

Results from Count on Mothers' study of

The PROTECT Act and the Recommendations of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations Report on The Youth Vaping Epidemic

Count on Mothers **provides legislators with comprehensive first-hand data to help them make more informed decisions.** Each policy that we examine is selected based on what surveyed Mothers have indicated they want to address, reflecting the priorities of Mothers from across the country and political spectrum. We survey Mothers because they are the largest group charged with the well-being of children. Every Mother is welcomed to contribute to our efforts. We do this work because we believe that Mothers' first-hand experiences and knowledge are critical sources of information that need to be an essential part of the federal policy-making process, particularly on bills that affect kids and families.

This report focuses on information Count on Mothers collected on an issue of interest to Mothers. In April 2024, we studied Mothers' views on the PROTECT Act and the Recommendations of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. In order to provide an informative resource, we surveyed Mothers on the main component of the PROTECT Act, four of the recommendations directly affecting children, and an open field for qualitative data. A total of **595** Mothers residing in **49** states and from across the political spectrum provided feedback on these questions based on their first-hand knowledge.

Mothers identified politically within the given choice of very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal, or very liberal. Count on Mothers tallies political affiliation in order to ensure a reflective sample and to study where Mothers agree and disagree both along political lines and regardless of ideology. After analyzing Mothers' opinions from the survey, we take this aggregate data and share it with Congressional legislators and the public so they are educated on Mothers' views on policies that seek to address critical issues for families.

Methodology

Design

This process uses a quantitative research design. Cross-sectional surveys were distributed in April 2024.

Instruments

A survey was constructed based on the main component of the PROTECT Act and the recommendations proposed on the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations Report

on the Youth Vaping Epidemic. We also assessed Mothers' political ideology and state/ zip code of residence to better understand the background of the sample.

Sampling Procedure

Count on Mothers employs both purposive and snowball sampling strategies. Concerted efforts were made to advertise and distribute the survey to and invite participation of as many Mothers as possible. For instance, we created Google advertisements, Instagram-based announcements, and posts in Mothers' Instagram groups that consist of participants from across the political spectrum. Additionally, Mothers who receive the questionnaire are encouraged to distribute the survey to other Mothers who they believe would be interested in sharing their perspectives.

Sample

595 Mothers from **49** states completed the survey focused on the PROTECT Act and the Teen Vaping Epidemic Report. Efforts were made to ensure that survey respondents reflected a range of political ideologies, from very conservative to very liberal. **10.25%** identified as very conservative, **19.66%** identified as conservative, **33.61%** identified as moderate, **23.3%** identified as liberal and **11.60%** identified as very liberal, and **1.85%** identified as other.

While national data on Mothers' political ideologies has not been identified, studies have examined the political ideologies of women, in general. According to a recent Gallup Poll (2021), 32% of women identified as conservative, 37% of women identified as moderate, and 29% of women identified as liberal. Count on Mothers will continue to invite the participation of Mothers across the political spectrum so that our sample closely mirrors these national trends.

Main Takeaways

Quantitative Questions

- Over 78% of Mothers agreed (either agreed or strongly agreed) that there should be a CDC initiative that authorizes \$500 million over 5 years for enhanced research and education to reduce youth use of e-cigarettes.
- An overwhelming majority of Mothers agreed that there should be enforced restriction of flavored e-cigarette products that promote youth tobacco product initiation and long-term use, specifically over 97% of very liberal Mothers versus 86% of very conservative Mothers.

- There was less of a spread between political parties (ranging from 87% to 91%) for Mothers who agreed that there should be an update of federal laws governing the marketing of age-restricted products, such as e-cigarettes, that address current marketing practices.
- There was more of a spread between political parties (ranging from 71% to 92%) for Mothers who agreed that Congress should examine whether social media companies' age gating capabilities are effective, and companies should determine how these capabilities can be strengthened.

Grouping States Based on Smoking and Vaping Prevalence Methodology

- The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is the country's leading system of health-related surveys that collect state data from U.S. residents regarding their health-related behaviors and chronic health conditions.
- Based on BRFSS data from 2017 and 2019, states were rated as high, medium, or low prevalence for smoking and vaping (ratings were based on prevalence groupings as denoted by the CDC).
- Survey responses for each question were then grouped according to smoking/vaping prevalence rates of their state.

Results

- On average, Mothers from states with lower smoking/vaping rates were more likely to agree or strongly agree with the questions than Mothers from states with a high prevalence of smoking/vaping.
- 93% of Mothers from states with a low prevalence of smoking/vaping agreed or strongly agreed that there should be enforced restriction of flavored e-cigarette products that promote youth tobacco product initiation and long-term use compared to only 84% of Mothers from states with a high prevalence for smoking/vaping.

