

September 2015 Winthrop Poll SC Residents

For methodological questions please read the full Methodology Statement at the bottom.

ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA – Two-thirds of South Carolina residents surveyed in the latest Winthrop Poll thought the S.C. Legislature made the right decision this summer to remove the Confederate battle flag from the State House grounds.

The decision came after nine church members, including the pastor who was a S.C. senator, were gunned down in their Charleston church in what was viewed as a racially motivated killing. Breaking down the survey results by race, 54% of white respondents said it was the right decision, while 93% of black residents supported it.

Nearly half of the overall respondents claim they disapproved of the flag before this summer; however, a November 2014 Winthrop Poll showed only one-third felt it should no longer continue to fly on State House grounds at that time.

For this latest Winthrop Poll, callers surveyed 963 South Carolina residents by landline and cell phones between Sept. 19-27. Results which use all respondents have a margin of error of approximately +/- 3.2% at the 95% confidence level.

When asked if the Confederate battle flag was more a symbol of racial conflict or of Southern pride, 40% of respondents said it stood for racial conflict, while 47% said it stood for Southern pride. Almost half of those who lean GOP said if it was left to their personal choice, they would let the flag continue to fly.

Callers also found that those who believe the history of slavery and discrimination make it harder for blacks to get ahead were more likely to support the flag's removal.

ECONOMY

On the subject of the economy, only a fourth of South Carolina residents said our country is headed in the right direction. Half of respondents believe this country's economic conditions as a whole are getting worse. Yet more than half think South Carolina is moving in a positive direction, and 63% think the condition of the economy is either very or fairly good.

Residents said the economy is the most important problem facing the United States (11.6%), followed by politicians/government (7%), moral values (6.8%) and immigration (6.2%).

Those surveyed said the two most important issues facing the Palmetto State are education and jobs/unemployment (tied at 13.3%), followed by racism (8%) and moral values (5.4%).

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA AND OTHERS

President Barack Obama's approval rating in South Carolina is 41% and remains roughly the same for the general population as it was in March, but still lags behind national approval ratings.

Meanwhile, Congress' approval rating by the Palmetto State residents continues to slide and is at 12%, a figure that is a little above the national opinion of Congress.

Governor Nikki Haley, who strongly urged legislators to take down the Confederate battle flag, has a 55% approval rating, nearly identical to her overall approval rating in March. Among Republicans and those who lean Republican, her approval rating is a strong 68%; however, this is lower than the 78% she garnered from GOP supporters among the general population in March. Meanwhile, the General Assembly received a stamp of approval from 45% of respondents.

U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, who is running for president on the GOP ticket, has a 40% approval rating. The state's junior senator, U.S. Sen. Tim Scott, who is more highly rated among the Republican base, has a 53% approval rating.

PUBLIC POLICIES AND ISSUES

Even though the U.S. Supreme Court voted this summer that the Constitution guarantees a right to same-sex marriage, half of the poll respondents said the union should not be recognized by law as valid. Yet when asked if county clerks or probate judges in the state should be allowed to deny a marriage license to same-sex couples, only 34% said yes.

Regarding roads, 84% of respondents said the priority should be to fix existing roads, not build new roads.

The Winthrop Poll also revealed:

- That 71% of respondents support a proposal before the S.C. General Assembly to allow the state health department to offer the HPV vaccine to female students entering seventh grade.
- That 51% of participants said that generations of slavery and discrimination do not make it difficult or somewhat difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class, while 45% said it makes it somewhat or strongly difficult.
- Of those surveyed, 70% said religion is very important to their lives.
- Nearly half of all respondents were either unsure about the Tea Party, or didn't feel familiar enough to offer an opinion, while only 22% approved. Five percent of respondents, including 8% of Republican identifiers, considered themselves Tea Party members.

NOTE: Numbers for GOP (and Leaners) in this poll CANNOT be compared to the numbers from the April 2015 Winthrop Poll. That poll was of LIKELY REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY VOTERS. That is, GOP and Leaners in this poll simply represents self-identified partisans and leaners. In the April Poll, ALL participants were GOP identifiers who were registered to vote AND so committed to partisan politics that they planned to vote in the SC GOP Presidential Primary.

