



Univeristy of North Florida Public Opinion Research Lab

www.unf.edu/coas/porl/

For Immediate Release: Saturday, May 7, 2016
Contact Dr. Michael Binder, m.binder@unf.edu
PDF version; website: <https://www.unf.edu/coas/porl/>

Jax Speaks Poll: Mixed news for Mayor Curry’s pension plan

Limited support with a great deal of uncertainty about the upcoming ballot measure.

Jacksonville, Fla. – A new poll from the University of North Florida (UNF) Public Opinion Research Lab (PORK) shows mixed support and opposition among Duval County residents with Mayor Lenny Curry’s sales tax referendum, which is slated to be voted on later this year.

“Curry has some work to do in order to convince voters that the sales tax extension is the right thing to do to try and solve our pension problems,” said UNF PORK faculty director Dr. Michael Binder. “There is opportunity for him [Curry] – 40 percent of the sample did not have an opinion about the upcoming pension ballot measure.”

Respondents were asked whether they support or oppose the referendum that will be presented to voters come August’s primary election.

“Permanently closing up to three of the City’s underfunded defined benefit retirement plans, increasing the employee contribution for those plans to a minimum of 10 percent, and ending the Better Jacksonville half-cent sales tax are all required to adopt a half-cent sales tax solely dedicated to reducing the City’s unfunded pension liability. Shall such pension liability sales tax, which ends upon elimination of the unfunded pension liability or in 30 years maximum, be adopted?”

Pension Support Among Self Identified Partisanship			
n= 380	Democrat	Republican	Independent/ Others
Support	33%	42%	36%
Oppose	25%	20%	25%
Don’t Know/ No Answer	42%	38%	39%

Of respondents there was a plurality of uncertainty with 40 percent of residents answering “Don’t Know” or “No Answer” while 36 percent expressed support toward Curry’s pension solution. Within the partisan divide that exists on this topic, Republicans showed higher levels of support 42 to 20 percent. Democrats were more mixed, 33 to 25 percent, while Independents and others show similar levels of support polling at 36 to 25 percent.

“Mayor Curry and his pension plan supporters seem to be getting the word out to Republicans, as they are more supportive at this early stage,” Binder said. “But the extremely high levels of uncertainty highlight the opportunity that the mayor has to make his case to voters during the next few months.”

Overwhelming support for Human Rights Ordinance in Jacksonville

Respondents’ overwhelming support, 64 to 26 percent, to “expand the Human Rights Ordinance (HRO) to include anti-discrimination protection on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression in the areas of housing, employment and public accommodations,” paints a clear picture of what Duval County residents want.

“Human rights have been a hot-button political issue in Jacksonville since the city council failed to pass an HRO almost 4 years ago,” said Binder. “This data shows that our residents continue to be supportive of a fully inclusive HRO.

Democrats, Independents and Republicans are all in favor of the city adopting these protections. Perhaps the city council’s constituents are more supportive of the HRO than they know.”

Jacksonville’s Human Rights Ordinance (HRO) Support Among Self Identified Partisanship			
n= 380	Democrat	Republican	Independent/ Others
Support	71%	48%	64%
Oppose	20%	42%	26%
Don’t Know/ No Answer	8%	10%	10%

The telephone survey was conducted May 2-5, 2016, with a random selection of 380 Duval County residents.

“I want to emphasize that this is not a likely voter survey for the August statewide primary, said Binder. “This survey is made up of county residents and gives us an idea about where they stand on two very important issues.”

The Jax Speaks Poll was conducted May 2-5, 2016 by telephone calls conducted in English and Spanish to 380 Duval County residents 18 years of age or older. The margin of error is 5%. This survey was sponsored by the Public Opinion Research Lab (PURL) at the University of North Florida (UNF) and is directed by Associate Professor of Political Science, Michael Binder, Ph.D. The PURL is a full-service survey research facility that provides tailored research to fulfill each client’s individual needs from political, economic, social and cultural projects. Since its opening in March of 2001, the PURL, is an independent, non-partisan center and is a Charter Member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research Transparency Initiative. Scientific Telephone Samples (STS) provided the sample selected through the use of Random-Digit-Dialing methodology for both landlines and cell phones. Upon reaching individuals through the landline telephone sample, respondents were selected in the household by being the first qualified participant to be available to participate. Cellphone sample respondents were selected by being the first qualified participant to answer the phone. The sample is of adults (18 years and older) who are residents of Duval County, Fla. The general population or total sample was weighted by age, gender, race, race and partisan identification to the estimated 2014 American Community Survey (ACS), from the U.S. Census Bureau and party registration statistics from the Duval County Supervisor of Elections. For more information about methodology, contact Dr. Michael Binder at porl@unf.edu or (904) 620-2784.



Univeristy of North Florida
Public Opinion Research Lab
www.unf.edu/coas/porl/

Jax Speaks Poll Toplines - May 2-5, 2016

All choices read out loud to respondent except “Don’t Know (DK)” and “No Answer (NA)”

[ASK ALL] Do you support or oppose the referendum to be presented to Jacksonville voters in the Aug. 30 primary election that reads, “Permanently closing up to three of the City’s underfunded defined benefit retirement plans, increasing the employee contribution for those plans to a minimum of 10 percent, and ending the Better Jacksonville half-cent sales tax are all required to adopt a half-cent sales tax solely dedicated to reducing the City’s unfunded pension liability. Shall such pension liability sales tax, which ends upon elimination of the unfunded pension liability or in 30 years maximum, be adopted?”

	Total Sample	n= 380
Support	36%	
Oppose	24%	
DK/NA	40%	

[ASK ALL] Do you support or oppose the City of Jacksonville expanding the city’s human-rights ordinance to include anti-discrimination protection on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression in the areas of housing, employment and public accommodations?

	Total Sample	n= 380
Support	64%	
Oppose	26%	
DK/NA	10%	

[ASK ALL] Regarding politics, do you consider yourself a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or something else?

	Total Sample	n= 384
Democrats	36%	
Republicans	29%	
Independent	35%	
DK/NA	--	

[ASK ALL] What is your racial/ethnic background? Are you:

	Total Sample	n= 383
White/Caucasian	56%	
Black/African American	28%	
Hispanic/Latino	8%	
Asian	4%	
Other	3%	
DK/NA	2%	

[ASK ALL] What is your highest grade in school or year of college you have completed?

	Total Sample	n= 381
Grade school	7%	
High School graduate/GED	25%	
Some college	44%	
College Graduate	17%	
Postgraduate degree	7%	
DK/NA	--	

[ASK ALL] Would you mind telling me how old you are?

	Total Sample	n= 383
18-24	13%	
25-44	35%	
45-64	34%	
65 and older	18%	
DK/NA	1%	

[INTERVIEWER DETERMINED] Respondent gender

	Total Sample	n= 380
Male	47%	
Female	53%	

[NOT ASKED] Determined from sample*

	Total Sample	n= 380
Landline	23%	
Cellphone	77%	

* Telephone sample purchased for this project was pre-identified as landline or cellphone from Scientific Telephone Sample (STS)