Qualitative Question: Is there anything you would like to add based on what you have seen firsthand in your home or your community?

- Over 5% of Mothers specifically mentioned the product appearance: for example, one Mother says "Companies are getting sneaky with products. They have [e-cigarettes] that look like highlighters now." (Liberal Mom, Illinois)
- Likewise, a very conservative Mother from South Carolina says "Restrictions on the shape of e-cigarettes. Some of them are being hidden in school supply looking containers, such as highlighters and erasers. Making them almost impossible for adults to spot."
- Almost 16% of Mothers were concerned with the easy accessibility of vaping products. Some Mothers remarked that they've seen teens purchase e-cigarettes/vapes from stores that do not check IDs and other moms said they've known teens to buy e-cigarettes/vapes from adults.
- Over 11% of Mothers felt that increasing education on the effects and addictiveness of vaping would be helpful as a preventative measure.
- Over 20% of Mothers thought that there should be stricter laws regarding e-cigarettes/vapes, including raising the age limit or implementing partial or total bans of e-cigarettes/vapes. For example, a very liberal Mother from Illinois thought that banning the sales of e-cigarettes/vapes within a certain range of schools would be helpful.

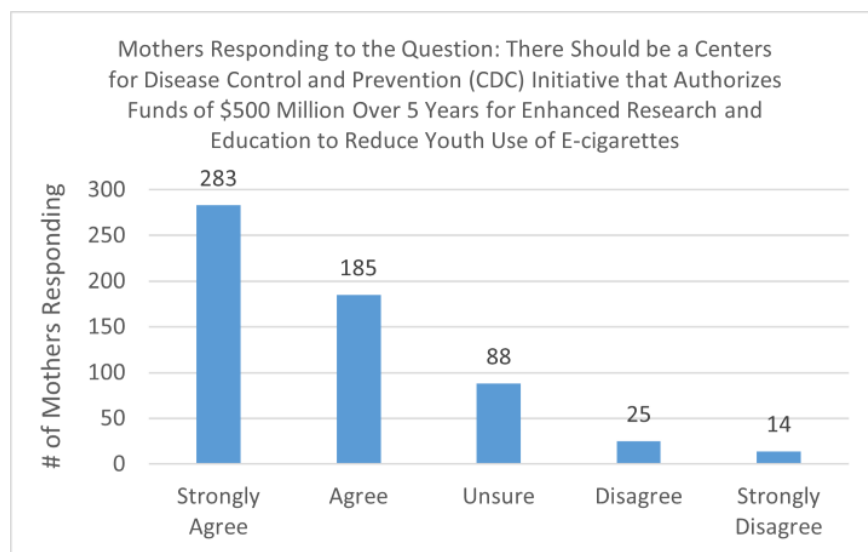
What is another issue that Count on Mothers Should address? One that concerns you or impacts your child's health or safety.

- Of the 33 Mothers who mentioned bullying/peer pressure, 7 moms (21%) specifically mentioned "cyber bullying."
- Of the 80 Mothers who said substance use/abuse, 24 moms (30%) specifically mentioned kids/teens substance use and 7 moms (9%) mentioned fentanyl use.
- The main issues that Mothers seem to want addressed month-over-month are abortion/reproductive rights, gun safety/control, and the education system.

Question on the Main Component of the PROTECT Act

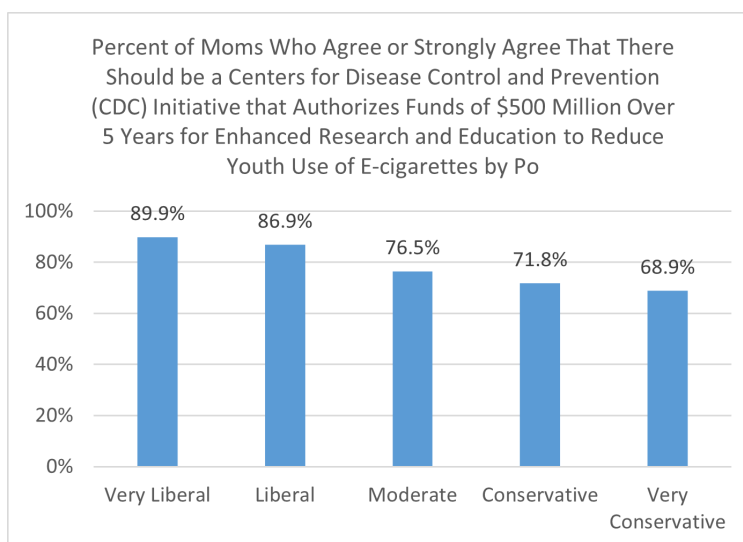
Over 78% of Mothers surveyed agree (both agree and strongly agree) there should be a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) initiative that authorizes funds of \$500 million over 5 years for enhanced research and education to reduce youth use of e-cigarettes. **15% of Mothers are unsure** about this component of the bill, **and roughly 7% of Mothers surveyed disagree** with this component.

