

FOR RELEASE APRIL 28, 2020

# Two-Thirds of Americans Expect Presidential Election Will Be Disrupted by COVID-19

*Sizable majority favors option of voting by mail*

**FOR MEDIA OR OTHER INQUIRIES:**

Carroll Doherty, Director of Political Research

Jocelyn Kiley, Associate Director, Research

Nida Asheer, Communications Associate

202.419.4372

[www.pewresearch.org](http://www.pewresearch.org)

**RECOMMENDED CITATION**

Pew Research Center, April, 2020, "Two-Thirds of Americans Expect Presidential Election Will Be Disrupted by COVID-19"

## About Pew Research Center

Pew Research Center is a nonpartisan fact tank that informs the public about the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world. It does not take policy positions. It conducts public opinion polling, demographic research, content analysis and other data-driven social science research. The Center studies U.S. politics and policy; journalism and media; internet, science and technology; religion and public life; Hispanic trends; global attitudes and trends; and U.S. social and demographic trends. All of the Center's reports are available at [www.pewresearch.org](http://www.pewresearch.org). Pew Research Center is a subsidiary of The Pew Charitable Trusts, its primary funder.

© Pew Research Center 2020

## How we did this

Pew Research Center conducted this study to understand Americans' views of several election proposals, as well as the potential impact of the coronavirus outbreak on the presidential election this November. For this analysis, we surveyed 4,917 U.S. adults in April 2020. Everyone who took part is a member of Pew Research Center's American Trends Panel (ATP), an online survey panel that is recruited through national, random sampling of residential addresses. This way nearly all U.S. adults have a chance of selection. The survey is weighted to be representative of the U.S. adult population by gender, race, ethnicity, partisan affiliation, education and other categories. Read more about the [ATP's methodology](#).

Here are [the questions used for the report](#), along with responses, and its [methodology](#).

# Two-Thirds of Americans Expect Presidential Election Will Be Disrupted by COVID-19

*Sizable majority favors option of voting by mail*

Over the past two months, the outbreak of [the novel coronavirus](#) has had a devastating impact on nearly all aspects of life in the United States. And now, most Americans expect it will disrupt the presidential election in November.

With just over six months until Election Day, two-thirds of Americans (67%) – including 80% of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents and half of Republicans and Republican leaners – say it is very or somewhat likely that the coronavirus outbreak will significantly disrupt people’s ability to vote in the presidential election.

The national survey by Pew Research Center, conducted April 7 to 12 among 4,917 U.S. adults on the Center’s American Trends Panel, finds broad public support for giving voters the option of voting by mail – and less widespread but growing support for conducting *all* elections by mail.

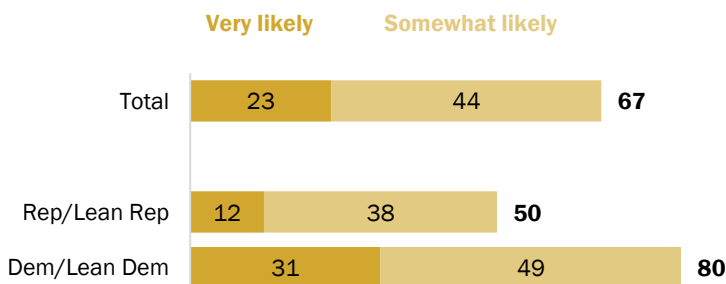
Overall, 70% favor allowing any voter to vote by mail if they want to, including 44% who strongly support this policy. About half of the public (52%) favors conducting *all* elections by mail. The share supporting this proposal has increased 18 percentage points since 2018.

While most Americans expect the coronavirus to affect the presidential election, majorities are at least somewhat confident that it will be conducted fairly and accurately (59%) and that all citizens who want to will be able to vote (63%).

---

## Two-thirds of Americans say it is likely the COVID-19 outbreak will disrupt the presidential election

*% who say it is \_\_\_ that the coronavirus outbreak will significantly disrupt Americans’ ability to vote in the presidential election in November*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 7-12, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

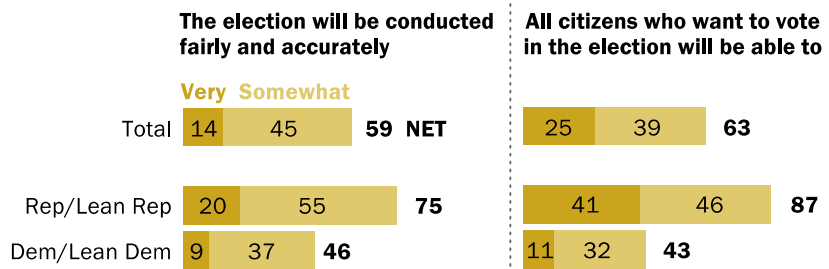
---

But as is the case with most attitudes about the conduct of elections and proposals on voting, partisans are sharply divided in these views. Large majorities of Republicans are confident that the election will be conducted fairly and accurately (75%) and that all citizens who want to vote will be able to do so (87%).

Democrats are considerably less confident: 46% are confident in the fairness and accuracy of the November election, and just 43% are confident all citizens will be able to vote if they want to.

## Democrats far less confident than Republicans that all citizens who want to vote in November will be able to

Thinking about the presidential election in November, % who say they are \_\_\_ confident that ...



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 7-12, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

As states begin weighing options for conducting elections amid the coronavirus outbreak, there is broad support among the public for both making voting by mail widely available and automatic voter registration.

Democrats overwhelmingly favor allowing any voter to vote by mail if they want to (87%), including nearly two-thirds who *strongly* favor this measure (63%). Republicans are split: 49% support allowing universal voting by mail, 50% oppose this.

