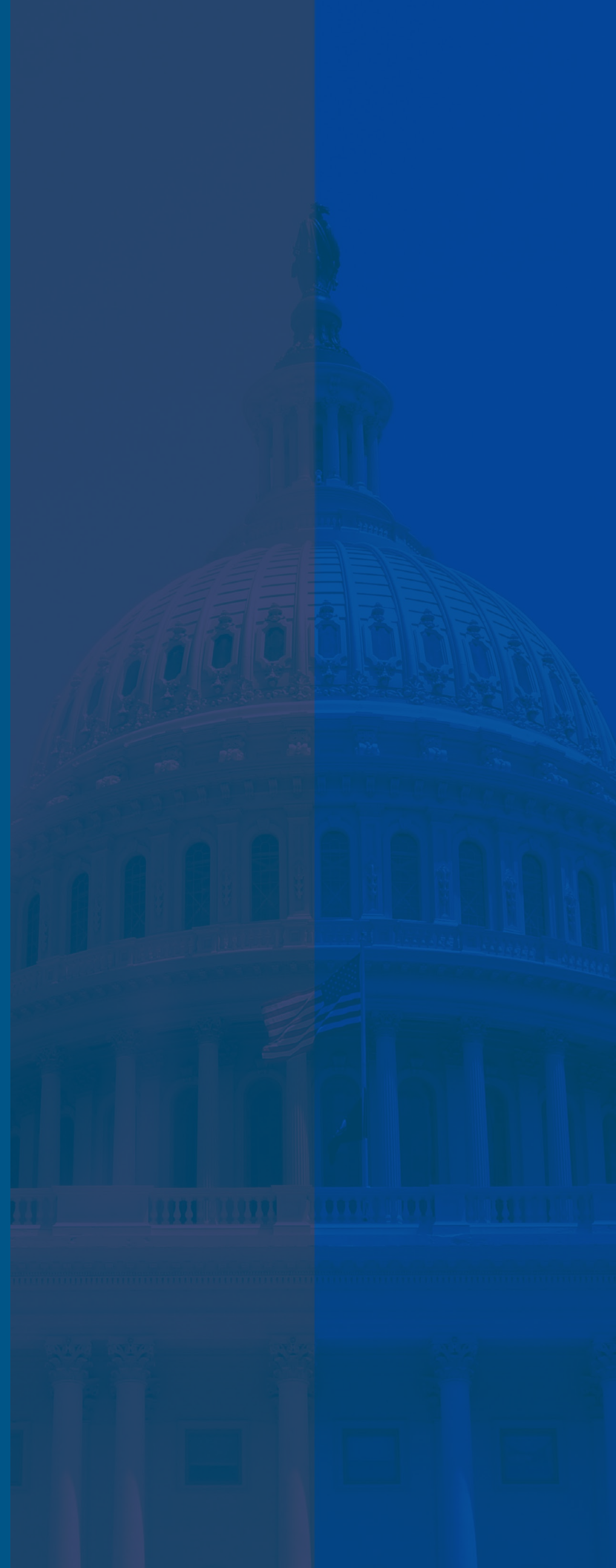


LATINOS, YOUNGER VOTERS, AND MODERATES AMONG REPUBLICANS MOST LIKELY TO BREAK WITH TRUMP II-ERA IMMIGRATION POLITICS: POLL FINDINGS FROM CALIFORNIA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Although partisan alignment shapes most voters' policy preferences, not all policy domains are equally partisan.

Findings from the August 2025 UC Berkeley IGS California Voter Poll (N= 4,950) show that while Democrats are largely uniform in their opposition to recent immigration enforcement actions, Republicans express mixed views and are more likely to break with party-line rhetoric and strategy than Democrats. But who are these Republicans? And in what ways do they oppose prevailing enforcement trends?

