Texas Trends Survey 2021

Criminal Justice Reforms

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The Hobby School of Public Affairs at the University of Houston and the Executive Master of Public Administration Program in the Barbara Jordan – Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs at Texas Southern University are conducting a five-year survey project to study Texas's changing population, with emphasis on the state's Black, Latino and Asian residents. In addition to a representative sample of all Texans, the inaugural survey includes an oversample of the former two groups in the first report to allow for an objective and statistically valid report of their diverse opinions and experiences.

The first survey of this five-year project focused on opinions about recently passed legislation during the 2021 regular and special sessions of the Texas Legislature and preferences related to electric vehicles and criminal justice issues. The survey was fielded between October 4 and October 21, 2021 in English and Spanish, with 2,067 YouGov respondents 18 years of age and older, resulting in a confidence interval of +/-2.2. The respondents were matched to a sampling frame on gender, age, race/ethnicity, and education and are representative of the Texas adult population.

The results of the 2021 survey will be presented in four separate reports: abortion and transgender athlete policies, election reform and redistricting, criminal justice, and electric vehicles.

This report examines Texans' attitudes related to criminal justice and proposed criminal justice reforms in the Lone Star State.

Executive Summary

The survey respondents were asked how much they support or oppose the implementation of nine proposed criminal justice policies in Texas.

The most popular policy would require police officers to receive more extensive conflict de-escalation training, which is supported by 86% of Texans, and is followed closely in support (79%) by a policy that would require the prosecution of police officers who use excessive force.

Two additional reforms also enjoy robust support. One would require police officers to receive more extensive racial bias training, a policy that is supported by 74% of Texans, while another (67% support) would legalize the sale and use of recreational marijuana.

Two proposed reforms are opposed by a majority of Texans. Three-quarters (75%) of the respondents oppose cutting the police department's budget, and 52% oppose using part of the police department's budget for funding social services.

A higher proportion of Black Texans than white and Latino Texans supports every one of the nine reforms. A reform that would require enhanced racial bias training for police officers is supported by

93% of Blacks and 84% of Latinos, but by only 62% of whites. Using some of the police department's budget to fund social services is supported by 78% of Blacks and 38% of whites, with Latinos in between at 53%. And, 73% of Blacks support an end to Stop-and-Frisk policing compared to 51% of whites, with Latinos in between at 59%.

In the case of four reforms, Black support is substantially greater than both white and Latino support, with the levels among the latter two not significantly different. Most noteworthy is the support of more than one-half of Blacks (51%) for cutting police department budgets compared to less than one-quarter of Latinos (23%) and whites (20%).

The respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed with four "pro-police" statements. More than two-thirds agree that they trust the police in their community and that people today do not give police officers the respect they deserve while more than three-fifths also agree that the budget for the police in their community should be increased. In contrast, three-fifths of Texans do not agree that because police officers have such dangerous jobs, we should not second-guess the decisions they make.

Whites agree with all four "pro-police" statements more than either Latinos or Blacks. Blacks agree less (disagree more) with the four statements than either Latinos or whites. Latinos agree with all four statements more than Blacks and less than whites.

Several of the racial/ethnic differences in "pro-police" support are substantial. For instance, 78% of whites and 68% of Latinos trust the police in their community compared to only 50% of Blacks. And while 77% of whites and 69% of Latinos agree that people don't give police the respect they deserve, only 47% of African Americans concur. Finally, while 69% of whites and 63% of Latinos agree that the budget for the police in their community should be increased, only 48% of Blacks concur.

The respondents were asked what impact three bail reform policies would have on the amount of crime in their community. More than four-fifths (82%) believe that a policy that prevents suspects with previous convictions for violent crimes from being released on bail would reduce crime, with 47% believing this reform would reduce crime a lot and 35% believing it would reduce crime somewhat. Three-quarters (75%) of Texans also believe that a policy that would prevent suspects who have been arrested while currently out on bail to again be released on bail would reduce crime, with 44% believing this reform would reduce crime a lot and 31% believing it would reduce crime somewhat.

More than three-quarters of white, Latino and Black Texans believe that preventing suspects who have prior convictions for violent crimes from being released on bail will reduce crime. Additionally, more than two-thirds of all three groups believe that preventing suspects who are arrested while out on bail from being released on bail again will also reduce crime.

Slightly more than half of Texans agree that Blacks and Latinos receive less equal treatment than whites in the Texas criminal justice system. More than twice as many Black Texans than white Texans agree with this statement. Latinos occupy a midpoint between these two extremes.

One half of Texans agree that the police in Texas treat Blacks and Latinos less favorably than whites. Eight out of every ten (79%) Black Texans agree that Texas police officers treat Blacks less favorably

than whites, compared to 37% of whites and 58% of Latinos. Nearly three-quarters (74%) of Blacks, 60% of Latinos, and 27% of whites believe police treat Latinos less favorably than whites.

More than half (54%) of Texans agree that Texas police officers are more likely to use force when confronting Black suspects than when confronting white suspects, and one half (50%) also believe this to be true when confronting Latino suspects rather than white suspects. With both of these scenarios, Blacks and Latinos are significantly more likely to agree with these statements than whites.

## Survey Population Demographics

The weighted survey population is split almost equally between women (51%) and men (49%). Whites account for 45% of the survey population, Latinos 37%, Blacks 12%, Asian Americans 4%, and others 2%. In regard to generations, 31% of the population belongs to the combined Silent Generation (born between 1928-1945) and Baby Boomers (1946-1964) cohort, 27% to Generation X (Gen X) (1965-1980), 31% to the Millennial (1981-1996) generation, and 11% to Generation Z (Gen Z) (1997-2012). Close to one-third (31%) of the population identifies as Democrat, 30% as Republican, and 28% as Independent, with 8% unsure and 3% who identify with another political party or group. In the 2020 presidential election, 38% of the respondents voted for Donald Trump, 33% voted for Joe Biden, 1% voted for other candidates, and 28% did not vote.

Support for and Opposition to Nine Proposed Criminal Justice Reforms

The survey respondents were asked how much they support (strongly or somewhat) or oppose (strongly or somewhat) the implementation of the following nine proposed criminal justice policies in Texas. A don't know option was also provided, although the following analysis excludes those responses from the calculation of the percentages of support for and opposition to the nine policy reforms.

1. Cut police department budgets.
2. Require police officers to receive more extensive conflict de-escalation training.
3. End Stop-and-Frisk policing, where officers have wide discretion to stop people and search them for weapons.
4. Use some of the police department's budget to fund social services.
5. Allow first-time offenders charged with a non-violent crime to be released without paying bail while they await trial.
6. Legalize the sale and use of recreational marijuana.
7. Legalize the sale and use of recreational meth, cocaine, heroin and opioids.
8. Prosecute police officers who use excessive force.
9. Require police officers to receive more extensive racial bias training.

Figure 1 contains the distribution of Texans who support (strongly or somewhat) and oppose (strongly or somewhat) the nine criminal justice reforms.

Figure 1: Support For And Opposition To Nine Potential Criminal Justice Reforms
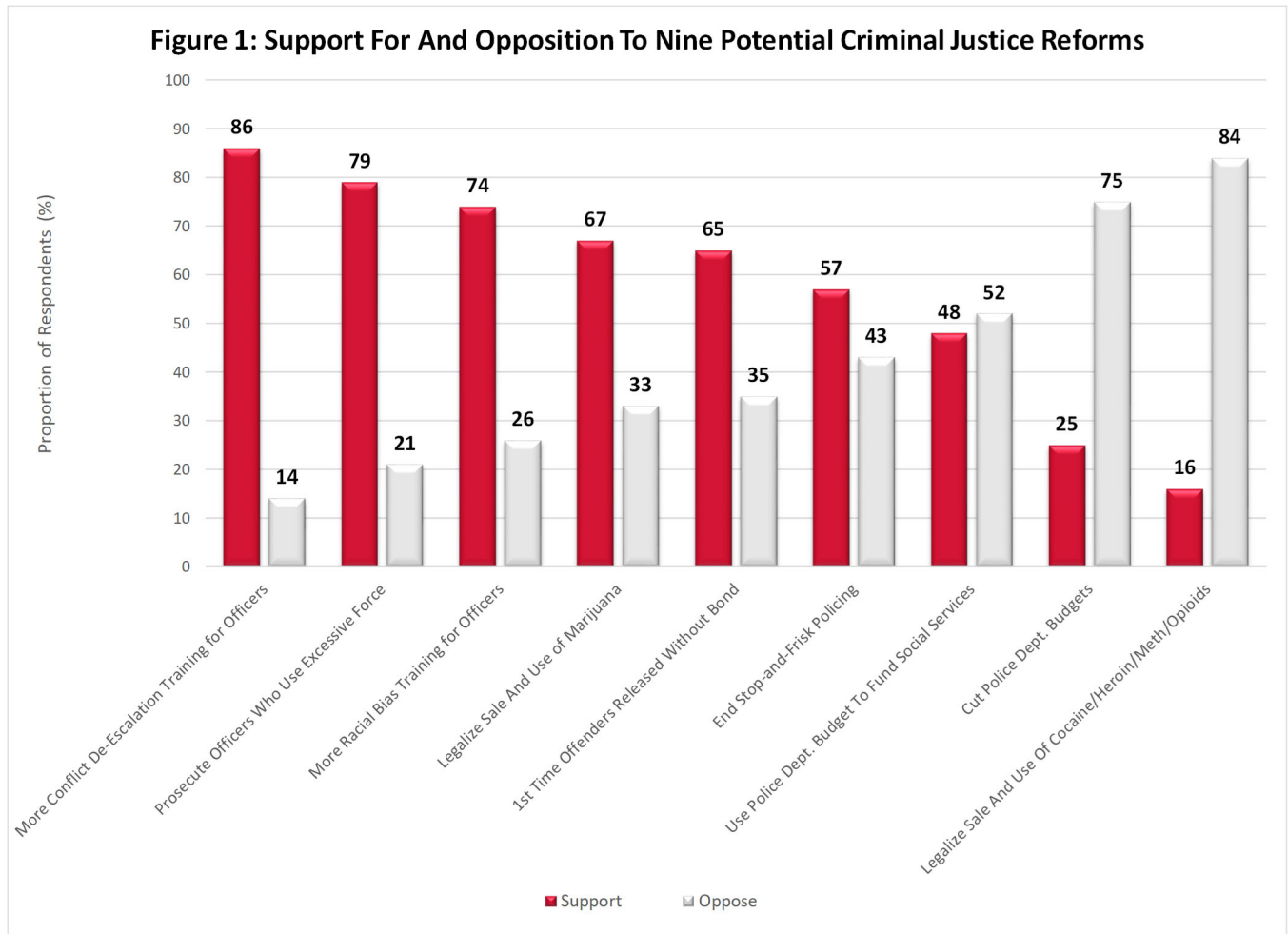
Two reforms are supported by more than three out of every four Texans. Most popular is the proposal to require police officers to receive more extensive conflict de-escalation training, which is supported by 86% (52% strongly and 34% somewhat) of Texans and opposed by 14% (5% strongly and 9% somewhat). This reform is followed closely in support to another reform also related to individual officers which involves prosecuting police officers who use excessive force, which 79% of Texans support (51% strongly and 28% somewhat), and which is opposed by 21% (8% strongly and 13% somewhat).

Two additional reforms are supported by less than three-quarters of Texans but by more than two-thirds of the state's adults. The first involves another officer specific policy which would require police officers to receive more extensive racial bias training, a policy is that is supported by 74% (53% strongly and 21% somewhat) and opposed by 26% (13% strongly and 13% somewhat). The second reform would involve legalizing the sale and use of recreational marijuana, which is supported by 67% of Texans (46% strongly and 21% somewhat) and opposed by 33% (20% strongly and 13% somewhat).

Two final potential criminal justice reforms enjoy lesser support than these first four, but still are supported by an absolute majority of Texans. A reform that would allow first-time offenders who are

charged with a non-violent crime to be released without paying bail while they await their trial is supported by 65% (32% strongly and 33% somewhat) and opposed by 35% (16% strongly and 19% somewhat). Finally, 57% of Texans support (34% strongly and 23% somewhat) a reform that would end Stop-and-Frisk policing where officers have wide discretion to stop people and search them for weapons. This reform is opposed by 43% of Texans (22% strongly and 21% somewhat).

Three reforms are opposed by a majority of Texans. Two of these reforms are related to the police budget. The first would use some of the police department's budget to fund social services. It is opposed by 52% (33% strongly and 19% somewhat) and supported by 48% (26% strongly and 22% somewhat). The other reform would cut the police department's budget. It is opposed by 75% of Texans (52% strongly and 23% somewhat) and supported by 25% of Texans (10% strongly and 15% somewhat).

