

Prepared for Culver City Deliberative Poll

The Deliberative Democracy Lab at Stanford University is a leader in the field of deliberative democracy, not only in deliberation research but also in implementation and policy impact. Under DDL's guidance, Mongolia passed the 2017 Law on Deliberative Polling, which mandated the convening of a national Deliberative Poll for any constitutional amendment. Mongolia has since convened two national Deliberative Polls; in both cases, Parliament has followed the deliberative results to amend its constitution. Results from Deliberative Polls alleviate polarization, moderate opinions, and produce lasting effects on policy opinions, voting intention, and mutual respect.

What is Deliberative Poling? [what-is-deliberative-polling.pdf](#)

Deliberative Polling is a unique methodology of public engagement that aims to provide a more informed and considered view of public opinion on complex policy issues. It was developed by political scientist James S. Fishkin in 1988 and has since been used in over 50 countries and implemented over 150+ projects.

Here are the key aspects of Deliberative Polling:

1. Random sampling: A representative sample of the population is randomly selected to participate in the process.
2. Initial polling: Participants are surveyed on their opinions about the issue at hand before the deliberative process begins.
3. Briefing Materials/Videos: Participants receive balanced and comprehensive briefing materials on the topic, prepared by experts from various perspectives.
4. Small group discussions (either online or in-person): Participants engage in moderated small group discussions to explore the issue in depth, share their views, and consider different perspectives.
5. Expert panel Q&A: Participants have the opportunity to ask questions to a panel of experts representing different viewpoints on the issue.

Steps 4 and 5 would iterate depending on the number of topics to be discussed.

6. Final polling: After the deliberative process, participants are surveyed again to measure how their opinions may have changed.

The main goals of Deliberative Polling are to:

1. Show what public opinion might look like if people were more informed and had the opportunity to critically engage with an issue.

2. Provide policymakers with a more nuanced understanding of public preferences on complex issues.
3. Encourage more thoughtful and considered public engagement in democratic processes.
4. Identify how opinions may shift when people have access to more information and diverse perspectives.

Map of Deliberative Polling Locations



Examples of Past Deliberative Polls

- 1) ***America in One Room (A1R) 2019*** was a landmark national experiment in deliberative democracy organized by the **Stanford Deliberative Democracy Lab**, Helena, and By the People Productions. It brought together a **representative sample of 526 registered voters** from across the U.S. for a multi-day discussion in September 2019. Participants engaged in **civil discourse on major political issues** ahead of the 2020 election, including: Immigration, Healthcare, Economy & Taxes, Environment and Foreign Policy.

CNN: [▶ Here's what happened when 526 people talked politics \(CNN\)](#)

The national Deliberative Poll demonstrated **reduction in partisan polarization** by fostering informed discussions. Surveys before and after the event showed **significant opinion shifts**, with participants **moderating their views** and gaining more understanding of opposing perspectives. The event demonstrated how **structured, respectful conversations** can help bridge political divides in a deeply polarized society.

- 2) **The Law on Deliberative Polling®** in Mongolia was passed in 2017, making Mongolia the **first country in the world to require a Deliberative Poll before any constitutional amendment**. This groundbreaking legislation institutionalized citizen deliberation as a core part of Mongolia's democratic process.

Video:  [Deliberative Democracy in Mongolia](#)

2017 National Deliberative Poll:

In 2017, Mongolia broke new ground by conducting its first national Deliberative Poll, focusing on proposed constitutional reforms. The process involved 669 randomly selected Mongolian citizens who engaged in discussions on critical issues such as the decentralization of power, judicial independence, and government accountability. This deliberative exercise proved highly influential, resulting in notable shifts in public opinion. Following the deliberations, there was a marked increase in support for reforms aimed at enhancing government transparency, strengthening local governance, and bolstering judicial independence. This landmark event demonstrated the power of informed public deliberation in shaping attitudes towards complex political issues and highlighted the potential of deliberative polling as a tool for democratic engagement in Mongolia.

