Annual Minnesota Statewide Survey Fall 2013
2nd Release 12-17  (most important problem facing the state, party best able to handle problem, party control of the MN house, party affiliation)
ST. CLOUD, Minn. – The SCSU Survey at St. Cloud State University has completed its annual fall statewide survey and is releasing the second wave of results. Previous released were results relating to job approvals of Barrack Obama, Mark Dayton, Al Franken, and Amy Klobuchar. Also results from the annual “Feeling Thermometer” including the previously named individuals, plus Congressperson Michelle Bachmann and four political parties (Democrat Party, Republican Party, Libertarian Party and the Tea Party).

This release covers how Minnesotans view the direction of the state, which political party (if any) can best handle their named problem, and political party should control the Minnesota House after the 2014 election.

In a few days’ results relating to Minnesotans views on legalizing marijuana for general and legal purposes and use of marijuana will be released.

A series of questions regarding immigration requires more intensive analysis and may be released in January-February.

In conjunction with each release the results will be posted on the Survey’s website at www.stcloudstate.edu/scsusurvey, in about a 10 days. There may be a delay in posting. For more information on these results contact Dr. Steve Frank at sfrank@stcloudstate.edu or 320-308-4131 (quicker response by email contact).

The 629 (626 after weighting and data cleaning) randomly chosen adult Minnesotans were interviewed Oct. 20-27th via live interviewers and random phone bank digit dialing was used to reach landlines and cell phones. Interviews were conducted by about 48 trained St. Cloud State students who were supervised by faculty and student directors. About 35% of the respondents were cell phone users. The sample is an almost exact match to the state’s population 18+. Slight weighting was done for Hennepin County and age. The county was slightly overrepresented and younger respondents were slightly underrepresented. A more complete methodology section is available but some work on that section is occurring. The overall margin of error is about 4.5% but can vary with subsamples and variation of the results.

ACTUAL QUESTIONS READ ON COMPUTER ASSISTED TELEPHONE INTERVIEWING SYSTEM (CATI)

Let's begin by asking a general question about Minnesota.
Do you think things in the state are generally going in the right direction, or do you feel things have gotten off on the wrong track?
T: 7 10
1. RIGHT DIRECTION
What do you think is the single most important problem facing the State of Minnesota today?
[DO NOT READ LIST. PROBE FOR ONE SPECIFIC RESPONSE]

01. ABORTION
02. AGRICULTURE-GENERAL
03. BRIDGES/ROADS
04. BUDGET/DEFICIT
05. CRIMES/Gangs/VIOLENCE
06. DRUGS USE
07. ECONOMY
08. EDUCATION
09. ENVIRONMENT/GLOBAL WARMING
10. FAMILY ISSUES
11. FINANCIAL ISSUES-MORTGAGE
12. GAMBLING
13. GAS PRICES-ENERGY
14. GUNS
15. HEALTH CARE/INSUR
16. HOUSING (AFFORD/FORECLOSURE)
17. IMMIGRATION
18. NATURAL DISASTERS
19. POLITICS/SHUT DOWN-RELATED.
20. POVERTY/POOR
21. RELIGIOUS/MORAL ISSUES
22. SENIOR ISSUES/ELDERLY
23. SPORTS ISSUES/STADIUMS
24. STATE SERVICE CUTS
25. TAXES
26. TERRORISM/NATIONAL SECURITY
27. UNEMPLOYMENT/NO JOB
28. WELFARE ISSUES
29. OTHER
30. NO PROBLEM FACING STATE
31. DON'T KNOW
32. REFUSED

Answer:

In Minnesota, which political party, if any, do you think can do a better job of handling the problem you have just mentioned - the Republicans, the Democrats, the Tea Party, the Minnesota Independence Party, the Libertarian Party, or the Green Party?

[INDEPENDENCE PARTY IS DIFFERENT FROM THOSE WHO SAY THEY ARE AN INDEPENDENT WHICH IS NO PARTY]
T:

Do you usually consider yourself to be a Democrat, Republican, Libertarian party member, Green party member, Minnesota Independence party member, Tea Party, another party, or are you an independent who is not a member of any party?

T: 7 10
1. DEMOCRAT
2. REPUBLICAN
3. LIBERTARIAN
4. GREEN
5. MN INDEPENDENCE PARTY
6. TEA PARTY
7. OTHER PARTY
8. INDEPENDENT, NOT A MEMBER OF ANY PARTY
9. NOT POLITICAL [VOLUNTEERED]
10. DON'T KNOW
11. REFUSED

I:

Q: Q4LEGCON

T:

Next year all seats of the Minnesota House of Representative will be up for election but not the Minnesota Senate.
If the election for the Minnesota House were being held today which political party would you like to see control the Minnesota House?

