



LAKE SOSIN SNELL PERRY
& ASSOCIATES, INC.

PUBLIC
OPINION
RESEARCH
AND
STRATEGY

PENNSYLVANIA SPECIAL COMMISSION TO LIMIT CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURES

**Banners from a survey of 500 registered
voters in the state of Pennsylvania**

January 12-14, 1998

Sex of respondent

male 48
female 52

Hello. My name is _____ and I'm calling from Pennsylvania Opinion Surveys. We are conducting a public opinion survey and I would like to ask you some questions. We are not selling anything, and I won't ask you for a contribution or donation.

Could I please speak with the (MALE/FEMALE) in your household, 18 years or older, who celebrated a birthday most recently?

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

yes 100
no **TERMINATE**
(don't know) 0

2. Many people didn't get a chance to vote in the election for president and other offices in November 1996. How about you -- were you able to vote, or like many other people, did you not get a chance to vote this time?

voted 86
didn't vote 14
(don't know) 0

3. In Pennsylvania, besides the major statewide and national elections in years like 1996 and 1998, there are local and statewide elections for judges and some other offices in odd-numbered years like 1997. Very few people actually made it to the polls to vote in these elections for judges this year. How about you -- did you happen to vote in the election for judges in November 1997, or like most people, did you not happen to vote this time?

voted 70
didn't vote 30
(don't know) 1

4. What would you say is the single biggest problem with politics and elections today?

**WRITE RESPONSE VERBATIM -- CODE AFTER SURVEY COMPLETE
(MULTIPLE CODES PERMITTED)**

too much money/campaign spending	11
contributions (any mention of donations or contributions) .	3
special interest influence (general)	4
wealthy/rich have too much influence	4
politicians are dishonest/corrupt	19
politicians don't keep promises	11
too negative	3
TV ads	2
too much time bickering/arguing	6
too personal/not focused on issues	3
not enough parties/choices	2
voter apathy/voters don't participate	5
one vote doesn't count	1
specific groups (e.g.: liberals, pro-lifers, NRA)	1
specific people (e.g.: Bill Clinton, the mayor)	0
Democrats/Republicans	1
Other [specify]: _____	13
(don't know)	11

5. In the 1997 judicial [joo-DISH-ill] elections, there were six seats on Pennsylvania's statewide appellate [uh-PELL-it] courts to be filled, including one seat on the state Supreme Court, and numerous local trial judge races. For that reason, this past year's election was considered to be one of the most important judicial elections in many years. Despite this, the voter turnout was an all-time low. Which of the following possible reasons do you believe is MOST responsible for the apparent lack of voter interest?

ROTATE

_ Voters did not know enough about the candidates	28
_ Many people do not care that much about judicial elections	30
_ Voters were turned off by the amount of special interest money that goes into these campaigns	11
_ Voters do not know enough about the jobs and functions these statewide judges perform	15
_ Voters were turned off by the ads these candidates ran on radio and tv	9
_ The news media don't do enough to inform voters about the issues surrounding judicial elections	8

6. Which of the following THREE statements comes closest to your own point of view?

ROTATE

__ I am not concerned about the amount of money being spent on political campaigns today.

__ I am concerned about the amount of money being spent on political campaigns today, but our political system is still basically fair and honest.

__ I am concerned about the amount of money being spent on political campaigns today and I believe it threatens the basic fairness and integrity of our political system.

not concerned	6
concerned, but system is honest	20
serious threat	68
(all/more than one)	3
(none)	0
(don't know)	2

7. In general, do you believe money in political campaigns [ROTATE] __ was more of a problem twenty years ago, OR __ is more of a problem now?

20 years ago	6
now	74
(same)	16
(don't know)	4

8. In general, do you believe politics [ROTATE] __ was more fair and honest twenty years ago, OR __ is more fair and honest now?

20 years ago	44
now	20
(same)	27
(don't know)	9

The next few questions are about elections for JUDGES in Pennsylvania.

9. Last year, the Pennsylvania Bar Association and the Newspaper Publishers of Pennsylvania sponsored a committee called the "Pennsylvania Judicial Evaluation Commission" that investigated, interviewed, and rated the candidates for statewide judgeships. Have you heard or read anything about this commission?

