



**GREENBERG** RESEARCH



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To: Interested Parties

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## **Responding to Biden's State of the Union**

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We conducted this unique research that gets a representative sample of key target groups to watch the President's speech and do pre and post surveys. They include a lot of open-ended responses and items that get at values, emotions, and concerns about this polarized country. The groups included were:

- 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

Going into speech, three quarters thought the country is on the wrong track. Reading their open-ended responses, people were dealing with an uncertain end of the pandemic and big rise inflation; a divided Democratic Party stopped helping. It took a terrible toll on President Biden, the Democratic Party, and Democrats in Congress. Their own base of voters was the hardest on them and they were disengaged as well. And, perhaps, most strikingly, voters think it is the Democrats who put party before country. The Republican Party is now viewed more favorably.

The greatest success of the President's State of the Union was doubling the support for the President among those who thought the country is on the wrong track. He got the attention of key groups in the upcoming elections Blacks, who are very disappointed in his Presidency; Hispanics; Asian Americans; white millennials/Gen Z; and unmarried women. These groups also included white working class individuals under 50 and GOP defectors. Movement in both what are considered base voters and those who have seemed out of reach was one of the positive signs for the administration.

However, Congress meant the speech barely moved the generic vote for Congressional Democrats, 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 and Republicans are 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. The speech gave many more the feeling Democrats were helping families and helping with cost of living.

Immigration is hurting Democrats. The speech shifted more voters to trust Democrats, including base voters. 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.

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. Participants' views of an increasingly diverse America became worse after the State of the Union.

We identified in this work 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. This finding was of particular interest to the AFT, one of the key sponsors.

Hispanics 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.

