

To: Civic Ventures and SEIU 775

From: GBAO

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CONFIDENTIAL

Approaching the Economic Recovery: Poll Analysis

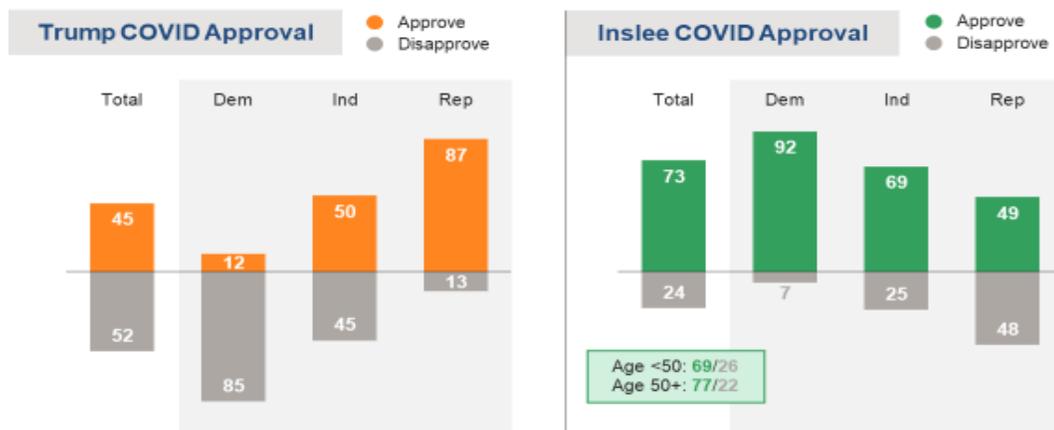
The coronavirus pandemic is causing serious health, economic, and educational concerns for Washington residents, and they are already feeling the financial strain. At the same time, they give Governor Inslee strong ratings for the handling of the crisis and are feeling more optimistic about the direction of the state than before the crisis.

As the state faces a looming economic crisis, voters do not want to see deep cuts to programs, rejecting an austerity approach. They support tax increases on the wealthy and large businesses, but shy away from broad-based tax increases, such as the sales tax.

The following are key findings from a survey of 500 Washington voters, conducted April 16-19, 2020 via landline and cellphone. The survey carries a +/- 4.4 percentage point margin of error at the 95 percent confidence level.

Key Findings

- Governor Inslee receives exceptionally positive ratings for his handling of the crisis, while President Trump receives negative assessments.** Seventy-three percent of Washington voters approve of the job Governor Inslee has done handling the coronavirus crisis, including a plurality of Republicans. By a 12-point margin (51-39 percent), voters believe Washington is headed in the right direction, a reversal from our polling in 2019 when 54 percent said the state was off on the wrong track. Meanwhile, Washington voters disapprove of President Trump's handling of the pandemic, with only 45 percent of Washington voters approving of his handling of the crisis and a majority (52 percent) disapproving.



- **Washingtonians are deeply concerned about the possibility of them or their loved ones getting sick during the coronavirus outbreak.** A large majority (75 percent) are at least “somewhat concerned” about getting sick or having close friends or family members get sick, including 49 percent who say they are “very concerned.” Washingtonians over the age of 50 (81 percent) are particularly concerned about themselves or their loved ones becoming ill.
- **Washingtonians are feeling the economic squeeze and are very concerned about Washington’s economy.** A majority of those in the workforce (56 percent) report that they or someone in their household has been laid off or their hours reduced (17 percent themselves have been laid off and 20 percent have had their hours or pay reduced). A majority (56 percent) say they are “very concerned” about the impact of the crisis on Washington’s economy, and 91 percent of voters say they are at least “somewhat concerned.” Only 21 percent of Washington voters think the economy will recover before the end of the year, indicating that Washingtonians are aware of the lasting economic impact of this health crisis.
- **To address the economic crisis and support workers and small businesses, voters support public investments through tax increases, rather than service cuts.** Specifically, voters support proposals to:
 - Raise taxes on the wealthiest households that can most afford it to kick start the economy and support workers and families (63 percent favor) and provide loans and grants to struggling businesses (60 percent favor).
 - Institute a capital gains tax to fund public services and provide support to families and businesses struggling due to coronavirus (62 percent favor).

