

FRANKLIN & MARSHALL

**February 2009**

**Franklin & Marshall  
College Poll**

**SURVEY OF PENNSYLVANIANS  
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

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## Methodology

The survey findings presented in this release are based on the results of interviews conducted February 17-22, 2009. The interviews were conducted at the Center for Opinion Research at Franklin and Marshall College under the direction of the poll's Director Dr. G. Terry Madonna, Head Methodologist Berwood Yost, and Project Manager Jennifer Harding. The data included in this release represent the responses of 644 adult residents of Pennsylvania. Telephone numbers for the survey were generated using random digit dialing, and respondents were randomly selected from within each household. Survey results were weighted using an iterative weighting algorithm.

The sample error for this survey is +/- 3.9 percent. The sample error for registered adults is +/- 4.2 percent. In addition to sampling error, this poll is also subject to other sources of non-sampling error. Generally speaking, two sources of error concern researchers most. Non-response bias is created when selected participants either choose not to participate in the survey or are unavailable for interviewing. Response errors are the product of the question and answer process. Surveys that rely on self-reported behaviors and attitudes are susceptible to biases related to the way respondents process and respond to survey questions.

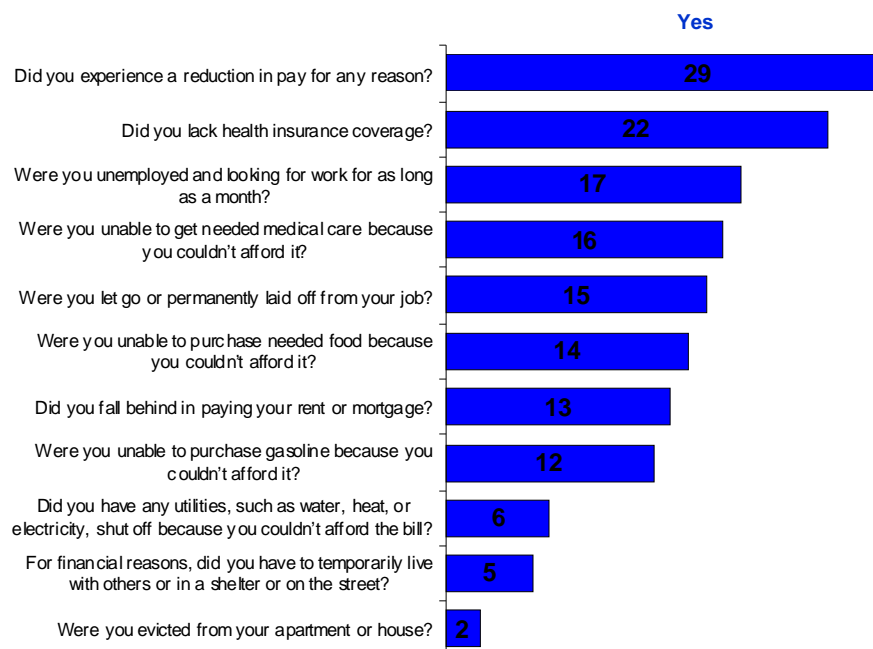
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## Key Findings

The February 2009 Franklin and Marshall College Poll finds Pennsylvania residents experiencing difficult economic times and significant economic hardships, while also expressing confidence in Governor Rendell and President Obama to resolve those problems.

Nearly half (44%) of Pennsylvanians are “worse off” financially than they were a year ago. Nearly one in three (29%) have experienced a reduction in pay and one in four (22%) have been without health insurance coverage at some point during the past year. Half (53%) of Pennsylvanians experienced at least one of the 11 economic hardships presented in the survey (see Figure 1). Residents who are younger than 55 years of age, without a college degree, non-white, and earning less than \$35,000 per year are more likely to have experienced an economic hardship during the past year.

