



Rediscovering the Mission:
Analysis of a Priming Survey Exploring Views of Government

Prepared for the Frameworks Institute
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Executive Summary

Introduction

In “*Without a Mission: An Analysis of Qualitative Research*,” this author concluded, “An effective reframing of government requires elevating the visibility of the *mission and values* of government, rather than the *actions* of government. The mission and values inherent in good government are missing from civic discourse, but it is these frame elements that can reshape public opinion and reengage citizens with government.”

The current phase of quantitative research builds on earlier recommendations and underscores the power of reminding people of the mission and values of government through the values-based Protection and Common Good Frames. In addition, it demonstrates the importance of making government more vivid for people by communicating the Public Structures model. These frame elements allow a myriad of opportunities to make the case for government. Indeed, this list is not meant to be exhaustive but rather symbolic. It confirms the volatility of public opinion toward government, a finding that runs counter to conventional wisdom. Given these data, we suspect other frames can be found to add to this repertoire.

This analysis is based on a priming survey conducted via telephone with 2,603 adults nationwide. The survey was piloted on July 18-20, 2005, and the remaining interviews were completed July 26-August 4, 2005. Unlike a typical survey, a priming survey incorporates a series of experiments to cue specific frames and frame elements, and then determines the extent to which exposure to the test language subsequently influences reasoning and attitudes. By comparing the responses of those exposed to priming language with the responses of a control group, the relative ability of each frame element to advance a particular view of the role for government can be determined, thereby indicating the effects of a communications frame on public opinion.

The intent of the priming experiments is to determine whether or not the tested reframes can move opinion toward the goals of the How to Talk About Government Project: 1) to re-engage the public in the business of government as a tool for achieving social progress; and 2) to build support for a policy agenda that underscores the need for active government.

Government Ratings and Responsibilities

Survey responses suggest that the public is deeply conflicted in its views of government. While a slight majority (54%) believes government has a positive impact on most people's lives, just as many believe government is doing too many things that should be left to individuals and business (55%). In fact, two competing philosophies for government – promoting self-reliance or promoting strong community – are a fault line in public opinion. Survey participants consistently divide over which is the appropriate approach for the public sector.

Few trust government to do what is right most the time (5% trust government “just about always,” 33% “most of the time”), but even fewer trust business (3% always, 29% most of the time). Lack of trust of business may be one reason that a strong majority believes regulation of business is necessary to protect the public (60%).

Importantly, many of these responses are clearly influenced by views of the political party in power. This is consistent with previous research conducted for the Frameworks Institute by Cultural Logic and reported in *"Mind and Monolith."* With the White House and both houses of Congress controlled by the Republican Party, Republican survey respondents are currently far more likely than Democratic survey respondents to hold positive perceptions of government and to trust government. However, Republicans’ positive ratings of government do not translate into support for active government, and part of Democrats’ critique of government is that it is not active enough.

Active, effective government requires funding. Therefore, one measure of citizens’ support for active government is their willingness to fund government. However, public views of taxes are, at best, ambivalent. A slight majority says taxes are too high (53%), and most would rather cut services than raise taxes to bring state government budgets in balance (cut services, 42%, raise taxes, 24%). At the same time, survey respondents divide over whether it would be better to have lower taxes and fewer services (45%), or more services for more taxes (42%).

At the same time, survey respondents are very enthusiastic about a number of policies that indicate support for a strong and active government. They place the highest priority on two policies addressing public health, even though both represent an

expansion of government and government services: expand public agencies’ efforts to develop vaccines and immunizations (7.8 average rating on a 10 point scale), and allow anyone to buy into a public health insurance program (7.7).

Importance of Policy Priority on a 1-10 Scale	
<i>Please rate each of the following for how important a priority you believe it should be, on a scale where zero means not a priority and 10 means an extremely important priority.</i>	
	Average Rating
Expand public agencies’ efforts to develop vaccines and immunizations for new diseases	7.8
Allow anyone to buy into a public health insurance program, and provide reduced rates for those with low incomes	7.7
Pass laws to encourage the use of clean energy sources	7.6
Change state tax policy to require voter approval for all tax increases	7.4
Strengthen and enforce environmental regulations and protections	7.2
Provide more opportunities for citizens to engage directly in the process of governing and the development of public policies and programs	7.0
Pass new tax cuts	6.0
Expand public funding for the national AmeriCorps program which provides college scholarships for those who work in public service jobs in schools, health clinics or other community programs	5.9
Bring down the federal deficit by reversing recent tax cuts	5.9
Reduce regulations on business	5.2
Give parents money to help pay for their children to attend a private or religious school instead of their local public school	4.1
Allow private companies to take over the operations of more public services such as public parks and forests	3.9

Environmental policies to protect the public and energy policies to encourage innovation also rate highly, such as pass laws to encourage clean energy (7.6), and strengthen and enforce environmental regulations (7.2). Providing more opportunities for citizen engagement also lands in the top half of the list (7.0).

Of three tax policies, only one rates highly: change state tax policy to require voter approval (7.4). The other two tax policies receive lower ratings, whether the policy is about new tax cuts (6.0) or reversing tax cuts (5.9). This pattern of response suggests that the high rating for voter approval for tax increases may be more about citizen empowerment than tax policy.

Three policies that reflect limiting the influence of government or downsizing government are rated the least important priorities by survey respondents: reduce regulations on business (5.2), provide private school vouchers (4.1), and privatize public parks and other services (3.9). This further suggests that the public is not enthusiastic about eliminating government responsibility for public goods.

Democrats and Republicans respond to these policies as expected. Democrats rate most of the policies higher than average, except tax cuts and the three policies to limit the size and influence of government. Republicans rate most of the policies lower, except voter approval for tax increases, tax cuts, and the three policies that limit the size or influence of government.

Citizen Engagement

Though many survey respondents are skeptical of government and less than enthusiastic about funding government, most believe in the power of citizenship and people working together to solve problems. In fact, most believe that citizenship has special obligations, such as voting, paying taxes, and keeping informed about news.

Table: Obligations of Citizenship
(In Percent)

For each, please tell me if you feel it should be an extremely important obligation, a very important obligation, a somewhat important obligation, or not an obligation of citizenship?

	Extremely Important	Very Important	Total
Voting in elections	58	33	91
Paying taxes	39	42	81
Keeping fully informed about news and public issues	33	44	77
Volunteering some time to community services	20	36	56
Protesting unjust public policies	18	26	44
Participating in town hall, community decision making meetings	16	34	50

The Experiments

Based on the results of the qualitative research phase, the research team developed two values reframes and a Simplifying Model that demonstrate promise in changing the conversation:

- **The Protection Frame** communicates that the role of the public sector is to protect citizens from physical and financial harm.
- **The Common Good Frame** states that public sector institutions rely upon citizens who work together to come to consensus for the common good and to improve quality of life.
- **The Simplifying Model**¹ describes government as the organizational and physical public structures that the country needs in order to get things done.

This survey was designed to quantify the relative effects of these three elements of a reframe for government. Practically, it is prudent to anticipate that a long-term reframing of government will require multiple frames deployed over time that are mutually reinforcing. Therefore, the objective of these experiments was to quantify the effects of *each* of the three elements, not to attempt to choose just one “best” approach.

Overall, the framing experiments result in a number of beneficial shifts in opinion. Each of the three elements tested in the survey demonstrate slightly different effects, but all have a role to play in a long-term, broad-based conversation. In the simplest terms, this phase of research yields some important conclusions:

- (1) it reveals the importance of reminding people of the mission and values of government and avoiding political partisanship;
- (2) it suggests that public views of government and the role of public institutions is highly malleable;
- (3) it demonstrates that the public’s concept of government as an important tool for public good is far from irretrievable, despite the concerted assault on its efficacy and integrity;
- (4) it identifies multiple opportunities for making the case for government, with different outcomes associated with different frames; and
- (5) it clearly underscores the power of making government more vivid for people.

While this phase of research provides important insight and direction about reframing government, it is critical to note that no one body of work, performed at a given juncture in public opinion evolution, is going to prove definitive. Rather, as events shape opportunities, it will be important to continually test newly emerging frames, and revisit

¹ Cultural Logic explains that “people typically rely on analogies in order to learn complex, abstract concepts. These concrete analogies are simplifying models - they help people organize information into a clear picture in their heads, including facts and ideas that they have been exposed to, but never been able to put together in a coherent way.” For more on simplifying models, see the FrameWorks Institute e-zine, Issue No. 19, “Opening Up the Black Box: A Case Study in Simplifying Models” by Axel Aubrun and Joe Grady for Cultural Logic, with Susan Bales of the FrameWorks Institute, available at www.frameworksinstitute.org.

this research in order to deliver fresher and deeper insights into reframing government for the long term.

Method

This survey was designed to quantify the effects of various frame elements identified in previous FrameWorks research on public attitudes toward the role of government. Throughout, the report will refer to the concept of “framing.” The FrameWorks Institute defines framing as referring to “the way a story is told -- its selective use of particular symbols, metaphors, and messengers, for example – and to the way these cues, in turn, trigger the shared and durable cultural models that people use to make sense of their world” (Bales and Gilliam, 2002). Research on how people think demonstrates that people use mental shortcuts to make sense of the world, and that new information provides cues to help people determine how to connect the new information to what they already know. This lens on the issue then quickly defines issue understanding, priority, consequences, solutions and responsibility for fixing the problem. This is framing. (Note: For more information on frames and framing, see the FrameWorks Institute web site at www.frameworksinstitute.org.)

This survey incorporated a series of “priming” experiments to cue specific frames and frame elements, and then determine the extent to which exposure to the test language subsequently influenced reasoning and attitudes about the role of government. Specifically, survey respondents were exposed to a set of questions at the beginning of the survey, designed to “prime” or predispose a particular way of thinking. Then all interviewees responded to the same set of core questions about government. By comparing the responses of those exposed to different priming language with the responses of a control group, we can determine the relative ability of each frame element to advance a particular view of the role for government, thereby indicating the effects of a communications frame on public opinion.

Each experiment was tested with a national sample of adults drawn proportionate to population. Initially, the 2,603 survey respondents were randomly assigned to either a control group, which received no deliberate framing, or one of two values-based frames:

- **The Protection Frame** communicates that the role of the public sector is to protect citizens from physical and financial harm.
- **The Common Good Frame** states that public sector institutions rely upon citizens who work together to come to consensus for the common good and to improve quality of life.

A second experiment tested the effectiveness of one particular element of the frame, a Simplifying Model, designed to make the full scope of government more visible and comprehensible. In this experiment, the 2,603 survey respondents were randomly assigned to a control group, which received no exposure to the Simplifying Model, or to a test frame that exposed respondents to a short statement reflecting the Simplifying

Model. The Simplifying Model identified for use on this topic is a Public Structures model, which describes government as the organizational and physical public structures that the country needs in order to get things done.

