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### **Few Americans Think Tax Rate Cuts Reduced Their April 15 Bill, Annenberg Data Show**

Nine percent of Americans think they paid less in federal taxes this month because of President Bush's tax cuts. But only a handful of them, one percent of the public, is a persuadable voter who is not yet firmly committed to either Bush or Senator John F. Kerry of Massachusetts in the presidential election, the University of Pennsylvania's National Annenberg Election Survey shows.

Every American who paid federal income taxes saw his or her rates reduced in 2003. But some made more money than in 2002 and paid more in taxes anyway. Moreover, some who actually paid less may have forgotten an advance check those with children received in 2003.

Adam Clymer, political director of the survey, said "Many people have only a vague idea of how much they paid in taxes. But perceptions often matter more than reality. So when only one American in eleven thinks his or her taxes were reduced by the tax laws passed last year, and hardly any of them are swing voters, those impressions strongly imply that the Bush tax cuts are not helping his candidacy very much."

The results came from polling of 1,300 adults beginning April 8 and concluding on April 26. The margin of sampling error for the entire sample was plus or minus three percentage points, but for the one percent who were swing voters who believe tax cuts had reduced their bill it was about one half of one percentage point.

Twenty-five percent of the public said they paid more in taxes this year than last. In that group, 56 percent said it was because they made a higher income, while the rest said there were other reasons.

Twenty-one percent said they paid less this year. In that group 42 percent said it was because of federal tax cuts, 26 percent said it was because they made less money, and the rest cited other reasons.

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In the group who said they paid less and it was because of tax cuts, 49 percent were Republicans, 14 percent Democrats and 26 percent independents. Sixty-four called themselves conservatives, 24 percent were moderates and 10 percent were liberals.

That National Annenberg Election Survey, the largest academic election poll, is a project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania ([www.AnnenbergPublicPolicyCenter.org](http://www.AnnenbergPublicPolicyCenter.org)). It has been tracking the presidential campaign since October 7, and interviewing will continue until after Election Day. Dr. Kathleen Hall Jamieson is the director of the survey. Ken Winneg is the managing director of the survey. Adam Clymer is the political director of the survey.

Another major election project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center is FactCheck.org, a project that tries to hold politicians accountable by exposing false or misleading campaign statements. It is available online at [www.FactCheck.Org](http://www.FactCheck.Org).

## Questions

A. On April 15th all federal taxes on income you earned in 2003 were due. Did you personally pay more, less, or about the same amount in federal income taxes compared to the year before?

Period	Percent
More	25
Less	21
Same	46
Don't know	7
Refused	1

B. (IF MORE:) Is that because you made more income in 2003 or some other reason?

Period	Percent
More income	57
Other	41
Don't know	2

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C. (IF LESS:) Is that because you made less income in 2003, because of the federal tax cuts, or because of some other reason?

Period	Percent
Less income	26
Tax cuts	42
Other	31
Don't know	2

## Survey Methodology

The National Annenberg Election Survey (NAES) is a survey conducted each presidential election by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania. The 2004 National Annenberg Election Survey is based on telephone interviews which began October 7, 2003 and will continue past Election Day.

The sample of telephone exchanges called was randomly selected by a computer from a complete list of thousands of active residential exchanges across the country. Within each exchange, random digits were added to form a complete telephone number, thus permitting access to both listed and unlisted numbers. Within each household, one adult was designated by a random procedure to be the respondent for the survey. The interviewing is conducted by Schulman, Ronca, Bucuvalas, Inc.

The results have been weighted to take account of household size and number of telephone lines into the residence and to adjust for variation in the sample relating to geographic region, sex, race, age and education.

This report deals with interviewing of 1,300 adults conducted from April 8 through April 15 and from April 23 through April 26. In theory, in 19 cases out of 20 the results for these interviews will differ by no more than three percentage points, up or down, from what would have been obtained by interviewing all American adults. For smaller subgroups, the margin of sampling error would be higher.

In addition to sampling error, the practical difficulties of conducting any survey of public opinion may introduce other sources of error into the poll. Variations in the wording and order of questions, for example, may lead to somewhat different results.

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