The McCourtney Institute for Democracy Mood of the Nation Poll

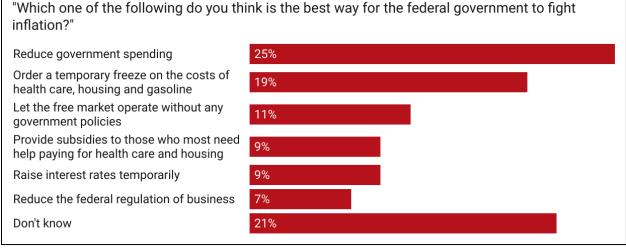
> PennState College of the Liberal Arts

### In their own words:

#### What Americans think about inflation

June 22, 2022

Americans divided on the best way to fight inflation, with 1 in 5 saying "I don't know." The most popular solutions are reducing government spending and freezing prices on essentials.



Source: APM Research Lab analysis of McCourtney Institute's Mood of the Nation Poll, May 11-19, 2022. N = 1,000 U.S. adults age 18 or older; the overall margin of error is ±3.6 percentage points, and is larger for subgroups.

# Summary and key findings

Following a December 2021 Mood of the Nation Poll identifying inflation as a key concern among Americans<sup>1</sup>, the May 2022 Mood of the Nation Poll sought to explore Americans' inflation opinions in more depth.

When presented with a list of six possible ways to fight inflation, the most popular options are reducing government spending, favored by 25%, and temporarily freezing the costs of health care, housing and gasoline, favored by 19%.

- Providing health care and housing subsidies, temporarily raising interest rates and reducing federal regulation of business are the least popular options, each garnering support from fewer than 1 in 10 Americans.
- While inflation is one of the key worries of the American public, many do not know how it should be addressed. One in five Americans indicated that they "don't know" which of the six options presented is preferrable.
- Opinions on fighting inflation are divided along political lines:
  - Forty-four percent of Republicans favor addressing inflation by reducing government spending, compared to only 6% of Democrats.
  - Thirty-one percent of Democrats favor addressing inflation by "order[ing] a temporary freeze on the costs of health care, housing and gasoline," compared to only 8% of Republicans.

When presented with a list of six entities that might influence inflation policy, Americans are most supportive of their fellow citizens and the free market having a great deal of influence (34% and 30%, respectively).

- Americans are least supportive of having CEOs of the largest U.S. Companies exercise influence on inflation policies, with only 14% indicating that CEOs should have a great deal of influence.
- Only about one in five Americans think that the Federal Reserve Bank, U.S. Congress and President Biden should have a great deal of influence on economic policy related to fighting inflation.
- Opinions on who should influence inflation policy are divided along political lines:
  - Half of Republicans indicate that the free market should have a great deal of influence on inflation policy compared to only 12% of Democrats.
  - Over one-third of Democrats think President Biden should have a great deal of influence on inflation policy, compared to only 10% of Republicans.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For complete results of the December 2021 Mood of the Nation Poll relating to Americans' hopes and worries, see <u>https://www.apmresearchlab.org/motn/hope-worry-2022</u>.

# Introduction

Penn State's nonpartisan McCourtney Institute for Democracy regularly conducts the nationally representative Mood of the Nation Poll to gauge how Americans are feeling about various aspects of American politics and society.<sup>2</sup>

Since inflation is currently very high and registering as a leading concern on many national polls, the May 2022 Mood of the Nation Poll included several questions aimed at better understanding who the American public thinks should be responsible for slowing down inflation as well as the general approach that they feel would work best.

- 1. With respect to fighting rising prices, how much influence should each of the following have in deciding US economic policy? A great deal of influence, a fair amount of influence, a little influence, or none at all.
  - a. President Biden
  - b. The U.S. Federal Reserve Bank
  - c. The chief executives of the largest US companies
  - d. The U.S. Congress
  - e. The American people's opinions, as conveyed in public opinion polls
  - f. The free market, without any intervention by government

Note that the order in which the entities a through f were presented was rotated to avoid possible question order effects.

2. You said that with respect to fighting rising prices, <any of the items a through f rated as having "a great deal of influence">> should have a great deal of influence. Can you tell us why they should have more influence than <any of the items a through f rated as less than "a great deal of influence">>?</a>

Note that this question was not asked of those who rated all items a through f as "a great deal of influence," or of those who did not rate any of the items a through f as "a great deal of influence."

