

2011 Sunshine State Survey

Floridians Frustrated, Growing Even More Pessimistic in New Leadership Florida Poll Sunshine State Survey depicts potential opportunities, challenges, and pitfalls for Governor Rick Scott as the Florida Legislature reconvenes

Deep concerns about prolonged economic hard times have Floridians in a lingering funk, as revealed in Leadership Florida's annual Sunshine State Survey -- a poll released on February in which a majority of residents believe the state is worse off than it was five years ago. An even greater margin believe things will stay the same or might actually get worse in the next five years.

The poll of 1,220 Floridians across the state was conducted January 3-16, 2011 for Leadership Florida by [The Nielsen Company](#), leading global provider of information and analytics around what consumers watch and buy. The Nielsen Company has conducted the tracking survey for Leadership Florida since 2010.

In all, 45% of respondents say the state is worse off than five years ago while 65% say things will stay the same or get worse.

"The public is very wearisome of the slow economic recovery and the high frustration level of Floridians is impacting their opinion of government at every level," said [Dr. Susan A. MacManus](#), Distinguished Professor of Public Administration and Political Science at the [University of South Florida](#). "At the same time, people have an expectation of what they want the governor and the legislature to do: to create jobs and remove major

barriers to doing business in the state of Florida. They also see education, especially good teachers, as vital to Florida's economic future."

More than half of all Floridians, 52%, identify jobs and the economy as the most important issue facing the state. Meanwhile 55% say the state is doing poorly at creating new jobs, the highest number since Leadership Florida began its tracking poll in 2008.

"Because Governor Rick Scott has identified job creation as his top priority and Floridians say it is their top priority as well, these survey results would seem to indicate an opportunity for him," said [John Streitmatter](#), Chair of Leadership Florida. "At the same time, Floridians have told us they are also very impatient with all levels of government right now, which means that today's challenge could very quickly turn into tomorrow's disappointment for the governor and the people."

The survey also highlighted other trends in Florida, including:

52% of Floridians say to get rid of ineffective teachers.

21% of Floridians now say they are seriously considering moving out of the state, up from 17% just one year ago.

65% of Floridians say their state government spends tax revenue in a relatively wasteful manner, up from 54% in 2010 and 45% in 2008.

69% of Floridians believe community business leaders do what is right for the state only "some of the time" or "never."

71%, 77% and 77% say the same thing about their local, state and federal government leaders respectively.

Despite all of the media attention on the issues, just 3% of Floridians believe tax relief should be the top priority of Governor Rick Scott. Only 1% of Floridians say the same thing about immigration reform.

"The Nielsen Company is proud to again support the Sunshine State Survey," says Bob McCann, Executive Vice President of The Nielsen Company. "With more than 3,000 persons on staff in Central Florida and

numerous open employment positions, Nielsen is confident about Florida's future and we look forward to our continued commitment to the region."