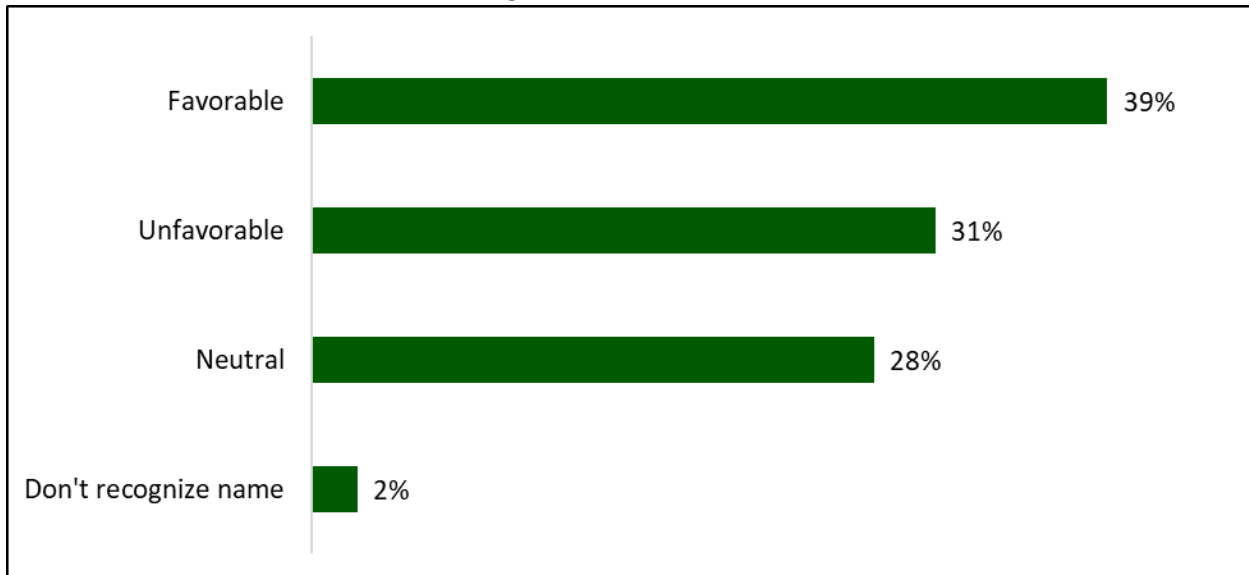


# Governor Mark Dayton

Findings from the MPR News | Star Tribune Minnesota Poll

October 26, 2018

**Four in ten Minnesota voters hold favorable opinions of Governor Dayton, while 3 in 10 have either unfavorable or neutral opinions of him**



Question: "Do you recognize the name Mark Dayton? (If YES), do you have a favorable, unfavorable, or neutral opinion of Mark Dayton?"

Source: MPR News | Star Tribune Minnesota Poll, October 15-17, 2018. N=800 registered Minnesota voters who are likely to vote in November; overall margin of error = +/-3.5 percentage points.

## Key findings

Results from the MPR News | Star Tribune Minnesota Poll of 800 likely voters show:

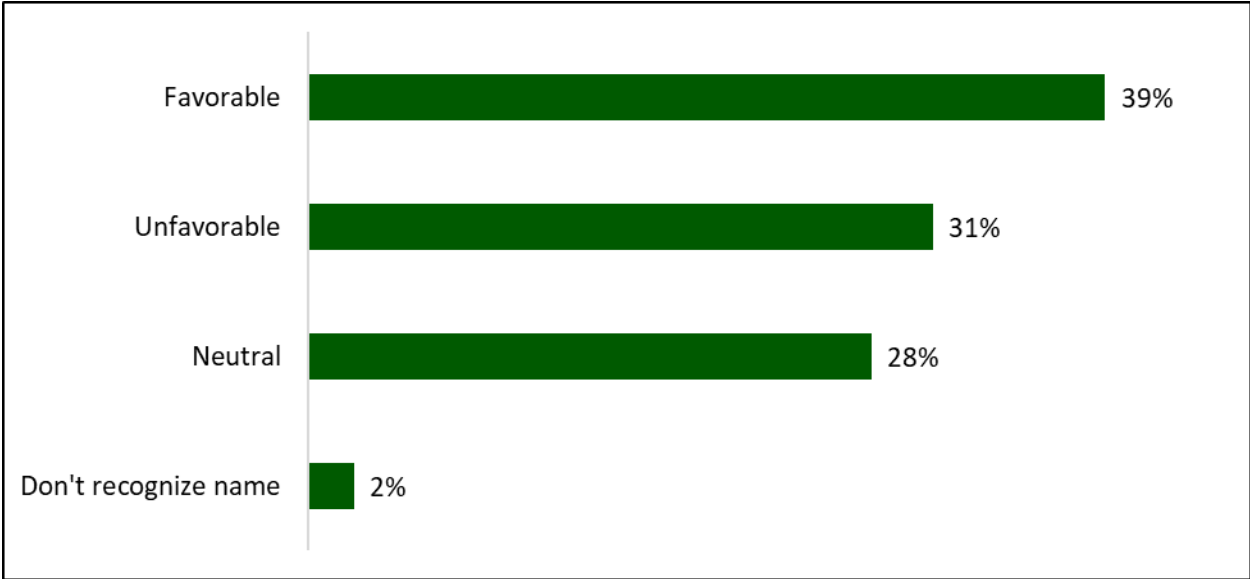
- **Overall, 4 in 10 Minnesota voters have a favorable opinion of Governor Mark Dayton, while approximately 3 in 10 have an unfavorable or neutral opinion of him.**
  - The share of women voters' who hold favorable, unfavorable, and neutral opinions of the outgoing governor mirror those of the Minnesota voters overall.
    - Since September, the share of women who view Dayton unfavorably has significantly decreased from just under one-third to one-quarter.
  - While in September a significantly higher number of men voters viewed Dayton unfavorably (43%) than favorably (32%), this latest poll shows men voters are split on how they feel.
    - The percentage of men voters at least 50 years of age who view Governor Dayton unfavorably dropped 13 points since September (49% to 36%). October ratings show men in this age group tied in unfavorable and favorable ratings at around 36 percent.
  - Minnesota voters with an annual household income of less than \$50,000 are more likely to have a favorable opinion of Governor Dayton than those making at least \$50,000.
    - Since September, the share of voters who make less than \$50,000 and hold a favorable opinion of the governor has grown 10 percentage points, from 35 percent to 45 percent, resulting in a significant drop in voters from this group who view him *unfavorably*.
  - Regionally, voters in the Northern region, Southern region, and metro suburbs are almost split equally in how they feel about the governor, with around one-third in each of the favorability categories. However, nearly half of voters in Ramsey and Hennepin Counties view Governor Dayton favorably.
  - Unsurprisingly, there is a big partisan divide on DFL Governor Dayton's favorability, with three-quarters of Democrats finding Dayton favorable and 61 percent of Republicans finding him unfavorable.
    - Since September, there has been a 24-point drop (85% to 61%) in the share of Republican voters who have an *unfavorable* opinion of the outgoing governor, while the percentage of Republican voters who have a neutral opinion increased by twenty points (11% to 31%).

