

To: NARAL Pro-Choice America and Latino Victory Fund
From: Matt A. Barreto & Kim Kilps-Ascencio, BSP Research
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Re: Latino views towards abortion access

OVERVIEW

On behalf of NARAL Pro-Choice America and Latino Victory Fund, BSP Research surveyed 800 Latinos registered voters throughout the U.S. The survey was available in their language of preference, English or Spanish. The study was completed using a blended mode, where 25% of interviews were completed on live telephone calls, and 75% were completed online. The survey was conducted August 31 through September 14, 2022 and carries a margin-of-error of +/- 3.5%.

While recent surveys of Latino voters have asked one or two questions on abortion access, this represents the first survey to take a comprehensive and in-depth look at the topic of abortion access and reproductive rights. For years there have been widespread assumptions that Latinos are religious conservatives who oppose abortion. This survey answers those assumptions with facts and data to show that Latino voters strongly support reproductive freedom, and have serious concerns today about abortion bans in many states. Importantly, this survey uncovers an important nuance—that even Latinos who personally oppose abortion do not believe the government should get involved to ban access for people who need it. We also uncover important messaging themes that resonate within the Latino community, including that abortion decisions should only be left to the woman and her doctor and that government bans on abortion are an affront to our personal liberties and freedom.

Every question we asked to gauge support for reproductive freedom resulted in 70% to 80% approval among Latino voters. This strong support is noteworthy especially given that our national sample reported 2020 vote choice of 64% Biden to 28% Trump. Across the board, the abortion issue shows an area where Latinos have become increasingly progressive and even reach 4-to-1 support margins in some cases.

KEY FINDINGS

For the first time in any of our testing, access to abortion is the #1 deal breaker for Latino voters, in front of the January 6 insurrection and opposition to the DREAM Act.

- 71% of Latinos said they could NOT vote for a candidate who supports a nationwide ban on abortions with no exceptions. Similarly, 70% said they are less likely to vote for a politician who seeks to ban abortion, contraception, and Plan B.

- While costs of living, inflation and the economy continues to register as the number one issue cited by Latinos, the NALEO tracking poll has reported for 3 weeks in a row that abortion is the number two issue for Latino voters right now
- Latino awareness of the issue is high with 73% correctly stating that SCOTUS had banned abortion. The poll revealed that exactly one-third are following this issue VERY CLOSELY with another third saying they have heard a good amount (69% total). This suggests abortion and reproductive health issues are now top of mind for Latino voters.

Latino voters report strong support for government protecting access to abortion, across all demographic segments.

- When asked about access to abortion, no matter how the question is phrased the poll reports strong and consistent support for abortion rights by a 3-to-1 margin or greater.
- Overall, by a 72-23 margin, Latino voters agreed: “No matter what my personal beliefs about abortion are, I think it is wrong to make abortion illegal and take away the freedom to make those decisions from everyone else.”
 - Hispanic men: 67 - 28 (+39)
 - Latina women: 77 - 18 (+59)
 - U.S. born: 74 - 22 (+52)
 - Foreign born: 69 - 26 (+43)
 - Catholic: 73 - 22 (+51)
 - Other Christian: 63 - 32 (+31)
 - Self-described moderate: 76 - 17 (+59)
 - Self-described Independent: 70 - 23 (+47)
 - California: 73 - 21 (+52)
 - Texas/Southwest: 71 - 24 (+47)
- When we ask a traditional 3-way abortion question we have a combined 82% who are in favor of government maintaining abortion rights. This includes a very important 29% of Latinos who are more conservative, who personally oppose abortion, but agree that government should not block a woman from making that decision for herself. In this question, only 11% of Latinos agree that abortion is wrong and should be illegal.
 - In particular, the 29% of the Latino electorate who personally opposes abortion, but does not want the government taking the right away for others, is a critical and often misunderstood portion of the Latino community that we must communicate effectively with

- Finally, when asked whether decisions on abortion should be up to patients and doctors versus politicians and judges, support jumps to +76 with 84% wanting to leave the decision to patients and doctors.

Messaging that emphasizes the personal decision to be left to the woman, and not the government performs very well among Latinos

- When framed against a Christian and religious objection to abortion which are commonly used in the Latino community, we find 79% agree with:
 - “Abortion is a private matter and a personal decision. No matter what my own beliefs are, it is not the role of government to ban access to abortion for people who need it.”
- Likewise, in a split sample, we found the same rate, 79% agreement with:
 - “Abortion is a personal decision and we can never know another person’s circumstances or health issues. These decisions should be made by the pregnant person with support of the people they love and trust, not politicians”
- And 78% agreed with:

“It is the right of each person to make their own healthcare decisions about what to do with their own body. Access to abortion is about having personal freedom to decide what is best for you with those you love and trust.”
- Similarly, when asked about being more or less likely to vote for politicians based on their statements on access to abortion **71% of Latino voters said it was essential or very important to hear where a candidate for office stands on the issue**
 - If a politician running for office said – the decision of whether or not a woman can have an abortion should be left to the woman and her doctor – would you be more likely to less likely to vote for this politician? **[77% more likely to vote]**
 - If a politician running for office said – no matter our personal view, it is wrong for the government to ban abortion because each person should have the freedom to decide what is best for their life and circumstances – would you be more likely to less likely to vote for this politician? **[76% more likely to vote]**

Given the current political climate, Latinos are concerned about state abortion bans and what it means for the future of rights to individual freedom and health

- When asked if they are worried or not worried about different implications of the Dobbs decision, a clear majority of Latinos expressed concern over state abortion bans and their aftermath:

- 78% worried “In states where abortion is now illegal, I am worried about the health, safety and lives of women and girls
- 76% worried “States will go even further and ban birth control”
- 76% worried “People who seek abortion care could now be charged with crimes and even put in jail in certain states”
- 76% worried “Women having a miscarriage will not be given the medical care they need or could go to jail”
- 68% worried “More and more states will pass laws to ban abortion”
- 65% worried “Now that the Supreme Court has struck down Roe v. Wade, which allowed abortion through a right to privacy, the Court will strike down the rights to privacy for gay and lesbian people next