

RESEARCH NOTE

Understanding the Gen Z Independent Voter: An Exploratory Study

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ABSTRACT

While a growing amount of research is emerging on the voting patterns and attitudes of Generation Z (Gen Z) voters in general, little attention has been given to independent Gen Z voters. To better understand these independent Gen Z voters, we surveyed 1315 registered voters in Arizona between 20 and 30 years old. We explored how Gen Z voters differ from their partisan counterparts in their attitudes toward politics, barriers to voting, and their motivation to vote in the 2024 election. We found that Gen Z voters are decidedly more independent and Latino than their party-affiliated counterparts and have significantly lower voting participation. Gen Z independents aligned with Democrats on several issues of concern and Republicans on others. They overwhelmingly felt that the two major parties are not working in the best interest of the country, and over two-thirds feel that the current political system is not working for their generation.

Related Articles:

Fisher, P. 2020. "Generational Replacement and the Impending Transformation of the American Electorate." *Politics & Policy* 48, no. 1: 38–68. <https://doi.org/10.1111/polp.12340>.

Fisher, P. 2024. "A Generation Divided: The politics of Generation X." *Politics & Policy* 52, no. 5: 900–917. <https://doi.org/10.1111/polp.12620>.

Shaykhtudinov, R. 2019. "Socialization, Rationality, and Age: Generational Gaps and the Attitudes Toward the Chechen War in Russia." *Politics & Policy* 47, no. 5: 931–955. <https://doi.org/10.1111/polp.12323>.

抽象的

尽管关于Z世代选民投票模式和态度的研究越来越多，但鲜有研究聚焦于Z世代的独立选民。为了更好地了解这些独立的Z世代选民，我们对亚利桑那州1315名年龄在20至30岁之间的登记选民进行了调查。我们探讨了Z世代选民在政治态度、投票障碍以及2024年大选中的投票动机方面与党派选民的区别。我们发现，Z世代选民明显比党派选民更加独立，更多为拉丁裔，投票参与率也显著更低。Z世代独立选民在一些关切议题上与民主党立场一致，在其他问题上与共和党立场一致。他们绝大多数认为两大政党并未以国家利益为重，并且超过三分之二的人认为现行政治体制不适合他们这一代人。

RESUMEN

Si bien cada vez se investigan más los patrones y actitudes de voto de los votantes de la Generación Z en general, se ha prestado poca atención a los votantes independientes de esta generación. Para comprender mejor a estos votantes, encuestamos a 1315 votantes registrados en Arizona de entre 20 y 30 años. Exploramos cómo los votantes de la Generación Z difieren de sus contrapartes partidistas en sus actitudes hacia la política, las barreras para votar y su motivación para votar en las elecciones de 2024. Descubrimos que los votantes de la Generación Z son decididamente más independientes y latinos que sus contrapartes afiliadas a un partido, y su participación electoral es significativamente menor. Los independientes de la Generación Z se alinearon con los demócratas en varios temas de preocupación y con los republicanos en otros. Consideraron mayoritariamente que los dos partidos principales no están trabajando en el mejor interés del país y más de dos tercios creen que el sistema político actual no está funcionando para su generación.

1 | Introduction

In the November 2024 US election, almost 41 million members of Generation Z (under age 30) were eligible to vote nationally (Medina and Suzuki 2023). The Generation Z (or Gen Z) population had a record high voter turnout in 2018 and 2020 (Frey 2021). The participation rate of young people in the 2020 presidential election was one of the highest since the voting age was lowered to 18 in 1972 (Medina 2023). Gen Z voted at a higher rate in the 2022 midterm election than previous generations did at that age (Medina 2023).

Some sources indicate troubling signs that this trend may not be continuing. According to Harvard Kennedy School's annual youth poll (2023), the percent of 18- to 29-year-olds who are “definitely” going to vote dropped from 57% in 2020 to 49% in 2024. However, polling taken after President Biden dropped out of the 2024 Presidential race and the entry of Vice President Kamala Harris has shown an increase in support, enthusiasm, and voter registration among Gen Z and younger Millennial voters, especially Black and Latino young women (Irwin 2024; Griffing 2024; McLennan and Manzo 2024; Moore 2024).

In the United States, Generation Z is generally defined as those Americans born after 1996 (Dimock 2019). Gen Z is considerably less attached to political parties than earlier generations. Gallup's polling operation found members of Generation Z who have reached adulthood match Millennials (generally considered to be people born between 1981 and 1996) in the percentage of political independents, at 52%. This percentage is higher than any other generation of voters (Jones 2022).

While a growing amount of research is emerging on the voting patterns and attitudes of Gen Z voters in general, little attention has been given to independent Gen Z voters, even though this group makes up the majority of the Gen Z population. The Gen Z generation is dynamic and unpredictable. They are less likely to identify with a political party than older Americans, more likely to identify as independent, and more critical of both major political parties. Thus, they tend to prioritize specific issues over party loyalty and are not a monolithic voice (Moore 2023; Parker and Igielnik 2022; Walton Family Foundation 2023). Gen Z tends to exhibit a growing sense of mistrust toward traditional political institutions. This can make them less likely to align with established political parties or candidates, opting instead

for nontraditional forms of political engagement, like protests or social media campaigns (McBeth et al. 2021; Restuccia and Collins 2024). Gen Z is also influenced by social media, influencers, and online communities, which can amplify shifting political ideas or create rapid shifts in political sentiment (Tirocchi 2024). Despite their political engagement, Gen Z historically has lower voter turnout compared to older generations, which can make predicting their impact on elections difficult (Parker and Igielnik 2020).

Our study seeks to contribute to the academic literature by exploring the voting attitudes of independent Gen Z voters. Specifically, we explore how Gen Z voters differ from their partisan counterparts. In addition to querying about their attitudes toward politics, we sought to gather insights into their sources for information about elections, the barriers to voting that they perceive, and what might motivate them to vote in the upcoming election. We do this by surveying registered Gen Z voters in the state of Arizona. Several factors make Arizona a good target for a study of independent Gen Z voters. Upon registration, the state asks voters to declare their party identification, including the option to not affiliate with an established party, thus being classified as independent. Although the state has voted reliably Republican since the 1950s, increases in independent registrations have moved Arizona into swing state status in recent years. This has brought increased national attention to a state that had long been assumed to vote solidly Republican. Finally, the state has a semi-open primary system where independents may participate in either the Democratic or Republican primary in most races.

2 | Background

2.1 | Two Different Ways to Measure the Independent Voter Profile

Researchers have two good sources that have tracked political affiliation over a long period of time: Gallup surveys, the famous polling company, and American National Election Studies (ANES), a collaboration of universities. The number of independents these surveys report, however, depends on how the surveyors classify independents.

GALLUP's (n.d.) surveys, which dates back to the 1930s, tracks which political party American voters support by asking them

the question, “In politics, as of today, ‘do you consider yourself a Republican, a Democrat, or an independent?’” The voter’s answer is about their present situation and may be different from whatever party affiliation they may have declared when registering to vote, and it may also be different from how they have voted in the past.

According to Gallup (Jones 2024), political independents constituted the largest political bloc of voters over the past year, with an annual average of 44% of American voters claiming that label. Independents first outnumbered supporters of both major parties in 1991 and have done so since then, except between 2004 and 2008. In June 2024, that number was as high as 51%—more than the two major parties combined. While the numbers may fluctuate from month to month, this trend is undeniable. Growing numbers of voters are not identifying with the two major parties.

The scholarly classification of voters as independent dates back to the work of Angus Campbell et al. (1960), who first published *The American Voter*. The surveys that those researchers analyzed for the book have been considered by many to be the gold standard in the field. The source of those surveys was the ANES program, a collaboration among several research universities. Though officially founded in 1978, the ANES has continuous survey data on the U.S. electorate since 1948. The survey is usually administered every other year but occasionally every fourth year.

Since 1952, researchers and pollsters have typically asked a follow-up question to those who identify as independents to determine whether respondents prefer one party over the other if they had to vote. Most independents reported that they lean toward either Democrats or Republicans. Initially, these surveys ask respondents to identify themselves on a three-option scale—Democrat, Republican, or independent. However, for independents, they probe more deeply, seeking to locate the person being surveyed on a seven-point spectrum between “strong Democrat” and “strong Republican,” with five options in between, to offer a more nuanced look at people’s political preferences.

In the 1990s, however, the idea of nuance among independent voters came under scholarly scrutiny. Keith et al. (1992) argued in their book *The Myth of the Independent Voter* that there really were only three main categories and that most people who said they were independent really preferred one party or the other. When those independents who report a lean toward a party are counted as supporters of that party, the overall proportion of independents is small—about 10% of the total electorate. That level has remained roughly constant since the 1950s. About two-thirds of independents lean toward one of the two major political parties’ candidates.

2.2 | The Unpredictable Nature of the Independent Voter

However, a number of scholars disagree with the assertion that most independents are really leaning toward a party and believe that there is more volatility in their voter patterns when tracked over time (Abrams and Fiorina 1992; Fiorina 2016; Reilly

et al. 2022; Reilly and Hunting 2023). They have argued that independents’ responses to questions asking whether they lean toward the Democratic or Republican parties are significantly affected by short-term factors related to whatever campaign is happening at the time, such as particular candidates and specific issues.

