



To: Interested Parties

## **The Power of Reproductive Freedom**

As the 2024 general election approaches, it is clearer than ever that abortion is one of the top issues on the minds of voters. Most notably, abortion is **the issue** where Democrats have an outsized advantage to draw contrast with an increasingly extreme Republican Party.

Every election since the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* has shown what we always knew to be true—that the vast majority of Americans resoundingly support reproductive freedom. We have seen victory after victory in states like Kansas, Ohio, Kentucky, Montana, California, Michigan, and Vermont, where Americans across the political spectrum strongly rejected attempts to ban or restrict abortion care. Voters understand that decisions about abortion care are deeply personal and should be made by the pregnant person and their families, not politicians, and will cast their votes in support of ballot measures and candidates that support reproductive freedom.

### **When Abortion is on the Ballot, Abortion Wins**

We have seen in election after election since the *Dobbs* decision that reproductive freedom matters to voters across all demographics, including Republicans and Independents.

- 8 in 10 Americans say the decision to have an abortion should be left to a woman and her doctor [KFF Tracking Poll, [February 2024](#)]
- 86% of Americans said they support protecting access to abortion for patients experiencing miscarriage or other pregnancy-related emergencies. [KFF Tracking Poll, [February 2024](#)]
- 65% of voters nationally support a law guaranteeing access to abortion nationwide. [Fox News, [March 2024](#)]
- Americans overwhelmingly oppose a federal law banning abortion nationwide: 80% of those surveyed opposed it, including 65% of Republicans and 83% of Independents [USA TODAY/Suffolk University, [June 2023](#)]
- By a 21-point margin (58%-37%), Americans describe the GOP's abortion position as extreme, including Independents by 24 points (59% extreme – 35% not extreme) [Navigator, [Oct 2023](#)]
- 75% of young people (18-34 yrs) surveyed said abortion should be legal in all or most circumstances, and 61% say they would take action to protect abortion rights [Change Research/Teen Vogue, [Aug-Sept 2023](#)]
- Nearly three-quarters of voters agree that the GOP has gone too far on abortion and politicians need to back down, including a majority (51%) of those who voted for Donald Trump in 2020 [Change Research, [May 2023](#)]

**Running an affirmative campaign on abortion is the path to defeating Donald Trump and MAGA Republicans.** Polling from [Fox News](#) shows that among registered voters nationally, Americans trust Biden over Trump on abortion by a +12 point margin, including a +29 among moderates, +20 among Independents, and +48 among Black voters. Recent [polling](#) in battleground states from the *New York Times* and Siena College found that battleground voters also trust President Biden more than Trump when it comes to abortion by a 9-point margin. This trust advantage is especially true among women (+18), voters 18-29 (+36), Independent voters (+24), and voters of color (+46).

This growing advantage can be widened even further, as Trump continues to run from his stance on abortion and voters remain confused by his position. Despite [bragging](#) about overturning *Roe* and expressing support for a [national ban](#), Trump continues to try to hide his anti-abortion record and is working overtime to [confuse](#) voters on [his position](#). According to a September 2023 Navigator [poll](#), 73% of voters believe that Republicans want to make abortion illegal in most or all cases, while only 56% of voters believe that Trump wants to make abortion illegal in most or all cases; with 29% not being sure of Trump's position on abortion (including 37% of Independents). Continued communication on Trump's true position on abortion is critical and can help widen this divide in Democrats' favor.

**Voters also understand that Republicans will ban abortion if they get the chance.**

Voters across the country can see the extreme, anti-abortion Republican party enacting cruel abortion bans and using every tool at their disposal in the [courts](#) and [statehouses](#) to restrict access to care en route to a national ban. Nearly two-thirds say Senate Republicans want to ban abortion (62%), including half of Independents (51%) and nearly three-quarters of Black voters (+72). Even Republican voters understand their own party's intentions, though they are split on how extreme the policies they push for will ultimately be: 44% say Senate Republicans want to ban abortion while 33% say they want to pass small restrictions. Nearly two-thirds of voters say that Republicans will pass or try to pass more restrictions if they win the next election (64%).

What's clear is that these Republican positions alienate voters: a majority agrees that Republicans are more extreme on the issue than Democrats (52%). While Democrats nearly universally trust Democrats over Republicans on abortion (+91), Republicans are more conflicted (+64), with nearly a third of voters not trusting their own party on abortion policy. Black (+65), AAPI (+28), and Hispanic (+19) voters trust Democrats, while White voters are divided (-1).

**Voters understand that exceptions do not work.** Horror story after [horror story](#) since the Supreme Court overturned *Roe* has exposed the truth behind the harm abortion bans cause. And the response from Republicans? Further [challenges](#) in court to make sure they can deny necessary, life-saving exceptions and continue to put pregnant people at risk of death—even bringing a case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court to block people from accessing the emergency abortion care they need.

