

# DUELING REALITIES

AMID MULTIPLE CRISES, TRUMP AND BIDEN  
SUPPORTERS SEE DIFFERENT PRIORITIES  
AND FUTURES FOR THE NATION

FINDINGS FROM THE 2020 AMERICAN VALUES SURVEY





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# Acknowledgements

The survey was made possible by the **Carnegie Corporation of New York**, with additional support from the **Ford Foundation**, the **Wilbur and Hilda Glenn Family Foundation**, and the **Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock**. The report was written by:

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Additionally, the authors would like to thank:

- Sean Sands, Chief of Staff
- Douglas Barclay, Digital Content Associate
- Tim Duffy, Graphic Designer

We would also like to thank **Kivvit** for providing communications outreach.

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# State of the Union: A House Divided and Fragile

## Pessimism, Optimism, and Polarization

As the U.S. enters the closing weeks of the 2020 presidential election, two-thirds (67%) of Americans say the country is heading in the wrong direction, compared to only one-third (32%) who say it is headed in the right direction. Notably, this mood is slightly less pessimistic than public sentiment just ahead of the 2016 elections (74% wrong direction, 25% right direction).

Two-thirds (66%) of Republicans, compared to one in four (26%) independents and one in ten (10%) Democrats, say the country is moving in the right direction. However, Republicans and independents are less optimistic about the direction of the country now than they were in 2019 (74% and 34%, respectively), while attitudes among Democrats are unchanged (11%). Republicans who say they trust Fox News most for television news overwhelmingly believe that the country is going in the right direction (79%), compared to 58% of Republicans who trust other news sources.

White evangelical Protestants (59%) are the only major religious group to say that the country is moving in the right direction. Other white Christian groups are less optimistic, including 40% of white mainline Protestants and 39% of white Catholics. Hispanic Protestants (40%), Hispanic Catholics (28%), and other Christians (26%) are less likely to say the country is headed in the right direction.<sup>1</sup> Only about one in four non-Christian religious Americans (24%), along with 18% of religiously unaffiliated Americans and 13% of Black Protestants, say the country is headed in the right direction.

Despite continued pessimism surrounding the current direction of the country, there are signs of optimism about the future: A majority (58%) of Americans say that America's best days are ahead of us, higher than in 2017 (52%) or in the lead-up to the 2016 election (48%).

Majorities across the party spectrum agree that America's best days are ahead of us, including 61% of Republicans, 56% of independents, and 62% of Democrats. This has shifted over the past several years, likely influenced by the coronavirus pandemic and the election of Donald Trump in 2016. In 2017, similar numbers of Republicans (64%) and independents (53%) were optimistic about America's future, compared to 45% of Democrats. Just before the 2016 election, 38% of Republicans, 45% of independents, and 61% of Democrats said that America's best days were ahead of us.

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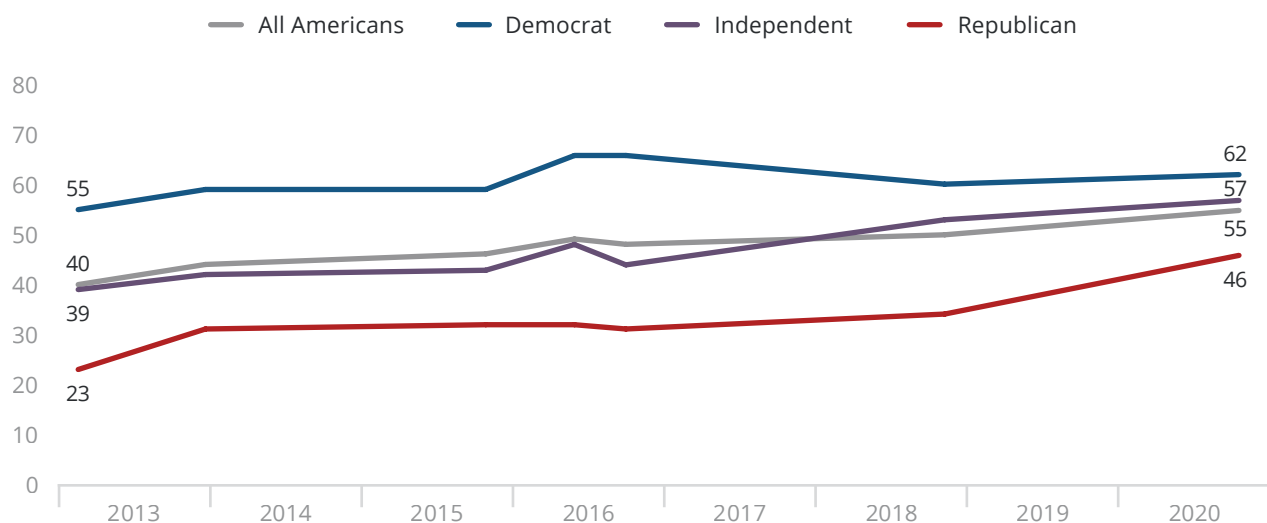
<sup>1</sup> Other Christians include Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, Orthodox Christians, and all other ethnic minority Christians who do not identify as white, Black, or Hispanic.

Majorities of nearly every major religious group say that America's best days are ahead of us. This includes 62% of white Catholics, 62% of Hispanic Catholics, 61% of religiously unaffiliated Americans, 61% of Black Protestants, 59% of non-Christian religious Americans, 57% of white mainline Protestants, 55% of white evangelical Protestants, and 53% of Hispanic Protestants. Other Christians stand out as evenly divided on the issue: 47% say the country's best days are ahead, and 48% say they are behind us.

A majority of Americans (55%) say that American culture and way of life have mostly changed for the better since the 1950s, compared to 44% who say it has changed for the worse. This is a notable shift from 2016, when the country was evenly divided on this question (48% said it had changed for the better, 51% said it had changed for the worse).

A majority (52%) of Republicans continue to believe that American culture and way of life have changed for the worse since the 1950s, and Republicans (46%) are less likely than independents (57%) or Democrats (62%) to say that American culture and way of life have changed for the better since the 1950s. But the views of Republicans and independents on this question have shifted substantially since 2016, when only about three in ten Republicans (31%) and less than half of independents (44%) said that American culture and way of life had changed for the better since the 1950s. The attitudes of Democrats have not changed significantly since 2016.

**FIGURE 1.1 Change in American Culture and Way of Life Since the 1950s, by Party Affiliation**  
Percent who say life has changed mostly for the better:



Sources: PRRI surveys 2013-2020.

White evangelical Protestants (43%), Hispanic Protestants (45%), and other Christians (47%) are the only religious groups among whom a majority does not say that American culture has mostly changed for the better since the 1950s. Solid majorities of white evangelical Protestants and Hispanic Protestants say things have changed for the worse since the 1950s (57% and 55%, respectively), notably lower than these sentiments in 2016 (74% and 61%, respectively). By contrast, majorities of white mainline Protestants (53%), white Catholics (53%), non-Christian religious Americans (55%), Black Protestants (57%), Hispanic Catholics (58%), and religiously unaffiliated Americans (66%) say that American culture and way of life have improved since the 1950s.

Interestingly, today, there are no significant racial divides over the belief that American culture and way of life have changed for the better since the 1950s. Nearly identical numbers of white (55%), Black (56%), Hispanic (53%), and another race or multiracial (56%) Americans agree that things have mostly changed for the better since the 1950s.<sup>2</sup> This pattern diverges from attitudes among racial and ethnic groups in 2016, when only 43% of white Americans, compared to 62% of Black Americans, said that American culture and way of life had changed for the better since the 1950s—perhaps reflecting the election of Donald Trump and the current unrest and prominent divisions over issues of racial justice in the country.

## Issue Priorities

Americans are most concerned about issues surrounding the coronavirus pandemic and the upcoming presidential elections. Out of 14 issues included on the survey, majorities of Americans said that only four issues were critical: the coronavirus pandemic (60%), fairness of presidential elections (57%), health care (56%), and jobs and unemployment (52%). Less than half of Americans say that foreign interference in presidential elections (49%), crime (46%), terrorism (45%), racial inequality (43%), climate change (43%), or the growing gap between rich and poor (42%) are critical issues. Four in ten Americans or less say that the appointment of Supreme Court justices (40%), the federal deficit (36%), abortion (36%), immigration (33%), and trade agreements with other countries (23%) are critical issues.<sup>3</sup>

Democrats and Republicans appear to be living in separate worlds based on their issue priorities. The only issue which majorities of Democrats and Republicans agree is critical is the fairness of presidential elections (68% and 55%, respectively), though partisans likely have divergent views of what “fairness” means.

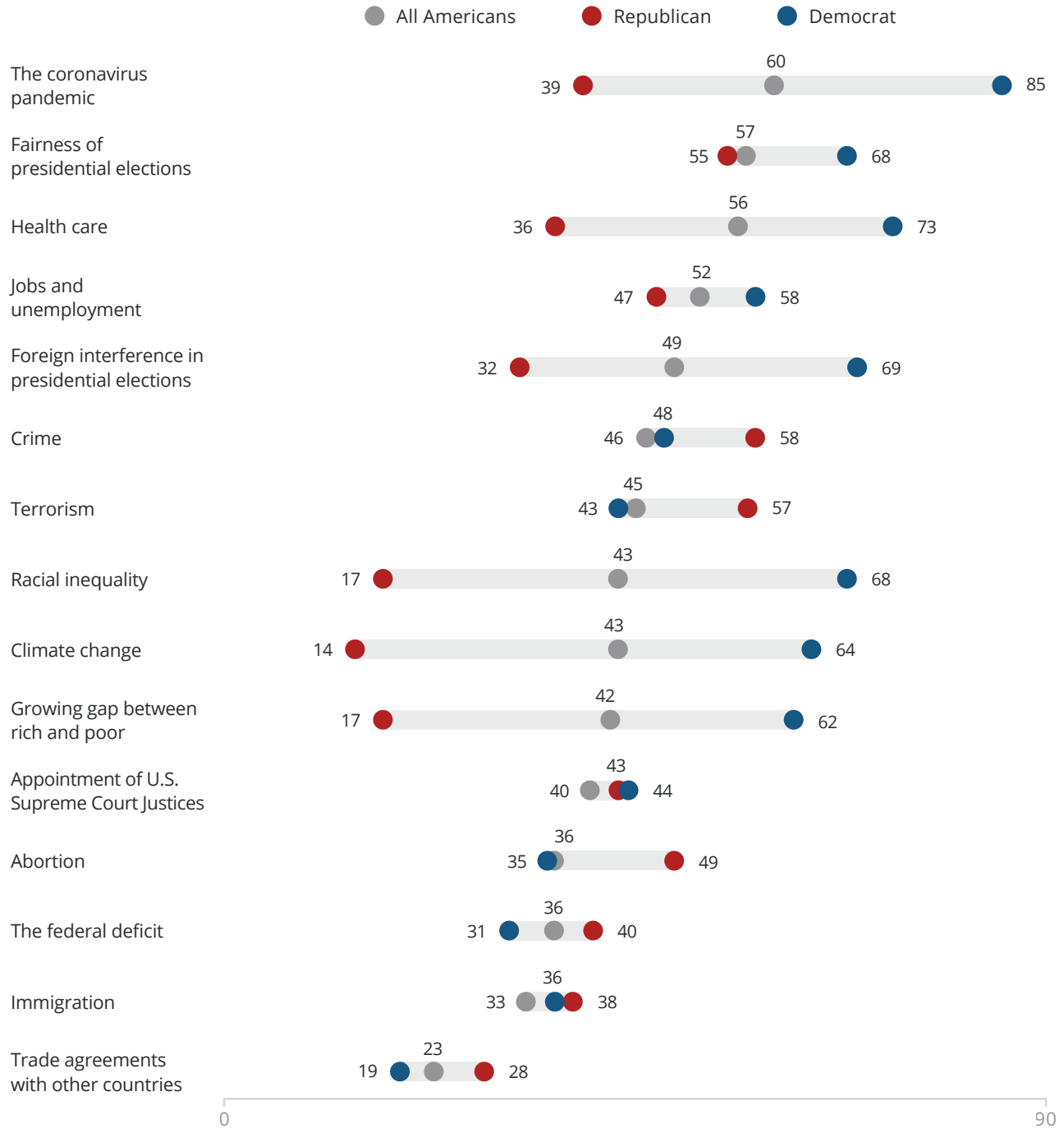
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<sup>2</sup> Another race or multiracial includes race groups with samples smaller than n=100, including multiracial, Asian or Pacific Islander, and Native American.

<sup>3</sup> Note that Associate Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg died on Sept. 18, 2020, after most of the survey was completed.

## FIGURE 1.2 Critical Issues, by Party Affiliation

Percent who view the issue as critical:



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

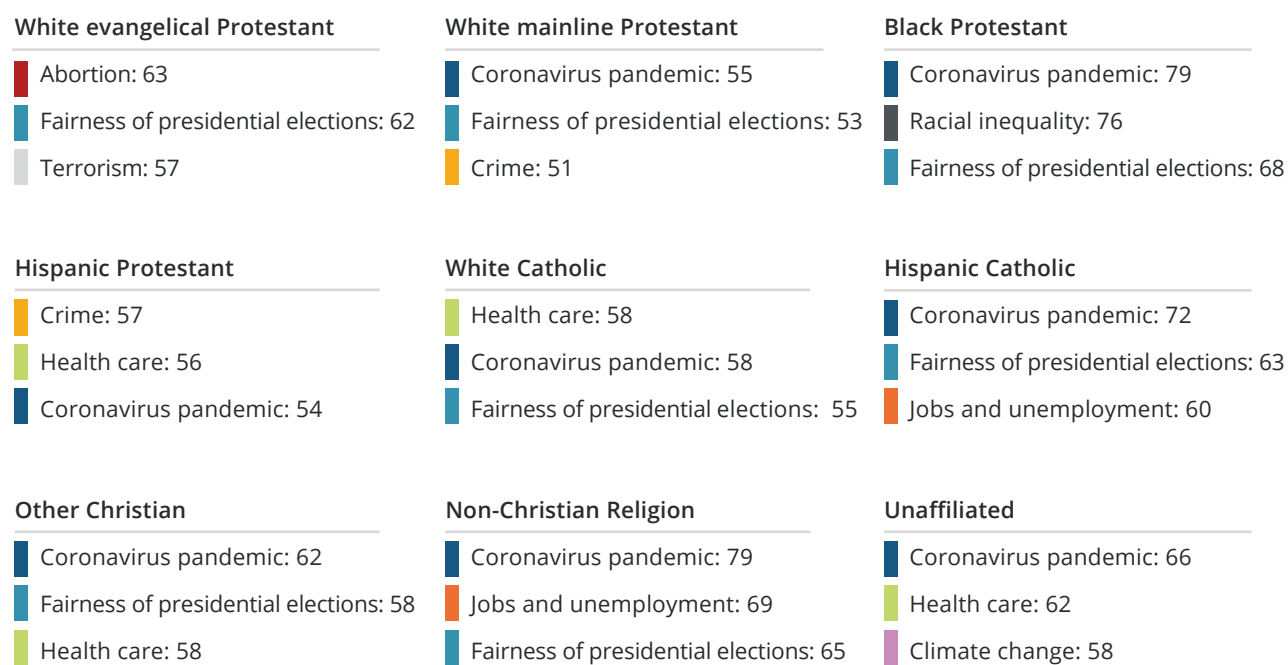
Compared to 2016, Democrats are more likely to rate the fairness of presidential elections (68% in 2020 vs. 39% in 2016) and racial inequality (68% in 2020 vs. 61% in 2016) as critical.<sup>4</sup> They are much less likely to rate terrorism as critical now (43%) than they were in 2016 (65%). Other issues that Democrats consider critical have only shifted slightly since 2016.

Compared to 2016, the only issue that Republicans are more likely to rate as critical is the fairness of presidential elections (55% in 2020 vs. 45% in 2016). Republican views of other issues as critical have declined by double digits, including terrorism (57% in 2020 vs. 83% in 2016), the federal deficit (40% in 2020 vs. 66% in 2016), immigration (38% in 2020 vs. 60% in 2016), racial inequality (17% in 2020 vs. 31% in 2016), and jobs and unemployment (47% in 2020 vs. 61% in 2016).

Independents express a similar trend, though to a lesser degree. More independents rate the fairness of presidential elections (54% in 2020 vs. 38% in 2016) as critical, but their rankings of other issues have declined by double digits, including terrorism (40% in 2020 vs. 67% in 2016), crime (37% in 2020 vs. 52% in 2016), immigration (29% in 2020 vs. 42% in 2016), and the federal deficit (39% in 2020 vs. 49% in 2016).

### FIGURE 1.3 Top Three Critical Issues, by Religious Affiliation

Percent who view the issue as critical:



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

<sup>4</sup> In 2016, the question about “racial inequality” was phrased as “race relations.”

Majorities of nearly all religious groups say the coronavirus pandemic is a critical issue, including Black Protestants (79%), Hispanic Catholics (72%), non-Christian religious Americans (70%), religiously unaffiliated Americans (66%), other Christians (62%), white Catholics (58%), white mainline Protestants (55%), and Hispanic Protestants (54%). The pandemic is significantly less critical to white evangelical Protestants (35%).

White evangelicals in particular stand out from all other religious groups in their issue priorities. They are the only religious group for which the coronavirus pandemic does not rank among their top three issues, as only 35% say the issue is critical. White evangelical Protestants are also the only religious group in which a majority (63%) say abortion is a critical issue, and it registers as their top issue. No other religious group has a majority saying abortion is a critical issue.

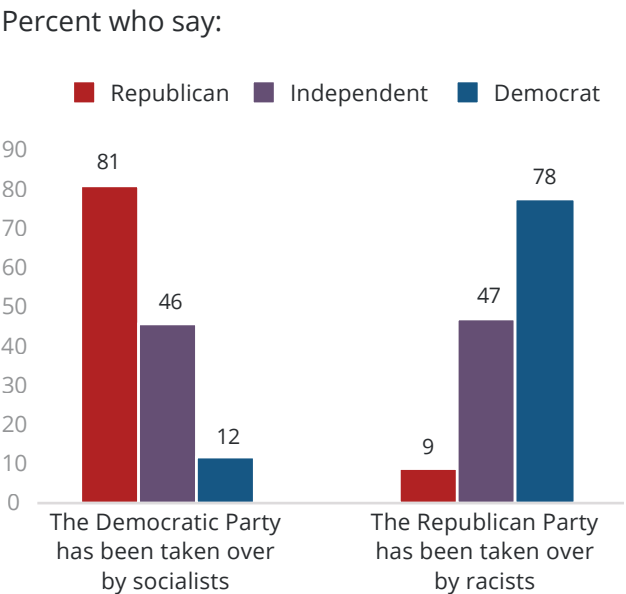
Perceptions of Political Parties

Americans remain deeply divided over the goals and makeup of both the Republican and Democratic parties. A slim majority (52%) of American believe that the Democratic Party is working to make capitalism work for average Americans, while 45% say that the Democratic Party has been taken over by socialists. These attitudes have not shifted since 2019 (53% and 44%, respectively).

Less than one in five (17%) Republicans and 84% of Democrats say the Democratic Party is trying to make capitalism work for average Americans. On the other end, 81% of Republicans and 12% of Democrats say the party has been taken over by socialists. Independents fall in the middle, with 51% saying that the Democratic Party is working to make capitalism work for average Americans and 46% saying that the party has been taken over by socialists. None of these partisan groups have shifted since 2019.

Americans are almost identically divided along party lines on whether the Republican Party is trying to protect the American way of life against outside threats (50%) or if the party has been taken over by racists (47%), views that are stable compared to 2019. Nine in ten (90%) Republicans, compared

FIGURE 1.4 Negative Perceptions of Political Parties, by Party Affiliation



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

to 20% of Democrats, feel the Republican Party is trying to protect against outside threats. Only 9% of Republicans, but 78% of Democrats, feel that the Republican Party has been taken over by racists. Again, independents fall in the middle, as 50% say the party is protecting the American way of life and 47% say the party has been taken over by racists.

## Religious and Cultural Fault Lines

### Religious Pluralism

When asked to put themselves on a ten-point scale where one end is the statement “I would prefer the U.S. to be made up of people belonging to a wide variety of religions” and the other end is the statement “I would prefer the U.S. to be a nation primarily made up of people who follow the Christian faith,” Americans are likelier to prefer religious diversity, although a significant number are divided. About four in ten (38%) mostly agree with the first statement, while approximately one-quarter (25%) mostly agree with the second statement and 36% position themselves in the middle of the scale.

Since Feb. 2019, Americans have shifted toward mostly agreeing with the first statement, which expresses support for religious pluralism in the U.S. Then, 34% mostly agreed with the first statement, while 37% placed themselves in the middle of the scale. The share of Americans who mostly agree with the second statement has not shifted since 2019 (24%).

There are deep divides along partisan and religious lines in preferences for religious diversity. Only 13% of Republicans, compared to 43% of independents and 53% of Democrats, mostly agree with the first statement. Four in ten (43%) Republicans, compared to 18% of independents and 16% of Democrats, mostly agree with the second statement. These patterns are largely similar to 2019.

Non-Christian religious Americans (66%) and religiously unaffiliated Americans (66%) are the only major religious groups among which a majority express a preference for religious diversity. Between one-quarter and one-third of other Christians (30%), Black Protestants (29%), white Catholics (29%), Hispanic Catholics (27%), and white mainline Protestants (25%) express a preference for religious diversity. White evangelical Protestants (7%) and Hispanic Protestants (15%) stand out as the least likely groups to express a preference for religious diversity. White evangelical Protestants are the only group in which a majority (58%) express a preference for a mostly Christian country.

Young Americans are much more likely to express a preference for religious pluralism. Nearly half (48%) of young Americans ages 18-29 mostly agree with the first statement, compared to four in ten or less ages 30-49 (40%), ages 50-64 (31%), or 65 and over (34%).

## Perceptions of Islam

A majority (54%) of Americans disagree with the statement that the values of Islam are at odds with American values and way of life, while 43% agree. This is the first time in PRRI polling that a majority have disagreed. When the question was last asked, in 2015, 56% agreed with the statement, while 41% disagreed.