Reilly and Hunting et al. (2023) have asserted that independents are very unpredictable with their votes. The researchers analyzed data from ANES on political identification and voting choices from 1972 to 2020. They observed significant volatility in loyalty to the party among independent voters over more than one election. They found that independent voters were not reliably tied in their votes to one party or the other. From one election to another, they voted for Democrats, then Republicans, and back again. They also found evidence that a sizable number of independents move in and out of independent status from one election to another and, in many cases, actually register as members of one party or another, sometimes differently from one election to the next.

2.3 | Generation Z Voters

As previously noted, the growth of the independent voter is especially pronounced with younger voters (Jones 2022). Generation Z, along with their older counterparts, Millennials, is now distinctly politically independent, at 52% of their respective groups. While there are many similarities between Gen Z and Millennials in their political voting patterns and political identification, researchers have noted that Gen Z is politically distinct in many of their issues of concern and activism (Harvard Institute of Politics 2022; Parker et al. 2019). Studies have demonstrated that ideological differences between generational cohorts are attributed more to the unique experiences of a particular cohort than they can to age itself (Braungart and Braungart 1986; Fisher 2020). McLean (2024) suggests Gen Z voters share a collective memory that has shaped this generation of voters by events occurring during their lifetimes, as members of this generation grew up during a period marked by significant social, economic, and political upheaval. The global pandemic that led to disruptions in schooling and isolation from friends and family, the rise of social media and being the first generation shaped completely by the Internet, and the first Trump presidency are just a few of the events that have shaped their worldview. Gen Z has also been shaped by an increase in affective polarization in the United States, which is characterized by those with strong ideologies who disagree less on policy issues but greatly dislike and do not want social contacts with those with opposing ideologies (McBeth et al. 2021). Similarly, Cook (2024) asserts that youth political identity and behavior are shaped by a variety of factors, including economic conditions, social values, and regional influences. Cook found that younger voters are also more open to third-party candidates or non-traditional political movements. He suggests that the youth vote is more nuanced than the stereotype of a uniformly liberal electorate, and this complexity needs to be recognized for understanding youth political participation and engagement.

Studies have found that members of Gen Z are more educated, more diverse, and more nonpartisan than other generations

(McBeth et al. 2021). Munger (2022) found that technological advances such as social media and demographic shifts have created new ways for younger generations to influence politics. According to PEW Research studies, Gen Z is more likely to favor the government doing more to solve problems (Parker and Igielnik 2020). However, like Millennials, they also are less trusting of government, more skeptical of governmental authority, and more pessimistic about the future than any living generation before them (McBeth et al. 2021; Restuccia and Collins 2024).

Considering both the large, untapped population of voters and their detachment from the two major parties, it is important to understand the attitudes and behaviors of the non-party affiliated Generation Z population. As the youngest currently eligible bloc of voters, they represent the future voting population, which will only increase in importance as the boomer generation fades away.

2.4 | Arizona Generation Z Voters

Although there are varying definitions of Generation Z, for our study, we defined Generation Z to include those born in the years from 1994 to 2004. The upper limit of 2004 was chosen to ensure that all survey respondents were eligible to vote in the 2022 election. This would allow comparison of the attitudes of those who voted and those who did not vote in 2022.

Although Generation Z comprises 17% of the voting age population in Arizona and 13% of all registered voters, they are seriously underrepresented at the ballot box, representing just 7% of voters in the 2022 General Election (Figure 1).

In addition to their reduced participation in elections, another distinguishing characteristic of Generation Z is their lack of attachment to either of the two major political parties. As seen in Figure 2, nearly half of the Generation Z voters registered in Arizona are neither Democrats nor Republicans. Note that those

registered with minor parties are included with the independents. The 49% of Gen Z registrations in Arizona is nearly twice the rate of the large Baby Boomer voting bloc. This percentage mirrors national findings.

Gen Z registered voters ages 20–30 comprise 19% of the Arizona voting age population and 18% of all registered voters. However, only 10% of the total ballots cast in the 2022 general election came from this age group. According to the Arizona Secretary of State's office, their political affiliation breaks down as Republicans (22%), Democrats (30%), and non-affiliated or party not declared (49%). Latinos make up 31% of this group. In the 2022 general election, 33% of the registered voters ages 20–30 turned out to vote, and 68% sat out the election, even though they were registered.

3 | Methodology

We surveyed 1315 registered voters in Arizona in May of 2024. Respondents were in the 20–30-year-old age range, and a representative sample by party identification, Latino origin, and educational attainment was obtained. The overall margin of error (MOE) for the survey is $\pm 2.7\%$. Throughout the text, the term *significant* is used to describe proportions that are different with $p < 0.05$. See the Appendix A for details on the survey instrument.

Special care was taken to ensure representative samples of those who had voted in the 2022 general election and those who had not voted. Most surveys focus on those who have previously voted for two reasons. First, those who have voted previously are also those who are most likely to vote in the future, so they are of the greatest value to political polls. Second, prior voters have already shown some engagement with voting, so they are more likely to respond to requests to participate in surveys about voting and elections.

Considerable effort went into ensuring that this survey captured a representative sample of those who were eligible

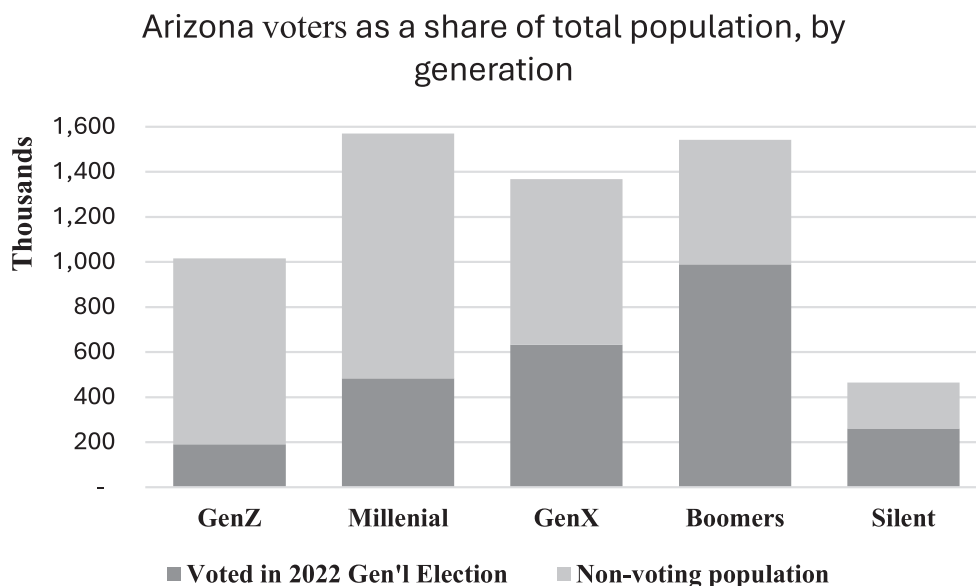


FIGURE 1 | Arizona 2022 voters as a share of the total population by generation.

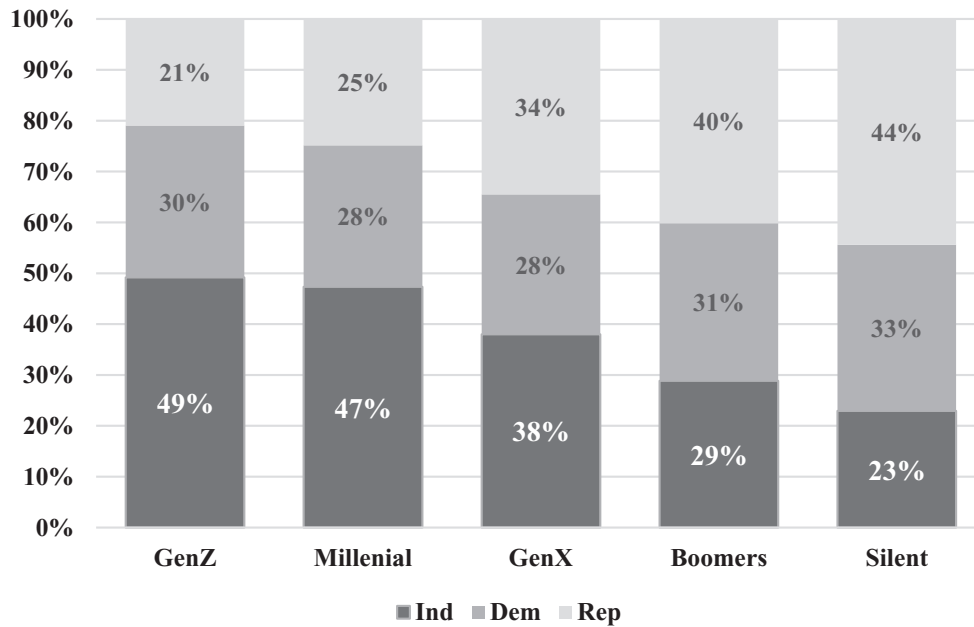


FIGURE 2 | Arizona voter registrations by generation, May 2024.

to vote in 2022 but chose not to. Turnout from this latent group of eligible but not yet active voters may well be key in deciding the closely fought races and initiatives that will be on the ballot in November 2024, so responses from this important group of seldom-surveyed individuals were deemed important.

