

# Pennsylvania's 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District on Police Reform Proposals

A Survey of Residents of PA-1

Sponsored by





#### **Policymaking Simulation**

- Given briefing on an issue before Congress
- Presented a policy option under consideration
- Evaluate arguments for and against
- Make recommendation: for/against
- Evaluate how acceptable 0-10 scale

Content reviewed by experts across spectrum

#### **Proposals Drawn From:**

#### George Floyd Justice in Policing Act (H.R. 7120)

JUSTICE Act (S. 3985)

#### **Proposals Considered**

#### POLICIES REGARDING USE OF FORCE

- Ban on Chokeholds and Neck Restraints
- De-escalation and Use of Force as a Last Resort
- Duty to Intervene
- Ban on No-knock Warrants

### INCREASING ACCOUNTABILITY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

- Requiring Body Cameras
- National Registry of Police Misconduct
- Independent Prosecutors
- Amending Qualified Immunity

#### **ADDRESSING IMPLICIT BIAS**

Training in Implicit Bias

#### Methodology

#### PENNSYLVANIA's 1st CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

**Sample Size:** 437 Residents of PA's 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District

Field Dates: July 24 - August 9, 2020

#### **NATIONAL**

Sample Size: 3,226 Registered Voters Nationwide

Field Dates: July 2-9, 2020

# POLICIES REGARDING USE OF FORCE

#### **Ban on Chokeholds and Neck Restraints**

**PROPOSAL** 

Require states to prohibit the use of chokeholds and other restraints that prevent breathing or block the flow of blood or oxygen to the brain.

# Ban Chokeholds and Neck Restraints

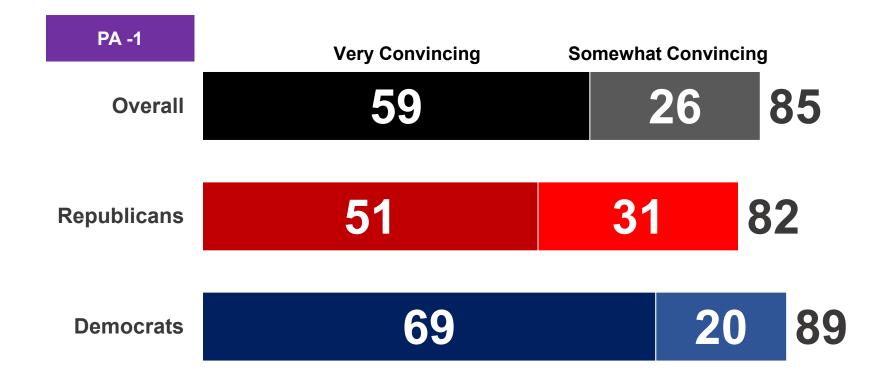
Ban on Chokeholds and Neck Restraints

There are means to resthain a shuggling suspect without using dangerous methods that survessmently put the suspect like in danger. Chokeholds by police have led to needless deaths of too many chillans as well as caused brain damage and shud, to other. Furthermore, when a suspect is being childed, they resist because they are trying to breaths, which in then used to justify using more broom, including deathly force.

Many police departments already prohibit chokeholds because they know it is wrong. They should be banned everywhere.

Chokeholds lead to unnecessary deaths, too dangerous.

There are alternatives.

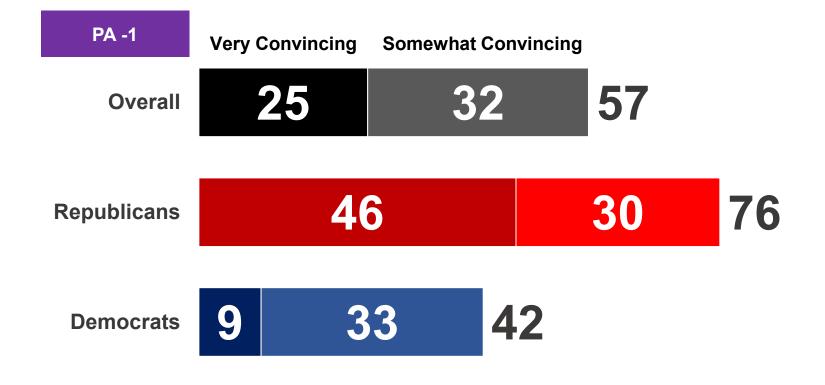


# Ban Chokeholds and Neck Restraints

Ban on Chokeholds and Neck Restraints

efficient are offer dealing with sident out of control people and we need all the took available to them. If they cannot see which will be the control to the control to the control to the railway, the finance, which are over more dangetous, the railway, the finance, which are over more dangetous, the control to charted free orders as they may be readed in some other which. For example, when a violent exact in other control to the control to

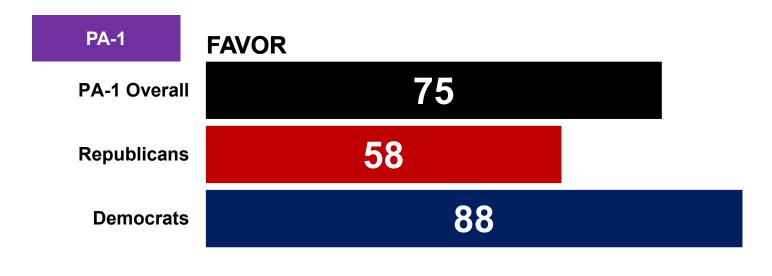
Officers should not be denied an option that may be key in dealing with a violent person

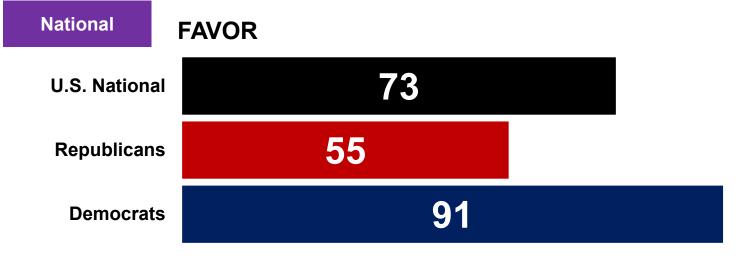


#### Ban on Chokeholds and Neck Restraints

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Do you favor or oppose this proposal?





#### De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

**PROPOSAL** 

- Officers receive training in alternatives to the use of deadly force and de-escalation techniques.
- Officers justified in using deadly force only as a last resort.
- In criminal cases, Judge/jury must determine whether officer:
  - Exhausted alternative tactics and/or de-escalation techniques
  - Acted with gross negligence, contributing to need for deadly force

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

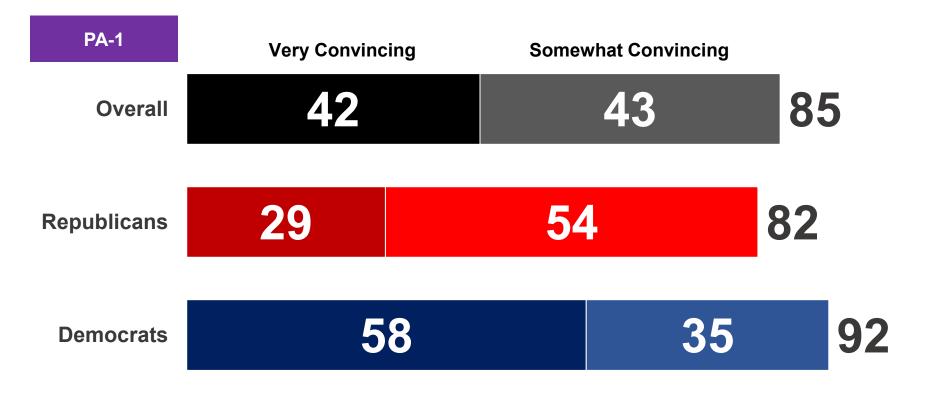
## De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

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If they believed the gun was real, they should have kept their sistence and, from a protected position, teld him to put down the gun. "We need to require that officiance four and use better tacking when they are sent to calls involving possitive evapores. They have also sent to calls involving possitive evapores. They have also guest to the production of the product and should be held accountable if they evapore privace or fall people.





