



Mercyhurst Center  
for Applied Politics

*Legalization of  
Marijuana in Pennsylvania*

*A Survey of 495 Registered  
Voters in Pennsylvania*

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## Summary of Findings

A Mercyhurst Center for Applied Politics poll of 495 (MOE +/-4.4) registered voters in Pennsylvania finds that the state's voters are divided on the question of whether the use of marijuana should be legal for all adults (48% favor/42% oppose). However, when it comes to using marijuana that was prescribed by a doctor, Pennsylvania voters are anything but divided. A strong majority (85%) say that patients should be allowed to use marijuana when prescribed by a doctor, with only a small fraction opposing it. A solid majority (59%) says that they favor decriminalizing the possession of the drug.

When it comes to Pennsylvania's approach to regulating marijuana, voters in the Keystone State are clear: Keeping laws the same is not their preference. When presented with a list of possible approaches to regulating the use of marijuana and asked which option best matches their opinion, a plurality of voters (33%) say they prefer allowing the use of marijuana by patients with a doctor's prescription and 31% say they prefer making use of the drug legal for all adults. Fifteen percent prefer decriminalization of marijuana use, and only a small fraction say laws pertaining to marijuana should be kept the same (8%) or made harsher (7%).

In spite of Pennsylvania voters' preference for changing the state's approach to regulating marijuana, a plurality (43%) says that marijuana is a gateway to other drugs and a majority (54%) believes that it is addictive. One factor that may increase approval of legalization is that a strong majority (78%) says that legalizing and taxing marijuana would generate a significant amount of money for the state. As opposed to using cocaine, which a strong majority of voters (76%) says is morally wrong, only a minority (31%) says that using marijuana is morally wrong.

A plurality of Pennsylvania voters (44%) disapprove of the job Tom Corbett is doing as governor. When asked for whom they would vote if the election for governor was held today, a plurality (49%) say they would vote for an unnamed candidate from the Democratic Party (compared to 40% in October 2013). In terms of the marijuana debate's impact on Pennsylvania's 2014 gubernatorial election, pluralities of voters say candidates' positions on legalization or decriminalization of marijuana will have no impact on their support of a candidate. However, 43% of voters say they would be more likely to vote for a candidate that favored legalizing the medicinal use of marijuana (compared to only 25% for legalizing the drug for all adults and 27% for decriminalization).

## Legalization and Decriminalization of Marijuana in Pennsylvania

A sizeable majority of Pennsylvania voters (85%) favor making it legal for patients to use marijuana if it was prescribed by their doctor, and only 10% oppose the position. The prospect of legalizing marijuana for medicinal purposes appears to have widespread support across key demographic groups including age, education, ideology, and party identification, and is favored in all five Pennsylvania's regions (see Cross Tabulations). A plurality of Pennsylvania voters (48%) say they favor the legalization of marijuana for all adults, but 42% say they oppose. In some states where marijuana use is

illegal, possession of the drug has been decriminalized. This means that while using marijuana is still illegal, people who are found to be in possession of marijuana are given a citation rather than being arrested and going to jail. When asked whether they favor or oppose decriminalization of marijuana, a majority (59%) of Pennsylvania voters said they favored and only 34% that they opposed. Opposition to decriminalization of the drug appears to be greatest among self-identified Republicans and conservatives.

When asked to pick the option that best matches their opinion on regulating marijuana, Pennsylvanians are divided. A plurality (33%) prefer to see state lawmakers legalize marijuana for those who have obtained a prescription from their doctor, and 31 % say it should be made legal for all adults. Decriminalization garners support from 17% of the population, keeping marijuana laws the same from 8% and making laws harsher from 7% (see Table 1)

**Table 1.** “Given the options of making penalties harsher, keeping laws the same, making it legal only with a doctor's prescription, decriminalizing it, or legalizing marijuana use, which option would best match your opinion on the issue?”

