

GENERAL SOCIAL SURVEY
FINAL REPORT

Trends in National Spending Priorities,
1973-2014

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Introduction

With the United States government facing continuing deficits and disagreements over the mix of taxes and spending in the budget, it is valuable to consider what the American people think governmental spending priorities should be and how their preferences have changed over the last four decades.

Since 1973 the General Social Surveys (GSSs) conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago have asked people whether government spending in various areas from health to foreign aid is too much, too little, or about right. Table 1 presents the spending preferences of the American public for all areas across all years. (The question wording is given in Table 1 and details on the GSSs appear in the Technical Appendix.) Eleven spending topics have been covered in the 29 GSSs between 1973 and 2014, 20 spending areas from 1984-1998, 21 in 2000, 22 in 2002-2008, and 23 in 2010-2014.

To help distill this crunch of numbers, public support for spending is summarized in net spending scores. Net spending is the % saying that "too little" is being spent minus the % saying "too much" is being spent. For example, in 2014 59.9% said that "too little" was spent on the environment and 10.9% said "too much" was spent for a net spending score of +49.0 (i.e. $59.9\% - 10.9 = +49.0$ percentage points). If everyone favored more spending for an area, the maximum net spending score would be +100.0 and if everyone wanted less spending, the net spending score would -100.0. Positive scores indicate that more people want to increase spending than to decrease it and negative scores mean that the cutters outnumber the adders.

Long-term Trends and Current Priorities

Education had generally led spending priorities in recent years, topping the list in 1996-2002 and 2006-2014. In absolute terms support for educational spending has been very high and changed little since 1989 (with net spending scores ranging from +65.8 to +71.5). In 2014, it scored +66.6.¹

After a first place rank in 2004 with a record high of +72.4, Health finished second in 2006-2008, but slipped to eighth place in 2014 with a score of +40.8. The drop seems to be associated with the passage of the Affordable Care Act in March, 2010.

¹Table 2 shows the rank and net spending scores for the eleven areas consistently covered from 1973 to 2014, Table 3 shows the same for the areas covered in 1984-2014, and Table 4 for the areas covered in 2002-2014. Rankings in the text reflect Table 4 plus the addition of the Alternative Energy item in 2010-2014.

Now in second place, Halting Crime was the perennial top choice from 1974 to 1988 and even regained first place in 1993 and 1994. But since 1994 net spending dropped from +71.4 to +50.6 in 2002, the lowest support for Halting Crime ever recorded. Its second place finish in 2014 is its best rank since 1996, but its net spending score of +53.1 in 2014 is little different than its score in the last 15 years.

In third place at +51.5, Assistance to the Poor has strongly rebounded from a 10th place showing in 1996. Its 2nd place position in 2010 and 2012 was its top finish ever and it had its best ever net spending score (+63.5) in 2004.

Support for environmental spending rose from +35.8 in 1980 to +70.4 and a first-place rank in 1989. But then backing of the Environment declined to +51.3 and a 7th place position in 1993. Then the Environment nudged upwards in both its net spending score and its relative rank, reaching 4th place in 2006, 2008, and 2014. Its 2014 score of +49.0 is however notably lower than levels in 2006-2008 (+61.9 and +58.7 respectively).

Social Security has gained major ground in in the 1990s rising from 10th place in 1993 and 1994 to 9th in 1996, and 4th or 5th position from 1998 to 2014. Its 2014 score of +48.9 is however notably below its levels in 2002-2008 (+55.7 to +60.5).

Dealing with Drug Addiction hit its record high of +66.8 and ranked 2nd in 1988, but slid back to a 7th place position with +57.7 by 1990. In 2014, it ranked in sixth place and its score was at +47.1.

Developing Alternative Energy Sources was added to the list in 2010 and finished fourth in 2010 and 2012. In 2014 it slipped to seventh place and it scored dipped to +46.4. The declining support may reflect the rise in traditional energy sources such as oil and natural gas.

Health fell from second place in 2008 to 8th position in 2014 with its net spending score dropping from +68.1 in 2008 to +40.8 in 2014.

Assistance for Childcare is 9th with a score of +40.7 in 2014. Since first included in 2000, support for more spending for childcare has weakened slightly.

Drug Rehabilitation comes in 10th place in 2014 with a score of +38.3. It rebounded from a drop in both rank and absolute score in 2012. Support for spending on Drug Rehabilitation has almost always been lower than support for Dealing with Drug Addiction.

Law Enforcement is in 11th place with a score of +33.2 in 2014. Support for spending on Law Enforcement has always trailed support for Halting Crime because people are attracted to the results-oriented action promised in the latter case.

In 12th place come Highways and Bridges with a score of +32.7 in 2014. Its 2010-2014 positions are well above its 14th place rank and +16.9 score in 2004.

Supporting Scientific Research is 13th in 2014 with a score of +29.7. Its rank and score have changed little from 2008-2014.

In 14th place in 2014 comes Solving the Problems of Big Cities with a score of +29.5. In both rank and absolute score, support for Solving the Problems of Big Cities is up somewhat from an all-time low in 2010.

Mass Transportation is at 15th place in 2014 with a score of +29.3. While higher than in the early 2000s, support slipped from its all-time best 10th place finish in 2008 with a score of +40.8.

Parks and Recreation is in 16th place with a score of +24.5 in 2014. Support for Parks and Recreation peaked in 2000 and its rank and score have been pretty stable from 2004 to 2014.

In 17th and 18th places in 2014 are two items on government programs for African Americans. Support for Improving the Condition of Blacks is at +17.4 and for the less results-promising Assistance to Blacks support stands at +3.6.

Defense is in 19th place in 2014 with a net spending score of +3.0. While low on the priority list, support rose appreciably from a low of -33.4 in 1993 to a recent high of +12.8 in 2002 in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The +3.0 score in 2014 was the first time defense was on positive side since 2004, but its rank did not rise in 2014 from its positions in 2010-2012.

In 20th place is Space Exploration with a score of -4.5. It is the first topic on the list to show a negative, net-spending score meaning that more people want to make cuts than to increase funding. Space has always finished close to the bottom, but its -4.5 score in 2014 is the highest it has ever achieved.

In 21st place comes Assistance to Big Cities at -19.1 in 2014. It finishes much worse than Solving the Problems of Big Cities because it does not promise positive results. It has shown little change in its rank or absolute score over the years. It is one of only four areas that has always had negative scores.

Welfare in 22th place in 2014 with a score of -30.8 has regained considerable ground from a near record low of -49.3 in 1994. (Its low point was -49.6 in 1977.) However, support for Welfare did not rise in 2010-2014 despite the economic downturn. Instead support has declined since 2008. Welfare has always been favored much less than Assistance to the Poor. People favor the idea of the government helping those with low-incomes, but many consider Welfare a failed program. Part of the rise in support for Welfare in the late 1990s reflects a positive response to the welfare reforms of the mid-1990s.

In last place in this and every year comes Foreign Aid with a score of -61.7 in 2014. This is up from between -70.1 to -71.5 in the early and mid-1990s, but down from a record high of -52.3 in 2008, leaving it solidly in 23rd place.

Overall Spending Trends

Support for overall spending (i.e. the average net spending across areas) has always been positive with more people favoring increases than cuts (Table 5). Looking at the 11 items that can be tracked from 1973 to 2014, support declined in the early 1970s to low points in 1976-78 (+11). The public then generally increased its overall support for spending over the next dozen years to highs of +24 to +25 in 1988-90. Then overall spending once again slipped to a moderate level of +16.8 in 1994 before rising again to a near record high of +23.7 in 2006. But it then declined during the recent economic downturn to from +17 to +18 in 2010-2012 before rebounding somewhat to +19.0 in 2014.

Support for domestic social spending (average net spending for Health, Education, Welfare, Solving the Problems of Big Cities, and Improving the Condition of Blacks) has also always been in the pluses. It fell from an early high of +29.2 in 1974 to a low of +13 to +14 in 1977-78. Support then generally moved up to a record high of +39.9 in 1990. Support then slipped to +26.4 in 1994, then rose to +36.7 in 2008 (its second highest). It was notably lower during the economic downturn and still has not regained pre-recession support levels standing at +24.7 in 2014.

