
RESEARCH SUMMARY

A nationwide telephone survey of American voters shows that roughly half (48%) of the American electorate believes that we currently spend too little on transportation infrastructure like roads, bridges and highways, while less than 10 percent say we spend too much.

This sentiment is generally consistent across party lines, with at least 40 percent of Republicans, Democrats and independents saying that we are spend too little on transportation infrastructure, while no more than 12 percent in any major party saying we spend too much. This trend also shows remarkable coherence among various geographic regions and ethnic groups.

The survey, conducted by David Binder Research on behalf of Professional Engineers in California Government, also shows that 81 percent of American voters believe it is urgent for the US to improve the transportation infrastructure.

In thinking about possible mechanisms by which to increase funding for transportation infrastructure, a majority would support allocating more money from state and federal general funds, or raising taxes on corporations to better fund transportation infrastructure.

A strong majority of voters also indicates that they would be more likely to support increased funding for transportation if the contracts for all construction projects were awarded through competitive bidding, and if taxpayers know in advance which projects will be constructed with the additional funds.

In addition, voters show a preference for highway design, construction and inspection being performed at the lowest cost, by a public agency. By a 2-1 margin, voters prefer that contracts for infrastructure construction and engineering services such as highway design should not be awarded to a private company if public agency engineers can perform the service at less cost to the taxpayers. Voters also express a preference that inspection of a private contractor's work be performed by publicly employed engineers.

TRANSPORTATION SEEN AS UNDERFUNDED

Voters were asked whether they believe too much, too little, or about the right amount of money is spent on transportation infrastructure like roads and bridges. 48 percent believe that too little is currently being spent on transportation infrastructure, including 28 percent who say "far too little" is spent.

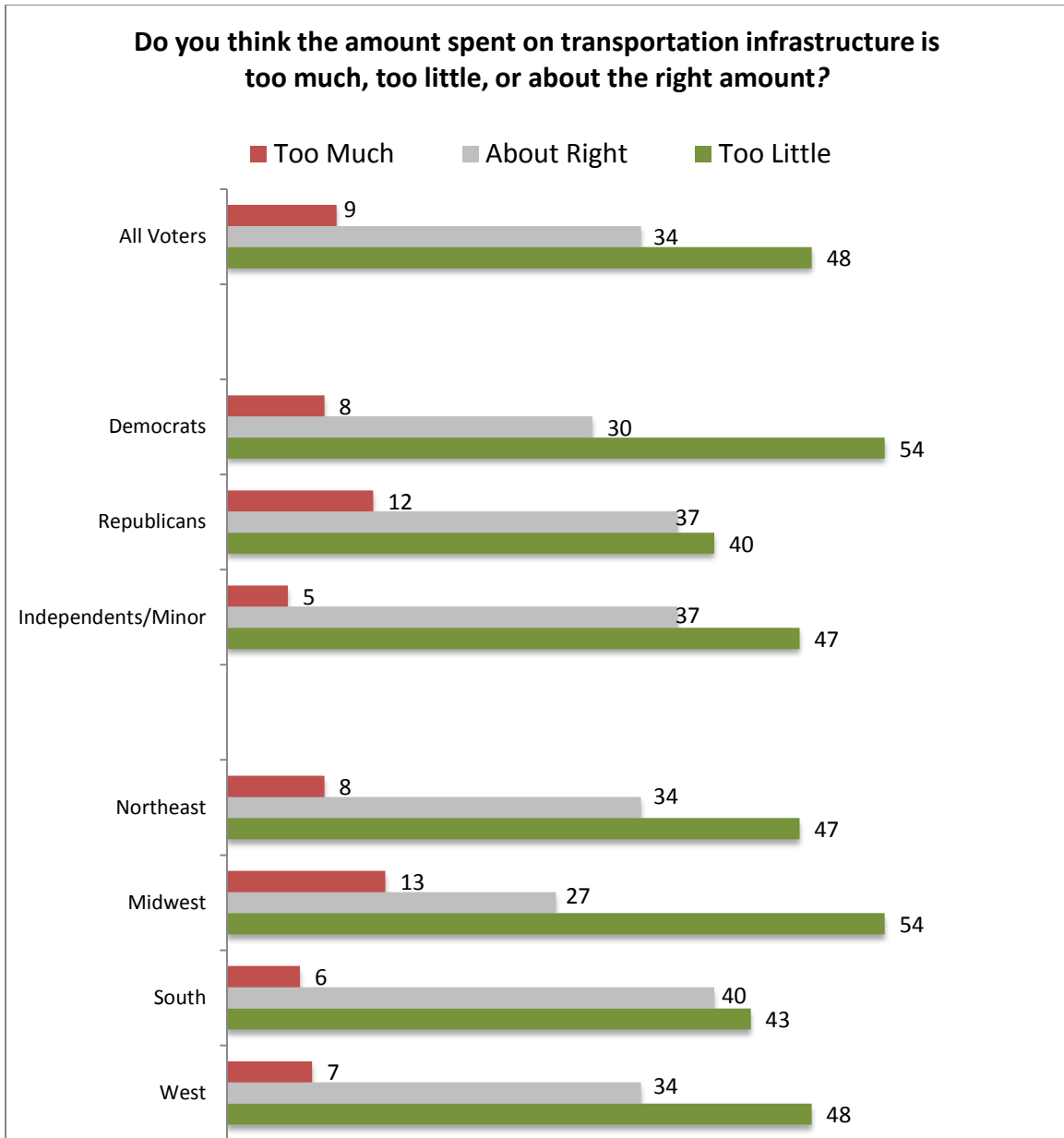
**Findings based on a telephone survey conducted from April 6 through 9, 2015 using both cell phones and land lines. The survey was conducted among 800 registered voters nationwide, with working phone numbers. The survey has a ±3.5% margin of error.*

