

THE ROCKY Mountaineer

September 2020, Issue 4

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- **TRUMP'S "LAW AND ORDER" MESSAGE FALLS FLAT AS VOTERS APPLAUD COLORADO'S POLICE REFORM**
- **GARDNER TRAILING BADLY AS HIS TIES TO TRUMP EASILY OUTWEIGH GOP ATTACKS ON HICKENLOOPER**
- **REPUBLICANS ARE STILL OUT OF STEP WITH COLORADO VOTERS ON REOPENING DURING THE PANDEMIC**

Welcome Back to The Mountaineer

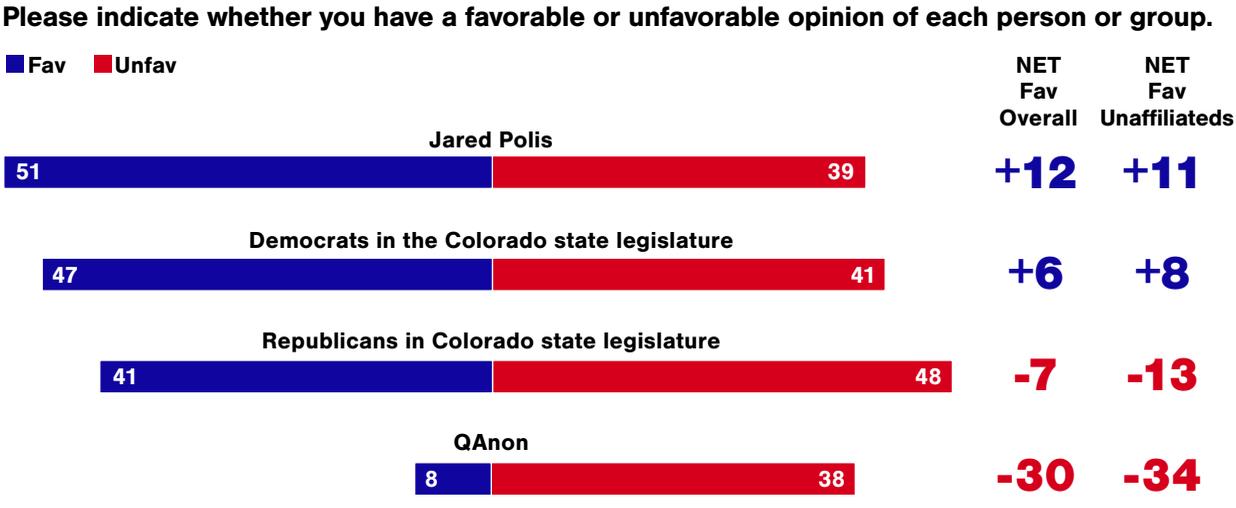
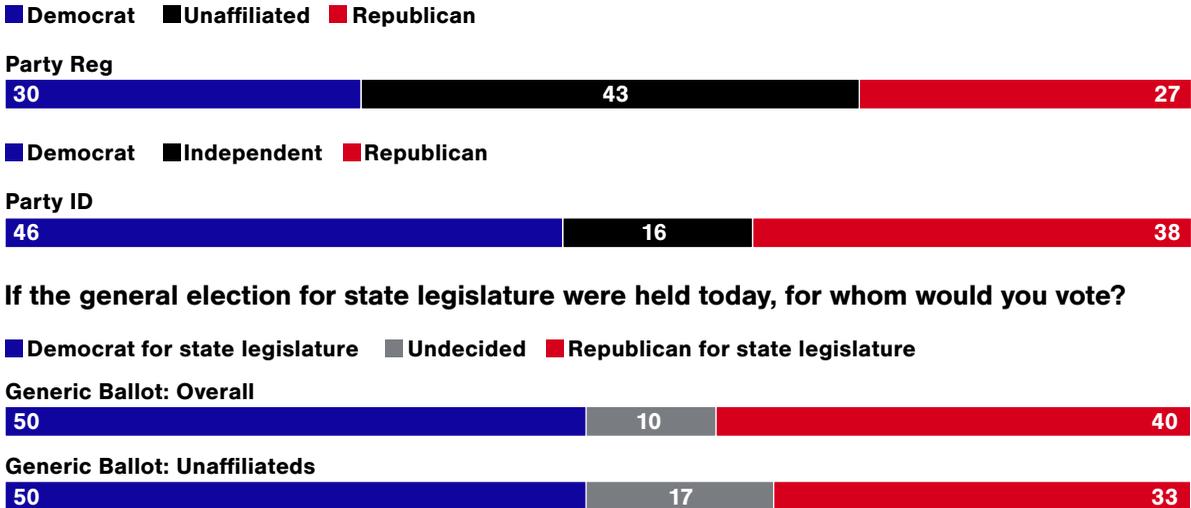
Welcome to The Mountaineer, a resource for progressives and a guide for advocates across the state of Colorado, published by Global Strategy Group and ProgressNow Colorado. Research presented in this publication is the result of a survey conducted between August 28 and September 1, 2020 among 800 registered voters in Colorado.

