TO: Interested Parties  
FROM: Fair Count, GALEO Impact Fund, Georgia ACT, Latino Community Fund, New Georgia Project, and the Southern Economic Advancement Project  
DATE: July 11, 2022  
RE: New Poll Showcases Concerns of Georgia Residents  

Georgia Residents Struggle with Economic Challenges; Supportive of Statewide Policy Actions

PerryUndem, a nonpartisan research firm, commissioned a statewide survey to gain a deeper understanding of how Georgia residents feel about their state, challenges in their communities and on a personal level, and policy priorities. Conducted May–June 2022, the poll reveals widespread challenges and concerns among Georgians and their support for state policy actions that would expand opportunities:

1. **Georgia residents are worried about the economy and their ability to meet basic needs.** 8 in 10 (84%) say they have been worrying about the economy during the last six months, and 69% feel the state's economy has left too many people behind. Half (49%) say finding good-paying jobs in their community is difficult. 3 in 10 (31%) say they are doing worse financially than they were a year ago (18% say they are doing better). Another 3 in 10 (30%) say they are struggling to buy food, and one-quarter (24%) say they are having difficulty paying their utilities. Nearly 7 in 10 (69%) say they have been worrying about transportation costs these last six months.

2. **Affordable housing is another problem they see in Georgia.** More than 8 in 10 (85%) feel over the past five years, housing in the state has become less affordable, and 59% say a lack of affordable housing is a major problem where they live.

3. **Affordable healthcare is nearly universal as a shared priority, but Georgians see barriers.** Almost all Georgia residents (94%) say health insurance is important, but they see a lot of barriers to it. 7 in 10 (70%) say health insurance is not affordable if you lose a job and need to buy it on your own. A similar amount (73%) agree there are a lot of jobs in Georgia that do not come with health insurance. Nearly 9 in 10 (89%) agree that “all Georgia residents should have access to quality, affordable healthcare services to support their physical and mental well-being and financial security.” And 90% say having more options for affordable health coverage can result in a healthier, more productive workforce in the state.
4. **Debt is causing challenges for many in the state.** 3 in 4 (75%) say they are carrying some kind of debt right now – medical debt, student loans, credit card, or debt from a mortgage – with 3 in 10 Georgia households (30%) carrying medical debt. Half of those with debt (51%) say it negatively affects their life. For example, 33% say debt impacted their credit score, 21% say it made it difficult to buy a car, 16% say their debt caused them to put off changing jobs, and 14% say their debt impacted their ability to rent a home.

5. **Many seem exhausted by how hard life is right now.** In fact, 62% say, “I am tired of just getting by; I want to thrive.” And 4 in 10 (41%) say, “no matter what I do, I just can’t seem to get ahead.” More than 4 in 10 (44%) have worried about their mental health in the last six months. Even more (53%) say they have worried about the mental health of a loved one during this period.

Fair Count, GALEO Impact Fund, Georgia ACT, Latino Community Fund, New Georgia Project, and the Southern Economic Advancement Project jointly call for action to address these challenges—a call supported overwhelmingly by Georgians. The poll demonstrates widespread support for policy action by state leaders:

6. **A majority do NOT think state leaders are doing enough to help them through these hard times.** Specifically, 6 in 10 (58%) say Georgia elected officials are NOT doing enough to improve residents' living standards. Only 20% say their state leaders are doing enough for residents.

7. **They believe collective action can solve the state's problems but feel they do not have a voice.** On the one hand, three-quarters (74%) agree they can solve problems if they work together with their neighbors and community members. But when it comes to their own sense of personal agency, more than 4 in 10 do not feel any. Specifically, 46% say they don’t feel like they have a voice in what happens in Georgia.

8. **They agree on many policy directions for the state.** These ideas, except for canceling student loan debt, have majority bipartisan support:
   - Improving conditions of existing roadways (93%)
   - Lowering utility bills and making utilities more reliable (89%)
   - Improving broadband and internet access (87%)
   - Creating more protections for people with medical debt (86%)
   - Expanding Medicaid so more people can get affordable health coverage (80%)
9. **Georgia residents want everyone in the state to have an opportunity to succeed and be healthy.** Specifically, 89% agree opportunity and success in the state should NOT be determined by zip code, background, or income. Regarding food access, 88% agree that everyone in the state should have equitable access to healthy foods regardless of where they live, their income, their race, or any other factors. Additionally, nearly 6 in 10 state residents say they have worried about racism recently. Specifically, 58% say that they have worried about racism and discrimination in the last six months. Black residents (78%), Hispanic/Latino residents (82%) and Democrats (83%) have worried about racism the most.

10. **Georgia residents prefer keeping Roe v. Wade intact.** They prefer this to overturning the law (44% don’t overturn vs. 34% overturn). 1 in 5 (22%) are unsure how they feel about this. Half say the overturning of Roe v. Wade would make them more likely to vote in the mid-terms this fall. Democrats (69%), city residents (62%), 18- to 29-year-olds (58%), and women (57%) are the most likely to vote because of this ruling.

See additional race, gender, age, and party affiliation breakdowns [here](#). This poll was a 15-minute statewide survey of adults 18 and older living in Georgia. The survey was conducted online with YouGov. In all, 700 adults participated, including 258 Black adults and 100 Hispanic/Latino adults. The margin of sampling error for total results is ±4.72 percentage points.