

targetsmart



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RE: SiX Arizona 2019 Pre-Session Statewide Issues Poll

Executive Summary

- Arizona voters prioritize affordable health care, improving and funding public schools, and keeping Arizona's air and water clean.
- Along with these priorities comes broad openness to raising revenue to increase public investment in things like schools and health care.
- Consensus emerges around a proactive, progressive agenda in several arenas:
 - ✓ Raising teacher pay to the national average, cutting down class sizes, and fully funding public schools
 - ✓ Charter school accountability through requiring disclosure of financial conflicts of interest and more transparency
 - ✓ Allowing anyone to buy into Medicaid/AHCCCS
 - ✓ Protecting public air, water, and lands and recognizing their importance to the state's economic future
 - ✓ Criminal justice reform including flexibility in sentencing, investments in re-entry, and early release of non-violent offenders
 - ✓ Democracy reform including banning dark money, expanding early voting, and preserving the independent redistricting committee
 - ✓ An economy that works for everyone:
 - *Equal pay for equal work*
 - *Guaranteeing overtime pay and cracking down on employers that deny overtime pay*
 - *Paid family leave program*
 - *Investments in renewable energy jobs*
 - *Child care subsidies for low-income families*
 - *Increasing workplace safety regulations*

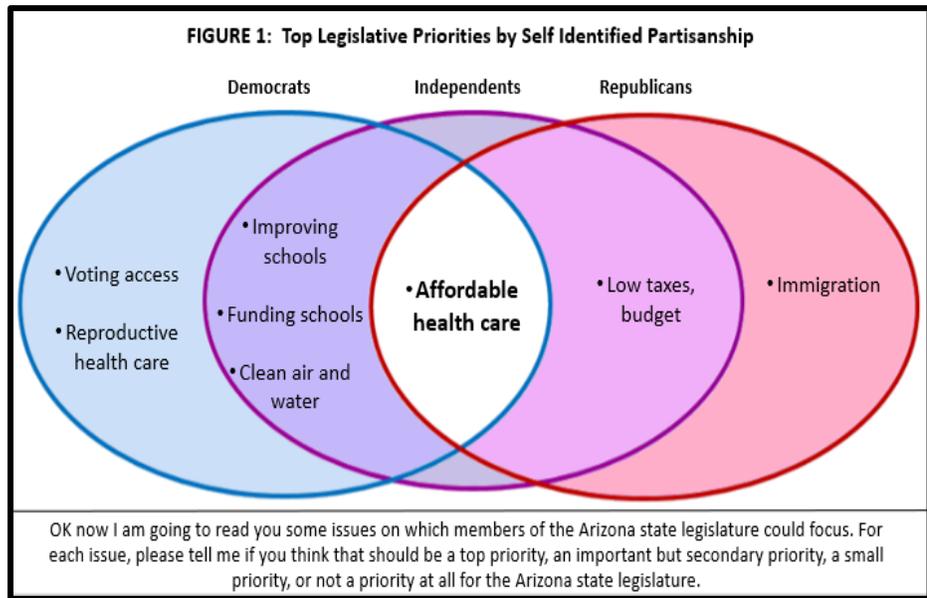
Arizona Voters Prioritize Health Care, Education, Clean Air and Water

When it comes to issues on which the state legislature could focus, Arizona voters are most likely to cite **making health care and health insurance more affordable** (72 percent top priority), improving (68 percent top priority) and increasing funding for (66 percent top priority) **neighborhood public schools**, and keeping Arizona's **air and water clean** (65 percent top priority) as top priorities. Notably, this marks a very consistent trend when comparing these results to the voter priorities highlighted in similar research we conducted for Arizona SiX this

time last year. Then and now, voters prioritize health care affordability and improving and funding public education.

Keeping taxes low and balancing the state budget (58 percent top priority) and **preserving Arizona’s public lands** that belong to us all (53 percent top priority) form a second tier of priorities. A bit less salient overall are attracting high wage jobs to the state (49 percent top priority), cracking down on illegal immigration (47 percent top priority), lessening the influence of money on state government (46 percent top priority), protecting and expanding voting access (46 percent top priority), protecting women’s access to reproductive health care services (45 percent top priority), fixing the state’s roads, highways and other infrastructure (43 percent top priority), and reforming Arizona’s criminal justice system (33 percent top priority).

