

This is America This Week: Oct 21st

The Weekly Heat #s:

- **65** – Two-thirds (65%) of U.S. voters think the **U.S. economy today is weak** (+8%-pts from October 2021)¹
- **57** – Over half (57%) say their **financial situation is getting worse** (+20%-pts from October 2021)²
- **1** – Compared to mid-March 2022, there has only been a **1%-pt decrease in concern** around the economy and inflation (89% v. 90%)³

Story #1: Pinkflation (CVS Health-The Harris Poll National Health Project)

- The “**Pink Tax**” refers to a markup on goods and services marketed to women and for which men pay less for similar products and services.
- In the United States, [one government study](#) analyzed 800 gender-specific products from nearly 100 brands. The report found that, on average, **personal care products targeted at women were (13%) more expensive** than similar men’s products
 - The study concluded that “**women are paying thousands of dollars more over the course of their lives** to purchase similar products as men”
 - The CVS Health Harris Poll National Health Project found that more than half (57%) of American women say **women’s care products are unfairly priced**
- These pink taxes are focused on essentials:
 - For example, period products:
 - Half (50%) of all women who are buying period products today **say they are less affordable than before the pandemic**
 - Nearly half (45%) of women with periods say they are **regularly stressed about affording period products**
 - In 2019, in partnership [with Thinx & PERIOD](#), **1 in 5 teens struggled even to afford period products** or were not able to purchase them at all
 - And most American consumers (58%) are unaware that **some states have sales tax on period/feminine hygiene products**
- Here’s a simple important way to work on your ‘S’ in ESG and be customer-centric:
 - **Start by understanding women drive our economy** – Women drive [70 to 80%](#) of all consumer purchasing decisions
 - Nearly nine in ten women believe corporations that sell period products should make them **more affordable, more accessible and more environmentally friendly**

¹ Harvard CAPS-Harris Poll (October 2022)

² Harvard CAPS-Harris Poll (October 2022)

³ Harris Poll America This Week Tracker (October 2022)

Palate Cleanser: The Generational Gap in the Meaning of Emojis

- **Background:** An [article in the NYPost](#) detailed that Gen Z'ers were saying that the “Thumbs Up” emojis were a sign of passive aggressive behavior from their bosses, we wanted to go out into the market and test this theory...
- **The generational divide:** For more than two-thirds (68%) of Boomers they view the thumbs up emoji as meaning “ok” or “I understand” and nothing more. However, the majority of Gen Z (68%) think that that emoji can have a hidden meaning implying sarcasm or passive-aggression
- In fact, Gen Z are **twice as likely to believe** the thumbs up emojis are meant **to be a passive-aggressive and dismissive** way of answering someone compared to Millennials, and nearly three times that of Gen X and four times that of Boomers.

Story #2: Inflation Hits our Center of Security, Our Homes

- **Americans see no relief in sight:** The Harvard CAPS-Harris Poll October findings found that (84%) of voters think the **U.S. is in a recession now or will be in one by next year**
- And The Harris Poll America This Week tracker found that 8 in 10 (80%) of Americans still think the worst of inflation is ahead of us
- **And most feel there's no way out of this cycle:** (55%) of voters blame Biden for inflation while (74%) think the Fed (by hiking IR's) is going to cause a recession⁴
- And for the 44 million American households who rent a home or apartment in the U.S., inflation keeps pushing costs higher and higher.
 - Our ATW tracker found that due to rising inflation, one in five (21%) of Americans **have missed or will soon miss a rent/mortgage payment** (Gen Z: 31%, Millennials: 28%, Hispanic: 28%, Black: 26%)
- **Featured story:** The New York Times [featured a story](#), The Rent Revolution is Coming – about a renters uprising and organizing to fight skyrocketing rental prices in Kansas City, a city of 500,000.
 - Zillow's home value index puts the typical KC home at **\$230,000**, or more than \$100,000 **below the national level**
 - But with a steadily expanding economy **driven by the logistics and medical industries**, Kansas City has seen **its rents increase (8.5%)** from a year ago, **outpacing the rest of the nation**, according to rental search site Apartment List.
 - **KC Tenants:** Pairing **protests with traditional lobbying**, the group exploded onto the political scene during the pandemic and has since become instrumental in **passing tenant-friendly laws** like an ordinance that gives renters a lawyer during eviction proceedings

⁴ Harvard CAPS-Harris Poll (October 2022)

