

**Gonzales RM&S  
Research & Communications, Inc**

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**Conducted for**

**Marylanders for Efficient and Safe Highways**

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## Methodology

Patrick E. Gonzales and Carol A. Arscott, the former president and vice president of Mason-Dixon Campaign Polling & Strategy, Inc., formed Gonzales Research & Marketing Strategies, Inc. at the beginning of 1999.

Gonzales is a 1981 graduate of the University of Baltimore with deep roots in the Anne Arundel County Democratic Party who served as a principal advisor to Janet Owens' 1998 campaign for County Executive. Arscott is a 1977 graduate of the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service and a former chairman of the Howard County Republican Party.

Gonzales and Arscott together have over 30 years of professional experience in politics. They have served as pollsters and consultants to dozens of political clients in Maryland since the mid-1980s, including County Executives Janet Owens, Doug Duncan, Jim Harkins, Chuck Ecker, Eileen Rehrmann, and Robert Neall; and State Senators Tom Bromwell, Marty Madden, John Astle, Chris McCabe, and Jean Roesser.

This survey was conducted by Gonzales Research & Marketing Strategies, Inc. from January 7<sup>th</sup> through January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2000. A total of 826 registered voters in Maryland were interviewed by telephone. All stated they regularly vote in statewide general elections. A cross-section of calls were made into each jurisdiction within the state to reflect general election voting patterns.

The margin for error, according to customary statistical standards, is no more than plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. This means that there is a 95 percent probability that the "true" figures would fall within this range if the entire survey universe were sampled. The margin for error is higher for any demographic subgroup, such as gender, race, or region.

These five survey questions were paid for by Marylanders for Efficient and Safe Highways, and released publicly by MESH on January 18, 2000. This report has been posted on the Gonzales RM&S web site with their permission.

## Maryland Statewide Poll Sample Demographics

<b><u>Gender</u></b>		<b><u>Party</u></b>
Male      409 (50%)		Democrat      470 (57%)
Female    417 (50%)		Republican    272 (33%)
		Independent    84 (10%)
<b><u>Race</u></b>		<b><u>Region</u></b>
White      628 (76%)		Eastern Shore/So. MD      99 (12%)
Black      187 (23%)		Baltimore City              86 (10%)
Other      11		Baltimore Suburbs        279 (34%)
		Washington Suburbs      269 (33%)
		Western MD                93 (11%)

### Regional Groupings

- Eastern Shore/Southern Maryland** - includes voters in these counties: Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester.
- Baltimore City** - includes voters in the City of Baltimore.
- Baltimore Suburbs** - includes voters in these counties: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Harford, and Howard.
- Washington Suburbs** - includes voters in these counties: Montgomery, and Prince George's.
- Western Maryland** - includes voters in these counties: Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, and Washington.



## General Summary & Analysis

Maryland voters are stuck in worsening traffic, they're not very happy about it, and they want the State to act now. That is the unmistakable message conveyed by our polling for Marylanders for Safe and Efficient Highways.

Nearly three-quarters of survey respondents, 73%, say that traffic conditions in their area have worsened in the past five years, while 20% thought conditions had stayed the same, and just 4% felt they had improved, with the remaining 3% offering no answer.

Worsening traffic conditions were reported in super-majority numbers in every region except Baltimore City, where 46% thought conditions had worsened, 41% felt they remained the same, and just 7% thought they had improved, hardly a ringing endorsement. In the Washington suburbs, a whopping 83% of those surveyed said that traffic conditions in their area had declined in the past five years.

The local traffic situation is described as at least somewhat of a problem in their daily lives by 65% of voters surveyed statewide – and as a major problem by 18%. Twenty-three percent said that their local traffic situation was not much of a problem, 10% thought it was no problem at all, and 2% offered no answer.

African-Americans (23%) were more likely than whites (16%) to view their local traffic situation as a major problem, while Washington area voters (25%) were more likely than their counterparts across the state to see the problem as a major one in their daily lives.

More than three-quarters (76%) of Maryland voters statewide said they believed that new roads or road improvements are needed to relieve traffic congestion in their area, including 69% of respondents from Baltimore City. Just 21% said that new and improved roads were not needed, with the remaining 3% offering no answer.

Again, the Washington suburbs lead the pack, with 83% believing that relief from their traffic woes required new roads. While there is remarkable unanimity on this issue across every demographic subgroup in the survey, it is interesting to note that Democrats (78%) are even slightly more likely to favor new roads than Republicans (70%).

Three-quarters of the survey sample (74%) said that the congestion problems in their area were significant enough that the General Assembly should act now to fund road improvements, rather than waiting three or four years. Twenty-two percent felt that the General Assembly could wait, while the remaining 4% gave no response.

Only among Baltimore City (64%) and Eastern Shore/Southern Maryland voters (69%) did the

majority for acting now drop below 70%.

