

**IssuesPA Polling Program**  
**\*\* 2007 State Legislator Survey \*\***

**PRINCETON SURVEY RESEARCH ASSOCIATES for**  
**PENNSYLVANIA ECONOMY LEAGUE**  
**THE PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS**

**FINAL TOPLINE RESULTS**

February 2, 2007

N= 123 Pennsylvania state legislators  
Margin of error:  $\pm$  6 percentage points  
Field period: January 5-31, 2007  
*Job #: 26087a*

**INTRODUCTION FOR RECEPTIONISTS/SECRETARIES/ASSISTANTS:**

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ calling for Princeton Survey Research on behalf of IssuesPA and the Pennsylvania Economy League. I am following up on a letter Stephen Stetler recently sent to **(INSERT FULL NAME FROM SAMPLE FILE)**.

- S1. May I please speak with... **(INSERT SALUTATION FROM SAMPLE FILE)? IF NECESSARY, READ:** It's very important that we include him/her in our short survey of state legislators. If he/she didn't receive Mr. Stetler's letter about the survey, we would be happy to fax it to you now.

**RESPONDENT INTRODUCTION:**

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ calling from Princeton Survey Research on behalf of IssuesPA and the Pennsylvania Economy League. We're following up on the letter you received recently from Stephen Stetler describing a short survey of state legislators about the key issues facing Pennsylvania this year. This interview will only take about 10 minutes, and your individual responses will be held in strictest confidence.

- S2. Is now a convenient time for this interview? **(IF R HESITATES:** If now isn't convenient, I can schedule a telephone interview for a day and time of your choice.)

*Notes: Because percentages are rounded they may not total 100%.  
An asterisk indicates less than 1 percent.*

1. Here's my first question... In recent years, how much progress do you think state government has made in its efforts to address Pennsylvania's most important problems...**(READ)**

<u>Total</u> <u>Legislators</u>		<u>Total PA</u> <sup>1</sup> <u>Adults</u>
15	A lot of progress	9
55	Some	53
26	Not too much, OR	29
2	No progress at all?	7
2	<b>(DO NOT READ)</b> Don't know/Refused	2

2. What do you think are the one or two MOST important issues or problems facing Pennsylvania that the legislature should address this year? **(OPEN-END QUESTION. RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE. RECORD UP TO TWO RESPONSES, BUT DO NOT PROBE FOR THEM.)**

<u>Total</u> <u>Legislators</u>		<u>Total PA</u> <u>Adults</u>
75	Net - Economic	41
46	Property tax / School tax reform	11
15	Budget / Government spending	1
10	Taxes (excluding property tax)	13
5	Reform business taxes/regulations / More business friendly	n/a
41	Health Care (including availability, cost, and quality)	24
21	Government / Legislative reform	n/a
14	Infrastructure	6
11	Education	15

*Note: "Don't know" and responses mentioned by less than 5 percent are not shown.*

3. In your opinion, how likely is it that the legislature will take meaningful action THIS YEAR to address the issue(s) or problem(s) that you just mentioned? Is it... **(READ)**

<u>Total</u> <u>Legislators</u>		<u>Total PA</u> <u>Adults</u>
31	Very likely	7
53	Somewhat likely	34
12	Not too likely OR	25
1	Not at all likely?	14
4	No problem or issue mentioned <sup>2</sup>	18
0	<b>(DO NOT READ)</b> Don't know/Refused	2

<sup>1</sup> Total PA adults results are from a companion survey of 1,096 Pennsylvania residents, age 18+, conducted January 17-30, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Respondents in this category are those who answered *Don't know/Refused* in question 2.

Now I'm going to ask you about your priorities for the state legislature in five different areas...

4. (To begin/Finally) I want to ask you about issues affecting Pennsylvanians' QUALITY OF LIFE. Please tell me if you think each of the following should be a TOP priority for the legislature this year, a lower priority, not a priority, or should not be done at all.

(First,) what about... **(INSERT—READ AND RANDOMIZE)** Should this be a TOP priority, a lower priority, not a priority, or should this not be done?

