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Michigan Voters Want Troops Out of Iraq

MIRS/Rossman Group/Denno-Noor Poll Shows 58 Percent Want Troops Out Now or Within Five Years

LANSING, Mich. — According to polling data released today, a majority of Michigan voters want American troops out of Iraq either immediately (25-percent) or within the next three to five years (33-percent).

“Dissatisfaction with the war in Iraq was an important factor in Democrats regaining control of Congress, and capturing majorities in legislatures and Governor’s offices throughout the country — including Michigan,” said The Rossman Group CEO Kelly Rossman-McKinney. “But our research indicates voters want an exit strategy in place that begins to move troops out of Iraq right away.”

This according to a recent state-wide survey conducted by Denno-Noor Research, in partnership with The Rossman Group, one of Michigan’s top public relations and issue management consulting firms, and Michigan Information & Research Services, Michigan’s leading daily legislative and state government newsletter. MIRS was recently voted the preferred newsletter of Lansing’s political insiders.

The question was worded as follows:

“With regard to U.S. involvement in Iraq, which of the following four statements best describes your beliefs (ROTATE): we need an immediate withdrawal of all troops; we need to begin to withdraw troops now — with a total American troop withdrawal completed in the next two to three years; we need to develop a concrete plan for Iraq’s future stability, which would include a total withdrawal of troops within the next five to seven years; or we are committed to a military presence in Iraq for the long haul, and we are there to stay.”

“According to the results, 25-percent of Michigan residents want troops out of Iraq today,” said MIRS President John T. Reurink, “while another 33-percent want troops out within the next two to three years. Clearly, where presidential candidates stand on this issue will have a huge impact on the already underway 2008 Presidential campaign.”

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The statewide results were as follows:

<u>Position on Troops in Iraq</u>	<u>%</u>
Begin to withdraw troops now, with total American troop withdrawal completed within next 2 – 3 years.	33%
Immediate withdrawal of all troops.	25%
Develop concrete plan for Iraq’s future stability, including total troop withdrawal w/in the next 5 – 7 yrs.	23%
We are committed to a military presence in Iraq for the long haul, and are there to stay.	13%
None of the Above	3%
Unsure	4%

“Only five percent of self-identified Strong Republicans supported an immediate withdrawal of troops, while 51-percent of Strong Democrats support this position,” said Denno-Noor President Dennis Denno. Aside from the sharp partisan differences, there was also strong disagreement on immediate withdrawal along racial lines (42-percent of African Americans support immediate withdrawal vs. 24-percent of Caucasian voters). Interestingly, younger the voters demonstrated less support for immediate troop withdrawal, and greater support for keeping troops in Iraq for the long haul. For seniors, it was the opposite response.”

The following chart reflects responses based on age:

	<u>18 – 35</u>	<u>36 – 49</u>	<u>50 – 64</u>	<u>65 +</u>
Immediate Withdrawal	21%	24%	26%	30%
2 – 3 years	29%	39%	34%	30%
5 – 7 years	25%	24%	23%	20%
Troops in Iraq to Stay	18%	13%	12%	10%
None of the Above	4%	1%	1%	4%
Unsure	3%	1%	4%	6%

“Meanwhile, when looking geographically at the polar opposite positions on this issue (immediate withdrawal vs. no withdrawal), no region favored keeping troops in Iraq for the long haul over immediate withdrawal of all troops,” added Denno. “In every geographic area, a majority can be built either through adding 1) immediate or two to three year withdrawal, or 2) adding two to three year withdrawal with five to seven year withdrawal. In no region of the state does a lengthier military presence in Iraq enjoy a majority.”

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Voter Positions on U.S. Military Involvement in Iraq

Geographically, the responses were as follows*:

	<u>SE MI</u>	<u>Central MI</u>	<u>West MI</u>	<u>Tri Cities/ Thumb</u>	<u>Upper L.P.</u>	<u>U.P.</u>	<u>Oakland</u>	<u>Macomb</u>	<u>Detroit</u>	<u>Balance of Wayne</u>
Immediate Withdrawal	28%	18%	21%	27%	36%	11%	27%	28%	37%	25%
Total Withdrawal within 2 – 3 years	41%	39%	28%	38%	24%	56%	28%	32%	32%	36%
Total Withdrawal within 5 – 7 years	12%	25%	29%	23%	24%	22%	24%	16%	10%	25%
Troops There to Stay	12%	11%	16%	9%	15%	11%	15%	20%	10%	6%
None of the Above	3%	4%	2%	3%	0%	0%	3%	2%	0%	5%
Unsure	3%	5%	4%	0%	0%	0%	4%	2%	12%	3%

*All numbers rounded. Thus, totals may exceed 100 percent.

“Age, political partisanship, racial heritage and geography all contribute to a respondents position,” added Reurink. “But there is no mistaking the results of this survey. The results are heavily tilted toward a desire to see troops out of Iraq — and the sooner the better.”

“Here’s some advice for presidential candidates campaigning in Michigan – the doves outnumber the hawks,” added Rossman-McKinney. “If you want to persuade Michigan primary voters in the race for president – Democratic voters in Michigan are looking for a plan that has more immediacy for troop withdrawal, while Republicans favor a more conservative, lengthier withdrawal strategy. But make no mistake about it, although the time-frames may vary among demographic sub-sets of the Michigan electorate, 81-percent of the state’s voters want to see a plan for troop withdrawal from Iraq.”

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Methodology:

This survey was part of the inaugural Rossman Group/MIRS/Denno-Noor Quarterly Survey of the Michigan electorate. 600 respondents were surveyed between February 21 and February 23, and the participation was stratified based on census data and past voter behavior. A screen was employed to include only those participants who said they intended on voting, either at the polls or by absentee ballot, in the November 2008 Election. The margin of error is plus/minus 4 percent.