



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Election Day Jackpot or Paying People to Vote?

LANSING, Mich. — Think that a chance to win a million dollars could get you to the polls? Arizona is taking the lead in creative ways to draw voters to the poll with a proposed general election lottery for voters. Michigan voters believe a lottery would increase the number of voters in the booths, but nonetheless think it's a bad idea. Are we just not ready to pay people to vote?

A recent Rossman Group/MIRS/Denno-Noor statewide poll asked Michigan voters a series of questions regarding the potential for a lottery to increase voter participation. Fifty-eight percent of those polled believed that a lottery would increase voter participation, but they weren't so certain they would support it or who would fund it.

Those respondents who believe a lottery would increase voter participation were then asked if they would support such a proposal in Michigan. By a two-to-one margin, participants said they would *not* support a lottery proposal.

Those who were still in support of the proposal were then asked if they would support the lottery if the funds came from the State of Michigan. Sixty-one percent supported taking the funds from the State, while 30 percent did not think the lottery should come from state money.

This according to a recent state-wide survey conducted by Denno-Noor Research, in partnership with The Rossman Group, one of Michigan's top public relations and issue management consulting firms, and Michigan Information & Research Services, Michigan's leading daily legislative and state government newsletter, recently voted the preferred newsletter of Lansing's political insiders.

"It looks like greed outweighs apathy for some Michigan voters, but most want to keep elections jackpot-free for now," said The Rossman Group CEO, Kelly Rossman-McKinney. "Maybe money doesn't really talk after all."

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“African-Americans were more likely than White voters to believe that the lottery would lead to greater voter participation and to be willing to support such a proposal,” said Dennis-Denno, President of Denno-Noor research. “Females were also more supportive of such a proposal than men.”

“Of the small group that ultimately agreed that the lottery would increase turnout and would support a proposal to create a lottery, there was a distinct difference in those who approved and didn’t approve of using state funds for the lottery,” added MIRS President John T. Reurink. “Within that subset, men and those from Detroit, Central Michigan and the Upper Peninsula support using state money, but women and those from Wayne County were not as inclined.”

“Michigan voters believe that a lottery would get people to vote, but wouldn’t support it or be willing to have the state pay for it at this point,” added Rossman-McKinney. “Looks like voter apathy is one problem that the State of Michigan will definitely not fix just by throwing money around. Michigan is just not ready for jackpot elections.”

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Editor’s Note:

Please find wording for the poll questions attached.

Methodology:

This survey was part of the inaugural Rossman Group/MIRS/Denno-Noor Quarterly Survey of the Michigan electorate. 600 respondents were surveyed between October 9 and October 11, and the participation was stratified based on census data and past voter behavior. A screen was employed to include only those participants who said they intended on voting, either at the polls or by absentee ballot, in the November 7, 2006 Election. The margin of error is plus/minus 4 percent.

The questions were worded as follows:

Question One:

“There is a proposal in Arizona to award one million dollars in every general election to one lucky voter, chosen by lottery, simply for voting — no matter whom they vote for. Do you believe such a proposal in Michigan would increase voter participation?”

The Results:

Yes – 58%

No – 36%

Unsure/Does Not Matter/Do Not Care – 6%

Question Two (for those who answered YES to Question One):

“Would you support such a proposal to award one million dollars in every general election to one lucky voter?”

The Results:

Yes – 32%

No – 64%

Unsure/Does Not Matter/Do Not Care – 4%

Question Three (for those who answered YES to Questions One and Two):

“Would you support the proposal to award one million dollars in every general election to one lucky voter if you knew it was paid by the State of Michigan?”

The Results:

Yes – 61%

No – 30%

Unsure/Does Not Matter/Do Not Care – 9%