

## **Biden's State of the Union** March 7, 2022

CAMPAIGNS CORPORATIONS ADVOCACY WORLDWIDE

### Methodology

On behalf of the *AFT* and the *PSG Consulting*, *Democracy Corps* on March 1, 2022, conducted online dial meter research during President Joe Biden's State of the Union Speech, among 387 registered voters nationally.

Key line groups include:

- African Americans
- Latinos
- Asian Americans
- White millennials
- White unmarried women
- White working-class women under 50
- White working-class men under 50
- White college women
- White disabled
- Republican defectors
- Democratic defectors
- Trump Loyalists
- Moderate Republicans

To ensure each line was as representative as possible, these lines were individually recruited. Surveys were administered before and after the live dial meter session.

#### \*This research is qualitative, and results are not statistically projectable onto a



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What's unique?

- A controlled experiment where participants watch the Biden speech and Congress and complete pre- and post-interviews
- Open-ended responses to key items
- Introduction of attributes on racial priorities and whites become a minority
- Questions on authoritarian and leadership dimensions
- Questions on reassurance
- Questions on depth of worry
- Questions on partisan polarization
- Questions on trust of government and trust in people
- Exploring areas of partisan competence



### **Key Findings**

- Going into speech three quarters thought country on wrong track. Reading their open-ended responses, people were dealing with uncertain end of the pandemic and big rise inflation, and a divided Democratic Party stopped helping. It took a terrible toll on the President Biden, the Democratic Party and Democrats in Congress. Their own base of voters were the hardest on them. Their base disengaged as well. The voters think it is the Democrats who put party before country. And the Republican Party is viewed more favorably.
- The greatest success of the President's State of the Union was in doubling the proportion who thought on the wrong track. He got the attention of very disappointed Blacks, Hispanics, Asian Americans, white millennials/GenZ, and unmarried women, as well as under 50 white working class and GOP defectors – key groups in the upcoming elections.
- Anger with Congress meant speech barely moved generic vote, but it did move Biden's approval and favorability. Because it was suppressed with the base, those gains could hold better than earlier SOTUs.
- Inflation remains a problem but worse, Republicans were seen as better on the economy, the middle class, helping your family, and dealing with cost of living. Biden shifted those, but Democrats began in a hole that showed them failing working families.
- Immigration is hurting Democrats. The speech shifted more voters to trust Democrats, including our own base. Biden got a rise on tackling the border, but the dial lines went down as he spoke about comprehensive immigration reform with Hispanics and white millennials.
- His comments on the NYPD and funding the police helped him with all voters, including Blacks.



### **Key findings**

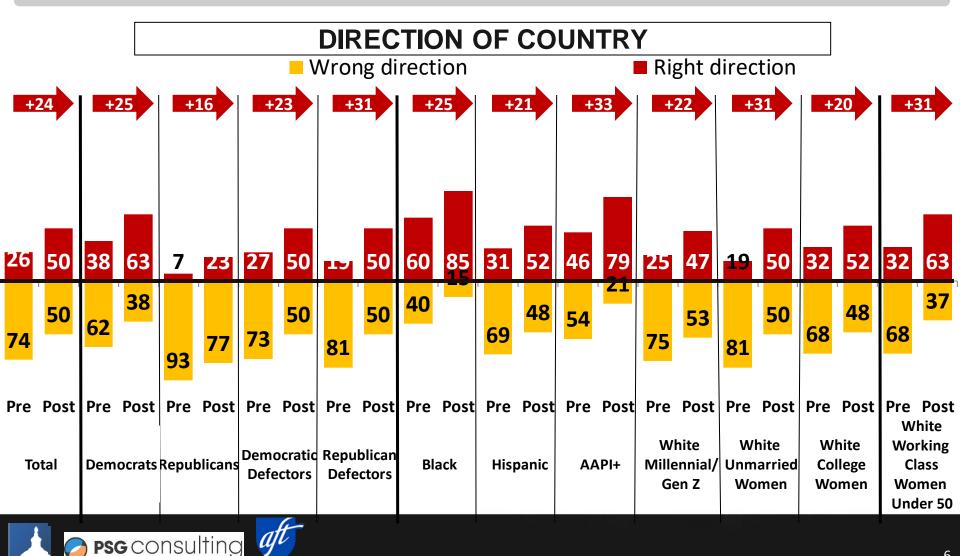
- The country is deeply anti-big corporations and rallies to them paying taxes. It is one of the biggest shifts from the speech and Democrats have high standing on health care affordability, big corporations and prioritizing American jobs and addressing climate change. The speech moved them ahead on helping families dealing with these costs.
- All parts of America are looking for a strong leader. This is not about scoring high on an authoritarian scale, as it does not correlate with party or class.
- The country is polarized by perception of deep polarization, reactions to MAGA and Trump, and America's changing racial composition. It is translating into a distrust of government.
- We identified in the work for the AFT that the less culturally conservative white working class under 50 that has been receiving direct benefits for government, including the child tax credit is more open to the Democrats. That is evident in the reaction to the speech and pre- and post-surveys. That is particularly true for the women, but both responded well to the speech.
- Hispanics act like they are not fully home among Democrats, but Biden's speech was very successful with them, except immigration. What Biden said on fighting crime and funding the police has to be part of the agenda going forward. They have to hear the economic help, as well as greater cultural affinity.



## Impact on key indicators

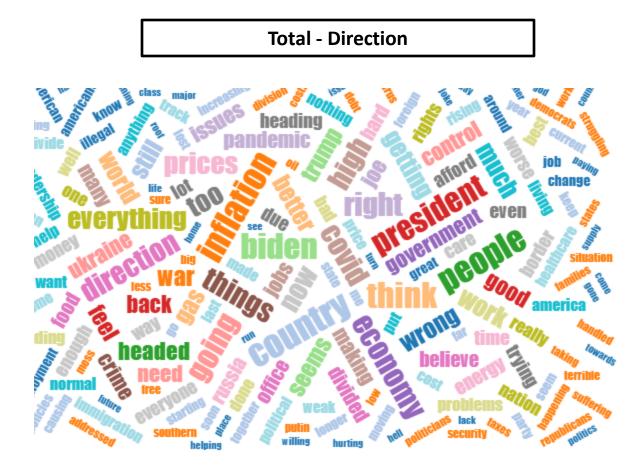
### Biden began in hole with only 26% right track, and doubles that number in right —biggest gains in base and working class targets. Why was it so low?

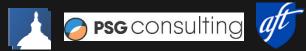
Thinking about the election for Congress in your district in November, will you vote for the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate?



### Voter uncertainty grounded in inflation, economy and unfinished COVID

Please explain using 2-3 sentences to explain your answer to the prior question. Why you think the country is headed in the right or wrong direction?





### **Public speaks about COVID and inflation troubles**

What [about the speech] made you feel reassured?

