

**Idaho Political Poll**  
**Executive Summary Report**  
**December 2007**

**Draft 4**

**Prepared by:**

**Robinson Research**  
**920 N. Washington Suite 100**  
**Spokane, Washington 99201**  
**Phone: (509) 489-4361**  
**E-mail: [billr@robinson-research.com](mailto:billr@robinson-research.com)**

## Table of Contents

Statement of Methodology.....	3
Detailed Observations.....	4

## Statement of Methodology

Robinson Research conducted a 400 sample telephone survey with “good voters” (voted in 3+ of the last four general elections) of Idaho. Respondents were screened to ensure that they did not work in a sensitive industry, such as market research, advertising, or public relations.

Surveys were conducted between the dates of November 26, 2007 and December 12, 2007.

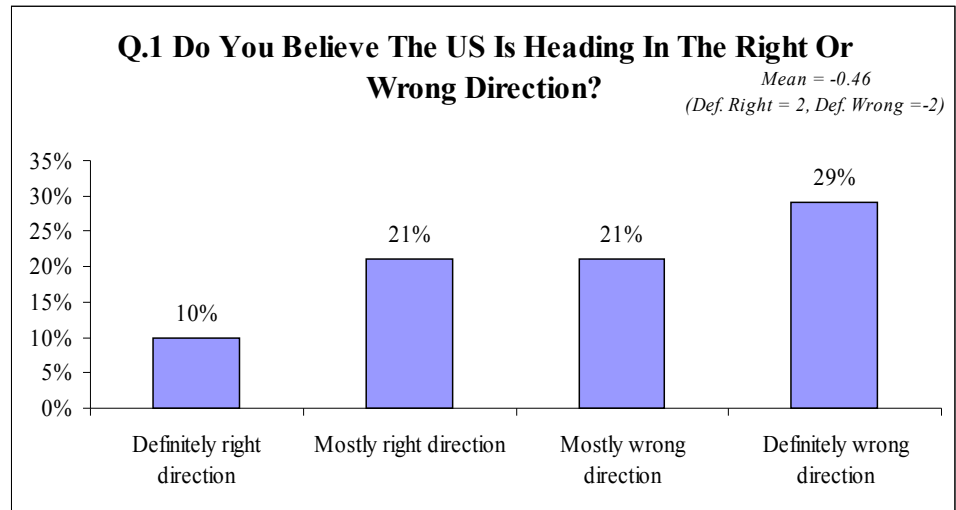
A four hundred sample survey has a margin of error of +/- 4.90%, which means that, in theory, results have a ninety-five percent (95%) chance of coming within +/- 4.90 percentage points of results that would have been obtained if all “good voters” in Idaho had been interviewed.

Questions regarding this study may be directed to:

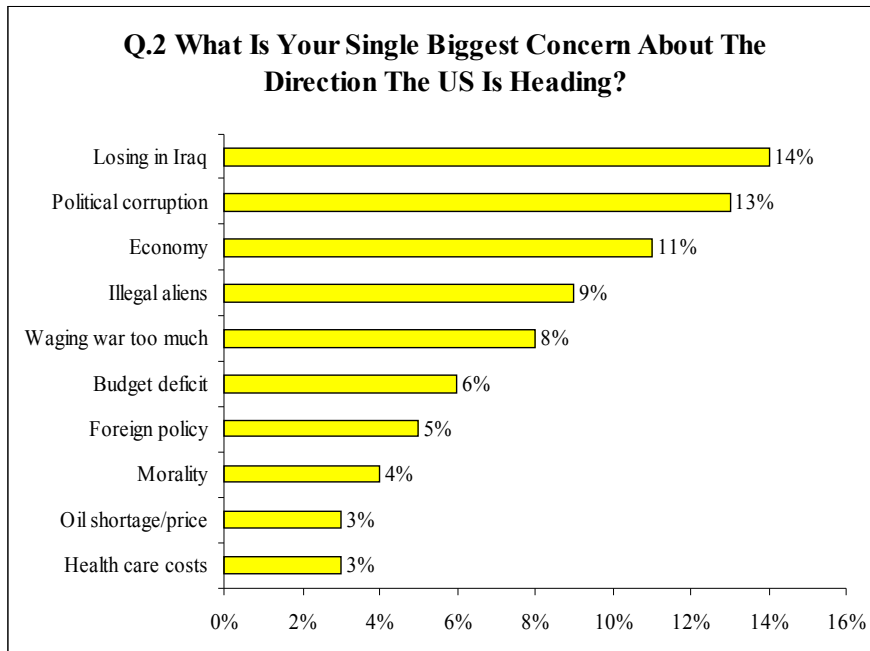
William D. Robinson  
President  
Robinson Research  
Spokane, Washington  
Phone: (509) 489-4361  
E-mail: [billr@robinson-research.com](mailto:billr@robinson-research.com)

**Q.1 Generally speaking, do you believe the US is heading in the right direction or the wrong direction?**

Those who would vote for Jim Risch were more likely than average to perceive the right direction, while those who would vote for Larry LaRocco were more likely than average to perceive the wrong direction. Perceptions of right and wrong direction were closely tied to one's identity as conservative or liberal.



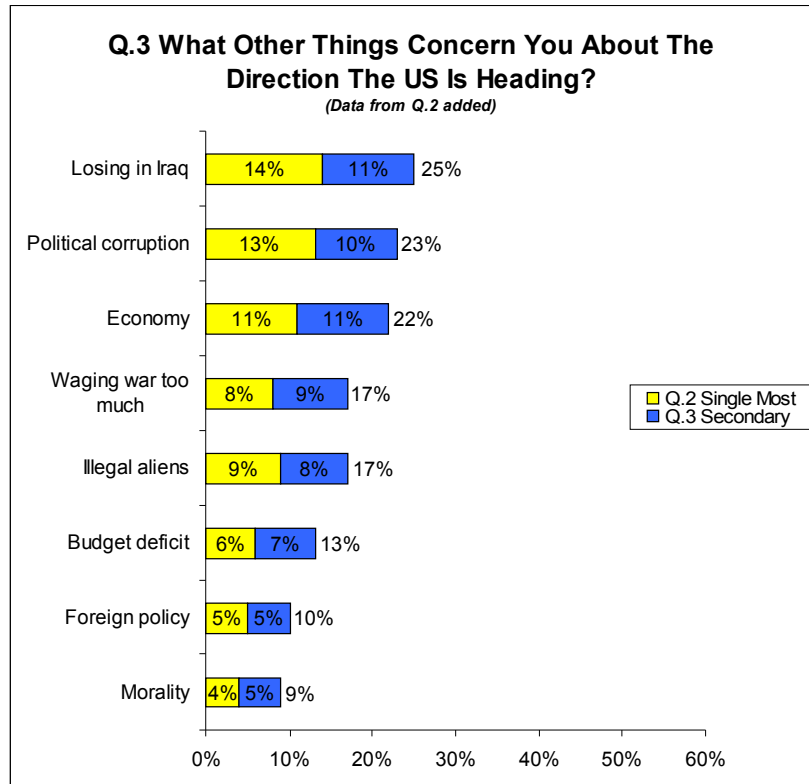
**Q.2 What is your single biggest concern about the direction the US is heading?**



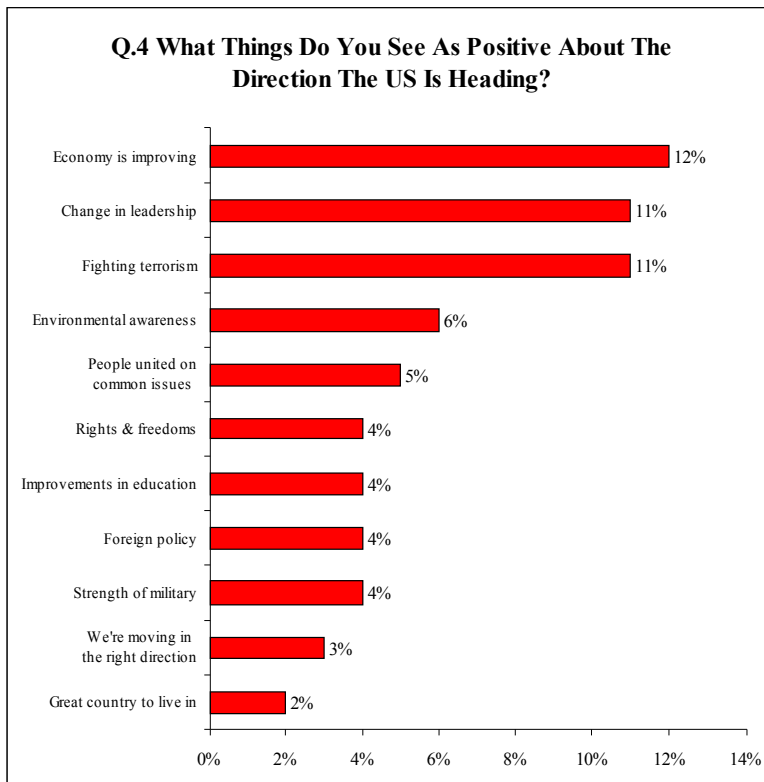
LaRocco supporters tended to be more concerned about losing the war in Iraq, while Risch supporters tended to be more concerned about political corruption.