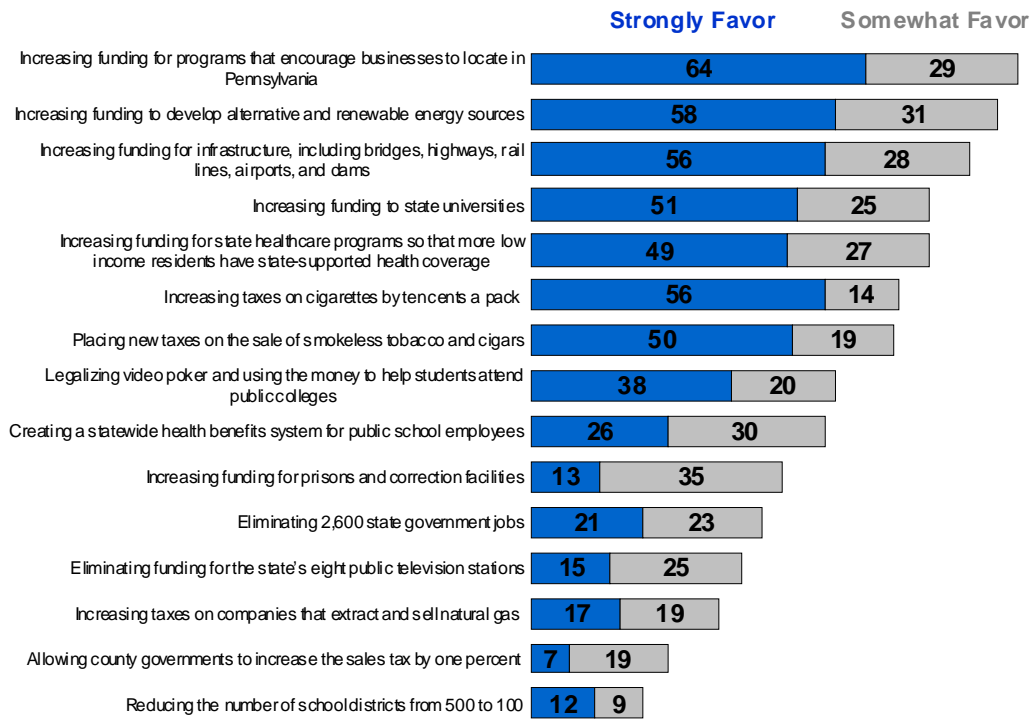
**Figure 1. Economic Hardships Faced by Pennsylvanians**



Even though Pennsylvanians are facing difficult economic times, they see better times ahead and demonstrate confidence in their political leaders. Although seven in ten (71%) Pennsylvanians say that economic conditions in the country are bad, more predict that conditions will be better (39%) a year from now than worse (24%) or about the same (35%). Furthermore, seven in ten (70%) registered adults are confident in President Obama's ability to manage the country's economic problems, and three in five (58%) are confident in Governor Rendell's ability to manage the state's budget problems.

Two in three (66%) registered Pennsylvanians believe the state government's financial condition is bad, although most believe the state government's condition is better (24%) or about the same (48%) as the financial situations facing other state governments. The state's registered adults support some of the governor's spending proposals but are less enthusiastic about others (see Figure 2). For instance, large proportions favor increasing funding for economic development, renewable energy, infrastructure, higher education, and health care. There is less support for legalizing video poker, increasing funding for prisons, raising taxes on natural gas extraction, and county sales taxes. Specific cost-saving measures proposed by the governor tend to receive less support than his spending proposals. More people oppose than support the governor's suggestions to eliminate more state government jobs (44% favor, 45% oppose), eliminate funding for public television stations (40% favor, 52% oppose), and reduce the number of school districts in the state (21% favor, 70% oppose).

**Figure 2. Support for Governor Rendell's Budget Proposals**



## Marginal Frequency Report

RightDir. All in all, do you think things in PENNSYLVANIA are generally headed in the RIGHT DIRECTION, or do you feel that things are off on the WRONG TRACK?

	Headed in Right Direction	Off on the Wrong Track	Don't Know
<b>Feb 2009</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>11%</b>
Aug 2007	47%	44%	9%
Jun 2007	42%	45%	13%
Feb 2007	46%	42%	12%
Oct 2006*	47%	42%	11%
Sep 2006*	52%	36%	12%
Aug 2006*	50%	40%	10%
Feb 2006	45%	46%	9%
Nov 2005	39%	52%	10%
Sep 2005	46%	46%	8%
Jun 2005	43%	45%	12%
Mar 2005	50%	44%	6%
Oct 2004*	48%	39%	13%
Sep 2004*	46%	41%	13%
Aug 2004*	43%	40%	17%
Mar 2004*	33%	50%	18%
Feb 2004	37%	49%	14%
Nov 2003	45%	45%	10%
Apr 2003	55%	33%	12%
Sep 2002*	52%	32%	16%
Jun 2002*	55%	32%	13%
Jul 1999	64%	27%	9%
Sep 1998*	67%	15%	18%
Jul 1998	60%	26%	14%
Mar 1998	65%	24%	11%
Oct 1996	49%	31%	21%
Sep 1996*	49%	34%	17%
Jul 1996	41%	41%	18%
Apr 1995	52%	32%	17%

\*Question asked of registered respondents only

REG. Some people are registered to vote, and many others are not. Are you CURRENTLY REGISTERED to vote at your present address?

