



# WORKTRENDS

AMERICANS' ATTITUDES ABOUT **WORK, EMPLOYERS, AND GOVERNMENT**

## **The Shattered American Dream: Unemployed Workers Lose Ground, Hope, and Faith in their Futures**

by

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## BACKGROUND

The John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey was founded as a research and policy organization devoted to strengthening New Jersey's and the nation's workforce during a time of global economic change. The Heldrich Center researches and puts to work strategies that increase worker skills and employability, strengthen the ability of companies to compete, create jobs where they are needed, and improve the quality and performance of the workforce development system.

Since 1997, the Heldrich Center has experienced rapid growth, working with federal and state government partners, Fortune 100 companies, and major foundations. The Center embodies its slogan "Solutions at Work" by teaming with partners and clients to translate cutting-edge research and analysis into practices and programs that companies, unions, schools, community-based organizations, and government officials can leverage to strengthen the nation's workforce.

The Center's projects are grounded in a core set of research priorities:

- Disability Employment
- Evaluation, Management, and Employment
- Industry, Education, and Employment
- Reemployment
- Work Trends and Economic Analysis

Since its inception, the Heldrich Center has sought to inform employers, union leaders, policymakers, community members, the media, and academic communities about critical workforce and education issues that relate to the emerging global economy.

To better understand the public's attitudes about work, employers, and the government, and improve workplace practices and policy, the Heldrich Center produces the *Work Trends* surveys on a regular basis. (The complete set of reports is available at [www.heldrich.rutgers.edu](http://www.heldrich.rutgers.edu).) The surveys poll the general public on critical workforce issues facing Americans and American businesses. The survey findings are promoted widely to the media and national constituencies.

The series is co-directed by Carl E. Van Horn, Ph.D., Director of the Heldrich Center, and Cliff Zukin, Ph.D., Senior Faculty Fellow at the Center and Professor of Public Policy and Political Science at Rutgers University. *The Shattered American Dream: Unemployed Workers Lose Ground, Hope, and Faith in their Futures* continues to advance the goals of the *Work Trends* series to give American workers a voice in the national economic policy debates, and thereby provides policymakers and employers with reliable insights into how workers across the nation are judging and acting upon the realities of work and the workplace.

## INTRODUCTION

### THE RESPONDENTS

A Heldrich Center survey of the unemployed, conducted in August 2009, interviewed 1,202 respondents. Eligibility was defined as those who had been unemployed at some point in the prior 12 months (between September 2008 and August 2009). Of this group, 75% were unemployed and looking for work, 5% were unemployed but not looking for work, and 19% were employed when first interviewed in August 2009. The entire sample of 1,202 constitutes **Wave 1** interviews.

We successfully re-interviewed 908 respondents in March 2010. At that point in time, 54% were unemployed and looking for a job, 13% were unemployed but not looking, and 33% were employed. The entire sample of 908 constitutes **Wave 2** interviews.

We again followed up in November 2010, turning back to our original sample, those who had been unemployed at some point in the prior 12 months. The sample of 764 respondents includes 43% who are unemployed and looking for work, 11% who are working part time but looking for full-time work, 8% who are working part time and not looking for full-time work, 13% who are unemployed but not looking for work, and 26% who are employed full time. When we refer to our **panel**, we are talking about all respondents, regardless of employment status, who were asked a survey question. When we talk about the **unemployed**, this includes those who are unemployed and looking for work *and* those working part time but who want a full-time job in Novem-

ber 2010. When we talk about the **reemployed**, this includes those who are employed full time *and* those who are working part time and not looking for full-time work in November 2010.

Table 1 illustrates that there were some employment gains between Waves 1 and 2. However, there has been very little change in the past eight months since March 2010. The percentage of those looking for work, not looking, and currently employed shows the great stagnation of the labor force.

### WHERE'S THE ECONOMY HEADED?

The midterm elections seem to have done little to boost the panel's expectations for recovery. When asked what they thought would become of the economic situation as a result of the elections, just 3 in 10 are more hopeful that they will begin to see a turnaround. A similar number is less hopeful, and 41% say it will make no difference.

Whether working or not, all panelists seem to have little hope that they'll see a turnaround, and don't know who to trust to lead the nation into recovery. Employment status makes little to no difference with regard to:

- If panelists are more, less, or roughly just as hopeful as they were before the election about an economic recovery;
- Whether the U.S. economy is experiencing a temporary downturn or fundamental and lasting changes;

TABLE 1. PANEL EMPLOYMENT STATUS

	August 2009	March 2010	November 2010
<b>Unemployed and looking</b>	75%	54%	54%
Jobless and looking	NA	NA	(43%)
Part time, looking for full time	NA	NA	(11%)
<b>Unemployed, not looking</b>	5%	13%	13%
Don't want a job	NA	(8%)	(6%)
Discouraged, dropped out	NA	(5%)	(7%)
<b>Employed</b>	19%	33%	34%
Full time	NA	NA	(26%)
Part time, don't want full time	NA	NA	(8%)
<b>Total</b>	99%	100%	101%
Number of respondents	(1,202)	(908)	(764)

Note: NA = Not Ascertained

- When panelists believe the economy will recover — and how pessimistic they are about the pace of changes; and
- Who panelists trust to do a better job handling the economy — 41% say they don't believe President Obama or the Republicans in Congress will do a better job, 32% have confidence in the President, and just 17% have faith in the Republicans.

Most think that an economic recovery is still a long way off. Just 1 in 10 (9%) say some resolve will come by the end of 2011, and 4 in 10 think they will wait for at least three years before seeing a turnaround. Fifteen percent believe the economy will not recover at all. (See Figure 1.)

With little optimism about when economic recovery will begin, the unemployed feel helpless and powerless, and have come to question a fundamental American credo — that everybody has it in them to succeed. More than half of our panelists (57%)

believe that no matter how determined they are, hard work does not guarantee success. A national sample conducted at about the same time by the Kaiser Family Foundation, Harvard University, and *The Washington Post* shows most Americans believe the opposite — that Americans can get ahead if they're willing to work hard. (See Figure 2.)

## THE UNEMPLOYED: STILL SEARCHING

### WHO ARE THE UNEMPLOYED?

Table 2 shows the employment status of all respondents surveyed in November 2010 and encompasses those who are unemployed and looking for work, unemployed but not looking for work, and those currently employed.

Unemployment has hit some groups harder than others. This is particularly noticeable with age, where 62% of those over 55 are

FIGURE 1. WHEN WILL THE ECONOMY BEGIN TO RECOVER?

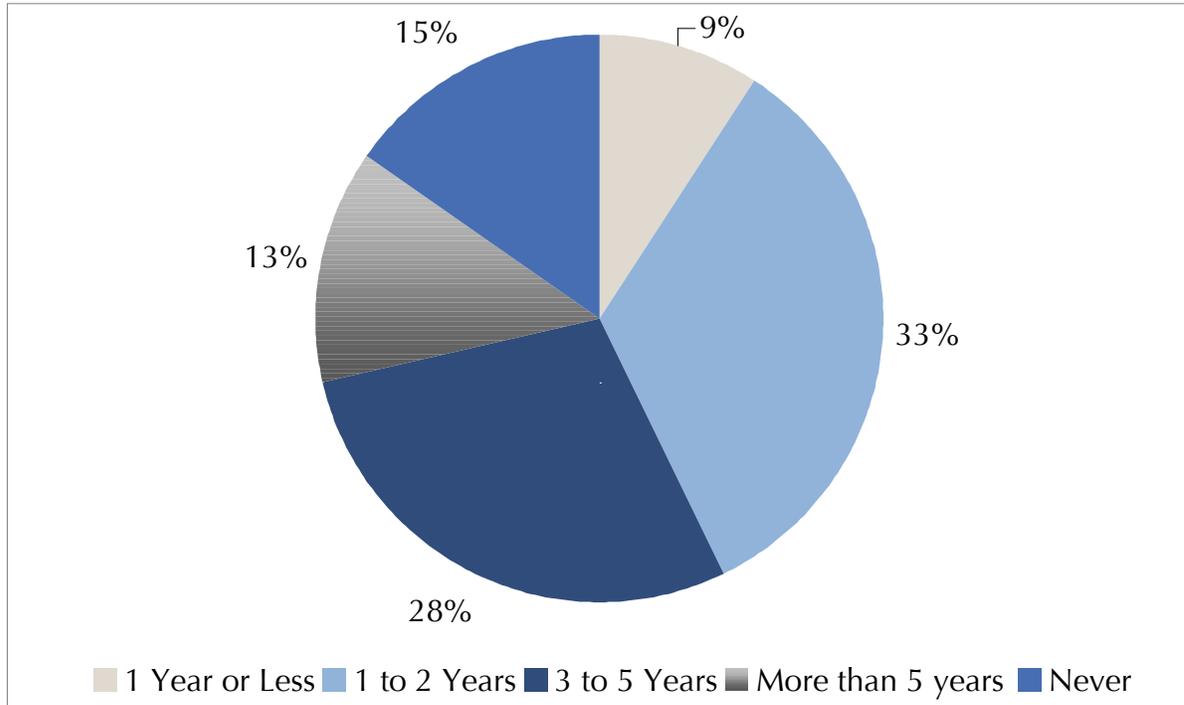


FIGURE 2. WHICH STATEMENT COMES CLOSER TO YOUR OWN VIEWS?

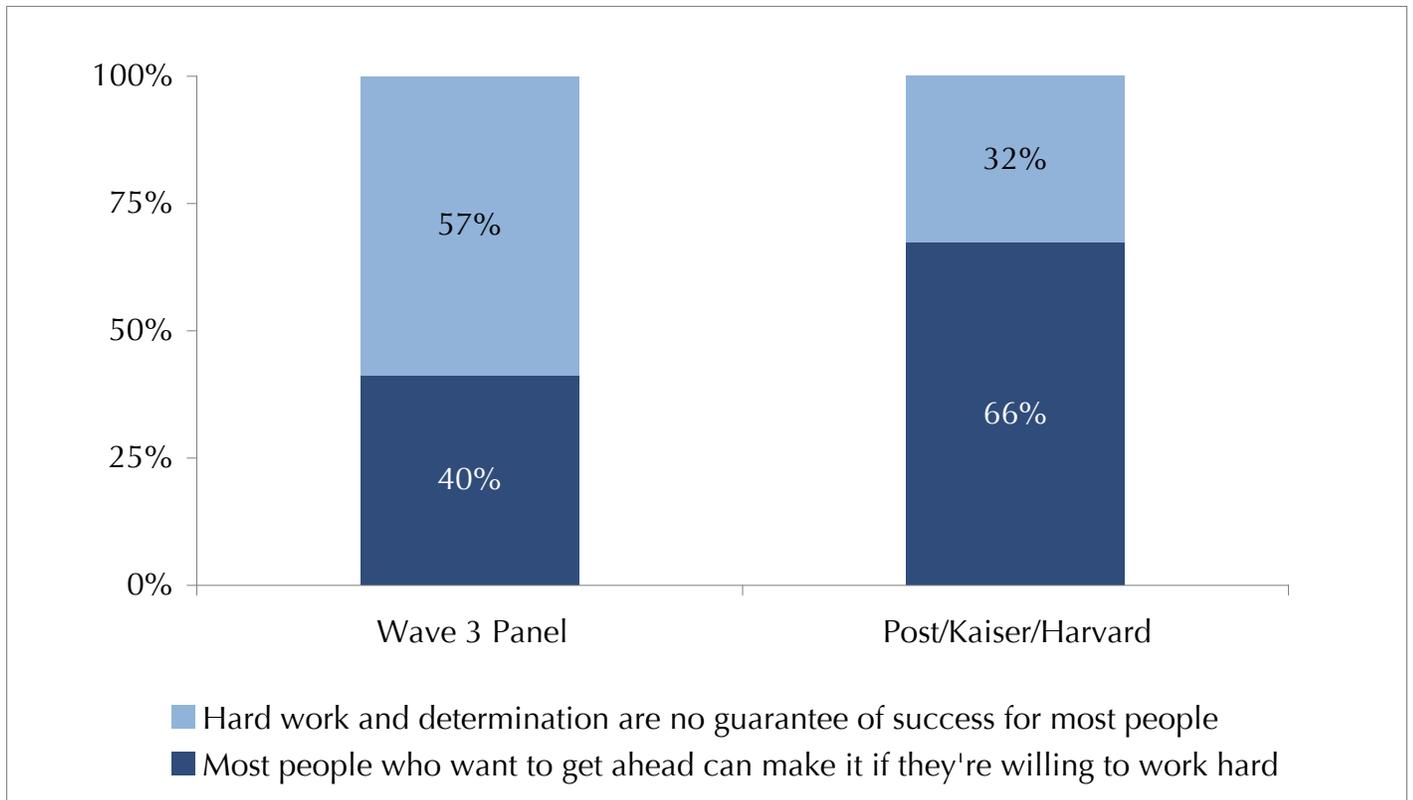


TABLE 2. WHO IS LOOKING FOR FULL-TIME WORK?

