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THE COVID STATES PROJECT: A 50-STATE COVID-19 SURVEY REPORT #66: UPDATE ON EXECUTIVE APPROVAL

USA, October 2021

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Northwestern
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Report of October 8, 2021, v.1

The COVID States Project

From: The COVID-19 Consortium for Understanding the Public's Policy Preferences Across States

A joint project of:

Northeastern University, Harvard University, Rutgers University, and Northwestern University

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Northeastern University
Network Science Institute

COVER MEMO

Summary Memo — October 8, 2021

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Note on methods:

Over fourteen survey waves, we polled 216,502 individuals across all 50 states plus the District of Columbia on their approval of the President and their state's governor. The data was collected between April 17, 2020 and September 27, 2021 by PureSpectrum via an online, nonprobability sample, with state-level representative quotas for race/ethnicity, age, and gender. In addition to balancing on these dimensions, we reweighted our data using demographic characteristics to match the U.S. population with respect to race/ethnicity, age, gender, education, and living in urban, suburban, or rural areas. The survey waves used in this report include: Late April 2020 (4/17/20-4/26/20), Early May 2020 (5/2/20-5/15/20), Late May 2020 (5/16/20-5/31/20), Late June 2020 (6/12/20-6/28/20), Late July 2020 (7/10/20-7/26/20), August 2020 (8/7/20-8/26/20), September 2020 (9/4/20-9/27/20), October 2020 (10/2/20-11/04/20), November 2020 (11/03/20-12/01/20), December-January (12/16/20-01/11/21), February 2021 (02/05/21-03/01/21), April 2021 (04/01/21-05/03/21), June 2021 (06/09/21-07/06/21) and September 2021 (08/26/21-09/27/21). The latest wave polled 21,079 individuals between August 26 and September 27, 2021.

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Or visit us at www.covidstates.org.

September 2021 update on executive approval

The COVID States Project survey regularly asks people in all 50 states about their approval of their governors and the President. Since our last report on executive approval, which examined trends through March 2021, the pandemic has notably evolved, with huge surges of cases and deaths associated with the Delta variant throughout the summer and early fall. Most states reacted to the dip in coronavirus infections and increase in vaccinations in late spring and early summer by lifting indoor mask mandates, only to struggle to adapt as cases surged again in the late summer and early fall 2021. Some of these states were responding to [CDC guidance](#), which announced in May that fully vaccinated people no longer needed to wear masks indoors or outdoors, only to reverse that guidance a few months later and recommend masks indoors for Americans living in areas of high transmission regardless of vaccination status. Other states rebuffed the guidance of public health agencies by, for instance, banning mask mandates in schools, businesses, and other public places. These policy decisions received wide criticism¹ particularly as COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths surged in those states with the loosest pandemic restrictions.

September 2021 has also seen important political developments with respect to national policy around COVID-19. On September 9, President Biden issued an [executive order](#) requiring all federal employees and government contractors to be vaccinated. The President also [announced](#) that the U.S. Department of Labor would require all businesses with more than 100 employees to require vaccination or weekly testing and provide paid time off for employees to get vaccinated. On September 22, the [FDA authorized](#) booster shots for those vaccinated with the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine for certain populations, including the elderly and those at higher risk of catching the disease due to their professions.

In this report, we examine the approval of governors and the President for their handling of the pandemic -- and for the president's *overall* approval -- over time across the U.S. to assess how the public reacted to the policy decisions and developments surrounding the pandemic as well as state and federal governmental responses.

¹ See e.g. Valerie Strauss. 2021. "Florida Gov. DeSantis faces growing revolt from school districts imposing mask mandates." *The Washington Post*. August 19. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2021/08/19/florida-mask-mandate-desantis-revolt/>

KEY FINDINGS

- Despite a drop in President Biden's approval rating on the pandemic since June (overall and among key groups), Biden maintains a higher coronavirus approval rating than did Trump at this point last year (49% vs. 34%).
- President Biden's approval rating on his handling of the coronavirus pandemic (49%) and the average governor's approval rating on their handling of the pandemic (45%) are similar. This is in contrast to President's Trump's approval rating on coronavirus at this point last year, which was significantly lower than respondents' approval of their governor's handling of the crisis (34% vs. 48%).
- Governors of states with prohibitions on vaccine mandates garner the lowest approval ratings. This relationship holds even after accounting for partisanship, race, gender, vaccination status, the governor's party, and the state's average per capita COVID-19 cases.
- Governors of states with higher average COVID-19 cases per capita receive lower approval ratings than governors of states where cases are lower.

1. Presidential Approval

Changes in executive approval during this time have tracked closely with developments in the COVID-19 pandemic, with approval of the President and state governors declining since summer as coronavirus cases surged in the late summer and early fall of 2021. See Figure 1 for overall approval trends for the president and governors, and Figure 6 for trends in governor approval by party identification.

