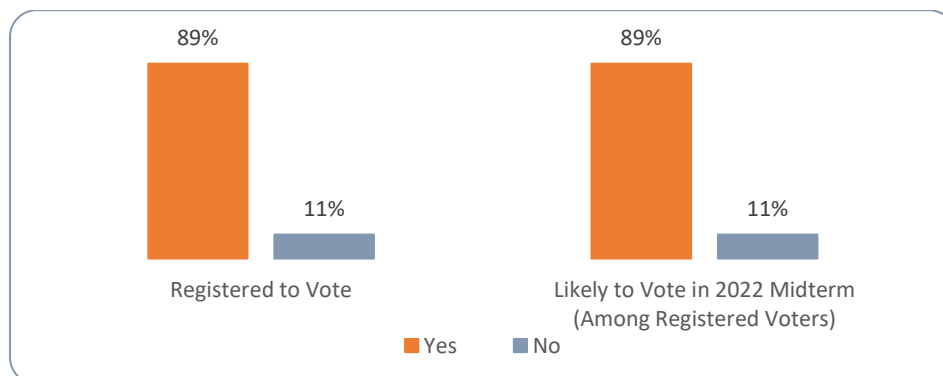


To: Easterseals & AARP
From: Pathfinder Opinion Research
Date: September 12, 2022
Re: Nationwide Survey of Adult Americans with Disabilities

A recent survey encompassing a representative sample of adult Americans with disabilities, with an oversample of adults 50+ with disabilities, shows that this population of nearly 38 million are politically active and engaged leading into the upcoming midterm election and are motivated by a host of pocketbook issues like inflation, Social Security, and Medicare. Further, this group, who relies heavily on early vote methods and other various accommodations to participate in elections, displays broad and bipartisan support for policies that make it easier to vote and are deeply concerned that politicians passing restrictive voting laws are making it more difficult for older Americans and adults with disabilities to participate electorally.

High Electoral Engagement

Nearly nine-in-ten (89%) adult Americans with disabilities say they are registered to vote. Of these registered voters, another 89% indicate that they “definitely” or “probably” will vote in the upcoming midterm election. By combining these survey results with Census estimates for this population, we can conclude that there are more than 33 million registered voters with disabilities in America, and nearly 30 million of these voters are likely to turn out in the 2022 midterm election.

