



News Release
Office of University Relations

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Note: The media contact for this Poll is Dr. Kelly Foster, 423-439-4374 or fosterkn@etsu.edu.

ETSU research center releases findings from Tennessee Poll, finds tight race for Senate seat

JOHNSON CITY – The Applied Social Research Laboratory (ASRL) at East Tennessee State University is releasing the findings of recent Tennessee Poll regarding the upcoming election. The research was led by Dr. Kelly Foster, director of ASRL and associate professor of sociology and anthropology at ETSU, along with Dr. Richard Clark, a professor of political science at Castleton University (Vermont).

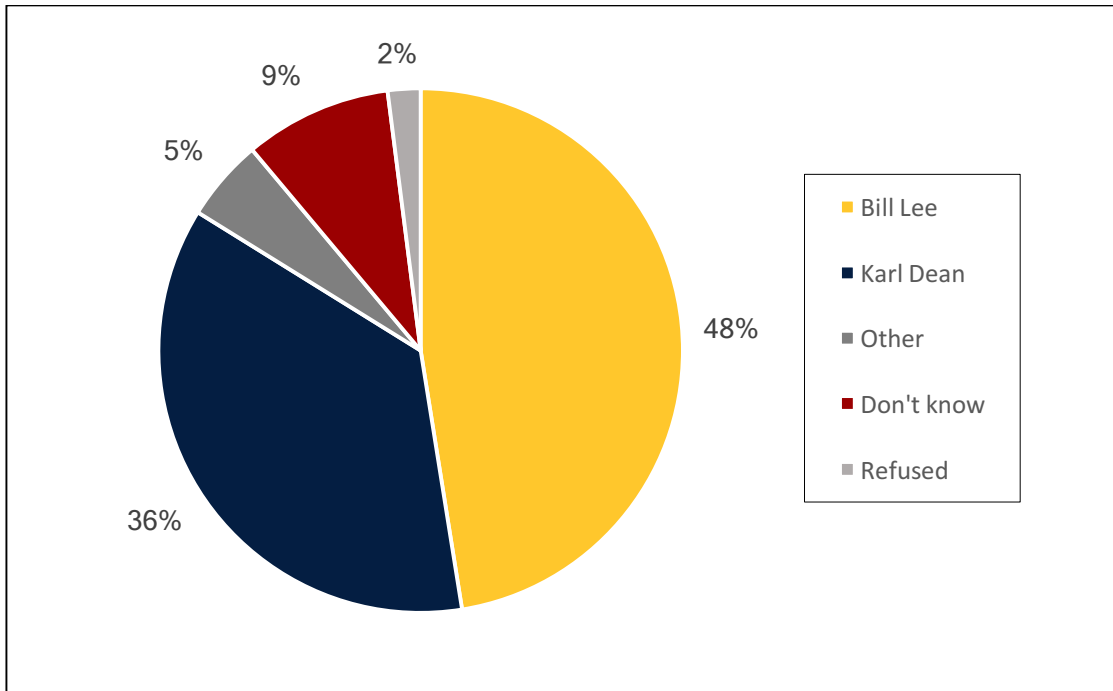
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The Tennessee Poll Finds Support for Republican Candidate Bill Lee and A Tight Race for Blackburn and Bredesen

The latest Tennessee Poll by ETSU finds that nearly 9 out of 10 Tennesseans say this year's election is either very important (75%) or somewhat important (14%). This sentiment holds true regardless of party affiliation, gender, or age. When asked about the current direction of the state, a majority of Tennesseans (52%) feel that Tennessee is going in the right direction, and only 20% feel it is on the wrong track. However, there are some notable differences by party affiliation, age, and gender. Respondents who identify as Republican or who lean Republican are more likely to say the state is heading in the right direction (73%) than are those who are Independent (42%) or Democrat (38%). Older respondents and men are more likely to feel things are going in the right direction than are respondents who are younger or female.

