

To: Immigration Hub, Unidos, Somos Votantes
From: BSP Research
Date: September 14, 2023
Re: Immigration Survey of Latino Voters in Battleground States

ABOUT THE POLL

On behalf of Immigration Hub, Somos Votantes, and UnidosUS Action, BSP Research conducted a survey of 2,000 Latino registered voters across battleground states and congressional districts to assess voter attitudes about immigration policies. The poll was run from July 14-23, 2023. Interviews were conducted in Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Nevada, Pennsylvania, and Texas, and several battleground congressional districts in California and New York. The survey was conducted via live telephone and online, and available in English or Spanish, per respondent preference. Final data are weighted to reflect the Latino registered voter population across these states, and the poll has a total margin of error of $\pm 2.2\%$. Below is a summary of key findings.

KEY FINDINGS

- **President Biden and Democrats have an opportunity to gain critical votes and increase enthusiasm among battleground Latino voters by taking action for Dreamers and long-settled immigrant families in the U.S. and by stressing a balanced approach to the nation's immigration system.** A strong majority of Latino voters continue to show overwhelming support for a balanced approach to the nation's immigration system that includes humane and orderly border security and action to address Dreamers, long-settled immigrant families, and undocumented immigrants currently in the U.S.
 - **Republicans have not made in-roads with battleground Latino voters on immigration.** Survey results demonstrate that the majority of Latino voters reject Republican extreme policies and continue to view the GOP as hostile to immigrants and their contributions to the economy. A majority believe that Republicans are failing working families and dividing Americans by banning history books in schools and attacking reproductive rights and immigrant communities.
 - **A majority of Latino voters support President Biden taking administrative action** to provide a path to legal status and work authorization to long-term immigrants, including Dreamers, eligible TPS holders and undocumented workers.
 - **The Biden administration's immigration policies are very popular, offering Democrats a significant opportunity to demonstrate contrast with Republicans and win critical Latino voters.** By articulating their position and contrasting against the GOP rhetoric and policies, President Biden and Democrats can increase Latino support dramatically.
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1. President Biden and Democrats have an opportunity to mobilize voters and increase enthusiasm among battleground Latino voters by doubling down on their messaging in support of balanced solutions, including orderly and humane border security and administrative action for Dreamers and immigrants already living and working in the country.

President Biden and the Democrats gain favorability among Latino voters when presented with a balanced approach to immigration policy that addresses both border security and immigrant rights. Currently, Biden stands at 61% approve to 39% disapprove among Latinos (+22).

- **Taking a conservative approach** – increasing border security by adding more agents to monitor and process migrants, but taking no action to support immigrants already living here, such as NOT offering a new path to legal status – **yields net negative enthusiasm for Biden at 33% more enthusiastic to 42% less enthusiastic (-9 net).**
- The most well-received immigration approach is when the President takes a balanced approach: increase border security by adding more agents to monitor and process migrants and also takes action to support immigrants already living here, such as providing temporary legal status to undocumented immigrants, **resulting in 63% more enthusiastic to 15% less enthusiastic (+48 net).**

Though immigration is not the highest in priority for Latino voters at this time – cost of living and inflation remains the top issue – immigration is still highly salient to many Latino voters. When asked about candidate positioning on immigration, more than one third of Latino voters **(36%) state that the issue of immigration has a lot of influence on the candidate they will support for President in 2024.**

Further, when voters are re-asked 2024 presidential vote choice at the end of the survey after hearing about both Biden and Republican current positioning on immigration, **Latino support for Biden over Trump increases +9 and support for Biden over DeSantis increases +11, suggesting that as Latino voters learn more about each candidates position on immigration, they are more inclined to vote for Biden.**

2. Republicans have not made in-roads with Latinos on the immigration issue. Latinos continue to view the GOP as hostile to Latinos and anti-immigrant. There is an important opportunity to engage Latino voters through messaging on Biden administration wins, especially on immigration, as there is little awareness about Republican immigration policy plans.

- When asked about policy at the U.S.-Mexico border, a clear majority of Latino voters (58%) feel that Republicans are currently making things worse (35%) or completely ignoring the situation (23%). Only 30% of Latinos feel that Republicans are trying to address the situation at the border. Biden and Democrats receive much higher marks, however there is considerable uncertainty over exactly what Biden is doing to address the southern border.

- A majority of Latinos reject Republican objectives such as “Building the Wall” (63% oppose to 37% support) and Trump era policies such as “Family separation at the Border” (69% negative to 22% positive).
- By a 2-to-1 margin Latino voters oppose denying citizenship to U.S. born children with non-citizen parents and almost 70% oppose Republican proposals to block migrants who enter the U.S. from applying for asylum.

3. Policies that support immigrants already living and working in the US, such as expanding TPS and creating legal pathways for migration and citizenship, have strong support among Latino voters.

- 85% of Latino voters would support President Biden expanding TPS to include immigrants who have gone through background checks, are already living in the U.S., and have come from countries that have been severely affected by dangerous conditions, allowing them to stay and work in the U.S.
- 77% support streamlining the process to allow Dreamers and DACA recipients to stay and legally work in the U.S. permanently.
- 75% support President Biden issuing an executive order to allow undocumented immigrants who have lived and worked in this country for a long time, to be able to live and work in the U.S. without fear of deportation.
- When presented with policy alternatives taken by President Biden, 80% of Latino voters believe that “a new balanced approach on immigration that increases resources for border security while also creating a way for Dreamers and undocumented immigrants currently living in the U.S. to earn a pathway to legal status and citizenship if they meet certain requirements” is the correct approach.

4. Biden Administration policies are very popular and have a significant opportunity to demonstrate contrast with Republicans. Democrats can hit Republicans on their extreme immigration agenda and remind Latino voters of Democratic solutions for working families. On Republican immigration counter-messaging, the two overall strongest arguments that resonated most with Latino voters were related to the economy and lack of solutions:

- **61% of Latino voters agree** that “Republicans bash immigrants who contribute to American communities and our economy, including immigrants who are small business owners, farmers, first responders and taxpayers.
- **Similarly, 61% of Latino voters also agree** that “Republicans don't have solutions for working families. They divide Americans by taking away reproductive rights from women, banning history books in schools, and attacking immigrants to try to distract us from their failure to deliver bipartisan solutions for our economy and immigration system.” 1 in 3 Latino voters strongly agree with this message.

When hearing about President Biden's comprehensive approach to immigration issues, Latino voters overwhelmingly agree Biden policies are the right approach:

- 78% agree this is the right approach: "President Biden believes that we need a safe, orderly and humane immigration system, and that's why he's pushing for fair and fast processing of refugee families at the border by increasing investments in facilities, technology, and judges. Migrants who arrive at the border are properly screened and those who are not eligible to be here are removed. Biden is also working with other Latin American countries to enhance legal pathways and share responsibility in addressing the causes of migration."