

Trends in National Spending Priorities, 1973-2008

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Facing soaring deficits and disagreements over the mix of taxes and spending in the stimulus program, the President and the Congress may wish 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 the National Opinion Research Center 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 26 GSSs between 1973 and 2008, 20 spending areas from 1984-1998, 21 in 2000, and 22 in 2002-2008.

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 2008 67.4% said that "too little" was spent on the environment and 8.7% said "too much" was spent for a net spending score of +61.9 (i.e. $67.4\% - 8.7 = +58.7$ 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.

Current Priorities:

Education had generally led spending priorities in recent years, topping the list in 1996-2002, 2006, and 2008. 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).¹

After a first place rank in 2004 health finished second in 2008 with a score of +68.1

Together Health and Education distinguish themselves from the other areas as regularly being among the most favored programs during the last decade. In nine surveys since 1990 Health topped the list twice and Education finished first seven times. Moreover, they both are consistently ahead of the next group of spending areas.

¹Table 2 shows the rank and net spending scores for the eleven areas consistently covered from 1973 to 2008, Table 3 shows the same for the areas covered in 1984-2008, and Table 4 for the areas covered in 2002-2008. The current (2008) rankings mentioned in this section are from Table 4.

Next, in 2008 comes six closely grouped areas, Assistance to the Poor 3rd at +62.1, the Environment 4th at +58.7, Social Security fifth at +55.7, Halting Crime seventh at +55.0, Assistance for Childcare seventh at +47.6, and Dealing with Drug Addiction 8th at +47.2. These spending areas are not only close in absolute terms, but have frequently switched relative positions in recent years.

Now in 3rd place at +62.1, Assistance to the Poor has strongly rebounded from a 10th place showing in 1996. It showed its top relative finish ever in 2002-2008 and had its best ever absolute 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. Since then the Environment has nudged upwards in both its net spending score and its relative rank, reaching 4th place in both 2006 and 2008.

Social Security has gained major ground in recent years rising from 10th place in 1993 and 1994 to 9th in 1996, 5th in 1998, 4th in 2000-2004, and 5th in 2006 and 2008. Its net spending score of +60.5 in 2004 in was the highest it has ever achieved.

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 has dropped from +71.4 to +50.6 in 2002, the lowest support for Halting Crime ever recorded. Despite some recent gains, its 2008 score of +55.0 and 6th place position are still low compared to its earlier period of dominance.

Assistance for Childcare is 7th with a score of +47.6. Since first included in 2000, support for more spending for childcare has weakened somewhat.

Dealing with Drug Addiction hit its recorded high of +66.8 and ranked 2nd in 1988, but slid back to a 7th place position with +57.7 by 1990. In 2006 both its rank (6th place) and net spending (+54.8) showed gains over recent years. But in 2008 it slipped again to 8th place at +47.2.

Law Enforcement is in 9th place with a score of +44.8 in 2008. 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 area. Like support for Halting Crime, support for Law Enforcement is up somewhat in 2008 from its lowest-measured level in 2002.

Mass Transportation is at 10th place in 2008 with a score of +40.8. This is up 3 positions and 15.5 points from 2002. The especially sharp rise from 2006 to 2008 probably reflect the increased demand for mass transportation due to high gas prices in the first half of 2008.

Drug Rehabilitation comes in 11h place in 2008 with a score of +36.7. Support for spending on Drug Rehabilitation has almost

always been lower than support for Dealing with Drug Addiction, but the gap widened appreciably in 2006 and 2008.

In 12th place in 2008 comes Solving the Problems of Big Cities with a score of +35.7. In both rank and absolute score support for Solving the Problems of Big Cities fell from the mid-1990s to 2004, but in 2006 and 2008 it moved upwards.

In 13th place come Highways and Bridges with a score of +35.5 in 2008. Both rank and absolute score set record lows in 2004, but support increased in 2006 and shot up in 2008 following the Minneapolis bridge collapse in August, 2007.

Supporting Scientific Research is 14th in 2008 with a score of +29.3. Since first included in 2002, support first grew, but then fell back a bit in 2008.

Parks and Recreation is in 15th place with a score of +25.9 in 2008. Parks and Recreation has stayed around the same position over the years and its net spending score has changed little.

In 16th and 17th places in 2008 are two items on government programs for African Americans. Support for Improving the Condition of Blacks is at +24.2 and for the less results-promising Assistance to Blacks support stands at +8.9.

In 18th place comes Assistance to Big Cities at -11.1 in 2008. 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. 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 19th place in 2008 with a record high score of -12.8 has regained considerable ground from a near record low of -49.3 in 1994. (Its low point was -49.6 in 1977). Welfare has always been favored much less than Assistance to the Poor. People like the idea of the government helping those with low-incomes, but consider Welfare a failed program. Part of the rise in support for Welfare reflects a positive response to the welfare reforms of the mid-1990s.

Defense is in 20th place in 2008 with a net spending score of -12.6. While low on the priority list, support rose appreciably from a low of -33.4 in 1993 to a recent high of +7.8 in 2002 in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Support for more spending then dropped notably from 2004 to 2008.

