

INDIANA

WISH-TV/BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

# 2013 HOOSIER SURVEY



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Bowen Center for Public Affairs at Ball State University is pleased to partner again this year with WISH-TV, Channel 8, in Indianapolis, in presenting the sixth annual Hoosier Survey. The Hoosier Survey is designed to provide Indiana citizens and policymakers with a measure of public opinion on current issues facing our state in the coming year. The results of this non-partisan survey are delivered to every member of the Indiana General Assembly and top administration officials at the beginning of the calendar year so that lawmakers can gauge public views about issues they are likely to face in the upcoming legislative session.

The survey was conducted for WISH TV/Ball State University by Princeton Survey Research International during the period October 8-21, 2013. Results are based on 600 completed interviews with 360 landline respondents and 240 cell phone respondents. The margin of error is  $\pm 4.8\%$ . Complete findings and methodology are available at [www.bowencenterforpublicaffairs.org](http://www.bowencenterforpublicaffairs.org).

Major findings in the 2013 Hoosier Survey include:

- Job creation continues as the number one priority for Hoosiers, with 83% saying this topic should be at the top of the legislative agenda. This is a slight increase over last year, when 81% named “jobs” as the top priority. The second highest priority is to improve schools (73%), which is a substantial increase over last year (65%). Affordable health care is the third highest priority at 59%, compared to last year’s 61%.
- Similar to last year, Hoosiers have not noticed major differences in service delivery across a host of areas ranging from road maintenance to public schools, parks and recreation, and fire and police protection. There is a slight improvement in the areas of road maintenance and public schools, with fewer respondents saying that these services “worsened” over the past year as compared to findings in the 2012 Hoosier Survey.
- This year we asked Hoosiers to assess the performance of Governor Pence, the overall performance of the Indiana General Assembly, the performance of Superintendent of Public Instruction Glenda Ritz, and a “retrospective rating” of former Governor Mitch Daniels’ performance. Governor Pence enjoys a 55% approval rating, compared to a 53% approval of the General Assembly and a 16% approval for Superintendent Ritz. The lower approval for Superintendent Ritz is a product of very few Hoosiers knowing enough about her to have an opinion, as over three-fourths of Hoosiers (77%) do not know enough about her to rate her performance. This holds across both political parties as well as Independents. A total of 70% of Hoosiers rate Governor Daniels’ eight years as “excellent” (33%) or “very good” (37%). As expected, Republican identifiers rate his performance much higher (59%) than Democratic identifiers (20%).
- Hoosiers continue to have high levels of satisfaction with public schools, with two-thirds (66%) saying they are very or somewhat satisfied with public schools, a number similar to last year’s 69%. Satisfaction levels for those who have children in public schools are even higher, at 73%. Democratic identifiers tend to be somewhat more satisfied with the public schools than Republicans (73% to 61%).
- There is strong support for lowering the age of mandatory school enrollment from 7 to 5 years of age, with 59% agreeing compared to 35% disagreeing. This breakdown holds across party lines (GOP 53%, DEM 66%).
- The controversial A to F grading of schools barely has majority support, with 51% saying they are satisfied with the integrity of the system. Slightly more than one-third (35%) say they would prefer to move to some other method for evaluating schools. There is a significant difference between the parties on this issue, with more than twice as many Republicans (58%) supporting the grading system as Democrats (25%). When Hoosiers were asked if they were closely following the controversy, among those who said they followed it closely, support fell to 45% and preference for “some other method” rose to 47%. In short, the more informed Hoosiers are about the A to F grading, the less support the system garners.
- On the Common Core Curriculum, 54% said they were very or somewhat familiar with the issue, with 45% saying they were not very familiar. (Nationally, Gallup reports that 41% are familiar with the

Common Core.) Among Hoosiers most familiar with Common Core, 53% believe it will make Indiana students more competitive in the world. Almost a third (31%) said they do not think it would make much difference. Far more Democratic identifiers support the Common Core curriculum (67%) than Republican identifiers (38%). There were no significant differences between those with children in school and those without.

- Hoosier support for the national Affordable Care Act (ACA) has declined in the past year. The support level is virtually identical to last year (44% last year to 43% this year), but those undecided last year have moved into the unfavorable camp by an increase of 11 percentage points (42% in 2012 to 53% in 2013). There is a very significant difference between the political parties on the ACA. Democratic identifiers are very or somewhat favorable toward the law (69%) whereas a large majority of Republican identifiers are somewhat or very unfavorable (87%). Even with these findings, however, barely a majority of Hoosiers seek outright repeal of the law (51%), with 41% seeking full implementation and 8% undecided.
- Governor Pence, upon taking office, proposed extending the Healthy Indiana Plan (HIP) to more low income residents and opposed participating in the Medicaid extension of the ACA for low income Hoosiers. The survey shows the Governor's decision garners support with 47% of Hoosiers surveyed while 32% were opposed. Republican identifiers overwhelmingly favor HIP over extending Medicaid (53% to 12%).
- Hoosiers reflect national trends when it comes to gun control. 83% of Hoosiers favor background checks of individuals purchasing guns at gun shows or private sales, with 54% favoring banning assault weapons. Another 65% favor a national database of gun owners, with only 38% supporting arming teachers and school employees. These figures are very close to national polling results.
- Hoosiers are slightly more supportive of legalizing same sex marriage (48%) this year over last year (45%). Hoosiers continue to oppose a state constitutional amendment banning gay marriage (58%). Last year's opposition to the amendment was 54%. Overall, 58% of registered voters oppose the amendment as do 56% of likely voters.
- Last year the Hoosier Survey found that 53% of Hoosiers supported decriminalizing marijuana by making it legal to hold small quantities. This year we asked about making marijuana a regulated substance like alcohol and tobacco. Hoosiers support this change, 52% to 45%--very similar to last year's results. Democrats were very supportive of this (64%), but even Republicans showed support at 49%. When asked if Indiana should tax marijuana like cigarettes, support rose to 78% among all Hoosiers, with virtually no variation by party.
- Other issues covered this year include banning videotaping of farm activities and perceptions of safety in downtown Indianapolis.

In addition to providing results for the state as a whole, some findings also are broken down by the three major regions of the state: Northern, Central, and Southern. The maps below illustrate the counties in each region.



For further information about the Bowen Center and the Hoosier Survey, contact:

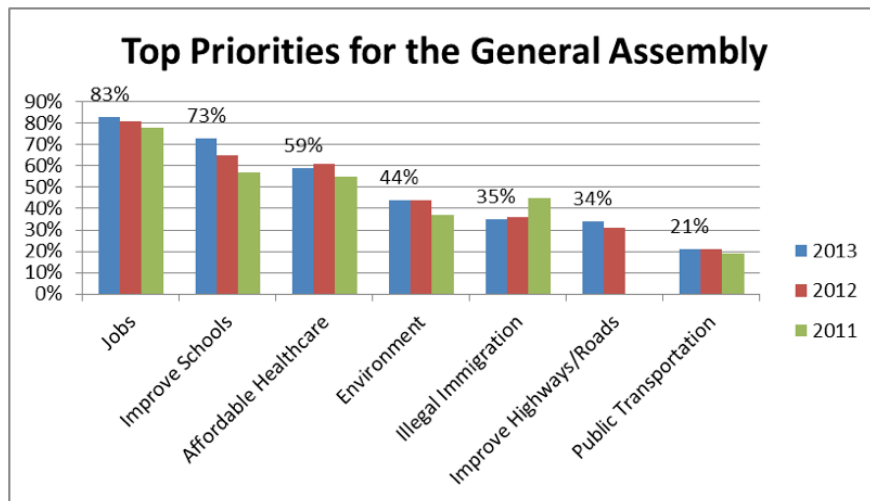
Dr. Raymond H. Scheele, Co-Director, The Bowen Center for Public Affairs 765-285-8982.  
[rscheele@bsu.edu](mailto:rscheele@bsu.edu)

Dr. Joseph Losco, Chair, Department of Political Science, Ball State University 765-285-8780.  
[jlosco@bsu.edu](mailto:jlosco@bsu.edu)

Dr. Sally Jo Vasicko, Co-Director, The Bowen Center for Public Affairs 765-285-8982.  
[svasicko@bsu.edu](mailto:svasicko@bsu.edu)

