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**PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION**  
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

## **Large Majorities Favor Police Reforms in Congressional Bills Most Get Bipartisan Support**

**College Park, MD** - When a representative sample of American voters were given a detailed presentation of ten police reform proposals in current Congressional bills, large majorities favored all of them. Majorities of Democrats and independents favored all ten proposals. Majorities of Republicans favored six of the proposals; the other four were found at least "tolerable."

The proposals were drawn from the two most prominent pieces of police reform legislation in Congress – the House's George Floyd Justice in Policing Act and the Senate's JUSTICE Act.

In the innovative survey of 3,226 registered voters by the [Program for Public Consultation](#) (PPC) at the University of Maryland, respondents were given relevant background information for each proposal. They then evaluated a series of strongly stated arguments for and against each proposal before making their final recommendation. The briefing material and arguments were thoroughly reviewed by experts representing the range of opinion on the issue, including former police chiefs.

Three of the proposals received overwhelming bipartisan majority support.

- Requiring all officers to wear body cameras, and to turn them on when they are on a call or interacting with a suspect, was the most popular reform with an overwhelming 89% favoring it, including 85% of Republicans and 94% of Democrats.
- Making it a duty for officers to intervene in cases where another officer is using excessive force was favored by 82% overall (Republicans 71%, Democrats 94%).
- Creating a national registry of police misconduct available to all police departments and the public was favored by a substantial majority of 81% (Republicans 70%, Democrats 92%).

Three received large majority support, including a clear majority of Republicans.

- Prohibiting chokeholds and other neck restraints was favored by 73% (Republicans 55%, Democrats 91%).
- Requiring officers to receive training to address implicit racial bias, was favored by 72% (Republicans 53%, Democrats 89%).

- Requiring states to use independent prosecutors in cases involving police use of deadly force, if those states accept federal money to hire independent prosecutors in such cases, was favored by 70% (Republicans 52%, Democrats 86%).

Four proposals had large majority support overall. While less than a majority of Republicans were in favor, in all cases, in a separate question, a majority of Republicans said they found the proposals at least “tolerable.”

- Requiring that all officers be trained in de-escalation techniques and alternatives to the use of deadly force, requiring that such techniques be exhausted before an officer uses deadly force, and making officers criminally liable if they fail to do so was favored by 69%, including 90% of Democrats. Less than half of Republicans—46%—were in favor, but 64% found it at least tolerable.
- Banning no-knock warrants, in which officers can enter a suspect’s house without warning, was favored by 65% overall, including 82% of Democrats and 45% of Republicans. Nearly six in ten Republicans (58%) found the proposal at least tolerable.
- Regulating and not giving police departments’ certain kinds of surplus military equipment, was favored by 64%, including 84% of Democrats and 43% of Republicans, with 54% finding it at least tolerable.
- Amending qualified immunity so that it is more possible to hold officers liable in civil cases for their use of excessive force – was favored by 63% overall, including 84% of Democrats. Among Republicans, 41% were in favor, but 56% found the proposal at least tolerable.

The survey was conducted online from July 2-9, 2020 with a national probability-based sample provided by Nielsen Scarborough from Nielsen Scarborough’s larger sample of respondents, who were recruited by mail and telephone using a random sample of households. The sample included 3,226 respondents with a margin of error of +/- 1.7%. Questions that were presented to three quarters of the sample had a margin of error of +/- 2.0%.

**Questionnaire with Frequencies (PDF):** <http://www.publicconsultation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/PoliceReformQuaire0720.pdf>

**Full Report (PDF):** <http://www.publicconsultation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/PoliceReformReport0720.pdf>

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