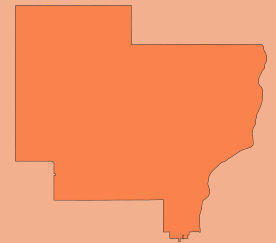




# Iowa



## 2026 general election poll: State Senate District 35

Likely-voter survey of the November 3, 2026 general election | Clinton, Jackson & Scott Counties

SD-35      **D** Mike Zimmer      **R** Joe Stutting

GOVERNOR      **D** Rob Sand      **R** Zach Lahn

### At a glance

| ELECTION DATE           | FIELD DATES                  | SAMPLE SIZE              | MARGIN OF ERROR    |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>November 3, 2026</b> | September 29-October 1, 2026 | <b>403 likely voters</b> | <b>±4.9 points</b> |

### Methodology

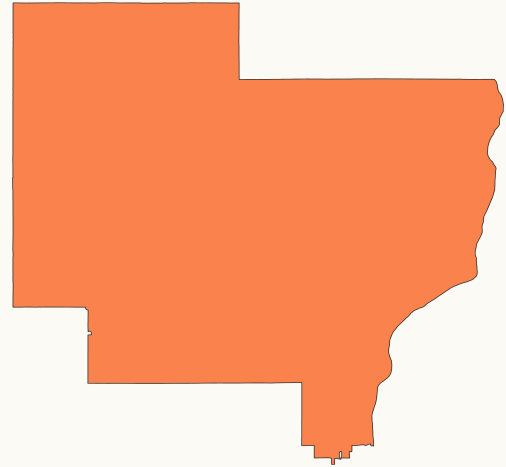
State Navigate surveyed 403 likely voters in Iowa's 35th State Senate District from September 29-October 1, 2026. Text messages were sent to voters by AllianceForge, which directed them to an online survey hosted on the SurveyMonkey platform. The sample was drawn from a voter file provided by L2 and results were weighted by gender, race, age, education, party registration, and region to reflect the likely November 2026 general electorate. The margin of error is 4.9% at a 95% confidence level. This survey was designed and conducted by the State Navigate Polling Team, and was not sponsored by any candidate or candidate's committee.

# District DNA | SD-35 (LV)



## STATE SENATE DISTRICT 35

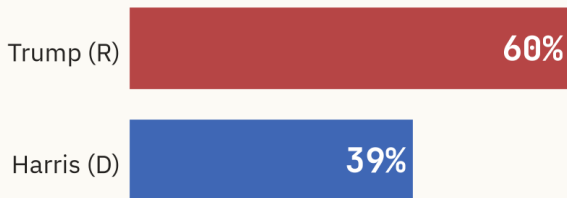
An Iowa State Senate district along the Mississippi River in eastern Iowa, anchored by the cities of Clinton and Camanche and also including DeWitt, Maquoketa, and rural parts of Clinton, Jackson, and Scott Counties; it is made up of State House Districts 69 and 70. Democratic incumbent Mike Zimmer, who flipped the seat in a January 2025 special election, faces Republican Joe Stutting.



