



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NC burned up by high gas costs

Raleigh, N.C. – According to the latest Public Policy Polling (PPP) survey released today, 89% of North Carolina adults are very concerned by the high cost of gas.

Sixty-percent of respondents reported that the rising cost of gas greatly affected their driving behavior. When questioned what changes they had made, 88% of respondents answered that they have tried to drive less.

Although North Carolina residents show concern over high gas costs, only 28% of respondents use alternative transportation, broadly defined as "public transit, carpooling, walking or bicycling." With the rising costs of gas, an additional 18% are at least considering using alternative transportation. However, the majority, 54% do not use alternative transportation and do not expect to.

When asked who is responsible for the high cost of gasoline, respondents place the most blame on American oil companies, 43%, with President Bush and the War in Iraq tagging along second with 28%. Respondents also expressed their belief that the President has strong influence over the cost of gas. Forty-three percent of North Carolinians polled think that the President has a great deal of influence, and 31% believe he has some influence on the cost of gas.

This survey was a project of Carrie McMillan, a junior at NC State University.

PPP surveyed 563 North Carolina adults on June 14. The survey has a margin of error of 4.1%. Other factors, such as refusal to be interviewed and weighting, may introduce additional error that is more difficult to quantify.

For more discussion of the poll visit the Public Policy Polling blog at <http://publicpolicypolling.blogspot.com>. If you have questions about this release or would like an interview regarding this release, please contact Carrie McMillan at 919-539-4624.

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North Carolina Survey

June 26, 2007

Introduction

Public Policy Polling surveyed North Carolina adults on June 14, 2007 about the affects of the rising cost of gas on North Carolinians and their families. Our purpose was to investigate opinions about the rising cost of gas and its affects on family driving and spending habits, attitudes about alternative transportation, and who North Carolinians think is responsible for the high gas prices.

Analysis

Attitudes about the current cost of gas

When PPP conducted this poll on June 14, the national average price for a gallon of regular, unleaded gas was \$3.05. Of the adults polled 89% reported that the current cost of gas concerns them very much, with 8% reporting that the cost concerns them somewhat, and only 3% reporting that they are not at all concerned with the cost of gas.

Effect of the cost of gas on driving behavior

Sixty-percent of respondents answered that the rising cost of gas has affected their driving behavior a lot, 28% answered that it affected them some what, while only 7% answered not very much, and 4% not at all.

When asked how it had affected their driving behavior, 88% percent of respondents reported that they have tried to drive less, while 12%, presumably the same 11% who are somewhat or not concerned with the cost of gas and whose driving habits have not been affected very much or at all by the cost of gas, have not made an effort to drive less.

Only 28% of respondents reported that they use alternative transportation, which PPP described as "public transit, carpooling, walking, or bicycling," with an additional 18% at least considering using alternative transportation. However, a majority of respondents, 54%, does not use alternative transportation and reports no intention of starting.

One explanation for the low rate of use of alternative transportation is that our North Carolina communities are set up for driving. If North Carolina communities had better transportation options and pedestrian-friendly communities, more people would be willing to use alternative transportation. Currently, the options are so poor that although 89% of the public is very concerned by the cost of gas, over half of the respondents, 54%, polled will not even consider alternative transportation. The perception of current mass transit systems as inefficient, inadequate, and unsafe for travelers also decreases the use of alternative transportation.

As North Carolina's communities grow and expand, increasing commuting times, putting more fuel-burning cars on the roadways, this problem of inefficiency within our transportation system will only be magnified.

Democrats showed more of a response to the higher gas prices than Republicans. Sixty-seven percent of Democrats responded that gas prices affected their driving behavior a lot, while 54% of Republicans that answered that gas prices had affected them a lot. Ninety-two percent of Democrats reported their effort to drive less, eight percent more than the 84% of Republicans who reported the same.

Race also seems to have an effect on the respondent's response to the high gas costs. Seventy-four percent of black respondents reported that the rising cost of gas affect their driving behavior a lot, compared to 56% of whites. Fifty-eight percent of black respondents are using or are considering using alternative transportation. There is an interesting contrast between whites and blacks' willingness to use alternative transportation, 58% of black respondents reported using alternative transportation or are considering it, while 58% of white respondents reported not using alternative transportation and do not intend to. As black voters are more likely to identify themselves with Democrats, the cross tabs by race may explain some of the differences in the effect of gas prices by party.

Who's to blame for the high costs?

