



Mercyhurst Center
for Applied Politics

*Wolf Agenda and
2016 Presidential Election*

*A Survey of 434 Registered
Voters in Pennsylvania*

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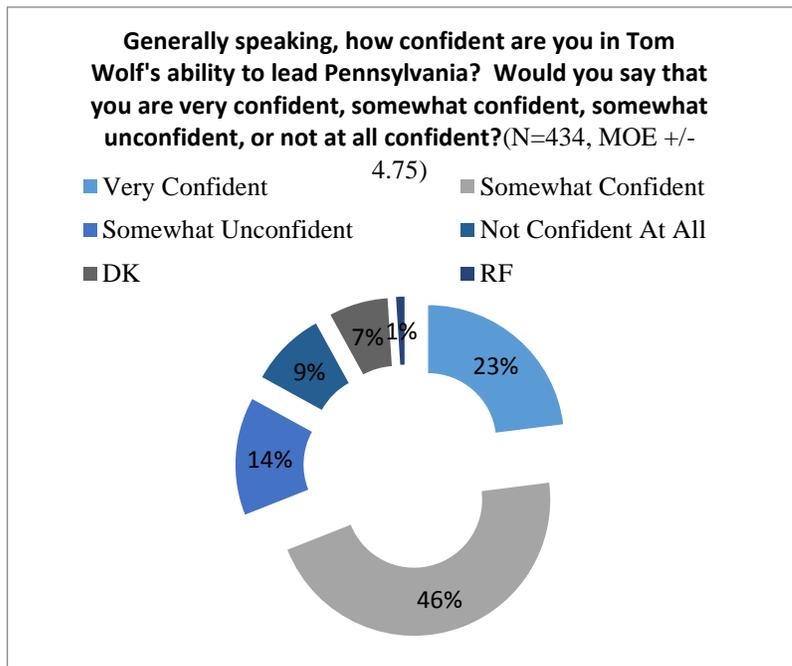
Summary of Findings

On the eve of Governor-elect Tom Wolf's inauguration, Pennsylvania voters are generally optimistic about his ability to successfully lead the commonwealth, solve the problems facing the state, work effectively with the state's Republican-led legislature, and majorities express support for key elements of his agenda.

A Mercyhurst Center for Applied Politics poll of 434 (MOE +/-4.75) registered voters in Pennsylvania conducted between January 7 and January 16, 2015, finds solid majorities of voters are confident in Wolf's ability to lead the state and solve the problems it faces. Solid majorities of voters also say they have confidence in Wolf's ability to work effectively with Republicans in the state legislature and nearly a majority express optimism that his performance as governor will exceed that of his predecessor, Tom Corbett. Concerning Wolf's stated agenda, majorities of voters favor creating a progressive income tax for Pennsylvania, increasing the minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$10.10/hour, enacting an extraction tax on natural gas, and increasing funding for public schools. Majorities of voters also express a desire for reform of the state's pension system and favor privatizing state liquor stores. On the question of which issue should be his top priority, voters identify education, the economy/jobs, and taxes, among others.

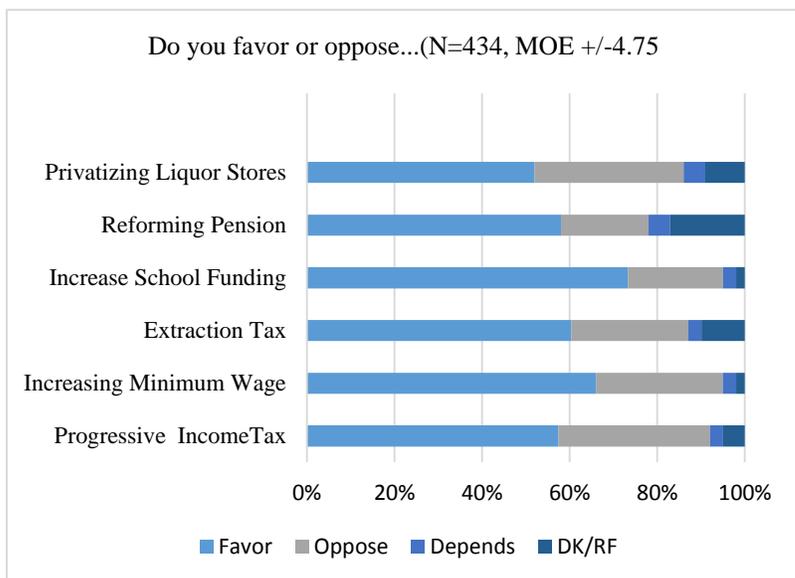
Looking ahead to the 2016 presidential election, majorities of Pennsylvania voters say they have strong or somewhat favorable opinions of two potential candidates for the Democratic Party, Hillary Clinton and Joe Biden. Leading the field of potential Republican candidates is Jeb Bush, followed by Chris Christie, Rick Santorum, and Paul Ryan. In contrast to potential contenders for the Democratic Party's nomination for president, none of the Republicans included in this poll secure favorable evaluations from a majority of Pennsylvania voters.