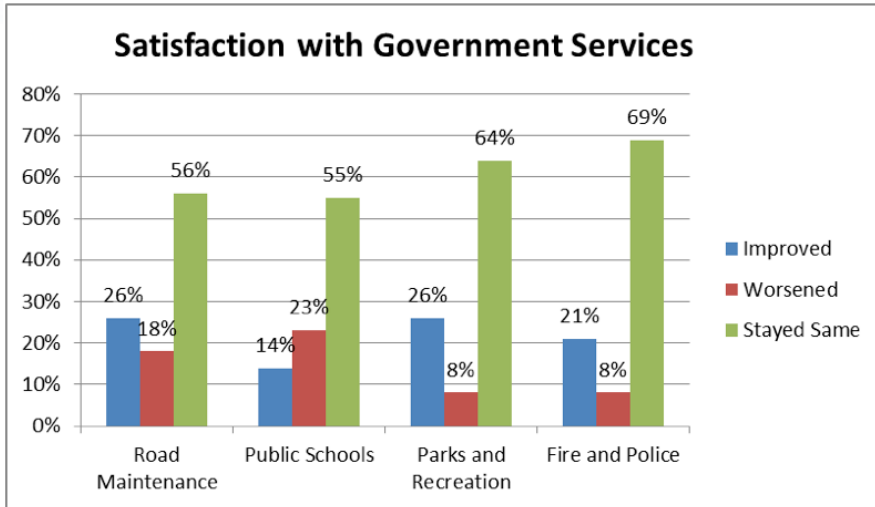
## TOP PRIORITIES FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Job creation continues as the number one priority for Hoosiers, with 83% saying this topic should be at the top of the legislative agenda. This is a slight increase over last year, when 81% named “jobs” as the top priority. The second highest priority is to improve schools (73%), which is a substantial increase over last year (65%). Affordable health care is the third highest priority at 59%, compared to last year’s 61%. Environmental protection has stabilized at 44%, the same as last year, after climbing 7 percentage points from 2011 to 2012. Illegal immigration continues a three year decline as a major focus for Hoosiers with highways and roads and public transportation continuing to trail other priorities.

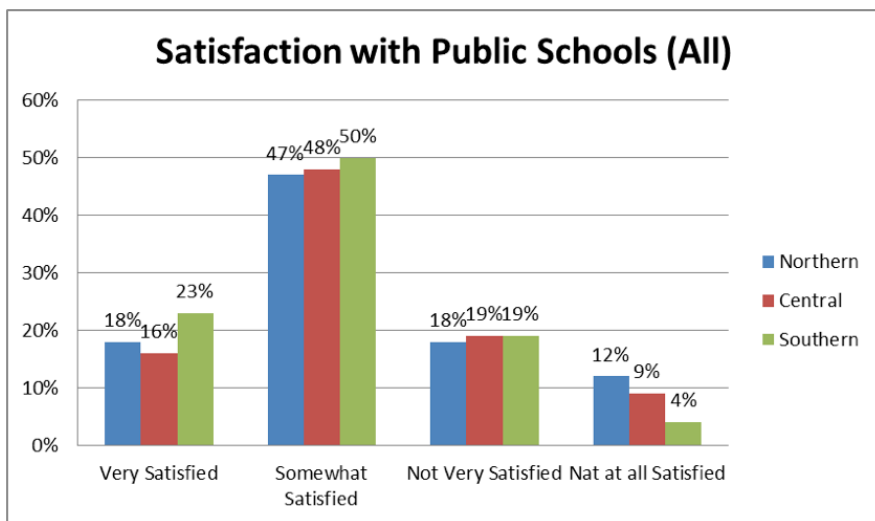


## SATISFACTION WITH PUBLIC SERVICES

Similar to last year, Hoosiers have not noticed major differences in service delivery across a host of areas ranging from road maintenance to public schools, parks and recreation, and fire and police protection. There is a slight improvement in the areas of road maintenance and public schools, with fewer respondents saying that these services “worsened” over the past year as compared to 2012 Hoosier Survey.

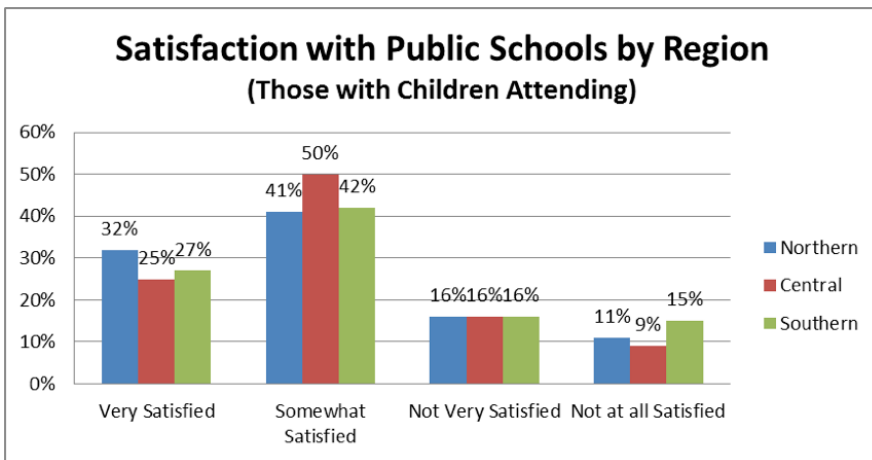
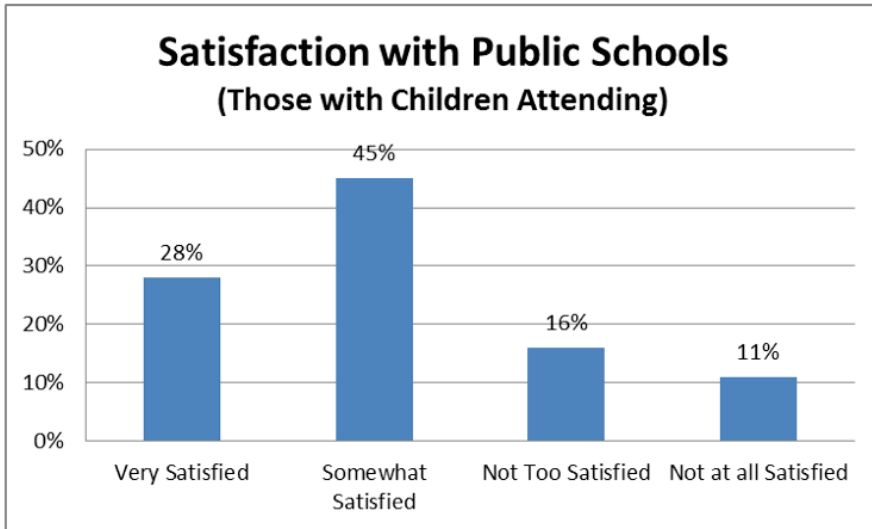


SCHOOLS

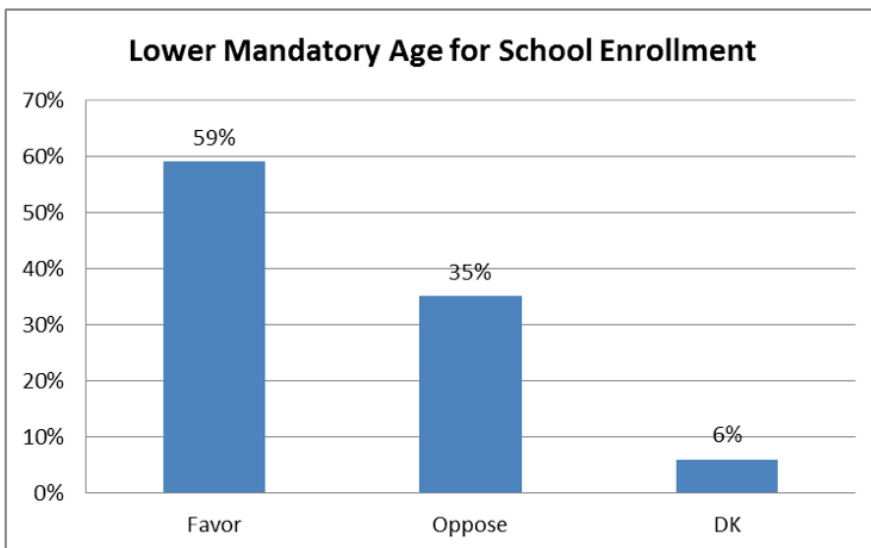


Once again, we show strong support for public schools across all regions of the state. Overall, 66% say they are very or somewhat satisfied with the public schools, a number similar to last year's results (69%). Satisfaction levels for those with children in the public schools are even higher at 73%.

