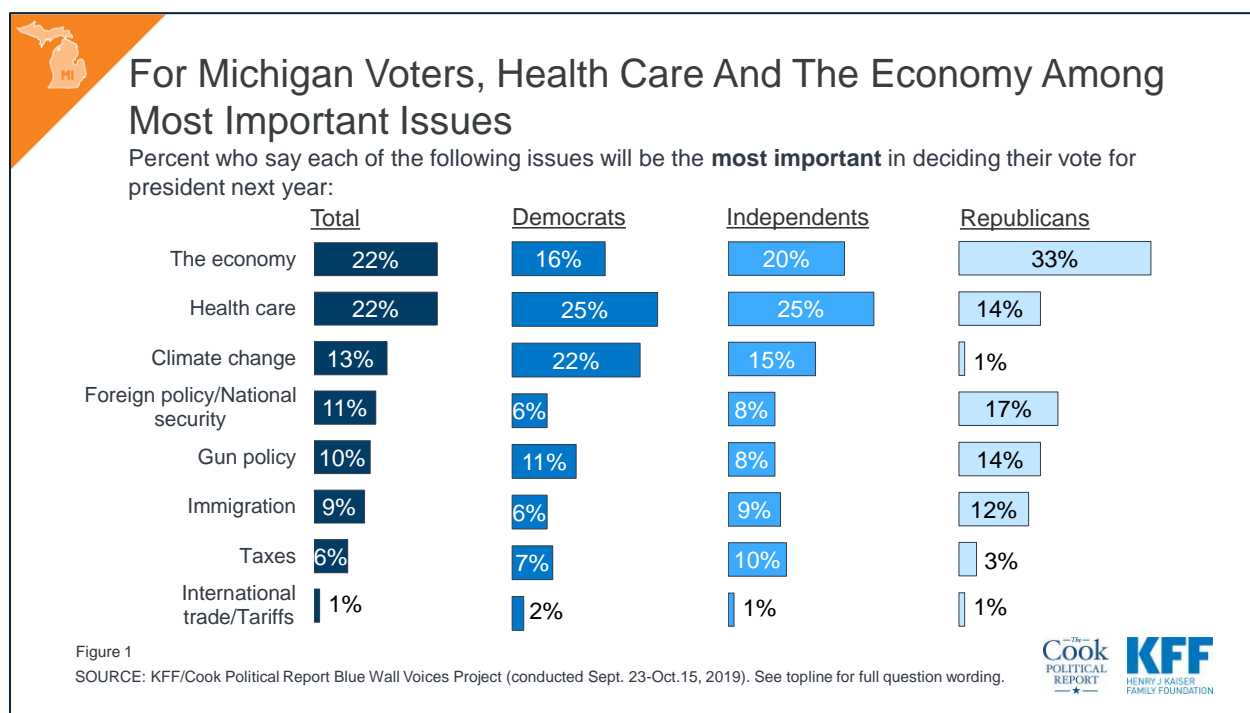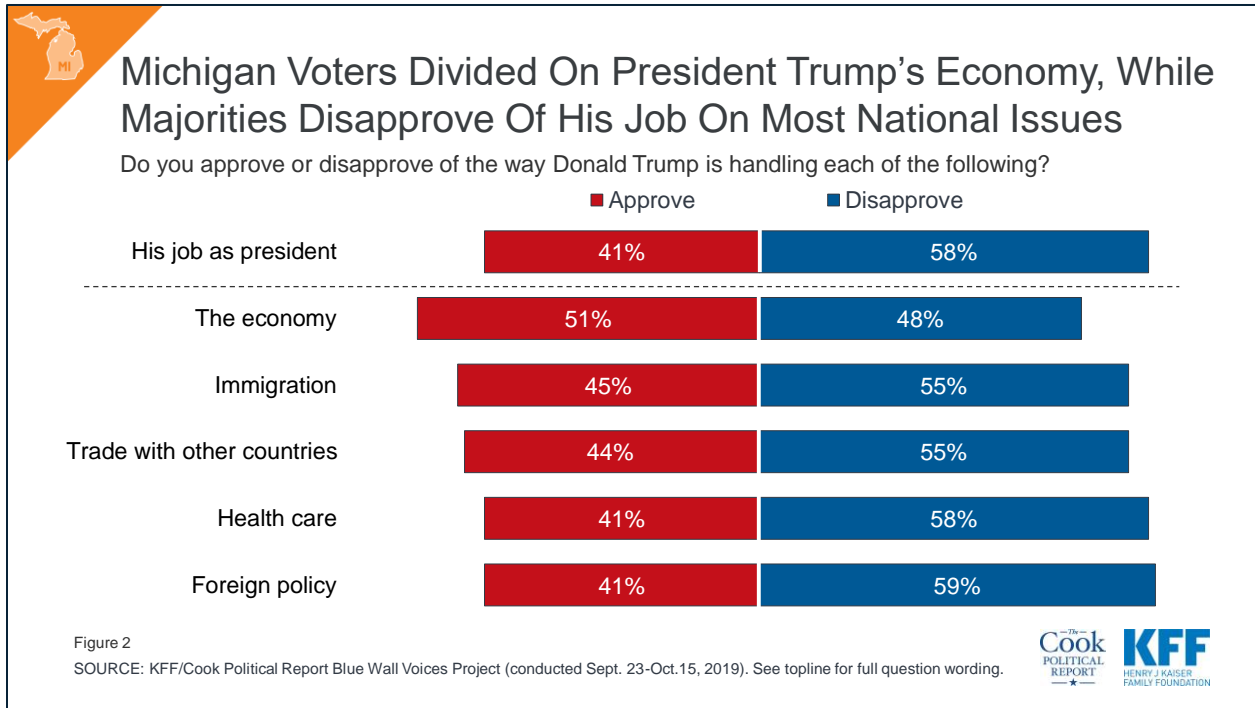# Blue Wall Voices Project - Michigan