Governor-Elect Tom Wolf

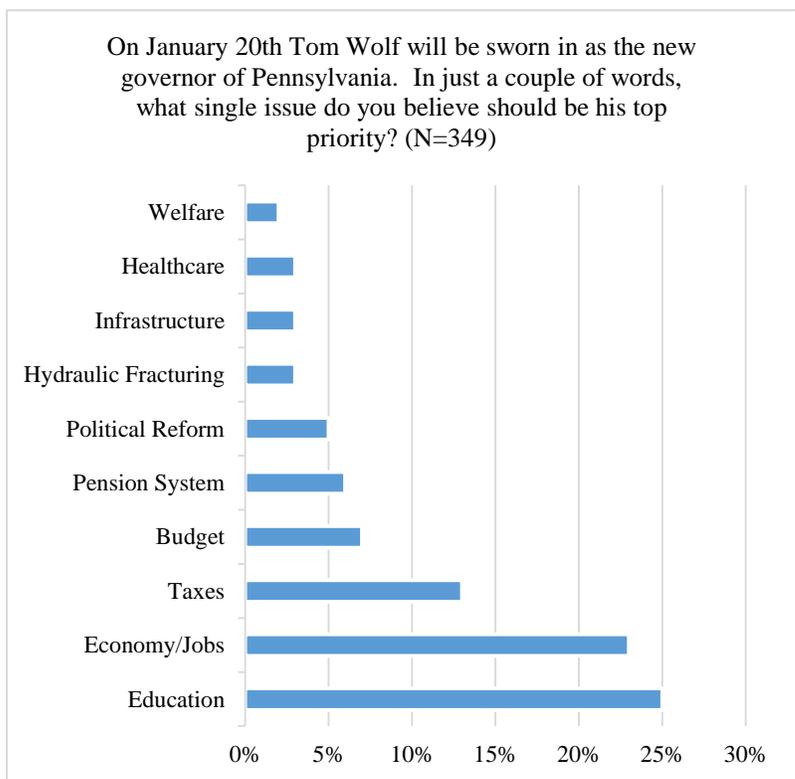


On the eve of Governor-elect Tom Wolf's inauguration, a majority (69%) of Pennsylvania voters say they are "very" (23%) or "somewhat" (46%) confident in his ability to lead the state, and only 24% say that they are "somewhat unconfident" (14%) or "not at all confident" (9%) in his ability to do so. Similarly, a solid majority (65%) expresses confidence in his ability to solve the problems facing the state, and only 28% expressed some degree of a lack of confidence in his ability to do so. These generally optimistic beliefs about Wolf's potential are echoed in voters' perception of his ability to work with the

Republican-led legislature. A majority (52%) of voters say that they are “very” (6%) or “somewhat” (46%) that Wolf will be able to work effectively with Republicans in the legislature, while 40% say that they are “somewhat” (24%) or “not at all” (16%) confident that he will be able to do so. As to whether he will outperform his predecessor, Tom Corbett, 50% of voters say he will and 11% say that he will not. A sizeable minority (29%) says that Wolf and Corbett’s performance as governor will be about the same.



In terms of Governor-elect Wolf’s agenda, voters in Pennsylvania appear to be generally supportive. Majorities of voters say they favor creating a progressive income tax for the state (58% favor; 35% oppose), raising the state’s minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$10.10/hour (66% favor; 29% oppose), enacting a five percent extraction tax on natural gas (61% favor; 27% oppose), and increasing funding for public schools (74% favor; 22% oppose). However, voters are less supportive of maintaining state control of liquor stores. When asked whether they favored or opposed privatizing state liquor stores, a majority (52%) said they favored such a move, while thirty-four percent said they opposed it. It is also clear that voters favor reforming the pension system for public employees (58% favor; 20% oppose).