These findings hold across both political parties (GOP at 61%, Dems at 73%). Results are similar for registered vs. non registered adults.

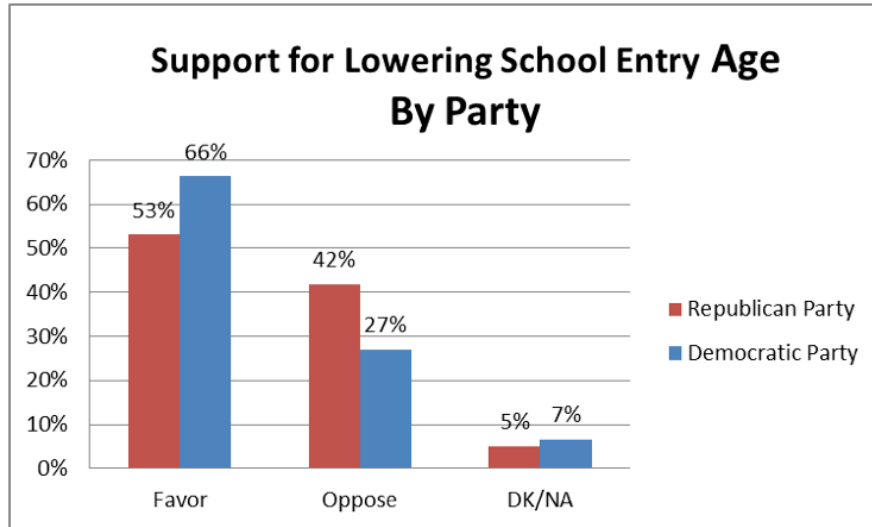


LOWERING THE AGE FOR SCHOOL ENROLLMENT





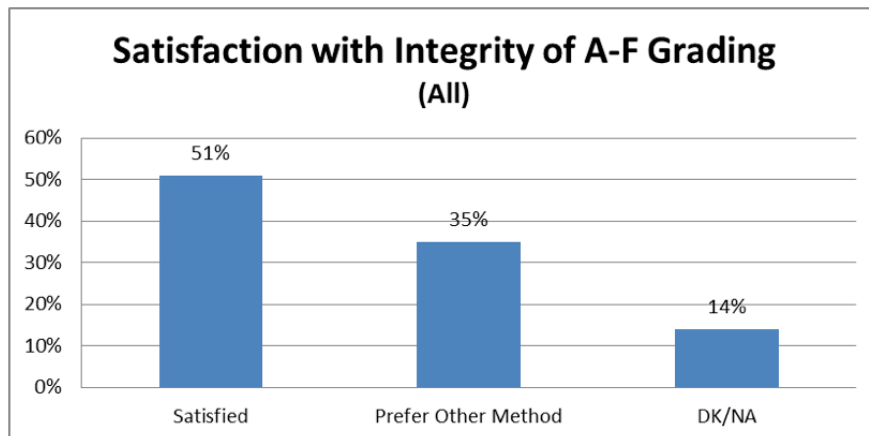
Legislation to lower the age for mandatory enrollment in school from 7 to 5 years of age may be introduced in the upcoming session. Overall, Hoosiers support this idea by 59% to 35%. The result holds across party lines (GOP 53%, Dems 66%) and for both registered voters and adults not registered. Support is somewhat lower among those who say they voted in the 2012 elections at 55%.

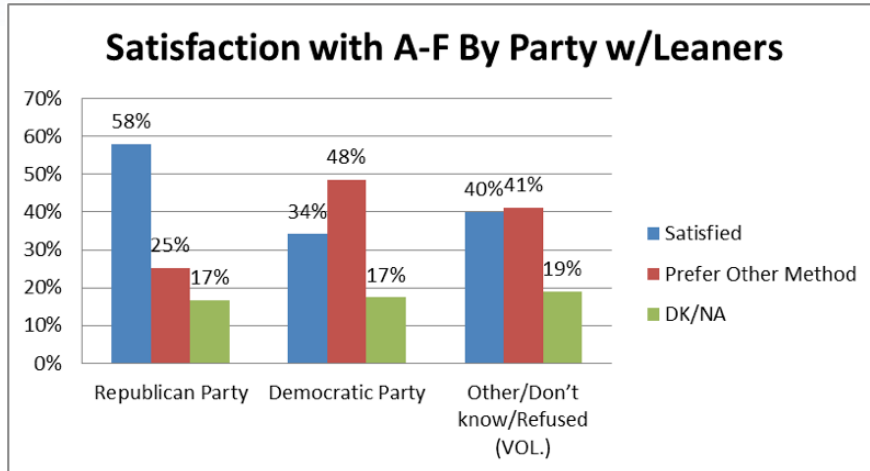


**SATISFACTION WITH A TO F GRADING OF SCHOOLS**

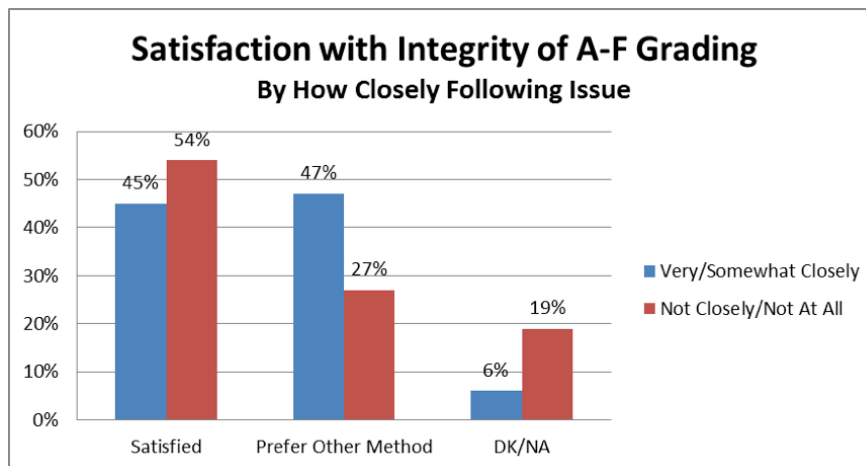
Changes to the A to F grading system for schools under Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Bennett led some to question the integrity of the grading system. We asked Hoosiers if they were satisfied with the system’s integrity or whether they would prefer moving to another evaluation method.

Roughly half of Hoosiers surveyed (51%) say they are satisfied with the integrity of the A to F grading system. Just over a third (35%) in our poll say they would prefer Indiana move to some other method for evaluating schools. However, the result masks a big gap between the parties with more than twice as many Republicans supporting the current system as Democrats (58% to 25%). Nearly half of Democrats (48%) prefer moving to some other measure.





We filtered by how closely respondents say they have followed the issue of A to F grading. Among those who have followed it closely support drops to 45% and preference for some other method increases to 47%. In short, the more informed Hoosiers are, the less they support A to F grading.

