



MEMORANDUM

TO: INTERESTED PARTIES

FROM: PATRICK LANNE / PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES

RE: RECENT SURVEY RESULTS

DATE: MAY 17, 2011

Public Opinion Strategies recently completed a survey of 500 likely voters in Wisconsin on behalf of Health First Wisconsin. The survey was conducted May 4-7, 2011 via landline and cell phone. The poll has a margin of error of plus or minus 4.38%.

KEY FINDINGS

- ✓ ***Wisconsin voters support the legislature's preservation of prevention funding.***
Wisconsin voters say "thank you" to the legislature for their recent vote to preserve funding for prevention and cessation programs. We asked voters, "*Recently, the legislature voted to preserve funding for programs to prevent kids from smoking and provide help for smokers who want to quit in the new state budget. Do you support or oppose the legislature preserving funding for tobacco prevention and cessation programs?*" Two-thirds (66%) of Wisconsin voters say they support the legislature's preservation of funding for such programs with support cutting across every major sub-group in the poll.

These results are not surprising considering three-quarters (74%) of voters express concerns about tobacco use among young people and 75% believe funding prevention and cessation programs is important.

- ✓ ***There is near consensus on placing candy/fruit flavor tobacco products behind counters.***
We asked voters if they favor or oppose a proposal, "*requiring little cigars and candy and fruit flavored tobacco products to be placed behind the counter so they are less accessible to young people.*" Nearly eight in ten (79%) of Wisconsinites favor the behind-the-counter proposal. Not only is support wide, but it is also very deep with 60% strongly favoring the proposal. Every major geographic and demographic subgroup supports the proposal by wide margins.

- ✓ ***Voters want to close the tobacco tax loophole.***
There is wide support for equalizing the taxation of tobacco products. We asked Wisconsin voters if they favor or oppose a proposal, “*closing the tobacco tax loophole so candy and fruit flavored tobacco products are taxed at the same rate as cigarettes?*” More than seven-in-ten (71%) voters favor closing the tobacco tax loophole with a near majority (49%) strongly in favor of the proposal. The proposal is popular across demographic groups including wide majorities of Republicans (65%) and Tea Party supporters (66%).

The Bottom Line

As we have seen in our previous polling, there is wide bi-partisan support for an agenda that makes it harder for children to have access to tobacco products, strengthens public health, and helps smokers quit smoking. Clearly, voters continue to support policies that keep tobacco products away from children. That’s why the legislature’s recent decision to continue funding for important prevention and cessation programs is widely applauded by Wisconsin voters from all political stripes.