



respect ability

FIGHTING STIGMAS. ADVANCING OPPORTUNITIES.

October 8, 2019

Disability Community is Large, Engaged and Contested

Survey Findings

To: Interested Parties

From: RespectAbility and GQR

The disability community is huge. Just over half the electorate (51 percent) self-identifies as having a disability (15 percent), having a family member with a disability (26 percent) or having a close friend with a disability (11 percent). While they lean Democratic, they are contested by both parties and paying close attention to the next election. And so far, their priorities have not sufficiently been addressed by the candidates, even in terms of making campaign events and websites accessible to people with disabilities.¹

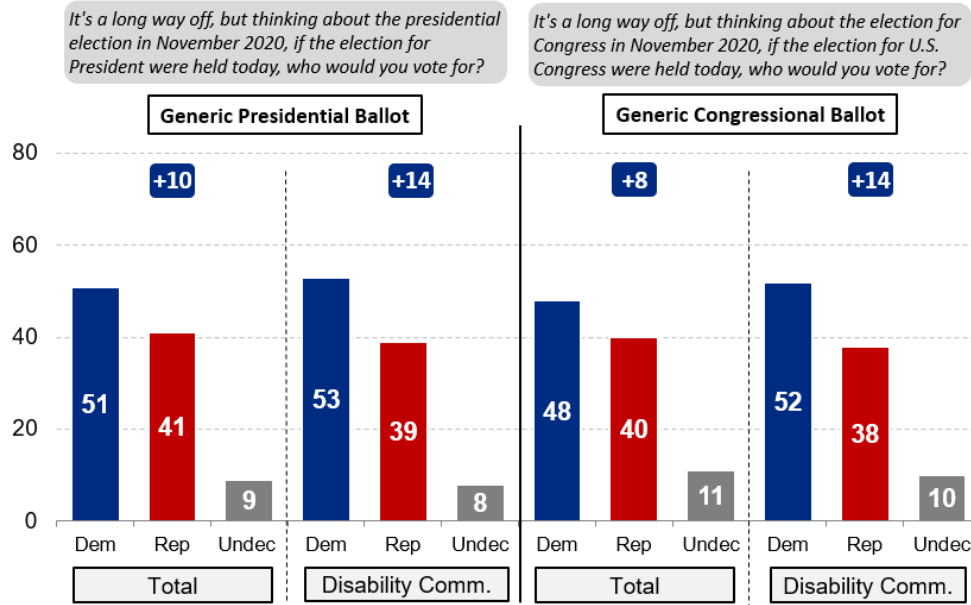
Key Findings

- ✓ **The disability community represents half the country.** A majority of the nation's electorate describes themselves as having a disability, being related to having a disability or having a close friend with a disability. These results echo a telephone survey taken in 2014 of likely voters by RespectAbility that shows 56 percent of voters declaring a home in the disability community. Outside of women, this community dwarfs any other voting bloc in the country right now.

Not surprising, the disability community grows larger with age, but outside of life cycle, this community captures fairly evenly numbers of white voters (52 percent) and people of color (50 percent), college (46 percent) and non-college voters (54 percent), urban (50 percent) and rural voters.

- **The disability community is politically contested.** On balance, these voters lean more Democratic than voters outside of the disability community. But they are far from a monolithic block and their support for Democrats vary only a few points from national averages.

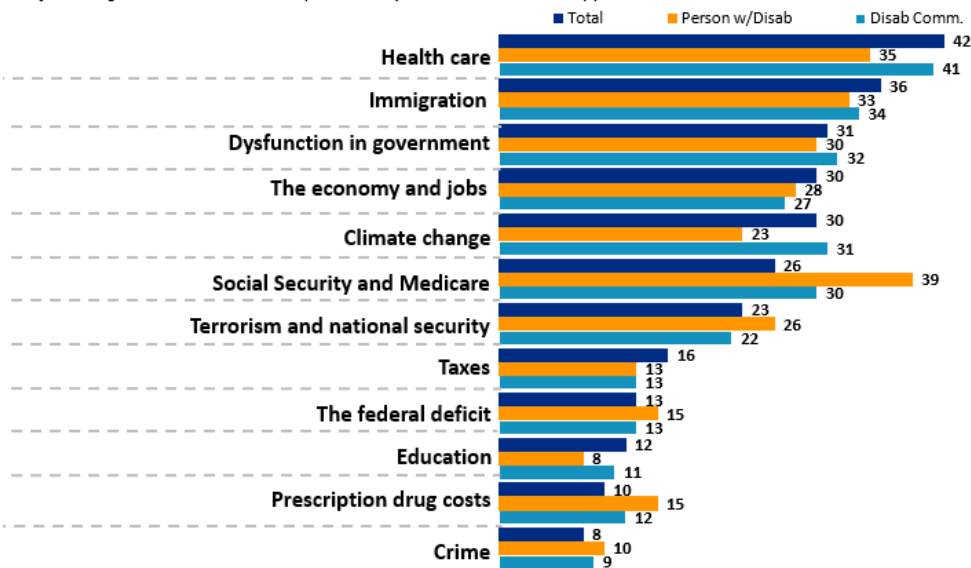
¹ This memorandum reflects an online national survey of 2,000 registered voters taken September 18-24, 2019. Because the online sample is based on those who initially self-selected for participation in the panel rather than a probability sample, no estimate of sampling error can be calculated. The results have been weighted by region, gender, age and race to reflect the national registered voter universe.



