

# 83<sup>rd</sup> State of the State Survey (SOSS) Brief Report

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## OVERVIEW

This report summarizes a portion of the key findings from the most State of the State Survey (SOSS), a Michigan general adult population survey. The survey has been run since 1994 either as an RDD telephone survey (1994 - 2020) or as a [YouGov](#) web panel survey (2020 - current). Due to the difference in methodology between the telephone mode and the web panel mode, comparisons between the telephone mode and the web panel mode will not be reported.

The current survey (Wave 83) was completed as a YouGov panel survey with data collection from December 15, 2021 to December 27, 2021. Invitations were initially sent to 2,680 adult Michigan residents and 1,351 interviews were completed by adult Michigan residents. The response rate for this round of SOSS was 53.3%<sup>1</sup>. The final dataset included 1,000 cases after the calibration process used to assign weights was completed. Data was weighted using the “weight” variable for all analysis unless otherwise stated.

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<sup>1</sup> Response rate was calculated using AAPOR RR3.

# RESULTS

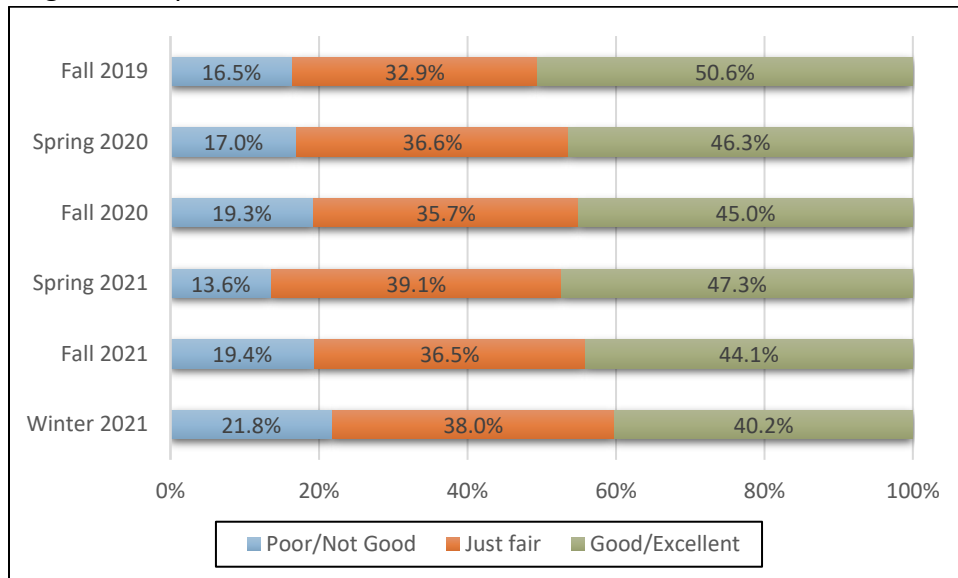
## Section A. Economic Optimism

This series of questions, related to multiple areas of economic optimism, has been included in SOSS surveys since the first SOSS in Fall 1994 (Wave 1). Respondents were asked three questions about their personal financial situation for three time periods:

- “How would you rate your household’s overall financial situation these days?” (Current)
- “Would you say that you (and your family living with you) are better off or worse off financially than you were a year ago?” (Current to past);
- “Now looking ahead, do you think that a year from now, you and your family living with you will be better off financially or worse off financially?” (Current to future).

Their responses to their household’s current financial situation is reported in Figure 1. The figure compares the current round (Winter 2021) to the last five previous rounds<sup>2</sup>.

Figure 1. Reported Assessment of Current Household Financial Situation



SOSS Sample size = 999-1499

Figure 1 shows a general decrease in the SOSS respondents’ views of their personal household finances. It is unclear why Spring 2021 does not appear to follow the same trends as the previous and subsequent SOSS surveys.

Excluding Spring 2021, the following patterns form:

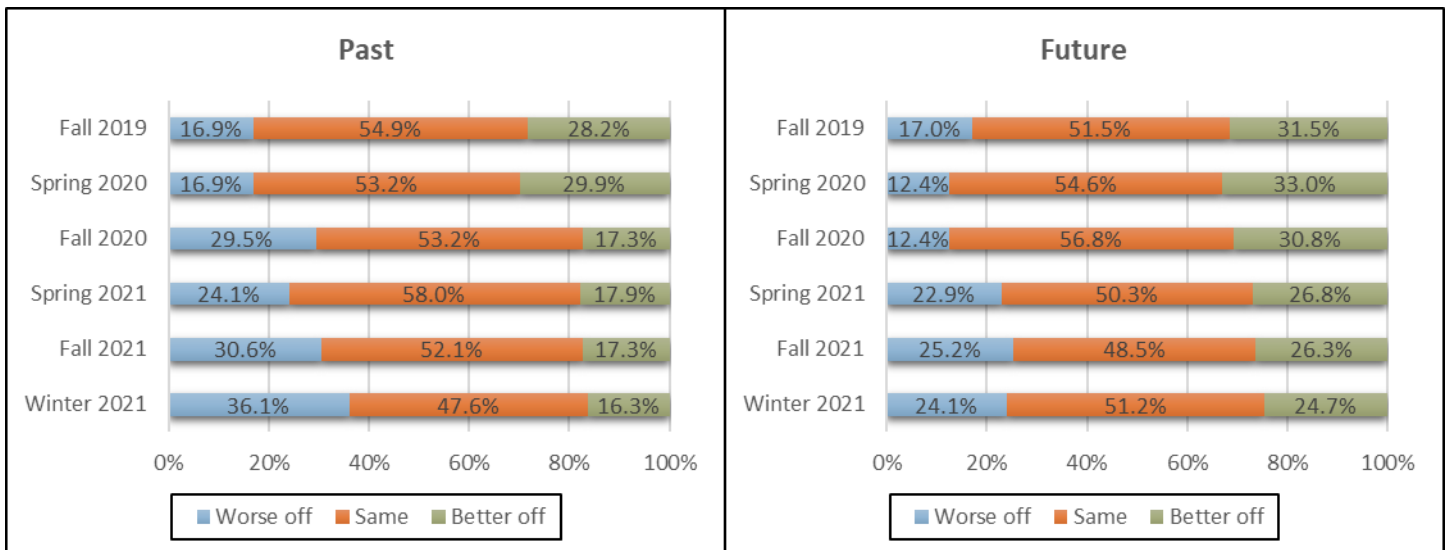
- In Winter 2021, 40 percent of households reported their household financial situation as *good to excellent* compared to 44 percent in Fall 2021.
- In Winter 2021, 22 percent reported that their current household financial situation was *poor to not good* which was an increase from 19 percent in Fall 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Fall 2019 was the first SOSS UGOV web panel survey.

- There has been a relatively steady decline in the percent of respondents who stated that their current situation was *good to excellent* with 51 percent reporting *good to excellent* in Fall 2019 and only 40 percent reporting it in Winter 2021.
- There has been a general increase in the percent of respondents reporting that their current financial situation is *poor or not good* with 17 percent reporting *poor or not good* in Fall 2019 and 22 percent reporting the same conclusion in Winter 2021.

Respondents' evaluations of their current situation compared to their past financial situation and anticipated future financial situation are reported in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Reported Assessment of Current Financial Situation Compared to Past/Future



In terms of present conditions compared to 12 months ago (Table Labeled “Past”):

- There was a slight decline in the percent of those who said they were *better off* than in the past when comparing Fall 2021 (17 percent) and Winter 2021 (16 percent).
- 36 percent of the respondents reported that they were *worse off* than they were 12 months ago in Winter 2021 compared to only 31 percent in Fall 2021.
- There has been a general decrease in those reporting that they are *better off* than they were 12 months ago with a difference of 12 percentage points between Fall 2019 (28 percent) and Winter 2021 (16 percent).
- There has been a major increase in those reporting that they are *worse off* than they were 12 months ago, with a difference of 19 percentage points between Fall 2019 (17 percent) and Winter 2021 (36 percent).

In terms of present conditions compared to those conditions expected 12 months into the future (Table Labeled “Future”):

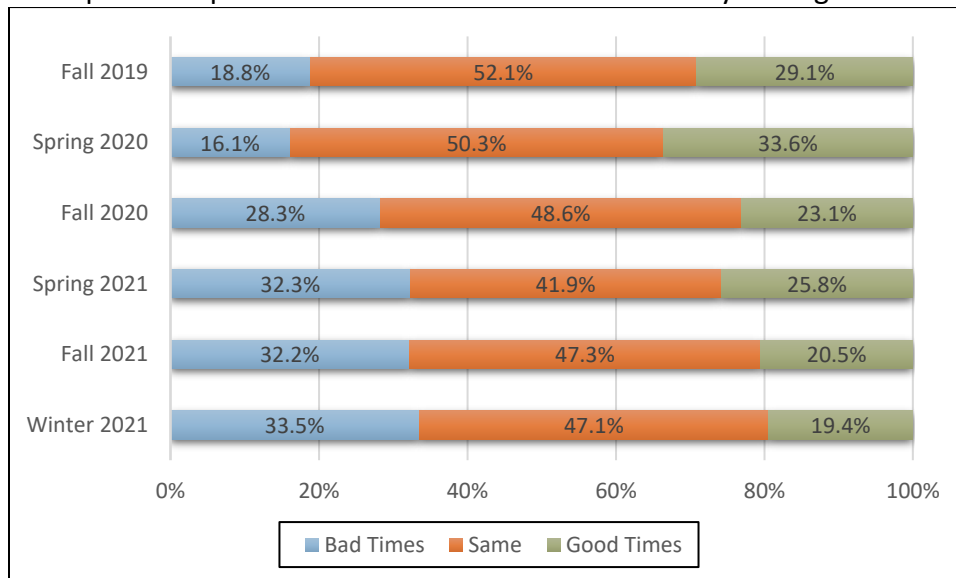
- There was little change in the percentage of respondents who said that they anticipate being financially better off in 12 months in Winter 2021 (25 percent) compared to Fall 2021 (26 percent).

- There was also little change in the percent who anticipate being *worse off* in 12 months in Winter 2021 (24 percent) compared to Fall 2021 (25 percent).
- There has been a general decreasing trend in the percent of respondents who believed that their financial situation would improve in the next 12 months with a 7-percentage point decline between Fall 2019 (32 percent) and Winter 2021 (25 percent).
- Overall, there has been a seven percentage point increase in those reporting that they believed they would be worse off financially in the next 12 months between Fall 2019 (17 percent) and Winter 2021 (24 percent).

SOSS respondents were also asked, “Now turning to business conditions in your community, do you think that during the next 12 months your community will have good times financially, or bad times financially?”

The responses to this item for the past six waves of SOSS are summarized in Figure 3. Figure 3 shows that general public were somewhat more pessimistic in their expectations about their communities’ financial situations in Winter 2021 than in Fall 2021.

Figure 3. Reported Expected Financial Situation in Community During Next 12 Months



SOSS Sample sizes: 996-1499

In particular:

- There was a slight decrease in those anticipating *good times* in their community between Fall 2021 (21 percent) and Winter 2021 (19 percent).
- There was a slight increase in those anticipating *bad times* in their community with 32 percent reporting it in Fall 2021 and 34 percent reporting it in Winter 2021.
- There has been a general increase over time in the percent of respondents stating that they expected their community to have *bad times* in the coming 12 months.
- There has been a general decrease over the same time period in the respondents predicting that their community would see *good times* in the next 12 months.

SOSS respondents were then asked about their expectations for certain economic indicators involving the country as a whole during the next 12 months. The questions asked were:

- “Twelve months from now, do you expect the unemployment situation in this country to be better than, worse than, or about the same as it was in the last 12 months?”
- “During the next 12 months, do you think the rate of inflation in this country will go up, will go down, or will stay about the same as it was in the past 12 months?”

