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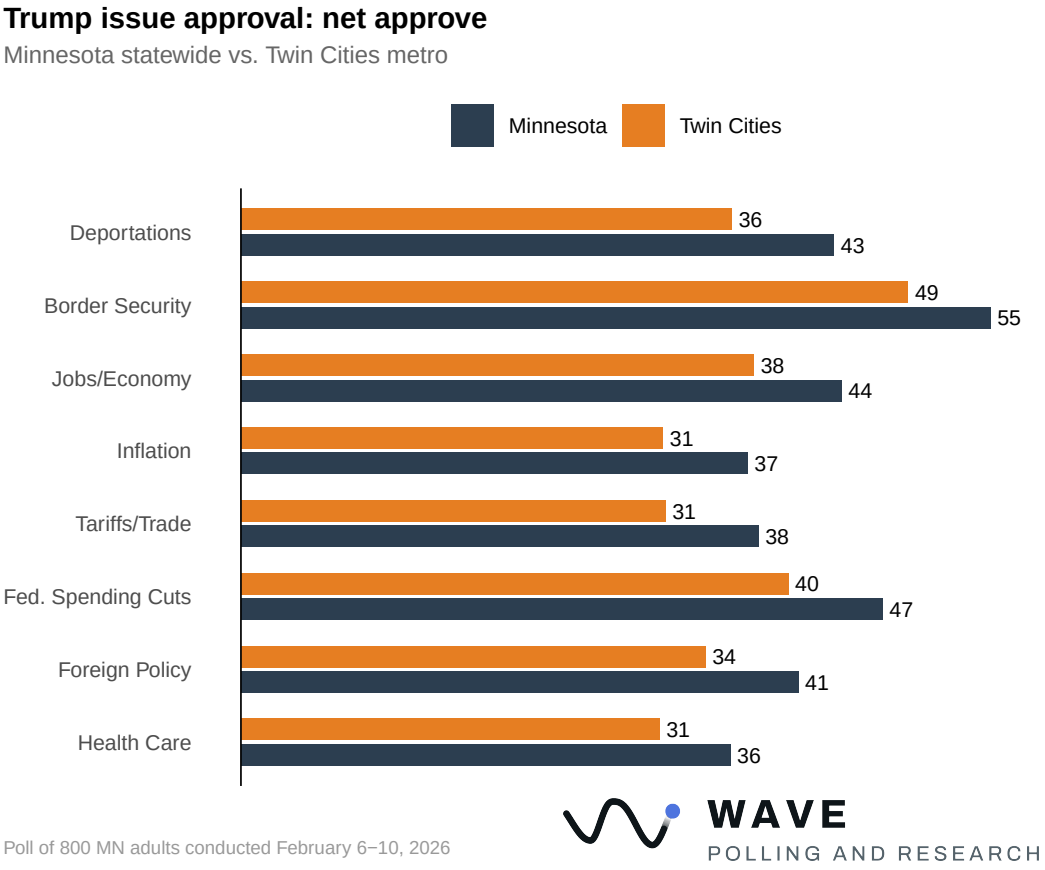
Memo: Minnesota Survey — Twin Cities vs. Statewide Views on Trump's Immigration Policies

To: Interested parties
From: G. Elliott Morris, Wave Polling and Research
Date: February 25, 2026

A new survey of 800 Minnesota adults reveals a geographic divide in attitudes toward the Trump administration's immigration enforcement. Twin Cities metro residents are consistently more critical than Minnesotans statewide — and the gap persists even after accounting for the metro area's more Democratic voter composition. Key findings:

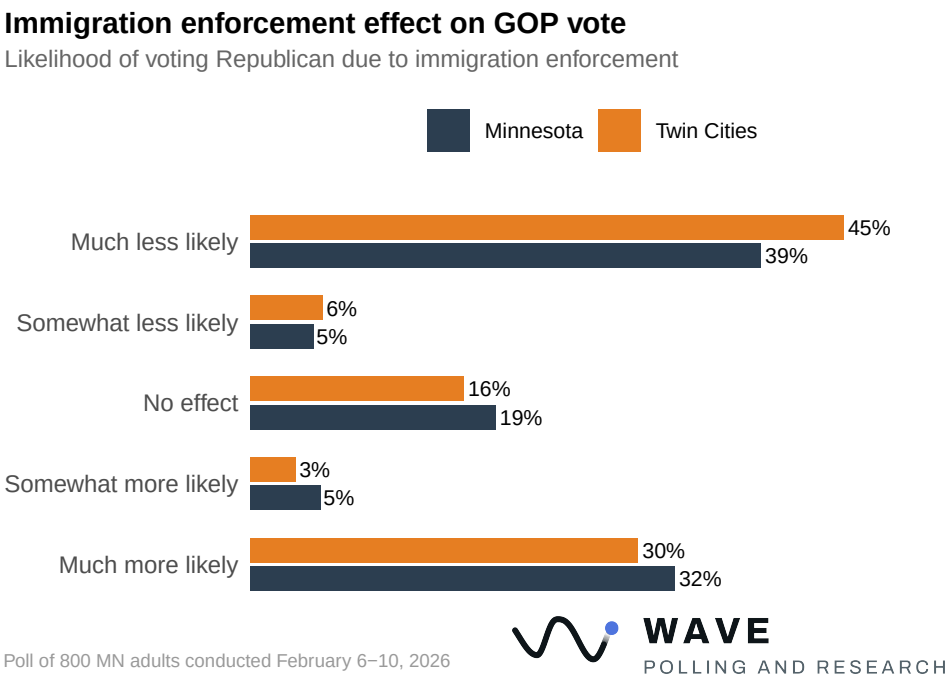
1. Twin Cities residents are less approving of Trump on deportations.

