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To: Interested parties

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Unmarried Women in 2018

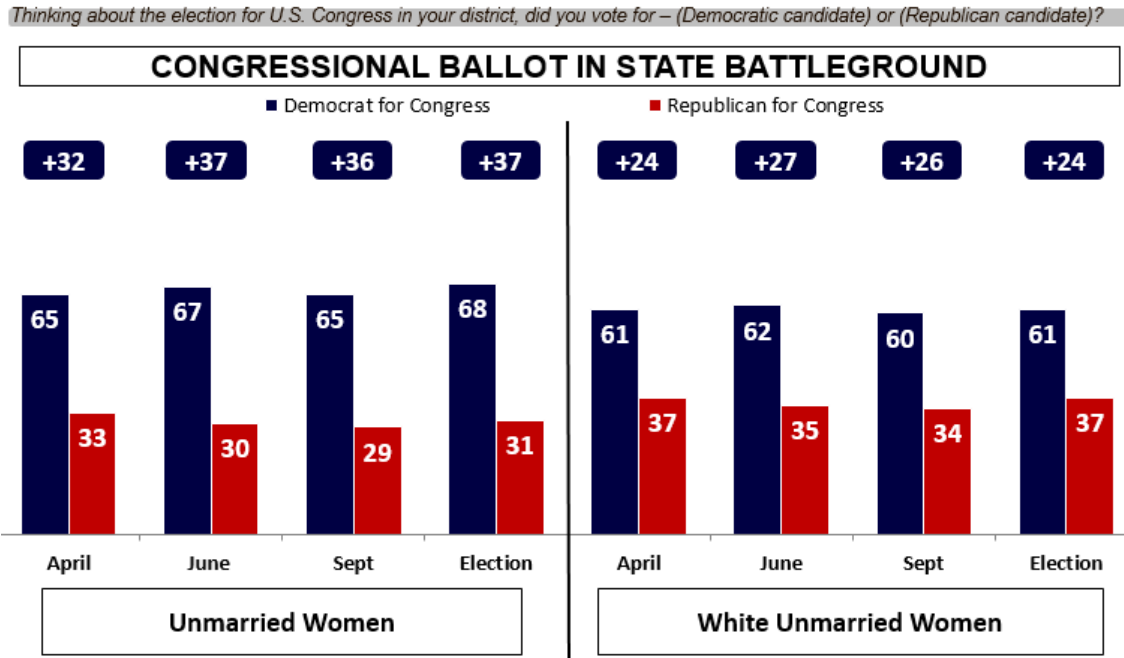
Unmarried women comprised 23 percent of the national electorate and played a decisive role in the 2018 wave. Like other women, many unmarried women decided early to oppose what was happening in the country, but some decided in the Fall and as late as the final week to vote and to vote out the Republicans, especially in the Rust Belt where Democrats made such big gains. We know this story because of the web-panel that *Democracy Corps* conducted for *WVWVAF* that interviewed the same respondents four times in the 12 states with competitive statewide races.¹

African Americans too were engaged, consolidated, and played a parallel role in getting the Rising American Electorate to deliver to its full potential. Critical work done by progressive groups and perversely, President Trump's stance on immigration, helped dramatically move up the Democratic vote among millennials and Hispanics, though their turnout failed to keep up with the surge among other progressive groups.

The story of unmarried women story was unique. Unmarried and white unmarried women gave the Democrats at all levels landslide numbers. Reacting to President Trump and the Women's March, many decided early to vote for Democrats by large margins; but a large proportion decided this election was very important in September and October and shifted to the Democrats in the final week, especially in the Rust Belt. That gave the Democrats big wins in the House and Senate. These voters were reached heavily by phone and mail. At the end of the day, unmarried women turned out at their highest level since *WVWVAF* has worked to put them center-stage in progressive strategies.

¹ On behalf of *Women's Voices Women Vote Action Fund*, *Democracy Corps* conducted a series of four phone surveys with accompanying web-surveys among an on-going panel of minorities, millennials, unmarried women and white non-college educated women (RAE+) in 12 states with Governor races (10 Senate races): Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Mexico, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee and Wisconsin. The phone survey of 714 registered voters with 66% cell-rate was conducted November 4-7, 2018. The voter-file matched web-panel of 791 "RAE+" registered voters was conducted November 1-14, 2018.