#### **Prices and inflation**

"The economy is terrible. Inflation is causing hardship for families. Government does not seem to care for average people.."- Democratic Defector | Working class man | Trump voter

"Gas prices up, Brink of WWIII, high inflation, can't find work even with employment agencies, lost job 8 months ago due to key stone pipeline loss, covid mandates, supply chain disruption, and more"– Hispanic woman | Trump voter

"With the prices on everything going up and becoming less affordable everyday we wake up. I go to the store and they don't have things I need. I might not be able to afford to go to work if the gas prices get any higher. White working class man Under Age 50 | Trump voter

"Everything is going up very fast. Our politicians, especially the democrats blame everyone and everything for raising prices but don't blame themselves." White working class man Under Age 50 | Trump voter

#### **COVID** pandemic

"There is a president in office who is more interested in the interests of the country rather than his own. Covid is being controlled, climate issues are being addressed and the future well being of all Americans is his primary goal."– White woman with disability | college educated | Biden voter

*"Until Covid-19 is fully controlled there will be divisiveness in the country. The economy will suffer and it will be hard for everyone to move ahead."–* Hispanic working class woman | Biden voter

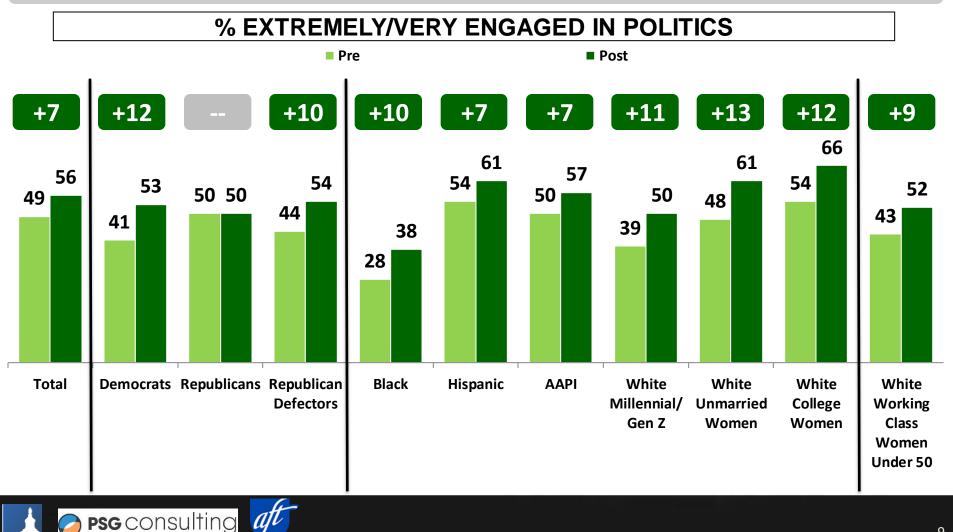
"I think we've finally rounded the corner with the pandemic and people are vaccinated and back to work and I think we've gotten away from a lot of drama that ran the last administration." – White working class woman under 50 | Trump voter

"Covid seems to be going in the right directions. With more people vaccinated hopefully we will be back to a somewhat normal living existence. ." – White unmarried woman | Working class | Biden voter



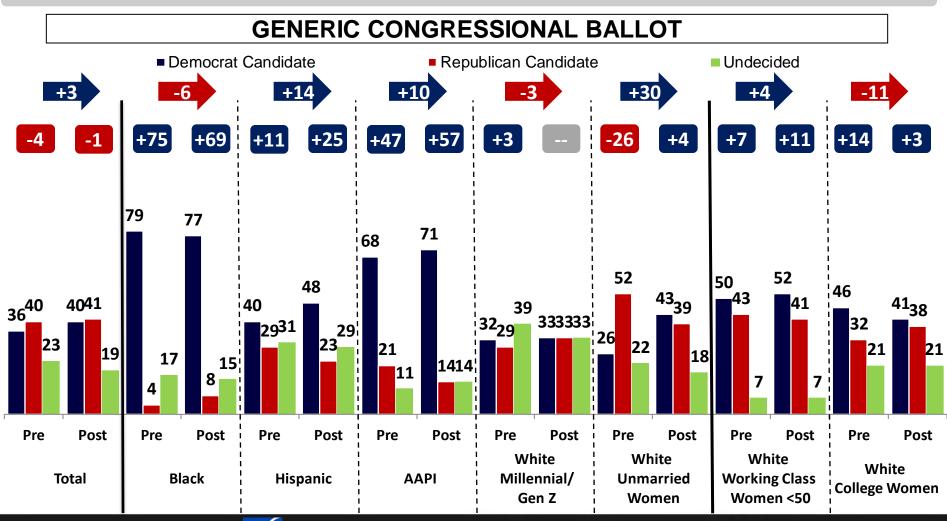
### GOP began with 9-point engagement gap, speech pushes interest with white millennial/GenZ, unmarried women & college women — Democrats now slight above Republicans after speech

How closely have you been following what's happening with elected officials and government, on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means not at all and 10 means following extremely closely. You may choose any number between 0 and 10.



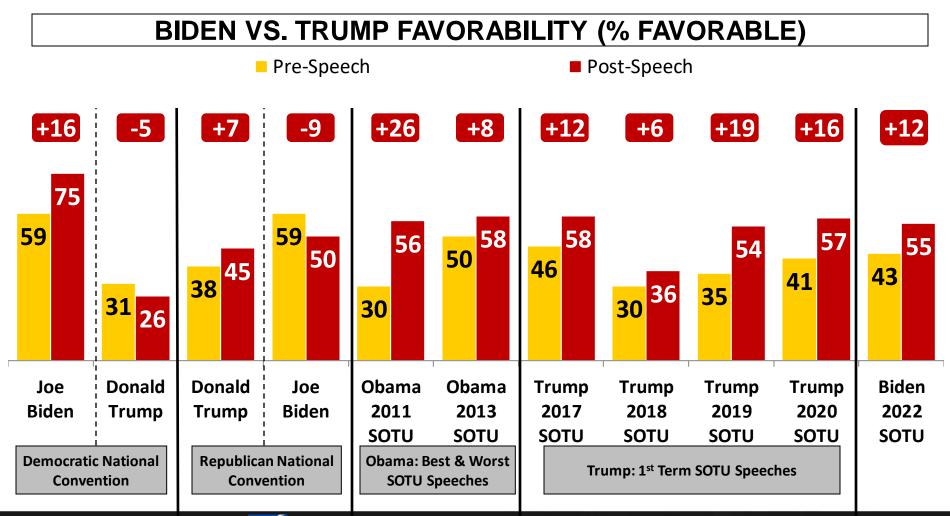
# Democrats begin in the hole in congressional ballot and very few gains: driven by Hispanics & Asian Americans (AAPI) & white unmarried women getting out of hole

Thinking about the election for Congress in your district in November, will you vote for the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate?



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# Biden raises favorability, similar to his DNC gains; much better than Trump's results year of 2018 wave

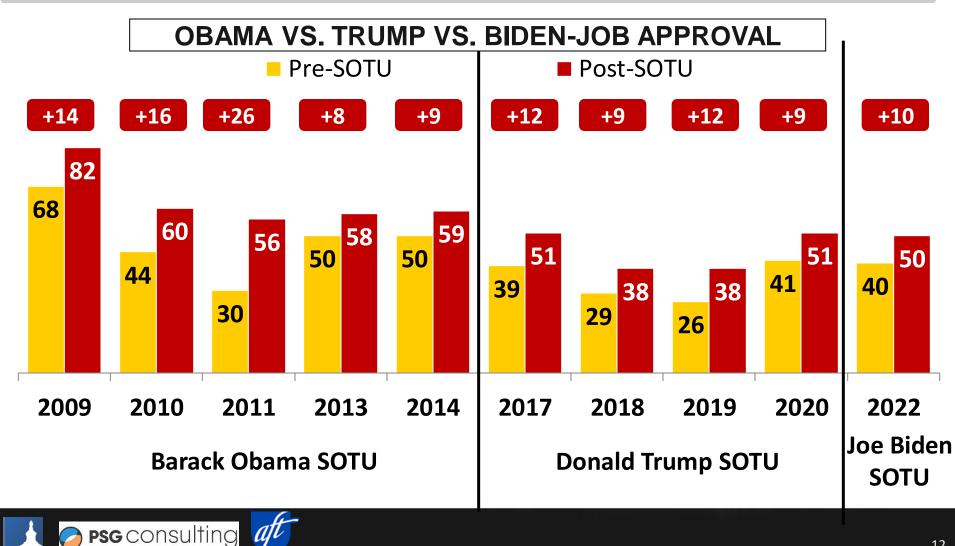


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\*2018 dial lines did not include white working-class women and white college women. 2019 dial lines did not include white working-class men.  $_{\rm 11}$ 