The Blue Wall Voices Project examines voters in the state of Michigan to get their perspectives on key issues and aspects of the 2020 election, including the role that health care and the economy may play in voters' decisions. In addition, it gauges enthusiasm and vote choice leading up to the 2020 presidential election.

Overall, a larger share of Michigan voters say health care and the economy are the most important issues in deciding their vote for president in 2020. About one in five Michigan voters say health care (22%) and the economy (22%) are the most important issues to their vote, with smaller shares saying issues like climate change (13%), foreign policy and national security (11%), gun policy (10%), immigration (9%), taxes (6%), and international trade and tariffs (1%). Partisans are divided in their priorities, with one in four Democrats and independents choosing health care as their top issue, and one-third of Republicans choosing the economy as the most important issue.

For Michigan Voters, Health Care And The Economy Among Most Important Issues

Percent who say each of the following issues will be the **most important** in deciding their vote for president next year:

	Total	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
The economy	22%	16%	20%	33%
Health care	22%	25%	25%	14%
Climate change	13%	22%	15%	1%
Foreign policy/National security	11%	6%	8%	17%
Gun policy	10%	11%	8%	14%
Immigration	9%	6%	9%	12%
Taxes	6%	7%	10%	3%
International trade/Tariffs	1%	2%	1%	1%

Figure 1

SOURCE: KFF/Cook Political Report Blue Wall Voices Project (conducted Sept. 23-Oct.15, 2019). See topline for full question wording.
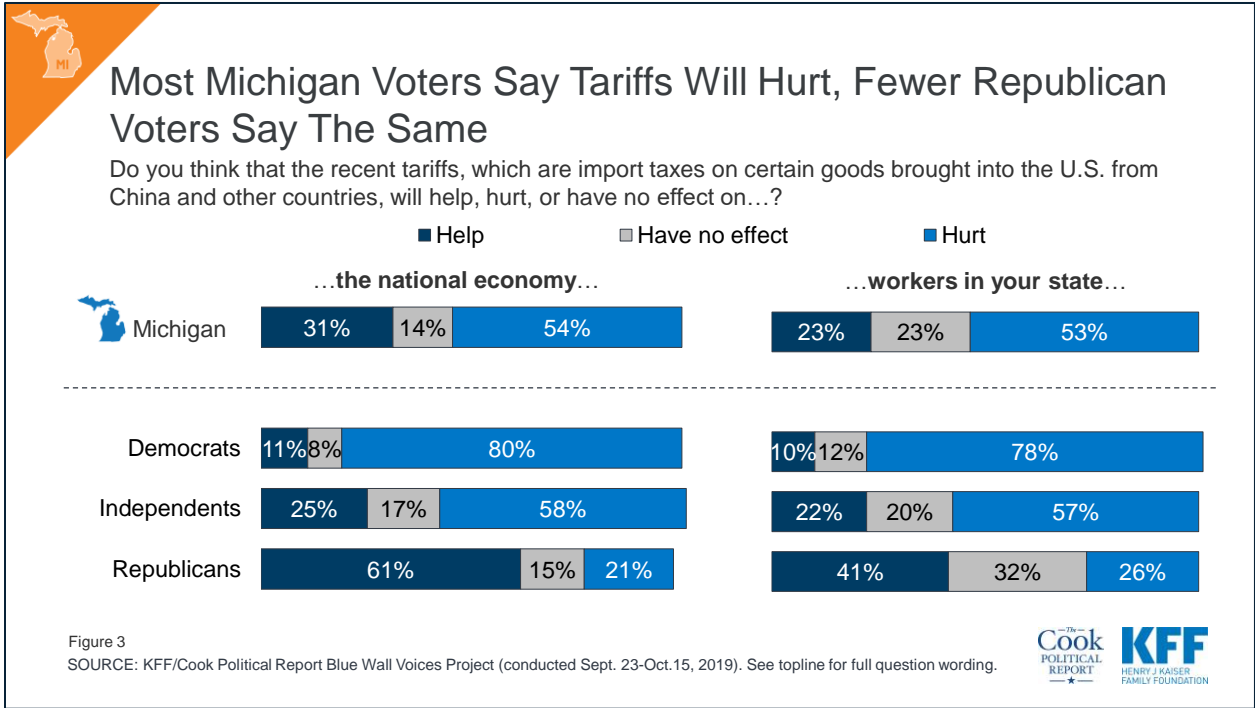
With health care and the economy ranking above all other issues for Michigan voters, it is important to note that Michigan voters give President Trump very different marks on both of these issues. Half (51%) of Michigan voters approve of the way President Trump is handling the economy compared to four in ten (41%) who approve of the way he is handling health care.

