



## **New C-SPAN/Pierrepont Survey: Public Attitudes About the U.S. Supreme Court**

***84% of Voters Say Supreme Court Decisions Affect Their Lives***  
***61% Closely Following News About President Biden's Nominee***  
***Just 29% Say Supreme Court is Transparent About How Justices Decide Cases***  
***65% Support TV Cameras in the Court & 70% Say Allowing Cameras Would Build Trust***

***One Week from Ketanji Brown Jackson Confirmation Hearing:  
New Poll Shows Strong Public Awareness of Court's Relevance  
Plus: Awareness of Live Oral Argument Audio is Aiding Court Favorability***

**(For immediate release, March 15, 2022)** — As the Senate prepares to consider a new U.S. Supreme Court justice, a new online national survey of more than 1,000 likely voters conducted for C-SPAN demonstrates strong public interest in the Court's work and awareness of the Court's relevance.

Over four in five respondents (84%) say Supreme Court decisions have “an impact on their everyday lives.” Further, two-thirds (65%) say the Court should allow TV coverage of its oral arguments, with 70% saying allowing TV cameras would build trust in the Court.

C-SPAN asked Pierrepont Analytics LLC to examine public awareness of the U.S. Supreme Court and related concerns such as trust, transparency, live oral argument audio awareness (a COVID-related innovation), and other topics including support for a Court Code of Ethics, 18-year terms for justices and TV cameras in the courtroom.

Forty-six percent of respondents see the Court as a partisan institution. “Trust in the federal government has taken a powerful hit in recent years,” said Robert Green, pollster for Pierrepont Analytics. “But there is one ray of light among the gloom. Under-50 American voters are much more likely to listen to Supreme Court oral argument audio than age 50+ voters. Awareness and exposure to oral arguments audio are building favorability and trust in the Court.”

The Supreme Court began providing live audio of its oral arguments during the pandemic, in May 2020. Green pointed out that, according to the survey, American voters younger than 50 are much more likely to know (55%-38%) there are live audio oral arguments and more likely to

have listened than age 50+ voters. Under-50 age voters are especially likely (58%) to say oral argument audio has provided them a more favorable view of the Supreme Court.

“This survey demonstrates that Americans have found and are listening to the Court's oral arguments and that listeners are coming away with a generally higher opinion of the Court,” said C-SPAN co-CEO Susan Swain. “That’s a strong message that more transparency is good for the Court — and good for the public.”

Other key survey findings:

- Only 56% of voters understand that the three branches of government are co-equal.
- Among the 44% who say the branches are not equal: Respondents say the Executive branch has the most power (51%), then the Legislative branch (26%) followed by the Judiciary (23%).
- One in four (28%) U.S. voters identified Ketanji Brown Jackson, President Biden's justice nominee, by name. (Another 15% could report that the new Supreme Court nominee is a Black female judge.)
- 42% say the Senate confirmation hearings are “an effective and fair tool” for deciding on Court appointees.
- Among the sitting justices, the two best known are Clarence Thomas (24%) and Chief Justice John Roberts (22%).
- Only one landmark Supreme Court case is well-known to American voters: Roe v. Wade (named by 40%); next: Brown v. Board of Education (named by just 6%).
- Voters favor greater racial diversity (69%) on the Court, and 59% say it would be better if justices came from a more diverse set of universities beyond northeastern Ivy League colleges.
- Voters support an 18-year term limit for justices (69%) over the current lifetime appointments.
- Voters support a Code of Ethics for the Supreme Court (72%).

See what the public thinks in the complete poll results: [www.c-span.org/SCOTUSsurvey2022/](http://www.c-span.org/SCOTUSsurvey2022/)

This is C-SPAN's eighth poll conducted with Robert Green on American attitudes about the Supreme Court, typically released just prior to nomination hearings for new justices.

Watch and listen to live coverage of the Ketanji Brown Jackson confirmation hearings on the C-SPAN Networks beginning Monday, March 21, 2022.

### **Methodology:**

Pierrepoint Consulting LLC, in association with Mercury Analytics, conducted online interviews from March 3-6, 2022, among n=1,011 U.S. likely voters. The margin of error for this study is +/- 3.10% at the 95% confidence level and higher for subgroups. Some percentages may add to more or less than 100% due to rounding. Where applicable, tracked findings reflect prior C-SPAN Supreme Court studies.

