



TO Interested Parties

FROM Dave Metz, Miranda Everitt, and Denny Han
FM3 Research

RE: Kansas Voter Support for Key Criminal Legal Reform Policies

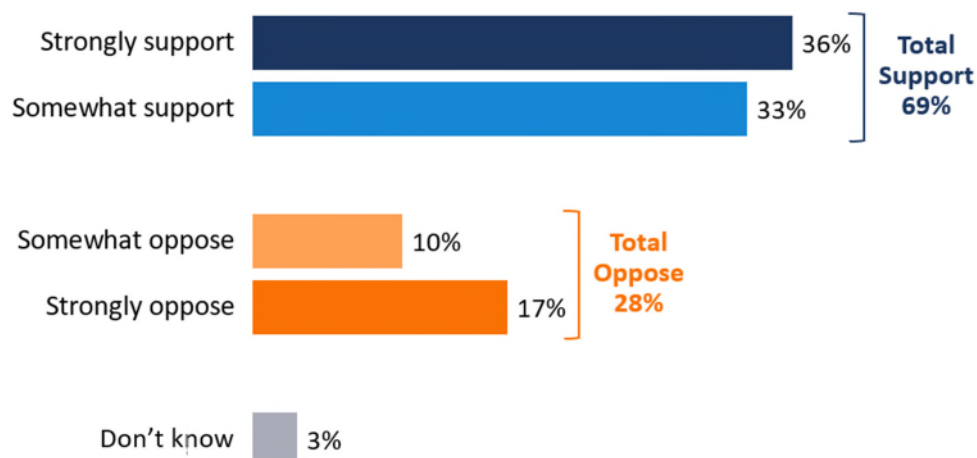
DATE September 1, 2023

Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) recently completed a survey of 700 Kansas voters to assess their views of key criminal legal system reforms. **The results show that Kansans broadly support reforming cash bail, replacing juvenile fines with other accountability measures, reforming marijuana laws, and restoring driver's licenses if the crime was unrelated to driving.** Detailed findings are as follows:

- **Nearly seven in ten support reforming cash bail.** As shown in Figure 1, 69% say they support reforming cash bail to create a path for most people to go home on the same day they are arrested if they do not pose a flight risk and are not a threat to anyone else. More than a third (36%) say they "strongly support" this proposal -- greater than the share who even somewhat oppose the proposal.

Figure 1: Support for Reforming Cash Bail

Some people have proposed that we reform bail to create a path for most people to go home on the same day they are arrested if they do not post a flight risk and are not a threat to anyone else. Release decisions would be based on individual circumstances and not how much money someone has. Would you support or oppose this proposal?



Support for this proposal cuts across major demographic groups including:

- 88% of Democrats, 76% of independents, and 54% of Republicans;
 - 88% of African American voters, 80% of Latino voters, and 69% of white voters;
 - 70% of women and 67% of men; and
 - 73% of voters under 50, 56% of voters ages 50 to 64, and 73% of voters 65 and older.
- **Broad majorities continue to support bail reform even after hearing critiques.** Voters heard several messages in favor of the proposal, as well as a statement from opponents. As shown in Figure 2, three in five (59%) continue to support the bail reform proposal after hearing this exchange of information.

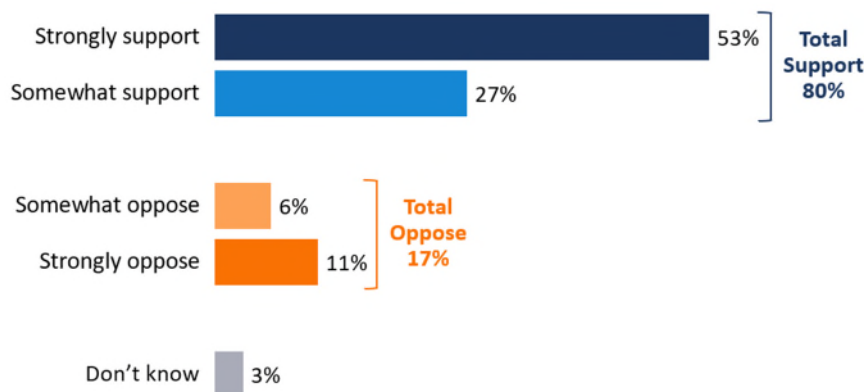
Figure 2: Support for Bail Reform After Messaging

| | Initial Opinion | After Positive Messaging | After Positive and Negative Messaging |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Total Support | 69% | 69% | 59% |
| Total Oppose | 28% | 28% | 40% |
| Don't Know | 3% | 3% | 2% |

- **Four in five support replacing juvenile fines with other accountability measures -- and more than half strongly support it.** As shown in Figure 3, 80% say they support replacing juvenile fines with 53% offering "strong support." This is a 63-point margin of support.

Figure 3: Support for Replacing Juvenile Fines

Currently in Kansas, people under 18 who are involved in the legal system can be charged fines, which are punishments for violations of the law. They may also be charged administrative fees regardless of whether they have been found guilty. Would you support or oppose replacing fines for Kansans under 18 with other accountability measures such as counseling, probation and community service?