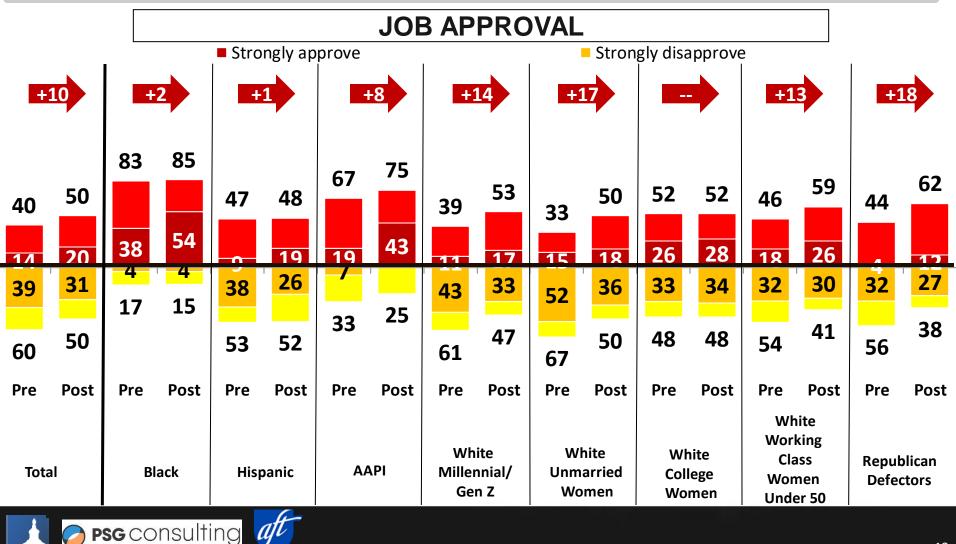
### Biden's approval gains comparable to Trump & Obama second term, but might stick this time

Do you approve or disapprove of Joe Biden/Donald Trump?



### Biden stunning low approval pushes up approval by AAPI, white millennial/ Gen Z and unmarried women and — and that might stick with delivery

Do you approve or disapprove of the job that Joe Biden is doing as President?



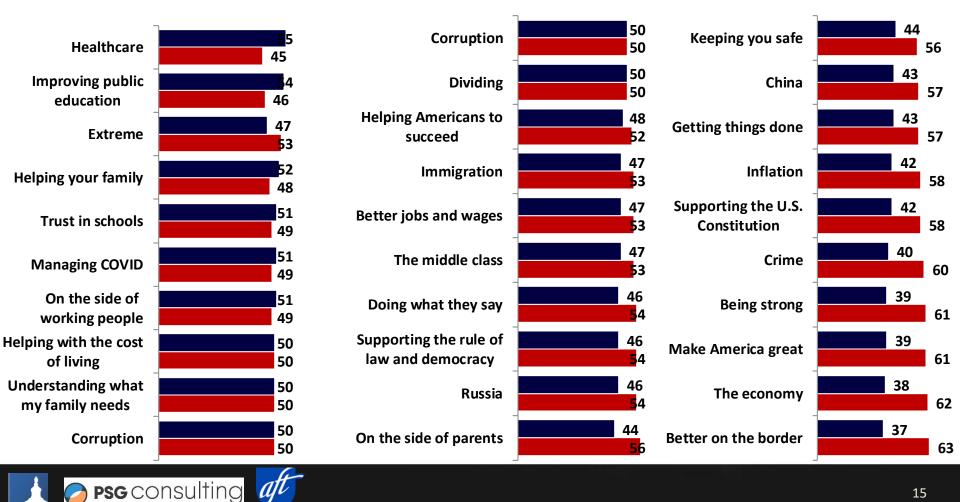
# Democrats' tarnished starting point

### Republicans better party border, the economy and inflation, and crime

Below is a list of issues and attributes. For each one, please indicate whether you think the Democrats or Republicans are better.

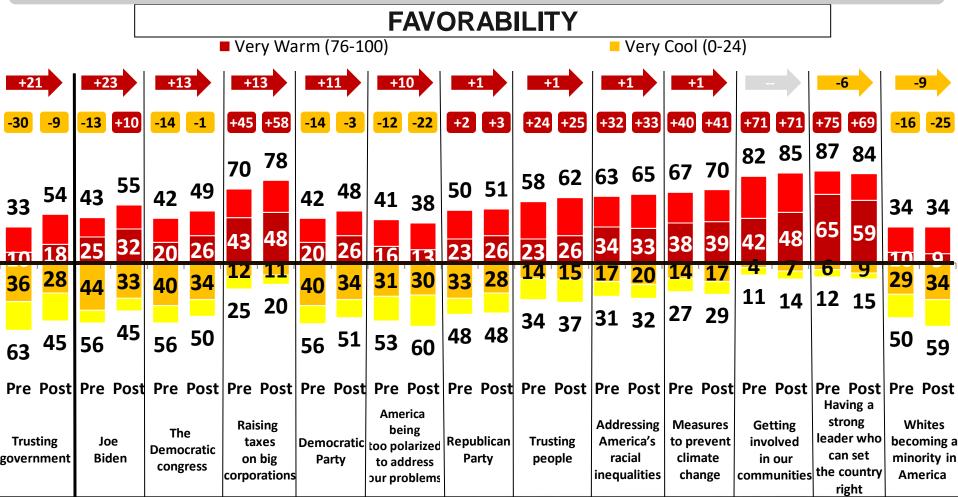
### WHICH PARTY BETTER - PRE SPEECH

■ Democrat better ■ Republican better



# **SOTU** produces impressive gains for Biden, Democratic Congress & raising taxes on big corporations, but party and president started under water

I'd like to rate your feelings toward some people and organizations with one hundred meaning a VERY WARM, FAVORABLE feeling; zero meaning a VERY COLD, UNFAVORABLE feeling; and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold.

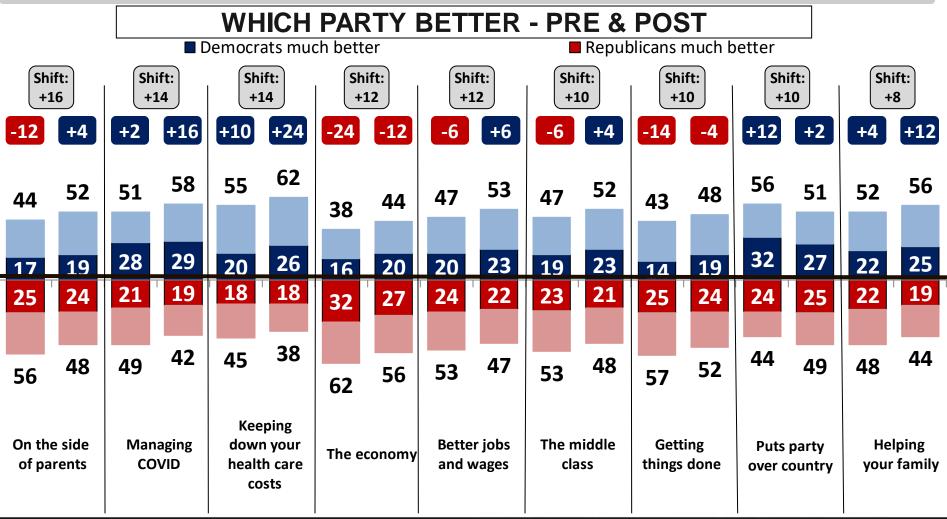


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# Democrats made gains on parent issues; jobs & wages, middle class, helping your family & cost of living, but trailed before SOTU; Dems put party first

Below is a list of issues and attributes. For each one, please indicate whether you think the Democrats or Republicans are better.

