



RESULTS EMBARGOED UNTIL WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, AT NOON E.S.T.

Press Contact Information

Mileah Kromer
Director, Sarah T. Hughes Field Politics Center
mileah.kromer@goucher.edu
Cell: 724-840-0990

Kristen Pinheiro
Director, Media Relations
kristen.pinheiro@goucher.edu
Office: 410-337-6316 / Cell: 443-253-3680

**Goucher Poll Reveals Marylanders' Opinions
on Marijuana, Minimum Wage, and Anti-Discrimination Bill**

Baltimore – The Goucher Poll asked Maryland citizens for their opinions toward marijuana, the minimum wage, sick leave, and the addition of gender identity to statewide anti-discrimination laws. Highlights of the results regarding these pressing issues in the state are detailed below.

Marijuana

Marylanders' opinions toward legalizing marijuana remains basically unchanged since the October 2013 Goucher Poll; half of those polled support making marijuana use legal in the state, while 39 percent oppose legalization. Ninety percent of Marylanders support the use of marijuana for medical purposes, if prescribed by a doctor.

When asked about the consequences for possessing small amounts of marijuana, 45 percent of residents support policies that focus on fines, and 36 percent are in favor of rehabilitation. Seven percent prefer measures that focus on jail time; 8 percent said they had another preference. Forty-one percent of the Maryland's citizens think legalizing marijuana would reduce the crime rate in the state.

A quarter of Maryland residents think the regulations placed on marijuana should be stricter than those on alcohol; 57 percent think the regulations should be as strict, and 16 percent think they should be less strict.

Fifty-two percent of residents disagree that marijuana is a "gateway drug" in that it leads to the use of "hard" drugs such as cocaine or heroin. Slightly less than half (46 percent) of Marylanders indicated they had personally tried marijuana.

“Maryland residents are clearly supportive of the use of medicinal marijuana, but are divided over whether to legalize it for recreational use,” said Mileah Kromer, director of the Sarah T. Hughes Field Politics Center. “It also appears that residents support the decriminalization of marijuana and have doubts that the use of marijuana is a gateway to hard drug use. Perhaps most interestingly, nearly half of Maryland residents indicate they tried marijuana.”

Pets

Marylanders were asked a series of questions concerning dog ownership and treatment.

About two-thirds of respondents (65 percent) said they would support giving Marylanders a one-time, \$100 tax break if they adopted a pet from a shelter or rescue organization, while 28 percent said they would oppose such a measure.

Overall, most Marylanders stated they do not consider some breeds of dog to be inherently dangerous; 67 percent agree it is the treatment of the dog—not the breed—that makes some dogs dangerous. A quarter of Marylanders said some breeds of dog are naturally more dangerous than others.

Sick Leave, Minimum Wage, and Gender Identity Anti-Discrimination

Marylanders were asked two questions concerning employee earnings. A large majority (80 percent) of respondents said they would support a measure requiring Maryland businesses to provide paid sick leave for their employees.

Similarly, 73 percent expressed support for raising the state minimum wage to \$10 per hour, while nearly a quarter (24 percent) said they would oppose it.

Finally, respondents were asked their opinions of a bill in the Maryland state legislature that would prohibit discrimination based on gender identity in matters of employment, housing, and public accommodation. Seventy-one percent of Marylanders expressed support for the inclusion of gender identity in the state’s anti-discrimination laws, while 20 percent said they were opposed.

Additional crosstabs of the survey results are available upon request, and Mileah Kromer, the director of the Sarah T. Hughes Field Politics Center, is available for comment. She can be reached at mileah.kromer@goucher.edu or 724-840-0990. For additional media requests, please contact Kristen Pinheiro, director of media relations, at 410-337-6316 or Kristen.pinheiro@goucher.edu.



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About the Goucher Poll

The Goucher Poll is conducted under the auspices of the Sarah T. Hughes Field Politics Center, which is housed in the Department of Political Science and International Relations at Goucher College. Directed by Mileah Kromer, the Goucher Poll conducts surveys on public policy, economic, and social issues in Maryland.

Goucher College supports the Goucher Poll as part of its mission to instill in its students a sense of community where discourse is valued and practiced. The Goucher Poll is fully funded by the Sarah T. Hughes Field Politics Center endowment and does not take additional funding from outside sources.

The Goucher Poll seeks to improve public discourse in the state by providing neutral and nonbiased information on citizen perceptions and opinions. The data collected by the Goucher Poll are used to support faculty and student research.

