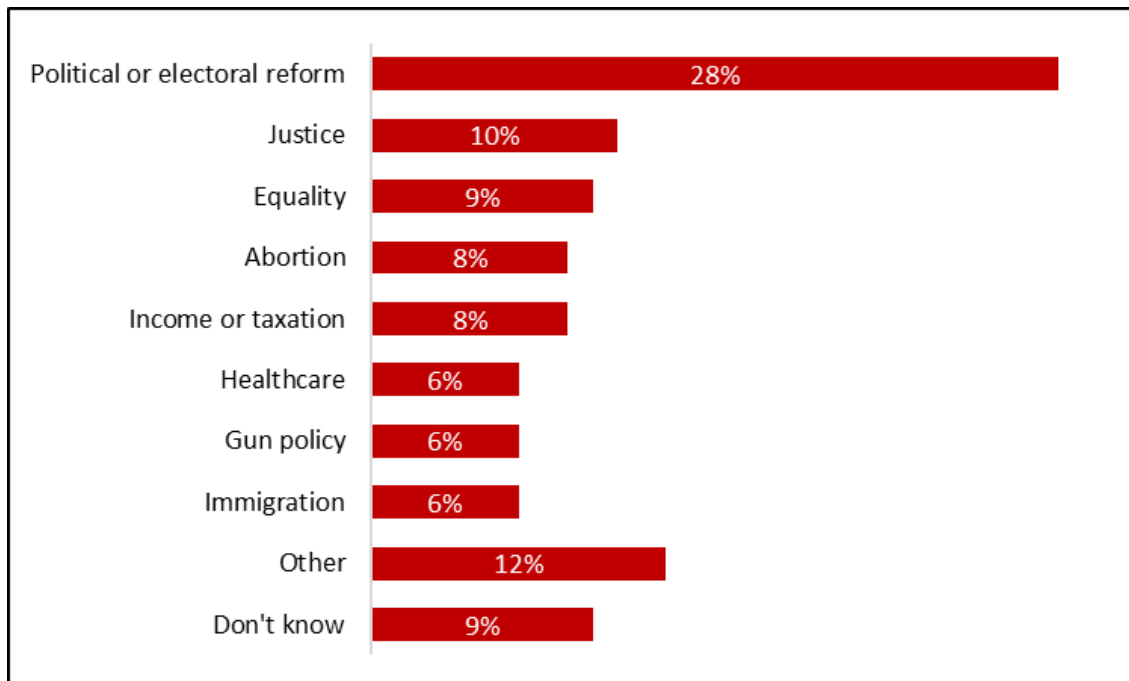


Mood of the Nation: Americans' legislative wish list for the new Congress

February 2, 2023

Political or electoral reform tops Americans' legislative wish list



Question: "Imagine that you have a magic wand that could enact any new law that you want... If you could use that magic wand to make any law, what would it be?"

Source: APM Research Lab analysis of McCourtney Institute's Mood of the Nation Poll, Nov. 14-18, 2022. N = 518 U.S. adults age 18 or older; the overall margin of error is ± 5.2 percentage points.

Summary and key findings

The McCourtney Institute for Democracy's latest Mood of the Nation Poll, conducted with 1,000 American adults November 14 through 18, 2022, included an open-ended question aimed at better understanding Americans' legislative priorities. Five hundred respondents were asked what law they would choose if they had a magic wand that could immediately enact any law they wanted. They answered in their own words and the most common phrases reflect citizens' wish list.

Most common phrases in describing a law they would enact if they had a magic wand



Question: "Now, imagine that you have a magic wand that could enact any new law that you want. This would become the law of the United States automatically as soon as the new Congress meets in January. If you could use that magic wand to make any law, what would it be?"

Source: McCourtney Institute's Mood of the Nation Poll, Nov. 14-18, 2022. N = 518 U.S. adults age 18 or older.

APM Research Lab analysts grouped respondents' answers into broad categories for this report. The findings show the legislative priorities of Americans in general. But as we dug further into the demographic analysis of the results, it was clear they also reveal the most pressing concerns facing certain communities.

What are Americans' legislative priorities?

- More than one-quarter of Americans (28%) said they would enact a law pertaining to some type of political or electoral reform.
 - Although the categories overlap somewhat, mentions of political reform were more common than election reform (18.5% compared to 9.5%).
- The next most popular types of responses were laws related to justice and the justice system (9.5%), equal rights (8.5%), abortion (7.9%), and income and taxation (7.7%).
- Smaller subsets of Americans prioritized laws related to healthcare (6.1%), gun policy (5.6%) and immigration (5.5%).
- Roughly one in ten Americans provided answers that did not logically group with many other answers, so they were lumped into an “other” category (12%), and a similar proportion said they did not know what law they would enact (9.2%).

What do Americans mean by political or electoral reform?

- The most common type of political or electoral reform mentioned by respondents had to do with instituting term limits for elected officials, mentioned by about one in four, followed by recommendations of broad political systems changes (such as moving to a legislature based on proportional legislation), election finance reform (mainly overturning the Supreme Court’s Citizen’s United decision), and tightening voting laws.

Which groups were most inclined to suggest a law pertaining to political or electoral reform?