As shown in FIGURE 1, affordable health care is a top priority for voters across the political spectrum. **Voting access** and **reproductive health care** tend to be top priorities for Democrats, but not for independents or Republicans. Political independents and Democrats come together to prioritize improving and funding public education and clean air and water. Independents and Republicans overlap in prioritizing low taxes and a balanced budget, while immigration is only a top tier issue for Republicans.



To Invest in These Priorities, Most Arizona Voters Are Open to Raising Revenues

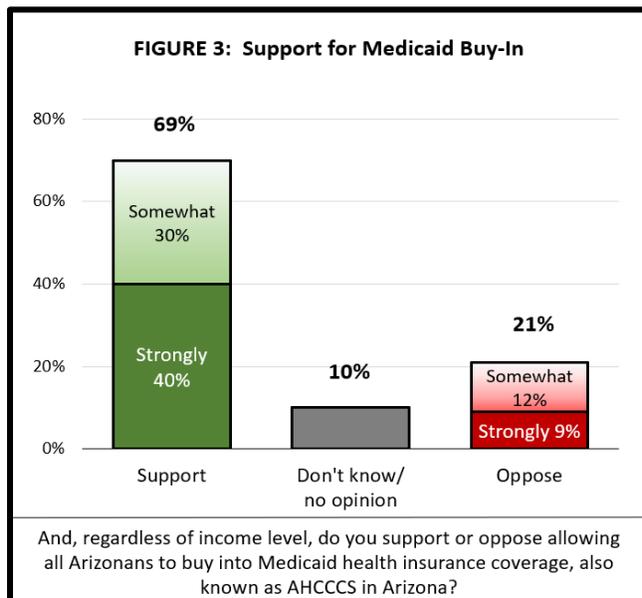
To varying degrees, this poll finds that Arizona voters are supportive of raising revenue to increase public investment in things like schools and health care. Targeting corporations for these revenues tends to be most popular, as 76 percent of Arizona voters indicate they support closing corporate tax loopholes (15 percent oppose) and 70 percent support cutting back on corporate subsidies that award large tax breaks to big corporations (25 percent oppose). What’s more, about two thirds of Arizona voters, 66 percent, support an Invest in Ed style increase in income taxes on earnings above two hundred and fifty thousand dollars (30 percent oppose). As shown in FIGURE 2 on page 3, these revenue raisers enjoy broad bipartisan support.

FIGURE 2: % Support Revenue Raiser Policy by Party Self-ID

	Total	ID Democrat	ID independent	ID Republican
Close corporate tax loopholes	76%	79%	81%	71%
Cut back on corporate subsidies that award large tax breaks to big corporations	70%	78%	73%	61%
Increase income taxes on earnings above \$250,000	66%	82%	67%	51%

Voters Know Schools Are Underfunded, Point to Outcomes of Fair Funding as Most Effective Solutions for Improving Education

Arizona voters prioritize education as an issue they want the legislature to address and they are supportive of various paths for raising revenues to help improve the schools. Notably, 64 percent of voters across the state believe increasing funding for neighborhood public schools would be a *very* effective way to improve education in Arizona. However, the **outcomes** associated with that funding tend to be viewed as effective by broader swaths of voters, namely **increasing teacher pay to the national average** (76 percent very effective) and **cutting down on class sizes by hiring more qualified teachers** (70 percent very effective). However, we also measure a broad desire for making sure small towns and rural Arizona get their fair share of funding (75 percent very effective).



Voters also equate accountability over charter schools in the state with improvements to education overall. Specifically, two-thirds of voters (66 percent) view requiring elected officials who make decisions about education funding to **disclose any financial conflicts of interest** they have, like investments in for-profit charter school operators that receive tax dollars as *very* effective education policy and nearly 6-in-10 (58 percent) say the same about requiring for-profit charter schools in Arizona to **publish their financial information to the public**.

