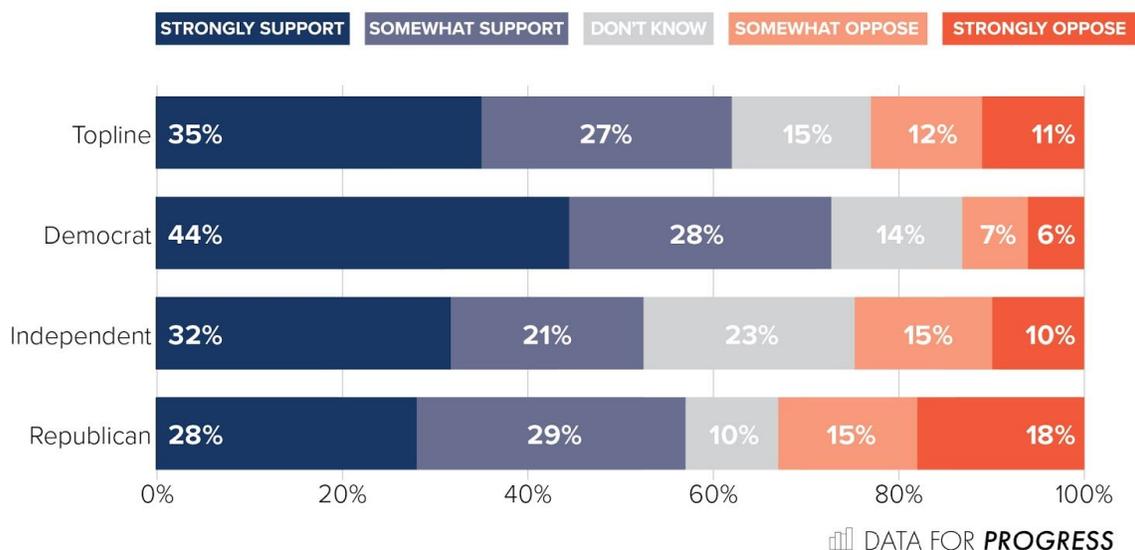


To: Interested Parties
From: Sean McElwee and Alexandria Sousa
Re: Voters Support Restoring Voting Rights to People Released From Prison
Date: 10/16/2020

New polling from The Justice Collaborative Institute and Data for Progress shows bipartisan majority support for restoring voting rights to people who have returned home from prison. The polling also shows that more people support than oppose abolishing felony disenfranchisement entirely.

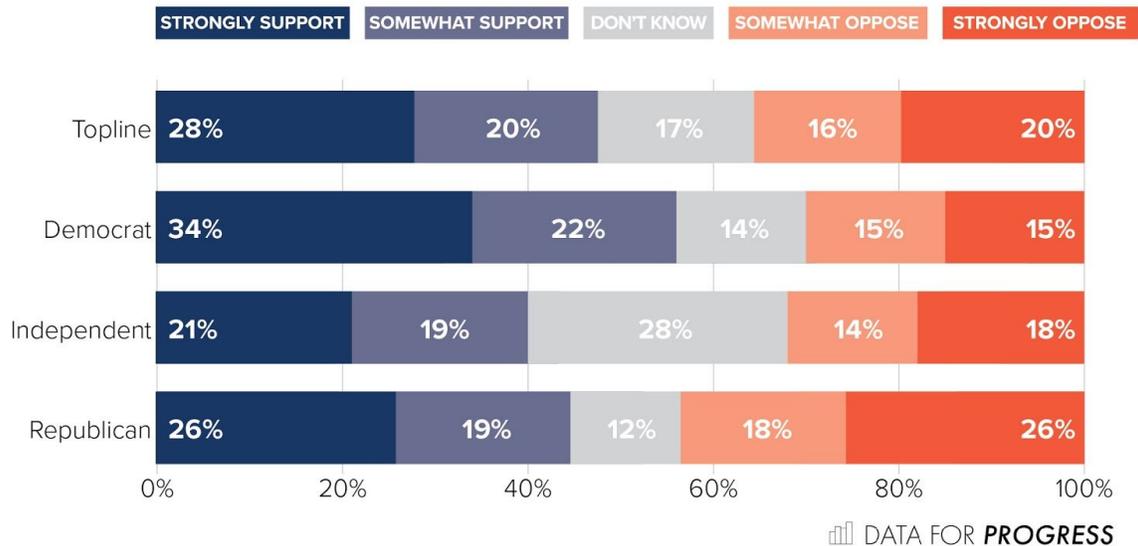
In a national survey of 1,195 likely voters, 62% of respondents support enfranchising anyone who has returned home from prison. This support crosses party lines, including 72% of Democrats, 57% of Republicans, and 53% of independent or third party voters.

Do you support or oppose restoring the right to vote for anyone who has returned home from prison and is living in the community?



We also found that 48% of likely voters support abolishing the practice of felony disenfranchisement entirely, with only 36% opposing that reform—a difference of 12 percentage points.

Do you support or oppose ending the practice of disenfranchisement?



Key takeaway:

This year, [5.2 million Americans](#) across 48 states will be unable to cast a vote because of a felony conviction. The practice of felony disenfranchisement is rooted in the United States' [long history of excluding Black people from democracy](#), and continues to disproportionately impact and reduce the political power of Black people, who are [incarcerated at a rate 8.3 times higher](#) than white people. Nationwide, [one in 16 Black people](#) of voting age is disenfranchised, with the rate of disenfranchisement much higher in certain states. [In Tennessee and Wyoming](#), more than 20% of Black adults cannot vote because of a felony conviction.

With the exception of Maine, Vermont, and Washington, D.C., which allow people to vote from prison, every state has some type of restriction on voting for those who are incarcerated, under probation, or on parole because of a felony conviction. In some states, people convicted of certain crimes can [lose their right to vote indefinitely](#), even after all the terms of their sentence are completed, and must seek executive clemency or a pardon to have their rights restored.

Recent years have brought movement toward reform. Earlier this year, Washington, D.C., abolished felony disenfranchisement. In Florida, voters in 2018 overwhelmingly passed a ballot initiative to restore voting rights to anyone who has completed their sentence. That law, Amendment 4, should have re-enfranchised about 1 million people, but [state Republicans passed a statute](#) that further conditioned the right to vote on paying all outstanding court fines and fees. In November, California will vote on a ballot initiative, Proposition 17, that would restore the right to vote to people who have been released from prison and are on parole—a reform for which our polling shows national enthusiasm across party lines.

Methodology:

From 10/09/2020 to 10/11/2020, Data for Progress conducted a survey of 1,195 likely voters nationally using web panel respondents. The sample was weighted to be representative of likely voters by age, gender, education, race, and voting history. The survey was conducted in English. The margin of error is +/- 2.8 percentage points.