



The power to make it better.

GS STRATEGY GROUP

Research. Strategy. Message.

AARP SURVEY: SOUTH CAROLINA

Presented By:

Greg Strimple

GS Strategy Group

350 N. Ninth Street, Suite 550

Boise, ID 83702 (208) 342-1545

SC Primary Survey: October 18-19, 2011;

400N/4.90% Margin of Error

About AARP

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with a membership that helps people 50+ have independence, choice and control in ways that are beneficial and affordable to them and society as a whole. AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to either political campaigns or candidates. We produce AARP The Magazine, the definitive voice for 50+ Americans and the world's largest-circulation magazine with over 35.1 million readers; AARP Bulletin, the go-to news source for AARP's millions of members and Americans 50+; AARP VIVA, the only bilingual U.S. publication dedicated exclusively to the 50+ Hispanic community; and our website, AARP.org. AARP Foundation is an affiliated charity that provides security, protection and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors and sponsors. We have staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

About GS Strategy Group

GS Strategy group is an award-winning public opinion research firm headed by some of the country's most experienced corporate and political strategists. The firm is located in Boise, Idaho. For more information, call (208) 342-1545.

Acknowledgements

GS Strategy Group conducted this research with funding from AARP. National media inquiries should be directed to Jim Dau at jdau@aarp.org or (202) 434-2560. For media inquiries in South Carolina, please contact Patrick Cobb at pcobb@aarp.org or (803) 261-0304.

For additional information, please contact Khelan Bhatia, Senior Advisor for Voter Education, at kbhatia@aarp.org.

Copyright © 2011

AARP

601 E Street, NW

Washington, DC 20049

www.aarp.org/youearnedit

Reprinting with permission only



KEY FINDINGS

Overview

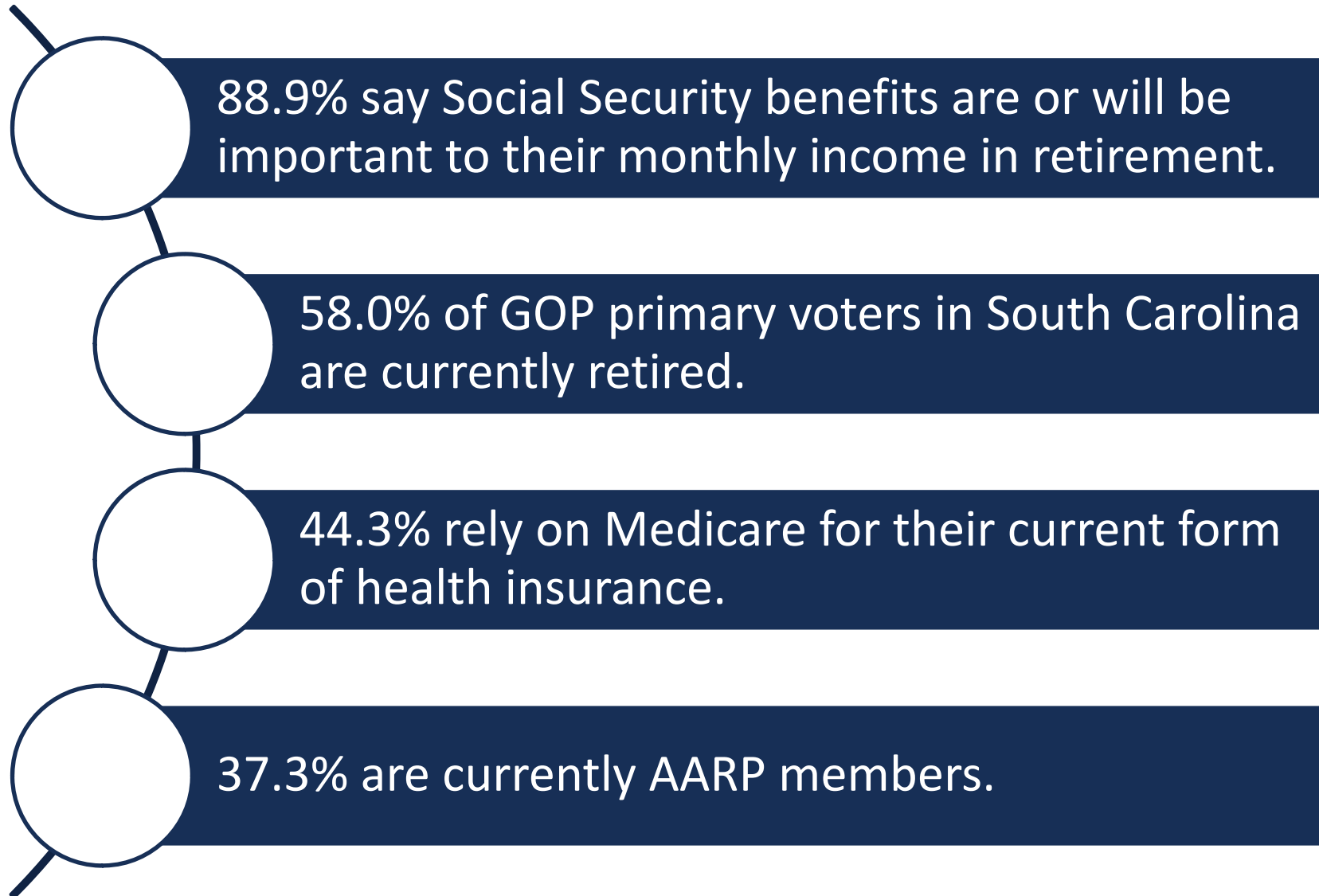
Republican primary voters in South Carolina believe Social Security and Medicare are critical to the economic security and health care of middle class seniors in retirement. Despite talk in Washington about cutting Social Security and Medicare to reduce the deficit, Republican voters in South Carolina overwhelmingly oppose cuts to the benefits they say they've "earned" and they "need." Across the ideological spectrum in the Republican Party, including Tea Party members, strong majorities oppose cuts to Social Security and Medicare to meet federal budget targets.

