PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES

turning questions into answers



Post-Election Debrief

November 14, 2022

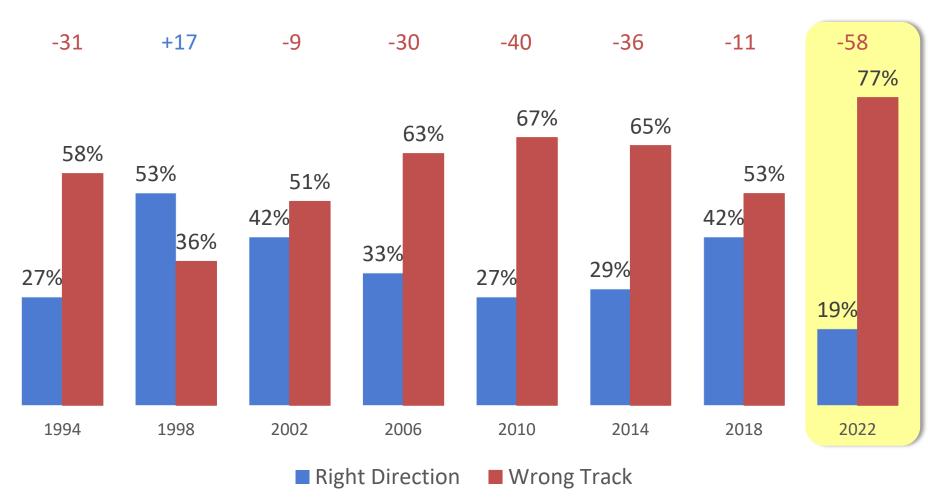
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The political environment put Democrats at a disadvantage

The mood of the country was the most negative we've ever tested for a mid-term election.



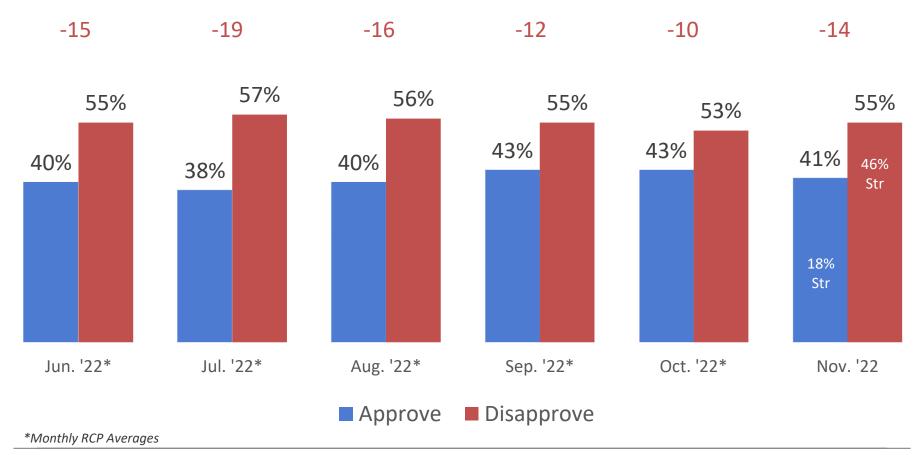






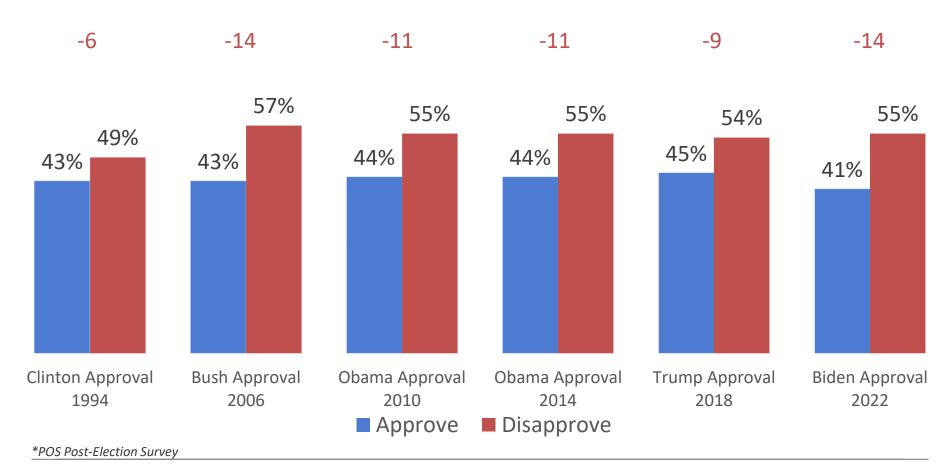
President Biden's job approval rating failed to break 45%.







