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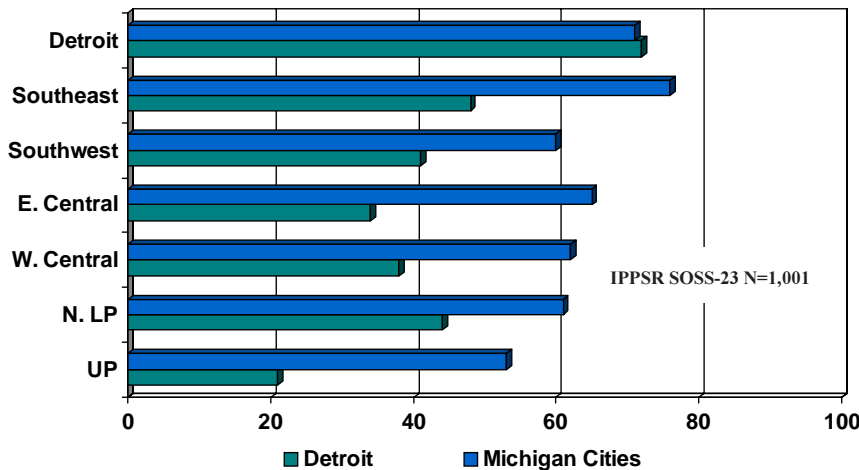
STATE of the STATE Survey

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Survey Reveals that Cities are Important to Michigan Residents

Percentage Saying Michigan Cities/Detroit are "Very Important" to Michigan by Region of Respondent



Importance of City to State

In the Institute for Public Policy and Social Research's twenty-third State of the State Survey (SOSS), respondents were randomly split into two samples, one group responded to questions on Michigan cities in general and one group answered questions pertaining to the city of Detroit.

When asked to assess the "shape" of Michigan Cities/Detroit, 42% said Michigan cities were "good" or "very good" and 43% said they were "fair." Some 20% said Detroit was "good" or "very good" and 50% rated it "fair."

How important are these cities to the overall well being of the state? While nearly the same percentage of residents thought that Michigan cities (98%) and Detroit (90%) were "very" or "somewhat" important, more thought that Michigan cities were "very" important (69%) to the state. Only 46% thought Detroit was "very" important.

Who is responsible for addressing the problems of our cities? When asked about Michigan cities, residents were divided. Some 50% said that "cities" should be

responsible, 29% said the "state," and 21% said "both." When asked about Detroit, residents were more likely to answer that the responsibility was that of the "city" (72%).

Local Governance

Approximately 85% of respondents support financial incentives from state government to encourage greater local cooperation. More than 71% support the consolidation of local governmental units if it would improve efficiency or services.

Citizens React to Urban Sprawl Issues

Defined to respondents as "the spreading of development such as housing and businesses on undeveloped land around cities," respondents were asked various questions relating to urban sprawl.

When asked whether they were "not at all concerned," "somewhat concerned," or "very concerned" about urban sprawl issues, respondents expressed greatest concern about increases in pollution and energy (Continued on Reverse)

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About the Study

The Institute for Public Policy and Social Research conducted the twenty-third round of the State of the State Survey (SOSS-23) by phone with 1,001 Michigan adult residents during October 26 through December 5, 2001. The margin of sampling error was $\pm 3.1\%$.

This edition of SOSS provides timely information about citizens' opinions on urban-rural, economic development, and environmental issues; term limits; and, punishments for crimes involving illegal drugs.

SOSS-23 was funded in part by the following organizations:

- Michigan State University Community Economic Development Program in collaboration with Michigan's Urban Core Mayors; and,
- Applied state policy research grants funded by the Institute for Public Policy and Social Research through funds allocated by the State of Michigan. The grants are aimed at developing expertise for Michigan's policy-making community.

