

**Kansas Policy Survey: Spring 2001
Survey Results – Short Version**

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Executive Summary

The Kansas Policy Survey, Spring 2001 (KPS-Spring01) consisted of over 80 questions that were constructed by the Director and Manager of the Survey Research Center as well as from consultation with others in the Policy Research Institute at the University of Kansas. While the survey is not inclusive of all policy and political issues affecting Kansas, it represents a breadth of issues and concerns from the 2000 Presidential election, to current and future economic expectations, policy preferences for Kansas state services, and the recent decision by the Kansas Board of Education to re-emphasize evolution in the science curriculum. The short version here contains the findings for selected survey questions specifically related to Kansas state government, policy and politics.

The results of the survey reveal interesting and important information about Kansans' perspectives on the various issues. For the most part, Kansans are satisfied with how things are going in the state. However, there are small to sizable minorities that feel that substantial change is needed. *One of the most notable distinctions is that Kansans are fairly concerned about the state of public education in the state.* The following list shows the most important and interesting findings from the Kansas Policy Survey: Spring 2001.

- Education was the primary concern among voters in all regions of the state regardless of the Congressional District or region. Education in public schools (K-12) was the only state program area to receive majority support for *increased spending levels*. Nearly *two-thirds* of respondents statewide said they felt state spending for public education should be increased.
- Most Kansans consider evolution to be an important aspect of the science curriculum for public schools in the state. More over, most Kansans have resolved the religious beliefs about creation to reflect the influence of evolution theory.
- Roughly 44 percent of respondents statewide said that the Kansas economy was about the same as a year ago, while nearly 40 percent thought it was worse off than a year ago. Nearly 74 percent of respondents thought the state's economy would be about the same or better off in a year, compared to the 18 percent who believed it would be worse.
- A majority of respondents thought that they paid about the right amount of state income and sales taxes, while a majority thought they paid too much in property taxes.
- Most respondents trust their state government in Topeka to do the right thing most of the time or just about always (48%). Further, Kansans place more trust in their state government to do the right thing most of the time or just about always (48%) than trust the federal government to do the right thing most of the time or just about always (37%).
- A substantial majority of respondents believe that their drinking water at home is safe to drink (69%). When asked how important it was that Kansas clean its waterways to help ensure the quality of drinking water, *over three-fourths* of respondents said that it was *very important*.

- About 45 percent of respondents were supportive for increasing Kansas state taxes to help clean up and protect Kansas's water resources. The findings from the survey suggest that Kansans feel that clean water is very important; however, they are not sure how to achieve it or to pay for it.
- A majority of respondents (50%) felt that the state legislature should vote to keep the state lottery. A majority of respondents across all regions of the state supported continuing the lottery.

The survey was a random digit-dial survey of households regarding their views about a range of current social, political, economic, and policy views. The survey was conducted by the Survey Research Center of the Policy Research Institute at the University of Kansas, between March 5, 2001 and May 11, 2001. Of the households contacted 503 agreed to complete the survey for a cooperation rate of 39 percent. With the 503, we can have 95 percent confidence with a margin of error of +/- 2.7 percentage points. The margin of error reflects the interval in which the data collected by the Kansas Policy Survey would be within +/- 2.7% of the means in 95 out of 100 surveys conducted among adults in Kansas.

Interviews for the KPS-Spring01 were begun on March 5, 2001 with a survey format of approximately 71 questions. After completing 108 surveys, the survey was expanded to include additional topics such as the Kansas Board of Education's decisions to once again emphasize evolution in the science curriculum in public schools and on standardized tests. Thus, starting on March 13, 2001 the expanded survey instrument replaced the previous version. Then between March 13, 2001 and May 11, 2001 395 surveys were completed with a new survey instrument of approximately 87 questions. The average interview length for the expanded survey was just over 25 minutes, and respondents were free to discontinue at any time during the survey. As a result of a change in the survey instrument and respondent participation, not all questions will have the same number of respondents. The number of respondents is noted where statistics and data from the KPS-Spring01 are reported. Results from the full survey, as well as a copy of the survey instrument itself can be found at www.ku.edu/pri/resrep.shtml (Report 265A - Kansas Policy Survey: Spring 2001, Survey Results). For more information regarding the survey, the findings reported here, or the survey data contact the Survey Research Center at 785-864-9117.

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A: Attitudes about Economics, Public Concerns, and Efficacy in Government

A-1: Problems Facing the State of Kansas

The Kansas Policy Survey: Spring 2001 (KPS-Spring01) asked respondents about their views of current economic, political and social issues in the state of Kansas, as well as about their level of trust in state government. These questions were sprinkled throughout the survey. One of the questions asked respondents about what they perceived to be the *most important* problem facing the state of Kansas today. Any answer that a respondent gave was accepted.

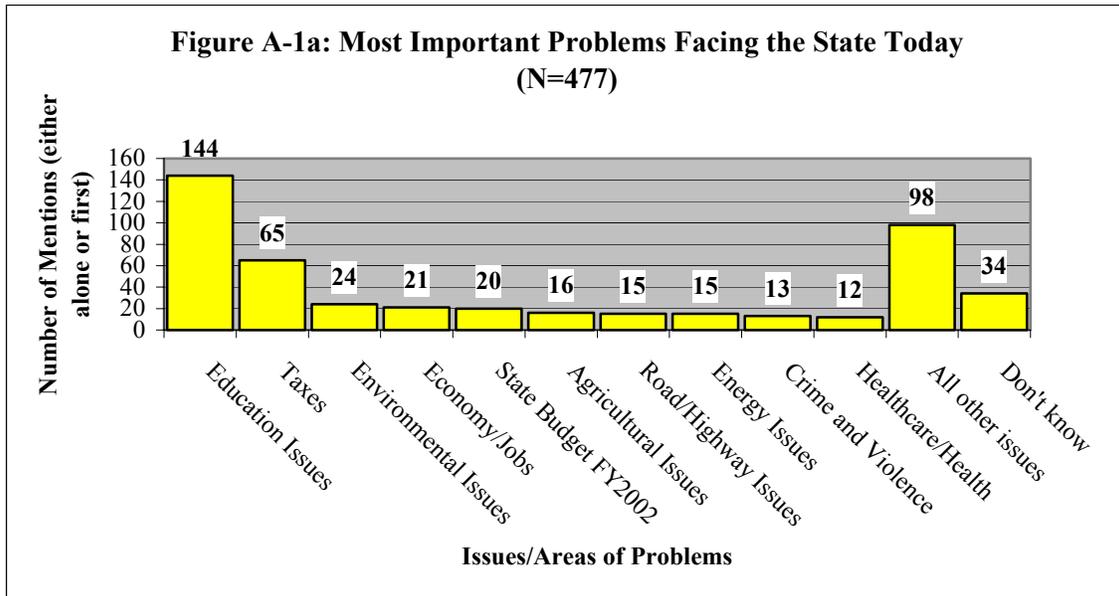


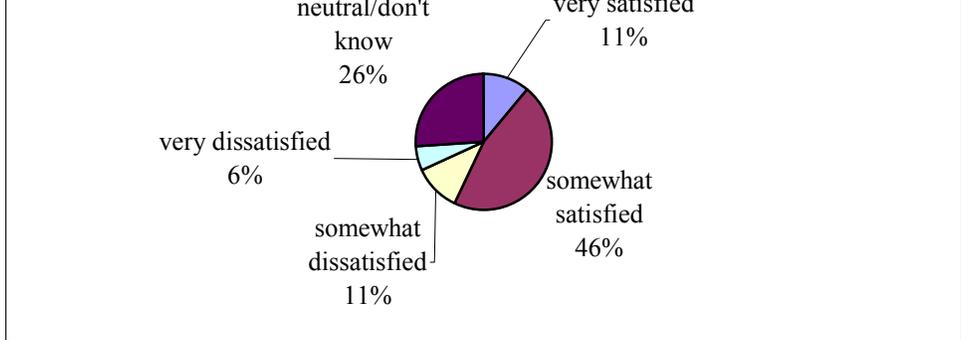
Figure A-1a lists the responses to the above question when an answer was given either by itself or was the first mentioned in a set of multiple problems mentioned by respondents. Of the 477 responses, the most mentioned issue was education (general/public education). Education was mentioned as either the most important problem or was tied for importance with another issue by 144 respondents statewide. This number represents just over 30 percent of all the answers recorded. Additionally, education was a primary concern among respondents in all regions of the state regardless of the Congressional District or metropolitan status of the county. Education made up at least 26 percent of all mentioned problems in each of the four Congressional Districts, with the Fourth being the lowest at 26 percent and the Third being the highest at 38 percent. About 28 percent of both the First and Second Congressional District respondents were concerned about education. The Third District stands out from the rest of the state with a larger share of respondents feeling that education was *the most important* problem facing that state today.

Nearly equal percentages of both female and male respondents (30.4% and 30.1% respectively) thought education was the most important problem facing the state. Education is also the issue most mentioned across all levels of educational attainment by respondents. However, there is a significant difference between those respondents holding at least a four-year college degree and those who do not. About 46 percent of Kansans who had attained at least a bachelor's degree mentioned education as the most important problem, while only 23 percent of those with only some college education mentioned it as most important, and even fewer respondents with a high school degree or less mentioned education (19%). Thus, it appears that the more education that respondents had achieved for themselves, the more likely they were to say that education was the most important problem facing the state.