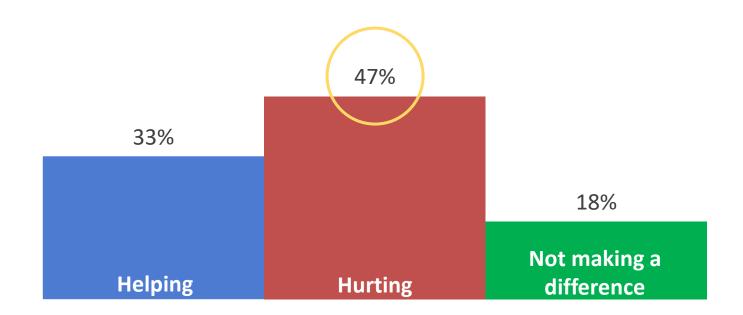
In fact, Biden's job approval was consistent with other Presidents who lost seats in a midterm.





Further, Americans generally thought that President Biden's policies were hurting the country.

Effect of Biden's policies on the country

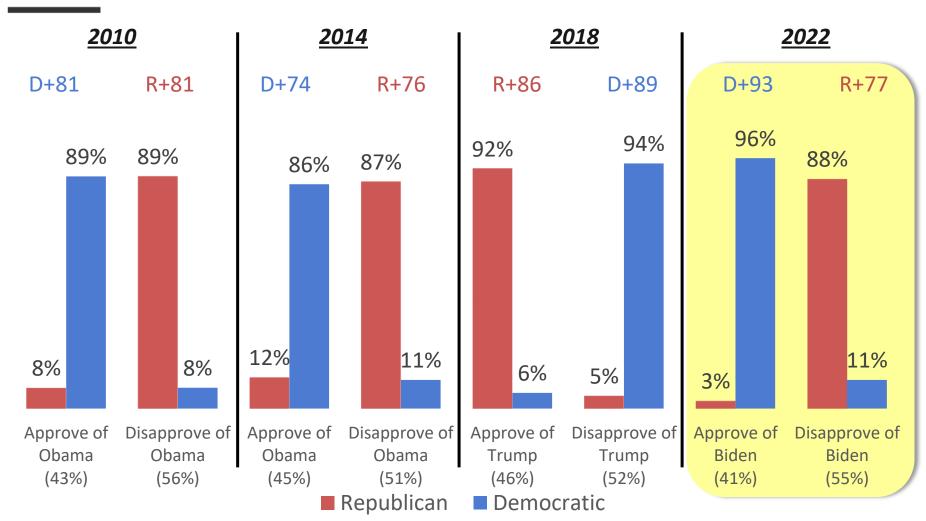




But, the 2022 GOP margin among Independents wasn't wide enough to sustain big gains.

Year	GOP Vote	DEM Vote	Pick Up House Seats
2006	41%	59%	+30
2010	59%	41%	+63
2014	56%	44%	+13
2018	41%	54%	+40
2022	48%	42%	+?

One reason Democrats overperformed the fundamentals of wrong track/disapprove is that there was a wider than normal ballot gap between approvers and disapprovers.