Major Findings

The Washington establishment greatly misunderstands Republican primary and caucus voters in IA, NH, SC and FL who will nominate the next Presidential candidate.

- By more than **3:1**, South Carolina's GOP primary voters **OPPOSE** cuts to Social Security and Medicare to balance the budget.
- Even strong majorities of very conservative GOP voters and voters who agree with the Tea Party **OPPOSE** cuts to these programs.
- And as church attendance increases, so does opposition to cuts to Social Security and Medicare benefits.
- Strong majorities of each presidential candidates' supporters oppose these cuts. Any Republican candidate advancing cuts to these programs puts their vote at risk.
- When asked about their Medicare and Social Security benefits, GOP primary voters believe they've "earned it," "paid into it their entire life," and "need it". They know there are other, less critical areas of government spending that can be cut instead.
- By wide, super majorities, South Carolina's GOP primary voters prefer withdrawing troops from Iraq and Afghanistan as an alternative to cutting either Social Security or Medicare.
- These findings are consistent across all early primary states in which research was conducted (Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina and Florida).

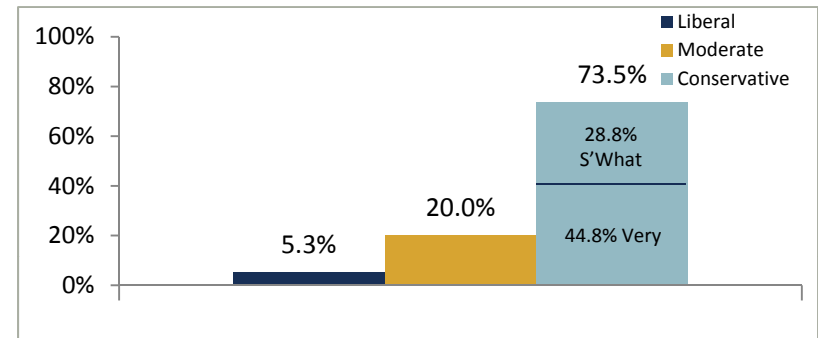
SOUTH CAROLINA'S GOP PRIMARY VOTERS



SOUTH CAROLINA ELECTORATE

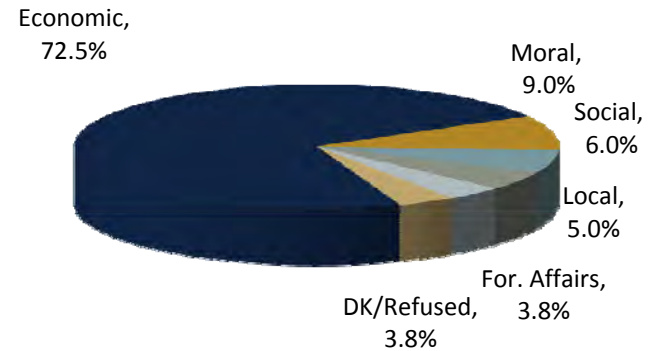
Voter Ideology

If you had to label yourself, would you say you are a liberal, a moderate or a conservative in your political beliefs?



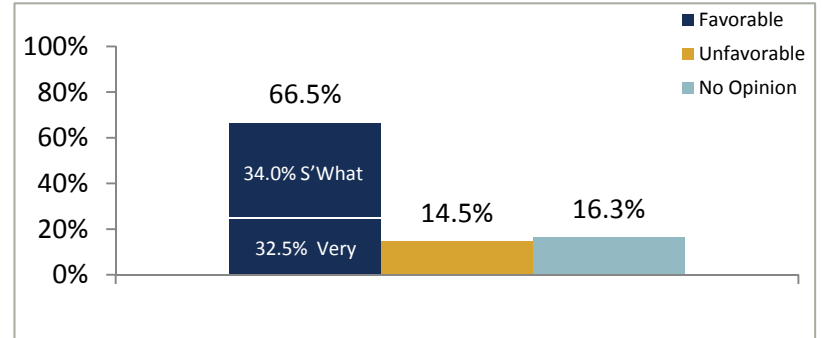
Issues

In general, are you most interested in economic issues, like taxes, jobs and the budget deficit; foreign affairs issues like national defense and terrorism; social issues like education, health care and the environment; local community issues like crime, drugs and immigration reform; or moral issues like the right to life and same sex marriage?



