

TO: Interested Parties  
FR: Mark Riddle, Future Majority  
RE: The Path Forward  
DT: September 19, 2021

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Since the 2020 election, Future Majority has surveyed 48,755 voters in swing congressional districts and states with our partners at Change Research. This memo includes data from recent surveys of 2,529 voters in battleground states Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin (Aug. 29 – Sept. 2), 1,309 voters in the seven congressional districts that split between supporting former President Trump and electing a Democrat to Congress (Aug. 29 – Sept. 4), and 2,352 voters in the 37 congressional districts decided by +/- 5 percentage points in 2020 (Sept. 10).

Our team at Future Majority has conducted a deep dive into voter attitudes and the electoral battlegrounds. The recommendations and findings in this memo are in the public domain.

**The Political Reality:** While August was shaky for Democrats, President Biden is still ahead of Trump's [approval rating](#) by 7 to 10 points at the same point in his presidency.

- **Defeating Covid and growing the economy go hand in hand.** Defeating Covid is job #1. It is concerning that Biden only has a 46% approval rating in the battleground states on handling the coronavirus. Despite this, voters in battleground states still trust Democrats 41% to Republicans 24% when asked which party has delivered better on defeating Covid. R still equals radical. Biden's new directives are a great start, but Democrats need to stay focused and play offense on this issue. Take on the Radical Republicans like Governors DeSantis and Abbott and those who enable them. Hold the Radicals accountable for their plans to Defund the Schools, not keep children safe, and slow the economic recovery. There is a cost to the chaos they've wrought on our citizenry, and Republicans need to pay it.
- **Voters favor Biden's decision to get out of Afghanistan.** In the 37 +/- 5 congressional districts, 46% agree with Biden, and 43% oppose Biden. Independents split. Hypocritical rage by the Radicals must be answered with the fact that Trump made a deal with the Taliban, releasing 5,000 of the worst prisoners and enabling them to be back in power, and pivot to protecting American troops and investing in American workers by not spending hundreds of millions daily on a war.
- **Build Back Better is popular, and can become more so if Congress delivers.** Voters support delivering big results; the \$3.5 trillion investment bill enjoys 56-42 support (+14) in the 37 swing districts. Net support for the bill package dramatically rises further (up to net +43) when investments are paid for by measures that tax the very wealthiest.
- **Democrats currently trail in the generic ballot:**
  - In a generic matchup, voters in the 37 congressional districts +/- 5 points say they would choose the Republican candidate over the Democratic candidate if

the 2022 election for U.S. House of Representatives were held today 45% to 43%, with 12% of voters saying they are not sure. **Independent voters currently favor the Republican candidate 41% to the Democratic candidate 32%, with 27% not sure.**

- Democrats trail Republicans in the seven Trump/Democrat congressional districts 47% to 41%, with 12% of voters who say they remain undecided.
- Over the summer, the enthusiasm gap has narrowed, with 85% of Democrats saying they are extremely motivated to vote compared to 86% of Republicans who say the same.
- **Two Red Flags:** Democrats making the case that they are lowering costs and cutting taxes will be a tough sell. **It risks committing the fundamental political sin of not acknowledging the existence of a voters' painful reality.**
  - **63% of voters in battleground states and 62% of voters in the seven Trump/Democrat congressional districts say their income is falling behind the cost of living.** 25% in battleground states and 28% in the seven districts say their income is staying even with the cost of living. Just 5% in battleground states and 4% in the seven districts say their income is going up faster than the cost of living. Very few are doing very well.
  - **60% of voters in battleground states and 59% of voters in the seven Trump/Democrat congressional districts think taxes will go up on those making less than \$400,000 a year even if President Biden says they won't.** Before the 2010 midterms, only 1 in 10 voters knew that taxes had gone down for the middle class. (CBS NYT) All they hear now is the Republican machine saying taxes will go up.
- **Voters Overwhelmingly Reject Texas Radical Republicans' Agenda.** In the survey of the 37 swing congressional districts, we asked voter opinions of Texas' new anti-abortion law:
  - **90% of voters are familiar with the passage of the new law in Texas that bans abortions at six weeks. 48% of voters are very familiar.**
    - **62% of voters oppose banning abortion at six weeks, before most women know they are pregnant. 53% strongly oppose the ban, including 90% of Democrats, 51% of Independents, and 66% of undecided Independents.**