Forty-three percent of respondents blame American oil companies for the high cost of gas, with President Bush and the war in Iraq coming in second with 28%. Respondents also expressed their belief that the President, not particularly George Bush, but any U.S. President, has a strong influence over the cost of gas. Forty-three percent of respondents believe that the President has a great deal of influence and 31% believe he has some influence over the cost of gas. Eighteen percent report that the President has very little influence over the cost of gas and 7% report that the President has no influence at all.

Twenty-eight percent of Republicans believe the President has very little influence over the cost of gas, compared to just 9% of Democrats.

Black respondents showed a general negativity to President Bush. When questioned as to who interviewees saw as primarily responsible for the rising cost of gas prices, a majority of black respondents, 54%, found President Bush and the War in Iraq to blame. And when questioned about the Presidential influence over the cost of gas, 64% of black respondents believe that the President has a great deal of influence. Although the survey did not include a job approval question, the latest PPP tracking poll from June 19, 2007 showed Bush not fairing well with only 22% of black respondents approving of his job as President.

The results from this poll show that voters are concerned about energy. The three major Democratic candidates all include energy on their list of top issues, while just one of the three major Republican candidates, Mitt Romney, included the issue. If politicians were to push for solutions to the high gas prices and energy crisis and present voters with results, it would help them in the upcoming 2008 elections.

Methodology

Public Policy Polling surveyed 563 North Carolina adults on June 14. Our surveys are conducted using Interactive Voice Response (IVR) phone technology. The same recorded voice is played to every respondent, who answer questions using their telephone keypad. The standardized voice dramatically reduces the effect of interview bias.

The surveys responses are weighted to accurately reflect the demographic breakdown of the desired population. The survey has a margin of error of $\pm 4.07\%$. Other factors, such as refusal to be interviewed and weighting, may introduce additional error that is more difficult to quantify. The exact wording of questions can be found on the respective survey results page.

Who We Are

Since 2001 Public Policy Polling (PPP) has provided poll data and expert analysis for the public, opinion leaders and public policy makers in the state of North Carolina. PPP continues to be dedicated to tracking issue trends, campaign match-ups, and approval ratings on key figures in the state. You can find more of our polling data and analysis at our website, www.publicpolicypolling.com.

Carrie McMillan is a junior at North Carolina State University in Raleigh.



Gas Price Poll Survey Results

Q1 The national average price for a gallon of regular, unleaded gas currently is \$3.05. How much does the current cost of gas concern you? Does it concern you very much, somewhat, or not at all? If the cost of gas concerns you very much, press 1 on your keypad now. If it concerns you somewhat, press 2. If not at all, press 3.

Very Much.....89% *Not at all*..... 3%
Some what..... 8%

Q2 Has the rising cost of gas affected you or your family's driving behavior- a lot, some, not very much, not at all, or are you unsure? If the cost of gas has affected your driving habits a lot, please press 1. If some, press 2. If not very much, press 3. If not at all, press 4. If you are unsure, press 5.

A lot..... 60% *Not at all*..... 4%
Some..... 28% *Unsure* 1%
Not Very Much 7%

Q3 What changes have you or your family made because of higher gas prices? Have you made an effort to drive less? If yes, you have tried to drive less, press 1. If no, press 2.

Yes..... 88% *No* 12%

Q4 Have you or your family begun to use alternative forms of transportation such as public transit, carpooling, bicycling, or walking or have you considered it? If yes, you have begun to use alternative forms of transportation, press 1. If you are considering using alternative transportation, press 2. If no, you haven't begun to use alternative transportation and don't expect to, press 3.

Yes..... 28% *No* 54%
Considering using . 18%

Q5 In the upcoming summer vacation months the cost of gas may affect some families' travel and vacation decisions. Because of the cost of gas, some families will be vacationing closer to home. Others will not go on vacation at all, while other families do not expect the cost of gas to influence their travel decisions. Which statement best matches your attitude?

If because of the cost of gas, you intend to vacation closer to home, press 1. If you expect not to go on vacation at all, press 2. If cost of gas will not affect your travel decisions, press 3. If you are unsure, press 4.

Intend to vacation closer to home33% *Cost of gas will have no effect of travel*.....15%
Expect not to go on vacation46% *Unsure* 6%

Q6 Many people today want to know who is responsible for the high cost of gas. Of the following options, who or what do you think is most to blame- American oil companies, oil producing nations, consumer wastefulness, President Bush and the War in Iraq, Congress, or other? If you think oil companies are most responsible, press 1. If oil producing nations, press 2. If consumer wastefulness, press 3. If President Bush and the War in Iraq, press 4. If Congress, press 5. If other, press 6. If you are unsure, press 7.