## Recent election results in SD-35

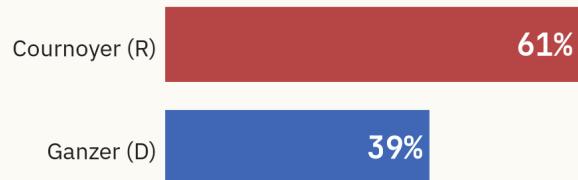
### 2024 President: Trump +21.1

### 2024 U.S. House: Miller-Meeks +9.4



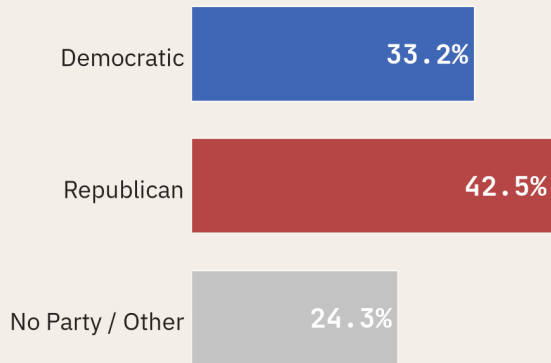
### 2025 SD-35 Special: Zimmer +3.6

### 2022 State Senate: Cournoyer +22.0

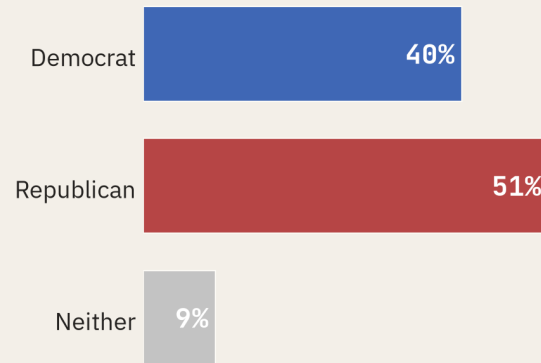


# District DNA | Survey demographics

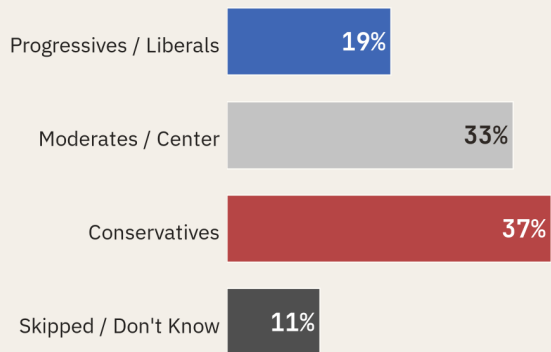
## PARTY REGISTRATION



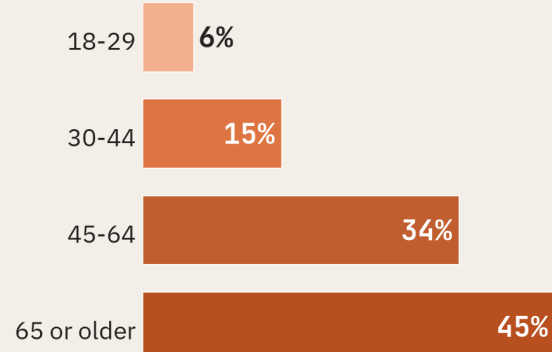
## PARTY ID (WITH LEANERS)



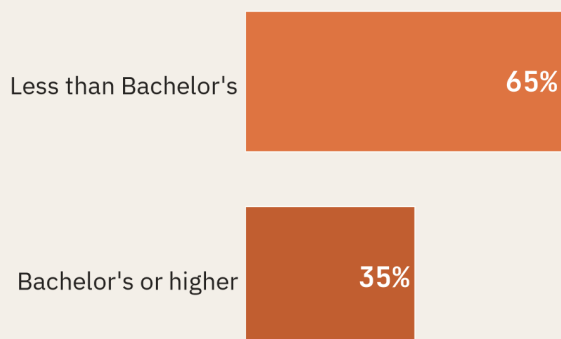
## IDEOLOGICAL SELF-ID (0-10)



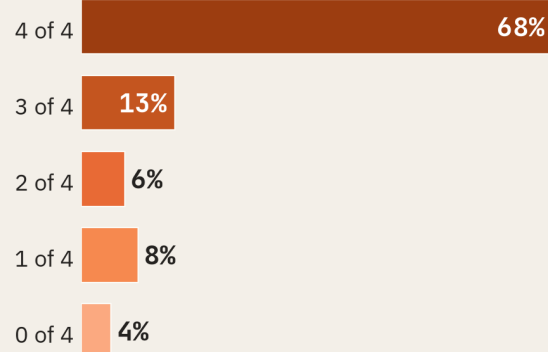
## AGE



## EDUCATION



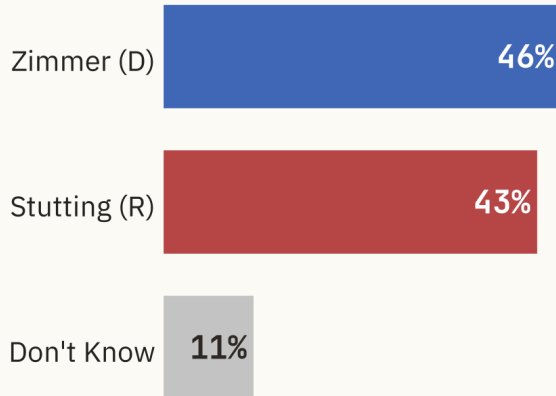
## VOTE HISTORY (LAST 4 GENERALS)



# The snapshots

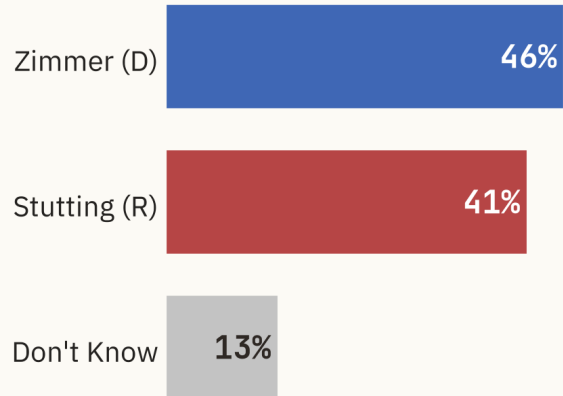
## SD-35 with leaners

If the election for Iowa State Senate District 35 were held today, which candidate would you vote for? (undecideds allocated via leaner follow-up)