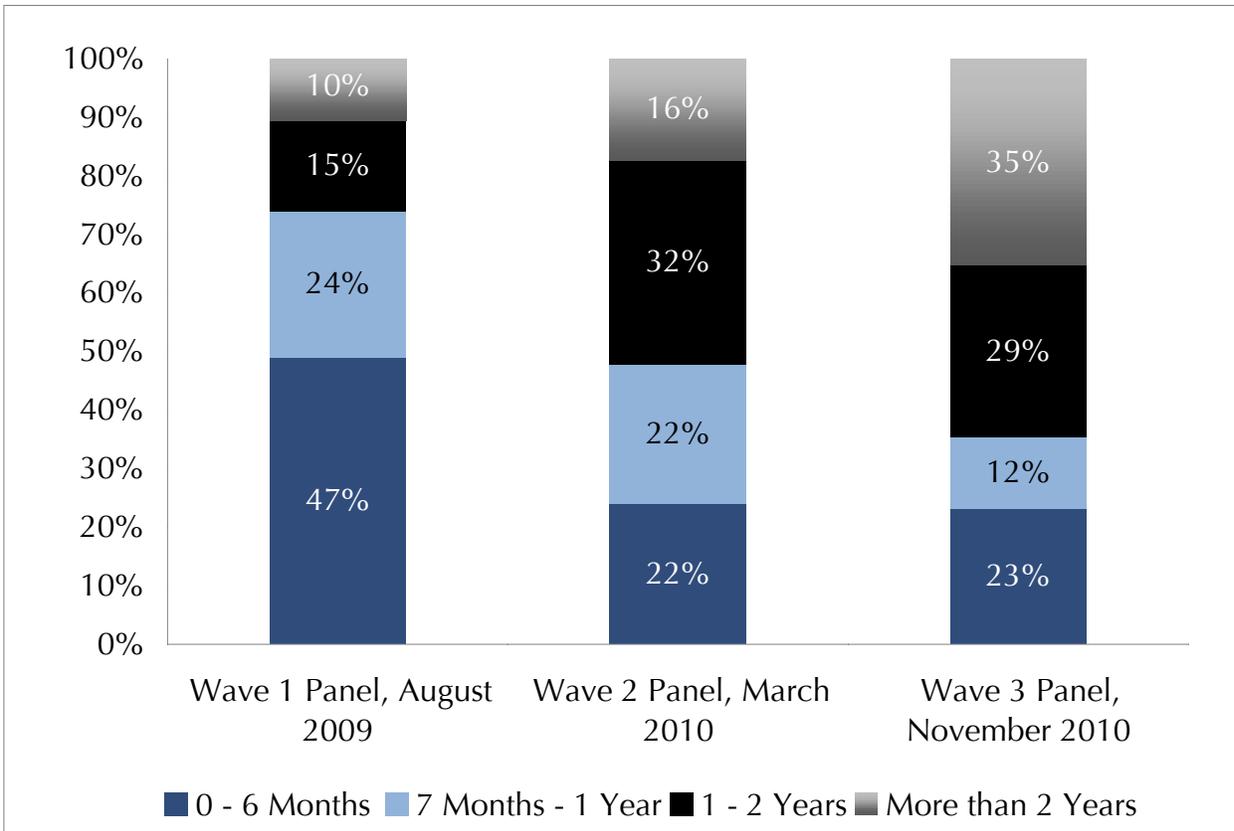
	Employed	Not in Labor Force	Unemployed and Looking for Work	Total %	Total Number
<b>Age</b>					
18 - 34	41%	12%	47%	100%	161
35 - 54	32%	12%	57%	101%	332
55+	21%	17%	62%	100%	271
<b>Education</b>					
High school or less	33%	17%	51%	101%	198
Some college	28%	5%	67%	100%	265
Bachelor's degree or higher	43%	14%	42%	101%	301
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	35%	13%	53%	101%	378
Female	31%	13%	56%	100%	386
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>					
White, non-Hispanic	37%	12%	51%	100%	542
Black, non-Hispanic/other, non-Hispanic/Hispanic	29%	11%	60%	100%	150
<b>Income</b>					
Less than \$30K	27%	14%	60%	101%	245
\$30K - \$60K	29%	10%	61%	100%	244
More than \$60K	56%	16%	28%	100%	275

looking for work, compared to 57% between the ages of 35 and 54, and 47% of those under age 35. Blacks report slightly higher unemployment than whites and those at the lower- and middle-income levels report more difficulty than do upper-income respondents. Those with a partial college education fare worse than either college or high school graduates.

As shown in Figure 3, the amount of time panelists have been without a job documents the intransigence of unemployment. More than 6 in 10 of the unemployed (64%) have been on the job hunt for at least a

year, with fully one-third (35%) looking for over two years. **The percentage out of work for a year or more increased from 25% in Wave 1 to 48% in Wave 2 and to 64% by Wave 3.** The percentage out of work two years or more has increased from 10% in Wave 1 to its current figure of 35% in Wave 3. Just under half of the unemployed (47%) believe another year will go by before they begin working again, if ever, or are unsure when they'll return to earning a regular income. More than half (58%) are pessimistic about finding a new job in the near future and fully one-quarter (24%) are **very** pessimistic about starting work soon.

FIGURE 3. DURATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT



Note: "Don't Know" responses are not shown.

Moreover, the unemployed don't expect much from any new job they might get. About half (47%) of those looking for full-time work believe their new job will pay less than their most recent job held, and just one-quarter of the panel believe they will either be paid the same or more than their last job, with the remainder uncertain.

The federal government's November 2010 jobs report documented a tremendous increase in the number of discouraged workers around the United States. In the Heldrich Center's March 2010 survey, 13% were unemployed and not looking for work. Of this group, 42% stopped looking for work because they got tired of searching or were discouraged. The Wave 3 numbers

are virtually identical. About one-quarter of the Wave 3 panel are **long-term unemployed**; that is, they have been unemployed and looking for full-time work for more than two years. Two-thirds of this group (67%) are now either very or somewhat pessimistic about eventually finding work. Half don't think that day will come for at least another year, if ever. Just 3% of the long-term unemployed believe that their next full-time job will pay better than their last position, with fully 60% predicting that they ultimately will end up earning less.

## THE REEMPLOYED: WHAT'S REEMPLOY- MENT LIKE?

The November 2010 survey finds that only one-third of those originally looking for work in August 2009 had become employed by November 2010, either as full-time workers (26%) or part-timers who do not want a full-time job (8%). This figure is up slightly from the March 2010 survey when 13% were found to have gotten full-time jobs and another 8% had gotten part-time jobs.

Their job search took a long time, as just 43% of the reemployed found work in a few months; half (about 49%) report that they actively sought employment for at least seven months before they found new work. Almost one-third (30%) say they had been on the hunt for a full year or more. (See Figure 4.)

And for many, their new job is not ideal and is only acceptable for the time being. More than half (54%) say that the position they have now will allow them to get by financially while they continue to look for something better. The sacrifices made by the reemployed to eventually find full-time work are also widespread. About one-third say they took a reduction in fringe benefits to find a new job and a large number of the reemployed (41%) have had to move to a new field or career (See Figure 5.) This is compared to just 18% of reemployed panelists in Wave 2 who were working in a new field in March 2010. Clearly, with the passage of time, more have had to find jobs in areas other than the field in which they had been working.

Almost a majority of reemployed workers (48%) were forced to take a cut in pay, and for most, a significant one. Nearly 60% are earning at least 20% lower at their new

FIGURE 4. HOW LONG WERE THE REEMPLOYED ACTIVELY SEARCHING FOR WORK?

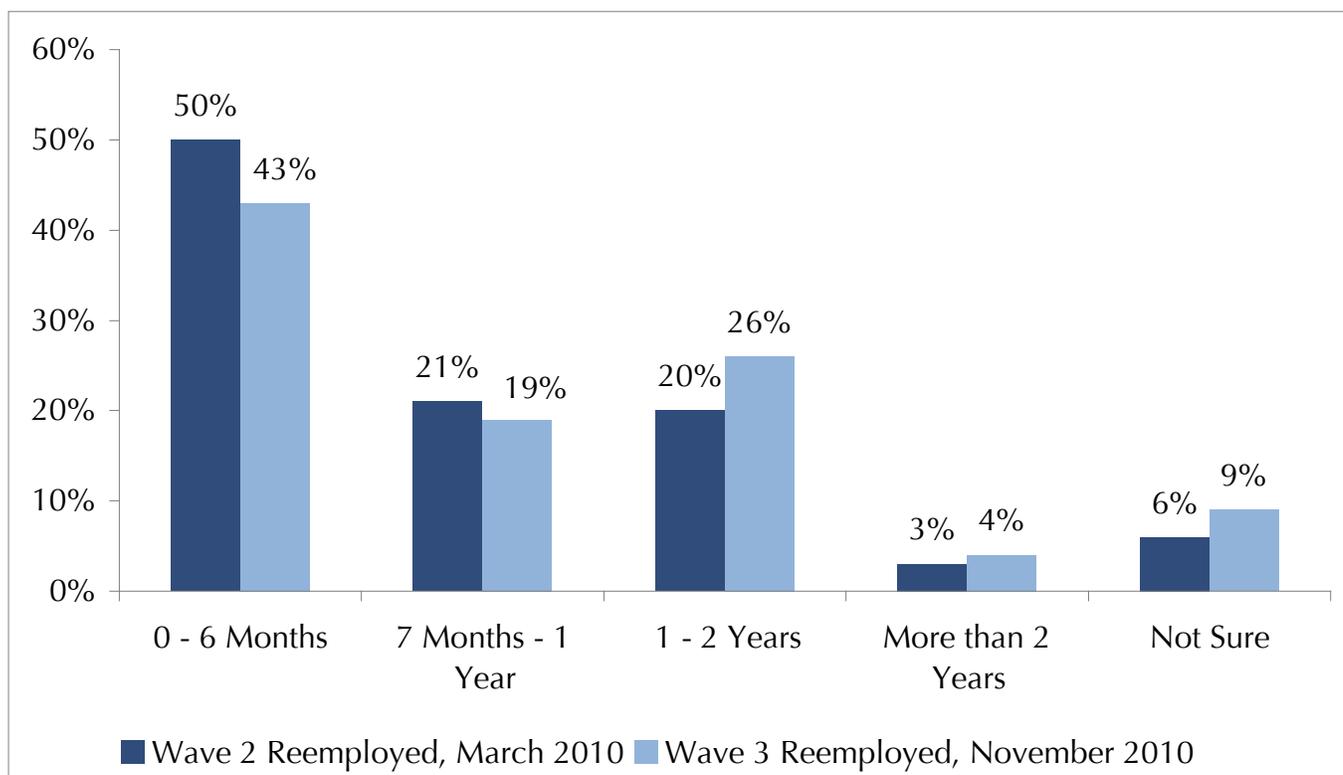
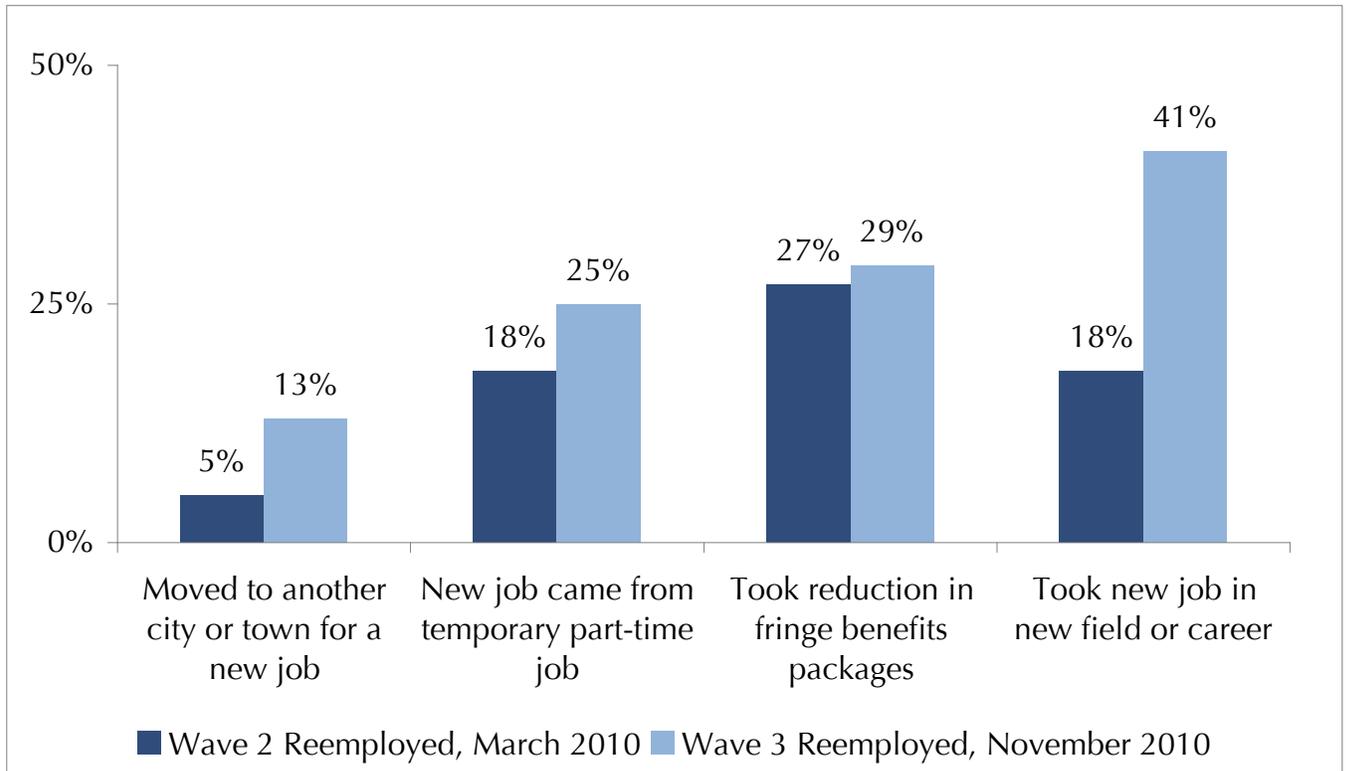


