

Public Opinion Monitor

A publication of  Public Sector Consultants, Inc.

Underwritten by  Michigan Hospital Association

Focus: The Political Ramifications of Michigan's Economy

By William Sederburg
Vice President and Director, Public Opinion Research Institute
Public Sector Consultants, Inc.

The May 1992 *Public Opinion Monitor* focuses on Michiganians' attitudes toward the economy and the ability of government to provide future economic opportunities. The data show that during the 1992 election period, the public is evaluating candidates largely on their ideas on how to improve the economy. In addition, the survey measured approval of state and federal level leaders, economic confidence, and the public's feeling about the future.

Major Findings

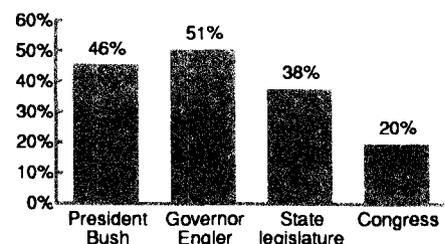
- Sixty percent of Michigan residents identify jobs and unemployment as the most important state problems.
- Forty-seven percent of the public say it is very or somewhat likely that they or a member of their immediate family will be laid off during the next year.
- Twenty percent of Michigan residents see corporate greed as the most important factor in General Motors' decision to close Michigan plants. Nineteen percent blame international competition.
- Congressional and presidential approval ratings have dropped, while approval for the state legislature and governor rose.

The *Public Opinion Monitor* reports the findings of a series of surveys done each year on state policy issues. The *Public Opinion Monitor*, underwritten by the Michigan Hospital Association, interviewed 800 residents between March 20 and 23, 1992. The survey included trend data on the governor's and legislature's approval ratings, economic confidence, and party affiliation.

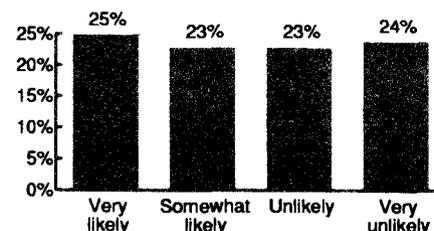
The Michigan Hospital Association is underwriting the cost of the *Public Opinion Monitor* as a public service. The association hopes to promote a better understanding of the political climate, to more fully explore the public's attitudes about policy issues, and to assist in the development of a vision to shape the future of health care delivery in Michigan.

The complete survey, including questions and data, is available from Public Sector Consultants' Public Opinion Research Institute. For further information, call 484-4954.

March Approval Ratings

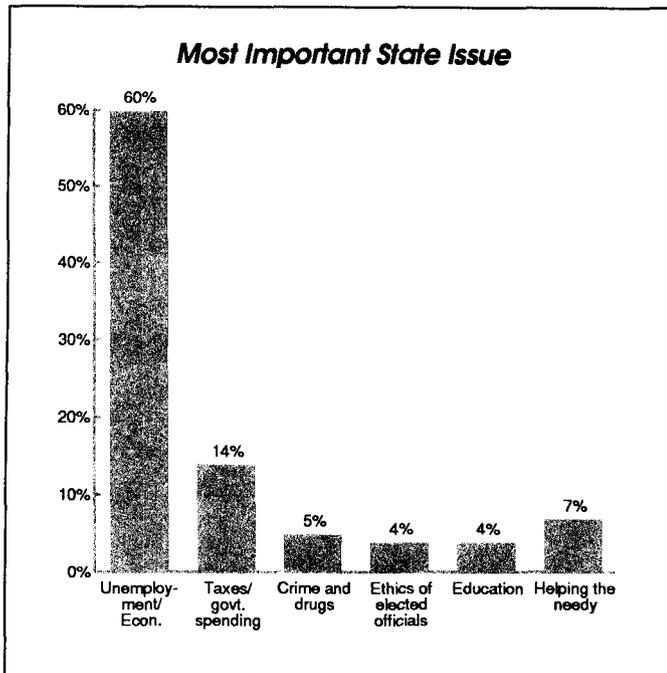


Likelihood of Layoff During the Coming Year (respondent or family member)



