

# Surveys of Voter Attitudes on Criminal Justice Reform in FL, NC, NV, KY, MO, & WI

January 12-14, 2016 for FL, NC, and NV

January 19-21, 2016 for KY, MO, and WI



THE TARRANCE GROUP

## Vote Likelihood

<b>State</b>	<b>Extremely likely (All voters)</b>
Florida	71%
North Carolina	76%
Nevada	73%
Kentucky	71%
Missouri	71%
Wisconsin	78%

## Generic U.S. Senate Ballot

<b>State</b>	<b>GOP candidate</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Democratic candidate</b>
Florida	44%	15%	41%
North Carolina	42%	17%	41%
Nevada	45%	17%	39%
Kentucky	50%	16%	34%
Missouri	47%	14%	40%
Wisconsin	42%	12%	46% <sup>3</sup>

## Direction of the Country

State	Right Direction (All voters)	Wrong track (All voters)
Florida	33%	59%
North Carolina	25%	63%
Nevada	31%	62%
Kentucky	23%	69%
Missouri	25%	67%
Wisconsin	32%	59%

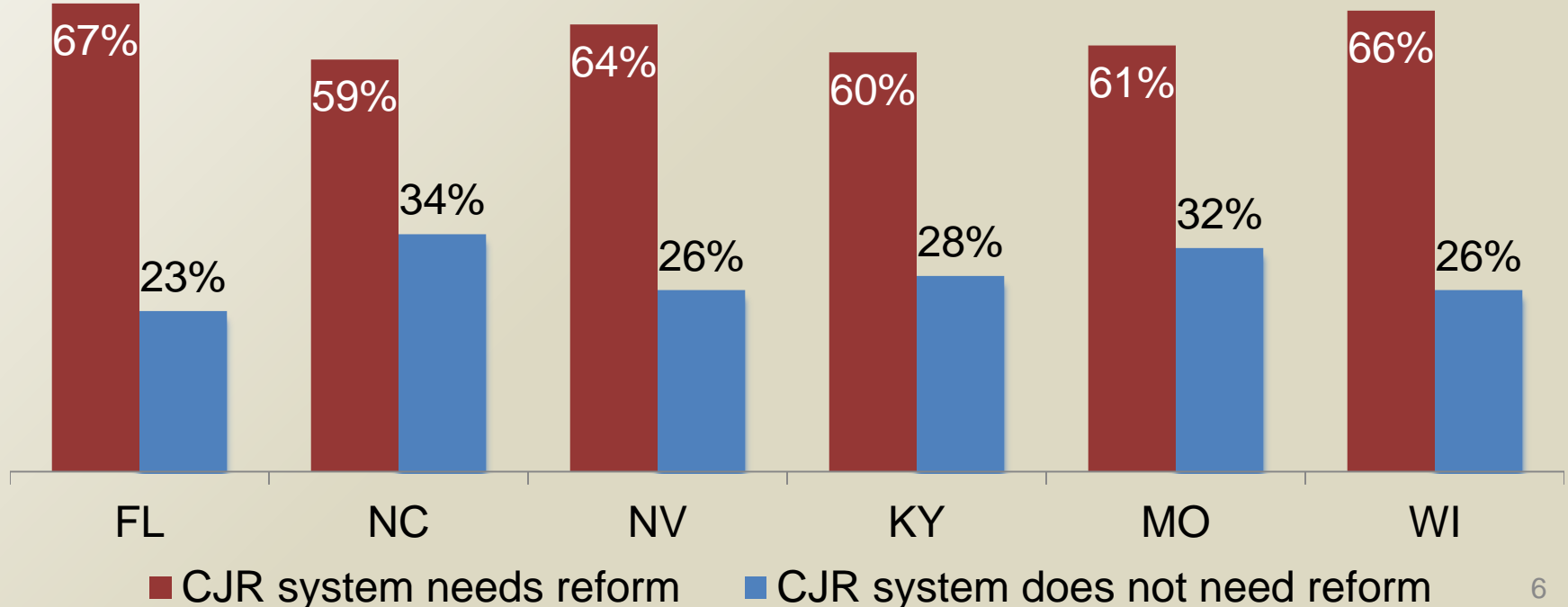
## Statements on Criminal Justice Reform

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Agree (FL)</b>	<b>Agree (NC)</b>	<b>Agree (NV)</b>	<b>Agree (KY)</b>	<b>Agree (MO)</b>	<b>Agree (WI)</b>
Our federal prisons house too many non-violent criminals.	69%	66%	64%	62%	66%	61%
The federal government is spending too much tax money keeping nonviolent offenders behind bars.	74%	71%	70%	68%	67%	70%
The main goal of our criminal justice system should be rehabilitating criminals to become productive, law-abiding citizens.	79%	77%	71%	78%	73%	78%
The federal government should remove barriers that make it more difficult for released prisoners to find jobs.	63%	67%	62%	57%	61%	63%

## Simulated Debate on Criminal Justice Reform

Some people say that our criminal justice systems needs to be reformed. We keep too many people in prison for too long with mandatory minimum sentences that give too much power to bureaucrats instead of allowing judges to make individual decisions about sentencing.

Other people say that our criminal justice system does not need to be reformed. Prisons should keep criminals away from society for as long as Congress deems appropriate. Mandatory minimum sentences work and judges should not have more discretion.



## Proposed Criminal Justice Reforms

Proposal	Favor (FL)	Favor (NC)	Favor (NV)	Favor (KY)	Favor (MO)	Favor (WI)
Changing the way that non-violent criminals are sentenced so judges can use their discretion to impose a range of sentences instead of having a one-size-fits-all mandatory minimum system.	80%	74%	72%	75%	73%	79%
Applying sentencing changes to <u>all</u> federal prisoners, even those who have already been sentenced, to see if a different punishment is now more appropriate.	66%	56%	57%	58%	59%	58%

## Conclusions

- Voters are:
  - Highly engaged in the political campaign season
  - Polarized about which Senate candidate they will support
  - Negative about the direction of the country
  
- One of the few areas for common ground is criminal justice reform. Bipartisan majorities of voters agree that:
  - We jail too many non-violent offenders
  - Too much is spent on imprisoning non-violent offenders
  - The goal of our criminal justice system should be rehabilitation.
  
- This agreement on goals leads a bipartisan majority of voters to support a criminal justice reform that gives judges more discretion in deciding punishments.