



Florida Opinion Research

TAMPA, FL: 813-283-2665 COLUMBUS, OH: 614-341-7005
WASHINGTON, DC: 202-263-7292 FAX: 202-318-0346
ON THE WEB: www.FloridaOpinionResearch.com

March 6, 2012

TO: Interested Parties

FR: Paul Fallon

RE: Charter Schools Tax Legislation

I just completed the winter installment of the quarterly Florida Omnibus Survey™ for my various clients, and decided to also include a question to share with tax activists, educators and others who might have an interest in public funding topics in Florida. Ironically, it is about the proposed state legislation that was, until last week, being considered to require public school systems to share tax dollars they receive for building construction and maintenance with charter schools.

Overall, only 41% of Florida voters favored the idea of requiring public school systems to share tax dollars they receive for building construction and maintenance with charter schools, while 50% opposed it and 9% were unsure. The proposed law did not garner a majority of support among any of the major voting sub-groups in the state, except unaffiliated/independent voters (53% favored it), Hispanic/Latino voters (60%), and voters in the Miami/Ft. Lauderdale media market (52%). Despite the conventional wisdom that views Republicans as being the most ardent supporters of charter schools, only a plurality of them (45%) favored the legislation.

QUESTION WORDING:

“Do you favor or oppose a proposed new law that would require public school systems to share tax dollars they receive for building construction and maintenance with charter schools in their counties?”

On the other hand, the strongest opposition to the law came from Democrats (60% opposed it), 45 to 59 year-olds (54%), and African-American voters (58%). The most intriguing finding is that parents of children enrolled in public schools were somewhat ambivalent, with 43% favoring the law and 52% opposing it, which, statistically-speaking, is almost identical to the aggregate results.

Although such legislation is often decided by a multitude of different types of considerations, the decision to forgo the law may have been a fortuitous one, as there did not seem to be widespread support for the idea. If you have any questions about this data or would like to discuss it, please feel free to call me at 813-283-2665. Please note that this question was not funded or commissioned by any organization, and was included in the Florida Omnibus Survey™ because it was a topical matter of general public interest.

This information is based on survey data that was gathered through telephone interviews that specially-trained opinion research interviewers conducted with 801 randomly-selected registered voters in the State of Florida who had valid residential or cellular telephone numbers and histories of voting in past even-year general elections. The interviews were performed during the period of February 29, 2012 through March 3, 2012. The overall estimated margin of sampling error is +/- 3.46%, based on a confidence level of 95%, although it varies for each individual question. This means that if this survey was repeated, 95 times out of 100 the results would be within plus or minus 3.46% of those provided herein. Adjustments were made to weight the results toward geographic and demographic characteristics of the state, in order to account for under- and over-sampling that normally occurs as a result of the random selection process, to ensure that all major sub-groups are represented in proportion to their actual percentages of the electorate.