Muhlenberg College

Institute of Public Opinion

Muhlenberg College/*Morning Call*

Pennsylvania Presidential Election Survey

MID OCTOBER 2020

Key Findings:

1. As Election Day 2020 draws closer, the latest Muhlenberg College/*Morning Call* poll finds former Vice President Joe Biden holding a 7-point lead (51%-44%) over President Donald Trump among likely Pennsylvania voters.

2. As President Trump seeks to repeat his 2016 victory in Pennsylvania, he is struggling to overcome the belief among a majority (51%) of likely voters that he does not deserve reelection.

3. While Trump trails Biden in a head-to-head matchup among likely voters, the President's supporters are significantly more likely to say they are very enthusiastic about voting for the President (79%), compared to Pennsylvanians who plan to vote for the former Vice President (51%).

4. Democrats hold a 6% lead among likely Pennsylvania voters in terms of congressional elections in the state, with 47% planning to vote for the Democrat candidate in their district, compared to 41% backing Republican candidates.

5. Three issues appear to be the top tier concerns of Pennsylvanians as they cast their 2020 presidential votes, with the economy (27%), Coronavirus pandemic (20%), and health care (18%) most commonly identified as the most important issue of voters in the Keystone State.

6. Slightly less than 2 out of 3 likely voters (62%) in the Commonwealth expressed their intent to vote in-person this election, with a little over 1 in 3 (35%) stating that they will vote by mail.

7. Voter fraud (40%) and voter suppression (37%) are identified by likely Pennsylvania voters as the biggest threats to Pennsylvania having a safe, secure and accurate election in 2020.

Methodological Statement:

The following report contains the results of a telephone survey of (416) likely voters in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania between October 13 and 20, 2020**.** Respondents were interviewed in English on both landlines (104) and cell phones (312). With a randomly selected sample of respondents the margin of error for the surveys is +/- 5.5% at a 95% level of confidence**.** Margins of error for questions with smaller sample size will be larger**.** In addition to sampling error, one should consider that question wording and other fielding issues can introduce error or bias into survey results. Interviewing was conducted by Communication Concepts of Easton, Pennsylvania under protocols established by the MCIPO. The data has been weighted to gender, age, region, party, race and educational attainment to reflect voter population parameters. The calculation of sampling error takes into account design effects due to the weighting identified above**.** In order to reach a representative sample of registered voters both land lines and cell phones were called up to 3 times. The sampling frame for the study is from the registered voters files of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. To determine likely voters, only voters who have voted in 1 or more of the last 4 general elections (2016-2019), or who is a new registrant since November of 2016 were included in the sampling frame. In addition, only survey respondents from this frame who indicated that they were "definitely" or "very likely" to vote in the November election were included in the sample. Due to rounding the totals provided in the frequency report may not total 100%. The survey instrument (presented in its entirety below) was designed by Dr. Christopher P. Borick of the MCIPO is conjunction with the staff of the *Morning Call*. The survey was funded exclusively by the *Morning Call* and the MCIPO**.** For more detailed information on the methods employed please contact the MCIPO at 484-664-3444 or email Dr. Borick at cborick@muhlenberg.edu.

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FREQUENCY REPORT AND INSTRUMENT

Q1: Thank you. Which of the following categories best describes your current voting status? Are you registered as a _____? (READ LIST)

1. Democrat…………………………………………………………47%
2. Republican………………………………………………………..41%
3. Independent……………………………………………………… 10%
4. Other Party……………………………………………………… 2%
5. Not Registered to Vote in Pennsylvania (END SURVEY)

Q2: How likely are you to vote in the presidential election this November? Are you definitely going to vote, very likely to vote, not too likely to vote or definitely not voting in the November Election?

1. Definitely Going to Vote………………………………………….95%
2. Very Likely to Vote………………………………………………… 5%
3. Not Too Likely to Vote (END SURVEY)
4. Definitely not voting (END SURVEY)
5. Not Sure (Volunteered) (END SURVEY)

Q3: Thinking about the upcoming presidential elections in November, would you say that you are very interested, somewhat interested or not interested at all in the 2020 election?

 1. Very Interested…………………………… 89%
 2. Somewhat Interested……………………… 8%
 3. Not Interested At All …………………….. 1%
98: Not Sure (Volunteered) …………………… 1%

Q4: Next, do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as President?