A 50 percent plurality of voters in the disability community rate their enthusiasm for participating in the 2020 elections as a 10 on a 10-point scale, a number comparable to national average (48 percent). Among voters who themselves are facing a disability, this number climbs to 52 percent, four-points higher than the national average.

- **This community's agenda has not been sufficiently addressed by candidates for public office.** Voters in this community focus more on Social Security and Medicare than voters overall. Many people in this community rely on these programs for survival.

Now thinking about the 2020 election. As you think about elections coming up in November 2020, which two or three of the following issues are the most important as you decide whom to support?



To date, some campaigns have started to make an effort to be accessible, but none are fully accessible to all members of this huge community. Nonetheless, an 85 percent majority of voters overall and an 88 percent majority of voters in the disability community believe it is very or somewhat important candidates for President make their campaign accessible. A 61 percent majority of voters in the disability community find it very important candidates make their campaign accessible, 64 percent among individuals facing personal disabilities.

In terms of policy, huge majorities of voters describe themselves as more likely to support candidates who ensure children with disabilities get the education and training they need to succeed and similar majorities describe themselves as more likely to support candidates who back job and career opportunities for people with disabilities. The intensity of these issues ramps up substantially in the disability community, particularly among people who have close friends with disabilities. Unlike family, friends *choose* to have people with disabilities in their lives.

Please read through the list below of things our leaders can do to address the challenges facing people with disabilities. For each, please indicate whether this stand would make you much more likely, somewhat more, a little more or no more likely to support a candidate for elected office who makes this a priority.

	Ensuring that children with disabilities get the education and training they need to succeed.				Expanding job and career opportunities for people with disabilities, so they can succeed just like anyone else.			
	Total	Person w/Disab.	Disab Comm.	Friend of Disab. Person	Total	Person w/Disab.	Disab Comm.	Friend of Disab. Person
Much more likely	43	52	49	48	39	48	45	48
Somewhat more likely	30	26	29	30	31	27	30	30
A little more likely	13	9	10	9	15	11	12	11
No more likely	11	8	9	11	12	9	10	10
Not sure	3	5	3	2	3	5	3	2
Much/Somewhat more	73	77	78	78	70	75	75	78
A little/No more	24	17	19	20	26	20	22	20

Conclusion

It is rare that a voting block that commands a full majority of the electorate share is ignored by so many people who seek their votes on Election Day. And yet that is the case here as none of the presidential candidates have made sure their materials are fully accessible to everybody. More broadly, with unemployment rates among people with disabilities running more than twice the national average, both voters overall and voters within this disability community believe more needs to be done to help people with disabilities integrate into the work force, starting at a young age.



Respect Ability Web Frequency Questionnaire

September 18-24, 2019
2248 Registered Voters
904 No Disability
1155 Respondent/Friend/Family with a Disability

Q.5 It's a long way off, but in November 2020 there will be a general election for U.S. President, as well as other statewide and local offices. What are the chances of you voting in the November 2020 general election?

	Total	Non-Disab Comm.	Disab Comm.
Almost certain to vote	89	91	88
Probably will vote	6	6	6
50-50 chance will vote.....	4	3	4
Will not vote	1	1	1
Not sure.....	0	-	0

(ref:WILLVT20)

Q.11 Please rate your level of enthusiasm about voting in the federal, state, and local elections in November 2020, on a scale from 0 to 10, where zero means you're not at all enthusiastic about voting and ten means you're extremely enthusiastic about voting.

