CSDI Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions

Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions
230 Appleton Place
301 Ingram Commons Center
Nashville, TN 37203-5721

Questionnaire for Vanderbilt Poll, June 2011

I'm calling for the Vanderbilt Poll a new survey to ask Tennesseans their opinions and thoughts about topics the economy and important decisions that are being made in our state.

1. For statistical purposes only, could you please tell be your race or ethnic background?

2. (I'd like your views on some government officials. As I read each name, please tell me if you approve or disapprove of how each is handling their job.) Barack Obama as President?

   Approve
   Disapprove
   I need to wait and see
   Don't Know who that is
   Don't Know
   Decline to Answer

3. (I'd like your views on some government officials. As I read each name, please tell me if you approve or disapprove of how each is handling their job.) The US Congress?

   Approve
   Disapprove
   I need to wait and see
   Don't Know who that is
   Don't Know
   Decline to Answer

4. (I'd like your views on some government officials. As I read each name, please tell me if you approve or disapprove of how each is handling their job.) The Tennessee State Legislature?

   Approve
   Disapprove
   I need to wait and see
   Don't Know who that is
   Don't Know
   Decline to Answer

VANDERBILT

5. (I'd like your views on some government officials. As I read each name, please tell me if you approve or disapprove of how each is handling their job.) Bill Haslam as Governor?

   Approve
   Disapprove
   I need to wait and see
   Don't Know who that is
   Don't Know
   Decline to Answer

6. (I'd like your views on some government officials. As I read each name, please tell me if you approve or disapprove of how each is handling their job.) Lamar Alexander as US Senator?

   Approve
   Disapprove
   I need to wait and see
   Don't Know who that is
   Don't Know
   Decline to Answer

7. (I'd like your views on some government officials. As I read each name, please tell me if you approve or disapprove of how each is handling their job.) Bob Corker as US Senator?

   Approve
   Disapprove
   I need to wait and see
   Don't Know who that is
   Don't Know
   Decline to Answer

VANDERBILT

8. What do you think should be the top priority of the Tennessee state government?

   Health Care
   Guns
   Immigration
   The economy, including jobs
   Education
   Other

9. The death of Osama Bin Laden has been widely reported in the news. Do you believe that Osama Bin Laden:

   Is still alive
   Has been killed

10. According to the U.S. Constitution, American presidents must be 'natural born citizens.' Some people say Barack Obama was born in another country, whereas others believe that he was born here in the United States. How about you - do you think Barack Obama was...

    Born in the United States
    Born in another country

11. Do you think the state of Tennessee should allow permits for professors to carry guns on campus?

12. Thinking of your finances these days, would you say that you and your family in your home are:

    Better off financially
    Worse off financially
    or, about the same as you were a year ago?

13. Looking ahead to the next year, do you think that a year from now, you and your family in your home will be:

    Better off financially
    Worse off financially
    About the same

VANDERBILT

14. Next, we are going to read an account that some people give for why Americans are overweight. After we read the account, please tell us how well you think it explains why people are overweight. A big problem in this country is that we're surrounded by choices that are cheap and easy but not good for us. We have become so used to eating fatty, sugary foods that healthy foods are lost in a sea of unhealthy alternatives. So people are overweight because processed foods displace natural foods and large restaurant portions replace reasonable meals. It's not fair that it's become so hard to find healthy foods at a reasonable price. When I see a person who's overweight, I get angry at our society for allowing bad food choices to drive out the good ones. How well does this account explain why people are overweight? Does it explain why people are overweight very well, somewhat well, not very well, or not well at all?

Very well
Somewhat well
Not very well
Not well at all

15. Next, we are going to read an account that some people give for why Americans are overweight. After we read the account, please tell us how well you think it explains why people are overweight. A big problem in this country, especially in the inner-city, is that we're surrounded by choices that are cheap and easy but not good for us. We have become so used to eating fatty, sugary foods that healthy foods are lost in a sea of unhealthy alternatives. So people are overweight because processed foods displace natural foods and large restaurant portions replace reasonable meals. It's not fair that it's become so hard to find healthy foods at a reasonable price. When I see a person who's overweight, I get angry at our society for allowing bad food choices to drive out the good ones. How well does this account explain why people are overweight? Does it explain why people are overweight very well, somewhat well, not very well, or not well at all?

