

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Planned Parenthood Texas Votes and Hart Research Associates
DATE: October 18, 2018
RE: Survey Findings on Texas Women Voters

From September 18 to 22, 2018, Planned Parenthood Texas Votes retained Hart Research Associates to conduct a telephone survey of 500 likely women voters in Texas who do not identify as strong Republicans. These results are not a statewide representative sample of women voters; instead this survey was done to understand the priorities, concerns, and motivations of women who are “within reach” for Democratic candidates in the 2018 midterms.

Overview

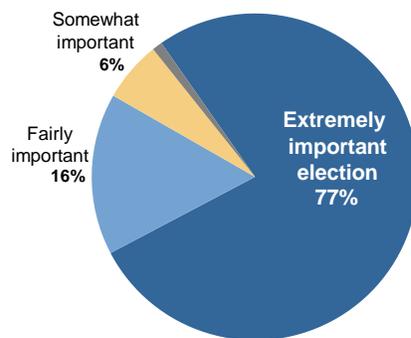
The results from this survey clearly show that this large audience of women voters are highly engaged and have a firm set of policy priorities and preferences as they head into the closing weeks of the 2018 midterm campaign. On a wide array of policy issues, they strongly favor progressive positions and demonstrate an unwavering propensity to give an electoral advantage to candidates who are outspoken in standing up for a progressive agenda. Notably, this trend is evident not just among self-identified Democrats within this audience, but it also is true among women who identify as independents and in many cases, women who are lean and moderate Republicans.

Key Findings

- 1. High Levels of Engagement:** More than three in four (77%) of these women voters describe the upcoming election as extremely important to them. While strong majorities of all demographic groups in this audience report a strong level of engagement, Democrats (84% extremely important) are the most energized when compared with independent women (74% extremely important) and soft Republican women voters (60% extremely important). Younger women and Hispanic women remain critical groups for mobilization; as expected, voters age 18 to 34 are less likely than older women voters to report that the midterm elections are extremely important to them, but still two in three (66%) women in this age cohort describe their feelings that way, which is encouraging (especially in conjunction with their interest in specific issue priorities as described below). While African-American women are especially enthusiastic (83% extremely important), Hispanic women represent an important audience for greater engagement in the final stretch of the campaign.

Women voters—especially Democrats—are motivated this midterm cycle.

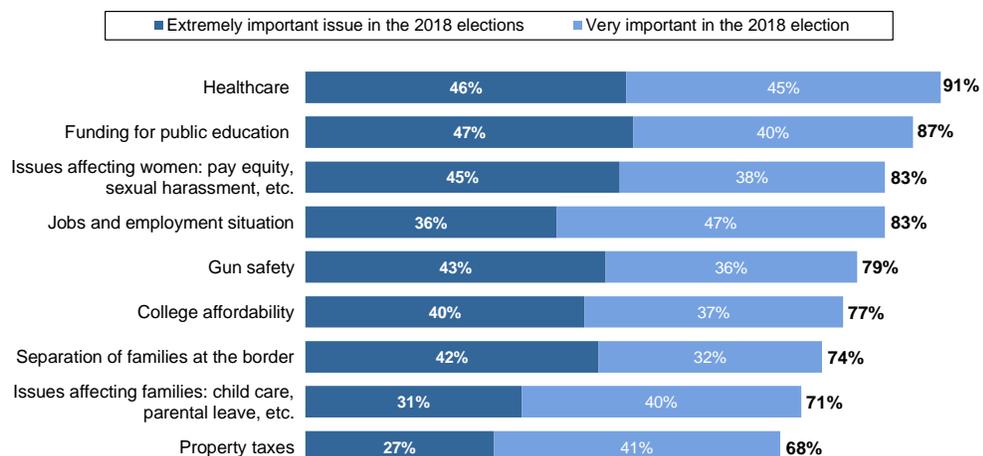
Some people say that certain elections are more important than others: how important is the upcoming November election for governor, U.S. senator, U.S. Congress, and other offices to you?



Extremely Important Election	
Democrats	84%
Independents	74%
Soft Republicans	60%
Age 18 to 34	66%
Age 35 to 49	77%
Age 50 to 64	82%
Age 65/older	78%
Whites	80%
African Americans	83%
Hispanics	70%

- Substantive Issue Priorities:** These women voters are focused on a broad range of substantive policies as they approach Election Day. Education, healthcare, and issues affecting women specifically (including pay equity and sexual harassment) lead the list of policy concerns that they are attuned to in the closing weeks of the campaign—more than four in nine women describe each of these issues as extremely important to them in thinking about their vote in November. Democratic women especially have a wide set of priorities—more than half of these women voters say that five issues (healthcare, funding for public education, issues affecting women, jobs and employment, and gun safety) are extremely important to them. By comparison, independent women voters are focused especially on healthcare as their top voting issue, while soft Republican women identify funding for public education as their leading concern. Among the audiences who are not yet fully mobilized—younger women and Hispanic women—funding for public education, separation of families at the border, and healthcare lead the agenda.