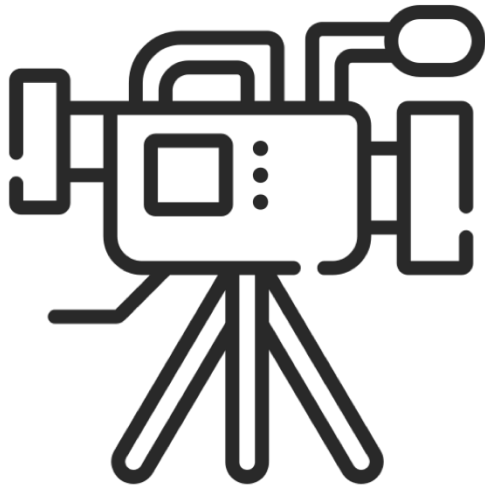
**About C-SPAN:**

C-SPAN, the public affairs network providing Americans with unfiltered access to congressional proceedings, was created in 1979 as a public service by the cable television industry and is now funded through fees paid by cable and satellite companies that provide C-SPAN programming. C-SPAN connects with millions of Americans through its three commercial-free TV networks, C-SPAN Radio, [C-SPAN Podcasts](#), the [C-SPAN Now app](#), [C-SPAN.org](#) and various social media platforms. C-SPAN's robust public affairs programming includes national and international public policy conversations; its popular morning show *Washington Journal*; book and author discussions on Book TV; a chronicle of America's past on American History TV; and more. The network's video-rich website contains over 270,000 hours of searchable and shareable content, archived since 1987 for educational and reporting purposes. Learn more about C-SPAN at [www.c-span.org/about/faq/](http://www.c-span.org/about/faq/). Engage with C-SPAN on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#), and stay connected through weekly and daily [newsletters](#).

**About Pierrepont Consultancy:**

Founded by Robert Green, Pierrepont Consulting and Analytics provides independent data-driven strategic analysis for clients as varied as C-SPAN, the Merchants Payment Coalition, Young & Rubicam, Hewlett-Packard, the Rockefeller Foundation, CalChamber and the Bipartisan Policy Center.

## C-SPAN/Pierrepont Supreme Court Survey 2022



65% of voters agree the Supreme Court **should allow television coverage** of its oral arguments

70% of voters agree that allowing television coverage would build **trust in the Court's process** and the rulings it makes

Learn more at [c-span.org/SCOTUSSurvey2022](https://c-span.org/SCOTUSSurvey2022)

## C-SPAN/Pierrepont Supreme Court Survey 2022

46% of voters **know** the Court provides **live audio of oral arguments**

Of those who **have listened** to a live audio argument, **48%** have a more **positive** view as a result

Learn more at [c-span.org/SCOTUSSurvey2022](https://c-span.org/SCOTUSSurvey2022)

## C-SPAN/Pierrepoint Supreme Court Survey 2022



Voters value **diversity** in higher education with **59%** thinking the Supreme Court would **be better** if the Justices came from more **diverse law schools**

Learn more at [c-span.org/SCOTUSSurvey2022](https://c-span.org/SCOTUSSurvey2022)

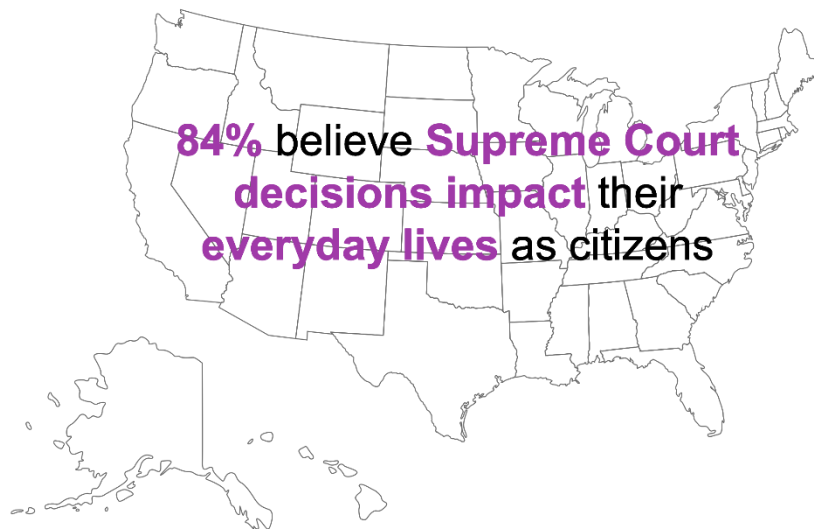
## C-SPAN/Pierrepoint Supreme Court Survey 2022



Nearly half (**47%**) think a diverse Supreme Court, in terms of **gender/ethnicity**, is **very important**

Learn more at [c-span.org/SCOTUSSurvey2022](https://c-span.org/SCOTUSSurvey2022)

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