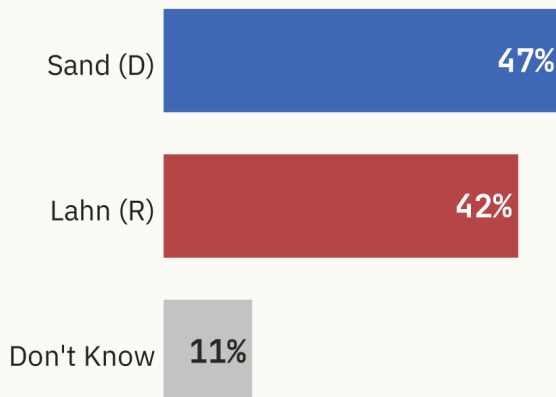
## SD-35 before undecided push

If the election for Iowa State Senate District 35 were held today, which candidate would you vote for? (initial ballot, before leaner follow-up)



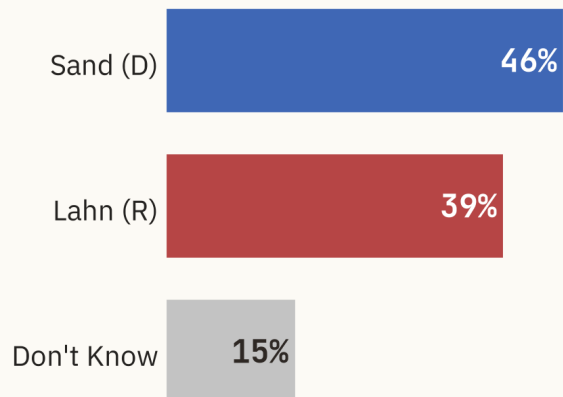
## Governor with leaners

If the election for Governor were held today, which candidate would you vote for? (undecideds allocated via leaner follow-up)



## Governor before undecided push

If the election for Governor were held today, which candidate would you vote for? (initial ballot, before leaner follow-up)

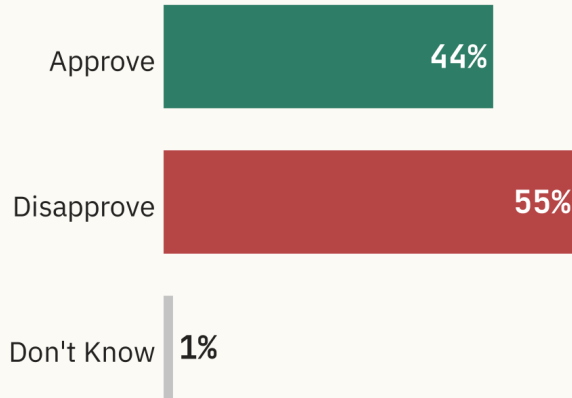


Mike Zimmer (D) leads 46-43 with leaners in SD-35, with 11% undecided. At the top of the ticket, Rob Sand (D) leads the Governor's race 47-42.

# Executive approvals

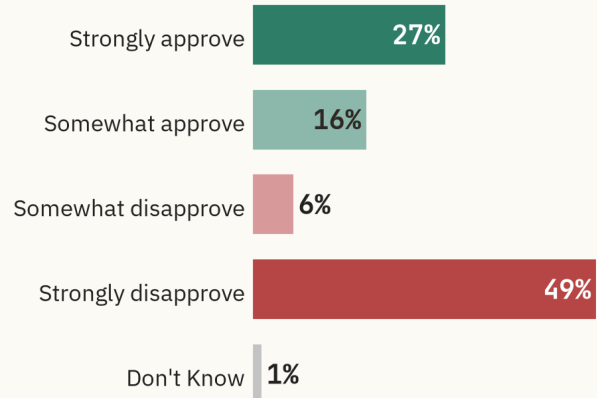
## President Trump job approval

Do you approve or disapprove of the job Donald Trump is doing as President?



