INSTITUTE OF POLITICS
UMBC Poll



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The UMBC Institute of Politics thanks the Maryland Municipal League for its partnership and investment in community-focused research in Maryland.

Topics:

- State and local news sources and consumption habits
- Community ratings and importance of community amenities and services
- Views on local, state, and federal tax levels
- Trust in levels of government on local spending decisions

Thursday, November 12, 2026 (Baltimore): The UMBC Poll, in partnership with the Maryland Municipal League, surveyed 710 (MOE=±3.7%) Maryland voters from **Thursday, November 5 to Monday, November 9, 2026**. Please refer to the methodology statement for information on data collection and sample demographics, and to the topline results for question wording.

Click here for sample demographics, toplines, and crosstabs.

We request that any media coverage of this poll utilize the partnership poll logo. **Click here to download.**

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State and local news sources and consumption habits

The UMBC Poll, in partnership with the Maryland Municipal League, asked Maryland voters about their state and local news consumption habits.

Regarding when they most often watch, read, or listen to state and local news:

All throughout the day: **39 percent**
- Among voters ages 18-34: **29 percent**
- Among voters ages 35-54: **47 percent**
- Among voters ages 55+: **39 percent**

Evening: **28 percent**
- Among voters ages 18-34: **44 percent**
- Among voters ages 35-54: **18 percent**
- Among voters ages 55+: **26 percent**

Morning: **20 percent**
- Among voters ages 18-34: **12 percent**
- Among voters ages 35-54: **19 percent**
- Among voters ages 55+: **25 percent**

Midday: **6 percent**
- Among voters ages 18-34: **3 percent**
- Among voters ages 35-54: **10 percent**
- Among voters ages 55+: **5 percent**

Late night: **5 percent**
- Among voters ages 18-34: **10 percent**
- Among voters ages 35-54: **3 percent**
- Among voters ages 55+: **3 percent**

“For many Maryland voters, keeping up with state and local news isn’t tied to a particular time of day, and those habits vary in part by age,” said Mileah Kromer, Director of the UMBC Institute of Politics. “Consistent with their consumption habits, the sources Maryland voters rely on most are the ones that fit in their pocket, available on their phones whenever they want to check in.”

Maryland voters get their news about state and local government from a variety of sources. The percentages below show the share of voters who say they regularly get news about state and local government from each source:

- Social media: **72 percent**
- Newspapers, in print or online: **65 percent**
- Friends, family, or neighbors: **62 percent**
- Local television news: **60 percent**
- Elected officials or government websites: **45 percent**
- Local radio: **42 percent**
- Podcasts: **32 percent**

Community ratings and importance of community amenities and services

Most Maryland voters have a positive view of their community, defined as their neighborhood or the area right around their home, as a place to live.

Seventy-seven percent of Maryland voters rate their community as excellent or good, while **23 percent** rate it as fair or poor.

Voters were then asked how important it is to them to live in a community with each of several amenities and services, regardless of whether they are currently available where they live.

The percentages below show the share of voters who say each item is “very important”:

- Services such as trash removal, law enforcement, or a water system: **86 percent**
- Dedicated police or fire departments: **80 percent**
- A good place to raise children: **67 percent**
- Access to recreational parks and trails: **63 percent**
- Sidewalks: **56 percent**
- Events such as farmers’ markets, parades, arts and music, and a vibrant downtown: **51 percent**
- A strong sense of community pride: **47 percent**

Views on local, state, and federal tax levels

Even when asked to consider the programs and services they receive, a majority of Maryland voters say they pay “too much” in state, federal, and local taxes.

The percentages below show the share of voters who say they pay “too much” in each type of tax:

- State taxes: **61 percent**
- Federal taxes: **61 percent**
- Local taxes: **57 percent**

Trust in levels of government on local spending decisions

Voters trust the level of government closest to them to make decisions about local services and how tax dollars are spent.

The percentages below show the share of voters who say they trust each level of government the most to make those decisions:

- Local city, town, or county government: **57 percent**
- State government in Annapolis: **18 percent**
- Federal government in Washington, DC: **6 percent**

“Marylanders recognize the value of strong local communities, and this poll reinforces something we see every day: trust begins closest to home. When it comes to the services they depend on and how their tax dollars are spent, Marylanders place significantly greater trust in their local governments. That confidence reflects the direct connection between residents and the local leaders who are accountable to them,” said Theresa Kuhns, Chief Executive Officer, Maryland Municipal League. “It is a powerful reminder of the importance of preserving local decision-making and ensuring our communities have the tools and resources to shape their own futures.”

