

Institute for Public Policy Statewide Poll - October 2021



Sacred Heart UNIVERSITY

Report of Findings

November 3, 2021



Table of Contents SECTION ONE **About the Poll SECTION TWO** Poll Overview **SECTION THREE** Headlines SECTION FOUR Key Study Findings

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Our Story

Sacred Heart University's Institute for Public Policy and GreatBlue Research partner to analyze salient issues facing the State of Connecticut. This collaboration combines the academic excellence of a top-rated private University and the research design, analysis and reporting expertise of GreatBlue Research.

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Table of Contents

SECTION ONE About the Poll

SECTION TWO Poll Overview

SECTION THREE Headlines

SECTION FOUR Key Study Findings



- Thoughts on the quality of life in Connecticut
- Governor Ned Lamont's job approval ratings
- Sentiments and habits around volunteerism and donating to charities

- Understanding of, and beliefs around, Critical Race Theory
- Voting plans for 2021 Connecticut Municipal elections
- Thoughts on COVID-19, mask mandates and distribution of the vaccine
- Changes in marijuana attitudes and usage after legalization Thoughts on school policies around transgender students

- Thoughts on incentives for energy-efficient natural gas heating
 - Demographic profiles of respondents

Areas of Investigation

The Sacred Heart University Institute for Public Policy leveraged a digital methodology quantitative research approach to address the following areas of investigation:





Research Methodology Snapshot



* Supervisory personnel, in addition to computer-aided interviewing platforms, ensure the integrity of the data is accurate. ** This represents the total possible number of questions; not all respondents will answer all questions based on skip patterns and other instrument bias.



Table of Contents

······

SECTION ONE About the Poll

SECTION TWO Poll Overview

> SECTION THREE Headlines

SECTION FOUR Key Study Findings

Docitive Impact





- of how Ned Lamont is handling his job as governor.
 - 30.2% approval among Republicans (13.8% unsure)
 - 42.2% approval among Independent voters (28.3% unsure)
 - 44.4% approval among Unaffiliated voters (25.9% unsure)
 - 75.7% approval among Democrats (15.9% unsure)



During the COVID-19 pandemic, roughly two-thirds of respondents reported to "approve" of the way Ned Lamont is handling "communication to the public" (67.6% from 71.0% in April 2021) and his "overall response and handling of the COVID-19 crisis" (66.0% from 69.0% in April 2021).

- families" (from 55.7% in April 2021).
- 53.5% in April 2021).

Slightly more than two-thirds of Connecticut residents surveyed in October 2021, 68.7%, reported their quality of life in the State is either "excellent" (15.0%) or "good" (53.7%), a decrease from 73.0% who reported the same in April of 2021.

A decreased frequency of October 2021 respondents expressed the belief that the quality of life in Connecticut is "improving" (16.4%), compared to the rate of those who reported the same in April 2021 (17.8%).

38.2% of respondents in October 2021 stated their mental health has declined due to COVID-19 (from 30.8%).

A decreased rate of Connecticut residents surveyed in October 2021 (50.5% from 55.7% in April 2021) reported to "approve"

52.0% reported they "approve" of the way Governor Lamont is "addressing a plan for Connecticut residents and

49.5% reported they "approve" of the way Governor Lamont is "addressing a plan for businesses in the state" (over













- rather give to large charities than small ones."
 - Americans to donate to charities since the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - money.



- history of racial injustices in the United States.

Three-quarters of October 2021 respondents, 75.4%, either "strongly agree" (19.2%) or "agree" (56.2%) with the statement "it is important that Americans give money and/or time to charities," while only 13.1% agree with the statement "I would

Nearly one-third of October 2021 respondents, 32.0%, believe that since the COVID-19 pandemic, it is more important for Americans to volunteer for charities, while a similar frequency, 30.3%, believe it is more important for

Nearly one-third of October 2021 respondents, 31.8%, indicated they volunteer and donate the same amount postpandemic as they did pre-pandemic, while only 7.3% indicated they both volunteer more time and donate more

Both currently (44.7%) and prior to the COVID-19 pandemic (43.8%), respondents in October 2021 indicated a preference of donating to charities with a "health" focused mission, followed by charities focused on "environment" and animals" (33.2% current, 32.5% pre-COVID) and "human services" (31.5% current, 30.6% pre-COVID).