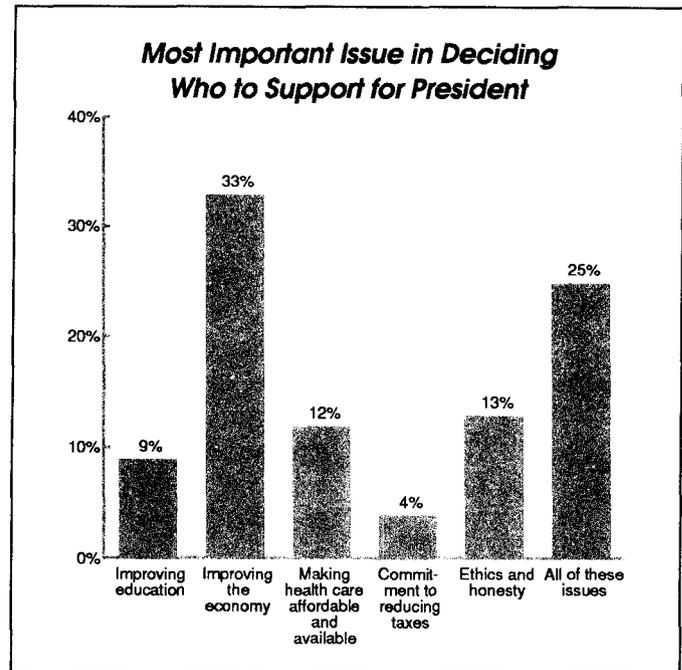
Michigan Issues

- * In answer to an open-ended question, 60 percent of the public named the economy or unemployment as the most important problems facing Michigan.
- * As voters evaluate candidates for the presidency, the candidates' ideas on how to improve the economy are viewed as the most important consideration; their desire to reduce taxes is least important.
- * Ninety-one percent of the public believe that government and political leaders have either *some* or *considerable* influence on the economy. Forty-three percent say that influence is great.
- * Half the respondents believe their economic success is determined by forces outside their control.



Michigan residents are very concerned about their and the state's economic future. Therefore, the dominant political issue in 1992 will be the economy. A significant percentage of the public (43 percent) look to government to improve economic conditions.

In deciding who to support for president, the importance given to the candidates' ideas on issues varies by region. The economy, most influential in the minds of 33 percent of respondents statewide, is given the most weight by an even greater percentage of metropolitan Detroiters (53 percent) and Thumb residents (49 percent). Honesty and ethics matter most to 13 percent statewide but to 30 percent in western Michigan. A candidate's ideas about how to



improve health care affordability and availability rank highest with only 12 percent statewide but with 23 percent in metropolitan Detroit. Finally, ideas about how to improve education mean most to 9 percent statewide and to almost twice as many (17 percent) in the City of Detroit.

The *Public Opinion Monitor* found the public willing to support tax increases for certain purposes. Fifty-five percent of those surveyed said they that if they learned that a candidate for the state legislature had voted for a cigarette tax increase of twenty-five cents per pack, that fact would tend to increase their support of the candidate.

Public Pessimism about the State Economy Persists

by Frances Spring

Although it appears that the recession is over, worry over current and future economic conditions is still foremost in the minds of Michigan residents. Among those polled, 60 percent responded that the job situation was the main problem facing the state today: 32 percent said that they are worse off now than they were a year ago (28 percent said they are better off; 40.5 percent the said their economic situation is the same), and 47 percent said they believed it was either "very likely" or "somewhat likely" that they or someone in their immediate family would be laid off within the next year.

Most revealing were feelings registered about the relative depth of the most recent recession compared to the last (1980-82). During the earlier "twin" recessionary period unemployment in Michigan peaked at an annual average rate of 15.5 percent in 1982 (reaching a monthly high of 17 percent in March) and per capita personal income in the state fell below the national average for the first time ever, rising by only 2.2 percent in 1982. This compares with an annual average unemployment rate of 9.2 percent in 1991, and a peak monthly rate of 11 percent in March of that year. Nearly half (48.5 percent) of those surveyed, however, indicated that they felt that the current recession is worse than the one in 1981-82, and the feeling was consistent across nearly all income, education, and regional subgroups.

The only subgroup that did not believe that this recession was worse than the last was residents of the City of Detroit, only 5 percent of whom said that they felt that this recession was worse than the last; the remaining 95 percent said that it was about the same. (Refer to Exhibit 1.) Compared to residents in other areas of the state, more of those living in the west, southeast, and Thumb areas felt that this recession was worse than the last. All age groups indicated that this recession was worse than the last, although the belief was stronger among respondents over age 65. The same pattern held true among education and income groups: Although all subgroups felt that this recession was worse, those with fewer years of formal education or lower incomes were more likely than those with more education or higher incomes to re-

EXHIBIT 1

Severity of the Current Recession Compared to the Last One, By Region and Income (percentages of all respondents)

Region	More Severe	Less Severe	Same	Don't Know/Other
Detroit City	5%	0%	95%	0%
Metro Detroit	44	14	34	8
Southeast	56	11	18	15
Thumb	56	12	23	9
Central	40	12	27	21
Western	60	9	15	16
Northern	47	11	32	10
Income Group				
<\$20,000	56	7	25	12
\$21,000-49,000	49	11	29	11
\$50,000+	40	19	31	10
Other/ no opinion	24	28	26	22

spond that the current state of the economy is worse than that of the early 1980s.

