October 6, 2026

To: Interested Parties
Fr: Impact Research / Equis / HIT Strategies
Re: 2028 Battleground States Poll Findings

Impact Research, HIT Strategies, and Equis Research are proud to announce that we have partnered with Project 270 to launch an ongoing series of comprehensive battleground-state (and, at times, possible expansion states) research, providing a data-driven assessment of the 2028 general election landscape and what it will take to reach 270 electoral votes. As noted in *The New York Times* (link), Project 270 exists to ensure that winning the general election remains at the center of the conversation. Until Democrats have a presumptive nominee, Project 270 will regularly commission and share research on what 2028 general election voters want from a nominee. While we are still one month out from the 2026 midterm elections, Democrats will need to hit the ground running as soon as polls close on November 3 to prepare for the 2028 presidential cycle. That's why today we are excited to share our initial findings on voter sentiment in the battleground states that will decide the 2028 presidential election.

Our first survey finds that voters in the core swing states want to change the country's direction from Trump and MAGA, especially on the cost of living. Many think the influence of corporations over politics is a bigger problem even than extreme partisanship, that Republicans are too focused on helping the wealthy and powerful, and that Republicans aren't prioritizing the economy.

At the same time, Trump's unpopularity alone does not translate into a clean advantage for Democrats. The party's brand on handling the economy is worse than Republicans', requiring candidates in 2026 to differentiate themselves from that brand. The data is clear that Democrats have a major opportunity to capitalize on Trump's failures, but that they must do the work to gain voters' trust on economic policy.

Key Findings:

- **Swing state voters want to break with Trump and MAGA.** Trump is unpopular with a majority of swing state voters (55% unfavorable), with roughly the same share saying it would be bad for the country "if the next Republican candidate for President is part of the MAGA movement and follows in his footsteps" (56%) and that they would be less likely to support a candidate he endorsed (55%). On every issue we tested, from the cost of living to health care to artificial intelligence to immigration, more voters prefer that the next U.S. President chart a different path from Trump rather than continue his approach.

- **2028 starts out as a tossup despite voters' displeasure with Trump.** A generic party vote for President is tied today (45% Democrat / 45% Republican / 10% persuadable), and the Democratic party is equally unpopular (38% favorable / 57% unfavorable) as the Republican

Findings are based on a multi-modal survey conducted via live telephone interviews and text-to-web September 14-23, 2026, among n=1500 registered voters across Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin, with additional oversamples of 250N Black voters and 250N Latino voters in the same states. The margin of error for the full sample is +/- 2.5%; for subgroups it varies and is higher. 85% of interviews were conducted via cell phone.

party (39% favorable / 57% unfavorable). Independents favor Democrats only by a narrow margin (35% Democrat / 23% Republican) despite holding very negative views of Trump (68% total unfavorable, 58% very unfavorable), and voters who say they supported Trump in 2024 but now hold negative views of him still favor a Republican over a Democrat 59% to 17%.

- **Trump's 2024 gains with Black and Latino voters are being erased, but these voters still have concerns about Democrats.** A quarter of Black voters (25%) have unfavorable views of the Democratic party, particularly Black men (34% unfavorable) and Black voters under age 50 (31%). Latino voter are evenly divided in their views of the Democratic party (45% favorable / 44% unfavorable), with Latino men especially negative (42% favorable / 52% unfavorable).

- **2028 Democratic candidates have a major opportunity to court voters on economic populism.** By a massive 40-point margin, voters want the next U.S. President to chart a different path from Trump on the role of big corporations in American politics (64% different path / 24% continue Trump's approach). A majority also say that real change never happens "because politicians are bought and paid for by big corporations who rig the system for their own agenda" (53%) rather than "because both parties are controlled by extreme partisans who are too focused on fighting each other and pursuing their own agendas" (36%). Similarly, a majority prefer the next U.S. President be "someone who will reform the law to take on politicians and corporate interests who manipulate the system for themselves" (53%) rather than "someone who will stop the endless political fighting and force both parties to come to the table and compromise" (39%). Independent voters see the influence of corporations on politics as a bigger problem than extreme partisanship by staggering margins (+18 change never happens because corporations rig the system / +16 prefer a President who will take on corporate interests who manipulate the system for themselves).

  By the same token, swing state voters support proposals to close corporate tax loopholes so big corporations have to pay their fair share (70% support, 57% strongly), break up big companies that are unfairly driving up prices (63% support, 45% strongly), raise the federal minimum wage to $15 (62% support, 44% strongly) and tie it to inflation (61% support, 43% strongly), and raise taxes on the wealthy (60% support, 45% strongly).

- **Though voters have soured on Republicans' handling of the economy, the Democratic party brand isn't any better and requires Democrats to earn voters' trust.** Few voters think that either national party runs the economy well and makes a strong economy their priority while in office (25% for Republicans, 26% for Democrats). Similarly, majorities think both parties are focused on issues that matter only to a few people rather than on issues that matter to the majority of Americans (51% for Republicans, 53% for Democrats).

  However, by a 13-point margin voters think Republicans at least know what it takes to run a strong economy (53% versus 40% who say they have the wrong ideas about how to run the economy well), while they are much more mixed on Democrats (45% know what it takes to run a strong economy / 46% have the wrong ideas about how to run the economy well). The difference – and the opportunity for Democrats – comes from the disproportionate share who think Republicans prioritize other goals over the economy when they are in power (28% versus 19% for Democrats). In fact, just over half of the 51% who think Republicans are focused on the wrong issues said in open-ended responses that Republicans are focused specifically on helping the wealthy and the powerful (27% out of the 51%), followed by themselves and other insiders (12% out of the 51%) and big corporations (10% out of the 51%).