

Dickinson College Exit Poll

Fall 2014

N = 402 Cumberland County, PA Voters

Key Findings

- Taxes (19%), education (18%), and the economy (12%) are the three most prominent issues voters said were the most important to them in deciding their vote in the PA Governor's race. The most voters, however (32%), listed more than one issue as being most important.
- Television is the most important medium by which Cumberland County voters received information about the PA Governor's race. Nearly three-fourths of voters (74%) said they got at least some information via television, while 34% said it was the news source they relied upon most heavily.
- President Obama's approval rating among Cumberland County voters was 31%, while 65% disapprove of the job he is doing as president.
- Nearly two-thirds of Cumberland County voters (65%) support selling the state-owned liquor stores to private companies. 50% of Democrats; 54% of Independents; and 75% of Republicans support selling the liquor stores.
- Just over half of Cumberland County voters (54%) support raising the minimum wage in Pennsylvania. 89% of Democrats; 57% of Independents; and 34% of Republicans support raising the minimum wage.
- Cumberland County voters are quite divided about the status of Pennsylvania's budget over the past few years. 30% say the budget is in better shape than it was a few years; 34% say it is in worse shape than a few years ago; 26% say it is in about the same shape as it was a few years ago. Not surprisingly, Democrats tend to think the budget is in worse shape as opposed to better (56% to only 9%) while Republicans tend to think it is in better shape as opposed to worse (44% to 21%). 26% of both parties think the budget is in about the same shape as it was a few years ago.
- Nearly half of Cumberland County voters (48%) support the expanding of hydraulic fracturing (fracking) on state-owned forestland while 41% oppose. Regardless of voters support or opposition of the expansion of fracking, however, 69% of voters would support imposing an extraction tax on oil and gas companies. 92% of Democrats; 80% of Independents; and 55% of Republicans are in favor of an extraction tax.
- In terms of public school funding, only 9% of Cumberland County voters think government funding for schools in their district should decrease. 49% think it should increase and 38% think it should stay about the same.

- Just over one in ten (13%) Cumberland County voters believe that marijuana should be illegal in all circumstances. 54% think it should be legal, but only for medicinal purposes while 31% think it should be legal for personal use among adults.

Methodology

Number of Interviews: 402 Voters in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania

Margin of Error: +/- 5% at a 95% level of confidence

Date: Election Day 2014 – November 4, 2014

Methods of Interviewing: All interviews were conducted in person, but were anonymous. Upon exiting the polling place, voters were asked if they wanted to participate. If voters agreed, they were given a clipboard with the survey and asked to complete both sides of the questionnaire. Upon completion, surveys were placed in envelopes with precinct identifiers.

Weighting: Data were weighted by the final vote percentage (Democrat and Republican) of Cumberland County in the PA Governor's race.

The exit poll was conducted by students enrolled in Dickinson College Political Science classes POSC 239: Research Methods, and POSC 390: Campaigns and Elections Senior Seminar, under the direction of Professor Sarah Niebler. For further information, please contact Professor Niebler at: nieblers@dickinson.edu; or 717-254-8093.