According to the most recent survey conducted by the COVID States Project, 45% approve or strongly approve of the job Biden is doing as President. One third (33%) of Independents approve of the President, compared to eight in ten (80%) Democrats and about one in ten Republicans (11%).

When it comes to the President's handling of the coronavirus pandemic, roughly half of respondents (49%) approve while about three in ten (31%) disapprove and another one in five (20%) neither approve nor disapprove. Since our last survey, the President's approval rating regarding handling COVID-19 has dropped eight points, from 57% in June.

The latest data from the COVID States Project shows that the decline in President Biden's approval spans groups. In June, 46% of Independents approved of Biden's handling of the coronavirus pandemic compared to the 38% of Independents who approved of the President's handling of the pandemic in September. Approval among Democrats and Republicans has also declined since the June wave (a five percentage point decline among Democrats and a seven point decline among Republicans). Possibly due to the President's more aggressive stance of mandating vaccinations, approval of Biden's handling of the pandemic among the unvaccinated declined 11 points between June and September.² Across racial and ethnic groups, Biden's approval declined between seven and eight percentage points.

² The decline in approval among the unvaccinated cannot be explained by changes in the demographic composition of the unvaccinated between June and September. See Appendix Figure 1 for evidence that the demographic groups comprising the unvaccinated have changed little between waves.

President Biden's Pandemic Approval Declines Across Key Groups

Percent of respondents who approve or strongly approve of the President's handling of the coronavirus pandemic:

■ June 2021 Wave ■ September 2021 Wave

Party Identification

Race/Ethnicity

Gender

Vaccination Status

Note: June wave conducted 06/09/21-07/06/21. September wave conducted 08/26/21-09/27/21.

Source: The COVID-19 Consortium for Understanding the Public's Policy Preferences Across States (A joint project of Northeastern University, Harvard University, Rutgers University, and Northwestern University) www.covidstates.org • Created with Datawrapper

Figure 2.

Despite these notable declines, Biden's approval for handling the coronavirus in September 2021 remains 15 percentage points higher than Trump's 34% approval at this point last year (September 2020). Similarly, Biden's overall approval tops Trump's 37% approval in September of his first term, although it is lower than Obama's first term September approval of 52%.³

Across states, Biden's approval has declined by a similar share in states run by Republican and Democratic governors: In Republican controlled states, 45% of respondents approved of the President's handling of the pandemic in September, an eight point decline from the 53% who approved in June. In Democrat-controlled states, Biden's approval declined seven points, from 60% in June to 53% in September.

Approval of the President also varies widely by respondent race. Approval of the President's handling of the pandemic is highest (66%) among Black respondents, and lowest among Whites, only 45% of whom approve of the President's performance on the pandemic.

2. Governor Approval

On average, 45% of respondents approved of their state governor's handling of the pandemic, a seven point drop from the 52% approval that governors enjoyed in June and the lowest approval of governors since the start of the pandemic. States with particularly notable approval declines are Virginia, Oklahoma, Nevada, Idaho, Alaska, Mississippi, Ohio, Arkansas, and Wisconsin - all of whose governors experienced double digit declines in approval since June. There were increases in approval in just four states, and in none of those were the increases significant.

Slightly fewer respondents approve of their governor's handling of the pandemic than approve of the President's performance on the issue. This is in stark contrast to 2020, when then-President Trump consistently garnered lower approval than governors with respect to the pandemic.

³ Approval figures from Trump and Obama's first term from *Gallup* polling which utilized slightly different question wording. See Megan Brennan. 2021. "Biden's Approval Rating Hits New Low of 43%; Harris' Is 49%." September 22. *Gallup*. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/354872/biden-approval-rating-hits-new-low-harris.aspx>

In the states hardest hit by the recent spike in cases associated with the Delta variant (that is, states above the median number of average per capita cases⁴) four in ten (40%) approve of their state's governor's pandemic performance. Approval in states with higher cases is 11 percentage points lower than in states with lower average case counts (below the median). This may be partly due to variations in how state governments have responded to the pandemic, both generally and regarding the spike in cases associated with the Delta variant. For example, state policies on vaccine mandates vary widely.⁵ In the 20 states where vaccines are required for at least some workers as of September 28, 2021, a slim majority (52%) of respondents approve of their governor's handling of the pandemic.

Approval is lower in the 19 states without such mandates (42% approve) and is lower still in the 11 states where vaccine mandates are prohibited (36%). Governors of states without vaccine mandates or where vaccine mandates are prohibited receive significantly lower approval for their handling of the pandemic even after accounting for alternative factors known to predict approval, including party, gender, race, vaccination status, governor's party, and average daily cases in the state (see Appendix Table 3 for details).

Approval of Governor's Handling of Coronavirus Pandemic by State Vaccine Mandates

Percent of respondents who approve or strongly approve of their state governor's handling of the coronavirus pandemic:

Based on September 2021 data. Survey conducted 08/26/2021-09/27/2021. Data on vaccine mandates from the Kaiser Family Foundation.

