

2016

HOOSIER SURVEY

Ball State University | WISH-TV



Breanna Daugherty | Indiana Bicentennial Torch Relay



Ball State University

The Bowen Center for Public Affairs at Ball State University is pleased to partner again this year with WISH-TV, Channel 8, in Indianapolis, in presenting the ninth annual Hoosier Survey. The Hoosier Survey is designed to provide Indiana citizens and policymakers with a measure of public opinion on current issues facing our state in the coming year. The results of this non-partisan survey are delivered to every member of the Indiana General Assembly and top state government administration officials before the start of each calendar year so that lawmakers can gauge public views about issues they are likely to face in the upcoming legislative session.

The survey was conducted for WISH TV/Ball State University by Princeton Survey Research International during the period October 10-16, 2016. Results are based on completed interviews with 803 registered voters (642 landline and 161 cell phone users). The margin of error is ± 3.9 percentage points. Complete findings and methodology are available at www.bowencenterforpublicaffairs.org.

Major findings in the 2016 Hoosier Survey include:

- **Top Priorities:** Job creation, reducing crime, and improving education continue to be top legislative priorities for Hoosiers this year as they were last year. Improving highways and roads, improving environmental quality, and public transportation all receded in importance compared to

last year's survey while dealing with illegal immigration remained virtually unchanged from last year with 37% believing this should be a top issue. A new category added this year, providing full day kindergarten for all Hoosier children, was named a top priority by 29% of respondents.

- **Quality of Government Services:** Most Hoosiers believe the quality of government services has not much changed over the past year. However, Hoosiers are closely divided with regard to improvements in highways and education. Whereas 30% of Hoosiers say that the conditions of our state roads and highways have improved, 28% believe they have gotten worse. On education, 19% see improvement with 18% believing schools have gotten worse. Far more Hoosiers said recreation facilities and police and fire services have improved than the number saying these services have declined.
- **LGBT Rights:** The percentage of Hoosiers voicing support for amending the state's civil rights laws to include protections for sexual orientation and gender identity has ticked up this year to 61%, an increase of four percentage points over last year (57%). Thirty percent voiced disapproval.
- **Right Track/Wrong Track:** There was a slight rise this year in the number of Hoosiers who believe that Indiana is headed in the right direction. Fifty-four percent say the state is heading in the right direction as compared with 51% who held that view last year. There is wide variation by party affiliation but little difference by region within the state.

In addition to providing results for the state as a whole, some findings also are broken down by the three major regions of the state: Northern, Central, and Southern. The maps below illustrate the counties in each region.



Full results, including our methodology report, are available at www.bowencenterforpublicaffairs.org.

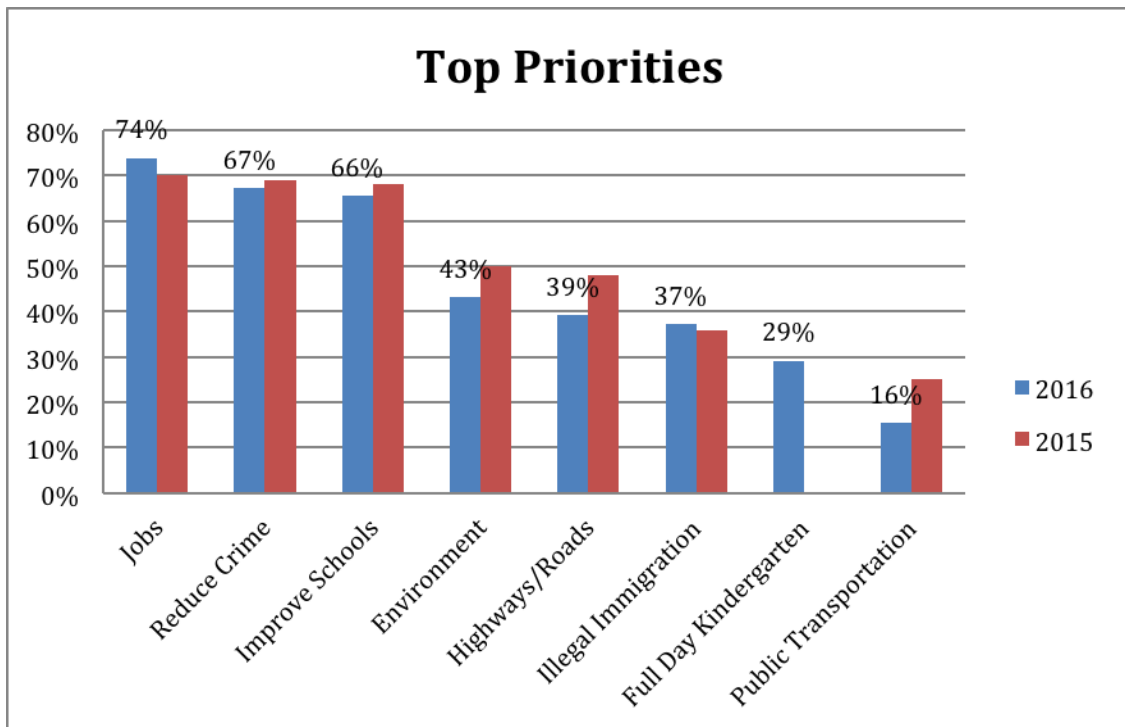
For further information about the Bowen Center for Public Affairs and the Hoosier Survey, contact:

