

Texas Trends Survey 2021

Election Reform & Redistricting

HOBBY
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
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Texas Trends Survey 2021 Election Reform and Redistricting

The Hobby School of Public Affairs at the University of Houston and the Executive Master of Public Administration Program in the Barbara Jordan – Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs at Texas Southern University are conducting a five-year survey project to study Texas's changing population, with emphasis on the state's Black, Latino and Asian residents. In addition to a representative sample of all Texans, the inaugural survey includes an oversample of the former two groups in the first report to allow for an objective and statistically valid report of their diverse opinions and experiences.

The first survey of this five-year project focused on opinions about recently passed legislation during the 2021 regular and special sessions of the Texas Legislature and preferences related to electric vehicles and criminal justice issues. The survey was fielded between October 4 and October 21, 2021 in English and Spanish, with 2,067 YouGov respondents 18 years of age and older, resulting in a confidence interval of +/-2.2. The respondents were matched to a sampling frame on gender, age, race/ethnicity, and education and are representative of the Texas adult population.

The results of the 2021 survey will be presented in four separate reports: abortion and transgender athlete policies, election reform and redistricting, electric vehicles, and criminal justice.

This report examines Texans' attitudes related to nine election reforms passed by the Texas Legislature in 2021 as well as opinions about redistricting in the Lone Star State.

Executive Summary

Senate Bill 1 passed during the second special session of the 2021 Texas Legislature, and was then signed into law by Governor Greg Abbott on September 7. This survey assessed the opinions of Texans regarding nine components of this wide-reaching election reform legislation.

Two reforms enjoy the support of more than four-fifths of Texans with an opinion about the reform. The change in the minimum number of early voting hours from eight to nine hours is supported by 86% and opposed by only 14%, while the change making ballot harvesting a third degree felony is supported by 82% and opposed by only 18%.

Four election reforms enjoy the support of more than three-fifths of Texans (but of less than four-fifths). The change requiring Texans to provide their drivers' license number (or last four numbers of their Social Security number) on both their mail ballot application and their mail ballot is supported by 74% and opposed by 26%. The modification explicitly restricting assistance to disabled Texas voters of only reading and marking the ballot by those assisting them is supported by 69% and opposed by 31%. Additionally, the change allowing Texas voters to correct mail ballot errors online to prevent their ballot from being rejected is supported by 66% and opposed by 34%, while the change allowing partisan poll

watchers to have more freedom of movement throughout the polling place is supported by 63% and opposed by 37%.

Three reforms enjoy the support of more than half (but less than three-fifths) of Texans with an opinion. These three changes targeted reforms implemented (drive-thru voting and 24-hour voting) or attempted (mailing all registered voters a mail ballot application) by Harris County's then-county clerk Chris Hollins for the November 2020 election. These reforms prohibit drive-thru voting (supported by 59%, opposed by 41%), make it a felony for an election administrator to send a mail ballot application to anyone who has not solicited one (supported by 59%, opposed by 41%), and prohibit 24-hour early voting by requiring polls to open no earlier than 6AM and close no later than 10PM (supported by 58%, opposed by 42%).

Among these latter three reforms there exist several notable differential patterns of popular support across different racial/ethnic, generational, and partisan sub-groups.

These three reforms enjoy the support of two-thirds or more of white Texans but of less than half of Black Texans, with Latino Texans generally halfway between Blacks and whites. For example, while 69% of whites support making it a felony for an election administrator to mail out unsolicited mail ballot applications, this change is backed by only 39% of African Americans and by 52% of Latinos. Similarly, 66% of white Texans support the ban on drive-thru voting, compared to 55% of Latinos and 42% of Blacks.

The most noteworthy generational differences exist in regard to support for the ban on drive-thru voting, which is supported by more than two-thirds (69%) of the Silent/Baby Boomer generations, but by only 51% of Millennials and 52% of Generation Z, with Generation X equidistant between the two extremes at 60%. All together however, the three reforms enjoy majority support across each one of the four generations.

The proportion of Republican support for the three reforms ranges from 79% (prohibit 24-hour voting) to 85% (prohibit drive-thru voting), more than double the proportion of Democratic support for these two reforms of 32% and 33%. More than three-fifths of Independents support the three reforms at nearly identical levels of 60% or 61%.

The proportion of Trump voter support for the three reforms ranges from 88% (prohibit 24-hour voting) to 89% (prohibit drive-thru voting) to 91% (felony to send out an unsolicited mail ballot application), more than triple the proportion of Biden voter support for the three reforms, which ranges from 23% (felony to send out an unsolicited mail ballot application) to 27% (prohibit 24-hour voting; prohibit drive-thru voting). More than one-half of non-voters support the three reforms, at levels that range from 57% (prohibit 24-hour voting) to 27% (prohibit 24-hour voting; prohibit drive-thru voting).

The respondents were asked "How much of a problem is it, when one political party controls the governorship and both chambers of the state legislature, that the legislative districts are drawn to intentionally favor that majority party?", and the response options were a major problem, a minor problem, not a problem and don't know. Among all Texans, 48% believe the scenario described is a major problem, 21% believe it is a minor problem, 12% do not consider it to be a problem, and 19% don't know enough to have an opinion. Excluding the don't know responses, 59% of Texans with an opinion believe that this scenario of tailor-made districts designed by, and to benefit, the majority party is a major problem compared to 27% who see it as a minor problem and 14% who don't consider it to be a problem.

A majority of white (56%), Latino (62%) and Black (67%) Texans all consider one party control over the redistricting process resulting in legislative districts intentionally drawn to favor the majority party to be a major problem, with Black Texans significantly more likely to consider it a problem than white Texans.

More than three out of four Democrats (76%) considers one party control over the redistricting process resulting in legislative districts intentionally drawn to favor the majority party to be a major problem, with only 6% considering it not to be a problem. A majority of Independents (57%) also considers the scenario to be a major problem, with 19% of Independents not seeing it as a problem at all. A plurality of 45% of Republicans considers this situation to be a major problem, followed by 35% who view it as a minor problem and 20% who don't consider it to be a problem.

Survey Population Demographics

The weighted survey population is split almost equally between women (51%) and men (49%). Whites account for 45% of the survey population, Latinos 37%, Blacks 12%, Asian Americans 4%, and others 2%. In regard to generations, 31% of the population belongs to the combined Silent Generation (born between 1928-1945) and Baby Boomers (1946-1964) cohort, 27% to Generation X (Gen X) (1965-1980), 31% to the Millennial (1981-1996) generation, and 11% to Generation Z (Gen Z) (1997-2012). Close to one-third (31%) of the population identifies as Democrat, 30% as Republican, and 28% as Independent, with 8% unsure and 3% who identify with another political party or group. In the 2020 presidential election, 38% of the respondents voted for Donald Trump, 33% voted for Joe Biden, 1% voted for other candidates, and 28% did not vote.

Texans and Nine Election Reforms from Senate Bill 1

Senate Bill 1 passed during the second special session of the 2021 Texas Legislature, and was then signed into law by Governor Greg Abbott on September 7. It goes into effect in December 2021.