The Issue Agenda



3. Strong Preference for a Progressive Agenda: On a broad range of issues, women voters overwhelmingly favor a candidate who takes the progressive position over a candidate who takes a more conservative stance. In fact, this survey tested seven different issues—ranging from funding women’s health, to access to birth control and abortion, to addressing racism, to progressive economic policies that support women, to family separation, to gun safety—and for each, the candidate who takes the progressive position is more appealing by double-digit margins.

The chart below shows these overall preferences on seven issues among women voters in this audience—for example, by a margin of 85% to 10%, these women voters say they favor a candidate who “supports economic policies meant to help women, like equal pay for equal work, paid sick leave, and child care assistance” over a candidate who “opposes economic policies meant to help women because they are not needed or would place too great a burden on businesses.” These overwhelming margins are also evident on all six other issues.

Progressive positions carry a clear electoral advantage.

I am more likely to vote for the candidate who:

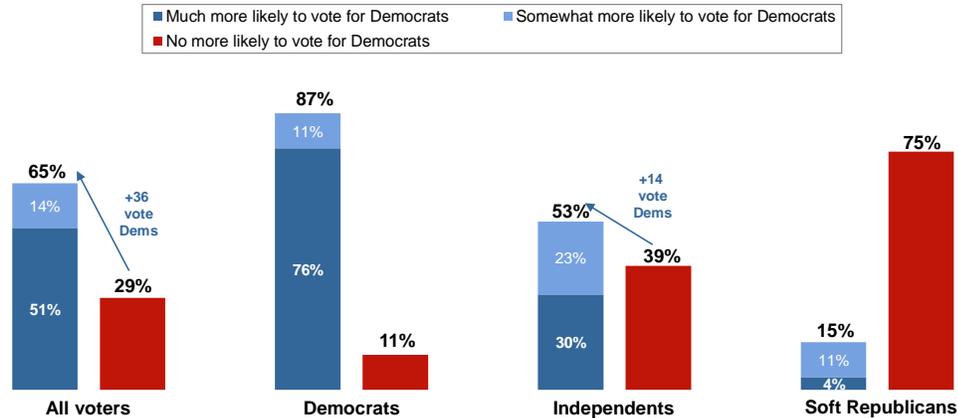


What is especially remarkable is that this strong preference for candidates with a progressive agenda holds up with independent women on all seven issues—by double-digit margins, women who describe themselves as politically independent say they prefer a candidate with a progressive stance. Further, on four of these seven issues (economic policies to help women, access to birth control, funding for Planned Parenthood, and addressing racism), even soft Republican women favor the candidate with the progressive stance over one with a more conservative position.

4. **2018 Democratic Advantage:** More than half (53%) of self-identified independent women say they're more likely to vote Democrat this year than in recent elections (33% say no more likely, the rest are not sure). Almost one in five (15%) of soft Republican women say they're more likely to vote Democrat this year (73% say no more likely, the rest are not sure).

A Democratic Advantage: Independents are especially in reach this year.

Compared with other election years, this year I am:



5. **Candidate Favorability:** While the findings from this survey do not reflect the full female electorate in Texas and therefore are not designed to assess the status of the “trial heat” in any of the statewide contests, it is clear that these women voters are providing powerful momentum for Beto O’Rourke in the U.S. Senate race and for Lupe Valdez in the race for governor. Young women ages 18 to 34 in this voting bloc are an especially strong base audience for O’Rourke—they favor him over Cruz by a 48-point margin (69% O’Rourke, 21% Cruz)—and independent women break for O’Rourke by a full 16 points (53% O’Rourke, 37% Cruz). These audiences are also a strong bloc for Valdez in the governor’s race, with young women favoring her over Abbott by 30-point margin (62% Valdez, 32% Abbott) and independent women giving her an 18-point advantage (53% Valdez, 35% Abbott).

In this regard, feelings about President Trump are especially animating as these women voters head into the final stretch of the midterm campaign. While it is not a surprise that Democratic women hold an unfavorable view of the president, that sentiment approaches near unanimity (90% unfavorable, 5% favorable), while among independent women voters in Texas, a solid majority (55%) view him negatively (just 29% favorable). In describing in their own words why this election is important to them, the most frequently volunteered response was the need for change in the country and the opportunity to get the country back on track.