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PolicyLink

New Research Shows Affordable Housing is Top Priority for Voters Across Demographics

Key Groups Support Some Funds Being Diverted from Police & Prisons to Address Housing Crisis

OAKLAND, Calif. — Ahead of Tuesday’s midterm elections, [new data](#) from research institute [PolicyLink](#) shows that affordable housing is a top priority for voters across demographics and political affiliation. New findings also revealed that most voting groups support diverting some public funds from policing and prisons to address the affordable housing crisis.

Many Americans are feeling the pressure of rising rents and inflation, with [100 million people already living below the poverty line in the United States](#). Paired with [recent polling](#) indicating economic concerns are a top priority for voters going into the midterms, the research demonstrates that people of all backgrounds want to see more government investment in solutions to the housing crisis. This indicates that housing has the potential to be a galvanizing issue for weary [voters facing escalating economic woes](#).

“At a time when we are told at every turn that our society is deeply divided, this research shows we have one big thing in common: we all want a safe, stable place for our communities to live, and most of us want the government to right historical wrongs and guarantee homes for everyone,” said **Michael McAfee, President and CEO of PolicyLink**. “This research confirms what we know about achieving equity: addressing a systemic problem for those who are most affected by it benefits us all. Government leaders should seize this opportunity and be accountable to the millions of people who need – and demand – housing justice now.”

Amid pandemic economic fallout and widespread displacement of largely Black and brown renters, tenant advocates in localities across the country have organized for local ballot initiatives to increase renter protections. Voters will decide on housing-related ballot initiatives [in at least five major cities](#) in the upcoming midterms, following rent stabilization being passed by voters in both St. Paul, Minnesota in 2021 and Portland, Maine in 2020.

“Across the country, community leaders are designing new policies that stop displacement and begin to create abundant housing futures that are ours,” said **Rasheedah Phillips, Director of Housing at PolicyLink**. “This research deepens our calls on government leaders to invest in our housing futures so that all of our communities can truly thrive, instead of racing to survive every first of the month.”

The research was produced to provide [a snapshot of the conversation on race and equity](#) as it relates to key issues nationwide. The surveys, conducted by Lake Research Partners, reached a total of 1,000 eligible voters across the country, including oversamples of 150 Black, 150 Latinx, 200 Asian/Pacific Islander, and 100 Native American eligible voters. To gather qualitative insight, HIT Strategies also conducted seven focus groups following polling.

Further findings of PolicyLink's [research](#) include:

- Americans overwhelmingly agree that homelessness and housing instability takes a toll on families leading to poor health outcomes.
- Blame for the housing crisis is spread out to all levels of government and the private sector.
- On the topic of policing, Americans would love to see greater investment in programs that address the root causes of poverty and violence.

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PolicyLink is a national research and action institute that works to achieve transformative results for the 100 million people in America living at or near poverty, by centering this population in designing and advancing solutions to the nation's greatest challenges. With a track record of delivering billions of dollars in equity policy wins at the local, state, and federal levels, PolicyLink is among the nation's leading policy and advocacy organizations.