Once again, support for this proposal cuts across several major demographics including:

- 89% of Democrats, 89% of independents, and 70% of Republicans;
 - 87% of Latino voters, 83% of African American voters, and 81% of white voters;
 - 85% of women and 74% of men; and
 - 84% of voters under 50, 78% of voters ages 50 to 64, and 75% of voters 65 and older.
- **Support for juvenile fines reform maintains two-thirds support after exposure to negative messaging.** As shown in Figure 4, support for this proposal is resilient in the face of criticism -- 65% offer support after hearing a mix of pros and cons.

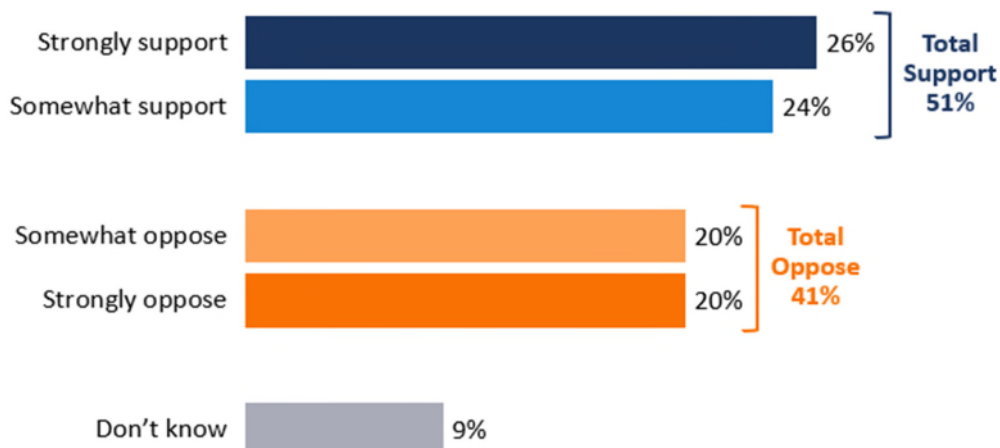
Figure 4: Support for Replacing Juvenile Fines After Messaging

| | Initial Opinion | After Positive Messaging | After Positive and Negative Messaging |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Total Support | 80% | 77% | 65% |
| Total Oppose | 17% | 21% | 34% |
| Don't Know | 3% | 2% | 1% |

- **A slim majority also supports eliminating administrative fees for Kansans under 18.** As shown in Figure 5, 51% say they at least "somewhat support" eliminating administrative fees for juveniles. Notably, about one in ten (9%) are undecided on this proposal given the limited context they were provided.

Figure 5: Support for Eliminating Juvenile Administrative Fees

Would you support or oppose eliminating these fees for Kansans under 18?



Support for this proposal breaks down as follows:

- 62% of Democrats, 60% of independent voters, and 39% of Republicans;
 - 66% of African American voters, 58% of Latino voters, and 51% of white voters;
 - 52% of women and 49% of men; and
 - 56% of voters under 50, 46% of voters ages 50 to 64, and 48% of voters ages 65 and older.
- **Support for fee reform broadens considerably with positive messaging.** As shown in Figure 6, support for eliminating juvenile fees increases by 12 points (from 51% to 63%) after voters are given reasons to support the change. However, support resets at essentially half after a critical statement.

Figure 6: Support for Eliminating Juvenile Fees After Messaging

| | Initial Opinion | After Positive Messaging | After Positive and Negative Messaging |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Total Support | 51% | 63% | 49% |
| Total Oppose | 41% | 34% | 48% |
| Don't Know | 9% | 3% | 3% |

- **Seventy percent or more support medical marijuana, marijuana decriminalization, and restoring driver's licenses if the crime was unrelated to driving.** Respondents were given a list of other policy proposals related to marijuana and driver's license suspension reform. As shown in Figure 7, nearly four in five Kansas voters support allowing medical marijuana prescriptions -- with 62% offering "strong support." Seventy-one percent support decriminalizing marijuana in general. Seventy percent also support restoring driver's licenses if the offense was unrelated to driving. Fifty-eight percent also support suspending driver's licenses for crimes related to driving.

Figure 7: Support for Marijuana and Driver's License Suspension Reforms

| Policy Proposal | Total Support | Total Oppose | Don't Know |
|---|---------------|--------------|------------|
| Allowing a doctor to prescribe medical marijuana to qualified patients | 79% | 20% | 1% |
| Removing criminal penalties for possession of marijuana for personal use | 71% | 26% | 3% |
| Restoring driver's licenses if someone's license was suspended for a crime unrelated to motor vehicle operation | 70% | 25% | 6% |
| Suspending a driver's license only for dangerous driving | 58% | 36% | 6% |

In conclusion, Kansas voters broadly support a number of proposals to reform the legal system. Seven in ten support reforming cash bail, while four in five support replacing juvenile fines with other accountability measures. Both proposals retain majority support even after voters hear a mix of pro and con messaging. Voters also support allowing medical marijuana, decriminalizing marijuana, and restoring driver's licenses if the crime was unrelated to driving.

ⁱ **Methodology:** From August 6-13, 2023, FM3 completed 700 online and telephone interviews with likely November 2024 Kansas voters. The margin of sampling error for the study is +/-4.4% at the 95% confidence level; margins of error for population subgroups within the sample will be higher. Due to rounding, not all totals will sum to 100%.