



The Lancaster County Democrat

October 2022

**Democrats Running for Office-Lancaster County
2022 General Election
November 8, 2022**

Representative in Congress, District 1
Patty Pansing Brooks

Governor/Lieutenant Governor
Carol Blood/Al Davis

Legislature, District 2
Sarah Slattery

Legislature, District 26
George C Dungan III

Legislature, District 28
Jane Raybould

Legislature, District 46
(Vote for one)
James Michael Bowers
Danielle Conrad

Lower Platte South NRD, Subdistrict 3 (2 yr term)
Kenneth Vogel

Lower Platte South NRD, Subdistrict 3 (4 yr term)
(Vote for one)
Melissa Baker
Annette Thompson

Lower Platte South NRD, Subdistrict 5
Stacie Sinclair

Lower Platte South NRD, Subdistrict 6
Deborah Eagan

Lower Platte South NRD, Subdistrict 7
Luke Peterson

Lower Platte South NRD, Subdistrict 8
Tom Green

Lower Platte South NRD, Subdistrict 10
Susan Seacrest

Lower Platte South NRD, At-Large
David Landis

Lancaster County Commissioner, District 1
Sean Flowerday

Lancaster County Commissioner, District 5
Rick Vest

**Southeast Community College Bd of Governors,
District 1**
Sandra Hoffman

**Southeast Community College Bd of Governors,
District 5**
(Vote for one)
Megan Neiles-Brasch
Joann Marie Herrington

Lancaster County Assessor/Register of Deeds
Dan Nolte

Lancaster County Attorney
Adam Morfeld

Lancaster County Clerk
Matt Hansen

Lancaster County Clerk of District Court
Lin Quenzer

Lancaster County Public Defender
Kristi Egger

Lancaster County Sheriff
Jay Pitts

Lancaster County Treasurer
Rachel Garver

Norris Public School Board of Education Ward 2
Patty Bentzinger

Norris Public School Board of Education Ward 4
Jim B. Craig

Palmyra Public School Board of Education
Dean Busch

Village of Denton Board of Trustees
Douglas R. Rosekrans

Village of Malcolm Board of Trustees
Jerad Little

Village of Malcolm Board of Trustees
Jeff Schweitzer

Village of Roca Board of Trustees
Robert C. Green



The campaign team continues to encourage people to join the team and help Patty reach Congress. Consider canvassing, attending visibility events, making phone calls, writing postcards, or putting a sign in your yard! We have the best volunteers of any campaign, and we can always use more help, as we're counting on you to get Patty Pansing Brooks to Congress. With the general election on November 8th, make sure you are registered to vote, know where your polling place is, or apply for mail in voting options. We can do this **one more time!**

The Patty for Congress campaign is less than 40 days away from the general election, and we could not be more excited about the future of this election. With volunteers canvassing in all counties across CD-1, more and more constituents are learning about the importance of this election, and why Patty Pansing Brooks is the best candidate for Nebraska.

Patty Pansing Brooks recently completed two televised debates with her opponent, Mike Flood, and it was clear who will work for Nebraska and who will only vote in the interest of their party bosses. During the past month, Flood has voted against law enforcement reform, including training for large police departments, hiring mental health professionals to respond to mental crises, and initiatives for homicide and violence intervention in communities across the country. He also voted against a mental health reform package, which included increased access to mental and behavioral care, and increasing the number of providers and programs for mental health services in schools. This is unimaginable and not what Nebraskans want. We deserve so much better.





Dan Nolte

County Assessor / Register of Deeds

I'm Dan Nolte and I'm running for County Assessor.

After serving you as Lancaster County Clerk, where we modernized and made it easy to do business with the office, I am now running for County Assessor. **It's one more place to open up and simplify the same old county.**

I have 3 priorities we can accomplish immediately to make the office work for you. I am asking for your support in this election to make that happen. Thank you for your support!

1. Promote the Homestead Exemption

The Legislature has done a good job of providing property tax relief to older homeowners who need it. **But the Assessor's Office can always do more to assist older people - who qualify - claim their potential tax savings.** I will make sure potential users are fully aware of the exemption through frequent announcements and easily understandable mailings.

2. Bring Back "The Comps"

Whatever happened to "The Comps"? Remember when the pictures and data on comparative properties used in valuing your property were shown on the Assessor's website until a new valuation was posted? **That was valuable and useful.** Let's look at bringing them back and keeping them available for you to access anytime.

3. Make Services Convenient

Right now, if you want to attend an Informal Protest about your property and possibly avoid a full Property Valuation Protest, you have to drive downtown and cross K street just to have your voice heard. It's inconvenient and it's unnecessary. I will open an easily accessible site with adjacent parking and expand office hours to evening times **to make that service more convenient for you.**

Learn More about the race at:

www.nolteforassessor.com/WhatIsAtStake

Vote Nolte for Assessor by

Mail-In Ballot in October or In-Person on November 8

Donate or Volunteer at:

www.nolteforassessor.com/StandwithDan

Paid for by People for Nolte, Tom Beckius Treasurer

About Dan!

Dan is running for County Assessor after 16 years as your County Clerk where he worked to make the property protest process easier for citizens and make public service and transparency the priority of the Lancaster County Clerk office.