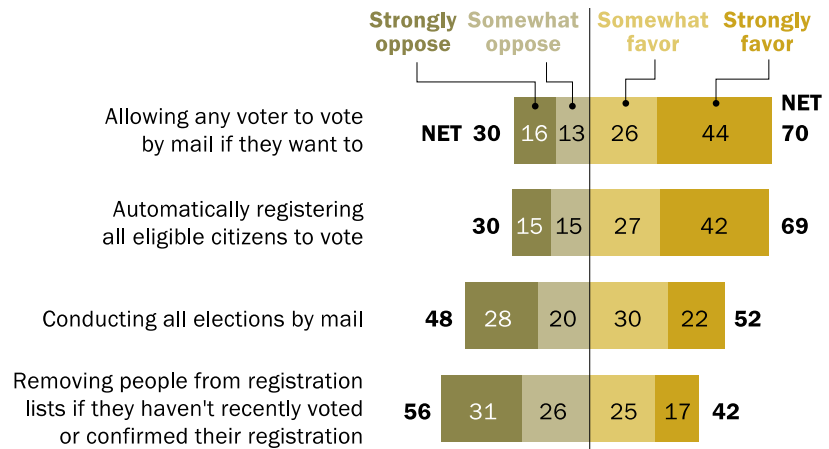
Automatic voter registration is supported by 69% of Americans, including a 42% plurality who *strongly* support the election proposal. Democrats (84%) overwhelmingly favor

automatically registering all eligible citizens to vote, compared with about half of Republicans (53%). Still, among the four election reforms asked about on the survey, the partisan gap is the smallest on automatic voter registration.

Of the four proposals asked about on the survey, there is only one with majority opposition: removing people from registration lists if they haven't recently voted or confirmed their registration. About four-in-ten adults (42%) say they favor removing citizens from registration lists, while 56% oppose this. Republicans are much more favorable toward this policy than are Democrats (63% vs. 24%, respectively).

### Broad support for allowing voting by mail, automatic voting registration; mixed support for other proposals

% who \_\_\_ each of the following



Note: No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 7-12, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Public support for conducting all elections by mail has increased sharply since the fall of 2018 – from 34% then to 52% today – with most of the change coming among Democrats.

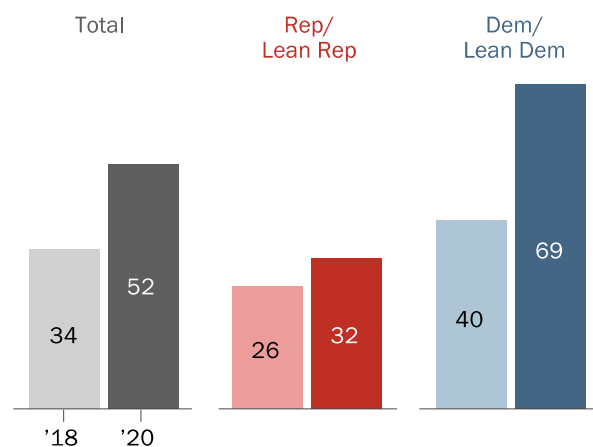
Today, 69% of Democrats strongly or somewhat favor conducting all elections by mail, up from just 40% two years ago. About a third of all Democrats and Democratic leaners (34%), including 44% of liberal Democrats, *strongly* favor this proposal.

At the same time, Republican support for the measure has ticked up only slightly. About a quarter (26%) favored conducting all elections by mail in 2018, compared with roughly a third (32%) who say they support the proposal today.

Currently, there is a 37 percentage point partisan gap in views of conducting all elections by mail. In 2018, partisan differences were far less pronounced (14 points).

### Sharp rise in Democratic support for conducting all elections by mail

% who favor conducting all elections by mail



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 7-12, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

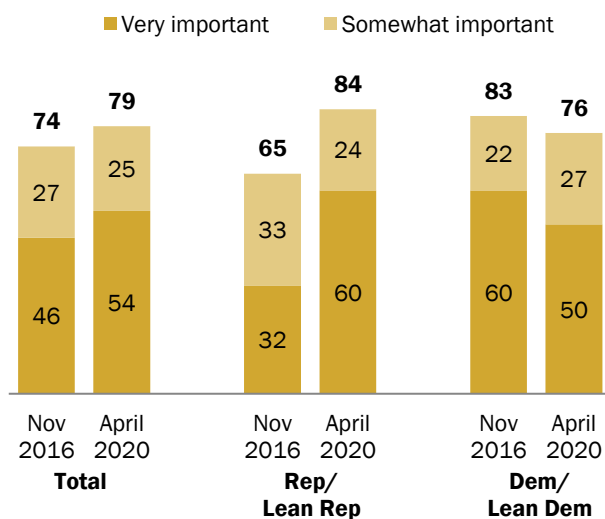
As Americans look ahead to the presidential election this November, nearly eight-in-ten adults (79%) say it is at least somewhat important for the losing candidate to publicly acknowledge the winner of the election as legitimate, including a majority (54%) who say this is very important. This represents a slight increase since November 2016, when 74% said it was at least somewhat important for a losing candidate to publicly concede.

The increase has been driven by Republicans, who are 19 percentage points more likely to say that a losing candidate publicly acknowledging the winner as legitimate is somewhat or very important than they were four years ago. The proportion of Republicans who say this is *very* important has nearly doubled, from 32% to 60%.

Among Democrats, slightly fewer now say that it is somewhat or very important for a losing candidate to publicly concede than said this prior to the 2016 election. However, about three-quarters of Democrats (76%) say this is important, including half who say it is very important.

### Most Americans think it is important for losing candidate to publicly concede

% who say it is \_\_\_\_ for the losing candidate in the presidential election to publicly acknowledge the winner as legitimate



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 7-12, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



## Most favor vote-by-mail access, automatic voter registration

The share of Americans who favor conducting all elections by mail has risen 18 percentage points from 34% in the fall of 2018 to 52% today. Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents account for most of this overall increase.

Just prior to the 2018 midterm elections, four-in-ten Democrats said they favored conducting all elections by mail. Today, nearly seven-in-ten Democrats (69%) say this, including 34% who *strongly* favor vote-by-mail elections.

