# Midterms 2022 file – CNDI

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#### GOP wins midterms now because of voter fears over econ, inflation

White 04/09 [Ben White is POLITICO Pro's chief economic correspondent and author of the “Morning Money” column covering the nexus of finance and public policy. "A Sour And Angry America Poised To Punish Dems This Fall". POLITICO, 04/09/2022, https://www.politico.com/news/2022/04/09/angry-voters-biden-inflation-midterms-00024218. Accessed 26 June 2022.]

The professionals who track American attitudes toward the economy say they can see the trouble coming. Angry voters slammed by higher prices and scarred by two years of fighting the pandemic are poised to punish Democrats in midterm elections, according to some of the leading experts in consumer sentiment and behavior. And with inflation persisting and Russia’s war on Ukraine stoking uncertainty, there are indications that public sentiment is getting worse, not better, posing a growing threat to Democrats’ already slim chances of holding onto Congress, they say. The widely watched University of Michigan consumer confidence survey recently touched its lowest level in almost 11 years. A survey by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research showed that almost 70 percent of Americans think the economy is in poor shape, and 81 percent of those in a poll released by CNBC see a recession coming this year. Gallup found the share of Americans citing inflation as the top issue is now at its highest level since the 1980s. “The big run-up in gas and food and home prices has really caused great hardship for many households,” said Richard Curtin, a veteran economist who has run the University of Michigan consumer survey since 1976. “And the Biden administration made a critical error in saying it would be transient and people should just tough it out. It wasn’t transient. A lot of people couldn’t just tough it out. And it caused a big loss of confidence in [President Joe Biden’s] policies.” Inside the West Wing, Biden and his top advisers know that the window to change the economic narrative through executive action is rapidly closing, according to a senior Biden aide and an outside adviser. The options, they say, mostly include whatever can be done to ease oil prices, the biggest drag on the party right now. But even that could have only limited impact. Mark Zandi, the chief economist at Moody’s Analytics and lead author of a closely followed model that ties political outcomes to economic conditions, said this is among the toughest environments for the incumbent party that he’s ever seen, despite a booming job market. Moody’s is working on its model for the 2022 midterms, and Zandi said that **as of now it’s likely to show a very tough path for Democrats to hold either the House, where they have a razor-thin margin, and the Senate, which is split 50-50.** “Most Americans have never experienced high inflation like this, particularly on gas prices, and it has gotten everyone very upset,” he said. “Behavioral economics reveals that people hate inflation more than they love a low unemployment rate. And the pandemic still colors everything. People have been through the wringer.” None of this is lost on Democratic aides and economists inside and outside the White House. One senior Biden aide, who declined to be identified by name because they were not authorized to speak publicly on the matter, said efforts to free up more oil and further ease supply chain bottlenecks would continue. And the president will point to strong positives in the economy including continued strong job growth, a large number of available positions, higher wages and a jobless rate of just 3.6 percent, a pandemic low. Most of those numbers are far better than economists were predicting a year ago. “There are still things we can do and arguments we can make, but frankly it would have been better had Vladimir Putin not invaded Ukraine,” the aide said. The White House did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Inflation was rapidly rising long before the war suddenly sent energy and food prices spiking even more and injected new volatility into global markets that were previously celebrating the end to the worst of the pandemic. Still, other indicators were trending the administration’s way. Austan Goolsbee, a University of Chicago professor who served as a top adviser to then-President Barack Obama, said the economy looks like it will be a headwind for Democrats. But he said some things could go right between now and Election Day in November. “There are still some glimmers of light for the White House right now,” Goolsbee said. “Supply chain pressures really may ease up. And the virus, which was way worse than expected, has been the primary driver of everything. And if we are in fact going to get out from under the grip of the virus, that should reverse some of the sourness that is now in all the polling and consumer surveys.” There is a lot to reverse, at least according to the latest survey conducted by The AP-NORC Center. “With energy and consumer prices on the rise, 69 percent consider the national economy to be in poor condition,” Marjorie Connelly, a senior fellow in public affairs and media research at NORC at the University of Chicago, said in a note. “Fifty-five percent say they don’t blame … Biden for high gasoline prices, but 65 percent disapprove of how he is handling the economy. Americans are more likely to think his policies have done more to hurt the national economy than to help it.” The survey offered some reason for optimism for Democrats, given that a majority of Americans don’t blame Biden for the higher gas prices. The numbers also generally break down along partisan lines in most polling, with **Republicans more likely to blame the president for economic problems. People also mostly still feel confident in their own personal finances even as they worry about other people and the national picture, the survey said. And they worry a lot**. “It’s just a tough road for Biden and Democrats to hoe right now,” said Curtin.

#### NATO cooperation gives Biden a chance to divert voters towards something favorable just as he struggles with economic messaging

Siddiqui 22 [Anas Siddiqui, political reporter at Verve Times 3-2-2022 Biden's leadership on Russia is a bright spot in a gloomy State of the Union Verve times https://vervetimes.com/bidens-leadership-on-russia-is-a-bright-spot-in-a-gloomy-state-of-the-union/] 6-27-2022

WASHINGTON — When President Joe Biden delivers his first official State of the Union address on Tuesday evening, the unified global response to Russia’s brutal invasion of Ukraine is poised to overshadow the other major theme of the speech: Biden’s economic agenda.

Biden and his team spent months working on the economic agenda portion of the hour-long speech, according to White House aides. The result is a “strong case” for Biden to make about how well the U.S. economy has rebounded in the past year, they said. By contrast, aides had just days to pull together his comments on Russia and Ukraine — a war that is changing by the minute. If this were any other year, a presidential speech on the nationwide economic recovery and his future domestic agenda would be more likely to resonate with American voters than a speech about a foreign war thousands of miles away. But this year is different. Voters still don’t see the economic recovery Biden will be addressing an electorate that polls show consistently feels disconnected from the economic recovery that Biden has overseen in his first year in office. The numbers are clear: Since Biden took office last January, the U.S. economy has achieved the fastest job growth on record and the fastest economic growth in nearly 40 years. A Washington Post ABC poll released last week found that 75% of Americans believed the economy is in either “poor” or “not so good” shape. This disconnect is not new. For months, Biden has insisted — and the numbers have shown — that America is undergoing a period of historic economic growth. But this has nonetheless failed to resonate with voters, a majority of whom feel pessimistic about the economy and frustrated at high inflation. Biden’s speech will acknowledge these anxieties on Tuesday, said a White House official. But he will not be unveiling any novel approaches to the problem. Instead, Biden will “call on Congress” to pass various elements of his “Build Back Better” bill, but won’t refer to the doomed bill by name. Biden’s hope of passing the once-in-a-generation social safety net expansion collided late last year with West Virginia Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin’s alarm over rising inflation. Manchin cited inflation as the reason why he pulled his support for the bill after it had already passed the House. Biden will “call on Congress” at least 10 times in Tuesday’s address to pass various proposals, according to a White House fact sheet on the speech. They include everything from increased funding for Pell grants to a $15 minimum wage to paid family leave. Still, the fact that Biden is resorting to public pressure on the Democratically controlled Senate and House, asking them to take action, only serves to highlight the hurdles Biden faces to fully enacting his legislative agenda. A decisive response While Biden’s domestic policy agenda appears to be mired in intraparty squabbles, it is a very different story 6,000 miles away in Ukraine. On Ukraine, Biden and his foreign policy team are leading the rest of the world, revitalizing the NATO alliance and stepping up to the challenge that Putin poses to the rules-based international order — one that has maintained relative peace in Europe for nearly 80 years. On Tuesday morning, tens of thousands of Russian troops were surrounding the Ukrainian capital Kyiv. Farther to the east, Russian forces shelled a public square in Kharkiv, Ukraine’s second largest city, killing hundreds. In response to the invasion, a loose coalition of large and small democracies around the world has banded together to impose severe restrictions on Russia’s central bank and sanctioned its richest citizens, its airlines and its state-run media. The goal of the effort is to isolate Moscow and force the Kremlin to pay a high price economically for launching a war of choice. Biden and the United States have been at the forefront of this coalition, which includes G-7 members, NATO allies, rich countries like Japan and developing countries like Ghana and even traditionally neutral countries like Switzerland and Monaco. White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Biden will “talk about the steps we’ve taken to not only support the Ukrainian people with military and economic assistance, but also the steps he’s taken to build a global coalition imposing crippling financial sanctions on President [Vladimir] Putin, his inner circle and the Russian economy.” Biden will also address “the importance of the United States as a leader in the world — standing up for values and standing up for global norms” she told reporters Monday. In just the past week, Biden has held scores of leader-to-leader calls with U.S. and NATO allies to coordinate both U.S. support for Ukraine and sanctions on Russia. He has also deployed thousands of U.S. troops to help shore up the defenses of NATO member states to whom Russia poses the most immediate threat. At the same time, Biden’s secretaries of state and defense have requested and distributed hundreds of millions of dollars worth of additional weapons to Ukrainian troops, and humanitarian aid to refugees fleeing the front lines. This combined U.S. military, diplomatic, economic and humanitarian response has earned praise for Biden from both Democrats and Republicans. “President Biden’s leadership in the Ukraine crisis has been truly impressive,” conservative intellectual Bill Kristol tweeted on Monday. Even more importantly, early polls show that average Americans of all parties are coalescing around their support for Ukraine and opposition to Russia’s invasion. For Republican voters to back Biden’s position on anything is exceedingly rare, and all the more so because the most recent Republican president, Donald Trump, was such an ardent supporter and defender of Putin.