More than one-half of October 2021 respondents, 54.7%, indicated being familiar with critical race theory, while 29.2%

39.8% of October 2021 respondents believe that critical race theory should be part of a K-12 curriculum.

More than two-thirds of October 2021 respondents, 71.2%, believe that K-12 students should learn about the



- being the result of "institutions" (25.3%).
- believe "government" has the greatest impact.

Nearly three-quarters of October 2021 respondents, 73.4%, plan to vote in the 2021 municipal elections.

- in-person and 23.8% will vote by mail.
- as Independents and 22.5% as Republicans.
- election for Governor were held today, while 8.4% would vote for Hilda Santiago.
- "unsure."

43.5% of October 2021 respondents believe that race is "constructed by society" as opposed to being a "biological feature" (35.0%), while 49.4% of respondents believe that racial inequities are the result of "prejudices of individuals" as opposed to

When asked to rank the impact of five (5) potential factors on racial inequality in the United States, 31.1% of October 2021 respondents ranked "family" as having the greatest impact on racial inequality, while 27.4% of respondents indicated they

Among the 734 respondents planning to vote in the municipal elections, more than two-thirds (70.7%) plan on voting

Slightly more than one-third of October 2021 respondents, 35.8%, identified as Democrats, while 25.1% identified

Among the 358 Democrat respondents, 75.7% indicated being "unsure" of who they would vote for if the primary

Among the 225 Republican respondents, 41.8% would vote for Bob Stefanowski, while 40.0% indicated being







Roughly two-thirds of October 2021 respondents, 65.2%, support the ability to vote by mail-in voting in Connecticut. 60.3% of respondents "completely trust" (31.3%) or "trust" (29.1%) the legitimacy of mail-in voting results. 58.0% support a proposed constitutional amendment on the 2022 ballot that would allow the legislature to make

- laws allowing early voting in Connecticut.



due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



67.7% of October 2021 respondents support the Connecticut mandate that students wear masks while in school.



vaccinated.



same after legalization of recreational usage in Connecticut.



play on the team associated with the gender they identify with.

Roughly three-fifths of October 2021 respondents, 58.0%, support the extension of Governor Lamont's emergency powers

Nearly three-fifths of October 2021 respondents, 58.6%, would support a requirement that K-12 students need to be vaccinated, while an increased frequency, 63.8%, support the requirement that State of Connecticut employees need to be

54.0% of October 2021 respondents indicated that the recent legalization of recreational cannabis usage has had no change on their support for recreational usage; 70.7% of respondents indicated that their use of cannabis has stayed the

One-half of October 2021 respondents, 50.2%, believe that school districts should develop policies to accommodate the needs of transgender youth, while a decreased frequency, 32.9%, think that schools should permit transgender athletes to



Table of Contents

······

SECTION ONE About the Poll

SECTION TWO Poll Overview

> SECTION THREE Headlines

SECTION FOUR
Key Study Findings

Desitive Impact





Quality of Life in Connecticut

More than two-thirds of Connecticut residents surveyed in October 2021, 68.7%, reported their quality of life in the State is either "excellent" (15.0%) or "good" (53.7%), which marks a decrease from the 73.0% who reported the same in April of 2021. A decreased frequency of October 2021 respondents expressed the belief that the quality of life in Connecticut is "improving" (16.4%), compared to the rate of those who reported the same in April 2021 (17.8%). * In October 2021, a decreased frequency of respondents earning less than \$50,000 annually (57.2% from 65.1% in April 2021) reported their

- quality of life is either "excellent" (10.2%) or "good" (47.0%).