This fourth publication will focus on the evolving political landscape, how voters view the parties and players through the lens of the coronavirus and racial justice, and how voters want the government to address school reopening this fall.

In this issue

The environment remains very friendly to Democrats as unaffiliateds reject the GOP

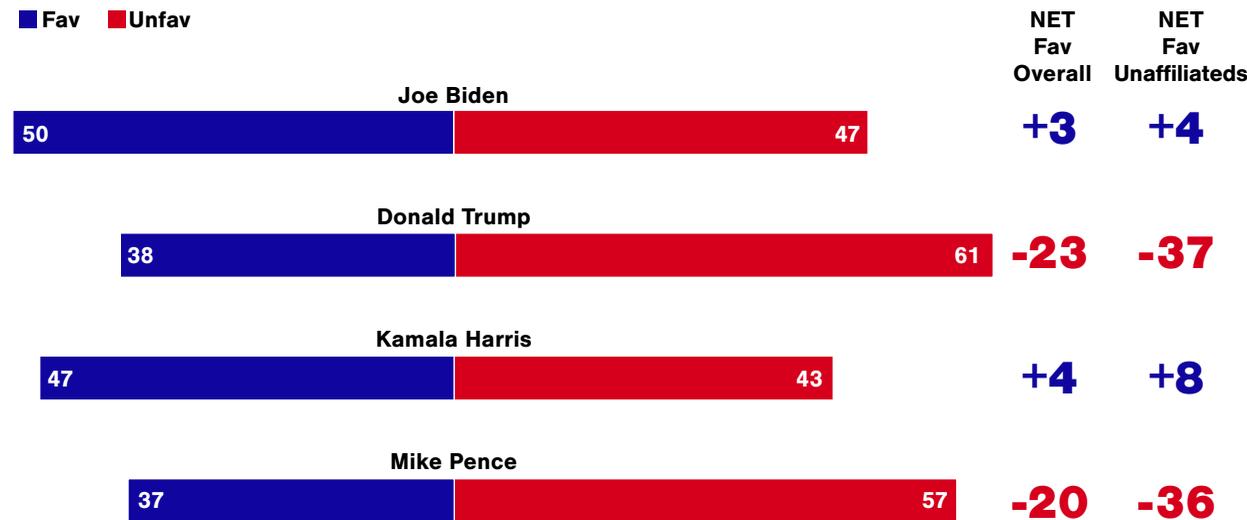
Despite just a three-point lead on party registration, Democrats enjoy an eight-point party ID advantage and **a 10-point lead on the generic ballot**, driven by a large margin among unaffiliated voters. Colorado voters continue to be favorable to Governor Polis and Democrats in the Colorado State Legislature, while Republicans in the state legislature have taken on water. Meanwhile, The QAnon conspiracy theory is viewed unfavorably by a 5-to-1 margin.



