

Trends in National Spending Priorities, 1973-2010

Tom W. Smith

General Social Survey
National Opinion Research Center
University of Chicago

March, 2011

Facing soaring 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 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 27 GSSs between 1973 and 2010, 20 spending areas from 1984-1998, 21 in 2000, and 22 in 2002-2010.

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 2010 60.2% said that "too little" was spent on the environment and 11.7% said "too much" was spent for a net spending score of +48.5 (i.e. $60.2\% - 11.7 = +48.5$ 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 and 2006-2010. 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 2006-2008, but slipped to eight place in 2010 with a scores of +41.4.

¹Table 2 shows the rank and net spending scores for the eleven areas consistently covered from 1973 to 2010, Table 3 shows the same for the areas covered in 1984-2010, and Table 4 for the areas covered in 2002-2010. The current (2010) rankings mentioned in this section are from Table 4.

Now in second place at +57.6, Assistance to the Poor has strongly rebounded from a 10th place showing in 1996. It showed its top relative finish ever in 2010 and had its best ever absolute score (+63.5) in 2004.

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. Its third place finish in 2010 is its best rank since 1998, but its absolute score of +51.2 is marginally lower than in recent years.

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, 5th in 2006-2008, and back to 4th in 2010. Its net spending score of +60.5 in 2004 was the highest it has ever achieved. Since then it has remained in 4th or 5th place, but its absolute score has slipped to +48.9 in 2010.

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 both 2006 and 2008, but it then declined to 5th position in 2010 with a score of +48.5.

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 2006, both its rank (6th place) and net spending (+54.8) showed gains over recent years. In 2008, it slipped to +47.2 and 8th place. In 2010, it decreased to +46.0, but moved back to 6th place.

Assistance for Childcare is 7th with a score of +43.8 in 2010. Since first included in 2000, support for more spending for childcare has weakened somewhat.

Health fell from second place to 8th position in 2010 with its net spending score dropping from +68.1 to +41.4.

Drug Rehabilitation comes in 9th place in 2010 with a score of +39.1. Support for spending on Drug Rehabilitation has almost always been lower than support for Dealing with Drug Addiction.

Law Enforcement is in 10th place with a score of +36.4 in 2010. 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.

In 11th place come Highways and Bridges with a score of +32.9 in 2010. Its 2010 position is the highest it ever achieved and well above its 16th place rank in 2004.

Mass Transportation is at 12th place in 2010 with a score of +31.9. 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.

Supporting Scientific Research is 13th in 2010 with a score of +27.9. Since first included in 2002, support first grew, but then fell back a bit in 2008-2010.

Parks and Recreation is in 14th place with a score of +27.5 in 2010. Parks and Recreation has stayed around the same position over the years and its net spending score has changed little.

In 15th place in 2010 comes Solving the Problems of Big Cities with a score of +22.9. In both rank and absolute score, support for Solving the Problems of Big Cities is at an all-time low in 2010.

In 16th and 17th places in 2010 are two items on government programs for African Americans. Support for Improving the Condition of Blacks is at +15.6 and for the less results-promising Assistance to Blacks support stands at +5.9.

Defense is in 18th place in 2010 with a net spending score of -9.2. 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. 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 was down in 2006-2010, shifting back into negative scores.

In 19th place comes Assistance to Big Cities at -19.2 in 2010. 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 20th place in 2010 with a score of -19.2 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 despite the economic downturn. 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 many 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.

In 21st place is Space Exploration with a score of -21.0. 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 -55.1 in 2010. This is a fairly strong score for Foreign

Aid, 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 2010, 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, but then declined to +17.2 in 2010.

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, then rose to +36.7 in 2008 (its second highest) before slipping back to +25.9 in 2010.

Conclusion:

Despite a dislike of taxes (e.g. in 2010 52% said their own federal income tax was too high, 46% about right, and 2% too low), more people have always favored increases in spending than cuts. In 2010, 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 2010, the largest negative score (-55.1 for Foreign Aid) was bested by the top two positive scores (Education +68.6 and Assistance for the Poor +57.6).

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 highest over overall spending in 2006 and for domestic social spending in 2008. Both scales then decreased in 2010.

Currently Education is clearly the public's top spending

priority with a very high score (+69) that is above even other very popular areas like Assistance to the Poor, Halting Crime, Social Security, the Environment, Dealing with Drug Addiction, Assistance for Childcare, and Health (+41 to +58).