By 17 points, voters believe that abortion bans with exceptions do not work as intended because there are too many circumstances where a person may need an abortion but not be able to get one. Voters understand that abortion bans restrict access for all women, with majorities of Democrats (87%), Independents (63%), and Republicans

(52%) agreeing that it's likely doctors who perform abortions will leave states where abortion is illegal or stop performing abortions altogether because it is too risky.

**Abortion is a top concern for voters - especially younger women - who need to be mobilized in 2024.** From our own research—including post-election and exit polling—we know that voters across demographics are mobilized by abortion. Our latest research found that certain cohorts, like Gen Z white women and younger Black women, are more motivated to support abortion at the ballot box just from hearing anti-abortion or opposition messaging.

These groups are primed for mobilization and are increasingly relying on social media as their go-to source for information, especially among young Latina women, young Black women, millennial women, AAPI women, and Gen Z women. And the trusted messengers these folks rely on are their friends, family, and mothers. Men similarly trust their friends and family, but also male politicians as credible sources of information. Overall, we found that the top-ranking actions are voting for a state candidate who supports legal access to abortion, sharing content on social media, and calling on friends and family to vote.

**How we talk about abortion matters**

When talking about abortion, it is crucial to use values-based messaging that is grounded in the latest data and research. Leaders must speak out with powerful, proactive messaging that engages the vast majority of Americans who support legal abortion and pushes back against rampant disinformation from anti-abortion extremists and politicians. The freedom to decide, especially as a direct contrast to controlling politicians, provides a powerful and uniquely effective framework for conversations around accessing the full range of reproductive health care in the United States.

It's also key to be specific and clear – when we are talking about abortion, we need to name it.

KEY LANGUAGE	
Defining our Side and Describing our Values	Describing Restrictions and Defining the Opposition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reproductive freedom</li> <li>• The freedom to decide</li> <li>• Personal decisions</li> <li>• Empathy and compassion</li> <li>• Safe, accessible, supported</li> <li>• Equity and justice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Controlling</li> <li>• Invasive/Intrusive</li> <li>• Politically motivated</li> <li>• Political interference</li> <li>• Self-interest and political gain</li> <li>• Taking away options</li> <li>• Criminalizing doctors and patients</li> </ul>

**Voters need to hear where Democrats stand on this issue.** This is just as important as knowing that Republicans are continuously working to push abortion care out of reach. It won't be enough to point out that the GOP will pass a nationwide ban on abortion; the contrast is important. The voters want and deserve more than promises of protection from a worst-case-scenario national abortion ban. Polls have shown time and time again that Americans want a national right to abortion codified into law.

**Nearly two-thirds of Americans support re-establishing a nationwide right to abortion in the United States. Support is especially strong among Democrats (+84), Independents (+34), and Black voters (+67).**

**Abortion is not just salient to voters, it's a mobilizer.** There is no doubt abortion is a salient issue that will strengthen support amongst our base and moderates, while also engaging and mobilizing our base of younger voters. But how we talk about abortion makes a huge difference. Talking about abortion within the framework of freedom remains the most effective way to shape the conversation around abortion. Some examples include:

- *“When it comes to decisions around abortion, pregnancy, and parenthood, I will always fight to protect reproductive freedom and a woman’s ability to make these deeply personal decisions.”*
- *“I, like the vast majority of Americans, believe that personal decisions about pregnancy should be made by women, with the support of their doctors and the people they love and trust—not by the politicians trying to control them.”*
- *“The reality is that every pregnancy is unique and complex. That’s why one-size-fits-all bans and restrictions on abortion endanger pregnant women and prevent doctors from providing the best health care to their patients.”*
- *“We are supposed to be passing laws that help people. Yet these abortion bans aren’t helping anyone—these bans are being used to control and manipulate others for political gain, power, and self-interest and have devastating real-world consequences for women and families.”*
- *“Most of us try to live our lives without interfering in other people’s personal decisions. We know that someone may end a pregnancy for different reasons. We cannot make their decisions because we haven’t walked in their shoes. Someone might face a web of barriers—including restrictions, travel distance to a clinic, or not being able to afford care—that can push abortion care out of reach or later into a pregnancy.”*

**Avoiding anti-abortion traps will continue to be an important part of the conversation.** Anti-abortion extremists and bad actors purposefully use inflammatory, medically inaccurate language as a means to manipulate and confuse voters. Avoiding these pitfalls is crucial as a means to pushback against their disinformation and lies.

HEAR THIS	SAY THIS
Abortion restrictions and limits	Abortion bans
Late-term abortion	Abortion later in pregnancy
Chemical abortion	Medication abortion
Maternal health centers, pregnancy care centers, crisis pregnancy centers	Fake health centers

**Further Resources:**

- [Communicating and Winning on Reproductive Freedom](#)
- [How to Respond to Tough Questions and Avoid Anti-Abortion Talking Points](#)