Yes	22
No	78

SPLIT A
SKIP TO Q 11

SPLIT B
SKIP TO Q 12

10. If Q 9 = 1 [YES]: Was your impression of the commission generally favorable or unfavorable?

Favorable	71
Unfavorable	22
Don't know	7

SPLIT SAMPLE A

11. Overall, would you say that candidates who run to become judges in Pennsylvania spend [ROTATE] _ too much money, _ about the right amount of money, _ or not enough money on their election campaigns?

IF NOT SURE: Well, what's your SENSE of how much money they spend -- is it [ROTATE] _ too much, _ about the right amount, or _ not enough?

too much	59
about right amount	14
not enough	4
(don't know after prompt)	22

END SPLIT SAMPLE A; GO TO Q13

SPLIT SAMPLE B

12. In this election and in the last several elections, the amount of money raised and spent by candidates for judicial office has increased substantially. Last year, in the most expensive race, the candidates spent nearly 3 million dollars on their campaigns. Overall, would you say that candidates who run to become judges in Pennsylvania spend [ROTATE] _ too much money, _ about the right amount of money, _ or not enough money on their election campaigns?

IF NOT SURE: Well, what's your SENSE of how much money they spend -- is it [ROTATE] _ too much, _ about the right amount, or _ not enough?

too much	81
about right amount	10
not enough	2
(don't know after prompt)	7

END SPLIT SAMPLE B; GO TO Q13

RESUME ASKING ALL

I am going to read a list of possible sources for campaign contributions to candidates who are running to become judges. For each one, please tell me whether you think most candidates for judge receive TOO MUCH money from that source, about the RIGHT AMOUNT, or NOT ENOUGH money from that source.

First, [READ SOURCE]. Do most candidates for judge receive TOO MUCH money, about the RIGHT AMOUNT, or NOT ENOUGH money from that source?

[ROTATE Q13 TO Q18]

	Too much	Right	Not Enough	DK
13. Wealthy individuals	66	14	3	17
14. Ordinary voters	15	36	31	17
15. Large corporations and their political action committees	73	9	3	15
16. Insurance companies and their political action committees	64	13	4	19
17. Lawyers and lawyers' organizations	62	16	4	19
18. The candidates' own personal wealth	32	28	22	17

19. In Pennsylvania, how frequently do you think the decisions made by judges in their courtrooms are influenced by large contributions made to their election campaigns -- ALWAYS, MOST of the time, SOME of the time, or NEVER?

always	7
most of the time	30
some of the time	51
never	5
don't know	7

20. Which of the following two statements comes closest to your own point of view?

ROTATE

Overall, when we elect judges in Pennsylvania, all citizens have EQUAL influence because everyone's vote counts the same, no matter how much money they have.

Overall, when we elect judges in Pennsylvania, people and special interests who can afford to make large campaign contributions have MORE influence than people with less money.

IF BOTH/NEITHER: Well, which one is CLOSER to your own view?

equal influence	18
those with more money have more influence	75
(both after prompt)	2
(neither after prompt)	1
(don't know)	4

21. And, which of these two statements comes closest to your own point of view?

ROTATE

Campaign commercials on TV and radio about candidates for judge usually provide useful information that helps people decide how to vote.

Campaign commercials on TV and radio about candidates for judge usually just make people more confused about who to vote for.

IF BOTH/NEITHER: Well, which one is CLOSER to your own view?

useful information	17
make people more confused	70
(both after prompt)	8
(neither after prompt)	2
(don't know)	3

22. Does the conduct of most candidates for judge during campaigns tend to [ROTATE] INCREASE your respect for judges in Pennsylvania, DECREASE your respect for judges in Pennsylvania, or would you say it makes no difference?

increases respect	13
decreases respect	34
no difference	48
(don't know)	5

Next I am going to read some ideas that have been proposed to change the laws that govern elections for judges in Pennsylvania. For each proposal I read, please tell me whether you would STRONGLY FAVOR, SOMEWHAT favor, somewhat OPPOSE, or STRONGLY oppose that proposal.

