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To: Interested Parties

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## **Trump's engaged party defining the battle for 2022**

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We conducted a large, mostly cell phone survey<sup>1</sup> with an oversample of Republicans in the 2022 battleground for the U.S. Senate, governorships, and House, and it is painfully clear Donald Trump, Lindsey Graham, and Kevin McCarthy know their party. The Trump loyalists who strongly approve of him are two-thirds of those who identify as, “Republican.” And they are joined by the Trump aligned to form a breathtaking, three quarters of the party in the electoral battleground states and districts that will decide who leads the country.

The survey also finds that the critical bloc of non-Trump conservatives and moderates is only a quarter of the battleground electorate — compared to 30 percent in our national poll last month. The non-Trump conservatives are a healthy 16 percent of Republicans, but there are just fewer moderates (9 percent) in the battleground. Democrats win 5 percent of the former and 13 percent of the latter, but a greater risk to Republican consolidation are the “Biden Republicans” and their choosing to abstain or vote third party. After all, these races may be decided by only a few points.

We were also surprised by how much Donald Trump’s loyalist party is totally consolidated at this early point in its 2022 voting and how engaged it is. Yes, they have pulled back from historic presidential year levels: the percent scoring 10, the highest level of interest in the election, has fallen from 84 to 68 percent. But Democrats’ engagement fell from 85 percent to 57 percent. Republicans are following their political theater much more closely than are Democrats — producing an 11-point gap.

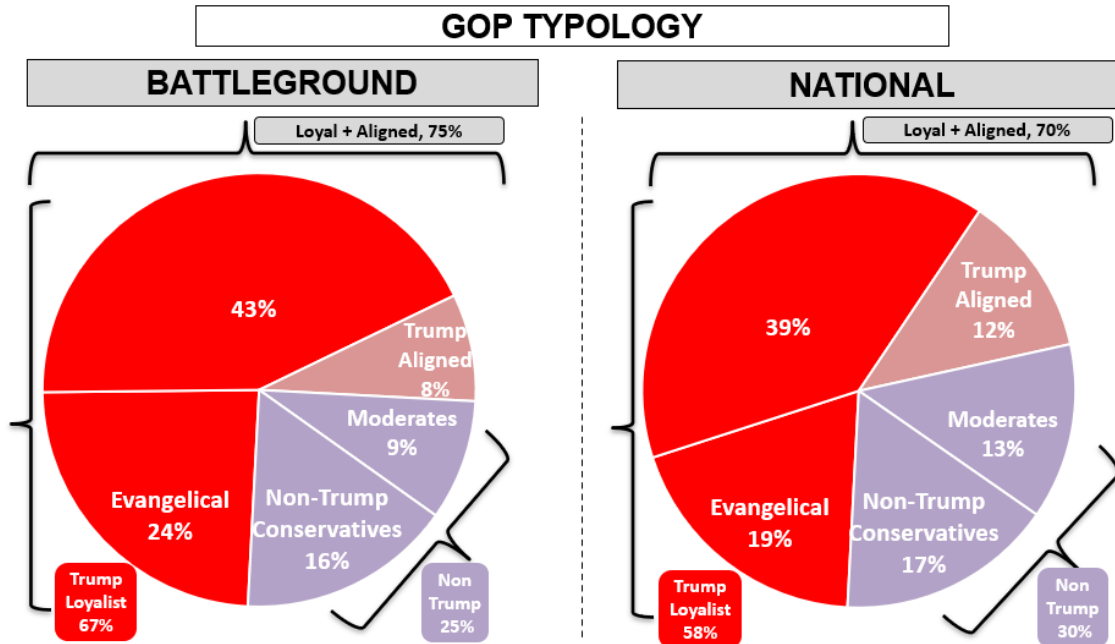
Neither is showing the level of interest of the presidential election in 2019 and 2020, but they are higher than a comparable point in 2018, suggesting the era of high turnout elections is not over. And with such high early engagement of Republicans and white working class voters in this survey, it means the era of Donald Trump shaping the electorate is not over either.

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<sup>1</sup> A battleground phone poll of 1,000 registered voters, with an oversample of 500 Republicans was conducted by phone April 27-May 3, 2021 from a voter-file sample. 67% of respondents were reached on cell phones in order to accurately reflect the American electorate. The margin of error is +/- 3.5 percentage points.

