

# **BLISS INSTITUTE**

## **2006 GENERAL ELECTION SURVEY**

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### **Executive Summary**

*The Bliss Institute 2006 General Election Survey finds Democrat Ted Strickland with a substantial lead over Republican Ken Blackwell in the race for Ohio governor. However, the race for U.S. Senate is a dead heat between Democrat Sherrod Brown and Republican Mike DeWine. The Republican candidate leads in the race for attorney general, while the Democratic candidates are ahead in the campaigns for auditor, secretary of state, and treasurer. In terms of ballot measures, a proposal to raise the minimum wage is backed by an overwhelming majority, while proposals to allow slot machines and to ban smoking in public places with some exceptions are ahead by smaller margins. The political attitudes, issue priorities, and demographic characteristics of voters help explain these patterns of preferences among likely voters. Overall, one-half of Ohioans expressed a great deal of confidence that their votes would be counted fairly in the 2006 general election. However, Democrats and less likely voters reported much lower levels of confidence than Republicans and likely voters.*

### **The Survey**

This report is based on a survey of a random sample of Ohio adults interviewed by telephone between August 20<sup>th</sup> and September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2006 by the Center for Marketing & Opinion Research, LLC of Canton, Ohio. The number of respondents was 1,073 and the overall margin of error for the general public sample is plus or minus 3 percentage points. Smaller sub-samples have margins of error that are higher.

To assess voter turnout, the report identifies a sub-sample of 477 likely voters, with a margin of error of plus or minus 4.5 percentage points. This measure of likely voters is based on variables associated with voter turnout overall and in recent Ohio gubernatorial elections.<sup>1</sup> Put another way, the survey figures for the general public approximate the level of turnout in the 2004 presidential election in Ohio and the likely voter sub-sample approximates the turnout of the 1998 gubernatorial race in Ohio.

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<sup>1</sup> Likely voters were identified by calculating the likelihood of voting for each respondent based on reported voter registration, reported likelihood of voting in 2006, interest in the campaign, reported past voting behavior, education, and income. Likely voters were registered respondents whose likelihood of voting was greater than the mean probability of voting for recent Ohio gubernatorial elections.

## Findings

### *The Major Races: Ohio Governor and U.S. Senate*

Table 1 reports respondents' preferences for the gubernatorial and senatorial races, listing the results for the general public and for likely voters.

Table 1: Major Statewide Races 2006:  
General Population and Likely Voters

	<i>General Population</i>	<i>Likely Voters</i>
<b>Ohio Governor</b>		
Strickland	40.6	47.4
Blackwell	26.5	33.8
Others	4.2	3.4
Undecided	28.7	15.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>U.S. Senator</b>		
Brown	35.0	41.5
DeWine	36.3	41.7
Others	3.2	2.5
Undecided	25.5	14.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

In the gubernatorial race, Democrat Ted Strickland leads Republican Ken Blackwell by a substantial margin. In the general public, 41% favor Strickland, 27% Blackwell, 4% other gubernatorial candidates, and 29% were undecided. Among likely voters, 47% favor Strickland, 34% Blackwell, 3% other candidates, and 16% undecided. Thus, Strickland holds a 14 percentage point lead among likely voters, a margin that differs little for the general public.

The margin between Strickland and Blackwell did not vary significantly over the period of the survey. Thus, aggregate voter preferences have changed very little over the first month of the fall campaign.

In contrast, the U.S. Senate race is very close. In the public as a whole, Democrat Sherrod Brown has the support of 35% of respondents and Republican Mike DeWine 36%, with other candidates at 3% and 25% undecided. Among likely voters, the figures are Brown 41%, DeWine 42%, and other candidates 3%, with 14% undecided.

Unlike the gubernatorial race, there was a significant shift in favor of Republican DeWine during the last third of the survey period. Among likely voters, DeWine's support rose from 37 to 49%, well outside the 5 percentage point margin of error of the relevant sub-sample. These gains erased Brown's initial lead, rendering the race a dead heat as of the end of September.

*The Major Races and Political Attitudes*

Table 2 examines the relationship between political attitudes and gubernatorial and senatorial preferences. Here the two major races present some contrasts.