#### A GOP win in November reverses the economic downturn – prefer empirics

Klebnikov 22 [Sergei Klebnikov, senior reporter at Forbes covering markets and business news. Previously, I worked on the wealth team at Forbes covering billionaires and their wealth. 1-19-2022 Here’s What Happens To The Stock Market If Republicans Take Congress In November Forbes https://www.forbes.com/sites/sergeiklebnikov/2022/01/19/we-looked-at-how-the-stock-market-performs-during-midterm-election-yearsheres-how-2022-may-be-worse/?sh=1b547e062562] 6-27-2022

Stocks are off to a rocky start so far this year thanks to a laundry list of challenges including inflation spikes and interest rate hikes. Midterm elections in November are going to make 2022 even trickier by adding yet another layer of uncertainty to the investing mix. Consumer prices are surging with inflation at nearly 40-year highs, supply chain issues continue to persist and coronavirus cases are spiking due to the Omicron variant. What’s more, the Federal Reserve has started tightening monetary policy in a bid to control inflation: Once the central bank finishes tapering its monthly asset purchases in March, it intends to hike interest rates three times later this year–something it hasn’t done since 2018. “The worst that can happen for Democrats is if they lose control over both houses of Congress. In that case the market would win by losing, and see a slightly improved average performance.” Sam Stovall, chief investment strategist at CFRA Research Come November, Republicans are hoping to win back control of either the House of Representatives or the Senate. They’ll need five seats to win a majority in the House and one seat in the Senate. Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Arizona, Georgia and Florida all have key elections that could determine whether or not Congress flips. “The most favorable outcome for markets would be a Republican win in both the House and the Senate,” says Jeremy Siegel, the Russell E. Palmer Professor of Finance at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. “If Republicans take the House and not the Senate, that would also be a relatively favorable outcome.” To find out how various election results would impact stocks, Forbes analyzed market data going back to 1945 with the help of CFRA Research. In short, when it comes to stock market performance, Democratic presidents have an edge. From 1945 through the end of 2021, the compound annual growth rate for the S&P 500 has been 9.4% under Democratic presidents compared with 6.6% for Republican commanders-in-chief. The best returns, however, have come under Democratic presidents kept in check by a split or Republican Congress. “Historically, investors prefer shared power across the Federal government,” says RSM chief economist Joe Brusuelas. For instance, President Barack Obama faced a split Congress from November 2010 to 2014, with Republicans holding the House of Representatives while Democrats held the Senate. Equity investors weren’t complaining: The S&P 500 surged nearly 70% during that period. Markets historically prefer Democratic presidents kept in check by a split Republican Congress. The S&P 500 average return in years where Democrats have simultaneously held the Oval Office and both houses of Congress is 10.5%. While those returns are nothing to balk at, the best-case scenario for investors—with a 13.6% average gain for the S&P 500—is when a Democratic president is presiding over a split Congress. The second-best performance, with a 13% average gain: A Democratic president working with a unified Republican Congress. “The worst that can happen for Democrats is if they lose control over both houses of Congress,” says Sam Stovall, chief investment strategist for CFRA Research. “In that case the market would win by losing—meaning that Wall Street will see a slightly improved average performance.” One thing to consider if Democrats lose: Less government spending. President Joe Biden and Democrats will be significantly less likely to pass big legislation if Republicans gain control of either the House or Senate. Markets often like big government spending. Consider that stocks surged after the Biden administration passed its $1.2 trillion infrastructure bill last November while stimulus spending gave markets room to run as the S&P 500 gained 26% in the 12 months following March 2020. Democrats’ latest piece of budget legislation, the Build Back Better Act, includes more infrastructure and climate spending but has been stalled for months after stalwart opposition from Senator Joe Manchin (D-W.Va). With midterms looming—and Democrats’ prospects not exactly looking rosy—BBB would need to be pushed through before November since it’s unlikely to pass if Republicans take the House or Senate. That means less spending for markets to bank on. So, how will stocks fare between now and November? Years with midterm elections tend to have weaker stock market returns overall. The second year of a presidential cycle has some “unique characteristics and none of them are favorable for investors,” says James Stack, president of InvesTech Research and Stack Financial Management. The second years of presidential terms, which Stovall refers to as the “sophomore slump,” produce the lowest average S&P 500 return—just 4.9%. Further, the second and third quarter of midterm years result in the worst returns, declining on average 1.8% and 0.5%, respectively. 2022 could be worse than average given worries about inflation, Covid variants, supply chain delays and the Federal Reserve’s tightening monetary policy. “There’s nothing that the market dislikes more than uncertainty—and that will lead to an increase in volatility, especially in 2022,” says Stack who emphasizes that monetary policy could spook markets even more than expected thanks to the Fed’s plan to rapidly shrink its balance sheet. “Risk has seldom if ever been higher from a valuation standpoint—and now that’s significantly increasing from a monetary standpoint,” he says. There is some good news on the horizon though. Historical data shows that the fourth quarter of midterm years and first quarter of the following year boast the two strongest returns of the entire presidential cycle, rising 6.1% and 7.5% on average, respectively. “By then we will also have had at least one if not two interest rate hikes and investors will realize the world hasn’t come to an end,” Stovall says. The equity party continues well into a president’s third year in office when there’s a push to stimulate the economy ahead of the next election. It’s no coincidence that the best market returns come during that period; the S&P 500 rises an average 16% in that third year. What’s more, in the six months after midterm elections—from November to April—the S&P 500 has gained 14.3% on average and has risen in price 95% of the time. “Very often you'll see a positive reaction to midterm elections regardless of which party wins,” says Stack.

#### Economic decline causes nuclear war

Stein Tønnesson 15, Research Professor, Peace Research Institute Oslo; Leader of East Asia Peace program, Uppsala University, 2015, “Deterrence, interdependence and Sino–US peace,” International Area Studies Review, Vol. 18, No. 3, p. 297-311

Several recent works on China and Sino–US relations have made substantial contributions to the current understanding of how and under what circumstances a combination of nuclear deterrence and economic interdependence may reduce the risk of war between major powers. At least four conclusions can be drawn from the review above: first, those who say that interdependence may both inhibit and drive conflict are right. Interdependence raises the cost of conflict for all sides but asymmetrical or unbalanced dependencies and negative trade expectations may generate tensions leading to trade wars among inter-dependent states that in turn increase the risk of military conflict (Copeland, 2015: 1, 14, 437; Roach, 2014). The risk may increase if one of the interdependent countries is governed by an inward-looking socio-economic coalition (Solingen, 2015); second, the risk of war between China and the US should not just be analysed bilaterally but include their allies and partners. Third party countries could drag China or the US into confrontation; third, in this context it is of some comfort that the three main economic powers in Northeast Asia (China, Japan and South Korea) are all deeply integrated economically through production networks within a global system of trade and finance (Ravenhill, 2014; Yoshimatsu, 2014: 576); and fourth, decisions for war and peace are taken by very few people, who act on the basis of their future expectations. International relations theory must be supplemented by foreign policy analysis in order to assess the value attributed by national decision-makers to economic development and their assessments of risks and opportunities. If leaders on either side of the Atlantic begin to seriously fear or anticipate their own nation’s decline then they may blame this on external dependence, appeal to anti-foreign sentiments, contemplate the use of force to gain respect or credibility, adopt protectionist policies, and ultimately refuse to be deterred by either nuclear arms or prospects of socioeconomic calamities. Such a dangerous shift could happen abruptly, i.e. under the instigation of actions by a third party – or against a third party. Yet as long as there is both nuclear deterrence and interdependence, the tensions in East Asia are unlikely to escalate to war. As Chan (2013) says, all states in the region are aware that they cannot count on support from either China or the US if they make provocative moves. The greatest risk is not that a territorial dispute leads to war under present circumstances but that changes in the world economy alter those circumstances in ways that render inter-state peace more precarious. If China and the US fail to rebalance their financial and trading relations (Roach, 2014) then a trade war could result, interrupting transnational production networks, provoking social distress, and exacerbating nationalist emotions. This could have unforeseen consequences in the field of security, with nuclear deterrence remaining the only factor to protect the world from Armageddon, and unreliably so. Deterrence could lose its credibility: one of the two great powers might gamble that the other yield in a cyber-war or conventional limited war, or third party countries might engage in conflict with each other, with a view to obliging Washington or Beijing to intervene.

