



University of South Carolina
College of Arts and Sciences
Institute for Public Service and Policy Research

South Carolina State Survey

SPRING 2017

Technical Report
For the South Carolina Progressive Network



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Background

THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE SURVEY is a cost-shared random probability survey of citizens age eighteen and older living in the State of South Carolina that is conducted biannually by the University of South Carolina's Institute for Public Service and Policy Research (IPSPR). The South Carolina State Survey allows policy makers, researchers, and other interested organizations an opportunity to gather reliable data in a timely and cost-effective manner.

Questionnaire Design

The substantive questions in the survey are constructed by the participating groups with the assistance of the South Carolina State Survey staff. The demographic questions and other technical aspects of the questionnaire are the responsibility of the South Carolina State Survey staff.

Before the questionnaire was finalized it was pretested to determine whether or not the questions could be easily understood by respondents, if the order of the questions seemed logical to the interviewers and respondents, or if it contained other identifiable weaknesses. Problems were detected and corrected. No major problems persisted into the actual conduct of the survey.

Sampling

A dual sampling frame approach, one based on landline telephone exchanges and the second based on cell phone telephone numbers, was used in selecting respondents for this study. For the landline component, respondents to be interviewed were selected from a random sample of households with telephones in the state. Respondents in the cell phone sample were randomly selected from a list of cell phone exchanges in South Carolina. Both the landline and cell phone samples were provided by Survey Sampling, International. Each of these numbers was called by the survey interviewers. Numbers that were found to be businesses, institutions, not-in-service, or otherwise not assigned were ineligible for the survey. The remaining numbers, when called, resulted in contacts to residences in the landline component and with individuals in the cell phone component. When contact was made with a residence in the landline component, a respondent, 18 years of age or older, was randomly chosen from the household's occupants. When contact was made with an individual in the cell phone component, they were asked a series of questions to determine eligibility, including confirming that the number reached was for a cell phone, that the individual who answered was 18 years of age or older, and that they were a resident of South Carolina.

To avoid biasing the sample in favor of households that can be reached on multiple landline telephone numbers, each case from the landline sample was weighted inversely to its probability of being included in the sample and adjusted for differences in probability of selection due to the number of individuals age 18 or older living in the household. The data are also weighted to correct any potential biases in the sample on the basis of age, race, sex, and educational attainment.

Interviewing

The interviewing was conducted from IPSPR's Survey Research Laboratory (SRL), on the Columbia campus of the University of South Carolina, by SRL interviewing staff members. Prior to the actual fieldwork (interviewing), the interviewers and interviewing supervisors received one day of specialized training for this survey. Many of the interviews were monitored to ensure that instructions were being followed. Calls were made from 9:00 AM to 9:30 PM Monday through Friday, from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM on Saturday, and 3:00 PM to 8:00 PM on Sunday. The main survey period was from May 10 to July 7, 2017. All interviews were conducted in English. In the landline component of this study, a total of 265 interviews were conducted, while the cell phone component consisted of 541 completed interviews. The AAPOR response rate for the landline component was 14.1% and for the cell phone component it was 10.7% (RR4). The overall AAPOR response rate was 11.6% (RR4).

Interviews were conducted using the SRL's computer-aided telephone interviewing facilities. After the interviews were completed, the open-ended questions were coded. Following this coding, analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and Stata statistical software. Organizations participating in this survey receive the frequency counts for their questions and cross-tabulations of these questions with seven demographic items.

Sampling Error

The South Carolina State Survey, like all surveys, has a potential for sampling error due to the fact that not all residents of the state were interviewed. For all questions that were answered by eight hundred (800) or so respondents the potential for error is +/- 3.5%. Results for questions answered by significantly fewer than 800 respondents and results for subgroups of the population have a potential for larger variation than those for the entire sample. In the reported analyses the sampling error has not been adjusted for any design effects due to weighting.

