

Results from a Statewide Survey of Black Women Voters in Michigan

# The Lives and Voices of Black Women in Michigan

COMMISSIONED BY IN OUR OWN VOICE: NATIONAL BLACK  
WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE AGENDA

CONDUCTED BY PERRYUNDEM

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voice  
IN OUR OWN

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# Introduction.

Black women represent decisive forces in elections, yet surveys among them are rare. Even rarer are state-level surveys among Black women.

For the past few elections, National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda: In Our Own Voice has invested in rigorous and robust national and state-level surveys to better understand the voting and policy priorities, needs, and views among Black adults and women.

In 2017, early in the Trump administration, we explored the attitudinal landscape among Black adults related to race, policy, and reproductive justice. In December 2020, prior to Biden taking office, we went back in the field to listen to Black adults' experiences and views over the past few years. Prior to the 2022 midterm elections, we conducted a national survey and several state surveys to better understand Black women voters' issue priorities, values, and reactions to news dominating the headlines at the time.

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Here we are in 2024, near the end of the Biden administration, with the country heading into another consequential election. How are Black women in Michigan feeling about the upcoming election? What voting issues are on their minds? What is motivating them to vote? What are their views on abortion and reproductive issues, given the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*?

These are the questions we set out to answer, with the goal of providing data as a resource for policymakers, the media, and other parties who want to understand the views and lives of Black women in Michigan.

This report provides findings from a statewide survey among n = 516 Black women\* registered voters. The survey was conducted January 22 through February 10, 2024 via Ipsos' KnowledgePanel, an online panel constructed from address-based probability sampling. The sample was supplemented by off-panel, opt-in sample. The data are weighted to reflect a representative sample of Black women registered voters in Michigan. The margin of sampling error is  $\pm 5.7$  percentage points. Many other types of errors can contribute to overall survey error.

This survey is part of a larger project that includes [national data](#) among all Black adults.

*\* Our future surveys will use expansive questions around gender identity. This survey used a standard binary variable. Transgender individuals who identify as women and chose it in a binary question are included in the survey. Typically, surveys tend to find about < 1% to 2% of respondents identifying outside of the binary.*

Here is the demographic composition of the survey respondents.

	Weighted %	Unweighted N
Total	100%	516
Black or African American	100%	516
2+ races	10%	49
Hispanic / Latina/o/x	3%	17
18 to 29	16%	110
30 to 44	29%	144
45 to 59	25%	129
60+	30%	133
HS or less	36%	167
Some college	41%	206
College +	23%	143
Democrat	68%	353
Independent	24%	121
Republican	8%	41
Urban	64%	282
Suburban	31%	118
Rural	4%	19

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# Key findings.

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## Here are 10 key findings.

1

### **Young Black women may feel particularly unmotivated to vote in the fall elections.**

Just 47% of 18-to 29-year-old respondents say they are “almost certain” to vote this fall, compared to 70% of all respondents.

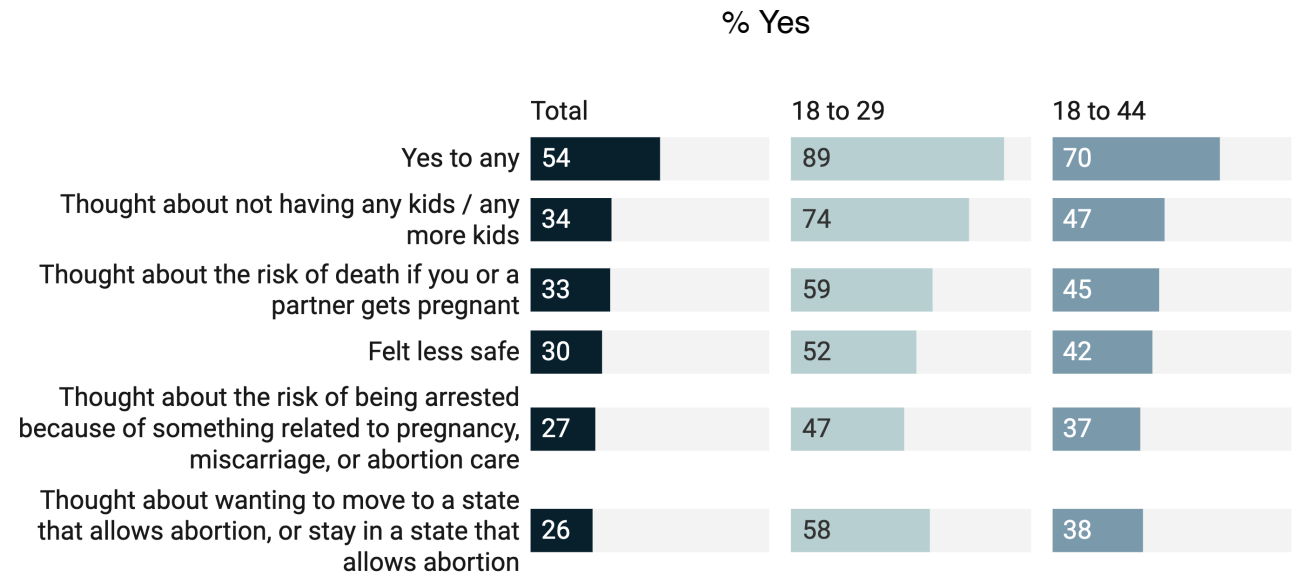
More than four in ten 18- to 29-year-olds (43%) say they’ve thought about not voting in 2024 as a form of protest. Insights from our national data suggest that young people are discouraged by the choice of candidates. In this survey, 80% of 18- to 29-year-olds say it’s extremely or very important that more Black women are elected and nominated to political offices.

2

## Abortion bans have affected young people’s sense of safety and their thinking about profound life decisions.

Three in four 18- to 29-year-olds (74%) say recent bans have made them think about not having any / any more kids. Six in ten (59%) say recent bans have made them think about the risk of death if they or a partner were to get pregnant.

As a result of recent abortion bans and restrictions, have you...



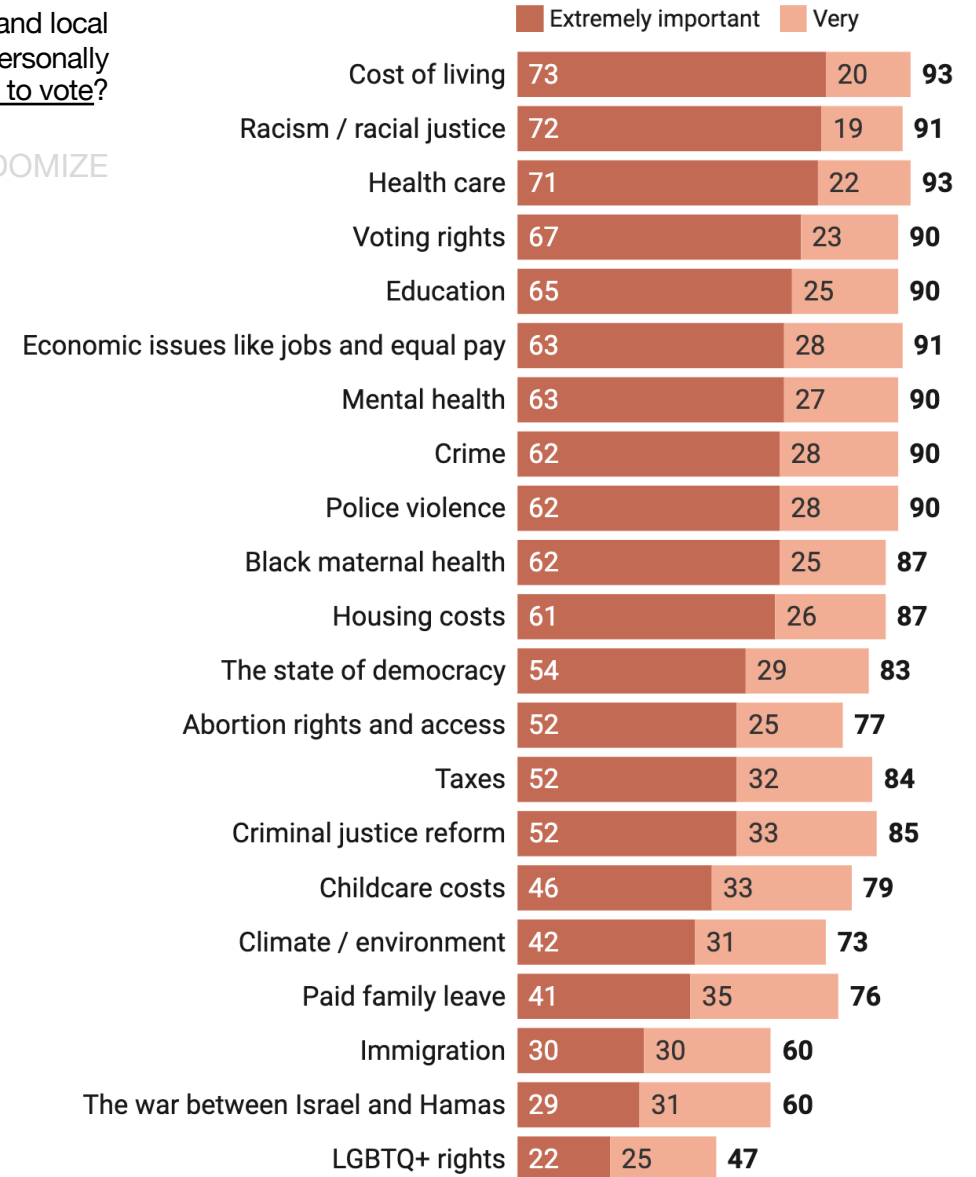


This fall there will be elections for US Congress, state, and local offices. How important is each of these issues to you personally when thinking about getting out to vote?

RANDOMIZE

**3**  
**Many issues are on the minds of Black women. Cost of living, racism / racial justice, and health care top the list.**

Mental health, Black maternal health, and housing costs are among the top issues for 18- to 29-year-olds.



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## 4

### **When asked about 20 discrete policy positions, economic, education, and mental health policies are among the most salient.**

Ending Black maternal mortality is high on the list for 18- to 29-year-olds.

#### **IMPORTANT POLICY POSITIONS**

- Lowering the cost of living and inflation (88% extremely or very important when thinking about getting out to vote this fall)
- Making sure schools teach children about American history, including the impact of slavery and racism (86%)
- Ensuring equal pay for equal work (86%)
- Increasing access to mental health care (85%)
- Lowering taxes for the middle and lower classes (85%)
- Making sure our elections are free from political interference and manipulation (84%)
- Creating equal access to resources and opportunities (83%)

---

**5**  
**In a list of 12 motivations to  
vote, these three rise to the top.**

**1**  
People fought and died for the right to vote.  
28% say this is in the top 1 or 2 motivations to vote

**2**  
Michigan is one of the few states that will decide who becomes president and whether the US Congress becomes Democratic or Republican. This means my vote will matter more than in most states.  
24%

**3**  
People's rights and freedoms are at stake.  
21%

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These are additional motivating factors among many respondents.

- Voting will affect who has the power in my state to make laws
- My family might be affected by the outcome of the elections
- If I could vote by mail or absentee
- It gives me a voice in the future

6  
**Black women in Michigan are strongly supportive of abortion rights and access.**

Large majorities of respondents support abortion rights and access, including those who attend religious services regularly. This tracks with Black women nationally.

81%

Say abortion should be legal in all or most cases

76% of those who attend religious services regularly

85%

Say they'd vote in favor of a state amendment that protects pregnancy and abortion decisions

81%

92%

Agree: Each person should have the right to make their own decision on abortion, even if I may disagree with it

86%

83%

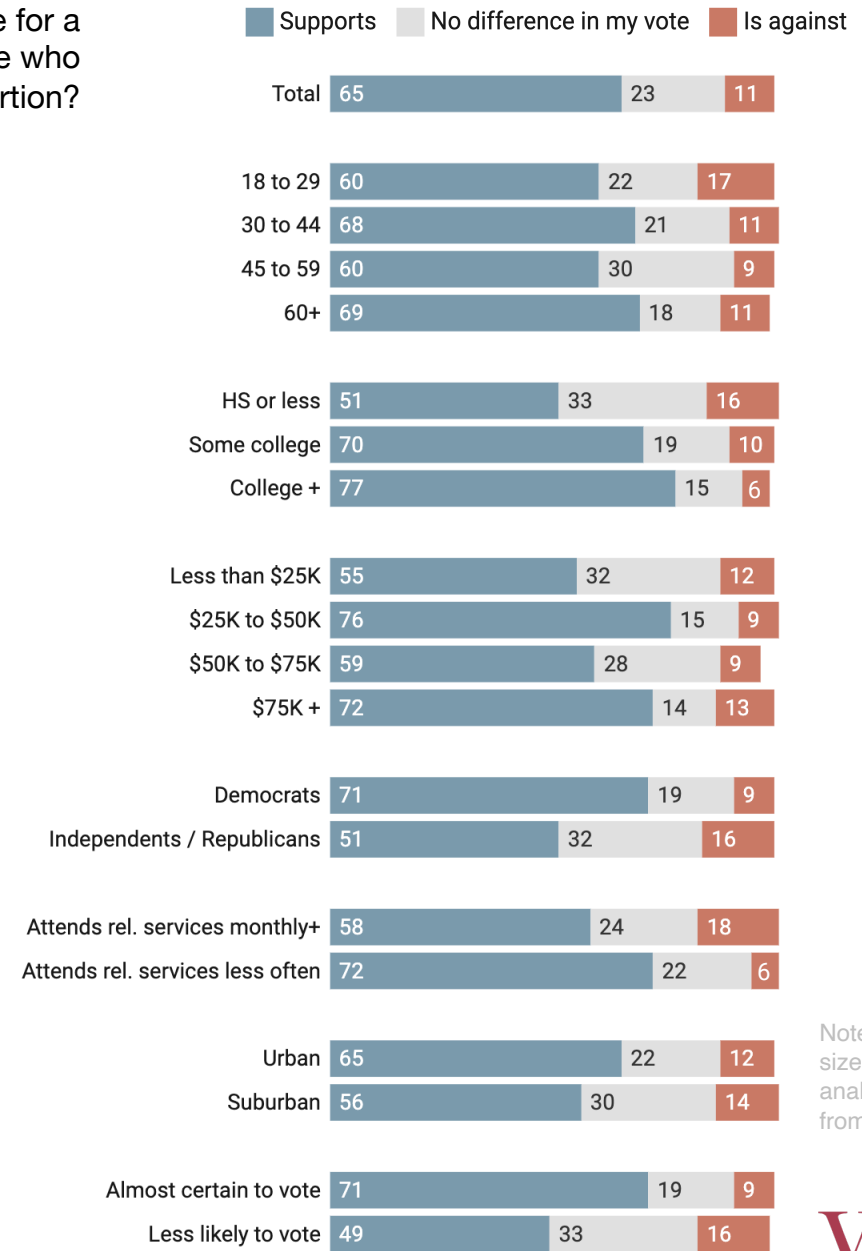
Say having an abortion can be the responsible choice

76%

Are you more likely to vote for a candidate for state legislature who \_\_\_\_\_ access to abortion?

