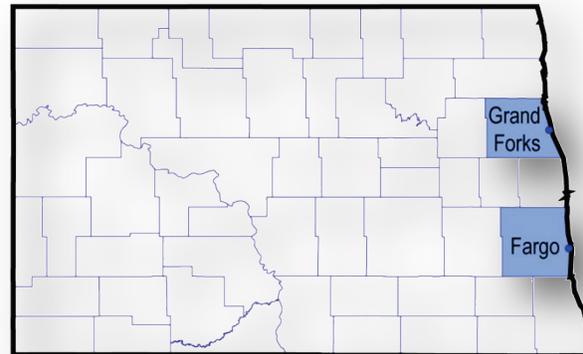


Community leadership, engagement, and problem-solving

2011 household survey in North Dakota

Across the region, people and institutions are acknowledging that economic and demographic challenges will affect us all. To better understand how North Dakotans feel about the future of their state, the Bush Foundation commissioned Wilder Research to conduct a survey asking questions about quality of life and the ability of their community to exercise the leadership necessary to address challenges. A representative sample of 404 North Dakotans completed the survey in October 2011.



This report summarizes findings from the survey and shows differences by gender, age, education level, presence of children in the household, and the two major metro areas of Fargo-Moorhead and Grand Forks versus non-metro. It also compares findings to those found in similar surveys conducted in 2009 and 2010.

Overview

After improving slightly in 2010, perceptions of quality of life have turned much more negative. North Dakotans are significantly more likely to say in 2011 than they were in 2010 that the quality of life is *getting worse* in their community (+13% change) and state (+13% change). Despite these trends, most residents (85%) believe they can make a difference in improving the quality of life in their local community.

When asked about “courageous leadership” in their community, two-thirds (65%) of residents feel that courageous leadership is strong in their community, similar to 2010 and a 10 percent increase from 2009. Nine out of 10 residents agree that their community is good at moving from talking about problems to taking action to solve them. A majority of residents (95%) agree that their community is good at taking action to solve problems.

When compared with 2010 survey results, residents are significantly less likely in 2011 to trust leadership of labor unions (-13%), the media (-9%), and state agencies and departments (-8%). North Dakotans are most trusting of leadership of small businesses, charitable organizations, and law enforcement and least trusting of the leadership of labor unions, the media, and major companies. North Dakotans have moderate levels of trust in local and state governments.

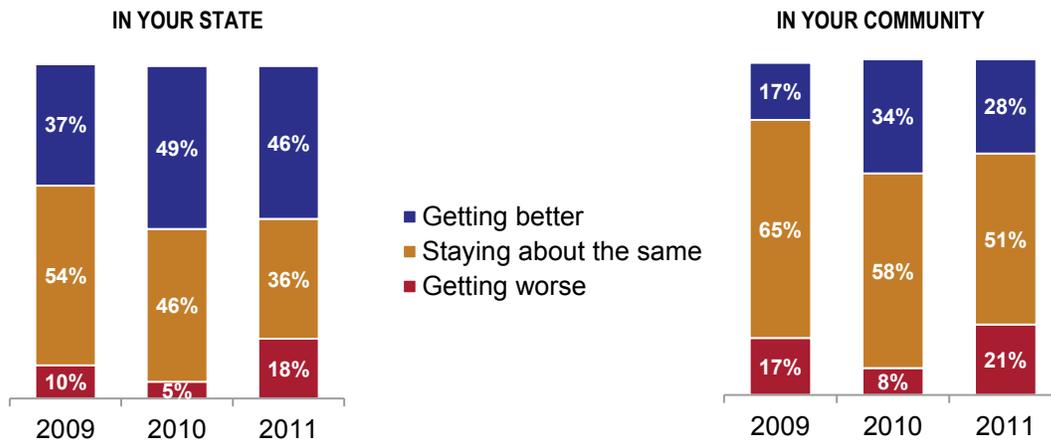
Most North Dakotans say they can accept most consequences of making government more efficient, such as having to do more for themselves (95%) and changing the location of a government service (91%). However, residents are significantly less likely to accept the consequence of less regulation and inspection (73%) in order to make government more efficient.

Summary of survey responses

Quality of life

After improving slightly in 2010, perceptions of quality of life have turned much more negative in 2011. North Dakotans are significantly more likely to say in 2011 than they were in 2010 that the quality of life is *getting worse* in their community (+13% change) and state (+13% change). Despite these trends, most residents (85%) believe they can make a difference in improving the quality of life in their local community.

