

Voters Support Bold Economic Agenda

Methodology: Demos sponsored an online survey among 1,536 registered voters, conducted June 5 to June 14, 2017. The research included a base sample of registered voters and, for deeper analysis, oversamples of working-class African Americans, working-class Hispanics, working-class white Obama-to-Trump voters, and progressives, defined as people of all races who identify as extremely or somewhat liberal. The data in this survey is weighted by standard weights to make it fully representative.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Economic and pocketbook issues—including raising the minimum wage, revitalizing infrastructure and debt-free college—ranked among the top issues for Progressives, working-class African Americans, working-class Hispanics, and working-class white Obama-to-Trump voters.**

Here is what the survey asked:

Q. Below is a list of some proposed policies. Please rank and select the THREE you think are most important for politicians to address. Drag the issue next to the 1st, 2nd, or 3rd ranking.

Top Ranking Policy Priorities for Voters

	Registered Voters	Progressives	Working-class African Americans	Working-class Hispanics	Working-class White Trump & Obama Voters
Revitalize infrastructure to ensure full employment	39%	36%	33%	38%	43%
Raise minimum wage	31%	41%	53%	42%	38%
Tough ethics laws to rein in lobbyists	30%	29%	11%	22%	39%
Public financing of elections to reduce the role of big money in our politics	27%	31%	20%	17%	26%
Debt-free public college	25%	32%	39%	32%	21%
Paid family and medical leave	24%	25%	25%	35%	24%
Break up the big banks to reduce the power of Wall Street	23%	25%	12%	20%	28%

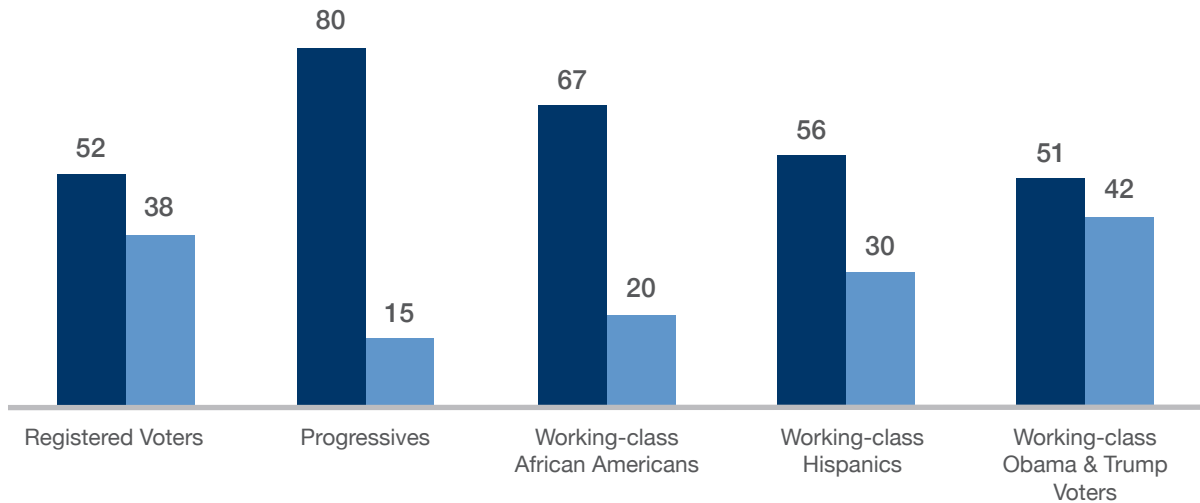
Shaded indicates top tier, darker shading indicates higher ranking

- A majority of Americans want government to do more to solve problems and help meet the needs of people.

Q. Which of the following statements do you agree with most?

Voters' Perception of the Role of Government

- The government should do more to solve problems and help meet the needs to people.
- The government does too many things that are better left to businesses and individuals.



- Messages focused on protecting the deals we've already made, the pocketbook issues of Americans, and the inequality gap in America (squeezed out) tested the highest.

Q. Below is a list of statements about potential agenda items for elected officials in Washington, DC. For each one, please indicate whether you support or oppose this statement.