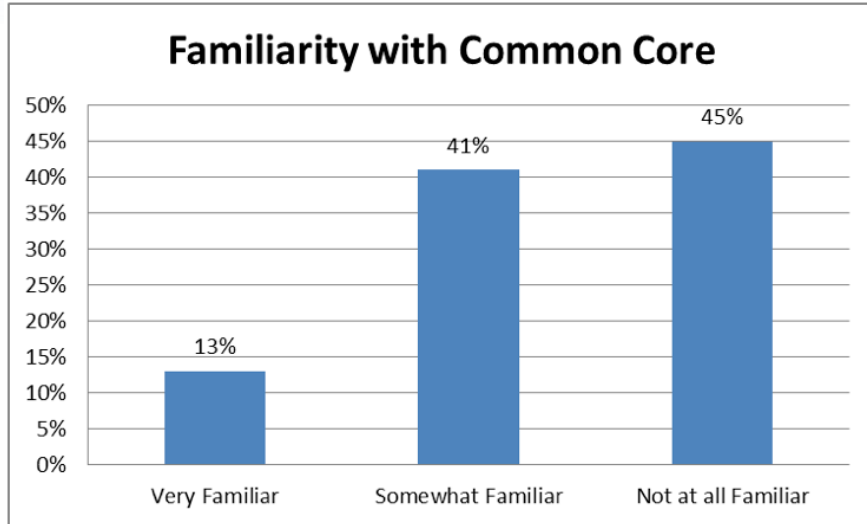


### COMMON CORE

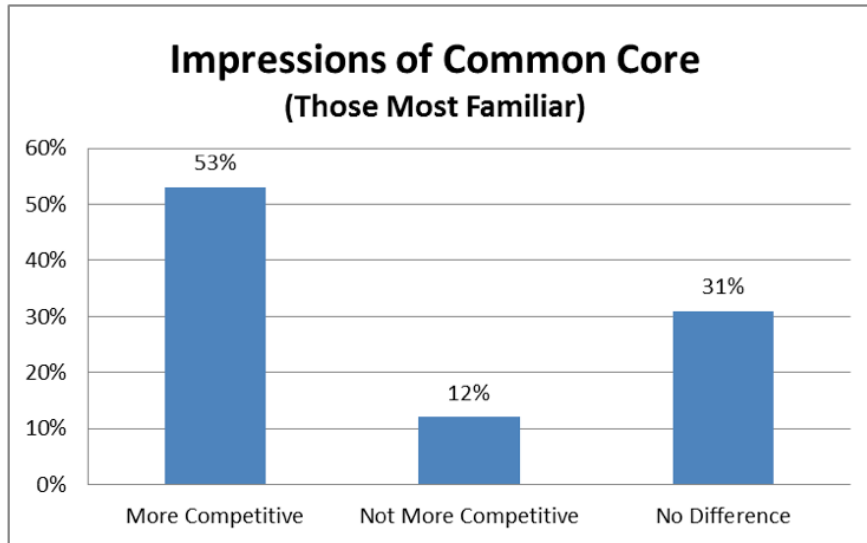
Hoosiers are about evenly divided when it comes to familiarity with the Common Core (54% very or somewhat familiar; 45% not familiar). Nationally, Gallup Reports 41% of Americans are familiar with the Common Core.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Source: 45<sup>th</sup> Annual PDK/Gallup Poll on Public Attitudes Toward the Public Schools

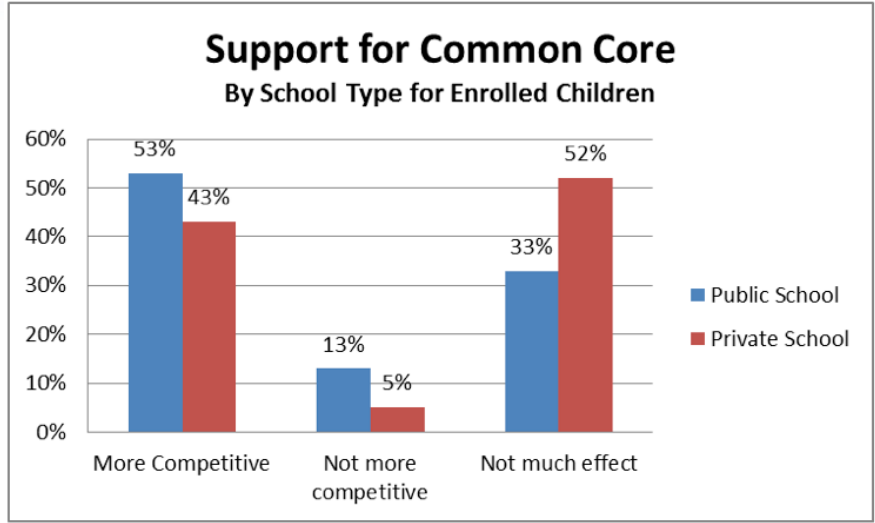




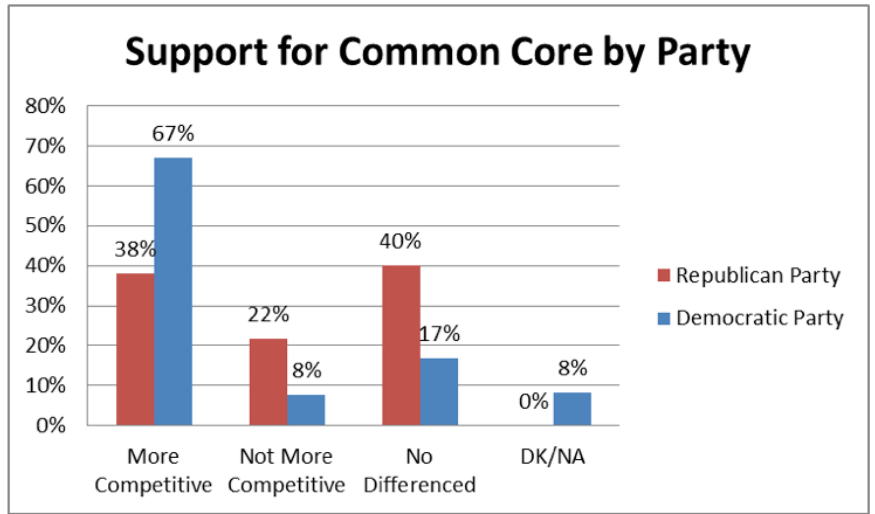
When those who are most familiar with Common Core are asked if they believed the curriculum would make Indiana students more competitive in the world, a majority (53%) said they believe it would. Almost a third (31%) say they do not think it would make much difference. There were no real differences between those with children in school and those without.



However, support for the Common Core is somewhat stronger among parents with children in the **public** schools than for those with children enrolled in private/charter schools or those receiving home schooling (53% to 43%).

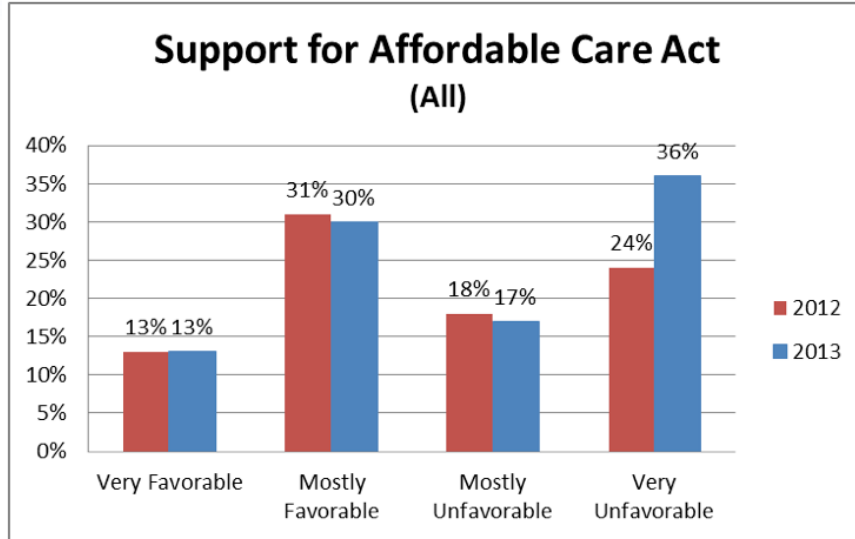


With regard to partisan differences, far more Democrats support the Common Core than Republicans (67% to 38%). A plurality of Republicans say the Common Core would make no real difference in competitiveness (40%). Gallup reports similar partisan differences nationally.