Source: The COVID-19 Consortium for Understanding the Public's Policy Preferences Across States (A joint project of Northeastern University, Harvard University, Rutgers University, and Northwestern University) www.covidstates.org • Created with Datawrapper

Figure 3.

⁴ Categorized as states above the median average cases per capita between July 28 and August 26, 2021. Case data from the *New York Times*.

⁵ Data on vaccine mandates from: *Kaiser Family Foundation*. "State COVID-19 Data and Policy Actions." September 28, 2021. <https://www.kff.org/report-section/state-covid-19-data-and-policy-actions-policy-actions/#vaccines>

Among individuals who say they are unvaccinated, roughly three in ten approve of their governor's handling of the pandemic across the states. However, approval among the vaccinated varies widely by state policy concerning vaccine mandates. In states with vaccine mandates, six in ten (60%) vaccinated individuals approve of their governor's handling of the pandemic, compared to 48% of those in states without such requirements and 37% in states where vaccine mandates are prohibited.

Governor Approval Varies By State Vaccine Mandates and Individual Vaccination Status

Percent of respondents who approve or strongly approve of their state governor's handling of the coronavirus pandemic:

States With Vaccine Mandates

States With No Vaccine Mandates

States With Mandates Prohibited

Based on September 2021 data. Survey conducted 08/26/2021-09/27/2021. Data on vaccine mandates from the Kaiser Family Foundation.

Source: The COVID-19 Consortium for Understanding the Public's Policy Preferences Across States (A joint project of Northeastern University, Harvard University, Rutgers University, and Northwestern University) www.covidstates.org • Created with Datawrapper

Figure 4.

In states with the highest average daily cases (states above the median), approval of the governor is lowest. In states with both the highest average daily cases and where vaccine mandates are prohibited,⁶ one third (33%) approve of their governor's handling of the pandemic.

⁶ Note that state counts reported here exclude the District of Columbia.

Even in states with the lowest average cases, more respondents approve of their governor when a vaccine mandate is in place: 54% approve in states with low cases and vaccine mandates, compared to 46% in low cases states without vaccine mandates or where they are prohibited.

Governors Of States With High Cases and Prohibitions On Vaccine Mandates Receive Lowest Approval From State Residents

Percent of respondents who approve or strongly approve of their state governor's handling of the coronavirus pandemic:

States With Vaccine Mandates

States with Highest Average Cases 50%

States with Lowest Average Cases 54%

States With No Vaccine Mandates

States with Highest Average Cases 39%

States with Lowest Average Cases 46%

States With Mandates Prohibited

States with Highest Average Cases 33%

States with Lowest Average Cases 46%

Based on September 2021 data. Survey conducted 08/26/2021-09/27/2021. Data on vaccine mandates from the Kaiser Family Foundation. Data on average cases from the New York Times. States with highest average cases are above the median in average cases per capita between 07/28-08/26/2021. States with lowest average cases are below the median in average cases per capita 07/28-08/26/2021.

Source: The COVID-19 Consortium for Understanding the Public's Policy Preferences Across States (A joint project of Northeastern University, Harvard University, Rutgers University, and Northwestern University) www.covidstates.org • Created with Datawrapper

Figure 5.

Figure 6. [Download high-resolution image](#)

The partisan gap in approval of Democratic governors has increased dramatically through the pandemic, due primarily to a steady and dramatic decrease in approval by Republicans, from 58% in April 2020, to 29% in September 2021 (Democratic approval of Democratic governors dropped more modestly, from 77% to 71%). Indeed, partisan polarization of Republican governors has decreased, largely because of a sizable drop in approval among Republicans for Republican governors (from 77% to 55%). This divergence in partisan gap started after the election. In November, the partisan gap in approval of Republican governors was larger than for Democratic governors.

Figure 7.

Figure 8.

As we have noted in our earlier reports, there are five Republican governors who stand out for having very high approval among Democrats (the governors of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, Maryland, and Ohio). Indeed, throughout 2021, those five governors have had higher average approval among Democratic respondents than among their Republican counterparts. In September, this partisan approval gap stands at 8 points, down from 18 points in June (see Figure 9). Nearly all of this narrowing of the partisan gap is attributable to declines in approval of these five Republican governors among their fellow Republican partisans.

Average approval by party across Republican governors of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, Maryland and Ohio

Figure 9.

Average approval by party across Republican governors except Republican governors of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, Maryland and Ohio

Figure 10.