### Q.3 What other things concern you about the direction the US is heading?

Responses to this question are suitable for interpretation only in conjunction with responses to Q.2.



### Q.4 What things do you see as positive about the direction the US is heading?

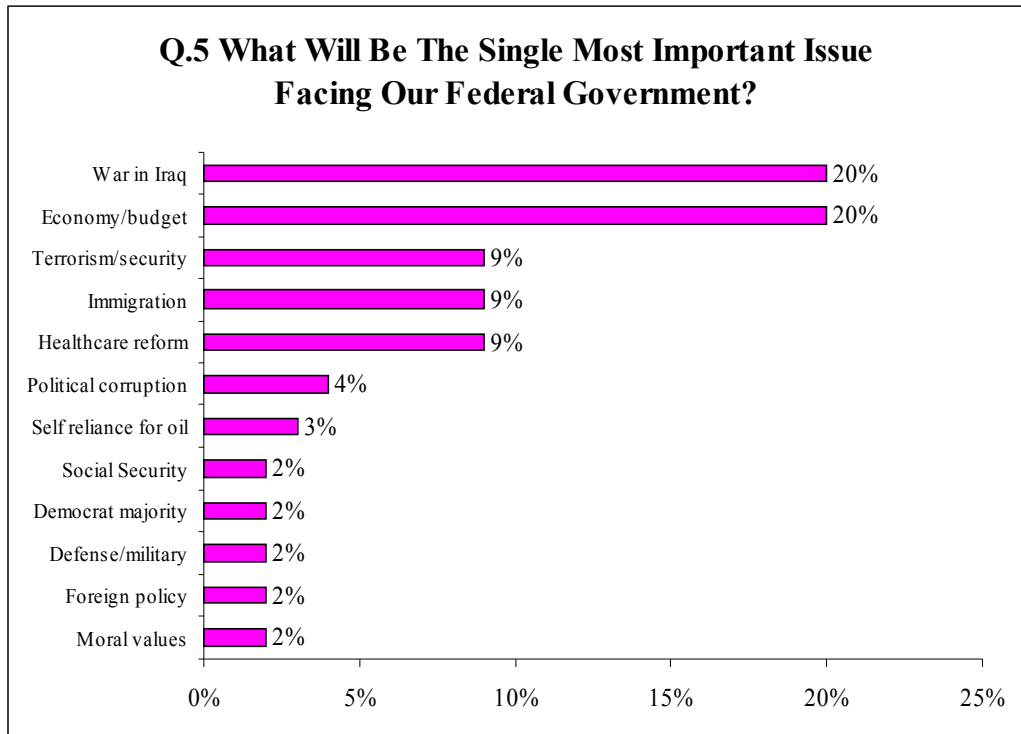


Those who believed that things are going in the right direction were particularly likely to cite improvement in the economy and fighting terrorism.

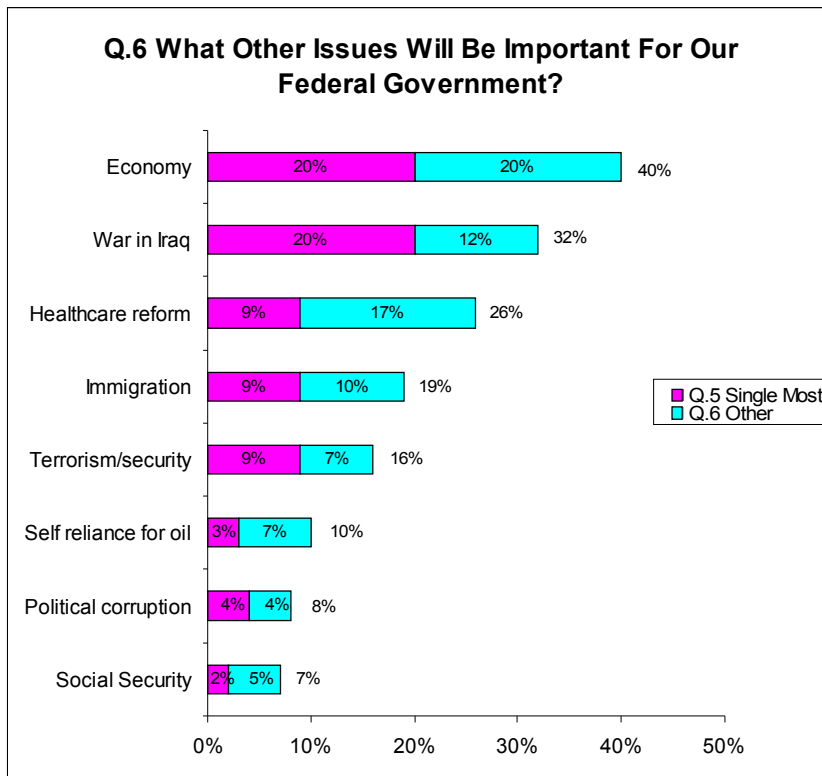
**Q.5 In your opinion, what will be the single most important issue facing our federal government?**

The economy/budget and the war in Iraq were the predominant concerns.

Responses spanned the tested subsets quite evenly.



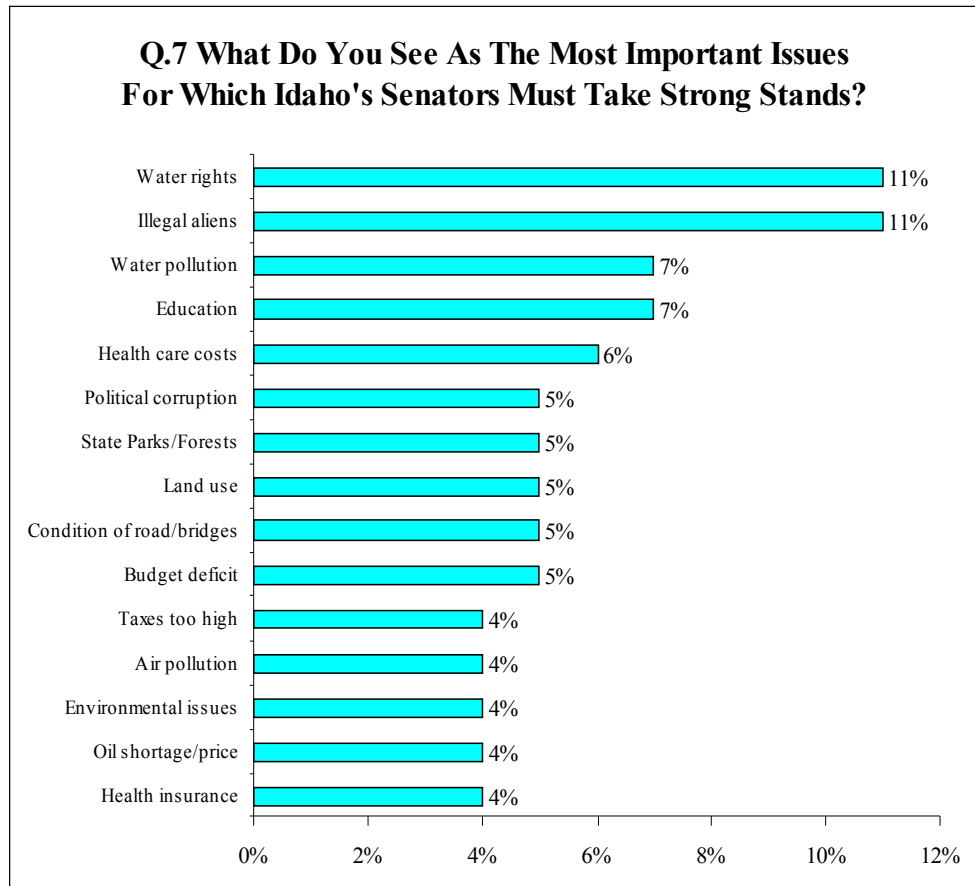
**Q.6 What other issues will be important for our federal government to address?**