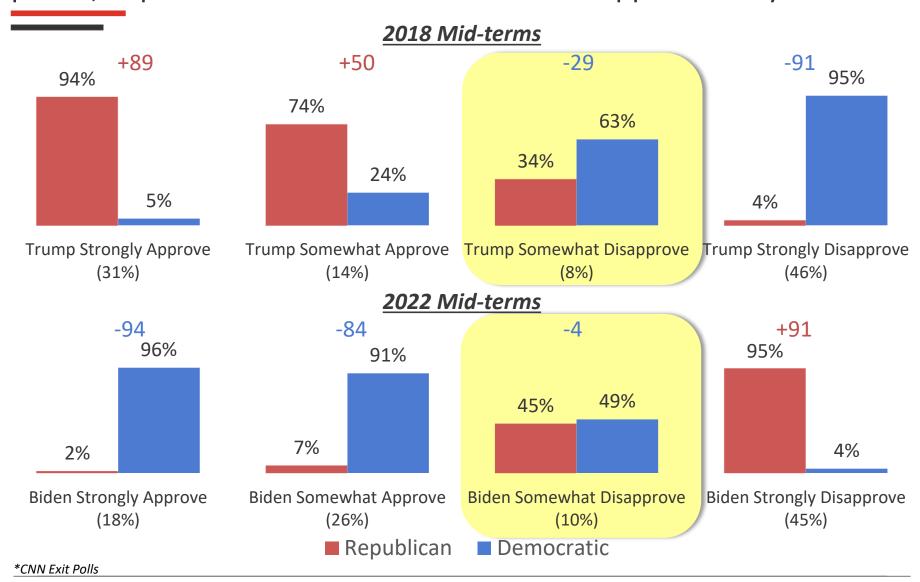


*POS Post-Election Survey





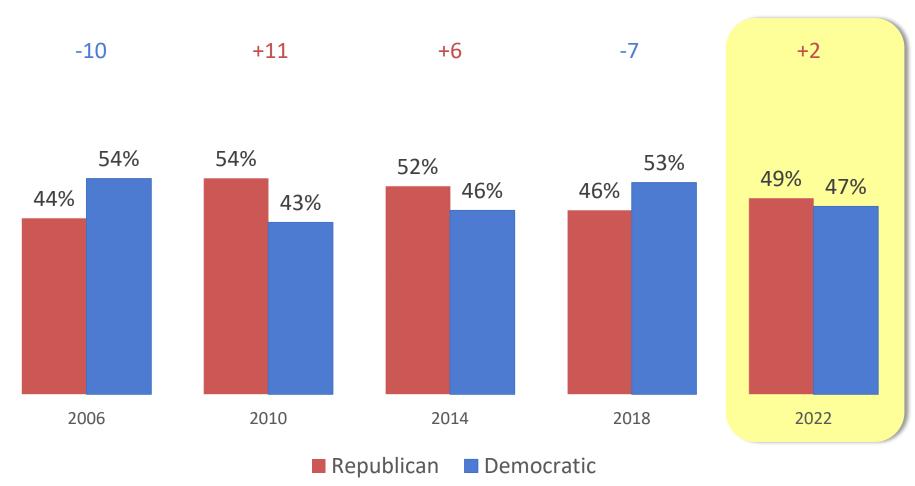
While in 2018 DEMs won Trump "somewhat disapprovers" by 29 points, Republicans lost Biden "somewhat disapprovers" by 4.





GOP candidates won the race for Congress by a narrow margin.

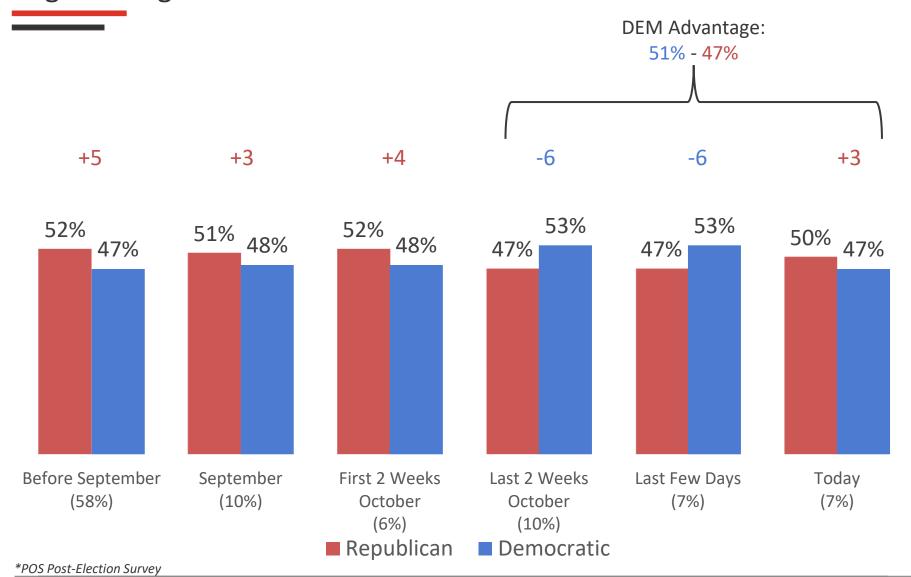




*POS Post-Election Survey



While GOP candidates won among early deciders, DEMs had an edge among late deciders.