Conclusion

Despite a dislike of taxes (e.g. in 2014, 57.0% said their own federal income tax was too high, 39.0% about right, 1.6% too low, and 2.4% don't know), more people have always favored increases in spending than cuts. In 2014, as in most years since the 1970s, people have backed more spending in about four-fifths of the areas and less spending in only the bottom quintile. Moreover, the number of areas with positive net spending scores not only outnumbered areas with negative scores, but are also larger. In 2014, the largest negative score (-61.7 for Foreign Aid) was bested by the top positive score (Education +66.6) and other top positive scores were well above the other negative scores.

The level of support has however waxed and waned over the decades. Support for both overall spending and domestic social spending declined from the early 1970s to the early 1980s before rebounding to a peak in 1990. Then support again fell off to lows in 1994-1996. After that support again picked up with overall spending peaking in 2006 and domestic social spending topping off in 2008. Both scales fell during the economic downturn. The over-spending score has started to rise again, but support for domestic social spending has not recovered.

Currently Education is clearly the public's top spending priority with a very high score (+67) that is above even other very popular areas like Halting Crime, Assistance to the Poor the Environment, Social Security, Dealing with Drug Addiction, and Alternative Energy (+46 to +53).

Table 1. Trends in National Spending Priorities, 1973-2014

We are faced with many problems in this country, none of which can be solved easily or inexpensively. I'm going to name some of these problems, and for each one I'd like you to tell me whether you think we're spending too much money on it, too little money, or about the right amount. First, (READ ITEM A)... are we spending too much, too little, or about the right amount on (ITEM)?

A. Space Exploration Program/Space Exploration ^a
B. Improving and Protecting the Environment/The Environment
C. Improving and Protecting the Nation's Health/Health
D1. Solving the Problems of the Big Cities
D2. Assistance to Big Cities
E1. Halting the Rising Crime Rate
E2. Law Enforcement
F1. Dealing with Drug Addiction
F2. Drug Rehabilitation
G. Improving the Nation's Education System/Education
H1. Improving the Condition of Blacks
H2. Assistance to Blacks
I. The Military, Armaments, and Defense/National Defense
J. Foreign Aid/Assistance to Other Countries
K1. Welfare
K2. Assistance to the Poor
L. Highways and Bridges
M. Social Security
N. Mass Transportation
O. Parks and Recreation
P. Assistance for Childcare
Q. Supporting Scientific Research
R. Developing Alternative Energy Sources

^aFor explanation of the dual headings see Technical Appendix.

A. Space Exploration Program/Space Exploration								
	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1980	1982
Too little	7.5	7.9	8.0	9.0	10.8	12.2	19.7	13.6
About right	31.1	29.2	32.2	29.4	37.3	37.9	37.7	44.5
Too much	61.4	62.9	59.8	60.8	51.9	49.9	42.6	41.9
Net (TL -TM)	-53.9	-55.0	-51.8	-51.8	-41.1	-37.7	-22.9	-28.3

A. Space Exploration Program/Space Exploration								
	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Too little	14.8	12.1	11.5	10.8	16.9	20.3	16.1	11.4
About right	43.1	43.8	45.7	48.3	43.5	42.6	46.3	46.8
Too much	42.1	44.2	42.8	40.9	39.6	37.1	37.7	41.8
Net (TL -TM)	-27.3	-32.1	-31.3	-30.1	-22.7	-16.8	-21.6	-30.4
	1991	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004
Too little	12.9	7.9	9.5	12.7	11.5	14.1	12.4	14.4
About right	48.3	39.7	41.6	44.6	46.9	42.3	49.7	45.5
Too much	38.8	52.4	48.9	42.7	41.6	43.6	38.0	40.1
Net (TL -TM)	-25.9	-44.5	-39.4	-30.0	-30.1	-29.5	-25.6	-25.7
	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014			
Too little	14.7	14.4	16.4	23.2	25.5			
About right	47.9	46.8	46.2	44.6	44.4			
Too much	37.4	38.7	37.4	32.2	30.0			
Net (TL - TM)	-22.7	-24.3	-21.0	-9.0	-4.5			

B. Improving and Protecting the Environment/The Environment								
	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1980	1982
Too little	64.6	63.7	57.9	58.6	52.1	55.0	51.9	54.4
About right	27.6	27.9	32.2	32.0	36.3	34.7	32.0	33.4
Too much	7.7	8.3	9.9	9.4	11.6	10.3	16.1	12.2
Net (TL -TM)	+56.9	+55.4	+48.0	+49.2	+40.5	+44.7	+35.8	+42.2
	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Too little	58.1	60.4	62.4	62.4	66.5	68.1	75.0	75.0
About right	32.5	32.4	29.6	31.3	27.4	27.4	20.4	21.2
Too much	9.4	7.1	8.0	6.3	6.1	4.6	4.6	3.8
Net (TL -TM)	+48.7	+53.3	+54.4	+56.1	+60.4	+63.5	+70.4	+71.2
	1991	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004
Too little	71.8	60.5	62.7	62.0	64.7	64.3	61.9	64.9
About right	23.2	30.2	28.2	27.7	27.5	27.7	29.8	28.2
Too much	5.0	9.2	9.0	10.3	7.8	8.0	8.2	6.8
Net (TL -TM)	+66.8	+51.3	+53.7	+51.7	+56.9	+56.3	+53.7	+58.1
	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014			
Too little	68.9	67.4	60.2	57.4	59.9			
About right	24.1	23.9	28.1	31.1	29.2			
Too much	7.0	8.7	11.7	11.5	10.9			
Net (TL -TM)	+61.9	+58.7	+48.5	+45.9	+49.0			

C. Improving and Protecting the Nation's Health/Health								
	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1980	1982
Too little	63.4	66.9	65.6	63.0	59.2	57.2	57.9	59.3
About right	31.8	28.8	29.1	32.4	34.0	35.9	34.3	33.8
Too much	4.8	4.3	5.4	4.6	6.8	6.9	7.8	6.9
Net (TL -TM)	+58.6	+62.6	+60.2	+58.4	+52.4	+50.3	+50.1	+52.4
	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Too little	59.5	58.8	57.8	60.6	68.5	70.2	70.4	72.2
About right	34.7	33.4	34.5	34.1	25.3	25.5	25.0	24.1
Too much	6.9	5.8	7.8	7.7	5.5	6.1	4.6	3.7
Net (TL -TM)	+52.6	+53.0	+50.0	+52.9	+63.0	+64.1	+65.8	+68.5
	1991	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004
Too little	70.7	73.2	66.0	65.6	69.6	71.9	73.7	78.3
About right	26.0	16.2	23.0	24.9	23.5	23.0	20.7	15.8
Too much	3.3	10.7	11.0	9.4	6.9	5.0	5.5	5.9
Net (TL -TM)	+67.4	+62.5	+55.0	+56.2	+62.7	+66.9	+68.2	+72.4
	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014			
Too little	73.5	76.2	60.3	61.2	57.6			
About right	19.4	15.7	20.8	23.9	25.7			
Too much	7.1	8.1	18.9	14.9	16.8			
Net (TL -TM)	+66.4	+68.1	+41.4	+46.3	+40.8			

