

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



RESULTS OF THE OCTOBER 2007 UTAH VOTER POLL

19 OCTOBER 2007

Voters Widely Oppose Referendum 1

A majority of Utah voters are planning to vote against Referendum 1 concerning school vouchers. The most recent Utah Voter Poll, conducted by the Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy (CSED) at Brigham Young University, found Utah voters oppose Referendum 1 61.1% to 38.9%. The Referendum was placed on the ballot by opponents to school vouchers to challenge a law passed by the Utah legislature in February, which would provide vouchers to families who transfer their students to private schools. "Given these numbers, Referendum 1 is very likely to be defeated on November 6th," said Professor Kelly Patterson, Director of CSED. "It is much more difficult to get voters to support a referendum than oppose one, making the job for voucher proponents even more difficult," added Patterson.

Democrats Against, Republicans Split on Vouchers

Voters are divided along party lines on the question of school vouchers. Only 8.5% of Democratic respondents said they support Referendum 1. Republicans are evenly divided. 50.2% support the referendum and 49.8 oppose it, although more than 75% of voters who called themselves strong Republicans support the legislation. "This helps to explain the reticence of some Republicans around the state to get behind the Referendum passed by a Republican legislature and signed by Governor Huntsman" said Quin Monson, assistant director of CSED. "When the Republican base is split, Republican office holders will feel less obligation to get all the way behind this."

Campaigns Unlikely to Sway Voters

Despite the intense campaigns for and against the Referendum, voters are not likely to switch sides in the final weeks before the election. Overall, 89.9% of respondents said they are "very certain" about their choice to vote for or against the Referendum. Those who oppose vouchers are slightly more certain of their choice than are their counterparts: 91.8% of voters who plan to vote against vouchers and 87.6% of voters who favor vouchers are "very certain" of their choice.

Looking only at the voters who are most likely to vote on election day, those with a "great deal of interest" in the election, 58.5% are against the Referendum. Furthermore, 62.9% of the respondents who are "completely certain [they] will vote" oppose the Referendum

An August 2007 survey of the Utah Voter Poll gave a similarly bleak outlook for the Referendum, with opponents of the legislation outnumbering supporters 58.4% to 41.6%.

Additional Analysis of Poll and Referendum 1 to Air on KBYU

Results from the survey along with analysis from Professors Kelly Patterson and Quin Monson from BYU's Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy will be presented as part of a KBYU Election 2007 special entitled "Voters Choose on School Choice." It will air November 1 at 9:00 pm, November 3 at 5:00 pm, and November 4 at 10:30 pm on KBYU-TV, Channel 11. Viewers will also hear from Referendum 1 supporters and opponents.

Information about the Survey

The researchers invited members of the Utah Voter Poll panel, a group of voters who were recruited at polling places across Utah on election day in 2004 and 2006, to complete an online survey between October 3 and October 9, 2007. The questionnaire included a question about Referendum 1 that exactly replicated the official ballot language authorized by the Lieutenant Governor's Office for next month's election. For more about the poll, see the methodology section below.

Media Contact

For further discussion of the results or methodology, please use the following contact information:

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Complete Results

Do you approve or disapprove of the job that Jon Huntsman, Jr. is doing as Utah Governor?

- Strongly approve, 15.1%
- Approve, 65.7%
- Disapprove, 17.0%
- Strongly disapprove, 2.2%
- N=417

Do you approve or disapprove of how the Utah State Legislature is handling its job?

- Strongly approve, 1.9%
- Approve, 56.4%
- Disapprove, 29.8%
- Strongly disapprove, 11.9%
- N=415

Sometimes at election time things come up that keep a person from voting. Think about all the things that may or may not have kept you from voting in past elections and whether or not something may come up that will keep you from voting this time. Indicate on the scale below how likely it is that you will vote in the election on November 6, 2007.

- No Chance I will vote (0), 1.6%
- 1, 0.1%
- 2, 0.0%
- 3, 0.2%
- 4, 1.3%
- 5, 2.0%
- 6, 0.6%
- 7, 2.6%
- 8, 10.1%
- 9, 15.5%
- Completely Certain I will vote (10), 66.0%
- N=419

Generally speaking, how much interest would you say you have in the upcoming November 6, 2007 election?

- A great deal of interest, 46.4%
- A fair amount of interest, 42.9%
- Only a little interest, 10.3%
- No interest at all, 0.4%
- N=417

In February 2007, the Utah Legislature passed H.B. 148, Education Vouchers. This bill takes effect only if approved by voters. The bill:

- Establishes a scholarship program for:
 - qualifying school-age children who newly enroll in eligible private schools; and
 - lower income school-age children who continue their enrollment in eligible private schools;
- Provides for scholarships within that program of \$500 to \$3,000, depending on family size and income, increasing those scholarship amounts in future years; and

- Allows school districts to retain some per-student funding for scholarship students who transfer to private schools.

Are you for or against H.B. 148 taking effect?