Figure 4. Reported Expected Change in Economic Indicators, Over Next 12 Months

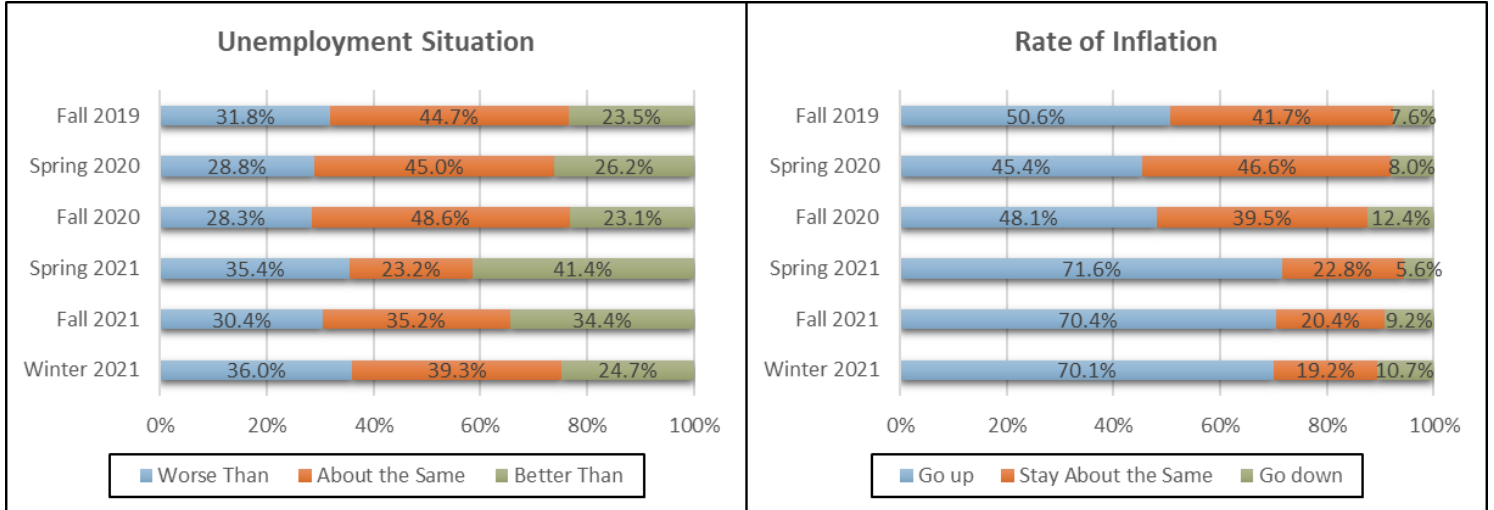


Figure 4 reports the results for these two variables over the past several waves of SOSS.

Specifically, the figure for unemployment shows:

- There was a decrease between Fall 2021 (34 percent) and Winter 2021 (25 percent) who believed that the unemployment situation would improve.
- The same period of time showed an increase in those who believed unemployment would grow worse with 30 percent reporting the finding in Fall 2021 and 36 percent reporting it in Winter 2021.
- Though there have been major swings in the percent who reported that the unemployment situation would improve between Fall 2019 and Winter 2021, there is only a percentage difference between the two end points (24 percent vs. 25 percent).
- There has been a relatively steady increase in the percent of respondents who believed that the unemployment situation would grow worse, with 32 percent reporting it growing worse in Fall 2019 and 36 percent reporting that finding in Winter 2021.

Figure 4 also reports respondents' outlook on changes in the rate of inflation during the next 12 months.

In particular,

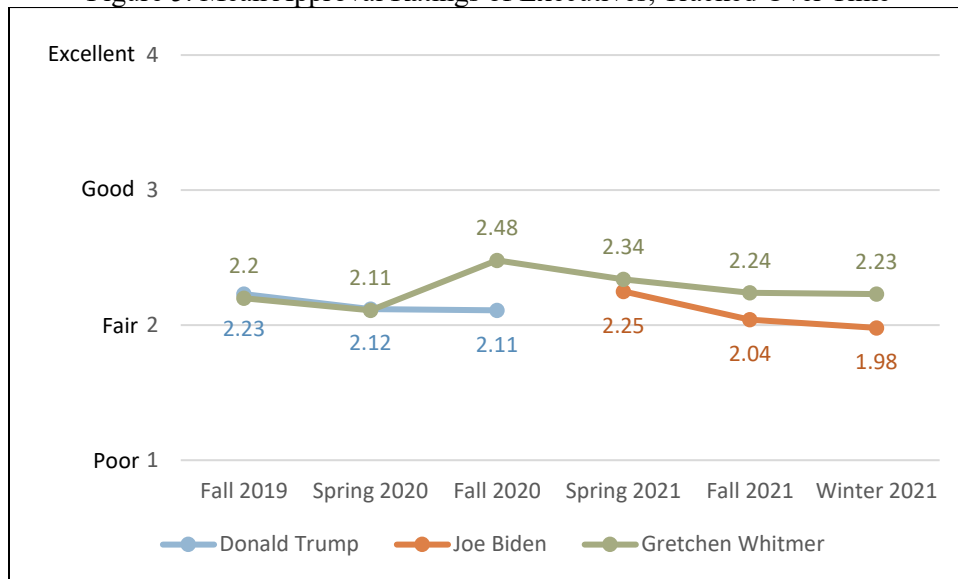
- There was a slight increase in the percent of respondents who said that inflation would go down, with 9 percent reporting it going down in Fall 2021 and 11 percent in Winter 2021.
- There was no change in the percent of respondents who reported that they anticipated inflation would go up with 70 percent reported in both Fall 2021 and Winter 2021.
- There has been a slight increase in those who believe inflation will go down between Fall 2019 (8 percent) and Winter 2021 (11 percent).
- There has been a major increase since Fall 2019 in those that believe inflation will go up with 51 percent of respondents reporting this in Fall 2019 compared to 70 percent in Winter 2021. There has been little change in this observation since Spring 2021.

## Section B. Assessment of Political Leaders

The questions assessing the current U.S. president and Michigan governor were first asked for President Bill Clinton and Gov. John Engler in the Winter 1995 SOSS survey (Wave 2). Since Wave 2, the Michigan Governor and the U.S. President have been rated using a four-point performance scale of *poor* (1), *fair* (2), *good* (3) and *excellent* (4).

Figure 5 shows the mean approval rating of the end of President Donald Trump’s term and the beginning of President’s Joe Biden’s term, as well as the majority of Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer’s term<sup>3</sup>.

Figure 5. Mean Approval Ratings of Executives, Tracked Over Time



As can be seen in Figure 5:

- President Trump’s approval rating decreased over his last year in office, but stayed within the *Fair* to *Good* range.
- President Biden’s approval rating decreased during his first year in office and fell from the *Fair* to *Good* range to the *Poor* to *Fair* range.
- Governor Whitmer’s approval ratings have varied over time, quite possibly due to response to the COVID pandemic during her term, though her ratings have stayed within the *Fair* to *Good* range.

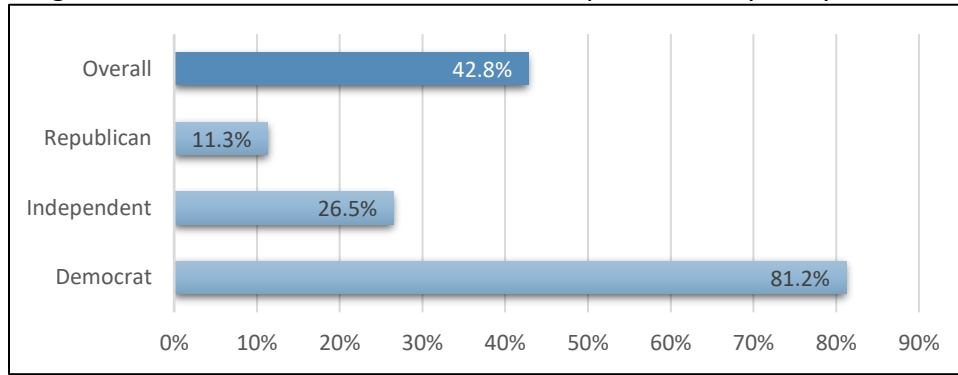
## Section C. 2022 State of Michigan Election Expectations

SOSS respondents were asked a series of questions about their expectations for the 2022 Michigan Governor and State Legislature elections. In terms of the governor’s race, they were first asked “Do you think Gretchen Whitmer will win re-election in 2022?” A total of 43 percent responded that they anticipated she would win re-election (Figure 6).

<sup>3</sup> Ratings prior to Fall 2019 were collected as part of telephone interviews and are not included due to methodological differences.



Figure 6: Governor Whitmer Re-election Expectations by Party Affiliation

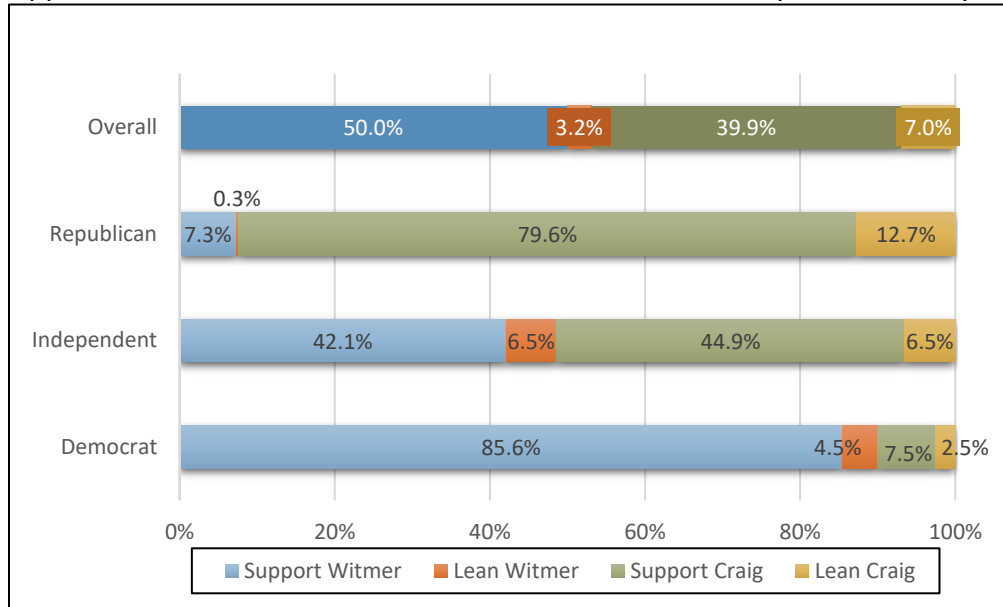


Sample size = 755

Not surprising, expectations for her re-election differed by political party affiliation with Democrats (81 percent) being more likely to expect re-election than Republicans (11 percent). Only 27 percent of Independents reported expecting re-election.

Respondents were then asked which of the two current top candidates - Gretchen Whitmer (Democrat) and James Craig (Republican) - they would support if that candidate won their party's nomination. Those who initially responded "Don't Know", were then asked a follow-up question regarding which candidate they were leaning toward. Figure 7 reports the overall distribution of those that support or lean toward each candidate along with party affiliation differences.

Figure 7: Support for MI Governor Candidates for the 2022 Election by Political Party Affiliation



Sample Size = 823

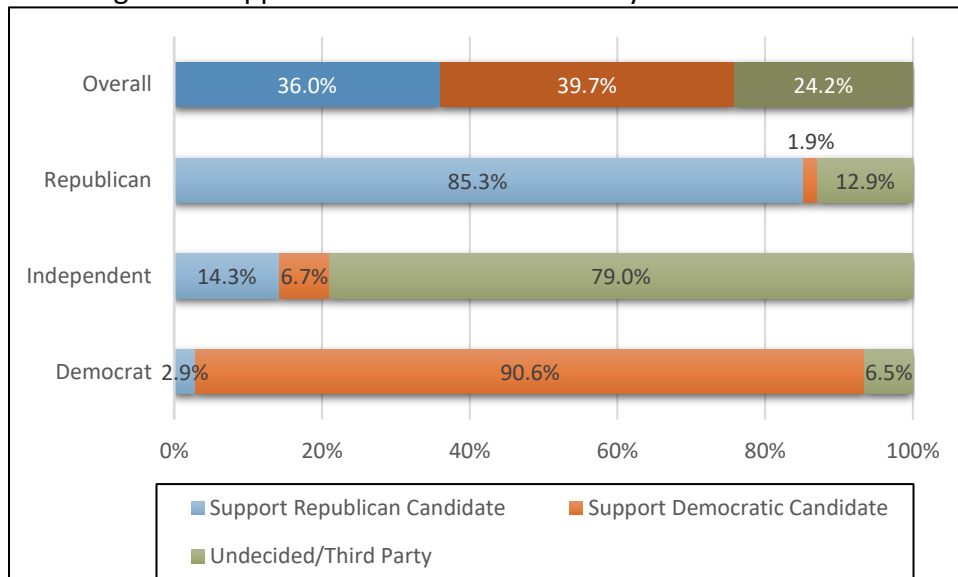
Figure 7 shows:

- Governor Whitmer, including those who support and those who lean toward her, currently holds a small lead (53 percent vs. 47 percent). With 10 percent of the respondents not choosing one of the candidates even after the follow-up question, this margin is not that large.

- Those who identify with one of the two major parties are much more likely to support or lean toward their party's candidate with 92 percent of Republicans supporting or leaning toward Craig and 90 percent of the Democrats supporting or leaning toward Whitmer.
- Independents are almost evenly split between the two candidates with 49 percent supporting or leaning toward Whitmer and 51 percent supporting or leaning toward Craig.