- When it comes to the upcoming gubernatorial race, approximately 7 in 10 voters who support DFL candidate Tim Walz view Dayton favorably, while a similar share of voters who back Republican candidate Jeff Johnson hold an *unfavorable* opinion of the outgoing governor.
- **When asked if they approve of Governor Dayton’s job performance during his two terms in office, a majority of voters indicated that they approve**
  - Among the 57 percent who approve of Governor Dayton’s job performance, over half indicate they “strongly approve.”
  - Among the 41 percent who disapprove, 63 percent state they “strongly disapprove.”
  - While men are almost split relatively evenly in approving and disapproving, 6 in 10 women voters approve of Governor Dayton’s job performance.
  - In Hennepin and Ramsey Counties, 7 in 10 voters approve of Dayton’s tenure as governor, while that number drops to around half for voters in the rest of the state.
  - Politically, expected partisan divides exist, with 92 percent of Democrat voters approving of the outgoing governor, and 77 percent of Republicans disapproving. However, 20 percent of Republicans approve of Dayton’s job performance.
  - Partisan divides remain when it comes to those who plan to vote for Democratic gubernatorial candidate Tim Walz or Republican candidate Jeff Johnson this November and their approvals of current Governor Dayton’s job performance. Of those who would vote for Walz, 94 percent approve of Dayton’s job performance, while that number falls to 14 percent among Johnson supporters.

The remainder of this brief details these findings in tables and graphs. Please see the appendices for survey background and methods, respondent characteristics, regional definitions, and exact question wording.

# Governor Dayton Favorability

**Four in ten Minnesota voters hold favorable opinions of Governor Dayton, while 3 in 10 have either unfavorable or neutral opinions of him**



Question: "Do you recognize the name Mark Dayton? (If YES), do you have a favorable, unfavorable, or neutral opinion of Mark Dayton?"

Source: MPR News | Star Tribune Minnesota Poll, October 15-17, 2018. N=800 registered Minnesota voters who are likely to vote in November; overall margin of error = +/-3.5 percentage points.

## Favorability ratings of Governor Dayton, by group

	October 15-17			September 10-12		
	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral
<b>ALL</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>31%</b>	28%	37%	37%	24%
<b>SEX</b>						
Male	37%	36%	25%	<b>32%</b>	<b>43%</b>	24%
Female	<b>42%</b>	<b>26%</b>	30%	42%	32%	24%
<b>AGE GROUP</b>						
18-34	<b>48%</b>	<b>24%</b>	28%	<b>55%</b>	<b>20%</b>	25%
35-49	40%	33%	26%	34%	40%	25%
50-64	37%	30%	31%	33%	42%	24%
65+	36%	34%	26%	<b>33%</b>	<b>43%</b>	20%
<b>AGE by SEX</b>						
Male, 18-49	39%	37%	23%	37%	36%	26%
Male, 50 or older	35%	36%	26%	<b>28%</b>	<b>49%</b>	21%
Female, 18-49	<b>47%</b>	<b>23%</b>	29%	<b>49%</b>	<b>27%</b>	24%
Female, 50 or older	<b>38%</b>	<b>28%</b>	31%	37%	36%	24%
<b>ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME</b>						
Under \$50,000	<b>45%</b>	<b>22%</b>	29%	35%	37%	26%
\$50,000 or more	37%	36%	25%	38%	39%	22%
<b>REGION<sup>a</sup></b>						
Hennepin/Ramsey	<b>49%</b>	<b>22%</b>	26%	<b>51%</b>	<b>29%</b>	18%
Metro Suburbs	34%	34%	30%	<b>28%</b>	<b>45%</b>	26%
Southern Minnesota	36%	32%	30%	36%	34%	28%
Northern Minnesota	34%	39%	25%	<b>29%</b>	<b>43%</b>	25%
<b>PARTY IDENTIFICATION</b>						
DFL/Democrat	<b>74%</b>	<b>3%</b>	22%	<b>73%</b>	<b>3%</b>	23%
Independent/other	32%	33%	32%	29%	31%	37%
Republican	<b>6%</b>	<b>61%</b>	31%	<b>2%</b>	<b>85%</b>	11%
<b>GOVERNOR VOTE</b>						
Tim Walz, DFL	<b>74%</b>	<b>2%</b>	22%	<b>69%</b>	<b>8%</b>	22%
Jeff Johnson, Republican	<b>3%</b>	<b>68%</b>	26%	<b>1%</b>	<b>84%</b>	13%

Source: APM Research Lab analysis of MPR News | Star Tribune Minnesota Poll, 2018. N=800 registered Minnesota voters who are likely to vote in November; overall margin of error = +/-3.5 percentage points.

