



ELECTION 2024 FOCUS GROUP ANALYSIS

TICKED-OFF, YOUNG,
DIVERSE, WORKING
CLASS VOTERS

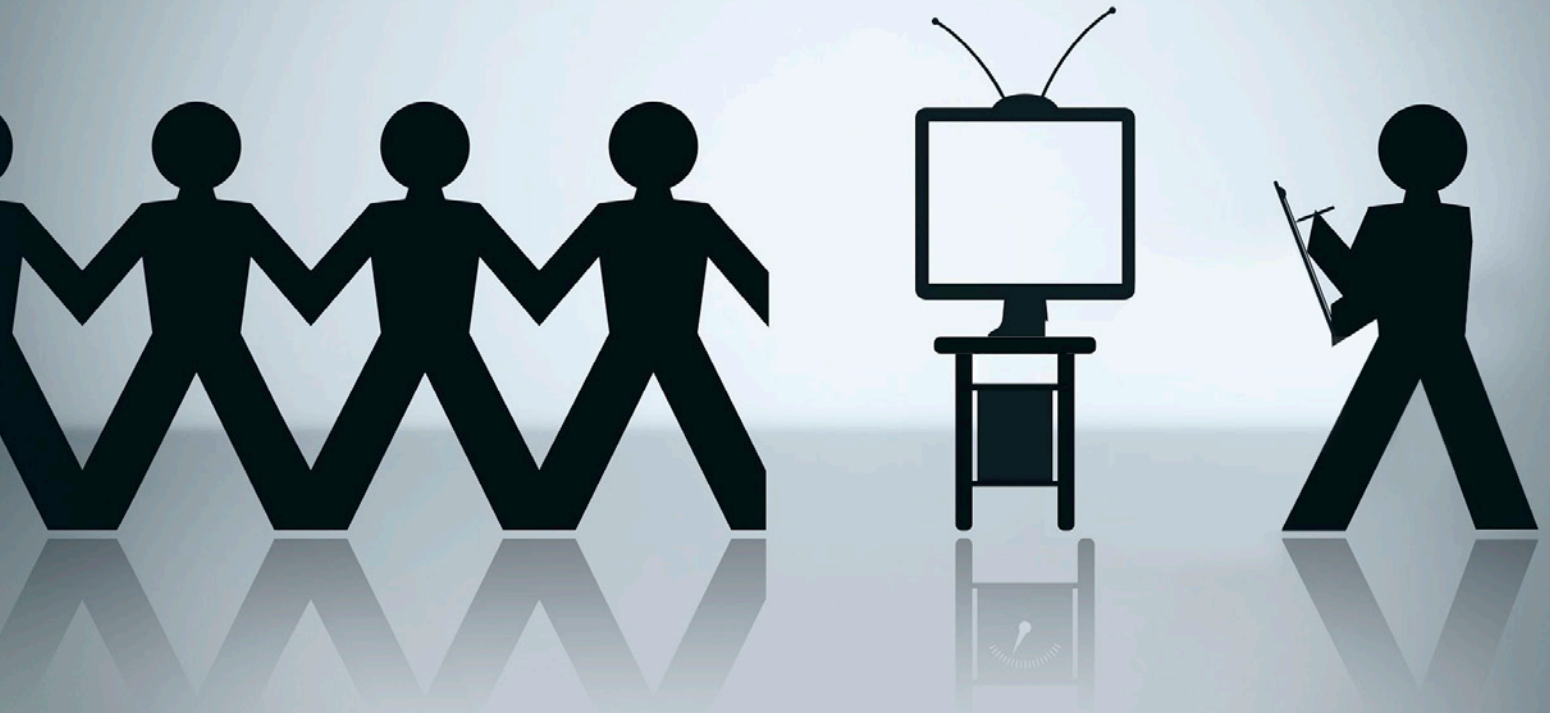
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MOST ACCURATE POLLING FIRM IN THE NATION

-New York Times -FiveThirtyEight -Nate Silver

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Cygnal recently conducted a focus group with Ticked-Off, Younger, Diverse, Working-Class (TOYDWC) voters revealed a pressing fact: The 2024 election is **NOT** the “inflation election.” It’s bigger than that. It’s the **“frustration election.”** At the end of the day, voters vote based on how they feel—not what they think—and the TOYDWC voters feel overwhelmed. They’re tired and unsure any politician can make things better for them, mostly because they’re not hearing how.