Among Republicans and Republican leaners, rise in support is much more modest: About a third of Republicans (32%) now say all elections should be conducted by mail, up 6 points from two years ago.

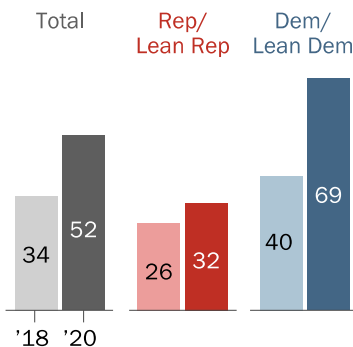
Support for removing people from registration lists if they have not recently voted or confirmed their registration is slightly higher than it was in 2018 – 42% now say this, up from 37%. This increase is attributable to a 10 percentage point rise among Republicans over the past two years, from 53% in 2018 to 63% today. Just about a quarter of Democrats (24%) continue to say they favor this proposal.

Public support for another election proposal – automatic voter registration for all eligible citizens – has also risen slightly since 2018: 65% said they favored the policy two years ago, 69% do so

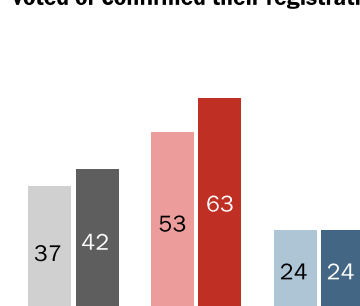
### Support for conducting all elections by mail grows, especially among Democrats

% who strongly or somewhat favor ...

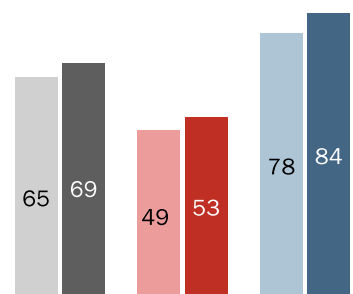
#### Conducting all elections by mail



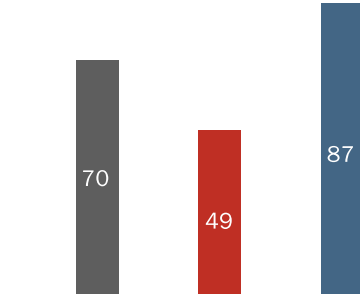
#### Removing people from registration lists if they haven't voted or confirmed their registration



#### Automatically registering all eligible citizens to vote



#### Allowing any voter to vote by mail if they want to



Note: Question about allowing any voter to vote by mail if they want to not asked in 2018. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 7-12, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

today. Democrats remain significantly more likely to support this policy than Republicans (84% vs. 53%).

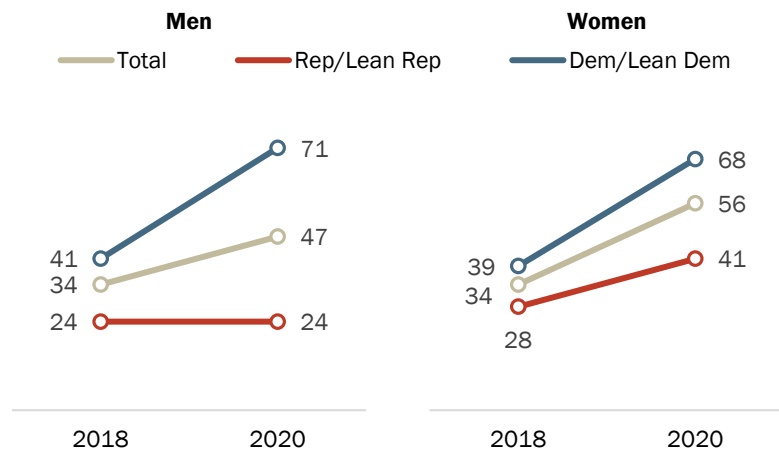
Support for conducting all elections by mail has risen among several groups – but not Republican men. Two years ago, similar shares of men and women in each party expressed support for vote-by-mail elections. Today, there is now a gender gap in views within the GOP.

In 2018, roughly a quarter of Republican men (24%) and GOP women (28%) said they favored conducting all elections by mail. There has been no change in support for the proposal among Republican men over the last two years, but support has risen by 13 percentage points among Republican women – from 28% then to 41% today.

Among both Democratic men and women, support for the proposal has risen by roughly 30 points over this period. Today, about seven-in-ten say they strongly or somewhat favor conducting all elections by mail today, up from about four-in-ten in 2018.

### Support for conducting vote-by-mail elections rises among most groups – but not Republican men

*% who strongly or somewhat favor conducting all elections by mail*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 7-12, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

## Broad support for vote-by-mail option, especially from Democratic-leaning groups

While the shares of Americans who support conducting all elections by mail has increased, there is even greater support for “allowing any voter to vote by mail if they want to.” Today, 70% of adults say they favor this, while just 30% oppose it.

There are some demographic differences in the magnitude of support for access to voting by mail. Black and Hispanic adults (79% in each group) are more supportive of the proposal than white adults (66%). Younger adults are also more supportive of this than older adults – though majorities in each age group favor allowing any voter to vote by mail if they want to.