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling each of the following?

■ Approve ■ Disapprove

	Approve	Disapprove
His job as president	41%	58%
The economy	51%	48%
Immigration	45%	55%
Trade with other countries	44%	55%
Health care	41%	58%
Foreign policy	41%	59%

Figure 2

SOURCE: KFF/Cook Political Report Blue Wall Voices Project (conducted Sept. 23-Oct.15, 2019). See topline for full question wording.
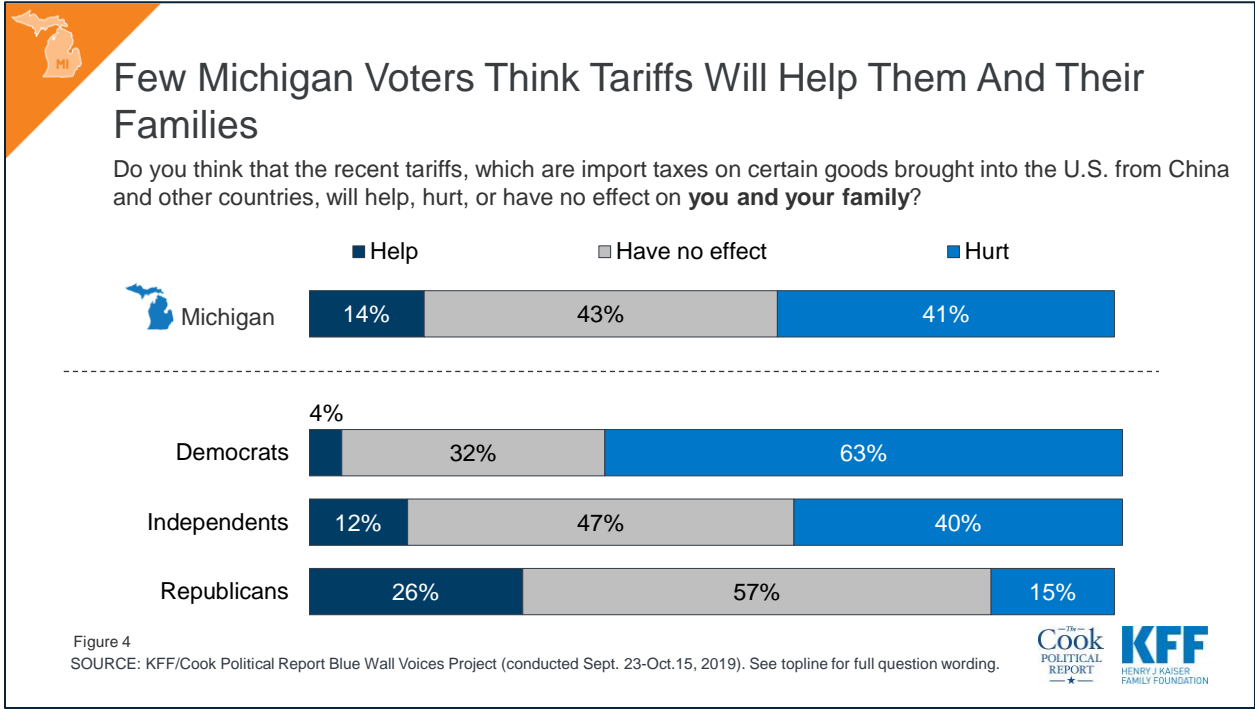
International Trade and Recent Tariffs

While voters do not rank international trade as one of the most important issues in deciding their vote next year, Michigan is a state expected to be most affected by the ongoing trade disputes with China and other countries. Overall, about half of voters – including majorities of Democrats and independents – say they think the recent tariffs will hurt both the national economy (54%) and workers in Michigan (53%). However, this opinion is only shared by about one-fourth of Republican voters (21% and 26%, respectively) compared to majorities of Democrats (80% and 78%, respectively) and independent voters (58% and 57%, respectively). Six in ten Republican voters in Michigan (61%) say the recent tariffs will "help" the national economy and about four in ten (41%) say the tariffs will "help" Michigan workers.

Most Michigan Voters Say Tariffs Will Hurt, Fewer Republican Voters Say The Same

Do you think that the recent tariffs, which are import taxes on certain goods brought into the U.S. from China and other countries, will help, hurt, or have no effect on…?