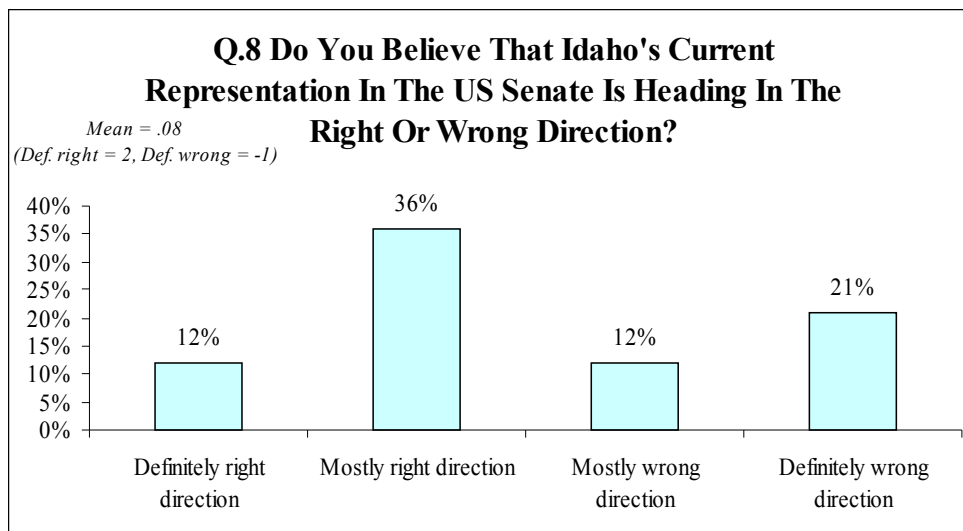
Responses to this question are suitable for interpretation only in conjunction with responses to Q.5.

**Q.7 In addition to working on legislation of interest to the country as a whole, sometimes Senators from a state are required to take strong stands about issues that have a definite effect on their own states? What do you see as the most important issues for which Idaho's Senators must take strong stands on behalf of the citizens of Idaho?**

Those who believed the US was definitely headed in the right direction were particularly likely to cite illegal aliens, while being unlikely to mention healthcare costs or conditions of roads/bridges.



**Q.8 Generally speaking, do you believe that Idaho's current representation in the US Senate is heading in the right direction or the wrong direction?**

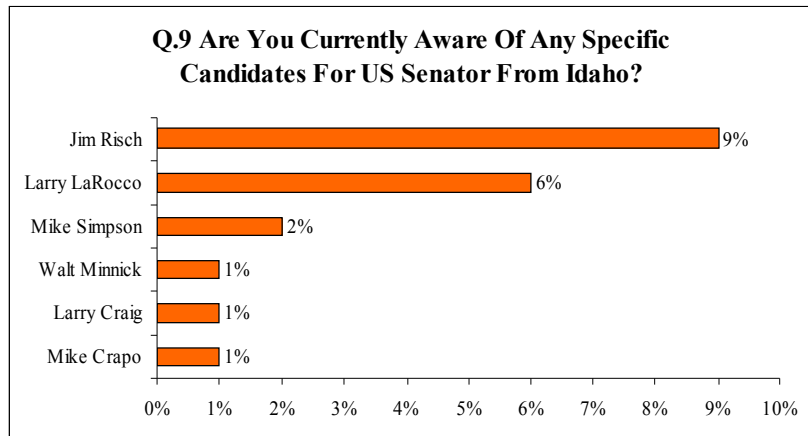


Perceptions of Idaho's current representation were generally quite a bit more positive than perceptions about how the US is headed.

**Q.9 Are you currently aware of any specific candidates for US Senator from Idaho?**

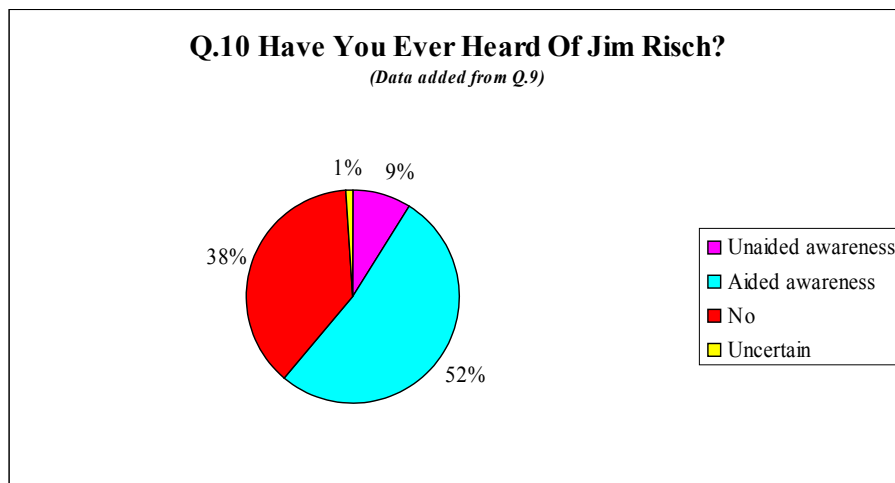
Eighty-four percent were unable to think of any candidates.

Forty-four percent of those demonstrating unaided awareness of Jim Risch also demonstrated unaided awareness of Larry LaRocco. Sixty-seven percent of those demonstrating unaided awareness of Larry LaRocco also demonstrated unaided awareness of Jim Risch.



**Q.10 Have you ever heard of Jim Risch?**

*(Responses were added from Q.9 to give a better overall understanding.)*



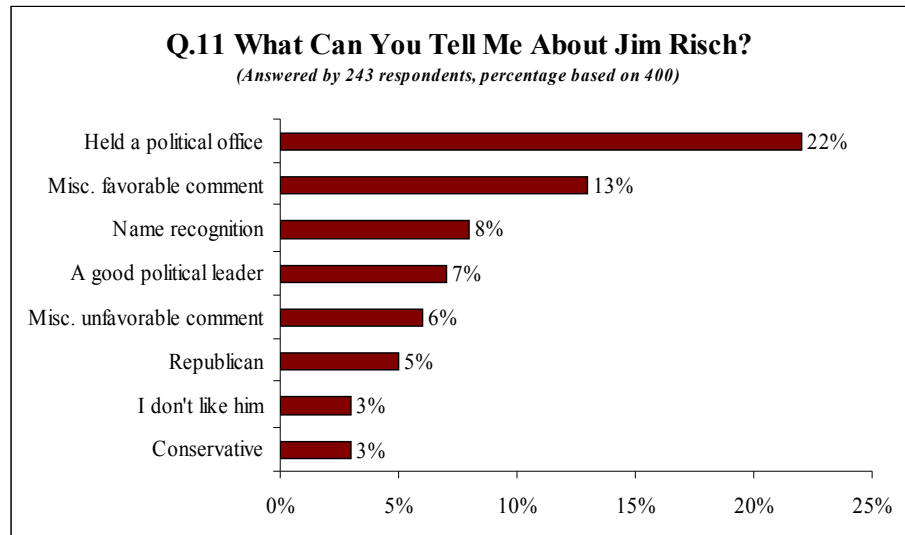
The pie graph shows the distribution of types of Jim Risch awareness.