Table 2: Major Races, Partisanship and Ideology  
Likely Voters

	<b>ALL</b>	Strickland	Blackwell	Others	Undecided	<b>Total</b>	Brown	DeWine	Others	Undecided	<b>Total</b>
<b>Partisanship</b>											
Democrat	<b>43.4</b>	85.5	4.3	1.0	9.2	<b>100.0</b>	79.2	8.2	0.0	12.6	<b>100.0</b>
Independent	<b>14.3</b>	33.8	22.1	11.8	32.3	<b>100.0</b>	36.8	32.4	4.4	26.4	<b>100.0</b>
Republican	<b>42.3</b>	12.9	67.8	3.0	16.3	<b>100.0</b>	4.5	79.2	4.5	11.8	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Party Control</b>											
Democrats take control of state government	<b>57.6</b>	82.8	4.6	1.7	10.9	<b>100.0</b>	76.2	11.7	0.4	11.7	<b>100.0</b>
Republicans stay in control of state government	<b>42.4</b>	9.7	73.9	2.8	13.6	<b>100.0</b>	3.4	81.8	3.4	11.4	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Ideology</b>											
Liberal	<b>22.2</b>	84.5	5.8	2.9	6.8	<b>100.0</b>	75.7	12.6	1.0	10.7	<b>100.0</b>
Moderate	<b>35.4</b>	62.2	16.5	2.4	18.9	<b>100.0</b>	51.2	29.9	1.2	17.7	<b>100.0</b>
Conservative	<b>42.4</b>	15.3	64.3	4.1	16.3	<b>100.0</b>	15.3	68.4	4.1	12.2	<b>100.0</b>

Among likely voters, self-identified Democrats and Republicans are almost equal in strength and account for almost 86% of the total. This even balance of party identification has been typical of Ohio politics in recent years and does not appear to have changed in the first month of the fall campaign.

However, there is an unusual pattern in the gubernatorial race: some 86% of Democrats support Strickland, but just 68% of Republicans back Blackwell. Indeed, 16% of Republicans are undecided in the gubernatorial race and 13% support Strickland. In contrast, less than 10% of Democrats are undecided and just 4% back Blackwell. About one-third of independents support Strickland and about one-fifth support Blackwell. However, nearly one-third is undecided, and better than one-tenth prefers another candidate.

In this regard, the senatorial campaign shows a more typical pattern for Ohio politics: Brown has the backing of 79% of Democrats and DeWine the support of 79% of Republicans, with only about one-eighth of each party undecided. Brown edges DeWine 37 to 32% among independents. However, twice as many Democrats are backing DeWine as Republicans who are supporting Brown (8 to 5% respectively). One-quarter of the independents are undecided.

In order to assess the political environment of the campaign, respondents were asked if they preferred the Democrats to take control of state government or for Republicans to stay in charge. Among likely voters, the Democrats were preferred 58 to 42%. (In the general public, the comparable figures were 61 and 36%, respectively.)

More than four-fifths of respondents who want the Democrats to take control of state government support Strickland, but just 74% of those who wanted to maintain Republican control back Blackwell.

Here, too, the pattern is reversed for the Senate race, with Brown receiving just three-quarters of the votes of people who want Democratic control of Ohio government, while DeWine is favored by more than four-fifths of those who want continued GOP control of state government.

Ideology completes the picture. Self-described liberals made up about one-fifth of likely voters, and give 85% of their support to Strickland and 76% of their support to Brown. Strickland also receives three-fifths of moderates, who accounted for about one-third of likely voters, and Brown receives just one-half.

In contrast, Blackwell and DeWine garner roughly two-thirds of the votes of conservatives, who made up some two-fifths of likely voters. More than 12% of conservatives were undecided in each race, and 15% back Strickland and Brown.

*“Wrong Track, Right Track” Questions*

Table 3 reports the percentage of likely voters who believe the state of Ohio is on the “wrong” and “right” track, overall, and with regard to Ohio’s economy and the state’s “moral climate.” By overwhelming margins, Ohioans believe the state, and especially its economy, to be on the “wrong track.” And a majority of respondents also believe the moral climate in Ohio is on the “wrong track.”