After education no single issue or area received nearly as many mentions by respondents, as demonstrated by Figure A-1a. Only one other issue -- taxes -- made up more than five percent of all the problems mentioned. Taxes, mentioned either alone or as the first of a set of problems was given by roughly 14 percent of respondents statewide. Taxes were mentioned by roughly equal percentages of Kansans across the state, regardless of gender. However, respondents who had attained higher levels of education thought taxes were less of a problem facing the state. Only 9.6 percent of the respondents who at least held a bachelor's degree mentioned taxes as the most important issue, compared with 17.6 percent of those with some college education and 14.7 percent of those with only a high school education (or less).

The next eight issues or issue areas received between ten and 25 mentions each statewide and all eight combined would not equal the number of responses for education. The eight issue areas, in order, are the environment (including water and water quality concerns), the economy, passing the Kansas State Budget for Fiscal Year 2002, farming/agricultural concerns, roads/highways/transportation, energy issues (supplies, costs, and crises), crime, and, finally, health care. While the responses demonstrate that there is a wide variety of problems that face the state, education is by far the biggest area of concern throughout the state.

Figure A-1b: Level of Satisfaction with the Way Things are Going in Kansas (N=491)



Respondents were also asked, in general, how satisfied they are with the way things are going in Kansas. Overall, respondents said they are fairly satisfied. Almost 57 percent of respondents statewide said they were somewhat satisfied or very satisfied, while about 17 percent said they were somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, with just over a quarter of respondents saying they were in-between or neutral (see Figure A-1b). There were regional variations in how Kansans feel about how things are going in the state. The data show a sizable difference between respondents in the Second and Third Congressional Districts (the eastern one-third of the state) and those in the First and Fourth Districts (the western two-thirds of the state).

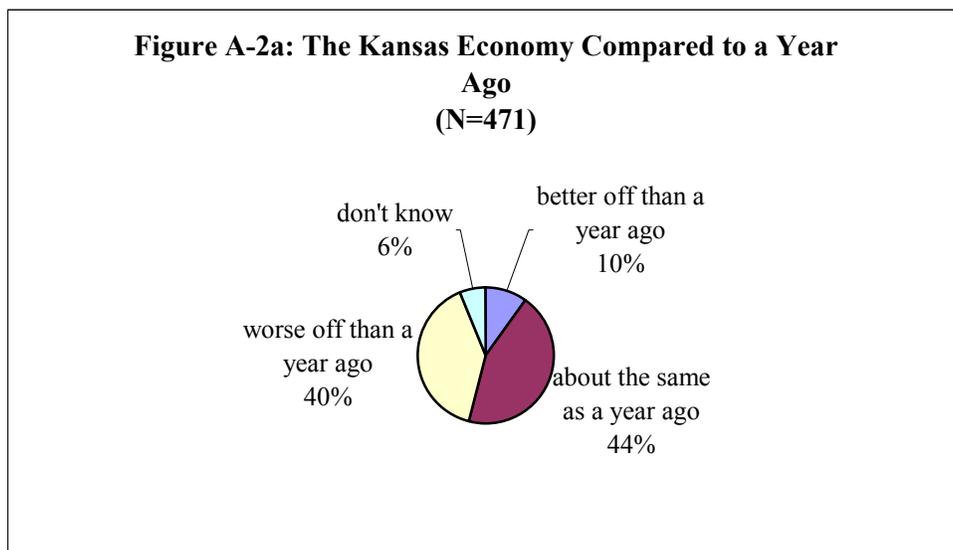
In the Second and Third Districts, the percent of respondents saying they are either somewhat satisfied or very satisfied is 63 percent. These two districts also had the lowest neutral response rates, both under 22 percent. On the other hand, the First and Fourth Districts had substantially lower levels of satisfaction at only 53 percent and 46 percent respectively, and a higher rate of neutral responses (about 30 %). But it is the respondents in the Fourth Congressional District that seem to have the least satisfaction with how things are going in Kansas. Respondents in the Fourth District only had a combined satisfaction level of 46 percent and they had the highest combined level of dissatisfaction at 22 percent, as well as the highest level of neutral responses (31%).

There was also a difference in the way that men and women felt about how things are going in the state. While about 63 percent of male respondents said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the way things are going in Kansas, only 55 percent of female respondents felt the same. The differences between the genders is found in that men were more likely to give a satisfied response, while women were more likely to say they were in-between (18.6% versus 27.9%). There were no substantial differences in the level of reported satisfaction regardless of educational attainment, but there tended to be in increasing

percentage of respondents reporting to be satisfied to very satisfied with higher levels of income. Among respondents making under \$40,000 a year, about 53 percent said they were either somewhat or very satisfied, while among respondents making over \$60,000 a year about 65 percent said the same. Overall, although a majority of respondents (57%) felt at least satisfied by the way things are going in Kansas, nearly as many (46%) were *only* somewhat satisfied and *not* very satisfied. This suggests that there is room for change.

A-2: Economic Perceptions among Kansans

When asked about how the Kansas economy compares to one year ago, roughly 44 percent of respondents statewide said that it was about the same as a year ago, while nearly 40 percent thought it was worse than a year ago. Just over 10 percent of respondents thought that the Kansas economy was better off than a year ago (see Figure A-2a). The finding suggests that most respondents feel the economy is slowing, which reflects national trends in consumer confidence (Consumer Confidence Survey, May 2001).

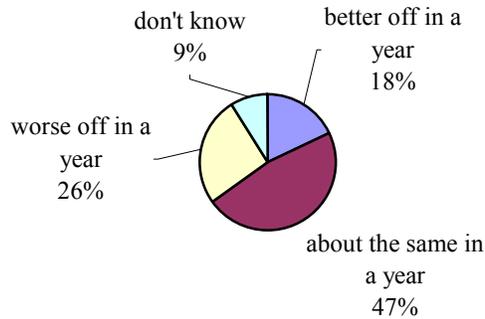


The regional breakdowns on this question look similar to those of the more general questions about how things are going in Kansas today. Both the Second and Third Congressional Districts had the largest share of respondents stating that the Kansas economy was about the same as a year ago. A majority of respondents in the Third Congressional District thought it was about the same, compared to only 33 percent and 43 percent respectively in the First and Fourth Districts. In fact, a majority of First District residents responded that the Kansas economy was worse off than a year ago, reflecting the continued decline in the farming sector. Regional differences also exist that reflect the “two states of Kansas.” While 50 percent of metro county respondents thought that the Kansas economy was about the same as a year ago, only about 40 percent of non-metro county respondents thought so.

Reviewing the same answers through the lenses of gender reveals that women were more likely to say that the Kansas economy is about the same as a year ago than men (50% to 42%), while men were more likely to say the Kansas economy had become worse off from a year ago (48% to 39%). Respondents who had at least a four-year college degree were more likely to think the Kansas economy was worse off now (47%) than those respondents who did not have a college degree (40%). When looking at how respondents of various income levels answered this question, an interesting difference exists between their answers here and on the question of satisfaction with the way things are going in Kansas. While respondents with higher income levels were more likely to say they were satisfied with the way things in general are going in Kansas than those making less money, they were more likely to say that the Kansas economy has declined over the course of the last year.

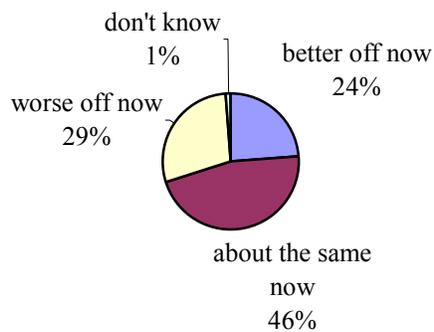
It is interesting to compare the responses to the above questions with the responses to the question about where Kansans think that the Kansas economy will be a year from now. When respondents look forward a year, their outlook is slightly negative (see Figure A-2b). Although the largest response given was that the economy would be about the same in a year, the number who thought that the economy would be better off in a year was almost 18 percent and the number who thought it would be worse was roughly 26 percent. Overall, a majority of respondents, regardless of their gender, income, educational attainment, geographical location in the state or their partisan affiliation, expect that the Kansas economy will not substantially change in the next year.

**Figure A-2b: Expectations for the Kansas Economy in A Year
(N=469)**



So how do the respondents' views about the Kansas economy compare with their own experiences? We examined this question through a set of matched questions that asked respondents how they are getting along financially these days and how they think they will be a year from now. When asked if they were financially getting along better, about the same, or worse than they were a year ago, about 45 percent of the respondents statewide said they were about the same, while just over 29 percent said they were worse off and about 24 percent said they were better off (see Figure A-2c).