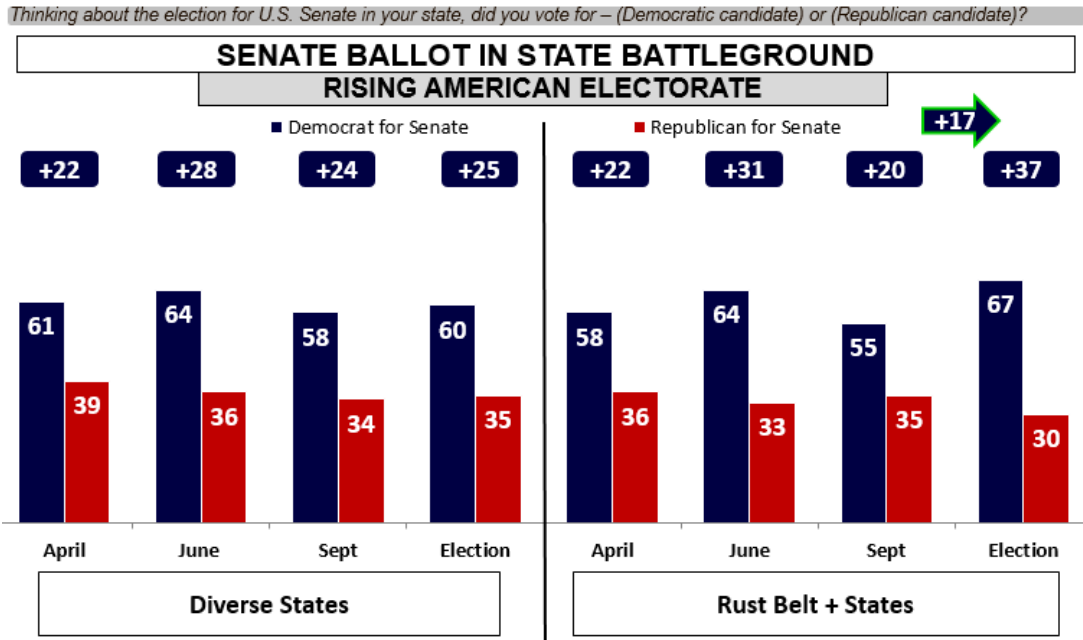
Unmarried women were resolute in their determination to vote against the Republicans, supporting the Democratic House candidate by 68 to 31 percent in these more conservative battleground states.² White unmarried women too — who are two-thirds of unmarried women — helped to produce this powerful repudiation of Trump and the GOP. In 2014 and 2016, they divided their national votes evenly between the parties, but in 2018, they supported Democrats with nearly a two-to-one margin (61 to 37 percent) in these more conservative battleground states.



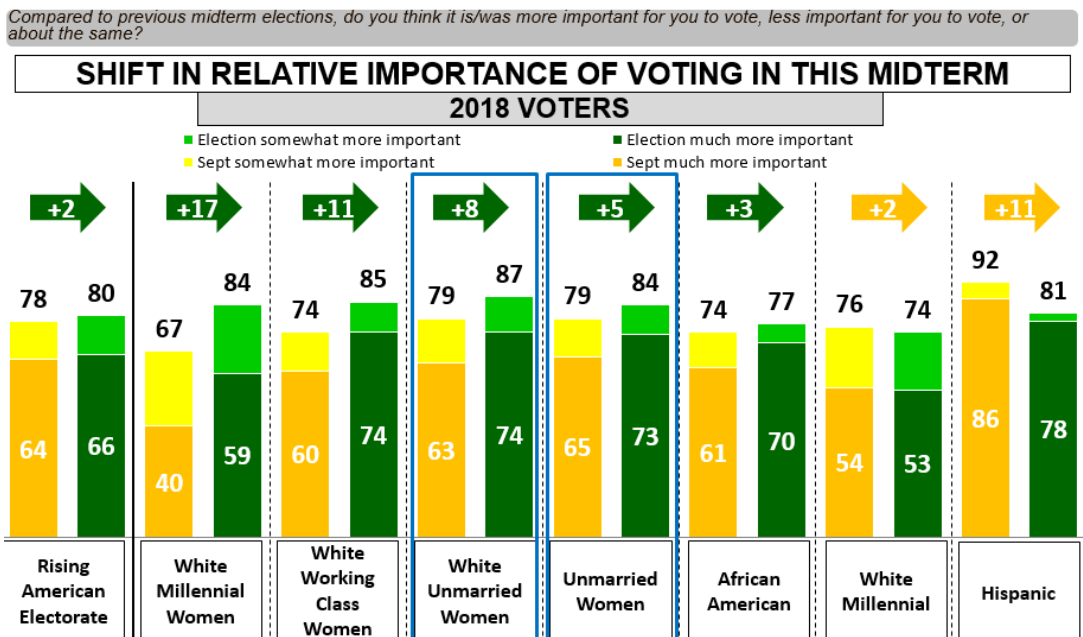
But a lot happened for those strong numbers to be translated into the November wave. The Rising American Electorate as a whole, particularly millennials and Hispanics, as well as unmarried women, shifted their vote margin for the Democrats by 9 points in the Fall in the Rust Belt States. Unmarried women supported Democrats then by 73 to 25 percent, the biggest margin of the year. The election crystalized in the Rust Belt for all the RAE groups then.