To isolate the effects of each experiment, the sample was carefully constructed to allow an analysis of the second experiment, in isolation, as well as in combination with the effects of the first experiment. Quotas for gender and region were set for each cell:

Sample Design – Number of Interviews by Split Sample Experiment					
		First Experiment			
		Control	Common Good	Protection	Total
Second Experiment	Control 2	504	401	401	1306
	Model	499	401	397	1297
	Total	1003	802	798	2603

After the values frames and Simplifying Model were introduced, survey respondents were asked a series of questions designed to judge each experiments' ability to change public attitudes concerning the role for government. This was done by comparing responses to the following questions with those of a control group:

- *Please rate (a series of issues) for how important a priority you believe it should be, on a scale where zero means not a priority and 10 means an extremely important priority.*
- *Thinking about problems facing the country, how much difference do you believe that people working together as a group can make in solving the problems you see – a great deal of difference, a lot of difference, some difference, a little difference, or no difference at all?*
- *Which of the following statements is closer to your view: Regulation of business is necessary to protect the public interest, OR, Regulation of business usually does more harm than good?*
- *Overall, what kind of impact do you think the government has on most people's lives – very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative, very negative, or does it have no impact either way?*
- *When you think and talk about government, do you tend to think of it more as "THE government" or more as "OUR government?"*
- *Which of the following statements is closer to your view: Government should do more to solve problems, OR, Government is doing too many things that should be left to individuals and business?*
- *Which of the following statements is closer to your view: Being a good citizen means having some special obligations, OR, Simply being a good person is enough to make someone a good citizen?*
- *For each of the following actions, please tell me whether you consider it to be an obligation of citizenship. For each, please tell me if you feel it should be an extremely important obligation, a very important obligation, a somewhat important obligation, or not an obligation of citizenship:*
 - *Volunteering some time to community services*
 - *Voting in elections*
 - *Keeping fully informed about news and public issues*
 - *Protesting unjust public policies*
 - *Paying taxes*
 - *Participating in town hall, community decision making meetings.*
- *Do you think the taxes you pay are too high, too low, or about right?*
- *In general, would you rather: have the government provide more services, even if it costs more in taxes, OR, have lower taxes, even if it means that government provides fewer services?*
- *As you may know, many state governments in the United States are facing serious financial problems. What action should state governments take to balance their budgets? Should they concentrate more on—raising taxes OR cutting services?*
- *After everything we've talked about, what is the value of government; why do we need it?*

- *How much of the time do you think you can trust government to do what is right – just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?*
- *How much of the time do you think you can trust businesses to do what is right – just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?*
- *Please tell me which statement is closer to your view: The role of the public sector should be to promote the principle of a strong community. America is most successful when we pursue policies that expand opportunity and create a rising prosperity for all, not just a few; OR, The role of the public sector should be to promote the principle of self reliance. America is most successful when we have a limited public role that keeps taxes low, so that businesses and individuals can prosper.*
- *Please tell me which statement is closer to your view: There are basic goals that individuals cannot reach alone; it takes citizens joining together. Government is one path through which citizens combine efforts to protect the public good and improve quality of life for all, by working to improve public schools, developing regulations that protect us from physical and financial harm, building roads and bridges, among others. We need to make sure our government is working on the public's behalf, has the resources to meet unforeseen needs and promotes the common good. OR, Government has gotten too big and is inserting itself into areas that should be left to individuals. We need to stop going down this path where overreaching regulations hurt business innovation and profitability, and government intrudes on parents' views of what their children should learn in school, and wastes tax dollars. We need to limit the size of government, cut taxes, and promote individual responsibility.*

At various points throughout the survey, questions with the experimental language were inserted to remind survey respondents of the frame element and to avoid having respondents revert to their dominant frame for government. By analyzing the pattern of response to the indicator questions listed above within each experimental group, and comparing test responses to a control group that received no exposure to a particular frame element, it is possible to begin to determine the impact of each experiment on public attitudes.

The attitudinal and policy questions in the survey were carefully selected to determine whether or not the experimental reframes could make progress toward achieving the project's goals. The How to Talk About Government Project is seeking: 1) to re-engage the public in the business of government as a tool for achieving social progress; and 2) to determine potential public support for active government, as evidenced in recognition of a battery of policy proposals. The intent of the priming experiments is to determine whether or not the tested reframes can move opinion toward these two goals of citizen engagement and support for active government.

Therefore, to be a valid test of the reframes, the attitudinal indicator questions need to correlate with citizen engagement and/or policy support for an active government. For example, while it seems logical that those who are more engaged with government will be more likely to believe that "People working together as a group can make a great deal of difference in solving the problems you see," it is only a useful test for the priming experiments if verified that it does actually correlate with citizen engagement and/or policy support.

Indeed, all but two of the indicator questions included in the survey correlate with citizen engagement or policy support. Trust in government, long held as an important indicator of attitudes toward government, is actually not a very useful indicator of people's engagement with government or people's support for active government. Trust in

government is tied to views of the current administration, resulting in far higher levels of trust in government among Republicans than among Independents or Democrats. As long as the public continues to conflate views of government with views of the party in power, this will not be a useful measure of attitudes toward government. The second indicator that does not correlate with engagement or policy support is trust in business, which was simply included as a comparison to public sector trust and was not expected to correlate with other measures.

The table below lists all the attitudinal indicator questions, and marks with a “✓” those indicators that correlate with average policy support and two measures of engagement: 1) voter registration, and 2) ongoing activity (registered voters who have either expressed their opinion by writing a letter to a newspaper or contacting an elected official, or registered voters who have spoken in public for an organization or cause they care about). Of the control group, 80% are registered voters, and 45% are engaged voters.

The following correlations are based on the control sample, which allows an assessment of support for policies and activities, without the influence of framing experiments. As noted in the table below, policy priority does indeed correlate with many of the indicators. In other words, the higher a person’s support for policies for an active government, the more likely they are to side with attitudes consistent with support for and engagement with government. “Policy Support” in this table was determined by averaging support for the 12 policies included in the survey. Items were rescaled before averaging, to place all policies in the same direction of support or opposition to active government.

Importantly, correlation does not mean causation. These results cannot lead one to say that certain attitudes *lead to* support for certain policies or vice versa. Furthermore, it is important to keep in mind that other factors, such as party identification, influence both policy support and response to attitudinal indicators. The attitudes that cause one to affiliate with either the Democratic or Republican parties are captured in response to many of these indicators. That was expected, of course, but is important to keep in mind while reviewing the influence of frames on attitudes and policies.

In addition to policy support, the table also lists which indicators correlate with active citizen engagement. Unlike correlations with policy priority, citizen engagement is not strongly influenced by party identification. Instead, citizen engagement correlates with indicators about participation: the difference people make, the obligations of citizenship, and the importance of voting and protesting unjust policies. This suggests that citizen engagement and policy priority appear to have different dynamics from one another that may warrant a multi-faceted communication strategy.

	Policy Priority	Voter Registration	Citizen Engagement
People working together as a group can make a great deal of difference in solving the problems you see	✓		✓
▪ Regulation of business is necessary to protect the public interest	✓		
OR			
▪ Regulation of business usually does more harm than good			✓
Government has a positive or negative impact on most people's lives			(Engaged have more negative view.)
Tend to think of government more as "THE government" or more as "OUR government"	✓ (Higher support among "THE.")		
▪ Government should do more to solve problems	✓	✓	
OR			
▪ Government is doing too many things that should be left to individuals and business		(Not registered more likely to say govt. should do more)	
▪ Being a good citizen means having some special obligations			✓
OR			
▪ Simply being a good person is enough to make someone a good citizen			
Important obligations of citizenship			
Volunteering some time to community services	✓		
Voting in elections		✓	✓
Keeping fully informed about news and public issues	✓		
Protesting unjust public policies	✓	✓	✓
Paying taxes		✓	
Participating in town hall, community decision making meetings		✓	
Think taxes are too high, too low, or about right	✓		
In general, would you rather: have the government provide more services, even if it costs more in taxes, OR have lower taxes even if it means that government provides fewer services?	✓		
Many state governments in the United States are facing serious financial problems. What action should state governments take to balance their budgets? Should they concentrate more on—raising taxes OR cutting services?	✓		
Trust government to do what is right			
Trust businesses to do what is right			
▪ The role of the public sector should be to promote the principle of a strong community. America is most successful when we pursue policies that expand opportunity and create a rising prosperity for all, not just a few	✓	✓	
▪ The role of the public sector should be to promote the principle of self-reliance. America is most successful when we have a limited public role that keeps taxes low so that businesses and individuals can prosper			
▪ There are basic goals that individuals cannot reach alone; it takes citizens joining together. Government is one path through which citizens combine efforts to protect the public good and improve quality of life for all, by working to improve public schools, developing regulations that protect us from physical and financial harm, building roads and bridges, among others. We need to make sure our government is working on the public's behalf, has the resources to meet unforeseen needs and promotes the common good	✓		
▪ Government has gotten too big and is inserting itself into areas that should be left to individuals. We need to stop going down this path where overreaching regulations hurt business innovation and profitability, and government intrudes on parents' views of what their children should learn in school, and wastes tax dollars. We need to limit the size of government, cut taxes, and promote individual responsibility			

The effects of each of the experiments are typically subtle, resulting in single-digit shifts in opinion. Dominant models of understanding are developed throughout the course of our lives, and changing those models takes time and significant exposure to new frames. A short survey of this type can provide directional understanding, but will not fully represent the shifts in public opinion that might occur over a long period of exposure to new frames.

The survey analysis is based on telephone interviews with 2603 adults nationwide. The survey was piloted on July 18-20, 2005, and the remaining interviews were completed July 26-August 4, 2005. Each main split or division consists of a national sample of adults drawn proportionate to population. Demographic characteristics (age, education, political party identification) were weighted when necessary, to be consistent across splits. Most percentages in this document refer to a base sample size of at least 800 interviews, which results in a sampling error of no more than +/- 3.5%. (Error decreases as opinion on a question becomes more polarized.) *Only statistically significant differences are included in this report.*

The following analysis begins with a review of current public perceptions, based solely on the responses of the control group (or that group uninfluenced by the effects of the framing experiments). An analysis of the effects of each frame element and the effects of the experiments on different target audiences follows. Finally, the paper ends with brief observations about the overall implications of this research.

Current Opinion

Note: This section is based upon the response of the Pure Control Group which includes 504 interviews nationwide. Respondents in the Pure Control Group were exposed to neither of the values frame experiments, nor the Simplifying Model experiment.

Government Roles and Responsibilities

Survey responses suggest that the public is deeply conflicted in its views of government. While a slight majority believes government has a positive impact on most people's lives, just as many believe government is doing too many things that should be left to individuals and business. Few trust government to do what is right most of the time, but even fewer trust business. In fact, a strong majority believes regulation of business is necessary to protect the public. Importantly, many of these responses are directed by party identification and views of the political party in control of the federal government. This supports earlier FrameWorks research findings that the public's image of government is frequently an image of elected officials and partisan politics, rather than a rich perspective based on the full scope of government.

Some survey responses indicate that the public has a favorable view of government. For example, a slim majority states that government has a positive impact on most people's lives (54% positive, 12% very positive), while only one-third reports that government has a negative impact (35% negative, 8% very negative). In addition, slightly more than half of survey respondents indicate a sense of engagement with government by responding that they think of government as "OUR government" (53%), while others indicate a personal distance from government by thinking of it as "THE government" (45%).

However, far fewer trust government to do what is right. Only 5% of survey respondents say they can trust government to do what is right "just about always," while an additional 33% trust government "most of the time". A majority (59%) says that it trusts government to do what is right just "some of the time."

Importantly, responses to all three of these questions are clearly influenced by views of the political party in power. This is consistent with previous research conducted for the Frameworks Institute by Cultural Logic and reported in *"Mind and Monolith."* With the White House and both houses of Congress controlled by the Republican Party, Republican survey respondents are far more likely than Democratic survey respondents to hold positive perceptions of government, to see government as "OUR government," and to trust government. Interestingly, religion also plays a role in influencing these responses. Those Republicans who attend religious services on a weekly basis have the highest ratings concerning the positive impact of government, the sense that it is OUR

government, and trust in government. Nonreligious Democrats have some of the lowest ratings on all these measures.

However, positive ratings of the party in power do not necessarily lead to support for an active role for government more generally. While a majority states that government has a positive impact on most people's lives, just as many believe, "Government is doing too many things that should be left to individuals and business (55%, 43% feel strongly). Only 39% choose an alternative statement that says, "Government should do more to solve problems" (39%, 32% feel strongly). Republicans' positive ratings of government do not translate into support for active government, and part of Democrats' critique of government is that it is not doing enough. Republicans, older respondents, and college-educated men are particularly likely to believe that government is doing too much. Democrats, younger respondents, college-educated women, union households, those who are single or divorced, and people of color, are more likely to say that government should do more.