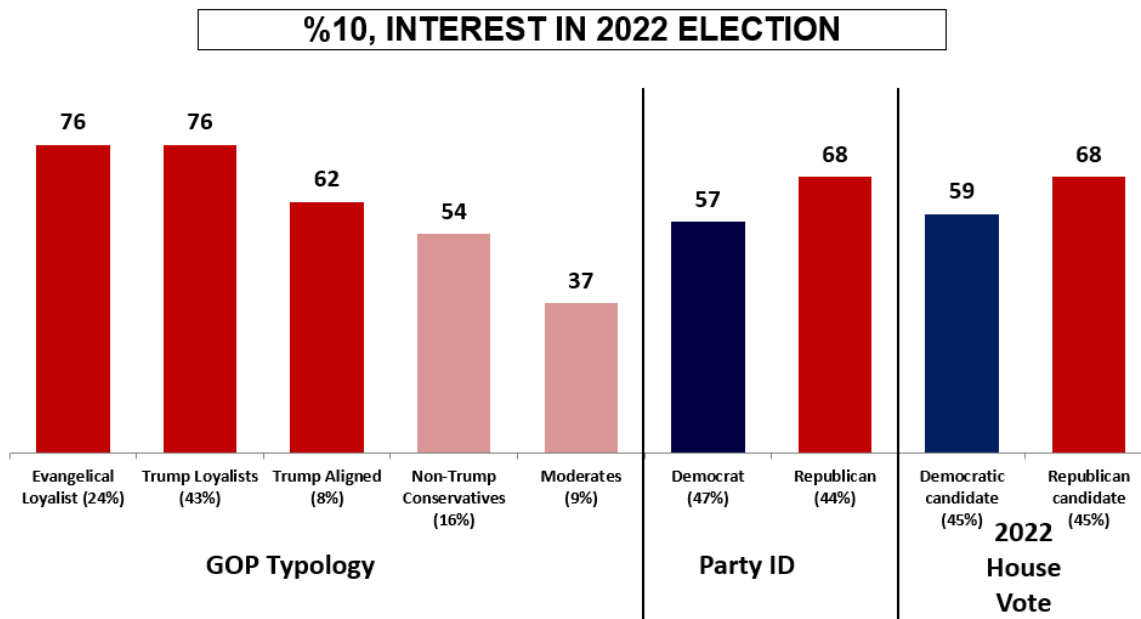
**GREENBERG RESEARCH**

**Trump's Loyalists and aligned fully 3/4<sup>th</sup> in 2022 battleground – and will play a big part in the fights ahead**



**GREENBERG RESEARCH**

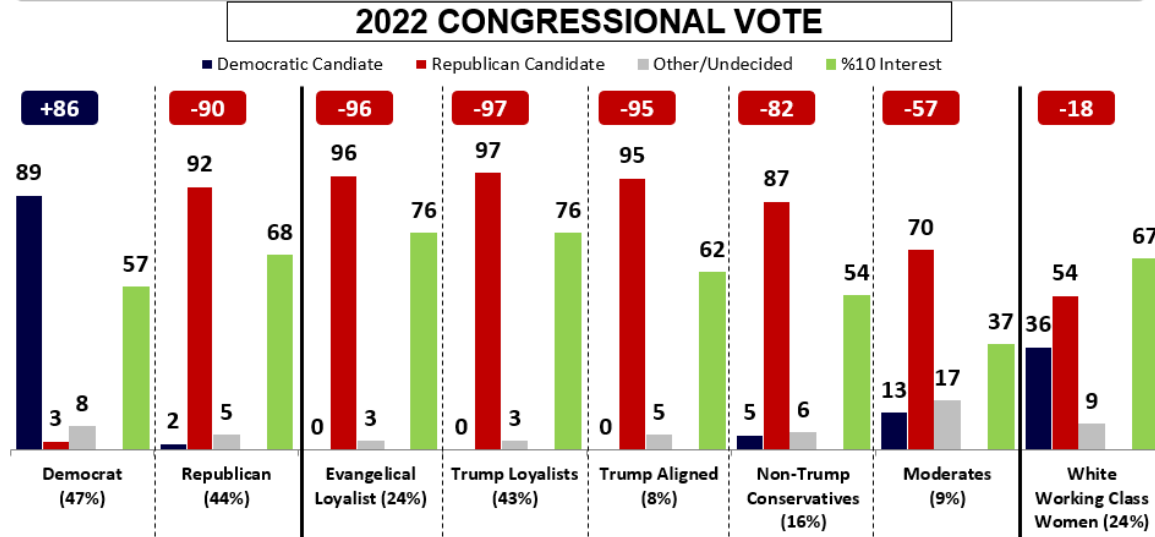
**They are deeply engaged – led by the 58% of GOP who are Trump loyalists – and alarmingly, Democrats are barely following politics**



**GREENBERG RESEARCH**

**Trump loyalists produce big GOP vote and turnout, but non-Trump conservatives and moderates could drop off; and white working class women unusually engaged**