- For, 38.9%
- Against, 61.1%
- N=417

How certain are you of your choice to vote “For”/“Against” (imported from previous response)
Referendum 1 on school vouchers?

- Very certain, 89.9%
- Not very certain, 9.7%
- Not at all certain, 0.3%
- N=416

How would you rate the quality of public education (K-12) in Utah?

- Excellent, 8.4%
- Good, 42.5%
- Fair, 37.8%
- Poor, 11.3%
- N=419

Do you think the current levels of funding for public education (K-12) in Utah are:

- Not enough, 73.7%
- About the right amount, 19.8%
- Too much, 6.5%
- N=419

How many children do you have that are currently enrolled in grades kindergarten through 12th grade?

- Zero, 60.4%
- One, 12.7%
- Two, 13.5%
- Three, 8.2%
- Four or more, 5.3%
- N=419

In what kind of school(s) do you currently have a child enrolled? Please check all that apply.

- Traditional public school, 91.6%
- Charter school, 7.2%
- Religious private school, 3.0%
- Non-religious private school, 1.2%
- Cyber or correspondence school, 0.0%
- Home school, 3.6%
- Some other kind of school, 2.4%
- N=166

(Asked only of respondents that said they currently have a child enrolled in a traditional public school)
Suppose Utah adopted the voucher program. Would you move your public school student(s) to a private school?

- Yes, 15.3%

- No, 84.7%
- N=150

Do you think the state board of education would be able to guarantee the quality of education at all schools accepting vouchers, or do you think this would not happen?

- Very likely to happen, 12.1%
- Somewhat likely to happen, 20.6%
- Somewhat unlikely to happen, 26.7%
- Very unlikely to happen, 40.6%
- N=418

Do you think vouchers would provide competition that will force public schools to improve, or do you think this would not happen?

- Very likely to happen, 23.3%
- Somewhat likely to happen, 15.1%
- Somewhat unlikely to happen, 20.6%
- Very unlikely to happen, 40.9%
- N=417

How much influence do you think each of the following groups has on public education in Utah?

	Utah Education Association (UEA)	The LDS (Mormon) Church	Parent Teacher Associations (PTA)	Utah State Legislature
Too much influence	33.9%	26.2%	10.1%	45.8%
About the right amount of influence	47.9%	58.0%	54.7%	38.8%
Not enough influence	18.3%	15.8%	35.2%	15.3%
N	417	416	415	415

How much of a majority is required for the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives to override a presidential veto?

- A simple majority, 1.1%
- A two-thirds majority, 85.6%
- A three-fourths majority, 5.9%
- A unanimous vote, 5.8%
- Don't know, 1.6%
- N=417

What party is more conservative than the other at the national level?

- The Democratic Party, 4.1%
- The Republican Party, 94.1%
- Don't know, 1.8%
- N=418

Please indicate which public office Dick Cheney currently holds:

- Chief of Staff, 0.0%
- Secretary of State, 0.4%
- Vice President, 98.9%
- Secretary of Defense, 0.0%

- Don't know, 0.8%
- N=418

Whose responsibility is it to determine if a law is constitutional or not?

- The President, 0.0%
- The Congress, 4.5%
- The Supreme Court, 90.7%
- The Attorney General, 2.2%
- Don't know, 2.7%
- N=415

What party has the most members in the House of Representatives in Washington DC?

- The Democratic Party, 87.7%
- The Republican Party, 8.1%
- Don't know, 4.2%
- N=416

How often do you use the Internet?

- Once or more per day, 86.1%
- A few times a week, 12.8%
- A few times a month, 0.8%
- Hardly ever, 0.3%
- N=416

What year were you born?

(1900 - 1988)

(Converted into age brackets)

- 18-24, 10.0%
- 25-34, 18.0%
- 35-44, 19.2%
- 45-54, 23.1%
- 55-64, 15.6%
- 65 or older, 14.1%
- N=422

Are you:

- Male, 48.0%
- Female, 52.0%
- N=416

Generally speaking, do you consider yourself to be a(n):

- Strong Democrat, 11.2%
- Not so strong Democrat, 3.8%
- Independent leaning Democrat, 10.5%
- Independent, 9.5%
- Independent leaning Republican, 14.4%
- Not so strong Republican, 13.1%
- Strong Republican, 34.6%
- Other, 2.6%
- Don't know, 0.3%
- N=417

On most political matters do you consider yourself:

- Strongly conservative, 27.4%
- Moderately conservative, 37.6%
- Neither, middle of the road, 13.3%
- Moderately liberal, 13.4%
- Strongly liberal, 7.4%
- Don't know, 0.9%
- N=415

What was the last year of school you completed?

- Eighth grade or less, 0.0%
- Some high school, 1.7%
- High school graduate, 12.8%
- Some college, 35.6%
- College graduate, 31.4%
- Post-graduate, 18.5%
- N=414

Did you ever attend a private/parochial (boarding or day) school for primary or secondary education?