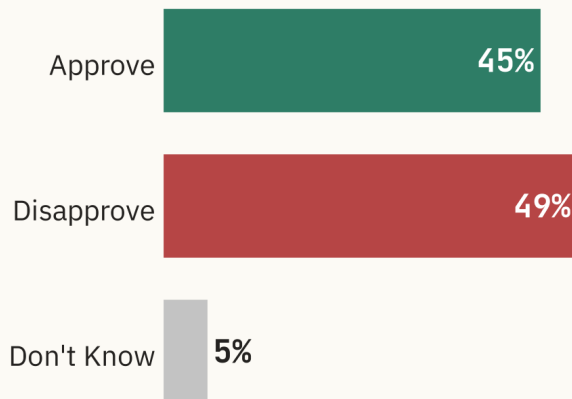
## President Trump job approval (detailed)

Do you approve or disapprove of the job Donald Trump is doing as President?



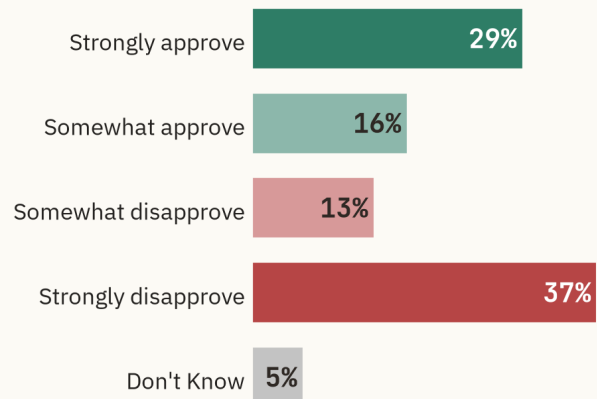
## Gov. Reynolds job approval

Do you approve or disapprove of the job Kim Reynolds is doing as Governor?



## Gov. Reynolds job approval (detailed)

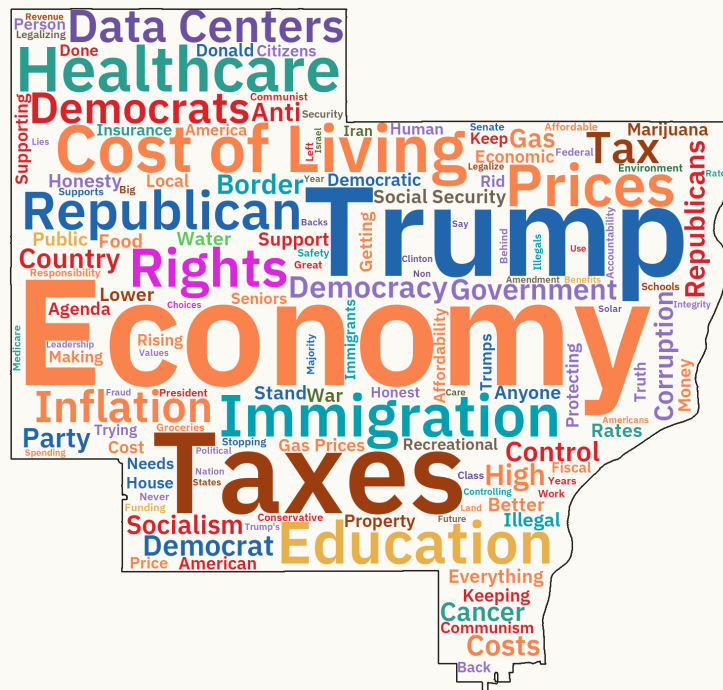
Do you approve or disapprove of the job Kim Reynolds is doing as Governor?



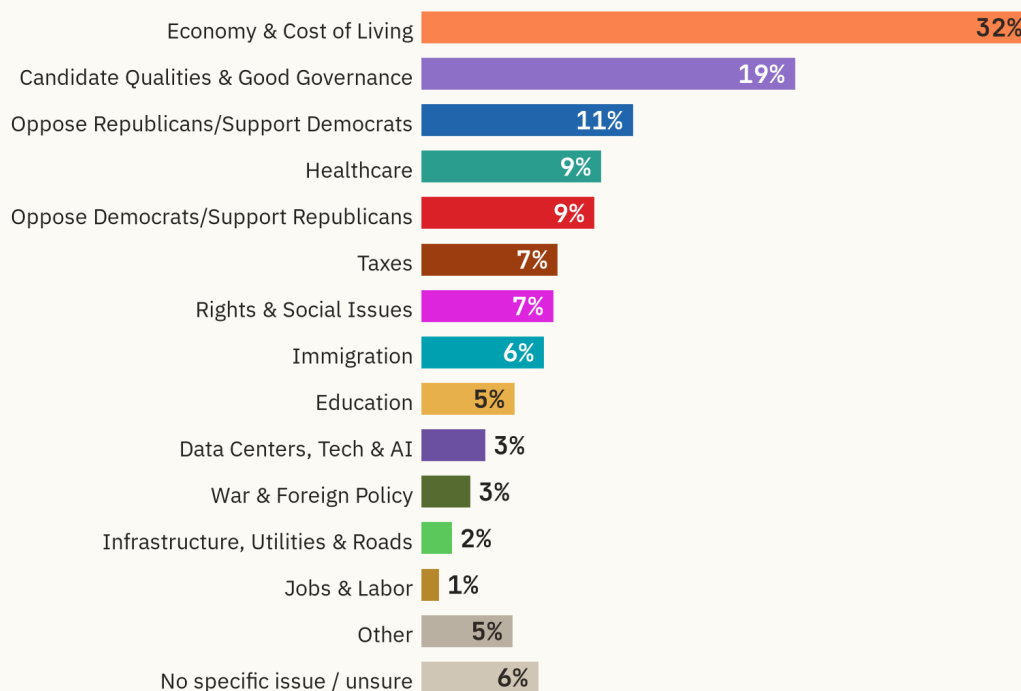
President Trump is underwater in SD-35 (44% approve / 55% disapprove), while Gov. Reynolds sits at 45% approve / 49% disapprove. The detailed breakdowns show how much of each number is strongly held versus soft.

