



Date: January 16, 2006

To: Michael Bender
mercurypolicy@aol.com

From: Rebecca Wittman
rebecca@zogby.com
315-624-0200

RE: Results from nationwide poll, and interactive poll in California and New England

Survey Methodology Zogby America 1/9/06 through 1/12/06

This is a telephone survey of adults conducted by Zogby International. The target sample is 1,216 interviews with approximately 72 questions asked. Samples are randomly drawn from telephone cd's of national listed sample. Zogby International surveys employ sampling strategies in which selection probabilities are proportional to population size within area codes and exchanges. As many as six calls are made to reach a sampled phone number. Cooperation rates are calculated using one of AAPOR's approved methodologies¹ and are comparable to other professional public-opinion surveys conducted using similar sampling strategies.² Weighting by region, party, age, race, religion, and gender is used to adjust for non-response. The margin of error is +/- 2.9 percentage points. Margins of error are higher in sub-groups.

Zogby International's sampling and weighting procedures also have been validated through its political polling: more than 95% of the firm's polls have come within 1% of actual election-day outcomes.

Interactive Survey Methodology

Zogby International conducted interviews of 2,590 adults in CA, CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, and VT. Panelists who have agreed to participate in Zogby polls online were invited to participate in the survey. The online poll ran from 1/13/06 through 1/16/06.

The margin of error is +/- 2.5 percentage points in the California sample of 1,643. Margins of error are higher in sub-groups. Slight weights were added to age, race, and gender to more accurately reflect the population.

¹ See COOP4 (p.38) in *Standard Definitions: Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates of Surveys*. The American Association for Public Opinion Research, (2000).

² *Cooperation Tracking Study: April 2003 Update*, Jane M. Sheppard and Shelly Haas. The Council for Marketing & Opinion Research (CMOR). Cincinnati, Ohio (2003).

The margin of error is +/- 3.2 percentage points in the Northeast states sample of 947. Margins of error are higher in sub-groups. Slight weights were added to state, age, race, and gender to more accurately reflect the population.

Narrative Summary

45. *One of the materials used by dentists to fill cavities is amalgam. Amalgam fillings contain several metals. Do you know what the primary metal in amalgam is?*

Table 1.

	Nationwide	California	New England
Mercury	24	40	35
Silver	12	23	22
Zinc	8	4	6
Gold	2	1	0
Not sure	54	32	37

A plurality of people in each of the three groups identifies mercury as the primary metal in amalgam. This percentage is highest among California respondents (40%), with one-third in New England (35%) and one in four nationwide (24%) citing mercury.

Silver ranks second in each of the three groups, as is it mentioned more frequently in California (23%) and New England (22%) than it is nationwide (12%). Zinc ranks third in each of the three groups, being cited by 4% to 8%. Little to none (0% to 2%) think gold is the primary metal.

People are most uncertain in the nationwide group, as over half (54%) are not sure. One-third (32%) in California, and slightly more (37%) in New England, are not sure.

46. *Would you say that silver dental fillings does contain mercury or does not contain mercury?*

Table 2.

	Nationwide	California	New England
Does contain mercury	48	59	60
Does not contain mercury	21	10	12
Not sure	31	31	29

People are much more likely than not to say that silver dental fillings contain mercury. Three-fifths of respondents in California (59%) and New England (60%) say these fillings contain mercury, while nationwide, nearly half (48%) agree.

Nationwide, people are approximately twice as likely as those in California and New England to believe silver fillings do not contain mercury. Nationwide, one in five (21%) has this view. In California, one in ten (10%) feels this way, as does one in eight (12%) in New England.

47. Do you think your dentist should be required to inform you about the various types of mercury and non-mercury fillings available before filling a cavity?

Table 3.

	Nationwide	California	New England
Yes	92	94	87
No	6	3	6
Not sure	2	3	7

There is overwhelming opinion that dentists should be required to inform their patients about the various types of mercury and non-mercury fillings available before filling a cavity. Close to nine in ten or more in each of the three groups feel this way, while only 3% to 6% disagree.

48. Which of the following would you be more likely to choose given the option – higher cost fillings that contain no mercury or lower cost fillings that are about 50% mercury?

Table 4.

	Nationwide	California	New England
Higher cost/no mercury	77	80	76
Lower cost/with mercury	13	6	8
Not sure	11	14	16

Vast majorities (between three-fourths to four-fifths) would choose the higher cost fillings that contain no mercury.

While much fewer respondents choose the lower cost fillings containing about 50% mercury, people nationwide (13%) are about twice as likely to do so than those in California (6%) or New England (8%).

One in nine (11%) to one in six (16%) are not sure.

49. How much of a problem do you think mercury pollution causes in the environment, on a scale with 1 being not at all serious and 5 being very serious?

Table 5.

	Nationwide	California	New England
1 Not at all serious	5	4	4
2	11	8	9
Less serious (1+2)	16	12	13
3	22	19	23
4	19	24	29
5 Very serious	28	33	25
More serious (4+5)	47	57	54
Not sure	16	13	10

Close to half or more in each group ranks this as a more serious problem for the environment. Majorities in California (57%) and New England (54%) rate this as a 4 or 5 on the scale, with nearly half nationwide (47%) in agreement.

Approximately one in five (19% to 23%) in each group rates this as a 3, giving it a medium amount of seriousness.

In the three groups, one in six (16%) to one in eight (12%) thinks this is a less serious problem for the environment, ranking it as a 1 or 2 on the scale.

People are most unsure nationwide (16%), with one in eight (13%) in California and one in ten (10%) in New England also not sure of the environmental impact.

(Asked in New England only)

50. *Would you support or oppose a ban on putting dental mercury fillings in pregnant women or children?*

Support 69%
Oppose 9
Not sure 22

Overwhelmingly, New England respondents support a ban on putting dental mercury fillings in pregnant women or children. Approximately seven in ten (69%) are in support, while in contrast, just 9% are opposed to the ban. Over one in five (22%), however, are not sure.