The survey respondents were presented with the following question: "In August, the Texas Legislature made the following changes to the Texas election code. To what extent do you support or oppose each change?" The response options were strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, strongly oppose and don't know.

The respondents were asked about the following nine changes to the election code:

1. All early voting must now take place between 6AM and 10PM, with 24-hour early voting now prohibited.
2. Minimum early voting hours must now be at least 9 hours a day, an increase from the current minimum of 8 hours.
3. Drive-thru voting is now prohibited, with only voters who are physically unable to vote within the polling place eligible for curbside voting

4. It is now a state jail felony for local election officials to send mail-in ballot applications to voters who have not requested them.
5. Voters casting a mail ballot will now need to provide their driver's license number or (if they don't have a license) the last four digits of their social security number on both their application for a mail ballot and on the completed ballot they return.
6. It is now possible for voters to go online and correct technical errors for their mail ballot that could cause it to be rejected.
7. Partisan poll watchers will now have freer movement throughout the polling place to observe and monitor the voting process.
8. It is now a third-degree jail felony to engage in vote (ballot) harvesting (in-person interaction with voters in the presence of the ballot to deliver votes for a specific candidate) in exchange for payment or another benefit.
9. People assisting a disabled person or non-native English or Spanish speaker at the polling machine must now limit their assistance to reading the ballot, marking the ballot, or directing the voter to mark the ballot.

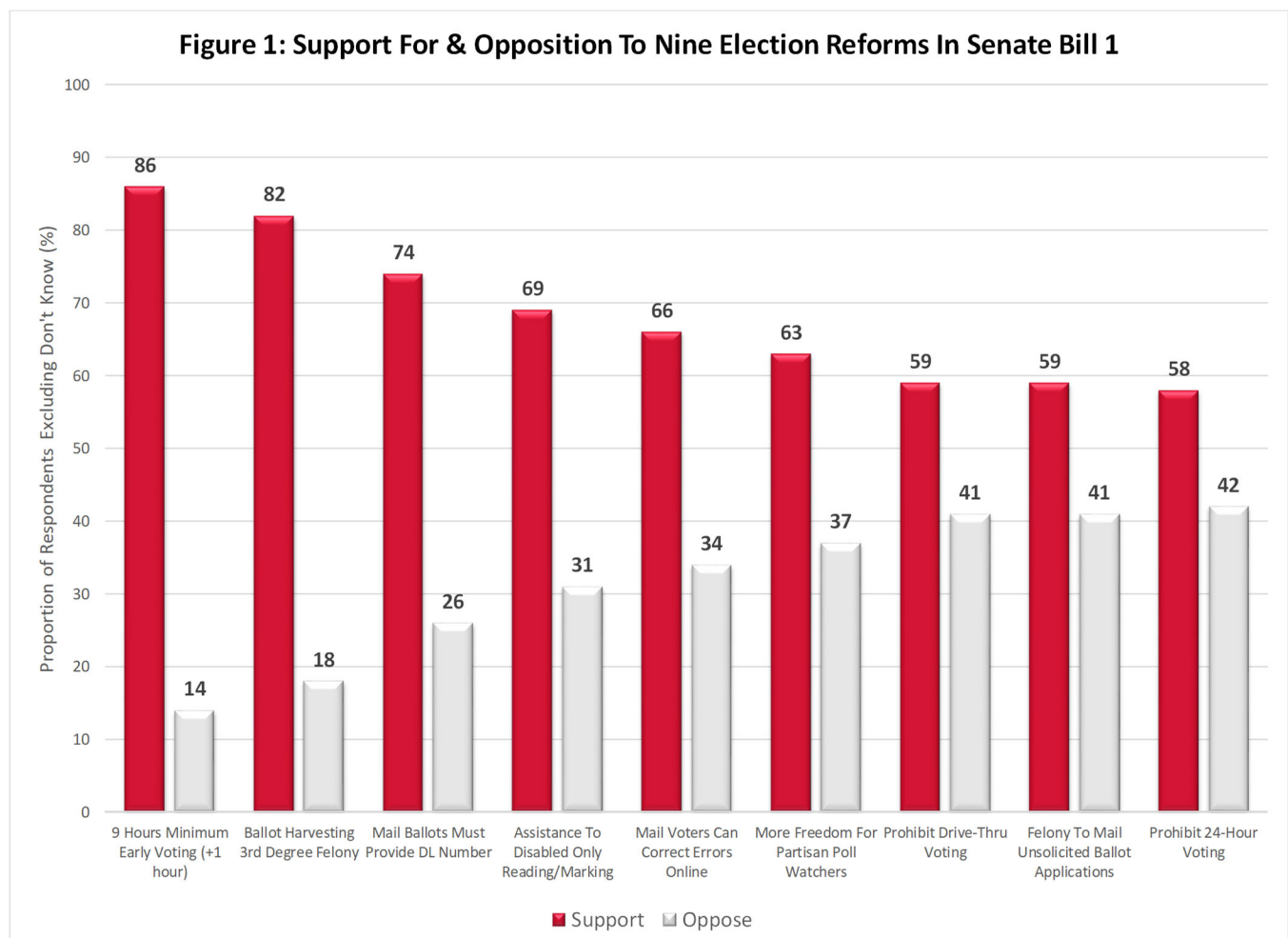
Table 1 provides the distribution of Texans who strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, and strongly oppose the nine election reforms, or did not know enough about them to have an opinion.

TABLE 1: Popular Support For & Opposition To Nine Election Law Reforms In Texas Senate Bill 1 (%)

Election Law Reform	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Don't Know
Early Voting Must Take Place Between 6AM & 10PM (24-hour Voting Prohibited)	28	19	11	23	19
Minimum Early Voting Hours Of At Least 9 Hours (Increase from 8 Hours)	37	32	7	5	19
Drive-Thru Voting Prohibited, Only Limited Curbside Voting for Disabled	33	18	12	24	13
State Jail Felony For County Election Officials To Send Unsolicited Mail Ballot Applications	35	15	11	23	16
Mail Ballot Voters Must Provide DL Number (or last 4 of SS#) On Application & Ballot	44	20	9	14	13
Mail Voters Can Go Online To Correct Errors That Could Cause Mail Ballot To Be Rejected	28	23	11	16	22
Partisan Poll Watchers Have More Freedom Of Movement To Observe & Monitor Voting	30	21	13	18	18
3rd Degree Felony To Engage In Ballot Harvesting In Exchange for Payment/Benefit	52	17	7	8	16
Assistance To Disabled Or Non-Spanish Speaker Limited to Reading & Marking Ballot Only	33	23	11	14	19

The proportion of Texans who strongly support a reform ranges from a high of 52% who strongly support the change making it a third degree felony to engage in ballot harvesting to a low of 28% who strongly support the change to allow voters to go online to correct errors on their mail ballot and who support the change which bans 24-hour voting. Conversely, the proportion of Texans who strongly oppose a reform ranges from a high of 24% who strongly oppose the ban on drive-thru voting to a low of 5% strongly oppose increasing the minimum number of daily early voting hours from eight to nine hours. The proportion of respondents who answered don't know ranges from a high of 22% for the change allowing voters to go online to make corrections to their mail ballot to a low of 13% for both the requirement that mail ballot voters provide their drivers' license number (or last four digits of the Social Security number) on their mail ballot and mail ballot application and for the prohibition of drive-thru voting.