For additional information on how these survey data were collected, contact:

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SUMMARY FINDINGS: SOUTH CAROLINA PROGRESSIVE NETWORK

As part of the Spring 2017 South Carolina State Survey, the South Carolina Progressive Network (SCPN) included items measuring attitudes about how legislative districts are drawn and electoral competition in South Carolina. In particular, these items asked respondents to indicate (1) whether the drawing of district lines for the South Carolina legislature is done fairly, (2) whether they are satisfied with the choices they have in elections for the South Carolina legislature, and (3) if they would prefer that the drawing of legislative district lines in South Carolina be done by the legislators in the General Assembly or by an independent commission of non-legislators. An embedded experiment was also included in the South Carolina State Survey, whereby a random subset of approximately one-half of the respondents received a brief amount of factual information about legislative districts in South Carolina prior to answering the three questions about how legislative districts are drawn and electoral competition in South Carolina, while the other approximately one-half of respondents answered the three questions without having first received any information about legislative districts in South Carolina. The information provided to the respondents who were randomly assigned to receive information about legislative districts in South Carolina prior to answering the SCPN's questions was as follows: *In South Carolina, 78% of the state legislative districts are dominated by one political party. This means that for 78% of the legislative districts in South Carolina, the candidate who wins the dominant party's primary will win the general election.* A total of 411 respondents received this information prior being asked the SCPN items, while 395 respondents did not receive this information. (A copy of the complete questionnaire is available from IPSPR upon request.)

This report provides a summary of the findings for the items included by the SCPN on the South Carolina State Survey. In addition to presenting the major findings for the complete sample, comparisons across demographic subgroups are provided in order to identify significant differences in opinion on these issues. Significant differences across subgroups are highlighted in bold ($p < .05$) or italicized ($p < .10$) text in the tables.

Is Drawing of District Lines for the South Carolina Legislature Done Fairly

The first of the items included by SCPN on the South Carolina State Survey asked respondents to indicate whether they feel the drawing of district lines for the South Carolina legislature is done fairly. As indicated in Table 1, a plurality of respondents (45.7%) reported feeling that the drawing of district lines for the South Carolina legislature is done fairly, while 26.4% of respondents indicated feeling that the drawing of district lines is *not* done fairly. Interestingly, however, more than a quarter of respondents (27.9%) said that they do not know whether the drawing of district lines for the South Carolina legislature is done fairly or not.

Also indicated in Table 1, there were significant differences in respondents' views about whether the drawing of district lines for the South Carolina legislature is done fairly based on whether

respondents first received the factual information about legislative districts in South Carolina before answering this question. In particular, those who received the factual information about legislative districts in South Carolina were significantly *more* likely than those who did not receive this information to say that the drawing of legislative districts is *not* done fairly and they were also significantly *less* likely to give a “don’t know” response to this question. Interestingly, however, respondents who received the factual information about legislative districts in South Carolina were not significantly more or less likely to say that the drawing of legislative districts in South Carolina is done fairly. Hence, it appears that the primary effect of the provision of the factual information about legislative districts in South Carolina was that it contributed to more respondents saying that the drawing of legislative districts is *not* done fairly and fewer respondents giving a “don’t know” response to this question.

There were also significant differences in respondents’ views about whether the drawing of district lines for the South Carolina legislature is done fairly across demographic groups. Women, for example, were significantly less likely than men to say that the drawing of district lines for the South Carolina legislature is done *fairly*, and women were significantly more likely than men to give a “don’t know” response to this question. Also, Black respondents were significantly less likely than White respondents to say that the drawing of district lines for the South Carolina legislature is done *fairly* and were significantly more likely than White respondents to say that the drawing of district lines is *not done fairly*.

Respondents with a college degree were significantly more likely than those with a high school education to say that the drawing of district lines is *not done fairly*. Also, respondents who reside in suburban areas were slightly less likely than those who reside in urban areas and significantly less likely than those who reside in rural areas to say that the drawing of district lines is done *fairly*; and respondents residing in suburban areas were significantly more likely than those residing in rural areas to say that the drawing of district lines is *not done fairly*. Also, respondents in the Lowcountry were slightly less likely than those in the Upstate to say that the drawing of district lines is done *fairly*.

Satisfaction with Choices in Elections for South Carolina Legislature

Next, respondents were asked if they are satisfied with the choices they have in elections for the South Carolina legislature or if they would prefer to have more choices. As indicated in Table 2, respondents were roughly split, with 46.3% of respondents saying they are satisfied with the choices they have and 45.9% indicating that they would prefer more choices. Another 7.7% of respondents indicated that they do not know whether they are satisfied or would prefer more choices in elections for the South Carolina legislature.