## Impact

### Readiness

#### GOP victory increases readiness through defense spending, hardline stances, energy independence

Pletka 22 [Danielle Pletka is a distinguished senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and co-host of the podcast What the Hell is Going On? 6-2-2022 The Republicans Could Win the U.S. Midterms. Here’s What that Means for the World. Foreign Policy https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/06/02/gop-congress-midterms-foreign-policy-ukraine-taiwan/] 6-27-2022

Last month’s vote in the U.S. Congress to appropriate $40 billion in additional military and budgetary assistance for Ukraine laid bare fissures in the Republican congressional caucus: 11 of 50 Senate Republicans voted against the bill, as did 57 of 208 House Republicans. Was the Ukraine vote a harbinger of Republican national security squabbles to come? Was it a partisan vote against anything associated with President Joe Biden? Or was it a one-off reflecting a poorly drafted bill with too much extraneous baggage? More importantly, who will hold the foreign-policy reins in the likely Republican House (and possibly Senate) majority to come in 2023—the isolationists or the internationalists? Political pundits agree Republicans are likely to win back the House of Representatives and have a good shot at the Senate in the November 2022 midterm elections. That could—caucus permitting—propel House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy to the speakership and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell to the post of majority leader. Of the two, McConnell is the known quantity—an experienced legislator and parliamentarian and an old-school internationalist whose foreign-policy views were forged in the crucible of the Cold War. McCarthy, not so much. Indeed, it’s probably most accurate to say his foreign policy was forged in the crucible of former President Donald Trump. As previous Republican speakers have learned to their displeasure, the Republican Party in today’s House is less a caucus and more a raucous battle for primacy. Former Speaker John Boehner struggled against rebellious Tea Party upstarts, his successor Paul Ryan struggled against the self-named Freedom Caucus, and McCarthy is unlikely to have much fun either. In the minority, the Republican Party tends—emphasis intended—to stand together because the Democratic speaker and the executive in the White House are deemed public enemies No. 1 and No. 2. But with the majority comes the battle to control the agenda. Domestic policy will likely dominate the politicking in Congress: inflation, crime, education, the border. But Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, like so many conflicts before it, has proved that as much as politicians wish to focus on “nation building here at home,” global realities intrude. Ukraine is the tip of the iceberg, but Republicans have their eye on plenty of other issues as well, including relations with China, the question of defending Taiwan, the continued isolation of Russia, the Middle East (think energy, Iran, and Israel), and, more broadly, defense spending. But before the substance of the foreign-policy challenge hits the House and Senate floors, the ideological question merits examination. American Enterprise Institute scholar Colin Dueck divides the Republican Party’s foreign policy into three schools: foreign-policy activists, foreign-policy hard-liners, and foreign-policy noninterventionists. Looking back, it’s clear that so-called foreign-policy activists dominated Republican national security policymaking for much of the post-World War II era. These were the leaders who believed, as both Presidents Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush regularly underscored, that the United States is not simply one nation among many but that it is a beacon of freedom to the world, a “shining city on a hill.” Foreign-policy activists underwrote the Reagan Doctrine, the principle that the United States should lend a hand to all those hoping to halt the advance of communism wherever they were, including in Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Angola, El Salvador, and Grenada. Bush faced different challenges, but his underlying faith in U.S. power and values was similar. Rather than fighting communism, what Bush dubbed his “Freedom Agenda” took on the tyrannies that he believed fueled Salafi-jihadis. Yet his efforts were neither clearly thought through nor appropriately resourced. Worse yet, Bush could not convincingly argue that he was advancing U.S. national interests in every case. For the activist school, Bush’s Iraq War proved to be their swan song. Though the Iraq War offered an “I told you so” moment for the Republican Party’s isolationist wing, its immediate beneficiaries were President Barack Obama and the Democratic Party’s own “End the endless wars” crowd—or so it seemed at first. But the intervening years offered the Republican Party’s noninterventionists ample fodder: the disastrous war in Libya and the horrifying killing of a U.S. ambassador in Benghazi, the withdrawal from Iraq and the resulting rise of the Islamic State, the civil war in Syria and the ensuing cataclysmic refugee crisis. These crises were not the primary reason for Trump’s election, but they didn’t hurt his campaign. Rather, they—together with Obama’s self-labeled signature foreign-policy achievement, the Iran nuclear deal—offered an opportunity for Trump. “Donald Trump’s political achievement in 2016 was to sense the possibility for a new [Republican] coalition unseen since before World War II,” Dueck writes. “He did this not by reiterating libertarian foreign-policy preferences. Rather, he combined non-interventionist criticism of ‘endless wars’ with hardline stands on China, jihadist terrorism, anti-American dictatorships in Latin America, and US defense spending.” This is a sweet spot for Republican foreign policy, and understanding the reluctant internationalism of most of the party’s voters—a repudiation of the embarrassed anti-Americanism of the Democratic Party’s far left and the activist internationalism that has heretofore characterized the Republican Party leadership—will be key to geolocating a new Republican Congress’s preferred national security policy. A unifying theme for the Republican Party will be the challenge presented by China. It sells well with the base, and with trade liberalization off the table for the moment (for both parties), the question of China will likely come down to economic disengagement and Beijing’s threat to Taiwan. A case in point is a recent letter co-written by Joe Manchin and Shelley Moore Capito (respectively the Democratic and Republican senators from West Virginia) urging Biden to include Taiwan in his newly proposed Indo-Pacific Economic Framework. Republican signatories to the letter included James Risch, who is likely to be the chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in a new Republican-held Senate; Roger Wicker, the likely chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee; Marco Rubio, the likely chair of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence; and most of the Republican members of the current Senate Appropriations Committee. Notably, several of the Senate’s more ardent Trump supporters, including Marsha Blackburn and Kevin Cramer, also joined the letter. (A similar House effort was also joined by likely future national security heavyweights, including probable House Foreign Affairs Committee Chair Michael McCaul.) Defense spending will be another key theme for the Republican Party. House and Senate Republicans have repeatedly slammed Biden’s defense spending as inadequate to address the country’s many national security challenges and have only escalated those charges since Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. McConnell has called for a 5 percent increase in defense spending above inflation, and McCarthy has been equally energetic. Both understand—as Trump did—that investing in the military can be cast as a deterrent as well as a down payment on victory in any eventual conflict. And here again, the base is with them. Ditto for energy security: While there is a bipartisan constituency for pivoting away from the Middle East—and a growing bipartisan opposition to renewing the Iran nuclear deal—Republicans are less focused on climate change issues and more on basic pocketbook challenges. That will mean more enthusiasm for restoring American energy independence, avoiding unnecessary bickering with Saudi Arabia (still a major swing producer of oil), and easing regulations on U.S. oil and gas production. But what about Ukraine and cases like it? What about those 11 in the Senate and the 57 in the House? What about the conservative powerhouse think tank the Heritage Foundation and its political action committee drawing a line in the sand against the $40 billion Ukraine aid package? Like Heritage, Sen. Mike Braun finessed his opposition based not on the policy of aiding Ukraine but on the cost of doing so and the spiraling U.S. debt. Sen. Rand Paul, a perennial opponent of U.S. overseas engagement, pinned his “no” vote on the lack of an inspector general in the bill to oversee how the funds are spent. That’s fair enough, but it’s hard to picture every one of those “no” votes switching tack if presented with a better or cleaner bill—not when the Republican Party’s rising stars include the likes of Senate candidate J.D. Vance, who during his campaign said, “I gotta be honest with you, I don’t really care what happens to Ukraine one way or another.” It’s relatively easy to predict that a Republican majority will continue to support arming and aiding Ukraine, because the vote has already happened. And though a significant minority of the Republican caucus voted no, it was a minority. But there are harder cases (though not just for the Republicans): the looming Chinese threat to Taiwan, for one.

#### GOP victory causes a budgetary shift from social spending towards defense

Marcelli et al 22 [Solita Marcelli Chief Investment Officer Americas Tom McLoughlin Head of Fixed Income Americas Nadia Lovell Senior Equity Strategist Americas ElectionWatch 2022 US midterm elections 21 April 2022 Chief Investment Office GWM Investment Research This report has been prepared by UBS Financial Services Inc. https://www.ubs.com/content/dam/WealthManagementAmericas/cio-impact/3717874%20ElectionWatch%202022%20US%20midterm%20elections.pdf] 6-26-2022

Election Outlook

The probability of a GOP sweep has increased but the competitiveness of some elections in November will depend upon the identity of each party’s nominees. Procedural rules in the Senate prevent narrow majorities from exercising broad discretion over legislation without the consent of the minority. There are two exceptions: judicial appointments and budget reconciliation.

Policy Implications

Taxes: No substantive changes to tax law but the R&D tax credit will be addressed if it is not already addressed in 2022. Companies now have to amortize R&D expenses over 5 years instead of the year it was made.² Defense: Spending increases more significantly under this scenario. Bipartisan consensus on an adversarial posture toward China persists. The R&D tax credit is an important issue for the defense industry under all three scenarios. Agriculture: Enacted by Congress roughly once every five years. A new bill will pass but GOP may demand cuts to supplemental nutrition assistance programs. Climate: Nothing substantive passes. Debt Limit: Contentious negotiations before default deadline. Limit is raised but GOP demands concession on social spending.

