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# Minnesota House of Representatives

## 2004 State Fair Poll Results

[St. Paul] – Minnesotans overwhelmingly support same-day voter registration, satisfactory school attendance for a teenager to receive a driver’s license and that school districts should not charge students for bus service.

Those were among the findings of an unofficial poll conducted by the Minnesota House of Representatives during the 2004 Minnesota State Fair.

Fair-goers strongly support smoking bans in bars and eateries, the Legislature meeting every year and that a set percentage of state tax dollars go toward certain areas of the state budget. They also believe that off-highway vehicle use on publicly owned lands should be limited, tax breaks should be given for persons who buy alternative-fuel vehicles and that college students convicted of a crime in connection with a riot should lose state aid eligibility.

A narrow majority of poll-takers believe that optional toll lanes should be used as a way to reduce congestion in high traffic areas and that failure to wear a seat belt should remain a secondary offense.

Respondents still believe that talking on a cell phone while driving should be illegal. However, support decreased from 58.4 percent in 2001 to 53.7 percent this year.

Additionally, those casting ballots narrowly believe that the job opportunity building zone program, designed to

help economically distressed areas of the state, should not be expanded.

There was a considerable amount of gambling discussion during the 2004 legislative session with proceeds targeted for a variety of purposes. Yet more than half of all poll respondents generally oppose the expansion of legalized gambling, with about one-third supporting the idea.

Finally, fair-goers rated cheese curds as their favorite fair goodie, just ahead of a Pronto Pup. Mini-donuts, chocolate chip cookies and corn on the cob, each received more than 15 percent of the vote.

An overwhelming majority (80 percent) of poll-takers indicated that they are residents of the Twin Cities metropolitan area. Approximately 14.2 percent live in Greater Minnesota and the remainder live in other metropolitan areas in the state, such as Duluth, St. Cloud or Rochester.

A total of 8,818 fair-goers took the poll, which is an informal, unscientific survey on a number of issues that have been discussed in prior legislative sessions and may be topics of discussion again. Approximately 7,300 ballots were cast in 2003, about 100 more than in 2002. The results were electronically calculated after the fair concluded Sept. 6.

Here’s a look at the questions and the results.

**1. A number of Minnesota cities have approved bans on smoking in bars and eateries. Should such a ban be implemented statewide?**

Yes.....	59.4%.....	(5,240)
No.....	33.8%.....	(2,982)
Undecided/No Opinion.....	6.2%.....	(548)
Left blank/vote not tallied.....	0.5%.....	(48)

**2. In general, do you support or oppose the expansion of legalized gambling in Minnesota?**

Support.....	32.2%.....	(2,840)
Oppose.....	53.1%.....	(4,685)
Undecided/No Opinion.....	13.9%.....	(1,222)
Left blank/vote not tallied.....	0.8%.....	(71)

**3. Do you support or oppose laws that limit the use of off-highway vehicles (i.e. all-terrain vehicles, off-road trucks and motorcycles) on publicly owned lands?**

Support.....	65.0%.....	(5,734)
Oppose.....	23.9%.....	(2,110)
Undecided/No Opinion.....	10.3%.....	(906)
Left blank/vote not tallied.....	0.8%.....	(68)

**4. Under current law, a driver must be stopped or detained for a moving violation before a citation can be issued for failure to wear a seat belt. Should the law be changed to make not wearing a seat belt a primary offense?**

Yes.....	42.1%.....	(3,716)
No.....	50.6%.....	(4,462)
Undecided/No opinion.....	6.6%.....	(579)
Left blank/vote not tallied.....	0.7%.....	(61)

**5. As part of a long-term plan to improve traffic flow on Interstate 394 west of Minneapolis, the high-occupancy vehicle lanes, now reserved for car pools and mass transit, are being converted to express lanes that permit single occupant drivers to pay a fee to use the lanes. Funds collected will be used to cover implementation costs and transportation and transit improvements in the corridor. In general, do you support toll lanes as a way to improve efficiency in high traffic areas?**