Belief	# of Mothers Responding	Percent of Sample
Strongly Agree	283	47.56%
Agree	185	31.09%
Uncertain	88	14.79%
Disagree	25	4.20%
Strongly Disagree	14	2.35%
	595	100%*



*On all tables, figures add up to 100%, not accounting for rounding error.

Among the 595 Mothers who identified with a political affiliation within the categories of very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal, and very liberal:

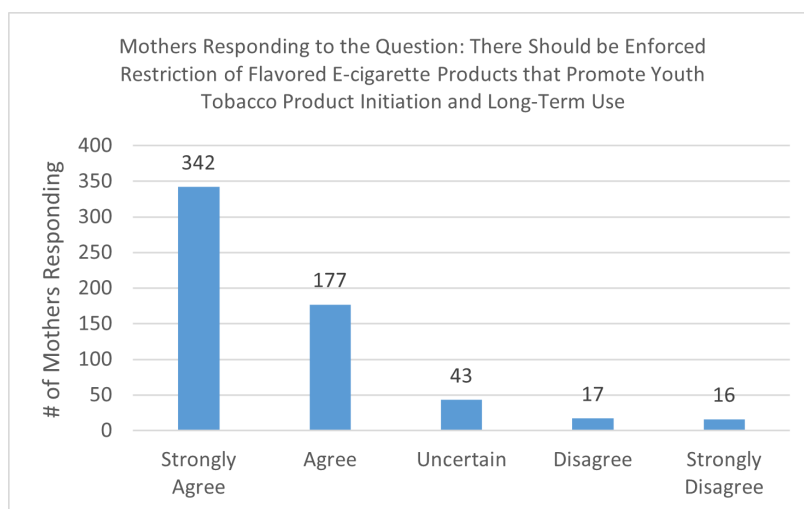


- **69% of very conservative and 72% of conservative Mothers agreed with this proposal**, while 16% of very conservative Mothers and 18% of conservative Mothers were unsure, and 15% of very conservative and 10% of conservative Mothers disagreed.
- **77% of moderate Mothers were in favor** of this proposal, while 18% were unsure and 6% disagreed.
- **87% of liberal and 90% of very liberal Mothers agreed** with this component of the bill, 9% of liberal Moms and 9% of very liberal Moms were unsure, and 4% of liberal Moms and 1% of very liberal Moms disagreed.

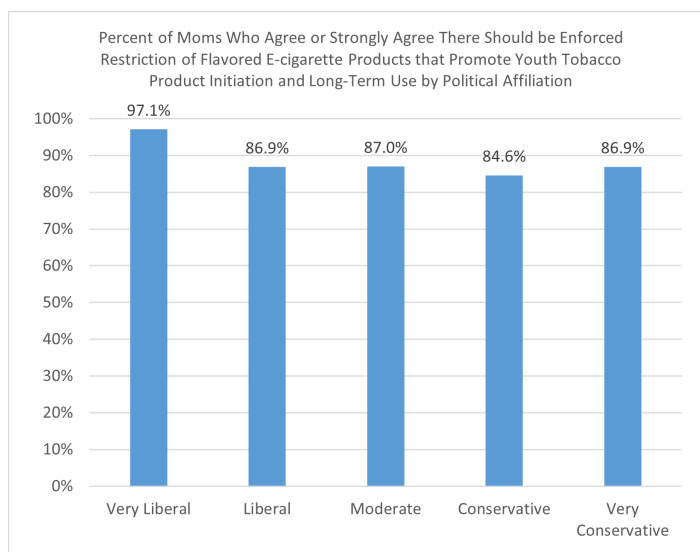
Questions on Recommendations on The Youth Vaping Epidemic Report

Over **87% of Mothers surveyed agree** there should be enforced restriction of flavored e-cigarettes products that promote youth tobacco product initiation and long-term use. A little over 7% of Mothers were uncertain and over 5% disagreed with this idea.

