



INSIDE MICHIGAN POLITICS

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IMP-MRG STATEWIDE POLL:

***Governor's Race A Toss Up – GOP Primary: A Two-Person Race?
Voters Oppose Granholm Tax Plan
Voters Prefer Government Shut Down Over Tax Hike
And Say No To Lucky Tab Two***

(Lansing, Mich.) — In a recent statewide poll, the race for Governor is still a toss-up with Lieutenant Governor John Cherry narrowly trailing Republicans Mike Bouchard and Mike Cox, but slightly leading Rick Snyder in separate general election matchups. In the GOP primary match-up, Attorney General Mike Cox holds a narrow lead over Congressman Peter Hoekstra. In the Democrat primary matchup, Lt. Governor Cherry holds a significant lead over his opponents, while not yet breaking the 50 percent margin.

In addition to assessing the 2010 Governor's race, this new poll measures likely voters' opinions of several issues currently in the news, including the various proposals being offered to balance Michigan's 2010 state budget. According to the poll, Governor Granholm's plan to raise taxes on cigarettes, sports and entertainment tickets, bottled water, vending machines, and some services is getting a cool reception from voters. And with the threat looming in Lansing, voters would rather see state government partially shutdown than see their taxes go up.

A majority of respondents also oppose a new plan to raise state revenue by expanding the Michigan Lottery, adding pull-tab games to bars and restaurants.

Republican Primary

"The GOP primary is currently a two-person race. Mike Cox and Pete Hoekstra are in a virtual dead heat in the GOP primary with the Attorney General holding a slight lead. The other candidates will have to find a way to shake up the field between now and next August, to break through in the primary," said Tom Shields, president of MRG.

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The results show a tight race between Attorney General Mike Cox and Congressman Pete Hoekstra. Running in third place is Oakland County Sheriff Mike Bouchard. State Senator Tom George and businessman Rick Snyder garner two percent each. Cox and Hoekstra have both picked up support since the Spring MRG-IMP survey conducted in March of this year.

All possible Republican primary voters were asked:

If the Republican primary election for Michigan Governor were being held today ... for whom would you vote?

TOTAL BOUCHARD.....	15%
TOTAL COX.....	27%
TOTAL GEORGE	2%
TOTAL HOEKSTRA	23%
TOTAL SNYDER.....	2%

LIKELY REPUBLICANS ONLY

TOTAL BOUCHARD.....	15%
TOTAL COX.....	27%
TOTAL GEORGE	2%
TOTAL HOEKSTRA	26%
TOTAL SNYDER.....	2%

Democrat Primary

Lt. Governor John Cherry holds a large lead over his announced opponents, former State Representative John Freeman and current State Senator Alma Wheeler Smith. Surprisingly, Cherry has not cracked the 50 percent mark against the two relatively unknown candidates. All possible Democrat primary voters were asked:

If the Democrat primary election for Michigan Governor were being held today ... for whom would you vote?

TOTAL CHERRY.....	38%
TOTAL FREEMAN.....	8%
TOTAL WHEELER SMITTH.....	6%

LIKELY DEMOCRATS ONLY

TOTAL CHERRY.....	40%
TOTAL FREEMAN.....	9%
TOTAL WHEELER SMITTH.....	8%

Possible General Election Match-ups

“Cherry clearly has trouble. In a state that has been trending Democrat in recent elections, Cherry is trailing every credible Republican candidate,” said Shields.

“It's also clear that if Andy Dillon were to run for governor as an Independent, he has a lot of ground to make up to become a serious candidate. Furthermore, there is little evidence at this point that he would hurt the Democratic nominee more than the Republican," said Bill Ballenger, editor and publisher of *Inside Michigan Politics*.

In this poll, likely voters were asked how Lt. Governor John Cherry would fare in matchups against Mike Bouchard and Rick Snyder. In addition, we offered respondents a hypothetical matchup of Republican Cox, Democrat Cherry, and Independent Andy Dillon. Bouchard narrowly leads the Lt. Governor, while the virtually unknown Rick Snyder trails by only eight points. In the third matchup, with Dillon running as an Independent, Cox narrowly edges out Cherry, while Dillon is in third at 13 percent. The Spring 2009 MRG-IMP poll had John Cherry trailing Mike Cox, Brooks Patterson, and Terri Lynn Land by slightly larger margins in head-to-head matchups.