FIGURE 5. WHAT EMPLOYED PANELISTS DID TO FIND A JOB, COMPARISONS ACROSS WAVES 2 & 3



position compared to their last full-time job. For panelists who are employed full time, 53% are making less now than they did in their most previous job before becoming unemployed, with many (56%) reporting that they earn at least one-fifth less in their current position than in their last job.

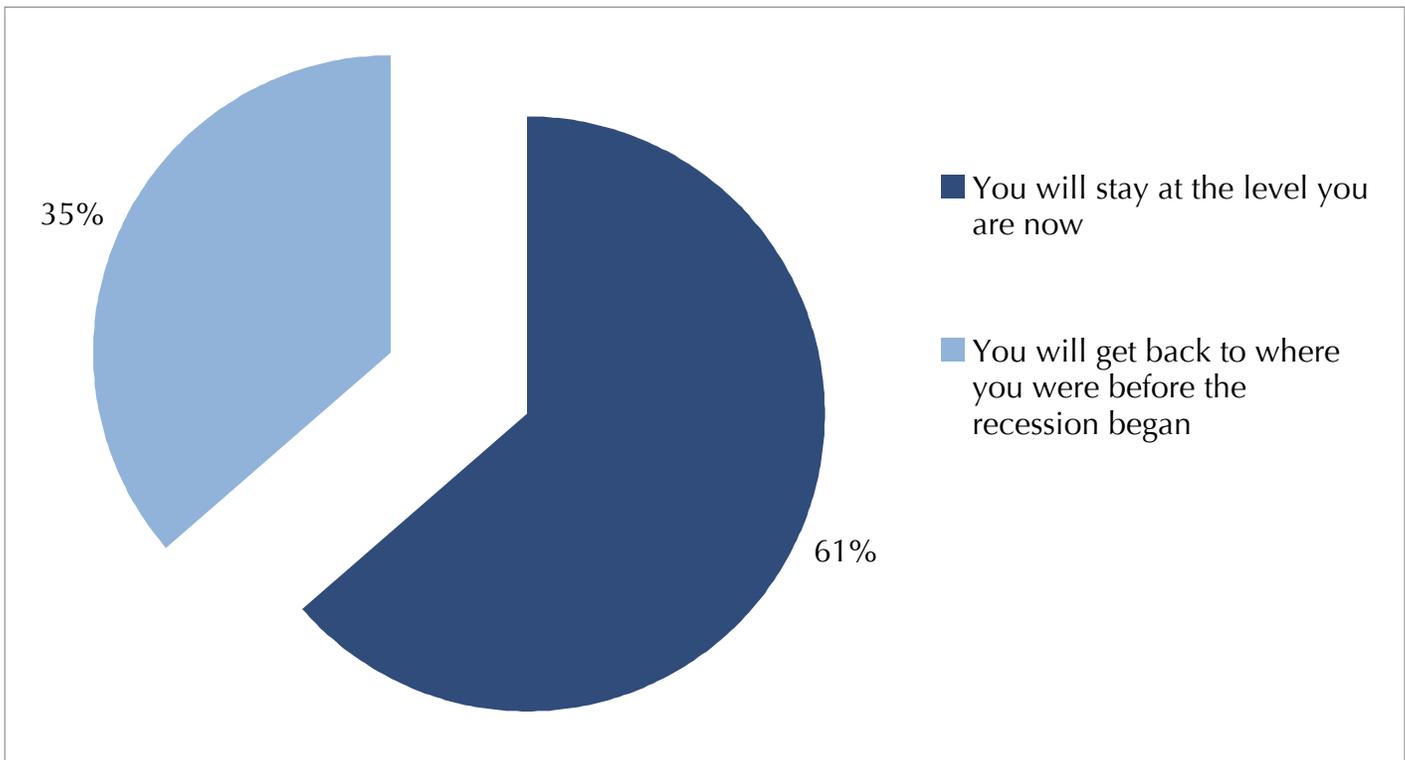
New beginnings and lower pay notwithstanding, the reemployed appear to be generally satisfied with their overall jobs and their ability to keep them. Fifty-six percent report being at least somewhat satisfied (compared to 65% of a national sample taken in September 2010), and about half (47%) are not very or not at all concerned with the security of their new position, also close to nationwide norms.

## FINANCIAL IMPACTS OF THE GREAT RECESSION

### VICTIMS OF THE GREAT RECESSION

For most of those who found themselves unemployed as a result of the Great Recession and certainly for those who are still unemployed today, the future looks grim. Just one-third of the panel believe they will recover financially and return to where they were before the downturn began, while most (61%) do not expect to get back to their prior economic station in life. (See Figure 6.) Those surveyed say they are not faring well now, and do not expect to fare better financially in the future. Eighty-one percent say their personal finances are either in only fair or poor shape.

FIGURE 6. THINKING ABOUT YOUR FINANCES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS, WHICH DO YOU THINK IS MORE LIKELY?



As Table 3 illustrates, the unemployed and reemployed are under severe financial distress:

- 61% say the economy has had, or is having, a major impact on their families,
- 57% say their family's financial situation is worse than two years ago,
- 58% say they have a **lot** less in savings and income than when the recession began, and
- 46% say that they are in flat out **poor** financial shape.

Most panelists (57%) say that their financial situation has gotten a lot worse since the Great Recession began, and report that they have a lot less in income and savings now compared to just a couple of years ago. A large number of those who report financial losses have lost nearly half of their savings. Almost 60% report having at least 25% less in savings. More than three-quarters of the long-term unemployed (76%) say they have "a lot less" in income and savings now compared to when the recession began.

The need to cope with severe financial losses and increasing uncertainty faced by the unemployed forced many to undergo substantial lifestyle changes, which in turn affected their family members and quality of life. We asked panelists to tell us where

## The Shattered American Dream

they have reduced spending so much due to their financial situation that it has made a noticeable difference in their family's **daily lives**. Fifty percent of panelists say they have given up things they consider desirable, and another 40% have had to go without some things considered to be essential. (See Figures 7 and 8.) A large number, more than 7 in 10, have reduced spending on luxuries — vacations and entertainment. But a near majority also reduced spending on what most consider necessities — about 5 in 10 have had to give up a central element in food (51%), health care (45%), transportation (45%), and housing (42%). And changes were made regardless of whether panelists are

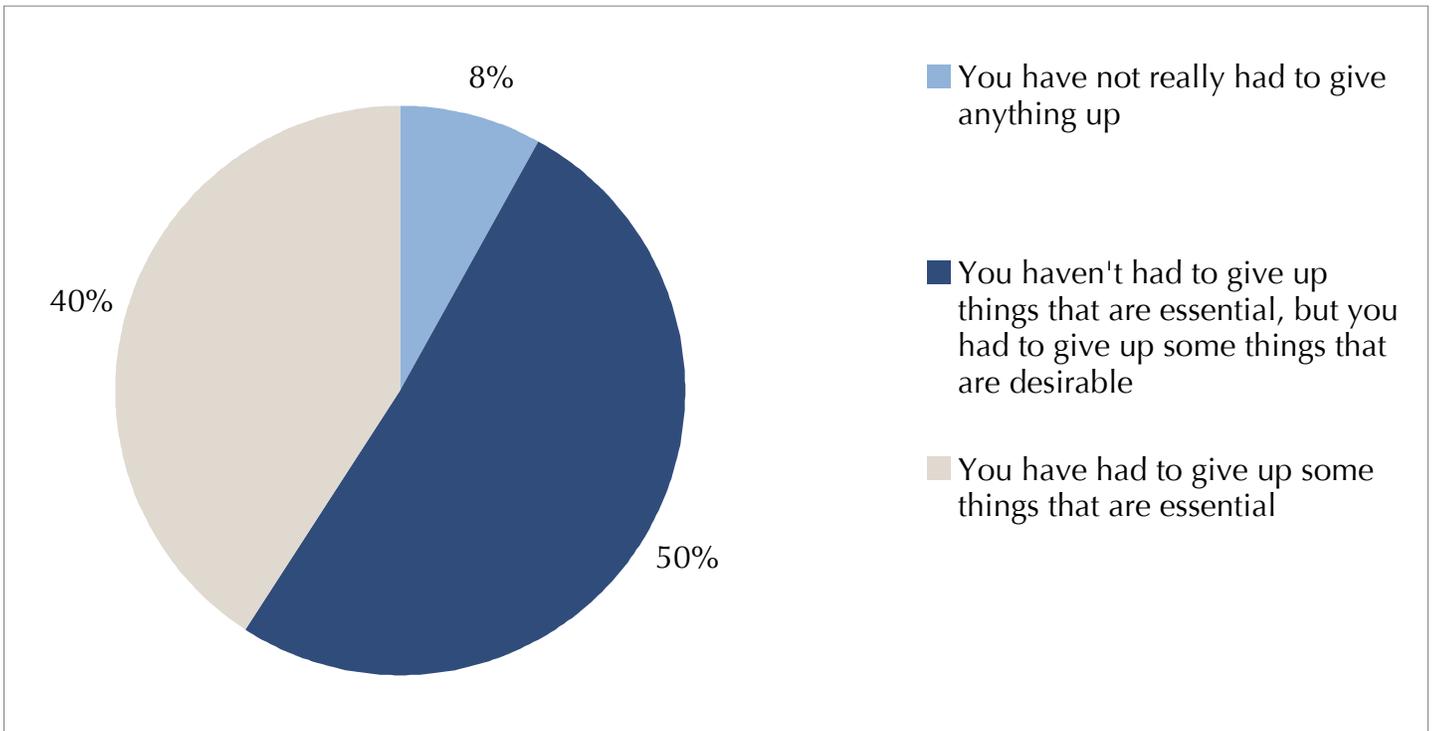
employed or unemployed. (See Figure 9.) What's disturbing is how many have given up at least one essential — 80% of our panel has spent less on either food, housing, or health care. In fact, 51% of our panelists do not have health care benefits; this is true of 60% of the long-term unemployed. More than half (54%) also say the recession has caused stress among family relationships for both the reemployed and those looking for work.