[Open-ended question: Verbatim answers recorded]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For additional information about the Mood of the Nation Poll see the appendix to this brief. For additional details about this survey's methodology, please see https://www.apmresearchlab.org/surveys

- 3. Which one of the following do you think is the best way for the federal government to fight inflation?
  - a. Reduce government spending
  - b. Provide subsidies to those who most need help paying for health care and housing
  - c. Reduce the federal regulation of business
  - d. Let the free market operate without any government policies
  - e. Raise interest rates temporarily
  - f. Order a temporary freeze on the costs of health care, housing and gasoline
  - g. I don't know

Note that the order in which the options were presented was rotated to avoid possible question order effects.

To see whether Americans' opinions on these topics vary according to demographic, social and economic characteristics, we analyzed the results of each question by gender (women, men), generation (Silent or Boomer; X; Millennial; Z), race and ethnicity (four groups are available in this survey: White, non-Hispanic; Black, non-Hispanic; Hispanic; Other), educational attainment and political affiliation (self-identified Republican, Independent, Democrat, as derived from self-placement on a seven-category scale ranging from "Strong Democrat" to "Strong Republican").

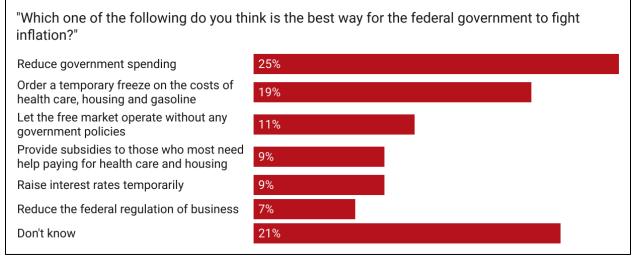
The number of respondents in each group are detailed in the methodology report that accompanies this brief.

# **Addressing inflation**

When presented a list of six ways to address inflation, a plurality of 1 in 4 Americans supports reducing government spending. The second most popular answer is "don't know," followed closely by ordering a temporary freeze on the costs of health care, housing and gasoline.

About one in ten Americans opted for either letting the free market operate without any government policies, providing subsidies to those who most need help paying for health care and housing, and raise interest rates temporarily. Seven percent indicated that inflation could be best contained by reducing the federal regulation of business.

# Americans are most supportive of reducing government spending and temporary price freezes as measures to address inflation



Source: APM Research Lab analysis of McCourtney Institute's Mood of the Nation Poll, May 11-19, 2022. N = 1,000 U.S. adults age 18 or older; the overall margin of error is ±3.6 percentage points, and is larger for subgroups.

While there is little consensus around these options for the public at large, there is some discernable variation from group to group. The most notable discrepancies follow political lines, with Republicans tending to favor laissez-faire approaches and Democrats favoring government intervention.

On the one hand, 44% of Republicans favor addressing inflation by reducing government spending, compared to only 6% of Democrats. Similarly, much higher proportions of Republicans than Democrats favor "let the free market operate without any government policies" (18% versus 2%) and "reduce the federal regulation of business" (11% versus 4%).

On the other hand, higher proportions of Democrats than Republicans favor "order a temporary freeze on the costs of health care, housing and gasoline" (31% versus 8%), "raise interest rates temporarily" (16% versus 3%), and "provide subsidies to those who most need help paying for health care and housing" (12% versus 2%).

#### Opinions on addressing inflation, by group

"Which one of the follo inflation?"	owing do yo	ou think is t	he best wa	ly for the fe	ederal gove	ernment to	fight
	Reduce govt spending	Temporary freeze on costs of health care, housing & gas	Let the free market operate	Provide subsidies*	Temporari raise interest rates	ly Reduce federal business regulation	Don't know
GENDER							0%
Male	28%	13%	13%	9%	13%	7%	17%
Female	22%	24%	9%	9%	5%	7%	25%
GENERATION							0%
Generation Z (age 18-25)	29%	13%	15%	16%	3%	1%	23%
Millennial (age 26-41)	20%	18%	6%	11%	12%	6%	27%
Generation X (age 42-57)	26%	20%	10%	8%	5%	9%	22%
Baby boom (age 58-76)	28%	19%	13%	6%	10%	8%	16%
Silent (age 77+)	21%	19%	15%	4%	10%	12%	19%
RACE & ETHNICITY							0%
White	29%	18%	12%	7%	9%	7%	18%
Black	16%	21%	8%	13%	7%	5%	31%
Hispanic/Latino	17%	22%	6%	13%	6%	9%	27%
Other	21%	11%	15%	10%	15%	5%	23%
EDUCATION							0%
High school or less	28%	17%	11%	10%	6%	6%	22%
Some college or Assoc.	21%	21%	12%	9%	8%	9%	20%
Bachelors degree+	24%	18%	10%	7%	13%	6%	21%
ANNUAL FAMILY INCOME							0%
Less than \$30,000	25%	19%	9%	16%	3%	8%	21%
\$30,000 to \$59,999	30%	21%	9%	8%	9%	7%	17%
\$60,000 to \$99,999	25%	20%	12%	6%	8%	6%	22%
\$100,000 or more	20%	19%	13%	6%	19%	8%	17%
POLITICAL AFFILIATION							0%
Democrat	6%	31%	2%	12%	16%	4%	29%
Independent	27%	12%	16%	15%	6%	7%	17%
Republican	44%	8%	18%	2%	3%	11%	13%

