

# Latino/a Voters' Views and Values on Abortion

## Findings from a Florida Statewide Survey

To: Interested Parties  
From: PerryUndem Research/Communication  
Date: October 19, 2016

### I. Executive Summary

The National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health commissioned PerryUndem Research/Communication to conduct a survey of Latino/a voters in Florida on the topic of views toward 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. The research shows that Latino/a voters in Florida mirror the electorate nationally. Large majorities support a woman's right to make her own decision on abortion. Latino/a voters in Florida say access for women who make this decision should be affordable, respectful, and not difficult in terms of travel and logistics. Respondents also express support for women in their lives who decide to have an abortion. More than half of respondents can envision a situation in which abortion would be the right decision for them or their partner.

PerryUndem conducted a statewide survey among  $n = 608$  registered Latino/a voters from August 26 to September 21, 2016 in Florida. The survey was administered by telephone and online by SSRS. The margin of sampling error for results is  $\pm 4.9$  percentage points. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish. See a more detailed methodology at the end of this report.

## Background

Over the years, conventional wisdom has suggested that Latino/as in the US are more likely than others to hold socially conservative political views on the legality of abortion. Findings from a 2013 Pew Research Center study suggest this is in fact true. The study<sup>1</sup> found 40 percent of Latino/a adults support legal abortion in all or most cases and 53 percent say it should be illegal in most or all cases. Among the general public the opinions are reversed; 54 support legal abortion in all or most cases and 40 percent say it should be illegal in most or all cases.

However, more recently studies have debunked this myth among Latino/a voters. Data suggest that Latino/a voters, particularly those who turn out to vote are just as – if not more – supportive of legal abortion as others. A January 2016 general electorate national poll of registered voters conducted by PerryUndem, commissioned by the National Institute for Reproductive Health, found one-third of respondents want to see the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision overturned (32 percent); 67 percent do not want to see the law overturned. The same question was asked in a January 2016 national poll of Latino/a registered voters conducted by PerryUndem, commissioned by the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health. The results from the Latino/a voter study are virtually identical to those of the general voting public. Among Latino/a registered voters 33 percent would like to see the law overturned; 67 percent do not. Florida Latino/a voters closely mirror both the general and Latino/a national electorates with 27 percent who would like to overturn *Roe*; and 64 percent do not.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.pewforum.org/2014/05/07/the-shifting-religious-identity-of-latinos-in-the-united-states/>

## II. Key Findings

Key findings from the survey include:

- A vast majority of Florida Latino/a voters sees the decision to have an abortion as a personal one to be made by an individual. Eighty-two percent agree “each woman should have the right to make her own decision on abortion, even if I may disagree with her reasons.”
- More than half of respondents say they personally could envision a scenario in which abortion could be the right choice for them or a partner (56 percent).
- In their personal lives, 87 percent say they would offer support to a loved one who had an abortion; 59 percent would provide “a lot” of support.
- When we ask questions grounded in real-life – how women access and receive abortion care – large majorities of Florida Latino/a voters say they want care to be respectful of her decision (89 percent), supportive (78 percent), affordable (77 percent), and not difficult in terms of travel and logistics (71 percent).
- These data continue to debunk myths connecting Latino/a voters’ religious views and abortion. Close to three quarters (74 percent) agree “even though some church leaders take a position against abortion, when it comes to the law, I believe it should remain legal.”
- In fact, six in ten Florida Latino/a voters (59 percent) agree with the statement: “my personal religious values can support a woman making her own decision about abortion.”
- Three quarters of Florida Latino/a voters (75 percent) agree that women, no matter their source of health insurance, should “have coverage for the full range of pregnancy-related care, including prenatal care and abortion.” Fully half (52 percent) strongly agree with this statement. About one quarter (24 percent) disagree.
- Close to 7 in ten Florida Latino/a voters say they tend to pay attention to a candidate’s views on a woman’s right to an abortion (69 percent).

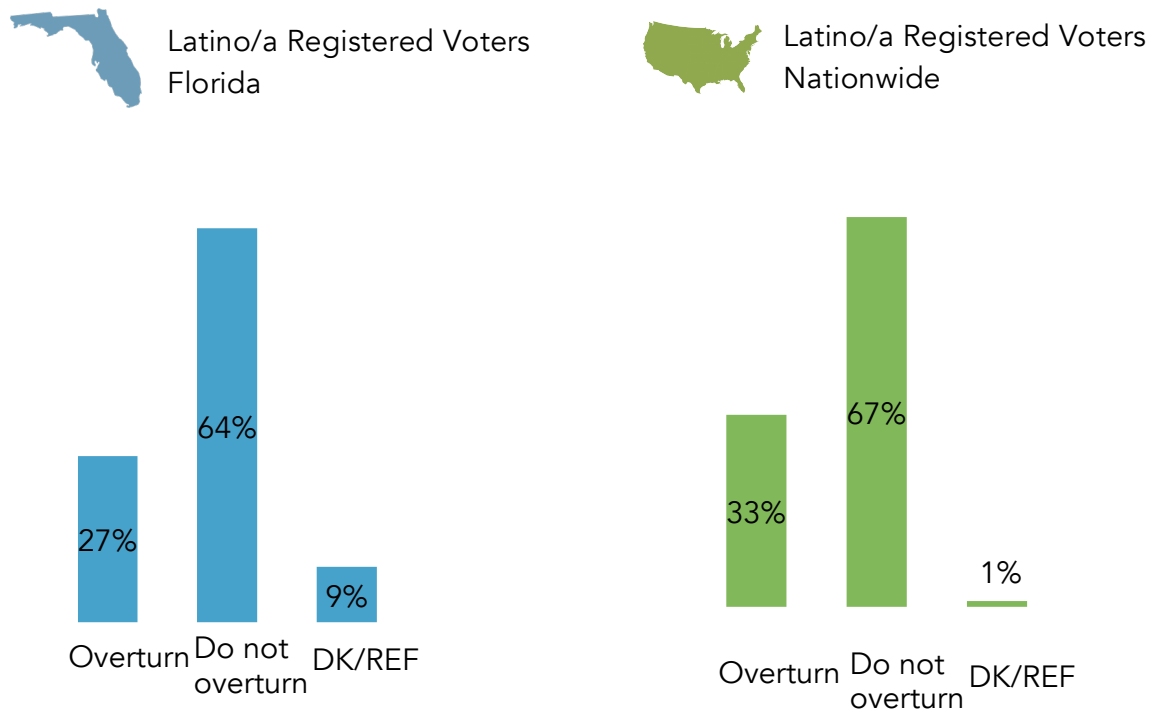
Following are detailed findings.

### III. Detailed Findings

#### General Views on the Right to Abortion

**A majority of Latino/a voters in Florida do not want to see *Roe v. Wade* overturned.** Two thirds of Latino/a voters in Florida (64 percent) say they do not want to see the decision overturned – nearly the same proportion of the Latino electorate nationally. (See Figure 1.)

*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?*



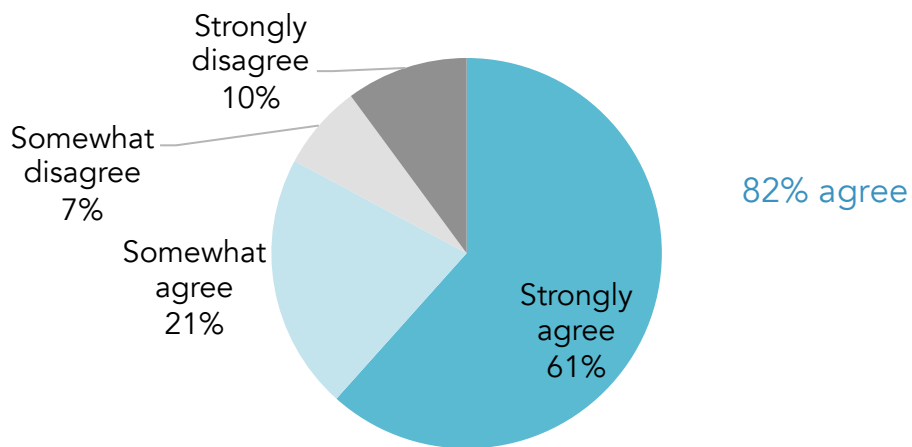
Latino/a voters in Florida between the ages 18 to 49, Democrats, independents, and those who attend church less frequently are most likely to not want *Roe v. Wade* overturned. (See Table 1.)

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

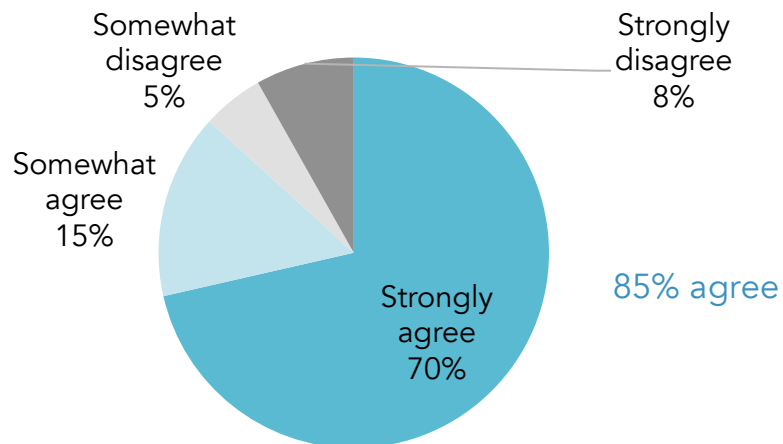
	<b>Do not overturn</b>	<b>Overturn</b>
Total	64	27
Men	67	25
Women	61	30
Democrat	71	22
Independent	71	20
Republican	45	44
18-29 years old ( <i>n</i> =89)	71	25
30-49	69	25
50-64	63	26
65+	51	33
Catholic	63	24
Attends service 1x a week or more	40	48
1x or 2x a month ( <i>n</i> =89)	59	28
Few times a year	80	13
Less often or never	74	20
Panhandle/West Central	59	36
East Central ( <i>n</i> =95)	64	26
South	68	22
Far South/Miami-Dade/Monroe	63	27

**A large majority of Florida Latino/a voters have nuanced views in support of a woman’s right to abortion.** More than eight in ten respondents (82 percent) 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 2.) A similar proportion (85 percent) agrees that “a woman should be able to make her own personal decisions about abortion without politicians interfering.” (See Figure 3.)

*Figure 2: Each woman should have the right to make her own decision on abortion, even if I may disagree with her reasons.*



*Figure 3: A woman should be able to make her own personal decisions about abortion without politicians interfering.*



Democrat Latino/a voters in Florida, 18 to 29 year olds, and those who attend religious services less often are most likely to agree women have a right to make her own decision about abortion. (See Table 2.)

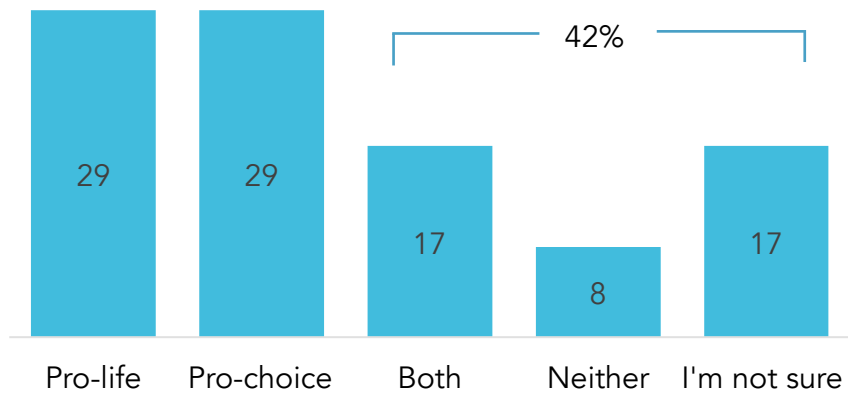
**Table 2: Do you agree or disagree... (% Agree)**

	<b>A woman should have a right, even if I disagree with reasons.</b>	<b>A woman should be able to make decision without politicians interfering.</b>
Total	82	85
Men	82	86
Women	83	85
Democrat	90	92
Independent	85	86
Republican	69	76
18-29 years old (n=89)	87	93
30-49	81	84
50-64	84	87
65+	78	78
Catholic	84	86
Attends service 1x a week or more	65	73
1x or 2x a month (n=89)	82	83
Few times a year	93	97
Less often or never	89	90
Panhandle/West Central	74	81
East Central (n=95)	88	86
South	82	86
Far South/Miami Dade/Monroe	84	88

## Traditional Labels and Identities

**Traditional labels on abortion are not relevant for many.** More than four in ten Florida Latino/a voters (42 percent) do not solely subscribe to either of the traditional labels on the issue of abortion. The remaining voters are equally split between identifying as pro-life or pro-choice (29 percent each).

Figure 4: Do you consider yourself to be...

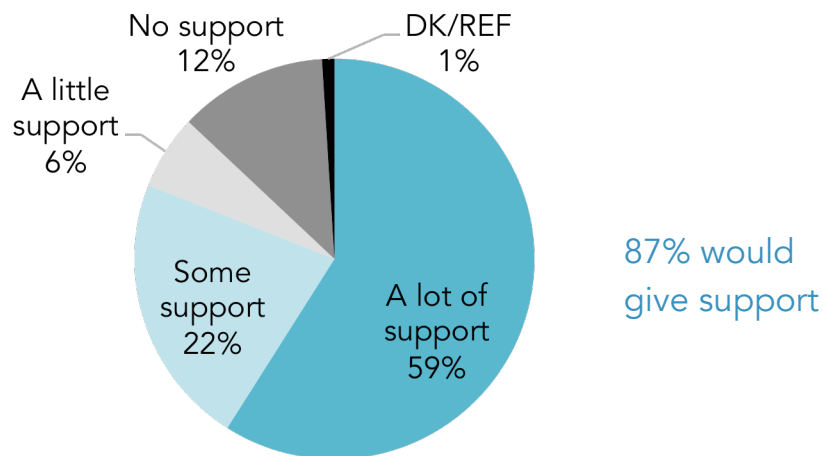




## Abortion in Their Personal Lives

**A large majority of Latino/a voters in Florida would support a loved one who had an abortion.** Eighty-seven percent would offer support to a friend or family member; 59 percent say they would give her “a lot” of support.

Figure 5: If a close friend or family member told you she had an abortion, would you give her:



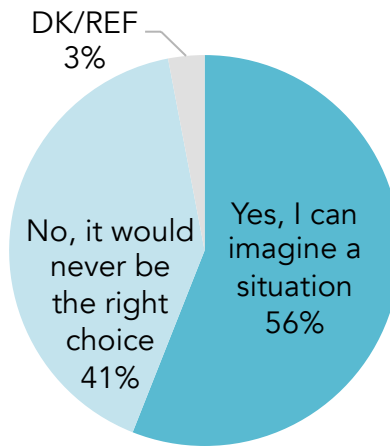
Overall, Florida Latino/a 18 to 29 year old voters, 50 to 64 year olds, and those who attend service a few times a year are likely to offer support to a family member who had an abortion. Democrats and those who attend church a few times a year or less often are more likely to show a lot of support. (See Table 3.)

**Table 3: If a close friend of family member told you she had an abortion, would you give her:**

	<b>Would give support</b>	<b>"A lot" of support</b>
Total	87	59
Men	89	61
Women	85	57
Democrat	90	66
Independent	88	61
Republican	81	46
18-29 years old ( <i>n</i> =89)	92	62
30-49	86	64
50-64	95	59
65+	75	49
Catholic	86	58
Attends service 1x a week or more	81	47
1x or 2x a month ( <i>n</i> =89)	91	57
Few times a year	94	66
Less often or never	85	64
Panhandle/West Central	86	62
East Central ( <i>n</i> =95)	91	65
South	90	59
Far South/Miami Dade/Monroe	85	58

**More than half of Florida Latino/a voters (56 percent) could envision a scenario in which abortion would be the right choice for them or a partner.** Four in ten (41 percent) say they cannot envision abortion as the right choice for them. (See Figure 6.)

*Figure 6: Now or in the past, can you imagine a situation where an abortion could be the right choice for you or your partner?*



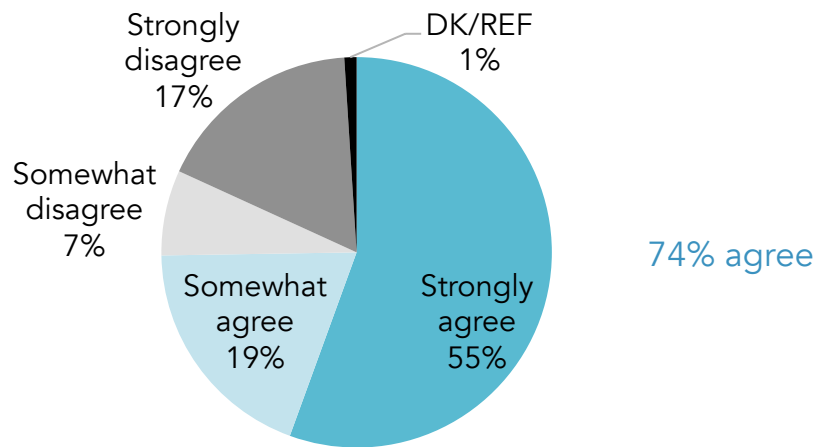
Florida Latino/a voters between the ages of 18 and 29, Democrats, and those who attend church a few times a year or less often are more likely to imagine a situation where abortion could be the right choice for them. (See Table 4.)

**Table 4. Now or in the past, can you imagine a situation where abortion could be the right choice for you or your partner?**

	Yes	No
Total	56	41
Men	60	35
Women	51	47
Democrat	62	36
Independent	59	38
Republican	45	52
18-29 years old ( <i>n</i> =89)	62	34
30-49	55	43
50-64	59	41
65+	47	48
Catholic	57	42
Attends service 1x a week or more	34	64
1x or 2x a month ( <i>n</i> =89)	49	48
Few times a year	71	27
Less often or never	66	29
Panhandle/West Central	53	46
East Central ( <i>n</i> =95)	50	44
South	57	40
Far South/Miami Dade/Monroe	57	40

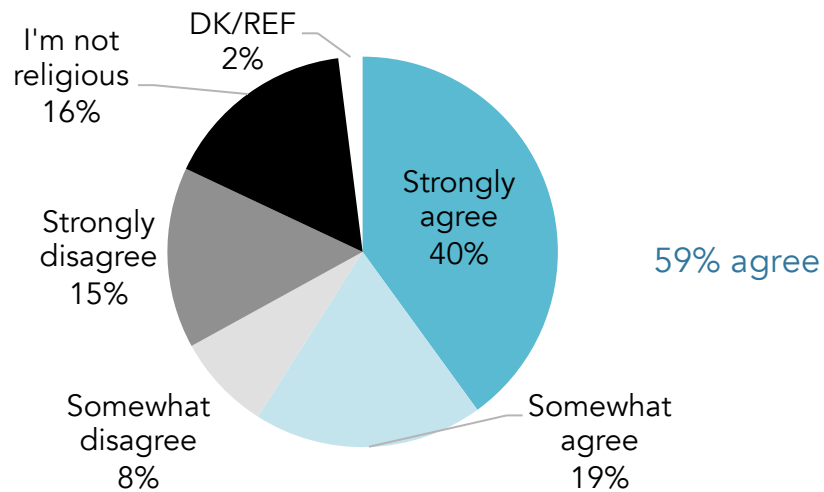
**Most Florida Latino/a voters are willing to disagree with church leaders on abortion.** Seventy-four percent agree with the statement: “Even though some church leaders take a position against abortion, when it comes to the law, I believe it should remain legal.” More than half (55 percent) strongly agree. Sixty-eight percent of national Latino/a voters agree with this statement; 47 percent strongly agree.

*Figure 7: Even though some church leaders take a position against abortion, when it comes to the law, I believe it should remain legal.*



**Further, more than half of Latino/a voters in Florida agree that their religious values can support a woman making her own decision about abortion.** Close to six in ten (59 percent) agree with this sentiment; 23 percent disagree; 16 percent say they are not religious. Nationally, half of Latino/a voters (50 percent) agree; 30 percent strongly agree. Thirty-seven percent disagree and 13 percent say they are not religious.

*Figure 8: My personal religious values can support a woman making her own decision about abortion; or are you not religious?*



A majority of Catholics and respondents who attend religious services regularly agree with these positions. (See Table 5.)

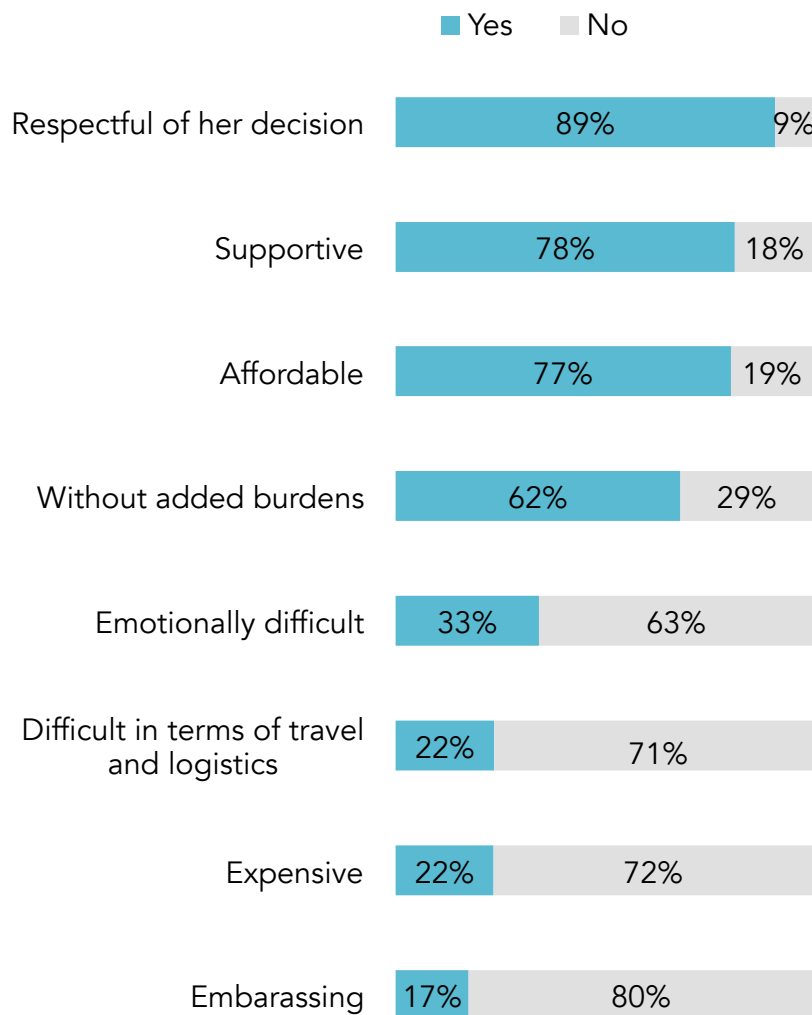
**Table 5: Do you agree or disagree (% Agree)**

	<b>Even though some church leaders take a position against abortion, when it comes to the law, I believe it should remain legal.</b>	<b>My personal religious values can support a woman making her own decision about abortion. Or are you not religious?</b>
Total	74	59
Men	75	57
Women	73	61
Democrat	79	70
Independent	82	56
Republican	56	49
18-29 years old ( <i>n</i> =89)	81	45
30-49	75	59
50-64	73	67
65+	67	65
Catholic	77	62
Attends service 1x a week or more	53	57
1x or 2x a month ( <i>n</i> =89)	77	66
Few times a year	85	69
Less often or never	82	52
Panhandle/West Central	67	58
East Central ( <i>n</i> =95)	75	68
South	78	57
Far South/Miami Dade/Monroe	75	58

## Views about Abortion Access and Care

When we ask questions grounded in real-life – how women access and experience abortion care – large majorities of Florida Latino/a voters want it to be respectful of her decision, supportive, affordable, and without difficulty in travel or logistics. These measures are very consistent with the Latino/a electorate at large<sup>2</sup>.

Figure 9: Let's say a woman has decided to have an abortion.  
Would you want the experience to be...



<sup>2</sup> <http://latinainstitute.org/en/2016-national-public-poll>



## Views toward Recent Restrictions

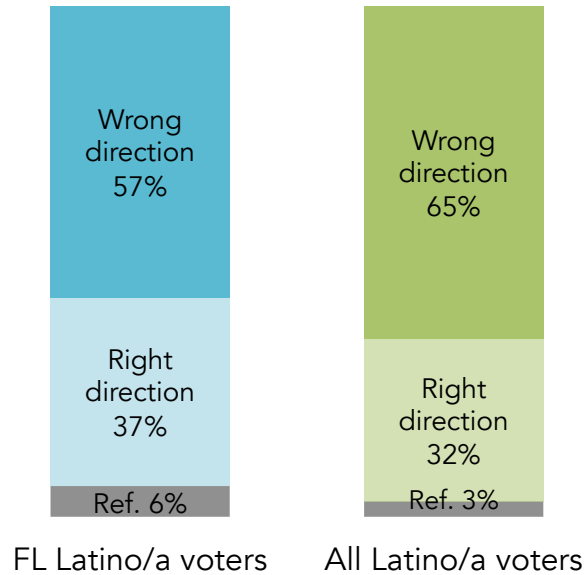
**When given a brief description of the trend to restrict access to abortion, a majority of Latino/a voters say restrictions are going in the wrong direction.** To measure opinion toward new laws that restrict abortion access, respondents heard the following information about the trend and types of laws.

Since 2010, politicians across the country have passed over 300 new laws that make it harder for women to get abortion care. In Florida, politicians have passed laws that do things like:

- Require women to have an ultrasound, whether or not the doctor says it is necessary,
- Require women to make multiple, medically unnecessary appointments for care,
- Make it illegal for health insurance in the online marketplace to cover abortion care except in cases of life endangerment, rape or incest.

More than half (57 percent) say the restrictions trend is going in the wrong direction; 37 percent say the trend is going in the right direction. (See Figure 10.) This is similar to the Latino/a electorate nationally (65 percent say wrong direction and 32 percent say right direction).

Figure 10: Do you feel this trend is going in the right direction or the wrong direction?



There are no demographic segments in which a majority feel restrictions are going in the right direction. (See Table 6.)

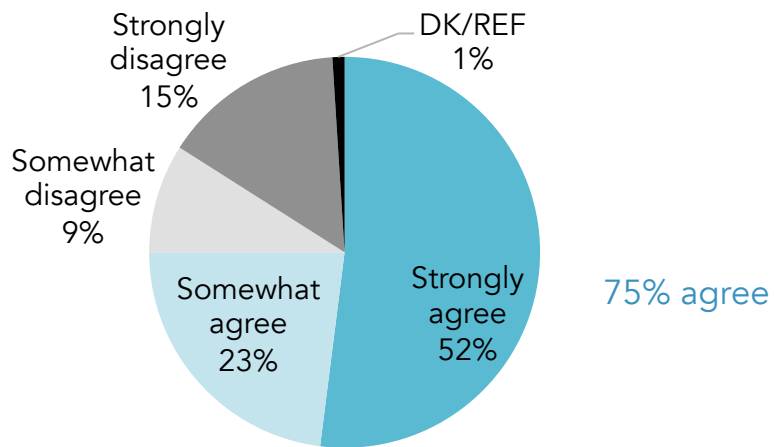
**Table 6: Do you feel these laws are going in the...**

	<b>Right direction</b>	<b>Wrong direction</b>
Total	37	57
Men	38	56
Women	35	58
Democrat	27	67
Independent	38	58
Republican	48	43
18-29 years old ( <i>n</i> =89)	36	60
30-49	36	59
50-64	29	67
65+	44	43
H.S. or less	40	51
Some college	35	61
College +	33	62
Catholic	36	56
Attends service 1x a week or more	46	47
1x or 2x a month ( <i>n</i> =89)	44	47
Few times a year	31	66
Less often or never	29	65
Panhandle/West Central	34	63
East Central ( <i>n</i> =95)	27	63
South	36	59
Far South/Miami Dade/Monroe	41	51

## Values Around Insurance Coverage for Pregnancy-Related Care

A large majority of Florida Latino/a voters (75 percent) believe health insurance should cover abortion care, no matter the source of her coverage. More than half (52 percent) strongly agree with this idea; a quarter (24 percent) disagrees.

*Figure 11: 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.*



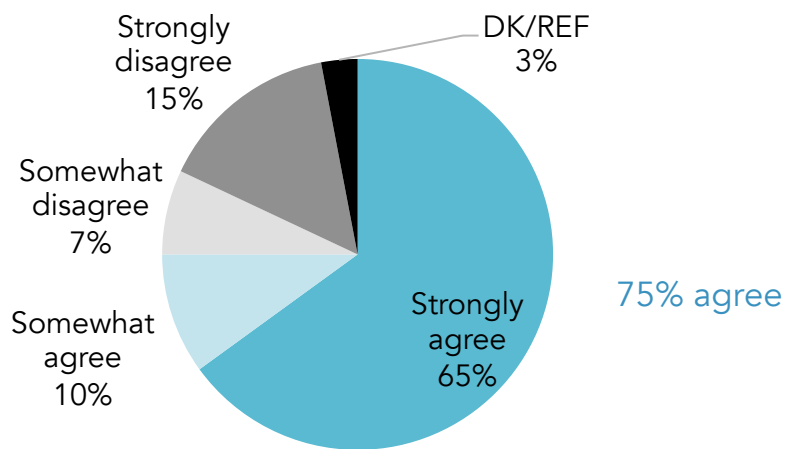
Majorities across all demographic segments agree women should have coverage for the full range of pregnancy-related care including prenatal care and abortion. (See Table 7.)

**Table 7: 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.**

	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
Total	75	24
Men	75	24
Women	75	23
Democrat	86	12
Independent	78	22
Republican	56	41
18-29 years old ( <i>n</i> =89)	86	12
30-49	70	29
50-64	78	20
65+	65	31
Catholic	74	23
Attends service 1x a week or more	65	33
1x or 2x a month ( <i>n</i> =89)	75	22
Few times a year	82	17
Less often or never	78	20
Panhandle/West Central	73	25
East Central ( <i>n</i> =95)	83	15
South	69	28
Far South/Miami Dade/Monroe	76	24

**A large majority of Florida Latino/a voters (75 percent) feel politicians should not deny coverage for abortion based on income.** Nationally, 81 percent of Latino/a voters also agree with this statement (67 percent strongly); 18 percent disagree.

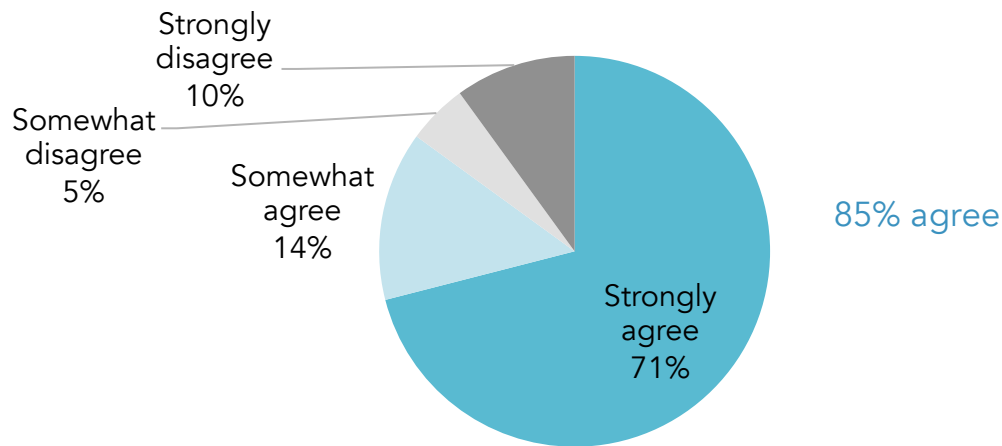
*Figure 12: However, we feel we feel about abortion, politicians should not be allowed to deny a woman's health coverage for it just because she's poor.*



Florida Latino/a voters ages 18 to 49 years old, Democrats, independents, and attend religious services with less frequency are most likely to agree a woman should not be denied abortion coverage due to her income. (See Table 8.)

**Large majorities (85 percent) of Latino/a voters in Florida agree that each woman should be able to get birth control through health insurance even if her employer disagrees.** Seven in ten (71 percent) strongly agree that birth control should be accessible through health insurance. 87 percent of national voters also agreed with this statement (68 percent strongly); 11 percent disagree.

*Figure 13: A woman should be able to get birth control through her health insurance, even if her boss disagrees with the idea of birth control.*



Large majorities across demographic segments agree with access to birth control regardless of employers' positions. (See Table 8.)

**Table 8: Do you agree or disagree...**

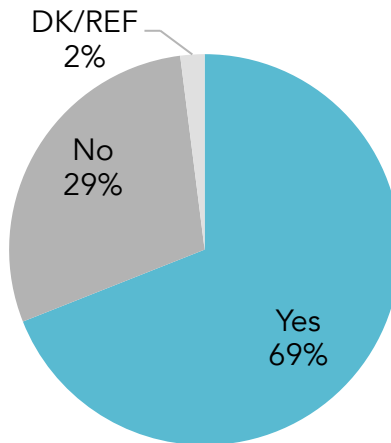
	<b>However, we feel abortion, politicians should not be allowed to deny a woman's health coverage for it just because she's poor.</b>	<b>A woman should be able to get birth control through her health insurance, even if her boss disagrees with the idea of birth control.</b>
Total	75	84
Men	79	82
Women	72	87
Democrat	81	95
Independent	81	83
Republican	61	70
18-29 years old (n=89)	92	91
30-49	82	88
50-64	75	83
65+	50	75
Catholic	71	82
Attend services 1x a week or more	65	82
1x or 2x a month (n=89)	71	77
Few times a year	84	87
Less often/never	79	88
Panhandle/West Central	77	86
East Central (n=95)	86	92
South	79	91
Far South/Miami Dade/Monroe	69	79



## Views toward Politicians' Positions on Abortion

**Voters care about a candidate's view and are paying attention to them.** Close to seven in ten Florida Latino/a voters (69 percent) say they pay attention to a candidates views on abortion.

*Figure 14: In general, do you tend to pay attention to a political candidate's views on a woman's right to get an abortion?*



Women and men in equal proportions are likely to pay attention to a candidate's position on abortion. Latino/a voters under 65 are also more apt to pay attention. (See Table 9.)

**Table 9: In general, do you tend to pay attention to a political candidate’s views on a woman’s right to get an abortion?**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Total	69	29
Men	68	31
Women	70	27
Democrat	73	25
Independent	68	31
Republican	65	32
18-29 years old (n=89)	75	25
30-49	71	29
50-64	71	28
65+	58	35
H.S. or less	62	34
Some college	74	24
College +	74	26
Catholic	66	32
Attend services 1x a week or more	74	26
1x or 2x a month (n=89)	63	33
Few times a year	71	27
Less often/never	66	32
Panhandle/West Central	73	26
East Central (n=95)	70	30
South	68	32
Far South/Miami Dade/Monroe	65	31

## Detailed Methods

The study collected data from a sample of  $n = 608$  Latino/a Florida registered voters.  $N = 499$  interviews were completed by phone and  $n = 109$  through a web panel. The survey was administered in both English and Spanish.

In order to obtain the number of interviews needed in a timely manner, SSRS used sample from registered voter lists in Florida, prescreened sample determined to include Hispanic registered voters from the appropriate states from SSRS's weekly omnibus survey.

The survey was also administered through a web panel in order to reach sufficient numbers of this low-incidence population. All web respondents to this survey were asked to complete the entire survey immediately after completing the screening eligibility questions. These eligibility questions were the same as the phone component.

Invitations to complete the web survey were sent directly to potential respondents by the web panel company. The field period for the web survey was September 15 through September 21, 2016.

The final data were weighted to correct for variance in the likelihood of selection for a given case and to balance the sample to known population parameters in order to correct for systematic under- or over-representation of meaningful social-demographic categories.

The field period for the phone study was August 26 through September 21, 2016. The margin of sampling error for results is  $\pm 4.9$  percentage points.