The provision of the factual information about legislative districts in South Carolina did not have a significant effect on whether respondents indicated being satisfied or preferring more choices in elections for the South Carolina legislature. There were some significant differences in

responses to this question, however, across demographic groups. Black respondents, for example, were less likely than White respondents to say they are satisfied with their choices in elections for the South Carolina legislature; and respondents in the oldest age cohort (age 65 and older) were significantly more likely than those between the ages of 30 and 44 to indicate that they are satisfied with their choices. Also, respondents who reside in rural areas of the state were slightly more likely than those who reside in urban or suburban areas to say that they are satisfied with their choices in elections for the South Carolina legislature.

Preference for Whether Legislative District Lines in South Carolina are Drawn by the General Assembly or an Independent Commission

The last item included by SCPN on the South Carolina State Survey asked respondents if they would prefer that the drawing of legislative district lines in South Carolina be done by the legislators in the General Assembly or by an independent commission of non-legislators. As indicated in Table 3, a solid majority of respondents (64.5%) indicated that they would prefer that the drawing of legislative district lines in South Carolina be done by an independent commission. Roughly one-fifth of respondents (20.9%) indicated that they would prefer that legislative district lines be drawn by the General Assembly, while 14.7% indicated that they do not know whom they would prefer to draw legislative district lines in South Carolina.

The provision of the factual information about legislative districts in South Carolina did not have a significant effect on whether respondents preferred that the drawing of legislative district lines in South Carolina be done by the legislators in the General Assembly or by an independent commission of non-legislators. There were, however, significant differences across demographic groups in preferences about whether legislative districts are drawn by the General Assembly or an independent commission. For example, Black respondents were significantly less likely than White respondents to indicate preferring that the drawing of legislative district lines in South Carolina be done by an independent commission. Also, respondents in the oldest age cohort (age 65 and older) were significantly less likely than younger respondents to say they preferred that the drawing of legislative district lines in South Carolina be done by an independent commission; and those in the oldest age cohort were significantly more likely than younger respondents to say that they don't know whether they prefer that the drawing of legislative district lines in South Carolina be done by the legislators in the General Assembly or by an independent commission of non-legislators.

Respondents with a college degree were significantly more likely than those with a high school education or less to indicate preferring that the drawing of legislative district lines in South Carolina be done by an independent commission; and respondents with a college degree were also less likely to provide a "don't know" response to this question. Also, respondents with annual household incomes of less than \$25,000 were significantly less likely than those with higher annual household incomes to prefer that the drawing of legislative district lines in South

Carolina be done by an independent commission, and they were significantly more likely than those with higher annual household incomes to provide a “don’t know” response to this question.

Summary

The findings presented herein depict a fairly mixed picture regarding South Carolinians’ attitudes about how legislative districts are drawn and electoral competition in South Carolina. While a larger percentage of South Carolinians reported feeling that district lines for the South Carolina legislature are drawn fairly (45.7%) than the percentage who reported feeling that they are not drawn fairly (26.4%), a sizeable percentage of respondents—27.9%—could not provide a definitive answer to this question. Also, there is a fair amount of variance across demographic groups in whether South Carolinians feel that district lines for the South Carolina legislature are drawn fairly. Interestingly, however, those who were first provided with a brief amount of factual information about legislative districts in South Carolina were significantly more likely to provide a definitive answer to this question (i.e., less likely to provide a “don’t know” response) and they were also significantly more likely to say that the drawing of legislative districts in South Carolina *is not* done fairly.

South Carolinians were almost evenly split on the question of whether they are satisfied with the choices they have in elections for the South Carolina legislature, though there was significant variation across demographic groups and nearly 8% of respondents were unable to provide a definitive response. Demographic variation and a fairly high percentage of “don’t know” responses (14.7%) notwithstanding, however, a clear majority of South Carolinians (64.5%) reported preferring that the drawing of legislative district lines be done by an independent commission, rather than the legislators in the General Assembly.

Despite the fact that South Carolinians have fairly mixed views about how legislative districts are drawn and electoral competition in South Carolina, these data suggest a couple of clear conclusions. First, it can be safely concluded from these data that the provision of factual information about the percentage of South Carolina’s legislative districts that are dominated by one party and how this effects general election outcomes made South Carolinians more likely to express an opinion about whether South Carolina’s legislative districts are drawn fairly and more likely to express the opinion that the drawing of legislative districts in South Carolina *is not* done fairly. Second, despite some demographic variation, the majority of South Carolinians prefer to have legislative district lines drawn by an independent commission of non-legislators, while comparatively few (20.9%) prefer that the drawing of legislative district lines in South Carolina be done by members of the General Assembly.

