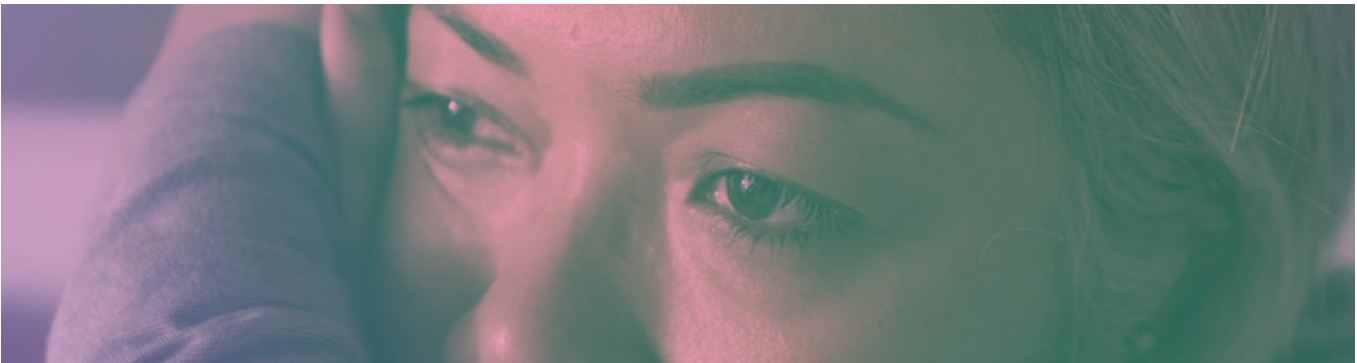


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March 17, 2021

Poll: Oregon Voters Demand Reduced Prison Terms for Domestic Violence Victims

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A new poll from Data for Progress and The Lab, a policy vertical of The Appeal, shows wide support among Oregon voters for legislation that could lead to shorter sentences for domestic violence victims.

Across the state, **70 percent of likely voters support legislation that would allow courts to impose shorter sentences—including resentencing people already in prison—for people who are survivors of domestic violence** when the abuse was a contributing factor to the offense.

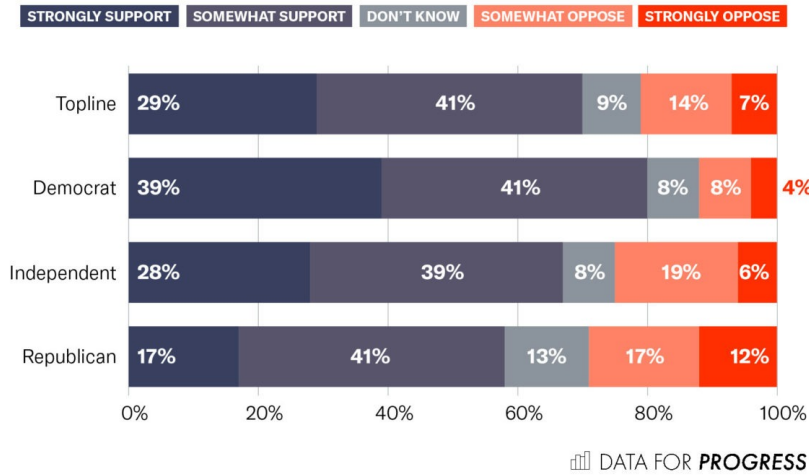
Full Poll Results

The Oregon Legislature is currently considering a bill that would require the court to consider evidence of domestic violence when sentencing someone found guilty of a crime. Under the following conditions, the court would be given the freedom to to impose a lesser sentence:

- When a person being sentenced is a survivor of domestic violence
- When abuse was a contributing factor to their crime; and
- When the presumptive or mandatory sentence would be unduly harsh in light of the circumstances.

The bill would also allow survivors of domestic violence currently serving time to petition for resentencing.

Do you support or oppose the survivor defendants bill?



Key Context

In a country where nearly half of incarcerated women have experienced physical or sexual violence, domestic violence drives mass incarceration. Among the 230,000 women and girls incarcerated in jails and prisons across the United States, at least 30 percent of those serving time on murder or manslaughter charges were protecting themselves or a loved one from physical or sexual violence, according to research for The Appeal. Failing to consider the role of abuse in criminal offenses ignores this reality and exacerbates the harm that domestic violence wreaks on communities across the country.

In Oregon, domestic violence affects approximately 37 percent of women and 33 percent of men. A 2017-2018 survey of women incarcerated at Oregon’s Coffee Creek Correctional Facility revealed that 65 percent of those in relationships at the time of their incarceration were abused by their partner. Sixty-nine percent said that trauma had led to their involvement in the criminal legal system.

HB2825, currently pending in the Oregon Legislature, would grant courts the ability to shorten sentences for people who are survivors of domestic violence when abuse was a contributing factor to the crime, and when the presumptive or mandatory sentence would be unduly harsh in light of the violence they suffered. Additionally, the bill would allow survivors of domestic violence who are currently incarcerated to petition for resentencing.

Our poll of Oregon voters follows a national trend of overwhelming support for “survivor-defendant” bills like HB2825. New York, California, and Illinois have recently passed similar laws that allow for increased consideration of a person’s domestic violence experience in expert testimony, parole hearings, and sentencing.

Polling Methodology

From March 5 to March 9, 2021, Data for Progress conducted a survey of 565 likely voters in Oregon using web panel respondents. The sample was weighted to be representative of likely voters by age, gender, education, race, and voting history. The survey was conducted in English. The margin of error is ±4 percentage points. ■

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