



FOOD CITIZEN PROJECT POLL RESULTS: MARYLAND POULTRY PRODUCTION

The Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future (CLF) is based at the Bloomberg School of Public Health in the Department of Environmental Health and Engineering. The Center engages in research, policy analysis, education, and other activities guided by an ecologic perspective that diet, food production, the environment, and public health are interwoven elements of a complex system.

The Center's Food Citizen Project is an ongoing public opinion research project that generates relevant and reliable information to strengthen food system policy dialogue and decisionmaking. The project is a core component of the Center's Food System Policy Program and involves the collection, analysis and communication of the public's perceptions and attitudes regarding critical issues surrounding our food system.

As part of the Food Citizen Project, the Center worked with Greenberg, Quinlan, Rosner, a premier opinion research firm, to conduct a survey of Maryland voters' perceptions of the state's poultry production system and attitudes toward proposed reforms based on information from both the poultry industry and reform

advocates. The following findings are based on an August 2016 online survey of 500 registered voters statewide, with an additional 100 registered voters from the Eastern Shore, where poultry production is concentrated, for a total sample of 600. The margin of error was plus or minus 4% with a 95% confidence level.

While acknowledging the importance of the poultry industry to Maryland's economy, voters want to see increased oversight of the handling of waste generated by poultry production facilities. Statewide, 59% support increased oversight, with 58% of Eastern Shore respondents supporting increased oversight. Support increased to 66% statewide and 64% on the Eastern Shore after voters read publicly available information, contained in the survey, from both reform and industry advocates.

Voters showed broad support for the following proposals to increase oversight of the production contracting system in Maryland's poultry industry: requiring that contracts between poultry companies and local growers are easily readable and transparent; ensuring that local growers can discuss contracts and working conditions with each other freely without

retaliation by poultry companies; and ending tournament pricing systems that force local growers to compete against each other and drive down prices. Statewide, 89% of voters support this increased oversight of the contracting system, with 84% of Eastern Shore voters supporting increased oversight.

Voters were also asked about specific proposals, such as making large poultry companies responsible for removing excess poultry waste from the Eastern Shore. Table 1 shows the percentage of voters in support of four different proposals among voters statewide and in six different regions of Maryland.

Voters were also asked their views about Governor Larry Hogan, the Maryland Department of Environment, and the Maryland state legislature as a body. Table 2 below shows the percentage of voters that view the Governor,

MD Department of the Environment and the MD State Legislature positively, and the percentage that view them negatively among voters statewide and in six different regions of Maryland.

Marylanders were also polled about the importance of these issues in terms of holding state legislators accountable at the ballot box. Table 3 shows the percentage of voters that said they would feel more favorably and the percentage that would feel less favorably toward a legislator who supports increased oversight of the poultry industry among voters statewide and in six different regions of Maryland.

The results of this survey clearly demonstrate that voters across Maryland, including those from the Eastern Shore, want more oversight of the poultry industry and are willing to hold their representatives accountable for reforms.

Table 1. Percentage of Voters in Support of Poultry Regulations Across Maryland Regions

Region	Making poultry companies responsible for excess poultry waste	Limiting construction of new and expanded poultry facilities	Limiting the overall number of chickens contained in one area	Supporting local public health laws to limit the number of new poultry houses and the number of chickens
Statewide	86%	64%	77%	76%
Eastern Shore	84%	65%	82%	71%
Border Region*	86%	57%	74%	73%
Baltimore Region**	87%	70%	75%	74%
Prince George’s County	75%	64%	72%	79%
Montgomery County	96%	71%	83%	78%
Central/South Region***	87%	56%	82%	76%

*The border region includes Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Harford, and Washington counties.

**The Baltimore region includes Baltimore City and County.

***The Central/South region includes Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Howard, and St. Mary’s counties.

Table 2. Favorability toward Governor, MD Department of the Environment, and MD State Legislature Among Voters Across MD Regions

Region	Favorability rating of Governor Larry Hogan		Favorability rating of the MD Department of the Environment		Favorability rating of the Maryland State Legislature	
	<i>View Positively</i>	<i>View Negatively</i>	<i>View Positively</i>	<i>View Negatively</i>	<i>View Positively</i>	<i>View Negatively</i>
Statewide	48%	28%	36%	23%	30%	36%
Eastern Shore	60%	25%	41%	28%	36%	35%
Border Region*	57%	24%	33%	19%	30%	37%
Baltimore Region**	48%	26%	33%	19%	36%	22%
Prince George's County	31%	42%	25%	31%	30%	34%
Montgomery County	43%	35%	42%	16%	40%	28%
Central/South Region***	55%	19%	40%	26%	27%	37%

*The border region includes Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Harford, and Washington counties.

**The Baltimore region includes Baltimore City and County.

***The Central/South region includes Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Howard, and St. Mary's counties.

Table 3. Favorability toward State Legislator Who Supports Increased Industry Oversight Among Voters Across MD Regions

Region	View State Legislator more favorably	View State Legislator less favorably	Makes no difference
Statewide	58%	10%	32%
Eastern Shore	58%	16%	26%
Border Region*	51%	13%	37%
Baltimore Region**	51%	14%	35%
Prince George's County	74%	1%	25%
Montgomery County	69%	9%	22%
Central/South Region***	53%	9%	38%

*The border region includes Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, Harford, and Washington counties.

**The Baltimore region includes Baltimore City and County.

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