There were fifty-two respondents who had never heard of Jim Risch, but still intended to vote for him in a race against Larry LaRocco.

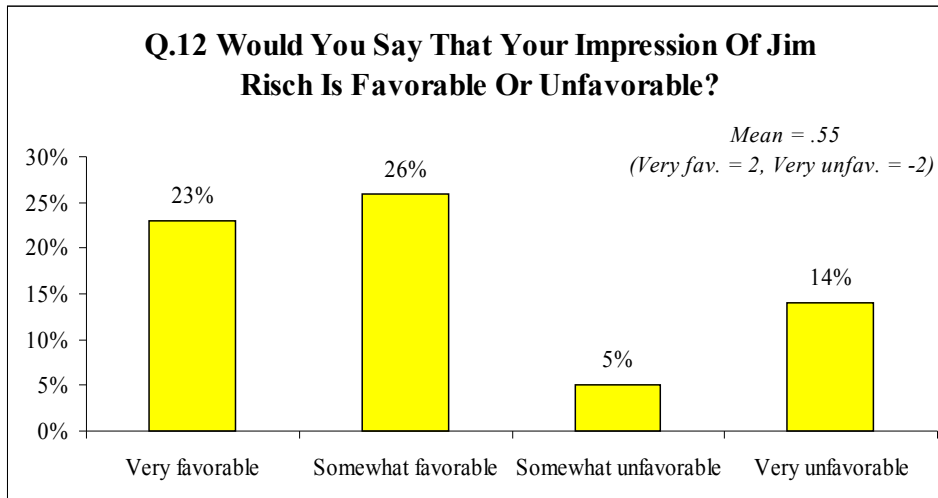
**Q.11 What can you tell me about Jim Risch?**

*(This question was asked in an open-ended format. Responses were captured verbatim and subsequently coded for ease of interpretation. Verbatim comments are presented under separate cover.)*

Awareness of Jim Risch was arguably broad, but apparently not very deep. The descriptions spanned the seven tested categories of partisanship more evenly than one might expect. Of the ten respondents stating that they did not like Jim Risch, three identified themselves as Republicans.



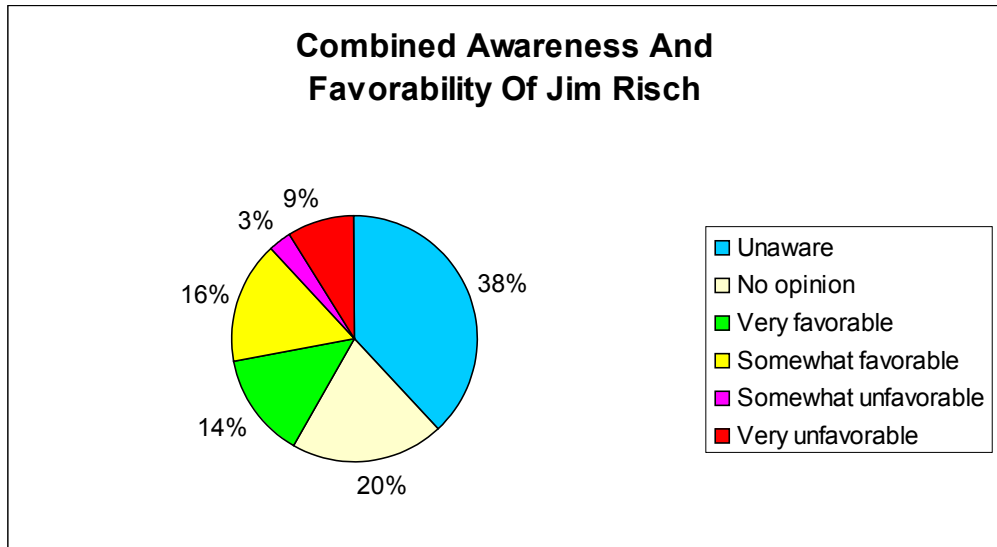
**Q.12 Based on anything you may know about Jim Risch, would you say that your impression is favorable or unfavorable?**



Of the 243 demonstrating or claiming awareness of Jim Risch, one-third (32%) had no impression of him. For every respondent with an unfavorable impression, there were 2.27 with a favorable impression.

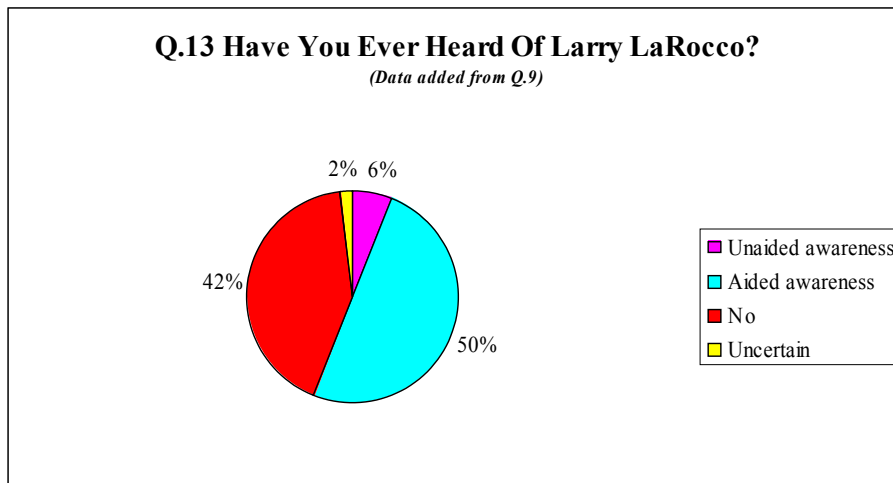
The following is a pie chart which combines data from Q.10 and Q.12, to allow for easier interpretation of the data.

While the descriptions of Jim Risch did not correlate perfectly with stated party affiliation, the favorability ratings were in lockstep with participants' descriptions of their partisan and liberal/conservative leanings.



**Q.13 Have you ever heard of Larry LaRocco?**

*(Responses were added from Q.9 to give a better overall understanding.)*



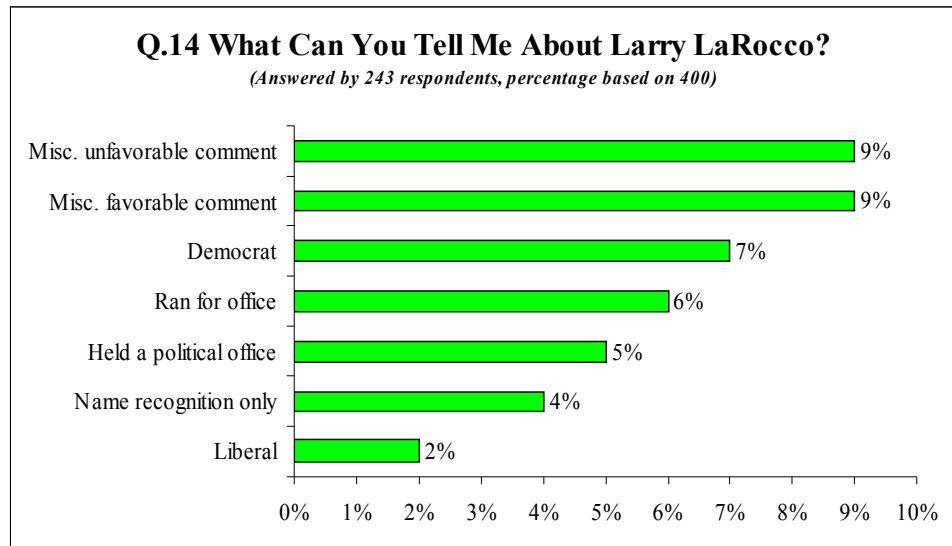
The pie graph shows the distribution of Larry LaRocco awareness.

One hundred sixty-nine respondents (42%) had never heard of Larry LaRocco, compared to 152 (38%) who had never heard of Jim Risch. 108 (27%) had heard of neither candidate. 179 (45%) had heard of both.