Biden maintains double-digit lead and his voters are more motivated

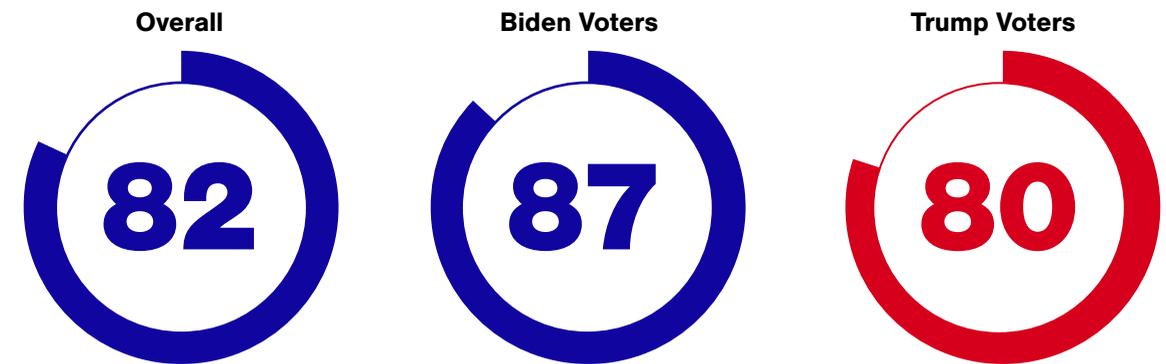
Looking ahead to November, Biden voters are 7 points more likely to report being extremely motivated to vote than Trump voters. Biden and Harris are above water on favorability, while Trump and Pence remain very unfavorable, especially among unaffiliateds. **This translates to an 11-point lead for Biden** in the full match-up, and a 12-point lead in the 2-way head-to-head. Biden's lead is consistent from May. **Despite the media fanfare, Kanye West only receives 1% of the vote in Colorado.**

Please indicate whether you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of each person.



Please rate your level of motivation to vote in the election in November for President, Senate, U.S. Congress and other offices on a scale from 0 to 10.

10 out of 10, extremely motivated:



If the general election for U.S. President were held today, for whom would you vote?

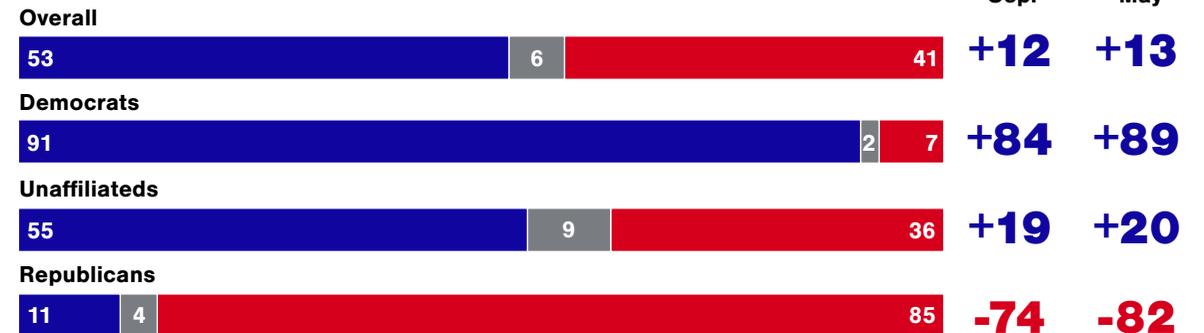
Full presidential ballot

Legend: Biden (blue), Hawkins (green), Undecided (grey), West (orange), Jorgensen (yellow), Trump (red)



2-way ballot

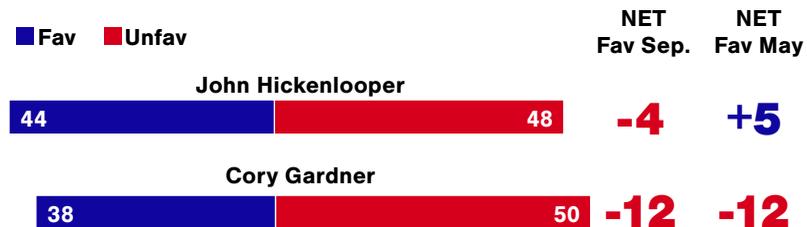
Legend: Biden (blue), Undecided (grey), Trump (red)



Gardner's loyalty to Trump sticks with him, swamps attacks against Hick on "corruption"