Oil Companies43% *President Bush and the War in Iraq*28%
Oil producing nations10% *Congress* 8%
Consumer Wastefulness 3% *Other*..... 5%
Unsure 2%





Q7 How much influence do you think any U.S. President has on the cost of gas prices? If you think the President has a great deal of influence, some influence, very little influence or none at all? If you think that the President has a great deal of influence, press 1. If some influence, press 2. If very little, press 3. If none at all, press 4. If you are unsure, press 5.

<i>Great deal of influence</i>	43%	<i>Very little influence</i> ..	18%
<i>Some influence</i>	31%	<i>None at all</i>	7%
		<i>Unsure</i>	2%

Q8 If you are a woman, press 1, if a man, press 2.

<i>Women</i>	56%	<i>Men</i>	44%
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Q9 What is your political affiliation? If Democrat, press 1. If Republican, press 2. If other, press 3.

<i>Democrat</i>	42%	<i>Other</i>	21%
<i>Republican</i>	38%		

Q10 If you are white, press one now. If you are African-American, press two now. If other, press 3.

<i>White</i>	74%	<i>Other</i>	4%
<i>Black</i>	22%		

Q11 If you are 18 to 29 years old, press 1 now. If you are 30 to 45, press 2. If you are 46 to 60, press 3. If older, press 4.

<i>18-29</i>	10%	<i>46-60</i>	35%
<i>30-45</i>	14%	<i>Older than 60</i>	41%





Gas Poll Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Women	Men
Degree of concern about gas cost			
Very Much	89%	92%	84%
Some what	9%	7%	11%
Not at all	3%	1%	5%

	Base	Gender	
		Women	Men
Affect of gas price on driving behavior			
A lot	60%	61%	59%
Some	28%	29%	28%
Not Very Much	6%	6%	7%
Not at all	4%	2%	5%
Unsure	1%	2%	0%

	Base	Gender	
		Women	Men
Drive Less			
Yes	88%	91%	85%
No	12%	9%	15%

	Base	Gender	
		Women	Men
Use of Alternative transportation			
Yes	28%	26%	30%
Considering using	18%	18%	18%
No	54%	56%	52%

	Base	Gender	
		Women	Men
Cost of gas' affect on travel			
Intend to vacation closer to home	33%	37%	29%
Expect not to go on vacation	46%	45%	48%
Cost of gas will have no effect of travel	15%	13%	17%
Unsure	6%	6%	6%

	Base	Gender	
		Women	Men
Responsible for high cost of gas			
Oil Companies	43%	42%	45%
Oil producing nations	10%	10%	9%
Consumer Wastefulness	3%	3%	2%
President Bush and the War in Iraq	28%	32%	23%
Congress	8%	6%	12%
Other	5%	4%	7%
Unsure	2%	3%	1%

	Base	Gender	
		Women	Men
President's influence on cost of gas			
Great deal of influence	43%	45%	40%
Some influence	31%	32%	29%
Very little influence	17%	13%	23%
None at all	7%	6%	7%
Unsure	2%	3%	1%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Other
Degree of concern about gas cost				
Very Much	89%	93%	88%	82%
Some what	8%	5%	8%	16%
Not at all	3%	2%	4%	3%





Gas Poll Crosstabs

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Other
Affect of gas price on driving behavior				
A lot	60%	67%	54%	57%
Some	28%	24%	31%	33%
Not Very Much	6%	5%	8%	7%
Not at all	4%	2%	6%	1%
Unsure	1%	2%	1%	1%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Other
Drive Less				
Yes	88%	92%	84%	87%
No	12%	8%	16%	13%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Other
Use of Alternative transportation				
Yes	28%	32%	24%	25%
Considering using	18%	21%	18%	12%
No	54%	47%	58%	63%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Other
Cost of gas' affect on travel				
Intend to vacation closer to home	33%	36%	31%	33%
Expect not to go on vacation	46%	50%	42%	48%
Cost of gas will have no effect of travel	15%	11%	20%	13%
Unsure	6%	4%	8%	6%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Other
Responsible for high cost of gas				
Oil Companies	43%	33%	56%	43%
Oil producing nations	10%	9%	11%	7%
Consumer Wastefulness	3%	2%	3%	3%
President Bush and the War in Iraq	28%	44%	10%	28%
Congress	8%	4%	12%	11%
Other	5%	5%	6%	5%
Unsure	2%	2%	3%	2%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Other
President's influence on cost of gas				
Great deal of influence	43%	56%	27%	46%
Some influence	31%	29%	33%	29%
Very little influence	18%	9%	28%	16%
None at all	7%	4%	10%	7%
Unsure	2%	1%	3%	2%

