

Latino/a Voters' Views on Abortion

Findings from a National Survey

To: Interested Parties
From: PerryUndem Research/Communication
Date: February 29, 2016

I. Introduction

The National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health commissioned PerryUndem Research/Communication to conduct a national survey of Latino/a voters on the topic of abortion. For many years, myths common in the media have suggested that Latino/a voters hold conservative views on abortion. Mounting evidence, including the data presented in this study, proves this assumption wrong. Overall, Latino/a voters' views on abortion are largely supportive – from their attitude toward *Roe v. Wade* to how they feel about the issue in their personal lives.

This study explores Latino/a voters' views toward abortion generally, their feelings toward abortion in the context of loved ones, and the conditions they want in place for women who decide to have an abortion. Additionally, the survey explores the intersection of religion and abortion, views toward a recent trend of state-level laws restricting abortion, and preferences around access that relate to the current abortion case before the Supreme Court.

PerryUndem conducted a national survey among a representative sample of n = 1,011 registered Latino/a voters from January 28 to February 11, 2016. The survey was administered online using GfK's KnowledgePanel. GfK uses address-based probability sampling for recruiting panelists. If participants do not have Internet access or hardware, GfK provides it. The margin of sampling error for total results is ± 5.1 percentage points. The survey was administered in English and Spanish.

Following are key findings from the study.

II. Key Findings

Key findings from the survey include:

- Latino/a voters' views on abortion are largely supportive. A majority does not want to see *Roe v. Wade* overturned (67 percent), most do not subscribe to a "pro-life" label (70 percent), and a vast majority agrees with women making their own decisions on the issue without political interference (82 percent).
- When we ask questions grounded in real-life – how women access and receive abortion care – large majorities of Latino/a voters say they want care be respectful of a woman's decision (83 percent), non-judgmental (79 percent), supportive (77 percent), and without pressure (75 percent). These views are consistent with those of the electorate at large.
- In their personal lives, 89 percent say they would offer support to a loved one who had an abortion. About half (54 percent) says they could envision a scenario in which abortion could be the right choice for them or a partner.
- Many Latino/a voters seem to have reconciled views on abortion with views of church leaders. Two thirds (69 percent) agree that "even though some church leaders take a position against abortion, when it comes to the law, I believe it should remain legal." In fact, fully half of Latino/a voters (50 percent) agree with the statement: "my personal religious values can support a woman making her own decision about abortion."
- Most Latino/a voters are not aware of the trend to pass new laws that restrict abortion access (62 percent). When they hear about facts around restrictions, two thirds (65 percent) say the trend is going in the wrong direction.
- Seven in ten Latino/a voters (69 percent) say they tend to pay attention to a candidate's views on a woman's right to an abortion. After hearing about restrictions, 82 percent say they plan to pay attention to a candidate's views on the topic.
- The Supreme Court is hearing a case about an abortion law in Texas (HB 2) that has resulted in clinics closing and women traveling long distances for care. Three in four Latino/a voters (75 percent) do not want a woman to face difficulty in travel or logistics when seeking abortion care. About two thirds (68 percent) say they want the experience to be without added burdens.

III. Detailed Findings

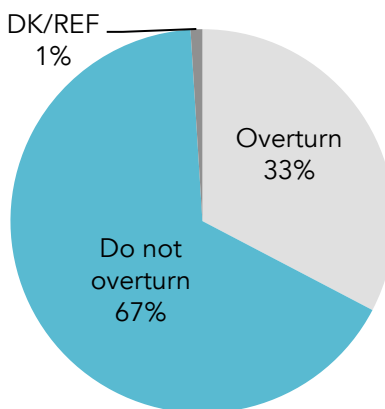
The survey explored views on a number of topics. Following are detailed findings about each area:

- A. General Views on Abortion
- B. Views about Access and Care
- C. Feelings and Views about Abortion in their Personal Lives
- D. Religion and Abortion
- E. Awareness and Views on Recent Restrictions
- F. Views toward Health Insurance Coverage

A. Latino/a Voters' General Views on Abortion

A majority of Latino/a voters do not want to see *Roe v. Wade* overturned. Two thirds of Latino/a voters (67 percent) say they do not want to see the decision overturned. One third (33 percent) says they would like the ruling to be reversed. (See Figure 1.) Latino/a voters mirror the electorate at large – 67 percent of whom do not want to see *Roe v. Wade* overturned¹.

