
Road Charge Focus Groups

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Agenda Item #9
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Focus Groups – Objectives



- ◆ Probe for motivations and values associated with transportation priorities
- ◆ Identify how transportation improvements connect to the values of the general public
- ◆ Assess attitudes toward a proposal for a road charge
- ◆ Gauge barriers to and understanding of transportation funding
- ◆ Identify communications needs and sensitivities for effective public and stakeholder outreach



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Key Focus Group Findings



- ◆ Transportation issues were important to focus group participants, ranking high among issues in need of attention
- ◆ Top transportation concerns:
 - ◇ Traffic
 - ◇ Congestion
 - ◇ Air quality
 - ◇ Road maintenance
 - ◇ Cost



Key Focus Group Findings (continued)



- ◆ Fairness was an important value underlying transportation funding decisions
- ◆ Fairness was linked to use and impact on roads
 - ◇ Perception that gas tax and vehicle registration fee were fair
 - ◇ Considerations for out of state vehicles, discount for fuel-efficient, and effective enforcement
 - ◇ Those with long commutes argued road charge was not fair



Key Focus Group Findings (continued)



- ◆ Little knowledge of how transportation improvements are currently funded
- ◆ Familiar funding mechanisms included:
 - ◇ Vehicle registration tax
 - ◇ Sales tax
 - ◇ Gas tax
 - ◇ Tolls
 - ◇ Fees on miles driven (distant 5th)



Key Focus Group Findings (continued)



- ◆ Concept of a fee on miles driven was mostly unfamiliar
- ◆ People who disliked road charge had a variety of objections:
 - ◇ Unfair to certain classes of people—long distance commuters and buyers of fuel-efficient cars
 - ◇ Disbelief that there is a funding problem/distrust in government
 - ◇ Damage to the environment—moving backwards on HEV incentives
 - ◇ Complex and expensive to implement and enforce
 - ◇ Intrusive or inconvenient
 - ◇ Tracking and privacy concerns



Key Focus Group Findings (continued)



- ◆ Choice was important to participants, especially those who did not want to share location information
- ◆ Preferred methods of implementation in this order:
 - ◇ Time Permits
 - ◇ Mileage Permits
 - ◇ Odometer Charge
 - ◇ Automated Mileage Reporting (with/without location)



Key Focus Group Findings (continued)



- ◆ Once participants understood what road charging was and how it might work, they generally accepted it as a fair replacement for the gas tax
- ◆ Very important to have an effective education campaign:
 - ◇ Explain the current funding system and challenges
 - ◇ Provide concrete examples of financial impact of a road charge as compared to the gas tax for specific driving circumstances
 - ◇ Road charges are a replacement tax, not a new tax
 - ◇ People will have choices
 - ◇ Provide information about implementation costs, projected revenues, new systems, program transparency and use of funds
 - ◇ Develop strategy to defuse negative assumptions about location tracking, complexity, costs, environmental impact, enforcement



