

Dear 'Reform Elections Now' Participants,

We would like to thank those of you who participated in last week's Question and Answer session on whether the U.S. is a Democracy or a Republic.

For those of you who were unable to participate, we asked 34 questions to determine how people felt about Federal, States, and Individual rights and then had a fascinating discussion about whether the U.S. was a Democracy, a Republic, or a Democratic Republic.

After the program, we received numerous emails from new participants talking about the intelligence of our members. We, at Reform Elections Now, would like to thank all of you for your outstanding inputs.

We are sending you the results of the Q&A. The recording of the entire program is being placed on our website.

Here are the questions and the voting results.

Part 1: Personal Choice

1. Who should determine speed limits on interstate highways?

Federal	8%	State	92%
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2. Who should determine drinking ages in each state?

Federal	35%	State	65%
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It is interesting that many more people think the Federal government should determine drinking ages than think the Federal government should determine speed limits.

3. Is banning a teenager from drinking in Church or at a Seder a violation of freedom of religion?

Yes	No
57%	43%

43% of respondents thought it should be illegal for a 20-year-old to have a glass of wine at Seder or a sip of wine at Communion. When Passover comes and there is a knock on the door, look through the peephole to make sure it is Elijah and not the police coming to arrest your kids.

4. Who should determine marriage age?

Federal	33%	State	44%	Individuals	24%
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The marriage age is interestingly split with the states having the highest percentage at 44%

5. Should marrying first cousins be legal?

Yes	No
44%	56%

I assume the "No" voters were making a statement of something related to the gene pool. I wonder how the answers would change if we said one of the first cousins was adopted.

6 Are states that allow first cousins to marry primarily Republican or Democratic?

Republican	Democratic
68%	32%

A majority was far off base everyone was on this question. People probably had a picture of first cousins marrying in West Virginia, Mississippi, and other rural states However, the majority of the states allowing first cousins to marry are blue- 13 blue states and territories, compared to only 4 red states and 3 purple states. If we include states that allow cousins over 50 to marry, 17 states and territories were carried by Biden compared to only 8 for Trump.

7 Who should decide rules for same sex marriage?

Federal	State	Individuals
65%	15%	19%

A large majority voted the Federal government should decide rules for same-sex marriage. Based on the comments, most people thought same-sex marriage should be legal.

8. Should there be a legal distinction between same sex and interracial marriage?

Yes	No
20%	80%

We probably could have phrased this question better, but it was clear that a majority of people felt Interracial marriage should be legal Federally. (Note: Despite Ginni's testimony at the Jan. 6 commission, Clarence Thomas has not yet come out against interracial marriage.

9. Should Polygamy also be protected by the 14th amendment?

Yes	No
30%	70%

While people were for same-sex and interracial marriage, they were 70% against polygamy.

The example we used related to two brothers who lived on a farm. Each brother had a wife and a child. One brother died, and the other wanted to marry the second wife and adopt the child, and both wives agreed. To many this was a matter of individual choice, but 70% of you said it should NOT be legal.

One of our core team members, Allegra Klein, mentioned that while polygamy is legal in many countries, the U.S. will not admit a polygamous family. Suppose two Afghan brothers fought for the U.S. and one was killed by the Taliban. The second married his brother's wife and sought to bring his entire family (2 wives and 4 children) to the U.S. The U.S. would forbid entry to the second wife and her children even though her husband had fought and died for the U.S.

Whether it is Mormonism, Islam, or some other religion, isn't banning polygamy a violation of Freedom of Religion?

10. We gave examples of underage children and cousins who were legally married in one state and moved to another where they would not be eligible to be married and asked if these marriages would still be legal.

Yes	No
100%	0%

Everyone agreed that a marriage that was legal in one state should be legal in another despite the laws of that state.

11. We asked if a Harvard freshman could buy and AK-47 in New Hampshire and bring it to her dorm where such weapons are illegal.

YES	No
88%	12%

A vast majority voted that if you buy a gun or an assault weapon legally in one state, you should be able to bring it to another state, where it is illegal. This would obviously make it increasingly difficult to control weapons. Note: Many states, like New York, are trying to come up with work arounds that would ban the carrying of weapons in public places.

12. Marijuana is legal in many states but illegal Federally. The impact of this division is that national banks and credit cards cannot be used for the purchase of marijuana. As a result, marijuana is primarily a cash business, leading to a 10x higher rate of burglaries than other businesses. We asked if a product can be illegal nationally but legal in many states.

