

# Ask Alabama Poll Results



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## PRESS RELEASE

### Alabama residents reach consensus on state's image

*Widespread agreement that their state is friendly, good for families, and a bargain for homebuyers*

**Auburn, September 14, 2009:** State of Alabama economic development representatives frequently say that the friendliness of Alabama's people is their secret weapon in recruiting international businesses looking to invest in new North American operations. The results of a recent statewide poll suggest that multi-national industrialists are not the only ones to have noticed. Almost all Alabama residents, 96 percent of them, agree that it's accurate to describe the state as "friendly." Seventy-three percent say that's a "very" accurate label for the state; another 23 percent say it's "somewhat" accurate.

"The people of Alabama are now being recognized around the globe for being hospitable and welcoming," said Dr. Don-Terry Veal, Director of the Center for Governmental Services that conducted the quarterly Ask Alabama Poll that surveyed the opinions of a random sampling of 639 adults across the state in July. "This friendliness makes the state a great place to live and a profitable site for investments in human resources. Companies are looking for happy and cooperative employees."

Other images of the state that Alabama's residents agree upon are that it's a "good place to raise a family," 91% agree, and a "good place to buy a home, 90 percent agree. There is also considerable consensus that Alabama is a "good place to retire," 86 percent agree, has good race relations, 82 percent, and is a good place to get an education, 80 percent.

Older residents of Alabama, those of retirement age (63 and older), feel more strongly than others that the state is ideal for retirement. Almost seven of every ten seniors (69 percent) told Auburn pollsters that it's very accurate to describe Alabama as a good place to retire. Another 26 percent of seniors say that image is somewhat accurate.

The image of improved race relations has touched both blacks and whites who live in the state. Seventy-eight percent (78 percent) of African-Americans and 83 percent of whites share the belief that it's accurate to say Alabama has good race relations. But whites are more intense in this opinion with 38 percent saying that it's "very accurate" compared with 31 percent of blacks.

In the current economic downturn, Alabama residents seem less sure about Alabama's economic situation. Only 63 percent feel that that Alabama is a "good place to start and build a new business," and just 43 percent conclude that it's a "good place to find a job." "Analyzing these data, it's difficult to say whether these less enthusiastic images reflect narrowly on Alabama's entrepreneurial and employment situation, or are simply a global reaction to the overall macroeconomic circumstance," says Dr. David Hill, Associate Director of the Center for Governmental Services. "Our sense of the data overall is that people are expressing frustration with the economy nationally and globally more than they are critiquing Alabama."

*The Ask Alabama survey results are based on telephone interviews conducted with a stratified random sample of 639 adult householders July 6 -- 19, 2009. The sample's geographic, gender, race, and age distributions were weighted to be proportionate to the United States Census Bureau's data for Alabama's adult (18+ years of age) householders. Patrick Rose, Manager of the Center's Survey Research Laboratory that conducted the interviews, said that poll results based on the full statewide sample have a margin of error of  $\pm 4$  percentage points.*

The Ask Alabama Poll is to be conducted quarterly by the Center for Governmental Services, a unit of Auburn University Outreach that provides research, consulting and training to government agencies, not-for-profit associations, and private sector clients. Patrick Rose, manager of the center's Survey Research Laboratory that conducted the interviews, said that poll results based on the full statewide sample have a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percentage points.

**Prior releases from the current poll include:**

**August 3 – CONSUMER CONFIDENCE.** Alabama residents have mixed views on the state of the economy.

**August 10 – MANUFACTURING.** Alabama residents see manufacturing leading economic recovery and many will be looking to purchase a new car made in Alabama.

