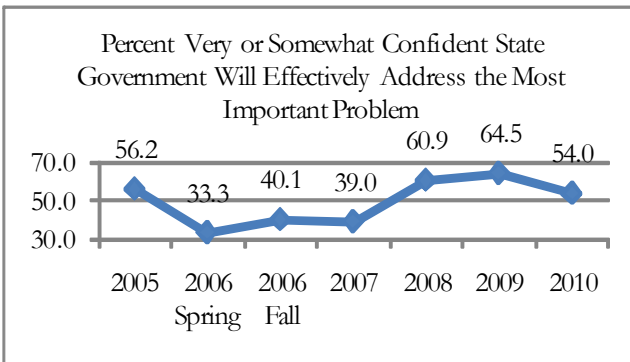


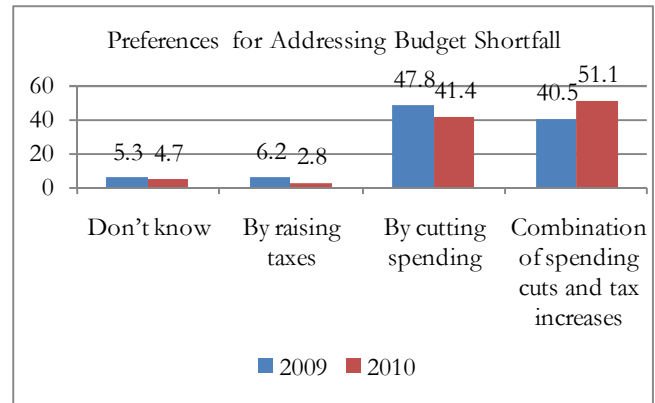
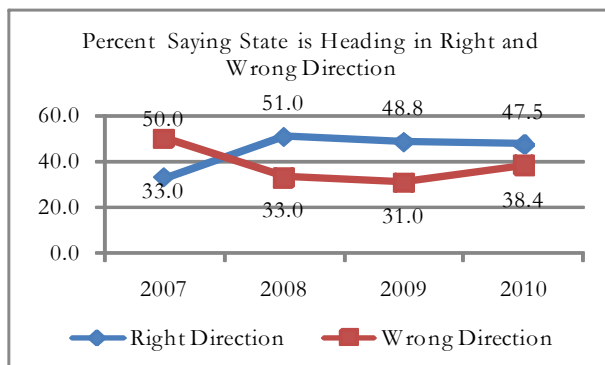
### Declining Confidence in State Government

The storyline for Louisiana politics for now and into the foreseeable future is about shrinking budgets, spending cuts, and a reluctance to consider increases in taxes or fees. The result of the budget crunch is a declining confidence that state government can effectively address the state's most pressing problems. In 2009, 65 percent of respondents said they were very or somewhat confident state government would effectively address their self-identified most important problem. Notably, this is the highest level of confidence recorded in the Louisiana Survey. In 2010, the percent very or somewhat confident dropped over 10-points to 54 percent, reflecting a significant shift.



### An Increase in the Wrong Direction

The percent of residents saying the state is heading in the right direction remained relatively stable over the past year declining by only 1.3 percentage points. At the same time, there was a more substantial 7.4 point increase in the percent of respondents saying the state was heading in the wrong direction. The reason for the shift? A 6-point decline in the percent of respondents unsure about the direction of the state. The type of respondent who expressed uncertainty in last year's survey is now concerned state government is moving in the wrong direction.

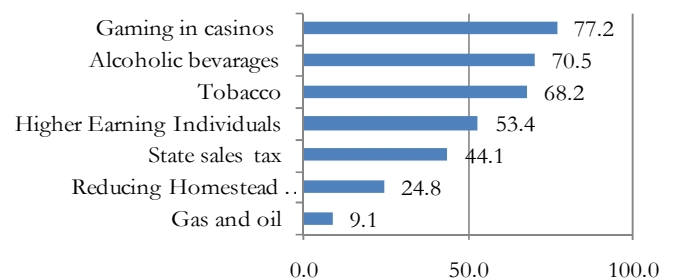


### Preferences for Handling the Budget Shortfall

When it comes to addressing existing and predicted budget shortfalls, a slim majority of Louisiana residents - 51 percent - prefer a combination of spending cuts and tax increases. Forty-one percent of respondents prefer addressing budget shortfalls through spending cuts alone. Since 2009, there has been a decline in the number of respondents saying budget shortfalls should be dealt with solely by raising taxes or cutting spending and a 10-point increase in the percent of respondents preferring some combination of spending cuts and tax increases. Residents are willing to consider means other than spending cuts to address the budget shortfall.

As in 2009, respondents express strong support for "sin taxes" on tobacco (68 percent), alcohol (71 percent), and gaming (77 percent), and more limited support for taxes on higher earning individuals and households (53 percent).

Figure 19: Support for Increasing Specific Taxes



### About the Louisiana Survey

The mission of the Louisiana Survey is to establish benchmarks and assess progress and regressions in residents' assessments of state government services. The Survey has been conducted annually since 2002, and was conducted biannually in 2005 and 2006.