	Base	Race		
		White	Black	Other
Degree of concern about gas cost				
Very Much	89%	87%	95%	84%
Some what	8%	9%	5%	9%
Not at all	3%	3%	-	6%

	Base	Race		
		White	Black	Other
Affect of gas price on driving behavior				
A lot	60%	56%	74%	66%
Some	28%	32%	17%	25%
Not Very Much	6%	8%	2%	3%
Not at all	4%	4%	2%	3%
Unsure	1%	0%	5%	3%





Gas Poll Crosstabs

	Base	Race		
		White	Black	Other
Drive Less				
Yes	88%	87%	93%	87%
No	12%	13%	7%	13%

	Base	Race		
		White	Black	Other
Use of Alternative transportation				
Yes	28%	25%	35%	29%
Considering using	18%	16%	23%	23%
No	54%	58%	42%	48%

	Base	Race		
		White	Black	Other
Cost of gas' affect on travel				
Intend to vacation closer to home	33%	32%	40%	25%
Expect not to go on vacation	46%	46%	47%	56%
Cost of gas will have no effect of travel	15%	17%	7%	19%
Unsure	6%	6%	7%	-

	Base	Race		
		White	Black	Other
Responsible for high cost of gas				
Oil Companies	43%	50%	24%	34%
Oil producing nations	10%	12%	3%	6%
Consumer Wastefulness	3%	3%	2%	6%
President Bush and the War in Iraq	28%	19%	57%	41%
Congress	8%	9%	5%	9%
Other	5%	5%	7%	3%
Unsure	2%	3%	2%	-

	Base	Race		
		White	Black	Other
President's influence on cost of gas				
Great deal of influence	43%	37%	64%	41%
Some influence	31%	32%	24%	34%
Very little influence	18%	21%	5%	16%
None at all	7%	8%	3%	6%
Unsure	2%	1%	3%	3%

	Base	Age			
		18-29	30-45	46-60	Older than 60
Degree of concern about gas cost					
Very Much	89%	94%	94%	91%	84%
Some what	8%	5%	3%	5%	14%
Not at all	3%	2%	2%	4%	2%

	Base	Age			
		18-29	30-45	46-60	Older than 60
Affect of gas price on driving behavior					
A lot	60%	69%	58%	63%	56%
Some	28%	24%	29%	28%	30%
Not Very Much	7%	5%	6%	7%	7%
Not at all	4%	2%	8%	2%	4%
Unsure	1%	-	-	0%	3%

	Base	Age			
		18-29	30-45	46-60	Older than 60
Drive Less					
Yes	88%	86%	88%	90%	87%
No	12%	14%	12%	10%	13%





Gas Poll Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18-29	30-45	46-60	Older than 60
Use of Alternative transportation					
Yes	28%	38%	25%	24%	30%
Considering using	18%	27%	24%	20%	12%
No	54%	35%	51%	56%	58%

	Base	Age			
		18-29	30-45	46-60	Older than 60
Cost of gas' affect on travel					
Intend to vacation closer to home	33%	25%	31%	31%	37%
Expect not to go on vacation	46%	56%	49%	47%	43%
Cost of gas will have no effect of travel	15%	15%	16%	17%	13%
Unsure	6%	5%	4%	5%	7%

	Base	Age			
		18-29	30-45	46-60	Older than 60
Responsible for high cost of gas					
Oil Companies	43%	25%	42%	45%	46%
Oil producing nations	10%	7%	7%	11%	10%
Consumer Wastefulness	3%	2%	4%	2%	3%
President Bush and the War in Iraq	28%	45%	28%	25%	27%
Congress	8%	12%	13%	8%	7%
Other	5%	5%	6%	8%	3%
Unsure	2%	3%	1%	1%	3%

	Base	Age			
		18-29	30-45	46-60	Older than 60
President's influence on cost of gas					
Great deal of influence	43%	50%	36%	44%	43%
Some influence	31%	27%	39%	32%	27%
Very little influence	18%	18%	20%	17%	17%
None at all	7%	3%	6%	7%	8%
Unsure	2%	2%	-	0%	4%