    Very well
    Somewhat well
    Not very well
    Not well at all

16. (Now we would like to ask you some general questions about government policies to curb obesity. There are no right or wrong answers here. For each of the policies that we describe, could you please indicate whether you would strongly support it, support it somewhat, neither support nor oppose it, oppose it somewhat, or strongly oppose it?) To require warning labels on foods with high sugar or fat content, indicating that such foods may be addictive.

    Strongly Support
    Support Somewhat
    Neither Support nor Oppose
    Oppose Somewhat
    Strongly Oppose

17. (Now we would like to ask you some general questions about government policies to curb obesity. There are no right or wrong answers here. For each of the policies that we describe, could you please indicate whether you would strongly support it, support it somewhat, neither support nor oppose it, oppose it somewhat, or strongly oppose it?) To impose a tax on junk food similar to existing government taxes on cigarettes and alcohol.

VANDERBILT

Strongly Support
Support Somewhat
Neither Support nor Oppose
Oppose Somewhat
Strongly Oppose

18. (Now we would like to ask you some general questions about government policies to curb obesity. There are no right or wrong answers here. For each of the policies that we describe, could you please indicate whether you would strongly support it, support it somewhat, neither support nor oppose it, oppose it somewhat, or strongly oppose it?) To require health insurers to charge higher premiums for policyholders who are overweight or fail to exercise regularly, allowing them to reduce premiums for everyone else.

    Strongly Support
    Support Somewhat
    Neither Support nor Oppose
    Oppose Somewhat
    Strongly Oppose

19. (Now we would like to ask you some general questions about government policies to curb obesity. There are no right or wrong answers here. For each of the policies that we describe, could you please indicate whether you would strongly support it, support it somewhat, neither support nor oppose it, oppose it somewhat, or strongly oppose it?) To provide funding to public schools to make fresh fruit, vegetables, and low-fat milk available for free at school lunches, even if it means that you will need to pay an additional $50 per year in taxes.

    Strongly Support
    Support Somewhat
    Neither Support nor Oppose
    Oppose Somewhat
    Strongly Oppose

20. Now, on to a different topic. Some people get most of their news from stories that focus on broad trends and statistics such as the unemployment rate and the value of the stock market. Other people get their news from stories that focus on the personal experiences of individuals or groups of individuals. How about you? Which type of story do you read or watch most often, or do you read and watch them both at the same rate?

    Stories that focus on statistics
    Stories that focus on individuals' experiences

VANDERBILT

Both equally
Neither

21. Some local communities are passing laws that ban discrimination by city contractors against gays and lesbians. Thinking of such a law, do you:

    Strongly favor
    Somewhat favor
    Neither favor nor oppose
    Somewhat oppose
    Strongly oppose

22. Some local communities are passing laws that ban discrimination by city contractors against gays, lesbian, and transgendered people. Thinking of such a law, do you:

    Strongly favor
    Somewhat favor
    Neither favor nor oppose
    Somewhat oppose
    Strongly oppose

23. There has been a great deal of discussion about extending the number of years from 3 to 5 before teachers can receive tenure. Do you think this change would...

    Improve the quality of education in the state
    Have no effect on the quality of education in the state
    Weaken the quality of education in the state

VANDERBILT

24. The Tennessee State Legislature debated a bill that would allow grocery stores to sell wine. The legislature decided to take up the issue again next year. Should grocery stores be allowed to sell wine?

25. The Tennessee State Legislature debated a bill that would allow grocery stores to sell wine. Opponents argue that it would benefit large chain stores while hurting small locally-owned businesses. Should grocery stores be allowed to sell wine?

26. The Tennessee State Legislature debated a bill that would allow grocery stores to sell wine. Proponents argue that it would give consumers lower prices and more choice. Should grocery stores be allowed to sell wine?