There are several possible explanations for these disparities. Nationally, white-collar workers have been hit harder in this recession relative to the last (in terms of unemployment growth compared to the national average). This, coupled with the fact that Michigan's economy is less dependent now on automobile manufacturing than in the past make it likely that a wider spectrum of Michigan residents and workers are experiencing layoffs and unemployment this time around. This is somewhat borne out when comparing the responses of those who are employed in the automobile industry and those who are not: 45 percent of those in the auto industry felt that this recession was worse relative to the last as compared to 50 percent of those not employed in the auto industry. The broader range of jobs and income levels

affected by this recession could explain the similar responses across regions and income groups.

Who Is to Blame?

Michigan residents attribute much of the blame for the current state of the economy to Congress, former President Reagan, and big business. (See Exhibit 2.) When the responses attributing “much of the blame” and “some of the blame” are combined, however, nearly all respondents believed government, labor, and business contributed to the 1991–92 recession. Respondents from urban areas were more likely to blame President Reagan, while Congress was the favorite culprit among suburbanites and non-Detroit city dwellers. Women tended to blame labor unions; men were more apt to blame Congress. Among Democrats, President Bush was most often cited as being to blame for the recession, while Republicans and ticket splitters most often cited Congress.

EXHIBIT 2

Party Receiving Much or Some of the Blame for the Current Recession, By Subgroups (percentages of all respondents)

Responsible Entity	Democrats	Republicans	Ticket Splitters
President Bush	89%	72%	80%
President Reagan	84	66	77
Congress	84	91	90
Labor unions	64	80	75
Big business	81	79	79

Apparently, the public no longer believes that what is good for General Motors is good for the country. Big business in general, and General Motors in particular, did not escape blame for the current recession. Survey responses indicate that big business is viewed by some as ill-managed and/or greedy, although there were some contradictory responses.

Big business was accorded much or some of the blame for the current state of the economy by 79 percent of survey respondents; 71 percent placed much or some of the blame on labor unions. When

asked about the competition between Michigan auto manufacturers and foreign producers, 49 percent stated that they either “strongly disagreed” or “somewhat disagreed” that Michigan firms are well managed in comparison to foreign firms, while 41 percent “somewhat agreed” or “strongly agreed” that Michigan firms are well managed. (Conversely, 69 percent of respondents agreed that Michigan autoworkers are as well trained and hardworking as their foreign counterparts; this held true across income groups, ideology, and type of community.)

Mistrust of big business also was reflected in survey responses to questions about the reasons for the shutdown of some state auto factories. When asked what prompted GM’s decision to close a number of Michigan plants, the most often chosen response was corporate greed (20 percent), closely followed by international competition (19 percent), and state taxes and regulations (16 percent). In contrast to other survey questions, the quality of management (6 percent) was near the bottom of the list of reasons given for plant closures. The quality of the work force (7 percent) also was not selected by many as a cause for the shutdowns.

Finally, when asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement that what is good for GM is good for the country, 31 percent of respondents either “strongly agreed” or “somewhat agreed,” while 59 percent either “strongly disagreed” or “somewhat disagreed.” Respondents who most often disagreed were those aged 35–44 (73 percent disagreed) and ticket splitting voters (31 percent strongly disagreed and another 22 percent somewhat disagreed). Somewhat surprisingly, there was no major difference between the responses of those who work in the auto industry and those who do not: 56 percent of autoworkers either “somewhat disagreed” or “strongly disagreed” with the statement compared to 60 percent of nonautoworkers. The most discernible difference in responses was among communities. Only 38 percent of respondents in the City of Detroit disagreed that what is good for GM is good for the country compared to 64 percent of respondents from small towns, 61 percent of rural respondents, and 60 percent of those from the suburbs.

Public Policy

Can It Work? Although attitudes about the economy are generally negative, most respondents

indicated that they believed that something could be done to improve economic conditions. Most respondents (42 percent) expressed the belief that, although there is some underlying weakness in the American economy, these weaknesses can be overcome with good policies. Another 36 percent expressed belief in the inevitability of business cycles and that healthier economic times are ahead. Only 17 percent of those surveyed indicated belief that the American economy is fundamentally flawed, a weakness that will result in the depression of our standard of living for many years. Belief that underlying economic weaknesses can be overcome through good policies was held most strongly by those identifying themselves as conservatives (48 percent) and Republicans (45 percent).

