



To: Interested Parties

From: Global Strategy Group

Date: April 2022

Re: Recent Survey Shows Battleground Voters Demand Stronger Gun Laws to Help Reduce Crime

In 2018, voters turned out in record numbers to elect a gun sense majority in Congress. Now, ahead of the November midterm elections, new polling shows gun violence prevention can once again shore up Democratic votes. With voters concerned about rising crime across the country, they are turning to gun violence prevention policies for the answer and are looking for action from elected officials.

A recent survey of 2022 voters in U.S. Senate battleground states shows that voters are prioritizing commonsense gun safety reforms to combat crime, especially those voters that Democrats most need to turn out — and gain back their vote share — to win: suburban voters, independents, Hispanic voters, and Black voters.

Voters believe crime is on the rise and are especially concerned with gun related crime

Battleground voters are extremely concerned about violent crime involving guns. With reports of shootings and armed robberies dominating the nightly news these days, nearly two-thirds of voters believe crime is increasing in their state (63%). Specifically, they are most concerned about shootings (57% major concern) and armed robberies (49% major concern) – crimes involving guns. This is true especially of Black voters – a key voting bloc Democrats need to turn out in November – and suburban voters, who Democrats need to persuade to rejoin our coalition like they did in 2018.

Voters recognize the role lax gun laws play in rising crime rates. Majorities of battleground voters blame criminals having easy access to guns (59% major factor) and an increase in illegal guns (58% major factor) for the increase in crime they believe is occurring. By demonstrating a commitment to gun violence prevention, Democrats can show they have a plan to address crime. And they must: Voters hold Democrats responsible for addressing crime (53% say Biden has major responsibility, 52% Democrats in Congress have a major responsibility).

Battleground voters are ready to vote on gun violence prevention

The Senate is up for grabs. Battleground voters are nearly evenly split in their partisan identification (44% Democrat/42% Republican), leaving them evenly divided on the generic vote for Senate (45% Democratic candidate/45% Republican candidate). This is especially true of key groups Democratic candidates need to win in November, like suburban voters (45% Democratic candidate/47% Republican candidate) and independents (26% Democratic candidate/33% Republican candidate), who currently favor a Republican.

Infusing guns into these races gives a Democrat the advantage. Gun violence prevention transcends partisan boundaries and motivates battleground voters to cross party lines and vote for a Democrat committed to stronger gun laws. A generic Democrat who supports stronger gun laws has a six-point advantage over a Republican who opposes new gun restrictions, and a seven-point advantage among suburban voters – a key voting bloc Democrats need to reclaim in November.

Vote	Overall	Independents	Suburban
	Net Democrat advantage (Dem – GOP)		
Generic ballot (Democrat v. Republican)	0	-7	-2
Gun-infused generic ballot (Democrat who supports stronger gun laws vs. Republican who opposes more gun restrictions)	+6	-4	+7
Net Shift (Generic vs. Gun-infused ballot)	+6	+3	+9

Gun violence prevention is a priority for voters

Battleground voters demand stronger gun laws. Nearly two-thirds of voters think background checks on all gun sales already exist (64%). Even with this false notion, most voters are calling for stronger gun laws (58%), including majorities of swing voters (53%) and suburban voters (58%), and even a third of Republicans (37%).¹ They are demanding change from their elected officials, as 67 percent say background checks on all gun sales needs to be a top priority for their next senator.

In fact, battleground voters prioritize a host of gun reforms ahead of increasing police presence when it comes to addressing crime. Compared to a range of other solutions, background checks is the #1 priority for reducing crime (64% top priority) – even more than getting Americans back to work (58% top priority) and imposing stricter sentences for convicted criminals (53%), and it is far above increasing the presence of law enforcement (43% top priority) and increasing funding for law enforcement (42% top priority). This is especially true of suburban voters, who are even less likely to want to prioritize the presence of law enforcement (41% top priority) than Black voters (44% top priority), and even more likely to prioritize background checks (65% top priority) as measures to combat crime.

But battleground voters don't only want background checks. Most voters want to go beyond this policy and have their elected officials focus on additional commonsense gun safety measures. Commonsense measures like combatting gun trafficking and the spread of illegal guns (59% top priority) and holding irresponsible gun dealers accountable (57%) are top priorities.

ABOUT THE POLL

Global Strategy Group conducted an online survey of 1,217 registered voters in FL, GA, NV, NC, PA, and WI including 203 Black voters and 201 Hispanic voters between March 17 and March 23, 2022. The survey had a confidence interval of +/- 2.8% and the oversamples of Black and Hispanic voters had a confidence interval of +/-6.9%. Interviews were conducted online. Care has been taken to ensure the geographic and demographic divisions of the populations of likely voters are properly represented.

¹ Swing voters (18% of the of the electorate) are true independents or completely undecided on the generic vote for Senate.