ARGUMENT AGAINST

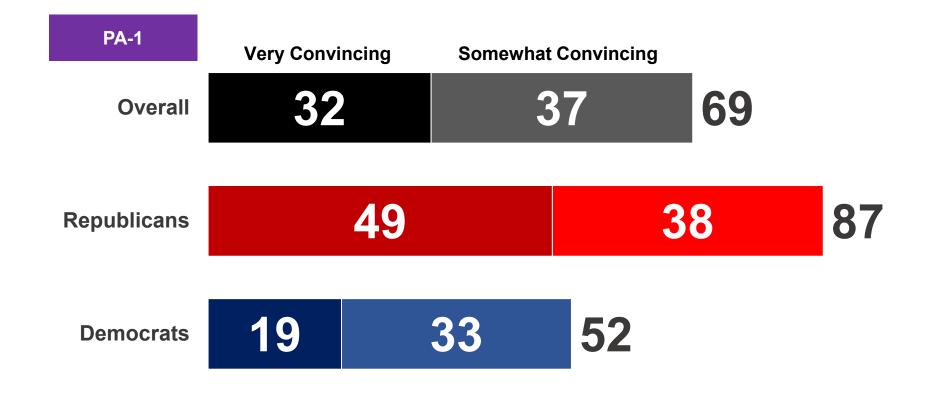
# De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Res

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present ests, which will make in transfer to encount mer officione. Current different may seek to assold these diregerous situations that they are salled to, which will weaken the effectiveness of the policio in general. Purificemone. If siminate appure that officers have to be secutations and tenici, this will embedded the siminates on our complewith an officiant commands and to even needs arrest.

These requirements will increase risks to police officers who put their lives on the line



ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

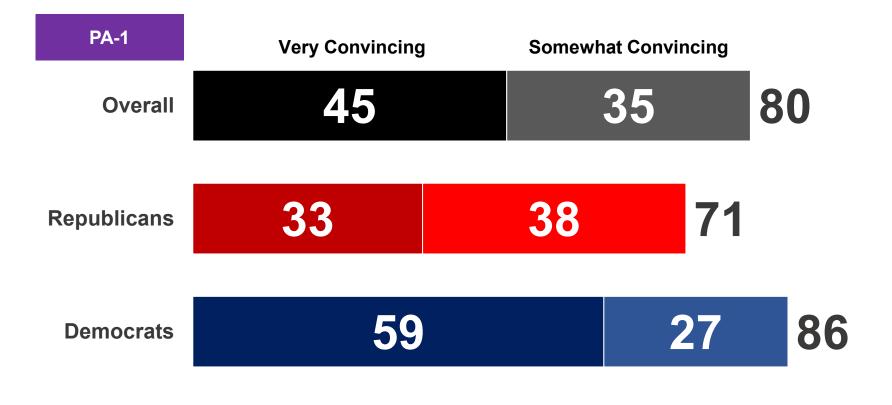
# De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

Several states and other have changed their policies to require that offices use do-escalation and other techniques to orwane that deadly force is only used as stall resort—and have seen peak results. Compartenesive studies have found the amount of police violence went down shappy, increasing the safety for officers, including systemotrus.

Officers were found to be at less risk, and there was no evidence that they were less able or willing to use force when it was necessary to defend themselves. Police morals went up.

Requiring de-escalation, other techniques, lowers violence against police and citizens



ARGUMENT AGAINST

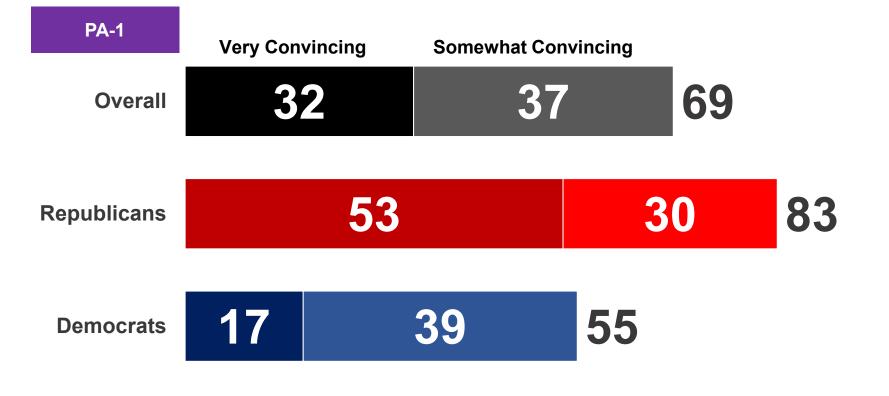
# De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

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If we are going to have officear risking their over lines and probeding as then our most disappeas orientals, have need to be stated to be in very they feed are necessary to protect thermonium and others. Officers should not be posterished for taking actions they believed were necessary and filestaving at the firms. Hidding them chrimially liable will entangle counts in endless secondquesting of goldic decisions make in spill seconds under others.

The feer of petting charged will discourage officers from acting as needed to protect thereselves or others, and from even thereign as needed to protect thereselves or others, and from even the actions, in the first place. We should do more to weed out bad acclors, in off wither jeopardize the lives of all who wear the actions.

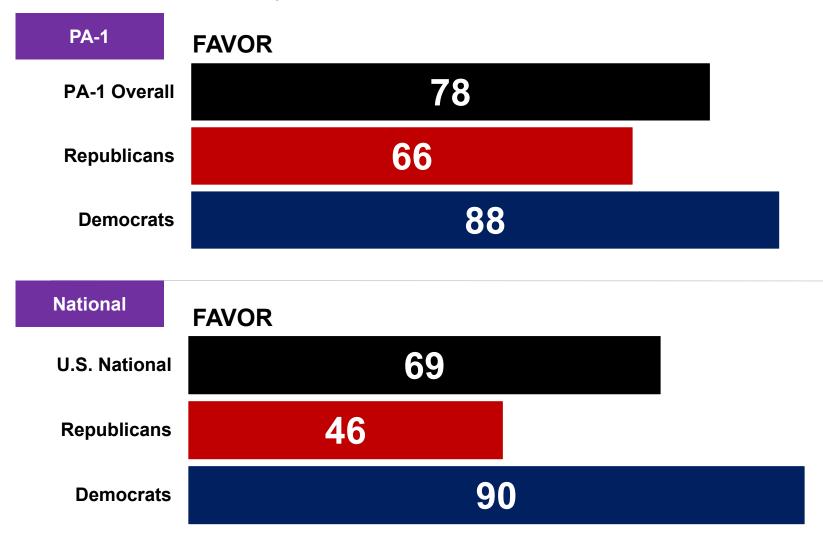
Should not punish officers for split-second decisions in dangerous situations



#### De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Do you favor or oppose this proposal?



**PROPOSAL** 

#### **Proposal:**

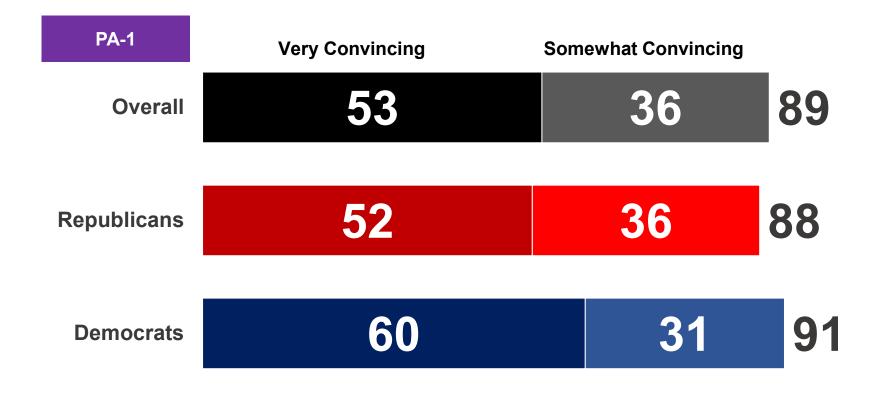
- Require police departments to adopt a policy that makes it a duty for officers to intervene when they perceive another officer is using excessive force
- Provide officers with training for when and how to intervene

Duty to Intervene

times two enforcement offices use excession faces, in narry cases there is another officer peear? If we want to raise must be the cases there is another officer peear? If we want to raise must that excessive force is not being used, one of the most effective things we can do is to make it a day for officers to intervene. Officers should be expected to ablet by the law just like everybody else, and their orderages should have the expected by the review body the review to the first officers and the review to the first officers and the review to the first of the review to the review

If any officer violates the tutes, this undertraines as officers in the year of accident, if the public sees officers holding each other accountable this will increase confidence in the integrity of all police officers. Police officers about the responsible for enforcing the law against everyone — including their over.