By comparison, only 9 percent say that too much is spent on transportation infrastructure, while 34 percent say that the amount currently spent on transportation is about right.

The feeling that we currently spend too little on transportation infrastructure is prevalent across a variety of different demographic and geographic groups. Even among Republicans, 40 percent believe that we currently spend too little on transportation infrastructure, and only 12 percent say that we spend too much.

Additionally, in every region of the country, more voters say that we spend too little on transportation infrastructure than that we spend about the right amount or spend too much.

**Findings based on a telephone survey conducted from April 6 through 9, 2015 using both cell phones and land lines. The survey was conducted among 800 registered voters nationwide, with working phone numbers. The survey has a $\pm 3.5\%$ margin of error.*



TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE SEEN AS BEING IN URGENT NEED OF IMPROVEMENT

More than four out of five (81%) of voters believe that it is urgent for the US to improve its transportation infrastructure. Asked whether they believe it is very urgent, somewhat urgent, not very urgent, or not at all urgent for the US to improve its transportation infrastructure, 29 percent say it is very urgent, 52 percent say it is somewhat urgent, 14 percent say it is not very urgent, and just 4 percent say it is not at all urgent.

African Americans (45%) and Latinos (39%) are particularly likely to believe that it is very urgent that we improve our infrastructure.

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Of the voters who earlier in the survey indicated that they believe the current transportation infrastructure is only in fair or poor condition, roughly 9 out of 10 say that improvement is urgent, including 39 percent who say that it is very urgent.

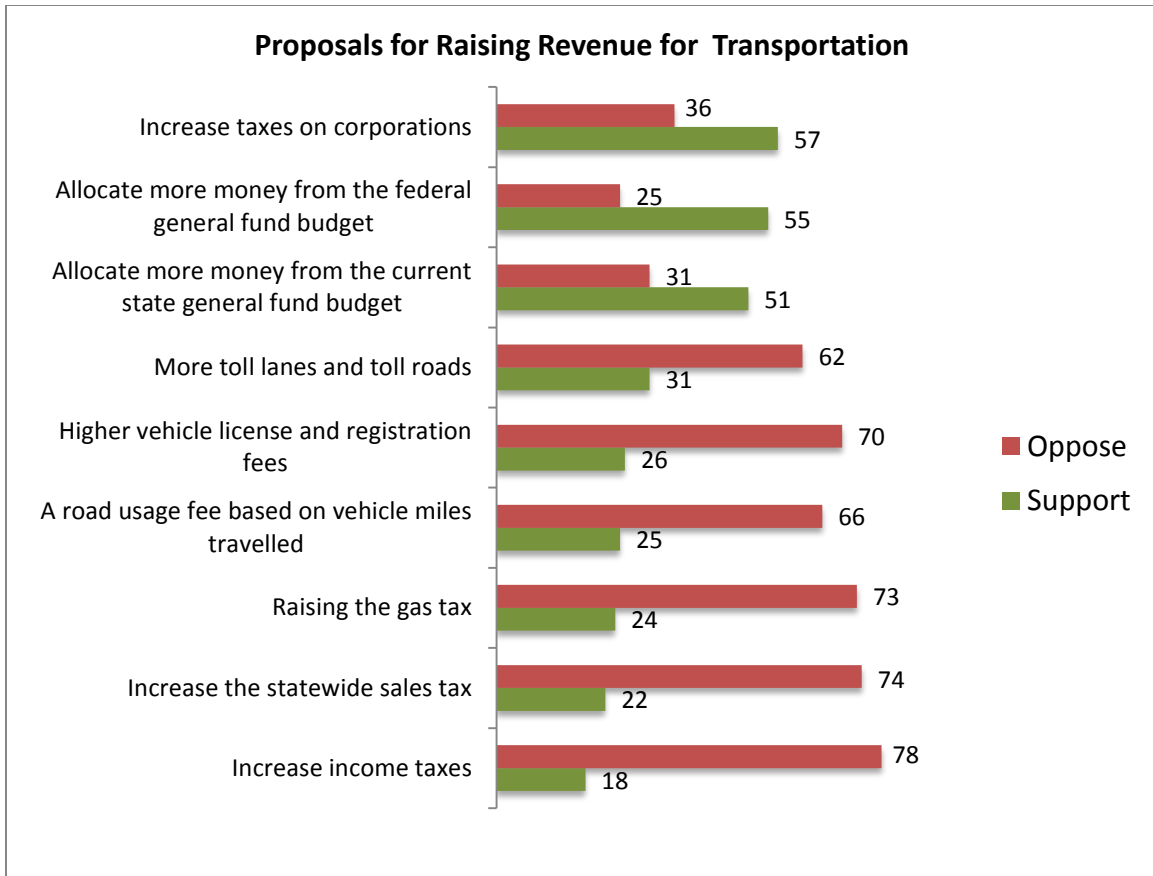
SUPPORT FOR ALLOCATING GENERAL FUND MONEY TO TRANSPORTATION; RAISING CORPORATE TAXES