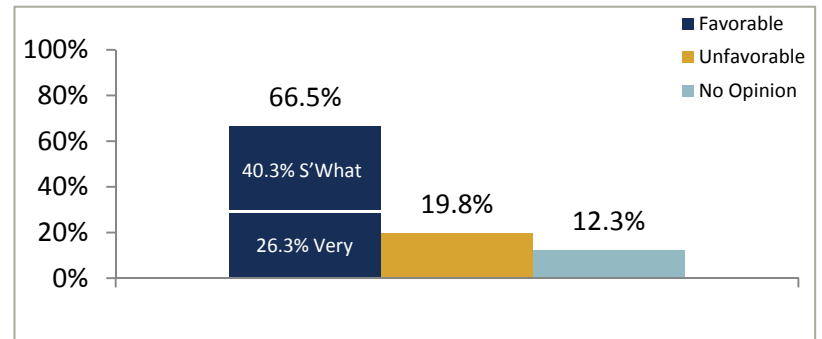
SOUTH CAROLINA PRIMARY

Please tell me whether you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of: **Herman Cain**



	Overall	Ideology			Issue		Tea Party			Church Attendance		Media Market		
		Mod	S'What Con	Very Con	Econ.	Moral	Agree/ Attend	Agree/ Not Attend	Disagree	Attend Regularly	Rarely/ Never	Green-ville	Columbia	Charles- ton
Favorable	66.5	58.8	64.3	74.3	66.6	61.1	79.4	72.0	47.1	65.8	65.8	65.5	68.3	73.1
Unfavorable	14.5	25.0	11.3	11.2	15.5	11.1	8.8	13.0	27.1	16.0	14.5	16.5	14.6	10.4
Net Fav	+52.0	+33.8	+53.0	+63.1	+51.1	+50.0	+70.6	+59.0	+20.0	+49.8	+51.3	+49.0	+53.7	+62.7

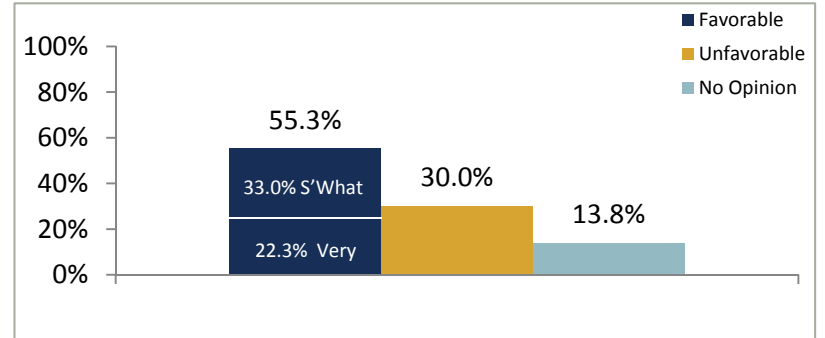
Please tell me whether you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of: **Mitt Romney**



	Overall	Ideology			Issue		Tea Party			Church Attendance		Media Market		
		Mod	S'What Con	Very Con	Econ.	Moral	Agree/ Attend	Agree/ Not Attend	Disagree	Attend Regularly	Rarely/ Never	Green-ville	Columbia	Charles- ton
Favorable	66.5	71.3	67.0	63.7	67.9	50.0	67.6	68.2	65.7	62.5	73.7	66.2	67.1	73.1
Unfavorable	19.8	17.5	17.4	23.5	19.3	30.6	32.4	19.5	14.3	21.8	18.4	20.1	18.3	16.4
Net Fav	+46.8	+53.8	+49.6	+40.2	+48.6	+19.4	+35.3	+48.7	+51.4	+40.7	+55.3	+46.1	+48.8	+56.7

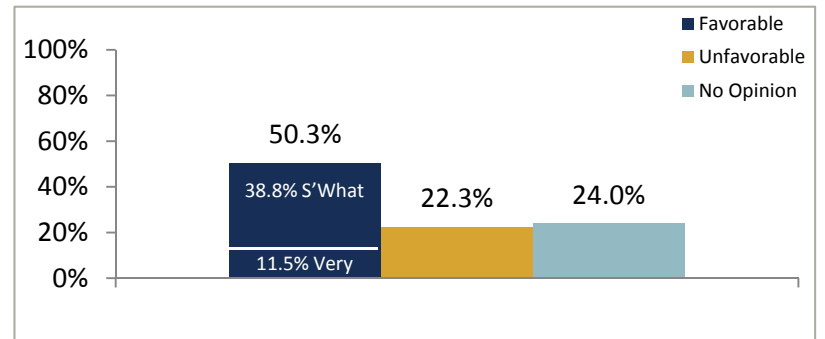
SOUTH CAROLINA PRIMARY

Please tell me whether you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of: **Newt Gingrich**



	Overall	Ideology			Issue		Tea Party			Church Attendance		Media Market		
		Mod	S'What Con	Very Con	Econ.	Moral	Agree/ Attend	Agree/ Not Attend	Disagree	Attend Regularly	Rarely/ Never	Green-ville	Columbia	Charles- ton
Favorable	55.3	41.3	57.4	63.1	56.6	63.9	67.6	64.0	30.0	54.5	53.9	56.1	52.4	59.7
Unfavorable	30.0	45.0	26.1	23.5	29.3	22.2	26.5	23.4	52.9	28.7	32.9	33.1	26.8	25.4
Net Fav	+25.3	-3.8	+31.3	+39.6	+27.2	+41.7	+41.2	+40.6	-22.9	+25.8	+21.1	+23.0	+25.6	+34.3