Demographics

	Census	Survey
Male	47.9412	47.8
Female	52.05879	51.7
Unknown	--	0.4
18-19	4.0608	4.1
20-29	17.966	17.8
30-39	16.4846	16.4
40-49	17.9802	18.2
50-59	17.7694	17.4
60-69	13.9953	13.7
70-79	7.5244	7.3
80-89	3.5764	3.3
90-99	0.6247	0.6
over 100	0.0184	0.0
Refused	--	1.1
White	68.57	67.9
Black	26.5	26.9

Other	4.93	5.1

RESULTS MAY NOT SUM TO 100% DUE TO ROUNDING

T1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President of the United States?

	All Respondents
Approve	41
Disapprove	51
Don't Know	7
Refused	1

T2 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Congress is handling its job?

	All Respondents
Approve	12
Disapprove	81
Don't Know	6
Refused	1

T3 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Nikki Haley is handling her job as Governor of South Carolina?

	All Respondents	GOP (including Leaners)

Approve	55	68
Disapprove	34	23
Don't Know	10	8
Refused	1	1

T4 Do you approve or disapprove of the way the South Carolina State Legislature is handling its job?

	All Respondents
Approve	45
Disapprove	39
Don't Know	14
Refused	2

T5 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Lindsey Graham is handling his job as a United States Senator for South Carolina?

	All Respondents	GOP (including Leaners)
Approve	40	46
Disapprove	47	44
Don't Know	11	10
Refused	2	1

T6 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Tim Scott is handling his job as a United States Senator for South Carolina?

	All Respondents	GOP (including Leaners)
Approve	53	68
Disapprove	23	12

Don't Know	20	17
Refused	4	3

T7 Thinking about the current path that our nation is taking, do you think our country is on the right track or headed in the wrong direction?

	All Respondents
Right Track	25
Wrong Direction	70
Don't Know/ Refused	5

T8 Thinking about the current path that the state of South Carolina is taking, do you think South Carolina is on the right track or headed in the wrong direction?

	All Respondents
Right Track	51
Wrong Direction	38
Don't Know/ Refused	11

T9 What do you think is the most important problem facing the United States of America today?

	All Respondents
Economy/ Economic – financial crisis	11.6
Politicians/ Government	7.0
Moral	

values	6.8
Immigration	6.2
Jobs/ unemployment	5.5

T10 What do you think is the most important problem facing the state of South Carolina today?

	All Respondents
Tie: Education	13.3
Tie: Jobs/ unemployment	13.3
Racism	8.0
Moral values	5.4
Politicians/ Government	4.2

T11 In 1962, the confederate battle flag was placed over the dome of the South Carolina Statehouse, where the legislature meets. It was removed from the dome in 2000 and flew at a memorial on the statehouse grounds. This summer, it was removed completely from Statehouse grounds and sent to a museum.

Before this summer, did you approve or disapprove of the confederate battle flag flying on the SC Statehouse grounds?

	All Respondents	GOP (including Leaners)	Democrats (including Leaners)
Approve	41	61	18
Disapprove	49	28	73
Don't Know	10	10	8
Refused	1	1	1

T12 In 1962, the confederate battle flag was placed over the dome of the South Carolina Statehouse, where the legislature meets. It was removed from the dome in 2000 and flew at a memorial on the statehouse grounds. This summer, it was removed completely from Statehouse grounds and sent to a museum.

Before this summer, did you approve or disapprove of the confederate battle flag flying on the SC Statehouse grounds?

	White	Black
Approve	54	10
Disapprove	35	82
Don't Know	10	7
Refused	1	0

T13 This past July, the South Carolina Legislature voted to completely remove the confederate battle flag from the Statehouse grounds. Do you think this was the RIGHT decision or the WRONG decision?

	All Respondents	GOP (including Leaners)	Democrats (including Leaners)
Right decision	66	50	83
Wrong decision	30	45	12
Don't Know/ Not Sure	4	4	4

Refused	1	1	0
---------	---	---	---

T14 This past July, the South Carolina Legislature voted to completely remove the confederate battle flag from the Statehouse grounds. Do you think this was the RIGHT decision or the WRONG decision?

	White	Black
Right decision	54	93
Wrong decision	40	4
Don't Know/ Not Sure	5	4
Refused	1	0

T15 If you had your personal choice, would the confederate battle flag CONTINUE to fly on South Carolina Statehouse grounds or NO LONGER fly on South Carolina Statehouse grounds

	All Respondents	GOP (including Leanners)	Democrats (including Leanners)
Continue to fly	32	49	13
No longer fly	61	43	81
Doesn't matter to me/ Don't care [volunteered]	5	6	5
Don't know/ Not sure	2	2	1
Refused	1	0	1

T16 If you had your personal choice, would the confederate battle flag CONTINUE to fly on South Carolina Statehouse grounds or NO LONGER fly on South Carolina Statehouse grounds

	White	Black
Continue to fly	43	4
No longer fly	49	90

Doesn't matter to me/ Don't care [volunteered]	6	4
Don't know/ Not sure	2	1
Refused	1	1

T17 Some people say the confederate battle flag reminds them of white supremacy and racial conflict. Other people say the confederate battle flag is a symbol of southern heritage and pride. Do you think the flag is more a symbol of racial conflict or of southern pride?

