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**FLAGSTAFF DIVIDED OVER PROP 100 VOTE;  
ROAD SIGNS AND BILLBOARDS DOMINATE ELECTION;  
DESPITE VOTE, CITY FRIENDLY TO LARGE RETAIL STORES**

Just one month before the Special Election, Flagstaff is divided over whether to support or defeat Proposition 100, according to the results of a recent telephone survey. Half of likely voters (50%) say they will vote “for” Proposition 100. Forty percent of likely voters say they will vote “against” Proposition 100 and 10 percent are “undecided.”

A vote “Yes” for Proposition 100 has the effect of ratifying the City Council’s Big Box Ordinance which would limit retail stores in Flagstaff to 125,000 square feet in size. A vote “No” against Proposition 100 is a vote to nullify the City Council ordinance.

Most Flagstaff residents are paying attention to the election. Nearly everyone has seen road signs or billboards advertising a position on Proposition 100. Fewer people have received mail pieces in their homes and about a third of people paying attention to the election have seen TV ads. Regardless of what is at stake in the Proposition 100 Election, a majority of Flagstaff residents (57%) say they support large retail stores such as Best Buy or Lowe’s moving to Flagstaff.

The telephone survey was conducted by the Social Research Laboratory at Northern Arizona with 467 Flagstaff city residents. Among people surveyed, 414 respondents self-identified as likely voters. The margin of error for Flagstaff city residents is +/- 4.5 percent and the margin of error for likely voters is +/- 4.8 percent. Calling took place between April 7 and April 10, 2005.

## A CITY DIVIDED

Likely Flagstaff voters are closely divided on whether they support or oppose Proposition 100 in a Special Election to be held on May 17<sup>th</sup>. Half of likely voters (50%) say they will vote “Yes” to support Proposition 100 and 40 percent say they will vote “No” to oppose Proposition 100. Ten percent of voters remain undecided. One month before the election, either side has the potential to prevail.

Flagstaff voters who have already made up their minds on the issue, however, are not likely to be swayed. People saying they either support or oppose Proposition 100 indicate they are unlikely to change their minds before mailing in their ballots. Eighty-six percent of “Yes” voters and 88 percent of “No” voters say they are “Very sure” of their vote.

Kristi Hagen, Social Research Laboratory acting director, commented on the survey results, “At this point in time, the final Special Election outcome could go either way. While more people say they will vote for, rather than against, Proposition 100, the general rule of thumb is that most ‘undecided’ voters will vote ‘No’ in elections of this type. I expect campaign activity will build to a fevered pitch over the next month as both sides seek to influence the undecided vote.”

When respondents were asked to explain their Proposition 100 vote intentions, some interesting trends emerged. Two-thirds (66%) of Proposition 100 supporters (Yes) are concerned that large big box stores will hurt local Flagstaff businesses. Local stores may go out of business, competition may be reduced, and the character of Flagstaff may change. Eleven percent of “Yes” voters are concerned that large big box stores will create traffic problems and other problems for the city. Seven percent say large big box stores ultimately cost the city money in terms of an increased demand for services and other benefits.

“No” on Proposition 100 voters are motivated by a different set of concerns. Half of the opposition voters (50%) say large big box shopping is cheaper, faster and more convenient. Eighteen percent say big box stores will bring more jobs to the Flagstaff and seven percent say they increase the City’s tax base.

## **THE SPECIAL ELECTION IS CAPTURING ATTENTION**

Almost three-quarters (72%) of Flagstaff residents say they are been paying “a lot” or “some” attention to the Proposition 100 Special Election. Twenty-eight percent of residents say they are paying “a little attention” or “none at all.” Among people paying any attention to the election, most have seen road signs or billboards advertising one position or another (90%). A majority of people paying attention to the election (54%) say they have received at least one mail advertisement about the election at their home. Thirty-five percent of people paying attention have seen a TV ad for one position or another.

## **LARGE NATIONAL CHAIN STORES STILL WELCOME IN THE CITY**

Despite divided interests in the Proposition 100 election, a solid majority of Flagstaff residents welcome large national chain stores coming to Flagstaff. Fifty-seven percent of residents say they support large national chain stores like Best Buy or Lowe’s moving into the City. Thirty-six percent say they “strongly” or “somewhat” oppose large national chain stores moving into Flagstaff. Eight percent either have no position or say their position depends on the type of store being considered. These figures are very consistent with results from a 2004 survey conducted by the Social Research Laboratory in Flagstaff.

