

To: Interested Parties
From: Global Strategy Group
Date: November 28th, 2022
Re: New Survey Shows Gun Safety Was Key to Democrats Keeping the Senate in 2022

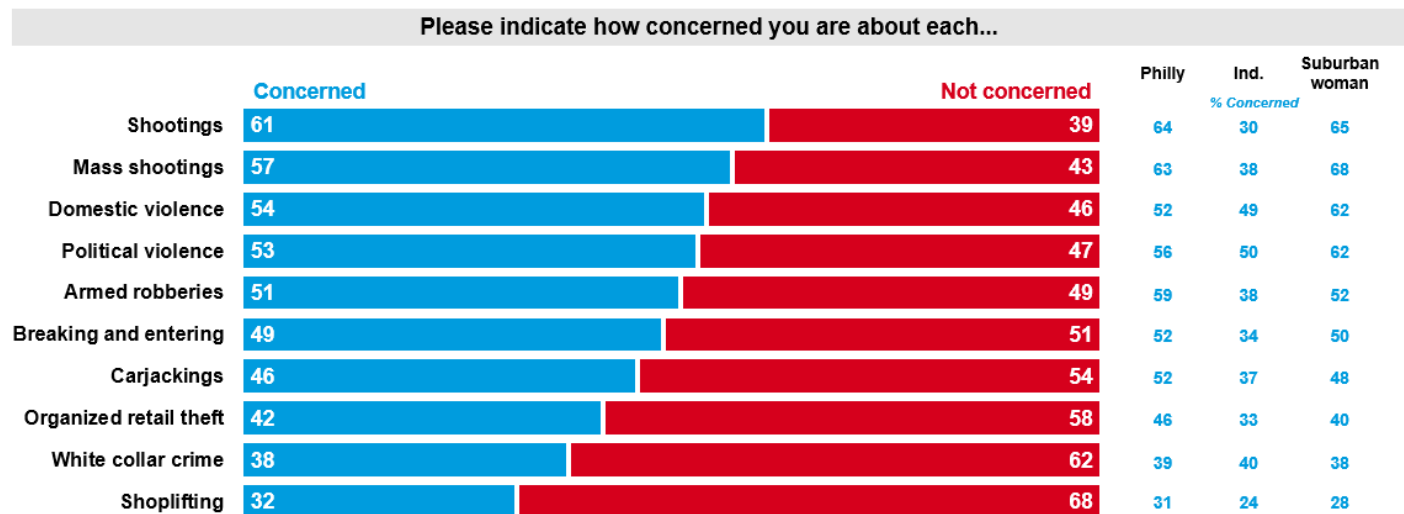
[History suggests Democrats should have been soundly defeated](#) in the 2022 midterm elections — after all, the party in power has only gained seats in one midterm since FDR’s presidency. But this midterm cycle, Democrats became the exception to the rule, expanding their Senate majority thanks to a big win from John Fetterman in Pennsylvania, who rooted out gun crime in his community.

The politics of gun safety have dramatically changed since 1994, when voters rejected politicians who passed the assault weapons ban. In fact, new polling of 2022 Pennsylvania voters shows guns is not just a salient issue everyone can rally behind, it is also an effective response to crime attacks Democrats face; Giffords’ advertising helped Senator-elect John Fetterman push back when he was attacked on crime, helping Fetterman win by five-points on Election Day.

Gun safety was a priority for voters in this election

Gun violence prevention was top of mind when Pennsylvania voters went to the polls. Gun violence (77% important) is one of only a handful of issues tested that three-quarters of voters deemed important in this election. Gun violence was particularly important among key blocs of voters Democrats needed to hold onto in their coalition: voters in the Philadelphia media market (81% important) and suburban women (85% important).

This comes as Pennsylvanians are deeply concerned about shootings in their communities. Crime has consistently been a top issue for voters this cycle, with nearly two-thirds believing crime was up in their state as early as April.¹ Now, [with crime on the rise in Philadelphia](#), 78 percent of voters, including 82 percent of voters in the Philadelphia media market, say crime was an important issue to them when voting. Violent crime, such as shootings, is also highly concerning to voters.



In fact, Pennsylvania voters are as concerned about kids in their community returning home safely from school (54%) as they are about being able to pay the bills (53%), and among voters in Philadelphia, it is an even greater concern (57% concerned about kids returning home safely, 54% concerned about paying the bills).

¹ See Giffords’ research from the spring: <https://giffords.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Giffords-Press-Memo-F04.18.22.pdf>

But energy is on the side of those supporting stronger gun laws, giving Democrats an edge in Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania voters want stronger gun laws by a seven-to-one margin (63% stronger/9% less strong), including 76 percent of suburban women and 71 percent of voters in the Philadelphia media market. And they trust Democrats like Fetterman more than Republicans like Oz to reduce gun violence (55% Fetterman and Democrats/45% Oz and Republicans), especially in Philadelphia (67% Fetterman and Democrats/33% Oz and Republicans). Half of the electorate would never vote for a candidate who opposes commonsense gun safety reforms like background checks on all gun sales (50%), including a majority of Philadelphia voters (55%).

Giffords flipped the crime narrative on its head, helping drive Fetterman to victory

Giffords used guns to flip the crime narrative on its head. Republicans unleashed a barrage of crime attacks on Fetterman that were sinking his vote share and could not be left unanswered. Giffords defended Fetterman on air in Philadelphia with their ad [“We’ve Watched,”](#) informing voters that contrary to what Republican attacks said, it’s Oz who has put their communities at risk with his opposition to background checks.

Giffords’ message broke through: 58 percent of Philadelphia voters remember hearing ads about Oz’s record on gun violence and 51 percent recall hearing about his record on crime, compared to 43 percent and 38 percent, respectively, outside of the market. And the core message resonated: Over two-thirds of Philadelphia voters went to the polls with the knowledge that Oz opposes background checks (67%) — 17 points more than voters outside the market (50%) in areas where Giffords didn’t run ads.

Giffords’ strategy worked, driving trust in Fetterman. Philly voters who heard Giffords’ message ultimately trusted Fetterman and Democrats to help them with crime more than Oz and Republicans (64% Fetterman/36% Oz, compared to 41% Fetterman/59% Oz among those who did not hear) – breaking the common narrative that Democrats are weak on crime – and giving Fetterman an overwhelming advantage in the vote (64% Fetterman/35% Oz, compared to 42% Fetterman/55% Oz among those who did not hear).

Voters who were concerned about gun violence delivered for Fetterman. The 47 percent of voters who said gun violence was extremely important to their vote overwhelmingly supported Fetterman in the election for Senate (66% Fetterman/32% Oz). To put it simply, Fetterman’s commitment to gun safety was the proof point voters needed to push back on the crime attacks he was facing, pushing him over the finish line.

ABOUT THE POLL

Global Strategy Group conducted an online survey of 804 PA voters, including 401 Philadelphia DMA voters between November 3-10, 2022. The survey had a confidence interval of +/-3.5%. Care has been taken to ensure the geographic and demographic divisions of voters are properly represented.