- Twice as many men than women said they would enact a law related to political or electoral reform (38% compared to 19%).
- Thirty-one percent of white Americans said they would enact a law related to political or electoral reform, as compared to 22% of Latino Americans and 15% of Black Americans.
- Of Americans with a high school degree or less, 23% said they would enact a law related to political or electoral reform, as compared to 28% of those with some college and 35% of those with a college degree or more.
- Only 16% of Americans with a household income of less than \$30k said they would enact a law related to political or electoral reform. That proportion increases to 24%

among Americans with a household income between \$30k and \$59.9k, 28% among those with a household income between \$60k and \$99.9k and, significantly, 39% among those with a household income over \$100k.

- Republicans are somewhat more likely to prioritize political or electoral reform (34%) than Democrats (24%) or political independents (27%).

Which groups were most inclined to suggest other laws?

Abortion

Although men were twice as likely as women to suggest political or electoral reform, women were significantly more likely to suggest a law pertaining to abortion.

- Fourteen percent of women said, if given the chance, they would enact a law pertaining to abortion, as compared to just 2% of men.
- Of those who said they would enact an abortion law, 80% said they would legalize abortion access on a national level, while 20% said they would outlaw abortion in any circumstance.
 - The men who gave an abortion answer all were in favor of legalizing abortion.
- Only 4% of those with a household income less than \$30k said they would enact an abortion law, compared to 14% of those making \$100k or more who said they would enact an abortion law.

Equality

- One in five Black Americans (20%) said they would enact a law securing equal rights for marginalized groups, compared to only 11% of Latino Americans and 7% of white Americans.
- Democrats (15%) were far more likely than either political independents (5%) or Republicans (2%) to say they would enact a law regarding equal rights.

Healthcare

Americans with a lower household income were more likely to say they would enact a law regarding healthcare access than those with a higher household income.

- Twelve percent of Americans with an annual family income less than \$30,000 prioritized a law regarding healthcare access, while that proportion dropped to 7% for those with an income between \$30,000 and \$59,999, 4% for those with a household income between \$60,000 and \$99,999, and 2% for those with a household income over \$100,000.

Immigration

One in 10 Republicans said they would enact a law regarding immigration, while only 4% of political independents and 2% of Democrats said the same.

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.¹

To assess Americans’ legislative priorities, 518 survey respondents were asked to respond to the following question:

(Open ended): Now, imagine that you have a magic wand that could enact any new law that you want. This would become the law of the United States automatically as soon as the new Congress meets in January. If you could use that magic wand to make any law, what would it be?

For purposes of analysis answers were coded into broad categories. Most respondents gave short answers pertaining to one law or policy area. Among the small minority who listed two or more laws we coded only the first mention.

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, annual family income (four groups), 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 is detailed in the methodology report that accompanies this brief.

¹ <https://www.apmresearchlab.org/mood-of-the-nation-poll-motn> .

One-quarter of Americans are eager for political or electoral reform

Based on the latest Mood of the Nation poll results, many Americans are ready to reform our political processes and systems. When asked what law they would enact if they had a magic wand that would automatically make put that law into effect when the new Congress first met in January, 28% of Americans answered with a political or election reform. This was by far the most frequently given type of response.

We combined political- and election-reform answers because both deal with changing the mechanisms by which our government functions. There was also explicit overlap between the two in some instances when it came to regulating political fundraising. If you split them into two distinct categories, political reform remains the most frequent answer with nearly one in five Americans (18.5%) giving an answer in that category, while one in ten (9.5%) suggest election reform.

Most other responses fell into one of seven categories: laws pertaining to justice (9.5%), equal rights (8.5%), abortion (7.9%), income and taxation (7.7%); healthcare (6.1%), gun policy (5.6%) and immigration (5.5%).

Roughly nine percent of poll respondents said they did not know what law they would enact, and 12% of poll respondents gave an answer that could not be grouped with many others.

