

## **American Red Cross, Nature Conservancy, Consumers Union and AARP are Organizations Inside the Beltway Most Trusted by Public**

*Those with most power are AFL-CIO, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, PhRMA, and NRA*

**NEW YORK, N.Y. – January 17, 2012** – Among all adults who are familiar with them, the American Red Cross, the Consumers Union, the Nature Conservancy, American Public Transportation Association and AARP are seen as the most trusted among 12 large organizations that have considerable influence on public policy, business and are frequently reported on in the media. Conversely, the AFL-CIO, PhRMA, the NRA and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce are perceived to be the least trusted. Those organizations that are seen as being the most powerful are the AFL-CIO, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, PhRMA, the National Association of Manufacturers, and the NRA.

These are some of the results of *The Harris Poll*<sup>®</sup>, a new nationwide survey of 2,237 U.S. adults surveyed online between December 5 and 12, 2011 by [Harris Interactive](#)<sup>®</sup>.

### **Familiarity**

The first question asked the public how familiar they are with these 12 organizations. The organizations that are **familiar to the largest number of people** are:

- American Red Cross 93%
- AARP 85%
- National Rifle Association (NRA) 83%
- U.S. Chamber of Commerce 72%

The organizations on the list that the **fewest people are familiar with** are:

- National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) 17%
- American Public Transportation Association (APTA) 19%
- PhRMA (Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America) 19%
- Consumers Union 22%
- The Nature Conservancy 37%

### **Trust**

Among those who are familiar with them, **the most trusted** organizations (based on those who trust them “a great deal” or “a fair amount”) are:

- American Red Cross 85%
- Consumers Union 81%
- The Nature Conservancy 80%
- American Public Transportation Association (APTA) 72%
- AARP 72%

**The least trusted** organizations on the list are (also based on those who trust them “a great deal” or “a fair amount:”

- AFL-CIO 45%
- PhRMA 47%
- NRA 57%

### **Power in Washington**

The organizations listed that are believed to have **the most power**, based on the number of people familiar with them who think each organization has “a “great deal” or “a fair amount” of power are:

- AFL-CIO 86%
- U.S. Chamber of Commerce 84%
- PhRMA 84%
- Nat’l Association of Manufacturers (NAM) 80%
- NRA 80%

The organizations thought to have **the least power** are:

- The Nature Conservancy 48%
- Sierra Club 57%
- Consumers Union 59%
- American Red Cross 60%

### **So What?**

*The Harris Poll* began measuring public perceptions of these organizations in 2005 and the results have generally been that those with the least power are most trusted while those with the most power are least trusted. For example, the American Red Cross, Consumers Union and the Nature Conservancy receive very high marks for being trusted; however, at the same time they are seen as having less power. However, by their sheer size and scope of work they are still able to work around their lack of power.

Groups such as the AFL-CIO, PhRMA and the NRA are the least trusted. Nonetheless they are thought to have lots of power. These groups have risen to power status by the sheer fact they survive on controversy and their ability to play politics very well.

**TABLE 1**  
**FAMILIARITY WITH ORGANIZATION - TREND**  
 “Please indicate your familiarity with the following organizations”  
 (Percentage who say they are familiar)

Base: All Adults

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2011	Change from 2009 to 2011
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
American Red Cross	N/A	96	96	93	92	93	+1
AARP	89	88	85	85	82	85	+3
NRA (National Rifle Association)	90	87	83	79	80	83	+3
U.S. Chamber of Commerce	76	78	79	70	66	72	+6
AFL-CIO	75	67	65	59	58	59	+1
National Education Association (NEA)	N/A	N/A	N/A	51	53	54	+1
Sierra Club	64	54	56	49	51	49	-2
The Nature Conservancy	47	40	41	37	38	37	-1
Consumers Union	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	22	N/A
PhRMA (Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America)	N/A	N/A	N/A	19	29	19	-10
National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)	N/A	N/A	N/A	17	21	17	-4
American Public Transportation Association (APTA)	N/A	N/A	N/A	19	19	19	0

Note: N/A indicates organization not asked about in that year

**TABLE 2**  
**TRUST IN ORGANIZATIONS**  
 “How much do you trust these organizations?”

Base: Adults Familiar with Organizations (Variable Base)