	All Respondents	GOP (including Leanners)	Democrats (including Leanners)
Racial conflict	40	21	61
Southern pride	47	68	24
Equally both [volunteered]	7	6	9
Don't know/ No sure	5	4	6
Refused	1	0	1

T18 Some people say the confederate battle flag reminds them of white supremacy and racial conflict. Other people say the confederate battle flag is a symbol of southern heritage and pride. Do you think the flag is more a symbol of racial conflict or of southern pride?

	White	Black
Racial conflict	27	74
Southern pride	61	11
Equally both [volunteered]	7	9
Don't know/ No sure	5	4
Refused	1	1

Further down in the results (reflecting relative position on the survey), you will see the results from the following question:

“On a completely different topic, do you feel that generations of slavery and discrimination do or do not make it difficult for Blacks to work their way out of the lower class? Do you feel that way Strongly or Somewhat?”

This question is taken from the “Racial Resentment Scale” of questions. Note, “racial resentment” is not the same as “racism” (although the two may overlap ... for more on the racial resentment scale, see: Kinder, Donald R., and Lynn M. Sanders. 1996. *Divided by Color: Racial Politics and Democratic Ideals*. Chicago : University of Chicago Press.)

Here, we have divided the confederate flag questions by those who DO versus those who DO NOT feel the history of slavery and discrimination makes it difficult for blacks to move ahead

T19 In 1962, the confederate battle flag was placed over the dome of the South Carolina Statehouse, where the legislature meets. It was removed from the dome in 2000 and flew at a memorial on the statehouse grounds. This summer, it was removed completely from Statehouse grounds and sent to a museum.

Before this summer, did you approve or disapprove of the confederate battle flag flying on the SC Statehouse grounds?

	History of slavery & discrimination DO make it hard for blacks to get ahead	History of slavery & discrimination DO NOT make it hard for blacks to get ahead
Approve	22	58
Disapprove	71	30
Don't Know	8	11
Refused	0	1

T20 This past July, the South Carolina Legislature voted to completely remove the confederate battle flag from the Statehouse grounds. Do you think this was the RIGHT decision or the WRONG decision?

	History of slavery & discrimination DO make it	History of slavery & discrimination DO NOT make
--	--	---

	hard for blacks to get ahead	it hard for blacks to get ahead
Right decision	82	52
Wrong decision	14	43
Don't Know/ Not Sure	4	4
Refused	0	0

T21 If you had your personal choice, would the confederate battle flag CONTINUE to fly on South Carolina Statehouse grounds or NO LONGER fly on South Carolina Statehouse grounds

	History of slavery & discrimination DO make it hard for blacks to get ahead	History of slavery & discrimination DO NOT make it hard for blacks to get ahead
Continue to fly	16	46
No longer fly	78	48
Doesn't matter to me/ Don't care [volunteered]	4	6
Don't know/ Not sure	1	1
Refused	1	0

T22 Some people say the confederate battle flag reminds them of white supremacy and racial conflict. Other people say the confederate battle flag is a symbol of southern heritage and pride. Do you think the flag is more a symbol of racial conflict or of southern pride?

	History of slavery & discrimination DO make it hard for blacks to get ahead	History of slavery & discrimination DO NOT make it hard for blacks to get ahead
Racial conflict	62	22
Southern pride	26	66

Equally both [volunteered]	8	6
Don't know/ No sure	5	5
Refused	0	1

T23 How would you rate the condition of the economy of the country as a whole these days? Is it very good, fairly good, fairly bad, or very bad?

	All Respondents
Very Good	4
Fairly Good	39
Fairly Bad	34
Very Bad	22
Not Sure	2
Refused	0

T24 Right now, do you think that economic conditions in the country as a whole are getting better or getting worse?

	All Respondents
Getting Better	43
Getting Worse	50
Not Sure	6
Refused	0

T25 How would you rate the condition of the economy of South Carolina these days? Is it very good, fairly good, fairly bad, or very bad?