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* Respondents ages 18-34 reported their quality of life is "improving" at a 21.0% frequency, which is the highest rate among all age segments.

Impact of COVID on Quality of Life

In October 2021, 38.2% of respondents stated their mental health has declined due to COVID-19, while 4.0% stated their mental health has improved as a result of the pandemic.

Additionally, 28.7% of respondents stated that increased utility costs have impacted their quality of life (over 22.9% in April 2021).

Also of note, 22.9% of surveyed **Connecticut residents reported their** physical health has declined since the pandemic, while 4.2% indicated their physical health has improved.

What kind of impact has the COVID-19 Pandemic had on your quality of life?

Mental health declined Increased utility costs Physical health declined Working from home (positive) Schooling fom home/hybrid schooling Job Loss Furloughed/Hours Loss 8.6% Working from home (negative) 5.3% 4.6% 4.2% Physical health improved 3.8% 2.8% Mental health improved 4.0% 6.9% 5.9% Other 6.0% None Unsure





- maintain their standard of living.





Governor's Approval Rating

50.5% of Connecticut residents surveyed in October 2021 reported they "approve" of how Ned Lamont is handling his job as governor, which marks a decrease from the 55.7% of respondents who reported the same in April 2021.

- in April 2021).
- from 64.0% in April 2021.
- 75.5% of those earning \$150,000 or more.





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* Rates of approval regarding the way Ned Lamont is handling his job as governor decreased among Republican respondents (30.2% from 35.3%

* 54.5% of respondents ages 18-34 currently "approve" of Governor Lamont's overall response to COVID-19, which marks a significant decrease

61.6% of respondents earning under \$50,000 per year currently "approve" of Governor Lamont's overall response to COVID-19, compared to [state: state: s

			Approve	Dissaprove	l l	Jnsure
	Communication to the public	March 2021	73.2	2%	15.	4% 11.
		April 2021	71.0)%	17.	3% 11.
		Oct. 2021	67.69	%	20.8	% 11.
		March 2021	70.1	%	18.8	8% 11.
	Overall response and handling of	April 2021	69.0	%	20.4	1% 10
	COVID-19 crisis	Oct. 2021	66.0%	6	22.09	<mark>% 12</mark> .
		March 2021	59.3%	• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	22.4%	18.39
	Addressing a plan for CT residents	April 2021	55.7%	2	5.0%	19.3%
	and families	Oct. 2021	52.0%	29	0.2%	18.8%
	• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	March 2021	52.7%	25	.1%	22.2%
	Addressing a plan for businesses in the state	April 2021	53.5%	25	.8%	20.7%
		Oct. 2021	49.5%	27.4	%	23.1%
		0%		50%	75%	
	Pleas	e indicate if yo	ou approve or dis	approve of the	e way Ne	d







Charitable Giving

Three-quarters of October 2021 respondents, 75.4%, either "strongly agree" (19.2%) or "agree" (56.2%) with the statement "it is important that Americans give money and/or time to charities," while only 13.1% agree with the statement "I would rather give to large charities than small ones." Nearly one-third of October 2021 respondents, 32.0%, believe that since the COVID-19 pandemic, it is more important for Americans to volunteer for charities.

- * 83.8% of Democrats agree it is important that Americans give money and/or time to charities, compared to 70.4% of **Unaffiliated Voters.**
- ***** 34.0% of Hispanic respondents would rather give to large charities as opposed to smaller charities, compared to 9.9% of Caucasian respondents.



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:





Please select which of the following statements applies to you. (Select all that apply)







Charitable Giving

Nearly one-third of October 2021 respondents, 31.8%, indicated they volunteer and donate the same amount post-pandemic as they did pre-pandemic, while only 7.3% indicated they both volunteer more time and donate more money. Less than one-third of October 2021 respondents, 30.3%, believe that since the COVID-19 pandemic, it is more important for Americans to donate to charities.