Dan is now running for County Assessor to bring that same focus on public service and transparency to County Assessor / Register of Deeds. Be a part of that change by donating at:

www.nolteforassessor.com/donate

or by mailing a contribution to

**Dan Nolte for County Assessor
1853 Otoe St
Lincoln, NE 68502**

Vote for Nolte for Assessor by Mail-in Ballot in October or In-Person on November 8!

KRISTI EGGER

PUBLIC DEFENDER



Vote for Experience and Dedication

I'm Kristi Egger, and I'm running for Lancaster County Public Defender in the November 8 General Election.

After a 33-year career as a Deputy Public Defender I retired this January with the intent to run for Public Defender. As many of you know, I won the Democratic Primary race this May. Now I face an opponent this November who has never even worked in a Public Defender's office and has been an attorney for around 8 years.

I'm not a politician. I'm running because it is important for Lancaster County to have a Public Defender competently equipped with the knowledge the job demands, along with a heart for public service.

For 32 years I served Lancaster County as a Deputy Public Defender. I have handled over 10,000 cases in every type of defense case the Office represents, including felony, misdemeanor, mental health, and juvenile cases.

I have worked to help people get into diversion and mental health programs, which decrease incarcerations and save tax dollars.

For over 3 decades I've worked with courts, prosecutors, probation, and treatment providers to serve our clients and our community. I fully understand this complex Office.

My opponent this November has little to no experience in most of these areas, and certainly no experience working in this Office.

Dennis Keefe was the Lancaster County Public Defender for over 30 years. He is someone I greatly respect and admire, in part due to the high standards he set for all the attorneys and staff, as well as for himself.

The following is a letter to the editor Dennis recently submitted to the *Lincoln Journal Star*, published October 4, 2022.

"Kristi Egger is running for public defender in Lancaster County. She has my full support, and I urge you to vote for her in this election.

The Public Defender's Office is not a high-profile political office, but its core function, providing high-quality legal services to indigents, is essential to the principles of equal justice and fairness of process.

From my 36 years of experience as Lancaster County public defender, I believe that the most important qualifications for this position are integrity, experience and commitment to the mission of the office. Kristi Egger has all three.

Having been her colleague for almost 30 years, I can personally attest to Kristi's integrity and good character. She is by far the most experienced candidate in this race, with more than 33 years of experience in providing direct legal services in all types of cases.

Her commitment to the mission of the office is unquestioned. Kristi worked part time as a law clerk in my office while in law school and took a job in a public defender's office in another county (at great personal sacrifice) until a position did open up in our office and I hired her.

Please join me in voting for Kristi Egger for Lancaster County public defender.

-Dennis R. Keefe, Lincoln"

As your elected Lancaster County Public Defender, I will strive to live up to the high

**standards, the leadership, and the dedication
Dennis demonstrated during his tenure.**

This is my *calling*. I have the proven experience and dedication necessary to competently and effectively lead as the Lancaster County Public Defender. Please vote in the General Election November 8 or vote by mail.

www.KristiEgger.org

<https://www.facebook.com/EggerForPublicDefender>
egger4defender@gmail.com

**The Stakes Are Too High for You To Stay
Home In 2022**

by Dennis Crawford



President Biden has the most productive legislative record since Lyndon Johnson in 1964–66.

President Biden and the Congressional Democrats are running on a record of accomplishment. Things aren't perfect but we're better off now than we were when Trump left office. Nonetheless, the Republicans are whining and crying that Biden hasn't cleaned up Trump's mess fast enough.

The highlights of Biden's accomplishments are as follows:

- Lowest poverty, uninsured rates in US history.
- New business starts at record levels.
- American manufacturers have now added enough jobs to regain all that they lost during the pandemic. Manufacturers have a net gain of 67,000 workers above pre-pandemic levels.
- In 2021, the U.S. economy added over 6.5 million jobs, the greatest year of job growth in history.

- The unemployment rate has nearly been cut in half.
- Jobless claims are at their lowest point since 1970.
- Under Biden, the U.S. has added 9 million jobs — the highest number of jobs added in any president's first 17 months. Not only is the unemployment rate at a historic low of 3.7 percent, but more Americans are now employed in the private sector than at any time.
- Deficit reduced by a record \$1.5 trillion.
- Because of President Biden's Infrastructure package, repairs have started on over 65,000 miles of roads and 1,500 bridges.
- The American Rescue Plan led to a record 14.5 million Americans signing up for healthcare coverage for this year through the Affordable Care Act.
- Child poverty has been cut in half since President Biden took office. While Donald Trump was in office, child poverty was at 9.7%. Since President Biden took office, child poverty has been reduced to 5.2%.
- As former President Trump's approval rating is sliding to all-time lows, President Biden's approval rating is rising. Trump's approval rating is 34% and Biden's approval rating is 46%.
- Democrats defeated the NRA by passing the first gun safety bill since 1994.
- President Biden and the Democrats in Congress have capped insulin costs at \$35 a month for Medicare recipients.
- The Inflation Reduction Act will now save 13 million Americans an average of \$800 annually on health insurance premiums.
- While Republicans want to restrict a woman's right to choose, Democrats are fighting to protect your reproductive freedoms.
- President Biden has appointed more judges than Trump.
- Unlike Republicans, President Biden will defend, not cut, Medicare.
- Unlike Republicans who want to privatize and cut Social Security, President Biden and the Democrats will defend it.
- Ukraine is winning the war thanks — in part — to the international coalition organized by President Joe Biden. If Trump had been president, Russia would've already won the war because Trump planned to pull out of NATO in a second term.
- President Biden has delivered on more campaign promises at this point in his Presidency than any other President in decades. He has the best legislative record since Lyndon Johnson.