2023 National Deliberative Poll:

Building on the success of its inaugural effort, Mongolia conducted its second National Deliberative Poll in 2023, in accordance with the law established in 2017. This poll, focused on potential further constitutional amendments, adhered to the same structured deliberative process as its predecessor. By doing so, Mongolia ensured that citizen voices played a direct and informed role in shaping proposed constitutional changes before they were presented to the government for consideration. This commitment to incorporating Deliberative Polling into its legal framework has positioned Mongolia as a global leader in deliberative democracy. The nation's approach serves as a compelling example of how informed citizen engagement can be effectively integrated into constitutional decision-making processes, potentially offering a model for other countries seeking to enhance their democratic practices.

- 3) **America in One Room: Climate and Energy (2021)** was the largest deliberative experiment on climate and energy ever conducted in the U.S. Organized by the Stanford Deliberative Democracy Lab and its partners, the event gathered a **nationally representative sample of 962 Americans** to discuss climate and energy policy in-depth. Participants engaged in small-group discussions, plenary sessions with experts, and completed surveys before and after deliberation to measure shifts in opinion. A separate **control group of 671 Americans**, who did not deliberate, was used for comparison. The findings showed that access to **balanced information and structured discussion** led to **bipartisan shifts toward stronger climate action**, with participants across political lines supporting significant measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and transition to clean energy.

Congressional Representatives Webinar:

▶ America in one Room | Webinar | December 1, 2021

The deliberation produced **notable changes in opinion on key climate policies**. On 66 of the 72 issues discussed, participants **moved toward greater climate action**, including stronger support for renewable energy, carbon pricing, and transitioning away from fossil fuels. Republicans, who were initially more skeptical, **showed increased support for reducing greenhouse gas emissions**, expanding renewable energy, and slowing deforestation. Democrats, meanwhile, **became more open to including nuclear energy** in the future energy mix. Despite some remaining partisan divides—especially on policies with strict deadlines—**majorities across party lines supported a bipartisan, economically sustainable transition** to Net Zero, emphasizing the need for state flexibility, job protection, and cost minimization for low- and middle-income Americans.

Participants overwhelmingly **valued the deliberative process**, with 91% calling the event helpful in clarifying their views and 75% stating they "learned a lot about people very different from me." Knowledge on climate issues **increased significantly**, with correct answers on climate-related questions rising from 62% to 78%. The event demonstrated that **deliberation can bridge political divides**, fostering greater consensus on climate solutions when citizens engage with balanced information and diverse perspectives. The **America in One Room: Climate and Energy** project offers a powerful model for **enhancing democratic decision-making** on complex policy challenges.

Proposal for Culver City Deliberative Poll

1. Randomly select 200 Culver City residents representative of the City. The sample size is necessary to reach statistical significance and to enable generalizability of the results.
2. Engage the participants in at least three online Deliberative Polls that coincide with the relevant budget meetings to allow participants to shadow and observe.
3. Culminate in one in-person Deliberative Poll where all 200 participants will gather to deliberate for one-day.
4. At each stage, the Deliberative Democracy Lab (DDL) at Stanford University will provide interim reports, both quantitative and qualitative to synthesize the participants' deliberations.
5. At the final in-person deliberation, DDL will provide a final report, both quantitative and qualitative, to provide actionable insights.

Draft Budget

Number of Participants	200
Number of Small Groups	20
Participant Recruitment	64000
Participant Incentives	80000

Participant Additional Funds Support	8000
Small Group Moderators (for 1 in-person delineration)	4000
Printed Materials	3000
Stanford Online Deliberation Platform (3 online deliberations)	12000
In-person Deliberation Food/Beverages	8800
Stanford DDL: We can include in the DDL Fee: Sampling Strategy, Pre and Post Survey, Briefing Materials and Video, AI Text Analysis Platform. Final Reporting and Analysis, Personnel	50000
Culver City Costs	20,000
Total	249800

DELIBERATIVE POLLING FOR CULVER CITY'S BUDGETING CHALLENGES

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Deliberative Democracy Lab

Center on Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law



James Fishkin

Stanford Professor

Director, Stanford Deliberative Democracy Lab



Alice Siu

Associate Director, Stanford

Deliberative Democracy Lab

Senior Research Scholar, Stanford

Center for Democracy,

Development, and Rule of Law

What *would* the
people think
under good
conditions for
thinking about
any issue?

