

TREASURE STATE 2020 POLL RESULTS: MARIJUANA ON THE BALLOT

Tabular data and analysis provided by:

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Notes: The survey was in the field from September 14 – October 2, 2020. Rows in tables may not sum to 100% exactly due to rounding. The margin of error, adjusted for design effects due to weighting, is +/-3.9 percentage points. Percentages are for weighted respondents as explained in the methods documentation.

Item language:

Rather than ask voters specifically about the two initiatives pertaining to marijuana legalization that are on the ballot (CI-118 and I-190), we asked the following question: “The state ballot will ask about legalizing recreational marijuana in Montana. Will you vote to support or oppose legalization?”

Table 1: Marijuana Vote among Likely and Active Registered Voters

Yes to legalization	No to legalization	Don't know	Will not vote on this	Total row respondents
49%	39%	10%	2%	1,607

Table 2: Marijuana Vote by Party among Likely and Active Registered Voters

Party	Yes to legalization	No to legalization	Don't know / will not vote	Total row respondents
Democrat	70%	17%	13%	439
Republican	27%	60%	13%	697
Independent	59%	29%	11%	336
Other	73%	20%	7%	102

Table 3: Marijuana Vote by Age among Likely and Active Registered Voters

Age	Yes to legalization	No to legalization	Don't know / will not vote	Total row respondents
18-29	64%	23%	14%	201
30-39	63%	28%	9%	236
40-49	63%	28%	9%	229
50-59	52%	38%	10%	249
60-69	40%	46%	13%	334
70+	27%	57%	16%	358

The fate of marijuana legalization comes down to three factors: how the “don’t know” respondents split, independent voters, and the presence of younger voters at the polls. Right now, 49 percent of respondents overall indicate they will vote to legalize—a 10-point lead over those indicating they will not. That lead is outside the poll’s margin of error. However, 12 percent of our respondents indicate they don’t know how they will vote or have no plans to vote on the initiative. Typically, the status quo position is advantaged in referendums, which would be no legalization.

What is clear, however, is that independents and younger voters hold the keys here, as Republicans overwhelmingly are opposed and Democrats overwhelmingly in favor. Independent voters support legalization by 30 points, and every age group below 60 support legalization by double digits. With a high voter turnout, Montana will likely legalize marijuana, assuming voters understand that both initiatives must pass and vote accordingly.