Finally, when asked to identify, in just a couple of words, which single issue should be Governor-elect Wolf’s top priority, education (25%), the economy and jobs (23%), and taxes (13%) topped the list. These top-tier issues were followed by the budget (7%), pension system (6%), political reforms (5%), hydraulic fracturing (3%), infrastructure (3%), healthcare (3%), welfare (2%), and a wide

range of other issues (9%).

2016 Presidential Election

Looking ahead to the 2016 presidential election, registered voters in Pennsylvania have favorable

opinions of potential candidates for the Democratic Party, and less favorable opinions of potential candidates for the Republican Party. Of the potential Democratic contenders, Hillary Clinton is perceived most favorably with 57% of voters saying they have a “strongly” (25%) or “somewhat” (32%) favorable opinion of her. Joe Biden also receives a largely positive evaluation from voters, with a majority (55%) saying they have either a “strongly” (16%) or “somewhat” (39%) favorable opinion of him. Leading the Republican field of potential candidates is Jeb Bush with 42% of voters saying they have either a “strongly” (8%) or “somewhat” (34%) favorable opinion of him. Following close behind Bush are Rick Santorum and Chris Christie, each with 40% of voters saying they have a strongly or somewhat favorable opinion of them. Other potential Republican candidates, including Ted Cruz, Rand Paul, Paul Ryan, Scott Walker, Rick Perry, and Marco Rubio are perceived substantially less favorable than Bush, Santorum and Christie.

Frequency Report

Interviews were completed with 434 registered voters in Pennsylvania. For a sample size of 434, there is a 95 percent probability that our survey results are within plus or minus 4.75 points (the margin of error) of the actual population distribution for any given question. For subsamples the margin of error is larger (depending on the size of the subsample). The data were weighted on age and gender to correct for minor discrepancies between the sample and population. Question order was randomized whenever possible. Due to rounding, column totals may not equal 100 percent. Bracketed or italicized text are instructions to interviewers.

To begin, I'm going to read you some ideas people have proposed for improving life in Pennsylvania. Some people favor turning these ideas into law, while others do not favor turning them into law. Please tell me whether you favor or oppose turning these ideas into law.

[Randomized]

Q.1 Do you favor or oppose creating a progressive income tax for Pennsylvania, where the more income a person has, the more they pay in state taxes?

Favor	58%
Oppose	35%
Depends (volunteered)	3%
Dk	4%
RF	1%

Q.2 Do you favor or oppose raising Pennsylvania's minimum wage from \$7.25 per hour to \$10.10 per hour?

Favor	66%
Oppose	29%
Depends (volunteered)	3%
DK	2%
RF	0%

Q.3 Do you favor or oppose creating a five percent extraction tax on natural gas from wells in Pennsylvania?

Favor	61%
Oppose	27%
Depends (volunteered)	3%
DK	9%
RF	1%

Q.4 Do you favor or oppose increasing funding for public schools?

Favor	74%
Oppose	22%
Depends (volunteered)	3%
DK	1%
RF	1%

Q.5 Do you favor or oppose reforming the pension system for public employees?

Favor	58%
Oppose	20%
Depends (volunteered)	5%
DK	15%
RF	2%

Q.6 Do you favor or oppose privatizing state liquor stores?

Favor	52%
Oppose	34%
Depends (volunteered)	5%
DK	9%
RF	0%

Q.7 On January 20th Tom Wolf will be sworn in as the new governor of Pennsylvania. In just a couple of words, what single issue do you believe should be his top priority?

Q.8 Generally speaking, how confident are you in Tom Wolf's ability to lead Pennsylvania? Would you say that you are very confident, somewhat confident, somewhat unconfident, or not at all confident?

Very confident	23%
Somewhat confident	46%
Somewhat unconfident	14%
Not at all Confident	9%
DK	7%
RF	1%

Q.9 Generally speaking, how confident are you in Tom Wolf's ability to solve the problems facing our state? Would you say that you are very confident, somewhat confident, somewhat unconfident, or not at all confident?

Very confident	11%
Somewhat confident	54%
Somewhat unconfident	16%
Not at all confident	12%
DK	7%
RF	0%

Q.10 Generally speaking, how confident are you that the Democrat Tom Wolf will be able to work effectively with the Republican-led state legislature? Would you say that you are very confident, somewhat confident, somewhat unconfident, or Not at all confident?

Very confident	6%
Somewhat confident	46%

Somewhat unconfident	24%
Not at all Confident	16%
DK	8%
RF	0%

Q.11 Do you believe that Tom Wolf's performance in his duties as governor will be better, worse, or about the same as the outgoing governor of Pennsylvania, Tom Corbett?

