

COMMONWEALTH FOUNDATION PENNSYLVANIA STATEWIDE SURVEY

Interview Schedule



**PUBLIC OPINION
STRATEGIES**

turning questions into answers

September 25-October 1, 2026

Project #: 260508

N=800 Registered Voters

Credibility Interval: $\pm 3.95\%$

-
1. Would you say that things in Pennsylvania are going in the right direction, or have they pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?

42% Right Direction

58% Wrong Track

-
2. Which ONE of the following issues are MOST important for the Governor and the State Legislature to address this legislative session?

39% Rising prices and inflation

19% The economy and jobs

9% Health care

8% Taxes and spending

8% Data Centers

5% Energy affordability

3% Public safety

3% Climate change

2% Election efficiency & integrity

2% Education

...or...

1% Abortion

1% Other

Changing topics and thinking about some issues here in Pennsylvania...

Please read some goals that people might have for Pennsylvania right now, and rate how important you personally consider each goal to be... **(RANDOMIZE)**

	Total Important	Total Not Important	Extremely Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important
3. Ensuring all K-12 students have access to an excellent education (A)	90%	10%	63%	27%	8%	2%
4. Reducing government spending and regulatory red tape (B)	79%	21%	42%	36%	18%	3%
5. Reforming welfare and protecting the dignity of work (A)	70%	30%	33%	37%	23%	6%
6. Improving election integrity (B)	67%	33%	32%	34%	25%	9%
7. Increasing the number of Pennsylvanians in the workforce (A)	82%	18%	41%	40%	17%	2%
8. Reducing the tax burden on Pennsylvania families (B)	91%	9%	61%	30%	9%	*
9. Restoring public sector workers' rights (A)	66%	34%	25%	41%	27%	7%
10. Making health care more accessible and affordable (B)	90%	10%	64%	26%	10%	*
11. Making government more accountable and transparent (A)	89%	11%	56%	33%	10%	1%
12. Reducing energy costs and improving reliability (B)	92%	8%	52%	40%	8%	—
13. Increasing energy production (A)	61%	39%	24%	37%	34%	6%

14. Now, thinking a little more about K-12 education in Pennsylvania... How would you grade Pennsylvania's K-12 public school system?

4% A
35% B
43% C
12% D
6% F/FAIL

2.2 GPA

Thinking more about K-12 education in Pennsylvania... Below is a series of different ideas and proposals people are talking about in Pennsylvania. After you read each one, please indicate if you support or oppose that proposal.

	Total Support	Total Oppose	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose
15. (EXPAND TAX CREDIT SCHOLARSHIPS) Expanding tax credit scholarships, which allow businesses to donate money to nonprofit organizations that provide scholarships to low-income and middle-income children in Pennsylvania to attend pre-kindergarten or K-12 private school.	89%	11%	42%	47%	8%	3%
16. (LIFELINE SCHOLARSHIPS/UNIVERSAL SCHOOL CHOICE) Creating education opportunity accounts, a government-funded account that parents can use for restricted educational expenses, including tuition, tutoring, and services for students with special needs.	85%	15%	39%	46%	10%	5%
17. (CHARTER SCHOOL INDEPENDENT AUTHORIZER) Establishing an independent authorizer for charter schools, such as a state board or universities, which would approve and renew charter schools; rather than the current system in which only school districts can approve charter schools.	78%	22%	27%	51%	18%	5%
18. (OPEN ENROLLMENT) Enacting open enrollment policies to allow Pennsylvania families to choose any public school that best fits their children's needs, regardless of home address.	78%	22%	39%	39%	17%	4%

Continued...

19. **(REFUNDABLE TAX CREDITS)** Providing a refundable income tax credit that gives money to families to spend on the direct needs of their child, including private tuition, online education programs, tutoring, curriculum, and therapies. Low-income families would be eligible for up front relief.

83%	17%	42%	40%	13%	5%
------------	------------	-----	-----	-----	----

20. **(STUDENT BASED FUNDING FORMULA)** Reforming education funding so money follows the child. Current funding relies on a policy guaranteeing that school districts receive the same state funding year-to-year, regardless of enrollment fluctuations. Under this reform, state funding would be based on the number of students each school serves.

86%	14%	39%	48%	11%	3%
------------	------------	-----	-----	-----	----

-
21. Now, thinking a little more about Pennsylvania's economy... How would you rank Pennsylvania's economic competitiveness?

3%	Among The Best States
19%	Better Than Average
54%	Average
18%	Worse Than Average
5%	Among The Worst States

22%	TOTAL BETTER
24%	TOTAL WORSE

Thinking more about economic competitiveness in Pennsylvania... Below is a series of different ideas and proposals people are talking about in Pennsylvania. After you read each one, please indicate if you support or oppose that proposal.