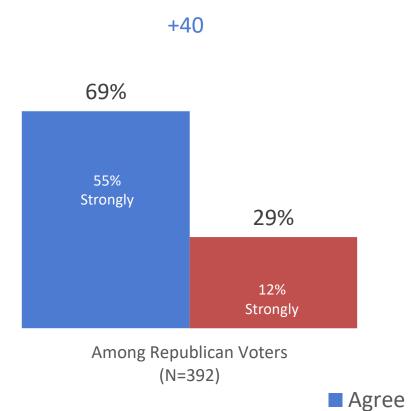




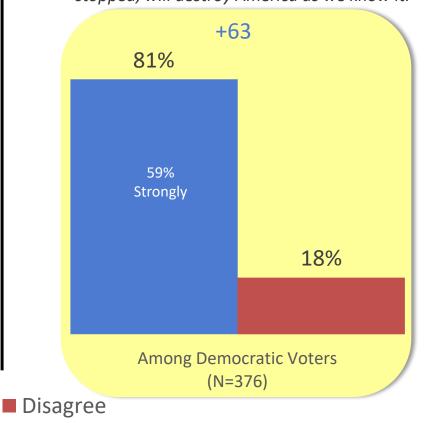
Another key: more Democrats saw the GOP as a threat to democracy.

And, do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

Democrats represent a threat to democracy that, if not stopped, will destroy America as we know it.



And, do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Republicans represent a threat to democracy that, if not stopped, will destroy America as we know it.



*POS Post-Election Survey



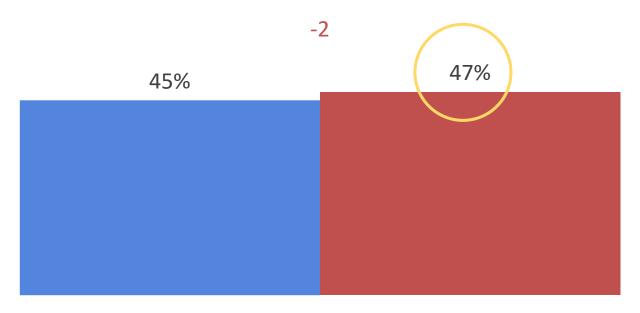
Despite the exit polls giving GOP candidates an edge, Americans were nonetheless concerned about Republicans making the wrong kind of change.

Which of the following represents the bigger concern to you regarding the results of this November's Congressional election?

The Democrats continue to control Congress, and there is not enough change in current policies.

...or...

The Republicans take over control of Congress, and they make the wrong kinds of changes in current policies.