Figure 1 displays the support (strong and somewhat) and opposition (strong and somewhat) to the nine election reforms among those respondents who did not answer don't know.



Two reforms enjoy the support of more than four-fifths of Texans with an opinion about the reform. The change in the minimum number of early voting hours from eight to nine is supported by 86% and opposed by only 14%, while the change making ballot harvesting a third degree felony is supported by 82% and opposed by only 18%.

Four reforms enjoy the support of more than three-fifths of Texans (but of less than four-fifths) with an opinion. The change that now requires Texans to provide their drivers' license number (or last four numbers of their Social Security number) on both their mail ballot application and their mail ballot is supported by 74%. The modification that explicitly restricts assistance to disabled Texas voters of only reading and marking the ballot by those assisting them is supported by 69%. Additionally, the change allowing Texas voters to correct mail ballot errors online to prevent their ballot from being rejected is supported by 66%, while the change allowing partisan poll watchers to have more freedom of movement throughout the polling place is supported by 63%.

Three reforms enjoy the support of more than half (but less than three-fifths) of Texans with an opinion. These three changes targeted reforms implemented (drive-thru voting and 24-hour voting) or attempted (mailing all registered voters a mail ballot application by Harris County's then county clerk, Chris Hollins, for the November 2020 election. These three reforms prohibit drive-thru voting (supported by 59%), make it a felony for an election administrator to send a mail ballot application to anyone who has not solicited one (supported by 59%), and prohibits 24-hour early voting by requiring polls to open no earlier than 6AM and close no later than 10PM (supported by 58%).

The next section first provides the detailed level of support for and opposition to the nine reforms based on the respondents' race/ethnicity, gender, generation, partisan ID, and 2020 presidential vote. Following each of these five sub-group analyses it examines the level of support (strongly plus somewhat) for and opposition to (strongly and somewhat) the four reforms on which Texans were most divided (for respondents with an opinion, that is excluding the don't know responses) via an analysis of differential support for and opposition to the reforms based on the respondents' race/ethnicity, gender, generation, partisan ID, and 2020 presidential vote. These four reforms include:

1. Prohibit 24-hour Voting. All early voting must now take place between 6AM and 10PM, with 24-hour early voting now prohibited: supported by 58% and opposed by 42%.
2. Prohibit Drive-thru Voting. Drive-thru voting is now prohibited, with only voters who are physically unable to vote within the polling place eligible for curbside voting: supported by 59% and opposed by 31%.
3. Felony to Mail Unsolicited Ballot Applications. It is now a state jail felony for local election officials to send mail-in ballot applications to voters who have not requested them: supported by 59% and opposed by 31%.
4. More Freedom for Partisan Poll Watchers. Partisan poll watchers will now have freer movement throughout the polling place to observe and monitor the voting process: supported by 63% and opposed by 37%.

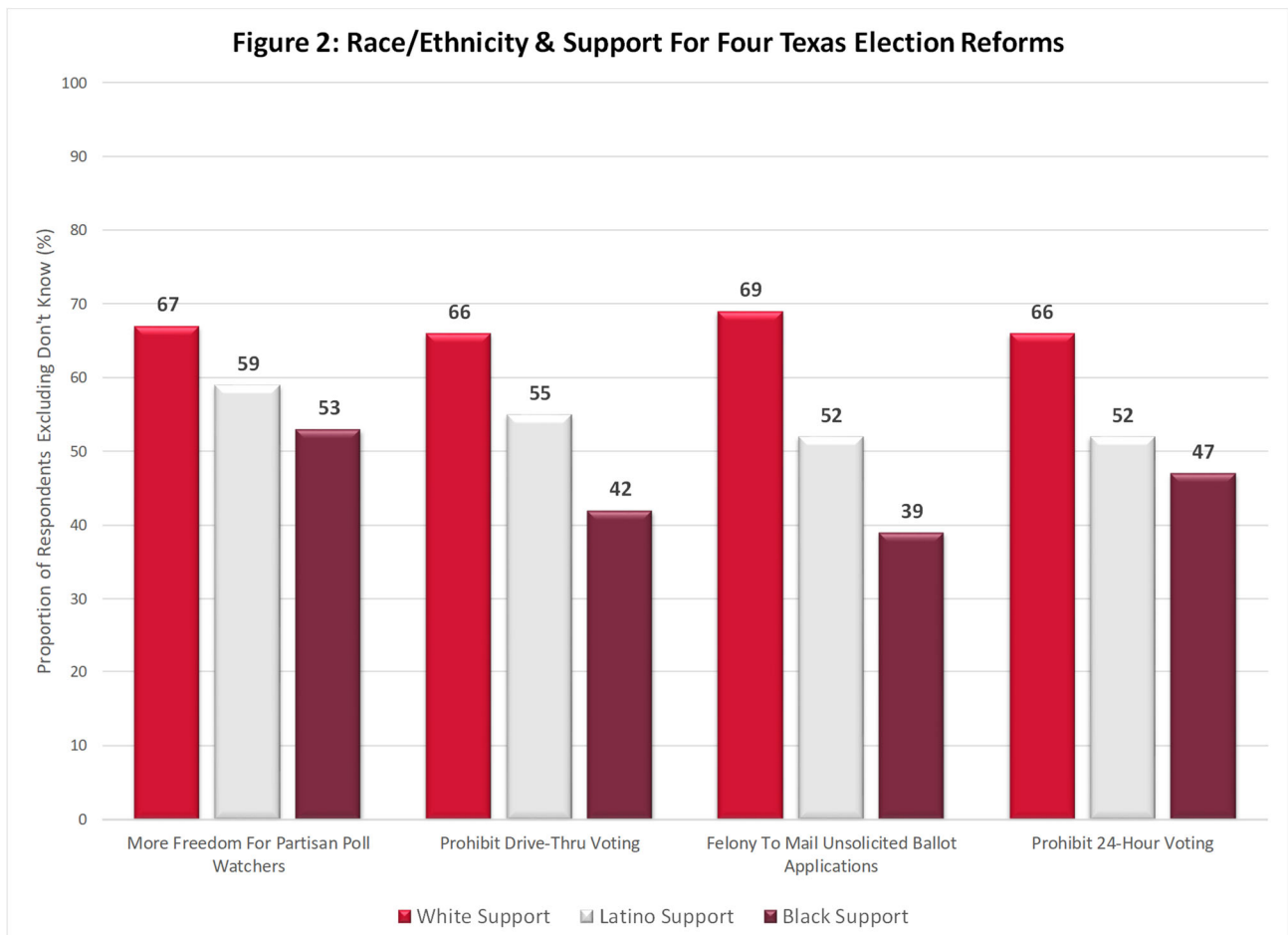
Race/Ethnicity and Support for the Four Electoral Reforms

Table 2 provides the distribution of respondents by race/ethnicity in regard to whether they strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose the reform (the proportion who answered don't know is not provided for reasons of space, but is kept in the denominator when calculating the proportions). For every reform the proportion of white Texans who support the change is greater than the proportion of Latino Texans who support the change, just as across all but one of the reforms, the proportion of Latino Texans who support the reform is greater than the proportion of Black Texans who support it (albeit with differences that are less substantial than those between whites and Latinos).

