



National Security and Foreign Policy in the 2024 Elections

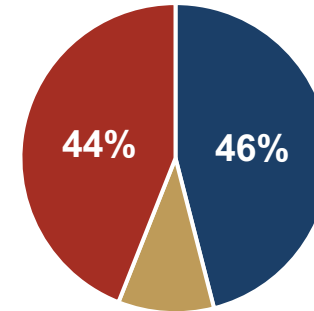
Key findings and recommendations from a survey
conducted April 2024 for National Security Action



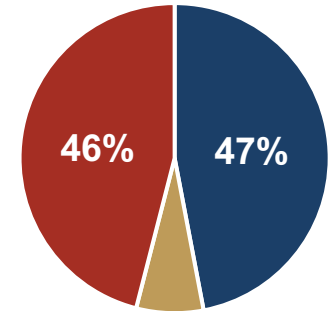
About the Survey and Sample

- **Base sample:**
1,200 voters nationwide
- **Battleground sample:**
507 interviews in AZ, GA, MI, NV, NC, PA, and WI
- **Methodology:**
Online interviews, conducted April 11 to 16, 2024

Party ID
■ Republican ■ Democrat



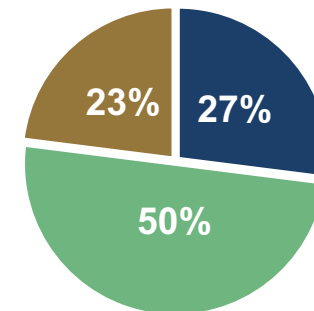
National sample



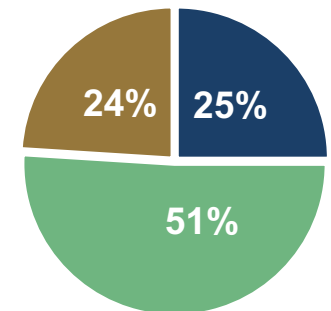
Battleground sample

Follow news about foreign policy and international issues:

■ Very closely ■ Somewhat closely ■ Less closely



National sample



Battleground sample

Takeaways: Framing the Best Case on National Security and Foreign Policy

1. Voters have more confidence in President Biden than in Donald Trump on several key leadership attributes that they believe are important in addressing America's national security and foreign policy interests. It is important to bring these attributes to bear as much as possible in debates on national security and foreign policy:
 - *Stands up in the world for America's values of freedom, democracy, and human rights*
 - *Has the experience and knowledge to deal with national security and foreign affairs*
 - *Builds strong alliances and works with our allies to advance America's interests*
 - *Has the right temperament to deal with national security and foreign affairs*
 - *Has the respect of other world leaders*
2. Voters also want a leader whose priority on national security and foreign policy is protecting and advancing America's interests, and it is important to stress that President Biden always puts America's interests first.
3. Americans do not want a president who believes America should go it alone instead of working in cooperation with our allies, and it is important to validate voters' belief that Donald Trump takes a "go it alone" approach.

Takeaways: Framing the Best Case on National Security and Foreign Policy (Cont'd)

4. Three key message frames are the most effective in raising concerns about Donald Trump as a national security and foreign policy leader:
- *Here at home, Donald Trump was the first president to try to block the peaceful transition of power by instigating the attack on the Capitol. Trump has undermined democracy and admires dictators, applauding the lack of press freedoms in Russia, extrajudicial killings in the Philippines, and dictatorial power in China, North Korea, and other countries.*
 - *Donald Trump talked tough on trade, but his policies hurt American farmers and cost American jobs, and America's trade deficit soared to its highest point in 12 years under Trump. Now, Trump is promising to start a global trade war by putting a new 10% tax on products coming into the United States from all countries-- costing the average household as much as \$1,500 extra per year.*
 - *Donald Trump has weakened and endangered America's most important international alliances. His former national security advisor says Trump will withdraw the United States from NATO, and Trump said he would encourage Putin and Russia to do 'whatever the hell they want' to our allies if they don't pay more into NATO.*

It is helpful to remind voters that the national security advisors who restrained Trump in his first term now oppose him and won't be there to restrain him again.