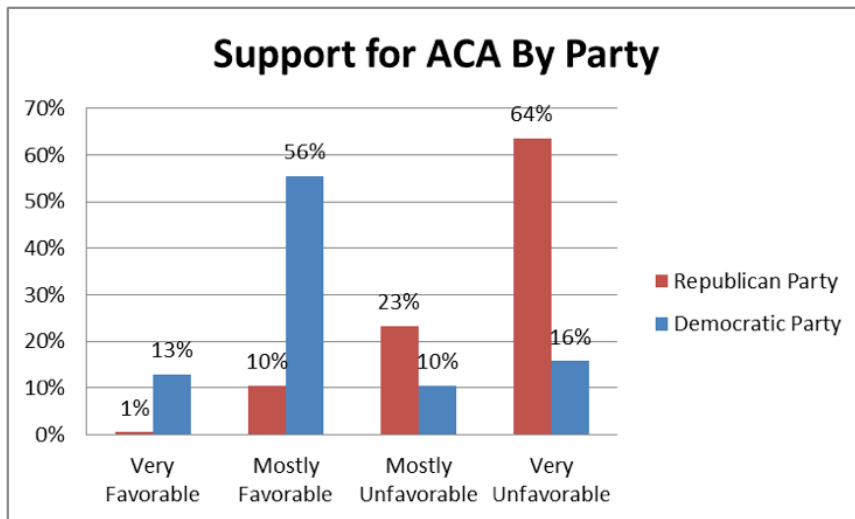
#### AFFORDABLE CARE ACT (ACA)

Hoosiers have a slightly more negative view of the ACA this year than last year. While the percent holding a very or somewhat favorable view of ACA is virtually identical to the figure we recorded last year (44% in 2012, 43% in 2013), more of those who were undecided last year have moved into the unfavorable (either very or somewhat unfavorable) camp by an increase of 11 percentage points (42% in 2012 to 53% in 2013).

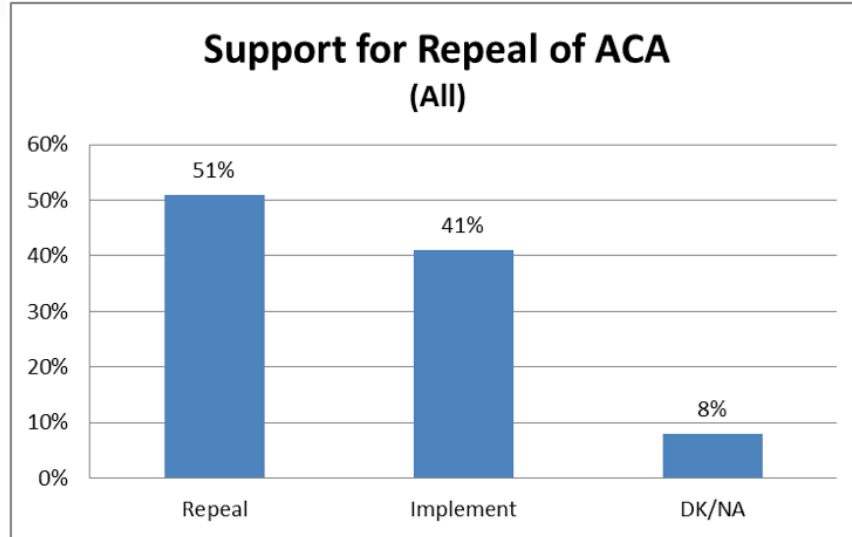


There is virtually no difference between registered and non-registered voters or those who say they voted in 2012 versus those who say they did not. Favorability is strongest among those in lowest income groups (under \$20K) at 53% and the highest income groups (\$100K and up) at 44%. Unfavorable views are highest for those with less education and almost evenly split among those with a 4-year college degree or higher.

Party differences are striking. Whereas 69% of Democrats are very or somewhat favorable, 87% of Republicans are very or somewhat unfavorable.

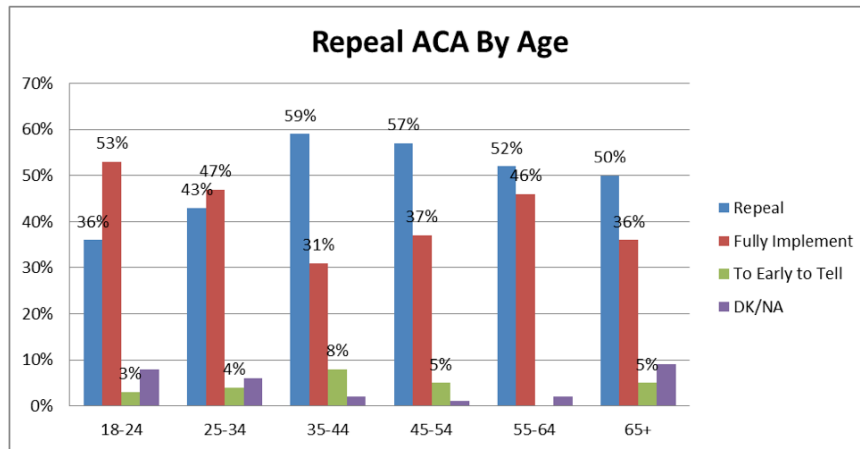


Despite clear unease with the ACA, barely a majority of Hoosiers seek repeal (51%) with 41% seeking full implementation and 8% undecided. Support for full implementation grows as education increases from 35% among those with a HS education or less to 48% of those with 4 years of college or more. Repeal is most popular among those with lower levels of educational attainment.



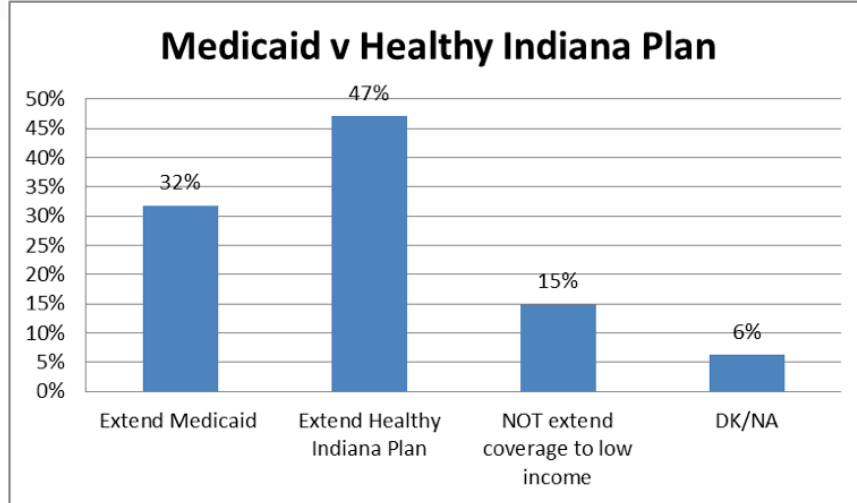
Whereas, Republicans overwhelmingly want to repeal ACA (83%), only 29% of Democrats seek repeal and 62% of Democrats want full implementation.

A very important age group for the success of Obamacare is the young. In our survey a majority (53%) of those 18-24 years of age favor full implementation over repeal (36%) as do 47% of those 25-34. Support for repeal is highest among those aged 35-44 at 59% and dips slightly to 50% among those 65 and older.

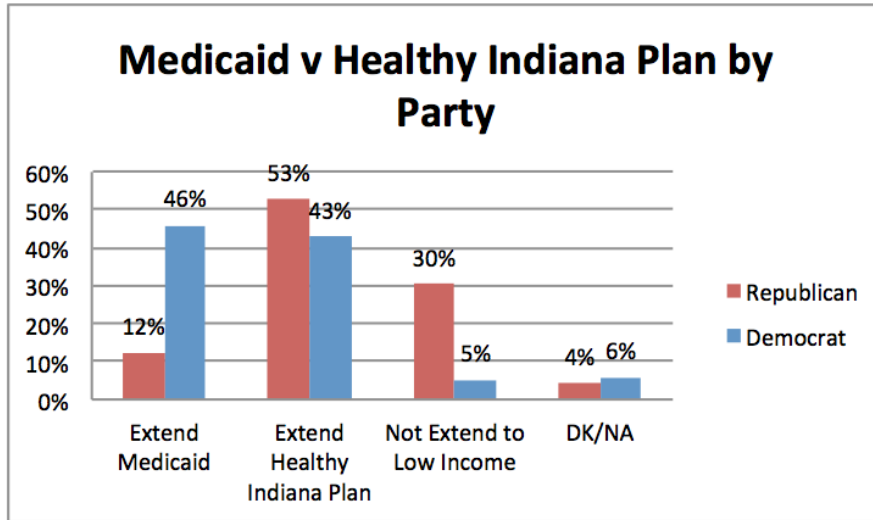


**MEDICAID VERSUS HEALTHY INDIANA PLAN**

Governor Mike Pence decided shortly after taking office this year that he would not participate in the Medicaid extension of the ACA for low income Hoosiers, an option permitted under the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebelius* (2013). Instead, he proposed extending Indiana’s Healthy Indiana Plan to more low income residents. In our survey, 47% of Hoosiers support the Governor’s decision whereas 32% support extending Medicaid as prescribed in the original ACA.