Belief	# of Mothers Responding	Percent of Sample
Strongly Agree	342	57.48%
Agree	177	29.75%
Uncertain	43	7.23%
Disagree	17	2.86%
Strongly Disagree	16	2.69%
	595	100%



Among the 595 Mothers who identified with a political affiliation within the categories of very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal, and very liberal:

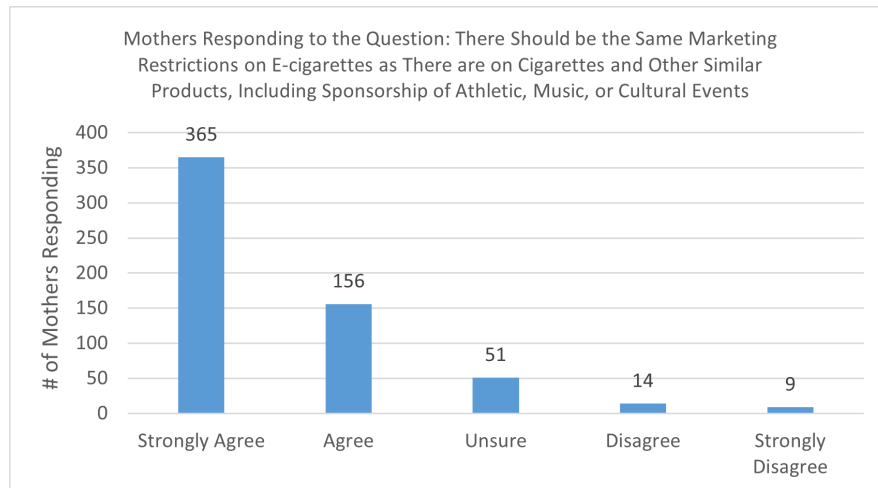


- **87% of very conservative Mothers and 85% of conservative Mothers agreed with this proposal;** 9% of conservative Mothers and 5% of very conservative Mothers were unsure, and 7% of conservative Mothers and 15% of very conservative Mothers disagreed with this recommendation.
- **87% of moderate Mothers were in favor** of this issue, however 9% were unsure and 4% disagreed with this idea.
- **87% of liberal Mothers** and **97% of very liberal Mothers agreed**, while 7% of liberal Mothers and 2% of very liberal Mothers were unsure about this recommendation, and 6% of liberal Mothers disagreed and 1% of very liberal Mothers disagreed.

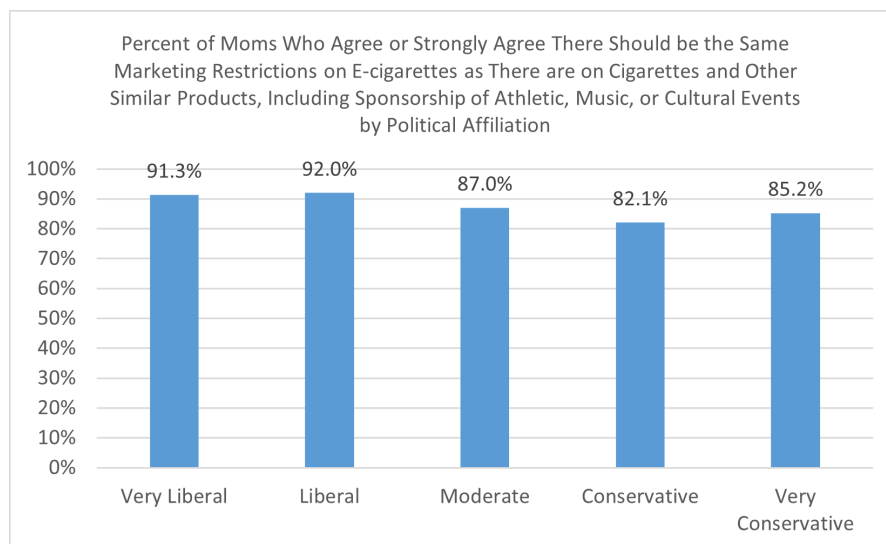
Over **87% of Mothers surveyed agree** that there should be the same marketing restrictions on e-cigarettes as there are on cigarettes and other similar products, including sponsorship of athletic, music, or cultural events. Over 8% of Mothers were unsure, and about 4% of Mothers disagreed.