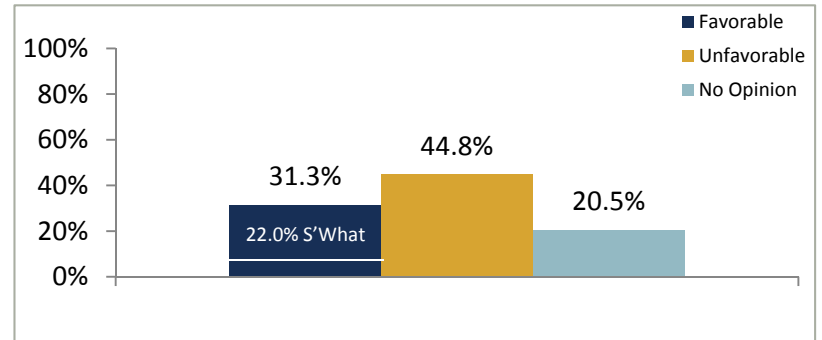
Please tell me whether you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of: **Rick Perry**



	Overall	Ideology			Issue		Tea Party			Church Attendance		Media Market		
		Mod	S'What Con	Very Con	Econ.	Moral	Agree/ Attend	Agree/ Not Attend	Disagree	Attend Regularly	Rarely/ Never	Green-ville	Columbia	Charles- ton
Favorable	50.3	41.3	46.1	58.1	50.3	44.4	61.8	55.6	32.9	49.8	50.0	47.5	51.2	59.7
Unfavorable	22.3	35.0	26.1	12.3	23.1	11.1	26.5	18.0	35.7	20.4	30.3	22.3	20.7	22.4
Net Fav	+28.0	+6.3	+20.0	+45.8	+27.2	+33.3	+35.3	+37.5	-2.9	+29.4	+19.7	+25.2	+30.5	+37.3

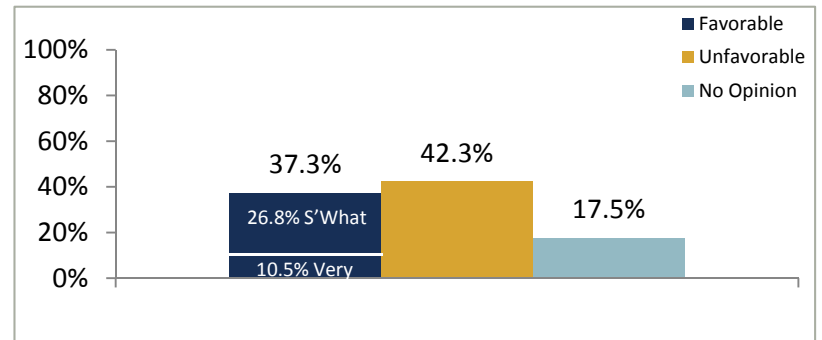
SOUTH CAROLINA PRIMARY

Please tell me whether you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of: **Ron Paul**



	Overall	Ideology			Issue		Tea Party			Church Attendance		Media Market		
		Mod	S'What Con	Very Con	Econ.	Moral	Agree/Attend	Agree/Not Attend	Disagree	Attend Regularly	Rarely/Never	Green-ville	Columbia	Charleston
Favorable	31.3	35.0	27.0	33.5	30.7	27.8	44.1	33.3	24.3	28.4	34.2	34.5	29.3	26.9
Unfavorable	44.8	52.5	42.6	41.3	46.2	38.9	44.1	46.7	42.9	45.5	47.4	41.7	41.5	50.7
Net Fav	-13.5	-17.5	-15.7	-7.8	-15.5	-11.1	0.0	-13.4	-18.6	-17.1	-13.2	-7.2	-12.2	-23.9

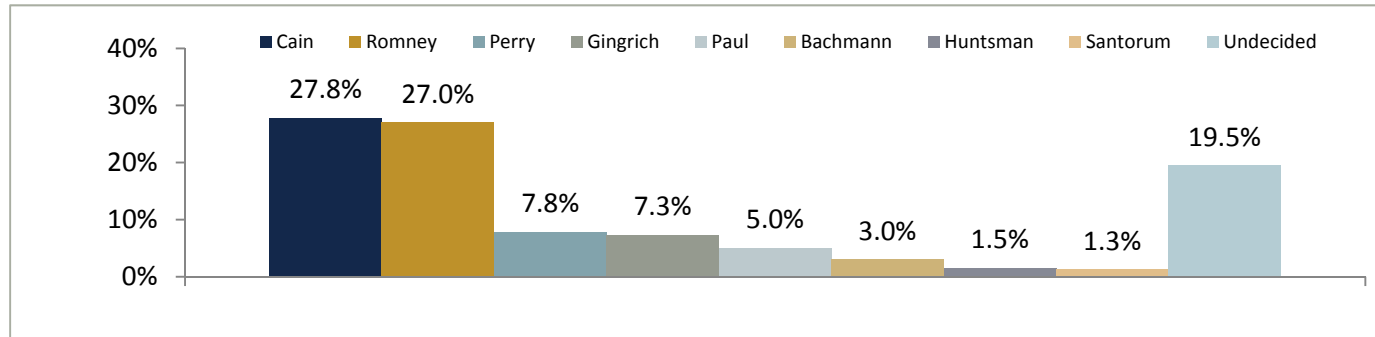
Please tell me whether you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of: **Michele Bachmann**



	Overall	Ideology			Issue		Tea Party			Church Attendance		Media Market		
		Mod	S'What Con	Very Con	Econ.	Moral	Agree/Attend	Agree/Not Attend	Disagree	Attend Regularly	Rarely/Never	Green-ville	Columbia	Charleston
Favorable	37.3	22.5	32.2	49.2	38.6	38.9	52.9	44.4	11.4	41.1	27.6	41.7	31.7	43.3
Unfavorable	42.3	62.5	41.7	31.3	42.8	36.1	41.2	35.6	72.9	38.9	50.0	40.3	46.3	40.3
Net Fav	-5.0	-40.0	-9.6	+17.9	-4.1	+2.8	+11.8	+8.8	-61.4	+2.2	-22.4	+1.4	-14.6	+3.0

GOP BALLOT—SOUTH CAROLINA

If the Republican Presidential Primary were held today, of the following candidates, for whom would you vote?

