

EPIC•MRA STATEWIDE POLL – SEPTEMBER 2009

[FREQUENCY REPORT of SURVEY RESPONSES – 800 LIKELY VOTERS -- ERROR ±3.5%]

Polling Dates: September 16, 2009 through September 21, 2009

Based on what you have heard, seen or read, would you say that the state government financial situation in balancing the state budget is in a crisis, is a major problem but not a crisis, is only a minor problem, or is not a problem at all?

<u>TOT</u>	
54%	A crisis
40%	Major problem but not a crisis
94%	TOTAL PROBLEM
5%	Only a minor problem
---	Not a problem at all
1%	Undecided/Don't know/Refused

As you may know, state government in Michigan is currently facing a budget deficit of \$2.7 billion out of a total state general fund budget of approximately \$8.0 billion dollars. Which of the following statements best describes how you think the Governor and the Michigan Legislature should balance the state budget?

<u>TOT</u>	
28%	Cuts in existing programs and services ALONE should be used to balance the state budget;
17%	The state budget should be balanced by MOSTLY relying on cuts in programs and services, but also by PARTLY relying on increases on some taxes and fees to raise revenue;
31%	The state budget should be balanced by relying EQUALLY on cuts in state programs or services AND increases in some taxes and fees to raise revenue;
7%	The state budget should be balance by MOSTLY increasing some taxes and but also by PARTLY making cuts in programs and services;
4%	Increases in taxes and fees ALONE should be used to balance the state budget.
13%	Undecided/Don't know/Refused

Now I would like to read a list of several specific programs and services, most of which would either be cut or eliminated under a plan approved by the Michigan State Senate. For each one I read, please tell me if you favor or oppose the action proposed? [**IF FAVOR/ OPPOSE, ASK**] Would that be strongly or somewhat?

	<u>Strong Favor</u>	<u>TOT Favor</u>	<u>TOT Oppose</u>	<u>Strong Oppose</u>	<u>Undec D/K</u>
Eliminate the Michigan Promise scholarship program that provides college tuition grants of up to \$4,000 for Michigan students	11%	28%	68%	52%	4%
Cut state financial aid payments to local public schools by 400 million dollars, or the equivalent of about 250 dollars per student	10%	20%	77%	61%	3%
Cut Medicaid payments to doctors and hospitals that fund health care for children, disabled and low income people by about 8 percent, or nearly 95 million dollars	7%	21%	75%	57%	4%
Cut funding for prisons and public safety by closing some state and local prisons, requiring consolidation of prisoners and the early release of others	12%	37%	56%	40%	7%
Cutting revenue sharing by 162 million dollars for local governments that fund police, fire and other local services	8%	28%	64%	42%	8%
Cutting funding for community colleges and job training programs	9%	29%	68%	48%	3%
Cutting funding mental health programs	6%	27%	66%	46%	7%
Cutting funding for the state police	6%	22%	75%	53%	3%
Eliminate funding for tax incentives for companies that film movies in Michigan	26%	53%	40%	23%	7%
Cutting funding for enforcement of environmental protections, including air and water quality inspections	15%	37%	58%	39%	5%
Eliminating the Earned Income Tax Credit that is provided for low income families	11%	26%	66%	46%	8%
Reduce or eliminate property credits and state income tax exemptions for Michigan senior citizens	8%	21%	74%	54%	5%

Thinking about the specific cuts that I just described, which will cut the budget shortfall roughly in half or – cut an estimated \$1.2 billion out of the \$2.7 billion budget deficit, let me ask you again -- which of the following statements best describes how you think the state budget should be balanced?

<u>TOT</u>	
24%	Cuts in existing programs and services ALONE should be used to balance the state budget;
17%	The state budget should be balanced by MOSTLY relying on cuts in programs and services, but also by PARTLY relying on increases on some taxes and fees to raise revenue;
33%	The state budget should be balanced by relying EQUALLY on cuts in state programs or services AND increases in some taxes and fees to raise revenue;
10%	The state budget should be balance by MOSTLY increasing some taxes and but also by PARTLY making cuts in programs and services;
4%	Increases in taxes and fees ALONE should be used to balance the state budget.
12%	Undecided/Don't know/Refused

Now I would like to read a list of several specific proposals that have been made to increase taxes or eliminate many tax breaks programs as a means of increasing state revenue. For each idea I describe, please tell me if you favor or oppose the action proposed? [**IF FAVOR/ OPPOSE, ASK:** Would that be strongly or somewhat?]

	<u>Strong Favor</u>	<u>TOT Favor</u>	<u>TOT Oppose</u>	<u>Strong Oppose</u>	<u>Undec D/K</u>
Enact an estate tax in Michigan which would impose a tax on estates that are worth more than 2 million dollars when the estate it is passed on to relatives or friends	30%	53%	43%	32%	4%
Increase the state income tax for all taxpayers from the current rate of 4.35 percent on income to 5.35 percent, raising 1.3 billion per year in additional revenue and increases taxes for a family of 4 by just under \$500 per year	11%	33%	64%	47%	3%
Expanding the current 6 cent state sales tax to <u>all</u> services.	17%	40%	55%	41%	5%
Expanding the 6 cent sales tax to include the sale of luxury items and non-essential items such as entertainment, recreation, landscaping and spa treatments	30%	59%	38%	26%	3%
Put a graduated income tax in place where the tax rate would increase for those in the higher income brackets but would lower the rate for up to 90 percent of Michigan taxpayers	35%	61%	32%	23%	7%
Reducing the state sales tax from 6 cents to 5 cents, but applying the lower sales tax rate to the purchase both products and services because the Michigan economy is now more of a service economy than a manufacturing economy	16%	46%	43%	25%	11%
Eliminate tax breaks, exemptions and other loopholes for corporations, generating approximately \$600 million annually	38%	66%	28%	18%	6%

Again, thinking about the specific cuts in programs and services that I described before, and the tax increase proposals I just described, let me ask you a final time -- which of the following statements best describes how you think the Governor and Michigan Legislature should balance the state budget?

[READ 1 TO 5]

<u>TOT</u>	
26%	Cuts in existing programs and services ALONE should be used to balance the state budget;
18%	The state budget should be balanced by MOSTLY relying on cuts in programs and services, but also by PARTLY relying on increases on some taxes and fees to raise revenue;
30%	The state budget should be balanced by relying EQUALLY on cuts in state programs or services AND increases in some taxes and fees to raise revenue;
11%	The state budget should be balance by MOSTLY increasing some taxes and but also by PARTLY making cuts in programs and services;
5%	Increases in taxes and fees ALONE should be used to balance the state budget.
10%	Undecided/Don't know/Refused