What Americans mean by political and election reform

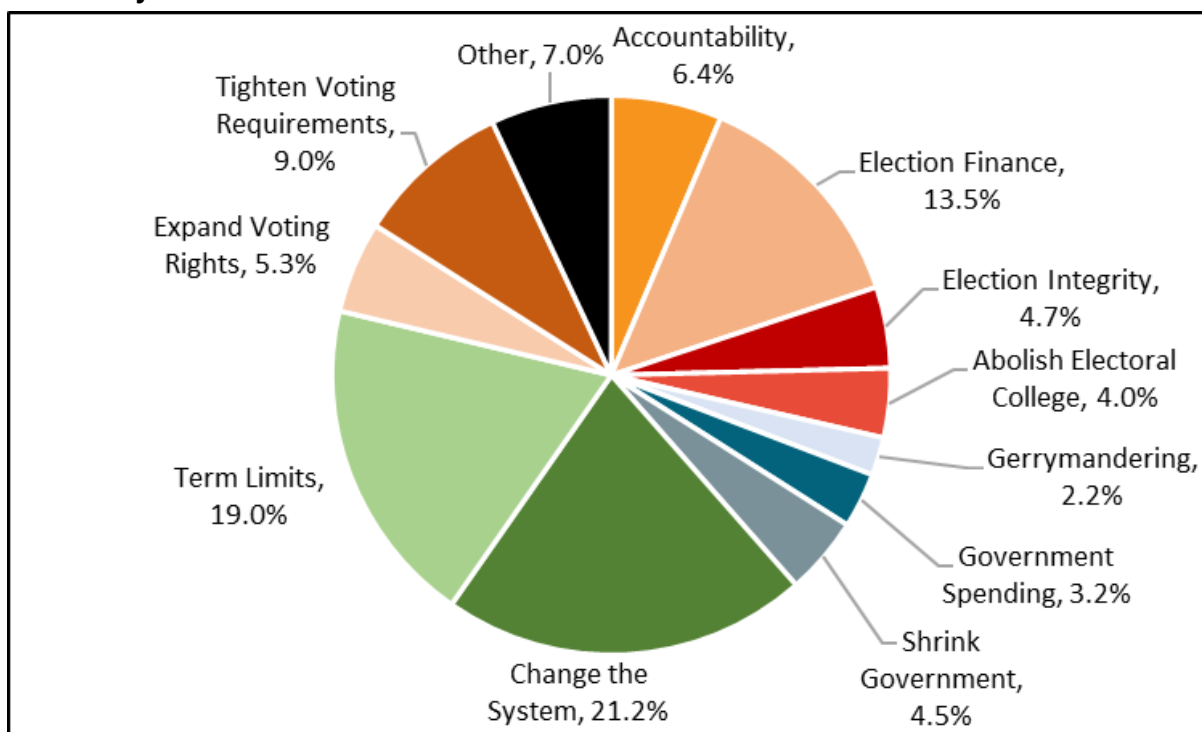
The category “political and election reform” includes clusters of several more specific suggestions. Among those who gave answers included in the broader category, overhauling our political system was the most frequent suggestion for political reform, given by just over 21% of those respondents who fell in the political- and election-reform category.

The most common thread within this type of answer was dissatisfaction with our current two-party system. In some cases, this was expressed as eliminating political labels or abolishing the party system. For example, one 44-year-old white woman from Missouri, an Independent, said she wished “To do away with the political labels that currently define our government representatives, specifically the parties of ‘Democrat’ and ‘Republican.’” A 72-year-old white

woman from Wisconsin, also an Independent, wishes we would “Have one [political] party so we can get things done and not be arguing all the time about who is better.”

Other respondents suggested moving to a system of proportional representation or a parliamentary democracy. A 66-year-old white man from North Dakota, an Independent, said “Change to Parliamentary Democracy and new constitution.” “Make political representation proportional,” suggested a 35-year-old Black man from Pennsylvania, a Democrat. While a 36-year-old white man from Utah, an Independent, specified that he “would have the Senate be a single nation-wide constituency using PR [proportional representation] with the 100 seats, while the House would remain as it is.”

Among those who mentioned political or electoral reforms (N=139), instituting term limits, overhauling the political system, and reforming election finance are the most commonly wished-for reforms

