

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Wednesday, May 12, 2010

Democrats Divided, But Support Key Provisions
BROAD APPROVAL FOR NEW ARIZONA IMMIGRATION LAW

The public broadly supports a new Arizona law aimed at dealing with illegal immigration and the law’s provisions giving police increased powers to stop and detain people who are suspected of being in the country illegally.

Fully 73% say they approve of requiring people to produce documents verifying their legal status if police ask for them. Two-thirds (67%) approve of allowing police to detain anyone who cannot verify their legal status, while

62% approve of allowing police to question people they think may be in the country illegally.

After being asked about the law’s provisions, 59% say that, considering everything, they approve of Arizona’s new illegal immigration law while 32% disapprove.

The latest national survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, conducted May 6-9 among 994 adults, finds that Democrats are evenly split over Arizona’s new immigration law: 45% approve of the law and 46% disapprove. However, majorities of Democrats approve of two of the law’s principal provisions: requiring

	App- rove %	Dis- approve %	DK %
<i>Opinion of:</i>			
Requiring people to produce documents verifying legal status	73	23	4=100
Allowing police to detain anyone unable to verify legal status	67	29	4=100
Allowing police to question anyone they think may be in country illegally	62	35	3=100
<i>Considering everything, opinion of new Arizona law</i>	59	32	8=100
Pew Research Center May 6-9. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.			

	Total %	Rep %	Dem %	Ind %
<i>% approve</i>				
Requiring people to produce documents verifying legal status	73	86	65	73
Allowing police to detain anyone unable to verify legal status	67	81	55	69
Allowing police to question Anyone they think may be In country illegally	62	79	50	64
<i>% approve of new Arizona law</i>	59	82	45	64
Pew Research Center May 6-9 Q10a-c & Q11. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.				

people to produce documents verifying legal status (65%) and allowing police to detain anyone unable to verify their legal status (55%).

Republicans overwhelmingly approve of the law and three provisions tested. Similarly, among independents there is little difference in opinions of the new Arizona law (64% approve) and its elements, which are viewed positively.

Young people are less supportive of the Arizona immigration law than are older Americans. Fewer than half (45%) of those younger than 30 approve of the new law while 47% disapprove. Majorities of older age groups – including 74% of those 65 and older – approve of the law.

	Total %	18-29 %	30-49 %	50-64 %	65+ %
<i>% approve</i>					
Requiring people to produce documents verifying legal status	73	61	70	80	82
Allowing police to detain anyone unable to verify legal status	67	52	67	71	77
Allowing police to question anyone they think may be in country illegally	62	48	59	67	77
<i>% approve of new Arizona law</i>	59	45	57	65	74

Pew Research Center May 6-9 Q10a-c & Q11. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

However, even most young people approve of requiring people to produce documents verifying their legal status; 61% approve of this element of the law while 35% disapprove. Larger percentages of older age groups support this provision.

Most Disapprove of Obama on Immigration

As has been the case since last fall, the public is highly critical of Barack Obama’s handling of immigration policy. Just 25% approve of the way Obama is handling the issue, while more than twice as many (54%) disapprove. That is little changed from last month (29% approve) and down slightly from last November (31%).

	Nov 2009 %	Jan 2010 %	Apr 2010 %	May 2010 %
<i>Obama overall job...</i>				
Approve	51	49	47	47
Disapprove	36	42	42	42
Don’t know	13	10	11	11
	100	100	100	100
<i>Job handling immigration policy...</i>				
Approve	31	30	29	25
Disapprove	48	50	47	54
Don’t know	21	21	24	21
	100	100	100	100

Pew Research Center May 6-9 Q1 & Q3b. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

In the current survey, 76% of Republicans disapprove of Obama’s handling of immigration policy, while just 8% approve. Independents disapprove of Obama’s job on the issue by more than two-to-one (57% to 25%). Even among Democrats, as many disapprove (38%) as approve (37%) of the way he is handling the issue, while a quarter (25%) offer no opinion.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

Results for this survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International among a national sample of 994 adults living in the continental United States, 18 years of age or older, from May 6-9, 2010 (662 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 332 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 123 who had no landline telephone). Both the landline and cell phone samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see <http://people-press.org/methodology/>.

