UNIVERSITY of SOUTH FLORIDA

July 12, 2022
Florida Policy Survey

Summary: Researchers at the University of South Florida, in collaboration with researchers from Florida International University, conducted a statewide survey of 600 Floridians to measure public opinion on several current policy issues. The results presented in this report address the recent Supreme Court ruling on abortion, gun violence/reform, and presidential/gubernatorial job approval. The survey included a representative sample of Floridians, fielded between July 2nd and July 10th, 2022. Topline results are reported below with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error +/- 4.

A majority of Floridians disapprove of the Supreme Court's recent decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, but there is little agreement about what Florida should do next when it comes to abortion policy. A majority of respondents (57%) indicated that they disagree with the recent Supreme Court decision on abortion, with 44% saying that they "strongly disapprove". However, when asked what the state of Florida should do following the decision, respondents were relatively split.

- Roughly a third (33%) say that the state should pass a law protecting abortion access;
- In contrast, 44% favor some state level restrictions, including…
    - A "no exceptions" ban on abortion (9%);
    - A statewide abortion ban, with exceptions for rape, incest, and mother's health (21%);
    - Restrictions on abortion access after 15 weeks of pregnancy (15%).
- Another 13% said that the state should do nothing and leave abortion laws as they are, while 8% were "unsure".

Abortion continues to be a partisan issue, but Democrats and Republicans see some common ground on support for pregnant mothers and adoption. A majority of Republicans (63%) in Florida approve of the recent Supreme Court decision overturning *Roe v. Wade*. In contrast, only 10% of Democrats and 24% of Independents say the same. However, a majority in all three groups are in favor of increased federal funding to support pregnant women (68% overall), sex education (71%), and child adoption efforts (80%)

Jobs and the economy are the most important issue for a plurality of Floridians. More than a third of respondents identified the economy and jobs as the most important issues facing the state today (35%). Government corruption was the second most frequently identified issues (13%), followed by healthcare (9%) and immigration (9%). The COVID-19 pandemic was identified as the most important issue by only 7% of Floridians.

Despite high profile social policy debates, midterm voters are focused on financial concerns. When asked which will have the MOST impact on their votes this Fall, a large majority (74%) of likely voters chose "pocketbook issues", such as jobs, inflation, and the economy. In contrast, only 26% said that their votes would be more heavily influenced by social policy issues (such as abortion, equity, and LGBTQ rights). When asked to identify the three issues that will most heavily influence their voting decisions, Floridians chose inflation (48%), the economy/jobs (47%), and gun violence/crime (35%).

Most Floridians approve of the recent bipartisan gun reforms passed by Congress, and there is broad bipartisan support for more extensive gun policy reforms. A majority of respondents (59%) say that they support the recent gun reforms passed by Congress. Additionally, in the wake of several high-profile mass shootings, a bipartisan coalition of Floridians support a range of potential gun reforms, including…

- Requiring universal background checks for all gun purchases (Democrats 96%, Independents 91%, Republicans 91%);
- Requiring a license to purchase guns classified as "assault weapons" (Democrats (95%, Independents 84%, Republicans 79%);
- Prohibiting individuals under 21 years of age from purchasing "assault weapons" (Democrats 95%, Independents 89%, Republicans 81%)
- Requiring a mandatory waiting period for all gun purchases (Democrats 96%, Independents 85%, Republicans 79%)

A plurality of Floridians approve of the job being done by Governor DeSantis on "jobs and the economy", despite partisan splits on many issues. Half of Floridians either "strongly" or "somewhat approve" of the job being done by Governor DeSantis when it comes to jobs and the economy (50%), while a plurality also supported his efforts around conservation (44%). Governor DeSantis received his lowest public support when it came to climate change, with only 42% of Floridians approving of his job in that area. While the Governor's overall approval ratings have remained strong, there has been a slight decline in support from highs observed in our April 2022 poll.

Consistent with national polls, President Biden's approval rating among Floridians has continued to decline. President Biden's approval among Florida voters continued to slip (compared to our April 2022 survey). A majority of respondents now "disapprove" of the job being done by the President in all areas. 63% disapprove of the job being done by the President on immigration and border security, while 62% disapprove of the President's performance when it comes to jobs and the economy.

