

## New Research: Voters, Candidates, and #MeToo



In the six months since Tarana Burke's #MeToo movement was revitalized on social media, the national conversation about sexual harassment shows no signs of slowing down. New research by the Barbara Lee Family Foundation, conducted in partnership with Lake Research Partners and Bellwether Research & Consulting, reveals what voters think about the #MeToo movement and how their thoughts might translate into voting decisions.

### **Voters Agree: Sexual Harassment Is a Serious Problem that Needs to Be Addressed**

- 81% of voters see sexual harassment in the workplace as a serious problem, with 44% saying it is a very serious problem.
- The majority of voters agree that the current attention on sexual harassment is about right (42%) or hasn't gone far enough (25%).
- 87% of voters agree that it needs to be easier for women to safely report sexual harassment in the workplace.

### **Voters Are Willing to Make Sexual Harassment an Issue at the Ballot Box**

- 52% of voters agree that they would never vote for a person accused of sexual harassment.
- 51% of voters agree they would never vote for someone who didn't make addressing sexual harassment a priority.
- 30% of voters say that current events regarding sexual harassment make them more likely to vote for women candidates, with the majority of voters saying it makes no difference.

### **Millennial Women Are Especially Likely to Connect Sexual Harassment to Voting Decisions**

- 86% of millennial women voters see sexual harassment in the workplace as a serious problem, with 57% saying it is a very serious problem.
- 73% of millennial women agree that they would never vote for a person accused of sexual harassment, with 57% strongly agreeing.
- 65% of millennial women agree that they would never vote for someone who didn't make addressing sexual harassment a priority, with 31% strongly agreeing.
- 50% of millennial women say that current events regarding sexual harassment make them more likely to vote for women candidates, with 27% saying it makes them much more likely.

## Men Want to Fight Sexual Harassment, Too

- 79% of men say that sexual harassment in the workplace is a serious problem. Only 5% of men say sexual harassment in the workplace is not at all serious.
- 53% of men agree that they would never vote for a person accused of sexual harassment.
- 84% of men agree that it needs to be easier for women to safely report sexual harassment in the workplace.

## Voters Support Women Candidates Who Advocate for Change

- An overwhelming majority of voters agrees that sexual harassment is a problem, and they prefer when women candidates take a hardline stance against sexual harassment while advocating for change.
- 37% of women, 42% of unmarried women, 50% of millennial women, and 40% of African Americans say current events regarding sexual harassment make them more likely to vote for women candidates.
- The statements below make voters across gender, age, partisanship, and race much more favorable towards a woman candidate. Percentages are of voters who rate each statement a “10” on a 0-10 scale where 0 means “much less favorable” and 10 means “much more favorable” toward that woman candidate.
  - Sexual harassment is unacceptable and should not be tolerated anywhere in our society. (72%)
  - Congress needs to get rid of the hush money fund that uses taxpayer money to protect sexual predators. (69%)
  - There is no excuse for sexual harassment. (61%)
  - Perpetrators of sexual misconduct have no place in public office. (59%)
  - We must fight every day to make sure that little girls grow up in a world where they never have to say #MeToo. (58%)
  - We need to require all employers to conduct sexual harassment training, including Congress. (54%)

This new research from the Barbara Lee Family Foundation shows that the majority of voters: take sexual harassment seriously; say that it will influence their voting decisions; and look more favorably upon candidates who take a strong stance against sexual harassment. **Sexual harassment is not a niche issue – it is one with the potential to make a real difference at the ballot box.**



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## METHODOLOGY

Lake Research Partners and Bellwether Research designed and administered this survey that was conducted over the phone from February 14 – 25, 2018. The survey reached a total of 1,000 likely 2018 voters nationwide with oversamples of 200 drop-off voters, 100 Millennial women, 100 unmarried women, 100 married women, and an additional 450 sample of likely 2018 voters who received the profile questions (to boost up the sample size hearing the profiles) and demographics. Telephone numbers were drawn from listed voter file Catalist sample. The data were weighed slightly by gender, age, region, party identification, and education to reflect attributes of the actual population. The Millennial, unmarried, and married women oversamples were weighted down into the base to reflect their natural proportion of the electorate. The margin of error for the total sample is +/-3.1% and 6.9% for the drop-off voter sample.