



Results from Count on Mothers' study of the Secure the Border Act

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 a bill of interest to Mothers. In January 2024, we studied Mothers' views on 7 main components of the Secure the Border Act: **1)** Whether the federal government should continue building a wall at the Southern border of at least 900 miles; **2)** Whether the federal government should improve technology and increase the number of Border Patrol agents at the southern and northern U.S. border; **3)** Whether we have public access to monthly information regarding the number and nature of illegal crossings; **4)** Whether Border Patrol should have real-time access to the criminal history databases of all countries of origin to perform background checks; **5)** Whether the Department of Homeland Security should remove unaccompanied children from the U.S. if they are not victims of trafficking or have a fear of return, **6)** Whether the federal government should limit asylum eligibility (i.e. to individuals who arrived in the U.S. at a port of entry, without criminal convictions); and **7)** Whether there should be criminal penalties for overstaying a visa. A total of **785** Mothers residing in **47** states and from across the political spectrum provided feedback on these components.

Of the 785 surveyed Mothers, 766 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 also studies where Mothers agree and disagree along political lines in order to understand where and what percentage mothers agree regardless of political affiliation. After analyzing Mothers' opinions from the survey, we take this aggregate data and share it with Congressional legislators so they are educated on Mothers' views on the main components of the "Secure the Border Act."

Methodology

Design

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

Instruments

A survey was constructed based on main tenets of the Secure the Border Act. 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

785 Mothers from **47** states completed the survey focused on the Secure the Border Act. Efforts were made to ensure that survey respondents reflected a range of political ideologies, from very conservative to very liberal. **10%** identified as very conservative, **21%** identified as conservative, **37%** identified as moderate, **18%** identified as liberal and **12% identified as very liberal**, and **2%** identified as other. The sample closely reflects the U.S. breakdown of political ideology among women according to Gallup.

Key Findings

60% of Mothers believe that overall, based on the 7 components surveyed, the "Secure the Border Act" would have a positive impact on the safety, health, or well-being of kids and families.

23% of Mothers surveyed were unsure whether the bill would have a positive impact and **17% of Mothers surveyed did not believe the bill would have a positive impact.**

The majority of Mothers support these seven (7) components, with the largest majority supporting 1) that the federal government should require real-time access to the criminal history databases of all countries of origin to perform background checks (80% of Mothers surveyed agree), and 2) that the federal government should improve technology and increase the number of Border Patrol agents at the southern and northern U.S. border (73% of Mothers surveyed agree). The least supported is the idea that unaccompanied children should be removed from the U.S. if they are not victims of trafficking or have a fear of return (51% of Mothers surveyed agreed).

Among the components of the bill, a trend emerged along political lines. Most very conservative and conservative Mothers were in agreement with each aspect of the legislation. However, on almost every component, Mothers who identified as liberal and very liberal were split. In addition, on almost every component, mothers who identified as moderate showed significant uncertainty on the ideas in the bill.

Bill Component Questions

56% of Mothers agree (both agree and strongly agree) the federal government should require the continuation of the southern border wall construction, to complete at least 900 miles, 20% of Mothers are unsure about this component of the bill, and 24% of Mothers surveyed disagree with this component.

Belief	# of Mothers Responding	Percent of Sample
Strongly Agree	281	37%
Agree	166	21%
Uncertain	155	18%
Disagree	77	10%
Strongly Disagree	106	14%
	785	100%*

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

Among the 766 Mothers who identified with a political affiliation within the categories of very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal, and very liberal:

- Conservative Mothers and very conservative Mothers were mostly in agreement with this component, **91% of very conservative and 81% of conservative Mothers agreed with this component.** 6% of very conservative Mothers and 13% of conservative

Mothers were unsure, while only 3% of very conservative and 6% of conservative Mothers disagreed.

- Among **moderate Mothers**, **48% were in favor** of this component. **31% were unsure**, and **21% disagreed**
- **36% of liberal and 46% of very liberal Mothers agreed** with building the wall, 19% of liberal Moms and 8% of very liberal Moms were unsure, and **45% of liberal Moms and 46% of very liberal Moms disagreed** with continuing the build of the Southern border wall to 900 miles.

73% of Mothers surveyed agree the federal government should improve technology and increase the number of Border Patrol agents at the southern and northern U.S. border. 17% of Mothers surveyed were unsure, and 10% of Mothers disagreed.

