

Memorandum

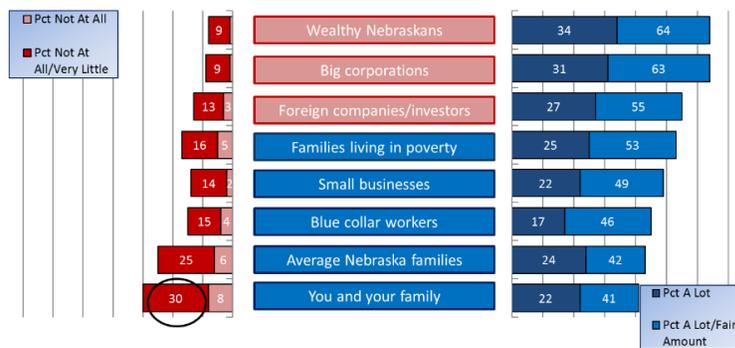
Date: December 16, 2017
 To: Interested Parties
 From: Lauren Spangler

Expanding Economic Opportunity in Nebraska

According to the results of our survey¹, Nebraskans believe that the best way to build the middle class is to give people the tools they need and that those who are willing to work hard should have the chance to live a middle-class lifestyle. At the same time, however, there is a clear sense that government is looking out for the wealthy and big corporations at the expense of Nebraska families. Broadly, Nebraskans favor investing in community college, career and vocational programs and providing incentives to businesses that create quality jobs with good wages and benefits. In essence, they believe that providing individuals with these tools will create a stronger middle class.

Similar to trends we have observed in other states, Nebraskans believe that government's economic policies are focused on helping big corporations, the wealthy, and foreign companies more than small businesses, blue collar workers, and average families.

Real Sense That Government Is Helping Wealthy, Big Corporations, Foreign Companies, and Those in Poverty More Than Average Families



Qs.51-58 And, in the last year or so, have government's economic policies helped _____ a lot, a fair amount, just some, very little, or not at all?

Indeed, as the graph outlines, 3-in-10 voters say that government's economic policies have helped them and their family a little or not at all in the last year. Both men and women believe government's economic policies are helping wealthy Nebraskans, big corporations, and foreign investors in equal numbers. The largest distinction comes along education lines. College-educated voters are more likely (70 percent help a lot/a fair amount) than blue collar audiences (62 percent

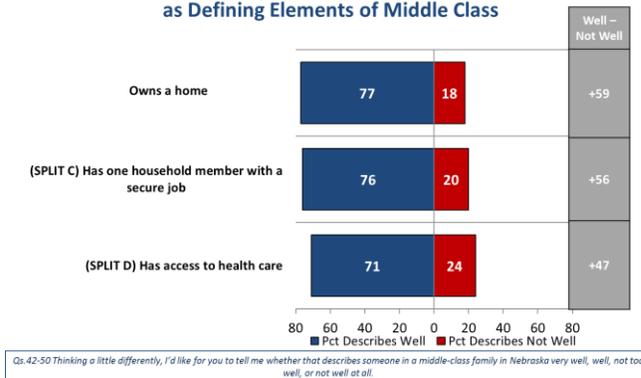
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¹ These findings are based on a survey of 600 likely voters statewide in Nebraska. Calling took place from November 2-6, 2017, and interviews were conducted by professional interviewers supervised by Myers Research | Strategic Services staff. The data were stratified to reflect the projected geographical contribution to the total expected vote. The margin of error associated with these data at a 95 in 100 percent confidence level is +/- 4.0 percent. The margin of error for subgroups is greater and varies.

help a lot/a fair amount) to say that government’s policies are helping the wealthy. Conversely, 9-in-10 blue collar voters (87 percent help a lot/a fair amount) say government’s policies are helping big corporations while 62 percent of college-educated voters say the same.

When asked specifically about various traits that may describe a middle-class family,

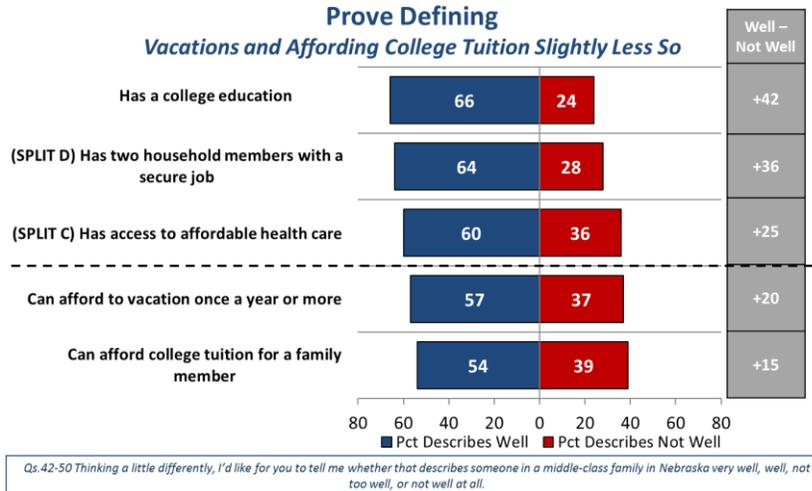
Home Ownership, a Secure Job, and Access to Health Care Viewed as Defining Elements of Middle Class