	<u>Top priority</u>	<u>Lower priority</u>	<u>Not a priority</u>	<u>Should not be done</u>	<u>DK/ Ref.</u>
a. Encouraging local governments to work together and have a common regional plan for economic growth, transportation, and land use	66	28	3	1	3
Total PA Adults:	65	29	4	1	1
b. Encouraging development that balances economic growth and jobs with other concerns like preserving open space, healthy downtowns, and affordable housing	70	26	2	0	3
Total PA Adults:	69	25	3	1	1
c. Making housing more affordable for moderate to low income families	40	43	13	1	4
Total PA Adults:	64	29	4	2	1
d. Helping local governments upgrade their sewer and water systems to meet the requirements of the Clean Water Act	57	37	3	0	4
Total PA Adults:	63	32	4	1	1
e. Preparing for emergencies, like natural disasters, blackouts, or terrorism incidents	47	41	7	1	4
Total PA Adults:	68	28	3	1	*

5. Which ONE of the QUALITY OF LIFE issues I just mentioned do you think should be the TOP priority for the legislature this year? **(ROTATE 1-5. READ IF NECESSARY)**

<u>Total Legislators</u>		<u>Total PA Adults</u>
30	Encouraging development that balances economic growth with other concerns	18
24	Encouraging local governments to work together and have a common regional plan	15
15	Helping local governments upgrade their sewer and water systems	11
9	Preparing for emergencies, like natural disasters, blackouts, or terrorism incidents	23
7	Making housing more affordable for moderate to low income families	29
3	None of these <b>(VOL.)</b>	1
8	Other <b>(VOL.)</b>	1
5	Don't know/Refused	2

6. Next I want to ask you about issues affecting EDUCATION in Pennsylvania. Please tell me if you think each of the following should be a TOP priority for the legislature this year, a lower priority, not a priority, or should not be done at all.

(First,) what about... **(INSERT—READ AND RANDOMIZE)** Should this be a TOP priority, a lower priority, not a priority, or should this not be done?

	<u>Top priority</u>	<u>Lower priority</u>	<u>Not a priority</u>	<u>Should not be done</u>	<u>DK/ Ref.</u>
a. Improving cooperation between public schools, colleges, and businesses to better prepare students for the jobs of the future	66	28	4	0	2
Total PA Adults:	78	18	2	1	*
b. Reducing the gap in per-pupil spending between higher and lower income school districts	55	30	15	0	0
Total PA Adults:	54	34	5	2	6
c. Helping school districts meet the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind act	37	49	11	3	0
Total PA Adults:	60	23	6	7	3
d. Increasing the number of college graduates trained in math, science and engineering to fill high skill science and technology jobs	58	39	3	0	1
Total PA Adults:	59	32	5	1	2
e. Ensuring that families with young children have access to quality preschool education programs	48	37	12	3	1
Total PA Adults:	69	24	4	2	1
f. Changing the public school finance system to reduce local property taxes	81	16	3	0	0
Total PA Adults:	74	17	4	2	2

7. Which ONE of the EDUCATION issues I just mentioned do you think should be the TOP priority for the legislature this year? **(ROTATE 1-6. READ IF NECESSARY)**

<u>Total Legislators</u>		<u>Total PA Adults</u>
62	Changing public school finance to reduce local property taxes	27
14	Reducing the gap in per-pupil spending by income level	10
11	Improving cooperation between public schools, colleges, and businesses	15
5	Ensuring access to quality preschool education programs	11
2	Helping school districts meet the No Child Left Behind act requirements	22
2	Increasing the number of college graduates trained in math, science and engineering	11
2	None of these <b>(VOL.)</b>	1
0	Other <b>(VOL.)</b>	1
2	Don't know/Refused	3

8. As I read you some HEALTH CARE issues , please tell me if you think each should be one of their TOP priorities, a lower priority, not a priority, or should not be done at all.

(First,) what about... **(INSERT—READ AND RANDOMIZE)** Should this be one of their TOP priorities, a lower priority, not a priority, or should this not be done?