Finally, in sharp contrast to the support (67%) for marijuana legalization, an overwhelming majority (84%) of Texans oppose (73% strongly and 11% somewhat) legalizing the sale and use of recreational cocaine, heroin, meth and opioids, a reform that is supported by only 16% of the state's adult population (8% strongly and 8% somewhat).

Race/Ethnicity and Support for Nine Potential Criminal Justice Reforms

Figure 2 presents the level of support among the Lone Star State's three principal racial/ethnic groups (whites, Latinos, Blacks) for the same nine criminal justice reforms examined in the previous section.

Figure 2: Race/Ethnicity And Support For Nine Potential Criminal Justice Reforms
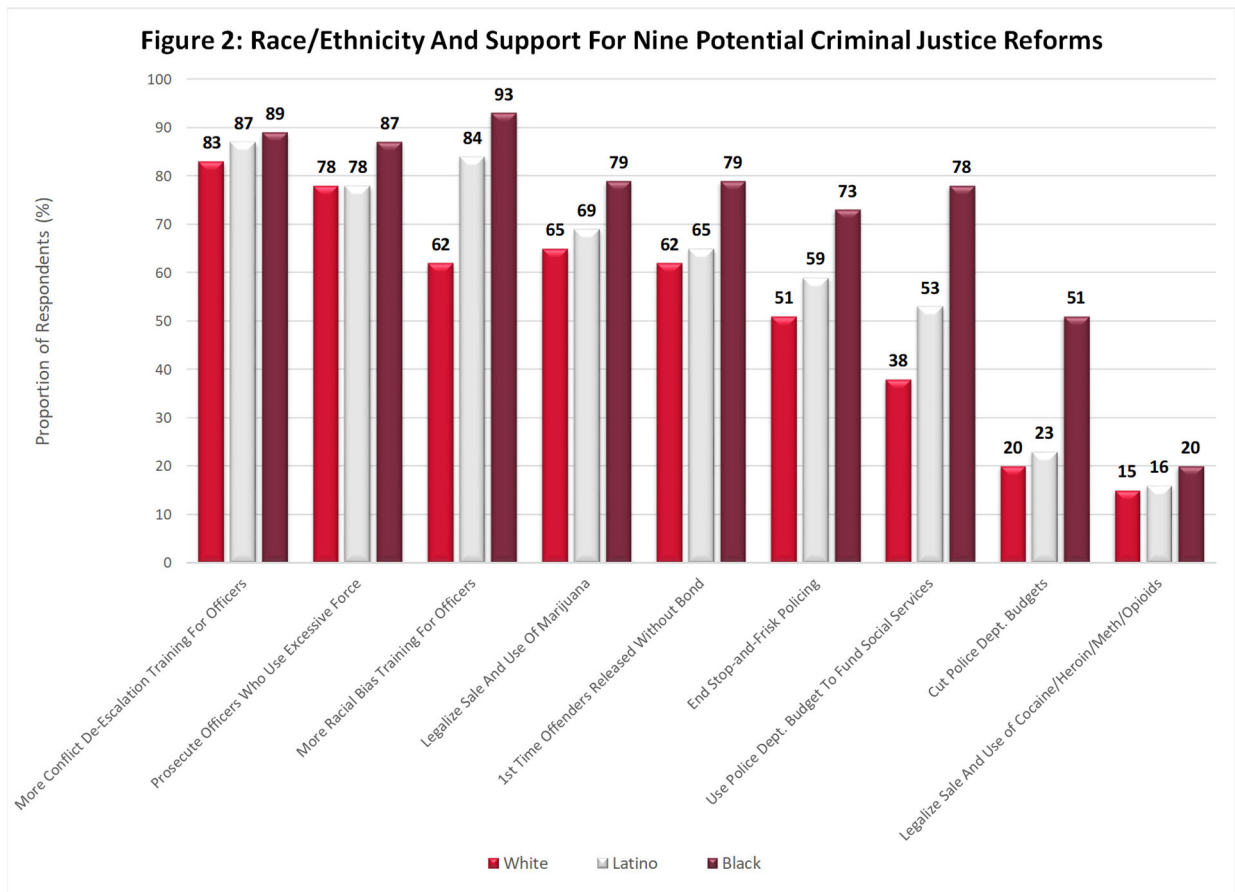
One notable pattern across all nine reforms is that a higher proportion of Black Texans than white and Latino Texans support every reform. The race/ethnicity gaps range from the statistically insignificant (e.g., in support of more conflict de-escalation training for officers and legalizing the sale of recreational cocaine, heroin, meth and opioids) to powerful differences of two types, one where Blacks and Latinos support the reform by substantially larger margins than whites and another where Blacks support the reform by substantially larger margins than both whites and Latinos.

The prime example of the first pattern is related to more racial bias training for police officers. This reform is supported by 93% of Blacks and 84% of Latinos, but is backed by only 62% of whites. A somewhat comparable reform is using some of the police department's budget to fund social services, which is supported by 78% of Blacks and 38% of whites, with Latinos equidistant between these two extremes at 53% support. And, in a similar vein, 73% of Blacks support an end to Stop-and-Frisk policing compared to 51% of whites, with Latinos once again in between at 59%.

Finally, in the case of four reforms, Black support is substantially greater than both white and Latino support, with the levels of support among the latter two groups not significantly different. Most noteworthy is the support of more than one-half of Blacks (51%) for cutting police department budgets compared to less than one-quarter of Latinos (23%) and whites (20%).

Blacks (79%) are also significantly more likely than either Latinos (69%) or whites (65%) to support legalizing the sale and use of recreational marijuana as well as significantly more likely than Latinos and whites to support the prosecution of officers who use excessive force, 87% vs. 78% and 78% respectively, and to support a reform through which first time offenders would be released without bond pending their trial, 79% vs. 65% and 62% respectively. In the case of these latter three reforms, it is important to note that in spite of the significant differences, large majorities of Blacks, Latinos and whites all support the reforms.

Partisan ID and Support for Nine Potential Criminal Justice Reforms

Figure 3 provides the distribution of support for the nine potential criminal justice reforms among Texans who identify as Democrats, Republicans, and Independents. A higher proportion of Democrats than Republicans supports every one of the nine reforms, a higher proportion of Independents than Republicans supports every one of the nine reforms, and a higher proportion of Democrats than Independents supports eight of the nine reforms. The one exception is the legalization of the sale and use of cocaine, heroin, meth and opioids, which slightly more Independents (20%) than Democrats (19%) support.

Figure 3: Partisan ID And Support For Nine Potential Criminal Justice Reforms
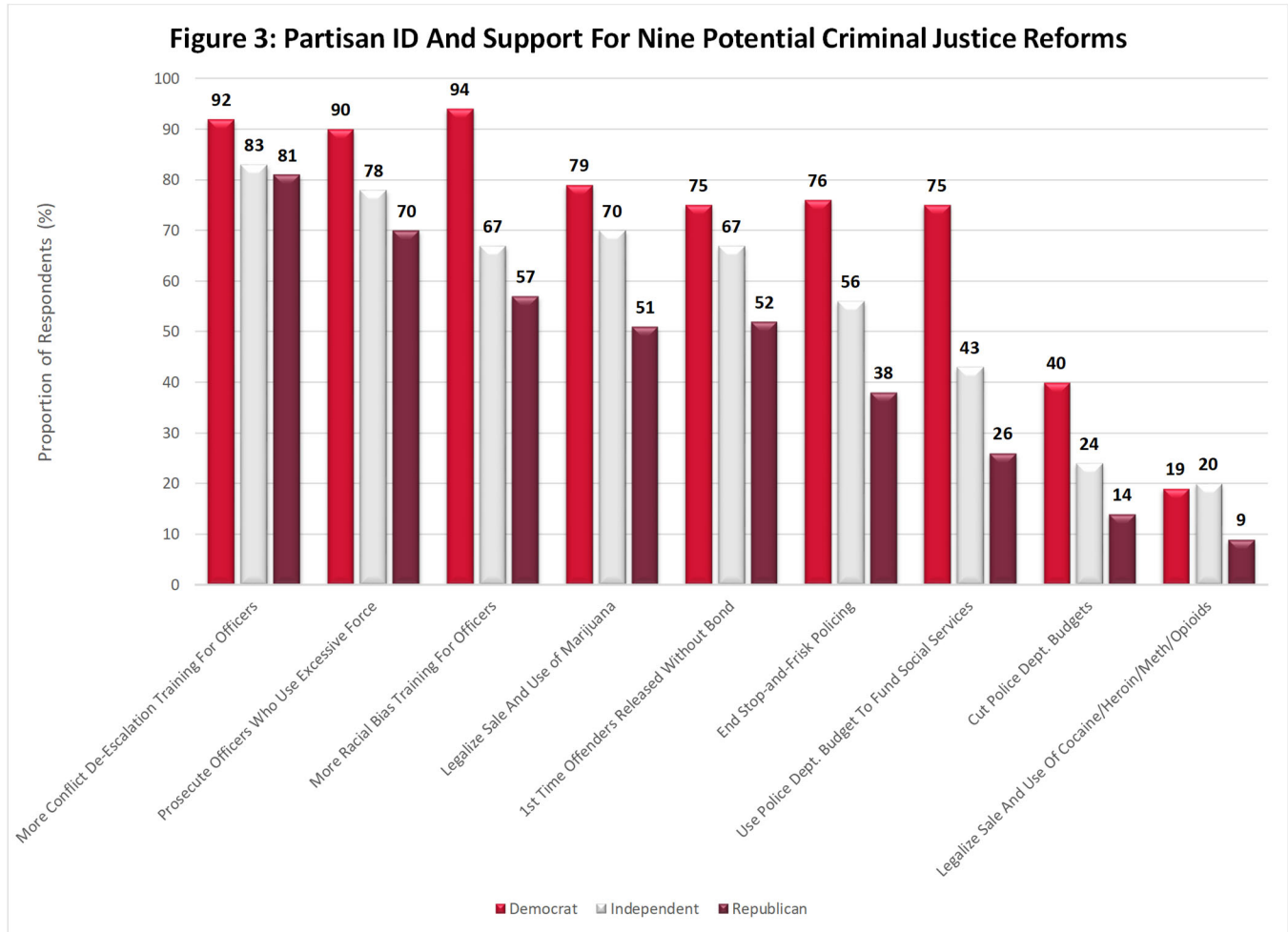
Even though the levels of support vary, there is a strong bipartisan consensus in support of three reforms, all of which are related to the training and conduct of police officers. Between eight in 10 Republicans (81%) and nine in 10 Democrats (92%) support more conflict de-escalation training for police officers. Between seven in 10 Republicans (70%) and nine in 10 Democrats (90%) support the prosecution of police officers who use excessive force. Finally, while the differences are much sharper between Democrats (94%) and Republicans (57%), there remains majority support among both Democrats and Republicans (as well as two-thirds of Independents) in favor of police officers receiving more racial bias training.

Two additional reforms enjoy the support of more than two-thirds of Democrats and Independents, but only bare majority support among Republicans. At least three quarters of Democrats (79% and 75%) and two-thirds of Independents (70% and 67%) support legalizing the sale and use of recreational marijuana and releasing first time offenders without pre-trial bond, respectively. These respective reforms were supported by only a narrow majority of Republicans, 51% and 52%, respectively.

Two reforms are supported by a large majority of Democrats but by only a minority of Republicans. While 76% of Democrats support an end to Stop-and-Frisk policing, only 38% of Republicans share this opinion (with 62% of Republicans opposing this reform). While 75% of Democrats support using a portion of the police department's budget to fund social services, only 26% of Republicans share this opinion (with 74% of Republicans opposing this reform).

Finally, two reforms do not enjoy majority support among either Democrats or Republicans. While only 40% of Democrats support cutting the budget of police departments, this proportion is still almost three times higher than the proportion of Republicans who support cutting police department budgets (14%). Finally, an overwhelming majority of Democrats and Republicans oppose legalizing the sale and use of cocaine, heroin, meth and opioids, a reform that is supported by only 19% of Democrats and 9% of Republicans.

Generation and Support for Nine Potential Criminal Justice Reforms

This section examines the support for the nine criminal justice reforms across the four generational groupings in which the Texas population falls: Silent Generation/Baby Boomer, Generation X, Millennials and Generation Z. Figure 4 displays the levels of support for Texans belonging to these four generations for the nine reforms.