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Summary of Responses

Do you approve or disapprove of the job that President Joe Biden is doing in each of the following areas? *(As a percentage of total respondents by row)*

	Total Approval	Strongly Approve	Somewhat Approve	Total Disapproval	Somewhat Disapprove	Strongly Disapprove	Unsure
Jobs and the Economy	34.2	11.5	22.7	62.0	17.0	45.0	3.8
Foreign Policy	37.4	14.7	22.7	57.0	14.5	42.5	5.7
Race Relations	41.5	16.7	24.8	51.3	12.5	38.8	7.2
Immigration/Border	29.9	10.2	19.7	63.2	16.5	46.7	7.0
COVID-19 Pandemic	45.0	21.2	23.8	51.4	14.2	37.2	3.7
Climate Change	38.0	15.8	22.2	50.3	12.5	37.8	11.7
Unifying Americans	33.1	11.8	21.3	61.0	14.5	46.5	5.8

N=600; (Statistically significant differences in approval exist across each policy area by political partisanship. Detailed partisanship data available upon request.)

Do you approve or disapprove of the job that Governor Ron DeSantis is doing in each of the following areas? *(As a percentage of total respondents by row)*

	Total Approval	Strongly Approve	Somewhat Approve	Total Disapproval	Somewhat Disapprove	Strongly Disapprove	Unsure
Jobs and the Economy	50.0	27.3	22.7	41.0	14.2	26.8	9.0
Race Relations	43.1	22.8	20.3	45.9	10.7	35.2	11.0
COVID-19 Pandemic	47.1	32.8	14.3	48.2	11.0	37.2	4.7
Climate Change	41.9	21.2	20.7	44.2	13.0	31.2	14.0
Conservation/ Environment	43.6	22.8	20.8	43.2	12.7	30.5	13.2
Unifying Floridians	42.5	24.5	18.0	49.3	10.0	39.3	8.2

N=600; (Statistically significant differences in approval exist across each policy area by political partisanship. Detailed partisanship data available upon request.)

In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing the state of Florida today?

	Frequency	Percentage
Economy & Jobs	207	34.5
Government Corruption	77	12.8
Healthcare	54	9.0
Immigration	51	8.5
COVID-19 Pandemic	44	7.3
Climate Change	38	6.3
Education	24	4.0
Environment and Conservation	20	3.3
Race Relations	19	3.2
Other*	66	11.0

*N=600 *Issues classified under "Other" received less than 2% of responses each. (Statistically significant differences in perception of the most important issue exist by political partisanship. Detailed partisanship data available upon request.)*

Thinking about how you will vote in this Fall's midterm elections, which of the following is MOST important to you?

	Frequency	Percentage
Pocketbook Issues (i.e. jobs, the economy, inflation, etc.)	381	74.3
Social Values Issues (i.e. abortion, equity, LGBTQ rights, etc.)	132	25.7

N=513 Likely Voters (Pocketbook Issues: Democrats = 53.9%; Independents = 74.7%; Republicans = 94.5%)

Thinking about the upcoming elections in November, which three of the following issues will have the most significant impact on how you decide to vote? *(Please select no more than three items)*

	Frequency	% of Total Respondents Selecting
Inflation	288	48.0
The Economy and Jobs	281	46.8
Gun Violence and Crime	211	35.2
Abortion	153	25.5
Immigration	133	22.2
Healthcare	115	19.2
Climate Change and the Environment	88	14.7
Education	66	11.0
Race Relations	61	10.2
COVID-19	61	10.2
LGBTQ Issues	34	5.7
War in Ukraine	25	4.2
Other*	10	1.7

*N=600 *Issues classified under "Other" received less than 2% of responses each. (Statistically significant differences in perception of the most important issue exist by political partisanship. Detailed partisanship data available upon request.)*

The United States Supreme Court recently issued a ruling that overturned *Roe v. Wade*, leaving abortion policy up to individual states. The likely outcome of this is that abortion will be prohibited in some states and protected in others going forward.

Do you approve or disapprove of the Supreme Court's decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Approve	129	21.5
Somewhat Approve	56	9.3
Neither Approve nor Disapprove	76	12.7
Somewhat Disapprove	78	13.0
Strongly Disapprove	261	43.5

N=600 (Strongly/Somewhat Approve: Democrats = 10.4%; Independents = 23.5%; Republicans = 63.0%)

Which of the following actions would you most like to see Florida take regarding abortion following the Supreme Court decision?

	Frequency	Percentage
Outlaw abortion, without exception	54	9.0
Outlaw abortion, with exceptions for rape, incest, & mother's health	123	20.5
Prohibit abortion after a certain point (i.e. 15 weeks after conception)	89	14.8
Do nothing - leave abortion laws as they currently stand	79	13.2
Pass a new law to protect abortion access	199	33.2
Unsure	46	7.7
Other	10	1.7

N=600 (Pass a law to protect abortion access: Democrats = 54.4%; Independents = 33.8%; Republicans = 13.0%)

Would you support or oppose the United States Congress passing legislation to do each of the following? ***Outlaw abortion nationwide***

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Support	82	13.7
Somewhat Support	45	7.5
Somewhat Oppose	77	12.8
Strongly Oppose	350	58.3
Unsure	46	7.7

