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**Illinois Voters are Not Happy with the Direction of the State:
Not Much Influenced by the Recent Tax Cuts**

Illinois voters are not very sanguine about the overall direction of the state and nation, but they are much happier by the direction of their own local town or city. They are not much impressed with the recent federal tax cuts and do not plan to let them influence their voting decisions.

Those are major conclusions of a recent poll by the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. The Simon Poll™ was based on a statewide sample of 1001 registered voters conducted February 19-25. The margin of error is plus or minus 3.1%.

The respondents were asked if “generally speaking, do you think things in our country are going in the right direction, or are they off track and heading in the wrong direction?” A total of 27% chose right track while a total of 64% chose wrong direction with 9% who said they don’t know.

Voters were then asked the same question about the state of Illinois. A total of 84% chose the off track and heading in the wrong direction for the state of Illinois while only 9% chose the right direction option.

“Voters have been more negative about the state of Illinois than the rest of the country since the inception of our poll in 2008,” said Charlie Leonard, an Institute visiting professor and one of the designers of the poll. “It is notable that the state ratings are still 20 percentage points more negative than the national ratings and there is an 18% gap between Illinois and the nation on the ‘right direction’ option.”

Things were much positive when the same question was asked at the local level regarding the city or area in which they lived. There, over a majority, 54% chose the right direction while 37% chose the wrong direction with 10% don’t know.

The poll also asked whether Illinois voters approved or disapproved of the 2017 tax cut passed by the Republican controlled Congress and signed by President Trump. 34% said they supported the tax cut with 17% who strongly supported and 17% who somewhat supported the cut.

Well over a majority, 53% of Illinois voters say they opposed the tax cut with 15% strongly opposed and 38% who opposed and 2% who said “neither”. The state is deeply polarized on this

issue with 80% of Democrats opposed while 75% of Republicans supported the tax cuts. Independents were in the middle with 36% who supported and 48% who opposed the cuts.

Central city Chicago voters opposed the tax cuts by a margin of 63% who opposed and 28% who supported. Downstate voters were more closely divided over the tax cuts with 40% who supported and 41% who opposed. 33% of suburban Chicago and the collar counties voters supported and 55% opposed the tax cuts.

Illinois voters were asked whether the tax cuts would make them more or less likely to vote for Republican congressional candidates in November. 33% of the respondents said the tax cuts would make them more likely to vote Republican in the fall while 56% said less likely with 6% choosing neither.

85% of Democrats said less likely; 80% of Republicans said more likely while 29% of Independents said more likely and 49% said less likely.

Downstate voters chose more likely over less likely by a margin of 48% to 42%. Chicago voters chose less likely by 70% to 19%. Suburban Chicago and the collar counties voters chose less likely over more likely by a margin of 58% to 31%.

The question of which party “best represents your interest in the U. S. Congress” produced a solid advantage for the Democrats. 43% of the respondents overall chose the Democrats; 28% chose the Republicans while 2% chose the Green Party, 6% the Libertarians, and 12% chose some other party.

40% of downstate chose the Republicans and 31% chose the Democrats while 2% chose the Greens and 7% the Libertarians. In Chicago, 55% favored the Democrats and 15% favored the Republicans. 6% took the Libertarians and 3% the Greens in Chicago. 45% of Chicago suburban and collar counties voters chose the Democrats and 25% the Republicans while 2% chose the Greens and 5% the Libertarians.

The poll then turned to two policy issues which are on the political agenda in Illinois. The first question asked whether the voters favored or opposed “the legalization of recreational marijuana if it is taxed and regulated like alcohol?”

Two-thirds (66%) of Illinois voters said they favored this measure compared to nearly one-third (32% who opposed. Those favoring were 46% who strongly favored and 20% who favored legalization compared to 24% who strongly opposed and 8% who opposed and 3% were unsure.

Downstate voters favored legalization by a 58% to 40% margin; Chicago favored by 77% to 22% and suburban Chicago and the collar counties favored by 66% to 31%. Democrats favored by 78% to 20%; Republicans were evenly divided at 49% favor and 49% opposed and Independents favored by 62% to 36%.

The second question was whether Illinois should require lawmakers to wait at least a year before registering as a lobbyist?” An overwhelming 85% majority supported this proposal while only

10% opposed and 5% were unsure. The measure was favored by similar margins by identifiers with both parties and independents and by all three major regions of the state.

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The margin of error of the entire sample of 1,001 voters is plus or minus 3.1 percentage points. This means that if we conducted the survey 100 times, in 95 of those instances, the population proportion would be within plus or minus the reported margin of error for each subsample. For subsamples, the margin of error increases as the sample size goes down. The margin of error was not adjusted for design effects. Among self-identified primary election voters, the margin is plus or minus 6 percentage points in the 259-voter sample of Republicans, and 4.5 percentage points in the sample of 472 Democrats.

