RUTGERS–NEW BRUNSWICK
Eagleton Institute of Politics
Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling

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Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling
Montana Free Press/Eagleton Poll #2
Methodology Statement

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The Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling (ECPIP), home of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll, was established in 1971. Celebrating over five decades and publication of more than 200 public opinion polls on the state of New Jersey, ECPIP is the first and longest continuously running university-based state survey research centers in the United States.

Our mission is to provide scientifically sound, non-partisan information about public opinion. ECPIP conducts research for all levels of government and nonprofit organizations with a public interest mission, as well as college and university-based researchers and staff. ECPIP makes it a priority to design opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to learn how to read, analyze, design, and administer polls. We pride ourselves on integrity, quality, and objectivity.

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Weighted Demographics

801 Montana Registered Voters 18+
Overall Margin of Error = +/- 4.1 percentage points

Please note: Totals may equal slightly more or less than 100% due to rounding. Some categories may be condensed due to statistical significance testing and n size.

		deff	MOE
Man	50%	1.43	+/- 5.8%
Woman	50%	1.34	+/- 5.8%
18-36	23%	1.24	+/- 10.7%
37-49	23%	1.29	+/- 7.9%
50-64	23%	1.28	+/- 7.6%
65+	31%	1.26	+/- 6.5%
Democrat	17%	1.43	+/- 9.8%
Independent	38%	1.36	+/- 6.5%
Republican	45%	1.38	+/- 6.2%
HS or Less	21%	1.27	+/- 10.6%
Some College	37%	1.39	+/- 6.4%
Bachelor's+	42%	1.31	+/- 5.8%
White	91%	1.36	+/- 4.2%
Non-White	9%	1.56	+/- 15.0%
<50K	29%	1.36	+/- 8.5%
50K-<100K	35%	1.37	+/- 7.0%
100K-<150K	20%	1.31	+/- 9.0%
150K+	17%	1.32	+/- 9.6%
CD1 – West	49%	1.35	+/- 5.7%
CD2 – East	51%	1.41	+/- 5.8%

Methodology

This Montana Free Press/Eagleton Poll was conducted from December 13, 2025, to January 3, 2026, with a sample of 801 Montana registered voters, aged 18 or older. Sample included a mixture of random-digit dial (RDD) landline and cell phone sample from the national voter registration database.

This study employed calling with live interviewers to the landline sample only (n=85) and one-to-one push-to-web texting (n=716). Distribution of recruitment method in this sample is:

Call	11%
Text-to-Web	89%

Weighting

The data were weighted to be representative of Montana registered voters.
The sample frame was national voter files maintained by L2. Sample was drawn from records that have a landline or cell phone number appended. The sample was drawn disproportionately across 12 strata defined by type of phone appended (landline, cell), gender, modeled political party, and age. A base weight was applied to correct for the disproportionate sampling across strata.

The sample was then balanced to match target population parameters for sex, age, education, race and ethnicity, region (Central, Missouri River, Southeast, Southwest, Western, Yellowstone), and 2024 presidential vote. Population parameters for sex, age, education, race, Hispanic origin were derived from 2024 CPS Voting and Registration Supplement data. The region benchmark was derived from Census Bureau estimates of the resident population from

ACS 2017-2021 5-year data. The 2024 Presidential Vote benchmark was pulled from Montana Secretary of State website.[1]

Weighting was accomplished using iterative proportional fitting, also known as raking. IPF is a procedure used to adjust the cells of a multi-dimensional contingency table so that all marginal totals match targets across all dimensions. Weights were trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on the final results. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the target population.

Post-data collection statistical adjustments require analysis procedures that reflect departures from simple random sampling. We calculate the effects of these design features so that an appropriate adjustment can be incorporated into tests of statistical significance when using these data. The so-called "design effect" or *deff* represents the loss in statistical efficiency that results from a disproportionate sample design and systematic non-response. [2]

All surveys are subject to sampling error, which is the expected probable difference between interviewing everyone in a population versus a scientific sampling drawn from that population. Sampling error should be adjusted to recognize the effect of weighting the data to better match the population. In this survey, the simple sampling margin of error is +/- 3.5 percentage points. The design effect[3] is 1.38, making the adjusted margin of error +/- 4.1 percentage points. Thus, if 50% of Montana adult residents in this sample favor a particular position, we would be 95%

[1] Montana Secretary of State, "2024 General Election Results," accessed January 22, 2026, https://electionresults.mt.gov/.

[2] The composite design effect for a sample of size n, with each case having a weight, w, is computed as $deff = n\sum w^2/(\sum w)^2$.

[3] Post-data collection statistical adjustments require analysis procedures that reflect departures from simple random sampling. We calculate the effects of these design features so that an appropriate adjustment can be incorporated into tests of statistical significance when using these data.

sure that the true figure is between 45.9% and 54.1% (50 +/- 4.1) if all residents had been interviewed, rather than just a sample.

Sampling error is only one possible source of error in a survey estimate. Sampling error does not consider other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as selection bias, non-response bias, question wording, context effects, or reporting accuracy, which may contribute additional error

This Montana Free Press/Eagleton Poll was fielded by Braun Research, Inc. using live interviewers for landline calling and RumbleUp and Tele-Town Hall using one-to-one push-to-web texting. Sample was provided by L2, Inc. The questionnaire was developed by the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling (ECPIP) in collaboration with Montana Free Press (MTFP). All data analyses were completed in house by ECPIP. The Montana Free Press/Eagleton Poll is paid for and sponsored by MTFP. The Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling is based at the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, a non-partisan academic center for the study of politics and the political process. For more information, please contact poll@eagleton.rutgers.edu.

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