The GovLab publishes report examining public opinion on government reform

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Today The Governance Lab at the NYU Tandon School of Engineering released an interactive report entitled "What Americans Want from Reform." The report by Paul C. Light, Paulette Goddard Professor at the

NYU Wagner School of Public Service and Senior Fellow at the GovLab, analyzes six key indicators about American attitudes toward government.

The report, which combines key findings from recent public opinion surveys and original analysis, finds that American demand for major government reform is still above the 50% mark with 65% of Republicans now favoring very major reform, compared with 42% of Democrats. Nonetheless, Americans remain deeply divided on whether reform translates into a vision for bigger or smaller government.

Do Americans trust Biden to fix the government? Light says "yes," but notes that public approval for Biden's job running the federal government fell from 51 to 44% between June and October while his fair/poor rating jumped nine points from 48 to 57% as the Afghanistan withdrawal and debt ceiling stalemate took their toll on his ratings.

As a result of Biden's declining approval numbers, "the Republican party emerged from summer with a 15-point margin as the party better able to protect the nation from international threats, and a nine-point lead as the party better able to keep the country prosperous," said Light.

The report and its accompanying analysis address six major questions and provides the latest survey data in response:

1. Do Americans still favor very major government reform?
2. Do Americans still favor a bigger government that provides more services?
3. How big is the federal government's blended workforce?
4. What kind of government reform will Americans support?
5. Do Americans trust Biden to fix the government?
6. Can Biden reverse the breakdown curve?

"When it comes to the subject of government reform, very few researchers have produced findings as comprehensive and meticulous as Professor Light," said Beth Simone Noveck, director of The GovLab. "One of the preeminent experts on government failures, Light's latest report is a must-read for public servants, policymakers, and anyone seeking insight into Americans' expectations for their government."

Light's analysis includes a quantitative analysis of government failures over time. Light argues that Biden can reduce the odds of further breakdowns and turn around his declining numbers by urgently focusing more attention on the successful functioning of public administration. "It has now been twenty-five years since Al Gore's reinventing government campaign, forty since the Supreme Court voided the president's reorganization authority, fifty since Jimmy Carter's civil service and sunshine in government reforms, and sixty-five since Herbert Hoover gaveled the second national Commission on Organization of the Executive Branch to a close."

 More information: Report: thegovlab.org/what-americans-w … m-government-reform/

Provided by NYU Tandon School of Engineering