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Charitable Giving

a "health" focused mission, followed by charities focused on "environment and animals" (33.2% current, 32.5% pre-COVID) and "human and research" (24.9% current, 23.1% pre-COVID).

Types of Charities	%
Health	44.7
Environment and Animals	33.2
Human Services	31.5
Education and Research	24.9
Public, Societal Benefit	18.2
Religion	15.8
Art, Culture, and Humanities	13.8
International	2.2
Other	6.6
None of the above	9.1



Which charities do you prefer giving to most? (Choose up to 3)



Both currently (44.7%) and prior to the COVID-19 pandemic (43.8%), respondents in October 2021 indicated a preference of donating to charities with services" (31.5% current, 30.6% pre-COVID). Additionally, nearly one-fifth of October 2021 respondents prefer giving to charities related to "education

Types of Charities	%
Health	43.8
Environment and Animals	32.5
Human Services	30.6
Education and Research	23.1
Public, Societal Benefit	18.6
Religion	16.7
Art, Culture, and Humanities	14.9
International	2.9
Other	5.3
None of the above	9.8



Critical Race Theory

More than one-half of October 2021 respondents, 54.7%, indicated being familiar with critical race theory, while 29.2% reported being not familiar. Fewer October 2021 respondents, 39.8%, believe that critical race theory should be part of a K-12 curriculum.

- 61.8% of Republicans are familiar with critical race theory, compared to 48.1% of Unaffiliated voters.
- among those with a household income of "under \$50,000."
- 61.7% of Democrats believe critical race theory should be part of a K-12 curriculum, compared to 17.8% of Republicans.

For the purposes of our survey today, critical race theory is defined as examining social, cultural, and legal issues primarily as they relate to race and racism in the USA. Are you familiar with critical race theory?





* 71.7% of October 2021 respondents with a household income of "\$150,000 or more" are familiar with critical race theory, compared to 47.7%

* 63.2% of African American respondents believe critical race theory should be part of a K-12 curriculum, compared to 35.3% of Caucasians. * 55.7% of respondents ages 18-34 believe critical race theory should be part of a K-12 curriculum, compared to 32.2% among those ages 65 or older.







Racial Education

More than two-thirds of October 2021 respondents, 71.2%, believe that K-12 students should learn about the history of racial injustices in the United States. Further, 43.5% of respondents believe that race is "constructed by society" as opposed to being a "biological feature" (35.0%), and 49.4% of respondents believe that racial inequities are the result of "prejudices of individuals" as opposed to being the result of "institutions" (25.3%).

- * 85.2% of Democrats believe K-12 students should learn about the history of injustices in the United States, compared to 55.1% of Republicans.
- ***** 85.5% of African American respondents believe K-12 students should learn about the history of injustices in the United States, compared to 69.3% of Caucasians.
- 63.2% of African American respondents believe racial inequities are the result of
 "prejudices of individuals," compared to 49.7% of Caucasians.
- **\$ 57.1% of respondents ages 65+ believe racial inequities are the result of** "prejudices of individuals," compared to 42.6% among those ages 18-34.



Do you believe K-12 students should learn about the history of racial injustices in the United States?

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Racial Impact / Factors

When asked to rank the impact of five (5) potential factors on racial inequality in the United States, 31.1% of October 2021 respondents ranked "family" as having the greatest impact on racial inequality, while 27.4% of respondents indicated they believe "government" has the greatest impact.

However, the "economy" (47.3%) received the highest frequency of top-2 rankings among the five (5) factors, followed by "education" (46.4%). Only 7.4% of October 2021 respondents indicated that "religion" has the greatest impact on racial inequality in the United States.





Please rank the following based on which you believe to have the greatest impact on racial inequity in the United States.