The GOP's attacks on Former Governor John Hickenlooper are failing to close the race because Senator Cory Gardner's fealty to Trump is much more troubling to voters. Hickenlooper holds a double-digit lead over Gardner even as his favorability has taken a hit since May. Meanwhile, Gardner has become even more firmly viewed as saying one thing in Colorado and doing another in D.C. and, more important, putting his loyalty to Trump ahead of Colorado. When the core critique from both sides are matched against each other, **the Democratic case that Gardner "puts his loyalty to Donald Trump ahead of what's best for Colorado" is seen as both significantly more accurate and more concerning than the Republican case - taken straight from National Republican Senatorial Committee ads - that Hickenlooper "is a shady lawbreaker whose corruption never ends."**

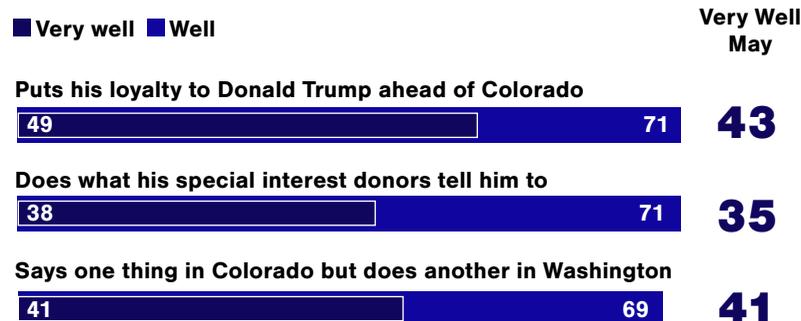
Please indicate whether you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of each person.



If the general election for U.S. Senate were held today, for whom would you vote?



Please indicate how well each one describes Cory Gardner.



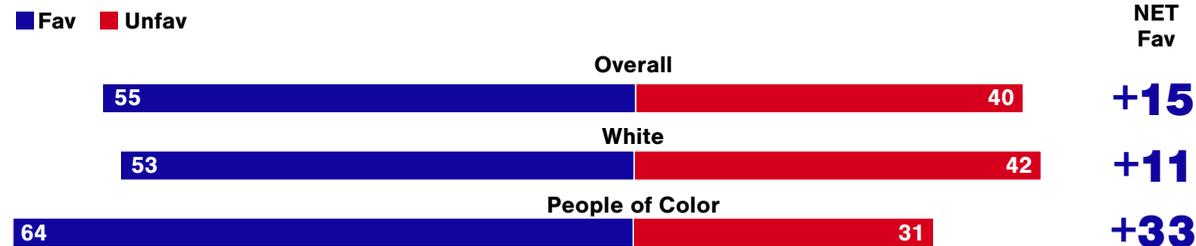
Here are two statements about the candidates for senate in Colorado. Which of these statements do you think is (more accurate/more concerning), even if neither is exactly right?

| | More Accurate | More Concerning |
|---|---------------|-----------------|
| Gardner puts his loyalty to Trump ahead of what's best for Colorado | 48 | 51 |
| Hickenlooper is a shady lawbreaker whose corruption never ends | 34 | 36 |
| Don't know | 18 | 13 |
| NET Overall | +14 | +15 |
| NET Unaffiliateds | +20 | +17 |

Coloradans support BLM protestors and the state's landmark police reform

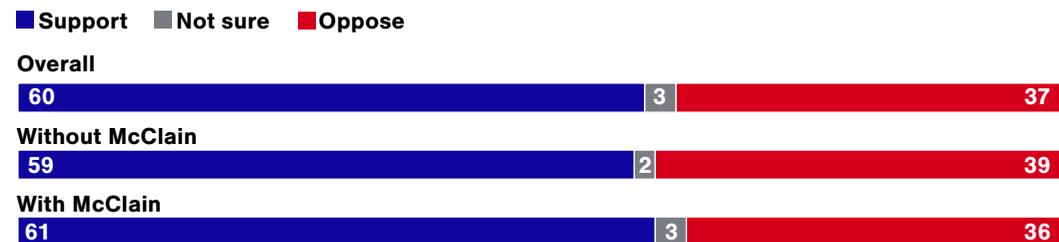
Colorado voters strongly support the Black Lives Matter protests that followed the murders of Elijah McClain and George Floyd and side with progressives on racial justice and reforming the police – including overwhelming support for Senate Bill 217, the landmark police accountability and reform law passed earlier this year. **Framing really matters here:** without making clear that the goal is not to literally defund the police, progressives lose an argument about police reform by 3 points. **When the progressive argument advocates for sweeping change to combat systemic racism and police brutality – but explicitly rejects defunding – progressives win the argument by 27 points.**

Please indicate whether you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the Black Lives Matter movement.