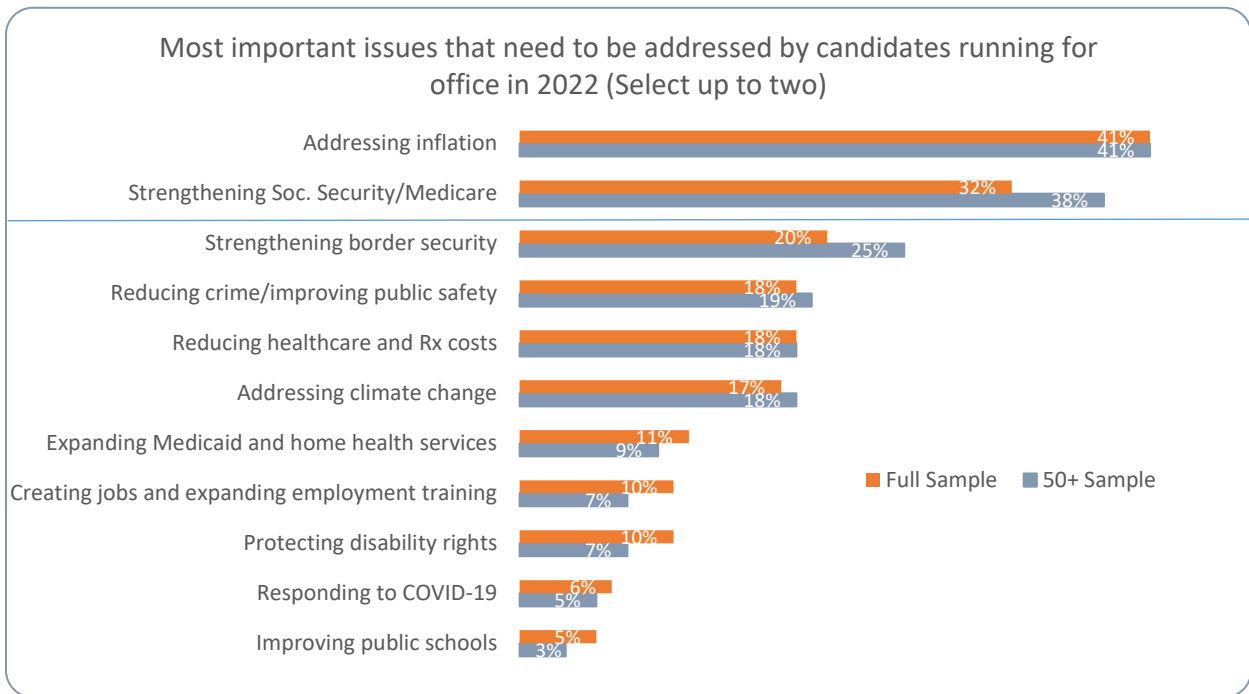


This group considers themselves informed about voting methods and are enthusiastic about participating in the upcoming midterm election. A plurality of likely voters (40%) say they are “extremely enthusiastic” about voting in the midterm election, and the mean score on a 0-to-10-point scale of voter enthusiasm is 8.0. With midterm turnout tending to be lower than Presidential year turnout, this finding is significant as the current level of enthusiasm equals what we measured among this universe in a survey conducted October 2020. Meanwhile, nine-in-ten (90%) registered voters with disabilities say they are “very” or “somewhat” informed when it comes to the practical aspects of voting – when, where, and how to vote early or in-person, and the accommodations that are available to help adults who are older or who have disabilities cast their ballots.

“By combining these survey results with Census estimates for this population, we can conclude that there are more than 33 million registered voters with disabilities in America, and nearly 30 million of these voters are likely to turn out in the 2022 midterm election.”

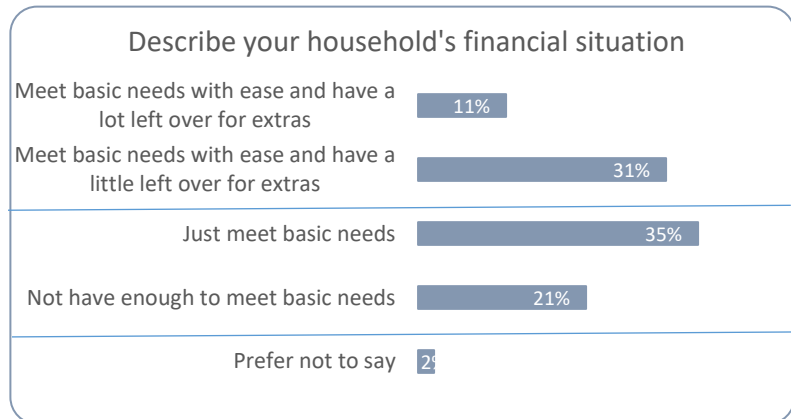
Prominence of Pocketbook Issues

Addressing inflation and strengthening Social Security and Medicare comprise the top tier of issue concerns for these adults. Four-in-ten (41%) overall -- and among the 50+ sample -- choose “addressing inflation” as their top issue leading into the midterms. About one-in-three from both groups also mention “strengthening Social Security and Medicare” as a top issue.



These pocketbook concerns reflect the harsh reality of low employment, high rates of government assistance, and limited financial means for disabled adults in America.

