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# Minnesota House of Representatives

Paul Thissen, Speaker

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## 2013 State Fair Poll Results

### Majority of polltakers support minimum wage increase

*Medical marijuana, gun show background checks also get solid support*

Polltakers at the Minnesota House of Representatives state fair booth strongly believe that the state's minimum wage should be increased, medical marijuana should be legalized and background checks should be required when purchasing a firearm from a private seller at a gun show.

Conducted by the nonpartisan House Public Information Services Office, the annual state fair poll is an informal, unscientific survey of issues discussed in prior legislative sessions and may be topics of discussion in 2014.

Of the more than 7,000 people taking the 2013 poll, 65.5 percent believe that the state's minimum wage should be increased to \$8.50 per hour for employers with annual gross sales of less than \$500,000, and \$9.50 per hour for large employers.

The House passed a bill in 2013 that would have gradually increased the state's minimum wage to \$9.50 per hour by Aug. 1, 2015; however, the Senate passed a version that increased the hourly minimum wage to \$7.75 over two years. A conference committee was not called to work out the differences before the session ended.

More than 82 percent of polltakers believe a background check should be conducted if a buyer wants to purchase a firearm from a private seller at a gun show. A bill to pass the so-called "gun-show loophole" was approved by a House committee in 2013 on a mostly party-line vote. However, HF285 did not come up for a floor vote. A question on the 2010 poll that asked if background checks should be required on all gun show purchases received an 85.2 percent favorable response.

Nearly three-fourths of those voting at the House booth think doctors should be able to prescribe medical marijuana to seriously ill people, if they believe the drug will help ease a patient's suffering. That is a 5.7 percent increase from when a similar question was asked in 2009.

An education issue received strong support with more than 75 percent believing that students should achieve

a minimum score on math, reading and writing tests to get their high school diploma. This session's omnibus K-12 education law (HF630\*/SF453) replaced state graduation exams with a new set of tests on which students would not have to achieve a minimum score in order to graduate.

A pair of environmental-related questions received favorable responses, but also found plenty of undecided voters. Almost 58 percent believe electric fish barriers should be erected on the Minnesota, Mississippi and St. Croix rivers in hopes of keeping out Asian carp and nearly 47 percent of respondents support moving the fishing opener up a week so it doesn't conflict with Mother's Day. However, 28 percent were undecided or had no opinion on electric fish barriers; 26.2 percent for moving the fishing opener.

Polltakers also believe:

- uniform regulations need to be created for cat and dog breeders (64 percent);
- Minnesotans should be able to vote at a specified location up to two weeks before the general election (62.1 percent);
- promoters should disclose how many concert tickets will be made available to the general public (61 percent);
- an independent, citizens-only council should set legislator salaries (59.8 percent); and
- the state's gas tax should be increased by a nickel to help fund the backlog of highway and bridge needs around the state (53.4 percent).

The lone question to receive more "no" votes was if governments should be able to use intersection cameras to prosecute drivers who run red lights. The so-called "Photocop" was rejected by 51.7 percent of voters.

Here's a look at the questions and results. All percentages are rounded to the nearest one-tenth. Totals are for those that actually voted on the question.

**1. The state's minimum wage is currently \$6.15 per hour. Should it be raised to \$8.50 per hour for small employers (those with annual gross sales of less than \$500,000) and \$9.50 per hour for large employers?**

Yes..... 65.5%..... (4,602)  
No..... 28.3%..... (1,985)  
Undecided/No Opinion ..... 6.2%..... (435)

**2. Should it be legal for doctors to prescribe medical marijuana to seriously ill people if they believe the drug will help treat the patient's condition and reduce their suffering?**

Yes..... 74.8%..... (5,244)  
No..... 18.6%..... (1,308)  
Undecided/No Opinion ..... 6.6%..... (462)

**3. If someone wants to purchase a firearm from a private seller at a gun show, should a background check be required of the buyer before the purchase can be completed?**

Yes..... 82.4%..... (5,763)  
No..... 14.7%..... (1,031)  
Undecided/No Opinion ..... 2.8%..... (197)

**4. State legislators currently earn \$31,140 annually, and they are eligible for additional per diem and other expenses. Should an independent, citizens-only council be created to set salaries for legislators? This question will be on the November 2016 ballot as a proposed constitutional amendment.**

Yes..... 59.8%..... (4,159)  
No..... 22.2%..... (1,547)  
Undecided/No Opinion ..... 17.9%..... (1,248)

**5. Should the state's gas tax be increased by 5 cents a gallon to help fund the backlog of highway and bridge needs around the state?**

Yes..... 53.4%..... (3,736)  
No..... 39.7%..... (2,779)  
Undecided/No Opinion ..... 6.9%..... (485)

**6. In order to get their high school diploma, should students be required to achieve a minimum score on tests in reading, writing and math?**

Yes..... 75.6%..... (5,244)  
No..... 16.1%..... (1,120)  
Undecided/No Opinion ..... 8.3%..... (574)

**7. Should Minnesotans have the option to vote in person at a specified polling place up to two weeks before the general election?**

Yes..... 62.1%..... (4,304)  
No..... 30.2%..... (2,094)  
Undecided/No Opinion ..... 7.7%..... (537)

**8. In hopes of keeping Asian carp out of Minnesota waters, should electric fish barriers be created in the Mississippi, Minnesota and St. Croix rivers?**

Yes..... 57.7%..... (3,989)  
No..... 14.4%..... (994)  
Undecided/No Opinion ..... 28.0%..... (1,936)

**9. Should local governments be permitted to use intersection cameras to prosecute drivers who run red lights?**

Yes..... 40.8%..... (2,819)  
No..... 51.7%..... (3,570)  
Undecided/No Opinion ..... 7.4%..... (513)

**10. There are no uniform state laws regulating dog and cat breeding. Do regulations need to be created that would include state licensing of breeders, inspection procedures and standards of care?**

Yes..... 64.0%..... (4,430)  
No..... 23.7%..... (1,638)  
Undecided/No Opinion ..... 12.4%..... (857)

**11. Should a promoter be required to state how many tickets for a concert will be made available to the general public after tickets are held back for promotional purposes, such as fan club pre-sales?**

Yes..... 61.0%..... (4,223)  
No..... 19.8%..... (1,369)  
Undecided/No Opinion ..... 19.2%..... (1,328)

**12. The state's fishing opener traditionally falls on the same weekend as Mother's Day. Should the fishing opener be moved up one week?**

Yes..... 46.6%..... (3,213)  
No..... 27.2%..... (1,875)  
Undecided/No Opinion ..... 26.2%..... (1,810)