\*Provide subsidies to those who most need help paying for health care and housing. Source: APM Research Lab analysis of McCourtney Institute's Mood of the Nation Poll, May 11-19, 2022. N = 1,000 U.S. adults age 18 or older; the overall margin of error is ±3.6 percentage points, and is larger for subgroups.

A P M R E S E A R C H L A B

McCourtney Institute for Democracy Mood of the Nation Poll @Pansate Comparison the Land Other, less dramatic, differences in preferred responses to inflation include:

- A higher proportion of women than men favor ordering a temporary freeze on the costs of health care, housing and gasoline (24% versus 13%).
- A higher proportion of Generation Z than either Baby Boomers or members of the Silent Generation favor providing subsidies to those who need them (16% versus 6% and 4%).
- Almost twice the proportion of White Americans versus either Black or Latino Americans favors reducing government spending (29% versus 16% and 17%).

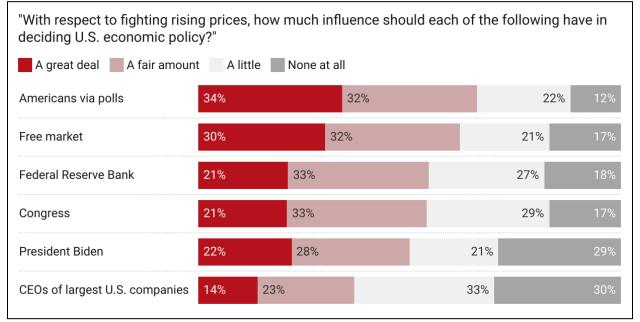
# Who should influence U.S. inflation policy?

When asked who should influence U.S. economic policy "with respect to fighting rising prices" over one in three Americans think that their fellow citizens should wield "a great deal of influence." Nearly as many indicate that the free market should have a great deal of influence.

About one in five Americans believes that each of three major institutions—the Federal Reserve Bank, Congress and the President—should have a great deal of influence on how the nation addresses inflation. Opinions are particularly divided on President Biden's role, however, since an even higher proportion (29%) indicate that that he should not have any influence on policies related to inflation.

Fewer Americans, one in seven, think that the CEOs of the largest U.S. companies should have a great deal of influence. And the proportion of Americans who think CEOs should have no influence at all is statistically tied with the proportion who believe President Biden should have no influence.

# Americans are most supportive of their fellow citizens and the free market wielding influence over inflation



Source: APM Research Lab analysis of McCourtney Institute's Mood of the Nation Poll, May 11-19, 2022. N = 1,000 U.S. adults age 18 or older; the overall margin of error is ±3.6 percentage points, and is larger for subgroups.

Opinions about who should exercise influence over economic policies tend to follow partisan lines:

- Half of Republicans indicate that the free market should have a great deal of influence compared to only 12% of Democrats.
- Over one-third of Democrats think President Biden should have a great deal of influence, compared to only 10% of Republicans.
- Twice the proportion of Democrats think the Federal Reserve Bank should have a great deal of influence than is the case for either Independents or Republicans (31% versus 14% for each of the latter groups).