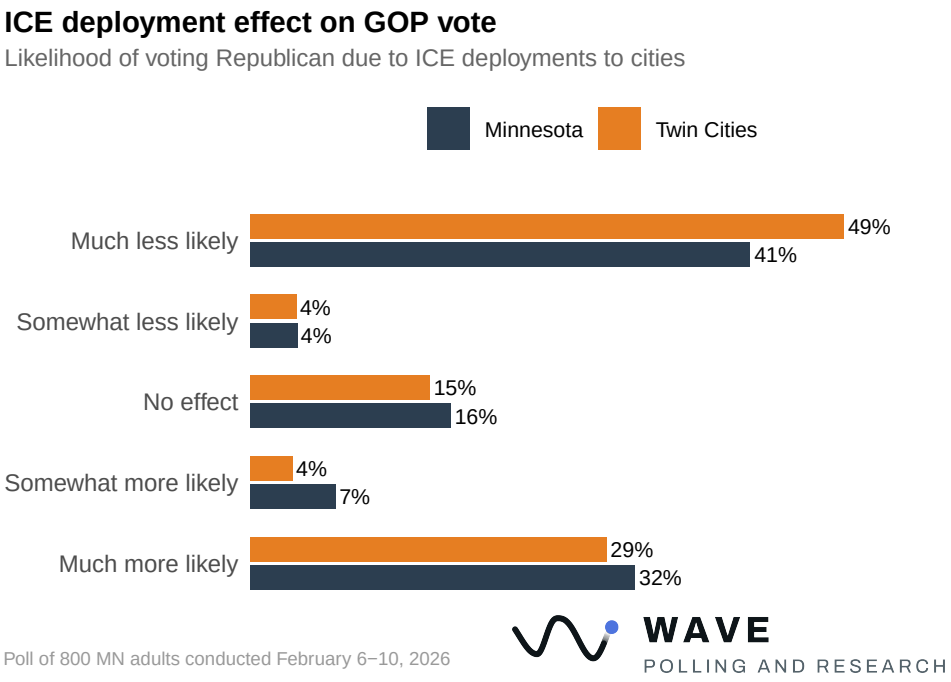
On Trump's handling of deportations, net approval among Twin Cities residents is 36 percentage points, compared with 43 points statewide — a gap of 7 points. The Twin Cities are more disapproving on every issue tested, but the divide is largest on deportations and immigration enforcement.



2. Immigration enforcement is pushing more metro voters away from the GOP.

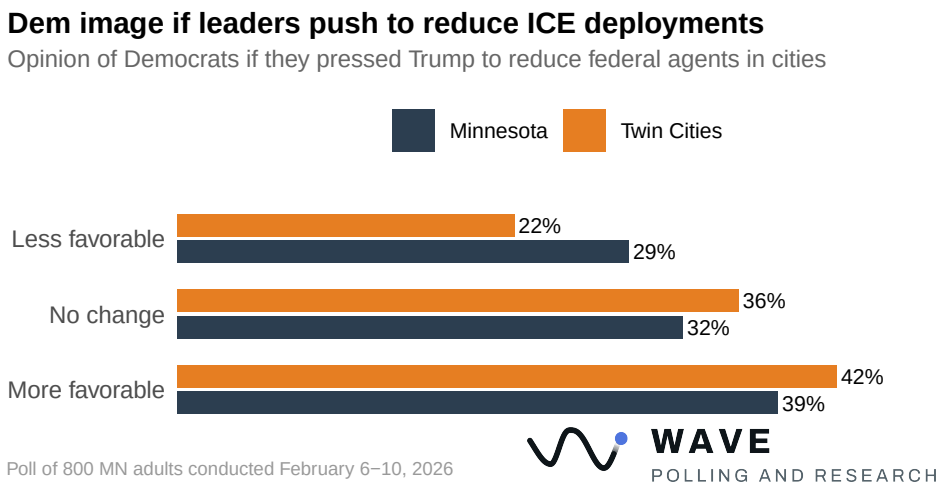
Statewide, 44% of Minnesotans say immigration enforcement makes them less likely to vote Republican. In the Twin Cities the figure rises to 51%. The pattern is similar for ICE deployments to cities: 45% statewide versus 53% in the metro.





3. Democrats have room to gain in the metro by pressing on ICE deployments.

If Democratic leaders pressed the administration to reduce federal agent deployments to cities, 42% of Twin Cities residents say they would view the party more favorably — compared with 39% statewide. The Democratic image boost from opposing ICE deployments is stronger in the metro.