	Percent
Make Pennsylvania’s marijuana laws harsher	7
Keep Pennsylvania’s marijuana laws the same	8
Make marijuana legal in Pennsylvania for people with a doctor’s prescription	33
Decriminalize marijuana in Pennsylvania	16
Make marijuana legal in Pennsylvania	31
Depends	2
Don’t know/Unsure	2
Refused to answer	0

*“Don’t know/unsure” and “refused to answer” have been omitted from this table.*

## Beliefs about Marijuana

The poll also sought to learn what Pennsylvania believed about marijuana use and the effect that legalization of the drug would have on state revenues. Pluralities of voters say that smoking marijuana is less harmful to a person’s health than smoking cigarettes (37%) or drinking alcohol (39%), and that using the drug does not lead to other criminal behaviors (49%). Majorities say that marijuana is addictive (54%), does not cause mental illness (67%), is more effective at treating symptoms of some medical conditions (52%), and has legitimate medical uses (78%). A strong majority (78%) also says that legalizing and taxing marijuana would generate a significant amount of revenue for the state. On one important question – whether marijuana is a gateway drug that leads to the use of other, more dangerous drugs – Pennsylvania voters are divided, with 43% saying that is and 43% saying that it is not a gateway drug (see Table 2).

**Table 2.** Beliefs About Marijuana

	Yes %	No %	Depends %	Unsure %	Refused %	
Do you believe that using marijuana leads to the use of other drugs such as cocaine, heroin or LSD?	43	43	8	6	0	
Do you believe that using marijuana causes mental illness?	18	67	5	5	6	
Do you believe that marijuana is more effective at treating symptoms of some medical conditions than prescription drugs?	52	19	8	21	1	
Do you think marijuana has legitimate medical uses or does not have legitimate medical uses?"	78	9	5	7	0	
Do you believe using marijuana does or does not lead to other criminal behaviors?	39	49	7	5	1	
Do you believe that legalizing and taxing marijuana would generate a significant amount of money for the state?	78	15	2	4	0	
	Addictive	Not Addictive	Depends	Unsure	Refused	
"Do you believe that Marijuana is addictive or not addictive?"	54	35	5	5	6	
	Less Harmful	More Harmful	About Same	Depends	Unsure	Refused
"Do you believe smoking marijuana is less harmful, more harmful, or about the same to a person's health compared to smoking cigarettes?"	37	23	32	3	5	0
Do you believe using marijuana is less harmful, more harmful, or about the same to a person's health compared to drinking alcohol?	39	17	38	2	4	0

## Morality Acceptability

In an effort to gauge the relative moral acceptability of marijuana use, Pennsylvania voters were asked whether they believed an act was morally wrong or not morally wrong. While majorities of voters say it is morally wrong to lie during a job interview (86%), use cocaine (76%), cheat on your taxes (90%) or your spouse (96%), and discriminate against people because of the color of their skin (92%) or because they are gay or lesbian (81%), a minority (31%) say the same of smoking marijuana. However, fewer Pennsylvania voters say that it is morally wrong to smoke cigarettes (24%) or drink alcohol (14%) than say the same of marijuana. To the extent that we have measured the moral acceptability of various behaviors, Pennsylvania voters see smoking marijuana about as morally acceptable as having

sex before you are married (see Table 3). Given the recent media attention on an Arizona state law that would allow discrimination based on religious views, it is interesting that 81% of Pennsylvanians say that discrimination against gay or lesbian individuals is not morally acceptable.

**Table 3.** “For each, please tell me whether you consider the action to be morally wrong or NOT morally wrong.”

	Morally Wrong %	Not Morally Wrong %	Depends %	Unsure %	Refused %
Using marijuana	31	58	9	1	1
Smoking cigarettes	24	67	6	2	1
Lying during a job interview	86	8	6	1	0
Having sex before you are married	34	58	6	1	2
Drinking alcohol	14	77	7	2	1
Using cocaine	76	20	2	2	1
Cheating on your spouse	96	2	1	1	0
Cheating on your taxes	90	7	2	1	1
Engaging in homosexual behavior	39	53	4	3	2
Discriminating against someone because of race	92	7	0	1	1
Discriminating against someone because they are gay or lesbian	81	12	2	2	2

# Frequency Report

*Interviews were completed with 495 registered voters in Pennsylvania. For a sample size of 495, there is a 95 percent probability that our survey results are within plus or minus 4.3 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, there has been a lot of discussion in the news of marijuana and whether it should be legal or illegal.

Q.1 Do you **favor** or **oppose** making the use of marijuana legal in Pennsylvania for adults?

Favor	48
Oppose	42
Depends	7
Unsure	4
Refused	0

Q.2 Do you **favor** or **oppose** making it legal for patients to use marijuana that was prescribed by a doctor for medicinal purposes?

