

Ask Alabama Poll Results



Contact:

Don-Terry Veal, Ph.D
Ask Alabama Poll
Phone: (334) 844-4781
Fax: (3343) 844-1919

2236 Haley Center
Auburn University, AL 36849
www.auburn.edu/cgs

SUMMER 2009 POLL RELEASE #1

PRESS RELEASE

Alabama residents have mixed views on the economy

42% say they're struggling to make ends meet, but 55% say they'll be better off in 2010.

Auburn, August 3, 2009: Auburn University's Center for Governmental Services today released statewide polling results showing that many Alabama residents are suffering through this recession.

- 42 percent describe themselves as "struggling to make ends meet;"
- 47 percent say they are financially worse off today than a year ago;
- 19 percent of the state's residents holding home mortgages worry that they will fall behind on their payments;
- 56 percent see interest rates for borrowers rising during the next 12 months; and
- 59 percent see more unemployment coming during the next 12 months.

However, contrasted with these downbeat opinions are signs of hope for the state's economy:

- 55 percent of the state's residents say they'll be **better** off financially a year from now. [NOTE: Nationally, less than one-third of Americans asked an identical question by the University of Michigan in June said their finances will be better off next year.]
- 58 percent say they are "living comfortably (52%) or doing "better than ever" (5%) in this recession.
- 54 percent expect Alabama to come out of the recession at least as fast as the rest of the country.

"Alabama residents are riding out the economic storm and a little brightness couldn't have come at a better time," said the Center for Governmental Services Director, Dr. Don-Terry Veal. "It's especially

important that Alabama is ahead of the nation in optimism. Our consumers' hopeful views about the recession waning during the next year are crucial to local governments. If shoppers stay in the marketplace and homeowners hold onto their property, local governments will take in the tax revenues they need to keep providing vital services to Alabama residents."

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.

Forthcoming releases from the current poll include:

MANUFACTURING. Alabama residents see manufacturing leading the recovery; many think it's a good time to buy an Alabama-made car.

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.

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

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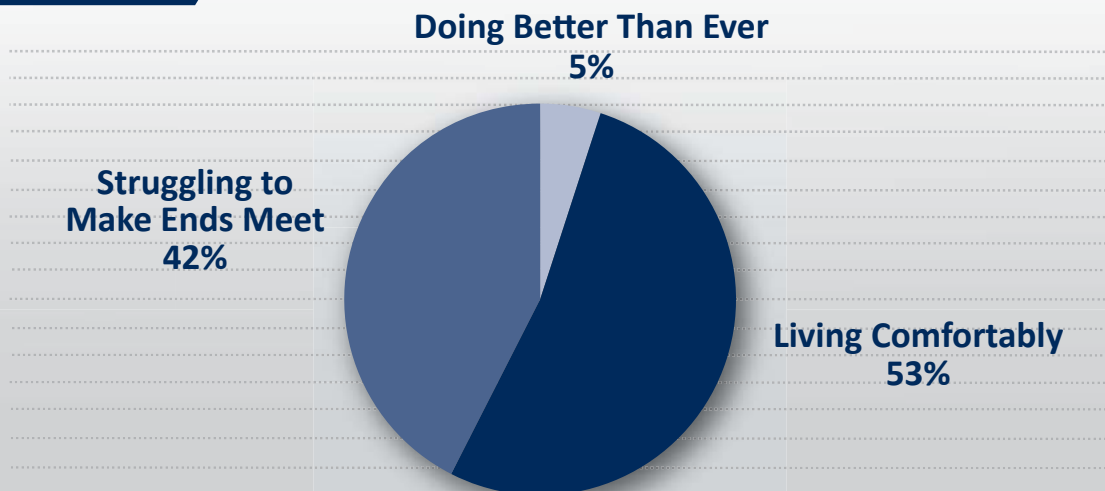
CENTER FOR GOVERNMENTAL SERVICES

42% of Alabamians describe themselves as “struggling to make ends meet.”

FINANCES

Question

Which of the following best describes the present overall financial situation of your family and household today?



MORE RESULTS

47% say they are financially worse off today than a year ago.

Would you say that you yourself are financially better off now than you were a year ago, or are you financially worse off now?

BETTER OFF	24%
ABOUT THE SAME	29%
WORSE OFF	47%
UNSURE	1%

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

54% expect Alabama to come out of the recession as fast as the rest of the country.

Compared with other states, is Alabama likely to come out of the recession faster or slower than most states?

MUCH FASTER	6%
SOMEWHAT FASTER	20%
SAME PACE	28%
SOMEWHAT SLOWER	26%
MUCH SLOWER	13%
UNSURE	7%

55% say they'll be better off financially a year from now.

Looking ahead, do you expect that at this time next year you will be financially better or worse off than now?

1. BETTER OFF	55%
2. ABOUT THE SAME	20%
3. WORSE OFF	20%
8. UNSURE	5%

59% see more unemployment coming during the next 12 months.

How about people out of work during the coming 12 months. Do you think there will be more or less unemployment?

MORE UNEMPLOYMENT	59%
ABOUT THE SAME	27%
LESS UNEMPLOYMENT	13%
UNSURE	1%

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www.askalabama.org

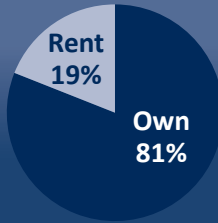


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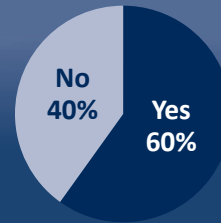
Do you own or rent your place of residence?



n = 639



Do you have a mortgage on your home?



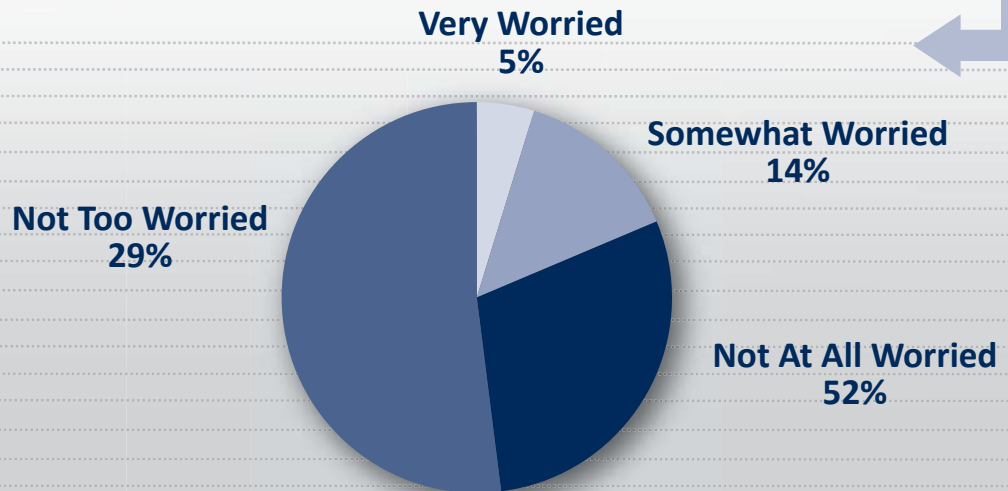
n = 509

Almost 1 in 5 mortgage holders worry about falling behind on payments.

HOUSING

Question

How worried are you that over the next six months you will not be able to make all of your mortgage payments on time? Are you



n = 302

MORE RESULTS

56% see interest rates on loans rising in the next twelve months.

What do you think will happen to interest rates for borrowing money during the next 12 months?

GO UP	56%
STAY THE SAME	25%
GO DOWN	14%
UNSURE	5%

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