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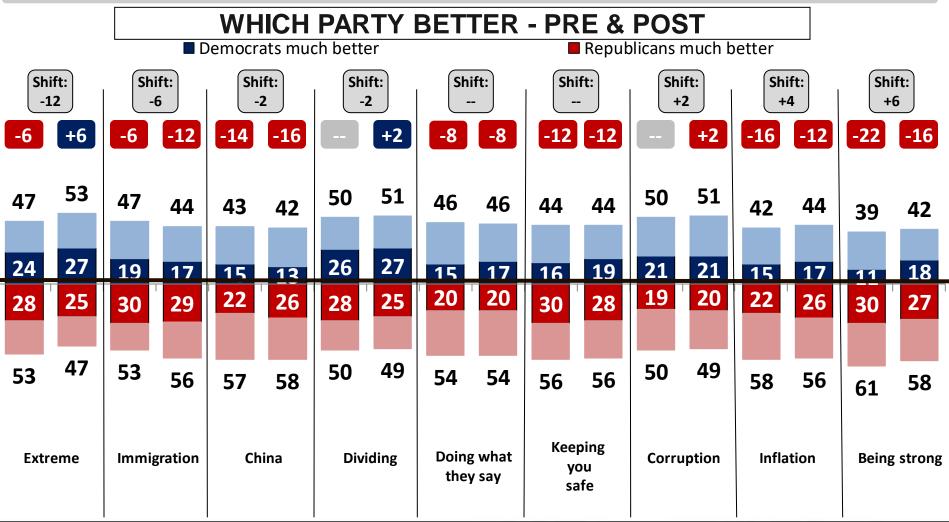


### No change on which party better dealing with inflation; slipped on immigration and

### extreme

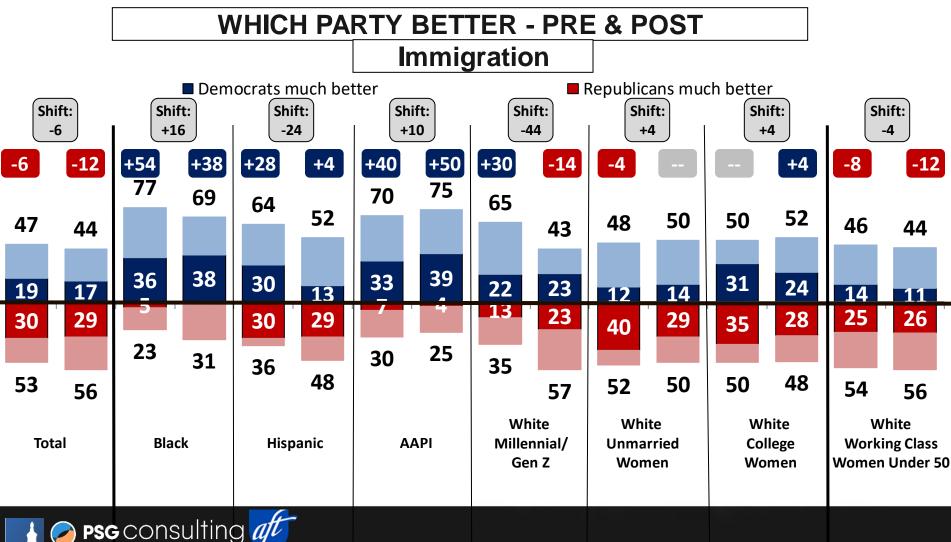
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Below is a list of issues and attributes. For each one, please indicate whether you think the Democrats or Republicans are better.



# Why did Democrats lose ground on immigration with Hispanics, and white millennials? Republicans ahead on border.

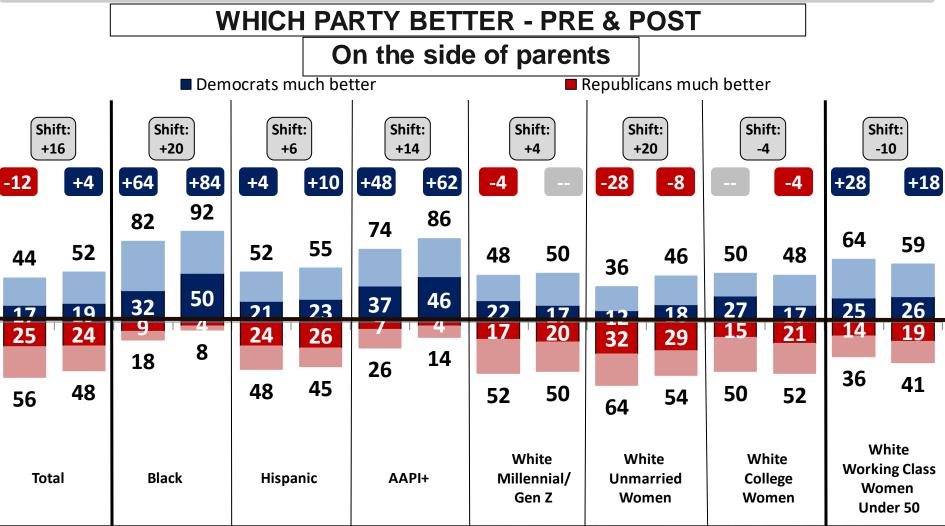
Below is a list of issues and attributes. For each one, please indicate whether you think the Democrats or Republicans are better.



## One of biggest shifts was on side of parents – driven by Black, AAPI, and white unmarried women, but lost ground with white working class women

Below is a list of issues and attributes. For each one, please indicate whether you think the Democrats or Republicans are better.

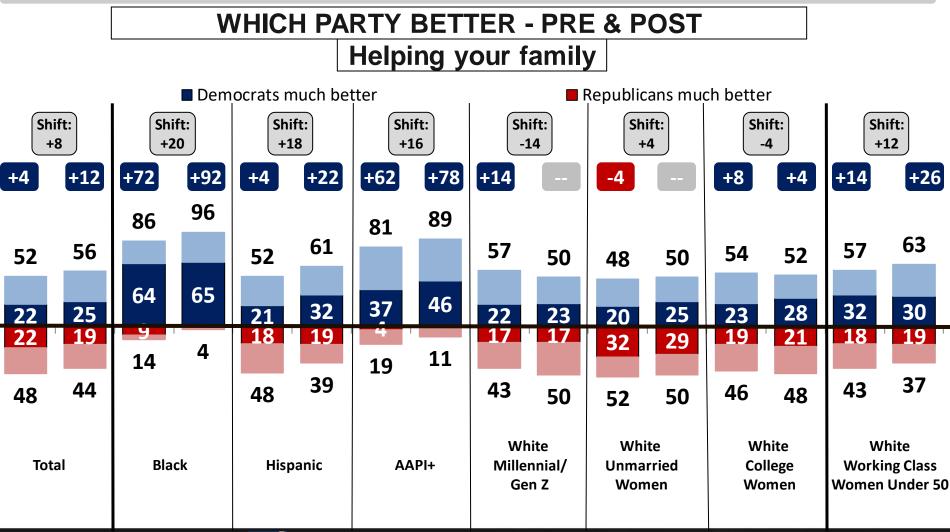
**PSG** consulting *(* 



### Help for your family noticed by Blacks, Hispanics, AAPI and white millennials/Gen Z, but also white working class women under 50

Below is a list of issues and attributes. For each one, please indicate whether you think the Democrats or Republicans are better.

