

# Ask Alabama Poll Results



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## PRESS RELEASE

Alabama residents see manufacturing leading economic recovery

*The affluent sense a car-buying opportunity; Alabama-made autos drawing interest.*

**Auburn, August 10, 2009:** With Alabama auto plants churning out more cars again and the Federal “Cash for Clunkers” program drawing shoppers back to new-car showrooms, Alabama residents feel a turnaround coming. Auburn University’s Center for Governmental Services today released additional statewide polling results showing that Alabama residents believe the manufacturing sector is most likely to lead the state’s recovery from recession. About one in three residents (33%) expects manufacturers to provide the boost that brings back jobs and income to Alabama, hastening the end of the current economic downturn.

After manufacturing, the newer high tech (15%) and healthcare (12%) industries are seen by Alabama residents as the next most likely sectors to lead an economic recovery, followed by agriculture (9%), government (5%), and tourism (3%).

One growing segment of Alabama’s surging manufacturing sector—the automobile industry—is likely to figure in a recovery and consumers seem to have noticed. When asked whether it’s time to buy a car, 60 percent of the Alabama residents polled say that the next 12 months will be a “good time” to enter the market. Perceptions that this is an auto-buying opportunity are linked closely to income. Auburn researchers discovered that the wealthier you are, the stronger your sense that this is a good time to look for a car-deal. Lower income residents are less interested, even with all the rebates, tax credits, and other special deals being offered by new and used car dealers.

Poll results also suggest that automakers with Alabama factories might want to make a stronger marketing pitch that their vehicles are made in the state. One in four consumers (26%) said that it would matter “a lot” to them if a car is made here in Alabama. Another 20% said it would matter some.

"That almost one-half of all Alabama residents say they may favor Alabama-built cars bodes well for the companies that have invested heavily in constructing new facilities here," said the Center for Governmental Services Director, Dr. Don-Terry Veal. "If more consumers do follow through on that sentiment, there is little doubt that manufacturing indeed will play a major role in bringing back Alabama's economy."

Dr. David Hill, an AU survey researcher, also points out that polls conducted in Michigan earlier this year showed that residents of that state are firmly committed to buying their next car from Michigan-based GM and Ford. "We are obviously entering an era of competition in which location of a manufacturer's headquarters or facilities can play a role in buyers' choices as they seek both to help their local economy and get a good deal at the same time."

*The Ask Alabama survey results are based on telephone interviews conducted with a stratified random sample of 639 adult householders July 6 -- 19, 2009. The sample's geographic, gender, race, and age distributions were weighted to be proportionate to the United States Census Bureau's data for Alabama's adult (18+ years of age) householders. Patrick Rose, Manager of the Center's Survey Research Laboratory that conducted the interviews, said that poll results based on the full statewide sample have a margin of error of ±4 percentage points.*

**The Ask Alabama Poll is to be conducted quarterly** by the Center for Governmental Services, a unit of Auburn University Outreach that provides research, consulting and training to government agencies, not-for-profit associations, and private sector clients.

**Prior releases from the current poll include:**

**August 3 –CONSUMER CONFIDENCE.** Alabama residents have mixed views on the state of the economy.

**Future releases from the current poll include:**

**SCHOOLS.** 60 percent of Alabama residents give their local public schools a grade of A or B; ratings top national figures from Gallup.

**HUNGER.** Hunger is an issue; many residents see Alabama families skipping meals to cope with economy.

**NEWS MEDIA.** Internet is a growing news source in Alabama; threatens to overtake newspapers.

**STATE IMAGE.** Alabama is seen as a friendly place to raise a family or retire; but don't consider starting a business or looking for a job.

**JOBS.** Better pay and benefits top of list of what Alabama job seekers want.

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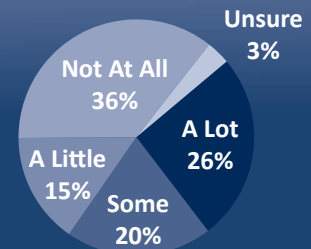
**AUBURN**  
CENTER FOR GOVERNMENTAL SERVICES

## Many Alabamians think it's a good time to buy an Alabama-made car.

Do you think the next 12 months or so will be a good time or a bad time to buy a car?



If you were buying a new car and wanted to help the state's economy, how much would buying an Alabama-made car matter to you?



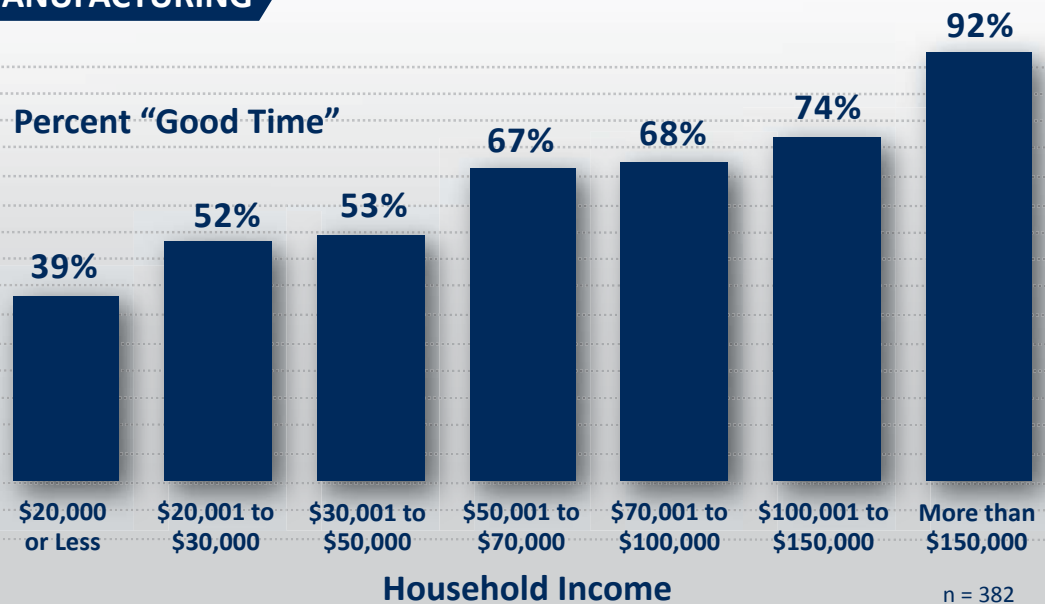
## The affluent sense a car-buying opportunity.

### MANUFACTURING

### Question

Do you think the next 12 months or so will be a good time or a bad time to buy a car?

### Percent "Good Time"



### MORE RESULTS

### Alabama residents see manufacturing leading the recovery.

Which one of the following industries, if any at all, would be best suited to lead Alabama out of the recession?

MANUFACTURING	33%	UNSURE	7%
HIGH-TECH	15%	GOVERNMENT	5%
ALL OF THE ABOVE	13%	TOURISM	3%
HEALTHCARE	12%	NONE OF THE ABOVE	2%
AGRICULTURE	9%		

Due to rounding, some charts may not sum to 100%.

The Ask Alabama survey results are based on telephone interviews conducted with a stratified random sample of 639 adult householders in Alabama from July 6 to July 19, 2009. The sample was chosen so as to ensure that each region of the state was represented in proportion to its population. The sample's geographic, gender, race, and age distributions were weighted to be proportionate to the United States Census Bureau's data for Alabama's adult (18+ years of age) householders. Results based on all 639 respondents have a margin of error of ±4 percentage points.