

New RGV Survey: Attitudes on the Border Wall

ABOUT 76 % RGV RESIDENTS OPPOSE THE CONSTRUCTION OF BORDER WALL

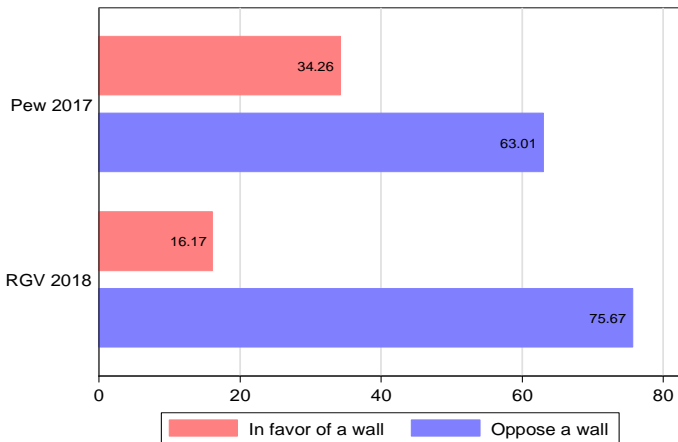
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The UTRGV Center for Survey Research & Policy Analysis fielded the 2018 RGV Our Voice/Nuestra Voz Survey. The survey found that:

- about 3 in 4 RGV residents oppose the construction of the proposed border wall
- nearly 4 in 10 RGV residents believe that expanding access to legal residency and citizenship and border security should be given equal policy priority
- about 1 in 2 RGV residents do not think that the border wall would reduce the number of immigrants.

In response to the question, “Are you in favor or do you oppose building a wall along the border to Mexico,” about 3 in 4 RGV residents –75.7 percent–expressed their opposition to a border wall. Nationally, opposition to the proposed wall along the U.S.-Mexico border is also high. In a survey conducted by Pew 2017 with a national sample of 1,503 adults, 63 percent of respondents opposed a border wall. Only 16.2 percent of RGV residents are in favor of a border wall, compared to about 34.3 percent of respondents to the Pew survey.

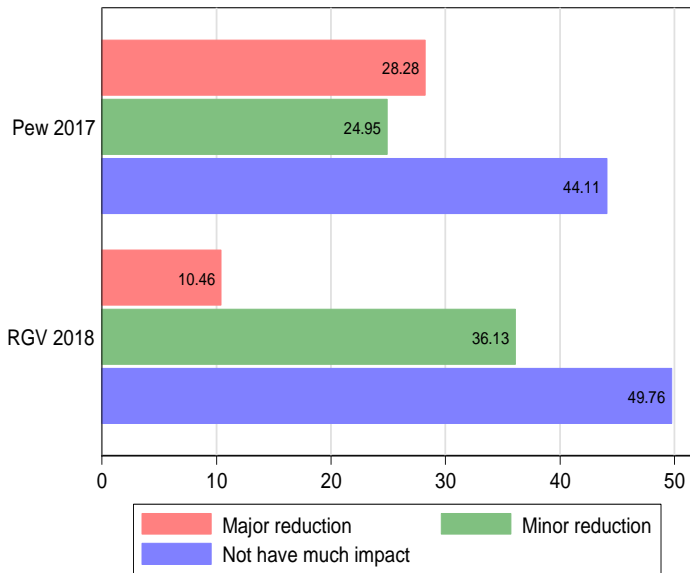
Nearly 4 in 10 RGV residents believe that expanding access to legal residency and citizenship and border security should be given equal policy priority



Despite overwhelming opposition to the wall, RGV residents recognized the need for border security as well as policies to expedite legal residency and citizenship for undocumented immigrants who live and work in the U.S. and meet certain requirements. Respondents were asked, “Which of the following should be a priority for U.S. immigration policy: (A) Ensuring better border security and strengthening immigration enforcement; (B) Creating a way for undocumented immigrants living and working in the U.S. to obtain legal