QUALITY OF LIFE



When looking at responses by specific populations:

- Residents whose highest level of education is a high school education or less are more likely to think the quality of life in North Dakota is getting better. College educated residents are most likely to believe that the quality of life in North Dakota is getting worse.
- A majority of residents from all age groups believe that they can improve the quality of life in their local community, but residents age 35-64 are more likely to believe they can make a difference.
- College graduates are more likely than those with less education to believe they can improve the quality of life in their local community.

Community problem-solving

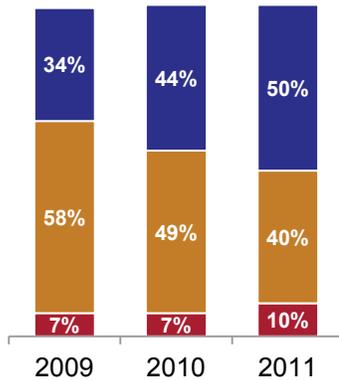
Most residents believe that their community is good at taking action to solve problems (95%) and that they can make a difference in improving the quality of life in their local community (92%). They also believe that their community can move from talking about problems to taking action to solve them (90%).

While 67 percent say that getting together and working on a problem is “a lot like” their community, only 38 percent say that including all segments of the community in decision-making is “a lot like” their community.

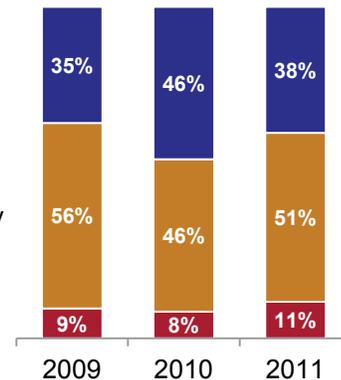
When looking at responses by specific populations:

- Residents with children in their households are more likely than residents without children to agree that “decisions are based on input for all segments of the community,” and also with the statement, “When there is a problem in your community, people get together to work on it.”
- Residents without children are more likely than residents with children to say that they are effective at solving problems and improving the quality of life in their community.

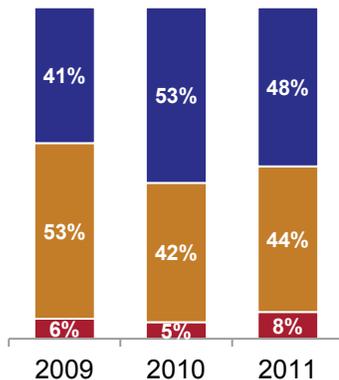
YOUR COMMUNITY IS GOOD AT MOVING FROM TALKING ABOUT PROBLEMS TO TAKING ACTIONS TO SOLVE PROBLEMS



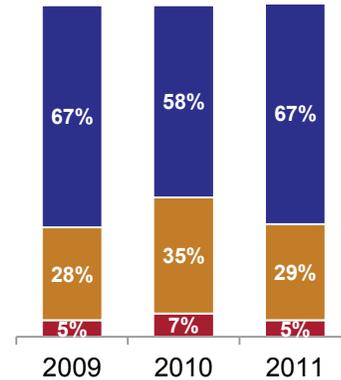
IN YOUR COMMUNITY, DECISIONS ARE BASED ON INPUT FROM ALL SEGMENTS OF THE COMMUNITY



YOUR COMMUNITY IS EFFECTIVE AT SOLVING PROBLEMS AND IMPROVING YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE



WHEN THERE IS A PROBLEM, PEOPLE IN YOUR COMMUNITY GET TOGETHER AND WORK ON IT



Courageous leadership

Respondents were read the Bush Foundation's definition of Courageous Leadership:

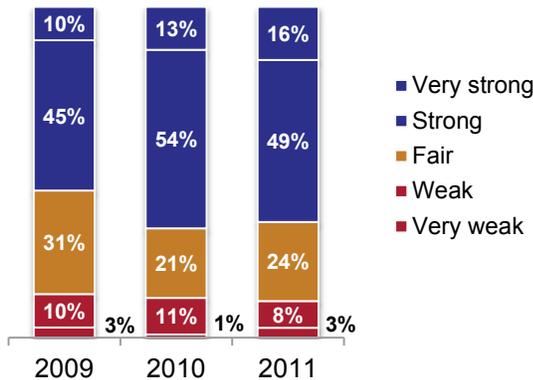
Courageous leaders don't shy away from conflict when they are trying to solve tough problems. Courageous leaders harness energy from differing points of view and rally community members to work together to find solutions. Courageous leadership can come from anybody in your community, not just those in charge.