Takeaways: Framing the Best Case on National Security and Foreign Policy (Cont'd)

5. There are compelling contrasts between the candidates that help raise confidence in President Biden:
- *Joe Biden has stood up against Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine because Biden knows that if Putin is allowed to succeed in Ukraine, he will be emboldened to attack other countries, including some NATO allies. Donald Trump refuses to stand up to Putin and has made it clear he would give Putin a free pass to expand his aggression to other countries in Europe, including our NATO allies.*
 - *Joe Biden has decades of experience in dealing with foreign policy and national security issues at the highest level, and understands the importance of being smart, strategic, and level-headed in dealing with international issues. Donald Trump's approach, on the other hand, is chaotic, impulsive, and ill-informed - qualities that make him more dangerous, which could get us into a war.*
 - *Joe Biden has stood up for America's values of freedom, democracy, and human rights. Donald Trump, on the other hand, has consistently sided with autocrats and dictators who not only oppose our core values, but want to see American democracy weakened. America is more respected around the world today than it was four years ago because Biden has put the United States back on the side of democracy and human rights.*

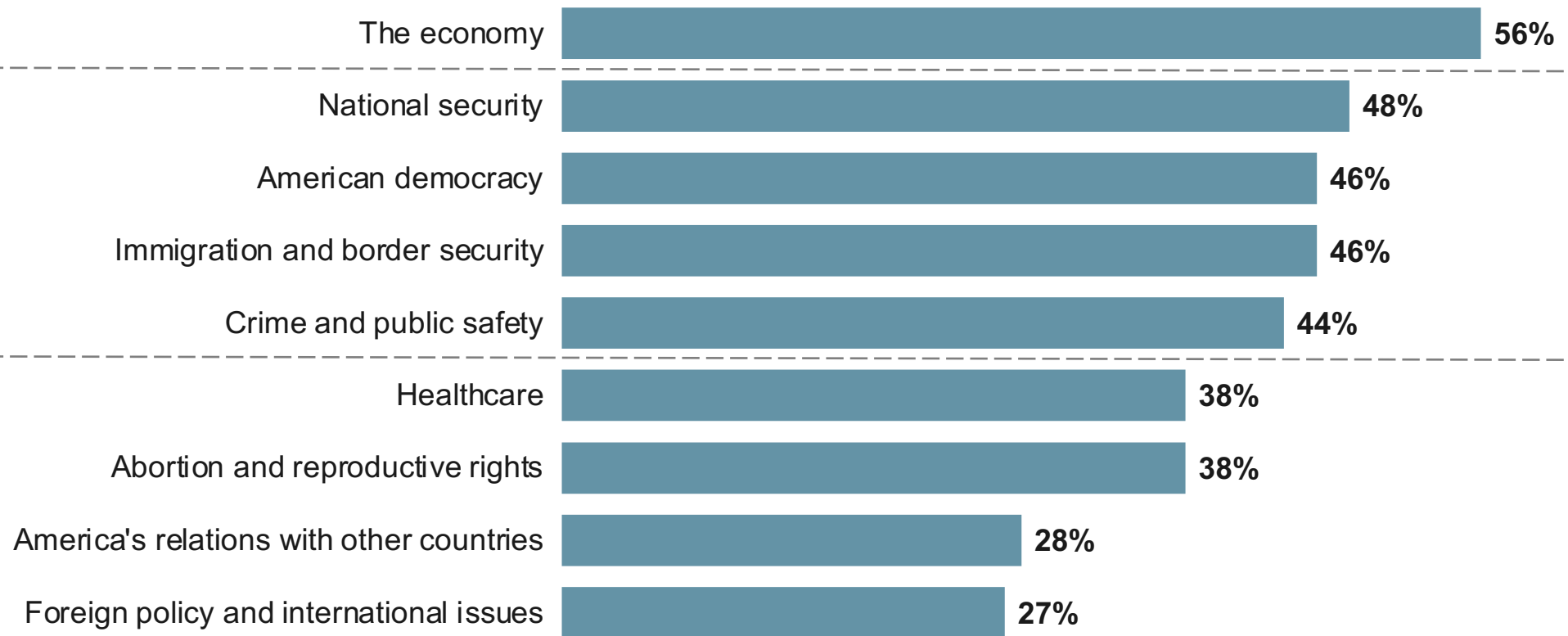
Independents, men, and voters of color also respond to an economic contrast that stresses President Biden's invest-in-America approach.