N=600 (Strongly/Somewhat Support: Democrats = 11.4%; Independents = 16.2%; Republicans = 35.9%)

Would you support or oppose the United States Congress passing legislation to do each of the following? ***Pass a law to protect access to abortion nationwide***

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Support	275	45.8
Somewhat Support	116	19.3
Somewhat Oppose	49	8.2
Strongly Oppose	106	17.7
Unsure	54	9.0

N=600 (Strongly/Somewhat Support: Democrats =82.9 %; Independents = 66.9%; Republicans = 45.7%)

Would you support or oppose the United States Congress passing legislation to do each of the following? ***Provide additional financial assistance to pregnant women.***

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Support	254	42.3
Somewhat Support	151	25.2
Somewhat Oppose	65	10.8
Strongly Oppose	63	10.5
Unsure	67	11.2

N=600 (Strongly/Somewhat Support: Democrats = 80.8%; Independents = 62.5%; Republicans = 52.7%)

Would you support or oppose the United States Congress passing legislation to do each of the following? ***Increase funding for sex education in schools.***

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Support	242	40.3
Somewhat Support	182	30.3
Somewhat Oppose	54	9.0
Strongly Oppose	62	10.3
Unsure	60	10.0

N=600 (Strongly/Somewhat Support: Democrats = 81.9%; Independents = 69.9%; Republicans = 54.9%)

Would you support or oppose the United States Congress passing legislation to do each of the following? ***Provide financial subsidies to support child adoption.***

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Support	274	45.7
Somewhat Support	205	34.2
Somewhat Oppose	43	7.2
Strongly Oppose	26	4.3
Unsure	52	8.7

N=600 (Strongly/Somewhat Support: Democrats = 85.5%; Independents = 78.7%; Republicans = 75.5%)

Do you support or oppose the gun safety reforms recently passed by Congress and signed into law by the President?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Support	141	23.5
Somewhat Support	215	35.8
Somewhat Oppose	74	12.3
Strongly Oppose	59	9.8
Unsure	111	18.5

N=600 (Strongly/Somewhat Support: Democrats = 77.2%; Independents = 62.5%; Republicans = 44.6%)

Would you support or oppose each of the following potential gun reforms, which were NOT part of the recent bipartisan legislation? ***Requiring universal background checks for all gun purchases.***

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Support	451	75.2
Somewhat Support	103	17.2
Somewhat Oppose	16	2.7
Strongly Oppose	18	3.0
Unsure	12	2.0

N=600 (Strongly/Somewhat Support: Democrats = 95.9%; Independents = 91.2%; Republicans = 90.7%)

Would you support or oppose each of the following potential gun reforms, which were NOT part of the recent bipartisan legislation? ***Requiring a license to purchase guns classified as "assault weapons".***

(NOTE: For the purposes of this question, an "assault weapon" refers to any gun that holds more than 15 rounds of ammunition)

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Support	421	70.2
Somewhat Support	93	15.5
Somewhat Oppose	24	4.0
Strongly Oppose	43	7.2
Unsure	19	3.2

N=600 (Strongly/Somewhat Support: Democrats = 94.8%; Independents = 83.8%; Republicans = 78.8%)

Would you support or oppose each of the following potential gun reforms, which were NOT part of the recent bipartisan legislation? ***Prohibiting those under 21 years of age from purchasing "assault weapons".***

(NOTE: For the purposes of this question, an "assault weapon" refers to any gun that holds more than 15 rounds of ammunition)

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Support	462	77.0
Somewhat Support	70	11.7
Somewhat Oppose	29	4.8
Strongly Oppose	29	4.8
Unsure	10	1.7

N=600 (Strongly/Somewhat Support: Democrats = 95.3%; Independents = 88.9%; Republicans = 81.0%)

Would you support or oppose each of the following potential gun reforms, which were NOT part of the recent bipartisan legislation? ***Requiring mandatory waiting periods for all firearm purchases.***

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Support	406	67.7
Somewhat Support	108	18.0
Somewhat Oppose	46	7.7
Strongly Oppose	25	4.2
Unsure	15	2.5

N=600 (Strongly/Somewhat Support: Democrats = 96.4%; Independents = 85.3%; Republicans = 79.3%)

Would you support or oppose each of the following potential gun reforms, which were NOT part of the recent bipartisan legislation? ***Preventing those under the age of 21 from purchasing any semi-automatic firearm.***

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Support	428	71.3
Somewhat Support	79	13.2
Somewhat Oppose	45	7.5
Strongly Oppose	35	5.8
Unsure	13	2.2

N=600 (Strongly/Somewhat Support: Democrats = 94.3%; Independents = 83.8%; Republicans = 75.0%)

Would you support or oppose legislation that banned all individuals convicted of domestic abuse - regardless of marital status - from purchasing a firearm?