When asked about courageous leadership in their community, two-thirds (65%) of residents feel that it is strong, which is similar to 2010 and a 10 percent increase from 2009.

When looking at responses by specific populations:

- Older residents are more likely than younger residents to say courageous leadership is strong in their community.

COURAGEOUS LEADERS



Over half of residents (55%) have seen between one and four courageous leaders in action in their community in the past year. One-third of residents say they have seen five or more courageous leaders in the past year while 12 percent of residents say they have not seen any courageous leaders in their community.

In 2011, residents are about twice as likely as in 2010 to say they have seen more than 10 courageous leaders in their community over the past year, although a relatively small proportion of all residents reported seeing this leadership (16%).

- Residents with a college degree report seeing more courageous leaders in their communities than residents with less education.

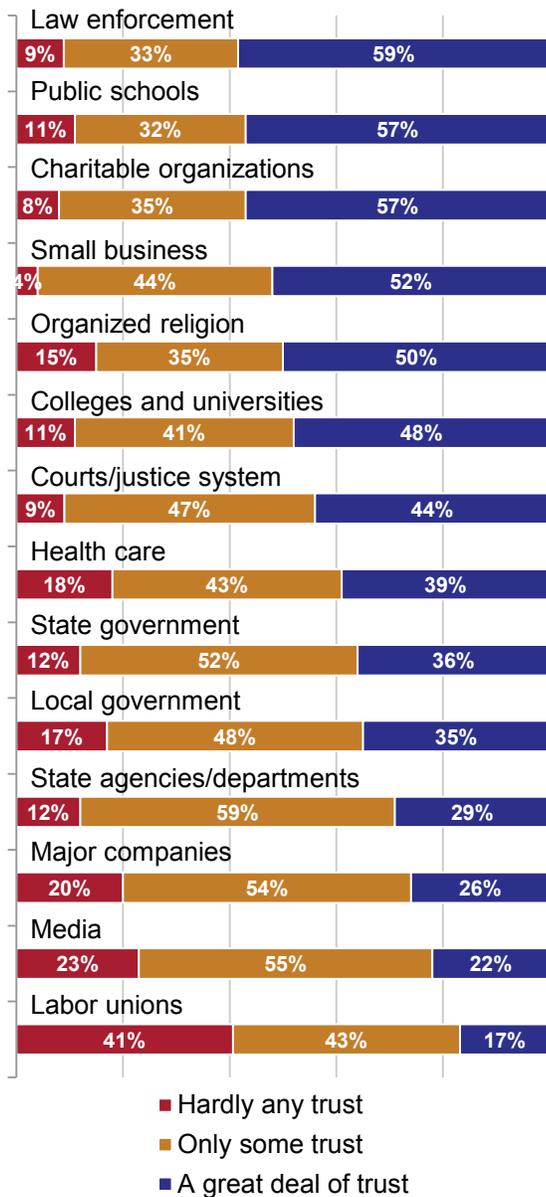
Trust in leadership

When compared with 2010 survey results, residents are significantly less likely in 2011 to trust leadership of labor unions (-13%), the media (-9%), and state agencies and departments (-8%). North Dakotans are most trusting of leadership of small businesses, charitable organizations, and law enforcement and least trusting of the leadership of labor unions, the media, and major companies. North Dakotans have moderate levels of trust in local and state governments.

When looking at responses by specific populations:

- Men are less likely than women to trust leaders in local government, health care, major companies, and the courts and judicial system.
- Younger residents are more likely than older residents to trust leaders in public schools and charitable organizations. As they get older, residents have greater trust in the leaders of law enforcement, health care, and organized religion.
- Residents with children are less likely to trust leaders in major companies, media, and health care, while residents without children are less likely to trust leaders in state agencies and departments.
- Residents from Fargo and Grand Forks are less likely to trust leaders in law enforcement, major companies, and state agencies and departments, whereas residents from rural areas are more likely to have a great deal of trust in organized religion.

