



THIRD WAY

Vice President Harris' Immigration Brand

**Findings from a Survey of
Likely Voters in Battleground
States**

September 2024



Joshua Ulibarri
Hannah Hall

Key Questions



1. How big is Trump's advantage or Harris' disadvantage on focus and approach when it comes to the border?
2. How serious do voters think Harris is on tackling border safety?
3. What are the strongest messages and contrasts to help reduce Harris' disadvantages and strengthen her serious on the border image?
4. How can MaxDiff analysis help establish stronger and weaker planks in strengthening Harris' brand?

Methodology

- LRP designed and administered this survey. It was conducted using text-to-online (TTO) from August 19 – 26, 2024. The survey reached 800 likely general election voters in battleground states. It also reached an oversample of 100 Latino/a voters.
- Telephone numbers for the sample were generated from a list of registered voters in battleground states (**Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin**) based on past turnout history and turnout score. The data were weighted slightly by gender, region, age, race, party identification, self-reported 2020 presidential vote, education, support score, turnout score, and vote select.
- Sampling error is +/- 3.5, with a greater sampling error for sub-groups.
- This survey was anchored to the voter file and, due to the nature of an all TTO survey, only reached voters who can be traced back to a cell phone number and are able to take a survey on their cell phone. Because of the small portion of voters this misses who do not have a cell phone or who are unable or unwilling to take a survey on their cell phone, this may cause some distortion in the data. This method has a tendency to push the data slightly upscale, reaching more progressive white voters and more moderate voters of color. However, the polling team is confident in the conclusions and the validity of the results.

(Re)Branding Harris on Immigration

1. Rebrand the Vice President by counterprogramming voters' assumptions and using her background to credential her on the border



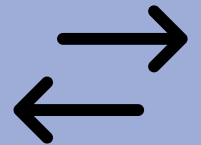
2. Assertively promote Harris' support for the bipartisan border bill that Trump blocked



3. Pivot to implicit and explicit contrasts and critiques against Trump – he blocked serious bipartisan border legislation that would have strengthened border security and fought drug trafficking, has a dangerous deportation agenda, and does not respect the law



4. Reaffirm Harris' commitment to stronger border security – then round this out with a future look toward a modernized immigration system, comprehensive reform, and addressing root causes of migration



What to Avoid When (Re)Branding Harris on Immigration

**Anchoring to the past,
including to Biden-
Harris
accomplishments**



**Avoid going straight to
the attack without
credentialing the Vice
President first**



**Trying to “out-tough”
Trump on the border
by directly comparing
records that voters
may not believe – this
also looks backwards
when Harris should
focus on the future**

Voters to Watch

Vulnerable Harris Voters (14% of all voters)

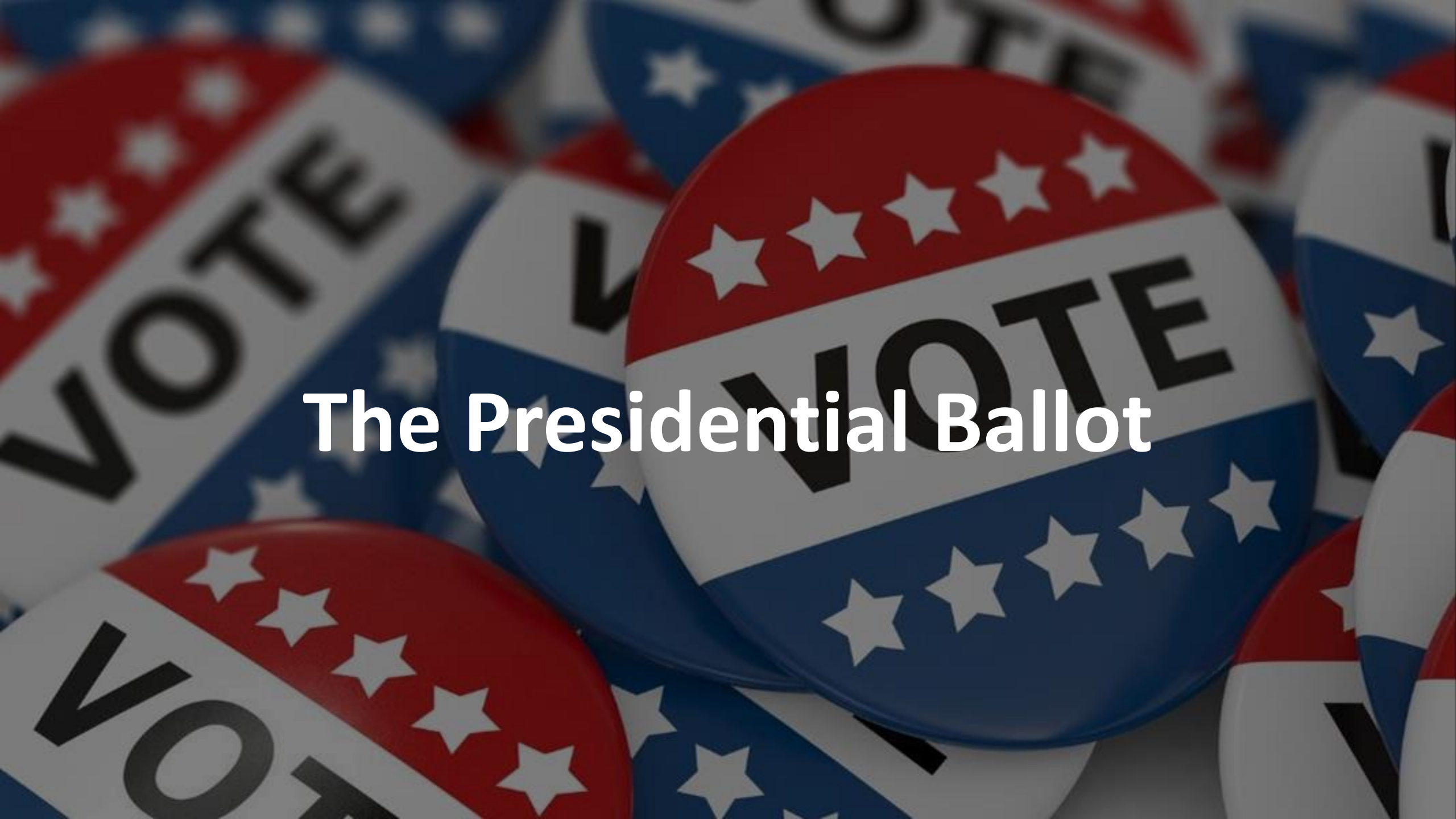
- These are voters who initially vote for Vice President Harris and either 1) do not say that Harris has the better approach, 2) do not say that Harris is more focused, or 3) have more concerns about Harris than Trump on immigration.
- By definition, these are all Harris voters in the presidential ballot.
- These voters tend to be younger women, African American and Latino/a college graduates, younger Democrats and independents, and 2020-only voters.

Persuasion Targets (21% of all voters)

- These are voters who fall into one of the following categories: 1) shift toward Harris in approach or focus, 2) shift toward thinking Harris is more serious when it comes to immigration, 3) have a favorable opinion of Harris OR an unfavorable opinion of Trump but do not initially vote for Harris, or 4) are undecided or weakly lean toward a candidate in the initial ballot.
- Currently, 43% of these voters vote Harris, 37% vote Trump, nine percent vote Kennedy, and five percent are undecided. Four percent say they would not vote.
- These voters also tend to be younger women, college graduates, and younger Democrats and independents, as well as voters of color who are women, under age 50, or college graduates. They tend to be lower turnout voters based on vote history (voted in 1 or fewer of the 2020 and 2022 general elections) and turnout score (under 70).

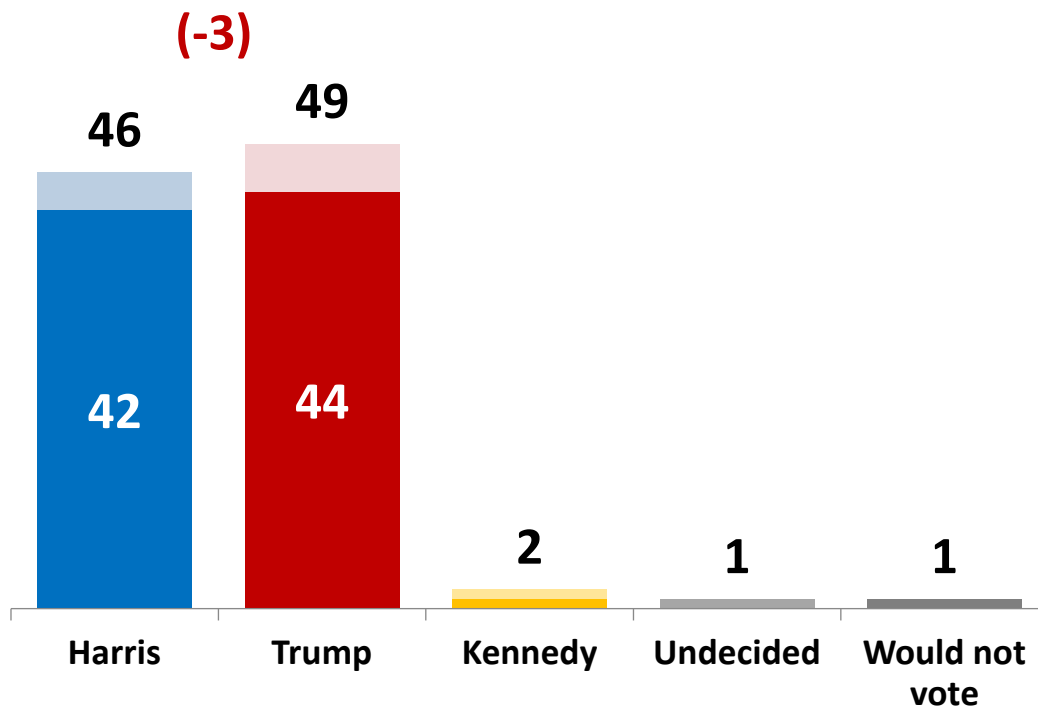
These groups are not mutually exclusive – among vulnerable Harris voters, 62% are also persuasion targets, and among persuasion targets, 42% are also vulnerable Harris voters. About nine percent of voters overall belong to both groups.