This analysis shows that among Republicans in California, a significant share of Latinos, younger voters, and self-described political moderates, especially women, disagree with many of Trump's immigration enforcement tactics. The extent to which they "break" with Republican strategy varies across different aspects of enforcement, such as the expansion of ICE raids in schools and hospitals or the availability of due process protections for immigrants. Overall, however, these subgroups strike a more moderate position on immigration than the prevailing conservative rhetoric driving national immigration policy. In contrast, region and education have little impact on the likelihood of Republican splintering on immigration.

This LPPI data brief analyzes voter sentiment on various dimensions of immigration enforcement, showing where California Republicans most strongly diverge from the Trump administration's current enforcement strategies. Then, the analysis turns to group-specific descriptives, looking specifically at Latinos, youth, and political moderates. Overall, findings emphasize that Republicans are not a monolith when it comes to immigration and interior enforcement, and that issue-framing matters for discerning voter sentiment.

DIMENSIONS OF IMMIGRATION SENTIMENT

The Berkeley IGS poll asked respondents 10 different questions about immigration and enforcement politics today. Results reveal partisan differences, as well as notable fractures within the Republican electorate (see Table 1). While Democrats were largely consistent in their support for immigrants and opposition to current enforcement trends—with opposition to Trump II immigration strategies reaching as high as 95% on multiple measures and never falling below 88%, Republicans displayed greater variation.

If immigration were completely polarized and Republicans were simply following partisan lines, then we would expect opposition to Trump's immigration strategies to hover between 5 and 15 percent among California Republican voters. Yet this is not what the results show. In seven out of the ten enforcement stances we measured, more than 20% of Republicans expressed opposition to the administration's approach—and on several issues, opposition was substantially higher.

For example, 45% of Republicans agreed with the statement that ICE agents should be required to show identification when carrying out actions - a concerted break from current Trumpian strategy (see Table 1). Forty percent of Republicans also agreed with the statement that immigrants in the United States should be granted due process, a stance that, once again, breaks with the administration's current strategy of swift deportation. Roughly one-third of Republicans also disagreed with expanding immigration enforcement to sensitive locations like schools and hospitals, deporting long-term residents, and ending birthright citizenship.

At the same time, Republican voters expressed largely partisan views on other immigration issues. For example, only 15% of Republicans said they felt that the raids were unfair compared to 91% of Democrats.

Table 1. Immigration Measures

	Republican	Democrat
<i>Approve of deporting longtime undocumented immigrants who have lived here for many years without committing crimes</i>	64%	5%
<i>Approve of Trump's immigration strategy overall</i>	79%	4%
<i>Agree that all undocumented immigrants should be deported</i>	69%	6%
<i>Agree with expanding immigration enforcement to schools and hospitals</i>	53%	3%
<i>Disapprove of ending birthright citizenship</i>	28%	92%
<i>Disagree that ICE only targets criminals</i>	18%	85%
<i>Support due process for all immigrants</i>	40%	92%
<i>Agree that ICE unfairly targets Latinos</i>	21%	88%
<i>Agree that ICE should show identification</i>	45%	92%
<i>Feel that ICE raids are unfair</i>	15%	91%

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Note: The August Berkeley IGS Poll surveyed a total of 4,960 voters, of those 1,005 were Republican and 2,677 were Democrat. Measures reflect weighted statistical descriptions, see Appendix A.

Source: Authors' analysis of Berkeley IGS Poll, "Tabulations from a August 2025 Poll of California Registered Voters about Redistricting," [available online](#).