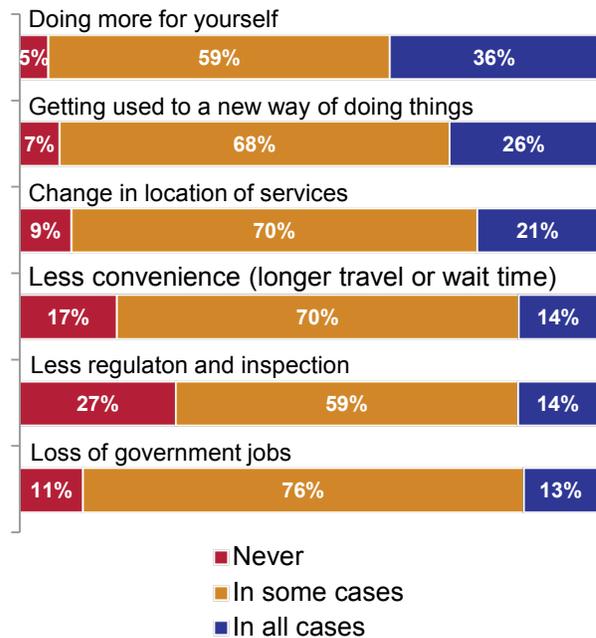
TRUST IN LEADERS



Consequences of increasing government efficiency

When asked to what degree they are willing to accept certain consequences of increasing the cost-effectiveness of government services, residents of North Dakota are most likely to accept doing more for themselves (95%) and getting used to a new way of doing things (93%). They are significantly less likely to accept the consequence of less regulation and inspection (73%) in order to make government more efficient.

WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT CONSEQUENCE OF GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY



When looking at responses by specific populations:

- College-educated residents are more likely to accept less regulation and inspection as an avenue to improve government efficiency.
- When compared with other age groups, older adults are less likely to accept getting used to new ways of doing things and doing more for themselves.
- Rural residents are less likely than residents of Fargo and Grand Forks to accept less convenience such as longer commute times and longer lines.

ADVICE FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS

When asked what one piece of advice they would give to elected officials in their state as they work on these and other issues of importance to their state, by far the most common suggestions provided by the residents of North Dakota fall under the following themes:

Listen to your constituency

Our government representatives need to take more time and listen to the citizens in their districts more. They talk big, but act little.

To make sure the politicians listen to the ideas and the opinions of their constituents. Just make sure they hear and research all sides of the issues at hand before making a decision. It's clear that the politicians aren't doing either, and they do not make informed decisions.

Don't be trapped by special interest groups

Politicians need to quit playing politics and do what is right. Too much time spent on self interests and not what is good for the majority.

Other areas that were commonly mentioned by residents include attending to the oil issue and paying attention to the condition of infrastructure.

Methods and respondent demographics

Residents were randomly selected to participate in this survey using a dual-frame (landline and cell phone) random digit dial sample of phone numbers with area codes from the state. Post-stratification weighting was used to ensure representativeness of the data. Data were weighted based on seven variables: number of adults in the household, age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, county of residence (Fargo or Grand Forks metro area counties vs. all other counties), and cell phone status (cell phone only vs. all others). Population estimates were obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates and were calibrated to the latest population projections using Claritas. The sampling error is less than +/- 5 percent.

ABOUT THE RESIDENTS WHO WERE POLLED

	N=404
Female	50%
Male	50%
Average household size	2.8 people
Percentage with children	34%
High school diploma or less	40%
Some college/AA degree	38%
Bachelor's degree or more	22%
18-34	33%
35-64	48%
65 and older	19%
Very conservative	10%
Conservative	42%
Moderate	33%
Liberal	12%
Very liberal	2%
Other/Non-specified	50%

**Some totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.*

For more information

For more information about this study, contact
Nicole MartinRogers at 651-280-2682

Authors: Nicole MartinRogers and Muneer
Karcher-Ramos

DECEMBER 2011



AMHERST H.
WILDER
FOUNDATION
ESTABLISHED 1906

Here for good.

Wilder Research

Information. Insight. Impact.

451 Lexington Parkway North
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104
651-280-2700
www.wilderresearch.org

BUSH FOUNDATION

courageous **LEADERSHIP** | sustainable **SOLUTIONS** | vital **COMMUNITIES**

332 Minnesota Street, Suite East 900
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101
Tel: 651-227-0891
www.bushfoundation.org