



TO: The Campaign For Tobacco Free Kids
FROM: The Mellman Group, Inc.
RE: West Virginia Statewide Survey Analysis
DATE: May 21, 2010

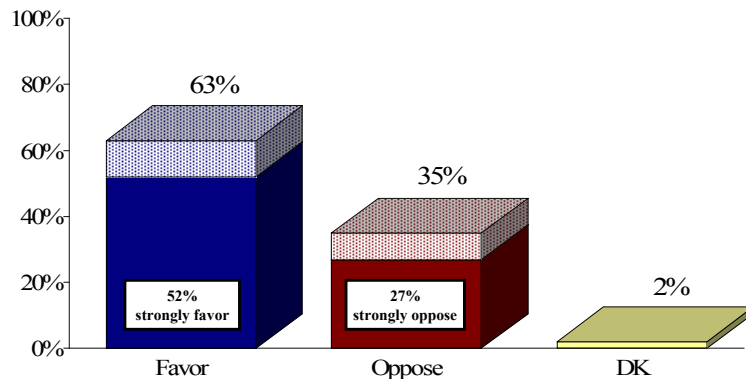
The Mellman Group conducted a statewide survey of 500 registered voters in West Virginia. The poll was conducted by telephone May 8-11, 2010, and used a registration-based sample designed to model the likely 2010 electorate. The margin of error for this survey is +/-4.4% at the 95% level of confidence. The margin of error is larger for subgroups

Support For A One Dollar Tobacco Tax Increase Is Both Broad And Deep

A substantial majority of West Virginia voters favor a \$1 per pack increase in the state tobacco tax as part of an effort to reduce tobacco use, particularly among kids, and reduce the state's budget shortfall. Nearly two-thirds (63%) favor such a tax increase, while only 35% oppose it. Moreover, more than half (52%) strongly favor the proposed tax increase, while only 27% strongly oppose it.

A Proposal To Increase The Cigarette Tax By \$1.00 Per Pack Garneres Widespread Support In West Virginia

Would you favor or oppose a one dollar per pack increase in the state tobacco tax, with part of the revenue dedicated to a program to reduce tobacco use, particularly among kids, and the rest of the revenue dedicated to reducing the state budget shortfall?



(darker shading=stronger intensity)

% Favor/Oppose Tobacco Tax Increase		
	Favor	Oppose
Democrat	65%	33%
Independent	62%	34%
Republican	61%	38%
Men	60%	39%
Women	66%	32%
<50	62%	36%
50+	64%	34%
HS or Less	58%	40%
Some College	65%	34%
College Grad+	68%	30%
Charleston DMA	59%	37%
Clarksburg DMA	63%	35%
Bluefield DMA	66%	33%
Rest of State	66%	33%

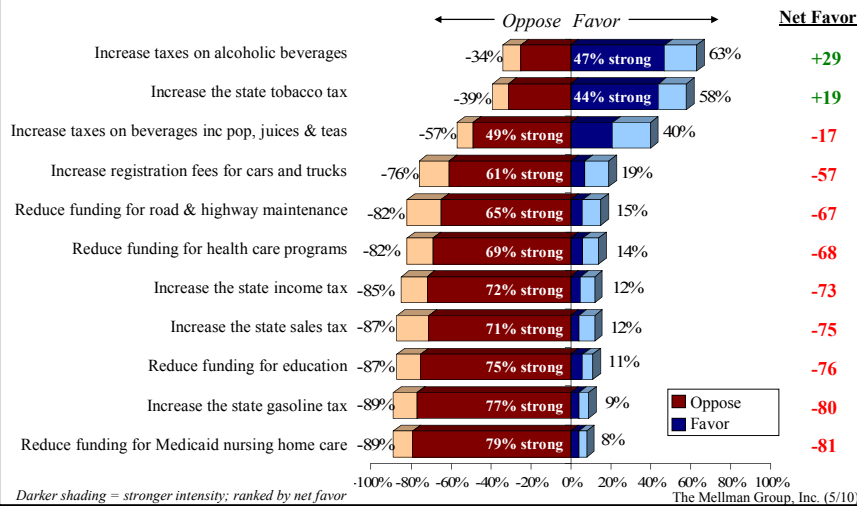
The proposed tobacco tax increase garners strong support across party lines, with sizable majorities of Democrats, independents and Republicans all supporting it. Support is also strong across age, gender and educational groups, and in every part of the state. Indeed, the only segment that opposes a tobacco tax increase is current smokers, who make up just 22% of the electorate. Among this group, 32% support the \$1 tobacco tax increase, while 68% oppose it. However, their opposition is offset by the enthusiastic support for a tobacco tax increase among both former smokers (64% favor, 31% oppose) and those who have never smoked (75% favor, 23% oppose). Together, these two groups make up 76% of the state's electorate.