# Issues impacting vote choice

If you choose to vote in November, what is the number one issue that will impact who you vote for?



## By theme | Share of respondents mentioning (weighted)



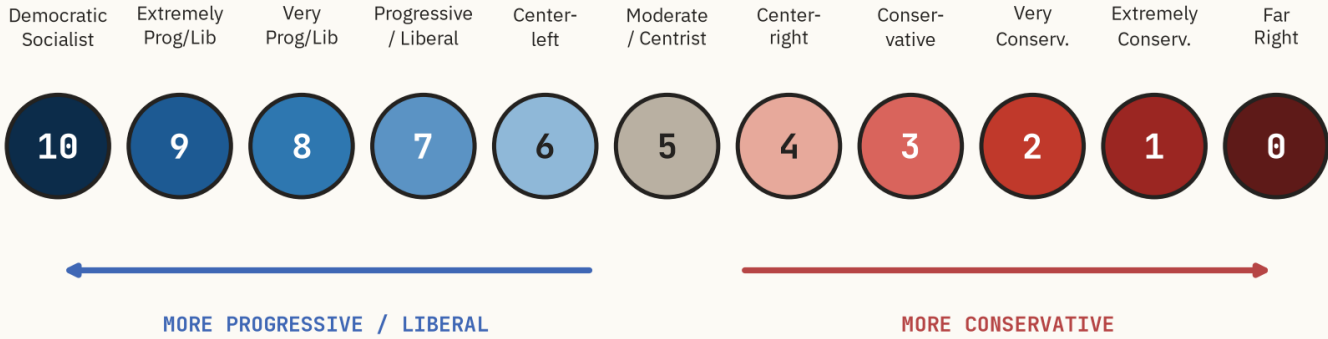
Open-ended responses from 392 respondents (338 weighted LV) who answered. Responses naming more than one issue count toward each theme, so shares sum to more than 100%. Themes follow the State Navigate issue taxonomy.