Republicans can and should capitalize on what’s driving this group of voters’ frustration—unmet needs. These voters are not the ideologues on either end of the political spectrum – they’re pragmatic **people who want solutions, not rhetoric.** In other words, they’re not woke radicals or far-right folks; they’re the person who works a job you probably don’t even notice or ever see.

Concern over inflation among this group of voters is a proxy for their general disillusionment with, well, everything. When we asked them “what is going right in America”...crickets. Inflation is simply the daily reminder that trickles constantly and either reminds them of or intensifies their feelings of malaise. While we’re on the topic of inflation, quit calling it that – we’re speaking to everyday Americans, not political animals or academics. Call it “cost of living.” **Inflation is the thing; cost of living is the impact.**

These voters feel vulnerable. While inflation is the major concern among this group, it’s not the only unmet need these voters feel. Worries over government spending priorities cropped up frequently. Participants were able to quickly highlight the fact that **they can’t afford eggs, but the government is sending a ton of money overseas for foreign aid.**



Importantly, the disillusionment these voters feel isn't just surrounding "issues." It's broad and contains multitudes. **They have a deep disdain for the two major presidential candidates and show relatively more affinity for RFK, Jr.** They have a deep distrust of the government and institutions in general, and they despise corporations.

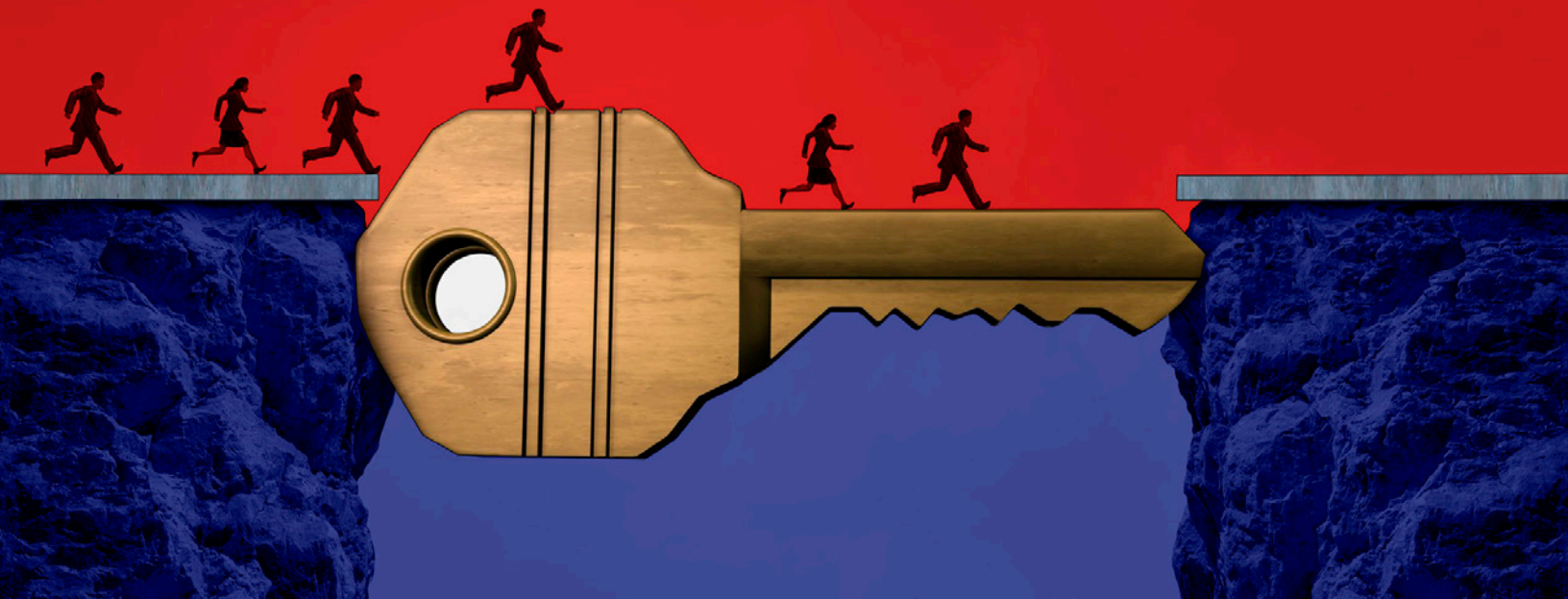
TOYDWC voters' disillusionment is driven largely by the **strongly held belief that politicians are untrustworthy**, that they're only in it for themselves and their own personal gain, and that they're puppets to the corporate interests who fund their campaigns.

