



## **BISC Trendency Research: Immigration Research Memo**

### **Key Takeaways**

#### **Strong Partisan Divide on Building a Border Wall**

- Voters remain deeply divided over building a border wall. Across all 14 states, 39% strongly support building a wall, while 35% strongly oppose it. Another 26% hold more moderate views. This split has remained stable since 2019, signaling long-standing polarization.
- Partisan and demographic divides shape these views. Republicans, AANHPI voters, rural voters, and men show the strongest support, while Democrats remain firmly opposed. Most other demographics fall in the middle (45-56 on a 100-point scale), reflecting broader polarization. Even voters whose preferred solution is “strengthening borders without a wall” are ambivalent (49/100).
- Geographically, support is highest in Mississippi (62) and Florida (59), with extreme Republican support in Arizona (94) and Oregon (91). Men are more supportive than women in most states, while younger voters are less convinced overall—though in California (64) and Washington (51), younger voters are more supportive than older voters.

#### **Broad Support for Multi-Racial Coalitions to Strengthen Democracy**

- Most voters support the idea that “we need to join together, with people of all different races, to vote for issues that will help fix our democracy and allow families to thrive.” Across states, the average response is 72 out of 100—a view that has held strong since 2019, with a modest recent increase (+2 points).
- Support is highest among Democrats, Indigenous voters, urban voters, Black voters, and lower-income voters (<\$75K). Republicans (58) are least likely to agree, underscoring a clear partisan split.
- Voters with anti-immigration views—those who support building a wall, think immigration is bad, or prioritize deportation—are less likely to embrace this coalition-building message. However, voters who prefer strengthening borders without a wall remain aligned with the overall average (75).
- More than half of voters (56%) strongly agree with this multi-racial coalition vision, while only 12% strongly disagree. Arizona voters show the most resistance (22% strongly disagree), driven largely by Republicans in the state (43). Men in Nebraska and Maine are also less likely to agree, and Independents in Missouri and California are on the fence.

## **Growing Support for Securing Borders and Preventing Illegal Immigration**

- Support is increasing for the statement: “we need to keep Americans safe from terrorists, secure our borders, and prevent illegal immigrants from taking advantage of our country.” The average agreement is now 67/100, up 5 points since last summer.
- Partisan differences are stark: Republicans are most supportive (87), while Democrats are least supportive (48). Agreement is also higher among voters over 45, rural voters, AANHPI voters, men, non-college educated voters, and higher-income voters (> \$75K). In contrast, younger voters, Latine voters, and urban voters fall below average.
- While one-quarter of voters (26%) disagree, half (50%) strongly agree with this statement. Strong agreement is especially high in Florida (64%) and Missouri (61%), with above-average agreement also in Mississippi, Maine, Ohio, Montana, and California.

## **Majority See Immigration as a Net Positive for the Country**

- Across BISC’s priority states, voters lean toward viewing immigration as good for the country (58/100), compared to viewing it as bad (37/100). This pattern holds across most demographics and states, with notable exceptions: Indigenous voters and Republicans tend to view immigration more negatively.
- Pro-immigration sentiment is strongest in Michigan, Washington, Colorado, and California, while voters in Florida and Mississippi are more skeptical. Views have been relatively stable over the past five years, though slightly more positive recently (+2 points for “good,” -3 points for “bad”).
- About half of voters (52%) allocate 60+ points toward viewing immigration positively, while 26% do the same on the negative side. However, 64% of voters acknowledge at least some negative aspects of immigration (20-100 points), showing that nuanced and mixed views remain common.

## **Two Competing Visions for Immigration Solutions**

- When asked about immigration priorities, voters are polarized between enforcement and citizenship approaches. Democrats favor preventing family separation and creating a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, while Republicans prioritize deportation and building a wall.
- The data reveals two distinct and polarized camps:
  - One group views immigration as good, values multi-racial coalition building, and opposes building a wall.
  - The other group holds opposite views—seeing immigration as harmful, opposing multi-racial coalition efforts, and prioritizing enforcement.
- Voters tend to cluster strongly into one of these two camps, with little overlap.

## **Voters Prefer a Balanced Approach: Border Security and Path to Citizenship**

- Most voters favor a comprehensive approach to immigration reform that includes both border security and a path to citizenship for long-term undocumented immigrants. This view is strongest among Democrats and Independents; Republicans remain the only major group preferring an enforcement-only approach.

- Overall, 43% of voters strongly support a balanced strategy (80+ points), while only about 20% strongly support focusing solely on securing the border. Support for comprehensive reform is highest in Colorado, Washington, Michigan, and Ohio. States with the strongest lean toward a border-only focus include Montana, Arizona, Missouri, Mississippi, and California.