The Rising American Electorate played an even more powerful late role in the U.S. Senate contests in the Rust Belt. Between Labor Day and Election Day, the RAE pushed up its vote margin for the Democrats by 17 points. The Democratic Senate candidates in the Rust Belt battleground states won by 67 to 30 percent. They won unmarried women there by 72 to 21 percent.

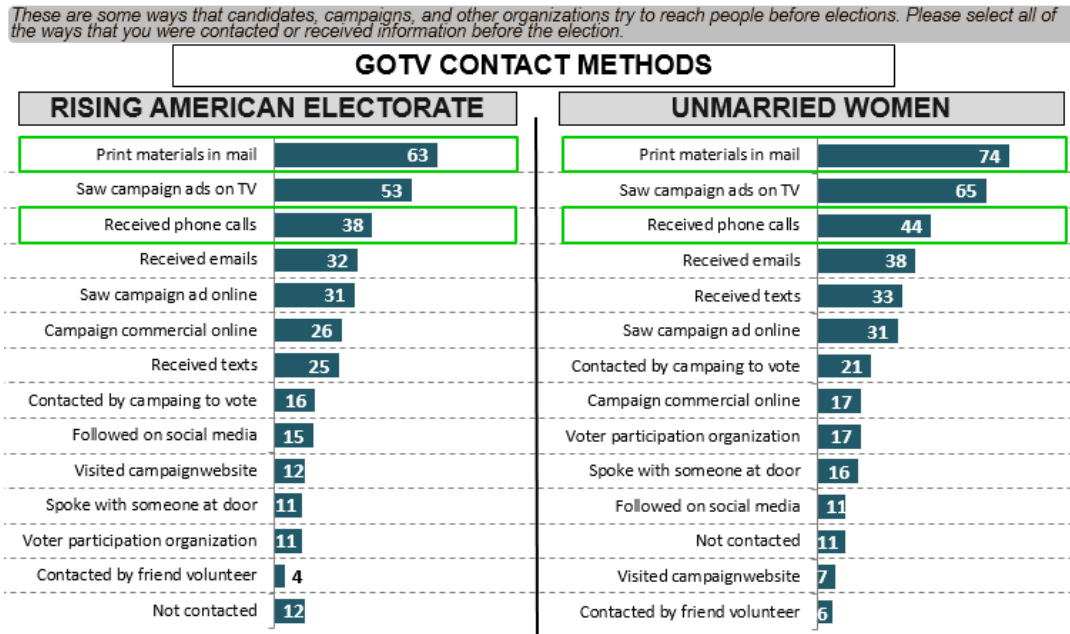
² Hillary Clinton won the national popular vote by 2 points in 2016, but Trump won these 12 battleground states by a margin of 3 points. According to the exit polls, Clinton won unmarried women nationally 62 to 33 (+29) in 2016. In 2018, Democratic House candidates won unmarried women nationally 66 to 31 (+35) and won them 68 to 31 (+37) in this 12-state battleground. White unmarried women nationally voted for 55 to 43 (+12) for Democratic House candidates in 2018 after voting 48 to 46 (+2) for Hillary Clinton in 2016.



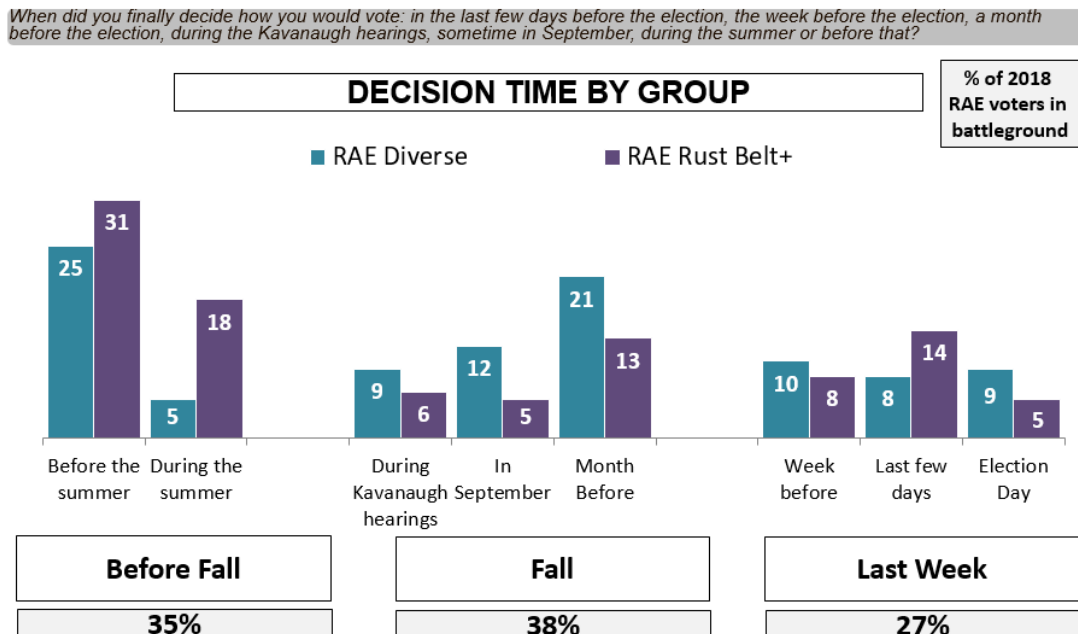
It was hardly certain that unmarried women would turnout in large enough numbers to offset President Trump’s effort to turnout his base. Unmarried women disappointed in 2010 and 2014. But the campaign and organizational efforts of progressives began to change that. The proportion of unmarried women saying that voting in this election was *much* more important than prior mid-terms jumped 8 points between September and the Election. The proportion that said voting in this election mattered more than past off-year elections jumped 8 points for white unmarried women and 17 points for white millennial women during that period.



