
THE TARRANCE GROUP

MEMORANDUM

TO: Justice Action Network
FROM: B.J. Martino
Asha Campbell
DATE: February 11, 2019
RE: Key Findings from a Survey of Voters In Minnesota

The Tarrance Group is pleased to present Justice Action Network with the key findings from a survey of voter attitudes in Minnesota. These key findings are based on telephone interviews with N=500 “likely” registered voters throughout the state. Responses to this survey were gathered January 17-22, 2019 and the margin of error associated with a sample of this type is $\pm 4.5\%$ in 95 out of 100 cases.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Minnesota voters are broadly supportive of measures that would reform the state’s probation system.

All three proposals to reform Minnesota’s probation laws scored more than 60% in favor. Eighty-two percent (82%) favor standardizing probation guidelines. Sixty-one percent (61%) favor placing a 5-year cap on felony probation. Seventy-six percent (76%) are in favor of allowing judicial discretion on dealing with technical violations.

Fully seventy-four percent (74%) of voters say they would be more likely to vote for a county prosecutor who supports these reforms to the state probation system.

KEY FINDINGS

Direction of State

Currently, fifty-six percent (56%) of voters feel that Minnesota is going in the right direction, while 34% feel it is headed on the wrong track, and 10% are unsure. Intensity leans slightly towards the negative, with 26% strongly right direction and 28% strongly wrong track.

Hennepin County is slightly more positive, with 60% saying things are headed in the right direction. Anoka, Dakota, and Washington counties are slightly more positive, with 63% who feel it is right direction.

The youngest voters are particularly positive, with 62% saying right direction and only 28% wrong track. Voters aged 45-64 are slightly more negative, with only 46% saying right direction and 41% wrong track.

Republicans are more negative, with 66% saying wrong track, while DFL are overwhelmingly positive with 85% saying right direction. Independents are slightly more positive, with 51% right direction and 34% wrong track.

THE TARRANCE GROUP

Standardize Probation Guidelines

Eighty-two percent (82%) favor standardizing probation guidelines, while 11% oppose, and 6% are unsure. Forty-seven percent (47%) strongly favor this proposal.

Five Year Cap on Probation

Sixty-one percent (61%) favor placing a 5-year cap on felony probation, while 27% oppose, and 12% are unsure. Twenty-five percent (25%) strongly favor this proposal, and 11% strongly oppose.

Sixty-five percent (65%) of men are in favor, while 57% of women favor the proposal.

Among DFL voters, sixty-seven percent (67%) favor standardizing probation guidelines. Support climbs to 71% among DFL men.

Judicial Discretion on Technical Violations

Seventy-six percent (76%) favor allowing judicial discretion on dealing with technical violations, while 19% oppose, and 5% are unsure. Forty-four percent (44%) strongly favor this proposal, and 12% strongly oppose.

Among women, support climbs to 80% and climbs further to 83% among working women.

Sixty-six percent (66%) of Republicans are in favor, and 71% of Independents are in favor. Among Democrats, eighty-eight percent (88%) are in favor.

Impact Vote County Prosecutors Who Support Reforms

Seventy-four percent (74%) say they would be more likely to vote for a county prosecutor who supports these reforms, and 11% are less likely. Thirty percent (30%) are strongly more likely.

In Hennepin County, seventy-six percent (76%) are more likely. In Ramsey County, seventy percent (70%) are more likely. In Anoka, Dakota, and Washington counties, seventy-seven percent (77%) of voters say they would be more likely. In the Southern counties, seventy-two percent (72%) are more

likely. In the Central counties, seventy-five percent (75%) say they would be more likely. In the Northern counties, seventy-four percent (74%) are more likely.

Those most likely to say more likely include voters aged 18-44 (79%), working men (79%), and DFL voters (80%), but it also gets 72% among Republicans and 74% among seniors.

###