D1. Solving the Problems of the Big Cities								
	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1980	1982
Too little	55.4	58.6	56.5	48.0	47.7	45.0	45.9	49.8
About right	31.0	29.0	29.5	29.9	29.6	33.6	29.5	26.9
Too much	13.7	12.3	14.0	22.0	22.7	21.5	24.6	23.4
Net (TL -TM)	+41.7	+46.3	+42.5	+26.0	+25.0	+23.5	+21.3	+26.4
	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Too little	47.3	51.9	43.3	49.2	44.4	54.7	53.1	59.0
About right	34.5	33.3	38.0	33.3	39.2	34.4	34.0	30.4
Too much	18.3	14.7	18.8	17.5	16.4	10.9	12.9	10.7
Net (TL -TM)	+29.0	+37.2	+24.5	+31.7	+28.0	+43.8	+40.2	+48.3
	1991	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004
Too little	52.5	62.1	60.8	59.1	51.6	51.9	44.7	43.3
About right	33.5	25.3	25.0	25.9	34.5	35.8	40.6	42.5
Too much	13.9	12.5	14.1	14.9	13.9	12.3	14.7	14.2
Net (TL -TM)	+38.6	+49.6	+46.7	+44.2	+37.7	+39.6	+30.0	+29.1
	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014			
Too little	48.1	48.6	42.8	42.3	45.7			
About right	39.1	38.5	37.3	39.4	38.2			
Too much	12.9	12.9	19.9	18.2	16.2			
Net (TL -TM)	+35.2	+35.7	+22.9	+24.1	+29.5			

D2. Assistance to Big Cities								
	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Too little	19.2	20.5	17.1	22.5	25.3	22.3	24.9	24.2
About right	42.0	37.4	43.4	43.1	40.3	40.1	44.7	39.5
Too much	38.8	42.1	39.5	34.4	34.4	37.6	30.4	36.3
Net (TL -TM)	-19.6	-21.6	-22.4	-11.9	-9.1	-15.3	-5.5	-12.1
	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006
Too little	27.2	27.2	25.6	22.0	26.9	17.2	18.7	21.7
About right	35.9	38.0	37.9	44.8	42.3	47.2	48.7	42.1
Too much	36.9	34.9	36.5	33.2	30.8	35.6	32.6	36.2
Net (TL -TM)	-9.7	-7.7	-10.9	-11.2	-3.9	-18.4	-13.9	-14.5
	2008	2010	2012	2014				
Too little	21.9	19.2	16.8	19.3				
About right	45.2	42.4	43.0	42.3				
Too much	33.0	38.4	40.2	38.4				
Net (TL - TM)	-11.1	-19.2	-23.4	-19.1				

E1. Halting the Rising Crime Rate								
	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1980	1982
Too little	68.3	70.6	69.2	70.0	70.6	67.7	72.2	75.9
About right	26.9	24.4	25.1	21.8	23.4	25.9	21.7	18.9
Too much	4.8	5.1	5.7	8.2	6.1	6.4	6.1	5.2
Net (TL -TM)	+63.5	+65.5	+63.5	+61.8	+64.5	+61.3	+66.1	+70.7
	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Too little	68.8	71.3	65.1	66.4	72.2	72.4	74.9	70.9
About right	25.8	23.8	29.0	29.1	22.5	23.4	20.1	24.8
Too much	5.4	4.9	5.9	4.5	5.3	4.2	4.9	4.3
Net (TL -TM)	+63.4	+66.4	+59.2	+61.9	+66.9	+68.2	+70.0	+66.9
	1991	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004
Too little	68.1	73.7	77.6	69.3	63.7	60.8	57.5	57.7
About right	26.7	21.1	16.3	23.1	28.9	33.6	35.6	37.0
Too much	5.2	5.1	6.2	7.6	7.4	5.6	6.9	5.3
Net (TL -TM)	+62.9	+68.6	+71.4	+61.7	+56.3	+55.2	+50.6	+52.4
	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014			
Too little	61.2	61.8	59.5	59.0	61.5			
About right	32.1	31.4	32.2	33.9	30.1			
Too much	6.6	6.8	8.3	7.1	8.4			
Net (TL -TM)	+54.6	+55.0	+51.2	+51.9	+53.1			

E2. Law Enforcement								
	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Too little	57.7	58.1	52.8	53.7	56.4	62.3	58.0	56.9
About right	35.3	36.2	40.5	39.8	38.1	30.9	36.4	37.1
Too much	6.9	5.7	6.6	6.5	5.5	6.8	5.7	6.1
Net (TL -TM)	+50.8	+52.4	+46.2	+47.2	+50.9	+55.5	+52.3	+50.8
	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006
Too little	60.4	65.3	59.1	56.8	52.2	48.2	54.1	55.3
About right	33.3	27.8	32.1	35.0	39.4	41.3	36.9	35.2
Too much	6.2	7.0	8.8	8.3	8.3	10.5	9.0	9.5
Net (TL -TM)	+54.2	+58.3	+50.3	+48.5	+43.9	+37.7	+45.1	+45.8
	2008	2010	2012	2014				
Too little	53.9	48.3	49.5	46.8				
About right	37.0	39.7	39.7	39.6				
Too much	9.1	11.9	10.9	13.6				
Net (TL – TM)	+44.8	+36.4	+38.6	+33.2				

F1. Dealing with Drug Addiction								
	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1980	1982
Too little	70.3	63.6	59.3	63.6	59.5	57.8	64.9	61.2
About right	23.1	29.4	32.3	28.5	31.9	32.7	27.3	29.6
Too much	6.6	7.0	8.5	7.9	8.7	9.5	7.9	9.3
Net (TL -TM)	+63.7	+56.6	+50.8	+55.7	+50.8	+48.3	+57.0	+51.9
	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Too little	62.0	66.2	64.8	60.1	66.4	70.9	73.0	64.6
About right	32.2	27.7	29.6	33.8	28.1	25.0	20.7	28.5
Too much	5.8	6.1	5.6	6.1	5.5	4.1	6.3	6.9
Net (TL -TM)	+56.2	+60.1	+59.2	+54.0	+60.9	+66.8	+66.7	+57.7
	1991	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004
Too little	60.3	63.3	63.2	60.4	60.8	62.2	57.8	55.3
About right	31.8	28.7	27.6	27.8	29.5	28.8	31.8	35.0
Too much	7.9	8.1	9.2	11.7	9.7	9.1	10.4	9.7
Net (TL -TM)	+52.4	+55.2	+54.0	+48.7	+51.1	+53.1	+47.4	+45.6
	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014			
Too little	62.1	57.3	56.4	55.8	59.5			
About right	30.6	32.6	33.2	31.9	28.0			
Too much	7.3	10.1	10.4	12.3	12.4			
Net (TL – TM)	+54.8	+47.2	+46.0	+43.5	+47.1			

F2. Drug Rehabilitation								
	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Too little	50.7	57.8	55.6	60.8	61.3	62.5	66.7	61.4
About right	39.2	33.9	34.4	31.2	30.4	28.2	25.1	30.8
Too much	10.1	8.3	10.0	8.0	8.2	9.3	8.2	7.8
Net (TL -TM)	+40.6	+49.5	+45.6	+52.8	+53.1	+53.2	+58.5	+53.6
	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006
Too little	57.9	55.5	57.2	56.0	54.8	54.7	52.4	54.9
About right	31.4	32.6	30.7	31.6	34.0	32.6	36.3	33.5
Too much	10.7	11.9	12.1	12.4	11.2	12.7	11.2	11.6
Net (TL -TM)	+47.2	+43.6	+45.1	+43.6	+43.6	+42.0	+41.2	+43.3
	2008	2010	2012	2014				
Too little	49.6	51.6	45.9	52.1				
About right	37.5	35.8	36.8	34.4				
Too much	12.9	12.5	17.3	13.6				
Net (TL - TM)	+36.7	+39.1	+28.6	+38.5				

G. Improving the Nation's Education System/Education								
	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1980	1982
Too little	51.3	53.5	51.8	52.6	50.4	53.3	55.9	57.2
About right	39.4	38.3	36.5	38.1	39.8	34.9	34.3	33.8
Too much	9.3	8.2	11.7	9.3	9.8	11.8	9.9	9.0
Net (TL -TM)	+42.0	+45.3	+40.1	+43.3	+40.6	+41.5	+46.0	+48.2
	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Too little	61.7	64.4	64.9	65.0	65.1	68.5	71.2	74.5
About right	32.2	20.6	28.8	30.4	29.3	27.7	25.5	22.5
Too much	6.1	5.0	6.2	4.7	5.6	3.8	3.3	3.0
Net (TL -TM)	+55.6	+59.4	+58.7	+60.3	+59.5	+64.7	+67.9	+71.5
	1991	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004
Too little	70.7	71.4	73.0	73.0	72.9	73.3	75.9	76.0
About right	24.8	23.0	21.5	21.5	20.5	21.8	19.0	19.1
Too much	4.5	5.6	5.5	5.5	6.6	4.9	5.1	4.9
Net (TL -TM)	+66.2	+65.8	+67.5	+67.5	+66.3	+68.4	+70.8	+71.1
	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014			
Too little	74.1	73.8	73.9	75.6	73.6			
About right	20.4	20.8	20.8	17.2	19.4			
Too much	5.4	5.4	5.3	7.2	7.0			
Net (TL -TM)	+68.7	+68.4	+68.6	+68.4	+66.6			

