

To: Interested Parties

From: Global Strategy Group & Paid Leave for All Action

Date: November 2021

Re: New Survey Shows Senate Battleground Voters Want Paid Leave as Part of Build Back Better

Nearly two years after the start of the pandemic, a new Global Strategy Group¹ survey of 1,201 likely 2022 voters from eight Senate battleground states (AZ, FL, GA, NV, NC, NH, PA, WI) shows voters continue to demand Congress pass paid leave urgently, even as pandemic worries wane,² and believe it will help address labor shortages and improve the economy. Further, this survey shows that with just 12 months left before the 2022 elections, including paid leave as part of the Build Back Better Act will benefit Democrats and hurt Republicans.

These states will decide control of the Senate and could go either way. In 2020, Republicans came within 55,000 votes of controlling the Senate, and 2022 could be even closer: Voters in eight battleground states that are likely to decide control of the Senate are currently weighing their options on whether they would rather re-elect (36%) or replace (50%) their incumbent senator. If Majority Leader Schumer and Minority Leader McConnell want Senate control come 2022, each will need to appeal to the independent women (10%), suburban women (25%), non-college women (34%), and undecided voters³ (14%) who have all proven critical to both Democratic and Republican victories in recent elections.

The battleground voters who will decide 2022 prioritize passing paid leave passed urgently

Paid leave has strong bipartisan support. Headed into 2022, voters from across the spectrum support providing paid medical, family, and parental leave for all U.S. workers. In fact, paid leave is the only policy a majority of voters from every party support aside from allowing Medicare to negotiate drug prices; with 80 percent of voters overall supporting paid leave for workers with a serious illness (49% strongly support), 76 percent supporting paid leave for workers caring for a seriously ill family member (45% strongly support), and 72 percent supporting paid leave for workers caring for a new child (45% strongly support).

Additionally, suburban women – a must-win audience in the wake of Virginia’s elections – strongly support paid medical leave (57% strong support) more than any other policy on the table, including allowing Medicare to negotiate prescription drug prices (56%), providing universal pre-K (45%), and extending the Child Tax Credit (33%).

¹ Global Strategy Group is the go-to public opinion research firm for candidates running in some of the toughest seats in the country. GSG has twice been named pollster of the year by the nonpartisan American Association of Political Consultants (AAPC) and was involved in all four of the 2020 Senate races that flipped from red to blue. For more information, please see <https://www.globalstrategygroup.com/>.

² Source: <https://navigatorresearch.org/pandemic-pessimism-declines-as-plurality-say-the-worst-is-over/>

³ Undecided voters are defined as the 214% of voters who are undecided on whether they would replace or re-elect their current representative for the U.S. Senate, meaning they are not wed to either party.

Please indicate whether you support or oppose each policy.

	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	DK	Overall		% total support			
				Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Suburban Women	Non-College Women	Undecided	
Allowing Medicare to negotiate prescription drug prices and cover hearing benefits	54			30	7	6	84	87	82
Ensuring paid leave for all U.S. workers suffering from a serious illness	49			31	9	9	85	84	80
Ensuring paid leave for all U.S. workers caring for a new child	45			28	12	14	80	78	77
Ensuring paid leave for all U.S. workers caring for a seriously ill family member	45			31	13	10	82	82	76
Building and renovating affordable housing so that it is energy efficient	44			27	13	14	75	79	76
Providing universal pre-K	39			24	14	20	67	67	64
Reducing premiums for those who buy insurance through the Affordable Care Act Marketplace	36			28	15	17	62	65	67
Delivering tax credits to Americans who shift to clean energy and expanding the electric vehicle charging network	30			29	16	23	61	58	61
Extending the enhanced Child Tax Credit, also known as the CTC	27			29	16	22	60	58	54

Battleground voters won't wait. They want paid leave passed urgently. More than two-thirds of voters overall, suburban women (74%), independent women (71%), and non-college women (76%) all agree Congress must pass paid leave *urgently* so U.S. workers can take time off for the care they need, with Democrats in the same camp (89%), bolstering that urgency. Furthermore, these same groups say there is no time for partisan games when it comes to paid leave: suburban women (62%), independent women (59%), and non-college women (58%) believe it must be passed now.

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement.