Predictably, results vary by party with Democrats almost evenly split on these options (43% favor HIP v. 46% who favor extending Medicaid) while Republicans favor the Healthy Indiana Plan over Medicaid extension by a huge margin (53% to 12%). These results show very little variation by region of state or by those who say they voted in 2012 versus those who did not.

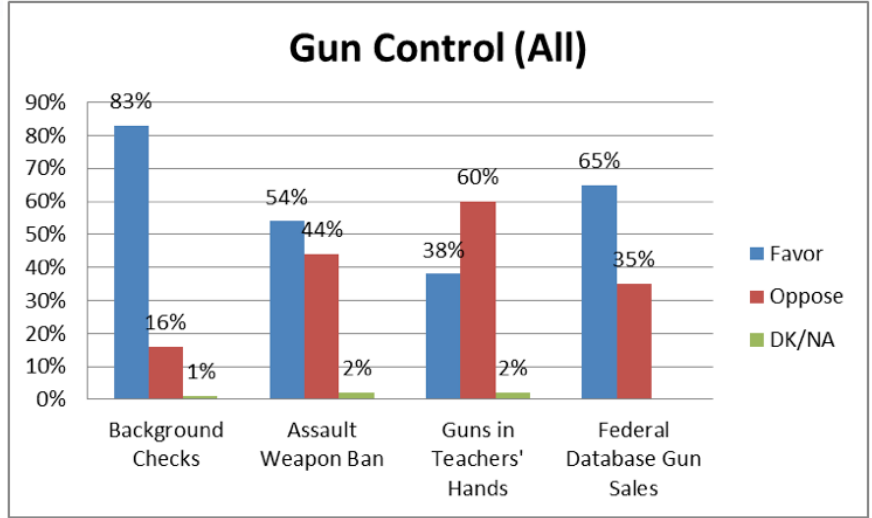


**GUN CONTROL**

Hoosiers appear to have similar attitudes regarding gun control as the nation as a whole. On a number of measures from background checks for sales at gun shows to banning the sale of assault weapons to arming teachers and school employees to creating a federal database to track gun sales, Hoosiers are within a few percentage points of national averages.

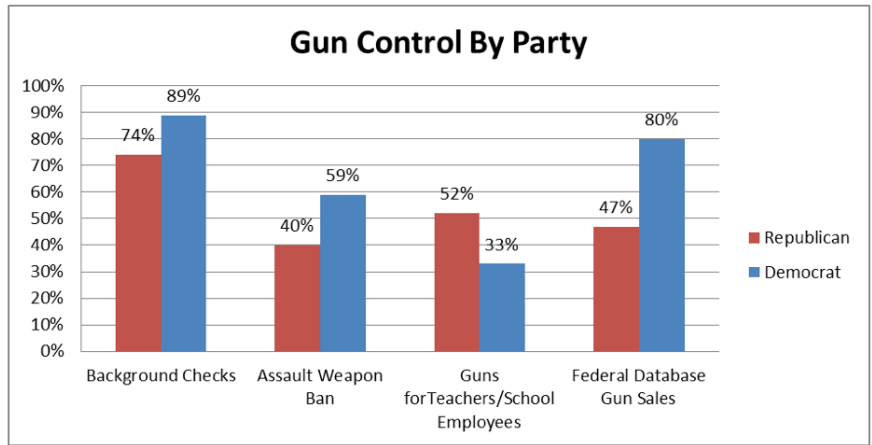
	National <sup>2</sup>	Hoosier Survey 2013
Favor Background checks	81%	83%
Favor Assault Weapon Ban	54%	54%
Favor Guns for Teachers/School Emp	34%	38%
Favor Federal Database	66%	65%

<sup>2</sup> Pew Research Center, May 1-5, 2013, Q. 46.



These figures are similar for those who say they voted in 2012 and those who did not, but support for assault weapons ban is even higher among those who voted (56%) than those who did not (42%).

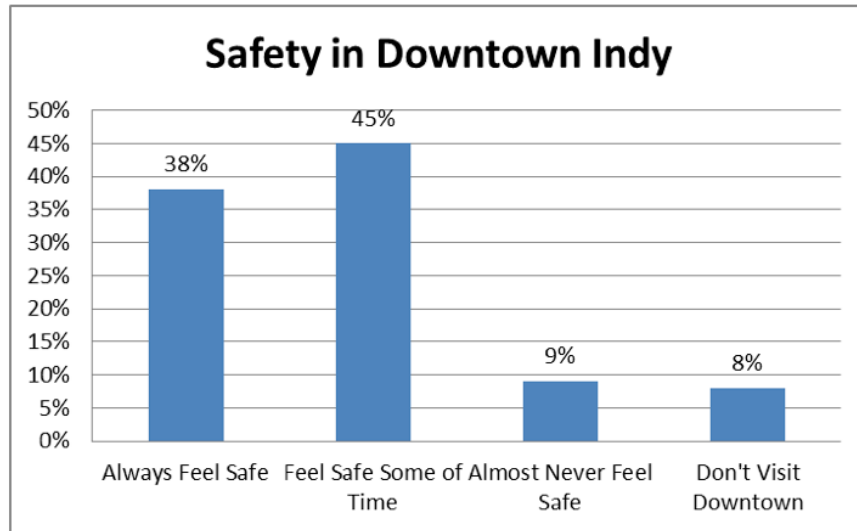
However, there are important differences by party affiliation. Republicans are less supportive of the assault weapons ban (40% to 59% for Democrats), less supportive of the federal database (47% to 80% for Democrats) and more supportive of putting guns in the hands of teachers and school employees to protect school safety (52% to 33% for Democrats). However, strong numbers in both parties support background checks for gun sales—74% of Republicans and 89% of Democrats support this measure.



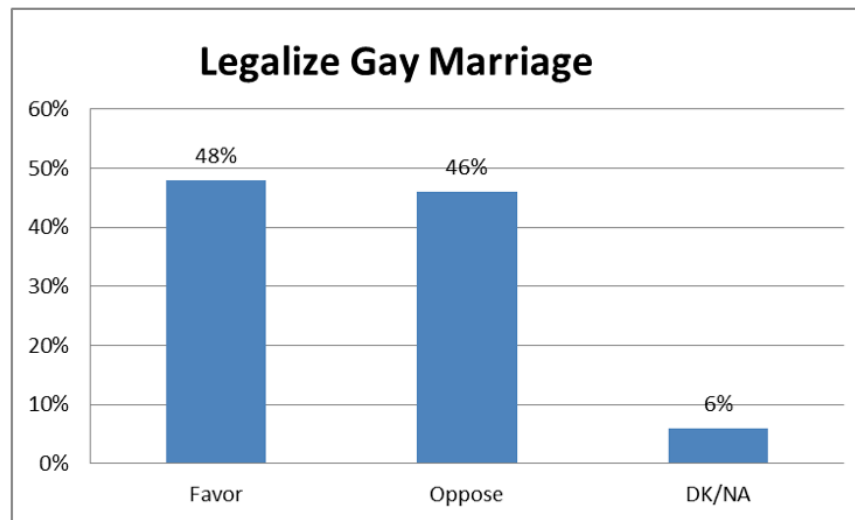
There is slightly less support for gun control measures among rural Hoosiers than among suburban or urban residents but virtually no differences among residents of different regions in the state.

**SAFETY IN DOWNTOWN INDIANAPOLIS**

This year, we asked Hoosiers living in Marion and the seven surrounding counties<sup>3</sup> about how safe they felt walking the streets of downtown Indianapolis. Thirty-eight percent reported feeling always safe and another 45% reported mostly always feeling safe when walking the Indianapolis streets downtown.