Appendix: Tables and figures

Appendix Table 1: Presidential Approval
(Error interval in parentheses)

	Late Apr. 20	Early May 20	Late May 20	Late Jun. 20	Late Jul. 20	Late Aug. 20	Sep. 20	Oct. 20	Nov. 20	Dec- Jan. 21	Feb.	Apr. 21	Jun. 21	Sep. 21
Nat.	42 (1)	40 (1)	34 (1)	34 (1)	32 (1)	34 (1)	34 (1)	35 (1)	32 (1)	32 (1)	53 (1)	59 (1)	57 (1)	49 (1)
AK	55 (14)	41 (10)	35 (13)	37 (10)	32 (10)	26 (12)	30 (10)	36 (7)	41 (8)	37 (6)	42 (7)	47 (9)	45 (9)	35 (9)
AL	54 (6)	52 (6)	42 (7)	45 (6)	46 (6)	46 (5)	50 (6)	48 (6)	46 (6)	43 (6)	49 (6)	52 (6)	43 (6)	39 (6)
AR	55 (6)	51 (7)	46 (7)	40 (7)	39 (7)	44 (6)	44 (8)	45 (6)	36 (7)	39 (6)	38 (5)	49 (7)	45 (7)	37 (6)
AZ	42 (6)	43 (7)	34 (5)	35 (5)	38 (7)	31 (5)	36 (6)	37 (6)	32 (5)	37 (5)	50 (6)	56 (7)	52 (6)	44 (6)
CA	32 (5)	34 (4)	27 (4)	25 (4)	30 (5)	28 (4)	25 (3)	27 (4)	26 (4)	26 (4)	64 (5)	67 (4)	61 (4)	57 (4)
CO	42 (6)	37 (6)	34 (6)	31 (5)	27 (6)	33 (5)	30 (6)	34 (5)	31 (5)	30 (5)	48 (6)	61 (5)	58 (6)	50 (6)
CT	34 (6)	32 (6)	31 (8)	26 (5)	22 (5)	30 (5)	23 (5)	28 (5)	21 (5)	26 (4)	56 (6)	61 (6)	64 (5)	56 (6)
DE	37 (7)	38 (6)	30 (7)	28 (6)	24 (7)	33 (8)	29 (7)	28 (6)	26 (6)	30 (5)	60 (7)	62 (7)	58 (7)	49 (6)
FL	42 (5)	42 (4)	38 (5)	40 (4)	39 (5)	29 (4)	34 (4)	39 (4)	34 (4)	34 (4)	55 (5)	62 (4)	59 (5)	47 (4)
GA	46 (5)	42 (5)	35 (6)	42 (5)	38 (6)	35 (5)	39 (5)	39 (5)	36 (5)	38 (5)	54 (6)	57 (6)	57 (6)	54 (5)
HI	31 (7)	30 (8)	20 (6)	23 (5)	20 (6)	27 (8)	21 (7)	21 (5)	26 (6)	19 (4)	67 (7)	57 (6)	54 (7)	49 (6)

IA	43 (6)	39 (6)	34 (7)	29 (6)	29 (6)	34 (7)	40 (8)	31 (5)	35 (5)	30 (5)	58 (6)	59 (6)	56 (6)	49 (6)
ID	51 (7)	46 (6)	42 (6)	36 (6)	36 (6)	49 (8)	42 (7)	45 (7)	38 (6)	39 (5)	41 (5)	40 (6)	42 (7)	31 (5)
IL	37 (5)	36 (5)	34 (4)	28 (4)	26 (5)	30 (4)	30 (4)	29 (4)	33 (5)	26 (4)	57 (6)	61 (5)	63 (5)	54 (5)
IN	50 (6)	49 (6)	39 (6)	37 (6)	30 (6)	38 (5)	39 (6)	43 (5)	39 (5)	41 (5)	41 (6)	52 (6)	44 (6)	44 (6)
KS	48 (6)	44 (6)	38 (8)	36 (6)	35 (6)	39 (6)	42 (7)	38 (6)	31 (5)	35 (5)	48 (6)	48 (6)	51 (6)	43 (6)
KY	52 (5)	47 (6)	44 (7)	47 (6)	45 (6)	42 (5)	46 (7)	42 (5)	39 (5)	40 (5)	45 (6)	49 (6)	51 (6)	38 (5)
LA	50 (6)	50 (7)	45 (7)	49 (7)	38 (7)	44 (6)	42 (8)	45 (6)	37 (6)	44 (5)	37 (7)	50 (7)	46 (6)	51 (7)
MA	35 (5)	34 (5)	27 (5)	24 (5)	26 (5)	24 (4)	27 (5)	26 (5)	24 (4)	21 (4)	67 (5)	69 (5)	66 (6)	61 (5)
MD	38 (6)	27 (5)	24 (5)	30 (5)	22 (5)	26 (4)	26 (5)	27 (4)	30 (5)	25 (4)	63 (6)	63 (6)	66 (5)	55 (6)
ME	46 (6)	37 (6)	34 (6)	33 (6)	31 (6)	40 (7)	38 (7)	36 (5)	31 (4)	34 (5)	52 (5)	57 (5)	57 (6)	42 (6)
MI	37 (5)	34 (5)	29 (5)	26 (5)	30 (6)	32 (5)	33 (6)	36 (5)	34 (4)	34 (5)	52 (5)	59 (5)	60 (6)	52 (5)
MN	44 (5)	39 (6)	33 (6)	33 (5)	36 (6)	35 (5)	30 (7)	34 (5)	38 (5)	28 (4)	49 (5)	55 (6)	55 (5)	45 (6)
MO	50 (5)	47 (5)	36 (5)	42 (5)	39 (6)	43 (5)	44 (6)	46 (5)	38 (5)	34 (5)	45 (6)	50 (6)	48 (5)	44 (5)
MS	46 (7)	50 (7)	48 (9)	48 (7)	37 (7)	45 (7)	45 (8)	47 (6)	35 (6)	34 (6)	47 (6)	56 (6)	52 (7)	35 (6)
MT	49 (8)	49 (8)	38 (11)	40 (7)	35 (7)	32 (8)	45 (8)	40 (6)	38 (6)	42 (5)	43 (6)	48 (7)	46 (7)	40 (7)