Respondents were also asked which political party candidate they expected to support in the U.S. House race during the 2022 Elections (Figure 8). With 36 percent expecting to support Republican candidates and 40% expecting to support Democratic candidates, SOSS respondents identifying as Undecided -- 24% -- could have an impact on the final outcome.

Figure 8: Support U.S. House Candidate by Political Affiliation



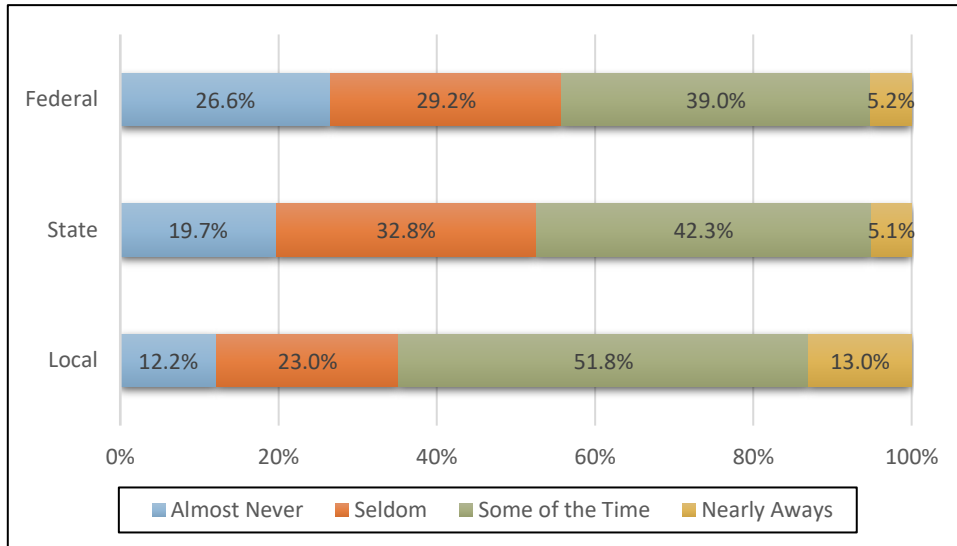
Sample size = 997

As would be expected, political party affiliation was a driving force in candidate support. Of interest is the percent of those identifying as independents who stated they were undecided or would vote for a third party candidate (79 percent).

## Section D. Trust in Government

Respondents were asked how much of the time they trust the federal and state governments, as well as the level of trust they have in their local government. The amount of trust varied by level of government (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Level of Trust of Governments

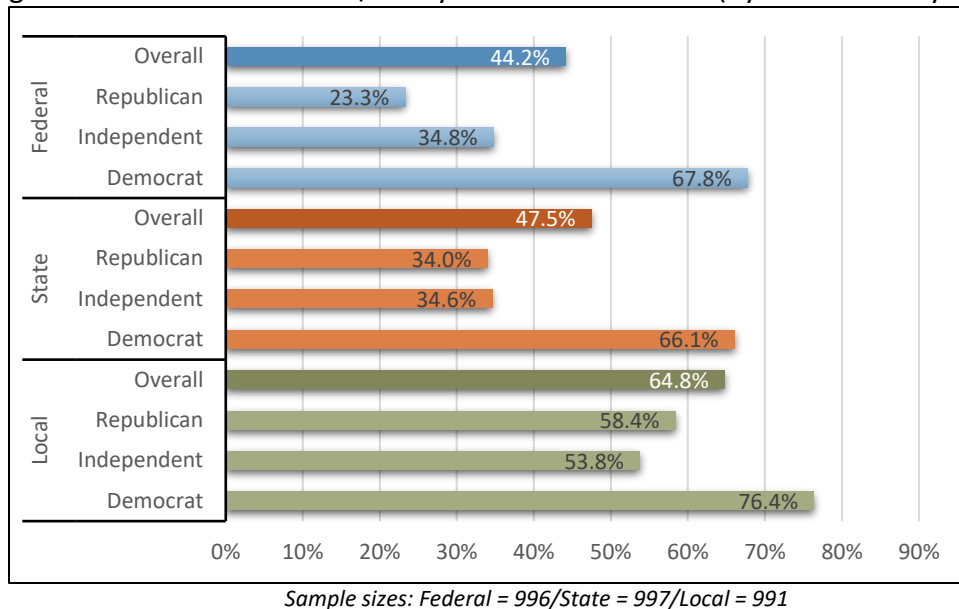


Sample Size = 998/999/992

In particular,

- The Federal government was the least trusted with only 44 percent stated that they trusted it 47 percent of the respondents reported that they trust the State government some of the time or nearly always.
- Local governments were the only level of government that had over 50 percent (65 percent) of the respondents stating that they trusted it some of the time or nearly always.

Figure 10: Some of the Time/Always Trust Government (By Political Party Affiliation)



Trust in the various levels of government varied by political party affiliation (Figure 10)

Specifically,

- Democrats were most likely to trust all three levels of government.
- Republicans were the least likely to trust federal and state governments, but Independents were the least likely to trust local governments.

## Section E. Better Political Party

Respondents were asked a series of questions focused on which of the two major political parties was better under certain situations:

- *Speaking up for disadvantaged groups.*
- *Speaking up for American principles and values.*
- *Proposing specific policies that respond to new social problems.*
- *Ensuring that the government stays in its proper role in society.*

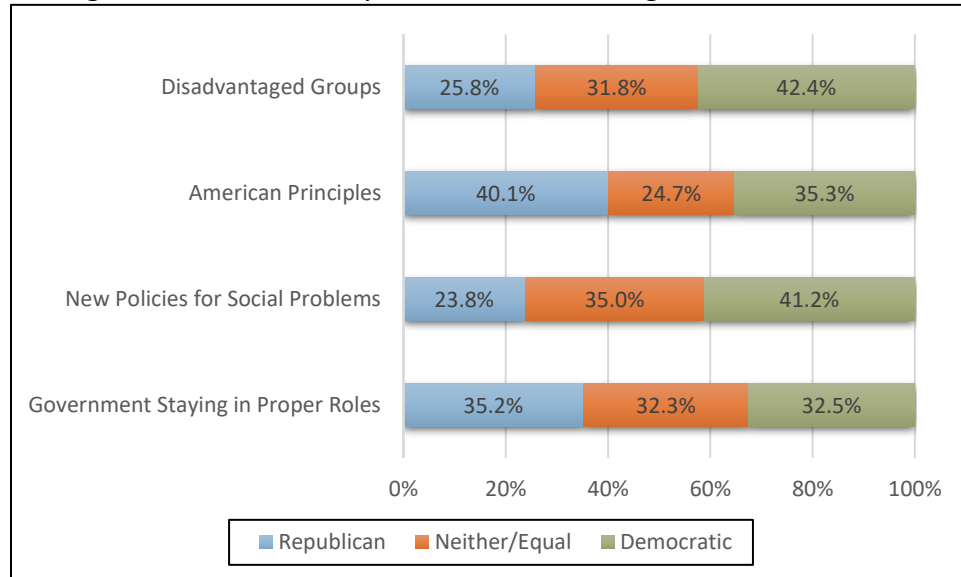
The order that each political party was listed first in each question (Republican or Democratic) was randomly assigned to prevent bias due to question wording. Figure 11 reports the respondents' answers for the four situations.

In particular, results indicated:

- The Democratic Party, compared to the Republican Party, was seen as being the better party for *speaking up for disadvantaged groups* (42 percent versus 26 percent) and *proposing specific policies for new social problems* (41 percent versus 24 percent).
- The Republican Party was seen as the better party for *speaking up for American principles* (40 percent versus 35 percent).

- Between the two parties, answers to the question *Ensuring that the government stays in its proper role in society* was almost evenly divided with the Republican Party, at 35 percent, the Democratic Party at 33 percent. Another 32 percent of the respondents indicated that neither party or both parties equally ensure *that the government stays in its proper role in society*.

Figure 11: Political Party Better for Addressing Different Situations

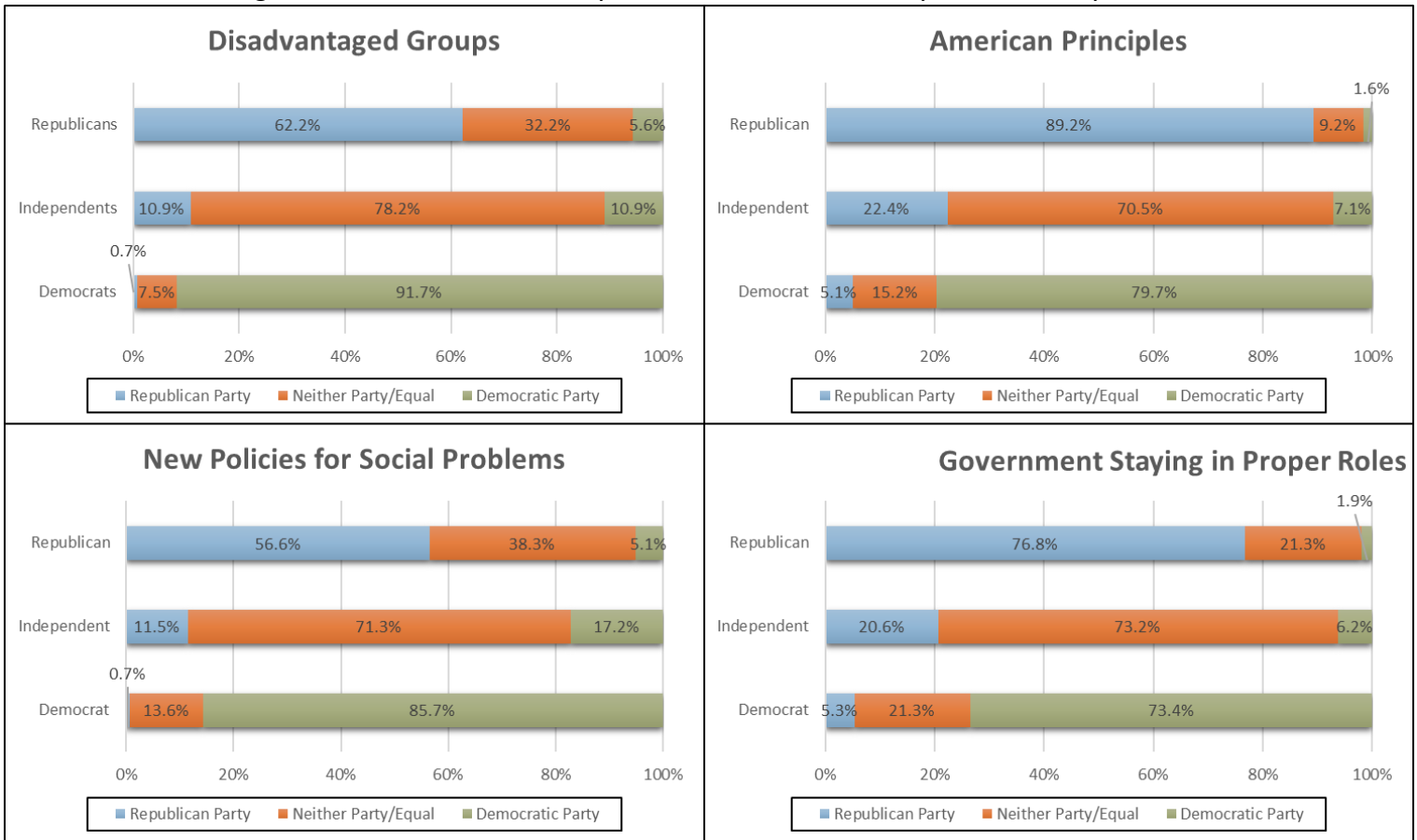


Sample Size = 997/998/994/995

Figure 12 identifies party affiliation among respondents answering questions about which of the two major political parties is better at addressing different circumstances. The results:

- Both Republicans and Democrats thought their party was the best at addressing all four situations.
- Independents believed that either neither party was the better party for the situation or believed both parties were equally good at addressing all four situations

Figure 12: Better Political Party for Different Situations by Political Party Affiliation



Sample Size = 996/995/992/994

## Section F: Support for Infrastructure Bill

Respondents were asked a series of questions related to Biden’s spending bill. Questions involved asked for overall support of the bill as well as support for specific items within the bill.

The first set of questions were an experiment to evaluate the impact of question wording on respondents’ level of support for the bill. Respondents were asked three versions of a question about their support of Biden’s \$1.85 trillion spending bill. Respondents were randomly assigned the question asked.

