



Survey Research Center

Report for the Idaho Public Policy Survey Group

June 1995

IDAHO PUBLIC POLICY SURVEY

Number Six

David F. Scudder

Michael J. Willmorth



1995 Idaho Public Policy Survey Group Participants:

**Idaho Commission on the Arts
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Idaho State Council on Developmental Disabilities
Andrus Center for Public Policy
BSU Department of Political Science
BSU Department of Sociology
BSU Public Affairs Program
BSU School of Social Work
BSU College of Business, Office of the Dean
BSU College of Education, Office of the Dean
BSU College of Social Sciences and Public Affairs, Office of the Dean**

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The research presented in this monograph was supported by the 1995 participants of the Idaho Public Policy Survey Group.

*Survey Research Center
College of Social Sciences and Public Affairs
Boise State University*

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The Idaho State Board of Education has designated public affairs as a primary emphasis area for Boise State University. One of the ways that BSU is developing this mission is by conducting timely, high-quality research that can assist Idaho citizens and policy makers to deepen their understanding of the needs and concerns of Idahoans and to further their efforts to come to grips with the key issues confronting Idaho. The Idaho Public Policy Survey is an annual project in the College of Social Sciences and Public Affairs at Boise State University. It is designed to examine public opinion on issues that are the subject of current debate among Idahoans and civic leaders.

BACKGROUND

This monograph presents the results from the sixth annual Idaho Public Policy Survey. As in the past, the research presented here builds on the past surveys by asking many of the same questions that were asked in previous years.

This year, however, marks a major change in the direction of the Idaho Public Policy Survey. In order to further develop its public affairs mission, the university has sought to develop a collaborative relationship with the community. To expand public participation in developing the survey questions, the Survey Research Center invited the public to form the **Idaho Public Policy Survey Group (IPPSG)**. The IPPSG is a consortium of all interested state and local government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector.

The purpose of the IPPSG is to provide a mechanism whereby community organizations can sponsor individual questions and collectively fund surveys that otherwise would not be possible. The survey results can meet the individual needs of the participants for less cost and far greater public impact than if any single participant attempted to conduct a survey on its own. The IPPSG also provides a forum in which interested organizations can have a direct input into how the questions are asked. In addition, the participants are helping to provide an important public service by sponsoring questions that will help inform all Idahoans.

Planning for this year's survey began in July 1994 when informational letters were sent to approximately 580 Idaho organizations. Between August and December 1994 several public meetings were held to plan the organization of the IPPSG and the survey. The first year of the IPPSG was slow to come together. The concept of a consortium of individual agencies and organizations bannng together to conduct public policy research that none could effectively conduct alone was new to all. Confusion reigned in the early meetings and conversations. It is expected that once more people become familiar with the concept and the organization, the process can be concluded much more expeditiously.

It is also expected that the participants for each survey will vary, perhaps considerably, depending on the needs and interests of potential participants. The Survey Research Center is prepared to conduct as many as four separate surveys each year in order to accommodate the needs, interests, and preferred timing of potential participants.

The Survey Research Center at Boise State University deeply appreciates the efforts and the patience of the 1995 participants of the Idaho Public Policy Survey Group:

Idaho Commission on the Arts
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Idaho State Council on Developmental Disabilities
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BSU College of Business, Office of the Dean
BSU College of Education, Office of the Dean
BSU College of Social Sciences and Public Affairs, Office of the Dean

METHODOLOGY

Random digit dialing telephone survey methods were used to conduct this survey. The advantages of the random digit dialing telephone survey methodology are that it is quite expeditious, it is affordable under optimum conditions, it includes the total population with the exception of the increasingly small proportion of households without telephones, and it is statistically precise. Although members of minority groups are less likely to have a telephone than others, the degree of undercoverage of minorities is less than in any other method considered practical for a statewide survey with high statistical validity. In order to minimize bias in the sample resulting from the known greater likelihood of certain sorts of people to answer phones in households (for example, women and older persons), interviewers asked for the person in the household 18 or older with the most recent birthday.

With five-point rating scale measures¹ like those predominantly used in this survey, 600 completed interviews are needed to produce statewide confidence intervals of approximately plus or minus three to four percent for the mean, with the most extreme being plus or minus four to five percent. The Center completed 647 interviews. Of course, the confidence intervals will be larger (less accurate) for subsets of the state population, such as regions or specific types of Idahoans, and for estimates of the influence of demographic factors on opinions.

¹Values for these five-point scales range from, for example, strongly agree to strongly disagree, with the third or middle value used to record such responses as "unsure," "indifferent," "don't care," and "don't know."

The Center purchases random digit dialing samples from the firm Survey Sampling Inc. (SSI), which provides well-documented, credible samples that have successfully withstood court challenges. The samples are stratified by telephone exchange within counties and region to ensure that every Idaho household with a telephone had a chance to participate.

PRESENTATION OF SURVEY RESULTS

The questions included on this year's survey represent largely the interests and concerns of the participants. The Survey Research Center edited the draft questions provided by the participants to produce professional telephone survey questions in a consistent format. In addition, the Center retained the core questions that have been asked on the Public Policy Survey over the last five years. The Center also included a standard set of demographic questions that are asked routinely on most general population surveys. The survey was conducted in late February and early March 1995.

The demographic information collected in the survey includes respondent's age, gender, education level, racial/ethnic group, income, length of residency in Idaho, and county of residence. The county of residency was used to code the respondent's region, one of six into which the state is commonly divided for purposes of service delivery and public policy planning (Figure 1-1).

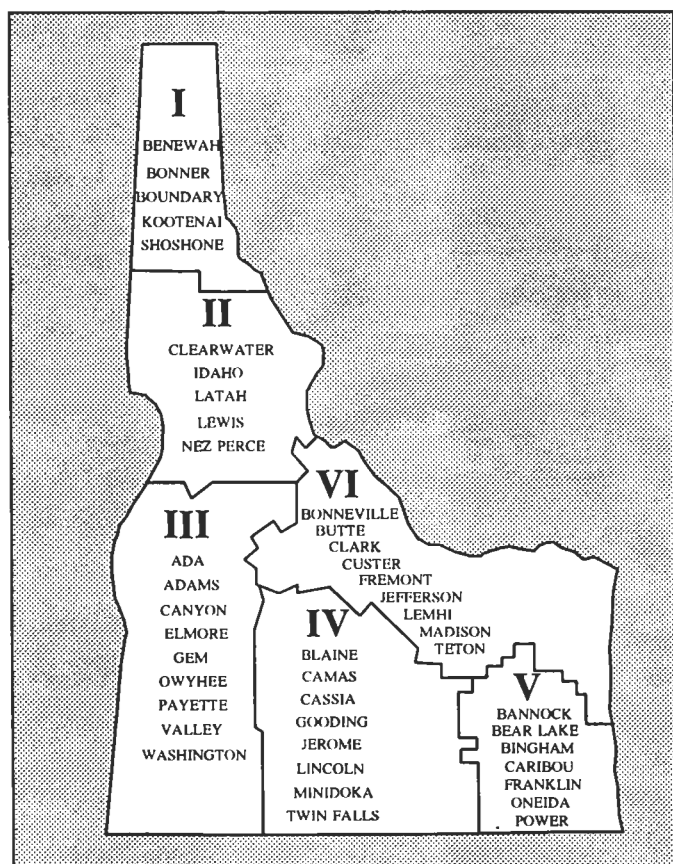


FIGURE 1-1: *Regions of Idaho*

The ordering of questions in this report does not necessarily reflect the order in which they were asked in the survey. Instead, they are grouped thematically to present a variety of perspectives on several core issues. The statewide distributions of responses are given in graphs, together with information on number of respondents, missing data, and confidence intervals. Where important differences among demographic groupings exist, they are noted following the statewide data.

The results of the survey are presented in the remaining chapters of this report. Chapter 2 shows the responses of those surveyed to very general questions about the quality of life in Idaho. Chapter 3 narrows the focus to respondent's opinions in specific areas of government and public spending. Chapter 4 broadens out again to examine attitudes on a variety of current public policy issues.

CHAPTER 2: QUALITY OF LIFE IN IDAHO

As in Public Policy Surveys from previous years, respondents were asked three questions relating to an overall assessment of their quality of life as residents of Idaho. The questions inquired about the overall quality of life in Idaho, whether the respondent expected the 1990s to be a decade when life gets easier or more difficult, and about the most important problems facing Idaho. This chapter presents the results of these questions.

Nearly nine out of ten survey respondents said they were satisfied with their overall quality of life as Idaho residents (Figure 2-1).

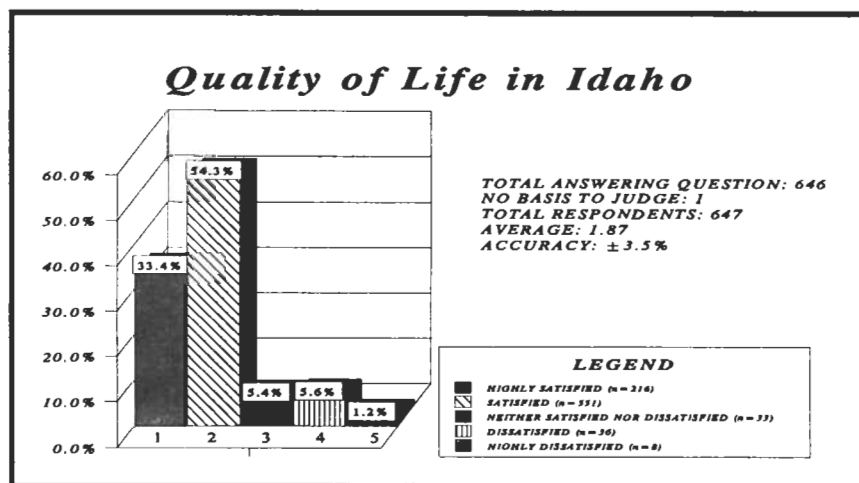


FIGURE 2-1: *How Satisfied Are You about Your Overall Quality of Life as a Resident of Idaho?*

- The central and eastern parts of the state have the highest percentages of people who are generally satisfied with the quality of life in Idaho, but the southwestern and south central areas have the highest percentages of respondents who are *highly* satisfied. Panhandle residents are more likely than other Idahoans to be dissatisfied with their quality of life.
- Idahoans with higher levels of formal education were generally more satisfied than others with their quality of life in the state. Those with vocational schooling are dissatisfied with their quality of life at a rate twice that of Idahoans with other educational levels.
- Survey respondent's with Republican political orientations were more likely than political independents, who in turn were more likely than Democrats, to say they are satisfied with their quality of life in Idaho.
- With increasing income level, Idahoans also had higher levels of satisfaction with their quality of life.

Figure 2-2 shows that more Idahoans expect the 1990s to be a decade when life gets more difficult for them personally than expect it should get easier.

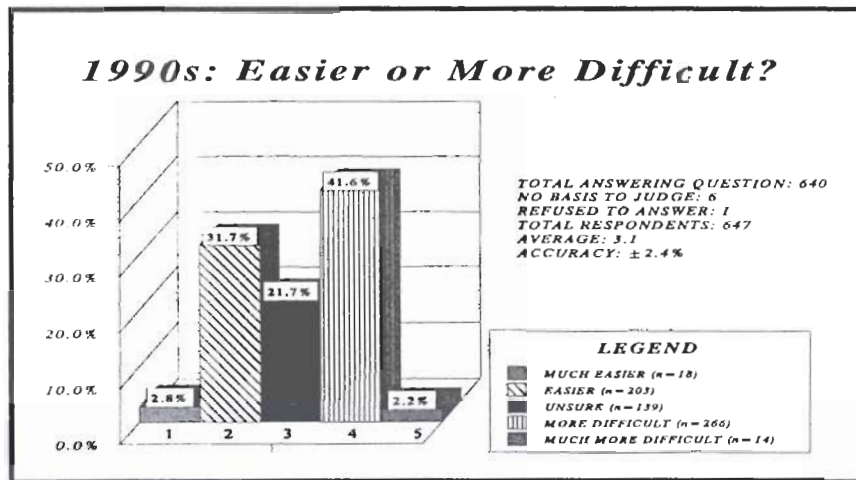


FIGURE 2-2: Do You Expect the 1990s to Be a Decade When Life Gets Easier or More Difficult for You Personally?

- Idahoans with college educations gave the highest rate of optimistic answers, while those with less than a high school education had the lowest rate.
- Survey respondents with higher income levels were more likely than other Idahoans to expect the 1990s to be a decade when life gets easier.

Numerous areas were given as the most important problem facing Idaho, as seen in Figure 2-3. The greatest numbers of Idahoans surveyed cited the rapid pace of growth and education.

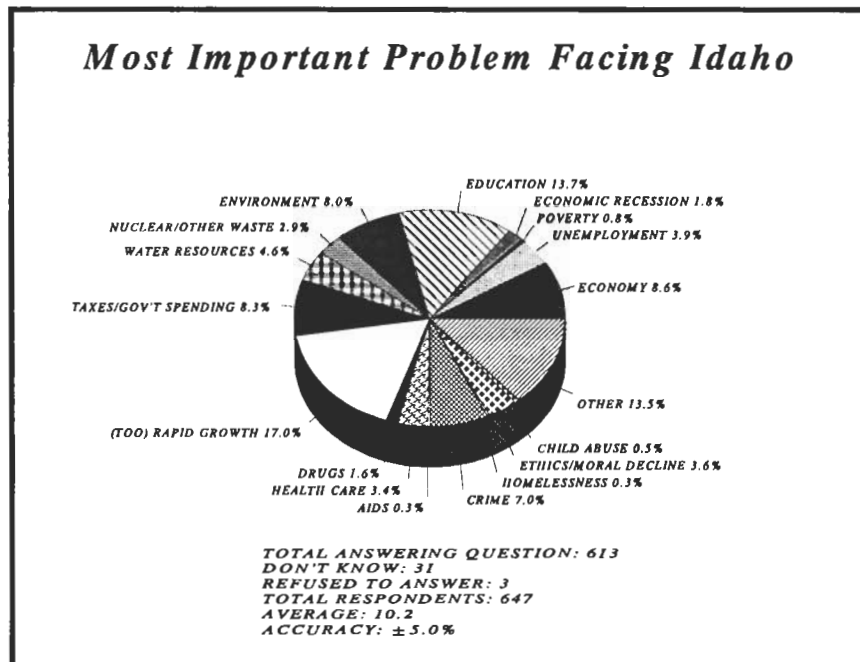


FIGURE 2-3: *What is the Single Most Important Problem Facing Idaho Today?*

- Panhandle residents gave the highest rates citing taxes and government spending as the most important problem facing Idaho. Idahoans in the north-central region were most concerned about the environment, while those in southwestern Idaho pointed to the rapid pace of growth. Idahoans in the eastern half of the state considered education to be the most pressing problem.
- Women were more likely than men to consider education the most important problem facing Idaho, while men were the most likely to cite the rapid pace of growth.
- Idahoans with primary school educations name unemployment and crime the most frequently as the most important problems facing Idaho. Taxes and government spending were of greatest concern to respondents with vocational education, while Idahoans with college educations were the most likely to say the rapid pace of growth. Survey respondents with graduate school educations were the most concerned about education.
- Survey respondents claiming a Republican political orientation were the most likely to consider the rapid pace of growth to be the most important problem facing Idaho, while those with other political orientations named education the most frequently.
- Adults under 35 years of age were the most concerned about education, while those between 35 and 59 cited the rapid pace of growth the most frequently. Respondents 60 or older gave the highest rate indicating taxes and government spending to be the most pressing problems.