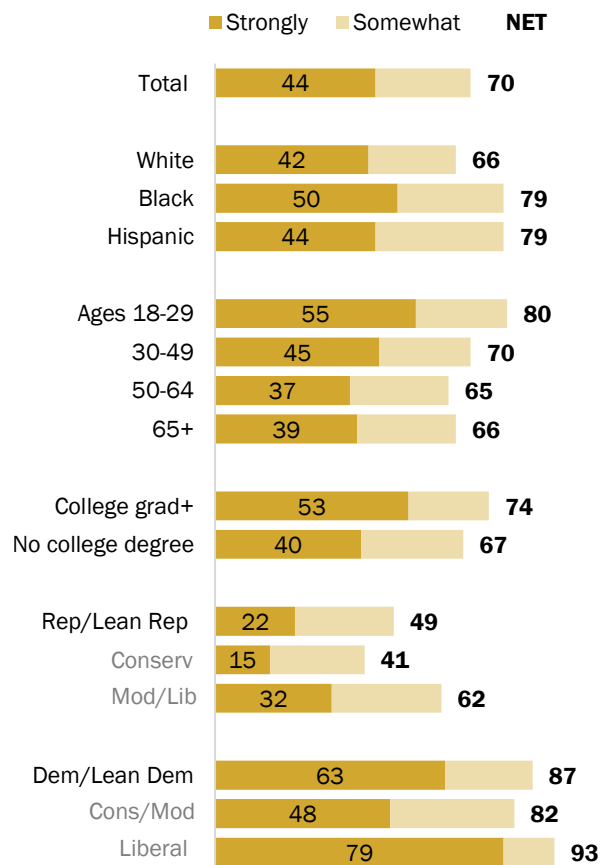
Nearly three-quarters (74%) of those with a college degree or more education support expanding access to voting by mail, including 53% who say they *strongly* favor the proposal. A somewhat smaller share of those with no college degree (67%) also favor allowing any voter to cast their ballot by mail.

But these demographic divides are dwarfed by the partisan gap in attitudes about voting by mail. Nearly nine-in-ten Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents (87%) support allowing any voter to vote by mail if they want to, including 63% who *strongly* support the proposal.

Republicans and Republican leaners are divided: 49% say they favor allowing any voter to vote by mail if they want to, while 50% oppose the proposal. Conservative Republicans are far less

### Widespread support for allowing any voter to vote by mail if they want to

% who favor allowing any voter to vote by mail if they want to



Note: Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 7-12, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

supportive of a vote-by-mail option than their moderate and liberal counterparts (41% vs. 62%, respectively).

### Most Republicans in states where many vote by mail favor expanding it

Adults who live in states where relatively large shares vote by mail are more supportive of expanding access to this method of voting than those who live in states with lower rates of voting by mail – a dynamic that is driven in large part by differences among Republicans.

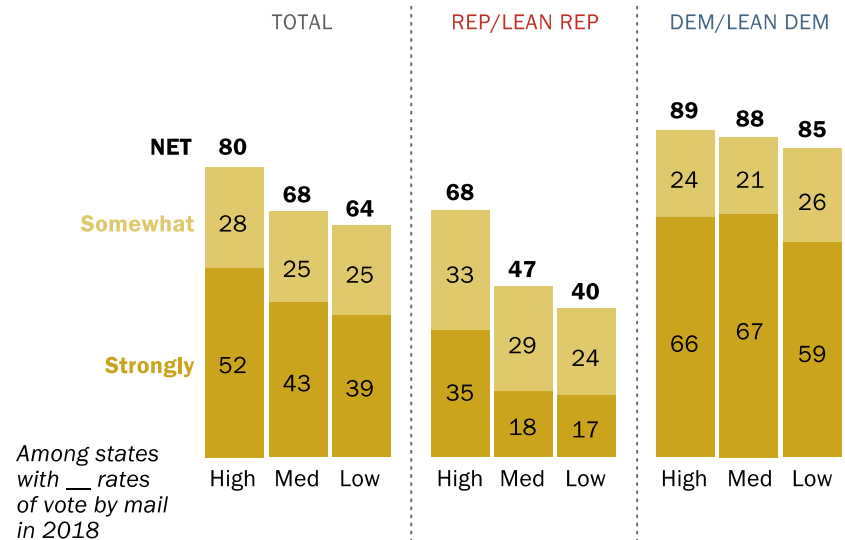
For example, about two-thirds (68%) of Republicans who live in states where about a third or more of voters cast their

ballots by mail say they favor allowing any voter to cast their ballot by mail if they want to. This compares with roughly four-in-ten of those who live in states with low rates of voting by mail.

There is less variation in views among Democrats. More than eight-in-ten Democrats and Democratic leaners – regardless of their state’s rate of 2018 mail voting – say they favor allowing any voter to vote by mail if they want to. However, Democrats in states with higher or more moderate rates of mail-in voting in 2018 are slightly more likely to say they *strongly* support allowing any voter to vote by mail than those in states where fewer vote by mail.

#### Adults in states with higher rates of mail-in voting in 2018 more supportive of vote-by-mail expansion

*% who strongly or somewhat favor allowing any voter to vote by mail if they want to*



Note: See appendix for details about 2018 vote by mail states.  
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 7-12, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

## About six-in-ten Republicans favor removal of inactive voters from registration lists

There is broad support among Americans (69%) for automatically registering all eligible citizens to vote. By contrast, fewer (42%) support removing people from registration lists if they have not recently voted or confirmed their registration.