3 Problems with Public Opinion

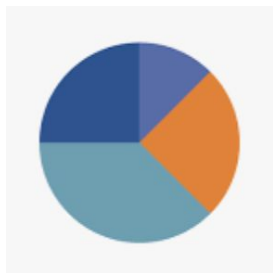
Rational Ignorance

Phantom Opinions

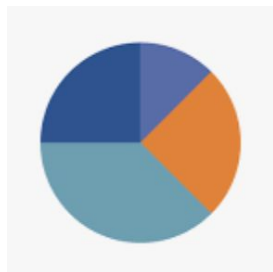
Communication with like-minded

What is Deliberative Polling?

Poll 1



Balanced
Briefing
Materials



Poll 2



Expert Plenary Sessions



Small Group Deliberations

50+ Countries/Jurisdictions, 130+ projects

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North America

United States (58)
Canada (4)
Mexico (1)

South America

Argentina (1)
Brazil (3)
Chile (2)
Colombia (1)
Peru (1)

Middle East

Egypt (1)
Saudi Arabia (1)

Africa

Ghana (1)
Malawi (1)
Morocco (2)
Nigeria (1)
Senegal (1)
Tanzania (1)
Uganda (2)
Kenya (1)
South Africa (1)

Europe

Bulgaria (2)
Denmark (4)
Italy (2)
European Union (2)
France (1)
Hungary (2)
Germany (1)
UK (8)

Macedonia (2)
Northern Ireland (1)
Iceland (1)
Poland (2)
Netherlands (1)
Croatia (1)
Norway (1)
Spain (1)
Turkey (1)
Romania (1)
Czech Republic (1)
Israel (1)

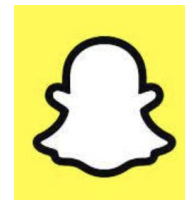
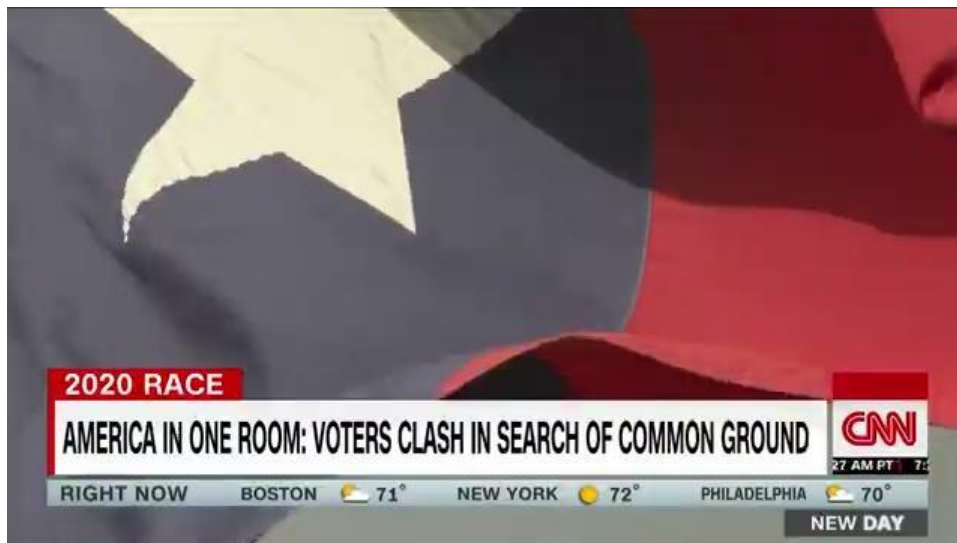
Asia

Hong Kong (2)
India (1)
Indonesia (1)
Mainland China (6)
Mongolia (2)
Macao (1)
Japan (8)
South Korea (4)
Taiwan (2)
Thailand (1)

Oceania

Australia (3)
New Zealand (1)







