



THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2018

High-resolution photo available upon request.

Arkansas Poll Shows Increasing Concern About Climate Change

The poll included questions about diversity, the upcoming election, and current policy issues.

The Arkansas Poll finds that a growing number of Arkansans think climate change poses a risk. They are also more concerned about health care than the economy, and believe more needs to be done to achieve gender and racial equity. The poll also included questions about the upcoming election and current political issues.

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. – The 20th annual Arkansas Poll finds that a growing number of Arkansans think climate change poses an imminent risk. They are also more concerned about healthcare than in the past, and they believe the state and country have more work to do to achieve gender and racial equity. The poll also included questions about the upcoming election and current political issues.

The Arkansas Poll, designed and analyzed by Janine Parry, professor of political science at the University of Arkansas, is one of the oldest public state polls in the country. It has consistently come within two points of actual election outcomes. Over the past two decades, the poll has tracked public opinion in Arkansas through 17,000 phone interviews.

This year, the poll is based on phone interviews with 1200 randomly selected participants statewide. Sixty-one percent of all calls were conducted over cell phones. For more information about the results, protocols and historic outcomes, go to the full [2018 Arkansas Poll Summary Report](#).

“It’s a credit to Arkansas that this annual effort to measure and share what the public wants from policymakers has hit this milestone,” Parry said. “Based on our election prediction record, it’s clear Arkansans are honest about their preferences. But interviewers at our national call center observe that the Arkansans they spoke to were also just plain nice. That’s an important intangible that’s kept the project rolling for two decades.”

CLIMATE CHANGE AND HEALTH CARE

For the past four years, the Arkansas poll asked: “Do you think global warming, or climate change, will pose a serious threat to you or your way of life in your lifetime?” This year, the number of people who answered “yes” increased by more than 50 percent, from 30 percent to 47 percent. Forty-four percent of respondents answered “no,” a decrease of 17 points from last year.

In response to a question about issues facing people in Arkansas today, respondents cited health care as the most important, followed by drugs, education and the economy. This is a shift from the past two years, when respondents cited the economy as the most important issue.

FOCUS ON DIVERSITY

When asked if they thought the increasing number of people of different races, ethnic groups and nationalities in Arkansas made the state better or worse, 45 percent of Arkansas respondents said better, 45 percent said no difference and 7 percent said worse.

When asked about the effects of a growing emphasis on diversity in the workplace, 40 percent said it helped, 43 percent said it made no difference and 10 percent said it hurt.

When asked about racial equity, 75 percent of respondents said the country had more to do in that area, and 70 percent said the state had more to do. On the question of gender equity, 70 percent thought the country needed to do more, while 67 percent thought the state needed to do more.

POLITICAL AND POLICY QUESTIONS

The poll also included questions related to the upcoming election and current policy issues. The responses to these are listed below.

BALLOT MEASURES

- Referred Amendment 2 – Require voters to present photo ID: 73 percent favor, 24 percent oppose.

- Issue 5 – Increase minimum wage: 67 percent favor, 29 percent oppose.

GOVERNOR’S RACE

- Hutchinson (R): 59 percent
- Henderson (D): 35 percent
- Other: 6 percent

CURRENT ISSUES

- Abortion: 38 percent favor laws that would make it more difficult; 20 percent favor laws that would make it easier; 36 percent favor no change.
- Gun Control: 44 percent favor stricter gun control; 10 percent favor less strict gun control; 43 percent favor no change.

The poll also included questions about party affiliation, political ideology and approval ratings of public figures. To see all the results, go to the [2018 Arkansas Poll Summary Report](#).

About the J. William Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences: Fulbright College is the largest and most academically diverse unit on campus with 19 departments and more than 30 academic programs and research centers. The college provides the core curriculum for all University of Arkansas students and is named for J. William Fulbright, former university president and longtime U.S. senator.

About the University of Arkansas: The University of Arkansas provides an internationally competitive education for undergraduate and graduate students in more than 200 academic programs. The university contributes new knowledge, economic development, basic and applied research, and creative activity while also providing service to academic and professional disciplines. The Carnegie Foundation classifies the University of Arkansas among only 2 percent of universities in America that have the highest level of research activity. *U.S. News & World Report* ranks the University of Arkansas among its top American public research universities. Founded in 1871, the University of Arkansas comprises 10 colleges and schools and maintains a low student-to-faculty ratio that promotes personal attention and close mentoring.

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