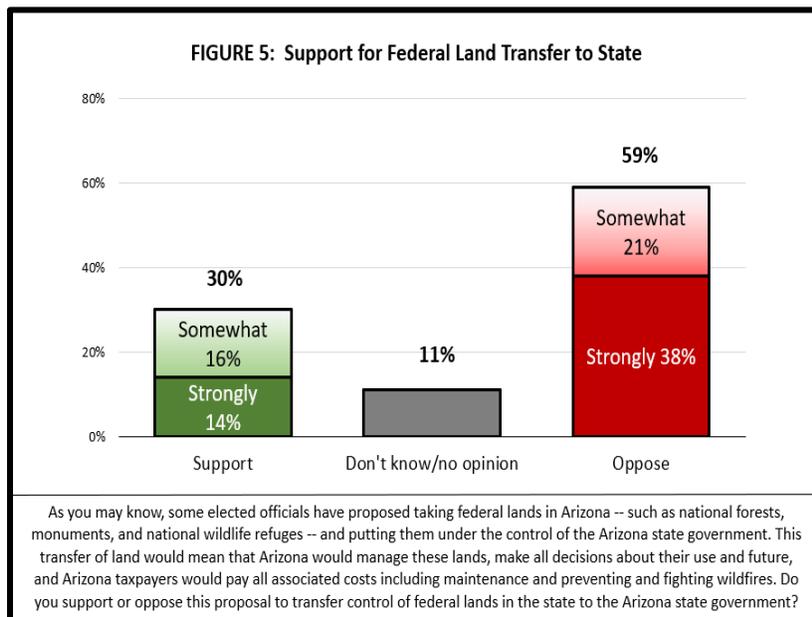
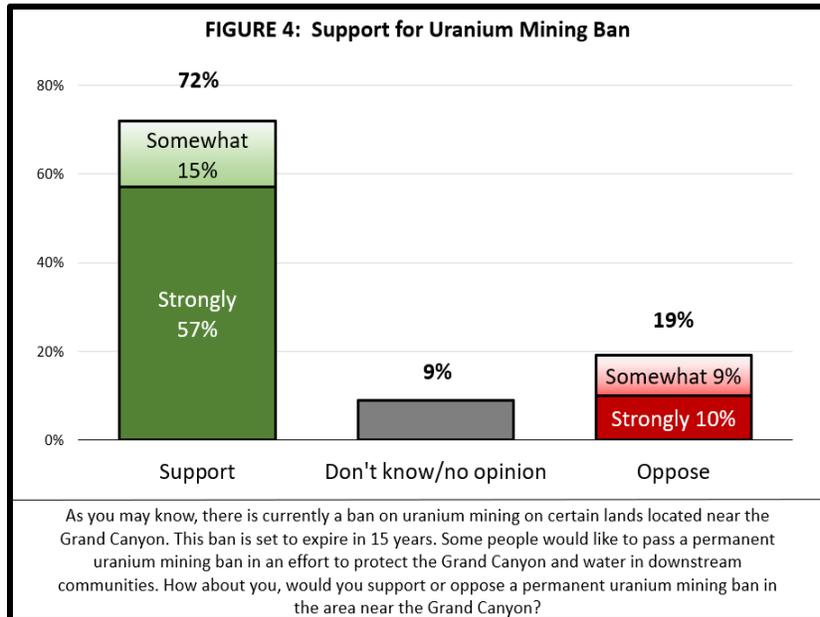
Support for Medicaid Buy-In Is Consensus Position

As highlighted above, health care affordability has been a top priority for Arizona voters and continues to be a top priority for Arizona voters. They even demonstrate a broad openness to raising revenues to help invest in health care. Therefore it follows that Arizona voters are broadly open to allowing all Arizonans, regardless of their income level, to buy into Medicaid health insurance coverage, also known as AHCCCS. As shown in FIGURE 3, about 7-in-10 voters

across the state support Medicaid buy-in, and support outweighs opposition across the partisan spectrum by at least a two-to-one margin (82 percent of Democrats, 67 percent of independents, and 60 percent of Republicans support Medicaid buy-in).

Air, Water, and Public Lands Central to Arizona’s Economic Future

Keeping Arizona’s air and water clean is a top priority for most Arizona voters. This survey reveals that Grand Canyon state voters draw a clear connection between the outdoors and the state’s economic future. To begin, a **permanent uranium mining ban in the area near the Grand Canyon** is near-consensus public policy, as 72 percent support such a ban and just 19 percent oppose it. What’s more, as shown in FIGURE 4, there is substantial intensity behind a ban on uranium mining, as almost 6-in-10 *strongly* support it.



