Maine Public Health Association
Voter Poll – Public Health Issues

Prepared by:
April 2019

Prepared for:
MPHA
Maine Public Health Association

Prepared by:
CRITICAL INSIGHTS

April 2019
Background and Purpose

- The Maine Public Health Association is a statewide non-profit organization that seeks to improve the health and well-being of Maine people through a focus on disease prevention, health promotion activities and advocacy, and the advancement of health equity across the state, regardless of socio-economic status.

- The organization commissioned market research in the form of a public opinion poll aimed at exploring public attitudes across Maine concerning current and prospective tobacco taxation policies.

- Critical Insights (an operating division of Digital Research Inc. of Portland, ME) assisted the organization with the development and execution of a statewide poll of Maine voters, the results of which are presented here.
Method and Approach

- The poll was conducted online via Critical Insights’ secure data collection portal using a questionnaire developed collaboratively with the Maine Public Health Association and other project stakeholders.
- A double opt-in consumer panel encompassing the entire State of Maine in proportion to the population distribution of the state was used to sample prospective participants for the poll, with candidate participants invited to take part in the poll for a reasonable incentive.
- Upon visiting the portal, all candidates were screened and classified appropriately, with eligible participants allowed to continue and complete the survey.
  - Only registered Maine voters, age 18 or older, were allowed to take part in the poll (non-voters and those under age 18 were excluded from the polling sample).
- A survey of approximately 15 minutes in administrative length was conducted with a statewide cross-section of 450 Maine voters between April 4th and April 15th of 2019.
  - The state was sampled by county population in proportion to the most recent election turnout (based on data from the Office of the Secretary of State).
  - The sample of 450 voters offers a sampling error of +/- 4.7 percentage points, at 95% confidence.
- The makeup of the polling sample is discussed in the following sub-section (Poll Participant Profile).
In what Maine county do you live?

Which of the following best describes the area where you live?

- Rural area: 31%
- Small town: 28%
- Suburban area: 18%
- Small city: 21%
- Large city or urban area: 2%
Poll Participant Profile - Stated Political Leanings

Which of the following best describes your political view?

- Extremely liberal: 8%
- Extremely conservative: 8%
- Liberal: 18%
- Moderate: 45%
- Conservative: 21%
Poll Participant Profile - Demographic / Household Profile

For classification purposes only, how many individuals under the age of 18 live in your household?

- None: 64%
- One: 17%
- Two: 13%
- Three or more: 6%

What is your current age?

- 18 to 24: 11%
- 25 to 34: 22%
- 35 to 44: 23%
- 45 to 54: 18%
- 55 to 64: 15%
- 65 or older: 11%

What is your gender?

- Male: 50%
- Female: 50%
What is the last grade of school you completed?

- High school or less: 27%
- Less than college degree: 34%
- Completed college: 29%
- Post graduate work: 11%

Into which of the following categories does your annual household income, before taxes, fall?

- Less than 35k: 33%
- 35,000 to 49,999: 21%
- 50,000 to 74,999: 19%
- 75,000 to 99,999: 12%
- 100,000 or more: 13%
- Prefer not to respond: 3%
Below are several types of tobacco products. Using the options provided, please choose the response that best describes your personal use of these products.

- **Cigarettes**
  - Never used: 44%
  - Formerly used, but no longer do: 27%
  - Occasionally use: 5%
  - Regularly use: 23%

- **E-cigarettes, Juuls, or vaping products**
  - Never used: 66%
  - Formerly used, but no longer do: 14%
  - Occasionally use: 12%
  - Regularly use: 6%

- **Cigars or pipe tobacco**
  - Never used: 67%
  - Formerly used, but no longer do: 18%
  - Occasionally use: 11%
  - Regularly use: 4%

- **Chewing or spit tobacco**
  - Never used: 85%
  - Formerly used, but no longer do: 7%
  - Occasionally use: 5%
  - Regularly use: 2%

Use of e-cigarettes is disproportionately higher among those younger than age 35 years (25%).
Perceptions of Addiction, Among Current Users

Below are several types of tobacco products you indicated using either regularly or occasionally. For each, please indicate if you believe you are currently addicted to the product.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cigarettes</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic cigarettes, sometimes called e-cigarettes, Juuls, or vaping products</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cigars or pipe tobacco</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chewing or spit tobacco</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Sample sizes of users are limited for some products, cigarettes (n=116), chewing/spit tobacco (n=17), e-cigarettes (n=32), and cigars/pipe tobacco (n=16).
Views on Tobacco Use in Maine
Please tell us how concerned you are about the following issues in the state of Maine.