86% Yes  
14% No

Questions RegPARTY through RateSenS were only asked of registered respondents (n=556).

RegPARTY. Are you currently registered as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or as something else?

47% Democrat  
 42% Republican  
 9% Independent  
 2% Other

IntFav. Please let me know your opinion of some people involved in politics today. Is your opinion of \_\_\_ favorable, unfavorable, undecided, or haven't heard enough about \_\_\_ to have an opinion? (*rotated*)

	Favorable	Not Favorable	Undecided	Don't know
<b>ED RENDELL</b>				
<b>Feb 2009</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>7%</b>
Aug 2007	47%	36%	12%	5%
Jun 2007	48%	38%	10%	4%
Feb 2007	53%	36%	8%	3%
Oct 2006	54%	30%	12%	4%
Sep 2006	52%	29%	16%	3%
Aug 2006	49%	33%	14%	4%
May 2006	48%	32%	16%	4%
Feb 2006	41%	40%	14%	5%
Nov 2005	39%	38%	18%	6%
Sep 2005	42%	36%	16%	6%
Jun 2005	41%	33%	17%	9%
Mar 2005	48%	28%	18%	7%
Aug 2004	46%	31%	17%	6%
Feb 2004	40%	32%	15%	14%
Nov 2003	46%	26%	21%	7%
Apr 2003	50%	19%	17%	16%
Oct 2002	50%	24%	18%	9%
Sep 2002	43%	19%	25%	14%
Jun 2002	40%	18%	26%	16%
Oct 2001	30%	8%	13%	50%
Apr 2001	29%	7%	11%	52%
Jul 1999	30%	7%	9%	54%
<b>ARLEN SPECTER</b>				
<b>Feb 2009</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>14%</b>
Jun 2007	42%	33%	16%	9%
<b>BOB CASEY, JR.</b>				
<b>Feb 2009</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>32%</b>
Jun 2007	29%	22%	23%	26%
<b>BARACK OBAMA</b>				
<b>Feb 2009</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>4%</b>
Oct 2008	53%	33%	12%	3%
Sep 2008	49%	30%	17%	3%
Aug 2008	43%	29%	23%	5%
Feb 2008	46%	27%	21%	6%
Jan 2008	41%	27%	23%	9%
Aug 2007	37%	21%	23%	19%
Jun 2007	32%	21%	20%	27%
Feb 2007	31%	15%	20%	34%

FinPA. The governor recently announced his proposed state budget for the coming fiscal year. How would you describe the financial condition of state government today? Would you say it is...

0%	Very good
23%	Good
46%	Bad
20%	Very bad
11%	Don't know

ComPA. Do you think Pennsylvania's financial condition is better than, worse than, or about the same as other states?

24%	Better
15%	Worse
48%	About the same
13%	Don't know

ConGov. How confident are you in Governor Rendell's ability to handle the state's budget problems? Are you...

10%	Very confident
48%	Somewhat confident
26%	Not very confident
14%	Not at all confident
2%	Don't know

IntBud1. I am going to briefly describe some state budget proposals. For each, please tell me if you FAVOR or OPPOSE the proposal. (*rotated*)

	<b>Strongly Favor</b>	<b>Somewhat Favor</b>	<b>Somewhat Oppose</b>	<b>Strongly Oppose</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
Increasing funding for programs that encourage businesses to locate in Pennsylvania	64%	29%	3%	1%	3%
Increasing funding to develop alternative and renewable energy sources	58%	31%	4%	5%	2%
Increasing funding for infrastructure, including bridges, highways, rail lines, airports, and dams	56%	28%	7%	6%	3%
Increasing taxes on cigarettes by ten cents a pack	56%	14%	8%	19%	3%
Increasing funding to state universities	51%	25%	11%	9%	4%
Placing new taxes on the sale of smokeless tobacco and cigars	50%	19%	10%	18%	3%
Increasing funding for state healthcare programs so that more low income residents have state-supported health coverage	49%	27%	12%	10%	2%
Legalizing video poker and using the money to help students attend public colleges	38%	20%	14%	26%	2%
Increasing taxes on companies that extract and sell natural gas	17%	19%	25%	27%	12%
Increasing funding for prisons and correction facilities	13%	35%	19%	24%	9%
Allowing county governments to increase the sales tax by one percent	7%	19%	20%	51%	3%

IntBud2. Now please tell me if you FAVOR or OPPOSE each of the following proposals as a way of reducing state government costs. (*rotated*)

	<b>Strongly Favor</b>	<b>Somewhat Favor</b>	<b>Somewhat Oppose</b>	<b>Strongly Oppose</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
Creating a statewide health benefits system for public school employees	26%	30%	16%	21%	7%
Eliminating 2,600 state government jobs	21%	23%	21%	24%	11%
Eliminating funding for the state's eight public television stations	15%	25%	24%	28%	8%
Reducing the number of school districts from 500 to 100	12%	9%	17%	53%	9%

RatePres. How would you rate the way that Barack Obama is handling his job as president?  
Would you say he is doing an...