**7**  
**Respondents are six times more likely to vote for a candidate who supports abortion access than one who opposes it.**

Black women who attend religious services regularly are significantly more likely to vote for a candidate who supports abortion access.



Note: The sample size is too small to analyze respondents from rural areas.

8

**Close to two thirds of Black women of reproductive age are interested in getting birth control pills over the counter.**

The retail price, however, is out of reach for 64% of these women.

62%

Of women 18 to 44 say they are interested in accessing birth control pills over-the-counter

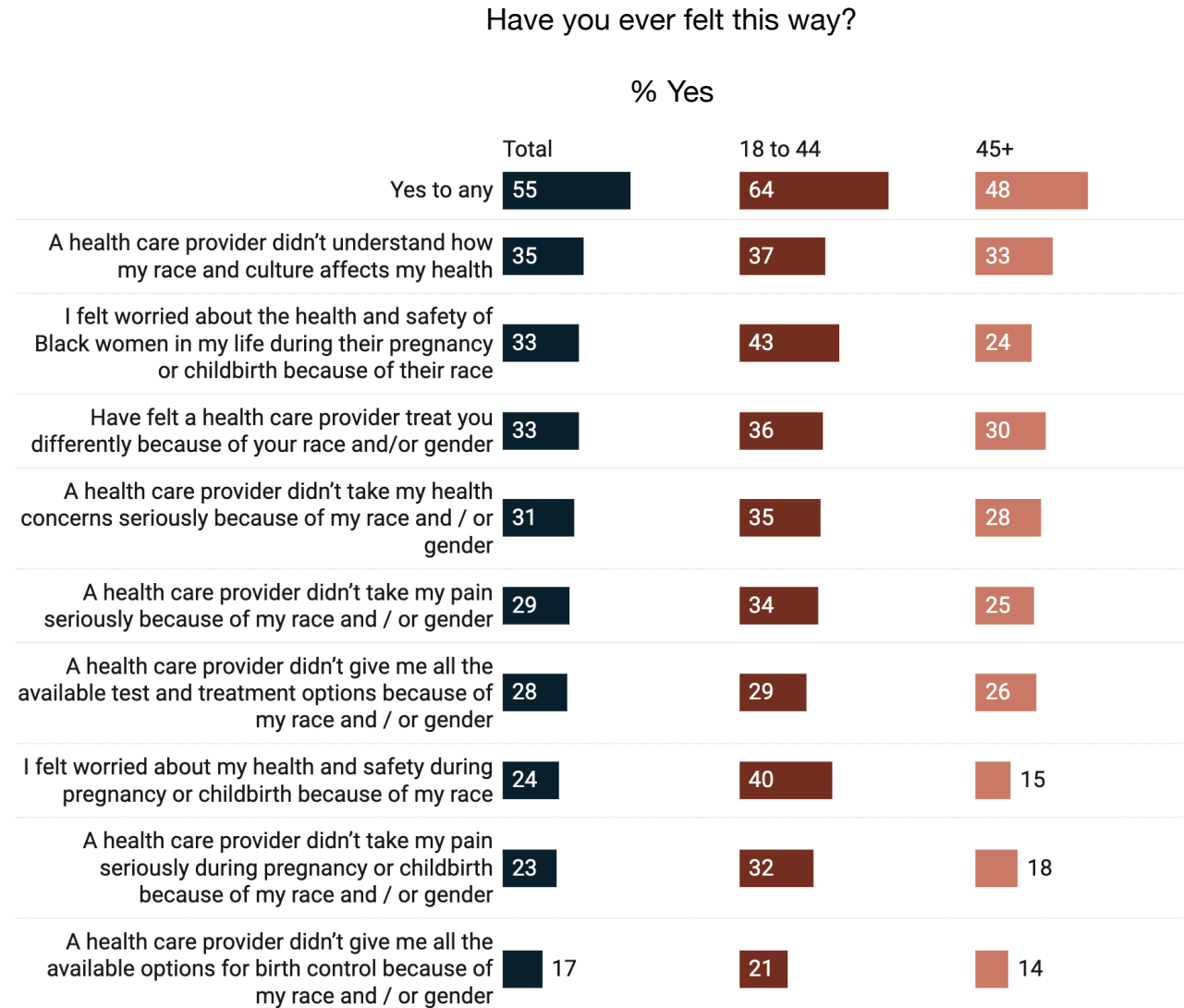
64%

Of women 18 to 44 could not afford to pay \$45 or more for a three-month supply

*Note: A three-month supply will retail at \$49.99*

**9**  
**A majority of Black women (55%) says they have felt the effects of racial / gender bias in the health care system.**

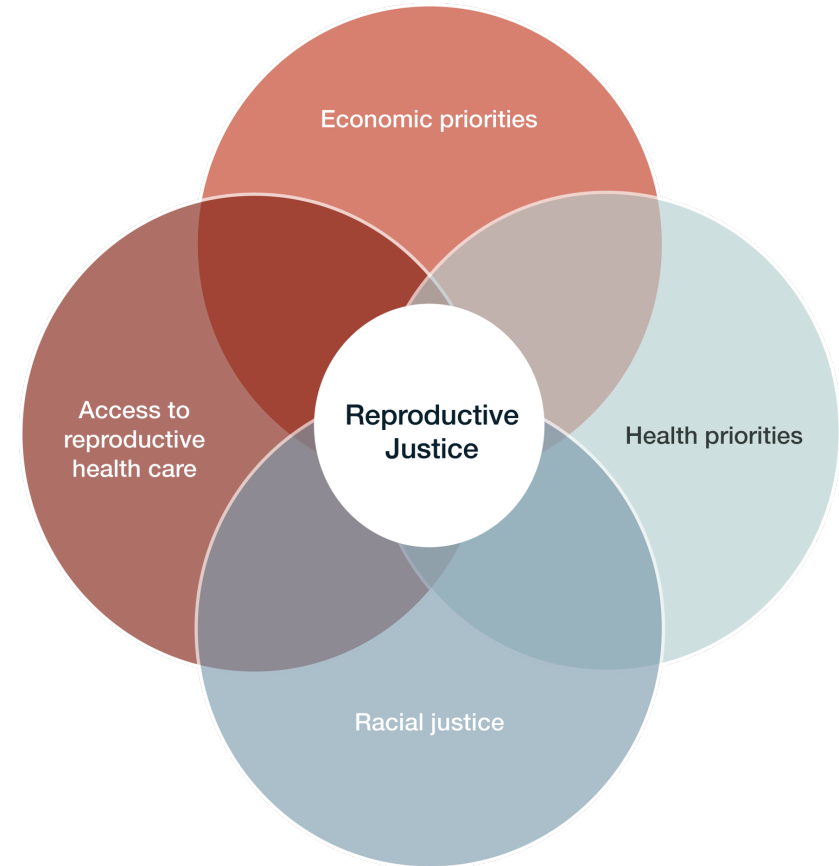
Younger respondents are more likely than older respondents to cite some of these experiences.





**10**  
**Reproductive Justice is at the intersection of top priorities and policy preferences among Black women in Michigan.**

Many women of reproductive age are profoundly impacted by abortion bans. A majority of women of reproductive age can't afford the price of over-the-counter birth control pills. Large majorities support access to abortion, comprehensive sex ed, and sex-positive communication with health care providers.



Economic issues top the list of voting priorities – including the cost of living, equal pay, and lower taxes for the middle and lower class.

Health care is also a top voting issue. Majorities are mobilized by policies to end Black maternal mortality, to increase access to mental health care, and to expand Medicaid. Black maternal mortality and mental health are top policies among young voters.

Racial justice is top voting issue. A majority has experienced gender / racial bias in the medical system.

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**Detailed findings.**



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# Voting in the 2024 elections

**voice**  
IN OUR OWN

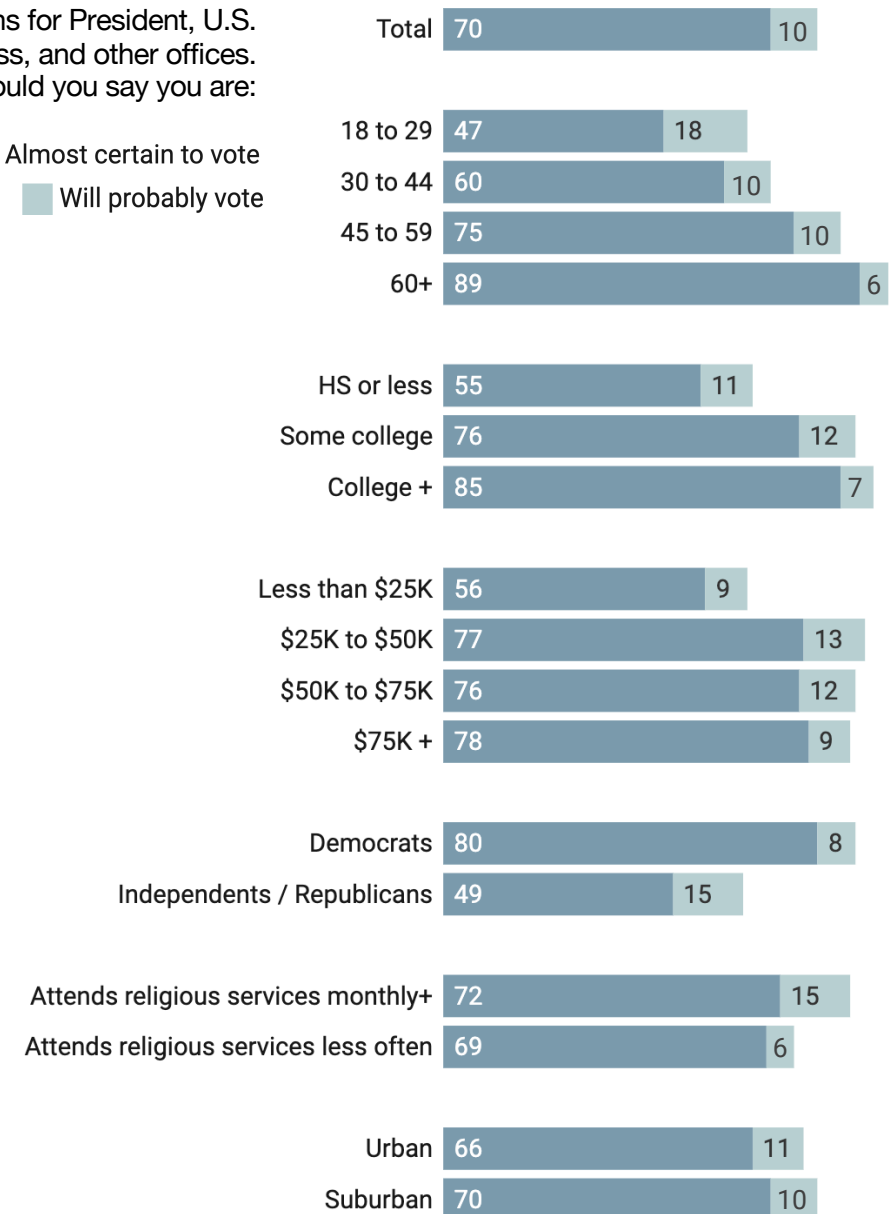
This fall there will be elections for President, U.S. Congress, and other offices. Would you say you are:

■ Almost certain to vote  
■ Will probably vote

## A majority of women (70%) says they're “almost certain” to vote this fall.

Respondents who are least certain to vote include:

- 18- to 29-year-olds (47% almost certain)
- Independent / Republican women (49%)





For you personally, how important is voting in the 2024 elections this fall?

1 to 7 scale  
Not at all important to extremely important  
Base n = 253

**About three in five women say voting in the 2024 elections is “extremely important.”**

That said, fewer than half of 18- to 44-year-olds (44%) feels the same.