Most believe there is a role for government in regulating business. While few trust government, even fewer trust business. Just 3% say they trust business to do what is right "just about always," while an additional 29% say they trust business "most of the time." Fully two-thirds (66%) say they trust business to do what is right just "some of the time." Therefore, most survey respondents believe, "Regulation of business is necessary to protect the public interest" (60%, 40% feel strongly) while only half as many believe, "Regulation of business usually does more harm than good" (33%, 22% feel strongly). Republicans have more faith in business and are more likely to say that regulating business does harm, while Democrats, union members, and people of color have less faith in business and are more likely to say that regulation is necessary.

Citizen Engagement

Though many survey respondents are skeptical of government, most believe in the power of citizenship and people working together to solve problems. In fact, most believe that citizenship has special obligations, such as voting, paying taxes, and keeping informed about news.

While most survey respondents are registered to vote, less than half are sufficiently engaged in political discourse to have expressed views publicly on an issue. Fully 80% of survey respondents in the control group state they are registered to vote. Slightly less than half of survey respondents (45%) are engaged voters, meaning they have either spoken out publicly on an issue, or have written to express their opinion on an issue. Disengaged voters, 35% of survey respondents in the control group, are registered to vote but they have neither spoken out publicly nor written to express their opinion on an issue.

Survey respondents believe in the efficacy of people working together for a common goal. A majority (60%) believes, "People working together as a group can make a difference in solving the problems" they see (36% "a great deal of difference," 24% "a lot

of difference”). Far fewer believe that people working together can only make some difference (27%) a little difference (8%), or no difference (4%).

In addition, a strong majority believes, “Being a good citizen means having some special obligations” (60%, 51% feel strongly), while fewer believe, “Simply being a good person is enough to make someone a good citizen” (34%, 27% feel strongly). The pattern of response to this particular question provides insight about the types of Americans who are more likely to recognize the special obligations of citizenship. Those who are more likely to believe that citizenship has special obligations include: engaged citizens, Republicans, especially Republicans who attend religious services weekly, older survey respondents, survey respondents with more education, and those who live in the South. Other demographic subgroups are more likely to believe that simply being a good person is enough to be a good citizen, including: those who are not registered to vote, disengaged citizens, younger survey respondents, those with less education, people of color, and Democrats who do not attend religious services weekly.

Of a series of specific activities, only one was rated as an "extremely important obligation of citizenship" by a majority of survey respondents. More than half (58%) state that voting in elections is an extremely important obligation of citizenship, and an additional 33% say it is very important. Only 39% believe paying taxes is an extremely important obligation, followed by keeping fully informed about news (33%), volunteering some time to community services (20%), protesting unjust public policies (18%), and participating in town hall meetings.

Table: Obligations of Citizenship

(In Percent)

For each, please tell me if you feel it should be an extremely important obligation, a very important obligation, a somewhat important obligation, or not an obligation of citizenship?

	Extremely Important	Very Important	Total
Voting in elections	58	33	91
Paying taxes	39	42	81
Keeping fully informed about news and public issues	33	44	77
Volunteering some time to community services	20	36	56
Protesting unjust public policies	18	26	44
Participating in town hall, community decision making meetings	16	34	50

Response to most of these questions is fairly consistent across demographic groups, with two exceptions. Those who place more priority on voting in elections closely mirror the subgroups that believe citizenship has special obligations. Groups placing particularly high importance on voting include: registered voters, engaged citizens, Republicans, especially Republicans who attend religious services weekly, college-educated survey respondents, especially college-educated men, and those who live in the South. Other groups place lower priority on voting, specifically: those who are not registered to vote and disengaged citizens. Interestingly, Democrats who attend religious services weekly place high priority on voting, while Democrats who do not attend religious services weekly place lower priority on voting.

The second area of obligation that shows interesting demographic patterns is the pattern of response concerning protesting unjust public policies. Subgroups placing particularly high priority on this activity include: Democrats, especially Democrats who do not attend religious services weekly, Independents, and younger men. Republican survey respondents place far less priority on this activity.

Taxes and Budgets

A slight majority says taxes are too high, and most would rather cut services than raise taxes to bring state government budgets in balance. At the same time, survey respondents divide over whether it would be better to have lower taxes and fewer services, or more services for more taxes.

Just over half of survey respondents (53%) believe the taxes they pay are too high, while 43% think the taxes they pay are about right, and a mere 2% say taxes are too low. Ideology is not a strong influence on response to this question. Geography has some influence, with those living in the Northeast and suburbs more likely to say taxes are too high, and those living the West and urban areas more likely to say taxes are about right. Less-educated respondents (who are typically also lower income) feel more tax pressure while college-educated women feel taxes are about right. Finally, those in the high income earning years of ages 35-64 years old say their taxes are too high, while younger respondents feel taxes are about right.

When asked to consider which approach they prefer, survey respondents divide between having “lower taxes even if it means the government provides fewer services” (45%), or having “the government provide more services, even if it costs more in taxes” (42%). Response changes when survey participants consider the appropriate action for state governments facing fiscal problems. Instead of the division noted in the prior question, survey respondents prefer cutting services over raising taxes by a nearly two-to-one margin. When asked what actions state governments should take to balance budgets, a plurality says that state governments should concentrate on cutting services (42%), 24% choose raising taxes, 20% want neither action, and 8% believe both should be done.

Political ideology matters in response to these questions. Republicans are consistently more likely to land on the side of lower taxes and cutting services. Democrats, however, especially Democrats who do not attend religious services weekly, prefer more services and raising taxes. Younger survey respondents, particular younger women, prefer more services and higher taxes. Other groups supporting raising taxes to address fiscal problems include public employees, union households, and college-educated women. College-educated men and non-union households far prefer cutting services. Those with no more than high school education tended to opt out of making a choice, responding “neither.”

Collective or Individual Responsibility

In considering two competing philosophies for government – promoting strong community and promoting self-reliance – survey participants divide. In two sets of paired statements, survey respondents are almost equally divided.

Survey respondents divide over the appropriate role for the public sector. Slightly less than half (49%, 40% strongly) believe, “The role of the public sector should be to promote the principal of a strong community. America is most successful when we pursue policies that expand opportunity and create a rising prosperity for all, not just a few.” Nearly as many (44%, 33% strongly) choose the alternative statement: “The role of the public sector should be to promote the principal of self-reliance. America is most successful when we have a limited public role that keeps taxes low so that businesses and individuals can prosper.”

Survey respondents similarly divide in response to the following paired statements:

- Nearly half (48%, 37% strongly) believe that “There are basic goals that individuals cannot reach alone; it takes citizens joining together. Government is one path through which citizens combine efforts to protect the public good and improve quality of life for all, by working to improve public schools, develop regulations that protect us from physical and financial harm, build roads and bridges, among others. We need to make sure our government is working on the public’s behalf, has the resources to meet unforeseen needs and promotes the common good.”
- Nearly as many (44%, 37% strongly) believe that, “Government has gotten too big and is inserting itself into areas that should be left to individuals. We need to stop going down this path where overreaching regulations hurt business innovation and profitability, and government intrudes on parents’ views of what their children should learn in school, and wastes tax dollars. We need to limit the size of government, cut taxes, and promote individual responsibility.”

In response to both sets of statements, Democrats, especially Democrats who do not attend religious services weekly, are more likely to choose community over individual responsibility. Republicans, however, select self-reliance in response to the first set of statements, but they are no more likely to choose "government has gotten too big" in response to the second set. This seeming conflict may be explained by Republicans continuing attraction to the principal of self-reliance, while also coupled with an unwillingness to criticize government when it is dominated at the national level by their own party.

Younger respondents, particularly younger women, are attracted to the statements on community. Public employees and survey respondents who live in the Midwest and South are more likely to choose community in the second instance, when the alternative

is limiting the size of government. Younger and college-educated men are more likely to choose self-reliance in principle; however older men and survey respondents who live in the Northeast are more likely to choose individual responsibility when it is associated with the idea of government being too big.

Policies

In addition to the attitudinal indicators, survey respondents rated a series of policy priorities designed to determine support for an active role for government.

Some of the included policies represent an expanded role for government and government services, such as "expand public agencies efforts to develop vaccines and immunizations for new diseases," "allow anyone to buy into a public health insurance program, and provide reduced rates for those with low incomes," and "expand public funding for the national AmeriCorps program, which provides college scholarships for those who work in public service jobs in schools, health clinics or other community programs."

Other policies represent a shrinking role for government, or shifting government responsibilities to the private sector, such as "allow private companies to take over the

operations of more public services such as public parks and forests," "give parents money to help pay for their children to attend a private or religious school instead of their local public school," and "reduced regulations on business."

Tax policy was addressed in the list in three ways: "pass new tax cuts," "bring down the federal deficit by reversing recent tax cuts," and "change state tax policy to require voter approval for all tax increases." The last tax policy could be interpreted as being as much about citizen empowerment as taxes. One other policy directed at citizen engagement is included in the list: "to provide more opportunities for citizens to engage directly in the process of governing and the development of public policies and programs."

Importance of Policy Priority on a 1-10 Scale	
<i>Please rate each of the following for how important a priority you believe it should be, on a scale where zero means not a priority and 10 means an extremely important priority.</i>	
	Average Rating
Expand public agencies' efforts to develop vaccines and immunizations for new diseases	7.8
Allow anyone to buy into a public health insurance program, and provide reduced rates for those with low incomes	7.7
Pass laws to encourage the use of clean energy sources	7.6
Change state tax policy to require voter approval for all tax increases	7.4
Strengthen and enforce environmental regulations and protections	7.2
Provide more opportunities for citizens to engage directly in the process of governing and the development of public policies and programs	7.0
Pass new tax cuts	6.0
Expand public funding for the national AmeriCorps program which provides college scholarships for those who work in public service jobs in schools, health clinics or other community programs	5.9
Bring down the federal deficit by reversing recent tax cuts	5.9
Reduce regulations on business	5.2
Give parents money to help pay for their children to attend a private or religious school instead of their local public school	4.1
Allow private companies to take over the operations of more public services such as public parks and forests	3.9

Finally, the list includes two policies concerning energy and the environment. One policy reflects government's role in protecting the public: "strengthen and enforce environmental regulations and protections." The other reflects government's role in encouraging innovation: "pass laws to encourage the use of clean energy sources."

Survey respondents are most enthusiastic about two policies addressing public health, even though both represent an expansion of government and government services: expand public agencies efforts to develop vaccines and immunizations (7.8 average rating on a 10 point scale), and allow anyone to buy into a public health insurance program (7.7). The environment and energy policies also rate highly: pass laws to encourage clean energy (7.6), and strengthen and enforce environmental regulations (7.2). Providing more opportunities for citizen engagement also lands in the top half of the list (7.0).

Only one of the tax policies rates highly: change state tax policy to require voter approval (7.4). The other two tax policies receive lower ratings, whether the policy is about new tax cuts (6.0) or reversing tax cuts (5.9). This pattern of response suggests that the high rating for voter approval for tax increases may be more about citizen engagement than tax policy.

The three policies that reflect limiting the influence of government or downsizing government are rated the least important priorities by survey respondents: reduce regulations on business (5.2), provide private school vouchers (4.1), and privatize public parks and other services (3.9).

One policy in the list does not seem to fit any of the other patterns, suggesting that the public has not thought enough about this type of policy to have a strongly held opinion: expand public funding for AmeriCorps, which provides college scholarships (5.9).

