



Public Sentiment toward the Rights of Immigrant Children

Findings from a survey of non-Latino voters in key states,
Feb. 22-26, 2016

Gabe Vasquez, Senior Director, Media Relations | March 2016

First Focus, a bipartisan children's advocacy organization, commissioned a survey on the opinions of non-Latino registered voters regarding the rights of immigrant children in key states.

The survey was conducted by Lake Research Partners from Feb. 22-26, 2016 via telephone with a geographically stratified sample of Republican, Democrat and Independent voters in Ohio, Missouri, Arizona, New Mexico, New York and Minnesota. The margin of effort for the sample is +/- 4.0 percent. The voter sample was representative of each state's gender, age, region, party registration, party identification and ethnicity.

The study indicates that 59 percent of voters support federal policy that provides the children of undocumented immigrants with the same public benefits that other U.S. citizen children receive. Arizona and New York voters expressed the most support toward providing public benefits to immigrant children -- 66 percent in each state. In all states, younger women (68 percent) were the most agreeable with this policy. Forty percent of Republicans overall agreed that immigrant children should have access to public benefits. Fifty-eight percent of Independent voters expressed their support.

Overall, voters are dissatisfied with the immigration policies of President Obama and the policies proposed by Donald Trump, with 29 percent of respondents saying they find the president's policies very unfavorable and 45 percent of voters saying they find Trump's proposed immigration policies very unfavorable.

Three fifths of voters -- 50 percent -- report a favorable view of immigrants overall and 63 percent are favorable of immigrant children. In every state surveyed except Ohio, a majority of voters (53 percent) agree that all children living in America, despite their legal status, should have the same rights as U.S.-born children.

Two thirds of voters (67 percent) support maintaining the Constitutional right to birthright citizenship for all children born in the United States. New York voters are the most supportive of this policy, with 81 percent of respondents in favor.

Below are additional findings from the survey:

The economy and jobs top voters' list of priorities for Congress, with 32 percent of respondents saying it should be Congress's top priority.

Which of these issues or problems would you say are the most important things that your Member of Congress should consider?

Economy/jobs: 32 percent

Education schools: 21 percent

Terrorism: 18 percent

Social Security/Medicare: 17 percent

Healthcare: 16 percent

Taxes: 12 percent

Immigration: 12 percent

Income inequality: 11 percent

Environment: 9 percent

Other issues: 23 percent

Top Issue – By State	
<p>Arizona</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy and Jobs—40% • Education and Schools—32% • Healthcare—19% 	<p>Ohio</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy and Jobs—32% • Terrorism—19% • Social Security and Medicare—19%
<p>Missouri</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy and Jobs—31% • Education and Schools—19% • Social Security and Medicare—19% 	<p>Minnesota</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy and Jobs—24% • Healthcare—23% • Education and Schools—20%
<p>New York</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy and Jobs—28% • Healthcare—24% • Taxes—23% 	<p>New Mexico</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy and Jobs—36% • Terrorism—33% • Education and Schools—21%

Voters tend to have supportive feelings overall for immigrant children.

For each, please tell me whether you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable impression.

Immigrant children:

- Very Favorable: 31 percent
- Somewhat Favorable: 31 percent
- Somewhat Unfavorable: 9 percent
- Very Unfavorable: 7 percent
- No Opinion/Never Heard: 22 percent

Children born in America to undocumented immigrants:

- Very Favorable: 27 percent
- Somewhat Favorable: 26 percent
- Somewhat Unfavorable: 15 percent
- Very Unfavorable: 17 percent
- No Opinion/Never Heard: 15 percent

Voters have net negative views of both President Obama’s and Donald Trump’s immigration policies, with Trump’s policies regarded unfavorably.

President Obama’s immigration policies:

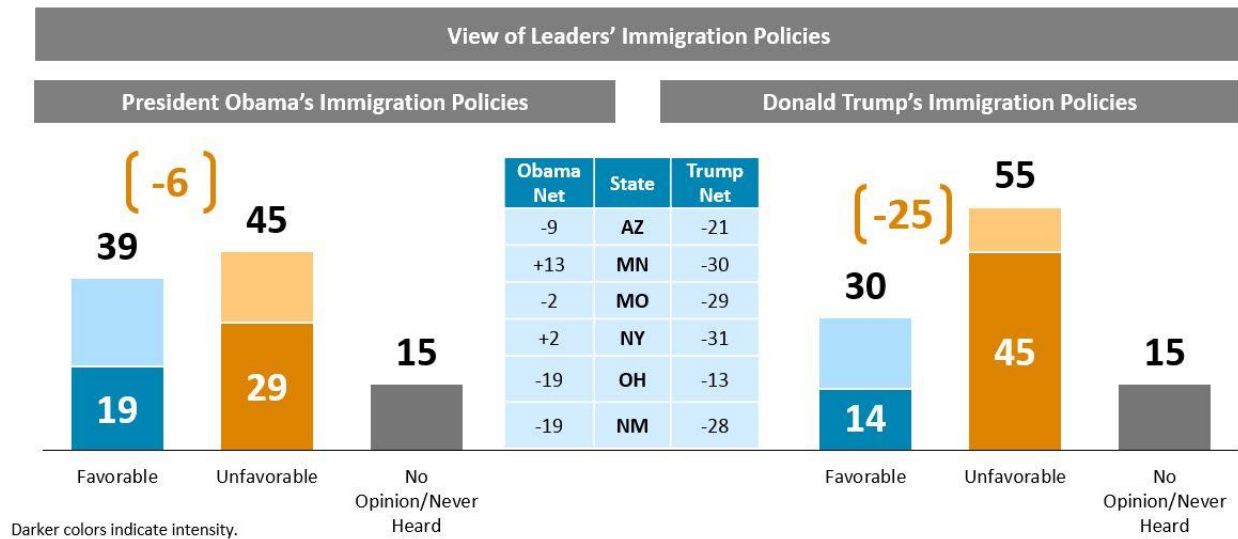
Very Favorable: 19 percent
 Somewhat Favorable: 20 percent
 Somewhat Unfavorable: 16 percent