The three versions of the questions were:

- “Do you support or oppose the \$1.85 trillion reconciliation bill before Congress to fund clean energy programs, pre-kindergarten, healthcare initiatives, and other soft infrastructure?” (Version A)
- “There is a proposal in Congress to spend \$1.85 trillion over the next ten years to expand health insurance coverage, subsidize renewable energy use, extend tax credits for families with children, fund early childhood education, and increase taxes on corporations and high-income individuals. Based on what you know, do you support or oppose this plan?” (Version B)

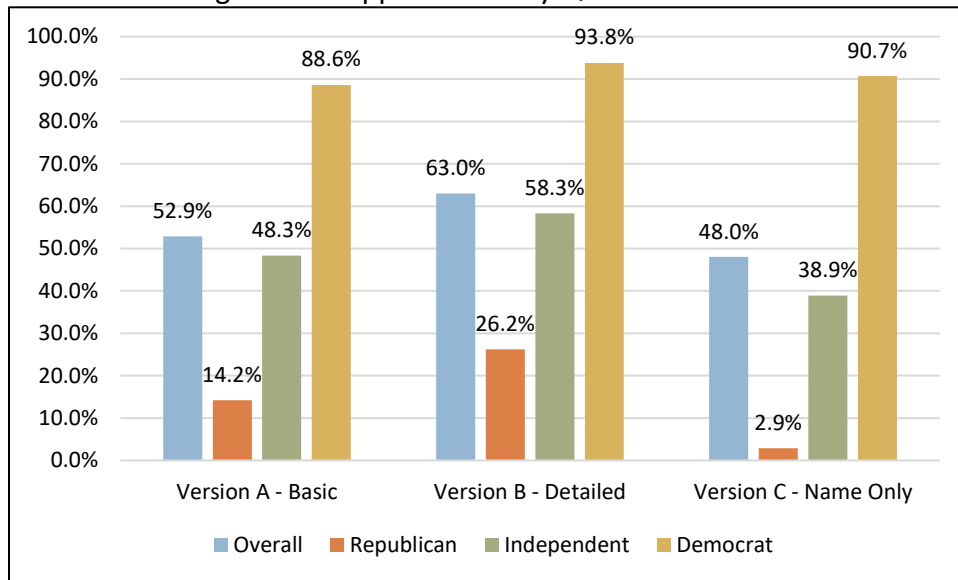
- “Do you support or oppose President Biden’s \$1.85 trillion Build Back Better spending plan currently being debated in Congress?” (Version C)

The different versions can be defined by the level of information they provide:

- Version A - Basic information
- Version B - Detailed information
- Version C - No information beyond name of congressional bill. It should also be noted that this is the only version that mentioned it was the bill that Biden supported.

Figure 13 provides an overview of support for the bill reported by respondents for the different versions of the question. The version that offered the most information (Version B) received the highest level of support (63 percent) with the version with the least amount of information (Version C) receiving the lowest level of support (48 percent).

Figure 13: Support of Bill by Question Version



Sample size: 287/281/259

Support for the various versions of the question varied significantly across party lines. The results:

- Republicans were most likely to report opposing the legislation described in all three versions of the question. Version C (name only) drew the highest level of opposition (97 percent) and Version B (detailed information) drew the lowest level of opposition (74 percent).
- Democrats were the most likely to report supporting the legislation for all three versions of the questions with Version B (detailed information) having the highest support (94 percent) and Version A (basic information) having the least support (88 percent).
- Amongst the three versions, Independents reported their highest level of support for the legislation for Version B (detailed information) with 58 percent support and the lowest for Version C (name only) with 39 percent reporting support for the legislation.

After asked about their level of support for the infrastructure bill, respondents were asked specifically about different components of the bill. Four of the questions centered around services provided/funded within the legislation, including:

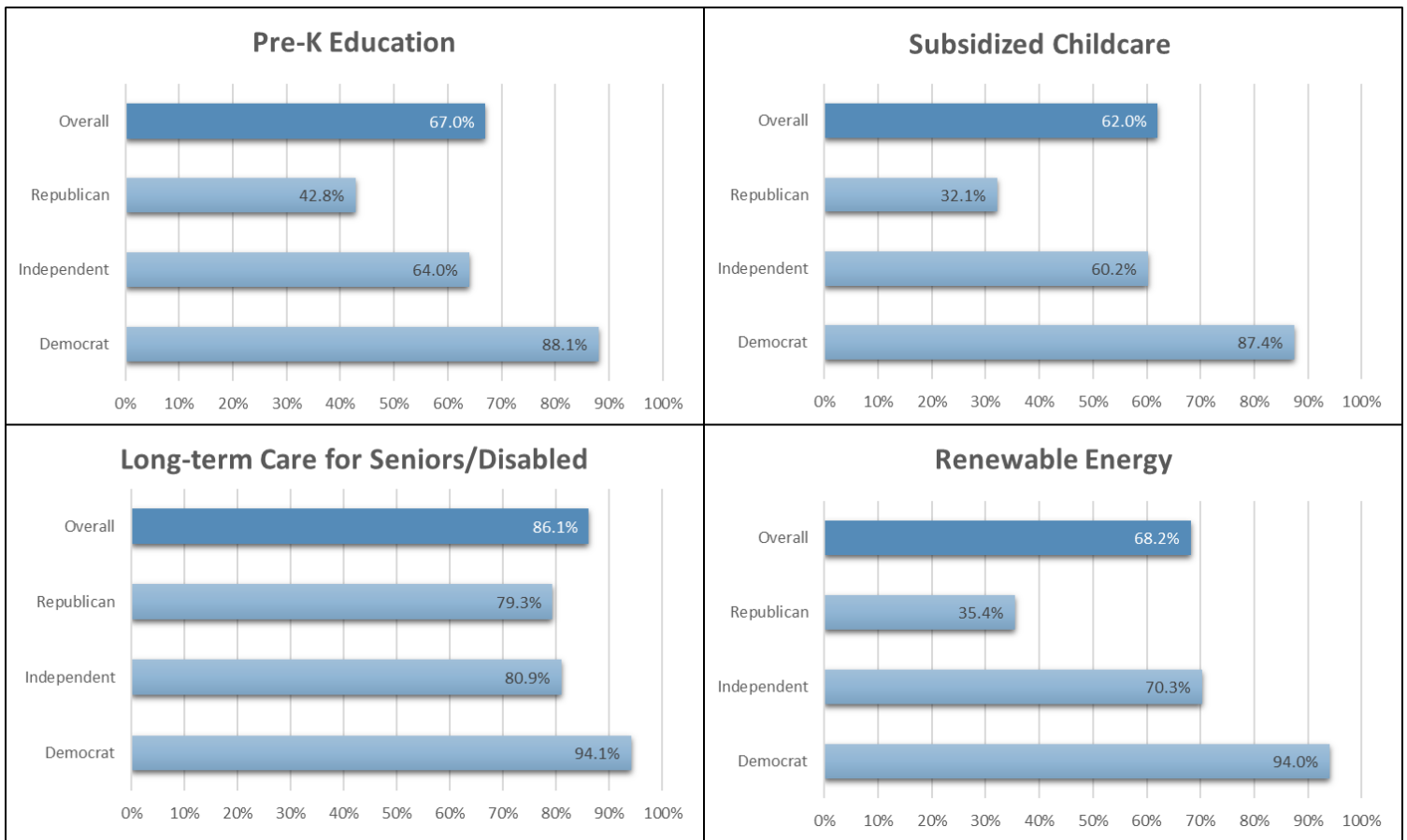
- *“Providing pre-K to all three and four year-olds.”*
- *“Subsidizing child care for younger children.”*
- *“Funding long-term care for seniors and people with disabilities.”*
- *“Funding for expanding the use of renewable energy.”*

Figure 14 reports the overall level of support for each of these items, as well as breakdown by party affiliation. Support for each of these services differed in general as well as by political affiliation.

Specifically,

- Long-term care of seniors and people with disabilities received the highest level (86 percent) of support of the four items. Subsidized childcare received the lowest level of support (62 percent).
- Democrats reported the highest support for all four items and Republicans reported the lowest.

Figure 14: Support for Services Related Items in Infrastructure Bill (By Political Affiliation)



Sample size: 876/847/887/864

In addition, respondents were asked four questions about tax related provisions of the legislation:

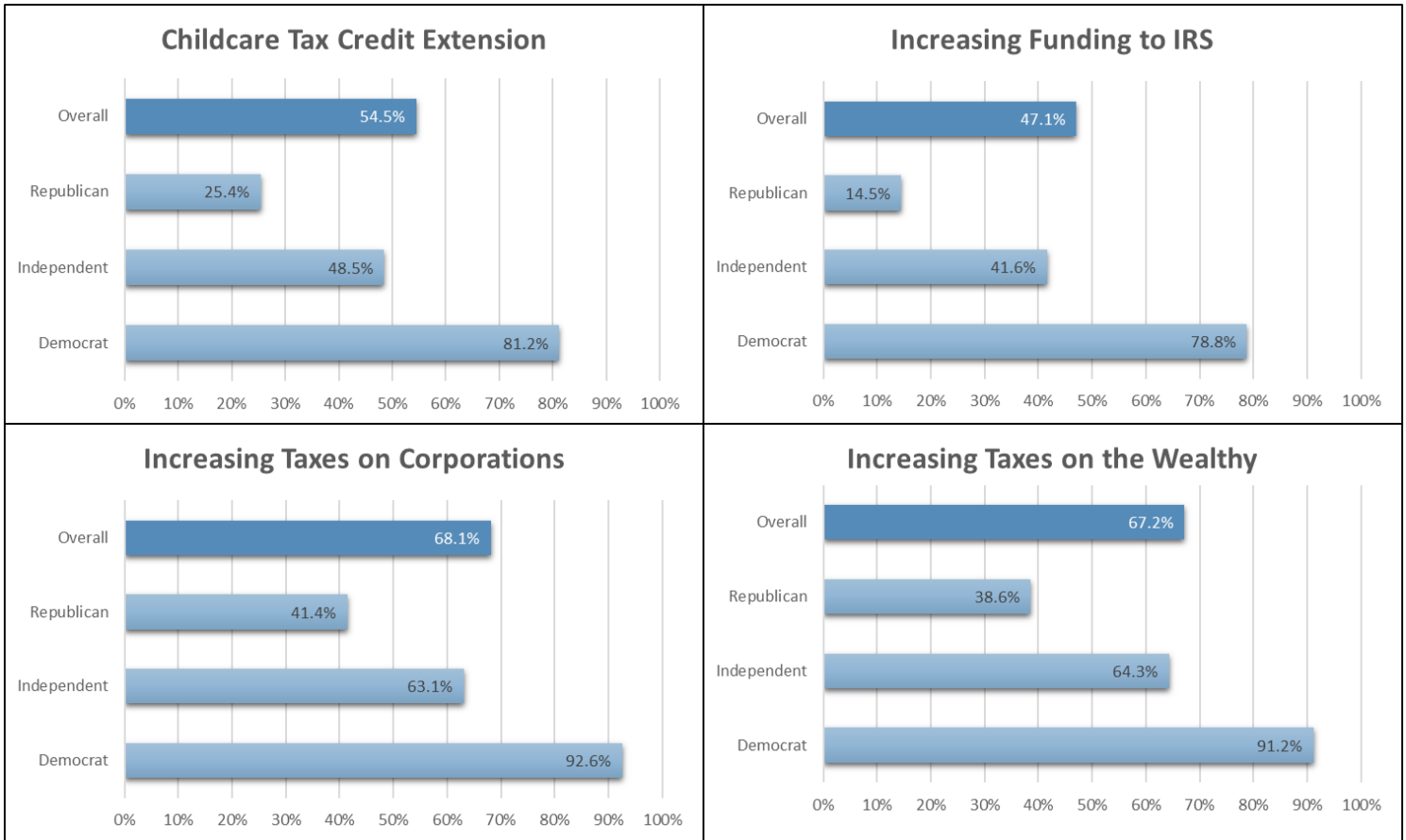
- *“Extending the Child Tax Credit, which provides parents up to \$300 per month for each child.”*
- *“Increasing funding on Internal Revenue Service tax enforcement.”*
- *“Increasing taxes on corporations.”*
- *“Increasing taxes on individuals with very high business or investment income.”*



Figure 15 reports the level of support for the four tax related provisions asked about in the survey:

- Support was highest for increasing taxes on the wealthy (67 percent) and corporations (68 percent). Increasing funding to the IRS for enforcement received the lowest support (47 percent) across all party affiliations.
- Democrats overwhelmingly reported more support for all tax related items compared to Republicans and Independents.

