

Colorado Political Climate Survey Topline Election Report

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Carey E. Stapleton
Survey Lead

E. Scott Adler
Director

Anand E. Sokhey
Associate Director



American Politics Research Lab
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

About the Study:

American Politics Research Lab

The American Politics Research Lab (APRL) is housed in the Department of Political Science at the University of Colorado Boulder. APRL is a non-partisan academic unit that supports basic research, educational activities, and public engagement on issues related to American politics. Lab faculty, student fellows, and affiliates pursue scholarly activities over a broad range of topics, utilizing a wide variety of research methodologies and analysis. Current lab projects include research on political behavior, state and local politics, and political agendas and recurring legislation in the U.S. Congress. The Lab is also home to the annual Colorado Political Climate Survey. APRL hosts a seminar series that includes talks by lab associates as well as distinguished scholars doing work related to the study of American politics.

Colorado Political Climate Survey

In October 2018, the American Politics Research Lab (APRL) conducted the third annual Colorado Political Climate (CPC) survey. The CPC is a survey of the political and policy attitudes of Coloradans. The study is designed to gauge the public's political and partisan leanings, their opinions on a number of key issues facing the state, their attitudes toward major statewide and national political figures, and the outlook for the 2018 election.

Methodology

The sample is representative of registered voters in Colorado. It consists of 800 individual responses and has an overall margin of error of +/- 3.5%. The margin of error for subgroups is larger due to smaller sample sizes.

The survey instrument was developed by APRL in the fall of 2018; it was administered online to a panel of Coloradans by the company YouGov between October 12-17, 2018. To generalize to the state of Colorado, YouGov employed a weighting procedure based on demographics and political characteristics. We use YouGov's weights for all analysis. The average time it took a respondent to complete the survey was approximately 10 minutes. The sampling methodology employed by YouGov for the 2018 CPC survey can be found:

https://www.colorado.edu/lab/aprl/sites/default/files/attached-files/yougov_sampling_2018.pdf

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American Politics Research Lab
Department of Political Science
University of Colorado Boulder
382 Ketchum Hall, UCB 333
Boulder, CO 80309
<https://www.colorado.edu/lab/april/>

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Summary:

National polls suggest a strong year for Democrats in House races around the country – it is often the case that the President’s party takes losses in midterm elections. Our results comport with that narrative, as we see Democrats with a 9-point lead in the generic congressional ballot. This is set against perceptions of a strong national and state economy.

The survey came out of the field just as ballots were hitting mailboxes in Colorado. The results show Jared Polis with a 12-point lead over Walker Stapleton in the gubernatorial contest. While there are expected patterns when looking at vote preference by partisanship, we see almost identical support for Polis among men and women.

President Trump’s approval in Colorado hovers around 40%, mirroring national trends. He remains very popular among Republicans, and very unpopular among Democrats. Overall, we see some evidence of a modest gender divide on approval of the President, with more women expressing disapproval.

Approval of Congress and the Supreme Court mirror other partisan trends. Congressional approval remains low overall, but we see considerably higher approval of the lawmaking body among Republicans than among Democrats. Approval of the Supreme Court hovers around 50%, with dramatic differences by partisanship – nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of Republicans approve, while roughly $\frac{2}{3}$ of Democrats disapprove.

We polled four constitutional amendments and two propositions that are on the ballot this November. Four measures look likely to pass (Amendments Y, 73, 74 and Proposition 111), one looks likely to fail (Amendment 75), and one remains too close to call (Proposition 112). As elsewhere, we see stark partisan differences on Proposition 112, with Democrats offering considerably more support, and Republicans considerably more opposition.

What follows are tables reporting survey data on only 2018 election-related items. An extended report including additional items on policies and policy-makers, expanded breakouts, and comparisons to previous CPC surveys will be forthcoming later this year.