H1. Improving the Condition of Blacks								
	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1980	1982
Too little	35.3	33.4	29.4	29.6	27.5	26.3	26.7	30.2
About right	41.9	44.5	44.4	42.7	46.2	46.9	47.8	48.0
Too much	22.8	22.0	26.3	27.6	26.3	26.8	25.5	21.8
Net (TL -TM)	+12.5	+11.4	+3.1	+2.0	+1.2	-0.5	+1.2	+8.4
	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Too little	31.7	37.3	32.1	37.2	37.4	38.0	37.3	41.1
About right	47.2	46.0	46.3	46.2	46.3	45.3	46.1	42.7
Too much	21.1	16.3	21.6	16.6	16.3	16.6	16.1	15.9
Net (TL -TM)	+10.6	+21.0	+10.5	+20.6	+21.1	+21.4	+21.2	+25.2
	1991	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004
Too little	39.0	39.4	34.0	35.4	36.9	38.0	33.0	34.7
About right	45.3	43.6	43.9	43.2	45.2	45.4	48.8	50.1
Too much	15.6	17.0	22.1	21.4	17.9	16.7	18.3	15.2
Net (TL -TM)	+23.4	+22.4	+11.9	+14.0	+19.0	+21.3	+14.7	+19.5
	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014			
Too little	37.0	38.2	32.7	36.0	33.8			
About right	47.1	47.7	50.2	49.0	49.8			
Too much	15.9	14.0	17.1	15.0	16.4			
Net (TL -TM)	+21.1	+24.2	+15.6	+21.0	+17.4			

H2. Assistance to Blacks								
	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Too little	26.5	28.8	23.5	28.2	29.0	31.3	31.1	34.5
About right	45.9	44.8	47.8	47.6	46.2	44.7	45.7	45.4
Too much	27.6	26.4	28.8	24.2	24.8	24.0	23.2	20.1
Net (TL -TM)	-1.1	+2.4	-5.3	+4.0	+4.2	+7.3	+7.9	+14.4
	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006
Too little	27.2	26.5	25.4	29.3	33.4	25.7	27.9	27.7
About right	44.8	44.1	46.4	45.6	42.5	47.3	51.6	46.5
Too much	28.0	29.4	28.2	25.2	24.1	27.1	20.5	25.7
Net (TL -TM)	-0.8	-2.9	-2.8	+4.1	+9.3	-1.4	+7.4	+2.0
	2008	2010	2012	2014				
Too little	31.1	28.3	25.3	27.5				
About right	46.7	49.4	51.4	48.7				
Too much	22.2	22.4	23.3	23.9				
Net (TL - TM)	+8.9	+5.9	+2.0	+3.6				

I. The Military, Armaments, and Defense/National Defense								
	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1980	1982
Too little	12.1	17.9	17.8	26.2	25.7	29.8	60.9	31.2
About right	47.4	48.5	49.3	45.0	49.4	47.4	27.1	37.2
Too much	40.5	33.6	32.9	28.8	24.8	22.9	12.0	31.6
Net (TL -TM)	-28.4	-15.7	-15.1	-2.6	+0.9	+6.9	+48.9	+0.4
	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Too little	25.5	17.8	15.5	17.1	18.0	17.9	15.8	10.8
About right	40.2	43.0	42.5	44.3	41.3	42.6	42.9	44.9
Too much	34.3	39.1	42.0	38.7	40.8	39.5	41.3	44.3
Net (TL -TM)	-8.8	-21.3	-26.5	-21.6	-22.8	-21.6	-25.5	-33.5
	1991	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004
Too little	14.2	11.2	17.3	18.2	18.8	25.8	33.8	34.0
About right	59.1	44.2	49.3	48.9	49.2	48.2	45.2	39.1
Too much	26.8	44.6	33.4	32.9	32.0	26.0	21.0	26.9
Net (TL -TM)	-12.6	-33.4	-16.1	-14.7	-13.2	-0.2	+12.8	+7.1
	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014			
Too little	26.8	25.3	25.7	25.3	34.2			
About right	33.8	35.0	39.4	43.1	34.6			
Too much	39.4	39.7	34.9	31.6	31.2			
Net (TL -TM)	-12.6	-14.4	-9.2	-6.3	+3.0			

J. Foreign Aid/Assistance to Other Countries								
	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1980	1982
Too little	4.9	3.2	5.6	2.9	3.7	4.3	5.5	5.6
About right	21.9	18.3	17.8	18.5	25.5	25.3	21.5	19.0
Too much	73.2	78.5	76.7	78.6	70.8	70.4	72.9	75.3
Net (TL -TM)	-68.3	-75.3	-71.1	-75.7	-67.1	-66.1	-67.4	-69.7
	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Too little	4.4	4.4	7.6	5.2	6.3	4.9	5.6	6.2
About right	17.7	19.3	23.6	19.3	21.1	22.3	22.4	23.4
Too much	77.9	76.3	68.8	75.5	72.6	72.8	72.1	70.4
Net (TL -TM)	-73.5	-71.9	-61.2	-70.3	-66.3	-67.9	-66.5	-64.2
	1991	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004
Too little	3.7	4.5	4.6	4.2	6.8	8.5	7.8	9.4
About right	21.0	20.9	19.8	20.7	25.3	28.0	24.5	24.1
Too much	75.2	74.6	75.6	75.1	67.9	63.4	67.7	66.6
Net (TL -TM)	-71.5	-70.1	-71.0	-70.9	-61.1	-54.9	-59.9	-57.2
	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014			
Too little	10.8	11.0	7.8	7.7	7.2			
About right	24.7	25.8	29.3	24.2	23.9			
Too much	64.6	63.3	62.9	68.1	68.9			
Net (TL -TM)	-53.8	-52.3	-55.1	-60.4	-61.7			

K1. Welfare								
	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1980	1982
Too little	20.9	23.8	24.6	14.1	13.1	13.5	14.3	20.4
About right	25.0	32.8	30.0	22.7	24.2	24.9	26.5	28.4
Too much	54.1	43.4	45.4	63.2	62.7	61.6	59.2	51.2
Net (TL -TM)	-33.2	-19.6	-20.8	-49.1	-49.6	-48.1	-44.9	-30.8
	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Too little	22.1	24.4	18.9	23.4	21.5	24.7	24.2	24.4
About right	28.7	35.9	34.7	34.5	32.6	32.5	32.7	37.1
Too much	49.2	39.8	46.4	42.1	45.9	42.8	43.1	38.4
Net (TL -TM)	-27.1	-15.4	-27.5	-18.7	-24.4	-18.1	-18.9	-14.0
	1991	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004
Too little	24.0	17.1	13.1	15.3	16.0	20.8	20.9	23.6
About right	36.7	25.6	24.6	26.6	37.7	39.8	37.8	35.0
Too much	39.3	57.3	62.4	58.1	46.3	39.3	41.3	41.4
Net (TL -TM)	-15.3	-40.2	-49.3	-42.8	-30.3	-18.5	-20.4	-17.8
	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014			
Too little	25.1	25.4	23.2	19.1	19.8			
About right	36.5	36.4	34.5	33.3	29.6			
Too much	38.3	38.2	42.4	47.6	50.6			
Net (TL -TM)	-13.2	-12.8	-19.2	-28.5	-30.8			

