

Penta Policy Insiders

Minnesota Insights Review

Public Health

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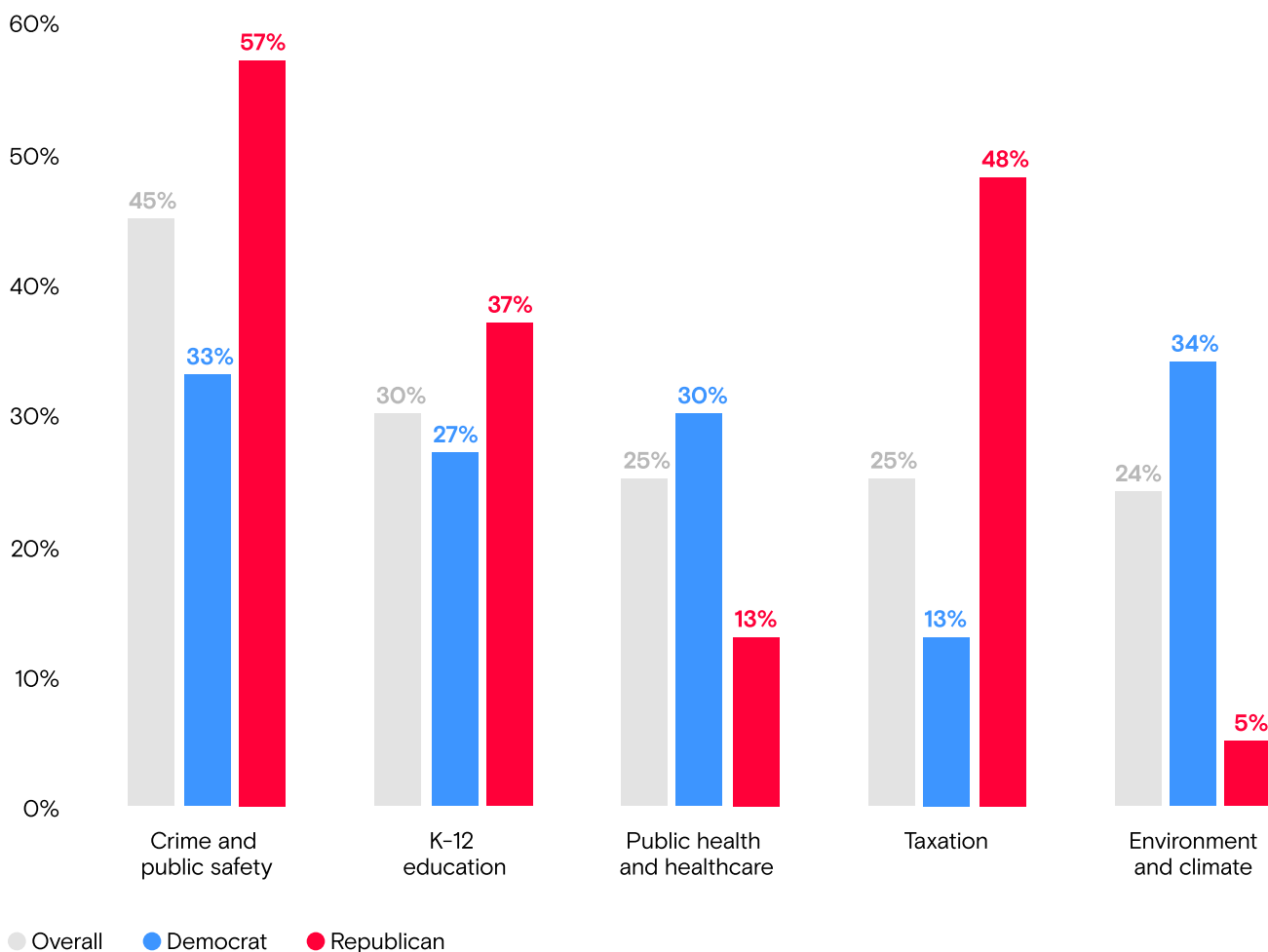
Executive summary

We are delighted to share our findings from this year's Minnesota Insights Review. From June to December 2022, we interviewed over 219 policymakers in Minnesota to find out what their top policy priorities are, as well as the main challenges communities are facing across the state.

Minnesota policymakers we spoke to detail a variety of challenges facing neighborhoods across the state including crime, K-12 education, public health, taxation, and the environment. At the top of policy leaders' minds are crime and public safety, with almost half of all policymakers - 45 percent - reporting these as their main concerns. This focus on public safety comes in spite of recent data showing a downward trend in violent crime in the state's largest city, Minneapolis.¹ The second highest-ranked priority for policy staff is K-12 education, with almost a third of policy staff across party lines citing issues such as teacher shortages and lack of funding to be hurdles for the state's public education system.

This report is the fourth in a series that examines Minnesota policymakers' top policy priorities for 2022. This review examines Public Health in the state.