Better	50%
Worse	11%
About the same	29%
DK	8%
RF	0%

I'm going to read you a list of people who have been in the news recently. I would like you to tell me whether your opinion of each person is strongly favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, strongly unfavorable. If you don't recognize the name, simply let me know and we will move on.

[Randomized]

Q.12 Is your opinion of Jeb Bush strongly favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or strongly unfavorable?

Strongly Favorable	8%
Somewhat Favorable	34%
Somewhat Unfavorable	27%
Strongly Unfavorable	21%
Do not Recognize	7%
DK	4%
RF	0%

Q.13 Is your opinion of Hillary Clinton strongly favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or strongly unfavorable?

Strongly favorable	25%
Somewhat favorable	32%
Somewhat unfavorable	16%
Strongly unfavorable	26%
Do not recognize	1%
DK	1%
RF	0%

Q.14 How about Scott Walker?

Strongly favorable	8%
Somewhat favorable	10%
Somewhat unfavorable	6%
Strongly unfavorable	10%
Do not recognize	50%
DK	15%
RF	1%

Q.15 How about Rick Perry?

Strongly favorable	5%
Somewhat favorable	19%
Somewhat unfavorable	17%
Strongly unfavorable	21%
Do not recognize	26%
DK	11%
RF	1%

Q.16 How about Joe Biden?

Strongly favorable	16%
Somewhat favorable	39%
Somewhat unfavorable	16%
Strongly unfavorable	26%
Do not recognize	2%
DK	2%
RF	0%

Q.17 How about Marco Rubio?

Strongly favorable	6%
Somewhat favorable	22%
Somewhat unfavorable	12%
Strongly unfavorable	15%
Do not recognize	32%
DK	12%
RF	0%

Q.18 How about Chris Christie

Strongly favorable	7%
Somewhat favorable	33%
Somewhat unfavorable	25%
Strongly unfavorable	22%
Do not recognize	8%
DK	4%
RF	1%

Q.19 How about Paul Ryan?

Strongly favorable	8%
Somewhat favorable	26%
Somewhat unfavorable	15%
Strongly unfavorable	20%
Do not recognize	21%
DK	10%
RF	0%

Q.20 How about Rand Paul?

Strongly favorable	6%
Somewhat favorable	26%
Somewhat unfavorable	21%

Strongly unfavorable	15%
Do not recognize	21%
DK	11%
RF	0%

Q.21 How about Ted Cruz?

Strongly favorable	4%
Somewhat favorable	14%
Somewhat unfavorable	12%
Strongly unfavorable	23%
Do not recognize	33%
DK	14%
RF	0%

Q.22 How about Rick Santorum?

Strongly favorable	10%
Somewhat favorable	30%
Somewhat unfavorable	19%
Strongly unfavorable	24%
Do not recognize	11%
DK	6%
RF	0%

Q.23 The last few questions are used to make sure that our sample for this survey reflects the population as a whole. Again, your answers will be kept completely confidential.

Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, Democrat or independent?

Republican	30%
Democrat	39%
Independent	27%
Other (volunteered)	2%
DK	1%
RF	0%

Q.24 Generally speaking, would you consider yourself to be a liberal, conservative, moderate, or have you not thought much about this?

Conservative	27%
Liberal	23%
Moderate	31%
Not thought about	17%
DK	2%
RF	1%

Q.25 In what year were you born?

18-28	14%
29-32	13%
39-48	15%
49-68	40%
69 or older	18%

Q.28 What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Less than high school	1%
High school	22%
Some college/associate degree	26%
Four year degree	33%
Graduate degree	18%
DK	0%
RF	0%

Q.29 What is your marital status?

Single	28%
Married	55%
Domestic Partnership	0%
Divorced	8%
Widowed	9%
Other	0%
DK	0%
RF	0%

Q.30 If you add together the yearly incomes, before taxes, of all of the members of your household for the past year, would the total be?

[read categories]

Less than \$30,000	15%
\$30,000-\$50,000	20%
\$50,000-\$100,000	28%
\$100,000-\$150,000	11%
Greater than \$150,000	10%
DK	7%
RF	8%

Q.31 What is your race or ethnicity?

White/Caucasian	86%
Non-White	11%
DK	1%
RF	2%

Q.32 Gender

[do not ask, just record]

Male	48%
Female	52%
DK	0%
RF	0%

Methodology

This report summarizes the results of a survey of registered voters in Pennsylvania, which was conducted between Wednesday, January 7 and Friday, January 16, 2015. During the 8 day field period interviewers called weekday evenings between the hours of 6:00 and 9:00 PM and between 11:00 AM and 6:00 PM on weekends. For each working phone number, interviewers made no fewer than six attempts to contact individuals selected to participate in the study. Calls were manually dialed and relied on a list of randomly selected registered voters Pennsylvania obtained from VoterMapping.com.