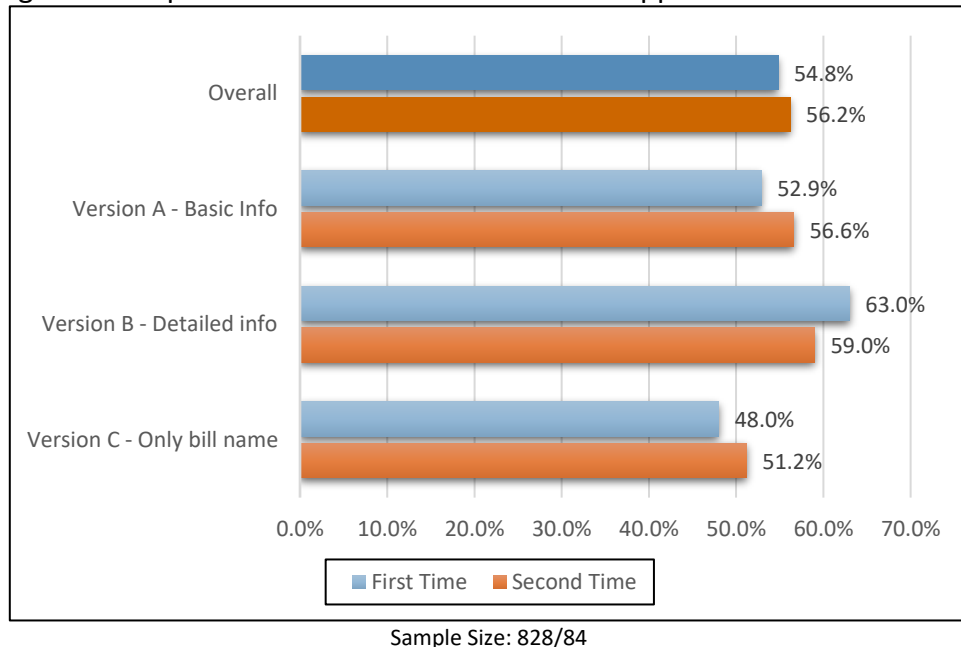
Figure 15: Tax Related Items in Infrastructure Bill by Political Party Affiliation



Sample size: 862/764/858/855

After respondents were asked about specific components of the President’s infrastructure bill, they were again asked whether or not they supported the bill – *“Now that you know more about the provisions in the Build Back Better Plan Congress is considering, do you support or oppose the plan?”* Figure 19 reports the percent of support broken down by the initial question asked about the infrastructure bill. Overall, there was little change between the two time points (55 percent vs. 56 percent).

Figure 16: Impact of Additional Information on Support of Infrastructure Bill



There was variation in the level of support between the order in which the questions were asked. The level of support depended on which version of the question they were asked first.

The results:

- The two groups with the least amount of information (Version A and C) both showed an increase in support between the first time the support question was asked and the second time.
- Version B -- which carried the most information among the three versions originally -- actually showed a decrease in the percent of respondents who supported the bill (63 percent vs 59 percent) after being asked the specific questions about the infrastructure bill.

## Section G: Role of Government

Respondents were presented with a series of statements designed to measure attitudes toward government functions. Those statements were:

- *"It is the responsibility of the government to take care of people who can't take care of themselves."*
- *"The growing number of newcomers from other countries threaten traditional American customs and values."*
- *"Government regulation of business usually does more harm than good."*
- *"Poor people have become too dependent on government assistance programs."*

Figure 17: Agreement with Attitudes Related to Government by Political Affiliation

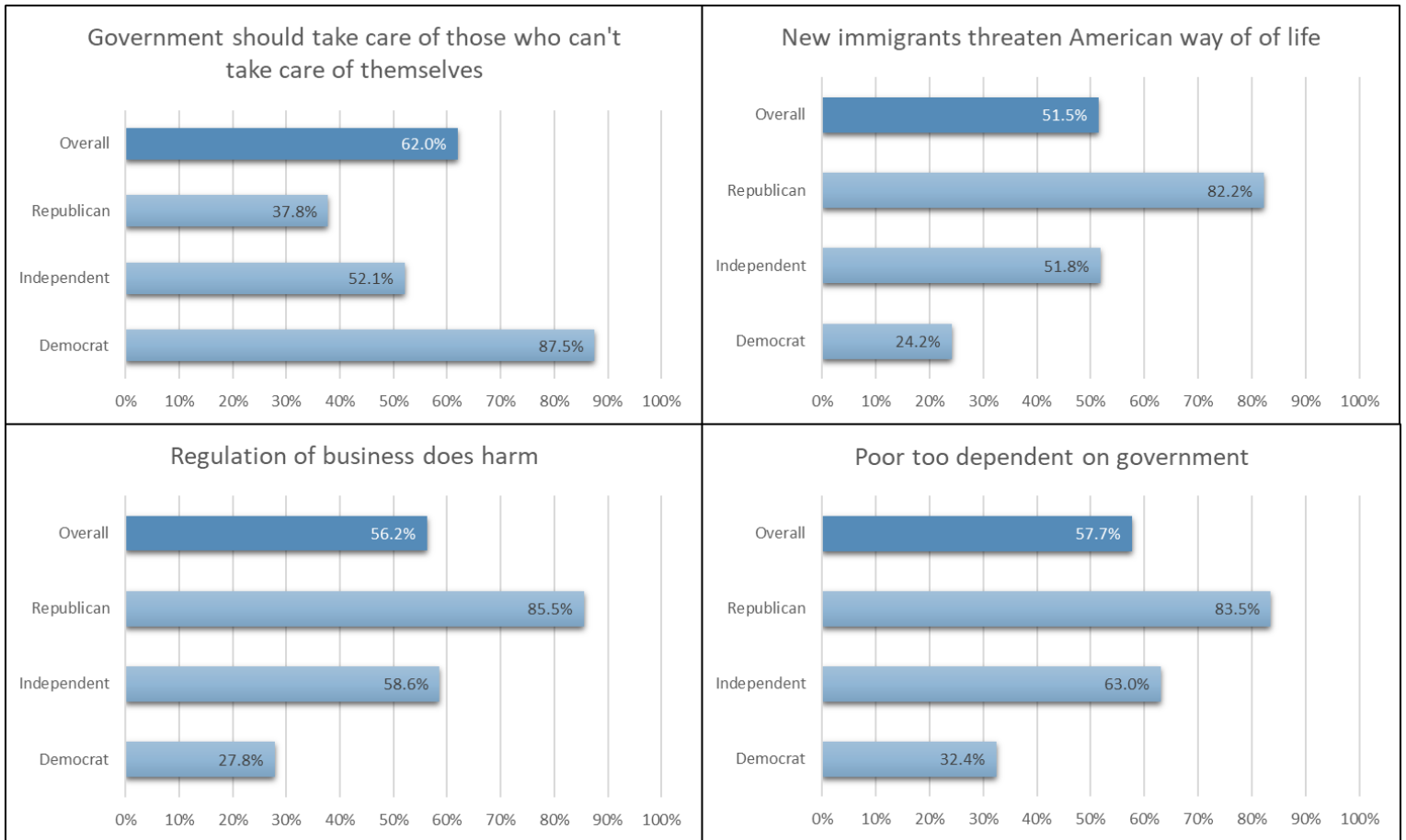


Figure 17 reports the overall responses for each of these four items as well as responses measured by political party affiliation for each item.

Specifically,

- Government should take care of those who can't take care of themselves.
  - Overall, 62 percent of the respondents agreed with the statement.
  - Democrats were much more likely (88 percent) to agree with the statement and Republicans were the least likely (38 percent). Independents fell in between with 52 percent agreeing with the statement.
- New immigrants threaten American way of life.
  - Overall, 52 percent of the respondents agreed with the statement.
  - Republicans agreed the most often (82 percent) with the statement and Democrats with it the least (24 percent) with Independents agreeing 52 percent of the time.
- Regulations of business does harm.
  - Overall, 56 percent of the respondents agreed that government regulations cause harm to businesses.
  - Republicans were most likely (86 percent) to agree with this statement and Democrats the least (28 percent). Independents agreed 59 percent of the time.

- Poor too dependent on Government.
  - Overall, 58 percent of the respondents agreed with this item.
  - Republicans were the mostly likely (84 percent) to agree and Democrats were the least likely (32 percent). As with the other statements, the Independents level of agreement fell between Republicans and Democrats (63 percent).

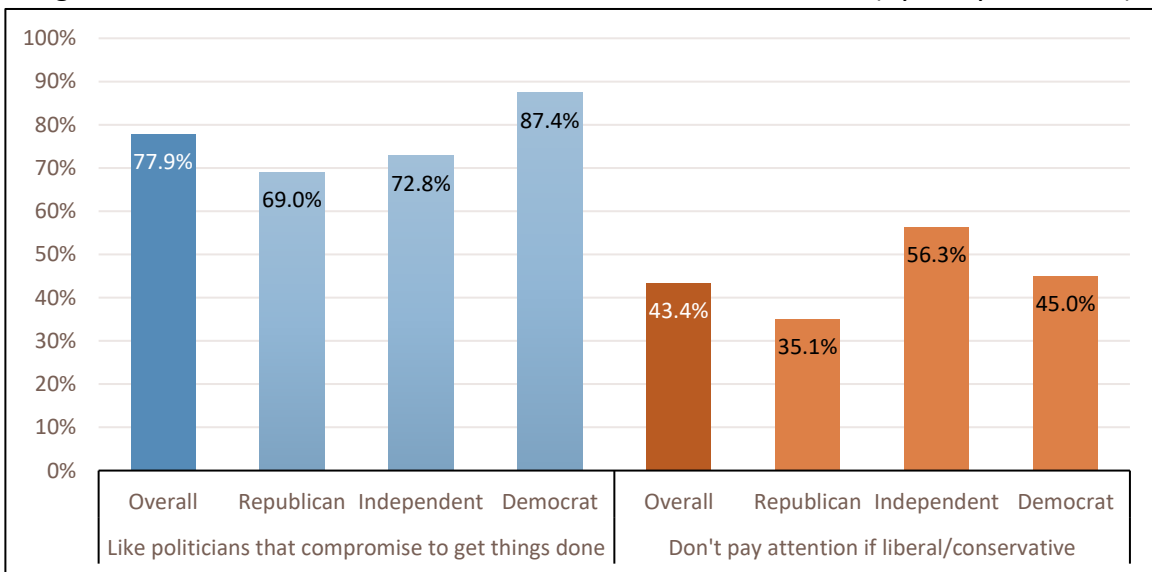
Respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed with two statements about characteristics of political leaders.

- *"I like political leaders who are willing to make compromises in order to get the job done."*
- *"I don't pay attention to whether a candidate calls him or herself a liberal or conservative."*

As seen in Figure 18:

- 78 percent of the respondents liked political leaders who were willing to make compromises to get things done.
- Republicans (69 percent) were the least likely to want political leaders to make compromises and Democrats (87 percent) were the most likely.
- Only 43 percent of the respondents said that they did not pay attention to whether or not a candidate identified as liberal/conservative.
- Independents (56 percent) were the most likely to state that they did not pay attention to whether or not a candidate identified as liberal/conservative and Republicans (35 percent) were the least likely.

Figure 18: Attitudes Towards Characteristics of Political Leaders (By Party Affiliation)

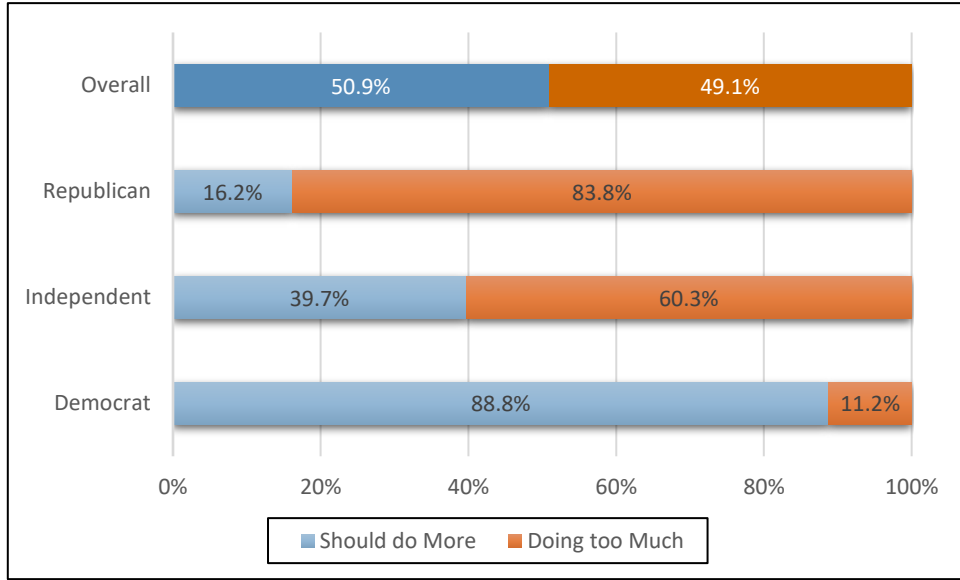


Sample size = 813/855

Respondents were asked about support for the level of government involvement (Figure 19).