Colorado and the Nation¹

1. Colorado Gubernatorial Election

Question: *If the election for governor of Colorado were being held today, would you vote for...*

Colorado Gubernatorial Election

Jared Polis	54%
Walker Stapleton	42%
Scott Helker	3%
Other	2%
Observations	800

Colorado Gubernatorial Election by Gender

	Male	Female
Jared Polis	53%	54%
Walker Stapleton	42%	42%
Scott Helker	4%	3%
Other	2%	2%
Observations	387	413

Colorado Gubernatorial Election by Partisanship

	Democrats	Republicans	Independents	Other
Jared Polis	98%	3%	51%	62%
Walker Stapleton	1%	96%	36%	24%
Scott Helker	1%	0%	8%	13%
Other	0%	1%	5%	1%
Observations	292	256	210	42

¹ Note, that due to rounding, each column may not sum exactly to 100%

2. Generic Congressional Election

Question: *If the 2018 election for the U.S. House of Representatives in your congressional district were held today, would you vote for the...*

Generic Congressional Ballot

Democrat	53%
Republican	44%
Other	3%
Observations	800

Generic Congressional Ballot by Gender

	Male	Female
Democrat	51%	56%
Republican	45%	42%
Other	4%	3%
Observations	387	413

Generic Congressional Ballot by Partisanship

	Democrats	Republicans	Independents	Other
Democrat	100%	2%	50%	60%
Republican	0%	96%	43%	27%
Other	0%	1%	7%	12%
Observations	292	256	210	42

3. Approval of Figures, Political Institutions and the Economy

Question: How much do you approve or disapprove of the way each of the following is handling their job?

a. Presidential Approval (Trump Approval)

Presidential Approval Ratings

Strongly Approve	23%
Approve	19%
Disapprove	7%
Strongly Disapprove	50%
Not Sure	2%
Approval Combined	41%
Disapproval Combined	57%
Observations	800

Presidential Approval Ratings by Gender

	Male	Female
Strongly Approve	24%	21%
Approve	19%	18%
Disapprove	5%	9%
Strongly Disapprove	49%	51%
Not Sure	3%	1%
Approval Combined	43%	40%
Disapproval Combined	54%	60%
Observations	387	413

Presidential Approval Ratings by Partisanship

	Democrats	Republicans	Independents	Other
Strongly Approve	1%	53%	17%	21%
Approve	2%	36%	23%	11%
Disapprove	6%	6%	10%	6%
Strongly Disapprove	91%	4%	46%	59%
Not Sure	1%	1%	4%	3%
Approval Combined	3%	89%	39%	31%
Disapproval Combined	97%	10%	57%	65%
Observations	292	256	210	42

b. Congress

Congressional Approval Ratings

Strongly Approve	2%
Approve	17%
Disapprove	30%
Strongly Disapprove	43%
Not Sure	7%
Approval Combined	19%
Disapproval Combined	73%
Observations	800

Congressional Approval Ratings by Gender

	Male	Female
Strongly Approve	1%	3%
Approve	15%	19%
Disapprove	30%	31%
Strongly Disapprove	50%	36%
Not Sure	3%	11%
Approval Combined	16%	22%
Disapproval Combined	80%	67%
Observations	387	413

Congressional Approval Ratings by Partisanship

	Democrats	Republicans	Independents	Other
Strongly Approve	1%	5%	0%	0%
Approve	8%	35%	10%	8%
Disapprove	25%	33%	33%	40%
Strongly Disapprove	60%	18%	47%	48%
Not Sure	5%	9%	10%	4%
Approval Combined	9%	40%	10%	8%
Disapproval Combined	85%	51%	80%	88%
Observations	292	256	210	42

c. Supreme Court

Supreme Court Approval Ratings

Strongly Approve	9%
Approve	39%
Disapprove	29%
Strongly Disapprove	10%
Not Sure	13%
Approval Combined	48%
Disapproval Combined	39%
Observations	800

Supreme Court Approval Ratings by Gender

	Male	Female
Strongly Approve	8%	10%
Approve	38%	39%
Disapprove	35%	23%
Strongly Disapprove	10%	11%
Not Sure	9%	16%
Approval Combined	46%	49%
Disapproval Combined	45%	34%
Observations	387	413

Supreme Court Approval Ratings by Partisanship

	Democrats	Republicans	Independents	Other
Strongly Approve	2%	24%	2%	8%
Approve	23%	54%	44%	28%
Disapprove	44%	13%	25%	39%
Strongly Disapprove	18%	0%	12%	14%
Not Sure	13%	9%	16%	10%
Approval Combined	25%	77%	46%	37%
Disapproval Combined	62%	13%	38%	53%
Observations	292	256	210	42

d. Economy

Question: How would you rate the economic conditions in the United States as of today?

