

Memorandum

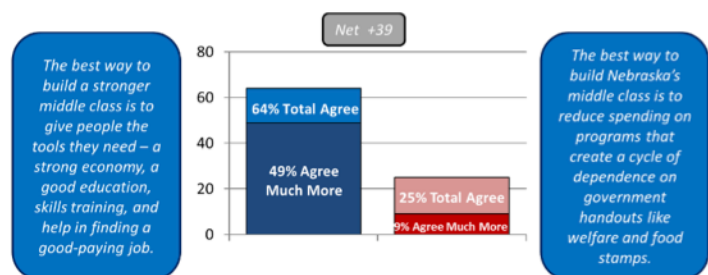
Date: March 19, 2018
To: Interested Parties
From: Lauren Spangler

Nebraskans' Priorities Map Clear Direction for State Lawmakers

As the state's legislative session reaches its peak, our survey¹ provides clear guidance on what it is that Nebraskans want from state government compared to their impression of the recent focus of state government. Indeed, by an overwhelming margin, Nebraskans believe that investing in families and ensuring they have the tools they need to succeed is the best way to build the middle class as opposed to reducing government and cutting spending. Broadly, Nebraskans favor investing in education at every level, career training, and health care, especially for children, and providing incentives to businesses that create quality jobs with good wages and benefits. Ultimately, they believe that providing individuals with these tools will build a stronger middle class.

As the graph outlines, 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).

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

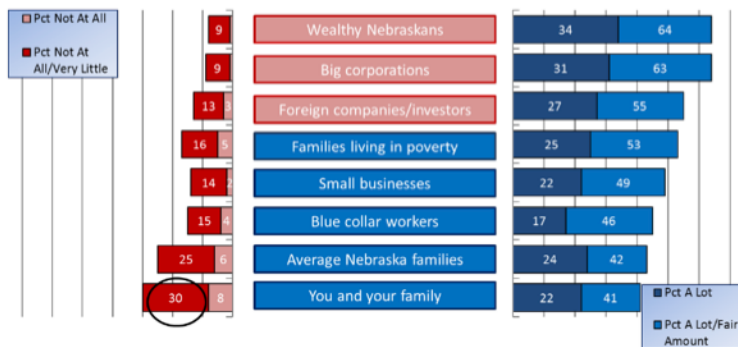


Q.34 Now, I am going to read you some pairs of statements and I want you to tell me whether you agree more with the first statement or more with the second statement even if neither is exactly right.

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.

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. 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 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.

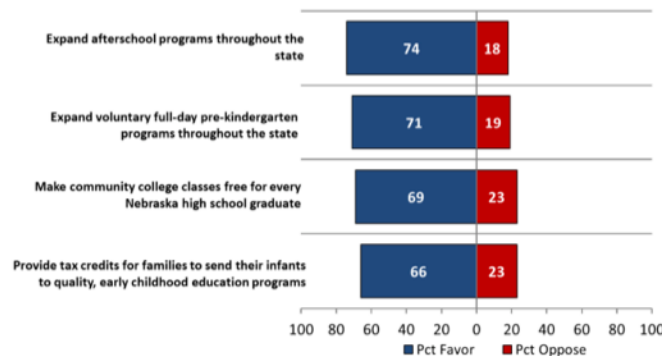
Real Sense That Government Is Helping Wealthy, Big Corporations, Foreign Companies, and Those in Poverty More Than Average Families



Q8.51-58 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?

When it comes to education, just 8 percent of Nebraskans believe the state spends too much on public schools. As the graph here details, there is a broad belief that expanding afterschool and voluntary pre-kindergarten will help to build a stronger middle class. Making community college free and sending young children to early childhood education programs are slightly less popular, but notably, even a majority of conservative Republicans favor free community college (60 percent favor) and providing tax credits for early childhood programs (62 percent favor).

