

**2004 State Fair Opinion Poll  
Minnesota State Senate  
Final Results**

September 10, 2004

To: All Senators, staff and interested citizens:

We apologize for the slight delay in posting our results.

As you can see the following is a partial tally of our poll results. This is an unscientific survey. It is simply a measurement of the opinions expressed by those individuals that visited the Senate Fair Booth within the Education Building and took the time to fill out our questionnaire.

This year, as a cost saving measure we made the decision to print the ballots in-house. The decision was made in consultation with Anoka County Election officials after several days of experimentation and evaluation because of the strict and exact standards involved.

Though precautions were taken, we did experience problems the third day of the Fair with a number of ballots being slightly too wide and unable to be inserted into the machine. That same day, Saturday August 28<sup>th</sup>, an Anoka County Elections official came out to our booth to assess the situation. A complete and correct reading of 1058 respondents was registered.

In addition, a new machine had to be installed because of the difficulty the first machine encountered with the effect of humidity and the width of some of the ballots. With the installation of the second machine, the wrong program card was inadvertently used thus setting the lines off their original alignment.

The end result was that only three of the twelve questions were complete with a remainder a mix of partial results or no results at all.

In summation, we learned a valuable lesson. The printing and care of election ballots is a very careful and precise operation. Under normal situations the ballots are all printed at once and immediately shrink wrapped.

It was impossible for us to take the same precautions, care and maintenance of the ballots as state election officials do. Obviously, next year's opinion poll survey will be conducted with the same precise standards as an official election.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

Scott Magnuson  
and Senate Information Staff  
651.296.7198

# Minnesota State Senate 2004 State Fair Poll

Respondents should be of voting age.  
Please mark one answer per question.

**FIRST MACHINE USED- 1058 Respondents**

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## Demographics

Male	49.81% (527)
Female	48.96% (518)
No answer	1.23% (13)
Minneapolis/St. Paul	36.29% (384)
Rural	15.12% (160)
Suburban	39.89% (422)
Regional hub (Rochester, Duluth, etc.)	5.48% (58)
Another state	.66% (7)
No answer	2.55% (27)
18-35	16.82% (178)
36-54	41.59% (440)
55-64	25.24% (267)
65 and older	13.71% (145)
No answer	2.65% (28)
Party Affiliation:	
DFL Party	38.66% (409)
Republican Party	21.55% (228)
Independence Party	1.51% (16)
Green Party	1.04% (11)
Independent or other	12.57% (133)
No comment	14.08% (149)
No answer	10.59% (112)

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What is your main source for receiving information about the Legislature?

Contacting the House and Senate Information Offices.	1.42% (15)
The House newsletter <i>Session Weekly</i> .	4.44% (47)
Legislative web site ( <a href="http://www.leg.state.mn.us">www.leg.state.mn.us</a> ).	3.88% (41)
Newspapers.	30.62% (324)
Radio.	13.33% (141)
Television (local news).	13.99% (148)
Televised committee and floor action coverage.	1.80% (19)
Conversation with friends.	2.08% (22)
I do not receive information about the Legislature.	1.89% (20)
No answer	26.56% (281)

1. Would you support the members of the state Senate serving 6-year terms with 1/3 of the members being up for re-election every 2 years?

Yes.	52.46 % (555)
No.	29.96% (317)
Undecided/No opinion.	14.46% (153)
No answer	3.12% (33)

2. Should violent sex offenders be sentenced to life without parole for their first offense regardless of the additional cost?

Yes.	31.76% (336)
No, however I would favor life without parole for any repeat offense.	48.96% (518)
No.	11.81% (125)
Undecided/No opinion.	5.29% (56)
No answer	2.17% (23)

3. Do you support state funding for voluntary, all-day, every-day kindergarten?

Yes.	62.57% (662)
No.	28.45% (301)
Undecided/No opinion.	7.28% (77)
No answer	1.70% (18)

4. Should the state try to prevent contracts it enters into from being outsourced to other countries, even if the products or services would cost more if purchased or performed in the United States?

Yes.	67.67% (716)
No.	20.89% (221)
Undecided/ No opinion.	9.83% (104)
No answer	1.61% (17)

5. Currently, Minnesota law requires that a personal flotation device (PFD), such as a lifejacket, be on board and readily accessible for each person in a boat. PFDs are required to be worn by all persons riding on personal watercraft and by children under age 13 while in a boat that is underway on waterways managed by the U.S. Coast Guard. Otherwise, state law does not require that a PFD be worn in a boat. Should the Minnesota Legislature require that PFDs be worn by persons in a boat?

Yes, by all people any time they are in a boat on the water.	25.99% (275)
Yes, by all people only while the boat is underway.	10.02% (106)
Yes, by children under the age of 13 any time they are in a boat on the water.	17.11% (181)
Yes, by children under the age of 13 only while the boat is underway.	4.54% (48)
No, leave the law as it stands.	36.86 % (390)
Undecided/No opinion.	3.31 % ( 35)

No answer 2.17% ( 23)

6. Current Minnesota law defines marriage as a civil contract only between a man and a woman. Should this definition of marriage be added to the Minnesota Constitution?