Belief	# of Mothers Responding	Percent of Sample
Strongly Agree	365	61.35%
Agree	156	26.22%
Uncertain	51	8.57%
Disagree	14	2.35%

Strongly Disagree	9	1.51%
	595	100%



Among the 595 Mothers who identified with a political affiliation within the categories of very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal, and very liberal:

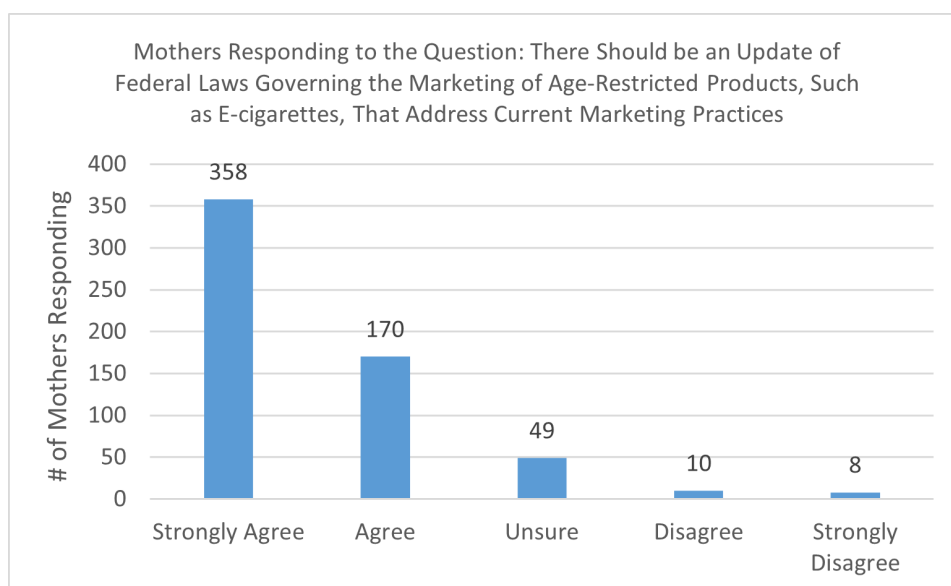


- A little over **85% of very conservative Mothers and 82% of conservative Mothers agreed with this idea** that there should be the same marketing restrictions on e-cigarettes as there are on cigarettes, about 13% of conservative Mothers and about 5% of very conservative Mothers were unsure, and only 4% of very conservative and 4% of conservative Mothers disagreed with this idea.

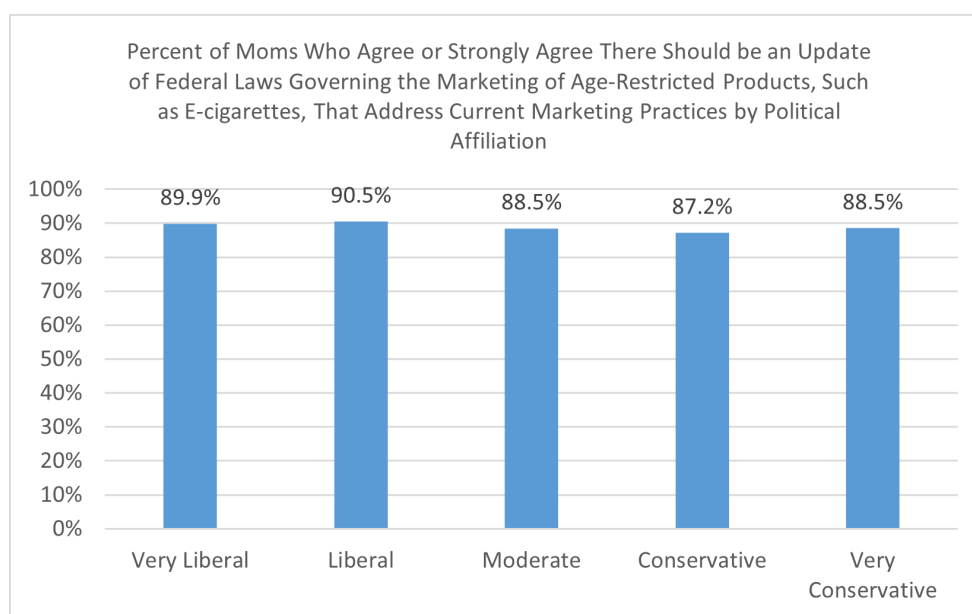
- **87% of moderate Mothers were in favor** of the same marketing restrictions on e-cigarettes as there are on cigarettes, and about 9% were unsure and about 4% disagreed.
- **92% of liberal Mothers and 91% of very liberal Mothers agreed with this idea**, while 6% of liberal Mothers and 7% of very liberal Mothers were uncertain about this recommendation, and 1% of very liberal Mothers and 2% of liberal Mothers disagreed with this proposal.