■ Help   ■ Have no effect   ■ Hurt

…the national economy…

	Help	Have no effect	Hurt
Michigan	31%	14%	54%
Democrats	11%	8%	80%
Independents	25%	17%	58%
Republicans	61%	15%	21%

…workers in your state…

	Help	Have no effect	Hurt
Michigan	23%	23%	53%
Democrats	10%	12%	78%
Independents	22%	20%	57%
Republicans	41%	32%	26%

Figure 3
SOURCE: KFF/Cook Political Report Blue Wall Voices Project (conducted Sept. 23-Oct.15, 2019). See topline for full question wording.
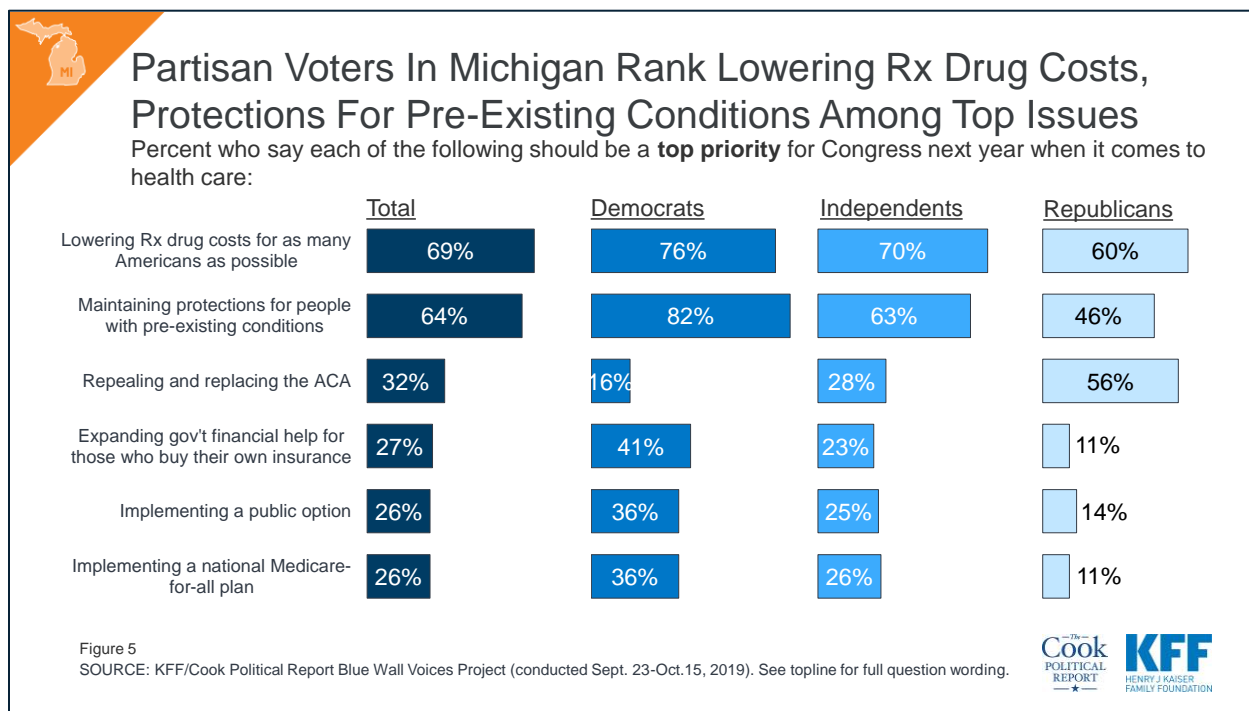
Partisans also differ in how they perceive the recent tariffs will impact them and their families. More than six in ten Democratic voters in Michigan (63%) say the recent tariffs will hurt them and their families while about half of independent voters (47%) and a majority of Republican voters (57%) in the state say they will "have no effect." Overall, few voters (14%) say the recent tariffs will help them and their families.

Few Michigan Voters Think Tariffs Will Help Them And Their Families

Do you think that the recent tariffs, which are import taxes on certain goods brought into the U.S. from China and other countries, will help, hurt, or have no effect on **you and your family**?

■ Help   ■ Have no effect   ■ Hurt

	Help	Have no effect	Hurt
Michigan	14%	43%	41%
Democrats	4%	32%	63%
Independents	12%	47%	40%
Republicans	26%	57%	15%

