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## Cost of Fuel is Top Economic Concern for Michigan Families

### *Healthcare and Education are Primary Non-Economic Concerns*

**LANSING, Mich.** — Michigan has had more than its share of economic hardships in recent years, but when Michigan voters were asked the biggest economic problem facing their family, the cost of fuel trumped everything.

According to a recent statewide survey, 61 percent said the price of fuel was the biggest economic problem facing their family, and 25 percent said fuel costs would cause them to cancel most, if not all, vacation plans.

“When gas prices exceed \$4 per gallon, it’s bound to have an impact on Michigan families,” said Kelly Rossman-McKinney, CEO of The Rossman Group. “This is definitely something that will be on voters’ minds come November, and it will be interesting to see how politicians respond.”

Denno-Noor Research conducted the survey in partnership with The Rossman Group – recently named Lansing’s Most Effective Public Relations Firm by a survey of political insiders – and Michigan Information & Research Services (MIRS) – Michigan’s leading daily legislative and state government newsletter.

The survey asked the following questions:

*“What is the biggest economic problem facing you and your family? Is it the real estate crisis, the high price of fuel, the high price of food, or the loss of manufacturing jobs?”*

AND

*“How will the high cost of gas and food affect your vacation plans? Will it not affect your vacation plans, will it cause you to travel less, or will it cause you to cancel most, if not all vacation plans?”*

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The results were as follows:

<b>What is the biggest economic problem facing you and your family?</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>How will the high cost of fuel affect your vacation plans?</b>	<b>%</b>
Real estate crisis	3%	Not affect vacation plans	24%
High price of fuel	61%	Will cause less travel	44%
High price of food	7%	Will cause cancellation of most, if not all plans	25%
Loss of manufacturing jobs	18%	Other	5%
Other	6%	Unsure/Do Not Know	3%
Unsure/Do Not Know	5%		

“Residents across the state are feeling pain at the pump,” said MIRS President John Reurink. “Rising fuel prices are contributing to cost increases in every industry. Voters will be looking for our elected leaders to come up with a long-term solution to this problem in the very near future.”

The poll also found the top non-economic issues facing Michigan voters this year are healthcare and education. According to the poll 25 percent believe healthcare is the important issue, followed closely by 21 percent who say education, which includes both K-12 and higher education, is the top concern. Another 14 percent of voters believe state and local taxes to be the primary concern followed by the housing crisis (8 percent), transportation and roads (7 percent), and crime (3 percent).

The question was worded as follows:

*Most people cite jobs and the economy as the most important issues facing Michigan. Aside from the economy and jobs, what is the NEXT most important issue facing Michigan’s lawmakers this year? Would it be the housing crisis, health care, education – which includes K-12 and higher education, transportation and roads, protecting Michigan’s rivers, streams and forests, state and local taxes, crime, or homeland security*

“While healthcare is the most important issue overall, the results vary across political lines,” said Denno-Noor President Dennis Denno. “Democrats showed a stronger concern for healthcare by a 10 percent margin. Overall, 34 percent of Democrats found healthcare to be the most important issue compared to only 14 percent who identified themselves as Republican.”

**Methodology:**

**This survey was part of the Rossman Group/MIRS/Denno-Noor Quarterly Survey of the Michigan electorate. 600 respondents were surveyed between May 17 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 intended on voting, either at the polls or by absentee ballot, in the November 2008 Election. The margin of error is plus/minus four percent.**

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