

PRRI/The Atlantic 2018 Voter Engagement Survey Michigan

Michigan Residents' Views of Problems With Current Election System

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

- Roughly seven in ten (69%) Michigan residents agree that wealthy individuals and corporations having too much influence is a major problem with the current election system.
- Nearly seven in ten (68%) Michigan residents cite too few people voting as a major issue.
- A majority (58%) agree that too many uninformed people voting is a major problem with the current election system.
- More than half (54%) of Michigan residents say that media bias against certain candidates is a major problem.

Fewer Michigan residents say outside interference or influence from foreign governments (39%), voter disenfranchisement (36%), or voter fraud (33%) are major problems.

There are stark racial divides when it comes to perceptions of voter fraud and voter disenfranchisement.

- Nonwhite Michigan residents are significantly more likely than white residents to say that voter disenfranchisement is a major problem (52% vs. 31%), but they are equally likely to say that voter fraud is a major problem (31% vs. 33%).

One in nine Michigan residents say they or a family member were unable to vote because they couldn't get off of work.

- Eleven percent of Michigan residents say they or a family member were unable to get off work the most recent time they attempted to vote.
- Fewer Michigan residents report issues with finding the correct polling place (7%), missing registration deadlines (7%), getting harassed while trying to vote (5%), or being told they did not have the correct voter identification (3%).
- Nonwhite Michigan residents are more likely than white Michigan residents to report the following experiences: were told they did not have correct identification (8% vs. 2%), missed a registration deadline (10% vs. 6%), or got harassed while trying to vote (9% vs. 4%).

Michigan residents express considerable uncertainty about voting laws and restrictions.

- A majority of Michigan residents are not sure if a resident of their state can vote without a permanent address (62%) or if they are late in paying taxes (51%). About half (48%) 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.
- Nearly six in ten (58%) Michigan residents correctly say that their state does not allow same-day voter registration, but only 14% know that the state does not allow early voting.

There is broad support among Michigan residents for expanding voting access and the popular vote.

- More than three-quarters (76%) of Michigan residents, including similar numbers of white (75%) and nonwhite (79%) residents, believe that a person convicted of a felony should be allowed to vote after they have served their sentence.
- Most (72%) Michigan residents, including similar numbers of white (70%) and nonwhite (75%) residents, believe that citizens should be automatically registered to vote when they do business with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) or other state agencies, while one-quarter (25%) of residents disagree.
- Nearly two-thirds (66%) of Michigan residents, including similar numbers of white (65%) and nonwhite (70%) residents, believe presidential elections should be based on the popular vote instead of the electoral college.
- About six in ten (61%) Michigan residents, are in favor of same-day registration for voting. Nonwhite residents are more likely than white residents to be in favor of same-day registration (71% vs. 58%).

Michigan Residents Polarized Along Partisan, Racial Lines Heading Into Midterms

A majority of Michigan residents believe the country has gotten off on the wrong track.

- Sixty-one percent of Michigan residents say things in the country have gone off course, while 38% say things are heading in the right direction.
- Eighty-four percent of Michigan Democrats say the country is heading in the wrong direction, while more than two-thirds (68%) of Republicans in the state say things are generally moving in the right direction.

Most Michigan residents say coming demographic change is mostly positive.

- Sixty percent of Michigan 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.
- About seven in ten (69%) nonwhite residents believe the current demographic shift will have a mostly positive impact on the country, while over half (57%) of white residents share this view.

Most Michigan residents view President Trump unfavorably, but there are stark racial divisions.

- A majority (58%) of Michigan residents view President Trump unfavorably, while 40% say they have a favorable opinion of him.
- Nonwhite residents express an overwhelmingly negative view of President Trump, with three-quarters (75%) viewing the president unfavorably. White residents are

more divided, with over half (54%) expressing an unfavorable view of Trump and 45% expressing a positive view of him.

Over half of Michigan 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.

- A majority (55%) of Michigan residents, including 53% of white residents and 63% of nonwhite Michigan residents, report they are absolutely certain to vote in the upcoming midterm election.
- However, Michigan Democrats (70%) are more likely than Michigan Republicans (56%) to say they are absolutely going to vote in the midterm election.
- A majority (54%) of Michigan voters say they would vote for the Democratic candidate in their election district, compared to 43% who say they would vote for the Republican candidate.
- A majority (56%) of Michigan residents, including similar numbers of white (55%) and nonwhite (60%) residents, think that all or most of their close friends will vote in the upcoming midterm.