	<u>Top priority</u>	<u>Lower priority</u>	<u>Not a priority</u>	<u>Should not be done</u>	<u>DK/ Ref.</u>
a. Helping employers provide health insurance to their employees	77	20	2	0	1
Total PA Adults:	78	17	2	3	1
b. Ensuring that low-income individuals, especially the disabled and elderly, have access to health care, long-term care, and home health services	70	28	1	0	0
Total PA Adults:	88	10	1	1	*
c. Helping the uninsured get health insurance coverage	70	26	4	0	1
Total PA Adults:	80	14	2	2	1
d. Leveraging the state's position as a major health care purchaser to improve the quality and safety of health care	68	25	3	1	3
Total PA Adults:	63	27	3	3	5
e. Protecting public health from threats like bioterrorism, bird flu, and obesity	40	53	7	0	0
Total PA Adults:	52	41	4	2	1

9. Which ONE of the HEALTH CARE issues I just mentioned do you think should be the TOP priority for the state legislature to address this year? **(ROTATE 1-5. READ IF NECESSARY)**

<u>Total Legislators</u>		<u>Total PA Adults</u>
34	Helping the uninsured get health insurance coverage	28
31	Helping employers provide health insurance	17
13	Leveraging the state's position to improve the quality and safety of health care	6
11	Ensuring that low-income individuals have access to health care	38
6	Protecting public health from threats	6
0	None of these <b>(VOL.)</b>	1
4	Other <b>(VOL.)</b>	2
2	Don't know/Refused	3

10. As I read you some issues affecting the ECONOMIC CLIMATE in Pennsylvania , please tell me if you think each should be one of their TOP priorities, a lower priority, not a priority, or should not be done at all.

(First,) what about... **(INSERT—READ AND RANDOMIZE)** Should this be one of their TOP priorities, a lower priority, not a priority, or should this not be done?

	<u>Top priority</u>	<u>Lower priority</u>	<u>Not a priority</u>	<u>Should not be done</u>	<u>DK/ Ref.</u>
a. Investing in roads, water systems and other infrastructure needed for economic development	75	23	2	0	0
Total PA Adults:	64	31	3	1	2
b. Creating partnerships with businesses and colleges to provide education and job skills training for workers	58	39	3	0	0
Total PA Adults:	71	24	3	1	1
c. Changing the business tax structure to make it easier for the state to attract and retain businesses	73	24	2	0	1
Total PA Adults:	64	28	3	2	2
d. Attracting companies that use new and advanced technologies and offer high quality jobs	80	19	1	0	0
Total PA Adults:	75	19	3	1	2
e. Providing additional funding for mass transit systems in Pennsylvania	43	41	11	5	0
Total PA Adults:	42	44	7	4	3

11. Which ONE of the issues affecting ECONOMIC CLIMATE that I just mentioned do you think should be the TOP priority for the state legislature to address this year? **(ROTATE 1-4. READ IF NECESSARY)**

<u>Total Legislators</u>		<u>Total PA Adults</u>
41	Changing the business tax structure to make it easier to attract and retain businesses	22
24	Investing in roads, water systems and other infrastructure	17
12	Providing additional funding for mass transit systems	11
10	Creating partnerships to provide education and job skills training	28
9	Attracting companies that use new and advanced technologies	19
0	None of these <b>(VOL.)</b>	1
2	Other <b>(VOL.)</b>	1
3	Don't know/Refused	3

12. (To begin/Finally) I want to ask you about issues related to GOVERNANCE in Pennsylvania. Please tell me if you think each of the following should be a TOP priority for the legislature this year, a lower priority, not a priority, or should not be done at all.

(First,) what about... **(INSERT—READ AND RANDOMIZE)** Should this be a TOP priority, a lower priority, not a priority, or should this not be done?