(Many of these accomplishments came from Biden's Wins on Twitter—a must follow page.)

Virtually all the D.C. Republicans voted against these popular accomplishments. They will try to repeal all of them if they regain power.

Despite all this progress, the Republicans are claiming that we're doomed, and everything is terrible. They are invested in the failure of the country. That's what the Republicans do when the Democrats are in power.

A speech by President Obama in 2015 did a great job in describing the Republicans:

- "Why is it that so many Republican politicians are so down on America?"
- "They've constructed this entire separate reality. It's like the Twilight Zone," Obama said.

- "Have you noticed that?" Obama asked the crowd of about 500 cheering women. "I mean, they are gloomy. They're like Grumpy Cat." Then he turned the corners of his mouth down into a frown, emulating the famous feline. "Everything is terrible, according to them," he said. "We're doomed!"

Republicans claim to be rolling out a new agenda — but we already know the MAGA GOP's extreme agenda:

- A nationwide abortion ban.
- Sunset Medicare and Social Security every five years.
- Raise the eligibility age for Social Security and Medicare to 69.
- Repeal the Affordable Care Act.
- A \$1 trillion tax increase on working families.
- Cut off aid to Ukraine.
- Defund the FBI and the IRS.
- Block money for more Covid-19 vaccines.
- Make prescription drugs more expensive.
- Make voting harder for Democrats.
- Lay the groundwork to steal the 2024 election.
- Investigate Hunter Biden.
- Impeach Joe Biden.

The Republicans will try to ram through this toxic agenda with a government shutdown and a debt default threat. The Republicans utilized this procedural radicalism during the Clinton and Obama Administrations. They've already promised to do it again.

Democracy itself will be on the ballot on November 8. The MAGA Republicans still haven't accepted the results of the 2020 Presidential election and they're not going to accept the results of the 2024 election after they lose again. The 2022 election will determine if the Republican Party has the officials it needs in place at the state and federal level to steal the 2024 election without a violent and bloody coup.

The Democratic Party is the only check and balance on a radicalized GOP. The press won't save us. Prosecutors and the courts won't save us from the MAGA Republicans. It's up to us Democrats to save the country. We may not be perfect, but they're nuts — and dangerous.

- Vote for Patty Pansing Brooks in Nebraska CD01!
- Vote for Tony Vargas in Nebraska CD02!
- Vote for David Else in Nebraska CD03!
- Vote for Carol Blood for governor!

The stakes are too high for you to stay home. Vote Blue in 2022!

“

**THE VOTE IS PRECIOUS.
IT IS ALMOST SACRED.
IT'S THE MOST POWERFUL NON-VIOLENT
TOOL WE HAVE IN A DEMOCRATIC
SOCIETY AND WE'VE GOT TO USE IT.**

”

JOHN LEWIS
AUGUST 24, 2013



Secular Democratic Voters

By Rachele Walter

There's a lot of talk these days about the separation of church and state and the takeover of government by religious extremists. This is not new. This has been a concerted, planned effort for 50 years by the radical right.

Those of us who work in secular advocacy have seen a definite uptick in the race to theocracy as the numbers of "Nones" (sounds like Nuns) continue to increase.

I'm the Chair of Secular Democrats of Nebraska, the President of Lincoln Atheists, and the Direct of American Atheists-Nebraska. I have testified at the legislature, I have written resolutions, I have organized and assisted in the writing of a presentation that is available to all of the Secular Democrats of America groups. Currently, I am trying to get on as many podcasts that will have me to speak about the changing demographics of the American populace, and especially within the Democratic and Independent Voters.

Our mission is simple. "We advocate for secular governance, promote respect and inclusion of nonreligious Americans, and mobilize nonreligious voters in Nebraska." We represent the Nones and the allies of faith who want nonreligious inclusion, separation of church and state, and evidence-based policy. Some may ask why we include allies of faith. We know how many of them are affected by religious policy and that many people who have religion believe strongly in the separation of church and state and want freedom of and freedom from religion for all. Though I will be talking about the Nones and those who are not religiously affiliated, we do not exclude those of faith whose values align with us. We cannot fight this alone and thank those who stand with us, even as they face backlash for allying with us.

Nones are another word for religiously affiliated—it means the person checked "none" under religion in a poll. The religiously unaffiliated are a diverse group both in terms of beliefs and background. It includes not just atheists, agnostic, and humanists, and people who don't believe in a god, but also believers who aren't affiliated with a specific denomination and people who are spiritual but not religious. An atheist lacks beliefs in gods. Full stop. The opposite of an atheist is a theist—someone who has beliefs in gods.

Agnostic is a statement of what is knowable. Agnostics acknowledge that you can't prove or disprove that god exists. Some people use this word

as a substitute for atheist because of the stigma against atheism. Some feel it better describes them. Some may call themselves agnostic atheists.

Humanists can also be atheists and/or agnostics.

Among the nones include non-theistic religious (not a comprehensive list, by any means), those include humanistic Judaism/secular Judaism, Cultural Muslims, ethical culture (the belief one can be ethical without a belief in gods), Unitarian Universalist, The Satanic Temple, secular/atheist paganism – all of which provide a community to those who do not necessarily believe in a religious entity.