CHAPTER 3: GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE AND PUBLIC SPENDING

As in the last Idaho Policy Survey, this year's study asked for views on several areas of government activity. The first set of questions probed for respondents' assessments of the performance of county, state, and federal levels of government. A second series inquired about attitudes toward spending levels in a variety of areas of existing state government programs. The final section of this chapter presents the results of an examination of levels of support for a number of potential programs.

TAXES AND GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

Survey respondents were asked several questions intended to assess their attitudes toward the relative value and performance of local, state, and federal government. In general, the local level was rated most favorably on every dimension, while the federal government uniformly ranked last.

As indicated in Figure 3-1, the highest percentage of those surveyed said they had most trust and confidence in the local level of government. The next most trusted level was the state, followed by none of the levels, and finally the federal government.

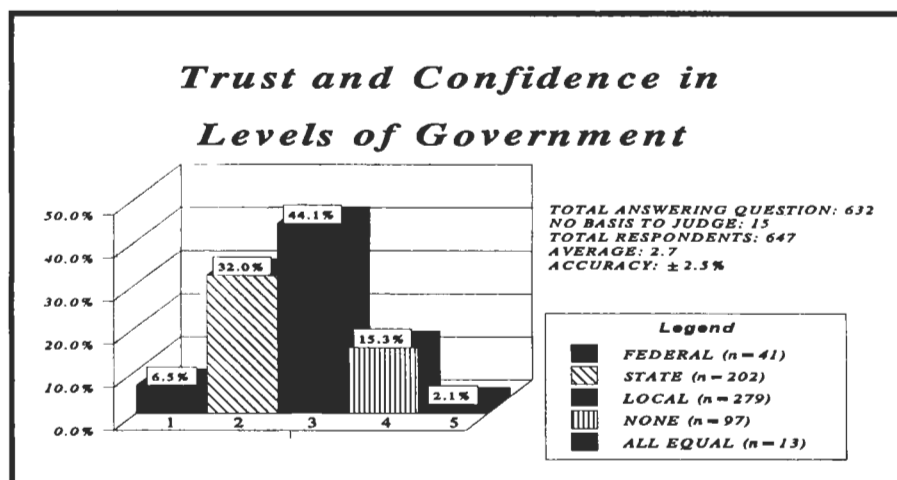


FIGURE 3-1: *In Which Level of Government Do You Have Most Trust and Confidence?*

- Idaho's central mountain region has the highest percentages of respondents who have most trust in state and local government or who feel that all levels are equal in this regard. Those in the north-central and southeastern regions showed the highest levels of trust in the federal government. Panhandle residents gave the smallest percentage of responses trusting local government and the highest rate having no trust at all in any level of government.
- Survey respondents with a Democratic political orientation showed the highest rate of trust and confidence the in federal government, while those identifying with Republicans were the most

likely to place theirs in the state and local levels. Political independents generally gave responses intermediate to those of these two groups.

- Minority group members were the most likely to have greatest trust and confidence in the federal government, while White/non-Hispanic respondents said this about state and local government the most frequently.
- Idahoans with residency of less than 10 years were the most likely to say they have greatest trust and confidence in the federal government or to equally trust all levels of government. Those in the state between 10 and 24 years trusted no level of government at all at the highest rate. Survey respondents with 25 to 44 years residency were the most likely to indicate local government, while those with 45 or more years chose the state level the most frequently.

About half of all Idahoans surveyed chose the local level of government as that which best responds to their needs, as reflected in Figure 3-2. State government was the next most frequently indicated, with the federal government chosen by fewer than one in ten Idahoans.

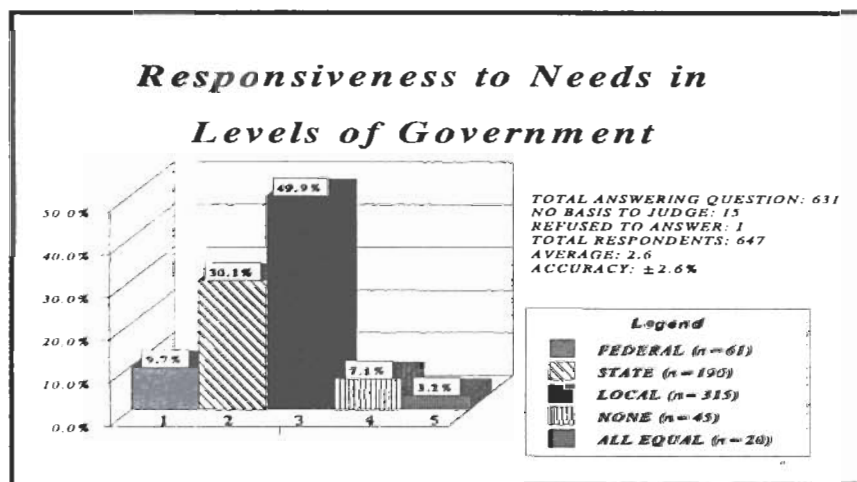


FIGURE 3-2: Which Government Level Best Responds to Your Needs?

- Idahoans with elementary school educations gave the highest rates favoring the federal and state levels of government as well as indicating that all levels of government are equally responsive their needs. Survey respondents with vocational educations were the most likely to say that no level of government best serves their needs, while those with college educations were the most likely to indicate local government.
- Survey respondents identifying with Democrats were the most likely to say that the federal government best responds to their needs, while those with Republican political orientations were the most likely to say this about state and local government. Political independents generally gave responses intermediate to those of these two groups.

- The oldest Idahoans (60 and over) were more than twice as likely as any other age group to name the federal government as the level which best responds to their needs. Adults under 35 and those between 45 and 59 opted for the state level the most frequently, while those between 35 and 44 were the most likely to favor the local level.
- Lower-income Idahoans were the most likely to say that the federal government best responds to their needs, those in the highest income group (\$70,000 and over) to indicate the state level, and those with intermediate income levels to favor local government.

Survey respondents most frequently selected the local level of government as the one from which they receive the most for their taxes (Figure 3-3). State government was ranked second, and the federal level was named by fewer than one in six respondents.

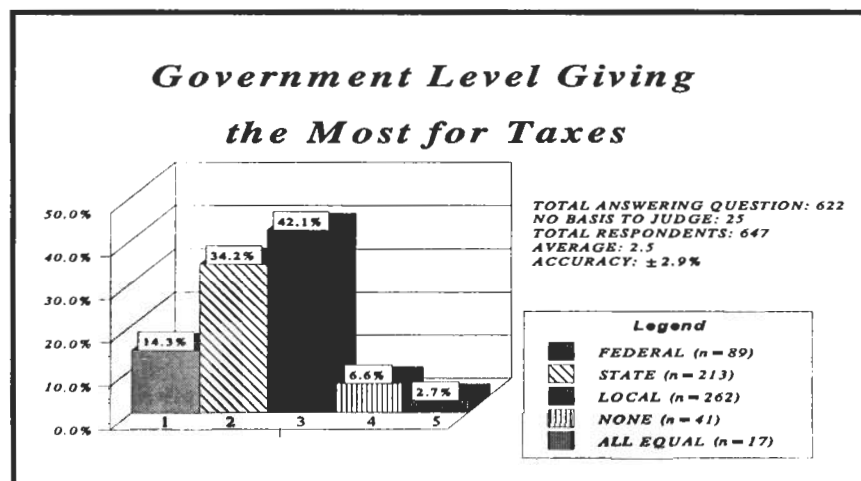


FIGURE 3-3: *From Which Level of Government Do You Get the Most for Your Taxes?*

- Idahoans in both the north-central and southeastern regions of the state were the most likely to value federal taxes the most highly, while those in the southwestern and central mountain areas chose state taxes the most frequently. This pattern does not appear to be clearly related to the concentrations of Democrats or Republicans in these regions.
- Persons with elementary educations showed the highest rates valuing the federal government no level of government at all, and all government levels equally. Idahoans with higher level educations were the most likely to say state and local taxes give the best return.
- Survey respondents identifying with Democrats were the most likely to say that the federal and state levels of government gives them the most for their taxes, while those with Republican orientations said this about local government the most frequently.
- Idahoans in the lowest income group were the most likely to say they get the most for their taxes from the federal government. Those earning in the range of \$30,000 to \$40,000 named

the state level at the highest rate, and about half of those in the highest income group (\$50,000 and over) opted for the local level.

As shown in Figure 3-4, survey respondents most frequently cited the federal income tax as the least fair, but this percentage was closely followed by the rate indicating local property tax. State sales and income taxes were each selected by fewer than one in ten respondents.

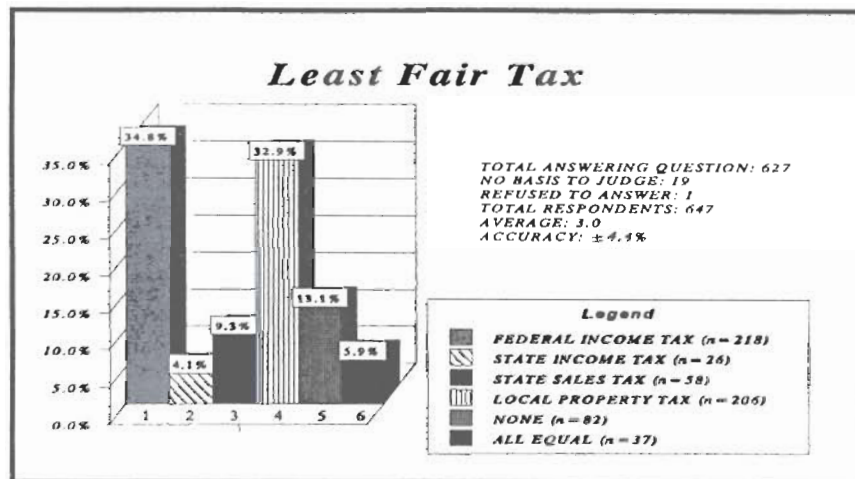


FIGURE 3-4: Which Do You Think Is the Least Fair Tax?

- Idahoans with elementary school educations gave the highest percentages citing state income tax, state sales tax, and none of the named taxes as the least fair. Survey respondents with high school educations were the most likely to choose local property tax, while those with college education most frequently named the federal income tax.
- Survey respondents with Democratic political orientations were the most likely to rank all the named taxes as equally fair or equally unfair; they were also the most likely to say the state income and sales taxes are least fair. The federal income tax was considered least fair the most frequently by political independents.
- White/non-Hispanic Idahoans were the most likely to say that the federal income tax is the least fair, while members of minority groups were the most likely to say this about the state income and sales taxes.
- Residents of Idaho for 10 to 24 years showed the highest percentages considering the federal income and state sales taxes to be the least fair. Idahoans with less than ten years residency were the most likely to select state income tax, while those with at least 45 years cited local property tax the most frequently.
- The youngest adults were the most likely to consider the state sales tax as the least fair or to say that none of the taxes deserve this distinction. Idahoans between 35 and 44 most

frequently cited federal income tax, while respondents 60 or older showed the highest rate nominating state income and local property taxes.

SPENDING LEVELS IN STATE GOVERNMENT PROGRAM AREAS

Figure 3-5 indicates that over half of respondents think that spending on public education (kindergarten through high school) should be increased, while about one-fourth say it should be maintained at the present level.

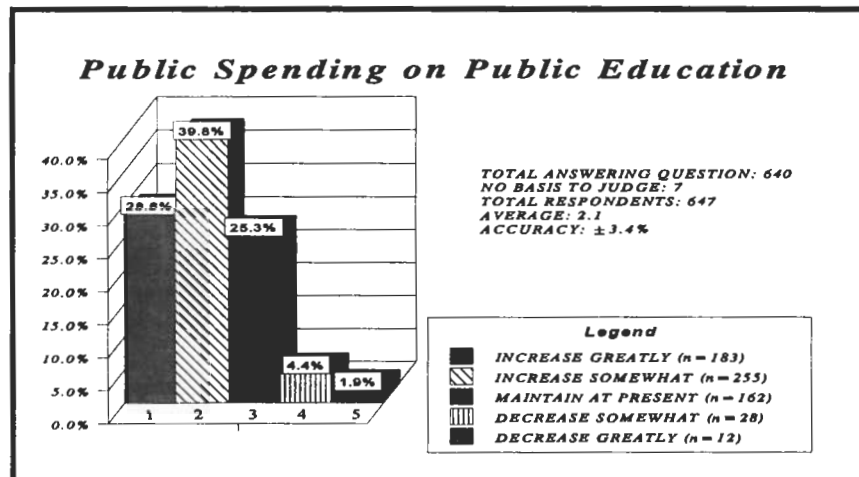


FIGURE 3-5: How Should the Amount Now Being Spent on Public Education Be Changed?

- More Idahoans in the south-central region felt that spending on public education should be increased than in any other part of the state. Survey respondents in the central mountain region were the most likely to say such spending should be decreased.
- Men were more likely than women to say that spending on public education should be maintained at the current level, while women were the most likely to indicate that such spending should be greatly increased.
- Idahoans with elementary school educations were far less likely than those with more schooling to feel that spending on public education should be increased.
- Democratic survey respondents were the most likely to feel that spending on public education should be increased, while those with a Republican political orientation were the least likely. Political independents showed rates intermediate to those of Democrats or Republicans.
- Idahoans with shorter residencies showed higher rates than others favoring an increase in the amount now being spent on public education.