One reason for the willingness of survey respondents to blame government officials for the current state of the economy could be that they believe that government has the power to change economic conditions. Survey responses indicate that Michigan residents believe government policies influence the economy, although they are fairly evenly split on the extent of that influence. Forty-four percent of those surveyed believed government and political leaders largely determine what happens to the economy; 48 percent believed that these leaders have *some* influence, but that economic conditions are determined by factors outside of their control. Only 5 percent of those surveyed believed that government and political leaders have very little or no influence over economic conditions.

Has It Worked? Given that most respondents believed that good policy can help overcome economic problems, how successful do they think implemented policies have been and what direction do respondents feel they should take in the future?

With respect to national policy, respondents indicated satisfaction with policies that are aimed at protecting the rights of minorities: 51 percent agreed that policies in that area were headed in the right direction and 38 percent disagreed. Respondents believed national policy generally is on the wrong track, however, in the areas of providing affordable health care, competing with foreign countries, and helping people get ahead. (See Exhibit 3.)

There was less consensus about policy direction among subgroups, however. African-Americans and respondents from the City of Detroit disagreed that policies aimed at helping minorities were working: 30 percent of African-Americans and 18 percent of

EXHIBIT 3

Q: Is the country generally headed in the right direction in the following policy areas, or do you feel things are on the wrong track?

Policy	Right	Wrong	Don't Know	Other
Protecting minority rights	51	38	9	2
Competing with foreign companies	30	60	8	2
Providing affordable health care	23	69	7	2
Helping people like you get ahead	32	52	12	5

Detroit residents felt that policies were headed in the right direction; 59 percent of African-Americans and 69 percent of Detroit respondents felt that policies were on the wrong track. Suburban respondents and those from Detroit, as well as whites and African-Americans, tended to think that policies aimed at handling foreign competition were on the wrong track. With respect to affordable health care, respondents aged 65 and older thought policies were headed in the right direction, while those that identified themselves as residents of Detroit, rural areas, and small towns thought the opposite. In addition, 69 percent of Detroiters felt that policies aimed at helping someone like themselves were headed in the wrong direction; only 12 percent felt that policies were on target. (Respondents from outside Detroit averaged 33 percent approval and 47 percent disapproval of policies in this area.)

Approval of the direction of national policy often was split along party, income, and ideological lines. Exhibit 4 shows the percentage of respondents in certain subgroups who approve of the direction of policies in the areas tested.

With respect to statewide strategies, slightly more respondents approved of Governor Engler's economic policies than disapproved. When asked whether his economic proposals were designed to help average working men and women, 42 percent either "strongly" or "somewhat" agreed, while 39

EXHIBIT 4

Percentage Approving of the Direction of National Policies, by Subgroup

Party	Protecting Minority Rights	Competing with Foreign Countries	Affordable Health Care	Helping People Like You
Democrat	40%	23%	17%	16%
Ticket Splitter	56	30	23	36
Republican	57	33	28	41
Other	47	34	26	33
Ideology				
Conservative	57	33	26	36
Somewhat/Mod. Conserv.	50	29	21	35
Liberal	44	25	22	22
Other	49	27	19	29
Income				
<\$20,000	48	31	24	27
\$21-49,000	50	29	17	28
\$50,000+	58	29	33	44
Other	52	30	25	34

percent either “strongly” or “somewhat” disagreed. Exhibit 5 breaks down approval of Governor Engler’s economic policies by subgroups.

What Should Be Done? Michigan residents believe that actions taken to assist the national economy should be aimed at creating jobs, improving the health care system, and enhancing the education system. When asked to compare the United States to other countries in these areas, 61 percent considered the nation weak in the realm of creating job opportunities, 60 percent believe it weak with respect to the health care system, and 56 percent said our education system is weak. According to 52 percent of the respondents, however, the United States has done well in the area of technology innovation.

Within racial groups, African-Americans and Asians/Pacific Islanders were less apt than others to respond that the education system was “strong” or “very strong”: 77 percent of African-Americans and 57 percent of Asian-Americans felt that the system was relatively weak; only 12 percent of African-Americans and no Asian-Americans responded that the system was “strong” or “very strong” in comparison to those of other countries. In addition, the more education respondents had, the more likely they were to believe that our education system is weaker than those of other countries.