While almost all Americans, despite their employment status, are hurting financially, those who continue to look for work have ultimately made the most sacrifices: almost two-thirds say the economic situation has

TABLE 3. SEVERE FINANCIAL IMPACTS

	Economy has Major Impact on Family	Poor Financial Shape	Family's Financial Situation is Worse Compared to Two Years Ago	Have a "Lot Less" in Personal Income and Savings
<b>Full Sample</b>	61%	46%	57%	58%
<b>Employment Status</b>				
Unemployed	67%	60%	61%	65%
Long-term unemployed	75%	74%	68%	76%
Reemployed	52%	27%	52%	48%
<b>Age</b>				
18 - 34	51%	41%	47%	46%
35 - 54	69%	51%	64%	67%
55+	67%	47%	66%	65%
<b>Education</b>				
High school or less	58%	49%	57%	61%
Some college	67%	53%	59%	60%
Bachelor's degree or higher	59%	31%	55%	48%
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	61%	49%	61%	57%
Female	61%	42%	52%	59%
<b>Race</b>				
White, non-Hispanic	56%	45%	59%	57%
Black/Hispanic	69%	48%	54%	61%

**FIGURE 7. WHICH STATEMENT BEST DESCRIBES WHAT YOU HAVE GIVEN UP:**



**FIGURE 8. WHICH STATEMENT BEST DESCRIBES WHAT YOU HAVE GIVEN UP (BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS)**

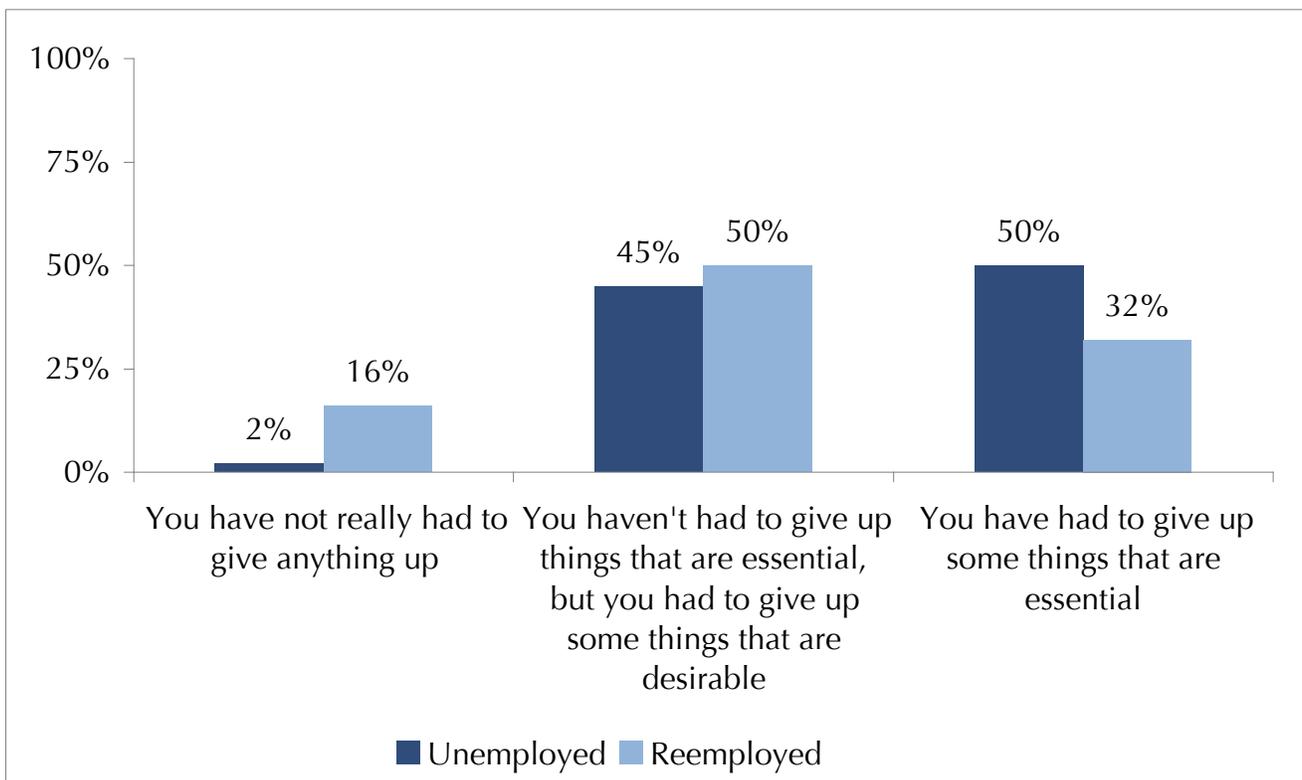
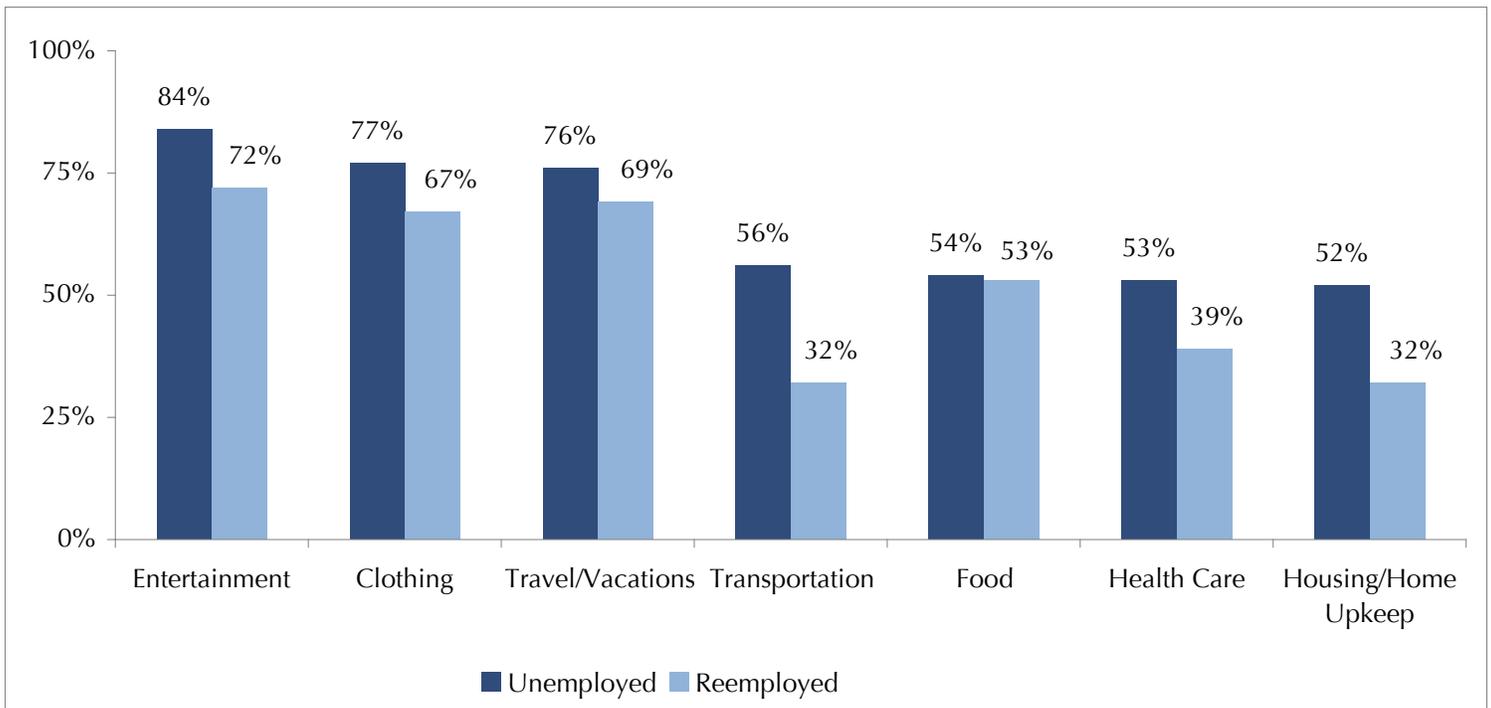


FIGURE 9. AREAS WHERE REDUCED SPENDING HAS AFFECTED DAILY LIFE (BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS)



caused a major change in their daily life, with just 5% reporting that they have not needed to make any adjustments. (See Figure 10.) A majority of panelists (at least 52%) who are currently unemployed have reduced spending in all areas, and just 2% say they haven't had to give anything up because of their employment situation. Half (50%) of those looking for work say they have given up things they consider essential.

When asked what they have done to cope with their financial troubles due to unemployment, the largest number of panelists (41%) have borrowed money from family or friends other than their adult children, followed by selling possessions (36%) and increasing credit card debt (29%). Americans seem to have coped in similar ways despite employment status across all areas, except for one — about half of those looking for work (45%) have sold possessions to make ends meet, compared to about a quarter

(26%) of the reemployed. Of the currently employed, however, more than a third (36%) accepted a job below their education or experience level, and roughly the same (32%) say they took a job they did not like.

Workers in general are accepting the notion that the effects of the recession will be permanent, rather than temporary. Two-thirds (66%) say that the economy is undergoing fundamental and lasting changes, a number that is basically unchanged from Wave 2 in March 2010, but reflects a substantial increase from Wave 1 in August 2009, when just about half (52%) thought the economy's changes would be permanent.