- Yes, 8.4%
- No, 91.6%
- N=411

What, if any, is your religious preference?

- Protestant, 5.9%
- Catholic, 5.1%
- LDS / Mormon, 69.9%
- Jewish, 0.0%
- Other, 3.0%
- No preference / No religious affiliation, 11.9%
- Prefer not to say, 4.2%
- N=416

How active do you consider yourself in the practice of your religious preference?

- Very active, 68.5%
- Somewhat active, 7.3%
- Not very active, 6.9%
- Not active, 7.2%
- Does not apply, 8.1%
- Prefer not to say, 2.0%
- N=415

Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

- Self-employed, 15.9%
- Employed by someone else, 48.9%
- Unemployed, 0.6%
- Homemaker, 13.5%
- Retired, 15.0%
- Student, 6.1%

- N=417

Do you work for the public school system?

- Yes, 7.3%
- No, 92.7%
- N=416

Does someone in your household work for the public school system?

- Yes, 13.0%
- No, 87.0%
- N=416

Are you:

- American Indian / Native American, 1.0%
- Asian, 0.4%
- Black / African American, 0.3%
- Hispanic / Latino, 3.7%
- White / Caucasian, 93.1%
- Pacific Islander, 0.6%
- Other, 0.9%
- N=417

What is your marital status?

- Married, 81.3%
- Divorced, 6.5%
- Widowed, 1.8%
- Living with partner, 0.4%
- Single, 10.0%
- N=413

What do you expect your 2007 family income to be?

- Under \$25,000, 12.7%
- \$25,000 - \$39,999, 15.4%
- \$40,000 - \$49,999, 12.1%
- \$50,000 - \$74,999, 24.4%
- \$75,000 - \$99,999, 16.8%
- \$100,000 - \$149,999, 12.4%
- Over \$150,000, 6.1%
- N=412

A researcher from the Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy may want to contact you by email and ask further questions related to this survey. Would that be okay?

- Yes, 79.2%
- No, 20.8%
- N=417

Would you like to receive an email detailing the results of this survey?

- Yes, 87.6%
- No, 12.4%
- N=415

Finally, for quality control purposes, please rate your experience taking this poll. Would you consider the experience:

- Excellent, 42.8
- Good, 52.6%
- Fair, 3.8%
- Poor, 0.5%
- Don't know, 0.3%
- N=417

Methodology

Survey Field Dates: October 3 to October 9, 2007

Sample Size and Margin of Error:

The survey was entered by 424 respondents and we have data on at least one question from 420 respondents and completed surveys from 416 respondents. The margin of error for a simple random sample with a sample size of 424 is about + or – 4.7 %. The Utah Voter Poll is drawn from the Utah Colleges Exit Poll which has a more complicated sample design and a “design effect” multiplier that will make the margin of error slightly higher.

Response Rate:

The response rate for the Utah Voter Poll was 18% (see calculations below). Potential respondents were sent three invitations to participate, spaced a few days apart over the survey field period. Our decision to send three invitations follows standard practices for internet surveys seeking to maximize response rates with minimal field time and disruption to potential respondents. Our 18% response rate is lower than our previous Utah Voter Poll surveys, but we suspect that this drop is due to a change in our survey distribution as well as increased use of spam blocking software.

Response rate calculation:

Total email addresses after removes: 2399

Total valid email addresses that received at least one email: 2359

Total accessed surveys: 424

Completed surveys: 418

Response rate = $424/2359 = 18\%$

Weighting:

The raw data were statistically adjusted using a technique called “rim weighting” to correct for potential nonresponse error and potential coverage error. Nonresponse error would occur if the nonrespondents from our sampling pool (the email addresses collected on election day in 2004 and 2006) differed significantly from our actual respondents on their responses to the survey items. Coverage error would occur if the group that opted into the Utah Voter Poll on Election Day differed significantly from the group that we are really trying to survey and draw inferences about (all Utah Voters). It is impossible to be absolutely certain about the existence of nonresponse and coverage error, and weighting is when we use what we know about nonresponse and coverage to minimize the chances of nonresponse error and coverage error.

Utah has very high computer ownership and internet access rates among the general population. These rates are likely to be even higher among voters. Some literature suggests web surveys will tend to overrepresent people with higher incomes, higher levels of education, younger people, and men. Our weighting procedure was designed to take the distributions for age, education, income, gender, and party identification from the 2006 Utah Colleges Exit Poll and use them to statistically adjust the data so that respondents belonging to overrepresented groups are given less weight in the analysis and those in underrepresented groups are given more weight. Rim weighting is when the weights are applied iteratively, one variable at a time, until the distributions for all of the variables of interest closely reflect their targets. The data were

weighted by education, age, income, gender, and partisan identification. Because the party identification weight was applied last, the party id distribution in the Utah Voter Poll exactly reflects the distribution in the Utah Colleges Exit Poll. When the weights are applied, the categories for education, age, income, and gender are within one percentage point of their actual values on the exit poll.