

# KENTUCKY

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Survey Measures Kentuckians' Response to 9/11

**FRANKFORT, KY** (September 5, 2002) — The Kentucky Long-Term Policy Research Center released state-wide survey results today that gauge public responses to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 (9/11). The results show how aware Kentuckians are of the federal warning system created in the wake of 9/11, how adequate they believe national spending and local preparedness are, how September 11 has influenced their involvement in civic and volunteer activities, and how citizens would prefer to see revenue generated to combat terrorism.

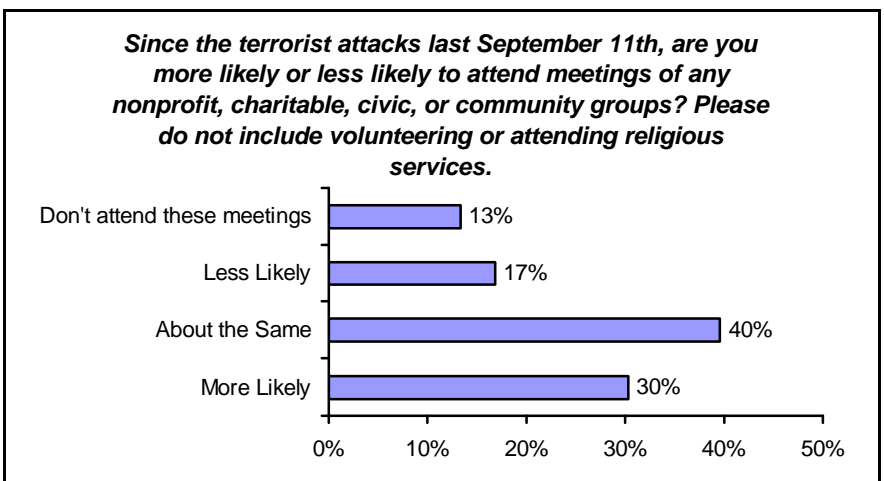
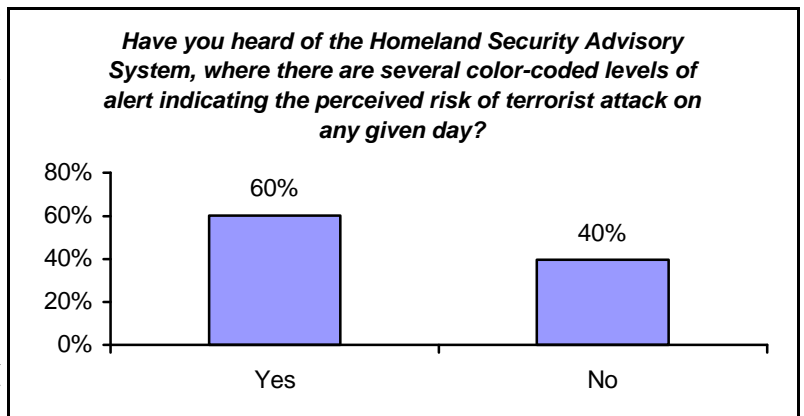
**Awareness of the Homeland Security Advisory System.** The Center's survey results show that 60 percent of Kentucky adults have heard of the color-coded Homeland Security Advisory System created six months ago by the White House Homeland Security Office as a way to "disseminate information regarding the risk of terrorist acts to Federal, State, and local authorities, and to the American people." However, only 12 percent of Kentuckians knew that our current nationwide threat level is "elevated."

The Homeland Security Advisory System has five threat levels, each identified by a color that corresponds with a level of terrorist threat. From lowest to highest, the levels and colors are:

- Low = Green
- Guarded = Blue
- Elevated = Yellow
- High = Orange
- Severe = Red

Of those Kentuckians who reported having heard of the advisory system, only 17 percent knew that the system includes five colors, and only 20 percent of respondents actually knew that the *current* level of alert was elevated or yellow, findings that suggest a low level of awareness about the federal government's principal means of communicating with the public about the risk of terrorism.

**Civic and Volunteer Responses.** To gain a better understanding of how Kentuckians are reacting to and dealing with the terrorist attacks, the Center asked a series of questions about their post-9/11 civic activities. The results show that a significant percentage (30 percent) of Kentuckians expressed an increased likelihood of attending meetings of nonprofit, charitable, civic, or community groups since the terrorist attacks.