K2. Assistance to the Poor								
	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Too little	63.2	65.8	63.2	67.3	70.2	68.1	68.7	66.4
About right	25.6	24.3	28.1	23.3	22.8	23.4	24.5	24.5
Too much	11.3	9.9	8.7	9.4	6.9	8.5	6.7	9.2
Net (TL -TM)	+51.9	+55.9	+54.5	+57.9	+63.3	+59.6	+62.0	+57.2
	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006
Too little	64.4	59.3	55.1	62.8	64.3	67.3	69.9	69.8
About right	23.0	25.2	26.3	25.8	24.2	24.5	23.7	22.4
Too much	12.6	15.5	18.6	11.4	11.5	8.2	6.4	7.8
Net (TL -TM)	+51.8	+43.8	+36.5	+51.4	+52.8	+59.1	+63.5	+62.0
	2008	2010	2012	2014				
Too little	70.2	67.5	63.9	63.6				
About right	21.7	22.5	26.0	24.2				
Too Much	8.1	9.9	10.1	12.1				
Net (TL -TM)	+62.1	+57.6	+53.8	+51.5				

L. Highways and Bridges								
	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Too little	49.1	44.0	36.5	36.9	37.4	40.1	47.0	36.4
About right	44.2	48.2	54.8	54.0	54.7	52.4	46.6	52.2
Too much	6.8	7.7	8.6	9.2	7.9	7.5	6.3	11.4
Net (TL -TM)	+42.3	+36.3	+27.9	+27.7	+29.5	+32.6	+40.7	+25.0
	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006
Too little	38.5	40.1	38.1	40.5	35.2	35.7	30.1	35.5
About right	52.4	51.9	52.3	49.4	52.5	51.7	56.7	53.0
Too much	9.1	7.9	9.6	10.1	12.4	12.6	13.2	11.5
Net (TL -TM)	+29.4	+32.2	+28.5	+30.4	+22.8	+23.1	+16.9	+24.0
	2008	2010	2012	2014				
Too little	45.3	44.1	43.0	44.9				
About right	45.0	44.7	43.9	42.8				
Too much	9.8	11.2	13.1	12.2				
Net (TL -TM)	+35.5	+32.9	+29.9	+32.7				

M. Social Security								
	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Too little	53.9	54.2	57.3	57.1	55.5	57.1	52.1	55.8
About right	35.9	38.5	36.2	36.1	39.4	37.9	42.2	40.2
Too much	10.2	7.3	6.5	6.8	5.1	5.0	5.8	4.0
Net (TL -TM)	+43.7	+46.9	+50.8	+50.3	+50.4	+52.1	+46.3	+51.8
	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006
Too little	46.0	49.1	51.7	59.8	60.3	61.0	66.0	63.9
About right	46.2	43.6	39.6	33.3	34.5	34.3	28.5	31.4
Too much	7.8	7.3	8.7	6.9	5.1	4.7	5.5	4.7
Net (TL -TM)	+38.2	+41.8	+43.0	+52.9	+55.2	+56.3	+60.5	+59.2
	2008	2010	2012	2014				
Too little	61.6	57.3	55.9	55.4				
About right	32.6	34.3	35.8	38.1				
Too much	5.9	8.4	8.3	6.5				
Net (TL -TM)	+55.7	+48.9	+47.6	+48.9				

N. Mass Transportation								
	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Too little	37.2	32.1	30.6	32.2	31.7	33.3	37.1	37.2
About right	50.9	54.2	55.3	53.7	57.2	56.3	53.2	53.0
Too much	11.9	13.7	14.1	14.1	11.1	10.3	9.8	9.8
Net (TL -TM)	+25.3	+18.4	+16.5	+18.1	+20.6	+23.0	+27.3	+27.4

N. Mass Transportation								
	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006
Too little	38.1	38.2	35.0	34.9	39.8	36.0	36.4	41.0
About right	50.9	53.1	53.4	54.7	51.8	53.3	53.0	49.9
Too much	11.0	8.7	11.6	10.4	8.4	10.7	10.6	10.1
Net (TL -TM)	+27.1	+29.5	+23.4	+24.5	+31.4	+25.3	+25.8	+30.9
	2008	2010	2012	2014				
Too little	48.7	42.7	39.9	38.6				
About right	43.3	46.5	50.1	52.1				
Too much	7.9	10.8	10.1	9.3				
Net (TL -TM)	+40.8	+31.9	+29.8	+29.3				

O. Parks and Recreation								
	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Too little	33.9	31.5	30.6	30.2	31.3	35.0	32.7	32.1
About right	60.5	60.7	63.1	63.2	63.2	59.7	61.3	63.1
Too much	5.6	7.8	6.4	6.6	5.5	5.3	6.0	4.8
Net (TL -TM)	+28.3	+23.7	+24.2	+23.6	+25.8	+29.7	+26.7	+27.3
	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006
Too little	32.5	31.4	33.5	36.3	36.7	34.5	31.9	33.5
About right	60.6	62.2	60.2	57.4	57.6	59.9	61.1	60.1
Too much	6.9	6.4	6.2	6.3	5.7	5.6	7.0	6.4
Net (TL -TM)	+25.6	+25.0	+27.3	+30.0	+31.0	+28.9	+24.9	+27.1
	2008	2010	2012	2014				
Too little	31.3	33.9	32.6	30.8				
About right	63.3	59.7	61.3	62.9				
Too much	5.4	6.4	6.1	6.3				
Net (TL -TM)	+25.9	+27.5	+26.5	+24.5				

P. Assistance for Childcare								
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014
Too Little	64.8	60.0	57.6	55.0	54.4	51.7	48.1	49.8
About Right	29.5	32.5	35.6	37.4	34.6	40.4	41.9	41.1
Too Much	5.7	7.5	6.8	7.6	6.8	7.9	10.0	9.1
Net (TL -TM)	+59.1	+52.5	+50.8	+47.4	+47.6	+43.8	+38.1	+40.7

Q. Supporting Scientific Research								
	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014	
Too Little	36.7	40.2	43.6	40.5	40.6	39.9	41.8	
About Right	48.9	47.3	44.3	48.3	46.6	45.9	46.1	
Too Much	14.4	12.5	12.1	11.2	12.7	14.1	12.1	
Net (TL -TM)	+22.3	+27.7	+31.5	+29.3	+27.9	+25.8	+29.7	

R. Developing Alternative Energy Sources								
	2010	2012	2014					
Too Little	64.1	61.9	57.0					
About Right	28.3	27.8	32.4					
Too Much	7.6	10.3	10.6					
Net (TL -TM)	+56.5	+51.6	+46.4					

Table 2. Rank of Net Spending Priorities, 1973-2014

RANK	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1980	1982	1983	1984	1985
1	Drugs +63.7	Crime +65.5	Crime +63.5	Crime +61.8	Crime +64.5	Crime +61.3	Crime +66.1	Crime +70.7	Crime +63.4	Crime +66.4	Crime +59.2
2	Crime +63.5	Health +62.6	Health +60.2	Health +58.4	Health +52.4	Health +50.3	Drugs +57.0	Health +52.4	Drugs +56.2	Drugs +60.1	Drugs +59.2
3	Health +58.6	Drugs +56.6	Drugs +50.8	Drugs +55.7	Drugs +50.8	Drugs +48.3	Health +50.1	Drugs +51.9	Educ. +55.6	Educ. +59.4	Educ. +58.7
4	Envir. +56.9	Envir. +55.4	Envir. +48.0	Envir. +49.2	Educ. +40.6	Envir. +44.7	Defense +48.9	Educ. +48.2	Health +52.6	Envir. +53.3	Envir. +54.4
5	SolCity +41.7	SolCity +46.3	SolCity +42.5	Educ. +43.3	Envir. +40.5	Educ. +41.5	Educ. +46.0	Envir. +42.2	Envir. +48.7	Health +53.0	Health +50.0
6	Educ. +42.0	Educ. +45.3	Educ. +40.1	SolCity +26.0	SolCity +25.0	SolCity +23.5	Envir. +35.8	SolCity +26.4	SolCity +29.0	SolCity +37.2	SolCity +24.5
7	ImpBlks +12.5	ImpBlks +11.4	ImpBlks +3.1	ImpBlks +2.0	ImpBlks +1.2	Defense +6.9	SolCity +21.3	ImpBlks +8.4	ImpBlks +10.6	ImpBlks +21.0	ImpBlks +10.5
8	Defense -28.4	Defense -15.7	Defense -15.1	Defense -2.6	Defense +0.9	ImpBlks -0.5	ImpBlks +1.2	Defense +0.4	Defense -8.8	Welfare -15.4	Defense -26.5
9	Welfare -33.2	Welfare -19.6	Welfare -20.8	Welfare -49.1	Space -41.1	Space -37.7	Space -22.9	Space -28.3	Welfare -27.1	Defense -21.3	Welfare -27.5
10	Space -53.9	Space -55.0	Space -51.8	Space -51.8	Welfare -49.6	Welfare -48.1	Welfare -44.9	Welfare -30.8	Space -27.3	Space -32.1	Space -31.3
11	ForAid -68.3	ForAid -75.3	ForAid -71.1	ForAid -75.7	ForAid -67.1	ForAid -66.1	ForAid -67.4	ForAid -69.7	ForAid -73.5	ForAid -71.9	ForAid -61.2