July 19-22, Washington DC



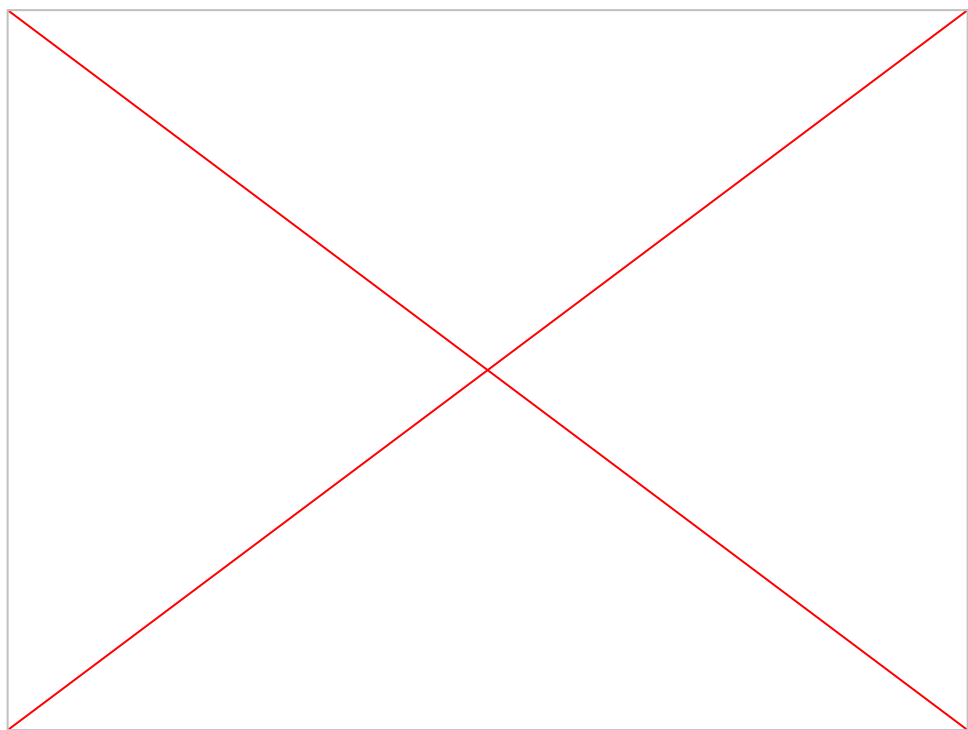
HELENA

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CLOSE UP
WASHINGTON DC

 generation lab

USC Marshall
*Neely Center for Ethical Leadership
and Decision Making*

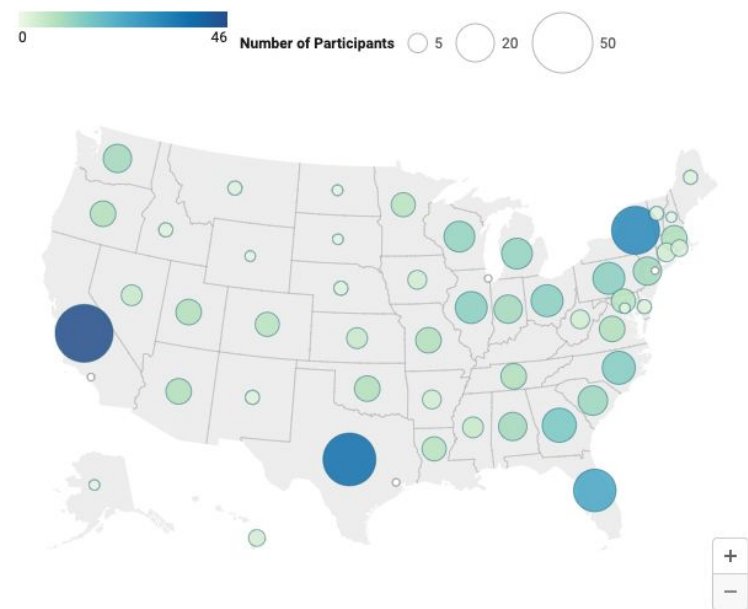


First-ever gathering of nationally representative sample of 18 year olds eligible voters

- 438 participants from 50 states
- In Washington, DC for 4 days
- Topics:
 - Healthcare
 - Economy, AI, and Taxes
 - Environment
 - Democracy and Elections



