

TO: Center for Voter Information
FROM: Geoff Garin
DATE: September 25, 2018
RE: Impact of Voter Guide Mailings

Our recent telephone survey of 2,000 likely voters across 14 battleground districts shows that mailings to inform voters in a relatively neutral way about where the candidates stand on key issues have the potential both to increase support for Democratic candidates and increase the enthusiasm of Democratic voters.

In drawing the sample for this research, we systematically excluded respondents who are most likely to be strong Democrats (modeled partisan scores of 90 or higher), but we included strong Republicans. In the interviews, respondents heard how the candidates in their districts differ on 14 issues (see appendix). Among the full sample, support for the Democratic candidate increased by a net of 13 points. Among an apples-to-apples version of the sample (which also excludes respondents who are most likely to be strong Republicans), support for the Democratic candidate increases by a similar net margin of 14 points.

	Full Sample (party scores 0-89)		Apples-to-Apple Sample (party scores 10-89)	
	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
Vote Democratic	32%	40%	48%	57%
Vote Republican	58%	53%	41%	36%

Our regression analysis identified three issues that are most important in driving these changes:

- [Republican candidate] favors and [Democratic candidate] opposes allowing health insurance companies to charge people more or deny coverage entirely if they have a preexisting medical condition
- [Democratic candidate] favors and [Republican candidate] opposes requiring Medicare to negotiate with drug companies to get the lowest price on prescription drugs
- [Republican candidate] favors and [Democratic candidate] opposes cutting the funding for Medicaid

A difference between candidates on the issue of background checks also generates a high degree of support among voters who move to the Democrat over the course of the survey.

Women under the age of 50 and independent voters are more likely to move in a Democratic direction on the basis of this information, but there is movement across the partisan scale.

While the results show that informing voters about issue difference raises the enthusiasm of Democratic voters, a few issues have the potential to also increase enthusiasm among Republican voters – particularly differences related to assault weapons bans and abortion.

Hart Research Associates

<i>If you learned that (READ ITEM), would this make you more likely to vote for (DEMOCRAT), more likely to vote for (REPUBLICAN), or would it not affect your vote either way?</i>			
	More Likely To Vote For Democrat %	More Likely To Vote For Republican %	Would Not Affect <u>Either</u> Way %
DEMOCRAT favors and REPUBLICAN opposes requiring criminal background checks on all potential gun buyers	43	18	35
DEMOCRAT favors and REPUBLICAN opposes requiring Medicare to negotiate with drug companies to get the lowest price on prescription drugs	40	17	39
REPUBLICAN favors and DEMOCRAT opposes allowing health insurance companies to charge people more or deny coverage entirely if they have a preexisting medical condition	39	18	38
DEMOCRAT favors and REPUBLICAN opposes requiring organizations that spend money to influence elections to fully disclose where their money comes from	36	16	45
REPUBLICAN favors and DEMOCRAT opposes cutting the funding for Medicaid	36	21	39
REPUBLICAN favors banning all abortions after the sixth week of pregnancy, with no exceptions for rape or incest and DEMOCRAT opposes banning all abortions after the sixth week of pregnancy, with no exceptions for rape or incest	35	29	32
DEMOCRAT favors banning the sale of semi-automatic assault weapons and REPUBLICAN opposes banning the sale of semi-automatic assault weapons	33	32	31
REPUBLICAN favors eliminating all government funding for Planned Parenthood's medical and family planning services and DEMOCRAT opposes eliminating all government funding for Planned Parenthood's medical and family planning services	33	32	31
REPUBLICAN favors and DEMOCRAT opposes allowing Internet service providers to give preferential treatment to some websites over others and charge consumers extra to access certain content	32	17	46
REPUBLICAN favors cutting taxes for people making more than a million dollars a year and DEMOCRAT opposes cutting taxes for people making more than a million dollars a year	32	24	40
REPUBLICAN favors cutting the tax rate for large multi-national corporations by forty percent and DEMOCRAT opposes cutting the tax rate for large multi-national corporations by forty percent	32	26	38
DEMOCRAT favors and REPUBLICAN opposes requiring electric utilities to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases and carbon pollution	30	20	46