	Strongly Favor	Smwht Favor	Smwht Oppose	Strongly Oppose	DK/Ref
[ROTATE Q23 TO Q27]					
_23. Put a limit of \$1000 on the amount a candidate for judge can receive from any individual	59	26	9	3	3
_24. Put a limit of \$5000 on the amount a candidate for judge can receive from any organization or political action committee	61	23	6	7	3
_25. Require candidates for judge to report to the public the sources of all contributions they receive greater than \$100	65	21	6	3	4
_26. Put a limit on the total amount candidates for judge could spend on their campaigns, with the spending limit based on how many voters are in the district	52	28	8	4	7
_27. Provide a limited amount of public financing for judicial candidates who agree not to accept private campaign contributions	46	31	10	6	8

SPLIT SAMPLE C -- GO TO Q28 (Pg. 9)

SPLIT SAMPLE D -- GO TO Q37 (Pg. 10)

SPLIT SAMPLE C

Now I am going to read some things that people have said might happen if Pennsylvania put a limit of \$1000 on campaign contributions to candidates for judge. After each item, please tell me if the item I read to you would be VERY likely to happen, SOMEWHAT likely, somewhat UNLIKELY, or VERY unlikely to happen IF Pennsylvania had a limit of \$1000 on campaign contributions to candidates for judge.

First, [READ ITEM]. Would that be very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely to happen if Pennsylvania had a limit on campaign contributions to candidates for judge?

	Very Likely	Smwht Likely	Smwht Unlikely	Very Unlikely	Don't Know
ROTATE Q28 TO Q36					
_28. Ordinary people would have more of a voice	40	39	11	4	6
_29. The power of wealthy special interests would be reduced	40	38	14	5	3
_30. Candidates would not be able to get their messages out to the voters	7	19	35	32	7
_31. Spending on judicial campaigns would decrease . . .	30	44	13	6	7
_32. The playing field would be more level for all candidates	50	38	6	2	4
_33. Candidates will have to spend even more time raising money	16	35	29	11	9
_34. Judges would be less tempted to change their rulings in return for campaign contributions	41	39	8	5	7
_35. Qualified people who are not wealthy would be better able to run for judge	47	35	9	4	5
_36. Limiting the amount of money people can contribute would violate their right to free speech	9	16	26	37	11

END SPLIT SAMPLE C -- GO TO Q46 (Pg. 11)

SPLIT SAMPLE D

Now I am going to read some things that people have said might happen if Pennsylvania put a limit of \$1000 on campaign contributions to candidates for judge. After each item, please tell me if you think it would be VERY POSITIVE, SOMEWHAT positive, somewhat NEGATIVE, or VERY negative IF it happened.

First, [READ ITEM]. If that happened, in your opinion would it be very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative, or very negative?

ROTATE Q37 TO Q45

		Very Positive	Smwht Positive	Smwht Negative	Very Negative	Don't Know
4	_37. Ordinary people would have more of a voice	61	33	2	1	3
3	_38. The power of wealthy special interests would be reduced	63	31	3	2	2
8	_39. Candidates would not be able to get their messages out to the voters	16	10	41	24	9
6	_40. Spending on campaigns would decrease	50	35	8	4	4
16 1	_41. The playing field would be more level for all candidates	69	28	1	1	2
7	_42. Candidates would have to spend even more time raising money	19	29	30	11	11
5	_43. Judges would be less tempted to change their rulings in return for campaign contributions	59	27	6	3	4
2	_44. Qualified people who are not wealthy would be better able to run for judge	64	27	5	0	3
7	_45. Limiting the amount of money people can contribute would violate their right to free speech	14	13	27	25	21

END SPLIT SAMPLE D

RESUME ASKING ALL

46. I am going to read two statements that people have made about putting limits on contributions to candidates for judge in Pennsylvania. Please tell me which statement comes closer to your own view:

ROTATE

Some people say/ ...that putting limits on campaign contributions will improve
Other people say the honesty and integrity of judicial elections by reducing the influence of wealthy campaign contributors and special interests.