#### Maintaining effective warfighting capabilities key to sustain global peace and prevent extinction

Barnett 11, Former Senior Strategic Researcher and Professor in the Warfare Analysis & Research Department, Center for Naval Warfare Studies, U.S. Naval War College

(Thomas P.M., The New Rules: Leadership Fatigue Puts U.S., and Globalization, at Crossroads, [www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/8099/the-new-rules-leadership-fatigue-puts-u-s-and-globalization-at-crossroads](http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/8099/the-new-rules-leadership-fatigue-puts-u-s-and-globalization-at-crossroads))

Events in Libya are a further reminder for Americans that we stand at a crossroads in our continuing evolution as the world's sole full-service superpower. Unfortunately, we are increasingly seeking change without cost, and shirking from risk because we are tired of the responsibility. We don't know who we are anymore, and our president is a big part of that problem. Instead of leading us, he explains to us. Barack Obama would have us believe that he is practicing strategic patience. But many experts and ordinary citizens alike have concluded that he is actually beset by strategic incoherence -- in effect, a man overmatched by the job. It is worth first examining the larger picture: We live in a time of arguably the greatest structural change in the global order yet endured, with this historical moment's most amazing feature being its relative and absolute lack of mass violence. That is something to consider when Americans contemplate military intervention in Libya, because if we do take the step to prevent larger-scale killing by engaging in some killing of our own, we will not be adding to some fantastically imagined global death count stemming from the ongoing "megalomania" and "evil" of American "empire." We'll be engaging in the same sort of system-administering activity that has marked our stunningly successful stewardship of global order since World War II. Let me be more blunt: As the guardian of globalization, the U.S. military has been the greatest force for peace the world has ever known. Had America been removed from the global dynamics that governed the 20th century, the mass murder never would have ended. Indeed, it's entirely conceivable there would now be no identifiable human civilization left, once nuclear weapons entered the killing equation. But the world did not keep sliding down that path of perpetual war. Instead, America stepped up and changed everything by ushering in our now-perpetual great-power peace. We introduced the international liberal trade order known as globalization and played loyal Leviathan over its spread. What resulted was the collapse of empires, an explosion of democracy, the persistent spread of human rights, the liberation of women, the doubling of life expectancy, a roughly 10-fold increase in adjusted global GDP and a profound and persistent reduction in battle deaths from state-based conflicts. That is what American "hubris" actually delivered. Please remember that the next time some TV pundit sells you the image of "unbridled" American military power as the cause of global disorder instead of its cure. With self-deprecation bordering on self-loathing, we now imagine a post-American world that is anything but. Just watch who scatters and who steps up as the Facebook revolutions erupt across the Arab world. While we might imagine ourselves the status quo power, we remain the world's most vigorously revisionist force. As for the sheer "evil" that is our military-industrial complex, again, let's examine what the world looked like before that establishment reared its ugly head. The last great period of global structural change was the first half of the 20th century, a period that saw a death toll of about 100 million across two world wars. That comes to an average of 2 million deaths a year in a world of approximately 2 billion souls. Today, with far more comprehensive worldwide reporting, researchers report an average of less than 100,000 battle deaths annually in a world fast approaching 7 billion people. Though admittedly crude, these calculations suggest a 90 percent absolute drop and a 99 percent relative drop in deaths due to war. We are clearly headed for a world order characterized by multipolarity, something the American-birthed system was designed to both encourage and accommodate. But given how things turned out the last time we collectively faced such a fluid structure, we would do well to keep U.S. power, in all of its forms, deeply embedded in the geometry to come. To continue the historical survey, after salvaging Western Europe from its half-century of civil war, the U.S. emerged as the progenitor of a new, far more just form of globalization -- one based on actual free trade rather than colonialism. America then successfully replicated globalization further in East Asia over the second half of the 20th century, setting the stage for the Pacific Century now unfolding.

#### Heg solves arms races, land grabs, rogue states, and great power war

Brands 18 [Hal, Henry Kissinger Distinguished Professor at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies and a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments." American Grand Strategy in the Age of Trump." Page 129-133]

Since World War II, the United States has had a military second to none. Since the Cold War, America has committed to having overwhelming military primacy. The idea, as George W. Bush declared in 2002, that America must possess “strengths beyond challenge” has featured in every major U.S. strategy document for a quarter century; it has also been reflected in concrete terms.6

From the early 1990s, for example, the United States consistently accounted for around 35 to 45 percent of world defense spending and maintained peerless global power-projection capabilities.7 Perhaps more important, U.S. primacy was also unrivaled in key overseas strategic regions—Europe, East Asia, the Middle East. From thrashing Saddam Hussein’s million-man Iraqi military during Operation Desert Storm, to deploying—with impunity—two carrier strike groups off Taiwan during the China-Taiwan crisis of 1995– 96, Washington has been able to project military power superior to anything a regional rival could employ even on its own geopolitical doorstep.

This military dominance has constituted the hard-power backbone of an ambitious global strategy. After the Cold War, U.S. policymakers committed to averting a return to the unstable multipolarity of earlier eras, and to perpetuating the more favorable unipolar order. They committed to building on the successes of the postwar era by further advancing liberal political values and an open international economy, and to suppressing international scourges such as rogue states, nuclear proliferation, and catastrophic terrorism. And because they recognized that military force remained the ultima ratio regum, they understood the centrality of military preponderance.

Washington would need the military power necessary to underwrite worldwide alliance commitments. It would have to preserve substantial overmatch versus any potential great-power rival. It must be able to answer the sharpest challenges to the international system, such as Saddam’s invasion of Kuwait in 1990 or jihadist extremism after 9/11. Finally, because prevailing global norms generally reflect hard-power realities, America would need the superiority to assure that its own values remained ascendant. It was impolitic to say that U.S. strategy and the international order required “strengths beyond challenge,” but it was not at all inaccurate.

American primacy, moreover, was eminently affordable. At the height of the Cold War, the United States spent over 12 percent of GDP on defense. Since the mid-1990s, the number has usually been between 3 and 4 percent.8 In a historically favorable international environment, Washington could enjoy primacy—and its geopolitical fruits—on the cheap.

Yet U.S. strategy also heeded, at least until recently, the fact that there was a limit to how cheaply that primacy could be had. The American military did shrink significantly during the 1990s, but U.S. officials understood that if Washington cut back too far, its primacy would erode to a point where it ceased to deliver its geopolitical benefits. Alliances would lose credibility; the stability of key regions would be eroded; rivals would be emboldened; international crises would go unaddressed. American primacy was thus like a reasonably priced insurance policy. It required nontrivial expenditures, but protected against far costlier outcomes.9 Washington paid its insurance premiums for two decades after the Cold War. But more recently American primacy and strategic solvency have been imperiled.

THE DARKENING HORIZON For most of the post–Cold War era, the international system was— by historical standards—remarkably benign. Dangers existed, and as the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, demonstrated, they could manifest with horrific effect. But for two decades after the Soviet collapse, the world was characterized by remarkably low levels of great-power competition, high levels of security in key theaters such as Europe and East Asia, and the comparative weakness of those “rogue” actors—Iran, Iraq, North Korea, al-Qaeda—who most aggressively challenged American power. During the 1990s, some observers even spoke of a “strategic pause,” the idea being that the end of the Cold War had afforded the United States a respite from normal levels of geopolitical danger and competition. Now, however, the strategic horizon is darkening, due to four factors.

First, great-power military competition is back. The world’s two leading authoritarian powers—China and Russia—are seeking regional hegemony, contesting global norms such as nonaggression and freedom of navigation, and developing the military punch to underwrite these ambitions. Notwithstanding severe economic and demographic problems, Russia has conducted a major military modernization emphasizing nuclear weapons, high-end conventional capabilities, and rapid-deployment and special operations forces— and utilized many of these capabilities in conflicts in Ukraine and Syria.10 China, meanwhile, has carried out a buildup of historic proportions, with constant-dollar defense outlays rising from US$26 billion in 1995 to US$226 billion in 2016.11 Ominously, these expenditures have funded development of power-projection and antiaccess/area denial (A2/AD) tools necessary to threaten China’s neighbors and complicate U.S. intervention on their behalf. Washington has grown accustomed to having a generational military lead; Russian and Chinese modernization efforts are now creating a far more competitive environment.

Second, the international outlaws are no longer so weak. North Korea’s conventional forces have atrophied, but it has amassed a growing nuclear arsenal and is developing an intercontinental delivery capability that will soon allow it to threaten not just America’s regional allies but also the continental United States.12 Iran remains a nuclear threshold state, one that continues to develop ballistic missiles and A2/AD capabilities while employing sectarian and proxy forces across the Middle East. The Islamic State, for its part, is headed for defeat, but has displayed military capabilities unprecedented for any terrorist group, and shown that counterterrorism will continue to place significant operational demands on U.S. forces whether in this context or in others. Rogue actors have long preoccupied American planners, but the rogues are now more capable than at any time in decades.

Third, the democratization of technology has allowed more actors to contest American superiority in dangerous ways. The spread of antisatellite and cyberwarfare capabilities; the proliferation of man-portable air defense systems and ballistic missiles; the increasing availability of key elements of the precision-strike complex— these phenomena have had a military leveling effect by giving weaker actors capabilities which were formerly unique to technologically advanced states. As such technologies “proliferate worldwide,” Air Force Chief of Staff General David Goldfein commented in 2016, “the technology and capability gaps between America and our adversaries are closing dangerously fast.”13 Indeed, as these capabilities spread, fourth-generation systems (such as F-15s and F-16s) may provide decreasing utility against even non-great-power competitors, and far more fifth-generation capabilities may be needed to perpetuate American overmatch.

Finally, the number of challenges has multiplied. During the 1990s and early 2000s, Washington faced rogue states and jihadist extremism—but not intense great-power rivalry. America faced conflicts in the Middle East—but East Asia and Europe were comparatively secure. Now, the old threats still exist—but the more permissive conditions have vanished. The United States confronts rogue states, lethal jihadist organizations, and great-power competition; there are severe challenges in all three Eurasian theaters. “I don’t recall a time when we have been confronted with a more diverse array of threats, whether it’s the nation state threats posed by Russia and China and particularly their substantial nuclear capabilities, or non-nation states of the likes of ISIL, Al Qaida, etc.,” Director of National Intelligence James Clapper commented in 2016. Trends in the strategic landscape constituted a veritable “litany of doom.”14 The United States thus faces not just more significant, but also more numerous, challenges to its military dominance than it has for at least a quarter century.