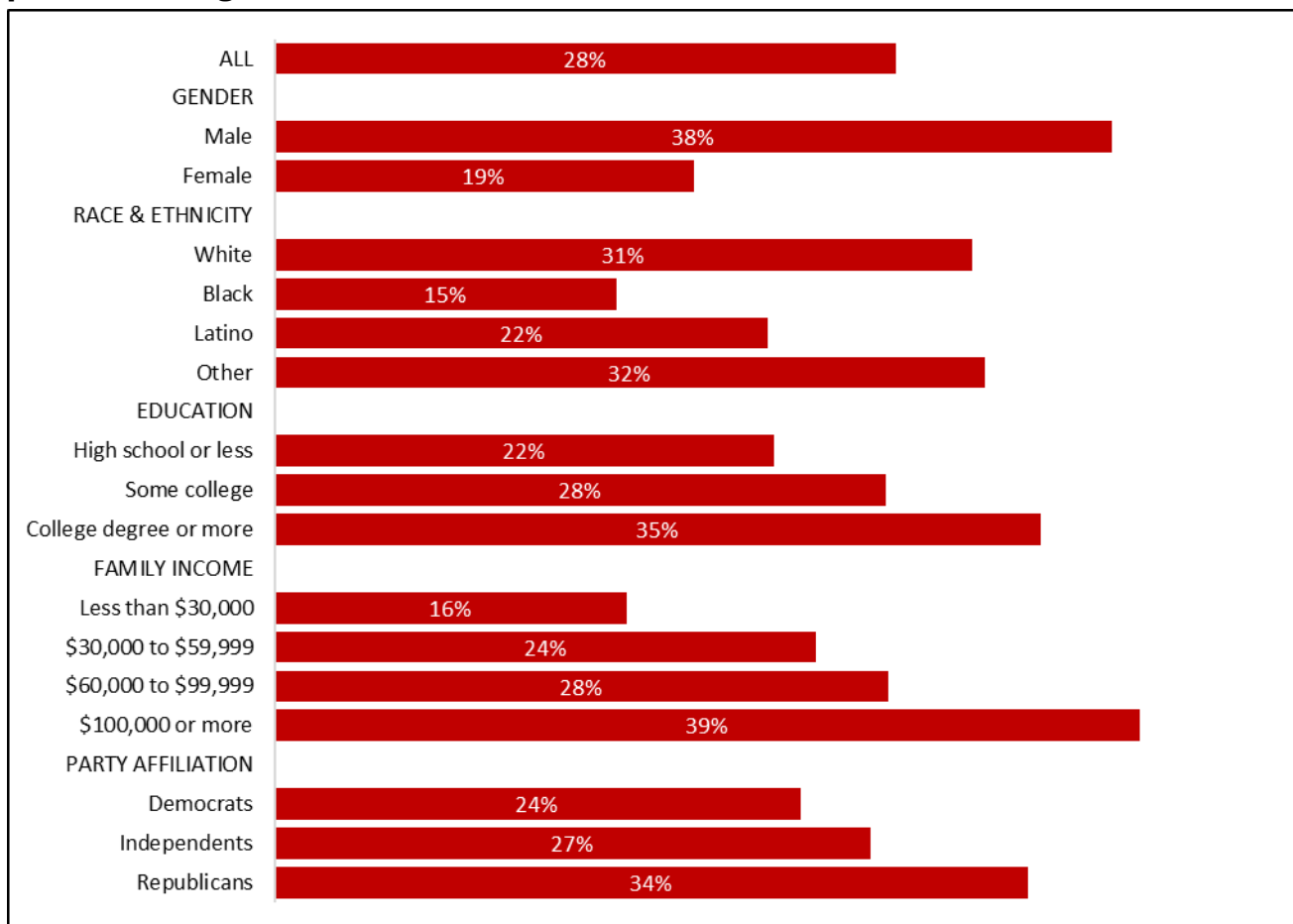


Source: APM Research Lab analysis of McCourtney Institute’s Mood of the Nation Poll, Nov. 14-18, 2022. N = 139 U.S. adults age 18 or older who answered that political or electoral reform was their top legislative priority; the overall margin of error is ± 6.4 percentage points.

Instituting term limits on political office emerged as the next most frequent type of political reform that Americans had in mind, mentioned by nearly one in four. Some respondents just said they would institute term limits, while others specified that it was for members of Congress. Several people would enact a law that would institute term limits for Supreme Court Justices.

Changing the laws around election finance was the third most popular type of suggestion related to political and election reform. Frequently, respondents specifically named the 2010 Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United v. FEC* as a target of their proposed legislation.

Political and election reform by group: gender, race, household income, education and political leaning



Source: APM Research Lab analysis of McCourtney Institute's Mood of the Nation Poll, Nov. 14-18, 2022. N = 518 U.S. adults age 18 or older; the overall margin of error is ± 5.2 percentage points, larger among sub-groups.

Americans who would enact a law regarding political and election reform are by and large significantly more likely to identify as male, white and Republican, to have higher levels of educational attainment and higher family income. The largest differences are seen across gender, race and family income.

Thirty-eight percent of men say they would enact a law regarding political or election reform, while half that proportion of women, 19%, say the same. Many of the other answer categories show relatively equivalent frequencies of response between men and women. However, far more women (14%) than men (2%) said they would enact a law on abortion access.

Thirty-one percent of white respondents gave an answer that fell under the political or election reform category, compared to only 15% of Black respondents and 22% of Latino respondents. Black respondents, however, were much more likely to say they would enact a law guaranteeing equal rights (20%), compared to just seven percent of white respondents and 11% of Latino respondents.

Respondents with a household income of over \$100,000 were most likely to respond with an answer falling under the political- and election-reform category, at 39%, than those with a household income under \$30,00, at 16%, and between \$30,000 and \$60,000, at 24%.

Political leaning and education level, as well as age group, also registered differences when it came to who prioritized legislation for political and electoral reform, although they do not appear quite as strong as the three mentioned above.

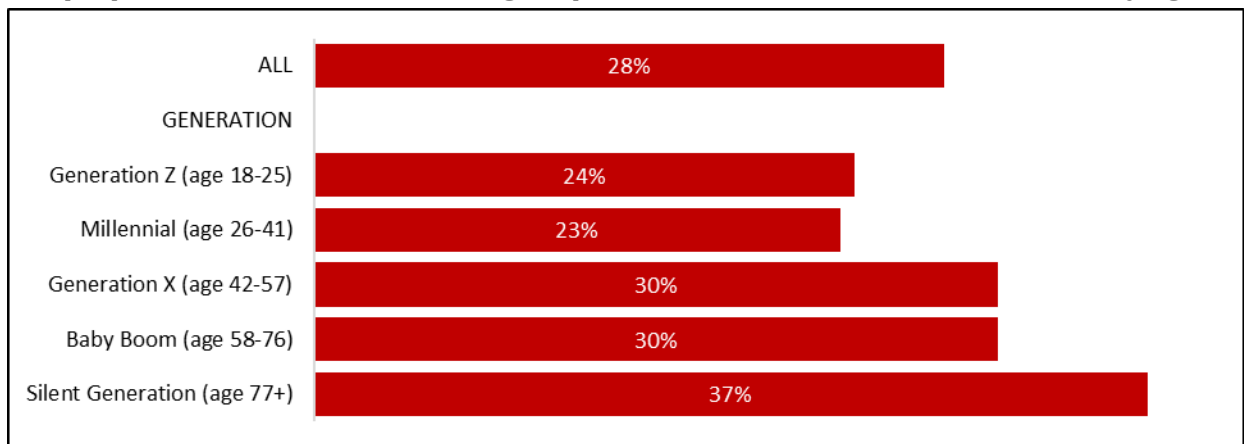
A higher proportion of respondents with a college degree or more education prioritized legislation to achieve political or electoral reform than was the case among those with a high school degree or less or those with some college.