Republicans will have to reestablish trust with and engage TOYDWC voters empathetically in "normal people" language, so that they feel heard and make the connection between Republicans' policy proposals and how they satisfy folks' unmet needs. These voters aren't looking for miracle workers, but they do want their needs spoken to then addressed. They don't want pie-in-the-sky promises; **they want politicians who have a plan for action to make them feel safe, economically secure, and reduce the amount of daily struggle they feel in their lives.**

The following memo outlines our **key findings and some strategic recommendations for Republicans** to win more elections this year. One important thought to keep in mind as you read them is something Maya Angelou expressed best:

“ *I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.*

KEY FINDINGS



1. Disillusionment with Political Leaders

- Participants expressed **strong negative feelings** towards both major political candidates, Joe Biden and Donald Trump. Words like “inept,” “weak,” “dementia,” “unstable,” “selfish,” “arrogant,” “incompetent,” and “clown” were used to describe them.
- There is a general consensus that **neither candidate is adequately addressing key issues**, particularly inflation.

“I don’t really trust most politicians at all. Like I don’t believe half the things that they’re saying. I don’t think the politicians themselves believe half the things they’re saying.” - Sam

2. Inflation as a Major Concern

- **Inflation is the most pressing issue for participants**, affecting their daily lives and financial stability. Words like “**frustration**,” “**uncertainty**,” “**dread**,” “**stress**,” and “**resentment**” were commonly used when discussing the impacts of inflation.
- Participants have **cut back on dining out, traveling, and other activities** due to rising costs. High costs of living, including **housing, groceries, and healthcare** are **major stressors**.
 - “Everything’s more expensive. My paycheck doesn’t go as far as it used to. My food stamps don’t go as far as they used to.” – Stuart

3. Distrust in Government, Institutions, and Corporate Greed

- There is a pervasive sense of **distrust towards the government and politicians**, with many feeling that political leaders are **out-of-touch** and **prioritize corporate interests over those of ordinary citizens**.
- **Corporate greed** is seen as a significant factor in rising prices, with companies **maintaining high prices post-COVID to maximize profits**.
 - They’re not voting for what we want. They’re voting for what their donors and interest groups want much more so than anything else.” –Brendan

4. Desire for Transparency and Real Change

- Participants want **greater transparency** from political leaders and **clear, actionable plans** to address key issues like inflation, healthcare, and foreign aid.
- There is a desire for **leaders who genuinely care** about the public and are not beholden to special interest groups.
 - “I’d like to see somebody be humane; somebody that really like cares about people, you know? I want to see action.” – Ilianna



5. Polarization and Political Fatigue

- Participants are frustrated with the **pervasive nature of politics in all aspects of life** and the extreme polarization that prevents effective governance.
- There is a **fatigue with constant political discourse** and a desire for politics to be less intrusive in everyday life.
 - *"It feels like politics has stuck its fingers into every aspect of my life, and I just want it to go away."* – Stuart