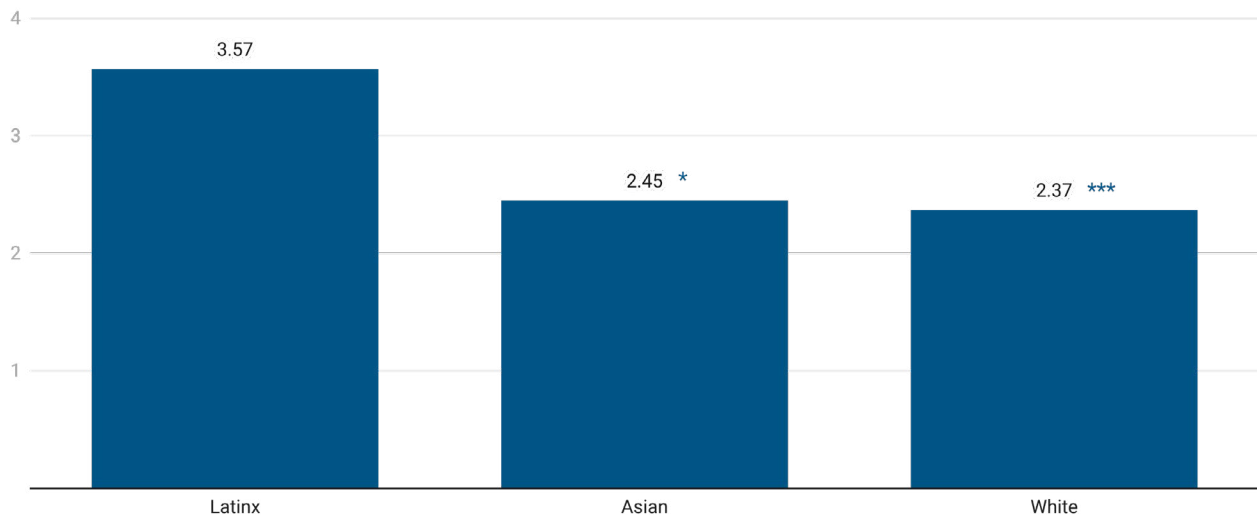
WHICH REPUBLICANS BREAK WITH TRENDS?

Among Republicans, we found that Latinos, younger voters, and especially political moderates were more likely to break with the prevailing Trump II strategy. Below, we analyze patterns using two approaches. First, we constructed an additive “Republican Immigration Divergence Scale” based on responses to the 10 immigration-related questions, six of which we reverse-coded. The scale measures the number of issues on which an individual Republican respondent expresses views that diverge from the party majority. Higher scores indicate greater divergence from mainstream Republican views. We then examined how different demographic groups scored on this scale and tested for statistical significance. We present both aggregate scale scores and disaggregated findings by specific issue below.

Latino Republicans

A larger share of Latino Republicans break with the Trump II administration’s strategy on most immigration indicators than their White and Asian Republican counterparts (see Figure 1). Results from our Republican Divergence Scale analysis show that, on average, Latino Republicans break with the majority of the party on a significantly larger number of issues (3.57) than their Asian (2.45) and White (2.37) Republican counterparts. These differences are statistically significant.¹

Figure 1. Republican Immigration Divergence Score by Race



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Note: (*) $p < .05$; (**) $p < .01$; (***) $p < .001$

Source: Authors’ analysis of Berkeley IGS Poll, “Tabulations from a August 2025 Poll of California Registered Voters about Redistricting,” [available online](#).

Disaggregated results, once again, show that Latino Republicans differ from White and Asian Republicans across all 10 dimensions (see Table 2). Over fifty percent of Latino Republicans support the due process of immigrants, while only 36% of White Republicans do. Similarly, while 44% of Latino Republican voters disagree that ICE agents should expand immigration enforcement into schools, hospitals, parks, and other public locations, only 26% of White Republicans do. Nineteen percent of White Republicans agree that ICE raids have unfairly targeted Latino communities for their race or ethnicity, while 33% and 24% of Latino and Asian Republicans agree, respectively.

Table 2. Republican Sentiment by Race

	White	Latino	Asian
<i>Disagree with the idea of deporting longtime undocumented immigrants</i>	30%	46%	28%
<i>Disapprove of Trump's immigration strategy overall</i>	15%	27%	21%
<i>Disagree that all undocumented immigrants should be deported</i>	21%	31%	23%
<i>Disagree with expanding immigration enforcement to schools and hospitals</i>	26%	44%	30%
<i>Disapprove of ending birthright citizenship</i>	24%	38%	28%
<i>Disagree that ICE only targets criminals</i>	16%	20%	17%
<i>Support due process for all immigrants</i>	36%	51%	43%
<i>Agree that ICE unfairly targets Latinos</i>	19%	33%	24%
<i>Agree that ICE should show identification</i>	40%	50%	52%
<i>Feel that ICE raids are unfair</i>	13%	24%	17%
<i>Percent of Republican Respondents</i>	57%	23%	12%

