GSG
GLOBAL STRATEGY GROUP

TO:	Interested Parties
FROM:	Global Strategy Group, The Immigration Hub, FWD.us, and America's Voice
DATE:	September 2020
RE:	**NEW SURVEY RESULTS: Battlefield research on immigration**

A new survey of likely voters in battleground states conducted for The Immigration Hub, FWD.us, and America's Voice shows that Trump remains in a weak position, particularly on his immigration policies, providing an opportunity for Joe Biden and Democrats to take advantage as we head into the final weeks of the presidential campaign. Key findings from Global Strategy Group's recent poll of 1,500 likely voters are as follows:

KEY SURVEY FINDINGS

- **Consistent with other public polls, Trump continues to lag behind Biden across the presidential battleground.** Trump trails Joe Biden by six points across the battleground (50% Biden, 44% Trump) – almost identical to the same gap we saw in our June battleground poll (51% Biden, 44% Trump). Trump's overall job approval is under water by eight points (46% approve/54% disapprove), and among the "swing voters" Trump needs to win the election, his disapproval is significantly more negative (38% approve/58% disapprove).

- **Trump's weakness extends to his positions on immigration, which more voters say is a reason to vote against him than for him.** Importantly, 43% see Trump's position on immigration as a reason to vote against him, while just 39% of voters see it as a reason to vote for him – suggesting that Trump's rhetoric and messaging on immigration is doing little for him outside of his core group of supporters. Among Independents, just 33% say it is a reason to vote for him, while 44% say it is a reason to vote against him.

- **Trump's "amnesty" hit against Joe Biden is falling flat.** In several recent advertisements, the Trump campaign and its allies are using the line that Joe Biden "*supports amnesty for 11 million illegal immigrants.*" However, our polling finds this line of attack to be falling flat as few voters – and even fewer swing voters – find this to raise doubts about voting for Biden, even though many believe the line to be true. That's because voters largely support a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants. Consider the following:
    - Just two in five voters (40%) – a number roughly equal to Trump's base – say Biden's support for amnesty raises "major doubts" about voting for Biden, including just 29% of "swing voters".
    - Few voters find this statement troubling in spite of the fact that more than seven in ten (71%) voters say that they find it believable that Biden holds this position.
    - Why do voters find this believable, yet not troubling? That's because voters themselves strongly support a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants. In our June battleground poll, we found that 82% of battleground voters support this and just 13% oppose it, "providing a path to earn citizenship for undocumented immigrants who have been long-standing members of the community, have paid taxes, and passed a background check."

- **Trump continues to be vulnerable on his immigration policies, particularly his family separation policy.** In contrast to the weak attack Trump is using against Biden on immigration, voters continue to find Trump's family separation policy to be very troubling. The following message raises "major doubts" about voting for Trump among 53% of voters overall, and among 56% of "swing voters."
    - *"That Trump's practice of separating families and putting kids in cages at the border is cruel, inhumane, and not who we are as Americans"*

In addition, the following immigration-related messages about DREAMers and the border wall also raised major doubts among a majority of voters in the battleground states:
- ○ *"That despite the Supreme Court ruling against him, Trump is trying again to deport DREAMers, those immigrants who came here as children, grew up in the United States, went to school here, and work here"*
- ○ *"That Trump keeps pushing to spend $20 billion on a border wall that doesn't solve our biggest safety threats, when we should be spending that money helping businesses stay afloat and helping people who have lost their jobs"*

● **Conservative immigration arguments are losing to progressive alternatives across a series of key issues including sanctuary cities, the border wall, financial relief during the pandemic, and citizenship for the undocumented.** In a series of back-and-forth arguments about key immigration issues, conservative arguments consistently lose out, often yielding only around four in ten voters (i.e. the Trump base). Below are a series of examples outlining the best ways to push back against conservative immigration arguments.

On the issue of how to handle the 11 million undocumented immigrants currently living in the country:
- ○ **62% agree with the progressive side:** *"Those who say that instead of the mass deportation of millions of people, we should create a pathway to citizenship for those undocumented immigrants who are long-standing members of our communities"*
- ○ **Just 38% agree with the conservative side:** *"Those who say that we should target criminal illegal immigrants for deportation, but also that any illegal immigrant that comes into contact with law enforcement should be deported*

On the issue of sanctuary cities and the role of local police in federal immigration enforcement:
- ○ **60% agree with the progressive side:** *"Those who say that we make neighborhoods safer when we let local law enforcement decide how best to protect public safety and build trust with the communities they serve"*
- ○ **Just 40% agree with the conservative side:** *"Those who say we must ban sanctuary cities to keep dangerous criminals out of our communities"*

On the issue of who should be eligible for financial relief during the coronavirus pandemic:
- ○ **59% agree with the progressive side:** *"Those who say that essential workers, like health care workers and farm workers, who have worked hard, paid taxes, and helped us get through the coronavirus pandemic should be eligible for financial relief."*
- ○ **Just 41% agree with the conservative side:** *"Those who say that we need to take care of U.S. citizens first and that it's wrong to give a handout to illegal immigrants who broke the law."*

On the issue of the U.S. border with Mexico:
- ○ **58% agree with the progressive side:** *"Those who say that instead of wasting 20 billion dollars on a border wall, we should invest in smarter border management that protects human rights"*
- ○ **Just 42% agree with the conservative side:** *"Those who say we need strong border security, including a border wall between the United States and Mexico."*

ABOUT THIS SURVEY
Global Strategy Group conducted an online survey of 1,500 likely voters from August 28th to September 7th, 2020. Findings also highlight results from a 1,504 likely voters survey from May 27th to June 3rd, 2020 battlefield poll. Both surveys had a confidence interval of +/- 2.5%. Both survey samples included voters from the battleground states of Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. Care has been taken to ensure that the geographic and demographic characteristics of the likely electorate across the battleground are properly represented.