

To: Interested Parties  
From: David Mermin, Emily Garner, and Jacklyn Juetten, Lake Research Partners  
Re: National and Minnesota Poll Results Show Support for Reforms to Policing and Economic Policy  
Date: September 22, 2020

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A new nationwide poll of 1000 US adults with an oversample of 400 Black Americans by Lake Research Partners<sup>1</sup> shows broad support across racial groups for a wide variety of reforms to policing, public safety, and economic policy, with some exceptions. Black Americans tend to be the most supportive of significant policy change, followed by Latinx and white Americans. Support in Minnesota for these policies is generally slightly lower than nationwide. This memo summarizes national and Minnesota-specific findings<sup>2</sup> on attitudes on belonging, policies related to policing and public safety, economic policies, and policies to reduce wealth and income inequality.

Findings related to the sense of belonging:

- Respondents were asked if they always, most of the time, some of the time, rarely, or never feel a sense of belonging in their home, neighborhood, workplace, public places, and their school.
- Eighty-five percent of Americans feel that they have a sense of belonging in their home always or most of the time. White Americans report a sense of belonging in their homes at higher rates (89%), than Black (85%) or Latinx (80%) Americans. Ninety-three percent of Minnesotans feel a sense of belonging in their homes.
- Two-thirds of Americans feel they have a sense of belonging in their neighborhoods (64%), though this number is slightly higher among white Americans (68%) than Black (64%) or Latinx (56%) Americans. Seventy-four percent of Minnesotans feel a sense of belonging in their neighborhoods.
- Fifty-one percent of Americans report a sense of belonging in places such as streets, parks, and public libraries always or most of the time. White Americans

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<sup>1</sup> Lake Research Partners administered this survey—designed by the Othering & Belonging Institute at UC Berkeley, Prosperity Now, and the Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage (CMAH)—which was conducted online. The survey reached a total of 1000 adults nationwide, with an oversample of 400 Black adults. The survey was conducted August 26 – September 1, 2020. Data were weighted slightly by gender, age, race, region, education level, and party identification to reflect the demographic composition of American adults. The margin of error for the base sample is +/-3.1%.

<sup>2</sup> Lake Research Partners administered this survey—designed by the Othering & Belonging Institute at UC Berkeley, Prosperity Now, and the Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage (CMAH)—which was conducted between August 26 – September 3, 2020. The survey reached 500 adults in Minnesota and an additional oversample of 500 Black adults in Minnesota. The base sample was conducted via online panel while the oversample was conducted via live telephone interview and text-to-online. Data were weighted slightly by gender, region, age, education, and race to reflect the demographic composition of adults in Minnesota. The margin of error for the base sample is +/- 4.4%.

- (52%) report slightly higher levels of belonging than Black (49%) or Latino (46%) Americans in public places. In Minnesota this number is 61%.
- Of those who work, 65% of Americans feel a sense of belonging in their workplace with white Americans (67%) reporting a slightly higher level of belonging in the workplace than Black (64%) Americans and Latinxs (61%).
  - Of those Americans engaged in schooling, 54% feel a sense of belonging in their schools always or most of the time. White (56%) and Black (55%) Americans report relatively higher levels of belonging than Latinx (51%) Americans do.

#### Findings related to community policing:

- Seventy-three percent of Americans feel confident that they can call on and trust the police if they are in an emergency always or most of the time, though this number is much higher among white (82%) Americans than Black (53%) or Latinx (58%) Americans. In Minnesota, 81% of white Americans feel this way compared with 51% of Black Americans.
- The poll tested four distinct community policing policies and split-sampled two policies with slightly different wording to see which tested better on a 5-point scale where 1 is not a priority at all and 5 is the highest priority.
- Americans solidly support having community resource professionals like social workers, paramedics, and mental health workers respond to cases involving homelessness, drug addiction, mental illness, or nonviolent offenses.
  - There is more support for community resource professionals to respond *alongside* police officers rather than *instead* of police officers.
  - On a scale of 1-5, Americans give having community-resource professionals respond *alongside* police officers a mean rating of 3.8 with 64% giving it a 4 or 5 rating. Support is higher among Black (4.1, 73%) and Latinx (3.8, 65%) Americans than white Americans (3.7, 61%). In Minnesota this number is similar to the nationwide numbers, 3.8, 63%.
  - Americans give having community-resource professionals respond *instead* of police officers a mean rating of 3.6 with 54% giving it a 4 or 5 rating. White (3.4, 51%) and Black (4.0, 66%) Americans give this a slightly lower rating than *alongside*, while Latinx Americans narrowly prefer *instead* (3.8, 53%) to *alongside*. Those in Minnesota prefer *alongside*, giving *instead* a rating of 3.5, 53%.
- Giving independent civilian oversight boards the power to investigate and discipline police officers accused of misconduct is also broadly appealing, with a mean rating of 3.6 and 52% giving it a 4 or 5 rating, with higher ratings for Black (4.0, 67%) and Latinx (3.8, 62%) Americans than white Americans (3.4, 46%). This policy is slightly less popular in Minnesota than the country as a whole, at 3.4, 50%.

- Americans are moderately in favor of reducing the criminal justice system's focus on policing and prosecuting low-level offenses with a mean rating of 3.3 and 46% giving it a 4 or 5 rating. Black (3.7, 54%) and Latinx (3.6, 52%) Americans rate this reform more highly than white Americans (3.1, 42%). In Minnesota the rating is 3.2, 41%.
- Reducing funding for police departments has less support overall but has slightly more support when this funding instead goes toward schools and healthcare (2.9, 37%) than community-based programs and services (2.8, 35%).