Some people say/ ...that putting limits on campaign contributions will NOT improve
Other people say the honesty and integrity of judicial elections -- it just means that candidates will have to spend even more time raising money from more sources.

Which statement comes closer to your own view?

IF BOTH/NEITHER: Well, which one is CLOSER to your own view?

will improve honesty and integrity	64
will not improve honesty and integrity	25
(both after prompt)	2
(neither after prompt)	3
(don't know/refused)	6

Next I am going to read a series of statements about campaigns and elections for ALL offices in Pennsylvania -- not just for judges. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with each statement.

ROTATE Q47 TO Q56

	Strong Agree	Smwt Agree	Smwt Disag	Strong Disag	Don't Know
_47. People and groups who donate large amounts of money to political campaigns have too much influence over the political process in Pennsylvania	59	34	5	1	2
_48. SPLIT SAMPLE C: The amount of money in election campaigns causes many voters to lose a great deal of faith in the political system	47	42	9	1	2
_49. SPLIT SAMPLE D: The amount of money in election campaigns has caused me to lose a great deal of faith in the political system	43	40	13	3	2
_50. People who donate large amounts of money to political campaigns usually expect to get something in return from the candidate when they are in office	62	30	4	1	3
_51. Good, qualified candidates often decide not to run for office because they can't raise enough money to compete	53	34	7	2	4
_52. Voters often do not get a full choice of candidates on election day because the only candidates they hear about are the ones who have the most money	54	34	7	2	2
_53. Most people who make large campaign contributions do it because they support the candidate's views on the issues, NOT because they want something in return	14	25	28	28	5
_54. Money is power. Average people do not get heard in politics because special interests get their way with their large political contributions	59	30	5	3	3
_55. Judges in Pennsylvania are not as impartial nor as high quality as they should be, because special interests have too much say over their elections	36	36	14	4	11
_56. Large contributions from special interests corrupt our state legislators and judges.	43	42	6	3	6

Finally, I would like to ask you a few questions for statistical purposes only.

57. Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, or what?
 [IF DEMOCRAT OR REPUBLICAN] Would you call yourself a strong (DEMOCRAT/REPUBLICAN) or a not very strong (DEMOCRAT/REPUBLICAN)?
 [IF INDEPENDENT, OTHER OR DON'T KNOW] Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican or Democratic Party?

Strong Democrat	21	44
Not strong Democrat	17	
Independent/Lean Democrat	6	
Independent	14	
Independent/Lean Republican	7	
Not strong Republican	17	
Strong Republican	13	37
(Other)	2	
(Don't know)	2	

58. What is your age? [REFUSED=01] _____

IF REFUSED: I am going to read you some categories. Stop me when we get to your category:

READ CATEGORIES:

18-24	4
25-29	8
30-34	9
35-39	13
40-44	12
45-49	11
50-54	11
55-59	9
60-64	5
over 64	18
(refused/don't know)	1

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

DO NOT READ CATEGORIES

1 - 11th grade	6
High school graduate	33
Non-college post H.S.(e.g. tech)	6
Some college (jr. college)	21
College graduate	22
Post-graduate school	11
(Don't know)	1

60. In which of the following ranges does your total household income fall, before taxes?

READ LIST

below 10 thousand	6
10 but less than 15 thousand	10
15 but less than 25 thousand	14
25 but less than 35 thousand	17
35 but less than 50 thousand	19
50 but less than 75 thousand	15
75 but less than 100 thousand	5
above 100 thousand	3
(n/a)	3
(refused)	9

61./62.

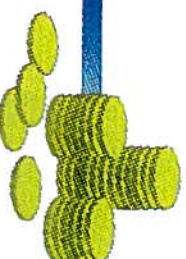
Finally, to make sure we have a representative sample, what is your race? **IF NOT HISPANIC IN Q61:** Do you consider yourself a Hispanic, Latino or Spanish-speaking American?