The survey was conducted from May 8–24, 2024, via text-to-online SMS message and live-caller responses. SMS (text) messages were sent to the phone numbers listed in the voter registrations file. These messages included a link to an online survey form. Voice calls were made to some respondents to ensure that targeted populations were adequately represented. Names and phone numbers of registered voters ages 20 to 30 were drawn from the Arizona Voter Registration Database (VRDB) obtained from the Arizona Secretary of State office. The sample was chosen to include representative proportions of those who voted in the 2022 general election and those who were registered but did not vote. Targets were also set to ensure proportional representation by party identification, Latino status, and urban/rural location. Those registered in Maricopa, Pima, and Pinal counties were considered urban, while all others were rural. Approval was received through the university’s Institutional review Board (IRB).

Raked weights were applied to the results of the survey to more accurately reflect the true nature of the electorate. The results were weighted by party affiliation, urban/rural status, Latino/non-Latino status, voter history, and educational attainment. Educational attainment of the targeted age group was targeted to match percentages from the American Community Survey 2022 5-year sample for Arizona. The other factors were all weighted to match Generation Z percentages from the VRDB. Party affiliation and voting status (whether or not a vote was cast in 2022) are both explicitly listed in the VRDB. The urban/rural status was derived from the respondent’s listed home ZIP code. ZIP codes falling within the Census-defined Phoenix or

Tucson Metropolitan Areas were coded as urban, and all others were coded rural. The Latino status was determined through an analysis of surnames in the VRDB.

Since the purpose of this analysis is to identify specific characteristics of independent voters, in most cases, Democrat and Republican responses have been combined for comparison to the independents. Meaningful differences between Democrats and Republicans have been highlighted as needed. While it would be advantageous to have the ability to compare this data with other generations, it is not part of this project. Also, note that the independents category includes the small number of respondents who identified with a minor party (7.3%) or refused to state a party (0.9%).

4 | Results

4.1 | Demographic Profile

Before exploring differences in political attitudes, we look at demographic similarities and differences between independents and party-affiliated respondents. Note that although the gender profile of independent respondents is broadly similar to the combined Democrat and Republican sample, the two major parties show a striking difference (Figure 3). Fifty-three percent of Democratic respondents were women, significantly more than the 36% independent and 30% Republican rates. More than two-thirds of Republican respondents were male, significantly more than the 57% independent and 41% Democrat percentages.

Significantly more independents identified themselves as Latino (35.2%) compared to the party-affiliated respondents (27.5%). The Latino share of Democrats (27.8%) and Republicans (27.1%) was very similar. There was no difference in the independent status between urban and rural areas of Arizona when

compared to the combined total of Democratic and Republican respondents, although rural respondents were more likely to identify as Republican.

Educational attainment among independents was significantly lower among independents than the party-affiliated, with 16% of independents holding at least a bachelor's degree, compared with 29% of those aligned with a major party. As expected, voting participation in the 2022 general election was lower among the independents, with 25% saying that they voted, while 39% of the party-affiliated voted. Independent's relative disinterest in voting also extended to the 2024 general election but with some important wrinkles. Although a significantly lower percentage of independents replied "I will definitely be voting," and a higher percentage said they "won't be voting," when asked about the 2024 election, a very large percentage of the independent respondents said that they might possibly vote (see Figure 4). It is, of course, unknown at this point how many of this large group of independents will actually turn out for the 2024 election, but

there seems to be a potentially large group of voters that might be persuaded by either party to vote. A summary of demographic responses is found in Table 1.

4.2 | Issues

Respondents were asked to rate their feelings of importance on 20 selected issues on a four-point Likert scale, ranging from Not Important to Extremely Important, using this prompt: "Indicate how important each of these issues is in regard to the upcoming 2024 general election." On 14 of these issues, Gen Z independents responded similarly to their party-affiliated peers. This indicates agreement on a broad range of issues including jobs, affordable housing, protecting the water supply, reproductive rights, and more. Independents aligned with Democrats on several issues, such as affordable housing, health care, reproductive rights, and climate change. Other issues, including fair and secure elections, taxes, gas prices, and

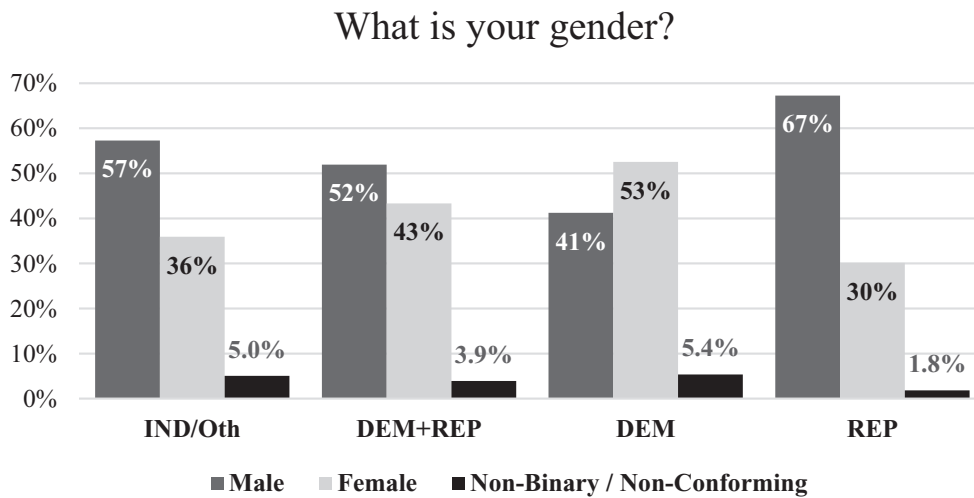


FIGURE 3 | Gender differences by party ID.

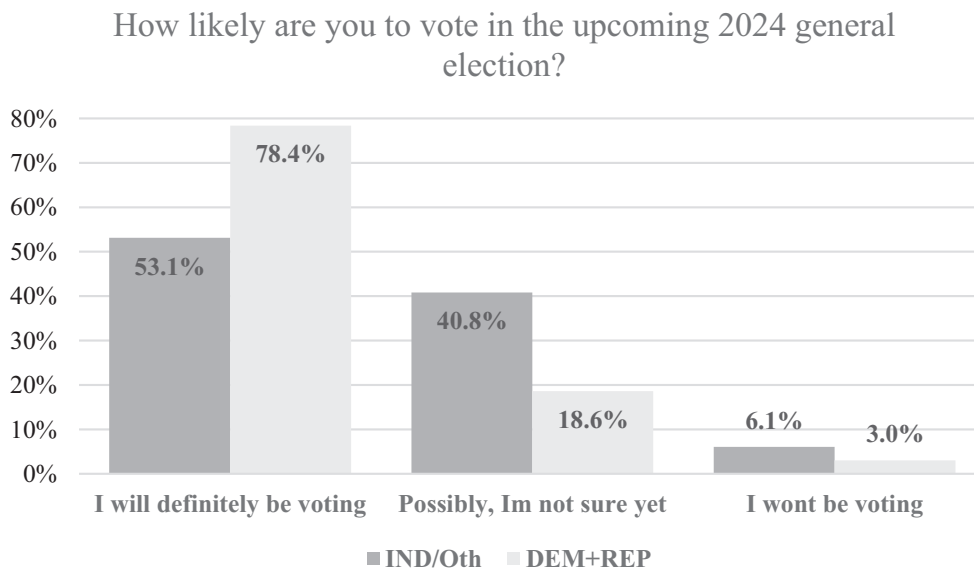


FIGURE 4 | Voting likelihood by party ID.

TABLE 1 | Demographics.

Demographics		IND/Oth (%)	DEM + REP (%)
What is your gender?	Male	57.3	51.9
	Female*	35.9	43.3
	Non-binary/non-conforming	5.0	3.9
	Prefer not to disclose	1.7	0.8
Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?	Yes*	35.2	27.5
	No*	64.6	72.5
	Refused	0.3	0.0
Which county in Arizona do you live in?	Subtotal urban	82.5	82.5
	Subtotal rural	17.5	17.5
What is your highest level of education?	No bachelor's*	66.3	53.2
	Bachelor's or better*	16.5	28.6
	Currently in college, university, or trade school	17.2	18.2
Did you vote in the 2022 election where Arizona's governor and senator were selected?	Yes*	25.0	38.8
	No*	75.0	61.2
How likely are you to vote in the upcoming 2024 general election?	I will definitely be voting*	53.1	78.4
	Possibly, I'm not sure yet*	40.8	18.6
	I won't be voting*	6.1	3.0

*Column percentages significantly different at $p < 0.05$.

gun rights, show independent choices similar to Republicans. See Table 2 for a list of the 20 issues and the responses based on political affiliation.

On the six issues listed below, there were significant differences between independents and party affiliates when the scale was collapsed to three categories: *Very or Extremely Important*, *Somewhat Important*, and *Not Important*. Some of these differences were attributable to large contrasts in positions taken by Democratic and Republican respondents. Note that the direction of concern was not specified on any of these issues. For example, when discussing taxes, the responses only indicate that they feel it is or is not an important issue. There was no consideration about whether taxes should be higher or lower for any group of people.

4.2.1 | Homelessness

A large majority of all respondents felt that homelessness was an important issue, with only 5.1% of independents and 5.8% of party affiliates rating it as *Not important*. However, 75.3% of independents rated homelessness as *Very or Extremely important*, compared to 68.0% of the party-affiliated. Democrats had concern levels for the issue that were similar but slightly higher than independents, at 77.8%, while 54.0% of Republican respondents said that homelessness was *Very or Extremely important*. On this issue, independents appear to be aligned with Democrats.