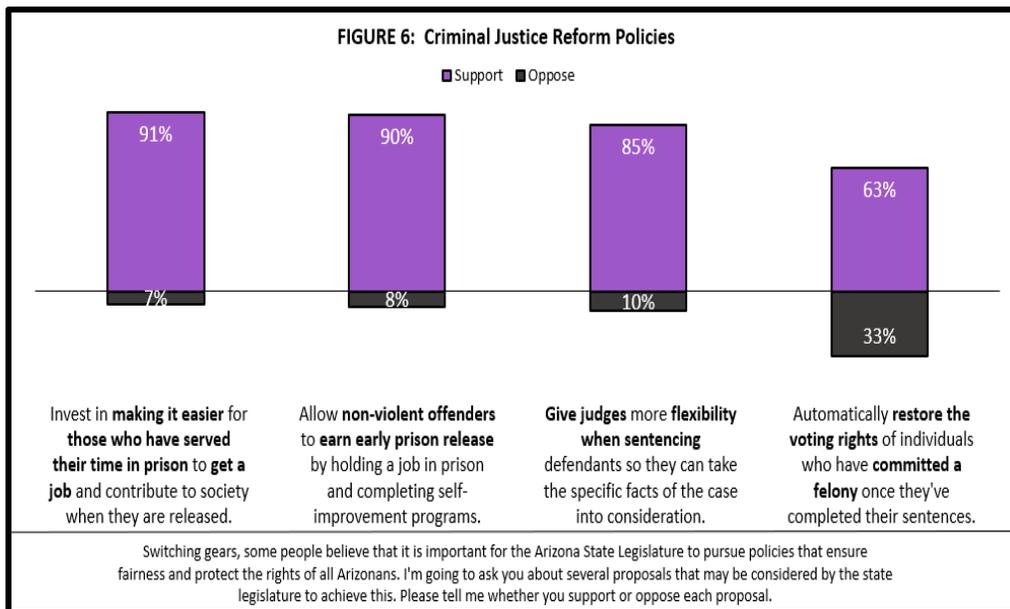
Roughly the same proportion of Arizona voters (70 percent) support **the establishment of an “Arizona Public Lands Day.”** And when asked to think about the economic future of Arizona, 56 percent characterize outdoor recreation as *very* important to the state’s economy in the future, and 93 percent characterize it as at least somewhat important.

However, this consensus position should not be misconstrued with an

eagerness to transfer federal lands to state control. In fact, by a roughly two-to-one margin voters oppose such a move, as shown in FIGURE 5.

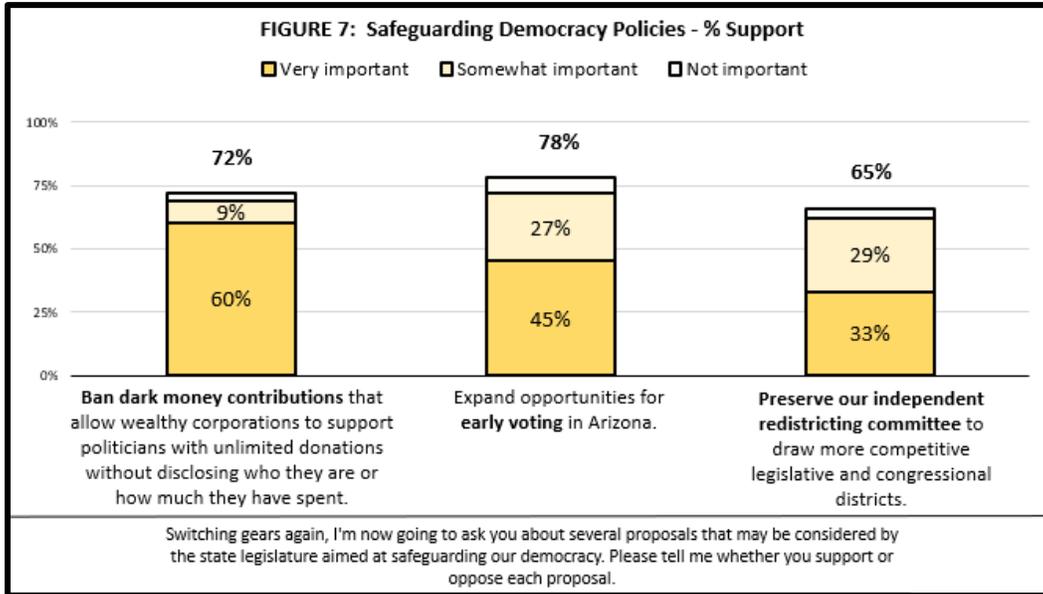
Arizona Voters Broadly Open to Progressive Criminal Justice Reform Agenda

The criminal justice reform agenda tested in the survey is broadly popular among Arizona voters. As shown in FIGURE 6, almost all Arizona voters are supportive of efforts to invest in making it easier for those who have served their time in prison **to get a job and contribute to society** when they are released, allow non-violent offenders to **earn early prison release** by holding a job in prison and completing self-improvement programs, and **give judges more flexibility** when sentencing defendants so they can take the specific facts of the case into consideration. Though also popular overall, automatically restoring the voting rights of individuals who have committed a felony once they've completed their sentences engenders the most opposition of any of these policies.