TABLE 2: Race/Ethnicity and Support For & Opposition To Nine Election Reforms (%)

Election Law Reform	White Support	White Opposition	Latino Support	Latino Opposition	Black Support	Black Opposition
Early Voting Must Take Place Between 6AM & 10PM (24-hour Voting Prohibited)	56	31	39	36	38	44
Minimum Early Voting Hours Of At Least 9 Hours (Increase From 8 Hours)	76	8	63	15	58	13
Drive Thru Voting Prohibited, Only Limited Curbside Voting For Disabled	60	30	46	38	36	49
State Jail Felony For County Election Officials To Send Unsolicited Mail Ballot Applications	60	27	43	40	32	50
Mail Ballot Voters Must Provide DL Number (or last 4 of SS#) On Application & Ballot	74	17	57	27	51	34
Mail Voters Can Go Online To Correct Errors That Could Cause Mail Ballot To Be Rejected	57	23	43	33	56	21
Partisan Poll Watchers Have More Freedom of Movement To Observe & Monitor Voting	57	29	46	32	41	27
3rd Degree Felony To Engage in Ballot Harvesting In Exchange for Payment/Benefit	77	11	61	18	59	21
Assistance To Disabled Or Non-Spanish Speaker Limited To Reading & Marking Ballot Only	67	17	47	32	42	36

Figure 2 summarizes the distinct levels of support among whites, Latinos and Blacks for the four most contested reforms. While the four reforms enjoy the support of two-thirds or more of whites, Black support for three of the four reforms (all except more freedom for partisan poll watchers, with 53% support) is less than 50%, ranging between 39% for making it a felony for election administrators to mail unsolicited mail ballot applications and 47% in support of banning drive-thru voting. A majority of Latinos support all four reforms, ranging from a high of 59% support for more freedom for poll watchers to lows of 52% for the prohibition on 24-hour voting and 52% for making it a felony for an election administrator to send out a mail ballot application unsolicited.



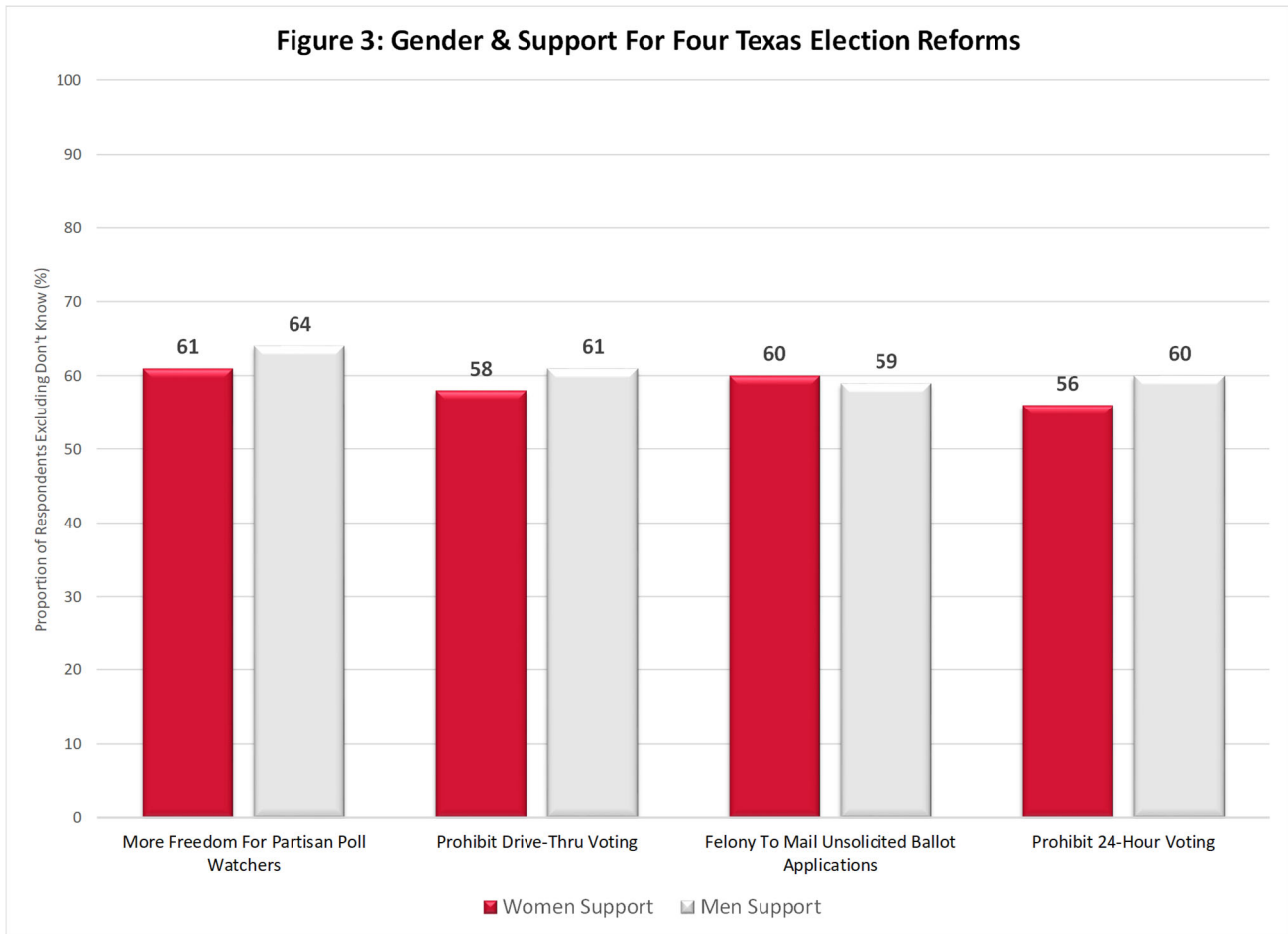
Gender and Support for the Four Electoral Reforms

Table 3 provides the distribution of respondents by gender in regard to whether they strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose the reform (the proportion who answered don't know is not provided for reasons of space, but is kept in the denominator when calculating the proportions). The data reveal the absence of any salient gender differences in regard to support for or opposition to these nine reforms.