Figure 4: Generation And Support For Nine Potential Criminal Justice Reforms
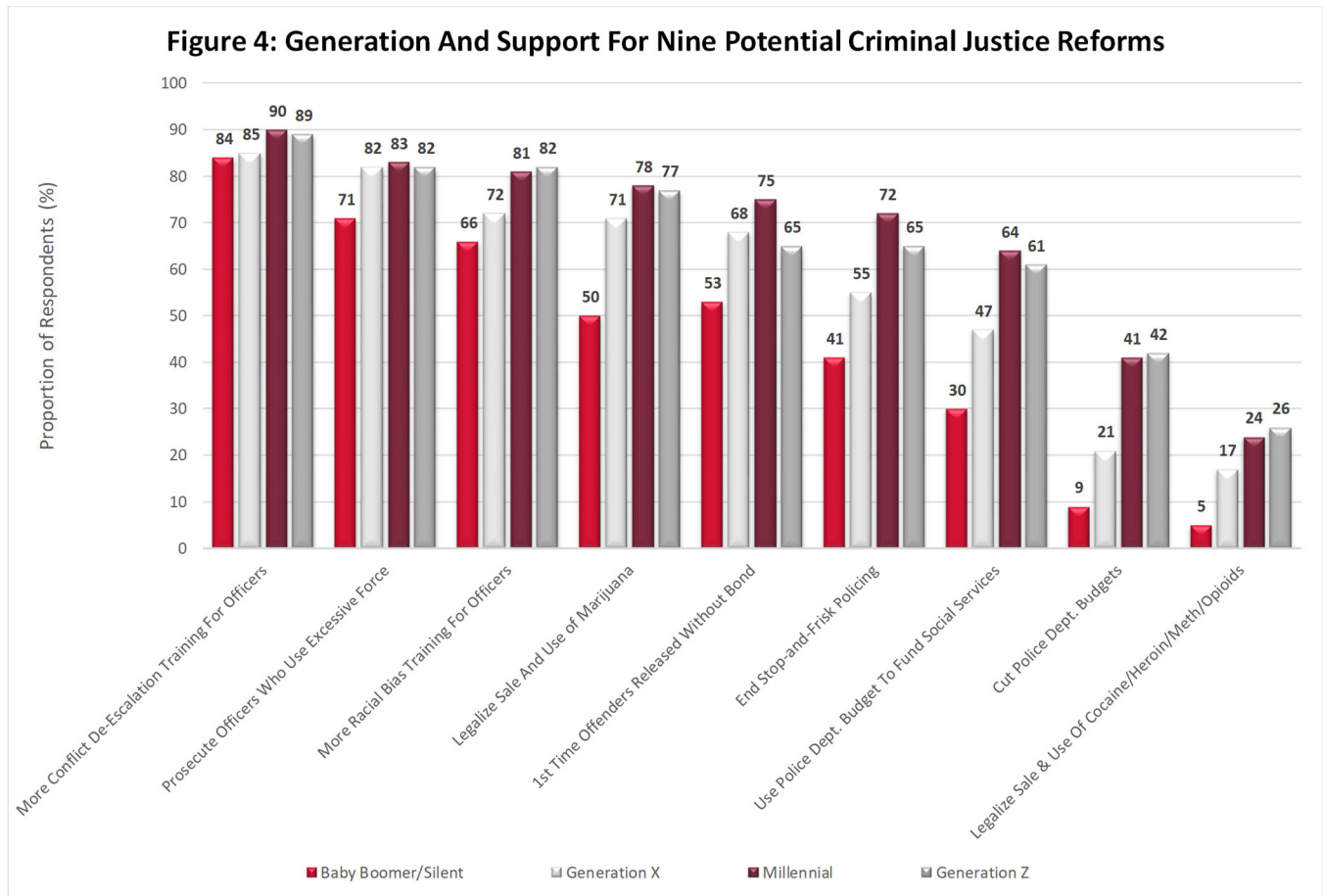
Substantial majorities from all generations support more conflict de-escalation training for police officers, the prosecution of police officers who use excessive force and the provision of more racial bias training for officers, at levels that range from 66% to 90%.

Two other reforms enjoy robust support among the three younger generations, but only bare majority support within the Silent Generation/Baby Boomer cohort. While between 65% (Generation Z) and 75% (Millennials) of the members of the younger generations support the pre-trial release of non-violent first time offenders without bond, this reform is backed by only 53% of the Silent Generation/Baby Boomer cohort. And while between 71% (Generation X) and 78% (Millennials) support the legalization of the sale and use of recreational marijuana, the Silent Generation/Baby Boomer cohort is evenly split, with 50% supporting and 50% opposing this reform. In a somewhat similar vein, robust majorities of Millennials (72%) and Generation Z (65%) support ending Stop-and-Frisk policing, something that is supported by a narrow majority of Generation X (55%) and only a minority of the Silent Generation/Baby Boomer cohort (41%).

More than half of the younger two generations support using some of the police department's budget to fund social services (64% of Millennials and 61% of Generation X). In sharp contrast, less than half of Generation X (47%) and less than a third of the Silent Generation/Baby Boomers (30%) are in favor of this reallocation of police department budgetary resources.

Two reforms fail to receive majority support across all four generations. Only two-fifths of Generation Z (42%) and of Millennials (41%) support cutting the budget of police departments, with proportions that drop to 21% among Generation X and to the single digits (9%) among the Silent Generation/Baby Boomers. And, only a quarter of Generation Z (26%) and Millennials (24%) support the legalization of recreational cocaine, heroin, meth and opioids, compared to 17% of Generation X and a mere 5% of the Silent Generation/Baby Boomers. That said, it is noteworthy that one in four of those Texans born since 1981 are in favor of the legalization of cocaine, heroin, meth and opioids.

Gender and Support for Nine Potential Criminal Justice Reforms

Figure 5 reveals a relative lack of substantively salient gender differences in regard to support for these nine reforms. In only one instance does the percentage difference between women and men reach the double digits (79% vs. 69%), in regard to support for more racial bias training for police officers. Another set of more modest differences are found in regard to drug legalization. In both cases, men are notably more supportive than women of legalizing the sale and use of recreational marijuana (71% to 63%) and of legalizing the sale and use of cocaine, heroin, meth and opioids (21% to 12%).

Figure 5: Gender And Support For Nine Criminal Justice Reforms
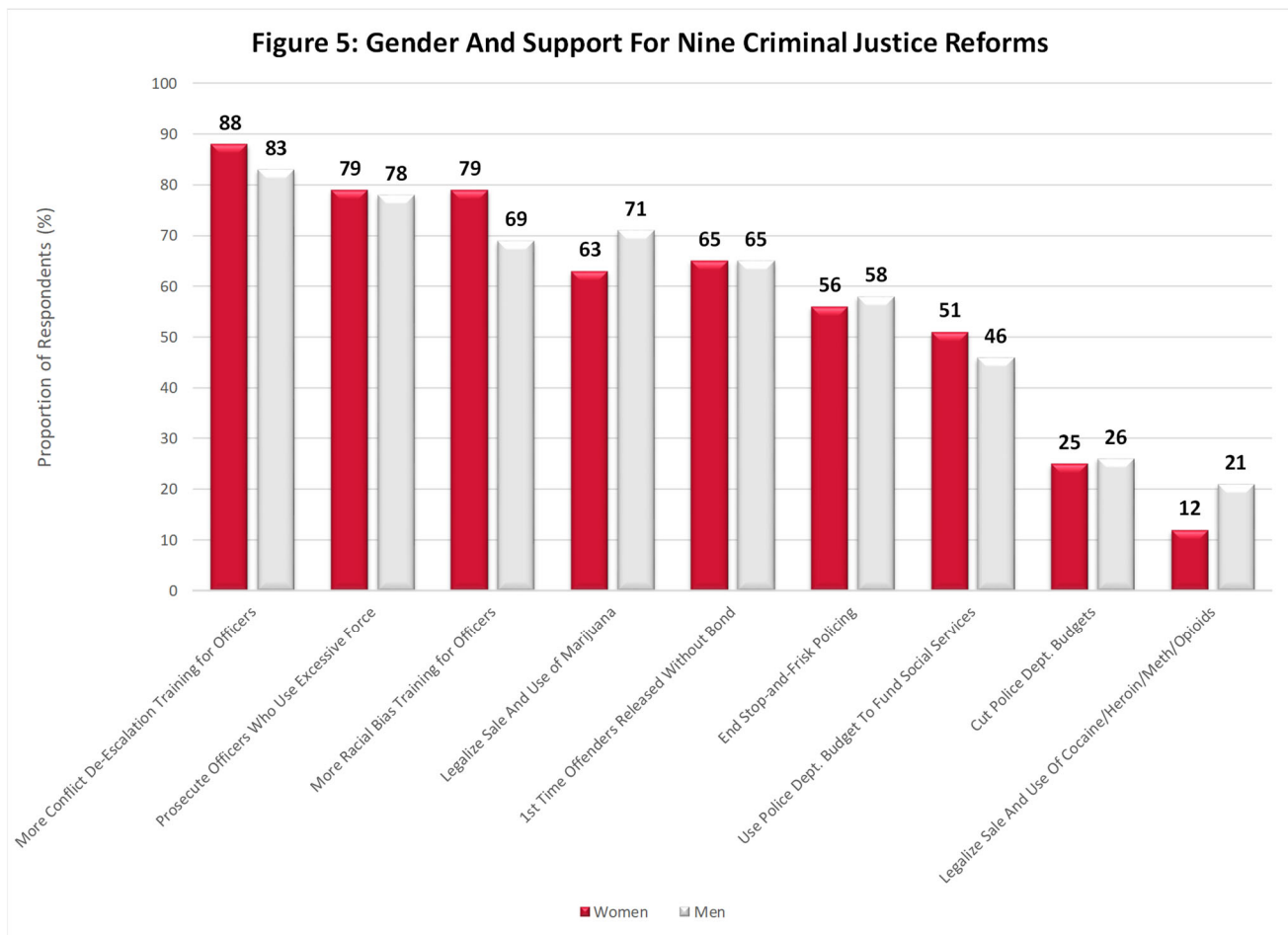
Attitudes and Opinions About the Police

The survey respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed (strongly agree or somewhat agree) or disagreed (strongly disagree or somewhat disagree) with four "pro-police" statements related to the police in their community.

1. The budget for the police in my community should be increased.
2. Because police officers have such dangerous jobs, we should not second-guess the decisions they make.
3. I trust the police in my community.
4. People today do not give our police officers the respect they deserve.

Figure 6 provides the proportion of Texans who agree (strongly and somewhat) and disagree (strongly and somewhat) with each of these four statements. More than two-thirds (71% and 70% respectively) of Texans agree that they trust the police in their community (28% strongly and 43% somewhat) and that people today do not give police officers the respect they deserve (38% strongly and 32% somewhat) while more than three-fifths (64%) also agree (26% strongly and 38% somewhat) that the budget for the police in their community should be increased. In contrast, 59% of Texans disagree (26% strongly and 33% somewhat) and 41% agree (14% strongly & 27% somewhat) that because police officers have such dangerous jobs, we should not second-guess the decisions they make.

Figure 6: Attitudes And Opinions About The Police
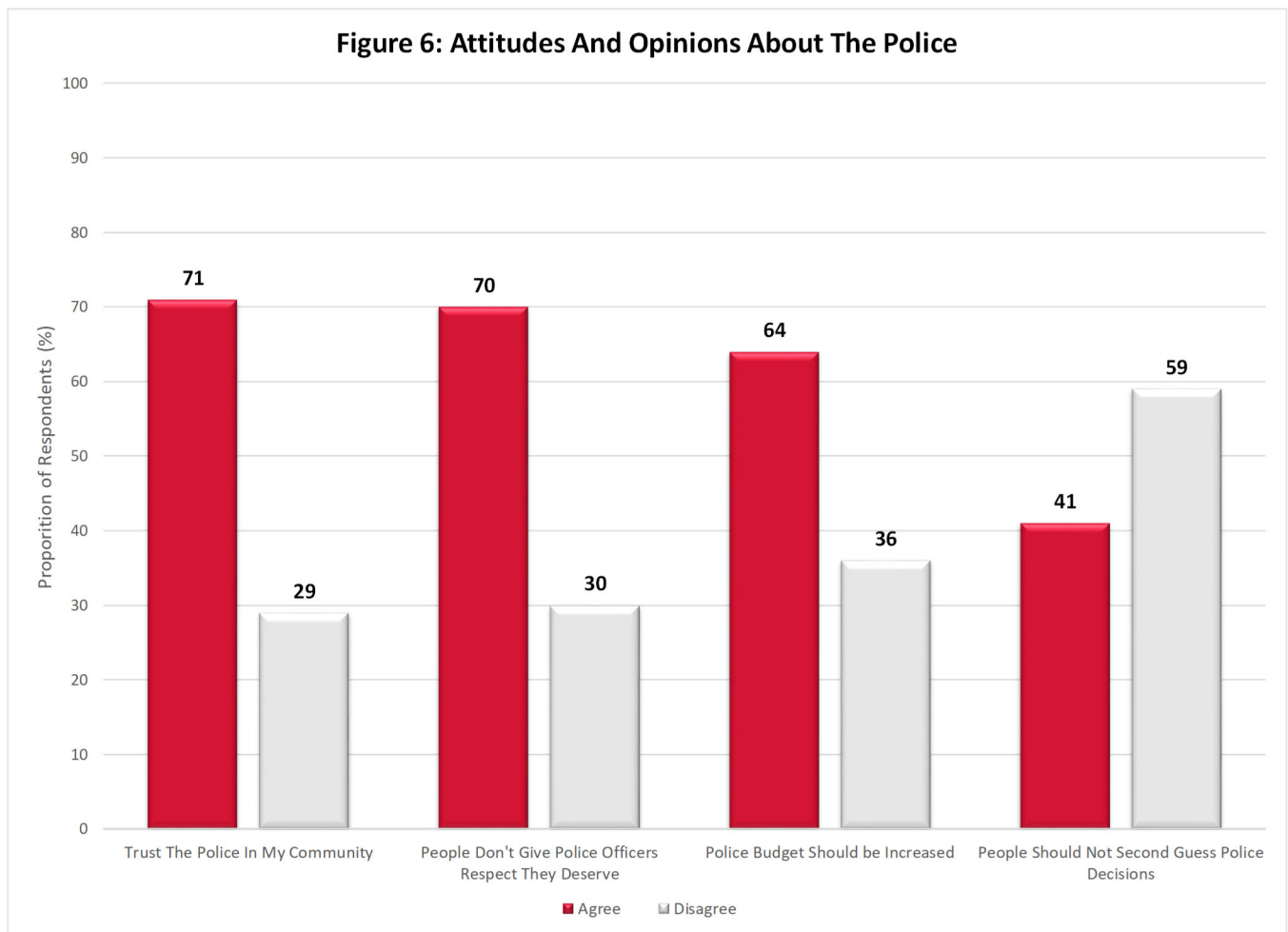
Race/Ethnicity & Attitudes and Opinions About the Police