A total of 434 individuals were interviewed. For a sample size of 434, there is a 95 percent probability that the results are within plus or minus 4.75 points (the margin of error) of the actual population distribution for any given question. For subsamples, the margin of error is higher (depending on the size of the subsample). Aside from sampling error, there are several factors that prevent the results obtained through a probability sample from being a perfect representation of the results that would be obtained if the entire population was interviewed. This non-sampling error may be caused by a variety of factors including, but not limited to, response rate and question order. In this survey, a variety of techniques were employed to reduce common sources of non-sampling error.

Response Rate

Calculating a response rate for a particular study involves considering a number of variables (see http://www.aapor.org/Response_Rates_An_Overview.htm); but, simply stated, it refers to the percentage of individuals in a sample that, when contacted, elect to participate in a study by responding an interviewer's questions. In recent years, researchers have documented a sharp decline in response rates. Today, a typical study that relies on telephone interviews can expect a response rate of between 20 and 30%. Although it is unclear if, or to what extent, response rate is a source of non-sampling error, most polls strive to maximize response rate by making multiple attempts to contact individuals and taking steps to secure their cooperation once they have been reached. In this way, our study of registered voters in Pennsylvania is no different than most polls: No fewer than six attempts were made to contact hard-to-reach individuals. These attempts occurred during weekday evenings and on Saturday afternoons.

Questions

This report contains the questions as worded on the questionnaire and in the order in which they were asked. Some of the questions include bracketed information, which is, in every case, an instruction to the programmer or interviewer. Whenever possible, question order was randomized to ensure that respondents did not receive a set order of response options, which allowed response set bias to be minimized. For structured (close-ended) questions, interviewers were trained to probe for clarity when respondents' answers were not identical to the predefined response options. For unstructured (open-ended) questions, interviewers were trained to record verbatim responses whenever possible. In cases where a respondent asked that a question or response option be repeated, interviewers were careful to re-read the entire question or all response options.

Data

Data collected during this study was prepared for analysis by director and associate director of Mercyhurst Center for Applied Politics. Data preparation included, but was not limited to, removing partial interviews (respondent-terminated interviews) from the dataset. To maximize the accuracy of our results and correct for discrepancies between our sample and the population, the data were

weighted on age and race. Simply stated, weighting is when data collected from survey respondents are adjusted to represent the population from which the sample was drawn.

Mercyhurst Center for Applied Politics

The Mercyhurst Center for Applied Politics (MCAP) began operations in July 2010. Inspired by the mission of Mercyhurst University and guided by the university's core values, the center promotes reasoned discourse about problems facing communities, states and nations. It accomplishes this objective by providing elected officials, government agencies, news organizations, and nonprofits with accurate and unbiased assessments of public opinion; and offering a nonpartisan forum for public debates and roundtable discussions that address pressing public problems.

The centerpiece of MCAP is the state of the art computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) facility. The facility, which is located in the Center for Academic Engagement, is comprised of thirty-one interviewer stations and staffed by well-trained research associates. The specialized computer software used to conduct telephone interviews generates random telephone numbers in a predefined geographic area or dials from a list, and allows research associates to accurately complete even the most complex interviews.

The center also has the ability to design and administer online surveys. This method of interviewing is ideal for organizations that have relatively up-to-date email addresses for their members. The software used by MCAP allows a researcher to administer a survey - whether short and simple or long and complex - to an unlimited number of email addresses. In addition, a researcher has the ability to monitor response rates and send out reminders, thereby ensuring that the study produces high quality results.

As the Northwestern Pennsylvania's only CATI facility whose primary purpose is to regularly and accurately gauge public opinion, the MCAP is an invaluable resource for community leaders. Each year the center conducts polls on issues of local, state and national interest. The results of these studies are made available to the public via the university's webpage (polisci.mercyhurst.edu/mcap). In addition to its annual polls, the center offers its services to private parties, nonprofits, news organizations, and government agencies for minimal cost.

Please direct questions about the center to Dr. Joseph M. Morris, Director, Mercyhurst Center for Applied Politics, Mercyhurst University, 501 E. 38th Street, Erie, PA, 16546, (814) 824-2154, jmorris@mercyhurst.edu.

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