

1995 Vermonter Poll - Vermonters Rate the Contract with America, and Political Figures

Almost one-half of Vermont's registered voters do not support the Republican Contract with America, according to the results of the 1995 Vermonter Poll. In December of 1995, the Center for Rural Studies at the University of Vermont surveyed by telephone 705 registered voters around the state.

Survey respondents were asked whether they supported or opposed the " national political initiative known as the Contract with America." According to 1995 Vermonter Poll results, almost one-half of Vermonters surveyed (48.2%) opposed the Contract, 23.6% supported it, and

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According to poll results, U.S. House of Representatives candidate, Susan Sweetser (R), was not recognized by 25.8% of the registered voters surveyed. Approximately 27 percent of survey respondents viewed her favorably, 14.4% were unfavorable, and 31.7% were undecided. Candidates for Lt. Governor, Douglas Racine (D) and John Carroll (R), also were not recognized by relatively large percentages of respondents, 25.8% and 17.4%, respectively. Racine was viewed favorably by 23.1% of the respondents, unfavorably by 13.8%, and 36.2% were undecided. Carroll was considered favorably by 21.7% of those surveyed, unfavorably by 28.8%, and 31.1% were undecided (Table 2).

When asked about national political figures, more than half of the Vermonters surveyed (55.0%)

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Table 3.
Favorability of State and National Political Figures: 1993 and 1995

Political Figure	Year	Favorable Percent	Unfavorable	Undecided	Don't Recognize	CHISQ
Patrick Leahy	1993	66.2	25.8	7.4	0.6	.00568*
	1995	66.0	20.4	13.0	0.7	
James Jeffords	1993	65.2	20.9	11.3	2.5	.06800
	1995	64.9	19.3	14.8	1.0	
Bernard Sanders	1993	54.5	34.9	9.4	1.2	.51200
	1995	58.8	31.9	8.2	1.0	
Howard Dean	1993	72.2	18.2	8.4	1.2	.00763*
	1995	63.9	24.5	11.1	0.5	
Barbara Snelling	1993	61.2	22.7	15.1	1.0	.00000*
	1995	45.0	36.0	17.1	1.9	
Bill Clinton						

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Looking specifically at the responses of the 1995 Chittenden Co. resident sample, favorability increased for Sen. Leahy (to 70.8%), President Clinton (to 58.4%), and Mrs. Clinton (to 54.8%).

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Table 4.
Favorability of State and National Political Figures: Chittenden County Sample
(All figures are in percent)

Political Figure	Favorable	Unfavorable	Undecided	Don't Recognize	Refused
Patrick Leahy	70.8	18.5	9.6	0.0	1.1
James Jeffords	63.0	21.7	13.5	0.7	1.7
Bernard Sanders	56.9	34.5	7.1	0.4	1.1
Howard Dean	63.0	24.2	11.7	0.0	1.1
Barbara Snelling	43.8	42.0	11.4	1.4	1.4
Susan Sweetser	43.1	19.2	25.6	11.0	1.1
Doug Racine	33.8	20.6	29.5	14.2	1.8
John Carroll	23.1	33.1	29.2	12.5	2.1
Bill Clinton	58.4	29.5	11.0	0.0	1.1
Hillary Clinton	54.8	33.1	10.3	0.0	1.8
Bob Dole	28.1	55.9	13.9	0.7	1.4
Newt Gingrich	10.3	80.4	6.4	1.4	1.4

Source: 1995 Vermonter Poll, Center for Rural Studies, University of Vermont.

Table 5.
Favorability of State and National Political Figures: Northeast Kingdom Sample
(All figures are percentages)

Political Figure	Favorable	Unfavorable	Undecided	Don't Recognize	Refused
Patrick Leahy	60.7	22.2	16.2	0.0	0.9
James Jeffords	62.4	19.7	15.4	1.7	0.9
Bernard Sanders	54.7	28.2	13.7	2.6	0.9
Howard Dean	56.4	29.9	12.0	0.9	0.9
Barbara Snelling	48.7	31.6	16.2	2.6	0.9
Susan Sweetser	17.9	12.0	38.5	30.8	0.9
Doug Racine	12.8	8.5	43.6	34.2	0.9
John Carroll	17.9	15.4	40.2	25.6	0.9

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Bill Clinton	51.3	38.5	9.4	0.0	0.9
Hillary Clinton	44.9	41.5	11.0	0.0	1.7
Bob Dole	29.1	52.1	17.9	0.0	0.9
Newt Gingrich	15.4	63.2	18.8	1.7	0.9

Source: 1995 Vermonter Poll, Center for Rural Studies, University of Vermont.

