

# Baker Briefing

Research from the Howard H. Baker Jr. Center for Public Policy

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HOWARD H. BAKER JR.  
CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY

## Leadership & Governance

### The Challenge of Modern Polling

The Baker Center's director of policy partnerships, Bill Lyons, is a former director of the UT Social Science Research Institute and has decades of experience in polling and surveys for government and political officials. In this video, Lyons discusses a new challenge facing polling, particularly in recent election cycles.



## Global Security



### How Social Media Networks Change Pre- and Post-Election

How big a role does social media play in shaping today's major events – not just beforehand but afterward as well?

Baker Fellows [Alex Bentley](#) and [Brandon Prins](#), along with Rice, et al., studied the presidential election in Belarus in 2020, focusing on the Twitter content and sharing networks leading up to and after the election. This election, much like the U.S.'s 2020 election, was highly contested.

Analysis of the study showed predictable patterns that served as indicators of how sources were using their disinformation campaigns and when they used them. The study also showed what type of information the public was paying attention to before the event versus the information they shared after it.

The research suggests audience networks shift from more centralized - people sharing links that go back to central hubs of sources as everyone hangs on the latest news - to more decentralized networks after the election as the population begins discussing the event with their peers.

With the help of social media, the negative campaigns have gone digital and last past election day. To read "Monitoring Event-Driven Dynamics on Twitter: a Case Study in Belarus", click [here](#).



### The Role of International Election Observation Missions in Shaping Public Belief Post-Election

International election observation missions (EOMs) play an important role in shaping post-election contention and the public's belief about the quality of the election.

Some developing countries bring in a number and variety of EOMs while other countries with authoritarian regimes bring in "friendly" monitors to counteract those monitoring EOMs. How does this affect the public's criticism of the election results?

Baker Affiliate [Kelly Morrison](#), with co-authors Daniela Donno, Burcu Savun and Perisa Davutoglu, draw data on EOM verdicts that show competing verdicts post-election in 119 developing countries from 1990-2012.

Their finding provides the first systematic evidence in support of the idea that governments holding flawed elections have incentives to invite multiple election observation missions to hedge against the risk of criticism.

Morrison recently presented the paper, "Competing Verdicts: Multiple Election Monitors and Post-Election Contention," at the American Political Science Association annual meeting in Montreal, Canada in September 2022.

## Energy & Environment



### Vehicle Stock Turnover's Impact on Greenhouse Gas Reductions

A key result of a new report out of the Baker Center shows that the current rate of passenger vehicle stock turnover could lead to a moderate reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by 2030 with substantial reductions possible by 2050, even without achieving a 100 percent new electric vehicle (EV) market share by 2035. In addition, policies to accelerate stock turnover would be

beneficial to reaching emissions reduction targets.

The [report](#) by Baker Fellows [David Greene](#) and [Benjamin Leard](#) studies different scenarios of passenger vehicle stock turnover rates to reach the goals of passenger vehicle decarbonization of GHG by 2035 and 2050. One pathway is transitioning the passenger vehicle fleet to electric vehicles. But a critical piece to making that transition successful is vehicle stock turnover. Vehicle stock turnover is defined as the rate at which the new vehicles enter the stock and the rate at which the old vehicles exit the stock.

The transportation sector represents the largest source of US GHG emissions, with passenger vehicles emitting the largest share of transportation sector emissions. This makes decarbonizing passenger vehicles a key component to meeting climate goals.



### Government Accountability Office Looks to Baker Affiliate as Subject Matter Specialist

Baker Affiliate [Alex Osei-Kojo](#) shared his insights with the Government Accountability Office (GAO) on current collaboration research that can help federal agencies improve interagency collaboration to address complex policy problems.

The primary point of Osei-Kojo's presentation is collaboration has two sides – cooperation and coordination – which are the pursuit of joint goals and aligning action to achieve agreed-on objectives.

Research shows that collaboration may be enhanced by incorporating stakeholder values in the design of those shared goals. An important note that Osei-Kojo presented was that organizations don't collaborate per se – the people who run the organizations do.

Osei-Kojo was approached to present as a subject matter specialist after the GAO identified his article, *The Opportunities and Constraints to Collaboration in Public Sector Management*, through a literature review.

## Student Spotlight



### Bret Berry

Bret Berry is a Baker Scholar, and he is a senior majoring in the College Scholars Program, focusing on health care law and policy. His thesis is titled "What Happens After a Rural Hospital Closes: An Analysis of Community Health Impacts Post-Closure." Berry plans to attend law school after graduation.

*"The Baker Center has provided a home for my academic and extracurricular endeavors during my time at UT. From my first semester here through my last, the Baker Center has provided mentorship, support and engagement in all facets of my time at the university. I have been blessed to work with the amazing faculty and staff at the Baker Center."*

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