Favor	85
Oppose	10
Depends	3
Unsure	2
Refused	0

Q.3 In some states the use of marijuana has been **decriminalized**. This means that while using marijuana is still illegal, people who are found to be in possession of marijuana are given a citation rather than being arrested and going to jail.

Do you **favor** or **oppose** decriminalizing the use of marijuana in Pennsylvania?

Favor	59
Oppose	34
Depends	4
Unsure	2
Refused	1

Q.4 Given the options of making penalties **harsher**, keeping laws **the same**, making it legal only **with a doctor's prescription, decriminalizing it**, or **legalizing** marijuana use, which option would best match your opinion on the issue?

[Make laws harsher, keep the same, by doctor's prescription only, decriminalize, or legalize the use of marijuana]

Harsher	7
Keep the Same	8
Marijuana by prescription/Medicinal Marijuana	33
Decriminalization	16
Legalize	31
Depends (volunteered)	2
Something else/neither (volunteered)	1
DK	2
RF	0

Q.5 If a candidate for governor of Pennsylvania supported making the use of marijuana **legal** in Pennsylvania, would you be **more likely** to vote for the candidate, **less likely** to vote for the candidate, or would it have **no impact** on your vote for governor?

More likely	25
Less likely	32
No impact	40
DK	3
RF	0

Q.6 If a candidate for governor of Pennsylvania supported the **decriminalization** of marijuana, would you be **more likely** to vote for the candidate, **less likely** to vote for the candidate, or would it have **no impact** on your vote for governor?

More likely	27
Less likely	24
No impact	47
DK	2
RF	0

Q.7 If a candidate for governor of Pennsylvania supported making it legal in Pennsylvania for patients to use marijuana that was **prescribed by their doctor**, would you be **more likely** to vote for the candidate, **less likely** to vote for the candidate, or would it have **no impact** on your vote for governor?

More likely	43
Less likely	10
No impact	46
DK	2
RF	0

Now I would like to get your thoughts on the effects of marijuana use.

Q.8 Do you believe that using marijuana leads to the use of other drugs such as cocaine, heroin or LSD?

Yes	43
No	43
Depends (volunteered)	8
DK	6
RF	0

Q.9 Do you believe that Marijuana is addictive or not addictive?

Yes, addictive	54
No, not addictive	35
Depends (volunteered)	5
DK	5
RF	6

Q.10 Do you believe that using marijuana causes mental illness?

Yes	18
No	67
Depends (volunteered)	4
DK	11
RF	1

Q.11 Do you believe smoking marijuana is **less** harmful, **more** harmful, or about the same to a person's health compared to smoking cigarettes?

Less Harmful	37
More Harmful	23
About the Same	32
Depends (volunteered)	3
DK	5
RF	0

Q.12 Do you believe using marijuana is **less** harmful, **more** harmful, or about the same to a person's health compared to drinking alcohol?

Less harmful	39
More harmful	17
About the same	38
Depends (volunteered)	2
DK	4
RF	0



Q.13 Do you believe that marijuana is **more effective** at treating symptoms of some medical conditions than prescription drugs?

Yes	52
No	19
Depends (volunteered)	8
DK	21
RF	1

Q.14 Do you think marijuana has legitimate medical uses or does not have legitimate medical uses?

Yes, has legitimate medical	78
No, does not have legitimate	9
Depends (volunteered)	5
DK	7
RF	0

Q.15 Do you believe using marijuana **does** or does **not** lead to other criminal behaviors?

Yes, it does	39
No, it doesn't	49
Depends (volunteered)	7
DK	5
RF	1

Q.16 Do you believe that legalizing and taxing marijuana would generate a significant amount of money for the state?

Yes	78
No	15
Depends (volunteered)	2
DK	4
RF	0

Q.17 If Pennsylvania lawmakers decide to make it legal to use marijuana in the state, what **single** word best describes how you would feel about the decision?

Top Five Responses

	<u>Number</u>
Disappointed	43
Good	31
Indifferent	22
Okay	16
Unsure	15

Now I'm going to read you a list of actions. For each, please tell me whether you consider the action to be morally wrong or NOT morally wrong.

Q.18 Smoking cigarettes.

[morally wrong or NOT morally wrong]

Morally wrong	24
Not morally wrong	67
Depends (volunteered)	6
DK	2
RF	1

Q.19 Lying during a job interview.

[morally wrong or NOT morally wrong]

Morally wrong	86
Not morally wrong	8
Depends (volunteered)	6
DK	1
RF	0

Q.20 Having sex before you're married.