Figure 4
SOURCE: KFF/Cook Political Report Blue Wall Voices Project (conducted Sept. 23-Oct.15, 2019). See topline for full question wording.
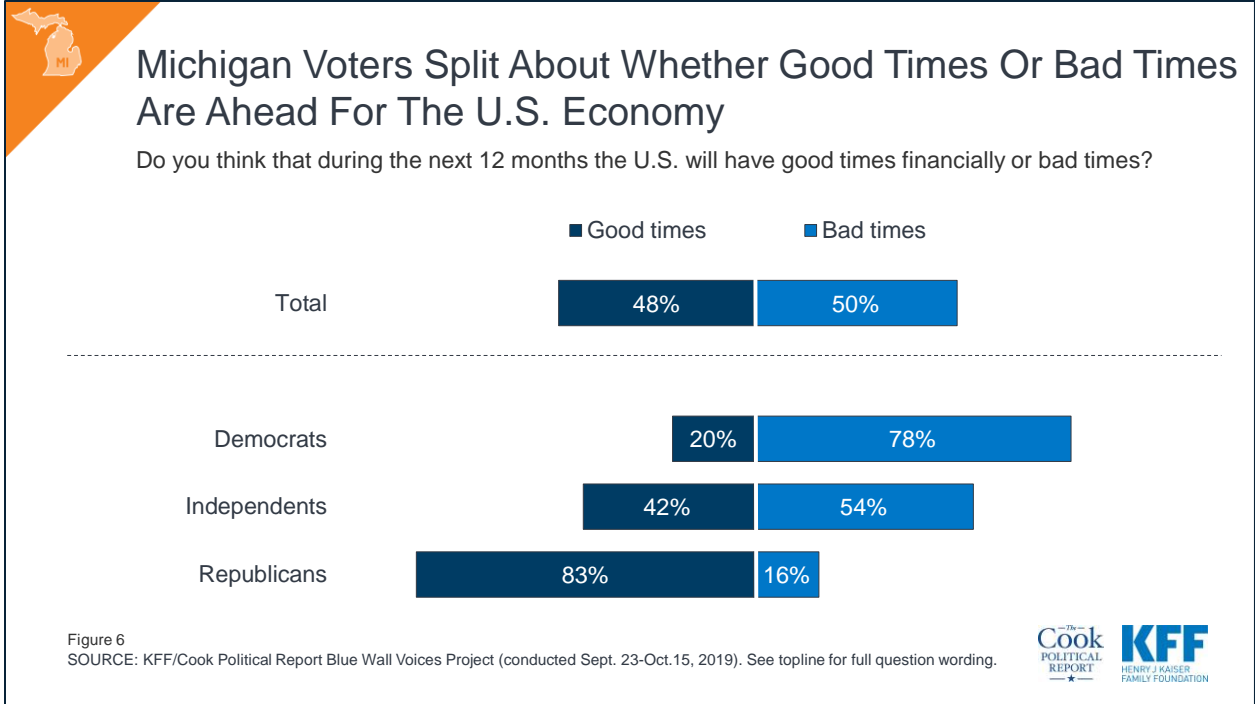
Health Care Priorities among Michigan Voters

When asked specifically about health care priorities that Congress should work on next year, over six in ten say that lowering prescription drug costs (69%) and maintaining protections for people with pre-existing conditions (64%) should be the top priority for Congress. These priorities substantially outrank other policy proposals such as repealing and replacing the ACA, expanding government aid for people who buy their own health insurance, and implementing a public option or national Medicare-for-all plan. These top two priorities persist across partisans, with large shares of Democratic voters, independent voters, and Republican voters naming lowering prescription drug costs and maintaining pre-existing condition protections as top priorities. However, over half of Republican voters (56%) also say that repealing and replacing the ACA should be a top priority. Implementing a national Medicare-for-all plan, a topic that has dominated health care discussions in the 2020 Democratic primary, is not a top issue for all voters or for Democratic voters, specifically.

Partisan Voters In Michigan Rank Lowering Rx Drug Costs, Protections For Pre-Existing Conditions Among Top Issues

Percent who say each of the following should be a **top priority** for Congress next year when it comes to health care:

	Total	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
Lowering Rx drug costs for as many Americans as possible	69%	76%	70%	60%
Maintaining protections for people with pre-existing conditions	64%	82%	63%	46%
Repealing and replacing the ACA	32%	16%	28%	56%
Expanding gov't financial help for those who buy their own insurance	27%	41%	23%	11%
Implementing a public option	26%	36%	25%	14%
Implementing a national Medicare-for-all plan	26%	36%	26%	11%

Figure 5
SOURCE: KFF/Cook Political Report Blue Wall Voices Project (conducted Sept. 23-Oct.15, 2019). See topline for full question wording.

Michigan Voters' Economic Outlook

Turning to the economy, the other top issue for voters during the 2020 election, voters in Michigan are split about what they think the economic forecast will be like for the next 12 months. Similar shares of Michigan voters say that during the next 12 months, the U.S. will have bad times (50%) and good times (48%). Views on the economic outlook are largely partisan with roughly eight in ten Democrats (78%) saying bad times are ahead and roughly eight in ten Republicans saying good times are ahead (83%). Independent voters are more divided, with four in ten saying the U.S. will experience "good times" while 54% say they expect "bad times" ahead.

Michigan Voters Split About Whether Good Times Or Bad Times Are Ahead For The U.S. Economy

Do you think that during the next 12 months the U.S. will have good times financially or bad times?

■ Good times   ■ Bad times

	Good times	Bad times
Total	48%	50%
Democrats	20%	78%
Independents	42%	54%
Republicans	83%	16%

Figure 6
SOURCE: KFF/Cook Political Report Blue Wall Voices Project (conducted Sept. 23-Oct.15, 2019). See topline for full question wording.

The Democratic Primary in Michigan and Preview of the General Election

More than half of Michigan voters say they are more motivated (55%) to vote in next year's election than in the previous presidential election. This includes a majority of Democrats (65%), independents (61%) and Republicans (53%) saying they feel *more* motivated than they did in 2016. Yet, similar to other states included in this analysis, a larger share of Democratic voters say they are "more motivated" than the share of Republican voters who said the same.