4.2.2 | Climate Change

There was a great deal of variation in feelings about climate change across party identifications. On this issue, independents take a middle ground position between Democrats and Republicans. 87.3% of Democratic respondents ranked climate change as a very or extremely important issue, while only 24.5% of Republicans rated it as such. Although a strong majority of independents rated climate change as very or extremely important (61.8%), this is still significantly less than Democratic concern for the issue.

4.2.3 | LGBTQ+ Rights

A similar pattern is seen with the issue of LGBTQ+ rights, with independents taking a position between that of the two major parties. Although a majority of respondents said that LGBTQ+ rights are *Very or Extremely important*, 81.2% of Democrats feel this way, 51.6% of independents, and just 13.3% of Republicans. At the other end of the scale, only 4.3% of Democrats said that LGBTQ+ rights are *Not important*, compared to 21.7% of independents and 64.6% of Republicans.

4.2.4 | Immigration

When it comes to immigration, a majority of all political orientations rated the issue as very or extremely important, but

TABLE 2 | Issues.

Indicate how important each of these issues is in regard to the upcoming 2024 general election		IND/Oth (%)	DEM + REP (%)
Jobs	Very/extremely important	76.5	74.9
	Somewhat important	19.9	21.4
	Not important	3.7	3.7
Affordable housing	Very/extremely important	87.7	84.6
	Somewhat important	10.2	13.0
	Not important	2.1	2.4
Homelessness	Very/extremely important*	75.3	68.0
	Somewhat important*	19.7	26.2
	Not important	5.1	5.8
Climate change	Very/extremely important	61.8	61.4
	Somewhat important*	22.2	17.3
	Not important*	16.0	21.3
Protecting the water supply	Very/extremely important	82.4	79.0
	Somewhat important	15.1	16.7
	Not important	2.5	4.3
Reproductive rights/abortion	Very/extremely important	74.3	73.7
	Somewhat important	14.0	13.7
	Not important	11.7	12.6
Public safety/Gun violence	Very/extremely important	71.3	68.0
	Somewhat important	21.3	22.3
	Not important	7.4	9.7
Gun rights	Very/extremely important	53.6	57.6
	Somewhat important	28.1	23.4
	Not important	18.3	19.1
LGBTQ+ rights	Very/extremely important	51.6	53.2
	Somewhat important*	26.7	17.7
	Not important*	21.7	29.1
The US role in the Israel/Gaza conflict	Very/extremely important	56.4	57.9
	Somewhat important	24.5	23.3
	Not important	19.1	18.8
The US role in the war in Ukraine	Very/extremely important	46.9	46.3
	Somewhat important	34.5	33.2
	Not important	18.6	20.5
Fair and secure elections	Very/extremely important	78.6	77.9
	Somewhat important	16.3	16.8
	Not important	5.1	5.3
Immigration	Very/extremely important*	59.0	68.7
	Somewhat important*	30.5	22.1
	Not important	10.5	9.2

(Continues)

TABLE 2 | (Continued)

Indicate how important each of these issues is in regard to the upcoming 2024 general election		IND/Oth (%)	DEM + REP (%)
Gas prices	Very/extremely important	58.2	53.7
	Somewhat important	30.9	32.6
	Not important	10.9	13.7
Potential ban of TikTok	Very/extremely important*	29.4	20.3
	Somewhat important*	24.1	31.2
	Not important	46.4	48.5
Student loan debt	Very/extremely important	49.8	47.3
	Somewhat important	30.2	29.0
	Not important	20.1	23.6
Taxes	Very/extremely important	62.5	61.8
	Somewhat important	28.2	32.9
	Not important*	9.3	5.3
Cost of living	Very/extremely important	90.2	90.7
	Somewhat important	8.7	8.5
	Not important	1.1	0.7
Protecting democracy	Very/extremely important	68.2	72.5
	Somewhat important	21.2	19.8
	Not important	10.5	7.7
Health care	Very/extremely important	80.6	76.9
	Somewhat important	15.4	17.7
	Not important	4.0	5.5

*Column percentages significantly different at $p < 0.05$.

independents (59.0%) were less concerned than party affiliates (68.7%). When the major parties are broken out, we see that 63.0% of Democrats and 77.0% of Republicans are concerned.

4.2.5 | Potential Ban of TikTok

At the time of the survey, there was discussion about the social media site TikTok in Congress, and a ban of the service might be a prime issue for Generation Z. Although nearly half of all respondents thought the issue was *Not important* (46.4% of independents and 48.5% of party-affiliated), there was a significant difference in the percentage that found the issue *Very or Extremely important* (29.4% independent vs. 20.3% party-affiliated).

4.2.6 | Taxes

The significant difference on the issue of taxes arose among those who said the issue was *Not important*, 9.3% of independents and 5.3% of the party-affiliated. The proportion of those who thought taxes are *Very or Extremely important* was quite

similar between the two groups: 62.5% independent vs. 61.8% party-affiliated.

4.3 | Information Sources

Respondents were also presented with the following prompt: How frequently do you get your information about important issues from each of these sources? along with a list of seven sources (see Table 3). For three of these sources, *social media*, *online news sites*, and *friends and family*, responses from independents were not significantly different from the party-affiliated. *Social media* was the only information source that was cited as frequently used by a majority of respondents. The remaining four sources showed significant differences:

4.3.1 | Late Night TV Shows

Just 3.9% of independents said they frequently get information on important issues from *Late night TV shows*, while 78.9% said they *Never* get information from this source. Eight percent of party-affiliated respondents frequently get their

TABLE 3 | Information sources.

How frequently do you get your information about important issues from each of these sources?		IND/ Oth (%)	DEM + REP (%)
Social media	Frequently	53.9	58.1
	Sometimes	34.1	32.7
	Never	12.0	9.2
Late night TV shows	Frequently*	3.9	8.0
	Sometimes	17.2	21.1
	Never*	78.9	70.9
Radio or TV news	Frequently*	17.0	24.0
	Sometimes	42.2	41.6
	Never*	40.7	34.4
Print media—Magazines and Newspapers	Frequently	9.9	9.4
	Sometimes*	22.0	29.0
	Never*	68.1	61.6
Online news sites	Frequently	48.5	47.7
	Sometimes	37.5	40.7
	Never	14.0	11.6
Podcasts	Frequently*	23.4	32.0
	Sometimes	38.2	33.4
	Never	38.4	34.6
Friends and family	Frequently	29.7	34.3
	Sometimes	54.4	51.8
	Never	15.9	13.8

*Column percentages significantly different at $p < 0.05$.

information from these shows, while 70.9% never get information from them.

4.3.2 | Radio or TV News

Independent respondents were also less likely to get their information from *Radio or TV news*. Seventeen percent of independent respondents get information from these shows, compared to 24% of the party affiliated.

4.3.3 | Print Media

Print media—magazines and newspapers had low levels of influence on Generation Z, as might be expected, but independents are particularly not interested in these old-school resources. 68.1% of independents said they never utilize this print media compared to 61.6% of the party affiliated.

4.3.4 | Podcasts

Podcasts were rated moderately high by those affiliated with the major parties, with 32.0% saying that they frequently get

important information there. This compares with just 23.4% of independents.

4.4 | Political Attitudes

Respondents were asked 10 questions probing their attitudes toward politics. For the prompt, “People under age 30 should vote,” both independents and party affiliates agreed in excess of 85%. On the other nine prompts, there was some significant differentiation between the two groups (see Table 4).

Independent respondents were more than twice as likely than the politically affiliated to say they never discuss politics with friends and family. Democrats and Republicans had very similar responses to each other on this question. Independents were significantly more likely to strongly agree with the statement that “the Democratic and Republican parties are out of touch with people my age.” There was also a notable difference in response between Democrats (52.9%) and Republicans (33.9%) on this question. The survey was taken before President Biden dropped out of the 2024 presidential race, so it is unclear if the view of Democrats would change with a younger, more energetic candidate at the head of the ticket.

Similarly, independents are more likely to strongly disagree with the statements, “election results generally reflect the will of the people,” “there should be more choices on the ballot besides Democrats and Republicans,” and “The current political system works for my generation.” Dissatisfaction with the political system is evident with significant portions of independent respondents strongly agreeing that “all politicians are corrupt” (23.6%), while only 10.1% strongly agree that “elections in American are generally fair.”

4.5 | Barriers to Voting

4.5.1 | 2022 Non-Voters

894 of the 1315 respondents (68%) stated that they had not voted in the 2022 general election. This proportion matches the actual election turnout for the selected age cohort. These non-voting, but registered, respondents were asked about what prevented them from voting in the previous election, with the prompt: “What do you think kept you from voting in the 2022 election?” (Table 5).

Not surprisingly, independent respondents were more likely to say that the candidates did not reflect their ideas. It also stands to reason that a substantial percentage of these non-voters didn’t vote because they felt, “my vote wouldn’t make a difference,” and, “I was turned off by the negative politics.”

Although a small percentage of independents said that their failure to vote was a form of protest (7.6%) or that they expressed their political preferences through activism (6.9%), these rates were still over three times those seen in the party-affiliated respondents (1.7% and 1.9%, respectively).

TABLE 4 | Political attitudes.