Findings related to policing and public safety:

- The poll tested 4 distinct policy proposals related to policing and safety, and split sampled one policy to test wording. Respondents were asked if they support or oppose the policy strongly or not so strongly.
- Requiring that police officers live in the cities or towns that they police (39% strongly support, 65% total support), has the highest support overall, with support higher for Black (49%, 69%) Americans than for Latinx (40%, 62%) and white (37%, 65%) Americans. Support for this policy is slightly lower in Minnesota (36%, 61%).
- Requiring that police officers maintain liability insurance to cover costs for civil suits, as many states require doctors and lawyers to do, is favored by a majority of Americans (34% strongly, 60% total).
- Ending relationships between local police forces and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is supported by half of Americans (50%) with strong support from 29%. Support is stronger among Latinx (40%, 62%) and Black (37%, 59%) Americans than white Americans (25%, 45%). Support is slightly lower in Minnesota than the country overall (27%, 47%).
- Disbanding your local police department and replacing it with a different public safety system is the lowest priority, with only 14% strongly supporting it and 29% supporting it overall. There is modest support among Black (23%, 41%) and Latinx (18%, 41%) Americans.

Findings related to economic policies:

- The poll tested four distinct economic policies on a 5-point scale where 1 is not a priority at all and 5 is the highest priority.
- A federal jobs guarantee policy ensuring that all American adults who want a job are able to have one earns a mean rating of 3.8 with 64% giving it a 4 or 5 rating. Black (4.1, 70%) and Latinx (4.0, 71%) Americans rate it higher than white Americans (3.7, 60%). In Minnesota the number is 3.5, 53%.
- A Universal Basic Income (UBI) policy that would provide every American with a monthly check of \$1,000 from the government receives a mean rating of 3.3 and 51% give it a 4 or 5 rating. Support is substantially higher among Black Americans

(3.9, 63%) and Latinx Americans (3.7, 58%) than among white Americans (3.1, 46%). This policy has less support in Minnesota (2.9, 39%), including among Black Minnesotans (3.3, 49%).

- Suspending rent and mortgage payments for the remainder of 2020 has a mean rating of 3.5, and 54% of Americans give it a 4 or 5 rating. Many more Black (4.0, 68%) and Latinx (3.9, 62%) Americans give this a 4 or 5 rating than white Americans (3.3, 49%). Again, support in Minnesota is lower (3.1, 41%).
- Providing every child born in the US with a savings account at birth with federal government contributions made annually based on family income has mean rating of 3.0, with 42% rating it a 4 or 5. Black (3.6, 53%) and Latinx (3.4, 47%) Americans rate this higher than white Americans (2.8, 37%). In Minnesota, 32% give this policy a 4/5 and it has a mean rating of 2.7.

Findings related to policies that would reduce wealth and income inequality:

- The poll tested 4 distinct policies aimed at reducing wealth and income inequality, and split-sampled one of the policies to test language. Respondents were asked if they support or oppose the policy strongly or not so strongly.
- Expanding the Child Tax Credit to provide a refund for children in all low-income families is strongly supported by 34% of Americans, while 62% support it overall. Almost half of Black Americans strongly support this policy (47%) and over two-thirds (70%) support it overall. This number is slightly lower for Latinx Americans (39%, 69%), but still higher than for white Americans (30%, 59%).
- Mandating that employers follow fair hiring practices that remove barriers to employment for people with a criminal history is strongly supported by 31% of Americans and 58% support it overall. Black (41% strongly support, 72% total support) and Latinx (34%, 67%) Americans support this policy at higher rates than white Americans (28%, 54%)
- Increasing taxes on large corporations and using that money to provide grants to Black entrepreneurs starting small businesses is strongly supported by 26% of Americans and 47% support it overall. Almost half (48%) of Black Americans strongly support this policy and two-thirds (68%) support it overall, while white (22%, 43%) and Latinx (30%, 51%) Americans support this at lower levels.
- Providing payments to Black Americans as restitution for slavery and discrimination is strongly supported by 19% of Americans and 34% support it overall. The racial divide is stark here with 49% of Black Americans strongly supporting this policy and 71% supporting it overall. In comparison, only 12% of white and 20% of Latinx Americans support this policy strongly and 24% of white and 44% of Latinx Americans support it overall.

Finally, the poll shows that Americans, by a modest margin, are more likely to say people look out for others than say people are selfish. We ask this question in two

different ways, and while we get overall similar results, Black, white and Latinx Americans' answers vary depending on how we ask.

- In a forced choice between “people try to be helpful to others” and “people look out for themselves” 52% of the sample overall choose the former, along with 54% of white, 55% of Black, and 43% of Latinx Americans. Forty-one percent choose the latter, along with 39% of white, 37% of Black, and 52% of Latinx Americans.
- In a separate forced choice between “most people try to be fair to others” and “most people want to take advantage of others” 51% of the sample overall choose the former, along with 55% of whites, 44% of Black, and 43% of Latinx Americans. Forty-two percent choose the latter, along with 39% of white, 47% of Black, and 50% of Latinx Americans.
- Overall, Black and white Americans are more likely to believe that people try to be helpful to others while a majority of Latinx Americans say that people generally look out for themselves. White Americans are also more likely to believe that most people try to be fair to others, while Black Americans are divided, and Latinx Americans say that most people would try to take advantage of others given the chance.

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Please do not hesitate to reach out to David Mermin ([dmermin@lakeresearch.com](mailto:dmermin@lakeresearch.com)) at (510) 379-5180 with any questions about this memo.