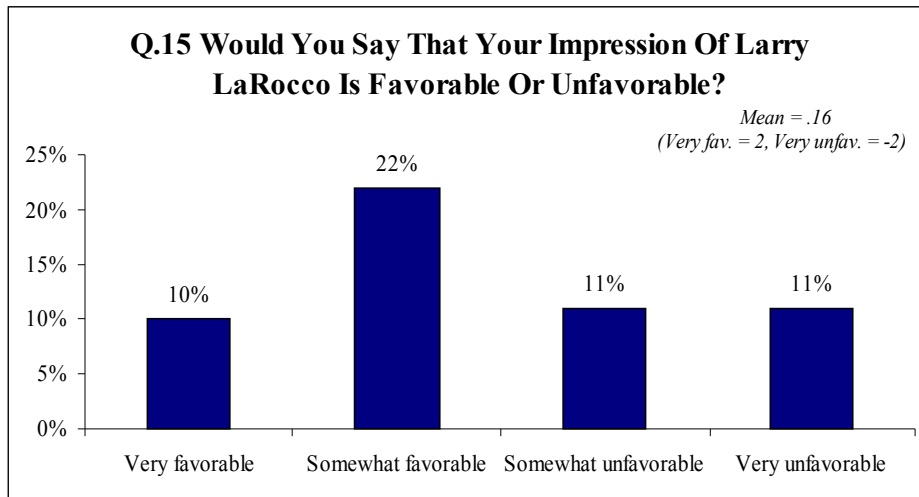
**Q.14 What can you tell me about Larry LaRocco?**

*(This question was asked in an open-ended format. Responses were captured verbatim and subsequently coded for ease of interpretation. Verbatim responses are presented under separate cover.)*

Perceptions of Larry LaRocco were generally quite shallow. The comments suggest that Larry LaRocco has somewhat more negative baggage than Jim Risch.



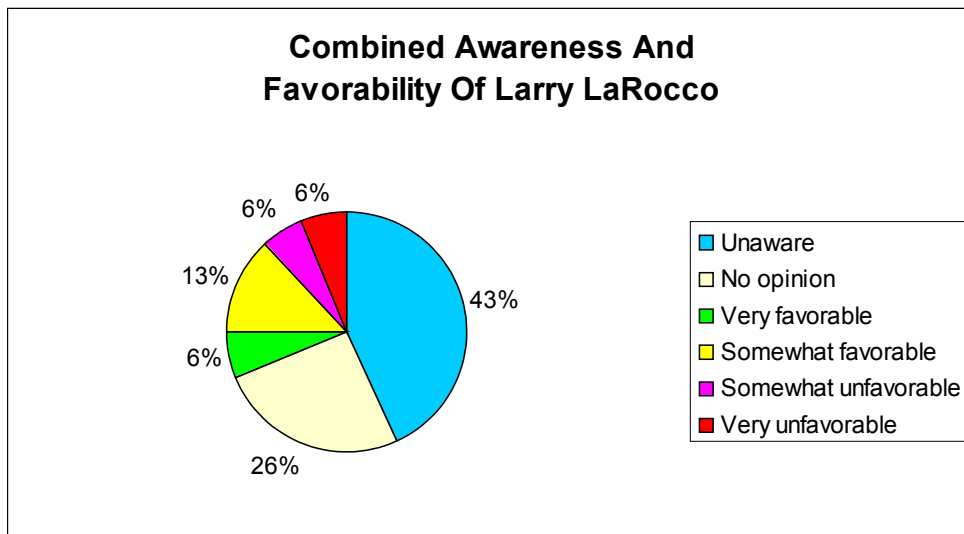
**Q.15 Based on anything you may know about Larry LaRocco, would you say that your impression is favorable or unfavorable?**



For every participant who had an unfavorable opinion of Larry LaRocco, there were 1.9 with a favorable impression. Overall, Jim Risch showed more favorable ratings than did Larry LaRocco.

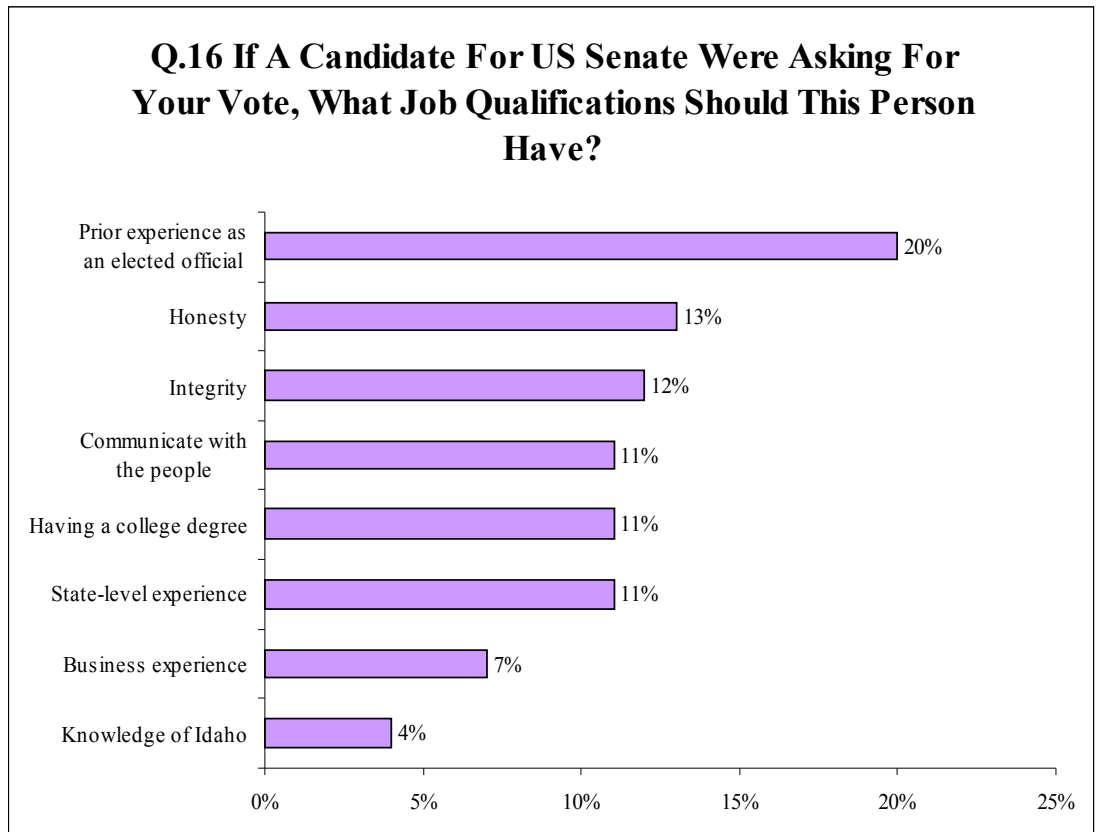
The difference in the mean scores of favorability ratings between Jim Risch and Larry LaRocco was statistically significant at the 99% confidence level.

The following is a pie chart which combines data from Q.13 and Q.15, to allow for easier interpretation of the data.