	<u>Top priority</u>	<u>Lower priority</u>	<u>Not a priority</u>	<u>Should not be done</u>	<u>DK/ Ref.</u>
a. Encouraging shared services and cooperative planning among local governments	61	34	5	0	0
Total PA Adults:	48	41	4	1	6
b. Changing Pennsylvania's state and local tax structure to help urban areas and older communities with a shrinking tax base deliver needed services	56	35	6	1	2
Total PA Adults:	69	22	4	1	3
c. Reducing the size of the general assembly	11	31	32	25	2
Total PA Adults:	28	41	14	7	11
d. Changing the way state legislative district boundaries are drawn so that it is done by a non-partisan independent commission	36	36	23	5	1
Total PA Adults:	34	44	10	4	8
e. Requiring lobbyists to register with the state and disclose their activities	56	35	6	2	1
Total PA Adults:	60	30	3	3	4
f. Limiting the amount of money individuals and political committees can contribute to candidates	30	34	19	16	1
Total PA Adults:	50	32	9	5	3

13. Which ONE of the GOVERNANCE issues I just mentioned do you think should be the TOP priority for the legislature this year? **(ROTATE 1-6. READ IF NECESSARY)**

<u>Total Legislators</u>		<u>Total PA Adults</u>
29	Changing the state and local tax structure to help urban areas and older communities deliver needed services	44
24	Encouraging shared services and cooperative planning among local governments	11
12	Requiring lobbyists to register and disclose their activities	12
9	Changing the way state legislative district boundaries are drawn	5
7	Limiting the amount of money that can be contributed to candidates	12
1	Reducing the size of the general assembly	8
5	None of these <b>(VOL.)</b>	1
13	Other <b>(VOL.)</b>	1
2	Don't know/Refused	6

14. Now, thinking about all of the issues we have talked about in this survey, is there any particular issue you would like to see Governor Rendell focus on this year?
15. [IF YES] What issue is that? (**OPEN-END QUESTION. RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE. RECORD UP TO TWO RESPONSES, BUT DO NOT PROBE FOR THEM.**)

<u>Total</u> <u>Legislators</u>		<u>Total PA</u> <u>Adults</u>
81	Yes	75
24	Property tax / School tax reform	8
23	Health care	20
9	Education	9
9	Budget / Government spending	1
6	Infrastructure	1
6	Taxes (excluding property tax)	7
5	Government / Legislative reform	n/a
16	No	23
3	Don't know/Refused	2

*Note: Responses mentioned by less than 5 percent are not shown.*

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

Gender from sample:

86 Male  
14 Female

D2. Now I have just a few more questions for classification purposes only... In total, how many years have you served as a... **(INSERT OFFICE FROM SAMPLE?)**?

23 Just elected/Less than one full year  
20 1 to 4 years  
17 5 to 9 years  
16 10 to 14 years  
22 15 years or more  
2 Don't know/Refused

D3. Before you became a legislator, please tell me whether you held a job in each of the following areas. (First,) what about... **(INSERT—READ AND RANDOMIZE)**? Have you ever held a job in this area, or not?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. Public education, including a school teacher	14	68	18
b. Local government, that is municipal or county government, including any elected or appointed position	59	37	4
c. State government, including any elected or appointed position	24	64	12

D4. In general, would you describe your political views as... **(READ)**

6 Very conservative  
32 Conservative  
48 Moderate  
12 Liberal OR  
2 Very liberal?  
1 **(DO NOT READ)** Don't know/Refused

D5. What is your age?

3 18-29  
40 30-49  
41 50-64  
11 65+  
5 Refused

- D6. Are you of Hispanic or Latino background, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban or other Spanish background?
- D7. What is your race? Are you white, black, Asian, American Indian or some other race?  
**IF R SAYS HISPANIC OR LATINO, PROBE:** Do you consider yourself a WHITE (Hispanic/Latino) or a BLACK (Hispanic/Latino)?
- 92 White, non-Hispanic
  - 6 Total Non-White
    - 5 Non-Hispanic Black or African-American
    - 1 Hispanic
    - 0 Asian or Pacific Islander
    - 0 American Indian or Alaskan Native
    - 1 Other/Mixed-race
    - 2 Undesignated

**END INTERVIEW:** Thank you for taking part in the survey.

**Party Affiliation (from Sample)**

- 51 Republican
- 49 Democrat

**Pennsylvania Region (from Sample)**

- 31 Southeast
- 21 Southwest
- 48 Rest of state