**57%**

Rate 7 – extremely important

43% 18 to 44  
70% 45+

69% Democrats  
35% Inds / Reps

**20%**

Rate 5 or 6

24% 18 to 44  
17% 45+

18% Democrats  
24% Inds / Reps

**23%**

Rate 1 to 4 – toward not important

34% 18 to 44  
13% 45+

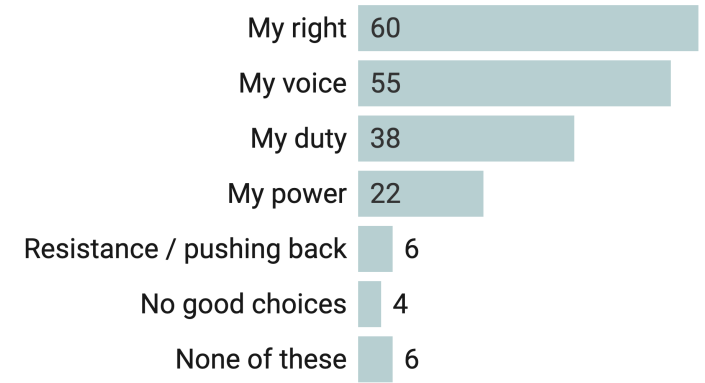
13% Democrats  
42% Inds / Reps

**Respondents are most likely to say voting in the 2024 elections is about “my right” and “my voice.”**

Finish this sentence. For me, voting in this year’s election is about: \_\_\_\_\_ .

Select up to 3

RANDOMIZE UP TO NO GOOD CHOICES



**Eight in ten respondents feel the Black community has the power to change the outcomes of elections.**

Do you feel the Black community has the power to change the outcomes of elections, or not?

**83%**

**17%**

Yes

No

77% 18 to 29  
81% 30 to 44  
86% 45 to 59  
85% 60+

79% HS or less  
83% Some college  
90% College+

79% Less than \$25K  
84% \$25K to \$50K  
84% \$50K to \$75K  
85% \$75K+



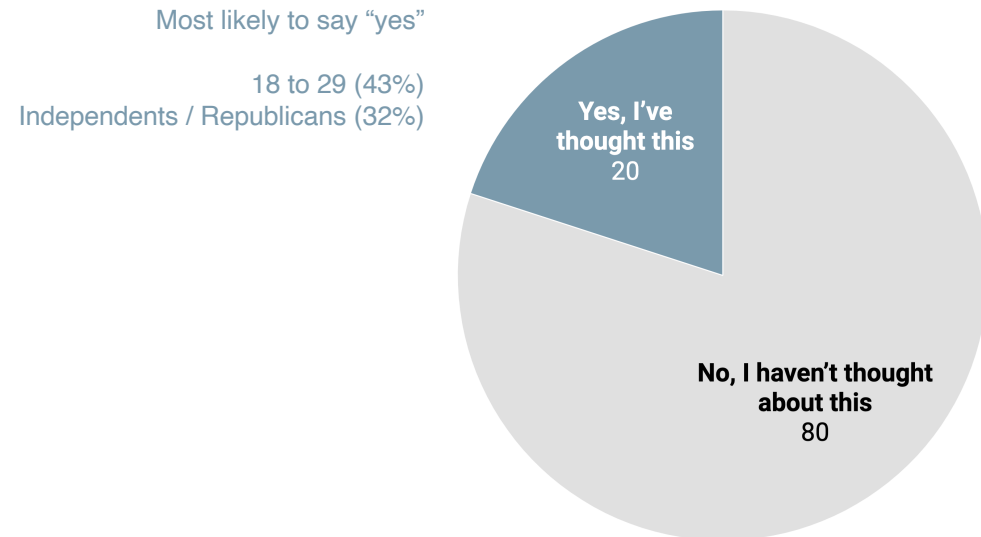
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## One in five says they've thought about not voting as a form of protest.

What might they be protesting? In our companion national survey, we asked a random subset of respondents to explain in an open-ended question. Here are the main themes:

- Bad candidates, candidates who don't represent their views, Biden / Trump being old white men
- Feeling their vote doesn't count
- Protecting Palestine / protesting what's happening in Gaza

Have you thought about not voting in the 2024 elections as a form of protest?



**If the presidential election were held today, two-thirds (67%) say they'd vote for the Democratic candidate.**

Among those most certain to vote, 78% say they'd vote for the Democratic candidate v. 9% for the Republican.

See the next page for breakouts by demographic segments.

If the 2024 presidential election were held today, would you vote for:

*Base n = 513*

**67%**

Democratic candidate  
78% of women almost certain to vote

**9%**

Republican candidate  
9%

**4%**

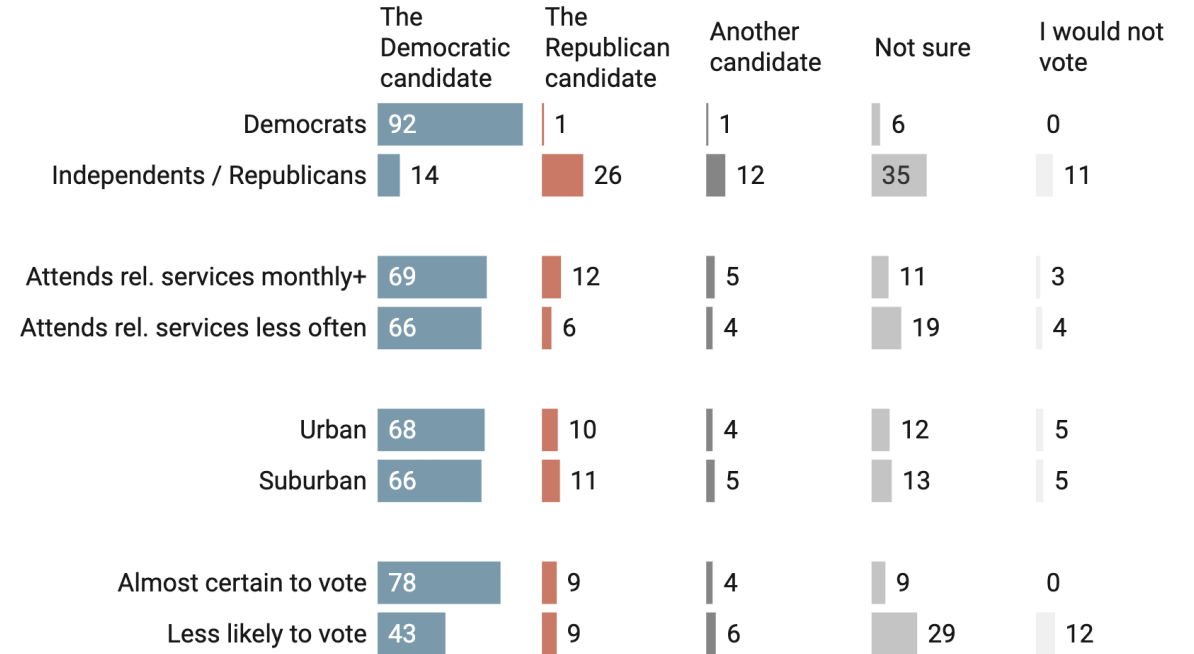
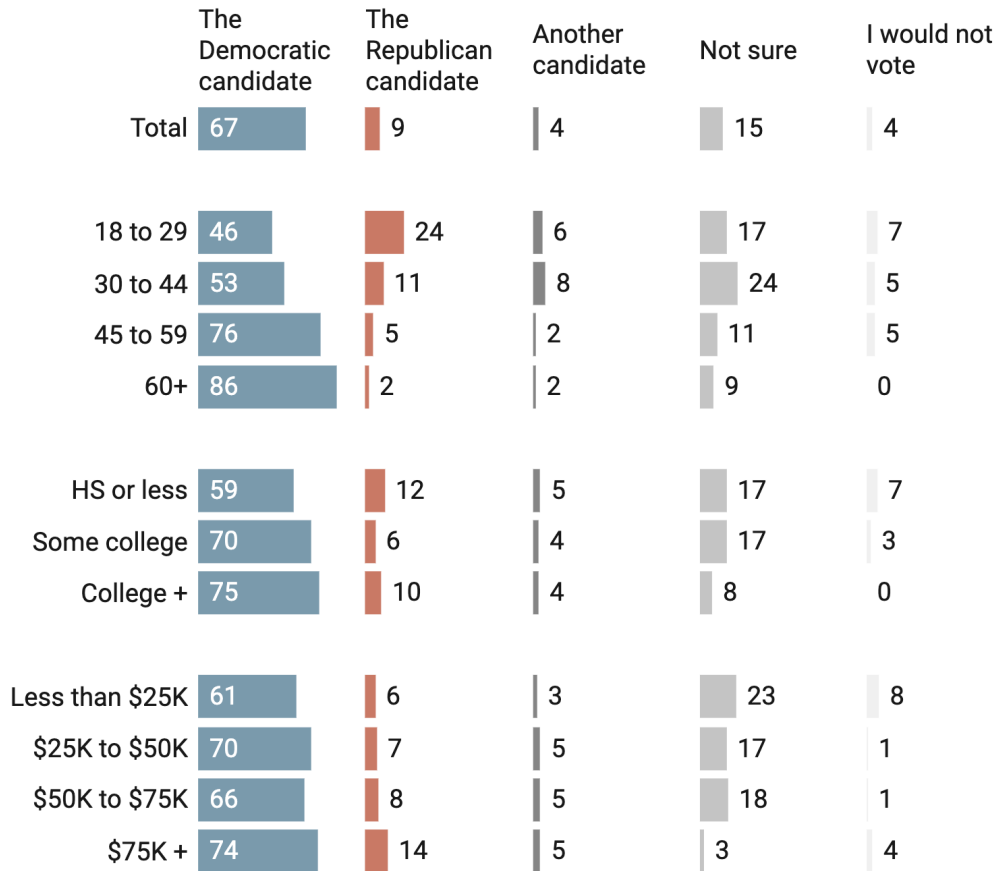
Other  
4%

**15%**

Not sure  
9%

**4%**

Would not vote  
0%

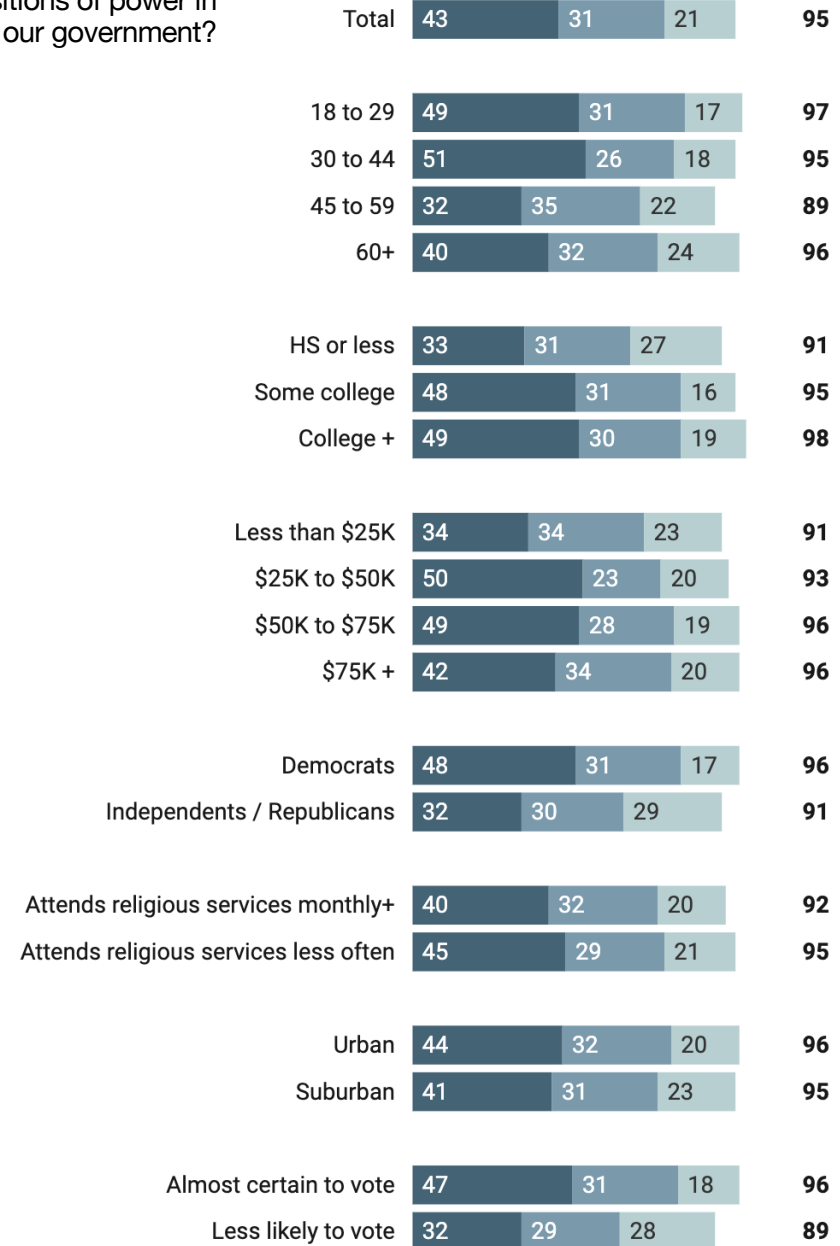


How important is it that more Black women are elected and nominated to positions of power in our government?

Extremely Very Somewhat

**More than nine in ten respondents (95%) say it's important that more Black women are elected and nominated to positions of power in government.**

This sentiment is particularly strong among younger women, Democrats, and college-educated women.



