

Michigan Chamber Survey Shows Overwhelming Voter Support For State Spending Cuts

PRNewswire
LANSING, Mich.

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce today announced the results of a statewide public opinion survey of voter sentiment on taxes, spending and how to balance the state budget. The statewide survey was conducted earlier this month for the Michigan Chamber by Marketing Resource Group, Inc., Lansing.

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20000320/DEM039>)

"We are greatly encouraged by the results of the survey and hope the Legislature and Administration will find this information helpful," said Michigan Chamber President & CEO Jim Barrett. "Seventy-seven percent of respondents said the state should cut spending to balance the budget and only seven percent of the respondents said the overall level of taxes in Michigan is too low."

"The responses to the first two questions clearly show that a solid majority (87 percent) of Michigan residents believe the current level of state and local taxes is about right or too high and that state government should cut spending to deal with the budget deficit," added Barrett.

The Chamber survey also asked voters if they would be more or less likely to vote for a state legislator if they knew that he or she voted to raise taxes to balance the state budget. By a two-to-one ratio, respondents said they would be less likely to vote for a legislator who raised taxes to balance the state budget.

"The response to this question shows that lawmakers would be at odds with state voters and perhaps vulnerable, especially among Republicans, if they raise taxes to balance the state budget," said Tom Shields, President of Marketing Resource Group (MRG).

MRG used the following methodology to conduct the survey. A sample of 600 likely voters was drawn in the State of Michigan and stratified by city and township within county, based upon average voter turnout in statewide general elections. Given the sample size of 600 and the method of random selection, the statistical margin of error can be reliably set at 4.1 percent within a 95 percent degree of confidence. The survey, conducted from February 8 through February 12, 2003, consisted of 600 15-minute telephone interviews. The questions and aggregate results are following.

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce is a statewide business organization that represents approximately 6,500 employers, trade associations and local chambers of commerce. The Michigan Chamber was established in 1959 to be an advocate for Michigan's job providers in the legislative, political and legal process.

MRG Statewide Survey, February 2003
Michigan Chamber of Commerce

QUESTIONS & AGGREGATE RESULTS

A. As you know, for a variety of reasons, the state is faced with budget deficits. Do you think the state should (ROTATE: cut spending or raise taxes) to balance the state budget?

Cut spending	77%
Raise Taxes	10%
Neither (volunteered)	7%
Don't know (volunteered)	7%
Refused (volunteered)	1%

B. Thinking about state, local and public school taxes in Michigan, do you think the overall level of taxes paid by individuals and business is too high, too low, or just about right?

Too High	34%
Too Low	7%
About Right	53%

Don't know (volunteered) 6%
Refused (volunteered) *

C. Would you be more or less likely to vote for a legislator if you knew that he or she voted to raise taxes to balance the state budget? (IF MORE OR LESS LIKELY, ASK: Would that be much (more/less) likely or just somewhat (more/less) likely?)

Much more likely	5%
Somewhat more likely	15%
Makes no difference	29%
Somewhat less likely	20%
Much less likely	21%
Refused	2%
Don't know	8%
TOTAL MORE LIKELY	20%
TOTAL LESS LIKELY	41%

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PRN Photo Desk, +1-888-776-6555 or +1-212-782-2840

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