



**PUBLIC OPINION  
STRATEGIES**

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO: INTERESTED PARTIES**

**FROM: GLEN BOLGER**

**RE: NORTH CAROLINA STATEWIDE SURVEY KEY FINDINGS**

**DATE: MARCH 8, 2011**

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**Key Findings**

***1. Voters strongly favor the state's recently passed smoke-free law.***

Three-quarters (74%) of voters favor the state's law prohibiting smoking in restaurants and bars. A majority (61%) of voters say they strongly favor the law, and just 25% oppose it.

The law receives strong support from voters across party lines, from both men and women, and in each of the state's major media markets. Tea Party supporters also back the law.

	<b>Total Favor</b>	<b>Total Oppose</b>
<b>Overall</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Republicans (32%)</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>31%</b>
<b>Independents (19%)</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>Democrats (44%)</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Men (48%)</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Women (52%)</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>Raleigh-Durham DMA (30%)</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>Charlotte DMA (27%)</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Winston Salem/Greensboro DMA (18%)</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>Fav Image of Tea Party (26%)</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>38%</b>

**2. Voters believe that a smoke-free environment in restaurants and bars is very important, and that secondhand smoke is a serious health hazard.**

The vast majority (82%) of voters say it is important to have a smoke-free environment in restaurants and bars. Fully 64% say it is very important, and just 17% say it is not important.

Voters also view secondhand smoke as a threat to their health, with 77% saying it is a health hazard. More than half (56%) say it is a serious health hazard, and just 22% say it is not a health hazard.

These views are prevalent even among a majority of smokers. Fully 56% of smokers say that a smoke-free environment in restaurants and bars is important, and 57% say that secondhand smoke is a health hazard.

**3. The smoke-free law has made going out to bars and restaurants more enjoyable.**

Fifty-seven percent (57%) of voters say that going out to bars and restaurants is more enjoyable since the smoke-free law has been in effect. Forty-four percent (44%) say it is much more enjoyable, while only 8% say it is less enjoyable.

**4. There is minimal support for weakening the smoke-free law.**

When asked if they would be more or less likely to support a candidate who wanted to weaken the smoke-free law and allow smoking in some restaurants and bars, just 28% said they would be more likely to support the candidate, while 55% said they would be less likely. Fourteen percent (14%) said it would make no difference to them. Opposition to weakening the smoke-free law is strong with both Republicans (35% more likely/51% less likely) and Democrats (22% more likely/62% less likely).

**The Bottom Line**

North Carolina voters strongly favor the state's smoke-free law. Voters like that the law has made restaurants and bars smoke-free and that they do not have to worry about secondhand smoke exposure when out to dinner. As a result, a majority of voters say it is more enjoyable to go to bars and restaurants than it was before the law was passed. From a political standpoint, voters across party lines oppose weakening the law and a candidate would gain little (and stand to lose plenty) by supporting such a measure.

**Methodology**

*Public Opinion Strategies is pleased to present the key findings from a survey of 500 likely voters in North Carolina. The survey was conducted February 8-10, 2011 and has a margin of error of +4.38% in 95 out of 100 cases.*