*Even though it is a long way off, thinking about the election for Congress in your district in November 2022, will you vote for – the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate?*



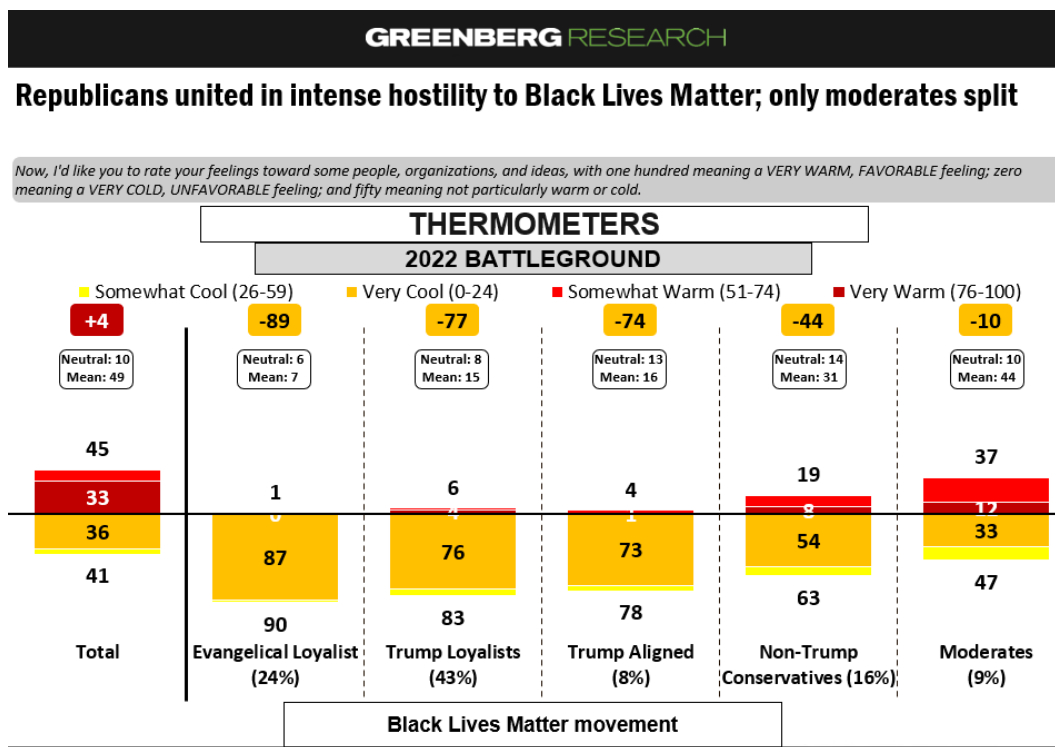
Democracy Corps polls are adjusted to reflect what I learned to accommodate the role of right-wing populist parties in Austria, Israel, and the UK. Our polls now maintain the proportion that were white non-college in 2020 election and critically, their recalled vote for Trump (61 to 35 percent). These are based on current estimates in Catalyst and our combined database for the battleground, which will be adjusted when Catalyst updates its state data.

And do not think Trump’s current focus on the stolen election is an amusing side-show. It is about Blacks and Democratic politicians in the cities using illegal voting procedures and stuffing ballot boxes to steal away Trump’s great victory his battle to save America. This survey shows what are the true drivers of GOP identity — the deep hostility to Black Lives Matter, undocumented immigrants, and Antifa. And imagine their reaction to the flood of unaccompanied children at the border, the guilty verdict in Minneapolis, and Black Lives Matter protests after each police shooting of unarmed Blacks.

There is no escaping the reality that Trump’s Republican Party is a self-consciously and self-confidently anti-democratic, anti-immigrant party that will battle for the future of white people in a multicultural America.

The Trump loyalists — again, two-thirds of the party — respond with deep emotion to the term, “MAGA,” that captures their whole embrace of Trump’s battle to make America great again. And it is an unfinished battle and campaign.

The non-Trump Republicans, our focus group research showed, are now vocal in their opposition to the GOP’s current direction, but Republican primaries will only confirm Trump’s ascendancy. Only the defeat of this anti-democratic, racist party in an election where it loses power will it be forced to change. *Part one of that story is non-Trump Republicans taking away key margins in key elections, and not being humiliated in GOP primaries.*



*Part two of a successful 2022 election is Democrats getting their act together.*

Fortunately, President Biden gives Democrats a headwind: 49 percent approve of his performance, with a net 4 points more positive than negative. That contrasts with Trump in the battleground who has a negative 5-point net approval rating (46 percent approve and 51 disapprove). (Our adjusted polling has Biden’s approval rating nationally 3 points lower than the average of the public polls.)