6. Spending Priority Concerns

- Concerns about the handling of foreign conflicts and domestic threats were raised frequently, most specifically related to massive foreign aid while domestic problems go unaddressed.
- Participants are **worried about the impact of international events** (read: ongoing wars) on **domestic stability and economic safety**.
 - *"One thing I'm kind of concerned about with national security is how much of our reserves we've sent to Ukraine."* – Brendan
 - *"I'm more worried about the domestic threats from within to be honest."* – Sam

7 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES

1. Humanize Your Campaign and Show Empathy

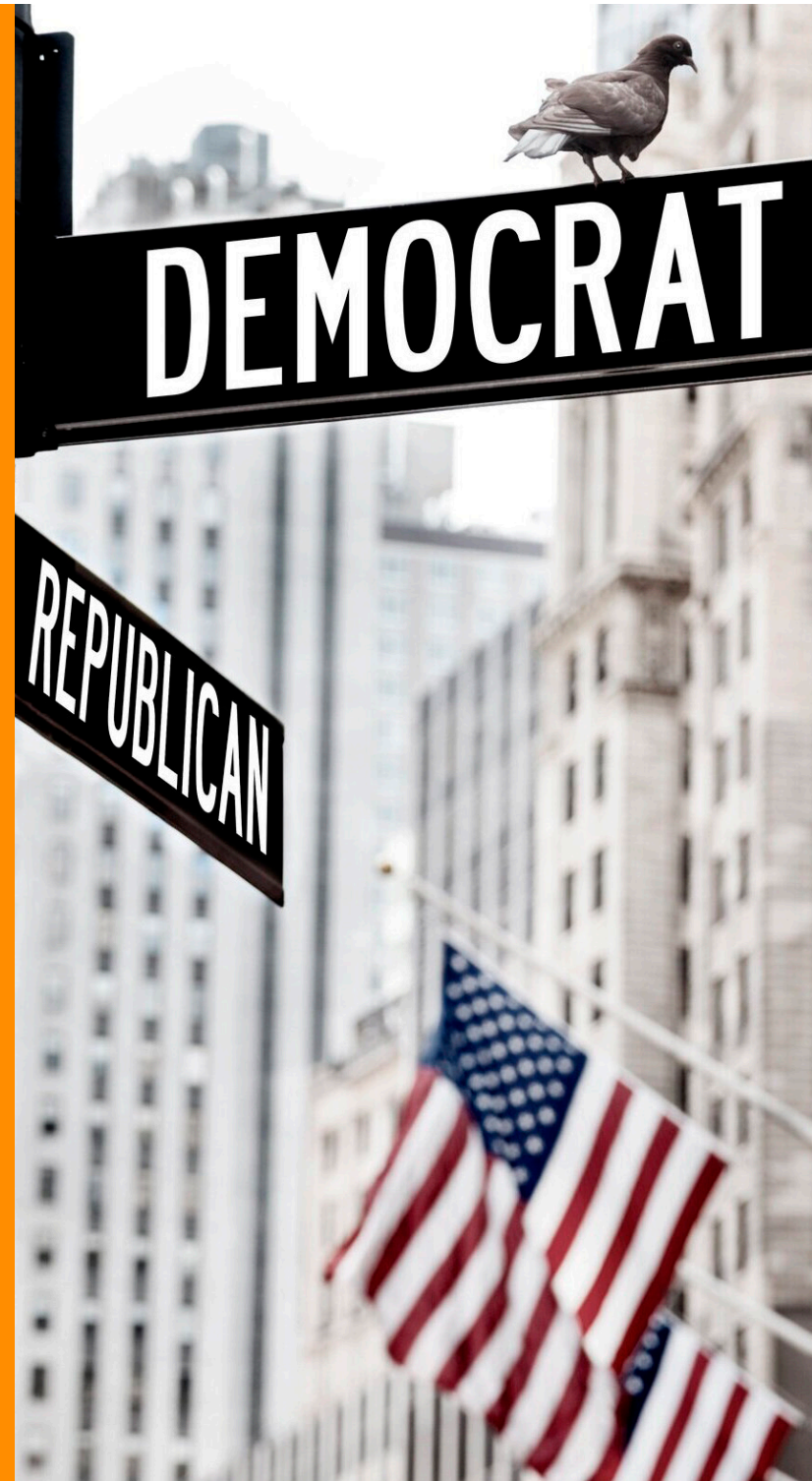
- **Message:** Show a more personal, empathetic side to connect with voters on a human level.
- **Action:** Share personal stories, listen to voter concerns in town halls or smaller settings, and demonstrate understanding and compassion for their daily struggles.
- **Pitfall:** Avoid coming across as insincere or staged. Authenticity is key.