Political attitudes		IND/Oth (%)	DEM + REP (%)
How often do you discuss politics with your friends and family?	Often*	31.3	37.8
	Sometimes	35.8	38.3
	Rarely	22.2	19.7
	Never*	10.6	4.2
The Democratic and Republican Parties are out of touch with people my age	Strongly agree*	62.8	45.1
	Somewhat agree*	20.6	32.1
	Neither agree nor disagree	9.6	10.0
	Somewhat disagree*	3.3	9.1
	Strongly disagree	3.7	3.7
Both Republican and Democratic politicians want what's best for the country	Strongly agree	3.8	4.9
	Somewhat agree	15.2	17.5
	Neither agree nor disagree	14.0	13.7
	Somewhat disagree*	21.9	26.9
	Strongly disagree*	45.1	36.9
Election results generally reflect the will of the people	Strongly agree	10.6	10.8
	Somewhat agree	28.9	31.2
	Neither agree nor disagree	15.3	17.9
	Somewhat disagree	24.4	28.4
	Strongly disagree*	20.8	11.8
There should be more choices on the ballot besides Democrats and Republicans	Strongly agree*	68.3	46.4
	Somewhat agree*	18.8	26.3
	Neither agree nor disagree*	8.5	15.9
	Somewhat disagree*	2.5	6.9
	Strongly disagree*	2.0	4.5
The current political system works for my generation	Strongly agree	4.4	6.8
	Somewhat agree	13.3	15.4
	Neither agree nor disagree	13.5	11.1
	Somewhat disagree*	21.4	28.5
	Strongly disagree*	47.4	38.2
People under age 30 should vote	Strongly agree	69.1	73.1
	Somewhat agree	17.6	15.5
	Neither agree nor disagree	6.7	4.4
	Somewhat disagree	3.6	3.6
	Strongly disagree	3.0	3.4
All politicians are corrupt	Strongly disagree*	7.0	10.2
	Somewhat disagree*	15.7	20.7
	Neither agree nor disagree	15.9	15.6
	Somewhat agree	36.9	36.7
	Strongly agree*	23.6	16.8

(Continues)

TABLE 4 | (Continued)

Political attitudes		IND/Oth (%)	DEM + REP (%)
My vote, along with the votes of my friends, can change things for the better	Strongly disagree*	8.6	4.8
	Somewhat disagree*	13.8	8.8
	Neither agree nor disagree	14.2	12.7
	Somewhat agree	36.1	37.2
	Strongly agree*	27.1	36.5
Elections in America are generally fair	Strongly disagree*	21.1	14.0
	Somewhat disagree	25.1	24.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	17.9	16.6
	Somewhat agree*	25.0	30.1

*Column percentages significantly different at $p < 0.05$.

4.5.2 | 2022 Voters

The 421 respondents who said they voted in the 2022 general election were asked a similar series of questions about what might prevent them from voting again in 2024 (see Table 6). This group had very low portions of respondents who found the voting process complicated or confusing; 1.5% of independents and 0.8% of party-affiliated individuals. This contrasts with over 20% of the non-voters listed above who found the voting process complicated or confusing and may indicate that there are opportunities to educate people about the voting process to increase turnout.

Independents expressed greater skepticism of the political system than their party-affiliated peers with significantly greater responses to the statements, “my vote does not count,” “there is no one I want to vote for,” and “it doesn’t matter who wins, nothing changes.”

4.6 | Motivators to Voting

4.6.1 | 2022 Non-Voters

Respondents who were registered to vote in 2022 but did not participate in the general election were asked about what would make them more likely to turn out for the 2024 election (see Table 7). The availability of online voting and important ballot issues were motivators to a significantly higher portion of independent respondents than to the party-affiliated.

Interestingly, those weakly affiliated with parties, who were registered as either Democrats or Republicans but did not actually turn out to vote in 2022, were considerably more likely (66.9%) to say that they would be encouraging others to vote compared to independent non-voters (44.5%).

4.6.2 | 2022 Voters

A majority of independent respondents who voted in 2022 cited their civic duty and ‘rights and freedoms’ as motivations

for voting, but these percentages were still less than those of party-affiliated voters (see Table 8). Although a large percentage (45.1%) of voting independents felt that their votes made a difference in 2022, this is still significantly less than the 57.8% of party-affiliated respondents who felt this way. This sentiment is echoed in the 41.7% of independent respondents who said that their vote making a difference in the outcome of the election is a motivation for voting.

4.7 | Ballot Initiatives

A series of ballot initiatives were being considered for inclusion in the November 2024 ballot in Arizona at the time the survey was administered. With one exception, a measure to mandate partisan primaries, these were all seen as making turnout more likely for both independents and party-affiliated respondents. Note that the questions did not ask the respondents if they were in favor of or opposed to these measures, only whether the presence of the measure would make them more or less likely to vote in the election.

Independents were much more likely to be motivated by a proposed measure that was described as follows:

Eliminate partisan primaries: Replace primary system where voters can only vote within one party, to a system where all eligible candidates are listed on the same primary, regardless of political affiliation, and all voters are allowed to participate.

As this measure would increase the voting powers of voters who are not aligned with one of the two major parties, it is not surprising that independent respondents backed it by 62.3%. It is somewhat more surprising that the measure was cited as a motivator to voting by 48.2% of the combined Democratic and Republican respondents, although Democrats (56.8%) favored the measure much more heavily than Republicans (35.8%).

Table 9 summarizes responses to questions about ballot initiatives.

TABLE 5 | Barriers to voting in 2022.

What do you think kept you from voting in the 2022 election?		IND/Oth (%)	DEM + REP (%)
I was too busy to vote	Checked	28.9	28.8
	Unchecked	71.1	71.2
The voting process was too complicated or confusing	Checked*	22.3	28.1
	Unchecked*	77.7	71.9
I didn't think the candidates reflected my ideas	Checked*	22.9	10.9
	Unchecked*	77.1	89.1
I was turned off by the negative politics	Checked*	14.9	7.4
	Unchecked*	85.1	92.6
My vote wouldn't make a difference	Checked*	18.6	9.9
	Unchecked*	81.4	90.1
I didn't vote as a form of protest	Checked*	7.6	1.7
	Unchecked*	92.4	98.3
I expressed my political preferences through activism, protests, or social media, rather than voting	Checked*	6.9	1.9
	Unchecked*	93.1	98.1
It was too difficult to learn about the candidates	Checked*	16.4	11.2
	Unchecked*	83.6	88.8
I just don't care	Checked	13.1	9.7
	Unchecked	86.9	90.3
Absentee issues	Checked	2.5	2.8
	Unchecked	97.5	97.2

Note: The survey instrument had check boxes next to each option to indicate agreement.

*Column percentages significantly different at $p < 0.05$.

4.8 | Ballot Completion

As expected, there is a decrease in likelihood of voting as one proceeds down the ballot from the presidential race. The interest in ballot initiatives and referendums described above can be seen in an uptick in participation in these measures over local elections. The fall-off in likely participation for party-affiliated respondents is 22.8%, dropping from 87.1% who said they are likely to vote in the presidential election to 64.3% who said they would vote for the ballot measures. However, the drop-off among independent voters is just 16.5%, with 73.3% saying they will vote in the presidential election and 56.8% voting for ballot measures. Table 10 summarizes responses regarding ballot completion.

5 | Discussion

While there are many similarities between Arizona independent Gen Z voters and their partisan counterparts in their demographics, top issues of importance, political attitudes, information sources, and political voting patterns, this research has found that independent Gen Z voters are politically distinct in many important areas.

First, Gen Z voters are decidedly more independent and Latino than their party-affiliated counterparts. As a group, fewer have acquired bachelor's degrees. They also have significantly lower voting participation than their partisan peers. However, while they are less likely to vote in the 2024 election, a large percentage of them are open to the idea and might be persuaded to participate in the November 2024 election. This research on Arizona Gen Z voters occurred before the entry of Vice-President Harris into the Presidential race. Her entry has sparked a good deal of enthusiasm among young voters, and Harris has also made significant inroads among independent voters in general, which is a notable shift when independents were more evenly split between President Biden and former President Trump (Glanzer 2024; Irwin 2024). Whether this will result in increased voter participation among independent Gen Z voters remains to be seen. As previously mentioned, Gen Z historically has lower voter turnout compared to older generations. When compared to their partisan counterparts, Arizona independent Gen Z voters have even lower voter participation, which can make predicting their impact on elections difficult.

When asked about the top issues Gen Z view as most important, independents aligned with Democrats on several issues, such as

TABLE 6 | Barriers to voting in 2024.

What might prevent you from voting in the upcoming 2024 general election?		IND/ Oth (%)	DEM + REP (%)
I'm too busy to vote	Checked*	8.9	3.8
	Unchecked*	91.1	96.2
The voting process is too complicated or confusing	Checked	1.5	0.8
	Unchecked	98.5	99.2
My vote does not count	Checked*	20.9	6.7
	Unchecked*	79.1	93.3
I will definitely vote in the 2024 general election	Checked*	55.9	80.7
	Unchecked*	44.1	19.3
There is no one I want to vote for	Checked*	42.5	23.2
	Unchecked*	57.5	76.8
I am turned off by all the negative advertising	Checked	10.7	6.8
	Unchecked	89.3	93.2
It doesn't matter who wins, nothing changes	Checked*	31.4	17.3
	Unchecked*	68.6	82.7
Not voting is a form of protest	Checked	11.3	8.0
	Unchecked	88.7	92.0
I express my political preferences through activism, protests, or social media, rather than voting	Checked*	14.6	4.8
	Unchecked*	85.4	95.2
It is too difficult to learn about the candidates	Checked	5.4	2.2
	Unchecked	94.6	97.8

Note: The survey instrument had check boxes next to each option to indicate agreement.