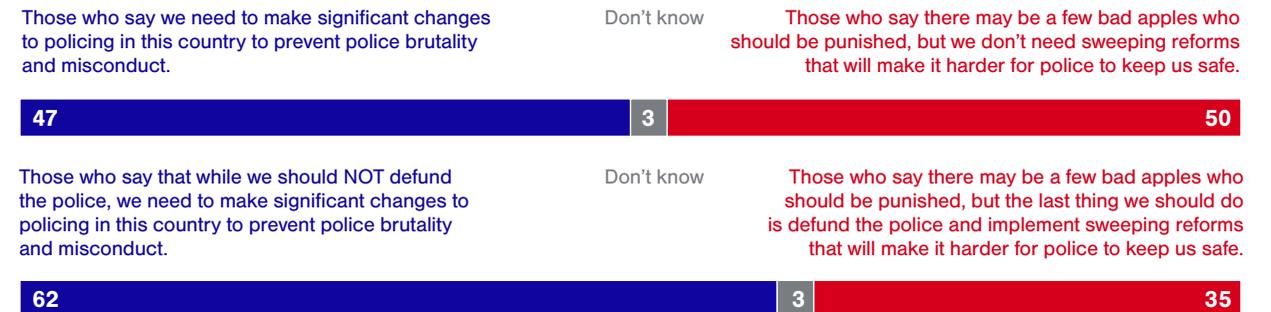


As you may know, the death(s) of George Floyd (and Elijah McClain) led to protests across the country focused on police treatment of Black Americans.

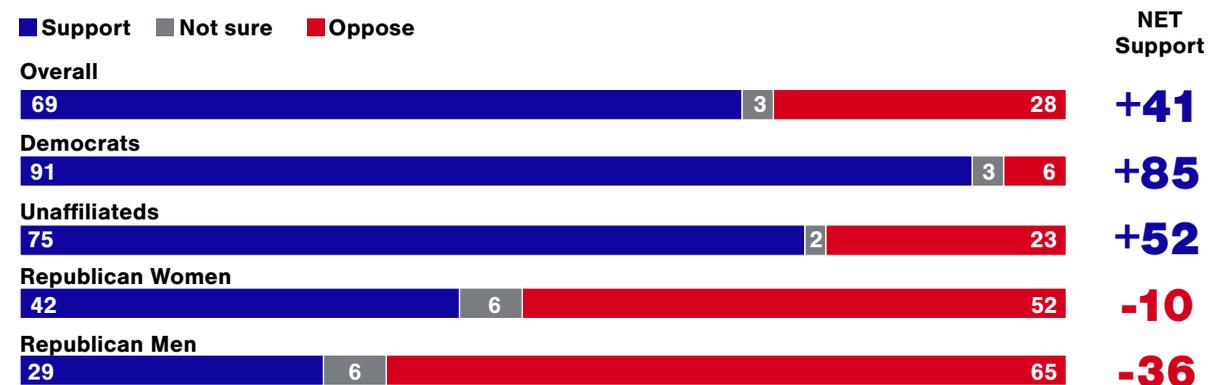
Do you support or oppose those protests?



Who do you agree with more, even if neither statement is perfect?



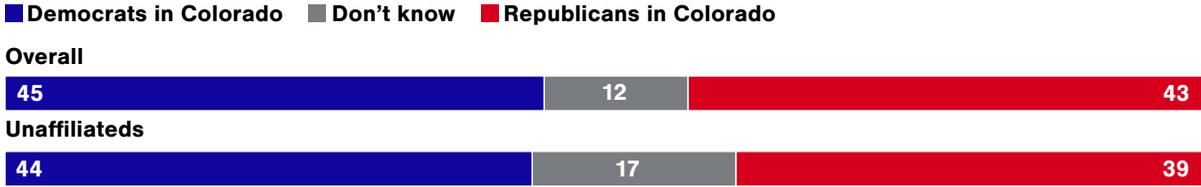
As you may know, Colorado lawmakers recently passed, and Governor Polis signed into law, a police reform law. The new law bans excessive and deadly force like chokeholds. It ends the qualified legal immunity that police officers previously had from lawsuits over civil rights violations and makes it easier to fire officers for misconduct. The law also bans police from using rubber bullets and tear gas against protesters without first announcing it and giving crowds time to disperse. Based on what you know, do you support or oppose this new law?



