

OREGON SURVEY RESEARCH LABORATORY

VOTE BY MAIL SURVEY 1996

CODE CATEGORIES FOR RESPONSES TO OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS

WHYNOBAL (Coded 1)

Since you are a registered voter, do you know why you didn't receive a ballot? Probe: Did you move?

- 1 **Moved:** Haven't changed my address/Wasn't in the area long enough/Wrong address/
Changed mailing address
- 2 **Registered to vote after cut-off date:** (reference to 21 day period) Didn't have 21 days
before election
- 3 **Other:** Forgot to mark the box/Picked up ballot
- 8 **Don't know:** Fell through the cracks/I have no idea/My kids get the mail/Everyone in
the house but me got one/Error
- 9 **Refused/No Answer**

VOTEALO2 (Coded 2)

Who else was there? Please don't tell me their name, just their relationship to you.

- 1 **Significant other:** Spouse/Fiancé/Partner/Boyfriend/Girlfriend
- 2 **Children:** Grandchildren/Children that I babysit/Daycare children
- 3 **Parents/Grandparents**
- 4 **Friends/Roommates**
- 5 **Employer/Co-workers**
- 6 **Other:** Siblings/Aunt
- 8 **Don't know**
- 9 **Refused/No Answer**

VOTEWHO1 (Coded 1)

Who marked your ballot? (Please don't tell me their name, just tell me their relationship to you.)

- 1 **Spouse**
- 2 **Child/Grandchild**
- 3 **Other:** Mom
- 9 **Refused/Don't know/No answer**

VOTEDIF2 (Coded 1)

What was difficult for you (in marking the ballot)?

- 1 **Visual:** Poor vision/Ballot hard to see/Need a bigger place to mark/holes too small/
Received two -- didn't pay attention to name on first one -- voted twice
- 2 **Too Complicated:** Too many steps/Difficult or confusing instructions/Couldn't
understand/ I'm used to punching not filling in/I mismarked it/Being sure I did it correctly
- 3 **Trouble deciding between candidates:** Not a good selection/No one to vote for
- 9 **Refused/Don't know/No answer**

VOTEWHO2 (Not Coded)

Who signed your ballot? (Please don't tell me their name, just tell me their relationship to you)
-- Not enough respondents answered this question to allow for coding --

VOTEWHER (Coded 1)

**If R marked ballot: Where were you when you marked your ballot? If R did not mark ballot:
Where was your ballot marked?**

- 1 **Work:** Also includes traveling on business
- 2 **Someone else's house:** Friend/Relative
- 3 **Ballot drop off site:** Library/Community building/Post Office
- 4 **Traveling:** On the road in a snowstorm/In New York/On a layover in Atlanta
- 5 **Other:** Car
- 8 **Don't know**
- 9 **Refused/No answer**

SENDDAY (Coded 1)

On what day (did you return your ballot/Was your ballot returned?)

- 1 **Early:** (January 12-19)
- 2 **Midway:** (January 20-27)
- 3 **End:** (After January 27)
- 8 **Don't know**
- 9 **Refused/No answer**

SENDDIF2 (Coded 1)

(Were there/Have there been) any difficulties returning your ballot? If "yes" then asked: What were those?

- 1 **Forgot to sign it**
- 2 **Drop box location unclear:** Didn't know where a drop box or mailbox was/Difficulty finding new voting location
- 3 **Other:** It was cold/Confusing to have extra postcard for registering to always vote by mail/ Didn't have a stamp/Forgot to put on stamps
- 8 **Don't know**
- 9 **Refused/No answer**

PREFER2 (Coded up to 5)

Why do you prefer (voting by mail/going to a polling place)?

(PART ONE: Vote by mail categories 1 - 19 -- PART TWO: Polling place categories 21 - 39)

1-19 PART ONE Why do you prefer voting by mail?

- 1 **Easier:** More convenient/Less trouble/Simpler/Don't have to be there at a specific time/Handier/Less effort/Don't have to find a polling place/Easier even though it costs a stamp/I'm out of town a lot/Have more than one day/Longer time span to vote/I wouldn't make it to a poll/Don't have to go anywhere
- 2 **Takes less time:** No long lines /No crowds/Less time consuming/Takes more time to write down the information to take to the poll than to vote by mail
- 3 **Kids:** Don't have to worry about taking the kids or finding a baby-sitter
- 4 **Bad weather not a problem:** Don't have to worry about bad weather
- 5 **Car related issues:** No worries about transportation or a parking place/Saves gas
- 6 **Elderly:** Old age mention/Infirmities related to age/Poor health due to age
- 7 **Disabled or poor health:** (Not disabled by age) Handicap or poor health mention
- 8 **Constraints of job:** Work hours/Caretakers/Voting interrupts workday/Don't have to skip work
- 9 **Distance to polling place:** Work 30 miles from home/Too far to walk
- 10 **More time to read ballot:** Time to figure things out/Take my time/No pressure/ No rush/Comfort
- 11 **More private:** Not influenced by people around you/ More anonymous/No distractions
- 12 **Higher turnout:** More people can vote/Everyone can be represented easier/No excuse not to vote
- 13 **Reduced cost:** Postage costs less than driving/Costs the state less
- 14 **Need a drop off box:** As long as there is a drop off box/Don't want to pay postage
- 17 **Other:** Mail is reliable/Anyone who votes should be able to read the language - function in English/Voting by mail is a privilege and an honor/Less prone to fraud/ More accurate/New experience/Don't like voting booths
- 18 **Don't know**
- 19 **Refused/No answer**