Kristi Hagen, director of the study, commented further, “While the outcome of the Proposition 100 election could go either way, people in Flagstaff apparently distinguish between the types of large retail stores that we now have and the huge big box stores that Proposition 100 is directed toward.”

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April 13, 2005

**PROPOSITION 100 SURVEY  
BACKGROUND MEMO**

Spring 2005

The *Flagstaff Omnibus Survey* was conducted between April 7 and April 10, 2005. A random sample of 467 Flagstaff residents was asked questions regarding Proposition 100. Survey question results are subject to a sampling error of +/- 4.5 percent at a 95 percent confidence level. A total of 414 Flagstaff residents self-identified as likely voters. Sampling error for likely voters is +/- 4.8 percent. Sampling error is the probable difference in results between interviewing everyone in the population versus a scientific sample taken from the population. Sampling error does not take into account additional sources of error inherent in any study of public opinion. The data referred to in this release are presented below.

As Flagstaff grows, larger national chain stores such as Best Buy and Lowe's may consider opening stores in Flagstaff. Some citizens oppose these and other "big-box" retail stores and would like the City Council to prohibit stores like these in Flagstaff. What are your feelings? Do you support or oppose big box stores locating in Flagstaff? (Probe: Is that strongly or somewhat support/oppose?)

	<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>
I strongly/somewhat support these types of stores locating in Flagstaff.	57%	58%
I strongly/somewhat oppose these types of stores locating in Flagstaff.	36%	35%
Don't know/it depends on the kind of store	8%	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>101%</b> (461)	<b>98%</b> (767)

As you may know, the Flagstaff City Council approved a Big Box Ordinance last September. This ordinance limits the size of large retail stores in the City to no more than 125,000 square feet. For comparison, the Flagstaff Walmart is about 115,000 square feet and Target is about 96,000 square feet. Some citizens opposed this ordinance and petitioned to bring the issue to Flagstaff voters. A Special Mail Ballot Election is being held on May 17th in Flagstaff, asking people to vote on Proposition 100. How much attention have you been paying to the Special election: a lot, some, a little or none at all?

	<u>Percent</u>
A lot/Some	72%
A little/None	28%
Don't know	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>101%</b> (467)

Have you seen any television advertisements either for or against Proposition 100?  
 Have any mail advertisements either for or against Proposition 100 come to your home?  
 Have you seen any road signs or billboards either for or against Proposition 100?

	<u>TV</u>	<u>Mail</u>	<u>Road Signs</u>
Yes	35%	54%	90%
No	62%	41%	9%
Don't know	4%	4%	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>101%</b> (412)	<b>99%</b> (413)	<b>100%</b> (413)

All ballots need to be mailed back to the City by May 17th. A "Yes" vote on Proposition 100 indicates support for the City Council's big box ordinance. A "No" vote indicates opposition to the big box ordinance. If you were voting today, would you vote "Yes" to support the big box ordinance and allow it to become law, or "No" to defeat the big box ordinance?

	<u>"Yes"</u>	<u>"No"</u>	<u>Undecided/ Don't know</u>	
<i>Likely Voters</i>	50%	40%	10%	(404)

How sure are you of your vote? Are you very sure or might you change your mind before mailing in your ballot?

	Very Sure	Might Change Mind	Don't know
<b>Likely "Yes" voters</b>	86%	13%	1%
<b>Likely "No" voters</b>	88%	12%	---

What is the most important reason why you would vote for Proposition 100?

	Percent
Big box stores hurt local and small businesses	66%
Big box stores create traffic and other problems	11%
Big box stores cost the city in services/benefits, etc.	7%
I like/trust the City Council/City Council knows what they're doing	5%
Big box stores don't pay employees well/poor-no benefits	5%
I'm an environmentalist	4%
My friends or professional networks are voting "Yes"	1%
Don't know	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>101%</b>

What is the most important reason why you would vote against Proposition 100?

	Percent
Big box store shopping is cheaper, faster, more convenient	50%
More jobs for the city	18%
Increased tax base for the city	7%
Opposed to social planning	6%
Distrust the city council/Mayor/government	4%
Dislike environmentalists	2%
My friends or professional networks are voting "No"	1%
Other	9%
Don't know	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>