Fewer than half (41%) of adults under age 65 with a disability indicate that they have any kind of employment status (full, part-time, or self-employment) – and only 27% say they are employed full-time. Further, 85% of adults with disabilities -- and 90% age

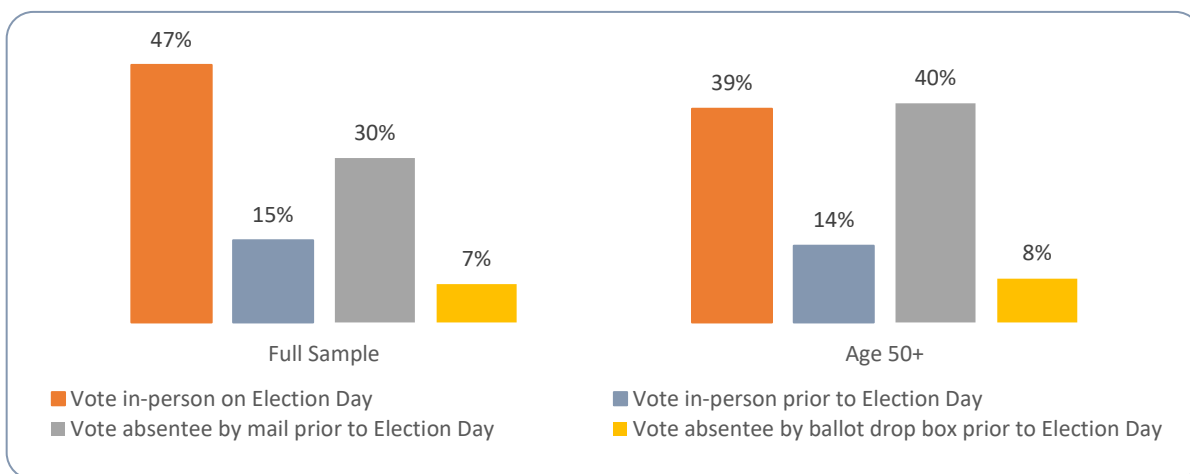


50+ -- say they receive some type of government assistance (Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, SSI, or SSDI). When describing their household's financial situation, more than one-third (35%) of these adults say they just meet their basic needs, while one-in-five (21%) say they don't have enough to meet their basic needs.

“These pocketbook concerns reflect the harsh reality of low employment, high rates of government assistance, and limited financial means for disabled adults in America.”

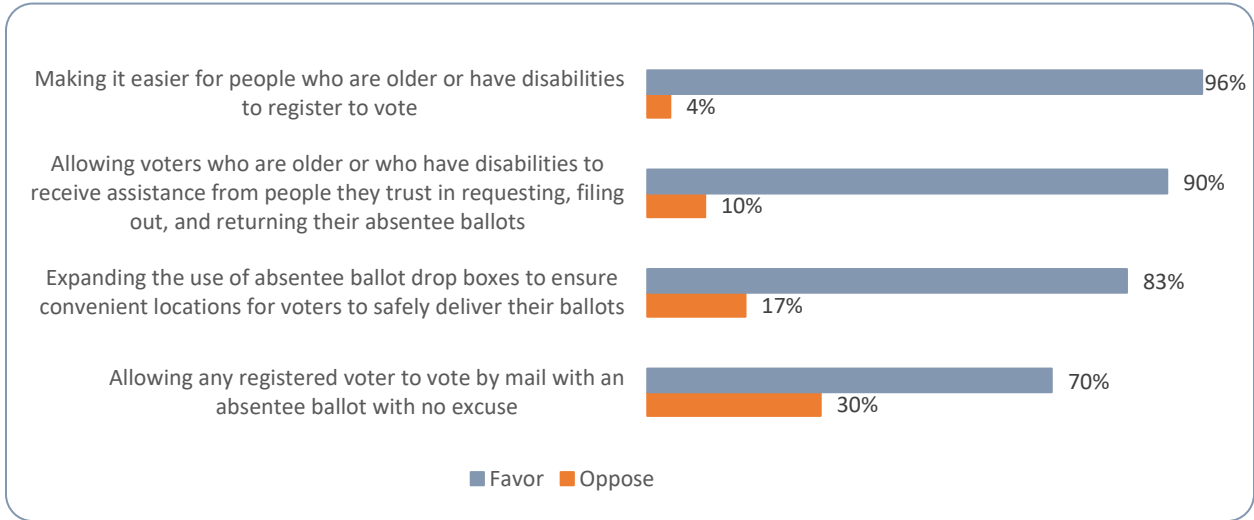
Use and Support of Expanded Voting Methods

Most voters with disabilities rely on early voting methods to participate in elections. Fewer than half (47%) of this group who are likely to vote in 2022, and only 39% age 50+, say they will vote in-person on Election Day this year, with the remaining majority planning to take advantage of various early voting options.