Survey Methodology

To ensure all Maryland citizens are represented, the Goucher Poll is conducted using random digit dialing (RDD) of a stratified random sample using landline and cellular telephone numbers. The sample of telephone numbers for the survey is obtained from Survey Sampling International, LLC (<http://www.surveysampling.com/>).

The survey was conducted Sunday, March 2, to Thursday, March 6. During this time, interviews were conducted 12-9 p.m. on Sunday and 5-9 p.m. Monday through Thursday. The Goucher Poll uses Voxco Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) software to administer its surveys. Interviews are conducted by a staff of professionally trained, paid student interviewers.

Interviewers attempted to reach respondents with working phone numbers a maximum of five times. Only Maryland adults—residents aged 18 years or older—were eligible to participate. Interviews were not conducted with adults who were reached at business or work numbers. For each landline number reached, one adult from that household was selected on the basis of being the oldest or youngest adult in that residence. Half of the interviews were conducted on a cell phone, and half were conducted on a landline.

Interviews for this survey were completed with 861 Maryland citizens. For a sample size of 861, there is a 95 percent probability the survey results have a plus or minus 3.3 percent margin of error from the actual population distribution for any given survey question. Margin of errors are higher for subsamples.

Survey Question Design

The Goucher Poll provides the questions as worded and the order in which they were administered to respondents.

BRACKETED ITEMS []: Items and statements in brackets are rotated to ensure respondents do not receive a set order of response options presented to them, which maintains question construction integrity by avoiding respondent agreement based on question composition.

Example: [agree or disagree] or [disagree or agree]

PROBE (p): Some questions contain a “probe” maneuver to determine a respondent’s intensity of opinion/perspective. Probe techniques used in this questionnaire mainly consist of asking a respondent if his or her response is more intense than initially provided.

Example: Do you have a [favorable or unfavorable] opinion of President Obama?

PROBE: Would you say very favorable/unfavorable?

OPEN ENDED: The open-ended question provides no response options, i.e. it is entirely up to the respondent to provide the response information. Any response options provided to the interviewer are not read to the respondents; they are only used to help reduce interviewer error and time in coding the response.

VOLUNTEER (v): Volunteer responses means the interviewer did not offer a response option in the question, as read to the respondent. Interviewers are instructed not to offer “don’t know” or “refused” or “some other opinion” to the respondent, but the respondent is free to volunteer that information for the interviewer to record.

Sample Demographics

	MD Population Parameter	Weighted Sample Estimate
Gender		
Male	.48	.50
Female	.52	.50
18 to 24 Years	.13	.13
25 to 34 Years	.18	.18
35 to 44 Years	.17	.17
45 to 54 Years	.20	.20
55 to 64 Years	.16	.16
65 Years and Older	.16	.16
White	.63	.59
Black	.29	.27
Other	.08	.13
Capitol	.36	.37
Central	.46	.46
Eastern	.08	.07
Southern	.06	.06
Western	.04	.04

Population parameters are based on Census estimates as of July 2011.

Sample is weighted by age, gender, and region.

Distribution of Regions

Capitol—Frederick, Montgomery, Prince George’s

Central—Anne Arundel, Baltimore City, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, Howard

Eastern—Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne’s, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, Worcester

Southern—Calvert, Charles, St. Mary’s

Other Sample Demographics

Generally speaking, do you consider yourself to be a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or something else?

If respondent indicates they are an Independent:

Because you indicated you were an Independent, do you typically lean toward the Republican or Democratic candidate during elections?

Party Identification	
Republican	.28
Democrat	.53
Independent	.09
Other	.07
Don't Know/Refused (v)	.03

Survey Results¹

Q: PETTAX

Next, I'm going to ask you some questions about pets.

Do you [support or oppose] giving Marylanders a one-time, \$100 tax break if they adopt a pet from a shelter or rescue organization?

PROBE

	Percent
Strongly Oppose (p)	13.6
Oppose	14.8
Support	30.5
Strongly Support (p)	34.7
Don't Know (v)	5.6
Refused (v)	0.8
Total=861 +/-3.3	100.0

Q: DOG

I'm going to read you two statements about dogs, and I'd like you to tell me which comes closest to your opinion:

[STATEMENTS ROTATED]

Statement #1: Some breeds of dog are naturally more dangerous than others.

Statement #2: It is the treatment of the dog—not the breed—that makes some dogs dangerous.

	Percent
Statement #1	25.0
Statement #2	67.0
Neither of These Statements (v)	4.6
Don't Know (v)	3.3
Refused (v)	0.1
Total=861 +/-3.3	100.0

¹ Percent totals may not add up to 100 due to weighting and/or rounding.