Table 3: Major Races, "Wrong Track, Right Track" Question  
Likely Voters

	ALL	Strickland	Blackwell	Others	Undecided	Total	Brown	DeWine	Others	Undecided	Total
<b>Overall</b>											
<b>Ohio</b>											
Wrong Track	67.9	60.7	22.3	2.1	14.9	100.0	54.4	29.2	3.0	13.4	100.0
Right Track	32.1	22.9	56.9	3.3	16.9	100.0	16.7	67.4	2.1	13.8	100.0
<b>Ohio</b>											
<b>Economy:</b>											
Wrong Track	74.4	57.9	24.7	3.0	14.4	100.0	53.0	31.7	2.4	12.9	100.0
Right Track	25.6	22.1	58.4	2.7	16.8	100.0	13.3	69.0	2.7	15.0	100.0
<b>Ohio Moral</b>											
<b>Climate:</b>											
Wrong Track	56.8	45.6	31.1	5.0	18.3	100.0	44.0	38.2	2.1	15.7	100.0
Right Track	43.2	45.4	41.0	1.1	12.5	100.0	34.4	49.2	2.2	14.2	100.0

These views are strongly associated with support for candidates. For instance, 61% of those who believe Ohio is on the “wrong track” overall back Strickland, while 57% of those who view Ohio as being on the “right tack” overall support Blackwell. In the Senate race, a similar pattern holds, with Brown garnering a 54% of the overall “wrong track” respondents and DeWine being supported by 67% of “right track” respondents. A nearly identical pattern exists for assessments of the direction of the Ohio economy.

The moral climate variable does not divide the candidates as sharply as the assessments of Ohio overall and the economy. Approximately the same percentage of likely voters (45%) back Strickland in both the “wrong” and “right track” perceptions of the moral climate. A somewhat greater difference appears in the Senate race, but it was much smaller than for the economy. These findings suggest that social issues may not be as prominent in 2006 as in recent elections.

### *Issue Priorities*

Table 4 details the extent to which likely voters report that economic issues, corruption, foreign policy, President Bush’s job performance, and social issues will be important to their vote in 2006. Large majorities said the first three would be important compared to a slim majority regarding Bush’s job performance as “very important” and less than one-half give social issues top priority.

Table 4: Major Races, Importance of Issues  
Likely Voters

	<b>ALL</b>	Strickland	Blackwell	Others	Undecided	<b>Total</b>	Brown	DeWine	Others	Undecided	<b>Total</b>
<b>Economic Issues</b>											
Very Important	<b>80.7</b>	49.9	30.9	3.4	15.8	<b>100.0</b>	44.7	39.0	2.9	13.4	<b>100.0</b>
Less Important	<b>19.3</b>	37.0	45.7	3.3	14.0	<b>100.0</b>	28.3	53.3	1.1	17.3	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Corruption</b>											
Very Important	<b>79.7</b>	48.9	30.5	3.9	16.7	<b>100.0</b>	43.7	38.9	2.6	14.8	<b>100.0</b>
Less Important	<b>20.3</b>	41.2	46.4	1.0	11.4	<b>100.0</b>	33.0	52.6	2.1	12.3	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Foreign Policy</b>											
Very Important	<b>77.6</b>	47.6	34.9	3.2	14.3	<b>100.0</b>	44.6	40.8	1.9	12.7	<b>100.0</b>
Less Important	<b>22.4</b>	46.7	29.9	3.7	19.7	<b>100.0</b>	30.8	44.9	4.7	19.6	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Bush's Job Performance</b>											
Very Important	<b>53.0</b>	56.9	28.1	2.0	13.0	<b>100.0</b>	53.8	31.2	1.6	13.4	<b>100.0</b>
Less Important	<b>47.0</b>	36.6	40.2	4.9	18.3	<b>100.0</b>	27.7	53.6	3.6	15.1	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Social Issues</b>											
Very Important	<b>49.1</b>	38.5	42.3	2.6	16.6	<b>100.0</b>	34.2	46.2	3.4	16.2	<b>100.0</b>
Less Important	<b>50.9</b>	56.0	25.5	4.1	14.4	<b>100.0</b>	48.6	37.4	1.6	12.4	<b>100.0</b>

Economic priorities sharply differentiate the campaigns, with those respondents who regard economic issues as “very important” favoring Strickland and Brown, while those who view economic issues as less important favoring Blackwell and DeWine.