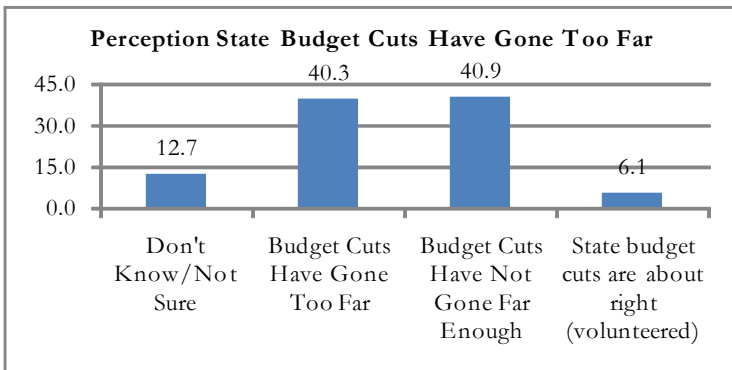
For the full report, see [www.survey.lsu.edu](http://www.survey.lsu.edu). For more information about the survey, contact Kirby Goidel, Senior Public Policy Fellow in the Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs and Director of the Louisiana Survey, at 225-578-7588 or [kgoidel@lsu.edu](mailto:kgoidel@lsu.edu).



### Concern About State Budget Cuts

If Louisianans are fiscal conservatives in the abstract, they are uncomfortable wielding the budgetary axe to slice specific program areas. Majorities are opposed to cutting health care (67.4 percent), primary and secondary education (62.9 percent), and state colleges and universities (55.9 percent). Moreover, substantial percentages prefer not cutting state roads and transportation (48.8 percent) or vocational and workforce training (45.5 percent). Even in areas respondents express greater willingness to cut (economic development and environmental regulation), the preference is for minor as opposed to major spending cuts.

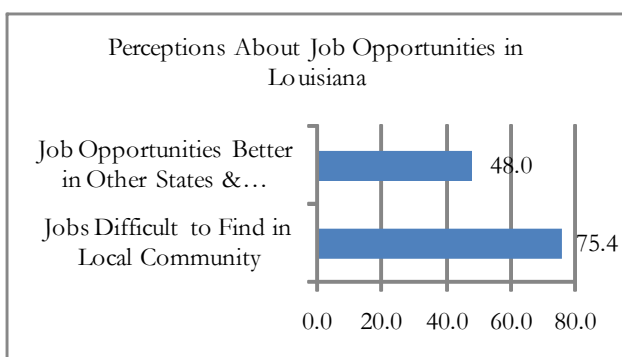
Louisianans are split on the question of whether state budget cuts have gone too far or not far enough: 40.3 percent of respondents say budget cuts have gone too far compared to 40.9 percent who say budget cuts have not gone far enough. Even so, substantial majorities say they are very or somewhat concerned about the effect of budget cuts on the quality of academic programs in state colleges and universities (85 percent) and health care (88 percent).



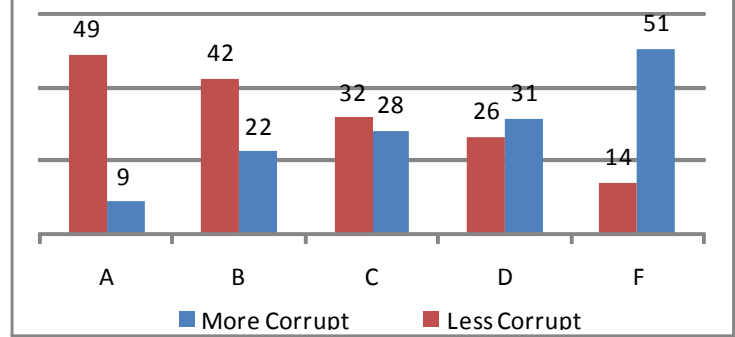
### Economic Evaluations Brighter But Negative

Evaluations of state and national business conditions brightened relative to last year but remained mostly negative. The percent of residents saying state business conditions have gotten worse declined from 51 percent in 2009 to 44 percent in 2010. The percent saying national business conditions have gotten worse declined from 69 to 61 percent. At the same time, evaluations of personal finances became more negative: 29 percent of respondents reported their personal finances had gotten better in 2008 compared to 21 percent in 2010.

This decline in personal finances may explain general perceptions that jobs are difficult to find and that there are fewer job opportunities in Louisiana than in other states and regions. Seventy-five percent of respondents said jobs were difficult to find in their local community and 48 percent said job opportunities were better in other states and regions.



### Grades for State Government Transparency and Perceptions of Corruption



### Perceptions of Corruption and Transparency

In 2008 during the first special session of the state legislature, a comprehensive package of ethics reforms was passed and signed into law. The immediate effect on public attitudes about corruption was striking – a 10-point increase in the percent of respondents saying the state had become less corrupt. Since the passage of ethics reform, there has been little or no movement in public attitudes. When asked to grade the level of transparency in state government, 6.7 percent of respondents gave the state an A grade, 20.4 percent a B, 35.3 percent a C, 21.6 percent a D, and 16.0 percent an F.

Respondent evaluations of state government transparency are directly related to perceptions of state government corruption. Forty-nine percent of respondents who gave the state an A for transparency said the state has become less corrupt compared to 14 percent who gave the state an F. Alternatively, 51 percent of respondents who gave the state an F for transparency said state government had become more corrupt over the past several years. This compares to 8.8 percent of respondents who gave the state an A for transparency.

### Methodology

The 2010 Louisiana Survey includes a traditional landline telephone survey combined with a survey of Louisiana cell phone users. Respondents are randomly selected and the data have been carefully weighted to account for the higher probability of selection of dual users, respondents with both a landline telephone and a cell phone. In addition, all the results are weighted to reflect current population demographics as reflected in the 2008 American Community Survey and current estimates of the cell phone only population provided by National Health Interview Survey. The combined survey includes 913 respondents including 510 respondents selected from landline telephone numbers selected via random digit dialing and 403 respondents selected from available cell phone blocks. Landline telephone interviews were conducted from February 2 to March 1, while the cell phone interviews were conducted from March 1 to March 21. The overall survey has a margin of error of +/- 3.2 percentage points and the landline survey has a margin of error of +/- 4.3 percentage points. Response rates for the landline and cell phone survey were 24.3 percent and 9.8 percent respectively.