Q: DOGOWN

Do you or a member of your household own a dog?

	Percent
No	55.7
Yes	44.1
Don't Know/Refused (v)	0.2
Total=861 +/-3.3	100.0

Q: POTLEG

Next, I'm going to ask you a few questions about marijuana.

In general, do you [support or oppose] making the use of marijuana legal in Maryland?

PROBE

	OCT 13	MAR 14
Strongly Oppose (p)	19.5	24.4
Oppose	20.8	15.0
Support	25.9	25.6
Strongly Support (p)	25.0	24.5
Don't Know (v)	7.5	9.8
Refused (v)	1.3	0.7
Total=	100.0 (665, +/-3.8)	100.0 (861 +/-3.3)

Q: POTMED

Do you [support or oppose] allowing the use of marijuana for medical purposes if prescribed by a doctor?

PROBE

	OCT 14	MAR 14
Strongly Oppose (p)	3.8	4.4
Oppose	4.3	3.5
Support	39.0	36.5
Strongly Support (p)	50.7	53.1
Don't Know (v)	2.1	2.3
Refused (v)	0.1	0.1
Total=	100.0 (665, +/-3.8)	100.0 (861 +/-3.3)

Q: POTFAVOR

Now, thinking generally about the consequences for possessing small amounts of marijuana—do you favor policies that focus [more on jail time, more on rehabilitation, or more on fines]?

	OCT 13	MAR 14
Jail	5.8	7.4
Rehabilitation	33.7	36.3
Fines	48.9	45.4
Some Other Policy (v)	8.5	8.3
Don't Know (v)	2.9	2.5
Refused (v)	0.2	.1
Total=	100.0 (665, +/-3.8)	100.0 (861 +/-3.3)

Q: POTHARD

Do you [agree or disagree] that marijuana is a “gateway drug” in that it leads to the use of hard drugs?

PROBE

	Percent
Strongly Disagree (p)	26.3
Disagree	25.9
Agree	20.1
Strongly Agree (p)	19.2
Don't Know (v)	8.0
Refused (v)	0.5
Total=861 +/-3.3	100.0

Q: POTREG

Should the regulations placed on marijuana be [more strict, less strict, or just as strict] as those on alcohol?

	Percent
Less Strict	16.2
Just as Strict	57.1
More Strict	25.1
Don't Know (v)	1.3
Refused (v)	0.3
Total=861 +/-3.3	100.0

Q: POTCRIME

If the sale and possession of marijuana were made legal in Maryland, do you think it would [increase, decrease, or have no effect] on the crime rate?

	Percent
Decrease	41.3
Have No Effect	29.4
Increase	24.8
Don't Know (v)	4.2
Refused (v)	0.3
Total=861 +/-3.3	100.0

Q: POTTRY

Now, keeping in mind that your responses are completely anonymous—have you, yourself, ever tried marijuana?

	Percent
Yes	45.8
No	52.1
Refused/Don't Know (v)	2.1
Total=861 +/-3.3	100.0

Q: SICK

Finally, I'm going to ask you about some of the issues being discussed in Annapolis.

Do you [support or oppose] requiring Maryland businesses to provide paid sick leave for their employees?

PROBE

	Percent
Strongly Oppose (p)	5.2
Oppose	10.1
Support	29.8
Strongly Support (p)	50.0
Don't Know (v)	4.8
Refused (v)	0.1
Total=861 +/-3.3	100.0

Q: WAGE

As you may know, the minimum wage in Maryland is \$7.25 per hour. Would you [support or oppose] raising the state minimum wage to \$10 per hour?

PROBE

	OCT 13	MAR 14
Strongly Oppose (p)	12.0	11.4
Oppose	15.2	12.4
Support	21.1	23.6
Strongly Support (p)	48.5	49.7
Don't Know/Refused (v)	3.3	3.0
Total=	100.0 (318 +/-5.5)	100.0 (861 +/-3.3)

Q: GENDERID

As you may have heard, the Maryland state legislature is considering a bill that would prohibit discrimination based on gender identity in matters of employment, housing, and public accommodation. This would mainly affect transgender individuals—people who self-identify as a gender different from their sex assigned at birth.

That being said, do you [support or oppose] including gender identity in the state’s anti-discrimination laws?

PROBE

	Percent
Strongly Oppose (p)	10.2
Oppose	9.7
Support	32.1
Strongly Support (p)	39.0
Don’t Know (v)	7.6
Refused (v)	1.4
Total=861 +/-3.3	100.0