EXHIBIT 5

Percentage Agreeing that Governor Engler’s Economic Policies Are Designed to Help Average Working Men and Women

Party	Percent Agree
Democrat	23%
Ticket Splitter	48
Republican	63
Other	30
Ideology	
Conservative	54
Somewhat/ Mod. Conservative	48
Liberal	27
Other	38
Income	
<\$20,000	36
\$21-49,000	38
\$50,000+	64
Other	42

Age and party affiliation were directly correlated with feelings about health care. The younger the

respondent, the more apt s/he was to rate the nation's health care system as relatively stronger, and more Democrats than Republicans rated the system as weaker than those of other countries. The U.S. health care system was rated worse than other countries' by 100 percent of the Native American respondents, 86 percent of Asians/Pacific Islanders, and 70 percent of Hispanics.

Policies aimed at getting Michigan's economy moving again that were most strongly supported by survey respondents were those that would provide more job training opportunities. Increased job training was "strongly" supported by 70 percent and "somewhat" supported by another 20 percent of those surveyed. Although a majority of all subgroups indicated support for this policy, approval was stronger among those under age 25 as well as minority groups. With respect to the latter, 100 percent of both Hispanic and Native American respondents and 93 percent of African-Americans supported this policy as a means to stimulate the state's economy (compared to 89 percent and 85 percent support among whites and those of Asian background, respectively).

The policy receiving the second highest approval rating was reducing taxes for the middle class (80 percent support). Again, a majority of all subgroups supported the proposed policy, although approval among Hispanics was only 50 percent. In general, support for this proposal was positively related to age (the older the respondent, the stronger the support), and negatively correlated with education level (the more years of education, the less strong the support); to a lesser degree, the proposal also was negatively correlated with income level. Approval of a middle-class tax cut was somewhat lower in Detroit and in small-town communities (76 and 77 percent approval, respectively) than in other types of communities. Interestingly, support was fairly equal across party lines; ideologically, however, support was higher among conservatives and liberals and lower among those in the middle of the political spectrum (those identifying themselves as somewhat conservative and moderate).

Seventy-two percent of respondents support the policy of investing state money in infrastructure in order to stimulate the economy. In age groups, support was strongest among the oldest (age 75 and older, 83 percent support) and lowest among the youngest group (younger than age 25, 68 percent support). Residents of cities other than Detroit were more supportive than those in other types of communities, and

100 percent of Asian and Native American respondents support this policy.

Paradoxically, Michigan residents indicated nearly equal support for reducing taxes on Michigan businesses (60 percent support) and raising taxes if they were invested in state services such as education (57 percent); the latter policy, however, received the least overall support among the policies tested. It would be expected that groups supporting one policy would be opposed to the other; although this was sometimes the case, it was not true for all groups. In different types of communities, for example, 70 percent of respondents from cities other than Detroit "somewhat" or "strongly" support reducing business taxes, the highest level of support among a community group; this subgroup also registered the highest level of approval to increasing taxes (67 percent support). Exhibit 6 breaks down responses on this issue by party, income, and ideology.

Control

Many respondents believe they have little control over their economic destinies. Half of survey respondents agreed that their economic success is determined by outside forces; 46 percent disagreed. Those who felt that discrimination was the cause of job loss were not limited to any *one* group or sex: Similar responses were recorded among men and women, across income groups, and among those with less than a postcollege education. Some racial groups felt more strongly about discrimination than others, however: 60 percent of Native Americans, 43 percent of whites, and 39 percent of African-Americans agreed that they were losing jobs to people less qualified because of discrimination, while only 14 percent of both Asians/Pacific Islanders and Hispanics agreed with the sentiment. These results indicate that nearly half of Michigan residents feel that outside forces control their economic lives, and that this sentiment is generally widespread throughout the population.

Conclusion

The 1991-92 recession has affected a broad spectrum of Michigan residents, making the economy the compelling force in their lives today. Not only is the economy perceived to be a personal monetary concern—in the areas of job availability and security—it is also seen as the force driving the decision-making

EXHIBIT 6

**Support for Increasing Taxes to Pay for State Spending on Services (including education)
and for Cutting Business Taxes as a Means to Stimulate the Michigan Economy**

<i>Party/Policy</i>	<i>Strongly Support</i>	<i>Somewhat Support</i>	<i>Strongly Oppose</i>	<i>Somewhat Oppose</i>	<i>Don't Know/Other</i>
Democrat					
Increase taxes	36	26	15	16	7
Cut business taxes	27	25	20	15	13
Ticket Splitter					
Increase taxes	31	25	18	17	9
Cut business taxes	36	27	16	15	6
Republican					
Increase taxes	26	25	23	17	9
Cut business taxes	41	27	7	14	9
Other					
Increase taxes	13	12	15	18	8
Cut business taxes	28	24	24	14	9