TABLE 1A

**IS THE DRAWING OF DISTRICT LINES FOR THE SOUTH CAROLINA LEGISLATURE
DONE FAIRLY OR NOT? – SPRING 2017**

	<u>Done Fairly</u>	<u>Not Done Fairly</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>N</u>
TOTAL	45.7	26.4	27.9	783
EXPERIMENT				
Received Information	48.1	32.3	19.6	402
No Information Received	43.2	20.2	36.6	383
SEX				
Male	53.1	27.4	19.5	372
Female	38.8	26.0	35.2	406
RACE				
White	53.1	21.5	25.4	525
Black	32.1	40.4	27.5	202
Other	34.6	24.5	40.9	21
AGE				
18 – 29	46.9	30.1	23.0	166
30 – 44	45.0	27.9	27.1	193
45 – 64	46.6	25.3	28.1	270
65 and Over	44.0	21.7	34.4	134
EDUCATION				
Less than High School	51.7	22.0	26.3	114
High School Diploma	48.4	21.5	30.2	235
Some College	43.7	28.7	27.6	248
College Degree	42.5	32.0	25.5	180
INCOME				
Under \$25,000	40.7	28.0	31.3	175
\$25,000-\$49,999	46.2	29.5	24.3	201
\$50,000-\$74,999	52.0	24.8	23.2	102
\$75,000 and Over	47.7	26.0	26.3	215
TYPE OF AREA				
Urban	48.5	26.8	24.7	187
Suburban	38.4	31.8	29.8	282
Rural	51.8	21.3	27.0	304
REGION				
<i>Upstate</i>	<i>49.9</i>	<i>22.6</i>	<i>27.4</i>	<i>310</i>
<i>Midlands</i>	<i>45.9</i>	<i>29.7</i>	<i>24.4</i>	<i>252</i>
<i>Lowcountry</i>	<i>39.7</i>	<i>27.8</i>	<i>32.5</i>	<i>220</i>

TABLE 1B
IS THE DRAWING OF DISTRICT LINES FOR THE SOUTH CAROLINA LEGISLATURE
DONE FAIRLY OR NOT? – SPRING 2017

	<u>Done Fairly</u>	<u>Not Done Fairly</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>N</u>
TOTAL	45.7	26.4	27.9	783
POLITICAL PARTY				
Republican	64.2	11.1	24.7	251
Democrat	29.8	44.0	26.2	214
Independent	46.2	23.1	30.7	221
Other	30.9	35.0	34.1	65
<i>VOTER REGISTRATION</i>				
<i>Registered to Vote</i>	<i>47.0</i>	<i>27.9</i>	<i>25.1</i>	<i>653</i>
<i>Not Registered to Vote</i>	<i>41.1</i>	<i>20.2</i>	<i>38.8</i>	<i>120</i>
TELEPHONE FRAME				
Cell Phone	46.2	26.2	27.6	564
Land Line	44.3	27.0	28.7	221

TABLE 2A

**ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE CHOICES YOU HAVE IN ELECTIONS FOR THE
SOUTH CAROLINA LEGISLATURE OR WOULD YOU PREFER TO HAVE MORE
CHOICES? – SPRING 2017**

	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Prefer More Choices</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>N</u>
TOTAL	46.3	45.9	7.7	788
EXPERIMENT				
Received Information	43.1	49.6	7.2	403
No Information Received	49.7	42.1	8.3	386
SEX				
Male	47.9	45.6	6.5	371
Female	44.7	47.0	8.3	409
RACE				
White	54.1	39.3	6.7	533
Black	31.0	60.0	9.0	199
Other	40.8	42.2	17.0	21
AGE				
18 – 29	50.1	39.7	10.3	165
30 – 44	39.3	51.4	9.3	194
45 – 64	45.5	50.3	4.2	272
65 and Over	54.1	37.8	8.1	136
EDUCATION				
Less than High School	46.9	49.9	3.2	114
High School Diploma	50.0	37.5	12.5	231
Some College	43.2	50.0	6.9	250
College Degree	46.9	47.1	6.0	186
INCOME				
Under \$25,000	46.3	47.1	6.6	176
\$25,000-\$49,999	44.7	49.1	6.2	200
\$50,000-\$74,999	40.8	51.7	7.5	102
\$75,000 and Over	51.6	43.4	5.0	216
TYPE OF AREA				
Urban	41.9	48.5	9.6	185
Suburban	43.6	48.6	7.8	287
Rural	52.0	41.1	6.9	306
REGION				
Upstate	49.1	42.8	8.1	311
Midlands	40.6	52.5	6.9	248
Lowcountry	49.0	42.7	8.2	226