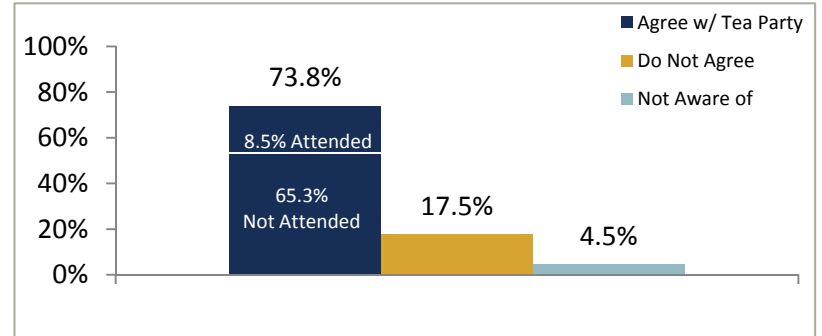


	Overall	Ideology			Issue		Tea Party			Church Attendance		Media Market		
		Mod	S'What Con	Very Con	Econ.	Moral	Agree/Attend	Agree/Not Attend	Disagree	Attend Regularly	Rarely/Never	Green-ville	Columbia	Charles-ton
Cain	27.8	23.8	27.8	31.8	27.9	33.3	35.3	31.4	15.7	27.6	22.4	28.8	25.6	31.3
Romney	27.0	32.5	31.3	21.2	30.0	16.7	20.6	26.8	28.6	25.5	32.9	23.0	29.3	29.9
Perry	7.8	5.0	6.1	9.5	5.9	13.9	8.8	6.9	12.9	9.1	5.3	7.2	9.8	6.0
Gingrich	7.3	5.0	3.5	10.6	6.6	11.1	11.8	7.7	7.1	8.7	5.3	6.5	11.0	3.0
Paul	5.0	7.5	5.2	3.4	5.5	5.6	2.9	5.4	4.3	4.0	6.6	7.9	3.7	0.0
Bachmann	3.0	6.3	3.5	1.7	2.8	2.8	0.0	3.8	0.0	3.3	2.6	4.3	2.4	3.0
Huntsman	1.5	3.8	0.9	0.6	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	5.7	1.1	3.9	1.4	0.0	4.5
Santorum	1.3	1.3	0.0	2.2	1.4	2.8	2.9	0.8	2.9	1.1	1.3	1.4	0.0	3.0
Undecided	19.5	15.0	21.7	19.0	19.0	13.9	17.6	16.5	22.9	19.6	19.7	19.4	18.3	19.4

TEA PARTY AND RELIGION—SOUTH CAROLINA

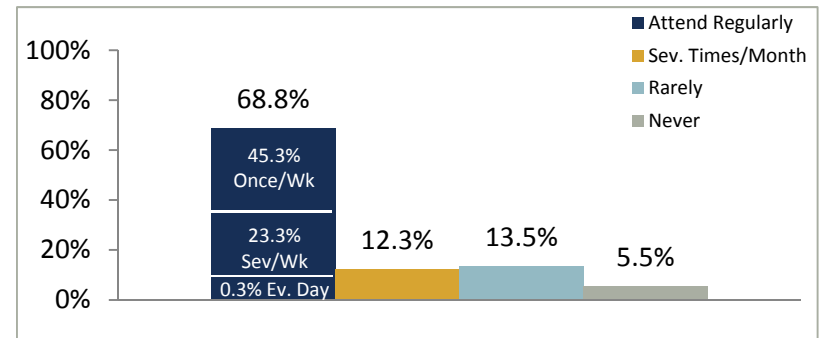
Which of the following best describes you:

- You agree with the Tea Party and have attended Tea Party events
- You agree with the Tea Party but have not attended Tea Party events
- You do not agree with the Tea Party
- You are not aware of the Tea Party



	Overall	Ideology			Issue					Church Attendance	
		Mod	S'What Con	Very Con	Econ.	Moral	Social	Foreign Aff.	Local	Attend Regularly	Rarely/ Never
Agree w/Tea Party	73.8	53.8	75.7	86.0	73.1	83.3	50.0	80.0	80.0	73.1	77.6
Do Not Agree	17.5	40.0	12.2	6.1	17.2	8.3	41.7	13.3	20.0	17.5	14.5
Net Agree	+56.3	+13.8	+63.5	+79.9	+55.9	+75.0	+8.3	+66.7	+60.0	+55.6	+63.2