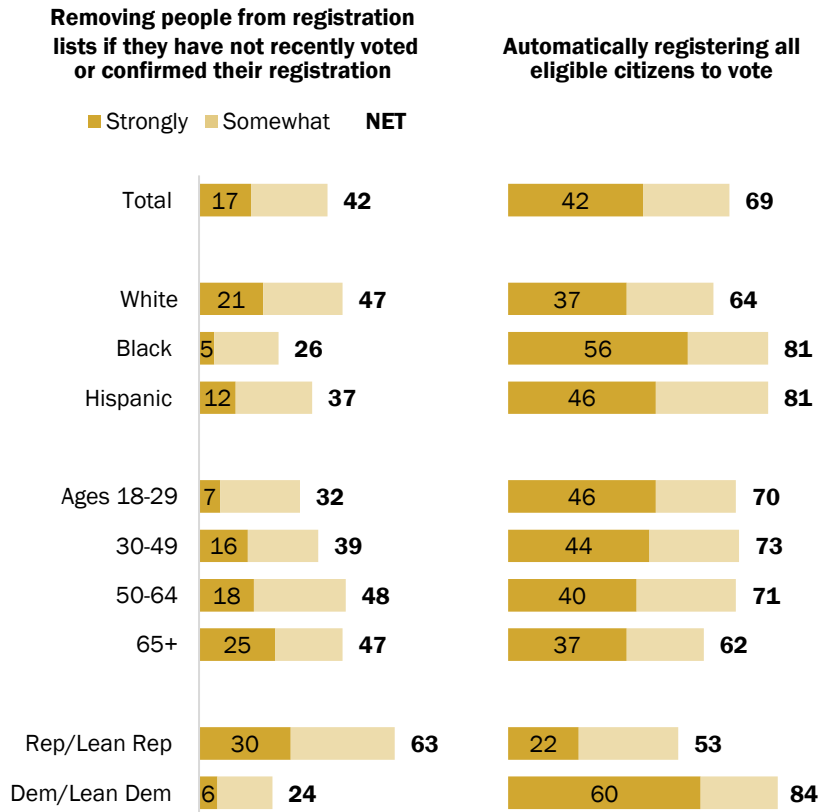
There are partisan and demographic differences in views of these two policies. Overall, 47% of white adults support removing people from registration lists if they have not recently voted or confirmed their registration; a slightly greater share (52%) opposes this policy. Smaller shares of Hispanic (37%) and black (26%) people support this approach to removing people from registration lists. In addition, younger adults are far less supportive of this proposal than older adults.

There is a large, 39 percentage point partisan gap on this question: 63% of Republicans support removing people who have not recently voted or confirmed their registration from registration lists, compared with just 24% of Democrats.

While there is more widespread support for automatically registering all eligible citizens to vote, differences in views by partisanship and race persist.

### Most support automatic voter registration, while views on removing voters from registration lists more mixed

% who strongly or somewhat favor...



Note: Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 7-12, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

A large majority of Democrats (84%) favor automatically registering all eligible citizens to vote. Support is less widespread among Republicans: 53% favor this policy, while 47% oppose it.

Larger majorities of black and Hispanic adults (81% of each) than white adults (64%) are in favor of automatic voter registration.

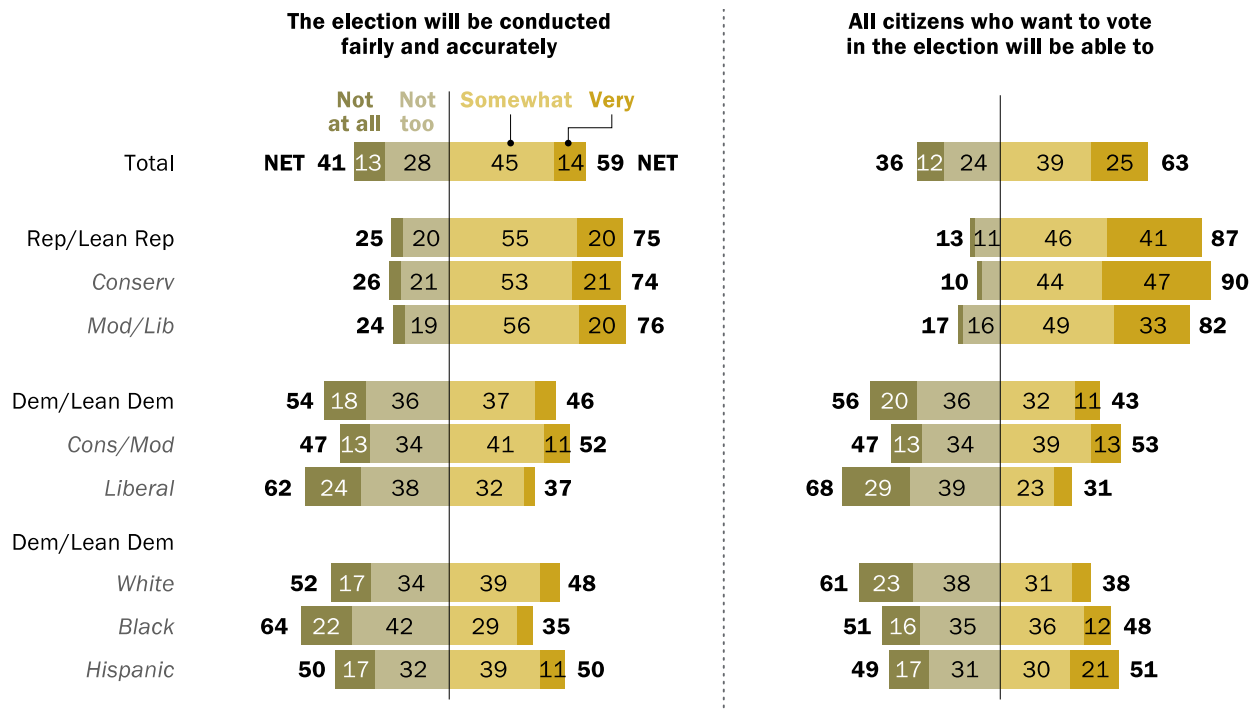
## Fewer than half of Democrats confident November election will be conducted fairly and accurately

Overall, about six-in-ten Americans (59%) say they are at least somewhat confident the November presidential election will be conducted fairly and accurately, while a similar share (63%) express confidence that all citizens who want to vote in the election will be able to.

But there are wide partisan gaps in these views – with Republicans much more confident than Democrats in the fairness and accessibility of the election. While three-quarters of Republicans and Republican leaners say they are at least somewhat confident the upcoming election will be conducted fairly and accurately, just 46% of Democrats and Democratic leaners say the same (with a majority saying they are not too or not at all confident in this). The partisan gap is even wider when it comes to ballot access. Nearly nine-in-ten Republicans express at least some confidence that “all citizens who want to vote in the election will be able to” – including 41% who say they are

## Republicans far more confident than Democrats that November election will be open, accurate

Thinking about the presidential election in November, % who say they are \_\_\_ confident that ...



