

# NC Senate District 7

*2022 General Election Likely Voter Survey Data*

**To: David Avella, Chairman, GOPAC Education Fund and the Center for American Ideas**  
**From: Jim Blaine, Differentiators Data**

## *Summary*

As part of a joint project sponsored by the Center for American Ideas and the GOPAC Education Fund to determine voter sentiment on key policy issues in legislative districts around North Carolina, Differentiators Data conducted a survey in North Carolina's 21<sup>st</sup> Senate District on May 23<sup>rd</sup> through May 25<sup>th</sup>. The survey of 300 likely general election voters was comprised of 1/3 live landline interviews, 1/3 live cell phones interviews, and 1/3 text to web interviews, with a margin of error of +/- 5.7%.

## *The Big Policy Issues*

There are several big, controversial policy issues before the NC General Assembly this legislative session. The goal of this project is to assess public opinion on these policy issues in competitive legislative districts:

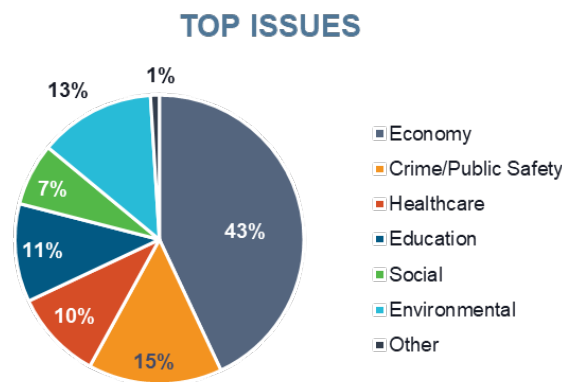
- Medical Marijuana – [Senate Bill 711](#) and [House Bill 929](#) authorize doctors to prescribe medical marijuana for the treatment of certain medical conditions and illnesses.
- Sports Betting – [Senate Bill 688](#) and [House Bill 631](#) legalize sports wagering.
- Increasing School Choice – [Senate Bill 671](#) and other legislation increases school choice options for North Carolina families.
- Reduce the Personal Income Tax – [Senate Bill 337](#), and state budget negotiations, propose further reductions in North Carolina's personal income tax rates.
- Expanding Medicaid – [House Bill 149](#) expands Medicaid program with a work requirement.

## *About NC Senate District 7*

North Carolina Senate District 7 is located in New Hanover County. Wilmington is the largest city in this diverse, well-educated and affluent district which includes some of North Carolina's most exclusive beach communities, the state's largest port and the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. The district is politically competitive. In the 2020 elections, Republican US Senator Thom Tillis won the district, as did Democratic Governor Roy Cooper, while Democrat Joe Biden and Republican Donald Trump both garnered 49% of the vote in the presidential race. The district is represented in the State Senate by Republican Michael Lee, who is being challenged by Democrat Jason Minnicozzi.

### Where Voters Stand on the Issues

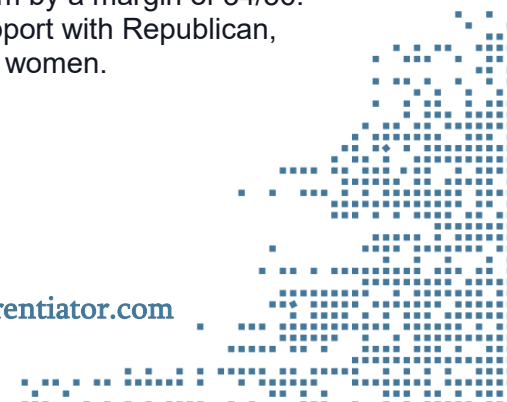
With record inflation sweeping the country, it's not surprising that a plurality of voters (43%) say economic issues are the most important to them. Economic issues were followed by crime and public safety (15%), environmental issues (13%) and education (11%):



Of the big policy issues the legislature could take up during the short session, medical marijuana, Medicaid expansion with a work requirement and reducing the state income tax are the most popular, exceeding 80% support from all voters. All three issues are broadly popular, enjoying support across all key demographics.

Voter Group	All		Minnicozzi		Lee		Undecided	
	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose
Medical Marijuana	85%	13%	92%	7%	77%	20%	92%	9%
Sports Betting	45%	37%	36%	44%	52%	31%	48%	37%
Universal School Choice	52%	42%	34%	59%	72%	25%	37%	52%
2.5% Income Tax	80%	13%	66%	24%	90%	6%	82%	3%
Medicaid Expansion	66%	30%	95%	3%	40%	54%	75%	22%
Expansion w/ work req.	91%	8%	100%	0%	81%	17%	98%	0%

Straight Medicaid expansion and a universal school choice program are not quite as popular as the top two issues, but both are very popular with voters. Though broadly supported, Medicaid expansion and universal school choice each have one notable demographic where support falls below a majority. In the case of Medicaid expansion, Republicans oppose the program by a 41/52 margin while Democrats oppose a universal school choice program by a margin of 34/56. Interestingly, legalizing sports betting enjoys comfortable margins of support with Republican, Unaffiliated and undecided voters while it is opposed by Democrats and women.



Voter Group	All		Republican		Unaffiliated		Democratic		Parent	
	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose
Medical Marijuana	85%	13%	73%	22%	87%	12%	94%	5%	84%	13%
Sports Betting	45%	37%	53%	32%	45%	36%	37%	43%	48%	33%
Universal School Choice	52%	42%	71%	23%	50%	46%	34%	56%	68%	29%
2.5% Income Tax	80%	13%	91%	8%	76%	15%	71%	16%	79%	12%
Medicaid Expansion	66%	30%	41%	52%	69%	26%	90%	9%	59%	33%
Expansion w/ work req.	91%	8%	80%	19%	93%	4%	99%	1%	91%	7%

Voter Group	All		Women		Men		White		Black	
	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose
Medical Marijuana	85%	13%	84%	14%	85%	12%	83%	14%	95%	5%
Sports Betting	45%	37%	34%	42%	58%	30%	43%	37%	56%	41%
Universal School Choice	52%	42%	50%	44%	55%	39%	52%	42%	50%	41%
2.5% Income Tax	80%	13%	79%	11%	80%	15%	78%	14%	92%	2%
Medicaid Expansion	66%	30%	69%	26%	62%	34%	65%	30%	74%	23%
Expansion w/ work req.	91%	8%	92%	7%	89%	10%	90%	8%	92%	8%

### ***How the Big Policy Issues Could Impact this Election***

Most analysts expected SD-7 to be very competitive in the 2022 election. This survey shows the district has the potential to be competitive in the fall, but right now the Republican incumbent Michael Lee comfortably leads Democratic challenger Jason Minnicozzi by 8 points – 48% to 40% - which is outside the poll's margin of error. The key groups of swing voters that will likely decide the outcome of this election, like undecided and registered Unaffiliated voters, generally support passage of all 5 of the major issues the legislature is considering. Increasing school choice options is supported by Unaffiliated voters but is opposed by a narrow majority of undecided voters. Lee, who has a history of advocating for all of these policies, is likely to benefit politically from his supporting of these issues.