Voters reject Trump and the GOP's "law and order" messaging

While Trump and Republicans try to drum up fears about protesters looting and vandalizing property, Coloradans are more concerned about pressing issues like the coronavirus and the economy. In fact, Coloradans say they trust Democrats in Colorado more than Republicans on the issue of public safety. **Trump's racial dog-whistling fails with suburban women, who see Trump as far more of a threat than the "low-income housing" from whom he claims to be protecting them.**

Who do you trust more to handle protecting public safety?



Who do you agree with more, even if neither statement is perfect?

Democrats who say that our local police can and should arrest any protesters who commit violence, but right now Colorado lawmakers should be focusing on defeating the coronavirus, protecting public health, and getting our economy back on track

Don't know

Republicans who say that with violence and vandalism at an all-time high, Democrats have abandoned the people of Colorado to the liberal mob. Colorado lawmakers need to make resorting law and order one of our top priorities



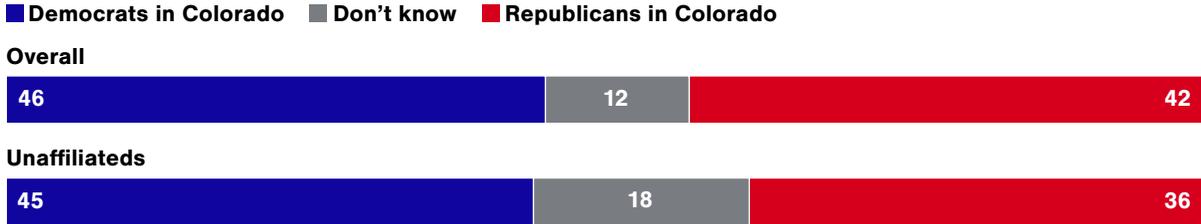
As you may know, President Trump recently tweeted that "the 'suburban housewife' will be voting for me. They want safety and are thrilled that I ended the program where low-income housing would invade their neighborhood." Which of the following do you consider to be a bigger threat to suburban women?



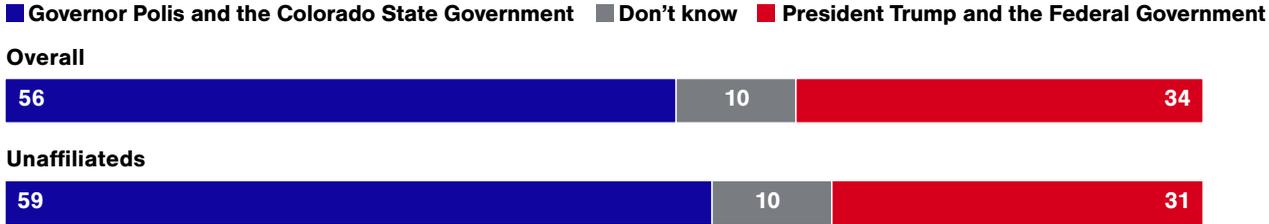
Voters disapprove of Trump and Gardner, but trust Polis

While Trump and Gardner are underwater on job approval, Polis continues to hold Coloradans' support. **Voters trust Democrats in Colorado to not only handle the coronavirus pandemic better than Republicans, but also to lead the economic recovery better as well.**

Who do you trust more to handle the economic recovery after the coronavirus pandemic?



Who do you trust more to handle the response to the coronavirus pandemic?