<i>Ideology/Policy</i>	<i>Strongly Support</i>	<i>Somewhat Support</i>	<i>Strongly Oppose</i>	<i>Somewhat Oppose</i>	<i>Don't Know/Other</i>
Conservative					
Increase taxes	32	26	19	15	9
Cut business taxes	37	26	16	15	6
Somewhat Conservative					
Increase taxes	32	23	17	20	9
Cut business taxes	34	30	10	20	6
Moderate and Moderate Conservative					
Increase taxes	29	26	22	13	9
Cut business taxes	31	26	18	16	10
Liberal					
Increase taxes	37	24	15	17	7
Cut business taxes	31	23	18	13	2
Other					
Increase taxes	21	31	17	22	5
Cut business taxes	37	29	13	5	15

processes of business and government. Many feel, however, that although decision making has been influenced by the state of the economy, policies aimed at resolving problems have been inadequate.

The belief that politicians have been unable or unwilling to enact effectual policies aimed at improving the economy can be seen as one more reason for voters' growing cynicism and apathy toward government. Despite this sentiment that policy makers have been unable to remediate economic conditions, most Michigan residents believe that the government

should play an active role in attempting to alter the economic future. One reason for this could be the feeling voiced by many respondents that they lack the ability to control or influence the world around them, which forces them to look to government for guidance. While there may be minor disagreements about specific policies, however, there is overwhelming agreement that something—whether it be providing additional opportunities for job training, building the state infrastructure, or changing the tax structure—should be done to improve their circumstances.

FROM SPENCER C. JOHNSON

Poll Supports Message: Time for Change in Health Care



**Spencer C. Johnson
President
Michigan Hospital
Association**

The call for health care reform is directly linked to the public's grave concerns about the state and nation's anemic economy, so vividly demonstrated in this latest *Public Opinion Monitor*. The survey shows a strong concern over loss of jobs among all Michiganians, including middle-class and upper-income individuals. With nearly two-thirds of Michigan residents' health care benefits linked to their employment, worries about job loss are compounded by worries about the loss of health benefits. Furthermore, economic worries fuel the public's concern about the adequacy of health benefits, especially as it relates to their ability to change jobs (job lock) and to sustain a family member's catastrophic injury or illness. In essence, the anxiety over the economy has sharpened the public's focus on health issues.

The survey also reveals a growing dissatisfaction with the current status of our health system. Sixty percent (the same percentage that cited the economy and jobs as the most important state issues) of those polled said the U.S. health system was weaker than those of other industrial countries. In addition, 69 percent said they believe the country is on the wrong track with respect to its health policies. Both findings are persuasive indicators that the public is ready for comprehensive reform that guarantees broader access and insures individuals against catastrophic illness and injury.

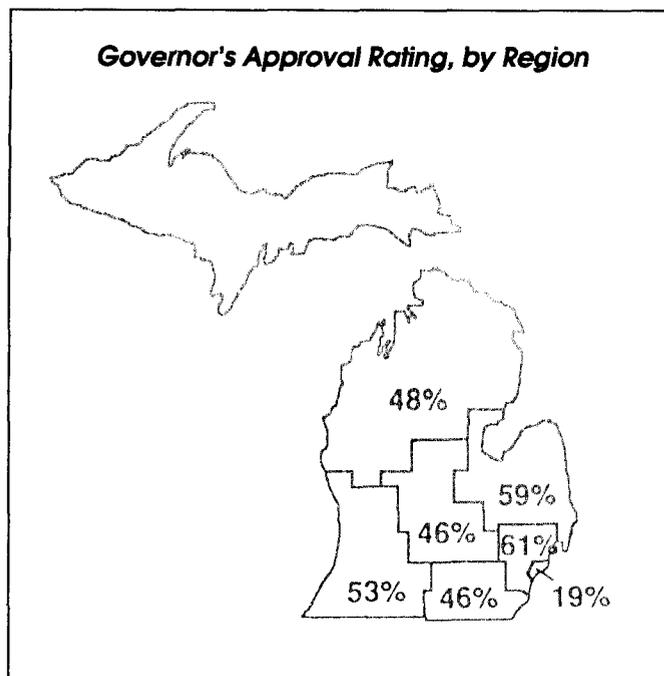
Finally, the survey provides new evidence that the anti-tax sentiment of the 1980s may be giving way to public support for increased taxes earmarked for specific programs. Support appears especially strong for additional funding for health care. For example, 55 percent of those polled showed themselves ready to support an elected official who voted to increase the cigarette tax by 25 cents, if those tax monies are designated for health care. Another example is the strong support given to tax increases specifically targeted to extend health care to the unemployed, to provide long-term care for the poor, and to protect all individuals from costs associated with catastrophic injury or illness. While protection from catastrophic costs garnered the most public support, with 46 percent strongly supporting and 24 percent somewhat supporting a tax increase for such a service, the idea of added taxes for the other two health programs received strong support from more than one-third of those polled and some support from another one-third.

