



To: Interested Parties

From: Global Strategy Group on behalf of Immigration

Hub Date: October 14, 2021

Re: NEW SURVEY – Strong support continues for lasting protections for undocumented immigrants, Democrats have the opportunity to own the immigration narrative

Global Strategy Group recently partnered with Immigration Hub to conduct public opinion research related to proposed citizenship legislation and the state of immigration in the U.S. **Our results demonstrate that strong support exists for lasting protections for undocumented people in the United States, especially among unmotivated Democratic voters who will be crucial turnout voters in the midterm election.**

Voters clearly see citizenship and other proposals that provide undocumented immigrants with legal status as detached from the border: While voters have concerns about the current situation at the border, they are not anti-immigrant, anti-citizenship, or anti-legalization. In fact, support for these immigration proposals remains consistently high. More so, nearly half of voters fault Republicans in Congress for blocking President Biden from taking action on the issue, while a majority want to see the opposite. Acting on these popular proposals while highlighting Republican obstructionism is a strong way to speak to voters – especially critical unmotivated Democratic voters – to improve Biden and the Democrats' standing on immigration and energize Democratic voters for the midterms.

Recent findings from a survey fielded last week (September 17-26) among 1,200 voters in eight 2022 Senate battleground states are as follows:

There is broad and vast support for lasting protections for undocumented people living in the U.S., whether by providing a path to citizenship or another form of legalization.

When independently testing support for a pathway to citizenship, a clear majority (71%) support a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants living in the U.S. if certain requirements are met over deporting them, including 88% of Democrats, 75% of independents, and 53% of Republicans. Support extends to other immigration proposals as well, with a majority of battleground voters supporting each of the following:

- 69% support the DREAM Act (just 24% oppose), including 89% of Democrats, 64% of independents, and 50% of Republicans.
- 68% support citizenship for undocumented essential workers (just 25% oppose), including 88% of Democrats, 61% of independents, and 50% of Republicans.
- 68% support citizenship for undocumented farm workers (just 25% oppose), including 88% of Democrats, 61% of independents, and 50% of Republicans.
- 67% support undocumented immigrants who have lived here for 10 years and have not committed a serious crime gaining a green card (just 26% oppose), including 87% of Democrats, 69% of independents, and 47% of Republicans.
- 58% support undocumented immigrants receiving work permits that would authorize them to stay and work in the country legally (without becoming a citizen), including 79% of Democrats, 55% of independents, and 38% of Republicans.

Inaction from Biden and Democrats could keep unmotivated Democrats at home in the 2022 midterms.

Opposing these legalization proposals creates potential vulnerabilities for battleground candidates and points to a clear opportunity for Biden and Democrats to better their stance with voters on immigration.

- Two in three battleground voters say they would be “upset” if these immigration citizenship proposals do not pass (66%), including 90% of Democrats and 75% of independents, and nearly half say they would be less likely to vote for their senator if they learned they had voted against these bills (48%).
- In looking at unmotivated Democrats – self-identified Democrats in these battleground states who say they are feeling less motivated to vote in the 2022 election (13% of respondents in this survey) – four in five (80%) say passing these permanent protection bills is urgent.
- Nearly nine in ten unmotivated Democrats (86%) say they will be upset if these citizenship proposals do not pass, and another 60% say they would be less likely to vote for their senator if they learned they had voted against these bills (60%).

Ultimately, getting these unmotivated voters to the polls will be crucial to holding Democratic majorities come 2022.

Voters support legalization proposals even in a tough immigration environment that is currently centered around the border. But Democrats can improve their standing on the border and immigration with the right messaging.

Tracking with other available public data, President Biden’s approval ratings on immigration are under water because the main issue associated with immigration right now is the border. Given concerns about the state of the border, Biden is 23-points under water on his handling of immigration (35%/58%) overall, mapping almost exactly onto his approval ratings on his handling of the situation involving migrants at the border specifically, where he is at 33% approve/56% disapprove.

However, our research continues to find that there are effective ways for President Biden and the Democrats to communicate on immigration and the situation at the border to improve their standing on this issue. This opportunity exists because the battleground electorate is not anti-immigrant. While voters do see a problem at the border, what they want is solutions that fix the immigration system in a fair and humane way that is in line with America’s values – which is where the Democrats should focus their messaging. Consider the following:

- By a 54%-46% margin, battleground voters prefer building “a functioning immigration system that processes people in a fair, orderly, and humane way” over an enforcement-only approach that relies on “more border security, more border patrol agents, and crackdowns on illegal immigration.”
- By a 56%-44% margin, battleground voters would prefer America be “a world leader in helping refugees, including accepting some to live here” over America focusing on itself and taking in fewer refugees.
- Democrats should also illustrate how Republicans are blocking progress and solutions on this issue. By a 25-point margin (47% to 22%), voters believe Republicans are blocking Biden from taking action on immigration instead of working with him. But by a 33-point margin (61%-28%), voters want Republicans to work with Biden on bipartisan solutions to fix our country’s immigration system.
- In addition to messaging on the border, Biden and Democrats can move the conversation around immigration towards the broadly popular legalization proposals. Delivering on citizenship or another form of legalization can motivate key voters in battleground states.

ABOUT THIS SURVEY

Global Strategy Group conducted an online survey of 1,200 2022 battleground Senate voters between September 17-26, 2021 in AZ, FL, GA, NC, NV, NH, PA, and WI. The survey had a confidence interval of +/- 2.8%. All interviews were conducted via web-based panel. Care has been taken to ensure the geographic and demographic divisions of the population of the electorate are properly represented.