Democrats and Republicans respond to these policies as expected. Democrats rate most of the policies higher than average, except tax cuts and the three policies that limit the size and influence of government. Republicans rate most of the policies lower, except voter approval for tax increases, tax cuts, and the three policies that limit the size and influence of government.

The Value of Government

Underlying the percentages is a rich array of perceptions of government that cannot be captured in closed-end questions. In response to an open-end question ("What is the value of government; why do we need it?"), survey respondents discussed the value of government as keeping order in society, providing security and necessary services, and promoting fairness and balance while protecting the weak. Most responses indicate that people view government as a large and powerful entity, rather than a process of governance or the collective wishes of the nation's citizens.

About one in ten survey respondents cannot provide any opinion concerning the value of government:

Well, for myself I think we need it because it's like -- I don't want to say it like that -- hmm, I really can't state it the way I want to.

About two in ten provide a strong criticism of government or state that government isn't needed:

We obviously have to have it, but I don't feel we need it because I don't think they do a good enough job at it.

Well we don't really [need it]. That's about it.

By far the most frequent responses revolve around government's role in setting the rules people live by, and keeping society from anarchy:

Everybody needs to have rules and stuff to go by and you've got to do it somehow so why not do it by the elected officials and the government because that is the only way it is going to get done.

Well, we need government to keep laws enforced; keep us safe from anarchy; keep people from killing each other indiscriminately. The laws are meant to protect us.

I think the value of government is to make rules for the activities of everyone in society so things will be fair and everybody will have equal opportunity for success and a happy life; protect our country and things like that.

While the following quote may sound paradoxical at first glance, a recurring theme in the responses was that there cannot be freedom without order:

If we didn't have somebody ruling, telling us what to do and enforce the laws; we have to have freedom of speech, freedom of religion and other freedoms.

Others take a pragmatic approach, saying that the value of government is to keep the machine of the nation running smoothly and providing the services people expect:

Make sure everything is running smoothly and provide services to people who need them.

To coordinate and take charge; make sure everything functions well, like make sure the roads and the schools are taken care of.

Some note that the value of government is to promote fairness and keep the powerful from abusing the weak:

In a democracy, the value of government is to keep things in order so that one group doesn't get total power and that the poor and disadvantaged and the downtrodden are looked after and not excluded at the expense of the rich and powerful. It keeps balance and order in the society.

While mentioned far less frequently, a few note the role of citizens in creating and supporting government:

Because there is not anybody, [any] individual that can run this country like a group of men and women that could, that know what the heck is going on. It takes everybody to run a country. How old are you? [Interviewer response] I am 54. Good, well you remember way back when Kennedy said, ask not what you can do for your country, right?

We're lucky to have the one we've got -- that we've had over several years even though it has a lot of faults, and you get the government that you deserve. If you don't participate and find out about it, then you should just shut up and lump it.

Changing the Conversation

As noted earlier, the objective of this research is to develop a communications strategy that will lead to increased public support for, and engagement with, government. Based on the results of the qualitative research phase, the research team developed two values reframes and a Simplifying Model that demonstrate promise in changing the conversation:

- **The Protection Frame** communicates that the role of the public sector is to protect citizens from physical and financial harm.
- **The Common Good Frame** states that public sector institutions rely upon citizens who work together to come to consensus for the common good, and to improve quality of life.
- **The Simplifying Model**² describes government as the organizational and physical public structures that the country needs in order to get things done.

This survey was designed to quantify the relative effects of these three elements of a reframe for government. Practically, it is prudent to anticipate that a long-term reframing of government will require multiple frames, deployed over time, that are mutually reinforcing. Therefore, the objective of these experiments was to quantify the effects of *each* of the three elements, not to attempt to choose just one “best” approach.

² Cultural Logic explains that “people typically rely on analogies in order to learn complex, abstract concepts. These concrete analogies are simplifying models - they help people organize information into a clear picture in their heads, including facts and ideas that they have been exposed to, but never been able to put together in a coherent way.” For more on simplifying models, see the FrameWorks Institute e-zine, Issue No. 19, “Opening Up the Black Box: A Case Study in Simplifying Models” by Axel Aubrun and Joe Grady for Cultural Logic, with Susan Bales of the FrameWorks Institute, available at www.frameworksinstitute.org.

As explained in the Method section, survey participants were randomly assigned to one of several groups and exposed to different survey versions designed to trigger distinct ways of thinking about government. Each cell reflects a national sample of survey respondents.

Sample Design – Number of Interviews by Split Sample Experiment					
		First Experiment			
		Control	Common Good	Protection	Total
Second Experiment	Control 2	504	401	401	1306
	Model	499	401	397	1297
	Total	1003	802	798	2603

The effects of priming experiments are typically subtle, resulting in single-digit shifts in opinion. Dominant models of understanding are developed throughout the course of our lives, and changing those models takes time and significant exposure to new frames. A short survey of this type can provide directional understanding, but will not fully represent the shifts in public opinion that might occur over a long period of exposure to new frames. Furthermore, this survey is just one phase in a broader research effort and should be understood in the context of the totality of the research.

Overall, the framing experiments resulted in a number of shifts in opinion. Each of the three elements tested in the survey demonstrate slightly different effects on public opinion. In each of the subsequent sections, we explain first the overall effects of the frame element, across all conditions. We then describe its impact within different sub-experiments.

The Simplifying Model

Note: This section is based upon the response of those exposed to the Simplifying Model, which includes 1,297 interviews nationwide. The Simplifying Model was tested in three different experiments. One group of survey participants heard only the Simplifying Model, a second group heard the Simplifying Model as well as the Protection Frame primes, and a third group heard the Simplifying Model as well as the Common Good Frame primes. By comparing each of these groups to a control group that heard no model or primes, it is possible to determine the effects of the Model alone, as well as the Model in combination with one of the values frames. For the first part of this section, the Control Group consists of all those respondents who did not hear the Simplifying Model (n=1,306). Subsequent sections will explore the effects of the Model in combination with each of the values frames (Common Good and Protection).

Cultural Logic, with research funded by the Frameworks Institute, has developed a Simplifying Model for government, referred to as the Public Structures Model. Earlier Frameworks Institute research indicated that, when the public thinks of government, it thinks of elected officials and partisan politics. The full scope of government is not easily apparent to most members of the public. The Public Structures Model was

developed to address two objectives: 1) to make the full scope of government more visible to the public; and 2) to develop an image of government that does not rely on individuals involved in government. The Public Structures Model can be communicated as follows:

The main advantages that make America so successful come from what are called Public Structures. The Public Structures America has created include physical structures we need in order to get things done – like highways, airports, and communications grids – as well as the organizational structures we need, like a postal system for delivering mail and courts for settling business disagreements. Third World countries have many smart, hard-working individuals, but they don't have the Public Structures that are essential for overall success.

Survey respondents were exposed to the Public Structures Model through a series of questions that embedded the Model in the question language.

Response to Test Language

The Public Structures Model was embedded into four questions that appeared in various points in the survey. The questions were simply a tool to expose survey respondents to the public structures concept; the actual responses to these questions are typically unimportant. Still, responses to these questions are reviewed in this section to communicate any insights that may be provided.

Table: Test Language for Simplifying Model	
Question	Test Language
Compare US Public Structures with Other Countries	Economists now agree that the main advantages that make America so successful come from what are called Public Structures. The Public Structures America has created include <i>physical</i> structures we need in order to get things done – like highways, airports, and communications grids – as well as the <i>organizational</i> structures we need, like a postal system for delivering mail and courts for settling business disagreements. Third World countries have many smart, hard-working <i>individuals</i> , but they don't have the Public Structures that are essential for overall success. Without continuing attention and support, America's Public Structures are at risk of decline.
Issue Priority	Bring down the federal deficit by reversing recent tax cuts, because that funding is needed to improve our Public Structures.
Which Comes to Mind	When you think about the Public Structures that America has created, do you tend to think more of the <i>physical</i> structures we need in order to get things done such as highways, airports, and communications grids, or do you think more of the <i>organizational</i> structures we need, like a postal system for delivering mail and courts for settling business disagreements.
Agree/Disagree	Our taxes support the Public Structures that make America so successful, such as the physical structures that we need to get things done, like highways, airports and communications grids, as well as the organizational structures we need, like the postal system and the courts. These public structures are essential for our nation's success.

Most feel that America's public structures are better than public structures in the rest of the world. Nearly two-thirds of survey respondents who were exposed to the Public Structures Model believe that America's public structures are above average, compared to the rest of the world (64%). Only 27% believe America's public structures are average, and just 6% say they are below average.

Organizational and physical structures are equally likely to come to mind. In considering the kinds of public structures that America has created, survey participants were just as likely to say they think about organizational structures (41%) as physical structures (39%), and 15% say they think of both organizational and physical structures.

Public structures are essential to the nation's success, according to survey participants. Fully 90% agree, and 66% strongly agree, that “Our taxes support the public structures that make America so successful, such as the physical structures that we need to get things done, like highways, airports and communications grids, as well as the organizational structures we need, like the postal system and the courts. These public structures are essential for our nation's success.”

Finally, one of the issue priority questions included the Public Structures test language. This was done for two reasons: 1) to continue to remind survey respondents of the Public Structures Model, and 2) to determine if policy support would be more directly influenced by attaching the test language to the policy test. When asked to rate the priority of bringing “down the federal deficit by reversing recent tax cuts, because that funding is needed to improve our public structures,” survey respondents gave an average rating of 5.7 on a 10-point scale, placing this issue roughly in the middle of priority of 12 issues. Including the Public Structures language in the issue description did not significantly alter response when compared to a control group that was asked to rate “bringing down the federal deficit by reversing recent tax cuts.”

Effect of the Model

Whether survey respondents agree with the Model is less relevant than whether the Model creates a new way of understanding government. Indeed, the Simplifying Model has a number of beneficial effects on public understanding, causing shifts in response on several indicator questions that correlate with policy support and citizen engagement.

Overall, the Simplifying Model causes survey respondents to become more likely to believe that people can make a difference, that citizens have an obligation to protest unjust policies, that regulations are necessary, and that government has a positive impact on people's lives. In addition, the Model causes more survey respondents to believe that the role of the public sector should be to promote the principle of a strong community.

Problematically, the Model also causes people to become more likely to believe that government has gotten too big, and the Model has no significant influence on increasing support for policies to promote an active role for government.

Importantly, the Model is most effective in shifting opinion when it is paired with either the Protection or Common Good values frames. When the Model is presented in isolation, it has far fewer effects.

Analyzing the entire group that was exposed to the Simplifying Model, whether or not some members of the group also heard a values frame, demonstrates that the Simplifying Model creates a number of beneficial shifts in opinion. Specifically:

- Survey respondents become significantly more likely to say that people working together as a group can make "a great deal of difference" in solving problems (+5 percentage points).
- They become more likely to believe that "regulation of business is necessary to protect the public interest" (+5 percentage points).
- Their view of government improves slightly, with an increase in the percentage reporting that government has a somewhat positive impact on most people's lives (+5 percentage points).
- While survey respondents' opinion of most citizen obligations does not shift significantly, there is a statistically significant increase in the percentage that ascribes extreme importance to protesting unjust public policies (+3 percentage points).
- The Model results in an increase in the percentage of participants who believe that the role of the public sector should be to promote the principle of a strong community (+4 percentage points overall, +6 percentage points "strongly"), and a decrease in the percentage of participants who believe the role of the public sector should be to promote the principle of self-reliance (-5 points).