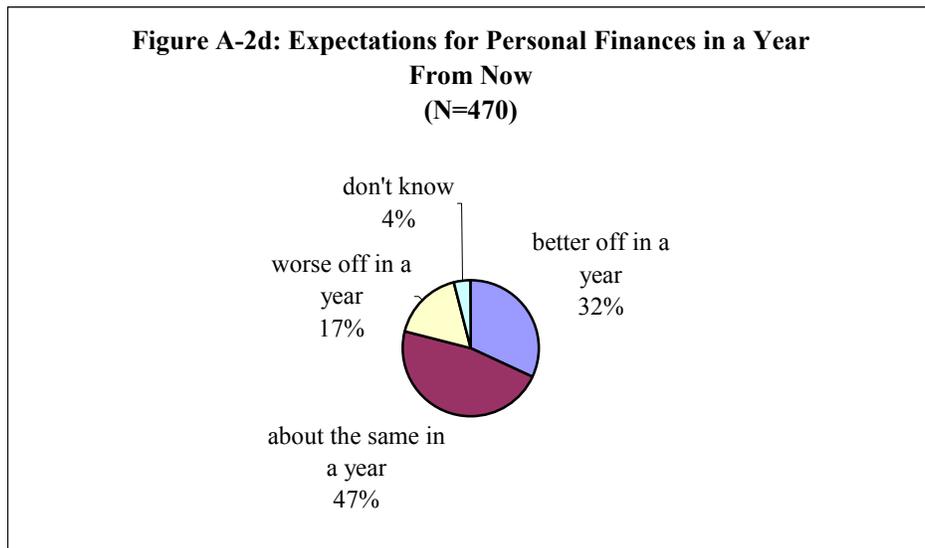
**Figure A-2c: Personal Finances Compared to a Year Ago
(N=470)**



Regional breakdowns show that respondents in the rural and western counties of the state were more likely to feel that they and members of their family living with them were worse off today compared to a year ago. Overall, about 29 percent of respondents statewide felt their family's finances were worse off. In the rural First Congressional District over 36 percent of respondents said they were worse off than

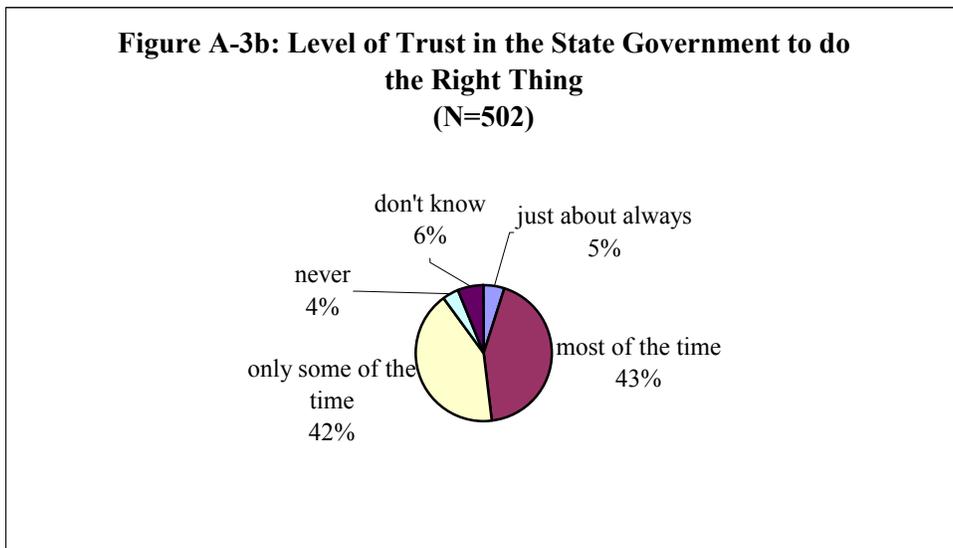
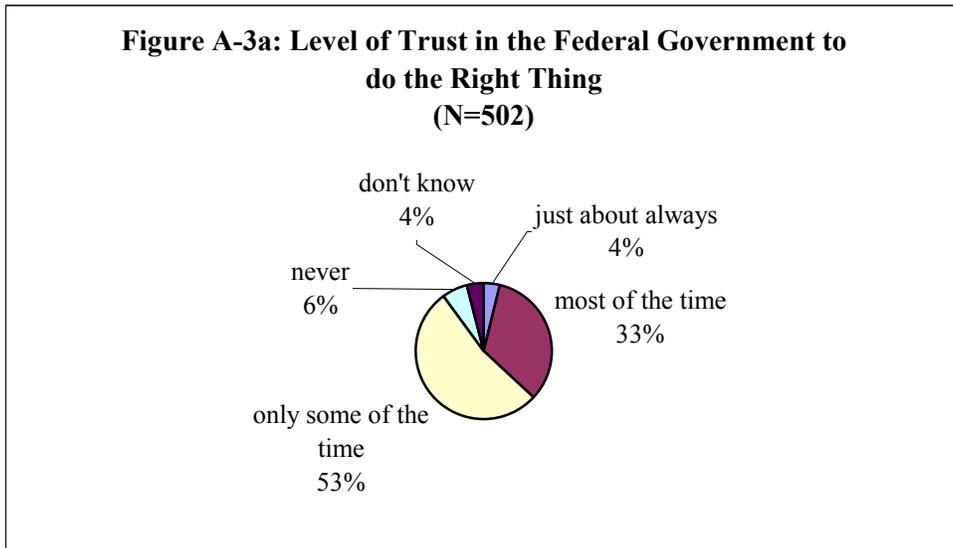
a year ago, but only 20 percent said they were better off (roughly 44% said they were about the same). Comparing these results to those from the question about how the Kansas economy is fairing compared to a year ago, we can see that while respondents in the First and Fourth Districts think that the economy is worse off, not as many believe that their families are worse off from a year ago (by roughly 10 percentage points). The data also show that respondents in the First District have the most negative view of the economy, both overall and in terms of their personal finances.

When respondents were asked where they thought their family's financial situation would be a year from now, we see that Kansans have a rosy prospective (see Figure A-2d). Nearly two times as many respondents thought that their family's financial situation would be better off in year than those who thought it would be worse off in a year (32% compared to 17%). However, nearly 47 percent of respondents statewide said that they thought it would be about the same in a year. Interestingly, the statewide pattern holds across all four Congressional Districts and between metro and non-metro counties. The pattern also holds regardless of gender and income. However, optimism seems to run a bit stronger among respondents with at least a bachelor's degree. Only about 12 percent of those with a college degree thought their family's finances would get worse in the next year, while nearly 38 percent thought that it would get better. Those respondents without a college degree were more likely to say they expected their family's finances to be worse off in a year. Thus, Kansans hold little hope that the Kansas economy will improve, but they hold slightly greater expectations that their own family's finances will improve.



A-3: Efficacy in Government

Respondents were also asked about their trust in Kansas state government and in the federal government. The questions read “How much of the time do you think you can trust the federal government in Washington D.C. to do the right thing” and “How much of the time do you think you can trust the state government in Topeka to do the right thing.” Results are presented in Figures A-3a and A-3b. A majority of respondents statewide (53%) said that they trusted the federal government to do the right thing only some of the time, while 37 percent said that they can trust the federal government most of the time or just about always.

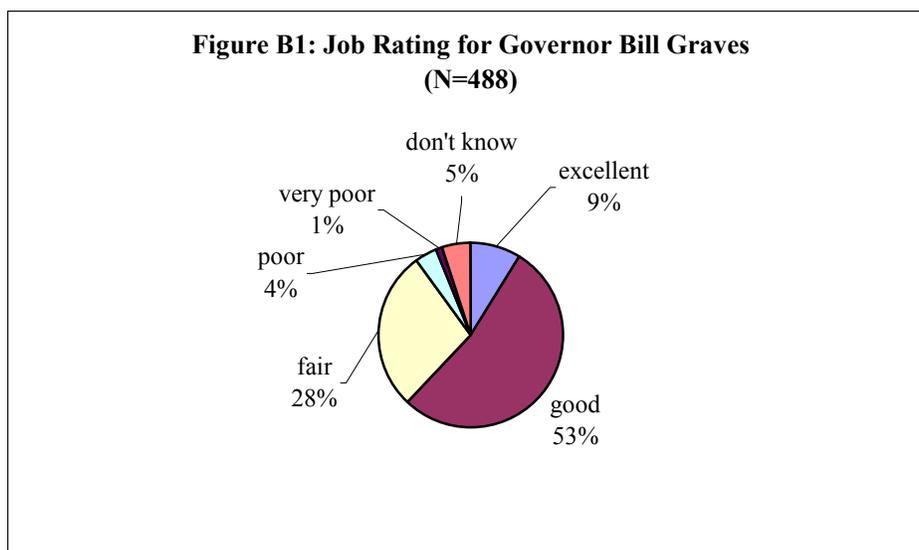


More respondents trust their state government in Topeka to do the right thing most of the time or just about always (48%) than they trust the federal government (37%). Although this difference is significant, it is somewhat misleading. For both the state and federal government, Figures A-3a and A-3b show that the percent of respondents who report trusting each government to do the right thing just about always is about the same (approximately 4% to 5%). Additionally, the percent of those saying that they never trust the state or federal governments is about the same (6% for the federal and 4% for the state). The difference lies with the respondents who trust state government “most of the time” while trusting the federal government “only some of the time.”

B: Attitudes toward state policies, taxes, and spending in Kansas

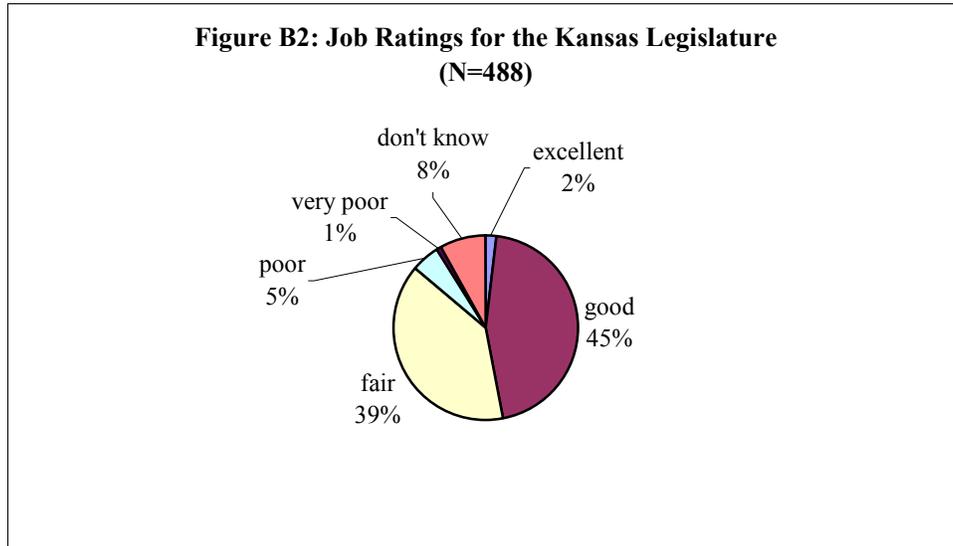
Rating the Governor and the State Legislature

The survey results show that Kansans have a more favorable view of the job that Governor Graves is doing compared to the state legislature, although both received overwhelming support from the respondents. Nearly 63 percent of respondents felt that Governor Bill Graves does either an excellent or good job (see Figure B1), while only 47 percent of respondents felt the same about the job the state legislature does (see Figure B2).