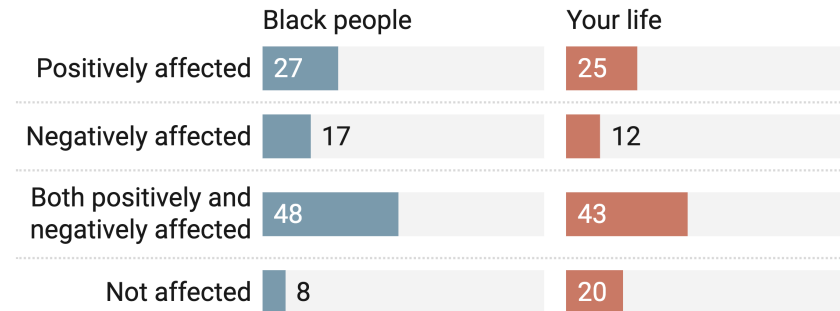


# Impact of the Biden administration

**voice**  
IN OUR OWN

**A plurality of respondents feels President Biden's policies have both positively and negatively affected their life.**

In general, do you think President Biden's policies have \_\_\_\_\_:  
"Black people" (n = 253) / "your life" (n = 263)



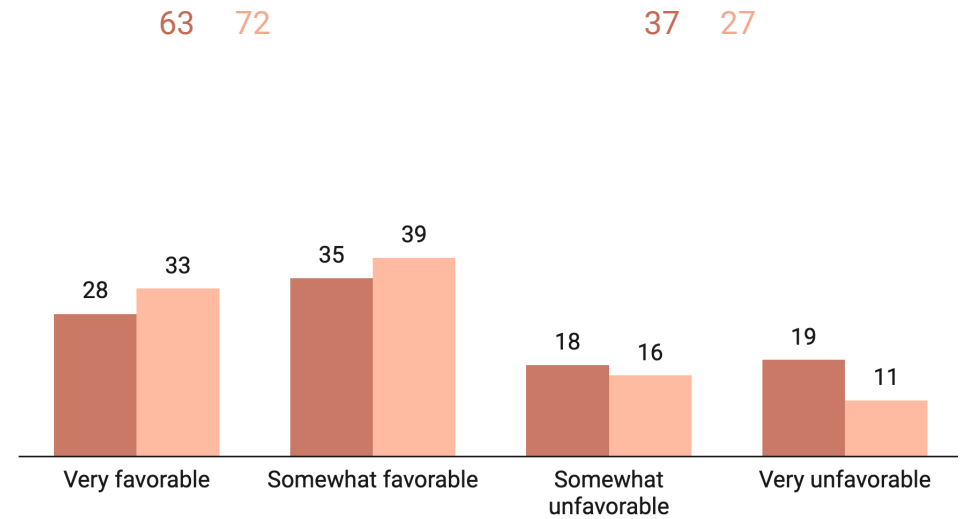


## That said, most have favorable impressions of President Biden and Vice President Harris.

Younger respondents are much more unfavorable toward Biden than Harris.

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable view of:

President Joe Biden Vice President Kamala Harris



Most likely to be favorable:

- Democrats (82% Biden, 84% Harris)
- Ages 60+ (81%, 78%)
- Ages 45 to 59 (77%, 79%)

Most likely to be unfavorable:

- Independents / Reps (76%, 54%)
- 18 to 29 (58%, 27%)
- 30 to 44 (56%, 42%)



# Issue priorities

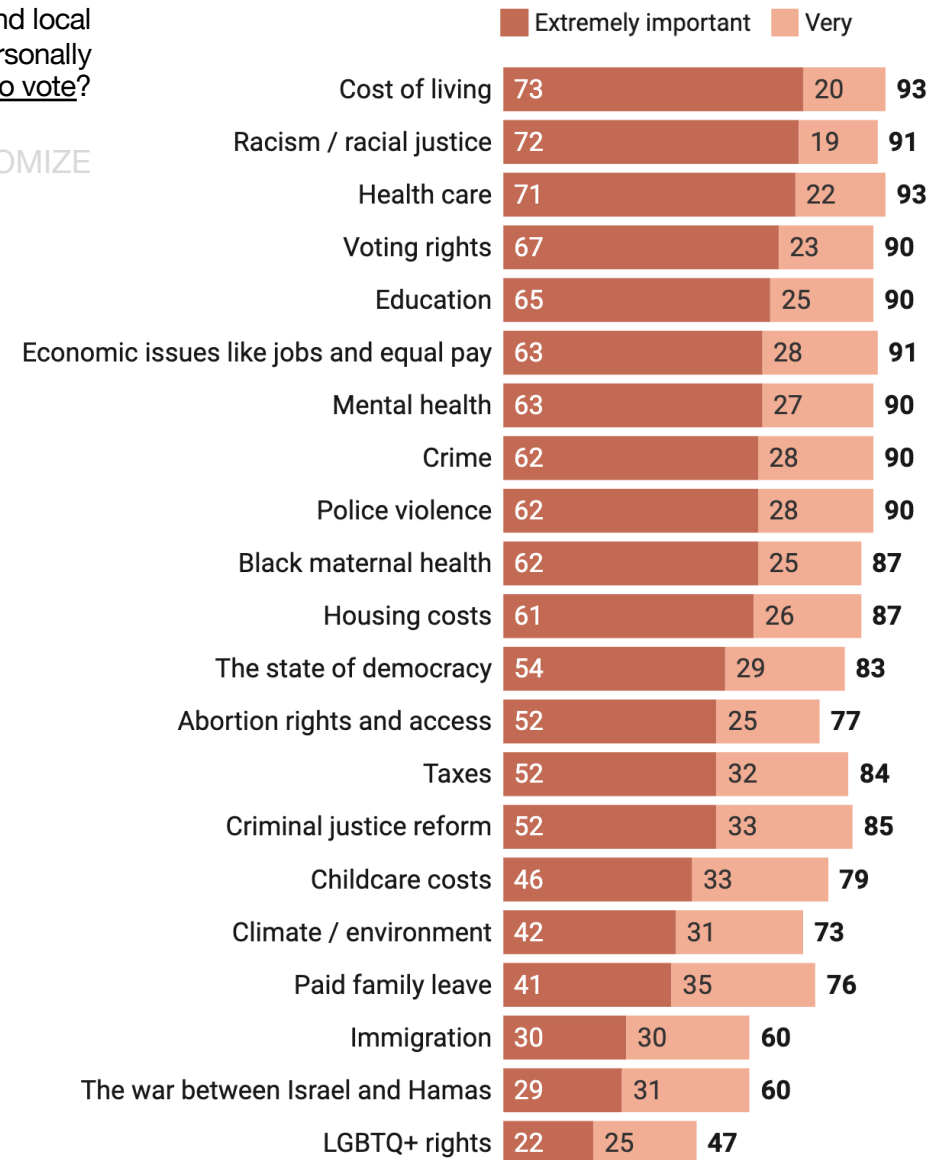
**voice**  
IN OUR OWN



This fall there will be elections for US Congress, state, and local offices. How important is each of these issues to you personally when thinking about getting out to vote?

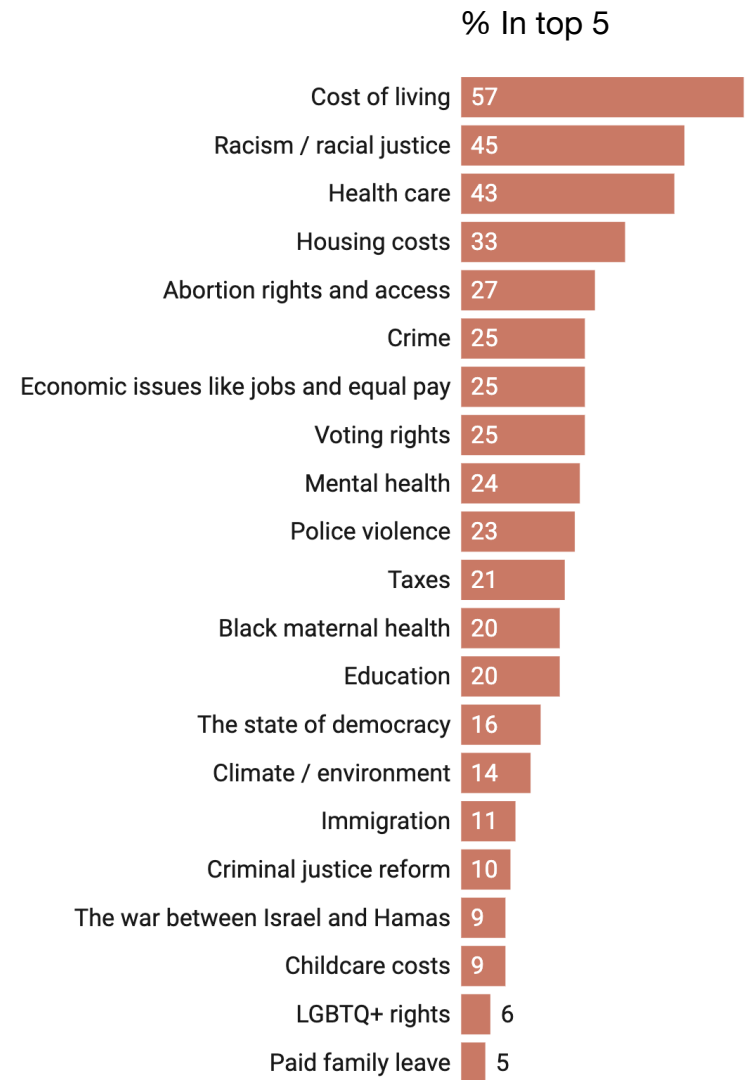
RANDOMIZE

**Many issues are on the minds of Black women.**

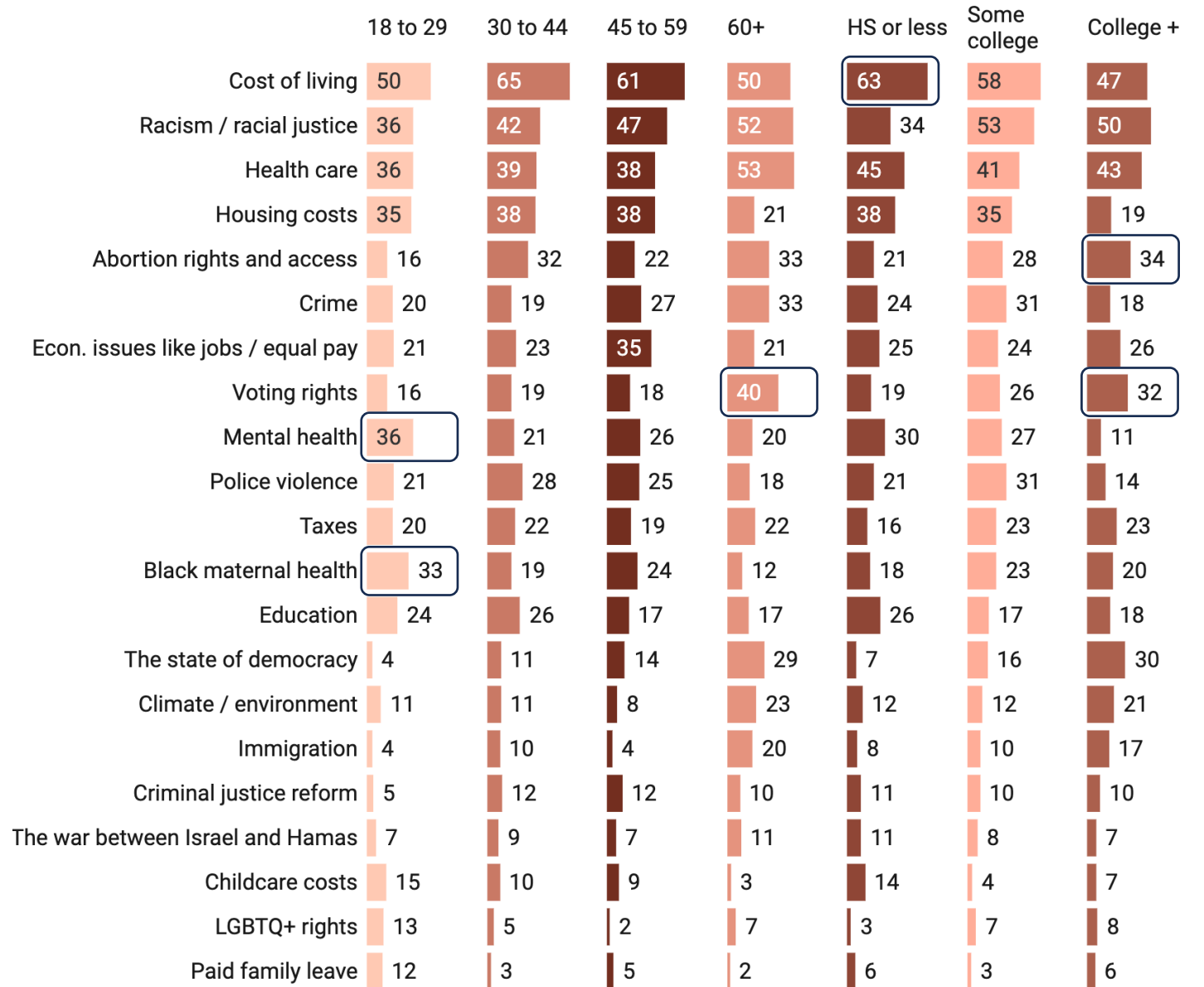


**When asked to prioritize their issues, cost of living tops the list.**

Choose the top 5 issues that matter most to you when voting in elections.