The Presidential Ballot

Vice President Harris is currently slightly behind Trump in the presidential ballot.



- The current ballot is 46% Harris, 49% Trump, and just one percent undecided.
- This poll was conducted before Robert F. Kennedy Jr. left the race, but he only takes two percent of the vote.
- Harris' base of support is among women, college graduates, and voters of color.

The Bases of Support



Harris' base includes:

- **Women – especially women under age 50).** She wins white, African American, and Latina women, but she needs to close the gender gap and win women by more than she loses men.
- **Younger voters – especially women.** She leads among voters under age 50, and is doing even better among voters under 40.
- **Voters of color – especially African American voters.** She is doing especially well among women of color and younger voters of color overall, while older Latino/a voters are part of her base.
- **College graduates – especially women.** She leads among college graduates across race.



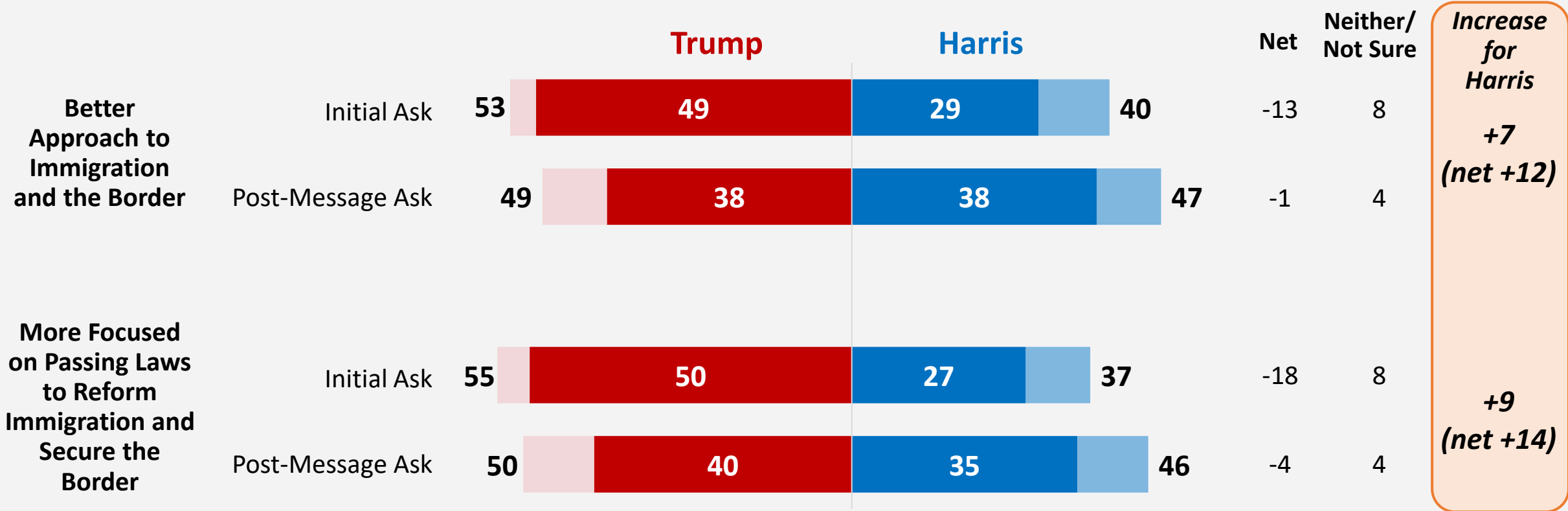
Trump's base includes:

- Men ages 50 and over
- White men and older white voters
- White non-college voters
- Non-college men
- Republicans and independents
- Latino/a voters in the South
- Voters who voted in neither the 2020 or 2022 general elections

Approach, Focus, and Seriousness about the Border



Approach and Focus on the Border



Darker colors indicate intensity

Vice President Harris initially trails Trump on focus and approach by double digits, but closes that gap with messaging.

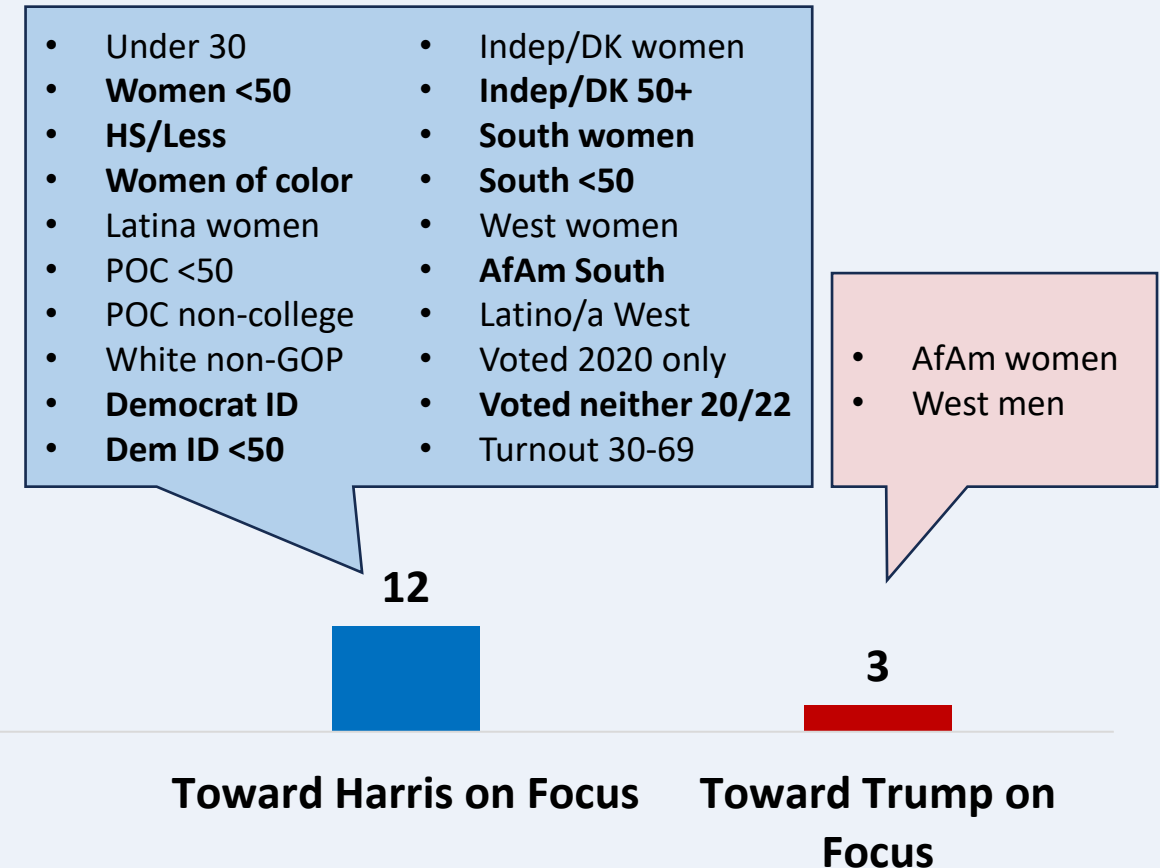
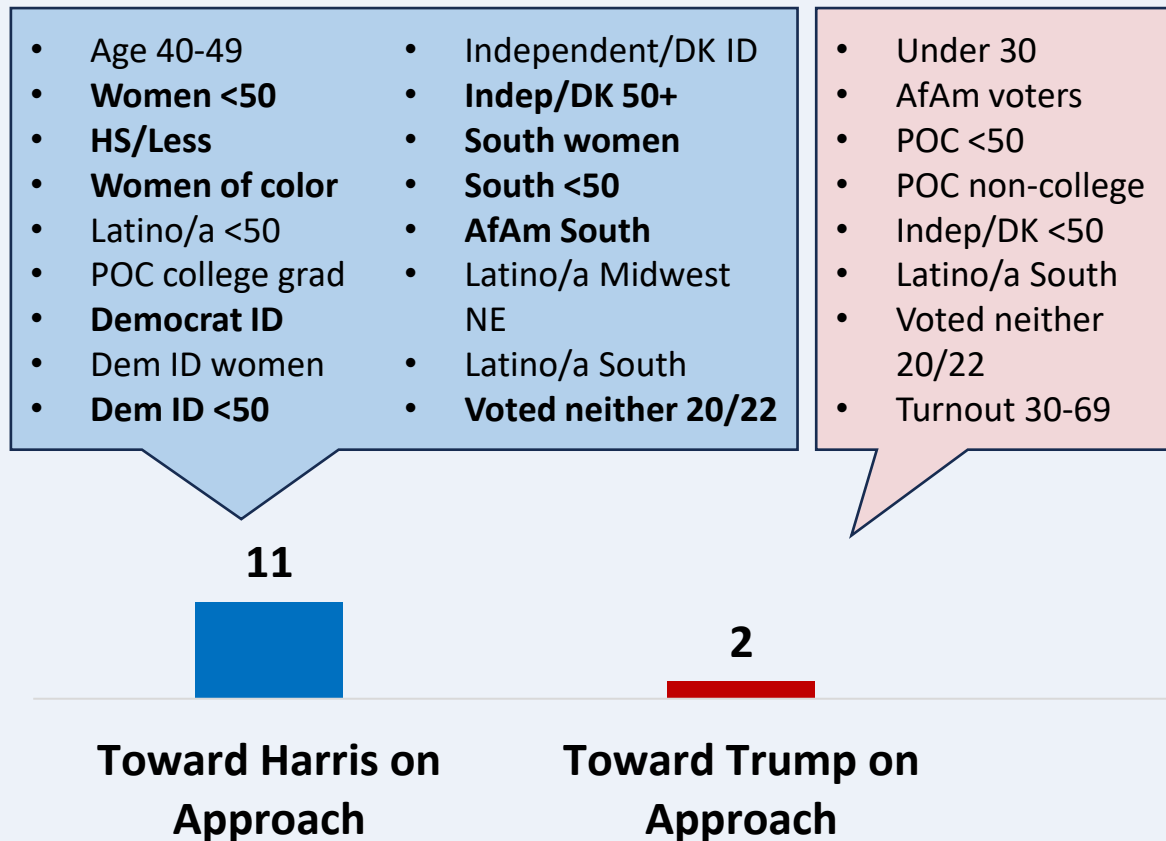


- While just 40% of voters initially say Harris has the better approach to immigration and the border, **47% choose Harris after messaging – a seven-point increase.**
- While just 37% of voters initially say Harris is more focused on immigration and the border, **46% choose Harris after messaging – a nine-point increase.**
- **Harris' messages close the gap** among Latino/a voters, persuasion targets, and vulnerable Harris voters (as well as scored independents and voters with more vote history).
- **Voters who shift toward preferring Harris in approach** tend to look like her base (younger women, voters of color, Democrats), though also include independents, voters who voted in neither the 2020 or 2022 general elections.
- **Voters who shift toward saying Harris is more focused than Trump** include younger women and Democrats, as well as non-college African American voters, Latina women, independent women, and voters who voted in neither the 2020 or 2022 general elections.