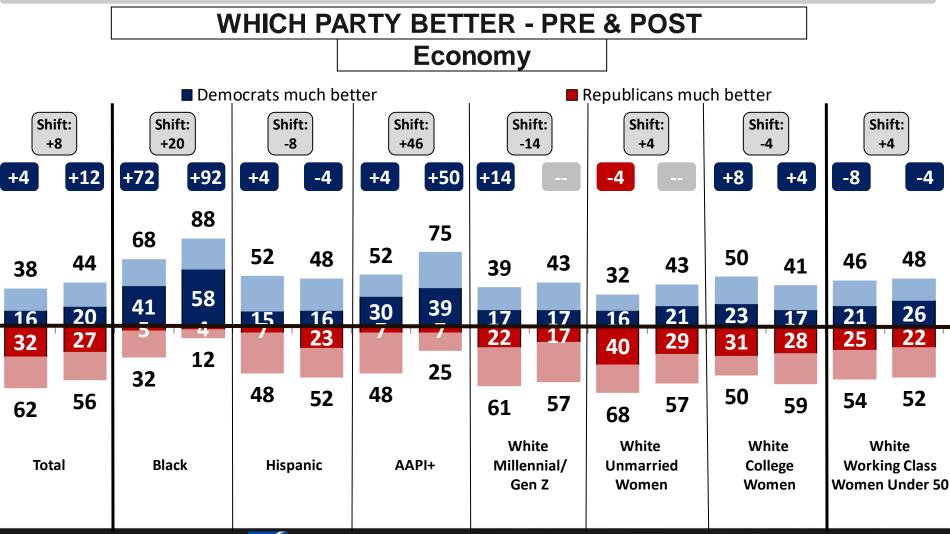
**PSG** consulting *4* 



## Gains on economy driven by Blacks, AAPI and white millennial/GenZ; also under 50 white working class women

Below is a list of issues and attributes. For each one, please indicate whether you think the Democrats or Republicans are better.

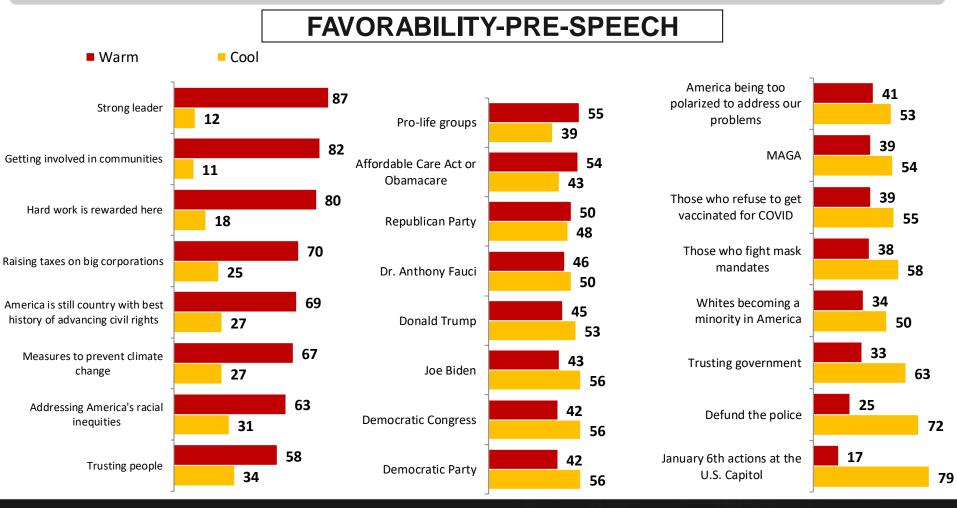
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# **Country's temperament**

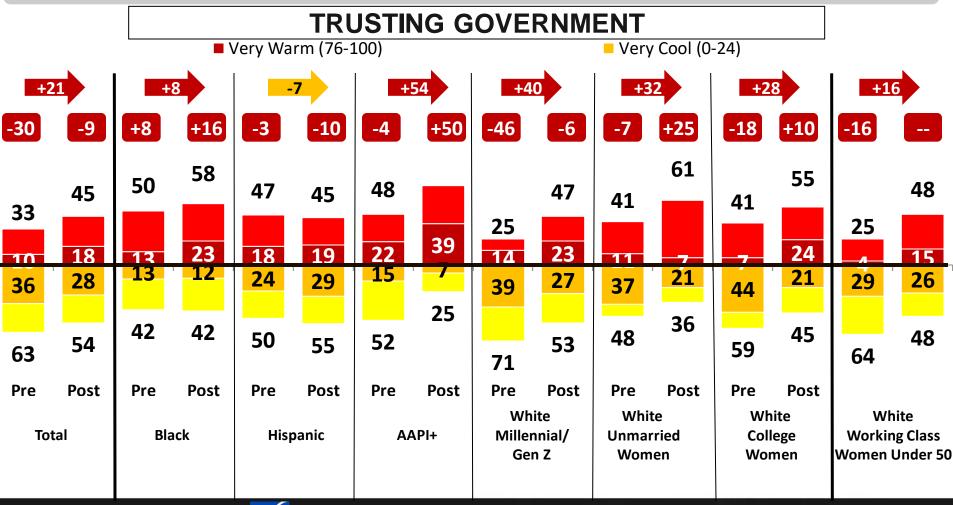
## America with all its polarized warts — wants a strong leader, people more involved, taxes on big corporations, addressing racial inequalities, and climate change.

I'd like to rate your feelings toward some people and organizations with one hundred meaning a VERY WARM, FAVORABLE feeling; zero meaning a VERY COLD, UNFAVORABLE feeling; and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold.



# A country not trusting government sees big movement with AAPI, white millennial/GenZ, white unmarried women, & college women.

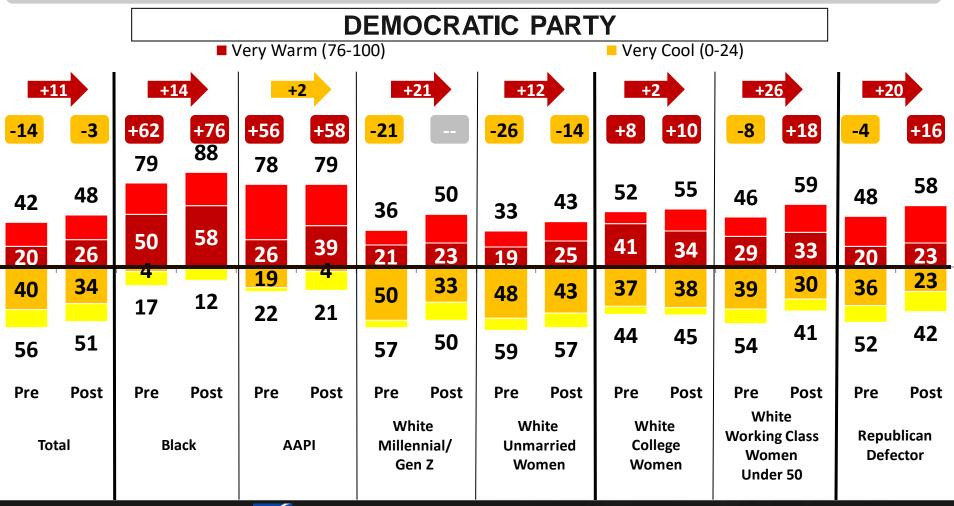
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# Party makes small recovery with base groups, under 50 working class women and GOP defectors

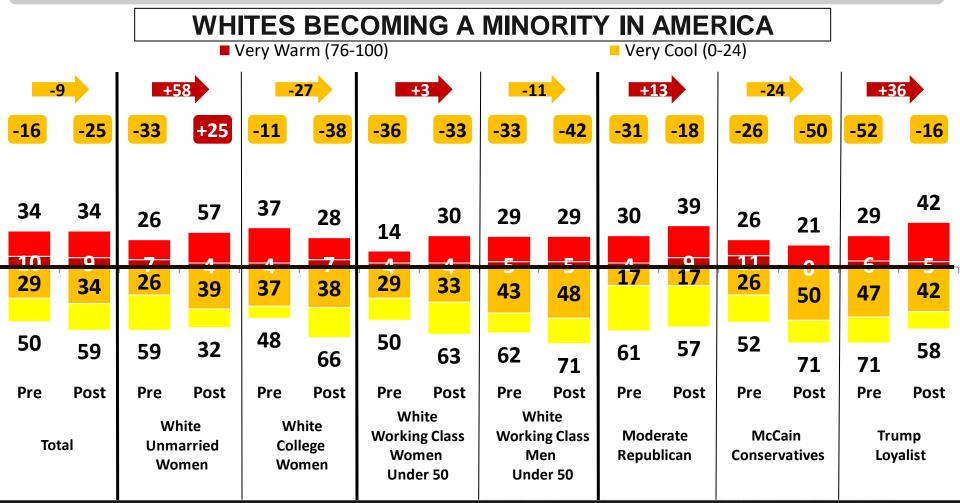
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# Watching the SOTU produce jump in worry whites a minority (A third very cool); impacting white college women, under 50 white working class; moderates OK

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## Reassurance



### **Engaging defund the police provides a lot of reassurance**

Imagine President Biden had made the following statement. Does that make you..?