- The responses were almost evenly split between 51 percent stating that government should do more and 49 percent saying the government is doing too much.
- Republicans (84 percent) overwhelmingly responded that government was doing too much and Democrats (89 percent) that the government should do more. Among Independents, 60 percent indicated the government was doing too much.

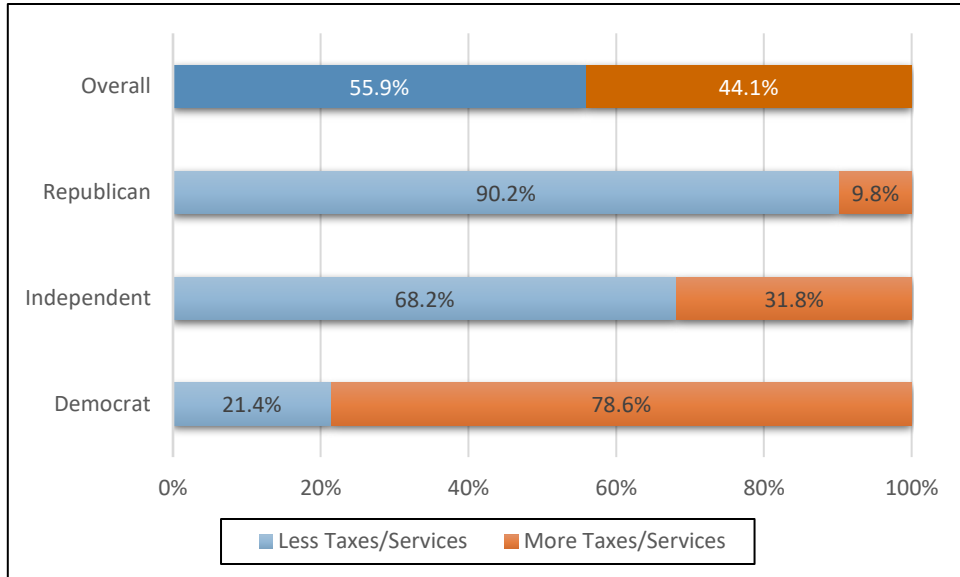
Figure 19: Level of Government Involvement (By Political Party Affiliation)



Sample size = 777

Respondents were also asked whether they would prefer less taxation with less services or more taxation with more services. In general, 56 percent of the respondents stated that they would prefer lower taxes and fewer services (Figure 20). Party affiliation was also requested.

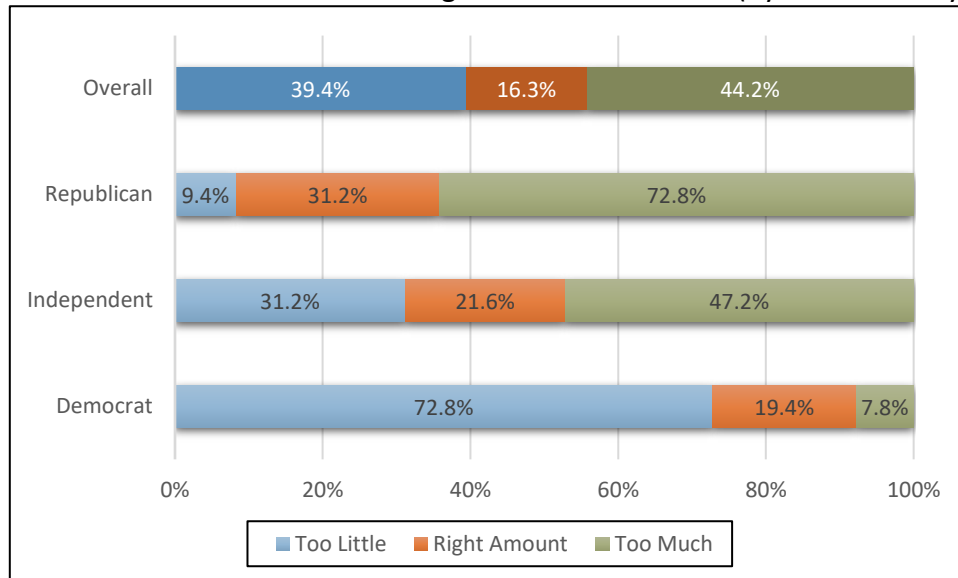
Figure 20: Level of Taxes/Services (By Political Party Affiliation)



Sample size: 744

- Republicans were the most likely to support lower taxes and fewer services (90 percent). Democrats were the mostly likely to support more taxes and more services (79 percent). Independents supported fewer taxes and services 68 percent of the time.
- Respondents were also asked their attitude toward the current level of regulation of businesses. Overall, 44 percent reported that there was too much regulation and 39 percent stated that there was too little with 16 percent saying there was the right amount (Figure 21).

Figure 21: Attitude Towards Government Regulation of Businesses (By Political Party Affiliation)



Sample size: 747

Attitudes about government regulation of businesses differed significantly by political party affiliation.

- Republicans (73 percent) were much more likely than either Independents (47 percent) or Democrats (8 percent) to signal too much government regulation of business.
- Republicans (31 percent) were also most likely to believe that the currently level of regulation was the right amount, compared to Independents (22 percent) and Democrats (19 percent).
- Democrats (73 percent) were the most likely to report that the level of government regulation on business was too little, compared to Independents (31 percent) and Republicans (9 percent).

## Section H: Critical Race Theory

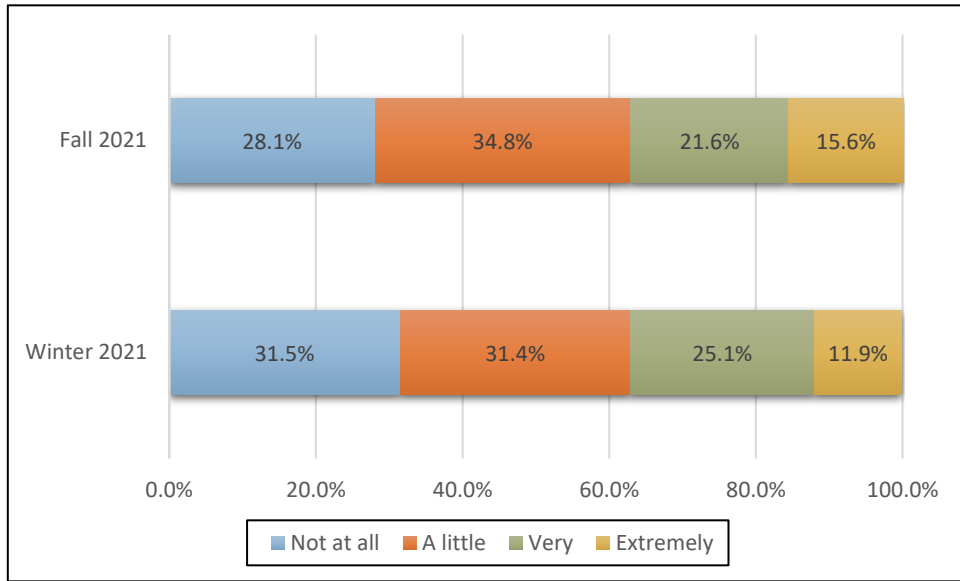
The previous round of SOSS (Fall 2021) included a series of questions asking about Critical Race Theory. Two of those questions were also asked in this round of SOSS (Winter 2021).

The two questions asked in both rounds were:

- “How familiar are you with Critical Race Theory (CRT)?”
- “To what extent do you support a ban on teaching Critical Race Theory in Michigan’s K-12 schools?”

In both rounds of SOSS, only 37 percent of the respondents stated that they were either very or extremely familiar with Critical Race Theory (Figure 22).

Figure 22: Familiarity with Critical Race Theory

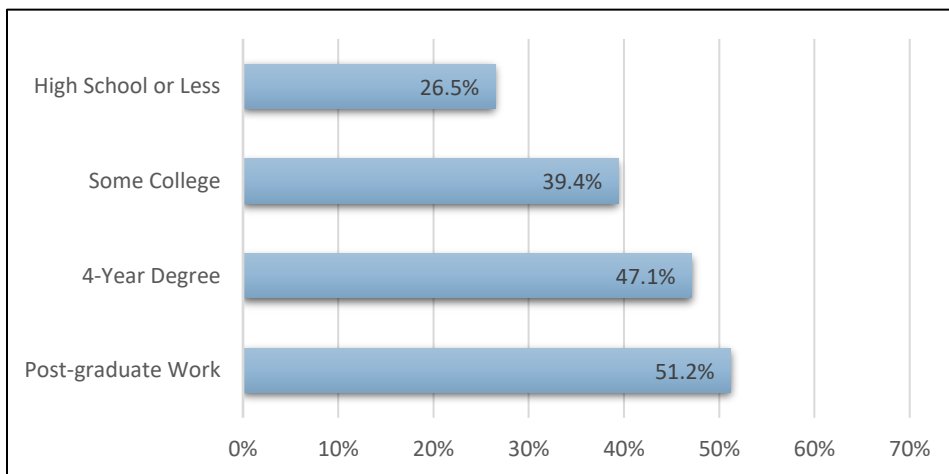


Sample Size: 1498/991

In Winter 2021 SOSS data, additional analysis was done to better understand the level of familiarity respondents reported. Whether or not someone was a member of a minority group or had a child under the age of 18 was not significantly related to familiarity with Critical Race Theory, nor was the respondent's political party affiliation.

In results from Winter 2021, the respondent's level of education was significantly related to familiarity with Critical Race Theory (Figure 23). The higher the respondent's level of education, the higher the reported level of familiarity with Critical Race Theory.

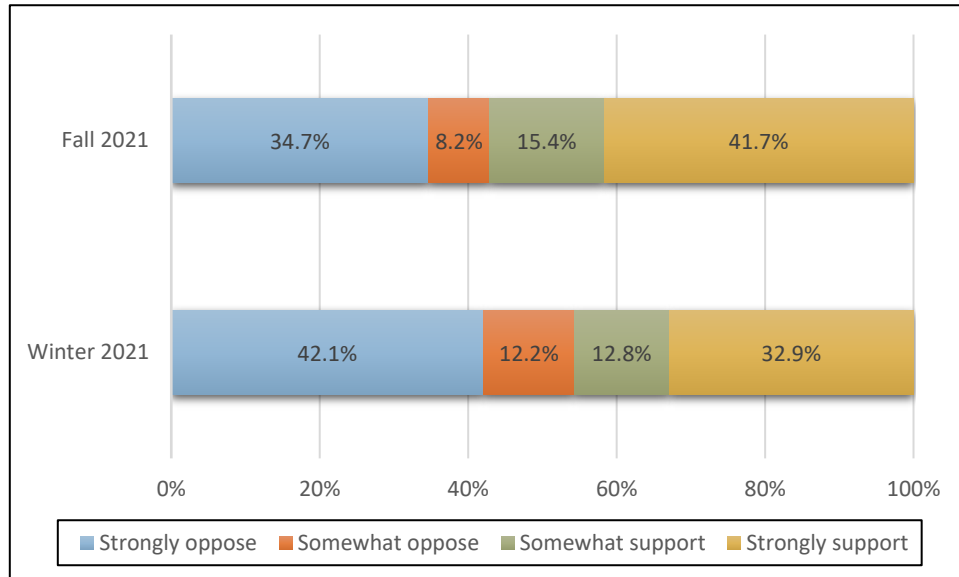
Figure 23: Familiarity with Critical Race Theory (By Education Level)



Sample Size: 990,  $X^2$  sig.=.000

Comparing the two time periods again, there was a change in the percent of respondents who somewhat supported a ban on the teaching of Critical Race Theory in K-12 schools (Figure 24). There was a decrease in the percent of those who supported the ban between the Fall 2021 (57 percent) and Winter 2021 (46 percent).