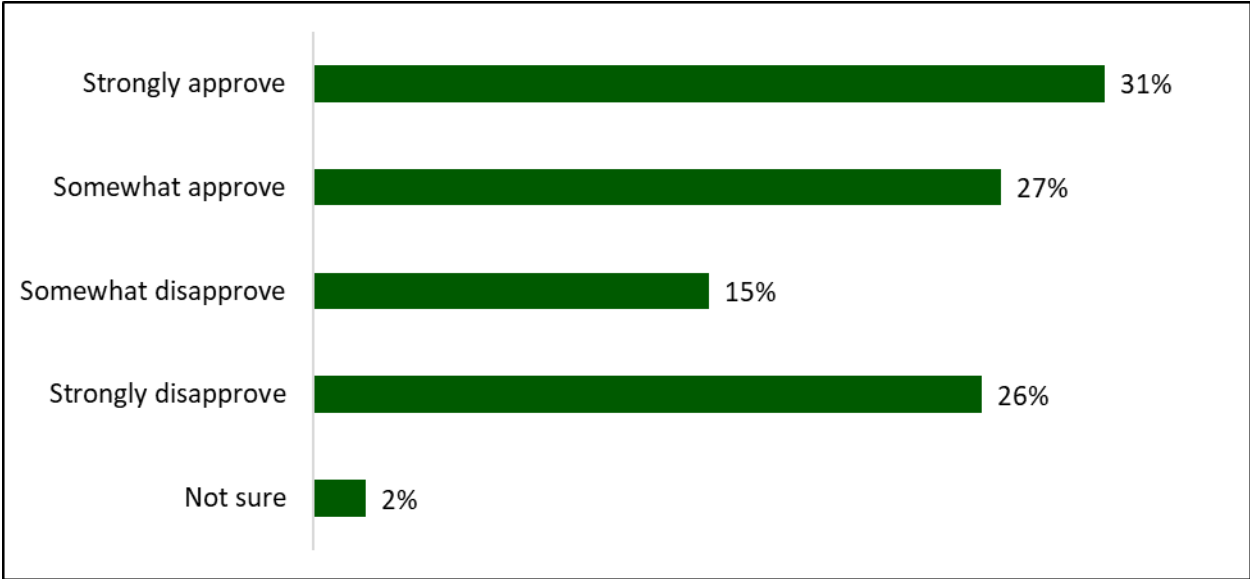
Question: "Do you recognize the name Mark Dayton? (If YES), do you have a favorable, unfavorable, or neutral opinion of Mark Dayton?"

**Bolded percentages** indicate a statistically significant difference (95 percent confidence level or higher) between the percentage indicating "favorable" and "unfavorable" in the survey noted at the top of the column.

<sup>a</sup> See Appendix 2 for definition of regions.

# Governor Dayton’s job performance after two terms

**While three in five voters approve of Governor Dayton’s job performance, two in five disapprove, and many in either camp feel “strongly”**



Question: “Overall, do you approve or disapprove of Mark Dayton’s job performance during his two terms in office? (is that strongly approve/disapprove or somewhat approve/disapprove)?”

Source: MPR News | Star Tribune Minnesota Poll, September 10-12 and October 15-17, 2018. N=800 registered Minnesota voters who are likely to vote in November; overall margin of error = +/-3.5 percentage points.