Other notable differences in opinions related to inflation policy include:

- Much larger proportions of the older Silent and Baby Boom generations think that the free market should have a great deal of influence than is the case among the younger members of Generation Z and Millennials (54% and 38% versus 18% and 20%, respectively).
- Higher proportions of Black and Latino Americans think the Federal Reserve Bank, Congress and especially President Biden should have a great deal of influence than is the case among White Americans.
- A higher proportion of Black Americans indicates that CEOs of the largest U.S. companies should exercise a great deal of influence than is the case among either White or Latino Americans (29% versus 11% and 17%).
- A higher proportion of those with annual family incomes below \$30,000 indicate that CEOs of the largest U.S. companies should have a great deal of influence than is the case among those with annual family incomes of \$100,000 or more (19% versus 7%).

#### Who should influence inflation policy, by group

"With respect to fighting rising prices, how much influence should each of the following have in deciding U.S. economic policy?" (shown: proportion indicating "a great deal of influence" for each)

each)						050 (
	Americans via polls	Free market	Federal Reserve Bank	Congress	President Biden	CEOs of largest U.S. companies
GENDER						
Male	34%	37%	25%	23%	21%	16%
Female	33%	23%	19%	18%	23%	12%
GENERATION						
Generation Z (age 18-25)	23%	18%	15%	13%	7%	6%
Millennial (age 26-41)	28%	20%	23%	21%	20%	12%
Generation X (age 42-57)	37%	30%	16%	20%	20%	13%
Baby boom (age 58-76)	37%	38%	25%	20%	29%	17%
Silent generation (age 77+)	45%	54%	27%	33%	27%	19%
RACE & ETHNICITY						
White	31%	32%	19%	16%	16%	11%
Black	42%	27%	28%	33%	44%	29%
Hispanic/Latino	41%	20%	28%	29%	31%	17%
Other	24%	36%	17%	17%	18%	10%
EDUCATION						
High school or less	38%	32%	23%	25%	27%	19%
Some college or Associates	38%	29%	16%	17%	19%	13%
Bachelors degree or more	23%	29%	25%	18%	18%	8%
ANNUAL FAMILY INCOME						
Less than \$30,000	38%	26%	19%	24%	26%	19%
\$30,000 to \$59,999	37%	33%	24%	21%	24%	16%
\$60,000 to \$99,999	31%	27%	22%	23%	22%	14%
\$100,000 or more	24%	30%	21%	18%	17%	7%
POLITICAL AFFILIATION						
Democrat	29%	12%	31%	25%	35%	17%
Independent	30%	32%	14%	18%	15%	9%
Republican	40%	49%	14%	16%	10%	12%

Source: APM Research Lab analysis of McCourtney Institute's Mood of the Nation Poll, May 11-19, 2022. N = 1,000 U.S. adults age 18 or older; the overall margin of error is ±3.6 percentage points, and is larger for subgroups.

# In their own words: Why different entities should exercise influence over U.S. economic policy

To better understand why Americans favored the influence of one entity over others, the May Mood of the Nation survey included the following open-ended question:

**"You said that with respect to fighting rising prices**, <any of the six entities named in preceding question and rated as having "a great deal of influence"> **should have a great deal of influence. Can you tell us why they should have more influence than** <any of the six entities named in preceding question and rated as less than "a great deal of influence">?"

While the question was asked of a wide combination of comparisons depending on each respondent's answers to a preceding question, common themes emerged from the unstructured responses.

The most common theme to emerge from respondents' verbatim answers to the open-ended question had to do with "American people." Nearly one-third of respondents mentioned something to do with regular people bearing the brunt of the inflation impacts, that our elected representatives are supposed to serve the people, that the voice of the people matters above all, or that politicians were out of touch with the American people.

For example:

"We work for our families for housing, food to pay our bills not for some fat cats to put us down as not important for them." – 75-year-old White female from Ohio, Republican, who indicated that the free market and American people's opinions as conveyed by public opinion polls should have a great deal of influence over inflation policy.

"American people need relief and it seems like the government won't help." – 28-yearold Black female from North Carolina, Democrat, who indicated that American people's opinions as conveyed by public opinion polls should have a great deal of influence over inflation policy.

"Listen to the people for goodness sake!" – 61-year-old White male from South Dakota, Republican, who indicated that American people's opinions as conveyed by public opinion polls should have a great deal of influence over inflation policy.

Over one-quarter of respondents mentioned that the entity that they thought should have a great deal of influence over inflation policy was "right for the job." Included in this category were answers indicating either that (a) inflation policy is the selected entity's job responsibility or (b) they have the power or control of mechanisms to be able to do something about inflation. For example:

"Again, this is a Democracy we put these people in office to do the job!" – 64-year-old Black male from Texas, Independent, who indicated that President Biden and the U.S. Congress should have a great deal of influence over inflation policy.