4. The Twin Cities gap persists after controlling for 2024 vote.

An ordinal logistic regression confirms that Twin Cities residents have significantly higher odds of disapproving of Trump's deportation policies. In the unadjusted model (M1), the odds ratio for the Twin Cities indicator is 1.88 (1.34, 2.63). Adding 2024 vote choice (M2) attenuates the coefficient to 1.4 (0.91, 2.15) — expected, given the metro's more Democratic composition — but the effect remains. Full model tables appear in the Methods section.

Table 1: Twin Cities coefficient across nested models

Model	OR	95% CI	p
M1: Unadjusted	1.88	(1.34, 2.63)	0.0002
M2: + Vote	1.40	(0.91, 2.15)	0.1254

About Wave Polling and Research

Wave Polling and Research is a survey research and strategic consulting firm founded by G. Elliott Morris. The firm provides data-driven research and advising for clients working in politics, media, and public policy. Wave Polling and Research emphasizes methodological transparency, rigorous survey design, and a commitment to letting the data speak for itself. For more information, visit wavepolling.com.

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Methods

Survey methodology

This survey was designed by Wave Polling and Research and fielded online from February 6 to February 10, 2026 among a sample of 800 Minnesota adults aged 18 and older. The fielding and weighting was performed by Verasight, a mixed-mode survey provider. The margin of sampling error is ±3.5 percentage points. Statewide results use the state-level weight; Twin Cities results use an MSA-specific weight calibrated to the seven-county metro population.

Model specification

We estimate two nested weighted ordinal logistic regressions (proportional odds) via `svyolr()` to assess whether Twin Cities residence predicts disapproval of Trump's handling of deportations (`q16_1`), after adjusting for potential confounders:

- **M1:** `q16_1 ~ twin_cities` (unadjusted)
- **M2:** `q16_1 ~ twin_cities + vote_2024`

"Not sure" responses are excluded. The outcome is ordered: Strongly approve < Somewhat approve < Somewhat disapprove < Strongly disapprove. An odds ratio above 1 for `twin_citiesYes` indicates higher odds of being in a more disapproving category.

M1: Unadjusted

Table 2: M1: Twin Cities effect (unadjusted)

Predictor	OR	95% CI	p
twin_citiesYes	1.88	(1.34, 2.63)	2e-04

M2: Adjusted for 2024 Vote

Table 3: M2: Adjusted for 2024 vote

Predictor	OR	95% CI	p
twin_citiesYes	1.40	(0.91, 2.15)	0.1254
vote_2024Harris	209.68	(104.53, 420.6)	0.0000
vote_2024DNV/Other	12.38	(6.66, 23.01)	0.0000

Robustness: Bayesian Hierarchical Logit

As a robustness check, we collapse the four-level outcome into a binary indicator (1 = approve, 0 = disapprove) and fit a Bayesian hierarchical logistic regression with a random intercept by 2024 vote choice. This relaxes both the proportional-odds assumption and the frequentist framework. We use weakly informative priors (default `brms` priors).

Table 4: Bayesian hierarchical logit: fixed effects (binary approve/disapprove)

Predictor	OR	95% CrI
Intercept	0.72	(0.04, 15.24)
twin_citiesYes	0.82	(0.49, 1.35)

The Twin Cities OR from the Bayesian model is 0.82 (95% CrI: 0.49–1.35), consistent with the frequentist ordinal results above.

Brant Test (Proportional Odds Assumption)

The Brant test is applied to an unweighted `polr()` fit of M2 as a diagnostic (the test does not support survey weights).

```
## --------------------------------------------------
## Test for     X2  df  probability
## --------------------------------------------------
## Omnibus          8.79    6   0.19
## twin_citiesYes       0.4 2   0.82
## vote_2024Harris  7.02    2   0.03
## vote_2024DNV/Other   3.13    2   0.21
## --------------------------------------------------
##
## H0: Parallel Regression Assumption holds
```

Table 5: Brant test of proportional odds (unweighted M2)

	X2	df	probability
Omnibus	8.7946	6	0.1855
twin_citiesYes	0.3954	2	0.8206
vote_2024Harris	7.0231	2	0.0299
vote_2024DNV/Other	3.1294	2	0.2092

Non-significant p-values indicate the proportional odds assumption is reasonable for that predictor.

Predicted Probabilities

Average marginal predicted probabilities for each approval level by Twin Cities status, holding 2024 vote at observed values.

Table 6: Average marginal predicted probabilities (M2)

Response	Twin Cities	Rest of MN	Difference
Strongly approve	26.7%	30.3%	-3.6 pp
Somewhat approve	13%	12.3%	0.7 pp
Somewhat disapprove	5.4%	5.3%	0.1 pp
Strongly disapprove	54.9%	52.1%	2.8 pp

Sample

Table 7: Analysis sample by geography (after dropping Not sure / missing)

Group	N
Twin Cities	480
Rest of MN	305
Total	785