- **68% of voters oppose, including 59% of voters who strongly oppose, the provisions of the radical new Texas law** empowering private individuals to sue people who perform abortions or help women obtain abortions.
- **83% of voters oppose, including 69% who strongly oppose, the government mandating that women carry pregnancies to term in cases of rape and incest.**
- **75% of voters support a woman's right to abortion.** Just 21% of voters say abortion is wrong and should be illegal.
  - 68% of voters agree a woman should have the freedom to choose whether to carry a pregnancy to term.
- **63% of voters agree that *Roe v. Wade* is the law of the land** and should not be changed, including 51% of voters who strongly agree.
- **62% of voters support the Women's Health Protection Act** to guarantee a woman's right to an abortion that was established in *Roe v. Wade*, including 72% of undecided independents. 51% strongly support, including 57% of undecided independents.
  - **50% of voters believe it is likely the Supreme Court will overturn *Roe v. Wade*** after it refused to stop the Texas ban from going into effect.

**Recommendations:**

Future Majority studied the responses of more than 24,000 voters since June to offer the following analysis and recommendations to meet voters where they are on a wide range of issues:

- **Covid and the cost of living are the kitchen table issues of the 2022 election.** Democrats get good marks on working to defeat Covid, but they must finish the job and get tougher on Radical Republicans who stand in the way of defeating the virus. But Democrats also need to acknowledge that the cost of living is putting the American Dream out of touch for too many working people. While Democrats' policies have the support of the majority of voters, they must do a better job in connecting the dots on how those policies help working people. There is too much Washington-speak about complex procedures like "reconciliation" rather than explaining the budget is an investment blueprint to help hard working people build their American dream.
- **Independent voters remain displeased with both parties.** They historically never like the party in power, but Democrats can win over enough of these voters if they focus on kitchen table issues and re-double their efforts to pass meaningful anti-corruption

measures. While HR1/S1 has numerous anti-corruption measures, the focus (and rightfully so) became about voting rights. We recommend passing separate pieces of legislation and hammering the Washington Republicans who have no interest in actually “draining the swamp.” Another area of anti-corruption messaging for Democrats to focus on is that they are the Party are “reforming a corrupt tax system” instead of letting the GOP label Democrats as “tax and spend liberals.” No document in Washington is seen as more corrupt than the U.S. tax code.

- **The sky is not falling:** At this point, Democrats are in much better shape than Republicans were as they headed into 2018 midterms. Biden’s approval rating is 7 to 10 points on average ahead of where Trump’s was at this same time. Democrats’ policies are popular. And, Republicans have become a Radical cult with no plan for the future. Democrats must unite and do a better job at selling their agenda, and they too need to contrast more with Radical Republicans. Every good story has a villain, and the Radicals have no shortage of villains for Democrats to compare for voters.
- **Voters care about results—and if the wealthiest are paying.** It’s the pay-fors, not the price tag. The \$3.5 trillion bill is already popular, but support is dramatically strengthened when it is paid for by taxes on billionaires and ultra-wealthy. Support for the bill craters if the bill is paid for by increasing the national debt. Democrats must unite around the bill and strengthen it with popular pay-fors rather than deliver less for voters. This also takes care of people believing their taxes will go up. They have to see taxes on the rich go up, which is exceedingly popular.

**It’s Time to Unite on Message.** The playbook for Democrats to retain their majorities in the U.S House and U.S Senate, hold the White House, retain and expand elected Democratic governors, and build more power at the local and state level is NOT complicated – if Democrats unite.

### **Three Ways to Unite:**

- 1) Unite around the message: “D” equals Deliver. “R” equals Radical. (This is a tweak from a previous recommendation. We believe it will be easier to get all Democrats singing from same page on the R equals Radical rather than R equals Q for QAnon)
- 2) Unite around the Democrat’s economic story: It’s time to end the Republican con that their policies work. **The true economic and job creation numbers are not remotely close.**
- 3) Unite around the Democrats’ agenda of defending Freedom and Democracy.