"They control the money floating around so should help." – 70-year-old White male from Ohio, Republican who indicated that the Federal Reserve Bank and American people's opinions as conveyed by public opinion polls should have a great deal of influence over inflation policy.

The third and fourth most common responses were focused on the entity that the respondent had not indicated should have a great deal of responsibility about inflation. These "anti-President Biden" and "anti-government" responses focused specifically on the perceived shortcomings of the President or other parts of government, including the Federal Reserve Bank, which some respondents felt is unconstitutional and should be abolished.

"Because politicians are crooks they do what Will put money in their own pockets and Biden acts as though he wants to destroy America, none of them are to be trusted." – 53-year-old White male from New Jersey, Independent, who indicated that CEOs of large U.S. companies and the free market should have a great deal of influence over inflation policy.

"The government has a history of trying to make things better and in most cases falls flat on their face." – 57-year-old White male from Utah, Republican who indicated that the free market should have a great deal of influence over inflation policy.

Over 1 in 10 respondents mentioned something about greed and corruption, typically explaining why they believed that either the Federal Reserve Bank, Congress or President Biden should not have a great deal of influence over inflation policy. A similar number based their reasoning on capitalism and the free market.

For several additional examples of the verbatim responses please see the appendix to this report.

# Appendix: Verbatim responses to open-ended question

The tables below provide several verbatim responses, chosen at random, to the question: "You said that with respect to fighting rising prices, <one of the six entities named in preceding question and rated as having "a great deal of influence"> should have a great deal of influence. Can you tell us why they should have more influence than < one of the six entities named in preceding question and rated as less than "a great deal of influence">?

# Explanations given by some of those who think President Biden should exercise a great deal of influence over inflation policy

Comment	Age	Race/ ethnicity	Gender	State	Political affiliation
That's what I think	29	Black	Female	SC	Democrat
They're better able to make those changes.	36	White	Male	AZ	Democrat
They will help stabilize the market and reduce inflation.	30	Black	Male	SD	Democrat
Because the economy only affects rich people.	22	White	Female	NJ	Democrat
Most of it is price gouging and the President and Congress should put a stop to it.	66	White	Female	SC	Republicar
Because sometimes they are in it for the money profit and not what is right by the American people.	53	White	Female	NC	Democrats
He's the coach of the team needs to lead by example.	63	Hispanic	Male	ТХ	Ind.
Biden is the president and, as such, where the buck stops so to speak. The Fed is responsible for one leg of the wobbly chair that is the economy. Congress, however ineffective they are, is responsible for a number of factors of the economy as well.	52	White	Male	NM	Ind.
Many in the U.S. Congress are in the pocket of big business. Chief executives would charge even more if they can get away with it, public be damned. Public opinion, people want stuff to cost as little as possible or even free regardless.	65	White	Male	ОН	Democrat
The chief executives have profit as their concern. They are a chief cause of our present inflation. Record profits and they are still raising prices. Greed!	76	White	Male	AZ	Democrat

# Explanations given by some of those who think the U.S. Federal Reserve Bank should exercise a great deal of influence over inflation policy

Comment	Age	Race/ ethnicity	Gender	State	Political affiliation
The chief executives and free market have corporate financial gain as their primary goal. While these two sectors should be included in discussions as to how to control inflation, the other sectors should be the leaders in setting the goals.	62	Hispanic	Female	CA	Democrat
I prioritized those groups because I think they are the ones who can actually do something about the situation. The rest of them probably couldn't do much, and in fact some of them (e.g. the CEOs) might even do further harm due to greed.	52	Asian	Female	OR	Democrat
Biden's restrictions on fossil fuels impact everything America uses and consumes. He campaigned on eliminating fossil fuel and from day one he put into motion our current inflationary problems. The Fed Bank moved too slowly to increase interest rates and cool the economy.	69	White	Male	IN	Republicar
They have sole power over monetary policy and act independently from the rest of the U.S. government.	27	White	Male	ТХ	Democrat
Business tends to gouge the public when they have the opportunity and government can help control this	50	Black	Male	CA	Democrat
The people have a great bit of influence on their Congress men and women they are the ones who elected them chief executive of major companies control prices on their products President Biden has a great bit of influence on the public and the federal reserve has a great bit of influence on the money rates.	54	Black	Male	SC	Democrat
Speaking with the Chief Executives of the largest companies within our Country should have a great deal of influence in my eyes knowing the Costs and what to do to help stop them from raising prices in speaking with President Biden. I may be wrong and not know too much about Politics, but I feel that the U.S. Federal Reserve Bank would somehow play a part in how much money we have to help this country.	38	White	Female	СТ	Ind.
President and Fed have the needs of citizens in mind. CEOs will always consider shareholders first whether that's best for the people.	73	White	Male	AZ	Democrat
President has dementia I think so no opinion. Chief executives of the largest companies are already	37	White	Female	OH	Republicar