So strong is the sentiment in favor of more and improved roads that less than fifty percent of respondents felt that more of the State's billion dollar surplus should be spent on education and public safety than on highways. When asked how they would prefer the surplus be spent, 33% thought that an equal percentage of the funds should be expended on roads, education, and public safety; 4% thought that more should be spent on roads; and 49% opted for a higher percentage of the surplus to be spent on education and public safety than roads. The remaining 14% offered no answer.

That 43% of voters in the Washington suburbs, 41% of those in Western Maryland, 38% of those in the Baltimore suburbs, and even 25% of those in Baltimore City would prefer to see at least as high a percentage, if not more, surplus funds devoted to roads than to bread-and-butter issues like education and public safety is testament to the fact that Maryland's current highway situation is unacceptable to voters across the state.

QUESTION: *Over the past five years, has traffic congestion in your area improved, worsened, or stayed the same?*

	<b>Improved</b>	<b>Worsened</b>	<b>Stayed the Same</b>	<b>No Answer</b>
<b>Statewide</b>	4%	73%	20%	3%
Eastern Shore/So. MD	6%	74%	17%	3%
Baltimore City	7%	46%	41%	6%
Baltimore Suburbs	3%	71%	24%	2%
Washington Suburbs	2%	83%	11%	4%
Western MD	5%	77%	15%	3%
Male	2%	75%	22%	1%
Female	6%	71%	18%	5%
White	3%	77%	18%	2%
Black	7%	59%	28%	6%
Democrat	4%	66%	26%	4%
Republican	4%	81%	13%	2%
Independent	3%	83%	12%	2%

QUESTION: *How would you describe your local traffic situation as it affects your daily life? Would you say it is a major problem, somewhat of a problem, not much of a problem, or no problem at all?*

	<b>Major Problem</b>	<b>Somewhat Problem</b>	<b>Not Much Problem</b>	<b>No Problem at All</b>	<b>No Answer</b>
<b>Statewide</b>	18%	47%	23%	10%	2%
Eastern Shore/So. MD	10%	45%	29%	15%	1%
Baltimore City	7%	33%	44%	13%	3%
Baltimore Suburbs	18%	49%	21%	10%	2%
Washington Suburbs	25%	51%	17%	5%	2%
Western MD	18%	46%	20%	15%	1%
Male	18%	49%	25%	7%	1%
Female	18%	45%	21%	13%	3%
White	16%	47%	23%	12%	2%
Black	23%	47%	22%	5%	3%
Democrat	17%	45%	26%	10%	2%
Republican	18%	53%	16%	11%	2%
Independent	25%	39%	27%	6%	3%

QUESTION: *Do you believe that new roads or road improvements are needed to relieve traffic congestion in your area, or not?*

	<b>Yes, Needed</b>	<b>Not Needed</b>	<b>No Answer</b>
<b>Statewide</b>	76%	21%	3%
Eastern Shore/So. MD	78%	20%	2%
Baltimore City	69%	24%	7%
Baltimore Suburbs	72%	25%	3%
Washington Suburbs	83%	16%	1%
Western MD	74%	21%	5%
Male	75%	24%	1%
Female	77%	18%	5%
White	75%	22%	3%
Black	79%	18%	3%
Democrat	78%	19%	3%
Republican	70%	28%	2%
Independent	82%	12%	6%

QUESTION: *Are congestion problems in your area significant enough that the General Assembly should act to fund road improvements now, or can the General Assembly wait three or four years to act?*

	<b>General Assembly Act Now</b>	<b>General Assembly Can Wait</b>	<b>No Answer</b>
<b>Statewide</b>	74%	22%	4%
Eastern Shore/So. MD	69%	25%	6%
Baltimore City	64%	29%	7%
Baltimore Suburbs	71%	28%	1%
Washington Suburbs	84%	13%	3%
Western MD	70%	22%	8%
Male	78%	20%	2%
Female	70%	24%	6%
White	74%	21%	5%
Black	72%	26%	2%
Democrat	74%	21%	5%
Republican	73%	24%	3%
Independent	79%	19%	2%

**QUESTION:** *As you may know, the State of Maryland is running a surplus of nearly one billion dollars. In the past several years, the vast majority of surplus funds have been devoted to public safety and education. This year, should equal percentages the surplus money be used to pay for road improvements, education and public safety; OR should more surplus money be spent on roads than on education and public safety; OR should more surplus money be spent on education and public safety than on roads?*

	<b>Equal Percentage on Roads/Ed/Safe</b>	<b>More on Roads</b>	<b>More on Education &amp; Safety</b>	<b>No Answer</b>
<b>Statewide</b>	33%	4%	49%	14%
Eastern Shore/So. MD	25%	2%	56%	17%
Baltimore City	24%	1%	65%	10%
Baltimore Suburbs	33%	5%	47%	15%
Washington Suburbs	39%	4%	48%	9%
Western MD	33%	8%	37%	22%
Male	37%	5%	41%	17%
Female	29%	3%	57%	11%
White	35%	4%	44%	17%
Black	27%	3%	66%	4%
Democrat	31%	2%	54%	13%
Republican	36%	7%	38%	19%
Independent	30%	4%	60%	6%