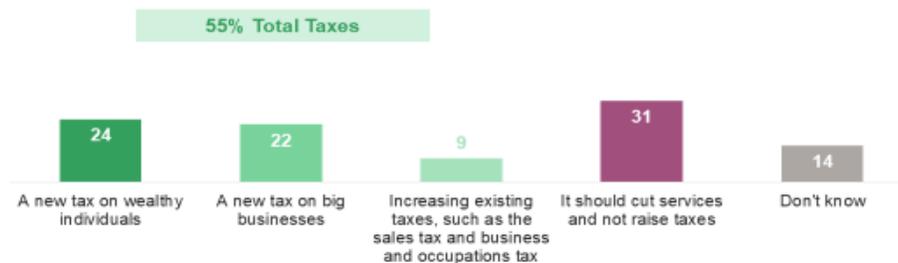
And they oppose broad cuts to services:

- Sixty-nine percent of voters oppose making significant cuts to services like health care and education in order to balance the budget without raising taxes, while only 27 percent favor this austerity approach.

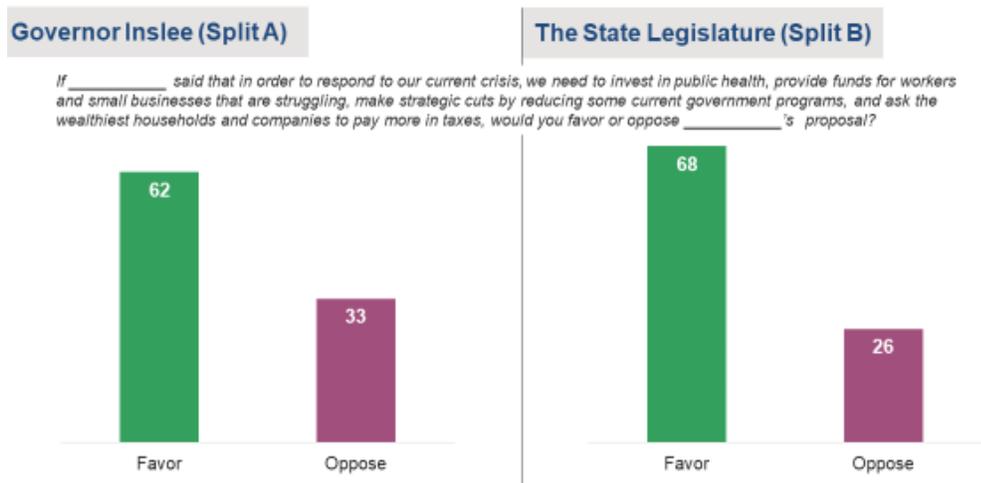
Funding – Combined

(SPLIT A) If the state legislature wanted to ensure a speedy recovery for our state’s economy by investing in programs to support workers and small businesses, how would you want it to fund those investments?

(SPLIT B) Due to the economic slow-down, state tax revenues are way down and the state legislature will need to figure out how to pay for existing programs and services. How would you like the Legislature to address this budget shortfall?



- Voters support the Governor and state legislature making investments to protect public health and the economy.** When asked if they would support a proposal from Governor Inslee to raise taxes on the wealthiest households and companies in order to invest in public health, provide funds for workers and small businesses that are struggling, and make strategic cuts to some government programs, 62 percent of voters support the proposal and 33 percent would oppose it. When the same proposal is presented as the state legislature’s plan, without mentioning a political party, support grows to 68 percent due to softened opposition from Republicans.



- This survey shows broad public support for legislative action on increasing taxes on those who can afford it.** The survey shows that tax increases targeted at those who can afford it would not engender political backlash for legislators.

Washington residents want to see a strong response to the coronavirus pandemic that will address the economic pressures they already face and their fears about their health, economic security, and children’s education. They support the actions Governor Inslee and their local leaders have taken thus far, and they reject an austerity approach and do not want to see deep cuts to health care and education programs they rely on. They support tax increases on the wealthy and large businesses to address the economic and fiscal crisis, but shy away from tax increases they fear they will personally struggle with, such as the sales tax.