Dr. Joseph Losco, Director, 765-285-8785. jlosco@bsu.edu.

TOP PRIORITIES FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Job creation continues as the number one priority for Hoosiers with 74% placing job creation at the top of the legislative agenda for lawmakers. Despite an improvement in the state's economy, the number of Hoosiers slating job creation as the number one priority ticked up four percentage points over last year. Reducing crime (67%) and improving public schools (66%) followed in second and third places respectively with little change from a year ago.

Improving highways and roads saw the steepest decline year over year, dropping from 48% describing this as a top priority last year to just 39% this year. Improving environmental quality and investment in public transportation also saw declines in support as compared to last year. Given the wide attention paid to full day kindergarten in the 2016 Gubernatorial campaign, we found only 29% of Hoosiers thought this should be a top priority. There was little change in the number of Hoosiers citing illegal immigration as a top concern (37% this year compared to 36% a year ago).



Regional differences surfaced with regard to environmental protection with 47% of Hoosiers in Northern counties saying this is a top priority as compared to 40% of Hoosiers in southern counties. Forty-three percent of Hoosiers in central counties cite environmental protection as a top priority. Somewhat smaller regional differences appear with regard to highways and roads and illegal immigration. Whereas 37% of Hoosiers in central Indiana see road improvement as a top priority,

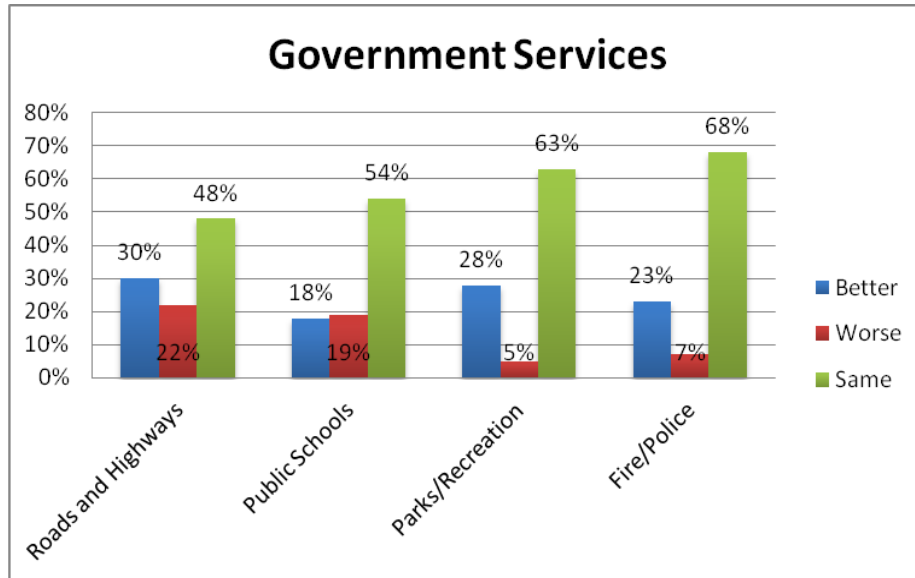
39% of Hoosiers in northern counties and 43% of Hoosiers in southern counties do so. Illegal immigration appears to be a greater concern for Hoosiers in southern counties with 43% calling this a top priority while 35% of respondents in northern and central counties see this as a top concern.

Significant differences in ranking priorities surface when we examine party affiliation. While Democrats are much more likely than Republicans to see environmental protection and full day kindergarten as top priorities, many more Republicans see the need to curb illegal immigration as a top concern.