Note: Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race. No answer responses not shown. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 7-12, 2020.

very confident about this. By comparison, just 43% of Democrats say they are at least somewhat confident all citizens who want to vote will be able to do so, while 56% say they are not too or not at all confident about this.

Among Democrats, confidence that the presidential election in November will be conducted fairly and accurately varies by ideology as well as by race and ethnicity. About half of conservative and moderate Democrats (52%) say they are either somewhat or very confident that the election will be conducted fairly and accurately, compared with 37% of liberal Democrats who say this. Similarly, while about half of conservative and moderate Democrats (53%) are somewhat or very confident that all citizens who want to vote will be able to do, 31% of liberals hold this view.

White and Hispanic Democrats express higher levels of confidence than black Democrats that the election will be conducted fairly and accurately: About half of white (48%) and Hispanic (50%) Democrats say this, compared with just 35% of black Democrats.

However, the gap between white and black Democrats is nearly reversed when it comes to the question of whether all citizens will be able to vote. About half of Hispanic (51%) and black (48%) Democrats are somewhat or very confident that they will, while just 38% of white Democrats say this.

Republicans are much more united in their levels of confidence in the election. Nearly identical proportions of conservative (74%) and liberal or moderate (76%) Republicans say they are somewhat or very confident the election will be conducted fairly and accurately. And nine-in-ten conservatives say they are confident that all citizens will be able to vote, while about eight-in-ten liberal or moderate Republicans (82%) say this.



## Confidence in November presidential election fairness, accessibility linked to expectations of COVID-19 disruptions

Those who think the coronavirus outbreak is likely to significantly disrupt voting in November are less likely to express confidence the election will be conducted fairly and accurately or that all citizens who want to vote will be able to do so. To some extent, this reflects partisan patterns of opinions on these questions – but the pattern holds within both partisan groups as well.

Democrats and Democratic leaners who think it is not likely that the election will be disrupted are 12 percentage points more likely to say they are confident the election will be conducted fairly and accurately than Democrats who think it is likely the election will be disrupted. Among Republicans and Republican leaners, there is a 7-point gap on this question.

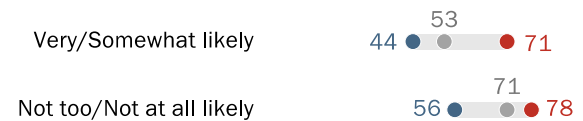
And while nearly six-in-ten Democrats (57%) who don't expect the election to be disrupted say they are somewhat or very confident that all citizens who want to vote will be able to, just 40% of those who say it's likely the election will be disrupted express confidence that all citizens who want to vote will be able to. Republicans who think it's not likely the election will be disrupted are 12 points more likely to say they are confident that all citizens will be able to vote than those who are less certain the election will proceed with no significant disruptions.

### Those who predict COVID-19 will disrupt voting less likely to think election will be conducted fairly and accurately

*Among those who think it is \_\_\_ that the coronavirus outbreak will significantly disrupt voting in November, % who are very/somewhat confident that ...*

● Dem/Lean Dem ● Rep/Lean Rep ● Total

#### The election will be conducted fairly and accurately



#### All citizens who want to vote in the election will be able to



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 7-12, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

## Acknowledgments

This report is a collaborative effort based on the input and analysis of the following individuals:

### Research team

Carroll Doherty, *Director, Political Research*

Jocelyn Kiley, *Associate Director, Political Research*

Alec Tyson, *Senior Researcher*

Andrew Daniller, *Research Associate*

Bradley Jones, *Research Associate*

Hannah Hartig, *Research Associate*

Amina Dunn, *Research Assistant*

Hannah Gilberstadt, *Research Assistant*

Ted Van Green, *Research Assistant*

### Communications and editorial

Nida Asheer, *Communications Associate*

### Graphic design and web publishing

Alissa Scheller, *Information Graphics Designer*

Sara Atske, *Associate Digital Producer*

## Methodology

### The American Trends Panel survey methodology

The American Trends Panel (ATP), created by Pew Research Center, is a nationally representative panel of randomly selected U.S. adults. Panelists participate via self-administered web surveys. Panelists who do not have internet access at home are provided with a tablet and wireless internet connection. The panel is being managed by Ipsos.

Data in this report is drawn from the panel wave conducted April 7 to April 12, 2020. A total of 4,917 panelists responded out of 6,092 who were sampled, for a response rate of 81%. This does not include one panelist who

was removed from the data due to extremely high rates of refusal or straightlining. The cumulative response rate accounting for nonresponse to the recruitment surveys and attrition is 4.4%. The break-off rate among panelists who logged on to the survey and completed at least one item is 1.7%. The margin of sampling error for the full sample of 4,917 respondents is plus or minus 2.1 percentage points.

---

#### American Trends Panel recruitment surveys

| Recruitment dates         | Mode                  | Invited       | Joined        | Active panelists remaining |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------------------|
| Jan. 23 to March 16, 2014 | Landline/<br>cell RDD | 9,809         | 5,338         | 2,310                      |
| Aug. 27 to Oct. 4, 2015   | Landline/<br>cell RDD | 6,004         | 2,976         | 1,335                      |
| April 25 to June 4, 2017  | Landline/<br>cell RDD | 3,905         | 1,628         | 685                        |
| Aug. 8 to Oct. 31, 2018   | ABS/web               | 9,396         | 8,778         | 6,411                      |
| Aug. 19 to Nov. 30, 2019  | ABS/web               | 5,900         | 4,720         | 4,686                      |
|                           | <b>Total</b>          | <b>35,014</b> | <b>23,440</b> | <b>15,427</b>              |

Note: Approximately once per year, panelists who have not participated in multiple consecutive waves or who did not complete an annual profiling survey are removed from the panel. Panelists also become inactive if they ask to be removed from the panel.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

---

This study featured a stratified random sample from the ATP. The sampling strata were defined by the following variables: age, ethnicity, education, country of birth (among Hispanics), internet status, party affiliation, voter registration and volunteerism.