## Governor Day job performance approval, by group

	Approve <sup>a</sup>	Disapprove	Neutral
<b>ALL</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>41%</b>	2%
<b>SEX</b>			
Male	52%	46%	1%
Female	<b>61%</b>	<b>36%</b>	3%
<b>AGE GROUP</b>			
18-34	<b>60%</b>	<b>38%</b>	1%
35-49	<b>58%</b>	<b>40%</b>	2%
50-64	<b>57%</b>	<b>43%</b>	1%
65+	<b>54%</b>	<b>43%</b>	3%
<b>AGE by SEX</b>			
Male, 18-49	51%	48%	1%
Male, 50 or older	53%	45%	1%
Female, 18-49	<b>67%</b>	<b>31%</b>	3%
Female, 50 or older	<b>57%</b>	<b>40%</b>	3%
<b>ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME</b>			
Under \$50,000	<b>60%</b>	<b>36%</b>	4%
\$50,000 or more	<b>54%</b>	<b>45%</b>	1%
<b>REGION<sup>b</sup></b>			
Hennepin/Ramsey	<b>71%</b>	<b>27%</b>	3%
Metro Suburbs	52%	47%	1%
Southern Minnesota	51%	48%	2%
Northern Minnesota	48%	49%	3%
<b>PARTY IDENTIFICATION</b>			
DFL/Democrat	<b>92%</b>	<b>7%</b>	2%
Independent/other	53%	45%	2%
Republican	<b>20%</b>	<b>77%</b>	3%
<b>GOVERNOR VOTE</b>			
Tim Walz, DFL	<b>94%</b>	<b>5%</b>	1%
Jeff Johnson, Republican	<b>14%</b>	<b>85%</b>	2%

Source: APM Research Lab analysis of MPR News | Star Tribune Minnesota Poll, 2018. N=800 registered Minnesota voters who are likely to vote in November; overall margin of error = +/-3.5 percentage points.

Question: "Overall, do you approve or disapprove of Mark Dayton's job performance during his two terms in office? (Is that strongly approve/disapprove or somewhat approve/disapprove)?"

**Bolded percentages** indicate a statistically significant difference (95 percent confidence level or higher).

<sup>a</sup> "Strongly approve" and "somewhat approve" were combined into "approve," and "strongly disapprove" and "somewhat disapprove" were combined into "disapprove."

<sup>b</sup> See Appendix 2 for definition of regions.

## Appendix 1: Survey background and methods

This survey is the result of a collaboration between Minnesota Public Radio News and the Star Tribune. It is a continuation of the Star Tribune's periodic "Minnesota Poll."<sup>2</sup>

Mason-Dixon Polling & Strategy, Inc. of Jacksonville, Florida, designed and executed the survey, including sample construction and screening procedures, data collection, and analysis. The poll was conducted from October 15 through 17, 2018. A total of 800 registered Minnesota voters were interviewed statewide by telephone. All indicated they were likely to vote in the November general election.

Those interviewed were randomly selected from a phone-matched Minnesota voter registration list that included both land-line and cell phone numbers. Quotas were assigned to reflect voter turnout by county.

Mason-Dixon provided the following information regarding survey cooperation:

	Human contacted (potential respondent)	Agreeing to participate	Of those agreeing, number qualifying (screened in) and completing survey
Land-line	1,580	577 (37%)	479 (83%)
Mobile	1,895	417 (22%)	321 (77%)
TOTAL	3,475	994 (29%)	800 (80%)

The data were not weighted. The overall margin for error is no more than  $\pm 3.5$  percentage points. This means that there is a 95 percent probability that the "true" figure would fall within that range if all adults were surveyed. The margin for error is higher for any subgroup, such as a sex or age grouping, as shown in Appendix 2.

The APM Research Lab provided consultation on the questionnaire and additional analysis of survey results, including this brief.