		<b>A Great Deal/A Fair Amount (NET)</b>	<b>A Great Deal</b>	<b>A Fair Amount</b>	<b>Not Very Much</b>	<b>Not At All</b>
American Red Cross	%	85	39	46	11	3
Consumers Union	%	81	26	55	16	3
The Nature Conservancy	%	80	26	55	16	4
American Public Transportation Association (APTA)	%	72	15	57	21	7
AARP	%	72	23	49	18	10
National Education Association (NEA)	%	64	17	47	21	15
Sierra Club	%	63	16	47	23	14
National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)	%	61	9	53	30	9
U.S. Chamber of Commerce	%	60	11	49	29	11
NRA (National Rifle Association)	%	57	20	37	24	19
PhRMA (Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America)	%	47	11	37	31	22
AFL-CIO	%	45	9	35	34	22

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% because of rounding

**TABLE 3**  
**TRUST IN ORGANIZATIONS - TREND**  
 “How much do you trust these organizations?”  
 (Percentage trust “a great deal” or “fair amount”)

Base: Adults Familiar with Organization (Variable Base)

	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>Change from 2009 to 2011</b>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
American Red Cross	N/A	84	86	88	86	85	-1
Consumers Union	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	81	N/A
The Nature Conservancy	79	80	83	82	76	80	+4
American Public Transportation Association (APTA)	N/A	N/A	N/A	73	61	72	+11
AARP	77	84	83	82	70	72	+2
National Education Association (NEA)	N/A	N/A	N/A	67	62	64	+2
Sierra Club	59	65	68	66	60	63	+3
National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)	N/A	N/A	N/A	67	62	61	-1
U.S. Chamber of Commerce	70	77	73	72	66	60	-6
NRA	48	54	52	56	56	57	+1
PhRMA (Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America)	N/A	N/A	N/A	58	37	47	+10
AFL-CIO	41	51	52	47	38	45	+7

Note: N/A indicates organization not asked about in that year

**TABLE 4**  
**HOW MUCH POWER ORGANIZATIONS ARE THOUGHT TO HAVE IN WASHINGTON**  
 “How much power within Washington, DC do you believe these organizations have?”

Base: Adults Familiar with Organizations (Variable Base)

		A Great Deal/A Fair Amount (NET)	A Great Deal	A Fair Amount	Not Very Much	None At All
AFL-CIO	%	86	45	40	13	1
U.S. Chamber of Commerce	%	84	35	50	14	2
PhRMA (Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America)	%	84	48	36	14	2
National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)	%	80	25	55	17	3
NRA (National Rifle Association)	%	80	40	40	17	3
National Education Association (NEA)	%	75	32	43	23	2
AARP	%	74	30	43	22	4
American Public Transportation Association (APTA)	%	67	18	49	28	5
American Red Cross	%	60	15	44	35	6
Consumers Union	%	59	14	44	35	6
Sierra Club	%	57	14	43	38	4
The Nature Conservancy	%	48	10	38	47	5

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% because of rounding

**TABLE 5**  
**PERCEIVED POWER IN WASHINGTON - TREND**  
 “How much power within Washington, DC do you believe these organizations have?”  
 (Percentage have power “a great deal” or “fair amount”)

Base: Adults Familiar with Organization (Variable Base)

	2008	2009	2011	Change from 2009 to 2011
	%	%	%	
AFL-CIO	87	90	86	-4
U.S. Chamber of Commerce	80	77	84	+7
PhRMA (Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America)	82	85	84	-1
National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)	80	74	80	+6
NRA (National Rifle Association)	79	80	80	0
National Education Association (NEA)	74	79	75	-4
AARP	73	80	74	-6
American Public Transportation Association (APTA)	70	74	67	-7
American Red Cross	62	59	60	+1
Consumers Union	N/A	N/A	59	N/A
Sierra Club	58	59	57	-2
The Nature Conservancy	51	48	48	0

Note: N/A indicates organization not asked about in that year

## Methodology

This **Harris Poll** was conducted online within the United States between December 5 and 12, 2011 among 2,237 adults (aged 18 and over). Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words "margin of error" as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

***These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.***

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By David Krane, VP Research, Harris Interactive

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