**Q.16 If a candidate for US Senate were asking for your vote, what job qualifications should this person have?**

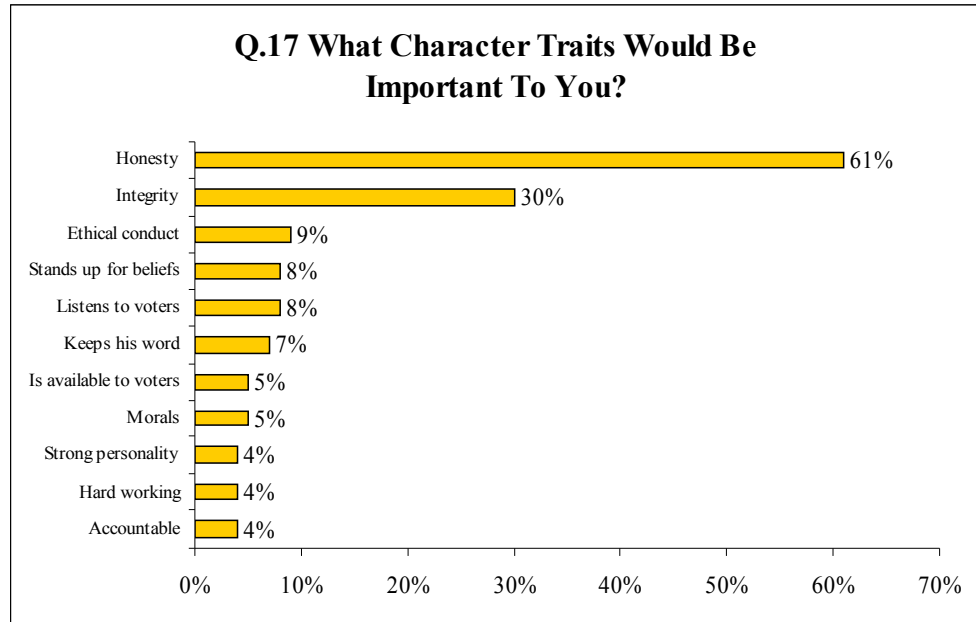
Eighty-seven percent offered at least one suggestion for a qualification. Note how the rankings of responses to this unaided question compare to the rankings of mean scores of importance when a list of attributes was tested in the Q19 through Q.37 series.



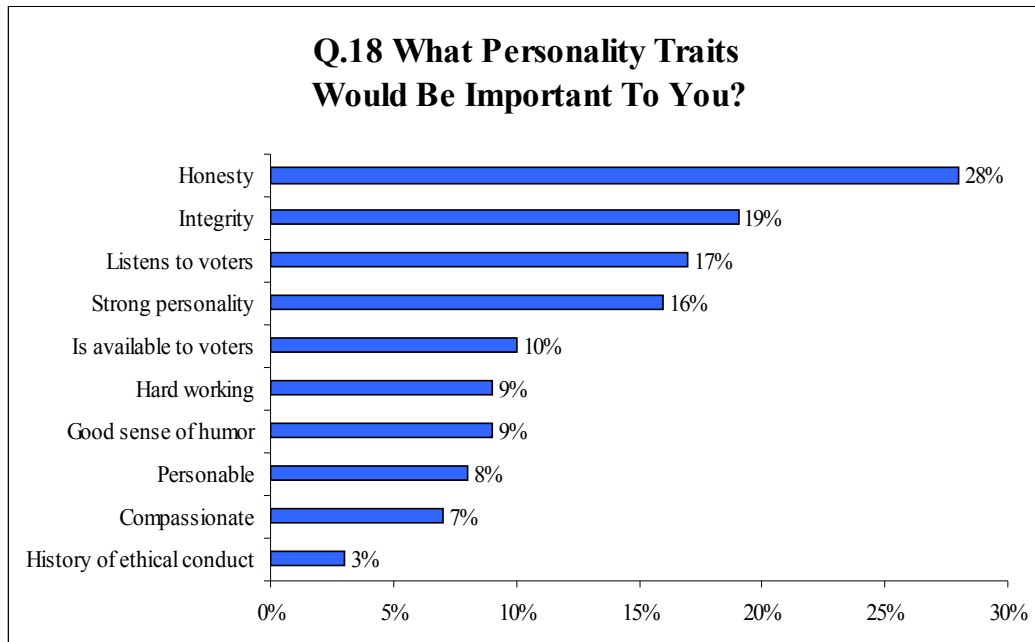
**Q.17 What character traits would be important to you?**

Honesty was mentioned as often as the next five attributes combined. Four of those five attributes arguably included elements of honesty.

Responses spanned the tested subsets quite evenly.



**Q.18 What personality traits would be important to you?**



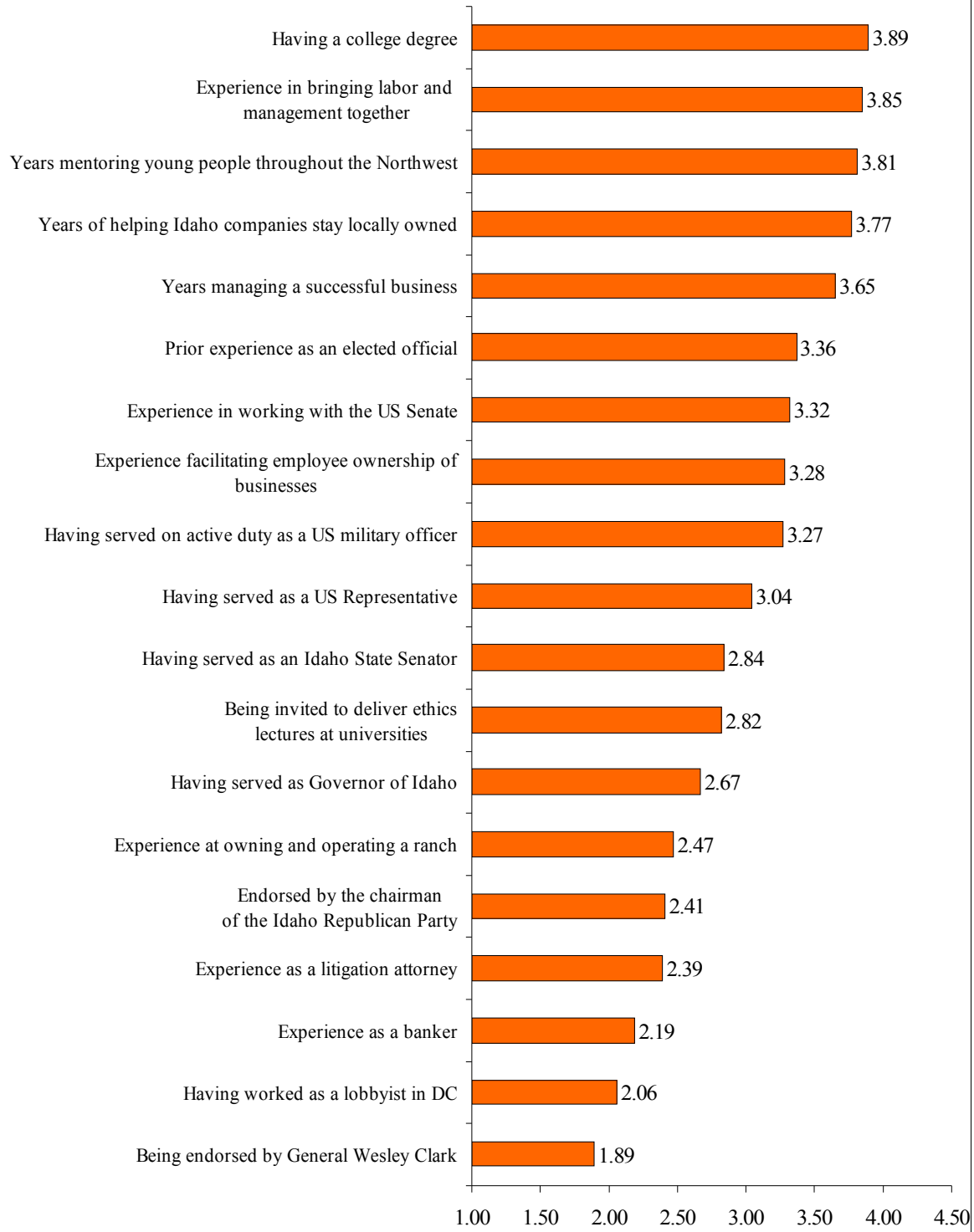
The responses to this question were quite comparable to the mentions of character traits in Q.17.