**Messaging:**

Democrats have delivered for the American People through policies like Social Security, Medicare, Civil Rights Act, Affordable Care Act, American Rescue Package, and more.

- Heading into 2022, it is the **Democrats who are delivering for the people, while Radical Republicans obstruct, create chaos, and bow to QAnon and Trump**. President Biden and the Democrats' Build Back Better Agenda delivered the Rescue Plan in the fight against Covid, invests in families and infrastructure, is putting Americans back to work by growing the economy, and are defending our freedom and democracy.
- By the numbers, this message works against what the Radicals are selling. In the seven Trump/Democrat congressional districts, in which currently the Democrats trail in a generic matchup 45% to 40%, we see a 12-point shift in Democrats' direction. This type of movement is consistent throughout polling – as is the 44% number for the Republican message.
  - For The People (still) works. When asked to choose between two candidate messages to support for the next election, **51% in the seven Trump/Democrat congressional districts chose a candidate “who is For the People and delivered on building America by investing in infrastructure and families, creating millions of middle class jobs, cracking down on corruption, and defending democracy and freedom,”** versus 44% who chose a candidate “who will get inflation under control by cutting the out of control government spending, getting people back to work, cracking down on violent crime, is against the teaching of Critical Race Theory, and will secure the southern border with Mexico.”

**Why this frame? The “D” equals Deliver.** It is important to know what the letter beside the name stands for, as it is a potent symbol that may add to or detract from a candidate or override them completely. Candidates come and go. The “D” is eternal.

- **The shot: #ForThePeople.** This is a populist theme that both moderates and progressives can unite behind and speaks to all voters.
- **The chaser: #BuildBackBetter.** President Biden's agenda is popular, and the midterm election will be a referendum on his agenda. Democrats will only be successful in 2022 if America defeats Covid and Democrats deliver a strong economy.

**Democrats' Legislative Efforts Fit into this Message Frame:**

- Investing in Families and Infrastructure: *American Rescue Plan, American Jobs Act, Child Care Tax Credit, Eliminating Billions in Student Debt, American Families Act, Affordable Care Act, Community Funding Projects, The American Dream and Promise Act, Farm Work Force Modernization Act, Invest in America Act, etc.*

- Building American Jobs: *American Jobs Act, Buy American Executive Order, Endless Frontier Act, Invest in America Act.*
  - Note: Jobs Training and prohibiting green energy job outsourcing are very popular.
  - **Jobs. Jobs. Jobs:** Biden +5 million jobs versus Trump's -2.87 million jobs. Clinton/Obama/Biden have created 33.8 million jobs versus 1.9 million for Bush/Bush/Trump. Let's have this economic argument since Republicans reverse these facts.
  - Defending Democracy and Freedom: *HR1, HR4, January 6<sup>th</sup> Commission, Roe v Wade, Freedom to Vote Act, Covid-19 Hate Crimes Act, Equality Act, Pro-Act, George Floyd Justice and Policing Act, Bipartisan Background Check Act, Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, etc.*

**By the Numbers:**

- **In our July survey, 63% of voters in the seven toughest Democrat/Trump congressional districts say they would vote for a candidate who uses the slogan "For the People"** when running for office, including 57% of independent voters, 62% of Republicans, and 54% of undecided independent voters.
- In our August survey **74% of voters in the 37 swing congressional districts would vote for a candidate using the slogan, "Building American jobs."** 59% of undecided independents support. Note: In Pennsylvania, it is 73% support, with 78% of undecided independents.
- In our July survey of the seven Democrat/Trump congressional districts, **73% of voters ranked "Building America by investing in infrastructure and families" as their top choice.**
- In our July survey of Pennsylvania voters, 67% would vote for a candidate who is for **"defending democracy and freedom."** It is **68% in the 37 swing congressional districts.**

**In the Battleground States, Enacting the Biden Build Back Better Agenda is Popular:**

- **65% of voters in the battleground states and 64% of voters in the seven Trump/Democrat congressional districts support the \$1.2 trillion infrastructure plan.**
  - An overwhelming majority of supporters (76% of Democrats and 40% of Independents) in battleground states want Washington lawmakers to pass the infrastructure bill now as opposed to 19% of Democrats and 29% of Independents who want to wait on passing the bipartisan infrastructure bill until the budget is signed.