Figure 1: In 1973, the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision established a woman's constitutional right to have an abortion. Would you like to see the Supreme Court overturn its *Roe v. Wade* decision, or not?



¹ http://www.nirhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Memo-NIRH-Poll_Final_3.pdf

Democrats, independents, younger Latino/a voters (18 to 29), and those who took the survey in English are most likely to not want *Roe v. Wade* overturned. Men and women in equal proportions feel the law should not be overturned. (See Table 1.)

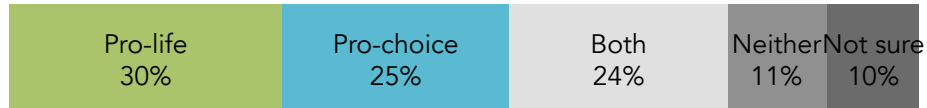
Table 1: Would you like to see the Supreme Court overturn its *Roe v. Wade* decision, or not?

	Do not overturn	Overturn	DK/REF
Total	67	33	1
Men	67	33	1
Women	66	33	1
Democrat	73	27	0
Independent	67	31	1
Republican	45	55	0
18-29 years old ²	78	22	0
30-44	69	31	0
45-59	62	37	1
60+	61	37	2
Took survey in Spanish	56	43	1
Took survey in English	71	28	1

² Note small cell size: n=86

Close to half of Latino/a voters do not subscribe solely to either of the traditional labels on the issue of abortion. Thirty percent identifies as pro-life and one in four says they are pro-choice. The remaining (45 percent) identifies with neither (11 percent) or both (24 percent) labels or says they are not sure (10 percent). (See Figure 2.)

Figure 2: Do you consider yourself:



Most demographic groups split in similar proportions across labels, with the exception of Republicans and younger Latino/a voters (18 to 29). Fifty-nine percent of Republicans consider themselves “pro-life.” About half of 18 to 29 year old respondents (51 percent) identifies as “pro-choice” (See Table 2.)

Table 2: Do you consider yourself...

	Pro-life	Pro-choice	Both	Neither	Not sure
Total	30	25	24	11	10
Men	33	23	26	10	7
Women	26	26	21	12	14
Democrat	25	30	26	8	11
Independent	27	25	25	12	11
Republican	59	9	11	14	6
18-29 years old	19	51	16	9	6
30-44	27	28	25	13	7
45-59	33	13	23	14	16
60+	36	19	26	5	13
Took survey in Spanish	35	11	24	13	18
Took in English	27	31	24	10	7

