

VOTER POLL

➤ A MORRISON INSTITUTE-KNOWLEDGE NETWORKS POLL IN ARIZONA

New Poll Results: Voters dissatisfied with state leaders, budget tactics

Arizona’s electorate – regardless of political party registration – is dissatisfied with state government and its leadership, according to results of a recent Morrison Institute-Knowledge Networks Poll.

Two-thirds of voters – 68% – disapprove of the way the Legislature is handling the state budget and taxes. Just 32% approve. While Democrats (76%) and independents (67%) are more disenchanted with the Legislature, the majority of Republicans (61%) also is critical of the GOP-dominated Legislature, which has made major cuts in programs to balance the budget.

Question: Overall, do you strongly approve, approve, disapprove or strongly disapprove of the way the Arizona Legislature is handling the issue of the state budget and taxes?

	Total	Gender		Age			Education			How do you think of yourself politically?		
		Male	Female	18-44	45-59	60 or older	Any High School	Some College	College Degree	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Strongly Approve	1%	3%	0%	3%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%
Approve	30%	31%	28%	31%	20%	38%	30%	26%	33%	34%	24%	33%
Disapprove	43%	40%	45%	37%	48%	45%	39%	44%	44%	44%	39%	42%
Strongly Disapprove	26%	26%	26%	28%	31%	16%	27%	28%	22%	17%	38%	25%
Refused	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%

Table 1: Response to the question: Overall, do you strongly approve, approve, disapprove or strongly disapprove of the way the Arizona Legislature is handling the issue of the state budget and taxes?

“Even among Republicans, whose party dominates Arizona government, there is widespread dissatisfaction with the way that state government is operated,” said David Daugherty, director of research at Morrison Institute for Public Policy at Arizona State University. “Dissatisfaction with Arizona government appears to be consistent with voter dissatisfaction around the country.”

A Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll, released Sept. 9, portrayed a general unhappiness with elected officials in Washington, D.C. According to the nationwide sampling, 56% of all voters—Democrats, Republicans and independents—said it was time to make a change in their congressional district and give someone else a chance to represent them.

It should be noted that dissatisfaction among Arizona’s electorate is not new. A July 2009 poll for Arizona Indicators, a collaborative online data project managed by Morrison Institute, found that 66% of Arizona voters surveyed disapproved of how the Legislature was dealing with the state budget and tax issues at that time. The percentage of dissatisfied voters, however, has increased, the new Morrison Institute-Knowledge Networks Poll shows.

Details of the poll and other survey results can be found at www.ArizonaIndicators.org and MorrisonInstitute.asu.edu.

Priorities

Two-thirds of all voters believe the Legislature has “the wrong priorities,” including a substantial portion from each political party. Surprisingly, the percentage only slightly dips among polled Republicans with 63% saying the Legislature has “the wrong priorities.”



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Arizona Indicators is an online information resource and analysis tool that centralizes data about the state and its communities. Arizona Indicators presents interactive visualizations, clear data descriptions, and public opinion data in a broad range of content areas.

This project is made possible by generous support from the Arizona Community Foundation and Arizona State University.

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Arizona Indicators is a project of Morrison Institute for Public Policy.

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Statement: I believe the state Legislature has the wrong priorities.

		Gender		Age			Education			How do you think of yourself politically?		
		Male	Female	18-44	45-59	60 or older	Any High School	Some College	College Degree	Republican	Democrat	Independent
	Total											
Strongly Agree	20%	17%	23%	21%	20%	20%	11%	26%	26%	9%	34%	20%
Agree	46%	45%	47%	54%	42%	37%	50%	39%	48%	54%	37%	42%
Disagree	29%	31%	28%	25%	31%	34%	30%	32%	24%	30%	28%	32%
Strongly Disagree	3%	4%	1%	0%	2%	8%	5%	1%	2%	2%	1%	6%
Refused	2%	3%	1%	0%	5%	1%	4%	1%	1%	4%	1%	0%

Table 2: Response to the statement: I believe the state Legislature has the wrong priorities.

Return On Investment

Voters are, for the most part, dissatisfied with how state tax dollars are allocated. Nearly three-quarters of Arizona voters – Republicans, Democrats and independents – agree with the statement about “a poor return on investment.” Interestingly, the total percentage of those dissatisfied with the ROI mirrors that of Republican respondents.