Table 6.
Favorability of State and National Political Figures:
Chittenden County v. Remainder of the State

Political Region Figure	Favorable	Unfavorable	Undecided	Don't Recognize	CHISQ
Patrick Leahy					
Chittenden Co.	71.6	18.7	9.7	0.0	.08643
Remainder of VT	64.3	20.8	14.0	0.9	
James Jeffords					
Chittenden Co.	63.7	21.9	13.7	0.7	.67842
Remainder of VT	65.3	18.5	15.1	1.1	
Bernard Sanders					
Chittenden Co.	57.6	34.9	7.2	0.4	.45438
Remainder of VT	59.2	31.0	8.5	1.2	
Howard Dean					
Chittenden Co.	63.7	24.5	11.9	0.0	.55470
Remainder of VT	64.0	24.5	10.8	0.7	
Barbara Snelling					
Chittenden Co.	44.4	42.6	11.6	1.4	.03010*
Remainder of VT	45.1	34.1	18.7	2.1	
Susan Sweetser					
Chittenden Co.	43.5	19.4	25.9	11.2	.00000*
Remainder of VT	22.8	13.1	33.7	30.3	
Doug Racine					
Chittenden Co.	34.4	21.0	30.1	14.5	.00000*
Remainder of VT	20.2	11.8	38.5	29.5	

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John Carroll				
Chittenden Co.	23.6	33.8	29.8	12.7

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	NEK	55.2	28.4	13.8	2.6	.05271*
	Remainder of VT	59.3	32.3	7.6	0.8	
Howard Dean						
	NEK	56.9	30.2	12.1	0.9	.41437
	Remainder of VT	64.7	23.8	10.9	0.5	
Barbara Snelling						
	NEK	49.1	31.9	16.4	2.6	.72103
	Remainder of VT	44.5	36.5	17.1	1.9	
Susan Sweetser						
	NEK	18.1	12.1	38.8	31.0	.05842
	Remainder of VT	28.7	14.9	31.1	25.4	
Doug Racine						
	NEK	12.9	8.6	44.0	34.5	.00399*
	Remainder of VT	24.7	14.5	35.7	25.1	
John Carroll						
	NEK	18.1	15.5	40.5	25.9	.00098*
	Remainder of VT	22.4	30.6	30.4	16.6	
Bill Clinton						
	NEK	51.7	38.8	9.5	0.0	.63140
	Remainder of VT	56.0	34.2	9.8	0.0	
Hillary Clinton						
	NEK	46.1	42.6	11.3	0.0	.52070
	Remainder of VT	51.2	37.0	11.7	0.0	
Bob Dole						
	NEK	29.3	52.6	18.1	0.0	.59803
	Remainder of VT	33.8	49.7	15.8	0.7	
0.7	20T	51.2	37.0	11.7	0.0	2 -1.1317 TD Tw4-24a*-.0013 Tceo-397 Tw1Remainder o77VT

Favorability among respondents toward political candidates was also analyzed according to respondent demographic characteristics including gender, age, college attainment, high school attainment, and 1995 household income.

As shown in Table 8, significant differences in favorability according to gender were discovered for Mrs. Clinton, Dole, Gingrich, Jeffords, Sanders, and Dean. Male respondents were significantly more favorable than female respondents toward Dole (41.4% v. 26.5%), Gingrich (20.7% v. 7.0%), Jeffords (69.2% v. 61.3%), and Dean (69.5% v. 59.2%). Female respondents were statistically more favorable toward Mrs. Clinton (54.9% v. 45.7%) and Sanders (56.9% v. 60.5%).

Respondents were dichotomized into two groups: those with less than four years of college and those with a four-year college degree or more in educational a

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Table 8. Favorability of State and National Political Figures: Respondent Gender
 Political Figure
 (All figures are percentages)