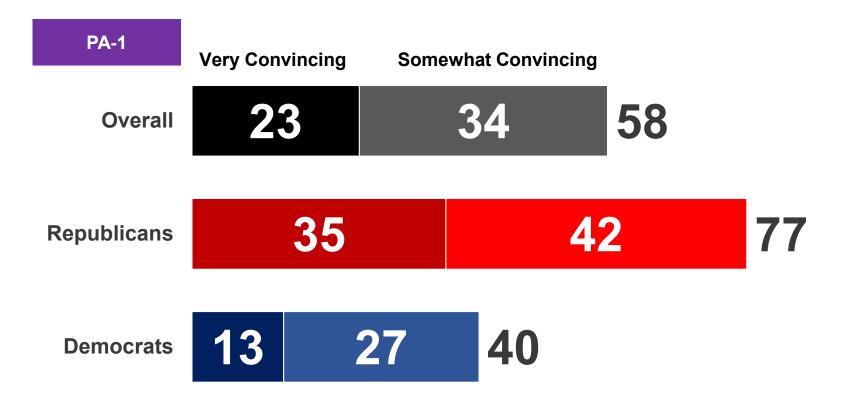
#### Officers should abide by the law and must hold each other accountable



Duty to Intervene

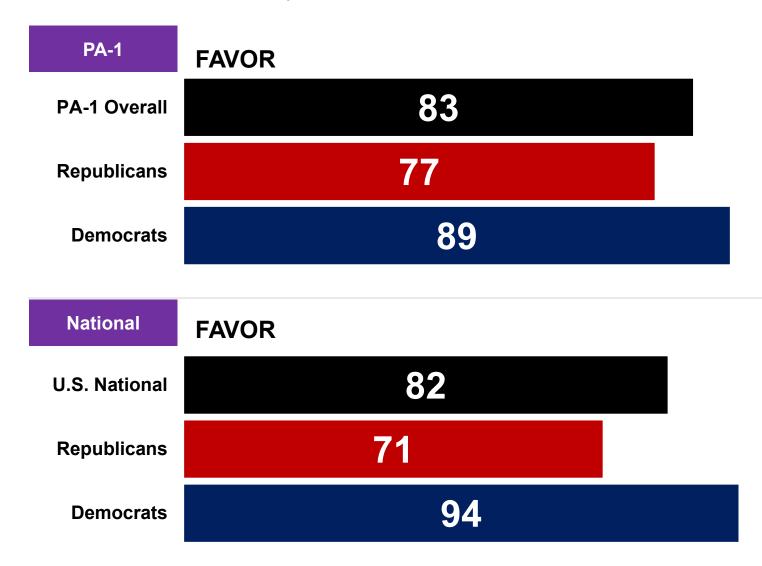
When officers use foces it is usually in disaperarus and complice shallown in which a suspect is votered or establist annual. Another officer may come upon the scene where they don't have all the facts of the shallown and cornor intally determine whether the other officer is using appropriate force or not. It can make the shallown more official and adaptives all they have be overy that another officer might sudderly intervene to stop them. Furthermore, officers theyardly have been one gap with bystanders or other suspects on the some final may make it hands to othermine whether another officer is using appropriate force. Officers should not be pursished for failing to intervene when shallowns are so often marky.

Situations are often unclear, intervening could be dangerous, not right to punish



**FINAL RECOMMENDATION** 

Do you favor or oppose this proposal?



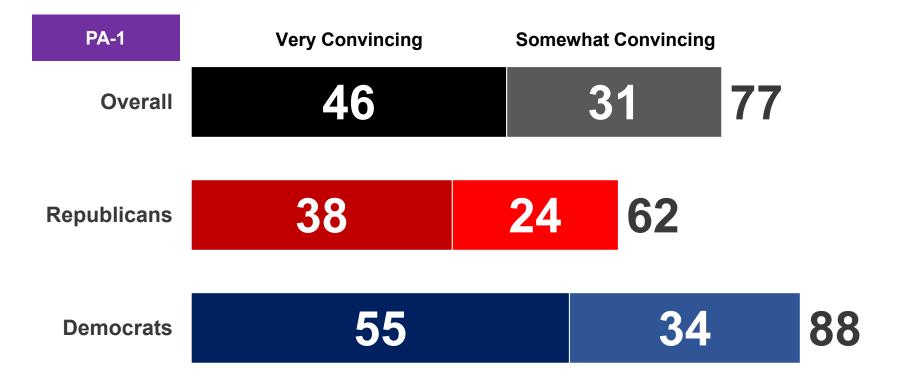
**PROPOSAL** 

Require local and state governments to ban the use of no-knock warrants for drug cases.

No-invok warrants are highly dangeross. Too often they have sessible in invocator people length part or filled, and aproperly death-yeal. Officers have broken into the enough bouse by accident. Proceeds in the house, the highly there is a criminal breaking in, have used their 2nd smendment rights of selfdeferme. Officers have been highly the high part of an appropriately investigate or apprehend suspects than breaking down their borns without swrings.

Highly dangerous, for police and for innocent civilians.

There are alternatives.

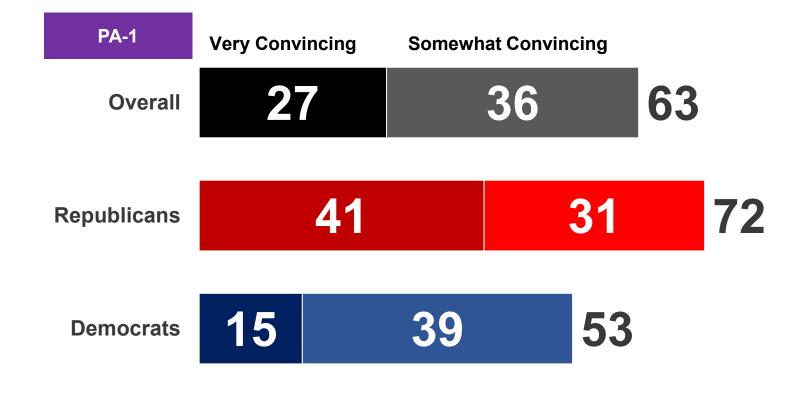


Ban on No-Knock Warrants

Nicolatorals warrants can be used appropriately and effectively one should be altieved. Christinals one fixet drugs and other evidence down a bollet of existing computer evidence of a many million clotter drug deal with a few quals keyworkers. If they know officers are of the disor, it gives those dangerous criminals time to get gums to use or to set up triggered body traps.