PREFER2 (Coded 5) (Continued)

Why do you prefer (voting by mail/going to a polling place)?

(PART ONE: Vote by mail categories 1 - 19 -- PART TWO: Polling place categories 21 - 39)

21-39 PART TWO Why do you prefer going to a polling place?

- 21 **Easier:** It is on the way home
- 22 **Just like it better:** (not specific) I prefer it/Accomplish more/Gives you an extra buzz/I think it is better/Feel more comfortable
- 23 **Voting act demeaned:** Just like a bill/Voting reduced to the same level as junk mail/Citizens need to show effort/Makes it special/Effort to get there is a very healthy process/Cost America something to vote and it should cost us something to have the right to vote like standing in line/If you don't care enough to go to a polling place then you shouldn't be voting/Adds dignity/Privilege to vote/Makes it seem more real to me - that I participate more fully/Feels more official/Patriotic/Anticlimactic
- 24 **Tradition:** More a part of the political process than vote by mail/The way I've done it all my life/Ritual of going/Habit/A loss of pageantry/A bit of Americana/The American way
- 25 **Sense of community:** Lose sense of community in a vote by mail/Gets me out/The energy of the polling place/More personal/A sense of being part of the system
- 26 **Mail-in voters less informed:** Lazy/Vote because it is easy not because they have taken time to become informed/People who don't care vote/It is a matter of sincerity/Anyone can vote/We should go for quality not quantity
- 27 **Less chance of fraud:** More accurate/More honest/Real danger of fraud in mail/Sure people are not underage
- 28 **No undue influence by another:** No pressure by another/More private/Secret
- 29 **Election period is too long:** One day election seems more legitimate/More likely to vote on a one day election/Don't get called many times by your party to vote/If you vote early you may change your mind
- 30 **No campaigning after ballots go out:** Shouldn't be electioneering after ballots go out/ Eliminates extended campaigning
- 31 **Tendency to forget election:** Put ballots aside/Forget to send it in/Easier to lose ballots/ People don't really look at what they receive in the mail/Overlooked in the mail/If it gets mailed to me it just sits around the house
- 32 **Unreliability of mail:** Mail is easily delayed or lost/Just don't like the mail part/The mail isn't safe/Somebody threw out my ballot/If you don't get one in the mail it is a hassle to go find one
- 33 **Cost:** Have to buy a stamp/Doesn't cost me anything/More cost effective
- 37 **Other:** It is more visual
- 38 **Don't know**
- 39 **Refused/No answer**

POLPROB2 (Coded 2)

Do you have any difficulties which make it hard for you to get to a polling place? If "yes" then What are those (difficulties)?

- 1 **Not convenient:** Don't know where the polling place is/Not a place I usually go
- 2 **Takes too much time:** Crowds/Standing in line/I have a busy schedule
- 3 **Kids:** Have to worry about taking the kids or finding a baby-sitter/Responsibilities in the home
- 4 **Bad weather not a problem:** Have to worry about bad weather/Don't go out in bad weather
- 5 **Car related issues:** Have to worry about transportation/Have to find a parking place/I don't have a car/I don't drive
- 6 **Elderly:** (Old age mention) Infirmities related to age/Poor health due to age
- 7 **Disabled or poor health:** (Not disabled by age) Handicap mention/Poor health due to physical or mental illness/Agoraphobic
- 8 **Constraints of job:** Work hours/Caretakers
- 9 **Distance to polling place:**
- 97 **Other:** Multiple problems - not specified/I tend to procrastinate/I was drunk
- 98 **Don't know**
- 99 **Refused/No answer**

MARWHO (Coded 1)

(If you vote,) for whom do you expect to vote?

- 1 **Democrat**
- 2 **Bill Clinton**
- 3 **Republican:** Republican candidate (not named)/Two or more named Republican candidates
- 4 **Named candidate:** One named candidate of any party (does not include Bill Clinton)
- 5 **Anyone but Clinton:** Who ever is running against Clinton/Not Clinton
- 6 **Other:** Mention of a third party such as the Libertarian candidate/Maybe a write in
- 7 **Refused:** Take the Fifth/None of your business
- 8 **Don't know:** Undecided/Undeclared/I'll have to see who the candidates are
- 9 **No Answer:** Respondents confused by question: Answers of Smith and Wyden