Takeaways: Framing the Best Case on National Security and Foreign Policy (Cont'd)

6. Most Americans have a favorable opinion of NATO and across party lines voters want the United States to continue playing a leadership role in NATO. Trump's hostility toward NATO and the threat that he will withdraw the United States from NATO is a key vulnerability.
7. A significant majority of voters want the United States to continue providing military weapons to help Ukraine fight Russian aggression, and voters say our goal should be to help Ukraine defeat Russian aggression rather than achieving a negotiated end to the war that concedes territory to Putin. It is important to be clear that Trump's version of "ending the war in one day" really means giving Putin what he wants.
8. The most compelling reasons for the United States to support Ukraine include direct references to Putin:
 - *If Vladimir Putin and Russia are allowed to succeed in their invasion of Ukraine, they will be encouraged to undertake more acts of aggression against other countries, including against our NATO allies.*
 - *Vladimir Putin has been indicted for war crimes by the International Criminal Court because of his horrific acts of brutality against civilians in Ukraine, including children and the elderly, and the United States must make sure that Putin is not rewarded for his brutality.*

The economy remains a dominant issue, but national security, democracy, immigration, and crime also are very important to near majorities.

Extremely Important Issues in the 2024 Election*



*10 rating on 0-to-10 scale

Reproductive rights and democracy are key drivers for progressives, while MAGA Republicans are most likely to emphasize immigration and national security.

Extremely Important Issues in the 2024 Election*

	All voters	Liberal Democrats	Other Democrats	Independents	Non-MAGA Republicans	MAGA Republicans
The economy	56%	43%	50%	55%	61%	74%
National security	48%	35%	45%	43%	53%	66%
American democracy	46%	59%	51%	29%	39%	44%
Immigration and border security	46%	24%	36%	35%	59%	72%
Crime and public safety	44%	31%	40%	46%	46%	64%
Healthcare	38%	47%	43%	41%	28%	32%
Abortion and reproductive rights	38%	65%	45%	30%	21%	19%
America's relations with other countries	28%	26%	33%	24%	24%	35%
Foreign policy and international issues	27%	22%	27%	25%	26%	36%

*10 rating on 0-to-10 scale

Voters' top priorities among these issue are immigration, keeping America safe, and keeping America out of wars

Top Four Issues in my 2024 Vote for President

	All voters	Liberal Democrats	Other Democrats	Independents	Republicans
Dealing with immigration and border security	54%	27%	42%	46%	78%
Keeping America safe from terrorism or violent extremism	49%	41%	48%	49%	54%
Keeping America out of wars	40%	42%	42%	48%	36%
Protecting and advancing democracy in the United States	33%	52%	42%	28%	19%
Investing in advanced manufacturing jobs and bringing supply chains home to America from overseas	33%	27%	35%	37%	34%
Supporting America's military	26%	11%	19%	23%	39%
Addressing the flow of fentanyl into the United States	23%	15%	18%	33%	29%
Dealing with Vladimir Putin and Russia	21%	29%	23%	16%	16%
Working with other countries to address global climate change	19%	38%	26%	14%	6%
Dealing with Israel and the war in Gaza	19%	28%	17%	19%	14%
Protecting and advancing democracy in the world	17%	31%	25%	17%	6%
Dealing with the war in Ukraine	17%	26%	18%	13%	12%
Dealing with Iran and preventing Iran from getting a nuclear weapon	17%	12%	16%	17%	19%
Dealing with Xi Jinping and China	15%	10%	12%	17%	20%
Dealing with international trade and tariffs	12%	9%	13%	16%	13%

Among demographic groups, white voters under age 40 are most likely to prioritize the war in Gaza (26%). Black voters are more likely than other groups to prioritize democracy at home (46%) and democracy in the world (27%).