making the largest profits their companies have					
ever seen. Give them influence so they can find					
ways to profit even more? No thank you. Congress,					
I don't trust to do right by us citizens. Maybe the					
Federal Reserve and free market can help us. I just					
don't know anymore on this one. I see I end in					
sight, and here we are giving billions of dollars					
away to Ukraine. Aren't you supposed to put on					
your own oxygen mask first before helping the					
person next to you? If we don't get it together here					
soon, I feel we won't be able to help anyone out					
with anything in the future.					
The money trail.	43	Black	Female	AL	Democrats
-					

*Source: McCourtney Institute's Mood of the Nation Poll, May 11-19, 2022.* 

# Explanations given by some of those who think the chief executives of the largest U.S. companies should exercise a great deal of influence over inflation policy

Comment	Age	Race/ ethnicity	Gender	State	Political affiliation
Because they are the ones that have the power to really change our situation even though they are not doing it.	43	Hispanic	Female	AZ	Republican
They control the ability to make changes.	74	Hispanic	Female	ТХ	Democrat
Closer to the people and economy.	75	White	Female	FL	Ind.
They [have] the funds and ability to demand companies to lower the cost of goods including gas prices.	74	Hispanic	Male	ТХ	Democrat
They have more information on the economy.	36	Black	Female	VA	Democrat
Because they control the market and make the money.	40	White	Male	IL	Ind.
They have the power to fight against rising prices.	34	Hispanic	Male	CA	Democrat
I am a capitalist, half the problems are caused by the government as they attempt to appease certain demographics.	22	Asian	Female	MI	Republican
They have the power to make things happen.	73	White	Female	WV	Ind.
They only care about themselves, but they can do more for the rest of us.	65	White	Male	TXs	Democrat

# Explanations given by some of those who think the U.S. Congress should exercise a great deal of influence over inflation policy

Comment	Age	Race/ ethnicity	Gender	State	Political affiliation
Chief executives have only profits for their companies in mind. The American people are not economists, and don't understand how the market works. You need Congress to pass policy laws, the Federal Reserve who understand markets.	61	White	Female	FL	Democrat
I don't feel like he is a good fit for a president I president I think he makes us look like a Weak country.	41	Hispanic	Male	ТХ	Democrat
Those are the people who make all the decisions.	37	Black	Female	WI	Democrat
It's how America works these days.	51	Asian	Male	WA	Democrat
Because the federal reserve controls interest rates and CEO's control pricing and U.S. Congress sets policy.	60	White	Male	ОН	Republican
I believe polls can be manipulated and we have our representatives in Congress and Senate. They are tasked we representing our public opinion.	64	White	Male	AL	Ind.
That's what their job is. They are also designed to protect all Americans from harmful economic situations.	26	White	Female	UT	Democrat
The president doesn't have the power of the purse.	23	Hispanic	Male	NY	Republican
Because the president is only one person, the Federal Reserve probably shouldn't exist at all, and executives don't have anyone's best interest in mind but their own.	27	White	Male	MA	Republican
They have more people to distinguish from one side to another and help make one group better than they expected. This situation can endorse themselves to be unique and find a way to execute all potentiality of qualities time deal affiliations.	31	Hispanic	Male	CA	Democrat

# Explanations given by some of those who think the American people's opinions, as conveyed in public opinion polls, should exercise a great deal of influence over inflation policy