Additional verification of the heightened voter concern with health care and access to it was demonstrated by the criteria those surveyed said they would use when selecting a presidential candidate this fall. Health care came in only slightly behind issues relating to the candidate's honesty and was mentioned more frequently than education issues as a determining factor for choosing a presidential candidate.

Taken together, these survey results provide further evidence that the call for health care reform has gone beyond concern for providing health care to the poor to become an issue of *individual* concern to middle-class voters. It is this, more than anything else, that ultimately will compel our elected officials to address the long overdue reform of our health care delivery system.

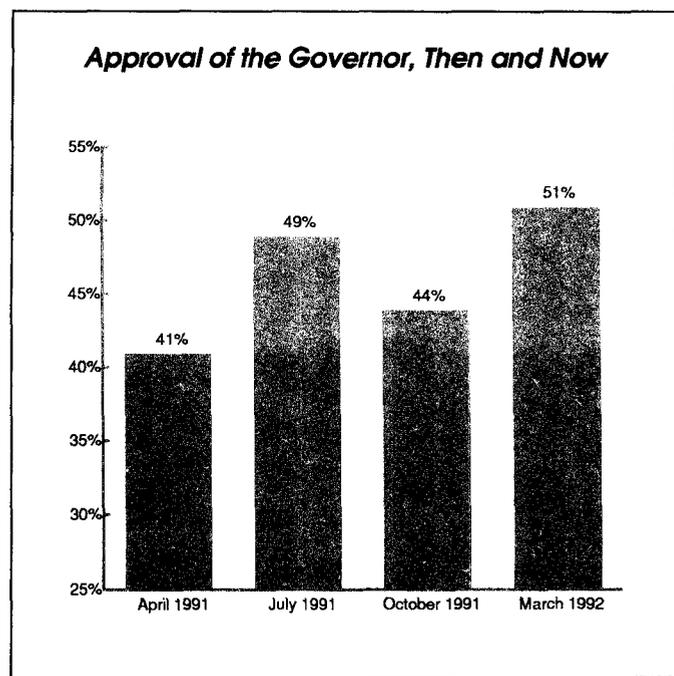
Politics: Approval Ratings

- **Governor Engler's approval rating is up:** In October 1991 only 44 percent expressed approval of how he is performing his job; the figure rose to 51 percent in the March 1992 survey. His disapproval rating dropped from 47 to 40 percent.
- **The congressional approval rating continues to drop:** In October 29 percent approved; in March the number dropped to 20 percent. Those disapproving increased from 59 to 69 percent.
- **One-third of respondents said they will not vote for a member of Congress who has "bounced a number of checks" at the House bank.** This view was expressed most often in metropolitan Detroit and in northern Michigan.
- **President Bush's approval rating is down significantly,** from 56 percent in October to 46 percent in March.
- **When asked who they would prefer as president if they had the choice of *any* American,** 13 percent of the respondents named H. Ross Perot. Thirty-two percent said they don't know.



For the first time since the *Monitor* surveys began, Governor Engler's approval rating exceeds 50 percent. This increase occurred while public attention was riveted on Washington and congressional and presidential ratings were declining sharply.

The governor's gain was greatest in northern Michigan (up 16 percent since October) and in the Thumb (up 14 percent). The incumbency trust scale devised by Public Sector Consultants suggests that the governor gained among people identified as critics (up 9 percent) and cynics (up 9 percent) and maintained about the same support among believers and