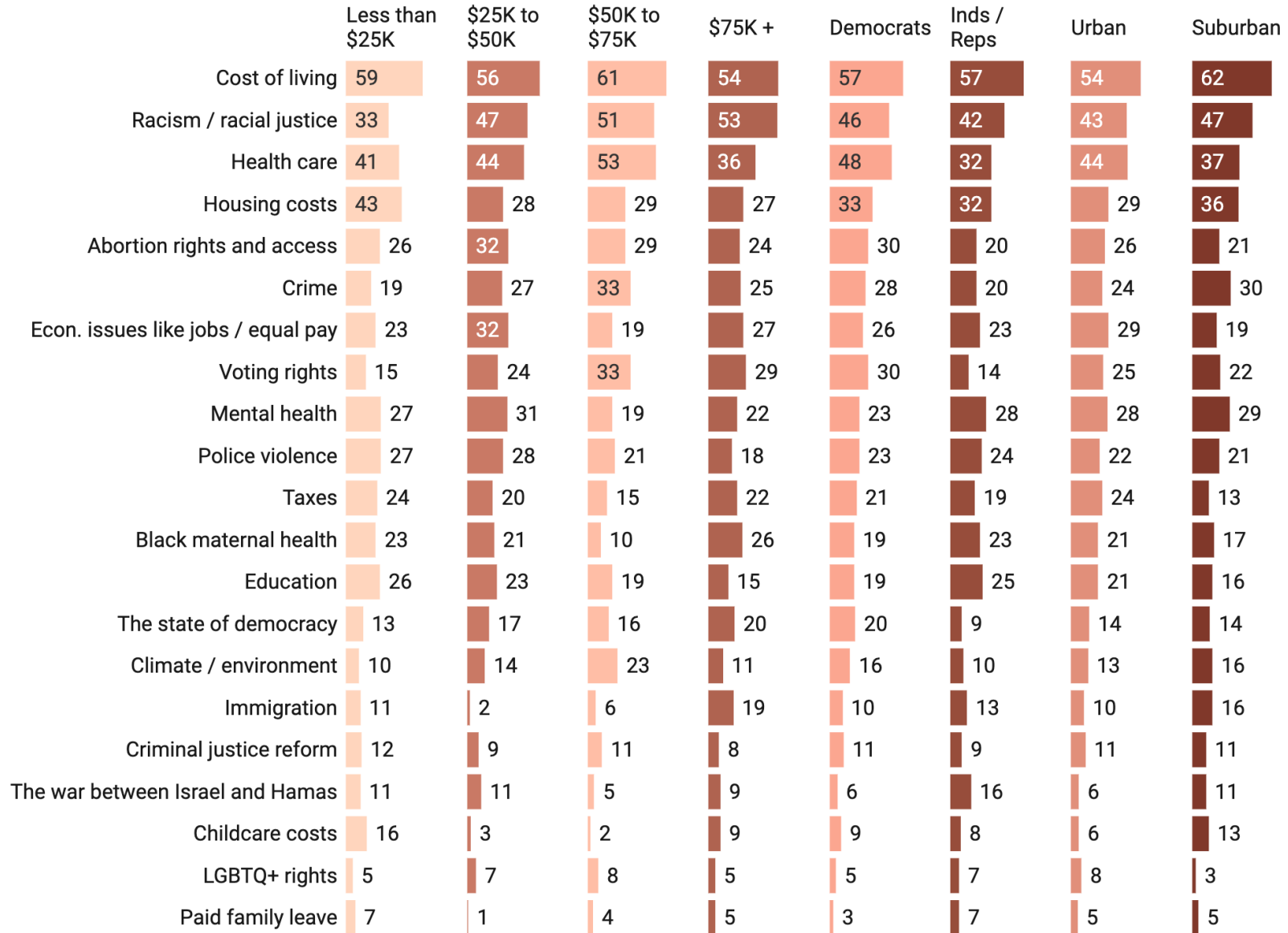
% Chosen as a top 5 issue



Mental health and Black maternal health are among the top issues for 18- to 29-year-olds.

Respondents with a high school degree or less are particularly likely to prioritize cost of living.

% Chosen as a top 5 issue



**We also explored views toward the war between Hamas and Israel.**

Respondents are split in their support and opposition of the way Israel has responded to events of October 7<sup>th</sup> – but half is unsure.

Do you support or oppose how Israel has responded to the events of October 7<sup>th</sup>?

**23%**

Support

**24%**

Oppose

**52%**

Not sure



## Respondents are split on how Biden has dealt with the war.

Older women are among the most likely to approve. Younger women and independents / Republicans are among the most likely to disapprove.

Do you approve or disapprove of the way President Biden has dealt with the war between Israel and Hamas?

**38%**

Approve

Most likely

- 60+ (57%)
- Democrats (49%)
- Attends rel. services monthly+ (47%)
- Suburbanites (46%)

**25%**

Disapprove

Most likely

- Independents / Republicans (40%)
- 18 to 29 (38%)

**36%**

Not sure



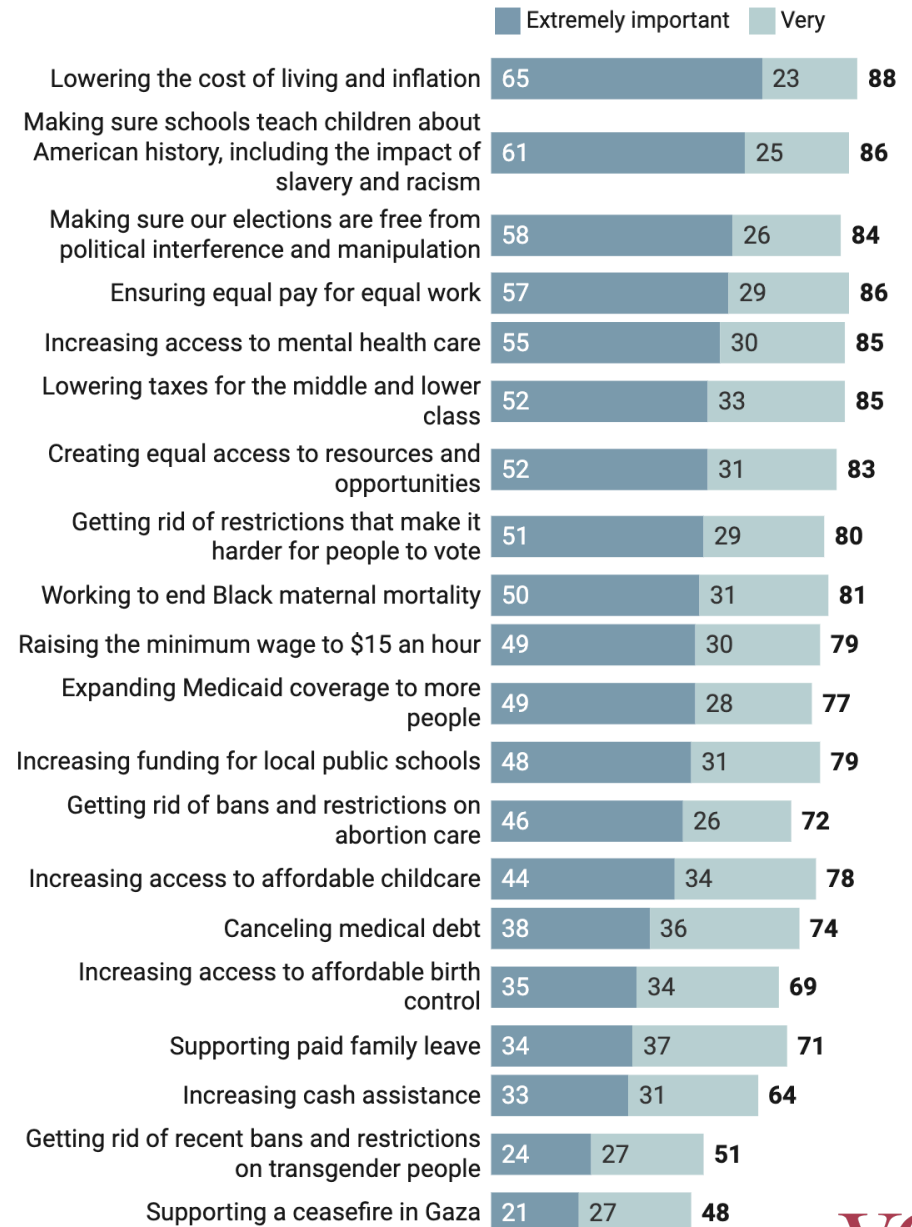
# Policy positions

**voice**  
IN OUR OWN

Here are positions some candidates will take in the November elections. How important would each of these issues be to you personally when thinking about getting out to vote?

RANDOMIZE

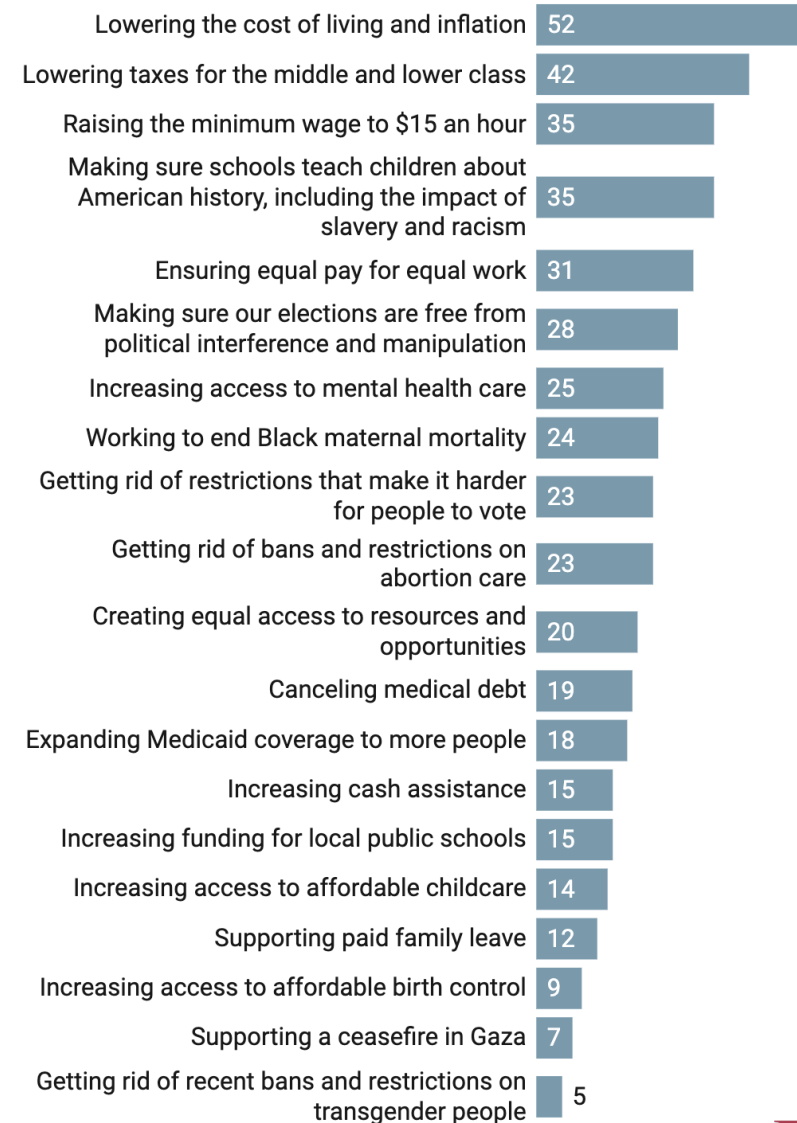
**Majorities say candidate policy positions relating to economics, education, elections, and health are extremely important.**