### Econ

#### History shows Republican midterms victory will solve economy.

Abott 5/9/22 (Andrew Abott. Writer and Public affairs consultant. “Can a November Red Wave Save the U.S Economy Like Gingrich’s 94 Win?” Amac. May 9, 2022. https://amac.us/can-a-november-red-wave-save-u-s-economy-like-gingrichs-94-win/)

Today, Republican leaders should explicitly remind Americans of this history, and point out to voters that they have a similar opportunity before them. Just as George H.W. Bush handed his predecessor an economy that was rapidly recovering from recession only to have it wrecked by a Democrat president tacking left, Donald Trump gave Biden the strongest economic recovery in history. As we know, Biden proceeded to quickly squander it. Just as in 1994, however, the election of large Republican majorities in the House and Senate would produce an immediate change in the national morale and economic culture. Biden’s weak economy would begin turning around the day after the election. The results would be seen instantly. Coupled with a legislative agenda of strong pro-growth policies, a Republican Congress could go a long way toward saving the U.S. economy, creating jobs, and producing a rapid return to prosperity. And who knows—perhaps Biden would even have the sense to take a page out of Bill Clinton’s book, and race back to the political center to save his presidency, and the economy along with it.

#### Economic collapse causes great power war

Tkacik, 20 --- PhD from the University of Maryland and a JD from Duke, professor of government at Stephen F Austin State University (4/21/2020, Michael, “Ingredients in place for new great power war; The Covid-19 pandemic may be the final toxin in a deadly political mix,” <https://asiatimes.com/2020/04/ingredients-in-place-for-new-great-power-war/>, accessed on 11/16/2020, JMP)

World War II

The events leading to war in 1939 included a sharp division between the wealthy and everyone else, economic catastrophe in the Great Depression, sharp reductions in global trade, a breakdown in international cooperation, and the end of liberal governance in much of the world. Once again, these variables are present.

Even before the Covid-19 pandemic, trade was decreasing and beggar-thy-neighbor economic policies had become the norm. It might be tempting to place this blame on Trump, but he was elected by people in his country who have suffered 40 years of criminal economic competition from China. It is no wonder they elected Trump and it is no wonder he undermined a global trade system that has failed America’s working class.

Similarly, evidence of the breakdown of international cooperation and liberalism are everywhere. The world is unable to deal with the existential threat of climate change. Authoritarian regimes have seats on the UN Human Rights Council. There is a great and increasing gap between the wealthy and everyone else, a new Gilded Age. Liberalism, unable to cope, is in retreat everywhere, from the US and the UK to fledgling democracies in Eastern Europe and Latin America. Our world is gravely ill.

Pandemic

Into this morass we stir a global pandemic, with its origin in a corrupt, authoritarian state that is hostile to openness, human dignity and truth. That China denied and then exported the pandemic was as predictable as it is lamentable. The pandemic will bring a global economic depression, the only variable from World War II not present today. We should expect more governments to fall, we should expect liberalism to retreat further, and we should expect increased nationalism and violence upon our own species. In short, we are in for dark days.

Dictators attempt to divert the attention of their people from corruption and injustice by seeking external enemies. Wars will therefore increase, and status quo powers such as the United States may attempt to defend a crumbling system. The chance of war between China and the United States has increased dramatically because almost all of the structural variables today point toward war.

Both World War I and II were avoidable because different variables were present. Consequently, had skilled leadership been present, each war might have been avoided by correctly diagnosing the causes of the impending crises. That the wars were not avoided does not mean they could not have been; it simply means leadership was not up to the task.

But today the causes of both of those wars have been combined in a single cauldron. So it is reasonable to ask, even with good leadership (of which there is no doubt we are lacking), can great-power war be avoided?

#### Economic collapse causes nuclear war

Mann 14. (Eric Mann is a special agent with a United States federal agency, with significant domestic and international counterintelligence and counter-terrorism experience. Worked as a special assistant for a U.S. Senator and served as a presidential appointee for the U.S. Congress. He is currently responsible for an internal security and vulnerability assessment program. Bachelors @ University of South Carolina, Graduate degree in Homeland Security @ Georgetown. “AUSTERITY, ECONOMIC DECLINE, AND FINANCIAL WEAPONS OF WAR: A NEW PARADIGM FOR GLOBAL SECURITY,” May 2014, <https://jscholarship.library.jhu.edu/bitstream/handle/1774.2/37262/MANN-THESIS-2014.pdf)>)

The conclusions reached in this thesis demonstrate how **economic considerations** **within states** can **figure prominently into the calculus for future conflicts**. The findings also suggest that security issues with economic or financial underpinnings **will** transcend classical determinants of war and conflict, **and change the manner by which rival states engage in hostile acts toward one another**. The research shows that **security concerns emanating from economic uncertainty** and the inherent vulnerabilities within global financial markets **will present new challenges for national security**, **and provide developing states new asymmetric options for balancing against stronger states**. **The** security **areas**, identified in the proceeding chapters, **are likely to mature into** global security threats in the immediate future. As the case study on South Korea suggest, **the overlapping security issues** **associated with** economic decline **and** reduced military spending **by the** U**nited** S**tates will affect allied confidence in America’s security guarantees**. The study shows that **this** outcome **could cause regional instability or realignments of strategic partnerships in the Asia-pacific region with ramifications for U.S. national security.** **Rival states and non-state groups** may also **become emboldened to challenge America**’s status in the unipolar international system. **The** potential **risks associated with stolen or loose WMD**, resulting from poor security, can **also pose a threat to U.S. national security**. The case study on Pakistan, Syria and North Korea show how **financial constraints affect weapons security making weapons vulnerable to theft**, and how **financial factors** can **influence WMD prolif**eration **by contributing to the motivating factors behind a trusted insider’s decision to sell weapons technology**. The inherent vulnerabilities within the global financial markets will provide terrorists’ organizations and other non-state groups, who object to the current international system or distribution of power, with opportunities to disrupt global finance and perhaps weaken America’s status. A more ominous threat originates from states intent on increasing diversification of foreign currency holdings, establishing alternatives to the dollar for international trade, or engaging financial warfare against the United States.

### A2 Warming

#### No impact to warming – its overestimated, slow, and adaptation solves

Ridley 15 (Matt, fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and of the Academy of Medical Sciences, and a foreign honorary member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, member of Science and Technology select committee in the House of Lords, worked for the Economist for 9 years as a Science Editor, “Why climate policies are doing more harm than climate change” http://www.rationaloptimist.com/blog/paris-climate-conference/)

This year looks likely to be a lot warmer than last, though still not as warm in both standard satellite data sets as 1998, the last time that a strong El Nino in the Pacific Ocean boosted the global air temperature a lot (surface thermometers sets say it will be warmer than 1998, once adjusted in various ways). The average trend over the past 35 years is 0.1 degrees of warming per decade according to the satellite data, less than 0.2 per decade according to the surface thermometers. Neither trend is fast enough to produce significantly dangerous climate change even by the latter part of this century. The warming has been much slower than was predicted when the scare began. Nor is it evenly spread. The Antarctic continent has warmed hardly at all, and the entire southern hemisphere has warmed about half as fast as the northern. The Arctic has warmed more than the tropics, night has warmed more than day and winter has warmed more than summer. Cities have warmed faster than the countryside, but that’s because of local warming factors, not global ones: buildings, vehicles, industry, pavements and people trap warmth. How unusual is today’s temperature? As I did this weekend, you have no doubt had conversations along the following lines recently: “Hasn’t it been mild? End of November and we’ve hardly had a frost yet!” All true. But then be honest: can you not recall such conversations throughout your life? I can. And here’s what the Met Office had to say about November 1938, long before I was born: “The weather of the month was distinguished by exceptional mildness: at numerous places it was the mildest November on record.” In 1953, November was even milder and there was no air frost recorded in Oxford in the last four months of the year at all. I am not saying it has not generally become warmer, but that the variation dwarfs the trend. Let’s go back a little further, to the Middle Ages. It used to be argued by some that the “Medieval Warm Period” of about a thousand years ago, when mountain glaciers retreated, vines grew further north and Iceland was widely cultivated, was confined to Europe. We now know from multiple sources of evidence that it was global. Tree lines were higher than today in many mountain ranges, for example. Both North Pacific and Antarctic Ocean water temperatures were 0.65C warmer than today. Go back yet further, still within the current interglacial period, to the so-called Holocene Optimum of 6,000-9,000 years ago. Ocean temperatures were up to two degrees warmer than today, the Arctic Ocean was nearly or completely ice-free at the end of summer in many years, and the boreal forest in Siberia extended 150 miles further north than today. July temperatures were up to six degrees warmer than today in the Siberian Arctic. Was this Holocene Optimum a horrible time of droughts, storms, disease and famine? Not especially. It was the period when agriculture spread rapidly across the globe from five or seven centres of invention. Abundant rainfall in Africa led to lakes in the Sahara with crocodiles and hippos in them, surrounded by green vegetation in the monsoon season. Today’s gentle warming, progressing much more slowly than expected, is also accompanied by generally improving conditions. Globally, droughts are declining very slightly. Storms are not increasing in frequency or intensity: this year has been one of the quietest hurricane seasons. Floods are worse in some places but usually because of land-use changes, not more rainfall. Death rates from floods, storms and droughts have plummeted and are now far lower than they were a century ago. Today, arid areas like western Australia or the Sahel region of Africa are getting generally greener, thanks to the effect of more carbon dioxide in the air, which makes plants grow faster and resist drought better.