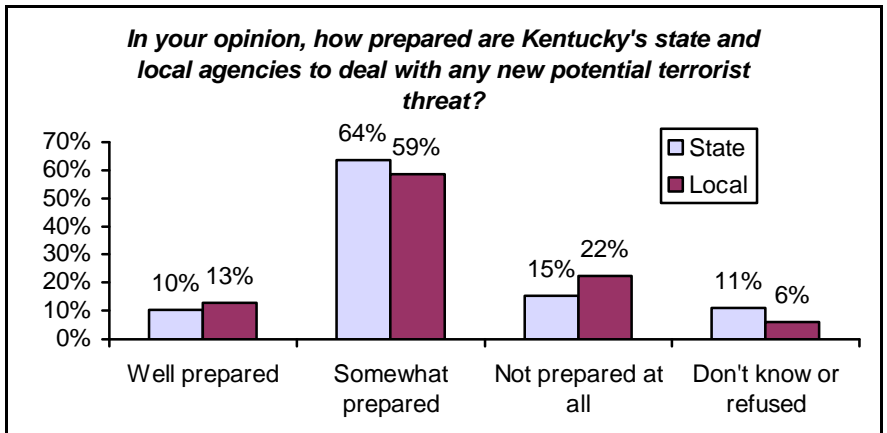
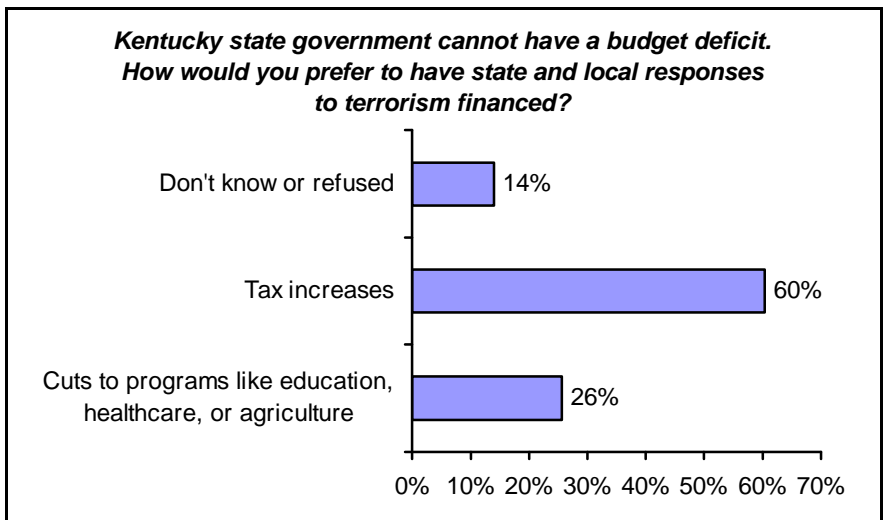
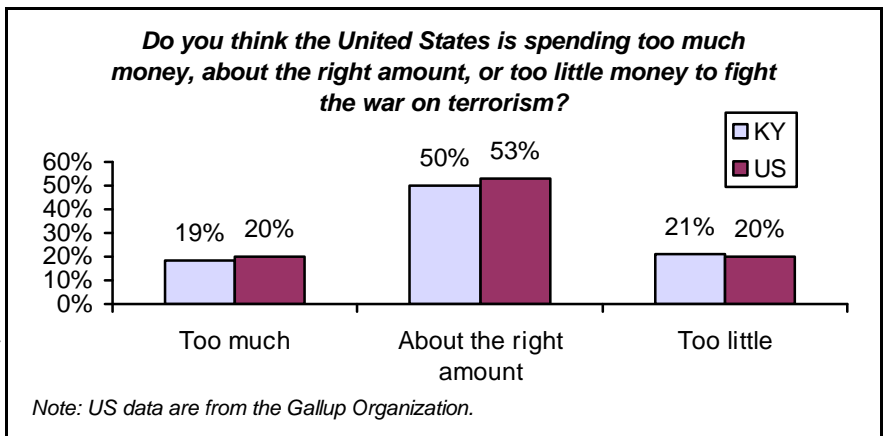
In a related question about volunteering, 58 percent of Kentuckians reported that they had volunteered time for civic, community, charitable or nonprofit, or church-related activities in the past 12 months. Of the 58 percent of Kentucky adults who are volunteers, about 11 percent indicated that the number of hours they volunteer had increased since the terrorist attacks, 85 percent said their level of volunteering had stayed the same, and 4 percent said it had decreased. At its annual conference on November 21, 2002, in Owensboro, the Center and the New-Cities Foundation will explore the issue of community life in Kentucky and discuss the ways civic engagement has been affected by the terrorist attacks.

**Financing the War on Terrorism.** The war on terrorism will be expensive and will require policymakers and citizens to make difficult choices about spending priorities. According to the *National Strategy for Homeland Security*, "It is critical that all levels of government work cooperatively to shoulder the costs of homeland security." Consequently, even though state and local governments across the country are experiencing budget shortfalls, they will be expected to help pay for the war on terrorism.

When asked about the adequacy of national spending to fight terrorism, 19 percent of Kentuckians said they believe the United States is spending too much money, 50 percent said about the right amount, and 21 percent said we are spending too little money to fight the war on terrorism. Another 10 percent of respondents indicated that they were unsure of the adequacy of spending. These responses are similar to those from a national Gallup Poll conducted in May 2002 which found that 20 percent said "too much," 53 percent said "the right amount," and 20 percent said "too little."