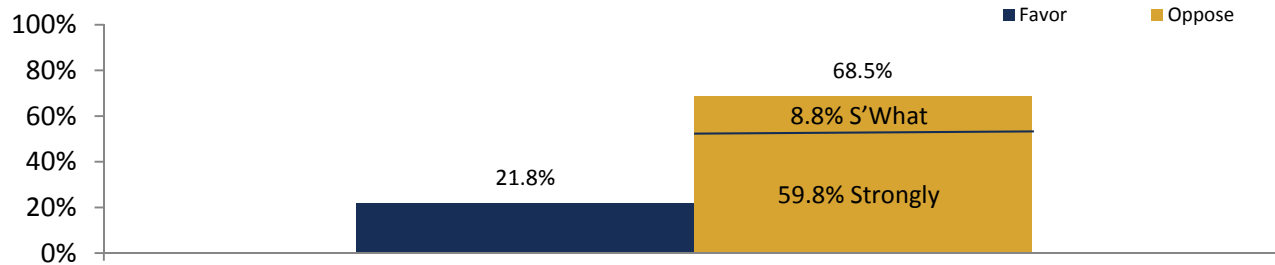
How often do you attend church services?



	Overall	Ideology			Issue					Tea Party		
		Mod	S'What Con	Very Con	Econ.	Moral	Social	Foreign Aff.	Local	Agree/ Attend	Agree/ Not Attend	Disagree
Attend Regularly	68.8	63.8	65.2	73.2	68.3	83.3	58.3	60.0	55.0	70.6	67.8	68.6
Rarely	13.5	12.5	14.8	12.8	14.5	5.6	4.2	26.7	20.0	14.7	14.9	11.4
Never	5.5	7.5	7.0	3.9	4.8	8.3	12.5	0.0	10.0	5.9	5.0	4.3

SOUTH CAROLINA ON SOCIAL SECURITY

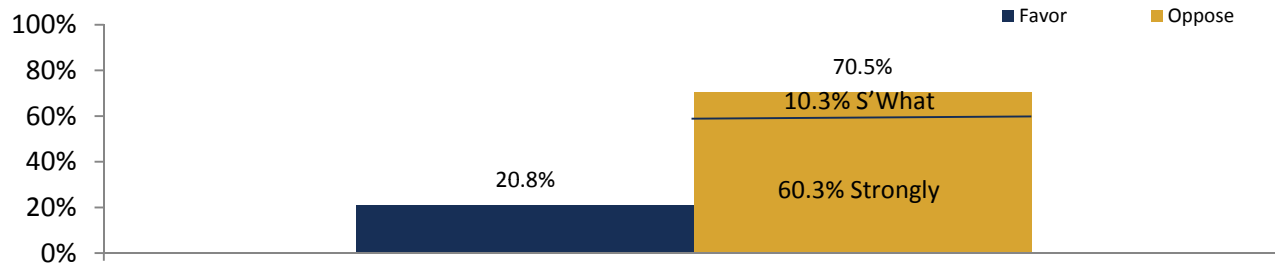
Do you favor or oppose reducing Social Security benefits for future retirees to help reduce the deficit?



	Overall	Ideology			Issue		Tea Party			Church Attendance	
		Mod	S'What Con	Very Con	Econ.	Moral	Agree/Attend	Agree/Not Attend	Disagree	Reg	Rarely/Never
Favor	21.8	21.3	16.5	26.3	24.5	13.9	35.3	24.5	12.9	18.9	27.6
Oppose	68.5	72.5	72.2	63.1	65.2	83.3	50.0	67.0	75.7	72.4	60.5
Net Fav	-46.8	-51.3	-55.7	-36.9	-40.7	-69.4	-14.7	-42.5	-62.9	-53.5	-32.9

SOUTH CAROLINA ON MEDICARE

Do you favor or oppose reducing Medicare benefits to help reduce the deficit?

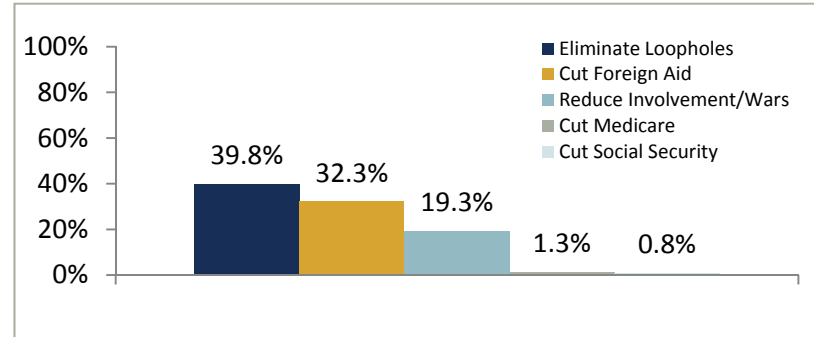


	Overall	Ideology			Issue		Tea Party			Church Attendance		
		Mod	S'What	Con	Very Con	Econ.	Moral	Agree/Attend	Agree/Not Attend	Disagree	Reg	Rarely/Never
Favor	20.8	21.3	11.3	11.3	27.9	21.0	22.2	23.5	24.5	11.4	18.9	22.4
Oppose	70.5	71.3	80.0	80.0	62.6	69.7	66.7	58.8	67.0	80.0	73.5	65.8
Net Fav	-49.8	-50.0	-68.7	-68.7	-34.6	-48.6	-44.4	-35.3	-42.5	-68.6	-54.5	-43.4

SPENDING ALTERNATIVES

Which of the following would you prefer as a means to cut government spending and reduce the deficit?