A higher proportion of Republicans than Democrats proposed political- or economic-reform legislation (34% compared to 24%).

Political and election reform by generation

Finally, it appears that older generations are significantly more likely than younger generations to suggest political or electoral reform as a legislative priority. Roughly 24% each of Generation Z and Millennials desired political or electoral reform. This increased to roughly 30% each for both Gen X and Baby Boomers, and 37% among the Silent Generation.

The proportion of Americans wishing for political or electoral reform increases by age



Source: APM Research Lab analysis of McCourtney Institute's Mood of the Nation Poll, Nov. 14-18, 2022. N = 518 U.S. adults age 18 or older; the overall margin of error is ± 5.2 percentage points, larger among sub-groups.

The generational results are noteworthy given the results on faith in democracy from this same Mood of the Nation Poll, which showed greater skepticism in democracy among Generation Z and Millennials and greater faith in democracy as the generations progressed.²

For example, just over half of Generation Z and 67% of Millennials agreed that “democracy is best in all circumstances,” as compared to 98% of the Silent Generation. Nearly one in five of those in Generation Z and the Millennial generation, however, believe that “dictatorship could be good in certain circumstances,” an opinion shared by only three percent of the Silent Generation.

Further, there appears to be some parallels between the generational trends in the faith in democracy and types of political and electoral reforms suggested by each generation. A The specific types of reform wished-for by those in the Silent Generation tend to be narrower, focused primarily on ensuring our current systems function well. Several Silent Generation respondents suggest term limits, but others insist on election integrity, especially with voting and vote counting only occurring on election day.

Among the smaller proportion of Generation Z and Millennials wishing for political or electoral reform, the specific suggestions were often wider in imaginative scope. For example, several respondents from these generations suggested that they would enact a law that would mean

² <https://www.apmresearchlab.org/motn/poll-americans-belief-in-democracy>

the U.S. Congress [can we specifically say the Senate here? the house districts are much closer to similar sized populations] would be elected by proportional representation.

Other younger respondents said that elections should be exclusively financed by the public. One said that “all elected officials would be paid no more than minimum wage and lobbying would be outlawed.” Finally, one Millennial respondent said they would pass a law that “Congress would be ineligible for reelection if the budget isn’t balanced by reducing spending.”

Where Americans stand on other legislative priorities

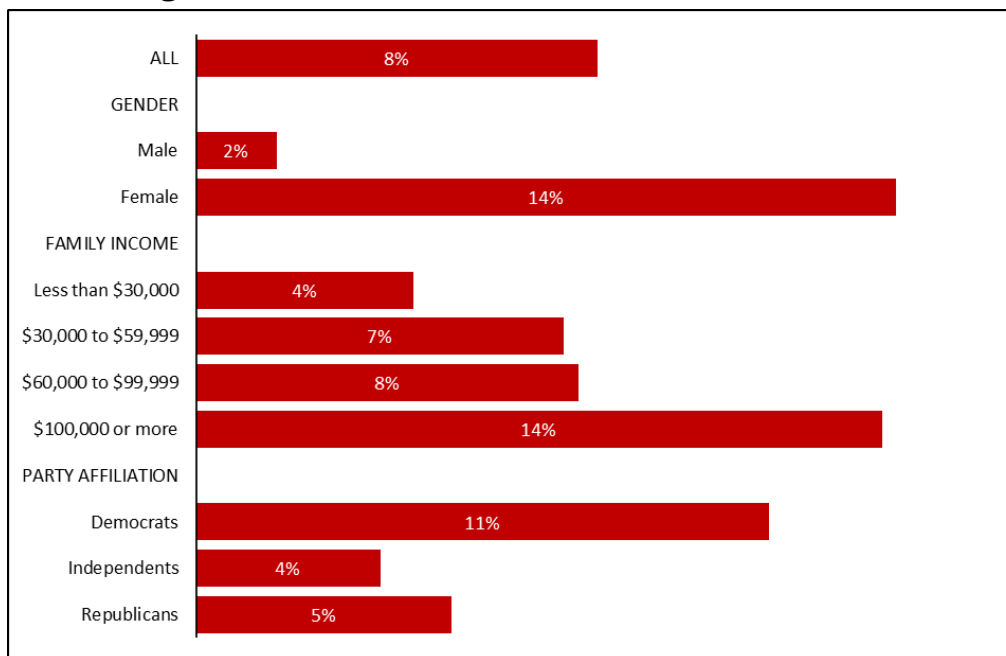
Not all the other categories had statistically significant differences when comparing the answer frequencies by demographic features, but several answer categories did have noteworthy differences.

Abortion

Eight percent of Americans cited abortion as the focus of their legislative priorities. The vast majority of Americans who would enact an abortion law, four in five, said they would legalize abortion access on a national level, while one in five said they would outlaw abortion in any circumstance.

Women were significantly more likely than men to say they would enact a law related to abortion (14% compared to 2%). Interestingly, all the men who gave an abortion answer were in favor of legalizing abortion.

More than one in 10 women, Democrats or those with a higher family income wish for abortion legislation



Source: APM Research Lab analysis of McCourtney Institute's Mood of the Nation Poll, Nov. 14-18, 2022. N = 518 U.S. adults age 18 or older; the overall margin of error is ± 5.2 percentage points, larger among sub-groups.