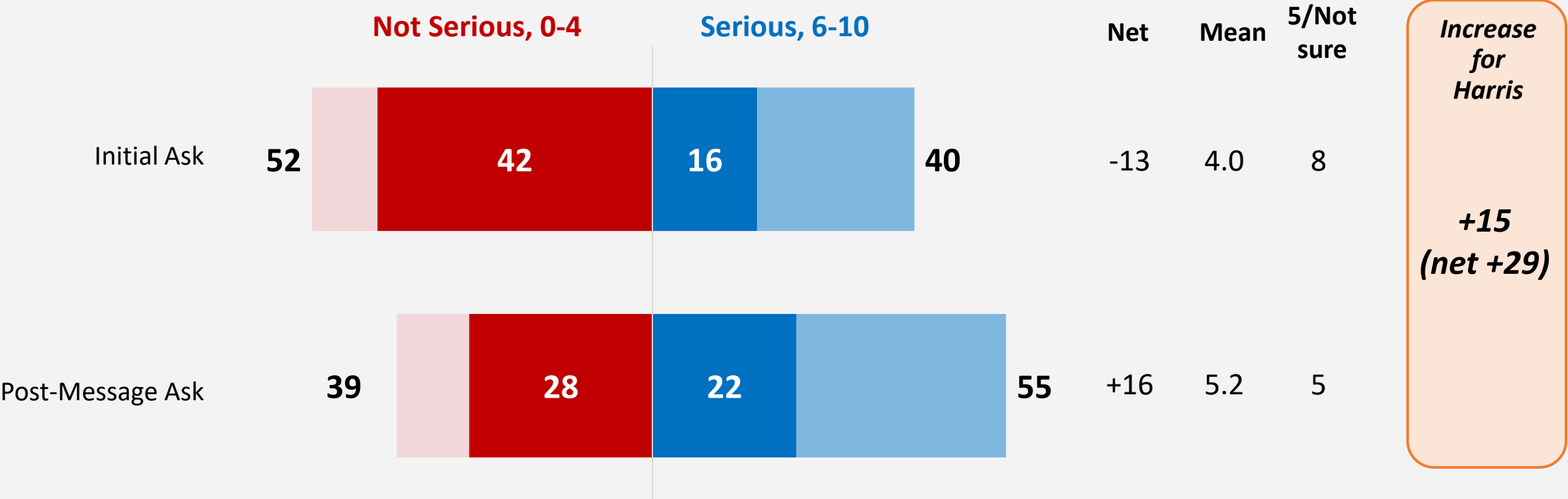
Choose Harris / Net Harris	Initial Approach	Approach Re-ask	Net increase for Harris	Initial Focus	Focus Re-ask	Net increase for Harris
Latino/a voters	38 / -13	45 / -1	+12	42 / -11	51 / +9	+20
African American voters	60 / +34	70 / +40	+6	55 / +21	68 / +38	+17
White non-GOP	62 / +33	74 / +52	+19	57 / +26	71 / +46	+20
Democrat ID	76 / +64	90 / +83	+19	70 / +52	86 / +75	+23
Independent/DK ID	25 / -41	32 / -26	+15	25 / -43	33 / -27	+16
Scored Democrat	68 / +46	75 / +53	+7	62 / +34	73 / +50	+16
Scored Independent	39 / -10	49 / +1	+11	36 / -15	44 / -8	+7
Persuasion targets	18 / -32	63 / +38	+70	16 / -43	65 / +40	+83
Vulnerable Harris voters	48 / +37	78 / +65	+28	24 / -14	63 / +39	+53

Approach and Focus Shifts

Younger women, women of color (especially Latinas), younger Democrats, older independents, and voters who did not vote in 2020 or 2022 are most likely to shift toward preferring Harris' approach or saying she is more focused than Trump is.



How serious is Harris about reforming immigration and securing the border?



This question asks voters to rate Harris on a scale from zero to ten where zero means Harris is not at all serious and ten means she is very serious.
Darker red indicates 0, Not at all serious. Darker blue indicates 10, very serious.

Messaging also strongly builds Harris' image as being serious about the border.

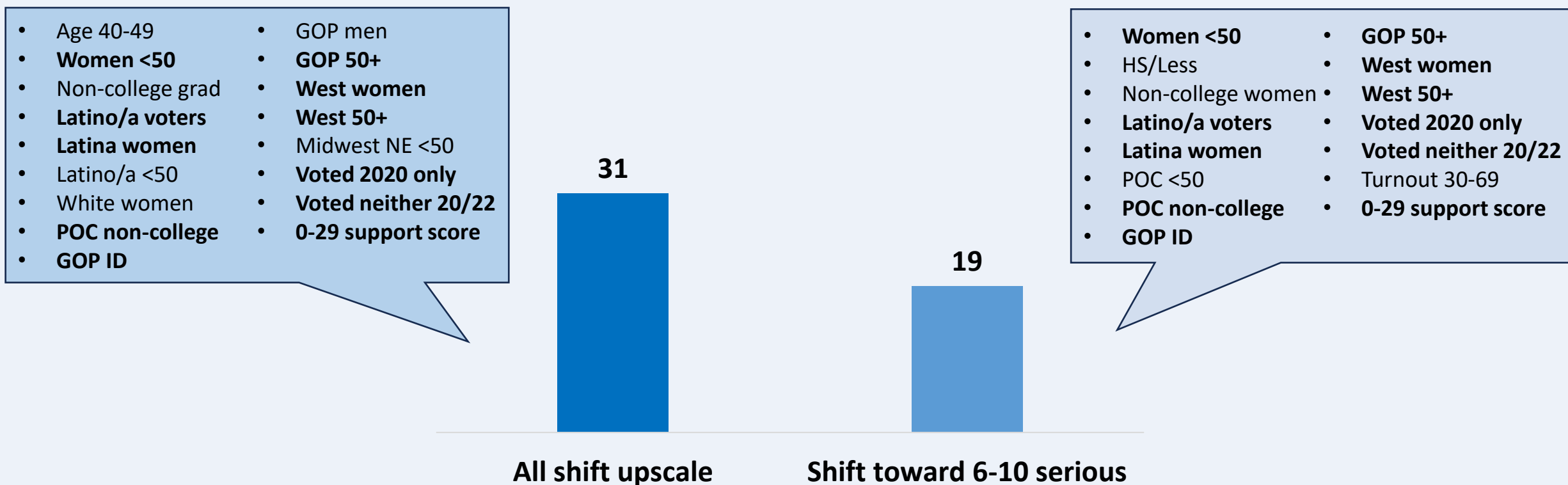


- While just 40% of voters initially rate Harris as 6-10 serious about reforming immigration and securing the border (16% say 10, very serious), **55% rate her as serious after messaging (22% very serious) – a 15-point increase.**
- Latino/a voters (especially women and younger Latinos/as), white women, non-college voters of color, and voters who voted in one or fewer of the 2020 and 2022 general elections disproportionately find Harris more serious after messaging.
- While a plurality of Latino/a voters and persuasion targets begin the survey rating Harris as 0-4 not serious about the border, nearly two thirds of each group align to rate her as 6-10 serious after messaging.

Serious 6-10 / Mean	Initial Ask	Re-ask	Increase % Serious
Latino/a voters	36 / 3.9	60 / 5.6	+24
African American voters	62 / 6.5	77 / 7.4	+15
White non-GOP	61 / 5.9	72 / 6.6	+11
Democrat ID	75 / 7.3	89 / 8.2	+14
Independent/DK ID	28 / 3.1	34 / 3.6	+6
Scored Democrat	65 / 6.6	75 / 7.0	+10
Scored Independent	45 / 4.4	51 / 4.9	+6
Persuasion targets	32 / 3.8	63 / 6.2	+31
Vulnerable Harris voters	58 / 6.6	75 / 6.9	+17