- With increasing age, Idahoans grow less likely to say that the amount now being spent on public education should be increased.

A majority of Idahoans surveyed felt that public spending on higher education (colleges and universities) should be increased (Figure 3-6).

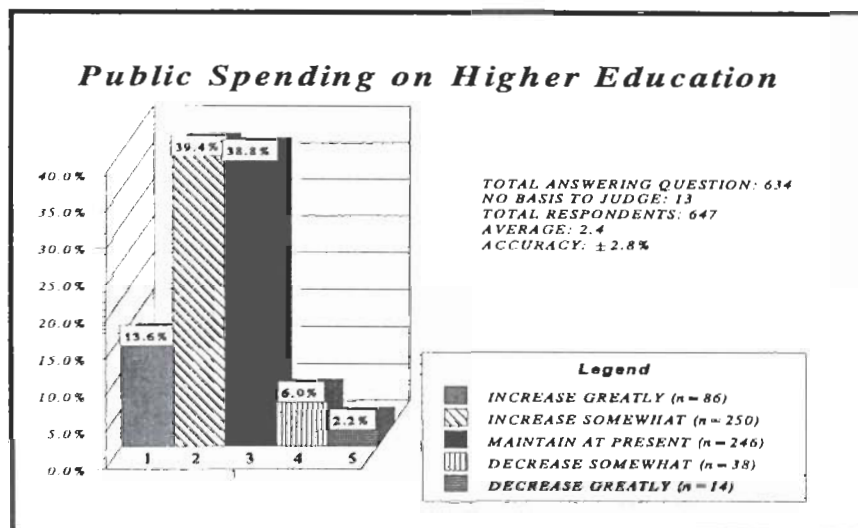


FIGURE 3-6: How Should the Amount Now Being Spent on Higher Education Be Changed?

- Idahoans with Democratic political orientations were the most likely to say that public spending on higher education should be increased; those identifying with Republicans gave the highest rate saying it should be decreased. Political independents gave answers at rates intermediate to those of Democrats and Republicans.
- With increasing age, Idahoans are less likely to say that the amount now being spent on higher education should be increased.

As seen in Figure 3-7, the highest percentage of those surveyed favored maintaining the amount spent on environmental protection at the present level. The percentage of those saying that it should be increased was nearly equal to that indicating it should be decreased.

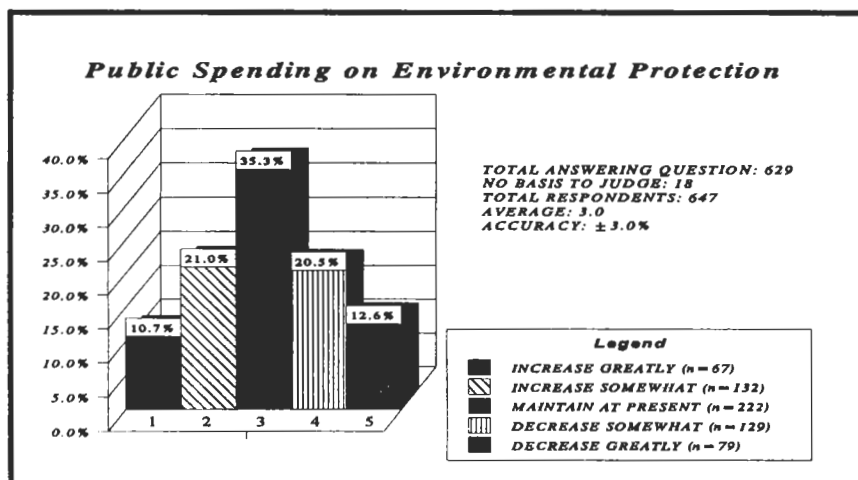


FIGURE 3-7: *How Should the Amount Now Being Spent on Environmental Protection Be Changed?*

- Idahoans with a Democratic political orientation showed the highest percentages favoring an increase in public spending on environmental protection; political independents gave the next highest rate, with Republicans supporting such an increase the least frequently.
- Members of minority groups were much more likely than White/non-Hispanic Idahoans to say that the amount now being spent on environmental protection should be increased.
- Idahoans with fewer years residency tend to be more likely than others to say that the amount now being spent on environmental protection should be increased.
- Younger survey respondents were more likely than other Idahoans to say that the amount now being spent on environmental protection should be increased.

Over half of respondents say public spending on highways, roads, and bridges should be increased, while two in five feel it should be maintained at the present level (Figure 3-8). All types of Idahoans tended to feel the same way on this issue.

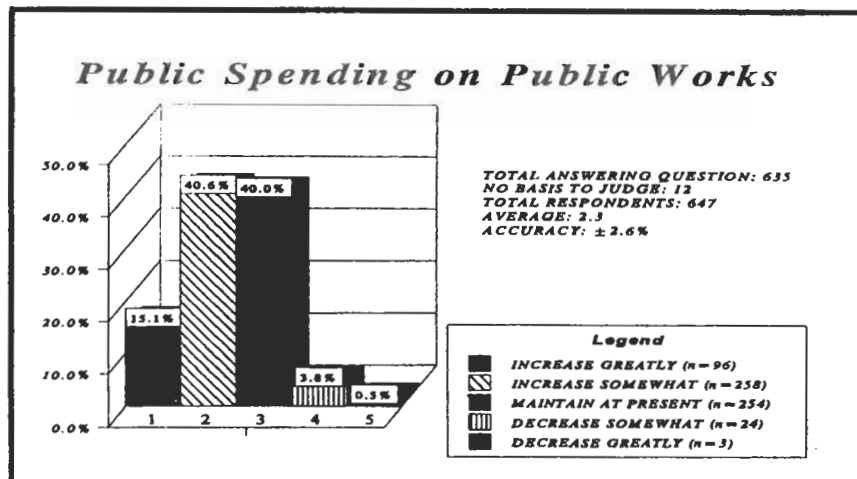


FIGURE 3-8: How Should the Amount Now Being Spent on Highways, Roads, and Bridges Be Changed?

Over half of survey respondents said that public spending on law enforcement should be increased, as shown in Figure 3-9. Different types of Idahoans tended to answer this question the same way.

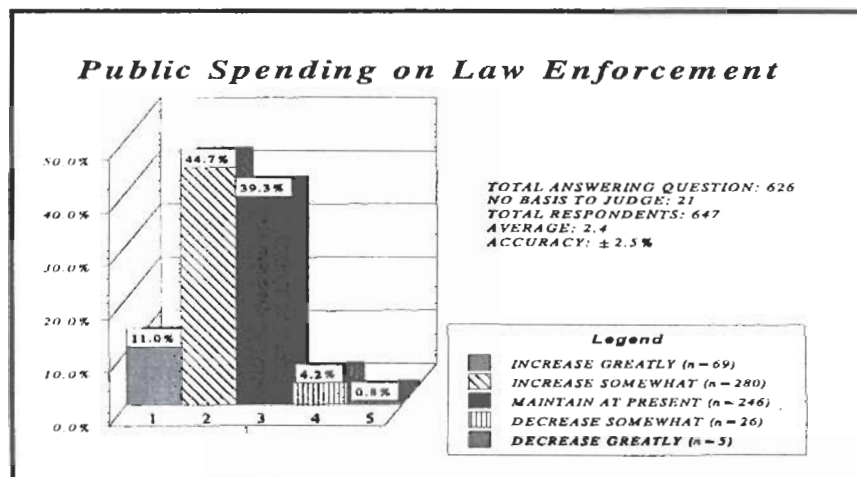


FIGURE 3-9: How Should the Amount Now Being Spent on Law Enforcement Be Changed?

As indicated in Figure 3-10, about two in every five respondents felt that the amount now being spent on health services for the uninsured should be increased. Percentages of those who said such spending should be maintained at the current level were greater than percentages of those who said it should be decreased.

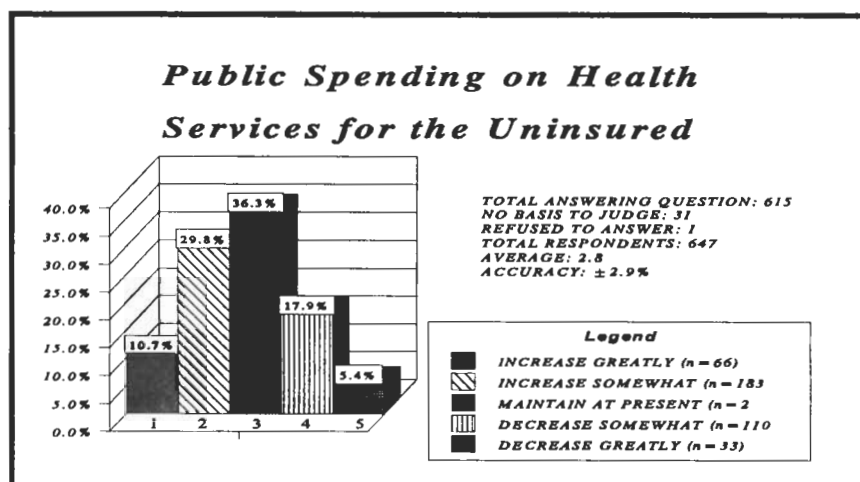


FIGURE 3-10: How Should the Amount Now Being Spent on Health Services to the Uninsured Be Changed?

- Women were more likely than men to say that public spending on health services for the uninsured should be increased.
- Idahoans with Democratic political orientations were the most likely to say that spending on health services for the uninsured should be increased, while those identifying with Republicans said this the least frequently. Political independents gave responses generally intermediate to those of Democrats and Republicans.
- Survey respondents with greater income levels were less likely than other Idahoans to say that the amount now being spent on health services for the uninsured should be increased.

Nearly half of those surveyed said that the amount being spent on economic development should be maintained at the present level, as shown in Figure 3-11.

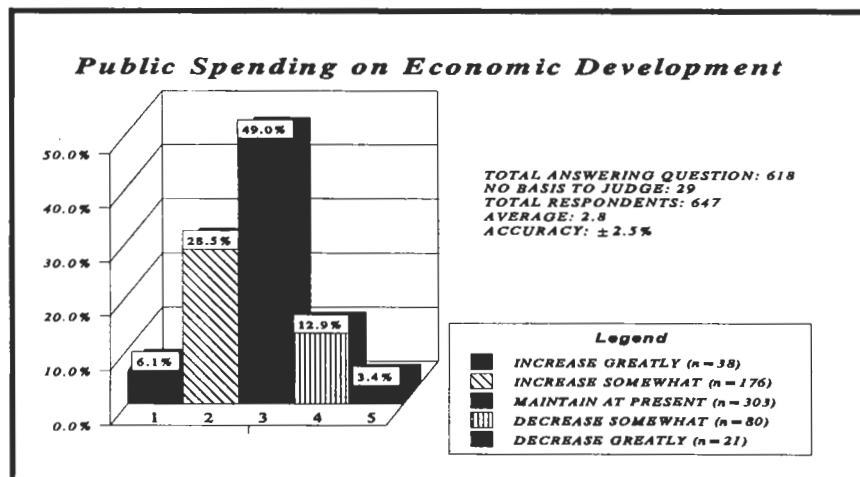


FIGURE 3-11: How Should the Amount Now Being Spent on Economic Development Be Changed?

- Political independents were much more likely than those with other political orientations to say that public spending on economic development should be increased.
- With increasing age, survey respondents were less likely they were to say that the amount now being spent on economic development should be increased.

The greatest percentage of those surveyed indicated that the amount being spent on aid to low-income families should be maintained at the present level, as reflected in Figure 3-12.

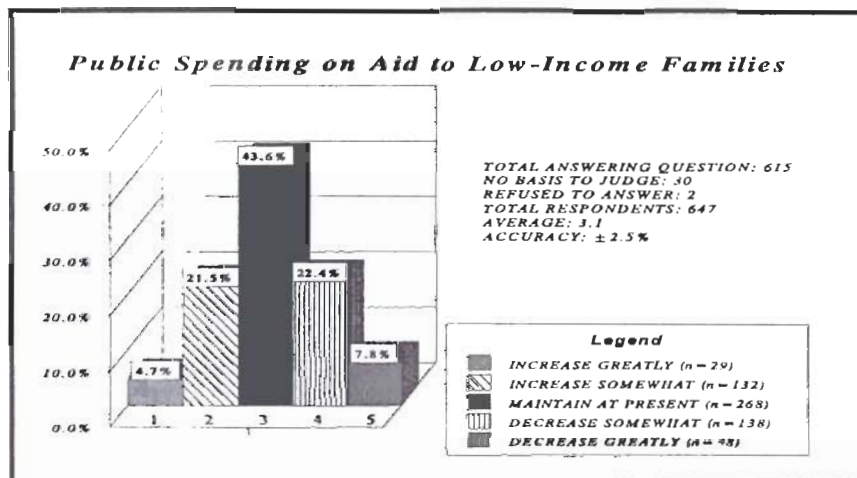


FIGURE 3-12: *How Should the Amount Now Being Spent on Aid to Low-Income Families Be Changed?*

- Idahoans with Republican political orientations were less likely than those identifying with Democrats to say that aid to low-income families should be increased.
- Survey respondents with higher income levels show lower levels of support than other Idahoans for increasing the level of spending on aid to low-income families.

As shown in Figure 3-13, over half of respondents said that public spending on senior citizen programs should be maintained at the present level.

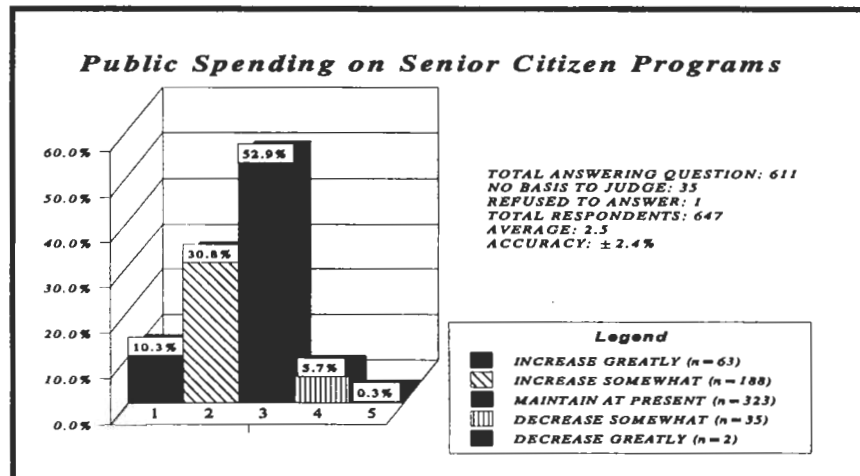


FIGURE 3-13: How Should the Amount Now Being Spent on Senior Citizen Programs Be Changed?