# Survey ideology

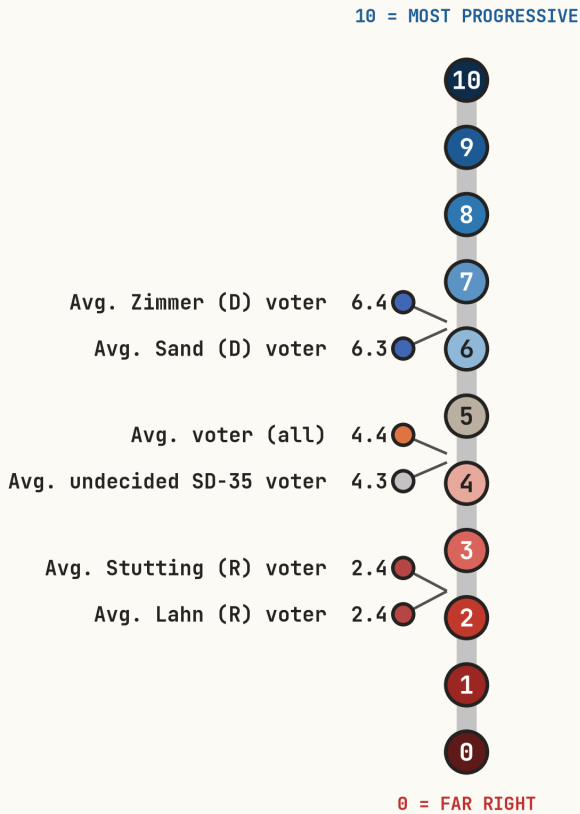
## The self-placement scale

### IDEOLOGICAL SELF-PLACEMENT SCALE

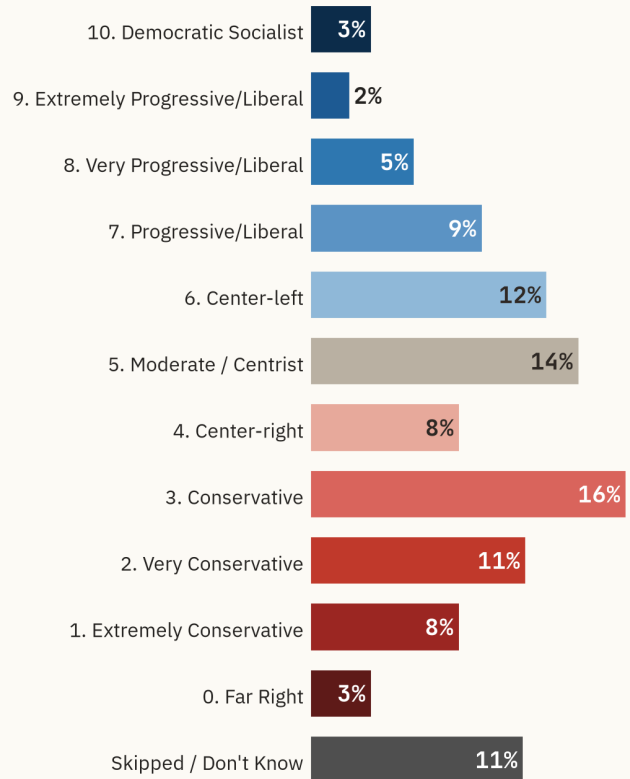
Place yourself — and each candidate — somewhere on the 0–10 scale.



### AVERAGE BY VOTER GROUP



### DETAILED SELF-PLACEMENT (ALL RESPONDENTS)

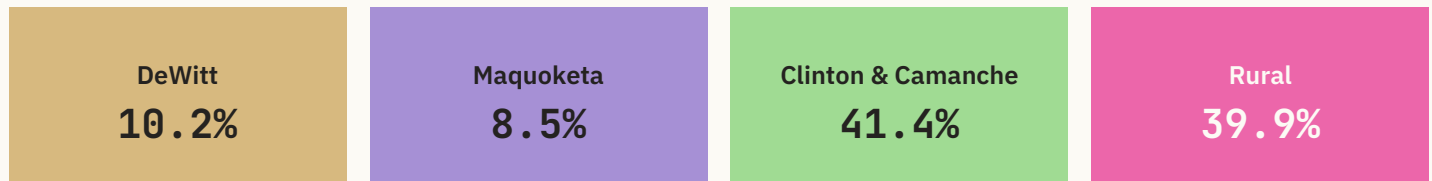


Ideology is respondents' self-placement on a 0-10 scale (10 = most progressive, 0 = far right). Detailed shares are of all respondents; 10.7% skipped the question. Group averages are weighted and computed among those who placed themselves (overall mean 4.4).