Yes.....	48.1%.....	(4,238)
No.....	42.1%.....	(3,712)
Undecided/No Opinion.....	9.0%.....	(795)
Left blank/vote not tallied.....	0.8%.....	(73)

**6. Should satisfactory school attendance be required for a teenager to receive a driver's license?**

Yes.....77.0%..... (6,788)  
No.....17.7%..... (1,559)  
Undecided/No Opinion .....4.6%..... (409)  
Left blank/vote not tallied.....0.7%..... (62)

**7. State law requires school districts to provide free transportation to any pupil who lives more than two miles from school, provided the bus ride is to a school in the student's attendance area. A school district may charge fees for other types of bus service, including if a student lives closer than two miles to school. Should school districts be allowed to charge all students for bus service?**

Yes.....21.7%..... (1,914)  
No.....70.0%..... (6,166)  
Undecided/No Opinion .....7.5%..... (665)  
Left blank/vote not tallied.....0.8%..... (73)

**8. Should a college student convicted of a crime in connection with a riot lose eligibility for state financial aid?**

Yes.....57.6%..... (5,077)  
No.....32.5%..... (2,868)  
Undecided/No Opinion .....9.1%..... (801)  
Left blank/vote not tallied.....0.8%..... (72)

**9. Do you support or oppose the creation of dedicated funds so that a set percentage of tax dollars would go toward certain areas of the budget, such as education or the environment?**

Support.....60.1%..... (5,300)  
Oppose.....24.5%..... (2,163)  
Undecided/No Opinion .....14.5%..... (1,279)  
Left blank/vote not tallied.....0.9%..... (76)

**10. The Legislature now meets every year. Should the state constitution be changed so that it meets every other year, as was the case between 1879 and 1973?**

Yes.....27.6%..... (2,437)  
No.....60.1%..... (5,298)  
Undecided/No Opinion .....9.9%..... (869)  
Left blank/vote not tallied.....2.4%..... (214)

**11. Minnesota is one of six states to allow same-day voter registration. Do you support or oppose this practice?**

Support.....73.0%..... (6,434)  
Oppose.....20.4%..... (1,797)  
Undecided/No Opinion .....4.2%..... (368)  
Left blank/vote not tallied.....2.5%..... (219)

**12. A 2003 law allows for up to 10 job opportunity building zones in economically distressed rural areas of the state. Businesses in the zones are permitted to forgo sales, income and property taxes for up to 12 years and persons investing in the zone business are exempt from applicable income and capital gains taxes. Should this program be expanded?**

Yes.....34.7%..... (3,056)  
No.....39.3%..... (3,463)  
Undecided/No Opinion .....23.2%..... (2,042)  
Left blank/vote not tallied.....2.9%..... (257)

**13. Should the state make talking on a cellular phone while driving illegal?**

Yes.....53.7%..... (4,736)  
No.....36.9%..... (3,252)  
Undecided/No Opinion .....6.6%..... (585)  
Left blank/vote not tallied.....2.8%..... (245)

**14. Should the state provide a motor vehicle sales tax exemption for persons who purchase alternative-fuel vehicles? Examples of alternative fuels include: alcohol fuels that are at least 70 percent alcohol by volume, natural gas, hydrogen, fuels derived from biological products, and electricity, including solar power.**

Yes.....63.2%..... (5,574)  
No.....26.2%..... (2,308)  
Undecided/No Opinion .....8.0%..... (709)  
Left blank/vote not tallied.....2.6%..... (227)

**15. Of the following, which is your favorite state fair food?**

Cheese Curds.....21.8%..... (1,918)  
Chocolate Chip Cookies.....16.7%..... (1,473)  
Corn on the Cob.....15.5%..... (1,367)  
Mini-Donuts.....16.9%..... (1,493)  
Pronto Pup.....19.3%..... (1,705)  
Left blank/vote not tallied.....9.8%..... (862)

(All percentages are rounded off to the nearest one-tenth.)