T: 8 8
1. DEMOCRAT PARTY
2. REPUBLICAN PARTY
3. TEA PARTY
4. MN INDEPENDENCE PARTY
5. =========================
6. OTHER --VOLUNTEERED
7. DON'T KNOW
8. REFUSED

I:

Q: PARTY2

T:

Although you are an independent, do you usually consider yourself to be closer to the Republicans, Democrats, the Libertarian Party, the Green Party, the Tea Party, or the Minnesota Independence Party?

T: 6 10
1. DEMOCRAT
2. REPUBLICAN
3. LIBERTARIAN
4. GREEN
MINNESOTANS’ VIEWS ON DIRECTION OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

Let’s begin by asking a general question about Minnesota. Do you think things in the state are generally going in the right direction or do you feel things have gotten off on the wrong track?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Wrong Track</th>
<th>Right Direction</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2013 Data N= 618

For the first time in over 3+ years more Minnesota adults think the state is headed in the right direction (45%) compared to those who think the state is on the wrong track (38%). We are much more optimistic than Americans nationwide (roughly 30% right direction for the country—60% or more say wrong track (see [http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/other/direction_of_country-902.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/other/direction_of_country-902.html)).
Democrats (69%-right direction) were more positive about the direction of the state than were Republicans (30%), as well as females (52%) more than males (45%), 18-24 (64%) and those 65+ were more positive than other age groups. Respondents with combined household incomes $15,000 and under (38%) were the least positive. With respect to education adults who did not graduate from high school were the most negative (38% right direction) compared to those with a graduate degree (59%- right direction).

**MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM FACING THE STATE**

In 2012 the survey found the top six problems facing the state were from the top, unemployment/job opportunities (22%), budget and budget deficit (20%), the economy (14%), education funding and quality (9%), and politics/politicians and taxes were tied (6%). In 2010...
the top five were: the economy, budget and budget deficit, unemployment/job opportunities, education funding and quality, and taxes. In 2009, the top five were: health care, budget, education, unemployment, taxes. In 2008, the top five were education, taxes, financial/mortgage crisis, unemployment, health care. In 2007 and 2006, education, taxes, health care, roads, crime.

**Which political party, if any, can best handle respondents named problem**

### Most important problem facing the state

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOP 5</th>
<th>OVERALL top 5</th>
<th>REP better</th>
<th>DEM better</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economy</strong></td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unemployment</strong></td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budget</strong></td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Taxes</strong></td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall All Problems</th>
<th>Dems 36%</th>
<th>Repub. 29%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MINNESOTAN’S VIEW ON WHICH POLITICAL PARTY, IF ANY, THEY WOULD LIKE TO CONTROL THE MN LEGISLATURE AFTER THE 2014 ELECTION

Every few years the Survey asks a generic ballot question (see graph above). The 14 point advantage for Democrats is the biggest difference we have observed. Of course the election is 13 months away and this is a fluid opinion. But when considered with our findings of party affiliation and the feeling thermometer this is not a good place for the Republican Party to be.

Republicans (83%) and Democrats are sticking to their party (87%). As this is a subsample of a sample there is a larger margin of error to consider. Usually Democrats are less committed to their party and candidates. In the 2013 SCSU Survey Democrats enjoy an edge in almost every demographic group. Those favoring Democratic control include every age group; both males and females but a larger gap for Democrats among females; just about every education category with an even split for college graduates and a large gap for Democrats for those with a graduate degree. The 10 county metro area gives the Democrats a 46% to 26% edge while the rest of the state is 46% to 31% Democratic.
**POLITICAL PARTY AFFILIATION OF MN ADULTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.00 democrat</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00 republican</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.00 libertarian</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.00 green</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.00 mn independence party</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.00 tea party</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.00 other party</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.00 not political/not close to any</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.00 dont know</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.00 refused</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MAY NOT EQUAL 100% DUE TO Rounding**

The party affiliation questions consist of two parts. The first is a general question on party identification and then a follow-up for those who say they are independents. Most independents are not true independents and usually vote consistently with one of the major parties. Therefore independents were asked which party they were closer to and most said Democratic or Republican. The above table is the combined results.

The 16 point advantage for Democrats is the largest the Survey has observed. In the past few years it has been about 7-11 points.

Party affiliation used to be a very stable opinion but now it fluctuates depending on issues, candidates and events. Many other summaries of surveys in sources such as RealClearPolitics and HuffPost Pollster, etc., show the Republican “brand is experiencing a negative perception by many. In Minnesota Democrats hold an edge in almost every demographic group. There is a large gender gap with Dems having a 9 point advantage with males and a 14 point advantage among females.
Hot link to Nate Silver