Over 88% of Mothers surveyed agree that there should be an update of federal laws governing the marketing of age-restricted products, such as e-cigarettes, that address current marketing practices, while a little more than 8% of Mothers were unsure, and close to 2% of Mothers did not agree.

Belief	# of Mothers Responding	Percent of Sample
Strongly Agree	358	60.17%
Agree	170	28.57%
Uncertain	49	8.24%
Disagree	10	1.68%
Strongly Disagree	8	1.35%
	595	100%



Among the 595 Mothers who identified with a political affiliation within the categories of very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal, and very liberal:

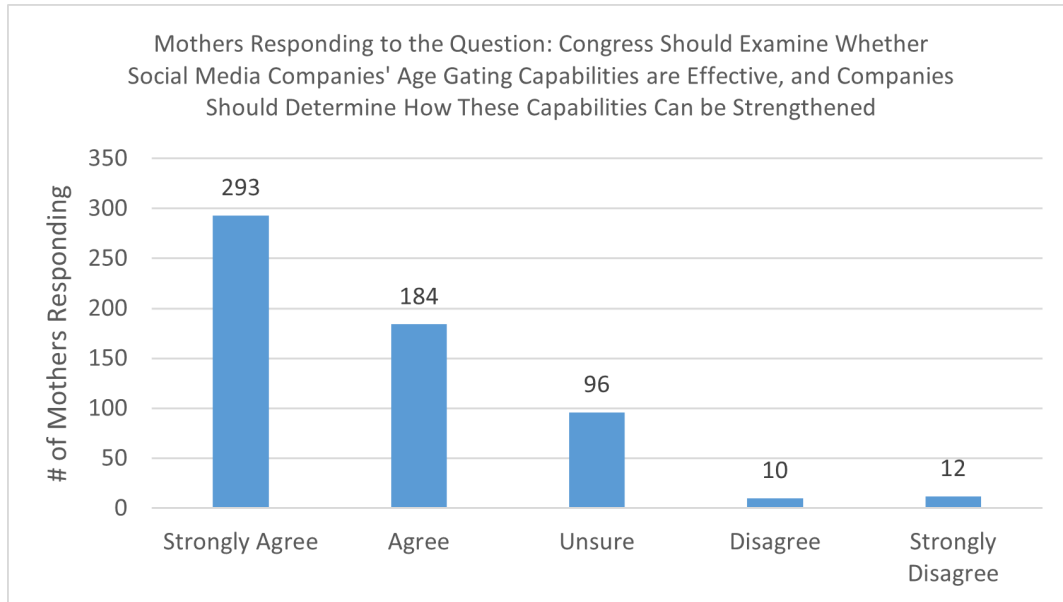


- 89% of very conservative Mothers and 87% of conservative Mothers agreed** that there should be an update of federal laws governing the marketing of age-restricted products, while 5% of very conservative and 10% of conservative Mothers were uncertain, and 6% of very conservative Mothers and 3% of conservative Mothers did not agree with this recommendation.

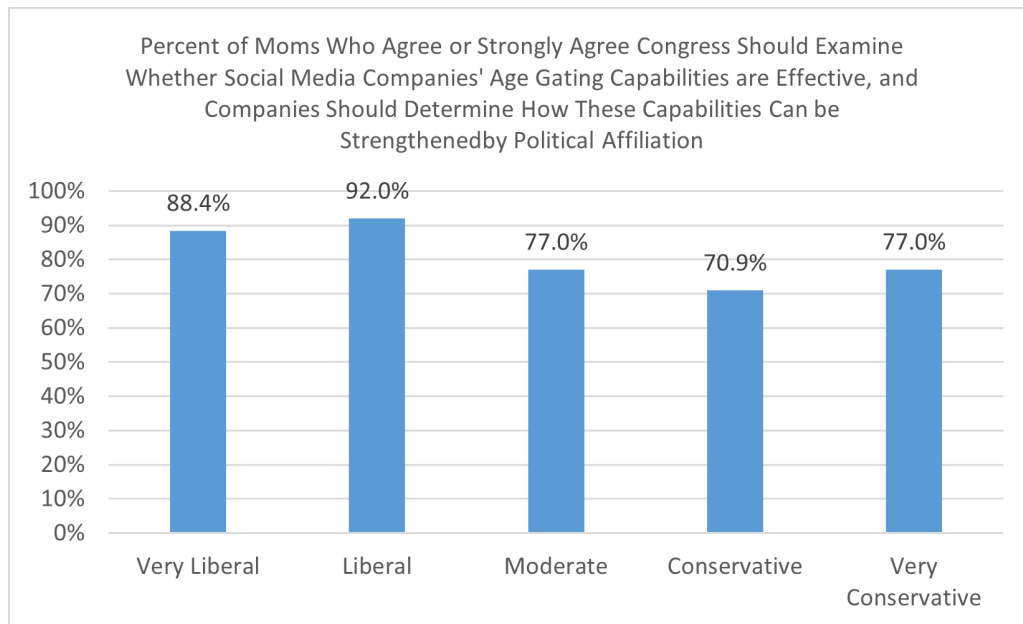
- **89% of moderate Mothers were in favor** of this idea, only 3% disagreed, and 9% were uncertain.
- **90% of liberal and 90% of very liberal Mothers agreed** with this recommendation for a federal law, 7% liberal and 9% of very liberal Mothers were uncertain about it, and a small percentage disagreed – 3% of liberal and 1% of very liberal Mothers.