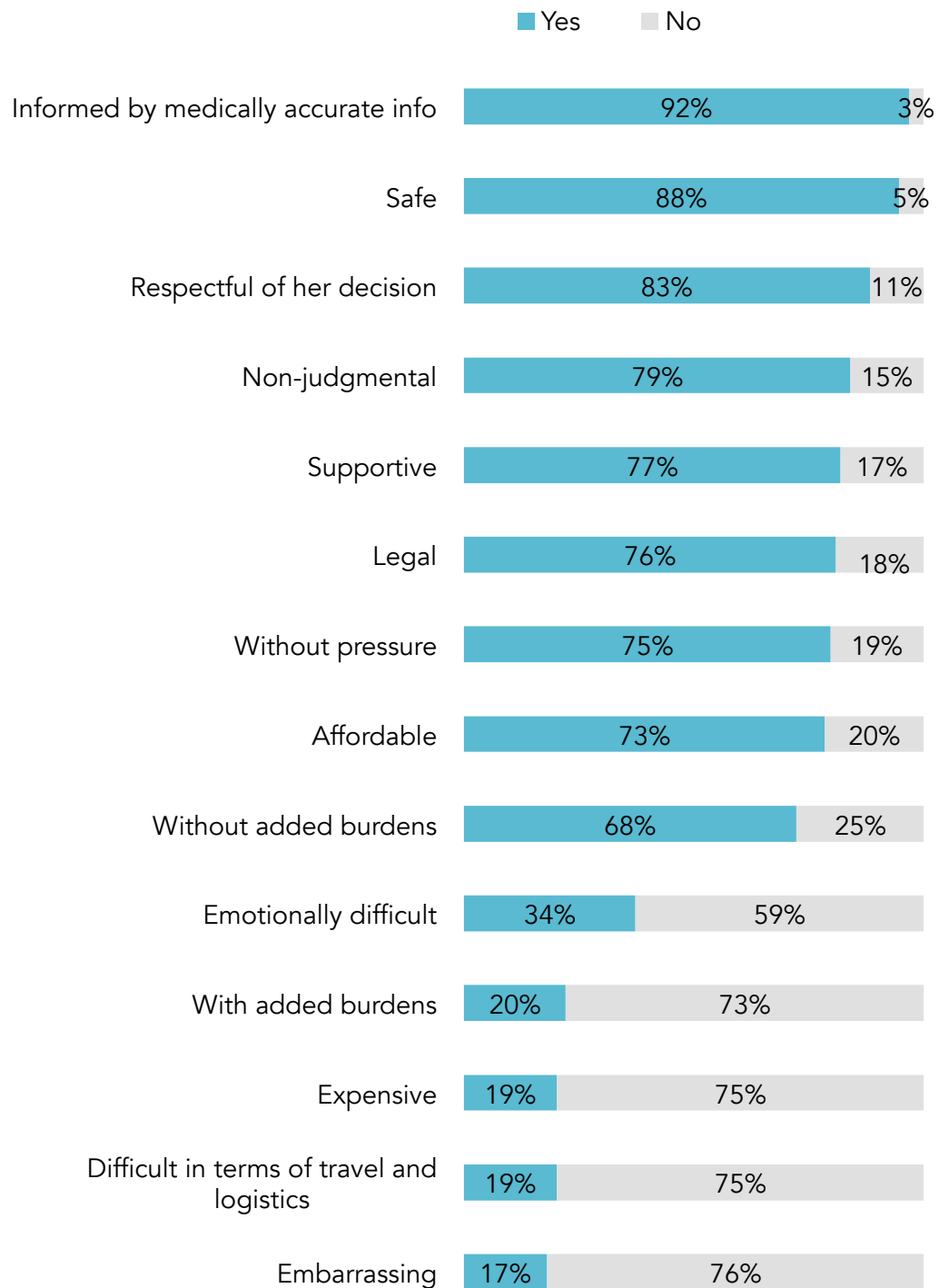
B. Views about Access and Care

When we ask questions grounded in real-life – how women access and receive abortion care – large majorities of Latino/as want care to be safe, legal, respectful, and affordable. Voters also want women to be informed by medically accurate information³, the care to be respectful of a person’s decision, without pressure, supportive, nonjudgmental, and without added burden. Latino/a voters *do not* want access to be difficult in terms of travel and logistics or expensive. (See Figure 3.) These measures are very consistent with the electorate at large⁴.

³ Some states require doctors to give medically inaccurate information to their patients:
http://www.guttmacher.org/statecenter/spibs/spib_OAL.pdf

⁴ http://www.nirhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Memo-NIRH-Poll_Final_3.pdf

**Figure 3: Think of a woman who has decided to have an abortion.
How would you want that experience to be? Would you want it to be...**



About eight in ten agree with statements that reflect other nuances of opinions on abortion. For example, 78 percent of Latino/a voters agree with the statement: “each woman should have the right to make her own decision on abortion, even if I may disagree with her reasons.” (See Figure 4.) Eighty-two percent agree that “a woman should be able to make her own personal decisions about abortions without politicians interfering.” (See Figure 5.)

Figure 4: Do you agree or disagree: Each woman should have the right to make her own decision on abortion, even if I may disagree with her reasons.