	Total	Non-Disab Comm.	Disab Comm.
10.....	48	47	50
9.....	7	9	6
8.....	12	11	12
7.....	8	9	7
6.....	4	3	4
5.....	10	9	10
4.....	2	1	2
3.....	2	1	2
2.....	2	2	2
1.....	1	2	1
0.....	5	4	6
(Don't know/Refused)	-	-	-
10.....	48	47	50
8-10	67	67	67
6-10	78	80	78
0-5	22	20	22
Mean	7.8	7.9	7.8

(ref:ENTHUSIM)

Q.14 Please rate your feelings toward each of the people, terms, and organizations below: do you feel very favorable toward them, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable? If you have no opinion or never heard of that person, term, or organization please check that box.

	Very Fav	Smwt Fav	Smwt Unfav	Very Unfav	Never Heard	Not Sure	Total ID	Total Fav	Total Unfav	Fav - Unfav
16 Democratic Party.....	14	25	14	39	6	1	99	39	54	-14
Non-Disabled Community	14	22	14	43	7	0	100	36	57	-21
Disabled Community.....	15	28	15	37	5	0	100	43	51	-8
17 Republican Party.....	13	22	16	42	6	1	99	35	58	-23
Non-Disabled Community	14	23	17	39	6	0	100	37	56	-18
Disabled Community.....	13	21	15	45	5	1	99	34	60	-26
19 Donald Trump.....	26	13	8	48	4	1	99	39	56	-17
Non-Disabled Community	29	15	6	46	4	0	100	44	52	-8
Disabled Community.....	25	11	8	52	4	1	99	35	60	-25

(ref:FAVOR04)

Q.36 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as President?

	Total	Non-Disab Comm.	Disab Comm.
Strongly approve	25	27	25
Somewhat approve	18	20	16
Somewhat disapprove	11	10	10
Strongly disapprove.....	46	42	49
Not sure.....		-	0
Total Approve	43	47	40
Total Disapprove	57	53	60
Approve - Disapprove.....	-13	-6	-19

(ref:TRUMPAPP)

Q.39 It's a long way off, but thinking about the presidential election in November 2020, if the election for President were held today, who would you vote for?

	Total	Non-Disab Comm.	Disab Comm.
The Democratic candidate	48	46	51
Lean The Democratic candidate	2	2	2
Republican Donald Trump	39	44	37
Lean Republican Donald Trump.....	2	2	2
(Undecided/Refused)	9	7	8
Total The Democratic candidate	51	48	53
Total Republican Donald Trump.....	41	45	39
Simulated	Total	No	Yes
The Democratic candidate	52	50	55
Republican Donald Trump	42	47	40
Not Sure	5	4	5

(ref:GPR20VT1)

Q.47 It's a long way off, but thinking about the election for Congress in November 2020, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today, who would you vote for?

	Total	Non-Disab Comm.	Disab Comm.
The Democratic candidate	47	44	50
Lean The Democratic candidate	1	1	2
The Republican candidate	39	44	36
Lean The Republican candidate.....	2	1	2
(Undecided/Refused)	11	10	10
Total The Democratic candidate	48	45	52
Total The Republican candidate	40	45	38
Simulated	Total	No	Yes
Total Dem	50	47	53
Total Rep	43	47	40
Not sure.....	7	5	6

(ref:GCN20VT1)

Q.126 Now thinking about the 2020 election. As you think about elections coming up in November, 2020, which two or three of the following issues are the most important as you decide whom to support?

	Total	Non-Disab Comm.	Disab Comm.
Health care	42	41	41
Immigration.....	36	36	34
Dysfunction in government	31	29	32
The economy and jobs	30	35	27
Climate change.....	30	30	31
Social Security and Medicare.....	26	21	30
Terrorism and national security	23	23	22
Taxes.....	16	19	13
The federal deficit	13	14	13
Education.....	12	14	11
Prescription drug costs.....	10	8	12
Crime	8	7	9
Not sure.....	-	-	-

(ref:RAISS20)

Q.127 As you think about whom to support for President, how important is it to you that the candidates have campaign events and websites that are open and accessible to people with disabilities, just like everyone else?

	Total	Non-Disab Comm.	Disab Comm.
Very important	54	47	61
Somewhat important	30	35	27
Not very important.....	9	11	7
Not at all important.....	6	7	5
Not sure.....	0	-	.
Very/Somewhat	85	82	88
Total Not.....	15	18	12

(ref:RAPRES)

Q.128 Please read through the list below of things our leaders can do to address the challenges facing people with disabilities. For each, please indicate whether this stand would make you much more likely, somewhat more, a little more or no more likely to support a candidate for elected office who makes this a priority.

