

## **PRRI/The Atlantic 2018 Voter Engagement Survey Illinois**

### **Illinoisans' Views of Problems With Current Election System**

**A majority of Illinois residents believe that the following are major problems with the current election system:**

- Roughly three-quarters (73%) of Illinois residents say wealthy individuals and corporations having too much influence is a major problem with the current election system.
- Nearly seven in ten (69%) Illinois residents cite too few people voting as a major issue.
- A majority (63%) agree that too many uninformed people voting is a major problem with the current election system.
- More than six in ten (61%) Illinois residents say that media bias against certain candidates is a major problem.

Illinois residents are more divided on whether outside interference or influence from foreign governments (47%), voter disenfranchisement (43%), or voter fraud (36%) are major problems with the current election system.

- Nonwhite Illinois residents are significantly more likely than white Illinois residents to say that voter disenfranchisement is a major problem with the current election system (61% vs. 33%), but they are about equally likely to say that voter fraud is a major problem (38% vs. 35%).

**Few Illinois residents report issues with voting, though these issues impacted nonwhite residents more than white residents.**

- Few Illinois residents say they or a household member experienced the following problems the last time they tried to vote: couldn't get off work to vote (8%), were unable to find the correct polling place (6%), missed the registration deadlines (6%), were harassed while trying to vote (6%), or were told they did not have correct voter identification (3%).
- Nonwhite Illinois residents are more likely than white residents to report that they or a household member missed the registration deadline (10% vs. 4%) or were harassed while trying to vote (9% vs. 4%)

**Illinois residents express considerable uncertainty about voting laws and restrictions.**

- Illinois residents express uncertainty about a number of voting laws in their state. A majority of Illinois residents report being unsure if a resident of their state can vote without a permanent address (59%) or if they are late in paying taxes (53%). Close

to half (45%) are not sure if voting is allowed if you have an outstanding traffic ticket or unpaid utility bill.

- Nearly one in three (32%) residents are uncertain whether citizenship is required to vote.
- More than seven in ten (73%) Illinoisans correctly say that their state allows early voting, but only about one-quarter (24%) know that Illinois allows same-day voter registration.

### **There is broad support among Illinois residents for expanding voting access and the popular vote.**

- More than three-quarters (76%) of Illinois residents, including about equal numbers of white (76%) and nonwhite (78%) Illinois residents, believe that a person convicted of a felony should be allowed to vote after they have served their sentence.
- Sixty-nine percent of Illinoisans, including 66% of white and 74% of nonwhite Illinois residents, say citizens should be automatically registered to vote when they do business with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) or other state agencies.
- Nearly two-thirds (66%) of Illinoisans, including 61% of white and nearly three-quarters (74%) of nonwhite Illinois residents, favor allowing same-day registration for voting.
- Nearly three-quarters (73%) of Illinois residents, including similar numbers of white (70%) and nonwhite (77%) Illinois residents, believe presidential elections should be based on the popular vote rather than the Electoral College.

### **Illinoisans Polarized Along Partisan, Racial Lines Heading Into Midterms** **Two-thirds of Illinois residents believe the country has gotten off on the wrong track.**

- Sixty-seven percent of Illinois residents say things in the country have gone off course, while 32% say things are heading in the right direction.
- Eighty-seven percent of Illinois Democrats say things have gone off course, while 61% of Illinois Republicans say the country is headed in the right direction.

### **Most Illinois residents say the coming demographic change is mostly positive.**

- Sixty-two percent of Illinois residents say that the U.S. becoming majority nonwhite by 2043 will primarily be a positive change for the country. Thirty-four percent say this will be a mostly negative development for the U.S.
- Eighty percent of nonwhite residents believe the current demographic shift will have a mostly positive impact on the country, while only a slim majority (53%) of white residents share this view.

### **Most Illinois residents view President Trump unfavorably, but there are stark racial divisions.**

- Two-thirds (67%) of Illinois residents view President Trump unfavorably, while 31% say they have a favorable opinion of him.
- Nonwhite residents express an overwhelmingly negative view of President Trump, with more than eight in ten (82%) viewing the president unfavorably. About six in

ten (59%) white residents have an unfavorable view of Trump, while 40% express a positive view of him.

**Half of Illinois residents say they are absolutely certain to vote in the midterms, and voters in the state are more likely to vote for the Democratic candidate in their district.**

- Half (50%) of Illinois residents, including similar numbers of white (53%) and nonwhite (46%) residents of the state, report they are absolutely certain to vote in the upcoming midterm election.
- Notably, Democrats and Republicans in the state report similar levels of enthusiasm.
- A majority (57%) of Illinois registered voters say they would vote for the Democratic candidate in their election district, compared to 40% who say they would vote for the Republican candidate.
- A majority (54%) of Illinois residents, including similar numbers of white (54%) and nonwhite (55%) Illinoisans, say that all or most of their close friends will vote in the 2018 congressional election.