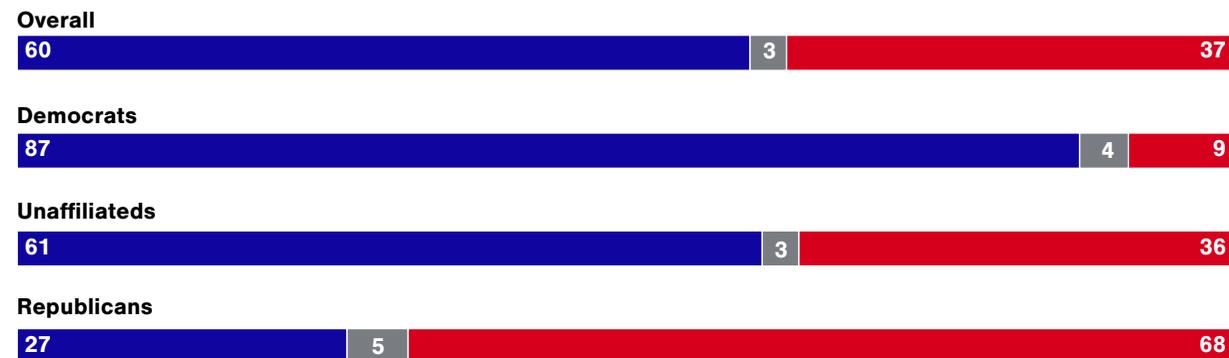
| | Overall | | | | Coronavirus | | | |
|---------|---------|------------|-------------|-------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------------|
| | Approve | Disapprove | NET Overall | NET Unaffiliateds | Approve | Disapprove | NET Overall | NET Unaffiliateds |
| Polis | 57 | 37 | +20 | +16 | 58 | 36 | +22 | +30 |
| Gardner | 40 | 48 | -8 | -13 | 37 | 44 | -7 | -15 |
| Trump | 42 | 57 | -15 | -22 | 40 | 58 | -18 | -29 |

Coloradans overwhelmingly want caution on reopening schools – and they will punish Republicans who don't share that caution at the ballot box

Voter trust Democrats in Colorado to make the decision about how and when to reopen schools over Republicans by a 10-point margin (44% to 34%) and prefer a cautious approach to reopening over immediate reopening by 23 points. **School reopening proves to be a divisive wedge against Republicans as Coloradans would vote for a legislative Democrat who is cautious about reopening over a Republican who supports immediate reopening by a 26-point margin** – that's 16 points higher than the Democrats' advantage on the standard generic ballot.

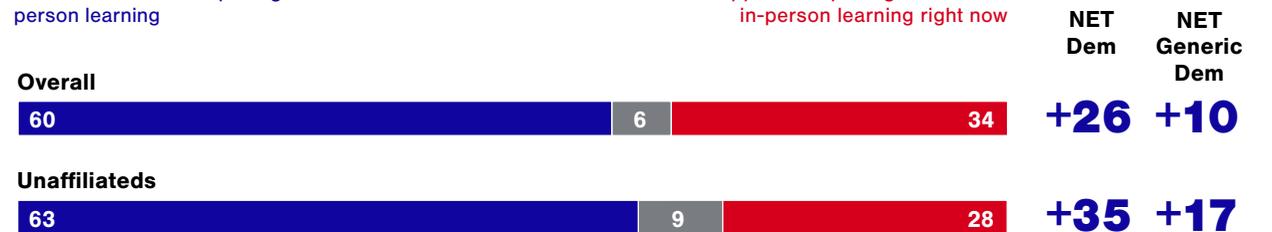
And as you may know, decisions around how and when to reopen schools this fall are complicated. But, generally speaking, which side are you on?

I am generally on the side of those who are being more cautious about reopening schools for in-person learning. Not sure I am generally on the side of those who are pushing to reopen schools for in-person learning.



If the general election for state legislature were held today, for whom would you vote?