A staggering number of panelists believe that the national economy has undergone fundamental changes in how Americans will look for work, feel about work, and find work. (See Figure 11.) Many believe that things will never return to where they were before the Great Recession. More than half

FIGURE 10. OVERALL, HAS THE RECESSION CAUSED:

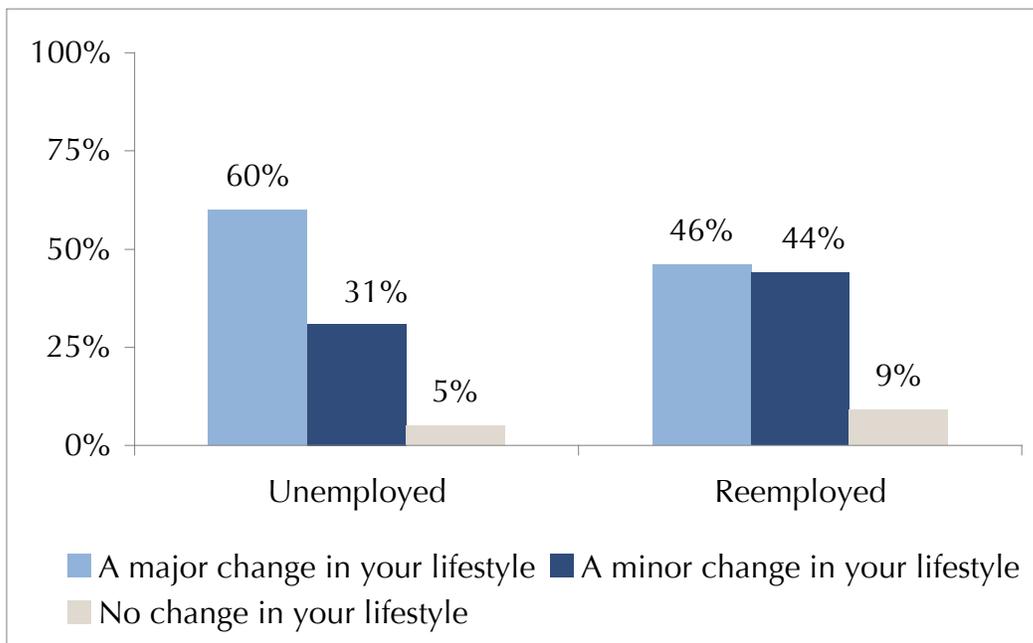
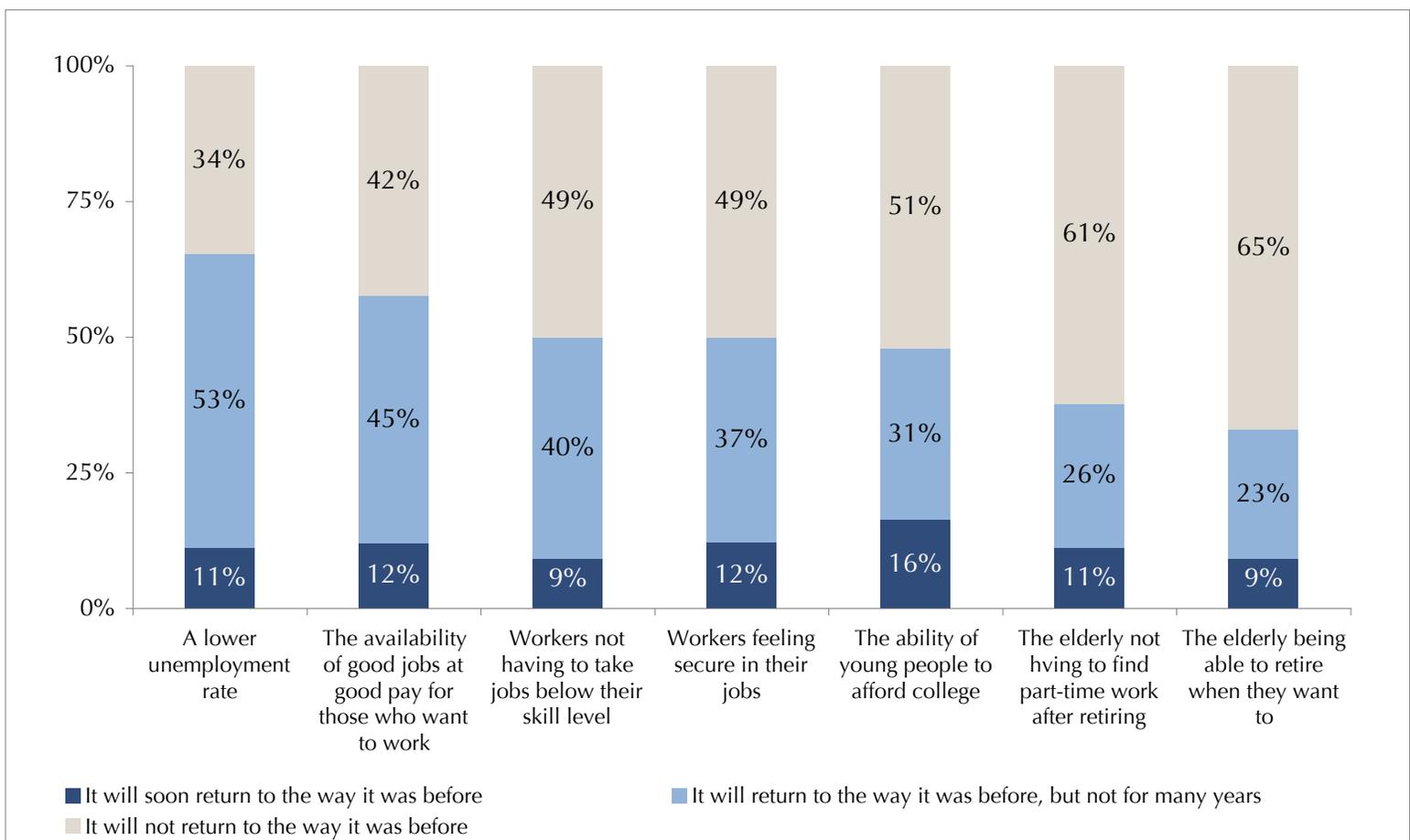


FIGURE 11. WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN EACH OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS?



believe that the following will be **permanent** changes:

- The elderly will have a more difficult time retiring when they want to (65%).
- The elderly will need to find part-time work after retiring to make ends meet (61%). This view is held by nearly 70% of those over age 50.
- It will become harder for young people to afford college (51%).
- Workers will never feel as secure in their jobs as they once did (49%) and will increasingly have to take jobs below their skill level (49%).

A large number also believe that things will eventually return to normal, although not for many years, including a lower national unemployment rate (53%) and the availability of good jobs at good pay for those who want to work (45%).

### OLDER WORKERS

The Great Recession appears to have wreaked havoc with the retirement plans of older workers, as shown in Table 4. A staggering number of older workers (73%) say they have changed how they envision their near future as a result of the recession. More than one-quarter (27%) will retire early because of their unemployment experience, thus showing who will be involuntarily unemployed because of the economic situation. Forty-six percent of panelists age 50 and above say that their unemployment experience during the Great Recession has caused them to think about retiring later than they had originally planned. About the same number (41%) intend to take their

**TABLE 4. THOUGHTS OF THOSE OVER 50. PERCENT WHO:**

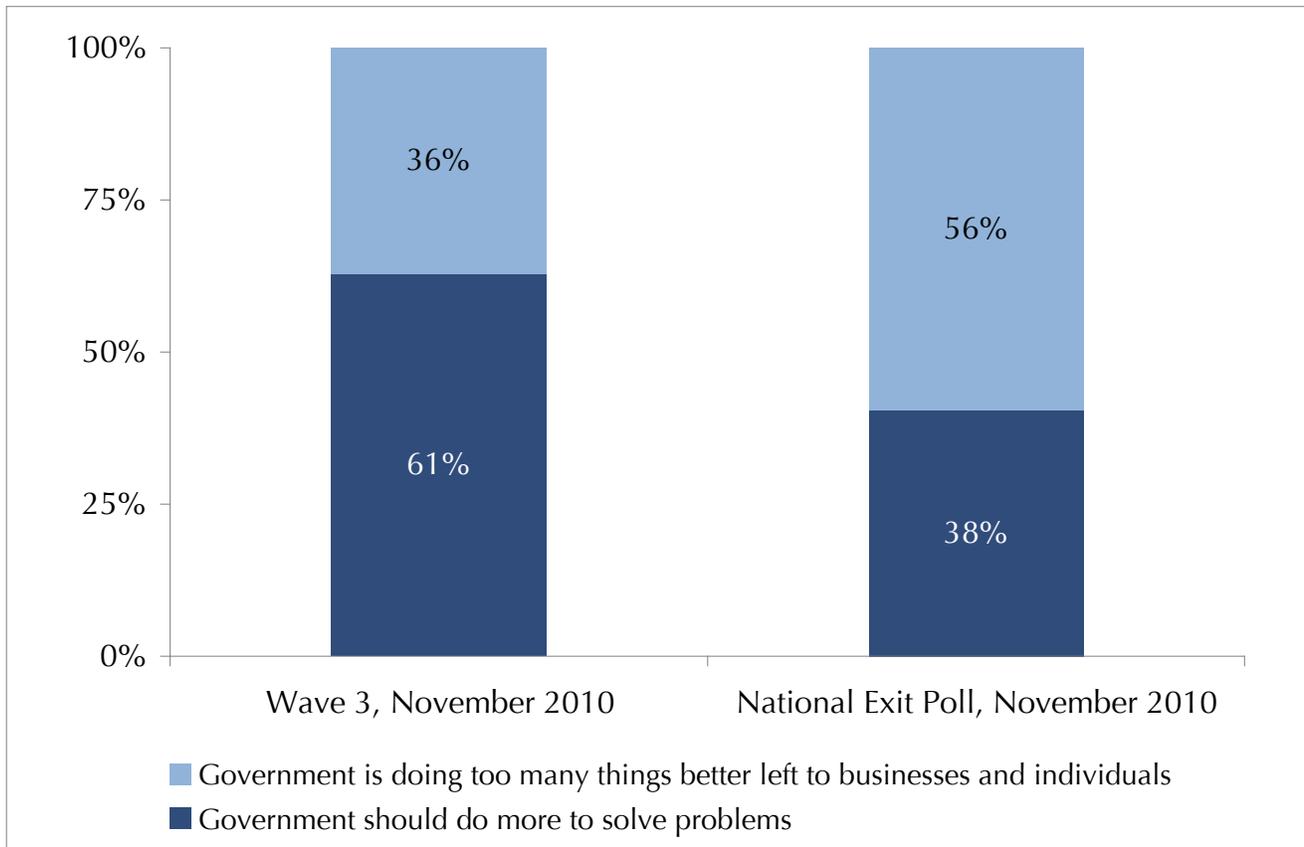
Believe the elderly will have to find part-time work in retirement	68%
Believe the elderly will not be able to retire when they want to	67%
Say they will retire earlier or later than planned because of their unemployment experience	73%
Plan to take social security as soon as they are eligible, or already have	60%
Say their financial situation will stay where it is now, rather than returning to its pre-recession level	72%

Social Security benefits as soon as they are eligible, with roughly half of this group (46%) citing their unemployment experience justifies the decision despite the fact that they will receive lower benefits than they would if they were able to delay for a few years.

### WHAT IS THE GOVERNMENT'S ROLE?

Two-thirds of those completing the survey say they are frustrated with the federal government (63%), while 17% describe themselves as angry. Feeling powerless themselves, a large number (61%) believe the government needs to do more to solve problems. This compares to just 38% of the United States as a whole in a nationwide survey conducted in November 2010. (See Figure 12.) About 8 in 10 (82%) believe government decisions have at least some impact on their daily lives, regardless of their employment status. Three-quarters of the panel (73%) give President Obama low

FIGURE 12. WHICH COMES CLOSER TO YOUR VIEW:



marks of only fair or poor in handling the problem of unemployment, and two-thirds (66%) report the same for how he has managed the national economic situation thus far.

What, then, does the public think policymakers can do to alleviate the financial stress and uncertainty faced by those affected by the Great Recession? Providing additional Unemployment Insurance for unemployed workers is the clear favorite, with 64% reporting that they support this proposal. This is followed by cutting wage taxes (60%), cutting government spending to reduce the deficit (58%), creating jobs through direct government spending (55%), and spending in construction projects

(50%). Cutting business taxes receives the least support from panelists (43%).

Table 5 shows a breakdown of support for policy proposals by the panelists' political party identification. Democrats favor providing more Unemployment Insurance (79%) and creating jobs (73%), while Republicans overwhelmingly support reducing the deficit (83%) and cutting wage taxes (74%). Independents want the government to increase spending in construction projects (70%), but also believe government spending should be cut (67%).

