

University of Iowa, Iowa Policy and Opinion Lab Poll – Topline Results
Majority of Iowans Support Change to Bottle Deposit Law
March 4, 2022
February online poll of Iowans

Sample: 883 voting-age residents in Iowa, margin of error +/-3.4%.

About: The Iowa Policy and Opinion Lab Poll was fielded Feb. 10 to Feb. 25, 2022.

The poll was designed by the Iowa Policy and Opinion Lab, comprised of University of Iowa faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students. The Iowa Policy and Opinion Lab is co-directed by Frederick J. Boehmke, professor of political science, and Kajsia Dalrymple, professor of journalism and mass communication. The poll is a teaching, research, and service project, and collaborated with the Iowa Social Science Research Center directed by Frederick J. Boehmke. The University of Iowa Public Policy Center provided support for this poll as part of its student success mission, intended to expand experiential policy-relevant research for UI students.

The Iowa Social Science Research Center (ISRC) contracted with a respected web panel vendor to field the survey to a demographically representative sample of up to 900 respondents. Respondents invited to complete the web survey were Iowa adults, aged 18-120 years, recruited for participation via web panel. To obtain a census-representative sample, quotas were set on the following demographics: sex, age, and urbanicity.

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Respondent Identification: All respondents who stated they were older than 18 and willing to participate in the survey were included. To obtain a census-representative sample, quotas were set on the following demographics: sex, age, and urbanicity.

Weighting: Reported results are weighted by age, sex, and party identification.

We want to ask about Iowa's bottle bill. Passed in 1978, this law requires a 5-cent deposit on all carbonated and alcoholic beverages containers. Lately there have been discussions about revisiting it. For each of the following parts, what do you prefer?

How would you revise which beverages are covered, if at all?

	%
Cover fewer beverages	13.7
Do not change beverage coverage	29.8
Cover more beverages, such and juice and water	46.1
Don't Know/Declined	10.5
Total	100.0

How would you revise the deposit amount, if at all?

	%
Eliminate the bottle deposit	22.3
Keep the deposit at 5 cents	38.9
Increase the bottle deposit	33.5
Don't Know/Declined	5.4
Total	100.0

Bottle deposit and covered beverages

	Cover Fewer	Do not change	Cover More	Don't Know/ Declined	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
Eliminate the deposit	10.4	6.5	2.3	3.1	22.3
Keep the deposit at 5 cents	2.2	18.2	16.9	1.6	38.9
Increase the deposit	1.1	4.6	26.1	1.7	33.5
Don't Know/Declined	0.0	0.5	0.8	4.1	5.4
Total	13.7	29.8	46.1	10.5	100.0

Under the current law, stores where these bottles are sold are required to accept returns and refund the deposit amount. Some have suggested moving returns to other sites. Where would you prefer to return your containers to redeem your deposit?

	%
Grocery stores and gas stations	40.4
Community redemption centers	48.9
Other	3.9
Don't Know/Declined	6.9
Total	100.0

Due to the pandemic and other reasons, some stores have closed their redemption centers. In the last year or so, have you experienced any problems redeeming your deposit containers?

	%
Yes, my usual return site was temporarily closed	27.8
Yes, my usual return site has permanently closed	16.3
No, I haven't had any problems	36.4
No, I don't return my cans and bottles	14.4
Don't Know/Declined	5.1
Total	100.0

Bottle deposit by age

	18-29	30-49	50-64	65 and over	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
Eliminate the bottle deposit	17.8	29.3	24.6	14.1	22.3
Keep the deposit at 5 cents	36.4	29.8	39.1	54.1	38.9
Increase the bottle deposit	35.7	36.9	32.8	27.2	33.5
Don't Know/Declined	10.2	4.0	3.5	4.6	5.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Bottle deposit by community

	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Total
	%	%	%	%
Eliminate the bottle deposit	22.7	23.6	20.7	22.2
Keep the deposit at 5 cents	39.3	37.1	40.5	39.0
Increase the bottle deposit	33.7	34.1	33.2	33.6
Don't Know/Declined	4.3	5.3	5.5	5.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Covered beverages by age

	18-29	30-49	50-64	65 and over	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
Cover fewer beverages	15.0	17.0	13.3	8.2	13.7
Do not change beverage coverage	29.8	29.0	31.2	29.3	29.8
Cover more beverages, such and juice and water	39.6	44.7	47.3	53.1	46.1
Don't Know/Declined	15.6	9.4	8.2	9.4	10.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Covered beverages by community

	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Total
	%	%	%	%
Cover fewer beverages	16.3	15.3	10.4	13.7
Do not change beverage coverage	35.7	28.3	27.5	30.0
Cover more beverages, such and juice and water	38.4	47.3	51.0	46.3
Don't Know/Declined	9.6	9.1	11.0	10.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Redemption venues by age

	18-29	30-49	50-64	65 and over	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
Grocery stores and gas stations	58.9	33.7	35.9	36.9	40.4
Community redemption centers	31.8	55.6	55.5	48.8	48.9
Other	0.8	4.0	4.5	5.9	3.9
Don't Know/Declined	8.5	6.8	4.1	8.4	6.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Redemption venues by community

	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Total
	%	%	%	%
Grocery stores and gas stations	49.7	43.3	32.0	40.7
Community redemption centers	41.2	47.7	56.1	49.2
Other	3.0	4.1	3.9	3.7
Don't Know/Declined	6.1	4.9	7.9	6.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Redemption problems by sex

	Male	Female	Total
	%	%	%
Yes, my usual return site was temporarily closed	25.8	29.7	27.8
Yes, my usual return site has permanently closed	13.4	19.2	16.3
No, I haven't had any problems	43.2	29.9	36.4
No, I don't return my cans and bottles	12.7	16.0	14.4
Don't Know/Declined	5.0	5.2	5.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Redemption problems by age

	18-29	30-49	50-64	65 and over	Total
	%	%	%	%	%
Yes, my usual return site was temporarily closed	22.4	27.1	33.6	27.7	27.8
Yes, my usual return site has permanently closed	14.2	18.3	16.4	15.4	16.3
No, I haven't had any problems	38.6	32.8	33.9	42.1	36.4
No, I don't return my cans and bottles	16.8	17.0	12.2	10.7	14.4
Don't Know/Declined	8.0	4.8	3.9	4.1	5.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Redemption problems by community

	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Total
	%	%	%	%
Yes, my usual return site was temporarily closed	33.3	26.0	26.0	28.0
Yes, my usual return site has permanently closed	14.2	16.1	18.4	16.5
No, I haven't had any problems	36.7	39.7	33.5	36.5
No, I don't return my cans and bottles	11.5	14.3	16.2	14.3
Don't Know/Declined	4.2	3.8	5.9	4.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

What is your sex?

	%
Male	49.2
Female	50.8
Total	100.0

Recoded from age: In what year were you born?

	%
18-29	21.8
30-49	32.1
50-64	23.8
65 and over	22.3
Total	100.0

Do you consider the community that you live in to be urban, suburban, or rural?

	%
Urban	27.5
Suburban	33.7
Rural	38.8
Total	100.0