Respondent	Gender	Favorable	Unfavorable	Undecided	Don't Recognize	CHISQ
Patrick Leahy						
	Male	64.2	224.1	11.3	0.5	.10968
	Female	67.5	17.2	14.5	0.8	
James Jeffords						
	Male	69.2	18.3	12.3	0.2	.03877*
	Female	61.3	20.2	16.8	1.7	
Bernard Sanders						
	Male	56.9	35.8	7.3	0.0	.02014*
	Female	60.5	28.6	9.0	1.9	
Howard Dean						
	Male	69.5	21.0	8.8	0.7	.03264*
	Female	59.2	27.4	13.0	0.4	
Barbara Snelling						
	Male	46.0	36.6	16.3	1.2	.52991
	Female	44.1	35.6	17.7	2.6	
Susan Sweetser						
	Male	26.0	15.5	33.0	25.5	.76165
	Female	28.9	13.7	31.0	26.4	
Doug Racine						
	Male	24.4	17.3	34.5	23.8	.07122
	Female	22.6	11.0	38.4	28.0	
John Carroll						
	Male	25.1	28.9	28.3	17.7	.20957
	Female	19.2	29.2	34.1	17.5	
Bill Clinton						
	Male	55.3	37.2	7.5	0.0	.12046

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	Female	55.8	32.5	11.7	0.0	
Hillary Clinton						
	Male	45.7	43.9	10.4	0.0	.00744*
	Female	54.9	32.3	12.8	0.0	
Bob Dole						
	Male	41.4	43.2	15.2	0.2	.00027*
	Female	26.5	55.8	16.7	1.0	
Newt Gingrich						
	Male	20.7	71.5	6.6	1.1	.00000*
	Female	7.0	80.3	10.2	2.4	

*Statistically significant at the .05 level.

Source: 1995 Vermonter Poll, Center for Rural Studies, University of Vermont.

Table 9.

Favorability of State and National Political Figures:
Respondent College Educational Attainment

Political Figure	Respondent Education	Favorable	Unfavorable	Undecided	Don't Recognize	CHISQ
Patrick Leahy						
	LT College	65.0	20.0	14.6	0.4	.40774
	College Plus	67.1	20.8	11.0	1.0	
James Jeffords						
	LT College	65.0	20.7	13.7	0.6	.34186
	College Plus	64.7	17.4	16.3	1.6	
Bernard Sanders						
	LT College	59.1	31.2	8.8	0.9	.84964
	College Plus	58.3	32.9	7.5	1.3	
Howard Dean						
	LT College	61.1	26.7	11.4	0.8	.28441
	College Plus	67.3	21.7	10.7	0.2	
Barbara Snelling						

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LT College	49.0	33.7	15.3	2.0	.11580	
College Plus	40.0	38.8	19.4	1.9		
Susan Sweetser						
LT College	26.1	12.5	31.0	30.4	.01474*	
College Plus	29.1	17.5	33.3	20.2		
Doug Racine						
LT College	22.3	13.5	34.5	29.7	.09402	
College Plus	24.5	14.6	39.7	21.3		
John Carroll						
LT College	22.8	26.0	29.8	21.5	.00732*	
College Plus	20.9	33.5	33.1	12.5		
Bill Clinton						
LT College	51.2	39.3	9.5	0.0	.00962*	
College Plus	61.9	28.5	4T*-.00(167r1413.2(22.8)2389t02395.2

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Table 10.
Favorability of State and National Political Figures:
Respondent High School Educational Attainment

Political Figure	Respondent Education	Favorable	Unfavorable	Undecided	Don't Recognize	CHISQ
Patrick Leahy	HS or Less	63.5	18.5	17.2	0.7	.16621
	> HS	67.0	21.2	11.1	0.7	
James Jeffords	HS or Less	66.1	16.6	17.0	0.3	.24210
	> HS	64.3	20.6	13.8	1.4	
Bernard Sanders	HS or Less	58.1	29.8	11.3	0.7	.22221
	> HS	59.1	32.9	6.9	1.2	
Howard Dean	HS or Less	55.9	32.2	10.5	1.4	.00145*
	> HS	67.4	21.0	11.4	0.1	
Barbara Snelling	HS or Less	52.4	30.8	15.1	1.7	.07670
	> HS	41.8	38.2	17.9	2.1	
Susan Sweetser	HS or Less	21.2	9.3	31.0	38.5	.00000*
	> HS	30.2	17.0	32.4	20.4	

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	> HS	59.8	31.2	9.0	0.0	
Hillary Clinton						
	HS or Less	41.1	42.9	16.0	0.0	.00121*
	> HS	55.3	35.1	9.6	0.0	
Bob Dole						
	HS or Less	32.6	46.3	19.1	1.9	.00633*
	> HS	33.8	51.9	14.3	0.0	
Newt Gingrich						
	HS or Less	9.5	74.0	13.3	3.2	.00170*
	> HS	15.0	77.3	6.4	1.2	

* Significantly different at the .05 level.

Source: 1995 Vermonter Poll, Center for Rural Studies, University of Vermont.