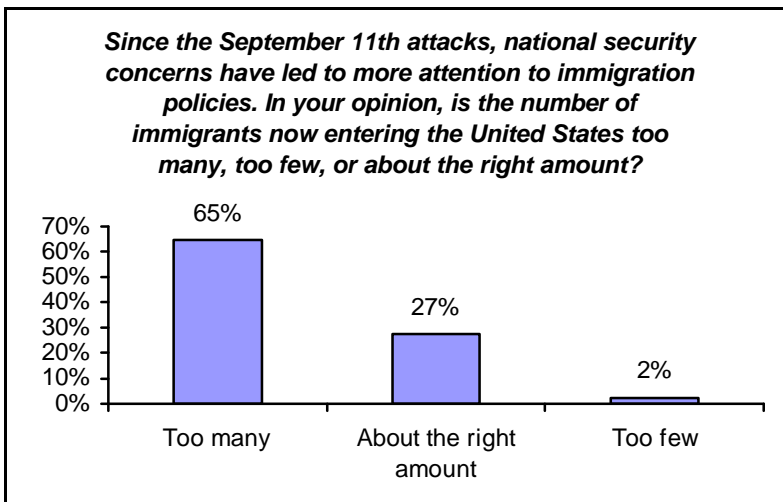
Unlike the federal government, Kentucky state and local governments are prohibited from operating with a budget deficit. When asked how they would prefer to finance the war on terrorism, 26 percent of Kentuckians favored cutting spending in other areas while 60 percent preferred a tax increase (14 percent either don't know or refused to respond).

**State and Local Preparedness.** In addition to helping finance the war on terrorism, state and local agencies such as fire departments, law enforcement, emergency medical services (EMS), hospitals, public health departments, and offices of emergency management will be the first to actually respond to a terrorist attack. Yet a national survey conducted by RAND just before the Sep-



tember 11, 2001, terrorist attacks found that fewer than one third of these state and local organizations had adequately planned for a terrorist incident involving a weapon of mass destruction. When asked how prepared state and local agencies are against a potential terrorist threat, about 10 percent of Kentucky adults said they believe these agencies are “well prepared,” signaling low levels of confidence in our preparations for an attack.

**Attitudes about Immigration.** American public opinion about immigration has become somewhat more negative since September 11. A Gallup poll conducted before the terrorist attacks (June 2001) revealed that 41 percent felt immigration levels should be decreased compared to 42 percent who would like to maintain the current level. However, a June 2002 Gallup poll found that “49 percent of Americans believe immigration levels should be decreased, 36 percent believe they should be kept at their present levels, and 12 percent think they should be increased.” Similarly, the Center found that 65 percent of Kentuckians believe there are “too many” immigrants entering the United States, 27 percent say “about the right amount,” and around 2 percent say “too few.”



The survey was conducted by the University of Kentucky Survey Research Center for the Kentucky Long-Term Policy Research Center from July 20 until August 26, 2002. Households were selected using random-digit dialings, a procedure giving every residential telephone line in Kentucky an equal probability of being called. The sample includes 882 noninstitutionalized Kentuckians, 18 years of age or older. The margin of error is approximately  $\pm 3$  percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level.

**Center Conference to Focus on 9/11.** This year, the Center’s annual conference, “Living in a Changed World,” which is being jointly sponsored by the NewCities Foundation, will explore the long-range implications of 9/11 for Kentucky. The conference will feature a briefing on state actions by representatives of the National Governors Association and the National Conference on State Legislatures and an exploration of the impact of 9/11 on community life in the Commonwealth. Dr. Bruce Hoffman, an international expert on terrorism who heads the RAND Corporation’s Washington office and is frequently a guest commentator on CNN, NPR, and the Lehrer NewsHour, will give the keynote address. As in the past two years, KET’s Bill Goodman, who hosts the award-winning *Kentucky Tonight*, will lead a panel discussion of the impact of 9/11 and anticipated responses to it. The program will be taped and later shown on KET. “Remembrance and Reflection,” a 9-minute, 11-second original performance piece by the Kentucky Historical Society’s Museum Theatre Program will dramatize the collected remembrances of Kentuckians from all walks of life about 9/11.

Slated for Thursday, November 21, 2002, at the Executive Inn Rivermont in Owensboro, the Center’s one-day conference will follow the Governor’s Executive Summit on Homeland Security, also a one-day conference being held in the same location. For further information about registration for the conferences, contact the Center or Shirley Rodgers with the Governor’s Office for Technology at 502-564-1209 or shirley.rodgers@mail.state.ky.us, or register online for both conferences at [www.kltprc.net/conference2002.htm](http://www.kltprc.net/conference2002.htm).

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