



"What in the world people are really thinking"

For Immediate Release



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Jan. 23, 2008

U.S. Conference of Mayors/Zogby Poll: Most Americans Believe ‘Going Green’ Will Create Jobs, Improve Communities

Concern over gas prices increases interest in mass transit; Survey explores issues of top priority for Americans leading up to the Presidential election; John Zogby to discuss results January 23

Washington, D.C. – Most Americans believe local efforts to be environmentally sensitive by “going green” will pay off for their communities by attracting new businesses and development, creating “green collar jobs” and boosting the local economy, a new United States Conference of Mayors/Zogby poll finds.

The survey was commissioned by the U.S. Conference of Mayors in support of the Mayors’ 10 Point Plan, *Strong Cities, Strong Families, for a Strong America*, and will be the first of a series of surveys designed to explore how America’s metro areas are the bulwark of the world’s economies. The results of the initial survey show strong support for community initiatives that focus on the environment. More than half – 56% – believe their local government should “go green” and make environmentally friendly and energy efficient changes throughout their local community, even if they may have to significantly change their lifestyle. Majorities also believe that if their local communities adopt more environmentally friendly policies, there will be a positive impact on the local economy. They think green technology will create new local jobs make their communities better places to live. Nearly half (48%) say they would be willing to pay higher taxes if the increase would fund environmentally friendly improvements in their community.

The results of the survey will be presented by Zogby International President and CEO John Zogby on Wednesday, Jan. 23, 2008, during the 76th Winter Meeting of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and will include a discussion of top priorities for Americans as the 2008 election season gets underway. The interactive survey of 32,085 adults nationwide was conducted Nov. 27-Dec. 12, 2007, and carries a margin of error of +/- 0.6 percentage points.

Many Americans are already taking conservation efforts into their own hands – 68% say that in their personal lives they have already adopted water conservation measures. The survey also shows more than half of Americans – 53% – say they would be willing to use mass transit if it were easily accessible from their homes and where they work, and the pressure of rising gas prices may make it an even more attractive alternative. Two in three (65%) said the raising price of gasoline makes them more likely to consider using mass transit and 44% would be willing to pay higher taxes if they knew all the added taxes were being spent on improving or creating public transportation where they live.



Although most Americans express dissatisfaction with the overall rate of return they receive for their tax dollars, they view the use of their local taxes more favorably than the taxes they pay on the state and federal levels. Nearly four in 10 (39%) believe they receive the best service in relation to the amount of taxes they pay at the local level, compared with 16% who believe they receive the most benefit from state taxes and 13% who believe their federal tax dollars give them the greatest return.

“The findings of this poll are in line with the very issues that mayors have been working to address in our 10 Point Plan,” said Conference President Trenton Mayor Douglas H. Palmer. “Mayors are in touch with the American public and we expect the Presidential Candidates to address these same issues.”

Other findings from the survey include:

- Americans are more concerned with crime in their local communities than they are with terrorism – nearly half say they fear local crime more (48%), compared to 31% who worry more about terrorism.
- Most respondents (57%) would be more likely to support their member of Congress if he or she voted to close loopholes in current gun laws and ensure that every individual passes a background check before they could purchase a gun. Slightly more than half (52%) would be more likely to support their Congressional representative if he or she voted to ban the sale of all semi-automatic or military grade weapons.
- Support for additional taxation to fund arts programs, cultural events, parks, and recreational facilities was not as strong as the support for items such as improving local schools, hospitals, and fighting crime.
- Half of Americans (49%) believe illegal immigrants have had a negative impact on their local economy – just 19% believe illegal immigrants have had a positive impact. Most (53%) believe stricter immigration laws and enforcement would have a positive impact on their local economy and 57% believe immigrants who are not living in this country legally should receive no services from the government.
- Survey respondents were split on the issue of funding for the State Children’s Health Insurance Program to three times the current poverty level, with slightly more who support (48%) than oppose (44%) the additional funding. However, more than half (53%) said they would pay higher taxes to help the poor living in their city or community.
- On the issue of affordable housing, 33% do not believe it is a government responsibility, while 24% said the state should be most responsible for guaranteeing an adequate supply of affordable housing, 18% favored local governments taking on the issue and 14% believing the federal government should be most responsible.

“This poll marks the beginning of a long relationship between the U.S. Conference of Mayors and Zogby,” said Conference Executive Director Tom Cochran. “The poll further confirms that mayors are on target with the concerns of the American people and we plan to release more polls to address key issues facing our citizens and our country.”

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