



MEMORANDUM

To: Steve Phillips, Democracy in Color

From: Drew Linzer, Civiqs

Date: July 10, 2020

RE: Results of National H.R. 40 Poll

Major Findings

A Civiqs poll conducted for Democracy in Color finds that a majority of Americans (50%) would support the U.S. Congress establishing a commission to study the institution of slavery and its legacy of persistent systemic discrimination against living African-Americans, as set forth in Bill H.R. 40.

Democrats overwhelmingly favor the congressional commission, with 86% in support, and only 5% opposed. Independents also support the commission, 46% to 37%.

This is a significant increase from one year ago in national support for a congressional commission. An April 2019 Huffington Post/YouGov poll found just 31% of Americans in favor of a government commission—with 55% of Democrats and 22% of Independents.

In general, Americans believe that the U.S. Congress is currently doing too little to address racial inequality in the United States. A majority, 56% say that Congress is doing too little. Only 16% say Congress is doing enough.

Americans recognize that racial and ethnic discrimination is a problem in the United States: 79% of Americans believe it is a problem, and 50% see it as a major problem. When it comes to giving Black people equal rights with whites, 53% of Americans believe that our country has not gone far enough.

Momentum on H.R. 40 and Reparations

From 2019 to 2020, support for a congressional commission as H.R. 40 would establish has grown from 31% to 50%, with gains across all racial demographics:

- 2020: Support 50% overall (39% white, 84% Black, and 67% Hispanic)
- 2019: Support 31% overall (23% white, 65% Black, and 37% Hispanic)

Americans increasingly believe that the impact of slavery and ongoing discrimination is a major factor in lower levels of wealth for Blacks in the United States. In 2019, 32% of Americans saw slavery as a major factor, and 42% saw discrimination as a major factor. Our July 2020 survey finds 49% of Americans now saying that slavery and discrimination is a major factor in lower levels of wealth for Black Americans.

Nationally, 48% of Americans support some form of government reparations to Black Americans for slavery and racial discrimination, and 48% do not. This too is an increase in support since 2019, when 35% of Americans backed reparations in the form of job training, and 20% said the government should make cash payments to Black Americans who are descendants of slaves.

Democrats See Problems and Want Action

On a range of issues, Democratic voters believe that:

- Racial and ethnic discrimination is a problem in the United States: 98% say that it is a problem, and 85% say it is a “major” problem.
- The legacy of slavery affects the position of Black people in American society today: 69% believe that slavery affects Black people today “a great deal” and another 22% say “a fair amount.”
- The impact of slavery and ongoing discrimination is a major factor in lower levels of wealth for Blacks in the United States today: 86% of Democrats say slavery and discrimination is a “major factor” and 7% say it is a “minor factor.”

Democrats also say that they believe white people in America are, on average, “much more wealthy” than Black people. Overall, a large majority (57%) of Americans believe this is true. Among Democrats, 90% agree that white people are much more wealthy than Black people.

There is broad support for congressional remedies for racial discrimination and the legacy of slavery in the United States. **Fully 86% of Democrats** would support the creation of a commission to study the institution of slavery and its legacy of persistent systemic discrimination against living African-Americans.

Democrats do not believe that the U.S. Congress has done enough to address racial inequality in the United States. There is consensus among Democrats that too little attention is paid to race and racial issues in the United States today (76%). Four in five Democrats (78%) say that race relations in the United States are “mostly bad;” a view shared by 51% of all Americans.

Nearly all Democrats (91%) say that when it comes to giving Black people equal rights with whites, our country has not gone far enough. A majority, 53% of all Americans agree. And 92% of Democrats believe that when it comes to addressing racial inequality in the United States, the U.S. Congress is doing too little.

There is broad support among Democrats for a variety of reparations. Overall, 84% of Democrats favor some form of compensation, including increased investments in K-12 education and access to medical care in predominantly Black areas, cash payments, debt forgiveness, or all of these.

Methodology

Civiqs interviewed 1,635 adults in the United States from July 8-10, 2020. The survey was conducted online, among selected members of the Civiqs research panel. Sampled individuals were emailed by Civiqs and responded using a personalized link to the survey at civiqs.com. The survey results are weighted by age, race, gender, education, party identification, and region to be representative of the population of adults in the United States. The survey has a margin of error of $\pm 2.5\%$ at the 95% confidence level, accounting for the weighting design effect. More information about Civiqs can be found online at civiqs.com/methodology.