Number of Participants by State



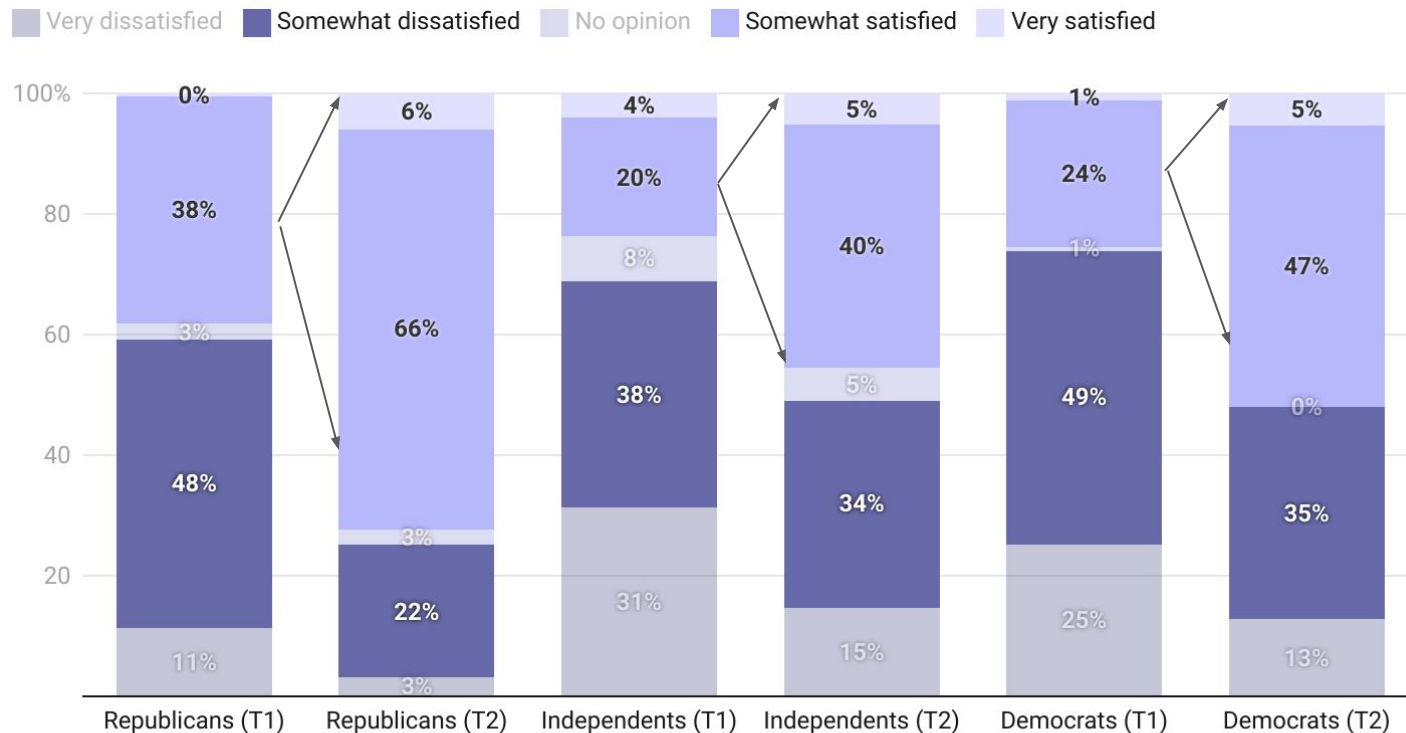
Source: Stanford Deliberative Democracy Lab • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Deliberative Polling® Methodology