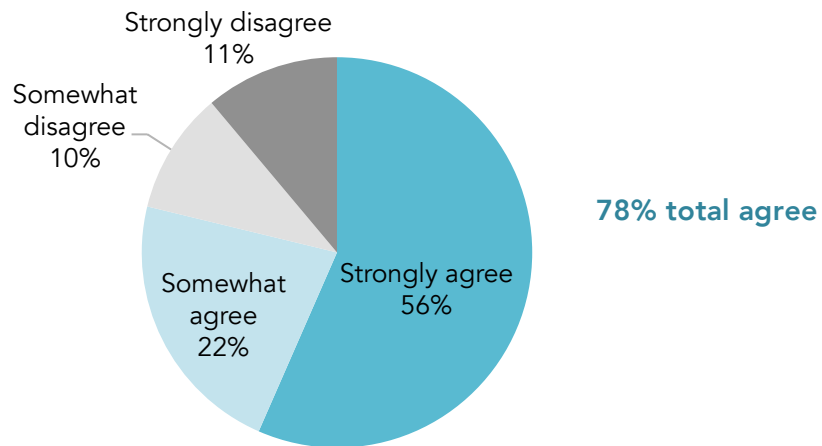
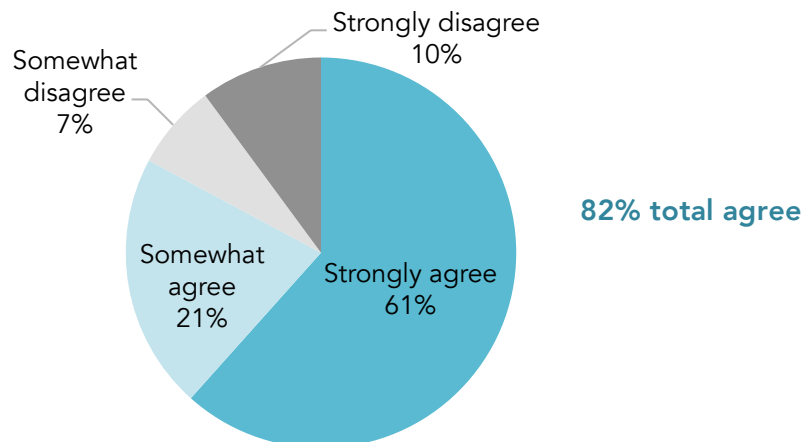


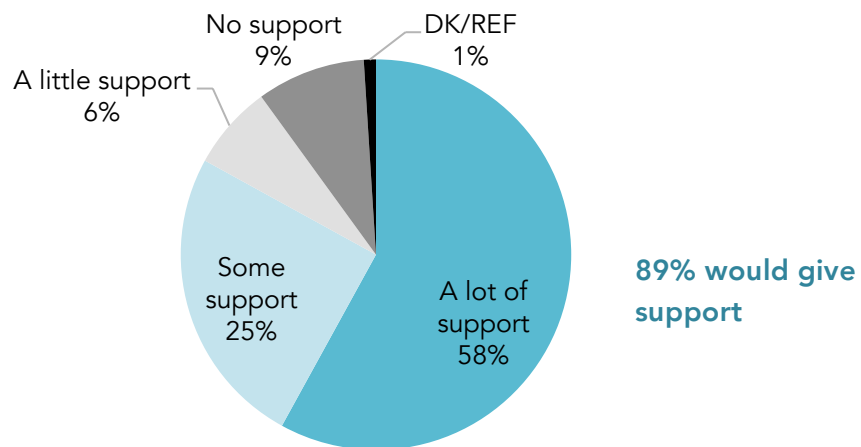
Figure 5: Do you agree or disagree: A woman should be able to make her own personal decision about abortion without politicians interfering. (N=532)



C. Feelings and Views of Abortion in Their Personal Lives

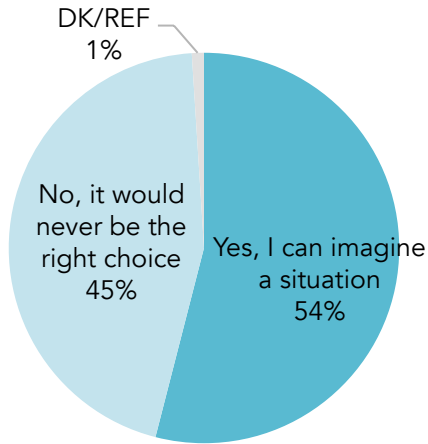
About nine in ten Latino/a voters would give support to a close friend or family member who had an abortion. More than half (58 percent) would give her “a lot” of support. (See Figure 6.)