**Now I will read a list of qualifications for a US Senate candidate and after I read each one, please indicate how important it would be to you, by choosing any number on a five-point scale, with one being not at all important and five being very important. The first one is...**

- Q.19 Experience as a litigation attorney
- Q.20 Prior experience as an elected official
- Q.21 Experience in working with the US Senate
- Q.22 Having served as a US Representative
- Q.23 Being endorsed by General Wesley Clark
- Q.24 Experience at owning and operating a ranch
- Q.25 Having a college degree
- Q.26 Having served on active duty as a US military officer
- Q.27 Having years of experience at managing a successful business
- Q.28 Being invited to deliver ethics lectures at universities
- Q.29 Having decades of successful experience in bringing labor and management together to solve sticky problems
- Q.30 Being endorsed by the chairman of the Idaho Republican Party
- Q.31 Having served as an Idaho State Senator
- Q.32 Experience as a banker
- Q.33 Having worked as a lobbyist in Washington DC
- Q.34 Having years of successful experience with helping Idaho companies stay locally owned
- Q.35 Having years of experience at facilitating employee ownership of businesses
- Q.36 Having served as Governor of Idaho
- Q.37 Having years of experience at mentoring young people throughout the Northwest on integrity, ethics and accountability

**The graph on the following page shows each aspect in descending order, based on their mean scores of importance.**

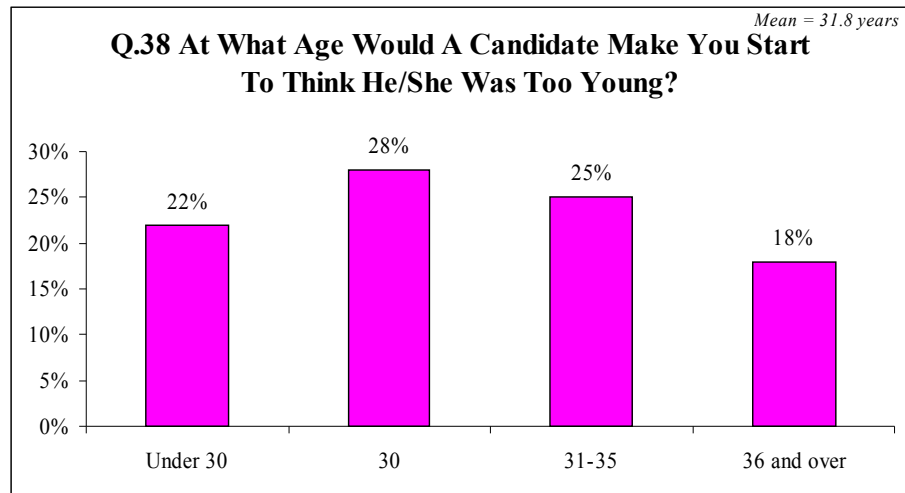
## Q.19-37 How Important Is The Following Qualification For A US Senate Candidate To You?



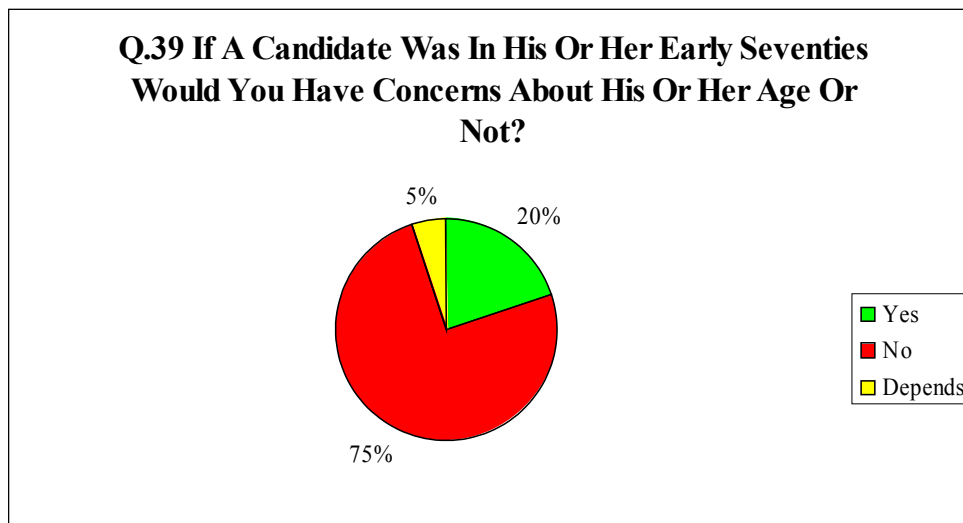
**Q.38 At what age would a candidate make you start to think he or she was too young to be an effective US Senator?**

The average age at which a candidate would be considered too young was 31.8 years.

Responses spanned the tested subsets quite evenly.



**Q.39 If a candidate was in his or her early seventies, had the experience and qualifications desired and proven good health, would you have concerns about his or her age or not?**

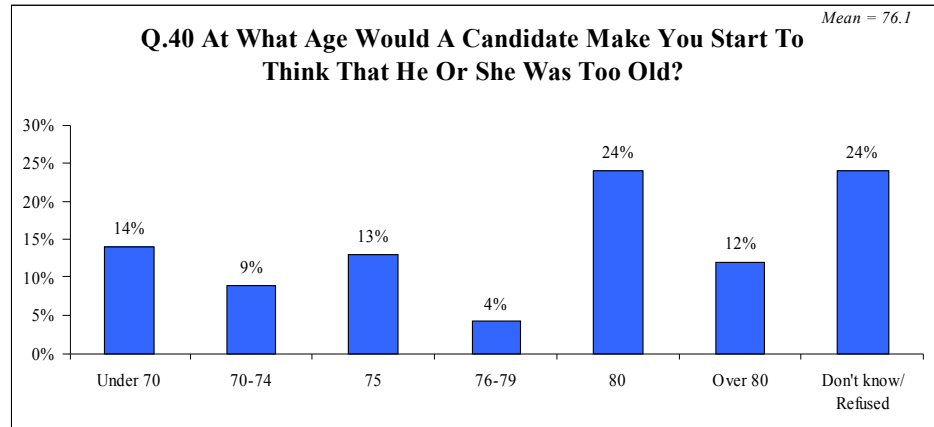


Three-fourths would have no concerns about a healthy candidate in his/her early seventies.

As the age of respondents increased, so did comfort with a 70+ candidate, but the correlation was not dramatic.

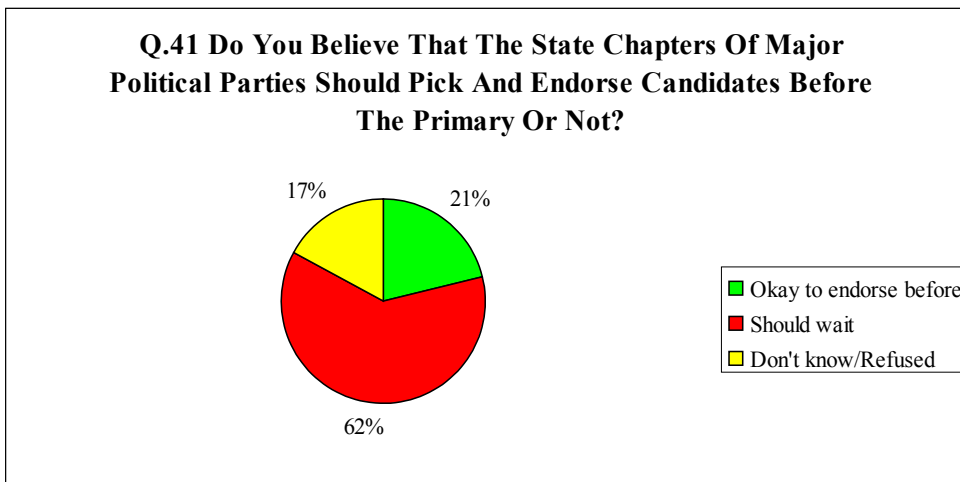
**Q.40 At what age would a candidate make you start to think that he or she was too old to be an effective US Senator?**

When the percentage who declined to consider that a given age would be the threshold of too old is combined with the percentages citing an age of eighty or older, we see that three-in-five would consider a candidate who was at least up to eighty years of age.



Independents with Republican sympathies gave the highest average age estimates.

