

current system.

The task force has officially decided to pursue the middle option of three presented to it at a meeting last month (See Gongwer Michigan Report, July 21, 2008), but could look for ways to fund more expansions and improvements in the future.

A combination of fewer miles traveled, more efficient vehicles and higher construction costs are leaving the state short not only of its maintenance funding needs, but of funds needed to match available federal transportation dollars, task force members told the commission.

Based on estimates provided for the "good" funding scenario, the task force will have to come up with sources for about \$7.2 billion in state funds, including current revenue, about double the \$3.4 billion in the governor's recommendation for the 2008-09 budget.

POLL SHOWS SUPPORT FOR COAL MORATORIUM

More than two thirds of voters would support holding off on building new coal-fired power plants until the state sets standards for carbon dioxide emissions, according to a poll released Thursday by environmental groups Sierra Club, Progress Michigan, and Clean Energy Now.

The three groups have been pushing the governor to adopt such a moratorium as part of a plan to limit global warming. The administration so far has declined to issue the order and is awaiting federal carbon regulations before developing its own.

"The public wants strong protections against global warming before we rush to build more harmful coal plants," said Anne Woiwode, director of the Michigan Sierra Club. "Governor Granholm must act to protect the Great Lakes and Michigan families from the dangers of global warming pollution before energy corporations rush to add to the problem."

But an official moratorium is not in the plans, at least right now.

"CO2 from coal fired plants is a growing concern," said Granholm press secretary Liz Boyd. "Michigan needs to be circumspect as we move forward to meet our future energy needs."

Ms. Boyd noted that building a coal-fired plant has already become more difficult in recent months with national investment banks raising concerns about the rising price of fuel and the potential for carbon taxes on the plants. She noted some 70 proposed plants have been cancelled around the country since last year.

The poll, conducted by Greenburg, Quinlan, and Rosner, showed bi-partisan support for the moratorium. Overall support was 69 percent, with the same proportion independents supporting the plan. Some 82 percent of Democrats supported the moratorium and 58 percent of Republicans supported it.

The poll also showed majority support for the moratorium across age groups and in Detroit, Lansing, Flint/Saginaw/Bay City and Grand Rapids/Kalamazoo.

The poll of 600 likely voters was conducted July 15-22 and had a margin of error of 4 percent.

IOSCO CIRCUIT JUDGES FAIL TO GET CHALLENGER REMOVED FROM BALLOT

Incumbent Iosco Circuit Court judges who asked appellate judges to keep a challenger's name off the November ballot aren't "aggrieved parties" and the fact that they will now likely have to spend more money to challenge a newcomer doesn't amount to a specific injury, therefore, the judges don't have standing in court to keep the challenger's name from appearing on the ballot, the Court of Appeals said in a split published decision released on Thursday.

Judge William Myles and Chief Circuit Judge Ronald Bergeron from the 23rd Circuit Court intervened in a case between Christopher Martin and the Department of State (*Martin v. Secretary of State*, COA docket No. 286015) after the department was ordered to place Mr. Martin on the ballot as a judicial candidate even though he didn't initially turn in the correct amount of signatures.

Courts allowed Mr. Martin an extended amount of time to collect the proper amount of signatures because he was initially given information from the Bureau of Elections that he need only turn in between 100 and 200 signatures, which he did. However, the signature limit information he was given was based on old district profiles. In actuality, judicial candidates in that district are required to turn in between 200 and 400 signatures, which initially prompted the bureau to invalidate Mr. Martin's candidacy petition for lack of signatures.

Incumbent Judges Myles and Bergeron said that allowing Mr. Martin to turn in the correct amount of signatures past the original deadline and get on the ballot aggrieved them because now they must face a challenger in a race that would have been unopposed had Mr. Martin been left off the ballot. Therefore, the incumbent judges said, since they will suffer economic damages, they have standing to intervene and