- **56% of voters in the battleground states and 59% of voters in the seven Trump/Democrat congressional districts support the proposed \$3.5 trillion in new spending over the next 10 years** that would expand Medicare benefits, invest in preschool education, community college, childcare, family leave, affordable college, and fund efforts to combat climate change.
  - **When asked to choose the top three issues they would like to see addressed in the Democrats \$3.5 trillion budget plan, voters in the 37 swing districts said:** (Note: There is not a lot of intensity around any single issue. Voters like the investments in families and infrastructure, and, not surprisingly, care about their own pocketbook the most.)
    - 37% of voters chose “a tax cut for Americans making less than \$400,000 a year” as a top issue.
    - 37% of voters chose “lowering the price of prescription drugs” as a top issue.
    - 36% of voters chose “raising taxes on the wealth and large corporations” as a top issue.
    - 25% of voters chose “upgrades to veteran facilities” as a top issue.
    - 25% of voters chose “requiring that the federal government adopt a “Made in America” standard for the vehicles and other goods they buy
    - 22% of voters chose “improving cybersecurity infrastructure” as a top issue.
    - Other items ranked, but received less than 18% support as a top priority, include: addressing forest fires and climate issues, expanding Medicare, expanding Childcare, tuition-free community college; small business access to credit, investment, and markets; investments in public housing and housing affordability; funding low-income solar and other climate-friendly technologies such as 500,000 electric vehicle charging stations; universal pre-kindergarten education for 3- and 4-year-olds; establishing lawful permanent status for qualified immigrants; Native American health, education, and housing programs; expanding Pell Grants for higher education; and funding for historically Black colleges and universities

**On the Key Questions on Generating Revenue for Investments:** Voters think that if billionaires can afford to fly to space, they can afford to help more now when our country needs it most. They are skeptical about anything that could be perceived as an increase or cost to working Americans.

- **69% of voters in the 37 swing congressional districts support the 3.5 trillion bill when it is paid for by applying an annual tax on billionaires' investment gains above \$1 billion, at the same rate as wages and salaries. When funded by this tax, support for the \$3.5 trillion bill increased 29 points in the 37 districts from 56-42 (+14) to 69-26 (+43).**
- **64% of voters in battleground states, 67% in the 37 swing congressional districts, and 68% in the seven Trump/Democrat congressional districts support a wealth tax of 2% a year on households whose net worth is at least \$50 million. When funded by this tax, support for the \$3.5 trillion bill increased 23 points in the 37 districts from 56-42 (+14) to 67-30 (+37).**
- 59% of voters in battleground states and 64% in the seven Trump/Democrat congressional districts support assessing a one-time 37% tax on billionaires' untaxed investment gains of more than one billion dollars. When funded by a one-time billionaire's tax of untaxed investment income of more than one billion at the same rate of wages and salaries, support for the \$3.5 trillion bill increased 20 points in the 37 districts from 56-42 (+14) to 63-29 (+34).
- **62% of voters in the 37 swing districts supported the \$3.5 trillion bill when funded by a one-time 2.5% tax on an individual's wealth above \$50 million, and a 5% tax on wealth above \$100 million. Funded by this one-time wealth tax, support for the bill increased 17 points, from 56-42 (+14) to 62-31 (+31).**
- 57% of voters in battleground states, 59% in the 37 swing congressional districts, and 65% in the seven Trump/Democrat congressional districts support raising the capital-gains tax rate for individuals earning at least \$1 million annually. When funded by this tax, support for the \$3.5 trillion bill increased 10 points in the 37 swing districts from 56-42 (+14) to 59-35 (+24).
- **56% of voters in battleground states, 57% in the 37 swing congressional districts, and 62% in the seven Trump/Democrat congressional districts support raising the income tax rate on individuals earning more than \$400,000.**
- 54% of voters in battleground states, 57% in the 37 swing congressional districts, and 60% in the seven Trump/Democrat congressional districts support assessing a one-time 14.5% tax on an individual's wealth above ten million dollars, as originally proposed by Donald Trump in 1999. Republican net support for the bill increases 63 points from 14-83 (-69) to 44-50 (-6).
- 54% of voters in battleground states, 55% in the 37 swing congressional districts, and 57% in the seven Trump/Democrat congressional districts support raising the corporate tax from 21% to 25% to fund infrastructure investments. Funding the \$3.5 trillion bill received 52-43 support when paid for by increasing the corporate tax from 21% to 28%.