Harris Serious Shifts

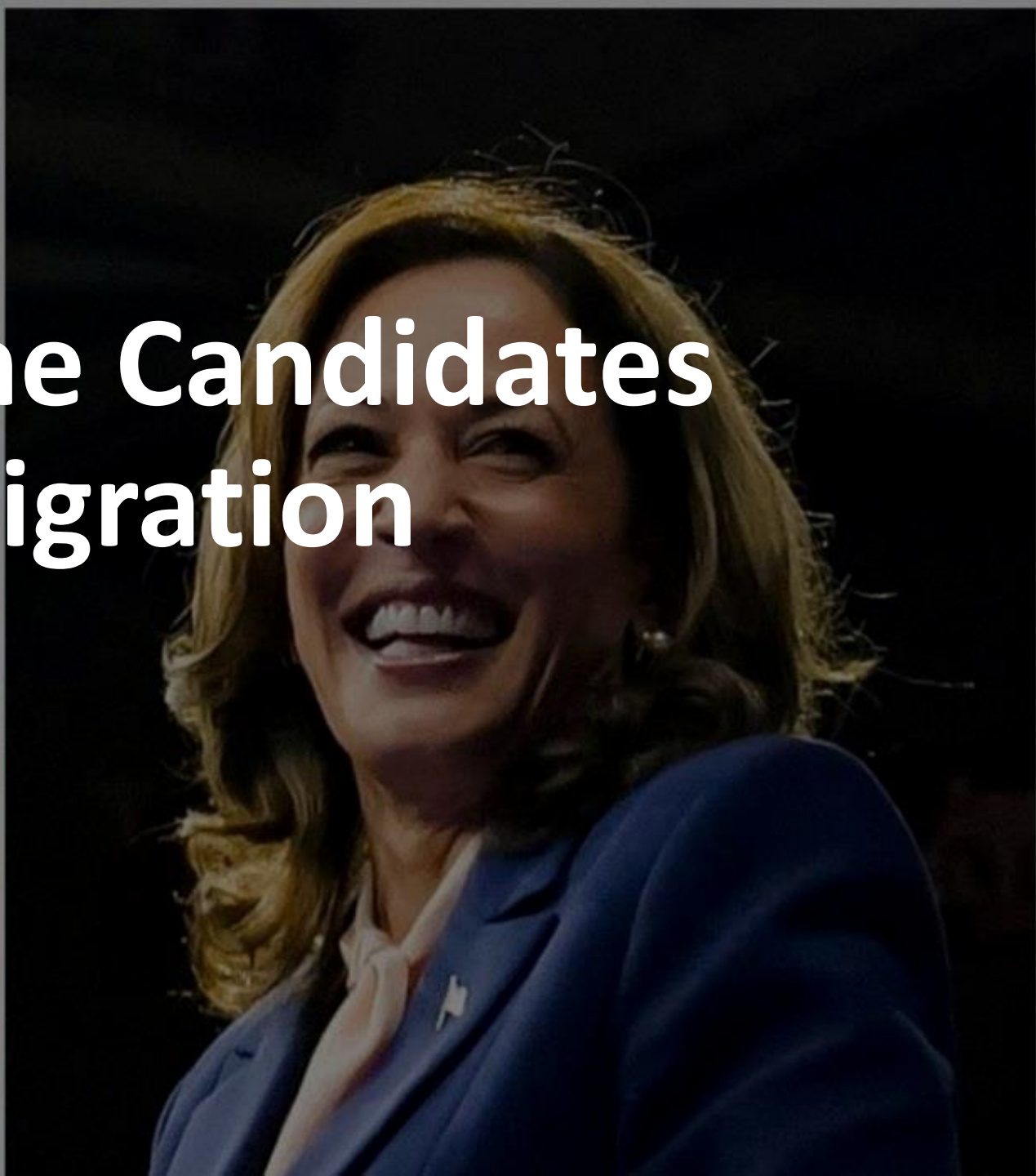
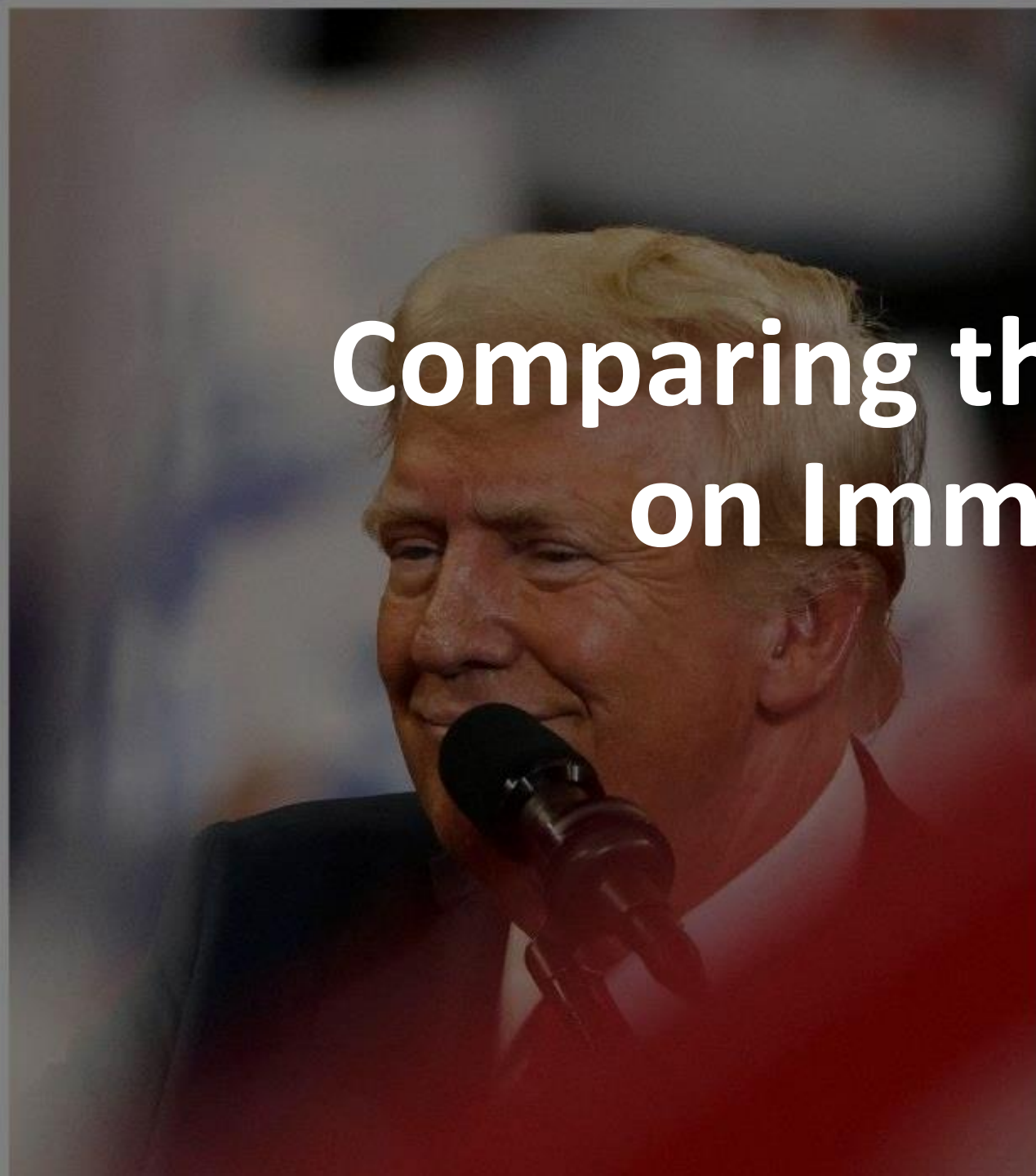
Like in approach and focus, younger women, Latina women, and voters who did not vote in 2020 or 2022 are especially likely to shift upscale in finding Harris serious about the border. Older Republicans also disproportionately shift toward rating Harris as more serious.



Upscale shifts include all changes up the 0-10 scale – from 0 to 3, 4 to 7, or 9 to 10, for example.

Shift toward 6-10 serious includes upward shifts between categories – those who initially rated Harris 0-4 not serious but shifted to give her a 5 or higher, and those who initially gave Harris a 5 or were unsure but rated her as 6-10 serious in the re-ask.

Comparing the Candidates on Immigration



Which statement, if it were true, concerns you more when it comes to electing a new President?



Kamala Harris's record on immigration is Joe Biden's record. That means open borders, uncontrolled immigration, rising crime, and community resources stretched too thin. Harris would be Biden but worse, because she is even more liberal and less qualified.



Donald Trump killed bipartisan border and immigration reform. The bill Trump killed included thousands of new border agents, money to fight fentanyl and the cartels, and the power to shut down the border during surges. By killing the bill, Trump showed us he would rather complain about the border as a political issue than really do anything to solve the problem.

Percent More Concerning



49

(-4)



45

Voters are more concerned about the immigration negative against Vice President Harris than the negative against Trump.



- **Forty-nine percent of voters have more concerns about the message blaming Harris for open borders, while 44% have more concerns about the message saying Trump killed the bipartisan border deal.**
- **While this aligns largely with partisanship, some key groups like independents and Latino/a voters (especially men) have stronger concerns about Harris.**
- **Persuasion targets are split on this question 42% more concerned about Harris to 45% more concerned about Trump.**

Which concerns you more	Harris	Trump	Net Trump
Latino/a voters	48	39	-9
African American voters	24	71	+46
White non-GOP	29	65	+36
Democrat ID	13	81	+68
Independent/DK ID	62	35	-27
Scored Democrat	18	75	+57
Scored Independent	48	44	-4
Persuasion targets	42	45	+3
Vulnerable Harris voters	11	78	+67

Experiment #1: Pathways vs. No Pathways

METHOD: To assess whether immigration pathways language helps or hurts Harris, half of voters heard Harris' position on border security including language about orderly pathways to legal status, while half heard her position without that language. All voters heard Trump's position, and were asked to choose which candidate's position they preferred.



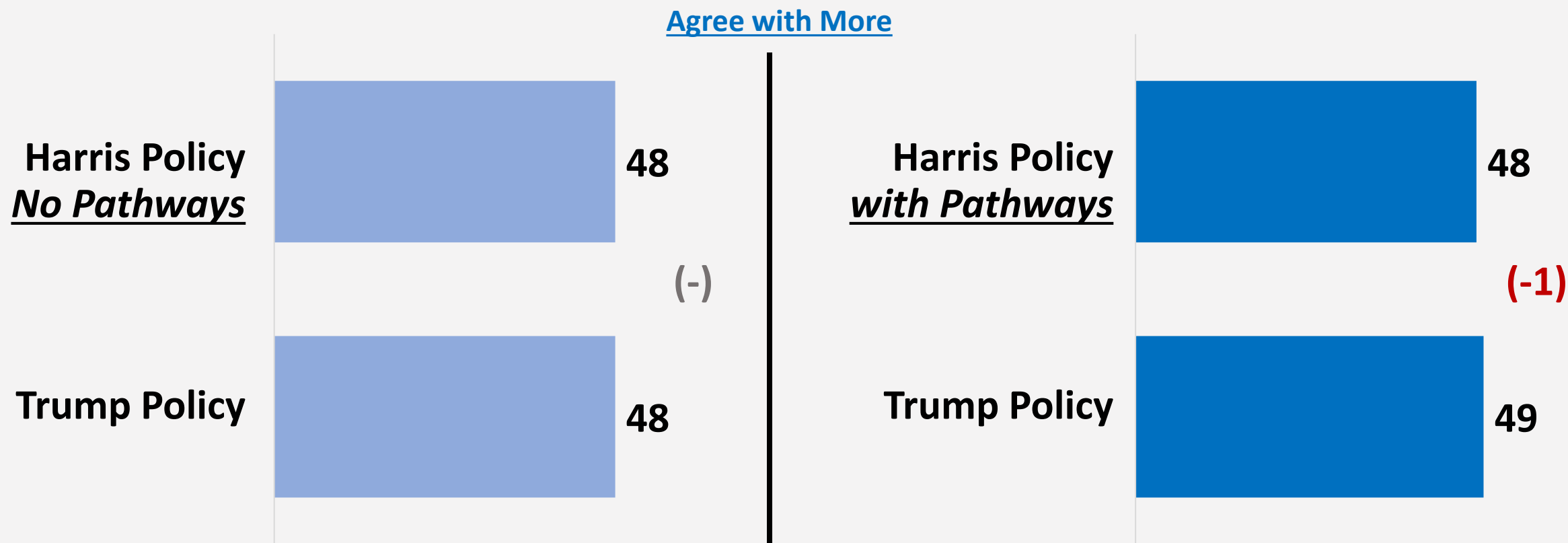
Regardless of how you plan to vote, which position do you agree with more, even if neither is perfect?

