

March 21, 2011

Majority of Iowa Voters Oppose Dove Hunting by Two to One

Voters want nearly century-old protection of species continued

A statewide survey conducted by Mason-Dixon Polling & Research, Inc. has revealed that a majority (54 percent) of Iowa voters oppose opening a dove hunting season while only 25 percent support. The survey results were consistent in every geographic region of the state and in every political demographic, with all regions and all political affiliation.

The poll comes after a bill has been introduced in the Iowa Legislature to allow the hunting of mourning doves in the state for the first time in nearly 100 years.

“This poll demonstrates that a majority of Iowans oppose the opening of a dove hunting season,” said Carol Griglione, Iowa state director for The HSUS. “Doves have been protected in our state for nearly a hundred years, and this most recent survey confirms voters value this gentle backyard songbird and deem it worthy of continued protection.”

The poll goes on to reveal that should legislation pass to open a dove hunting season about half support a veto should it reach the governor's desk while less than a third support him signing the legislation into law.

Mourning doves have been protected in Iowa since 1918, and there have been numerous unsuccessful attempts by hunting industry groups over the years to overturn those longstanding protections. In 2001, the Iowa Legislature narrowly passed legislation to allow dove hunting, but former Gov. Tom Vilsack vetoed the bill.

The bill, S.F. 464, could be debated on the Senate floor as early as this week.

The survey of 625 Iowa voters was conducted statewide from March 17 through March 19, 2011. The margin of error is plus or minus 4 percent. The questions and results are below.

QUESTION: The hunting of mourning doves in Iowa has been outlawed since 1918. The Iowa legislature is considering a bill to allow the hunting of doves. Do you support or oppose allowing the hunting of mourning doves in Iowa?

	STATE	MEN	WOMEN	DEMS	REPS	INDS
SUPPORT	25%	35%	16%	21%	29%	26%
OPPOSE	54%	44%	63%	61%	50%	51%
UNDECIDED	21%	21%	21%	18%	21%	23%

QUESTION: If the legislature passed a bill allowing the hunting of mourning doves, would you support or oppose Governor Branstad vetoing the measure?

	STATE	MEN	WOMEN	DEMS	REPS	INDS
SUPPORT	49%	42%	55%	53%	46%	49%
OPPOSE	29%	37%	22%	25%	32%	28%
UNDECIDED	22%	21%	23%	22%	22%	23%

QUESTION: Everything else being equal, would you be more likely or less likely to vote for a state legislator who voted to legalize dove hunting in the state of Iowa?

	STATE	MEN	WOMEN	DEMS	REPS	INDS
MORE LIKELY	12%	19%	5%	9%	14%	13%
LESS LIKELY	41%	28%	54%	41%	29%	37%
NO EFFECT/DK	47%	53%	41%	50%	57%	50%