 1. Approve……………………………...43%
 2. Disapprove………………………….. 51%
98. Not Sure (Volunteered)…………....... 7%

TIME SERIES

	NOVEMBER 2019	FEBRUARY 2020	AUGUST 2020	**OCTOBER 2020**
Approve	40%	42%	43%	**43%**
Disapprove	56%	50%	51%	**51%**
Not Sure	4%	9%	6%	**7%**

Q5: Now, I would like to ask your overall impression of a few political figures. For each name I read, please tell me if your impression of him is favorable or unfavorable. First, Donald Trump

1. Favorable……………………………….40%
2. Unfavorable………………………….52%
3. Neutral/Not Sure (Vol)……………… 8%

TIME SERIES

	AUGUST 2020	**OCTOBER 2020**
Favorable	42%	**40%**
Unfavorable	51%	**52%**
Neutral/Not Sure	8%	**8%**

Q6: Next, Joe Biden

1. Favorable……………………………42%
2. Unfavorable…………………………42%
3. Neutral/Not Sure (Vol)………………16%

TIME SERIES

	AUGUST 2020	**OCTOBER 2020**
Approve	39%	**42%**
Disapprove	46%	**42%**
Neutral/Not Sure	15%	**16%**

Q7: Do you think Donald Trump deserves to be re-elected as President, or not?

1. Deserves re-election………………. .44%
2. Does not deserve re-elected……….. 51%
98. Not Sure (Volunteered)…………… 5%

TIME SERIES

	NOVEMBER 2019	FEBRUARY 2020	AUGUST 2020	**OCTOBER 2020**
Deserves re-election	42%	42%	44%	**44%**
Does not deserve re-elected	57%	54%	53%	**51%**
Not Sure	2%	4%	3%	**5%**

Q8: Now, if the 2020 presidential election was being held today and the race was between Donald Trump and Joe Biden, would you vote for? (OPTIONS ROTATED)

1. Trump ……………………………44%
2. Biden……………………………..51%
3. Neither/Other …………………… 2%
98. Not Sure (Volunteered)………… 4%

TIME SERIES

	NOVEMBER 2019	FEBRUARY 2020	AUGUST 2020	**OCTOBER 2020**
Trump	43%	47%	44%	**44%**
Biden	52%	47%	48%	**51%**
Neither/Other	4%	2%	3%	**2%**
Not Sure	2%	4%	4%	**4%**

Q9: Are you leaning more toward voting for Donald Trump or Joe Biden? (OPTIONS ROTATED) (ASKED ONLY OF THOSE THAT SAID "NOT SURE" ON Q8: N =14)

1. Trump …………………………… 0%
2. Biden…………………………….. 10%
98. Not Sure (Volunteered)………… 90%

PRESIDENTIAL RACE INCLUDING LEANERS

Trump……………………………….44%
Biden……………………………….51%
Neither/Other……………………… 2%
Not Sure…………………………… 4%

TIME SERIES

	AUGUST 2020	**OCTOBER 2020**
Trump	45%	**44%**
Biden	49%	**51%**
Neither/Other	3%	**2%**
Not Sure	3%	**4%**

Q10: Would you say you are very enthusiastic about supporting Trump, somewhat enthusiastic, not so enthusiastic or not enthusiastic at all? (ASKED ONLY OF TRUMP VOTERS)

1. Very Enthusiastic…………….79%
2. Somewhat Enthusiastic ……...18%
3. Not So Enthusiastic …………. 2%
4. Not Enthusiastic at All ………. 1%
98. Not Sure……………………... 1%

Q11: Would you say you are very enthusiastic about supporting Biden, somewhat enthusiastic, not so enthusiastic or not enthusiastic at all? (ASKED ONLY OF BIDEN VOTERS)

1. Very Enthusiastic…………….51%
2. Somewhat Enthusiastic………39%
3. Not So Enthusiastic………….. 5%
4. Not Enthusiastic at All………. 4%
98. Not Sure………………………1%

Q12: If the election for U.S. House of Representatives was held today, would you vote for the Republican or the Democratic candidate in your Congressional district? (ROTATE OPTIONS)

