

Matt Entenza  
MN Engineers' Gubernatorial Survey

**1. Why do you want to be the Governor?**

I want to be governor because I grew up poor in Worthington, and if it hadn't been for a local community that saw something in me and helped me go to college, I probably wouldn't be where I am today. That is the Minnesota I grew up in, and it's the Minnesota I want every kid here to be a part. Minnesota used to be a leader in almost every area and I want us to be a leader again. In the last 10 years we have seen our state decline in key education and economic indicators, and this trend will continue unless we take steps to turn it around.

**2. What is your number one concern for the State of Minnesota?**

We need to get our priorities straight again: our future comes first. We need to prepare our kids and our state for a new future of sustainable economic growth. I believe this means reinvesting in education and focusing in on one of the highest potential growth areas for our economy: clean energy. Minnesota is sitting on an abundance of the resources that will power this new economy, and with the right leadership we can build the infrastructure needed to tap into it and create good jobs for the long-term. Creating these jobs and spurring technology and innovation through our higher education system will put us on a path of that will supply the revenue we need to make our state great again.

**3. What do you feel is the role of a professional public employee? How will you demonstrate that you value to that state employee?**

Professional public employees are the life-blood of government and public services. Elected officials and their appointees come and go, but professional public employees do the work that keeps our state running and strong. Their experience and institutional memory are an invaluable resource to any elected official of any party and should be treated as such. In my administration, professional public employees will be valued contributors and assets as we move our state forward. Their concerns and ideas will be taken seriously as we consider the best practices needed to make Minnesota once again a national standard.

**4. Do you consider state employees an asset or a liability to Minnesota's economy?**

State employees are a huge asset – and they're indispensable. As I said above, we need a permanent core of dedicated employees with a deep understanding of government operations. Without this, government would be unable to serve the people of Minnesota.

**5. Who should be doing most of the state's engineering work, state employees or consultants? If both, should their pay be equal? What is your view on outsourcing state engineering work?**

As much as possible, the state's engineering work should be done by state engineers, not consultants. State government wastes millions of dollars a year in outside contracting of work that could have been done by state employees. As governor I will work to make sure that the work of the state is done by employees of the state.

**6. When the state budget is in deficit, should that affect wages of state employees? If so, how?**

I believe our commitment to an experienced, educated and quality workforce means not penalizing employees for things outside of their control. I also do not believe that the way to balance a budget is to make government service less attractive. While I believe in shared sacrifice, I also believe it is important to work collaboratively to set fair compensation between employer and employee.

**7. Are you in favor of state engineers, engineering specialists, and land surveyors getting cost of living wage increases?**

Yes—as negotiated through a collective bargaining agreement.

**8. What are your short-term and long-term priorities for the future of transportation in outstate Minnesota?**

As governor I will develop two comprehensive, 20-year transportation plans – one for the metro and one for the state as a whole. These will be designed to complement and accelerate a transition into a new clean energy economy, and take advantage of our abundant renewable energy resources and manufacturing centers. The state plan will call for strategic investment in heavy rail and highways, with the objective of better connecting raw materials, manufacturing centers and markets. In the short-term, the state plan will emphasize bringing our currently deficient bridges and roads up to standard.

Right now Minnesota is falling behind other states in its commitment to infrastructure that works for both people and business. Together, our capital spending on roads and transit puts Minnesota 48<sup>th</sup> per capita in the nation.

We need to end regional conflict when it comes to funding. It is not good for anyone if parts of our state do not take part in our transportation solutions. Roads and rail in one region move the goods and supplies from another, and neither is effective without the other. As one sector of the economy ripples through the supply chain and boosts others, our transportation system is the network that will hold it all together and facilitate the movement of material and capital.

**9. In its recently released Statewide Transportation Policy Plan, the Minnesota Department of Transportation identified a \$50 billion shortfall between the actions needed to meet the Department's performance targets for the state trunk highway system in the next 20 years and the funding that the Department expects to receive. (Cite: Mn/DOT Statewide Transportation Plan, page 7.2 - 11, and Mn/DOT's**

budget in the short-term is through a combination of revenue enhancements and cost-saving measures. We also have to consider how we will fix the long-term structural deficits our state inherits year and after year, and we must focus on making smart investments for our future prosperity.

**14. Would you support legislation that would allow state agencies to carry money from one biennium to the next?**

Yes.

**15. How do you intend to keep the state from experiencing a budget deficit every biennium?**

From year-to-year we have moved from cut to cut and cannot continue this way. We need to grow our economy—and the best way to do this is by making Minnesota a leader in clean energy and technology. Minnesota is sitting on an abundance of the resources that will power this new economy, and with the right leadership, we can build the infrastructure we need to tap into these resources and create good, long-term jobs. Creating these jobs and spurring technology and innovation through our higher education system will put us on a path of sustainable economic growth that will supply the revenue we need to fund our priorities.