TABLE 3: Gender and Support For & Opposition To Nine Election Reforms (%)

Election Law Reform	Women Support	Women Opposition	Men Support	Men Opposition
Early Voting Must Take Place Between 6AM & 10PM (24-hour Voting Prohibited)	51	34	51	35
Minimum Early Voting Hours of At Least 9 Hours (Increase From 8 Hours)	66	11	73	12
Drive-Thru Voting Prohibited, Only Limited Curbside Voting For Disabled	48	35	55	35
State Jail Felony For County Election Officials To Send Unsolicited Mail Ballot Applications	48	32	52	37
Mail Ballot Voters Must Provide DL Number (or last 4 of SS#) On Application & Ballot	64	20	66	25
Mail Voters Can Go Online To Correct Errors That Could Cause Mail Ballot To Be Rejected	48	25	54	28
Partisan Poll Watchers Have More Freedom of Movement To Observe & Monitor Voting	47	31	55	30
3rd Degree Felony To Engage In Ballot Harvesting In Exchange for Payment/Benefit	68	11	70	19
Assistance to Disabled or Non-Spanish Speaker Limited to Reading & Marking Ballot Only	55	22	57	28

Figure 3 summarizes the distinct levels of support among women and men for the four most contested reforms. It underscores the relative uniformity in support for these reforms across the two genders.



Generations and Support for the Four Electoral Reforms

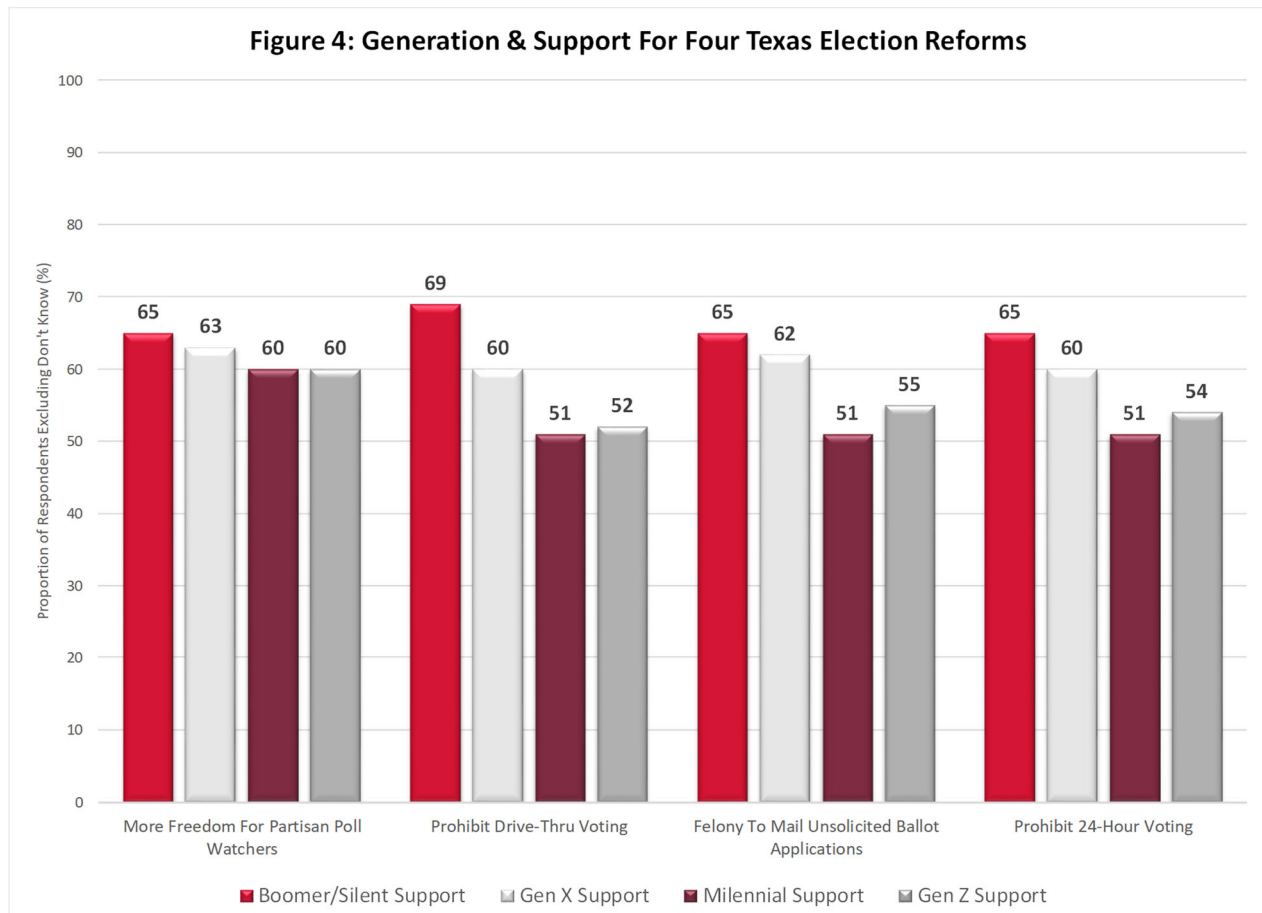
Table 4 provides the distribution respondents by generation in regard to whether they strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose the reform (the proportion who answered don't know is not provided for reasons of space, but is kept in the denominator when calculating the proportions).

TABLE 4: Generation And Support For & Opposition To Nine Election Reforms (%)

Election Law Reform	Silent/Boomer Support	Silent/Boomer Opposition	Gen X Support	Gen X Opposition	Millennial Support	Millennial Opposition	Gen Z Support	Gen Z Opposition
Early Voting Must Take Place Between 6AM & 10PM (24-hour Voting Prohibited)	58	31	46	31	40	40	39	33
Minimum Early Voting Hours Of At Least 9 Hours (Increase from 8 Hours)	70	9	71	8	63	14	55	19
Drive Thru Voting Prohibited, Only Limited Curbside Voting For Disabled	64	30	60	33	43	41	32	39
State Jail Felony For County Election Officials To Send Unsolicited Mail Ballot Applications	61	32	49	30	42	40	42	35
Mail Ballot Voters Must Provide DL Number (or last 4 of SS#) On Application & Ballot	73	22	67	19	60	23	50	31
Mail Voters Can Go Online To Correct Errors That Could Cause Mail Ballot To Be Rejected	52	30	49	25	53	25	49	26
Partisan Poll Watchers Have More Freedom of Movement To Observe & Monitor Voting	60	32	48	29	48	32	43	28
3rd Degree Felony To Engage In Ballot Harvesting In Exchange for Payment/Benefit	79	13	65	15	64	16	62	16
Assistance to Disabled or Non-Spanish Speaker Limited To Reading & Marking Ballot Only	69	19	54	23	49	29	45	44

On average members of the Silent/Baby Boomer generations tend to be the most supportive of the reforms with members of Generation Z tending to be the least supportive of the reforms.

Figure 4 summarizes the distinct levels of support among the four generations for the four most contested reforms. Generational differences are muted in regard to more freedom of movement for poll watchers where the generational variance is minimal (60% to 65%). The starkest generational differences exist in regard to support for the ban on drive-thru voting, which is supported by more than two-thirds (69%) of the Silent/Baby Boomer generations, but by only 51% of Millennials and 52% of Generation Z, with Generation X equidistant between the two extremes at 60%. All together, the four reforms enjoy majority support across each one of the four generations.