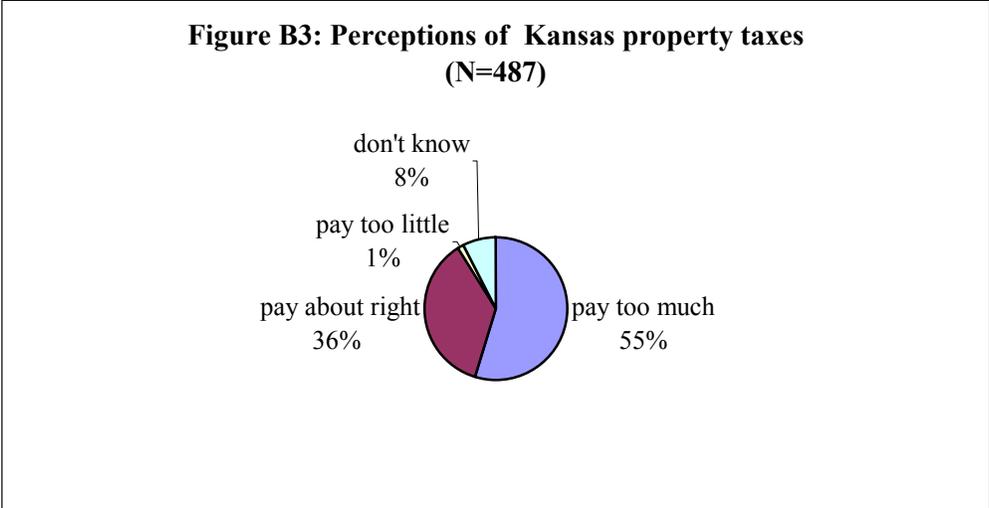
Support for Governor Graves remains fairly constant across the state. However, support for the state legislature fluctuates across different areas of the state. The First District gave the most support to the legislature's performance with over 52 percent saying the legislature was doing a good to excellent job, while the Third District was the least supportive – only 40 percent said good to excellent, and nearly 9 percent said poor or very poor. Only 38 percent of respondents in metro counties said the legislature was doing a good to excellent job, while 42 percent said fair and nearly 9 percent said poor or very poor. However, respondents in the rural and less urban areas were more approving of the legislature's performance (52% good or excellent versus only 4% poor or very poor). There are no statistical differences between the way that men and women rated either the governor or the state legislature. However, respondents who had a four-year college degree were more likely to rate Governor Graves as good (59%) and less likely to rate him excellent (8%) or poor (2%) than those who did not have a four-year degree (52%, 10%, and 4% respectively). Educational attainment appears to have very little impact on respondents' assessment of the state legislature, but partisan identification does. Respondents who said they considered themselves to be Republicans were more likely to rate the state legislature as doing a

good job (56%) than respondents who considered themselves to be Democrats (43%) and Independents (35%).

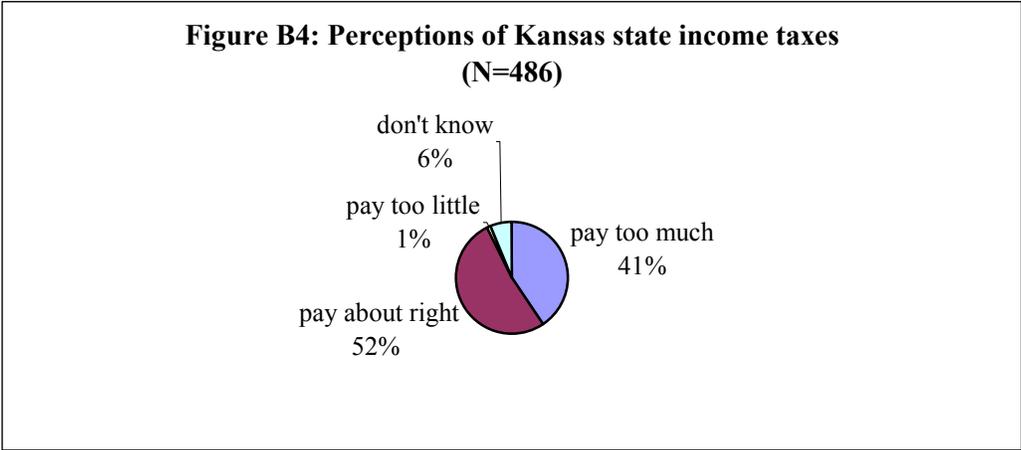


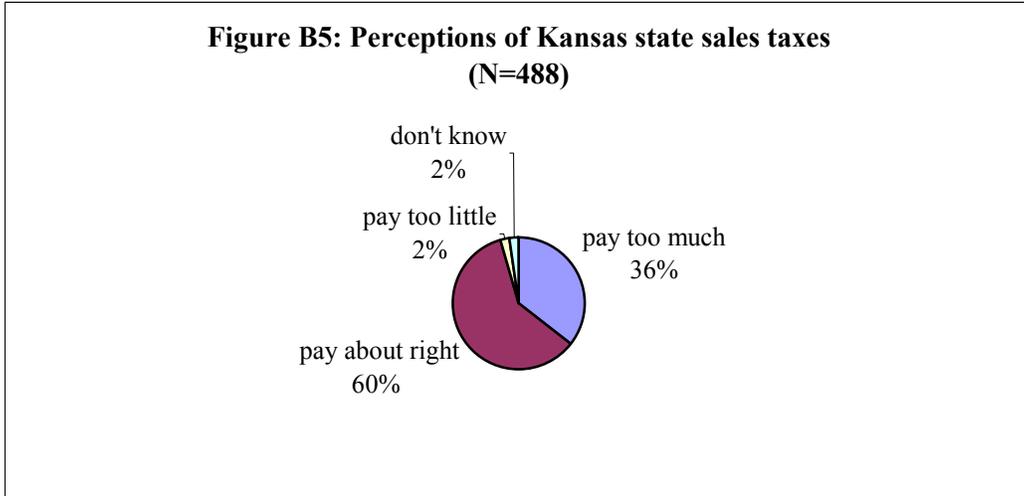
Public Support for State Taxes

Respondents to the KPS-Spring01 were also asked to assess the amount they paid in Kansas state property taxes, income taxes, and sales taxes. They were asked if they thought they paid too much, about the right amount, or too little for each. The results are reported in Figures B3, B4, and B5. A majority of respondents thought that they paid about the right amount of state income and sales taxes, while a majority thought they paid too much in property taxes. This finding fits with the existing literature that demonstrates that the property tax is the least-liked tax in America (Fisher 1996, see chapter 13). A majority of respondents in all four Congressional Districts and in both metro and non-metro counties felt they paid too much in property taxes, showing that Kansans statewide are not fond of property taxation (see Figure B3).



Of the two remaining state taxes, state sales taxes – the most regressive and the least administratively costly to the average citizen – received the most support with 60 percent of respondents statewide saying they pay about the right amount and just about 36 percent saying they pay too much (see Figure B5). This pattern is fairly similar across the geographic regions of the state. Statewide a majority of respondents also felt that they paid about the right amount of state income taxes, although a large minority felt they paid too much (see Figure B4).



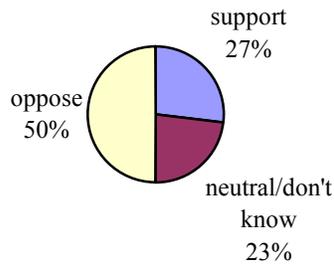


Kansans' Views on the State Lottery

In terms of state programs and policies, the KPS-Spring01 included several questions related to state policies on the lottery, water resources, and on the role of evolution in education. The results about water resources and evolution in education are addressed in the full report on the KPS-Spring01 (available at www.ku.edu/pri/resrep.shtml). Here, briefly, we review the results about Kansans' support for continuing the state lottery.

A bare majority of respondents to the KPS-Spring01 felt that the state legislature should vote to keep the state lottery, while a little over one quarter of respondents supported eliminating the lottery (Figure B6). A majority of respondents across three of the four Congressional Districts and in both metro and non-metro counties supported continuing the lottery. Only in the Second District did a majority of respondents fail to support keeping the lottery, yet only about 29 percent said they supported its elimination. Support to eliminate the state lottery was fairly consistent among both men and women as well as among all levels of education. However, opposition to the elimination of the lottery was higher among male respondents (56%) than female respondents (47%). Opposition to eliminate the lottery was also higher among respondents who did not have a four-year college degree (52%) than those with a four-year degree (46%).