White	84
Black	11
Hispanic (Cuban, Guatemalan, Mexican-American, etc.)	3
Asian	0
(other)	1
(don't know/refused)	1



Executive Summary

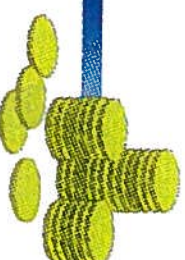
- Voters in Pennsylvania strongly believe that the amount of money in judicial elections threatens both the integrity and fairness of those elections, as well as the rulings that judges make in their courtrooms.
- Voters believe that campaign contributions from special interests dominate the political process, and that the voice of ordinary voters is diminished by large campaign contributions.
- Corruption is the word that voters themselves use most frequently in describing what is wrong with campaigns and elections today. They believe the problem of money in politics has grown worse in recent years.
- Voters are firmly convinced that large campaign contributions lead to special treatment, including from judges. They believe contributors expect -- and receive -- something in return for their largesse, even in the courtroom. This perception may be one cause of the very low voter turnout in Pennsylvania.
- Voters overwhelmingly agree that the amount of money in elections and campaigns has caused them to lose a great deal of faith in the political system.





Executive Summary (continued)

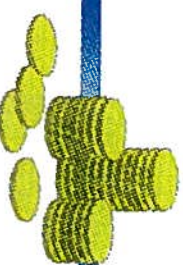
- There is a strong desire among voters to reform the judicial election system. Voters overwhelmingly support specific reform measures including contribution limits, spending limits, tight disclosure requirements, and public financing for candidates. This matches and in some cases exceeds levels of support we have seen in other states.
- Voters appear even more anxious to reform the judicial system than other offices and therefore are more supportive of public financing.
- Voters believe firmly that enacting contribution limits would improve the honesty and integrity of judicial elections by reducing the influence of wealthy campaign contributors and special interests.
- If contribution limits were enacted, voters believe that the playing field would be more level for all candidates, ordinary people would have more of a voice, and the power of special interests would be reduced. All of these are seen as highly beneficial and likely outcomes. Voters are not worried that candidates would have to spend more time raising money, and they reject the idea that contribution limits would violate anyone's right to free speech.





Executive Summary (continued)

