

POLL SHOWS AMERICANS EMBRACING DIVERSITY SUPPORTING STEPS TO

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For Immediate Release

Contact:

Shantha Susman 212.502.6498
 shantha@policylink.org



Poll Shows Americans Embracing Diversity and Strongly Supporting Steps to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Inequality

Washington, D.C. — New public opinion research conducted by the Center for American Progress and PolicyLink and funded by the Rockefeller Foundation found that Americans are much more open to diversity and supportive of steps to reduce inequalities between racial and ethnic groups than is commonly portrayed in politics and the media. The Latino Decisions study included close to 3,000 Americans, who shared their opinions on diversity, inequality, the role of government, and opportunity in America.

The results of this survey indicate that Americans are more likely to see opportunities from rising diversity than challenges. They understand the problems associated with inequality in society and strongly support new steps and investments to reduce these inequalities. Although differences remain between growing populations of color and whites in terms of openness to diversity and support for new policies to close remaining social gaps, many of these distinctions are more ideological in nature and less about race and ethnicity.

Some key findings of the poll include:

- **Americans vastly overestimate current and future levels of diversity.** The median estimate given for the current percentage that people of color comprise (49 percent) indicates that the typical American thinks we are nearly a majority people-of-color nation already (the correct figure is about 37 percent). And their prediction for 2050—62 percent—considerably exceeds the Census Bureau's 53 percent projection.
- **Americans overall are not pressing the panic button about rising diversity in society.** By and large, positive sentiments about opportunities from rising diversity tend to outweigh negative concerns about rising diversity.
- **Economic growth and greater innovation and competitiveness for businesses are the greatest opportunities associated with rising diversity.** Sixty-nine percent of respondents agree that "a bigger, more diverse workforce will lead to more economic growth" and that "diverse workplaces and schools will help make American businesses more innovative and competitive."
- **Americans strongly support a new equity agenda designed to reduce racial and ethnic inequality.** More than 7 in 10 Americans (71 percent) support "new steps to reduce racial and ethnic inequality in America through investments in areas like education, job training, and infrastructure improvement," compared to just 27 percent who are opposed. This includes 63 percent support among white people. In addition, 54 percent of Americans say such steps would help the economy overall, compared to 10 percent who think it will hurt the economy (whites are 49 percent to 11 percent on the same question).
- **There is strong support for proactively reducing inequality.** Along with the general openness to rising diversity expressed by most Americans, our study finds strong support for new steps to reduce racial and ethnic inequality through investments in education, job training, and infrastructure improvement. A full 71 percent of Americans support such an equity agenda, and 61 percent say they would be willing to invest "significantly more public funds to help close [the] gap in college graduation rates" between black and Latino students and white students.

"The Rockefeller Foundation is proud to support this important survey to explore the country's views on our changing demographics," said John Irons, Managing Director, Foundation Initiatives, at The Rockefeller Foundation. "With our growing diversity comes a great deal of opportunity if we harness it effectively. The poll that we are releasing today gives us much to be optimistic about, with the majority of Americans seeing incredible opportunity as a result of our country's rising diversity—and actually viewing it as a critical factor to our nation's economic growth. We hope that this poll sparks increased conversation and ultimately increases action on both the local and national policy level to ensure that growing diversity equals growing opportunity as well."

"This poll clearly shows that Americans not only understand the long-term effects of inequality given our demographic changes but also embrace diversity as an asset that will bring innovation and make us more competitive," said Vanessa Cárdenas, Vice President for Progress 2050 at the Center for American

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Progress. "Contrary to what you hear in the news, Americans clearly support taking proactive steps to close disparities so that our entire economy benefits. And they believe in something that many in Congress don't seem to grasp: that investing in our future today will benefit all Americans down the road.

"This poll validates what many of us have been saying for a long time: that America's demographic shift is an asset in the global economy," said Angela Glover Blackwell, founder and CEO of PolicyLink. "Our nation's economic fate is tied to the success of the communities of color that are contributing nearly all of our growth. People all over the country are clearly ready for an equity agenda to invest in our future; it's time our politicians listened."

To download the polling memo, [click here](#). To download the All-In Nation book, [click here](#).

To speak with CAP experts, please contact Crystal Patterson at 202.478.6350 or cpatterson@americanprogress.org.

To speak with PolicyLink experts, please contact Shantha Susman at 212.502.6498 or shantha@policylink.org.

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