Yes.	36.11% (382)
No.	57.75% (611)
Undecided/No opinion.	3.97% (42)
No answer	2.17% (23)

7. Would you support a statewide smoking ban in all bars and restaurants?

I would support a smoking ban in both bars and restaurants.	48.96% (518)
I would support a smoking ban in restaurants only.	17.30% (183)
I oppose any further restrictions on smoking.	16.26% (172)
This issue should be dealt with on the local rather than the state level.	13.04% (138)
Undecided/No opinion.	1.61% (17)
No answer	2.84% (30)

8. Pick one statement that most closely matches your opinion about raising the gasoline tax.

I would support an increase in the gasoline tax of 5 to 8 cents per gallon for highway purposes. 16.45% (174)

I would support an increase in the gasoline tax of 1 to 4 cents per gallon for highway purposes. 15.97% (169)

I would support an increase in the gasoline tax if the revenues are also made available for transit purposes. 24.67% (261)

The gasoline tax should be indexed and go up or down based on the state's economic situation. 7.75% (82)

I do not support a gasoline tax increase of any amount. 27.22% (288)

Undecided/No opinion. 4.73% (50)

No answer 3.21% (34)

9. If there is a budget shortfall in 2005, the Legislature should resolve it by:

Increasing taxes.	15.97% (169)
Increasing user fees.	4.73% (50)
Both A and B.	15.22% (161)
Reducing state spending.	31.66% (335)
All of the above.	24.29% (257)
Undecided/No opinion.	3.88% (41)
No answer	4.25% (45)

10. If the Legislature decides to increase tax revenues to resolve any budget shortfall, several options are available. Which method would you choose first?

Extend the sales tax to clothing.	5.00% (53)
Extend the sales tax to services (such as haircuts, attorneys' fees, etc.).	3.50% (37)
Extend the sales tax to both clothing and services.	3.78% (40)
Increase personal income taxes.	9.26% (98)
Restructure corporate income taxes.	31.76% (336)
All of the above.	11.06% (117)
I oppose any tax increases.	25.43% (269)
Undecided/No opinion.	3.59% (38)
No answer	6.62% (70)

11. If the Legislature decides to cut funding to resolve any budget shortfall in 2005, which area should be cut first?

E-12 education.	4.54% (48)
Higher education.	4.44% (47)
Transportation.	4.35% (46)
Health and social service programs.	10.78% (114)
Corrections.	4.35% (46)
Public Safety.	.95% (10)
Aids to local government.	10.30% (109)
I oppose any further cuts in state spending.	49.43% (523)
Undecided/No opinion.	6.43% (68)
No answer	4.44% (47)

12. Minnesota currently allows local government broad authority for the siting of livestock facilities. Many local governments have adopted zoning ordinances relating to livestock facilities, including setbacks from residences and restrictions on the size of the livestock facility allowed. The Minnesota Legislature should:

Establish statewide zoning for livestock facilities that preempt local zoning for livestock facilities. 8.79% (93)

Establish statewide standards for local zoning of livestock facilities to ensure that local zoning ordinances are more consistent throughout the state. 26.18% (277)

Leave the law as is, allowing local governments to make livestock facility zoning decisions based solely on local concerns. 37.43% (396)

Undecided/No opinion. 24.76% (262)

No answer 2.84% (30)

## **Minnesota State Senate 2004 State Fair Poll**

Respondents should be of voting age.  
Please mark one answer per question.

**SECOND MACHINE USED - 3700 respondents**

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### **Demographics**

Male	49.35% (1826)
Female	49.86% (1845)
No response	.78% (29)
Minneapolis/St. Paul	40.92% (1514)
Rural	14.40% (533)
Suburban	37.95% (1404)
Regional hub (Rochester, Duluth, etc.)	4.22% (156)
Another state	.54% (20)
No response	1.97% (73)
18-35	20.68% (765)
36-54	40.57% (1501)
55-64	20.97% (776)
65 and older	14% (518)
No response	3.78% (140)
Party Affiliation:	
DFL Party	38.43% (1422)
Republican Party	21.65% (801)
Independence Party	1.40% (52)
Green Party	1.27% (47)
Independent or other	14.32% (530)
No comment	11.97% (443)
No response	10.95% (405)

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What is your main source for receiving information about the Legislature?

Contacting the House and Senate Information Offices.	.97% (36)
The House newsletter <i>Session Weekly</i> .	4.18% (152)
Legislative web site ( <a href="http://www.leg.state.mn.us">www.leg.state.mn.us</a> ).	4.30% (159)
Newspapers.	31.22% (1155)
Radio.	13.57% (502)
Television (local news).	14.51% (537)
Televised committee and floor action coverage.	1.62% (60)
Conversation with friends.	2.62% (97)
I do not receive information about the Legislature.	1.73% (64)
No answer	25.35% (938)

1. Would you support the members of the state Senate serving 6-year terms with 1/3 of the members being up for re-election every 2 years?