**Q.41 Do you believe that the state chapters of major political parties should pick and endorse candidates before the primary election, or wait until after the primary election to make their endorsements?**

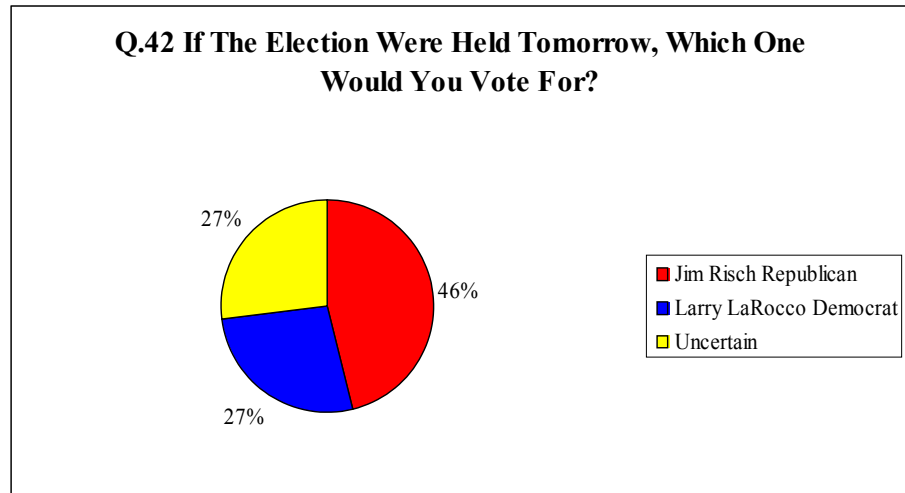


For every respondent who believed it would be okay to endorse before the primary election, there were 2.87 who believed that endorsements should only be made after the primary election.

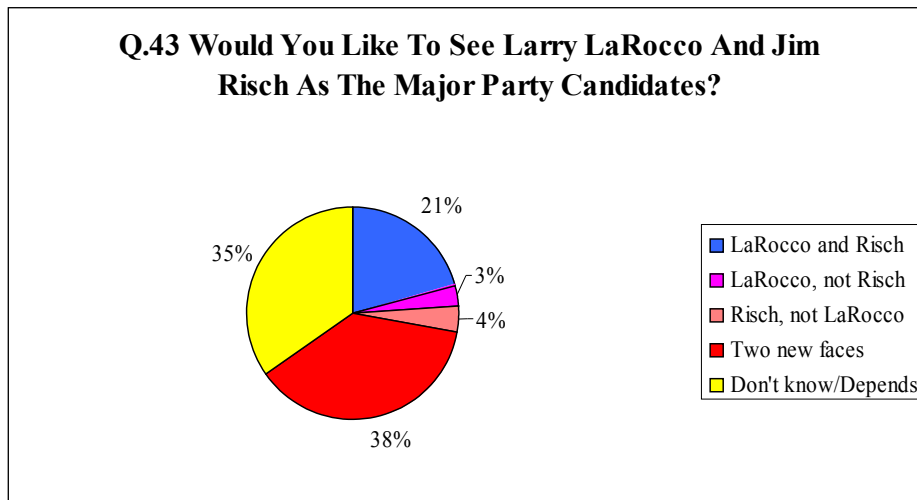
**Q.42 If the election were held tomorrow and the candidates for Idaho’s seat in the US Senate were Jim Risch Republican or Larry LaRocco Democrat, which one would you vote for?**

For every ten respondents who would vote for Larry LaRocco, there were seventeen who would vote for Jim Risch.

Other than the blatantly obvious correlations (party affiliation, favorability ratings of each candidate, etc.) the responses spanned the tested subsets quite evenly.



**Q.43 Thinking specifically for the race for US Senator, would you like to see Larry LaRocco and Jim Risch as the major party candidates or would you prefer to see some new faces in the race?**

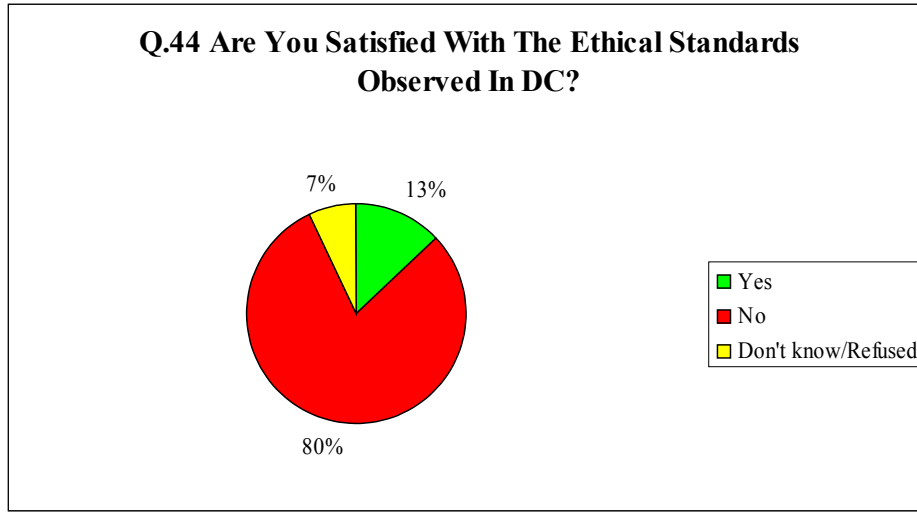


There were nearly twice as many who would like to see two new faces than there were who would like to see a race between Jim Risch and Larry LaRocco.

Those who would vote for Jim Risch were much more likely to prefer Risch versus LaRocco than were those who would vote for Larry LaRocco.

Larry LaRocco supporters were nearly twice as likely to prefer two new faces than were Jim Risch supporters.

**Q.44 Generally speaking, are you satisfied with the ethical standards observed in Washington DC?**



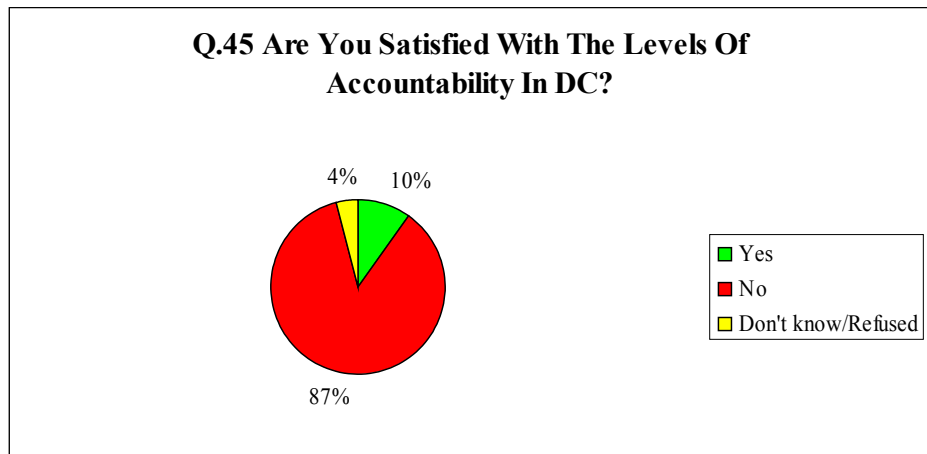
Four-in-five were not satisfied with the ethical standards.

As the age and education levels of respondents increased, likelihood of being satisfied generally decreased.

**Q.45 Generally speaking, are you satisfied with the levels of accountability in Washington DC?**

Nearly nine-in-ten (87%) were not satisfied with levels of accountability in DC.

The responses were so heavily clustered in the dissatisfied category that analysis of subsets was not practical.



## Demographic Variables

- The average age of these “good voters” (3+ in past 4) was 53.11 years, typical for a sampling of those with a history of voting in nearly all recent elections.
- The average years of formal education was 14.84.
- The following table shows the distribution of reported partisan preferences:

Republican	Independent/ Republican	Independent	Independent/ Democrat	Democrat	Other
53%	5%	5%	5%	22%	7%

- The following table shows the distribution of six categories along the Liberal/Conservative continuum.

Very Conservative	Somewhat Conservative	Neutral	Somewhat Liberal	Very Liberal
36%	28%	14%	12%	8%

- Fifty-seven percent were female, comparable to the percentage of females in the “good voter” sample.
- Twenty-six percent were from Ada County
- Fifty-two percent were from a county outside Ada County, but within the Mountain Time Zone
- Twenty-three percent were from a county in the Pacific Time Zone.
- Quotas and responses for all counties are shown in the Detailed Database Report.