A secular identity is one who does not identify themselves as religious. I am an atheist. I have never been a believer, I tried, but was never able to make anything click. Secular institutions include public schools; public libraries; city, state, national parks; and should include government.

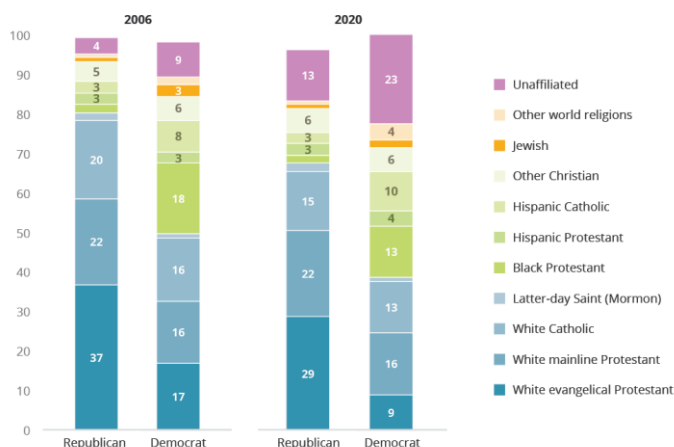
Three more definitions before we get into the changing demographics:

- Religious privilege is the expectation that everyone you meet is religious.
- Religious supremacy is the expectation that everyone you meet shares (or should share) your religious philosophy.
- Religious nationalism is the expectation that the laws, elected leaders, and governmental agencies should enforce theocratic rule, through any means necessary.

When we look at the demographics, there are things to consider. Many of the surveys that are out there do not give a list of all religious identities (it is not possible to do that). But most give the option of 7-12 choices: Protestant, Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Atheist, Unaffiliated. The additional options may include Evangelical Christian, Mainline Christian, Other Christian, but rarely break down the non-religious options. When a survey does give those non-religious options such as: Spiritual but Not Religious, Agnostic, Humanist, Secular Jew, etc., we see the numbers of non-religious increase dramatically. Having more options that more closely identify with one's own self-perception allows the numbers to be more accurate and more accepting of those outside of the expectation of religion.

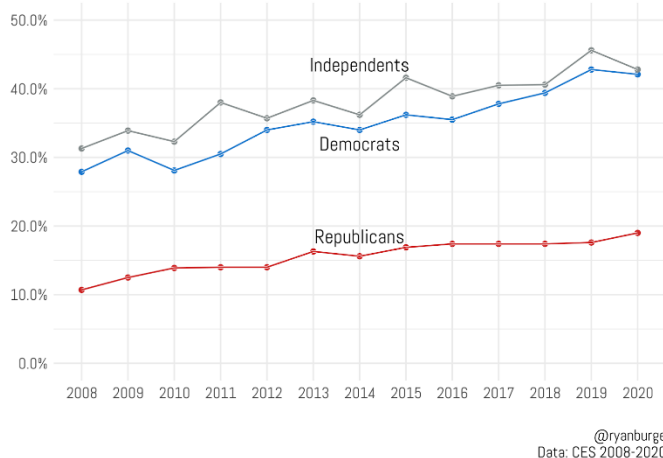
(Examples below)

FIGURE 8. Shift in Religious Affiliation 2006 to 2020, by Party Affiliation
Percent who identify as:



Sources: Pew 2006 Survey, PRRI 2020 American Values Atlas.

Share of Each Party That is Atheist/Agnostic/Nothing in Particular



In most of the studies that do not include a wide variety of options, Pew, PRRI, Gallup, we see about 1 in 4 (25%) Americans identify under the None-brella. In the studies, like those done by Ryan Burge (a Baptist minister and statistician, who has offered as many as 47 religious options on his surveys): 1 in 3 Americans (33%). And of those, 4 of 10 who self-identify as none are registered Democrats (42%). Among registered Independents, that number is 43% and registered Republicans are 19%.

Additionally, there is not a single demographic that is not represented within the Nones. Every race, ethnicity, culture, ability or disability, gender and sexual identity, age, military affiliation, and every religious or former religious identity.

In the studies with fewer options for self-identification, the racial make-up of religiously unaffiliated may seem surprising. More than one in five (21%) Black Americans are religiously unaffiliated; nearly three in ten Native Americans (28%) and there have been no substantial shifts in

religious affiliation among Native Americans since 2013; slightly more than one-third (34%) of multiracial Americans; Asian American and Pacific Islander Americans are as likely to be religiously unaffiliated (34%) as they are to be Christian (34%) and one in five Hispanic Americans (19%) are religiously unaffiliated.

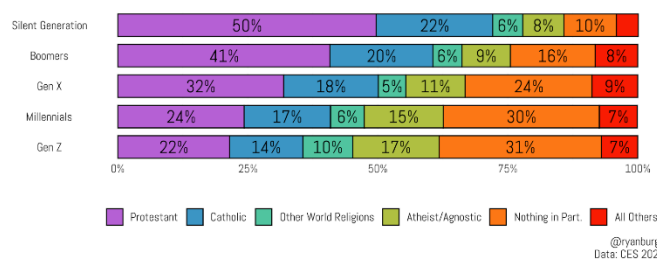
FIGURE 6. Religious Affiliation, by Race/Ethnicity

Percent who identify as:



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Atlas.