#### Republicans will solve climate change and inflation problems with energy legislation.

**Josh Siegel ‘22** (Josh Siegel was a reporter at the Washington Examiner he’s been the lead author of Daily on Energy, “House Republicans to introduce climate change strategy with eye on midterms,” Politico, <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/06/01/house-republicans-to-introduce-climate-change-strategy-with-eye-on-midterms-00036481>, 6/1/2022)

House Republicans are preparing to release a six-part strategy to try to tame surging gasoline prices and to combat climate change that calls for increasing production of all types of energy and sets no greenhouse gas targets. The plan to be released Thursday is the product of an “energy, climate, and conservation task force” created by top House Republican Kevin McCarthy last year that he tasked with devising a policy agenda to address climate change **should Republicans capture the** House in the 2022 **midterm elections**. “We are **creati**ng a clear coherent **energy strategy** that returns the U.S. to an **emissions reduction trajectory** as opposed to what we are seeing under the Biden administration, which is failing every test, whether it be affordability, emissions or security,” Rep. Garret Graves (R-La.), the chair of the 17-member task force, told POLITICO in an exclusive interview previewing the plan. The strategy released by House Republicans contains few new policy ideas and is meant instead to provide a high-level overview of how the party would **address** the challenges of **record-high energy prices worsened by Russia’s war in Ukraine while reducing global emissions**. The strategy is consistent with McCarthy’s effort in recent years to develop the party’s climate change platform and messaging to challenge Democrats and the Biden administration, with an eye toward winning support from young people and suburban voters who polls show are increasingly concerned worried about the issue. The GOP is betting that promoting private sector innovation to curb emissions without targeting fossil fuels that are the biggest source of greenhouse gases will enable the party to win competitive oil and gas producing House districts won by Democrats in 2020. The task force report, shared with POLITICO, contains six pillars: “Unlock America’s Resources,” “Beat China and Russia,” “Let America Build,” “Build Resilient Communities,” “American Innovation” and “Conservation with a Purpose.” Without those themes, Republicans aim to pursue the party’s well-trodden policy ideas such as promoting domestic production and export of “all of the above” energy resources, **including oil and gas, along with zero-carbon technologies such as wind, solar, small modular nuclear reactors, hydrogen and carbon capture**. They also want to streamline permitting to reduce obstacles to **building clean energy** and traditional energy infrastructure, including pipelines, LNG terminals and mines to produce critical minerals. House Republicans say they plan to introduce new legislation next Congress that corresponds to each of the six policy areas should the GOP take control of the chamber. The report, however, is also notable in what it does not include. House Republicans continue to resist setting a specific emissions reduction target. They oppose policies to reduce fossil fuel use, including regulations, taxes, or mandates. And Graves said House Republicans, unlike at least some GOP counterparts in the Senate, are skeptical of the government extending and expanding clean energy tax credits that the renewable industry says are critical to helping them deploy zero-carbon power at the scale needed to address climate change. “Are we open to looking at strategies that nudge technologies to economic sustainability? Yes. But a lot of that can be achieved through R&D partnering with innovators,” said Graves, who represents an oil and gas district experiencing sea level rise and is currently the ranking GOP member of the Democratic-led Select Committee on the Climate Crisis. In leaning too much into fossil fuels to counter Biden’s more aggressive climate agenda, Republicans risk turning off swing voters in states and districts already feeling the effects of climate change, with forecasts predicting a brutal summer for wildfires, extreme heat and drought.

## Link

### Win for Biden – Russia

#### GOP midterm strategy relies on hammering Biden on Russia, foreign policy. The aff changes the narrative.

#### Tobin ’22 (Jonathan Tobin, editor in chief at jns.org; “McConnell's Win on Ukraine Aid Isn't the End of GOP Foreign Policy Debate”; Newsweek; 6.24.22; https://www.newsweek.com/mcconnells-win-ukraine-aid-isnt-end-gop-foreign-policy-debate-opinion-1710970)//ccs

After getting his way on a $40 billion Ukraine aid bill, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) took a victory lap in the form of a fawning New York Times interview. The Kentucky senator had to be particularly pleased with the headline on the piece that read, "On Ukraine, McConnell Tries to Show the World This Isn't Trump's GOP." The same day, Politico chimed in with a similar article that took its readers "Inside McConnell's bid to quash GOP 'isolationists.'" Both made the point that although former President Donald Trump had been critical of the massive package, only 11 out of the 50 Republicans in the Senate had followed his lead on the issue. That dissent, as well as the efforts of GOP dissidents like Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) to slow down the Biden administration's rush to pass the bill, was enough for Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY), whose caucus was unanimous in its support, to slam Republicans for being "soft on Putin." But McConnell, who had helped orchestrate the victory with a quick trip to Ukraine the previous weekend, was still satisfied, claiming that the vote represented a reaffirmation of his party's traditional support for the U.S.-Europe alliance over the views of a group he dismissed as "isolationists." With most of his caucus sticking with him over the complaints of Trump and many of the former president's supporters, McConnell had cause to celebrate. And he can also point to a Pew Research Center poll that not only shows most Americans support aid to Ukraine, but also that a plurality of conservatives actually think President Joe Biden hasn't done enough to help resist the Russian invasion. One of the main GOP criticisms of Biden is that his weakness in Afghanistan and elsewhere encouraged Russia's aggression. Though Trump's rhetoric about NATO and foreign entanglements in general sounded isolationist at times, in practice, it was anything but, as his efforts strengthened the alliance while taking aggressive stands against ISIS and Iran. NEWSWEEK NEWSLETTER SIGN-UP > Moreover, even though many on the Right see the obsession with Russia as a distraction from the more dangerous threat from Communist China, Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX) backed McConnell on the aid package because of a belief that it would help deter Beijing from a possible invasion of Taiwan. From that perspective, though the $40 billion is more than the United States sends to any ally—Israel is routinely bashed for receiving $3.8 billion in annual military assistance even though almost all of it is subsequently spent back in the United States—it would be money well spent if it helped degrade the Russian military and sent a deterrent message to China. In that sense, McConnell is channeling Sen. Arthur Vandenberg (R-MI), who chaired the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations in the late 1940s and supported President Harry Truman's Cold War policies in Europe. Vandenberg's bipartisan cooperation with Democrats was summed up by his famous quip about "politics stopping at the water's edge." Given that he can take credit for the likely impending overturning of Roe v. Wade by conservative Supreme Court justices whose confirmations were largely his doing, McConnell can be forgiven for thinking that despite his low polling numbers, his party's base should acknowledge his achievements. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) speaks Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) speaks to reporters after a closed-door lunch meeting with Senate Republicans at the U.S. Capitol May 24, 2022 in Washington, DC. DREW ANGERER/GETTY IMAGES NEWSWEEK SUBSCRIPTION OFFERS > Still, a willingness to play ball with the Democrats on Ukraine isn't likely to endear McConnell to voters who love Trump. Those voters do so primarily because he understands that in the current atmosphere of total culture war in which the Left demonizes all conservatives, bipartisanship only helps foes who would never return the favor. The Left likes the idea of anyone putting Trump in his place. And in a less partisan era than the one he is now living in, McConnell playing Vandenberg to Biden's Truman might have won him points even within his own party. But in 2022, McConnell is still the enemy in the eyes of the mainstream media, and skepticism about the puzzling way in which much of the Washington establishment from both parties has decided the territorial integrity of Ukraine is the main objective of American foreign policy is likely to only grow among conservatives. Anyone who has been listening to the rhetoric on the campaign trail in contested Republican primaries around the country knows that it's Trump's skepticism about Ukraine, rather than McConnell's internationalism, that is motivating GOP voters to turn out this year. The imagery of Republicans supporting such a large amount being sent abroad at a time of domestic woes such as inflation, supply chain shortages such as that affecting baby formula and a crisis at the southern border that has created a flood of illegal immigrants heading into the country, goes against the GOP's midterm strategy of holding Biden accountable for the deplorable state of the country. McConnell's willingness to agree with Biden about rushing aid to Ukraine because of the urgency of its wartime needs may eventually come back to bite him if a GOP Congress elected this fall pursues oversight for the spending. Indeed, the lack of transparency in the aid bill is a real problem. Despite Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky being given the Churchill treatment by the international press, his government is well known for corruption. If much of what is being sent to Kyiv winds up in the pockets of friendly oligarchs or officials, McConnell may regret choosing not to insist on accountability for the aid process while buying into Biden's talking points about saving democracy in Eastern Europe. McConnell's boasts are not in sync with the message most Republican primary voters are sending. The GOP Senate caucus that convenes next January is likely to have several more Ukraine skeptics, such as J.D. Vance in Ohio. That will be even truer for what is likely to be a new Republican majority in the House. The emergence of Trump and others who buck the foreign policy establishment's conventional wisdom on a number of issues should have already made it clear to McConnell and his Senate cronies that their period of dominance of the party is nearing an end. Should he work with Biden to try to pass a similar Ukraine aid package next year, McConnell is probably setting himself up for defeat.