A similar pattern holds for corruption, Bush’s job performance, and foreign policy, with likely voters who view these issues as “very important” favoring the Democratic candidates. However, those respondents who view social issues as “very important” favor the GOP candidates.

These data suggest that on balance, economic issues, corruption, foreign policy, and President Bush’s job performance benefit the Democratic candidates and hurt the Republican candidates. In contrast, social issues appear to aid the Republicans.

*Demography and the Vote*

Table 5 reports the connection between basic social characteristics and the vote for the major candidates among likely voters.

Table 5: Major Races, Basic Demography

	<b>ALL</b>	Strickland	Blackwell	Others	Undecided	<b>Total</b>	Brown	DeWine	Others	Undecided	<b>Total</b>
<b>Gender</b>											
Male	<b>54.5</b>	46.5	39.6	4.2	9.7	<b>100.0</b>	37.7	48.5	3.1	10.7	<b>100.0</b>
Female	<b>45.5</b>	48.4	26.7	2.3	22.6	<b>100.0</b>	46.1	33.6	1.8	18.5	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Race</b>											
White	<b>86.6</b>	46.7	34.9	3.4	15.0	<b>100.0</b>	40.4	44.3	2.7	12.6	<b>100.0</b>
Black	<b>8.4</b>	57.5	17.5	0.0	25.0	<b>100.0</b>	52.5	12.5	0.0	35.0	<b>100.0</b>
Other	<b>5.0</b>	41.7	41.7	8.3	8.3	<b>100.0</b>	41.7	45.8	4.2	8.3	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Region</b>											
Northeast	<b>38.8</b>	51.9	28.1	4.3	15.7	<b>100.0</b>	45.9	37.8	1.1	15.2	<b>100.0</b>
Northwest	<b>11.1</b>	45.3	39.6	0.0	15.1	<b>100.0</b>	37.7	43.4	5.7	13.2	<b>100.0</b>
Central	<b>16.8</b>	45.0	36.3	3.7	15.0	<b>100.0</b>	38.8	46.3	1.3	13.6	<b>100.0</b>
Southeast	<b>6.1</b>	69.0	20.7	6.9	3.4	<b>100.0</b>	58.6	31.0	0.0	10.4	<b>100.0</b>
Southwest	<b>27.3</b>	38.5	40.8	2.3	18.4	<b>100.0</b>	34.6	46.2	4.6	14.6	<b>100.0</b>

First, there are interesting gender differences in the gubernatorial race. The classic gender gap is missing among Strickland supporters, with about the same proportion of men and women supporting the Democratic candidate (47 and 48% respectively). In contrast, Blackwell has more support among men (40%) than women (27%).

In the Senate race, there is a more traditional “gender gap” with women preferring Brown by eight percentage points more than men, and with males preferring DeWine by fifteen percentage points more than females.

With regard to race, Strickland leads among black voters (57 to 18%). However, one-quarter of African American likely voters are undecided, an unusual pattern for this strong Democratic constituency. Indeed, the Senate contest reveals a more common pattern: DeWine has a slight plurality of white respondents and Brown a majority of black respondents.

There are also clear regional patterns to candidate preferences. In the gubernatorial race, Strickland carries all regions except the Southwest, Blackwell’s home turf. Strickland polls particularly well in the Southeast, his native region.

In the Senate campaign, Brown earns a plurality in Northeast Ohio, his home turf and the most populous region of the state; Brown also has a large majority in the Southeast. DeWine has plurality support in the other three regions, including his home region of Southwest Ohio.

Table 6 examines the impact of religion. Here, the first entry combines religious affiliation and worship attendance to capture the impact of both aspects of religion on the vote.