[BLUE COLLAR CHOICE] Imagine President Biden had made the following statement: The Democrat says, people are living paycheck to paycheck and struggling to pay their bills and taxes. They need a government that looks out for the middle class, cuts taxes working families, small businesses, and the vulnerable who work hard. The Republican Party in Congress battles to keep the big corporations from paying any tax or drug companies charging without any limit or seeing millions more children fall into poverty. Please elect more member of Congress that enable us to grow the middle class again.

[DEFUND THE POLICE MESSAGE] Imagine President Biden had made the following statement: Democrats feel a deep obligation to keep our communities safe from crime. Fighting violent is our highest priority and our cities must have the police and resources they need. It is a tough job, and our police should be respected. We should fund, not defund the police. We also need urgent reforms, with better training and accountability. Those who want to defund police do not call the shots in my Democratic Party or country.

Much more positive	Somewhat more positive	A little more positive	□ No difference either way	Makes me more negative about the Democrats
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61	64
18	16
18	24
25	24
27	23
12	13



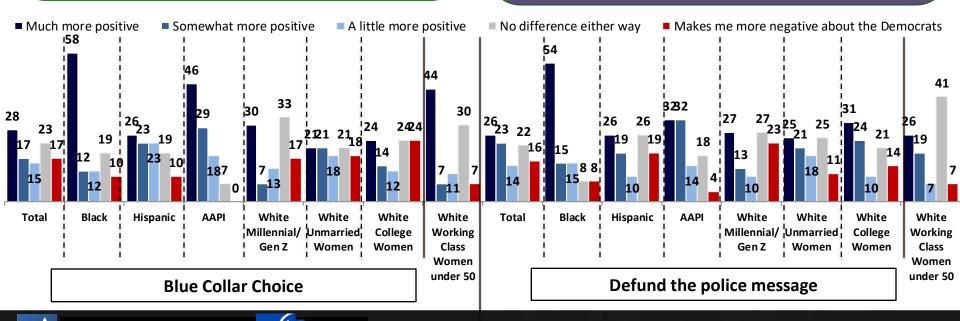
## Blue collar contrast stirs base; no defund stirs Blacks, Hispanic, white unmarried and college women

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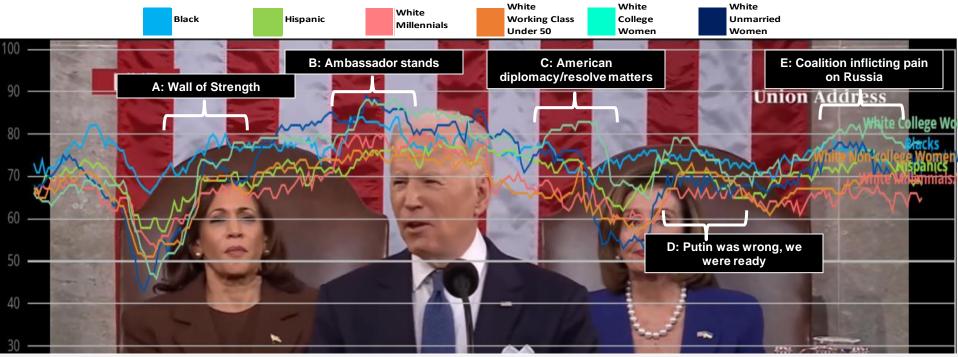
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# Diverse voter segments respond to Biden speech

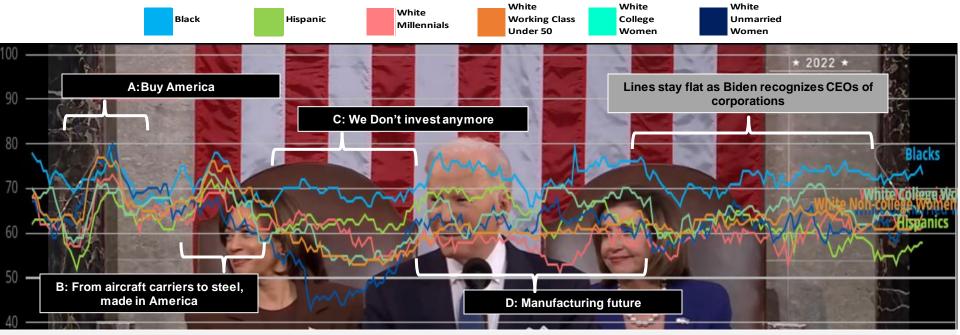
## Ukraine drives lines in very territory, pushed up by Hispanics, white unmarried and college women; Blacks just high; white millennials less engaged by Ukraine



- [A] He thought he could roll into Ukraine, and the world would roll over. Instead, he met with a wall of strength he never anticipated or imagined. He met the Ukrainian people. From President Zelensky to every Ukrainian, their fearlessness, their courage, their determination, literally inspires the world.
- [B] In this struggle, as President Zelensky said in his speech to the European Parliament, "light will win over darkness." The Ukrainian ambassador to the United States is here tonight, sitting with the first lady. Let each of us here, if you're able to stand, stand and send an unmistak able signal to the world and Ukraine.
- [C] And the costs, the threats to America, and America to the world, keeps rising. That's why the NATO alliance was created: to secure peace and stability in Europe after World War II. The United States is a member, along with 29 other nations. It matters. American diplomacy matters. American resolve matters.
- [D] He thought the West and NATO wouldn't respond. He thought he could divide us at home, in this chamber and in this nation. He thought he could divide us in Europe as well. But Putin was wrong. We are ready. We are united, and that's what we did. We stayed united.
- [E] Along with 27 members of the European Union, including France, Germany, Italy, as well as countries like the United Kingdom, Canada, Japan, Korea, Australia, New Zealand and many others even Switzerland are inflicting pain on Russia and supporting the people of Ukraine. Putin is now isolated from the world more than he has ever been.



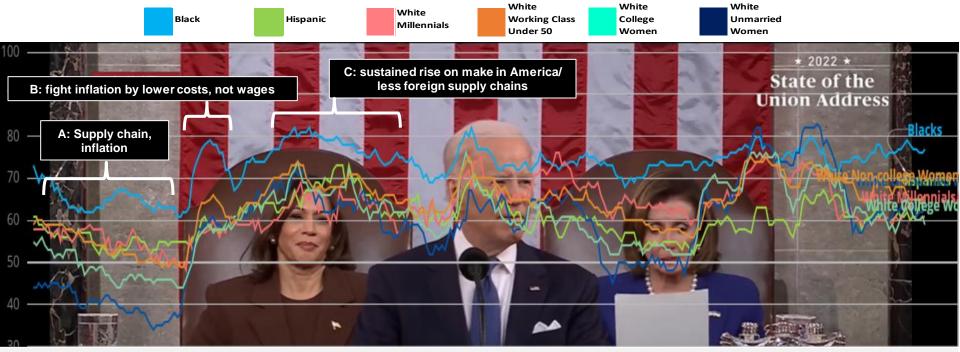
## Buy America produces spike with everybody, including Hispanics and under 50 white working class; Blacks like most all; and lines go flat when Biden recognizes CEOs



- [A] When we use taxpayers' dollars to rebuild America, we are going to do it by buying American: buy American products, support American jobs.
- [B] We will buy American to make sure everything from the deck of an aircraft carrier to the steel on highway guardrails is made in America from beginning to end. All of it. All of it.
- [C] But folks, to compete for the jobs of the future, we also need to level the playing field with China and other competitors. That's why it is so important to pass the Bipartisan Innovation Act sitting in Congress that will make record investments in emerging technologies and American manufacturing. We used to invest 2 percent of our G.D.P. in research and development. We don't now. China is.
- **[D]** Let me give you one example of why it's so important to pass it. If you travel 20 miles east of Columbus, Ohio, you'll find 1,000 empty acres of land. It won't look like much, but if you stop and look closely, you'll see a field of dreams, the ground on which America's future will be built. That's where Intel, the American company that helped build Silicon Valley, is going to build its \$20 billion semiconductor mega site. Up to eight state-of-the-art factories in one place. Ten thousand new jobs. In those factories, the average job: about \$135,000 a year. Some of the most sophisticated manufacturing in the world to makecomputer chips the size of a fingertip that power the world and everyday lives. From smartphones. The internet. Technology we have yet to invent. But that's just the beginning. [..] That would be the biggest investment in manufacturing in American history.



