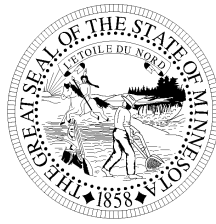


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**Minnesota
House of
Representatives**
Margaret Anderson Kelliher, Speaker

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2007 State Fair Poll Results

Gas tax increase favorable to majority of voters

More than 58 percent of those participating in the 2007 House of Representatives State Fair Poll support raising the state's gas tax by a dime if all the money goes toward state road and bridge improvements.

During the 12-day run of the Minnesota State Fair, 6,678 fairgoers took the poll conducted by nonpartisan House Public Information Services. It is an informal, unscientific survey on issues discussed in prior legislative sessions, and may again be topics of discussion.

Since the Interstate 35W bridge collapse Aug. 1, there has been more talk about increased transportation funding, including a possible gas tax increase. A 7.5-cent increase was in the omnibus transportation finance bill vetoed by the governor earlier this year. The gas tax has been at 20 cents per gallon since 1988.

Last year, just 41 percent of polltakers supported a 10-cent per gallon increase in the state gasoline tax to fund transportation improvements; however, 53.6 percent of 2005 polltakers said yes to: "In general, do you support increasing the gas tax to fund road and bridge projects?"

While a gas tax increase may be palatable to the majority of polltakers, 48.7 percent do not support raising the state sales tax by three-eighths of 1 percent and dedicating the money to environment and arts funding. Nearly 42 percent said yes to the question that was based on bills passed by House and Senate in 2007. However, a conference committee convened on the session's final day to try to work out a compromise on allocating the money ran out of time.

Favorable responses were given to a pair of education-related questions. More than two-thirds of voters believe state funding should be increased to provide for full-day kindergarten, if a district chooses to offer this. More than 61 percent believe grants should be made to public school districts to provide locally grown food as part of their lunch programs.

Also in the food area, 68.6 percent of polltakers think people should not be allowed to sue food manufacturers and vendors for weight gain as a result of consuming certain foods.

Nearly 71 percent of voters believe the state should be required to ensure affordable, comprehensive health care for all Minnesotans, and 58 percent support the use of marijuana for medical purposes.

On the heels of a smoking ban passed into law, more than 70 percent of voters think smoking should be banned within 50 feet of an entrance to public buildings.

Stadia being built for the Minnesota Twins and University of Minnesota are being partially financed with public dollars. However, just 13 percent of those taking the poll believe public financing should be used to help construct a stadium to house the Minnesota Vikings. The team has proposed a nearly \$1 billion facility on the Metrodome site.

Two-thirds of voters believe the fine for moving traffic violations should be doubled if the driver was using a cell phone at the time of the infraction; 57.6 percent support car dealers and liquor stores being open on Sundays; 45.8 percent believe veterans should be given Veterans Day off with pay; and 45.3 percent support \$260 million in bonding to restore and expand the State Capitol. However, nearly one-quarter of voters had no opinion on the issue, or were undecided.

And, finally, 47.3 percent of polltakers said the Tilt-A-Whirl, invented in Faribault, should be designated the state amusement ride. However, 31.2 percent had no opinion.

Here's a look at the questions and results. All percentages are rounded to the nearest one-tenth. Totals are for those that actually voted on the question.

(More)

1. Should the fine for moving traffic violations be doubled if the driver is using a cell phone at the time of the infraction?

Yes..... 66.6%..... (4,419)
No..... 25.7%..... (1,709)
Undecided/No Opinion 7.6%..... (502)

2. Would you be willing to pay an extra 10 cents per gallon for gas if all the money goes toward state road and bridge improvements?

Yes..... 58.3%..... (3,873)
No..... 33.5%..... (2,226)
Undecided/No Opinion 8.2%..... (543)

3. Do you support legislation that would prohibit people from suing food manufacturers and vendors for weight gain as a result of consuming certain foods?

Yes..... 68.6%..... (4,547)
No..... 24.3%..... (1,607)
Undecided/No Opinion 7.1%..... (471)

4. On Veterans Day, should employers be required to give veterans a paid day off?

Yes..... 45.8%..... (3,042)
No..... 39.5%..... (2,622)
Undecided/No Opinion 14.6%..... (971)

5. Do you support a proposal to amend the state constitution to raise the state's sales tax by three-eighths of 1 percent and dedicate the money to environment and arts funding?

Yes..... 41.7%..... (2,762)
No..... 48.7%..... (3,223)
Undecided/No Opinion 9.6%..... (634)

6. Should the state allow for medical uses of marijuana?

Yes..... 58.0%..... (3,845)
No..... 30.3%..... (2,007)
Undecided/No Opinion 11.7%..... (777)

7. Should the state be required to ensure affordable, comprehensive health care for all Minnesotans?

Yes..... 70.7%..... (4,685)
No..... 22.2%..... (1,469)
Undecided/No Opinion 7.1%..... (468)

8. Should smoking be prohibited within 50 feet of an entrance to public buildings?

Yes..... 70.2%..... (4,656)
No..... 24.7%..... (1,642)
Undecided/No Opinion 5.1%..... (338)

9. In 2008, should the state bond for \$260 million to restore and expand the State Capitol, which opened in 1905?

Yes..... 45.3%..... (2,994)
No..... 30.6%..... (2,026)
Undecided/No Opinion 24.1%..... (1,596)

10. Should grants be made to public school districts to provide locally grown food as part of the school lunch program?

Yes..... 61.3%..... (4,062)
No..... 26.6%..... (1,762)
Undecided/No Opinion 12.1%..... (803)

11. Minnesota currently provides funding for half-day kindergarten. Should funding be increased to provide for full-day kindergarten, if a district chooses to offer this?

Yes..... 67.1%..... (4,447)
No..... 25.2%..... (1,671)
Undecided/No Opinion 7.7%..... (513)

12. Should public financing be used to help fund a new football stadium to house the Minnesota Vikings?

Yes..... 13.0%..... (862)
No..... 81.4%..... (5,401)
Undecided/No Opinion 5.7%..... (376)

13. Should liquor stores and car dealers be permitted to open on Sundays?

Yes..... 57.6%..... (3,819)
No..... 33.9%..... (2,243)
Undecided/No Opinion 8.6%..... (570)

14. Invented in Faribault in 1926, should the Tilt-A-Whirl be designated the State Amusement Ride?

Yes..... 47.3%..... (3,123)
No..... 21.5%..... (1,421)
Undecided/No Opinion 31.2%..... (2,065)