**August 17 – SCHOOLS.** Alabama residents give their local schools high marks.

**August 24 – HUNGER.** Hunger is an issue; many residents see Alabama families skipping meals to cope with economy.

**August 31 – NEWS.** Internet sites are a rising source of news for Alabama residents, challenging daily newspapers.

**September 8 – NEWS.** Internet sites are a rising source of news for Alabama residents, challenging daily newspapers.

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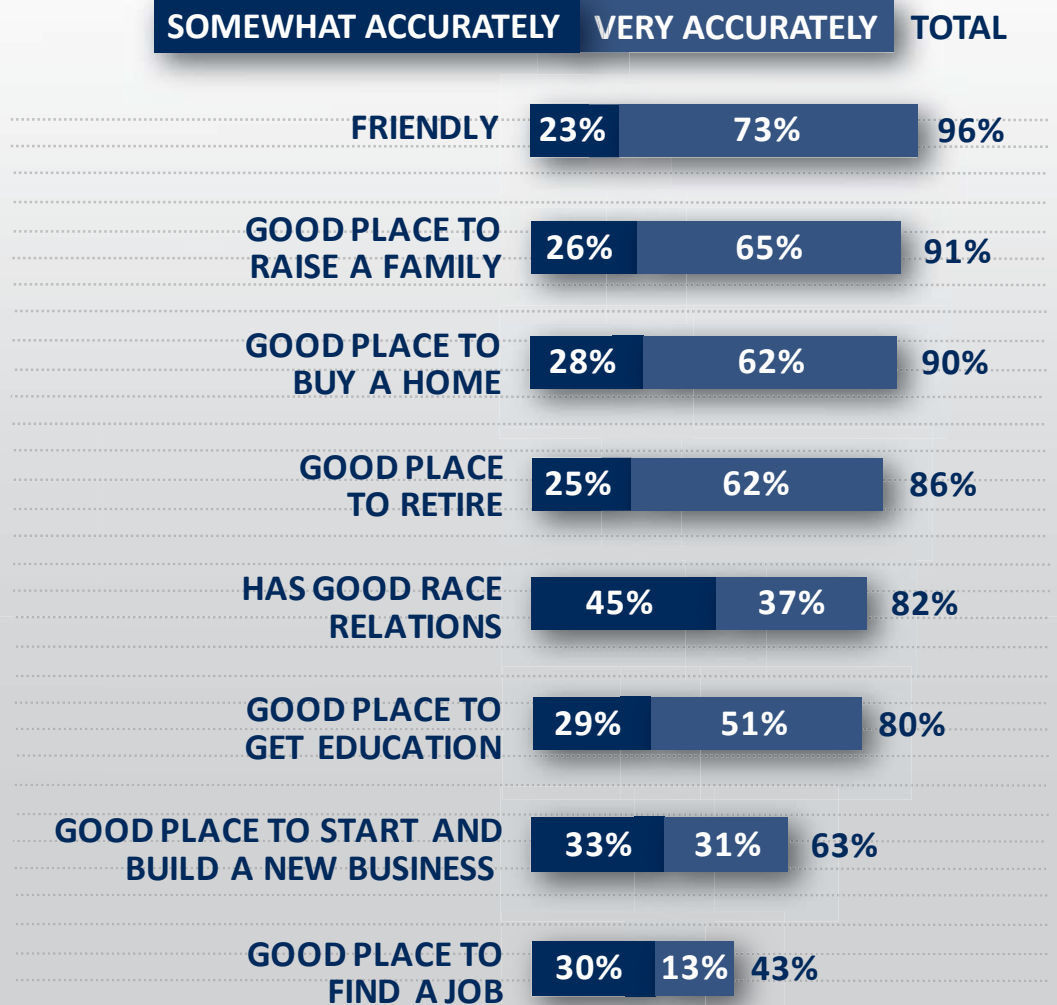
AUBURN  
CENTER FOR GOVERNMENTAL SERVICES

Alabama is considered as a friendly and good place to raise a family and retire, but not so much as a good place to find a job or start a business.

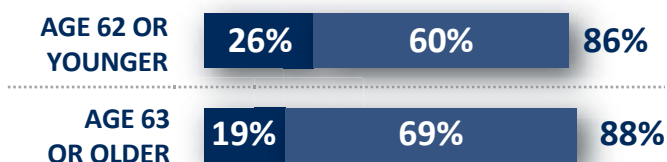
## Question

I'm going to read some descriptions of places where people might live and work. For each description, tell me how accurately it describes the part of Alabama where you live.

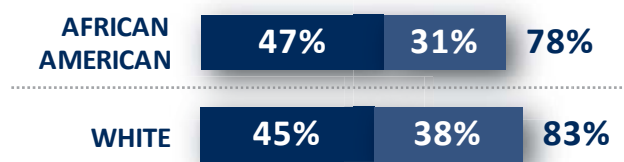
## STATE IMAGE



## Percent "Good Place To Retire" By Age



## Percent "Has Good Race Relations" By Race



The Ask Alabama survey results are based on telephone interviews conducted with a stratified random sample of 639 adult householders in Alabama from July 6 to July 19, 2009. The sample was chosen so as to ensure that each region of the state was represented in proportion to its population. The sample's geographic, gender, race, and age distributions were weighted to be proportionate to the United States Census Bureau's data for Alabama's adult (18+ years of age) householders. Results based on all 639 respondents have a margin of error of ±4 percentage points.