Yes	No
33%	67%

The problem with this question is we did not ask how this conflict would be resolved. Some of you may have felt that marijuana should not be legal in states if it illegal Federally. Others of you may have felt the Federal government should change its banking laws to make marijuana legal.

13. Should abortions be regulated by the Federal government, states, or neither?

Federal	States	Neither
25%	25%	50%

Half of you voted neither, which suggests you view abortion as a personal right. Interestingly, this was more than twice the level that voted that marriage age should be an individual right.

14. If the Federal government banned abortion, should states be able to legalize it?

Yes	No
59%	41%

59% of you felt the states had the right to legalize abortion.

15. If Congress passed a law limiting abortions after 22 weeks, would all states have to comply?

Yes	No
68%	32%

Yet while 59% said states should have the right to legalize abortion, 68% said that states would have to comply with a Federal law banning abortion after 22 weeks. The conflict between these answers demonstrates the complexity of some of these issues. Half of you said that abortion

should be up to the individual and only 25% said it should be up to the Federal government, yet when asked about specific laws, large majorities supported the right of the Federal government to restrict abortions.

16. Could Congress under the Interstate Commerce Act ban states from punishing people who crossed state lines for an abortion?

Yes	No
74%	26%

74% of you said that one state cannot arrest a resident who goes to another state for an abortion. Many states have passed laws making it illegal for people to do this. Congress could attempt a work-around by including abortion in interstate commerce. However, according to Article IV Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution, a person charged in any state with a crime and found in another state would have to be arrested and returned to the original state. In the subsequent discussion, some argued that the person who crossed state lines for an abortion had done nothing illegal in the original state and should not have to be returned. We suspect this will be an subject of continuing legal dispute, likely settled by the Supreme Court.

Part 2: Immigration

17. Should the Federal government compensate states for the cost of undocumented immigrants?

Yes	No
95%	5%

This is a fascinating answer and if applied might have a real impact on politics in the United States. Many states are complaining that the impact of immigration falls unfairly on them. According to fairus.org, in 2017, the Federal government spent \$30.4 billion on illegal immigrants, while states spent \$85 billion. In 2022, the top 7 states are expected to spend \$56.3 billion or roughly 2/3 of all expenditures. (worldpopulationview.com) If the Federal government paid for the undocumented immigrants that it admitted, the impact would be more evenly spread over the states.

California	21.8B
New York	9.5 B
Texas	8.8B
Florida	5.5B
Illinois	4.6B
New Jersey	3.5B
Arizona	2.6B

Ironically, Florida and Texas, have lower expenditures than New York, to whom they are sending immigrants.

18. Should states have the right to transport immigrants to other states?

Yes	No
37%	63%

Even though most of you believe the Federal government should pay the costs of immigrants, 63% of you believe states should not have the right to transport immigrants to other states. What should a state do if the financial burden becomes too great?

19. Can States deny undocumented immigrants medical care and education?

Yes	No
45%	55%

If states do not provide medical care and education to undocumented immigrants, as 45% of you suggest, what would be the alternative. A guess would be that immigrants would flock to the states that do provide medical care and education. This would likely create a greater imbalance and further divide the country.

20. Can states be able to return immigrants to their country of origin?

Yes	No
54%	46%

This was another interesting result. 54% of you want to give states the right to return immigrants to their country of origin. We can understand this view with the border being jammed with people fleeing Venezuela, Nicaragua, Cuba, and other countries. But would your vote be the same if we were talking about Jews fleeing Nazi Germany or Vietnamese allies fleeing Vietnam? How would you feel if Texas was flying Jews back to Berlin or California was flying Vietnamese back to Saigon?

Part 3: Voting

21. Should states have the right to create their own voting systems like Ranked Choice Voting or Nonpartisan primaries for Federal elections?

Yes	No
68%	32%

Some of these new voting systems, like Ranked Choice Voting and Nonpartisan Top 2 Primaries appear to be having a significant impact on reducing polarization and creating more competition. 68% of you felt that States should have the right to experiment with new voting systems.

22. Should states be able to allocate votes by Congressional districts instead of winner take-all?

Yes	No
68%	32%

68% of you believed states should be able to allocate votes by Congressional district, the way Maine and Nebraska do, instead of winner take-all. A system like this would likely more closely align the electoral votes with the popular votes. However, in 2020, if Pennsylvania, Michigan, Georgia, Minnesota, and Arizona had all switched to this system, Trump would have been elected

23. Should states be allowed to switch electoral vote systems based on political expediency?

Yes	No
0%	100%

Everyone agreed that states could change systems, but they should not have the right to switch back and forth based on political expediency.