#### Biden wants midterms to be focused on foreign policy not the economy

**Lauter ’22** (David Lauter, Senior Editor at the Los Angeles Times covering Politics; “Essential Politics: War in Ukraine scrambles GOP and Democratic strategies for midterms”; Los Angeles Times; 3.11.22; https://www.latimes.com/politics/newsletter/2022-03-11/politics-war-ukraine-scrambles-plans-2022-midterm-election-essential-politics)//ccs

“As a general rule, Americans don’t vote on foreign policy unless American men and women are dying in a war, but we’ve rarely had an international event not involving the United States directly that has so totally consumed our news and attention as the Russian invasion of Ukraine,” said Republican pollster and strategist Whit Ayres. “This war has become symbolic for the survival of democratic regimes against authoritarian dictatorships,” Ayres added. “That symbolism has given it a much broader meaning.” A poll this week by Navigator Research, a Democratic firm, found that 37% of American voters said they were “very closely” following news from Ukraine, and nearly 8 in 10 said they were following it at least somewhat closely — high numbers for a foreign issue. National security and foreign policy had jumped to the top of American concerns, tied with jobs and the economy, displacing worries about the coronavirus and inflation, the poll found. The summer months may seem like the time to take a break from worrying about your teenager’s mental health. Surely the promise of sunshine and no homework will lead to improved mood and behavior, right? Amid that intense focus, Americans have clearly picked a side — overwhelmingly favoring the Ukrainians. That could be seen in Wednesday’s House vote to suspend oil imports from Russia, which passed 414-17 with just two of the chamber’s most left-wing Democrats, Reps. Cori Bush of Missouri and Ilhan Omar of Minnesota, and 15 right-wing Republicans voting no. That level of attention makes the Ukraine war the kind of event that could significantly shift U.S. politics. “Politics isn’t the most important thing right now,” said Democratic strategist Steve Schale, chief executive of the pro-Biden super-pac Unite the Country. But, he added, since 1992, “the only two midterm elections that were not absolute debacles for the incumbent president’s party were held during a window where there was something significant in the country that reshaped the conversation.” Those two were 1998, when voters rejected Republican efforts to impeach President Clinton and Democrats gained four seats, and 2002, when Republicans under President George W. Bush gained seats in the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks. Biden and the Democrats have a long way to go to emulate the midterm successes those two presidents enjoyed. A new Wall Street Journal poll released Friday continues to show Democrats trailing the GOP as the party voters say they expect to back in November. But polls have also shown an uptick in voters’ assessments of how Biden is doing his job. The change is just a few percentage points, but after nine months of nearly steady decline, it’s a welcome sign for the president. Ukraine has clearly contributed to the boost in Biden’s ratings. A poll by Morning Consult for Politico found this week, for example, that by 46% to 42%, voters approved of Biden’s response to the crisis. Voters’ assessments of how Biden has dealt with Ukraine have improved notably since last month and are also significantly higher than how they assess his presidency overall.

### Win for Biden – Emerging tech

#### They also want to hammer Biden for lack of action on emerging tech

Gould 21 [Joe Gould. "23 Republicans urge Biden to work with allies on tech to combat China". 1-28-2021. Defense News. https://www.defensenews.com/congress/2021/01/28/23-republicans-urge-biden-to-work-with-allies-on-tech-to-combat-china. 6-23-2022.] - AL

WASHINGTON ― Nearly two dozen Republican lawmakers are calling on President Joe Biden to engage with allies on emerging technologies like 5G networking and artificial intelligence in the face of China’s advancements. House Armed Services Committee ranking member Mike Rogers, House Foreign Affairs Committee ranking member Mike McCaul, and House Science, Space and Technology Committee ranking member Frank Lucas signed a letter to Biden urging him to maximize alliances to counter “China’s vision for tech authoritarianism and protect our own economic and national security interests.” The message to Biden signals an avenue for bipartisan cooperation, just days after Secretary of State Antony Blinken appeared supportive of U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s efforts to forge a D-10 group of democracies ― South Korea, India and Australia, plus the G-7 nations ― to cooperate on 5G and vulnerable supply chains. In his confirmation hearing last week, Blinken said: “Bringing concerned countries together, the digital democracies together in an appropriate forum, is the place to start.” “I don’t want to minimize the challenge. We obviously have disagreements among democracies about a lot of profound questions about how technology is used, so we’ve got some work to do just to get our own collective house in order,” he said. Western allies, under pressure from President Donald Trump, agreed to exclude Chinese tech giant Huawei from their 5G networks, claiming an espionage risk, something the company has denied. Since then, the European Union signed a long-promised investment deal with China last month despite the public concerns from the incoming Biden administration. The Republican lawmakers, referencing Johnson in their letter, recommended raising the issue of China’s tech authoritarianism through the G-7 and NATO ― but also expanding engagements with allied democracies, and creating and hosting new international groups dedicated to democratic cooperation on technology. They also called for the development of an allied network to encourage cooperation among companies in allied states to scale emerging technologies, and for the U.S. to help allies establish governmental bodies like the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States to review foreign investments and prevent the transfer of allied technologies. McCaul, who chaired the House’s Republican-only China Task Force, called on Biden to prioritize investments in domestic manufacturing of next-generation semiconductor chips in his expected infrastructure plan. McCaul has sponsored legislation to boost funding for basic research. “We must work with our allies to ensure that our supply chain is secure and the future of technology is safely out of the hands of the [Chinese Communist Party],” McCaul said in a statement. Democratic lawmakers have also raised alarms over China’s development of emerging technologies. After a report last month that Huawei tested AI software that could recognize Uighur minorities and alert police, Democratic Sen. Bob Menendez, the incoming Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman, tweeted the following: “A shocking reminder that #China continues to flout the ethical development of emerging technologies. The US must lead an effort with our allies to ensure the proper use of the digital domain predicated on the values of openness, stability, security, & protection of human rights.”

#### GOP doesn’t want to give Biden a win before the midterms, especially on emerging tech

Leonard and Flatley 22 [Jenny Leonard and Daniel Flatley, congressional reporters for Bloomberg News 6-24-2022 Biden’s $52 Billion Chip Plan Sputters as Lawmakers Eye Election BNN https://www.bnnbloomberg.ca/biden-s-52-billion-chip-plan-sputters-as-lawmakers-eye-election-1.1776685] 6-26-2022

(Bloomberg) -- Long-stalled legislation to boost US semiconductor manufacturing and strengthen competitiveness against China risks collapsing in Congress, with Republicans growing skeptical of the measure as midterm elections near and Democrats focusing instead on gun violence.

The bill has been a top priority for Joe Biden’s administration, particularly Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo, but some lawmakers fault the White House for not being more engaged. And time is running short for Congress to act on it before lawmakers depart for a summer recess and then the campaign trail, with many issues unresolved, according to people familiar with negotiations.

Republicans who had worked with the administration on the measure are now balking at giving Biden a win ahead of the November election, with their party poised for big gains in Congress, the people said. Instead, they aim to write their own China bill after taking control of the House, Senate, or both.

### NATO

#### Commitment to NATO motivates Democrats while dividing GOP voters

Saleton 3/21/22 Writer, The Bulwark Washington, Washington, D.C. U.S. As seen in: The Bulwark, The New York Times, Business Insider, MSN, The Wall Street Journal, New Scientist, Slate, National Post, The Dallas Morning News, Mother Jones, Slate France and more, “Republican Voters Are Now America’s Foreign Policy Doves,” The Bulwark, March 21, 2022, https://www.thebulwark.com/republican-voters-are-now-americas-foreign-policy-doves/