Statement: I think our level of state taxes produces a poor return on investment.

		Gender		Age			Education			How do you think of yourself politically?		
		Male	Female	18-44	45-59	60 or older	Any High School	Some College	College Degree	Republican	Democrat	Independent
	Total											
Strongly Agree	19%	20%	18%	18%	24%	17%	16%	21%	21%	19%	18%	20%
Agree	53%	50%	55%	52%	51%	57%	58%	53%	46%	53%	48%	56%
Disagree	22%	21%	22%	25%	19%	19%	15%	20%	31%	21%	25%	21%
Strongly Disagree	4%	5%	3%	5%	2%	4%	5%	5%	1%	1%	8%	3%
Refused	2%	4%	2%	1%	5%	3%	5%	1%	1%	5%	2%	0%

Table 3: Response to the statement: I think our level of state taxes produces a poor return on investment.

Republican/Democratic Leadership

Perhaps the non-surprise from the survey is that Republicans think Republicans have done a better job, while Democrats believe Democrats have better demonstrated “good leadership.” Neither gives the opposing party much credit. Independents aren’t impressed with the leadership from either party, with 71% feeling that Democrats have failed to provide leadership and 63% expressing similar disapproval of Republican leadership.

Statement: The Democratic Party has provided good leadership in formulating state public policy.

		Gender		Age			Education			How do you think of yourself politically?		
		Male	Female	18-44	45-59	60 or older	Any High School	Some College	College Degree	Republican	Democrat	Independent
	Total											
Strongly Agree	4%	2%	6%	5%	4%	2%	2%	8%	2%	0%	12%	0%
Agree	33%	28%	38%	36%	32%	29%	37%	28%	33%	12%	61%	29%
Disagree	37%	33%	41%	39%	38%	32%	32%	44%	35%	46%	22%	47%
Strongly Disagree	24%	34%	15%	19%	21%	36%	25%	19%	29%	38%	4%	24%
Refused	2%	3%	1%	0%	5%	1%	4%	1%	1%	4%	0%	1%

Table 4: Response to the statement: The Democratic Party has provided good leadership in formulating state public policy.

Statement: The Republican Party has provided good leadership in formulating state public policy.

		Gender		Age			Education			How do you think of yourself politically?		
		Male	Female	18-44	45-59	60 or older	Any High School	Some College	College Degree	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Strongly Agree	2%	5%	5%	3%	6%	6%	4%	5%	6%	11%	0%	3%
Agree	5%	41%	31%	39%	27%	41%	39%	40%	28%	58%	17%	33%
Disagree	36%	27%	39%	32%	35%	34%	33%	34%	33%	26%	39%	34%
Strongly Disagree	33%	24%	23%	24%	27%	18%	20%	20%	32%	1%	44%	29%
Refused	24%	3%	2%	1%	5%	0%	4%	1%	2%	4%	0%	2%

Table 5: Response to the statement: The Republican Party has provided good leadership in formulating state public policy.

Governor's Leadership

The vast majority of Republicans believe Gov. Jan Brewer has provided “good leadership,” but an even larger percentage of Democrats believe she has not. Independents are evenly divided on their opinion of the governor’s leadership, with half approving of her efforts and the half critical.

Statement: I believe the governor has provided good leadership in formulating state public policy.

		Gender		Age			Education			How do you think of yourself politically?		
		Male	Female	18-44	45-59	60 or older	Any High School	Some College	College Degree	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Strongly Agree	12%	12%	12%	7%	8%	24%	14%	13%	9%	19%	5%	12%
Agree	40%	46%	35%	41%	40%	41%	45%	36%	41%	54%	24%	37%
Disagree	24%	20%	27%	26%	23%	21%	19%	26%	27%	18%	29%	28%
Strongly Disagree	22%	20%	25%	26%	23%	15%	19%	25%	24%	5%	41%	22%
Refused	2%	3%	1%	0%	5%	0%	4%	1%	0%	4%	1%	0%

Table 6: Response to the statement: I believe the governor has provided good leadership in formulating state public policy.

