

## Stockton Poll: Minority Voters More Moderate on Issues Than Democrats

*For immediate release:*

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**Galloway, N.J.** - As progressive and moderate factions battle for influence in the Democratic Party, a new Stockton University Poll of New Jersey adults shows that key Democratic constituencies – Black, multiracial and Hispanic voters – are more moderate on a host of issues than the overall party.

Minority voters mostly still supported liberal positions on issues tested in the poll of 933 New Jersey registered voters of all partisan affiliations. But the percentages supporting the more liberal positions were consistently at least a few percentage points lower than the entire Democratic Party and a few points higher for the more moderate positions.

As the party crafts a campaign message for the midterm elections, activists debate whether to appeal to the political middle or to embrace progressive liberal policies. The Stockton Poll tested where minority voters stand ideologically because racial and ethnic minorities, especially Black/African American voters, regularly support Democrats in large numbers. The poll results show those voters land closer to the middle than most other Democrats.

For example:

- 64% of Black and multiracial respondents supported legalizing marijuana for recreational use, compared to 70% of Democrats; 27% of Black and multiracial voters would legalize it for medical use only, while 22% of all Democrats would.
- Both Black/multiracial respondents and Democrats responded the same when asked whether police funding should be decreased (only 11% of both wanted to defund police) and whether the nation should reduce incarceration rates (51% of both).
- 73% percent of Democrats supported making it harder to buy guns, while 65% of Black and multiracial voters did. Only 5% of Democrats would make it easier to buy guns, compared to 14% of Black and multiracial voters.
- Half of Democrats said immigration should be made less difficult, compared to 38% of Black and multiracial voters. Nearly one in four (23%) Black and multiracial voters would make immigration harder, while

- 15% of Democrats would.
- On abortion, 55% of Democrats support having it legal in all cases, compared to 47% of Black and multiracial voters. About one of five (21%) of the Black and multiracial voters saw abortion as morally wrong, compared to 16% of Democrats.
- 78% of Black and multiracial voters agreed that religion played a very important role in their lives, compared to 60% of Democrats.

The poll asked if it would affect their vote in the midterm elections if the U.S. Supreme Court were to overturn the Roe v. Wade decision that legalized abortion. A Democratic majority of 57% said it would, compared to 48% of Black/multiracial voters.

Among Democratic women, 62% said overturning Roe v. Wade would motivate their votes.

“On any given measure, the difference on the ideological scale may be only a few percentage points. But the pattern of more Black and multiracial voters being moderate was consistent on the vast majority of issues polled,” said John Froonjian, director of the Hughes Center. “On no issue did a higher percentage of Black and multiracial voter support the more liberal position.”

Froonjian said the trend is notable because Blacks are seen as among the most reliably Democratic bloc of voters. Analysts credit the Black/African American vote with securing the presidential nomination for Democrat Joe Biden.

The pattern found among Black voters also held when Hispanic voter results were compared with the Democratic Party, with smaller percentages of Hispanics embracing the more liberal positions. One difference: Hardly any Democratic or Black voters said they voted for Donald Trump but nearly one in four Hispanic voters sampled said they voted for the former president.

Not surprisingly, Republicans took a more conservative position than Democrats on every issue, with independents charting a middle course, said Hughes Center Research Associate Alyssa Maurice. The full poll results including Republican and independent voters paint a portrait of blue-state New Jersey as slightly left of center with majorities taking liberal positions on legalized marijuana, gun control and abortion and in the middle on issues of immigration and crime.

The poll results included 336 respondents who identified as Democrats, and 289 respondents who said they are Black/African American or multiracial. It was conducted for the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton University March 1-12.

Comparisons of Democratic Party responses with those of Hispanic/Latino voters found the same trend, with greater percentages of party regulars adopting more liberal positions and more Hispanic voters taking moderate positions on almost every issue. Because the number of Hispanic poll respondents was not as high as the other groups, the Stockton Polling Institute is not releasing exact percentage of Hispanic voter breakdowns.

**Full poll results are posted on the [Stockton Polling Institute website](#).**

## Methodology

The poll of New Jersey registered voters was conducted by the Stockton Polling Institute of the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy March 1-12, 2022. Live interviewers who are mostly Stockton University students called cell phones and landlines from the Stockton University campus. Opinion Services supplemented a portion of the fieldwork. Overall, 83 percent of interviews were conducted on cell phones and 16 percent on landline phones. A total of 933 New Jersey adult residents who were screened as registered voters were interviewed. Both cell and landline samples consisted of voter list and random digit dialing (RDD) sample. Black or African American voters were oversampled in order to collect enough responses to isolate this data, but weighted down proportionately in the full population results. Data are weighted based on U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey data for New Jersey on variables of age, race, ethnicity, education level, sex, and region. The poll's margin of error is +/- 3.2 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence level. MOE is higher for subsets.

## About the Hughes Center

The William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy ([www.stockton.edu/hughescenter](http://www.stockton.edu/hughescenter)) at Stockton University serves as a catalyst for research, analysis and innovative policy solutions on the economic, social and cultural issues facing New Jersey, and promotes the civic life of New Jersey through engagement, education and research. The center is named for the late William J. Hughes, whose distinguished career includes service in the U.S. House of Representatives, Ambassador to Panama and as a Distinguished Visiting Professor at Stockton. The Hughes Center can be found on YouTube, and can be followed on Facebook @StocktonHughesCenter, Twitter @hughescenter and Instagram @ stockton\_hughes\_center

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### Stockton University

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