Democratic Voters In Michigan Report Higher Levels Of Motivation

Compared to the 2016 presidential election, how would you describe your level of motivation to vote in next year's 2020 presidential election?
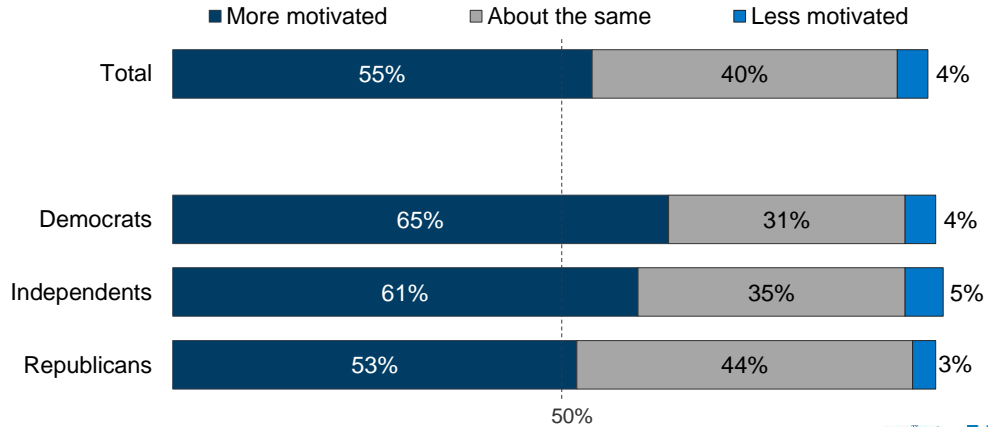
Legend: ■ More motivated ■ About the same ■ Less motivated

Group	More motivated	About the same	Less motivated
Total	55%	40%	4%
Democrats	65%	31%	4%
Independents	61%	35%	5%
Republicans	53%	44%	3%

50%

Figure 7
SOURCE: KFF/Cook Political Report Blue Wall Voices Project (conducted Sept. 23-Oct.15, 2019). See topline for full question wording.

Cook POLITICAL REPORT   KFF HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

Given the high levels of motivation as the next presidential election approaches, the Blue Wall Voices survey explored what could be motivating voters. When asked specifically what the one thing is that will motivate them to vote in the 2020 election, voters offer an array of open-ended responses, with the most frequently volunteered response relating to defeating President Trump (21%), followed by those who offered responses related to civic duty (10%) and health care (8%). Small shares of voters cited reasons such as wanting to re-elect Trump and not wanting to elect a Democrat (6%), or the economy (5%).

One In Five Michigan Voters Say Defeating Trump Is Their Top Motivation To Vote In 2020

Percent who say each of the following is the one thing that will motivate them to vote in the presidential election in 2020 *(open-ended responses):*