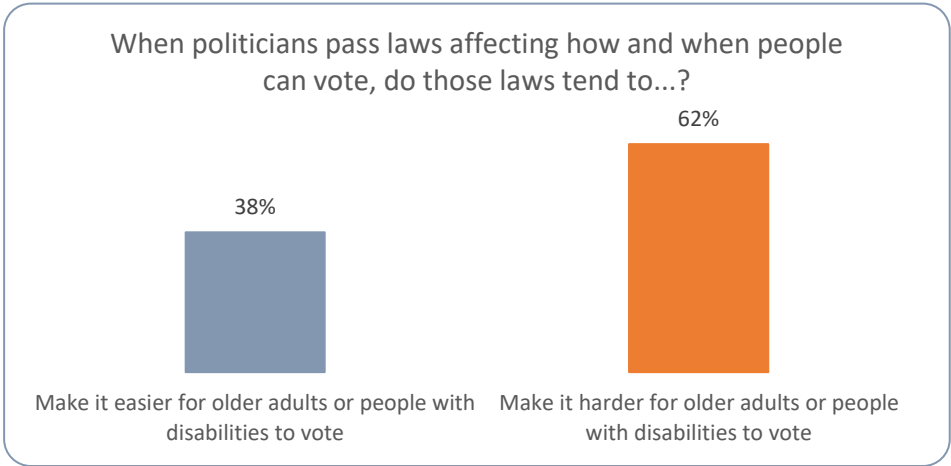
A significant percentage of adults with disabilities say that they require specific accommodations in order to vote. When given an opportunity to select as many options as possible that apply to them personally, 43% of these adults indicate that they require at least one accommodation in order to vote. Many of these accommodations are specific to in-person voting, including requiring transportation assistance to a voting location, requiring in-person voting assistance from a voting official, requiring a wheelchair ramp at their voting site, or requiring a braille ballot or sign-language interpreter.

Given this group's heavy reliance on early voting methods, and the high percentage who require voting accommodations, it's no surprise that disabled adults demonstrate broad and bipartisan support for various policy reforms that would make it easier to vote – such as, expanding vote by mail and ballot drop boxes, allowing absentee ballot assistance, and making it easier for people who are older or who have disabilities to register to vote.



“Given this group’s heavy reliance on early voting methods, and the high percentage who require voting accommodations, it’s no surprise that disabled adults demonstrate broad and bipartisan support for various policy reforms that would make it easier to vote.”

Adults with disabilities are concerned that changes to voting laws could have a negative impact on democracy and their own ability to cast a ballot. Most of these adults say that states that pass laws reducing early vote periods, place limits on who can vote by mail, and ban absentee drop box locations are doing more to harm democracy than protect democracy (43% say *these actions protect democracy by reducing voter fraud* / 57% say *these actions harm democracy by making it harder for legal voters to participate in elections*). Further, most of these adults say that when politicians pass laws affecting how and when people can vote, these laws tend to make it harder for adults who are older or have disabilities to vote (38% say *make it easier for older adults or people with disabilities to vote* / 62% say *make it harder for older adults or people with disabilities to vote*).



Methodology

This memo reports on the findings of a survey conducted by Pathfinder Opinion Research from August 23-29, 2022, among a sample of n=800 adult Americans with disabilities and a sample of n=800 Americans aged 50+ with disabilities (when combining the base sample with an oversample).

Interviews were conducted online utilizing a national research panel. Each respondent self identified as having at least one disability type used by the Census to categorize disabled persons (hearing, vision, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care, or independent living difficulties).

Data were weighted by gender, age, race, education, and geographic region based on American Community Survey population characteristics of Americans with disabilities.