



## **Innovation Ohio Poll Contrasts Budget Initiatives with Public Opinion**

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Innovation Ohio released results of a poll Friday that it says shows state residents' views don't align with some policies sought in Gov. John Kasich's latest budget proposal, HB59 (Amstutz).

Janetta King, president of the think tank, said the group commissioned the poll in advance of the budget roll-out to gauge opinions on policy topics likely to be addressed. They released the results Friday because the General Assembly has begun reviewing the budget proposals, and Kasich is poised to give his annual "State of the State" address in Lima next week.

"We wanted to know what regular Ohioans thought about some of these issues that are being debated in the budget," King said.

Pollster Diane Feldman of the Feldman Group conducted the Jan. 14-17 survey of 800 Ohio voters who reported going to the polls in 2012.

Questions asked opinions on funding education and local government spending, the turnpike bonding plan and taxes.

The poll found 59 percent of respondents think the state does too little to improve education quality, while 5 percent said it does too much and 29 percent said it does about the right amount. Sixty percent said schools need more school funding, and 32 percent said schools have enough state funding.

Sixty-two percent said more funding for schools, police and fire services are more important than state income tax cuts, versus 32 percent who'd prefer the tax cuts.

The poll found 62 percent strongly or moderately favor raising the energy severance tax to raise money for restoring state services that have been cut, while 25 percent moderately or strongly oppose the plan. Kasich wants to raise the tax but put that money toward income tax cuts instead of state services.

The poll found 57 percent of respondents moderately or strongly disapprove of borrowing against future turnpike revenue to pay for projects now, while 29 percent strongly or moderately

approve.

"It's clear that most Ohioans simply don't agree with Gov. Kasich, and Innovation Ohio stands ready to assist our elected officers in crafting policies more in tune with what Ohioans wants," King said.

One significant element addressed in the governor's budget proposal, but not the poll, is the expansion of Medicaid.

King and Dale Butland, Innovation Ohio's communications director, said it wasn't known ahead of time whether Kasich would include expansion in the budget, and also pointed out the group needed to be selective about the number of questions asked because of polling costs.

"These were the issues that we at Innovation Ohio were particularly interested in, because it's the issues we work on mostly closely," King said.

The poll also found the following:

- 56 percent of respondents said job creation should be state leaders' top priority; 38 percent said school improvement; 24 percent said keeping local property taxes down; 18 percent said reducing state income taxes; and 12 percent said improving roads and transportation.

- 23 percent said the economy has gotten better in the past couple years, 28 percent said worse\*\*\*, and 46 percent said it's the same.

Poll results and demographic information for respondents are available at <http://innovationohio.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Appendix-Innovation-Ohio-Release.pdf>. The poll's margin of error is 3.5 percent.

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