



# GRANITE STATE POLL REPORT

Assessing the Attitudes of New Hampshire  
Residents Concerning the Future of the State

May, 2006

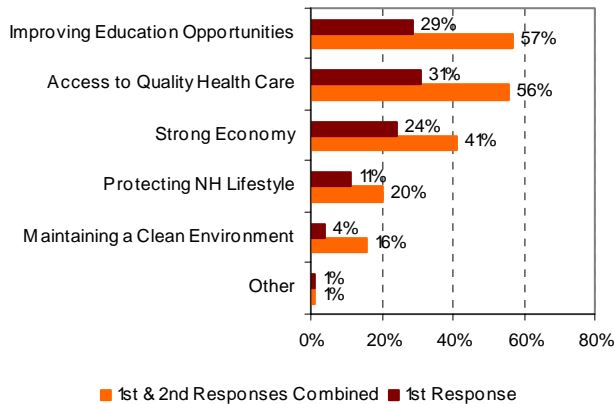
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# Granite State Poll Report

## Assessing the Attitudes of New Hampshire Residents Concerning the Future of the State

### 1. Which of the following do you think is most important for New Hampshire policy makers to focus on?

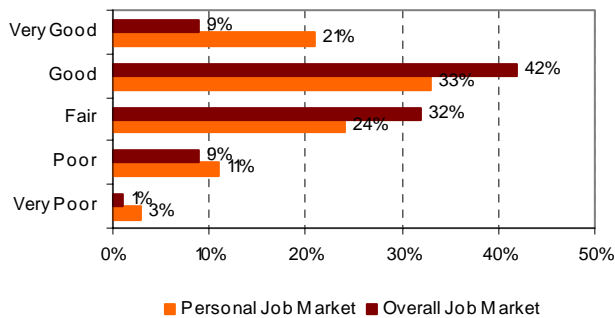


This report presents the results from a survey conducted in February of 2006 of five hundred and six (506) adults by the University of New Hampshire Survey Center, an independent, non-partisan academic survey research organization and a division of the UNH Carsey Institute. A total of four questions were asked at the request of The NH Forum on the Future.

opportunities ranked first at 57% (when the first and second responses are combined). Access to quality healthcare emerged as the second most important task NH policy makers should focus on at 56%. Whereas, 41% say a strong economy, 20% say protecting NH's lifestyle, and 16% say maintaining a clean environment (*Figure 1*)

Improving educational

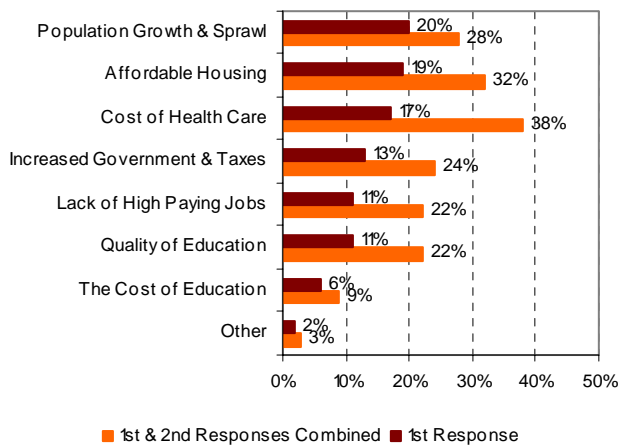
### 2. How would you rate the job market in New Hampshire?



Overall NH residents think the NH job market is good. 9% rate it as very good, 32% rate it as good, 32% as fair, 9% poor and only 1% as very poor. residents are even more

optimistic about the market for the kind of work they do. 21% says it is very good, 33% say good, 24% say fair, 11% say poor, and 3% say it is very poor. (*Figure 2*)

### 3. What do you think is the greatest threat to New Hampshire's Future?



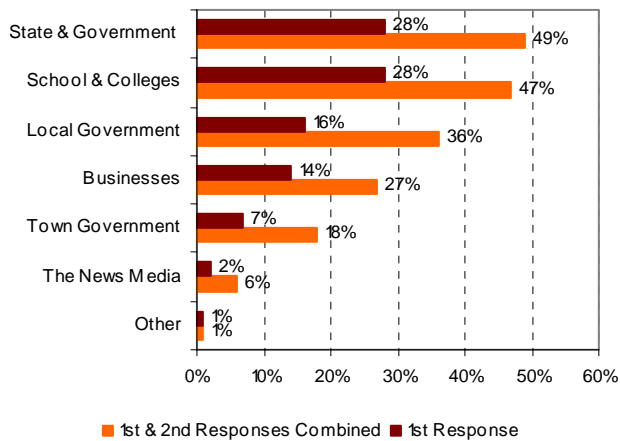
One-fifth of New Hampshire adults (20%) think population growth and sprawl is the greatest threat to NH's future, 19% say affordable housing, 17% say the cost of health care, 13% say increased government and taxes, 11% say quality of education, 11% say a lack of high paying jobs, and 6% say the cost of education.

adults (38%), followed by affordable housing (32%), population growth and sprawl (28%) and the cost of education (19%) (*Figure 3*)

When the first and second responses are combined, the cost of health care is considered the greatest threat by more than one-third of New Hampshire

NH adults with post-graduate educations and those earning more than \$100,000 think population growth and sprawl are the greatest threat to NH's future, adults between ages of 50 and 59 are most likely to say the cost of healthcare, while older adults (over 70) are most likely to say the cost of education.

