



SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY

PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Criminal Justice: Police, Prison and Criminal Records

- STATE OF MONTANA, CD1, AND NATIONAL -

Field Dates:

State of Montana, Montana CD1: July 21 - Aug 3, 2026

National: February 11-26, 2026

Sample Sizes:

State of Montana: 803

Montana CD1: 500

National: 2,509

Confidence Interval:

State of Montana: +/-6.4% **Montana CD1:** +/-5.6%

National: +/- 2.9%

Samples Provided by: Multiple online opt-in panels, including Cint, Dynata and Prodege. Sample collection and quality control was managed by QuantifyAI under the direction of the University of Maryland's Program for Public Consultation.

Note: Rows may not add to 100% due to rounding

[Q13-26 withheld for future release, Q1-12 and Q27-51 previously released]

[Police Reform]

We are now going to ask whether you favor some proposals in Congress related to criminal justice.

Here are some proposals in Congress to reform policing:

Q52. Require police departments to make it a duty for officers to intervene when they perceive another officer is using excessive force. Also, provide officers with training for when and how to intervene.

	Favor	Oppose	Ref/DK
National	88%	11%	0%
Republicans	88%	12%	0%
Democrats	90%	9%	0%
Independents	84%	15%	1%
Montana (Statewide)	88%	11%	1%
Republicans	83%	16%	1%
Democrats	95%	4%	1%
Montana CD1	85%	13%	2%
Republicans	83%	16%	1%
Democrats	94%	5%	1%

Q53. Prohibit the use of chokeholds that prevent breathing or block the flow of blood or oxygen to the brain.

	Favor	Oppose	Ref/DK
National	78%	22%	0%
Republicans	70%	29%	0%
Democrats	86%	14%	0%
Independents	76%	24%	0%
Montana (Statewide)	71%	28%	1%
Republicans	61%	38%	1%
Democrats	86%	14%	0%
Montana CD1	70%	29%	1%
Republicans	63%	36%	1%
Democrats	88%	12%	0%

Q54. Require law enforcement agencies to submit information about officer misconduct to a national database so that this information is available to all other law enforcement agencies when deciding whether to hire an officer.

	Favor	Oppose	Ref/DK
National	89%	11%	0%
Republicans	87%	12%	0%
Democrats	92%	8%	0%
Independents	86%	13%	1%
Montana (Statewide)	84%	15%	1%
Republicans	79%	20%	0%
Democrats	90%	8%	2%
Montana CD1	83%	16%	1%
Republicans	81%	19%	1%
Democrats	89%	9%	2%

Q55. For cases in which a law enforcement officer has been charged with using deadly force, provide funds to states so they can hire an independent prosecutor, meaning they do not regularly work closely with the officer's department.

	Favor	Oppose	Ref/DK
National	78%	20%	1%
Republicans	73%	26%	1%
Democrats	85%	14%	1%
Independents	75%	23%	2%
Montana (Statewide)	74%	25%	1%
Republicans	67%	32%	1%
Democrats	86%	14%	0%
Montana CD1	71%	28%	1%
Republicans	69%	29%	2%
Democrats	80%	20%	0%

Q56. Require all police departments to have body cameras, to have their officers wear them, and turn them on whenever they are responding to a police call or interacting with a suspect.

	Favor	Oppose	Ref/DK
National	90%	10%	1%
Republicans	90%	8%	1%
Democrats	90%	10%	1%
Independents	86%	12%	1%
Montana (Statewide)	84%	15%	1%
Republicans	82%	18%	0%
Democrats	88%	11%	0%
Montana CD1	85%	15%	1%
Republicans	84%	15%	0%
Democrats	89%	11%	0%

[Sentencing]

Here are proposals for giving federal judges more discretion in sentencing.

Q57. Currently, when someone is convicted of selling or producing a substantial amount of drugs, a judge is required to impose a minimum sentence of 10 years. Do you favor or oppose lowering the mandatory minimum sentence to 5 years and letting the judge decide if it should be more?

	Favor	Oppose	Ref/DK
National	66%	33%	0%
Republicans	60%	39%	0%
Democrats	74%	26%	0%
Independents	64%	36%	0%
Montana (Statewide)	64%	35%	1%
Republicans	57%	42%	1%
Democrats	76%	24%	0%
Montana CD1	64%	34%	2%
Republicans	56%	43%	2%
Democrats	80%	20%	0%

Q58. For prisoners who were convicted as juveniles and have served at least 20 years in prison, do you favor or oppose giving federal judges the option to release them from prison and place them on 5 years of supervised release?

	Favor	Oppose	Ref/DK
National	73%	26%	0%
Republicans	70%	30%	0%
Democrats	79%	21%	0%
Independents	67%	33%	0%
Montana (Statewide)	73%	27%	0%
Republicans	66%	34%	0%
Democrats	85%	15%	0%
Montana CD1	72%	27%	0%
Republicans	64%	36%	0%
Democrats	87%	13%	0%

Here are proposals to reform the treatment of people in prison:

First, here are proposals related to the use of solitary confinement which means putting a prisoner in a cell by themselves for 22-24 hours a day. People are put in solitary confinement for the following purposes:

- as punishment for minor or serious violations of prison rules
- for the prisoner's safety (protection from other inmates, or they are suicidal)

Currently, there are no federal laws that regulate how many days a person can be kept in solitary confinement, or for what purposes.

Proposals have been put forward to limit the use of solitary confinement.

Q59. Which do you favor:

1. Prohibit any use of solitary confinement
2. Limit the use of solitary confinement only when it is necessary for the prisoner's safety, and to no more than 15 days in a row or 20 days in a two-month period
3. Limit the use of solitary confinement as punishment for serious violations only or for their own safety, and to no more than 30 days in a row or 40 days in a two-month period
4. Do not limit the use of solitary confinement

	Prohibit solitary confinement	Limit: only for prisoner's safety, no more than 15 days in a row	Limit: only as punishment for serious violations or prisoner's safety, no more than 30 days in a row	TOTAL LIMIT USE	Do not limit	Ref /DK
National	13%	47%	23%	82%	17%	1%
Republicans	10%	42%	23%	74%	25%	1%
Democrats	16%	53%	21%	90%	10%	0%
Independents	11%	44%	26%	81%	17%	2%
Montana (Statewide)	15%	42%	20%	78%	21%	1%
Republicans	12%	38%	21%	70%	29%	1%
Democrats	19%	54%	20%	92%	7%	1%
Montana CD1	15%	45%	18%	78%	21%	1%
Republicans	7%	40%	18%	64%	35%	0%
Democrats	21%	56%	20%	97%	3%	0%

[Criminal Records]

As you may know, there are negative consequences to having a criminal record that go beyond serving time in prison, including difficulty getting a job, a license to practice a trade, and housing. In many states, a person can be disqualified – have their application rejected, or get fired or evicted – because of their criminal record.

Proposals have been put forward to limit these negative consequences of having a criminal record.

Do you favor or oppose prohibiting employers and licensing boards from disqualifying a person on the basis that they were:

Q60. arrested but not charged, or charged but not convicted

	Favor	Oppose	Ref/DK
National	64%	35%	1%
Republicans	66%	33%	1%

Democrats	65%	34%	0%
Independents	59%	39%	2%
Montana (Statewide)	68%	32%	1%
Republicans	70%	29%	0%
Democrats	75%	24%	1%
Montana CD1	70%	28%	1%
Republicans	73%	27%	0%
Democrats	78%	20%	2%

Q61. convicted of a petty, nonviolent crime, such as littering, jaywalking, failing to pay a parking ticket, or loitering

	Favor	Oppose	Ref/DK
National	60%	39%	1%
Republicans	59%	40%	1%
Democrats	63%	36%	1%
Independents	57%	43%	1%
Montana (Statewide)	68%	32%	0%
Republicans	65%	35%	0%
Democrats	79%	20%	1%
Montana CD1	69%	31%	1%
Republicans	68%	32%	0%
Democrats	78%	20%	2%

Q62. convicted of a crime unrelated to their ability to responsibly perform the job

	Favor	Oppose	Ref/DK
National	57%	42%	1%
Republicans	57%	42%	1%
Democrats	58%	42%	0%
Independents	57%	40%	2%
Montana (Statewide)	60%	40%	1%
Republicans	59%	41%	0%
Democrats	64%	35%	2%
Montana CD1	60%	38%	1%
Republicans	60%	39%	1%
Democrats	69%	30%	2%

Here are other proposals to limit the negative consequences of having a criminal record. For each, please say whether you favor or oppose.

Q63. Limit the period of time during which employers and licensing boards can disqualify a person for certain convictions:

- for a misdemeanor, one year after they complete their sentence
- for a felony, five years after they complete their sentence.

	Favor	Oppose	Ref/DK
National	79%	20%	0%
Republicans	78%	21%	0%
Democrats	82%	18%	0%
Independents	75%	24%	1%
Montana (Statewide)	76%	23%	2%
Republicans	73%	25%	2%
Democrats	86%	13%	1%
Montana CD1	74%	25%	1%
Republicans	71%	28%	1%
Democrats	87%	11%	2%

Proposals have been put forward to reduce the amount of time it takes to get a record of an arrest or crime sealed so that it is no longer available to the public, including employers and landlords.

Q64. For a person convicted of a non-violent drug offense, automatically sealing the record of that crime five years after the person has finished their sentence or probation.

	Favor	Oppose	Ref/DK
National	77%	22%	0%
Republicans	73%	27%	1%
Democrats	83%	17%	0%
Independents	74%	26%	0%
Montana (Statewide)	72%	26%	3%
Republicans	66%	32%	2%
Democrats	86%	14%	0%
Montana CD1	67%	30%	3%
Republicans	63%	36%	2%
Democrats	83%	16%	1%

Methodology

Fielding and Sample Size: The surveys were fielded by the Program for Public Consultation (PPC) at the University of Maryland’s Civic Innovation Center, with representative non-probability samples obtained from multiple online panels, including Cint, Dynata and Prodege.

National

Field Dates: February 11-26, 2026	Total Sample Size: 2509	Response Rate: 7.6%
Four-fifth Sample Sizes: 1991 to 2020		

State of Montana

Field Dates: July 21 - Aug 3, 2026	Sample Size: 803	Response Rate: 7.6%
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Montana CD1

Field Dates: July 21 - Aug 3, 2026	Sample Size: 500	Response Rate: 7.7%
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Pre-Stratification and Weighting: The samples were pre-stratified and weighted by age, race, ethnicity, gender, educational attainment, household income, and home ownership. Benchmarks were obtained from the Census Bureau’s 2024 and 2025 American Community Surveys, as well as the 2024 Current Population Survey’s Annual Social and Economic Supplement.

The national sample was also weighted by Census region and partisan affiliation. In the Montana samples, the distribution of partisan affiliation was weighted to be within expectations, based on voter registration data for non-leaners and/or Cook’s Partisan Voting Index for leaners.

National

Confidence Interval of Four-fifth Samples: +/-2.9%	Min Weight: 0.25	Max Weight: 2.51	Mean Weight: 1.0
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State of Montana

Confidence Interval: +/-6.4%	Min Weight: 0.09	Max Weight: 6.5	Mean Weight: 1.0
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Montana CD1

Confidence Interval: +/-5.6%	Min Weight: 0.09	Max Weight: 4.44	Mean Weight: 1.0
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Confidence Intervals were calculated using the sample variance of the weights using the following formula:
 $CI = \text{Square root } ((1+\text{variance})/\text{sample size})$

Sample Collection: Sample collection was managed by Quant-E with oversight from PPC. Samples were drawn from multiple large online panels, including Cint, Prodege, and Dynata, whose members are recruited using non-

probability sampling methods. The selected sample was invited to participate via email invitation, push notification, or SMS for cell phone users. Respondents were offered cash or cash-equivalent incentives to participate in the survey.

Data Collection and Privacy: Survey responses were collected directly on the Qualtrics platform. Only respondents with a provided link could take the survey, using their computer, laptop, tablet, or mobile phone.

Privacy and security measures were taken to ensure that data was collected in adherence to the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation policies for data privacy and security, as well as the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA).

Quality Control: Quality control measures in the sample collection process to disqualify duplicate respondents and survey bots included:

- checking respondents' IP addresses to determine if there are duplicate respondents
- employing an "operating system & Web browser check" to determine if there are any cross-panel duplicates
- using hCaptcha to detect and disqualify survey bots.

Quality control measures within the survey to disqualify dishonest or mischievous respondents, as well as survey bots, included:

- an attention-check question, e.g. Select the word that does not belong. [Tuesday]; [Friday]; [April]; [Wednesday]
- an honesty question, e.g. What have you done in the past week? Select all that apply. [Won a gold medal at the Olympics]; [Watched TV]; [Got a license to operate a Class SSGN submarine]; [Read a book]
- a speed limit, which disqualified respondents who moved through the first quarter of the survey at a pace roughly triple the average reading speed.

Lastly, respondents were removed from the sample who answered less than half the substantive questions, or who engaged in straight-lining.