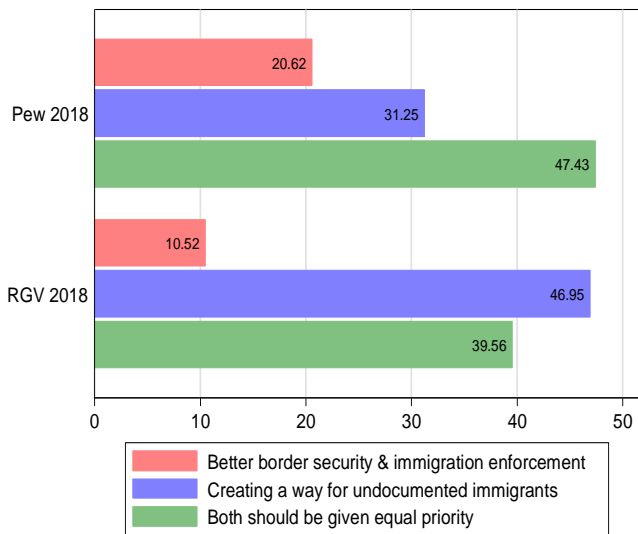
resident status or citizenship if they meet certain requirements; or (C) Both should be given equal priority.

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Nearly 4 in 10 (39.6 percent) RGV residents indicated that expanding access to legal residency and citizenship and border security should be given equal policy priority. National polls also reveal support for this option, with 47.5 percent of Pew respondents agreeing that both should be given equal priority.



Results from the RGV Our Voice/Nuestra Voz and Pew reflect attitudes supporting expanding citizenship pathways for immigrants. RGV residents are **more** likely to support policies that provide a path to legal residency and citizenship for undocumented immigrants who meet certain criteria than Pew respondents. Specifically, 47 percent of RGV residents express support for this policy compared to 31.3 percent of Pew respondents. Only 10.5 percent of RGV residents and just 20.6 percent of Pew respondents support prioritizing border security and immigration enforcement.

About 1 in 2 RGV residents do not think that the border wall would reduce the number of immigrants

Consistent with the RGV attitudes toward the border wall and immigration policy, nearly half of RGV residents believe that the wall will not have a major impact on the number of immigrants to the U.S. Respondents were asked, “Do you think that a wall along the entire U.S.-Mexico border would lead to (A) a major reduction in immigration, (B) a minor reduction in immigration or (C) no reduction in immigration?”

Similarly, the results from the Pew demonstrates that 44.1 percent of respondents agree that the wall would not reduce the number of immigrants. RGV respondents are also less likely to report that a border wall would result in a major reduction in immigration. Only 10.5 percent of RGV respondents indicates a wall would cause a major reduction in the number of immigrants compared to 28.3 percent of Pew respondents.

Methodology: In spring 2018, the UTRGV Center for Survey Research & Policy Analysis fielded the 2018 **RGV Our Voice/Nuestra Voz Survey**. Randomly selected RGV residents aged 18 years or older residing in Cameron, Hidalgo and Starr counties were asked about their perceptions of border security, immigration policy, NAFTA, gun control, disaster preparedness and satisfaction with community services. A team of student interviewers administered random-digit dialed telephone surveys in both Spanish and English. The sample of respondents totaled 660 (+/- 4 percent MOE). The 2018 RGV Our Voice/Nuestra Voz survey was funded by the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Office of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Student Success, and P-16 Integration *Transforming Our World Strategic Plan*. For more information regarding survey methodology, please contact csr@utrgv.edu.

About the Center for Survey Research & Policy Analysis: The Center for Survey Research & policy Analysis (www.utrgv.edu/center-for-survey-research) at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley was established in 1998 to study and report on issues of local concern in the Rio Grande Valley and to provide training opportunities and research experience to students in survey research methods. Today, the Center continues its mission to provide timely applied research, and technical assistance and consulting services to local and state agencies, non-profit organizations and private business associations throughout the Rio Grande Valley, as well as to the UTRGV community. The Center’s capabilities include survey design and administration, public opinion polling, data collection and analysis, program evaluation, needs assessment, technical assistance and policy analysis. For more information or to discuss a potential project contact csr@utrgv.edu.

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