



Methodology Statement

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Results of this edition of *The West Virginia Poll*[®] are based on interviews conducted between August 15-23, 2014 with a sample of 401 West Virginia residents age 18 and over. Multiple data collection methods have been used to conduct The West Virginia Poll including Random Digit Dialing (RDD), cell phone, opt-in Internet, and mobile. Each of these methods have strengths and weakness.

For this issue of The West Virginia Poll, the MindField Online Internet Platform was used to screen, qualify and select respondents for participation. Screening qualifications included West Virginia residency, registered to vote in the November 4, 2014 general election, likelihood to vote in that election, and county of residency.

While it is not appropriate to apply a margin of error to Internet based survey data, statistical tests of significance were used between segments at the 95% confidence level. This method yields an estimated statistical error for each question asked and an overall statistical error of +/- 4.9 percentage points.

The purpose of the West Virginia Poll is to provide a snapshot of opinion and timely voter views in the Mountain State. In this issue of the West Virginia Poll, we partnered with the **Pew Research Center** (www.pewresearch.org) to re-produce the Pew Political Typology, which sorts voters into cohesive groups based on their attitudes and values. This issue of the West Virginia Poll provides additional insight into the changing West Virginia political landscape, as well as comparisons between West Virginia and the nation as a whole. Based on the data and analytics, the Political Typography segments for West Virginia compared to the U.S. include:

Steadfast Conservatives – This segment holds very conservative attitudes across most issues, including social policy and the size and scope of government. However, they are critical of business and Wall Street. Steadfast Conservatives also express highly negative attitudes toward immigrants and take a skeptical view of U.S. global involvement

34% of likely voters in West Virginia 19% in the US

Business Conservatives – This group includes traditional small-government Republicans. The Overwhelming percentages of this segment believe that government is almost always wasteful, and many government programs are better left to businesses and individuals. Business Conservatives differ from Steadfast Conservatives in their strong support for Wall Street and business more generally. Most think that immigrants strengthen the country and take a positive view of U.S. global involvement. They are less socially conservative than Steadfast Conservatives.

11% of likely voters in West Virginia vs. **17%** in the US

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Solid Liberals – Highly educated and affluent, Solid Liberals strongly support the social safety net and take very liberal positions on virtually all issues. Most say they always vote Democratic and they are unflagging supporters of Barack Obama. Solid Liberals are very optimistic about the nation’s future and are the most likely to say that America’s success is linked to its ability to change, rather than its reliance on long-standing principles. On foreign policy, Solid Liberals overwhelmingly believe that good diplomacy – rather than military strength – is the best way to ensure peace.

14% of likely voters in West Virginia vs. **21%** in the US

Young Outsiders – This relatively young, largely independent group holds a mix of conservative and liberal views. And while more align more toward the Republican Party than the Democratic Party, Young Outsiders express unfavorable opinions of both major parties. They are skeptical of activist government; a substantial majority views government as wasteful and inefficient. Yet they diverge from the two conservative typology groups – Steadfast Conservatives and Business Conservatives – in their strong support for the environment and many liberal social policies.

15% of likely voters in West Virginia vs. 11% in the US

Hard-Pressed Skeptics – Deeply financially-stressed and distrustful of government, Hard-Pressed Skeptics lean toward the Democratic Party but have reservations about both political parties. They want government to do more to solve problems, but have doubts about its efficiency. Hard-Pressed Skeptics are dissatisfied with conditions in the country and their communities. They are among the most cynical about the ability of individuals to improve their lot through hard work. These attitudes may reflect their distressed financial conditions: Hard-Pressed Skeptics have the lowest family incomes of any of the typology groups.

12% of likely voters in West Virginia vs. 9% in the US

Next Generation Left – Young, well-educated and financially comfortable, the Next Generation Left have very liberal attitudes on many issues, including homosexuality and abortion, the environment and foreign policy. They are supportive of an activist government, but wary of expanding the social safety net. They also have relatively positive views of Wall Street’s impact on the economy. While most affiliate with the Democratic Party or lean Democratic, few consider themselves strong Democrats.

19% of likely voters in West Virginia vs. 11% in the US

Faith and Family Left – This segment combines strong support for activist government with conservative attitudes on many social issues. They are highly diverse – this is the only typology group that is “majority-minority.” The Faith and Family Left favor increased government aid for the poor even if it adds to the deficit and believe that government should do more to solve national problems. They oppose same-sex marriage and legalizing marijuana. Religion and family are at the center of their lives.

3% of likely voters in West Virginia vs. **12%** in the US

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R.L. Repass & Partners, Inc. (Repass) is responsible for questionnaire design, the respondent screening and selection process, data tabulation, statistical analysis, and reporting of results. Interviewing is conducted by the firm's data collection partner, McMillion Research LLC. All data collection is conducted from the firm's Charleston, West Virginia data collection facilities for Internet, mobile and telephone surveys. Both the Repass and McMillion firms are members of the Council of American Survey Research Organizations (CASRO).

Data as reported has been statistically weighted based by estimates of voter participation by age, party affiliation, and gender.

The West Virginia Poll is a non-partisan survey of public opinion owned and conducted by Repass. The West Virginia Poll has been conducted periodically since January 21, 1980 and reported by the *Charleston Daily Mail* and other media outlets. The name The West Virginia Poll is a registered trademark of Repass, all rights reserved.

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