Comment	Age	Race/ ethnicity	Gender	State	Political affiliation
Just think so.	62	Black	Female	MS	Democrat
Businesses are too greedy and need to be restrained and/or prosecuted for these prices.	75	Black	Male	FL	Democrat
We should have the right to say that we want our pipeline opened back up. President Trump had this country in a beautiful place and Joe Biden put us in the toilet in a year.	52	White	Female	AL	Republicar
Good information	45	Hispanic	Male	AZ	Democrat
People are the most important, not corporations. People are the most effected day to day with rising prices and [people] have to make decisions of whether they will eat or buy gas to make it to work.	29	White	Male	NM	Democrat
We work for our families for housing, food to pay our bills not for some fat cats to put us down as not mportant for them.	75	White	Female	ОН	Republica
The largest companies are making more money than ever even though the people are suffering. Trust the government, especially Biden, to make good decisions? That's really funny.	79	White	Female	NJ	Republicar
The U.S. Congress and American people's opinion should have a great deal of influence since most Americans are middle-class or lower. As for Congress, the American people elected such leaders to help American people.	44	White	Female	MN	Democrat
The American people are the ones who buy stuff, and they are the ones who have to come up with the money to spend.	70	White	Female	FL	Republicar
We the people are the ones struggling to survive.	50	White	Male	WA	Ind.

# Explanations given by some of those who think the free market should exercise a great deal of influence over inflation policy

Comment	Age	Race/ ethnicity	Gender	State	Political affiliation
For the average American family.	70	White	Male	VA	Democrat
Because President Biden, the U.S. Federal Reserve Bank, the chief executives of the largest US companies, and the US Congress have so totally [messed] it up.	62	White	Male	CA	Ind.
The free market in my opinion is best suited to make these decisions, because they are the ones who see this issue close up and sets the standards each and every day. They know when are on an upward swing or a downward trend.	64	Black	Male	ТХ	Democrat
The government has shown it is ineffective in containing rising prices.	24	Asian	Male	IL	Ind.
Because Biden is carrying us down the yellow brick road to destruction.	75	White	Male	AL	Republica
Because they are not as stupid as our leaders and it s the Democrat leaders that caused the issue	65	Hispanic	Male	ID	Republica
The government should stay out of the lives of the people and allow business to work.	72	White	Male	ТΧ	Republica
The people make the decisions with their money.	81	White	Male	FL	Republica
Biden couldn't [run] a lemonade stand, let alone manage a 14 trillion-dollar economy. Look around. Congress is full of grifters and corruption. The Fed needs to be dissolved, and our dollar needs to be returned to a gold standard. Congress cannot NOT spend, spend, spend, which is a large part of our current problems.	57	White	Male	WI	Republica
Because Biden and the Fed caused the inflation by spending money we don't have	72	White	Male	IL	Ind.

#### **About the APM Research Lab**

The APM Research Lab is a department within the American Public Media Group that informs the public about challenges and opportunities facing families, communities and organizations throughout the nation. Our mission is to foster an engaged democracy by inspiring curiosity, inquiry and discussion through fact-driven, credible research and analysis. Our Values: Independent, Useful, Informative, Non-partisan. Our tagline is *bringing facts into focus*.

The Lab is a member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research's Transparency Initiative and abides by its standards. See <u>https://www.aapor.org/Standards-Ethics/Transparency-Initiative/</u>.

Contact: info@apmresearchlab.org | apmresearchlab.org

#### **About the McCourtney Institute for Democracy**

The McCourtney Institute for Democracy at Penn State promotes scholarship and practical innovations that defend and advance democracy in the United States and abroad. Through teaching, research and public outreach, the Institute leverages the resources of Penn State and partners around the world to foster a model of deliberation, policymaking and responsiveness that is passionate, informed and civil.

The Mood of the Nation Poll offers a unique approach to public opinion polling. It allows Americans to speak in their own words through open-ended questions that focus on emotions like anger and hope, as well as commitment to constitutional principles.

Contact: democracyinst@psu.edu | democracy.psu.edu

#### About the survey

Data collection for this Mood of the Nation Poll was conducted online by YouGov (https://today.yougov.com/). The YouGov panel includes over 1.8 million individuals who agree to complete occasional surveys. The 1,000 individuals who completed the May 2022 Mood of the Nation Poll were matched to the joint distribution from the Census's American Community Survey in terms of age, sex, race and ethnicity, and years of education. The frame was augmented by matching to the November 2010 Current Population Survey and the Pew Religious Life Survey in order to include voter registration, political interest and party identification in the selection model.

For additional details about the sample and survey methodology, as well as transparency disclosures relevant to the American Association of Public Opinion, the Roper Center and CNN, please see: <u>https://www.apmresearchlab.org/surveys</u>.

## Acknowledgments

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