TABLE 5. PARTY IDENTIFICATION SUMMARY

	Democrats (N = 311)	Republicans (N = 190)	Independents (N = 177)
% more hopeful about economic recovery because of the outcome of the midterm elections	27%	64%	24%
% who trust Obama to do a better job handling the economy, compared to Republicans in Congress	55%	6%	28%
% who trust Republicans in Congress to do a better job handling the economy, compared to Obama	3%	59%	22%
% who don't trust Obama nor Republicans in Congress to handle the economy	28%	31%	46%
% frustrated with the government	64%	65%	65%
% angry with the government	11%	26%	20%
% who favor providing more Unemployment Insurance for unemployed workers	79%	53%	48%
% who favor creating jobs through direct government spending	73%	32%	44%
% who favor cutting wage taxes	59%	74%	58%
% who favor cutting business taxes	37%	65%	43%
% who favor spending in construction projects	53%	46%	70%
% who favor cutting government spending to reduce the deficit	57%	83%	67%

## CONCLUSION

The recession has been a cataclysm that will have an enduring effect. It is hard to overstate the dire shape of the unemployed. Over the space of the 15 months we have been tracking our panel's progress, just one-quarter have found full-time jobs. And virtually all of those jobs were for less pay or benefits, with 40% having to change fields or their career path to find employment.

For those who remain unemployed, the cupboard has long been bare. The recession had stripped away any luxuries from them long ago. Now, on top of the half who

report having to give up desirable elements of the quality of life, another 40% now say they are giving up rudiments they had long considered essential. Eighty percent report having given up something formerly fundamental to their lives in one of the areas of food, housing, or health.

The unemployed are living lives of downward economic mobility. Moreover, they manifest an air of resignation to their fates. By a margin of almost two to one, more feel they will **not** return to their former financial position than will. The vast majority do not simply say they have less in savings and income than they did a few years ago, but that they have a **lot** less.

We are witnessing the birth of a new class — the **involuntarily retired**. Many of those over age 50 believe they will not work again at a full-time “real” job commensurate with their education and training. More than one-quarter say they expect to retire earlier than they want, which has long-term consequences for themselves and society. Many will file for social security as soon as they are eligible, despite the fact that they would receive greater benefits if they were able to delay retiring for a few years.

One of the casualties of the Great Recession has been a core American principle since the founding of the nation — that if people work hard and play by the rules, they can get ahead. Now, the majority of the unemployed do not believe that simple hard work will guarantee success. They feel powerless, and voice little confidence in the government’s ability to help them.

## APPENDIX A. TOPLINE SURVEY RESULTS

This topline captures what has happened to Americans who were unemployed and looking for work in August 2009 or had been unemployed in the previous 12 months — our third measurement in a longitudinal study. We took a representative sample in August 2009 (Wave 1) and followed our panel in March 2010 (Wave 2) and November 2010 (Wave 3). This study shows how our panel has fared as the political and economic environment around them has changed over time.

Weighting procedures intend to keep the complexion of the 2009 population parameters used for Wave 1 identical in 2010 so we can make comparisons about changes in attitudes and behaviors since the beginning of the study. As done for Wave 2, Wave 1 weights are brought forward to Wave 3, and current sample numbers are adjusted for non-response.

This survey was fielded November 5 to 28, 2010 through Knowledge Networks. The unweighted sample is composed as follows:

- Total Sample – 764
- Unemployed/Looking – 268
- Unemployed/Not Looking – 123
- Working Part Time/Looking for Full-Time Work – 99
- Working Part Time/Not Looking for Full-Time Work – 68
- Employed Full Time – 206

Base – unemployed in August 2009 or unemployed in past 12 months

Percentage totals may not equal 100% due to rounding

\*= less than 1% reporting

### EXPLANATION OF BASES

**Wave 3 Unemployed** — includes those who are unemployed and looking for work *and* those working part time and looking for full-time work

**Wave 3 Long-Term Unemployed** — includes those who have been unemployed and looking for full-time work since Wave 1 was conducted in August 2009

**Wave 3 Reemployed** – includes those who are employed full time *and* those who are working part time and not looking for full-time work (all who were unemployed at some point during the Great Recession, and are now currently employed/not looking for work)

**Wave 3 Employed Full Time** — includes only those employed full time

**Wave 3** — includes all Wave 3 respondents who were asked the question

**Wave 2** — includes all Wave 2 respondents who were asked the question

**Wave 1** — includes all Wave 1 respondents who were asked the question

**CQ1 [NE1]. How would you rate the job Barack Obama is doing:**

	Excellent	Good	Only Fair	Poor	Refused
Handling his overall job as President	12%	37%	33%	19%	*
Handling the nation's economy	7%	26%	38%	28%	1%
Handling the problem of unemployment	5%	19%	38%	35%	2%

**W337. Did you vote in the election on November 2?**

Yes	58%
No	42%
Refused	*

**[IF W337 = YES]**

**W337A. Who did you vote for?**

Democratic candidate for the House of Representatives	58%
Republican candidate for the House of Representatives	30%
Other candidate	4%
Did not vote in that race	5%
Refused	3%

**[IF W337 = NO]**

**W337B. Why didn't you vote? (Check all that apply) – Those who reported "yes"**

Not eligible (not registered)	32%
I'm not interested in politics	22%
It's hard to get information about who to vote for	16%
My vote wouldn't make any difference in what happens in my life	19%
I really dislike politics and government	23%
Refused	3%

**W338. Do you know which party now has a majority in the House of Representatives?**

Democrats	15%
Republicans	63%
Don't know	22%

**W339. Does the outcome of the election make you:**

	Wave 3	Wave 3 Unemployed	Wave 3 Reemployed
More hopeful about an economic recovery	30%	28%	36%
Less hopeful about an economic recovery	28%	32%	25%
Makes no difference	41%	41%	36%
Refused	1%	*	2%

**W340. Who do you trust to do a better job handling the economy?**

	Wave 3	Wave 3 Unemployed	Wave 3 Reemployed
President Obama	32%	37%	28%
The Republicans in Congress	17%	16%	19%
Neither	41%	38%	41%
Both	9%	9%	10%
Refused	1%	*	3%

**CQ2 [NE2]. When people are laid off from work, who should be mainly responsible for helping them?**

	Wave 3
Government	45%
Employers	29%
Workers themselves	26%
Refused	*

**W33. Several possible steps to improve the economy are being considered by policy-makers in Washington. Please mark whether you favor or oppose each of the following:**

	Favor	Oppose	No Opinion	Refused
Providing more Unemployment Insurance for unemployed workers	64%	12%	22%	1%
Creating jobs through direct government spending	55%	21%	24%	1%
Cutting wage taxes	60%	16%	23%	1%
Cutting business taxes	43%	30%	26%	1%
Spending in construction projects, such as building roads and highways	50%	16%	34%	1%
Cutting government spending to reduce the deficit	58%	18%	23%	1%

**NE5. When do you believe the economy will begin to recover?**

	Wave 3	Wave 3 Unemployed	Wave 3 Reemployed
In the next 6 months	2%	2%	3%
6 months to 1 year	7%	6%	8%
1 year to 2 years	33%	35%	34%
3 to 5 years	28%	28%	26%
More than 5 years	13%	11%	12%
The economy will not recover	15%	17%	15%
Refused	2%	1%	3%

**CQ6 [NE4]. Is the U.S. economy experiencing:**

	Wave 3	Wave 2	Wave 1
A temporary downturn	33%	37%	48%
Fundamental and lasting changes	66%	63%	52%
Refused	2%	2%	*

**[TXT, IF CQ6 = FUNDAMENTAL AND LASTING CHANGES]**

**W35A. What do you think will be the most significant long-lasting change of the recession?**

See Appendix B for verbatim responses.

**W36. Please indicate what you think will happen in each of the following areas:**

	It will Soon Return to the Way it was Before	It will Return to the Way it was Before, but Not for Many Years	It will Not Return to the Way it was Before	Refused
A lower unemployment rate	11%	53%	34%	2%
Workers feeling secure in their jobs	12%	37%	49%	2%
The availability of good jobs at good pay for those who want to work	12%	45%	42%	2%
The ability of young people to afford college	16%	31%	51%	2%
The elderly not having to find part-time work after retiring	11%	26%	61%	2%
The elderly being able to retire when they want to	9%	23%	65%	3%
Workers not having to take jobs below their skill level	9%	40%	49%	2%

**[PROMPT/TERMINATE]**

**CQ14 [UH1]. Which of the following best describes your current job situation?**

Unemployed and looking for work now	43%
Unemployed but not looking for work now	13%
Working part time, not looking for full-time work	8%
Working part time, looking for full-time work	11%
Employed full time	26%

**[IF CQ14 = UNEMPLOYED/NOT LOOKING]**

**CQ14A [UH2]. Are you not looking for a job because:**

	Wave 3	Wave 2
Because you do not want a job now	6%	8%
Because you got tired of looking or are discouraged	7%	5%
Refused	1%	*

**[IF CQ14 = UNEMPLOYED/LOOKING, WORKING PART TIME, LOOKING FOR FULL-TIME WORK]**

**CU5 [JHU1]. How long have you been actively seeking employment?**

	Wave 3	Wave 2	Wave 1
2 months or less	12%	12%	9%
3 to 4 months	4%	6%	15%
5 to 6 months	7%	4%	23%
7 months to 1 year	12%	22%	24%
1 year to 2 years	29%	32%	15%
More than 2 years	35%	16%	10%
Not sure	2%	10%	4%
Refused	*	*	*

**[IF CQ14 = UNEMPLOYED/LOOKING, WORKING PART-TIME, LOOKING FOR FULL-TIME WORK]**

**CU6 [JHU2]. At the moment, what is your current outlook on finding a new job in the near future?**

	Wave 3	Wave 3 Long-Term Unemployed <sup>1</sup>
Very optimistic	9%	5%
Somewhat optimistic	33%	28%
Somewhat pessimistic	34%	37%
Very pessimistic	24%	30%
Refused	*	*

1. We define the long-term unemployed as those who have been unemployed and looking for work in Wave 1 (August 2009), Wave 2 (March 2010), and Wave 3 (November 2010).

**[IF CQ14 = UNEMPLOYED/LOOKING, WORKING PART TIME, LOOKING FOR FULL-TIME WORK]**

**CU7 [JHU3]. How long do you think it will be until you start a new job?**

	Wave 3	Wave 3 Long-Term Unemployed
2 months or less	15%	12%
3 to 4 months	6%	6%
5 to 6 months	14%	10%
7 months to 1 year	15%	16%
1 year to 2 years	7%	8%
More than 2 years	1%	1%
Never	3%	5%
Not sure	36%	40%
Refused	1%	2%

**[IF CQ14 = UNEMPLOYED/LOOKING, WORKING PART TIME, LOOKING FOR FULL-TIME WORK]**

**CU9. How much do you think you will be paid when you find a new job?**

	Wave 3	Wave 3 Long-Term Unemployed
More than your last job	9%	3%
The same as your last job	16%	14%
Less than your last job	47%	60%
Don't know	27%	23%
Refused	*	*

**[IF CQ14 = UNEMPLOYED/LOOKING, WORKING PART TIME, LOOKING FOR FULL-TIME WORK]**

**W312. Have you been on a job interview since becoming unemployed?**

Yes	64%
No	33%
Refused	3%

[NUM, IF W312 = YES, RANGE 00-99]

W312A. How many job interviews have you been on? Median = 4.00

[IF CQ14 = WORKING PART TIME, LOOKING, OR NOT LOOKING]

W313A. Do you have more than one part-time job?

Yes	12%
No	88%

[IF CQ14 = EMPLOYED FULL TIME, WORKING PART TIME/NOT LOOKING FOR FULL-TIME WORK]

CE1. Thinking about your current job are you:

	Wave 3 Reemployed	National Sample <sup>2</sup>
Very satisfied	21%	25%
Somewhat satisfied	35%	40%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	19%	14%
Somewhat dissatisfied	17%	12%
Very dissatisfied	7%	7%
Don't know	2%	2%

[IF CQ14 = EMPLOYED FULL TIME, WORKING PART TIME/NOT LOOKING FOR FULL-TIME WORK]

CE3 [JHE1]. How long were you actively seeking employment before you found a job?

	Wave 3 Reemployed	Wave 2 Reemployed
2 months or less	18%	22%
3 to 4 months	15%	12%
5 to 6 months	10%	16%
7 months to 1 year	19%	21%
1 year to 2 years	26%	20%
More than 2 years	4%	3%
Not sure	9%	6%
Refused	*	-

2. Heldrich Center *Work Trends* 22 fielded online July 19 to August 6, 2010 with national probability sample of 818 U.S. residents age 18 or older.

