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Large Majority Favors Allowing Slot Machines

A large majority of Texas voters (64%) favor the specific proposal of allowing slot machines at Texas race tracks and on Indian reservations. A similar percentage (63%) supported the same proposal in our February 2009 voter survey, and 32% were opposed. Support for the proposal in the current survey is similar among Democrat voters (66%), Independents (64%) and Republican voters (63%).

Even 57% of Republican voters who attend church services on a weekly basis favor the proposal. In addition, 68% of African-Americans, 65% of Hispanics and 63% of Anglos favor slot machines at the tracks and Indian reservations.

Would you favor or oppose allowing slot machines at the existing and licensed Texas horse and greyhound race tracks where pari-mutuel betting is already allowed under current law and on the existing Indian reservations in Texas?

64% Favor
28% Oppose
8% Depends / Unsure

As in 2009, 82% of Texas voters think they should have an opportunity to decide on this issue in the form of a statewide constitutional amendment election. This sentiment is shared by Republican voters (83%), Democrat voters (81%) and Independents (82%).

Regardless of your position on this issue, do you think the state legislature should allow Texas voters to decide if slot machines at the race tracks and Indian reservations should be allowed by putting it to a vote in a statewide constitutional amendment election?

82% Yes
14% No
4% Depends / Unsure

When asked to choose from five options, 51% of respondents selected allowing slot machines at tracks and Indian reservations as their first choice for additional or new sources of state revenues.

If you had to choose, which one of the following would be your first choice for any additional or new sources of state revenues? **(Randomize choices)**

51%	Allowing slot machines at the race tracks and Indian reservations
13%	Increasing the state sales tax
12%	Increasing severance taxes on oil and gas
6%	Establishing a personal income tax
3%	Increasing school property taxes
3%	Other / alternative sources (vol)
2%	A combination (vol)
8%	None (vol)
3%	Undecided / refused (vol)

Voters become more in favor of allowing slot machines at Texas race tracks and on Indian reservations after being presented with specific information. Among the most persuasive statements were:

Thirty-eight other states have legalized (Version X: gaming / Version Y: gambling) that generate revenue. This proposal will allow Texas to also generate revenue for needed services and programs.

77%	Favor	20%	Oppose	3%	No difference / Unsure
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Texans are already gambling extensively by spending more than two-and-a-half billion dollars a year on (Version X: gaming / Version Y: gambling) in neighboring states such as Louisiana, New Mexico, and Oklahoma, and this proposal would keep over two billion dollars of that money in Texas.

77%	Favor	20%	Oppose	3%	No difference / Unsure
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Sixty-three percent of Texas voters (*from the 2009 survey results*) support slot machines at the existing and licensed Texas horse and greyhound race tracks and on the three Indian reservations in Texas.

69%	Favor	21%	Oppose	10%	No difference / Unsure
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This proposal would create 77,500 new, permanent jobs in Texas.

75%	Favor	20%	Oppose	5%	No difference / Unsure
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This proposal would generate one billion dollars a year for state or local services.

73%	Favor	21%	Oppose	7%	No difference / Unsure
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After hearing the informative statements, **76% of Texas voters favor** allowing slot machines at race tracks and on Indian reservations compared to 22% who are opposed. Informed support ranges from 70% of conservative Republicans to 82% of moderate/liberal Democrats. In addition, 83% of African-Americans, 80% of Hispanics, and 73% of Anglos favor slot machines at the tracks and on Indian reservations after hearing the informative statements.

In summary, large majorities of voters 1) support allowing slot machines, 2) understand the economic benefits of having slot machines at specific venues, and 3) want the gaming dollars leaving the state of Texas to be kept here to generate revenues for needed services.

These results are from a telephone survey of N=1,002 randomly selected registered voters in the state of Texas. This survey was conducted January 30 - February 1, 2011. The margin of error to the results of this survey is +/- 3.1% at the .95 test level.