*Column percentages significantly different at $p < 0.05$.

affordable housing, health care, and reproductive rights. Other issues, including fair and secure elections, taxes, gas prices, and gun rights, show independent choices are similar to Republicans. Independents fell in the middle of their partisan counterparts on the importance of climate change and LGBTQ+ rights, viewed homelessness and a potential ban of TikTok as more important, and felt taxes and immigration did not rise to the level of importance as their party-affiliated peers. These findings underscore other research that found independents have distinct political views from partisans (Bitzer et al. 2022; Fiorina 2016; Reilly et al. 2022; Siev et al. 2024).

Overall, the majority of Arizona Gen Z voters get their news sources on important issues from social media (56%), followed by online news sites at 48%. Only 10% used print media such as newspapers and magazines. Gen Z independents were even

less interested in print media, late night TV shows and podcasts than partisans. The reliance of Gen Z voters, particularly Gen Z independent voters, on social media, influencers, and online communities makes it clear that traditional methods of outreach in elections need to adapt. This demographic is not just digitally savvy but also tends to process information differently, often relying on social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Twitter (now X), and YouTube, rather than traditional media such as newspapers or TV for news and political discourse. For Gen Z independent voters who do not feel as aligned with traditional political parties, these platforms hold additional significance.

Our research observed some further differences regarding political attitudes. Independent respondents were more than twice as likely than the politically affiliated to say they never discuss politics with friends and family. Further, independents were significantly more likely to strongly agree that the two parties are out of touch with people their ages and more likely to strongly disagree that elections reflect the will of the people. They felt more strongly than their peers that there was a need for more choices on the ballot. Dissatisfaction with the political system appeared more pronounced with this group of young voters, with significant portions of independent respondents strongly agreeing that all politicians are corrupt.

Not surprisingly, independent respondents were more likely to say that the candidates did not reflect their ideas. It also stands to reason that a substantial percentage of these non-voters did not vote because they felt their vote would not make a difference. Overall, Gen Z independents also expressed greater skepticism of the political system than their party-affiliated peers.

Finally, respondents were asked if the presence of ballot measures on various policy choices would make it more likely that they would vote in November 2024. Independents were much more likely to be motivated by a proposed measure that would eliminate partisan primaries and enshrine reproductive rights into the state's constitution. Previously, polling of Arizona voters found over 80% supported a voting system that allowed all voters to equally participate in primary elections (Hunting et al. 2023). It appears that Gen Z voters were especially in support of such a measure. Direct democracy tools such as the ballot initiative are important alternatives to enacting public policy when elected representatives failed to do so. These measures are being used to address a range of public policy issues, both conservative and liberal. Post-election follow-up surveys will be vital to determining whether Gen Z voters cast votes for ballot questions and, if so, how they view the success or failure of those ballot questions. Will Gen Z view ballot questions as mechanisms for expressing their frustration with the current political system or will they become cynical about how the political parties manipulate ballot questions for partisan purposes?

6 | Conclusions

Generation Z is coming of age during an era of unprecedented challenges and of widening polarization. The pandemic impacted their academic and career aspirations, caused them to miss key milestones like graduations or beginning college. Global conflicts are raging with wars in Ukraine and the

TABLE 7 | Motivators for non-voters.

What would make it more likely that you'll vote in the 2024 general election?		IND/Oth (%)	DEM + REP (%)
Candidates that better align with my values	Checked	45.4	39.8
	Unchecked	54.6	60.2
Online voting	Checked*	25.6	17.2
	Unchecked*	74.4	82.8
A dangerous candidate might win if I don't vote	Checked*	25.7	33.8
	Unchecked*	74.3	66.2
Candidates addressing issues that are important to me	Checked	42.0	36.7
	Unchecked	58.0	63.3
There are local and state candidates that I want to vote for or against	Checked	20.0	16.8
	Unchecked	80.0	83.2
There are ballot issues that I care about	Checked*	27.9	17.5
	Unchecked*	72.1	82.5
Will you be encouraging friends, family, and coworkers to vote in the upcoming presidential election?	Yes*	44.5	66.9
	No*	21.5	13.6
	Maybe/Don't know*	34.0	19.4

Note: The survey instrument had check boxes next to each option to indicate agreement.

*Column percentages significantly different at $p < 0.05$.

TABLE 8 | Motivators for voters.

What are your reasons for voting?		IND/Oth (%)	DEM + REP (%)
My vote can make a difference in the outcome of elections	Checked*	41.7	55.8
	Unchecked*	58.3	44.2
People's rights and freedoms are at stake	Checked*	56.8	79.3
	Unchecked*	43.2	20.7
Democracy is at stake	Checked*	28.2	47.9
	Unchecked*	71.8	52.1
It is my civic duty to vote	Checked*	63.5	76.5
	Unchecked*	36.5	23.5
Friends or family encouraged me to vote	Checked	14.4	18.7
	Unchecked	85.6	81.3
Do you think the votes of you and your friends made a difference in the 2022 election?	Yes*	45.1	57.8
	No*	33.5	22.5
	Don't know	21.4	19.7
Will you be encouraging friends, family, and coworkers to vote in the upcoming presidential election?	Yes*	65.4	85.7
	No*	22.9	4.8
	Don't know	11.7	9.4

Note: The survey instrument had check boxes next to each option to indicate agreement.

*Column percentages significantly different at $p < 0.05$.

Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and inflation, gas prices, and a shortage of housing are on the rise. Given these challenging issues, it is no surprise that many in Gen Z feel pessimistic

and disillusioned about the future. Unlike previous generations, Gen Z is a polarized generation without strong party affiliations.

TABLE 9 | Ballot initiatives.

Would any of these ballot initiatives make it more likely, less likely, or have no impact on whether you vote in the 2024 general election?		IND/ Oth (%)	DEM + REP (%)
Abortion access	More likely	69.8	68.6
	Less likely*	9.5	15.4
	No impact*	20.6	16.1
Eliminate partisan primaries	More likely*	62.3	48.2
	Less likely*	9.4	13.5
	No impact*	28.4	38.3
Public education funding	More likely	70.2	71.8
	Less likely*	4.8	7.5
	No impact	25.0	20.7
Minimum wage	More likely	55.2	55.8
	Less likely	16.8	19.7
	No impact	27.9	24.5
Keep partisan primaries	More likely*	16.3	21.7
	Less likely*	41.6	25.8
	No impact*	42.1	52.6

*Column percentages significantly different at $p < 0.05$.

Arizona Gen Z voters are also distinctly independent, mirroring national data on political affiliation for this age group (Jones 2024). These Gen Z voters as a whole overwhelmingly feel that the two major parties are not working in the best interest of the country and are out of touch with people of their age. Well over half believe that all politicians are corrupt. Independents in this voting group are especially dissatisfied with the current political atmosphere, with over two-thirds feeling that the current political system is not working for their generation. However, despite this, a large majority of Gen Z voters, including a large percent of independent Gen Z voters, indicate that they will be voting in 2024.

While facing these challenges, Gen Z is ready to step in to take over as the boomer generation fades away, but they are profoundly frustrated with the political world that has been handed down to them. They are not ready to give up on democracy. Gaining a more nuanced understanding of how Gen Z independent voters might differ from their partisan affiliated peers is essential to understanding this engaged group of voters and ensuring their momentum for participation in voting continues. It may also provide needed insights into how to persuade them to participate more fully in elections.

Despite these contributions, our study has several limitations. First, as with any survey, the attitudes on voting details are all based on self-reports that may be susceptible to response bias. Second, while our models are controlled for several demographic

TABLE 10 | Ballot completion.

How likely are you to complete the following sections of the 2024 general election ballot?		IND/ Oth (%)	DEM + REP (%)
US President	Likely*	73.3	87.1
	Unsure*	16.8	8.4
	Not likely*	9.9	4.5
US Senate and Congress	Likely*	66.0	83.4
	Unsure*	22.6	11.0
	Not likely*	11.4	5.6
State Legislature	Likely*	64.7	74.8
	Unsure*	21.8	15.9
	Not likely*	13.5	9.3
Local offices	Likely*	57.4	68.4
	Unsure*	28.5	17.3
	Not likely	14.1	14.2
Retention of judges	Likely*	47.3	57.3
	Unsure*	31.3	26.0
	Not likely*	21.3	16.7
Ballot initiatives and referendums	Likely*	56.8	64.3
	Unsure	26.9	24.5
	Not likely*	16.3	11.1
Are you considering voting for an independent or third-party presidential candidate?	Yes*	40.2	20.3
	No*	24.5	56.3
	Don't know*	35.3	23.4

*Column percentages significantly different at $p < 0.05$.

factors, there is always the risk of omitted variable bias, so we caution the reader not to make causal interpretations. Finally, the sample recommends against robust multivariate analysis, but at the same time, the descriptive data yield noteworthy, previously unknown patterns of voting attitudes about Gen Z independent voters. Despite these limitations, these findings offer important insights into the voting patterns of Gen Z independent voters.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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Appendix A