NC	48 (5)	46 (5)	40 (5)	35 (5)	35 (6)	34 (5)	40 (5)	41 (4)	33 (4)	30 (4)	54 (5)	59 (5)	54 (5)	53 (5)
ND	53 (11)	42 (8)	45 (9)	52 (9)	36 (8)	38 (9)	40 (9)	37 (6)	33 (6)	38 (5)	39 (6)	43 (6)	42 (7)	35 (6)
NE	54 (7)	49 (8)	38 (10)	40 (6)	39 (6)	34 (7)	38 (8)	34 (5)	35 (6)	39 (5)	45 (6)	48 (6)	46 (6)	41 (7)
NH	39 (6)	34 (5)	26 (5)	30 (5)	30 (6)	33 (8)	28 (6)	31 (6)	29 (5)	27 (4)	56 (6)	60 (5)	62 (6)	57 (6)
NJ	37 (5)	37 (5)	30 (4)	29 (5)	28 (6)	30 (5)	30 (5)	32 (5)	25 (5)	29 (5)	56 (6)	67 (5)	68 (5)	61 (5)
NM	42 (13)	30 (10)	35 (11)	26 (8)	26 (7)	33 (7)	26 (7)	33 (7)	34 (7)	28 (6)	50 (7)	52 (7)	51 (7)	47 (7)
NV	39 (6)	37 (6)	31 (7)	31 (6)	34 (6)	32 (6)	33 (7)	36 (5)	27 (6)	27 (5)	53 (7)	59 (7)	55 (6)	40 (6)
NY	34 (5)	35 (4)	34 (4)	29 (4)	31 (5)	31 (5)	28 (4)	30 (4)	32 (4)	26 (4)	63 (4)	72 (4)	68 (5)	59 (4)
OH	51 (5)	45 (5)	41 (5)	38 (4)	35 (5)	36 (5)	41 (5)	42 (4)	42 (5)	38 (5)	51 (5)	56 (5)	57 (5)	49 (5)
OK	50 (6)	49 (7)	42 (7)	43 (7)	31 (7)	41 (6)	45 (7)	41 (6)	39 (6)	41 (5)	38 (6)	46 (7)	48 (6)	40 (6)
OR	35 (5)	36 (5)	33 (5)	35 (6)	34 (6)	28 (5)	35 (6)	33 (5)	30 (5)	28 (4)	48 (6)	57 (7)	56 (6)	50 (6)
PA	39 (5)	40 (4)	37 (4)	36 (4)	36 (6)	37 (5)	33 (4)	38 (4)	35 (4)	36 (5)	52 (5)	56 (5)	57 (5)	48 (5)
RI	39 (7)	31 (6)	17 (7)	25 (6)	26 (6)	21 (7)	27 (7)	27 (5)	21 (4)	25 (4)	54 (6)	57 (6)	60 (7)	52 (7)
SC	49 (6)	49 (6)	43 (6)	39 (6)	40 (6)	43 (6)	37 (6)	38 (5)	43 (5)	35 (5)	49 (6)	61 (6)	52 (6)	43 (6)
SD	43 (9)	41 (8)	42 (9)	41 (7)	43 (8)	36 (10)	42 (10)	36 (6)	41 (6)	40 (5)	44 (6)	46 (7)	46 (7)	37 (7)

TN	52 (6)	50 (6)	50 (6)	44 (6)	44 (6)	45 (5)	41 (5)	46 (5)	41 (6)	40 (5)	45 (6)	53 (6)	47 (6)	39 (5)
TX	43 (5)	38 (5)	36 (5)	37 (4)	32 (6)	30 (4)	35 (4)	36 (4)	39 (4)	33 (5)	50 (5)	63 (4)	56 (5)	48 (4)
UT	45 (6)	48 (7)	39 (8)	37 (7)	32 (6)	38 (7)	42 (7)	38 (5)	38 (5)	35 (5)	49 (5)	47 (6)	45 (6)	44 (6)
VA	42 (5)	39 (5)	35 (5)	33 (5)	33 (6)	33 (5)	36 (5)	36 (5)	31 (5)	35 (5)	58 (5)	67 (5)	66 (5)	56 (5)
VT	30 (8)	33 (7)	22 (7)	27 (7)	33 (8)	30 (10)	21 (9)	26 (6)	19 (6)	27 (5)	55 (6)	64 (7)	62 (8)	49 (8)
WA	30 (6)	30 (5)	26 (4)	30 (5)	32 (5)	26 (5)	30 (5)	31 (5)	28 (5)	25 (4)	61 (5)	59 (6)	63 (5)	59 (5)
WI	38 (5)	32 (5)	29 (5)	30 (5)	29 (5)	29 (5)	34 (6)	31 (5)	29 (4)	31 (5)	54 (6)	64 (5)	58 (5)	52 (5)
WV	57 (6)	58 (7)	44 (9)	51 (7)	44 (7)	48 (7)	58 (8)	46 (5)	50 (7)	47 (6)	37 (6)	40 (7)	46 (7)	34 (6)
WY	61 (11)	67 (12)	52 (11)	52 (10)	50 (10)	46 (11)	48 (11)	47 (7)	44 (8)	44 (6)	35 (7)	36 (8)	40 (9)	37 (9)