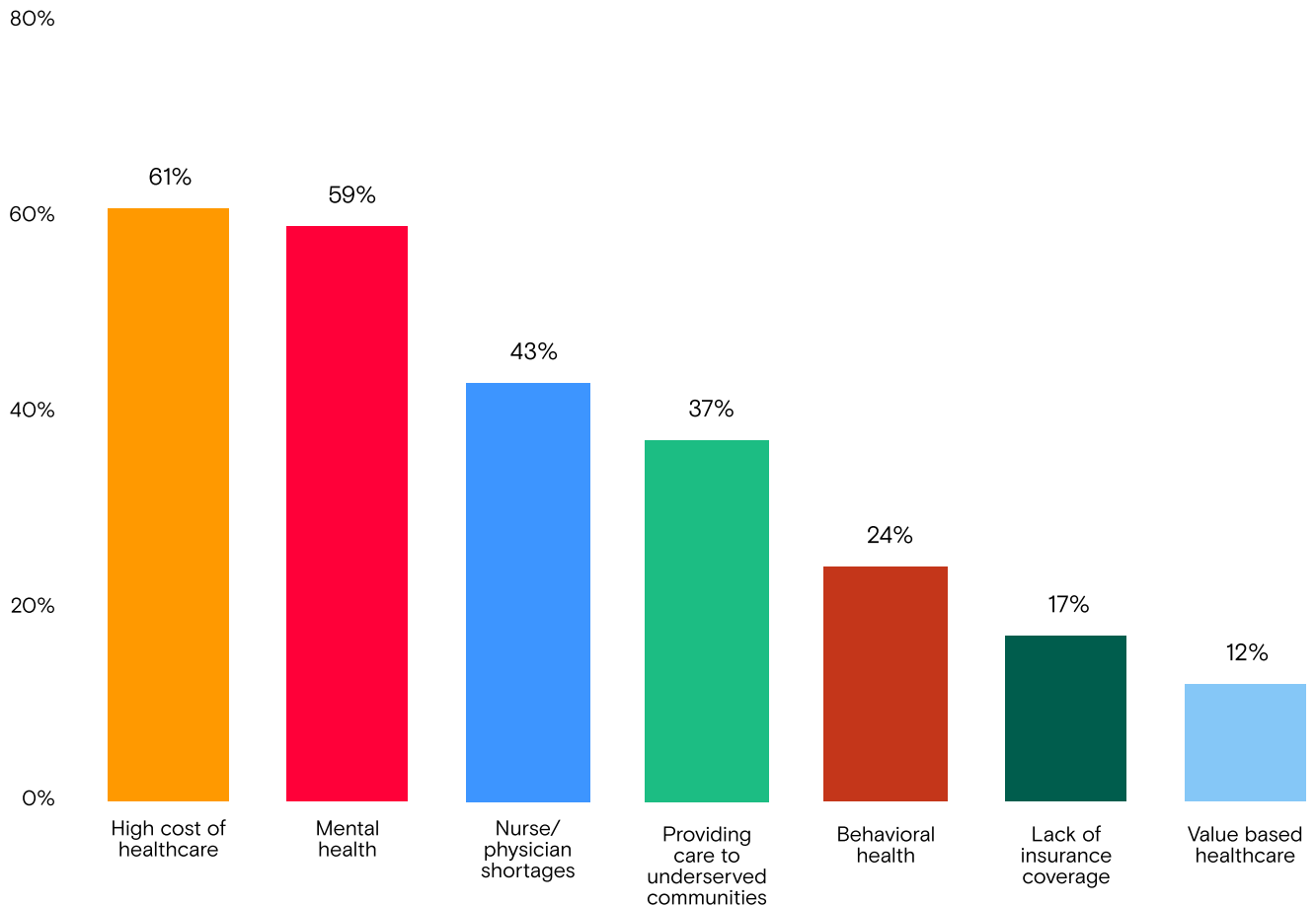
Top policy priorities in Minnesota



Minnesota deep dive

Public health

Public health ranks as a top issue among Democratic policymakers in Minnesota. While Republicans rank it as a lower priority than education and taxes, policymakers on both sides of the aisle agree on key challenges within the healthcare policy space. Specifically, policymakers on both sides of the aisle agree that addressing the high cost of healthcare and improving mental health care are top issues.



Healthcare costs

Affordable healthcare is a top priority in the state and policymakers are concerned that costs of healthcare services are not only high, but continuing to increase. Additionally, ongoing physician and nurse shortages contribute to accessibility issues across the state. Policymakers are also aware that lack of insurance coverage and high out of pocket costs are obstacles for many when it comes to receiving health services.



Access to insurance, which is one thing, and then there's access to actual providers and services. And that means having the services available, but also having people able to go get the services and feel comfortable getting them. I think there can be access issues there too.

Supervisor, Minnesota Executive Branch, D



Cost for health care is going up everywhere. And with access, I believe there were some mechanisms put into place that helped to preserve health insurance or access to health care during the pandemic. And I'm imagining that some of those protections are being taken away because they were time limited around the crisis.

Program Director, Minnesota Executive Branch, D

Mental health

Policymakers want to promote a more holistic approach to healthcare that puts a greater focus on mental and behavioral health needs.



Mental health is an issue that kind of permeated through all of our budget areas, we're trying to really ramp up our resources for behavioral health needs in the state and to build up our workforce there.

Committee Administrator, Minnesota House of Representatives, D



We are not having this whole person approach when we are providing health care to people. So that means bringing addiction care as well as mental health support right at par with physical health. And then people do not have multiple doors to get the care they need. So integrated care, dealing with the epidemic of overdose deaths which are on the rise. That's super important. And then addressing the trauma that our community suffered during pandemic.

Director, Minnesota Executive Branch, N/A

Conclusion

Policymakers want to improve access to healthcare, which will require addressing issues such as high costs of services and nurse and physician shortages. Policy leaders from both parties have different priorities, but recognize that addressing all these issues is vital to improving healthcare systems in the state.

About Penta Policy Insiders

Penta Policy Insiders provides direct feedback from policymakers to government relations professionals, improving advocates' ability to understand, validate, and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their engagement.

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1. <https://www.minneapolismn.gov/government/government-data/datasource/crime-dashboard/>

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