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## Arkansas Poll Looks at Immigration, Gun Laws and Political Makeup of State

The 21<sup>st</sup> annual Arkansas Poll found an increase in Arkansans identifying as Republican and support for both gun laws and a border wall.

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. – The 21<sup>st</sup> annual Arkansas Poll found that the economy is the top concern for Arkansans and that the majority of respondents support gun licensing, background checks for gun purchases, hiring of more border agents and construction of a border wall.

The Arkansas Poll, designed and analyzed by Janine Parry, professor of political science at the University of Arkansas, is one of the oldest public state polls in the country. It has tracked public opinion on current issues, politicians, the economy and life in Arkansas through more than 17,000 phone interviews in the last two decades.

This year's questions on policies related to gun and immigration laws showed that, generally speaking, Arkansans hold views very similar to those found in national polls.

"Outsiders, but just as frequently those who live here, often presume the average Arkansan holds views markedly different from the average American," said Parry. "On most issues, most of the time, we actually track pretty closely with national patterns."

## **GUN POLICY**

This year's policy questions focused on guns and immigration, and showed that, with a few notable exceptions, Arkansans hold views similar to the nation as a whole on these issues.

When asked about background checks to buy guns at shows or from private parties, 85 percent of Arkansans said they should be required while 13 percent said they should not. Nationally, those numbers are 83 and 14 percent, respectively, according to a September poll by Pew Research. On the question of creating a red flag law to permit the temporary removal of guns by court order, 85 percent of Arkansans thought such a law should be created, while 13 percent did not, results that are within two percentage points of national findings.

Other gun-related findings:

- Asked if Congress should increase funding for mental health screening, 90 percent of respondents said yes, and 7 percent said no.
- On the question of whether or not a license should be required to purchase a gun, 67 percent said yes, and 30 percent said no.
- On whether Congress should ban sale of semi-automatic assault-style rifles, 56 percent it should, and 40 percent said it should not.

## **IMMIGRATION**

Asked whether immigrants living in the U.S. illegally should be given a chance to become citizens if they meet certain requirements, 79 percent of Arkansans said yes, while 19 percent said no, which is within two percentage points of respondents nationally.

Other immigration-issue findings:

- Arkansans strongly favor hiring more border patrol agents, 73-20 percent.
- They favor increased construction of walls on the U.S.-Mexico border, 55-42 percent.
- They also favor deporting all immigrants living in the U.S. illegally, 48-44 percent.

## POLITICS, CURRENT ISSUES, QUALITY OF LIFE

The poll also included a variety of questions on how Arkansans feel about their elected representatives, their political affiliations and life in the state. Highlights include:

- A three-point increase in the percentage of people who identify as Republicans (35%) over last year, with a corresponding decrease in those who identify as Democrats (23%) and independents (31%).
- “The economy” ranked as the most important concern facing Arkansas today (29%), followed by healthcare (9%) and education (8%).
- An increase in the percentage of Arkansans who say the state is headed in the right direction (71%) and a corresponding decrease who say it is headed in the wrong direction (20%).

## ABOUT THE POLL

The Arkansas Poll was conducted between Oct. 12 and Oct. 24. The polling firm Issues & Answers Network Inc. completed 811 telephone interviews among a random sample of adult Arkansans. The margin of error statewide is plus or minus 3.5 percentage points.

To see all results, go to the [2019 Arkansas Poll Summary Report page](#).

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