The ATP was created in 2014, with the first cohort of panelists invited to join the panel at the end of a large, national, landline and cellphone random-digit-dial survey that was conducted in both English and Spanish. Two additional recruitments were conducted using the same method in 2015 and 2017, respectively. Across these three surveys, a total of 19,718 adults were invited to join the ATP, of which 9,942 agreed to participate.

In August 2018, the ATP switched from telephone to address-based recruitment. Invitations were sent to a random, address-based sample (ABS) of households selected from the U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File. In each household, the adult with the next birthday was asked to go online to complete a survey, at the end of which they were invited to join the panel. For a random half-sample of invitations, households without internet access were instructed to return a postcard. These households were contacted by telephone and sent a tablet if they agreed to participate. A total of 9,396 were invited to join the panel, and 8,778 agreed to join the panel and completed an initial profile survey. The same recruitment procedure was carried out on August 19, 2019, from which a total of 5,900 were invited to join the panel and 4,720 agreed to join the panel and completed an initial profile survey. Of the 23,440 individuals who have ever joined the ATP, 15,427 remained active panelists and continued to receive survey invitations at the time this survey was conducted.

The U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File has been estimated to cover as much as 98% of the population, although some studies suggest that the coverage could be in the low 90% range.<sup>1</sup> The American Trends Panel never uses breakout routers or chains that direct respondents to additional surveys.

---

<sup>1</sup> AAPOR Task Force on Address-based Sampling. 2016. "[AAPOR Report: Address-based Sampling.](#)"

## Weighting

The ATP data was weighted in a multistep process that begins with a base weight incorporating the respondents' original selection probability. The next step in the weighting uses an iterative technique that aligns the sample to population benchmarks on the dimensions listed in the accompanying table.

Sampling errors and test of statistical significance take into account the effect of weighting. Interviews are conducted in both English and Spanish.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

---

## Weighting dimensions

| <b>Variable</b>                                  | <b>Benchmark source</b>   |
|--|---|
| Gender   | 2018 American Community Survey  |
| Age  |   |
| Education  |   |
| Race/Hispanic origin                             |   |
| Country of birth among Hispanics                 |   |
| Years lived in the United States among Hispanics |   |
| Home internet access                             |   |
| Region x Metropolitan status                     | 2019 CPS March Supplement   |
| Volunteerism                                     | 2017 CPS Volunteering & Civic Life Supplement                           |
| Voter registration                               | 2018 CPS Voting and Registration Supplement                             |
| Party affiliation                                | Average of the three most recent Pew Research Center telephone surveys. |

Note: Estimates from the ACS are based on non-institutionalized adults. Voter registration is calculated using procedures from Hur, Achen (2013) and rescaled to include the total U.S. adult population.

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER**

---

The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

---

*Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 7-12, 2020*

| <b>Group</b>            | <b>Unweighted sample size</b> | <b>Weighted %</b> | <b>Plus or minus ...</b> |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Total sample            | 4,917                         |                   | 2.1 percentage points    |
| Half sample             | At least 2,449                |                   | 3.0 percentage points    |
| Rep/Lean Rep            | 2,034                         | 45                | 3.2 percentage points    |
| Half sample             | At least 1,004                | 45                | 4.5 percentage points    |
| Dem/Lean Dem            | 2,764                         | 51                | 3.0 percentage points    |
| Half sample             | At least 1,379                | 51                | 4.3 percentage points    |
| Vote by mail categories |                               |                   |                          |
| High                    | 1,363                         |                   | 4.1 percentage points    |
| Medium                  | 1,117                         |                   | 4.5 percentage points    |
| Low                     | 2,437                         |                   | 3.1 percentage points    |

---

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

© Pew Research Center, 2020

## Appendix

### Vote-by-mail categorization for 2018

To categorize states for the vote-by-mail analysis, researchers used the Census Bureau's 2018 Current Population Survey Voting and Registration Supplement data. This data was accessed through [CPS IPUMS database](#) and contains information on the share of votes cast in person on Election Day, the percentage of votes cast in-person before Election Day, as well as the percentage of votes cast by mail.

States where 31% or more of voters cast ballots by mail in the 2018 midterm elections were categorized as “high” vote-by-mail states.

States where 10%-30% of voters cast ballots by mail were categorized as “medium,” and states where 0%-9% of voters cast ballots by mail were categorized as “low.”

---

#### Categorization of vote by mail states

| <b>High</b><br>(31%-100% of votes cast by mail in state) | <b>Medium</b><br>(10%-30% of votes cast by mail in state) | <b>Low</b><br>(0%-9% of votes cast by mail in state) |
|--|---|--|
| Washington   | Iowa  | Georgia  |
| Oregon   | North Dakota  | Texas  |
| Colorado   | Michigan  | Maryland   |
| Utah   | Nebraska  | New Hampshire  |
| Arizona  | Ohio  | Oklahoma   |
| Montana  | Maine   | Rhode Island   |
| California   | Vermont   | South Carolina                                       |
| Hawaii   | District of Columbia                                      | Wisconsin  |
| Florida  | Kansas  | Connecticut  |
|  | Nevada  | Indiana  |
|  | Alaska  | Massachusetts  |
|  | Idaho   | Missouri   |
|  | Illinois  | Pennsylvania   |
|  | Minnesota   | South Dakota   |
|  | Wyoming   | Alabama  |
|  | New Jersey  | Louisiana  |
|  | New Mexico  | Mississippi  |
|  |   | New York   |
|  |   | Kentucky   |
|  |   | North Carolina                                       |
|  |   | Virginia   |
|  |   | West Virginia  |
|  |   | Arkansas   |
|  |   | Delaware   |
|  |   | Tennessee  |