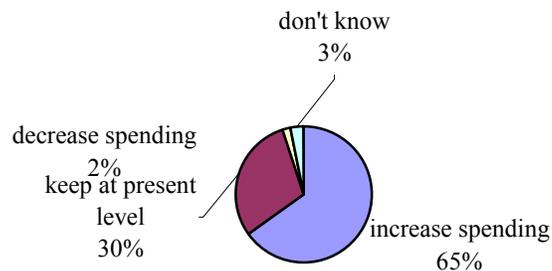
Figure B6: Support and Opposition to Eliminating the State Lottery
(N=481)



B-1: Program Spending Preferences

The KPS-Spring01 also asked Kansans about eight policy areas or programs on which the state spends money: public schools (K-12), state colleges and universities, help to low income families, job training programs for the unemployed, environmental protection, programs for crime (including state prisons and correctional facilities), state highways and roads, and economic development programs. For each of the eight program areas the respondents were asked if they thought state spending should be increased, kept at the present level, decreased, or spent differently. For only one program did a majority of respondents think that spending levels ought to be increased – public schools (K-12). Nearly two-thirds of respondents statewide said they felt state spending for public education should be increased, while less than two percent thought that it should be decreased (see Figure B-1a).

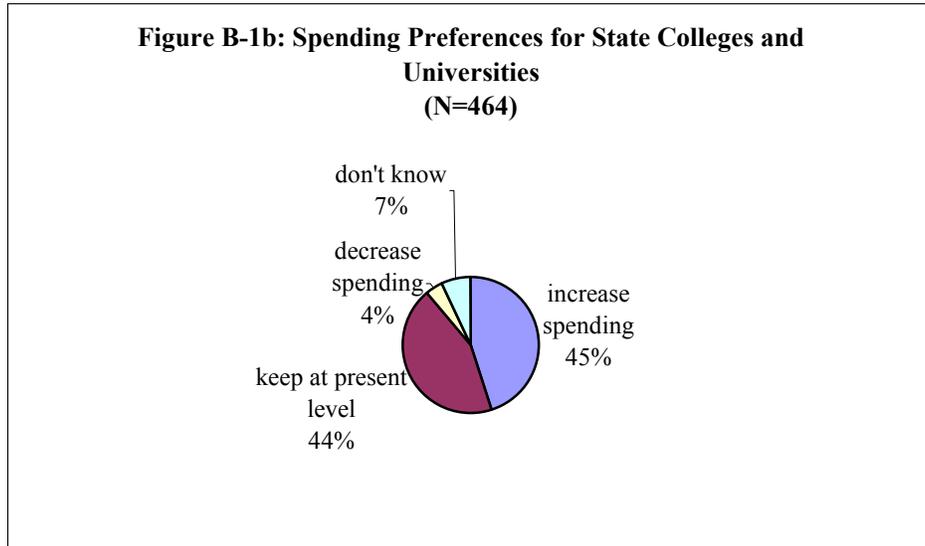
Figure B-1a: Spending Preferences for Public Schools (K-12)
(N=464)



Recall that education was also the most-mentioned concern when respondents were asked what was the most important problem facing the state today. It seems that Kansans believe the state needs to do and *spend* more to improve public primary and secondary education. Furthermore, this view is fairly constant across the state. In none of the four Congressional Districts does the support for increasing state spending on education fall below 60 percent (also recall that educational concerns were the most-mentioned problem facing the state today in all four districts as well). Increased spending for public schools (k-12) was the preference for both male and female respondents (both over 60%), as well as for overwhelming majorities of respondents with each level of educational attainment. The only major difference was that 72 percent of respondents with a four-year degree (or more) preferred increasing state spending, while only 62 percent of respondents without a four-year degree preferred more state spending. A large majority of respondents, regardless of partisan identification, feel that state spending for public K-12 schools should be increased -- 59 percent of Republicans, 68 percent of Independents, and 70 percent of Democrats said they preferred increased state spending on public education. Overwhelming, a clear majority of Kansans feel that the state should spend more on public primary education.

Only one other program area received plurality support for increased state spending -- state colleges and universities. Again, education rises to the top of Kansans' policy concerns, with about 45 percent of respondents statewide saying state spending should be increased to state colleges and universities, while 44 percent wanted the present level of spending and only about four percent wanted a decrease in spending (see Figure B-1b). The pattern for spending preferences for state colleges and universities is highly constant across the state's regions. However, there are differences between the spending preferences for male respondents (50% increase) and female respondents (42% increase), with more men preferring more state spending. Additionally, respondents who had a four-year college degree

were more likely to prefer increased state spending on state colleges and universities (48% increase) than those respondents without a four-year degree (42% increase).



Spending preferences for the remaining six programs/areas follow. All six had a majority or plurality of respondents reply that spending for each should be kept at the present level. Interestingly, the only program area included in the survey where more than ten percent of the respondents felt that a decrease in spending was necessary were programs for economic development (17%) (see Figure B-1h). The overall results about Kansans' spending preferences suggest that Kansans are happy or at least comfortable with the status quo, with one exception, public education, where they feel more state money is needed.

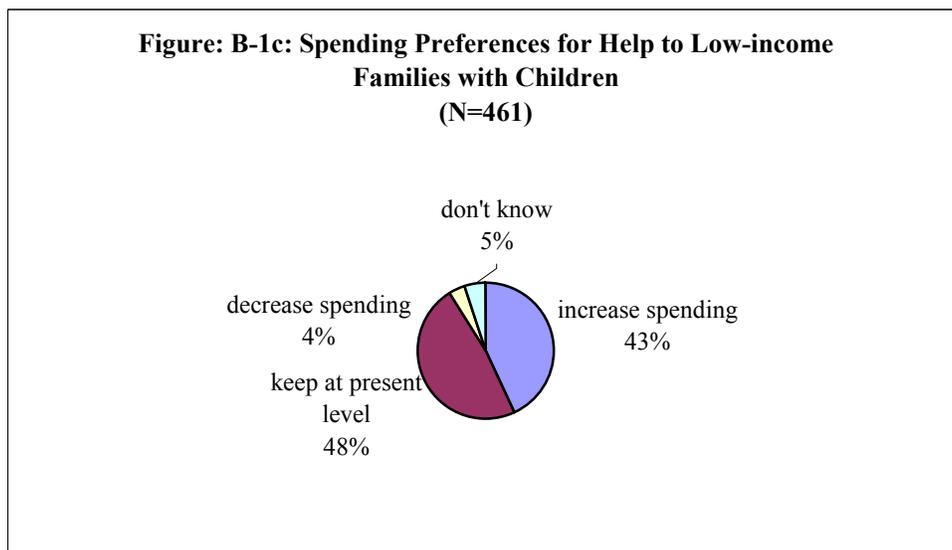


Figure B-1d: Spending Preferences for Job Training Programs for the Unemployed (N=461)

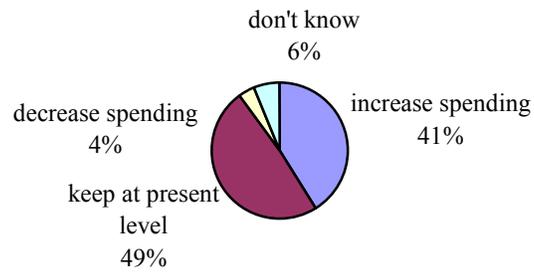


Figure B-1e: Spending Preferences for Environmental Protection Programs (N=464)

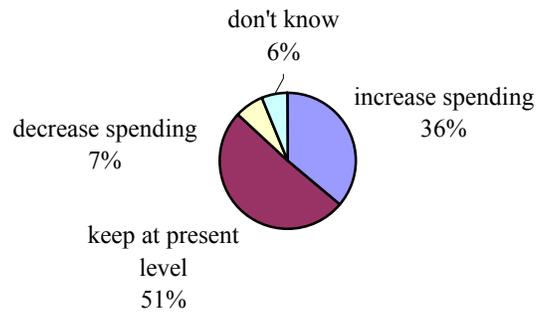


Figure B-1f: Spending Preferences for Crime Prevention Programs (including state prisons and correctional facilities)
(N=464)

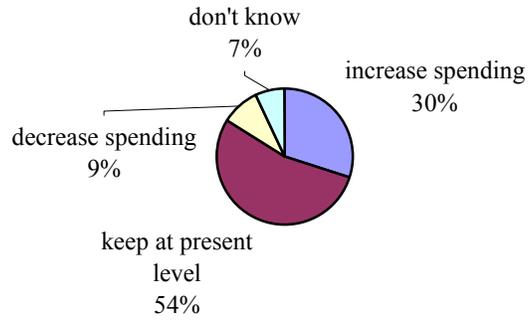
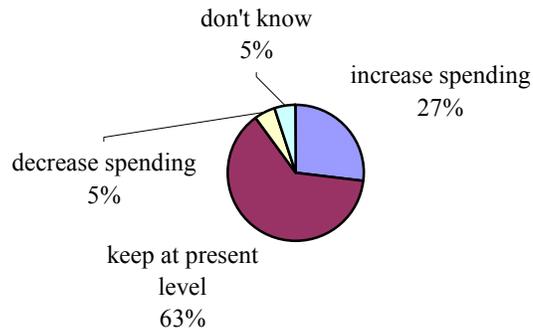
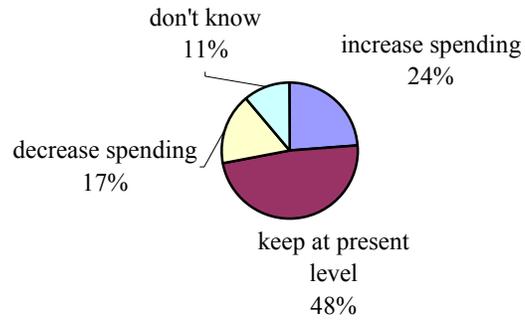


Figure B-1g: Spending Preferences for State Highways and Roads
(N=464)



**Figure B-1h: Spending Preferences for Economic Development Programs
(N=463)**

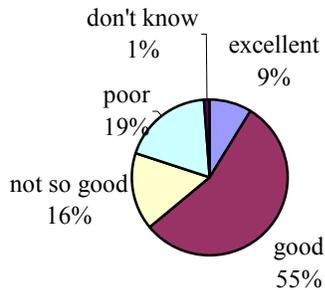


B-2: Water Quality and Resources

The KPS-Spring01 survey contained 13 questions relating to water resources and water quality in Kansas. These questions range from asking the respondents to rate the water quality of the drinking water in their house to questions regarding their support for proposed state water resource policies. Overall, the results from the survey indicate that a majority of respondents believe that their drinking water is safe to drink. A majority also said that quality drinking water is important to them, and that they would be willing to support *some* stronger policies to ensure and further protect water resources in Kansas.