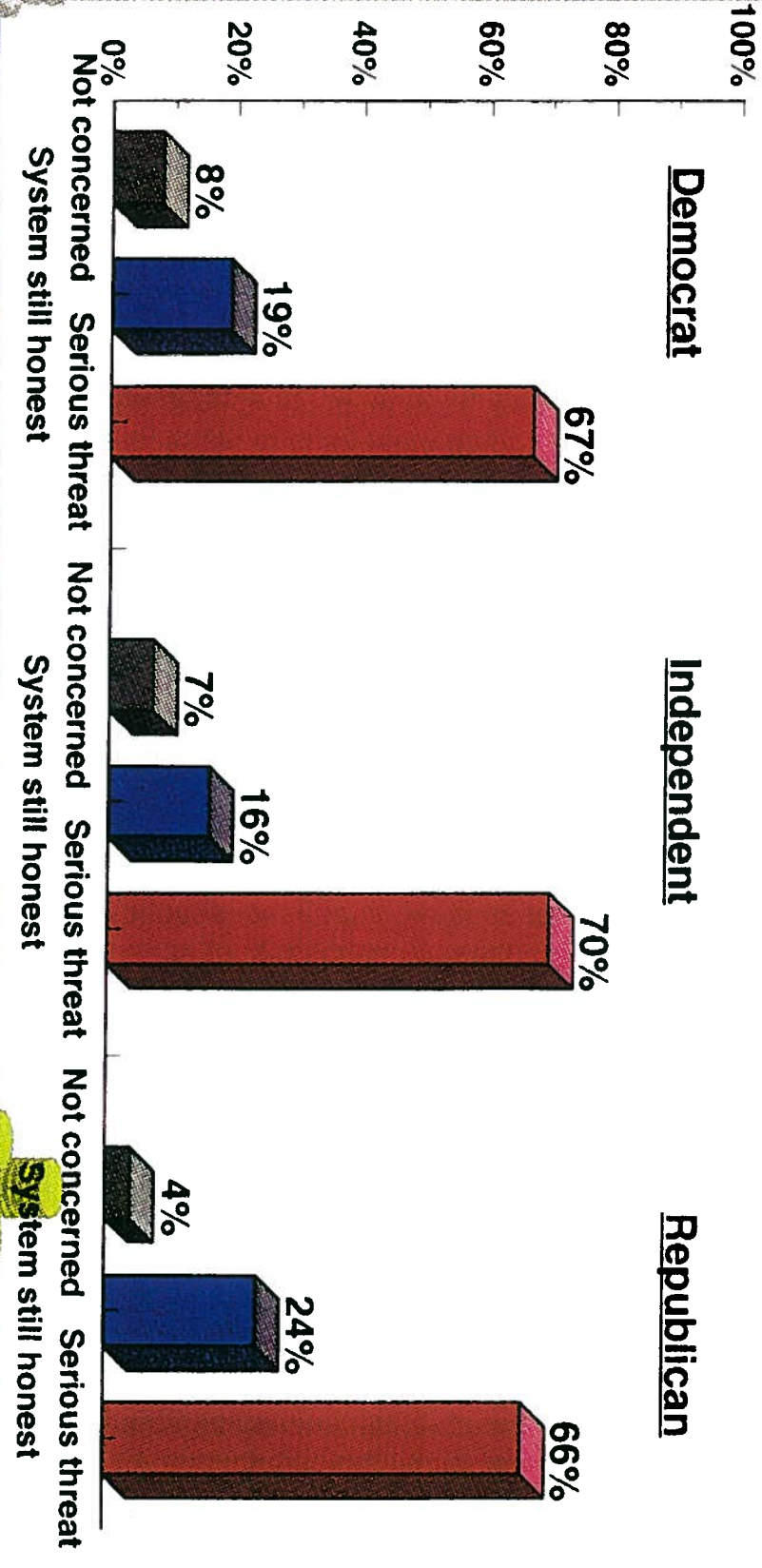
- Many voters willingly admit that a lack of knowledge and a lack of interest keeps them from turning out at the polls for judicial elections. However, they do not believe candidates need more money to get their messages out. They say they are more confused than informed by the television and radio ads that the candidates run.
- There is remarkably little demographic, geographic, or partisan variation in voters' attitudes on these issues. Pennsylvanians of all parties and in all parts of the state believe strongly that reform of judicial elections is needed and that reform would have beneficial consequences.





Which of the following statements comes closest to your own point of view?

I am not concerned about the amount of money being spent on political campaigns today.
I am concerned about the amount of money being spent on political campaigns today, but our political system is still basically fair and honest.
I am concerned about the amount of money being spent on political campaigns today and I believe it threatens the basic fairness and integrity of our political system.



Pennsylvania Special Commission to Limit Campaign Expenditures



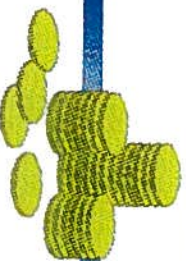
Lake Sosin Snell Perry



Overall, would you say that candidates who run to become judges in Pennsylvania spend too much money, about the right amount of money, or not enough money on their election campaigns?

	Too much	About right	Not enough	(don't know)
Without Explanation				
Dem men	67%	13%	5%	15%
Dem women	48%	20%	3%	29%
Rep men	56%	15%	8%	21%
Rep women	61%	12%	7%	20%