- 52% of voters in battleground states, 57% in the 37 swing congressional districts, and 55% in the seven Trump/Democrat congressional districts support an increase on the estate tax on inheritances of \$7 million or more.

Versus:

- 78% of voters in battleground states and 76% of voters in the seven Trump/Democrat congressional districts oppose raising the gas tax by 5 cents per gallon.
- **71% of voters in battleground states and 73% of voters in the seven Trump/Democrat congressional districts oppose increasing federal borrowing an adding to the national debt to fund infrastructure investments.**
- 67% of voters in battleground states and 64% of voters in the seven Trump/Democrat congressional districts oppose assessing tolls and user fees when people access infrastructure once it is built

**Democrats also have an opportunity in the debate over generating revenue to argue they are cleaning up corruption.** A recent [report](#) by the Treasury Department asserted the top 5% of taxpayers evade nearly \$600 billion last year, which translates to about \$7 trillion in lost tax revenue over the next decade. Democrats should say they are cleaning up the corruption in the tax code.

- Over years of surveys, our data consistently shows more than 90% of voters are concerned about corruption and its influence in Washington.
- In our July survey of voters in the 37 congressional districts decided by +/- 5 points, 86% of voters said corruption in Washington, DC reduced opportunities for them, their family, and their community. 53% said corruption reduced opportunities “a lot.”
- **88% of voters (84% of Democrats, 91% of Independents, 90% of Republicans) said they think corruption plays a role in having an unresponsive government.**

**Democrats win if they define “R” as Radical:** “The Radicals are for Trump, corruption and QAnon -- not for you.” Ask California Republicans, who embraced the Radicals, how this worked out for them.

- **Commission on January 6<sup>th</sup>:** Democrats should not undervalue the importance of the January 6<sup>th</sup> Commission. Voters are still angry and scared and put the blame Trump and QAnon. Politically, the Commission gives the Democrats a needed reset and a chance to frame the 2022 election as a choice of between those who are defending democracy and freedom versus the Radicals and their chaos. It also guts the traditional Republican argument of, “law and order.”
  - **76% of voters in the seven districts say QAnon and other radicals hold responsibility for what happened on Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>**, including 63% who say they hold

- “a lot” of responsibility. Republican elected officials and candidates should be put on the record whether they support or oppose the QAnon movement. They are damned if they do with Independents and Democrats, and damned if they do not with their base.
- **55% of voters in the seven Trump/Democrat congressional districts chose “angry”** when asked to choose one word that would best describe what they think about the January 6<sup>th</sup> takeover of the U.S. Capitol. The second highest rated answer was “Scared” at 23%.
  - Among swing district voters in our August survey, 69% of voters say they would not vote for someone if they were known as a “QAnon Republican.” Notably, 57% of undecided independents say they “would definitely vote for someone else.” This is a very powerful weapon and Democrats should use it.
  - **54% of voters in the seven districts and 51% in the battleground states say former President Trump holds responsibility for what happened on Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>. 62% of undecided independents in the seven districts say Trump holds responsibility, including 45% who say he holds “a lot” of responsibility.**
  - **Trump. Trump. Trump.** 50% of voters in battleground states have an unfavorable view of former President Trump. Among undecided independent voters, 60% view the former president unfavorably and just 18% view him favorably. Suburban women view Trump unfavorably 56% to 40%, with 52% viewing the former president very unfavorably.
  - **49% of voters in the seven Democrat/Trump congressional districts agree with the statement:** “If the Republican Party takes over control of Congress in the 2022 election, the people who led the insurrection on January 6th will have won. The current Republican leadership in Washington, like Kevin McCarthy and Mitch McConnell, are weak and will be led around by radicals like Marjorie Taylor Greene and Matt Gaetz who supported violence against our great country that day.”
  - **Democrats should also hold Republican minority leader McCarthy responsible for his caucus.** 47% of voters in the Democrat/Trump congressional districts believe he holds responsibility for the attack. McCarthy is emerging as a known national figure and is not ready for prime time.
- **Even Before Texas: 55% of undecided independents in the battleground states say Republicans were too extreme.**
  - **55% of undecided independents in the seven districts said Republicans were dividing the country, 16% said uniting the country, and 28% said they were not sure.**