- Idahoans with a Republican political orientation were the less likely than others to say that public spending on senior citizen programs should be increased.
- Survey respondents with the shortest residencies showed the highest percentages saying that the amount now being spent on senior citizen programs should be increased.
- Older Idahoans were less likely than others to say that the amount now being spent on senior citizen programs should be increased.

As shown in Figure 3-14, over half of respondents felt that the amount now being spent on child protective services should be increased, while about two in five said it should be maintained at the current level.

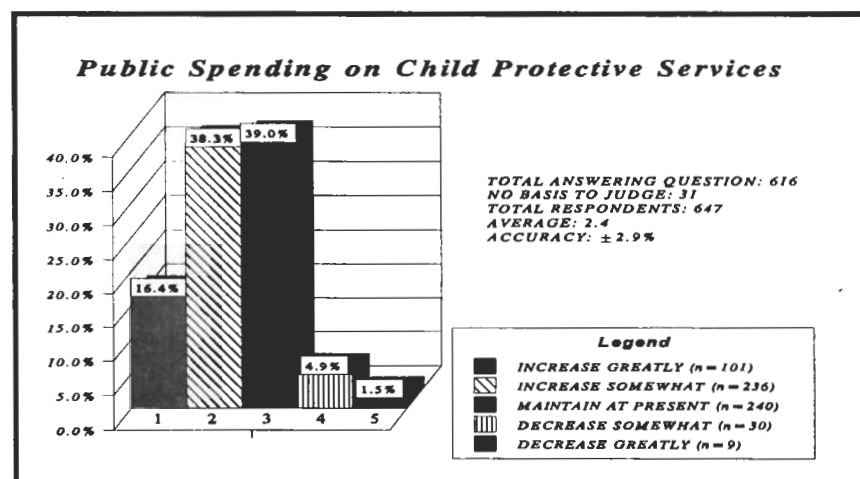


FIGURE 3-14: How Should the Amount Now Being Spent on Child Protective Services Be Changed?

- Women were more likely than men to say that public spending on child protective services should be increased, while men were more likely to favor maintaining the current level of spending.
- Idahoans with Democratic political orientations were more likely than Republicans to say that public spending on child protective services should be increased. Political independents gave responses intermediate to Democrats and Republicans.
- Survey respondents with shorter residencies in Idaho were more likely than others to say that the amount now being spent on child protective services should be increased.
- Younger Idahoans showed higher levels of support than survey respondents for increasing spending on child protective services.
- Idahoans with lower income levels were more likely than others to say that the amount now being spent on child protective services should be increased.

As indicated in Figure 3-15, the largest percentage of those surveyed supported maintaining the current level of spending on jails and prisons, though nearly two in five were in favor of increasing it.

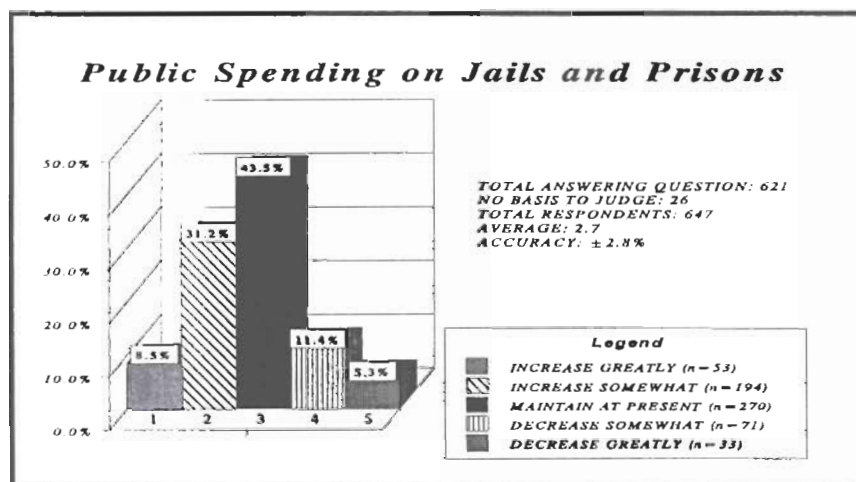


FIGURE 3-15: *How Should the Amount Now Being Spent on Jails and Prisons Be Changed?*

- Idahoans with Republican political orientations were more likely than others to say that public spending on jails and prisons should be increased.
- White/non-Hispanic respondents were the most likely to say that spending on jails and prisons should be increased, while those in minority groups showed the highest percentages saying that such spending should be decreased.
- With increasing age, those surveyed were more likely than other Idahoans to say that the amount being spent on jails and prisons should be increased.

Figure 3-16 shows that nearly two in five Idahoans would grade the quality of the public schools in their county with a "B" or a "C," over three times as many as would give either an "A" or a "D."

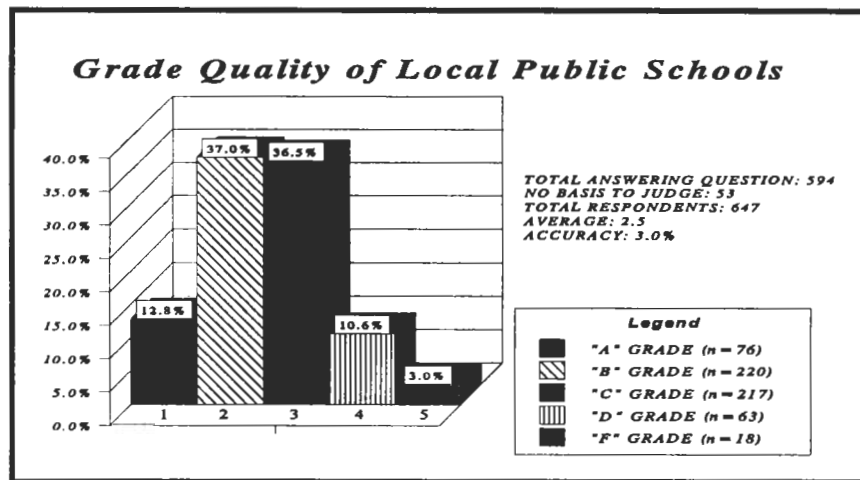


FIGURE 3-16: How Would You Grade the Quality of the Public Schools in Your County?

- Idahoans identifying with Republicans were the most likely to give "A"s and "B"s as assessments of the quality of the public schools in their county. A majority of those with other political orientations gave grades of "C" or lower.
- Survey respondents with the shortest and longest residencies in Idaho were the most likely to give the quality of the public schools in their county a grade of "A" or "B"; Idahoans with intermediate residencies (between 10 and 45 years) were about equally likely to give grades of "C" or "D."

SUGGESTED PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

In addition to their assessments of spending levels for existing state programs, surveyed Idahoans were asked to judge whether certain proposals for new or reformed public assistance programs would be worth public funding or would be good for Idaho.

In presenting the first proposed program, interviewers told respondents that some families in Idaho have children with disabilities and cannot afford to pay all the expenses of supporting the family and keeping the disabled child at home. Figure 3-17 indicates that nearly nine out of ten respondents said they would support the use of public funds to enable such families to care for their children with disabilities at home.

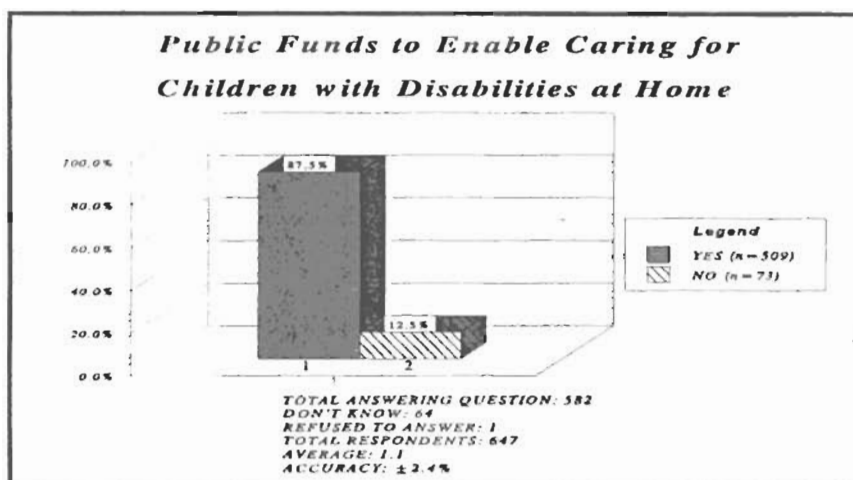


FIGURE 3-17: Would You Support Public Funds to Enable Families to Care for Their Children with Disabilities at Home?

- Survey respondents with lower education levels were more likely than other Idahoans to say they would support this sort of program.
- Idahoans with a Democratic political orientation were the most likely to support this type of program; those identifying with Republicans were the least likely. Political independents gave responses intermediate to those of Democrats and Republicans.

Figure 3-18 gives the responses of those who did not support the program described in the previous question when it was further specified that placement of children with disabilities in group care facilities would cost more than using public funds to assist families with taking care of their children with disabilities at home. Nearly half of those who would not support this sort of program in the previous question said they would support it if reliance on group care facilities would be more expensive. More than one in five still would not support it even if it were less expensive than group care. Idahoans of different types tended to feel the same way on this issue.

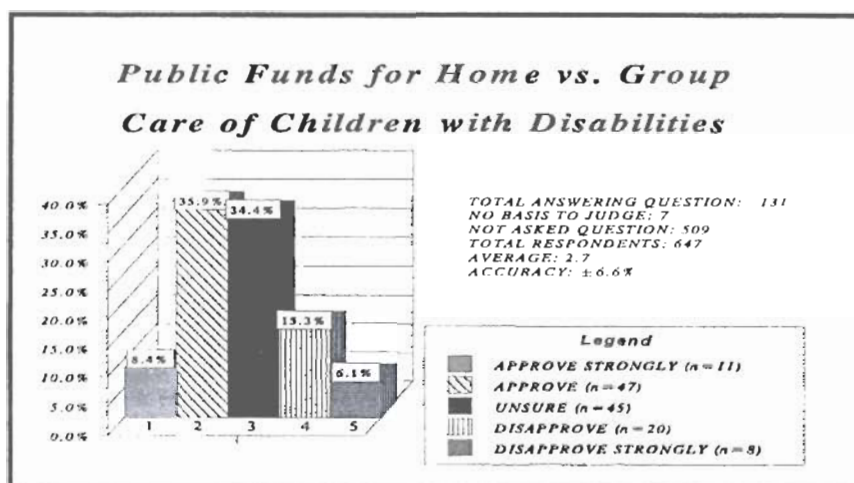


FIGURE 3-18: *If a Group Care Facility Would Cost More, Would You Approve the Use of Public Funds for the Sort of Program Just Described?*

Nearly nine out of ten respondents said that a program of welfare to work which provides job training and education for recipients would be a good one for Idaho, as indicated in Figure 3-19.

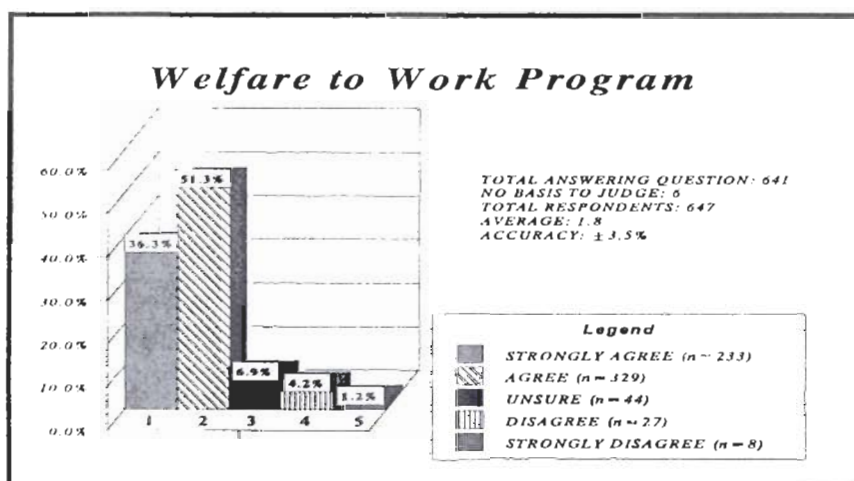


FIGURE 3-19: *Would a Program of Welfare to Work which Provides Job Training and Education for Recipients Be a Good One for Idaho?*

- Women were more likely than men to agree that a welfare to work program would be a good one for Idaho.
- Survey respondents identifying with Republicans gave the lowest percentage of responses agreeing that a welfare to work program would be a good one for Idaho. Over ninety percent of those with other political orientations gave responses in agreement.
- White/non-Hispanic Idahoans were the most likely to agree that a program of welfare to work would be a good one for Idaho.

- As the age of the survey respondent increases to between 45 and 59, percentages agreeing that a program of welfare to work would be a good one for Idaho also increased; the rate goes down again for Idahoans 60 and older.

As shown in Figure 3-20, over seventy percent of survey respondents think that a welfare program that stresses child support and the establishment of paternity in recipient families would be a good one for Idaho.

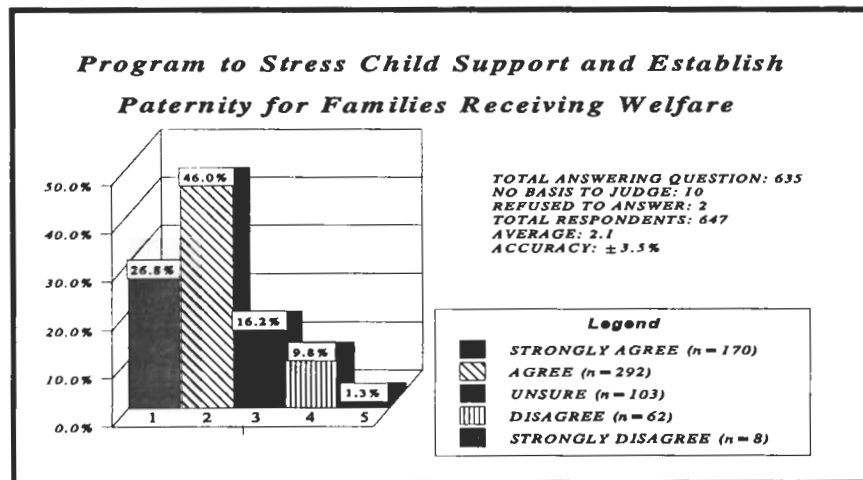


FIGURE 3-20: Would a Program that Stresses Child Support and the Establishment of Paternity in Families Receiving Welfare Be a Good One for Idaho?