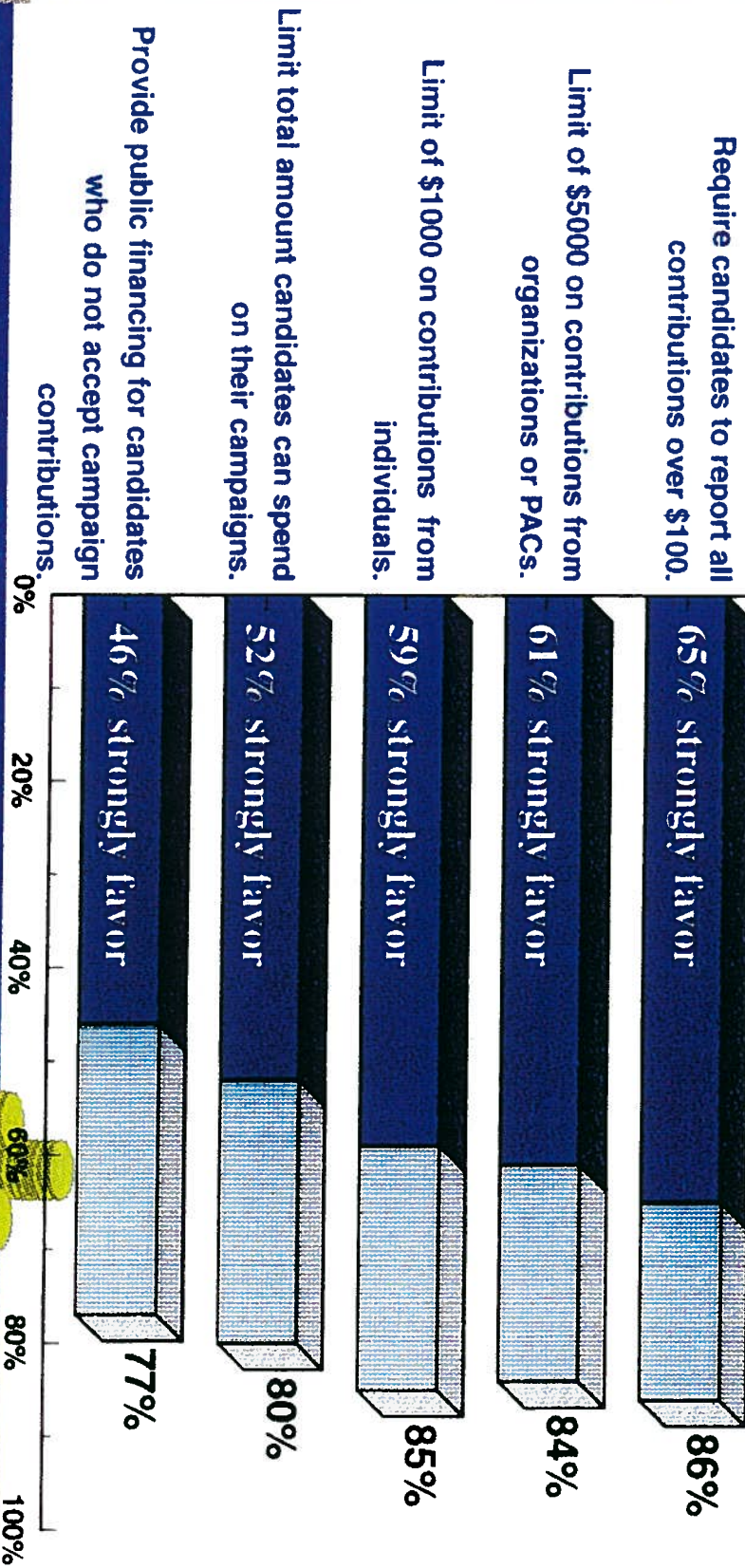
	Too much	About right	Not enough	(don't know)
With Explanation				
Dem men	86%	12%	0%	2%
Dem women	75%	14%	3%	8%
Rep men	77%	10%	7%	6%
Rep women	92%	2%	2%	4%



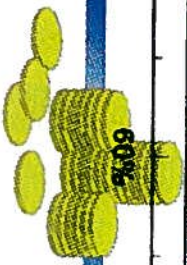


Next I am going to read some ideas that have been proposed to change the laws that govern elections for judges in Pennsylvania. For each proposal I read, please tell me whether you would strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose that proposal.