There is a 50 percentage-point divide between partisans on this question today, which has expanded over the last five years. More than three-quarters of Republicans (77%) agree that the values of Islam are at odds with American values and way of life, compared to only 41% of independents and 26% of Democrats. Since 2015, the views of Republicans have not changed (76%), but far fewer independents and Democrats agree with this sentiment today than five years ago (57% and 43%, respectively).

## Racial Pluralism

When asked to put themselves on a ten-point scale where one end is the statement “I would prefer the U.S. to be made up of people from all over the world” and the other end is the statement “I would prefer the U.S. to be a nation primarily made up of people from western European heritage,” almost half of Americans (48%) mostly agree that the U.S. should be a diverse country made up of people from all over the world. Four in ten (40%) place themselves in the middle of the scale, while just 10% say they would prefer the U.S. to be made up of people of western European heritage. These shares have not meaningfully changed since Feb. 2019.

One in four (25%) Republicans, compared to a plurality (48%) of independents and more than six in ten (63%) Democrats mostly agree with the first statement. Republicans (57%) are most likely to place themselves in the middle of the scale, and somewhat more likely than all Americans to mostly agree with the second statement (17%). Four in ten (41%) independents and around three in ten (28%) Democrats place themselves in the middle of the scale, while just 9% of independents and 7% of Democrats mostly agree with the second statement.

White Americans are less likely than other Americans to express a preference for racial diversity. Less than half of white Americans (43%) and Hispanic Americans (47%) mostly agree with the first statement, compared to majorities of those who are another race or multiracial (73%) and Black Americans (54%). White Americans divide by education, as 36% of Americans without a four-year college degree and 53% of Americans with at least a four-year degree prefer racial diversity.

Majorities of Americans ages 18–29 (55%) or ages 30–49 (51%), compared to less than half of Americans ages 50–64 (41%) or over age 65 (42%), mostly agree with the racial diversity statement.

Less than one in five Americans (18%) agree that the idea of America where most people are not white bothers them, while 81% disagree, including a slim majority who *strongly* disagree (52%). These attitudes are relatively similar to those recorded in May 2016 (21% agree, 78% disagree) and Feb. 2013 (14% agree, 84% disagree).

Republicans (27% agree, 71% disagree) are somewhat more likely to agree than independents (16% agree, 83% disagree) and Democrats (13% agree, 86% disagree). However, Republicans (35%) are much less likely to *strongly* disagree than independents (52%) or Democrats (66%).

### **The U.S. as a Christian Nation**

More than one-third (36%) of Americans say this country has always been and is currently a Christian nation. Four in ten (40%) say it was a Christian nation but no longer is, and about one in five (22%) say the U.S. has never been a Christian nation.

Between 2010 and 2015, the belief that the U.S. is a Christian nation declined, from 42% to 35%, before rising to 41% in 2016. Since 2016, that share has declined slightly, to its current 36%. The share of Americans who say that America has never been a Christian nation is at its highest point (22%), up from 15% in 2016.

Around four in ten Americans have consistently said that the U.S. was a Christian nation in the past but is not now, but the share of those who said that change is a good thing has increased, from 29% in June 2015 to 39% currently. The share of those who say it is a bad thing has held relatively steady, from 61% to 59% in the same time period.

About half of Republicans (49%), compared to 35% of independents and 30% of Democrats, say the U.S. is a Christian nation. Four in ten Republicans (43%) say the U.S. was a Christian nation but is no longer, and among that group, 16% say that is a good thing, while 82% say it is a bad thing. Similar numbers of independents (41%) and Democrats (39%) say the U.S. is no longer a Christian nation but are much more divided on whether this is a good thing (43% for independents, 55% for Democrats) or a bad thing (57% for independents, 43% for Democrats). Democrats (28%) are more likely than independents (22%) and Republicans (7%) to say the U.S. has never been a Christian nation.

Less than half of all white Christian groups say the U.S. has always been and currently is a Christian nation. This includes 49% of white Catholics, 44% of white mainline Protestants, and 42% of white evangelical Protestants. Black Protestants are somewhat more likely to say the U.S. was but is no longer a Christian nation (44%) than that it is currently a Christian nation (35%). Similarly, 31% of Hispanic Catholics say the U.S. is a Christian nation, while 42% say it no longer is. Hispanic Protestants are more divided, as 40% say it is currently a Christian nation and 38% say it used to

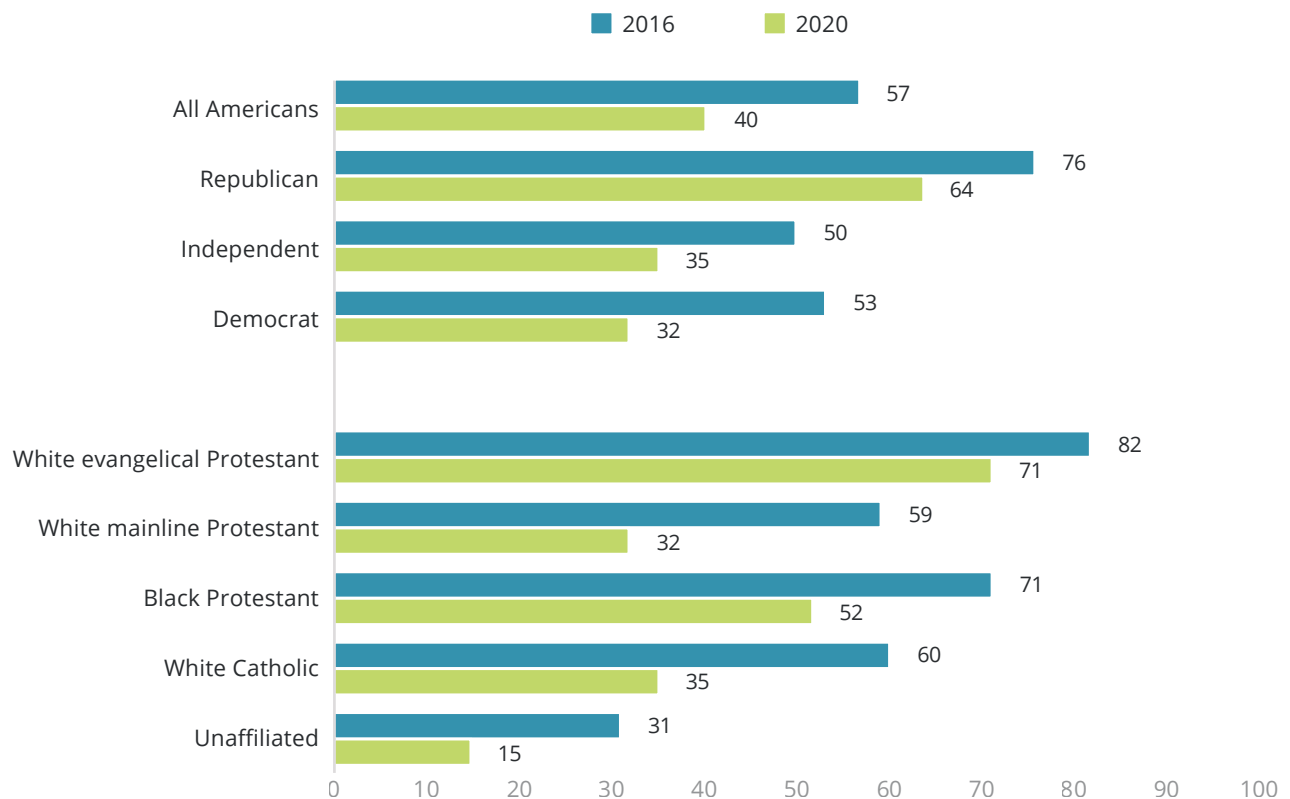
be. About one-third of non-Christian religious Americans (32%) and religiously unaffiliated Americans (38%) say the U.S. has never been a Christian nation.

Today, only 40% of Americans agree that God has granted the U.S. a special role in human history, while 58% disagree. This is the first time since PRRI first asked this question, in 2011, that a majority have disagreed with this statement. Even as recently as 2016, 57% of Americans agreed with the statement, while 36% disagreed. Notably, the share of Americans who *completely* disagree (40%) has nearly doubled since the question was last asked, in the lead-up to the 2016 election (22%).

Nearly two-thirds of Republicans (64%) agree that God has granted the U.S. a special role in human history, compared to about half as many independents (35%) and Democrats (32%). Six in ten independents (61%) and 67% of Democrats disagree with the statement. Since 2016, agreement with this statement among all partisan groups has decreased, shifting the most among

**FIGURE 1.5 God Has Granted America a Special Role in Human History, 2020 vs. 2016, by Party Affiliation and Religious Affiliation**

Percent who agree:



Sources: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey, PRRI 2016 Survey.

Democrats. In 2016, three in four Republicans (76%), half of independents (50%), and a majority of Democrats (53%) agreed that God has granted the U.S. a special place in human history.

Majorities of white evangelical Protestants (71%) and Black Protestants (52%) agree that God has granted the U.S. a special role in history.<sup>5</sup> Only 35% of white Catholics, 32% of white mainline Protestants, and 15% of religiously unaffiliated Americans agree with the statement. Four years ago, 82% of white evangelical Protestants agreed, along with 71% of Black Protestants, 60% of white Catholics, 59% of white mainline Protestants, and 31% of religiously unaffiliated Americans.

### **The U.S. as a Moral Example**

Around one-quarter of Americans (26%) agree with the statement that America sets a good moral example, while 74% disagree. This is a significant downward shift from previous years (40% in 2018 and 43% in 2015).

Republicans (45%) are more likely than Democrats (18%) and independents (23%) to agree with the statement, but majorities of all partisan groups disagree (55% of Republicans, 75% of independents, and 81% of Democrats). Since 2018, Republican agreement with this statement has dropped more than twenty percentage points (from 67% in 2018). Agreement among independents has declined somewhat (from 36% in 2018), while agreement has held steady among Democrats (20% in 2018).

Today, there are no religious groups in which a majority agree that the U.S. sets a good moral example for the world. Only 33% of white Catholics, 29% of white mainline Protestants, and 28% of white evangelical Protestants agree. And Black Protestants (14%) and religiously unaffiliated Americans (10%) are even less likely to agree.<sup>6</sup> Compared to 2018, agreement with this statement has dropped across all religious groups. In 2018, a majority of white Catholics (57%), along with nearly half of white evangelical Protestants (46%) and white mainline Protestants (45%), agreed, along with roughly one in four (26%) religiously unaffiliated Americans.

### **The Role of Religion in Society**

Around four in ten (38%) Americans agree that religion causes more problems in society than it solves, while 61% disagree. This is relatively in line with past years, including 2019 (36% agreed, 63% disagreed) and 2016 (37% agreed, 61% disagreed).

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<sup>5</sup> This question was asked of only half the sample, so Hispanic Catholic, Hispanic Protestant, other Christian, and non-Christian groups are too small to report.

<sup>6</sup> This question was asked of only half the sample, so Hispanic Catholic, Hispanic Protestant, other Christian, and non-Christian groups are too small to report.

Majorities of Republicans (79%), independents (58%), and Democrats (53%) disagree that religion causes more problems in society than it solves. The same holds true for Christian groups. Majorities of white evangelicals (90%), white Catholics (75%), other Christians (75%), white mainline Protestants (73%), Black Protestants (71%), Hispanic Protestants (67%), and Hispanic Catholics (66%) disagree. By contrast, non-Christian religious Americans and religiously unaffiliated Americans are both more likely to agree (56% and 69%, respectively) than disagree (42% and 32%, respectively) that religion causes more problems than it solves.

Today, only about four in ten (39%) agree that it is necessary to believe in God in order to be moral and have good values, compared to 60% who disagree. Opinion on this statement has shifted significantly since 2016, when opinion was nearly evenly divided (49% agreed, 50% disagreed).

A slim majority of Republicans (53%) believe that it is necessary to believe in God in order to be moral and have good values, compared to only 36% of Democrats and 32% of independents. Most of the shift from 2016 has been driven by Democrats (down from 48%) and independents (down from 43%), while Republicans have remained steady (54% in 2016).

In many, but not all, religious groups, majorities agree it is necessary to believe in God to be moral and have good values. Black Protestants are most likely to agree (69%), along with 64% of white evangelical Protestants, 59% of Hispanic Protestants, 58% of Hispanic Catholics, and 51% of other Christians. White Catholics (37%), white mainline Protestants (35%), non-Christian religious Americans (25%), and religiously unaffiliated Americans (15%) are all less likely to agree.

### **Perceptions of Gender Roles and Societal Norms**

Americans continue to be less likely to agree than disagree with the statement that society seems to punish men just for acting like men (38% agree, 60% disagree) and that society has become too soft and feminine (39% agree, 59% disagree). These attitudes have remained roughly the same since 2016.

Majorities of Republicans agree with both the statement that society punishes men just for acting like men (60% agree) and that society has become too soft and feminine (63% agree). Independents and Democrats are less likely to agree with either statement: 33% of independents and 24% of Democrats agree that society punishes men for being men, and 34% of independents and 23% of Democrats agree that society has become too feminine.

A majority (53%) of white evangelical Protestants agree that society punishes men just for acting like men, and 56% agree that society has become too feminine. White mainline Protestants are more divided: 50% agree that society punishes men for being men, and 47% agree that society has become too feminine. Religiously unaffiliated Americans, white Catholics, and Black Protes-

tants are all much less likely than other white Christian groups to agree that society punishes men for being men (29%, 32%, and 47%, respectively) or has become too feminine (36%, 35%, and 29%, respectively).<sup>7</sup>

Unsurprisingly, there are deep gender divides on the issue. Half of men (50%), compared to 30% of women, agree that society punishes men for being men. Similarly, nearly half of men (47%) but only one-third of women (32%) agree that society has become too feminine.

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<sup>7</sup> These questions were asked of only half the sample so Hispanic Catholic, Hispanic Protestant, other Christian, and non-Christian groups are too small to report.

# The 2020 Election

## Confidence in the Electoral Process

The 2020 environment has introduced an unusually high volume of concerns about the conduct and integrity of the presidential election, and Americans do show concern about the election process generally. Only 18% are very confident that the election will be conducted fairly and accurately. Almost half are somewhat confident (49%), and one-third of Americans (33%) report no confidence at all that the election will be conducted fairly and accurately. Notably, there are no major differences in the perceptions of partisans, but independents (35%) are slightly more likely than Republicans (29%) or Democrats (30%) to say they are not confident at all that the election will be conducted fairly and accurately.

Black Americans (39%), Hispanic Americans (38%), and those who are another race or multiracial (39%) are more likely than white Americans (30%) to say they have no confidence at all that the election will be fair and accurate. White Americans without a four-year college degree (33%) are more likely to express no confidence in the system than their counterparts who have four-year college degrees or higher (25%).

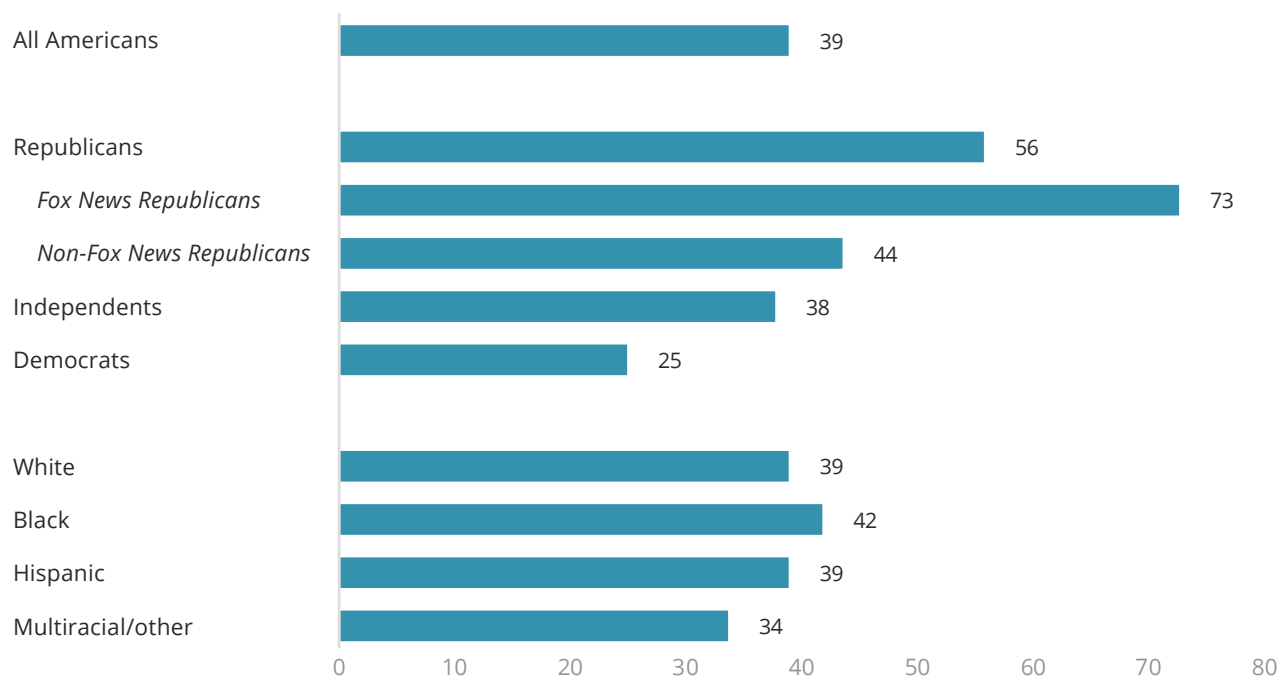
Americans are a bit more confident that their individual votes will be counted accurately than they are in the system overall. More than one-third say they are very confident that their votes will be counted accurately (35%) and 47% are somewhat confident. Still, around one in five (18%) are not confident at all that their votes will be counted accurately. Independents (21%) are more likely than Republicans (13%) or Democrats (14%) to say they are not confident at all that their vote will be counted accurately. The last time PRRI asked this question, prior to the 2016 election, 43% reported a great deal of confidence, 38% only some confidence, and 17% hardly any confidence that their votes would be counted accurately.

Hispanic Americans (27%) and Black Americans (23%) are more likely than white Americans (15%) to say they have no confidence at all that their votes will be counted accurately. Among white Americans without a four-year degree, 17% say they are not at all confident their votes will be counted accurately, compared to 10% among those with a four-year degree.

Americans' confidence in the security of voting by mail is more polarized, as 27% say they are very confident, 34% say they are somewhat confident, and 39% say they are not confident at all that voting by mail will be as secure as voting in person.

Notably, Republicans are twice as likely as Democrats to say they are not confident at all that voting by mail will be as secure as voting in person (56% and 25%, respectively). Independents

**FIGURE 2.1 Voting by Mail will be as Secure as Voting in Person, by Party Affiliation and Race**  
Percent who are NOT AT ALL CONFIDENT:



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

fall in between, with 38% not at all confident that voting by mail will be as secure as voting in person. And Republicans who say they most trust Fox News are especially distrustful of voting by mail. Nearly three in four Republicans who most trust Fox News (73%), compared to only 44% of Republicans who trust any other news source, say they are not confident at all that voting by mail will be as secure as in-person voting.

### **The Electoral College vs. the Popular Vote**

Americans continue to say that the popular vote should determine the winner of presidential elections by a two-to-one majority. Two-thirds say the popular vote should determine the next president (66%), compared to 33% who say the Electoral College should continue to award the prize of the nation's highest office. This is unchanged from 2018 and 2019.

Republicans are much less likely than Democrats to favor allowing the popular vote to determine the winner of presidential elections (39% vs. 86%). More than two-thirds of independents (68%) prefer the popular vote. Republicans who report trusting Fox News most are even less supportive of the popular vote than Republicans who most trust any other news source (25% vs. 48%).

Black Americans (82%), Hispanic Americans (72%), and those who are another race or multiracial (71%) are more likely than white Americans (61%) to prefer the popular vote as the final arbiter of presidential elections. There are no significant differences by education.

Three in four (76%) young Americans (ages 18–29) would prefer that the popular vote decide presidential elections rather than the Electoral College, as do just under two-thirds of those ages 30–49 (65%) and 50–64 (65%). Seniors ages 65 and older are least likely to prefer the popular vote, but still nearly six in ten (59%) would choose it over the Electoral College. Women (72%) are more likely than men (59%) to favor allowing the popular vote to decide presidential contests.

## Trump, the Incumbent in Crisis Times

### Job Approval

Despite the multiple crises facing the U.S. in 2020, Donald Trump's job approval has remained steady, with 40% of Americans approving and 59% disapproving of how he is doing in office. Opinion is extremely polarized by partisanship, with 86% of Republicans approving of the president, including 58% who *strongly* approve of him, compared to only 11% of Democrats who approve of the job Trump is doing in office. Independents are closer to the Democratic side than the Republican side, with only 35% approving of how the president is doing in office. The numbers by party have not changed substantially throughout Trump's time in office.

Nearly all Republicans who report trusting Fox News most for television news (97%) approve of the job Trump is doing in office, including 82% who *strongly* approve. Among all other Republicans, 78% approve of the president and 42% strongly approve.

Among religious groups, white evangelical Protestants are by far the most positive about Trump's job in office. Three in four (76%) approve of the job the president is doing. Although differences are not statistically significant, more Hispanic Protestants (57%) approve of Trump than white mainline Protestants (52%) and white Catholics (49%), and are nearly on par with all white Christians (59%). Smaller proportions of other Christians (42%), non-Christian religious Americans (30%), Hispanic Catholics (27%), and religiously unaffiliated Americans (23%) approve of Trump's job performance. Notably, only 15% of Black Protestants (15%) approve of the job Trump is doing as president—a 60-percentage-point difference from white evangelical Protestants.