home ownership, a secure job, and access to health care top the list. As the graph outlines, three quarters of voters believe each of these traits describe someone in a middle-class family well. One third say having access to health care (37 percent very well), owning a home (34 percent very well) and having one household member with a secure job (34 percent very well) describes someone in a middle-class household *very well*.

While slightly less descriptive, two thirds of Nebraskans indicate that having a college education, having **two** household members with a secure job, and having access to **affordable** health care describe someone in the middle class. Though a broad majority say that the ability to vacation once a year or more or being able to afford college tuition for a family member describe someone in the middle class, these traits are more elusive than the others mentioned. Twenty or thirty years ago, being able to vacation or affording college tuition for a family member were typical of most middle-class families. It is somewhat remarkable that nearly 4-in-10 Nebraskans say these traits do not describe a middle-class family well today. Additionally, a near majority (48 percent) say the ability to invest in stocks, bonds, and mutual funds is not descriptive of someone in a middle-class household, again a departure from trends we would have seen a decade ago.

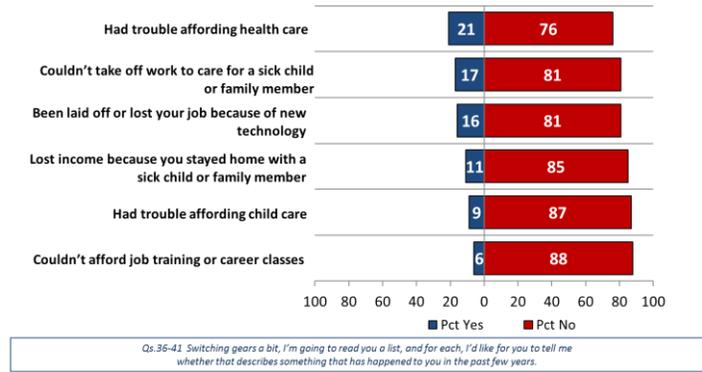
A College Degree, Two Secure Jobs, Affordable Health Care Also Prove Defining Vacations and Affording College Tuition Slightly Less So



As the graph on the following page outlines, health care is more of a struggle for Nebraskans than broader economic concerns. In fact, one fifth of Nebraskans say they have had trouble affording health care in the past few years, and nearly as many report

that they were not able to take time off work to care for a sick child or family member because of a concern that they would lose their job. A similar number also say that improvements in technology resulted in layoffs or job losses.

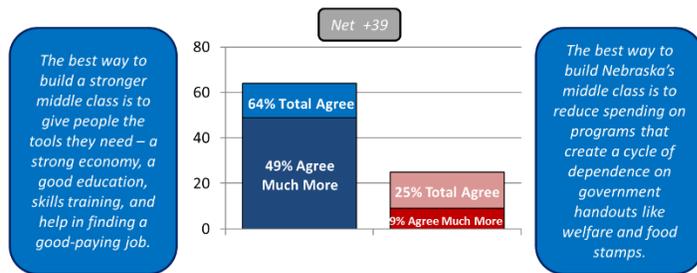
One Fifth of Nebraskans Have Had Trouble Affording Health Care and Nearly as Many Could Not Take Leave for a Relative's Illness



It is blue collar audiences who are most affected by the affordability of health care or the inability to take time off to care for a sick relative. Importantly, women - both blue collar women and college-educated women - tend to have been most affected by layoffs due to technology, and somewhat strikingly, it is blue collar men who are the most likely to report that they have trouble affording child care, an issue that we might expect women to mention more often.