	Total Support	Total Oppose	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose
22. (REDUCE REGULATORY RED TAPE: LEGISLATIVE APPROVAL) Requiring the state legislature to vote to approve any new state regulation that would cost businesses and consumers more than \$1 million. Pennsylvania currently imposes more than 160,000 regulations on businesses and individuals.	78%	22%	32%	46%	17%	5%
23. (REDUCE REGULATORY RED TAPE: REPEAL AND REVIEW) Giving the state legislature the power to repeal an existing regulation by majority vote, and establishing a regular process to review and eliminate regulations that are harmful or outdated. Pennsylvania currently imposes more than 160,000 regulations on businesses and individuals.	83%	17%	34%	49%	13%	3%
24. (TAXPAYER PROTECTION ACT) Adopting a Taxpayer Protection Act to ensure Pennsylvania's state spending is responsibly managed in line with the rate of inflation and population growth.	93%	7%	51%	43%	5%	1%
25. (PRIORITIZE TAX RELIEF) Redirecting the nearly \$2 billion a year Pennsylvania spends on subsidies to selected companies, and using that money to speed up the scheduled reduction in the Corporate Net Income Tax, a tax on business profits. Today those subsidies go to companies chosen by state officials, while every other business in Pennsylvania pays the full rate.	76%	24%	32%	44%	19%	6%
26. (PERSONAL TAX RATE) Lowering Pennsylvania's Personal Income Tax, the state tax paid on wages and other income, from 3.07% back to 2.8%, the rate Pennsylvanians paid before it was raised in 2004.	89%	11%	59%	30%	9%	2%
27. (ELIMINATE THE ELECTRICITY TAX) Eliminating Pennsylvania's gross receipts tax on electricity, a state tax of about \$51 per person annually, built into the price of electricity, to lower energy costs for households and businesses and make Pennsylvania more competitive.	86%	14%	48%	38%	11%	3%

Continued...

28. **(DEFINED CONTRIBUTION PENSION PLANS)** Enrolling all newly hired government employees into a 401(k) style retirement plan, similar to what most employees in the private sector receive, instead of a guaranteed pension for life, to create predictable and affordable retirement benefits.
81% **19%** 39% 42% 14% 5%
29. **(PRIVATIZE LIQUOR AND WINE SALES)** Removing government control of the sale and distribution of wine and liquor by selling all state-run liquor stores, and allowing private retail stores and wholesalers to sell alcohol.
74% **26%** 33% 41% 19% 7%

Thinking more about state government in Pennsylvania... Below is a proposal people are talking about in Pennsylvania. Please indicate if you support or oppose that proposal.

- | | Total
Support | Total
Oppose | Strongly
Support | Somewhat
Support | Somewhat
Oppose | Strongly
Oppose |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 30. (VOTER ID) Modernizing Pennsylvania election laws to include voter identification. (A) | 75% | 25% | 42% | 33% | 17% | 8% |
| 31. (CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM FOR SAFER COMMUNITIES) Reforming Pennsylvania's correction system to remove existing barriers to job training, housing and transportation for low-risk offenders and preserve more resources to high-risk offenders. (B) | 79% | 21% | 32% | 47% | 15% | 7% |

Changing topics and thinking about energy and electricity here in Pennsylvania...

32. How concerned are you about the reliability of electricity in Pennsylvania and the possibility of blackouts?
- | | |
|------------|----------------------------|
| 18% | Very concerned |
| 46% | Somewhat concerned |
| 32% | Not too concerned |
| 4% | Not at all concerned |
| 64% | TOTAL CONCERNED |
| 36% | TOTAL NOT CONCERNED |

33. How affordable do you believe energy is in Pennsylvania?

2% Very affordable
36% Somewhat affordable
41% Somewhat unaffordable
20% Very unaffordable

39% TOTAL AFFORDABLE
61% TOTAL UNAFFORDABLE

Thinking more about energy issues in Pennsylvania... Below is a series of different ideas and proposals people are talking about in Pennsylvania. After you read each one, please indicate if you support or oppose that proposal.

