



INSIDE MICHIGAN POLITICS

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School Choice and 48-Month Welfare Cap Popular With Voters Across The State

Voters Still Approve of Medical Marijuana, But Most Want Law Retooled

Lansing, MI – School choice, the 48-month cap on welfare benefits, and medical marijuana are all supported by a majority of Michigan voters according to a recent statewide survey.

Voters were asked if they would support legislation to expand school choice, allowing any Michigan student to attend any public school they wish, except in cases where that school had no additional space. Fifty-four percent approved of expanded school choice while 36 percent were opposed.

“Despite the vocal opposition by some in the school establishment, school choice is still popular with Michigan voters. With the strongest support coming from parents of school aged children (61 percent support), it appears that parents want as many options as possible for their kids,” said Tom Shields, president of Marketing Resource Group.

Another hot topic around the capitol, medical marijuana, continues to be popular among citizens. The medical marijuana law passed by an overwhelming majority in 2010 and support for it still stands at 70 percent. However, that support comes with some reservations, as 52 percent of those who support medical marijuana say the state should revise the law to address concerns of the courts and legislature.

“Fifty-two percent of voters believe we should continue to allow ill people to use marijuana prescribed by their doctors, but believe the existing law should be refined to address the concerns of the courts and the legislature. Only 18 percent believe we should leave the current law alone and slightly more than a quarter feel the marijuana law should be repealed entirely. If it were up to the voters, medical marijuana would

remain legal, with some minor tweaking.” said Bill Ballenger, publisher of Inside Michigan Politics. “There is also strong support for the governor’s proposal to put a time limit on welfare benefits,” Ballenger continues. “The 48-month cap on welfare benefits recently passed and signed into law also received strong support. Fully 60 percent supported the legislation while only 26 percent opposed.”

The actual wording of the questions and the results are below...

As you may know, Michigan has had a school choice law in place since 1996, allowing students in K through 12 schools to attend other schools outside their own school districts under certain conditions. Now, the Legislature is considering bills to expand "school choice" to allow any Michigan student to attend any public school he or she wants to anywhere in Michigan unless that district can demonstrate that it has no room for additional students. Do you (**ROTATE:** support or oppose) this new "school choice" legislation? (**IF SUPPORT/OPPOSE ASK:** Do you strongly (support/oppose) it or just somewhat (support/oppose) it?)

Strongly support	30%
Somewhat support.....	23%
Neither support nor oppose	4%
Somewhat oppose	9%
Strongly oppose.....	27%
Don't know (Volunteered)	6%
Refused (Volunteered)	0%
 TOTAL SUPPORT.....	 54%
TOTAL OPPOSE	36%

A new Michigan law was just approved that imposes a four-year lifetime limit on cash welfare assistance for Michigan citizens who receive it. Some recipients who qualify, such as those with a disability, are still eligible to receive assistance beyond the limit. Do you (**ROTATE:** support or oppose) this new 48-month cap on welfare assistance in Michigan? (**IF SUPPORT/OPPOSE ASK:** Do you strongly (support/oppose) it or just somewhat (support/oppose) it?)

Strongly support.....	36%
Somewhat support.....	24%
Neither support nor oppose	6%
Somewhat oppose.....	10%
Strongly oppose	16%
Don't know (Volunteered)	9%
Refused (Volunteered).....	*
TOTAL SUPPORT	59%
TOTAL OPPOSE	25%

In November of 2008, Michigan voters approved a new state law allowing the medical use of marijuana. The new law allows seriously ill people in Michigan to legally grow limited amounts of marijuana and to use it with a doctor's approval, but never in public or while driving. Last month, however, a Michigan court ruled that dispensaries selling medical marijuana from patient to patient are illegal. Some in the Legislature claim that the current law is unworkable and should therefore be repealed.

Do you believe we should...(ROTATE A THROUGH C)

A: Keep the current medical marijuana law as it is,

...or...

B: Continue to allow ill people to use marijuana in Michigan, but revise the current law to address the State’s concerns,

...or...

C: Repeal the medical marijuana law altogether and make all use of marijuana illegal again in Michigan?

A: Keep Law As Is.....	18%
B: Continue Law, But Revise	52%
C: Repeal Altogether	26%
Other (Volunteered)	1%
Don't know (Volunteered)	3%
Refused (Volunteered)	*

* indicates less than 1%

The survey sampled 600 likely voters, stratified by city and/or township and based on past voting history. The statistical margin of error is +/- 4 percent. The survey was conducted September 14-19, 2011. Eighty-eight percent of the surveys were conducted over the telephone by professional interviewers and 12 percent were conducted online with likely voters in cell-phone-only households. Twenty-six percent of the respondents identified themselves as Republicans, 30 percent as Democrats and 43 percent as Independents.

About Marketing Resource Group, Inc.

Lansing, Michigan-based Marketing Resource Group, Inc. (www.mrgmi.com) is an award-winning PR firm representing corporate, association, nonprofit, and private clients with interests in Michigan. MRG offers expertise in public affairs, communications, political campaign management, and public opinion survey research. For more than thirty years, MRG has conducted its bi-annual omnibus Michigan Poll™, tracking the pulse of Michigan voters on key statewide public policy and political issues. MRG is the only Michigan public opinion survey research firm that maintains nearly 30 years of trend analyses of voter attitudes related to state and national leaders, political parties, and the political and economic climate in Michigan. MRG has earned six Public Relations Society of America Silver Anvil awards, the PR profession’s highest honor.

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