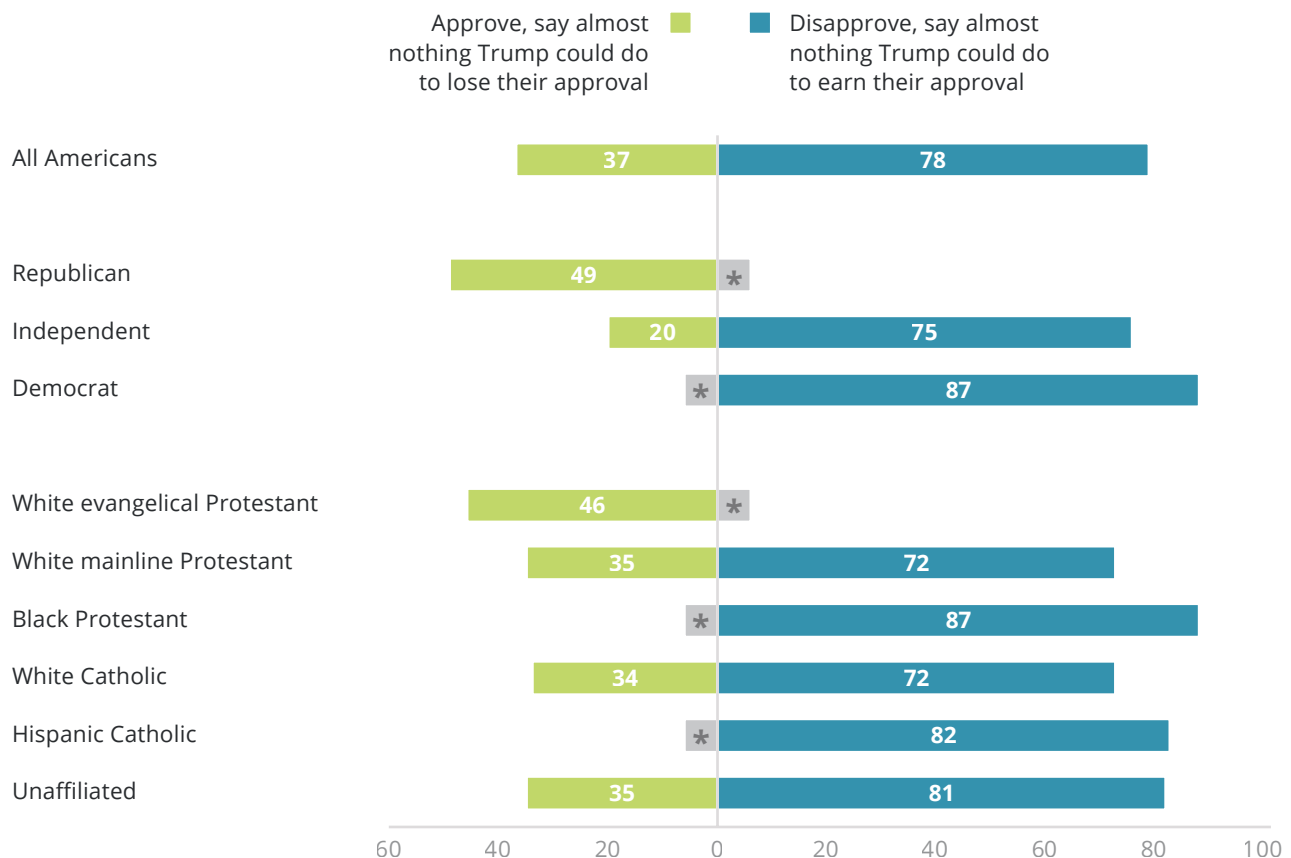
By race, Trump has his highest marks among white Americans (47% approve). About one-third of Hispanic Americans (36%) and Americans who are another race or multiracial (34%) approve of the job Trump is doing as president. Only 14% of Black Americans approve of his job performance. White Americans without a four-year college degree are more likely than those with a four-year college degree to approve of the job Trump is doing in office (55% vs. 36%).

Trump stands to lose more than he might gain on job approval. Among those who disapprove of Trump's performance in office, only one in five (21%) say there is something he could do to win their approval, while 78% say there is almost nothing the president could do to win them over. Among those who approve of Trump, 63% say there is something he could do to lose their approval, while 37% say there is almost nothing that would make them disapprove.

Partisans are set in their opinions, although here too the disapprovers show less willingness to move than approvers. Half of Republicans who approve of Trump (50%) say he could lose their approval, and only 13% of Democrats who disapprove of Trump say he could earn their approval somehow. A majority of Republicans who trust Fox News most for accurate television news (58%) and white evangelical Protestant Republicans (53%) who approve of Trump say he most likely

**FIGURE 2.2 Trump's Opposition is More Entrenched Than His Base, by Party Affiliation and Religious Affiliation**

Percent who:



\*Sample size too small to report.

Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

cannot lose their approval. Four in five independents who approve of Trump (80%) say he could lose their approval, compared to only 24% of those who disapprove who say Trump could win them over.

White evangelical Protestants are almost as set in their ways as Republicans. Among those who approve of the president, 54% say he could lose their approval, but nearly as many (46%) say there is virtually nothing he could do to lose their approval. More than six in ten white mainline Protestants (63%), religiously unaffiliated Americans (65%), and white Catholics (65%) who approve of Trump say it is possible he could lose their approval. Conversely, 28% of white mainline Protestants and white Catholics who disapprove of Trump say he could likely win their approval. Less than one in five religiously unaffiliated Americans (18%), Hispanic Catholics (18%), and Black Protestants (13%) who disapprove of Trump say he could earn their approval.

## **Approval on Major Issues**

### ***The Economy***

Americans feel more positive toward the president regarding his handling of the economy than they do regarding his overall job performance. Half approve (50%) and half disapprove (50%) of this aspect of his presidency. Republicans are much more likely to approve of Trump's handling of the economy than independents and Democrats (90% vs. 51% and 20%, respectively). Approval is near-universal among Republicans who trust Fox News most for television news (98%) and among white evangelical Protestants who are Republicans (95%).

A majority of white Americans (57%) approve of Trump's performance with the economy, while those who are another race or multiracial (46%), Hispanic Americans (45%), and Black Americans (23%) are less likely to approve. More than six in ten white Americans without a four-year college degree (62%), compared to 48% of white Americans with a college degree, approve of how Trump is handling the economy.

### ***The Pandemic***

Trump gets much lower marks on his handling of the coronavirus pandemic. Just over one-third of Americans (35%) approve of how Trump has handled the coronavirus pandemic, while 65% disapprove. More than three in four Republicans (78%), compared to only 29% of independents and 7% of Democrats, approve of how the president has handled the pandemic. Republicans who trust Fox News most for television news (94%) are much more likely than those who rely on any other news source (67%) to approve of the president on this issue.

More than four in ten white Americans (43%) approve of how Trump has handled the pandemic. Less than three in ten Hispanic Americans (28%), and less than one in five of those who are

another race or multiracial (17%) and Black Americans (15%), approve of the president's pandemic response. Education makes a substantial difference among whites, however, as nearly half of white Americans without a four-year college degree (49%) approve of Trump on this issue, compared to only one-third of white Americans with a four-year college degree (33%). Notably, seniors—the group that is at higher risk of contracting the virus but supported Trump in 2016—also give the president low marks on his handling of the pandemic, with only 38% saying they approve and 61% saying they disapprove of his performance.

### ***The Protests***

Americans are also not overly positive about Trump's handling of the protests over the summer following killings of Black Americans by police. Just over one-third approve of Trump's response (35%), and 64% disapprove. Again, the vast majority of Republicans (78%) approve of the president's performance on this topic, while only 29% of independents and 9% of Democrats agree. Republicans are divided by those who trust Fox News most for news (93% approve) and those who trust any other source (68% approve).

White Americans (42%) are more likely to approve of Trump on this topic than any other racial or ethnic group. Three in ten Hispanic Americans (31%) and those who are another race or multiracial (30%) approve of the president's protest response. One in ten Black Americans (10%) approve. White Americans without a four-year college degree (48%) are considerably more likely than those with a four-year college degree (33%) to approve of how Trump has handled the protests.

### **Impact of Trump's Behavior**

More than six in ten Americans (63%) believe that Trump has damaged the dignity of the presidency, including 27% of Republicans, 68% of independents, and 89% of Democrats. This represents a decrease from the 69% who agreed with this statement in 2018.

Republicans who most trust Fox News (9%) are much less likely than those who trust another source most (38%) to agree. More than one in four Americans who plan to vote for Trump (28%) say he has damaged the dignity of the presidency. Almost nine in ten of those who plan to vote for Joe Biden (89%) agree.

White evangelical Protestants are the least likely among religious groups to say that Trump has damaged the dignity of the presidency. Just over one-third of this group (36%) agree, and even fewer white evangelical Protestants who identify as Republicans (20%) think Trump has harmed the office of the presidency. Majorities of every other religious group say the current president has indeed damaged the dignity of the office.

More than two-thirds of Americans (68%) wish Trump's speech and behavior were consistent with those of previous presidents, similar to 2018 (69%) and slightly lower than in 2019 (73%). The partisan divide is still wide, but it is notable that close to half of Republicans (46%) wish that Trump would act more like his predecessors. Large majorities of independents (72%) and Democrats (84%) agree. Republicans have become less likely to say this than they were in 2018 (57%). Democrats and independents have held steady over time.

Republicans who most trust Fox News (27%) are less than half as likely as those who trust any other source (59%) to say they wish Trump behaved more like previous presidents. Nearly half (47%) of those who say they will vote for Trump agree, and the overwhelming majority (84%) of those who say they will vote for Biden agree.

This is one question on which white evangelical Protestants show a more consistent view with other religious groups and the rest of Americans. A majority (55%) say they wish Trump behaved more like his predecessors, compared to 66% each of white mainline Protestants, white Catholics, and Hispanic Protestants. Two-thirds of Black Protestants (67%) and other Christians (68%) agree. More than seven in ten Hispanic Catholics (71%), non-Christian religious Americans (71%), and religiously unaffiliated Americans (75%) also wish Trump's behavior were more in line with that of previous presidents.

A majority of Americans (57%) say Trump's decisions and behavior as president have encouraged white supremacist groups. This is mostly unchanged since 2019 (57%) and 2018 (54%). A small percentage (7%) say Trump has discouraged white supremacist groups, and 35% say his actions have had no impact either way.

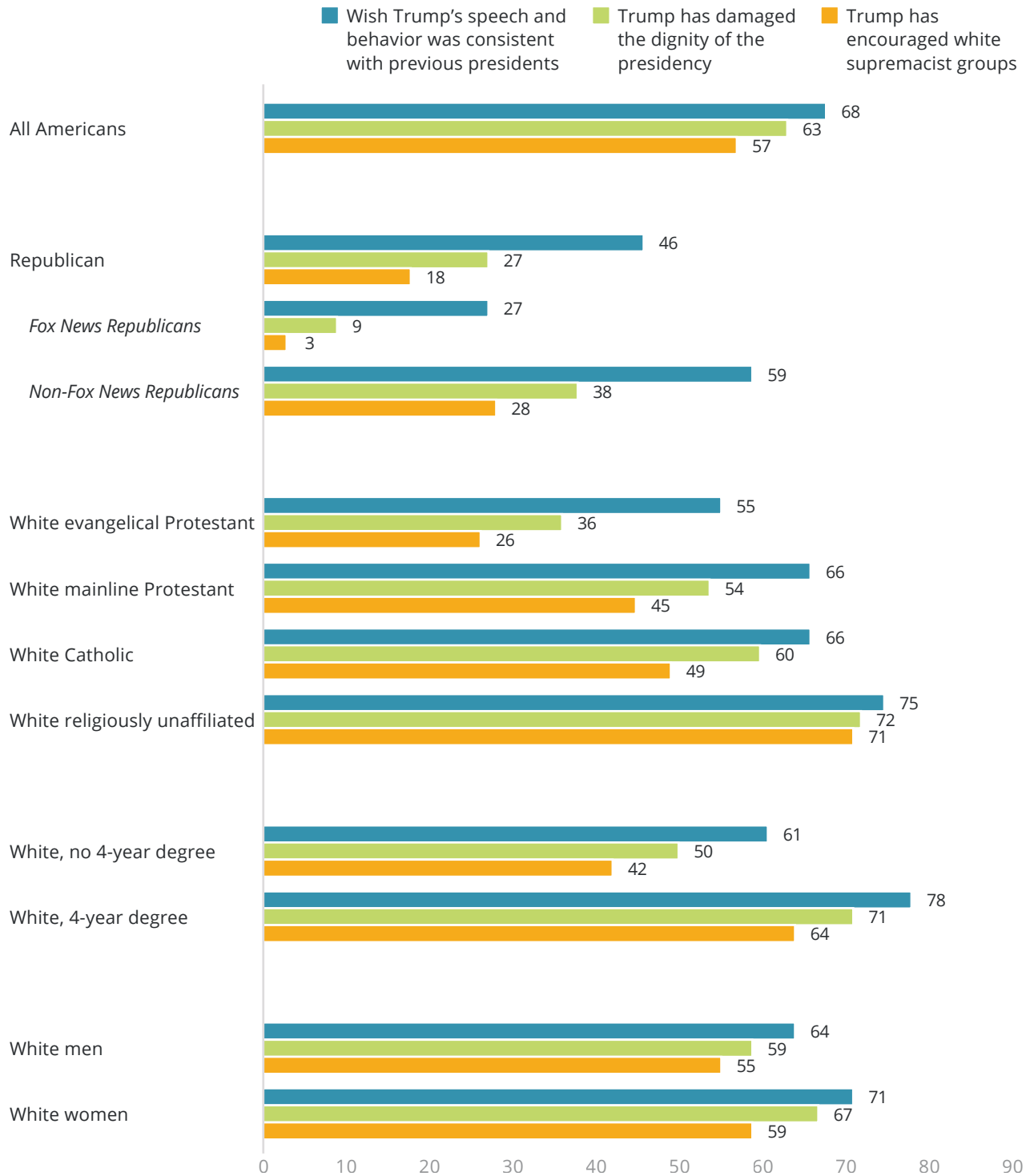
Opinions among partisans have been stable on this question. Less than one in five Republicans (18%) say Trump's behavior has encouraged white supremacist groups, compared to 59% of independents and 88% of Democrats. Republicans who trust a non-Fox News source most are much more likely than those who trust Fox News most to say Trump has encouraged white supremacist groups (28% vs. 3%).

White evangelical Protestants stand out again. Only one in four say Trump has encouraged white supremacist groups (26%), compared to 44% of Hispanic Protestants, 45% of white mainline Protestants, and 49% of white Catholics. All other religious groups have majorities who say Trump has encouraged white supremacist groups.

Half of white Americans (50%) think Trump has encouraged white supremacist groups, compared to 78% of Black Americans, 72% of those who are another race or multiracial, and 60% of Hispanic Americans. White Americans without a four-year college degree are less likely to say this than those with four-year college degrees (42% vs. 64%).

**FIGURE 2.3 Impact of Trump's Behavior, by Republican and White Religious Subgroups**

Percent who say:



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

Women (59%) are not significantly more likely than men (55%) to say Trump has encouraged white supremacist groups. The gap is about the same between white women (53%) and white men (48%) but disappears among white women and men without a four-year college degree (43% vs. 41%, respectively). A wider division emerges between the proportion of white women with a four-year college degree (68%) and white men with a four-year college degree (59%) who think Trump has encouraged white supremacist groups.

### ***Impact of Trump's Behavior on Support***

Nearly six in ten Americans (59%) say Trump's personal conduct makes them less likely to support him. Only 12% say his behavior makes them more likely to support him, and 29% say it makes no difference. The parties mostly align as expected. Just over one in five Republicans (23%), compared to 64% of independents and 87% of Democrats, say Trump's behavior makes them less likely to support him. Among Republicans who trust Fox News most, that drops to 8%. About one in five Americans who say they are voting for Trump (22%) say that his conduct makes them less likely to support him. Nearly nine in ten Biden supporters (87%) say the same.

Among religious groups, white evangelical Protestants (32%) are least likely to say they are repelled by Trump's conduct. Almost half of white mainline Protestants (47%), half of Hispanic Protestants (50%), and a slim majority of white Catholics (51%) say they are less likely to support Trump due to his conduct. Majorities of every other religious group report being less likely to support Trump, including other Christians (61%), Hispanic Catholics (70%), religiously unaffiliated Americans (71%), non-Christian religious Americans (75%), and Black Protestants (78%).

About three in four Black Americans (78%) and those who are another race or multiracial (74%) say Trump's behavior makes them less likely to support him, compared to 63% of Hispanic Americans and 53% of white Americans. White Americans without four-year college degrees are significantly less likely than those with four-year college degrees to say Trump's behavior negatively impacts their likelihood of supporting him (43% vs. 69%).

Women (62%) are more likely than men (56%) to say that Trump's conduct lessens their chances of supporting him. A similar gap exists between white women (55%) and white men (50%). Many fewer white women (46%) and white men (40%) without a four-year college degree, compared to those with a four-year college degree (72% and 65%, respectively), say Trump's behavior makes them less likely to support him.

## Biden, the Challenger

### Biden as the Democratic Nominee

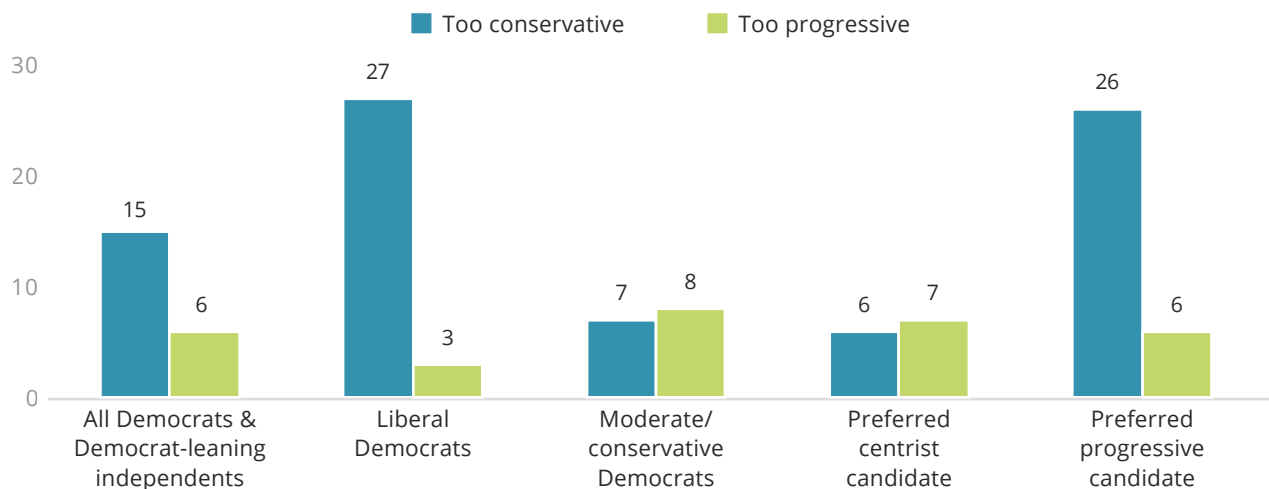
Less than three in ten Democrats and Democrat-leaning independents (28%) say they had originally hoped Biden would be the Democratic presidential nominee. The only former Democratic presidential candidate to show slightly higher support is Senator Bernie Sanders (D-VT), with 31% originally pulling for him. The rest of Democrats and Democrat-leaning independents divide between Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) (14%), former South Bend, Ind. mayor Pete Buttigieg (10%), businessman Michael Bloomberg (6%), Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) (4%), businessman Tom Steyer (2%), and someone else (4%).

The candidate support numbers point to a split Democratic Party, as the progressive candidates Sanders and Warren combine for 45%, and the centrist candidates Biden, Buttigieg, Bloomberg, and Klobuchar combine for 48%. However, both segments of the party overwhelmingly indicate they will vote for Biden. Nearly all of the centrist candidate supporters (97%) and progressive candidate supporters (94%) say they will vote for Biden.

More than three in four (78%) Democrats and Democrat-leaning independents say Biden is neither too conservative nor too progressive. Only 15% say Biden is too conservative, and 6% say he is too progressive. There is no difference between Democrat-leaning independents and Democrats, but more than one in four (27%) Democrats who identify as ideologically liberal, compared to 7% of Democrats who identify as conservative or moderate, say Biden is too conservative.

**FIGURE 2.4 Perceptions of Biden's Ideology, by Democratic Subgroups**

Percent who say Biden is:



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

Those Democrats and Democrat-leaning independents who preferred centrist candidates are much less likely than those who preferred progressive candidates to say Biden is too conservative (6% vs. 26%). The vast majority of those who think Biden is too conservative (94%) plan to vote for him, compared to 96% of those who think he is neither too conservative nor too progressive, and 75% of those who think he is too progressive.