Connecticut Politics

Nearly three-quarters of October 2021 respondents, 73.4%, plan to vote in the 2021 municipal elections; among the 734 respondents planning to vote in the municipal elections, more than two-thirds (70.7%) plan on voting in-person and 23.8% will vote by mail.

- * 83.1% of respondents ages 65+ plan on voting in the 2021 municipal elections, compared to 60.8% among those ages 18-34.
- Republicans.
- by mail, compared to 21.9% of Caucasian respondents.



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* 87.4% of Republicans, compared to 61.1% of Democrats, plan to vote in-person; 33.6% of Democrats plan to vote by mail, compared to 12.1% of

* 72.2% of Caucasian respondents, compared to 58.7% of Hispanic respondents, plan to vote in-person; 38.1% of Hispanic respondents plan to vote



Do you plan on voting by mail or in-person in the 2021 municipal election? (among the 73.4% planning to vote)

Connecticut Politics

on the 2022 ballot that would allow the legislature to make laws allowing early voting in Connecticut.

- * 89.7% of Democrats, compared to 38.7% of Republicans, support mail-in voting in Connecticut.
- * 78.9% of African American respondents support mail-in voting in Connecticut, compared to 64.5% of Caucasian respondents.
- 66.3% of respondents ages 65 or older "trust" the legitimacy of mail-in voting, compared to 55.1% among those ages 18-34.
- * 85.5% of Democrats, compared to 34.3% of Republicans, "trust" the legitimacy of mail-in voting.
- * 82.7% of Democrats would support the constitutional amendment for early voting, compared to 36.0% of Republicans.
- 67.0% of those earning \$150,000 or more support the constitutional amendment for early voting,
 compared to 53.5% among those earning less than \$50,000.





Roughly two-thirds of October 2021 respondents, 65.2%, support mail-in voting in Connecticut; further, 60.3% of respondents "completely trust" (31.3%) or "trust" (29.1%) the legitimacy of mail-in voting results. Nearly three-fifths of October 2021 respondents, 58.0%, support a proposed constitutional amendment



The Connecticut State Legislature has placed a Constitutional Amendment on the 2022 ballot that would allow the legislature to make laws allowing early voting in Connecticut. Do you support that amendment?

Connecticut Politics

Slightly more than one-third of October 2021 respondents, 35.8%, identified as Democrats, while 25.1% identified as Independents and 22.5% as Republicans.

Among the 358 Democrat respondents, 75.7% indicated being "unsure" of who they would vote for if the primary election for Governor were held today, while 8.4% would vote for Hilda Santiago.

Among the 225 Republican respondents, 41.8% would vote for Bob Stefanowski, while 40.0% indicated being "unsure."









(among Democrats)







COVID-19, Mask Mandates and Vaccination

Roughly three-fifths of October 2021 respondents, 58.0%, support the extension of Governor Lamont's emergency powers due to the COVID-19 pandemic, while more than two-thirds, 67.7%, support the Connecticut mandate that students wear masks while in school.

- * 83.0% of Democrats support the extension of Gov. Lamont's emergency powers, compared to 36.0% of Republicans.
- 65.1% of respondents ages 65 or older support the extension of Gov. Lamont's emergency powers, compared to 51.7% among those ages 18-34.
- 62.0% of Women, compared to 53.8% of Men, support the extension of Gov. Lamont's emergency powers.
- * 88.8% of Democrats support mask mandates for students in Connecticut schools, compared to 44.0% of Republicans.
- * 72.2% of Women, compared to 62.8% of Men, support mask mandates for students in Connecticut schools.
- * 84.2% of African American respondents support mask mandates for students in Connecticut schools, compared to 67.0% of Caucasian respondents.

The Legislature has recently extended Gov. Lamont's emergency powers due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Do you support this extension?











COVID-19, Mask Mandates and Vaccination

Nearly three-fifths of October 2021 respondents, 58.6%, would support a requirement that K-12 students need to be vaccinated, while an increased frequency, 63.8%, support the requirement that State of Connecticut employees need to be vaccinated.