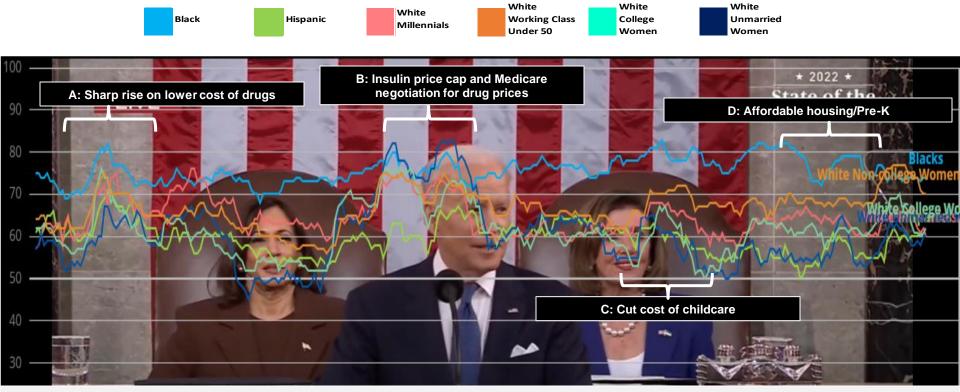
## Economy roared back drove Hispanics and white unmarried women below 50, but low cost & wages and make it in America produced spikes for all, especially under 50 wc



- [A] Look, our economy roared back faster than almost anyone predicted, but the pandemic meant that businesses had a hard time hiring enough workers to keep up production in their factories. So you didn't have people making those beams that went into buildings because they were out, the factory was closed. The panic also disrupted the global supply chain. Factories close. When that happens, it takes longer to make goods and get them to the warehouses, to the stores, and prices go up. Look at cars last year. One-third of all of the inflation was because of automobile sales. There weren't enough semiconductors to make all the cars that people wanted to buy. And guess what, prices of automobiles went way up. Especially used vehicles as well. So, we have a choice.
- [B] One way to fight inflation is to drive down wages and make Americans poorer. I think I have a better idea to fight inflation. Lower your cost, not your wages. That means make more cars and semiconductors in America. More infrastructure and innovation in America. More goods moving faster and cheaper in America. More jobs where you can earn a good living in America.
- [C] Instead of relying on foreign supply chains, let's make it in America. Economists call it "increasing the productive capacityof our economy." I call it building a better America. My plan to fight inflation will lower your costs and lower the deficit. Seventeen Nobel laureates in economics said my plan will ease long-term inflationary pressures. Top business leaders and I believe most Americans support my plan. And here's the plan:



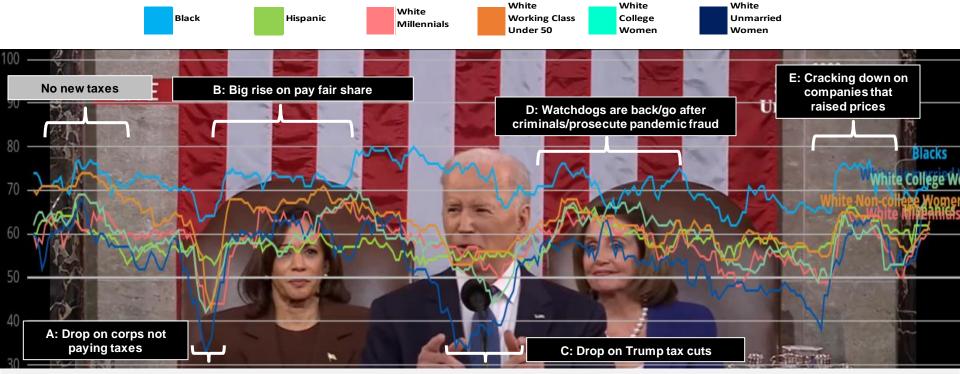
## Action on drug prices spikes all, and again, for insulin cap, child care and cost to families, with with under 50 working class above other base groups



- [A] And here's the plan: First, cut the cost of prescription drugs. We pay more for the same drug produced by the same company in America than any other country in the world. Just look at insulin. One in 10 Americans has diabetes. In Virginia, I met a 13-year-old boy, the handsome young man up there, Joshua Davis.
- [B] For Joshua, and for the 200,000 other young people with Type 1 diabetes, let's cap the cost of insulin at \$35 a month so everyone can afford it. And drug companies will do very, very well their profit margins. And while we're at it, let's let Medicare negotiate the price of prescription drugs. They already set the price for V.A. drugs.
- [C] The third thing we can do to change the standard of living for hard-working folks is cut the cost of child care. Cut the cost of child care. Folks, if you live in a major city in America, you pay up to \$14,000 a year for child care per child.
- [D] But my plan doesn't stop there. It also includes home and long-term care. More affordable housing. Pre-K for 3- and 4-year-olds. All of these will lower costs for families.



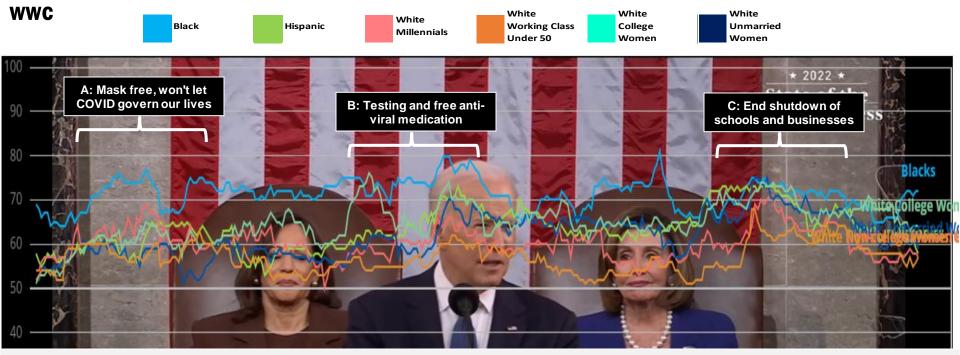
Listening and flat on new taxes, but one of biggest jumps on minimum corporate tax and crack down on foreign companies that jacked up prices.



- [A] The point is even they understand they should pay just the fair share. Last year, 55 of the Fortune 500 companies earned \$40 billion in profit and paid zero in federal taxes. Look, it's not fair. That's why I proposed a 15 percent minimum tax rate for corporations.
- [B] And that's why in the G7 and other meetings overseas we're able to put together, I was able to be somewhat helpful, 130 countries to agree on a global minimum tax rate so companies can't get out of paying their taxes at home by shipping jobs and factories overseas. It'll raise billions of dollars.
- [C] The previous administration not only ballooned the deficit with those tax cuts for the very wealthy and corporations, it undermined the watchdogs whose job was to keep pandemic relief funds from being wasted.
- [D] But in my administration, the watchdogs are back. And we're going to go after the criminals who stole billions in relief money meant for small businesses and millions of Americans. And tonight, I'm announcing that the Justice Department will soon name a chief prosecutor for pandemic fraud.
- [E] During the pandemic, about half a dozen or less foreign-owned companies raised prices by as much as 1,000 percent and made record profits. Tonight, I'm announcing a crackdown on those companies overcharging American businesses and consumers.