- Women were more likely than men to agree that a program that stresses child support and the establishment of paternity in recipient families would be a good one for Idaho.
- Idahoans with elementary school educations agreed that this program would be a good one for Idaho much less frequently than did those with higher educational levels.
- White/non-Hispanic survey respondents were the most likely to strongly agree that a program that stresses child support and the establishment of paternity would be a good one for Idaho.

Over eighty percent of respondents said they agreed that a welfare reform initiative which allows recipients to keep more earnings and benefits (so they would have greater incentive to participate in the work force) would be a good program for Idaho, as reflected in Figure 3-21.

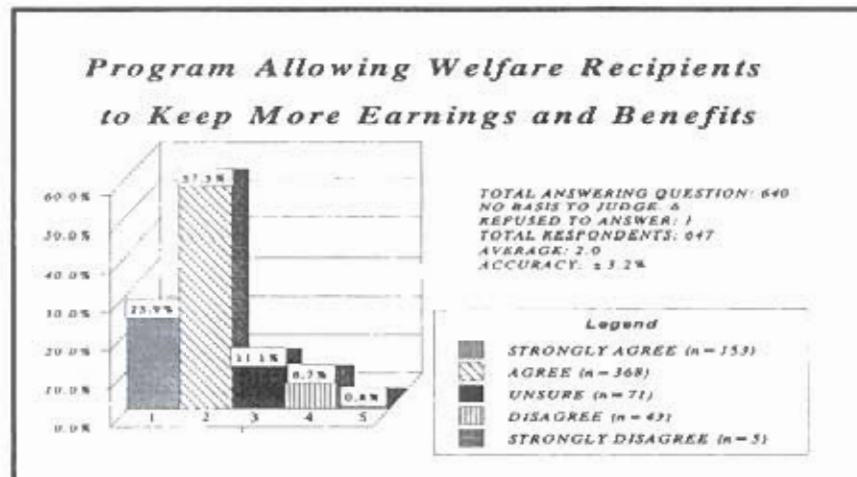


FIGURE 3-21: Would a Reform Initiative which Allows Recipients to Keep More Earnings and Benefits Be a Good Program for Idaho?

- Men were more likely than women to agree that a reform initiative which allows recipients to keep more earnings and benefits would be a good program for Idaho.
- With increasing age, Idahoans tend to be more likely to agree that a reform initiative which allows recipients to keep more earnings and benefits would be a good one for Idaho.

Over three-fourths of respondents said they agreed that a program which stresses private job creation for the poor would be a good one for Idaho, as shown in Figure 3-22.

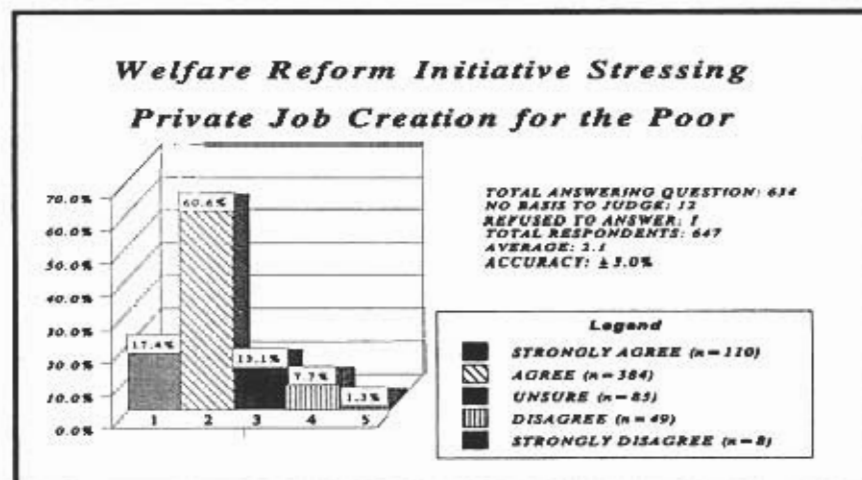


FIGURE 3-22: Would a Welfare Reform Initiative which Stresses Private Job Creation for the Poor Be a Good Program for Idaho?

- Idahoans with Democratic political orientations were the most likely to agree that a program which stresses private job creation for the poor would be a good one for Idaho, while Republicans agreed less frequently. Political independents gave responses intermediate to Democrats and Republicans.

- With increasing age, Idahoans tend to be more likely to agree that a program which stresses private job creation for the poor would be a good one for Idaho.

Over seven out of ten respondents agreed that a program which includes all previously described programs would be a good one for Idaho, as shown in Figure 3-23.

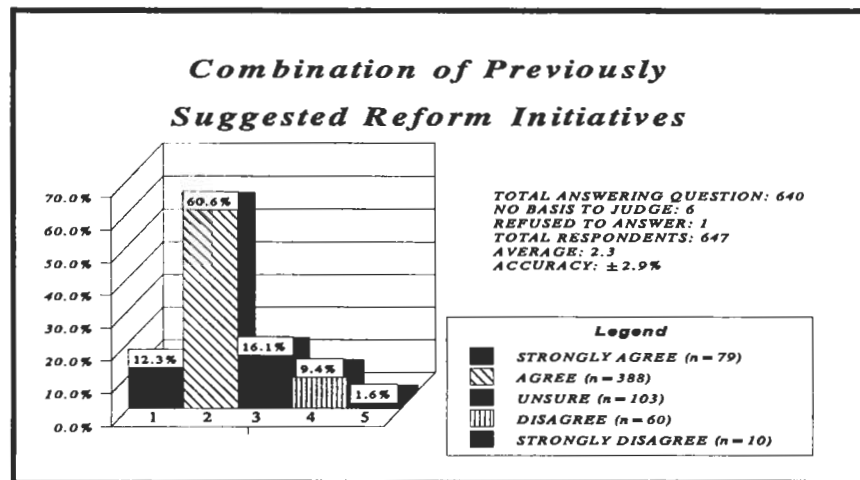


FIGURE 3-23: Would a Reform Initiative which Includes All Previously Mentioned Programs Be a Good One for Idaho?

- Survey respondents with Democratic political orientations were the most likely to agree that a program which includes all previously described programs would be a good one for Idaho, with Republicans agreeing less often. Political independents gave responses intermediate to Democrats and Republicans.
- Idahoans with residencies of 25 to 44 years were the most likely to agree that a program with includes all previously described programs would be a good one for the state.

CHAPTER 4: CURRENT PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES

In addition to questions about government performance and programs, survey respondents were asked to give information and opinions on a variety of issues with public policy import. These included land management, wildlife, the arts, the information superhighway, and the 1994 ICA Initiative, as well as political orientation and voting activity. This chapter presents the information given by respondents to these questions.

LAND MANAGEMENT

As shown in Figure 4-1, nearly half of those surveyed said that, if a choice had to be made between one or the other, emphasis in the development and management of Idaho's natural resources should be placed on protecting the environment rather than on making the economy grow. This compares with about one-third who opted for the latter choice. About one in six respondents thought that emphasis should be placed on both of these goals.

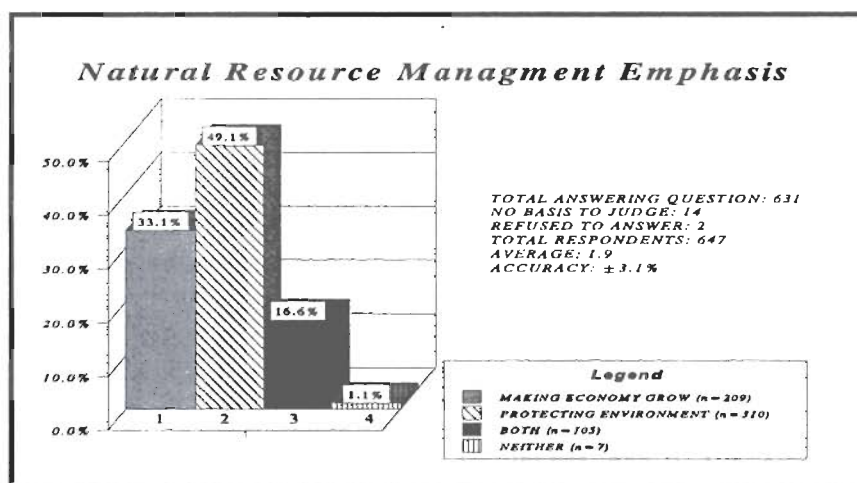


FIGURE 4-1: *On What Should Most Emphasis Be Placed in the Development and Management of Idaho's Natural Resources?*

- Democratic survey respondents showed a greater likelihood of placing most emphasis on protecting the environment, while those with Republican political orientations were the likeliest both to favor emphasizing economic growth as well as to endorse emphasizing both goals. Political independents gave percentages intermediate to those of Democrats and Republicans.
- Idahoans with at least 45 years residency were the likeliest to say that most emphasis in land management should be placed on making the economy grow. At least half of those living in Idaho for fewer years favored placing emphasis on protecting the environment.

- Older Idahoans were more likely than younger ones to say that most emphasis should be placed on making the economy grow or to endorse emphasizing both goals. Younger respondents were likelier to support emphasizing protection of the environment.

Figure 4-2 shows that Idahoans are evenly split in their agreement or disagreement with the idea that environmental protections are so important that they should be continued regardless of the cost.

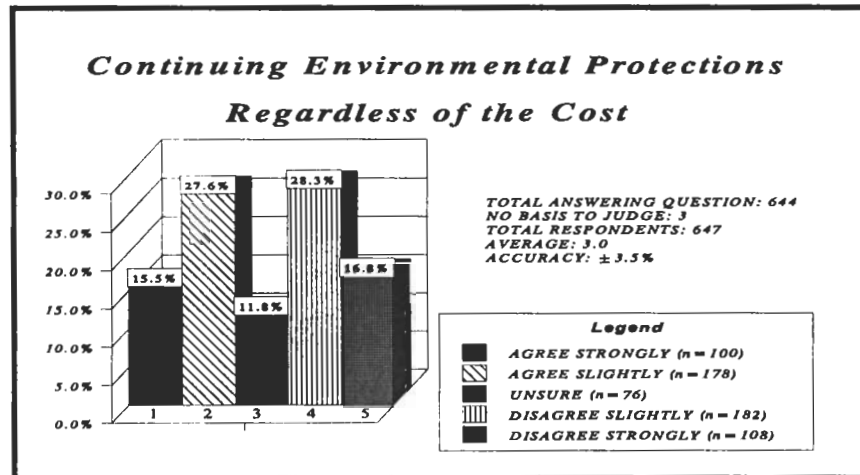


FIGURE 4-2: Should Environmental Protections Be Continued Regardless of the Cost?

- With increasing education level, the percentages of those surveyed who agreed that environmental protections should be continued regardless of the cost also rise.
- Democratic survey respondents were the most likely to agree that environmental protections should be continued regardless of the cost, while those with a Republican political orientation were the likeliest to disagree. Political independents gave responses falling between those of Democrats and Republicans.
- Younger Idahoans were more likely than older survey respondents to agree that environmental protections should be continued regardless of the cost.

The highest percentage of Idahoans considered the level of conflict between groups organized around environmental and recreational issues and local government in their county to be average, as indicated in Figure 4-3. Nearly one-fourth said they thought the level of conflict was high.

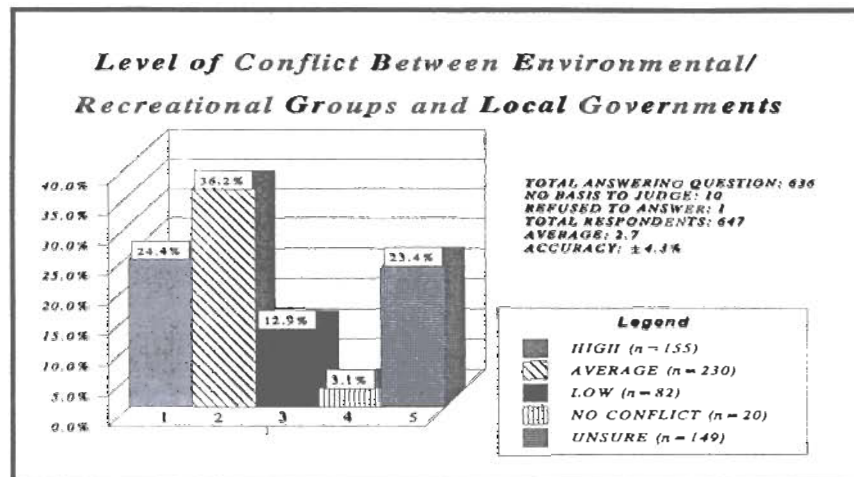


FIGURE 4-3: What Is the Level of Conflict between Groups Organized around Environmental and Recreational Issues and Local Government in Your County?

- Of all Idaho residents, those living in the northern areas of the state were the most likely to say that the level of conflict over environmental and recreational issues in their county is high. Survey respondents in the central mountain region had the highest rate considering the level of local conflict to be low or nonexistent.
- In general, as education level increases, so does the percentage of survey respondents who consider the level of conflict in their county to be average or low. However, those with vocational and college educations break this pattern by being the most likely of all Idahoans to say that the level of conflict over environmental and recreational issues in their county is high.
- Idahoans over 60 years of age were the most likely to say that the level of conflict between groups organized around environmental and recreational issues and local government in their county is average. Younger respondents were the most likely to say it is high.
- Survey respondents with higher income levels were more likely than other Idahoans to judge the level of conflict in their county between groups on this issue to be high.

Figure 4-4 indicates that nearly three-fourths of surveyed Idahoans disagreed with the proposition that federal lands, including national parks, should be privatized.