Figure 7 displays the attitudes and opinions of white, Latino and Black Texans towards the police along these four "pro-police" dimensions. Three patterns are clear. First, whites agree with all four of these four "pro-police" statements more than either Latinos or Blacks. Second, Blacks agree less (i.e., disagree more) with these four "pro-police" statements than either Latinos or whites. Third, Latinos agree with all four of these "pro-police" statements more than Blacks and less than whites.

Figure 7: Race/Ethnicity And Attitudes And Opinions About The Police: Percentage Agreeing With The Statement
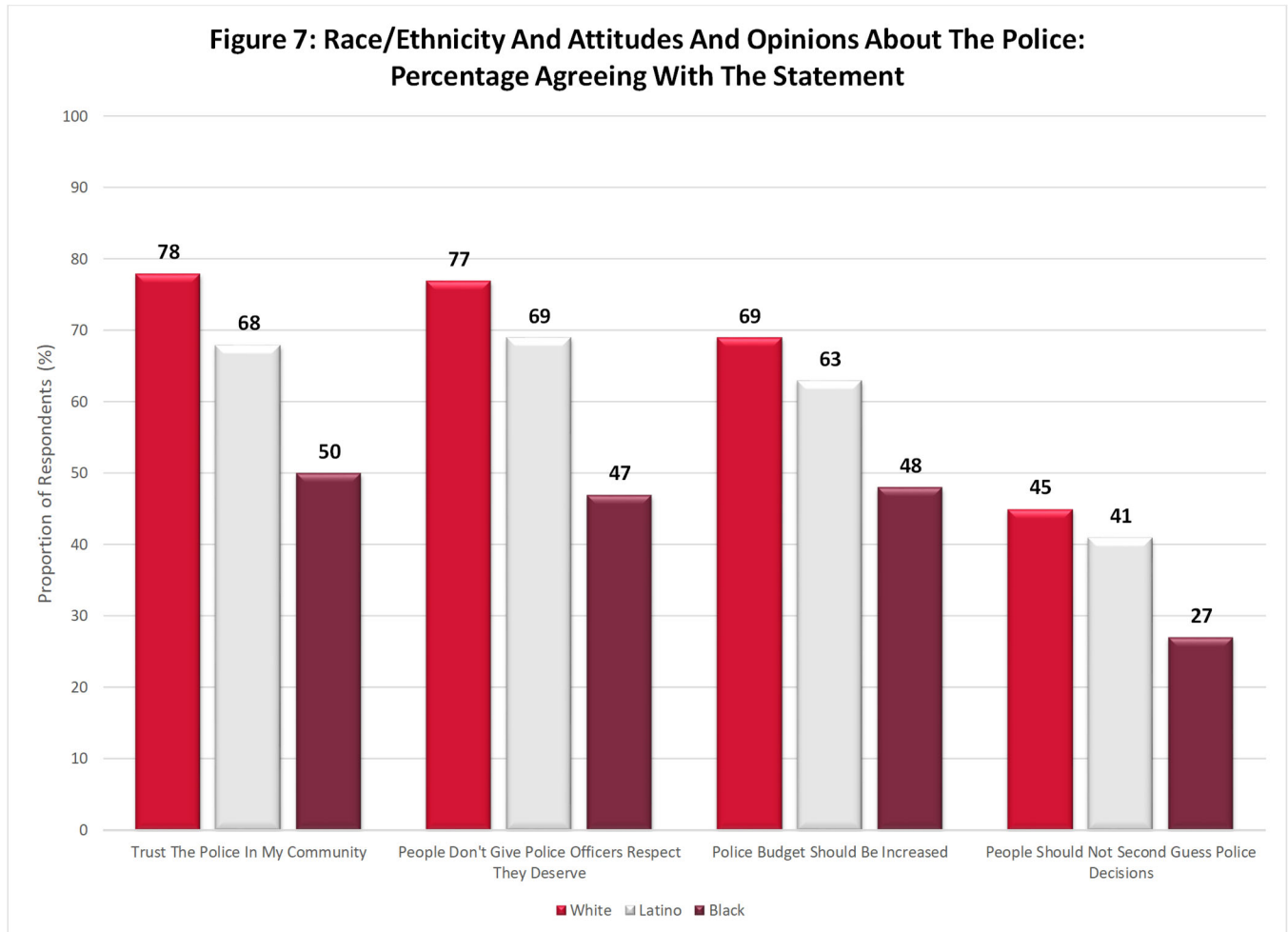
Several of the racial/ethnic differences are substantial. For instance, 78% of whites and 68% of Latinos trust the police in their community compared to only 50% of Blacks. And while 77% of whites and 69% of Latinos agree that people don't give police the respect they deserve, only 47% of African Americans share that opinion. Finally, while 69% of whites and 63% of Latinos agree that the budget for the police in their community should be increased, only 48% of Blacks concur with them.

The one statement with which no racial/ethnic majority was in agreement was that people shouldn't second-guess the police. Still, while this position only yielded minority support among all three racial/ethnic groups, a significantly larger proportion of whites (45%) and Latinos (41%) agreed with it than did Blacks (27%).

Partisan ID & Attitudes and Opinions About the Police

Figure 8 displays the attitudes and opinions of Democrats, Independents and Republicans towards the police along these four "pro-police" dimensions. Three patterns are clear. First, Republicans agree with all four of these "pro-police" statements more than do Independents, and, especially, Democrats. Second, Democrats agree less (i.e., disagree more) with these four statements than do Republicans. Third, with one exception (related to Democrats in regard to second-guessing police decisions), Independents occupy an intermediate point between the two partisan groups, more likely to agree with the "pro-police" statements than Democrats and less likely to agree with them than Republicans.

Figure 8: Partisan ID And Attitudes And Opinions About The Police: Percentage Agreeing With The Statement
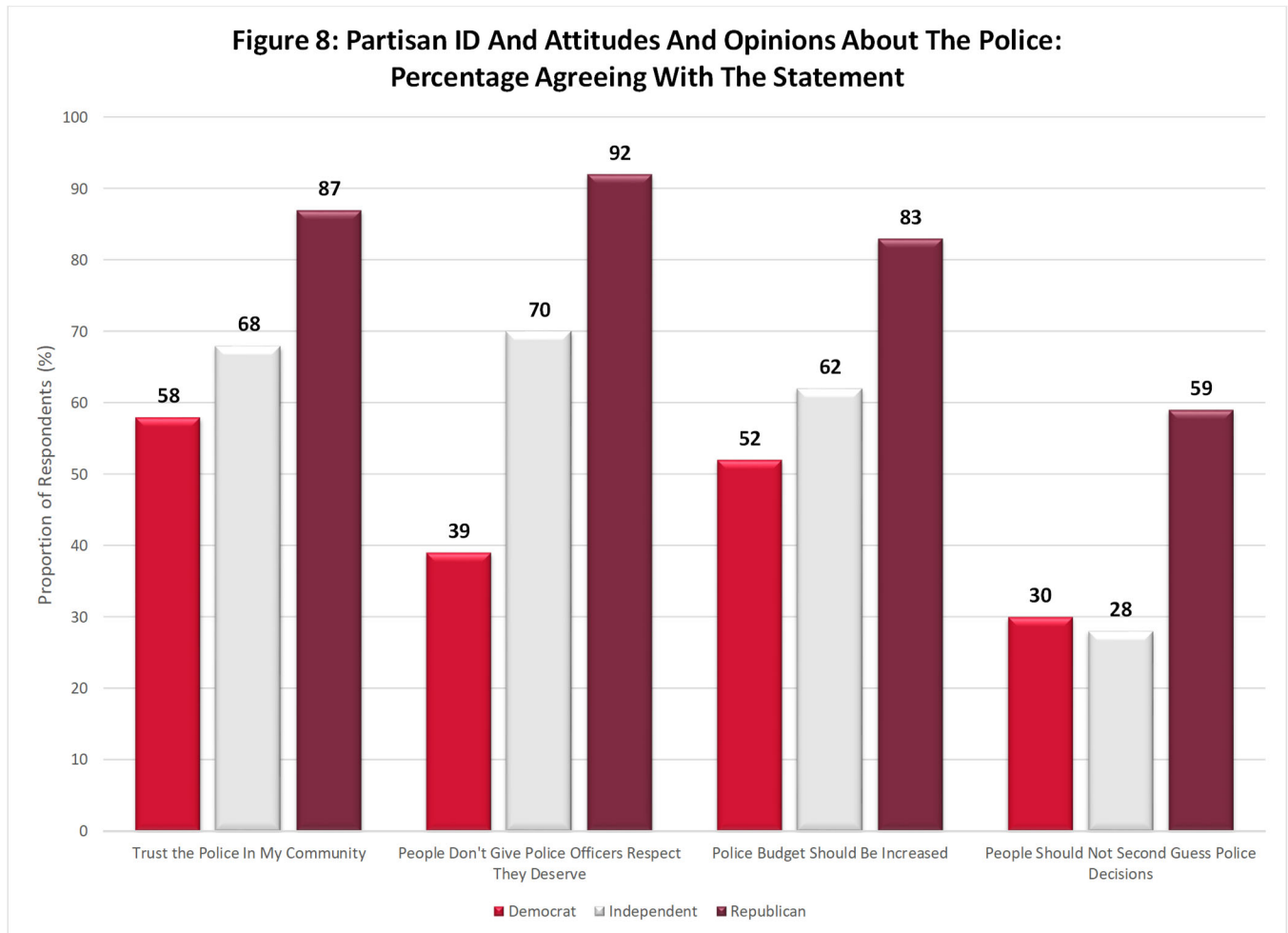
The only statement on which there is robust majority bipartisan agreement is that the respondent trusts the police in their community. Almost nine out of 10 Republicans (87%), 68% of Independents and 58% of Democrats agree with this statement. The statement with the second most bipartisan support is to increase the budget of the police in the respondent's community. More than eight out of then Republicans (83%) agree with this statement, as do 62% of Independents and a narrow majority of Democrats (52%).

The sharpest partisan differences exist with the statement that people don't give police the respect they deserve. While 92% of Republicans and 70% of Independents agree with this statement, only a

minority of Democrats (39%) agrees, signifying that more than three-fifths of Democrats (61%) do not agree that people do not give police officers the respect they deserve.

Finally, while 59% of Republicans agree that people should not second-guess the decisions that police officers make, this opinion is shared by less than one-third of Democrats (30%) and Independents (28%).