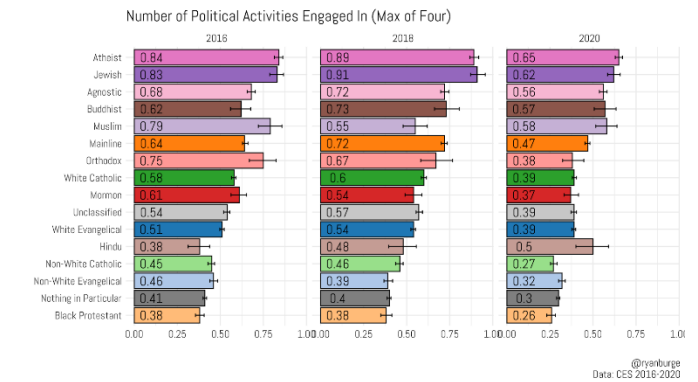
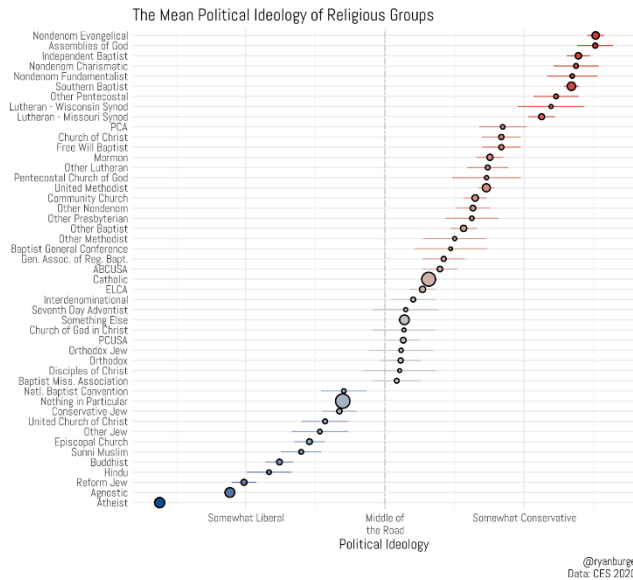
Religious Composition by Generation



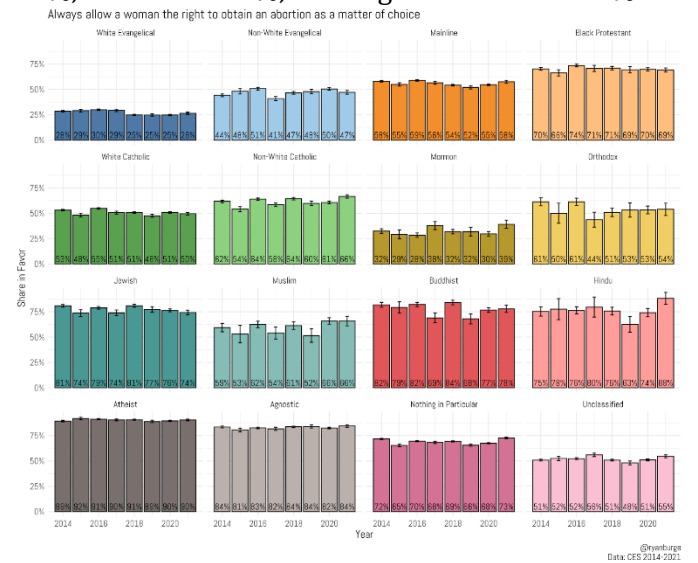
These numbers are higher when there are multiple choices for self-identification: 40% of white people under the age of 35 are nones; 30% of African-Americans; 30% of Hispanics; 34% of Asians, and 40% of all other races.

Atheists, agnostics, and Reform Jews tend to be the most progressive and liberal.

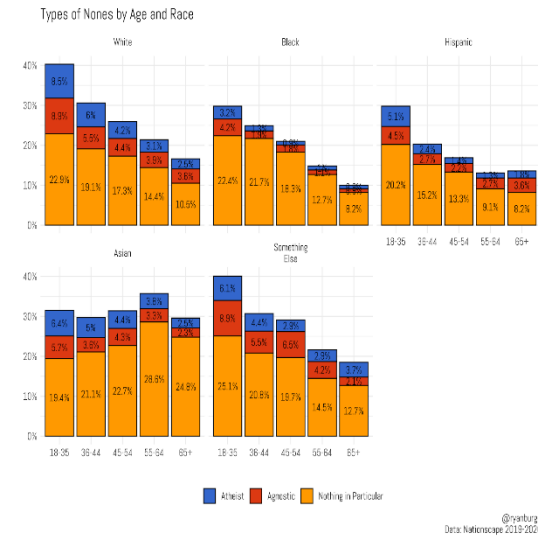
Atheists are the most politically active group in the country. When asked "Have you participated in any of the following four political activities: 1. Attend a political meeting (school board, etc.); 2. Put up a political yard sign; 3. Work for a candidate/campaign; 4. Donate money to a candidate/campaign," the atheists, Jewish, and agnostics routinely lead the pack.