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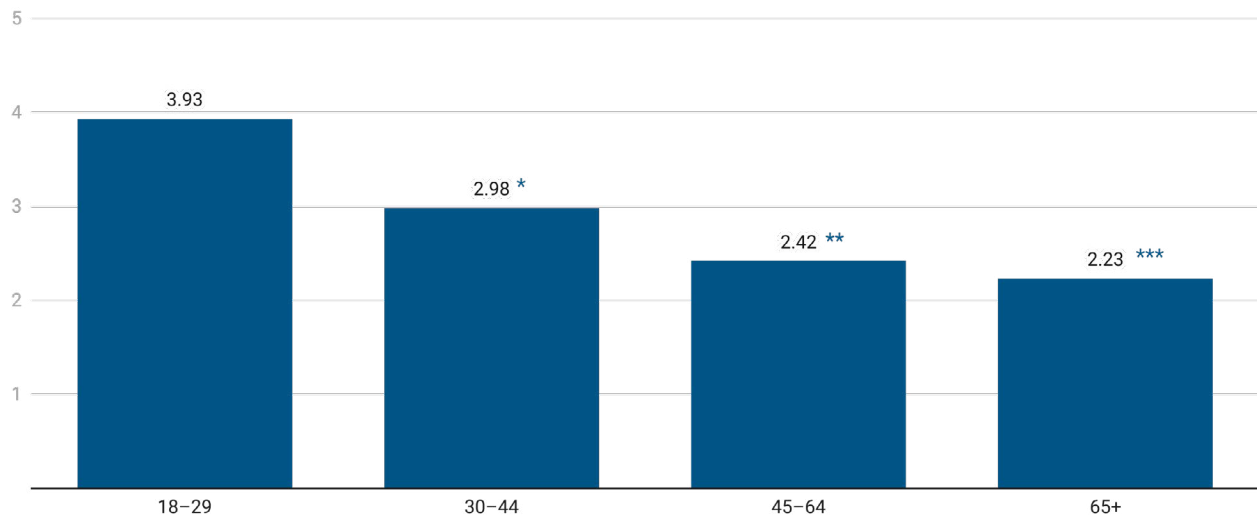
Note: N = 1,005 Republican Registered Voters; Measures 1-6 were reverse-coded.

Source: Authors' analysis of Berkeley IGS Poll, "Tabulations from a August 2025 Poll of California Registered Voters about Redistricting," [available online](#).

Young Republicans

Young California Republicans (ages 18-29) make up nearly 15% of all Republicans in the state, and on each of the ten immigration items, they are, on average, more likely than their older counterparts to break with Trump II immigration politics (see Figure 2). Specifically, young Republicans break on approximately four issues compared to their older counterparts: those aged 30-44 (2.96), 45-64 (2.42), and 65+ (2.23), break on 2-3 of the ten topics examined.

Figure 2. Republican Immigration Divergence Score by Age Group



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Note: (*) $p < .05$; (**) $p < .01$; (***) $p < .001$

Source: Authors' analysis of Berkeley IGS Poll, "Tabulations from a August 2025 Poll of California Registered Voters about Redistricting," [available online](#).

When we disaggregate the scale, we find that younger Republicans do, in fact, look consistently different from older voters (see Table 3). For example, 57% of young Republicans support due process for immigrants, while only 33% of those older than 65 do. Only 24% of older Republicans disagree that ICE agents should expand immigration enforcement into schools, hospitals, parks, and other public locations, while 44% of younger voters do. Nearly a third of young Republicans disagree that ICE raids in California are primarily focused on undocumented immigrants who have committed serious crimes beyond immigration violations, suggesting they believe ICE casts a wider net, while only 13% of those ages 65 and older disagree. Eighteen percent of older adults over the age of 65 agree that ICE raids have unfairly targeted Latino communities for their race or ethnicity, while younger Republicans double that share at 36%.