Appendix Table 2: Governor Approval
(Error interval in parentheses)

	Late Apr. 20	Early May 20	Late May 20	Late Jun. 20	Late Jul. 20	Late Aug. 20	Sep. 20	Oct. 20	Nov. 20	Dec- Jan. 21	Feb.	Apr. 21	Jun. 21	Sep. 21
Nat.	64 (1)	59 (1)	54 (1)	53 (1)	51 (1)	48 (1)	48 (1)	48 (1)	47 (1)	47 (1)	46 (1)	52 (1)	52 (1)	45 (1)
AK	61 (14)	53 (10)	48 (13)	51 (11)	47 (11)	42 (13)	34 (11)	48 (7)	45 (8)	41 (6)	39 (7)	52 (9)	48 (9)	34 (9)
AL	60 (6)	52 (6)	46 (7)	48 (6)	47 (6)	44 (5)	46 (6)	46 (6)	45 (6)	45 (6)	54 (6)	45 (6)	49 (6)	41 (6)
AR	65 (6)	61 (7)	52 (7)	47 (7)	41 (7)	43 (6)	52 (8)	50 (6)	36 (7)	41 (6)	47 (6)	48 (7)	48 (7)	37 (6)
AZ	56 (6)	57 (7)	41 (5)	33 (5)	30 (7)	30 (5)	37 (6)	36 (5)	36 (6)	28 (5)	32 (6)	38 (7)	37 (5)	28 (5)
CA	70 (5)	67 (4)	58 (4)	58 (4)	58 (6)	47 (4)	51 (4)	48 (4)	47 (4)	42 (5)	45 (5)	52 (5)	51 (5)	54 (4)
CO	64 (5)	54 (6)	52 (6)	52 (6)	51 (7)	52 (5)	52 (7)	56 (5)	48 (6)	55 (5)	52 (6)	62 (5)	57 (6)	53 (6)
CT	66 (6)	66 (6)	64 (8)	59 (6)	59 (6)	65 (6)	57 (6)	63 (5)	62 (6)	59 (5)	61 (6)	65 (6)	72 (5)	62 (6)
DE	69 (7)	62 (6)	53 (7)	54 (6)	51 (8)	60 (8)	48 (8)	47 (6)	54 (6)	51 (5)	53 (7)	58 (7)	54 (7)	53 (6)
FL	46 (5)	46 (4)	49 (5)	43 (4)	40 (6)	29 (4)	34 (4)	39 (4)	38 (4)	38 (5)	35 (5)	46 (5)	45 (5)	36 (4)
GA	53 (5)	33 (5)	35 (6)	43 (5)	37 (6)	36 (5)	38 (5)	41 (5)	37 (5)	34 (5)	35 (5)	44 (6)	40 (6)	33 (5)
HI	36 (8)	35 (9)	41 (8)	43 (6)	39 (7)	31 (8)	31 (8)	28 (5)	37 (7)	39 (5)	47 (7)	39 (6)	44 (7)	38 (6)
IA	52 (6)	36 (6)	37 (7)	37 (6)	28 (6)	25 (7)	27 (7)	27 (5)	32 (5)	31 (5)	32 (6)	35 (6)	38 (6)	28 (5)