- ✤ 77.1% of Democrats would support a K-12 student vaccination requirement, compared to 43.1% of Republicans.
- * 71.6% of respondents ages 65 or older would support a K-12 student vaccination requirement, compared to 49.4% among those ages 18-34.
- * 70.8% of those earning \$150,000 or more would support a K-12 student vaccination requirement, compared to 54.0% among those earning less than \$50,000.
- * 82.1% of Democrats, compared to 44.4% of Republicans, support the vaccination requirement for State employees.
- than \$50,000.







* 71.7% of those earning \$150,000 or more support the vaccination requirement for State employees, compared to 58.9% among those earning less

* 71.3% of respondents ages 65 or older support the vaccination requirement for State employees, compared to 58.9% among those ages 35-44.





Cannabis Usage Post Legalization

indicated their usage has increased while 3.5% indicated their usage has decreased.

- 42.6% of respondents ages 18-34 indicated increased support for recreational cannabis use, compared to 11.5% among those ages 65 or older. * 29.9% of those earning less than \$50,000 indicated increased support for recreational cannabis use, compared to 19.8% among those earning
- \$150,000 or more.
- or older.



Has the recent legalization for recreational use changed your attitude toward cannabis?



More than one-half of October 2021 respondents, 54.0%, indicated that the recent legalization of recreational cannabis usage has had no change on their support for recreational usage; while 70.7% of respondents indicated that their use of cannabis has stayed the same after legalization in Connecticut, 12.1%

* 27.8% of respondents ages 18-34 indicated increased cannabis usage since its legalization in Connecticut, compared to 3.4% among those ages 65



Has your use of recreational cannabis changed as a result of the legalization in CT?



School Policies for Transgender Youth

One-half of October 2021 respondents, 50.2%, believe that school districts should develop policies to accommodate the needs of transgender youth, while a decreased frequency, 32.9%, think that schools should permit transgender athletes to play on the team associated with the gender they identify with. * 74.6% of Democrats believe schools should develop accommodating policies for transgender students, compared to 31.6% of Republicans. * 74.6% of African American respondents, compared to 49.1% of Caucasian respondents, believe schools should develop accommodating policies for

- transgender students.
- 65 or older.
- \$ 57.9% of Women believe schools should develop accommodating policies for transgender students, compared to 41.5% of Men.
- the gender they identify with.
- among those ages 65 or older.



Should school districts develop policies to accommodate the needs of transgender youth?

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* 61.9% of respondents ages 18-34 believe schools should develop accommodating policies for transgender students, compared to 46.4% among those ages

* 50.6% of Democrats believe transgender athletes should play on the team associated with the gender they identify with, compared to 16.0% of Republicans. * 59.2% of African American respondents, compared to 29.2% of Caucasian respondents, believe transgender athletes should play on the team associated with

* 48.3% of respondents ages 18-34 believe transgender athletes should play on the team associated with the gender they identify with, compared to 25.7%





Do you think schools should permit transgender athletes to play on the team associated with the gender they identify with?

Energy-Efficient Natural Gas Incentives

Respondents in October 2021 were split on their support for energy-efficient natural gas heating incentives; while 31.8% of respondents believe the state should end incentives for energyefficient natural gas heating, 37.0% believe these incentives should continue, and 31.2% were "unsure."

- 38.5% of Democrats believe these incentives should end, compared to 26.2% of Democrats.
- ***** 45.7% of Hispanic respondents believe these incentives should end, compared to 29.8% of Caucasian respondents.
- 47.2% of respondents ages 18-34 believe these incentives should end, compared to 27.2% among those ages 65 or older.
- 35.9% of Men believe these incentives should end, compared to 28.2% of Women.





Do you believe the State should end incentives for energy-efficient natural gas heating in order to meet its greenhouse gas emissions targets?





Demographic Profile - October 2021





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