### **Most Voters Reject Anti-Immigration Narratives on Crime, Economy, and Schools**

- Two-thirds of voters (67%) express pro-immigration views across questions about immigrants' impact on crime, the economy, and public schools.
  - Crime: 47% of voters say immigrants help strengthen communities, while only 28% say immigration increases crime. Republicans are the only major group that sees a negative impact. Oregon, Colorado, Washington, and Michigan are the most pro-immigration states on this measure. Negative views are more common in Arizona, Florida, Montana, Maine, Nevada, Nebraska, and Mississippi (especially strong in Mississippi).
  - Economy: Urban and suburban voters believe immigration strengthens the economy, while rural voters, voters aged 45-64, and some Latine voters are more likely to believe immigrants drive up costs.
  - Public Schools: Nearly half of voters (47%) strongly oppose ICE operating in public schools—an even stronger rejection than seen on the crime or economy questions. Opposition is strongest among college-educated voters, women, voters earning less than \$75K, urban voters, and Democrats. Colorado, Oregon, Ohio, Michigan, and California lead in opposition; support for ICE in schools is highest in Missouri, Montana, and Arizona.

### **Mixed Views on Whether New Immigrants Receive Too Much Support**

- Voters are split on whether “new immigrants and asylum seekers receive more public support and attention than long-term residents and working families.” The average score is 56/100. About 40% of voters strongly agree with this sentiment, while 25% strongly disagree.
- Partisanship and geography shape views. Urban voters and West Coast states (California, Oregon, Washington, and Colorado) are least likely to agree. In contrast, agreement is highest in Arizona, Maine, and Mississippi.

### **Limited Support for Letting Local Police Enforce Immigration Laws**

- Voters generally oppose proposals to allow state and local police to arrest people suspected of being undocumented immigrants. Currently, only 32% of voters would support such a measure (60-100 points), suggesting it would likely fail if placed on the ballot.
- Opposition is strongest among Democrats, urban voters, and college-educated voters. Republicans, rural voters, men, non-college educated voters, AANHPI voters, Independents, and Indigenous voters are more divided or on the fence.
- Geographically, Mississippi is the only state where a slim majority leans toward supporting this type of initiative—though even there, voters are mixed. Other “on the

fence” states include Missouri, Florida, Nebraska, and Montana. The strongest opposition comes from Michigan, Oregon, and Colorado.

### **Voters Split on Using the National Guard to Enforce Immigration Laws**

- Opinions are more evenly divided when it comes to using the National Guard to enforce immigration laws at the border. About 36% of voters strongly support this (80-100 points), while 33% strongly oppose it.
- Support is higher among Republicans, older voters, men, and rural voters. Opposition is strongest among Democrats and urban voters. State-level divides are notable: Montana, Missouri, and Maine have the highest support; Colorado is the most opposed.
- Voters who oppose using the National Guard also tend to oppose local police enforcement of immigration laws and ICE operating in schools. However, voters who favor National Guard enforcement are not universally supportive of these other enforcement measures—some express opposition to them.

### **Majority Support Allowing Long-Term Undocumented Immigrants to Apply for Legal Status**

- A majority of voters support allowing undocumented immigrants with no violent criminal history to stay and apply for legal status. The average score on this question is 59/100, with 43% of voters strongly agreeing (80-100 points) and 25% strongly disagreeing (0-19 points).
- Support is highest among Democrats, Black voters, and urban voters. Republicans are the only group to average below 40/100 on this question. At the state level, Colorado, Nevada, and Nebraska voters are most supportive, while Montana is the only state where average support falls below 50/100.

### **Research Methodology**

#### **[Baseline Immigration Trendency Report & Analysis \(May 2025\)](#)**

BISC's 2025 Baseline Reports consist of data on questions that are active across all of BISC's 14 priority campaign state panels conducted and managed by Trendency Research (AZ, CA, CO, FL, ME, MI, MS, MO, MT, NE, NV, OH, OR, and WA). Questions for Part 1 of this Immigration report were added to the rotation beginning in June 2019, and data was pulled from April 18-24, 2025. Questions for Part 2 of this Immigration report were added to the rotation beginning on April 15, 2025, and data was pulled from May 12-15, 2025; these questions were part of a larger queue of baseline and state-specific questions set at various priorities and frequencies, which means that each voter receives a bespoke survey made especially for them and changes depending on where they live and how often they log on to the platform. Since the data was pulled over the course of multiple days, averages featured throughout this report may be slightly different due to daily fluctuations in the data. Although the sample size and its corresponding demographics vary from question to question, specific information for the baseline panel overall, as well as the questions featured in this report, can be found in the table to the right.

## **BISC Approach to Research**

BISC's mission is to strengthen democracy by implementing a national progressive strategy for ballot measures rooted in building state-based power. We center the following principles when approaching our research program:

1. We conduct comprehensive research that includes quantitative and qualitative methodologies.
2. We collect data that gives us insight to a snapshot in time (like most traditional polling and focus groups) and we collect longitudinal data to give us insight over time through our Trendency panels.
3. We conduct research in the multi-modal ways that people access data, including text messaging, social media and online methodologies for gauging opinions.
4. We conduct research that allows for more complexity and nuance, utilizing scale - seeing participants as multi-dimensional, rather than binary beings.
5. We conduct research that helps us disrupt "monolith" narratives and strategies for BIPOC, immigrant and youth communities, to understand in more depth what is important to these traditionally underrepresented people -- the people we center in our long-term, movement building work.

## **Contact Us**

For more information, or if you have any questions, please contact Adam Snipes, Director of Strategic Partnerships at [adam@ballot.org](mailto:adam@ballot.org).

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