

**2008 State Fair Opinion Poll  
Minnesota State Senate  
Survey Results**

September 2, 2008

To: All Senators, staff and interested citizens

Attached are the results of the Senate State Fair opinion poll survey. This is an unscientific survey. It is simply a measurement of the opinions expressed by those individuals who visited the Senate Fair Booth in the Education Building and took the time to fill out our questionnaire.

Our main purpose in conducting this opinion poll was to familiarize fair-goers with some of the issues that were considered during the past year, or may be dealt with in 2009.

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

Sincerely,

Scott Magnuson, John Trombley, and Jessica Tupper  
Senate Information Office  
651-296-0504

Please note: Approximately 4.5% of those who took the poll failed to answer questions on the back side of the ballot, hence the lower vote totals for questions 10-15.

**Minnesota State Senate**  
**2008 State Fair Poll**

Respondents should be of voting age.

Please mark one answer per question.

**4584 TOTAL RESPONDENTS**

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**Demographics**

Male	50.18% (2283)
Female	49.82% (2267)
Minneapolis/St. Paul	32.28% (1471)
Rural	15.89% (724)
Suburban	46.65% (2126)
Regional hub (Rochester, Duluth, etc.)	4.26% (194)
Another state ____	0.92% (42)
<i>Party Affiliation:</i>	
DFL Party	43.45% (1972)
Republican Party	23.04% (1046)
Independence Party	2.09% (95)
Independent or other	18.51% (840)
No comment	12.91% (586)

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- Should the Legislature increase the mandatory attendance age for high school students from 16 years old to 18 years old?
  - Yes. **61.77% (2806)**
  - No. **26.52% (1205)**
  - Undecided/No opinion. **11.71% (532)**
- Should the state require age appropriate comprehensive sex education in public schools?
  - Yes. **66.93% (3042)**
  - No. **24.99% (1136)**
  - Undecided/No opinion. **8.07% (367)**
- When Legislators are faced with a large budget deficit, how should they solve it?
  - Budget cuts only. **27.82% (1266)**
  - Tax increases only. **4.86% (221)**
  - Mixture of cuts and tax increases. **64.88% (2952)**
  - Undecided/No opinion. **2.44% (111)**

4. Should the Legislature ban chemicals that may be harmful to children's health (phthalates and Bisphenol-A) from use in plastic products designed for children, such as pacifiers and toys?
- |                           |                      |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| A. Yes.                   | <b>78.25% (3559)</b> |
| B. No.                    | <b>11.57% (526)</b>  |
| C. Undecided/ No opinion. | <b>10.18% (463)</b>  |
5. Should Minnesota adjust the date of its annual fishing opener weekend so as not to conflict with Mother's Day?
- |                          |                      |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| A. Yes.                  | <b>42.06% (1906)</b> |
| B. No.                   | <b>29.10% (1319)</b> |
| C. Undecided/No opinion. | <b>28.84% (1307)</b> |
6. Increased commodity prices are prompting farmers and landowners to take marginal agricultural land out of conservation programs, and put it back into production, which could have a negative impact on wetland and wildlife habitat. Should the state increase financial compensation for farmers and landowners to participate in conservation programs?
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|--------------------------|----------------------|
| A. Yes.                  | <b>49.18% (2227)</b> |
| B. No.                   | <b>36.55% (1655)</b> |
| C. Undecided/No opinion. | <b>14.27% (646)</b>  |
7. Should Minnesota exempt military retirement pension income from the state income tax?
- |                          |                      |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| A. Yes.                  | <b>48.77% (2212)</b> |
| B. No.                   | <b>39.44% (1789)</b> |
| C. Undecided/No opinion. | <b>11.79% (535)</b>  |
8. Minnesota law prohibits all drivers from text messaging while driving. Provisional drivers, generally those under age 18, are not allowed to use cell phones. Should the ban on cell phone use while driving be extended to all drivers?
- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| A. Yes.   | <b>51.24% (2329)</b> |
| B. Yes, with an adult exception for hands-free devices. | <b>24.18% (1099)</b> |
| C. No.  | <b>21.69% (986)</b>  |
| D. Undecided/No opinion.                                | <b>2.88% (131)</b>   |
9. Which answer best reflects your opinion on illegal immigration in Minnesota?
- |  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| A. I don't believe there is a significant problem with illegal immigration in Minnesota.   | <b>13.60% (616)</b> |
| B. Because immigration law is primarily federal, the state should leave any enforcement action to the federal authorities.                                   | <b>11.37% (515)</b> |
| C. Heighten the enforcement of existing employment laws. (Employers must withhold taxes and pay unemployment insurance and workers' compensation insurance.) | <b>15.61% (707)</b> |

- D. State and local law enforcement personnel should assist the federal government to enforce laws against undocumented workers and employers who hire undocumented workers. **11.46% (519)**
- E. Enact legislation requiring law enforcement officers to ask about immigration status and arrest illegal immigrants. **4.20% (190)**
- F. A combination of answers C, D, and E. **38.62% (1749)**
- G. Undecided/No opinion. **5.14% (233)**
10. Would you support a proposal that would change Minnesota's current caucus system to a presidential primary election? Under this proposal, voters would still have the opportunity to caucus for state and local candidates, but would be able to vote throughout the day for their presidential choice.
- A. Yes. **67.38% (2937)**
- B. No. **17.50% (763)**
- C. Undecided/No opinion. **15.12% (659)**
11. Should the state enact a law requiring all Minnesotans to obtain health insurance coverage (through public programs, employer-sponsored insurance, or private coverage purchased by individuals), if affordable coverage is available?
- A. Yes. **37.54% (1636)**
- B. No, the state should not play such a large role in health care. **27.70% (1207)**
- C. No, the health insurance system should be replaced by a system that gives people direct access to health care services paid for by the state in certain circumstances, without using health insurance companies. **26.48% (1154)**
- D. Undecided/No opinion. **8.28% (361)**
12. Would you support legislation that would make Minnesota's marriage laws gender neutral (making it a contract between two persons rather than between a man and a woman)?
- A. Yes. **52.26% (2285)**
- B. No. **42.29% (1849)**
- C. Undecided/No opinion. **5.44% (238)**
13. Global climate change may profoundly affect Minnesota's public health, public infrastructure, natural resources, tourism, forestry, and other industries. Should the Legislature require state agencies to develop strategies to respond to climate change effects, such as warmer temperatures and more extreme weather events?
- A. Yes. **58.91% (2569)**
- B. No. **29.95% (1306)**
- C. Undecided/No opinion. **11.14% (486)**
14. Should professional breeders of dogs and cats, owners of six or more breeding female animals, be required to be licensed and their facilities inspected?
- A. Yes. **84.58% (3696)**
- B. No. **8.72% (381)**
- C. Undecided/No opinion. **6.70% (293)**

15. Should the state minimum wage be increased?

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|--|----------------------|
| A. Yes.  | <b>32.48% (1421)</b> |
| B. Yes, and indexed to keep pace with inflation. | <b>37.37% (1635)</b> |
| C. No.   | <b>23.70% (1037)</b> |
| D. Undecided/No opinion.                         | <b>6.45% (282)</b>   |