Table 2 Rank of Net Spending Priorities, 1973-2014 (continued)

RANK	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008
1	Crime +61.9	Crime +66.9	Crime +68.2	Envir. +70.4	Educ. +71.5	Health +67.4	Crime +68.6	Crime +71.4	Educ. +67.5	Educ. +66.3	Educ. +68.4	Educ. +70.8	Health +72.4	Educ. +68.7	Educ. +68.4
2	Educ. +60.3	Health +63.0	Drugs +66.8	Crime +70.0	Envir. +71.2	Envir. +66.8	Educ. +65.8	Educ. +67.5	Crime +61.7	Health +62.7	Health +66.9	Health +68.2	Educ. +71.1	Health +66.4	Health +68.1
3	Envir. +56.1	Drugs +60.9	Educ. +64.7	Educ. +67.9	Health +68.5	Educ. +66.2	Health +62.5	Health +55.0	Health +56.2	Envir. +56.9	Envir. +56.3	Envir. +53.7	Envir. +58.1	Envir. +61.9	Envir. +58.7
4	Drugs +54.0	Envir. +60.4	Health +64.1	Drugs +66.7	Crime +66.9	Crime +62.9	Drugs +55.2	Drugs +54.0	Envir. +51.7	Crime +56.3	Crime +55.2	Crime +50.6	Crime +52.4	Drugs +54.8	Crime +55.0
5	Health +52.9	Educ. +59.5	Envir. +63.5	Health +65.8	Drugs +57.7	Drugs +52.4	Envir. +51.3	Envir. +53.7	Drugs +48.7	Drugs +51.1	Drugs +53.1	Drugs +42.0	Drugs +45.6	Crime +54.6	Drugs +47.2
6	SolCity +31.7	SolCity +28.0	SolCity +43.8	SolCity +40.2	SolCity +48.3	SolCity +38.6	SolCity +49.6	SolCity +46.7	SolCity +44.2	SolCity +37.7	SolCity +39.6	SolCity +30.0	SolCity +29.1	SolCity +35.2	SolCity +35.7
7	ImpBlks +20.6	ImpBlks +21.1	ImpBlks +21.4	ImpBlks +21.2	ImpBlks +25.2	ImpBlks +23.4	ImpBlks +22.4	ImpBlks +11.9	ImpBlks +14.0	ImpBlks +19.0	ImpBlks +21.3	ImpBlks +14.7	ImpBlks +19.5	ImpBlks +21.1	ImpBlks +24.2
8	Welfare -18.7	Defense -22.8	Space -16.8	Welfare -18.9	Welfare -14.0	Defense -12.6	Defense -33.4	Defense -16.1	Defense -14.7	Defense -13.2	Defense -0.2	Defense +12.8	Defense +7.1	Defense -12.6	Welfare -12.8
9	Defense -21.6	Space -22.7	Welfare -18.1	Space -21.6	Space -30.4	Welfare -15.3	Welfare -40.2	Space -39.4	Space -30.0	Space -30.1	Welfare -18.5	Welfare -20.4	Welfare -17.8	Welfare -13.2	Defense -14.4
10	Space -30.1	Welfare -24.4	Defense -21.6	Defense -25.5	Defense -33.5	Space -25.9	Space -44.5	Welfare -49.3	Welfare -42.8	Welfare -30.3	Space -29.5	Space -25.6	Space -25.7	Space -22.7	Space -24.3
11	ForAid -70.3	ForAid -66.3	ForAid -67.9	ForAid -66.5	ForAid -64.2	ForAid -71.5	ForAid -70.1	ForAid -71.0	ForAid -70.9	ForAid -61.1	ForAid -54.9	ForAid -59.9	ForAid -57.2	ForAid -53.8	ForAid -52.3

Abbreviations/Labels Used in Tables 2-4:

- AidBlks=Assistance to Blacks
- AidCity=Assistance to Big Cities
- Crime=Halting the Rising Crime Rate
- Defense=The Military, Armaments, and Defense/National Defense
- Drugs=Dealing with Drug Addiction
- Educ.=Improving the Nation's Education System/Education

Envir.=Improving and Protecting the Environment/The Environment

ForAid=Foreign Aid/Assistance to Other Countries

Health=Improving and Protecting the Nation's Health/Health

ImpBlks=Improving the Condition of Blacks

LawEnf=Law Enforcement

Parks=Parks and Recreation

Poor=Assistance to the Poor

Rehab.=Drug Rehabilitation

Roads=Highways and Bridges

SocSec=Social Security

SolCity=Solving the Problems of the Big Cities

Space=Space Exploration Program/Space Exploration

Trans.=Mass Transportation

Welfare=Welfare

Table 2. Rank of Net Spending Priorities, 1973-2014 (continued)

RANK	2010	2012	2014
1	Educ. +68.6	Educ. +68.4	Educ. +66.6
2	Crime +51.2	Crime +51.9	Crime +53.1
3	Envir. +48.5	Health +46.3	Envir. +49.0
4	Drugs +46.0	Envir. +45.9	Drugs +47.1
5	Health +41.4	Drugs +43.5	Health +40.8
6	SolCity +22.9	SolCity +24.1	SolCity +29.5
7	ImpBlks +15.6	ImpBlks +21.0	ImpBlks +17.4
8	Defense -9.2	Defense -6.3	Defense +3.0
9	Welfare -19.2	Space -9.0	Space -4.5
10	Space -21.0	Welfare -28.5	Welfare -30.8
11	For Aid -55.1	ForAid -60.4	ForAid -61.7