Table 3. Republican Sentiment by Voter Age

	18-29	30-44	45-54	65+
<i>Disagree with the idea of deporting longtime undocumented immigrants</i>	43%	34%	28%	30%
<i>Disapprove of Trump's immigration strategy overall</i>	33%	26%	15%	12%
<i>Disagree that all undocumented immigrants should be deported</i>	27%	23%	19%	18%
<i>Disagree with expanding immigration enforcement to schools and hospitals</i>	44%	33%	26%	24%
<i>Disapprove of ending birthright citizenship</i>	46%	34%	29%	18%
<i>Disagree that ICE only targets criminals</i>	30%	20%	16%	14%
<i>Support due process for all immigrants</i>	57%	46%	36%	33%
<i>Agree that ICE unfairly targets Latinos</i>	36%	21%	18%	18%
<i>Agree that ICE should show identification</i>	51%	40%	46%	43%
<i>Feel that ICE raids are unfair</i>	27%	19%	11%	12%
<i>Percent of Total Republican Respondents</i>	15%	19%	34%	33%

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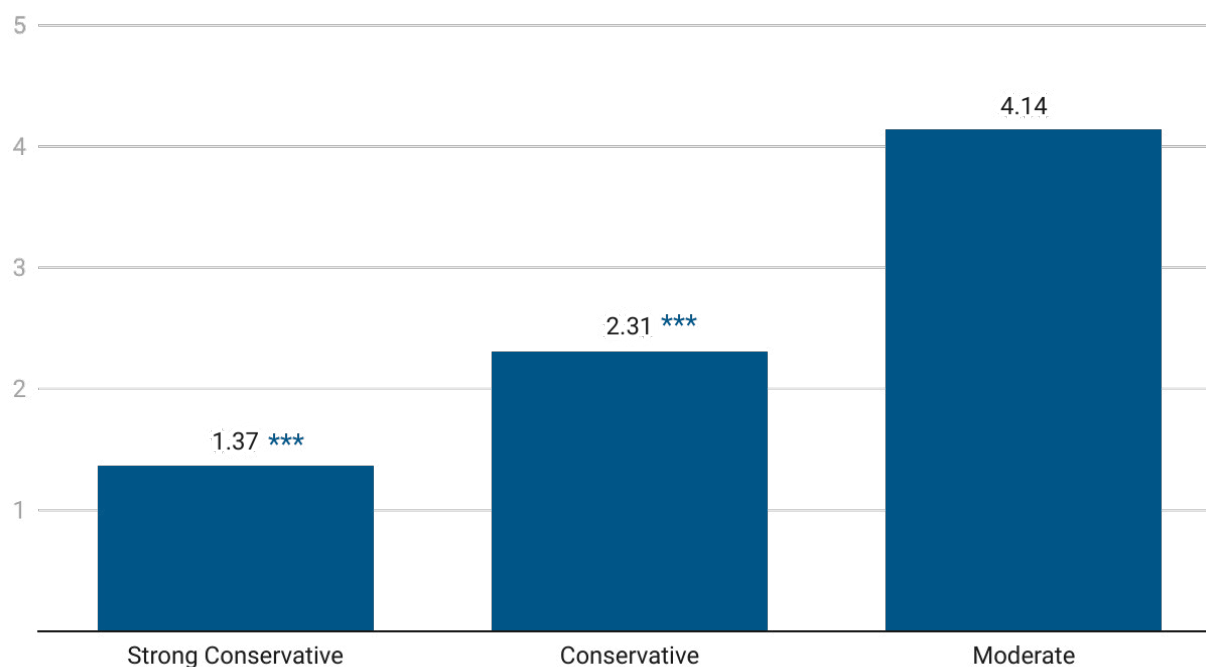
Note: N = 1,005 Republican Registered Voters; Measures 1-6 were reverse-coded.

Source: Authors' analysis of Berkeley IGS Poll, "Tabulations from a August 2025 Poll of California Registered Voters about Redistricting," [available online](#).

