

Alaska State House of Representatives

Statewide Public Opinion Survey
n=700 Alaskan Residents Age 18+

Topline Results

Fielded: March 5 - 8, 2015
Margin of Error= ± 3.7%

1) Generally speaking, how would you rate Alaska’s current economy, as far as you’re personally concerned?
Is it...

| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| Very good | 8% |
| Good..... | 61% |
| Not too good | 23% |
| -or- Pretty bad..... | 6% |
| Unsure | 2% |

2) What is the most important thing you would like to see the Alaska Legislature accomplish this session?

| <u>TOP MENTIONS</u> | [ASKED AS OPEN-ENDED QUESTION] |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Balance budget/cut spending | 24% |
| Natural gas pipeline | 17% |
| Fund education | 7% |
| Improve economy/More jobs | 7% |
| Healthcare issues | 7% |
| Work together/Do your job | 5% |
| Fix education | 5% |

3) In your opinion, is current state spending too high, about right, or too low?

| | | |
|-------------------|-----|-------------------|
| Too high..... | 49% | [ROTATED OPTIONS] |
| About right | 33% | |
| Too low..... | 10% | |
| Unsure | 8% | |

4) Do you believe the current level of state spending is sustainable in the future?

| | |
|--------------|-----|
| Yes | 34% |
| No | 57% |
| Unsure | 9% |

5) With regard to education, if you had to assign a letter grade to Alaska’s K through 12 public school system, what would it be? Would you give it an A, B, C, D, or F?

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| A | 9% |
| B..... | 36% |
| C..... | 32% |
| D | 13% |
| F..... | 5% |
| Unsure (skipped to q7)..... | 5% |

6) And why do you feel that way? [ASKED AS OPEN-ENDED QUESTION]

| <u>TOP MENTIONS AMONG THOSE GRADING SCHOOLS A & B</u> | <u>TOP MENTIONS AMONG THOSE GRADING SCHOOLS C, D & F</u> | | |
|--|--|---|-----|
| Doing a good job | 24% | Kids not leaving prepared/ Not getting quality education | 21% |
| My kids did well..... | 12% | Personal experience - Kids went there/I worked there | 11% |
| Good teachers..... | 9% | Lack of funding | 10% |
| Many opportunities - extracurricular, languages, technology, etc..... | 7% | Spending too much for what we get..... | 8% |
| Kids not leaving prepared/ Not getting quality education | 6% | Bad teachers/Can’t get rid of..... | 7% |
| Personal experience - I worked there | 6% | Back to the basics/Tougher when I went..... | 7% |

Now I'm going to read the names of some people, organizations, and groups. For each of the following, please tell me whether you have a mostly positive or negative opinion of each. First... ..and is that very or somewhat positive/negative?

| [RANDOMIZED] | Total Positive | Total Negative | Very positive | Somewhat positive | Somewhat negative | Very negative | Unsure |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------|--------|
| 7) Bill Walker | 54% | 13% | 19% | 35% | 9% | 4% | 33% |
| 8) Barack Obama | 38% | 55% | 16% | 22% | 14% | 41% | 7% |
| 9) The Alaska State Legislature.... | 52% | 34% | 6% | 46% | 26% | 8% | 14% |
| 10) The Federal Government | 32% | 61% | 6% | 26% | 34% | 27% | 7% |
| 11) The oil industry..... | 60% | 33% | 17% | 43% | 21% | 12% | 7% |
| 12) Environmental groups..... | 50% | 40% | 17% | 33% | 21% | 19% | 10% |

Moving on...

13 A) How would you rate the job Governor Bill Walker is doing – would you say he is doing an...?

- Excellent job 10%
- A good job 58%
- Not a very good job..... 11%
- or- A poor job..... 4%
- Unsure 17%

SPLIT
SAMPLE

14 A) How would you rate the job the Alaska State Legislature is doing – would you say the Legislature is doing an...?

- Excellent job 0%
- A good job 52%
- Not a very good job..... 31%
- or- A poor job..... 10%
- Unsure 7%

Moving now to the state budget...

15) Based on what you have seen, read, or heard regarding the state budget, which of the following best describes Alaska's budget situation at this time? Would you say it's... [ROTATED OPTIONS]

- A crisis 12%
- A serious problem 54%
- Not much of a problem 28%
- or- Not a problem at all 3%
- Unsure 3%

16) Due to sharp declines in oil prices, state revenues have dropped by more than 50% and Alaska now faces a \$3 ½ billion budget deficit this year. If oil prices remain low, the state will likely face major budget deficits in future years too. Currently the state has about \$9 billion in savings that can be used to help balance the budget. But depending on the rate of use, those savings could be gone in as little as three years. Given this information, in your opinion which of the following options is the best way for the legislature to deal with the budget deficit?