### **Harris as Vice Presidential Nominee**

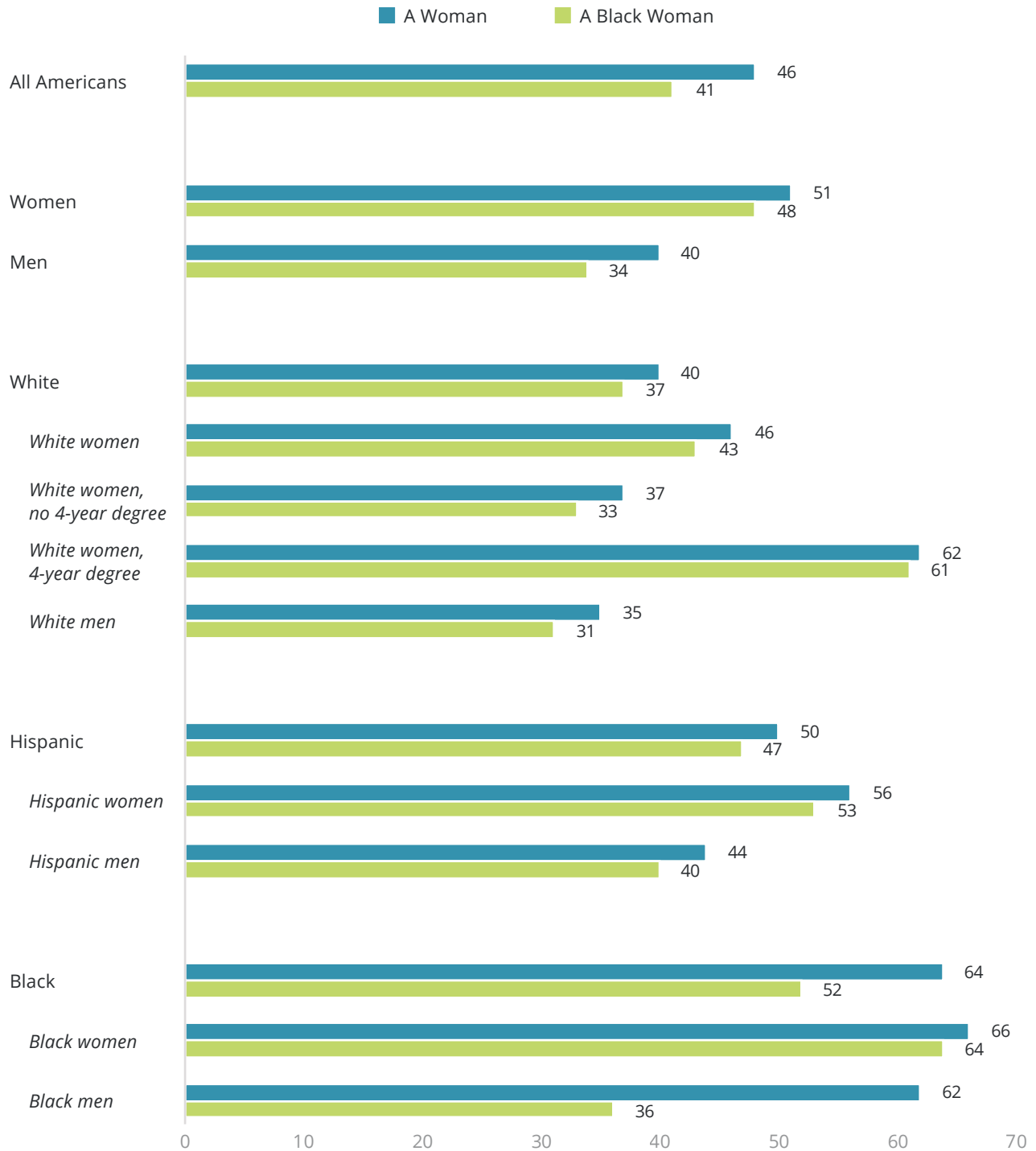
Biden committed to choosing a woman as his vice presidential nominee before he had secured the nomination, and eventually chose Senator Kamala Harris (D-CA). The survey asked half of the sample whether it was a good or bad decision to nominate a woman. Almost half of Americans (46%) say it was a good decision, compared to only 12% who say it was a bad decision and 42% who say it does not matter. The other half of the sample was asked whether it was a good or bad decision to nominate a Black woman. Fewer Americans say this was a good decision (41%) or a bad decision (8%), and the proportion who said it does not matter increases to 50%.

White Americans are equally likely to say nominating a woman (40%) or a Black woman (37%) was a good idea and are more likely to say that nominating a woman (14%) than a Black woman (8%) was a bad decision. There are no significant differences between responses among Hispanic Americans. Roughly half think nominating a woman (50%) and a Black woman (47%) was a good decision. Gender divides are consistently around 12 percentage points among white and Hispanic women and men.

Among Black Americans, notably, 64% say nominating a woman was a good decision, compared to 52% who think nominating a Black woman was a good idea. These differences are driven by the attitudes of Black men, among whom 62% say nominating a woman was a good idea, but only 36% say nominating a Black woman was a good idea. Black women show no significant difference in whether it was a good idea to nominate a woman (66%) or a Black woman (64%).

### FIGURE 2.5 Perceptions of Biden's Decision to Nominate \_\_\_\_\_ as His Running Mate, by Gender and Race

Percent who say it was a good decision:



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

## Trump vs. Biden

### Authoritarianism and Moral Character: What Americans Want to See in Their Leaders

A sizable minority of Americans still agree with the statement “Because things have gotten so far off track in this country, we need a leader who is willing to break some rules if that’s what it takes to set things right.” More than four in ten mostly or completely agree with the statement (44%), while a majority disagree (55%). These numbers are unchanged from 2016 and 2017. Similar to 2016 and 2017, a majority of Republicans (57%) mostly or strongly agree that we need a leader willing to break some rules, compared to 43% of independents and 36% of Democrats. Republicans who trust Fox News most (55%) are not significantly less likely than non-Fox News Republicans (60%) to agree with the statement. Similarly, white evangelical Protestant Republicans (55%) are not significantly less likely than other Republicans (59%) to agree.

Americans also remain fairly tolerant of leaders’ personal indiscretions. A majority (57%) say an elected official who commits an immoral act in their personal life can still behave ethically and fulfill their duties in their public and professional life. Four in ten (42%) disagree. These patterns are similar to findings just ahead of the 2016 presidential election, when 61% of Americans agreed with this statement, but they are a substantial departure from when PRRI first asked this question, in June 2011, when only 44% agreed this was possible. This sea change in opinion is driven by Republicans and white evangelical Protestants, whose positions dramatically shifted with the presence of Donald Trump at the top of the Republican ticket in 2016.

Seven in ten Republicans (71%) say that an elected official who personally behaves in an immoral way can still be effective in their public and professional life, compared to 57% of independents and just under half of Democrats (47%). Compared to 2011, Democrats’ opinions have not changed significantly, but Republicans were approximately twice as likely to affirm this statement beginning in 2016 (70%) as they were in 2011, when only 36% said this bifurcation between an elected official’s personal and public behavior was possible.

The most dramatic opinion shift on this question between 2011 and 2016 has occurred among white evangelical Protestants, who jumped from 30% agreement in 2011 to 72% in 2016. They have mostly held that ground in 2020, with 68% affirming their belief that a person who acts immorally in their personal life can still behave ethically in their public and professional life. White mainline Protestants (63%) and white Catholics (68%) have also held steady on this question since 2016 (60% and 70%, respectively); they also have a significant but less dramatic shift in attitudes compared to 2011 (38% and 43%, respectively).

### **Favorability of the Candidates on the Tickets**

Just over one-third of Americans say they hold favorable views of Trump (36%), with 62% unfavorable, and Pence (36%), with 57% unfavorable. The president and vice president are viewed quite favorably by their own party, with 84% of Republicans holding favorable views of the president and 77% holding favorable views of the vice president. Both get near-universal favorability among Republicans who trust Fox News most for television news (98% for Trump and 96% for Pence).

Biden and Harris are both more likely to be viewed favorably than Trump and Pence. About half of Americans (49%) view Biden favorably, and the same proportion (49%) view him unfavorably. Americans are still getting to know Harris (12% say they have not heard of her), but 46% hold favorable views of the vice presidential nominee, while 41% say they hold unfavorable views of her. Nine in ten Democrats (90%) hold favorable views of Biden, and 82% hold favorable views of Harris (7% of Democrats have not heard of her).

### **Candidate Traits**

Americans are almost twice as likely to say Biden, rather than Trump, is the candidate with the right temperament and personality to be president (48% vs. 25%). One in five (21%) say neither fits that description, and 6% say both candidates have the right temperament and personality to be president.

Biden also outpaces Trump on which candidate “cares about people like you.” More than four in ten (43%) say this describes Biden (43%), whereas 24% say it describes Trump. Nearly one in five (24%) say neither candidate cares about people like them and 7% believe both candidates do.

Four in ten Americans (41%) say Biden is honest and trustworthy, while one in five (21%) say Trump fits that description best. Three in ten Americans (31%) say neither candidate is honest and trustworthy, and 6% say both fit that description.

Neither candidate is viewed as a strong and decisive leader by much more than one-third of Americans. Trump (36%) slightly edges Biden (35%) on this question; 21% say neither candidate is a strong and decisive leader and 7% who say both are aptly described by this statement.

Republicans say Trump is the better candidate on all four traits, but less than two-thirds say he is the candidate best described as having the right temperament and personality to be president (64%), caring about people like them (64%), and being honest and trustworthy (58%). Four in five (80%) say he is the candidate best described as being a strong and decisive leader.

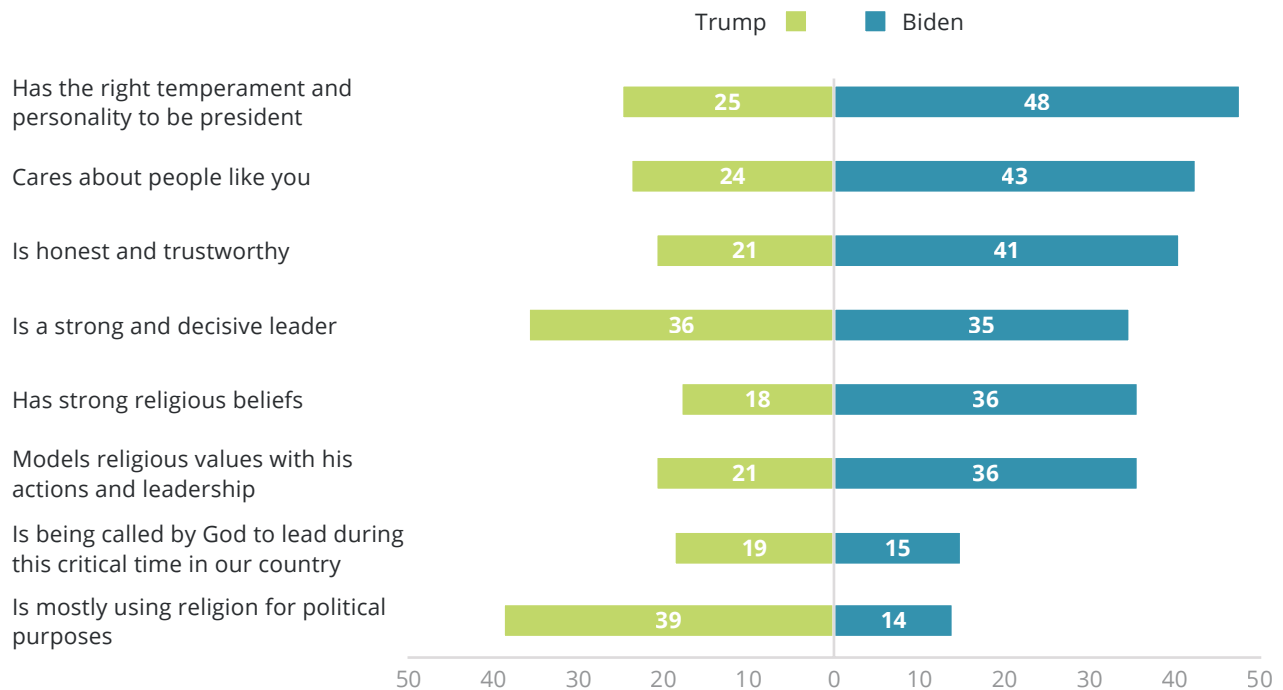
Relying on Fox News as the most trusted television news source makes a significant difference in opinion among Republicans on all four traits. No fewer than three in four Republicans who trust

Fox News most think Trump fits the bill on all traits, including 83% who think he has the right temperament (compared to 51% among those who trust another source most), 83% who think he cares about people like them (compared to 52% among those who trust another source most), 78% who think he is honest and trustworthy (compared to 44% among those who trust another source most), and 93% who think he is a strong and decisive leader (compared to 71% among those who trust another source most).

More than two-thirds of Democrats view Biden as the leading candidate on all four traits. Around four in five Democrats think he is the candidate with the right temperament and personality to be president (83%), that he cares about people like them (80%), and that he is honest and trustworthy (77%). Biden wanes a bit on being viewed as the candidate who is a strong and decisive leader, but he is still selected as such by seven in ten Democrats (70%).

## FIGURE 2.6 Candidates' Leadership and Religious Traits

Percent who say trait applies more to:



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

### Perceptions of Candidates' Religious Beliefs

Twice as many Americans say Biden rather than Trump is the candidate with strong religious beliefs (36% vs. 18%). One-third (33%) say neither candidate has strong religious beliefs, and 11% say both do.

White Christians are divided: 28% say Biden is the candidate with strong religious views, and 26% say Trump fits that description better. Among Trump's strongest supporters, white evangelical Protestants, a plurality (43%, compared to 18% for Biden) think the president has strong religious beliefs. This belief rises to a majority (59%) among Republican white evangelical Protestants. However, Biden is more likely to be viewed as the candidate with strong religious views among white mainline Protestants (33% compared to Trump's 18%) and white Catholics (35% compared to Trump's 21%), the religious group to which he belongs.

Similarly, 36% of Americans say Biden is the candidate who models religious values with his actions and leadership, compared to 21% who say Trump fits this description better. Only 8% say both candidates, and 35% say neither candidate models religious values.

White Christians tilt slightly toward Trump on this question, and are more likely to say the actions and leadership of Trump rather than Biden best exhibits religious values (32% vs. 29%). White evangelical Protestants are more than twice as likely to say that Trump rather than Biden best models religious values (49% vs. 18%). White mainline Protestants and white Catholics are more likely to say Biden is the better religious role model, with roughly one-third choosing the former vice president (33% and 37%, respectively) and roughly one in four choosing Trump (22% and 26%, respectively).

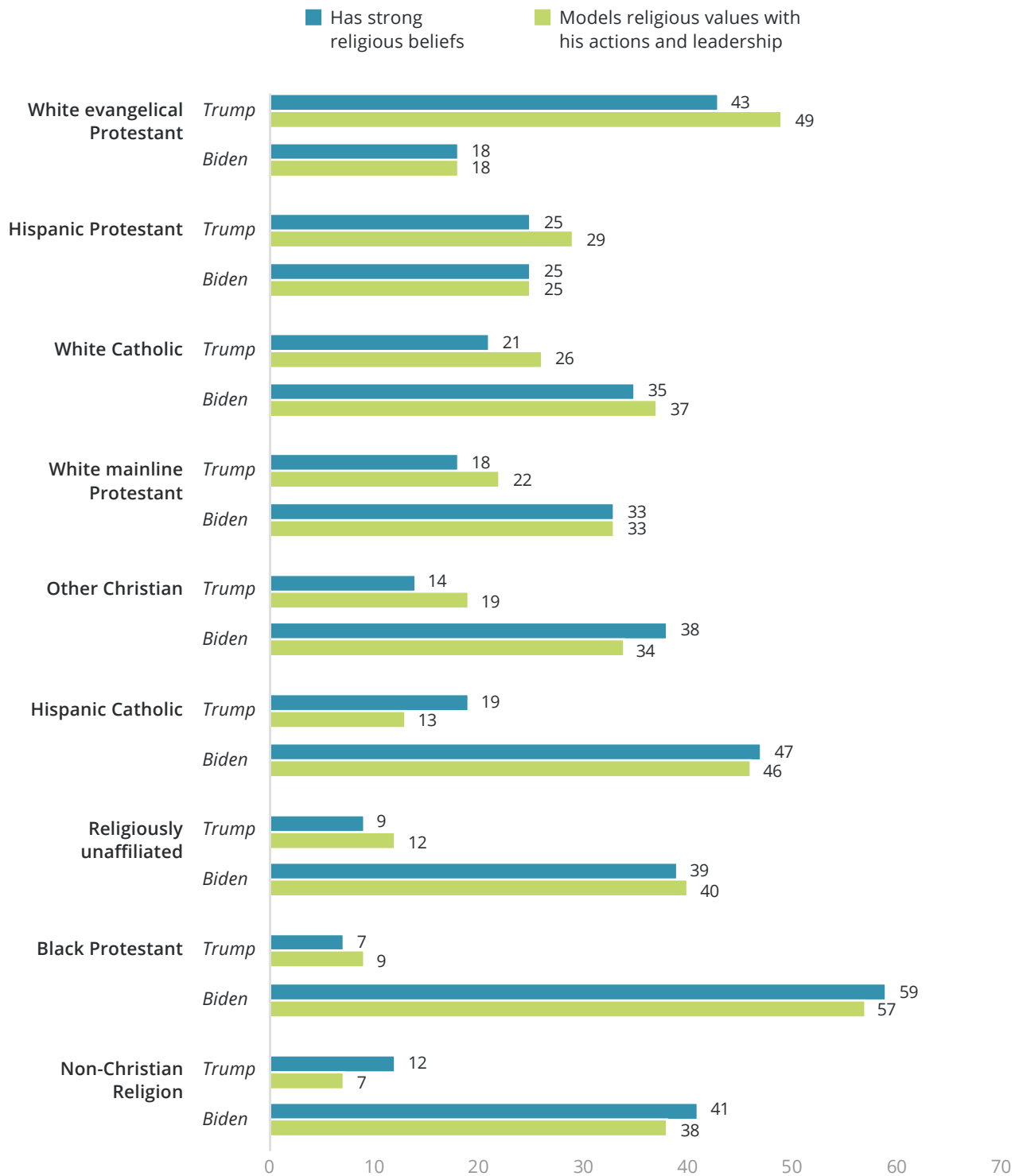
Most Americans (59%) do not think either candidate has been called by God to lead the country at this time. Trump gets a few percentage points more support on this question (19%) than Biden (15%), while 6% say both candidates have been called by God to lead the country.

White Christians are more than twice as likely to say that Trump, rather than Biden, has been called by God (31% vs. 12%), which is driven by 55% of white evangelical Protestants who say Trump has this divine calling, compared to 10% for Biden. Among Republican white evangelical Protestants, 72% say the president has been called by God to lead. Only about one in five white mainline Protestants (20%) and white Catholics (17%) say Trump has been called by God, while slightly fewer of each group say Biden has been called by God to lead in this moment (12% and 15%).

Americans are more than twice as likely to say Trump rather than Biden is using religion for political purposes (39% vs. 14%). White Christians agree, with three in ten (30%) holding the view that Trump uses religion for political reasons and 18% saying the same of Biden. White evangel-

**FIGURE 2.7 Candidates' Religious Traits, by Religious Affiliation**

Percent who say trait applies more to:



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

ical Protestants are equally likely to say Trump (23%) and Biden (23%) are only using religion for political purposes. White mainline Protestants and white Catholics are each twice as likely to say that Trump (34% and 32%, respectively), rather than Biden (17% and 16%, respectively), is using religion for political purposes.

### **Who Plans to Vote**

Most Americans say they are registered to vote (86%), and an additional 6% who were not registered at the time they took the survey said they planned to register. More than three in four American adults (76%) say they are absolutely certain they will vote in November's election, the highest proportion PRRI has recorded in the last three presidential election cycles. In late Oct. 2016, 66% said they were absolutely certain to vote, and in Sept. 2012, 71% said they were absolutely certain to vote.

In addition to those who are absolutely certain to vote, 1% of Americans indicated they had already voted as of the time they took the survey. Another 9% say they "probably will vote," 5% say the chances are 50-50 they will vote, and 8% say their chances of voting are less than 50-50.

More than eight in ten Republicans (85%) and Democrats (85%) say they are absolutely certain to vote, compared to 70% of independents. Nearly all Republicans who trust Fox News most for television news (96%) and nine in ten white evangelical Protestant Republicans (90%) say they are absolutely certain to vote. There is no significant difference between Trump supporters and Biden supporters (76% vs. 78%).

Nine in ten older Americans (91%), ages 65 and over, say they are absolutely voting, compared to 82% of those ages 50–64, 73% of those ages 30–49, and 59% of the youngest voters (ages 18–29).

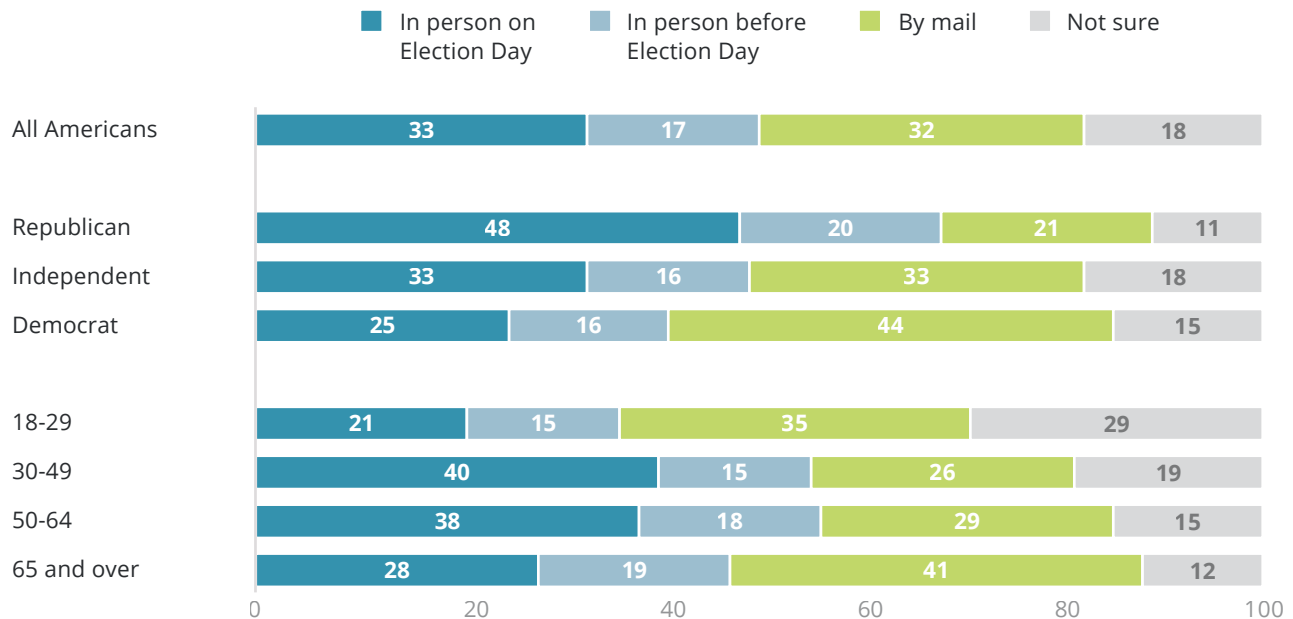
The coronavirus pandemic has changed discussions around how to cast votes. Half of Americans report that they are planning to vote in person: one-third say they will vote in person on Election Day (33%), and another 17% are planning to vote in person sometime before Election Day. About one-third plan to vote by mail (32%), and 18% are not sure. Among those who say they are absolutely certain to vote, 38% plan to vote in person on Election Day, 19% in person before Election Day, and 35% by mail.