Education Proposals Are Salient

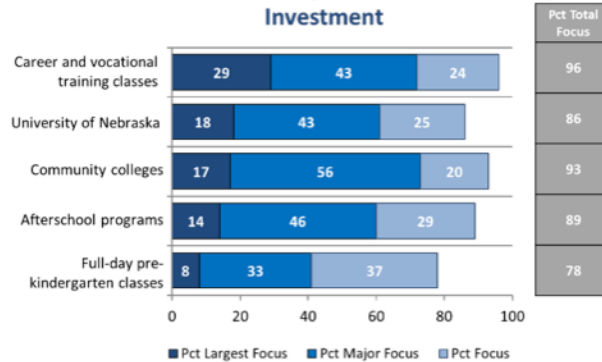


Qs. 59-71 Now, let me read you a list of proposals that may help to build a stronger middle class in Nebraska. For each, please tell me whether you favor or oppose that proposal.

When asked specifically about the level of investment in a variety of areas of education, Nebraskans put the highest level of importance on career and vocational training, expressing near unanimity that it should be a focus of investment. Nebraskans make few distinctions about this level of investment in career training, with both blue collar and college-educated voters expressing support for equal levels of investment and support holding in all regions of the state. Voters under age 50, especially younger women and

those with a college degree, are the most likely to cite a need to invest further in the University of Nebraska. Unsurprisingly, it is parents with children at home who are most focused on investments in afterschool programs and full-day pre-kindergarten classes.

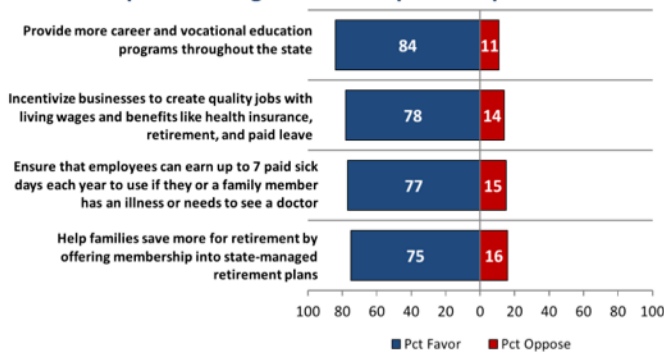
Career and Vocational Training Is Critical Point of Emphasis for Investment



Qs. 74-82 Now, I'm going to read you a list of different areas of education and health care. For each, please tell me whether that should be the largest focus of investment, a major focus, a focus, or not much of a focus of investment in the state budget.

These trends transfer directly to career training and other economic proposals. Eight-ten Nebraskans believe that providing more career and vocational training will help to build a stronger middle class in Nebraska, and voters across the board favor this proposal in almost equal numbers. Providing incentives to businesses to create quality jobs with benefits and providing paid sick leave also emerge as popular, although slight gaps emerge along education lines. College-educated voters are slightly more supportive of

Career Training, Good Jobs with Benefits and Retirement Savings Options Emerge as Most Popular Proposals



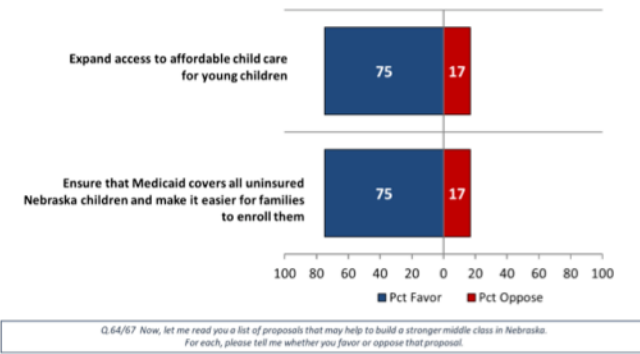
Q.59 Now, let me read you a list of proposals that may help to build a stronger middle class in Nebraska. For each, please tell me whether you favor or oppose that proposal.

providing incentives to businesses (85 percent favor) than blue collar audiences (75 percent favor), and the same trend holds when it comes to employers providing sick leave - 82 percent of college-educated voters favor it compared to 75 percent of blue collar voters. Similarly, college-educated voters (81 percent favor) back retirement savings options in greater numbers than those who are blue collar (73 percent favor), with younger college-educated the most