Note: Participants were asked to use a scale of 1-5, with 1 being “not at all concerned” and 5 being “very concerned”. Proportions in the chart below do not sum to 100%, as responses of 3 and “don’t know” are not included.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>More Concerned (responses of 4 and 5)</th>
<th>Less concerned (responses of 1 and 2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The use of flavors - like candy, fruit and menthol - to make tobacco</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>products more appealing to Maine youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of e-cigarettes, Juuls, and other vaping products among</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maine youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco use and nicotine addiction among Maine youth and adults</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco use and nicotine addiction increasing the risk of addiction</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to other substances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Importance of Youth Tobacco Use Prevention

How important do you believe it is to prevent Maine youth from using tobacco product, such as cigarettes, chewing or spit tobacco, cigars or pipe tobacco, and electronic cigarettes (sometimes called e-cigarettes, Juuls, or vaping products)?

Note: Participants were asked to use a scale of 1-5, with 1 being “not at all important” and 5 being “very important”. Proportions in the chart below do not sum to 100%, as responses of 3 and “don’t know” are not included.

- More important (responses of 4 and 5)
- Less important (responses of 1 and 2)

Stated Importance

- 85%
- 6%
Perceived Influence of E-Cigarettes

Based on what you know or have heard, how much of a role do you believe e-cigarettes, Juuls, and other vaping products play in

- increasing nicotine addiction among youth and young adults?
- helping cigarette smokers to quit smoking?

Note: Participants were asked to use a scale of 1-5, with 1 being “no role at all” and 5 being “a very significant role”. Proportions in the chart below do not sum to 100%, as responses of 3 and “don’t know” are not included.

Increasing nicotine addiction among youth and young adults

- Plays more of a role: 73%
- Plays less of a role: 9%

Helping cigarette smokers to quit smoking

- Plays more of a role: 29%
- Plays less of a role: 43%
Please tell us your beliefs about several health-related policies in Maine. Using the scale provided, please indicate your level of disagreement or agreement with the following:

Note: Participants were asked to use a scale of 1-4, with 1 being “strongly disagree” and 4 being “strongly agree”. Proportions in the chart below do not sum to 100%, as responses of “don’t know” are not included.

- People should have the right to breathe clean air while in the workplace
  - Agree more: 95%
  - Agree less: 4%

- People should have the right to breathe clean air in all public places
  - Agree more: 92%
  - Agree less: 7%

- When considering whether to experiment with tobacco products, youth and young adults are strongly influenced by their peers
  - Agree more: 91%
  - Agree less: 7%

- When considering whether to experiment with tobacco products, youth and young adults are strongly influenced by whether smoking or vaping is allowed where they live, work, relax, or...
  - Agree more: 72%
  - Agree less: 21%

- People should have the freedom to smoke cigarettes or use vaping products wherever they choose
  - Agree more: 25%
  - Agree less: 73%

- Secondhand tobacco smoke is probably not as harmful as doctors and scientists say it is
  - Agree more: 20%
  - Agree less: 77%
Views on Tobacco Policy and Use of Settlement Funds in Maine
## Views on Tobacco Prohibitions and Restrictions

Please tell us your level of opposition or support for the following policies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Strongly support</th>
<th>Somewhat support</th>
<th>Total Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prohibiting the sale of all flavored tobacco products (including cigars, e-cigarettes, Juuls, and other vaping products) in order to prevent use of tobacco products by youth in Maine</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining current Maine law, which restricts the sale of food or drink in tobacco specialty stores where smoking is allowed</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining current Maine law, which restricts smoking and using e-cigarettes, Juuls, or other vaping products in public places, including outdoor eating areas</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How important do you believe it is that Maine use tobacco settlement funds to prevent young people from starting to smoke and to help current tobacco users to quit?

Note: Participants were asked to use a scale of 1-5, with 1 being “no at all important” and 5 being “very important”. Proportions in the chart below do not sum to 100%, as responses of 3 and “don’t know” are not included.