Figure 6: If a close friend or family member told you she had an abortion, would you give her:



Half of Latino/a voters, 54 percent, could envision a scenario in which abortion could be the right choice for them or a partner. Forty-five percent say abortion could never be the right choice. (See Figure 7.)

Figure 7: Now or in the past, can you imagine a situation where an abortion could be the right choice for you or your partner?



Younger respondents (18 to 29), Democrats, and those who took the survey in English are among the most likely to be able to imagine a situation where abortion could be the right choice. Interestingly, men are more likely than women to say they can imagine a situation in which an abortion could be the right decision. (See Table 3.)

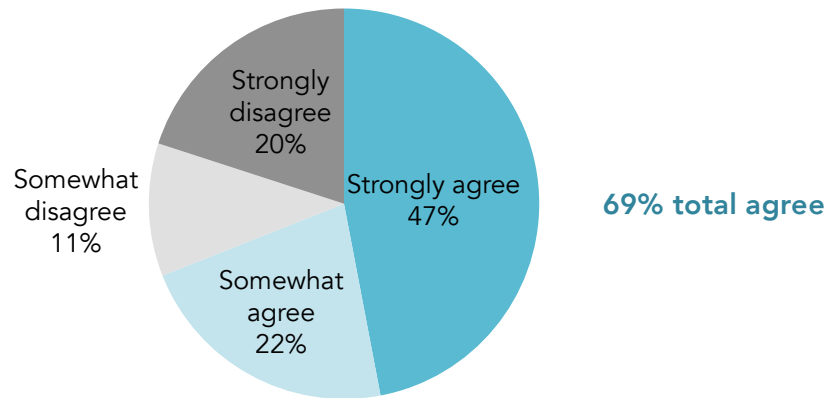
Table 3. Can you imagine a situation where abortion could be the right choice for you?

	Yes	No
Total	54	45
Men	60	39
Women	49	50
Democrat	60	38
Independent	55	45
Republican	36	64
18-29 years old	78	22
30-44	52	47
45-59	52	46
60+	48	52
Took survey in Spanish	38	61
Took in English	62	38

D. Religion and Abortion

Most Latino/a voters are willing to disagree with church leaders on abortion – and half agrees that their personal religious beliefs can support a woman making her own decision on abortion. About two thirds (69 percent) agree that even though some church leaders take a position against abortion, they believe abortion should still remain legal. (See Figure 8.)

Figure 8: Do you agree or disagree: Even though some church leaders take a position against abortion, when it comes to the law, I believe it should remain legal.



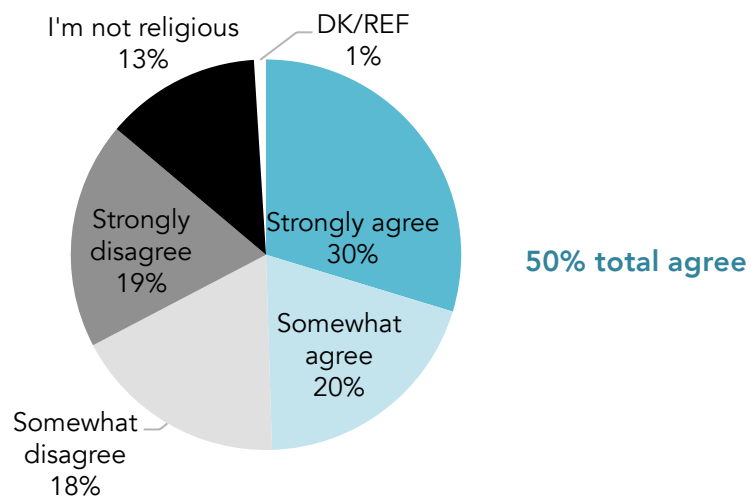
Democrats, independents, and younger voters are the most likely to agree that abortion should remain legal, even though some church leaders are against it. (See Table 4.)