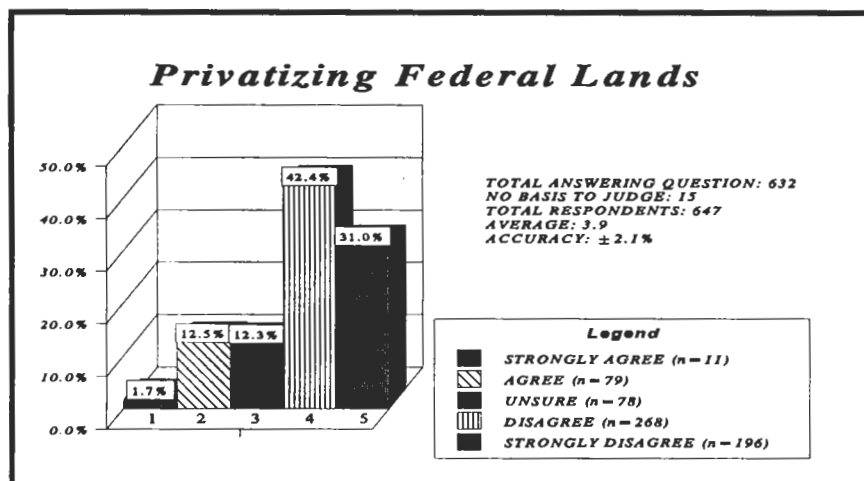


FIGURE 4-4: *Should Federal Lands, including National Parks, Be Privatized?*

- Political independents were the most likely to disagree that federal lands (including national parks) should be privatized. Idahoans with a Republican political orientation were the most likely to agree with this idea.
- Survey respondents with the highest incomes were the most likely to disagree that federal lands should be privatized. Those with middle-level incomes were the most likely to agree.

WILDLIFE

Figure 4-5 shows that over two-thirds of those surveyed agreed that the Endangered Species Act should be amended to require a clear balancing between the costs and benefits of protecting endangered species.

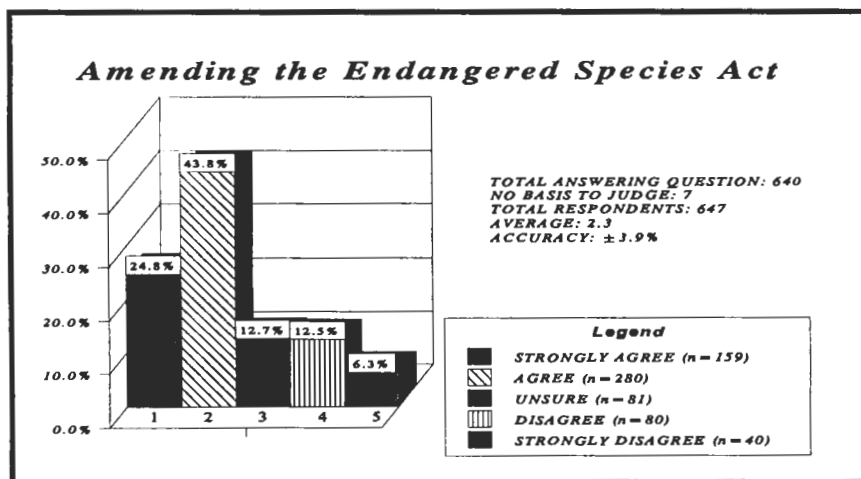


FIGURE 4-5: *Should the Endangered Species Act Be Amended to Balance Costs and Benefits?*

- Survey respondents with a Republican political orientation were far more likely than other Idahoans to agree that the Endangered Species Act should be amended to more clearly balance costs and benefits.
- Idahoans with shorter residencies were more likely than others to agree that the Endangered Species Act should be amended to more clearly balance costs and benefits.
- Younger respondents were more likely than other Idahoans to agree that the Endangered Species Act should be amended to balance costs and benefits.
- Idahoans with higher income levels were likelier than others to agree that the Endangered Species Act needs to be amended to balance costs and benefits.

Over seventy percent of respondents said they were at least to some extent interested in saving Idaho's salmon and steelhead (Figure 4-6). Only one in six said they were not interested.

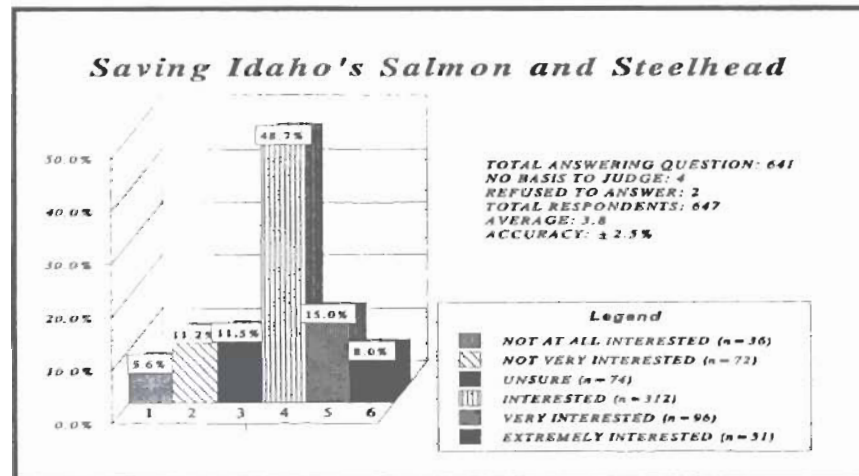


FIGURE 4-6: *Do You Favor Saving Idaho's Salmon and Steelhead?*

- Idahoans with higher education levels showed higher levels of interest than others in saving the state's salmon and steelhead.
- Survey respondents with Republican political orientations were far less likely than other Idahoans to be interested in saving the state's salmon and steelhead.
- Idahoans with shorter residencies were more likely than other survey respondents to be interested in saving Idaho's salmon and steelhead.
- Younger Idahoans were more likely than older respondents to be interested in saving Idaho's salmon and steelhead.

About two-thirds of those surveyed would be willing to spend some amount of money to save the salmon and steelhead in Idaho, as reflected in Figure 4-7. However, less than half would be willing to spend more than \$2.

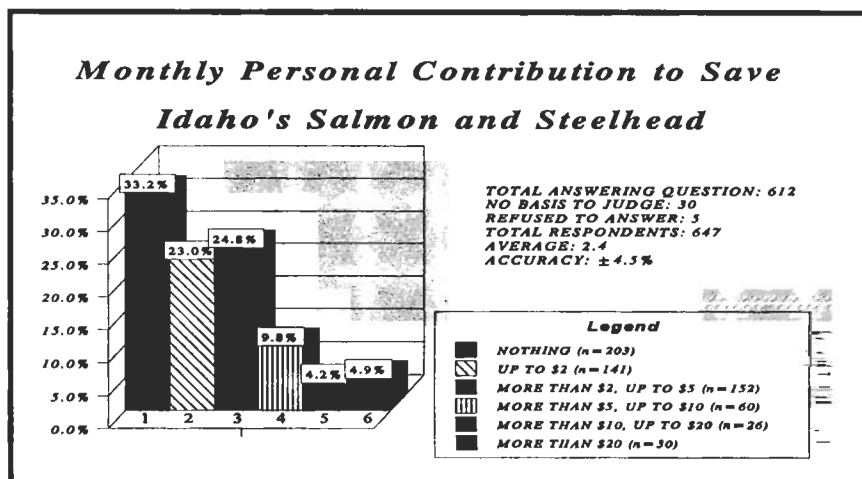


FIGURE 4-7: How Much Would You Be Willing to Spend per Month to Save Idaho's Salmon and Steelhead?

- No region of the state had a majority of respondents who would not be willing to spend some personal money to save Idaho's salmon and steelhead. However, nearly half of those surveyed in the central parts of the state said they would be unwilling to spend anything personally for this purpose.
- Respondents with Republican political orientations were less likely than Democrats to be willing to spend any amount to save the salmon and steelhead in Idaho.
- Idahoans with shorter residencies were more willing than other respondents to spend greater amounts of money to save salmon and steelhead in the state.
- Younger survey respondents were more likely than older Idahoans to be willing to spend at least \$2 to save the state's salmon and steelhead populations.
- The willingness of a respondent to spend at least \$2 per month to save salmon and steelhead rises with increasing income level.

Survey respondents were asked whether they would support a proposal to modify dams and for two and one-half months each year draw down Lower Snake River reservoirs in an effort to save Idaho's salmon and steelhead. They were told that waterway shippers would be compensated for any increased costs and that no additional water would be required from Idaho reservoirs. Not quite half of respondents said they would support such a proposal, as reflected in Figure 4-8. About three in ten were opposed.

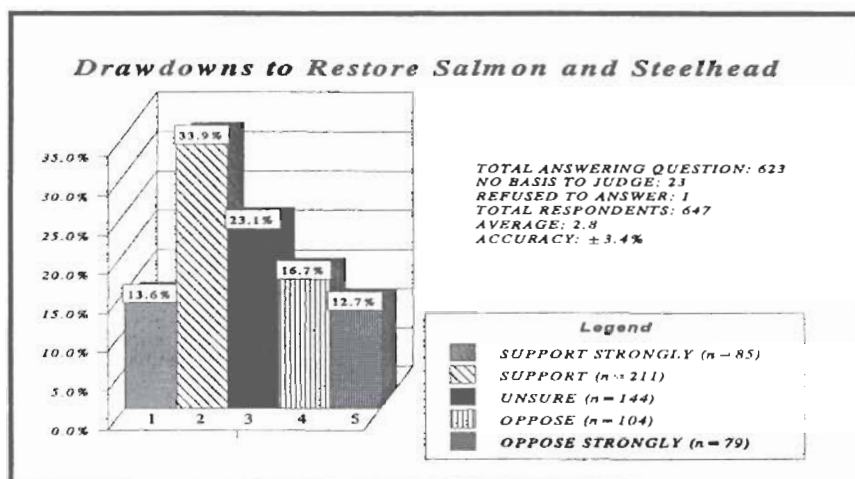


FIGURE 4-8: Would You Support Drawdowns to Restore Idaho's Salmon and Steelhead?

- In all regions but those that would be directly affected by the proposed drawdowns, percentages of Idahoans favoring the proposal are about twice as large as those in opposition. In north-central Idaho--the region that would be directly affected--this pattern is reversed, with twice as many people opposing the proposal as supporting it.
- Idahoans with a Democratic political orientation were more likely than Republicans to support the drawdown plan as described. Political independents gave responses intermediate to those of Democrats and Republicans.
- Survey respondents with shorter residencies were more likely than other Idahoans to support the use of drawdowns to restore the state's salmon and steelhead populations.
- Younger Idahoans were more likely than older respondents to support the described drawdown plan.

As indicated in Figure 4-9, nearly half of respondents agreed that Idaho should have wolves in the wilderness and roadless areas in the central part of the state; however, over two in five disagree.

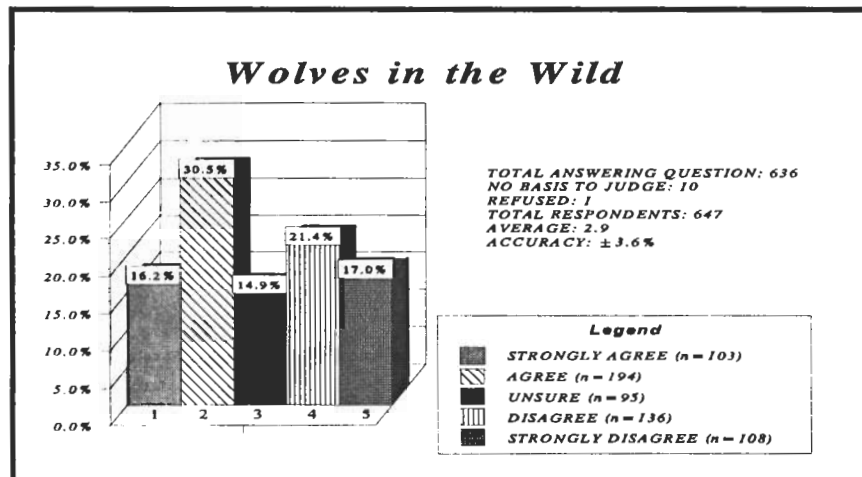


FIGURE 4-9: *Should Idaho Have Wolves in the Wilderness and Roadless Areas in the Central Part of the State?*

- Survey respondents with higher education levels were more likely than other Idahoans to agree that there should be wolves in the wilderness and roadless areas of the central area of the state.
- Idahoans with a Democratic political orientation were more likely than political independents, who in turn were more likely than Republican respondents, to agree that there should be wolves in the wilderness and roadless areas in the central part of Idaho.
- With shorter periods of residency in Idaho, survey respondents were more likely to agree that Idaho should have wolves in the wilderness and roadless areas in the central part of the state.
- Younger respondents were more likely than older Idahoans to agree that there should be wolves in the wilderness and roadless areas in the central part of the state.

CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS AND THE ARTS

Nearly nine out of every ten survey respondents said that having museums and theaters available was important to the quality of life in their community (Figure 4-10).

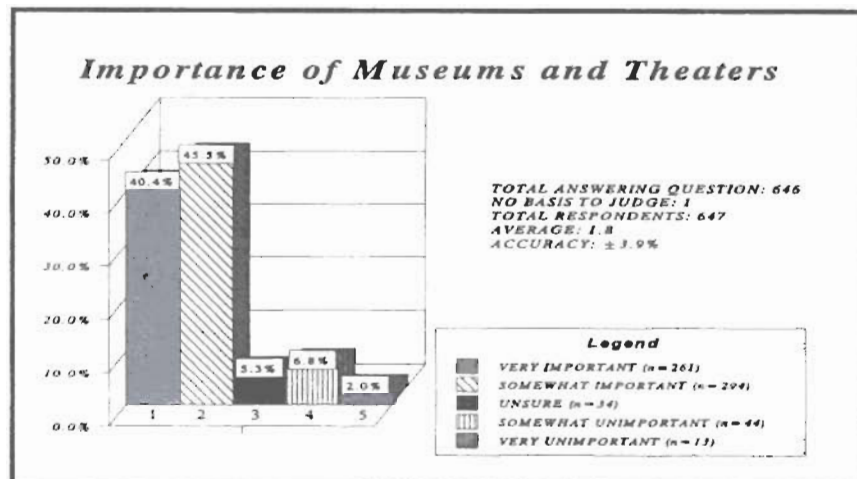


FIGURE 4-10: *How Important Is Having Museums and Theaters in Your Community?*

- Idahoans with higher income levels were more likely than others to say that having museums and theaters is important to the quality of life in their community.

Over half of those surveyed said they had attended a live dance, stage theater, or music performance (excepting school performances) in the past year, as indicated in Figure 4-11.