Generation & Attitudes and Opinions About the Police

Figure 9 displays the level of agreement with these four "pro-police" statements among the four generational groups present in the survey population: Silent Generation/Baby Boomer, Generation X, Millennial, Generation Z. Three noteworthy trends can be observed in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Generation And Attitudes And Opinions About The Police: Percentage Agreeing With The Statement
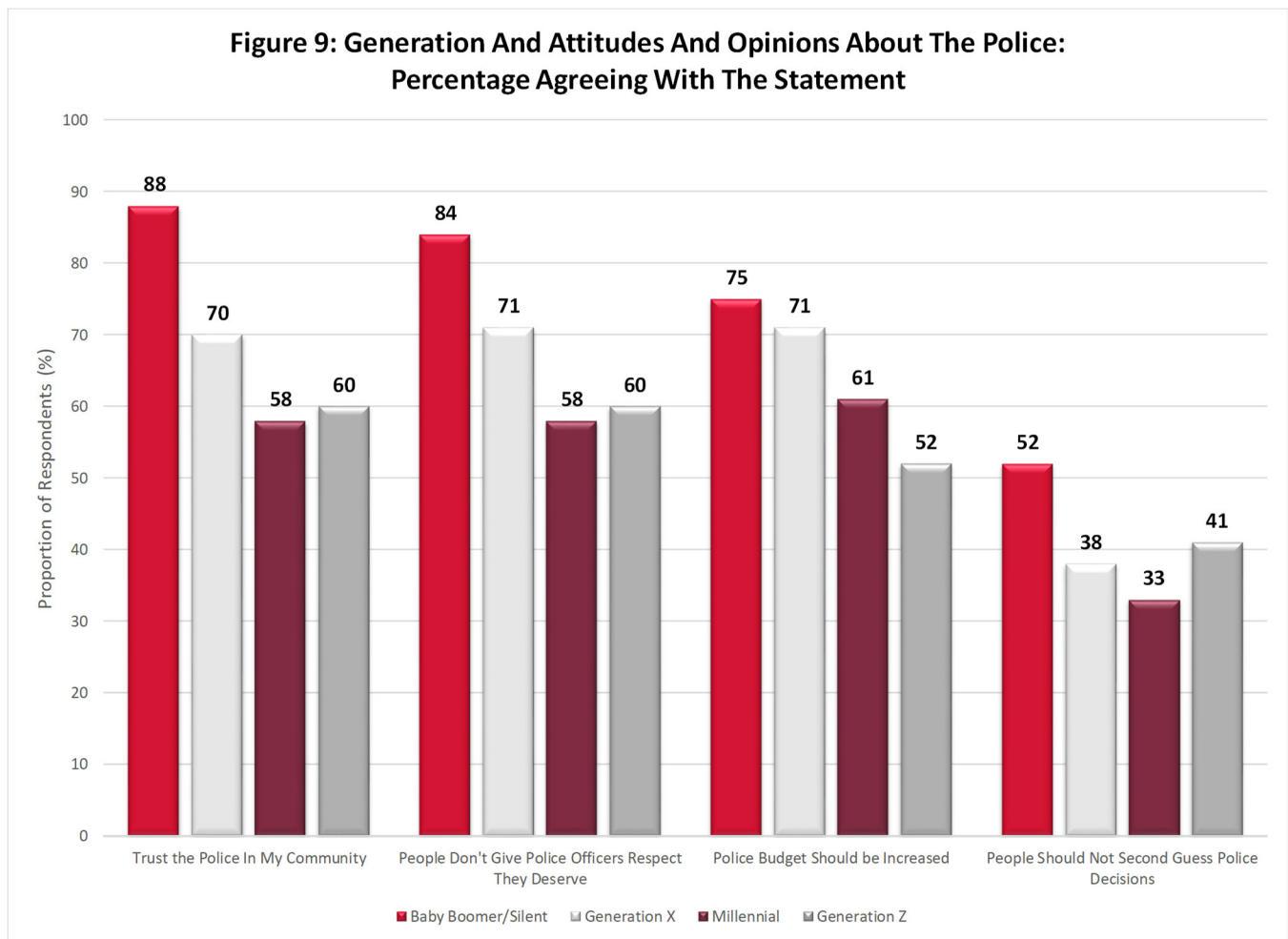
First, members of the Silent Generation/Baby Boomer cohort agree with all four of these "pro-police" statements more than do the members of all three other generational groups, with the gap between them and the next closest generation ranging from substantial (e.g., trust in the police in their community) to marginal (e.g., police budget should be increased).

Second, with one exception, the members of Generation X tend to occupy an intermediate position, less in agreement with the "pro-police" statements than their elders, but more in agreement than their juniors.

Third, there exist no consistent differences in "pro-police" sentiment between Millennials and Generation Z. In two cases (trust in police and respect for police) the two generations have functionally identical levels of agreement, while for the two other statements each one alternates in their level of agreement, being higher than the other in one case and lower than the other in the other case.

Fourth, with one exception, a majority of all four generations either agrees with or does not agree with the "pro-police" statements. The one exception is the statement that people should not second-guess police decisions which majorities of all three youngest generations disagree with (ranging from 67% to 59%), but which a narrow majority (52%) of the Silent Generation/Baby Boomers agrees with.

Gender & Attitudes and Opinions About the Police

Figure 10 provides the level of agreement with these four "pro-police" statements among women and men. The figure reveals no salient gender differences in agreement with the four "pro-police" statements.

Figure 10: Gender And Attitudes And Opinions About The Police: Percentage Agreeing With The Statement
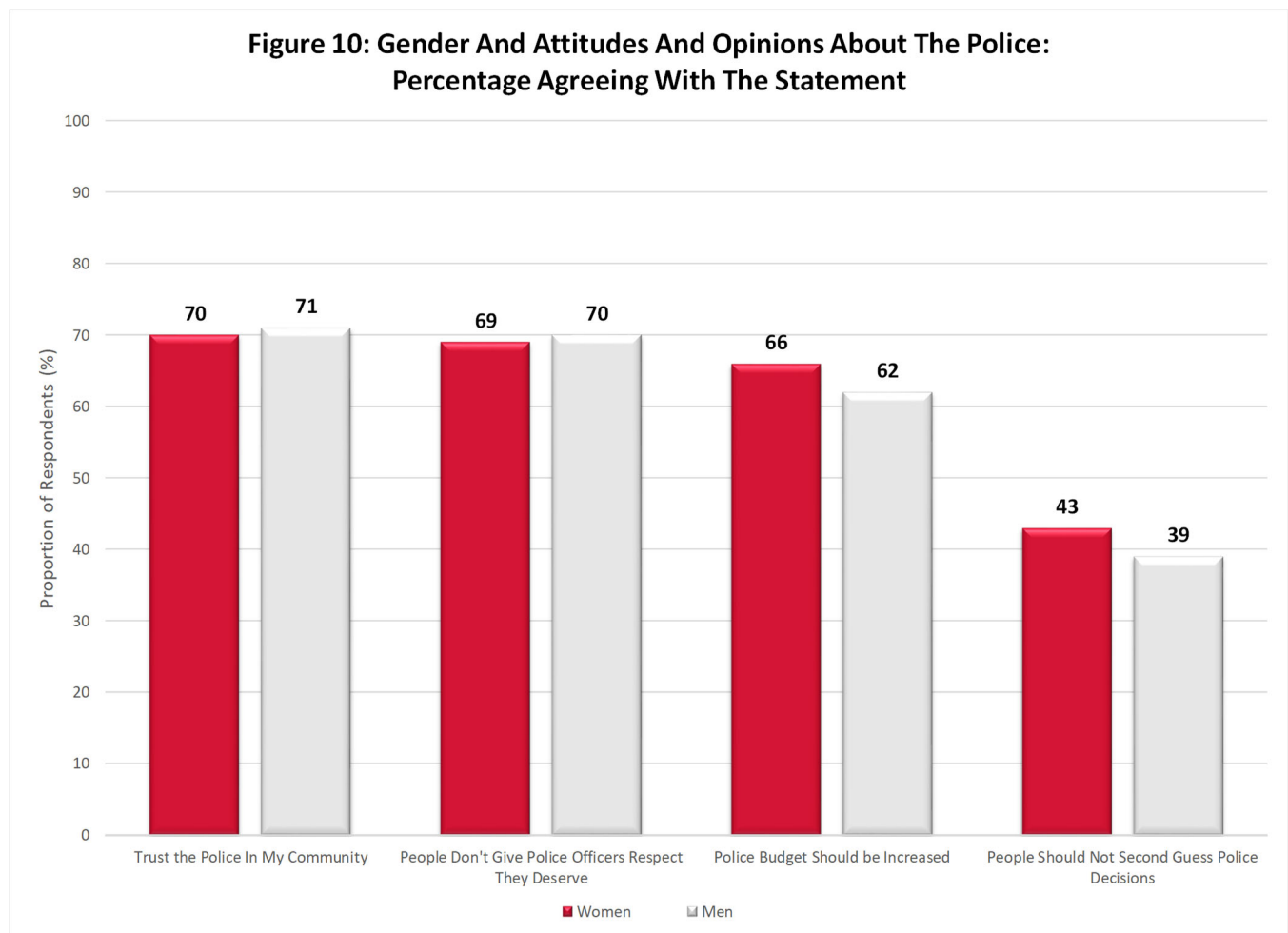
The Perceived Impact of Three Types of Bail Reform on Crime

In the survey, respondents were asked what impact the believed three bail reform policies would have in their community. The response options were: would reduce crime a lot, would reduce crime somewhat, would not reduce crime, and don't know. Here we focus on the distribution of the population among the first three response options. The three proposed bail reform policies are as follows:

1. Prevent judges from allowing no-cash bail (where the suspect is released without paying bail, promising to later appear in court).
2. Prevent suspects with previous convictions for violent crimes from being released on bail.
3. Prevent suspects who have been arrested while currently out on bail and awaiting trial to again be released on bail.

Figure 11 indicates that more than four-fifths (82%) of Texans believe that a policy that prevents suspects with previous convictions for violent crimes from being released on bail would reduce crime, with 47% believing this reform would reduce crime a lot and 35% believing it would reduce crime somewhat.

Figure 11: Impact Of 3 Types Of Bail Reform On Crime In The Eyes Of The Public
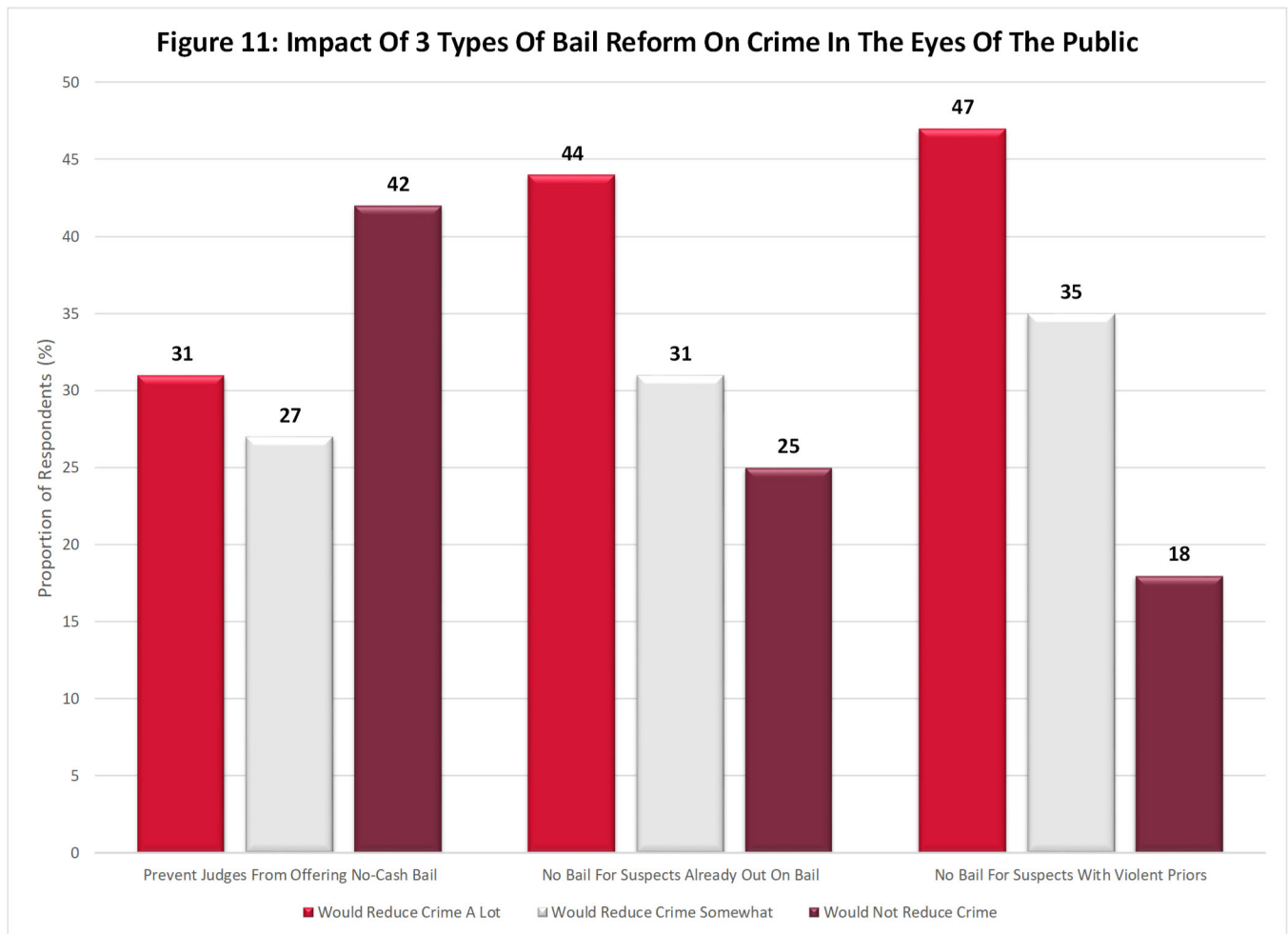
Three-quarters (75%) of Texans also believe that a policy that would prevent suspects who have been arrested while currently out on bail to again be released on bail again would reduce crime, with 44% believing this reform would reduce crime a lot and 31% believing it would reduce crime somewhat.