Methodology Statement

The UMBC Poll is conducted under the auspices of the UMBC Institute of Politics (IoP) and is funded by the UMBC College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. This poll was conducted in partnership with the Maryland Municipal League, which funded the data collection.

The UMBC Poll surveyed **710** Maryland voters from **Thursday, November 5 to Monday, November 9, 2026**. The poll was conducted by live interviewers and text-to-web utilizing a dual-frame (landline and cell phone) random sample stratified by county.

Text-to-web: **80 percent**
Live-caller cell phone: **16 percent**
Live-caller landline: **4 percent**

Interviews were conducted from **12 p.m. to 8 p.m.**, and interviewers attempted to reach respondents with working phone numbers up to **3 times**. ReconMR provided the sample and data collection.



There is a 95 percent probability that the survey results have the following percentage point sampling error from the actual population distribution for any given survey question: **MOE=±3.7%** for the sample of **710** Maryland voters.

The margin of sampling error is higher for subgroups and is not adjusted for design effects. Like all public opinion polls, the UMBC Poll is also subject to non-sampling error, including non-response bias, question-order effects, and question-wording effects. The topline tables include the questions as worded.

The UMBC Poll data are weighted by gender, age, race, geography, and educational attainment to represent the Maryland voter targets established by the combination of sources from ReconMR, including Maryland State Board of Elections (2026), Current Population Survey data (2024), and the American Community Survey (ACS) 1-year estimates (2025) for the state of Maryland. Results are reported as column percentages and may not sum to exactly 100 due to weighting and rounding.

Mileah Kromer, Director of the UMBC Institute of Politics (IoP), designs the survey questionnaires and analyzes the data collected by the UMBC Poll. Research assistants Trisha Sirsat, Audrey Grutzik, Sofia Cabrera, Khizar Qazi, and Sophie Sultenfuss assist with each stage of the process under her direction. Their involvement reflects the IoP's mission to facilitate student learning in applied politics and to produce public-facing research on political, policy, and social issues for the betterment of Maryland.

The UMBC Poll is committed to methodological transparency. If you have questions about the poll's methodology, contact Mileah Kromer, Director, UMBC Institute of Politics, at mkromer@umbc.edu.

About the Maryland Municipal League (MML)

Founded in 1936, the Maryland Municipal League represents the 160 incorporated local governments in Maryland. As the only state organization of municipal officials, the League empowers Maryland's municipalities by strengthening local leadership, advancing municipal autonomy, and delivering resources and partnerships to help communities thrive.

To learn more about its work, visit: https://www.mdmunicipal.org/

Community Partnership Polling

As part of UMBC's commitment to serving as a national model for university-community partnerships, the UMBC Institute of Politics welcomes opportunities to partner with mission-aligned nonprofits, nonpartisan advocacy organizations, businesses, government entities, and media organizations on community-focused research in Maryland.

Partnership polls give Marylanders a voice on a variety of issues facing their state and communities, and they provide partners with methodologically rigorous public opinion research on the topics that matter to them. Public-release questions are shared openly, whereas internal-use questions and the results belong solely to the partner and do not represent the views or positions of the UMBC Institute of Politics or the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

Organizations interested in exploring a partnership should contact Mileah Kromer, Director of the UMBC Institute of Politics, at mkromer@umbc.edu.

Sample Demographics (in percent)

		Maryland voters n=710 (MOE=±3.7%)
Gender	Male	48
	Female	52
Age	18-24	4
	25-34	23
	35-44	15
	45-54	19
	55-64	13
	65+	26
Race	White	45
	Black	28
	Hispanic/Latino	13
	Asian	7
	All other	8
Education	High school diploma or less	13
	Some college or associate's degree	43
	Bachelor's degree	17
	Graduate or professional degree	27
Geography	Montgomery County	16
	Prince George's County	15
	Baltimore County	14
	Anne Arundel County	10
	Baltimore City	9
	Central Region	13
	Western Region	9
	Eastern Shore Region	8
	Southern Region	7

Central Region: Carroll, Harford, and Howard Counties
Western Region: Allegany, Frederick, Garrett, and Washington Counties
Eastern Shore Region: Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties
Southern Region: Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties

Other Sample Demographics (in percent)

		Maryland voters n=710 (MOE=±3.7%)
Party	Democrat	57
	Republican	23
	Unaffiliated	18
	Other party	1
Home	Own	75
	Rent	17
	Other	8
Income	Under $40,000	9
	$40,000 to under $75,000	27
	$75,000 to under $125,000	30
	$125,000 or more	34
Municipality	Municipal resident	50
	Unincorporated area resident	50

The UMBC Poll data are not weighted by these characteristics.