**[IF CQ14 = EMPLOYED FULL TIME, WORKING PART TIME/NOT LOOKING FOR FULL-TIME WORK]**

**CE6. How concerned are you with the job security of your new position?**

	Wave 3 Reemployed
Very concerned	22%
Somewhat concerned	29%
Not very concerned	33%
Not at all concerned	14%
Refused	4%

**[IF CQ14 = EMPLOYED FULL TIME, WORKING PART TIME/NOT LOOKING FOR FULL-TIME WORK]**

**CE8. Is this job:**

	Wave 3 Reemployed
Something you really want to do and think it is a new long-term job	46%
Something to get you by while you look for something better	54%
Refused	*

**[IF CQ14 = EMPLOYED FULL TIME, WORKING PART TIME/NOT LOOKING FOR FULL-TIME WORK]**

**CE9. Were you forced to take a cut in pay in order to find new full-time employment?**

	Wave 3 Reemployed	Wave 3 Employed Full Time
Yes	48%	53%
No	50%	45%
Refused	2%	2%

[IF CE9 = YES]

**CE9A. How much lower is your income at your new position as opposed to your last full-time job? [of those who took a paycut]**

	Wave 3 Reemployed	Wave 3 Employed Full Time
0% - 5% lower	4%	3%
6% - 10% lower	22%	23%
11% - 20% lower	15%	17%
21% - 30% lower	24%	27%
31% - 50% lower	24%	22%
More than 50% lower	9%	7%
Refused	1%	1%

[IF CQ14 = EMPLOYED FULL TIME, WORKING PART TIME/NOT LOOKING FOR FULL-TIME WORK]

**CE10. Following are a list of ways people have found new jobs. Please select any of the following you did in order to find employment:**

	Yes	No	Refused
Did you move to another city or town for a new job?	13%	85%	2%
Did your new job come from a temporary part-time job?	25%	73%	2%
Did you take a reduction in fringe benefits packages in order to find a new job?	29%	69%	2%
Did you take a class or training course for skills to get a new job?	20%	74%	5%
Is your new job in a new field or career?	41%	57%	2%

	Wave 3 Reemployed	Wave 2
Moved to another city or town for a new job	13%	5%
New job came from temporary part-time job	25%	18%
Took reduction in fringe benefits packages	29%	27%
New job in a new field or career	41%	18%

**[IF CQ14 = EMPLOYED FULL TIME, WORKING PART TIME/NOT LOOKING FOR FULL-TIME WORK]**

**CE15. While unemployed did you receive unemployment benefits from the government?**

	Wave 3
Yes	54%
No	44%
Refused	2%

**[IF CE15=1]**

**CE15A. Did your unemployment benefits run out before you found a new job? [based on those who received unemployment benefits]**

	Wave 3
Yes	35%
No	65%

**CQ9. How would you rate your own personal financial situation?**

	Wave 3	Wave 3 Unemployed	Wave 3 Reemployed
Excellent shape	2%	*	6%
Good shape	15%	7%	25%
Only fair shape	35%	32%	40%
Poor shape	46%	60%	27%
Refused	1%	1%	2%

**W341. Compared to two years ago, is your family's financial situation:**

	Wave 3	Wave 3 Unemployed	Wave 3 Reemployed	Wave 3 Long-Term Unemployed	Exit Poll <sup>3</sup>
Better	11%	6%	19%	2%	15%
Worse	57%	61%	52%	68%	41%
About the same	30%	32%	26%	28%	43%
Refused	2%	2%	3%	2%	-

3. National Exit Poll – n = 12,832, November 2, 2010, in-person; also includes national sample of 1,601 absentee/early voters via telephone between October 22nd and October 31st. Poll conducted by Edison Research.

**NE9. Over the next year, do you think your family's finances will:**

Get a lot better	9%
Get a little better	29%
Stay the same	30%
Get a little worse	20%
Get a lot worse	11%
Refused	1%

**CQ8 [NE8]. How has the economic situation affected you and your family?**

	Wave 3	Wave 3 Unemployed	Wave 3 Reemployed	Wave 3 Long-Term Unemployed
Major impact	61%	67%	52%	75%
Minor impact	33%	29%	42%	22%
No impact at all	4%	3%	4%	*
Refused	2%	2%	2%	3%

**[IF AGE >= 50]****W319. Did your unemployment experience cause you to think about retiring later or earlier than you had originally planned?**

Yes, earlier	27%
Yes, later	46%
No	28%
Refused	*

**[IF AGE >= 50]****W320. Do you plan to take Social Security as soon as you are eligible?**

Yes	41%
No	40%
Already have	19%

**[IF W320 = YES OR ALREADY HAVE]**

**W320A. Is that because you are unemployed? [of those who plan to take social security as soon as they are eligible]**

Yes	46%
No	52%
Refused	2%

**W321. Comparing how much you make and what you have in savings now to when the recession started a couple years ago, do you now have:**

	Wave 3	Wave 3 Unemployed	Wave 3 Reemployed	Wave 3 Long-Term Unemployed
A lot more	4%	2%	9%	*
A little more	5%	4%	7%	1%
The same	16%	14%	17%	10%
A little less	15%	13%	17%	10%
A lot less	58%	65%	48%	76%
Refused	2%	2%	2%	2%

**[IF W321 = A LITTLE LESS OR A LOT LESS]**

**W321A. As a percentage, how much less do you have this year? [of those who say they have a little less or a lot less]**

1% - 10%	7%
11% - 25%	11%
26% - 50%	21%
More than 51%	35%
Not sure	24%
Refused	2%

**W322. Thinking about your finances over the next few years, which do you think is more likely:**

You will get back to where you were before the recession began	35%
You will stay at the level you are now	61%
Refused	3%

**W323. Which statement best describes what you have given up:**

	Wave 3	Wave 3 Unemployed	Wave 3 Reemployed
You have really not had to give anything up	8%	2%	16%
You haven't had to give up things that are essential, but you had to give up some things that are desirable	50%	45%	50%
You have had to give up some things that are essential	40%	50%	32%
Refused	3%	3%	2%

**W324. Please check off any of the areas where you have reduced spending so much that it has made a difference in your family's day-to-day life (THOSE WHO CHECKED 'YES'):<sup>4</sup>**

	Wave 3	Wave 3 Unemployed	Wave 3 Reemployed
Food	51%	54%	53%
Clothing	73%	77%	67%
Entertainment	80%	84%	72%
Transportation	45%	56%	32%
Housing/home upkeep	42%	52%	32%
Health care	45%	53%	39%
Travel/vacations	74%	76%	69%

**W325. Overall, has the recession caused:**

	Wave 3	Wave 3 Unemployed	Wave 3 Reemployed
A major change in your lifestyle	52%	60%	46%
A minor change in your lifestyle	38%	31%	44%
No change in your lifestyle	7%	5%	9%
Refused	3%	4%	2%

4. Examining the combined responses of the 51% who had reduced spending on food, the 42% who reduced spending on housing, and the 45% who had reduced spending on health, 80% of all respondents said they had done at least one of these.

**W326. [CU9A-CU17/PE3] (IF CQ14 = 1,2) Which of the following have you done since becoming unemployed? (IF CQ14 = 3,4,5) Which of the following have you done because of unemployment? (THOSE WHO CHECKED 'YES')**

	Wave 3	Wave 3 Unemployed	Wave 3 Reemployed
Sold some of your possessions to make ends meet	36%	45%	26%
Moved in with family or friends to save money	18%	15%	18%
Had family or friends move in with you to save money	6%	7%	6%
Borrowed money from family or friends, other than adult children	41%	46%	41%
Borrowed money from adult children	5%	3%	8%
Missed a mortgage or rent payment	18%	20%	21%
Taken a job you did not like	25%	24%	32%
Taken a job below your education or experience levels	28%	27%	36%
Borrowed money against your house or from a bank	6%	8%	5%
Missed a credit card payment	19%	22%	16%
Forced to move to a different house or apartment	11%	10%	14%
Increased credit card debt	29%	29%	31%

**W327. How much of an impact do you think decisions made by the government have on your daily life:**

	Wave 3	Post/Kaiser/ Harvard <sup>5</sup>
A lot	41%	50%
Some	41%	32%
Just a little	12%	12%
No real impact	4%	5%
Refused	1%	1% (no opinion)

5. Washington Post/Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard University – n = 2,054, September 22 – October 3, 2010, national random sample of adults age 18+, landline/cell phone.

**W27A. Which comes closer to your view:**

	Wave 3	Exit Poll <sup>6</sup>
Government should do more to solve problems	61%	38%
Government is doing too many things better left to businesses and individuals	36%	56%
Refused	3%	-

**W328. Some people say they are basically content with the federal government, others say they are frustrated, and others say they are angry. Which of these best describes how you feel?**

	Wave 3	Pew Research Center <sup>7</sup>
Basically content	17%	21%
Frustrated	63%	52%
Angry	17%	23%
Refused	3%	4% (DK/Ref)

**W330. Please indicate which of the following statements comes closer to your own views, even if neither is exactly right:**

	Wave 3	Post/Kaiser/Harvard <sup>8</sup>
Most people who want to get ahead can make it if they're willing to work hard	40%	66%
Hard work and determination are no guarantee of success for most people	57%	32%
Refused	2%	1% (no opinion)

6. National Exit Poll – n = 12,832, November 2, 2010, in-person; also includes national sample of 1,601 absentee/early voters via telephone between October 22nd and October 31st.

7. Pew Research Center for the People & the Press – n = 2,351, August 25 – September 6, 2010, national random sample of adults 18+, landline/cell phone

8. Washington Post/Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard University – n = 2,054, September 22 – October 3, 2010, national random sample of adults age 18+, landline/cell phone; 1% = neither (vol).

**W333. Please check off any of the impacts the recession has had on you and your family (THOSE WHO CHECK 'YES'):**

Strengthened the bonds of family and friends	21%
Changed roles in the family of who does what	25%
Caused stress among family relationships	54%
Not made any real difference in this area	26%

**CQ16 [AN3]. Do you currently have health care benefits?**

No	51%
Yes, from current employer	11%
Yes, from previous employer (COBRA, other)	2%
Yes, from other family member	14%
Yes, from Medicare or Medicaid	12%
Yes, other	8%
Refused	2%

**W335. Other than yourself, are there any adults living in your household that are 18 years or older?**

Yes	74%
No	25%
Refused	1%

**W335A. Do any of the other adult(s) living with you contribute a significant amount of money to the household's finances to help make ends meet?**

Yes	82%
No	18%

**W336. In politics today, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent?**

Republican	15%
Democrat	40%
Independent	18%
Other	3%
No preference	25%
Refused	1%

**[IF W336 = OTHER OR NO PREFERENCE]****W336A. As of today, do you lean more to the Democratic Party or Republican Party?**

Democratic Party	15%
Republican Party	9%
Neither	75%
Refused	1%

## APPENDIX B. VOICES OF THE UNEMPLOYED

Individuals who participated in the November 2010 survey who said the economy is undergoing “fundamental and lasting changes,” were asked the following question, “**What do you think will be the most significant long-lasting change of the recession?**” The following were some of the answers that were received.

### CHANGING ATTITUDES ABOUT SPENDING, SAVING, AND WEALTH

A more realistic national sense of the limits of growth.

A totally different way of approaching economic affairs.

America’s wasteful mindset.

Change to USA customer attitudes on debt, housing, and consumerism in general.

Confidence of [Americans].

I feel that we as Americans were getting [used] to way overspending. I hope that the recession puts our economy back into perspective and we budget. Hopefully people will consider their future and not only the present.

I hope it will change our wasteful habits as consumers and move us toward together for a common good.

...I would like to think that we have an opportunity to rethink our values and the way we have done business in the past, but unfortunately greed and meanspiritedness seems to be back on track; at least it was in this last election.

Less consumer spending.

More people are aware of how to manage their income.