Finally, a small majority (58%) of Texans believe that preventing judges from offering no-cash bail would reduce crime, with 31% believing the reform would reduce crime a lot and 27% believing it would reduce crime somewhat. Contrary to the prior two reforms, a plurality (42%) of Texans believes that this reform would not reduce crime at all.

Race/Ethnicity & The Impact of Three Types of Bail Reform on Crime

Table 1 provides the opinions of white, Latino and Black Texans regarding the impact of the three potential bail reforms on crime. There do not exist any highly salient racial/ethnic differences related to the impact of a bail reform that would prevent judges from offering no-cash bail, although white Texans were of the opinion that it would have a greater impact on reducing crime than either Latino or Black Texans. All together substantial proportions of all racial/ethnic groups do not believe this reform would reduce crime, proportions that in all three cases are greater than the proportion who believe it would reduce crime a lot.

Table 1: Race/Ethnicity And The Impact Of Three Bail Reforms On Crime

Bail Reform	Impact on Crime	White	Latino	Black
Prevent Judges From Offering No-Cash Bail	Would Reduce Crime A Lot	34	28	27
	Would Reduce Crime Somewhat	28	25	30
	Would Not Reduce Crime	38	47	43
No Bail For Suspects Already Out on Bail	Would Reduce Crime A Lot	50	39	35
	Would Reduce Crime Somewhat	31	30	35
	Would Not Reduce Crime	19	31	30
No Bail for Suspects With Prior Convictions for Violence	Would Reduce Crime A Lot	53	45	39
	Would Reduce Crime Somewhat	35	33	37
	Would Not Reduce Crime	12	22	24

More than two-thirds of all three racial/ethnic groups believe that preventing suspects who are arrested while out on bail from being released on bail again will reduce crime, with 81% of white Texans believing it would either reduce crime a lot (50%) or somewhat (31%), followed by 70% of Blacks (35% a lot and 35% somewhat) and by 69% of Latinos (39% a lot and 30% somewhat). While whites are significantly more likely to believe in the efficacy of this reform in reducing crime than either Blacks or Latinos, large majorities of all three ethnic/racial groups are of the opinion that this reform would be effective for the reduction of crime.

More than three-fourths of all three racial ethnic groups believe that preventing suspects who have prior convictions for violent crimes from being released on bail will reduce crime, with 88% of whites believing it would either reduce crime a lot (53%) or somewhat (35%), followed by 78% of Latinos (45% a lot and 33% somewhat) and by 76% of Blacks (39% a lot and 37% somewhat). While whites are significantly more likely to believe in the efficacy of this reform in reducing crime than Blacks or Latinos, large majorities of all three ethnic/racial groups are of the opinion that this reform would be efficacious for the reduction of crime.

Partisan ID & The Impact of Three Types of Bail Reform on Crime

The sharpest partisan differences in regard to the impact of these three bail reforms on crime is found for the reform that would prevent judges from offering no-cash bail, which one-half of Democrats (50%) believe would not reduce crime compared to 34% of Republicans (see Table 2).

Table 2: Partisan ID And The Impact Of Three Bail Reforms On Crime

Bail Reform	Impact on Crime	Democrat	Independent	Republican
Prevent Judges From Offering No-Cash Bail	Would Reduce Crime A Lot	20	36	39
	Would Reduce Crime Somewhat	30	27	27
	Would Not Reduce Crime	50	37	34
No Bail For Suspects Already Out On Bail	Would Reduce Crime A Lot	31	45	57
	Would Reduce Crime Somewhat	39	32	22
	Would Not Reduce Crime	30	23	21
No Bail for Suspects With Prior Convictions for Violence	Would Reduce Crime A Lot	38	48	60
	Would Reduce Crime Somewhat	41	36	28
	Would Not Reduce Crime	21	16	12

While Democrats are less likely to believe the other two reforms would reduce crime than Republicans, overwhelming majorities of Democrats still support these reforms. Seventy percent (31% a lot and 39% somewhat) of Democrats believe that banning bail for suspects who are already out on bail would reduce crime, and 79% (38% a lot and 41% somewhat) believe that banning bail for suspects with a prior conviction for a violent crime would reduce crime. This compares to Republican support of these reforms at 79% (57% a lot and 22% somewhat) and 88% (60% a lot and 28% somewhat), respectively.

Generation & The Impact of Three Types of Bail Reform on Crime

The most noteworthy generational differences in regard to the perceived impact of these three bail reforms on crime is seen in the contrast between the two older generations (Baby Boomer/Silent Generation and Generation X) and the younger two generations (Generation Z and Millennials) (see Table 3) about whether the reform would reduce crime a lot. While 57% of the Baby Boomer/Silent Generation cohort and 45% of Generation X believe that preventing suspects who are arrested while out on bail from being released on bail again would reduce crime a lot, only 32% of Millennials and 31% of Generation Z share this opinion. And, while 62% of the Baby Boomer/Silent Generation cohort and 51% of Generation X believe that preventing suspects who have a prior conviction for violent crime from being released on bail would reduce crime a lot, only 34% of Millennials and 31% of Generation Z share this opinion.

Table 3: Generation And The Impact Of Three Bail Reforms On Crime

Bail Reform	Impact on Crime	Baby Boomer/Silent	Generation X	Millennial	Generation Z
Prevent Judges From Offering No-Cash Bail	Would Reduce Crime A Lot	40	30	23	27
	Would Reduce Crime Somewhat	21	23	34	38
	Would Not Reduce Crime	39	47	43	35
No Bail For Suspects Already Out on Bail	Would Reduce Crime A Lot	57	45	32	31
	Would Reduce Crime Somewhat	20	31	41	37
	Would Not Reduce Crime	23	24	27	32
No Bail for Suspects With Prior Convictions for Violence	Would Reduce Crime A Lot	62	51	34	31
	Would Reduce Crime Somewhat	25	34	44	43
	Would Not Reduce Crime	13	15	22	26

Gender & The Impact of Three Types of Bail Reform on Crime

Table 4 underscores that no salient gender differences exist in regard to the belief by female and male Texans regarding the impact of these three potential bail reforms on crime.

Table 4: Gender And The Impact Of Three Bail Reforms On Crime

Bail Reform	Impact on Crime	Women	Men
Prevent Judges From Offering No-Cash Bail	Would Reduce Crime A Lot	30	32
	Would Reduce Crime Somewhat	27	27
	Would Not Reduce Crime	43	41
No Bail For Suspects Already Out on Bail	Would Reduce Crime A Lot	47	48
	Would Reduce Crime Somewhat	37	33
	Would Not Reduce Crime	16	19
No Bail for Suspects With Prior Convictions for Violence	Would Reduce Crime A Lot	41	46
	Would Reduce Crime Somewhat	34	29
	Would Not Reduce Crime	25	25

Race/Ethnicity & Equity in the Criminal Justice System

The survey respondents were asked three batteries of three questions each about the extent to which they believed Black, Latino and white Texans are treated differently by the Texas criminal justice system, both generally and in regard to specific interactions with Texas police officers. They were asked the extent to which they agreed (strongly or somewhat) or disagreed (strongly or somewhat) with the following nine statements (they also had the option of answering don't know).
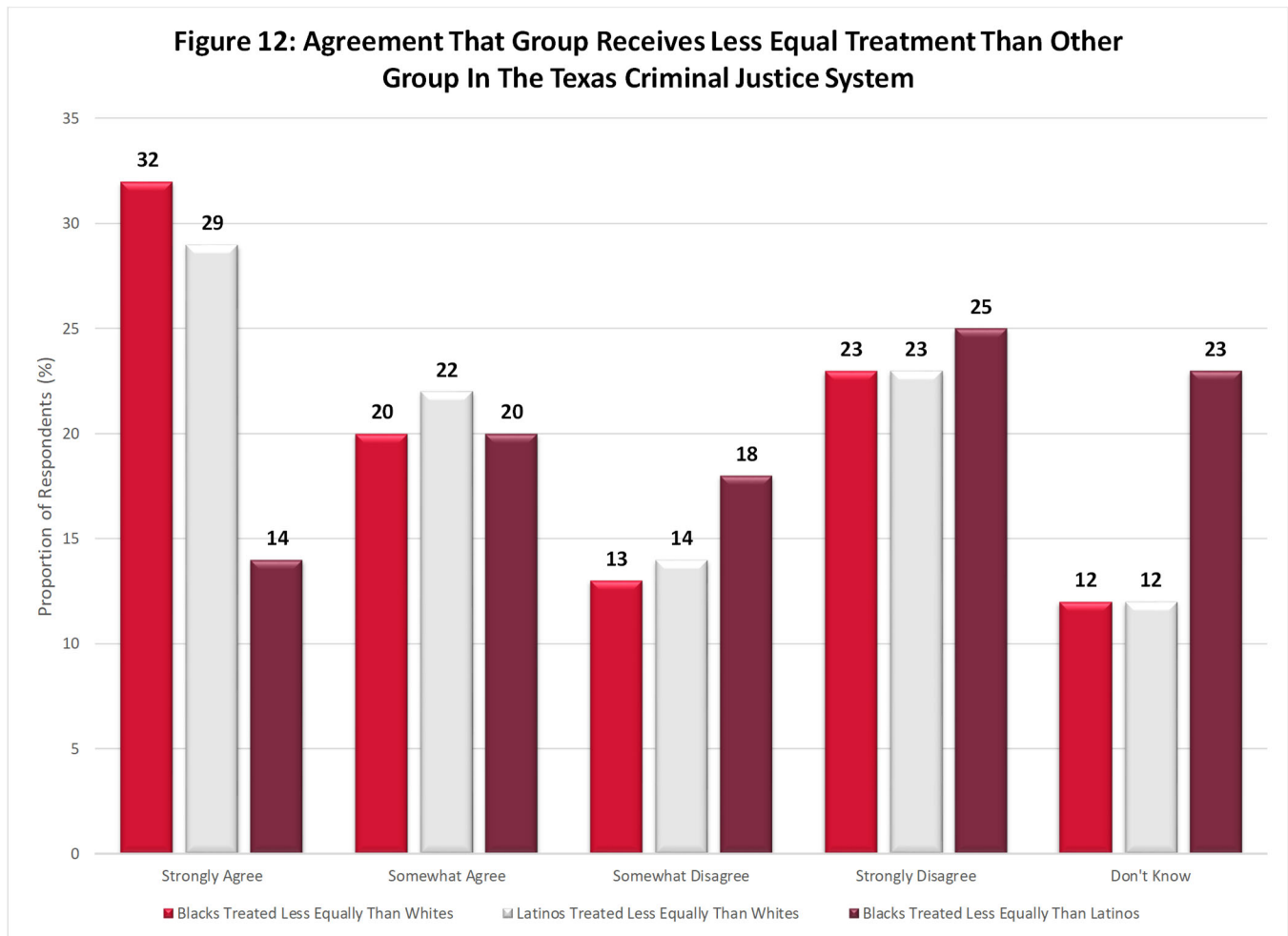
1. Blacks receive less equal treatment than whites in the Texas criminal justice system.
2. Latinos receive less equal treatment than whites in the Texas criminal justice system.
3. Blacks receive less equal treatment than Latinos in the Texas criminal justice system.

4. Police in Texas treat Blacks less favorably than whites.
5. Police in Texas treat Latinos less favorably than whites.
6. Police in Texas treat Blacks less favorably than Latinos.

7. Texas police officers are more likely to respond with force when confronting Black suspects than when confronting white suspects.
8. Texas police officers are more likely to respond with force when confronting Latino suspects than when confronting white suspects.
9. Texas police officers are more likely to respond with force when confronting Black suspects than when confronting Latino suspects.

Race/Ethnicity & Treatment in the Texas Criminal Justice System

Figure 12 contains the distribution of the responses to the first battery of three statements related to the treatment of the different racial/ethnic groups in the Texas criminal justice system.