[morally wrong or NOT morally wrong]

Morally wrong	34
Not morally wrong	58
Depends (volunteered)	6
DK	1
RF	2

Q.21 Drinking alcohol.

[morally wrong or NOT morally wrong]

Morally wrong	14
Not morally wrong	77
Depends (volunteered)	7
DK	2
RF	1

Q.22 Using cocaine.

[morally wrong or NOT morally wrong]

Morally wrong	76
Not morally wrong	20
Depends (volunteered)	2
DK	2
RF	1

Q.23 Cheating on your taxes.

[morally wrong or NOT morally wrong]

Morally wrong	90
Not morally wrong	7
Depends (volunteered)	2
DK	1
RF	1

Q.24 Cheating on your spouse.

[morally wrong or NOT morally wrong]

Morally wrong	96
Not morally wrong	2
Depends (volunteered)	1
DK	1
RF	0

Q.25 Using marijuana.

[morally wrong or NOT morally wrong]

Morally wrong	31
Not morally wrong	58
Depends (volunteered)	9
DK	1
RF	1

Q.26 Engaging in homosexual behavior.

[morally wrong or NOT morally wrong]

Morally wrong	39
Not morally wrong	53
Depends (volunteered)	4
DK	3
RF	2

Q.27 Discriminating against someone because of the color of their skin.

[morally wrong or NOT morally wrong]

Morally wrong	92
Not morally wrong	7
Depends (volunteered)	0
DK	1
RF	1

Q.28 Discriminating against people because they are gay or lesbian.

[morally wrong or NOT morally wrong]

Morally wrong	81
Not morally wrong	12
Depends (volunteered)	2
DK	2
RF	2

Q.29 Just a few more general questions. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Tom Corbett is doing as governor of Pennsylvania?

Approve	30
Disapprove	44
Depends (volunteered)	8
DK	17
RF	2

Q.30 You may be aware that later this year Pennsylvania will elect a governor. If the election was held today and Tom Corbett was the Republican Party's candidate, would you be more likely to vote for Tom Corbett or the Democratic Party's candidate?

Corbett	31
Democratic candidate	49
DK	19
RF	1

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.

Q.31 Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, Democrat or independent?

Republican	35
Democrat	38
Independent	25
Other (volunteered)	2
DK	1
RF	1

Q.32 Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or the Democratic Party?

Republican	38
Democratic	33
Neither	21
DK	8
RF	0

Q.33 Generally speaking, would you consider yourself to be a liberal, conservative, libertarian, moderate, or have you not thought much about this?

Liberal	18
Conservative	27
Moderate	19
Libertarian	4
Not thought about this	29
DK	2
RF	1

Q.34 What is your age?

18-28 years old	16
29-38 years old	13
39-48 years old	17
49-58 years old	20
59-68 years old	16
68 years or older	18

Q.35 What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Less than high school	1
High school	31
Some college/associates degree	24
Four year degree	24
Graduate degree	18
DK	1
RF	1

Q.36 What is your religious affiliation?

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Q.37 What is your marital status?

Single	24
Married	63
Domestic partnership	1
Divorced	6
Widowed	6
Other	0
DK	0
RF	0

Q.38 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	13
\$30,000-\$50,000	20
\$50,000-\$100,000	28
\$100,000-\$150,000	16
Greater than \$150,000	9
DK	4
RF	10

Q.39 What is your race or ethnicity? [read if necessary]

White/Caucasian	86
Non-white	12
DK	0
RF	3

Q.40 Region

Northwest	14
Northeast	14
Southwest	25
Southeast	21
Central	26

Q.41 Gender [Do NOT read unless necessary]

Male	48
Female	52

## Cross Tabulations

Percentages in cross tabulation tables are based on subsamples. The margin of error for subsamples is considerably higher than for the sample as a whole.

Q.1 Do you **favor** or **oppose** making the use of marijuana legal in Pennsylvania for adults?