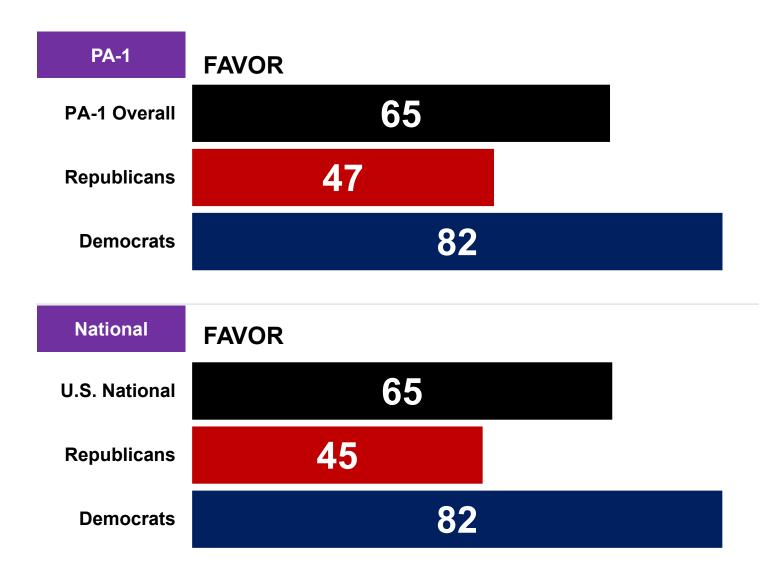
We shouldn't harvetring officent ability to protect themselves and/or to prevent destruction of essential evidence of a crime

#### Shouldn't hamstring officers from technique that can protect them, preserve evidence



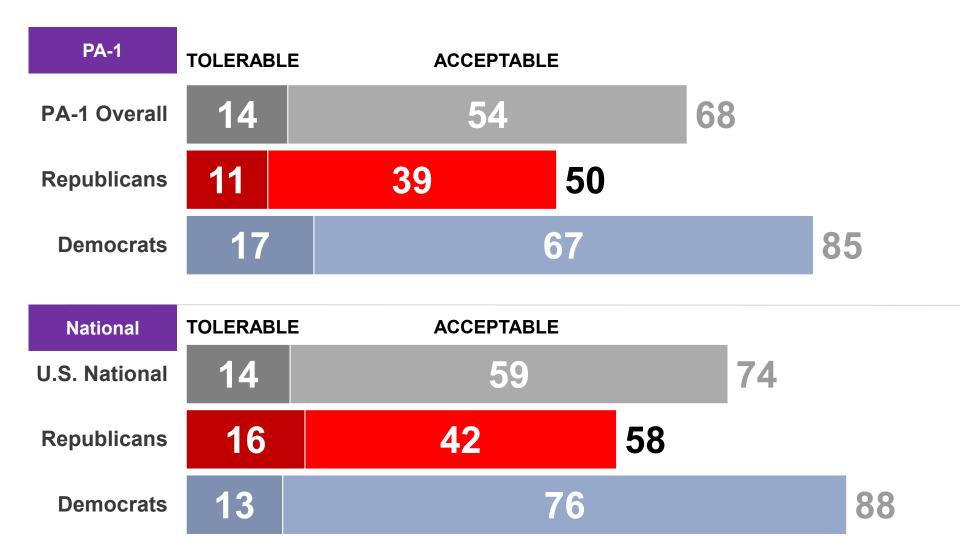
FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Do you favor or oppose this proposal?



**ACCEPTABILITY** 

After evaluating the arguments, how acceptable do you find this proposal?



# INCREASING ACCOUNTABILITY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

**PROPOSAL** 

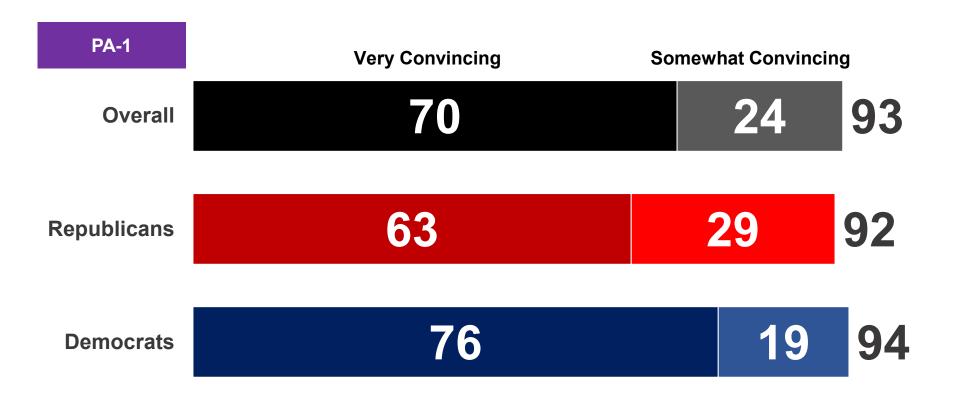
- Require all police departments to have body cameras.
- Require officers to wear them and turn them on when responding to a call or interacting with a suspect. Failure to do so would result in disciplinary action.

Body Cameras

Requiring officers to use body camerus will make the process of law enforcement more transparent and will help held police accountable. There is evidence this will exact in a reduction solores, research shows use of body camerus have reduced both police and chellan violence by substantial amounts.

People's marrory is often influenced by the heat of the moment and comerce provide a neutral view of events as they happened. Body comerce have also provided police with visual evidence of crimes being committed in neal time.

Increased transparency benefits both civilians and officers, reduces violence

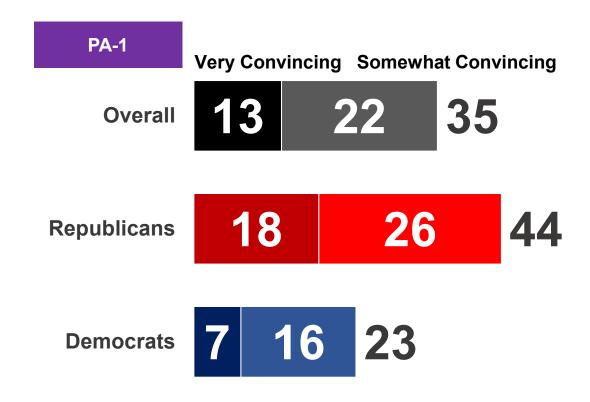


Body Cameras

Body carrense cost a lot of money and shades show that they are not very effective. They create a base impression of objectivity; laises have interprete them differently, based on how they were used by prosecutors and delarns alterneys. In some cases, the body corrects have of been well in capturing what actually happened, other because the bodge was grainy, shallow, or only showed a limited level of the shadow.

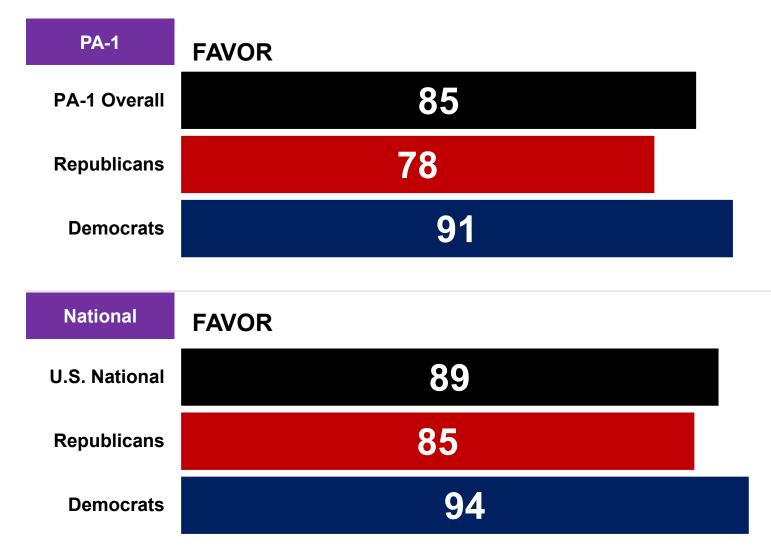
Having this footage around proates a pressure to release if publicly, it could be used to humiliate citizens who have been cought in a streetul situation and might have acted in an embarrousing manner.