Over 80% of Mothers surveyed believe that Congress should examine whether social media companies' age gating capabilities are effective, and companies should determine how these capabilities can be strengthened, over 16% of Mothers are uncertain, while close to 4% of Mothers disagreed with this idea.

Belief	# of Mothers Responding	Percent of Sample
Strongly Agree	293	49.24%
Agree	184	30.92%
Uncertain	96	16.13%
Disagree	10	1.68%
Strongly Disagree	12	2.02%
	595	100%



Among the 595 Mothers who identified with a political affiliation within the categories of very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal, and very liberal:



- 77% of very conservative Mothers and 71% of conservative Mothers agreed** with this idea, while 16% of very conservative Mothers and 25% of conservative Mothers were uncertain, and only 7% percent of very conservative Mothers disagreed and 4% of conservative Mothers disagreed.

- **77% of moderate Mothers were in favor** of this recommendation that Congress should examine the effectiveness of social media gating capabilities; 20% were uncertain, and only 3% disagreed with this idea.
- **92% of liberal Mothers and 88% of very liberal Mothers agreed** with this recommendation, only 6% of liberal Moms and 9% of very liberal Moms were uncertain, and under 2% of liberal Moms and 2% of very liberal Moms surveyed disagreed with the recommendation.

Qualitative Data

On an open-ended question, where mothers had a chance to provide additional thoughts based on their firsthand experience in their homes or communities, 163 provided information.

- Over 5% of moms specifically mentioned the product appearance: for example, one mom says "Companies are getting sneaky with products. They have [e-cigarettes] that look like highlighters now." (Liberal Mom, Illinois)
- Likewise, a very conservative mom from South Carolina says "Restrictions on the shape of e-cigarettes. Some of them are being hidden in school supply looking containers, such as highlighters and erasers. Making them almost impossible for adults to spot."
- Almost 16% of moms were concerned with the easy accessibility of vaping products. Some moms remarked that they've seen teens purchase e-cigarettes/vapes from stores that do not check IDs and other moms said they've known teens to buy e-cigarettes/vapes from adults.
- Over 11% of moms felt that increasing education on the effects and addictiveness of vaping would be helpful as a preventative measure.
- Over 20% of moms thought that there should be stricter laws regarding e-cigarettes/vapes, including raising the age limit or implementing partial or total bans of e-cigarettes/vapes. For example, a very liberal mom from Illinois thought that banning the sales of e-cigarettes/vapes within a certain range of schools would be helpful.