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<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.startribune.com/the-minnesota-poll/468458743/>



## Appendix 2: Characteristics of survey sample

	Survey respondents <sup>a</sup>		Margin of error for within-group analysis <sup>b</sup>	All Minnesotans age 18+ <sup>c</sup>
	Number	Percent <sup>d</sup>	Percentage points ±	
<b>ALL</b>	800	100%	3.5	4,277,949
<b>SEX</b>				
Male	384	48%	5.0	49%
Female	416	52%	4.8	51%
<b>AGE GROUP</b>				
18-34	136	17%	8.4	29%
35-49	210	26%	6.8	24%
50-64	237	30%	6.4	26%
65+	210	26%	6.8	20%
Refused	7	--	--	
<b>ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME</b>				
Under \$50,000	225	36%	6.5	36%
<i>Under \$25,000</i>	106	17%	--	16%
<i>\$25,000-\$49,999</i>	119	19%	--	20%
\$50,000 or more	400	64%	4.9	64%
<i>\$50,000-\$74,999</i>	131	21%	--	19%
<i>\$75,000-\$99,999</i>	129	21%	--	14%
<i>\$100,000 or more</i>	140	22%	--	32%
Refused	175	--	--	
<b>REGION <sup>e</sup></b>				
Hennepin/Ramsey	255	32%	6.1	33%
Metro Suburbs	230	29%	6.5	28%
Southern Minnesota	160	20%	7.7	19%
Northern Minnesota	155	19%	7.9	20%
<b>PARTY IDENTIFICATION</b>				
DFL/Democrat	306	38%	5.6	--
Independent	229	29%	6.5	--
Republican	265	33%	6.0	--
<b>INTERVIEW TYPE</b>				--
Land-line	479	60%	--	--
Cell phone	321	40%	--	--

<sup>a</sup> MPR News | Star Tribune Minnesota Poll. N=800 registered Minnesota voters who are likely to vote in November.

<sup>b</sup> Maximum margin of error at 95 percent confidence level for results presented for the group. For example, if 50 percent of males prefer a given candidate, there is a 95 percent probability that the value for the entire population would be between 45 and 55 percent.

<sup>c</sup> Mason Dixon's methods for this survey are designed to mirror the population that will vote in November. The exact characteristics of that population are unknowable; we provide characteristics of all adults as a point of reference (APM Research Lab analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 2017 Population Estimates and American Community Survey).

<sup>d</sup> Percentages in this table are calculated as "valid percentages"; refusals are excluded from the denominator.

<sup>e</sup> Regional definitions are noted below

## Comparison with September Minnesota Poll

In comparing the characteristics of the survey sample noted in the table above from the Minnesota Poll conducted September 10-12, 2018 with those of the Minnesota Poll conducted October 15-17, 2018, there are no statistically significant differences in terms of describing the broader target population of likely voters. However, there are some minor differences that may influence the overall results, in addition to the changes in the actual opinions of the broader population. Note that the two surveys are independent of one another; Mason Dixon did *not* attempt to interview the same respondents.

There is a slight difference in the age profile of respondents, with a 2.0 percentage point decrease from September to October in the proportion represented in the youngest age category, 18-34. The oldest category (65+) also decreased slightly, while the two middle categories both increased by less than 2 percentage points.

There also was a 2.8 percentage point increase in the proportion of respondents indicating that they had annual incomes below \$25,000 and a decrease of nearly 5 percentage points in the portion of respondents who refused to answer the income question; proportions represented in the broader “Under \$50,000” and “\$50,000 or more” categories differed by less than one percentage points between the two surveys.