	Excellent Job	Good Job	Only a Fair Job	Poor Job	Don't Know
<b>Feb 2009</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>9%</b>

ConfPres. How confident are you in President Obama's ability to handle the country's economic problems? Are you...

- 27% Very confident
- 43% Somewhat confident
- 14% Not very confident
- 15% Not at all confident
- 1% Don't know

Rate\_Gov. How would you rate the way that Ed Rendell is handling his job as governor?  
Would you say he is doing an...

	Excellent Job	Good Job	Only a Fair Job	Poor Job	Don't Know
<b>Feb 2009</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>4%</b>
Aug 2007	9%	38%	36%	15%	2%
Jun 2007	8%	37%	37%	17%	1%
Feb 2007	11%	39%	34%	14%	2%
Oct 2006	11%	42%	30%	15%	2%
Sep 2006	12%	45%	28%	13%	2%
Aug 2006	11%	39%	33%	15%	2%
May 2006	9%	37%	34%	17%	3%
Feb 2006	8%	36%	34%	21%	1%
Sep 2005	5%	36%	38%	18%	3%
Jun 2005	6%	36%	41%	14%	3%
Mar 2005	6%	33%	46%	11%	4%
Aug 2004	9%	37%	39%	12%	4%
Feb 2004	6%	31%	44%	13%	7%
Nov 2003	7%	33%	35%	15%	10%
Apr 2003	10%	36%	24%	10%	21%

RateSenC. How would you rate the way that BOB CASEY is handling his job as US SENATOR? Would you say he is doing an...

	Excellent Job	Good Job	Only a Fair Job	Poor Job	Don't Know
<b>Feb 2009</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>20%</b>
Aug 2007	5%	37%	36%	7%	15%

RateSenS. How would you rate the way that ARLEN SPECTER is handling his job as US SENATOR? Would you say he is doing an..

	Excellent Job	Good Job	Only a Fair Job	Poor Job	Don't Know
<b>Feb 2009</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>8%</b>
Aug 2007	15%	36%	33%	12%	4%

FinToday. We are interested in how people are getting along financially these days. Would you say that YOU and YOUR FAMILY are better off, worse off, or about the same financially as you were a year ago?

	Better Off	Worse Off	About the Same	Don't Know
<b>Feb 2009</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>0%</b>
Oct 2008*	14%	44%	42%	0%
Sep 2008*	12%	40%	47%	0%
Aug 2008*	16%	37%	46%	1%
Feb 2008*	20%	29%	51%	0%
Jan 2008*	17%	25%	57%	1%
Nov 2005	20%	28%	51%	1%
Sep 2005	17%	36%	47%	0%
Jun 2005	24%	24%	52%	0%
Mar 2005	21%	28%	51%	1%
Nov 2003	17%	29%	53%	1%
Apr 2003	16%	30%	54%	0%
Sep 2002*	25%	26%	47%	1%
Jun 2002*	29%	20%	50%	1%
Jul 1999	31%	16%	52%	1%
Jul 1998	31%	16%	52%	1%
Mar 1998	31%	16%	52%	1%
Jul 1996	21%	22%	56%	1%
Feb 1996	21%	21%	57%	1%
Apr 1995	26%	21%	52%	1%

\* Question asked of registered respondents only

FinFut. Now looking AHEAD, do you think that A YEAR FROM NOW, YOU and YOUR FAMILY will be better off financially than you are now, worse off, or about the same as you are now?

	Better Off	Worse Off	About the Same	Don't Know
<b>Feb 2009</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>7%</b>
Oct 2008*	33%	14%	40%	14%
Sep 2008*	25%	18%	42%	15%
Aug 2008*	28%	15%	45%	12%
Nov 2005	29%	20%	48%	3%
Sep 2005	27%	23%	45%	5%
Jun 2005	32%	15%	48%	5%
Mar 2005	31%	20%	45%	4%
Nov 2003	33%	13%	49%	5%
Apr 2003	27%	17%	51%	5%
Sep 2002*	38%	8%	43%	11%
Jun 2002*	35%	6%	49%	10%
Jul 1999	38%	8%	50%	4%
Jul 1998	41%	9%	45%	5%
Mar 1998	39%	7%	50%	4%
Jul 1996	24%	12%	54%	10%
Feb 1996	29%	16%	49%	6%
Apr 1995	37%	12%	44%	7%

\* Question asked of registered respondents only

FinTot. Now turning to business conditions in the country as a whole, do you think that during the next 12 months, we'll have good times financially or bad times?