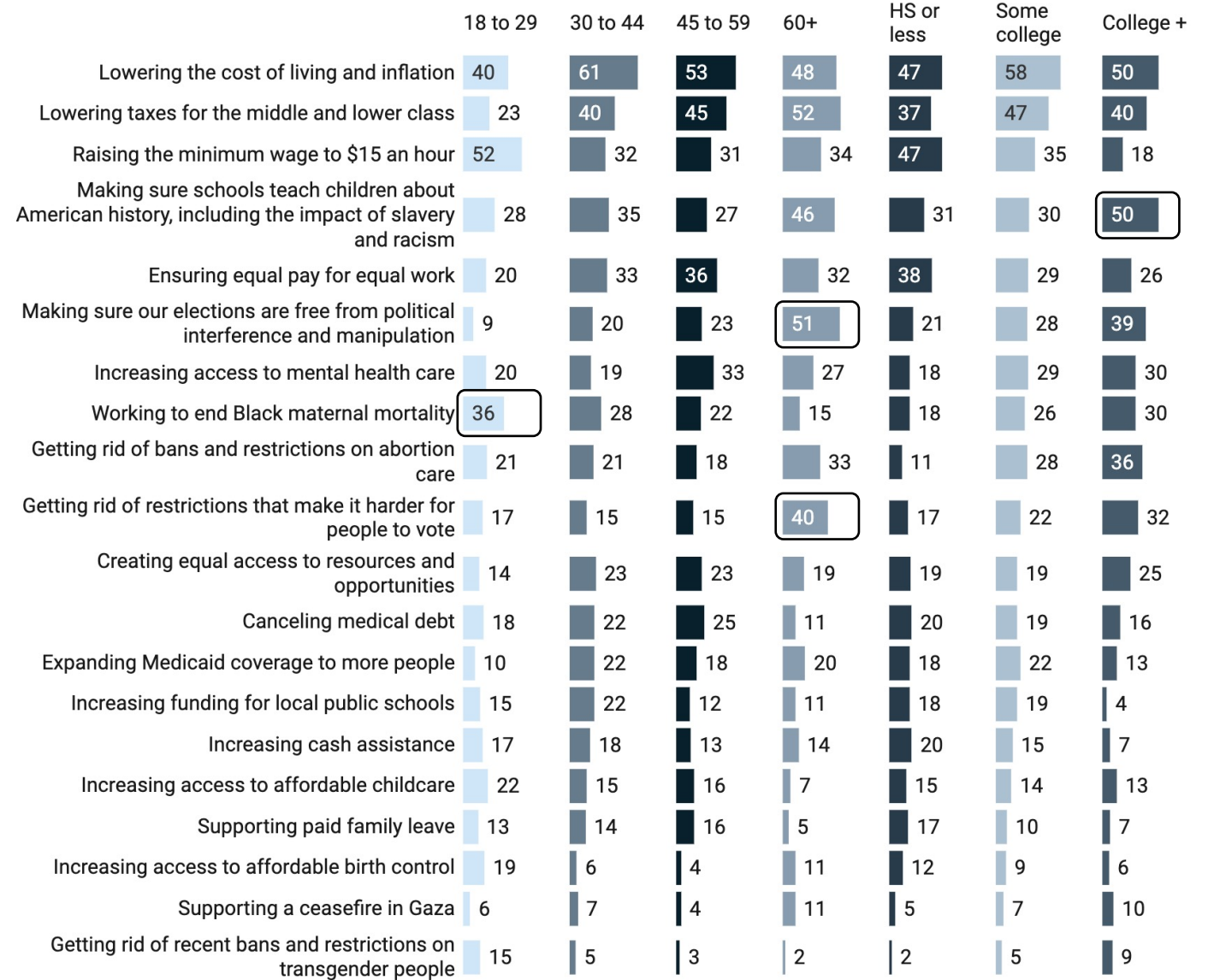


**When asked to narrow down to the most important policy positions, economic policies rise to the top.**

% Chosen as a top 5 policy position



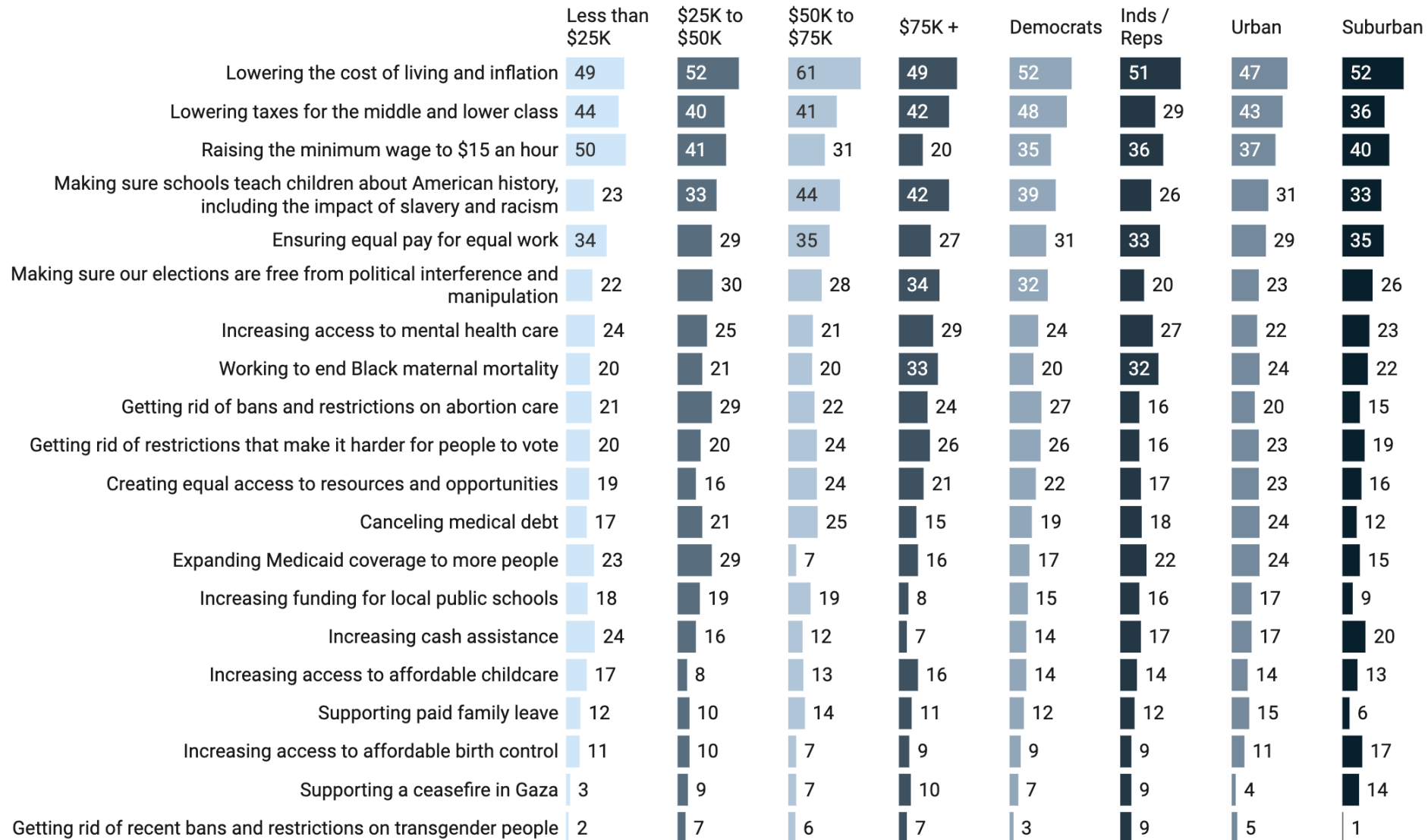
% Chosen as a top 5 issue



Working to end Black maternal mortality is among the top policies for 18- to 29-year-olds.

Policies relating to free and fair elections are higher priorities for older v. younger respondents.

% Chosen as a top 5 issue





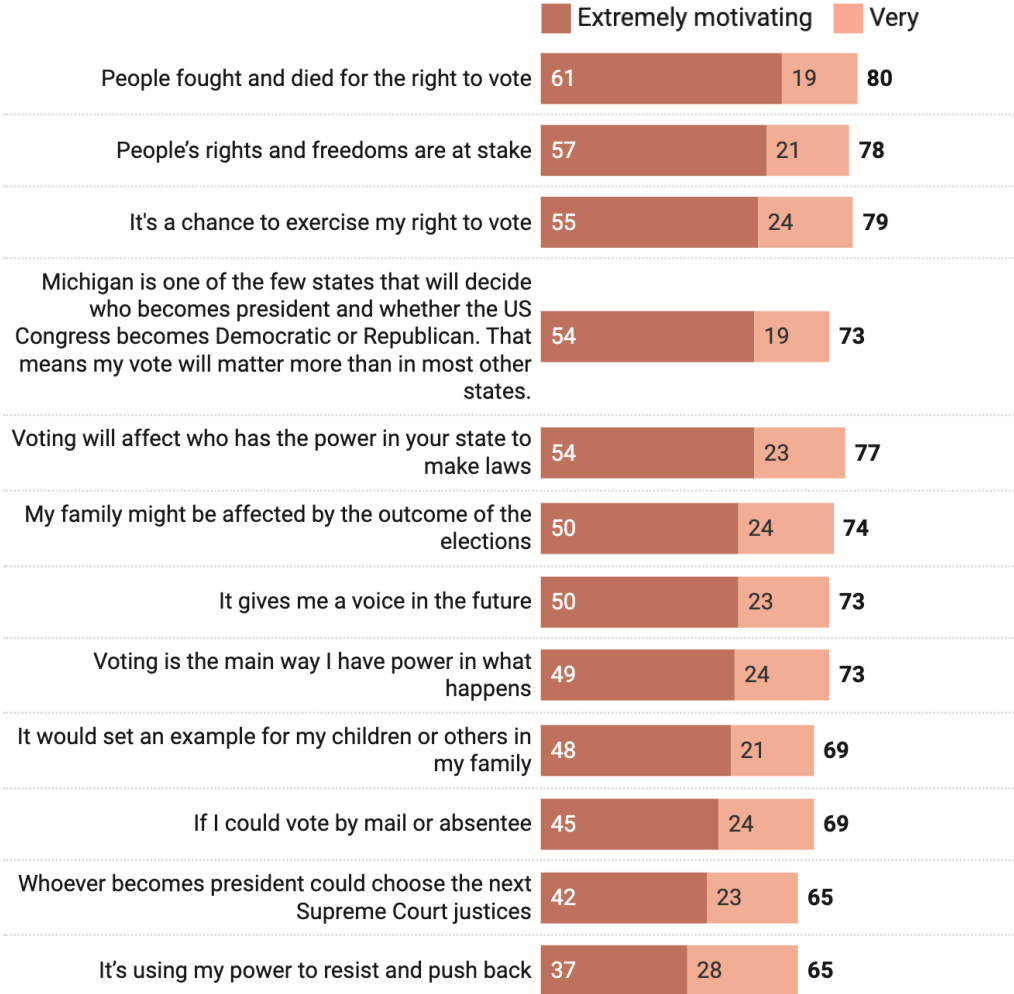
**Why vote?**

**voice**  
IN OUR OWN

For you personally, how motivating is each of these to get out and vote in the elections this fall?

## We explored several motivations to vote in the elections this fall.

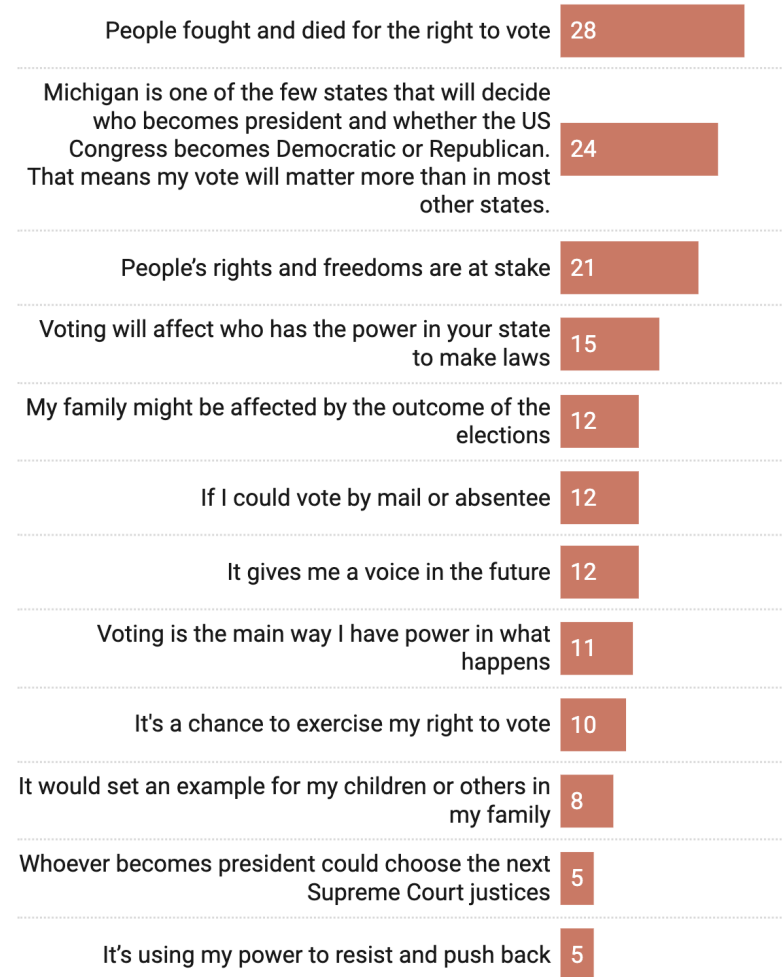
There are many motivations. At the top are people having fought and died for the right to vote, feeling that people’s rights and freedoms are at stake, and the chance to exercise a right.



## Here's what they say when forced to choose the top 1 or 2 motivations.

The table on the following page shows the top motivations by demographic group.

Of these, which might be most motivating for you personally to vote this fall?  
Choose 1 or 2.



## Here are the top 5 motivations by demographic segment.

18 to 29	30 to 44	45 to 59	60+	HS or less	Some college	College +
People fought and died for the right to vote	People fought and died for the right to vote	Michigan is one of the few states that will decide...	People fought and died for the right to vote	People fought and died for the right to vote	People fought and died for the right to vote	Michigan is one of the few states that will decide...
It gives me a voice in the future	Michigan is one of the few states that will decide...	People's rights and freedoms are at stake	People's rights and freedoms are at stake	Michigan is one of the few states that will decide...	People's rights and freedoms are at stake	People fought and died for the right to vote
Voting is the main way I have power in what happens	Voting will affect who has the power in your state to make laws	Voting will affect who has the power in your state to make laws	Michigan is one of the few states that will decide...	People's rights and freedoms are at stake	Michigan is one of the few states that will decide...	People's rights and freedoms are at stake
Michigan is one of the few states that will decide...	My family might be affected by the outcome of the elections	People fought and died for the right to vote	It's a chance to exercise my right to vote	If I could vote by mail or absentee	It gives me a voice in the future	Voting will affect who has the power in your state to make laws
If I could vote by mail or absentee	If I could vote by mail or absentee	It gives me a voice in the future	Voting is the main way I have power in what happens	It gives me a voice in the future	My family might be affected by the outcome of the elections	Voting is the main way I have power in what happens

## Here are the top 5 motivations by demographic segment.

Less than \$25K	\$25K to \$50K	\$50K to \$75K	\$75K+	Urban	Suburban	Almost certain to vote	Less likely to vote
People fought and died for the right to vote	Michigan is one of the few states that will decide...	People fought and died for the right to vote	People fought and died for the right to vote	People fought and died for the right to vote	People fought and died for the right to vote	People fought and died for the right to vote	People fought and died for the right to vote
Michigan is one of the few states that will decide...	People fought and died for the right to vote	Michigan is one of the few states that will decide...	Michigan is one of the few states that will decide...	Michigan is one of the few states that will decide...	People's rights and freedoms are at stake	Michigan is one of the few states that will decide...	Voting will affect who has the power in your state to make laws
People's rights and freedoms are at stake	People's rights and freedoms are at stake	It gives me a voice in the future	People's rights and freedoms are at stake	People's rights and freedoms are at stake	It gives me a voice in the future	People's rights and freedoms are at stake	People's rights and freedoms are at stake
If I could vote by mail or absentee	If I could vote by mail or absentee	Voting will affect who has the power in your state to make laws	Voting will affect who has the power in your state to make laws	My family might be affected by the outcome of the elections	Michigan is one of the few states that will decide...	Voting will affect who has the power in your state to make laws	If I could vote by mail or absentee
It's a chance to exercise my right to vote	Voting will affect who has the power in your state to make laws	My family might be affected by the outcome of the elections	Voting is the main way I have power in what happens	If I could vote by mail or absentee	If I could vote by mail or absentee	My family might be affected by the outcome of the elections	Michigan is one of the few states that will decide...





