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Minnesota House of Representatives

Kurt Daudt, Speaker

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2016 State Fair Poll Results

Tax increases for transit, transportation receive positive responses

Majority of polltakers also support so-called 'Death with Dignity'

Most of those participating in the House of Representatives state fair poll are willing to pay more in taxes to fund metro area transit and additional funding for statewide transportation needs.

Of the 6,550 people participating in the 2016 opinion survey, 60.6 percent expressed support for at least a dime increase in the state's 28.5 cents-per-gallon gas tax to fund highway and bridge improvements, while 32.2 percent are opposed and 7.2 percent are undecided or have no opinion.

Nearly an equal split — 59.6/32.2/8.1 — support an increase in the metro area sales tax to fund mass transit projects, including bus and light rail projects.

Conducted by the nonpartisan House Public Information Services Office, the poll is an informal, unscientific survey of issues discussed in prior legislative sessions and that may be topics of discussion in 2017.

Transportation was a major issue during the 2016 session; however, the Legislature and Gov. Mark Dayton could not reach agreement on how to fund road and bridge improvements across the state and more bus and light rail lines in the Twin Cities metropolitan area; nor could an agreement be reached during summer negotiations between the governor and legislative leaders.

Almost 75 percent of polltakers believe an ignition interlock device should be required for anyone convicted of DWI to get their driving privilege reinstated. Currently, a person with three DWI convictions in 10 years or four or more must use ignition interlock — which tests for the presence of alcohol — for a prescribed period of time before seeking reinstatement.

According to poll results, 86.2 percent believe criminal background checks should be required on all gun sales, including private transactions and those made at gun shows.

Nearly 67 percent of those taking the poll support so-called "Death with Dignity," whereby patients with less than six months to live could receive aid in dying from their attending physician in the form of a prescribed medication in which the qualified patient self-administers.

A pair of education-related issues received strong support.

More than 82 percent of polltakers believe government agencies and institutions should be required to obtain parental consent before disclosing personally identifiable data on students to a third party, other than law enforcement. Slightly more than two-thirds, 67.5 percent, believe the state should provide an individual tax credit of up to \$5,000 for student loan payments.

Polltakers also believe:

- an independent, citizens-only council should set legislator salaries (64.4 percent – up from 59.8 percent in 2013);
- schools and businesses should not be able to require individuals to use restroom and locker room facilities based on biological sex, as defined at birth (59.2 percent);
- employees in workplaces with six or more workers should be able to accumulate one hour of sick leave for every 30 hours worked, with a maximum of 40 hours of accrual each year (58.9 percent);
- it should be illegal to talk on a wireless device while driving (51.6 percent); and
- legislators should be elected with political party designation (46.4 percent).

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.

1. Do you support an increase in the metro area sales tax to fund mass transit, including bus and light rail projects?

Yes..... 59.6%..... (3,843)
No..... 32.2%..... (2,075)
Undecided/No Opinion 8.1%..... (525)

2. Should criminal background checks be required on all gun sales, including private transactions and at gun shows?

Yes..... 86.2%..... (5,556)
No..... 11.5%..... (739)
Undecided/No Opinion 2.3%..... (150)

3. Should schools and businesses be able to require individuals to use restroom and locker room facilities based on biological sex, as defined at birth?

Yes..... 30.6%..... (1,962)
No..... 59.2%..... (3,796)
Undecided/No Opinion 10.2%..... (655)

4. Should government agencies and institutions be required to obtain parental consent before disclosing personally identifiable data on students to a third party, other than law enforcement?

Yes..... 82.5%..... (5,294)
No..... 8.1%..... (523)
Undecided/No Opinion 9.4%..... (603)

5. Would you support increasing the state's 28.5 cents-per-gallon gas tax by at least 10 cents to help fund highway and bridge needs across the state?

Yes..... 60.6%..... (3,902)
No..... 32.2%..... (2,077)
Undecided/No Opinion 7.2%..... (462)

6. An ignition interlock device requires users to blow into a breathalyzer device on their vehicle's dashboard; if the device detects the presence of alcohol the vehicle will not start. Should everyone convicted of DWI be required to use such a device for a prescribed period of time before they can retain full driving privileges?

Yes..... 74.6%..... (4,802)
No..... 16.5%..... (1,064)
Undecided/No Opinion 8.9%..... (574)

7. Should it be mandatory that employees in workplaces with six or more workers accumulate one hour of sick leave for every 30 hours worked, with a maximum of 40 hours of accrual each year?

Yes..... 58.9%..... (3,724)
No..... 28.4%..... (1,799)
Undecided/No Opinion 12.7%..... (802)

8. When a mentally capable adult is dying from a terminal illness, do you think this adult should be allowed to receive a prescription for life-ending medication they may self-administer?

Yes..... 66.8%..... (4,226)
No..... 22.8%..... (1,441)
Undecided/No Opinion 10.5%..... (664)

9. Should it be illegal to talk on a wireless communication device while driving?

Yes..... 51.6%..... (3,236)
No..... 39.7%..... (2,487)
Undecided/No Opinion 8.7%..... (547)

10. Should the state provide an individual income tax credit of up to \$5,000 for principal and interest payments on student loans?

Yes..... 67.5%..... (4,269)
No..... 20.6%..... (1,302)
Undecided/No Opinion 11.9%..... (751)

11. From 1913 until 1973, Minnesota legislators were elected on nonpartisan ballots, meaning there was no political party designation for individual members. Should legislators be elected without political party designation?

Yes..... 37.6%..... (2,377)
No..... 46.4%..... (2,932)
Undecided/No Opinion 15.9%..... (1,006)

12. State legislators currently earn \$31,140 annually, and they are eligible for per diem and other expenses. Should an independent, citizens-only council be created to set salaries for legislators? This question will be on the November 2016 ballot as a proposed constitutional amendment.

Yes..... 64.4%..... (4,063)
No..... 19.5%..... (1,232)
Undecided/No Opinion 16.1%..... (1,018)