



---

# How Democrats run stronger with all working class voters

**September 30, 2021**

**CAMPAIGNS | CORPORATIONS | ADVOCACY | WORLDWIDE**

# The team working so Democrats run stronger with all working class groups

## OUR RESEARCH TEAMS AND THEIR RESEARCH

- **Democracy Corps-** We fielded battleground web poll of 1,000 registered voters was conducted July 22-26, 2021, which was weighted to recent phone poll on cultural thermometers, and 2020 vote by white working class weighted to match Catalist analysis.
- **EquisLabs-** We used findings from focus groups conducted with Hispanic voters to inform this online survey of 1800 registered Hispanic registered voters in 11 states (Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Michigan, North Carolina, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas and Wisconsin).
- **HIT Strategies-** Our research included findings from qualitative research with Black voters and previous research with AAPI voters to inform the quantitative findings in this report that are based on two surveys of AAPI and Black registered voters: the first survey used mixed mode of text-to-web and live phone dialing to survey 400 registered Asian and Pacific Islander voters in Orange County, CA and second online survey consisted of 1,200 African American registered voters in 10 battleground states (MI, WI, PA, GA, SC, NC, FL, TX, NV, AZ) matched to the voter file.

## Keys to winning all working class voters:

- **Key one** — recognizing that the overwhelming majority of our diverse base is the hardworking working class. They are citizens who have never completed a four-year college degree. Fully 70 percent of Blacks in HIT's battleground survey are working class, 75 percent in EquisLab's surveys with Hispanics in Florida, Texas, Arizona and other battleground states. The AAPI voters are predominantly college grads in Orange County, but 67 percent of millennials and GenZ voters lack a four-year degree, as do 69 percent of unmarried women, and 57 percent of white unmarried women across the 2022 battleground. We need to **wear** their working class shoes.
- **Key two** is recognizing that all our base of Black, Hispanics, and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are feeling less hopeful about the country's direction and giving Democrats a weaker generic congressional vote than expected because of uncertainty on COVID, the economy, and whether Biden in the end will make life better **for them**... And that may be decided this week.
- **Key three** is recognizing our base is pretty clear-eyed and united about Build Back priorities: labor protections that promote a \$15 wage and watch out for workers rights in the workplace; expanding Medicare or maintaining insurance subsidies that lower insurance premiums for the first time; the child tax credit; and infrastructure **jobs**. They **want material help** but also to strengthen workers and weaken big corporations who should pay their fair share of taxes.

## Keys to winning all working class voters:

- **Key four** is recognizing that campaigns to win these voters back must focus on a base that is consumed with material gains and class position, a base that prioritizes improving economic conditions of their communities within the context of racial disparity. AAPI voters put initiatives on racial equities at the bottom of their list, **as do Hispanics in Democracy Corps' research**. Racial justice is an important priority for Blacks in HIT's battleground research, but it is part of a top set of priorities that include greater labor protection, reduced health costs, infrastructure jobs, managing COVID, and the CTC.
- **Key five** is realizing that Democrats need to be showing, they care more about people like you and are "better for Hispanics." Democrats need to talk about each Hispanic community, its immigrant and class history that bring them to America to fulfill the American dream. **Delivery on immigration in the Congress shows Democrats don't take them for granted, are indeed better for Hispanics and helps them with pro-immigration voters**. Democrats need to deliver in areas of Democratic strength: COVID, health care, immigration, and "caring for people like you." And hit the Republicans who govern only for the biggest corporations.
- **Key six** is recognizing that AAPI voters **are** pretty alienated, **believe country on wrong track, and Democrats are underperforming**. They resent other groups getting more attention, yet very aligned with Democrats on corporations paying higher tax and respond strongly to message, "need government that works for us."

- **Key seven** is recognizing *that both our diverse base and persuadable working class voters have very similar priorities for government* and they too, resent hardworking people no longer calling the shots in society and government. Our base and working class targets both want government to offer more protections and higher pay for low-wage workers, and maintain the child tax credit, reduced health insurance premiums and prescription drug costs and better Medicare, and big corporations paying much more in taxes.
- **Key eight** is recognizing this is an opportunity for Dems to pass legislation that lifts all working class boats but to advance messaging that describes how the new laws specifically addresses the needs of Black, Hispanic and Latino, AAPI and white working voters. It shows Democrats care about them, allays fear that some groups benefiting more than others and improves perception that “neither” party is delivering for them.
- **Key nine** is recognizing that crime is a major issue in every community and addressing it is a precondition for Democrats regaining support. Crime was among the very top concerns with AAPI and Black voters, where it ranks higher than police abuse. Trump’s message on respecting police still gets a strong hearing in all these communities. However, Democracy Corps research showed how much Democrats gained their biggest margin in an experiment where voters heard, “we must be for funding, not defunding the police” and “respect officers.” The Democrats are also unequivocal that abusive officers will be held accountable.

# Key Findings:

- **Key ten** is recognizing that persons with a disability are heavily represented in the white working class and rural areas, as is evident in every focus group we conducted. They respond with great enthusiasm to the current agenda and become more Democratic. Can they become base voters?
- **Key eleven** is recognizing that *making the new expanded, monthly child tax credit a centerpiece* of the Democratic agenda reveals new things about the the white working class. First, it is very popular, but also shows that white working class voters under 50 years of age may be culturally different than their parents and therefore more accessible to Democrats.
- **Key twelve** is recognizing the working class is really independent contractors, small business owners, and those who work in small businesses. Democrats need to have programs to help them, as well as be seen to battle for small businesses.
- **Key thirteen.** All of this research points to a common message frame where Democrats are on your side while Republicans fight for the rich corporations. [see next slide]

## **Working Messages:**

### **EquisLabs**

- Democrats say that those who work hard should be able to achieve the American Dream. Biden took over a divided Washington and acted quickly to deliver relief to working Americans and small businesses. Now, Democrats are cutting taxes for middle-class families, giving a boost to small businesses, and creating millions of good-paying jobs by investing in infrastructure. (Tested with Hispanic voters)
- Democrats say that Republicans are looking out for the wealthy instead of those struggling to pay their bills. It's time that corporations and the top one percent pay their fair share so we can invest in education, job-creating infrastructure, childcare, reduced health care costs, and lower taxes for working families. It's wrong that the rich have gotten richer while too many average American families have been left behind. (Tested with Hispanic voters)

### **HIT Strategies**

- No matter our race or where we come from, what we need at this moment is a government that works for us instead of large corporations, or the wealthy one percent. We need to continue building on the progress that has been made since 2020 to provide over a million hard-working middle class families with \$200 per month subsidies to access affordable health care, \$1,400 per person economic assistance to 66 million families with children and \$20 billion to local state governments to help low-income households pay their rent and utility bills. We must ensure equal access to opportunity for working families. (Tested with AAPI voters)

### **Democracy Corps**

- The Democrats say, in the richest country on the planet, half our people live paycheck to paycheck. That's why we need a government that looks out for the middle class, working families, small businesses, and the vulnerable who work hard. They don't need a government that jumps for the top 1 percent and biggest corporations. Those corporations must pay their fair share so we can invest in education, job creating infrastructure, helping small businesses, childcare, reduced drug and health care costs, and lower taxes for working families. With the gap growing between rich and poor, government should bend over backwards for those who work hard so America can grow the middle class again.