Very Unfavorable: 29 percent
 No Opinion/Never Heard: 16 percent

Donald Trump’s immigration policies:

Very Favorable: 14 percent
 Somewhat Favorable: 16 percent
 Somewhat Unfavorable: 11 percent

Very Unfavorable: 45 percent
 No Opinion/Never Heard: 15 percent



In each state surveyed except Ohio, a solid majority of voters agree that all children in the U.S. should have the same rights, regardless of their documentation.

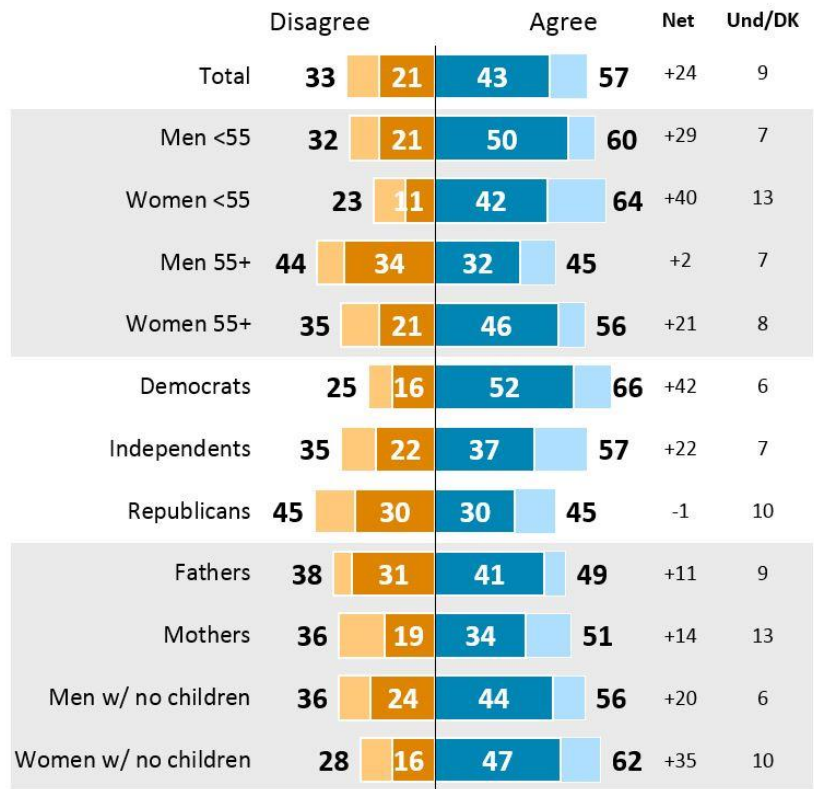
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: All children in the U.S. have the same rights, including children of undocumented immigrants:

Agree: 53 percent
 Disagree: 36 percent
 Undecided/Don't Know: 11 percent

Do all children in the U.S. have the same rights? (combined)

Democrats, voters under 55, and women with no children are most likely to see all U.S. children as having the same rights.

Republicans and older men are divided on the issue.



Nearly three-fifths of voters, 59 percent, agree that the children of undocumented immigrants should receive the same public benefits that other U.S. citizen children receive, and 45 percent agree intensely.