*If the general election for Michigan Governor were being held today ...
for whom would you vote?*

TOTAL BOUCHARD 41%
TOTAL CHERRY 38%

Or ...

TOTAL SNYDER 34%
TOTAL CHERRY 42%

Or ...

TOTAL COX..... 35%
TOTAL CHERRY 33%
TOTAL DILLON.....13%

Granolm Tax Plan

“Voters appear to be in no mood for tax increases. They oppose the Granholm plan to raise taxes, and, by a narrow margin, they would even prefer to see state government shut down completely than have their taxes raised,” said Ballenger. Fifty-eight percent of voters oppose (46 percent strongly oppose) the Governor’s proposal to avoid some budget cuts by raising a variety of taxes. The actual wording of the question follows below:

As you may know, Governor Granholm recently released her plan to balance the state budget. While it includes nearly \$2.2 billion in budget cuts, it also includes nearly \$1.1 billion in new and higher taxes. These tax increases include:

- A 25 cent increase in the cigarette tax, from \$2.00 to \$2.25 per pack,*
- A 6 percent tax on all sports and entertainment tickets,*
- A new tax on vending machine purchases,*
- A new tax on services such as landscaping and home and car maintenance,*
- A new one percent tax on bottled water, and*
- A 12 percent reduction in all business tax credits, including those offered to the film industry.*

Generally speaking, do support or oppose the tax increases included in Governor Granholm's budget proposal.

<i>Strongly support.....</i>	<i>17%</i>
<i>Somewhat support.....</i>	<i>22%</i>
<i>Neither support nor oppose</i>	<i>1%</i>
<i>Somewhat oppose.....</i>	<i>12%</i>
<i>Strongly oppose.....</i>	<i>46%</i>
<i>Don't know (Volunteered).....</i>	<i>2%</i>
<i>Refused (Volunteered).....</i>	<i>0%</i>
<i>TOTAL SUPPORT.....</i>	<i>39%</i>
<i>TOTAL OPPOSE</i>	<i>58%</i>

Government Shutdown Versus Raising Taxes

By a narrow margin the voters of Michigan would rather see the state government close its doors rather than raise taxes. The actual wording of the question follows below:

As you may know, state Republicans and Democrats are fiercely debating how to balance the 2010 state budget but haven't yet come to an agreement. Essentially, the sticking point is over taxes: Democrats want to include tax increases, while Republicans do not. If the governor and legislature don't agree on a state budget by October 1, the end of the fiscal year, state government may be forced to shut down, except for essential services like prisons, police, fire and emergency services. Please tell me which of the following statements comes closest to your own opinion regarding this issue...

A: We should do what ever it takes to avoid a state government shutdown, even if means raising taxes to balance the budget.

Or...

B: We should not raise taxes to balance the state budget, even if it means that state government will shut down on October 1 without an agreement.

Statement A (Avoid Shutdown)..... 45%

Statement B (Do Not Raise Taxes)..... 51%

Expand Lottery By Allowing Pull-tab Game

“The voters' foul mood means they're suspicious of gimmicks --- they also oppose a scheme to allow gambling to be expanded at the state's horse racing tracks,” said Ballenger.

A majority (52 percent) opposes the expansion of the state lottery by allowing pull-tab games. Forty-two percent are strongly opposed to this expansion:

The Michigan Lottery is considering placing new gaming machines called Lucky Tab Two in Michigan bars and horse racetracks across Michigan. While these new machines would look like casino slot machines, they would require players to match a number on a pull-tab with the number on the screen to win. Proponents say the new gaming machines could raise up to \$1 billion in new revenue for the state and help revive the horseracing industry in Michigan. Opponents say this would be an illegal expansion of gaming in Michigan, turning bars and racetracks into mini casinos, and that voters already banned slot-type machines at horse racetracks in 2004. Generally speaking, do you support or oppose new Michigan Lottery gaming machines at bars and horse racetracks in Michigan?

Strongly support..... 22%

Somewhat support..... 20%

Neither support nor oppose 2%

Somewhat oppose..... 11%

Strongly oppose..... 42%

Don't know (Volunteered)..... 3%

Refused (Volunteered)..... 1%

TOTAL SUPPORT 43%

TOTAL OPPOSE 52%

The statewide poll was conducted from September 12 to 20 among a random sampling of 600 likely Michigan voters. Given the sample size of 600 and the method of random selection, the statistical margin of error is plus or minus 4.1 percent within a 95 percent degree of confidence.

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