State of National Economy	
Excellent	17%
Good	42%
Fair	25%
Poor	11%
Bad	5%
Observations	800

State of National Economy by Partisanship				
	Democrats	Republicans	Independents	Other
Excellent	3%	38%	12%	15%
Good	36%	49%	44%	32%
Fair	39%	10%	24%	17%
Poor	15%	3%	13%	29%
Bad	7%	1%	7%	8%
Observations	292	256	210	42

Question: How would you rate the economic conditions in Colorado as of today?

State of Colorado Economy	
Excellent	19%
Good	49%
Fair	21%
Poor	8%
Bad	3%
Observations	800

State of Colorado Economy by Partisanship				
	Democrats	Republicans	Independents	Other
Excellent	18%	27%	13%	11%
Good	49%	49%	49%	45%
Fair	24%	15%	24%	28%
Poor	9%	7%	9%	12%
Bad	1%	3%	5%	3%
Observations	292	256	210	42

Amendments and Propositions

Question: As you may know, there are several different propositions and amendments on the Colorado ballot this year. We would like to know how you would vote on a few of these if the election were held today.

a. Proposition 112

Question: Proposition 112 would require that new oil and gas wells be located at least 2,500 feet from occupied buildings and other areas designated as by the state of Colorado as vulnerable. Current state law requires that oil and gas wells be 500 feet from homes and 1,000 feet from schools. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this proposition?

Proposition 112

Yes	52%
No	48%
Observations	800

Proposition 112 by Partisanship

	Democrats	Republicans	Independents	Other
Yes	73%	25%	51%	72%
No	27%	75%	49%	28%
Observations	292	256	210	42

b. Amendment 74

Amendment 74 would require the Colorado government to provide just compensation to private property owners when a government law or regulation reduces the fair market value of their property. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this proposition?

Amendment 74	
Yes	63%
No	37%
Observations	800

Amendment 74 by Partisanship				
	Democrats	Republicans	Independents	Other
Yes	60%	68%	65%	51%
No	40%	32%	35%	49%
Observations	292	256	210	42

c. Amendment 73

Amendment 73 would establish a new tax bracket system that would raise taxes on individuals making more than \$150,000 per year as well as increase the corporate income tax rate to create the Quality Public Education Fund. This fund would then spend the additional money generated by the increased taxes to fund preschool through 12th grade public education. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this proposition?

Amendment 73	
Yes	58%
No	42%
Observations	800

Amendment 73 by Partisanship				
	Democrats	Republicans	Independents	Other
Yes	86%	25%	55%	73%
No	14%	75%	45%	27%
Observations	292	256	210	42

d. Proposition 111

Proposition 111 would reduce the total interest that payday lenders can charge their clients from a current maximum of 45% to 36% interest while removing other fees that payday lenders often charge their clients. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this proposition?

Proposition 111

Yes	84%
No	16%
Observations	800

Proposition 111 by Partisanship

	Democrats	Republicans	Independents	Other
Yes	93%	71%	90%	77%
No	7%	29%	10%	23%
Observations	292	256	210	42

e. Amendment Y

Amendment Y would change how Congressional district lines are drawn so that an independent commission, not controlled by one political party or the other, would be in charge of drawing the new district lines. Currently, the state legislature has the power to redraw Congressional districts. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this proposition?

Amendment Y	
Yes	78%
No	22%
Observations	800

Amendment Y by Partisanship				
	Democrats	Republicans	Independents	Other
Yes	89%	64%	79%	76%
No	11%	36%	21%	24%
Observations	292	256	210	42

f. Amendment 75

Amendment 75 would change how campaigns can be financed in Colorado so that if a candidate for state office spends 1 million dollars or more of their own money than the other candidates for that office can accept 5 times more money from donors than currently allowed by law. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this proposition?

Amendment 75	
Yes	39%
No	61%
Observations	800

Amendment 75 by Partisanship				
	Democrats	Republicans	Independents	Other
Yes	42%	39%	34%	39%
No	58%	61%	66%	61%
Observations	292	256	210	42

Appendix: Demographics

Partisanship

Democrats	37%
Republicans	32%
Independents	26%
Other	5%
Observations	800

Gender

Male	48%
Female	52%
Observations	800

Age Groups

18-29	17%
30-44	30%
45-64	32%
65+	22%
Observations	800

Education

No High School	2%
High School	19%
Some College	23%
Associate's Degree	9%
Bachelor's Degree	30%
Post-graduate	17%
Observations	800

Race/Ethnicity

White	85%
Black	3%
Hispanic	7%
Asian	1%
Native American	1%
Middle Eastern	0%
Mixed	3%
Other	1%
Observations	800