There are considerable partisan divides, with two-thirds of Republicans saying they will vote in person, either on (48%) or before (20%) Election Day. By contrast, only about four in ten Democrats say they will vote in person, either on (25%) or before (16%) Election Day. Conversely, 44% of Democrats plan to vote by mail, compared to only 21% of Republicans.

Voters ages 18–29 (35%) and 65 and over (41%) are more likely than those 30–49 (26%) and 50–64 (29%) to say they will vote by mail. Notably, younger voters are more likely than any other age group to say they do not know how they will vote.

**FIGURE 2.8 How Americans Plan to Vote, by Party Affiliation and Age**

Percent who say they will vote:



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

### The Election: Biden vs. Trump

Among all Americans, 56% say they are voting for Biden for president, including 7% who are uncertain but lean toward Biden, compared to 42% who say they are voting for Trump, including 6% who are uncertain but lean toward Trump. These reported voting patterns are identical among registered voters.

Given the ongoing pandemic, there is considerable uncertainty in how many Americans will turn out to vote. PRRI developed two likely voter models to measure potential support for each candidate under two turnout scenarios.<sup>8</sup> If voter turnout looks similar to 2016 (55% turnout), Biden bests Trump by 11 percentage points (55% to 44%). If voter turnout is higher (68% turnout), as multiple indicators suggest is likely, Biden leads Trump by 15 percentage points (57% to 42%).

The survey suggests that the election is largely a referendum on President Trump. Two-thirds of Trump supporters (67%) say their vote is more for Trump than against Biden, while one-third of Trump supporters (33%) say their vote is against Biden more than for Trump. Notably,

<sup>8</sup> The likely voter models are described in the appendix to this report.

in 2016, Trump supporters were much more likely to say their vote was against former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (59%) than to say it was a vote for Trump (40%).

On the other side, only 39% of Biden supporters say their vote is more for Biden than against Trump, while six in ten (60%) say their vote is more against Trump than for Biden. In 2016, 46% of Clinton supporters indicated their choice was more for Clinton than against Trump, compared to 54% who said their vote was specifically against Trump.

### **Election Night and the Aftermath**

In the face of the uncertainty introduced by the pandemic and more mail-in voting this year, Americans are not convinced that they will know the winner of the election on the night of the election. Only 14% are very confident, while 42% are somewhat confident, and 44% are not at all confident they will know the winner on election night. There are few differences by party, but independents (49%) are more likely than Republicans (40%) and Democrats (43%) to have no confidence at all that they will know the winner on election night. Biden supporters (47%) are also more likely than Trump supporters (39%) to report no confidence in knowing the outcome on election night.

A majority of Americans (55%) say they are not at all confident that President Trump will concede defeat if Biden is declared the winner of the election. Three in ten (30%) are somewhat confident he would concede if he loses, and only 15% are very confident.

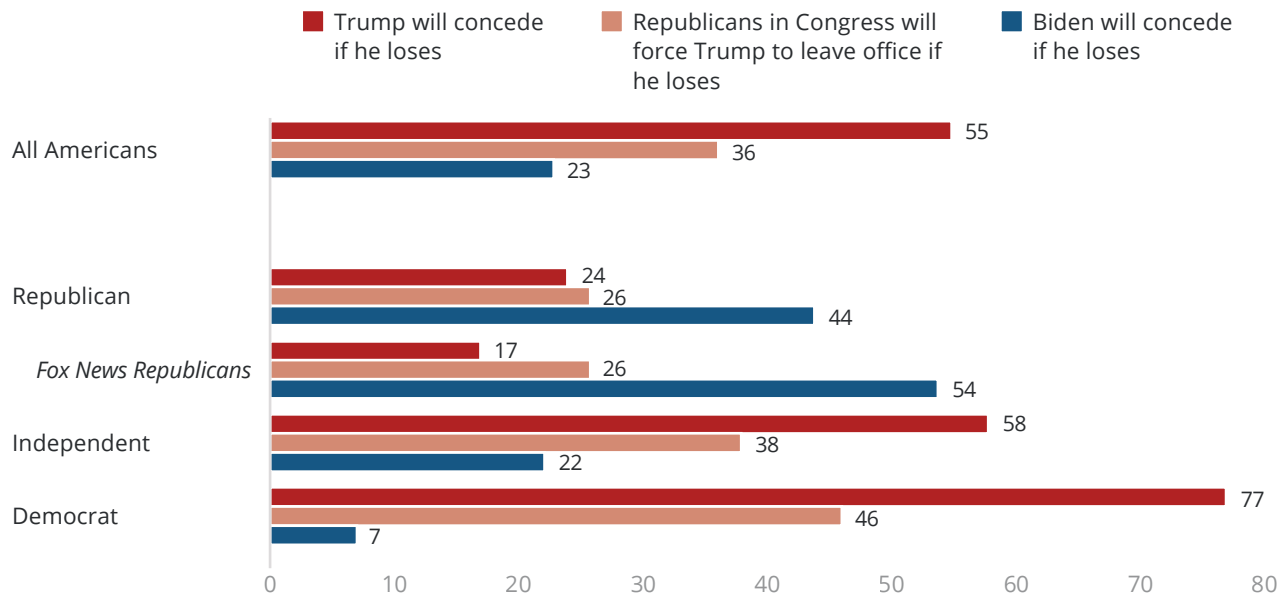
Republicans are divided, with 24% not at all confident and 32% very confident that Trump would concede. Interestingly, Republicans who rely on Fox News are much more likely to be very confident (47%) that Trump will concede and less likely to express no confidence at all (17%). Only 10% of independents and 5% of Democrats are very confident that Trump would concede if he loses, compared to majorities who have no confidence at all (58% and 77%, respectively). Trump and Biden supporters reflect their respective parties on this question.

Americans are a bit more hopeful that Republican leaders in Congress would demand Trump leave office if he refuses to concede, with 21% very confident and 41% somewhat confident that this would happen. Still, more than one-third (36%) are not at all confident that Republican leadership would take this stand.

Even among Republicans, only 30% are very confident that Republican congressional leaders would demand Trump leave the White House if he refused to concede defeat; 41% say they are somewhat confident. And one in four Republicans (26%) are not at all confident that the party's leaders in Congress would push Trump out should he refuse to concede. Independents (38%) and Democrats (46%) are more likely to express no confidence.

**FIGURE 2.9 Concerns About Losing Candidates Conceding the Election, by Party Affiliation**

Percent who are NOT AT ALL CONFIDENT:



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

There is less concern about Biden refusing to concede should he lose the election. More than four in ten Americans (42%) say they are very confident that the former vice president would concede, with 35% somewhat confident and 23% not at all confident. Nearly two-thirds of Democrats (63%) are very confident that Biden would concede if he loses the election—nearly twice the share of Republicans who say the same of Trump (32%). Few Democrats (7%) have no confidence that Biden would concede, one-third as many as Republicans who are not at all confident Trump would concede (24%). More than one in five independents (22%) express no confidence that Biden would concede, and 44% of Republicans say the same.

### Preferences for Congressional Control

Not surprisingly, most Americans want the party of their preferred candidate to control Congress in 2021 and beyond. If Biden wins the presidency, 54% of Americans want the Democrats to control Congress, compared to 44% who want Republicans to control Congress. That includes 91% of Biden supporters and 95% of Democrats, while only 6% of Trump supporters and 5% of Republicans agree.

If Trump wins the presidency, 41% of Americans want Republicans to control Congress, and 56% want Democrats to control Congress. Nine in ten Republicans (90%) and Trump supporters (88%)

want Republicans also in control of Congress if Trump wins, while only 7% of Biden supporters and 5% of Democrats agree.

Altogether, 51% of Americans support Biden *and* a Democratic Congress if Biden wins, 37% support Trump *and* a Republican Congress if Trump wins, 5% support Biden and a Republican Congress if Biden wins, and 5% support Trump and a Democratic Congress if Trump wins.

The current leaders of each chamber of Congress are not viewed particularly well by Americans. More than one-third of Americans (36%) hold favorable views of Democratic Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), compared to 55% who view her unfavorably. Seven in ten Democrats (70%) report favorable views of the speaker.

One in five Americans (21%) view Republican Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) favorably, while 56% hold unfavorable views of him. He is viewed favorably by less than half of Republicans (46%), but 22% say they have not heard of him. Notably, among all Americans, 23% indicated they had not heard of McConnell, compared to only 7% who said the same of Pelosi.

# Major Issues in 2020

## Coronavirus Pandemic

More than one in five Americans (22%) know someone who has died from COVID-19, the illness caused by the coronavirus, and more than one-third (34%) know someone who has been hospitalized. One in ten Americans (10%) report that they themselves have gotten sick with COVID-19 symptoms, 6% report testing positive for COVID-19, and 2% say they have been hospitalized for COVID-19.

Americans' experiences with the pandemic are heavily stratified by race and ethnicity. Only 16% of white Americans, compared to 38% of African Americans, 29% of Hispanic Americans, and 25% of other race or multiracial Americans, report knowing someone who has died from COVID-19. And white Americans are roughly half as likely as African Americans or Hispanic Americans to report they have tested positive for COVID-19 (5% vs. 12% and 9%, respectively).

The economic consequences have been equally large. Nearly four in ten Americans (38%) report that they or someone in their household has had hours or pay cut due to the coronavirus pandemic, and 22% report that they or someone in their household has lost a job due to the coronavirus pandemic. There are also significant racial disparities in the economic impact of COVID-19. White Americans (17%) are significantly less likely than Black Americans (29%), Hispanic Americans (31%), and Americans who identify with another race or as multiracial (31%) to report they have lost a job due to the pandemic.

## Who Americans Trust for Pandemic Information

When Americans were asked about how much they trust various government officials and institutions to provide accurate information and advice regarding the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, there are two notable findings. First, out of eight potential sources of information about the pandemic, only one source has even a slim majority of Americans saying they trust it "a lot." Second, President Donald Trump is by far the least trusted source on the list.

About half of Americans say they have a lot of trust in university research centers (51%), Dr. Anthony Fauci (49%), and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC, 48%). About four in ten have a lot of trust in the World Health Organization (WHO, 42%) and state and local health organizations (40%). Nearly three in ten (28%) have a lot of trust in Joe Biden, and 24% express a lot of trust in state and local governments. Notably, only 14% of Americans say they trust Donald Trump a lot to provide accurate information and advice regarding the pandemic.

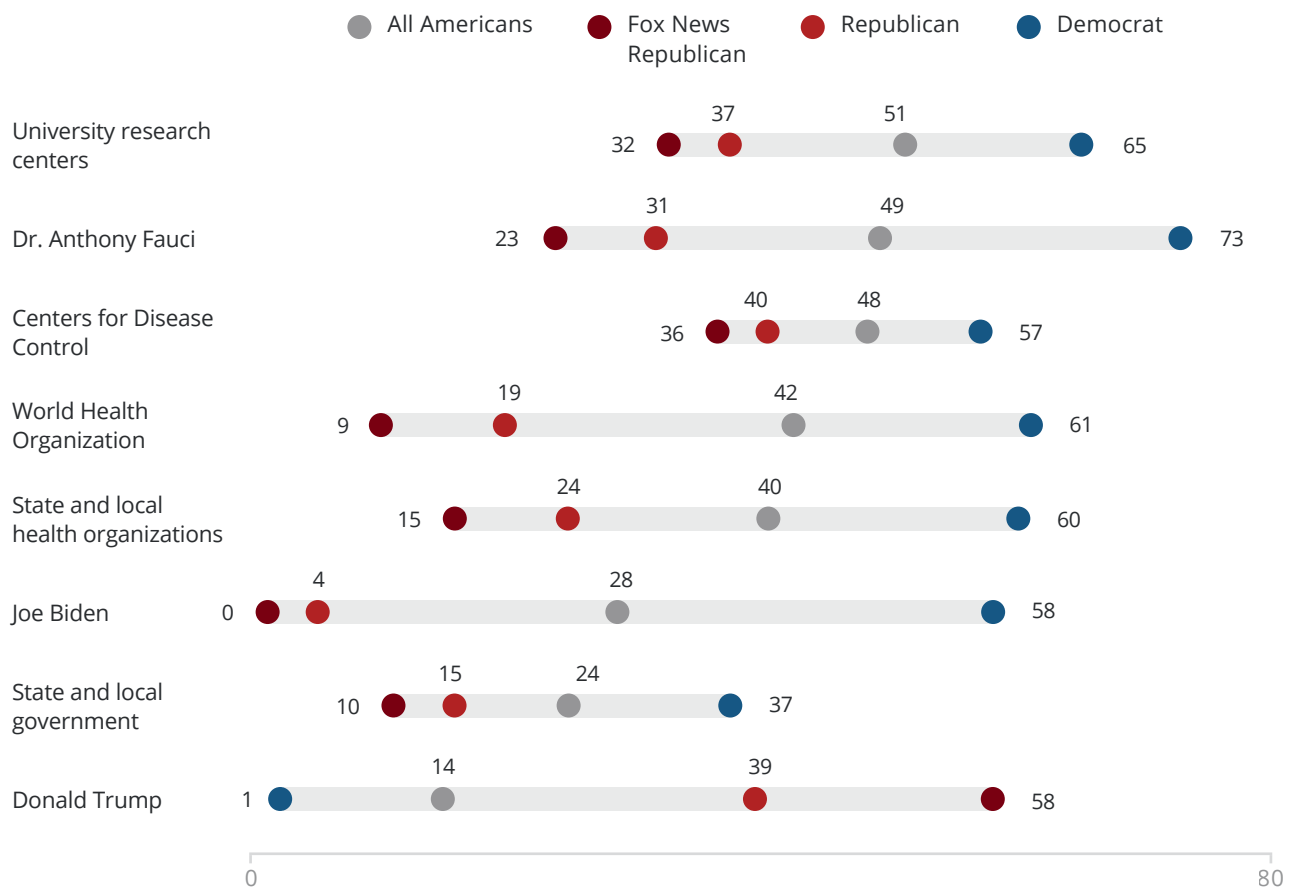
Republicans are notable for their low levels of trust in any of the sources of information about the pandemic. Republicans are most likely to have a lot of trust in the CDC (40%), Trump (39%), and

university research centers (37%), but notably, even these most trusted sources top out at four in ten Republicans who say they trust them a lot. A majority of Republicans who trust Fox News most (58%) have a lot of trust in Trump, compared to 26% of Republicans who most trust any other television news sources. However, compared to Democrats and independents, Republicans are the least likely to say they have a lot of trust in the CDC (40%), university research centers (37%), Anthony Fauci (31%), state and local health organizations (24%), the WHO (19%), and state and local governments (15%). Only 4% of Republicans place a lot of trust in Biden.

By contrast, majorities of Democrats express a lot of trust in Anthony Fauci (73%), university research centers (65%), the WHO (61%), state and local health organizations (60%), and the CDC (57%). Nearly six in ten Democrats (58%) trust Biden a lot, considerably higher than the propor-

**FIGURE 3.1 Who Americans Trust to Provide Accurate Information About the Coronavirus Pandemic, by Party Affiliation and Fox News Republicans**

Percent who say they have “a lot” of trust:



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

tion of Republicans who have a lot of trust in Trump (39%). About 37% of Democrats trust state and local governments a lot. Only 1% of Democrats say they have a lot of trust in Trump.

Independents mirror very closely all Americans except that they are notably less likely than all Americans to put a lot of trust in Biden (23% vs. 28%) or Trump (9% vs. 14%) to provide accurate information and advice regarding the coronavirus.

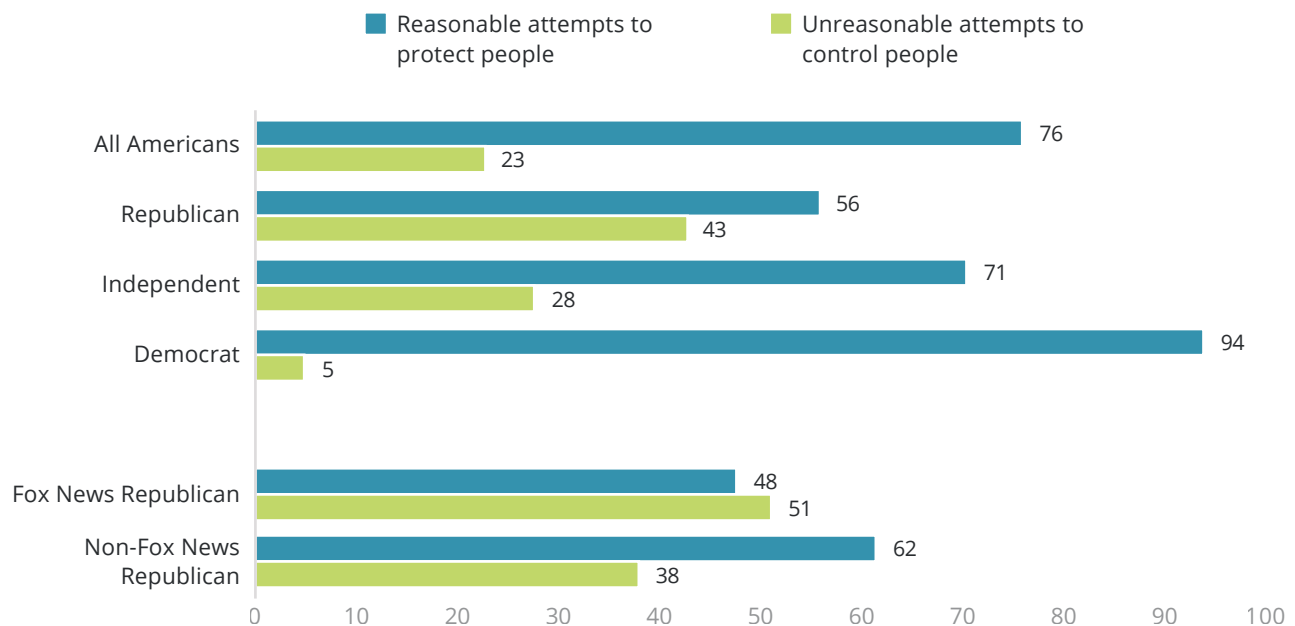
### Views on Protective Measures

About three in four Americans (76%) think shutdowns, mask mandates, and other steps taken by state and local governments since the coronavirus pandemic began are reasonable measures to protect people, compared to 23% who say they are unreasonable attempts to control people.

Republicans (43%) are significantly more likely than independents (28%) and Democrats (5%) to say these actions are unreasonable attempts to control people. This percentage is notably higher among Republicans who trust Fox News as their main source of television news, compared to Republicans who trust other sources (51% vs. 38%).

**FIGURE 3.2 Perceptions of Steps Taken by State and Local Governments Since Pandemic Began, by Party Affiliation and Fox News Republicans**

Percent who say steps are:



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

White evangelical Protestants (39%) and Hispanic Protestants (36%) stand out as the most likely religious groups to believe that steps taken by state and local governments are unreasonable attempts to control people. Fewer members of every other religious group think the same, including other Christians (26%), Black Protestants (24%), white mainline Protestants (23%), white Catholics (21%), Hispanic Catholics (21%), religiously unaffiliated Americans (18%), and members of non-Christian religions (15%).

About the same percentage of white (25%), Hispanic (23%), and Black Americans (21%) think that steps taken by state and local governments are unreasonable attempts to control people, although white Americans without a four-year college degree are notably more likely to say this than those with a four-year degree (30% vs. 17%).

Most Americans (78%) say they always wear a mask in public places to protect themselves against COVID-19 transmission, compared to 19% who say they wear a mask sometimes and only 3% who say they never wear a mask. Nine in ten Democrats (90%), 78% of independents, and 65% of Republicans say they always wear a mask in public places. White evangelical Protestants stand out among religious groups as less likely than others to report wearing a mask all the time in public (63% vs. 77% and higher among all other groups).

Women are also more likely than men to report always wearing a mask (81% vs. 74%). Seniors ages 65 and over (87%) are more likely than younger Americans ages 18–29 (73%), Americans ages 30–49 (74%), and Americans ages 50–64 (79%) to say they always wear masks.

### **Inevitability and Source of the Pandemic**

Nearly seven in ten Americans (69%) think the spread of COVID-19 in the U.S. could have been controlled better, compared to 30% who say an outbreak of this size was inevitable. Republicans (40%) are notably less likely than independents (70%) and Democrats (92%) to think the spread of COVID-19 could have been controlled better. Republicans who trust Fox News as their main source of television news are much less likely than Republicans who trust other sources to think the spread in the U.S. could have been controlled better (22% vs. 51%).

Among religious groups, only white evangelical Protestants (44%) do not reach a majority affirming that the spread of COVID-19 could have been controlled better. Majorities of all other religious groups think this is the case, including white Christian subgroups such as white mainline Protestants (57%) and white Catholics (65%).

Americans are divided on whether the coronavirus was developed intentionally by scientists in a lab (50%) or it developed naturally (49%). Majorities of Republicans (71%) believe that the coronavirus was developed in a lab, compared to 43% of independents and 34% of Democrats. More

Republicans who trust Fox News most for television news think this way than Republicans who trust other sources (81% vs. 64%).

Majorities of members of many religious groups believe the virus was lab-made, including Hispanic Protestants (74%), Black Protestants (68%), white evangelical Protestants (61%), white mainline Protestants (56%), and members of other Christian groups (50%). Hispanic Catholics (46%), white Catholics (46%), members of non-Christian religions (41%), and religiously unaffiliated Americans (32%) do not reach majority support for this belief.

## **Racial Justice and White Supremacy**

The months-long series of protests sparked by the police killings of Black Americans, including Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, have led to broader conversations around protests, the Black Lives Matter movement, and changing how police departments are funded.

Currently, around four in ten Americans (43%) feel that recent killings of Black Americans by police are isolated incidents, compared to 56% who say these killings are part of a broader pattern of how police treat Black Americans. Similar shares of Americans agreed that these killings are isolated incidents in both June 2020 (42%) and in 2018 (45%). Attitudes have shifted, however, since Oct. 2015, when a majority of Americans (53%) said police killings of Black men are isolated incidents and 44% said these incidents are part of a broader pattern.

