

# AZ JUDICIAL CONFERENCE

*The Enduring  
Importance of the  
Rule of Law and  
The Judiciary's Role  
in It*



# The Enduring Importance of the Rule of Law and the Judiciary's Role in Its Preservation

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# rule · of · law



World Justice  
Project

The rule of law is a durable system of laws, institutions, norms, and community commitment that delivers four universal principles:

Accountability

Just Law

Open Government

Accessible and Impartial  
Justice

Research shows that rule of law correlates to higher economic growth, greater peace, more education, and improved health outcomes.

# Elements of the Rule of Law

- Decisions are based on evidence and established legal principles
- Parties have an opportunity to be heard
- Decision-makers (judges) have ethical integrity and are subject to effective oversight
- Adverse rulings can be criticized and appealed but ultimately are respected

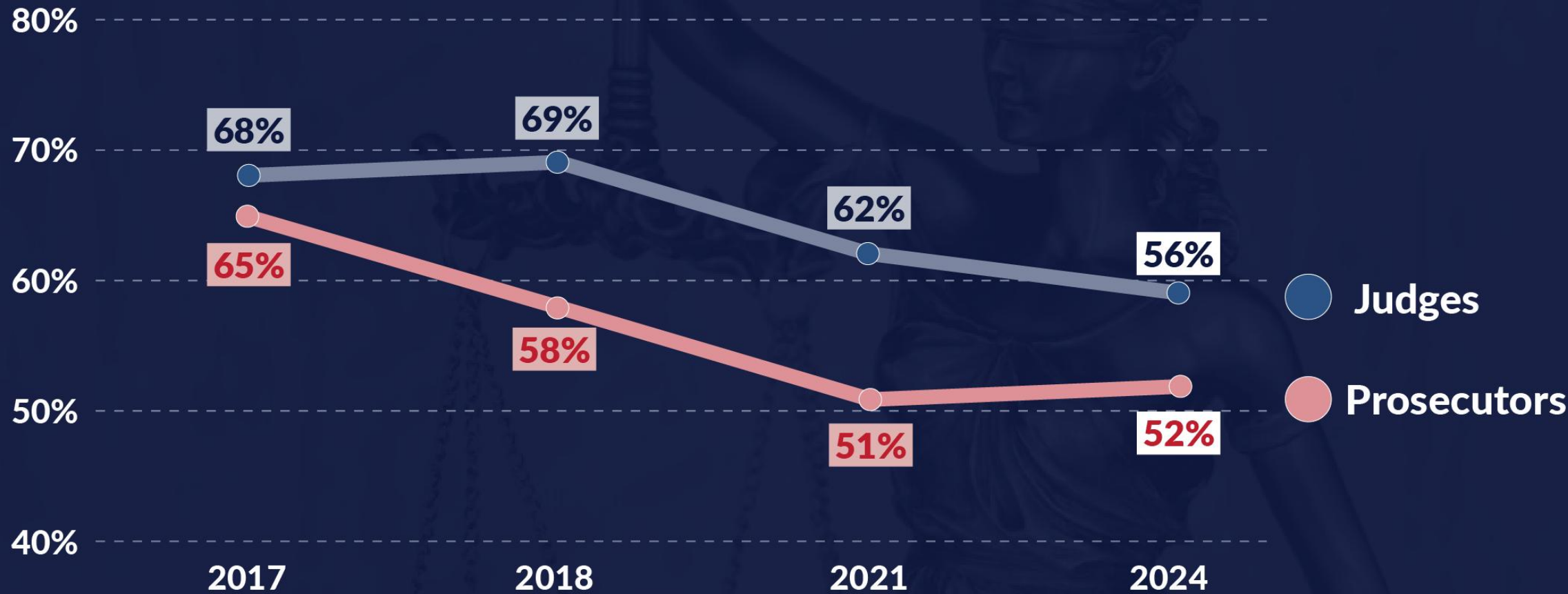
# Inherent Challenges

- Evidence-based decision-making can be affected by the limitations of decision-makers' perceptions
- The opportunity to be heard can be affected by limitations on resources, including money and time
- Judges' adherence to the highest professional standards can be affected by less-than-optimal selection processes and insufficient oversight
- Lack of transparency in explaining rulings can affect the degree to which they are accepted