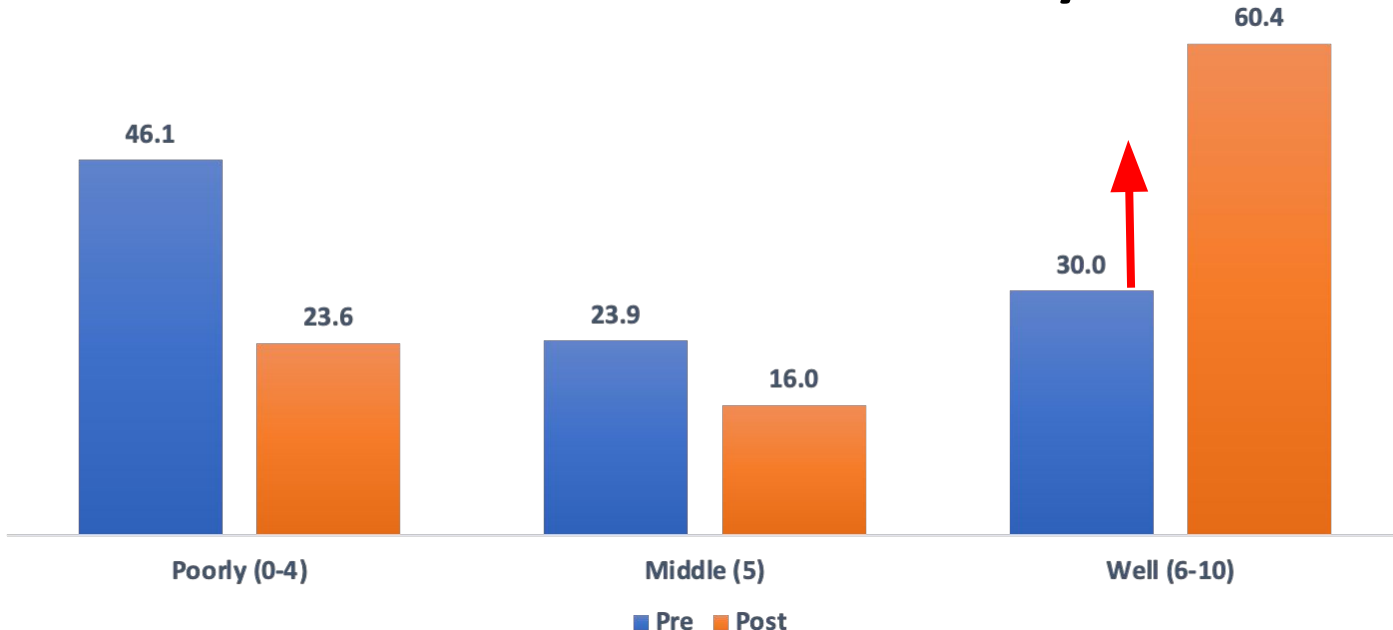


How Satisfied or Dissatisfied Are You With the Way Democracy Is Working in the U.S.?

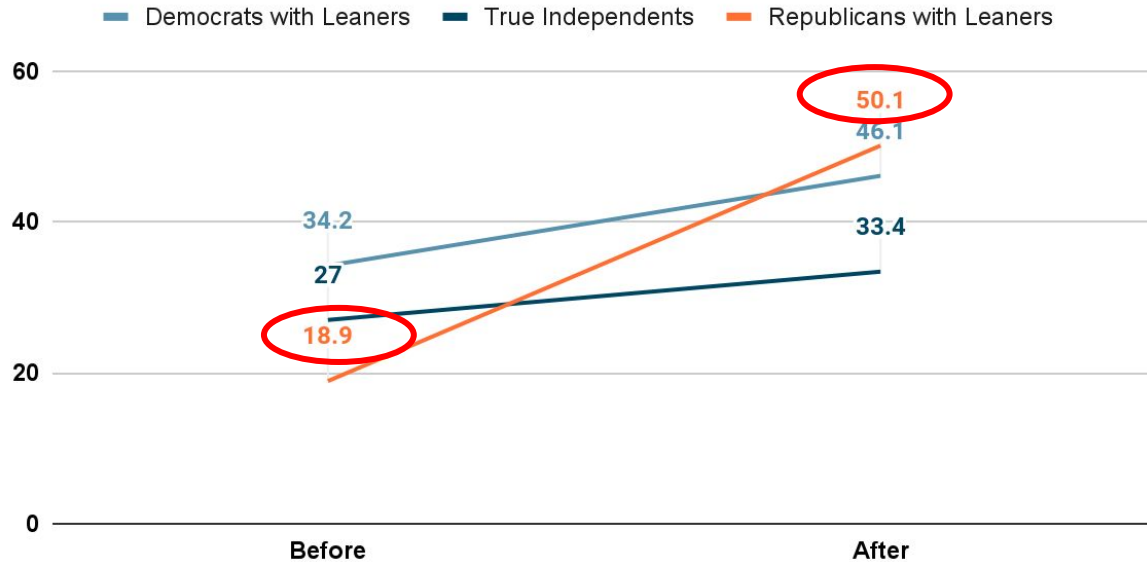
T1: Pre deliberation, T2: Post deliberation