	Total Support	Total Oppose	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose
34. (REPEAL HIDDEN ENERGY TAXES) Rejecting taxpayer subsidies like the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards, which cost Pennsylvania ratepayers \$700 million a year and reduce the reliability of the electric grid.	76%	24%	33%	43%	20%	4%
35. (NET METERING REFORM) Requiring utilities to pay homeowners and businesses with solar panels or small windmills the wholesale price for extra electricity they send back to the grid. They now receive the higher retail price, which also covers the cost of the poles and wires they do not maintain.	78%	22%	30%	47%	18%	4%
36. (RATEPAYER PROTECTION) Allowing large energy users such as factories and data centers to supply their own energy free of mandates for green energy, and requiring new large users to pay for the transmission and distribution upgrades they require, instead of passing those costs to other customers.	77%	23%	44%	33%	14%	9%
37. (BUILD RELIABLE POWER) Reforming state regulations to speed approval of new power plants, rejecting new taxes on energy production, and reforming litigation rules, to attract more reliable power and drive down the cost of electricity.	79%	21%	34%	44%	16%	5%

38. Now, thinking a little more about the role of state government programs... Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement:

The state government should promote policies that encourage Pennsylvanians to become less dependent on the government.

37% Strongly Agree
48% Somewhat Agree
12% Somewhat Disagree
3% Strongly Disagree

85% TOTAL AGREE
15% TOTAL DISAGREE

(ASK OF SAMPLE A ONLY)

39. Thinking some more about worker welfare in Pennsylvania... Please indicate whether you support or oppose the following work requirements:

Medicaid is a taxpayer funded welfare program providing health care to nearly one-in-four Pennsylvanians. A new law aims to empower healthy adults to improve their well-being by requiring them to work, seek employment, or participate in education or training to receive benefits. Senior citizens, individuals with disabilities, parents with young children, and pregnant women would be exempt from this requirement, ensuring the most vulnerable continue to receive necessary support.

Do you generally support or oppose these work requirements?

41% Strongly Support
34% Somewhat Support
14% Somewhat Oppose
11% Strongly Oppose

75% TOTAL SUPPORT
25% TOTAL OPPOSE

(ASK OF SAMPLE B ONLY)

40. Thinking some more about worker welfare in Pennsylvania... Please indicate whether you support or oppose the following work requirements:

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides taxpayer funded food assistance (commonly known as "food stamps") to low-income Pennsylvanians. A new law aims to empower healthy adults who receive food stamps by encouraging them to work, seek employment, or participate in education or training to continue receiving benefits. This initiative fosters self-sufficiency and strengthens our workforce, while ensuring that senior citizens, individuals with disabilities, parents with young children, and pregnant women continue to receive the support they need.

Do you generally support or oppose these work requirements?

46%	Strongly Support
33%	Somewhat Support
11%	Somewhat Oppose
10%	Strongly Oppose

80% TOTAL SUPPORT

20% TOTAL OPPOSE

Thinking more about worker welfare in Pennsylvania... Below is a series of different ideas and proposals people are talking about in Pennsylvania. After you read each one, please indicate if you support or oppose that proposal.

	Total Support	Total Oppose	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose
41. (IMPLEMENT WORK REQUIREMENTS) Requiring healthy adults (excluding seniors, individuals with disabilities, and those with young children) who receive Medicaid or SNAP benefits to work, seek work or job training, or volunteer in their communities part-time to continue receiving benefits.	77%	23%	46%	31%	13%	10%
42. (REGULAR MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION) Ensuring that healthy adults are eligible for Medicaid by verifying income, residency and household composition twice a year. Require the Auditor General to conduct regular Medicaid eligibility audits and provider performance audits to stop wasteful spending.	77%	23%	42%	35%	14%	9%
43. (EXPAND SCOPE OF PRACTICE) Allowing certified nurse practitioners in Pennsylvania to work without the supervision of a doctor to increase access to health care.	63%	37%	20%	43%	27%	10%
44. (REMOVE BUREAUCRATIC BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT) Reducing outdated Pennsylvania licensing restrictions that prevent Pennsylvanians from getting a job.	84%	16%	42%	43%	12%	4%
45. (END PREVAILING WAGE AND PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENT MANDATES) Ending prevailing wage and project labor agreement mandates. These rules require higher wages and often union-only labor on government construction, which raises the cost of roads, schools and public buildings.	70%	30%	28%	42%	22%	8%

46. Now, thinking a little more about Government unions in Pennsylvania... Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement:

Government unions have too much influence over Pennsylvania politicians.

33% Strongly Agree
43% Somewhat Agree
18% Somewhat Disagree
5% Strongly Disagree

77% TOTAL AGREE
23% TOTAL DISAGREE

Thinking about Government unions in Pennsylvania... Below is a series of different ideas and proposals people are talking about in Pennsylvania. After you read each one, please indicate if you support or oppose that proposal.