Figure 12: Agreement That Group Receives Less Equal Treatment Than Other Group In The Texas Criminal Justice System
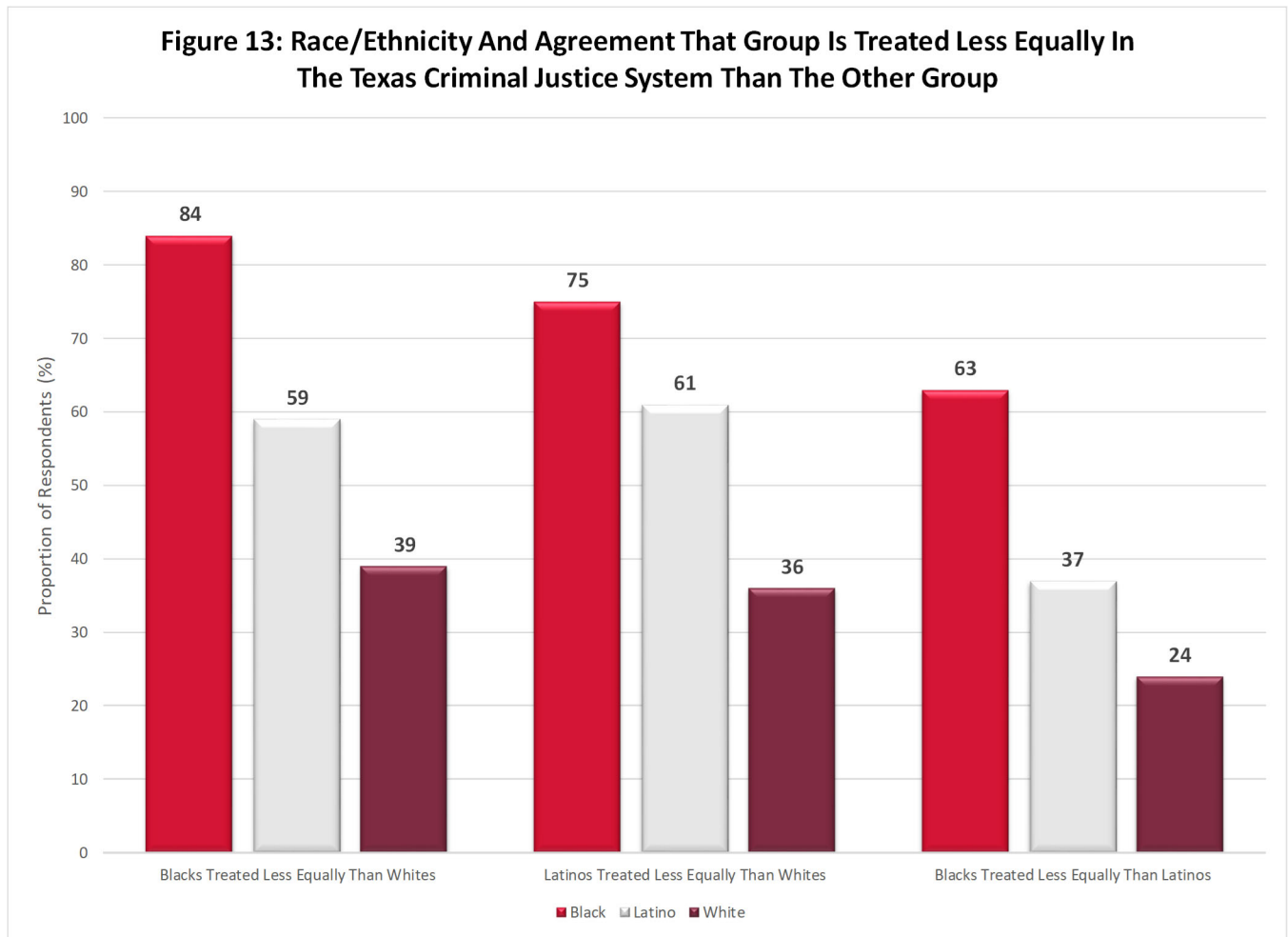
Slightly more than half (52%) of Texans agree (32% strongly and 20% somewhat) that Blacks receive less equal treatment than whites in the Texas criminal justice system. A little more than one-third (36%) of Texans disagree with this statement (23% strongly and 13% somewhat), while 12% answered don't know.

Slightly more than half (51%) of Texans agree (29% strongly and 22% somewhat) that Latinos receive less equal treatment than whites in the Texas criminal justice system. A little more than one-third (37%) of Texans disagree with this statement (23% strongly and 14% somewhat), while 12% answered don't know.

In contrast to the nearly identical responses to the former two statements, only one-third (34%) of Texans agree (14% strongly and 20% somewhat) that Blacks receive less equal treatment than Latinos in the Texas criminal justice system. A slightly larger proportion of Texans (43%) disagrees with this statement (25% strongly and 18% somewhat), while almost twice as many respondents answered don't know (23%) than for the prior two statements (12% each).

Figure 13 provides the level of agreement (strongly and somewhat) with these three statements among Black, Latino and white Texans (retaining the don't know responses in the denominator).

Figure 13: Race/Ethnicity And Agreement That Group Is Treated Less Equally In The Texas Criminal Justice System Than The Other Group

More than twice as many Black Texans (84%) than white Texans (39%) agree that Blacks receive less equal treatment in the Texas criminal justice system than whites. Latinos occupy a midpoint between these two extremes, with 59% agreeing with the statement. Of note, more than two-thirds (67%) of Blacks strongly agree with this statement, compared to only 23% of whites and 33% of Latinos.

A similar, albeit slightly more diminished, pattern is observed in relation to the statement that Latinos receive less equal treatment in the Texas criminal justice system than whites. More than twice as many Black Texans (75%) than white Texans (36%) agree with this statement, with Latinos (61%) in between, but notably more proximate to Black Texans than to white Texans in this instance.

Finally, 63% of Black Texans, but only 37% of Latino Texans and 24% of white Texans agree that Blacks receive less equal treatment in the Texas criminal justice system than Latinos. That is, while three-fifths of Latinos agree that both Blacks and Latinos receive less equal treatment than whites, only two-fifths of Latinos agree that Blacks receive less equal treatment than Latinos in the Texas criminal justice system.

Race/Ethnicity & Treatment by Police in Texas

Figure 14 contains the distribution of the responses to the second battery of three statements related to the treatment of the different racial/ethnic groups by the police in Texas.

Figure 14: Agreement That Group Is Treated Less Favorably By Police In Texas Than Other Group
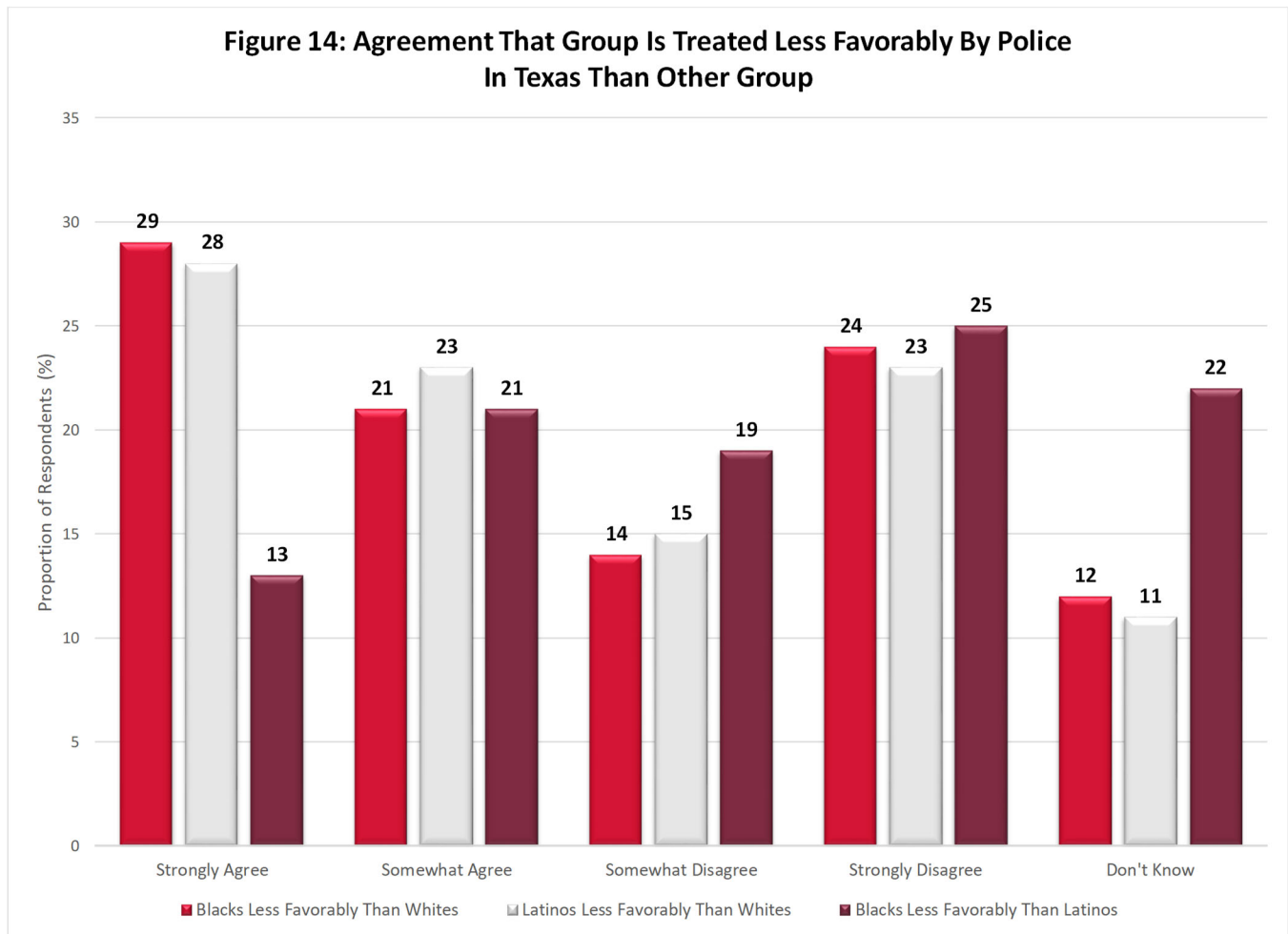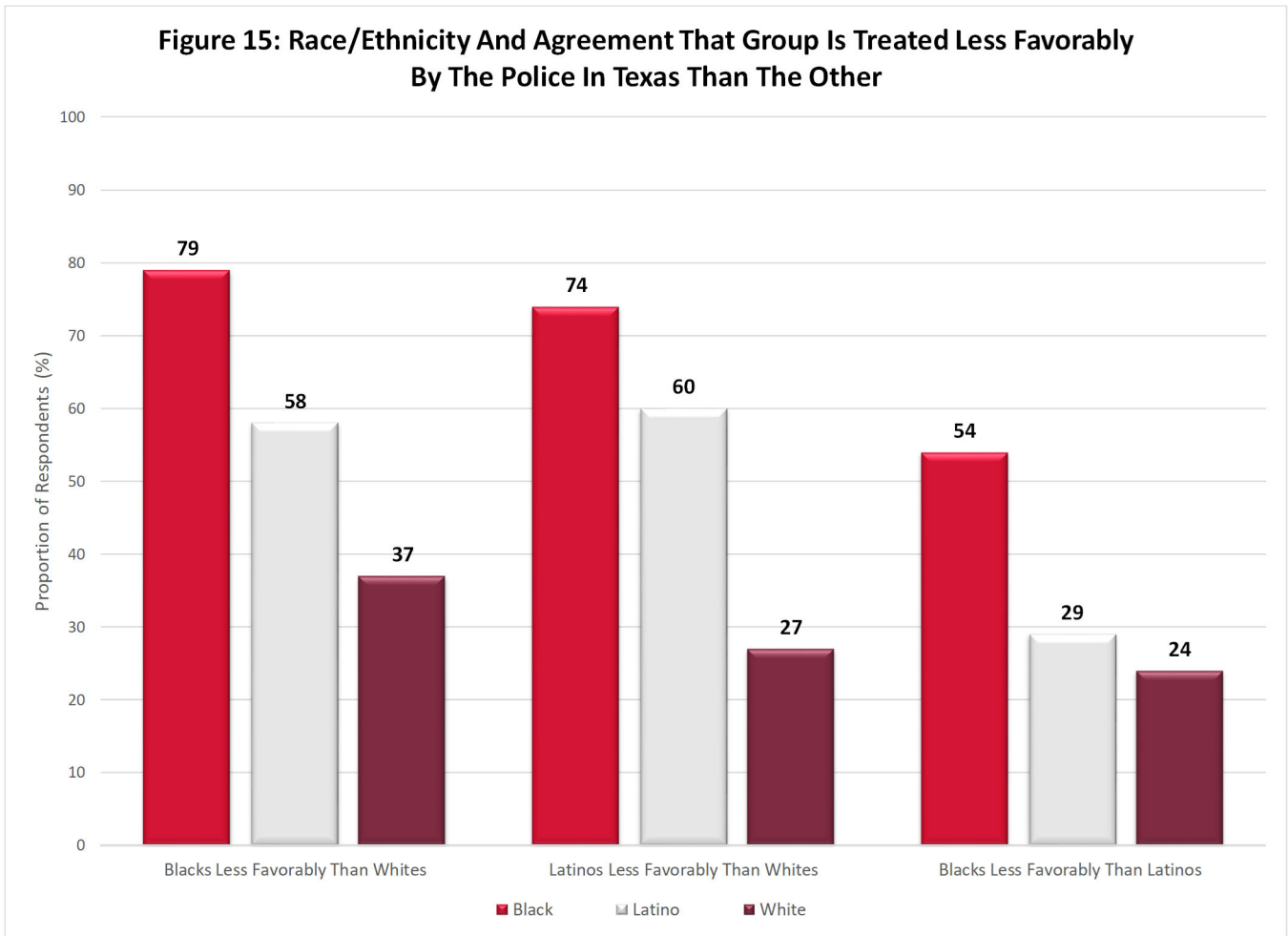
One half (50%) of Texans agree (29% strongly and 21% somewhat) that the police in Texas treat Blacks less favorably than whites. Slightly less than two-fifths (38%) of Texans disagree (24% strongly and 14% somewhat) with this statement, while 12% answered don't know.