		Favor	Oppose	Depends	Unsure	Refused
<b>All</b>		<b>48</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>
Party						
	Democratic Party	58	31	7	5	0
	Republican Party	31	61	6	2	1
	Independent	56	31	8	5	0
Ideology						
	Liberal	73	17	4	6	0
	Conservative	25	66	6	2	1
	Libertarian	65	15	10	10	0
	Moderate	44	40	12	4	0
	Not Thought About	53	40	4	3	0
Age						
	18-28 yrs.	66	31	0	3	0
	29-38 yrs.	70	25	0	5	0
	39-48 yrs.	42	43	8	6	1
	49-58 yrs.	45	42	11	2	0
	59-68 yrs.	42	48	9	1	0
	68 yrs. or older	26	59	10	5	0
Education Completed						
	Less than high school					
	High school	43	47	7	3	0
	Some college/associates/technical	48	43	7	3	0
	College	52	36	6	7	0
	Graduate degree	51	40	4	3	1
	68 yrs. or older					
Region						
	Northwest	27	60	6	5	2
	Northeast	54	35	3	8	0
	Southwest	49	38	9	4	0
	Southeast	56	35	8	1	0
	Central	48	43	7	2	0

Q.2 Do you **favor** or **oppose** making it legal for patients to use marijuana that was prescribed by a doctor for medicinal purposes?

		Favor	Oppose	Depends	Unsure	Refused
<b>All</b>		<b>85</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
Party						
	Democratic Party	92	5	1	2	0
	Republican Party	75	19	5	2	0
	Independent	89	5	3	3	0
Ideology						
	Liberal	92	6	2	0	0
	Conservative	72	18	5	5	0
	Libertarian	90	11	0	0	0
	Moderate	94	5	0	1	0
	Not Thought About	87	9	4	1	0
Age						
	18-28 yrs.	89	11	0	0	0
	29-38 yrs.	88	6	3	3	0
	39-48 yrs.	79	14	4	4	0
	49-58 yrs.	87	10	2	1	0
	59-68 yrs.	86	7	5	3	0
	68 yrs. or older	78	13	4	6	0
Education Completed						
	Less than high school					
	High school	82	14	1	3	0
	Some college/associates/technical	86	7	3	3	0
	College	87	7	5	2	0
	Graduate degree	87	11	2	0	0
	68 yrs. or older					
Region						
	Northwest	86	13	2	0	0
	Northeast	89	6	0	5	0
	Southwest	86	10	2	3	0
	Southeast	88	8	3	1	0
	Central	78	13	6	3	0



Q.3 In some states the use of marijuana has been **decriminalized**. This means that while using marijuana is still illegal, people who are found to be in possession of marijuana are given a citation rather than being arrested and going to jail.

Do you **favor** or **oppose** decriminalizing the use of marijuana in Pennsylvania?

		Favor	Oppose	Depends	Unsure	Refused
<b>All</b>		<b>59</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Party						
	Democratic Party	70	25	4	1	0
	Republican Party	43	48	5	3	1
	Independent	66	28	5	2	0
Ideology						
	Liberal	80	16	3	1	0
	Conservative	32	57	7	4	0
	Libertarian	90	11	0	0	0
	Moderate	72	19	5	2	1
	Not Thought About	57	38	2	1	0
Age						
	18-28 yrs.	73	25	3	0	0
	29-38 yrs.	64	27	3	3	3
	39-48 yrs.	60	40	0	0	0
	49-58 yrs.	59	31	7	2	0
	59-68 yrs.	54	36	9	1	0
	68 yrs. or older	44	46	6	3	1
Education Completed						
	Less than high school					
	High school	51	43	3	1	0
	Some college/associates/technical	59	32	8	1	0
	College	62	30	3	6	0
	Graduate degree	67	28	5	0	0
	68 yrs. or older					
Region						
	Northwest	51	44	2	3	0
	Northeast	56	39	3	1	0
	Southwest	62	31	4	3	0
	Southeast	68	26	5	1	0
	Central	57	34	5	3	1

## **Methodology**

This report summarizes the results of a survey of registered voters in Pennsylvania, which was conducted between Monday, February 17 and Wednesday, February 26, 2014. 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 generated by CATI software or manually dialed and relied on a list of randomly selected registered voters Pennsylvania obtained from Votermapping.com.

A total of 495 individuals were interviewed. For a sample size of 495, there is a 95 percent probability that the results are within plus or minus 4.4 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](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, mornings and on Saturday afternoons. To ensure a high rate of cooperation, interviewers received training on conversion techniques that are consistent with research ethics as identified by the Mercyhurst University Institutional Review Board.

### **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 gender and age. 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](http://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. 38<sup>th</sup> Street, Erie, PA, 16546, (814) 824-2154, [jmorris@mercyhurst.edu](mailto:jmorris@mercyhurst.edu).

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