Belief	# of Mothers Responding	Percent of Sample
Strongly Agree	309	43%
Agree	215	30%
Uncertain	114	16%
Disagree	40	6%
Strongly Disagree	35	5%
	713	100%

Among the 766 Mothers who identified with a political affiliation within the categories of very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal, and very liberal:

- **91% of very conservative Mothers were in agreement, and 81% of conservative Mothers agreed**; 13% of conservative Mothers and 6% of very conservative Mothers were unsure, and only 5% of conservative Mothers and 3% of very conservative Mothers disagreed with this provision.
- Among moderate Mothers, **54% were in favor** of this issue, however **30% were unsure** and 16% disagreed with this provision.
- Among liberal Mothers, **45% agreed**, and **49% of very liberal Mothers agreed**. 28% of liberal Mothers and 13% of very liberal Mothers were unsure about this provision, but **28% of liberal Mothers disagreed and 38% of very liberal Mothers disagreed** with this

provision of the bill.

68% of Mothers agree the federal government should require Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to publish monthly information regarding the number and nature of illegal crossings on the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) website, while 16% of Mothers are unsure of this component and 16% do not agree that we should require public information on these crossings.

Belief	# of Mothers Responding	Percent of Sample
Strongly Agree	311	39%
Agree	226	29%
Uncertain	123	16%
Disagree	55	4%
Strongly Disagree	10	7%
	785	100%

Among the 766 Mothers who identified with a political affiliation within the categories of very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal, and very liberal:

- **86% of very conservative Mothers were in agreement, and 86% of conservative Mothers agreed**; while 11% of very conservative and 12% of conservative Mothers were unsure, and very few disagreed, only 3% of very conservative and 2% of conservative Mothers.
- **74% of moderate Mothers were in favor** of requiring published information on the number and nature of illegal crossings, and **a significant portion were unsure (21%) and only 5% disagreed**.
- **66% of liberal Mothers and 68% of very liberal Mothers agreed**, while also showing uncertainty among liberal Mothers **(22%)** and **12%** of very liberal Mothers **were unsure**, but **20% of very liberal Mothers disagreed** and **12%** of liberal Mothers **disagreed**.

80% of Mothers agree that the federal government should require CBP to have real-time access to the criminal history databases of all countries of origin to perform background checks, and **over half of Mothers strongly believe** the government should

have this real-time access. **13% of Mothers are unsure**, and **only 7% of Mothers do not agree** that border patrol should have real-time access to those databases for background checks.

Belief	# of Mothers Responding	Percent of Sample
Strongly Agree	397	51%
Agree	231	29%
Uncertain	105	13%
Disagree	30	4%
Strongly Disagree	22	3%
	785	100%

Among the 766 Mothers who identified with a political affiliation within the categories of very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal, and very liberal:

- **90% of very conservative Mothers were in agreement and 89% of conservative Mothers agreed**, while only 1% of very conservative and 2% of conservative Mothers disagreed that the federal government should require background checks, and the remaining 9% were uncertain.
- **82% of moderate Mothers were in favor** of this component, only 3% disagreed, but **15% were uncertain** whether the federal government should require this.
- **69% of liberal and 68% of very liberal Mothers agreed** with this item, and the remaining mothers of both categories were split between those who were uncertain and those who disagreed that the federal government should require background checks through criminal history databases – Of liberal Mothers, **17% were uncertain and 14% disagreed**, and of very liberal Mothers, **13% were uncertain and 19% disagreed**.

Regarding unaccompanied children, 51% of Mothers agree that the federal government should require DHS to:

- Remove unaccompanied children from the U.S. if they are not victims of trafficking or have a fear of return,
- Provide a hearing within 14 days for child victims of trafficking, and
- If placed with an individual, to obtain the individual's social security number and personal information.

25% of Mothers were unsure about this, and 25% of Mothers did not agree with

these requirements regarding unaccompanied children.

Belief	# of Mothers Responding	Percent of Sample
Strongly Agree	247	31%
Agree	154	20%
Uncertain	193	25%
Disagree	106	14%
Strongly Disagree	85	11%
	785	100%

Among the 766 Mothers who identified with a political affiliation within the categories of very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal, and very liberal:

- **76% of very conservative Mothers and 72% of conservative Mothers agreed** with this requirement, while **19% of conservative and very conservative Mothers were uncertain**, and only 5% percent of very conservative Mothers disagreed and 9% of conservative Mothers disagreed.
- **46% of moderate Mothers were in favor** of this issue, but a significant portion, **30%, were uncertain** about all three of these requirements regarding unaccompanied children, and **24% disagreed with them**.
- **30% of liberal Mothers and 46% of very liberal Mothers agreed** with these requirements, **26% of liberal Moms and 16% of very liberal Moms were uncertain**, and **44% of liberal Moms and 38% of very liberal Moms disagreed** with these components of the bill regarding unaccompanied children.

