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**Michigan at a glance.....**

State specific results from the Joyce Foundation survey on political reform show that the opinions of Michigan residents fall in line with many of their neighbors in the Midwest. Although they hold extremely negative views on the direction of the state, Michiganders express interest in making government work better for them.

As part of a critique of state government, Michigan residents identify the influence of money in politics as a significant obstacle to honest and responsive government. Two thirds express the belief that elected officials would not be able to keep their promises on key issues until we limit the amount of money affecting policy decisions in Lansing.

Furthermore, the poll highlights that Michiganders are in support of a political reform agenda focusing on specific judicial, special interest, and campaign finance initiatives.

**Below is a summary and comparison of key Michigan findings:**

**Michiganders are concerned about making state government work better...**

When asked how often they expect state government to do "what is right," 62 percent of Michiganders said "never" or only "some of the time," while only 37 percent said "always" or "most of the time."

Honesty is the most important value Michiganders want in state government. 72 percent of residents stated that honesty was "extremely important," rating it a "10" on a 1-10 scale

**Connecting the dots...**

Over two thirds (67 percent) of Michigan residents believe that "unless we limit the influence of money in government, elected officials will not be able to keep their promises on issues that are important to people like me."

64 percent of Michigan residents feel that candidates who could represent them do not run for office because they do not have the money to win.

### **Citizens are engaged and are not giving up...**

64 percent of Michigan residents disagreed with the statement that “corruption in government will always be a problem, so trying to fix it will not make much difference.”

### **Reforms widely supported....**

58 percent of Michigan residents feel that prohibiting judges from taking money from interests that may have cases in their courts would make a big difference in making government work better.

57 percent of Michigan residents feel that requiring lobbyists to fully report their activities would make a big difference in making government work better.

56 percent of Michigan residents believe public financing of campaigns would make a big difference in making government work better.

### **Statements from Michigan political and government reform leaders**

#### Anne Magoun, President, League of Women Voters of Michigan

“The results of this survey clearly show that the people of Michigan want an honest, responsive state government, and they believe that political reforms can provide a framework for a government that works better for all of Michigan.”

#### John Chamberlin, Chairman, Common Cause in Michigan

“People in our state are concerned about the influence of money in politics. We can build trust and confidence in our state government by making our campaign finance laws a real system of limits and accountability; by requiring greater transparency in reporting lobbying activity; and by addressing the large gaps in our ethics laws.”

#### Rich Robinson, Executive Director, Michigan Campaign Finance Network

“We want a state government that is fair and responsive to all our people, not just to those interest groups that spend a lot of money helping politicians to get elected. Thanks to the actions taken last week by the Committee on House Oversight, Elections and Ethics, the Legislature has an opportunity to require more frequent and thorough reporting of campaign finance activities. That would be a great way to start showing some understanding of a key area of concern to the people of Michigan.”

(Additional information about the five-state survey as well as reform recommendations for Michigan can be found on the Michigan Campaign Finance Network’s web site at [www.mcfn.org](http://www.mcfn.org).)

*The Joyce Foundation Survey was conducted by Belden Russonello & Stewart. A random survey of 2,040 residents of five Midwestern states was conducted from June 14-July 6, 2006. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 2.2 percentage points for the entire study. The margin of sampling error for individual state results is plus or minus 4.9 percentage points.*

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