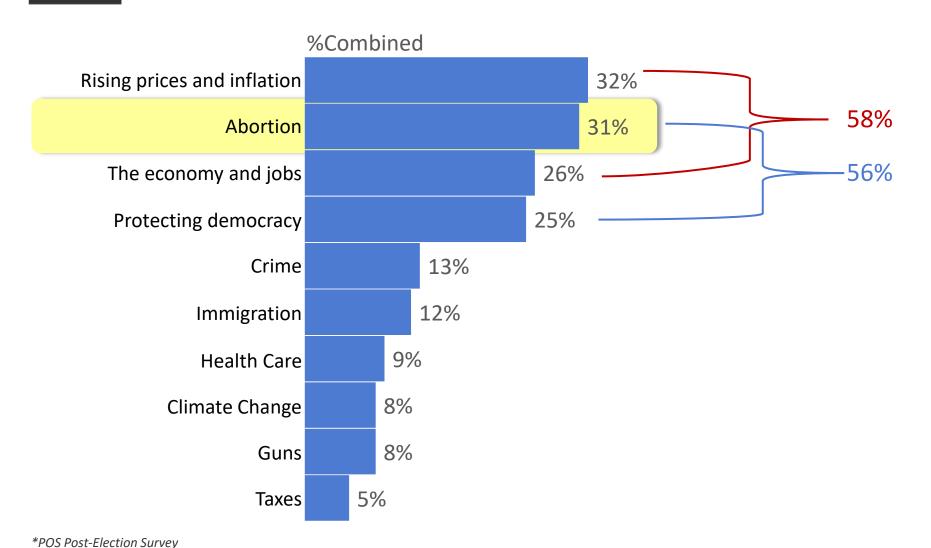






The Issue Agenda

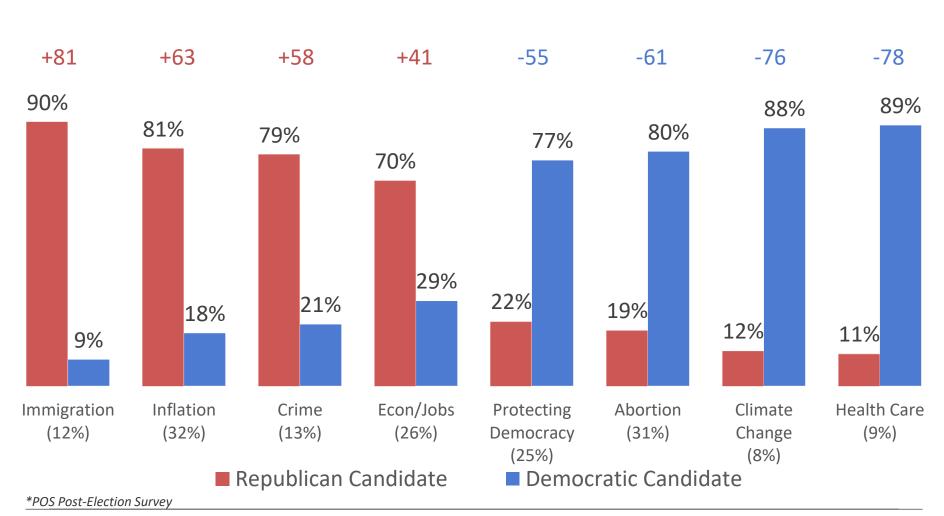
Abortion was more of a factor than the pre-election polls indicated.







GOP candidates won handily among those concerned about economic issues, immigration and crime, while Democrats fared better on democracy, abortion, climate and health care.







GOP and Democratic campaigns spent their advertising dollars driving their top issues.



\$239m **Taxes**

\$167m Crime

Biden \$132m

Inflation \$115m

Immigration

\$85m

Democratic Advertisement Spending by Issue

\$350m **Abortion**

> \$132m Crime

\$124m **Taxes**

\$113m Character

\$84m Healthcare





This election was NOT good news for former President Trump

Many of his hand-picked statewide candidates lost.