1. Democrat …………………….. 47%
2. Republican…………………… 41%
3. Other (Volunteered)…………. 2%
98: Not Sure (Volunteered)……….11%

	AUGUST 2020	**OCTOBER 2020**
Democrat	45%	**47%**
Republican	38%	**41%**
Other	1%	**2%**
Not Sure	17%	**11%**

Q13: Which of the following issues do you consider the most important in your choice of candidates in the presidential race? (Rotate Choices)

1. The Economy………………… 27%
2. The Coronavirus Pandemic…... 20%
3. Health Care……………………18%
4. Law and Order………………...12%
5. Racial Justice…………………. 8%
6. National Security……………… 5%
7. Other Issue (Vol) ……………... 5%
98. Not Sure (Vol)………………… 5%

Q14: Overall, would you say that your financial situation is better, worse or about the same since President Trump took office in 2017?

1. Better……………………… 36%
2. Worse………………………16%
3. About the Same…………… 46%
98. Not Sure (Vol)…………… 2%

TIME SERIES

	FEBRUARY 2020	AUGUST 2020	**OCTOBER 2020**
Better	40%	40%	**36%**
Worse	11%	10%	**16%**
About the Same	48%	47%	**46%**
Not Sure	1%	2%	**2%**

Q15: Now thinking ahead to the November election, do you plan to vote in person at a polling station, or vote by mail?

1. Vote in Person…………………………62%
2. Vote by Mail…………………………..35%
98. Not sure (VOL) ……………………… 2%

	AUGUST 2020	**OCTOBER 2020**
Vote in Person	64%	**62%**
Vote by Mail	26%	**35%**
Not Sure	10%	**2%**

Q16: Now thinking about the presidential election in November, do you think that Pennsylvania is very prepared, prepared, not very prepared or not prepared at all to keep this November's elections safe and secure?

1. Very Prepared…………………. 15%
2. Prepared……………………….. 40%
3. Not Very Prepared…………….. 15%
4. Not Prepared at All……………. 12%
98. Not Sure……………………….. 19%

TIME SERIES

	FEBRUARY 2020	AUGUST 2020	**OCTOBER 2020**
Very Prepared	11%	8%	**15%**
Prepared	43%	47%	**40%**
Not Very Prepared	15%	14%	**15%**
Not Prepared at All	3%	6%	**12%**
Not Sure	28%	25%	**19%**

Q17. Which of the following do you consider to be the biggest threat to Pennsylvania having a safe, secure and accurate election in November? (ROTATE OPTIONS)

1. Foreign interference in the election………………8%
2. Voting machines malfunctioning…………………3%
3. Voter fraud……………………………………….40%
4. Suppression of individuals from voting………….34%
5. Other factor (Volunteered)……………………… 5%
98. Not Sure……………………………………….11%

TIME SERIES

	FEBRUARY 2020	AUGUST 2020	**OCTOBER 2020**
Foreign interference in the election	17%	14%	8%
Voting machines malfunctioning	22%	7%	3%
Voter fraud	25%	39%	40%
Suppression of individuals from voting	21%	30%	34%
Other Factor (Vol)	15%	4%	5%
Not Sure	1%	7%	11%

Next I'm going to read you a few statements. For each statement I read tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the statement: First:

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure
Q18. Increasing the number of U.S Supreme Court justices is appropriate if a justice is confirmed during the middle of a presidential election.	15%	20%	20%	26%	20%
Q19: As of today, I don't feel safe voting in person.	8%	13%	29%	47%	3%
Q20. Roe vs. Wade should be overturned by the Supreme Court.	12%	11%	12%	42%	23%

Q21: Next I have a question about the coronavirus and the government response to the pandemic. Would you say that President Trump has done an excellent, good, fair or poor job handling the coronavirus outbreak?

1. Excellent…………………………………..19%
2. Good………………………………………18%
3. Fair……………………………………….. 10%
4. Poor………………………………………. 51%
98: Not Sure (Vol)…………………………… 2%

TIME SERIES

	AUGUST 2020	**OCTOBER 2020**
Excellent	17%	19%
Good	21%	18%
Fair	9%	10%
Poor	51%	51%
Not Sure	3%	2%

Q22: Which of the following best describes your activity in the 2016 Presidential Election? Did you vote for:

1. Donald Trump ……………………………40%
2. Hillary Clinton ……………………………41%
3. Some other candidate ……………………. 5%
4. Or did you not vote in that election……….14%

Q23: Finally, I have a few questions about yourself. Which of the following categories best describes your racial identity? Are you (READ LIST)?