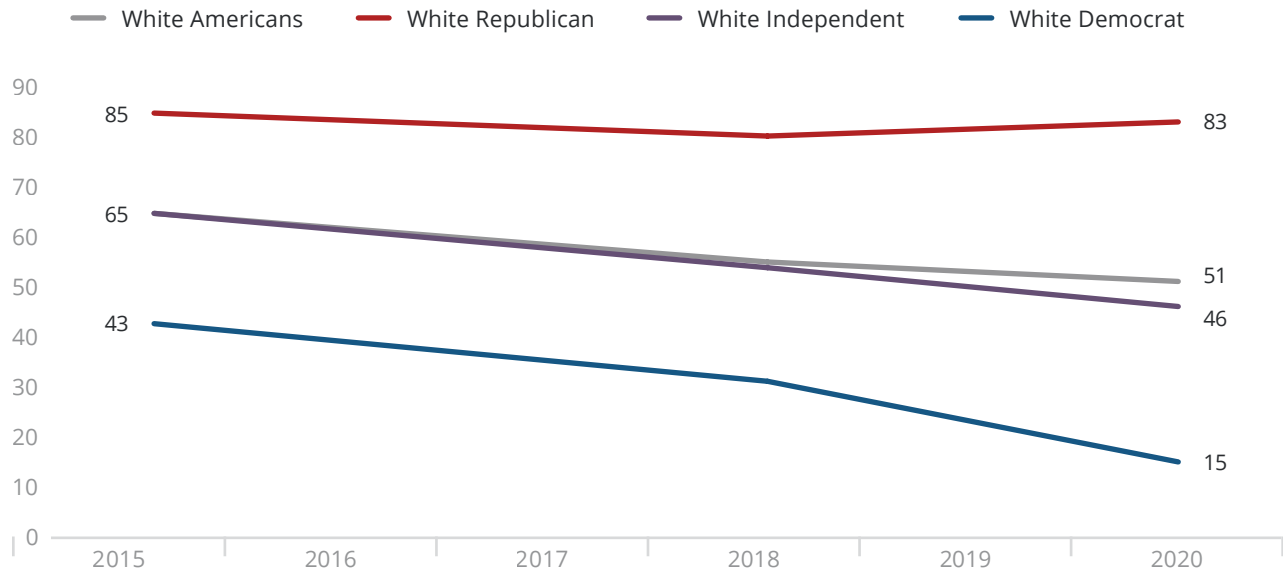
Around eight in ten Republicans (79%), compared to 40% independents and 17% of Democrats, believe that killings of African Americans by police are isolated incidents. These patterns are nearly identical to those recorded in June 2020. Republicans who trust Fox News most for television news (90%) are even more likely than Republicans as a whole to say that these are isolated incidents.

Democrats are significantly less likely than they were in both 2018 (26%) and 2015 (32%) to believe police killings of Black men are isolated incidents. These shifts among Democrats are largely driven by white Democrats' views becoming more aligned with the views of African Americans over the last five years. Independents have trended downward as well, with 55% saying killings of Black Americans are isolated incidents in 2015 and 45% in 2018. By contrast, Republicans have not changed their views since 2018 (77%) and only slightly since 2015 (82%).

Among religious affiliations, white evangelical Protestants (70%) are most likely to say that police killings of African Americans are isolated incidents. Their views are unchanged since 2018 (71%) and 2015 (72%). The attitudes of white mainline Protestants (57%) and white Catholics (58%) are not statistically different from their views in 2018 (59% and 63%, respectively), but their views have significantly shifted since 2015 (73% and 71%, respectively), when these groups were aligned

### FIGURE 3.3 Perceptions of Police Killings of Black Americans as Isolated Incidents, Among White Americans, by Party Affiliation

Percent who say recent killings of Black Americans by police are isolated incidents:



Sources: PRRI 2015 and 2018 Surveys, PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

with white evangelical Protestants on this issue. There are notable divides among Hispanic Americans by religion, with half of Hispanic Protestants (50%) saying that killings of African Americans by police are isolated incidents, compared to only one-third (33%) of Hispanic Catholics. Compared to white Christian groups, white religiously unaffiliated Americans (32%) are less likely to view these police killings as isolated incidents, down from 38% in 2018 and a high of 44% in 2015. Among all religiously unaffiliated Americans, 28% view police killings of Black men as isolated incidents. By contrast, only 17% of Black Protestants see the killings of African Americans by police as isolated incidents, compared to 82% who see them as part of a pattern of how police treat African Americans.

White Americans (51%) are much more likely than Hispanic Americans (36%), those who are another race or multiracial (32%), and Black Americans (14%) to say that killings of African Americans by police are isolated incidents rather than part of a pattern of how police treat African Americans.

### The Role of Race in Protests

This survey contained an embedded experiment to evaluate how the race of protesters influenced Americans' perceptions of the protests themselves. PRRI divided the sample into two demographically identical subsamples and gave each subsample a nearly identical question, differing only by the fact that one question specified the race of the protesters while the other did not. This experiment found significant differences in opinions on these statements among whites overall, and particularly among white subgroups such as Republicans and evangelicals.

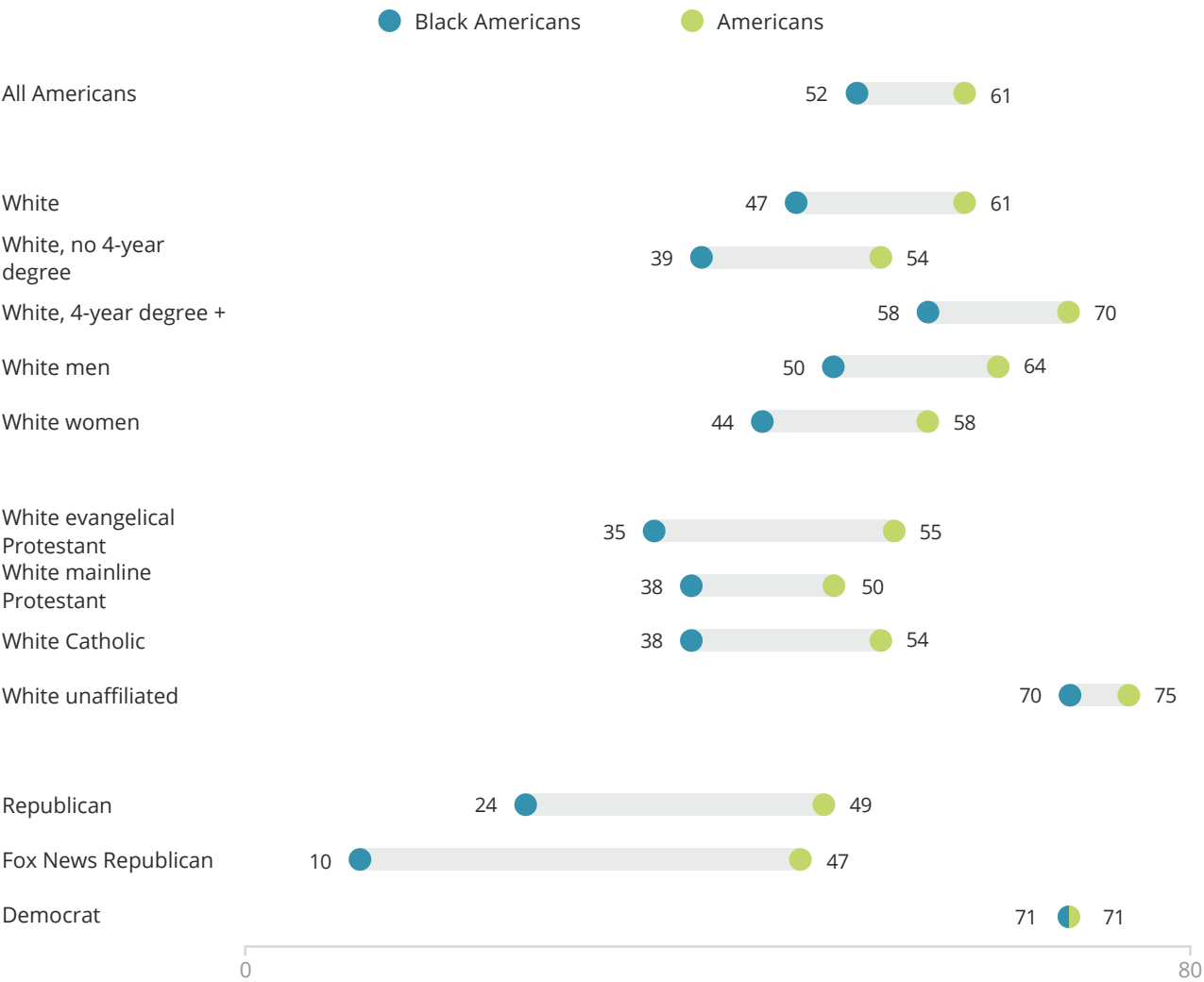
Americans are more likely to agree (61%) than disagree (37%) with the statement "When Americans speak up and protest unfair treatment by the government, it always makes our country better." However, Americans are less likely to agree (52%) and more likely to disagree (47%) with the statement "When *Black* Americans speak up and protest unfair treatment by the government, it always makes our country better."

Republicans are 25 percentage points more likely to agree that protests make the country better when the statement does not mention Black Americans (49%) than they are when the protesters are specified as Black Americans (24%). Among Republicans who most trust Fox News, this effect grows to 37 percentage points: 47% favor the statement without Black Americans, compared to only 10% who favor the statement when the protesters are identified as Black Americans. Independents are 12 percentage points more likely to agree with the statement that does not mention Black Americans (62%) than the statement that does (55%). Notably, there is no attitude gap among Democrats; Democrats are equally likely to agree with both statements (71% agree with both versions of the statements).

For the statement that does not include Black Americans, there are no significant differences in the level of agreement between white (61%), Black (61%), and Hispanic (63%) Americans. When the protesters are identified as Black Americans, support for protests drops 14 percentage points among white Americans (to 47%) and 11 percentage points among Hispanic Americans (to 52%), but it rises 15 percentage points among African Americans (to 76%).

**FIGURE 3.4 Support for Protests, by White Subgroups and Party Affiliation**

It always makes our country better when \_\_\_\_\_ speak up and protest unfair treatment by the government:



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

### Topics of Protests: Defunding the Police, Black Lives Matter, and Confederate Symbols

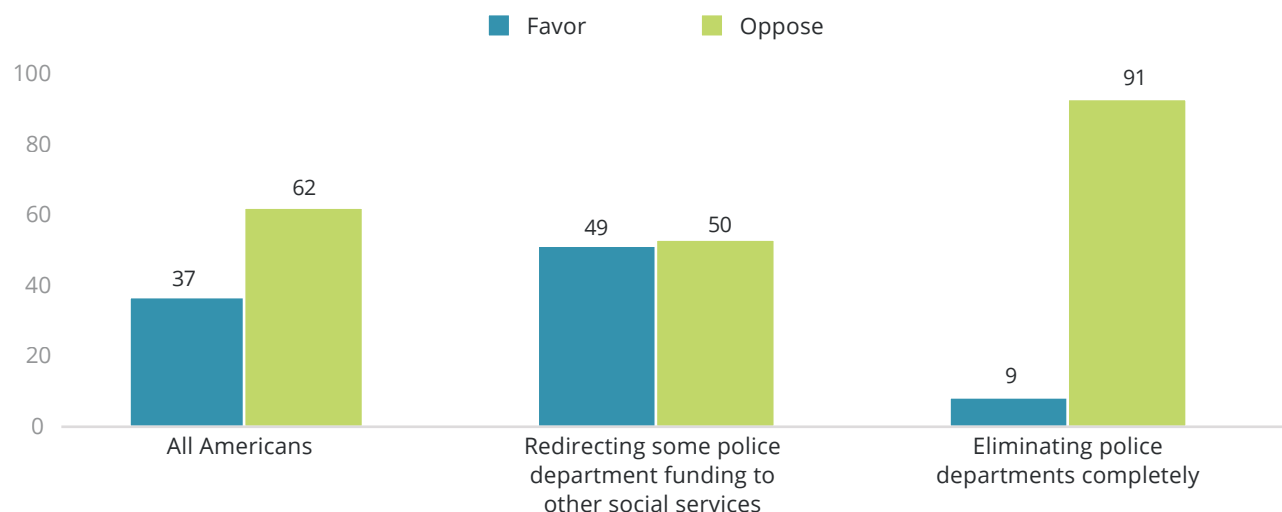
Most Americans say that when they hear the phrase “defund the police” they think it means people want to redirect some police department funding to other social services (70%), as opposed to eliminating police departments completely (28%). However, less than four in ten (37%) favor the goals of defunding the police, while 62% oppose the goals. Among Americans who think that defunding the police is about redirecting funding, 49% favor the goals, while 50% oppose them. Among those who say it is about completely eliminating police, just 9% favor the goals, while 91% oppose, including 73% who *strongly* oppose the goals.

Just under half of Republicans (46%), compared to 75% of independents and 88% of Democrats, say that “defund the police” means redirecting funding. Less than one in ten (8%) Republicans (8%), compared to 37% of independents and 62% of Democrats, say they favor those goals. Republicans who trust Fox News most for television news (63%) are even more likely to say that “defund the police” means completely eliminating police departments, and only 3% of them agree with the goals.

Compared to the goals of defunding the police, Americans are much more in favor of the goals of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement. A majority of Americans (58%) favor BLM’s goals, while 41% are opposed. Only one in five Republicans (20%), compared to nearly six in ten independents (58%) and nearly nine in ten Democrats (87%), favor BLM’s goals. Just 8% of Republicans who

### FIGURE 3.5 Support for “Defunding the Police,” by Perceived Goal of the Movement

Percent who favor defunding the police among those who think it means:



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

trust Fox News most for television news favor BLM's goals, compared to 27% of Republicans who trust other news sources most.

Nearly nine in ten Black Americans (89%), and more than two-thirds of those who are another race or multiracial (68%), favor the goals of BLM. Almost two-thirds of Hispanic Americans (65%) favor the goals of BLM. White Americans are less likely to favor the movement's goals overall (48%) but are deeply divided along education lines. Four in ten white Americans without a four-year college degree (42%) favor BLM's goals, compared to 58% of white Americans who hold a four-year degree or more. Around seven in ten (69%) young Americans ages 18–29 (69%), compared to 57% of ages 30–49, 50% of ages 50–64, and 55% of Americans over age 65, favor the movement's goals.

### ***Confederate Flags and Monuments***

The country is nearly equally divided on the question of whether the Confederate flag is a symbol of racism (47%) or a symbol of Southern pride (51%). This is essentially unchanged from June 2020 (48% said Southern pride, 49% said racism), and similar to 2018, when 52% said the flag was a symbol of Southern pride and 45% said it was a symbol of racism. Compared to the Confederate flag, considerably more Americans see monuments to Confederate soldiers as symbols of Southern pride (59%) rather than racism (39%).

Similar proportions of Republicans say both the flag (85%) and monuments to Confederate soldiers (90%) are symbols of Southern pride. Democrats are much less likely to say that either the flag (17%) or monuments (32%) are symbols of pride, while independents are more divided, with 45% who say the flag is a symbol of Southern pride and 60% who say monuments are symbols of pride. Democrats and independents are significantly less likely to view the flag as a symbol of Southern pride now (17% and 45%, respectively) than they were in 2019 (26% and 55%, respectively).

White Christian groups are most likely to view Confederate flags as symbols of Southern pride rather than racism, including strong majorities of white evangelical Protestants (81%), white mainline Protestants (68%), and white Catholics (64%). Other groups of nonwhite Christians are more divided on the flag, with 41% of Hispanic Protestants, 45% of Hispanic Catholics, and 47% of other Christians saying the flag is a symbol of pride. Around three in ten religiously unaffiliated Americans (31%) and non-Christian religious Americans (32%) say the flag is a symbol of Southern pride. Only about one in ten Black Protestants (13%) say the flag is a symbol of pride, compared to 86% who say it is a symbol of racism.

The same pattern holds for Confederate monuments. Broad majorities of white evangelical Protestants (89%), white mainline Protestants (77%), and white Catholics (74%) say Confederate monuments are more symbols of Southern pride. Smaller majorities of Hispanic Catholics (55%),

Hispanic Protestants (57%), and other Christians (59%) agree. Half of non-Christian religious Americans (50%) and less than half of unaffiliated Americans (44%) view monuments as symbols of Southern pride over monuments. Just one in five Black Protestants (20%) see Confederate monuments as symbols of Southern pride, compared to 77% who see them as symbols of racism.

### **Perceptions of Discrimination**

Majorities of Americans say that there is a lot of discrimination against Black people (75%), Hispanic people (69%), and Asian people (55%). Far fewer say that there is a lot of discrimination against either Christians (37%) or white people (32%). Americans are significantly more likely to say that there is a lot of discrimination against Asian people now than they were in 2018 (44%), but there has been no similar shift in views for any of the other groups.

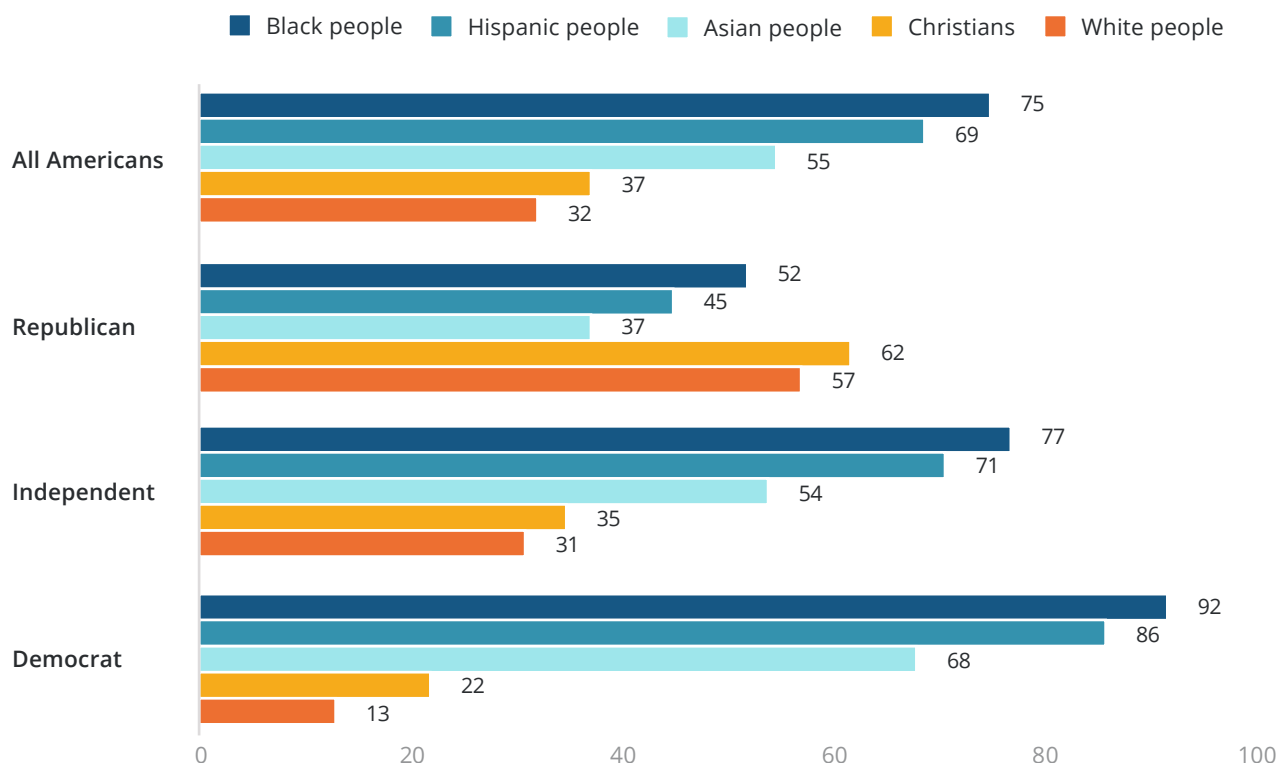
Republicans are much less likely than all Americans to say that Asian people (37%), Hispanic people (45%), or Black people (52%) face a lot of discrimination. Since 2018, Republicans have become more likely to say that white people face a lot of discrimination (up from 48% to 57%). Strikingly, Republicans are more likely to say that white people (57%) or Christians (62%) face a lot of discrimination than they are to say this about racial or ethnic minority groups.

Republicans who trust Fox News most for television news are even more likely to believe white people and Christians are experiencing higher levels of discrimination than racial or ethnic minority groups. Around one-third or less Republicans who trust Fox News most for television news say there is a lot of discrimination against Asian people (27%), Hispanic people (34%), or Black people (36%). A majority of Republicans who trust Fox News most (58%) say there is a lot of discrimination against white people, and nearly three in four (73%) say there is a lot of discrimination against Christians.

Democrats and independents are more likely than Republicans to see discrimination against racial and ethnic minority groups. Majorities of independents and Democrats say that there is a lot of discrimination against Asian people (54% and 68%, respectively), Hispanic people (71% and 86%, respectively), and Black people (77% and 92%, respectively). Both independents and Democrats are much less likely to perceive discrimination against white people (32% and 13%, respectively) or Christians (35% and 22%, respectively). Democrats and independents are both more likely to say there is a lot of discrimination against Asian people now than they were in 2018 (44% and 50%, respectively).