[RANDOMIZED]

- Make deep cuts to state spending even if it means a reduction or elimination of some government services, but use less savings 31%
- Make smaller cuts to state spending and use more savings..... 25%
- Enact new taxes like a personal income tax or state sales tax 21%
- Use Permanent Fund earnings to help pay for government, even if it means smaller PFD checks 13%
- Other/Unsure 10%

17) In your mind, what percentage would you consider to be a “deep cut” and a “small cut” to state spending? [ASKED AS OPEN-ENDED QUESTION]

[RANDOMIZED]

A deep cut to state spending Median response: 30%

A small cut to state spending Median response: 10%

18) Would you support or oppose a plan to use some money from Permanent Fund Dividends to help pay for state government? ...and would you strongly (support/oppose) or somewhat (support/oppose) that plan?

Strongly support 13%

Somewhat support 23%

Somewhat oppose 15%

Strongly oppose 46%

Unsure 3%

Going back to education for a minute...

19) Last year the state legislature adopted a 3 year plan to increase education funding by \$100 million per year. Since adopting the plan, state revenues have decreased by more than 50%. Given the large budget deficit the state faces, please tell me which of the following statements comes closest to your view....

[RANDOMIZED]

The legislature should reevaluate its plan to increase education funding by \$100 million per year for the next 2 years 60%

-or- The legislature should follow through on its plan to increase education funding by \$100 million per year for the next 2 years 36%

Unsure 4%

And on another topic...

20) Do you support or oppose the expansion of Medicaid in Alaska? ...and do you strongly (support/oppose) or somewhat (support/oppose) Medicaid expansion?

Strongly support 37%

Somewhat support 23%

Somewhat oppose 13%

Strongly oppose 18%

Unsure 9%

21) And [RANDOMIZED] do you think legislation should be introduced so that the risks and benefits of Medicaid expansion can be fully explored in a public process before it is enacted, or do you think enough is already known about the risks and benefits of Medicaid expansion and it should be enacted without separate legislation?

Introduce separate legislation 58%

Enact without separate legislation 33%

Unsure 9%

Now on the topic of natural gas pipelines...

22) In your opinion, is the state getting any closer to making a natural gas pipeline a reality, or is it still just a pipedream that will never happen?

Getting closer 42%

Will never happen 44%

Unsure 14%

23) Currently the state is considering options regarding a natural gas pipeline. Each would require substantial state investment. What is your opinion, should state funds be used to help pay for a natural gas pipeline if that's what it takes to get a pipeline built?

Should..... 62%
Should not (skipped to q25)..... 29%
Unsure (skipped to q25)..... 9%

24) Would you still feel that way if you knew the required state investment would likely be more than \$10 billion?

Yes 68%
No 22%
Unsure 10%

25) Recently, Governor Walker announced a major state policy shift on the natural gas pipeline. Have you read or heard anything about that?

Yes 29%
No 69%
Unsure 2%

26) Ok, part of the announcement was that the governor has stopped all work on a small diameter pipeline designed to supply gas for in-state use. Planning for that project had been underway for two years. Instead, the state will now work only on plans for a large diameter pipeline designed mostly to export natural gas, although it would also supply gas for in-state use. Now please tell me which of the following statements comes closer to your view: [RANDOMIZED]

The state should continue planning for a smaller natural gas pipeline designed for in-state use as a backup plan in case a large export gas pipeline proves too expensive to build 48%
-or- The state should plan only for a large diameter natural gas pipeline because it could provide better economies of scale and export revenues for the state 42%
Unsure 10%

Another part of the governor's announcement is that the state will now take an ownership interest in two, competing large diameter gas pipeline projects. [RANDOMIZED STATEMENTS]

One (The other) project involves the state partnering with gas producers to share the cost of building and operating a pipeline.

In the other (In one) project, the state would be the sole or majority owner and be responsible for covering the cost or raising funds for the pipeline's construction and operation.

Each project is estimated to cost \$45 to 65 billion. Only one project would ultimately be built. Both pipeline projects would compete for the same gas markets.

Now I'd like to ask you some questions about that proposal.

27) Given that the state is currently a partner with the gas producers in one project, and would be a competitor of the same gas producers in the other project, do you think it is more or less likely that the gas producers would be willing to share sensitive information with the state?

More likely..... 23%
Less likely..... 63%
Unsure 14%

28) In your opinion is it a good idea or a bad idea for the state to assume majority ownership and most of the financial responsibility for a large diameter natural gas pipeline project estimated to cost \$45 to 65 billion? ...and do you feel strongly about that?