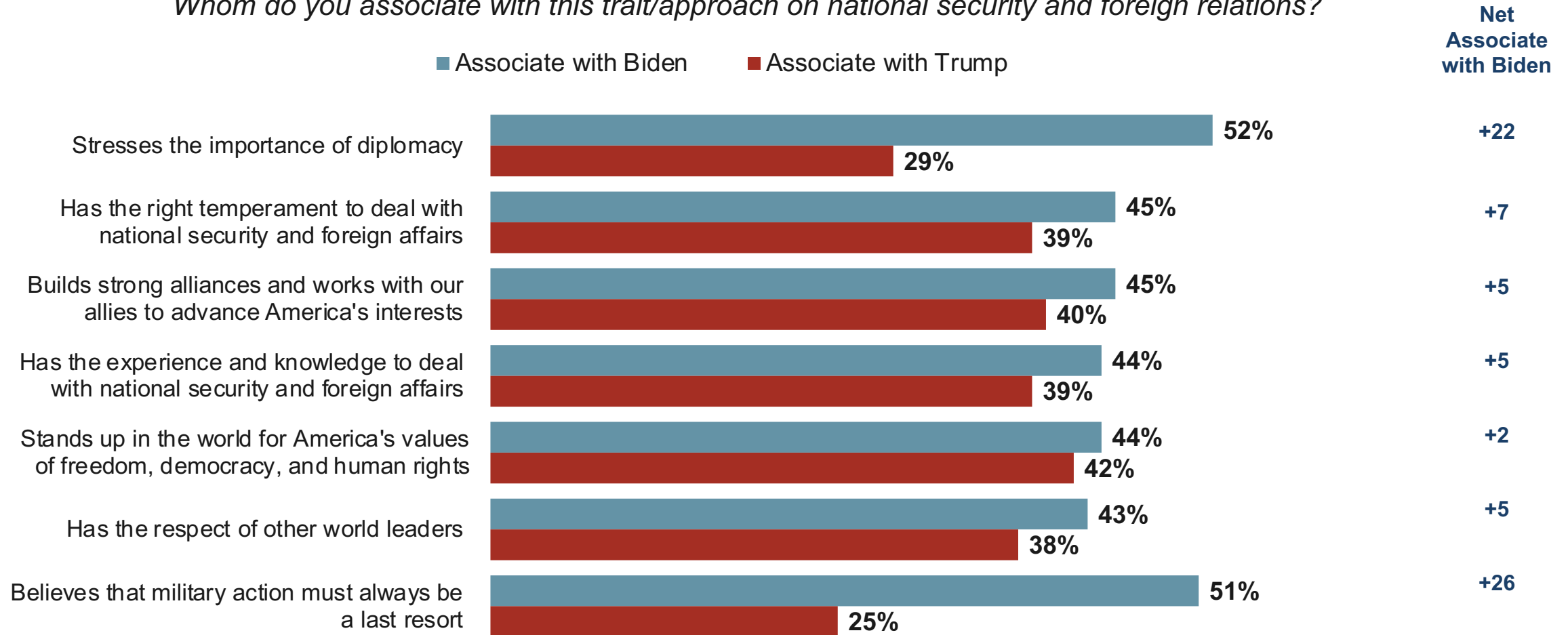
Half of all voters prioritize “putting America first,” but many attributes associated with Biden are in the top tier of priorities.