- Eliminate tax loopholes
- Cut foreign aid
- Reduce U.S. involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan
- Cut Medicare
- Cut Social Security



	Overall	Ideology			Issue		Tea Party			Church Attendance	
		Mod	S'What Con	Very Con	Econ	Moral	Agree/Attend	Agree/Not Attend	Disagree	Reg	Rarely/Never
Eliminate Loopholes	39.8	47.5	37.4	38.5	40.0	44.4	47.1	39.1	40.0	42.2	34.2
Cut Foreign Aid	32.3	17.5	30.4	42.5	31.0	41.7	20.6	36.4	22.9	31.3	36.8
Reduce Involvement/Wars	19.3	28.8	20.9	11.7	19.7	8.3	23.5	14.6	31.4	18.5	18.4
Cut Medicare	1.3	1.3	0.9	1.7	1.7	0.0	2.9	1.5	0.0	1.1	1.3
Cut Social Security	0.8	1.3	0.0	1.1	1.0	0.0	2.9	0.8	0.0	0.7	1.3

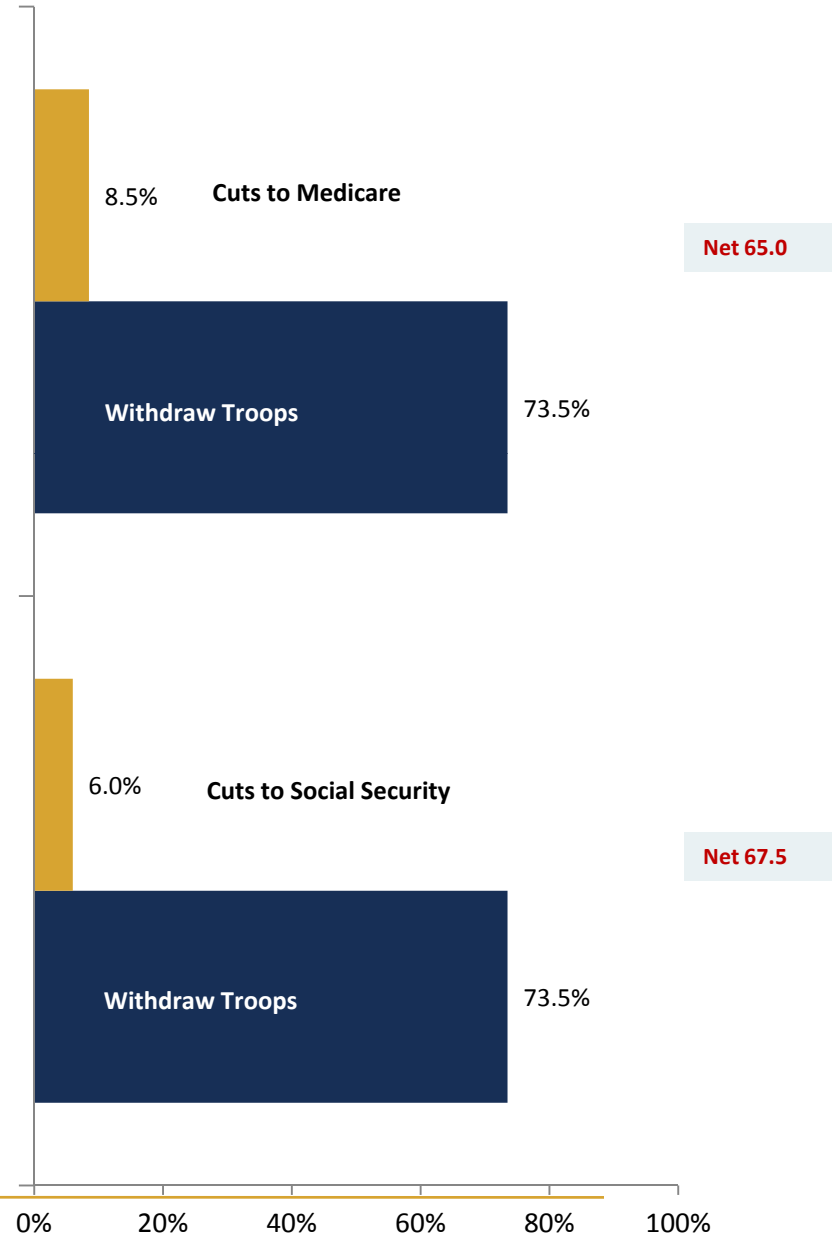
	Overall	Cain	Romney	Perry	Gingrich	Paul	Bachmann	Huntsman	Santorum	Undec
Eliminate Loopholes	39.8	42.3	45.4	32.3	31.0	35.0	25.0	33.3	20.0	39.7
Cut Foreign Aid	32.3	37.8	25.9	45.2	41.4	15.0	50.0	16.7	20.0	28.2
Reduce Involvement/Wars	19.3	11.7	18.5	16.1	24.1	40.0	16.7	33.3	40.0	23.1
Cut Medicare	1.3	2.7	0.9	0.0	3.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Cut Social Security	0.8	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.3	16.7	0.0	0.0



CHALLENGING CONVENTIONAL WISDOM

Which would you prefer as a means to decrease government spending : *Cuts to **Medicare** benefits* or *Withdrawal of troops from Iraq and Afghanistan*.

Which would you prefer as a means to cut government spending and reduce the deficit: *Cuts to **Social Security** benefits* or *Withdrawal of troops from Iraq and Afghanistan*.