However, across all conditions, the Model has some inadequacies as well. First, it results in no statistically significant policy shifts. In addition, it causes survey respondents to be more likely to believe the government has gotten too big. Specifically:

- Survey respondents become less likely to believe that, "There are basic goals that individuals cannot reach alone; it takes citizens joining together. Government is one path through which citizens combine efforts to protect the public good and improve quality of life for all, by working to improve public schools, develop regulations that protect us from physical and financial harm, build roads and bridges, among others. We need to make sure our government is working on the public's behalf, has the resources to meet unforeseen needs and promotes the common good." (-5 percentage points)
- Survey respondents become more likely to believe that, "Government has gotten too big and is inserting itself into areas that should be left to individuals. We need to stop going down this path where overreaching regulations hurt business innovation and profitability, and government intrudes on parents' views of what their children should learn in school, and wastes tax dollars. We need to limit the size of government, cut taxes, and promote individual responsibility." (+4 percentage points)

With respect to the latter point, it may be the case that, ironically, the Model is so powerful in making the full scope of government visible, that some people may become more likely to worry the government is doing too much. In subsequent refinement of the model, the FrameWorks research team will carefully consider the extent to which this dynamic is, or is not, a problem for the design of the Model.

Importantly, the Model is most effective when presented in conjunction with one of the Level 1 values frames. When survey participants are exposed to the Model alone, it

creates beneficial shifts, but far fewer shifts than when paired with values. Specifically, when the Model is presented alone:

- Survey respondents become significantly more likely to say that people working together as a group can make "a great deal of difference" in solving problems (+6 percentage points).
- They become more likely to strongly believe that "regulation of business is necessary to protect the public interest" (+8 percentage points).
- More say that keeping fully informed about the news is an extremely important obligation of citizenship (+7 percentage points).

Subsequent sections will present an analysis of the Simplifying Model in combination with each of the values frames.

Protection Frame

Note: This section is based upon the response of those exposed to the Protection Frame, which includes 798 interviews nationwide. The Protection Frame was tested in two different experiments. One group of survey participants heard only the Protection Frame as a prime to further thinking, while a second group heard the Simplifying Model as well as the Protection Frame prime. By comparing each of these groups to a control group, we can determine the effects of the Protection Frame alone, as well as the Protection Frame in combination with the Model. For the first part of this section, the Control Group consists of all those respondents who did not hear the Protection Frame (n=1,003). Then, the analysis will review the effect of the Protection Frame in isolation, as well as in combination with the Simplifying Model.

Response to Test Language

The Protection Frame was embedded into seven questions which were placed at various points in the survey. The questions were simply a tool to expose survey respondents to the Protection Frame; the actual responses to these questions are typically unimportant. Still, responses to these questions are reviewed in this section to communicate any insights that may be provided.

The role of the public sector in protecting public health and well-being is a widely shared and deeply held perspective. Nearly all survey respondents agree (93% agree, 74% strongly agree) with the statement: “There are certain things that individuals cannot do alone and

Table: Test Language for Protection Frame

<u>Question</u>	<u>Test Language</u>
Intro	Now, in this survey we'll be talking about how public sector institutions protect public health and well-being
Closer to View	It is more important that public sector institutions protect the public and responsible businesses from the rogue, <u>irresponsible businesses that risk public health</u> OR It is more important that public sector institutions protect employees and responsible employers from the rogue, <u>irresponsible employers that risk worker safety</u>
Agree/Disagree	We rely on our public institutions to set and enforce the regulations that will protect us from physical and financial harm. There are a variety of ways that federal, state and local agencies protect the public, including: food quality standards, environmental controls, financial securities regulations, consumer fraud protections, workplace and product safety standards, to name a few. With the support of citizens and business, public sector institutions can set and enforce these protections on behalf of the public good.
Agree/Disagree	There are certain things that individuals cannot do alone and that require the power of all citizens working together. For example, we need public agencies to ensure that our meat processing system is as safe as possible, because the most cautious food handling in the home won't help if the food left the meat processing plant diseased. But public agencies need citizen support to be effective, which means that the responsibilities of citizenship extend far beyond voting. A good citizen acts on behalf of our country by working to improve public institutions, respecting laws, serving on community committees, paying taxes, or speaking out on issues that concern the country.
Issue Priority	Allow anyone to buy into a public health insurance program, and provide reduced rates for those with low incomes, because public health coverage will protect people from those healthcare institutions that unfairly charge higher rates to people without insurance than they charge to insurance companies
Issue Priority	Pass laws to encourage the use of clean energy sources, because it is important to protect the public from the health effects of pollution in our air and water that result from ineffective business regulations
Which Comes to Mind	Food and product standards, such as determining whether a product is safe for public use Workplace protections, such as workplace safety or wage and hour laws Environmental standards, such as air and water quality Financial protections, such as insured banking
Agree/Disagree	Taxes are my contribution to society as a citizen of the United States. They help to protect public health and well-being by supporting services, such as health and safety inspections, enforcement of environmental regulations and financial securities, and many others.

that require the power of all citizens working together. For example, we need public agencies to ensure that our meat processing system is as safe as possible, because the most cautious food handling in the home won't help, if the food left the meat processing plant diseased. But public agencies need citizen support to be effective, which means that the responsibilities of citizenship extend far beyond voting. A good citizen acts on behalf of our country by working to improve public institutions, respecting laws, serving on community committees, paying taxes, or speaking out on issues that concern the country.”

Furthermore, high proportions of the public recognize the need for taxes to support this role for the public sector. Survey respondents overwhelmingly agree (83% agree, 53% strongly agree) with the statement: “Taxes are my contribution to society as a citizen of the United States. They help to protect public health and well-being by supporting services, such as health and safety inspections, enforcement of environmental regulations and financial securities, and many others.”

Most agree with the wide range of protections that the public sector has put in place. More than three-quarters agree (79% agree, 47% strongly agree) with the statement: “We rely on our public institutions to set and enforce the regulations that will protect us from physical and financial harm. There are a variety of ways that federal, state and local agencies protect the public including: food quality standards, environmental controls, financial securities regulations, consumer fraud protections, workplace and product safety standards, to name a few. With the support of citizens and business, public sector institutions can set and enforce these protections on behalf of the public good.”

Worker safety and public health are two equally important protections, according to survey respondents. Asked to choose between two similar statements concerning the role of the public sector, survey respondents exposed to the Protection Frame were only slightly more likely to choose “It is more important that public sector institutions protect employees and responsible employers from the rogue, irresponsible employers that risk worker safety” (42%), over the competing statement “It is more important that public sector institutions protect the public and responsible businesses from the rogue, irresponsible businesses that risk public health” (39%).

However, when provided with a more extensive list of protections, survey respondents say they are most likely to think of food and product safety, followed by environmental regulations.

**Table: Public-Sector Protections
(In Percent)**

Which of the following most comes to mind for you when you think of the ways that public sector institutions protect public health and wellbeing:

Food and product standards, such as determining whether a product is safe for public use	36
Environmental standards, such as air and water quality	23
Workplace protections, such as workplace safety or wage and hour laws	19
Financial protections, such as insured banking	13
Other	3
Don't know	5

Finally, two issue priority questions included the Protection Frame test language. This was done to: 1) continue to remind survey respondents of the Protection Frame, and 2) determine if policy support would be more directly influenced by attaching the test language to the policy test. In fact, the Protection Frame language lifted support for one of the policies, but not the other. When asked to rate the priority of passing “laws to encourage the use of clean energy sources, because it is important to protect the public from the health effects of pollution in our air and water that result from ineffective business regulations,” survey respondents gave an average rating of 7.9 on a 10-point scale, placing this issue near the top in priority of 12 issues. Including the Protection language in the issue description increased survey respondents’ priority of this issue compared to a control group that was asked to rate passing “laws to encourage the use of clean energy sources.”

When asked to rate the priority of allowing “anyone to buy into a public health insurance program, and provide reduced rates for those with low incomes, because public health coverage will protect people from those healthcare institutions that unfairly charge higher rates to people without insurance than they charge to insurance companies,” survey respondents gave an average rating of 7.7 on a 10-point scale, placing this issue near the top in priority of 12 issues. Including the Protection language in the issue description did not significantly alter response when compared to a control group that was asked to rate allowing “anyone to buy into a public health insurance program, and provide reduced rates for those with low incomes.”

Effect of the Frame

Again, whether survey respondents agree with the frame is less relevant than whether the frame creates a new way of understanding government. Indeed, the Protection Frame has a number of beneficial effects on public understanding, causing shifts in response on several indicator questions that correlate with policy support and citizen engagement.

The Protection Frame is very powerful. It causes a higher percentage of survey participants to believe that people can make a difference, that regulations are necessary, that government should do more to solve problems, and that citizenship has obligations. The Protection Frame also results in increased priority for four policies.

Importantly, the Protection Frame has more beneficial effects when it is paired with the Simplifying Model than when it is presented in isolation. While the Protection Frame results in some beneficial effects when presented in isolation, it results in a number of problematic effects as well.

Analyzing the entire group that was exposed to the Protection Frame, whether or not some members of the group also heard the Simplifying Model, demonstrates that the Protection Frame creates a number of beneficial shifts in opinion. Specifically:

- Survey respondents become significantly more likely to say that people working together as a group can make "a great deal of difference" in solving problems (+5 percentage points, compared to a control group that did not hear the Protection Frame).
- They become more likely to strongly believe that "regulation of business is necessary to protect the public interest" (+5 percentage points).
- They become more likely to say that "government should do more to solve problems" (+6 points) and less likely to say that "government is doing too many things that should be left to individuals and business" (-4 points overall, -6 points strongly).
- More survey respondents believe that "being a good citizen means having some special obligations" (+6 points) and fewer believe that "simply being a good person is enough to make someone a good citizen" (-5 points overall, -7 points strong).
- The frame lifts four policies: expand funding for Americorp, provide more opportunities for citizen engagement, encourage clean energy sources, and expand public agencies' efforts to develop vaccines and immunizations.

Overall, the Protection Frame results in just one problematic shift. It increases the percentage saying that participating in town hall meetings is not an obligation of citizenship (+4 points).

Effect of Combining Protection and the Simplifying Model

The prior section reviewed the results of all respondents exposed to the Protection Frame, whether or not they also heard the Simplifying Model (n=798). This section analyzes the effects of the Protection Frame in isolation (n=401), as well as the Protection Frame in combination with the Simplifying Model (n=397).

While the Protection Frame in isolation results in many beneficial shifts, there are a number of problematic shifts that undermine its overall effectiveness. In isolation, the Protection Frame increases the likelihood that people see government as THE government, an entity separate from their own actions. In addition, more survey respondents say that town hall meetings are not an obligation of citizenship. Finally, perhaps as a backlash to the anti-business implication of the Protection Frame, respondents have less negative views of business.

Specifically, when survey respondents are only exposed to the Protection Frame, the following problems occur:

- There is an increase in the percentage reporting that they think of government as THE government, rather than OUR government (+8 points compared to a pure control that heard no values frame or Simplifying Model).
- There is an increase in the percentage saying that participating in town hall meetings is not an obligation of citizenship (+5 points).
- Perhaps as a backlash, there is an improvement in people's trust in business. There is a decrease (-7 points) in the percentage saying they only trust business "some of the time."

The Simplifying Model helps to temper some of the problematic results of the Protection Frame. When the Protection Frame incorporates the Simplifying Model, there are only beneficial shifts, such as increases in believing that people working together make a great deal of difference, a more positive view of the impact of government, and increases in the importance of certain obligations of citizenship.

Specifically, when survey respondents are exposed to the Protection Frame as well as the Simplifying Model, the following shifts occur:

- Survey respondents become significantly more likely to say that people working together as a group can make "a great deal of difference" in solving problems (+10 percentage points compared to a pure control that heard no values frame or Simplifying Model).
- They have a more positive view of the impact of government on people's lives (+7 points)
- More say that "keeping fully informed about news and public issues" and "protesting unjust public policies" are extremely important obligations of citizenship (+7 points each).
- In addition to increasing the priority of opportunities for citizen engagement, when the Protection Frame incorporates the Simplifying Model, survey participants also place higher priority on expanding funding for Americorps.

