



**From: Katherine Patterson, Public Policy Polling**

**To: Interested Parties**

**Subject: Support in North Carolina for Extending Federal Unemployment Insurance in Response to COVID-19**

**Date: August 4, 2020**

A new Public Policy Polling survey finds that just 14% of North Carolina voters think Congress should end the \$600 per week unemployment benefits in response to the economic downturn related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, half (50%) think these unemployment insurance benefits should be either extended or increased.

These voters who support extending or increasing unemployment insurance are also considerably more concerned with how their Senator votes on this issue than those who do not support extending the benefits.

- 73% of North Carolinians who think Congress should increase the extra unemployment benefits to more than \$600 per week say they would view Senator Thom Tillis less favorably if he voted against the extension. Just 19% say it wouldn't make a difference in their views of Tillis.
- 71% who think the same \$600 unemployment insurance should be extended say they would view Senator Tillis less favorably if he voted against the extension, while only 17% say it wouldn't make a difference.
- 37% of voters who think the unemployment benefits should be decreased say Senator Tillis voting against unemployment insurance extension would cause them to view him less favorably, while nearly a third (30%) say it wouldn't make a difference in their view of him. Just 26% say they would view him more favorably.

North Carolina voters show strong support for prioritizing initiatives to help small businesses and struggling workers over bailouts for large corporations and other wealthy



interests. A large majority (87%) agree that Congress should prioritize small businesses and struggling workers, with 73% of those saying they strongly agree.

With a debate over whether or not Congress should extend the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), just 15% of North Carolinians think Congress should extend the program as-is, and only 6% think it should be allowed to expire. With concerns over the PPP prioritizing wealthy and well-connected companies over small businesses, other voters think it should be reformed. A plurality (44%) think the program should be extended but fixed to prioritize small businesses, and another 29% think Congress should start over with a new program that is more transparent.

Other key findings in the survey include:

- President Trump is underwater in overall approval in North Carolina by a 7-point margin (45-52).
- 52% of North Carolinians think President Trump's response to the coronavirus pandemic has made America less safe, while just 44% think America is safer.
- North Carolinians are closely divided in opinion on President Trump's handling of the coronavirus pandemic and the economic downturn resulting from it: 51% disapprove of his handling of the coronavirus pandemic, while 50% approve. Another 50% disapprove of Trump's handling of the economic downturn during the coronavirus pandemic, while 48% approve.
- Senator Thom Tillis is unpopular in his home state, with his approval being underwater by 22 points (29-51).

Public Policy Polling surveyed 641 North Carolina voters on July 31, 2020 on behalf of Accountable.US. The margin of error is +/- 3.9%. 50% of interviews for the survey were conducted by telephone and 50% by text message.