Four Most Important Traits/Approaches to Have in a President Today

	All voters	Liberal Democrats	Other Democrats	Independents	Republicans
Puts America first	51%	24%	37%	57%	72%
Stands up in the world for America's values of freedom, democracy, and human rights	42%	49%	40%	40%	41%
Has the experience and knowledge to deal with national security and foreign affairs	37%	52%	41%	34%	27%
Builds strong alliances and works with our allies to advance America's interests	37%	42%	44%	35%	31%
Has the right temperament to deal with national security and foreign affairs	36%	49%	43%	28%	28%
Has the respect of other world leaders	35%	44%	36%	33%	29%
Is smart and strategic in dealing with our adversaries and promoting our interests	31%	32%	29%	35%	30%
Is strong and tough in dealing with our adversaries and promoting our interests	30%	16%	24%	35%	40%
Believes it is important for America to be a world leader	22%	17%	20%	18%	27%
Believes America should be much less involved in world affairs and more focused on issues at home	20%	12%	18%	26%	25%
Believes that military action must always be a last resort	19%	23%	23%	23%	13%
Stresses the importance of diplomacy	18%	30%	25%	13%	10%
Willing to use our military to respond to threats by our adversaries	13%	7%	9%	12%	19%

Biden has comparative advantages on several key leadership attributes.

Whom do you associate with this trait/approach on national security and foreign relations?

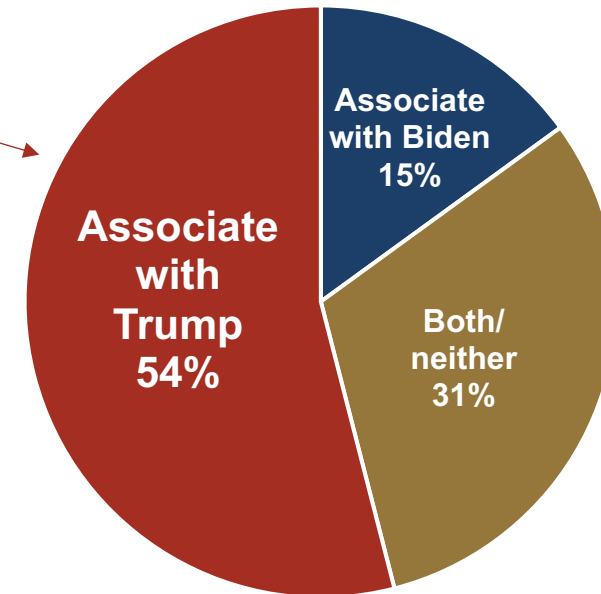


Voters do not want a president who believes America should “go it alone” and say Trump is more likely to do so.

Traits/Approaches I DO NOT WANT in a President Today

With whom do you associate this trait/approach?

51%	Believes America should go it alone instead of working in cooperation with our allies
20%	Believes America should be much less involved in world affairs and more focused on issues at home
14%	Willing to use our military to respond to threats by our adversaries
9%	Believes that military action must always be a last resort
6%	Puts America first
6%	Believes it is important for America to be a world leader



We used MaxDiff analysis to test the relative persuasiveness of eight criticisms of Donald Trump.

NOTE ON INTERPRETING MAXDIFF SCORES:

Scores above 100 indicate an item is above average in importance; Scores below 100 indicate an item is below average in importance

