Report on Partisanship and Ideology in Utah Reveals Growing Divides

But Republicans, Unaffiliated Voters and Democrats Share Concern about K-12 Education

(October 27, 2020) – Today, Utah Foundation releases the next installment in the Utah Priorities Project series: a report examining the partisan divide. *Red, Grey and Blue: The Issues that Unite and Divide Utah Voters* looks at how priorities differ across party and ideological lines and how those lines have shifted over time.

Among the findings of the report:

- The proportion of registered voters who are Republicans or Democrats have both increased, with Democrats increasing by roughly 50% since 2016. However, Republicans now make up half of registered voters, while only 15% are Democrats. (Unaffiliated voters make up most of the remainder.)
- There is close agreement among Republicans, unaffiliated voters and Democrats as to the relative importance of both K-12 education and housing affordability issues.
- Utah Foundation’s survey found that partisanship and division was a top-10 issue only for unaffiliated voters.
- Republicans have a higher level of concern about taxes, jobs and the economy, and growth management. They are also more worried about crime.
- Democrats have a higher level of concern about racial inequality or racism, public health and homelessness. They also have a higher level of concern about climate change.
- The median voter in Utah has become more liberal. This is due in large part to shifting views among unaffiliated voters and Democrats.
- Republicans and Democrats in Utah have become more polarized, mainly due to a shift further left among Democrats.

“There is a growing ideological divide between the political parties in Utah,” Utah Foundation President Peter Reichard said. “But there remains common ground on certain key issues facing Utah, providing opportunities for policy-making across a broad consensus.”
Special thanks to the George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation, the Larry H. Miller Group of Companies and Y2 Analytics for supporting the Utah Priorities Project. The brief is available at www.utahfoundation.org.

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