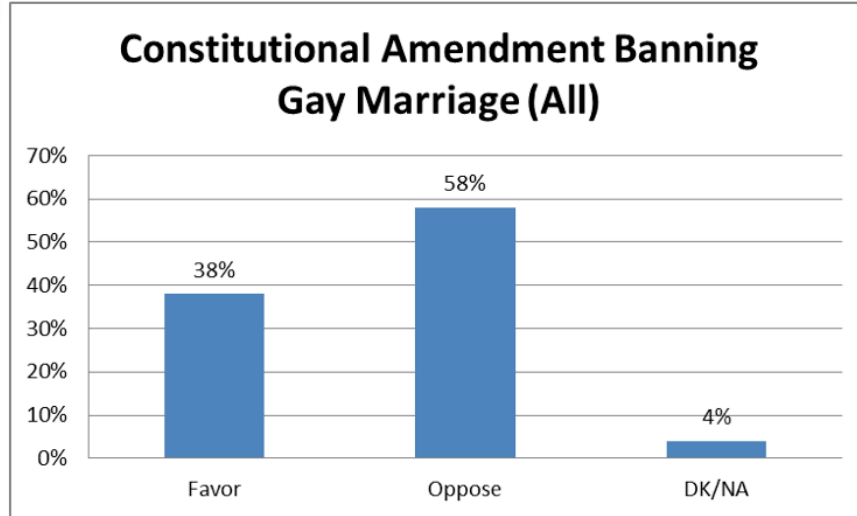
**SAME SEX MARRIAGE**



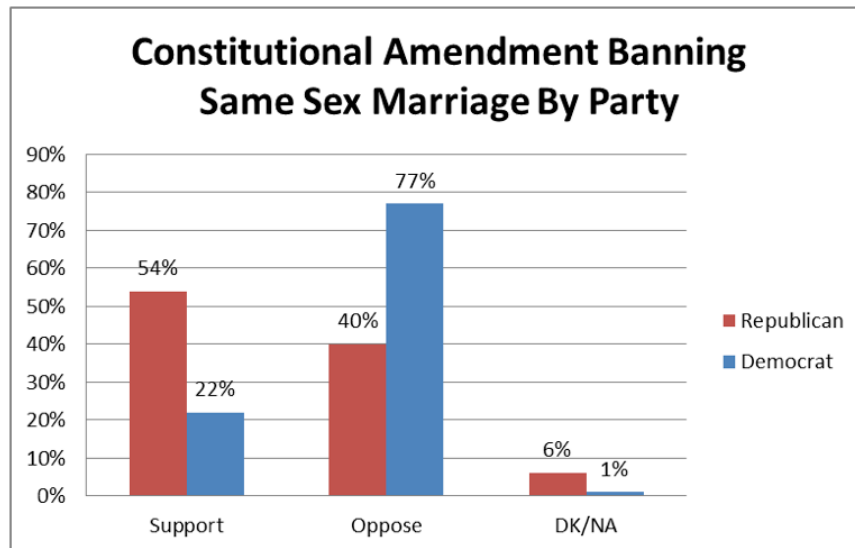
Hoosiers are somewhat more supportive of legalizing same sex marriage (48%) this year as opposed to last year (45%). However, as compared to the overall population, likely voters are slightly less supportive (44% favor, 48% opposed). Support for gay marriage is greatest among the young (72% of those 18-24 and 63% of those 25-34) and among Democrats (79% support versus 27% support by Republicans).

<sup>3</sup>Counties Sampled: Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Marion, Putnam and Shelby. Margin of error for Indy Region based on total answering Q26 (N=147): +/- 9.7%





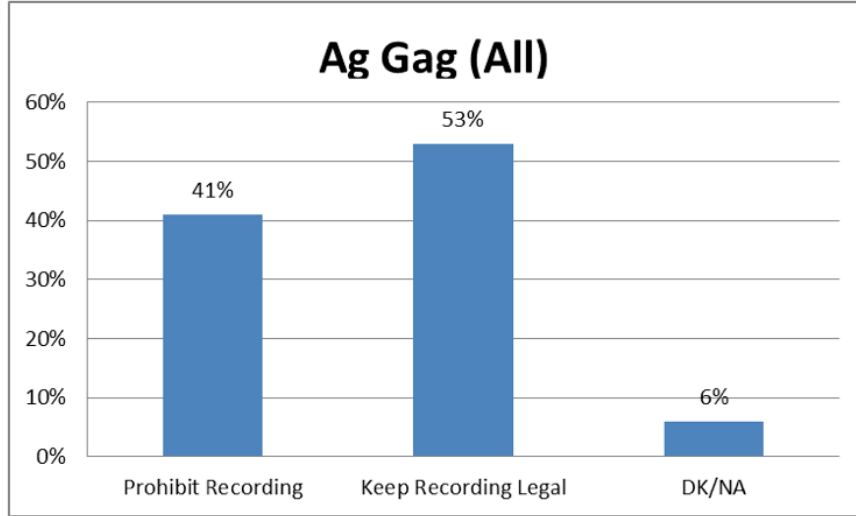
Hoosiers continue to oppose a state constitutional amendment banning gay marriage (58%). Last year's opposition to the amendment was 54%. Overall, 58% of registered voters oppose the amendment as do 56% of likely voters.



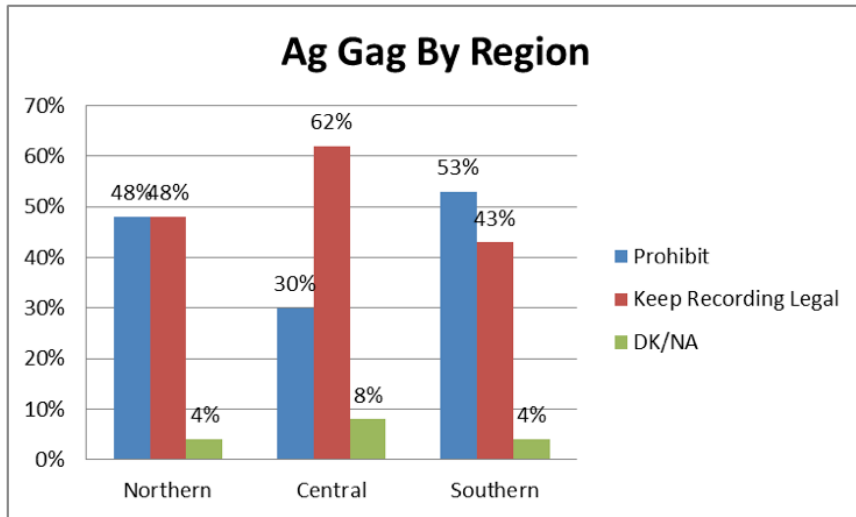
However, only 40% of the Republicans oppose the Amendment whereas 77% of Democrats are opposed.

#### PROHIBITING VIDEOTAPING OF AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES (AG GAG)

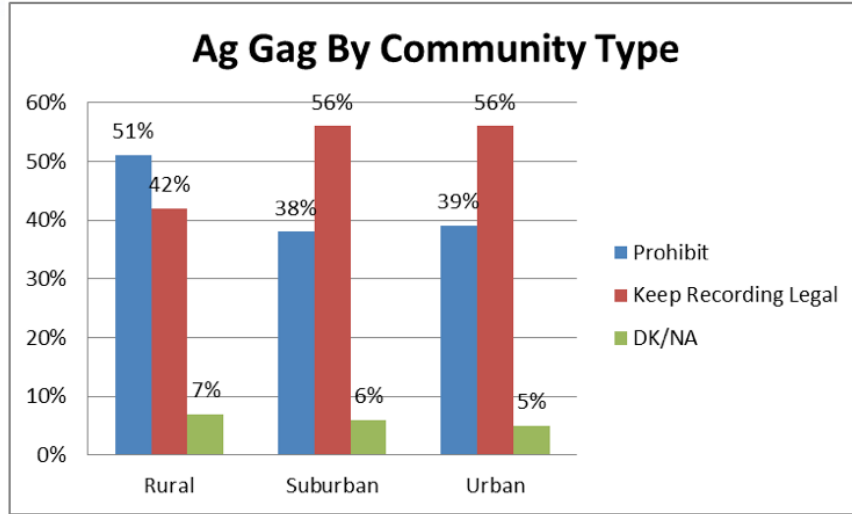
S.B. 373 which would have criminalized the taking of photos at farms or slaughterhouses and publishing them in an attempt to hurt the business passed the Senate last legislative session but was pulled from the House calendar before a vote could be taken. House Speaker, Brian Bosma, assigned the bill to a summer study committee and the bill may be resurrected in the coming session. We asked Hoosiers whether the videotaping of farm practices should be prohibited or remain legal.



