

A Penta White Paper

**Penta** Policy Insiders

# New York Insights Review Series

Crime and Public Safety

January 2024  
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# Executive summary

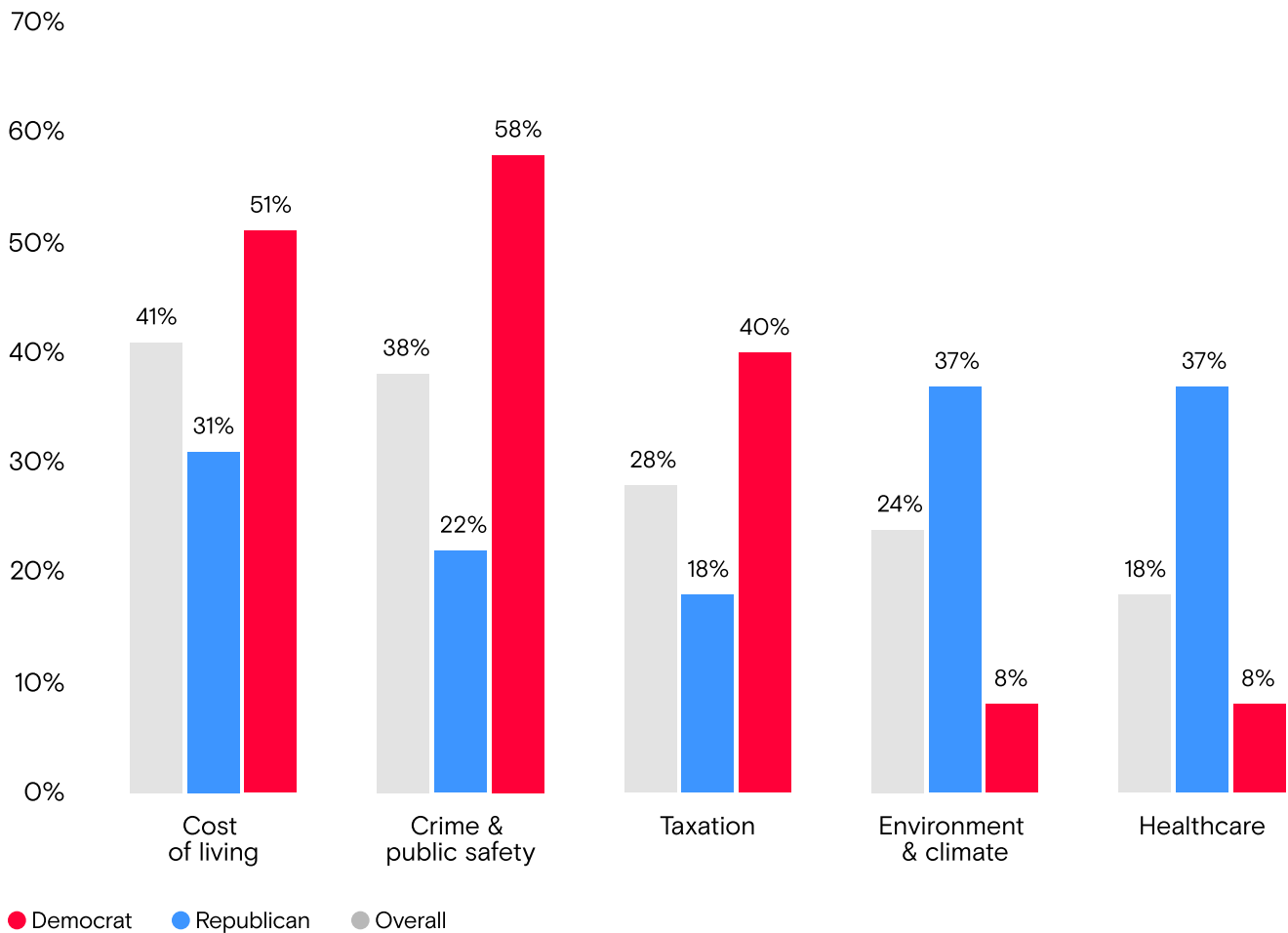
We are pleased to share our findings in this year's New York Insights Review. From X to X 2023, we spoke to over 270 policymakers in the state about their policy priorities and the top issues facing their communities.

Cost of living is the top priority for New York policymakers this year, who have placed particular focus on addressing the lack of affordable housing options throughout the state. Policymakers also note the state's high tax rates as another issue they would like to spend time on. Crime and public safety, environment and climate, and healthcare are all also at the top of policymaker priorities this year.

This report is third in a series that examines five of New York policymakers' top priorities, which include (i) cost of living (ii), crime and public safety (iii), taxation (iv), environment and climate and (v) healthcare.

## Top policy priorities in New York

Multiple selections permitted



Source: Penta Policy Insiders

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## New York deep dive

# Crime and public safety

Policymakers in New York – 38 percent – say crime and public safety is a top policy priority, though leaders have varying perspectives on the true extent of crime in the state. Some believe media bias is making the problem seem worse than it is – noting that numbers are lower than in previous years – while others believe that crime rates are increasing. Additionally, bail reform has been a focal point of debate across party lines.

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**I think the narrative of public safety is really real.** [The Administration] has made it very clear that **by next year they're predicting double crime rates** in the city, ...it's an exorbitant number.

Legislative Director, Legislative, D

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Well, I think the number one thing that needs to be addressed is public safety. **Many of the policy changes that have been made by the New York State legislature the past five years have been pro-criminal** as opposed to pro-public safety.

County Legislator, New York State Municipality, R

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**The crime numbers aren't that dramatic compared to the past**, the 1980s and [times] like that, it's definitely declined since then. And yet, **because we see it all the time on TV or the 24-hour news channel and social media, it seems like there's the boogeyman behind every corner.**

Deputy Director, Executive, I

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## Bail reform debates

Policymakers are concerned about the rising costs of goods and services in the state, and point to gas prices as a prime example of growing expenses.

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Originally they eliminated bail for criminals who were arrested. Now they've changed it. So it's the judge's discretion in certain circumstances. So it's better, but then we see the news stories of somebody commits a crime. **They get arrested, they get out because there's no bail. They can't be kept in jail. They get out. They commit another crime within hours.**

Regional Officer Director, Legislative, R

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**Bail reform has been a big challenge to find balance.** The legislature is more progressive than the governor, and the governor was hammered by conservatives in the last election on crime.

Councilmember, New York State Municipality, D

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## Conclusion

Policymakers in New York identify crime and public safety as a key policy concern, despite differing views on the prevalence of crime. Some argue that media bias exaggerates the severity of the issue, while others anticipate an escalation in crime rates down the line. Regardless, 38 percent of policy staff consider crime and public safety to be top-of-mind in the state.



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## 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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