Mehmet Oz, PA Senate



Tudor Dixon, MI Governor



Blake Masters, AZ Senate



Tim Michels, WI Governor



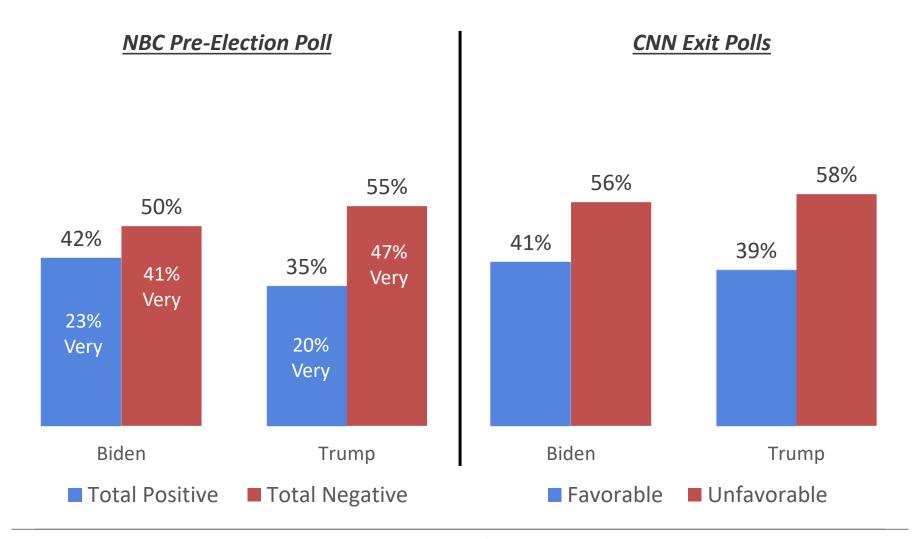
Don Bolduc, NH Senate



Doug Mastriano, PA Governor

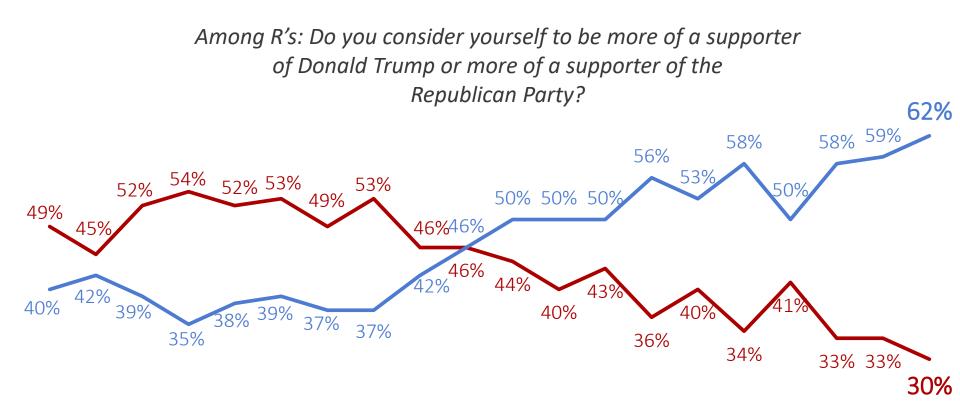


And, both our pre-election polling and the exit polls indicate Biden is more popular than the former President.

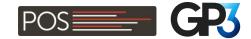




Further, there is clear evidence that GOPers may be falling out of love with President Trump.



Oct. Jan. Apr. Aug. Feb. Mar. Apr. Jun. Jul. Aug. Sep. Oct. Jan. Mar. May Aug. Nov. '20 '20 '20 '20 '20 '20 '21 '21 '21 '22 '22 '22 '22 '22 '22 '20 '20 '22 GOP Support Trump —GOP Support Party *NBC News Poll, November 3-5, 2022





- Despite the record-breaking negative mood of the country, and lackluster Biden approval scores, the GOP's narrow margin on the generic ballot translated into a smaller advantage than anticipated in the US House.
- 2. Voters' top issues were "rising prices and inflation" and "abortion," followed by "the economy and jobs" and "protecting democracy." Inflation/economic issues were cited by 58% of voters, while abortion and protecting democracy were cited by 56%, providing the GOP with only a modest advantage.



- 3. Democrats put their money behind the abortion issue and rode that all the way to Election Day. Expect abortion to remain "on the ballot" in 2024.
- 4. One key to the better-than-expected Democrat performance in the election is the threat that Democrats believed GOP candidates posed to the country. Fully 81% of Democratic voters agree that "Republicans represent a threat to democracy that will destroy America as we know it."

By way of comparison, just 69% of Republicans feel the same way about Democrats. This data seems to point to the sentiment that, while voters were ready and willing to make a change, they didn't fully trust the GOP to be that change.



- 5. Our polling indicates Democrats had the late momentum, as late deciders (24% of the electorate) broke 51%-47% in their favor.
- 6. It wasn't a good night for President Trump—many of his handpicked candidates lost, his potential '24 challenger picked up a
 ton of steam, and GOP voters seem to be questioning their
 allegiance to the former President.



BOTTOM LINE

While the abortion issue energized D's this summer, independent voters – particularly late deciders – who opted for Democratic candidates, could very well have been in reaction to President Trump more aggressively inserting himself into the mid-term dialogue.

Regardless of the final numbers and the outcome of the House and Senate races where votes are still being counted, Democrats out-performed expectations and Americans once again reinforced the extreme partisan divide in the country.



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