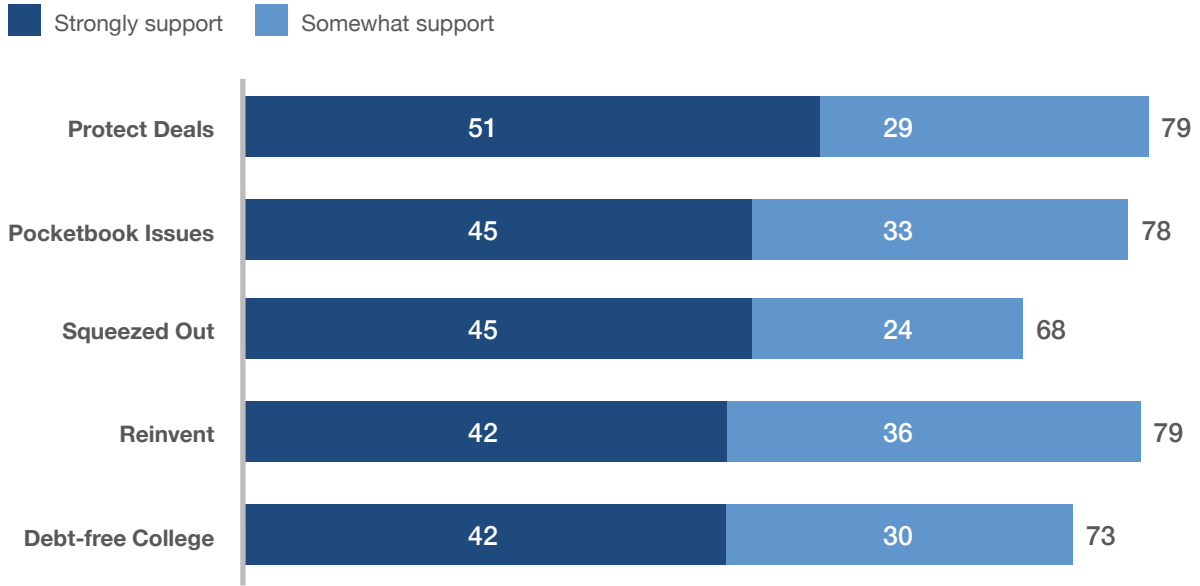
Tested Economic Messages

Label	Message
Protect Deals	To make an economy that works best for America, we need to protect the deals we have already made and propose a Better Deal in other areas. That means, first, protecting Social Security and Medicare from cuts and keeping protections for equal pay and workers' rights. Second, that means making new investments in infrastructure and higher education, and setting minimums for sick days and paid family leave.
Pocketbook Issues	It is no surprise that what keeps some in the working class up at night are pocketbook issues. Their earnings shape the family budget, and they are often forced to make painful decisions about how to spend each and every dollar. They deserve dignity on the job and for their work to be both valued and valuable. We need a Better Deal to eliminate the daily financial stresses experienced by our working class.
Squeezed Out	The inequality gap in America is larger today than it's ever been. The rich are getting richer, and the middle class is getting squeezed out. We need a new, Better Deal which redistributes some of the wealth so that income gaps don't disadvantage the hardworking Americans who deserve a decent living.

Tested Economic Messages (Continued)

Label	Message
Reinvent	America needs to reinvent the economy so that hard work is rewarded and opportunity exists for those willing to work hard to get ahead. Handouts don't make sense anymore, but neither does slamming the door on equal opportunity. A Better Deal will reward work, provide opportunity and give everyone a chance to build a better life.
Debt-free College	Though having a college education is important for getting a good job, college is becoming increasingly expensive, making it less accessible to the students who need it most. We need a new, Better Deal which will prioritize higher education and help states invest in public institutions so that all Americans have the opportunity to earn a degree debt-free.
Racial Class	For too long, those in power have divided working people—pitting whites against blacks, men against women and everyone against immigrants. When the powerful turn Americans on each other, we let Wall Street bankers run our economy, oil companies stop clean energy, giant corporations ship good jobs overseas, and the rich give themselves tax breaks. That all takes money from our schools, highways, healthcare, and retirement. When we turn on each other, we can't unite to demand a Better Deal for all struggling people in America, no matter what their background
Disrespect	Today, disrespect is baked into working-class jobs. From unstable schedules to low pay to wage theft, employers impose punitive workplace policies that place the blame for a low quality of life squarely on the worker. Workers are seen as costs to be minimized, and their dignity and value are forsaken for maximum profit. An economy based on disrespect that ignores the needs of workers and their families is not sustainable. We need a new, Better Deal for the working class.
Rigged System	Right now, big banks, Wall Street and the rich use their money to buy access and rig the system. Making money through innovation or hard work is the American way. But what's wrong is when the system lets the rich buy access, rig the system and hold the rest of us down. A Better Deal will fix this inequality of power and restore honesty and balance in the system so everyone has a chance to work hard and succeed.
Racial Disparities	Our country cannot succeed unless we are all given a chance to succeed, and that means we need to address the issues which have held some of us back because of race. A Better Deal for America means fixing racial disparities in pay, education, healthcare, and housing. We cannot survive in the global economy if we don't give everyone a true chance to build a better life.
Technology	Technological innovation and the global economy are some of the most important forces in the world today. Though they enhance productivity, they also disrupt labor markets, require workers to learn new skills more quickly and challenge our global competitiveness. As a nation, we need a Better Deal to respond to these opportunities and challenges by investing in innovation, infrastructure, and small business to make it easier for workers to acquire new skills and switch jobs when it's necessary.

