



**SENATE INFORMATION OFFICE**  
231 Capitol Building  
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
651-296-0504

# **2009 State Fair Opinion Poll Minnesota State Senate Survey Results**

September 8, 2009

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 2010.

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

**Minnesota State Senate  
2009 State Fair Poll**

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

**6702 Total Respondents**

---

**Demographics**

Male	<b>48.95% (3249)</b>
Female	<b>51.05% (3388)</b>
Minneapolis/St. Paul	<b>32.33% (2146)</b>
Rural	<b>15.52% (1030)</b>
Suburban	<b>46.82% (3108)</b>
Regional hub (Rochester, Duluth, etc.)	<b>4.73% (314)</b>
Another state	<b>.60% (40)</b>
18-29	<b>13.07% (866)</b>
30-49	<b>26.48% (1754)</b>
50-64	<b>41.51% (2750)</b>
65 and older	<b>18.99% (1258)</b>
<i>Party Affiliation:</i>	
DFL Party	<b>42.42% (2805)</b>
Republican Party	<b>22.20% (1468)</b>
Independence Party	<b>2.54% (168)</b>
Independent or other	<b>18.81% (1244)</b>
No comment	<b>14.02% (927)</b>

---

1. Should the state primary election be moved from September to June?

A. Yes.	<b>26.75% (1762)</b>
B. No.	<b>44.66% (2941)</b>
C. Undecided/No Opinion.	<b>28.59% (1883)</b>

2. Minnesota law currently bans the construction of nuclear power plants. Should this law be repealed?

A. Yes.	<b>54.34% (3598)</b>
B. No.	<b>34.72% (2299)</b>
C. Undecided/No Opinion.	<b>10.93% (724)</b>

3. Should health insurance companies be prohibited from denying coverage or charging more because of “pre-existing conditions?”
- A. Yes. **67.17% (4448)**  
 B. No. **27.44% (1817)**  
 C. Undecided/No Opinion. **5.39% (357)**
4. Would you support legislation that would provide same-sex couples with the same legal and economic rights and responsibilities as married couples, such as providing health care insurance coverage for one another, inheritance and pension benefits, hospital visitations, and medical decision making?
- A. Yes. **61.24% (4065)**  
 B. No. **33.67% (2235)**  
 C. Undecided/No Opinion. **5.09% (338)**
5. The Minnesota State Grant is a state-funded award that helps students from low and moderate income families pay for college in Minnesota at either public or private institutions. Should this grant be given only to students attending public colleges and universities in the state?
- A. Yes, restrict it to public colleges or universities. **39.76% (2630)**  
 B. No, keep the current policy that includes public and private. **54.52% (3606)**  
 C. Undecided/No Opinion. **5.71% (378)**
6. Should job creation and stimulus bills include subsidies for private business developments, such as the Mall of America?
- A. Yes. **31.17% (2053)**  
 B. No. **53.62% (3532)**  
 C. Undecided/No Opinion. **15.21% (1002)**
7. If gas tax revenues continue to decline, should the state look for other ways to pay for transportation improvements? (Select only one answer.)
- A. No. **27.92% (1842)**  
 B. Yes, tax based on miles traveled. **11.20% (739)**  
 C. Yes, with higher charges for driving during rush hour. **3.27% (216)**  
 D. Yes, by raising gas tax. **27.12% (1789)**  
 E. Yes, impose a tax based on vehicle weight. **19.25% (1270)**  
 F. Undecided/No Opinion. **11.23% (741)**

8. Should the Legislature impose more limits on when and how the Governor can use executive authority to unallot appropriations to balance the budget?

- |                          |                      |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| A. Yes.                  | <b>54.51% (3610)</b> |
| B. No.                   | <b>38.49% (2549)</b> |
| C. Undecided/No Opinion. | <b>7.00% (464)</b>   |

9. Should gambling be expanded to raise revenue for the state?

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| A. I oppose any increase in gambling.                           | <b>45.04% (2982)</b> |
| B. I support slot machines at a licensed horse racing facility. | <b>13.32% (882)</b>  |
| C. I support slot machines in bars throughout the state.        | <b>3.41% (226)</b>   |
| D. I support both B and C.                                      | <b>30.39% (2012)</b> |
| E. Undecided/No Opinion.  | <b>7.84% (519)</b>   |

10. When there is a budget shortfall, how should the Legislature resolve it?

- |                           |                      |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| A. Increase taxes.        | <b>7.82% (496)</b>   |
| B. Increase user fees.    | <b>1.99% (126)</b>   |
| C. Both A and B.          | <b>7.52% (477)</b>   |
| D. Reduce state spending. | <b>41.61% (2638)</b> |
| E. All of the above.      | <b>39.42% (2499)</b> |
| F. Undecided/No Opinion.  | <b>1.64% (104)</b>   |

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

- |  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| A. Extend the sales tax to clothing.   | <b>6.23% (393)</b>   |
| B. Extend the sales tax to services<br>(such as haircuts, attorney fees, etc.) | <b>3.26% (206)</b>   |
| C. Extend the sales tax to both clothing and services.                         | <b>5.01% (316)</b>   |
| D. Increase the sales tax rate.  | <b>4.36% (275)</b>   |
| E. Increase personal income tax across the board.                              | <b>4.72% (298)</b>   |
| F. Increase personal income tax on the highest income earners.                 | <b>34.63% (2185)</b> |
| G. All of the above.   | <b>7.30% (461)</b>   |
| H. I oppose any tax increase.  | <b>32.38% (2043)</b> |
| I. Undecided/No Opinion.   | <b>2.11% (133)</b>   |

12. If the Legislature decides to cut funding to resolve a budget shortfall in 2010, which area should be cut first?

A. E-12 education.	<b>3.73% (234)</b>
B. Higher Education.	<b>5.73% (360)</b>
C. Health and social service programs.	<b>11.08% (696)</b>
D. Corrections/Public Safety.	<b>4.41% (277)</b>
E. Aid to local government.	<b>9.82% (617)</b>
F. Transportation.	<b>4.08% (256)</b>
G. Environment/Pollution Control.	<b>14.07% (884)</b>
H. I oppose any further cuts in state spending.	<b>40.17% (2523)</b>
I. Undecided/No Opinion.	<b>6.90% (434)</b>

13. The rate of groundwater use in Minnesota is increasing faster than the rate of population growth, and many municipalities are enacting water use restrictions. Should the Legislature require local municipalities to initiate or expand water conservation pricing for those who use excessive amounts of water?

A. Yes.	<b>68.53% (4312)</b>
B. No.	<b>21.60% (1359)</b>
C. Undecided/No Opinion.	<b>9.87% (621)</b>

14. Should a student be denied a high school diploma for not making a passing grade on a statewide mathematics test?

A. Yes.	<b>54.70% (3441)</b>
B. No.	<b>32.62% (2052)</b>
C. Undecided/No Opinion.	<b>12.68% (798)</b>

15. What is your primary source for acquiring governmental or political information?

A. Social networking sites: Twitter, Facebook, etc.	<b>1.28% (79)</b>
B. Other websites.	<b>16.27% (1005)</b>
C. Newspapers.	<b>33.39% (2063)</b>
D. Television.	<b>19.76% (1221)</b>
E. Radio.	<b>19.57% (1209)</b>
F. Family/friends.	<b>2.6% (161)</b>
G. Newsletters, direct mailings, etc., received by mail.	<b>2.38% (147)</b>
H. Other.	<b>4.74% (293)</b>