**FIGURE 3.6 Perceptions of Discrimination, by Party Affiliation**

Percent who say the group faces a lot of discrimination:



Sources: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

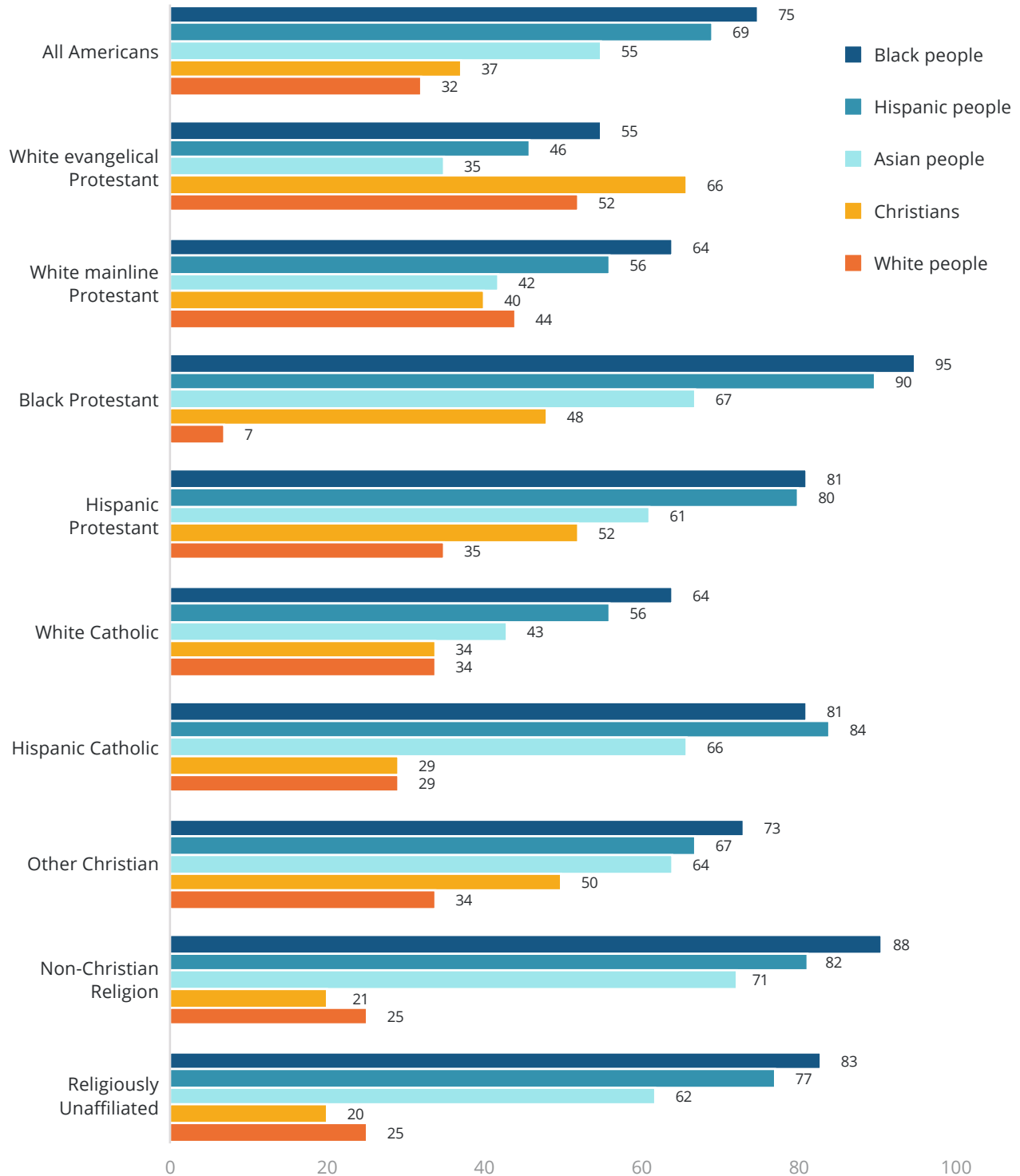
White Christian groups are generally less likely to perceive discrimination against minority groups and more likely to perceive discrimination against white people and Christians than other religious groups. Majorities of white evangelical Protestants say there is a lot of discrimination against Christians (66%), Black people (55%), and white people (52%), but less than half say the same about Hispanic people (46%) or Asian people (35%).

White Americans are generally less likely than Americans of other races to say that there is a lot of discrimination against minority groups, and slightly more likely to say there is discrimination against white people. Around half of white Americans (47%) say Asian people face a lot of discrimination, while more than six in ten say the same of Hispanic (61%) or Black people (69%). Around four in ten white Americans say Christians (38%) or white people (39%) face a lot of discrimination.

There are deep divides by education level among white people. White Americans without a college degree are less likely than those with at least a four-year degree to say that Asian people (45% vs. 50%, respectively), Hispanic people (56% vs. 71%, respectively), or Black people (65% vs.

### FIGURE 3.7 Perceptions of Discrimination, by Religious Affiliation

Percent who say the group faces a lot of discrimination:



Sources: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

74%) face a lot of discrimination. White Americans without a college degree are about twice as likely as white college graduates to say that there is discrimination against white people (48% vs. 24%) or Christians (44% vs. 27%).

Americans of other races are much more likely to say there is a lot of discrimination against minorities. Around nine in ten Black Americans say there is a lot of discrimination against Hispanic (88%) or Black people (95%), and 65% say there is a lot of discrimination against Asian people. Just one in ten (9%) say there is a lot of discrimination against white people, and less than half (44%) say the same of Christians.

Hispanic Americans follow a similar pattern. Around eight in ten say there is a lot of discrimination against Black (82%) or Hispanic people (83%), and six in ten (63%) say the same of Asian people. Hispanic people are about as likely as the general population to say there is a lot of discrimination against white people (30%) or Christians (37%).

Those who are another race or multiracial are most likely to perceive discrimination against Black (81%) or Asian people (80%), and 73% perceive discrimination against Hispanic people. Around one in four members of this group see a lot of discrimination against white people (23%) or Christians (27%).

### **Diversity and Discrimination**

Around one-third of Americans (34%) agree that efforts to increase diversity always come at the expense of whites, compared to 63% who disagree. Republicans (57%) are much more likely than independents (35%) or Democrats (17%) to agree.

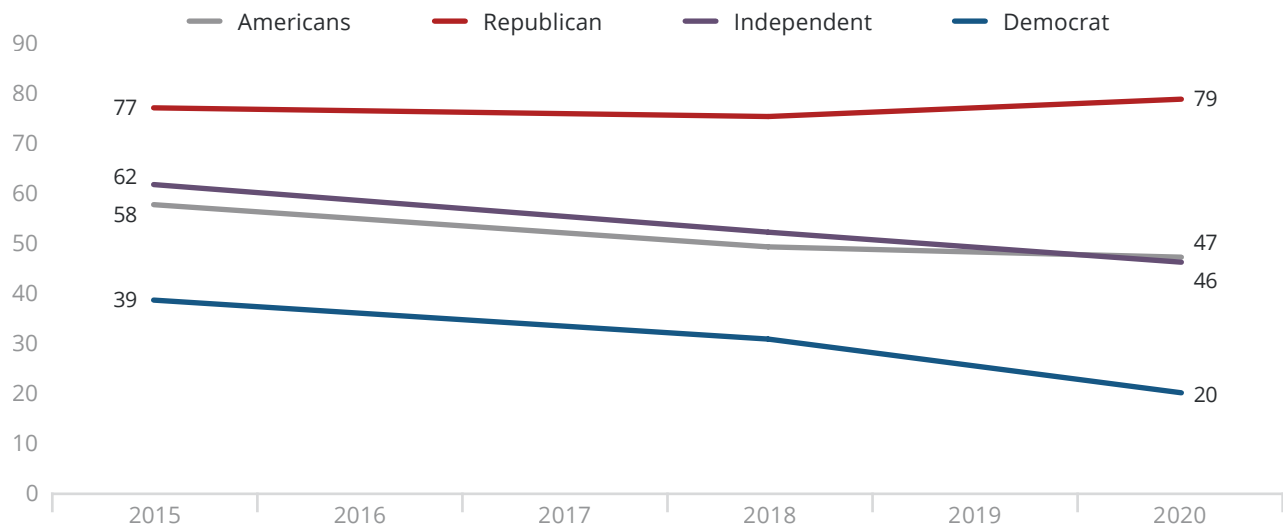
White Americans (40%), particularly white Americans without a four-year college degree (46%), are more likely than Black (23%), Hispanic (29%), and white Americans with a four-year degree or more (31%) to agree that efforts to increase diversity always come at the expense of whites.

Americans are evenly divided on the question of whether generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for Black Americans to work their way out of the lower class (52% agree vs. 47% disagree). The percentage of Americans who disagree with this statement is unchanged from Oct. 2018 (49%), but disagreement has decreased significantly from 2015 (58%).

Nearly eight in ten Republicans (79%), and nearly nine in ten Republicans who most trust Fox News (87%), disagree that past discrimination has created conditions that make it difficult for Black Americans to work their way out of the lower class. These views are unchanged from 2015. By contrast, only 46% of independents and 20% of Democrats disagree with this statement. Disagreement with this statement has dropped by double digits among both independents and Democrats since 2015 (from 62% and 39%, respectively).

**FIGURE 3.8 Generations of Slavery and Discrimination Have Created Conditions that Make it Difficult for Blacks to Work Their Way Out of the Lower Class, 2015-2020, by Party Affiliation**

Percent who disagree:



Sources: PRRI 2015 and 2018 Surveys, PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

Majorities of all white Christian groups disagree that generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for Black Americans to work their way out of the lower class, including white evangelical Protestants (72%), white mainline Protestants (60%), and white Catholics (58%). Fewer Hispanic Protestants (44%), other Christians (45%), and Hispanic Catholics (48%) disagree. Non-Christian religious Americans (41%), religiously unaffiliated Americans (33%), and Black Protestants (24%) are least likely to disagree.

White Americans (54%) and Hispanic Americans (41%) are notably more likely than Black Americans (21%) to disagree that slavery and discrimination have made it difficult for Black Americans to achieve economic mobility. White Americans have not changed their views since 2018 (55% disagreed) but have become less likely to hold the belief than they were in 2015 (64% disagreed). There are notable divides among whites by educational attainment. Whites without a four-year college degree are more likely than white Americans with a four-year degree or higher to disagree that past discrimination continues to play a role in limiting economic mobility for African Americans (61% vs. 43%, respectively).

### Reparations and Affirmative Action

Around one in four Americans (27%) believe that the U.S. government should economically compensate African Americans who are the descendants of enslaved people, while seven in ten (71%)

oppose such a policy. The share of Americans who support reparations is slightly higher now than in 2019 (21%).

Less than one in ten Republicans (5%), compared to 22% of independents and 50% of Democrats, support reparations. Democrats are much more likely to support reparations now than they were in 2019 (37%), while Republicans and independents have not shifted meaningfully on the issue in the last year (5% and 17%, respectively).

Few white Christians favor reparations, including 5% of white evangelical Protestants, 7% of white Catholics, and 12% of white mainline Protestants. Somewhat larger shares of Hispanic Protestants (25%) and Hispanic Catholics (40%) support reparations. Around one in four other Christians (28%) and non-Christian religious Americans (31%), along with around four in ten religiously unaffiliated Americans (38%). Black Protestants (75%) overwhelmingly support reparations.

Less than one in five white Americans (16%), compared to around four in ten Hispanic Americans (37%) and 76% of Black Americans support reparations. Black, Hispanic, and white Americans are more likely to support reparations now than they were a year ago (64%, 23%, and 11%, respectively).

Slim majorities of Americans favor policies that encourage special efforts to help Black and other minority candidates in order to make up for past discrimination in both hiring practices (53%) and college admissions (52%). About one in five Republicans support such affirmative action programs for either college admissions (19%) or hiring (23%), while more than three in four Democrats favor both (82% and 77%, respectively). Independents are somewhat more divided on the issue: 45% support affirmative action in college admissions, while 53% support affirmative action in hiring practices.

Black Americans and Hispanic Americans overwhelmingly favor affirmative action for both hiring (86% and 67%, respectively) and college admissions (86% and 64%, respectively). Around four in ten white Americans favor either type of affirmative action (41% for both). White Americans without a college degree are less likely than white Americans with at least a four-year degree to favor either affirmative action in hiring (38% and 49%, respectively) or in college admissions (37% and 48%, respectively).

## Immigration

### Favorable Views Toward Immigrants

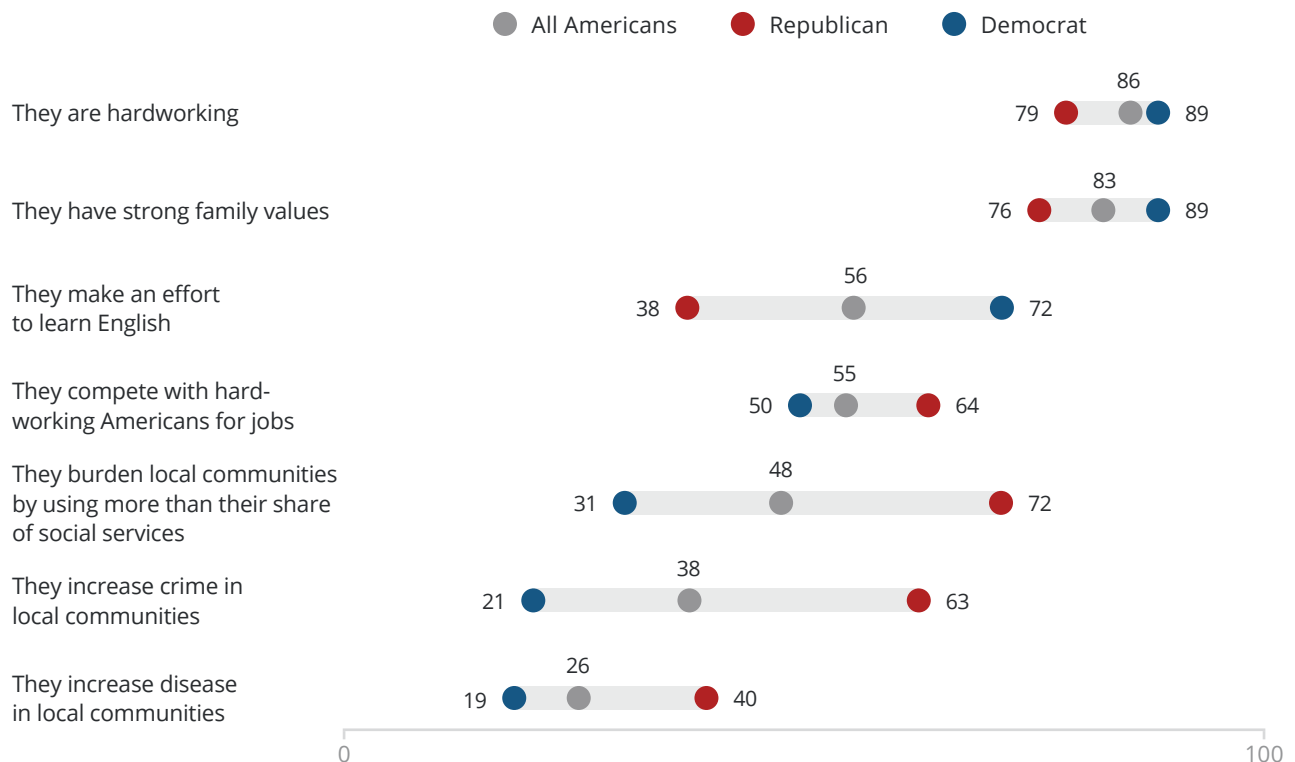
One-third of Americans (33%) think that immigration is a critical issue, significantly down from 49% in 2019.

Americans hold favorable views of immigrants as people. Majorities of Americans say that immigrants are hardworking (86%), have strong family values (83%), and make an effort to learn English (56%). These opinions are largely unchanged since 2019.

Large majorities of those who identify as Republican, independent, and Democrat view immigrants as hardworking (79%, 89%, and 89%, respectively) and as having strong family values 76%, 83%, and 89%, respectively). About four in ten Republicans (38%) think that immigrants make an effort to learn English, compared to 55% of independents and 72% of Democrats.

### FIGURE 3.9 Traits that Describe Immigrants, by Party Affiliation

Percent who say each describes immigrants somewhat or very well:



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

### **Unfavorable Views Toward Immigrants**

Less than four in ten Americans agree that immigrants increase crime in local communities (38%) or that immigrants increase disease in local communities (26%). However, Americans are divided about whether immigrants are burdening local communities by using more than their share of social services (48% agree, 50% disagree), and a majority (55%) of Americans believe that they compete with hardworking Americans for jobs.

There are stark variations among partisans. Majorities of Republicans hold mostly negative views of immigrants, including 72% who agree that immigrants are a burden to local communities, 64% who agree that they compete with Americans for jobs, and 63% who agree that immigrants increase crime in local communities. By contrast, independents and Democrats are notably less likely than Republicans to say that immigrants are a burden to local communities (48% and 31%, respectively), that they compete with Americans for jobs (55% and 50%, respectively), or that immigrants increase crime in local communities (35% and 21%, respectively). Republicans (40%) are significantly more likely than independents (24%) and Democrats (19%) to believe that immigrants increase disease in local communities.

### **Immigrants as Cultural Threat**

Approximately three in ten Americans (31%) agree that “immigrants are invading our country and replacing our cultural and ethnic background,” significantly down from 36% in 2019. A majority of Republicans (57%) agree with this statement, but fewer express the belief now than did in 2019 (63%). Two-thirds of Republicans who trust Fox News most for television news (67%) agree that immigrants are invading the country (significantly down from 78% in 2019), compared to 51% of Republicans who trust another source most. Less than three in ten independents (28%) and Democrats (15%) agree that immigrants are invading our country.

Over one-third of white Americans (36%), compared to one in four Hispanic (24%) and Black Americans (24%), think immigrants are invading American society. White Americans without four-year college degrees are about twice as likely as those with four-year degrees to agree that immigrants are invading American society (44% vs. 23%). Senior Americans ages 65 and older are twice as likely as younger Americans ages 18–29 to agree with this statement (41% vs. 22%).

### **Opposition to Restrictive Immigration Policies**

Majorities of Americans oppose building a wall along the U.S. border with Mexico (57%), compared to 42% who favor it, and oppose passing a law to prevent refugees from entering the United States (62%), compared to just over one-third who support it (36%). These views have remained stable since 2019.

More than eight in ten Republicans (84%) support the border wall, while a nearly identical number of Democrats oppose it (85%). Independents roughly mirror Americans in general (62% oppose vs. 38% support). Nearly all Republicans who trust Fox News most among television news sources (96%) favor this policy.

Nearly eight in ten Democrats (79%) and almost two-thirds of independents (66%), compared to only 36% of Republicans, oppose the passage of a law that would prevent refugees from entering the United States.

### ***Family Separation***

Less than one in four Americans (23%) favor an immigration border policy that separates children from their parents and charges parents as criminals when they enter the country without permission, compared to 76% who oppose such a policy. These views have remained constant since 2019.

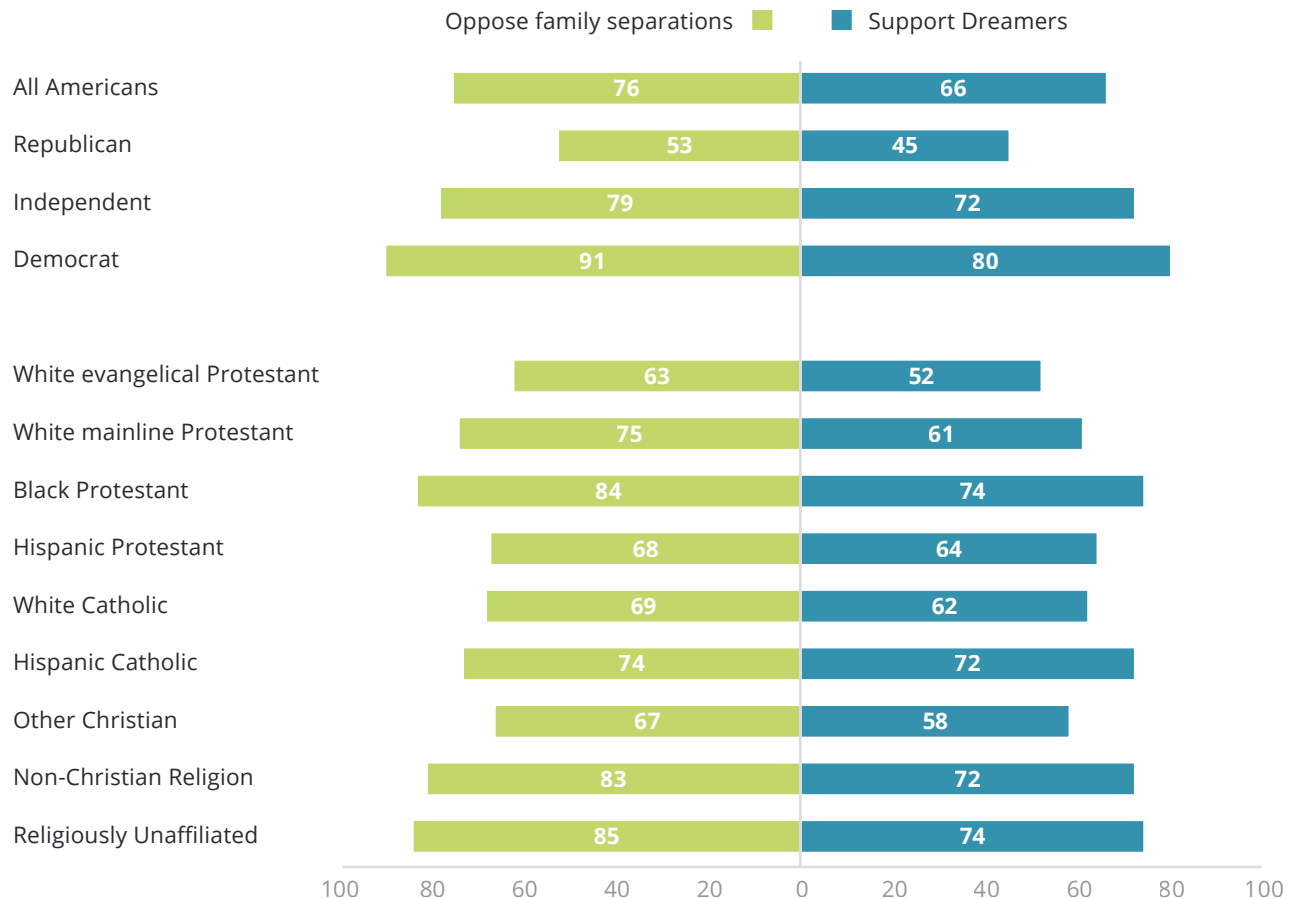
Majorities of Democrats (91%), independents (79%), and Republicans (53%) oppose this family separation policy. However, a majority of Republicans who most trust Fox News (53%) favor this immigration policy of separating children from their parents at the border, compared to 41% of Republicans who favor any other news source.