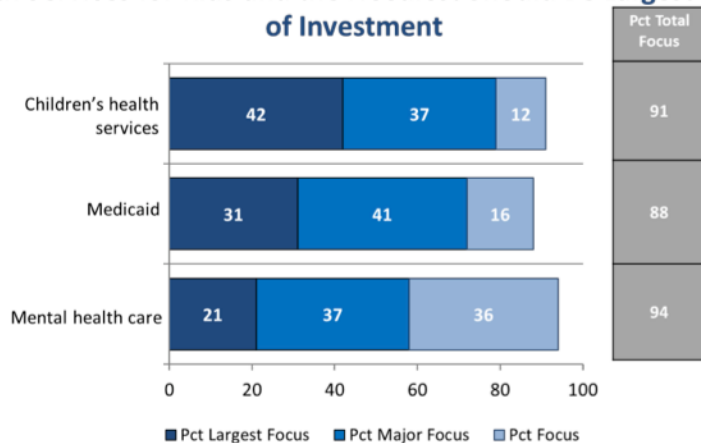
supportive (86 percent favor).

With 9 percent of Nebraskans admitting that they have had trouble affording child care in the past few years, it comes as little surprise that efforts to provide access to affordable child care proves incredibly popular across the board. Indeed, among those with children under age 18 at home, nearly all (93 percent) favor expanding access to affordable child care (69 percent of those without children at home favor it). Similarly, support for ensuring that Medicaid covers all uninsured children is nearly universal among those with children at home (88 percent favor) while 7-in-10 (70 percent) of those without children at home favor it.

Programs To Help Children and Their Parents Are Broadly Popular



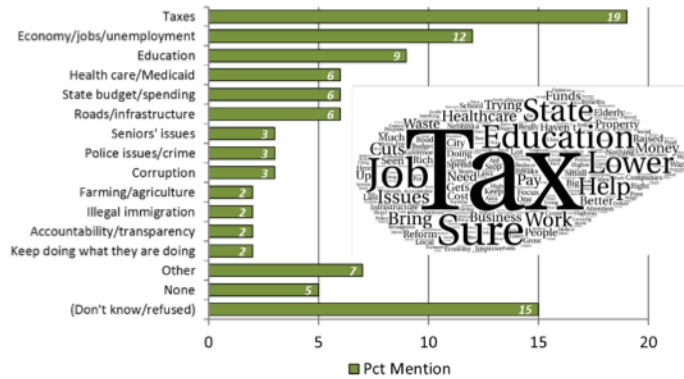
Health Services for Kids and the Neediest Should Be Largest Focus of Investment



Moreover, the sentiment is nearly unanimous that children's health care services, Medicaid, and mental health care should be a focus of investment in the state's budget. Investing in children's health services proves to be the most popular among voters across the board.

At the same time that Nebraskans place an emphasis on investing in tools to help middle-class families succeed, when asked to name the issue or issues on which the Governor and legislature have been focused, taxes emerges as the top singular issue, followed by the economy and jobs and education which form a secondary tier, as seen in the graph. The graph also includes a word cloud of verbatim responses, and in the word cloud, the larger the word, the more often it is mentioned.

What Nebraskans Believe the Governor and Legislature Are Focused On



Q.8 (SPLIT B) Thinking back, what issue or issues have the Governor and Nebraska state legislature been focused on?

Across the partisan spectrum, among registered Democrats, registered Republicans, and those registered as nonpartisans, voters believe taxes have been the top issue of focus for state government. It is also notable that just as many say that the Governor and legislature are not focused on any issue or do not know which issues on which they have been focused, showing the disconnect we often see between voters and state government.

When examining the data in finer detail in this open-ended exercise in which respondents' verbatim responses are recorded, the specificity of taxes comes through more clearly. Make no mistake, Nebraskans do not believe their taxes are being cut; they believe the legislature has been focused on cutting taxes for corporations and the rich and helping big business. One respondent even indicated that he or she knew they were working on tax cuts but that they had not seen relief yet. A sampling of these quotes is provided below.

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In sum, the narrative that emerges is one in which Nebraskans believe government is cutting taxes for corporations and the wealthy but not necessarily for them and their

families. Meanwhile, education and health care are being gutted to pay for these tax cuts at a time when Nebraskans want investments in their services to rebuild the middle class.