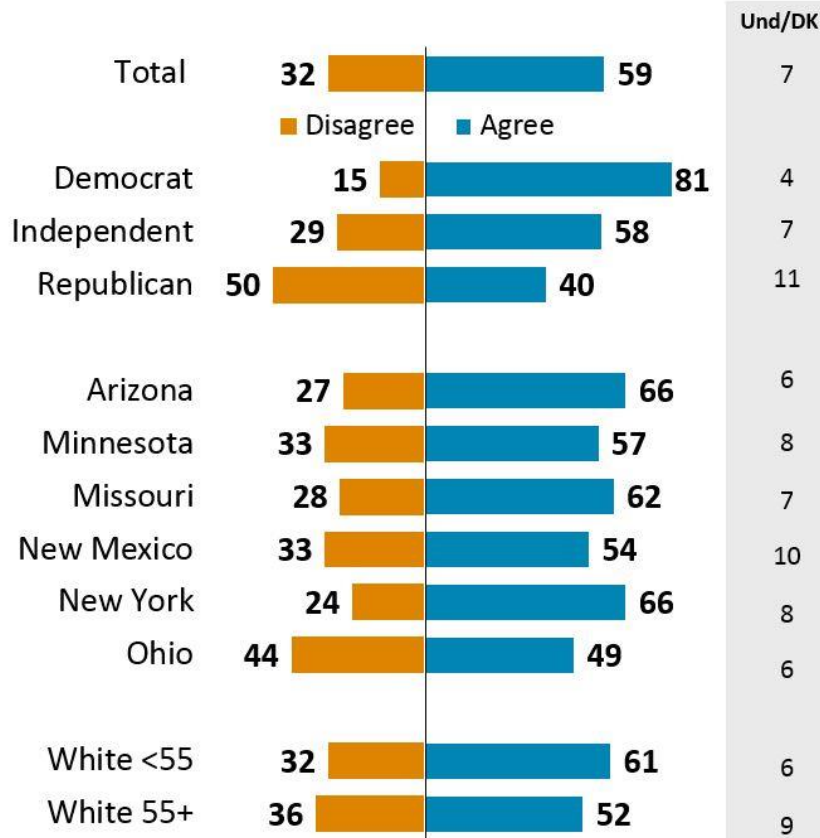
Do you agree or disagree with providing the children of undocumented immigrants in the U.S. the same public benefits that other U.S. citizen children receive, including access to the various public services and programs currently in place, such as publicly funded healthcare and nutrition programs?

Agree strongly: 45 percent
 Agree, not so strongly: 14 percent
 Undecided/don't know: 7 percent

Disagree, not so strongly: 9 percent
 Disagree strongly: 23 percent
 Other/refused: 2 percent

Public Benefits for All Children

Arizona and New York voters are the most supportive of this policy, while Ohio is the only state in which voters fall below majority support.



Two-thirds of voters, 67 percent, support maintaining the right to birthright citizenship, with the strongest support for this Constitutional right expressed by New York voters.

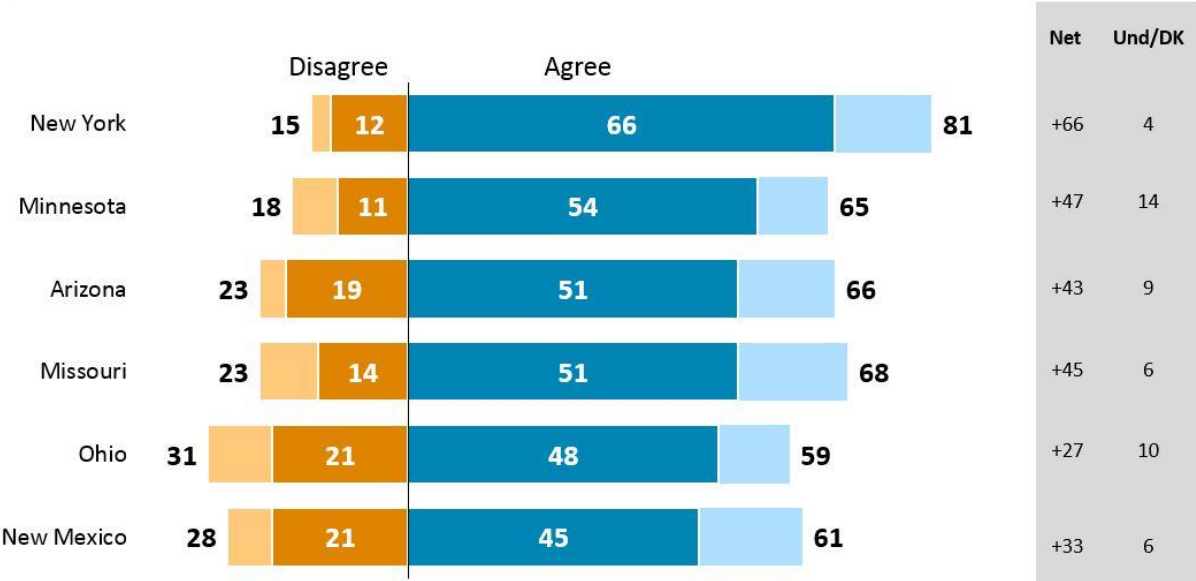
As you may know, under the United States Constitution, any child born in the United States is automatically a U.S. citizen. Do you support or oppose MAINTAINING this right to birthright citizenship for all children born in the United States?

Support: 59 percent

Don't support: 32 percent

Undecided/don't know: 7 percent

Maintaining Right to Citizenship (combined)



About First Focus:

First Focus is a bipartisan advocacy organization dedicated to making children and families a priority in federal policy and budget decisions. For more information, visit www.firstfocus.org.

About Lake Research Partners:

Lake Research partners is a leading public opinion research firm known for its polling on healthcare, education, environment, and immigration issues. For more information, visit www.lakeresearch.com.