Survey Instrument and Toplines

	Unweighted count	Weighted count	Column N %
Total	1315	1315	100.0
Demographics			
<i>D02 What is your gender?</i>			
Male	735	718	54.6
Female	508	522	39.7
Non-binary/non-conforming	58	59	4.5
Prefer not to disclose	14	17	1.3
<i>D03 Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?</i>			
Yes	394	411	31.2
No	919	902	68.6
Refused	2	2	0.1
<i>D04 Which of the following best describes your race?</i>			
White	712	680	75.2
Black or African American	38	39	4.3
American Indian or Alaska Native	30	37	4.1
Asian	46	45	5.0
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	2	3	0.3
Mixed Race	73	78	8.6
Other race not listed	20	23	2.5
<i>D05 Which county in Arizona do you live in?</i>			
Maricopa County	781	754	57.3
Pima County	243	252	19.2
Pinal County	75	79	6.0
<i>Subtotal: Urban</i>	1099	1085	82.5
Apache County	9	13	1.0
Cochise County	22	22	1.7
Coconino County	44	39	3.0
Gila County	6	11	0.8
Graham County	14	12	0.9
Greenlee County	1	1	0.1
La Paz County	2	2	0.1
Mohave County	30	36	2.7
Navajo County	16	18	1.4
Santa Cruz County	10	11	0.9
Yavapai County	33	29	2.2
Yuma County	25	32	2.4
Refused	4	4	0.3
<i>Subtotal: Rural</i>	216	230	17.5

(Continues)

	Unweighted count	Weighted count	Column N %
<i>D07 What is your highest level of education?</i>			
No bachelors, not in college	626	784	59.6
Bachelors or better	380	298	22.6
Currently in college, university, or trade school	309	233	17.7
<i>D08 How would you describe your political affiliation?</i>			
Democrat	356	394	30.0
Republican	246	276	21.0
Independent or unaffiliated	587	536	40.8
Something else	114	96	7.3
Refused	12	12	0.9
<i>LV01 Did you vote in the 2022 election where Arizona's governor and senator were selected?</i>			
Yes	584	421	32.0
No	673	827	62.9
Don't know	58	67	5.1
<i>LV02 How likely are you to vote in the upcoming 2024 general election?</i>			
I wont be voting	53	59	4.5
Possibly, I'm not sure yet	337	387	29.4
I will definitely be voting	923	866	65.9
Refused	2	3	0.2
Important issues			
<i>Q01 Indicate how important each of these issues is in regard to the upcoming 2024 general election</i>			
<i>Jobs</i>			
Not important	53	48	3.7
Somewhat important	277	270	20.6
Very important	558	581	44.2
Extremely important	424	411	31.3
Refused	3	4	0.3
<i>Affordable housing</i>			
Not important	37	30	2.3
Somewhat important	148	153	11.6
Very important	495	501	38.1
Extremely important	634	631	48.0
Refused	1	1	0.1
<i>Homelessness</i>			
Not important	67	71	5.4
Somewhat important	323	301	22.9
Very important	538	541	41.1
Extremely important	383	396	30.1
Refused	4	6	0.5

(Continues)

	Unweighted count	Weighted count	Column N %
<i>Climate change</i>			
Not important	253	243	18.5
Somewhat important	247	256	19.5
Very important	387	393	29.9
Extremely important	422	409	31.1
Refused	6	14	1.0
<i>Protecting the water supply</i>			
Not important	53	45	3.4
Somewhat important	209	209	15.9
Very important	555	555	42.2
Extremely important	493	500	38.0
Refused	5	7	0.5
<i>Reproductive rights/abortion</i>			
Not important	148	158	12.0
Somewhat important	186	180	13.7
Very important	396	416	31.7
Extremely important	577	548	41.7
Refused	8	12	0.9
<i>Public safety/Gun violence</i>			
Not important	121	112	8.5
Somewhat important	291	285	21.7
Very important	475	481	36.6
Extremely important	421	428	32.5
Refused	7	10	0.7
<i>Q01_8 2024 Issues—Gun rights</i>			
Not important	246	244	18.5
Somewhat important	365	335	25.5
Very important	365	388	29.5
Extremely important	331	337	25.6
Refused	8	11	0.9
<i>LGBTQ+ rights</i>			
Not important	332	328	25.0
Somewhat important	287	285	21.7
Very important	331	333	25.3
Extremely important	349	343	26.1
Refused	16	26	2.0
<i>The US role in the Israel/Gaza conflict</i>			
Not important	234	246	18.7
Somewhat important	304	310	23.6
Very important	352	358	27.2

(Continues)

APPENDIX A | (Continued)

	Unweighted count	Weighted count	Column N %
Extremely important	412	383	29.1
Refused	13	18	1.4
<i>The US role in the war in Ukraine</i>			
Not important	239	254	19.3
Somewhat important	438	439	33.4
Very important	361	355	27.0
Extremely important	262	248	18.8
Refused	15	19	1.5
<i>Fair and secure elections</i>			
Not important	82	69	5.2
Somewhat important	223	217	16.5
Very important	501	499	38.0
Extremely important	508	529	40.2
Refused	1	1	0.1
<i>Immigration</i>			
Not important	139	128	9.7
Somewhat important	353	341	25.9
Very important	450	470	35.8
Extremely important	362	362	27.5
Refused	11	14	1.0
<i>Gas prices</i>			
Not important	172	161	12.3
Somewhat important	431	415	31.6
Very important	395	417	31.7
Extremely important	313	315	23.9
Refused	4	6	0.5
<i>Potential ban of TikTok</i>			
Not important	619	615	46.7
Somewhat important	358	359	27.3
Very important	185	183	13.9
Extremely important	140	138	10.5
Refused	13	20	1.5
<i>Student loan debt</i>			
Not important	289	286	21.7
Somewhat important	383	386	29.3
Very important	364	362	27.5
Extremely important	272	272	20.7
Refused	7	10	0.8

(Continues)

	Unweighted count	Weighted count	Column N %
<i>Taxes</i>			
Not important	93	94	7.2
Somewhat important	416	400	30.4
Very important	486	510	38.8
Extremely important	313	303	23.0
Refused	7	8	0.6
<i>Cost of living</i>			
Not important	15	12	0.9
Somewhat important	109	112	8.5
Very important	494	504	38.3
Extremely important	689	675	51.4
Refused	8	12	0.9
<i>Protecting democracy</i>			
Not important	119	118	9.0
Somewhat important	268	266	20.3
Very important	442	473	36.0
Extremely important	475	443	33.7
Refused	11	15	1.1
<i>Health care</i>			
Not important	68	62	4.7
Somewhat important	227	217	16.5
Very important	507	523	39.7
Extremely important	511	510	38.8
Refused	2	3	0.2
Information sources			
<i>Q02 How frequently do you get your information about important issues from each of these sources?</i>			
<i>Social media</i>			
Never	143	139	10.5
Sometimes	434	438	33.3
Frequently	737	737	56.0
Refused	1	1	0.1
<i>Late night TV shows</i>			
Never	966	981	74.6
Sometimes	269	252	19.1
Frequently	77	79	6.0
Refused	3	4	0.3
<i>Radio or TV news</i>			
Never	510	493	37.5
Sometimes	548	551	41.9
Frequently	256	270	20.6
Refused	1	1	0.1

(Continues)

	Unweighted count	Weighted count	Column N %
<i>Print media—Magazines and Newspapers</i>			
Never	849	850	64.6
Sometimes	348	336	25.5
Frequently	116	127	9.6
Refused	2	3	0.2
<i>Online news sites</i>			
Never	151	168	12.8
Sometimes	489	513	39.0
Frequently	672	631	48.0
Refused	3	3	0.3
<i>Podcasts</i>			
Never	483	478	36.3
Sometimes	469	468	35.6
Frequently	360	364	27.7
Refused	3	5	0.4
<i>Friends and family</i>			
Never	195	195	14.8
Sometimes	712	697	53.0
Frequently	406	420	32.0
Refused	2	3	0.3
<i>Q03 How often do you discuss politics with your friends and family?</i>			
Never	76	96	7.3
Rarely	268	275	20.9
Sometimes	499	487	37.1
Often	471	455	34.6
Refused	1	1	0.1
Voting attitudes			
<i>Q04 How much do you agree with the following statements?</i>			
<i>Q04_1 The Democratic and Republican Parties are out of touch with people my age</i>			
Strongly disagree	45	48	3.7
Somewhat disagree	83	82	6.3
Neither agree nor disagree	116	128	9.7
Somewhat agree	360	347	26.4
Strongly agree	707	704	53.5
Refused	4	6	0.5
<i>Q04_2 Both Republican and Democratic politicians want what's best for the country</i>			
Strongly disagree	570	533	40.5
Somewhat disagree	333	319	24.3
Neither agree nor disagree	155	181	13.7
Somewhat agree	197	213	16.2

(Continues)

	Unweighted count	Weighted count	Column N %
Strongly agree	54	57	4.3
Refused	6	12	0.9
<i>Q04_3 Regardless of party affiliation, all voters should have equal access to voting</i>			
Strongly disagree	19	14	1.1
Somewhat disagree	18	14	1.1
Neither agree nor disagree	35	35	2.7
Somewhat agree	149	155	11.8
Strongly agree	1093	1095	83.3
Refused	1	1	0.1
<i>Q04_4 All politicians are corrupt</i>			
Strongly disagree	112	114	8.6
Somewhat disagree	244	240	18.2
Neither agree nor disagree	206	208	15.8
Somewhat agree	485	484	36.8
Strongly agree	263	265	20.1
Refused	5	5	0.4
<i>Q04_5 My vote, along with the votes of my friends, can change things for the better</i>			
Strongly disagree	89	88	6.7
Somewhat disagree	169	148	11.3
Neither agree nor disagree	168	176	13.4
Somewhat agree	475	482	36.6
Strongly agree	413	420	31.9
Refused	1	1	0.1
<i>Q04_6 Elections in America are generally fair</i>			
Strongly disagree	223	230	17.5
Somewhat disagree	330	325	24.7
Neither agree nor disagree	216	227	17.3
Somewhat agree	381	363	27.6
Strongly agree	161	165	12.6
Refused	4	5	0.4
<i>Q04_7 Election results generally reflect the will of the people</i>			
Strongly disagree	222	212	16.1
Somewhat disagree	356	346	26.3
Neither agree nor disagree	215	218	16.6
Somewhat agree	393	394	30.0
Strongly agree	126	140	10.7
Refused	3	4	0.3
<i>Q04_8 There should be more choices on the ballot besides Democrats and Republicans</i>			
Strongly disagree	41	43	3.3
Somewhat disagree	57	63	4.8

