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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**THE 2012 WISH-TV/BALL STATE UNIVERSITY HOOSIER SURVEY FINDS JOB CREATION, AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE AND PUBLIC EDUCATION POLICIES ARE HOOSIERS TOP CONCERNS HEADING INTO 2013**  
*Residents Also Share Opinions on Abortion Rights, Decriminalizing Marijuana and Same Sex Rights*

**INDIANAPOLIS – (December 13, 2012)** – Today, the Bowen Center for Public Affairs at Ball State University unveiled the complete 2012 WISH-TV/Ball State University Hoosier Survey results at the 21<sup>st</sup> Bingham Greenebaum Doll Legislative Conference at the Indiana Convention Center in downtown Indianapolis. The fifth annual Hoosier Survey identified Indiana residents' top priorities for state government action during the 2013 legislative session, and garners their opinions on popular social issues throughout the state.

For the third straight year, job creation is the number one priority for Hoosiers. Eighty-one percent of survey respondents said this item should be at the top of the legislative agenda when the session begins in January 2013. Other top priorities include improving schools (65%), making health care more affordable (61%) and protecting the environment (44%). Reducing illegal immigration is less of a priority for Hoosiers this year. The priority dropped nearly nine percentage points this year to 36 percent.

Sixty-nine percent of survey respondents said Indiana's education system, while satisfactory, has room for improvement. Thirty-three percent of Hoosiers believe that schools can be best improved by greater parental involvement. Increasing teacher's salaries ranked second at 22 percent, followed by tying teacher salaries to student test scores and permitting students to attend public schools outside of their home district, both in third with 16 percent support. Only six percent voted for closing failing schools.

Affordable health care remains one of Hoosiers' top priorities in 2012, tied with improving governmental services at 61 percent. The survey results show opinions are almost evenly divided on the Affordable Care Act (ACA) with 43.6 percent of respondents in favor of the legislation. As with last year's survey, the results indicate that regardless of one's stance on the ACA, there is overwhelming support for most of the ACA's provisions including banning discrimination based on pre-existing conditions (89.9%) and the insurance mandate (63.5%).

Additional survey findings included:

#### State Priorities

- A two-to-one majority (64%) prefers surplus revenues be used to invest in jobs and education rather than rebating taxpayers. Support for investment over tax cuts was slightly higher for Hoosiers with lower incomes. Tax cut support was highest among Hoosiers making between \$75,000 - \$100,000 annually (48%).

#### Health Care

- At least half of Hoosiers (50%) would prefer to let the federal and state government work together to create Indiana's health insurance exchange. Only six percent of survey respondents favored allowing the federal government to handle Indiana's insurance exchange alone.

#### Education

- In 2013 Indiana's voucher program—allowing families to use tax dollars to send children to private schools—current application cap of 15,000 students will be expanded to an unlimited number of students. Over the past two years, the most significant change on this topic is the 11 percent increase of Hoosiers who are undecided on their opinion of school vouchers.

#### Social Issues

- Support for the legality of abortion rises when certain conditions are cited. Overwhelming majorities support the right to abortion in cases of rape and incest (75%), or when the mother's life (83%) or health (76%) is in danger.
- Hoosiers are evenly split in their opinion on legalizing same sex marriage. However, only 38 percent support the constitutional ban. Fifty-five percent support same sex civil unions.
- A majority of survey respondents (53%) support decriminalizing the possession of small amounts of marijuana to a civil offense. Support varies by demographics and is highest among 18-24 year olds (69%), those with annual incomes over \$100,000 (57%) and individuals with higher levels of educational attainment (59%).

#### Tea Party

- In 2010, 46 percent of Hoosiers had no opinion regarding the Tea Party. This year, only four percent of Hoosiers had no opinion regarding the Tea Party, while the percentages of residents with favorable (43%) and unfavorable (44%) opinions were virtually the same.

The Hoosier Survey was conducted for WISH-TV and the Bowen Center for Public Affairs by Princeton Research Associates International (PSRAI) from November 12 - 24, 2012. PSRAI surveyed 602 Hoosier adults by landline and cell phone, chosen randomly, yielding a margin of sampling error of +/- 4.5 percent. In addition to providing statewide results, some findings also were broken down by region. The Bowen Center for Public Affairs partnered with Ball State's Global Health Institute again this year to look at opinions about recent health care legislation and the delivery of health care services in Indiana. These results were also presented at the legislative conference.

For more information about the Hoosier Survey or The Bowen Center for Public Affairs, visit [www.bsu.edu/bowencenter](http://www.bsu.edu/bowencenter) or call (765) 285-8982.

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#### **About The Bowen Center for Public Affairs**

Founded in 2007, the Bowen Center for Public Affairs at Ball State University empowers people who want to participate in their communities. The Bowen Center for Public Affairs offers expert and practical viewpoints on the operation of local and state governments.