Perceptions on State of Democracy

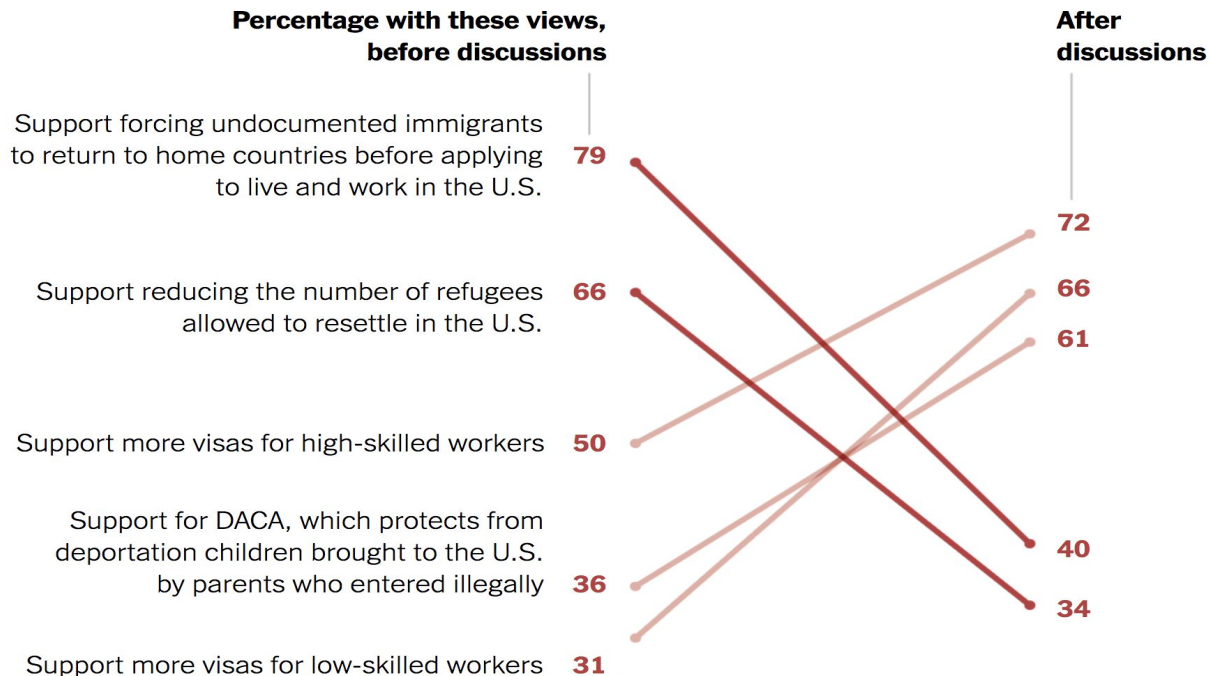


How satisfied are you with the way democracy is working in the U.S.?