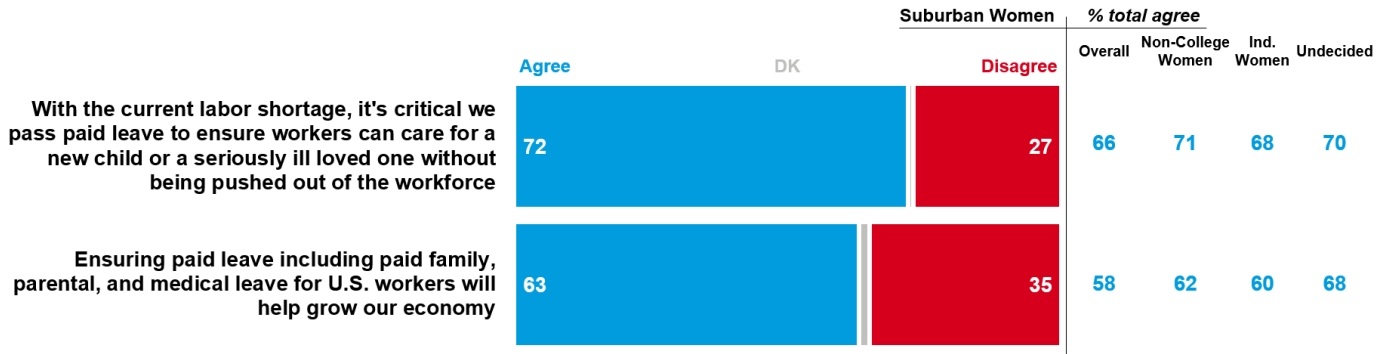
	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	DK	Suburban Women		Voters Overall		
				Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	Total Agree	
With health care costs out of control, we need paid leave urgently to ensure American workers can take time off to get the care they and their families need, without losing their ability to pay for it	50			24	14	12	42	70
Paid leave cannot wait. Elected officials need to stop with the partisan games and pass paid family and medical leave now	41			21	18	19	36	60

Key Senate races can be won or lost on paid leave

Passing paid leave would help boost voters' perceptions of the economy. With Americans feeling the impact of supply chain issues,⁴ the majority of battleground voters (57%) disapprove of President Biden and Democrats' handling of the economy. But voters say passing paid leave would help.

⁴ Source: <https://navigatorresearch.org/rising-costs-are-seen-as-a-growing-crisis>

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement.



They are particularly likely to believe paid leave can help with supply chain issues. Even in the face of a false attack claiming paid leave will incentivize laziness, 60 percent of battleground voters, including two-thirds of undecideds and two-thirds of suburban women are more likely to agree that “we aren’t rewarding laziness. We are rewarding hard work and benefiting from it.”

Which statement comes closest to your opinion, even if neither is exactly right?	Overall	Undecided	Ind. Women	Non-College Women	Suburban Women
If we want to get people back to work and reduce our supply chain issues, we need paid leave. Women who are able to take paid leave after having a child are 40% more likely to return to work and companies that offer paid leave report better productivity. We aren't rewarding laziness, we're rewarding hard work and benefiting from it.	60%	69%	58%	60%	69%
Paid leave is just another expensive entitlement program that will incentivize people to stay home rather than work. We should not be rewarding laziness.	37%	26%	38%	38%	31%

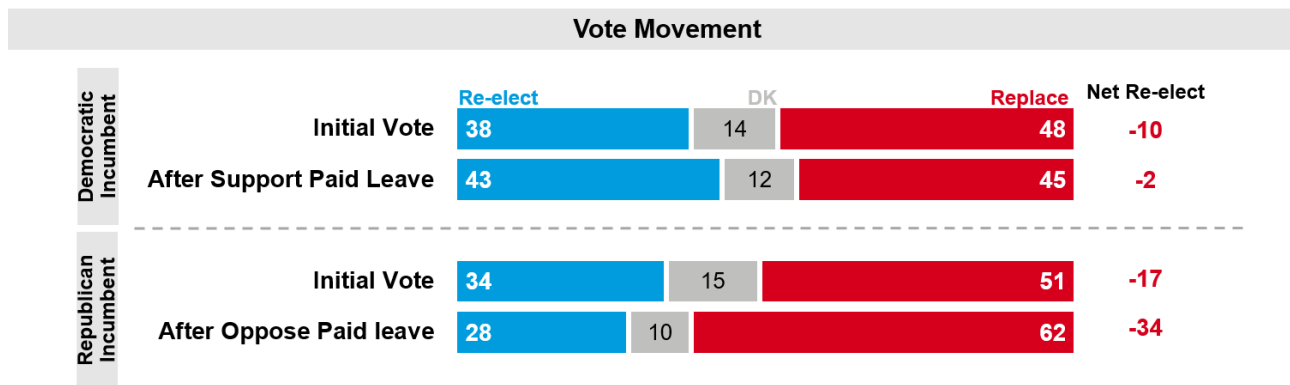
When Democrats support paid leave and Republicans oppose, Democrats win decisively. Absent any other information about candidates, battleground voters are four points more likely to prefer a generic Republican over a generic Democrat (45% Republican/41% Democrat). But when a Republican candidate opposes paid leave and a Democrat supports, as has historically been the case, Republicans lose their advantage: Democrats suddenly win undecided voters by 17 points.