And there are Biden Republicans. One fifth of non-Trump conservatives and one third of moderates approve of Biden’s performance in office — and that is way above their Democratic vote for Congress. Democrats should be doing better in the race for Congress.

This survey has the generic congressional vote even (45 to 45 percent) in the battleground states, but ahead by 3 points in the frontline congressional seats.

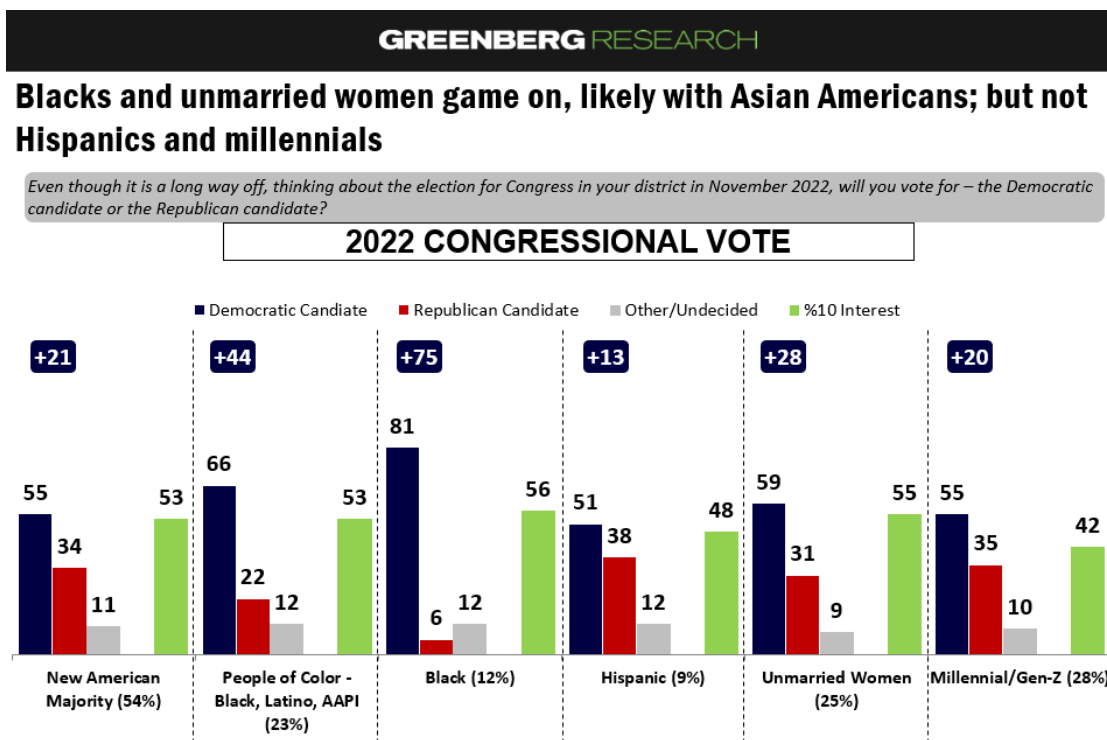
The two parties are at parity in the generic ballot because Republicans are slightly more consolidated — only 5 percent undecided, compared to 8 percent of Democrats — and because their base is uniquely unified and engaged. Their Evangelical and other Trump loyalists are two thirds

of the party and none are voting Democratic, only 3 percent are undecided and three quarters of for the top score on the interest scale.

Blacks, Asian Americans (AAPI), and unmarried women are delivering an impressive vote and engagement for Democrats. We have rarely started with a vote margin so strong in this key part of the base, and their engagement looks closer to levels in 2018.

Democrats start with an equally impressive margin with millennials and GenZ voters, but only 42 percent score 10 on the high interest scale — more than 10 points below unmarried women and voters of color.

Democrats have only a 13-point margin with Hispanic voters and like the younger voters, only 48 percent are highly engaged.



Democrats and Joe Biden need to show that they are helping people in historic ways, and it will all be put at risk if Trump’s Republican Party retakes the Congress and reverses the gains. With fairness, we are many chapters away from being able to tell that story and make that contrast. Much of that gain is delivering materially to offer an economic and class contrast with the Republicans.

It is possible that we have another election where health care is a major motivator and choice. Almost one-fifth of non-Trump conservatives and one-third of moderates express warmth for the Affordable Care Act or Obamacare. The greatly expanded access and reduced costs may become more real for working class voters a year from now.

And this time, Democrats cannot fail to see how early Trump's party is fully engaged with its on-going culture war, focused on crime, open borders, and defunding the police. Democrats are at risk of repeating 2020 if they do not prioritize defusing and neutralizing it.

