

Penta Policy Insiders

Minnesota Insights Review

Top Issues

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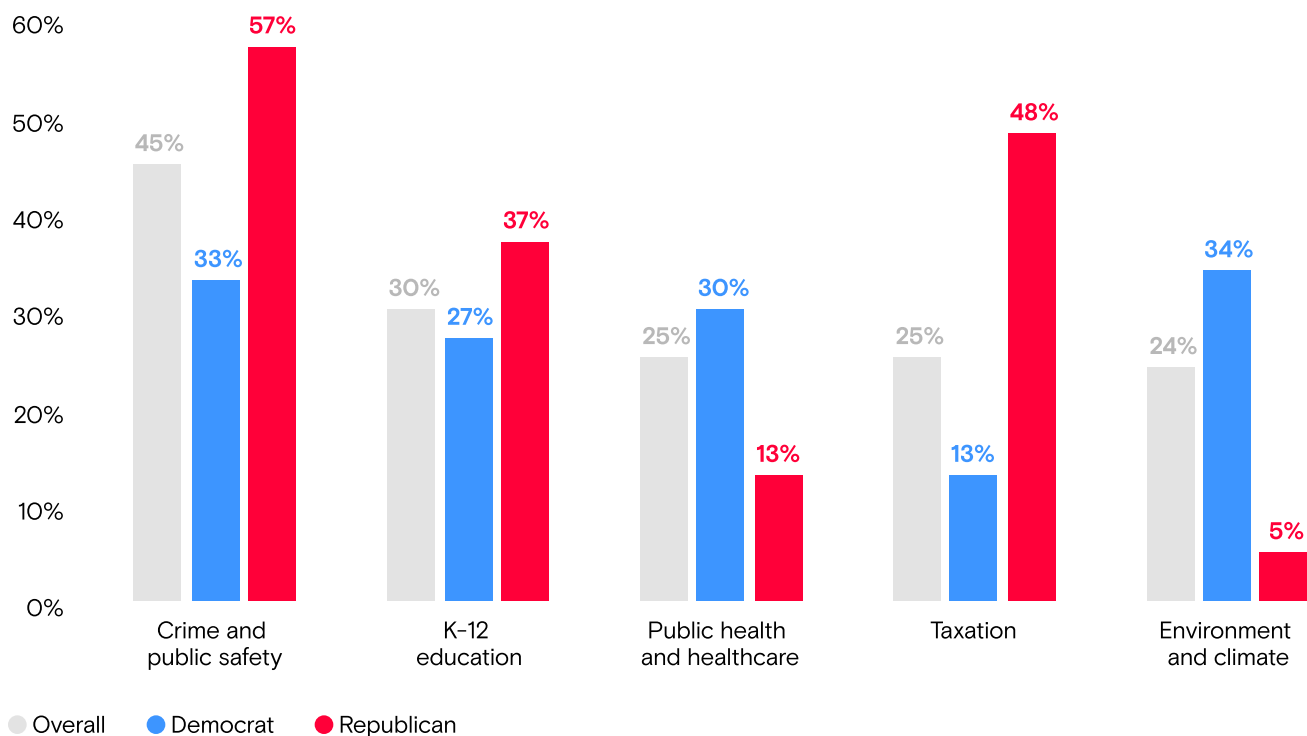
Executive summary

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 first in a series that examines five of Minnesota policymakers' top policy priorities, which include (i) Crime and Public Safety (ii) K-12 Education (iii) Public Health (iv) Taxation and (v) Environment and Climate.

Top policy priorities in Minnesota



Crime and public safety

Public safety is a priority across both sides of the aisle, and policymakers in Minnesota are concerned that crime is having a negative impact on residents and businesses in the state.



There's a deep public concern, and if you don't have public safety, people don't feel hopeful. People don't want to invest here and stay here. Neighborhoods can become destabilized. The business centers can become destabilized, and so there's good reason to focus on public safety.

Commissioner, Minnesota Executive Branch, D



We still have a lot of businesses that haven't been able to reopen; crime is a huge part of it.

Sheriff, Minnesota State Municipality, R

K-12 education

30 percent of the policymakers we spoke with in Minnesota agree that K-12 Education is a top priority and cite issues with poor graduation rates and educational outcomes.



I'm focused on fixing the educational system because when you've got certain school districts, large school districts in the state that have pitiful graduation rates, pitiful performance in reading, in math, and other skill bases, that hurts the students' capability of getting a job.

Representative, Minnesota House of Representatives, R

Healthcare

Policymakers, especially Democrats, want to see improvements in public health, specifically when it comes to accessing healthcare services and mental health treatment.



Access to insurance, [as well as] access to providers and services [is a priority]. 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

Taxation

Taxation is top of mind for policy leaders, especially Republicans, in the state, with concern about high tax rates impacting economic growth.



Our biggest policy goal will be to stop any tax increases, stop any more regulatory increases... they're really stifling the ability to grow jobs and grow manufacturing here in our state.

Representative, Minnesota House of Representatives, R



Minnesota is such a high tax base state. I think we've got to come to a reckoning on that, try to correct that problem, get these taxes lowered in this state and in this community. We've [also] got to draw more high tech here, businesses that pay well to continue on with — spur of growth in these communities.

Mayor, Minnesota State Municipality, N/A

Environment

Environmental issues are a priority among Democrats in Minnesota who are concerned about waste and the impact of manufacturing. However, policymakers have varying perspectives on what environmental standards private companies should be held to.



I will say one of the things that more than half of the energy that is created or available for use is wasted. So we could do a lot in terms of climate and energy improvement by having more effective use of our energy. Less waste going out of buildings, less waste in the transmission process, less waste using wasted heat, for example, to capture that and reuse it.

Representative, Minnesota House of Representatives, D



You've got a governor and you've got a house that have been penalizing companies that deal with the environment.

Senator, Minnesota State Senate, R

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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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