Source: 2018 Current Population Survey, IPUMS-CPS, University of Minnesota.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

---

**2020 PEW RESEARCH CENTER'S AMERICAN TRENDS PANEL**  
**WAVE 65 April 2020**  
**APRIL 7-12, 2020**  
**N=4,917**

**ASK ALL:**

SATIS All in all, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in this country today?

|                                  | <u>Satisfied</u> | <u>Dissatisfied</u> | <u>No answer</u> |
|----------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Apr 7-12, 2020                   | 31               | 68                  | 1                |
| Mar 19-24, 2020                  | 33               | 66                  | 1                |
| Oct 29-Nov 11, 2019              | 31               | 69                  | 1                |
| Oct 1-13, 2019                   | 28               | 71                  | 1                |
| July 22-Aug 4, 2019              | 27               | 72                  | 1                |
| Nov 27-Dec 10, 2018              | 34               | 65                  | 1                |
| Jan 29-Feb 13, 2018 <sup>2</sup> | 36               | 63                  | 1                |
| Feb 28-Mar 12, 2017 <sup>3</sup> | 32               | 68                  | 0                |
| Sep 27-Oct 10, 2016              | 23               | 75                  | 2                |
| Jun 7-Jul 5, 2016 <sup>4</sup>   | 19               | 80                  | 1                |
| Sep 15-Oct 3, 2014               | 25               | 75                  | 0                |

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS PREVIOUSLY RELEASED****ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****ASK ALL:**

VTPRIORITY Please indicate whether you would favor or oppose the following ideas about election policy.  
**[RANDOMIZE ITEMS; REVERSE ORDER OF PUNCHES FOR RANDOM HALF-SAMPLE]**

|  | <u>Strongly favor</u> | <u>Somewhat favor</u> | <u>Somewhat oppose</u> | <u>Strongly oppose</u> | <u>No answer</u> |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| <b>ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=2,449]:</b>  |                       |                       |                        |                        |                  |
| a. Automatically registering all eligible citizens to vote   |                       |                       |                        |                        |                  |
| Apr 7-12, 2020   | 42                    | 27                    | 15                     | 15                     | *                |
| Sep 24-Oct 7, 2018   | 34                    | 31                    | 17                     | 17                     | 1                |
| b. Conducting all elections by mail  |                       |                       |                        |                        |                  |
| Apr 7-12, 2020   | 22                    | 30                    | 20                     | 28                     | *                |
| Sep 24-Oct 7, 2018   | 9                     | 25                    | 28                     | 37                     | 1                |
| <b>ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N= 2,468]:</b>   |                       |                       |                        |                        |                  |
| c. Allowing any voter to vote by mail if they want to  |                       |                       |                        |                        |                  |
| Apr 7-12, 2020   | 44                    | 26                    | 13                     | 16                     | 1                |
| d. Removing people from registration lists if they have not recently voted or confirmed their registration |                       |                       |                        |                        |                  |
| Apr 7-12, 2020   | 17                    | 25                    | 26                     | 31                     | 2                |
| Sep 24-Oct 7, 2018   | 15                    | 22                    | 27                     | 35                     | 1                |

<sup>2</sup> In W31 and previous surveys, question was called SATISF.

<sup>3</sup> The W24.5 Mode Study survey was administered by web and phone. Results reported here are from web mode only.

<sup>4</sup> SATISF in the W18 survey was asked to a random half of the sample assigned to Form 2 [N=2,366].



**ASK ALL:**

ELECT\_CONF Thinking about the presidential election this November, how confident, if at all, are you that...  
**[RANDOMIZE ITEMS]**

|  | <u>Very<br/>confident</u> | <u>Somewhat<br/>confident</u> | <u>Not too<br/>confident</u> | <u>Not at all<br/>confident</u> | <u>No<br/>answer</u> |
|--|---------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| a. The election will be conducted fairly and accurately<br>Apr 7-12, 2020          | 14                        | 45                            | 28                           | 13                              | 1                    |
| b. All citizens who want to vote in the election will be able to<br>Apr 7-12, 2020 | 25                        | 39                            | 24                           | 12                              | 1                    |

**ASK ALL:**

CONCEDE Thinking about the results of the presidential election this November, how important do you think it is for a losing candidate to publicly acknowledge the winner as the legitimate president of the country?

| <u>Apr 7-12<br/>2020</u> |                      | <u>Oct 25-<br/>Nov 8<br/>2016</u> | <u>Sept 27-<br/>Oct 10<br/>2016</u> |
|--------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 54                       | Very important       | 46                                | 50                                  |
| 25                       | Somewhat important   | 27                                | 24                                  |
| 14                       | Not too important    | 15                                | 13                                  |
| 6                        | Not at all important | 10                                | 12                                  |
| 1                        | No Answer            | 1                                 | 1                                   |

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS PREVIOUSLY RELEASED****ASK ALL:**

COVID\_ELCT How likely do you think it is that the coronavirus outbreak will significantly disrupt Americans' ability to vote in the 2020 presidential election in November? Do you think this is...

| <u>Apr 7-12<br/>2020</u> |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 23                       | Very likely       |
| 44                       | Somewhat likely   |
| 26                       | Not too likely    |
| 7                        | Not at all likely |
| *                        | No answer         |

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS PREVIOUSLY RELEASED****ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

**ASK ALL:**

PARTY In politics today, do you consider yourself a:

**ASK IF INDEP/SOMETHING ELSE (PARTY=3 or 4) OR MISSING:**PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to...<sup>5</sup>

| <u>Republican</u> | <u>Democrat</u> | <u>Independent</u> | <u>Something<br/>else</u> | <u>No<br/>answer</u> | <u>Lean<br/>Rep</u> | <u>Lean<br/>Dem</u> |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 28                | 29              | 29                 | 13                        | 1                    | 17                  | 22                  |

---

<sup>5</sup> Party and PartyIn asked in a prior survey.