Too expensive, not effective, create false sense of "objectivity," can be misused



#### FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Do you favor or oppose this proposal?



#### National Registry of Police Misconduct

**PROPOSAL** 

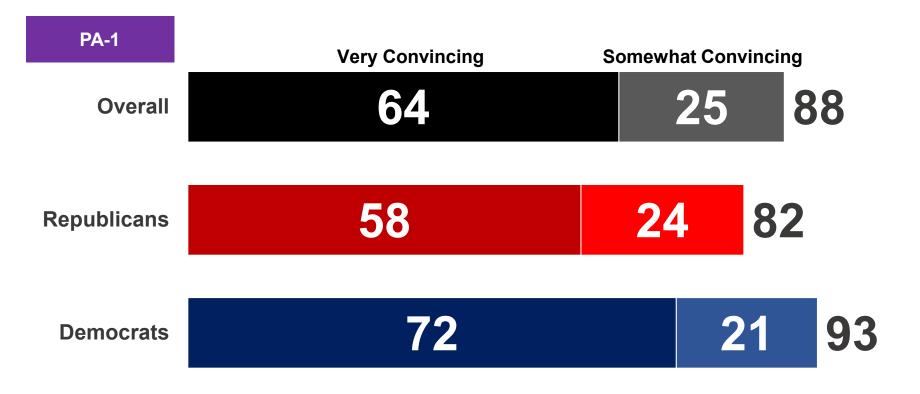
- Create a national database of police misconduct and require all law enforcement agencies to submit information about officer misconduct.
- Database would be available to all law enforcement agencies, other government agencies and the public.

## National Registry of Police Misconduct

National Registry of Police Misconduct

Any effort to increase heregoarces; and accominately starbwith howing all not be laid orga an erythol department on an start to know the holder of the project they he and employee with deady force of the thirds or one way of resulting that projects exhibited the start of the project they he and employee with deady force in this part of the officers they thin, taid one scarp just port on ally to dry, acting that when yields and consequence. Finally, this information is very useful in court cases when a judge or jusy in thy lay ocided if an officer's miscorduct was a stree-line overt, or if they have a history of unitwelf behavior.

Bad cops can just go from city to city, police depts have a right to know background



ARGUMENT AGAINST

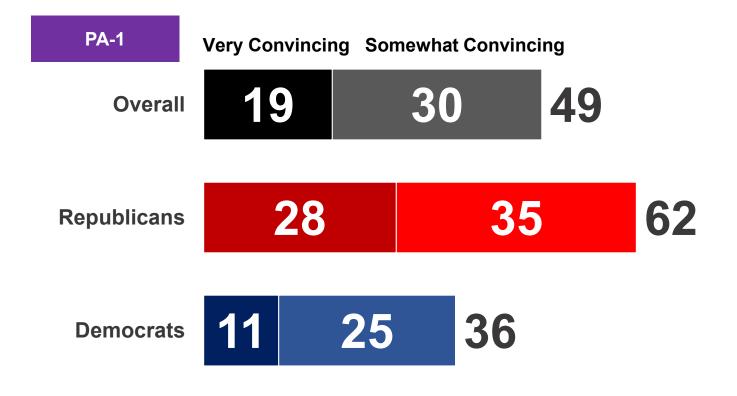
# National Registry of Police Misconduct

National Registry of Police Misconduct

Orecast yes unplaint the complaints intendigenist when an all syling forms. Officers get negation reports from people who are syling to come up with an excuss for the behavior that prompted their arrest by the officer, or they may have a personal gradely against the officer. A small mission or wrongfully find complaints, can mead in pellips be desirated and officially in getting another job in law enforcement or elsewhere, which is unfail.

This proposal singles out the police: no other government, employee or official has a clasticate of orangialists or mistakes. It is also a solution of their privacy as this will be a public database. Officers just trying to protect our communities already have a lot of pressures on them and this will only add more.

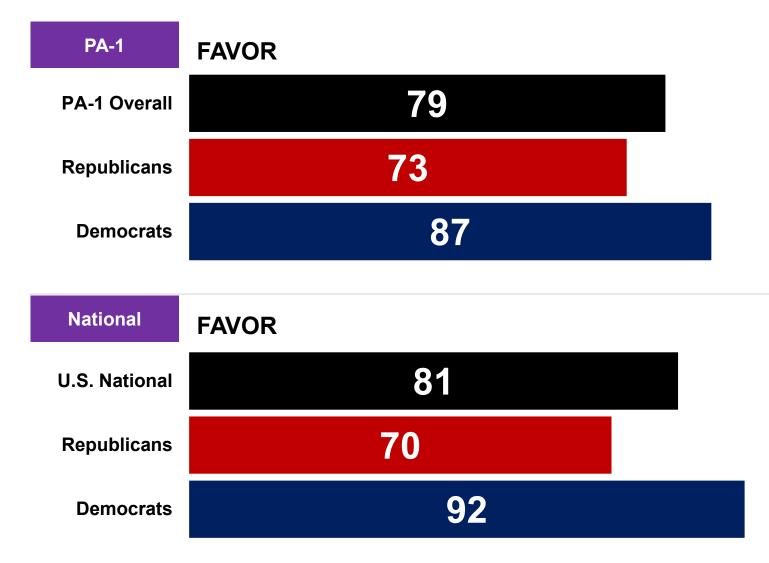
Unjustified or minor complaints can lead to officers being blacklisted, violates privacy



#### **National Registry of Police Misconduct**

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Do you favor or oppose this proposal?



#### **Independent Prosecutors**

**PROPOSAL** 

- Offer states federal funding to hire an independent prosecutor when investigating or charging a law enforcement officer for using deadly force.
- To get funding, state must have policy requiring use of an independent prosecutor in all such cases.

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

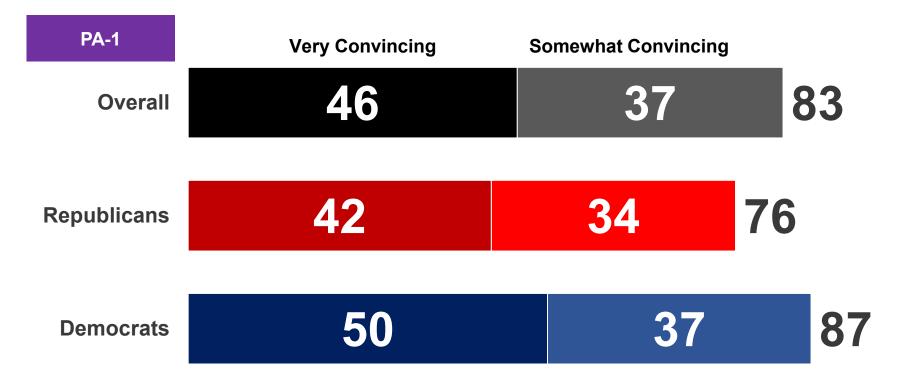
#### **Independent Prosecutors**

Independent Prosecutors

Because regular prosecution offset need to keep up a good residentially with the police departments they over with to prosecute redmary cases, they offset do not pursue charge against officers as aggressively as they do against offset people. against officers as aggressively as they do against offset people officials, who may choose to solid presecuting a police officer officials, who may choose to solid presecuting a police officer with the manufacture of the policy of officers who have allegedly unjusty injusted or killed a person do not per charged with a crime.

It is only fair that these cases be conducted by independent prosecutors, so there is no conflict of interest. This will result in more justice, and more confidence in the justice system.

#### Regular prosecutors too close to cops, have too many conflicts of interest



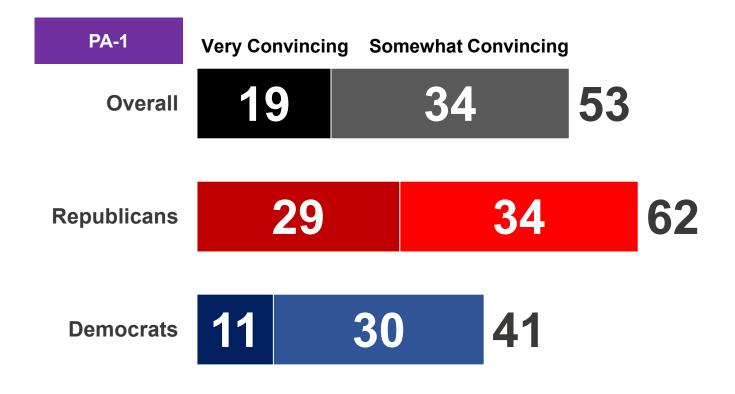
# **Independent Prosecutors**

Independent Prosecutors

When tonging in an outside prosecutor, there is a risk that whoever chooses the prosecutor might have a political agenda to look tough or to punish officers unfairly. Also, they may not be part of the community, and thus would not be termilar with the police officers and the situation of the community they servand perfect.