Table 4: Even though some church leaders take a position against abortion, it should remain legal.

	Agree	Disagree
Total	69	31
Men	67	33
Women	69	30
Democrat	73	26
Independent	71	28
Republican	39	61
18-29 years old	84	16
30-44	70	30
45-59	62	38
60+	64	35
Took survey in Spanish	56	43
Took in English	73	27

Further, half of Latino/a voters (50 percent) agree that their personal religious values can support a woman making her own decision about abortion. (See Figure 9.)

Figure 9: Do you agree or disagree: My personal religious values can support a woman making her own decision about abortion.



E. Awareness and Views toward Recent Restrictions

A majority of Latino/a voters have not heard about the trend of states passing laws that restrict abortion care. Six in ten (62 percent) Latino/a voters say that they either have not heard of the trend or are not sure. (See Figure 10.) Voters who took the survey in Spanish are less likely than others to know about the restrictions trend (See Table 5.)

Figure 10: Have you heard of a recent trend of states passing laws making it harder for women to get abortion care?

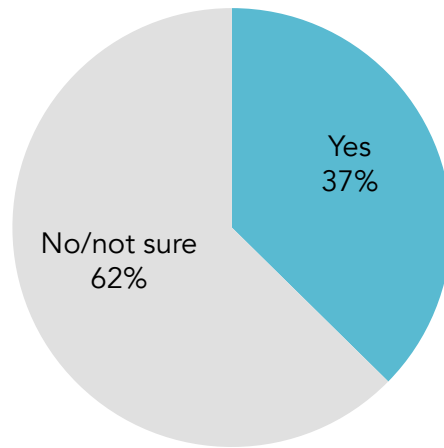


Table 5. Have you heard of a recent trend of laws making it harder for women to get abortion care?

	Yes	No	Not sure
Total	37	27	35
Men	43	24	32
Women	31	29	39
Democrat	39	24	36
Independent	36	28	37
Republican	40	28	28
18-29 years old	53	26	20
30-44	32	30	37
45-59	36	25	38
60+	37	23	39
Took survey in Spanish	27	34	38
Took in English	42	23	35

When informed of the trend, a majority of Latino/a voters say the restrictions are going in the wrong direction. To measure opinion toward new laws that restrict abortion access, we presented respondents with the following information about the trend and types of laws.

Since 2010, states across the country have passed 288 laws that make it harder for women to get abortion care. The 288 laws tend to fall into these categories:

- Requiring women to have an ultrasound, whether or not the doctor says it is necessary
- Requiring the doctor to describe the ultrasound image or display it in front of the woman
- Requiring doctors to give women medically inaccurate information
- Requiring women to make multiple, medically unnecessary appointments for care
- Requiring women to get counseling from health centers that advise or try to coerce women to carry an unwanted pregnancy to term
- Making it illegal for insurance plans to cover abortion care
- Making it illegal for Medicaid to cover abortion care, even when the woman's health is at risk
- Making safe and medically proven abortion procedures illegal

About two thirds (65 percent) say the restrictions trend is going in the wrong direction, and 32 percent say the trend is going in the right direction. (See Figure 11.)

Figure 11: In general, do you feel these laws are going in the right direction or wrong direction?



These findings are not surprising given that 79 percent of Latino/a voters agree with the statement: “As long as the law says women have a right to an abortion, it should be safe and accessible for women who have decided to have one.”