Figure 24: Support Ban of Critical Race Theory in K-12 Schools



Sample Size: 1131/704

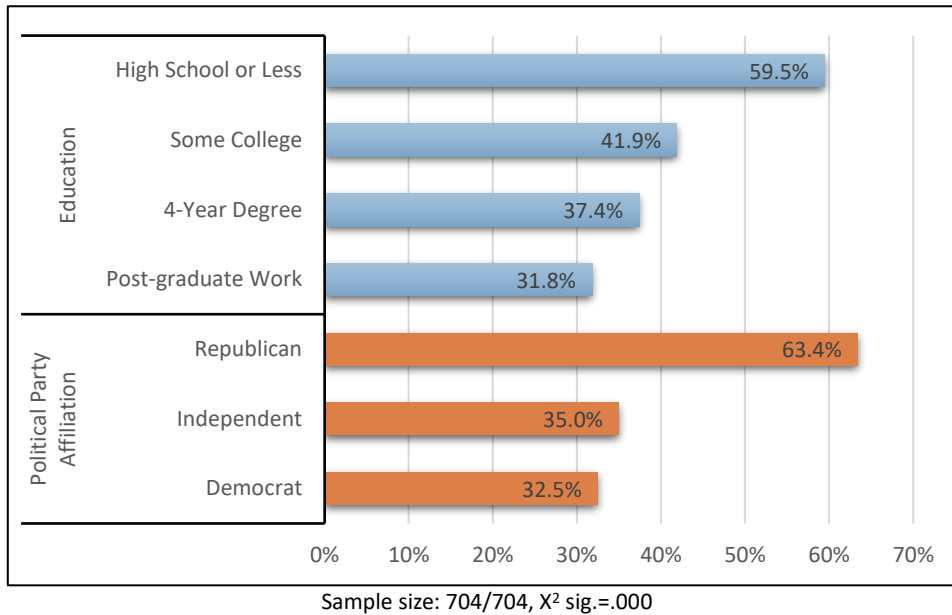
If a respondent was a member of a minority group or had a child under the age of 18 wasn't significantly related to the support of a ban of Critical Race Theory in K-12 schools. As with their familiarity with Critical Race Theory, the respondent's level of education was significantly related (Figure 25). The respondent's political party affiliation was also significantly related.

Specifically,

- In general, the higher the level of education, the less likely respondents were to support a ban of Critical Race Theory in K-12 schools.
- Republicans were most likely to support the ban with 63 percent stating that they would at least somewhat support a ban.
- Democrats (33 percent) and Independents (35 percent) were similar to each other and less likely to report supporting a ban.



Figure 25: Support of Ban by Education and Political Party Affiliation



### Section I. Michigan Independent Citizens’ Redistricting Commission

A series of questions were asked in the past three State of the State Surveys (Spring, Fall, and Winter 2021) about the Michigan Independent Citizen’s Redistricting Commission (MICRC). Three of the questions were asked during all three rounds. Two of those questions will be discussed below.

Respondents were first asked “*In 2018, voters approved a state Constitutional amendment that created the new Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (Proposal 2). How familiar are you with this new approach to redistricting in the state?*”. In SOSS Winter 2021, only 29 percent of the respondents stated that they were completely unaware of the MICRC.

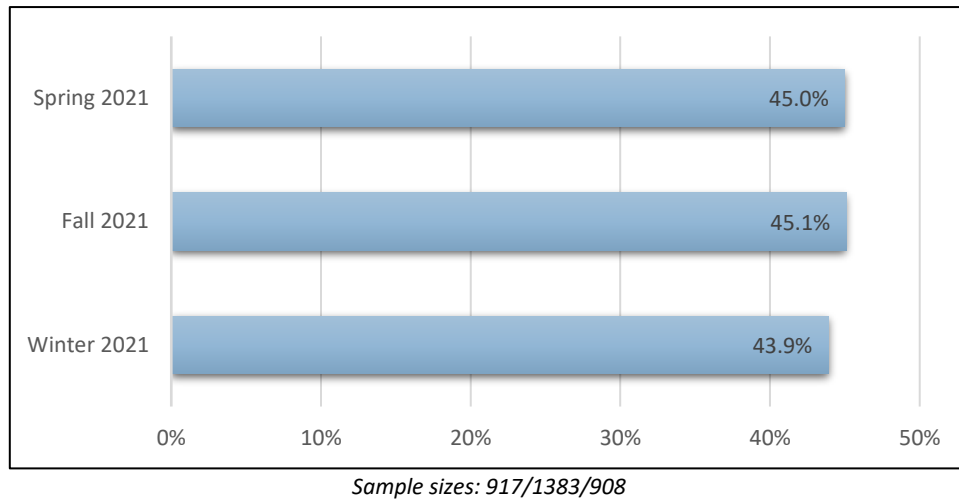
In a different study, conducted on behalf of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission in February 2022, results showed that 41 percent of the respondents reported hearing about the MICRC.<sup>4</sup> This is lower than the 71 percent that had reported that they had at least heard of the MICRC in the Winter 2021 SOSS.<sup>5</sup>

Categories were collapsed into *Unfamiliar* (completely and mostly unfamiliar) and *Familiar* (somewhat and very familiar) for the tables below. Figure 26 compares the SOSS respondents across all three waves. Overall, there was little change in the familiarity of the general population at each of the three time points even though MICRC meetings and decision-making activities were ongoing.

<sup>4</sup> Glengariff Group, Inc. February 2022. Michigan Independent Citizen’s Redistricting Commission Post Survey.

<sup>5</sup> The questions were not identical between the two studies. Anyone that had reported being somewhat unfamiliar, somewhat familiar and completely familiar were treated as having at least heard of the commission.

Figure 26: Familiarity with New Redistricting Approach



Though there has been little change across the three time points, there are interesting differences in terms of the level of familiarity when respondent characteristics were considered. All demographic analyses reported below were statistically significant and from the most recent SOSS survey (Winter 2021).

Whether or not someone was a member of racial/ethnic minority group was not found to be significant. A respondent's education level, gender, and political affiliation were significantly related to how familiar the respondent was with the MICRC. Similar trends were also found in the [Glengarrif Group](#) report though the group didn't report any significance to the findings.

Figure 27 displays the differences found by education, gender, and political party affiliation. All relationships were statistically significant.

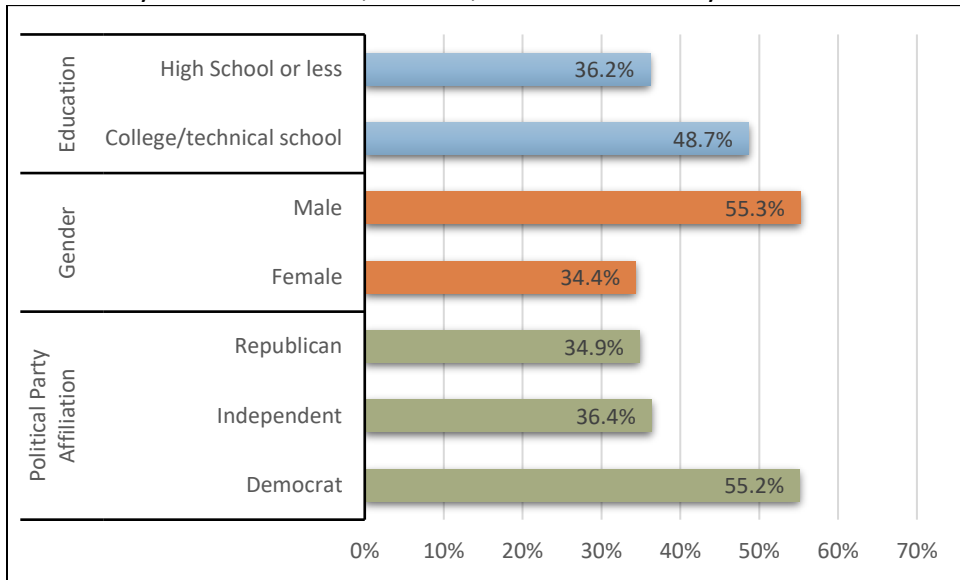
Generally,

- Those with at least some college/technical school experience were more likely to be familiar with the MICRC (49 percent vs 36 percent).
- Males (55 percent) were much more likely than females (34 percent) to be familiar with the MICRC.<sup>6</sup>
- Democrats (55 percent) were more familiar than either Republicans (35 percent) or Independents (36 percent).

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<sup>6</sup> For this analysis, those who self-identified as intersex were not included due to comprising only 0.3% of all the respondents.

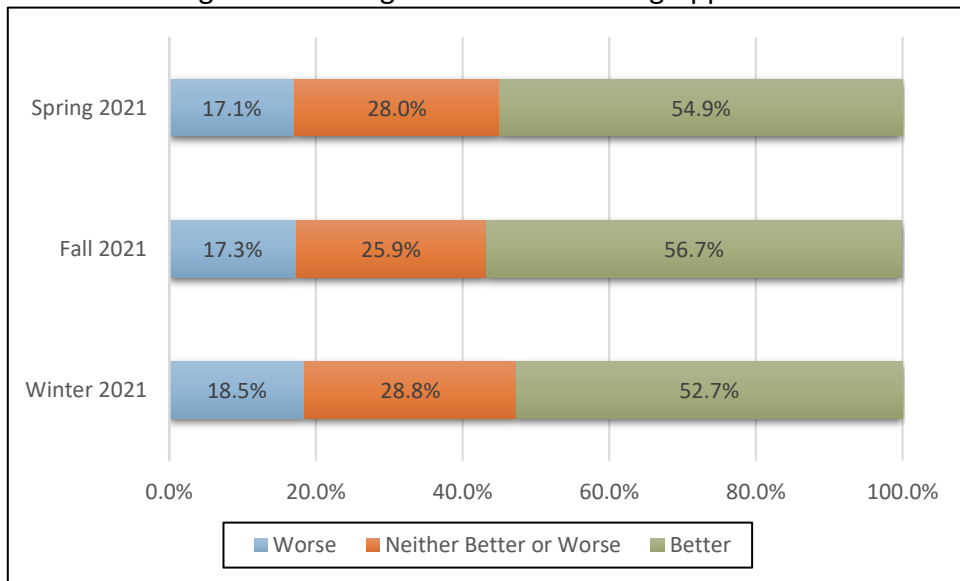
Figure 27: Familiarity with New Redistricting Approach by Education Level, Gender, and Political Party Affiliation



Sample size: 902/892/902,  $X^2$  sig.=.000

Respondents were also asked “Given what you know about it, overall, do you believe Michigan’s new approach of having districts drawn by an independent citizens’ commission is a **better or worse** approach than having them drawn by the legislature?” As with the previous question, respondents from the Spring, Fall, and Winter 2021 SOSS survey were all asked to answer the question. Figure 28 reports the findings across all three periods of time. There was no clear pattern of change across the three time periods.

Figure 28: Rating of New Redistricting Approach



Sample sizes: 593/926/547

A similar question was asked in the Glengariff Group report. Respondents were asked if they believed that the commission should be allowed to continue to map districts or if the state should return to the previous redistricting system overseen largely by the Legislature and courts. The group found that 66 percent of the respondents indicated that the redistricting process should stay in the hands of the commission and only 24 percent felt that it should go back to the Legislature. The remaining 10 percent of the respondents reported “both,” “neither,” “don’t know,” or “refused.”

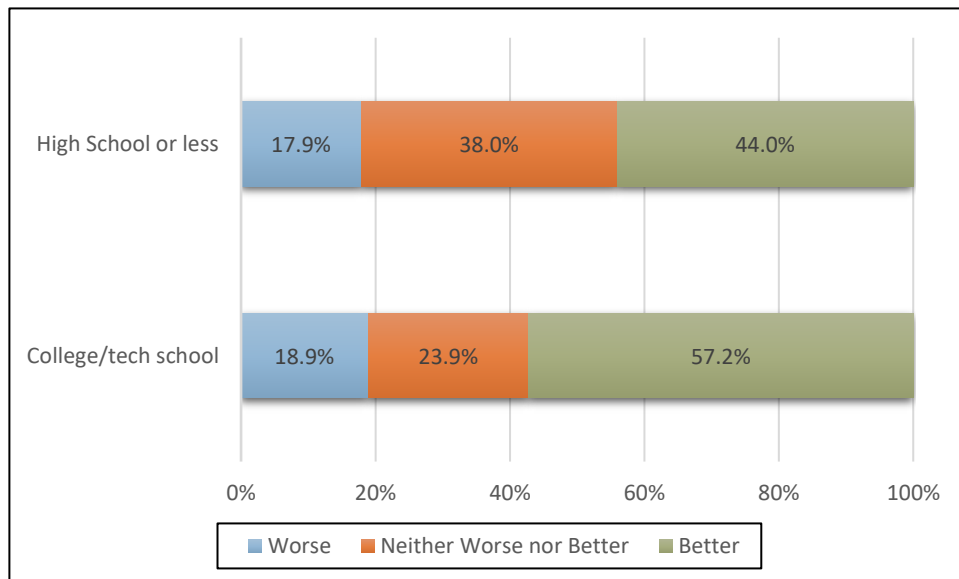
As with the previous question, analysis of the most recent SOSS survey (Winter 2021) by respondent demographics showed variations within demographic categories. All demographic comparisons are statistically significant. As before, membership within a racial/ethnic minority group was not found to be statistically related. The respondent’s education level, gender, and political party affiliation were significantly related with rating of the MICRC process. Similar patterns were found for sex and political party affiliation in the Glengariff Group report though statistical significance was not reported.