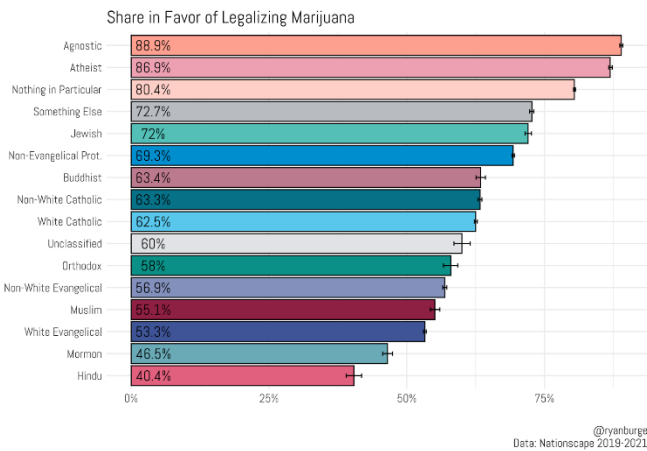
Atheists are the most pro-choice. Support for abortion rights (Those over 70%) are as follows: Atheists - 90%, Hindu - 88%, Agnostic - 84%, Jewish - 74%, Buddhist - 78%, Nothing in Particular - 73%



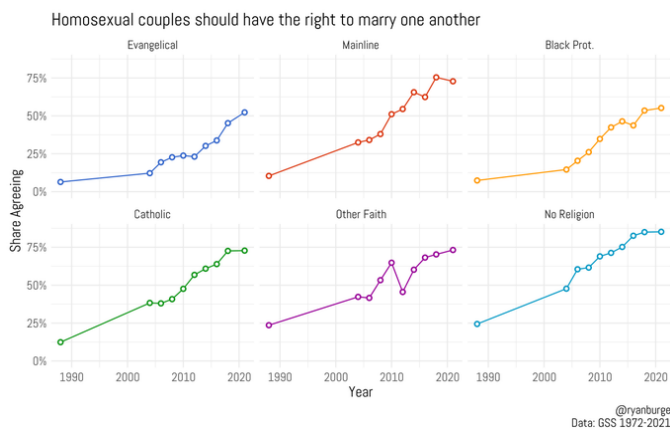
We are pro-marijuana legalization: 68% of Americans want marijuana to be legalized. Strongest support is among the nones: Agnostic - 89%; Atheist - 87%; Nothing in Particular - 80%; Something Else - 73%; Jewish - 72%.



Self-identification by age/generation with more options to choose from has consistently increased by 5-10% in each generation. For example, the Silent Generation is about 20% non-affiliated; Boomers increased to 25%; Gen X represents about 35%; Millennials jumped to 45%; Gen Z (those who are 18+ and can participate in these surveys) are trending around 48%, but this number is expected to increase.



When asked about whether “Homosexual Couples Should Have the Right to Marry,” the support has increased from 1990 to 2020 in the following ways: Nones - 48% -> 85% (+37 points); Catholic - 38% -> 73% (+35); Other Faith - 42% -> 73% (+31); Mainline Protestant - 33% -> 73% (+40); Black Protestant - 15% -> 55% (+40); Evangelical Christian - 12% -> 52% (+40) – again with Nones the most supportive.



How Candidates and Political Parties can reach the Secular Voter is fairly easy. There are two phrases that every Candidate and Political Party should include: 1. Those of faith **and no faith**. 2. The Freedom of **and Freedom from** Religion. Politicos also need to be cognizant of the language they use when speaking. After Uvalde, Beto O’Roarke did something no other candidate has done after a national tragedy: He included us, by not using exclusive language. He did not say “God Bless,” or “God bless America,” or invoke religion. Instead, he said “Be kind to each other.” That is it. Everyone was included in his wish for a better America. And the non-theists noticed. When I speak to those of faith, they did not notice the language shift. But it meant everything to us. For once we felt seen as those also affected by this kind of violence.

When politicians invoke God; attend Prayer Breakfasts; when Congressional sessions start with

Prayer; when the pledge continues to include “under God,” when the money has “In God We Trust” on it; when the oaths of office, citizenship, or in a court of law include “so help me God;” when political events include prayer or invocations; they are inherently exclusive. There is absolutely no way to include the 4000+ gods that exist while also including those who are of no faith. This does mean people of faith cannot pray or exalt in their faith. Prayer happens in all settings. There is no one who can tell me those children of faith in Uvalde were not praying for a miracle to rescue them. Prayer is personal, and no one should ever be asked not to practice their faith. Prayer is also very divisive and pushes those of no faith out of the room. Many of us have been asked to sit in the hall our whole lives to avoid having religious observations forced upon us.

It is time we recognize that the fastest-growing, most intersectional, largest arm of the Democratic party is “none,” and start doing what we can to message and reach out to them, especially with all the current rulings from the Supreme Court, the laws being introduced in state legislatures all over the country, the terror all minorities are facing. There is not a single civil rights movement in this country that was devoid of the nones. We have always been alongside those who are most marginalized and disenfranchised.

Several secular religious organizations exist in this state. If a candidate is reaching out to religious leaders, they also need to start reaching out to those leaders in the secular community. Several non-theistic groups exist in this state. Most are either very small or in the two largest cities of Lincoln and Omaha, but we’re here. And we’re waiting to be acknowledged and asked to participate as nones.

Sources: linktr.ee/seculardemsofne

Contact: secularedems@gmail.com

Facebook: Secular Democrats of Nebraska

Secular Democratic Voters

Rachele Walter, Chair

President Joe Biden's Farm Bill Must Transform Our Food System

Originally published by Union of Concerned Scientists, The Equation. By Karen Perry Stillerman.

