



Memo

To: Interested Parties

From: Protect My Ballot

Date: September 11, 2020

Re: New Polling on Public Perception of Ranked Choice Voting

The following memo summarizes the key findings from recent polling conducted by Protect My Ballot on the public's understanding of and opinion on Ranked Choice Voting. The survey was conducted by Engine Insights from August 12-14, 2020, and gained responses from 1,004 adults (849 of which were registered voters), 18 years of age and older.

Recently, several states have seen a push for Ranked Choice Voting (RCV)—an electoral scheme where voters rank candidates in order of preference. With RCV, voters are not required to rank each candidate; however, this could result in their ballot being discarded by the end of the election.

In order to understand the public's perception of RCV, Protect My Ballot conducted a survey of 1,004 Americans. They were asked if the current voting system is easy to navigate, or if they would like to see a change. A question was asked about the consequences of discarding ballots—or ballot exhaustion—because of RCV. Ballot exhaustion occurs when the candidate(s) voters select are eliminated from contention or when voters make ballot marking mistakes, typically out of confusion.

The survey results show that the majority of respondents find the current system easy to navigate. When asked about switching from the current system to RCV, respondents were nearly split, with slightly more opposing RCV. However, when informed about the likelihood of ballot exhaustion, majorities across all political parties opposed a ranking system that could potentially disenfranchise them.

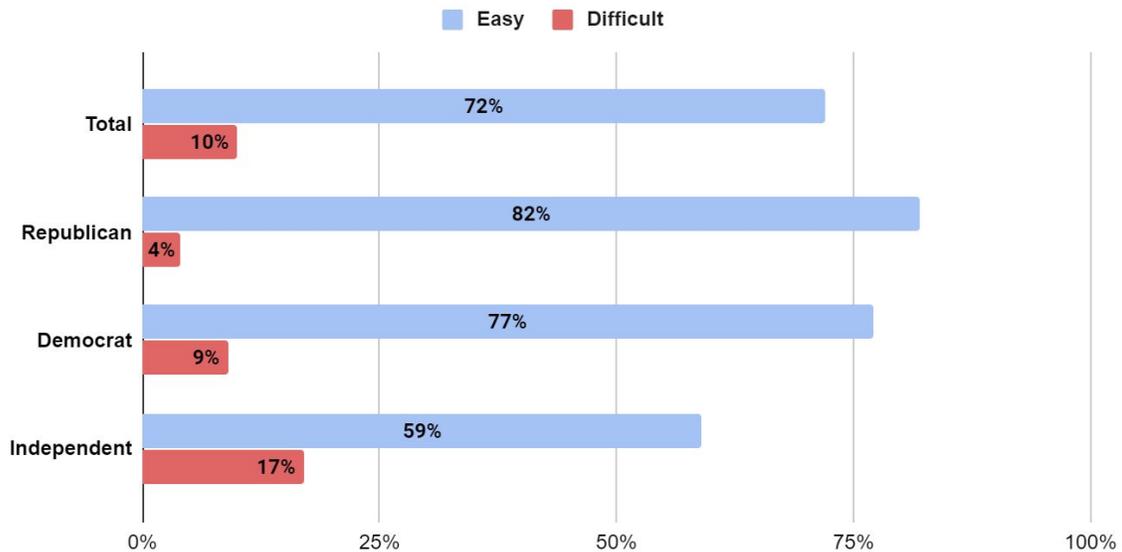
Key takeaways:

1. Americans overwhelmingly believe the current voting system works;
2. Most Americans find the current system easy to navigate;
3. Respondents had divided opinions on Ranked Choice Voting;
4. When informed of the ballot exhaustion risk with Ranked Choice Voting, majorities across all political parties opposed ranking candidates.

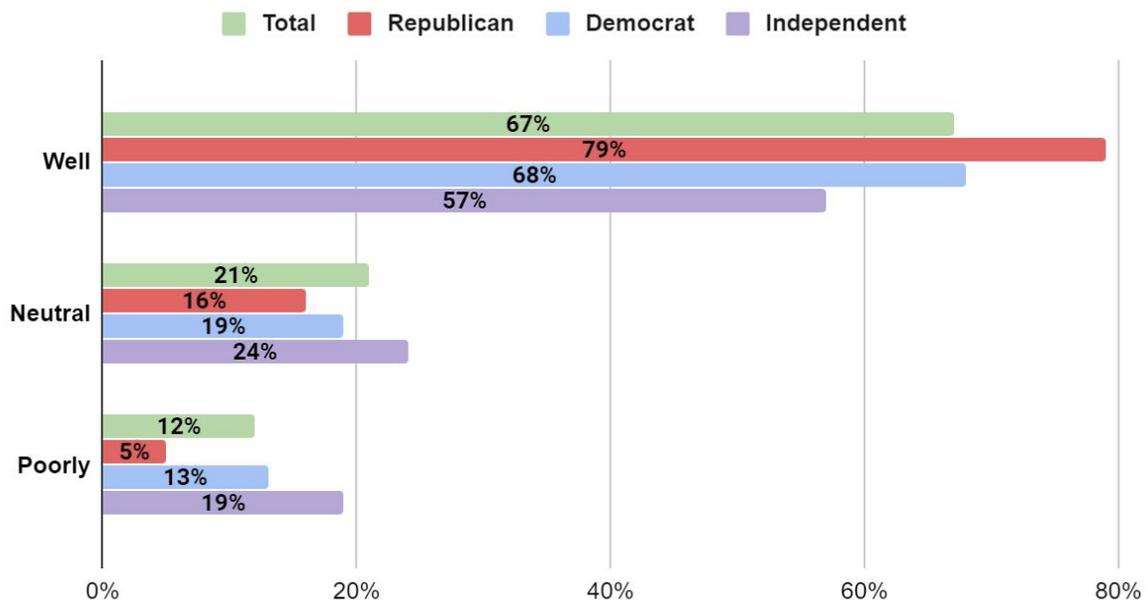
Responses to questions on current voting system:

- 72 percent said the current voting system is very easy or somewhat easy to understand; only 10 percent found it somewhat or very difficult;
- 67 percent said the current voting system works well for them; 21 percent were neutral; 12 percent said it works poorly for them.

How easy or difficult do you find it to vote under the current voting system?



How well do you think the current voting system works?



Responses to questions on Ranked Choice Voting:

- 47 percent oppose the structure of Ranked Choice Voting; 34 percent support it; 19 percent don't know;
- 57 percent oppose a system that allows them to rank candidates, once informed of the ballot exhaustion consequence;
- Many respondents appear to need more information on Ranked Choice Voting:
 - 19 percent don't know if they support or oppose Ranked Choice Voting;
 - 15 percent said they don't know if they would support or oppose a ranking system, even if their ballot was removed from the final tally;
- Majorities among all political parties said they oppose such a system:
 - Republican: 61 percent
 - Democrat: 57 percent
 - Independent: 55 percent

Would you support or oppose an election system that allows you to rank candidates, even if it was more likely that your ballot would be discarded or removed from the final tally?