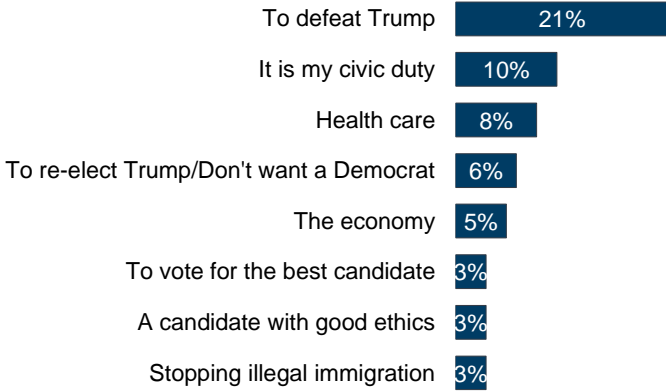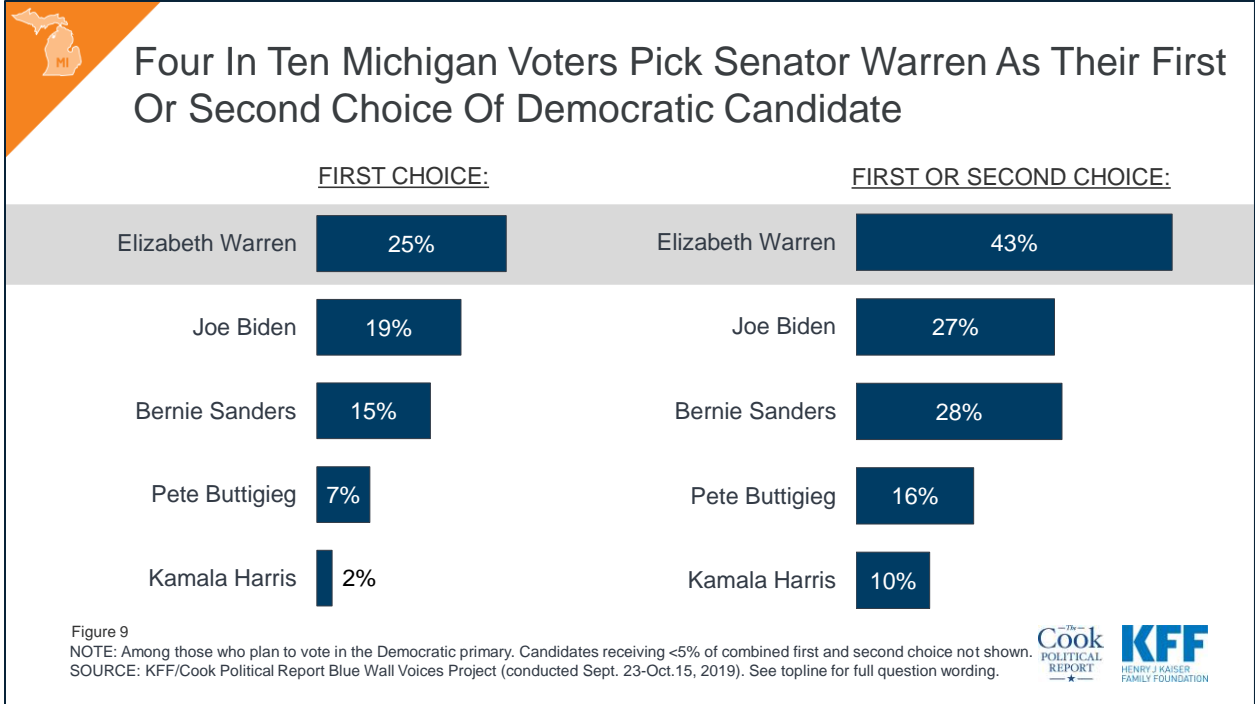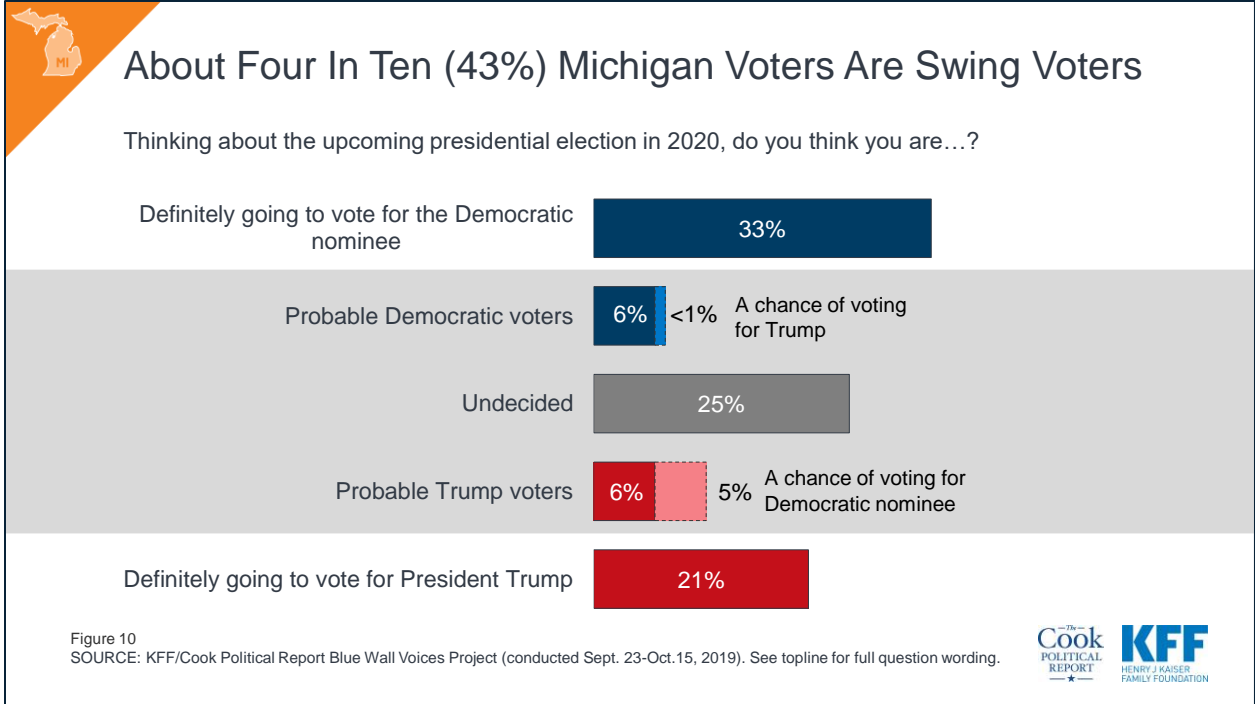|	
To defeat Trump	21%
It is my civic duty	10%
Health care	8%
To re-elect Trump/Don't want a Democrat	6%
The economy	5%
To vote for the best candidate	3%
A candidate with good ethics	3%
Stopping illegal immigration	3%

Figure 8
NOTE: Responses 3% and above shown.
SOURCE: KFF/Cook Political Report Blue Wall Voices Project (conducted Sept. 23-Oct.15, 2019). See topline for full question wording.