Split A No Pathways: Harris says she will sign the bipartisan immigration bill that is the toughest, most expansive border security law in the last 20 years. It allows the President to close the border if our personnel get overwhelmed, hires thousands of new border agents and immigration judges, and invests millions to fight fentanyl cartels. Harris will continue to work with neighboring countries to slow down the flow to the U.S. and return people who aren't eligible to stay here.

Split B w/ Pathways: Harris says she will sign the bipartisan immigration bill that is the toughest, most expansive border security law in the last 20 years. It allows the President to close the border if our personnel get overwhelmed, hires thousands of new border agents and immigration judges, and invests millions to fight fentanyl cartels. Harris will continue to work with neighboring countries to slow down the flow to the U.S. and return people who aren't eligible to stay here. ***And Harris will push for orderly pathways that allow immigrants who have long lived and worked in our communities to earn legal status.***

To All: Trump says that under his leadership, we were respected around the world. In three short years that international respect is gone. We have an uncontrolled border crisis, leading to increased crime, and community resources are stretched too thin. Trump says on day one he will once again begin building the wall he started and begin the process of finding and deporting the millions of immigrants here illegally.

Overall, there is little difference in which candidate’s position voters agree with more regardless of whether they hear Harris’ immigration pathways language.



Pathways language likely is not required, but can be a component later in the reform conversation.



- **Voters overall are split between Harris' and Trump's positions on immigration and the border**, regardless of whether or not they heard Harris' pathways language.
- **This language does not provide a bounce with key constituencies**, so it may not be required to introduce the Harris brand, though the strength of reform messaging in later batteries indicate it could be a good message component later on.
 - Pathways language is better with some base groups like younger women and white women.
 - Latino/a voters prefer the message without pathways language (driven more by younger Latino/a voters), though this stark difference may be related to sampling differences discussed further on the following slide.
 - African American voters, vulnerable Harris voters, and persuasion targets also prefer the message without pathways language (but prefer Harris either way).

Prefer Harris / Net	No Pathways	Heard Pathways
Women <50	55 / +16	62 / +28
White women	53 / +7	57 / +15
Latino/a voters	53 / +11	37 / -19
African American voters	76 / +55	68 / +39
Persuasion targets	59 / +27	53 / +13
Vulnerable Harris voters	93 / +90	83 / +77
Democrat ID	86 / +77	84 / +72
Independent/DK ID	42 / -13	27 / -42
Scored Democrat	77 / +59	78 / +59
Scored Independent	48 / +6	51 / +6

Pathways Language Among Latino/a Voters



- There are some differences between voters who identify as Latino/a with those flagged as Latino/a on the voter file – those who are flagged as Latino/a but identify as white are not as good for Harris and are more heavily represented in pathways split.
- Additionally, there are more conservative kinds of Latino/a voters in the pathways split, which makes it look much worse for Harris among Latino/a voters. While the polling team evens splits to make sure that Latino/a voters (and other demographic groups) are evenly distributed by split, the sample sizes get too small to do that by subgroups like, for example, Latino/a voters by gender or party ID.
- That said, our overall message flow and recommendations would not be any different – we want to credential Harris, go into the bipartisan immigration plan, build in the contrast with Trump, and then can circle back to reform.
- Looking at the data among flagged Hispanics and among Latinos/as who do not vote for Trump, the No Pathways advantage holds:
- **Among Flagged Hispanics:**
 - No Pathways: 59% prefer Harris; 36% prefer Trump
 - With Pathways: 49% Harris; 42% Trump
- **Among Latino/a voters who do not vote for Trump:**
 - No Pathways: 83% prefer Harris; 12% prefer Trump
 - With Pathways: 77% Harris; 11% Trump

A photograph of Vice President Kamala Harris speaking at a dark blue podium. She is wearing a white blazer and has her right hand raised in a gesture. The podium features the Presidential Seal. The background is dark with out-of-focus blue lights.

Exploring Vice President Harris' Brand Through Messaging and MaxDiff Analysis

Immigration Messages Language

Kamala Harris has a record of holding criminals accountable. She was a prosecutor who got her start putting sexual offenders in prison. As an Attorney General, Harris took on big banks and held them accountable for fraud. Trump has been found liable for rape, convicted of 34 fraud felonies, and called on his supporters to dangerously rally at the Capitol on January 6th. Harris is a disciplined law enforcer focused on the border while Trump is a lawbreaker who can't be trusted to enforce tough immigration laws. **[DISCIPLINED LAW QUAL]**

Kamala Harris knows it is time to bring order to the chaos at the border. While the U.S. strengthens security at the border, we also need to address the root causes of the migrant crisis. Harris led efforts in the Senate and as Vice President to combat corruption, reduce violence – especially gender-based violence and trafficking – and improve economic opportunity in Central American countries. That will help people in those countries feel safer, more secure, and empowered at home so they feel less pressure to immigrate. **[ROOT CAUSES]***

Kamala Harris is serious about restoring order at our southern border. She wants to sign the toughest bipartisan border bill in history that would have surged thousands of new agents to the border, added millions of new dollars in border security technology, and added more judges to process asylum cases in a way that's fast, fair, and final. Donald Trump told Republicans in Congress to stop that bill. Trump would rather have a campaign issue to complain about than to actually secure our border. **[SERIOUS BILL SUPPORTER]**

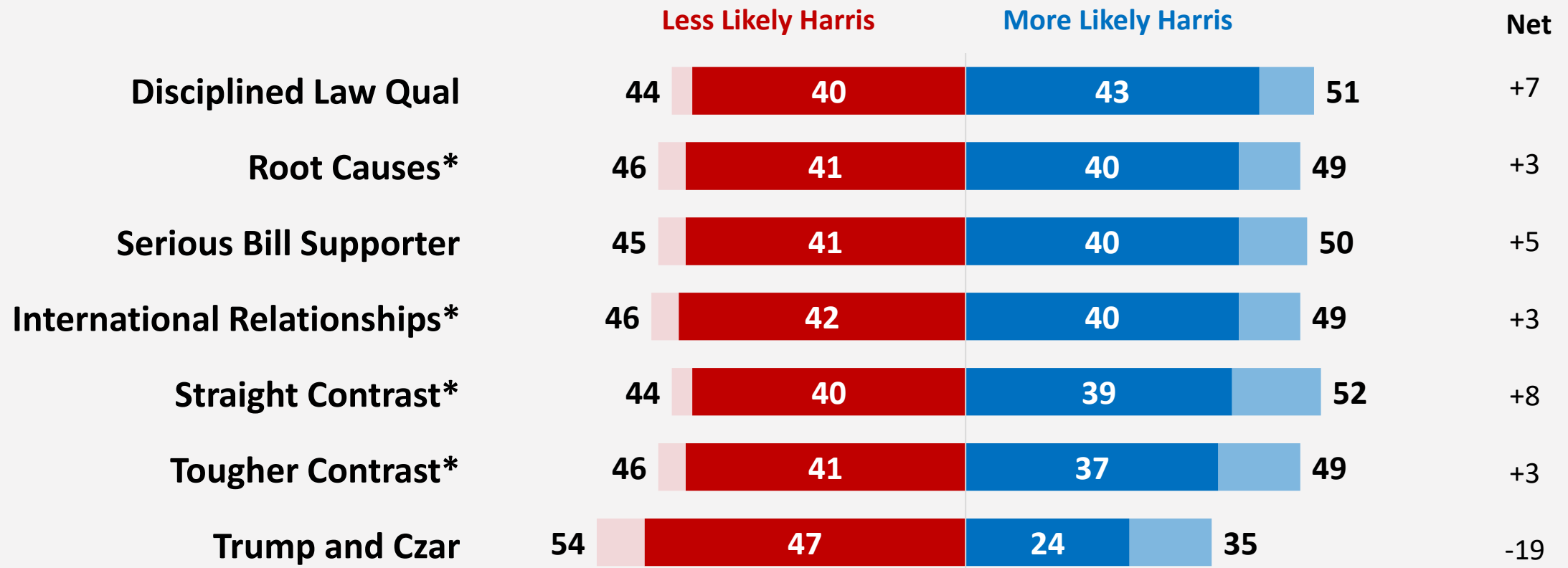
Harris is ready to restore order at the border. That requires not only getting serious about security at the border, but also getting serious about building and protecting international relationships with other countries. Harris helped bolster relationships with Venezuela, Mexico, and Guatemala so those countries help reduce the flow of migration and accept people removed from America who weren't eligible to stay. Harris's steady leadership can protect these relationships, so countries work with us to slow down migration to the border. **[INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS]***

Under Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, illegal border crossings are plummeting and on pace to be lower than Trump's 2019 and 2020 numbers. The Biden-Harris administration increased border patrol funding by more than \$11 billion to hire more border agents and install better technology and sent home three times as many people without valid cases at the border as Trump did. And under Biden-Harris, border agents seized nearly six times as much fentanyl at the border as the Trump administration. **[STRAIGHT CONTRAST] ***

Under Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, more people who don't qualify for asylum are being sent home, more drugs are being seized, and illegal border crossings are plummeting and on pace to be lower than Trump's 2019 and 2020 numbers. The Biden-Harris administration increased border patrol funding by more than \$11 billion to hire more border agents and install better technology and sent home three times as many people without valid cases at the border as Trump did. And under Biden-Harris, border agents seized nearly six times as much fentanyl at the border as the Trump administration. **[TOUGHER CONTRAST]***

Kamala Harris was put in charge of Biden's border policy; some described her as Biden's border czar, and under Biden, the border is more open and more dangerous than ever. Trump got serious on day one, started to fund and build the border wall, and promises to deport millions of illegal immigrants who are in our country without permission. **[TRUMP AND CZAR]**

Immigration Messages



Darker colors indicate intensity

*Split sampled

Experiment #2: Straight Contrast vs. Tougher Contrast

Split A Straight Contrast:

Under Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, illegal border crossings are plummeting and on pace to be lower than Trump's 2019 and 2020 numbers. The Biden-Harris administration increased border patrol funding by more than \$11 billion to hire more border agents and install better technology and sent home three times as many people without valid cases at the border as Trump did. And under Biden-Harris, border agents seized nearly six times as much fentanyl at the border as the Trump administration.