#### 4. Which of the following do you think is most important to ensure New Hampshire's future?



NH adults think schools and colleges (28%) and state government (28%) are the most important institutions to ensure NH's future, 16% say local government, 14% say businesses, 7% say town government and 2% the news media

When the first and second responses were combined, state government is seen as the most important institution to ensure NH's future by 49% of NH adults, followed by schools and colleges (47%), local government (36%), businesses

(27%), town government (18%) and the news media (6%) (Figure 4)

Young adults (18-29), those with post-graduate educations, those who are unemployed and looking, and those who live in the Central/Lakes region are most likely to say schools and colleges.

NH adults earning between \$60,000 and \$75,000, households with one child, homemakers and students are most likely to say state government.

## Higher Education: The Cornerstone to New Hampshire's Prosperity

**"Economic strength will be based on economic diversity and on strong healthy business in a broad range of sectors."**

The New Hampshire higher education community, businesses, non-profit organizations, and public policy leaders can strengthen the economic future of our state.

Our continued economic growth will depend on an educated workforce, on the ability of New Hampshire high school students to pursue their college education in their home state, and on the continuing education of those graduates as they pursue their careers in

New Hampshire.

If we combine these elements with the right economic environments, business and entrepreneurs will prosper in the state.

Economic strength will be based on economic diversity and on strong, healthy businesses in a broad range of sectors. These diverse businesses will need a talented and educated workforce if they are to thrive and succeed

in the Granite State.

Higher education needs to work closely with the business and public policy sectors to ensure that the required workforce is developed and educated here in New Hampshire for the 21st century.

*- A message from the NH Forum on Higher Education -*

## The NH Forum on the Future



The NH Forum on the Future brings together leaders from higher education, businesses, and public policy to explore the key question: What are the future educational, social, technological, environmental, cultural and economic realities, challenges and opportunities facing the State of New

Hampshire, and how can we best prepare for our collective future? The Forum on the Future serves as the cornerstone for generating responses to these critical questions.

In order to sustain and enhance the mission of the NH Forum on the Future it is managed by the New Hampshire College &

University Council, which serves both as the fiscal agent and coordinating partner.

The New Hampshire High Technology Council and the New Hampshire Higher Education Assistance Foundation are also Founding Partners.

# Granite Staters Want Their Leaders to Focus on Education

## From the New Hampshire Union Leader, Friday, April 28, 2006

While education is widely recognized as critical to the future of anyone looking to succeed in today's global economy, until now, education in New Hampshire has not always been among the highest ranked issues in opinion polls. So it's worth noting the results of a recent survey of New Hampshire residents commissioned by the NH College & University Council and the NH High Technology Council to find out where "education" stands in the minds of New Hampshire residents as a priority for the State's economic future.

In a **Granite State Poll** conducted by the University of New Hampshire Survey Center between February 10 and February 17, 2006, five hundred six (506) randomly selected adults identified "educational opportunity and the quality of healthcare" as the top two issues for public policy makers in New Hampshire, and as the most important issues for New Hampshire's future. Other key issues chosen by poll respondents included the economy, lifestyle, and the environment.

When the two top issues were combined, 57% said improving educational opportunities was the most important, while 56% identified access to healthcare. When asked about the institutions, most important to ensure our state's future, New Hampshire schools and colleges were identified by 28% of responders, with state government equally identified by 28%. The business community was cited by 14%.

These results speak to related issues raised by both the business and education communities in New Hampshire in the past year. Businesses report they're having a difficult time finding educated and trained workers, especially engineers and technicians. Companies making decisions on their growth and expansion are increasingly looking outside New Hampshire for employees and for expansion opportunities.

We conclude that the **Granite State Poll** reflects a growing realization that education in New Hampshire needs to be more available, affordable and geared toward the "flat world" in which we live. Yet, with the highest community college tuition in the country, the second highest public four-year college tuition, and the only state to permit taxation of non-profit colleges, it should be no surprise that New Hampshire annually sends 50% of our college bound students out-of-state. What might surprise you is that the average 30 year old in New Hampshire is now less educated than the average 60 year old. And, while New Hampshire is the only state in New England growing in population, it is growing slower than the rest of the nation, and our K-12 population is in decline.

This is the type of data The **New Hampshire Forum on the Future** is examining. The Forum is an alliance between the New Hampshire College & University Council and the New Hampshire High Technology Council, with major funding from the New Hampshire Higher Education Assistance Foundation. The Forum is designed to take a

closer look at the forces shaping our state in the next ten to twenty years. Since last fall we have hosted a series of breakfast forums focused on public policies ranging from housing to education funding, been briefed on the demographic shift from younger to older residents, and heard about the profound changes taking place in the major news media in the state. Our next breakfast forum looks at the future of the state's economy through the eyes of business CEOs.

The bottom line is becoming clear through these forums, and it's supported by the poll we cite here: education is a major issue facing New Hampshire's future, whether it's a high school graduate choosing a college, a business CEO looking for educated employees, or the State Legislature trying to figure out how to fund education for life-long learning. We strongly believe that leaders from business, education and government should come together to focus on these trends that are shaping New Hampshire's future.

- Tom Horgan, President,  
NH College & University Council

- Fred Kocher, President,  
NH High Technology Council

For further information on The NH Forum on the Future  
or to explore ways you might partner, visit  
[www.NHfuture.org](http://www.NHfuture.org)

Or contact

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