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
Job Creation	77%	70%	75%
Public Transit	20%	16%	12%
Environmental Protection	60%	45%	25%
Full Day Kindergarten	42%	26%	21%
Illegal Immigration	17%	36%	59%
Improve Local Schools	72%	65%	64%
Highways/Roads	41%	36%	40%
Reduce Crime/Improve Public Safety	66%	65%	73%

Government Services

Most Hoosiers don't see much change in quality across a host of government services. However, more Hoosiers said highway and road maintenance had improved (30%) rather than gotten worse (22%) and more than a quarter of Hoosiers saw improvement in parks and recreational facilities.

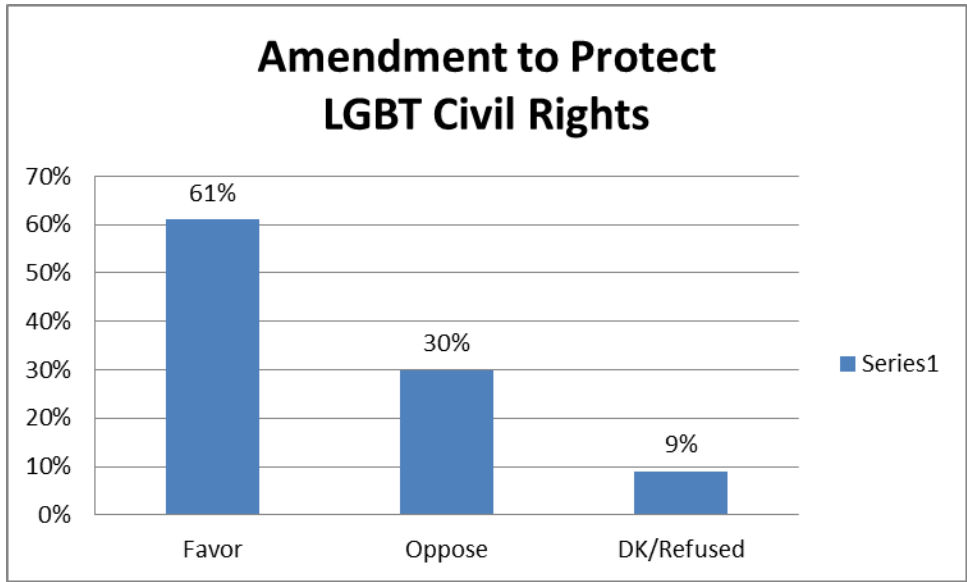


Small regional differences were evident with slightly more southern county residents saying public schools have improved (21% compared to 18% in central counties and 15% in northern counties) and slightly more southern county residents saying road and highway maintenance has gotten worse (27% in southern counties as opposed to 21% in central counties and 20% in northern tier).

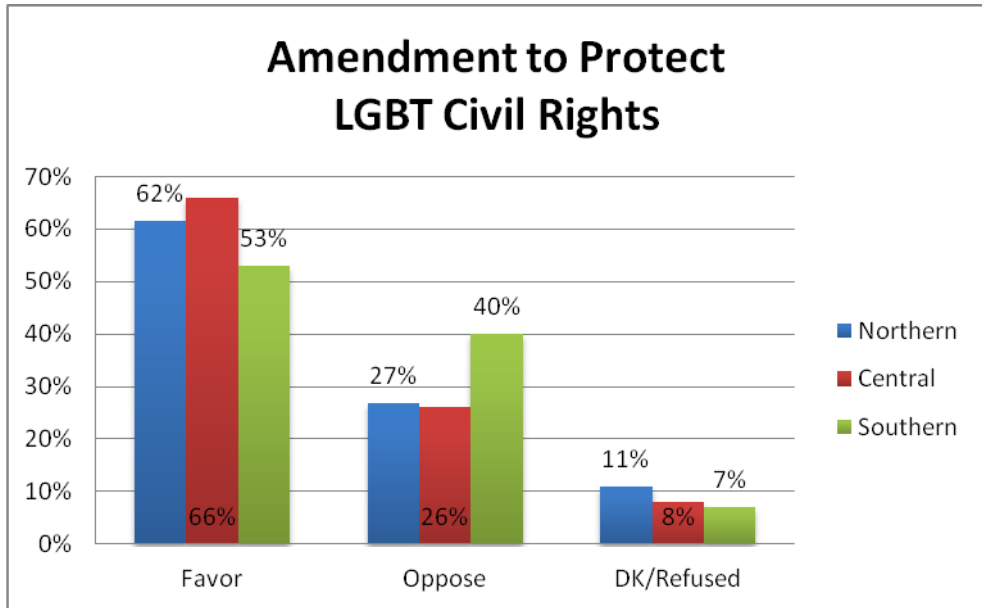
LGBT Civil Rights

The Bowen Center has been tracking Hoosier public opinion with regard to issues raised by the Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender communities for the past several years. Each year we have witnessed an increase in support for issues such as same sex marriage and civil rights protections. The upward trend in support for these issues continues.