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Support	337	56.2
Somewhat Support	180	30.0
Somewhat Oppose	62	10.3
Strongly Oppose	21	3.5

N=600 (Strongly/Somewhat Support: Democrats = 91.2%; Independents = 85.3%; Republicans = 83.1%)

"Red Flag" laws are state level laws that require the removal/surrender of firearms from individuals once a judge has declared that individual to be dangerous to themselves or to others. **Do you support or oppose states enacting Red Flag laws?**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Support	386	64.3
Somewhat Support	144	24.0
Somewhat Oppose	42	7.0
Strongly Oppose	28	4.7

N=600 (Strongly/Somewhat Support: Democrats = 96.9%; Independents = 83.8%; Republicans = 82.0%)

In your opinion, how effective would stricter gun control laws be at reducing gun violence in the United States?

	Frequency	Percentage
Very Effective	141	23.5
Somewhat Effective	210	35.0
Not Very Effective	111	18.5
Not at All Effective	105	17.5
Unsure	33	5.5

N=600 (Very/Somewhat Effective: Democrats = 82.4%; Independents = 56.6%; Republicans = 37.0%)

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Survey Information

600 adult Floridians were surveyed via an online web-panel using an industry leading market research provider. The survey was fielded from July 2nd through July 10th 2022, and the results are reported with a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of +/- 4. Respondents were selected via stratified, quota sampling to ensure a representative sample. Balanced quotas for gender, age, race/ethnicity, education and party affiliation were determined based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Florida's Department of State, and Florida's Office of Economic and Demographic Research (EDR). Quotas were stratified by region of the state for geographical representativeness.

Table A1
Sample Comparison

	USF Survey Sample	Florida Demographics*
Gender		
Female	50.3%	51.1%
Male	49.0%	48.9%
Other	0.7%	-
Age		
18-24	11.2%	10.8%
25-44	30.0%	31.2%
45-64	33.3%	32.4%
65+	25.5%	25.6%
Race		
Black/African American	17.7%	16.9%
White/Caucasian	74.8%	77.3%
Other	7.5%	5.8%
Ethnicity		
Hispanic	27.7%	26.4%
Non-Hispanic	72.3%	73.6%
Education		
Less than 4 Year Degree	69.0%	69.5%
4 Year Degree (or higher)	31.0%	30.5%
Political Affiliation (registered voters only, n=540)		
Democrat	36.2%	36.2%
Independent	25.5%	26.4%
Republican	34.5%	35.7%
Other	3.7%	1.7%
Region		
Panhandle	7.3%	7.2%
Northeast Florida	12.2%	12.4%
Central Florida	26.8%	25.5%
West Coast	22.7%	21.9%
Southeast Florida	31.0%	32.9%

*Gender, race, ethnicity, and region quotas based on U.S. Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program (PEP): https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/FL Age quotas based on Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research (EDR): http://edr.state.fl.us/Content/population-demographics/data/index-floridaproducts.cfm Political Affiliation quotas based on Florida Division of Elections https://dos.myflorida.com/elections/data-statistics/voter-registration-statistics/voter-registration-reportsxlsx/voter-registration-by-party-affiliation/

About our Research Team

Stephen Neely (PhD, North Carolina State University, 2013) is an Associate Professor in the School of Public Affairs at the University of South Florida. He is coordinator of the School's undergraduate program in *Leadership and Public Service*. His areas of specialization include survey research, quantitative data analysis, and public policy. He is a faculty researcher on the Sunshine State Survey project and has conducted survey research on behalf of several local governments in the Tampa Bay region. For additional information please visit his **USF faculty page**. Dr. Neely can be contacted by email at srneely@usf.edu

Bethany Bowra (PhD Candidate, Florida International University). Bethany Bowra is a PhD Candidate at Florida International University. Her specializations include interbranch relations, social media, and quantitative data analysis. She provides U.S. politics analysis for various outlets, including Times Radio. Bethany can be reached at **bbowr001@fiu.edu**

About the University of South Florida

The University of South Florida is a high-impact global research university dedicated to student success. Over the past 10 years, no other public university in the country has risen faster in U.S. News and World Report's national university rankings than USF. Serving more than 50,000 students on campuses in Tampa, St. Petersburg and Sarasota-Manatee, USF is designated as a Preeminent State Research University by the Florida Board of Governors, placing it in the most elite category among the state's 12 public universities. USF has earned widespread national recognition for its success graduating under-represented minority and limited-income students at rates equal to or higher than white and higher income students. USF is a member of the American Athletic Conference. Learn more at www.usf.edu.

***For media inquiries, please contact Stephen Neely at srneely@usf.edu and Bethany Bowra at bbowr001@fiu.edu**