Table 1

Trends in National Spending Priorities, 1973-2010

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	2010					
Too little	14.7	14.4	16.4					
About right	47.9	46.8	48.2					
Too much	37.4	38.7	37.4					
Net (TL - TM)	-22.7	-24.3	-21.0					

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	2010					
Too little	68.9	67.4	60.2					
About right	24.1	23.9	28.1					
Too much	7.0	8.7	11.7					
Net (TL - TM)	+61.9	+58.7	+48.5					

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	2010					
Too little	73.5	76.2	60.3					
About right	19.4	15.7	20.8					
Too much	7.1	8.1	18.9					
Net (TL - TM)	+66.4	+68.1	+41.4					

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	2010					
Too little	48.1	48.6	42.8					
About right	39.1	38.5	37.3					
Too much	12.9	12.9	19.9					
Net (TL - TM)	+35.2	+35.7	+22.9					

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	2010
Too little	21.9	19.2
About right	45.2	42.4
Too much	33.0	38.4
Net (TL - TM)	-11.1	-19.2

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	2010					
Too little	61.2	61.8	59.5					
About right	32.1	31.4	32.2					
Too much	6.6	6.8	8.3					
Net (TL - TM)	+54.6	+55.0	+51.2					

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	2010
Too little	53.9	48.3
About right	37.0	39.7
Too much	9.1	11.9
Net (TL - TM)	+44.8	+36.4

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	2010					
Too little	62.1	57.3	56.4					
About right	30.6	32.6	33.2					
Too much	7.3	10.1	10.4					
Net (TL - TM)	+54.8	+47.2	+46.0					

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

Table 1 (continued)

F2. Drug Rehabilitation

	2008	2010
Too little	49.6	51.6
About right	37.5	35.8
Too much	12.9	12.5
Net (TL - TM)	+36.7	+39.1

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	2010					
Too little	74.1	73.8	73.9					
About right	20.4	20.8	20.8					
Too much	5.4	5.4	5.3					
Net (TL - TM)	+68.7	+68.4	+68.6					

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	2010					
Too little	37.0	38.2	32.7					
About right	47.1	47.7	50.2					
Too much	15.9	14.0	17.1					
Net (TL - TM)	+21.1	+24.2	+15.6					

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	2010
Too little	31.1	28.3
About right	46.7	49.4
Too much	22.2	22.4
Net (TL - TM) +	8.9	+5.9

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	2010					
Too little	26.8	25.3	25.7					
About right	33.8	35.0	39.4					
Too much	39.4	39.7	34.9					
Net (TL - TM)	-12.6	-14.4	-9.2					

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	2010					
Too little	10.8	11.0	7.8					
About right	24.7	25.8	29.3					
Too much	64.6	63.3	62.9					
Net (TL - TM)	-53.8	-52.3	-55.1					

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	2010					
Too little	25.1	25.4	23.2					
About right	36.5	36.4	34.5					
Too much	38.3	38.2	42.4					
Net (TL - TM)	-13.2	-12.8	-19.2					

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	2010
Too little	70.2	67.5
About right	21.7	22.5
Too Much	8.1	9.9
Net (TL - TM)	+62.1	+57.6

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	2010						
Too little	45.3	44.1						
About right	45.0	44.7						
Too much	9.8	11.2						
Net (TL - TM)	+35.5	+32.9						

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						
Too little	61.6	57.3						

About right	32.6	34.3
Too much	5.9	8.4
Net (TL - TM)	+55.7	+48.9

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	2010						
Too little	48.7	42.7						
About right	43.3	46.5						
Too much	7.9	10.8						
Net (TL - TM)	+40.8	+31.9						

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						

Too little	31.3	33.9
About right	63.3	59.7
Too much	5.4	6.4

Net (TL - TM) +25.9 +27.5

P. Assistance for Childcare

	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010
Too Little	64.8	60.0	57.6	55.0	54.4	51.7
About Right	29.5	32.5	35.6	37.4	34.6	40.4
Too Much	5.7	7.5	6.8	7.6	6.8	7.9

Net (TL - TM) +59.1 +52.5 +50.8 +47.4 +47.6 +43.8

Q. Supporting Scientific Research

	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010
Too Little	36.7	40.2	43.6	40.5	40.6
About Right	48.9	47.3	44.3	48.3	46.6
Too Much	14.4	12.5	12.1	11.2	12.7