Reprinted with permission

Roughly every five years, Congress passes legislation known as the Farm Bill, a nearly trillion-dollar package of investments that touches all of our lives, every day. It determines who US farmers and farm workers are, what they grow, how they grow it, who can afford it, and who profits from it, and with each cycle, there's an opportunity to reimagine the system for the better. But in reality, over my whole lifetime, Congress has passed one farm bill after another creating and fundamentally reinforcing an inequitable, unsustainable, and unhealthy food and farm system.

Now, more than 150 organizations representing tens of millions of people across this country are saying: Enough.

In a letter sent to President Biden today [Sept. 14, 2022] these organizations—spanning expertise in nutrition, farming, rural development, racial equity, labor, and climate change, and including the Union of Concerned Scientists—are asking the president to join our call for Congress to pass a Farm Bill that will transform our food and farming system. We're asking for a bill that reflects the president's values by centering equity and racial justice; meeting the climate crisis head on; increasing access to healthy food; ending hunger; ensuring safety and dignity for food and farm workers; protecting farms and consumers; and ensuring the safety of our food supply.

When President Biden signed the Inflation Reduction Act last month, it was a historic step towards making the nation's farmers and farmland part of the climate solution and providing underserved farmers with debt relief. That legislation followed unprecedented administrative action by the Biden administration to reduce economic inequality, address history of discrimination in farming and landownership, promote competition in agriculture, end hunger, confront the climate crisis, improve nutrition and food safety, and protect and support farmers, workers, and communities.

With the next Farm Bill up for reauthorization in 2023 and hearings in the House and in the Senate well underway, the president can and must take leadership to build on his momentum and success. Our nation's food and farm systems have been shocked and tested by climate change, a global pandemic, supply chain

disruptions, significant inflation, and the ripple effects of Russia's war in Ukraine. With more disruption sure to come, farmers, food workers, and eaters cannot wait another half decade for transformative change. With the next Farm Bill, the Biden administration and Congress can build a food and farm system that:

- Centers racial justice by confronting past discrimination and allocating resources to communities that have been historically underinvested;
- Ends hunger by protecting and strengthening food assistance programs;
- Meets the climate crisis head on by investing in research, technical assistance, and support to make farmers and ranchers more resilient and part of the climate solution;
- Increases access to nutritious food and nutrition security;
- Ensures safety and dignity for the 20 million food and farm workers that feed our nation through a living wage, access to health care, clean housing, the right to organize and join a union, protections from toxic pesticides and extreme heat, and access to citizenship;
- Protects farmers and consumers by continuing to promote competition in the food and agriculture sectors; and
- Ensures the safety of our food supply by addressing pathogens that originate on factory farms and to make the U.S. food supply safe for everyone.

A Farm Bill that does these things would be one President Biden could be proud to sign. He should make that clear to Congress, starting today.



The Republicans Are The Problem on Immigration

By Dennis Crawford



Just so we're clear. The migrants are not "illegal immigrants."

They came here LEGALLY to seek asylum. They followed the law.

YOU KNOW WHAT'S NOT LEGAL?

Luring people onto an airplane under false pretenses and then dropping them in a different place you said they were taking them.

@REXCHAPMAN

OCCUPY DEMOCRATS

Question for conservative Christians — who better fits your vision of Jesus, Ron DeSantis or the people of Martha's Vineyard who welcomed migrants, fed them, clothed them and gave them shelter?

Early in the year, the conventional wisdom was that the Republicans were going to sweep to victory due to voter dissatisfaction with the economy, inflation, and dysfunction in Washington. The Republicans and the corporate press assumed that the 2022 would be a referendum on the Biden Administration and the Democrats in Washington.

Something different happened on the way to the GOP coronation. The Republicans on the Supreme Court threw out the right to an abortion and Donald Trump again began to dominate the news headlines. Moreover, the price of gas began to plunge. Suddenly, the election became a choice between two futures: progress versus radicalism.

Due to this unexpected shift in voter sentiment, the Republicans have now shifted most of their messaging to immigration and crime. I fully expect a caravan to appear in Mexico in October and disappear on November 9.

Ron DeSantis decided to exploit anti-immigration sentiment among MAGA Republicans by pulling a publicity stunt where an airplane funded by the Florida taxpayers transported Venezuelan migrants from Texas to Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts. In the run up to this cruel ploy, DeSantis bragged to his donors about this caper and even sent a videographer on the plane. Fox News was also given exclusive access to film the migrants.

Representatives of DeSantis approached migrants outside of a shelter in San Antonio and convinced them to board a plane that they claimed was bound for Boston. A woman named Perla falsely told the migrants that they would get expedited work papers. The Florida governor's representatives lied to the migrants about both their destination and the purpose of the trip. DeSantis chose to use people — including innocent children — as his props and pawns.

Much to the chagrin and surprise of DeSantis and the MAGA Republicans, the migrants were greeted with open arms at Martha's Vineyard. They were provided food, clothing and shelter. "Did DeSantis hope to prove that a liberal New England enclave hates immigrants as much as far-right Republicans? Apparently so, but he failed spectacularly." Jonathan Chait.

