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The New York Times / Siena College National Poll:

Majority Have Unfavorable View of Supreme Court; Voters Say Decisions Based on Political Views Rather than Constitution, 63-30%

Americans Oppose SCOTUS Decision Overturning Roe v. Wade, 61-29%; Say Abortion Should Always/Mostly Be Legal (65%), vs. Mostly/Always Be Illegal (26%)

Voters Evenly Divided on Whether Dems or Reps Should Control Congress By 49-42%, Voters Say January 6 Was Attempt to Overthrow Government, Not a Protest that Got Out of Hand; Trump Committed Serious Federal Crimes, 49-40%

Loudonville, NY. Fifty-three percent of American voters view the Supreme Court unfavorably, compared to 41% who view the Court favorably, with a wide partisan divide as 69% of Republicans have a favorable view of the Court and 80% of Democrats have an unfavorable view. By more than two-to-one, 63-30%, voters say Supreme Court decisions are based more on the political views of the justices rather than the constitution and law, according to The New York Times/Siena College poll of registered voters released today.

Voters oppose 61-29% the recent Supreme Court decision that overturned Roe v. Wade and eliminated the constitutional right to abortion. A slightly larger 65-26% majority say that abortion should always (33%) or mostly (32%) be legal, rather than mostly (20%) or always (6%) be illegal. Voters are virtually evenly divided on which party they want to win control of Congress this year, with 41% saying Democrats and 40% Republicans.

“Current views of the Supreme Court appear to be largely determined by partisanship. Republicans overwhelmingly view the Court favorably, while Democrats have an even stronger unfavorable view of the Court. By 55-40%, independents view the Court unfavorably,” said Dr. Don Levy, Director, Siena College Research Institute. “There is also a wide age divide, as voters 45 and older largely have a break-even view about the Court, while about two-thirds of those under 45 view the Court unfavorably.

“Similarly, Democrats and independents overwhelmingly believe that Supreme Court decisions are based more on the justices’ political views rather than the constitution and law, while Republicans by a smaller 54-39% margin say decisions are based more on the constitution,” Levy said. “A majority of voters from every region, gender, age group, race and education level says that Court decisions are based more on political views.”

Voters Oppose Recent SCOTUS Decision Overturning Roe; Support Legal Abortion in All/Most Cases

“While 90% of Democrats and 66% of independents oppose the recent decision overturning Roe, 58% of Republicans support the decision eliminating the constitutional right to abortion,” Levy said. “There is a noticeable but not huge gender gap, with 68% of women and 53% of men opposing the overturning of Roe. The age gap is even larger with 84% of voters under 30 and 51% of voters 65 and older opposing the decision.

“Interestingly, the way Democrats and independents feel about SCOTUS’ Dobbs decision virtually mirrors their answer to whether they think abortion should always or mostly be legal vs. always or mostly be illegal, but the same is not true for Republicans,” Levy said. “Republicans support the Court overturning Roe 58-30%, but when it comes to their view on when abortion should or should not be legal, 46% say it should be illegal in all/most cases and 43% said it should be legal in all/most cases.”

With a Closely Divided Congress Now, Voters Are Closely Divided on Who they Want to Win in November

“If the election to fill congressional seats were happening now, it would all come down to turnout since the race could not be any closer,” Levy said. “By a margin of 90-4% Republicans say they want to see the GOP win control of Congress. By the same 90-4% margin, Democrats want their party to retain control of Congress. Independents are divided down the middle with 35% for the Dems and 34% for the Reps.

“Beyond the partisan divide, there is also a gender gap with women siding with Democrats by 10 points and men supporting Republicans by nine points. Voters under 45 support Democratic control while those 45 and older want Republicans to win. White voters side with Republicans by 10 points, Latinos are closely divided, and Black voters support the Democrats 78-3%,” Levy said.

By Small Margins: Capitol Riots were Attempt to Overthrow Govt. & Trump Committed Serious Crimes

Previously released, voters thought Trump went so far as to threaten American democracy, not just exercise his right to contest the election, 55-39%. New questions today show that by 49-42%, voters say that the January 6 Capitol riots were an attempt to overthrow the government, not simply a protest that got out of hand. And by 49-40%, voters say Trump committed serious federal crimes in the aftermath of the 2020 elections. On each of those three questions, at least 72% of Republicans disagree with the majority or plurality of Americans.

“The ideological lines couldn’t be more clearly drawn – 72% of Republicans say the riots at the Capitol were just a protest that got out of hand, and 80% say Trump did not commit serious federal crimes after the 2020 election. But 84% of Democrats say the riots were an attempt to overthrow the government and 89% say Trump committed serious crimes. Independents tilt toward the Democrats but by much narrower margins,” Levy said.

“Two-thirds of Americans think Biden was the legitimate 2020 winner, including 99% of Democrats and 67% of independents. However, 61% of Republicans say Trump won, compared to 29% who say Biden won,” Levy said.

Majority: America’s Political System is Too Divided to Solve Problems; Large Majority: Voting Matters

By 53-41%, voters say America’s political system is too divided politically to solve its problems. Voting makes a difference in how government works, says 69%, compared to 28% who say voting doesn’t make a difference.

“While independents are most negative, 58-37%, about the ability of America’s political system to solve the nation’s problems, neither Democrats nor Republicans have confidence in our political system to solve problems, with voters in both parties agreeing, 50-45% that the nation is too politically divided,” Levy said.

“At the same time, Americans overwhelmingly believe that voting makes a difference in how government works – including 81% of Democrats, 75% of Republicans and 57% of independents,” Levy said. “While more than two thirds of people 30 and over believe voting matters, it is interesting and concerning that those under 30 are virtually evenly divided, with 48% saying voting doesn’t really make a difference.”

A majority think America’s system of government needs to be completely replaced (8%) or in need of major reforms (50%), compared to 29% who say minor changes are needed, and 11% who say no changes are needed.

“Majorities of Republicans, Democrats and independents agree that the country’s system of government is in need of major reforms or a complete redo,” Levy said. “Partisans may continue to strongly disagree on a wide variety of issues, but they are on the same page when it comes to our nation’s government and political systems not working the way they want it to.”

By Two-to-One, Voters Have Little or No Confidence in the Accuracy or Fairness of Mainstream Media

Only 34% of voters say they are confident (6% very confident) in mainstream media organizations to accurately and fairly report about news and politics, while 65% are not too confident (23%) or not at all confident (42%).

“While Democrats are confident in mainstream media to accurately and fairly report the news, 59-40%, 68% of independents and a whopping 86% of Republicans have little or no confidence in the mainstream media,” Levy said. “While half of voters over 65 have confidence in mainstream media’s ability to report the news, only 22% of those under 30 have confidence.”

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This New York Times/Siena College survey of 849 registered voters nationwide was conducted in English and Spanish on landline and cellular telephones from July 5 to July 7, 2022. The survey is a response rate adjusted stratified sample of active registered voters on the L2 voter file. The survey was fielded by the Siena College Research Institute and ReconMR. Overall, 63% of respondents were reached on cellular telephones. The survey’s margin of error due to sampling is +/- 4.1%. It accounts for the survey’s design effect of 1.46, a measure of the loss of statistical power due to weighting.

The Siena College Research Institute, directed by Donald Levy, Ph.D., conducts political, economic, social, and cultural research. SCRI, an independent, non-partisan research institute, subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research Code of Professional Ethics and Practices. For more information, please contact Steven Greenberg at 518-469-9858. Survey cross-tabulations and frequencies can be found at: <https://scri.siena.edu/category/political/nyt/>.