Yes.	53.54% (1981)
No.	28.65% (1060)
Undecided/No opinion.	16.03% (593)
No answer	1.78% (66)

2. Should violent sex offenders be sentenced to life without parole for their first offense regardless of the additional cost? **Data Lost**

Yes.	
No, however I would favor life without parole for any repeat offense.	
No.	
Undecided/No opinion.	
No answer	

\*3. Do you support state funding for voluntary, all-day, every-day kindergarten?

Yes.	61.78% (2286)
No.	28.46% (1053)
Undecided/No opinion.	
No answer	9.76% (361)

4. Should the state try to prevent contracts it enters into from being outsourced to other countries, even if the products or services would cost more if purchased or performed in the United States?

Yes.	67.51% (2498)
No.	21.30% (788)
Undecided/ No opinion.	9.76% (361)
No answer	1.53% (53)

5. Currently, Minnesota law requires that a personal flotation device (PFD), such as a lifejacket, be on board and readily accessible for each person in a boat. PFDs are required to be worn by all persons riding on personal watercraft and by children under age 13 while in a boat that is underway on waterways managed by the U.S. Coast Guard. Otherwise, state law does not require that a PFD be worn in a boat. Should the Minnesota Legislature require that PFDs be worn by persons in a boat?

Yes, by all people any time they are in a boat on the water.	28.03% (1037)
Yes, by all people only while the boat is underway.	10.40% (385)
Yes, by children under the age of 13 any time they are in a boat on the water.	18.95% (701)
Yes, by children under the age of 13 only while the boat is underway.	4.19% (155)
No, leave the law as it stands.	33.22% (1229)
Undecided/No opinion.	3.70% (134)
No answer	1.59% (59)



\*6. Current Minnesota law defines marriage as a civil contract only between a man and a woman. Should this definition of marriage be added to the Minnesota Constitution?

Yes.	35.30% (1306)
No.	58.90% (2179)
Undecided/No opinion.	
No answer	5.81% (215)

7. Would you support a statewide smoking ban in all bars and restaurants? **Data Lost**

I would support a smoking ban in both bars and restaurants.  
I would support a smoking ban in restaurants only.  
I oppose any further restrictions on smoking.  
This issue should be dealt with on the local rather than the state level.  
Undecided/No opinion.  
No answer

8. Pick one statement that most closely matches your opinion about raising the gasoline tax.

**Data Lost**

I would support an increase in the gasoline tax of 5 to 8 cents per gallon for highway purposes.  
I would support an increase in the gasoline tax of 1 to 4 cents per gallon for highway purposes.  
I would support an increase in the gasoline tax if the revenues are also made available for transit purposes.  
The gasoline tax should be indexed and go up or down based on the state's economic situation.  
I do not support a gasoline tax increase of any amount.  
Undecided/No opinion.  
No answer

\*9. If there is a budget shortfall in 2005, the Legislature should resolve it by:

Increasing taxes.	16.38% (606)
Increasing user fees.	4.16% (154)
Both A and B.	13.81% (511)
Reducing state spending.	31.32% (1159)
All of the above.	26.22% (970)
Undecided/No opinion.	
No answer	8.11% (300)

10. If the Legislature decides to increase tax revenues to resolve any budget shortfall, several options are available. Which method would you choose first? **Data Lost**

Extend the sales tax to clothing.  
Extend the sales tax to services (such as haircuts, attorneys' fees, etc.).  
Extend the sales tax to both clothing and services.  
Increase personal income taxes.  
Restructure corporate income taxes.

All of the above.  
I oppose any tax increases.  
Undecided/No opinion.  
No answer

\*11. If the Legislature decides to cut funding to resolve any budget shortfall in 2005, which area should be cut first?

E-12 education.	2.49% (92)
Higher education.	4.97% (184)
Transportation.	4.46% (165)
Health and social service programs.	9.84% (364)
Corrections.	4.62% (171)
Public Safety.	1.54% (57)
Aids to local government.	12.19% (451)
I oppose any further cuts in state spending.	47.81% (1769)
Undecided/No opinion.	
No answer	12.08% (447)

\*12. Minnesota currently allows local government broad authority for the siting of livestock facilities. Many local governments have adopted zoning ordinances relating to livestock facilities, including setbacks from residences and restrictions on the size of the livestock facility allowed. The Minnesota Legislature should:

Establish statewide zoning for livestock facilities that preempt local zoning for livestock facilities.	8.16% (302)
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Establish statewide standards for local zoning of livestock facilities to ensure that local zoning ordinances are more consistent throughout the state.	26.08% (965)
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Leave the law as is, allowing local governments to make livestock facility zoning decisions based solely on local concerns.	37.54% (1389)
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Undecided/No opinion.

No answer	28.22% (1044)
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\* Results on the questions did not line up on the voting machine tape. Corrections were made to account for a reading error and these were the results when processed in that way. The percentages are in line with the initial 1058 total from the first 3 days of the fair.