More people will **finally** think about what they are spending when they use a credit card or take a loan. Most people were living in a fantasy world, buying whatever they wanted and ignoring everything except the minimum payment each month. Insane!!!

No more living beyond one’s means by pulling “equity” out of homes without proving you can pay the money back. The ability to live on never ending credit is gone and people do not want to go back to that way of life.

People have changed their spending habits and won’t change back to old habits. People will be using credit less.

People saving toward a goal instead of just using credit cards.

People will become more practical, less dependent on credit.

People will learn to save money and budget their spending wisely.

People will reduce spending to most necessary items.

People will reduce their debt loads as credit is tightened.

People will spend less and save more. The increase in personal savings rate and the cutback of unneeded spending by families.

Wishful thinking perhaps, but one could hope that the American public would be somewhat less inclined to require instant gratification!

A more realistic reality of our economy — hopefully no more artificially inflated [economics].

Attitude of Americans as to the living/spending style and moving towards savings for [the] future with enhanced family values.

Hopefully people won't spend money as frivolously as they had been. Unfortunately, I don't think major CEO's will be [changing] their attitudes or lust for more money at the expense of their employees.

I think people will think more before they buy. Hopefully we will start buying more American made products.

I think, much like the Big Depression, people will definitely learn to be more cautious about money. I actually hope that it encourages people to become less materialistic and more focused on building good.

More self-awareness for savings.

The individual's savings rate will increase due to fear of unemployment and people will begin to live more within their means.

One hopes that Americans as a whole will save more money and spend less on unnecessary items. In other words perhaps slowly but surely the USA economy will be less consumer driven. The most significant

change will be [there] will be a much smaller middle class and a bigger division between the rich and the poor.

## SHIFTING SOCIAL CLASS DISTINCTIONS/WIDENING RICH-POOR GAP/ DISAPPEARANCE OF THE MIDDLE-CLASS

A majority of middle class individuals will migrate towards the lower class incomes. Thus the separation between the haves and have-nots will increase and begin to resemble the 40's and 50's.

A wider gap between the upper class and the lower class if not eliminating the middle class altogether.

Greater disparity of income in American households, shrinking of the middle class and the growth of the lower class.

I think that the life that American workers can expect is going to take a downward turn. I also think [that] this is the exact wrong thing as the middle class has always been the strongpoint of this country.

One hopes that Americans as a whole will save more money and spend less on unnecessary items. In other words perhaps slowly but surely the USA economy will be less consumer driven. The most significant change will be [there] will be a much smaller middle class and a bigger division between the rich and the poor.

Lack of upward mobility.

Lower class of living.

## The Shattered American Dream

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Middle class are moving into the poverty level, the super rich will remain.

More poor people.

No more middle class.

Polarization of social classes based on income.

...the gap between the classes will widen. The middle class will virtually disappear.

The distribution of wealth, the increasingly exponential gaps between classes, the increasing frugality of what was the middle class.

The lower and middle class will keep getting farther behind the upper class.

The poor people will become poorer.

The salaries that people use to make aren't "out there" anymore. Once people realize this, they relook at their finances and accept the fact that we lived "high on the hog" and now have to tighten our belts.

Widening gap between rich and poor and decline of the middle class.

Working class people are convinced that government works for business interests which results in the gap between rich and poor greatly increasing. People don't need [handouts] but laws and the interpretation of laws that level the playing field so everyone can benefit from a growing economy.

Lower paying jobs of the middle class making it very hard to spend money for things that need to change this around like cars, houses, and appliances.

More people below the poverty level and more and more people without health insurance.

Significant loss to the middle class due to unemployment resulting in massive home foreclosures, increased government aid, and family hardship.

## CHANGES TO U.S. GOVERNMENT/POLITICAL VALUES

America is on the verge of becoming a third world country and has lost its power and prestige in the world. The government has lost sight of the founding principles of the country and welfare and political correctness have sapped individualism and ambition from the people which is what made us great. As we become more socialistic, the rest of the world is waking up to the problems it creates and are becoming more and more capitalist. Until Obama recognizes that we are in an ideological war with Islamic Jihadists we are and continue to be at risk.

Competence in Washington, D.C.

High deficit.

Higher taxes, to pay for all the money given away and wasted by the current president. Less and less products and services for the dollar, as is happening now. More and more theft by those who have nothing.

Hopefully more government oversight of financial institutions.

Loss of trust in the system.

Oversight and regulation of financial institutions and their policies that led to the economic collapse.

People finally holding Congress responsible for the Big Business sellout. Not in this election but down the road.

People overall will keep a closer eye on the greed machine called Wall Street and call for the government to make that sector toe the line.

Reduction of debt and control of runaway governmental spending and regulation.

Reduction of spending by both government and individuals.

We are already experiencing a dramatic change in the lifestyle we have become accustomed to. Without radical changes to how the federal government and state governments exercise control over the economy, we may never return to an increase in our standard of living. All governments should drastically cut back their control over the private sector; government spending needs to be cut; taxes need to be cut; private sectors of our nation need to be encouraged to contribute to the betterment of those around us, rather than have our governments attempt to make things better. Governments have a terrible habit of making things worse.

Government is getting involved in too many sectors of the economy. The car industry and banking are prime examples. I feel the money being spent in these areas is only offsetting the rich man's losses and is having little effect on the welfare of the middle class and lower middle class.

Our government and big business put us where we are right now and because of their greed and mismanagement we are in this recession and good Americans have lost money, jobs and their life savings and it

is unforgivable and the government and big business should be held accountable and made to make restitution to the American people.

## CHANGING BUSINESS CLIMATE/CHANGING JOBS/PERSISTENT HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT

Business not expanding, hiring, etc., because of the uncertainty of taxes, health care costs and overspending in Washington.

Business that cannot recover.

Businesses sending work to other [countries].

Companies cutting back, hiring less.

Continued loss of jobs.

Employers are taking advantage of the economy to hire skilled workers at lower wages and not giving raises.

High unemployment nationwide.

Higher unemployment will become normal because of excessive outsourcing of jobs to foreign countries for cheaper wages and higher profits. The middle class will be smaller or squeezed out of existence. The gap between "have" and "have nots" will continue to widen. The standard of living will continue to decline and bottom out. Only a fortunate few will survive to lead comfortable lives while the others will be left behind. Our elected representatives will continue to do the bidding for the corporations that buy and sell their votes to increase their profits as greed continues to

## The Shattered American Dream

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go unchecked. The average American will continue to vote against their own interests because they will be duped or mesmerized by false prophets with phony messages of hope and change, dividing and conquering the populace as the elites continue to pillage until [there] is nothing left.

Jobs and careers will not come back.

Lack of unemployment.

Lack of jobs.

Lasting impacts on certain sectors of the economy (e.g., construction).

Less jobs, especially in manufacturing.

Less total employment.

Loss of jobs...a lot of them are not ever coming back.

Lower wages.

Manufacturing jobs are leaving this country in droves. We are going to become a third world country due to [unbridled] greed.

The U.S. will become a third world country.

Many industries and the workers they employed will no long be viable, and won't return to the market/economy without drastic changes in their business focus, and the workers must have re-training or take advantage of new job possibilities.

More corporate mergers causing less competition, worse service, and worse workplace environments.

More unemployment, lower paying jobs, no retirement income.

People out of work longer [than] five years and over fifty.

Permanent higher unemployment rate.

Security of jobs.

Stinginess in investments from the private sector, especially venture capital.

The whole work force will reconfigure... there will be full economic recovery, however jobs will be different.

There has been a permanent loss of jobs.

Unemployment will be long lasting because of so many factors and the [government] has contributed to the problem for years.

...the death of the idea that we should specialize in one thing. All workers are now becoming freelancers to a certain extent: they have to constantly study and learn, they have to market themselves, and they may even have to move to where positions are [better] in [states] and overseas; and we will have to do it numerous times as well. It will be a rare person who stays at one job all his/her life.

Very few companies will keep people for the length of their careers. It is common now to have to move from job to job every few years as opposed to working twenty to thirty years for one company.

Wages: they will be reduced for the work that is performed...

A lot of us don't have jobs and it causes us to struggle in everyday life.

A permanently increased level of unemployment.

I don't think there will ever be enough jobs again.

I think there will be a large segment of the population who will remain unemployed and not have a skill set to secure employment.

I think there will be a permanent loss of jobs that will result in long-term higher unemployment.

I think there will be less higher paying jobs. I think that more families will have one or more adults working more than one job.

Many well-paid white collar jobs will never return, either due to technological changes or outsourcing to other countries. The economy is beginning to grow again at the top and the bottom, but not for semi-skilled labor.

The lack of low skill jobs as well as the devaluing of a Bachelor's degree.

The whole work force will reconfigure... there will be full economic recovery; however jobs will be different.

## **CHANGES TO THE HOUSING MARKET**

Housing construction and resale will not be as it was once.

Housing crisis — big banks win the game — we all lose.

Housing depression.

Housing issues.

Housing market and job loss.

Housing market crash.

Housing prices.

Lack of home ownership.

Reasonable expectation when it comes to housing prices and how much they rise. Also, more due diligence when it comes to mortgage loans. More background checks and income verification. No more "interest only" loans. The housing market, I think, will be forever changed.

The [effect] it has had on the housing sector, especially for homeowners applying for loans.

[Cost] of living will remain high. Housing market will be poor for a long time.

Drop in property values and long-term investment value.

Home loss will be long lasting.

## **CHANGES IN AMERICAN STANDARD OF LIVING/ QUALITY OF LIFE/WE'LL NEVER RECOVER**

People not being able to recover anything they lost — such as if you lost your home it's gone for good and there is no chance to ever own another home.

People who lost their homes due to foreclosure will take years to get back on their feet.

People will be sicker because they cannot afford health care. Many people will lose their homes and all they have worked for and the poverty level will increase.

## The Shattered American Dream

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Quality of life for many will never be like it was.

The American Dream of working hard and being able to retire comfortably will not become a reality for many anymore. I think fear about the future will make the quality of our lives change, especially for our young people. They will never forget the economic downturn and so they will be less inclined to take risks in employment and in other areas of their lives. Their confidence in our country and in themselves has been forever broken.

The American life-style and security.

The unemployed will not recover from their earnings, savings, and retirement fund losses.

A lot of older people will never find good jobs again and will have a hard time when they retire.

Many people will never make the same income they made prior to the recession. They will also not have the same benefits such as retirement plans and medical insurance.

Quality of life for many will never be like what it was.

The inability of this country to return to the times when people felt they could save for a home or even a vehicle. You can't save when you're not earning and with unemployment so high the burden falls to those that are working and they are earning less and being taxed more.

Most people age 55 and older will lose all savings, health insurance when applicable and have a hard time finding affordable housing.

Reduced purchasing power for the unemployed, discouraged job seekers, and those earning less than \$100,000.

Reduction of senior benefits and government assistance programs.

Retirement accounts depleted. Stock market confidence will remain low.

## INTERNATIONAL CHANGES

China will surpass the U.S.

Loss of U.S. economic power worldwide.

Off-shoring will move to more and different countries, not just India and China.

Outsourcing.

The devaluation of the dollar and the loss of the global leadership crown by the U.S.

## OTHER

...people are looking out for each other more and communities are strengthening.

Fewer well-educated youth.

Requirements for obtaining credit I believe will be changed forever.

Since I lost my job almost 2 years ago and am 66, my retirement has been seriously changed. I think the recession has undermined security and trust in government and business.

The destruction of classic manufacturing and the attitude that nothing can go really wrong.

Anger and crime. I see the citizens chasing out the illegal aliens and actually doing the jobs they're doing now.

Family values will increase again.

Highlights even more much needed changes in our education system. Greed will always win and the lack of accountability for those who started this mess just proves it.

I believe the children and teens that grew up in this day and age will be ill-prepared to deal with the economic problems the nation will face in the years to come.

Individual U.S. citizens will need to recognize their own responsibility to take part in their own well-being, not just health but economics, life-styles, job opportunities, family life, etc. We cannot and should not expect or desire our elected officials to do these things for us. They promise change and will take credit for it when we decide to change ourselves.



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