In sum, there is a strong case to be made from these data that it is the interaction between the values-based Protection Frame and the Simplifying Model that best realizes the goals of the test.

Common Good Frame

Note: This section is based upon the response of those exposed to the Common Good Frame, which includes 802 interviews nationwide. The Common Good Frame was tested in two different experiments. One group of survey participants heard only the Common Good Frame as a prime to further thinking, while a second group heard the Simplifying Model as well as the Common Good Frame prime. By comparing each of these groups to a control group, we can determine the effects of the Common Good Frame alone, as well as the Common Good Frame in combination with the Simplifying Model. For the first part of this section, the Control Group consists of all those respondents who did not hear

the Common Good Frame (n=1,003). Then, the analysis will review the effect of the Common Good Frame in isolation as well as in combination with the Simplifying Model.

Response to Test Language

The Common Good Frame was embedded into seven questions placed at various points in the survey. The questions were simply a tool to expose survey respondents to the Common Good Frame; the actual responses to these questions are typically unimportant. Still, responses to these questions are reviewed in this section to communicate any insights that may be provided.

The common good language is very attractive to survey respondents. Nearly all agree (93% agree, 73% strongly agree) with the statement: “There are certain things that individuals cannot do alone and that require the power of all citizens working together and each in his own way. In fact, every day people are acting to improve our public institutions. When a parent meets with a parent teacher organization at a public school, that parent is acting to improve the quality of the public education system. When a concerned neighbor speaks up to increase funding for the library, that neighbor is making the community a better place to live. The responsibilities of citizenship extend far beyond voting. A good citizen acts on behalf of our country by working to improve public institutions, respecting laws, serving on community committees, paying taxes, or speaking out on issues that concern the country.”

Table: Test Language for Common Good Frame	
Question	Test Language
Intro	Now, in this survey we'll be talking about how citizens work together through public sector institutions to improve quality of life for everyone
Closer to View	our quality of life relies upon citizens who <u>unite with public sector institutions</u> to work for the common good, doing things together to improve our quality of life that we could not accomplish alone OR our quality of life relies upon citizens who work within the public sector to shape guidelines and opportunities for everyone's benefit
Agree/Disagree	Our nation's success is based upon the power of people working together and each in his own way. We all benefit when citizens work with the public sector to identify problems and come to consensus on a vision to address those problems. Whether it is revitalizing a crumbling downtown, restoring parkland, or determining health and safety regulations, our nation's quality of life now and into the future depends upon citizens and public agencies working for the common good.
Agree/Disagree	There are certain things that individuals cannot do alone and that require the power of all citizens working together and each in his own way. In fact, every day people are acting to improve our public institutions. When a parent meets with a parent teacher organization at a public school, that parent is acting to improve the quality of the public education system. When a concerned neighbor speaks up to increase funding for the library, that neighbor is making the community a better place to live. The responsibilities of citizenship extend far beyond voting. A good citizen acts on behalf of our country by working to improve public institutions, respecting laws, serving on community committees, paying taxes, or speaking out on issues that concern the country.
Issue Priority	Allow anyone to buy into a public health insurance program, and provide reduced rates for those with low incomes, because health insurance will be less expensive and will work better for all of us when everyone gets preventive care
Issue Priority	Pass laws to encourage the use of clean energy sources, because we will all be better off and everyone in the country will be healthier when the air and water are clean.
Which Comes to Mind When You Think of Protecting Public	Living by the laws and the guidelines we set as a society Calling a local representative to state an opinion Writing letters to the editor of a local newspaper Supporting public institutions like schools, libraries, the police force, public transportation and so on
Agree/Disagree	Taxes are my contribution to society as a citizen of the United States. They help to improve the quality of life for everyone by supporting the services that are in everyone's best interests, such as schools, roads, parks, health and safety inspections, and many others.

They overwhelmingly believe in the strength of people working together for a common goal. Nearly all agree (90% agree, 67% strongly agree) with the statement: “Our nation’s success is based upon the power of people working together and each in his own way. We all benefit when citizens work with the public sector to identify problems and come to consensus on a vision to address those problems. Whether it is revitalizing a crumbling downtown, restoring parkland, or determining health and safety regulations, our nation’s quality of life now and into the future depends upon citizens and public agencies working for the common good.”

Even when the Common Good Frame is associated with taxes, survey respondents agree with the core sentiment of working together to improve quality of life for all. More than eight in ten survey respondents agree (83% agree, 61% strongly agree) with the statement: “Taxes are my contribution to society as a citizen of the United States. They help to improve the quality of life for everyone by supporting the services that are in everyone’s best interests, such as schools, roads, parks, health and safety inspections, and many others.”

Asked to choose between two similar statements, a majority of survey respondents exposed to the Common Good Frame chose the statement: “Our quality of life relies upon citizens who unite with public sector institutions to work for the common good, doing things together to improve our quality of life that we could not accomplish alone” (56%). Just one third preferred the statement: “Our quality of life relies upon citizens who work within the public sector to shape guidelines and opportunities for everyone’s benefit” (32%).

As they consider the various ways in which citizens act on behalf of the common good, most say they tend to think of supporting public institutions (44%), followed by living by society’s laws (37%).

Table: Actions for the Common Good
(In Percent)

Which of the following most comes to mind for you when you think of citizens acting on behalf of the common good:

Supporting public institutions, like schools, libraries, the police force, public transportation and so on	44
Living by the laws and the guidelines we set as a society	37
Calling a local representative to state an opinion	11
Writing letters to the editor of a local newspaper	4
Other	2
Don’t know	2

Finally, two issue priority questions included the Common Good Frame test language. This was done to: 1) continue to remind survey respondents of the Common Good Frame, and 2) determine if policy support would be more directly influenced by attaching the test language to the policy test. In fact, the test language for the Common Good Frame lifted support for one of the policies, but not the other. When asked to rate the priority of passing “laws to encourage the use of clean energy sources, because we will all be better off and everyone in the country will be healthier when the air and water are clean,” survey respondents gave an average rating of 8.0 on a 10-point scale, placing this issue at

the top in priority of 12 issues. Including the common good language in the issue description increased survey respondents' priority of this issue compared to a control group that was asked to rate passing "laws to encourage the use of clean energy sources."

When asked to rate the priority of allowing "anyone to buy into a public health insurance program, and provide reduced rates for those with low incomes, because health insurance will be less expensive and will work better for all of us when everyone gets preventive care," survey respondents gave an average rating of 7.9 on a 10-point scale, placing this issue near the top in priority of 12 issues. Including the common good language in the issue description did not significantly increase survey respondents' priority of this issue compared to a control group that was asked to rate allowing "anyone to buy into a public health insurance program, and provide reduced rates for those with low incomes."

Effect of the Frame

The Common Good Frame results in fewer shifts in opinion than the Simplifying Model or the Protection Frame. However, it moves opinion on some questions that the Model and Protection Frame do not. For example, after being exposed to the Common Good Frame, survey participants become more willing to consider both increasing taxes and cutting services to address state fiscal issues, rather than automatically assume that state budgets can be cut with no consequences. Survey respondents also become less likely to believe that government is doing too many things, and support for three policies increases. Finally, when presented with the Model in addition to the Common Good Frame, positive opinions of government increase.

Analyzing the entire group that was exposed to the Common Good Frame, whether or not some members of the group also heard the Simplifying Model, demonstrates that the Common Good Frame creates beneficial shifts in opinion. Specifically:

- The Common Good Frame results in a decrease in the percentage of survey respondents who believe that "government is doing too many things that should be left to individuals and business" (-5 points, compared to a pure control that heard no values frame or Simplifying Model).
- When asked how to solve the financial problems that many state governments face, survey respondents exposed to the Common Good Frame become more likely to say that state governments should "both" raise taxes and cut services, which is movement in the right direction, considering that a plurality of respondents want to cut services (+4 percentage points).
- The Common Good Frame results in increased priority for three policies: expand funding for Americorp, provide more opportunities for citizen engagement, and encourage clean energy sources.

While the Common Good Frame does not create as many shifts in opinion as the Protection Frame, it moves opinion on questions that the Protection Frame does not. Therefore, it is a useful component of a broad reframing of government.

Effect of Combining Protection and the Simplifying Model

The prior section reviewed the results of all respondents exposed to the Common Good Frame, whether or not they also heard the Simplifying Model (n=802). This section compares the effects of the Common Good Frame in isolation (n=401), as well as the Common Good Frame in combination with the Simplifying Model (n=401).

The Common Good Frame is far weaker in isolation than when it is paired with the Simplifying Model. When the Common Good Frame is presented in isolation, there are no statistically significant beneficial shifts in attitude, and there is one problematic shift. However, the Common Good Frame must be shifting public attitudes in ways that the survey is not capturing, because even when the Common Good Frame is presented in isolation, the priority for three policies increases

Specifically, when survey respondents are only exposed to the Common Good Frame:

- Survey respondents become more likely to report that protesting unjust public policies is not an obligation of citizenship (+8 percentage points). One might surmise that there is a “frame clash” between the idea of good citizenship here and the notion of impolite or activist activity.
- At the same time, the priority for three policies increases: expand funding for Americorp, provide more opportunities for citizen engagement, and allow anyone to buy into a public health insurance program.

However, when the Common Good Frame incorporates the Simplifying Model, there are only beneficial shifts: survey respondents have a more positive view of government, they are open to considering both raising taxes and cutting services, rather than simply assuming that cutting services is the right response, and one policy increases in priority.

Specifically, when survey respondents are exposed to the Common Good Frame as well as the Simplifying Model:

- Survey respondents’ view of government improves, with an increase in those reporting the government has a “somewhat positive” effect on people's lives (+7 points).
- Survey respondents are more likely to say that state governments should “both” raise taxes and cut services to deal with state budgetary problems (+5 points).
- One policy achieves significantly higher priority: expanding funding for AmeriCorps.

These findings suggest that the combination of the Common Good Frame and the Simplifying Model create beneficial shifts that the Common Good Frame alone does not achieve.

Demographic Distinctions

Typically, in survey research, certain subgroups respond more to one frame than another. Some of this dynamic occurs in this survey as well. For example, the Common Good Frame has slightly more influence among Democrats and women than among Republicans, Independents and men.

Also, it frequently happens that some subgroups tend to be more influenced by all of the frames, while other subgroups seem resistant to any of the experimental primes. In this survey all of the frame elements create beneficial movement among older women and engaged voters, for example, while none of them show much movement among disengaged voters. This is hardly a surprise, since it should be expected that those engaged with government would respond more readily on this topic than those who are currently disengaged.

What is somewhat unique in this survey is that each of the frame experiments seems to be tapping attitudes concerning different fundamental aspects of government across a variety of demographic subgroups. This suggests that Common Good and Protection are not interchangeable frames. Rather, these frames should be interwoven to support and extend the influence of each.

As noted in the prior section, the Common Good Frame shifts attitudes on some different questions than the Protection Frame or the Simplifying Model. These same shifts carry over to subgroup responses.

So, for example, the Simplifying Model, the Protection Frame, or the combination of both experiments, cause several subgroups to become more likely to believe that “people working together can make a great deal of difference.” The Common Good Frame causes no subgroup to shift significantly on this question.

The Common Good Frame influences demographic groups on different questions, such as: some specific citizen obligations (volunteerism, voting, protesting unjust policies), whether government is doing too much, opinions concerning taxes and state budgets, and support for policies. This suggests that Common Good is influencing different *aspects* of people’s attitudes toward government than the Protection Frame or the Simplifying Model. Smart communicators would not choose *between* Common Good and Protection. Instead, they would rely upon *both* values-based frames and employ the Simplifying Model as a supporting element.

