

The Barr Foundation Transportation Poll

Topline Results

Statewide Survey of 709 Massachusetts Registered Voters

Field Dates: December 19, 2017 – January 9, 2018

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable view of Charlie Baker?

Very favorable	22%
Somewhat favorable	46%
Somewhat unfavorable	8%
Very unfavorable	4%
Heard of, undecided	15%
Never heard of	3%
Prefer not to say	3%

Would you say you approve or disapprove of how Governor Charlie Baker is dealing with the transportation system in your area?

Strongly approve	15%
Somewhat approve	42%
Somewhat disapprove	20%
Strongly disapprove	5%
Don't Know / Refused	18%

How much of a priority do you think each of the following issues should be for state government here in Massachusetts?

<i>Order randomized; sorted by "major priority"</i>	Major priority	Minor priority	Not a priority	Unsure / Prefer not to say
Improving highways, roads, and bridges	73%	21%	3%	3%
Improving public education	68%	23%	5%	4%
Improving public transportation like buses, trains and subways	64%	30%	3%	3%
Keeping taxes as low as possible	62%	28%	6%	3%
Addressing climate change	37%	37%	21%	5%
Improving bikeways and walkways	35%	49%	12%	4%

Thinking about the state as a whole, do you think the roads and public transportation in the state are: *Order rotated.*

Good enough to keep the economy moving	51%
Bad enough that they are holding the economy back	35%
Unsure / Prefer not to say	14%

Thinking about your region of the state, do you think the roads and public transportation in your area are:
Order rotated.

Good enough to keep the economy moving	55%
Bad enough that they are holding the economy back	33%
Unsure / Prefer not to say	12%

Do you think the MBTA system, including the buses, subways, commuter trains and ferries, is: *Order rotated.*

Good enough to keep the economy moving	48%
Bad enough that it is holding the economy back	35%
Unsure / Prefer not to say	17%

In the past 5 years, would you say that getting around your part of the state has:

Gotten better	14%
Gotten worse	38%
Stayed about the same	46%
Unsure / Prefer not to say	2%

How effective do you think each of the following would be in improving getting around the state?

<i>Order randomized; sorted by "very effective"</i>	Very effective	Somewhat effective	Not too effective	Not at all effective	Unsure / Prefer not to say
Making public transportation more frequent and reliable	56%	32%	8%	2%	3%
Improving the condition of poor roads and bridges	55%	34%	7%	2%	2%
Cracking down on drivers texting and using their smartphones while driving	53%	26%	15%	4%	2%
Expanding rail service to connect cities like Springfield, Fall River and New Bedford to Boston.	45%	34%	11%	6%	4%
Making public transportation more affordable	42%	38%	13%	3%	3%
Building more housing, shopping, and office space near public transportation	25%	39%	24%	6%	6%

Would you support or oppose expanding the commuter rail system to connect cities like Springfield, Fall River and New Bedford to Boston?

Strongly support	39%
Somewhat support	39%
Somewhat oppose	9%
Strongly oppose	7%
Unsure / Prefer not to say	6%

Would you support or oppose the Commonwealth raising new money to invest in the Massachusetts transportation system, including improving roads, bridges and public transportation?

Strongly support	40%
Somewhat support	41%
Somewhat oppose	8%
Strongly oppose	6%
Unsure / Prefer not to say	4%

The state recently replaced the toll booths on the Massachusetts Turnpike with gates that charge drivers electronically as they drive under them. Do you support or oppose this change?

Strongly support	44%
Somewhat support	30%
Somewhat oppose	12%
Strongly oppose	8%
Unsure / Prefer not to say	6%

Would you support or oppose the state using this new tolling system on additional highways across the state?

Strongly support	24%
Somewhat support	23%
Somewhat oppose	20%
Strongly oppose	25%
Unsure / Prefer not to say	7%

Would you support or oppose using electronic tolls on additional highways if the revenue were guaranteed to be used to reduce congestion on the roads in the region where it was collected?

Strongly support	30%
Somewhat support	31%
Somewhat oppose	14%
Strongly oppose	17%
Don't Know / Refused	7%

Would you support or oppose reducing tolls on the highways going in and out of Boston outside of rush hours, to encourage drivers to travel at less busy times of day?

Strongly support	22%
Somewhat support	38%
Somewhat oppose	16%
Strongly oppose	14%
Don't Know / Refused	10%

Would you support or oppose raising tolls on the highways going in and out of Boston during rush hours, to encourage drivers to travel at less busy times of day?