66% of Mothers believe the federal government should limit asylum eligibility (i.e. to individuals who arrived in the U.S. at a port of entry, to those not convicted of a felony, those not convicted of a misdemeanor relating to unlawful possession of ID, or DUI causing injury or death). However, 22% of Mothers are uncertain about this limitation and 15% disagree.

Belief	# of Mothers Responding	Percent of Sample
Strongly Agree	276	35%
Agree	224	28%
Uncertain	174	22%

Disagree	67	9%
Strongly Disagree	44	6%
	785	100%

Among the 766 Mothers who identified with a political affiliation within the categories of very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal, and very liberal:

- **83% of very conservative Mothers agreed with the limitation and 80% of conservative Mothers agreed**, while 16% of conservative Moms and 12% of very conservative Moms were uncertain, but only 5% of very conservative Mothers and 4% of conservative Mothers disagreed with this limitation on asylum eligibility.
- **61% of moderate Mothers were in favor of this component, while a significant portion of this group were uncertain (29%),** and 10% disagreed with this limitation.
- **48% of liberal and 52% of very liberal Mothers surveyed agreed** with this limitation, while a **significant portion (27%) of liberal Mothers were uncertain** and 12% of very liberal Mothers were unsure about limiting asylum eligibility, and a **significant portion of very liberal Mothers (36%) and liberal Mothers (25%) were against the idea.**

57% of Mothers believe the federal government should establish criminal penalties for overstaying a visa, 19% of Mothers are uncertain about this, and 24% do not agree that there should be criminal penalties.

Belief	# of Mothers Responding	Percent of Sample
Strongly Agree	249	32%
Agree	199	25%
Uncertain	149	19%
Disagree	123	16%
Strongly Disagree	65	8%
	785	100%

Among the 766 Mothers who identified with a political affiliation within the categories of very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal, and very liberal:

- **85% of very conservative Mothers and 74% of conservative Mothers agreed** that there should be criminal penalties for those overstaying a visa, 10% of very conservative and

15% of conservative Mothers were uncertain, and only 5% of very conservative Mothers disagreed but 11% of conservative Mothers disagreed with this idea.

- **54% of moderate Mothers were in favor** of this idea, and the remaining moderate Mothers were equally split between being uncertain (23%) and disagreeing (23%) that overstaying a visa should bring criminal penalties.
- **Within both groups of very liberal and liberal Mothers, they were almost split equally on whether overstaying a visa should bring criminal penalties – 46% agreed and 44% disagreed among very liberal Moms and 10% were uncertain, while 39% agreed and 36% disagreed among liberal Mothers and a significant portion were uncertain.**

60% of Mothers agree that the "Secure the Border Act" will have a positive impact on the safety, health, or well-being of kids and families, based on these 7 main components; however a significant amount, 23% of Mothers, are not certain about the impact of this bill and 17% disagree that it will.

Belief	# of Mothers Responding	Percent of Sample
Strongly Agree	267	34%
Agree	206	26%
Uncertain	180	23%
Disagree	74	10%
Strongly Disagree	58	7%
	785	100%

- **81% of very conservative Mothers and 82% of conservative Mothers agreed** that this bill will have a positive impact on the safety, health, or well-being of kids and families, and **there were more conservative Mothers (16%) than very conservative Mothers (11%) who were uncertain**, and there were **only 2% of conservative Mothers who disagreed with this idea and 8% of very conservative Mothers who disagreed.**
- **58% of moderate Mothers agreed** that this bill would have a positive impact, but a **significant portion of moderate Moms were uncertain (29%), and 13% disagreed.**
- **40% of liberal Mothers agreed and 45% of very liberal Mothers agreed** that it would have a positive impact, **more liberal Moms (28%) than very liberal Moms (15%) were uncertain**, and **32% of liberal Mothers disagreed and 40% of very liberal Mothers**

disagreed that this bill would have a positive impact on the safety, health, or well-being of kids and families.

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 "Secure the Border Act" participants, the sample closely reflects the U.S. breakdown of political ideology among women according to Pew. 11.36% were very conservative, 23.30 % were conservative, 32.67% were moderate, 19.46% were liberal, and 13.21% were very liberal, and 1.42% identified as "other."

State of Residence Question

Mothers who responded to the "Secure the Border Act" survey resided in 47 states. The states that had the most representation were New York (52), Texas (50), Pennsylvania (50), California (45), Michigan (38), Florida (37), Virginia (34), Ohio (34), Georgia (31), Illinois (31)

Future Legislative Focus

Mothers who completed the surveys recommended that these legislative issues should be the focus of future efforts for Count on Mothers:

- Abortion
- Education
- Gun safety/ control
- Health

- Public schools