# Views toward reproductive policies

**voice**  
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**Four in five respondents  
say abortion should be legal  
in all or most cases.**

Which comes closest to your view.  
Abortion should be:

**81%**

**18%**

Legal in all or most  
cases

Illegal in all or most  
cases

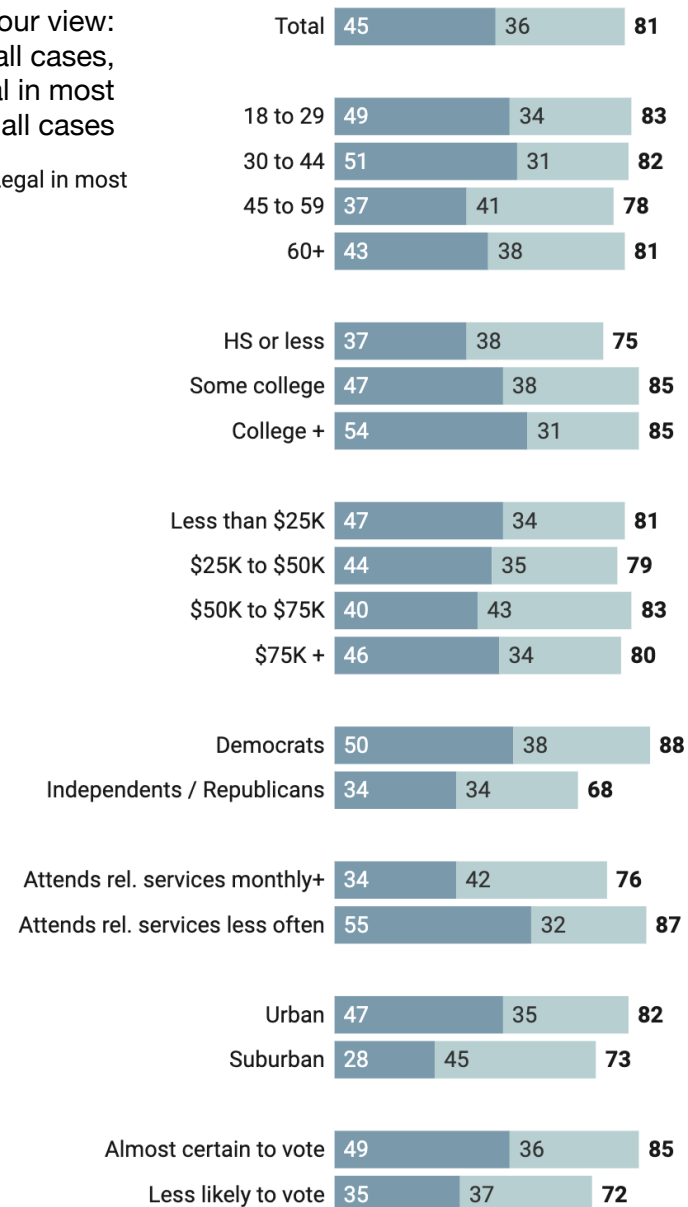
*5% illegal in all  
cases*

## Majorities across every demographic group think abortion should be legal in all or most cases.

Three in four women (76%) who attend religious services regularly say abortion should be legal in all or most cases.

Which comes closest to your view:  
Abortion should be legal in all cases,  
legal in most cases, illegal in most  
cases, illegal in all cases

Legal in all   Legal in most



**More than eight in ten say they'd vote in favor of a state amendment to guarantee the right to make decisions about pregnancy, including abortion.**

Let's say there was a proposed amendment to your state constitution. You could vote on it. The amendment would guarantee the right to make all decisions about pregnancy and abortion care, without the state interfering. Would you vote:

ROTATE

**85%**

In favor of this

83% 18 to 44  
88% 45+

**15%**

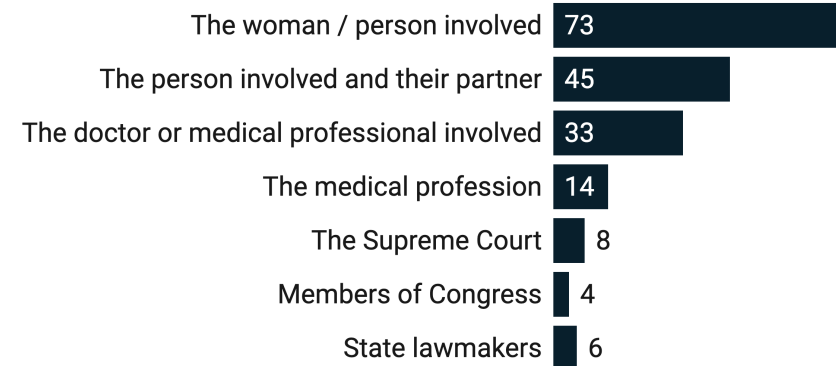
Against this

**A large majority wants decisions about abortion to rest in the hands of the people involved.**

In your view, who should make decisions about when and how someone can get abortion care in your state?

Select any that apply:

RANDOMIZE



Large majorities value each person and circumstance driving decisions, including later in pregnancy.

92%

Agree: Each person should have the right to make their own decision on abortion, even if I may disagree with it

73% Strongly agree  
19% Somewhat agree

93% 18 to 44  
91% 45+

85%

Agree: People should be able to get abortion care as early as possible and as late as necessary. Abortion care provided later in pregnancy occurs under complex and unpredictable circumstances. Medical professionals should be able to care for patients without government interference or fear of punishment

*(Base n = 263)*

58% Strongly agree  
27% Somewhat agree

81% 18 to 44  
88% 45+

83%

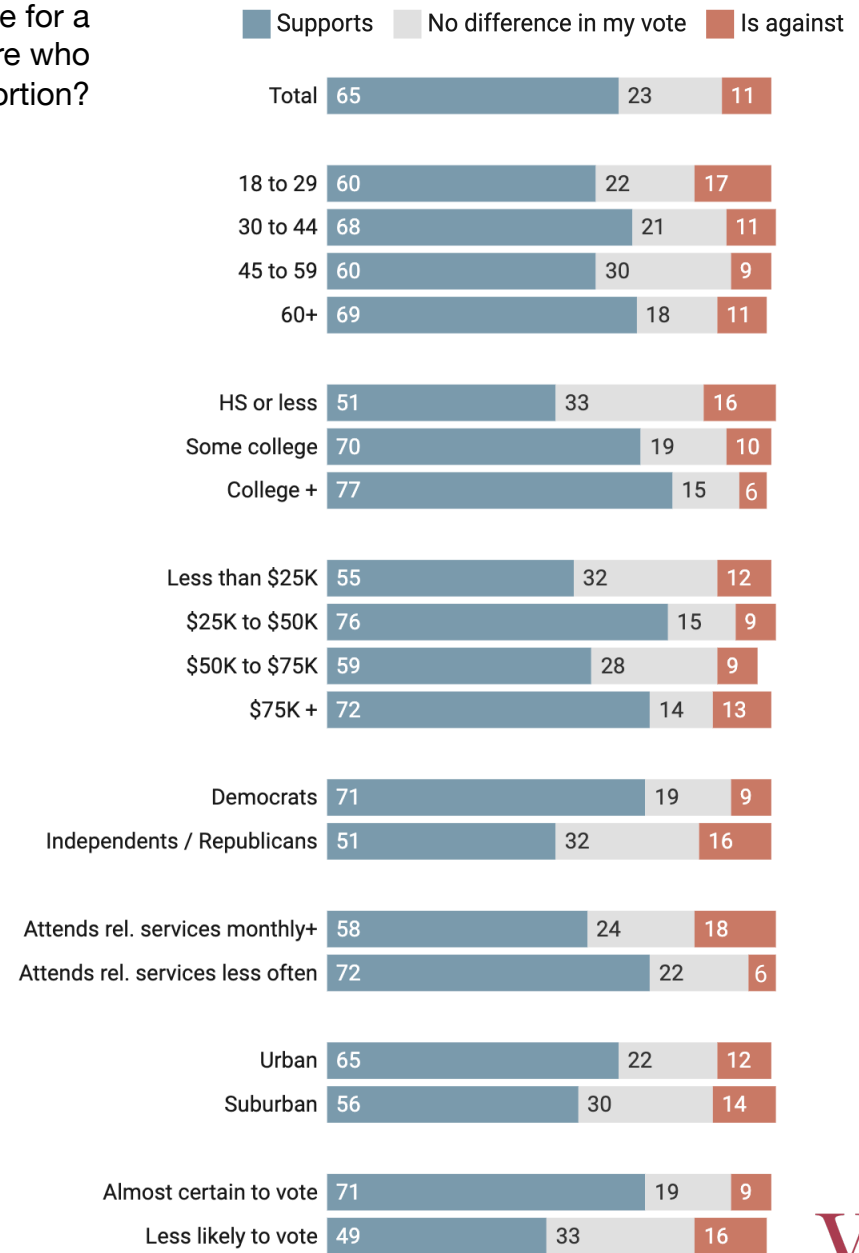
Say having an abortion can be a responsible choice

84% 18 to 44  
83% 45+

Are you more likely to vote for a candidate for state legislature who \_\_\_\_\_ access to abortion?

**Respondents are six times more likely to vote for a candidate who supports abortion access (65%) than one who opposes it (11%).**

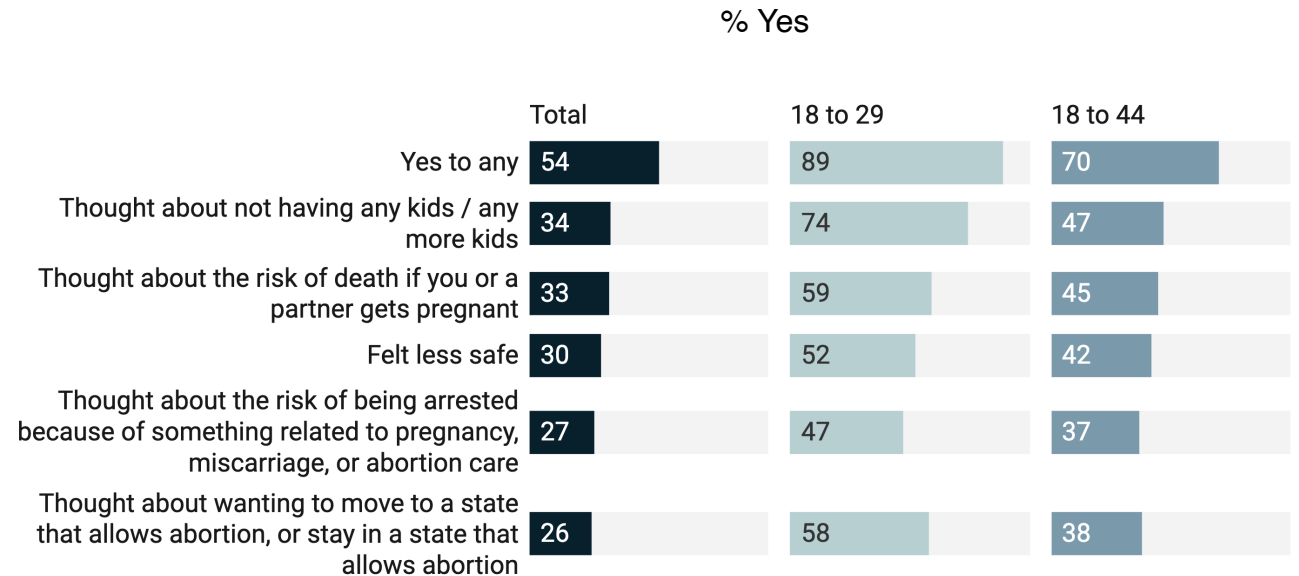
Those most likely to vote are also among the most likely to support a candidate who supports abortion access.



## Recent abortion bans are having a personal impact on Black women of reproductive age.

Three in four 18- to 29-year-olds (74%) say recent bans have made them think about not having any / any more kids. Six in ten (59%) say recent abortion bans have made them think about the risk of death if they or a partner were to get pregnant.

As a result of recent abortion bans and restrictions, have you...





**Almost one in four women knows someone who has tried to have an abortion in the past year or two.**

Do you know anyone who has had an abortion or tried to have an abortion in the past year or two?

**23%**

Of all women say yes

**37%**

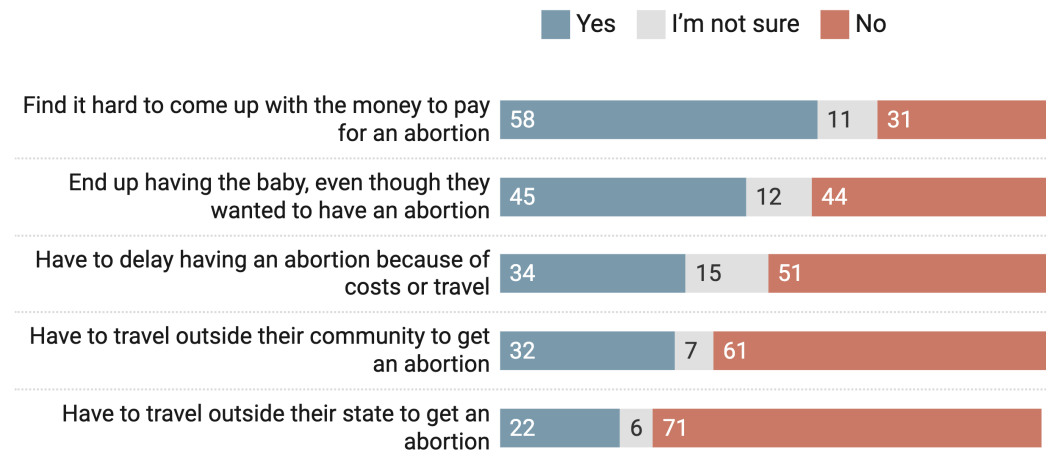
Of women 18 to 44 say yes

**Three in four (77%) says the person(s) they know faced at least one of these barriers to care.**

Cost is the main barrier cited. Nearly half (45%) says the person was not able to have an abortion.

