

Texans Support Immigration Compromise



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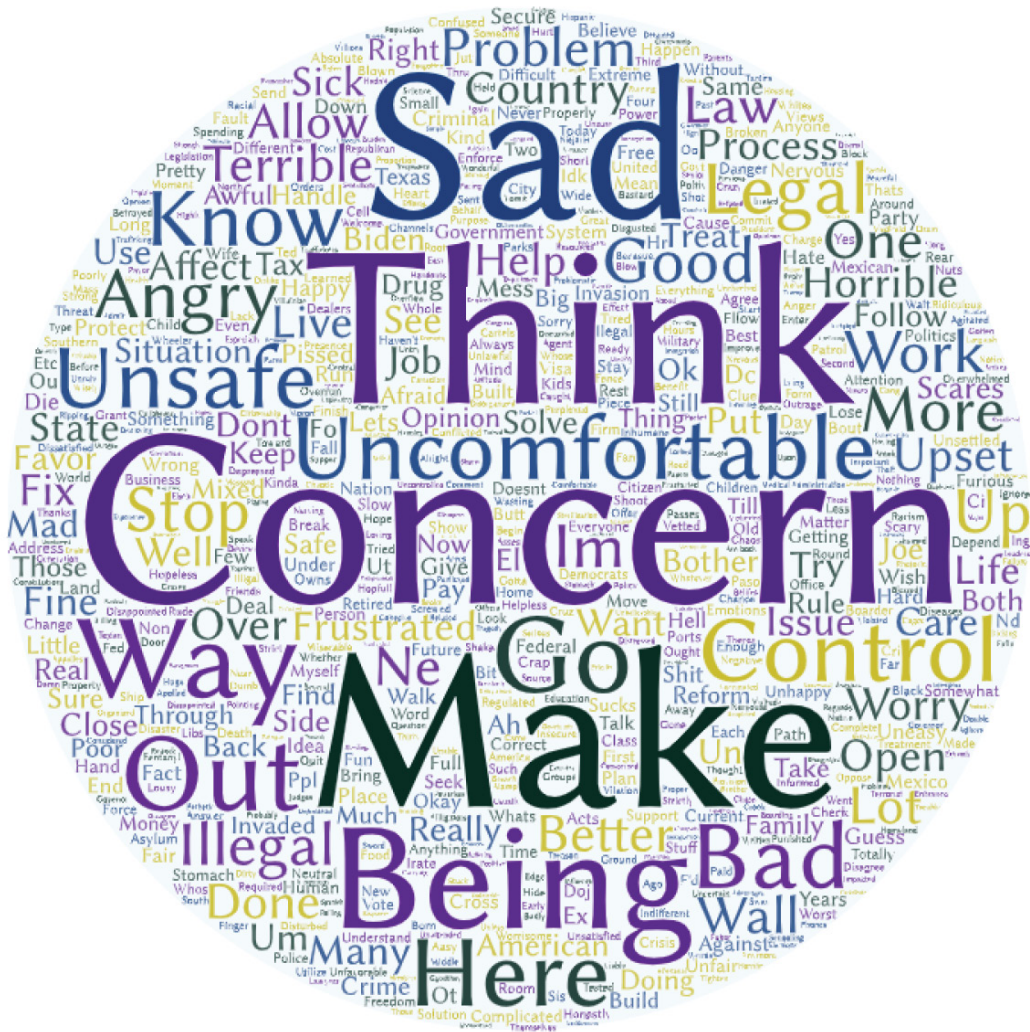
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Recent reports have indicated that policymakers are hard at work trying to strike a compromise around immigration in the final weeks of this Congress. To help members of the US House and Senate better understand how their constituents would react to such a deal, Third Way worked with Republican research firm GS Strategy Group to poll 800 Texas likely voters from December 7th-11th, 2022, to get their sense of the underlying issues the proposal seeks to solve as well as the policy specifics that may be on the table.

Texans are Torn on the Issue of Immigration

At the outset, it is clear that voters in the state with the longest US-Mexico border are very concerned about this issue. A whopping 84% say illegal immigration is a problem in Texas, with 63% saying it is a major problem. And when asked to describe how the immigration situation in Texas makes them feel, they conjure overwhelmingly negative sentiments.



Yet these concerns do not connote hostility to policy action. In fact, by 45 points, these same voters say right off the bat that they would support immigration reform that creates a tough but fair pathway for undocumented immigrants currently living in the US to earn citizenship (68% to 23%). That desire is shared by 62% of Texas Republicans, 63% of self-described conservative voters in the state, and 63% of Texans who say they have a favorable view of Donald Trump. By a similar margin of 42 points, Texas voters say it would be more practical and cost effective for American taxpayers to provide such a pathway than to deport the 11 million undocumented immigrants currently living in America.

Texans Strongly Support the Deal on the Table

This openness to an earned pathway to citizenship is even more widespread when asked specifically about the population of undocumented immigrants referred to as “Dreamers,” those who were brought to this country as children through no fault of their own. Nearly eight in ten Texas voters say they believe those folks should have an earned pathway to citizenship (56% strongly), with less

But if the details remain as reported, this compromise is unique in its wide appeal, not just for the combination of policies, but for every component of the package.

- By 67 points (78% to 11%), Texas voters support dedicating more funding and resources—including new processing centers, additional officers, and more judges—to better handle the rise in migrants seeking asylum and speed up the application process. Among GOP voters, conservative voters, and those with a favorable view of Trump, support for this provision was 76%, 74%, and 73% respectively.
- By 63 points (76% to 13%), Texans want Congress to dedicate more funding and resources to quickly remove anyone who did not qualify for asylum and to help locate and deport migrants who have fled from law enforcement and remain at large. Among GOP voters, conservative voters, and those with a favorable view of Trump, support for this provision was 87%, 84%, and 87% respectively.
- By 62 points (76% to 14%), voters in Texas want to send more funding to the Border Patrol to help hire more officers and provide pay raises for the agents on the ground. Among GOP voters, conservative voters, and those with a favorable view of Trump, support for this provision was 88%, 84%, and 89% respectively.
- Finally, by 54 points (71% to 17%), Texans want people to be able to apply for asylum at the southern border and stay if they can make their case under US law. Even among GOP voters, conservative voters, and those with a favorable view of Trump, support for this provision was 58%, 57%, and 56% respectively.

In short, each piece of this deal has at least 7 in 10 Texans on board, with opposition bouncing around somewhere in the teens.

Conclusion

It's clear that if policymakers move forward with the compromise under discussion in Washington, Texas voters will not punish them for it. By contrast, they may even reward those they feel have taken popular action on an issue that drives high levels of concern that has seen little to no progress over the past few decades.

Toplines

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