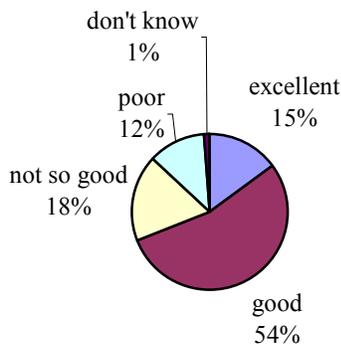
When respondents were asked to rate the overall quality of the drinking water in their county, nearly two-thirds rated it as either good or excellent, while one-third rated it as not so good or poor (see Figure B-2a). In each of the four Congressional Districts and in both metro and non-metro counties a majority of respondents rated the overall quality of their county's drinking water as good or excellent. However, the rated quality of water is not constant across the regions of the state. In both the First and Fourth Congressional Districts, or roughly the western two-thirds of the state, over 40 percent of respondents rated the drinking water in their county as either not so good or as poor. In the Second District only 33 percent of respondents gave the same two rating options, whereas in the Third District only 14 percent of respondents thought that their county's drinking water was not so good or poor. In fact, the perceived water quality seems to be the best in the Third District, which is primarily urban and more affluent. It had a combined good-to-excellent rating of nearly 85 percent. The differences between the districts are also reflected in the metro versus non-metro county distinction. While over 72 percent of metro county respondents rated the county water as good to excellent, only about 60 percent of non-metro county respondents did, and non-metro county respondents were significantly more likely to rate the county's water quality as poor.

Figure B-2a: Overall Quality of Drinking Water Ratings for the Respondents' County of Residence (N=376)

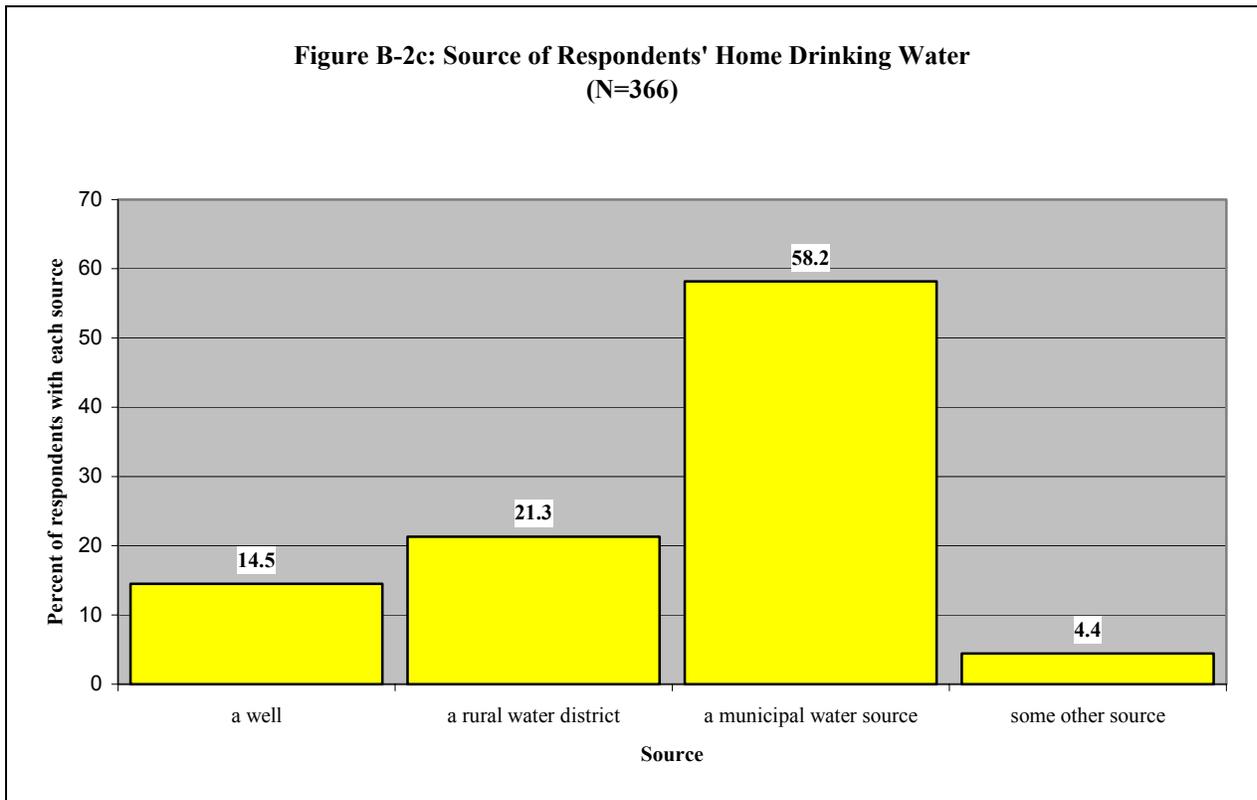


We also asked respondents to rate the overall quality of the drinking water in their home. The results are shown in Figure B-2b. Over two-thirds of respondents rated their home drinking water as good-to-excellent, while only about 13 percent rated it as poor. Much the same pattern appears in the responses to this question as did to the question about the overall quality of the county drinking water. Across all geographic regions of the state a majority of respondents rate their home drinking water as good-to-excellent, except in the Fourth Congressional District, where only 49 percent of respondents gave a good-or-excellent rating. Again the highest-rated water quality was in the Third District with over 81 percent saying good or excellent. Similar to the quality rating of county drinking water, home drinking water was not rated good-to-excellent by as large a share of non-metro county respondents -- more of them rated their home drinking water as poor (over 14%).

Figure B-2b: Ratings of the Overall Quality of Drinking Water in Respondent's Homes (N=365)

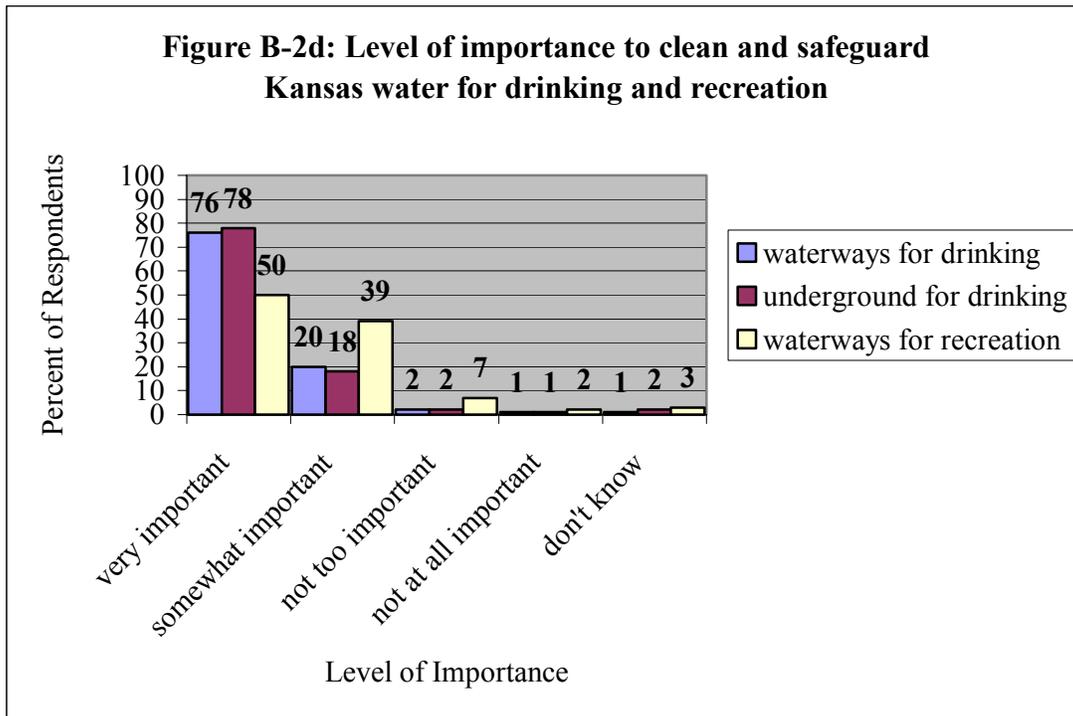


The water that respondents statewide reported drinking in their home most often came from a municipal water source (58%), with rural water districts accounting for just over 20 percent of home drinking water and wells about 15 percent (see Figure B-2c). As one might expect, in each of the four Congressional Districts, except the First, a majority of respondents reported their home water as coming from a municipal water source. When we breakdown the reported water quality by the source of home drinking water, about 25 percent of well-drinking water respondents reported not so good or poor while about 33 percent of municipal home drinking water respondents ranked their water not so good or poor. Majorities of both well users and municipal water users appear to be fairly happy with the drinking water they receive.