(Continues)

APPENDIX A | (Continued)

	Unweighted count	Weighted count	Column N %
Neither agree nor disagree	153	161	12.2
Somewhat agree	298	297	22.6
Strongly agree	764	749	57.0
Refused	2	3	0.2
<i>Q04_9 The current political system works for my generation</i>			
Strongly disagree	577	560	42.6
Somewhat disagree	355	328	25.0
Neither agree nor disagree	151	161	12.3
Somewhat agree	173	188	14.3
Strongly agree	57	73	5.6
Refused	2	4	0.3
Strongly disagree	36	42	3.2
Somewhat disagree	48	47	3.6
Neither agree nor disagree	69	73	5.5
Somewhat agree	218	217	16.5
Strongly agree	943	935	71.1
Refused	1	1	0.1
Asked of 2022 voters			
<i>Q05 What might prevent you from voting in the upcoming 2024 general election?</i>			
<i>I'm too busy to vote</i>			
Unchecked	546	397	94.2
Checked	38	24	5.8
<i>The voting process is too complicated or confusing</i>			
Unchecked	576	416	98.9
Checked	8	4	1.1
<i>My vote does not count</i>			
Unchecked	515	370	87.9
Checked	69	51	12.1
<i>I will definitely vote in the 2024 general election</i>			
Unchecked	154	121	28.8
Checked	430	300	71.2
<i>There is no one I want to vote for</i>			
Unchecked	404	292	69.4
Checked	180	129	30.6
<i>I am turned off by all the negative advertising</i>			
Unchecked	527	386	91.7
Checked	57	35	8.3
<i>It doesn't matter who wins, nothing changes</i>			
Unchecked	437	325	77.3
Checked	147	95	22.7

(Continues)

	Unweighted count	Weighted count	Column N %
<i>Not voting is a form of protest</i>			
Unchecked	522	382	90.7
Checked	62	39	9.3
<i>I express my political preferences through activism, protests, or social media, rather than voting</i>			
Unchecked	539	385	91.4
Checked	45	36	8.6
<i>It is too difficult to learn about the candidates</i>			
Unchecked	559	406	96.6
Checked	25	14	3.4
<i>Refused</i>			
Unchecked	89	70	96.0
Checked	5	3	4.0
<i>Q06 Do you think the votes of you and your friends made a difference in the 2022 election?</i>			
Yes	316	223	52.9
No	144	112	26.7
Don't know	124	86	20.4
Refused	0	0	0.0
<i>What are your reasons for voting?</i>			
<i>My vote can make a difference in the outcome of elections</i>			
Unchecked	275	209	49.6
Checked	309	212	50.4
<i>People's rights and freedoms are at stake</i>			
Unchecked	171	123	29.3
Checked	413	297	70.7
<i>Democracy is at stake</i>			
Unchecked	330	251	59.6
Checked	254	170	40.4
<i>It is my civic duty to vote</i>			
Unchecked	153	120	28.5
Checked	431	301	71.5
<i>Friends or family encouraged me to vote</i>			
Unchecked	486	349	83.0
Checked	98	72	17.0
<i>Refused</i>			
Unchecked	93	72	99.4
Checked	1	0	0.6
<i>Q08 Will you be encouraging friends, family, and coworkers to vote in the upcoming presidential election?</i>			
Yes	450	328	78.0
No	66	49	11.7
Don't know	68	43	10.3
Refused	0	0	0.0

(Continues)

	Unweighted count	Weighted count	Column N %
Asked of 2022 non-voters			
<i>What do you think kept you from voting in the 2022 election?</i>			
<i>I was too busy to vote</i>			
Unchecked	518	636	71.1
Checked	213	258	28.9
<i>The voting process was too complicated or confusing</i>			
Unchecked	553	671	75.0
Checked	178	224	25.0
<i>I didn't think the candidates reflected my ideas</i>			
Unchecked	591	739	82.6
Checked	140	156	17.4
<i>I was turned off by the negative politics</i>			
Unchecked	645	791	88.5
Checked	86	103	11.5
<i>My vote wouldn't make a difference</i>			
Unchecked	629	763	85.4
Checked	102	131	14.6
<i>I didn't vote as a form of protest</i>			
Unchecked	700	851	95.1
Checked	31	44	4.9
<i>I expressed my political preferences through activism, protests, or social media, rather than voting</i>			
Unchecked	700	853	95.4
Checked	31	41	4.6
<i>It was too difficult to learn about the candidates</i>			
Unchecked	628	769	86.0
Checked	103	126	14.0
<i>I just don't care</i>			
Unchecked	647	791	88.5
Checked	84	103	11.5
<i>Other</i>			
Unchecked	701	855	95.6
Checked	30	39	4.4
<i>Absentee issues</i>			
Unchecked	1286	1280	97.3
Checked	29	35	2.7
<i>Q10 What would make it more likely that you'll vote in the 2024 general election?</i>			
<i>Candidates that better align with my values</i>			
Unchecked	415	511	57.2
Checked	316	383	42.8

(Continues)

	Unweighted count	Weighted count	Column N %
<i>Online voting</i>			
Unchecked	559	700	78.2
Checked	172	195	21.8
<i>A dangerous candidate might win if I don't vote</i>			
Unchecked	524	631	70.6
Checked	207	263	29.4
<i>Candidates addressing issues that are important to me</i>			
Unchecked	435	540	60.4
Checked	296	354	39.6
<i>There are local and state candidates that I want to vote for or against</i>			
Unchecked	584	729	81.5
Checked	147	166	18.5
<i>There are ballot issues that I care about</i>			
Unchecked	551	688	76.9
Checked	180	207	23.1
<i>Refused</i>			
Unchecked	474	574	95.8
Checked	17	25	4.2
<i>Q11 Will you be encouraging friends, family, and coworkers to vote in the upcoming presidential election?</i>			
Yes	395	490	54.8
Maybe	151	188	21.0
No	132	159	17.8
Don't know	52	56	6.3
Refused	1	1	0.2
2024 Election issues			
<i>Q12 Would any of these ballot initiatives make it more likely, less likely, or have no impact on whether you vote in the 2024 general election?</i>			
<i>Abortion access: Establishes a fundamental right to abortion before fetal viability by enshrining the right to abortion in Arizona's constitution</i>			
Less likely	152	162	12.3
No impact	247	237	18.1
More likely	899	896	68.1
Refused	17	20	1.5
<i>Eliminate partisan primaries: Replace primary system where voters can only vote within one party, to a system where all eligible candidates are listed on the same primary regardless of political affiliation, and all voters are allowed to participate</i>			
Less likely	148	149	11.3
No impact	441	434	33.0
More likely	710	714	54.3
Refused	16	19	1.4
<i>Public education funding: (1) Statewide salary schedule for K-12 educators with annual increases; (2) Require public money for education go to school districts or educational institutions</i>			
Less likely	77	81	6.1
No impact	312	297	22.6

(Continues)

	Unweighted count	Weighted count	Column N %
More likely	914	925	70.4
Refused	12	12	0.9
<i>Minimum wage: Increases minimum wage to \$18/h</i>			
Less likely	227	239	18.2
No impact	353	342	26.0
More likely	728	726	55.2
Refused	7	8	0.6
<i>Keep partisan primaries: Supports the status quo by requiring primary elections to remain partisan affairs, accessible only to party members</i>			
Less likely	420	431	32.8
No impact	632	614	46.7
More likely	241	246	18.7
Refused	22	24	1.8
<i>Q13 Are you considering voting for an independent or third-party presidential candidate?</i>			
Yes	409	393	29.9
No	526	534	40.6
Don't know	374	383	29.1
Refused	6	6	0.4
<i>Q14 How likely are you to complete the following sections of the 2024 general election ballot?</i>			
<i>US President</i>			
Likely	1075	1052	80.0
Unsure	146	163	12.4
Not likely	89	93	7.1
Refused	5	6	0.5
<i>US Senate and Congress</i>			
Likely	1019	980	74.5
Unsure	191	218	16.6
Not likely	99	110	8.4
Refused	6	7	0.5
<i>State Legislature</i>			
Likely	951	913	69.4
Unsure	224	246	18.7
Not likely	132	148	11.2
Refused	8	9	0.7
<i>Local offices</i>			
Likely	889	824	62.7
Unsure	269	298	22.6
Not likely	150	186	14.1
Refused	7	8	0.6

(Continues)

	Unweighted count	Weighted count	Column N %
<i>Retention of judges</i>			
Likely	751	685	52.1
Unsure	351	374	28.4
Not likely	206	248	18.9
Refused	7	8	0.6
<i>Ballot initiatives and referendums</i>			
Likely	871	791	60.1
Unsure	292	335	25.5
Not likely	142	178	13.6
Refused	10	11	0.8