Table 6: Major Candidates and Religion, Likely Voters

	<b>ALL</b>	Strickland	Blackwell	Others	Undecided	<b>Total</b>	Brown	DeWine	Others	Undecided	<b>Total</b>
<b>Religion</b>											
Weekly Attending											
Evangelical Protestants	<b>21.6</b>	26.2	51.5	2.9	19.4	<b>100.0</b>	23.3	57.3	4.9	14.5	<b>100.0</b>
Less Observant											
Evangelical Protestants	<b>5.7</b>	44.4	22.2	3.7	29.7	<b>100.0</b>	48.1	40.7	3.7	7.5	<b>100.0</b>
Weekly Attending											
Mainline											
Protestants	<b>7.3</b>	45.7	34.3	5.7	14.3	<b>100.0</b>	34.3	57.1	2.9	5.7	<b>100.0</b>
Less Observant											
Mainline											
Protestants	<b>13.0</b>	46.8	37.1	3.2	12.9	<b>100.0</b>	43.5	41.9	3.2	11.4	<b>100.0</b>
Weekly Attending											
Catholics	<b>14.9</b>	47.9	33.8	2.8	15.5	<b>100.0</b>	42.3	40.8	0.0	16.9	<b>100.0</b>
Less Observant											
Catholics	<b>9.4</b>	46.7	42.2	4.4	6.7	<b>100.0</b>	35.6	53.3	2.2	8.9	<b>100.0</b>
Black Protestants	<b>7.8</b>	56.8	21.6	0.0	21.6	<b>100.0</b>	48.6	18.9	0.0	32.5	<b>100.0</b>
Other Christians	<b>4.4</b>	66.7	28.6	0.0	4.7	<b>100.0</b>	57.1	23.8	4.8	14.3	<b>100.0</b>
Non-Christians	<b>5.5</b>	69.2	19.2	0.0	11.6	<b>100.0</b>	65.4	30.8	0.0	3.8	<b>100.0</b>
Unaffiliated	<b>10.5</b>	68.0	10.0	8.0	14.0	<b>100.0</b>	58.0	20.0	2.0	20.0	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Member of Christian conservative group</b>											
Yes	<b>10.9</b>	23.5	66.7	0.0	9.8	<b>100.0</b>	17.6	70.6	0.0	11.8	<b>100.0</b>
No	<b>89.1</b>	51.0	30.0	3.6	15.4	<b>100.0</b>	45.0	37.7	2.9	14.4	<b>100.0</b>

In the race for governor, Blackwell garners a majority of weekly attending evangelical Protestants, a strong GOP constituency in the past. However, Strickland has the support of one-quarter of these voters, with almost one-fifth undecided. In the Senate race, DeWine has the support of nearly three-fifths of these voters while Brown has just over one-fifth.

Strickland carries a plurality of less observant evangelical Protestants (those who report attending worship less than once a week) as well as comparable pluralities of all the Mainline Protestant and Catholic groups. Strickland also has the backing of a majority of Black Protestants (compared to one-fifth for Blackwell), and large majorities of Other Christians, Non-Christians, and the Unaffiliated.

In the Senate race, Brown garners a near majority of “less observant evangelical Protestants,” but DeWine carries “weekly attending” Evangelical and Mainline Protestants as well as “less observant” Catholics. Meanwhile, “less observant mainline Protestants” and “weekly attending Catholics” split their support between the candidates. Brown has the support of religious minorities and the unaffiliated, but not at the same rate as Strickland.

Not surprisingly, those respondents identified as a member of a Christian conservative group strongly backed the Republican candidates.

Finally, Table 7 looks at socio-economic status and the vote. As one might expect, the Democratic candidates outperform the Republican candidates among respondents in the lower income groups (although there are a large number of undecideds in the “under \$18,000 a year” subgroup). However, Strickland outperforms Blackwell across all income groups except among respondents in the “over \$72,000 a year” category, where the gubernatorial candidates are in a statistical tie.

In the Senate race, Brown outpolls DeWine across all income subgroups except among the most affluent respondents—who are the largest group among likely voters.