Partisan Politics

To varying degrees, Republicans, Democrats and independents agree there is too much partisan conflict at the Arizona State Capitol. The total percentage of Arizona voters who believe there is excess partisanship is 74%. Democrats (83%) feel particularly strongly on this issue, followed by independents (75%) and Republicans (61%).

Statement: There is too much partisan conflict at the Arizona State Capitol.

		Gender		Age			Education			How do you think of yourself politically?		
		Male	Female	18-44	45-59	60 or older	Any High School	Some College	College Degree	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Strongly Agree	26%	24%	27%	26%	25%	26%	20%	24%	34%	11%	39%	31%
Agree	48%	49%	46%	52%	43%	45%	48%	49%	47%	50%	44%	44%
Disagree	21%	22%	21%	19%	23%	24%	22%	25%	17%	33%	13%	19%
Strongly Disagree	2%	1%	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%	3%
Refused	3%	4%	3%	0%	7%	3%	7%	1%	1%	5%	1%	3%

Table 7: Response to the statement: There is too much partisan conflict at the Arizona State Capitol.

Moderates

The Legislature, governor and other top state leaders pride themselves on their conservative politics, but nearly six in 10 Republicans said they would prefer more moderate elected officials. In fact, the vast majority of Arizona voters (67%) – regardless of party – share that sentiment.

Statement: I would like to see more moderate candidates elected to public office.

		Gender		Age			Education			How do you think of yourself politically?		
		Male	Female	18-44	45-59	60 or older	Any High School	Some College	College Degree	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Strongly Agree	11%	14%	9%	11%	10%	13%	7%	8%	20%	4%	10%	21%
Agree	56%	50%	61%	62%	49%	53%	51%	58%	58%	55%	61%	49%
Disagree	23%	19%	27%	20%	27%	24%	26%	24%	18%	28%	22%	19%
Strongly Disagree	6%	12%	2%	4%	8%	8%	9%	7%	3%	9%	5%	6%
Refused	4%	5%	2%	3%	6%	3%	7%	3%	1%	4%	2%	5%

Table 8: Response to the statement: I would like to see more moderate candidates elected to public office.

Overall Voter Satisfaction

While half of Republican voters are dissatisfied with “the way things are going in Arizona government,” an even larger percentage of Democrats (80%) and independents (62%) indicate dissatisfaction. Voter dissatisfaction with local community government, while slightly less widespread than dissatisfaction with state government, is still high; two-thirds give local governments a negative review.

Statement: I am generally satisfied with the way things are going in Arizona state government.

		Gender		Age			Education			How do you think of yourself politically?		
		Male	Female	18-44	45-59	60 or older	Any High School	Some College	College Degree	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Strongly Agree	3%	4%	2%	1%	2%	8%	5%	2%	1%	3%	1%	5%
Agree	33%	41%	26%	38%	24%	37%	35%	31%	33%	42%	19%	33%
Disagree	39%	34%	44%	35%	47%	36%	36%	42%	40%	44%	38%	34%
Strongly Disagree	23%	19%	27%	26%	23%	19%	19%	25%	26%	6%	42%	28%
Refused	2%	3%	1%	0%	5%	1%	5%	1%	1%	5%	0%	0%

Table 9: Response to the statement: I am generally satisfied with the way things are going in Arizona state government.

Statement: I am satisfied with the way things are going in my local community's government.

		Gender		Age			Education			How do you think of yourself politically?		
		Male	Female	18-44	45-59	60 or older	Any High School	Some College	College Degree	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Strongly Agree	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	0%	4%	4%	2%	1%
Agree	36%	38%	34%	34%	28%	49%	32%	32%	45%	44%	26%	38%
Disagree	43%	40%	46%	42%	51%	35%	44%	43%	41%	37%	49%	44%
Strongly Disagree	17%	18%	16%	21%	14%	13%	16%	23%	10%	10%	24%	17%
Refused	2%	3%	1%	0%	5%	1%	4%	1%	1%	4%	1%	0%

Table 10: Response to the statement: I am satisfied with the way things are going in my local community's government.

Government Efficiency/Worthy Programs

While nearly everyone believes “state government programs should be maintained to deal with important problems,” more than three-quarters also say “government programs are run inefficiently.” Do we need them? Yes. Are they managed well? No.

Statement: I believe state government programs are run inefficiently.

