



Memo: Insights from Project 2020

To: Interested Parties

From: Heritage Action

Background

Project 2020 is Heritage Action’s grassroots effort to directly counter the left’s policy foothold on swing voters. We are putting our trained activists known as Sentinels to work by asking them to educate voters in their communities. This voter engagement effort will speak directly with swing voters on the issues [we know they care most about](#), asking them to vote conservative and then recruiting them to join Heritage Action’s million-person grassroots network.

In 2019, we conducted extensive policy research on where voters stand on the conservative agenda today. We learned where voters are with us, and where the front-lines of the issues now are in our realigned nation. In January 2020, we developed an advanced data model to identify swing, persuadable voters in Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, North Carolina, and Iowa.

Project 2020 launched on April 1, marrying the knowledge we gained on the salience of today’s issue set with the targeting matrix of the voters who matter most. Since April 1, we have converted the first 100,000 door knocks we had scheduled to instead be voter phone calls due to the societal impact of COVID-19. These calls are then “chased” by text messages and persuasive digital ads. Later, we will follow up with in-person visits and events.

To date, Heritage Action has called 350,000 households, focusing on two groups of swing voters:

- Low-propensity Trump voters—voters who likely approve of Trump but are unlikely to vote based on their election histories.
- Suburban swing voters—likely voters who are persuadable and live along the beltways of metropolitan areas.

Swing Voter Summary

Of the 8,784 survey respondents:

- 48% identify as conservative
- 28% identify as moderate
- 9% identify as liberal
- 15% are unsure

Swing voters approve of the President’s handling of the crisis. They’re also open to conservative solutions for the pandemic and beyond.

Swing voters are concerned about the impact of the coronavirus and generally approve of Trump's handling of the crisis. Moreover, they are more concerned with health risks than the economy — but the economic concern is growing. This shifting dynamic represents a critical moment for the nation as the coronavirus's impact on society and the economy begins to eclipse health concerns.

President Trump and Coronavirus

Suburban swing voters and low-propensity Trump voters overwhelmingly approve of Trump's handling of the COVID crisis (63% approve to 21% disapprove). That pattern has held each week we conducted the survey.

Greatest Concerns: Health vs. the Economy

Health concerns currently outweigh economic concerns for voters, but economic fears are growing steadily.

When asked an open-ended question regarding what is most concerning about COVID-19, the most common response since April 1 has been “personal health” (27%) followed by “the national economy” (23%), “the health of loved ones/others” (21%), and then “loss of income” (5%).

Importantly, over the week of April 13, the percentage of swing voters answering “the health of loved ones/others” and “personal health” decreased, with more respondents answering “the national economy” and “loss of income.”

Concerns for “the health of loved ones/others” dropped from 26% during the first two weeks of calls to only 15% last week—an 11% drop. “Personal health” decreased from 28% to 26%.

The percentage of swing voters answering “the national economy” increased from 20% to 28%. The percentage answering “loss of income” doubled, growing from 4% to 8%.

Business vs. Government

Swing voters would rather rely on businesses to fix the economy (46%) instead of depending on government checks (24%). Preference for re-opening businesses has grown in the last week from 43% to 51%. Preference for more government payments decreased from 27% to 19%.

Training vs. Cash

A majority of swing voters (56%) support the government increasing private sector workforce training for those who have become unemployed instead of only making cash payments as part of the coronavirus response.

Manufacturing

A vast majority (75%) of swing voters support bringing manufacturing back home to end our reliance on Chinese and foreign factories for essential supplies such as masks and medication.