Moderate Republicans

Moderate Republicans make up 26% of all Republicans in our sample, and their views on immigration differ substantially from those of their conservative and strong conservative counterparts, who represent 37% and 33% respectively of all Republicans (see Figure 3). On average, moderate Republicans break politically on roughly 4 (4.14) of the 10 immigration topics examined. Strong conservatives (1.37) and somewhat conservative (2.31) republicans break on 1-2 of the ten topics examined.

Figure 3. Immigration Divergence Score by Political Ideology



Note: (*) $p < .05$; (**) $p < .01$; (***) $p < .001$

Source: Authors' analysis of Berkeley IGS Poll, "Tabulations from a August 2025 Poll of California Registered Voters about Redistricting," [available online](#).

Once again, disaggregated measures show consistent trends. For example, 55% of moderate Republicans support the due process of immigrants, while only 26% and 39% of strong conservatives and conservatives, respectively, do (see Table 4). Only 14% of strong conservatives and 26% of conservatives disagree that ICE agents should expand immigration enforcement into schools, hospitals, parks, and other public locations, while 45% of moderate Republican voters do. A third of moderate Republicans disagree that ICE raids in California are primarily focused on undocumented immigrants who have committed serious crimes beyond immigration violations, while only 9% of strong conservatives and 12% of conservatives disagree. Ten percent of strong conservatives agree that ICE raids have unfairly targeted Latino communities for their race or ethnicity, while moderate Republicans agree at 37%.

Table 4. Republican Sentiment by Political Ideology

	Strong Conservative	Conservative	Moderate
<i>Disagree with the idea of deporting longtime undocumented immigrants</i>	16%	30%	47%
<i>Disapprove of Trump's immigration strategy overall</i>	5%	9%	38%
<i>Disagree that all undocumented immigrants should be deported</i>	7%	17%	35%
<i>Disagree with expanding immigration enforcement to schools and hospitals</i>	15%	26%	45%
<i>Disapprove of ending birthright citizenship</i>	23%	29%	40%
<i>Disagree that ICE only targets criminals</i>	9%	12%	32%
<i>Support due process for all immigrants</i>	26%	39%	55%
<i>Agree that ICE unfairly targets Latinos</i>	10%	16%	37%
<i>Agree that ICE should show identification</i>	31%	45%	58%
<i>Feel that ICE raids are unfair</i>	5%	8%	30%
<i>Percent of Republican Respondents</i>	37%	33%	26%

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Note: N = 1,005 Republican Registered Voters; Measures 1-6 were reverse-coded.

Source: Authors' analysis of Berkeley IGS Poll, "Tabulations from a August 2025 Poll of California Registered Voters about Redistricting," [available online](#).

Moderate Republican Women Stand Out

Women make up about half of all moderate republicans and break on a larger number of issues than men (see Table 5). In fact, the gender gaps between moderates are larger than they are for the Republican population as a whole. In other words, while Republican women, in general, break on more issues than Republican men (3.02 vs. 2.38), **moderate** Republican women specifically are among those who diverge the most from broader Republican trends and their men counterparts (4.55 for moderate Republican women, and 3.59 for moderate Republican men).

For example, 58% of moderate Republican women disagree that ICE agents should expand immigration enforcement into schools, hospitals, parks, and other public locations, while 43% of moderate Republican men do. Nearly 40% of moderate Republican women disagree that ICE raids in California are primarily focused on undocumented immigrants who have committed serious crimes beyond immigration violations, while 25% of moderate men disagree. Thirty percent of moderate Republican men agree that ICE raids have unfairly targeted Latino communities for their race or ethnicity, while a larger share of moderate Republican women agree, at 45% (see Table 5).