Finally, as communicators and researchers build upon this body of work, it is critical to keep in mind one of the findings from the cognitive elicitations and the focus groups: that “government” is often reinterpreted as the current administration. Therefore, patterns of opinion under a Republican administration are likely to be very different than under a Democratic administration. For example, there are interesting dynamics in response to the question concerning “THE” government or “OUR” government. Democrats shift as expected. When exposed to the Protection Frame, more Democrats say “THE”

government, and when exposed to the Common Good Frame, more Democrats say “OUR” government. Republicans, however, become less likely to say “OUR” in response to all three frame elements. It seems that Republicans in the control group are conflating government with the current administration, but those in the experimental groups are reminded by the test language that government is more than just the White House. As political control at the national level shifts, communicators and researchers should expect to see different patterns of response on several measures of government support, and adapt as needed.

In sum, there are very different effects across demographic populations from exposure to the frame elements. Different combinations of frame elements yield different conceptual ground in advancing a positive role for government. This experimental research supports the hypothesis that communications employing a combination of the Simplifying Model, the Protection Frame and the Common Good Frame could, over time, dislodge the dominant frame and cause the public to consider government in more productive ways.

Conclusions

Existing attitudes toward government are often conflicting and are frequently based on attitudes toward the political party in control at the national level. The conflation of government and politics undermines public consideration of the role for government, separate from party politics. However, by priming different ways of thinking about government that do not trigger partisanship, this research demonstrates that it is possible to restore the public’s view of government as a tool for public good.

This research underscores the power of reminding people of the mission and values of government through the values-based Protection and Common Good Frames. And, it demonstrates the importance of making government more vivid for people by communicating the Public Structures model. These frame elements allow a myriad of opportunities to make the case for government.

By deploying these frames, it appears possible to energize public support for government by increasing the public perception that people can make a difference, that citizenship requires certain obligations, that regulations are necessary, that government has a positive impact on people’s lives, that government should do more to solve problems, that the role of the public sector should be to promote the principle of a strong community, that taxes are necessary, and that policies demonstrating the need for active government deserve priority.

However, a significant shift in public opinion will not happen easily. It will require a concerted, highly disciplined effort that can adapt to emerging needs and opportunities over the long-term. This research is one step in a long journey toward identifying and shaping the public discourse needed to realize that promise.

Appendix: Frequency Questionnaire

Government Survey
July 2005
(In Percent)

Split 1

C1: Control1

G: Common Good/Quality of Life/Consensus

P: Protection/Rule Setter

Split 2

C2 Control2

M Model

Split Combinations				
	Control 1	Common Good	Protection	Total
Control 2	504	401	401	1306
Model	499	401	397	1297
Total	1003	802	798	2603

Hello. My name is (caller name). I'm calling for National Opinion Surveys. We are conducting a public opinion survey and I would like to ask you some questions. It will take about 10 minutes and is for research purposes only. We are not selling anything, and I won't ask you for a contribution or donation. Could I please speak with the person 18 or older in your household who celebrated a birthday most recently?

REPEAT INTRO IF NEEDED

RECORD RESPONDENT'S GENDER (DO NOT ASK).

	Total Sample
Male	48
Female	52

1. First of all, are you registered to vote at this address?

	Total Sample
Yes	82
No registered voter	18
Refused/don't know	-

2. Do you consider yourself a Democrat, Republican or Independent? **(IF INDEPENDENT, DON'T KNOW)** Would you say you are closer to the Democrats or Republicans?

	Total Sample
Democrat	31
Lean Democrat	6
Independent, no lean	22
Lean Republican	5
Republican	29
Don't know / Refused	7

3. I am going to read you a list of activities that some people have done and others have not. Please tell me which of the following you can recall ever having done. (IF YES) Did you happen to have done that in the last 12 months or so?

	Total Sample	Ever Done	Past 12 months	Never	Don't know
a) Expressed your opinion by writing a letter to a newspaper or contacting an elected official	27	19	54	-	
b) Spoken in public for an organization or cause you cared about	17	13	70	-	

4. Are you or is anyone in your household a public employee -- that is, are you employed by a federal, state, or local agency, a public school system, or some other public system, or are you not a public employee?

Yes, self public employee	14
Yes, other in household	7
No, not a public employee	79
Not sure	-

5. Are you or is anyone in your household an employee of a marketing research company, or not?

Yes, self marketing	1
Yes, other marketing in household	1
No marketing	99
Not sure	-

SPLIT ONE COMBINATION

Now, in this survey we'll be talking about:

C1: Control1: skip intro

G: Common Good/Quality of Life: how citizens work together through public sector institutions to improve quality of life for everyone

P: Protection/Rule Setter: how public sector institutions protect public health and well-being

SPLIT 1 COMBINATION

6. Which of the following statements is closer to your view:

DO NOT ROTATE

(STATEMENT 1) Some people say:

C1: Control1: skip question

G: Common Good/Quality of Life: that our quality of life relies upon citizens who unite with public sector institutions to work for the common good, doing things together to improve our quality of life that we could not accomplish alone

P: Protection/Rule Setter: it is more important that public sector institutions protect the public and responsible businesses from the rogue, irresponsible businesses that risk public health

(STATEMENT 2) Other people say :

C1: Control1: skip question

G: Common Good/Quality of Life: that our quality of life relies upon citizens who work within the public sector to shape guidelines and opportunities for everyone's benefit

P: Protection/Rule Setter: it is more important that public sector institutions protect employees and responsible employers from the rogue, irresponsible employers that risk worker safety

	Common Good Sample
Citizens doing things together for the common good	56
Citizens work within public sector	32
Both (vol.).....	6
Neither (vol.).....	4
Don't know (vol.).....	2
	Protection Sample
Protecting from the irresponsible businesses that risk public health	39
Protecting from the irresponsible employers that risk worker safety	42
Both (vol.).....	7
Neither (vol.).....	5
Don't know (vol.).....	7

SPLIT TWO COMBINATION

C2: Control2 (skip question)**M: Model**

7. Now I have a question about the Public Structures that America has created. Please listen to the following recorded statement:

Economists now agree that the main advantages that make America so successful come from what are called Public Structures. The Public Structures America has created include *physical* structures we need in order to get things done – like highways, airports, and communications grids – as well as the *organizational* structures we need, like a postal system for delivering mail and courts for settling business disagreements. Third World countries have many smart, hard working *individuals*, but they don't have the Public Structures that are essential for overall success. Without continuing attention and support, America's Public Structures are at risk of decline.

Overall, how would you say America's public structures compare with those of other countries, taking both physical and organizational structures into account? Would you say above average, average, or below average?

	Model Sample
Above average	64
Average	27
Below average	6
Don't know	3

SPLIT ONE COMBINATION

Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Please listen to the following recording. (FOLLOW UP) And do you feel strongly or not so strongly about that?

C1: Control1: skip question

G: Common Good/Quality of Life:

8. Our nation’s success is based upon the power of people working together and each in his own way. We all benefit when citizens work with the public sector to identify problems and come to consensus on a vision to address those problems. Whether it is revitalizing a crumbling downtown, restoring parkland, or determining health and safety regulations, our nation’s quality of life now and into the future depends upon citizens and public agencies working for the common good.

Common Good Sample

Agree, strongly.....	67
Agree, not strong.....	23
Don’t know	4
Disagree, not strong	4
Disagree, strongly	3

G: Common Good/Quality of Life:

9. There are certain things that individuals cannot do alone and that require the power of all citizens working together and each in his own way. In fact, every day people are acting to improve our public institutions. When a parent meets with a parent teacher organization at a public school, that parent is acting to improve the quality of the public education system. When a concerned neighbor speaks up to increase funding for the library, that neighbor is making the community a better place to live. The responsibilities of citizenship extend far beyond voting. A good citizen acts on behalf of our country by working to improve public institutions, respecting laws, serving on community committees, paying taxes, or speaking out on issues that concern the country.

Common Good Sample

Agree, strongly.....	73
Agree, not strong.....	20
Don’t know	3
Disagree, not strong	2
Disagree, strongly	2

P: Protection/Rule Setter:

10. We rely on our public institutions to set and enforce the regulations that will protect us from physical and financial harm. There are a variety of ways that federal, state and local agencies protect the public including: food quality standards, environmental controls, financial securities regulations, consumer fraud protections, workplace and product safety standards, to name a few. With the support of citizens

and business, public sector institutions can set and enforce these protections on behalf of the public good.

	Protection Sample
Agree, strongly.....	47
Agree, not strong.....	32
Don't know	8
Disagree, not strong	7
Disagree, strongly	6

P: Protection/Rule Setter:

11. There are certain things that individuals cannot do alone and that require the power of all citizens working together. For example, we need public agencies to ensure that our meat processing system is as safe as possible, because the most cautious food handling in the home won't help if the food left the meat processing plant diseased. But public agencies need citizen support to be effective, which means that the responsibilities of citizenship extend far beyond voting. A good citizen acts on behalf of our country by working to improve public institutions, respecting laws, serving on community committees, paying taxes, or speaking out on issues that concern the country.

	Protection Sample
Agree, strongly.....	74
Agree, not strong.....	19
Don't know	2
Disagree, not strong	2
Disagree, strongly	3

ASK ALL

Please rate each of the following for how important a priority you believe it should be, on a scale where zero means it should not be a priority and 10 means it should be an extremely important priority, or rate anywhere between zero and 10 based upon how much of a priority you think it should be. (MARK 11 FOR DON'T KNOW OR REFUSED)

RANDOMIZE

Average Rating on a 1-10 Scale				
	Pure Control	Common Good	Protection	Model
12. Control 1: Allow anyone to buy into a public health insurance program, and provide reduced rates for those with low incomes Common Good: Allow anyone to buy into a public health insurance program, and provide reduced rates for those with low incomes, because health insurance will be less expensive and will work better for all of us when everyone gets preventive care Protection: Allow anyone to buy into a public health insurance program, and provide reduced rates for those with low incomes, because public health coverage will protect people from those health care institutions that unfairly charge higher rates to people without insurance than they charge to insurance companies	7.7	7.9	7.7	7.7
13. Pass new tax cuts	6.0	5.9	5.8	6.0
14. Strengthen and enforce environmental regulations and protections.	7.2	7.2	7.3	7.2
15. Change state tax policy to require voter approval for all tax increases	7.4	7.1	7.2	7.1
16. Expand public funding for the national AmeriCorps program which provides college scholarships for those who work in public service jobs in schools, health clinics or other community programs	5.9	6.3	6.2	6.2
17. Reduce regulations on business.	5.2	5.4	4.9	5.2
18. Expand public agencies' efforts to develop vaccines and immunizations for new diseases.	7.8	7.8	8.0	7.8

19. Control 1: Pass laws to encourage the use of clean energy sources. Common Good: Pass laws to encourage the use of clean energy sources, because we will all be better off and everyone in the country will be healthier when the air and water are clean. Protection: Pass laws to encourage the use of clean energy sources, because it is important to protect the public from the health effects of pollution in our air and water that result from ineffective business regulations.	7.6	8.0	7.9	7.8
20. Control 2: Bring down the federal deficit by reversing recent tax cuts. Model: Bring down the federal deficit by reversing recent tax cuts, because that funding is needed to improve our Public Structures.	5.9	5.7	5.7	5.7
21. Give parents money to help pay for their children to attend a private or religious school instead of their local public school.	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.0
22. Provide more opportunities for citizens to engage directly in the process of governing and the development of public policies and programs.	7.0	7.3	7.4	7.2
23. Allow private companies to take over the operations of more public services such as public parks and forests.	3.9	4.1	4.0	4.1

SPLIT ONE COMBINATION

C1: Control1: skip question**G: Common Good/Quality of Life:**

24. There are many ways that citizens work with the public sector on behalf of the common good to improve quality of life. Which of the following most comes to mind for you when you think of citizens acting on behalf of the common good:

Common Good Sample

Living by the laws and the guidelines we set as a society	37
Calling a local representative to state an opinion	11
Writing letters to the editor of a local newspaper	4
Supporting public institutions like schools, libraries, the police force, public transportation and so on	44
Other (DO NOT READ, BUT SPECIFY RESPONSE)	2
Don't know	2

P: Protection/Rule Setter:

25. There are many ways that public sector institutions protect public health and wellbeing. Which of the following most comes to mind for you when you think of the ways that public sector institutions protect public health and wellbeing:

Protection Sample

Food and product standards, such as determining whether a product is safe for public use	36
Workplace protections, such as workplace safety or wage and hour laws	19
Environmental standards, such as air and water quality	23
Financial protections, such as insured banking.....	13
Other (DO NOT READ, BUT SPECIFY RESPONSE).....	3
Don't know	5

SPLIT TWO COMBINATION

C2: skip question

M: Model

26. When you think about the Public Structures that America has created, do you tend to think more of the *physical* structures we need in order to get things done such as highways, airports, and communications grids, or do you think more of the *organizational* structures we need, like a postal system for delivering mail and courts for settling business disagreements.