We should not assume that local prosecutors are blased in favor of police just because some people do not like the outcomes of the case.

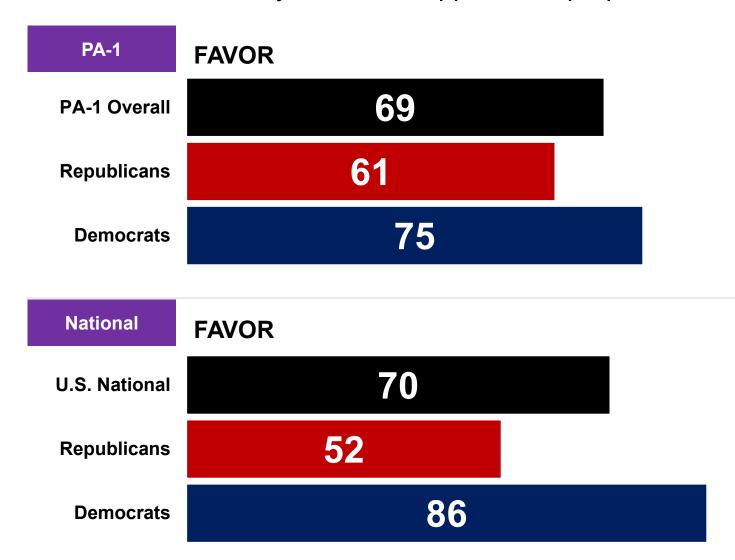
Can be driven by political agenda to look tough, outsiders don't understand community



# **Independent Prosecutors**

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Do you favor or oppose this proposal?



# **Amend Qualified Immunity**

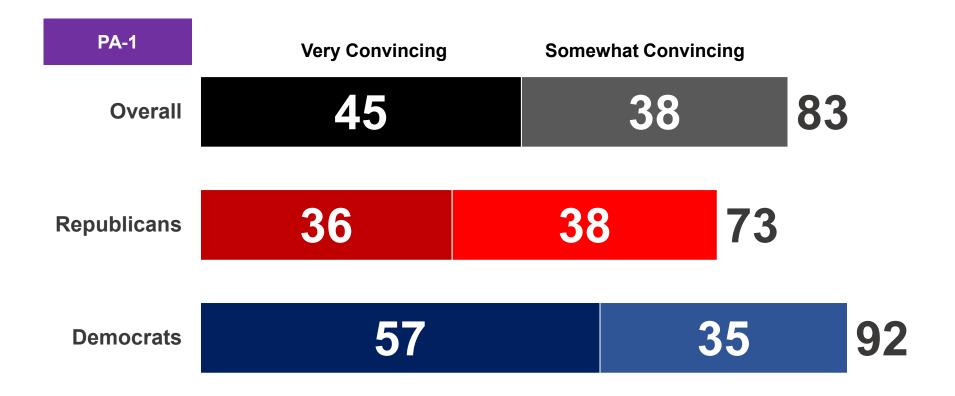
**PROPOSAL** 

- Stop giving officers immunity solely on basis that officer says they were acting in good faith and believed their actions were lawful.
- No longer allow officers to be granted immunity because there haven't been previous cases holding other officers liable for the same conduct in very similar circumstances.

# **Amend Qualified Immunity**

These have been an estinocidary number of cases in which offices have not been rived accordance often using excessive visions against oxidiars, simply because the officer could not like glidht think help were idealing the law or because them wasn't a previous cose holding on officer lottle inside visitably the name commitmations. All uniformstanding the law of because them wasn't a previous cose holding on officer lottle under visitably the name commitmations. All uniformstanding the law of should not be an excess for visitable (i.e., expecially for a police officer. When care commitmations is a substantial of the law of the commitmations and commitment of the commitmation of the commitmations acts against distance. This is wrong and its country helping to lot the faith in our arytime of justice.

Police saying they don't know law or no exact precedent no excuse, must be accountable



ARGUMENT AGAINST

# **Amend Qualified Immunity**

Amend Qualified Immunity

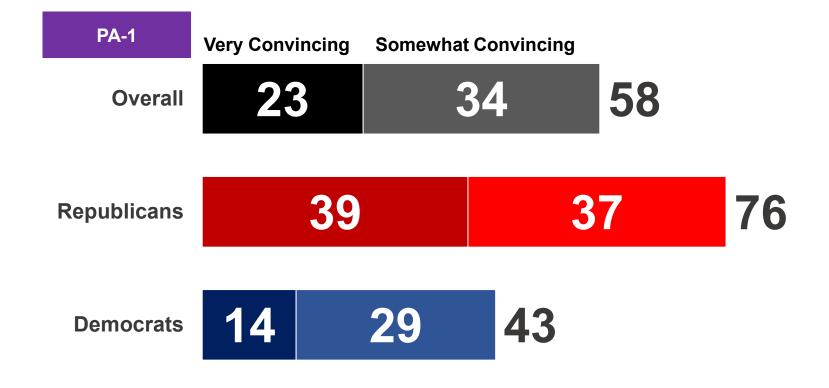
ABUART Address

Police officers after have to make spit-second decisions in

dangerous situations. Caudited invitually is increasing to give ordinars the oblight in ration resourcible, ever if matative decisions without constantly worrying about getting sued. Without qualified inmunity policy officers will become too trivial and ratio to take the appropriate action. They may use too much suction, and let a orinned get every or worse, they may fall to use recessary forms against a visient person that poses a risk to the officer or a bytamble.

When or the job, police officers should only have to consider how best to stop criminals and make their community safer, and not whether their actions will result in a long total and bad publicly Changing these laws will make our communities less safe and make it harder to execut and setting good officers.

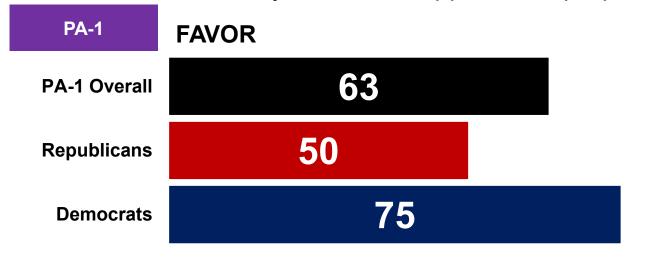
Will lead officers to be too timid for fear of being sued; make communities less safe

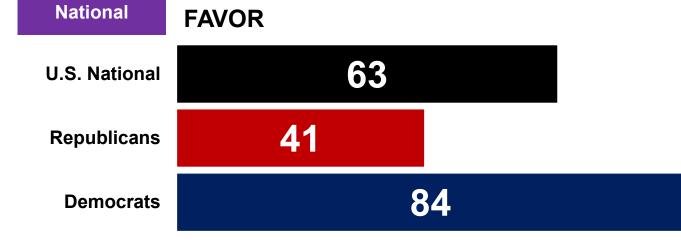


# **Amend Qualified Immunity**

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Do you favor or oppose this proposal?





# **Amend Qualified Immunity**

**ACCEPTABILITY** 

After evaluating the arguments, how acceptable do you find this proposal?



# ADDRESSING IMPLICIT BIAS

### **PROPOSAL**

### Studies have found:

- officers use excessive force against minorities more than they do against white civilians.
- problem is not primarily that most officers have conscious negative attitudes toward minorities, but rather that many officers – like most people – have what is called an "implicit bias."

Training methods have been developed to help people understand better how implicit bias may be affecting them and to consciously work to counter its effects.

