



TO: INTERESTED PARTIES

FROM: CARLY COOPERMAN

DATE: SEPTEMBER 27, 2022

RE: **BATTLEGROUND STATES GUN SAFETY STUDY ISSUES ANALYSIS: GUNS AND ABORTION**

Executive Summary

Schoen Cooperman Research conducted 4,800 interviews (600 per state) with likely voters in eight battleground states – Arizona, Colorado, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin – in August to assess the state of key races and examine the impact of gun policy on the election. In addition to analyzing the importance of gun safety, our research sought to identify which other issues and messaging frames could motivate voters to support Democrats.

The results were clear: **drawing a contrast between Democratic support for and Republican opposition to public safety through gun safety improves Democrats' generic ballot position.**

In each state's informed generic horserace – between a “Democrat who supports strengthening gun safety laws” and a “Republican who opposes more gun restrictions” – net support for Democrats increases by at least 7-points and as many as 17-points from the initial generic ballot.

While contrast messaging on gun violence prevention starts from a strong position for Democrats, our polling demonstrated how the advantage can be pressed further.

In addition to gun violence prevention, protecting abortion rights are clearly important to voters in these eight battleground states. Messaging that attacks Republican candidates by linking their extreme positions on these issues improves Democrats' overall position. **Pairing gun violence prevention with abortion rights is highly effective in drawing a contrast between Democrats and Republicans**, generating between 5 and 7 points of ballot movement toward Democrats in the generic vote for U.S. Congress in every state tested.

As our research demonstrates, voters this November and beyond are most concerned about one thing: the safety and security of our families and communities. **Highlighting a gun lobby candidate's opposition to women's health care combined with the candidate's opposition to common-sense gun safety provides a clear illustration of how their dangerous agenda is threatening the health and safety of every community. In the current environment, this type of messaging exposes these extreme candidates and offers a framework to begin disqualifying them among voters across the political spectrum in battleground states.**

Flow of Generic Vote

In all eight states, negative Republican messaging – especially messaging surrounding guns and abortion rights – is effective at improving Democrats’ position in the generic vote for Congress.

Table 2. Flow of Generic Vote					
State	Initial		Post-Messaging		Net Dem Increase
ARIZONA	44%	R +3	47%	D +3	+6
	47%		44%		
COLORADO	46%	D +5	50%	D +12	+7
	41%		38%		
GEORGIA	41%	R +6	45%	R +1	+5
	47%		46%		
MICHIGAN	46%	D +1	49%	D +7	+6
	45%		42%		
NEVADA	45%	R +3	48%	D +2	+5
	48%		46%		
OHIO	42%	R +8	46%	D +1	+9
	50%		45%		
PENNSYLVANIA	47%	D +3	50%	D +8	+5
	44%		42%		
WISCONSIN	43%	R +3	47%	D +3	+6
	46%		44%		

Initial & Informed Generic Vote

In the informed generic horserace, gun policy offers Democrats an effective contrast, with the **“Democrat who supports strengthening gun safety laws”** leading a **“Republican who opposes more gun restrictions”** by 3-points in Georgia, 4-points in Arizona and Nevada, 9-points in Ohio, 12-points in Michigan, 13-points in Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, and 17-points in Colorado.

Table 3. Initial and Informed Generic Vote					
State	Initial		Informed Generic Vote		Net Dem Increase
ARIZONA	44%	R +3	47%	D +4	+7
	47%		43%		
COLORADO	46%	D +5	53%	D +17	+12
	41%		36%		
GEORGIA	41%	R +6	47%	D +3	+9
	47%		44%		
MICHIGAN	46%	D +1	51%	D +12	+11
	45%		39%		
NEVADA	45%	R +3	48%	D +4	+7
	48%		44%		
OHIO	42%	R +8	49%	D +9	+17
	50%		40%		
PENNSYLVANIA	47%	D +3	51%	D +13	+10
	44%		38%		
WISCONSIN	43%	R +3	51%	D +13	+16
	46%		38%		

Impact of General Guns/Abortion Message

The combination guns/abortion message that attacks Republicans for their extreme agenda vis-à-vis supporting banning abortions and opposing common-sense gun safety laws is convincing to a majority of voters in each of the eight states.

Across these eight battleground states, this message is convincing to an average of 59% of voters.

Table 4. Impact of <u>General</u> Guns/Abortion Message		
	Message Summary	% Convincing
<u>EIGHT</u> <u>BATTLEGROUND</u> <u>STATES</u>	[GUNS/ABORTION] Republican politicians are pushing an extreme agenda that threatens the health and safety of residents in our state. They want to ban abortions in the state, even in cases of rape or incest. They also oppose common-sense gun safety laws, and support permitless carry. This dangerous, extreme agenda denies women lifesaving care while making it easier for violent criminals to carry firearms.	59%

Impact of Candidate-Specific Guns/Abortion Message

Further, the candidate-specific guns/abortion combination messages tested are persuasive to majorities of voters in those respective states.

Table 5. Impact of Candidate-Specific Guns/Abortion Message

Message Summary	% TOTAL Convincing	% Very Convincing
[JOHNSON – GUNS/ABORTION] (WI) Johnson is pushing a dangerous, extreme agenda that threatens the health and safety of Wisconsinites. He believes states should be able to ban abortions, even in cases of rape or incest. Johnson also opposed common-sense gun safety laws, making it easier for dangerous, violent criminals to access guns that can be used to kill law enforcement officers.	64%	48%
[O’DEA - GUNS/ABORTION] (CO) O’Dea, is pushing a dangerous, extreme agenda that makes our communities less safe. O’Dea wants to restrict abortions and supported policies that make it easier for violent criminals to access guns that can be used to kill law enforcement officers.	61%	42%
[DIXON - GUNS/ABORTION] (MI) Dixon is pushing a dangerous, extreme agenda that threatens the health and safety of Michiganders. Dixon wants to ban abortions, and described a 14-year-old child being sexually assaulted and raped by her uncle as a “perfect example” of someone who should be forced to give birth. Dixon also opposes common-sense gun safety laws, and supports permitless carry, making it easier for violent criminals to carry firearms.	61%	47%

Table 6. Impact of Candidate-Specific Guns/Abortion Message

Message Summary	% TOTAL Convincing	% Very Convincing
<p>[VANCE – GUNS/ABORTION] (OH) Vance is pushing an extreme agenda that threatens the health and safety of Ohioans. He wants to ban abortions, even in cases of rape or incest. Vance also opposed common-sense gun safety, making it easier for dangerous, violent criminals to access guns that can be used to kill law enforcement officers. This dangerous, extreme agenda denies women lifesaving care while making it easier for violent criminals to carry firearms.</p>	<p>60%</p>	<p>45%</p>
<p>[WALKER - GUNS/ABORTION] (GA) Walker is pushing a dangerous, extreme agenda that threatens the health and safety of Georgians. Walker wants to ban all abortions in Georgia, with no exceptions for rape, incest, or the life of the mother. Walker also supports permitless carry, making it easier for violent criminals to carry firearms.</p>	<p>60%</p>	<p>39%</p>
<p>[LAXALT – GUNS/ABORTION] (NV) Adam Laxalt is pushing a dangerous, extreme agenda that threatens the health and safety of Nevadans. He wanted to roll back protections for women and implement new barriers to ban abortion. He also opposed common-sense gun safety laws, and supports permitless carry, making it easier for violent criminals to carry firearms in public.</p>	<p>60%</p>	<p>39%</p>