	Much More Likely	Smwt More Likely	A Little More Likely	No More Likely	Not Sure	Much/ Smwt More	Little/ No More
128 Ensuring that children with disabilities get the education and training they need to succeed.	43	30	13	11	3	73	24
Non-Disabled Community	38	32	15	14	3	69	28
Disabled Community.....	49	29	10	9	3	78	19
129 Expanding job and career opportunities for people with disabilities, so they can succeed just like anyone else.	39	31	15	12	3	70	26
Non-Disabled Community	34	32	17	14	3	66	32
Disabled Community.....	45	30	12	10	3	75	22

(ref:RABLEBAT)

Q.130 A disability can be a physical, cognitive, sensory, mental health, chronic pain or another condition that is a barrier to everyday living. Do you, a family member, or a close friend have a disability? Please check off all that apply.

	Total	Non-Disab Comm.	Disab Comm.
No	40	100	-
Yes, myself.....	15	-	29
Yes, family member	26	-	50
Yes, close friend.....	11	-	21
Prefer not to say.....	8	-	-
Total Yes	51	-	100

(ref:RDSABLT)

Q.131 These last questions are just for statistical purposes only. What is the last year of schooling that you have completed?

	Total	Non-Disab Comm.	Disab Comm.
1 - 11th grade	2	2	1
High School graduate	28	29	28
Some college no degree	24	21	27
Associates degree.....	9	8	11
College graduate	23	27	19
Post-graduate school.....	14	14	13
(Don't know/Refused)		-	-
(ref:NEWEDUC)			

Q.136 What is your race?

	Total	Non-Disab Comm.	Disab Comm.
White.....	74	74	75
African American or Black	12	12	11
Hispanic or Latino	10	11	10
Asian or Pacific Islander.....	1	1	1
American Indian or Native American.....	1	0	1
Other	2	1	2
Prefer not to say.....	1	0	1
(ref:RACE)			

[1124 Respondents]

Q.142 (SPLIT A) Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a(n) :

	Total	Non-Disab Comm.	Disab Comm.
Strong Democrat	26	25	28
Weak Democrat.....	13	12	11
Independent-lean Democrat	7	7	7
Independent.....	15	12	15
Independent-lean Republican	9	10	9
Weak Republican.....	10	13	9
Strong Republican	20	20	20
(Don't know/Refused)		-	.
(ref:PTYID1)			

[1124 Respondents]

Q.145 (SPLIT B) Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a(n) :

	Total	Non-Disab Comm.	Disab Comm.
Strong Democrat	26	25	28
Weak Democrat.....	7	8	6
Independent - lean Democrat	13	11	13
Independent.....	15	12	16
Independent - lean Republican	10	9	12
Weak Republican.....	8	9	7
Strong Republican	22	26	18
Not sure.....	0	-	-

(ref:PTYIDNEW)

	Total	Non-Disab Comm.	Disab Comm.
COMBINED			
Strong Democrat	26	25	28
Weak Democrat.....	10	10	9
Independent - lean Democrat	10	9	10
Independent.....	15	12	15
Independent - lean Republican	10	9	10
Weak Republican.....	9	11	8
Strong Republican	21	23	19
Not sure.....	0	-	.

Q.151 In the 2018 election for U.S. Congress, for whom did you vote?

	Total	Non-Disab Comm.	Disab Comm.
The Democratic candidate	47	45	49
The Republican candidate	41	45	38
Another candidate.....	5	3	5
Did not vote in 2018.....	8	6	8
Prefer not to say.....	0	0	.
Democrat - Republican.....	6	0	10

(ref:CONG2018)

Q.152 In the 2016 election for President, for whom did you vote?

	Total	Non-Disab Comm.	Disab Comm.
Democrat Hillary Clinton	41	40	42
Republican Donald Trump	39	43	37
Libertarian Gary Johnson.....	5	4	5
Green Party candidate Jill Stein	3	3	3
Other	4	3	5
Prefer not to say.....	0	0	.
Did not vote in 2016.....	8	7	9
Clinton - Trump.....	1	-4	5
(ref:VOTE2016)			

Q.3 What is your gender?

	Total	Non-Disab Comm.	Disab Comm.
Male	47	53	42
Female.....	53	47	58
(ref:GENDER)			

Q.4 In what year were you born?

	Total	Non-Disab Comm.	Disab Comm.
18 - 24	8	8	8
25 - 29	10	10	9
30 - 34	7	7	7
35 - 39	8	9	7
40 - 44	6	6	6
45 - 49	10	11	8
50 - 54	8	7	8
55 - 59	9	7	10
60 - 64	10	11	11
65 and over	24	24	26
(No answer).....	-	-	-
(ref:AGE)			