Vote	Overall	Undecided	Ind. Women	Non-College Women	Suburban Women
Generic ballot (Democrat v. Republican)	R+4	R+1	R+3	R+6	D+2
Paid leave generic (Democrat who supports passing paid leave for all U.S. workers who are suffering from a serious illness or caring for a new child or seriously ill family member v. Republican who opposes paid family, parental, and medical leave)	D+13	D+17	D+22	D+17	D+25

Democrats who champion paid leave benefit more than those who only support the broader BBB Act. While voters support both paid leave and the Build Back Better Act, voters are more responsive to those who champion paid leave versus the Build Back Better Act. And they are more likely to punish Republicans for opposing paid leave than they are to punish Republicans for opposing the Build Back Better Act.

*When voters are told their Democratic senator championed passing...	Paid leave	The Build Back Better Act	*When voters are told their Republican senator voted against...	Paid leave	The Build Back Better Act
% more favorable	45%	36%	% more favorable	14%	37%
% less favorable	20%	33%	% less favorable	60%	42%

Perhaps more importantly, though, voters will reward those who champion paid leave at the ballot box. A single statement around how their senator led the charge to pass paid family and medical leave puts Democratic incumbents back into a statistical tie. And conversely, when voters believe their Republican incumbent opposed paid leave, they are more likely to vote against them—suggesting a tremendous opportunity for Senate Democrats.



Pushing for paid leave is essential to ensuring low-turnout Democratic constituencies vote. One-third of voters (33%) would “rather stay home on election day than vote for a Senator who opposes basic things like ensuring workers have access to paid leave when they or a family member are seriously ill,” including 47 percent of voters 18-44 years of age and 57 percent of Black voters.

Additionally, voters under the age of 55, parents, and Black voters all say paid leave would do more to help their family than providing universal pre-K, extending the enhanced Child Tax Credit, allowing Medicare to negotiate prescription drug prices and cover hearing benefits, and delivering tax credits to Americans who transition to clean energy. In fact, voters under 55 and Black voters are more than 2.5 times as likely to say paid leave would do more to help their families than “providing universal Pre-K and extending the enhanced Child Tax Credit.”

Disparaging paid leave won't work; it stands up even under attack

Voters want the Senate to pass paid leave, even in the face of false attacks. When presented with two statements, voters say they agree more with a statement in favor of paid leave than one that mischaracterizes paid leave and falsely argues – using the opposition’s language – “we cannot afford to spend another \$200 billion to make us all dependent on government for paid leave.”

Which statement comes closest to your opinion, even if neither is exactly right?	Overall	Undecided	Ind. Women	Non-College Women	Suburban Women
In 2020, more than 55 profitable major corporations avoided paying a dime in federal taxes. Companies like Nike and FedEx made well over \$1 billion and yet they pay less than the average American. Simply closing these corporate tax loopholes will more than cover the cost of paid leave so that American workers can stay safe and healthy, businesses can thrive, and our economy can grow.	57%	58%	59%	61%	63%
It's irresponsible to increase taxes that cost American families thousands each year and put small businesses at risk of closure right as we are finally emerging from the pandemic. We cannot afford to spend another \$200 billion to make us all dependent on government for paid leave.	39%	34%	32%	34%	34%

Global Strategy Group conducted an online survey of 1,201 likely voters in battleground states (AZ, FL, GA, NC, NV, NH, PA, WI), including 422 independents, between November 8th and November 10th, 2021. The survey has a confidence interval of +/-2.8%. Care has been taken to ensure the geographic and demographic divisions of the populations of likely voters are properly represented.

Appendix:

Paid Leave and Build Back Better Act Statements Tested

- **Paid Leave** – “You never think it could happen until it does. One day your 2-year-old daughter is feeling sick, so you take her to the doctor and she receives a cancer diagnosis, or you get back from work to hear your father has broken a hip and is in recovery. Whatever the situation, it's hard for many Americans to imagine what they'd do because most can't afford a day off of work. We need to pass paid leave, including paid family, parental, and medical leave to ensure all American workers and small business owners can care for their loved ones and themselves when they have a serious illness, without risking their paycheck.
- **Build Back Better** – “As you may know, President Biden and Democrats have proposed new \$1.75 trillion legislation called the Build Back Better Act. This economic plan will establish a universal pre-K program, expand Medicare coverage for seniors to include hearing, lower health care costs by expanding Affordable Care Act coverage, provide tax breaks for clean energy, and expand the Child Tax Credit for most families with children.”