	All Respondents
Very Good	4

Fairly Good	59
Fairly Bad	26
Very Bad	9
Not Sure	3
Refused	0

T26 Right now, do you think that economic conditions in South Carolina are getting better or getting worse?

	All Respondents
Getting Better	60
Getting Worse	30
Not Sure	9
Refused	1

T27 How would you rate your financial situation today? As excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

	All Respondents
Excellent	9
Good	45
Only Fair	35
Poor	11
Not Sure	0
Refused	1

T28 Right now, do you think that your financial situation as a whole is getting better or getting worse?

	All Respondents
--	-----------------

Getting Better	61
Getting Worse	30
Not Sure	8
Refused	1

T29 There is currently a proposal in the South Carolina legislature to allow the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control to offer the HPV vaccine to female students entering the 7th grade. The Department would also develop a brochure, which could be handed out at schools, explaining the link between HPV and cervical cancer in women. This proposal would NOT require girls to have the vaccine in order to attend school.

Would you support or oppose this proposal?

	All Respondents
Support	71
Oppose	20
Not Sure	7
Refused	1

T30 Do you think marriages between same-sex couples SHOULD or should NOT be recognized by the law as valid, with the same rights as a marriage between a man and a woman?

	All Respondents
Should be valid	44
Should not be valid	50
Not Sure	3
Refused	2

T31 Now that the United States Supreme Court has struck down laws banning same-sex marriage making same-sex marriage legal in all 50 states, do you believe county clerks, or probate judges in South

Carolina, should be allowed to deny a marriage license to same-sex couples if they personally oppose same-sex marriage?

	All Respondents
Yes	34
No	63
Not Sure/Don't Know	2
Refused	1

T32 When it comes to how the state of South Carolina should spend money on roads, which statement comes closer to your beliefs about spending priorities:

[ROTATED]

Building NEW roads should be the top priority

Or

Repairing EXISTING roads should be the top priority

	All Respondents
Build new roads	10
Repair existing roads	84
Should have equal priority [volunteered]	4
Something else (or 'neither of these') should be top priority [volunteered]	1
Not sure/ Don't know	1
Refused	0

T33 On a completely different topic, do you feel that generations of slavery and discrimination do or do not make it difficult for Blacks to work their way out of the lower class?

Do you feel that way Strongly or Somewhat?

	All Respondents	White	Black
Strongly DO make it difficult	29	17	59
Somewhat DO make it difficult	16	17	15
Somewhat do NOT make it difficult	14	15	11
Strongly do NOT make it difficult	37	47	13
Don't Know/ Not Sure	3	3	2
Refused	1	3	1

T34 Aside from weddings and funerals, how often do you attend religious services... more than once a week, once a week, once or twice a month, a few times a year, seldom, or never?

	All Respondents
More than once a week	20
Once a week	30
Once or twice a month	16
Few times a year	12
Seldom	13
Never	7
Don't Know/ Refused	1

T35 How important would you say religion is in your own life: Very important, Fairly important, or Not very important?

	All Respondents
Very Important	70
Fairly Important	18
Not Very Important	12

Don't Know/ Refused	1
---------------------	---

T36 In general, would you say you approve or disapprove of the Tea Party movement or are you not familiar enough with the Tea Party movement to have an opinion?

	All Respondents	GOP (including Leaners)
Approve	22	38
Disapprove	28	14
Not Sure/Not familiar enough to have opinion	49	48
Refused	1	1

T37 Would you consider yourself a MEMBER of the Tea Party Movement?

	All Respondents	GOP (including Leaners)
Yes	5	8
No	89	88
Not Sure	5	5
Refused	0	0

T38 Under the current law, if a university or local government wishes to change the name of a street, park, or building which is named after a historical figure or event, it must obtain the approval of the South Carolina state legislature with a two-thirds vote.

Do you think universities and local governments SHOULD or should NOT be able to rename streets, parks, or buildings named after historical figures or events WITHOUT seeking approval of the state legislature?

	All Respondents	GOP (& Leaners)	Democrats (& Leaners)
Should be able to rename	32	28	41

without out approval			
Should NOT be able to rename without out approval	63	68	55
Not sure/ Don't Know	5	4	3
Refused	1	0	1

	White	Black
Should be able to rename without out approval	30	38
Should NOT be able to rename without out approval	64	58
Not sure/ Don't Know	6	4
Refused	1	0

T39 Currently, when a person purchases a firearm, if the background check takes longer than three days to come back, the buyer may receive the firearm without a completed background check if the seller agrees.