Voters were read a list of options that some people have proposed for more increased revenues dedicated to transportation. The proposals that focused on raising taxes and fees for most citizens were generally unpopular, with majorities saying that they are strongly opposed to measures like raising the gas tax, increasing vehicle registration fees, and increasing the statewide sales tax.

Fifty three percent of voters say they would support allocating more money for transportation infrastructure from their state's general fund, while 59 percent say that they would support allocating more money from the federal general fund. Importantly, majorities of both Republicans (54%) and Democrats (68%) support the idea of allocating more federal general fund money toward transportation infrastructure

Fifty nine percent also say that they would support increasing taxes on corporations to fund transportation infrastructure. Support for this particular proposal is largely divided on partisan lines, with 71 percent of Democrats and 63 percent of independents and minor party members supporting it. Meanwhile, 50 percent of Republicans oppose raising the corporate tax to fund transportation infrastructure, and 42 percent support.

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WIDESPREAD SUPPORT FOR COMPETITIVE BIDDING FOR CONSTRUCTION AND ENGINEERING; VOTERS WANT TO KNOW SPECIFICALLY WHERE MONEY IS ALLOCATED

Voters were asked to respond to a series of suggestions for ensuring that any hypothetical increase in revenue for transportation infrastructure is used efficiently and effectively. They were asked to state whether each provision would make them more or less likely to support increased funding.

Eighty percent of voters said that they would be more likely to support increased funding for transportation infrastructure if “all construction contracts would be awarded through a competitive bidding process with the contract being awarded to a qualified firm at the lowest cost to the taxpayers.” Just 15 percent say that this would make them less likely to support increased funding.

Meanwhile, 80 percent also responded that they would be more likely to support increased funding for education if “contracts for engineering, such as design or inspection of a highway, would be awarded through competitive bidding to a qualified firm at the lowest cost to the taxpayers.” Just 14 percent say this would make them less likely to support increased funding.

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These results, which are remarkably consistent across party lines, and throughout each region of the country, suggest a strong desire to see all types of contracts be awarded to the entity that can perform the work at the lowest cost.

Three out of four voters (74%) also say that they would be more likely to support increased funding for transportation infrastructure if “taxpayers are told in advance which projects will be constructed with the additional funds.”

Again, this sentiment is consistent across all demographic and geographic groups, suggesting strong nationwide support for earmarking transportation construction funding for specific projects.

VOTERS PREFER PUBLIC AGENCY INSPECTION OF CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Sixty two percent say that contracts for engineering services such as highway design should not be awarded to a private company if public agency engineers can perform the service at less cost to the taxpayers. Meanwhile, only half that number (31%) say they disagree with this.

A majority (55%) of voters also believe that inspection to approve or reject a private construction contractor’s work on a highway or bridge should be performed by engineers employed by a public agency, while just 35 percent believe this work should be performed by engineers employed by a private contractor.

Democrats are particularly likely to believe that this type of inspection work should be performed by engineers employed by a public agency, with 61 percent agreeing on this. However, a plurality of Republicans (47%) and majority of independents/minor party voters (56%) also agree.

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