Slightly more than half (51%) of Texans agree (28% strongly and 23% somewhat) that the police in Texas treat Latinos less favorably than whites. Slightly less than two-fifths (38%) of Texans disagree (23% strongly and 15% somewhat) with this statement, while 11% answered don't know.

In contrast to the nearly identical responses to the former two statements, only one-third (34%) of Texans agree (13% strongly and 21% somewhat) that Blacks receive less equal treatment than Latinos in the Texas criminal justice system. A somewhat larger proportion of Texans (44%) disagrees with this statement (25% strongly and 19% somewhat), while almost twice as many respondents answered don't know (22%) than for the prior two statements (12% and 11%, respectively).

Figure 15 provides the level of agreement (strongly and somewhat) with these three statements among Black, Latino and white Texans (retaining the don't know responses in the denominator).

Figure 15: Race/Ethnicity And Agreement That Group Is Treated Less Favorably By The Police In Texas Than The Other

Nearly eight out of every ten Black Texans (79%) agree with the statement that Texas police officers treat Blacks less favorably than whites, with 56% strongly agreeing with this statement. This compares to only 37% of white Texans who agree (19% strongly) that Blacks are treated less favorably than whites by the police in Texas. Latinos again occupy an intermediate position between Blacks and whites, with 58% in agreement.

Nearly three out of four (74%) Black Texans and three out of five Latino Texans (60%) agree that Latinos are treated less favorably than white Texans by the police in Texas, compared to only a little more than one in four (27%) white Texans.

A majority of Black Texans (54%), but less than one-third of Latino Texans (29%) and less than one-quarter of white Texans (24%), agree with the statement that Texas police officers treat Black Texans less favorably than Latino Texans.

Race/Ethnicity & Use of Force by Texas Police Officers

Figure 16 contains the distribution of the responses to the third battery of three statements related to Texas police officers being more likely to respond with force when confronting suspects from different racial/ethnic groups.

Figure 16: Agreement That Texas Police Officers Are More Likely To Respond With Force With Suspects From One Group Than The Other
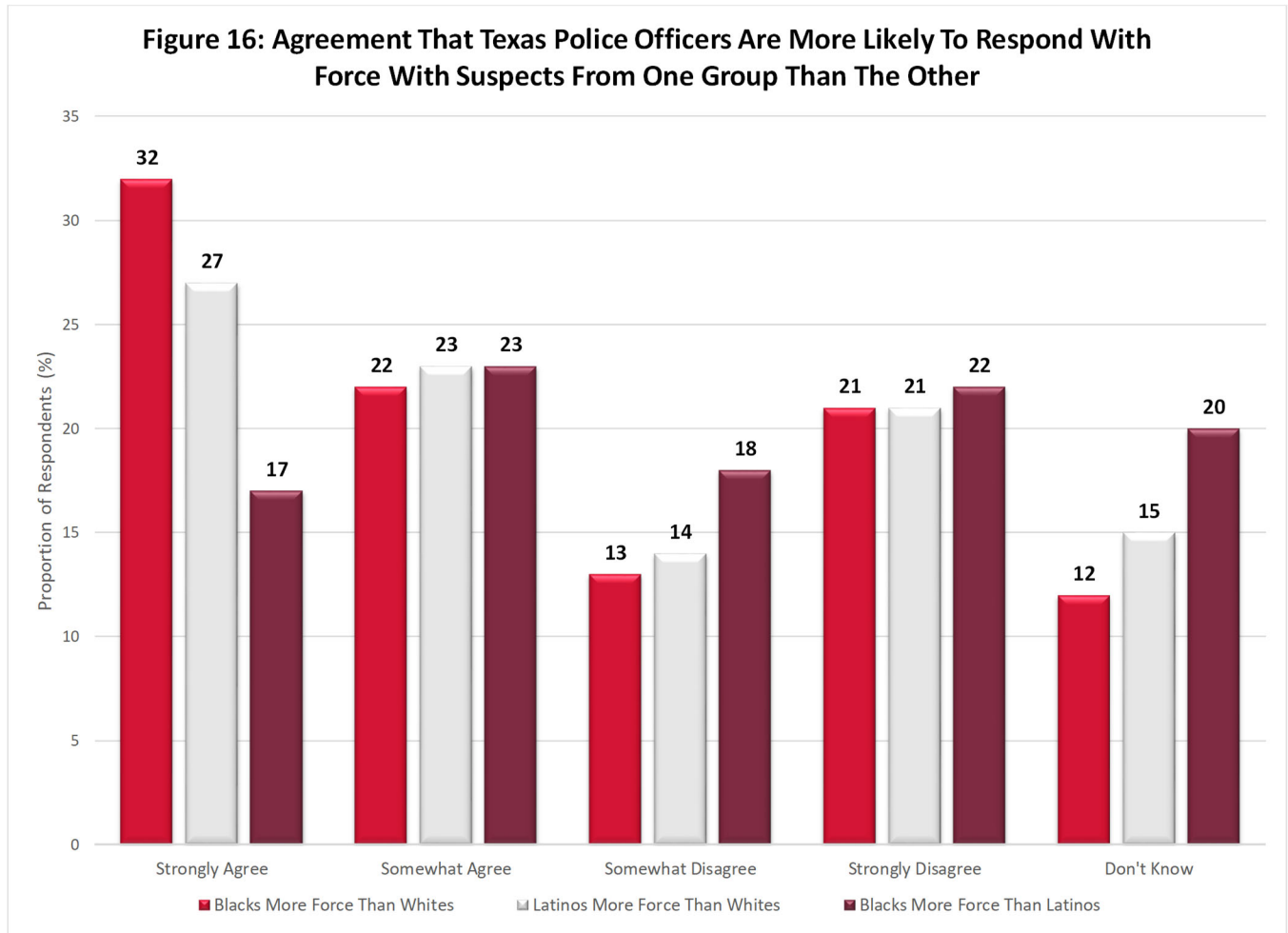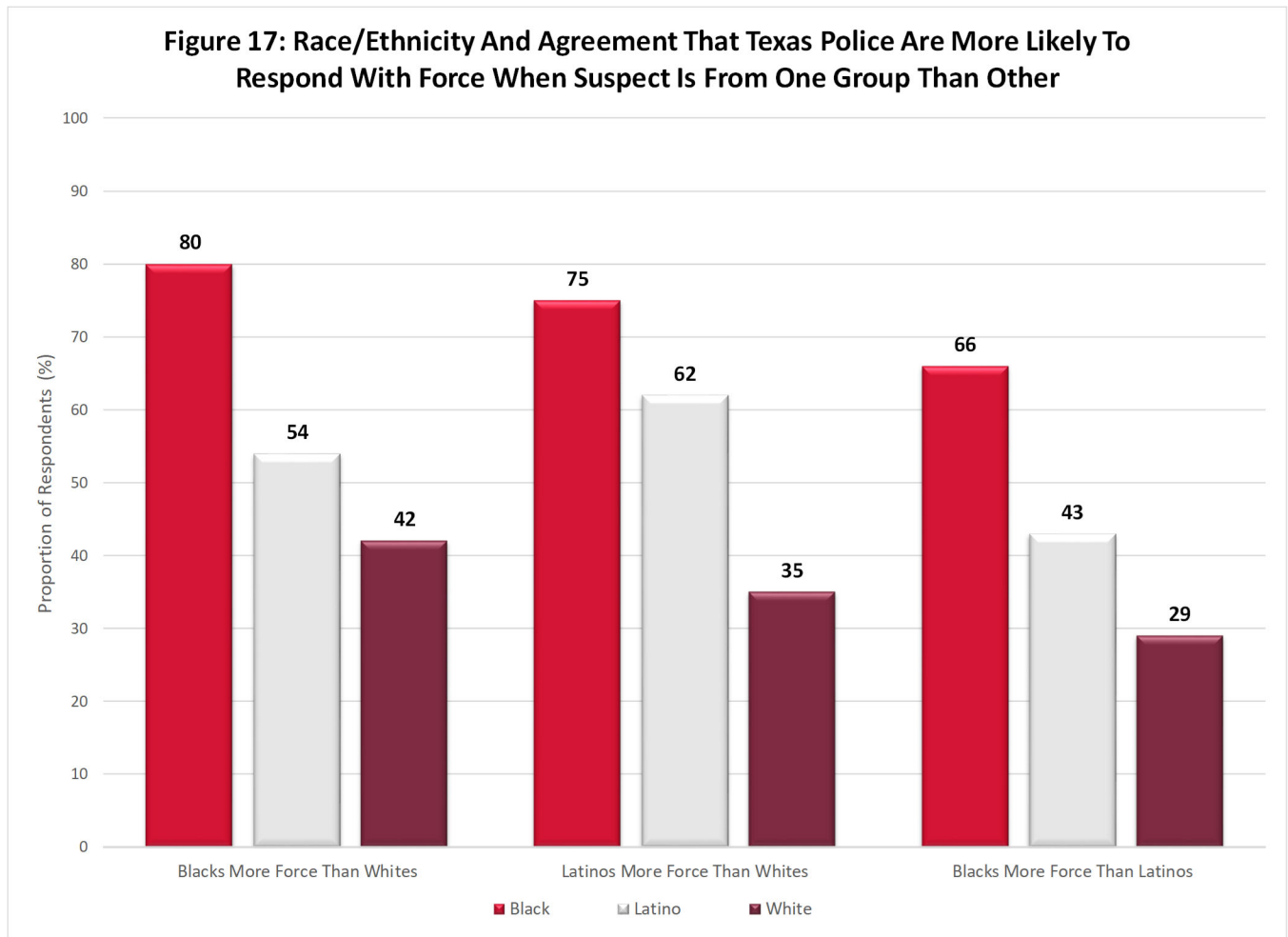
More than half (54%) of Texans agree (32% strongly and 22% somewhat) that Texas police officers are more likely to use force when confronting Black suspects than when confronting white suspects. One-third of Texans (34%) disagree (21% strongly and 13% somewhat) with this statement, while 12% answered don't know.

One half (50%) of Texans agree (27% strongly and 23% somewhat) that Texas police officers are more likely to use force when confronting Latino suspects than when confronting white suspects. One-third of Texans (35%) disagree (21% strongly and 14% somewhat) with this statement, while 15% answered don't know.

Equal proportions of Texans both agree (40%) and disagree (40%) that Texas police officers are more likely to use force when confronting Black suspects than when confronting Latino suspects. One-fifth (20%) answered don't know to this question.

Figure 17 provides the level of agreement (strongly and somewhat) with these three statements among Black, Latino and white Texans (while retaining the don't know responses in the denominator).

Figure 17: Race/Ethnicity And Agreement That Texas Police Are More Likely To Respond With Force When Suspect Is From One Group Than Other

Eight out of ten Black Texans (80%) agree with the statement that Texas police officers are more likely to respond with force when confronting Black suspects than when confronting white suspects, with 63% of Black Texans strongly agreeing with this statement. More than half of Latinos (54%) also agree with this statement, as do a little more than two-fifths (42%) of whites.

Somewhat fewer Black Texans (75%) and somewhat more Latino Texans (62%) agree with a similar statement that Texas police officers are more likely to respond with force when confronting Latino suspects than when confronting white suspects. Slightly more than one-third (35%) of whites agree with this statement.

Finally, two-thirds (66%) of Black Texans, but only 43% of Latino Texans agree with the statement that Texas police officers are more likely to respond with force when dealing with Black suspects than when dealing with Latino suspects. Meanwhile, significantly fewer whites (29%) agree with this statement.

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