Trouble with Affording Key Services along Education Lines					
(Pct Yes - Pct No)					
	<i>Total</i>	College Men	Blue Collar Men	College Women	Blue Collar Women
Had trouble affording health care	21 - 76	11 - 86	26 - 70	13 - 85	24 - 73
Couldn't take off work to care for sick relative	17 - 81	9 - 87	21 - 76	12 - 91	18 - 82
Been laid off or lost job	16 - 81	13 - 84	14 - 80	20 - 80	18 - 79
Lost income from staying home with sick family member	11 - 85	7 - 91	13 - 83	8 - 91	12 - 82
Had trouble affording child care	9 - 87	2 - 95	16 - 81	6 - 92	8 - 88
Couldn't afford job training/career classes	6 - 88	2 - 92	6 - 87	5 - 93	7 - 85

Broad Agreement that Investing in Giving People the Tools They Need, Instead of Cutting Spending, Will Build a Stronger Middle Class



Q.34 Now, I am going to read you some pairs of statements and I want you to tell me whether you agree more with the first statement or more with the second statement even if neither is exactly right.

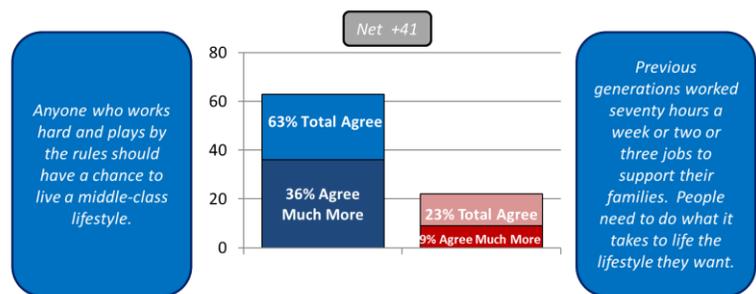
As the graph shows, overall, there is broad and deep agreement that the best way to build a stronger middle class is to give people the tools they need compared to cutting spending on programs in order to reduce dependence on government. In fact, even a broad majority of conservative Republicans side with a statement about giving people the tools they need (56 percent agree) compared to 30 percent of them

who side with reducing spending on government programs. Three quarters of non-partisan voters who are not registered as either Democrats or Republicans agree with the statement about giving voters the tools they need (76 percent agree).

Sixty-two percent of men and 66 percent of women agree with the statement that giving voters the tools they need is the best way to build the middle class, with voters who have children under the age of 18 (85 percent agree) helping to drive the trend more than those who do not have children at home (56 percent agree).

Along the same lines, and by virtually the same margin, Nebraskans agree with a statement that anyone who works hard and plays by the rules should have the opportunity to live a middle-class lifestyle compared to a statement that people should do what it takes to live a middle-class lifestyle, just like previous generations did. Perhaps most compelling about this statement is that a majority of self-described conservatives (54 percent) agree that hard work and playing by the rules should provide access to a middle-class lifestyle. Just 30 percent of them say people should do whatever it takes to live the lifestyle they want.

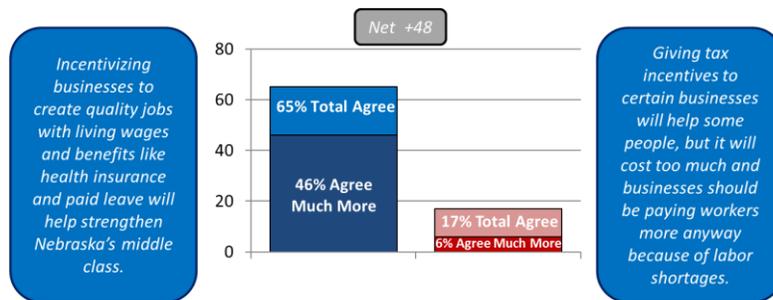
Personal Responsibility – Working Hard and Playing by the Rules – Should Enable Someone To Get Ahead



Q.33 Now, I am going to read you some pairs of statements and I want you to tell me whether you agree more with the first statement or more with the second statement even if neither is exactly right.

As the graph on the following page outlines, two thirds of Nebraskans also agree that incentivizing businesses to create quality jobs with good wages and benefits will help to strengthen the middle class while just 17 percent agree with a statement that it will hurt businesses and become too costly. Importantly, a near majority (46 percent) *strongly* agree that giving incentives to businesses will strengthen the middle class. Voters under age 50 help to fuel the overall trend (70 percent agree with giving businesses incentives)

Broad and Deep Agreement That Providing Good Wages and Benefits Will Strengthen the Middle Class, Not Hurt Businesses



Q.32 Now, I am going to read you some pairs of statements and I want you to tell me whether you agree more with the first statement or more with the second statement even if neither is exactly right.

although 6-in-10 older voters say the same (60 percent). And while registered Democrats (74 percent agree with incentives statement) and non-partisans (77 percent agree with incentives statement) are most apt to agree with it, a broad majority of registered Republicans do as well (58 percent agree with incentives statement compared to 20 percent who agree with the statement that it will cost too much).