Western New England University Polling Institute
Massachusetts Statewide Telephone Survey
April 6 – 14, 2015

METHODOLOGY

The Western New England University Polling Institute survey consists of telephone interviews with 499 adults ages 18 and older drawn from across Massachusetts using random-digit-dialing April 6 – 14, 2015. The sample yielded 427 adults who said they are registered to vote in Massachusetts.

Paid interviewers at the Polling Institute dialed household telephone numbers, known as "landline numbers," and cell phone numbers using random samples obtained from Survey Sampling International of Shelton, CT. In order to draw a representative sample from the landline numbers, interviewers alternated asking for the youngest adult male or the youngest adult female age 18 or older who was home at the time of the call. Interviewers dialing cell phone numbers interviewed the respondent who answered the cell phone after confirming three things: (1) that the respondent was in a safe setting to complete the survey; (2) that the respondent was an adult age 18 or older; and (3) that the respondent was a resident of Massachusetts. The sample of all adults consisted of 333 interviews completed on landlines and 166 interviews completed on cell phones. The landline and cell phone data were combined and weighted to reflect the adult population of Massachusetts by gender, race, age, and county of residence using U.S. Census estimates for Massachusetts. The data also were weighted to adjust for cell phone and landline usage based on state-level estimates for Massachusetts from the National Center for Health Statistics. Complete results of the poll are available online at www.wne.edu/news. The full text of the questionnaire for this survey is available at www1.wne.edu/polling-institute.

All surveys are subject to sampling error, which is the expected probable difference between interviewing everyone in a population versus a scientific sampling drawn from that population. The margin of sampling error for a sample of 499 adults is +/- 4 percent at a 95 percent confidence interval, and the margin of sampling error for a sample of 427 registered voters is + / - 5 percent at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus if 40 percent of registered voters said they had heard a lot of information about Boston's bid to host the 2024 Olympic summer games, one would be 95 percent sure that the true figure would be between 35 percent and 45 percent (40 percent +/- 5 percent) had all registered voters in Massachusetts been interviewed, rather than just a sample. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. Sampling error does not take into account other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording, or context effects.