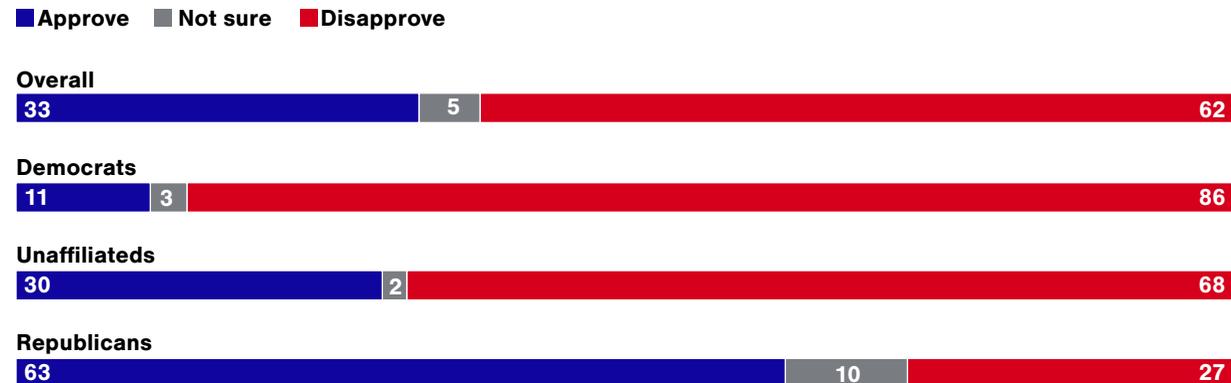
A Democratic candidate who says we need to be cautious about reopening schools for in-person learning Undecided A Republican candidate who supports reopening schools for in-person learning right now



Voters strongly oppose Trump's efforts to block Postal Service funding and view Gardner as a "coward" for refusing to stand up to him

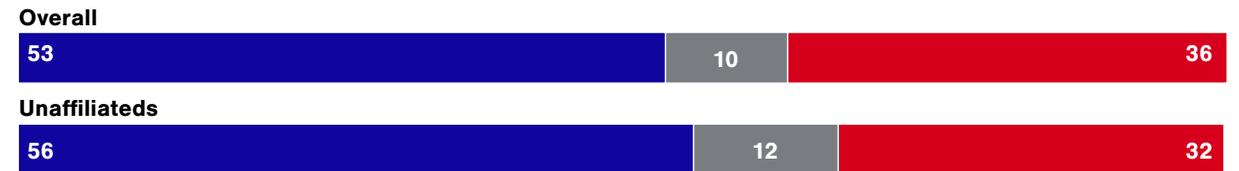
Voters overwhelmingly disapprove of Trump's actions toward the Postal Service, and a majority are willing to call out his behavior for what it is – a self-serving political game – while rejecting Trump's spin that he is undertaking an honest attempt to fix the Postal Service. **Gardner's silence on the issue does not go unnoticed among Coloradans, who overwhelmingly choose the word 'cowardly' when asked to describe Gardner's refusal to take a position in their own words.**

As you may know, Democrats in Congress have passed a bill to provide \$25 billion in funding for the U.S. Postal Service, but President Trump has admitted that he has blocked that funding to prevent mail-in voting in November. Just based on what you know, do you approve or disapprove of President Trump's effort to block this funding for the U.S. Postal Service?



Please indicate which is closer to your view, even if neither is exactly right.

Trump and DeJoy are attempting to sabotage the Postal Service in order to prevent people who oppose Donald Trump from voting by mail. Don't know Trump and DeJoy are attempting to reform an organization that has a broken business model and is losing billions of dollars.



As you may know, both Republicans and Democrats around the country have criticized Trump and DeJoy for these actions, but when Senator Cory Gardner was repeatedly asked his position on these actions, he refused to give a direct answer. Just based on what you know, what one word would you use to describe Cory Gardner's actions on this issue?



About The Mountaineer

Colorado has a long history as a leader in developing and implementing ground-breaking progressive policy, but as the state's leaders continue to build on this progressive tradition, they also face unique challenges that range from the state's TABOR amendment to its rapid growth.

The Mountaineer is designed to act as a consistent, flexible, and responsive tool to help inform the unique political and policy debates in Colorado. By conducting methodologically sound research and providing reliable guidance to inform allies, elected leaders, and the press, The Mountaineer will help progressive leaders and communicators shape the debate on the issues that matter most to Coloradans.

About the Study

Global Strategy Group conducted a public opinion survey among a sample of 800 registered voters in Colorado August 28 – September 1, 2020. The survey was conducted over the phone and online via a combination of text-to-web methodology, with voters chosen at random from the voter file, and with respondents who were recruited from multiple opt-in online panel vendors. Respondents were verified against a voter file, and special care was taken to ensure the demographic composition of our sample matched that of Colorado's registered voter population across a variety of demographic variables including party registration, race, gender, age, education, region, and population density.

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