

4131 Spicewood Springs Road  
Suite O-2  
Austin, TX 78759

Office: 512-345-9720  
Fax: 512-345-9740  
email: mattg@baselice.com

## Summary of Texas Statewide Voter Survey

Baselice & Associates, Inc. was retained by the Texas Academy of Family Physicians to conduct survey research for the purpose of studying attitudes and opinions of voters in Texas regarding HB 2154, a proposed physician education loan repayment program. The following results are from a telephone survey of N=600 randomly selected registered voters in the state of Texas conducted May 16-17, 2009. The margin of error to the results of this survey is +/- 4.1% at the .95 test level. Results to the survey indicate that (1) a large majority of voters support a physician loan repayment program, and (2) support intensifies when respondents learn funding could come from tobacco tax revenues.

- When asked to choose between “*addressing the physician shortage in Texas*” and “*keeping taxes low on discount tobacco products*” seven in nine (78%) respondents (62% strongly) chose addressing the physician shortage while one in ten (10%) chose keeping taxes low on discount tobacco products. A large majority of Republicans (78%), Independents (73%), and Democrats (81%) all chose addressing the physician shortage as did voters in rural counties (79%) and voters in urban/suburban counties (77%).
- Nearly two-thirds (64%) of respondents favor (32% strongly favor) “the State of Texas repaying the medical school loans of doctors who agree to practice in medically underserved areas of Texas.” Respondents were presented with the following: “*The average medical student graduates with a debt of one hundred sixty thousand dollars - making it increasingly difficult for these new physicians to practice in rural and other medically underserved parts of Texas. As a result, over half of Texas counties are classified as medically underserved, and need more primary care physicians to meet the health care needs of our growing population. To address this issue, the Texas Legislature is considering a proposal to repay the medical school debt of doctors who agree to practice in these medically underserved areas of Texas.*”
- Sixty-two percent (62%) of respondents indicate they would favor (39% strongly favor) “the State of Texas repaying the medical school loans of doctors who agree to practice in medically underserved areas of Texas” if they “*knew it was funded from tax revenues on tobacco products.*”
- Five in eight (63%) respondents favor (38% strongly favor) “the State of Texas repaying the medical school loans of doctors who agree to practice in medically underserved areas of Texas” after being informed that “*the proposal currently being considered closes an existing loophole in the smokeless tobacco excise tax and this will result in estimated additional revenues of ninety million dollars which will be used to repay the medical school loans of doctors who practice in underserved areas of the state.*”