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## Local Poll Gives Nod to Bush, Jobs and Curfews

Lycoming County registered voters give President Bush a 63% approval rating, feel jobs is the most important issue facing the county today (55%), and an overwhelming 77% support a curfew for children under the age of 18.

These are some of the findings of a poll conducted by political science students at Lycoming College under the direction of Dr. Jonathan Williamson, professor of political science and director of Lycoming's newly formed polling institute. The students surveyed 601 likely Lycoming County voters from October 12-16. The margin of error for the survey is +/- 4%.

"Indicative of the Republican strength in the area, respondents consistently supported Republican candidates and causes," points out Dr. Williamson. "County residents were about 10% more supportive of the President than the nation as a whole."

Governor Ed Rendell received a 36% favorable rating according to this poll.

On a national level, 27% indicated the economy as the greatest concern followed by terrorism indicated by 18%.

"While county voters expressed the most concern over the economy and terrorism in national terms, locally the biggest concern was jobs" says Dr. Williamson.

On a local level, 55% of those polled cited jobs as the top issue in the county, over the economy (7%) drugs (6%), taxes (5%) or crime (4%). Yet when asked to compare their personal finances today to two years ago, 56% said they were about the same.

"Lycoming County is in a period of transition. Voters worry that jobs lost in declining industries are not being replaced with jobs in emerging industries," surmises Williamson.

While 77% of those polled were in favor of curfews for children under 18, the respondents were split on the issue of state-owned liquor stores with 42% indicating that the state should keep them and 39% agreeing that they should be sold.

"The liquor store issue divides voters' loyalties in a county where most voters are conservative," says Williamson. "Conservatives (and Republicans) appear to be

torn between selling the liquor stores as means to reduce the size of government and keeping them in order to better regulate socially undesirable behavior.”

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Attached are the results for each of the 11 questions asked.

I'd like to read you a short list of names. For each name, could you please indicate whether your impression of that person is favorable or unfavorable. If you have never heard of someone, or don't know enough to rate that person, please let me know and we will move on.

	Favorable	Unfavorable	No Opinion	Never Heard Of
Governor Ed Rendell	36%	50%	13%	2%
Senator Rick Santorum	64	21	11	4
Senator Arlen Specter	58	26	14	2
Representative Don Sherwood (Among Respondents in District)	68	11	14	6
Representative John Peterson (Among Respondents in District)	20	8	31	41

Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?

Approve                    63%  
 Disapprove                26%  
 Don't know                11%

What do you think is the most important issue facing the United States today?

Top 5 Issues:

Economy                    27%  
 Terrorism                   18%  
 Iraq                            11%  
 Jobs                            8%  
 Health care                5%

Would you describe the state of the nation's economy these days as excellent, good, not so good or poor?

Excellent                    1%  
 Good                            33%

Not so good	48%
Poor	18%

Do you think doctors should be allowed by law to assist a terminally ill patient in committing suicide if the patient requests it?

Yes	44.2%
No	44.1%
Don't know	11.7%

Some say that Pennsylvania state liquor stores should be sold to private investors to raise state revenue, while others say that the state should keep the stores to better monitor sales. Which position do you agree with?

Pennsylvania should keep state owned liquor stores	42%
Pennsylvania should sell state owned liquor stores	39%
Don't Know	19%

Do you approve or disapprove of the proposal to legalize slot machines at Pennsylvania's horse tracks?

Approve	42%
Disapprove	49%
Don't know	10%

Considering how things are today, would you say that Lycoming County is generally headed in the right direction or the wrong direction?

Right Direction	56%
Wrong Direction	21%
Don't know	22%

What do you think is the most important issue facing our Lycoming County today?

Top 5 Issues:

Jobs	55%
Economy	7%
Drugs	6%
Taxes	5%
Crime	4%

Some communities in Lycoming County are imposing curfews for children under the age of 18. Do you support or oppose these curfews?

Support	77%
Oppose	14%
Don't know	10%

Compared to two years ago, would you say your personal finances today are better off, worse off or about the same?

Better	21%
Worse	23%

About the same      56%

\*\*\*\*\*-end of poll\*\*\*\*\*