Respondents were asked how important several state water policies were to them. When asked how important it was to them that Kansas clean its waterways to help ensure the quality of drinking water, *over three-fourths* of respondents said that it was very important (see Figure B-2d). The percentage saying that this is very important to them remained between 70 percent and 80 percent across all four Congressional Districts as well as both metro and non-metro counties. A similarly large share of respondents also said that it was very important to them that Kansas take steps to protect underground water supplies to ensure the quality of drinking water (see Figure B-2d). Over two-thirds of both male and female respondents said it is very important to them to clean Kansas' waterways and its underground

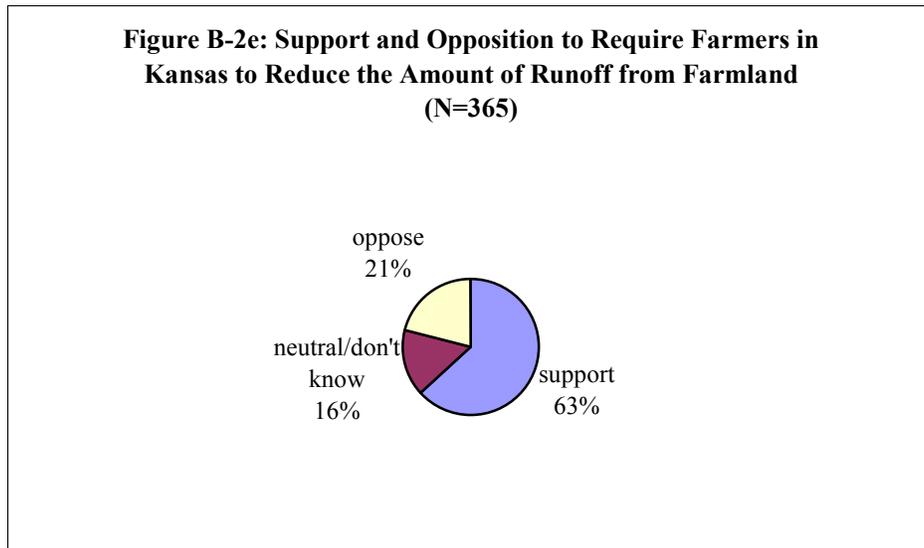
aquifers to ensure safe drinking water. When asked about the importance of cleaning waterways for recreational use, however, just over a majority of respondents said it is very important to them. Men were more likely to say it was very important (56%) than were women (47%). Further, respondents who did not have a four-year college degree more often said it is very important (52%) than did those with at least a four-year degree (46%).



Fewer respondents said that cleaning Kansas’ waterways to ensure water quality for recreational purposes was as important. While about 75 percent of respondents said it was very important for the state to clean its waterways to help ensure quality drinking water, only 50 percent thought it was very important to clean waterways to ensure clean water for recreation purposes (see Figure B-2d). Further, it was only in the more urban or metropolitan areas of the state that a majority of respondents said that clean waterways for recreation was very important to them. It appears that rural residents of the state are less concerned about higher quality waterways for recreational activities.

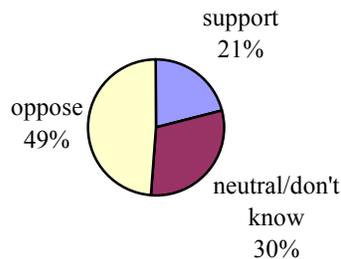
We probed a bit deeper and asked how strongly respondents support or oppose some fairly specific policies to improve or maintain drinking quality water in the state. While over 75 percent of respondents said it was very important to them that Kansas clean its waterways to help ensure the quality of drinking water, just over 63 percent said that they would support a proposal to require farmers in Kansas to reduce the amount of runoff from farmland. Additionally, nearly 21 percent said they would oppose such a proposal (see Figure B-2e). While the majority of respondents said they support requiring farmers to reduce the amount of runoff from farmland, Democratic (68% support) and Independent (70%

support) respondents were more likely to support such a requirement than were Republican respondents (55% support).



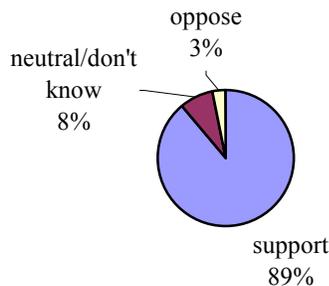
A similar pattern can also be seen in the responses to a question about support or opposition to Governor Graves' proposal to reduce water use from the state's largest water aquifer. In fact, when you contrast the data from the question about how important it is that Kansas take steps to protect underground water supplies with support for Governor Graves' proposal, it seems that Kansans may not be sure about how to handle underground water supplies. Earlier we saw that 78 percent of respondents statewide said it was very important for the state to protect underground water supplies (see Figure B-2d), but only about 21 percent said they supported Governor Graves plan to reduce water usage in the aquifer (see Figure B-2f). On the flip side, nearly 49 percent said they opposed the governor's plan and this lack of support remains fairly constant across the regions of the state. It is only in the First Congressional District, where the largest water aquifer in Kansas (the High Plains Aquifer) is located, that support for the governor's plan is over 20 percent.

Figure B-2f: Support and Opposition to Governor Graves' Proposal to Reduce Water Use from the High Plains Aquifer (N=463)

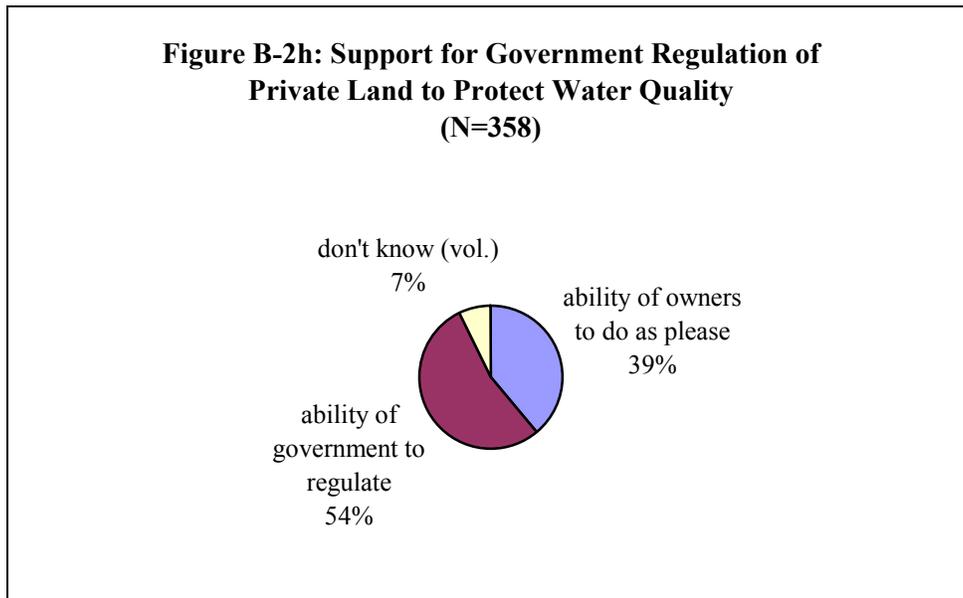


The two above policies do not receive the level of support that one might expect given how very important it is to a large number of respondents that Kansas clean its waterways. However, when asked how strongly would they support or oppose a proposal to require municipalities in Kansas to upgrade their facilities to meet or exceed federal water quality standards, nearly 55 percent of respondents statewide said they strongly supported it and an additional 34 percent said they would support it. Thus, just over 89 percent would support or strongly support upgrading municipal water facilities (see Figure B-2g). It seems that Kansans favor cleaning the water that municipalities return to the watershed systems in the state, at least in theory. What remains to be seen is if Kansans will support higher standards for municipalities with greater funds to upgrade their municipal water facilities.

Figure B-2g: Support and Opposition to Requiring Municipalities to Upgrade Facilities to Meet Federal Water Quality Standards (N=359)

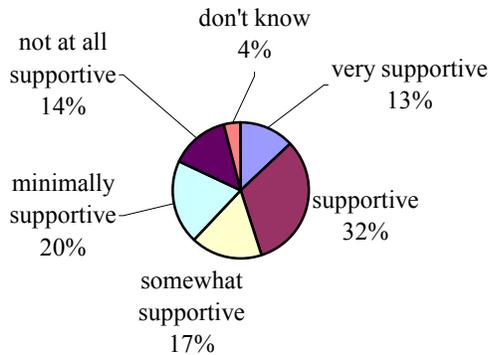


A majority of respondents statewide also think that it is more important for government to have the ability to regulate residential and commercial use of land to protect water quality for the common good, rather than the ability of individuals to do what they want with their land (see Figure B-2h). This finding holds across all regions of the state, except in the Second District where both options received support by 46 percent of respondents. If we look at respondents' responses grouped by their partisan identification, 67 percent of Democrats said it was more important for government to regulate residential land to protect water than for individual landowners to do whatever they want with their land, while only 50 percent of Republicans and 44 percent of Independents said the same. However, a substantial majority of all respondents (65%) also believe that if government chooses to regulate the use of private property for the public interest that the government should compensate the landowner for losses regardless of the respondents' location in the state, gender, or partisan identification.



When asked how supportive they would be of increases in Kansas taxes to help clean-up and protect the quality of Kansas' water resources, roughly 62 percent of respondents said they were somewhat to very supportive, while over one-third were minimally supportive or not at all supportive (see Figure B-2j). Support for increased taxes to pay for cleaning and safeguarding Kansas' water resources was higher among respondents with at least a four-year college degree (69%) than those without a four-year degree (58%). Support was fairly equal among both male and female respondents as well as throughout the state's four Congressional Districts and among respondents of all partisan identifications.

