Coronavirus, the Economy, and Taxes: An Alaska Opinion Survey

Presented on June 11, 2020 by Melodie Wilterdink for ALASKA POLICY FORUM
Methodology & Demographics

Survey Information
• May 20–23, 2020
• n=400
• Margin of Error = ± 4.9%
• Live Interviewer Telephone Survey
• 65% Cell, 35% Landline

Gender
• Male: 50%
• Female: 50%

Age
• 18–34 years old: 14%
• 35–44 years old: 20%
• 45–54 years old: 18%
• 55–64 years old: 23%
• 65+ years old: 25%

Region
• Anchorage: 40%
• Southcentral: 26%
• Interior: 13%
• Southeast: 13%
• Rural: 8%

How closely do you follow the news?
• Very closely: 39%
• Somewhat closely: 47%
• Not too closely: 10%
• Not at all closely: 4%

Do you consider yourself ... ?
• Very conservative: 13%
• Somewhat conservative: 29%
• Moderate: 30%
• Somewhat liberal: 15%
• Very liberal: 7%
• Not provided: 6%

Conducted by
DITTMAN
COVID-19: Impact on Individuals & Businesses

• Has the coronavirus outbreak caused any financial hardship for you or your household?
  - Yes 42%
  - No 58%

• Has coronavirus and related economic shutdowns impacted the long-term viability of your business?
  - Yes 44%
  - No 53%
  - Unsure 3%
COVID-19: Opinions

• Do you think the coronavirus is a real threat or blown out of proportion?

- March: 79% Real Threat, 17% Blown out of Proportion
- April: 75% Real Threat, 21% Blown out of Proportion
- May: 63% Real Threat, 33% Blown out of Proportion

• Which of the following best describes your feelings about the coronavirus in Alaska?

- March: 80% Not Likely to Be that Major of a Problem, 13% The Worst Is behind Us, 3% The Worst Is Yet to Come
- April: 62% Not Likely to Be that Major of a Problem, 19% The Worst Is behind Us, 12% The Worst Is Yet to Come
- May: 38% Not Likely to Be that Major of a Problem, 24% The Worst Is behind Us, 28% The Worst Is Yet to Come

• How do you feel about the possibility that you or someone in your household might catch the coronavirus?

- March: 0% Very Worried, 20% Somewhat Worried, 62% Not Too Worried, 80% Not Worried at All
- April: 20% Very Worried, 40% Somewhat Worried, 50% Not Too Worried, 62% Not Worried at All
- May: 24% Very Worried, 44% Somewhat Worried, 38% Not Too Worried, 63% Not Worried at All
Response to COVID-19

- Which worries you most about responding to the coronavirus? That Alaska ...

- Which of the following statements comes closest to your opinion?
  
  Some people say that the health mandates have worked to slow the spread of the virus, and that it’s time to begin removing the mandates so that more Alaskans can go back to work and get Alaska’s economy started again.

  Some people say that we should keep the health mandates in place, and that removing them now would lead to increased spread of the virus and a strain on Alaska’s health care system.

**May 2020**

![Pie chart showing responses to COVID-19 concerns]

- Will Not Go Far Enough: 48%
- Will Go Too Far: 35%
- Unsure: 17%

**April**

- Begin Removing the Mandates: 23%
- Keep the Mandates in Place: 74%

**May**

- Begin Removing the Mandates: 35%
- Keep the Mandates in Place: 58%
Getting Back to Normal

- Would you or would you not do each of the following at this point in time?

![Bar chart showing the percentage of respondents who would do various activities at this point in time.](image)

- Visit In-State Family: 21% Yes, 78% No, 1% Unsure
- Visit In-State Friends: 25% Yes, 73% No, 2% Unsure
- Take a Personal Trip In-State: 26% Yes, 72% No, 2% Unsure
- Visit a Doctor for a Non-Urgent Issue: 31% Yes, 69% No, 0% Unsure
- Take an In-State Business Trip: 38% Yes, 60% No, 2% Unsure
- Go to Church: 46% Yes, 53% No, 1% Unsure
- Go to the Grocery Store More: 46% Yes, 52% No, 2% Unsure
- Visit a Shopping Mall: 48% Yes, 52% No, 2% Unsure
- Dine at a Restaurant: 48% Yes, 50% No, 2% Unsure
- Send Children Back to Daycare/School: 41% Yes, 55% No, 4% Unsure
- Go to the Gym: 36% Yes, 60% No, 2% Unsure
- Go to the Movies: 34% Yes, 63% No, 1% Unsure
- Fly Out-of-State: 34% Yes, 64% No, 2% Unsure
Considering Leaving Alaska

- Have you recently considered moving out of Alaska?

- Yes: 23%
- No: 76%
- Unsure: 1%
Alaska’s Economy

• Generally speaking, how would you rate Alaska’s current economy?

- Pretty Bad: 24%
- Not Too Good: 45%
- Good: 25%
- Very Good: 1%
- Unsure: 5%

May 2020

Graph showing the percentage of people rating Alaska’s economy from 2016 to May 2020.
Low Oil Prices

• Have the economic effects of low oil prices impacted you personally?

Yes 34%
No 64%
Unsure 2%

• If yes, how have low oil prices impacted you?

Lost Job
- Yes 89%
- No 3%
- Unsure 8%

Pay or Hours Cut
- Yes 73%
- No 25%
- Unsure 2%

Family Member Impacted
- Yes 45%
- No 55%
- Unsure 0%
State Budget Solutions

• Do you believe that a solution to the state budget situation should be comprised mainly of ... ?

- Cuts to Spending and Services: 34%
- Revenue Generating Measures: 33%
- Use of the Permanent Fund Earnings: 11%
- Combination: 12%
- Other: 3%
- Unsure: 7%

• Do you support or oppose each of the following to address the state budget?

- Making Cuts to State Spending: 67% Support, 30% Oppose
- Introducing a State Sales Tax: 54% Support, 44% Oppose
- Introducing a State Personal Income Tax: 43% Support, 54% Oppose
Making Cuts to State Spending

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If you have questions about the presentation, please email them to Melodie@AlaskaPolicyForum.org.