Would you support or oppose legislation that would require a completed background check before a buyer can take possession of a firearm, even if the background check takes longer than three days to come back?

	All Respondents	GOP (& Leaners)	Democrats (& Leaners)
Support	80	80	83
Oppose	18	18	17
Not Sure	2	2	0

Refused	1	0	1
---------	---	---	---

T40 Which comes closest to your view about what government policy should be toward illegal immigrants currently residing in the United States? Should the government –

[ROTATE]

deport all illegal immigrants back to their home country,

allow illegal immigrants to remain in the United States in order to work, but only for a limited amount of time,

or

allow illegal immigrants to remain in the United States and become U.S. citizens, but only if they meet certain requirements over a period of time?

	All Respondents	GOP (& Leaners)	Democrats (& Leaners)
Deport	22	35	7
Remain to work for limited time	16	21	13
Allow to become citizens	58	42	78
Don't Know/ Not Sure	3	2	2
Refused	1	1	0

	White	Black
Deport	27	9
Remain to work for limited time	18	15

Allow to become citizens	52	74
Don't Know/ Not Sure	3	2
Refused	1	0

	18-24	25-44	45-64	65+
Deport	16	23	25	18
Remain to work for limited time	23	11	19	18
Allow to become citizens	57	65	53	58
Don't Know/ Not Sure	4	1	3	5
Refused	0	0	1	1

Methodology Statement

Survey Methodology

September 2015 Winthrop Poll of SC Residents

The September 2015 Winthrop Poll interviewed **963** adults (aged 18 and older) living in South Carolina. Results which use all respondents have a margin of error of approximately +/- 3.2% at the 95% confidence level. Results that use less than the full sample will naturally have a higher margin of error. Results for GOP and Leaners only have a margin of error of approximately +/- 4.8%. Results for Democrats and Leaners only have a margin of error of approximately +/- 5.3%. Results for whites only have a margin of error of approximately +/- 3.8%. Results for blacks only have a margin of error of approximately +/-6%. Margins of error

are based on weighted sample size. 48% of the weighted respondents came from wireless (i.e. cell phone) sample.

The survey was in the field from 9/19-9/27, 2015. Phone calls were made during weekday evenings, all day Saturday, and Sunday afternoon and evening. Weekday daytime calls are not made to avoid oversampling those who are more likely to be at home during the day (e.g. retirees, stay-at-home-moms, etc.). Conducting weekend calls is important to avoid systematically excluding certain populations (such as those who may work 2nd or 3rd shift during the week).

The survey used (1) Random Digit Dialing (RDD) and (2) wireless phone number sampling. Both RDD and wireless samples are crucial to ensure no adult in the geographical area of interest is systematically excluded from the sample. Both the RDD sample and the wireless sample were purchased from Survey Sampling International (SSI). A further explanation of RDD methodology, with descriptions taken from SSI's website, may be found below. Questionnaires were administered in English.

Phone numbers selected for the survey were re-dialed up to five times in an attempt to reach a respondent. Once a household was reached, we also employed procedures to randomize within households for RDD sample.

Additionally, we:

1. Weight responses based on sex, age, and race according to the known population of residents of SC age 18 and older.
2. Randomize within household for respondents reached via RDD sample. Households are randomly designated for respondent selection based on the oldest/youngest male/female adult living in the household.

Computerized autodialers were not used in order to ensure the survey of wireless phones complied with the Telephone Consumers Protection Act and all FCC rules regarding contacting wireless telephones.

The Winthrop Poll is paid for by Winthrop University with additional support from The West Forum on Politics and Policy at Winthrop University.

Additional Explanation of RDD Methodology : (with descriptions taken from SSI website)

Samples are generated using a database of "working blocks." A block (also known as a 100-bank or a bank) is a set of 100 contiguous numbers identified by the first two digits of the last four digits of a telephone number. For example, in the telephone number 203-567-7200, "72" is the block. A block is termed to be working if some specified number of listed telephone numbers are found in that block.

Samples of random numbers distributed across all eligible blocks in proportion to their density of listed telephone households are selected. All blocks within a county are organized in ascending order by area code, exchange, and block number. Once the quota has been allocated to all counties in the frame, a sampling interval is calculated by summing the number of listed residential numbers in eligible blocks within the county and dividing that sum by the number of sampling points assigned to the county. From a random start between zero and the sampling interval, blocks are systematically selected in proportion to their density of listed households. Once a block has been selected, a two-digit number is systematically selected in the range 00-99 and is appended to the exchange and block to form a 10-digit telephone number.