Figure 29 shows difference in rating of the MICRC process compared to the previous process across education categories.

Specifically,

- Those with at least some college or technical school were more likely to see the new approach as better compared to those with a high school education or less (57 percent versus 44 percent).
- Those with a high school degree or less were more likely to report that it was either better or worse than those who attended college or technical school (38 percent versus 24 percent).

Figure 29: Rating of New Redistricting Approach by Education

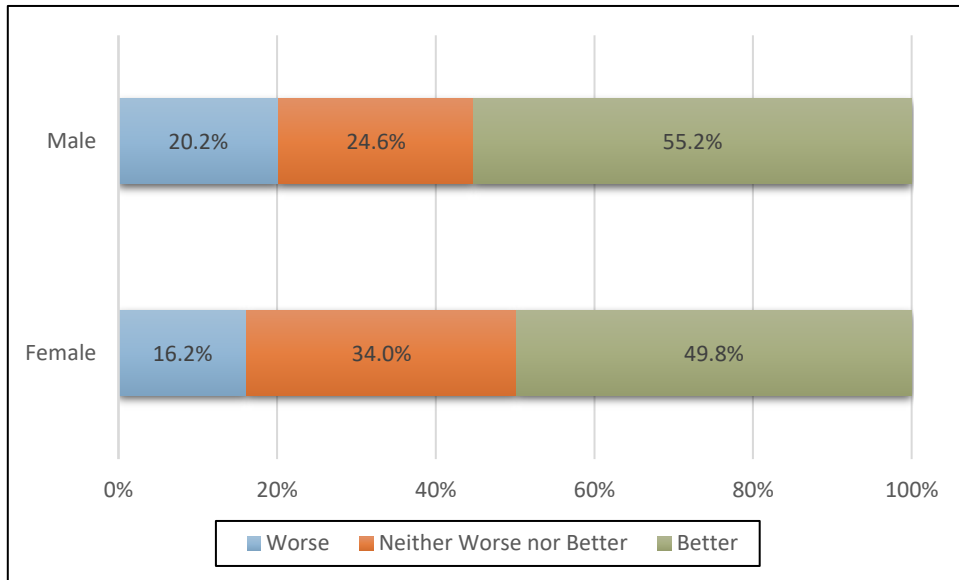


Sample size: 539,  $X^2$  sig.=.002

Figure 30 shows:

- 34 percent of females compared to 25 percent of males were likely to have a neutral opinion of the MICRC approach to drawing maps governing voting boundaries compared to the previous approach.
- Males were more likely to consider the process both better (55 percent vs 50 percent) and worse (20 percent vs 16 percent) than females.

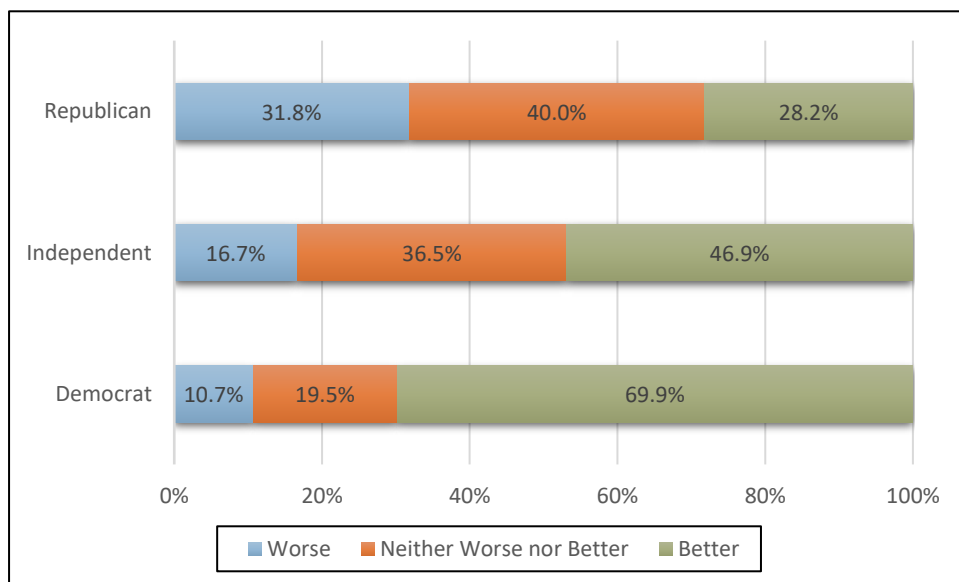
Figure 30: Rating of New Redistricting Approach by Gender



Sample size: 538,  $X^2$  sig.=.049

Finally, political party leaning was also significantly related to whether or not the respondent believed the new process was better or worse than the previous one (Figure 31).

Figure 31: Rating of New Redistricting Approach by Political Party Affiliation



Sample size: 538,  $X^2$  sig.=.000

In comparing results:

- 70 percent of Democrats indicated the MICRC process was better than the previous system and only 11 percent believed it worse.
- Republicans were the most likely to state that the new approach was neither worse nor better (40 percent) or to think that it was worse than the old approach (32 percent).
- Independents fell in between Democrats and Republicans for all three categories.

# SUMMARY

## Section A: Economic Optimism

Respondents were asked several questions about their views of the past, present and future economic conditions related to themselves, their community, and in general. Looking at the general trends from Fall 2019 through the Winter 2021 (six data points), there appears to be little economic optimism.

- Slight increase in the percent of respondents who reported that their current household financial situation was poor to just fair.
- General increase in the percent who reported that their current financial situation was worse than 12 months ago.
- Decrease in the percent that felt that their financial situation would be better off in 12 months.
- General increase in the percent who expected the financial situation in their community to be bad.
- General increase in the percent who believed that the unemployment situation would get worse in the next 12 months.
- There was a large increase in Spring 2021 in the percent of respondents who indicated that inflation was going to go up in the next 12 months and has stayed relatively high since then.

## Section B: Assessment of Political Leaders

Biden's approval rating has decrease from a *fair* to *good* rating in Spring 2021 to a *poor* to *fair* rating in Winter 2021. Whitmer's approval rating has decreased slightly over the same period of time, but stayed within the *fair* to *good* range.

## Section C: 2022 State of Michigan Election Expectations

Less than half of the respondents predict that Governor Whitmer would be reelected. Republicans and Independents were much less likely to forecast that she would be reelected.

When presented with the current top candidates for the Republican Party (James Craig) and Democratic Party (Gretchen Whitmer), Whitmer held a six percentage point difference (53 percent vs. 47 percent), but 10 percent of the respondents reported being undecided and were not included. Respondents who identified as Independent were almost evenly split between candidates.

In terms of the U.S. House race in the 2022 Elections, Democrats were more likely to support their party's candidate than were the Republicans. Independents were much more likely to be undecided or supporting a third party candidate.

## Section D: Trust in Government

Respondents were most likely to trust their local government and least likely to trust the federal government. Democrats were the most likely to trust all three levels of government and Republicans were the least likely to trust federal and state governments, but Independents were least likely to trust local governments.

### Section E: Better Political Party

In general, the Democratic Party was seen as being better for “*Speaking up for disadvantaged groups*” and “*Proposing specific policies that respond to new social problems*”. Republicans were seen as being better for “*Speaking up for American principles and values*” and “*Ensuring that the government stays in its proper role in society*”. Republicans were more likely to respond that their party was the best for all four situations and Democrats believed that their party was the best at all four situations. Independents were more likely to think both parties or neither party was the best at each of the four situations.

### Section F: Support for Infrastructure Bill

One of three question wording variations was randomly presented to each respondent regarding overall support of Biden’s infrastructure plan. Support of the bill did vary by which question version was asked. The more information provided about the bill, the higher the support. Republicans were the least likely to support the bill regardless of the question, but offered the least level of support for the question version that only had the name of the bill. Given that this was the version with the least amount of information about the bill and had the President’s name attached to it, it is difficult to tell if it was due to the lack of information, the President’s name or some combination of the two. Democrats overwhelmingly gave the most support for the bill regardless of question version, but offered the least amount of support for the question that had basic information in it and lacked President’s name.

Of the eight provisions of the bill that respondents were asked to rate their support for *long-term care of seniors and persons with disabilities* received the highest overall level of support. *Increasing funds to the IRS* received the lowest level of support. This held true regardless of political party affiliation.

Respondents were asked a second time about their level of support for the bill after being asked about the specific provisions, but were all asked the same version of the question (one with Biden’s name attached). Supported increased when asked the second time for those that were asked the question with basic information and the question with only the name of the President’s bill. Those that were asked originally the question version with the most detail, actually showed a decrease in support for the bill.

### Section G: Role of Government

Respondents were asked their attitude about four statements related to the role of government. Overall, the role with the highest percent of agreement was *government should help those that cannot help themselves* and the lowest was for *immigrants threatening the American way of life*. Agreement with the statements among Republicans was highest on *government regulation does harm to businesses* and lowest on *government should help those that cannot help themselves*. For Democrats, agreement was highest for *government should help those that cannot help themselves* and lowest for *government regulation does harm to businesses*.

When respondents were asked whether or not they liked politicians who were willing to make compromises to get things done, over three-quarters agreed. Republicans were the least likely to agree and Democrats were the most likely to agree.

Less than half of the respondents agreed that they did not pay attention to whether or not a politician was liberal or conservative. Independents were the most likely to agree with this statement and Republicans were the least.



Respondents were asked what they thought about current government involvement. Overall, the response was almost split evenly between doing too much and needing to do more. Republican were much more likely to respond that the government was doing too much and Democrats were much more likely to respond that the government was not doing enough.

More than half of the respondents stated that they would rather have fewer taxes and fewer services. Republicans overwhelmingly reported wanting less taxation and less service while Democrats were much more likely to report favor for added taxes and services. More than half of those identifying as Independents favored lower taxes and services.

When asked specifically about government regulations of business, *too much* was reported most often followed by *too little*. A lower percent reported the *right amount*. When looking at political party affiliation, Republicans and Independents were more likely to report *too much* regulation and Democrats were more likely to report *too little* regulation.

#### Section H: Critical Race Theory

Overall, a little more than a third of the respondents stated that they were either very or extremely familiar with Critical Race Theory (CRT). Neither a respondent's race/ethnicity, children under the age of 18 nor political party affiliation was able to explain the differences in respondents' familiarity with CRT. Education was able to help explain the awareness, with those with a higher education level being more likely to be very or extremely familiar with CRT.

Whether or not a respondent supported a ban on teaching CRT in K-12 was also not understood by a respondent's race/ethnicity or by a child under the age of 18 in the home. Both education level and political affiliation were related. The higher respondents' education, the less likely they were to support a ban. Republicans were more likely to support a ban and Democrats and Independents were less likely to support a ban.

#### Section I: Michigan Independent Citizens' Redistricting Commission (MICRC)

Comparison of respondents' familiarity with the MICRC process across Spring 2021, Fall 2021, and Winter 2021 showed little change. Statistical differences across the different levels of familiarity were found by political party leaning, education level, and gender. Democrats were more familiar with the commission than were Republicans or Democrats. Those with a lower level of education and females had less familiarity with the commission. This knowledge of the commission's activities suggests that the current methods of educating the public may not be sufficient.

Also, the rating of the MICRC process against the former process across Spring 2021, Fall 2021, and Winter 2021 showed no clear pattern. There were statistical differences in rating based on political party leaning, education level, and gender. Democrats were more likely to believe that the new process was better than the previous method than were Republicans or Independents. People with lower education and women were more likely to report the MICRC process neither worse nor better. This may be due to the lower familiarity with the commission and not having enough information to feel comfortable making a choice.

## APPENDIX

Table A1: Demographic Description of SOSS Respondents

Demographic Characteristics <sup>a</sup>		
<b>Party</b>	Republican	37.4%
	Independent	21.1%
	Democrat	41.5%
<b>Race/Ethnicity<sup>b</sup></b>	White	82.0%
	Black	13.7%
	Asian/Pacific Islander	1.9%
	Native American/Alaska Native	2.1%
	Other Race	3.3%
	Hispanic	4.5%
<b>Gender<sup>c</sup></b>	Male	45.6%
	Female	52.8%
	Intersex	1.6%
<b>Education</b>	Less than 4 year Degree	73.0%
	4-Year Degree	16.7%
	Graduate Degree	10.3%
<b>n</b>		
<sup>a</sup> SOSS percentages are weighted using survey weights provided by YouGov. <sup>b</sup> Racial/ethnic categories are not mutually exclusive and respondents may have selected more than one. <sup>c</sup> Due to the small percent of Intersex respondents, they were not included in analysis related to gender.		