ECONOMIC SECURITY INITIATIVES

The following is another list of potential initiatives to strengthen retirement security.
Please tell me if you favor or oppose the reforms.

		Overall	Tea Party Agree	Issue Moral	Very Con
<p>Currently, seniors are mandated to withdraw from their retirement savings at the age of 70 ½ or they will face a stiff tax penalty. Would you favor or oppose allowing seniors to grow their nest eggs for an additional five years without facing this tax penalty?</p>	Favor	83.8	83.4	66.7	86.0
	Oppose	8.5	8.5	13.9	5.6
	Net	+75.3	+74.9	+52.8	+80.4
<p>Creating a smart card for Medicare patients that will make it harder for criminals to commit fraud by stealing a senior’s identity.</p>	Favor	84.0	85.1	86.1	81.6
	Oppose	10.3	9.8	11.1	12.3
	Net	+73.8	+75.3	+75.0	+69.3
<p>Establishing separate health courts for medical malpractice claims to help rein in costs and reduce frivolous lawsuits.</p>	Favor	83.5	84.4	80.6	82.7
	Oppose	10.5	11.2	13.9	13.4
	Net	+73.0	+73.2	+66.7	+69.3

HEALTHCARE SECURITY INITIATIVES

Do you support or oppose the following ideas to increase the solvency of Medicare?

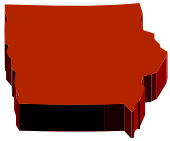

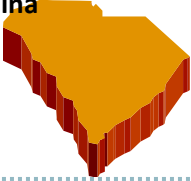
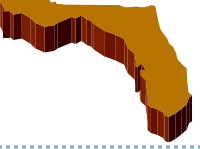
		Overall	Tea Party Agree	Issue Moral	Very Con
■ Incentivizing doctors and hospitals to work together to reduce costly hospital readmissions.	Support	80.5	81.4	63.9	77.1
	Oppose	10.0	10.2	22.2	12.8
	Net	+70.5	+71.2	+41.7	+64.2
■ Adopting electronic medical records and other health care information technology to treat patients more efficiently and better track the care they need.	Support	72.5	71.2	55.6	68.7
	Oppose	14.3	15.9	25.0	17.9
	Net	+58.3	+55.3	+30.6	+50.8
■ Improving the coordination of care for patients with chronic conditions to cut down on unnecessary tests and procedures	Support	69.8	69.8	66.7	66.5
	Oppose	13.0	12.5	19.4	12.3
	Net	+56.8	+57.3	+47.2	+54.2

THE RESEARCH



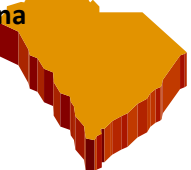

In addition to the South Carolina survey, GS Strategy Group conducted surveys of Republican caucus and primary voters in the following states:

IA Caucus Survey	Oct. 17-20, 2011; 400N/4.90% Margin of Error
NH Primary Survey	Oct. 17-18, 2011; 400N/4.90% Margin of Error
FL Primary Survey	Oct. 18-19, 2011; 500N/4.38% Margin of Error
+200 FLHispanic Oversample	Oct. 18-20, 2011; 200N/6.90% Margin of Error

STATE COMPARISONS

	Overall	Iowa 	New Hampshire 	South Carolina 	Florida 
Mitt Romney	30.7	21.5	43.3	27.0	31.0
Herman Cain	25.2	25.0	18.0	27.8	29.0
Newt Gingrich	7.6	5.8	4.8	7.3	11.6
Rick Perry	6.2	5.3	2.5	7.8	8.6
Ron Paul	6.1	8.3	9.3	5.0	2.8
Michele Bachmann	3.3	6.5	3.0	3.0	1.2
Rick Santorum	1.8	4.0	0.8	1.3	1.4
Jon Hunstman, Jr.	1.6	1.0	3.3	1.5	0.8
Undecided	17.5	22.8	15.3	19.5	13.6

STATE COMPARISONS

		Iowa 	New Hampshire 	South Carolina 	Florida 
	Overall				
AARP Membership	33.8	24.8	37.3	37.3	35.4
Percentage opposed to reducing Social Security benefits for future retirees to help reduce the deficit.	67.1	64.5	69.8	68.5	66.0
Percentage who agrees: “The strength and solvency of Social Security is essential to seniors’ economic security in retirement.”	91.1	89.0	91.8	92.5	91.2
Percentage opposed to reducing Medicare benefits to help reduce the deficit.	70.2	67.3	72.5	70.5	70.4
Percentage who agrees: “The strength and solvency of Medicare is essential to seniors’ healthcare security in retirement.”	90.1	87.0	91.8	92.3	89.4

STATE COMPARISONS

	Overall	Iowa	New Hampshire	South Carolina	Florida
Percentage who says Social Security benefits are or will be important to their monthly income in retirement	87.9	86.4	89.5	88.9	87.1
Percentage Retired	55.4	56.8	45.5	58.0	60.0
Mean Age	64.7	65.6	63.0	63.9	66.0
Percentage relying on Medicare for their current form of health insurance	43.4	50.0	34.3	44.3	44.8
Percentage Agrees with Tea Party & Attends Events	10.8	12.0	8.8	8.5	13.2
Percentage Agrees with Tea Party & Does Not Attend Events	60.5	60.3	52.5	65.3	63.2
Percentage Attends Church Regularly	56.5	69.3	37.0	68.8	52.2