At least seven respondents mentioned their desire to “codify Roe v. Wade.” Some respondents emphasized bodily autonomy at the root of their legal safeguarding of abortion access. Other respondents thought abortion should be legally accessible in all cases.

One 37-year-old woman from Washington, a Democrat, tied abortion to healthcare more broadly saying the law she would enact would provide “free health care for all (abortion is health care).” And a 28-year-old woman from Kansas, a Democrat, said that abortion should not just be legal, it should be accessible: “very accessible/encouraged birth control/ abortion/ reproductive care.”

Those who wanted to institute a nationwide ban on abortions mostly left it at that. But a 42-year-old woman from Texas, a Democrat, said she “would overturn Roe v. Wade and outlaw certain guns.” And another respondent emphasized “no abortions of any kind, ever, that we value ALL forms of life. That we never start to devalue life in infants, elderly, different people.”

There were also significant differences in frequency of response based on household income. As the level of family income increases, a somewhat higher proportion of Americans point to abortion policy as their law of choice.

Only 4% of those with a family income less than \$30,000 said they would enact an abortion law, while 7% and 8%, respectively, of those making between \$30,00 and \$59,999 and those making between \$60,000 and \$99,999 said the same. However, for those making \$100,000 or more, the frequency of response is double or nearly double the two middle income categories. Fourteen percent of those making \$100,000 or more said they would enact an abortion law.

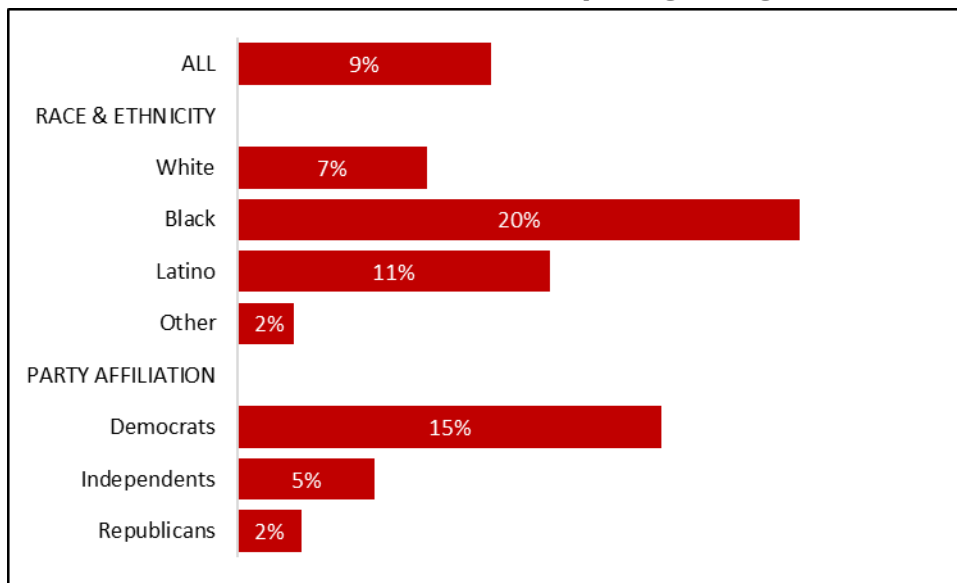
Equality

Nearly 9% of Americans prioritized enacting legislation that would secure equal rights for marginalized groups. But there are significant differences among frequency of response when it comes to race and ethnicity, and political leaning.

One in five Black Americans said they would enact a law regarding equal rights, and just over one in 10 Latino Americans would do the same. Only 7% of white Americans, however, prioritized legislation pertaining to equal rights.

The high frequency of response among Black Americans, more than double the overall rate, suggests how much of an urgent priority equal rights are among that community.

One in five Black Americans wishes for equal rights legislation



Source: APM Research Lab analysis of McCourtney Institute's Mood of the Nation Poll, Nov. 14-18, 2022. N = 518 U.S. adults age 18 or older; the overall margin of error is ± 5.2 percentage points, larger among sub-groups.

There is also a significant political difference when it comes to those suggesting a law regarding equal rights. Democrats (15%) were far more likely than either political independents (5%) or Republicans (2%) to say they would enact equal rights legislation. This difference between political leanings may also be influenced by race, since a higher proportion Republicans identify as white.

Many respondents said they would enact a law securing “equal rights for all.” Others sought to advance equal rights specifically as it came to racism, or gender equity, or marriage equality and other LGBTQ rights. One respondent specifically cited enacting the Equal Rights Amendment. Two people specifically mentioned financial inequality, and the desire for “equal income throughout the country.”

Healthcare

Comparatively speaking, healthcare legislation was among the less frequently cited categories, only 6% of Americans gave an answer related to healthcare. But there is a significant difference in frequency of response when analyzed by household income: those with a lower household income were more likely to say they would enact a law regarding healthcare access than those with a higher household income.

Twelve percent of Americans with an annual family income less than \$30,000, double the overall rate, prioritized healthcare access. That proportion drops to 7% for those with a family income between \$30,000 and \$59,999, 4% for those with a family income between \$60,000 and \$99,999, and 2% for those with a family income over \$100,000.

Among those with a household income less than \$30,000 who would enact healthcare-related legislation, one said they would make it so “that we will never be forced to pay a mandate for health insurance again.” But all others advocated for some form of universal healthcare, such as: “Medicare for all!”, “that all citizens have health insurance regardless of income”, and “comprehensive, single payer healthcare for everyone.”