Table 7: Major Candidates, Socio-economic Status  
Likely Voters

	<i>ALL</i>	<i>Strickland</i>	<i>Blackwell</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>Undecided</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>DeWine</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>Undecided</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Income</b>											
Under \$18,000	<b>3.4</b>	40.0	26.7	6.7	26.6	<b>100.0</b>	40.0	33.3	0.0	26.7	<b>100.0</b>
\$18-36,000	<b>15.5</b>	58.0	27.5	2.9	11.6	<b>100.0</b>	53.6	30.4	1.4	14.6	<b>100.0</b>
\$36-\$54,000	<b>18.2</b>	50.6	28.4	2.5	18.5	<b>100.0</b>	46.9	39.5	1.2	12.4	<b>100.0</b>
\$54-72,000	<b>22.2</b>	48.5	30.3	3.0	18.2	<b>100.0</b>	42.4	37.4	1.0	19.2	<b>100.0</b>
Over \$72,000	<b>40.8</b>	42.9	42.3	4.4	10.4	<b>100.0</b>	34.6	50.0	4.9	10.5	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Education</b>											
High School or less	<b>22.0</b>	57.7	22.1	3.8	16.4	<b>100.0</b>	55.8	26.9	1.9	15.4	<b>100.0</b>
Some College	<b>30.0</b>	40.6	39.9	2.1	17.4	<b>100.0</b>	39.9	42.7	3.5	14.0	<b>100.0</b>
College Graduate	<b>28.5</b>	45.6	35.3	3.7	15.4	<b>100.0</b>	32.4	45.6	2.2	19.8	<b>100.0</b>
Post Graduate degree	<b>19.5</b>	48.4	35.5	4.3	11.8	<b>100.0</b>	40.9	51.6	2.2	5.3	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Member labor union</b>											
Yes	<b>20.3</b>	60.0	26.2	3.1	10.7	<b>100.0</b>	52.3	35.4	0.0	12.3	<b>100.0</b>
No	<b>79.7</b>	42.4	36.9	3.1	17.6	<b>100.0</b>	38.8	41.2	3.9	16.1	<b>100.0</b>



In the gubernatorial race, Strickland leads among respondents from all education levels, although he and Blackwell are in a virtual tie among those voters with “some college.” In the Senate race, Brown carries the “high school or less” category whereas DeWine leads in all other education subgroups.

As expected, labor union members support the Democratic candidates by significant majorities.

*Candidates for Other Offices*

Table 8 reports respondent preferences for other statewide offices. Historically, these races have been deeply influenced by the gubernatorial and senatorial campaigns. Clearly, many fewer Ohioans know about and have preferences on these candidates, as evidenced by the fact that one-third or more of even likely voters are undecided.

Table 8: Other Offices  
Likely Voters

	<i>General Population</i>	<i>Likely Voters</i>
<b>Congress</b>		
Democratic	29.2	31.6
Republican	21.5	30.5
Other candidate	2.6	2.6
Undecided	46.7	35.3
<b>Attorney General</b>		
Betty Montgomery	32.2	38.2
Marc Dann	22.1	23.8
Other candidate	2.4	1.9
Undecided	43.3	36.1
<b>Auditor</b>		
Barbara Sykes	25.1	29.2
Mary Taylor	14.4	18.8
Other candidate	2.1	1.9
Undecided	58.4	50.1
<b>Secretary of State</b>		
Jennifer Brunner	23.5	26.8
Greg Hartmann	13.8	19.9
Other candidate	1.5	0.8
Undecided	61.2	52.5
<b>Treasurer</b>		
Richard Cordray	23.8	28.8
Sandra O'Brien	20.9	26.2
Other candidate	1.7	1.5
Undecided	53.6	43.5

In the general public, the Democrats lead the Republicans in a generic party ballot for congressional candidates 30 to 22%. However, among likely voters, the two parties are in a statistical tie (about 31% each).

In the contest for Ohio Attorney General, Republican Betty Montgomery leads Democrat Marc Dann 32 to 22% in the public at large, and 38 to 24% among likely voters. The current state auditor and former attorney general, Montgomery is perhaps the best known candidate in any of these down-ticket races.

In the race for Ohio Auditor, Democrat Barbara Sykes is ahead of Republican Mary Taylor 25 to 14% in the public at large and 29 to 19% among likely voters. However, half of all respondents are undecided.

For Ohio Secretary of State, Democrat Jennifer Brunner leads Republican Greg Hartmann 24 to 14% in the general public, and 27 to 20% among likely voters, with 52% undecided.

For Ohio Treasurer, Democrat Richard Cordray leads Republican Sandra O'Brien 24 to 21% in the general public and by 29 to 26% among likely voters, with 44% undecided. These differences are within the margin of error of the survey, and thus are a statistical tie. These results are surprising given the fact that Cordray has run for statewide office before and O'Brien has not.