### **Proposal:**

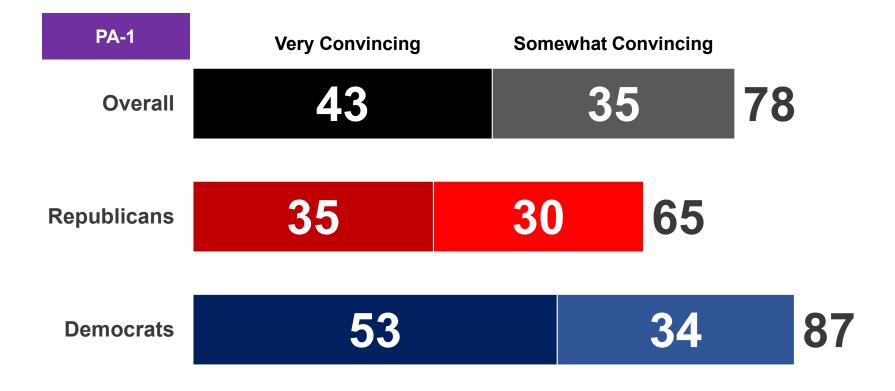
 Require police departments to provide their officers training on implicit bias.

Training in Implicit Bias

Studies show that nearly everybody has some implicit bias, whether they are with, black, movemen, blocks or consensative, in the judies exystem, everybody is supposed to get equal treatment. But evidence shows that police offices are more likely to use excessive force against people of color with potentially deadly consequences.

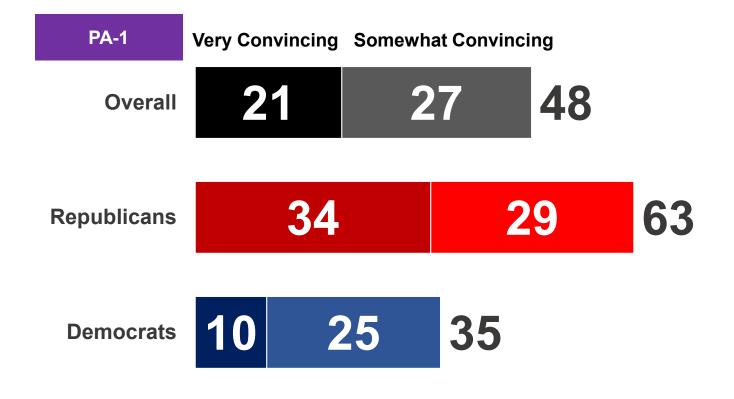
implied bias tolving has been shown to be effective in a significant number of cases and with more experience it can become even more effective. Reducing block in law enforcement is the right thing to do and will help renew confidence in the legal system.

# Unequal treatment of people of color is wrong; need to reduce bias



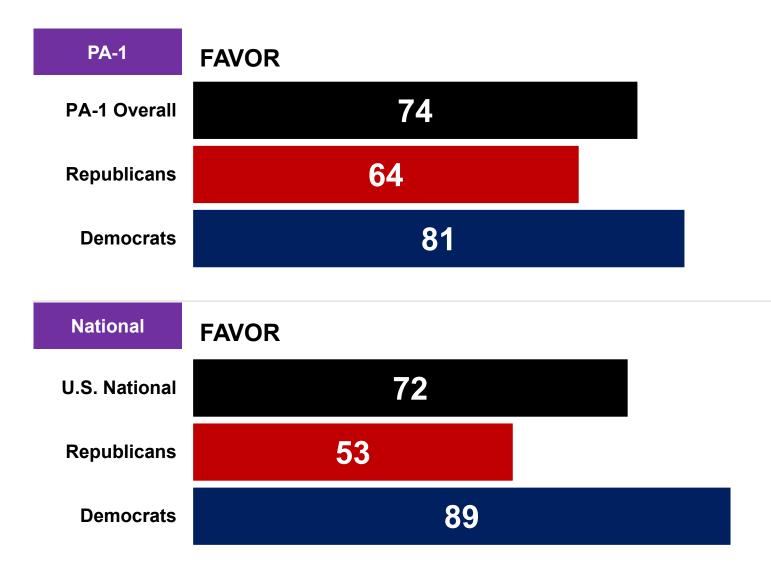
This implicit bias fraining contrip solid money and has not been proven to be consistently effective. We should not be taking firms away from officers mail work of knepting communities said. It is unfinite to highlight support that they are socials and cased be trialled. Furthermore, if zops become accessis and cased be trialled. Furthermore, if zops become accessis about whether they alriculat trust their own judgment, it may make them the solid to toke accession action in the efficiency of a crisis obtained, putting them and others present at greater of a crisis obtained, putting them and others present at greater

Training costs money, not proven to be effective, takes time, undermines confidence



FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Do you favor or oppose this proposal?



# POLICE REFORM PROPOSALS SUPPORTED BY PA-1

Support for Police Reform Proposals	U.S.	PA-1		
	Natl	Overall	GOP	DEM
LARGEST BIPARTISAN MAJORITY SUPPORT				
Require Body Cameras	89	85	78	91
Duty to Intervene	82	83	77	89
National Registry of Police Misconduct	81	79	73	87
De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort	69	78	66	88
BIPARTISAN MAJORITY SUPPORT				
Ban on Chokeholds and Neck Restraints	73	75	58	88
Implicit Bias Training	72	74	64	81
Independent Prosecutors	70	69	61	75

47

(50)

**50** 

(60)

82

65

63

65

MAJORITY SUPPORT IN PA-1 OVERALL; PARTIES MIXED

Ban on No-knock Warrants

**Amend Qualified Immunity** 

# PRO AND CON ARGUMENTS

### **ARGUMENT IN FAVOR**

Every year around a thousand civilians—many of them unarmed — die from police shootings. Too many officers are quick to use deadly force, especially against Black Americans. Under existing law, when an officer kills a citizen — even an unarmed one--all they have to do is say that they **believed** that they were at risk of being severely injured or killed. In the case of Tamir Rice — a 12-year-old boy — he had a toy gun and the officers drove up to him and, without warning, shot him.

If they believed the gun was real, they should have kept their distance and, from a protected position, told him to put down the "gun." We need to require that officers learn and use better tactics when they are sent to calls involving possible weapons. They should only use deadly force as a last resort and should be held accountable if they wrongly injure or kill people.

### **ARGUMENT AGAINST**

Police officers put their lives on the line every day to protect us all. On average, about 150 officers die in the line of duty each year; many more are wounded or assaulted. They often deal with dangerous situations and violent criminals who attack them or members of the public. This requires split-second decision making. Officers are trained to first try to talk down a person and get their cooperation. But requiring them to do it can result in the officer hesitating and getting harmed or killed.

If we put these limits on the officers, this will put their lives at even greater risk, which will make it harder to recruit new officers. Current officers may seek to avoid these dangerous situations that they are called to, which will weaken the effectiveness of the police in general. Furthermore, if criminals assume that officers have to be so cautious and timid, this will embolden the criminals to not comply with an officers' commands and to even resist arrest.

**ARGUMENT IN FAVOR** 

Several states and cities have changed their policies to require that officers use de-escalation and other techniques to ensure that deadly force is only used as a last resort — and have seen great results. Comprehensive studies have found the amount of police violence went down sharply, increasing the safety for citizens, including bystanders.

Officers were found to be at less risk, and there was no evidence that they were less able or willing to use force when it was necessary to defend themselves. Police morale went up.

### **ARGUMENT AGAINST**

If we are going to have officers risking their own lives and protecting us from our most dangerous criminals, they need to be able to act in ways they feel are necessary to protect themselves and others. Officers should not be punished for taking actions they believed were necessary and lifesaving at the time. Holding them criminally liable will entangle courts in endless second-guessing of police decisions made in split seconds under stress.

The fear of getting charged will discourage officers from acting as needed to protect themselves or others, and from even becoming officers in the first place. We should do more to weed out bad actors, not further jeopardize the lives of all who wear the uniform.