ID	64 (6)	54 (6)	51 (6)	49 (6)	42 (6)	34 (8)	46 (7)	41 (7)	36 (6)	31 (5)	33 (5)	43 (6)	44 (7)	30 (5)
IL	63 (5)	54 (5)	52 (5)	58 (5)	52 (6)	57 (5)	50 (5)	50 (4)	48 (5)	51 (5)	45 (6)	51 (5)	55 (5)	52 (5)
IN	71 (5)	59 (6)	56 (6)	56 (6)	50 (7)	47 (5)	46 (6)	49 (5)	45 (6)	43 (5)	54 (6)	50 (6)	43 (6)	46 (6)
KS	68 (6)	58 (6)	57 (8)	51 (7)	50 (6)	46 (6)	51 (7)	51 (7)	51 (6)	51 (5)	44 (6)	49 (6)	47 (6)	41 (6)
KY	79 (4)	71 (5)	63 (7)	62 (6)	59 (6)	57 (5)	57 (7)	55 (5)	55 (5)	56 (5)	52 (6)	57 (6)	60 (5)	51 (6)
LA	67 (6)	67 (6)	60 (7)	64 (7)	50 (7)	52 (6)	43 (8)	49 (6)	48 (6)	49 (5)	43 (7)	52 (7)	51 (6)	53 (7)
MA	80 (4)	77 (4)	72 (5)	70 (5)	70 (6)	68 (5)	71 (5)	65 (5)	64 (5)	65 (5)	59 (5)	68 (5)	68 (6)	64 (5)
MD	79 (5)	72 (5)	69 (6)	69 (5)	75 (5)	71 (5)	67 (6)	66 (5)	67 (6)	66 (5)	65 (6)	61 (6)	70 (5)	60 (5)
ME	67 (6)	57 (6)	50 (6)	50 (6)	54 (7)	54 (7)	52 (7)	54 (5)	58 (5)	53 (5)	52 (5)	57 (5)	55 (6)	51 (6)
MI	62 (5)	62 (5)	59 (5)	69 (5)	67 (6)	64 (5)	53 (6)	54 (5)	54 (5)	55 (5)	52 (5)	55 (5)	58 (6)	51 (5)
MN	71 (5)	62 (6)	59 (6)	54 (5)	52 (6)	51 (5)	49 (8)	50 (5)	50 (5)	57 (5)	52 (5)	53 (6)	52 (5)	46 (6)
MO	59 (5)	49 (5)	42 (6)	44 (5)	38 (6)	39 (5)	37 (6)	41 (5)	38 (5)	31 (5)	33 (5)	42 (6)	38 (5)	34 (5)
MS	56 (7)	53 (7)	54 (9)	50 (7)	42 (7)	34 (7)	35 (8)	40 (6)	31 (6)	33 (6)	34 (6)	44 (6)	41 (7)	28 (6)
MT	59 (8)	62 (7)	57 (11)	57 (7)	53 (7)	49 (8)	45 (8)	49 (6)	47 (6)	46 (5)	37 (6)	46 (7)	48 (7)	42 (7)
NC	60 (5)	60 (5)	52 (5)	49 (5)	48 (6)	52 (5)	51 (6)	48 (4)	51 (5)	52 (5)	50 (5)	51 (5)	53 (5)	46 (5)

ND	66 (11)	54 (9)	63 (9)	64 (9)	58 (9)	53 (9)	51 (9)	43 (6)	30 (6)	41 (5)	38 (6)	42 (6)	37 (7)	41 (7)
NE	63 (7)	53 (8)	51 (10)	50 (6)	41 (6)	40 (7)	42 (9)	40 (5)	39 (6)	37 (5)	39 (6)	43 (6)	41 (6)	39 (7)
NH	74 (6)	71 (5)	68 (6)	71 (5)	64 (6)	63 (8)	65 (7)	55 (6)	60 (6)	61 (4)	61 (6)	63 (5)	63 (6)	56 (6)
NJ	65 (5)	67 (5)	58 (5)	66 (5)	60 (7)	60 (5)	58 (5)	62 (5)	59 (6)	56 (5)	51 (6)	60 (6)	62 (5)	60 (5)
NM	64 (13)	67 (10)	54 (11)	42 (9)	53 (8)	53 (8)	48 (8)	48 (7)	46 (7)	48 (6)	47 (7)	53 (7)	54 (7)	50 (7)
NV	60 (6)	60 (6)	55 (7)	51 (6)	47 (7)	41 (6)	44 (8)	50 (6)	50 (6)	44 (5)	44 (7)	53 (7)	57 (6)	42 (6)
NY	70 (5)	70 (4)	69 (4)	64 (4)	71 (5)	61 (5)	58 (4)	57 (4)	60 (4)	63 (5)	53 (5)	60 (4)	62 (5)	57 (4)
OH	81 (4)	77 (4)	69 (5)	66 (4)	58 (5)	58 (5)	56 (5)	59 (4)	56 (5)	50 (5)	57 (5)	62 (5)	61 (5)	49 (5)
OK	51 (6)	48 (7)	44 (7)	45 (7)	34 (7)	35 (6)	39 (7)	36 (6)	39 (6)	33 (5)	37 (6)	50 (7)	47 (6)	32 (6)
OR	61 (5)	53 (5)	54 (5)	48 (6)	47 (6)	39 (5)	46 (7)	43 (6)	44 (5)	47 (5)	39 (6)	50 (7)	48 (6)	42 (6)
PA	57 (5)	56 (5)	52 (5)	48 (4)	52 (6)	48 (5)	48 (5)	47 (4)	43 (5)	44 (5)	39 (5)	44 (5)	47 (5)	41 (5)
RI	74 (6)	72 (6)	66 (9)	63 (6)	71 (6)	60 (8)	62 (8)	58 (6)	58 (5)	54 (5)	40 (6)	50 (7)	60 (7)	52 (7)
SC	51 (6)	49 (6)	46 (6)	44 (6)	44 (6)	36 (6)	37 (6)	38 (5)	41 (5)	35 (5)	42 (6)	54 (6)	46 (6)	36 (6)
SD	43 (9)	45 (8)	40 (9)	54 (7)	54 (8)	48 (10)	42 (10)	38 (6)	38 (6)	37 (5)	43 (6)	48 (7)	47 (7)	41 (7)
TN	62 (5)	51 (6)	50 (6)	46 (6)	44 (6)	40 (5)	38 (5)	43 (5)	43 (6)	35 (5)	37 (5)	41 (6)	49 (6)	31 (5)