Immigration

Only 6% of Americans listed some type of immigration legislation as their top priority, placing it in the range of categories with the lowest frequency of response. One in 10 Republicans, however provided an answer in this category, while only 4% of political independents and 2% of Democrats did the same.

While only three people gave an answer supportive of immigrants—such as ending deportations, no longer requiring immigration visas and making it easier for immigrants to work—all others, across party leanings, would place restrictions on immigration. These ranged from increasing border security, to closing the borders, to removing all undocumented immigrants, to ending birthright citizenship. One respondent would go further: “every generation after 1898 that came to the United State from a different country will have to go back to their ancestral country.”

Other

Twelve percent of Americans gave an answer that fell into an “other” category. These are all answers that, while perhaps several people suggested them, there were not enough answers to make it useful or statistically significant to have on their own. They cover a wide range of issues.

Among the topics included in answers that fall under the “other” category: banning certain political ideologies or movements, making gay marriage illegal and removing transgender rights, strengthening efforts to combat climate change, increasing separation of church and state, decreasing separation of church and state, getting rid of “green veggies,” world peace, and others.

The only significant difference among those whose answer falls into the “other” category is regarding household income. One in five Americans with an annual family income of less than \$30,000 provided an answer that was labeled “other,” Much higher than other income categories..

Of those answers from people making under \$30,000, one woman wanted to enact a law directing as many resources as needed to “mitigate the effects of climate change,” while another wanted free, universal education through college or university. Several people wanted to prevent Democrats from

holding office, one wanted to get rid of the MAGA movement. Several people wanted world peace, and several others wanted to ban gay marriage and transgender care and rights.

Two answers really stood out. One young woman said, “I wouldn’t [enact a law via magic wand] it would be an abuse of power.” And one young man said, “bring my mom back.”

Appendix: Examples of answers given by those whose legislative wish would be to enact laws regarding political or electoral reform

Comment	Age	Sex	Race & ethnicity	Education	Household income	State	Political party
Limit government overreach at all levels, creating stricter checks and balance. Single issue bills that have been addressed through ballot measures by citizens to remove bloated, convoluted nonsense and gridlock	52	F	white	High school or less	Less than \$30,000	OH	Ind.
Term limits	46	F	white	College degree or more	\$100,000 or more	VA	Rep.
Voter ID laws	60	F	white	Some college	\$100,000 or more	CA	Rep.
I would wave the wand and ban politicians from gerrymandering. Voters should pick their representatives, not the other way around.	43	M	Two or more	College degree or more	NA	WA	Dem.
TERM LIMITS FOR THOSE SERVING IN CONGRESS.	83	F	Other	Some college	NA	CA	Ind.
I would make a law to where police officers and city, State, Govt officials can be held accountable for their actions and can be removed easily.	41	M	white	High school or less	Less than \$30,000	KY	Dem.
Free and fair election	28	F	white	College degree or more	Less than \$30,000	TX	Ind.
Limit the amount of money people can donate to a candidate.	43	F	Hispanic	Some college	\$60,000 to \$99,999	IL	Dem.
Outlaw political parties	74	M	white	Some college	\$30,000 to \$59,999	WA	Ind.
Paper ballots and vote on election day with id	60	M	white	High school or less	\$100,000 or more	MO	Ind.
That senators and house representatives can serve for no more than two terms	28	F	white	College degree or more	\$100,000 or more	OH	Ind.
line-item veto	60	M	white	Some college	NA	NY	Rep.

To do away with the political labels that currently define our government representatives, specifically the parties of "Democrat" and "Republican". These labels have become destructive and no longer represent anything but negative tribal-type b	44	F	white	Some college	\$60,000 to \$99,999	MO	Ind.
Term limits for all government held offices	56	M	white	High school or less	\$60,000 to \$99,999	OR	Rep.
It wouldn't be a law, it would be a set of institutions. I would have the Senate be a single nation-wide constituency using PR with the 100 seats, while the House would remain as it is.	36	M	white	College degree or more	\$60,000 to \$99,999	UT	Ind.
Term limits!	76	M	Other	College degree or more	Less than \$30,000	SC	Rep.
Term and benefits limits for House and Senate.	54	F	Black	College degree or more	\$30,000 to \$59,999	TN	Rep.
Reduce the size of a Congressional District.	48	M	white	High school or less	\$30,000 to \$59,999	LA	Rep.
Direct voting in federal elections ie end the electoral college	64	M	white	College degree or more	\$60,000 to \$99,999	FL	Ind.
Abolish electoral college. One vote = one vote. Majority wins. Simple	42	F	Hispanic	High school or less	Less than \$30,000	FL	Dem.
I would like a law that bans any future U.S. President from trying to overturn our electoral process like Donald Trump attempted to do.	60	F	Asian	College degree or more	\$30,000 to \$59,999	NY	Dem.
If I have a magic wand I will make the salary of all politicians minimum wage and make it illegal for them to invest in the stock market.	45	M	Asian	College degree or more	\$100,000 or more	NJ	Other

Appendix: Examples of answers given by those whose legislative wish was to enact a law for something other than political or electoral reform