		Gender		Age			Education			How do you think of yourself politically?		
		Male	Female	18-44	45-59	60 or older	Any High School	Some College	College Degree	Republican	Democrat	Independent
	Total											
Strongly Agree	21%	20%	22%	19%	22%	23%	18%	24%	21%	19%	26%	19%
Agree	57%	57%	56%	59%	55%	53%	60%	55%	53%	54%	52%	61%
Disagree	18%	17%	19%	17%	16%	21%	15%	16%	24%	20%	17%	19%
Strongly Disagree	3%	4%	2%	3%	3%	1%	2%	5%	1%	2%	5%	2%
Refused	2%	3%	1%	1%	5%	1%	4%	1%	1%	5%	1%	0%

Table 11: Response to the statement: I believe state government programs are run inefficiently.

Statement: I believe state government programs should be maintained to deal with important problems.

		Gender		Age			Education			How do you think of yourself politically?		
		Male	Female	18-44	45-59	60 or older	Any High School	Some College	College Degree	Republican	Democrat	Independent
	Total											
Strongly Agree	21%	21%	22%	22%	21%	20%	24%	22%	18%	19%	22%	23%
Agree	69%	68%	69%	72%	61%	73%	62%	71%	75%	64%	75%	70%
Disagree	5%	4%	6%	4%	7%	5%	5%	4%	7%	6%	3%	6%
Strongly Disagree	2%	4%	1%	1%	6%	0%	5%	2%	1%	6%	0%	1%
Refused	2%	3%	1%	0%	5%	1%	4%	1%	0%	5%	0%	0%

Table 12: I believe state government programs should be maintained to deal with important problems.

Voter-protected Funds

Under current law, legislators are not allowed to divert funds from programs approved by a direct vote of the electorate. When asked whether this law should apply in times of a “budget crisis,” voters were split in their opinions. Slightly fewer than half of all three political affiliates – Republicans, Democrats and independents – favor releasing such funds for other uses, while slightly more than half believe the money should remain protected.

Statement: In times of budget crisis, the Legislature should be able to use funds protected by voter ballots.

		Gender		Age			Education			How do you think of yourself politically?		
		Male	Female	18-44	45-59	60 or older	Any High School	Some College	College Degree	Republican	Democrat	Independent
	Total											
Strongly Agree	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%	6%	5%	3%	6%	5%	4%	5%
Agree	41%	44%	39%	51%	32%	35%	52%	42%	27%	37%	46%	39%
Disagree	34%	28%	38%	28%	39%	36%	23%	35%	46%	35%	30%	36%
Strongly Disagree	18%	19%	17%	16%	20%	20%	15%	19%	21%	18%	16%	20%
Refused	3%	3%	3%	1%	5%	4%	6%	1%	1%	5%	3%	0%

Table 13: Response to the statement: In times of budget crisis, the Legislature should be able to use funds protected by voter ballots.

About The Survey

Findings in the survey are a statewide representative sample based on the responses of 614 Arizonans interviewed between July 16 and Aug. 6, as part of the Arizona Indicators Panel. Results reflect a plus-or-minus 4 percentage point level of accuracy. Percentages are rounded.

The survey was conducted using the web-enabled KnowledgePanel®, a probability-based panel designed to be representative of the U.S. population. Initially, participants are chosen scientifically by a random selection of telephone numbers and residential addresses. Persons in selected households are then invited by telephone or by mail to participate in the web-enabled KnowledgePanel®. For those who agree to participate, but do not already have Internet access, Knowledge Networks provides at no cost a laptop and ISP connection. People who already have computers and Internet service are permitted to participate using their own equipment. Panelists then receive unique log-in information for accessing surveys online, and then are sent e-mails throughout each month inviting them to participate in research. More technical information is available at: <http://www.knowledgenetworks.com/ganp/reviewer-info.html>.

About Knowledge Networks

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About Arizona Indicators

Arizona Indicators, a project of Morrison Institute for Public Policy, is a community partnership supported by major sponsors Arizona State University and Arizona Community Foundation, and contributing sponsors Valley of the Sun United Way, *The Arizona Republic*, and Arizona Department of Commerce. For continuously updated data, go to <http://arizonaindicators.org>.

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