

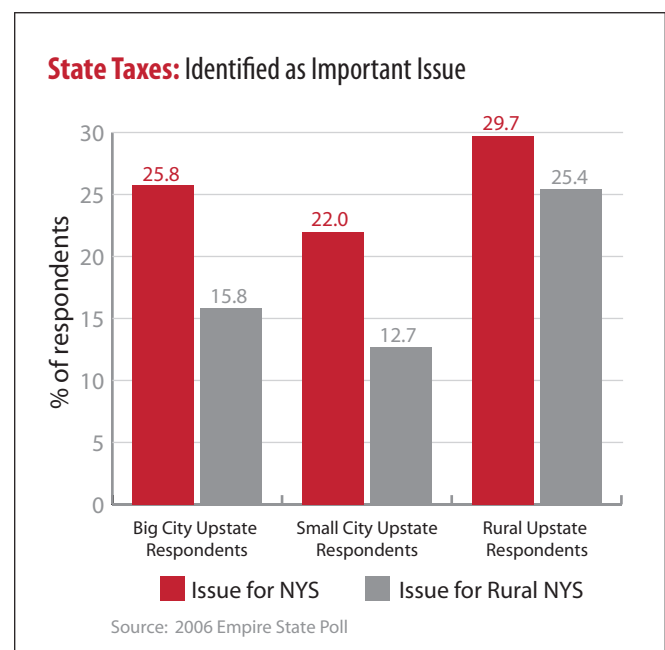
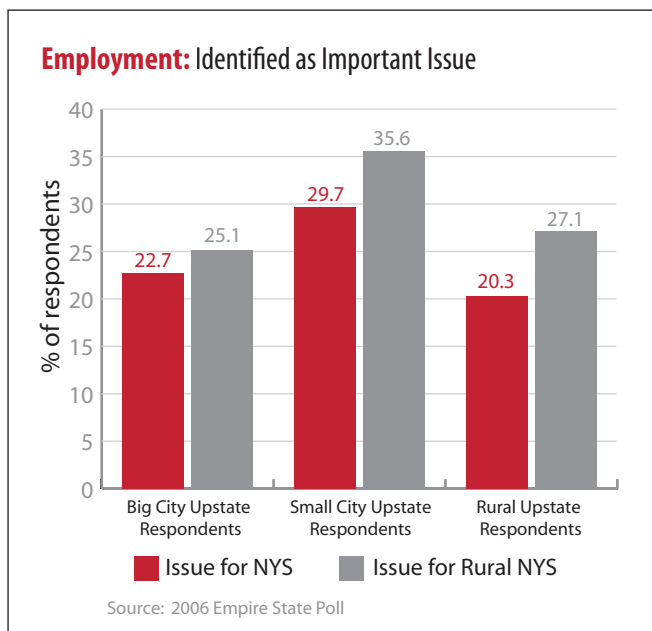
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What Issues Are Important to Upstate New Yorkers?

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Upstate New Yorkers are frequently compared to their downstate counterparts, often revealing dramatic differences between the two. But upstate residents are certainly not all alike, socio-demographically and in their opinions and perceptions of important public policy issues. It is important to understand these differences because public policy needs to reflect and respond to geographical differences. Public support for policy depends not only on information and data regarding the social and economic situation, but also on general opinions and perceptions of issues.



Employment and state taxes were the two most important issues identified by respondents to Cornell University's annual Empire State Poll in February 2006. Interestingly, more respondents felt that employment was a bigger issue for rural NYS than for the state overall. For example, while about 30% of small city residents identified employment as the most important issue for the state as a whole, almost 36% felt it was the most important issue for rural areas in the state. This is true for all respondents, regardless of where they lived. State taxes, in contrast, were seen as a more important issue for the state as a whole than from rural areas. Even rural residents were more likely to identify state taxes as an important issue for the state (~30%), than for their own areas (25%). ♦