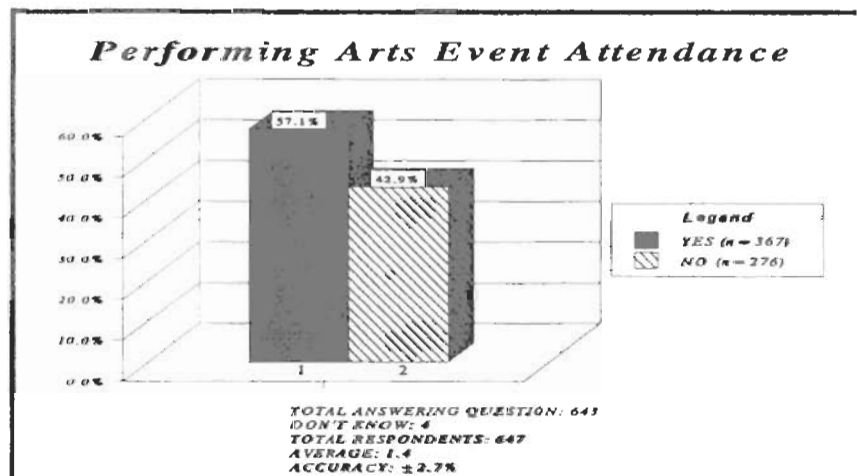


FIGURE 4-11: *Did You Attend a Performing Arts Event in the Past Year?*

- Idahoans with higher education levels were more likely than others to have attended a performing arts event in the last twelve months.
- Survey respondents with fewer than 25 years residency in Idaho were more likely than those with longer residencies to have attended a performing arts event in the past year.
- Respondents under 60 years of age were more likely than older Idahoans to have attended a performing arts event in the past year.

- Idahoans with higher income levels were more likely than others to say they attended a performing arts event in the past year.

Figure 4-12 shows that almost three-fourths of Idahoans said they had visited an art or craft fair or festival in the past year.

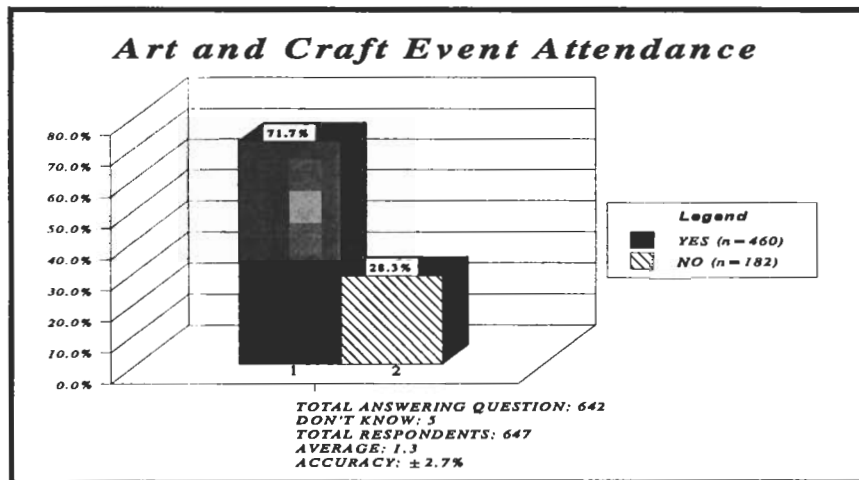


FIGURE 4-12: Did You Visit an Art or Craft Event in Past Year?

- Women were more likely than men to have visited an art or craft event during the past year.
- The higher a respondent education level, the more likely they were to have visited an art fair or festival or a craft fair or festival during the last twelve months.
- Survey respondents with 10 to 24 years residency in Idaho were the most likely to have visited an art or craft event during the past year, followed by those with less than 10 years, and finally by those with 25 or more.
- Idahoans in the 45 to 59 age group were the most likely to say they visited an art or craft event in the past year.
- With increasing income level, the likelihood of a respondent having visited an art or craft event in the past year also goes up.

THE INFORMATION SUPERHIGHWAY

A larger percentage of respondents said that the information superhighway is not important to them personally than said it is, as indicated in Figure 4-13. One in five respondents was not sure of its importance.

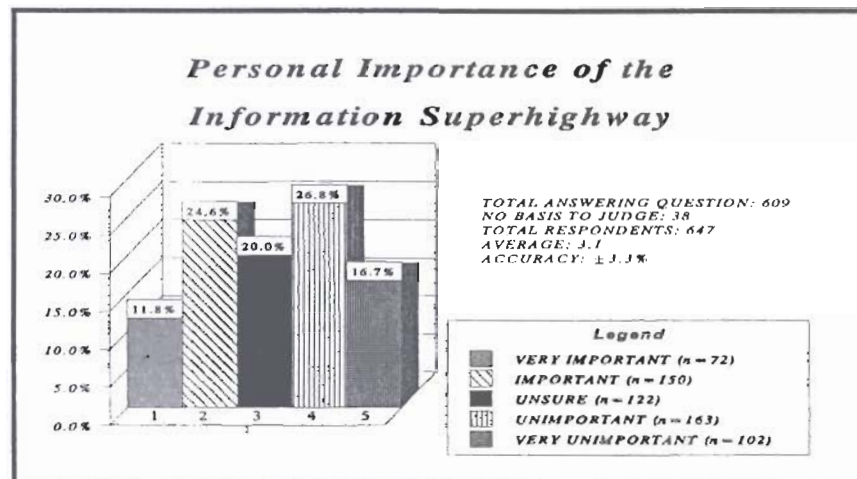


FIGURE 4-13: *How Important is the Information Superhighway to You?*

- The largest percentages of respondents who said that the information superhighway was important to them personally live in the north-central and southeastern regions of the state.
- Men were more likely than women to say the information superhighway is important to them personally.
- Idahoans with shorter residencies were more likely than other survey respondents to say that the information superhighway is important to them personally.
- Younger survey respondents agreed more frequently than older Idahoans that the information superhighway is important to them personally.
- The higher a survey respondent's the income level, the more likely they were to say that the information superhighway is important to them personally.

Over three-fourths of respondents say the information superhighway is important to Idaho businesses (Figure 4-14).

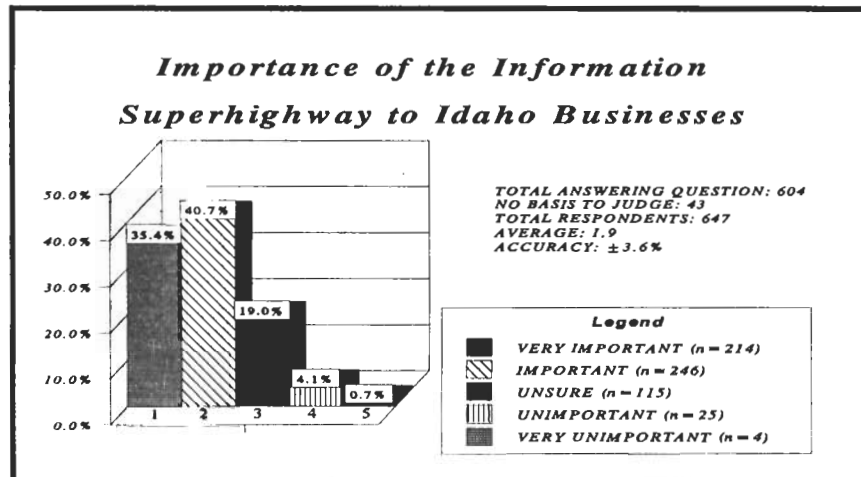


FIGURE 4-14: *How Important Is the Information Superhighway to Idaho Businesses?*

- Only two in three survey respondents with Democratic political orientations said the information superhighway is important to Idaho businesses, compared to about three-fourths of other Idahoans.
- Idahoans with shorter residencies were more likely than other respondents to say that the information superhighway is important to Idaho businesses.
- The youngest adults were the most likely to agree that the information superhighway is important to Idaho businesses. However, those least likely to agree were in the next older group (35 to 44 years).
- Survey respondents in the highest income group were the most likely to agree that the information superhighway is important to Idaho businesses. Those with the next highest income level (between around \$50,000 to \$60,000), however, were the least likely to agree.

Over three-fourths of Idahoans deem the information superhighway to be important to the future of the state, as shown in Figure 4-15.

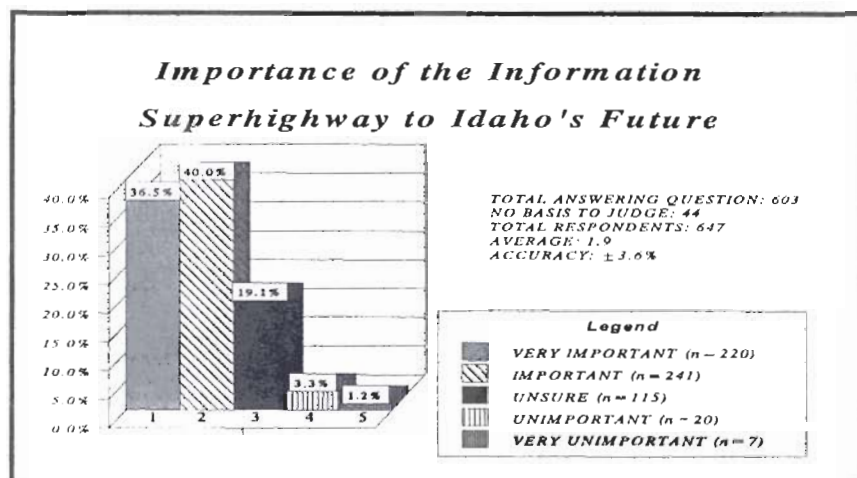


FIGURE 4-15: How Important Is the Information Superhighway to the Future of Idaho?

- Idahoans with shorter residencies were more likely than others to say that the information superhighway is important to the state's future.
- With increasing income level, survey respondents were increasingly likely to say the information superhighway is important to the future of Idaho.

1994 ICA INITIATIVE

Figure 4-16 indicates that nearly half of Idahoans said they voted against the ICA "Anti-Gay" initiative in November 1994. Three out of ten said they voted for it, and about one in six said they didn't vote at all.

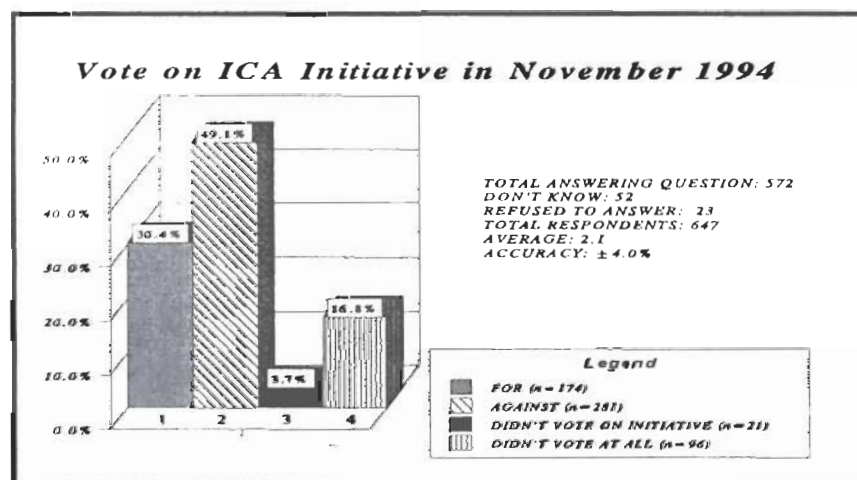


FIGURE 4-16: How Did You Vote on the ICA "Anti-Gay" Initiative in the Election Last November?

- A greater percentage of men than women said they voted for the 1994 ICA Initiative.

- Idahoans with the highest education level were the most likely to say they voted against the ICA Initiative, but those with college educations were the most likely to say they voted for it. Survey respondents with elementary school educations were the most likely to say they didn't vote on the initiative or that they didn't vote at all.
- Those with Republican political orientations were more likely than political independents, who in turn were more likely than Democrats, to say they voted for the 1994 ICA Initiative. More than twice as many of the Democratic and independent respondents as Republicans said they didn't vote at all in the election.
- Idahoans with longer residencies were more likely than others to have voted against the ICA Initiative and less likely to have not voted at all.
- Survey respondents between 35 and 44 years old and those at least 60 were the most likely to have voted for the ICA Initiative. Idahoans between 45 and 59 were the most likely to say they voted against it, and the youngest adults (under 35) were at least twice as likely as older respondents to have not voted at all.
- Idahoans in the lowest income group (under around \$20,000) were much less likely as those with higher incomes to have voted for the ICA Initiative and were at least twice as likely to have not voted at all. Over half of survey respondents earning more than around \$50,000 said they voted for the initiative.

The greatest percentage of respondents said they would not agree with the Idaho Legislature if it were to consider passing parts of the 1994 ICA Initiative. The remainder of those surveyed split between those who were unsure whether they would agree and those who said they would agree (Figure 4-17).

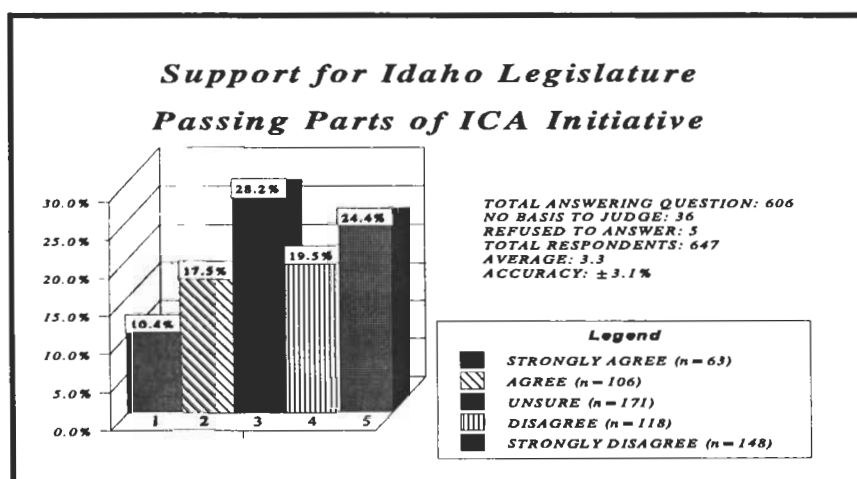


FIGURE 4-17: Would You Agree with the Idaho Legislature if It Were to Consider Passing Parts of the ICA Initiative?

- Men were more likely than women to agree with legislating parts of the ICA Initiative that didn't pass in November 1994.
- Republican survey respondents were more likely than political independents, who in turn were more likely than those with Democratic political orientations, to agree with legislating parts of the failed 1994 ICA Initiative.
- Idahoans with higher income levels would disagree more than others with legislating parts of the failed 1994 ICA Initiative.