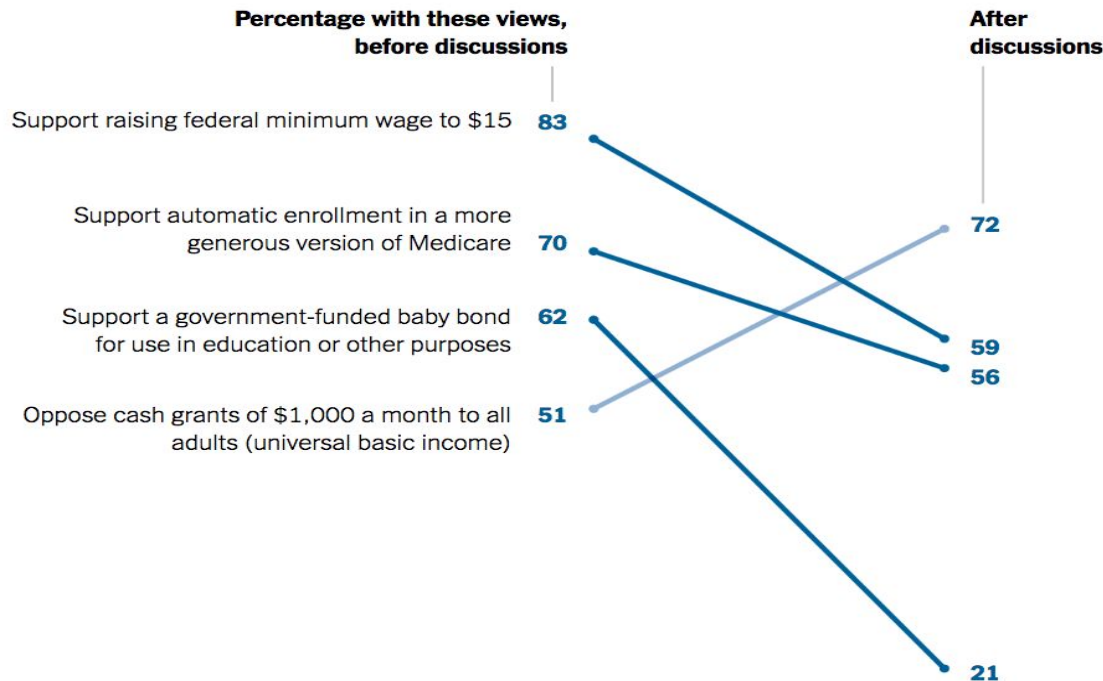
How Republicans Softened Their Views on Immigration

Some positions that were most altered by discussions with people of other viewpoints.

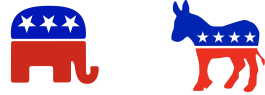


The Limits of Liberalism?

Democrats lost enthusiasm for some potentially costly government programs.



Reducing Affective Polarization



AI-assisted Stanford Online Deliberation Platform



100,000+ hours of deliberation



40+ countries



35+ languages

Features include:

- Speaking Queue
- Timed Agenda
- Real-time transcripts
- Offensive Language Detection
- Nudges to join discussions and consider arguments

- Designed based on Deliberative Polling®, 30+ years of experience
 - 150+ projects in 50+ countries
- **Online and In-person results are comparable**
 - high participant evaluations
 - significant opinion changes
 - equity of participation
 - building trust and empathy

Voices of the Future - Civic Responsibility and Representation



The main video shows a man wearing a brown baseball cap and a dark t-shirt, gesturing with his hands while speaking. Below the main video is a row of nine smaller video thumbnails, each labeled with a number or name: 709, 2431, Fox, 1661, 1119, 1551, 2765, 1711, and a partially visible one on the right.

Current speaker

455

Next speakers

1119

Fox

1661

2765

1551

Fox would like to move on to the next agenda item.
2431, 1119, 1071, 1711, 1551, 2765 agreed. **1661** disagreed. Most people think that all arguments have been discussed. Decision: move on.

1661 would like to move on to the next agenda item.
2431, 1551, 2765 agreed. Most people think that all arguments have been discussed. Decision: move on.

2431 would like to move on to the next agenda item.
709, Fox, 1119, 1661, 455, 1071, 1711, 1551, 2765 agreed. Most people think that all arguments have been discussed. Decision: move on.

Agenda

• Previous-agenda-items

• **National Service**

[View details](#)

- **Pro** National Service could reduce polarization by exposing people to people of different political persuasions.
- **Pro** A culture of national service could create a

[Visualization & transcript](#)

The discussion is scheduled to start at 11/6/21, 2:07:41 PM CDT and end at 11/6/21, 3:15:00 PM CDT.

Outcomes from the Stanford Online Deliberation Platform

- Significant opinion changes **comparable to in-person deliberations**
- Participants become more empathetic
 - Willingness to listen to the other side
 - Willingness to learn from others
- Decrease in political and affective polarization



American Political Science Review: Is Deliberation an Antidote to Extreme Partisan Polarization? Reflections on “America in One Room”



Michigan Journal: How College Students Can Depolarize: Evidence for Political Moderation Within Homogeneous Groups

- Desire for more engagement and sustained participation
 - Request to stay in contact with groups
 - Exchange of social media handles and emails

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