In 21st place is Space Exploration with a score of -24.3. Space has always finished close to the bottom. While its absolute score is up from -44.5 in 1993, its rank is unchanged.

In last place in this and every year comes Foreign Aid with a score of -52.3 in 2008. This is Foreign Aid's best score, up from -70 to -72 in the early and mid-1990s, but this still leaves it solidly in 22nd 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 2008, 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 +24/25 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 and +23.0 in 2008.

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 +13/14 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 and since then rose to +36.7 in 2008 (its second highest).

Conclusion:

Despite a dislike of taxes (e.g. in 2008 57% said their own federal income tax was too high), more people have always favored increases in spending than cuts. In 2008, as in most years since the 1970s, people have backed more spending in about three-quarters of the areas and less spending in only the bottom quarter. Moreover, the number of areas with positive net spending scores not only outnumbered areas with negative scores, but are also larger. In 2008, the largest negative score (-52.3 for Foreign Aid) was bested by the top six positive scores (Health +68.1, Education +68.4, Assistance for the Poor +62.1, Environment +58.7, Social Security +55.7, and Halting Crime +55.5).

The level of support has however waxed and waned over the decades. From 1993 to 2000 it showed an upswing with overall spending scores approaching the record levels of the late 1980s and early 1990s. After a drop in 2002 support for spending was higher in 2004-08.

Currently Education and Health are clearly the public's top two spending priorities with very high scores (both +68) that are consistently above even other very popular areas like Assistance to the Poor, the Environment, Social Security, Halting Crime, Assistance for Childcare, and Dealing with Drugs Addiction (+47 to +62).

Table 1

Trends in National Spending Priorities, 1973-2008

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

^aFor explanation of the dual headings see Technical Appendix.

Table 1 (continued)

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
	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						
Too little	14.7	14.4						
About right	47.9	46.8						
Too much	37.4	38.7						
Net (TL - TM)	-22.7	-24.3						

Table 1 (continued)

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						
Too little	68.9	67.4						
About right	24.1	23.9						
Too much	7.0	8.7						
Net (TL - TM)	+61.9	+58.7						

Table 1 (continued)

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						
Too little	73.5	76.2						
About right	19.4	15.7						
Too much	7.1	8.1						
Net (TL - TM)	+66.4	+68.1						

Table 1 (continued)

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						
Too little	48.1	48.6						
About right	39.1	38.5						
Too much	12.9	12.9						
Net (TL - TM)	+35.2	+35.7						

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

Table 1 (continued)

D2. Assistance to Big Cities

	2008
Too little	21.9
About right	45.2
Too much	33.0
Net (TL - TM)	-11.1

Table 1 (continued)

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						
Too little	61.2	61.8						
About right	32.1	31.4						
Too much	6.6	6.8						
Net (TL - TM)	+54.6	+55.0						

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

Table 1 (continued)

E2. Law Enforcement

	2008
Too little	53.9
About right	37.0
Too much	9.1
Net (TL - TM)	+44.8

Table 1 (continued)

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						
Too little	62.1	57.3						
About right	30.6	32.6						
Too much	7.3	10.1						
Net (TL - TM)	+54.8	+47.2						

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

F2. Drug Rehabilitation

	2008
Too little	49.6
About right	37.5
Too much	12.9
Net (TL - TM)	+36.7

Table 1 (continued)

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						
Too little	74.1	73.8						
About right	20.4	20.8						
Too much	5.4	5.4						
Net (TL - TM)	+68.7	+68.4						

Table 1 (continued)

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						
Too little	37.0	38.2						
About right	47.1	47.7						
Too much	15.9	14.0						
Net (TL - TM)	+21.1	+24.2						

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

Table 1 (continued)

H2. **Assistance to Blacks**

	2008
Too little	31.1
About right	46.7
Too much	22.2
Net (TL - TM)	+ 8.9

Table 1 (continued)

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	26.0	26.9
Net (TL - TM)	-12.6	-33.4	-16.1	-14.7	-13.2	-0.2	+7.8	+7.1
	2006	2008						
Too little	26.8	25.3						
About right	33.8	35.0						
Too much	39.4	39.7						
Net (TL - TM)	-12.6	-14.4						

Table 1 (continued)

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						
Too little	10.8	11.0						
About right	24.7	25.8						
Too much	64.6	63.3						
Net (TL - TM)	-53.8	-52.3						

Table 1 (continued)

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						
Too little	25.1	25.4						
About right	36.5	36.4						
Too much	38.3	38.2						
Net (TL - TM)	-13.2	-12.8						

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

Table 1 (continued)

K2. Assistance to the Poor

	2008
Too little	70.2
About right	21.7
Too Much	8.1
Net (TL - TM)	+62.1

Table 1 (continued)

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							
Too little	45.3							
About right	45.0							
Too much	9.8							
Net (TL - TM)	+35.5							

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							
Too little	61.6							
About right	32.6							
Too much	5.9							
Net (TL - TM)	+55.7							