2% Very good  
 21% Good  
 49% Bad  
 22% Very bad  
 6% Don't know

FinTot2. And how about a year from now, do you expect that in the country as a whole, business conditions will be better or worse than they are at present or just about the same?

39% Better  
 24% Worse  
 35% About the same  
 2% Don't know

IntHard. Now I'm going to ask you about various events that happen to people. I'm interested in those that happened to you at any point during the last 12 months, that is since [fill one year ago's date]. Did any of the following hardships happen to you in the last 12 months?  
(rotated)

Feb 2009	Oct 2008*	Sep 2008*	
<b>% Yes</b>			
<b>29%</b>	19%	21%	Did you experience a reduction in pay for any reason?
<b>22%</b>	10%	15%	Did you lack health insurance coverage?
<b>17%</b>	10%	13%	Were you unemployed and looking for work for as long as a month?
<b>16%</b>	11%	14%	Were you unable to get needed medical care because you couldn't afford it?
<b>15%</b>	6%	8%	Were you let go or permanently laid off from your job?
<b>14%</b>	11%	13%	Were you unable to purchase needed food because you couldn't afford it?
<b>13%</b>	8%	10%	Did you fall behind in paying your rent or mortgage?
<b>12%</b>	12%	14%	Were you unable to purchase gasoline because you couldn't afford it?
<b>6%</b>	4%	5%	Did you have any utilities, such as water, heat, or electricity, shut off because you couldn't afford the bill?
<b>5%</b>	2%	3%	For financial reasons, did you have to temporarily live with others or in a shelter or on the street?
<b>2%</b>	1%	0%	Were you evicted from your apartment or house?

\* Question asked of registered respondents only

I now have a final few questions for statistical purposes only.

CNTY. Region of state (What is the name of the county you live in?)

28% Central  
21% Southeast  
12% Northeast  
10% Southwest  
10% Philadelphia  
10% Allegheny  
9% Northwest

RESID. How many years have you lived at your current address?

15 Mean

AGE. What was your age on your last birthday?

6% 18-24  
21% 25-34  
17% 35-44  
21% 45-54  
14% 55-64  
21% 65 and older

EDUC. What was the highest grade level of schooling you have completed?

12%	Non high school graduate
41%	High school graduate or GED
13%	Some college
9%	Two-year or tech degree
15%	Four year college degree
10%	Post graduate degree

MAR. What is your CURRENT marital status, are you single, married, separated, divorced, or a widower?

20%	Single, Never Married
55%	Married
3%	Separated
11%	Divorced
11%	Widow or widower

PRTY1. Regardless of how you are registered, in politics, as of today, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, or an Independent?

20%	Strong Republican
9%	Republican
12%	Lean Republican
10%	Pure Independent
12%	Lean Democrat
9%	Democrat
25%	Strong Democrat
3%	Don't know

LABR. Are you or is any member of your household a member of a LABOR UNION?

17%	Yes
83%	No

VET. Are you a military veteran?

13%	Yes
87%	No

Hisp. Are you Hispanic or Latino, or not?

2%	Yes
98%	No

RACE. Which of the following categories best describes your racial background?

86%	White
14%	Non-white

REL. Do you consider yourself to be Protestant, Catholic, some other religion, or not affiliated with any religion?

34%	Protestant
34%	Catholic
18%	Some other religion
14%	Not affiliated with any religion

BAC. Do you consider yourself to be a born-again Christian or fundamentalist, or not?

33%	Yes
65%	No
2%	Don't know

NumA. Including yourself, how many adults 18 years of age or OLDER CURRENTLY live in this household?

28%	One
56%	Two
12%	Three
4%	Four or more

WORK. Are you currently working FULL-time, PART-time, going to school, keeping house or something else?

45%	Full-time
12%	Part-time
3%	Going to school
6%	Keeping house
7%	Unemployed
6%	Disabled
20%	Retired
1%	Don't know

INC1. And, just for statistical purposes, we need to know if your total family income is above or below \$50,000 per year?

19%	Under \$25,000
17%	\$25-\$35,000
12%	\$35-50,000
23%	\$50-75,000
11%	\$75-100,000
13%	Over \$100,000
5%	Don't know

DONE. Sex of respondent:

52%	Female
48%	Male