24. Should states have the right to draw districts based on different definitions of population?

Yes	No
0%	100%

Everyone agreed that all states must abide by the same rules developed for the census. No state can define population as "citizens." States cannot draw districts based on income, people of voting age, or any other specialized measure. We would not be surprised to see a state bring a case to the Supreme Court on this subject.

25. Should Congress pass an amended Voting Rights Act or leave it to the states?

Federal	States
80%	20%

Given recent Supreme Court decisions, there was an 80%-20% preference for a new voting rights act. The problem, in many cases, is with the substantial growth in the non-white, non-Hispanic population, there are states like Texas, California, New Mexico, Hawaii, Maryland, and Nevada, where non-white, non-Hispanics are in the majority, and other states, like New York, New Jersey, Georgia, and Florida, where there is an approximate 50%-50% split. In some of these states. The creation of "majority-minority" may actually work against the minorities by giving them districts where they win by landslides, while limiting them in the majority of districts.

25. Should Congress pass legislation defining how to draw election districts?

Yes	No
92%	8%

Almost all of you suggested Congress should pass laws defining how to draw election districts. Some form of law of the sort would likely eliminate many of the current excesses. However, it is unlikely that many in Congress would vote for a law that could lead to their defeat and the Supreme Court appears to be moving in the opposite direction.

26. Should Congress require election districts to be drawn by Independent Commissions

Yes	No
84%	16%

There is proof that Independent Commissions work much better than having politicians draw districts. There is only one small problem. Politicians like to keep their jobs and in many cases, draw districts to protect themselves.

27. Should voting rules like early voting, mail-in voting, etc. be set by the Federal government or the states?

Federal	States
72%	28%

72% of you felt the Federal government should set uniform rules for voting. Once again, the Supreme Court appears to be moving in the opposite direction.

28. If Federal laws meant scaling back early voting, mail-in voting, etc. would that be beneficial?

Yes	No
50%	50%

72% of you thought the Federal government should set voting rules. But one of the benefits of having 50 different systems is that each state can be a laboratory for better voting systems.

Eight states (Oregon, Washington, Colorado, Utah, California, Vermont, Nevada, and Hawaii) have adopted all mail voting, and have encountered few problems. Arizona, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, New Mexico, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, and Wyoming have 20 days or more of early voting. If the Federal government passed a voting law, it would likely have restricted either all mail or early voting. Only half of you agreed this would be beneficial.

29. Should the Federal government mandate all citizens have a valid Voter I.D. card?

Yes	No
71%	29%

71% of you were in favor of Voter I.D. cards. With all the discussion about “fake” votes and with the lack of control over people who have residences in multiple states or students who attend college in a different state than their parents’ home, wouldn’t Voter I.D. cards eliminate uncertainty? People have driver’s licenses and Social Security cards, why not Voter I.D. cards?

30. Should the Federal government establish a national voter registry?

Yes	No
80%	20%

80% of you believe the Federal government should establish a national voter registry. The greatest benefit of such a registry is that it would be able to better track people who move from one state to another as well as people who have died. This would again help remove some of the voting uncertainties.

31. Should the Federal government have the right to modify voting actions by states it believes are discriminating?

Yes	No
44%	56%

Less than half of you believe the Federal government should have the right to modify voting actions by states it believes are discriminating. The biggest question, of course, is who decides what is discrimination? Is having long lines or minimal drop boxes discrimination? Is rejecting mail-in votes because they have the wrong date or signature discrimination. These are complicated issues.

One area that is quite clear is discrimination against Native Americans. For example, many states require people have street addresses, but people living on reservations do not have

street addresses. Also Native Americans are frequently asked to prove they were born in the U.S. It is often difficult to prove when your family has been here over 1,000 years.

32. Should the Federal government conduct an audit of every election?

Yes	No
44%	56%

Well more than half of you say the Federal government should not conduct an audit of every election. If the question was asked- should an independent auditor conduct an annual audit of every public company, how would you answer? What is the downside of having an independent auditing firm conduct an audit of every election?

33. Should the Federal government conduct the audit or leave it up to the states, who might retain Cyber Ninjas?

Yes	No
80%	20%

80% of you say the audit should be handled by the Federal government.

Your answers have given us a lot of food for thought. We would again like to thank for participating in this very interesting discussion of Federal V. State V. Individual rights.

We look forward to seeing you at our next presentation on **Tuesday 22 November**, on the subject of Misinformation, Disinformation and Propaganda – A Virus Infecting our Democracy: The announcement and registration link can be found at www.reformelectionsnow.org.

Peter Siris
Director of Research