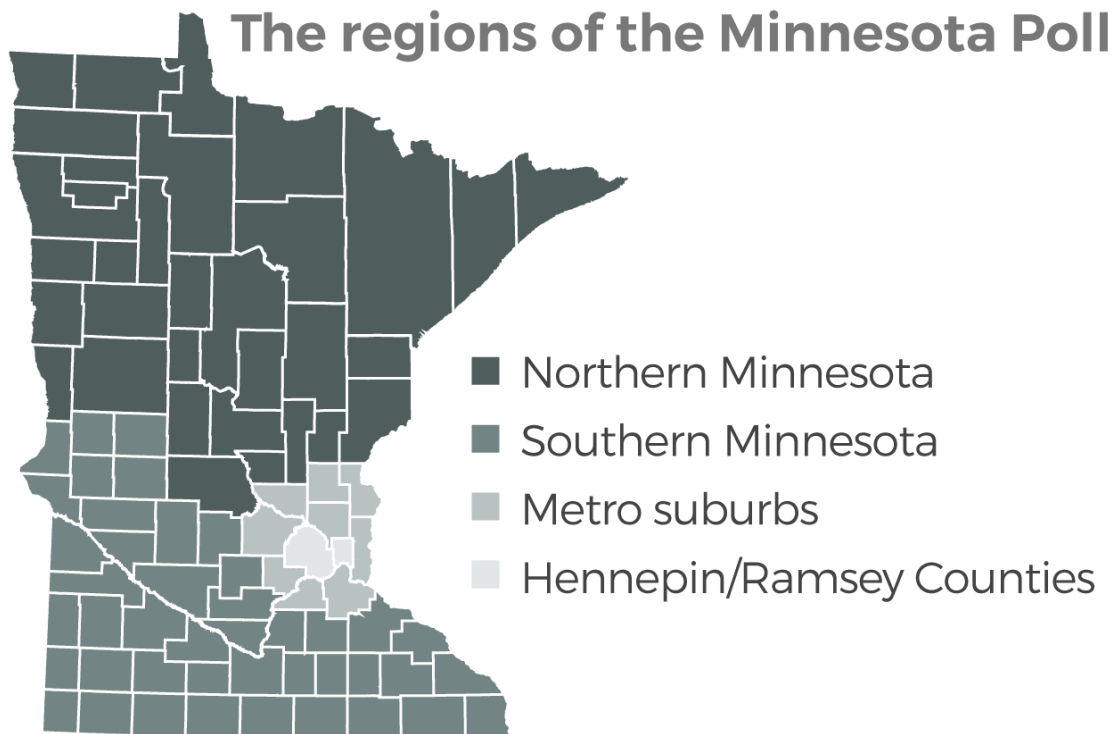
There are no regional differences between the two surveys as regions were used as quotas in the sampling for both iterations of the Minnesota Poll.

In the October poll, the percentage of respondents identifying as Republican and DFL or Democrat increased by 2.4 and 0.9 percentage points, respectively, while the percentage identifying as independent decreased by 3.3 percentage points. Note that party identification can change as respondents associate themselves with candidates.

	October 15-17		September 10-12	
	<i>Number</i>	Percent <sup>d</sup>	<i>Number</i>	Percent <sup>d</sup>
<b>PARTY IDENTIFICATION</b>				
DFL/Democrat	306	38%	299	37%
Independent	229	29%	255	32%
Republican	265	33%	246	31%

<sup>a</sup> MPR News | Star Tribune Minnesota Poll. N=800 registered Minnesota voters who are likely to vote in November.

## Regions



Source: William Lager | MPR News

**Hennepin/Ramsey:** Likely voters in Hennepin and Ramsey Counties.

**Metro Suburbs:** Likely voters in Scott, Wright, Sherburne, Carver, Dakota, Anoka, Isanti, Chisago and Washington Counties.

**Southern Minnesota:** Likely voters in Goodhue, Rice, Le Sueur, Blue Earth, Waseca, Freeborn, Steele, Dodge, Mower, Fillmore, Olmstead, Houston, Winona, Wabasha, Rock, Nobles, Jackson, Martin, Faribault, Watonwan, Cottonwood, Murray, Pipestone, Lincoln, Lyon, Redwood, Brown, Nicollet, McLeod, Renville, Sibley, Meeker, Kandiyohi, Chippewa, Yellow Medicine, Lac Qui Parle, Swift, Big Stone, Traverse, Stevens, Pope, Douglas, and Grant Counties.