- More important (responses of 4 and 5) - 91%
- Less important (responses of 1 and 2) - 10%
Beliefs Concerning Current Public Health Allocations from Tobacco Settlement Funds

Approximately what percentage of these funds do you believe Maine should use each year for public health efforts to prevent chronic illnesses, including tobacco-related illnesses, and promote health and wellness among youth and adults in the state?

- 100%: 44%
- 80%: 19%
- 60%: 17%
- 40%: 12%
- 20%: 5%
- 0%: 3%
Currently, Maine spends approximately $20 million of the $50 million the state receives annually from the settlement (40% of the total) on efforts to prevent disease and promote good health, including efforts to prevent tobacco addiction.

With this information, which one of the following statements best matches your feelings about the state’s current spending on public health efforts to prevent chronic illnesses, including tobacco-related illnesses, and promote health and wellness among youth and adults in the state?

- Maine currently does not spend enough on efforts in this area (68%)
- Maine currently spends too much on efforts in this area (8%)
- Maine currently spends the right amount on efforts in this area (14%)
- Don't know/Not sure (9%)
The U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (the U.S. CDC) recommends that Maine spend approximately $16 million annually to help smokers quit and to keep kids from starting to use tobacco products.

Currently, Maine spends approximately $5 million from the $50 million the state receives annually from the tobacco settlement on efforts to prevent youth from starting to use tobacco products and to help smokers quit.

With this information, which one of the following statements best matches your beliefs about the state’s current spending on efforts to prevent youth from starting to smoke and to help smokers quit using tobacco?

- Maine currently spends the right amount on efforts in this area: 10%
- Maine currently spends too much on efforts in this area: 6%
- Maine currently does not spend enough on efforts in this area: 77%
- Don't know/Not sure: 7%
Views on Tobacco-Related Tax Policy in Maine
Views on Tobacco-Related Tax Policy: Standardizing Tax on E-Cigarettes

Participants in the poll were informed that e-cigarettes are currently not assessed an additional excise tax like other tobacco products, but that if e-cigarettes were taxed similarly to cigarettes, this change could result in as much as $5 million in annual revenue to the state.

Please tell us if you would oppose or support taxing e-cigarettes if you knew that...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly support</th>
<th>Somewhat support</th>
<th>Total Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The additional tax revenue would be used to prevent youth from starting to smoke or use other tobacco products, such as a-cigarettes, Juuls, or other vaping products</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The additional tax revenue would be used to prevent illness and improve overall health</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The additional tax revenue would be used to help current smokers quit using tobacco</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The additional tax revenue would be used to help more Maine people afford health insurance coverage</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The additional tax revenue would be used to pay for opiate addiction treatment and recovery programs</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of the most effective ways to prevent youth from starting to smoke is to significantly raise the price of tobacco products</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ten response options were provided; these are the six with strongest support.
Views on Tobacco-Related Tax Policy: Standardizing Tax on Cigars/Loose Tobacco

Participants in the poll were told that products like cigars and loose tobacco aren’t currently taxed at the same rate as cigarettes, but if they were taxed similarly to cigarettes, the change could result in approximately $10 million in additional annual revenue to the state.

Please tell us if you would oppose or support standardizing taxes on tobacco if you knew that...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Strongly support</th>
<th>Somewhat support</th>
<th>Total Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The additional tax revenue would be used to prevent youth from starting to smoke or use other tobacco products, such as a-cigarettes, Juuls, or other vaping products</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The additional tax revenue would be used to help current smokers quit using tobacco</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The additional tax revenue would be used to help more Maine people afford health insurance coverage</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The additional tax revenue would be used to prevent illness and improve overall health</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of the most effective ways to prevent youth from starting to smoke is to significantly raise the price of tobacco products</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The additional tax revenue would be used to build a healthier workforce</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ten response options were provided; these are the six with strongest support.
Views on Tobacco-Related Tax Policy: Increasing Cigarette Tax

Participants in the poll were informed that the current excise tax on cigarettes is $2.00 per pack and that an increase of $1.50 per pack would result in an additional $40 million in annual revenue to the state.