### *Partisanship and Party Control*

Historically, down-ticket races have been influenced by partisanship, and Table 9 examines the association between partisanship and candidate preferences.

The generic congressional vote is a good example of this historic tendency: nearly two-thirds of Democrats said they will vote for the Democratic congressional candidate, and three-fifths of the Republicans said they will vote for the GOP candidate. Most independents are undecided, but GOP candidates enjoy a slight edge among them.

Down-ticket candidates leading in this survey typically enjoy greater unity among their fellow partisans, while partisan support for the trailing candidates is much softer. Likewise, the leading candidates have an advantage among independents.

This pattern holds for Betty Montgomery for attorney general, Barbara Sykes for auditor, Jennifer Brunner for secretary of state, and Richard Cordray for treasurer. A modest exception to these patterns occurs for Sandra O'Brien, who has a level of party unity comparable with her opponent—a pattern that may help explain the closeness of the race.

Table 9 Other Offices and Political Attitudes  
Likely Voters

	<b>Partisanship</b>			<b>Total</b>
	Democrats	Independent	Republican	
<b>All</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>35.4</b>	<b>42.3</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Congress</b>				
Democratic	65.7	15.2	2.0	100
Republican	4.9	18.2	60.8	100
Other candidate	1.5	9.1	1.5	100
Undecided	27.9	57.5	35.7	100
<b>Attorney General</b>				
Betty Montgomery	14.5	34.8	63.7	100
Marc Dann	44.9	19.7	3.5	100
Other candidate	0.5	7.6	1.5	100
Undecided	40.1	37.9	31.3	100
<b>Auditor</b>				
Barbara Sykes	55.8	20.9	4.5	100
Mary Taylor	1.5	9.0	40.0	100
Other candidate	1.0	6.0	1.5	100
Undecided	41.7	64.1	54.0	100
<b>Secretary of State</b>				
Jennifer Brunner	51.2	20.9	4.0	100
Greg Hartmann	2.4	10.4	40.8	100
Other candidate	0.0	4.5	0.5	100
Undecided	46.4	64.2	54.7	100
<b>Treasurer</b>				
Richard Cordray	52.9	22.4	6.0	100
Sandra O'Brien	6.3	14.9	50.5	100
Other candidate	0.0	9.0	0.5	100
Undecided	40.8	53.7	43.0	100

*Ballot Measures*

Table 10 lists voter preferences for proposed ballot initiatives proposed for 2006, among the general public as well as likely voters.

A proposal to raise the minimum wage draws the most support, with the support of four-fifths of the public in general and nearly three-quarters of likely voters.

In contrast, a proposal to change certain limits in the worker compensation program is supported by less than one-fifth of the general public and likely voters. Indeed, about half of all respondents, both general population and likely voters, are undecided on this initiative.

A proposal to allow slot machines in Ohio is backed by almost one-half of the general public and by the same margin among likely voters.

Table 10 Ballot Measures  
Likely Voters

	<i>General Population</i>	<i>Likely Voters</i>
<b>Raise Minimum Wage</b>		
Yes	81.0	72.9
No	10.9	17.2
Undecided	8.1	9.9
<b>Worker Compensation Limits</b>		
Yes	18.7	19.0
No	29.5	31.8
Undecided	51.8	49.2
<b>Allow Slot Machines</b>		
Yes	47.6	47.6
No	38.3	40.4
Undecided	14.1	12.0
<b>Smoking Ban without exception</b>		
Yes	42.6	47.7
No	46.9	43.9
Undecided	10.5	8.4
<b>Smoking Ban with exceptions</b>		
Yes	51.4	52.5
No	33.8	36.1
Undecided	14.8	11.4

A proposed ban on smoking in public places without exceptions garners 43% support from the general public and 47% opposition. However, the figures are reversed among likely voters, where the proposition leads 48 to 44%. This was the only example where the preferences of the public in general and likely voters differ for ballot proposals.

A proposal to ban smoking in public places with some exceptions was more popular, with a majority of both the general public and likely voters supporting it.