- Strongly, good idea 23%
- Not strongly, good idea 14%
- Not strongly, bad idea 16%
- Strongly, bad idea 38%
- Unsure 9%

29) Please tell me which of the following statements comes closer to your view:

- 1) It makes no sense for the state to spend millions competing [RANDOMIZED] against itself on two similar and very expensive projects designed to sell gas to the same markets 58%
- or- 2) Competition between two similar projects will move the project along faster and achieve the greatest return for Alaska 30%
- Unsure 12%

30) Finally, overall do you think the decision to stop work on a small gas pipeline and instead pursue two competing large gas pipelines at the same time is a step in the right direction or wrong direction when it comes to getting a gas pipeline built?

- Right direction 39%
- Wrong direction 48%
- Unsure 13%

On another topic...

31) Do you think the federal government has too much control, the right amount of control, or not enough control on issues affecting Alaska? [ROTATED OPTIONS]

- Too much control 66%
- The right amount of control 25%
- Not enough control 5%
- Unsure 4%

32) President Obama recently proposed designating all remaining lands in ANWR – about 12 million acres – as a Wilderness area, which means ANWR would be totally off-limits to oil and gas development in the future. Do you agree or disagree with designating all of ANWR as a Wilderness area? ...and do you strongly (agree/disagree), or somewhat (agree/disagree)?

- Strongly agree 19%
- Somewhat agree 10%
- Somewhat disagree 14%
- Strongly disagree 55%
- Unsure 2%

33) In your opinion how important is it to fight federal overreach in Alaska? Would you say it's...

- Critically important 53%
- Somewhat important 29%
- Not too important 9%
- or- Not important at all 7%
- Unsure 2%

SPLIT
SAMPLE
B

Moving on...

13 B) How would you rate the job Governor Bill Walker is doing – would you say he is doing an...?

| | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Excellent job | 12% |
| A good job | 57% |
| Not a very good job..... | 9% |
| -or- A poor job..... | 3% |
| Unsure | 19% |

14 B) How would you rate the job the Alaska State Legislature is doing – would you say the Legislature is doing an...?

| | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Excellent job | 2% |
| A good job | 50% |
| Not a very good job..... | 32% |
| -or- A poor job..... | 9% |
| Unsure | 7% |

And finally, I have a few more short questions for statistical purposes only...

34) How long have you lived in Alaska?

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| 0-9 years | 11% |
| 10-19 years..... | 16% |
| 20+ years | 73% |

35) Which age group do you fit into? Please stop me when I reach yours...

| | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| 18-29 years..... | 22% |
| 30-44 years..... | 27% |
| 45-59 years..... | 28% |
| 60 years or older | 21% |
| Not provided | 2% |

36) How closely would you say you follow local news and politics in Alaska – very closely, somewhat closely, not too closely, or not at all closely?

| | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Very closely | 24% |
| Somewhat closely..... | 51% |
| Not too closely | 19% |
| Not at all closely | 5% |
| Unsure | 1% |

37) Do you consider yourself very conservative, somewhat conservative, moderate, somewhat liberal or very liberal? [ROTATED OPTIONS]

| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Very conservative..... | 16% |
| Somewhat conservative..... | 24% |
| Moderate | 34% |
| Somewhat liberal | 17% |
| Very liberal | 5% |
| Unsure/Not provided | 4% |

38) Did you register as a Democrat, Republican, Non-Partisan, Undeclared, or something else -- or are you not registered to vote?

| | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Democrat..... | 12% |
| Republican..... | 24% |
| Non-Partisan..... | 15% |
| Undeclared..... | 32% |
| Other | 5% |
| Not registered | 8% |
| Unsure/Not provided..... | 4% |

39) Do you have any children under the age of 18 currently living in your household?

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Yes | 39% |
| No | 60% |
| Not provided | 1% |

40) What was the last grade of schooling you completed?

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Less than high school graduate..... | 4% |
| High school graduate / GED | 24% |
| Some college or technical school..... | 28% |
| Graduated college | 28% |
| Graduate school | 15% |
| Not provided | 1% |

41) Are you or anyone in your household a member of a labor union? ...and is that a public employee union?

| | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Yes, public employee..... | 15% |
| Yes, other union | 8% |
| Yes, unsure of type..... | 2% |
| No | 73% |
| Unsure/Not provided | 2% |

42) Gender

| | |
|-------------|-----|
| Male | 52% |
| Female..... | 48% |

43) Location

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Anchorage | 41% |
| Southcentral..... | 21% |
| Interior | 15% |
| Southeast | 13% |
| Rural | 10% |