27. As you may know, collective bargaining refers to negotiations between an employer and a labor union's members to determine the conditions of employment. The Tennessee State Legislature passed a law taking away some of the collective bargaining rights of public school teachers. Do you favor or oppose taking away some of the collective bargaining rights of teachers' unions? Strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, strongly oppose.

28. The Tennessee Legislature has passed a bill that would limit the amount a person could obtain from a jury for pain and suffering resulting from injuries such as medical malpractice, auto accidents, or unsafe products. The limit of $750,000 would be the same for everyone. Supporters say a limit will keep insurance costs down, which will allow businesses to hire more workers. Opponents say a limit is unfair to seriously injured persons, and will not deter careless or reckless behavior. Which is closer to your view:

    A limit on pain and suffering damages is needed to save money and create jobs
    A limit on pain and suffering damages will be unfair to seriously injured persons

29. Please tell me how much you agree with this statement: My community would benefit from an expanded and improved public transportation system, such as rail and buses. Do you:

    Strongly agree
    Somewhat agree
    Somewhat disagree
    Strongly disagree

30. Overall, how would you rate--the quality of health care you receive:

    Excellent
    Good
    Fair
    Poor

31. In your view, is global climate change:

    A very serious problem
    A somewhat serious problem
    Not too serious of a problem
    Not a problem

32. Do you think the United States is winning or losing the war on terrorism?

VANDERBILT

Winning
Losing

33. If you could choose between the following two approaches, which do you think is the better punishment for murder--the death penalty or life imprisonment, with absolutely no possibility of parole?

    The death penalty
    Life imprisonment, with absolutely no possibility of parole

34. What grade would you give your local public schools?

    A
    B
    C
    D
    Or, F

35. What grade would you give public schools in Tennessee?

    A
    B
    C
    D
    Or, F

36. Do you think abortion should be legal in all cases, legal in most cases, illegal in most cases, or illegal in all cases?

    Legal in all cases
    Legal in most cases
    Illegal in most cases
    Illegal in all cases

37. On the issue of abortion, would you say you are:

    Definitely pro-choice
    Somewhat pro-choice
    Somewhat pro-life
    Definitely pro-life

38. If the 2012 presidential election were held today and the candidates were... President Barack Obama, the Democrat and former Vice Presidential candidate Sarah Palin, the Republican, who would you vote for, or neither?

VANDERBILT

Barack Obama
Sarah Palin
Neither

39. If the 2012 presidential election were held today and the candidates were... President Barack Obama, the Democrat and former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, the Republican, who would you vote for, or neither?

    Barack Obama
    Newt Gingrich
    Neither

40. If the 2012 presidential election were held today and the candidates were... President Barack Obama, the Democrat and Former Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty, the Republican, who would you vote for, or neither?

    Barack Obama
    Tim Pawlenty
    Neither

41. If the 2012 presidential election were held today and the candidates were... President Barack Obama, the Democrat and Minnesota Congresswoman Michele Bachmann, the Republican, who would you vote for, or neither?

    Barack Obama
    Michele Bachmann
    Neither

42. If the 2012 presidential election were held today and the candidates were... President Barack Obama, the Democrat and former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney, the Republican, who would you vote for, or neither?

    Barack Obama
    Mitt Romney
    Neither

43. Please tell me how much you agree with this statement: Most national elected officials care what people like me think. Do you...

    Completely Agree
    Mostly Agree
    Mostly Disagree
    Completely Disagree

VANDERBILT

44. Please tell me how much you agree with this statement: Most state and local elected officials care what people like me think. Do you...