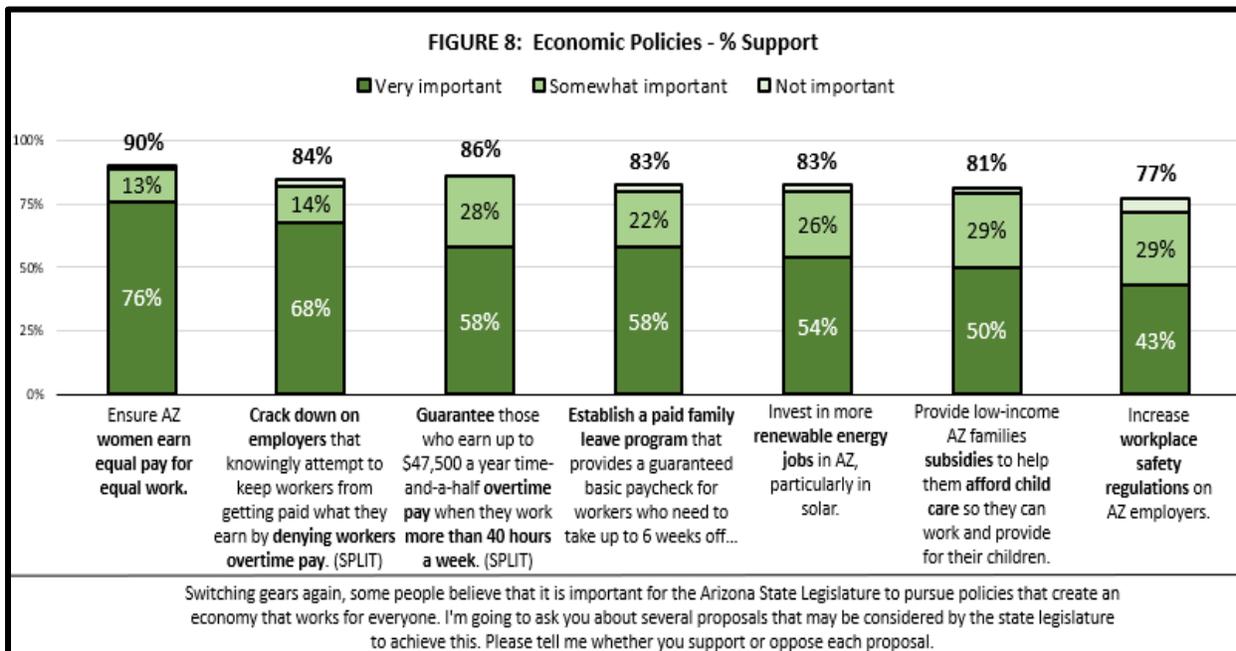
Democracy Reforms Popular, Most Urgency Placed on Banning Dark Money

Arizona voters are generally supportive of policies aimed at safeguarding our democracy; as shown in FIGURE 7 on page 6, anywhere from 65 to 78 percent of the electorate backs these proposals to **ban dark money**, **expand early voting**, and **preserve our independent redistricting committee**. However, when asked a follow-up question about the relative importance of these policies, we find that 6-in-10 voters both support a ban on dark money contributions that allow wealthy corporations to support politicians with unlimited donations without disclosing who they are or how much they have spent AND characterize it as a *very* important priority for the state legislature (60 percent). Compared to expanding early voting and preserving the independent redistricting committee, there is significantly more intensity behind banning dark money.



Consensus Economic Agenda

As shown in FIGURE 8, **equal pay for equal work, overtime pay guarantees, paid family leave, investments in renewable energy jobs, child care subsidies for low income families, and increased workplace safety regulations** are all broadly popular policy proposals, engendering very little opposition, even among political conservatives. As is the case with democracy reform though, voters ascribe varying levels of urgency to these economic reforms.



In the top tier is equal pay for equal work, which enjoys near unanimous support, and which 76 percent of voters say is *very important* for the legislature to address. Just behind equal pay is cracking down on employers that knowingly attempt to keep workers from getting paid what

they earn by denying them overtime pay. Sixty-eight percent both support this policy and say it's *very* important.