% Strongly/somewhat favor



Pennsylvania Special Commission to Limit Campaign Expenditures



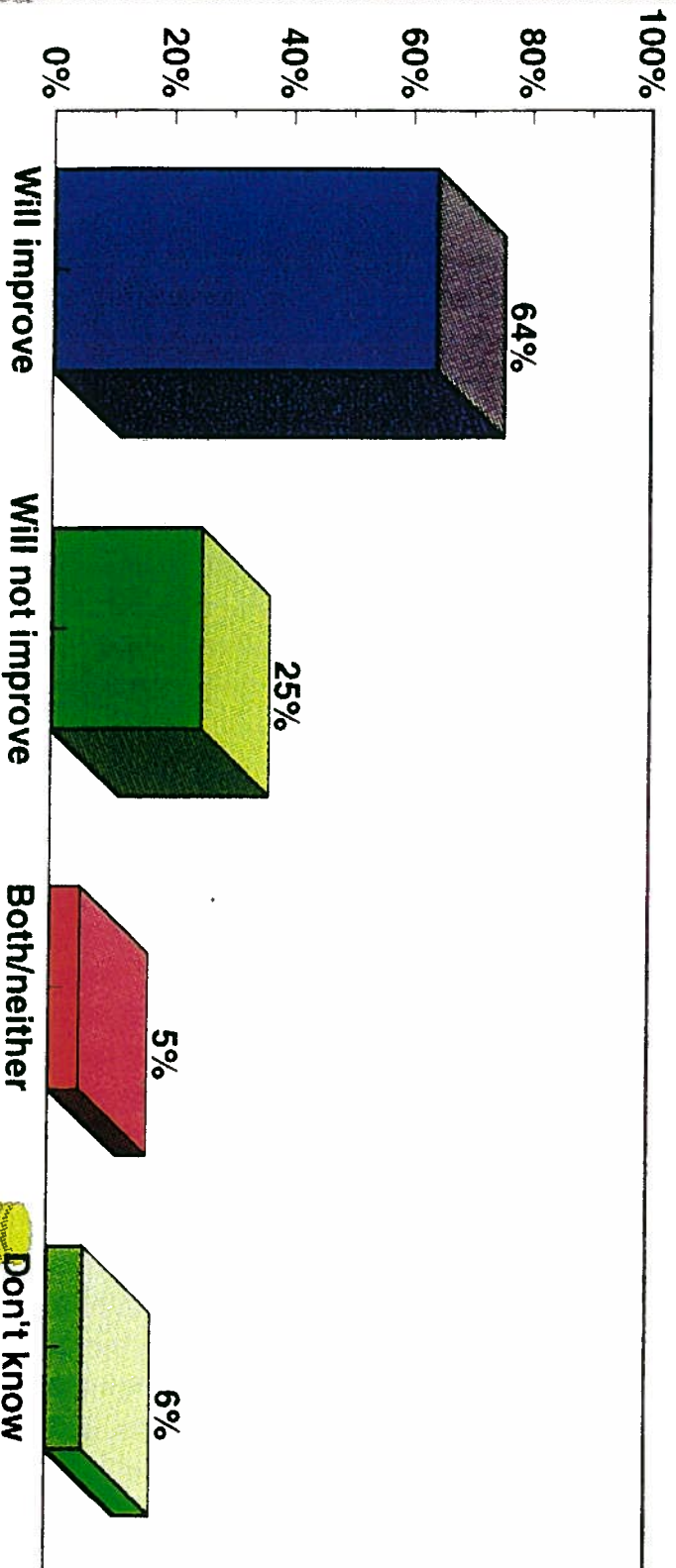
Lake Sosin Snell Perry



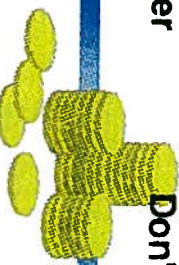
I am going to read two statements that people have made about putting limits on contributions to candidates for judge in Pennsylvania. Please tell me which statement comes closer to your own view:

...that putting limits on campaign contributions will improve the honesty and integrity of judicial elections by reducing the influence of wealthy campaign contributors and special interests.

...that putting limits on campaign contributions will NOT improve the honesty and integrity of judicial elections -- it just means that candidates will have to spend even more time from more sources.



Pennsylvania Special Commission to Limit Campaign Expenditures



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Now I am going to read some things that people have said might happen if Pennsylvania put a limit of \$1000 on campaign contributions to candidates for judge. After each item, please tell me if the item I read to you would be very likely to happen, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely to happen if Pennsylvania had a limit of \$1000 on campaign contributions to candidates for judge.