Completely Agree
Mostly Agree
Mostly Disagree
Completely Disagree 4

45. Next, please tell me which of the following two statements comes closer to your own views, even if neither is exactly right:

Today, legal immigrants strengthen our country because of their hard work and talents
Today, legal immigrants are a burden on our country because they take our jobs and use up our tax dollars

46. Next, please tell me which of the following two statements comes closer to your own views, even if neither is exactly right:

Today, illegal immigrants strengthen our country because of their hard work and talents
Today, illegal immigrants are a burden on our country because they take our jobs and use up our tax dollars

47. Next, please tell me which of the following two statements comes closer to your own views, even if neither is exactly right:

Today, immigrants strengthen our country because of their hard work and talents
Today, immigrants are a burden on our country because they take our jobs and use up our tax dollars

48. Before taxes, Was your total household income in 2010:

Under $45,000
Over $45,000

49. Before taxes, was it:

Under 15,000
Between 15,000 and 30,000
Between 30,000 and 45,000

50. Before taxes, was it:

Between 45,000 and 75,000
Between 75,000 and 100,000

VANDERBILT

Over 100,000

51. There are around 2.5 million families in Tennessee. How many do you think have a household income lower than yours?

    Less than 20%
    Between 20% and 40%
    Between 40% and 60%
    Between 60% and 80%
    More than 80%

52. Now looking ahead to next year's (2012) federal budget, do you think it should or should not include higher taxes for families with household incomes of $250,000 and above?

    Should include higher taxes
    Should not include

53. Right now the United States faces large budget deficits and a large national debt. In response, lawmakers are considering making major changes to Medicare that would control the cost of the program by reducing the health-care benefits to Americans. Thinking of these reductions, do you:

    Strongly favor
    Somewhat favor
    Neither favor nor oppose
    Somewhat oppose
    Strongly oppose

54. Right now the United States faces large budget deficits and a large national debt. In response, lawmakers are considering making major changes to Social Security that would control the cost of the program by reducing the pension benefits to Americans. Thinking of these reductions, do you:

    Strongly favor
    Somewhat favor
    Neither favor nor oppose
    Somewhat oppose
    Strongly oppose

55. Which one of the following comes closest to what you would like to see lawmakers IN CONGRESS do with the federal budget deficit--would you like lawmakers to:

VANDERBILT

Make deep cuts in spending and do not raise any taxes
Make no cuts in spending and raise taxes on the wealthy
A mix of some spending cuts and some taxes on the wealthy

56. In general, would you support or oppose increasing funding to expand and improve public transportation in your community, if it required a small increase in taxes or fees?

    Strongly support
    Somewhat support
    Somewhat oppose
    Strongly oppose

57. How old are you?

58. How many years have you lived in Tennessee?

59. How would you rate the condition of the United States economy these days? Is it:

    Very Good
    Fairly Good
    Fairly Bad
    Very Bad

60. When you use a telephone at home, are you more likely to...

    Use a land line more
    Use a cell phone more
    Use them about the same

61. How would you rate your own personal health - would you say your personal health is:

    Excellent
    Good
    Fair
    Poor

62. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a:

    Democrat
    Republican
    Independent
    Something Else

VANDERBILT

63. Would you call yourself a:

    Strong Democrat
    Not a Strong Democrat

64. Would you call yourself a:

    Strong Republican
    Not a Strong Republican

65. Do you think of yourself as closer to the:

    Republican Party
    Democratic Party

66. We hear a lot of talk these days about conservatives and liberals. How would you generally describe your views on most political matters? Are you:

    Conservative
    Moderate
    Liberal

67. Do you think of yourself as part of the Tea Party movement?

68. In general, do you support the Tea Party movement's ideas?

69. What is your zip code?

70. How much school have you completed?

    Less than High School
    High School Diploma or GED
    Vocational or Technical School
    Some College
    College Graduate
    Post Graduate

71. GENDER

72. How often do you attend church, mosque, synagogue or other place of worship?

73. Would you call yourself a born-again Christian, that is, have you personally had a conversion experience related to Jesus Christ?

VANDERBILT

74. How closely do you follow news about the Tennessee state legislature and governor?

75. How would you rate the condition of the Tennessee state economy these days? Is it:

    Very Good
    Fairly Good
    Fairly Bad
    Very Bad

76. Were you born in the United States?

77. City/Place

78. State

79. In what year did you most recently arrive in the United States [Mainland] to stay or live?

80. Are you a citizen now?

81. In what year you did you naturalize?

THANK YOU again for sharing your thoughts and opinions! This survey is being conducted by the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions at Vanderbilt University. Newspapers will report the results soon. Have a nice rest of the day.

VANDERBILT