Table 1 (continued)

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
	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							
Too little	48.7							
About right	43.3							
Too much	7.9							
Net (TL - TM)	+40.8							

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							
Too little	31.3							
About right	63.3							
Too much	5.4							

Net (TL - TM) +25.9

P. Assistance for Childcare

	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008
Too Little	64.8	60.0	57.6	55.0	54.4
About Right	29.5	32.5	35.6	37.4	34.6
Too Much	5.7	7.5	6.8	7.6	6.8
Net (TL - TM)	+59.1	+52.5	+50.8	+47.4	+47.6

Q. Supporting Scientific Research

	2002	2004	2006	2008
Too Little	36.7	40.2	43.6	40.5
About Right	48.9	47.3	44.3	48.3
Too Much	14.4	12.5	12.1	11.2
Net (TL - TM)	+22.3	+27.7	+31.5	+29.3

Table 2

Rank of Net Spending Priorities, 1973-2008

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

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, 1973-2008 (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 +7.8	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

Table 3
Rank of Net Spending Priorities, 1984-2008

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 +21.0	Trans. +18.4	Trans. +16.5	Trans. +18.1	Trans. +20.6	ImpBlks +21.2	Parks +26.7	ImpBlks +23.4	ImpBlks +22.4	ImpBlks +11.9	ImpBlks +14.0	ImpBlks +19.0	ImpBlks +21.3	ImpBlks +14.7	Roads +16.9	ImpBlks +21.1
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 +7.8	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 (continued)

Rank	2008
1	Educ. +68.4
2	Health +68.1
3	Poor +62.1
4	Envir. +58.7
5	SocSec +55.5
6	Crime +55.0
7	Drugs +47.2
8	LawEnf +44.8
9	Trans. +40.8
10	Rehab. +36.7
11	SolCity +35.7
12	Roads +35.5
13	Parks +25.9
14	ImpBlks +24.2
15	AidBlks + 8.9
16	AidCity -11.1
17	Welfare -12.8
18	Defense -14.4
19	Space -24.3
20	ForAid -52.3

Table 4: Rank of Net Spending Priorities, 2002-2008

	2002	2004	2006	2008
1	Educ. +70.8	Health +72.4	Educ. +68.7	Educ. +68.4
2	Health +68.2	Educ. +71.1	Health +66.4	Health +68.1
3	Poor +59.1	Poor +63.5	Poor +62.0	Poor +62.1
4	SocSec +56.3	SocSec +60.5	Envir. +61.9	Envir. 58.7
5	Envir. +53.7	Envir. +58.1	SocSec +59.2	SocSec +55.7
6	Child +52.5	Crime +52.4	Drugs +54.8	Crime +55.0
7	Crime +50.6	Child +50.8	Crime +54.6	Child +47.6
8	Drugs +47.4	Drugs +45.6	Child +47.4	Drugs +47.2
9	Rehab. +42.0	LawEnf +45.1	LawEnf +45.8	LawEnf +44.8
10	LawEnf +37.7	Rehab. +41.2	Rehab. +43.3	Trans. +40.8
11	SolCity +30.0	SolCity +29.1	SolCity +35.2	Rehab. +36.7
12	Parks +28.9	Science +27.7	Science +31.5	SolCity +35.7
13	Trans. +25.3	Trans. +25.8	Trans. +30.9	Roads +35.5
14	Roads +23.1	Parks +24.9	Parks +27.1	Science +29.3
15	Science +22.3	ImpBlks +19.5	Roads +24.0	Parks +25.9
16	ImpBlks +14.7	Roads +16.9	ImpBlks +21.1	ImpBlks +24.2
17	Defense +7.8	AidBlks +7.4	AidBlks +2.0	AidBlks + 8.9
18	AidBlks -1.4	Defense +7.1	Defense -12.6	AidCity -11.1
19	AidCity -18.4	AidCity -13.9	Welfare -13.2	Welfare -12.8
20	Welfare -20.6	Welfare -17.8	AidCity -14.5	Defense -14.4
21	Space -25.6	Space -25.7	Space -22.7	Space -24.3
22	ForAid -59.9	ForAid -57.2	ForAid -53.8	ForAid -52.3

Table 5

Trends in Overall and Domestic Welfare Spending, 1973-2008

	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	+21.1	+32.7
2004	+23.1	+34.9
2006	+23.7	+35.6
2008	+23.0	+36.7

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, Solving the Problems of the Big Cities, Improving the Nation's Education System, Improving the Condition of Blacks, Welfare)

Technical Appendix

General Social Surveys (GSS)

The GSS are conducted by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago. James A. Davis, Tom W. Smith, and Peter V. Marsden 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 1973-2008 in the standard cross-sections totals 50,723 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). Full technical details on the sample, response rates, and other methodological matters are presented in James A. Davis, Tom W. Smith, and Peter V. Marsden, General Social Surveys, 1972-2008: Cumulative Codebook. Chicago: NORC, 2009.

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 and in 2002 a 17th area (Supporting Scientific Research).

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.