1. White/Caucasian………………. 81%
2. African-American………………10%
3. Hispanic/Latino………………... 4%
4. Asian…………………………..   2%
5. Native American………………..<1%
6. Mixed race…………………….. 2%
7. or other………………………… 1%

Q24: Which of the following categories best describes your religious affiliation? Are you (READ LIST)?

1. Catholic………………………………… 33%
2. Protestant……………………………. 36%
3. Jewish……………………………….. 3%
4. Muslim………………………………. 1%
5. Hindu………………………………… <1%
6. Other Religion (Including agnostic)…. 21%
7. or Atheist……………………………... 5%
98. Not Sure (Volunteered)……………… 1%

Q25: What is your highest level of education? (READ LIST)

1. Less than High School……………….. 2%
2. High School Graduate………………..32%
3. Some college or technical school…….28%
4. College graduate (4 yr only)………… 24%
5. Graduate or professional degree…….. 14%

Q26: Which of the following categories best describes your family income? Is it (READ LIST)?

1. Under $20,000……………….10%
2. $20,000-$40,000……………..15%
3. $40,000-$60,000……………..18%
4. $60,000-$80,000……………..16%
5. $80,000-$100,000……………10%
6. Over $100,000……………….26%
98. Not Sure (Volunteered)…….. 5%

Q27: In which of the following age categories does your current age fall. READ LIST _____

1. 18-29……………...19%
2. 30-49……………...28%
3. 50-65……………...31%
4. or Over 65………..23%

Q28: Finally, to which gender identity do you most identify? (READ LIST)

1. Male……………………………………………49%
2. Female……………………………………………50%
3. Or another category besides Male or Female…… 1%

SELECTED CROSSTABS

President Trump Approval Ratings

	Approve	Disapprove	Not Sure
OVERALL	**43%**	**51%**	**7%**
Male (49%)	49%	44%	7%
Female (50%)	36%	58%	6%
Democrat (47%)	9%	86%	5%
Republican (41%)	84%	9%	8%
Independent/Other Party (12%)	30%	60%	11%
College Degree (38%)	38%	53%	9%
No College Degree (62%)	45%	50%	5%
White (81%)	50%	45%	5%
Non-White (19%)	13%	73%	14%
Philadelphia (13%)	16%	76%	9%
Philadelphia Suburbs (21%)	35%	55%	11%
Alleghany County (11%)	35%	63%	2%
Northeast PA (14%)	55%	39%	5%
Remainder of State (41%)	53%	41%	6%
18-29 (19%)	27%	62%	10%
30-49 (27%)	50%	40%	10%
50-64 (31%)	50%	48%	2%
65 and Over (23%)	34%	60%	5%
Catholic (32%	46%	52%	2%
Protestant (32%)	49%	44%	7%
Other/Agnostic/Atheist (36%)	34%	56%	9%
Mail Ballot (35%)	16%	78%	6%
In Person (62%)	58%	35%	6%

Trump vs. Biden

	Trump	Biden	Neither/Other/Not Sure
OVERALL	**44%**	**51%**	**6%**
Male (49%)	52%	43%	5%
Female (50%)	37%	58%	6%
Democrat (47%)	9%	89%	2%
Republican (41%)	87%	9%	4%
Independent/Other Party (12%)	26%	57%	17%
College Degree (38%)	37%	57%	6%
No College Degree (62%)	49%	48%	4%
White (81%)	53%	44%	3%
Non-White (19%)	11%	77%	12%
Philadelphia (13%)	16%	76%	9%
Philadelphia Suburbs (21%)	35%	55%	11%
Alleghany County (11%)	35%	63%	2%
Northeast PA (14%)	55%	39%	5%
Remainder of State (41%)	53%	41%	6%
18-29 (19%)	29%	61%	10%
30-49 (27%)	51%	46%	4%
50-64 (31%)	51%	45%	4%
65 and Over (23%)	39%	59%	2%
Catholic (32%)	47%	50%	4%
Protestant (32%)	52%	44%	5%
Other/Agnostic/Atheist (36%)	36%	57%	7%
Mail Ballot (35%)	20%	78%	2%
In Person (62%)	59%	36%	5%