TABLE 2B
ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE CHOICES YOU HAVE IN ELECTIONS FOR THE
SOUTH CAROLINA LEGISLATURE OR WOULD YOU PREFER TO HAVE MORE
CHOICES? – SPRING 2017

	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Prefer More Choices</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>N</u>
TOTAL	46.3	45.9	7.7	788
POLITICAL PARTY				
Republican	68.0	26.4	5.7	255
Democrat	30.5	63.4	6.1	211
Independent	42.3	48.7	9.0	224
Other	33.8	55.3	10.9	67
VOTER REGISTRATION				
Registered to Vote	45.6	49.0	5.5	660
Not Registered to Vote	50.5	29.2	20.2	115
TELEPHONE FRAME				
Cell Phone	48.5	43.6	7.9	563
Land Line	40.9	51.8	7.3	226

TABLE 3A

WOULD YOU PREFER THAT THE DRAWING OF LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT LINES IN
SOUTH CAROLINA BE DONE BY THE LEGISLATORS IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OR BY AN INDEPENDENT COMMISSION OF NON-LEGISLATORS? – SPRING 2017

	<u>General Assembly</u>	<u>Independent Commission</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>N</u>
TOTAL	20.9	64.5	14.7	791
EXPERIMENT				
Received Information	20.2	64.8	15.1	407
No Information Received	21.6	64.2	14.2	388
SEX				
Male	19.6	67.0	13.5	375
Female	21.8	62.8	15.4	411
RACE				
White	19.0	68.9	12.1	535
Black	25.1	58.0	16.9	203
Other	29.2	53.0	17.8	21
AGE				
18 – 29	23.0	66.5	10.6	171
30 – 44	17.9	72.2	9.9	196
45 – 64	20.0	64.9	15.1	272
65 and Over	24.5	49.2	26.3	135
EDUCATION				
Less than High School	25.7	52.3	22.0	114
High School Diploma	20.6	60.8	18.6	235
Some College	20.0	66.9	13.1	253
College Degree	20.1	72.5	7.4	185
INCOME				
Under \$25,000	24.3	52.4	23.3	177
\$25,000-\$49,999	20.4	68.4	11.2	201
\$50,000-\$74,999	16.7	72.4	11.0	103
\$75,000 and Over	18.1	74.2	7.7	219
TYPE OF AREA				
Urban	24.5	61.5	14.0	187
Suburban	20.3	68.4	11.3	286
Rural	18.6	63.0	18.4	310
REGION				
Upstate	19.5	64.9	15.6	314
Midlands	23.8	63.2	13.0	250
Lowcountry	19.8	64.8	15.4	227

TABLE 3B

WOULD YOU PREFER THAT THE DRAWING OF LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT LINES IN
SOUTH CAROLINA BE DONE BY THE LEGISLATORS IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OR BY AN INDEPENDENT COMMISSION OF NON-LEGISLATORS? – SPRING 2017

	<u>General Assembly</u>	<u>Independent Commission</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>N</u>
TOTAL	20.9	64.5	14.7	791
POLITICAL PARTY				
Republican	24.2	59.5	16.3	258
Democrat	19.5	65.8	14.7	213
Independent	21.3	66.9	11.9	225
Other	11.0	75.6	13.4	66
VOTER REGISTRATION				
Registered to Vote	23.0	64.7	12.3	662
Not Registered to Vote	10.5	61.9	27.6	119
TELEPHONE FRAME				
Cell Phone	18.5	66.5	14.9	571
Land Line	26.8	59.2	14.0	225

Counties Used in Regional Analyses

Upstate

Abbeville
Anderson
Cherokee
Chester
Fairfield
Greenville
Greenwood
Lancaster
Laurens
Newberry
Oconee
Pickens
Spartanburg
Union
York

Midlands

Aiken
Allendale
Bamberg
Barnwell
Calhoun
Clarendon
Chesterfield
Darlington
Edgefield
Kershaw
Lee
Lexington
Marlboro
McCormick
Orangeburg
Richland
Saluda
Sumter

Lowcountry

Beaufort
Berkeley
Charleston
Colleton
Dillon
Dorchester
Florence
Georgetown
Hampton
Horry
Jasper
Marion
Williamsburg