Last year, 57% of Hoosiers said they would support amending the state’s civil rights laws to include protections for sexual orientation and gender identity. That number has risen this year to 61%. Thirty percent said they opposed such a measure and 9% said they didn’t have an opinion or refused to answer. Such an amendment would prohibit individuals from discriminating against members of the LGBT community with regard to housing, employment, and access to public facilities and services.

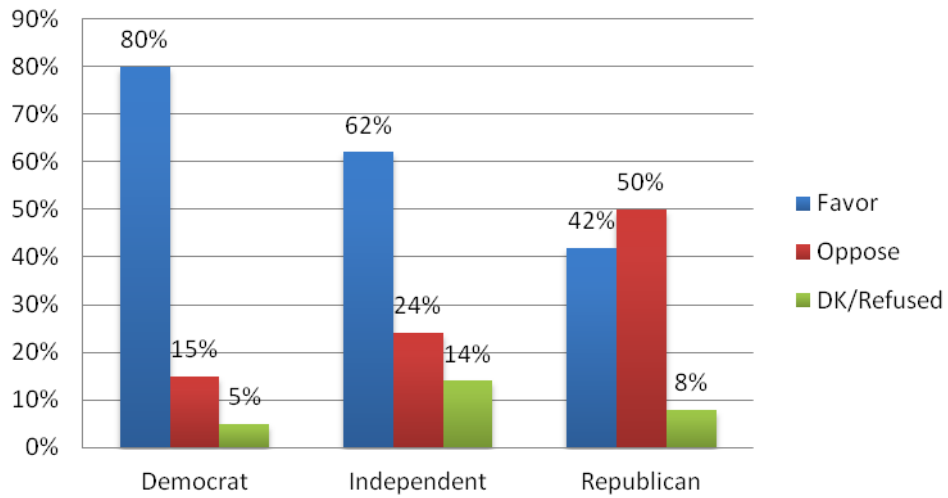


Support for these protections is strong in all regions of the state with the highest level of support evident in the central counties of Indiana.