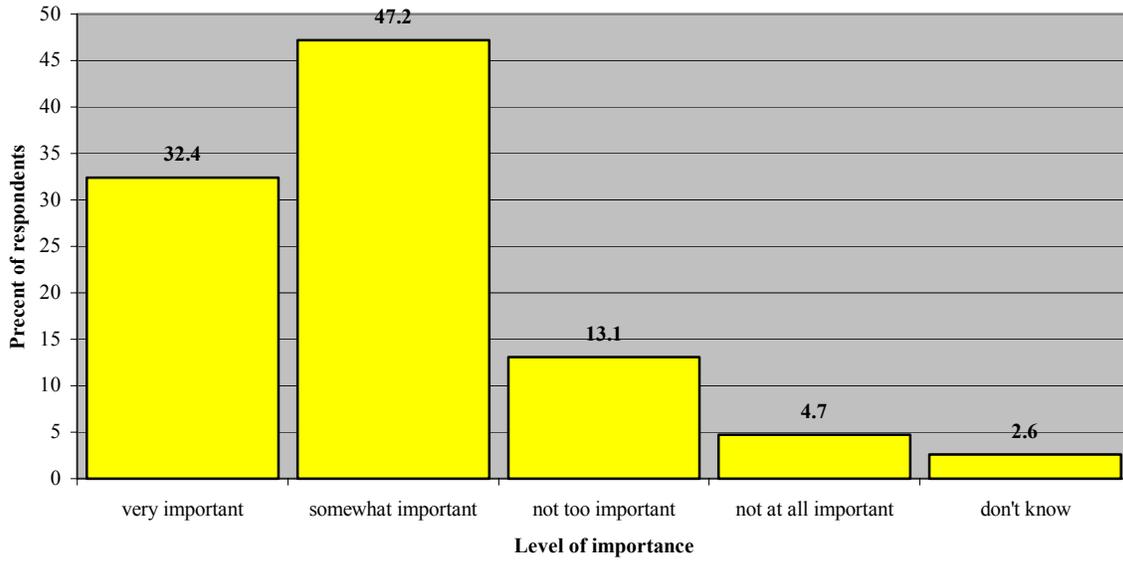
Figure B-2j: Level of Support for Increased Taxes to Help Clean and Protect the Quality of Kansas' Water Resources (N=356)



Recall that when asked what was the most important problem facing the state today, only 24 respondents mentioned environmental issues (many with a concern specifically for water). In terms of importance it seems that environmental and water issues are significantly low on the list, behind education and taxes. This is also reflected in the responses to a question about how important environmental issues are in determining the respondent's vote for local and state political offices. On this question just under one-third of the respondents statewide said that environmental issues are very important to their vote choices, while approximately 47 percent said they were only somewhat important, and nearly 18 percent said they were either not too important or not at all important (see Figure B-2k). This response pattern holds fairly constant across the state. However, a higher percentage of respondents with at least a four-year degree said environmental issues were very important to their vote choices (39%) than those without a four-year degree (28%). Respondents who identified themselves as Democrats were more likely to say that candidates' positions on environmental issues were very important in determining their vote for state and local office (40%).

With the results from these questions about specific policies, it seems that Kansans have bought into the idea that having clean water is important, but that when it comes to policies that require specific action or changes by individuals (mainly farmers and/or themselves) their level of support declines. Yet, when they are presented with a policy that on the perimeter looks like it has no individual cost for a public good (municipal water facility upgrades) they overwhelmingly support it. The findings from the survey suggest that Kansans feel that clean water is very important; however, they are not sure about how to achieve it or may not be willing to pay for it with tax dollars.

Figure B-2k: Level of Political Candidates' Positions on Environmental Issues in Determining the Respondents' Vote for Local and State Offices (N=358)



Conclusions

The results of the survey reveal interesting and important information about Kansans' perspectives on the various issues. For the most part, Kansans are satisfied with how things are going in the state. However, there are small to sizable minorities that feel that substantial change is needed. *One of the most notable distinctions is that Kansans are fairly concerned about the state of public education in the state.* Education in public schools (K-12) was the only state program area to receive majority support for *increased spending levels*. Nearly *two-thirds* of respondents statewide said they felt state spending for public education should be increased. The findings regarding education suggest that most Kansans want to see change to improve education. Future surveys may want to focus in greater detail on the means that Kansans think are necessary to improve public primary education in the state.

Another area of focus for the Kansas Policy Survey: Spring 2001 was water issues and concerns about the safety and usage of water in Kansas. A majority of respondents believe that their drinking water at home is safe to drink (69%). When asked how important it is that Kansas clean its waterways to help ensure the quality of drinking water, *over three-fourths* of respondents said that it was *very important*. However, when asked how supportive they would be for increases in Kansas state taxes to help clean up and protect Kansas' water resources, 45 percent of respondents were supportive and only 13 percent said they were very supportive. The findings from the survey suggest that Kansans feel that clean water is very important; however they are not sure how to achieve it or to pay for it.

The top three issue areas that respondents mentioned as the most important problem facing the state today (see Figure A-1a) are connected. Kansans clearly want to improve the state's public K-12 education; how remains to be seen. Likely it will involve some sort of funding change -- most of the respondents want the state to spend more money on public primary education. However, there is a trade off between spending more money for education and other public programs and services and taxes. Since the survey contained more questions about water quality concerns and willingness to support taxes to pay for "clean water," we use it for comparison. Support for policies and practices that clean the water in Kansas was consistently high, but when asked if they would be willing to support increased taxes for clean water resources support was only moderate. This is no real surprise -- remember that the second most mentioned problem with the state today was taxes. It appears that while many Kansans want changes in education and water protection, they are not interested in paying increased taxes to give the state the means to enact changes. This paradox between policy desire and willingness to pay stands out for policy makers and citizens to keep in mind when working to improve the state of Kansas.

Appendix A

Geographical Location of Respondents to the Kansas Policy Survey: Spring 2001

**Kansas Policy Survey March 5 – May 11, 2001
Number of Respondents in Each County**

Cheyenne	Rawlins	Decatur	Norton	Phillips	Smith	Jewell	Republic	Washington	Marshall	Nemaha	Brown	Doniphan
1	1		2			1	1	2	1	4	3	2
Sherman	Thomas	Sheridan	Graham	Rooks	Osborne	Mitchell	Cloud	Clay	Riley	Pottawatomie	Jackson	Atchison
2	2			3	1	3	3	1	8	6	5	5
Wallace	Logan	Gove	Trego	Ellis	Russell	Lincoln	Ottawa	Dickinson	Geary	Wabaunsee	Shawnee	Jefferson
2		1		5	2		1	6	4	1	36	6
Greeley	Wichita	Scott	Lane	Ness	Rush	Barton	Ellsworth	Saline	Morris	Osage	Douglas	Johnson
	1	1		3	2	6	3	10	1	2	32	48
Hamilton	Kearny	Finney	Hodgeman	Pawnee	Edwards	Stafford	Reno	McPherson	Marion	Chase	Coffey	Franklin
	1	4		2	1	2	17	6	4	2	7	6
Stanton	Grant	Haskell	Ford	Kiowa	Pratt	Kingman	Harvey	Sedgwick	Butler	Greenwood	Woodson	Allen
	1		8		2	2	6	57	12	3	1	5
Morton	Stevens	Seward	Meade	Clark	Comanche	Barber	Harper	Sumner	Cowley	Elk	Wilson	Neosho
1	1	2	1	1	2	3		8	7		3	3
										Chautauqua	Montgom.	Labette
										1	9	3
												Cherokee
												4
												Leavenworth
												Wyandotte
												20

For purposes of the data analysis in this report the following six counties were grouped together to examine the attitudes and responses of metropolitan residents in Kansas. The six counties (Douglas, Johnson, Leavenworth, Sedgwick, Shawnee, and Wyandotte) are all labeled as being metropolitan or in a metropolitan area by the U.S. Census Bureau and they are the six most populated counties in the state. Together there were 209 respondents to the KPS-Spring01 Survey in these six counties, leaving 297 respondents who reported residing in the rest of the state.

Appendix B

Demographic Comparisons of the Kansas Policy Survey: Spring 2001 to the 2000 Census

Table ApxB-1: Demographic Comparisons KPS-SPRING01 and 2000 Census		
	KPS-SPRING01	2000 Census
Racial Identification		
White or Caucasian	93.3	86.1
Black or African American	1.5	5.7
Asian	1.5	0.9
Native American or some other race	0.4	1.7
	2.2	3.4
	(N=461)	
Ethnic Identification		
Hispanic/Latino	3.3	7.0
Non-Hispanic	95.7	93.0
	(N=461)	
Gender		
Female	67.9	50.6
Male	31.9	49.4
	(N=502)	
Median Age		
	49.5	35.2
	(N=458)	
Age Ranges		
18 to 24	8.7	7.1*
25 to 34	10.0	13.0
35 to 44	16.8	15.6
45 to 54	24.9	13.2
55 to 64	16.4	8.2
65 to 74	14.0	6.5
75 and over	9.2	6.7
	(N=458)	
<i>(* the comparable age range in the 2000 Census is 20-24)</i>		
Level of educational attainment		
less than a high school diploma	6.0	12.3
high school diploma/GED	93.6	87.7
four year college degree	36.8	26.9
	(N=462)	
Median Total Combined Household Income \$40,000-\$49,999		
		\$36,488
	(N=462)	
<i>Source: Kansas Policy Survey: Spring 2001 and 2000 Census.</i>		

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