DEMOCRACY	174.1	Here at home, Donald Trump was the first president to try to block the peaceful transition of power by instigating the attack on the Capitol. Trump has undermined democracy and admires dictators, applauding the lack of press freedoms in Russia, extrajudicial killings in the Philippines, and dictatorial power in China, North Korea, and other countries.
ECONOMICS	115.3	Donald Trump talked tough on trade, but his policies hurt American farmers and cost American jobs, and America's trade deficit soared to its highest point in 12 years under Trump. Now, Trump is promising to start a global trade war by putting a new 10% tax on products coming into the United States from all countries--costing the average household as much as \$1,500 extra per year.
ALLIES	106.8	Donald Trump has weakened and endangered America's most important international alliances. His former national security advisor says Trump will withdraw the United States from NATO, and Trump said he would encourage Putin and Russia to do 'whatever the hell they want' to our allies if they don't pay more into NATO.
ADVISORS	94.4	None of the national security and foreign policy officials from Donald Trump's first term who restrained him and stopped him from doing dangerous things will be there to stop him in a second term. The people who served him previously say they can no longer support Trump, and now they have been replaced by extreme advisors who will feed Trump's worst instincts.
BORDER	91.1	Donald Trump instructed Republicans to kill the strongest border enforcement legislation in history because he thinks a border crisis helps him politically. The bipartisan legislation that Trump blocked would have funded 1,500 new border patrol agents, paid for new technology to stop fentanyl from coming over the border, and given the president the ability to close the border when necessary. Donald Trump talks tough on the border but doesn't want to solve the problem.
MILITARY	84.1	Donald Trump has a long track record of insulting our military leaders and disrespecting those who have served in the military. He has called those who gave life and limb for our country 'suckers' and 'losers'. As president, he was constantly at odds with military commanders and ignored their expertise. Now, he has a plan to politicize the military and use it as part of his effort to subvert the Constitution.
AUTOCRATS	67.9	Donald Trump expresses admiration for autocratic rulers and brags about his close relationships with dictators like Vladimir Putin and Kim Jong Un. The truth is that those dictators do not actually respect Trump and are just using him for their own purposes.
CORRUPT	66.4	Donald Trump and his family abused the power of the White House and engaged in corrupt conflicts of interest to line their own pockets. Ivanka Trump received Chinese patents days after her father relaxed sanctions on a China-owned company. Jared Kushner raised \$2 billion from Saudi Arabia for his investment fund shortly after negotiating with them for the Trump administration. Trump himself made millions from foreign interests who curried favor with him by paying high rates at his hotels and resorts.

We also used MaxDiff to rank the importance of seven contrasts on national security and foreign policy between Joe Biden and Donald Trump

NOTE ON INTERPRETING MAXDIFF SCORES:

Scores above 100 indicate an item is above average in importance; Scores below 100 indicate an item is below average in importance

PUTIN	152.9	Joe Biden has stood up against Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine because Biden knows that if Putin is allowed to succeed in Ukraine, he will be emboldened to attack other countries, including some NATO allies. Donald Trump refuses to stand up to Putin and has made it clear he would give Putin a free pass to expand his aggression to other countries in Europe, including our NATO allies.
AMERICAN VALUES	110.7	Joe Biden has stood up for America's values of freedom, democracy, and human rights. Donald Trump, on the other hand, has consistently sided with autocrats and dictators who not only oppose our core values, but want to see American democracy weakened. America is more respected around the world today than it was four years ago because Biden has put the United States back on the side of democracy and human rights.
SMART AND LEVELHEADED	99.0	Joe Biden has decades of experience in dealing with foreign policy and national security issues at the highest level, and understands the importance of being smart, strategic, and level-headed in dealing with international issues. Donald Trump's approach, on the other hand, is chaotic, impulsive, and ill-informed - qualities that make him more dangerous, which could get us into a war.
ECONOMIC	97.3	Joe Biden made America's economy stronger by investing in American manufacturing, bringing more of our supply chains back home from overseas, and making sure America is the leader in research and innovation. Donald Trump talked tough on trade, but failed to strengthen America's ability to compete against other countries. Under Trump America's trade deficit soared to a record high.
GO IT ALONE	94.7	Joe Biden knows that we must work with other countries to make progress on global challenges, while Donald Trump wants to isolate America and go it alone. After Trump abandoned international efforts to address climate change, Biden restored America's participation and leadership in developing global climate solutions and helped pass the most comprehensive climate bill in U.S. history.
ALLIANCES	77.8	Joe Biden restored American leadership in the world and rebuilt our alliances after Donald Trump alienated our allies and made them question whether they could count on the United States. Because Biden is respected by other leaders, he has been able to strengthen NATO, rally the world to stand with Ukraine, and build new military alliances in Asia to deter aggression by China.
CHINA	67.8	Joe Biden has been smart and strong in dealing with the threat posed by China. As president, Biden took action to reduce our economic reliance on China by investing in high tech manufacturing industries at home. While strengthening our military alliances in the Asia-Pacific region to deter Chinese aggression, Biden also negotiated with China to prevent the risk of a military conflict and to reduce the flow of fentanyl. Donald Trump too often let China have the upper hand and was more interested in attacking China without getting results.

Making the case on national security and foreign policy adds 4 points to Biden's margin both nationally and in battleground states.

