

Poll: 1 in 5 say Black Lives Matter movement good for Oregon

By Zane Sparling
Pamplin Media Group

The Black Lives Matter movement has won supporters and detractors in equal measure, according to a new poll, but many on both sides agree: It changed Oregon, and the world.

The Oregon Values and Beliefs Center found that 19% of Oregonians believe the social push, often abbreviated as BLM, had a positive impact — while a roughly equivalent portion (22%) say the effect was negative.

A larger share, 29%, said the movement contains both good and bad elements. Another fifth (22%) said it had “no impact” and 9% were unsure.

“There was more equality but at the same time it turned into unwanted riots,” said one survey respondent, identified as a female Democrat living in Clackamas County.

Oregon Values and Beliefs, a nonprofit polling organization, conducted from June 8-14 the online survey of 1,400 Oregon adults, who were selected to mirror the state’s broader demographics. The margin of error ranges from 1.6% to 2.6% depending on the question.

Let’s dive into the data:

- Nearly half of Republicans (46%) believe the Black Lives Matter cause hurt their community, while one-third of Democrats (32%) said it was for the best. A significant share of Democrats had mixed feelings (38%) on the movement.

About the project

The Oregon Values and Beliefs Center is committed to the highest level of public opinion research. To obtain that, the non-profit is building the largest online research panel of Oregonians in history to ensure that all voices are represented in discussions of public policy in a valid and statistically reliable way.

Selected panelists earn points for their participation, which can be redeemed for cash or donated to a charity. To learn more, visit oregon-vbc.org.

A plurality (38%) of rural residents said BLM had no impact on their lives.

- Almost half (47%) of those polled think the Black Lives Matter movement’s impact, be it for good or ill, will be long lasting. Twenty percent believe it will only have a fleeting effect, and a third (33%) are unsure. Those identifying as Black, Indigenous or people of color were more likely (27%) than whites (19%) to see the changes as temporary.

- The elderly, defined as those 75 or older, were most likely to say Black Lives Matter had no impact, with 29% holding that opinion. Those who identified as



A new poll finds a roughly equal number of Oregonians believe the Black Lives Matter movement has been good for Oregon. A larger share said the movement contains both good and bad elements. Above, marchers lie outside The Dalles Police Station on Third Street, downtown The Dalles. Mark B. Gibson photo/file

Black, Indigenous or people of color (36%) were significantly more likely than whites (28%) to see the protests as both good and bad.

Voices from across Oregon: The Oregon Values and Beliefs Center also asked survey respondents open-ended questions regarding their thoughts on the Black Lives Matter movement. Here’s

what they had to say:

- “BLM has caused significant decline in racial harmony and harmed the very people it claims to be supporting. Unfortunately, the media is hiding the fact that the BLM organization is an avowed Marxist organization,” said one Washington County man.
- “BLM brings awareness,

education and visibility to the communities it touches,” said a Washington County woman.

- “White supremacists have been emboldened, have become more threatening as they wield deadly weapons to intimidate,” said a Clatsop County woman. “Potential mayhem is more likely to ensue.”

- “It has been wonderful to see all races and creeds walk with the BLM demonstrations, actually, heartwarming,” said one Multnomah County man. “Police and other city policies have changed to assist in the underserved communities, including the homeless.”

Recall effort against Sen. Findley gets official signal to collect signatures

By Gary A. Warner
Oregon Capital Bureau

A recall effort against Sen. Lynn Findley, R-Vale, has been officially approved to begin circulating petitions, the Secretary of State said Thursday.

The Findley recall was approved to circulate petitions on July 7.

Proponents now have until 5 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 13 to submit at least 8,289 valid signatures.

“Each petition signer must be an active registered voter in Senate District 30 at the time of signing the petition,” said Carla Axtman, communications director for Secretary of State Shemia Fagan.

Findley’s Senate District 30 is the largest in the senate, covering all of Baker, Grant, Harney, Jefferson, Malheur and Wheeler counties and parts of Deschutes, Lake and Wasco counties.

The Secretary of State’s website shows that a “Findley Failed” political action committee was created on July 1.

Patrick A. Kopke-Hales of Mount Vernon is listed as the chief petitioner. HollyJo A. Beers of Pendleton is listed as the treasurer.

Findley was among six Republican senators who have been sharply criticized by some conservative activists for voting against Senate Bill 554, a gun control bill, rather than walking out to prevent the legislation from moving forward.

The final version of SB 554 barred concealed weapons from the state Capitol and the passenger terminal at Portland International Airport. An amendment by

the House added new rules for gun storage and locks in homes.

Sen. Bill Hansell, R-Athena, told the East Oregonian newspaper that prior to the vote, the Republican caucus had been lobbied by the Oregon Firearms Federation, which advertises itself as the state’s “no compromise” gun rights group, to walk out on the session. A Republican walkout would have prevented a quorum in the Senate, stopping all legislation.

The decision of whether or not Republicans should walk out over the gun bill split the caucus.

Sen. Fred Girod, R-Stayton, said he would go to the Senate floor to argue against the bill and vote.

Republicans should not bring the session to a halt with more than three months to go and crucial legislation still pending, Girod argued. He also expressed concern that Republican single interest groups were beginning to expect a walkout against bills they opposed.

In the end, six Republican senators — Girod, Findley, Bill Hansell of Athena, Tim Knopp of Bend, Bill Kennemer of Canby and Dick Anderson of Lincoln City — went to the floor to vote against the bill.

Republican senators who chose to be absent without Senate permission included:

- Dallas Heard of Roseburg, who is also the chair of the Oregon Republican Party.
- Dennis Linthicum of Klamath Falls, who is also the treasurer of the Oregon Republican Party.
- Kim Thatcher of Keizer, who was also the unsuccessful GOP nominee for

Secretary of State in 2020.

- Art Robinson of Cave Junction, a freshman, who would eventually leave the Republican caucus to join Sen. Brian Boquist of Dallas as senators elected as Republicans but announcing later they were independent.

Other senators received permission in advance to be excused, removing them from the center of the quorum issue.

Though Findley and the other GOP lawmakers spoke out forcefully against the bill, their presence in the chamber allowed for a quorum of senators to do business.

SB 554 passed 16-7, with Sen. Betsy Johnson, D-Scappoose also opposing the bill. It was sent to the House, where House Minority Leader Christine Drazan, R-Canby, announced ahead of time that there would not be a walkout. The bill, with some Democratic amendments, passed 34-24.

Gov. Kate Brown signed the bill, which will go into effect on Sept. 27. Backers of a proposed referendum to overturn the bill must submit 74,680 valid signatures to the Secretary of State by Sept. 24. The law would then be put on hold until voters could decide the issue in the November 2022 general election.

There were angry denunciations of Republicans who went to the floor instead.

The Senate Republican Caucus also reported death threats against some of the GOP senators to the Oregon State Police for investigation. A recall was filed against Girod, but the July 6 deadline to file petitions passed with no documents submitted. That action is now dead.

The Findley recall is in an earlier phase, with the circulation of petitions approved on July 7, the day after the demise of the Girod recall drive.

Findley told the Blue Mountain Eagle in June that going to the floor of the Senate was doing the job

voters sent him to Salem to do: Represent constituents’ positions and values through the legislative process.

“I chose to stand and fight and put stuff on the record,” he said, “and by staying in the session, I was able to work hard for the constituents. And that’s what I’m supposed

to do.” The petition also criticized Findley for co-authoring Senate Bill 865 which would have barred senators from simultaneously holding public office and being an officer in a major political party.

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