TX	61 (5)	52 (5)	49 (5)	45 (4)	38 (6)	35 (4)	40 (4)	40 (4)	43 (4)	38 (5)	41 (5)	46 (4)	41 (5)	32 (4)
UT	60 (6)	57 (7)	56 (8)	49 (7)	44 (6)	44 (8)	46 (7)	42 (5)	40 (5)	40 (5)	51 (5)	55 (6)	50 (6)	43 (6)
VA	59 (5)	54 (5)	54 (5)	49 (5)	59 (6)	46 (5)	46 (5)	51 (5)	48 (6)	50 (5)	49 (5)	61 (5)	64 (5)	49 (5)
VT	72 (8)	75 (7)	74 (8)	75 (7)	75 (7)	76 (9)	70 (11)	78 (6)	77 (6)	74 (5)	71 (6)	74 (6)	78 (7)	69 (8)
WA	70 (6)	65 (5)	53 (5)	58 (6)	57 (6)	50 (5)	51 (5)	54 (5)	55 (5)	54 (5)	55 (5)	58 (6)	60 (6)	55 (5)
WI	56 (5)	56 (5)	50 (6)	48 (5)	46 (5)	43 (5)	39 (6)	41 (5)	48 (4)	47 (5)	47 (6)	56 (5)	53 (6)	42 (5)
WV	78 (5)	73 (6)	67 (9)	65 (7)	54 (7)	56 (7)	49 (8)	48 (5)	55 (7)	54 (6)	55 (6)	60 (7)	61 (6)	54 (6)
WY	65 (11)	54 (13)	59 (11)	55 (10)	60 (10)	48 (11)	42 (11)	51 (7)	43 (7)	39 (6)	37 (7)	46 (8)	50 (9)	41 (9)

**Appendix Table 3: Predictors of Governor Approval
September Wave (08/26/21-09/27/21)**

<i>Dependent variable:</i> Approve/Strongly Approve of Governor Handling of Coronavirus		
	(1)	(2)
Average daily cases per 100,000 people (07.28-08.26)	-0.001*** (0.0001)	-0.001*** (0.0001)
Vaccine Mandates: Prohibited	-0.037*** (0.009)	-0.041*** (0.008)
Vaccine Mandates: Yes	0.039*** (0.009)	0.035*** (0.009)
Republican Governor	-0.029*** (0.009)	-0.285*** (0.011)
Independent	-0.112*** (0.007)	-0.232*** (0.009)
Republican	-0.080*** (0.008)	-0.394*** (0.010)
Vaccinated	0.103*** (0.006)	0.112*** (0.006)
Black	-0.015 (0.009)	0.006 (0.009)
Hispanic	-0.045*** (0.008)	-0.044*** (0.008)
Asian	0.013 (0.012)	0.008 (0.012)
Other Race	-0.076*** (0.018)	-0.075*** (0.018)

Male	0.029 ^{***} (0.006)	0.032 ^{***} (0.005)
Republican Governor*Independent		0.268 ^{***} (0.013)
Republican Governor*Republican		0.625 ^{***} (0.014)
Constant	0.612 ^{***} (0.013)	0.719 ^{***} (0.013)
Observations	20,718	20,718
R ²	0.061	0.143
Adjusted R ²	0.061	0.142
Residual Std. Error	0.410 (df = 20705)	0.392 (df = 20703)
F Statistic	112.700 ^{***} (df = 12; 20705)	246.800 ^{***} (df = 14; 20703)

Notes:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

OLS Estimates. Standard errors in parentheses. Results from weighted regressions. Dependent variable is coded 0=Disapprove, 0.5=Neither approve nor disapprove, 1= Approve.

Figure 1.

Demographics of the Unvaccinated Across Waves

Percent of unvaccinated respondents belonging to each group:

■ June 2021 Wave ■ September 2021 Wave

Party Identification

Race/Ethnicity

Gender

Age

Note: June wave conducted 06/09/21-07/06/21. September wave conducted 08/26/21-09/27/21.

Source: The COVID-19 Consortium for Understanding the Public's Policy Preferences Across States (A joint project of Northeastern University, Harvard University, Rutgers University, and Northwestern University) www.covidstates.org • Created with Datawrapper