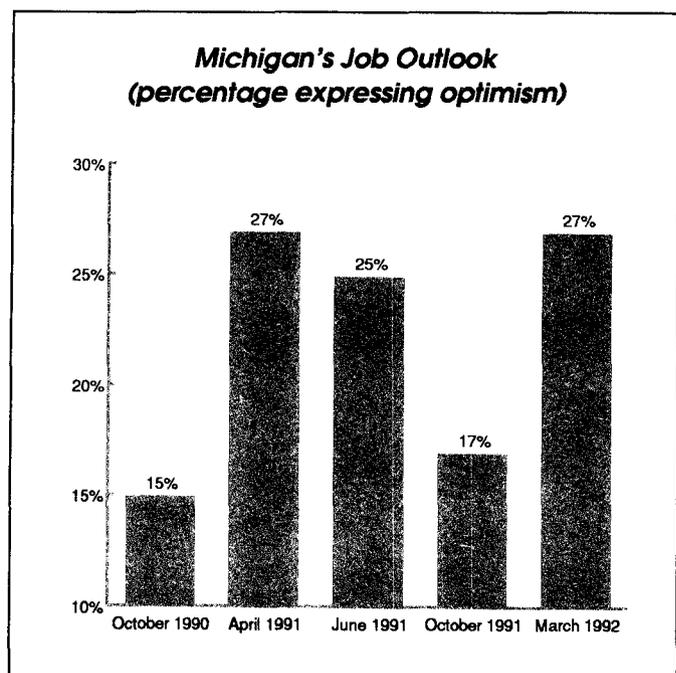
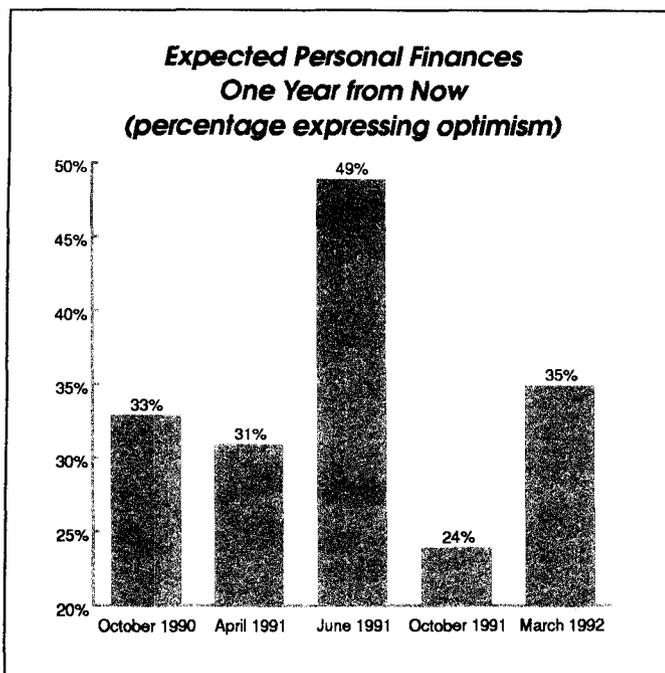


optimists. These figures imply that, so far, the governor has not been hurt by an anti-incumbent attitude.

The low rating of Congress, coupled with and/or caused by the check overdraft scandal and other improprieties, suggests that in this election year, incumbents—particularly those with a significant number of bounced checks—may have tougher campaigns than usual. In Michigan, Congressman Bob Davis (R-Gaylord), who represents northern Michigan, and Congressman David Bonior (D-Mt. Clemens), who represents suburban Macomb County, appear to be most threatened.

Trends in Public Confidence

- Although Michigan residents are more confident now about their personal economic future than they were in October 1991, economic confidence still is lower than in June 1991.
- Michigianians are somewhat more optimistic about job opportunities than they were in October. The percentage expecting improvement has risen from 17 to 27 percent, and the percentage expecting deterioration has dropped from 41 to 35 percent. Despite these shifts, it must be noted that overall there is more pessimism than optimism (35 percent to 27 percent).
- In this survey, responses expressing economic optimism were inversely related to age (more younger respondents are more optimistic) and directly related to education level (more respondents with higher levels of education are more optimistic).



The responses to the recent *Monitor* survey reflect general pessimism and fear of layoffs, coupled with antagonism toward large institutions such as government and the automobile companies. Fortunately, the national economic news is positive; the country seems to be recovering from the recession,

and this good news may stimulate improvement in Michigan. The public remains skeptical, however; Michigianians are nervous about the future and perceive the state and the nation to be falling behind others in the race for economic growth and prosperity.

Methodology

Public Sector Consultants' March 20-23, 1991, survey sampled 800 Michigan residents over the age of eighteen, yielding a margin of error of plus or minus 3.5 percent in 95 out of 100 samples. Survey participants were not required to be registered voters. This sample was stratified with respect to geography and gender and was designed to represent the population correctly. The surveys were conducted by Florence Morros Interviews in Oak Park, Michigan. PSC is convinced that these numbers accurately reflect current political attitudes in Michigan.