**Northern Minnesota:** Likely voters in Benton, Stearns, Morrison, Todd, Wadena, Otter Tail, Wilkin, Clay, Becker, Hubbard, Beltrami, Lake of the Woods, Clearwater, Mahnommen, Norman, Polk, Red Lake, Pennington, Marshall, Roseau, Kittson, Cook, Lake, St. Louis, Koochiching, Itasca, Cass, Crow Wing, Aitkin, Carlton, Pine, Kanabec, and Mille Lacs Counties.

**Metro:** Hennepin/Ramsey and Metro Suburbs combined.

**Greater Minnesota:** Southern and Northern Minnesota combined.

## Appendix 3: Question wording

### OCTOBER 2018 MINNESOTA POLL

Good evening. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ from Mason-Dixon Polling. We are conducting a statewide public opinion poll. Would you have a few minutes to participate?

SCREENER #1: Are you a registered voter in the state of Minnesota?

YES-SKIP TO SCREENER 3      NO-PROCEED

SCREENER #2: Are you planning to register at the polls on Election Day in order to vote?

YES      1-SKIP TO Q1                      NO-TERMINATE

SCREENER #3: In November, there will be a general election for Governor, two US Senate seats and other state and local offices. Which of the following best describes your plans for participating in that election?

I will vote by absentee ballot	1-PROCEED
I will definitely vote on Election Day	2-PROCEED
I will probably vote on Election Day	3-PROCEED
I may or may not vote	4-TERMINATE
I probably will not vote	5-TERMINATE
I definitely will not vote	6-TERMINATE
Not Sure ( <b>DO NOT READ</b> )	7-TERMINATE

Do you recognize the name \_\_\_\_\_? (IF YES) Do you have a favorable, unfavorable or neutral opinion of \_\_\_\_\_?

1=RECOGNIZE NAME, FAVORABLE OPINION  
2=RECOGNIZE NAME, UNFAVORABLE OPINION  
3=RECOGNIZE NAME, NEUTRAL OR NO OPINION  
4=DON'T RECOGNIZE NAME

(ROTATE ORDER)

FAV   UNFAV   NEUT   DR

9) Mark Dayton                      1              2              3              4

14) Mark Dayton is nearing the end of eight years as governor of Minnesota. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of his job performance during his two terms in office? (is that strongly approve/disapprove or somewhat approve/disapprove?)

- 1 Strongly approve
- 2 Somewhat approve
- 3 Somewhat disapprove
- 4 Strongly disapprove
- 5 Not sure

30) In terms of your political party identification, do you generally consider yourself DFL or Democrat, Republican or an independent?

	DFL/Democrat 1	Republican 2	Independent/Other 3
31) What is your age?		18-34	1
		35-49	2
		50-64	3
		65+	4
		Refused	5

32) What is your annual household income?

<\$25,000	1
\$25,000-\$49,999	2
\$50,000-\$74,999	3
\$75,000-\$99,999	4
\$100,000+	5
Refused ( <b>DO NOT READ</b> )	6

33) NOTE SEX: Male 1 Female 2

34) NOTE REGION: Hennepin/Ramsey Counties 1  
 Metro Suburbs 2  
 Southern Minnesota 3  
 Northern Minnesota 4

## About the APM Research Lab: Bringing Facts into Focus

The APM Research Lab is a division of American Public Media aimed at informing the public by producing credible research- and analysis-based content. Our mission is to foster an engaged democracy by inspiring curiosity, inquiry and discussion through fact-driven, credible research and analysis. Values: Independent, Useful, Informative, Non-partisan.

The APM Research Lab conducts research projects of all types — surveys, demographic analyses, literature reviews, and more — and informs the work of partner organizations and the broader public through traditional reports, as well as infographics, blog posts, interactives, presentations, and other platforms.

In addition to philanthropic support and partnership, we are happy to entertain requests for proposals and other contractual inquiries related to research and analysis.



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