Forty-one percent of Hoosiers prefer outlawing the videotaping of farm practices that might show animal cruelty. A majority of Hoosiers (53%) favor keeping such taping legal. Support for prohibition is slightly higher in Southern Indiana (53%) as opposed to Northern Indiana (48%) and Central Indiana (30%). Democrats favor keeping the practice of videotaping farm practices legal by a margin of 57% to 42% whereas Republicans are more closely divided on the issue with 48% favoring prohibition and 42% supporting continued legality.



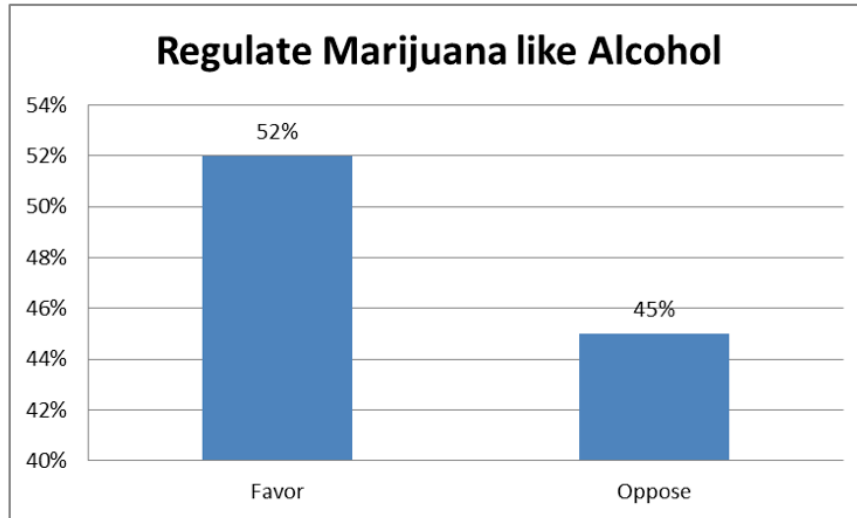
As expected, rural communities are more in favor of outlawing the practice (51%) as opposed to Hoosiers living in suburban (38%) and urban areas (39%).



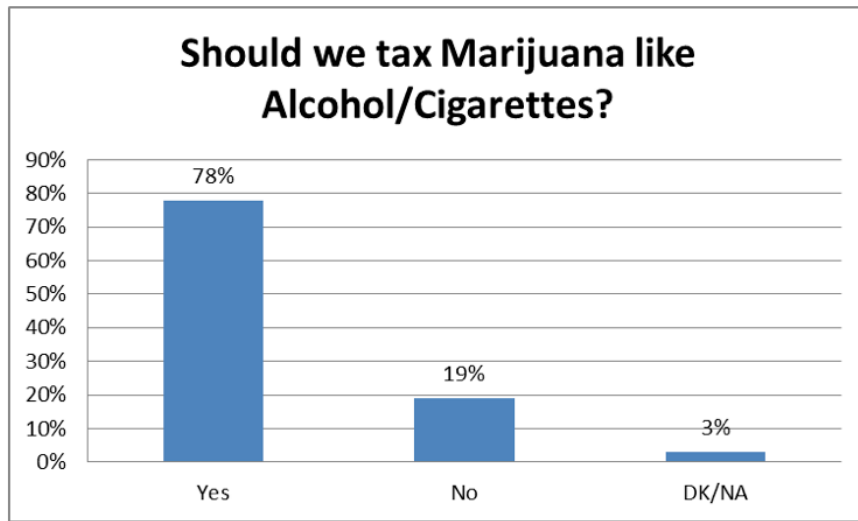
### MARIJUANA

Last year, our survey showed 53% of Hoosiers supported decriminalizing marijuana by making it legal to possess small quantities.

This year, we asked whether Hoosiers would support making marijuana a regulated substance much like alcohol and tobacco. Hoosiers supported this change 52% to 45%, mirroring last year's findings with respect to decriminalization. While Democrats were more supportive of this change (64%), Republicans were evenly divided (49% in favor, 51% opposed).

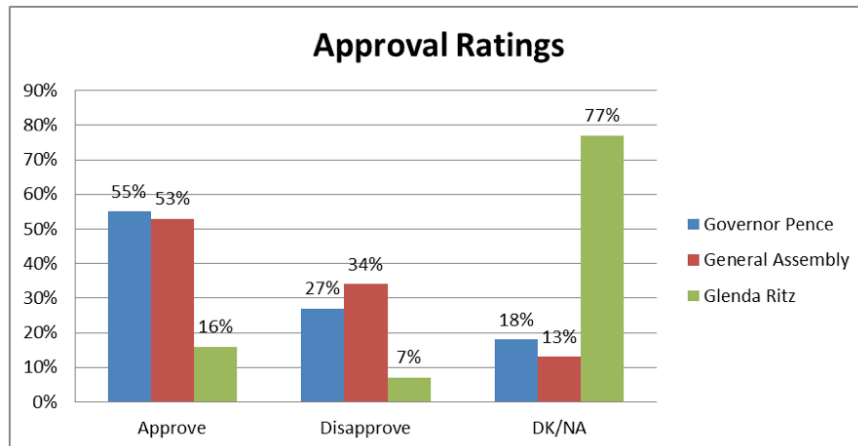


When asked if we should tax marijuana like cigarettes, support rose to 78% with virtually no differences by party affiliation.



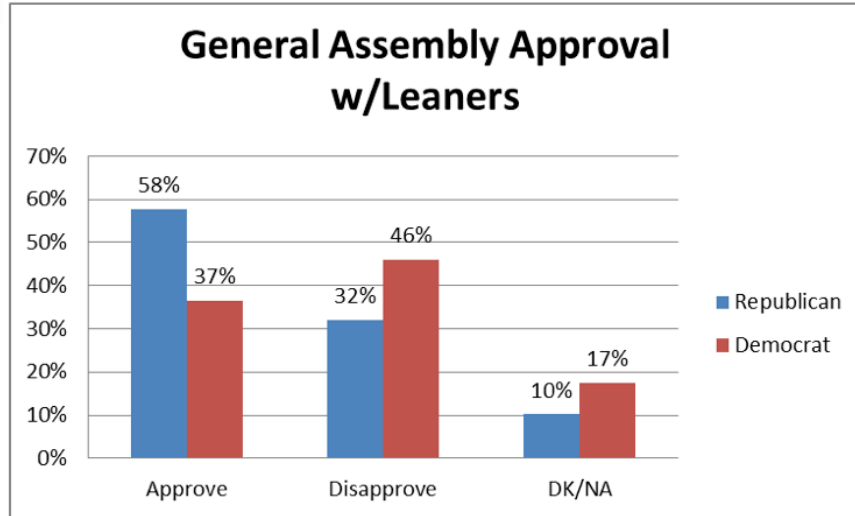
**APPROVAL RATINGS**

Overall approval for Governor Mike Pence is fairly high at 55% and compares favorably to the approval rating our survey recorded for former Governor Mitch Daniels (52%) back in 2011. Results are similar for registered voters as well as for those who are not registered and for those reporting they voted in 2012 versus those who said they did not. But there is a clear political divide with approval among Republicans 30 percentage points higher (77%) than among Democrats (47%) with Independents hovering in between (at 51%).



The General Assembly also fares well in our survey. Overall support is sound at 53% approval but buoyed by strong support by Republicans identifiers at 72% with Democrats 25 percentage points lower at 47% and Independents nearly identical at 48%

Still, these numbers are much stronger than for national leaders where the president's approval rating during the third quarter of 2013 stood at about 45% and Congress at about 11% (Gallup).



Glenda Ritz remains an unknown to most Hoosiers with 77% saying they do not know enough about her to have an opinion. This holds across both parties and Independents. This means the actions she is now taking will mold her political future. It also gives credence to the notion that the election results were primarily a referendum on former Secretary Tony Bennett's performance in office.

#### MITCH DANIELS

In retrospect, 33% of Hoosiers rate Mitch Daniels performance during his two terms in office as excellent or very good. Slightly more (37%) rate his performance as just "good" with another twenty-six percent viewing his performance as poor or very poor. As expected more Republicans rate his performance as excellent or very good (59%) than Democrats (20%). Independents are between these two extremes with 30% rating his eight year record as excellent or very good.