### *Ballot Measures and Political Attitudes*

Table 11 reports the relationship between ideology and partisanship to preferences on ballot measures among likely voters.

The minimum wage increase is more strongly favored by liberals than by conservatives, by a margin of 86 to 60%. It was also more strongly favored by Democrats than by Republicans (90 to 56%). However, solid majorities of conservatives and Republicans back the measure among likely voters. These figures suggest that the minimum wage proposition may help Democratic candidates indirectly by bringing additional liberals and Democrats to the polls on Election Day.

Table 11 Ballot Measure and Political Attitudes  
Likely Voters

	Ideology			Total	Partisanship			Total
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative		Democrat	Independent	Republican	
<b>All</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>35.4</b>	<b>42.3</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>43.4</b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>42.3</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Raise Minimum Wage</b>								
Yes	86.3	79.3	59.7	100	89.9	70.6	56.2	100
No	6.9	13.4	26.5	100	5.8	17.6	28.9	100
Undecided	6.8	7.3	13.8	100	4.3	11.8	14.9	100
<b>Worker Compensation Limits</b>								
Yes	17.6	18.4	21.2	100	18.7	16.4	20.2	100
No	36.3	33.1	27.5	100	35.0	35.8	27.3	100
Undecided	46.1	48.5	51.3	100	46.3	47.8	52.5	100
<b>Allow Slot Machines</b>								
Yes	52.9	56.4	38.8	100	55.6	51.5	38.1	100
No	33.3	31.3	52.0	100	29.8	39.7	51.5	100
Undecided	13.8	12.3	9.2	100	14.6	8.8	10.4	100
<b>Smoking Ban without exceptions</b>								
Yes	52.4	47.0	45.1	100	48.1	50.0	46.5	100
No	37.9	44.5	48.2	100	41.7	44.1	46.0	100
Undecided	9.7	8.5	6.7	100	10.2	5.9	7.5	100
<b>Smoking Ban with exceptions</b>								
Yes	52.4	51.5	53.4	100	53.4	50.0	52.5	100
No	35.9	39.3	33.1	100	35.4	38.2	36.1	100
Undecided	11.7	9.2	13.5	100	11.2	11.8	11.4	100

The slot machine and the smoking ban without exceptions measures show modest differences by ideology and party, with conservatives voicing greater opposition.

The smoking ban with exceptions showed no variation by ideology or partisanship, having majority support across the board.

*Confidence that Votes will be Counted Fairly*

There has been considerable controversy of the counting of ballots in Ohio elections and Table 12 reports Ohioans confidence that their vote will be counted fairly in 2006.

Overall, Ohioans had a good deal of confidence in the fairness of the electoral process: 53% said that they had a “great deal of confidence” that their ballots would be counted fairly, and another 31% said they had “some confidence.” Just 11% claimed to have “little confidence,” and only 5 percent expressed “no confidence at all.”

Table 12: Confidence in Fair Ballot Counting

	<i>A great deal of confidence</i>	<i>Some confidence</i>	<i>Little confidence</i>	<i>No confidence</i>	<b>Total</b>
ALL	53.2	30.8	11.2	4.8	<b>100.0</b>
Democrat	39.2	39.9	15.1	5.8	<b>100.0</b>
Independent	42.6	32.3	16.6	8.5	<b>100.0</b>
Republican	76.6	19.1	3.2	1.1	<b>100.0</b>
Likely Voters	61.8	26.0	10.3	1.9	<b>100.0</b>
Less Likely Voters	48.8	35.3	11.4	4.5	<b>100.0</b>

However, these general figures mask important differences within the public. For example, Democrats expressed much less confidence in a fair vote count, with just 39% reporting a “great deal of confidence” in the process and another 40% “some confidence.” In contrast, 77% of Republicans expressed a “great deal of confidence” and another 19% “some confidence.” For independents, the comparable figures were 43 and 32%, respectively.

There is also an important difference between likely and less likely voters in this regard. Overall, 61% of likely voters expressed a “great deal of confidence” in the fairness of the process, while just 49% of less likely voters reported a “great deal of confidence.” And the partisan “confidence gap” remains: only 43% of Democrats among likely voters have a “great deal confidence” in the fairness of the vote count, compared to 56% of independents and 84% of Republicans.