2. Address Inflation and Economic Concerns Directly

- **Message:** Emphasize practical and actionable plans to reduce the cost of living.
- **Action:** Propose specific measures to lower taxes, reduce unnecessary government spending, and implement policies that make everyday essentials more affordable.
- **Pitfall:** Avoid overly complex economic jargon and ensure that solutions are presented in a way that seems feasible and relatable to regular voters.

3. Address Corporate Greed and Corruption Head-On

- **Message:** Position yourself as a champion against corporate greed and government corruption.
- **Action:** Propose and commit to policies that limit corporate influence, increase transparency in government, and ensure that the interests of ordinary Americans come first.
- **Pitfall:** Focus on small-dollar fundraising to limit the argument that you're funded by big corporations.





4. Promote Transparency and Accountability

- **Message:** Commit to a transparent and accountable governance model.
- **Action:** Pledge to hold regular town hall meetings, transparent reporting of legislative actions, and open communication channels with constituents.
- **Pitfall:** Do not make vague promises about transparency without a clear plan of how this will be implemented. Voters are skeptical and need specifics.

5. Promote National Security with a Balanced Approach

- **Message:** Reassure voters of your commitment to national security, both foreign and domestic, with practical, measured steps.
- **Action:** Outline a clear national security strategy that includes securing borders, enhancing cybersecurity, and ensuring adequate defense resources while avoiding unnecessary foreign entanglements.
- **Pitfall:** Avoid extreme rhetoric that could heighten fears or appear warmongering. Focus on protecting American interests pragmatically.


6. Champion Practical Healthcare Solutions


- **Message:** Propose practical healthcare reforms that reduce costs and improve accessibility.
- **Action:** Advocate for policies that increase healthcare competition, reduce prescription drug prices, and provide support for affordable healthcare options.
- **Pitfall:** Avoid promising unrealistic healthcare overhauls that cannot be delivered. Focus on incremental, achievable improvements.


7. Focus on Reducing Political Polarization


- **Message:** Emphasize a commitment to reducing polarization and working towards unity.
- **Action:** Advocate for bipartisan initiatives and show willingness to work with the other side on key issues. Highlight any past bipartisan successes.
- **Pitfall:** Avoid divisive language or attacking opponents personally. Focus on common goals and shared values.


POTENTIAL HAZARDS TO AVOID

 **Blame Games:** Voters are tired of constant blame-shifting. Take responsibility where appropriate and focus on solutions.

 **Over-Promising:** Voters are highly skeptical of political promises. Ensure that all proposed solutions are realistic and achievable.

 **Inconsistency:** Ensure that your messaging remains consistent and does not contradict past statements or actions.

 **Rhetoric Over Reality:** While strong rhetoric can energize our base, it can alienate undecided voters. Balance bold statements with practical solutions.

 **Discounting Voter Fatigue:** Acknowledge that voters are exhausted by constant political conflict. Emphasize a desire to reduce political noise and focus on governance.





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