	Total Support	Total Oppose	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose
47. (PAYCHECK PROTECTION) Stopping the use of taxpayer-funded public payroll systems to collect campaign contributions and other funds that government union leaders use for political purposes.	87%	13%	53%	33%	10%	3%
48. (WORKERS' CHOICE) Requiring regular elections where government employees vote on their union representation. Regular elections would make government unions answerable to the workers they represent.	93%	7%	47%	46%	6%	1%
49. (NOTIFICATION OF EMPLOYEE RIGHTS) Requiring state and local governments to notify all employees of their legal rights to join or not join a union. Under a 2018 Supreme Court decision, government employees cannot be required to join a union or pay union fees.	90%	10%	47%	43%	8%	1%
50. (FREEDOM TO RESIGN) Allowing government union members the right to end their union membership at any time. Today, members can only resign during a 15-day window at the end of a union contract, which often runs several years.	84%	16%	42%	42%	12%	4%

51. Thinking about the proposals you read about in this survey, if a candidate for the state legislature supported these kinds of reforms, would that make you more likely or less likely to vote for that candidate, or would it not make much difference?

22%	Much more likely
47%	Somewhat more likely
7%	Somewhat less likely
3%	Much less likely
22%	Would not make much difference

69%	TOTAL MORE LIKELY
10%	TOTAL LESS LIKELY

Now, just a few additional questions to ensure we have a representative sample...

- D1. In what year were you born?

5%	18 - 24
19%	25 - 34
16%	35 - 44
15%	45 - 54
18%	55 - 64
27%	65 AND ABOVE

- D2B. Please record your gender.

48%	Male
52%	Female

D3A. And, what is the last grade you completed in school?

*	Some grade school (Grades 1-8)
2%	Some high school (Grades 9-11)
23%	Graduated high school (Grade 12)
9%	Technical/vocational school
25%	Some college
31%	Graduated college (e.g. Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science)
11%	Graduate/professional school (e.g. PhD, MD, JD, MA)

58% TOTAL <COLLEGE

42% TOTAL COLLEGE+

D6A. What is your main racial or ethnic heritage?

80%	Caucasian or White
11%	African American or Black
5%	Hispanic, Latino or some other Spanish speaking background
3%	Asian or Pacific Islander
*	American Indian or Alaskan Native
*	Other/Mixed Race

Now just a few more questions for statistical purposes only...

D4B. Are you registered to vote as... a Republican, a Democrat, or something else?

23%	Strong Republican
22%	Not-so-strong Republican
1%	Lean towards the Republicans
6%	Something else/Independent
4%	Lean towards the Democrats
18%	Not-so-strong Democrat
26%	Strong Democrat

45% TOTAL REPUBLICAN

44% TOTAL DEMOCRAT

11% TOTAL LEAN/INDEPENDENT

D5A. In politics today, do you consider yourself to be...

16%	Very Conservative
20%	Somewhat Conservative
37%	Moderate
14%	Somewhat Liberal
12%	Very Liberal

1%	Something Else
----	----------------

36%	TOTAL CONSERVATIVE
27%	TOTAL LIBERAL

D9A. And for statistical purposes only, what is your total annual household income?

12%	Under \$20,000
23%	Between \$20,000 - \$40,000
16%	Between \$40,000 - \$60,000
17%	Between \$60,000 - \$80,000
11%	Between \$80,000 - \$100,000
14%	Between \$100,000 and \$150,000
5%	Between \$150,000 and \$200,000
1%	Between \$200,000 and \$250,000
	...or....
2%	Over \$250,000

51%	TOTAL <\$60K
49%	TOTAL \$60K+

D8A. Regardless of how you feel now, for whom did you vote in the 2024 Presidential election...

<u>Total</u>	<u>Voted</u>	
46%	50%	Donald Trump
45%	49%	Kamala Harris
		...or...
1%	1%	Someone else?
7%	—	Did not vote
1%	—	Don't know/don't recall

D9F. Are you currently...

42%	Employed full-time
11%	Employed part-time
2%	Student
4%	Stay at home parent
25%	Retired
9%	Unemployed and looking for work
7%	Disabled or unable to work

53% TOTAL EMPLOYED

47% TOTAL NOT EMPLOYED

D9G. Which of the following do you consider the job you have or most recently had:

44%	White Collar, Like At A Desk In An Office
26%	Blue Collar, Like Physical Labor Or Working In A Factory
27%	Service Industry, Like Working In A Retail Store Or Hospital
3%	Have Never Worked

97% TOTAL HAVE EVER WORKED

D16A. Do you have children at home under the age of 18 you are responsible for raising who are not yet in college or the workforce?

26%	Yes
74%	No

D10A. Are you, or is anyone in your household, a member of a labor union or a teachers' union, employed by the city, county, state, or federal government, including as a fire fighter or law enforcement officer?

5%	Yes, labor union
3%	Yes, teachers' union
2%	Yes, government employee (city, county, state, federal)
1%	Yes, firefighter or law enforcement officer

90% No

10% TOTAL YES

GEO1. Geography from zip code.

24%	Urban
65%	Suburban
11%	Rural