Comment	Age	Sex	Race & ethnicity	Education	Household income	State	Political affiliation
gun control	36	F	white	College degree or more	\$60,000 to \$99,999	CA	Dem.
socialized medicine	60	F	Asian	Some college	\$30,000 to \$59,999	TX	Dem.
Any government official who lies or cheats is immediately known and punished.	72	F	white	High school or less	Less than \$30,000	VA	Rep.
healthcare for all	59	M	white	High school or less	\$30,000 to \$59,999	FL	Dem.
Racial equality for black and brown people to have a fair and equal chance at obtaining jobs, making the same pay as non blacks, to have the opportunity to pay lower interest rates in consumer goods	61	F	Black	College degree or more	\$30,000 to \$59,999	SC	Dem.
Do away with income tax	56	M	white	Some college	\$100,000 or more	NY	Rep.
There's several laws I want. But waving a magic wand isn't going to enact laws that are fair or equitable. I'd start by codifying Roe, the right to marry (interracial and same sex). I'd also try to figure out a way to impeach Supreme Court just	45	F	Other	Some college	Less than \$30,000	WI	Dem.
that the borders be closed for good and only those who come legally into this country can stay, if they are not a convict.	69	F	white	High school or less	\$30,000 to \$59,999	MD	Rep.
Make people less stupid	24	F	white	College degree or more	\$30,000 to \$59,999	MA	Ind.
Increase minimum wage a lot	50	M	white	High school or less	Less than \$30,000	WV	Dem.
Strict gun laws	44	F	Black	High school or less	Less than \$30,000	NJ	Ind.

No cops	20	M	white	High school or less	NA	UT	Not sure
Helping people	60	M	Hispanic	High school or less	Less than \$30,000	CA	Dem.
Free healthcare for all (including birth control/abortion access).	31	F	white	Some college	\$60,000 to \$99,999	ID	Ind.
A law that would in shrine personal rights.	56	M	white	Some college	\$60,000 to \$99,999	WI	Dem.
To put our tax dollars towards a better pavement material for our roads. We spend way to much tax money to add layers to the roads year after year.	28	F	Hispanic	College degree or more	\$100,000 or more	MI	Ind.
Marshall law	34	F	white	Some college	\$30,000 to \$59,999	TX	Ind.
All people regardless of origin are equal on all grounds, protected from harmful discrimination and are held to the same ethical moral standards as those around them are held to that of the same. No person or demographic shall stand elitist or	24	M	Black	Some college	Less than \$30,000	WI	Dem.
Healthcare would be free for all	49	M	white	High school or less	NA	PA	Dem.
I would legalize abortion.	37	F	Hispanic	Some college	Less than \$30,000	NM	Dem.
Abortion is legal once more.	62	M	Black	Some college	\$60,000 to \$99,999	FL	Ind.
I would create a law of fairness on all sides or punishable by law.	56	F	Black	High school or less	\$30,000 to \$59,999	FL	Dem.
abusers will get arrested for 100 years	21	F	Black	High school or less	\$30,000 to \$59,999	NY	Ind.
No government or higher up can control anybody	24	M	Black	High school or less	Less than \$30,000	NJ	Ind.
A law protecting this country's borders	64	M	white	Some college	\$60,000 to \$99,999	TN	Rep.

Adults that repeatedly have molested young children get life in prison without possibility of being released or executed.	45	M	white	High school or less	Less than \$30,000	TX	Ind.
The gay marriage and transgender is illegal	23	F	white	High school or less	Less than \$30,000	OH	Rep.
The democrats can't cheat or lie and get away with it.	55	F	white	Some college	Less than \$30,000	SD	Rep.
the magic will women and men have the same quality to get a job or something	26	M	Hispanic	High school or less	Less than \$30,000	NY	Dem.
That's a tough one. That our government who stop trying to rewrite our history by erasing it through removal of historically important monuments just because people are offended by it. We would never have gotten to where we are today without wh	39	F	white	Some college	Less than \$30,000	TN	Not sure
All are equal minorities, women, gays, all faiths	77	M	white	High school or less	\$60,000 to \$99,999	CA	Dem.
I would want to have more time in the whole wide world	23	M	Hispanic	High school or less	\$30,000 to \$59,999	NY	Rep.
Medicare for all.	21	M	Hispanic	Some college	\$30,000 to \$59,999	TX	Ind.
Close the borders, start drilling and repeal all of the presidents illegal mandates	65	F	white	College degree or more	\$100,000 or more	CO	Ind.
Every , I mean Every person has to abide by the laws that were put forth for this country. If you are called to testify, 99% of us have to do that.	61	M	white	High school or less	\$30,000 to \$59,999	KY	Dem.

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 <https://www.aapor.org/Standards-Ethics/Transparency-Initiative/>.

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 individuals who completed this 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 education. The frame was constructed by stratified sampling from the full 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) 1-year sample with selection within strata by weighted sampling with replacements (using the person weights on the public use file).

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: <https://www.apmresearchlab.org/surveys>.

Acknowledgments

This report was authored by Benjamin Clary and Craig Helmstetter of the APM Research Lab. The survey questions were designed by the McCourtney Institute, particularly Mood of the Nation Poll Director Eric Plutzer who also provided input on the reporting.

Media contacts

APM Research Lab: Craig Helmstetter (chelmstetter@apmresearchlab.org; 651-290-1219)

McCourtney Institute for Democracy: Jenna Spinelle (jenna@psu.edu; 570-617-5667)