Table 11.

Favorability of State and National Political Figures:
Respondent HH Income

Political Figure	Respondent Income	Favorable	Unfavorable	Undecided	Don't Recognize	CHISQ
Patrick Leahy						
	\$30,000 or Less	63.8	19.9	15.7	0.6	.29315
	> \$30,000	68.0	20.7	10.6	0.8	
James Jeffords						
	\$30,000 or Less	66.4	17.5	14.5	1.6	.65230
	> \$30,000	64.8	20.6	13.8	0.8	
Bernard Sanders						
	\$30,000 or Less	62.6	28.1	8.3	1.0	.50726
	> \$30,000	58.0	33.6	7.2	1.2	
Howard Dean						
	\$30,000 or Less	61.2	27.0	10.6	1.2	.18376
	> \$30,000	66.1	22.5	11.3	0.2	

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Barbara Snelling						
\$30,000 or Less	47.8	32.8	17.5	1.9		.31912
> \$30,000	42.2	40.1	15.9	1.8		
Susan Sweetser						
\$30,000 or Less	23.7	12.8	35.4	28.1		.16638
> \$30,000	29.5	15.8	31.6	23.1		
Doug Racine						
\$30,000 or Less	22.5	15.2	38.5	23.8		.44797
> \$30,000	23.4	12.5	35.7	28.4		
John Carroll						
\$30,000 or Less	21.3	27.5	29.8	21.5		.13564
> \$30,000	21.7	30.6	33.3	14.4		
Bill Clinton						
\$30,000 or Less	56.8	34.7	8.5	0.0		.91631
> \$30,000	55.4	35.4	9.2	0.0		
Hillary Clinton						
\$30,000 or Less	53.9	33.7	12.4	0.0		.10056
> \$30,000	49.7	41.4	8.9	0.0		
Bob Dole						
\$30,000 or Less	34.7	49.7	14.4	1.2		.51751
> \$30,000	32.9	51.4	15.4	0.3		
Newt Gingrich						
\$30,000 or Less	12.2	76.1	8.5	3.2		.29837
> \$30,000	13.7	77.0	8.1	1.9		

Source: 1995 Vermonter Poll, Center for Rural Studies, University of Vermont.

1995 Vermonter Poll - Introduction and Methodology

January 1996

Introduction:

The 1995 Vermonter Poll is a unique opportunity for researchers, policy makers, social advocates, and citizens to examine changes in public opinion regarding contemporary, and often controversial, issues in the public arena. Since 1990, the Center for Rural Studies at the University of Vermont has conducted four, state-wide polls of registered Vermonters (1990, 1993, 1994, and 1995). Results of these studies help document evolving public attitudes toward a variety of concerns with implications for public policy, programming development, and the allocation of shrinking public resources. Specific issues addressed in the Vermonter Poll Series include: favorability toward political figures; agriculture and the environment; community growth and economic development; satisfaction with community services; property tax reform; and the use of computers and communications technology. Additional questions are added to, or deleted from, the Vermonter Poll as issues become more or less timely.

The first report of the 1995 polling results focuses specifically on Vermonters' support of the "Contract with America" and favorability toward a number of state and national political figures. Political figure favorability responses are first compared to Vermonters' responses to similar questions in the 1993 Vermonter Opinion Poll. Additional comparisons are made according to whether respondents live in Chittenden County or Vermont's Northeast Kingdom. Finally, responses are analyzed according to selected respondent demographics including age, education, income, and gender.

Additional reports will be produced as analysis of the Vermonter Poll data progresses and issues

5%), both Chittenden County and Vermont's Northeast Kingdom (Essex, Orleans, and Caledonia Counties) were over-sampled to allow for separate and comparative analyses of these distinct regions. In total, 702 registered Vermont voters completed the survey. To compensate for over sampling in certain parts of the state, different weights were assigned to data depending on the analysis required (See Table A). Weights were determined using the proportion of Vermont's total households found in these regions during the 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing. The results of the weighting process yielded a representative statewide sample population of 705 cases.

A conservative estimate of the margin of error associated with the statewide analysis is +/- 5.0% with a confidence interval of 95.0%. This means that if the survey were to be redone, 95 percent of the time the results would be the same within +/-5.0 percentage points for each particular question. The margin of error for the Chittenden County and Northeast Kingdom analyses is +/- 5.0% with a confidence interval of 90.0%. The margin of error associated with any given item in the survey increases as the sample size for individual questions are examined in greater detail such as in cross-tabulations.

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