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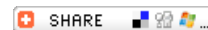
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## Latest Winthrop ETV Poll Results on Economy, Government, Global Warming and Taxes

COLUMBIA, S.C. - The results of the latest **Winthrop/ETV Poll**, conducted between **Feb. 2 and Feb. 17, 2008** (note: no calling was done on Super Bowl Sunday, Feb. 3) are in. This poll surveyed South Carolinians on issues of importance to them as well as ascertained their impressions of how the federal government and the Bush administration are handling the war in Iraq and other front-burner issues.

The results were released **exclusively** during the **Feb. 21st** edition of ETV's "**The Big Picture**" show at **7:30 p.m.**

The **Winthrop/ETV Poll** was conducted among **722** randomly sampled South Carolinians over the age of 18. It has a margin of error of **plus/minus 3.65 percent**.

Commenting on the results, **Dr. Scott Huffmon**, director of the **Winthrop/ETV Poll** initiative, said, "The poll results show that the general public wants **to see troop reductions in Iraq**. South Carolina is a bellwether state, and if SC conservatives are saying that is what they want to see, candidates need to pay attention, and realize this sentiment needs to be addressed.

**In terms of the economy**, there may be a bit of a disconnect as to how South Carolinians feel. They are seeing economic problems more in national terms than as a statewide issue. Given the high unemployment numbers in SC, and the fact that most economists believe we are in a recession, there might be a little bit of denial involved here, especially given the large number of South Carolinians who say they believe their jobs are secure.

**As far as a gasoline-tax increase** is concerned, while opposition to it is a reflection of a general anti-tax sentiment in the state, what also could be at play is a response to the incredibly high price of gasoline. If we were seeing cheap oil, people would remember the bridge collapse in Minnesota and be willing to absorb a small increase in the gasoline tax to improve our infrastructure."

### Among the Winthrop/ETV Poll findings:

- Almost **60 percent** of respondents characterized their **current financial situation** as either excellent or good, with 50 percent saying their financial circumstances as a whole are getting better. This despite the fact that almost **80 percent** said that overall, **economic conditions in the country are getting worse**.
- Over **80 percent** of those who were polled said that they can trust the **national government** to do what is right some of the time, most of the time, or just about always. On the **state level**, over **90 percent** of respondents said they could trust state government to do what is right some of the time, most of the time, or just about always. And on the **local level**, almost **86 percent** said that they can

trust their local government to do what is right some of the time, most of the time, or just about always.

- Over **60 percent** of respondents **oppose a small increase in the gasoline tax** for the purpose of improving **South Carolina's roadways** and **repairing old bridges**.
- When asked if the **cigarette tax should be increased**, and, if so, how should the resulting money be spent, almost **27 percent said there should be no increase whatsoever**, while almost **52 percent of those who favored it**, targeted offsetting **Medicaid costs** as how the additional money should be spent.
- Almost **30 percent** of respondents said that **global warming** is mostly the result of natural causes, with almost **28 percent** saying the effects of global warming are being exaggerated, or aren't even real. Still, over **36 percent** said the **federal government needs to take immediate action to combat global warming**.

**Among the additional findings:**

- Almost **60 percent** of South Carolinians felt that the **current criminal penalties** for both **domestic abuse and driving under the influence of alcohol** were **too lenient**.
- Almost **one-quarter** of those polled said they did not know enough about the issue of **school vouchers** to either support or oppose them.
- Over **47 percent** thought the **next president** should **gradually reduce all troop levels** with the eventual goal of complete withdrawal.
- The issue of **abortion** remains complex for South Carolinians. While over **53 percent** believe a woman should be able to obtain a legal abortion in certain circumstances, almost **one-quarter** of respondents said abortion should be illegal in all circumstances.
- Over **half** of the respondents disapprove of the way **George W. Bush** is doing his job as **president** and his **handling of the war in Iraq**.

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