WSTC Public Outreach Program
Voice Of Washington State (VOWS)
Panel & Phone Surveys
Final Presentation

Conducted by:
Research Assurance and Abt SRBI

Presentation to:
Washington State Transportation Commission
January 2017
BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION
VOWS Overview

• **The Overall Purpose Of The VOWS Program:** To provide the Commission, Governor and State Legislature with an understanding of Washington State citizen’s attitudes and opinions on transportation policy & funding issues, investment priorities, and funding alternatives.

• **Panel Started In 2010:** Currently 29,868 panel members with 26,654 having done 1 or more surveys. Done over 10 VOWS surveys with most having 7,000+ responses.

• **Conducted Two Probability Studies:** Address Base Sample (ABS) of 5,518 in 2010 and Random Digit Dial (RDD) Phone Sample of 1,000 done in 2017.

• **VOWS Members Join the Panel Via:**
  – 50% Of The Random Address Based Sample Signed Up For The VOWS Panel
  – Emailed VOWS Invite To Registered & Active Washington State Voters & General Washington State Citizens
  – WSTC and WSDOT Website Links To VOWS Signup Page
  – Various Local Newspaper Articles With Links To VOWS Signup Page
  – “Recruit A Friend” Emails Sent By VOWS Members To Encourage Sign-up

• **Studies in 2017:** *Statewide Attitudes Towards Key Transportation Issue via RDD Phone and VOWS Panel conducted from January 6 – 21, 2017.*
SURVEY FINDINGS
F2. Of just the following five areas, which of those do you feel is the most important issue facing the current legislature?

**Most Important Issue in Current Legislative Session**

- **Telephone (n=1,000):**
  - Education: 43%
  - Economy: 18%
  - Taxes: 15%
  - Environment: 10%
  - Transportation: 7%
  - Other: 4%

- **VOWS (n=7,327):**
  - Education: 29%
  - Economy: 15%
  - Taxes: 19%
  - Environment: 7%
  - Transportation: 19%
  - Other: 4%
T1. How urgent do you feel it is to make sure Washington's transportation system WORKS EFFECTIVELY today and into the future?
Urgency

Making Sure Transportation System Works Effectively

RANDOM STUDIES

2017 RDD
- 38% 7:Ext Urgent
- 22% 6
- 21% 5
- 13% 4
- 7% 3-1: Not Urgent
- 12% 6

2011 ABS
- 45% 7:Ext Urgent
- 32% 6
- 13% 5
- 6% 4
- 4% 3-1: Not Urgent

PANEL STUDIES

2014
- 45% 7:Ext Urgent
- 29% 6
- 16% 5
- 7% 4
- 3% 3-1: Not Urgent

2013
- 40% 7:Ext Urgent
- 28% 6
- 18% 5
- 7% 4
- 7% 3-1: Not Urgent

2011
- 40% 7:Ext Urgent
- 28% 6
- 18% 5
- 8% 4
- 6% 3-1: Not Urgent

T1. How urgent do you feel it is to make sure Washington's transportation system WORKS EFFECTIVELY today and into the future?
Overall Washington Transportation Grade

2.05

Average Grade

1.62

Overall Washington Transportation Grade

Telephone (n=1,000)

- Above Average: 29%
- Average: 48%
- Below Average: 22%

VOWS (n=7,327)

- Above Average: 19%
- Average: 40%
- Below Average: 41%

T2. Using a school grading scale where A equals Excellent, B equals Above Average, C equals Average, D equals Below Average and F equals Failing, how would you rate Washington's transportation system OVERALL on an A to F scale?
T2. Using a school grading scale where A equals Excellent, B equals Above Average, C equals Average, D equals Below Average and F equals Failing, how would you rate Washington's transportation system OVERALL on an A to F scale?
T3. Again, using an A through F grading scale, what grade would you give the state for making sure your area of the state gets a fair share of transportation funding?
T3. Again, using an A through F grading scale, what grade would you give the state for making sure your area of the state gets a fair share of transportation funding?
T4. Using the same A through F grading scale, what grade would you give the transportation system in your local area - that is in your city or town and the areas immediately surrounding it?
Local Transportation Grade

**T4.** Using the same A through F grading scale, what grade would you give the transportation system in your local area - that is in your city or town and the areas immediately surrounding it?