### ***Dreamers***

Nearly two-thirds of Americans (66%) favor allowing immigrants brought illegally to the U.S. as children, better known as Dreamers, to gain legal resident status, while 33% are opposed. Support for this policy has remained stable since 2019. Republicans (45%) are notably less likely than independents (72%) and Democrats (80%) to favor this policy. While Republicans and independents have not shifted their opinions significantly since 2019 (42% and 67%, respectively), Democrats have become more supportive since 2019 (74%).

**FIGURE 3.10 Opposition to Immigration Policy that Separates Children from Parents Who Enter Country Without Permission, Vs. Support for Allowing Dreamers to Obtain Legal Status, by Party Affiliation and Religious Affiliation**

Percent who:



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

### Creating a Path to Citizenship for Those Living in the U.S. Illegally

About two-thirds of Americans (64%) say that immigrants living in the U.S. illegally should be allowed a way to become citizens, provided they meet certain requirements. Less than one in five (16%) say they would prefer undocumented immigrants to be eligible for permanent residency status but not citizenship, and about one in five (19%) say all immigrants living in the U.S. illegally should be deported. Support for allowing undocumented immigrants to become citizens has remained stable since 2019 and has been remarkably consistent over the last five years.

Democrats (74%) and independents (67%) are more likely than Republicans (48%) to support allowing undocumented immigrants to become citizens. However, Republicans who do not rely on Fox News as their main source of information are more likely to support this policy than Republicans who trust Fox News most (51% vs. 42%).

Majorities of all religious groups support allowing undocumented immigrants to become citizens, including 73% of religiously unaffiliated, 66% of non-Christian groups, 65% of white mainline Protestants, 63% of Black Protestants, 61% of Hispanic Catholics, 59% of white Catholics, 58% of white evangelical Protestants, and 56% of members of other Christian groups. Hispanic Protestants (50%) show the least support among religious groups.

## **Support for Major Policy Changes**

Most Americans (79%) agree that because things have gotten so far off track in this country, we need major policy change to help everyday Americans, compared to one in five (21%) who do not agree with this statement. Substantial majorities of Americans across various demographics agree that the U.S. needs major policy change to help everyday Americans, including majorities of Democrats (93%), independents (78%), and Republicans (62%), majorities in every major religious group (ranging from 65% to 90%), and majorities of Black (89%), white (77%), and Hispanic Americans (76%).

Americans are broadly supportive of a number of policies that would constitute major changes: guaranteeing all Americans access to affordable childcare (83%), guaranteeing all Americans a minimum income (70%), making college tuition free at public institutions (63%), and a “Medicare for All” plan that would replace private health insurance with government-backed health insurance coverage for all Americans (62%).

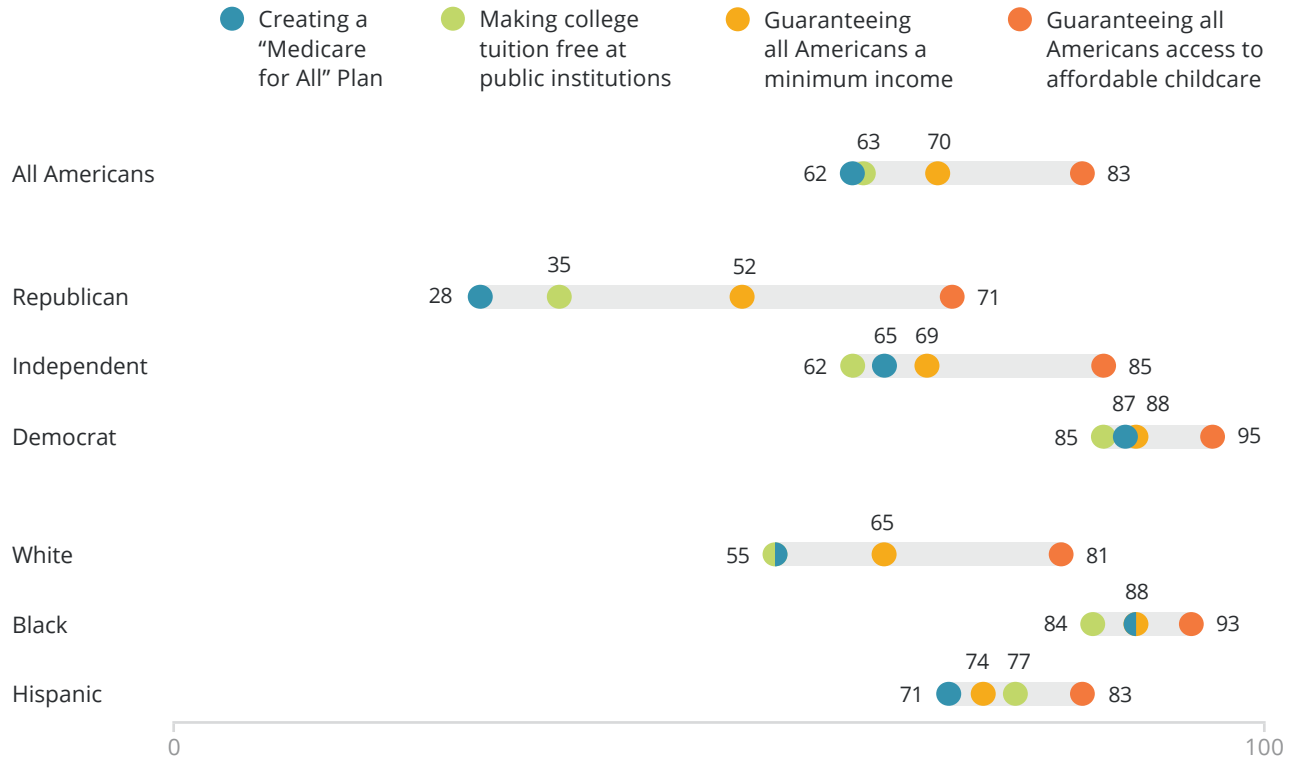
Majorities of Democrats, independents, and Republicans favor guaranteeing all Americans access to affordable childcare (95%, 85%, and 71%, respectively) and guaranteeing all Americans a minimum income (88%, 69%, and 52%, respectively).

There are significant partisan divides about making college tuition free at public institutions and about a “Medicare for all” policy. Strong majorities of Democrats (85%) and independents (62%), compared to only 35% of Republicans, favor making college tuition free at public institutions. Republicans who trust Fox News as their main source of information are about half as likely as Republicans who trust other news outlets to favor this policy (23% vs. 42% respectively).

Almost nine in ten Democrats (87%) favor a generic “Medicare for All” proposal, with just under half (48%) strongly favoring it. Nearly two-thirds of independents (65%) favor this policy as well, but support drops to three in ten among Republicans (28%). Not surprisingly, Republicans who

**FIGURE 3.11 Support for Types of Major Policy Change, by Party Affiliation and Race**

Percent who favor:



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

trust Fox News most for television news are significantly less likely to favor a generic "Medicare for All" proposal than Republicans who trust other news outlets (10% vs. 39%).

### Perceptions of the Value of a College Education

Americans are equally likely to think that a college education is a smart investment in the future or that college education is more of a gamble that may not pay off in the end (49% vs. 50%). This percentage is virtually the same as in 2019. A majority (58%) of Democrats think that a college education is a smart investment in the future, compared to 49% of independents and 43% of Republicans.

A majority of Black Americans (60%) and half of Hispanic Americans (50%) think college is a smart investment. Less than half of white Americans (45%) agree, with a substantial divide between white Americans without a four-year college degree (39%) and with a four-year college degree (55%) who think it is a good investment.

## Climate Change

Most Americans (58%) believe that climate change will cause them a great deal or a moderate amount of harm, compared to four in ten Americans (42%) who think climate change will cause them little or no harm. These percentages remain virtually unchanged since 2019 (59% vs. 41%). Americans who consider climate change a critical issue are eight times more likely than those who do not think climate change is a critical issue to believe that climate change will harm them personally (87% vs. 11%).

Democrats (76%) and independents (61%) are notably more likely than Republicans (31%) to think that climate change will cause them harm. Only about one in five Republicans who trust Fox News most for television news (18%) think that climate change will cause them harm, compared to nearly four in ten Republicans who most trust any other television news source (39%).

Black (68%) and Hispanic (63%) Americans are more likely than white Americans (53%) to think climate change will harm them personally. Interestingly, the percent of Hispanic Americans who think this is the case declined significantly since 2019 (from 74% to 63%).

## Abortion

Six in ten Americans (60%) think that abortion should be legal in most or all cases, compared to four in ten Americans (40%) who think that abortion should be illegal in most or all cases. These views have been stable over the last five years. Those who oppose the legality of abortion are significantly more likely than those who favor the legality of abortion to say it is a critical issue (57% vs. 22%, respectively).

Although abortion looms large in national politics, few Americans say it is a litmus test in considering their support for candidates. Notably, only one in five Americans (20%) say they will only vote for a candidate who shares their views on abortion. A majority of Americans (52%) hold a more complex position, saying that a candidate's position on abortion is one of many factors that might affect their vote for major offices, and one-quarter of Americans (26%) say that abortion is not a major issue in their choice of candidates. Americans who oppose the legality of abortion are also significantly more likely than those who favor the legality of abortion to say they would only vote for a candidate who shares their views on abortion (29% vs. 15%, respectively).

Democrats (78%) and independents (63%) are notably more likely than Republicans (32%) to think that abortion should be legal in most or all cases. Two-thirds of Republicans oppose the legality of abortion, but, notably, less than one-quarter of Republicans (23%) believe abortion should be illegal in *all* cases. Similarly, Republicans (32%) are about twice as likely as Democrats (17%) and independents (14%) to say that they will only vote for a candidate who shares their views on abortion.

White evangelical Protestants (22%) stand out as the least likely to think that abortion should be legal. Hispanic Protestants (48%) are the only other religious group in which less than half think abortion should be legal in most or all cases. More than six in ten Hispanic Catholics (63%) and a majority of white Catholics (53%) think that abortion should be legal in most or all cases. Majorities of religiously unaffiliated Americans (84%), non-Christian religious groups (70%), Black Protestants (64%), and white mainline Protestants (55%), as well as half (50%) of members of other Christian groups, think abortion should be legal in most or all cases. With the exception of white evangelical Protestants, less than one-quarter of every major religious group (ranging from 14%-23%) say they would only vote for a candidate who shares their views on abortion. Among white evangelical Protestants, that proportion rises to 36%.

## LGBTQ Rights

The vast majority of Americans (70%) favor allowing gay and lesbian couples to marry legally, compared to 28% of Americans who oppose it. Majorities of Democrats (80%) and independents (76%), as well as half of Republicans (50%), support same-sex marriage.

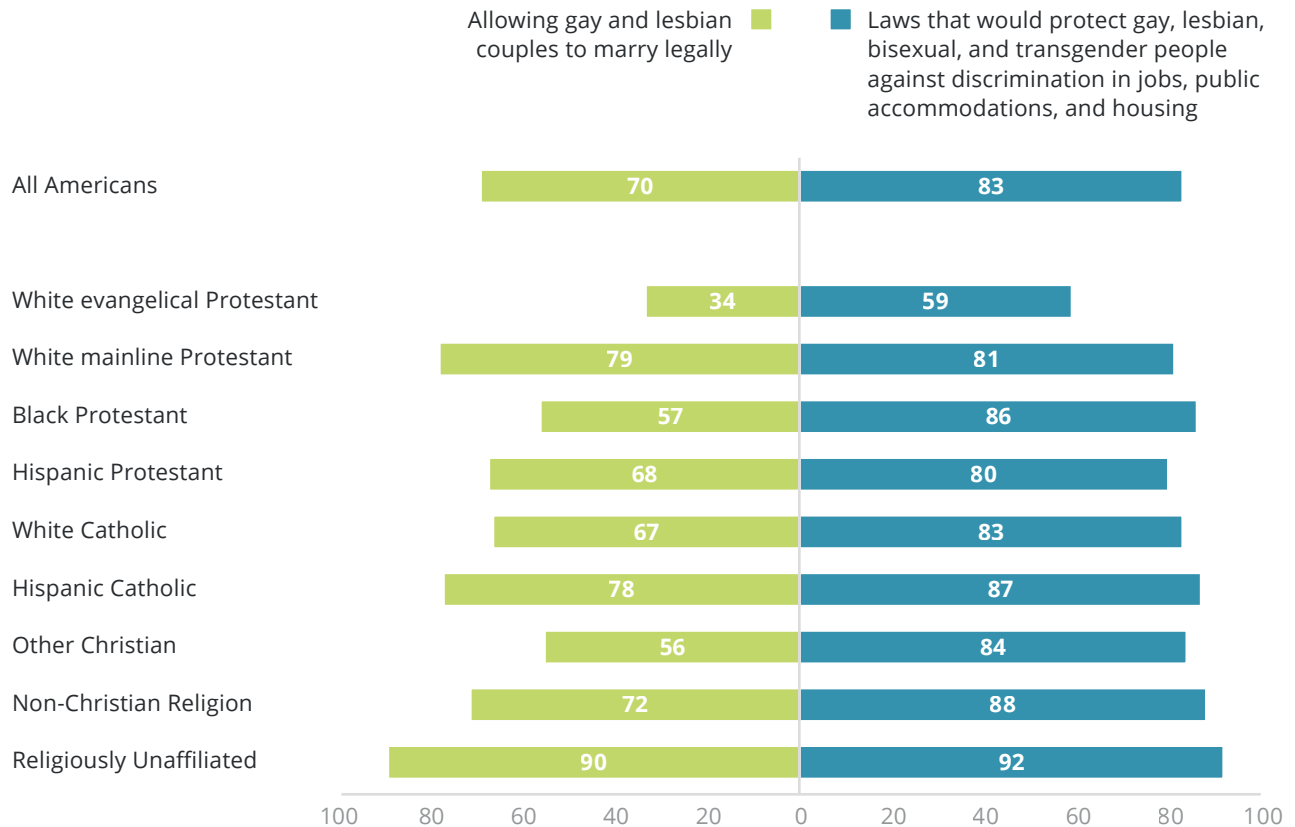
White evangelical Protestants stand out as the only major religious group in which a majority opposes allowing gay and lesbian couples to marry (34% favor, 63% oppose). Majorities in every other major religious group support marriage equality, including 90% of religiously unaffiliated Americans, 79% of white mainline Protestants, 78% of Hispanic Catholics, 72% of members of non-Christian religious groups, 68% of Hispanic Protestants, 67% of white Catholics, 57% of Black Protestants, and 56% of members of other Christian religious groups.

More than eight in ten Americans (83%) favor laws that would protect gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people against discrimination in jobs, public accommodations, and housing, compared to only 16% of Americans who oppose such laws. Majorities of Democrats (94%), independents (85%), and Republicans (68%) favor nondiscrimination laws that protect LGBTQ people.

Substantial majorities in every major religious group favor nondiscrimination laws that protect LGBTQ people, ranging from 59% among white evangelical Protestants to 92% among religiously unaffiliated Americans.

**FIGURE 3.12 Support for Same-Sex Marriage and LGBTQ Nondiscrimination laws, by Religious Affiliation**

Percent who favor:



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

### Foreign Policy: Views of Russia and China

About 5% of Americans consider Russia an ally of the U.S., one in four (23%) consider Russia friendly but not an ally, about four in ten (37%) consider Russia unfriendly but not an enemy, and 34% consider Russia an enemy of the U.S. Notably, Republicans (38%) are considerably more likely than independents (27%) and Democrats (17%) to think that Russia is either an ally of the U.S. or friendly.

When asked about China, only 4% of Americans consider China an ally of the U.S., more than one in five (21%) consider China friendly but not an ally, one-third (41%) of Americans consider China unfriendly but not an enemy, and more than four in ten (33%) consider China an enemy of the U.S. Compared to views on Russia, there are fewer partisan divides. About one in four Republicans (25%), independents (22%), and Democrats (26%) say China is either an ally or friendly.



## Appendix 1: Survey Methodology

The survey was designed and conducted by PRRI. The survey was made possible through the generous support of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, with additional support from the Ford Foundation, the Wilbur and Hilda Glenn Family Foundation, and the Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock. Interviews were conducted among a random sample of 2,538 adults (age 18 and up) living in the United States including all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Interviews were conducted both online using a self-administered design and by telephone using live interviewers. All interviews were conducted among participants in AmeriSpeak, a probability-based panel designed to be representative of the national U.S. adult population run by NORC at the University of Chicago. Panel participants without Internet access, which included 42 respondents, were interviewed via telephone by professional interviewers under the direction of NORC. Interviewing was conducted in both Spanish and English between September 9 and September 22, 2020.

NORC's AmeriSpeak Panel provides a representative panel of civilian, non-institutional adults (age 18 and over) living in the United States. The sample frame was developed using a two-stage probability sample design to create a representative sample of households in the United States. The first stage uses National Frame Areas (NFAs), geographic areas that have a population of at least 10,000 people. The National Sample Frame contains almost 3 million households and includes 80,000 rural households. Additionally, NORC oversampled housing units in segments (Census tracts or block groups) that include hard-to-reach populations, including young adults, Hispanics and African Americans. Panel recruitment proceeded in two stages. First, a mail solicitation is sent to a randomly selected household along with follow-up telephone calls and email solicitations if necessary. In the second stage, households that have not responded to the initial inquiry or follow-ups receive an enhanced incentive offer and a personal visit from NORC field interviewers. Members typically participate in panel surveys two or three times a month. For more information about AmeriSpeak, please visit: <http://amerispeak.norc.org>.

The weighting is accomplished in two separate stages. First, panel base weights are calculated for every household based on the probability of selection from the NORC National Frame, the sampling frame that is used to sample housing units for AmeriSpeak. Household level weights are then assigned to each eligible adult in every recruited household. In the second stage, sample demographics are balanced to match target population parameters for gender, age, education, race and Hispanic ethnicity, and division (U.S. Census definitions), housing type, and telephone

usage. The telephone usage parameter came from an analysis of the National Health Interview Survey. All other weighting parameters are derived from an analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey.

The sample weighting is accomplished using an iterative proportional fitting (IFP) process that simultaneously balances the distributions of all variables. Weights were trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on the final results. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the target populations.

The margin of error for the survey is +/- 2.6 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence, which includes the design effect for the survey of 1.83. In addition to sampling error, surveys may also be subject to error or bias due to question wording, context and order effects.

## Likely Voter Models

Three questions were used to identify likely voters: Whether the respondent is registered to vote, how they plan to vote (e.g., by mail or in person on Election Day), and how likely they think they are to vote (including an option for having already voted). Due to the overwhelming majority of respondents saying they are both registered and absolutely certain to vote or had already voted (76%), we determined that a "cutoff" model based

**TABLE A1. Demographic, Political, and Religious Subgroup Sample Sizes**

	General Public (unweighted)
Total Sample	2, 538
Male	1,245
Female	1,293
Democrat	893
Independent	716
<i>Leans Democrat</i>	292
<i>Independent (no lean)</i>	209
<i>Leans Republican</i>	214
Republican	656
White, non-Hispanic	1,618
Black, non-Hispanic	305
Hispanic	435
Asian	64
Multiracial	87
Something else	29
Age 18-29	361
30-49	954
50-64	673
65+	550
White evangelical Protestant	326
White mainline Protestant	406
Black Protestant	214
Hispanic Protestant	139
Catholic	415
White Catholic	251
Hispanic Catholic	164
Other Christian	148
Non-Christian religion	223
Religiously unaffiliated	667

on those factors alone resulted in an unrealistic estimate of voter turnout. Using the assumption that if people are unsure of how they will actually cast their ballot, they are a bit less likely to vote, we used the plan to vote question to decrease the likelihood of voting among those who report not knowing how they would vote. Then a probability model was applied in order to avoid the sharp exclusions of a cutoff model. This process resulted in a model in which 68% of adults are deemed likely to vote and constitutes the high turnout estimate reported.

Because 68% would be historically high turnout, we estimated a second likely voter model that forced the data to replicate the roughly 55% voting age population turnout of 2016. This was achieved by adjusting the probability of turnout downward among one key demographic of the likely voter sample that was highly overrepresented compared to the 2016 national exit polls – those who report their ideology to be moderate. Remaining demographics were not significantly impacted. After this process, the sample resembled 2016 turnout at 55% and constitutes the lower turnout estimate reported.

The 68% turnout model includes 1,736 likely voters, with a margin of error of +/- 3.2 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence, which includes the design effect. The 55% turnout model includes 1,387 likely voters, with a margin of error of +/- 3.6 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence, which includes the design effect.

## Appendix 2: About PRRI

PRRI is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to research at the intersection of religion, values, and public life.

Our mission is to help journalists, opinion leaders, scholars, clergy, and the general public better understand debates on public policy issues and the role of religion and values in American public life by conducting high quality public opinion surveys and qualitative research.

PRRI is a member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR), the American Political Science Association (APSA), and the American Academy of Religion (AAR), and follows the highest research standards of independence and academic excellence.

We are also a member organization of the National Council on Public Polls, an association of polling organizations established in 1969, which sets the highest professional standards for public opinion researchers. PRRI is also a supporting organization of the Transparency Initiative at AAPOR, an initiative to place the value of openness at the center of the public opinion research profession.

As a nonpartisan, independent research organization, PRRI does not take positions on, nor do we advocate for, particular policies. Research supported by our funders reflects PRRI's commitment to independent inquiry and academic rigor. Research findings and conclusions are never altered to accommodate other interests, including those of funders, other organizations, or government bodies and officials.

### History

Since PRRI's founding in 2009, our research has become a standard source of trusted information among journalists, scholars, policy makers, clergy, and the general public. PRRI research has been cited in thousands of media stories and academic publications and plays a leading role in deepening public understanding of the changing religious landscape and its role in shaping American politics.

For a full list of recent projects, see our research page: <http://www.prri.org/research/>

PRRI also maintains a lively online presence on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/prripoll>) and Twitter (<http://www.twitter.com/prripoll>).

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