Top Ranking Messages for All Registered Voters



Top Ranking Messages for Tested Demographics

	Registered Voters	Progressives	Working-class African Americans	Working-class Hispanics	Working-class White Trump & Obama Voters
Protect Deals	51%	74%	57%	49%	56%
Pocketbook Issues	45%	66%	53%	47%	57%
Squeezed Out	45%	59%	57%	44%	54%
Reinvent	42%	39%	43%	46%	55%
Debt-free College	42%	63%	63%	46%	44%
Racial Class	42%	63%	57%	41%	47%
Disrespect	42%	57%	52%	40%	55%
Rigged System	41%	57%	49%	39%	44%
Racial Disparities	40%	64%	59%	44%	42%
Technology	37%	53%	44%	37%	45%

Shaded indicates top tier, darker shading indicates higher ranking
 (Graph includes only respondents that are in strong support.)

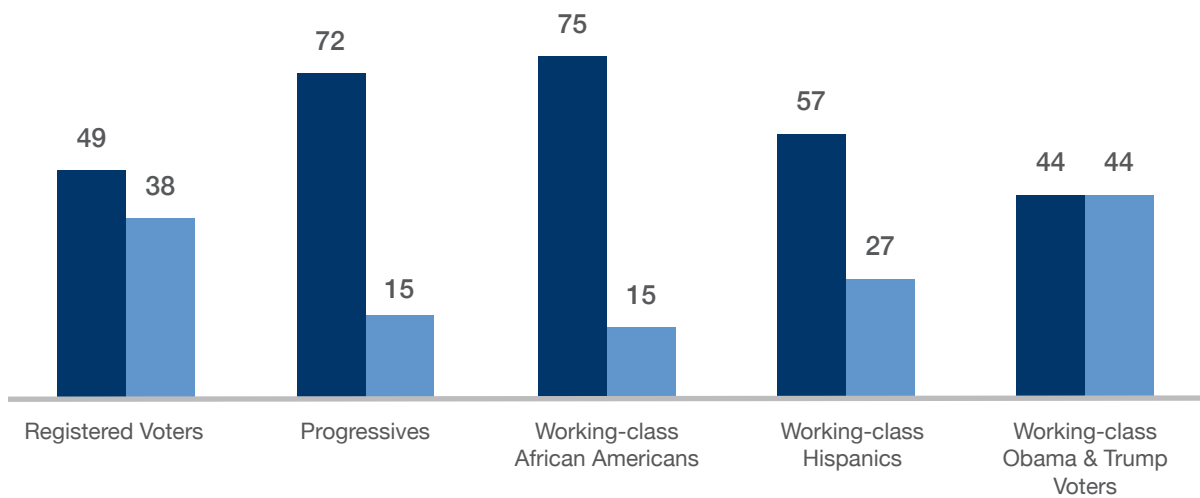
Although not in the top three, the two messages that put forward a combined race and class analysis, (“racial class” and “racial disparities”) were strongly supported by progressive voters and working-class African Americans—and well-received among a significant percentage of all voters, including white working-class Obama-to-Trump voters.

- Our research also showed that respondents—including white working-class voters—felt that having to choose between talking about race and talking about class is a false choice.

Q. Which of the following statements do you agree with most?

The False Choice Between Race and Opportunity

- Our country cannot succeed unless we are all given a chance to succeed, and that means we need to address the issues which have held some of us back because of race
- We all can already succeed and make this country a success, because we have all been given equal opportunities.



This survey has the following distribution among political and education lines: party identification (Democrats 36%, Republicans 29%, Independent/other 35%), ideology (liberal 34%, conservative 35%, moderate/no response 31%), education (high school or less 26%, some college/tech school 35%, bachelor's or higher 39%).

[Click here to see the full results of the economic survey.](#)