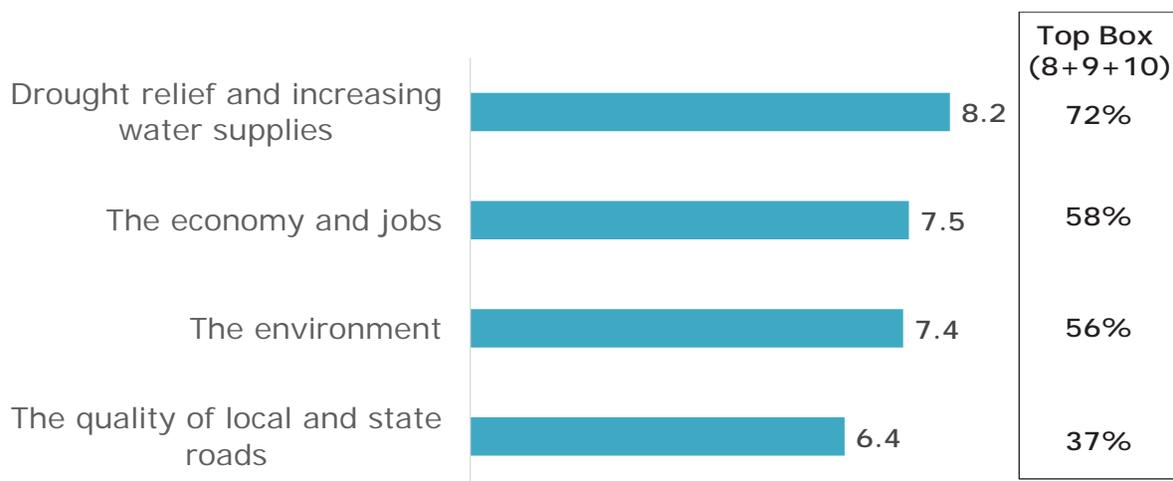
Telephone Survey – Overview



- ◆ In September 2015, 600 registered voters and 300 additional Californians completed the telephone survey
 - ◇ Adherence to agreed parameters and approach with margin of error ± 3.3 percentage points
- ◆ Objectives
 - ◇ Provide information on the public's opinion on road charging as a general concept
 - ◇ Gain a better understanding about how people value transportation as compared to other important issues
 - ◇ Determine to what extent people understand California's transportation funding shortfalls
- ◆ Following slides include some topline results



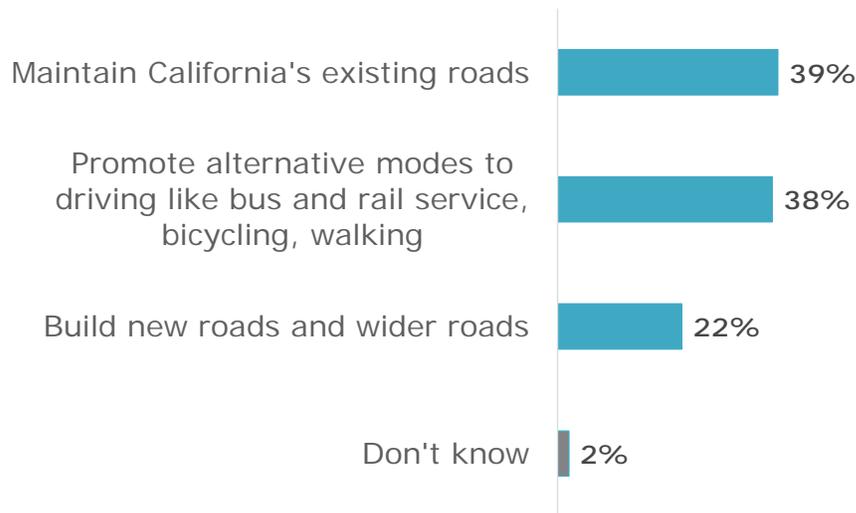
Issues of Concern in California



On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means that you are not at all concerned, and 10 means you are very concerned, please rate the following issues



Highest Transportation Priority



Thinking about the driving you do on California roads, I'd like to read a list of transportation priorities. Which one do you think should be the highest priority?



Most Important Road Charge Issue

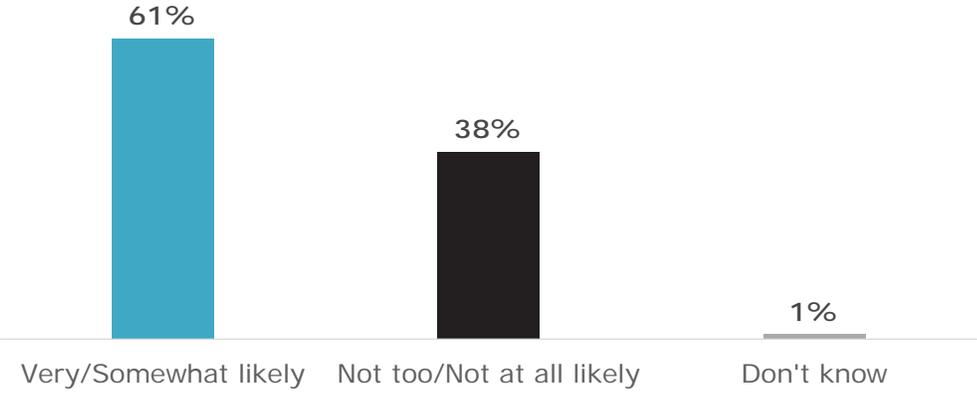


- 1) Protect my privacy
- 2) Ensure all motorists pay their fair share for road use
- 3) Ensure I not pay both a mile charge and a gas tax

Thinking about paying a road charge based on the number of miles driven instead of the gas tax, which is the most important issue to you?



Likelihood to Purchase Hybrid/EV



If you were to buy or lease a vehicle, how likely are you to consider an electric or hybrid vehicle?

