



The Perricone Group



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Contact: Kelly Rossman-McKinney
Cell: 517-749-0529
Dennis Denno, Denno-Noor Research President
Cell: 517-402-2453
Chuck Perricone, Perricone Group President
Cell: 269 758-3480
Mark Pischea, Rossman Group President
Cell: 517-927-1089

Voters Oppose Foreign Control of Michigan Infrastructure

Overwhelming opposition throws possible revenue enhancement idea out window

LANSING, Mich. — With nearly a nearly \$2 billion budget gap facing the state of Michigan in the next fiscal year legislators are wading through a number of revenue enhancement ideas. But when Michigan voters were asked if they support foreign control of Michigan infrastructure projects as a means of raising revenue, a vast majority said no.

Seventy-two percent of voters indicated that they oppose foreign control of Michigan infrastructure compared to 18 percent who support the measure. Ten percent were undecided.

“Given the state’s continually declining tax revenue and infrastructure that ranks among the most neglected in the country, one might think that nearly any revenue enhancement idea would be considered a good one,” said Kelly Rossman-McKinney, CEO of The Rossman Group “But it seems that voters want no part of this one.”

The poll, asked the question:

Other states have leased bridges, tunnels and freeways to foreign companies to generate significant revenue. Do you support foreign control and operation of major Michigan infrastructure projects key to the state’s economic future?

Younger voters, age 18-35, were among the most supportive with 37 percent in favor of foreign control. The strongest opposition came from Central Michigan voters with 80 percent and opposed Upper Peninsula voters with 88 percent opposed.

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Surprisingly, the poll found that Oakland County voters were not overwhelmingly supportive of bringing the NAIAS to Rock Financial Showplace – only 43 percent indicated support for their home-county facility compared to 34 percent who wanted to keep it at Cobo. Detroit voters, on the other hand, were strongly supportive of a Cobo Hall expansion with 86 percent in favor compared to only 6 percent who supported the NAIAS move to Oakland County.

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“With only a 9 percent difference between the Rock and Cobo, it doesn’t seem like Oakland County is all that geared up about becoming the new home of the Auto Show,” said former Speaker of the Michigan House and Perricone Group CEO Chuck Perricone. “Since the Auto Show organizers have openly stated their commitment to Detroit. Now it’s just a matter of Detroit’s leaders making it happen.”

In another key issue for Detroit, voters across the state of Michigan revealed their support for newly-elected Detroit Mayor Dave Bing taking responsibility of Detroit Public Schools (DPS). The survey found that 41 percent support Bing taking over DPS compared to 28 percent who oppose Bing’s control. Thirty-one percent remain undecided.

The city of Detroit is evenly divided on the issue with 44 percent both in support and opposed to the mayor’s control over DPS. Eleven percent are undecided. Young voters – those between 18 to 35 years – were among the strongest supporters of the issue, with 63 percent in favor. That support, however, faded to 33 percent among voters 65 and older.

Voters were also asked their thoughts on whether Bing will adopt and implement openness and a new code of ethics in the mayor’s office or continue with business as usual. Thirty-six percent believe Bing will adopt ethics and openness, while 26 percent believe ethics in the mayor’s office will remain unchanged. Another 36 percent remain undecided.

Within Detroit, voters were somewhat more optimistic than the rest of the state. Forty-four percent are confident Bing will bring more ethics and openness compared to 33 percent who disagreed, and 22 percent undecided.

“With less than half of Detroit voters convinced that Bing can bring anything but politics as usual to the city, the mayor still has quite a lot of room to prove himself,” said former Michigan Speaker of the House and Perricone Group CEO Chuck Perricone. “I’m sure he’ll be looking to do just that before the next election.”

While Michigan may be hopeful of Bing’s potential for creating a more ethical city government, it was Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson who won the most confidence from voters. Patterson yielded support from 21 percent of Michigan respondents compared to 12 percent for Bing. They were followed by Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano, who garnished 6 percent, and Macomb County Executive Paul Gielegem with 2 percent. Fifty-five percent were undecided.

Sixty-four percent of Oakland County voters and 51 percent of Wayne County voters trust Patterson the most. 42 percent of Detroit voters gave their trust to Bing

Methodology:

Michigan Favors Cobo Expansion Over Rock

May 28, 2009

Page 3 of 3

This survey was part of the Rossman Group/Perricone Group/Denno Noor Research Quarterly Survey of the Michigan electorate. 600 respondents were surveyed between May 18 and May 21, 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 voted, either at the polls or by absentee ballot, in the November 2008 Election. The margin of error is plus/minus 4 percent. All numbers are rounded and may exceed 100%.

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