

# Priorities for State Programs and Services 2005

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**Ask-Alabama Poll, Spring 2005**  
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### Significant Findings

1. **A majority of Alabamians are optimistic about the future of the State, and have confidence that Alabama is moving in a positive direction.**
  - a. 18% say that the quality of life in Alabama has improved during the past year;
  - b. 58% say that the quality of life in Alabama has remained the same during the past year;
  - c. 23% say that the quality of life in Alabama has worsened during the past year;
  - d. 54% have some or great confidence that Alabama's elected leadership is moving Alabama in a positive direction;

*The Alabama public continues to hold a relatively optimistic perspective that the State is moving forward, and that its elected leadership is helping in this regard. Concern over the direction of the economy apparently has not created a sense of crisis or a feeling that the quality of life in the State has deteriorated.*

2. **Economic development and the creation of new jobs, assuring access to quality health care, assuring access to affordable prescription medications, providing child welfare services to protect Alabama's children, and improving K-12 education are the top State program priorities.**
  - a. 81% of respondents state that economic development and new jobs should receive urgent or high attention;
  - b. 81% of respondents state that access to health care should receive urgent or high attention;
  - c. 81% of respondents state that affordable prescription medicines should receive urgent or high attention;
  - d. 73% of respondents state that child welfare should receive urgent or high attention; and
  - e. 72% of respondents state that K-12 education should receive urgent or high attention.
  - f. 71% of respondents state that K-12 senior citizen services should receive urgent or high attention.

*Alabamians are focused on the traditional primary concerns of state government. These are to grow the economy and good jobs, protect and promote the health of the citizenry, particularly the elderly, and to promote the education of children and welfare of our children. It will be important for State policy-makers to pay attention to the concerns that Alabamians have about access to health care and affordable prescriptions and to remain focused on jobs and economic development. It is interesting to note that the public's priority rankings have remained virtually unchanged since our last poll on this topic in 2004.*

**3. 83% consider that assuring the honesty and integrity of State officials requires urgent or high attention, but only 37% consider that a new State Constitution requires urgent or high attention by State officials.**

- a. 40% of the respondents state that honesty and integrity of state officials is an *urgent priority*
- b. 43% of the respondents state that honesty and integrity of state officials is a *high priority*

*While most Alabamians agree that the elected leaders are moving the State in the right direction, they are very concerned that much of this progress can be lost through unethical behavior on the part of a few. There is a high degree of latent suspicion and distrust towards State officials among Alabamians.*

- c. 14% of the respondents state that a new state constitution is an *urgent priority*
- d. 22% of the respondents state that a new state constitution is a *high priority*.

*Relatively few Alabamians seem to believe that the State needs a fundamental rewriting of the State Constitution. Despite major efforts to educate the citizenry about problems with the document, the message has not taken hold among the public that Alabama must have fundamental constitutional change.*

## **Poll Facts**

Dates of Survey: April 6 – 18, 2005  
Sample Size: 603  
Estimated Margin of Error: Less than +/- 4%  
Type of Survey: Random telephone survey of Alabamians 19 or older