Net (TL - TM) +22.3 +27.7 +31.5 +29.3 +27.9

Table 2

Rank of Net Spending Priorities, 1973-2010

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 2 Rank of Net Spending Priorities, 1973-2008 (continued)

RANK	2010
1	Educ. +68.6
2	Crime +51.2
3	Envir. +48.5
4	Drugs +46.0
5	Health +41.4
6	SolCity +22.9
7	ImpBlks +15.6
8	Defense - 9.2
9	Welfare -19.2
10	Space -21.0
11	For Aid -55.1

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	2010
1	Educ. +68.4	Educ. +68.6
2	Health +68.1	Poor +57.6
3	Poor +62.1	Crime +51.2
4	Envir. +58.7	SocSec +48.9
5	SocSec +55.5	Envir. +48.5
6	Crime +55.0	Drugs +46.0
7	Drugs +47.2	Health +41.4
8	LawEnf +44.8	Rehab. +39.1
9	Trans. +40.8	LawEnf +36.4
10	Rehab. +36.7	Roads +32.9
11	SolCity +35.7	Trans +31.9
12	Roads +35.5	Parks +27.5
13	Parks +25.9	SolCity +22.9
14	ImpBlks +24.2	Impblks +15.6
15	AidBlks + 8.9	AidBlks + 5.9
16	AidCity -11.1	Defense - 9.2
17	Welfare -12.8	Welfare -19.2
18	Defense -14.4	Aid City -19.2
19	Space -24.3	Space -21.2
20	ForAid -52.3	ForAid -55.1

Table 4: Rank of Net Spending Priorities, 2002-2010

	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010
1	Educ. +70.8	Health +72.4	Educ. +68.7	Educ. +68.4	Educ. +68.6
2	Health +68.2	Educ. +71.1	Health +66.4	Health +68.1	Poor +57.6
3	Poor +59.1	Poor +63.5	Poor +62.0	Poor +62.1	Crime +51.2
4	SocSec +56.3	SocSec +60.5	Envir. +61.9	Envir. +58.7	SocSec +48.9
5	Envir. +53.7	Envir. +58.1	SocSec +59.2	SocSec +55.7	Envir. +48.5
6	Child +52.5	Crime +52.4	Drugs +54.8	Crime +55.0	Drugs +46.0
7	Crime +50.6	Child +50.8	Crime +54.6	Child +47.6	Child +43.8
8	Drugs +47.4	Drugs +45.6	Child +47.4	Drugs +47.2	Health +41.4
9	Rehab. +42.0	LawEnf +45.1	LawEnf +45.8	LawEnf +44.8	Rehab. +39.1
10	LawEnf +37.7	Rehab. +41.2	Rehab. +43.3	Trans. +40.8	LawEnf +36.4
11	SolCity +30.0	SolCity +29.1	SolCity +35.2	Rehab. +36.7	Roads +32.9
12	Parks +28.9	Science +27.7	Science +31.5	SolCity +35.7	Trans. +31.9
13	Trans. +25.3	Trans. +25.8	Trans. +30.9	Roads +35.5	Science +27.9
14	Roads +23.1	Parks +24.9	Parks +27.1	Science +29.3	Parks +27.5
15	Science +22.3	ImpBlks +19.5	Roads +24.0	Parks +25.9	SolCity +22.9
16	ImpBlks +14.7	Roads +16.9	ImpBlks +21.1	ImpBlks +24.2	ImpBlks +15.6
17	Defense +7.8	AidBlks +7.4	AidBlks +2.0	AidBlks + 8.9	AidBlks + 5.9
18	AidBlks -1.4	Defense +7.1	Defense -12.6	AidCity -11.1	Defense - 9.2
19	AidCity -18.4	AidCity -13.9	Welfare -13.2	Welfare -12.8	AidCity -19.2
20	Welfare -20.6	Welfare -17.8	AidCity -14.5	Defense -14.4	Welfare -19.2
21	Space -25.6	Space -25.7	Space -22.7	Space -24.3	Space -21.0
22	ForAid -59.9	ForAid -57.2	ForAid -53.8	ForAid -52.3	ForAid -55.1

Table 5

Trends in Overall and Domestic Welfare Spending, 1973-2010

	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
2010	+17.2	+25.9

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 (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; 2010=2044). 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, 1972-2010: Cumulative Codebook. Chicago: NORC, 2011.

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.