## Masks flat, except for Blacks & white millennials; Hispanics & white unmarried women like testing and anti-viral; open up schools/business big white millennials and under 50



- [A] Just a few days ago, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued new mask guidelines. Under these new guidelines, most Americans in most of the country can now go mask free. And based on projections, more of the country will reach across that point across the next couple of weeks. Thanks to the progress we have made in the past year, Covid-19 no longer need control our lives.
- **[B]** We're also ready with anti-viral treatments. If you get Covid-19, the Pfizer pill reduces your chances of ending up in the hospital by 90 percent. I've ordered more of these pills than anyone in the world has. Pfizer is working overtime to get us one million pills this month and more than double that next month. And we're launching the "test to treat" initiative so people can get tested at a pharmacy, and if they prove positive, receive antiviral pills on the spot at no cost. If you're immunocompromised or have some other vulnerability, we have treatments and free high-quality masks. We're leaving no one behind or ignoring anyone's needs as we move forward. On testing, we have made hundreds of millions of tests available, and you can order them for free to your doorstep.
- [C] Third, we can end the shutdown of schools and businesses. We have the tools we need. It's time for America to get back to work and fill our great downtowns again with people. People working from home can feel safe and begin to return to their offices. We're doing that here in the federal government. The vast majority of federal workers will once again work in person. Our schools are open. Let's keep it that way. Our kids need to be in school.



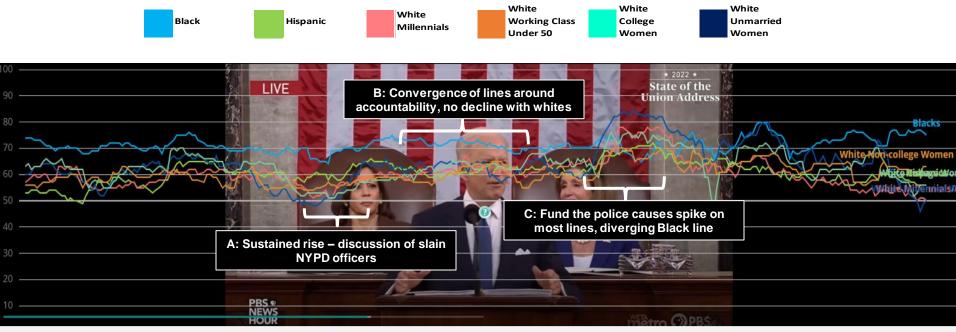
All lines rising on securing the border and comprehensive immigration reform pushes down Hispanics, white millennials and under 50 white working class



- [A] Folks, if we are to advance liberty and justice, we need to secure our border and fix the immigration system. And as you might guess, I think we can do both.
- [B] We can do all this while keeping lit the torch of liberty that has led the generation of immigrants to this land my forebears and many of yours. Provide a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers, those on temporary status, farm workers, essential workers. Revise our laws so businesses have workers they need and families don't wait decades to reunite. It's not only the right thing to do it's economically smart thing to do. That's why immigration reform is supported by everyone from labor unions to religious leaders to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Let's get it done once and for all.



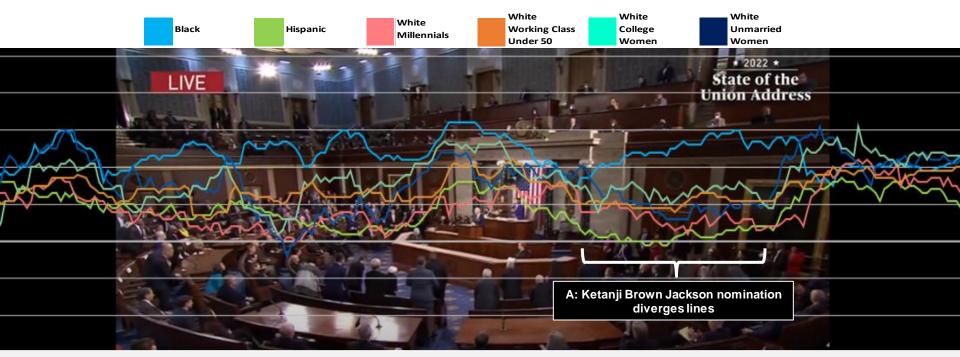
### Sustained rise for NYPD officers and no drop on accountability, and fund police spike all lines, including Blacks



- [A] Officer Mora was 27 years old. Officer Rivera was 22 years old. Both Dominican Americans who grew up on the same streets theylater chose to patrol as police officers. I spoke with their families and I told them that we are forever in debt for their sacrifices, and we'll carry on their mission to restore the trust and safety of every community deserves.
- **[B]** Let's come together and protect our communities, restore trust and hold law enforcement accountable. That's why the Justice Department has required body cameras, banned chokeholds and restricted no-knock warrants for its officers. That's why the American Rescue Plan that you all provided \$350 billion that cities, states and counties can use to hire more police, invest in proven strategies. Proven strategies like community violence interruption trusted messengers breaking the cycle of violence and trauma and giving young people some hope.
- [C] We should all agree: The answer is not to defund the police. It's to fund the police. Fund them. Fund them. Fund them with resources and training. Resources and training they need to protect their communities. I ask Democrats and Republicans alike to pass my budget and keep our neighborhoods safe.



### Polarized reaction to Judicial nomination shows a very diverse Democratic Party in control of government

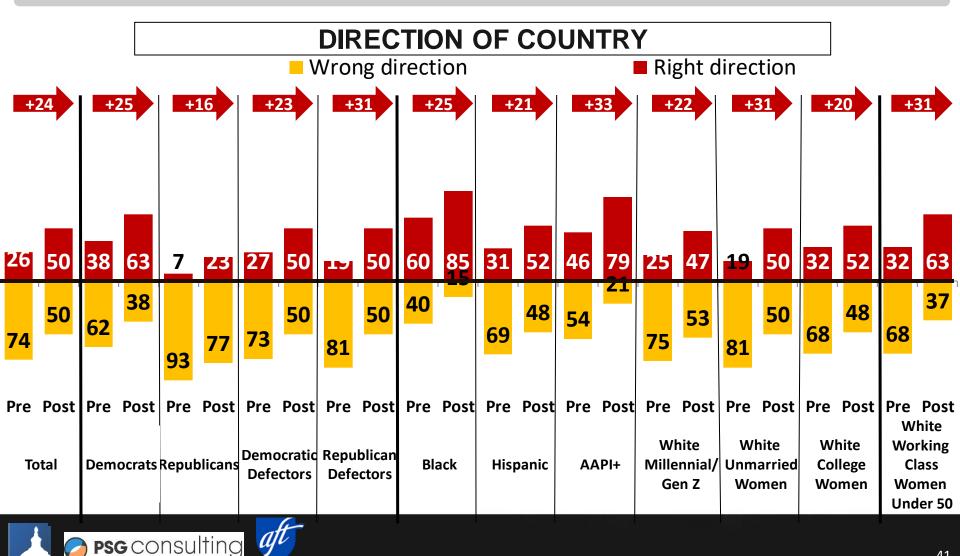


• [A] As I did four days ago, I've nominated the Circuit Court of Appeals Ketanji Brown Jackson. One of our nation's top legal minds, who will continue in Justice Breyer's legacy of excellence. A former top litigator in private practice. A former federal public defender. From a family of public school educators and police officers. She's a consensus builder. Since she's been nominated, she's received a broad range of support — including the Fraternal Order of Police and former judges appointed by Democrats and Republicans.



### Biden began in hole with only 26% right track, and doubles that number in right —biggest gains in base and working class targets. Why was it so low?

Thinking about the election for Congress in your district in November, will you vote for the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate?



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