Increasing Tobacco Taxes Is One Of Only Two Popular Ways To Address The Budget Shortfall

West Virginia voters are far more likely to favor a tobacco tax increase than all but one other mechanism for dealing with the state's budget shortfall.

A Tobacco Tax Increase Is One Of Only Two Proposals For Dealing With The Budget Shortfall That Generate Widespread Support

As you may know, WV is facing a significant budget shortfall. I'm going to list some proposals that have been made to address this shortfall. After each please tell me whether you favor or oppose that particular proposal to deal w/ the budget shortfall.



We offered voters a list of possible solutions to the state budget shortfall including a tobacco tax increase, this time with no amount specified and without a specific indication of how the money would be spent. In response to this slightly different question wording and context, 58% expressed support for a tobacco tax increase with 39% opposed. By comparison a mere 12% favor increasing the state sales tax (87% opposed) and 12% favor increasing the state income tax (85% opposed). A gas tax increase is opposed by 89% and supported

by only 9%. Other fee and tax increases also elicit strong opposition, as do cuts to healthcare, education and road maintenance.

Indeed, only an alcohol tax increase garners a level of support akin to that for tobacco taxes.

The Politics Favor A Tobacco Tax Increase

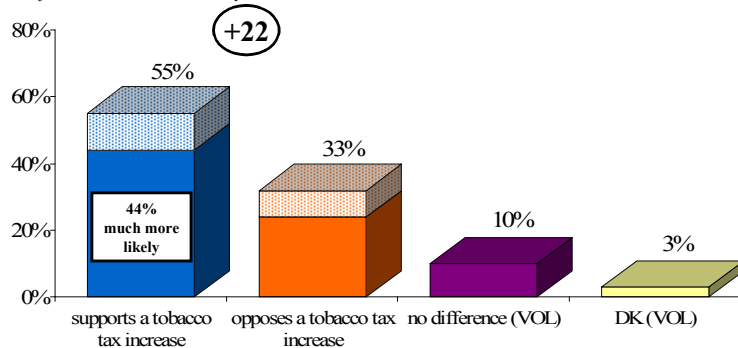
A tougher test of voters' attitude toward a tobacco tax pits two candidates against each other—one who supports a tobacco tax increase and another who opposes it. A clear majority (55%) prefer the supporter over the opponent (33%). Majorities of Democrats (59% supporter, 29% opponent) and independents (51% supporter, 36% opponent) along with a plurality of Republicans (50% supporter, 37% opponent) prefer the supporter of a tobacco tax increase over the opponent.

A Substantial Majority Would Vote For A Candidate Who Supported a \$1 Tobacco Tax Increase

I'm going to read you statements about two candidates for office in WV & ask for whom you would vote:

- Candidate X, who supports a \$1 per pack tobacco tax increase with part of the revenue dedicated to a program to reduce tobacco use, particularly among kids, and the rest of the revenue dedicated to reducing the state budget shortfall.
- Candidate Y, who opposes the plan to increase the state tobacco tax by \$1 per pack because our state taxes are already too high.

For which of these candidates would you vote?



Moreover, support for this tax increase has the potential to help politicians from both parties. By a 49% to 31% margin, voters say they would vote for a Democrat who supports the tobacco tax increase over a Republican who opposes it. Likewise, by 43% to 36%, voters would vote for a Republican who supports the tobacco tax increase over a Democrat who opposes it.

Strong support for a cigarette tax increase may be due in part to the high level of concern among West Virginia voters about smoking and other tobacco use among young people in the state. Eighty-two percent (82%) of the state's voters say they are "very" or "somewhat concerned" about youth smoking, while only 17% say they are "not too" or "not at all" concerned.