Model Sample

Physical structures	39
Organizational structures	41
Both.....	15
Neither.....	1
Don't know	3

ASK ALL

27. Thinking about problems facing the country, how much difference do you believe that people working together as a group can make in solving the problems you see – a great deal of difference, a lot of difference, some difference, a little difference, or no difference at all?

	Pure Control	Common Good	Protection	Model
A great deal	36	39	44	43
A lot	24	24	27	26
Some	27	26	18	21
A little	8	7	4	6
No difference	4	3	6	3
Don't know (vol.)	1	1	1	1

28. Which of the following statements is closer to your view?

ROTATE

- Regulation of business is necessary to protect the public interest.

OR

- Regulation of business usually does more harm than good.

(Follow up:) Do you feel strongly or not so strongly about that?

	Pure Control	Common Good	Protection	Model
Statement 1, strongly	40	44	49	47
Statement 1, not strong	20	19	19	19
Statement 2, not strong	11	11	10	9
Statement 2, strongly	22	18	15	18
Both (vol.)	2	2	2	3
Neither (vol.)	1	2	2	1
Don't know (vol.)	4	4	3	3

29. Overall, what kind of impact do you think the government has on most people's lives – very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative, very negative, or does it have no impact either way?

	Pure Control	Common Good	Protection	Model
Very positive	12	11	13	11
Somewhat positive	42	45	46	48
Somewhat negative	28	26	24	24
Very negative	8	9	9	8
No effect	7	6	4	5
Don't know (vol.)	3	3	4	4

30. When you think and talk about government, do you tend to think of it more as "THE government" or more as "OUR government?"

	Pure Control	Common Good	Protection	Model
THE government	45	45	51	48
OUR government	53	52	46	49
Both	2	2	1	1
Neither	-	1	1	1
Don't know (vol.)	1	1	1	1

31. Which of the following statements is closer to your view?

ROTATE

- Government should do more to solve problems.
- OR
- Government is doing too many things that should be left to individuals and business
(Follow up:) Do you feel strongly or not so strongly about that?

	Pure Control	Common Good	Protection	Model
Statement 1, strongly	32	32	33	30
Statement 1, not strong	7	11	11	11
Statement 2, not strong	13	9	12	10
Statement 2, strongly	43	40	37	41
Both (vol.)	3	3	3	3
Neither (vol.)	1	2	2	2
Don't know (vol.)	2	3	2	3

32. Which of the following statements is closer to your view?

ROTATE

- Being a good citizen means having some special obligations.
- OR
- Simply being a good person is enough to make someone a good citizen.

	Pure Control	Common Good	Protection	Model
Statement 1, strongly	51	51	54	53
Statement 1, not strong	9	10	13	9
Statement 2, not strong	8	9	9	8
Statement 2, strongly	27	26	19	24
Both (vol.)	3	2	3	3
Neither (vol.)	-	1	1	1
Don't know (vol.)	2	1	1	1

SPLIT ONE COMBINATION

Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.
(FOLLOW UP) And do you feel strongly or not so strongly about that?

C1: Control1: skip question

G: Common Good/Quality of Life:

33. Taxes are my contribution to society as a citizen of the United States. They help to improve the quality of life for everyone by supporting the services that are in everyone's best interests, such as schools, roads, parks, health and safety inspections, and many others.

	Common Good
Agree, strongly	61
Agree, not strong	22
Don't know	2
Disagree, not strong	6
Disagree, strongly	8

P: Protection/Rule Setter:

34. Taxes are my contribution to society as a citizen of the United States. They help to protect public health and well being by supporting services such as health and safety inspections, enforcement of environmental regulations and financial securities, and many others.

	Protection
Agree, strongly	53
Agree, not strong	30
Don't know	2
Disagree, not strong	6
Disagree, strongly	8

SPLIT TWO COMBINATION

C2: Control2: skip question

M: Model

35. Our taxes support the Public Structures that make America so successful, such as the physical structures that we need to get things done, like highways, airports and communications grids, as well as the organizational structures we need like the postal system and the courts. These public structures are essential for our nation's success.

	Model
Agree, strongly	66
Agree, not strong	24
Don't know	2
Disagree, not strong	3
Disagree, strongly	4

For each of the following actions, please tell me whether you consider it to be an obligation of citizenship. For each, please tell me if you feel it should be an extremely important obligation, a very important obligation, a somewhat important obligation, or not an obligation of citizenship?

RANDOMIZE

% Saying Extremely Important Obligation				
	Pure Control	Common Good	Protection	Model
36. Volunteering some time to community services	20	24	22	23
37. Voting in elections	58	61	57	60
38. Keeping fully informed about news and public issues	33	38	38	39
39. Protesting unjust public policies	18	21	23	23
40. Paying taxes	39	41	38	38
41. Participating in town hall, community decision making meetings	16	19	18	19

42. Do you think the taxes you pay are too high, too low, or about right?

	Pure Control	Common Good	Protection	Model
Too high	53	50	50	50
Too low	2	3	2	3
About right	43	43	44	43
Don't know (vol.)	2	4	4	4

43. In general, would you rather:

ROTATE

have the government provide more services, even if it costs more in taxes,

OR

have lower taxes even if it means that government provides fewer services?

	Pure Control	Common Good	Protection	Model
More services/more taxes	42	40	41	40
Lower taxes/fewer services	45	46	42	44
Stay same	5	6	7	6
Don't know (vol.)	8	9	9	10

44. As you may know, many state governments in the United States are facing serious financial problems. What action should state governments take to balance their budgets? Should they concentrate more on—

ROTATE

raising taxes

OR

cutting services

	Pure Control	Common Good	Protection	Model
Raising taxes	24	24	25	25
Cutting services	42	39	38	38
Both	8	12	9	10
Neither	20	18	22	19
Don't know (vol.)	6	6	7	7

45. After everything we've talked about, what is the value of government; why do we need it? (OPEN END, RECORD RESPONSE ON AUDIO)
-

46. How much of the time do you think you can trust government to do what is right – just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?

	Pure Control	Common Good	Protection	Model
Just about always	5	5	5	4
Most of the time	33	32	35	34
Some of the time	59	59	58	58
Don't know (vol.)	3	3	2	3

47. How much of the time do you think you can trust businesses to do what is right – just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?

	Pure Control	Common Good	Protection	Model
Just about always	3	4	3	4
Most of the time	29	26	31	28
Some of the time	66	66	63	66
Don't know (vol.)	2	3	2	2

48. Please tell me which statement is closer to your view:

ROTATE

- The role of the public sector should be to promote the principle of a strong community. America is most successful when we pursue policies that expand opportunity and create a rising prosperity for all, not just a few.
- The role of the public sector should be to promote the principle of self reliance. America is most successful when we have a limited public role that keeps taxes low so that businesses and individuals can prosper.

(Follow up:) Do you feel strongly or not so strongly about that?

	Pure Control	Common Good	Protection	Model
Statement 1, strongly	40	39	40	43
Statement 1, not strong	10	12	12	11
Statement 2, not strong	11	13	12	10
Statement 2, strongly	33	31	30	30
Both (vol.)	4	3	4	4
Neither (vol.)	1	1	1	1
Don't know (vol.)	2	3	1	2

49. Please tell me which statement is closer to your view:

ROTATE

- There are basic goals that individuals cannot reach alone; it takes citizens joining together. Government is one path through which citizens combine efforts to protect the public good and improve quality of life for all, by working to improve public schools, develop regulations that protect us from physical and financial harm, build roads and bridges, among others. We need to make sure our government is working on the public's behalf, has the resources to meet unforeseen needs and promotes the common good.
- Government has gotten too big and is inserting itself into areas that should be left to individuals. We need to stop going down this path where overreaching regulations hurt business innovation and profitability, and government intrudes on parent's views of what their children should learn in school, and wastes tax dollars. We need to limit the size of government, cut taxes, and promote individual responsibility.

(Follow up:) Do you feel strongly or not so strongly about that?

	Pure Control	Common Good	Protection	Model
Statement 1, strongly	37	37	39	36
Statement 1, not strong	12	10	11	10
Statement 2, not strong	8	9	11	11
Statement 2, strongly	37	37	32	36
Both (vol.)	5	3	4	4
Neither (vol.)	1	1	1	1
Don't know (vol.)	1	2	2	2

And now, just a few more quick questions for statistical purposes. This information will only be used for analysis of this study, and will be kept completely confidential.

RESUME ASKING ALL

50. In what year were you born?

	Total Sample
18-29 years old	13
30-39 years old	12
40-49 years old	18
50-64 years old	28
65+ years old	26
Refused	2

51. What is your employment status?

	Total Sample
Employed full time	41
Employed part time.....	7
Self employed	7
Not employed but looking	3
Homemaker.....	5
Student	2
Retired.....	30
Other	2
Not working	3
Refused	1

52. Are you married, single, separated, divorced, or widowed?

	Total Sample
Married	56
Single, never married	20
Separated/divorced	12
Widowed	11
Refused	1

53. **(IF MARRIED)** Does your spouse work, part-time or more, outside the home or would you say that your spouse's work is mainly at home?

	Total Sample
Employed outside home	57
Home-based business/self-employed	5
At home/homemaker/not employed	36
Refused	1

54. Do you have any children?

	Total Sample
Yes	75
No	24
Refused	1

55. **(IF YES)** In which of the following age groups do they belong? **(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**

	Total Sample
Under 2 years old	6
2-5 years old	10
6-11 years old	13
12-18 years old	17
Over 18 years old	72
Refused	-

56. What is the last year of schooling that you have completed?

	Total Sample
1 - 11th grade	11
High school graduate	27
Non-college post H.S. (e.g. tech)	2
Some college (jr. college)	25
College graduate	22
Post-graduate school/PHD	12
Don't know	1

57. About how often do you attend a place of worship – at least once a week, almost every week, about once a month, seldom, or never?

	Total Sample
At least once a week	35
Almost every week	10
About once a month	14
Seldom	25
Never	15
Don't know	1

58. Are you a member of a labor union? (IF NO) Is any member of your household a union member?

	Total Sample
Yes: Respondent belongs	11
Yes: Household member	5
No: No member of household belongs	83
(Don't know/refused)	1

59. What is your race?

	Total Sample
White	81
Black	7
Hispanic (Puerto Rican, Mexican-American, etc.)	6
Asian/pacific islander	2
Other	1
Mixed race	1
Don't know/refused	2

60. And are you of Spanish or Hispanic descent?

(Results included in race/ethnicity above.)

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME [TERMINATE]