Partisan ID and Support for the Four Electoral Reforms

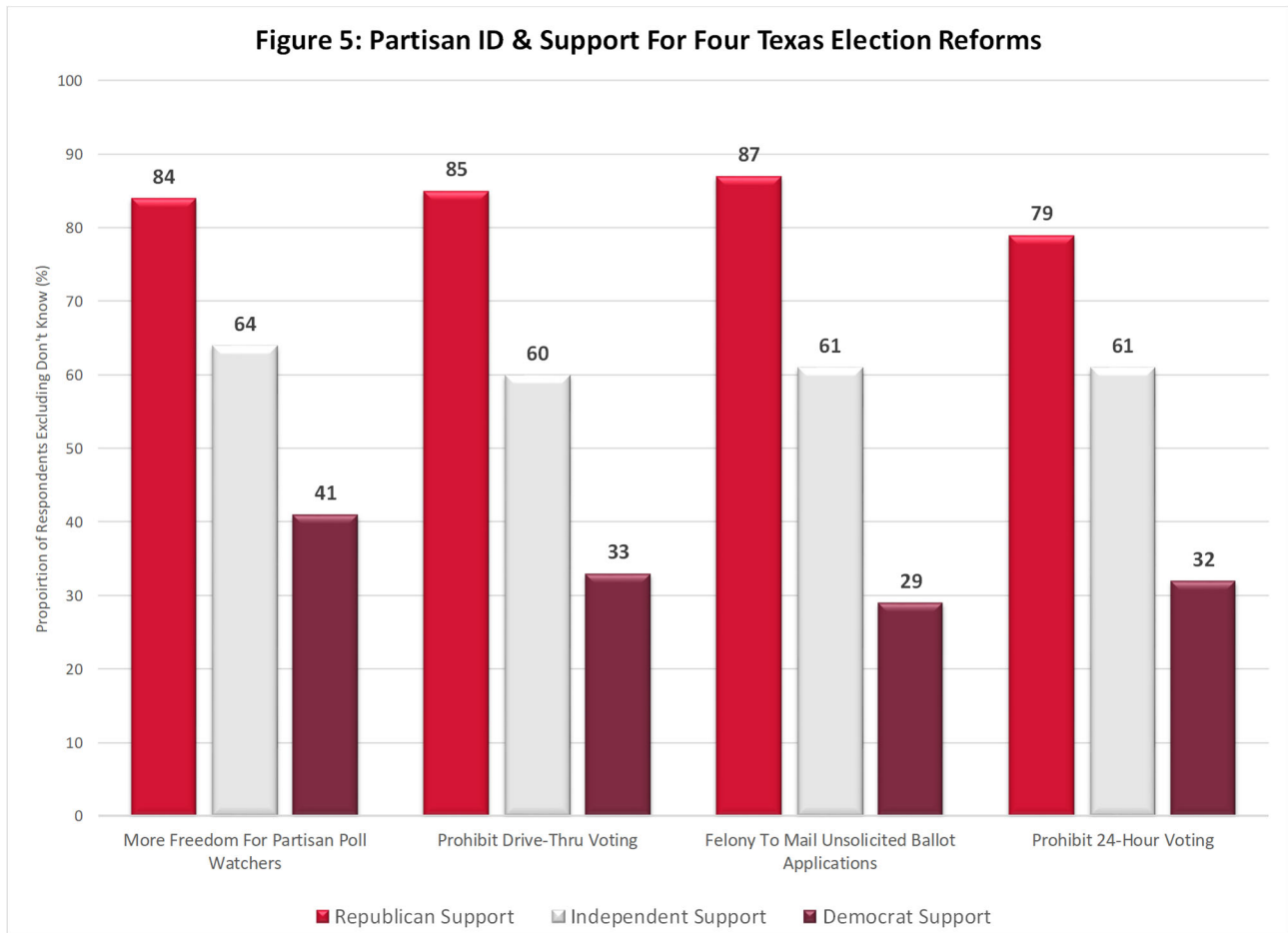
Table 5 provides the distribution respondents by partisan ID in regard to whether they strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose the reform (the proportion who answered don't know is not provided for reasons of space, but is kept in the denominator when calculating the proportions).

TABLE 5: Partisan ID And Support For & Opposition To Nine Election Reforms (%)

Election Law Reform	Democrat Support	Democrat Opposition	Independent Support	Independent Opposition	Republican Support	Republican Opposition
Early Voting Must Take Place Between 6AM & 10PM (24-hour Voting Prohibited)	28	58	47	31	72	15
Minimum Early Voting Hours Of At Least 9 Hours (Increase From 8 Hours)	74	12	64	13	76	10
Drive-thru Voting Prohibited, Only Limited Curbside Voting For Disabled	29	61	51	33	79	13
State Jail Felony For County Election Officials To Send Unsolicited Mail Ballot Applications	26	52	49	32	78	12
Mail Ballot Voters Must Provide DL Number (or last 4 of SS#) On Application & Ballot	48	40	66	18	86	9
Mail Voters Can Go Online To Correct Errors That Could Cause Mail Ballot To Be Rejected	61	24	47	27	52	28
Partisan Poll Watchers Have More Freedom Of Movement To Observe & Monitor Voting	34	49	51	29	75	15
3rd Degree Felony To Engage in Ballot Harvesting In Exchange For Payment/Benefit	61	23	69	12	84	9
Assistance to Disabled or Non-Spanish Speaker Limited To Reading & Marking Ballot Only	39	42	57	20	78	13

Republicans are across the board substantially more supportive of the reforms than are Democrats, with two exceptions. Large majorities of both Republicans (76%) and Democrats (74%) support the reform increasing the minimum number of daily early voting hours by one hour, from eight to nine hours. Additionally, more Democrats (61%) than Republicans (52%) support the reform that allows voters to go online to correct errors on their mail ballot that could cause it to be rejected. With the exception of these two abovementioned reforms, Independents support the reforms at levels higher than Democrats and at lower levels than Republicans.

Figure 5 summarizes the distinct levels of support among Republicans, Independents and Democrats for the four most contested reforms. The proportion of Republican support for the four reforms ranges from 79% to 87%, more than double the proportion of Democratic support for every one of the four reforms respectively, which ranges from 29% to 41%. More than three-fifths of Independents support the four reforms, at levels that range from 60% (prohibit drive-thru voting) to 64% (more freedom for partisan poll watchers).