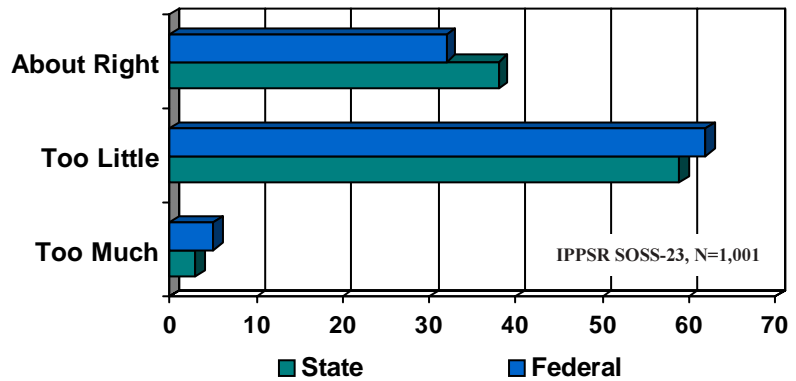
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consumption (56%) and the loss of farmland and open space (55%).

Respondents were more concerned about sprawl in their own county/region, than they were (41% “very concerned”) about the state (31%).

When asked “Which level of government do you think should have the main responsibility for reducing the negative effects of sprawl?” the most common response was “state” (42%), followed by “local” (24%), and “county” (17%).

Is the Government Doing Enough to Protect the Environment?



Improving Cities, Schools, Environment

Some pundits believe that the statewide population is increasingly frustrated with sprawl and convinced that the revitalization of inner cities would help. They believe that citizens understand that inner-city rejuvenation would redirect new development away from suburban greenfields, toward inner cities and would therefore reduce sprawling development.

To test this political hypothesis, the State of the State Survey asked, “Do you think [that redeveloping deteriorated or underutilized areas in old inner or central cities] would reduce urban sprawl?” Some 19% of respondents said that it would “greatly reduce” urban sprawl, 65% felt it would “somewhat reduce” it, and 16% said “it would not help at all.”

At a surprisingly high rate, respondents reported that they are willing to assist deteriorated or underused areas of central cities even at the expense of other current or potential state programs and projects. Some 85 to 93% of respondents “strongly favored” or “somewhat favored” each of the following options:

- Tax breaks (85%) or low-interest government loans (88%) for businesses;
- Tax breaks (93%) or low-interest government loans (93%) for families;
- State funds to redevelop the infrastructure and facilities (90%); and,
- Free or low cost job training to workers who live or work there (85%).

School Infrastructure

Michigan residents (nearly 70%) rate the physical condition of public school buildings in their community as “good” or “very good.” Only 11% rated conditions as “very poor” or “poor.” Support was strong (87%) for state assistance to local districts for improving school infrastructure.

Government and the Environment

Michigan residents said that the state (51%) and federal governments (35%) do the best job of protecting the environment. However, residents reported that both are doing “too little.” Only 38% thought that the state was doing enough, only 32% were content with the level of federal activity.

Clean-up: What are the Standards, Who Pays?

In 1998, Michigan voters approved a bond issue, which included \$350 million to clean contaminated sites. When respondents of this survey were asked how they thought the funding should be allocated, they said that “contamination levels” (69%) were more important than “redevelopment potential” (25%).

Some 85% of Michigan residents said that polluted sites should be cleaned up to the same standards regardless of their intended future use. The following groups were the most often cited for payment responsibility:

- Corporations/individuals who caused contamination (87%);
- Above group even when the pollution was legal (84%);
- The government for a portion (87%);
- The government for entire cost if no other responsible party is found (89%).

Support Continues for Term Limits

The present survey confirms the findings of other recent opinion polls, documenting broad support (over 60%) for continuing the present system of term limits for state elected officials. Strong support is evident across political party affiliation, education, gender, income, and age.

Respondents in IPPSR’s twenty-third State of the State Survey were asked how the performance of their own state representative/senator and the performance of state government as a

whole, compares now to their performance before the passage of term limits. The survey found that most residents thought the performance of their own state representative/senator (66%) and the government as a whole (66%) was about the same.

Also asked was whether term limits should be eliminated, continue with longer terms, or continue unchanged. Most residents (64%) said that term limits should continue unchanged. Only 12% support longer terms.

IPPSR’s State of the State Survey is the only survey conducted in Michigan that provides a regular systematic monitoring of the public mood on important issues in major regions of the state.

*For more information visit the Institute online at:
<http://www.ippsr.msu.edu/SOSS>.*