Did [ONE PERSON: that person / MORE THAN ONE: any of the people you know]:

*Base n = 164 who know someone who has had an abortion or tried to have an abortion in the past two years*



**A large majority of women support comprehensive sex ed in high school.**

Majorities of women who regularly attend religious services also support comprehensive sex ed.

Do you support or oppose comprehensive sex ed in high school that covers topics such as abstinence, birth control, abortion, preventing HIV and other sexual transmitted diseases, different sexual orientations, gender identity, sexual violence, consent, and healthy relationships?

**90%**

Support

**9%**

Oppose

86% Attends rel. services monthly+  
95% Less often

**Four in five women agree that health care providers should create space for conversations about sexuality, including sexual pleasure.**

Do you agree or disagree: Our health care providers should create space for education and non-judgmental conversations about sexuality, including how we can experience pleasure.

**83%**

Agree

**16%**

Disagree

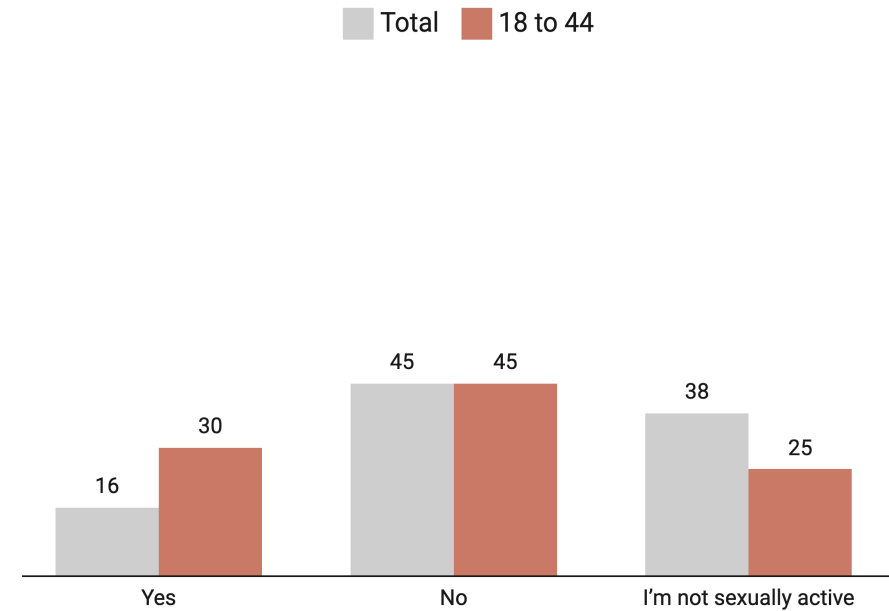
83% Attends rel. services monthly+



# Access to birth control

**Roughly three in ten women of reproductive age (30%) say they or a partner are currently using birth control.**

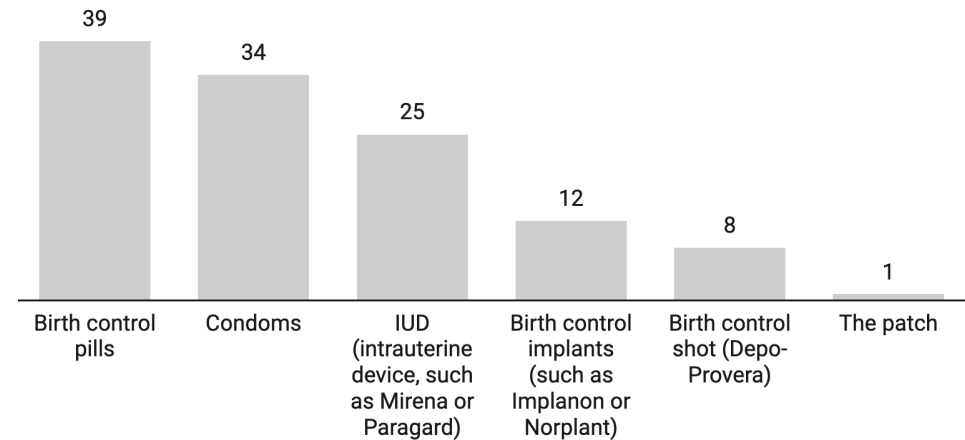
Are you or your partner currently using birth control?



What type(s) of birth control are you or a partner using now? Select any that apply.

*Base n = 88 self or partner is currently using birth control*

**Pills, condoms, and IUDs are the most common birth control methods.**



**A majority of women of reproductive age expresses interest in getting birth control pills over the counter.**

Soon people will be able to get birth control pills over-the-counter. They will be available at the drugstore, like condoms and other birth control methods. How interested are you in getting birth control pills over-the-counter for you or a loved one?

% Very or somewhat interested

**62%**

Women 18 to 44

**68%**

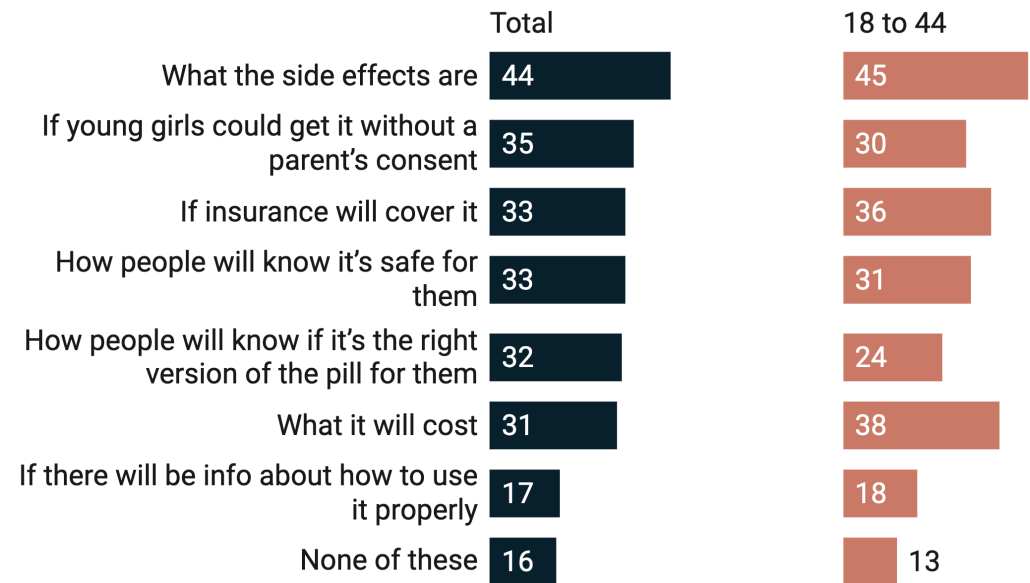
Women 18 to 29



**Among women of reproductive age, the most common questions about over-the-counter pills are about side effects and costs.**

What would you want to know about birth control pills being over-the-counter?  
Select the top 3 things you'd want to know.

RANDOMIZE



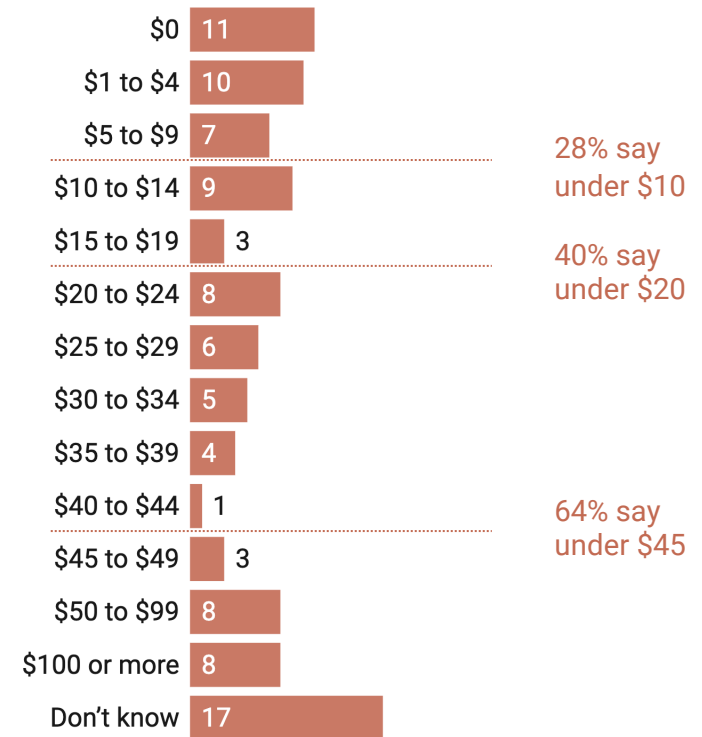
**The retail price for over-the-counter birth control (\$49.00) is out of reach for 64% of respondents of reproductive age.**

Let's say you or a loved one needed a 3-month supply of birth control pills. How much would you be able to pay for it, out-of-pocket, today?

Even if you don't need birth control pills, please imagine a situation in which you or a loved one does.

Your best guess is fine.

*Base n = 254 women 18 to 44*



**More than four in ten respondents of reproductive age (45%) say they are likely to talk with loved ones about over-the-counter access to birth control.**

Soon people will be able to get birth control pills over-the-counter. They will be available at the drugstore, like condoms and other birth control methods. Is this something you'd talk about with partners, family, or friends?

% Yes

**45%**

18 to 44



# Experiences with medical bias

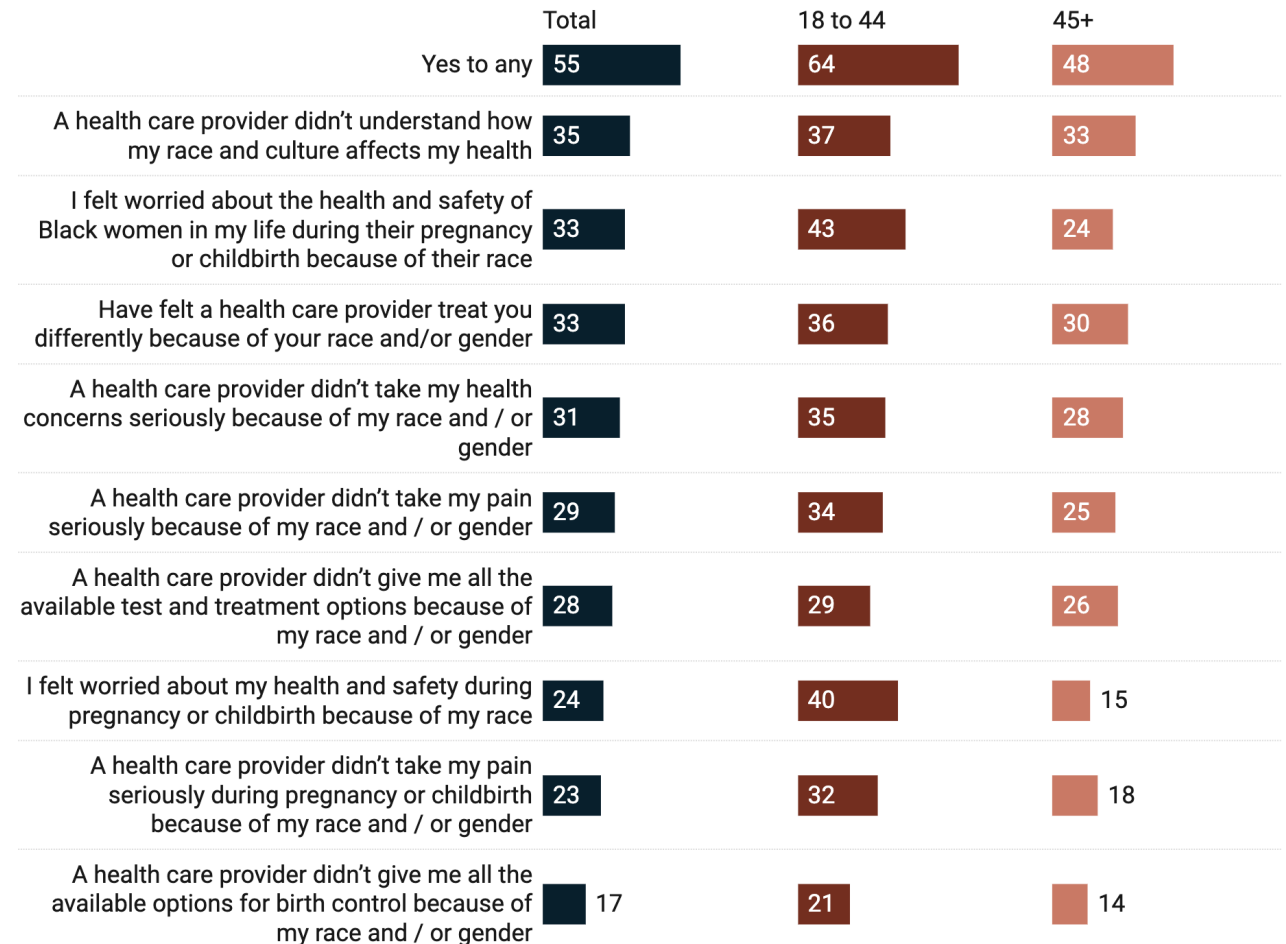
**voice**  
IN OUR OWN

## A majority of Black women says they have felt the effects of racial / gender bias in the health care system.

Younger respondents are more likely than their older counterparts to cite some of these experiences.

Here are things that can happen in the healthcare system due to racial bias or racism. Have you ever felt this way?

RANDOMIZE



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voice  
IN OUR OWN