2020 Presidential Vote and Support for the Electoral Reforms

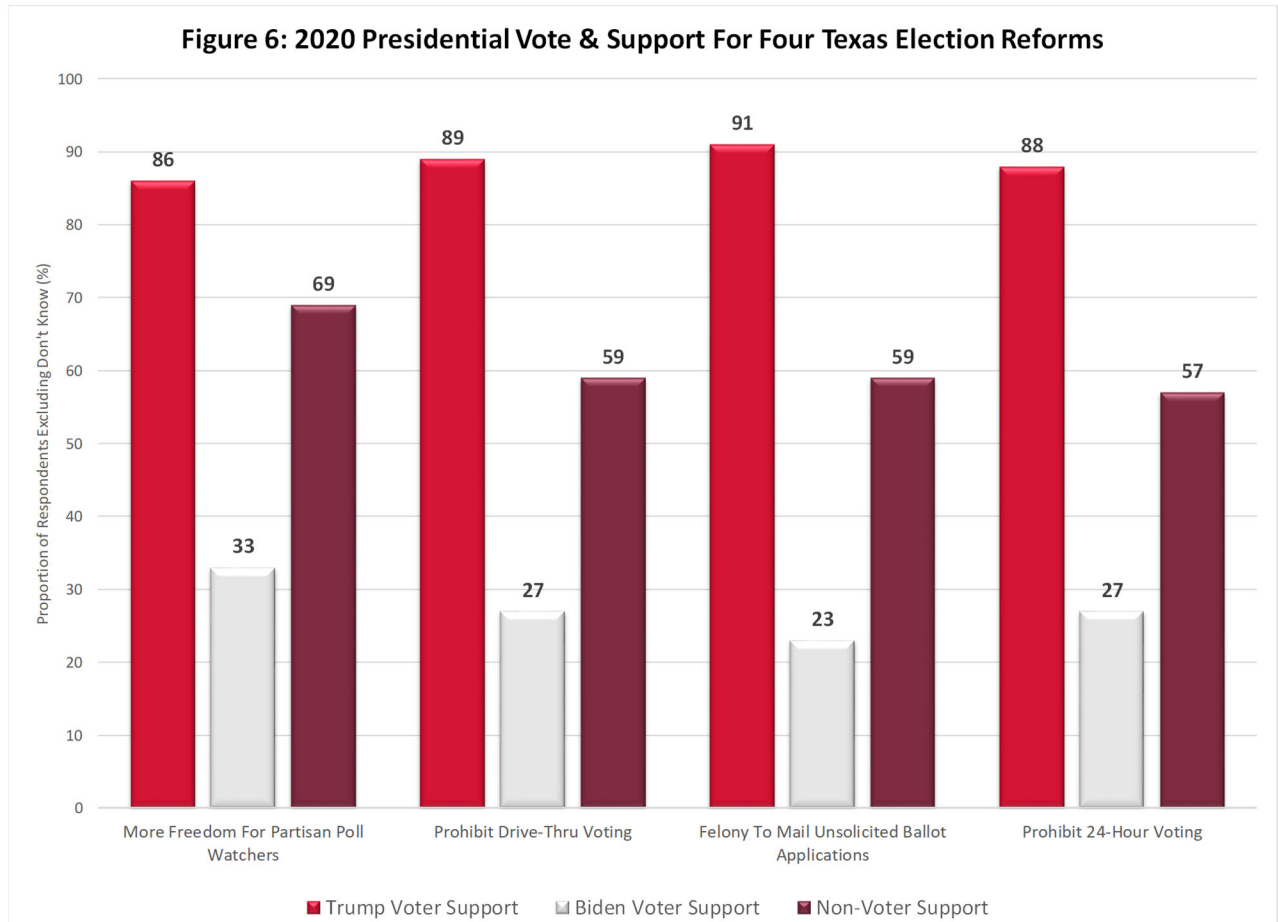
Table 6 provides the distribution of respondents by their 2020 presidential vote in regard to whether they strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose the reform (the proportion who answered don't know is not provided for reasons of space, but is kept in the denominator when calculating the proportions).

TABLE 6: 2020 Presidential Vote And Support For & Opposition To Nine Election Reforms (%)

Election Law Reform	Trump Support	Trump Opposition	Non-Voter Support	Non-Voter Opposition	Biden Support	Biden Opposition
Early Voting Must Take Place Between 6AM & 10PM (24-hour Voting Prohibited)	78	10	35	26	24	76
Minimum Early Voting Hours Of At Least 9 Hours (Increase From 8 Hours)	78	9	48	14	78	12
Drive-Thru Voting Prohibited, Only Limited Curbside Voting For Disabled	83	10	42	29	25	67
State Jail Felony For County Election Officials To Send Unsolicited Mail Ballot Applications	84	8	40	27	20	79
Mail Ballot Voters Must Provide DL Number (or last 4 of SS#) On Application & Ballot	80	5	53	20	46	44
Mail Voters Can Go Online To Correct Errors That Could Cause Mail Ballot To Be Rejected	47	31	39	27	66	21
Partisan Poll Watchers Have More Freedom Of Movement To Observe & Monitor Voting	76	12	46	20	28	59
3rd Degree Felony To Engage in Ballot Harvesting In Exchange For Payment/Benefit	88	5	53	18	60	24
Assistance To Disabled Or Non-Spanish Speaker Limited To Reading & Marking Ballot Only	81	9	44	26	39	41

As was the case with partisan ID, Trump voters are across the board substantially more supportive of the reforms than are Biden voters, with two exceptions. Large majorities of both Trump voters (78%) and Biden voters (78%) support the reform increasing the minimum number of daily early voting hours by one hour, from eight to nine hours. And, more Biden voters (66%) than Trump voters (47%) support the reform that allows voters to go online to correct errors on their mail ballot that could cause it to be rejected. With the exception these two reforms and the reform which makes ballot harvesting a third degree felony, non-voters support the reforms at levels higher than Biden voters and at lower levels than Trump voters.

Figure 6 summarizes the distinct levels of support among Trump voters, Biden voters and non-voters for the four most contested reforms. The proportion of Trump voter support for the four reforms ranges from 86% to 91%, more than double or triple the proportion of Biden voter support for the four reforms, which ranges from 23% to 31%. More than one-half of non-voters support the four reforms, at levels that range from 57% (prohibit 24-hour voting) to 69% (more freedom for partisan poll watchers).



Texans and Redistricting

Survey respondents were asked: “How much of a problem is it, when one political party controls the governorship and both chambers of the state legislature, that the legislative districts are drawn to intentionally favor that majority party?” The response options were a major problem, a minor problem, not a problem and don’t know.