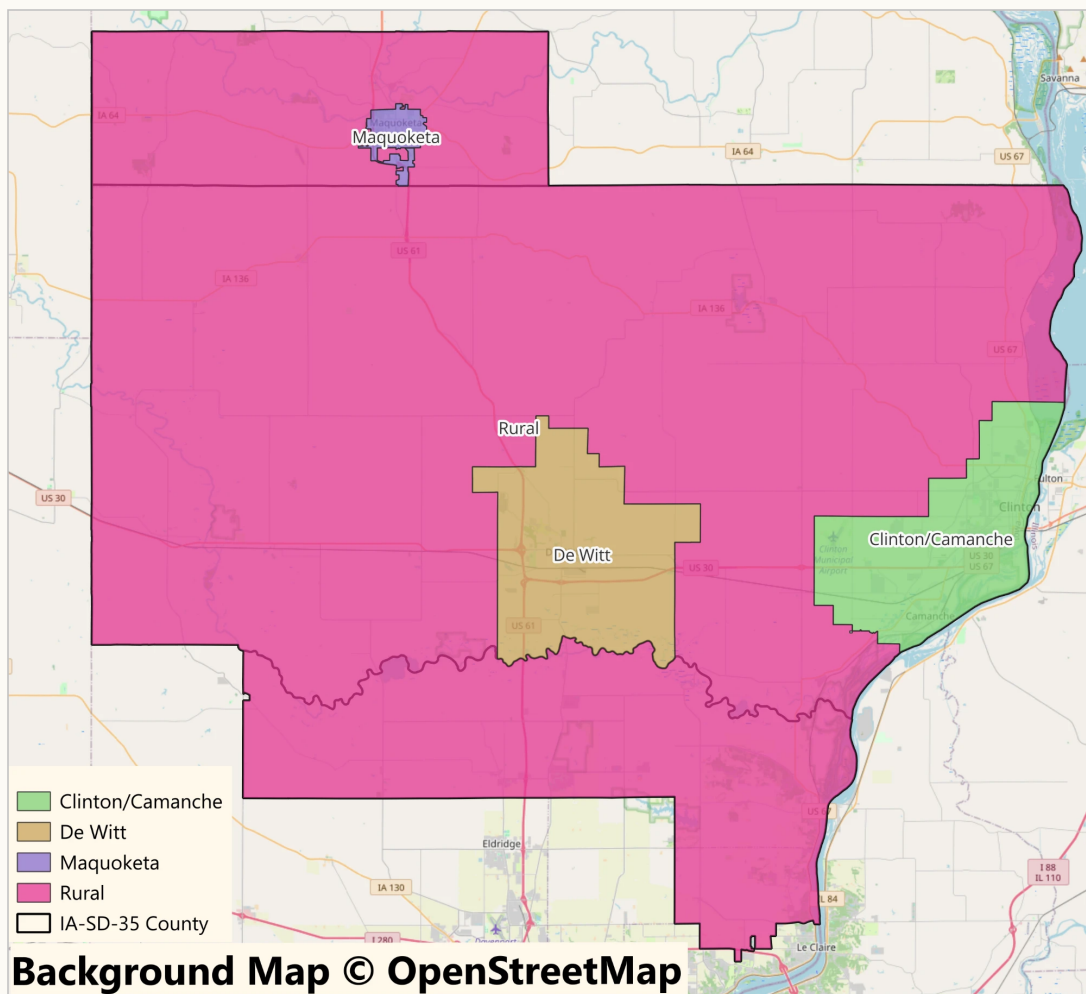
# Appendix | Regions & weights

State Senate District 35 was weighted by region. Cards show each region's share of the weighted likely-voter sample.

## Region weights | Share of weighted sample



## SD-35 by region



# Team notes & analysis

The following analysis from the State Navigate polling team examines the forces shaping this race.

CHAZ NUTTYCOMBE | ON CROSSOVER VOTING

## Zimmer is winning Trump voters at the same rate as Sand.

Mike Zimmer leads Joe Stutting by 3 points with leaners (46% to 43%), just behind Rob Sand's 5-point lead over Zach Lahn in the Governor's race (47% to 42%). A big reason Zimmer is keeping pace with the top of the ticket is crossover support: among voters who say they voted for Donald Trump in 2024\*, Zimmer wins 8%, the same share Sand gets, while Stutting wins just 2% of voters who say they voted for Kamala Harris. Ticket-splitting between the Governor and State Senate races is rare in both directions: about 1.5% of likely voters back both Sand and Stutting, and fewer than 1% back both Lahn and Zimmer. Most of the remaining gap between Zimmer and Sand comes from Sand voters who are still undecided in the State Senate race, about 2% of likely voters; if they come home, Zimmer should run right alongside Sand's margin. \*As Mary notes below, there are probably a significant number of respondents who voted for Trump in 2024 but aren't telling us they did, so these crossover figures describe self-reported Trump voters rather than every likely Trump 2024 voter in our survey.

MARY RADCLIFFE | ON THE 2024 RECALL VOTE

## Voters' memories of 2024 don't match the results, and Republicans are the reason.

Donald Trump carried SD-35 by 21 points in 2024, 60% to 39%, but our likely voters recall a much closer race: 48% say they voted for Trump and 41% for Kamala Harris. The gap comes from respondents who aren't reporting their 2024 vote accurately. Only 85% of registered Republicans in our survey say they voted for Trump, even after a follow-up question for those who initially declined to answer, while 90% of registered Democrats say they voted for Harris and 5% say they voted for Trump. The Democratic numbers look about right, but the Republican number isn't plausible: far more than 85% of this district's registered Republicans voted for Trump. The Republicans who don't report a Trump vote stand out in other ways, too: about two-thirds strongly disapprove of the job Trump is doing, and they favor Zimmer over Stutting 44% to 26% (a small group, so treat that split with caution). They look like Republicans who have soured on Trump and are reluctant to say they voted for him. Because of this, we did not weight this version of our results to recalled 2024 vote, and comparisons between this year's candidates and recalled Trump or Harris support should be read with caution. We are also releasing a companion version that weights recalled vote within each part of the district; it shows Stutting narrowly ahead, 47% to 45%.