[52% Total More Likely Harris, 39% Much More Likely; +8 More Likely]

Split B Tougher Contrast:

Under Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, ***more people who don't qualify for asylum are being sent home, more drugs are being seized,*** and illegal border crossings are plummeting and on pace to be lower than Trump's 2019 and 2020 numbers. The Biden-Harris administration increased border patrol funding by more than \$11 billion to hire more border agents and install better technology and sent home three times as many people without valid cases at the border as Trump did. And under Biden-Harris, border agents seized nearly six times as much fentanyl at the border as the Trump administration.

[49% Total More Likely Harris, 37% Much More Likely; +3 More Likely]

- **METHOD:** To assess whether voters responded to a tougher contrast between Harris and Trump, half of voters heard a Harris/Biden-Trump contrast message included harsher language around asylum cases and drug seizures, while half heard the contrast without that language.
- While both contrasts rank toward the bottom of the tested messages – likely because they focused on past actions instead of the future – **the tougher contrast is weaker than the general contrast, especially among voters of color.**
 - Among Black voters, the Straight Contrast makes 71% of voters much more likely to support Harris; the Tougher Contrast just 41%.
 - Among Latino/a voters, the Straight Contrast makes 36% of voters much more likely to support Harris; the Tougher Contrast just 29%.
- Voters just do not buy that Harris will be harsher or tougher than Trump on the border, and this shouldn't be the goal when defining Harris.

Top Immigration Messages by Demographics

The Disciplined Law message focused on Harris' background is the top overall message and is especially strong with base voters while still appealing to persuasion targets and Latino/a voters.

The second best-testing message focuses on addressing root causes to migration and is strongest among base Democrats and Latino/a voters, followed by supporting the bipartisan immigration bill, which is also particularly strong for both base Democrats and more swing independents and Latino/a voters.

Directly contrasting Harris' and Trump's records has generally less intense appeal but is strong among African American voters, independents, older women, and persuasion targets.

Latino/a Voters

- Root Causes (48%)
- Disciplined Law (47%)
- Serious Bill (41%)

Women <50

- Intl. Relationships (56%)
- Disciplined Law (55%)
- Serious Bill (50%)

Persuasion Targets

- Straight Contrast (44%)
- Disciplined Law (43%)
- Root Causes (40%)

Dem ID

- Disciplined Law (81%)
- Root Causes (78%)
- Serious Bill (74%)

African American Voters

- Root Causes (73%)
- Straight Contrast (71%)
- Disciplined Law (65%)

Women 50+

- Root Causes (48%)
- Disciplined Law (46%)
- Straight Contrast (45%)

Vulnerable Harris Voters

- Disciplined Law (75%)
- Root Causes (70%)
- Intl. Relationships (67%)

Indep/DK

- Straight Contrast (36%)
- Serious Bill (31%)
- Disciplined Law (29%)

White non-GOP

- Disciplined Law (66%)
- Intl. Relationships (64%)
- Serious Bill (62%)

Vote Harris

- Disciplined Law (87%)
- Root Causes (84%)
- Serious Bill (83%)

Scored Dem

- Disciplined Law (72%)
- Root Causes (68%)
- Serious Bill (67%)

Scored Indep.

- Disciplined Law (41%)
- Straight Contrast (41%)
- Intl. Relationships (40%)

MaxDiff Analysis



What is MaxDiff Analysis?

- Best-Worst Analysis
- A relative preference test for survey takers; they are asked to choose their best and worst alternatives from between four choices.

When to use MaxDiff?

- When trade-offs or choices are required
- Better for shorter rather than longer questions
- As an example, policy proposals or candidate traits

What does MaxDiff tell us?*

- It tells us which statements voters find to be the most likely reasons to support the Vice President when they are forced to choose between four, and which statements are weaker relative to other choices.
- Importantly, the scores do not reflect how convincing each statement is in and of itself, but rather how convincing it is relative to the other statements tested in this exercise.

*MaxDiff analysis can also be used to create classes that segment voters based on how they respond to the battery. Analysis of these classes will come later.

MaxDiff Statements Language

Harris will restore order at the border and modernize our broken system so it works for America. She also supports comprehensive immigration reform that includes an earned path to citizenship. Already she has helped protect undocumented spouses of U.S. citizens and doubled the number of asylum cases heard each week. **[REFORM FUTURE]**

Kamala Harris is serious about addressing the border crisis. She wants to sign the toughest bipartisan border deal in history that would add thousands of new border patrol agents, invest billions to fight fentanyl and drug cartels, and shut down the border if our agents get overwhelmed. **[HARRIS BIPARTISAN]**

Kamala Harris was a prosecutor who sent sex offenders to prison and an Attorney General who held big banks accountable. She was a border state prosecutor who went after drug cartels, smugglers, and gangs. She will hold bad actors accountable for creating chaos at the border so we decide who comes into our country. **[HARRIS BACKGROUND]**

The Biden-Harris administration has improved relationships with Guatemala, Mexico, and Venezuela and worked with them to reduce the number of people arriving at our border without permission. Now the U.S. can send people home who aren't eligible to stay. Harris helped build these relationships that made us safer, relationships Trump would put at risk. **[INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS]**

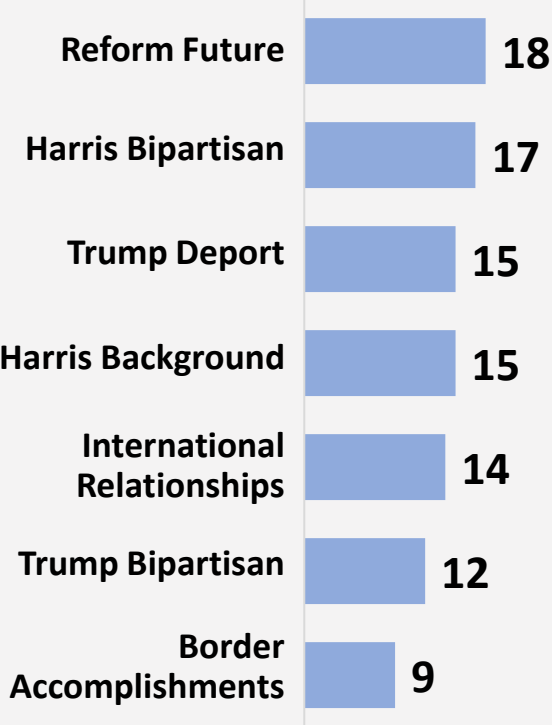
Donald Trump has a dangerous and extreme agenda. After killing the bipartisan border deal, Trump now says he will deport 15 million immigrants, which will devastate our economy, separate families, and divide our communities. **[TRUMP DEPORT]**

Donald Trump singlehandedly killed a major border bill that would have invested millions to restore order at the border, fight the cartels, and stop drugs from coming into our country. But Trump would rather have a border issue to complain about during the campaign than get the issue solved. **[TRUMP BIPARTISAN]**

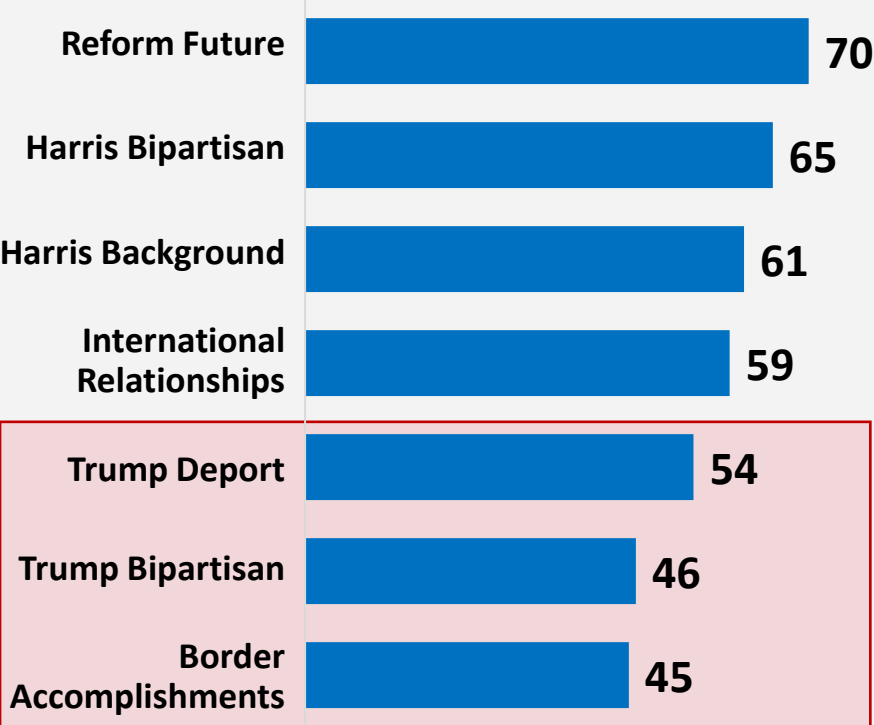
Kamala Harris is ready to build on the Biden-Harris border accomplishments so we don't go back to Trump's failures. There are now fewer encounters at the southern border than under Trump, and the Biden-Harris administration delivered more than three times as many removals of people who aren't eligible to stay per month and more than six times the fentanyl seizures as Trump did. **[BORDER ACCOMPLISHMENTS]**