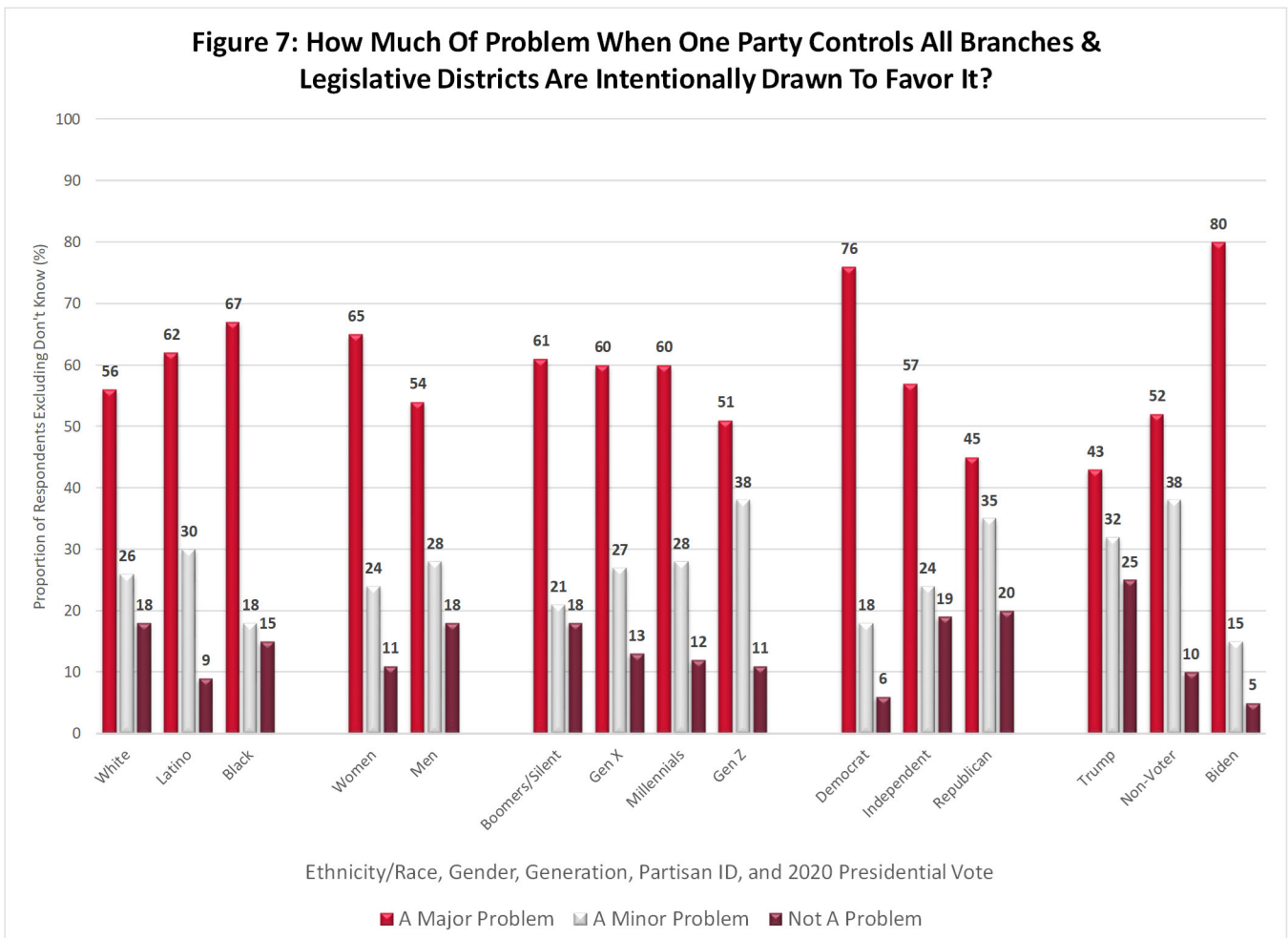
Table 7 displays the results both including and excluding respondents who answered don’t know (19%). Among all Texans and including the don’t know responses, 48% believe the scenario described above (such as came to fruition in states such as Texas and Illinois during the 2021 redistricting cycle) is a major problem, 21% believe it is a minor problem, 12% do not consider it to be a problem, and 19% don’t know enough to have an opinion. Excluding the don’t know responses, 59% of Texans with an opinion believe that this scenario of tailor-made districts designed by, and to benefit, the majority party is a major problem compared to 27% who see it as a minor problem and 14% who don’t consider it to be a problem.

TABLE 7: How Much Of A Problem When The Majority Party Draws Districts To Benefit Itself

Problem Level	All Texans	All Texans Excluding Don't Knows
A Major Problem	48	59
A Minor Problem	21	27
Not A Problem	12	14
Don't Know	19	

Figure 7 on the next page displays the proportion of respondents based on race/ethnicity, gender, generation, partisan ID and 2020 presidential vote that considers a situation where the majority party uses its control of state government to draw legislative districts that favor it to be a problem.

Figure 7: How Much Of Problem When One Party Controls All Branches & Legislative Districts Are Intentionally Drawn To Favor It?



A majority of white (56%), Latino (62%) and Black (67%) Texans all consider this scenario to be a major problem, with Black Texans significantly more likely to consider it a major problem than white Texans.

A majority of women (65%) and men (54%) consider this scenario to be a major problem, with women significantly more likely to consider it a major problem than men.

Generational differences in regard to viewing this scenario as a major problem are modest, with one exception. Significantly more members of the Boomer/Silent generations (61%), Generation X (60%), and Millennials (60%) consider it to be a major problem than do members of Generation Z (51%), although Generation Z also has the smallest proportion (11%) that does not consider it to be a problem, and the largest proportion (38%) that considers the scenario to be a minor problem.

More than three out of four Democrats (76%) considers one party control over the redistricting process resulting in legislative districts intentionally drawn to favor the majority party to be a major problem, with only 6% considering it not to be a problem. A majority of Independents (57%) also considers the scenario to be a major problem, with 19% of Independents not seeing it as a problem at all. A plurality (albeit not a majority) of 45% of Republicans considers this situation to be a major problem, followed by 35% who view it as a minor problem and 20% who don't consider it to be a problem.

Finally, 80% of Biden voters consider this majority party gerrymander scenario to be a major problem, compared to 43% of Trump voters and to 52% of non-voters. In contrast, 25% of Trump voters, 10% of non-voters and 5% of Biden voters do not consider it to be a problem.

The presidential vote items feature the highest proportion of Texans that consider the aforementioned redistricting scenario to be a major problem (80% of Biden voters), the highest proportion that does not consider it to be a problem (25% of Trump voters), the lowest proportion that considers it to be a major problem (43% of Trump voters) and the lowest proportion that does not consider it to be a problem (5% of Biden voters).

Texans also were queried about their support for the formation of an independent redistricting commission: “At present, the Texas State Legislature is responsible for drawing federal and state legislative districts. Do you support or oppose legislation that would create an independent non-partisan commission in Texas to draw the legislative districts used for U.S. House, Texas Senate, and Texas House elections?” Response options were strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, strongly oppose, and don’t know.

Table 8 contains the results, both including and excluding the respondents who answered don’t know, which was 33%, and indicative of a lack of familiarity by many respondents with the topic of the creation of an independent redistricting commission or redistricting in general. Among all Texans, 44% support the creation of an independent redistricting commission while 23% are in opposition. Among the 67% of the respondents who had an opinion, 65% support the creation of an independent redistricting commission while 35% of this sub-population opposes it.

TABLE 8: Support For & Opposition To Creation Of Non-Partisan Redistricting Commission in Texas

Support/Opposition	All Texans	All Texans Excluding Don't Knows
Strongly Support	22	33
Somewhat Support	22	32
Somewhat Oppose	12	18
Strongly Oppose	11	17
Don't Know	33	

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