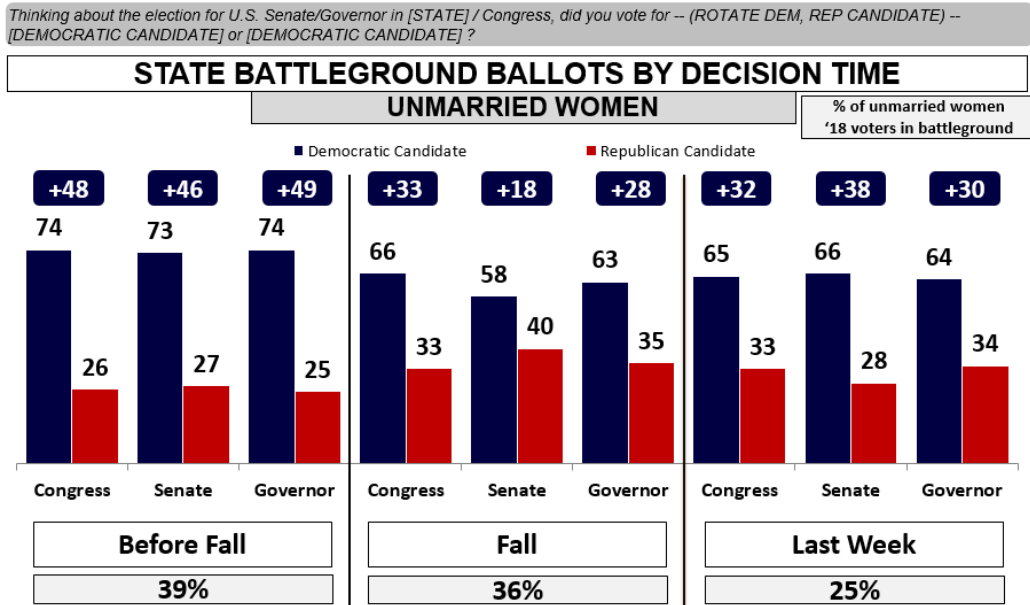
It was not TV ads that reached these voters to get out their vote. Three-quarters of unmarried women said that candidate, campaigns, and other organizations reached them with “print materials in the mail” — outpacing those indicating they saw an ad on TV by 9 points — and 44 percent of unmarried women reported receiving phone calls.



We now know from the series of interviews we conducted with the same respondents in the Rising American Electorate battleground panel that nearly half of those voters in the Rust Belt decided their vote before or during the Summer. The unmarried women who decided how they would vote before the Fall voted straight ticket during that period, giving nearly 75 percent of their votes to Democratic candidate for the House, Senate and Governor.



In the fall, when the Kavanaugh hearings were held, over 40 percent of the Rising American Electorate in the diverse battleground states made up their minds. The unmarried women who decided then gave two-thirds of their votes to Democrats in the House races but were less consolidated in the races for the Senate and for Governor.



The last week was decisive for the Rising American Electorate and the blue wave. Fully 27 percent of the RAE in the Rust Belt battleground states made their vote choice in the last week. The unmarried women who decided in the final week gave Democrats two-to-one support in the races for the House, Senate and Governor.

This report makes clear that that there was nothing foretold in the role that unmarried women would play in 2018. Yes, they gave Democrats landslide support and they participated at historic levels, but they responded to mobilizing events and intense campaign activity to shape the wave.