Please tell us if you would oppose or support increasing the cigarette tax if you knew that...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly support</th>
<th>Somewhat support</th>
<th>Total Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The additional tax revenue would be used to prevent youth from starting to smoke or use other tobacco products, such as a-cigarettes, Juuls, or other vaping products</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The additional tax revenue would be used to help current smokers quit using tobacco</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The additional tax revenue would be used to prevent illness and improve overall health</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The additional tax revenue would be used to help more Maine people afford health insurance coverage</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of the most effective ways to prevent youth from starting to smoke is to significantly raise the price of tobacco products</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The additional tax revenue would be used to build a healthier workforce</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ten response options were provided; these are the six with strongest support.
Impact of Increased Support for Rural Communities from Tobacco Taxation

If you knew that an emphasis would be placed on using increased tax revenue to help support Maine’s rural communities (specifically in the areas of reducing tobacco use, responding to the opioid crisis, promoting overall health improvement, boosting economic opportunity, and increasing access to health care and health insurance coverage), how would that impact your feelings? Would you be....?

- **Increased cigarette tax**
  - Much more likely to support: 12%
  - Somewhat more likely to support: 27%
  - Somewhat more likely to oppose: 27%
  - Much more likely to oppose: 11%
  - Don't know/Not sure: 10%

- **Taxing other tobacco products**
  - Much more likely to support: 8%
  - Somewhat more likely to support: 11%
  - Somewhat more likely to oppose: 27%
  - Much more likely to oppose: 9%
  - Don't know/Not sure: 8%

- **Taxing e-cigarettes**
  - Much more likely to support: 10%
  - Somewhat more likely to support: 29%
  - Somewhat more likely to oppose: 11%
  - Much more likely to oppose: 8%
  - Don't know/Not sure: 11%

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Voter Poll – Public Health Issues
If tax policy in Maine were changed to generate additional revenue from sales of various tobacco products, in which three of the following areas do you believe this additional revenue should be spent?

- Programs to prevent youth from starting to use tobacco products and to help smokers quit: 49%
- Expanding health insurance coverage through MaineCare: 39%
- Programs for opiate addiction treatment and recovery: 32%
- Programs that give children resilience-building tools to cope with adversity, trauma, and stress in order to prevent future addiction: 26%
- Programs to prevent illness and improve overall health: 26%
- Ensuring each high school and middle school in Maine is staffed with a school nurse, school health coordinator, and school resource officer: 25%
- Programs specifically designed to help support Maine's rural communities: 20%
- Programs to boost economic opportunity: 16%
- Programs to reduce the stigma of addiction and promote the understanding of addiction as a brain disease: 16%
- Programs to build a healthier workforce: 9%
- Some other area of focus specified: 6%
- Don't know/Not sure: 5%
Views on Lawmakers and Tobacco-Related Tax Policy and Settlement Funds
Views on Tobacco Settlement Funds

Would you be more likely to oppose or support a candidate for political office in Maine who voted in the following manner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Much more likely to support</th>
<th>Somewhat more likely to support</th>
<th>Total more likely to support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voted to ensure Maine's tobacco settlement funds are used first and foremost to prevent youth from smoking and to help smokers quit</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voted to ensure Maine's tobacco settlement funds are used primarily to prevent disease and promote good health</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Views on Tobacco-Related Tax Policy

Would you be more likely to oppose or support a candidate for political office in Maine who voted in the following manner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote Description</th>
<th>Much more likely to support</th>
<th>Somewhat more likely to support</th>
<th>Total more likely to support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voted to tax e-cigarettes, Juuls, and other vaping products at the same rate as</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>regular cigarettes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voted to tax all other tobacco products, including cigars and loose tobacco, at</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the same rate as regular cigarettes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voted to prohibit the sale of all flavored tobacco products, including flavored</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cigarettes, cigars, e-cigarettes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voted for a $1.50 increase in Maine's cigarette tax</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preferences for Lawmakers’ Approach to Use of Settlement Funds

Which one of the following statements best matches your feelings about how lawmakers should use these settlement funds?

- Lawmakers should honor their original intent and use Maine's tobacco settlement funds primarily to prevent chronic diseases - including tobacco related illnesses - and promote good health among Maine people. 71%
- Most of the Maine's tobacco settlement funds should be used to pay for medical care 11%
- The tobacco settlement funds should not be dedicated to any specific program on purpose. Lawmakers should have the ability to direct these funds to any purpose they see fit - even purposes not directly related to health 12%
- Don't know/Not sure 6%