Table 3. Rank of Net Spending Priorities, 1984-2014

RANK	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006
1	Crime +66.4	Crime +59.2	Crime +61.9	Crime +66.9	Crime +68.2	Envir. +70.4	Educ. +71.5	Health +67.4	Crime +68.6	Crime +71.4	Educ. +67.5	Educ. +66.3	Educ. +68.4	Educ. +70.8	Health +72.4	Educ. +68.7
2	Drugs +60.1	Drugs +59.2	Educ. +60.3	Health +63.0	Drugs +66.8	Crime +70.0	Envir. +71.2	Envir. +66.8	Educ. +65.8	Educ. +67.5	Crime +61.7	Health +62.7	Health +66.9	Health +68.2	Educ. +71.1	Health +66.4
3	Educ. +67.9	Educ. +58.7	Envir. +56.1	Drugs +60.9	Educ. +59.4	Educ. +67.9	Health +68.5	Educ. +66.2	Health +62.5	LawEnf +58.3	Health +56.2	Envir. +56.7	Envir. +56.3	Poor +59.1	Poor +63.5	Poor +62.0
4	Envir. +53.3	Poor +55.9	Poor +54.5	Envir. +60.4	Health +64.1	Drugs +66.7	Crime +66.9	Crime +62.9	Drugs +55.2	Health +55.0	Envir. +51.7	Crime +56.3	SocSec +55.2	SocSec +56.3	SocSec +60.5	Envir. +61.9
5	Health +53.0	Envir. +54.4	Drugs +54.0	Educ. +59.5	Envir. +63.5	Health +65.8	Poor +62.0	Poor +57.2	LawEnf +54.2	Drugs +54.0	LawEnf +50.3	SocSec +52.9	Crime +55.2	Envir. +53.7	Envir. +58.1	SocSec +59.2
6	Poor +51.9	LawEnf +52.4	Health +52.9	Poor +57.9	Poor +63.3	Poor +59.6	Rehab. +58.5	Rehab. +53.6	Poor +51.8	Envir. +53.7	Drugs +48.7	Poor +51.4	Drugs +53.1	Crime +50.6	Crime +52.4	Drugs +54.8
7	LawEnf +50.8	Health +50.0	SocSec +50.8	Rehab. +52.8	Rehab. +53.1	LawEnf +55.5	Drugs +57.7	Drugs +52.4	Envir. +51.3	SolCity +46.7	Rehab. +45.1	Drugs +51.1	Poor +52.8	Drugs +47.4	Drugs +45.6	Crime +54.6
8	SocSec +43.7	Rehab. +49.5	LawEnf +46.2	SocSec +50.3	LawEnf +50.9	Rehab. +53.2	LawEnf +52.3	SocSec +51.8	SolCity +49.6	Poor +43.8	SolCity +44.2	LawEnf +48.5	LawEnf +43.9	Rehab. +42.0	LawEnf +45.1	LawEnf +45.8
9	Roads +42.3	SocSec +46.9	Rehab. +45.6	LawEnf +47.2	SocSec +50.4	SocSec +52.1	SolCity +48.3	LawEnf +50.8	Rehab. +47.2	Rehab. +43.6	SocSec +43.0	Rehab. +43.6	Rehab. +43.6	LawEnf +37.7	Rehab. +41.2	Rehab. +43.3
10	Rehab. +40.6	Roads +36.3	SolCity +31.7	SolCity +28.0	SolCity +43.8	SolCity +40.2	SocSec +46.3	SolCity +38.6	SocSec +38.2	SocSec +41.8	Poor +36.5	SolCity +37.7	SolCity +39.6	SolCity +30.0	SolCity +29.1	SolCity +35.2
11	SolCity +37.2	SolCity +24.5	Roads +27.9	Roads +27.7	Roads +29.5	Roads +32.6	Roads +40.7	Trans. +27.4	Roads +29.4	Roads +32.2	Roads +28.5	Roads +30.4	Trans. +31.4	Parks +28.9	Trans. +25.8	Trans. +30.9
12	Parks +28.3	Parks +23.7	Parks +24.2	Parks +23.6	Parks +25.8	Parks +29.7	Trans. +27.3	Parks +27.3	Trans. +27.1	Trans. +29.5	Parks +27.3	Parks +30.0	Parks +31.0	Trans. +25.3	Parks +24.9	Parks +27.1
13	Trans. +25.3	ImpBlks +10.5	ImpBlks +20.6	ImpBlks +21.1	ImpBlks +21.4	Trans. +23.0	ImpBlks +25.2	Roads +25.0	Parks +25.6	Parks +25.0	Trans. +23.4	Trans. +24.5	Roads +22.8	Roads +23.1	ImpBlks +19.5	Roads +24.0
14	ImpBlks Trans. +21.0	Trans. +18.4	Trans. +16.5	Trans. +18.1	ImpBlks +20.6	Parks +21.2	ImpBlks +26.7	ImpBlks +23.4	ImpBlks +22.4	ImpBlks +11.9	ImpBlks +14.0	ImpBlks +19.0	ImpBlks +21.3	Roads +14.7	ImpBlks +16.9	ImpBlks +21.1

RANK	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1993	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006
15	AidBlks -1.1	AidBlks +2.4	AidBlks -5.3	AidBlks +4.0	AidBlks +4.2	AidBlks +7.3	AidBlks +7.9	AidBlks +14.4	AidBlks -0.8	AidBlks -2.9	AidBlks -2.8	AidBlks +4.1	AidBlks +9.3	Defense +12.8	AidBlks +7.4	AidBlks +2.0
16	Welfare -15.4	AidCity -21.6	Welfare -18.7	AidCity -11.9	AidCity -9.0	AidCity -15.3	AidCity -5.5	AidCity -12.1	AidCity -9.7	AidCity -7.7	AidCity -10.9	AidCity -11.2	Defense -0.2	AidBlks -1.4	Defense +7.1	Defense -12.6
17	AidCity -19.6	Defense -26.5	Defense -21.6	Defense -22.8	Space -16.8	Welfare -18.9	Welfare -14.0	Defense -12.6	Defense -33.4	Defense -16.1	Defense -14.7	Defense -13.2	AidCity -3.9	AidCity -18.4	AidCity -13.9	Welfare -13.2
18	Defense -21.3	Welfare -27.5	AidCity -22.4	Welfare -24.4	Welfare -18.1	Space -21.6	Space -30.4	Welfare -15.3	Welfare -40.2	Space -39.4	Space -30.0	Space -30.1	Welfare -18.5	Welfare -20.6	Welfare -17.8	AidCity -14.5
19	Space -32.1	Space -31.3	Space -30.1	Space -22.7	Defense -21.6	Defense -25.5	Defense -33.5	Space -25.9	Space -44.5	Welfare -49.3	Welfare -42.8	Welfare -30.3	Space -29.5	Space -25.6	Space -25.7	Space -22.7
20	ForAid -71.9	ForAid -61.2	ForAid -70.3	ForAid -66.3	ForAid -67.9	ForAid -66.5	ForAid -64.2	ForAid -71.5	ForAid -70.1	ForAid -71.0	ForAid -70.9	ForAid -61.1	ForAid -54.9	ForAid -59.9	ForAid -57.2	ForAid -53.8

Table 3. Rank of Net Spending Priorities, 1984-2014 (continued)

Rank	2008	2010	2012	2014
1	Educ. +68.4	Educ. +68.6	Educ. +68.4	Educ. +66.6
2	Health +68.1	Poor +57.6	Poor +53.8	Crime +53.1
3	Poor +62.1	Crime +51.2	Crime +51.9	Poor +51.5
4	Envir. +58.7	SocSec +48.9	SocSec +47.6	Envir. +49.0
5	SocSec +55.5	Envir. +48.5	Health +46.3	SocSec +48.9
6	Crime +55.0	Drugs +46.0	Envir. +45.9	Drugs +47.1
7	Drugs +47.2	Health +41.4	Drugs +43.5	Health +40.8
8	LawEnf +44.8	Rehab. +39.1	LawEnf +38.6	Rehab +38.3
9	Trans. +40.8	LawEnf +36.4	Roads +29.9	LawEnf +33.2
10	Rehab. +36.7	Roads +32.9	Trans +29.8	Roads +32.7
11	SolCity +35.7	Trans +31.9	Rehab +28.6	SolCity +29.5
12	Roads +35.5	Parks +27.5	Parks +26.5	Trans +29.3
13	Parks +25.9	SolCity +22.9	SolCity +24.1	Parks +24.5
14	ImpBlks +24.2	Impblks +15.6	ImpBlks +21.0	ImpBlks +17.4
15	AidBlks +8.9	AidBlks +5.9	AidBlks +2.0	AidBlks +3.6
16	AidCity -11.1	Defense -9.2	Defense -6.3	Defense +3.0
17	Welfare -12.8	Welfare -19.2	Space -9.0	Space -4.5
18	Defense -14.4	Aid City -19.2	AidCity -23.4	AidCity -19.1
19	Space -24.3	Space -21.2	Welfare -28.5	Welfare -30.8
20	ForAid -52.3	ForAid -55.1	ForAid -60.4	ForAid -61.7

