

TO: Interested parties
FROM: Guy Molyneux and Aileen Cardona
DATE: October 21, 2021
RE: Public Support for Legal Representation for Unaccompanied Children

A recently completed national survey of registered voters on behalf of Kids In Need Of Defense (KIND) reveals that the electorate decisively favors providing legal representation for unaccompanied children seeking asylum in the U.S. The survey, conducted among a representative cross section of 835 registered voters from October 11 to 13, shows that voters of all political stripes support allowing children to seek asylum and believe they should have legal representation as they go through the legal process.

1. The voting public firmly backs proposals that would ensure that children seeking asylum have access to legal representation and make the processing of unaccompanied children more humane.

- An overwhelming bipartisan and demographically diverse majority (75%) say the country should extend legal representation to children as they go through the legal immigration process, while only 25% voice opposition.
- Again, we find that support crosses ideological and partisan lines, with solid majorities of both conservatives (58% approve, 42% disapprove) and Republicans (54% approve, 46% disapprove) in favor of the policy. Similarly, voters in every region of the country—and in both urban and rural communities—overwhelmingly favor providing representation to these children. In fact, support is just as high in states carried by Donald Trump (75%) as in those carried by Joe Biden (75%).

	Total Approve %	Total Disapprove %		Total Approve %	Total Disapprove %
All voters	75%	25%	All Voters	75%	25%
White voters	71%	29%	Conservative	58%	42%
Black voters	83%	17%	Moderate	79%	21%
Latinx voters	86%	14%	Liberal	91%	9%
Democrats	90%	10%	Urban	81%	19%
Independents	79%	21%	Suburban	73%	27%
Republicans	54%	46%	Rural	70%	30%
Northeast	78%	22%	Biden States	75%	25%
South	77%	23%	Trump States	75%	25%
Midwest	71%	29%			
West	72%	28%			

Hart Research Associates

- Despite changing events and news surrounding the border and unaccompanied children over the past year, the electorate’s strong approval (75%) for providing legal representation to children has held steady over time. Indeed, 71% of the voting public expressed support for providing legal representation when surveyed in August of 2020.
- A decisive 77% of voters say children should receive legal representation in the legal asylum process if they cannot afford it, while just 23% of voters believe that unaccompanied children should be required to represent themselves in that situation. Notably, two in three conservative voters concur (68%, along with 80% of moderates and 86% of liberals), as do 64% of Republicans.
- Fully 71% of voters favor placing child welfare professionals (as opposed to immigration agents) at the helm when it comes to managing children arriving at the border.

2. Majorities of voters across diverse segments of the electorate support allowing children to seek asylum at the border.

- A resounding three in four (75%) voters, including 88% of Democrats, 76% of independents, and 58% of Republicans, believe that unaccompanied migrant and refugee children should be allowed to request asylum and live with their relatives while they await the results. Just 25% favor detaining and removing them from the country, without permitting them to seek asylum.
- Support for giving unaccompanied minors the opportunity to seek asylum also cuts across geographic regions and a wide range of demographic categories. Remarkably, majorities of conservatives, white voters, rural voters, and voters in states carried by Donald Trump express support for allowing children to stay and have their cases heard.

	Request asylum/live with relatives %	Remove/ detain %		Request asylum/live with relatives %	Remove/ detain %
All voters	75%	25%	All voters	75%	25%
White voters	71%	29%	Conservative	58%	42%
Black voters	86%	14%	Moderate	81%	19%
Latinx voters	81%	19%	Liberal	89%	11%
Democrats	88%	12%	Urban	78%	22%
Independents	76%	24%	Suburban	76%	24%
Republicans	58%	42%	Rural	67%	33%
Northeast	80%	20%	Biden States	75%	25%
South	76%	24%	Trump States	74%	26%
Midwest	70%	30%			
West	72%	28%			