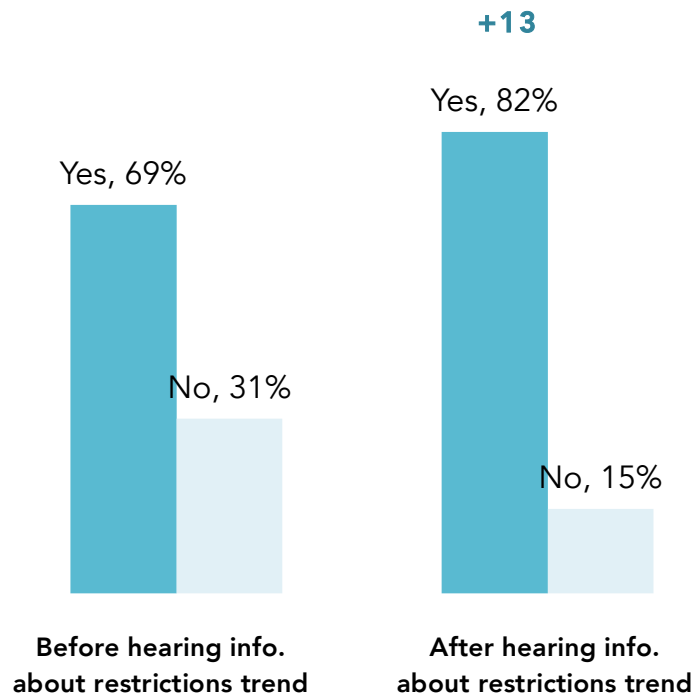
Democrats, independents, and younger Latino/a respondents (18 to 29) are the most likely to say recent laws are going in the wrong direction. Men and women in equal proportions feel laws are going in the wrong direction. (See Table 6.)

Table 6: Do you feel these laws are going in the...

	Right direction	Wrong direction
Total	32	65
Men	33	64
Women	31	66
Democrat	24	74
Independent	29	66
Republican	64	35
18-29 years old	19	80
30-44	30	67
45-59	39	57
60+	33	62
Took survey in Spanish	34	65
Took in English	31	65

After reading information about restrictions, a larger majority of Latino/a voters say they plan to pay attention to a candidate's views on the issue. Prior to any information, 69 percent of Latino/a voters say they tend to pay attention to a candidate's views on the issue. (See Figure 13.) After reading specifics on the types of laws that are passing, 82 percent say they plan to pay attention to a candidate's views on the issue.

Figure 13: In general, do you tend to pay attention to a candidate's views on a woman's right to get an abortion? (After info.) Now that you know about this trend, do you plan on paying attention to a candidate's views on a woman's right to get an abortion?



Prior to any information, Democrats and younger Latino/a respondents (18 to 29) are the most likely to say they pay attention to a candidate's views on the issue. After reading about restrictions, there is an increase among all demographic groups who say they plan to pay attention to a candidate's views. (See Table 7.)

Table 7: Plan to pay attention to candidates' views on issue

	Before info.	After info.
Total	69	82
Men	67	81
Women	70	82
Democrat	75	88
Independent	66	78
Republican	68	84
18-29 years old	82	89
30-44	64	78
45-59	70	83
60+	67	80
Took survey in Spanish	65	84
Took in English	70	81

F. Views toward Insurance Coverage

Latino/a voters agree that women should have health insurance coverage for abortion care. Nearly seven in ten (69 percent) agree that a woman should have coverage for the full range of pregnancy-related care, including prenatal care and abortion, regardless of whether she has private or government funded health coverage (See Figure 14.) Eight in ten (81 percent) agree that politicians should not be allowed to deny a woman health coverage for abortion just because she's poor (See Figure 15.)

Figure 14: Whether she has private or government funded health coverage, every woman should have coverage for the full range of pregnancy-related care, including prenatal care and abortion.

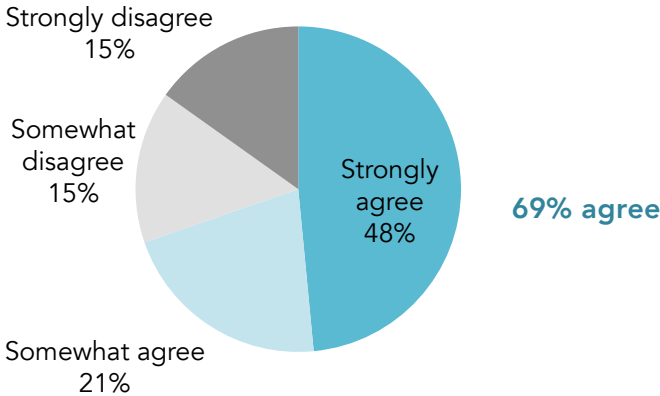


Figure 15: Do you agree or disagree: However we feel about abortion, politicians should not be allowed to deny a woman's health coverage for it just because she's poor.

