

In the interest of accountability for polls and pollsters, we try to catalog the Arkansas Poll’s track record. While it is not our primary aim to be in the election prediction business, the ArkPoll team has tested – directly or indirectly – 33 statewide elections; we’ve blown five.

An interesting pattern emerges in the table presented below: generally, the lower the profile (“saliency”) the item and/or the more buried the details in the ballot title, the more likely we are to be off/wrong and by wide margins. A particularly good (or bad) example of this is Initiated Act 1 of 2008. The explanation for that flip is multi-parted but, chiefly, opponents effectively made it a referendum on gays and lesbians only whereas we asked about the referendum’s actual language: “cohabitating couples.”

Year	Measure/Election	ArkPoll ¹		Election		Diff. ²	Diff. ³	Right?
		Y	N	Y	N			
2014	Cotton vote							
	<i>Very likely voters only</i>	49	36	57	39			
	<i>Very likely voters only (minus dk/refused)</i>	57	43			0	14/18	Y
2014	Hutchinson vote							
	<i>Very likely voters only</i>	50	39	55	41			
	<i>Very likely voters only (minus dk/refused)</i>	56	44			1	12/14	Y
2014	Minimum wage hike							
	<i>Very likely voters only</i>	69	24	66	34			
	<i>Very likely voters only (minus dk/refused)</i>	74	26			8	48/32	Y
2014	Alcohol sales statewide							
	<i>Very likely voters only</i>	41	51	43	57			
	<i>Very likely voters only (minus dk/refused)</i>	45	55			2	10/14	Y
2014	Ethics/term limits extension							
	<i>Very likely voters only</i>	27	59	53	48			
	<i>Very likely voters only (minus dk/refused)</i>	32	68			-21	-36/5	N
2012	Romney vote	53	34					
	<i>Very likely voters only</i>	58	31					
	<i>Very likely voters only (minus dk/refused)</i>	64	34	61	35	3	30/26	Y
2012	Highway sales tax	51	44					
	<i>Very likely voters only</i>	53	42					
	<i>Very likely voters only (minus dk/refused)</i>	56	44	58	42	-2	12/16	Y

¹ Note that, unless otherwise noted, the sum of the first two columns fall short of 100% because of “don’t know/refused” responses.

² ArkPoll (% voting yes or for candidate named) – Election (% voting yes or for candidate named)

³ ArkPoll margin /Actual margin

2012	Medical Marijuana	44	52					
	<i>Very likely voters only</i>	43	53					
	<i>Very likely voters only (minus dk/refused)</i>	45	55	49	51	-4	10/2	Y
2011	Road bonds	63	28					
	<i>Very likely voters only</i>	65	26					
	<i>Very likely voters only (minus dk/refused)</i>	71	29	81	19	10	42/62	Y
2010	Boozman vote	48	36					
	<i>Very likely voters only</i>	54	35					
	<i>Very likely voters only (minus dk/refused)</i>	61	39	58	37	3	22/21	Y
2008	Act 1: adoption and fostering by cohabitators	38	55					
	<i>very likely voters only</i>	37	55					
	<i>very likely voters only (minus dk/refused)</i>	41	59	57	43	-16	-18/14	N
	Amendment 3: lottery	64	33					
	<i>very likely voters only</i>	63	34					
	<i>very likely voters only (minus dk/refused)</i>	65	35	63	37	2	30/26	Y
	McCain vote	49	36					
	<i>very likely voters only</i>	51	36					
	<i>very likely voters only (minus dk/refused)</i>	60	41	59	39	1	19/20	Y
2006	Beebe vote	49	36					
	<i>very likely voters only</i>	51	38					
	<i>very likely voters only (minus dk/refused)</i>	58	43	56	41	2	15/15	Y
	Question 1: college bonds	72	20					
	<i>very likely voters only</i>	72	21					
	<i>very likely voters only (minus dk/refused)</i>	78	22	69	31	9	56/68	Y
	Ref A. 1: bingo, raffles	67	27					
	<i>very likely voters only</i>	68	28					
	<i>very likely voters only (minus dk/refused)</i>	71	29	69	31	2	41/38	Y
2004	A1: extend term limits	27	66					
	<i>very likely voters only</i>	27	68	30	70	-3	-41/-40	Y
	A2: development bonds	76	15					
	<i>very likely voters only</i>	76	15	64	36	12	61/28	Y
	A3: restrict marriage	75	22					
	<i>very likely voters only</i>	77	21	75	25	2	56/50	Y
	Raise school millage	59	33					
	<i>very likely voters only</i>	59	34	30	70	29	25/-40	N
	Lincoln approval	55	19					

	<i>very likely voters only</i>	57	21	56	44	1	36/12	Y
	Bush vote	47	40					
	<i>very likely voters only</i>	50	41	54	45	4	9/9	
	<i>very likely voters only (minus dk/refused)</i>	53	44	54	45	-1	9/9	Y
2002	A1: Secret ballot	90	6					
	<i>very likely voters only</i>	91	6	57	43	34	85/14	Y
	A2: Executive reform	60	31					
	<i>very likely voters only</i>	60	32	45	55	15	28/-10	N
	A3: Drop sales tax on groceries and medicines	39	57					
	<i>very likely voters only</i>	38	59	39	61	-1	-21/-22	Y
	Increase animal cruelty penalties	65	30					
	<i>very likely voters only</i>	63	33	38	62	25	30/-24	N
	Hutchinson approval	46	29					
	<i>very likely voters only</i>	49	33	46	54	3	16/8	Y
	Huckabee approval	50	35					
	<i>very likely voters only</i>	50	40	53	47	-3	10/6	Y
2000	A1: Redevel'mt districts	65	23	54	46	11	42/8	Y
	A2: Property tax credit	65	28	63	37	2	37/26	Y
	A3: Judicial reform	46	34	56	44	-10	12/12	Y
	Tobacco settlement	71	20					
	<i>intended voters only</i>	75	21	64	36	11	54/28	Y
	State lottery/casinos	46	49					
	<i>intended voters only</i>	44	53	36	64	8	-9/-28	Y
	Bush favorable	48	40					
	<i>intended voters only</i>	49	40	51	46	-2	9/5	Y