Strongly support	14%
Somewhat support	24%
Somewhat oppose	23%
Strongly oppose	32%
Don't Know / Refused	7%

Currently, cities, towns, and regional agencies in Massachusetts cannot ask voters to vote on a transportation project for their specific area. Would you support or oppose letting cities, towns place funding measures for local or regional transportation projects on the ballot for voters in their area to approve or reject? *Order rotated.*

Strongly support	34%
Somewhat support	35%
Somewhat oppose	10%
Strongly oppose	6%
Don't Know / Refused	14%

Asked of half of respondents:

Would you support or oppose requiring companies that import gasoline into Massachusetts to pay a fee for the pollution the gasoline creates, and using the proceeds of that fee to invest in cleaner transportation like public transportation or electric vehicles?

Strongly support	28%
Somewhat support	30%
Somewhat oppose	14%
Strongly oppose	16%
Don't Know / Refused	12%

Asked of other half of respondents:

Right now Massachusetts and other northeast states require power plants to buy permits for the pollution they generate. The state then invests the proceeds in cleaner renewable energy and provides homeowners with discounts for energy-efficiency projects. Would you support or oppose Massachusetts doing the same with companies that import gasoline: requiring them to pay a fee based on the pollution that gasoline creates, and investing the proceeds in cleaner transportation like electric vehicles or public transportation?

Strongly support	27%
Somewhat support	34%
Somewhat oppose	15%
Strongly oppose	11%
Don't Know / Refused	12%

Do you think that ride-hailing services like Uber and Lyft are making traffic:

Better	20%
Worse	19%
Make no difference	43%
Don't Know / Refused	18%

Do you think that self-driving cars will make traffic on the roads:

Better	19%
Worse	37%
Make no difference	17%
Don't Know / Refused	26%

Which of the following is closest to your point of view?

Self-driving cars will largely replace public transportation like the MBTA. We don't need to worry about making big investments in public transportation.	9%
Self-driving cars will not replace public transportation. We need to invest in public transportation regardless of what happens with self-driving cars.	79%
Don't Know / Refused	12%

Do you think self-driving cars will make the roads:

Safer for other drivers	26%
Less safe for other drivers	46%
Unsure / Prefer not to say	29%

Do you think self-driving cars will make the roads safer for pedestrian and cyclists, or less safe?

Safer for pedestrians and cyclists	26%
Less safe for pedestrians and cyclists	45%
Unsure / Prefer not to say	30%

Which do you think is more dangerous:

Self-driving cars	15%
Distracted driving	76%
Unsure / Prefer not to say	9%

Would you support or oppose a ban on drivers using their cellphones, GPS or other electronics unless they are in "hands-free mode", with an exception for making emergency phone calls?

Strongly support	55%
Somewhat support	24%
Somewhat oppose	10%
Strongly oppose	6%
Don't Know / Refused	4%

Would you support a ban on pedestrians looking at their phones when crossing a street?

Strongly support	50%
Somewhat support	25%
Somewhat oppose	10%
Strongly oppose	8%
Don't Know / Refused	6%

Which modes of travel do you use regularly to get around? Please check all that apply. *Multiple responses allowed; percentages total more than 100%.*

Drive alone	80%
Drive or ride with others	49%
Walk	34%
Take the MBTA subway (Red, Orange, Blue, Green, Silver lines)	22%
Take a taxi, Uber or Lyft	20%
Take a MBTA or other public bus	16%
Take the commuter rail	10%
Ride a bicycle	7%
Take a ferry	3%
Other	1%

On a normal day, how long is your morning commute to work or school?

15 minutes or less	17%
15-30 minutes	24%
30 minutes to an hour	21%
More than an hour	6%
Do not commute	31%
Prefer not to say	1%

Demographics

Party Identification

Democrat	34%
Independent / Other	46%
Republican	14%
Prefer not to answer	5%

Race

White / Caucasian	81%
All others	18%
Prefer not to say	1%

Age

18 to 29	16%
30 to 44	25%
45 to 59	30%
60+	29%

Gender

Male	48%
Female	52%

Education

High School or less	28%
Some college, no degree	25%
College graduate (BA/BS)	27%
Advanced degree	19%

About the Poll

These results are based on a representative survey of 709 Massachusetts registered voters. Responses were collected online between December 19, 2017 and January 9, 2018. This project was sponsored by The Barr Foundation.