

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

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Michigan Consumers Discouraged Again as Holiday Season Nears: Economy and Political Leaders Given Low Marks

As this year's holiday season got underway, Michigan residents were growing grouchy with the state's economy and its elected leaders, according to results of Michigan State University's latest State of the State Survey.

Gov. Rick Snyder's approval rating, at 44.5 percent favorable shortly after taking office, fell below 20 percent in the third State of the State Survey during his administration.

Consumer confidence slipped as well, even as Michigan's unemployment rate dropped during September and October. Just slightly more than 46 percent of the survey's respondents rated their current financial situation as "excellent" or "good."

"Michigan's mood is definitely gloomier than it was earlier in the year," said Charles Ballard, State of the State Survey Director and MSU professor of economics.

Last winter, respondents to the quarterly survey were the most upbeat about their financial situation since 2007, but those attitudes became more depressed during the past months, Ballard noted.

"The economy in so many ways is better than it was a year ago," he said. "The progress seemed to grind to a halt at the midpoint of 2011."

Snyder's favorable ratings had previously fallen to 31.5 percent in this year's spring/summer survey. That survey was completed in July.

"It is remarkable how far Gov. Snyder's numbers continue to fall," Ballard said. "Snyder is now down in Gov. Jennifer Granholm's territory." Granholm's ratings neared 58 percent when entering office and had fallen to about 20 percent as her administration ended and Snyder took his oath of office.

President Obama's positive reviews dropped as well. The president's "excellent" or "good" grades fell from 44.5 percent this past spring to 40.5 percent in the latest phone interviews with 807 Michigan residents from Sept. 15 to Nov. 8.

The survey carried a margin of error of 3.45 percent.

The U.S. Congress, too, suffered from low marks among survey respondents. "Congress received very poor ratings," Ballard said. Less than 1 percent of the survey's respondents awarded Congress an "excellent" or "good" mark. A striking 57.4 percent gave Congress "poor" grades.

MSU's State of the State Survey has been conducted by the Institute for Public Policy and Social Research since 1994. IPPSR is a unit of MSU's College of Social Science.

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