Cook POLITICAL REPORT   KFF HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

With more than four months before the 2020 Michigan Democratic primary, Senator Elizabeth Warren garners the most support among likely Democratic primary voters followed by Vice President Joe Biden and Senator Bernie Sanders. One-fourth of Michigan Democratic primary voters say Senator Warren is their first choice for the 2020 Democratic ticket and a combined 43% of voters say she is their first choice or second choice.

Four In Ten Michigan Voters Pick Senator Warren As Their First Or Second Choice Of Democratic Candidate

FIRST CHOICE:

Elizabeth Warren	25%
Joe Biden	19%
Bernie Sanders	15%
Pete Buttigieg	7%
Kamala Harris	2%

FIRST OR SECOND CHOICE:

Elizabeth Warren	43%
Joe Biden	27%
Bernie Sanders	28%
Pete Buttigieg	16%
Kamala Harris	10%

Figure 9
NOTE: Among those who plan to vote in the Democratic primary. Candidates receiving <5% of combined first and second choice not shown.
SOURCE: KFF/Cook Political Report Blue Wall Voices Project (conducted Sept. 23-Oct.15, 2019). See topline for full question wording.

Overall, many voters (43%) in the state remain uncertain about who they will support in the 2020 election. One-third of Michigan voters say they are definitely voting for the Democratic nominee and about one-fifth (21%) say they are definitely voting for President Trump. In contrast, one-fourth of voters say they are undecided, and few voters say they are either probably voting for the Democratic nominee (6%) or for President Trump (11%). This poll finds there are few persuadable Michigan voters meaning that, while they currently support one candidate, they could be convinced to support the other party's candidate.

About Four In Ten (43%) Michigan Voters Are Swing Voters

Thinking about the upcoming presidential election in 2020, do you think you are…?

Definitely going to vote for the Democratic nominee	33%
Probable Democratic voters	6% <1% A chance of voting for Trump
Undecided	25%
Probable Trump voters	6% 5% A chance of voting for Democratic nominee
Definitely going to vote for President Trump	21%

Figure 10
SOURCE: KFF/Cook Political Report Blue Wall Voices Project (conducted Sept. 23-Oct.15, 2019). See topline for full question wording.

Michigan swing voters (those who are either undecided voters or say they are probable but not definite Trump or Democratic voters) are supportive of three progressive platforms: the Green New Deal, a pathway to citizenship for immigrants, and a ban on future sales of assault weapons. But, on the other progressive platforms included in this project, Michigan voters are either split or a majority say they are a bad idea. This includes two-thirds of Michigan swing voters (65%) who say a national Medicare-for-all plan is a "bad idea."

Michigan Swing Voters See Many Progressive Positions As Good Ideas Including The Green New Deal

Do you think each of the following is a good idea or a bad idea?

■ Good idea   ■ Bad idea

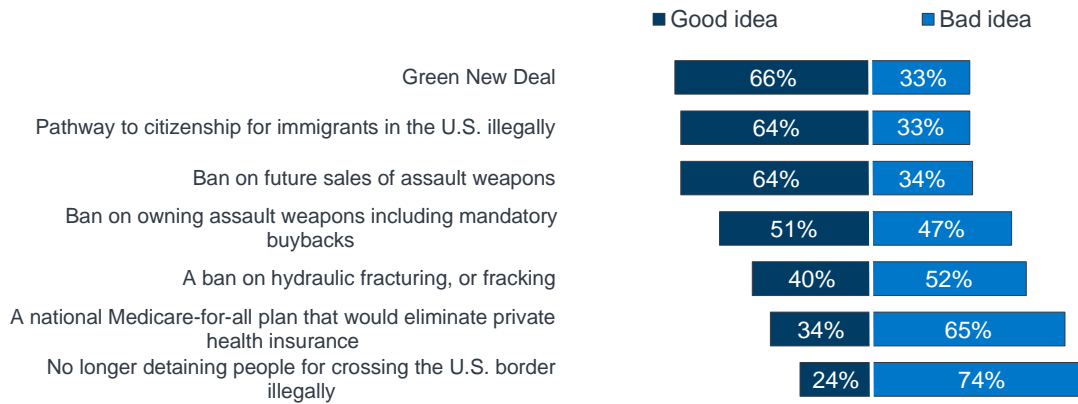|	Good idea	Bad idea
Green New Deal	66%	33%
Pathway to citizenship for immigrants in the U.S. illegally	64%	33%
Ban on future sales of assault weapons	64%	34%
Ban on owning assault weapons including mandatory buybacks	51%	47%
A ban on hydraulic fracturing, or fracking	40%	52%
A national Medicare-for-all plan that would eliminate private health insurance	34%	65%
No longer detaining people for crossing the U.S. border illegally	24%	74%

Figure 11

NOTE: Among voters who either say they are "undecided" or are probable Trump or probable Democratic voters in 2020

SOURCE: KFF/Cook Political Report Blue Wall Voices Project (conducted Sept. 23-Oct.15, 2019). See topline for full question wording.