Figure 4-18 shows that just over half of survey respondents described their attitude toward homosexuals and their lifestyle as negative. About one-fourth were unsure of their attitude, and one in five said their attitude was positive.

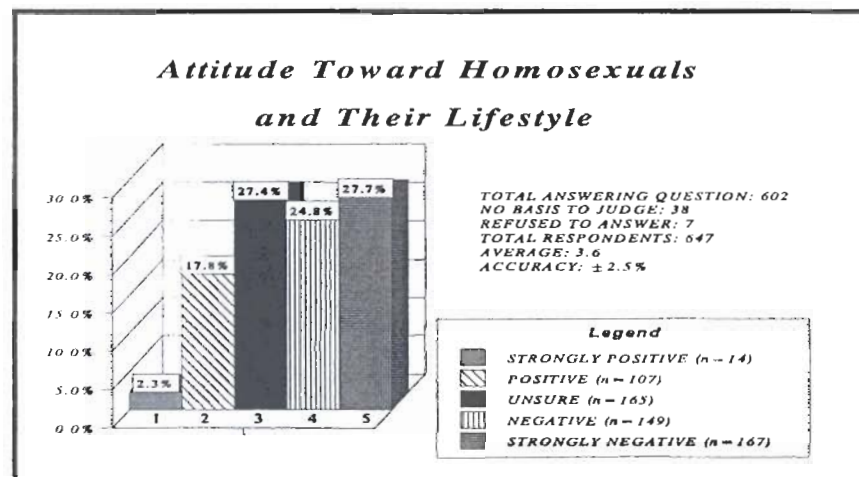


FIGURE 4-18: How Would You Describe Your Attitude toward Homosexuals and Their Lifestyle?

- Men were more frequently negative in their attitude toward homosexuals and their lifestyle than women.
- Survey respondents with higher education levels are more likely than other Idahoans to have positive attitudes toward homosexuals and their lifestyle.
- Idahoans with Democratic political orientations were more likely than political independents, who in turn were more likely than Republicans, to describe their attitude toward homosexuals and their lifestyle as positive.
- Those with shorter residencies in Idaho have a higher likelihood than others of describing their attitude toward homosexuals and their lifestyle as positive.

The majority of those surveyed said that they don't have male or female friends, relatives, or close acquaintances who are gay or lesbian, as shown in Figure 4-19.

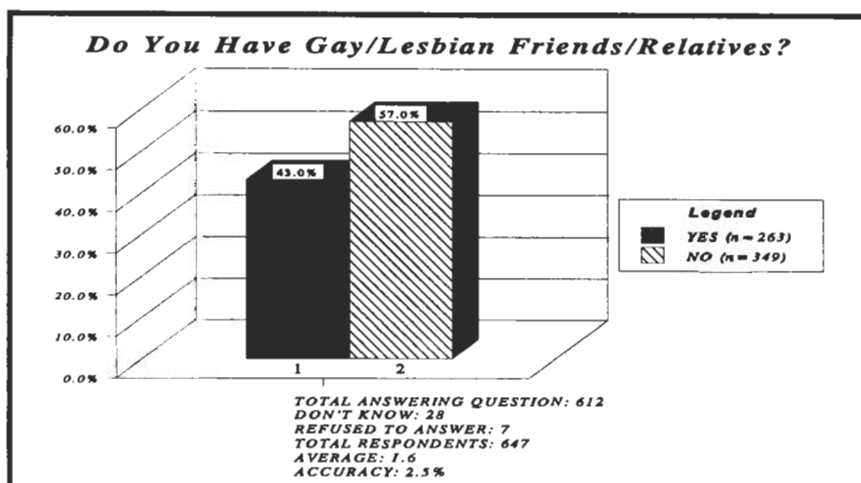


FIGURE 4-19: *Do You Have Male or Female Friends, Relatives, or Close Acquaintances Who Are Gay or Lesbian?*

- Regions differed greatly in the percentages of those who say they have a gay or lesbian friend or relative, ranging from about half in the north-central, southwestern, and southeastern parts of Idaho to about one-quarter in the central mountain area.
- Women said they have a gay or lesbian friend or relative more frequently than men.
- Survey respondents with higher levels of education were more likely than other Idahoans to say they have a gay or lesbian friend or relative.
- Republican respondents were less likely than those with other political orientations to say they have male or female friends, relatives, or close acquaintances who are gay or lesbian.
- Idahoans with residencies of at least 45 years were about half as likely as other respondents to say they have male or female friends, relatives, or close acquaintances who are gay or lesbian.
- Younger respondents were more likely than older Idahoans to say they have male or female friends, relatives, or close acquaintances who are gay or lesbian.

As indicated in Figure 4-20, about two in five respondents feel that gays and lesbians have more political power than they should, while nearly one out of five said that they have just the right amount. Almost ten percent of Idahoans said that gays and lesbians have less political power than they should, and about three in ten respondents were unsure how much political power gays and lesbians have.

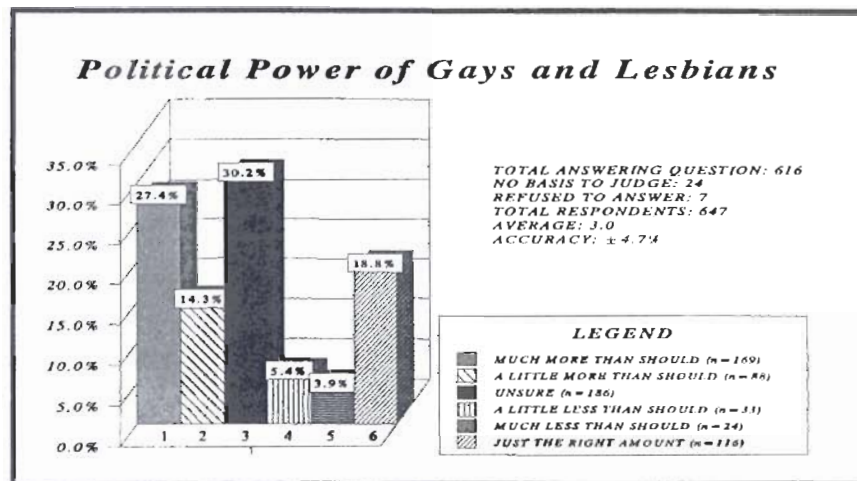


FIGURE 4-20: Gays and Lesbians Have How Much Political Power?

- Men were more likely than women to say that gays and lesbians have more political power than they should have.
- Republican respondents were more likely than political independents, who in turn were more likely than those with Democratic political orientations, to say gays and lesbians have more political power than they should.

POLITICAL ORIENTATION AND VOTER REGISTRATION

As indicated in Figure 4-21, the largest political orientation includes those who consider themselves Republican to some degree, the second largest are political independents, with those identifying themselves as Democratic ranking third.

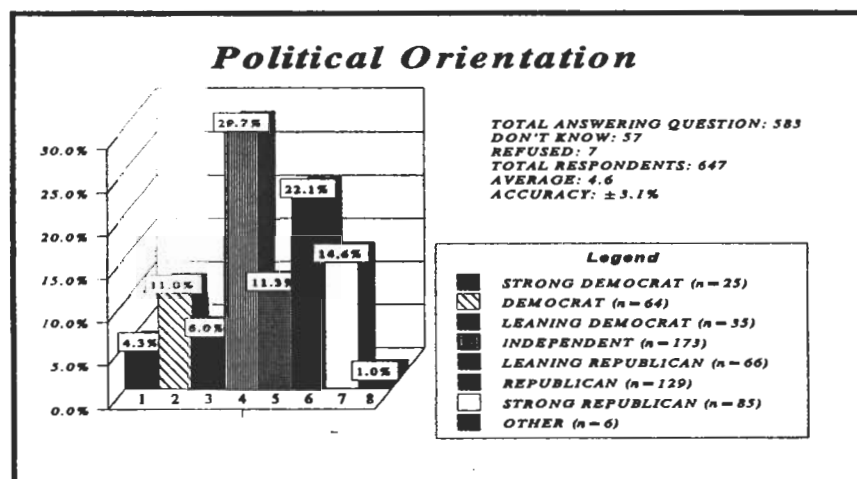


FIGURE 4-21: Which Best Describes Your Political Orientation?

- The youngest adults (those under 35) were the most likely to say they were at least leaning Republican, while those between 35 and 44 gave the highest percentage claiming a Democratic

political orientation. Respondents between the ages of 45 and 59 were the most likely to say they were political independents or had an “other” political orientation.

Figure 4-22 shows that over four in five respondents said they were registered to vote in Idaho.

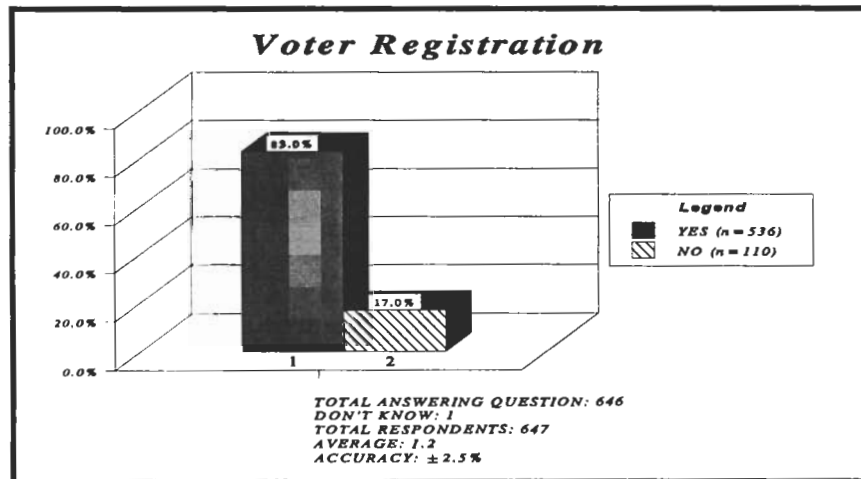


FIGURE 4-22: Are You Registered to Vote in the State of Idaho?

- Survey respondents with Republican political orientations were the most likely to be registered to vote in Idaho.
- Idahoans with longer residencies were more likely than others to be registered to vote in the state.
- Older respondents were more likely than younger Idahoans to be registered to vote in the state.
- The likelihood of being registered to vote in Idaho increases with income level

APPENDIX: SURVEY METHODOLOGY

SAMPLE DESIGN

The Center purchases random digit dialing samples from Survey Sampling Inc. (SSI), which are well-documented, credible, and have successfully withstood court challenges. The probability samples are stratified proportional to the number of active blocks in each telephone exchange in each county of the test area. A block is a group of 100 telephone numbers in a single exchange. For example 343-1100 to 343-1199 is one block. There are 100 blocks or 10,000 numbers per exchange. In order for a block to be active, at least one number in the block must be listed in the telephone directory. (The assessment of active blocks is updated every six months by SSI.) Thus, for example, in the Boise exchange "343" all 100 blocks are active and the sampling frame includes 10,000 numbers. In the town of Deary, Idaho, there are only six active blocks for the exchange "877," resulting in a total of 600 numbers being included in the sampling frame for that exchange. In order to ensure that every Idaho household had a chance to be surveyed, the Center also requested telephone exchanges that border on Idaho and include some Idaho households even though the majority of the numbers are in adjacent states. These exchanges included Whitman and Spokane Counties in Washington. Accordingly, there were a total of 782,700 telephone numbers from which the sample was drawn.

Once the sample is drawn, SSI removes numbers that they have identified through their screening procedures as business or non-working numbers. However, not all of these numbers can be identified and removed: Some must be identified by the Center over the course of the survey. In addition, the Center cannot make contact with all of the valid residential numbers in the sample during the course of the survey. Some numbers will remain unanswered or busy at the end of the survey, and some additional numbers reached will refuse to conduct the interview.

The number of calls that result in no answers, busy signals, businesses, refusals, unqualified households, and so forth before one interview can be completed is termed the "hit rate." For this survey, SSI determined that the hit rate could be as high as ten to one. Accordingly, the Center purchased a sample of 4100 telephone numbers.

As just described, these 4100 numbers were drawn from each county based on the proportion of active telephone blocks in each telephone exchange. For example, Ada county contains over 20 percent of the total active blocks, whereas Camas county contains about one-seventh of one percent. Accordingly, 20.41 percent of the 4100 numbers or 837 numbers were drawn from active blocks in Ada county exchanges, and 0.14 percent or 6 numbers were drawn from the active blocks in Camas county exchanges.

The proportion of sample size to the size of the sampling frame is .0052 (4100 divided by 782,700). The number of households selected for the survey in each telephone exchange was determined by multiplying the number of active blocks by this proportion and again by 100. For example, Deary

has 6 active blocks, so three households (6 times .0052 multiplied by 100) there were selected for the survey.

The 4100 numbers were further divided into 41 replicates of 100 numbers each. Each replicate is an independent sample with the same specifications as just discussed. This procedure is adopted so that the Center can better control the response rate by adding new replicates as the current replicates are exhausted by the interviewers. After SSI screened the sample for business and non-working numbers, the Center actually received a total of 3432 numbers, divided into 41 replicates, each with a range of from 76 to 91 phone numbers.

The sampled telephone numbers, therefore, were spread across the 44 Idaho counties in rough proportion to the number of households in each county.² This procedure allows the Center to aggregate the results into regions of the state along county lines and ensure that statistics for each region can be calculated.

DATA COLLECTION AND PROCESSING

Once the final draft of the questionnaire was approved by the participants in February 1995, the Center purchased the full sample from Survey Sampling Inc. and began the survey. In order to minimize potential bias in the sample resulting from the known greater likelihood of certain sorts of people to answer phones in households (for example, women and older persons), interviewers asked for the person in the household 18 or older with the most recent birthday.

The questionnaire items were entered into the computer-assisted telephone interviewing software, which transforms the hardcopy questionnaire into computerized data entry screens. The sample telephone numbers were fed through the computer network to the interviewer work stations. The disposition of every telephone call made as well as the data on all completed interviews were returned through the network to a central computer, where the data were prepared for analysis.

²Since different counties may have differing proportions of households without telephones, the proportion of households with telephones in each county is not exactly the same as the proportion of households in each county. For example, approximately 2.4 percent of Ada county households do not have telephones, while approximately 9.4 percent of Camas county households do not have telephones.