### Local Transportation System Grade

#### RANDOM STUDIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Above</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Below</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017 RDD</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 ABS</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### PANEL STUDIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Above</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Below</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
T5. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Washington State needs additional revenue to keep our transportation system safe, effective and properly maintained?
T5. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Washington State needs additional revenue to keep our transportation system safe, effective and properly maintained?
T6. Currently the transportation system is funded by a per gallon gas tax. Would you say using the gas tax to fund transportation is...
T6. Currently the transportation system is funded by a per gallon gas tax. Would you say using the gas tax to fund transportation is...

**Random Studies**

- **2017 RDD**
  - Very Fair: 24%
  - Somewhat Fair: 47%
  - Not that Fair: 11%
  - Not Fair At All: 14%
  - Not Sure: 4%

- **2014**
  - Very Fair: 20%
  - Somewhat Fair: 39%
  - Not that Fair: 19%
  - Not Fair At All: 19%
  - Not Sure: 3%

**Panel Studies**

- **2017**
  - Very Fair: 22%
  - Somewhat Fair: 40%
  - Not that Fair: 17%
  - Not Fair At All: 17%
  - Not Sure: 4%

- **2014**
  - Very Fair: 20%
  - Somewhat Fair: 39%
  - Not that Fair: 19%
  - Not Fair At All: 19%
  - Not Sure: 3%
A road usage charge is a different way to fund transportation. It would replace the gas tax and charge drivers by the miles driven instead of by the gallons used, resulting in all drivers paying the same amount per mile for their use of the road, regardless of their vehicle’s Miles Per Gallon.

Knowing this, would you say road usage charge is:

- Very Fair
- Somewhat Fair
- Not that Fair
- Not Fair at All
- Not sure

**Phone (n=1,000)**
- 9% Very Fair
- 19% Somewhat Fair
- 2% Not that Fair
- 2% Not Fair at All
- 5% Not sure

**VOWS (n=7,327)**
- 38% Very Fair
- 32% Somewhat Fair
- 14% Not that Fair
- 14% Not Fair at All
- 5% Not sure
T7. A road usage charge is a different way to fund transportation. It would replace the gas tax and charge drivers by the miles driven instead of by the gallons used, resulting in all drivers paying the same amount per mile for their use of the road, regardless of their vehicle’s Miles Per Gallon. Knowing this, would you say road usage charge is ...
Gas Tax vs. Road Usage Charge

T8. Which transportation funding approach do you think is more fair?

- Gas Tax: 43% Much More Fair, 23% Somewhat More Fair, 20% Neither, 5% Not Sure
- Road Usage: 40% Much More Fair, 10% Somewhat More Fair, 5% Neither, 5% Not Sure
- Both Options: 3% Much More Fair, 3% Somewhat More Fair, 3% Neither, 5% Not Sure
- Neither Options: 3% Much More Fair, 3% Somewhat More Fair, 3% Neither, 5% Not Sure
- Not Sure: 3% Much More Fair, 3% Somewhat More Fair, 3% Neither, 5% Not Sure

Phone (n=1,000)

Gas Tax vs. Road Usage Change

- Gas Tax: 44% Much More Fair, 28% Somewhat More Fair, 16% Neither, 10% Not Sure
- Road Usage: 25% Much More Fair, 13% Somewhat More Fair, 22% Neither, 10% Not Sure
- Both Options: 0% Much More Fair, 0% Somewhat More Fair, 0% Neither, 10% Not Sure
- Neither Options: 0% Much More Fair, 0% Somewhat More Fair, 0% Neither, 10% Not Sure
- Not Sure: 0% Much More Fair, 0% Somewhat More Fair, 0% Neither, 10% Not Sure

VOWS (n=7,327)
T8. Which transportation funding approach do you think is more fair?

### RANDOM STUDIES
- Gas Tax: 44%
- RUC: 10%
- Both: 40%
- Neither: 3%
- Not Sure: 3%

### PANEL STUDIES
- Gas Tax: 43%
- RUC: 25%
- Both: 22%
- Neither: 0%
- Not Sure: 10%

2017 RDD
- Gas Tax: 44%
- RUC: 10%
- Both: 40%
- Neither: 3%
- Not Sure: 3%

2014
- Gas Tax: 40%
- RUC: 30%
- Both: 23%
- Neither: 0%
- Not Sure: 7%
T9. Fairness aside, to fund transportation would you prefer?