# Team notes & analysis

CHAZ NUTTYCOMBE | ON RURAL REPUBLICANS

## A Canary in the Corn Fields: Rural Republicans in Iowa are difficult to reach.

In this version of our poll, which isn't weighted to recalled 2024 vote, the rural part of SD-35 looks far more Democratic than it should. Donald Trump carried the district's rural precincts by 37 points in 2024, but our rural respondents recall backing Trump by just 10 points; the State Senate race there is a dead heat, with Zimmer at 46% and Stutting at 45%, Sand leads Lahn 46% to 44%, and our rural respondents recall backing Trump by just 10 points. That points to a non-response bias amongst rural Republicans in Iowa. Our sample in DeWitt also looks too Democratic: Trump carried DeWitt by 18 points in 2024, but respondents there recall voting for Kamala Harris over Trump 51% to 43%, and Zimmer leads by 22 points. Clinton and Camanche, the most Democratic-leaning part of the district, are the exception: respondents there recall backing Trump by 8 points, 48% to 40%, almost exactly his actual 8-point margin in those precincts in 2024 (53% to 45%), and the State Senate race there is tied. That makes the gaps elsewhere stand out. Overall, this version recalls Trump winning the district by just 7 points, compared to his actual 21-point margin, so its district-wide result may still understate Republicans, even accounting for the respondents in our sample whom we believe are lying Trump voters. Our companion version corrects for this by weighting recalled vote within each region. Reaching rural Republicans is a challenge for every pollster in Iowa. Ann Selzer's final Iowa Poll before the 2024 election showed Kamala Harris leading Trump by 3 points; Trump won the state by 13, and Selzer's post-election review pointed to Democrats becoming more willing than Republicans to take part in polls. This year, the statewide polling average has Rob Sand leading Zach Lahn by about 9 points in a state Trump carried by 13. It's worth asking whether statewide pollsters are running into the same problem we see in SD-35's rural areas, as Echelon Insights' Patrick Ruffini noted on X/Twitter.

State Navigate is a nonpartisan, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to becoming a compass for state legislatures everywhere. Our bipartisan polling team consists of alumni of FiveThirtyEight, political scientists, and polling experts. Last year, State Navigate was the most accurate pollster in the country for the 2025 election cycle. To learn more about our poll sponsorship opportunities, [click here](#)! Public polling on state governance, especially state legislatures, is rare, so we try to make our polling as affordable as possible for sponsors to help fill this gap.

## Our polling team

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### CHAZ NUTTYCOMBE

#### FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Chaz was the Director of CAnalysis.com, the only website dedicated to state legislative election forecasting. He has successfully forecasted thousands of state legislative elections since 2017 during his senior year in high school. Chaz leads the polling team and works with them on survey design, field work, weighting, and written analysis.

### MICHAEL FOLEY

#### ELECTIONS COORDINATOR

Michael is an expert in GIS technology and has experience in coding and scraping technology. He is a graduate of Fordham University and the University of Chicago Law School. In our polling, Michael conducts fieldwork, setting up surveys and texts, and exports/designs crosstabs.

### MARY RADCLIFFE

#### DATA MANAGER

Mary Radcliffe is a mathematician and data analyst from Pittsburgh. She earned a PhD in Mathematics from the University of California, San Diego in 2012. Mary has previously worked as a Teaching Professor at Carnegie Mellon University and Researcher at FiveThirtyEight. In our polling, Mary helps with survey design, keeps our polling operations ethical, creates topline, and writes analyses of results.

### G. ELLIOTT MORRIS

#### POLLING COMMITTEE MEMBER

Elliott Morris is a data-driven journalist and author living in Washington, DC. He's the author of STRENGTH IN NUMBERS: How Polls Work and Why We Need Them. Elliott was most recently the Editorial Director of Data Analytics at ABC News, where he developed polling aggregation and election-forecasting models and managed the research and data visualization teams for ABC's data-journalism website FiveThirtyEight/538. In our polling, Elliott helps with survey design and writing weighting scripts.

### NICHOLAS GOEDERT

#### POLLING COMMITTEE MEMBER

Nicholas / "Nick" is an assistant professor of Political Science at Virginia Tech with expertise focused on legislative elections and American politics. He is the author of GROUND WAR: Courts, Commissions, and the Fight over Partisan Gerrymanders (Oxford, 2022). He served as an expert witness in the Wisconsin redistricting case Whitford v. Gill. He holds a Ph.D. in Politics from Princeton and a J.D. from Georgetown Law. In our polling, Nick helps with survey design and gives academic feedback.