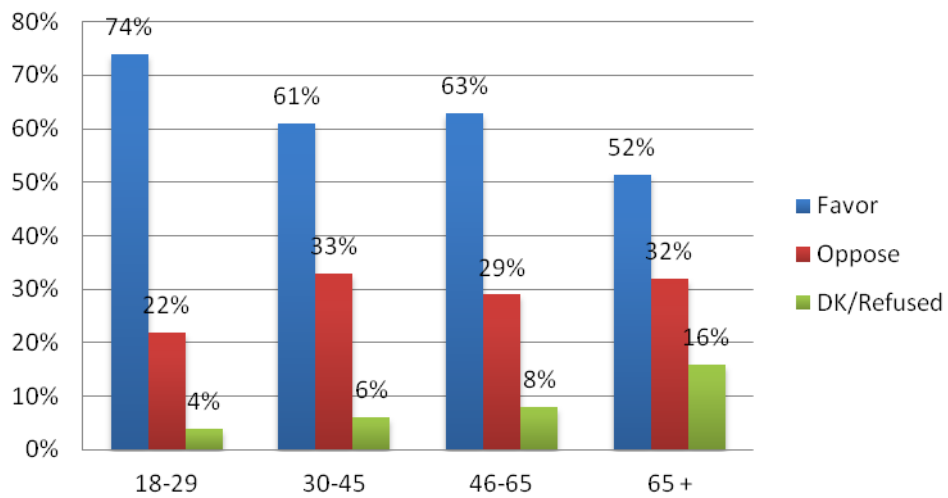


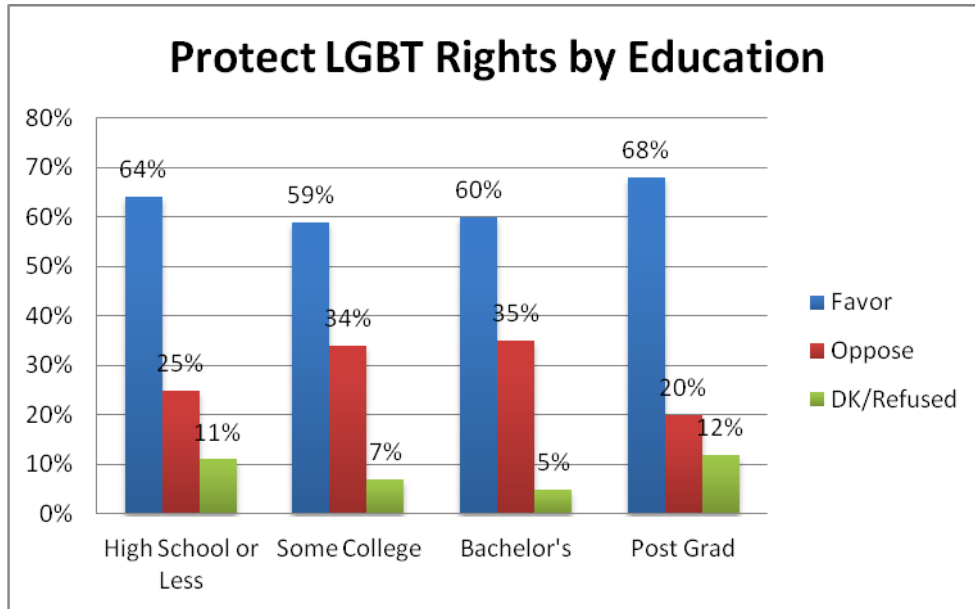
Support for amending the civil rights act to include LGBT protections varies by party, age, and level education with Democrats, young persons, and those at the highest and lowest levels of educational attainment expressing the strongest levels of support. Fewer whites (61%) than blacks (72%), Asians (75%) or Hispanic Hoosiers (68%) support extending civil rights protections to the LGBT community.

Protect LGBT Rights by Party



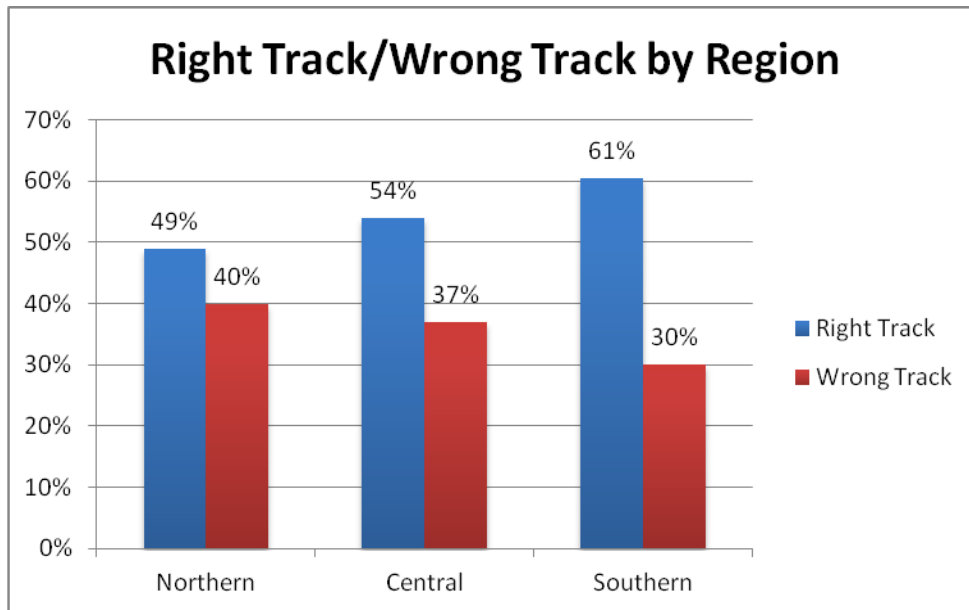
Protect LGBT Rights by Age





RIGHT TRACK/WRONG TRACK

A slightly higher number of Hoosiers believe the state is headed in the right direction this year than the number that expressed that opinion last year (54% in 2016 versus 51% in 2015). A regional breakdown shows that while just under half (49%) of Indiana residents in northern counties believe the state is headed in the right direction, 54% of residents in the central counties hold this view as do 61% of residents in the state's southern tier of counties.



However, there are significant partisan differences with regard to the state's trajectory. Republicans remain much more positive about the state's direction (73%) than either Independents (55%) or Democrats (35%).