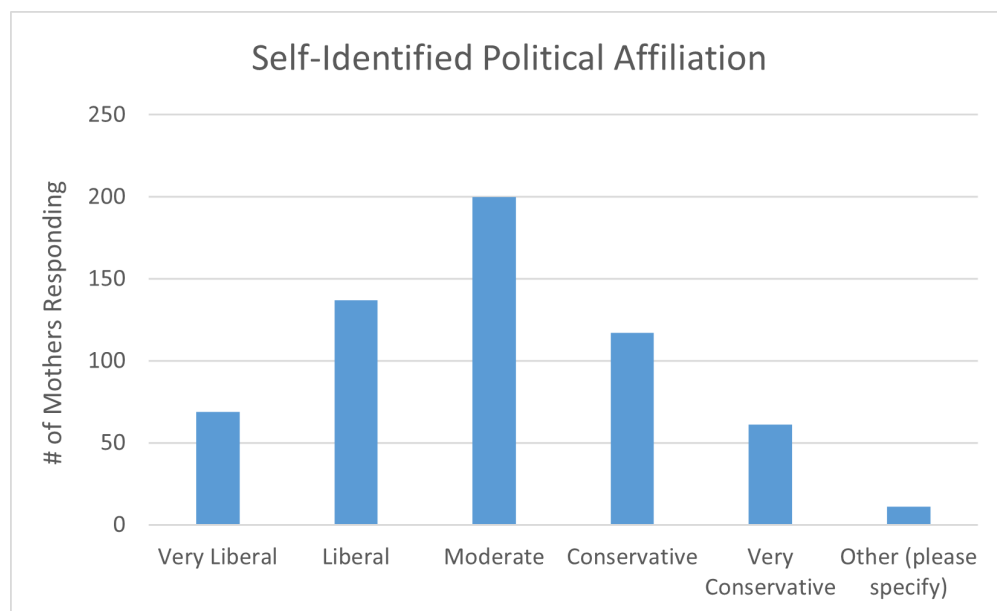
	# of Mothers Responding	Percent of Sample
Vapes are too accessible	26	15.95%
Increase education	18	11.04%
Stricter laws	15	9.20%
Increased resources for quitting	10	6.13%
Product appearance (too appealing/easy to conceal)	9	5.52%
Total vaping ban	9	5.52%
Increase the age restrictions	8	4.91%
Parental awareness	7	4.29%
Advertisements	6	3.68%
Increased prevalence	5	3.07%
Less government regulations (and more personal autonomy)	3	1.84%
Stores selling to minors/not checking IDs	3	1.84%
Too many vape shops	3	1.84%
Adults buying vapes/e-cigarettes for children	2	1.23%
Ban vaping indoors	2	1.23%
Concerns about the environmental impacts of vaping	2	1.23%
Increase research on vaping	2	1.23%
Other responses	33	20.25%
Total	163	100.00%

Political Ideology

Count on Mothers is committed to representing Mothers of all political ideologies so that Congress can be best informed of constituents' experiences and views.

Regarding the political background of the survey respondents, the sample closely reflects the U.S. breakdown of political ideology among women according to Gallup. 10.25% were very conservative, 23.03% were conservative, 33.61% were moderate, 23.03% were liberal, and 11.60% were very liberal, and 1.85% identified as “other.”

Political Affiliation	# of Mothers Responding	Percent of Sample
Very Liberal	69	11.60%
Liberal	137	23.03%
Moderate	200	33.61%
Conservative	117	19.66%
Very Conservative	61	10.25%
Other (please specify)	11	1.85%
Total	595	100.00%



State of Residence Question

Mothers who responded to the survey resided in 49 states. The states that had the

most representation were: California (10.14%), Pennsylvania (5.91%), New York (5.74%), Florida (5.74%), Illinois (5.07%), Texas (4.90%), Ohio (4.73%), Michigan (4.05%), and Georgia (3.89%).

Future Legislative Focus

Mothers who completed the survey in April recommended legislative issues that should be the focus of future efforts for Count on Mothers.

What is another issue that Count on Mothers should address?

Issue	# of Mothers Responding	Percent of Sample
Substance use/abuse	80	22.35%
Bullying/peer pressure	33	9.22%
Gun safety/control	31	8.66%
Crime/safety	25	6.98%
School safety	19	5.31%
Abortion/reproductive rights	19	5.31%
Mental health	17	4.75%
Social media	16	4.47%
Education	13	3.63%
Healthcare	13	3.63%
Child welfare/safety	10	2.79%
Sex education	10	2.79%
Driver safety/distracted driving	9	2.51%
LGBTQ+ issues	8	2.23%
Vaccinations	7	1.96%
Food access/nutrition	6	1.68%
Childcare	4	1.12%
Inflation	4	1.12%
Paid family leave	4	1.12%
Pornography	4	1.12%
Teen pregnancy	4	1.12%
Environment/climate change	3	0.84%
Video games	3	0.84%
Border security/immigration	2	0.56%
Human trafficking	2	0.56%
Car seat safety	1	0.28%
Child support	1	0.28%
Dress code	1	0.28%
Eating disorders	1	0.28%
Food additives	1	0.28%
Housing access	1	0.28%
Lead exposure/poisoning	1	0.28%
Misinformation	1	0.28%
Outdoor infrastructure	1	0.28%
Parental rights	1	0.28%
Racism	1	0.28%
Voting rights	1	0.28%
Total	358	100.00%