- **59% of undecided independents in the seven districts say Republicans have no plans.**
- **56% of voters in the 37 swing congressional districts agree with the statement “The Republican Party talks about ‘freedom’ all the time except when it comes to women’s freedom to make her own medical decisions. The Republican Party needs to either guarantee this freedom or stop talking about freedom altogether.**
- 70% of voters in the 37 swing congressional districts agree with the statement “When a politician says ‘my body, my choice’ when they decline getting the coronavirus vaccine, they should not turn around and vote to ban a woman from being able to make her own medical decisions.”

Additional data points below include tactical thoughts for how Democrats can play offense. Yes, **focus on the top 5 C’s: Covid, Costs, Choice, Corruption, Climate, but take smart opportunities to gain ground with voters on the following issues:**

**On relations with China:** Democrats should be more tough. Democrats see a significant opportunity to sell voters on their infrastructure proposals as investments required for the U.S. to stay competitive with China, while blunting a commonly used GOP line of attack that they are soft on China.

- 72% of voters in battleground states say the United States should treat China as either a competitor (36%) or an enemy (36%).
- 62% of voters in the battleground states support the “\$1.2 trillion plan to repair roads and bridges, create millions of American jobs, **and help us compete with China.**”
- 66% of voters in the seven Trump/Democrat congressional districts think we should be “investing in American infrastructure, technology, and manufacturing to lead the world again in these areas.”

#### **Cannabis:**

- **Democrats embrace of legalizing marijuana is a political win.** In our August survey, 70% of voters in swing congressional districts support legalizing recreational cannabis for adults 21 and older, including 49% who strongly support (74% of Democrats, 46% of Independents, and 27% of Republicans) the initiative. By adopting this policy, Democrats win on personal freedoms, generating revenue, and being responsive to the will of the people. It has the added benefit of being good politics because it will drive a wedge between the 45% of Republicans who support legalization and their politicians who will almost certainly oppose it.

**Cryptocurrency and Decentralized Finance:**

- **Democrats should be smart about cryptocurrency policy** to not be labeled as opponents of innovation of this growing industry. In our April [survey](#) on issues around cryptocurrencies and decentralized finance, voters generally support the concept of individuals' freedom to buy and sell these currencies.

**Final Point - Culture Wars: The GOP will continue to try to make the 2022 election about culture fights – even fake ones. But, if Democrats are smart and do not give them any oxygen, they can successfully fend off these attacks.** Democrats need to be tougher on themselves and not let people speak for the Party or let the Party be defined on false terms by the Radical Right and their highly disciplined media operation. Harmful words, slogans, or ideas need to get swiftly swatted down by leadership. If Democrats are too cute on this point, the midterms will be a lot more challenging than they already will be due to historical trends.

**Previous Future Majority Reports:**

- Public Sentiment on the For the People Act ([March 24, 2021](#))
- Support for President Biden's Jobs Plan & Proposals to Pay for It ([April 29, 2021](#))
- Future Majority's Winning the Future study on voter attitudes ([May 2021](#))
- Battleground CDs Survey: Play Offense ([June 14, 2021](#))
- Battleground Survey: Wisconsin, Nevada, and Georgia ([June 24, 2021](#))
- Future Majority's Playbook 2.0 ([June 2021](#))
- Message Delivery ([July 19, 2021](#))
- Future Majority's Playbook: Message Discipline ([July 2021](#))
- Jobs: Michigan and the Battleground Congressional Districts ([August 16, 2021](#))
- Voter Opinions on Defending Freedom and Democracy: FL & VA ([August 23, 2021](#))
- Analysis of Voter Attitudes on the Cost of Living ([August 2021](#))
- Report on Voter Attitudes in the Democrats' 2020 Coalition ([September 2021](#))