DeSantis' ploy was reminiscent of the tactics utilized by the white southern racists during the 1960s. "To embarrass Northern liberals and humiliate Black people, southern White Citizens Councils started their so-called "Reverse Freedom Rides," giving Black people one-way tickets to northern cities with false promises of jobs, housing, and better lives. White Citizens Councils bused three dozen Black people to Hyannis, the Kennedy home, in 1962." JFK Library.

Republicans like DeSantis prioritize political theater over actual problem solving because the GOP isn't capable of governing. When the GOP takes power in Washington, they cut taxes for the rich and confirm radical right-wing judges. The disastrous Bush 43 and Trump presidencies are a consequence of the GOP's inability — even refusal — to govern.

The right-wing Republicans' disdain for governing has resulted in America's broken immigration system. MAGA Republicans don't want to solve the problem. Instead, they want to maintain the issue to keep their base in a state of outrage and agitation. There has been a long history of GOP obstruction of immigration reform.

In 2007, a conservative Republican filibuster killed a bi-partisan immigration reform bill in the Senate that was co-sponsored by Ted Kennedy and John McCain. This legislation was a classic compromise that consisted of an earned pathway to citizenship and more resources for border security.

Three years later, in 2010, the House passed the DREAM Act but it was blocked by a right-wing filibuster in the Senate. This bill would have created an earned pathway to citizenship for aspiring Americans brought to the U.S. as children.

The best opportunity to reform our immigration system was in 2013 when the Senate passed a bill similar to the 2007 Kennedy-McCain bill by an overwhelming 68–32 majority. This time, John Boehner was afraid to offend the extremists in the House GOP caucus and never allowed an up or down vote on the bill even though it had a support of the majority in the House.

Instead of allowing a vote on a bill that would have fixed our immigration system, Boehner held a vote in 2013 on a bill that would have defunded the DACA program and allowed the federal government to treat Dreamers in the same way as violent criminals.

Republican obstruction continued into the Trump Administration. In 2018, Chuck Schumer offered \$25 billion for a border wall in exchange for DACA protections for Dreamers. After Trump tentatively agreed to these terms, Chief of Staff John Kelly called Schumer to renege on the agreement in principle and said the plan couldn't get the support of the far right. Trump himself declared that he'd need far more in any deal, including significant cuts to legal immigration.

Trump's most prominent immigration promise was that Mexico would pay for the wall. The former TV reality star made this promise over two hundred times. The 2016 Trump campaign website even guaranteed that Mexico would send a check within one week of Trump's inauguration. Mexico never paid for the wall.

Trump's immigration and border policies turned out to be a miserable failure. The current border surge began in the summer of 2020. Senator Christopher Murphy (D-CT) pointed out that: "The surge at the border began in the fall of 2020, in the last four months of Donald Trump's presidency there was an 80 percent surge in apprehensions at the border."

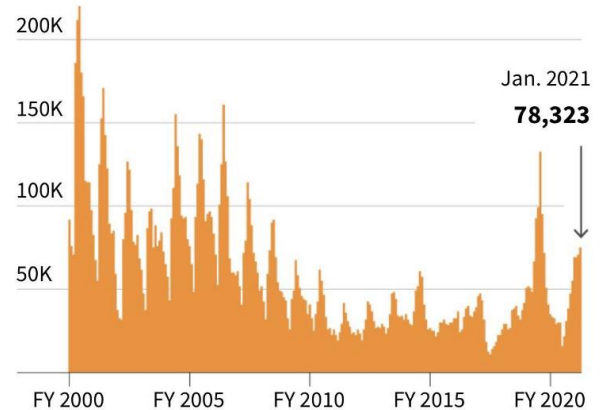
Murphy followed up that interview with another tweet on immigration: "I'm not contesting there has been an increase in apprehensions. What I'm pointing out is that it didn't start when Biden became President."

Here's the rough data on % increases in border encounters in 2020:

Jun-Aug — 73%
 Sept-Nov — 44%
 Dec-Feb — 38%"

Number of people apprehended at the U.S.-Mexico border each month

TOTAL APPREHENSIONS



What's more, Biden transition officials maintain that the Trump Administration delayed taking action on the surge at border. According to NBC News: "In early December, the Biden transition team and career government officials began sounding an alarm on the need to increase shelter space for the large number of migrant children expected to soon be crossing the border, but the Trump administration didn't take action until just days before the inauguration, according to two Biden transition officials and a U.S. official with knowledge of the discussions."

Joe Biden inherited a mess at the border from Trump. Since Biden has taken office, the Republicans in the Congress and the Supreme Court have blocked any solutions. The Republicans like to create the problem and run against the solution.

Representative Mike Flood (R-NE) would only perpetuate the problems at the border since he is unwilling to compromise. Flood is opposed to a pathway to citizenship and his only so-called "solution" is to build Trump's wall.

Patty Pansing Brooks has a good record on immigration in the Nebraska legislature. She has voted for professional licenses and drivers licenses for the Dreamers. These bills were passed on a bi-partisan basis with the support of the business community.

It's progress versus radicalism in 2022. That is the choice. Vote for Patty Pansing Brooks in Nebraska CD01! Vote Blue in 2022!

Photos from the LCDP Chili Cook-Off, October 1, 2022

Photos on these pages were taken at the County Party Chili Cook-Off held on October 1, 2022, at the Labor Temple. Thanks to candidates and friends for the great chili and fixin's!











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