MaxDiff Statements

By MaxDiff Score

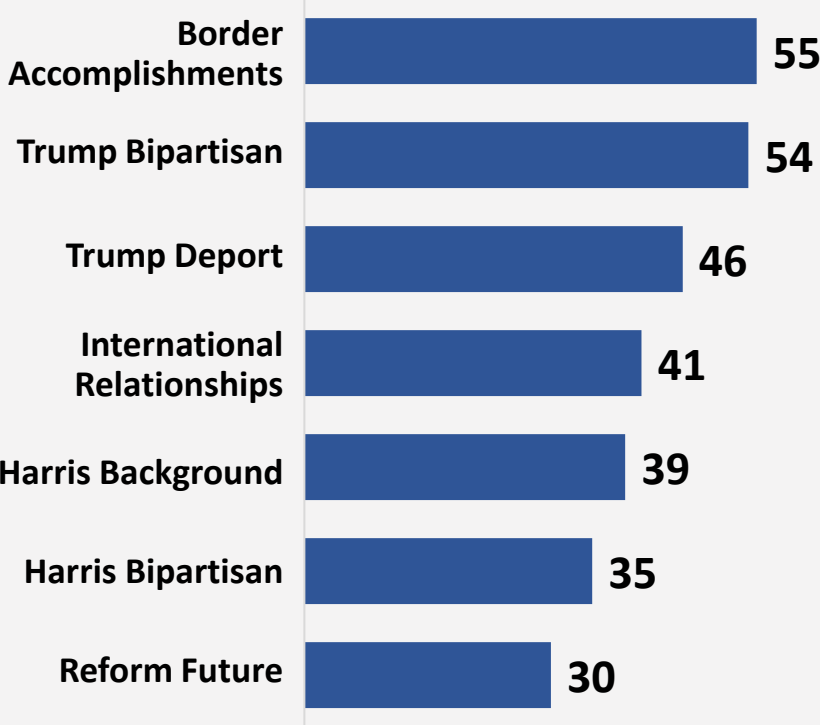


By Chosen Most Likely Reason to Support Harris at Least Once



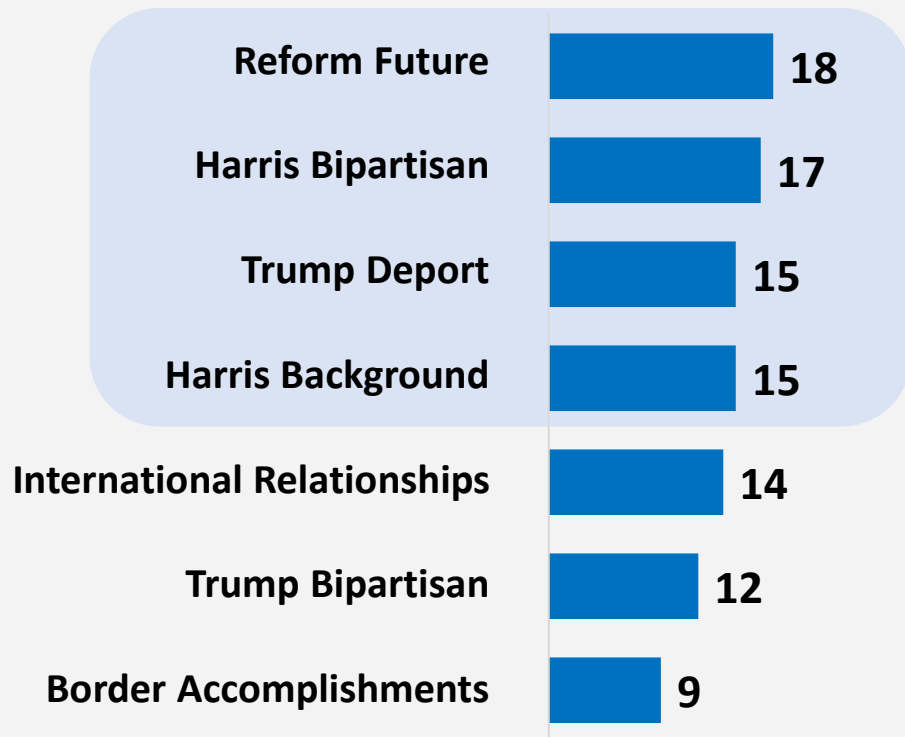
These bottom three messages all mention Trump directly, weakening their reach.

By Never Chosen Most Likely Reason to Support Harris



MaxDiff Statements by Score

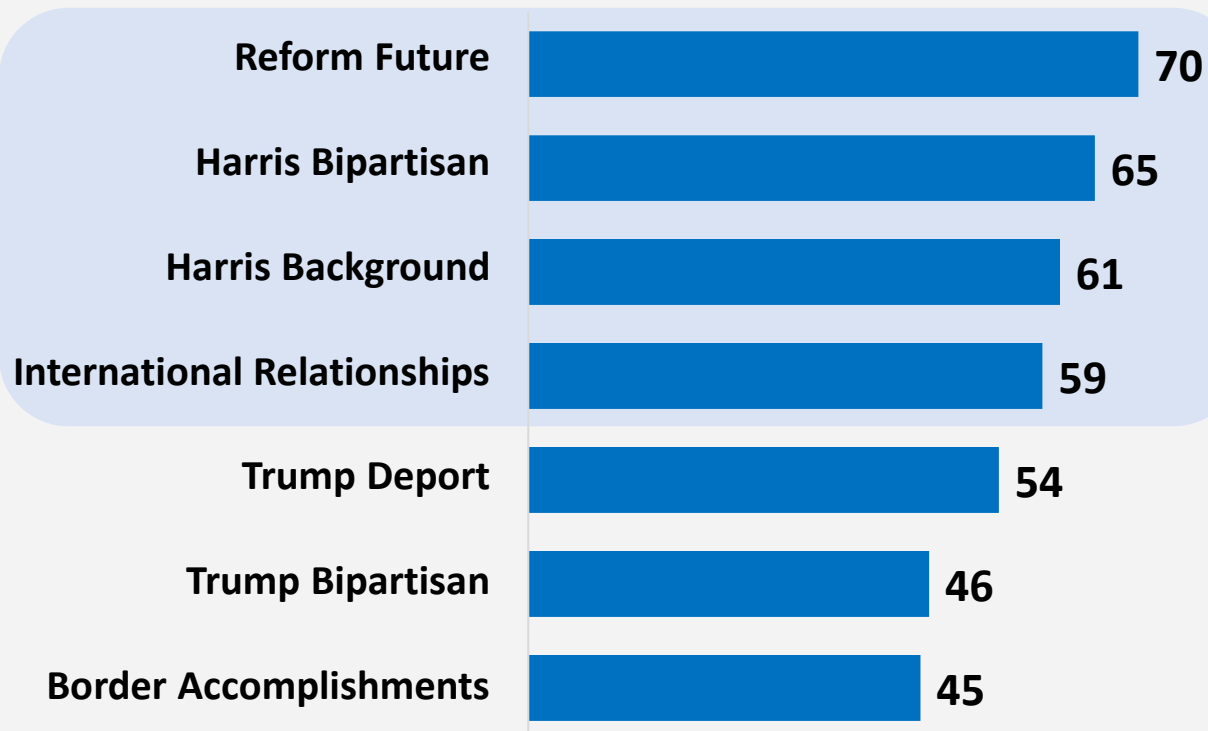
By MaxDiff Score



- Looking at the data by MaxDiff score tells us which statements were always or almost always chosen as the most likely reason to support Harris by a greater share of the electorate – essentially, which items have the most dedicated support.
- Based on this data, we can see that significant segments of voters always or almost always prioritize:
 1. Restoring order at the border through a modernized system and comprehensive immigration reform
 2. Passing the toughest bipartisan border deal in history
 3. Keeping Trump from passing his extreme agenda that would deport millions of immigrants and divide communities.
 4. Harris’s background as a prosecutor.
- These issues do not necessarily have the broadest support, but instead the most dedicated supporters.

MaxDiff Statements by Chosen Most Likely Reason to Support Harris at Least Once

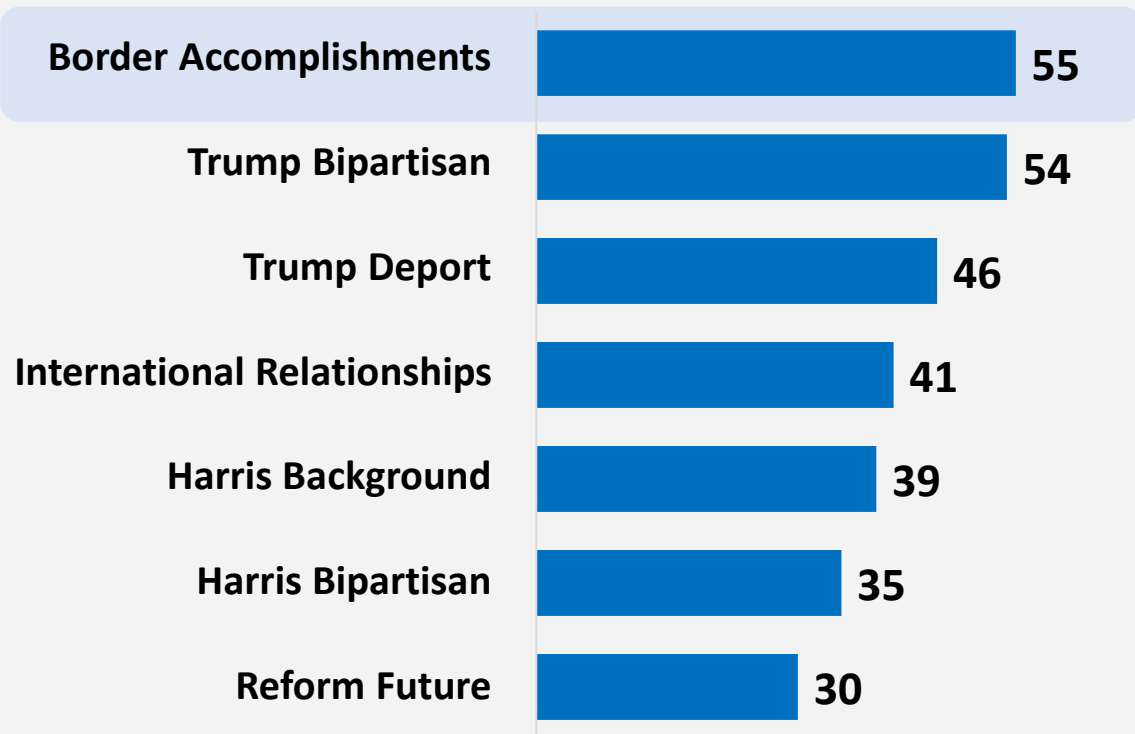
By Chosen Most Likely Reason to Support Harris at Least Once



- Looking at the data by what percentage of voters *ever* chose each item as the most likely reason to support Harris shows which statements have broader, if not always as dedicated, reach.
- Reforming the system and passing the bipartisan immigration bill still top the list here, though Harris' prosecutorial background and her work building international relationships to reduce unlawful border crossings are stronger here.
- Meanwhile, the more direct contrasts with Trump have less reach.