Table 4. Rank of Net Spending Priorities, 2002-2014

	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014
1	Educ. +70.8	Health +72.4	Educ. +68.7	Educ. +68.4	Educ. +68.6	Educ. +68.4	Educ. +66.6
2	Health +68.2	Educ. +71.1	Health +66.4	Health +68.1	Poor +57.6	Poor +53.8	Crime +53.1
3	Poor +59.1	Poor +63.5	Poor +62.0	Poor +62.1	Crime +51.2	Crime +51.9	Poor +51.5
4	SocSec +56.3	SocSec +60.5	Envir. +61.9	Envir. +58.7	SocSec +48.9	SocSec +47.6	Envir. +49.0
5	Envir. +53.7	Envir. +58.1	SocSec +59.2	SocSec +55.7	Envir. +48.5	Health +46.3.	SocSec +48.9
6	Child +52.5	Crime +52.4	Drugs +54.8	Crime +55.0	Drugs +46.0	Envir. +45.9	Drugs +47.1
7	Crime +50.6	Child +50.8	Crime +54.6	Child +47.6	Child +43.8	Drugs +43.5	Health +40.8
8	Drugs +47.4	Drugs +45.6	Child +47.4	Drugs +47.2	Health +41.4	LawEnf +38.6	Child +40.7
9	Rehab. +42.0	LawEnf +45.1	LawEnf +45.8	LawEnf +44.8	Rehab. +39.1	Child +38.1	Rehab +38.3
10	LawEnf +37.7	Rehab. +41.2	Rehab. +43.3	Trans. +40.8	LawEnf +36.4	Roads +29.9	LawEnf +33.2
11	SolCity +30.0	SolCity +29.1	SolCity +35.2	Rehab. +36.7	Roads +32.9	Trans. +29.8	Roads +32.7
12	Parks +28.9	Science +27.7	Science +31.5	SolCity +35.7	Trans. +31.9	Rehab. +28.6	Science +29.7
13	Trans. +25.3	Trans. +25.8	Trans. +30.9	Roads +35.5	Science +27.9	Parks +26.5	SolCity +29.5
14	Roads +23.1	Parks +24.9	Parks +27.1	Science +29.3	Parks +27.5	Science +25.8	Tran3 +29.5
15	Science +22.3	ImpBlks +19.5	Roads +24.0	Parks +25.9	SolCity +22.9	SolCity +24.1	Parks +24.5
16	ImpBlks +14.7	Roads +16.9	ImpBlks +21.1	ImpBlks +24.2	ImpBlks +15.6	ImpBlks +21.0	ImpBlks +17.4
17	Defense +12.8	AidBlks +7.4	AidBlks +2.0	AidBlks +8.9	AidBlks +5.9	AidBlks +2.0	AidBlks +3.6
18	AidBlks -1.4	Defense +7.1	Defense -12.6	AidCity -11.1	Defense -9.2	Defense -6.3	Defense +3.0
19	AidCity -18.4	AidCity -13.9	Welfare -13.2	Welfare -12.8	AidCity -19.2	Space -9.0	Space -4.5
20	Welfare -20.6	Welfare -17.8	AidCity -14.5	Defense -14.4	Welfare -19.2	AidCity -23.4	AidCity -19.1
21	Space -25.6	Space -25.7	Space -22.7	Space -24.3	Space -21.0	Welfare -28.5	Welfare -30.8
22	ForAid -59.9	ForAid -57.2	ForAid -53.8	ForAid -52.3	ForAid -55.1	ForAid -60.4	ForAid -61.7

Table 5. Trends in Overall and Domestic Welfare Spending, 1973-2014

	Overall Spending	Domestic Social Spending
1973	+14.1	+24.2
1974	+16.1	+29.2
1975	+13.6	+25.0
1976	+10.7	+16.1
1977	+10.9	+13.9
1978	+11.3	+13.3
1980	+17.4	+14.7
1982	+13.8	+20.9
1983	+16.3	+24.1
1984	+19.1	+31.0
1985	+15.5	+23.2
1986	+17.9	+29.4
1987	+20.3	+29.4
1988	+24.4	+35.2
1989	+24.5	+35.2
1990	+24.3	+39.9
1991	+22.9	+36.1
1993	+17.0	+32.0
1994	+16.8	+26.4
1996	+16.9	+27.8
1998	+19.5	+31.1
2000	+23.4	+35.5
2002	+21.5	+32.7
2004	+23.1	+34.9
2006	+23.7	+35.6
2008	+23.0	+36.7
2010	+17.2	+25.9
2012	+17.9	+26.3
2014	+19.0	+24.7

Overall Spending = Average Net Spending for all 11 items

Domestic Welfare Spending = Average Net Spending for 5 items (Improving and Protecting the Nation's Health/Health, Solving the Problems of the Big Cities, Improving the Nation's Education System/Education, Improving the Condition of Blacks, Welfare)

Technical Appendix

General Social Surveys (GSSs)

The GSSs are conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago. Principal funding comes from the National Science Foundation. Tom W. Smith, Peter V. Marsden, and Michael Hout are the principal investigators. The GSS are full-probability samples of adults living in households in the United States. Interviews are conducted in-person. Sample size across 1973-2012 in the standard cross-sections totals 55,448 respondents (1973=1504, 1974=1484, 1975=1490, 1976=1499, 1977=1530, 1978=1532, 1980=1468, 1982=1506, 1983=1599, 1984=1473, 1985=1534, 1986=1470, 1987=1466, 1988=1481, 1989=1537, 1990=1372, 1991=1517, 1993=1606, 1994=2992, 1996=2904, 1998=2832, 2000=2817; 2002=2765; 2004=2812; 2006=2992; 2008=2023; 2010=2044; 2012=1974; 2014=2538). Full technical details on the sample, response rates, and other methodological matters are presented in Tom W. Smith, Peter V. Marsden, and Michael Hout, General Social Surveys, 1972-2014: Cumulative Codebook. Chicago: NORC, 2015. The data are on-line at <http://www3.norc.org/GSS+Website/>.

National Spending Priority Items

Items covering 11 areas have been asked in every GSS since 1973 (Space Exploration Program, Improving and Protecting the Environment, Improving and Protecting the Nation's Health, Solving the Problems of the Big Cities, Halting the Rising Crime Rate, Dealing with Drug Addiction, Improving the Nation's Education System, Improving the Condition of Blacks, The Military, Armaments, and Defense, Foreign Aid, Welfare). Since 1984 an additional four areas have been included (Highways and Roads, Social Security, Mass Transportation, Parks and Recreation). In 2000 a 16th area (Assistance for Childcare) was added, in 2002 a 17th area (Supporting Scientific Research, and in 2010 an 18th area (Developing Alternative Energy Sources).

Also since 1984, 11 alternative wordings for the original spending items have been asked on a random sub-sample (Space Exploration, The Environment, Health, Assistance to Big Cities, Law Enforcement, Drug Rehabilitation, Education, Assistance to Blacks, National Defense, Assistance to Other Countries, Assistance to the Poor). When the alternative wordings produced distributions that did not significantly differ from the original wordings they have been combined together (Space Exploration Program/Space Exploration, Improving and Protecting the Environment/The Environment, Improving and Protecting the Nation's Health/Health, Improving the Nation's Education System/Education, The Military, Armaments,

and Defense/National Defense, Foreign Aid/Assistance to Other Countries). For the remaining five original spending areas the standard and alternative results are presented separately.

Differences between the standard and alternative wordings are examined in Tom W. Smith, "A Preliminary Analysis of Methodological Experiments in the 1984 GSS," GSS Methodological Report No. 30. Chicago: NORC, 1984; Tom W. Smith, "That Which We Call Welfare by Any Other Name Would Smell Sweeter: An Analysis of the Impact of Question Wording on Response Patterns," Public Opinion Quarterly, 51 (Spring, 1987), 75-83; Kenneth A. Rasinski, "The Effect of Question Wording on Public Support for Government Spending," GSS Methodological Report No. 54. Chicago: NORC, 1988; and Tom W. Smith, "Wording Effects on National Spending Priority Items Across Time, 1973-2004," GSS Methodological Report No. 107. Chicago: NORC, 2006.