# Current Challenges

- Rhetoric implying that decisions should be based on outcome rather than evidence and legal norms
- Threats and executive orders directed at lawyers who have represented parties opposed to government policies
- Threats to impeach judges who have made adverse rulings, and insufficient ethical oversight of other judges
- Personal attacks on judges and their families, and threatened or actual refusal to comply with court orders
- Increased concerns regarding safety for everyone at the courthouse

# Americans' trust in the **justice system** is down

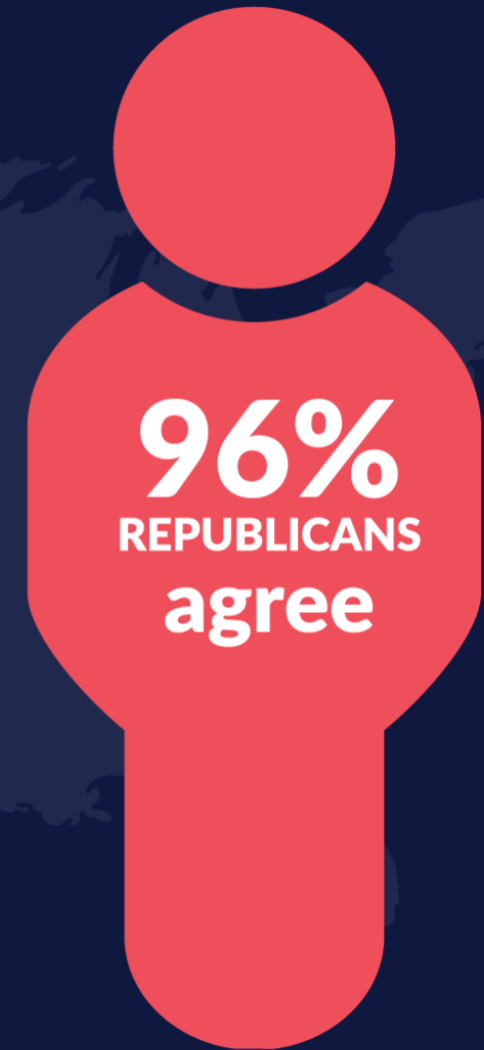
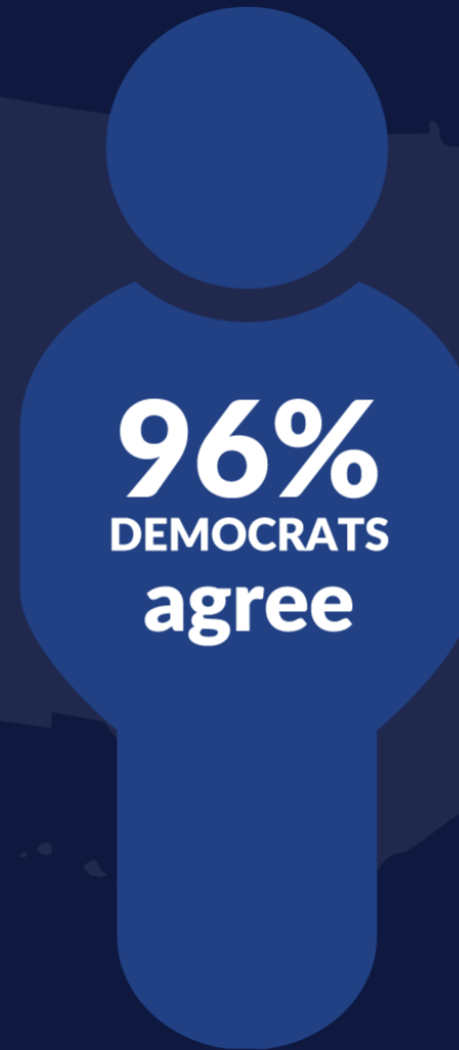


# Reasons for Optimism

- Constitutional guardrails (including life tenure for federal judges and lack of support for impeachments)
- Culture and tradition
- Mobilization of lawyers, judges, and court administrators to support the rule of law
- Innovation and civil justice system improvements are underway
- Judicial leadership and innovation

# Rule of law is crucial to the future of the country

*Almost all Americans agree that the rule of law is essential or important to the future of the country (96%), U.S. democracy (95%), and their own lives (94%).*



# The Importance of Well-Being and Resilience



**What role do judges play in setting the foundation for the next 250 years of justice?**

**Where do you see opportunity to respond to the challenges in this moment and ensure both a trusted and trustworthy system? Ideas to further innovation?**

**What gives you hope for the future of our justice system?**