MaxDiff Statements by Never Chosen Most Likely Reason to Support Harris

By Never Chosen Most Likely Reason to Support Harris



- Looking at the data by what percentage of voters *never* chose each item as the most likely reason to support Harris can tell us which statements are less of a priority for broader groups of voters.
- The statement focused on the Biden-Harris border accomplishments is the weakest overall, lower in both intense and broad support. This statement makes a direct comparison with Trump and asserts that Biden and Harris have taken tougher border actions, which many voters likely find hard to believe.

Top MaxDiff Statements by Demographics

The reform statement – which starts with language about restoring order at the border – is the top MaxDiff statement, appealing to both base and persuasion targets for Harris. It is particularly strong with voters of color and Democrats. Harris supporting the bipartisan deal also appeals to base and persuasion targets but is especially strong with African American voters and independents. Additionally, the statement on Harris’ background also has broad appeal and particular strength among Latino/a voters and younger women.

The attack on Trump’s extreme deportation agenda does not have as broad appeal but pops with several key targets. Harris needs a broader brand and credentials for herself, but critiquing Trump on this is still a strong message for base Democrats, African Americans, and Harris voters, as well as her vulnerable and persuasion targets.

Latino/a Voters

- Reform Future (73%)
- Background (67%)
- Harris Bipartisan (62%)

Women <50

- Reform Future (66%)
- Harris Bipartisan (66%)
- Background (66%)

Persuasion Targets

- Reform Future (69%)
- Deport (66%)
- Harris Bipartisan (61%)

Dem ID

- Deport (72%)
- Reform Future (72%)
- Harris Bipartisan (64%)

African American Voters

- Deport (74%)
- Reform Future (72%)
- Harris Bipartisan (68%)

Women 50+

- Reform Future (69%)
- Harris Bipartisan (64%)
- Background (61%)

Vulnerable Harris Voters

- Deport (74%)
- Reform Future (70%)
- Harris Bipartisan (56%)

Indep/DK

- Harris Bipartisan (73%)
- Reform Future (62%)
- Intl. Relationships (58%)

White non-GOP

- Reform Future (68%)
- Harris Bipartisan (65%)
- Deport (58%)

Vote Harris

- Reform Future (70%)
- Deport (69%)
- Harris Bipartisan (62%)

Scored Dem

- Reform Future (73%)
- Deport (64%)
- Harris Bipartisan (62%)

Scored Indep.

- Harris Bipartisan (72%)
- Reform Future (60%)
- Intl. Relationships (60%)

By % Ever Chosen Most Likely

1. The first goal to (re)brand Harris should be to counterprogram voters' assumptions and use her background to credential her on the border.



- Voters need to know that Harris is serious, tough enough, and qualified to secure the border and enforce the law.
- Overall, the top positive immigration message for Harris is **Disciplined Law Qual**, which focuses on Harris' background in law enforcement to prove she is serious about getting tough on the border and enforcing the law – while Trump is a criminal lawbreaker.
 - This is a top message among Latino/a voters and scored independents, base Democrats and women, as well as Harris' vulnerable voters and persuasion targets.
- In the MaxDiff battery, the strong **Harris Background** statement focuses on her background in law enforcement as a proof point to her taking border security seriously.
 - This statement is especially strong among Latino/a voters, women of color, and younger women.

Kamala Harris has a record of holding criminals accountable. She was a prosecutor who got her start putting sexual offenders in prison. As an Attorney General, Harris took on big banks and held them accountable for fraud. Trump has been found liable for rape, convicted of 34 fraud felonies, and called on his supporters to dangerously rally at the Capitol on January 6th.

Kamala Harris was a prosecutor who sent sex offenders to prison and an Attorney General who held big banks accountable. She was a border state prosecutor who went after drug cartels, smugglers, and gangs. She will hold bad actors accountable for creating chaos at the border so we decide who comes into our country.

2. Harris' brand must also include her support for the bipartisan border bill that Trump blocked.

- As a proof point that Harris is serious about ending the chaos and tough enough to secure the border, voters need to know that she supports the bipartisan border deal that Trump and the Republicans blocked.
- The **Serious Bill Supporter** message is especially strong with Latino/a voters, as well as both Democrats and independents. This message focuses on the bipartisan immigration bill, which Harris supported and Trump blocked.
- In the MaxDiff battery, the **Harris Bipartisan** statement focused on this bill also rises to the top overall and among key targets, like persuasion and vulnerable voters, Latino/a voters, independents, and base Democrats and African American voters.



Kamala Harris is serious about restoring order at our southern border. She wants to sign the toughest bipartisan border bill in history that would have surged thousands of new agents to the border, added millions of new dollars in border security technology, and added more judges to process asylum cases in a way that's fast, fair, and final. Donald Trump told Republicans in Congress to stop that bill. Trump would rather have a campaign issue to complain about than to actually secure our border.

Kamala Harris is serious about addressing the border crisis. She wants to sign the toughest bipartisan border deal in history that would add thousands of new border patrol agents, invest billions to fight fentanyl and drug cartels, and shut down the border if our agents get overwhelmed.

3. After credentialing Harris, pivot to implicit and explicit contrasts and critiques against Trump.



- This contrast should not be about trying to prove that Harris will be tougher than Trump – voters don't believe that. Instead, they should hear that Harris is serious about ending the chaos at the border, while Trump is not serious, risky, and extreme.
- Proof points for this critique should include Trump **blocking the bipartisan border bill so he could have a political issue to run on**, having a record of breaking the law, and wanting to **deport millions of immigrants and devastate our communities**.
- In the MaxDiff battery, the Trump critique around his extreme policies rises to the top, and is especially strong among base African American voters and Democrats, as well as persuasion targets and vulnerable voters.
- Take note that focusing too much on Trump's past actions around immigration is less useful here – focus on what he *will* do if re-elected.

Harris is a disciplined law enforcer focused on the border while Trump is a lawbreaker who can't be trusted to enforce tough immigration laws.

Donald Trump singlehandedly killed a major border bill that would have invested millions to restore order at the border, fight the cartels, and stop drugs from coming into our country. But Trump would rather have a border issue to complain about during the campaign than get the issue solved.

Donald Trump has a dangerous and extreme agenda. After killing the bipartisan border deal, Trump now says he will deport 15 million immigrants, which will devastate our economy, separate families, and divide our communities.

4. Lastly, bring in future-oriented language about restoring order at the border and comprehensive reform.



- Even as the “pathways” language does not give Harris a boost earlier in the survey, the **Reform Future** statement that incorporates a path to citizenship – **in addition to restoring order at the border and modernizing America’s immigration system** – is the top MaxDiff statement.
- This is one of the top statements for both base and persuasion targets, and among African American voters, Latino/a voters, and white women.
- Harris should consider whether or not to include pathways language, as it could help hold the base but could also cross-pressure some groups if the conversation leans to heavily into citizenship.

Harris will restore order at the border and modernize our broken system so it works for America. She also supports comprehensive immigration reform that includes an earned path to citizenship. Already she has helped protect undocumented spouses of U.S. citizens and doubled the number of asylum cases heard each week.

There could also be opportunities to discuss root causes of immigration as a component of reform.



- While not tested in the MaxDiff battery, the **Root Causes** positive message is the second strongest overall message for Harris, popping especially with voters of color, Democrats, and both persuasion and vulnerable targets.
- This could be a way to talk about immigration reform without cross-pressuring voters who may have more concerns about pathways to citizenship language.
- This “root causes” language tends to be stronger than the “international relationships” angle, which offers a more direct critique of Trump but may be less believable because of voters’ more positive feelings about America’s global standing under Trump.

Kamala Harris knows it is time to bring order to the chaos at the border. While the U.S. strengthens security at the border, we also need to address the root causes of the migrant crisis. Harris led efforts in the Senate and as Vice President to combat corruption, reduce violence – especially gender-based violence and trafficking – and improve economic opportunity in Central American countries. That will help people in those countries feel safer, more secure, and empowered at home so they feel less pressure to immigrate.

Focusing on past accomplishments, starting with the contrast, and trying to “out-tough” Trump are less useful here.

- Anchoring to Biden-Harris accomplishments is less successful here. Voters don’t necessarily believe what has gotten done, and it is more effective to put Trump on the defense than to compare records. This angle could work in earned media but is useful in a branding operation.
- Introducing this conversation by immediately attacking Trump on bipartisan bill also seems less effective here – the conversation should be more about counterprogramming for Harris and establishing her credentials, *then* pivoting to Trump. While contrast is needed, it should come after Harris has established herself as serious and tough on the border.
- Voters are not likely to believe that the Biden-Harris administration has been tougher on the border or on immigrants than Trump, and this should not be where Harris tries to compete. The contrast should come more from her credentials and her taking the issue seriously – not who is tougher.



Anything backwards looking tends to be weaker, so Harris’ branding operation should focus on the future.

Thank You and Questions

Joshua E. Ulibarri

julibbarri@lakeresearch.com

Cell: (703) 201-5079

X: @jeudc

Meryl O'Bryan

mobryan@lakeresearch.com

Hannah Hall

hhall@lakeresearch.com