Table 5. Moderate Republican Sentiment by Gender

	Moderate Women	Moderate Men	Difference
<i>Disagree with the idea of deporting longtime undocumented immigrants</i>	57%	47%	10.2
<i>Disapprove of Trump's immigration strategy overall</i>	40%	31%	9.5
<i>Disagree that all undocumented immigrants should be deported</i>	41%	34%	6.7
<i>Disagree with expanding immigration enforcement to schools and hospitals</i>	58%	43%	15.3
<i>Disapprove of ending birthright citizenship</i>	43%	40%	3.0
<i>Disagree that ICE only targets criminals</i>	39%	25%	14.8
<i>Support due process for all immigrants</i>	61%	60%	1.8
<i>Agree that ICE unfairly targets Latinos</i>	45%	30%	15.1
<i>Agree that ICE should show identification</i>	62%	50%	12.2
<i>Feel that ICE raids are unfair</i>	35%	24%	11.0

Created with Datawrapper

Note: N = 243 Moderate Republican Voters; Measures 1-6 were reverse-coded.

Source: Authors' analysis of Berkeley IGS Poll, "Tabulations from a August 2025 Poll of California Registered Voters about Redistricting," [available online](#).

CONCLUSION

Despite common assumptions that immigration is a thoroughly polarized issue, results reveal that Republican support for Trump II immigration enforcement policies is more complex than previously assumed. While Democratic opposition to Trumpian strategy is consistently high, Republican support fractures along key dimensions. Our “Republican Divergence Scale” shows that key subsets of Republicans, including Latinos, younger voters, and especially female political moderates, are more likely to break than others.

Surprisingly, we found few differences across regions or education. That is, highly educated Republicans were not significantly more likely than those less educated within their party to break with current partisan trends. Geographical region also seemed to make little difference; however, more fine-grained geo-spatial analysis, perhaps at the zip code or block-group level, could reveal important differences that regional analyses obscure.

Overall, the findings suggest that some Republicans’ immigration politics may be movable in the current moment. Immigration enforcement strategies that touch on constitutional issues, like due process and birthright citizenship, elicit some of the strongest opposition from Republican voters. At the same time, enforcement strategies that seem unsympathetic or even inhumane, like deporting long-time residents or expanding enforcement into schools and hospitals, also spark concern among some Republicans. It may be that recent media depictions of ICE cavalries and gunmen entering family spaces, like MacArthur Park in Los Angeles, or picking up parents at school sites, have felt like a step too far for some Republican voters. Given that Latinos, younger voters, and moderates are a small yet growing minority within the Republican party, analysts would be wise to track public opinion changes within this subset to best make sense of Republican sentiment on immigration.

APPENDIX A

Available online at: <https://latino.ucla.edu/research/immigration-politics-poll-findings-from-california/>

NOTES

1. The sample size for Black Republicans is prohibitively small to reach reliable estimates.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



G. Cristina Mora is Chancellor's Professor of Sociology and the Co-Director of the Institute of Governmental Studies (IGS) at UC Berkeley. Her research focuses mainly on immigration, categorization, and racial and political attitudes in the United States. Mora has received numerous awards from the American Sociological Association, and her research has been the subject of various national media segments in venues like the Atlantic, the New Yorker, NPR, and Latino USA. In 2020, she helped to oversee the largest survey on Covid-19 and partisan politics in California and published some of the state's first briefs and academic articles on the subject.



Nicholas Vargas is an Associate Professor of Chicanx/Latinx Studies in the Department Ethnic Studies. He currently co-leads the Latinxs and Democracy Cluster and serves as Faculty Co-Director of the UCB Latino Social Science Pipeline Initiative (LSSPI), both of which aim to advance Latinx social science scholarship and strengthen academic pipelines. Most of his scholarship draws from nationally representative data and explores questions of ethnoracial boundaries, patterns of label use, racial ideology adherence, contested racial identity, and Latina/o/x experiences in higher education with particular attention paid to various organizational and individual markers of racialization.



Dr. Daisy Verduzco Reyes is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of California, Merced. Her work centers Latinx populations including mothers-daughter relationships, undergraduate students, college graduates, and student loan borrowers. She is the author of *Learning to be Latino: How Colleges Shape Identity Politics*, which examines how race and ethnicity are constructed and mobilized within colleges and universities. She is working on a book that examines the mobility trajectories of college-educated Latinx millennials with specific attention to their financial experiences and familial arrangements.

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