

Rep. Kolste: Releases survey results

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MADISON – People in the 44 th Assembly District will accept an increase in the gasoline tax to fund the state transportation budget, but they are dead set against an increase in vehicle registration fees.

Those conclusions are based on the results of a districtwide, non-scientific survey by Rep. Debra Kolste (D-Janesville.) The survey was returned by 1,403 households.

“I was amazed by the number of responses” Kolste said. “To respond, you had to answer 28 yes-or- no questions, find a stamp and mail the survey to my office. A lot of people took the time and effort to respond.”

The survey asked if the gasoline tax should be increased to help pay for road repair and construction: 62 percent said yes. On the other hand, 81 percent objected to raising vehicle registration fees. Opinions on whether to have toll roads was split right down the middle, with 50.2 percent opposed.

The wide-ranging survey covered questions about transportation, education, drug policy, term limits and other issues.

“The survey was sent to as many households as possible,” Kolste said. “I tried to ask fair questions that were based on comments my constituents make when they call me or write to me.

“The survey provided another way for people who really want to communicate with their representative to make their opinions known,” she said. “The results are interesting

and I intend to use them in my policy decisions, when possible and appropriate.”

The respondents reject the idea that voter fraud is widespread by a 78-22 percent margin.

However, 62 percent believe that a picture identification card should be required for voting.

“I was surprised that many of my constituents want voter ID cards but don’t believe voter fraud is an issue,” Kolste said. “That seems like a contradiction.”

Support for term limits was significant. Respondents favored term limits for state legislators at 82 percent; for governor, 89 percent, and for U.S. Senators and Representatives, 81 percent.

They favored legalizing medical marijuana by 80 percent to 20 percent, and 56 percent want to legalize recreational use of marijuana.

Local support for voucher schools is low, based on survey results: 86 percent don’t believe public funds should be spent on private schools and 85 percent oppose expanding the number of private schools receiving state funding.

91 percent favor having legislative lines drawn by a nonpartisan panel rather than by legislators.

“I think frustration with government and elected officials is represented in several of the results,” Kolste said.

The full results will be included in Rep. Kolste’s electronic newsletter and will be available on her legislative website at <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/assembly/44/kolste>.