# **Duty to Intervene**

### **ARGUMENT IN FAVOR**

When law enforcement officers use excessive force, in many cases there is another officer present. If we want to make sure that excessive force is not being used, one of the most effective things we can do is to make it a duty for officers to intervene. Officers should be expected to abide by the law just like everybody else, and their colleagues should have the responsibility to ensure that they do.

If any officer violates the rules, this undermines all officers in the eyes of society. If the public sees officers holding each other accountable this will increase confidence in the integrity of all police officers. Police officers should be responsible for enforcing the law against everyone — including their own.

# **Duty to Intervene**

### **ARGUMENT AGAINST**

When officers use force it is usually in dangerous and complex situations in which a suspect is violent or resists arrest. Another officer may come upon the scene where they don't know all the facts of the situation and cannot reliably determine whether the other officer is using appropriate force or not. It can make the situation more difficult and dangerous if they have to worry that another officer might suddenly intervene to stop them. Furthermore, officers frequently have to engage with bystanders or other suspects on the scene that may make it harder to determine whether another officer is using appropriate force. Officers should not be punished for failing to intervene when situations are so often murky.

# Ban on Chokeholds and Neck Restraints

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

There are means to restrain a struggling suspect without using dangerous methods that unnecessarily put the suspect's life in danger. Chokeholds by police have led to needless deaths of too many civilians as well as caused brain damage and strokes in others. Furthermore, when a suspect is being choked, they resist because they are trying to breathe, which is then used to justify using more force, including deadly force.

Many police departments already prohibit chokeholds because they know it is wrong. They should be banned everywhere.

# Ban on Chokeholds and Neck Restraints

**ARGUMENT AGAINST** 

Officers are often dealing with violent out of control people and they need all the tools available to them. If they cannot use chokeholds and similar restraints, they will have to use alternatives, like firearms, which are even more dangerous. Officers should not be denied these options as they may be needed in some circumstances. For example, when a violent individual physically attacks a police officer, the officer must do all they can to prevent that person from getting ahold of the officer's firearm, and a chokehold may be the only way of restraining the attacker.

## **Ban on No-Knock Warrants**

### ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

No-knock warrants are highly dangerous. Too often they have resulted in innocent people being hurt or killed, and property destroyed. Officers have broken into the wrong house by accident. Innocents in the house, thinking there is a criminal breaking in, have used their 2nd amendment rights of self-defense. Officers have been killed. There are other means to appropriately investigate or apprehend suspects than breaking down their doors without warning.

# **Ban on No-Knock Warrants**

**ARGUMENT AGAINST** 

No-knock warrants can be used appropriately and effectively and should be allowed. Criminals can flush drugs and other evidence down a toilet or destroy computer evidence of a multi-million-dollar drug deal with a few quick keystrokes. If they know officers are at the door, it gives these dangerous criminals time to get guns to use or to set up triggered booby traps.

We shouldn't hamstring officers' ability to protect themselves and/or to prevent destruction of essential evidence of a crime.

# **Amend Qualified Immunity**

### **ARGUMENT IN FAVOR**

There have been an extraordinary number of cases in which officers have not been held accountable after using excessive violence against civilians, simply because the officer could say they didn't think they were violating the law or because there wasn't a previous case holding an officer liable under virtually the same circumstances. Not understanding the law should not be an excuse for violating it — especially for a police officer. No other person would ever be able to use that defense in court. Without any consequences, officers will continue to commit heinous acts against citizens. This is wrong and its causing people to lose faith in our system of justice.

# **Amend Qualified Immunity**

### **ARGUMENT AGAINST**

Police officers often have to make split-second decisions in dangerous situations. Qualified immunity is necessary to give officers the ability to make reasonable, even if mistaken decisions without constantly worrying about getting sued. Without qualified immunity, police officers will become too timid and fail to take the appropriate action. They may use too much caution, and let a criminal get away, or worse, they may fail to use necessary force against a violent person that poses a risk to the officer or a bystander.

When on the job, police officers should only have to consider how best to stop criminals and make their community safer, and not whether their actions will result in a long trial and bad publicity. Changing these laws will make our communities less safe and make it harder to recruit and retain good officers.

# National Registry of Police Misconduct

**ARGUMENT IN FAVOR** 

Any effort to increase transparency and accountability starts with knowing who the bad cops are. Police departments have a right to know the history of the people they hire and empower with deadly force. Without some way of ensuring that police departments can know the history of the officers they hire, bad cops can just go from city to city, acting abusively without consequence. Finally, this information is very useful in court cases when a judge or jury is trying to decide if an officer's misconduct was a one-time event, or if they have a history of unlawful behavior.

# National Registry of Police Misconduct

### **ARGUMENT AGAINST**

Officers get unjustified complaints filed against them all the time. Officers get negative reports from people who are trying to come up with an excuse for the behavior that prompted their arrest by the officer, or they may have a personal grudge against the officer. A small mistake or wrongfully filed complaints, can result in getting blacklisted and difficulty in getting another job in law enforcement or elsewhere, which is unfair.

This proposal singles out the police: no other government employee or official has a database of complaints or mistakes. It is also a violation of their privacy as this will be a public database. Officers just trying to protect our communities already have a lot of pressures on them and this will only add more.

# **Independent Prosecutors**

### **ARGUMENT IN FAVOR**

Because regular prosecutors often need to keep up a good relationship with the police departments they work with to prosecute ordinary cases, they often do not pursue charges against officers as aggressively as they do against other people. Many county prosecutors or District Attorneys are elected officials, who may choose to avoid prosecuting a police officer due to relationships or for political reasons. As a result, many officers who have allegedly unjustly injured or killed a person do not get charged with a crime.

It is only fair that these cases be conducted by independent prosecutors, so there is no conflict of interest. This will result in more justice, and more confidence in the justice system.

# **Independent Prosecutors**

**ARGUMENT AGAINST** 

When bringing in an outside prosecutor, there is a risk that whoever chooses the prosecutor might have a political agenda to look tough or to punish officers unfairly. Also, they may not be part of that community, and thus would not be familiar with the police officers and the situation of the community they serve and protect.

We should not assume that local prosecutors are biased in favor of police just because some people do not like the outcomes of the case.

# **Body Cameras**

### **ARGUMENT IN FAVOR**

Requiring officers to use body cameras will make the process of law enforcement more transparent and will help hold police accountable. There is evidence this will result in a reduction in violence: research shows use of body cameras have reduced both police and civilian violence by substantial amounts.

People's memory is often influenced by the heat of the moment and cameras provide a neutral view of events as they happened. Body cameras have also provided police with visual evidence of crimes being committed in real time.

# **Body Cameras**

### **ARGUMENT AGAINST**

Body cameras cost a lot of money and studies show that they are not very effective. They create a false impression of objectivity: juries have interpreted them differently, based on how they were used by prosecutors and defense attorneys. In some cases, the body cameras haven't done well in capturing what actually happened, either because the footage was grainy, shaky, or only showed a limited view of the situation.

Having this footage around creates a pressure to release it publicly; it could be used to humiliate citizens who have been caught in a stressful situation and might have acted in an embarrassing manner.

### **ARGUMENT IN FAVOR**

Studies show that nearly everybody has some implicit bias, whether they are white, black, men, women, liberal or conservative. In the justice system, everybody is supposed to get equal treatment. But evidence shows that police officers are more likely to use excessive force against people of color with potentially deadly consequences.

Implicit bias training has been shown to be effective in a significant number of cases and with more experience it can become even more effective. Reducing bias in law enforcement is the right thing to do and will help renew confidence in the legal system.

**ARGUMENT AGAINST** 

This implicit bias training costs public money and has not been proven to be consistently effective. We should not be taking time away from officers' real work of keeping communities safe. It is unfair to implicitly suggest that they are racists and cannot be trusted. Furthermore, if cops become uncertain about whether they should trust their own judgment, it may make them hesitate to take decisive action in the midst of a crisis situation, putting them and others present at greater risk.



# Pennsylvania's 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District on Police Reform Proposals

A Survey of Residents of PA-1

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