Live telephone interviews were conducted by Customer Research International of San Marcos, Texas using the random digit dialing method. The telephone sample was provided to Customer Research International by Scientific Telephone Samples. Potential interviewees were screened based on whether they were registered voters and quotas based on area code and sex (<60% female). The sample obtained 51% male and 49% female respondents. Interviewers asked to speak to the youngest registered voter at home at the time of the call. Cell phone interviews accounted for 60 percent of the sample. A Spanish language version of the questionnaire and a Spanish-speaking interviewer were made available.

Field work was conducted from February 19 through February 25. No auto-dial or “robo” polling is included. Customer Research International reports no Illinois political clients. The survey was paid for with non-tax dollars from the Institute’s endowment fund. The data were not weighted in any way. Crosstabs for the referenced questions will be on the Institute’s polling web site, simonpoll.org.

The Paul Simon Public Policy Institute is a member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research’s (AAPOR) Transparency Initiative. AAPOR works to encourage objective survey standards for practice and disclosure. Membership in the Transparency Initiative reflects a pledge to practice transparency in reporting survey-based findings.

The Institute’s polling data are also archived by four academic institutions for use by scholars and the public. The four open source data repositories are: The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research (<http://ropercenter.cornell.edu/polls/>), The University of Michigan’s Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (<http://openicpsr.org>), the University of North Carolina’s Odum Institute Dataverse Network (<http://arc.irss.unc.edu/dvn/dv/PSPPI>), and the Simon Institute Collection at OpenSIUC (<http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/ppi/>).

Note: The “Simon Poll” and the “Southern Illinois Poll” are the copyrighted trademarks of the Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University. Use and publication of these polls is encouraged- but only with credit to the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at SIU Carbondale.

Frequency Tables¹
OUTLOOK

USA

Generally speaking, do you think things in our country are going in the right direction, or are they off track and heading in the wrong direction?

Response	Percent (n=1001)
Right direction	27%
Wrong direction	64%
Don't know	9%

Illinois

And what about the direction of the State of Illinois? Generally speaking, are things in Illinois going in the right direction, or are they off track and heading in the wrong direction?

Response	Percent (n=1001)
Right direction	9%
Wrong direction	84%
Don't know	7%

Local Area

And how are things going in the right direction, or are they off track and heading in the wrong direction?

Response	Percent (n=1001)
Right direction	54%
Wrong direction	37%
Don't know	10%

¹ Values are rounded and may not sum to 100%.

REFORMS

Tax Plan

Next, do you support or oppose the tax reform plan passed last December by the Republican Congressional majorities?

Response	Percent (n=1001)
Support	34%
<i>Strongly support</i>	17%
<i>Somewhat support</i>	17%
Neither	2%
Oppose	53%
<i>Somewhat oppose</i>	15%
<i>Strongly oppose</i>	38%
Other/Don't know (not read)	12%

Does your view on tax reform make you more or less likely to vote for Republican Congressional candidates in November?

Response	Percent (n=866)
More	33%
<i>Much more</i>	18%
<i>Somewhat more</i>	15%
Neither	6%
Less	56%
<i>Somewhat less</i>	12%
<i>Much less</i>	44%
Other/Don't know	5%

*Which political party do you believe best represents your interests in the U.S. Congress?
Democratic, Republican, Green, Libertarian, or some other party?*

Response	Percent (n=866)
Democratic	43%
Republican	28%
Green	2%
Libertarian	6%
Some other party	12%
Other/Don't know	10%

Marijuana

Do you favor or oppose the legalization of recreational marijuana if it is taxed and regulated like alcohol?

Response	Percent (n=1001)
Favor	66%
<i>Strongly favor</i>	46%
<i>Favor</i>	20%
Oppose	32%
<i>Oppose</i>	8%
<i>Strongly oppose</i>	24%
Other/Don't know	3%

Lobbying

Most states surrounding Illinois require lawmakers to wait at least one year before accepting jobs with firms that lobby their state legislatures after leaving office, Illinois does not. Should Illinois require lawmakers to wait at least a year before registering as a lobbyist?

Response	Percent (n=1001)
Yes	85%
No	10%
Other/don't know	5%

Demographic Crosstabs and Historical Trends

TAX BILL

Tax Bill by PARTY

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
Support	10%	35%	75%
Oppose	80%	48%	12%
Neither	1%	3%	2%
Other/don't know	9%	13%	11%

Tax Bill by AREA

	Chicago City	Chicago Suburbs	Downstate
Support	28%	33%	40%
Oppose	63%	55%	41%
Neither	1%	2%	2%
Other/don't know	9%	10%	17%