The UMBC Institute of Politics is a member of the Association of Academic Survey Research Organizations and the American Association for Public Opinion Research's Transparency Initiative.

Topline Results

The topline results below represent the sample of 710 Maryland voters. Click here for results by demographics. Results are reported as column percentages and may not sum to exactly 100 due to weighting and rounding. The questionnaire below reflects the text-to-web version of the survey. Question wording and response options were the same across modes, with minor adaptations for live-caller vs. web-based administration.

Q: NEWS_REG	Please indicate whether you regularly get news about Maryland state and local government from each news source.	No	Yes	Don't know	Refused
Q: SOCIAL	Social media	26	72	1	0
Q: NEWSPAPER	Newspapers, in print or online	32	65	3	0
Q: FRIENDS	Friends, family, or neighbors	36	62	2	0
Q: TV	Local television news	38	60	1	0
Q: GOVT	Elected officials or government websites	55	45	0	0
Q: RADIO	Local radio	56	42	2	0
Q: PODCASTS	Podcasts	66	32	2	0

Items presented in a randomized order.

Q: NEWS_MAIN	When do you most often watch, read, or listen to state or local news?	Percent
	Morning	20
	Midday	6
	Evening	28
	Late night	5
	All throughout the day	39
	Don't know	1
	Refused	1

Q: LIVE	How would you rate the community, that is, your neighborhood or the area right around your home, as a place to live?	Percent
	Poor	3
	Fair	20
	Good	47
	Excellent	30
	Don't know	0
	Refused	0

Q: COMMUNITY	Regardless of whether it is currently available where you live, how important is it to you to live in a community with each of the following?	Not	A little	Somewhat	Very	Don't know	Refused
Q: IMP_SERVICES n=451	A community with services such as trash removal, law enforcement, or a water system	3	3	9	86	0	0
Q: IMP_POLICE n=384	A community that has dedicated police or fire departments	5	2	14	80	0	0
Q: IMP_CHILDREN n=379	A community that is a good place to raise children	11	2	19	67	0	0
Q: IMP_OUTDOOR n=377	A community with access to recreational parks and trails	8	5	25	63	0	0
Q: IMP_SIDEWALK n=434	A community that has sidewalks	10	7	25	56	1	0
Q: IMP_ACT n=387	A community with events such as farmers' markets, parades, arts and music, and a vibrant downtown	7	8	34	51	0	0
Q: IMP_SENSE n=428	A community with a strong sense of pride	5	15	32	47	1	0

Each respondent received four of the seven items selected at random and presented in a randomized order.

Q: TAXBURDEN	Thinking about all the programs and services you receive, do you think the amount you currently pay in each of the following types of taxes is too little, about the right amount, or too much?	**Too little**	**About right**	**Too much**	**Don't know**	**Refused**
Q: TAX_STATE	State taxes	2	32	61	5	0
Q: TAX_FED	Federal taxes	2	30	61	6	0
Q: TAX_LOCAL	Local taxes	2	33	57	8	1

Items presented in a randomized order.

Q: TRUST2	When it comes to decisions about local services and how tax dollars are spent, which level of government do you trust the most to make those decisions? Is it your:	**Percent**
	Local city, town, or county government	57
	State government in Annapolis	18
	Federal government in Washington, DC	6
	Don't know	15
	Refused	4

University Mission

UMBC is a dynamic public research university integrating teaching, research and service to benefit the citizens of Maryland. As an Honors University, the campus offers academically talented students a strong undergraduate liberal arts foundation that prepares them for graduate and professional study, entry into the workforce, and community service and leadership.

UMBC emphasizes science, engineering, information technology, human services and public policy at the graduate level. UMBC contributes to the economic development of the State and the region through entrepreneurial initiatives, workforce training, K-16 partnerships, and technology commercialization in collaboration with public agencies and the corporate community. UMBC is dedicated to cultural and ethnic diversity, social responsibility and lifelong learning.

INSTITUTE OF POLITICS
College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

Our Mission

The UMBC Institute of Politics (IoP) produces and supports public-facing and community-engaged research and events on political, policy, and social issues for the betterment of Maryland.

The IoP operates under the auspices of the UMBC College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences.