



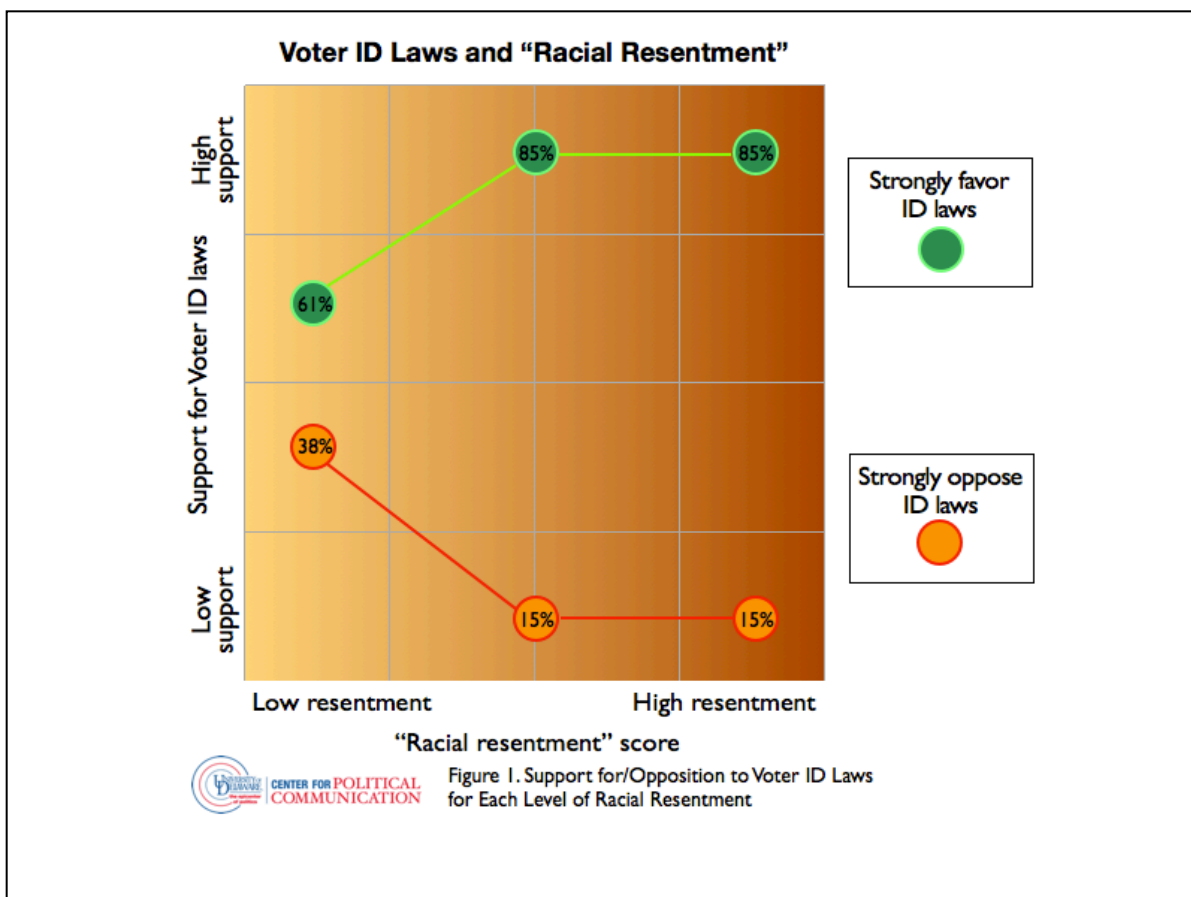
National Survey Shows Support for Voter ID Laws Strongest Among Those with Negative Attitudes Toward African Americans

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A new National Agenda Opinion Poll by the University of Delaware’s Center for Political Communication reveals support for voter identification laws is strongest among Americans who harbor negative sentiments toward African Americans.

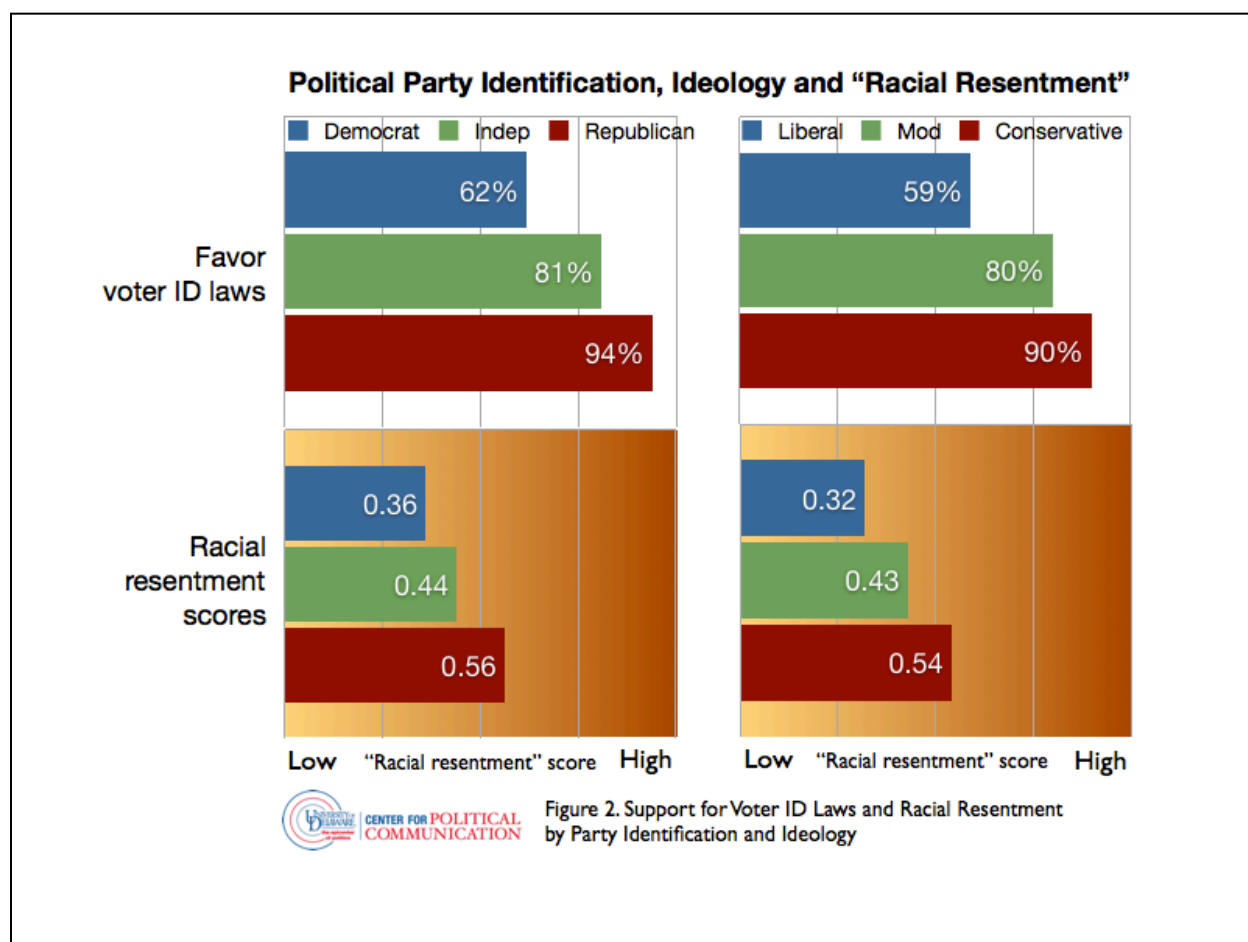
Voter ID laws require individuals to show government issued identification when they vote. The survey findings support recent [comments](#) by U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder, who portrayed a Texas photo ID law now being challenged as similar to poll taxes used in the Jim Crow era, primarily by Southern states, to block African Americans from voting. Holder pledged to oppose “political pretexts” which, he said, “disenfranchise” black voters.



The national telephone survey of 906 Americans was conducted by the University of Delaware’s Center for Political Communication from May 20-June 6, 2012. Research faculty David C. Wilson and Paul Brewer supervised the study, as states and the federal government confront the voter ID issue.

To assess attitudes toward African Americans, all non-African Americans respondents in the poll were asked a series of questions (see Appendix). Responses to these questions were combined to form a measure of “racial resentment.” Researchers found that support for voter ID laws is highest among those with the highest levels of “racial resentment” (see Figure 1).

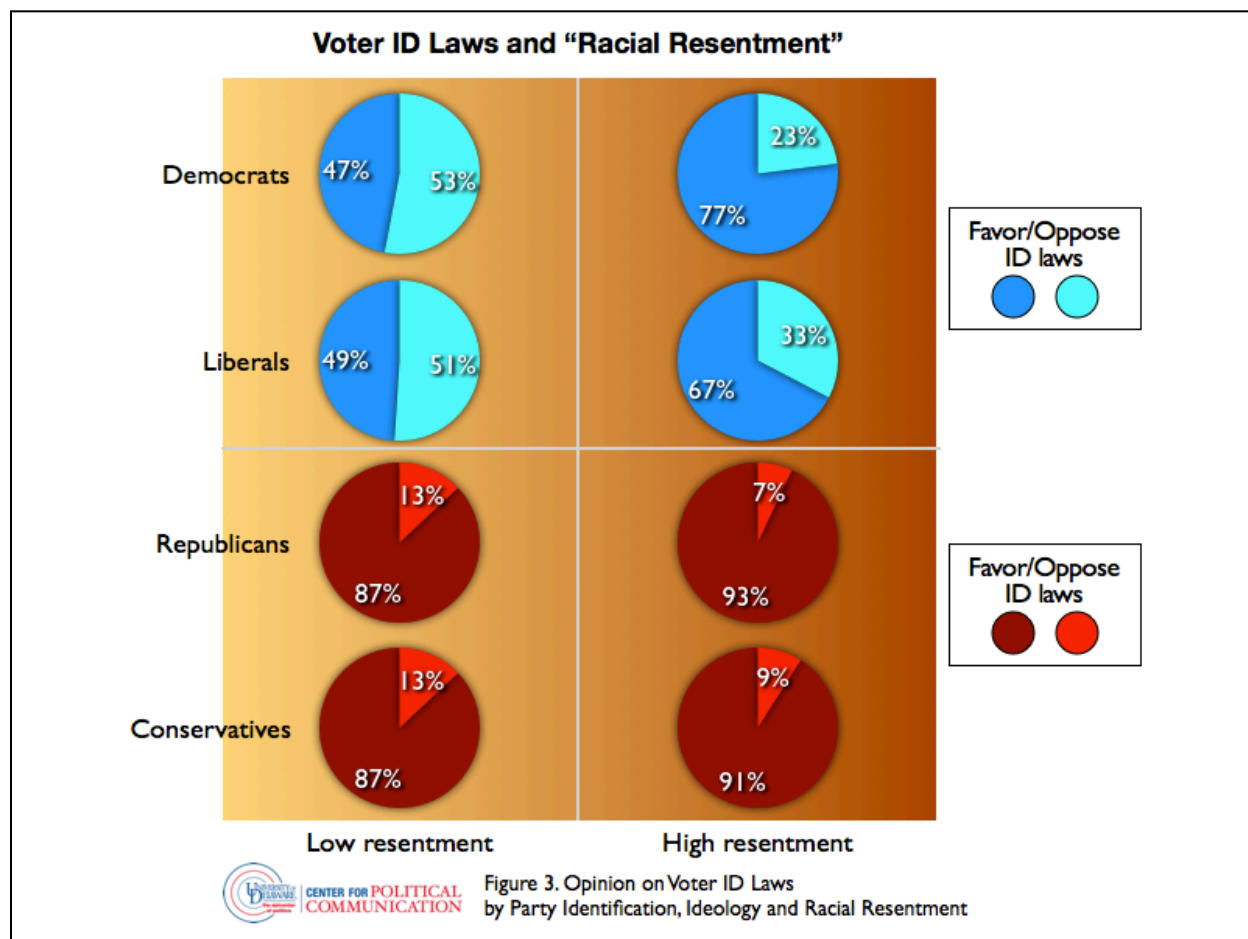
Brewer, the center’s associate director for research, said, “These findings suggest that Americans’ attitudes about race play an important role in driving their views on voter ID laws.”



The survey reveals strong partisan and ideological divisions on “racial resentment” (see Figure 2). Republicans and conservatives have the highest “racial resentment” scores, and Democrats and liberals have the lowest; Independents and moderates are in the middle. In addition, Democrats and liberals are least supportive of voter ID laws, whereas Republicans and conservatives are most supportive. The link between “racial resentment” and support for such laws persists

even after controlling for the effects of partisanship, ideology, and a range of demographic variables.

Wilson, the center’s coordinator of public opinion initiatives and an expert on race and public opinion, said, “Who votes in America has always been controversial; so much so that the U.S. constitution has been amended a number of times to protect voting eligibility and rights. It comes as no surprise that Republicans support these laws more than Democrats; but, what is surprising is the level at which Democrats and liberals also support the laws.”



Here, CPC researchers found an interesting pattern in the data: it is Democrats and liberals whose opinions on voter ID laws are most likely to depend on their racial attitudes. Republicans and conservatives overwhelmingly support voter ID laws regardless of how much “racial resentment” they express. In contrast, Democrats and liberals with the highest “racial resentment” express much more support for voter ID laws than those with the least resentment (see Figure 3).

About the study

The National Agenda Opinion Project research was funded by the University of Delaware's Center for Political Communication (CPC) and the UNIDEL Foundation. The study was supervised by the CPC's Coordinator for Public Opinion Initiatives, David C. Wilson, an associate professor in the Department of Political Science and International Relations, and the CPC's Assistant Director for Research, Paul Brewer, a Professor in the Department of Communication.

Results are based on telephone interviews with a nationally representative sample of 906 adults living in the continental United States. Telephone interviews were carried out using a dual sampling frame consisting of both landline (n=551) and cell phone (n=355, including 158 without a landline phone) extensions. The survey was managed by Princeton Survey Research Associates International (PSRAI), and the data were collected through English only interviews by Princeton Data Source. The data were collected from May 30 to June 5, 2012. Statistical results are weighted to correct known demographic discrepancies. The margin of sampling error for the complete set of weighted data is ± 3.9 percentage points. This estimate includes a calculated "design effect." Readers should be aware that in addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls. Please contact David C. Wilson at (302) 831-1935 for more details about the survey's methodology.

APPENDIX

Question wording and Topline Frequencies

*** Totals may sum to more than 100% due to rounding**

Now, I have a few questions about voter identification laws, or voter ID laws.

ASK ALL:

Q18. How familiar are you with the issue of voter ID laws? Are you ...

34% Not at all familiar

43% Somewhat familiar or

22% Very familiar?

0% Don't know (VOL.)

1% Refused (VOL.)

IF Q18="not at all familiar," "somewhat familiar," "don't know," or a refusal

READ: "Voter ID laws require individuals to show a form of government issued identification when they attempt to vote."

If Q18="very familiar"

READ: "As you know, voter ID laws require individuals to show a form of government issued identification when they attempt to vote."

ASK FORM A:

Q19a. What is your opinion? Do you strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose voter ID laws?

50% Strongly favor

29% Favor

9% Oppose

10% Strongly oppose

2% Don't know (VOL.)

2% Refused (VOL.)

ASK FORM B:

Q19b. Supporters of voter ID laws argue they are necessary to keep people who aren't eligible to vote from voting. What is your opinion; do you strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose voter ID laws?

- 46% Strongly favor
- 29% Favor
- 9% Oppose
- 9% Strongly oppose
- 3% Don't know (VOL.)
- 3% Refused (VOL.)

ASK FORM C:

Q19c. Supporters of voter ID laws argue they are necessary to keep people from voting multiple times. What is your opinion; do you strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose voter ID laws?

- 45% Strongly favor
- 31% Favor
- 8% Oppose
- 12% Strongly oppose
- 2% Don't know (VOL.)
- 1% Refused (VOL.)

ASK FORM D:

Q19d. Opponents of voter ID laws argue they can actually prevent people who are eligible to vote from voting. What is your opinion; do you strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose voter ID laws?

- 33% Strongly favor
- 34% Favor
- 14% Oppose
- 16% Strongly oppose
- 1% Don't know (VOL.)
- 3% Refused (VOL.)

ASK FORM E:

Q19e. Opponents of voter ID laws argue they are unnecessary because voter fraud is very rare. What is your opinion; do you strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose voter ID laws?

- 44% Strongly favor
- 35% Favor
- 9% Oppose
- 9% Strongly oppose
- 1% Don't know (VOL.)
- 2% Refused (VOL.)

COMPLETE TABLE COMPARING VERSIONS

Do you strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose voter ID laws?

	Version: "Voter ID Laws"					Total
	No Argument Presented	"Keep ineligible from voting"	Keep from voting multiple times	Prevent eligible voters from voting	Unnecessary Because Voter fraud is rare	
Strongly oppose	10%	9%	12%	16%	9%	11%
Oppose	9%	9%	8%	14%	9%	10%
Favor	29%	29%	31%	34%	35%	32%
Strongly favor	51%	46%	45%	33%	44%	43%
Don't Know	2%	3%	2%	1%	1%	2%
Refused	2%	3%	1%	3%	2%	2%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Q21. If you had to say, how common or rare is voting fraud during the typical election—very common, somewhat common, somewhat rare, or very rare?

- 13% Very common
- 29% Somewhat common
- 26% Somewhat rare
- 23% Very rare
- <1% Depends (VOL.)
- 9% Don't know (VOL.)
- <1% Refused (VOL.)

Racial Resentment Scale

ASK IF NOT AFRICAN-AMERICAN (RACE=1,3-9),

READ: Next, the following statements represent views that some people might have, while others have different views.

Q24. Please tell me how strongly you AGREE or DISAGREE with each of the following statements. The first one is: _____ do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with this statement?

a. I resent any special considerations that Africans Americans receive because it's unfair to other Americans.

15%	Strongly agree
23%	Somewhat agree
23%	Somewhat disagree
21%	Strongly disagree
4%	Don't know (VOL.)
3%	Refused (VOL.)
10%	Not Applicable

b. Special considerations for African Americans place me at an unfair disadvantage because I have done nothing to harm them.

18%	Strongly agree
18%	Somewhat agree
20%	Somewhat disagree
26%	Strongly disagree
5%	Don't know (VOL.)
3%	Refused (VOL.)
10%	Not Applicable

c. African Americans bring up race only when they need to make an excuse for their failure.

12%	Strongly agree
22%	Somewhat agree
23%	Somewhat disagree
26%	Strongly disagree
3%	Don't know (VOL.)
2%	Refused (VOL.)
10%	Not Applicable