**16. Innovation. Science and technology have been responsible for half of the growth of the American economy since WWII. But several recent reports question America's continued leadership in these vital areas. What policies will you support to ensure that America remains the world leader in innovation?**

As the distinguished MIT Nobel Laureate Robert Solow has shown, job creation and increases in productivity are ultimately due to technology development, and this development occurs through the acquisition and application of knowledge. Right now as our state and nation disinvests in R&D and in our higher education systems, we are putting bad bets down on our future. Technology research through our state colleges and university system is a vital component of Minnesota's economy. Without adequate funding for our schools, the next Medtronic – a product of the University of Minnesota – will never come to be. We need to restore funding for research at the university level as well as create private-sector incentives like angel investor tax credits to spur investment in cutting-edge start-up companies. Our future quite literally depends upon it.

**17. Energy. Many policymakers and scientists say energy security and sustainability are major problems facing the United States this century. They are important to Minnesota. What policies would you support to meet demand for energy while ensuring an economically and environmentally sustainable future?**

As the preceding answers have indicated clean tech and clean energy are at the heart of my economic platform. They are a big part of the solution to our state's economic woes; they're vital to our national security and necessary to combating climate change and

**reporting on 2008 performance measures) If additional funding is unlikely, how will your administration prioritize between transportation system expansion versus repair or maintenance of existing infrastructure?**

Transportation and infrastructure development are two of the most critical issues facing us. Given the precarious state of transportation funding in the short-term, we may need to prioritize some projects that pose a danger to public safety; however as governor I will support a robust bonding bill that puts people to work and helps advance the state's greater goals. We need to stop focusing on stopgap measures that leave us in deeper trouble down the road and commit to investing what is necessary to move our state forward.

**10. What is your plan to address our on-going problem of congestion and deteriorating infrastructure?**

We need to start thinking about our transportation system in terms of where we want to be 20 years from now. Given the seismic shifts in climate thinking in the last 10 years, the federal dollars available and the fact that the chair of the House transportation committee is from Minnesota, we are ideally placed to receive sizeable dollars for transit funding. This will help free up state dollars to spend on things for which we can't get federal assistance. We must then review, on a ranked basis, the most pressing transportation needs and balance those with long-term goals.

**11. How are we going to fund road construction in the advent of higher costs and lower tax revenue?**

First off we need to re-order our priorities. We need to make a strong commitment to our transportation network. We also need to raise revenue, and as I've said before that means making the most fortunate pay their fair share.

**12. Will you expand or cut back government spending? In what areas? How?**

I will certainly look to scale back the number of political appointees. The current governor has gone overboard with number appointments, and those dollars could be put to much better use. More generally speaking, my administration will conduct a department by department and agency by agency audit that will review internal policies, look for cost-cutting measures and review the use of outside contractors and their effect on the budget. We will also review state programs and judge their effectiveness in meeting their stated goals. If they are ineffective, they will be changed, merged with others, or cut entirely.

**13. Can you balance the state budget? If so, will you recommend raising revenue or cutting costs to do that?**

The Minnesota State Constitution requires that we balance the budget every biennium, and in the last few years it has gotten tougher and tougher. The only way to fix our

ensuring we have clean air and water for years to come. Nationally and globally we stand on the cusp of a massive “gold rush” of clean tech and clean energy. Other nations like Germany and China are quickly implementing policies and building infrastructure to gain a foothold in this new energy sector, and other states, like Vermont, are doing likewise. Minnesota sits on abundant resources to tap this emerging opportunity, but unless we get moving on serious policy initiatives we are going to continue to fall behind. As governor I will work to incentivize investment in renewable energy, including angel investor tax credits to encourage early stage capital investment, increase resources for R&D at our top universities and set ambitious goals and track their implementation.

**18. Education. A comparison of 15-year-olds in 30 wealthy nations found that average science scores among U.S. students ranked 17th, while average U.S. math scores ranked 24th. What role do you think the state government should play in preparing K-12 students for the science and technology driven 21<sup>st</sup> Century?**

In order to be well-placed for economic success in the future, we must reinvest in education now. Like the U.S., Minnesota is falling behind in key indicators, and we need to reverse this trend. In particular we need to increase science and math scores among our students since the jobs of the future will be heavily dependent upon such skills, especially in the clean energy economy I envision for our state. We will need innovative ideas and committed investment to strengthen our educational system and continue to produce quality teachers. As governor I will work to create a system where every child gets a world-class education and prepares to compete in a global economy.