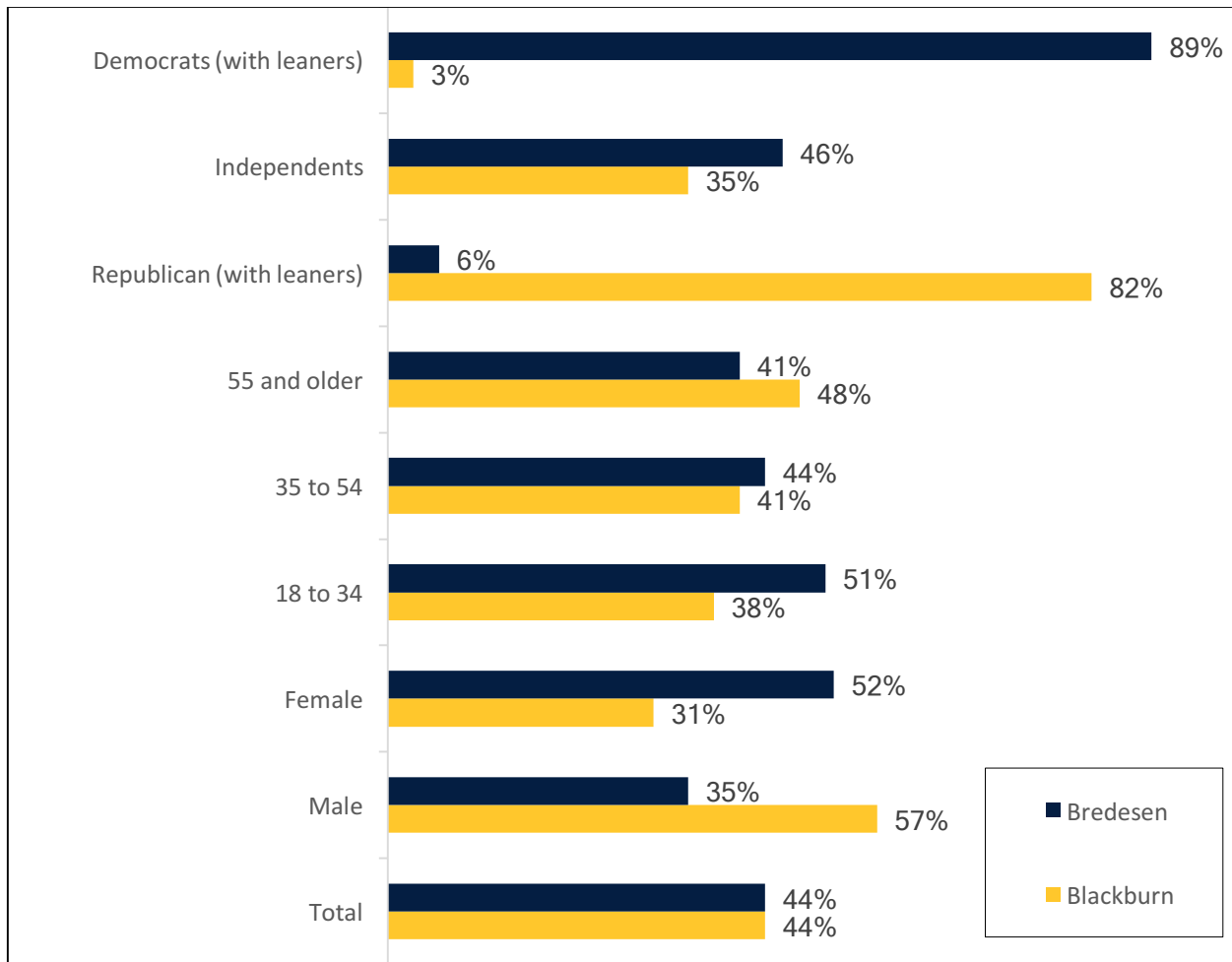
When asked about how likely they were to vote in this year's elections, nearly 8-in-10 residents say they are either very likely (63%) or likely (16%) to vote in the election on November. Among likely voters (N=415), 47% indicate that they will vote for Republican Gubernatorial candidate Bill Lee and 36% say they will vote for Democratic candidate Karl Dean while 9% remain undecided. See Figure 1.

Figure 1. Support for Tennessee Gubernatorial Candidates



In one of the most tightly contested senate races in the country, the Tennessee Poll finds that 44% of likely voters in Tennessee favor Republican candidate Marsha Blackburn and 44% favor Democratic candidate Phil Bredesen with stronger levels of support within respective parties. Men are more likely to indicate support for Blackburn, and women are more likely to report they support Bredesen. See Figure 2.

Figure 2. Support for Tennessee Senate Candidates by Selected Demographics



About the Authors:

Dr. Richard L. Clark is a professor of political science at Castleton University, Vermont, former director of the Castleton Polling Institute, and director of recent polling for Vermont Public Radio and Vermont PBS. Dr. Clark can be reached by email (rich.clark@castleton.edu) or phone 802-468-1306.

Dr. Kelly N. Foster is the director of the Applied Social Research Lab (ASRL) and Associate Professor of Sociology at East Tennessee State University. Her research focuses on survey research methodology, new technologies in research, health disparities, and medical decision making among Appalachian women. Dr. Foster can be reached by email (fosterkn@etsu.edu) or phone (423-439-4374).

About The Tennessee Poll:

The Tennessee Poll is a statewide public opinion poll conducted by ETSU’s Applied Social Research Lab. The ETSU Poll was conducted by telephone from October 22 -29, 2018. The final sample has 610 adults and a margin of error of (+/-) 4 percent at the 95% confidence level for the full sample (smaller subsamples will indicate higher margin of errors). For more information about this poll including a full methodological statement please visit www.etsu.edu/ASRL or contact ASRL Director, Dr. Kelly N. Foster (fosterkn@etsu.edu, 423-439-4374). You can also follow ASRL on Twitter @ETSUASRL. **NOTE: This is the first in a series of releases from the Tennessee Poll by ETSU. Complete results of the poll are forthcoming and will be available at www.etsu.edu/ASRL.**