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race/ethnicity, region, and population density to parameters from the March 2009 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey. The sample is also weighted to match current patterns of telephone status and relative usage of landline and cell phones (for those with both), based on extrapolations from the 2009 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size within the landline sample. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting.

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

Group	Sample Size	Plus or minus...
Total sample	994	4.0 percentage points
Republicans.....	275.....	7.5 percentage points
Democrats	311	7.0 percentage points
Independents.....	332.....	6.5 percentage points

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.

ABOUT THE CENTER

The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press is an independent opinion research group that studies attitudes toward the press, politics and public policy issues. We are sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts and are one of seven projects that make up the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan "fact tank" that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world.

The Center's purpose is to serve as a forum for ideas on the media and public policy through public opinion research. In this role it serves as an important information resource for political leaders, journalists, scholars, and public interest organizations. All of our current survey results are made available free of charge.

All of the Center's research and reports are collaborative products based on the input and analysis of the entire Center staff consisting of:

Andrew Kohut, Director
Scott Keeter, Director of Survey Research
Carroll Doherty and Michael Dimock, Associate Directors
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PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
MAY 2010 OMNIBUS
FINAL TOPLINE
 May 6-9, 2010
 N=994

ASK ALL:

Q.1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President? **[IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

	<u>Approve</u>	Dis- <u>approve</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
May 6-9, 2010	47	42	11
Apr 21-26, 2010	47	42	11
Apr 8-11, 2010	48	43	9
Mar 10-14, 2010	46	43	12
Feb 3-9, 2010	49	39	12
Jan 6-10, 2010	49	42	10
Dec 9-13, 2009	49	40	11
Oct 28-Nov 8, 2009	51	36	13
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	52	36	12
Sep 10-15, 2009	55	33	13
Aug 20-27, 2009	52	37	12
Aug 11-17, 2009	51	37	11
Jul 22-26, 2009	54	34	12
Jun 10-14, 2009	61	30	9
Apr 14-21, 2009	63	26	11
Mar 31-Apr 6, 2009	61	26	13
Mar 9-12, 2009	59	26	15
Feb 4-8, 2009	64	17	19

QUESTIONS 2-3a PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

ASK ALL:

Thinking again about Barack Obama...

Q.3 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]**
 How about **[NEXT ITEM]**? **[REPEAT INTRODUCTION AS NECESSARY]**

	<u>Approve</u>	Dis- <u>approve</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
b. The nation's immigration policy			
May 6-9, 2010	25	54	21
Apr 21-26, 2010	29	47	24
Jan 6-10, 2010	30	50	21
Oct 28-Nov 8, 2009	31	48	21

QUESTIONS 3c-d PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

QUESTION 4 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

QUESTIONS 5-9 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

On a different subject...

ASK ALL:

Q.10 The state of Arizona recently passed a law dealing with illegal immigration. As I describe some parts of the law, tell me if you approve or disapprove of each. (First/Next) do you approve or disapprove of **[INSERT ITEM; READ IN ORDER]**.

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Dis- approve</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>
a. Allowing police to question anyone who they think may be in the country illegally May 6-9, 2010	62	35	3
b. Requiring people to produce documents verifying their legal status if police ask for them May 6-9, 2010	73	23	4
c. Allowing police to detain anyone who cannot verify their legal status May 6-9, 2010	67	29	4

ASK ALL:

Q.11 Considering everything, would you say you approve or disapprove of Arizona's new illegal immigration law?

May 6-9

2010

59	Approve
32	Disapprove
8	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

QUESTIONS 12 THROUGH 13 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK ALL:

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent?

ASK IF ANSWERED 3, 4, 5 OR 9 IN PARTY:

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	<u>(VOL.) No preference</u>	<u>(VOL.) Other party</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>	<u>Lean Rep</u>	<u>Lean Dem</u>
May 6-9, 2010	24	33	35	5	1	3	15	14