Gas Tax vs. Road Usage Charge Preference

Phone (n=1,000)
- Gas Tax: 52%
- Road Usage: 23%
- Either Option: 14%
- Neither Option: 5%
- Not Sure: 4%

VOWS (n=7,327)
- Gas Tax: 42%
- Road Usage: 17%
- Either Option: 12%
- Neither Option: 19%
- Not Sure: 10%
T10-18. Next, I want to read you several short statements and please let me know how important each is to you on a five-point scale, where 1 is not at all important and 5 is extremely important. On a 1 to 5 scale, how important is...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>2017 Phone (n=1,000)</th>
<th>2011 ABD (n=5,518)</th>
<th>2017 VOWS (n=7,327)</th>
<th>2013 VOWS (n=5,673)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining and Repairing Existing Roads, Highways, and Bridges</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making Sure Rural and Mountain Roads Remain Open Year-Round</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanding Public Transit Services (Vanpools, Dial-a-Ride)</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating and Maintaining Washington's Ferry System</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing Law Enforcement and Public Safety Efforts on WA Highways</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widening and Building More Roads and Highways</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building or Improving Sidewalks</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving Regional Airports</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Bike Lanes</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
T19. Currently, public transit operations are funded with federal and local tax dollars but not with State gas taxes. Knowing this, do you support or oppose Washington State providing more state transportation funding to help fund public transit services?

Support for More Funding for Public Transit

Support: 74%  Oppose: 19%

Support: 50%  Oppose: 35%

Phone (n=837)

VOWS (n=3,180)

Strongly Support  Somewhat support  Somewhat Oppose  Strongly Oppose  Not Sure
T20. Currently, about 70% of the daily operational costs of the Washington State Ferries are covered by fares paid by the riders. The remaining 30% is covered by gas tax revenues. Gas tax revenues also cover the costs of ferry boats and terminals. Knowing this, do you support or oppose using state gas tax revenues to fund the Washington State Ferry System?
Currently, about 70% of the daily operational costs of the Washington State Ferries are covered by fares paid by the riders. The remaining 30% is covered by gas tax revenues. Gas tax revenues also cover the costs of ferry boats and terminals. Knowing this, do you support or oppose using state gas tax revenues to fund the Washington State Ferry System?

Support for Using Gas Tax to Fund Washington’s Ferry System

**RANDOM STUDIES**
- Strongly Support: 32%
- Somewhat Support: 33%
- Somewhat Oppose: 14%
- Strongly Oppose: 18%
- Not Sure: 3%

**PANEL STUDIES**
- Strongly Support: 20%
- Somewhat Support: 21%
- Somewhat Oppose: 31%
- Strongly Oppose: 12%
- Not Sure: 16%
T21. The next couple of questions are about tolling, that is, charging drivers a fee on some major highways and bridges. In general, do you support or oppose tolling as a way to help pay for new state transportation projects?
Support for Tolling

T21. The next couple of questions are about tolling, that is, charging drivers a fee on some major highways and bridges. In general, do you support or oppose tolling as a way to help pay for new state transportation projects?
T22. Toll rates that change based on time of day are known as variable tolls. This approach to tolling helps reduce congestion by charging a higher toll during the busiest hours and a lower toll during less-busy hours. In general, do you support or oppose the concept of variable tolling on major state highways in heavily congested areas?
T22. Toll rates that change based on time of day are known as variable tolls. This approach to tolling helps reduce congestion by charging a higher toll during the busiest hours and a lower toll during less-busy hours. In general, do you support or oppose the concept of variable tolling on major state highways in heavily congested areas?
T23. Express Toll Lanes allow people traveling alone to pay a toll to use the High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes. The express toll amount changes based on traffic speeds – slower speeds cause the toll to increase and faster speeds keep the toll low. In general, do you support or oppose allowing people traveling alone to pay an express toll to use the HOV lanes on major state highways in heavily congested areas?
T23. Express Toll Lanes allow people traveling alone to pay a toll to use the High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes. The express toll amount changes based on traffic speeds – slower speeds cause the toll to increase and faster speeds keep the toll low. In general, do you support or oppose allowing people traveling alone to pay an express toll to use the HOV lanes on major state highways in heavily congested areas?
T24-T29. Please think about all the trips you personally made from home during a typical week last year such as going to work, running errands, or going to appointments. Approximately what percentage of those trips per week are done by...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Phone (n=1,000)</th>
<th>VOWS (n=7,327)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Driving alone</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpooling</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public transit</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorcycle</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thank you!

Reema Griffith, WSTC

Frank Lynch, Abt SRBI

Bill Young, Research Assurance

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