On Wednesday, 15 Republican senators held a press conference to criticize President Biden for insufficient boldness in Ukraine. John Kennedy likened the president to “Bambi’s baby brother.” Ben Sasse accused the administration of treating the war like a “nerd-lawyer” dispute, not “a moral battle.” John Cornyn sternly declared, “The Biden administration’s timidity in the face of this evil needs to end.” From Richard Nixon in 1968 to Mitt Romney in 2012, this is how Republican politicians talked about foreign policy: They were the party of strength, and Democrats were the party of weakness. But that formulation is no longer true. The GOP, as measured by the expressed beliefs of its voters, has become the more dovish party. The Supreme Court reoriented our understanding of fundamental rights today. Now come the fights over… For more than a century, Republicans have had an isolationist wing. The power of that faction has waxed and waned. But in the Trump era, for the first time since before World War II, it has taken over the party. In an Echelon Insights poll taken from February 19 to 23, as Russian troops surrounded and prepared to invade Ukraine, most Democratic voters affirmed that “It’s best for the future of our country to be active in world affairs.” Republicans, by a ratio of 2 to 1, chose the alternative answer: “We should pay less attention to problems overseas and concentrate on problems here at home.” In the same poll, 47 percent of Democrats said human rights should be a top priority in foreign policy. Only 27 percent of Republicans agreed. Republicans aren’t just less interested than Democrats in fighting for universal values, such as democracy. They’re also less likely to support allies. In the Echelon Insights poll, Republicans were less willing than Democrats to “provide military support to defend allies’ security” or to “participate in and provide resources to international military alliances like NATO.” In an Economist/YouGov survey taken in early February, 27 percent of Republicans—compared to only 8 percent of Democrats—said the United States should withdraw from NATO. A month later—more than a week into the Russian invasion, as NATO countries rallied to help Ukraine—34 percent of Democrats expressed a very favorable view of NATO. Only 12 percent of Republicans agreed. This rising isolationism on the right has converged with Trumpist sympathy for Russia and hostility to Ukraine. When former Vice President Mike Pence said there was “no room in this party for apologists for Putin,” he was talking—whether he knew it or not—about a faction that does, in fact, take up significant space in the GOP. Even during the invasion, Putin’s favorable rating among Republicans has reached 14 percent, 15 percent, and 18 percent in some surveys—more than twice as high as his favorable rating among Democrats. Republicans are more likely than Democrats to affirm that Putin is a “genius,” that his conduct of the war is justified, and that the best outcome would be a Russian victory. On average, only about 10 percent of Republicans openly express such pro-invasion views. But they’re joined by a much larger group of Republicans who are hostile to or wary of Ukraine. This is the result, in large part, of Trumpist propaganda that for years has accused Ukraine of pervasive corruption and electoral sabotage against the GOP. In the latest Economist/YouGov survey, taken from March 12 to 15, 40 percent of Democrats classified Ukraine as an ally. Only 23 percent of Republicans agreed. Fifty-three percent of Democrats expressed a very favorable view of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky; only 39 percent of Republicans shared that view. Republicans were also significantly less likely than Democrats to acknowledge that Ukraine is a democracy. In other polls, Democrats have consistently said that Ukraine deserves little or no blame for the war. Republicans are closely divided on that question. In February, these sentiments—isolationist, pro-Putin, anti-Ukraine—combined to divide the GOP over whether it was more important to “take a strong stand so that Russia does not take over Ukraine by force” or, alternatively, to “maintain good relations with Russia.” In a February Yahoo News/YouGov survey, 58 percent of Democrats said the United States should take Ukraine’s side, but only 42 percent of Republicans agreed. Most Democrats said it was “in America’s best interests to stop Russia and help Ukraine,” but Republicans leaned toward the alternative answer: “The conflict is none of America’s business.” Today, Republican politicians say Biden should have sanctioned Russia and sent more weapons to Ukraine before the invasion. But that wasn’t what Republican voters thought. In the Yahoo News poll, only 40 percent of Republicans supported sanctions against Russia, even after they were told that “more than 100,000 Russian troops are massing on the border of Ukraine, threatening an invasion.” In weekly Economist/YouGov surveys, Democrats clearly favored weapons shipments to Ukraine, but Republicans were evenly divided. A Washington Post/ABC News poll found that if sanctions on Russia entailed higher energy prices in the United States, 62 percent of Democrats would still support them, but only 44 percent of Republicans would go along. Many Republicans preferred appeasement. In early February, when an Economist/YouGov survey asked about Sen. Josh Hawley’s proposal “to stop supporting Ukraine’s prospective membership in NATO,” more Republicans supported that idea than opposed it. Most Democrats, however, said the United States should continue to support NATO membership for Ukraine. As Biden moved to fortify Europe against the Russian threat, Republicans opposed him. In mid-February, a Quinnipiac survey informed respondents that Biden had “approved the deployment of thousands of troops to Eastern Europe to support U.S. allies in NATO, such as Poland and Romania.” Seventy percent of Democrats endorsed the deployment. But a plurality of Republicans, 47 percent to 43 percent, rejected it. The Republican resistance wasn’t just about Biden. A Suffolk poll, also taken in mid-February, found that Republicans were significantly less likely than Democrats to support every kind of intervention: sanctions, military aid, troops to the region, and troops to Ukraine. Twenty-two percent of Republicans, compared to 9 percent of Democrats, said the U.S. should do nothing. Echelon Insights found a stark partisan divide when it asked voters to choose between interventionist and isolationist statements. Most Democrats, 56 percent to 31 percent, chose this statement: “The United States has a moral responsibility to protect Ukraine and other democratic allies from aggression and invasion, even if it means sending military aid or deploying troops.” But most Republicans, 51 percent to 39 percent, chose the alternative statement: “The United States has more important issues to focus on at home than sending military aid or deploying troops to deter a potential Russian invasion.” Today, weeks into the war, the partisan gap persists. In nearly every survey, Republicans are less willing than Democrats to sanction Russia, sanction Putin, ban the importation of Russian oil and gas, “send weapons and supplies to Ukraine,” help Ukraine “obtain more fighter jets,” send troops to Ukraine (even in non-combat roles), “shoot down Russian military planes flying over Ukraine,” or conduct “air strikes on Russia.” They’re less willing to support or participate in boycotts of Russian products, and they’re more willing to “promis[e] Russia that Ukraine will never join NATO.” In the latest Yahoo News survey, completed last Monday, the gap between the parties remains wide. Seventy-six percent of Democrats say the United States should take Ukraine’s side; only 57 percent of Republicans agree. Eighty percent of Democrats endorse “severe economic sanctions on Russia”; again, only 57 percent of Republicans agree. Two-thirds of Democrats prefer a “full Russian defeat”; only 51 percent of Republicans agree. When respondents are asked whether “It’s in America’s best interests to stop Russia and help Ukraine” or “The conflict is none of America’s business,” 72 percent of Democrats say we should help Ukraine. Fewer than half of Republicans share that view. Nor does the partisan divide stop at Ukraine’s borders. In polls taken since the invasion, Republicans are less willing than Democrats to “maintain [our] commitment to defend NATO allies when they are attacked,” “send U.S. troops to protect NATO allies near Ukraine,” or keep “U.S. military forces in NATO countries near Ukraine.” Even when they’re told that “The U.S. and its European allies are obligated to defend countries that belong to [NATO] if they are invaded by a foreign power,” Republicans are less willing than Democrats to say we should respond with force “if Russia were to invade a NATO member state.” Together, these numbers drive home an uncomfortable truth: As war returns to Europe, America’s soft underbelly isn’t in the Biden administration. It’s in the GOP. The problem isn’t just that rank-and-file Republicans are relatively reluctant to stand up to Putin. It’s that they don’t recognize their own passivity. They still think they represent a muscular foreign policy. In every survey, they complain that Biden has been “too weak,” and they insist—more than Democrats do—that the United States must get “tougher.” But then, when they’re asked about measures that would actually get tougher, they flinch. If Republican senators want America to stand strong against Putin, they should be talking to their own voters. That would be leadership. And it would be helpful, because no foreign intervention is sustainable without public support at home. Instead, they’re cracking soundbites about Bambi and taking cheap shots at Biden. They’re talking tough instead of being tough. Just like their voters.

#### **Republicans are divided over cooperation with NATO**

Parker et al 22 (Ashley Parker, Marianna Sotomayor, and Issac Stanley-Becker. Ashley Parker is the White House Bureau Chief for the Washington Post; Marianna Sotomayor is a congressional reporter for the Washington Post; Issac Stanley-Becker is a political reporter. “Inside the Republican Drift Away from Supporting the NATO alliance.” The Washington Post. April 29, 2022. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/04/29/nato-republicans-trump/>)

In early 2019, several months after President Donald Trump threatened to upend the North Atlantic Treaty Organization during a trip to Brussels for the alliance’s annual summit, House lawmakers passed the NATO Support Act amid overwhelming bipartisan support, with only 22 Republicans voting against the measure.

But this month, when a similar bill in support of NATO during the Russian invasion of Ukraine again faced a vote in the House, the support was far more polarized, with 63 Republicans — [30 percent of the party’s conference](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/04/06/house-gop-nato-support/?itid=lk_inline_manual_4) — voting against it.

The vote underscores the Republican Party’s remarkable drift away from NATO in recent years, as positions once considered part of a libertarian fringe have become doctrine for a growing portion of the party.

The isolationist posture of some Republicans is in line with the“America First” ethos of Trump, the GOP’s de facto leader, who has long railed against NATO. Last week, [speaking at a Heritage Foundation event](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/04/22/trump-says-he-threatened-not-defend-nato-russia/?itid=lk_inline_manual_7) in Florida, Trump implied that as president he had threatened not to defend NATO allies from Russian attacks as a negotiating tactic to pressure them to contribute more money toward the organization’s shared defense.

The vote also comes against the backdrop of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, which has catapulted NATO to its most prominent role in decades. And it comes as some hawkish Republicans seek to cast themselves as stronger opponents of Russia than Democrats.

Metin Hakverdi, a German lawmaker who chairs the North America working group within the ruling Social Democratic Party, said the question that preoccupies him is, “Was Donald Trump the exception, or will Joe Biden be the exception?”

Some two dozen House GOP lawmakers who voted for the 2019 NATO Support Act voted against the similar resolution this month, which reaffirmed support for the alliance and its principles. But in interviews, several of those House Republicans said they still support the organization and simply objected to what they viewed as problematic provisions that Democrats had added to the bill for perceived political purposes.

Several who switched their votes since 2019 objected to measures they said did not specifically address strengthening NATO to help Ukraine. Rep. Barry Loudermilk (R-Ga.) found it particularly problematic that the resolution instructed NATO to be involved when a country has “internal threats from proponents on illiberalism,” which he says could be interpreted as conservatism.

“I am a huge supporter of NATO — I served in the Air Force during the Cold War, worked with NATO during that time period,” he said. “These issues should be left to those individual nations.”

Loudermilk argued that Democrats had inserted “poison pills” into the symbolic resolution, which could be used against Republicans in the 2022 midterms. “It was the Democrats trying to politicize something and add things in there that we have no business working on,” he said, explaining his vote against the bill.

Similarly, from Rep. Robert B. Aderholt (R-Ala.): “I am wholeheartedly, unequivocally, without reservation, supportive on NATO.”

But Aderholt said he worried that the resolution “had some language in that I thought went on the political side. And I don’t want to see NATO go political. I want to see NATO stand up for, you know, what’s going on in Ukraine — stand up for Ukraine against Russia.”

The two bills are not exactly the same. The legislation in 2019 reaffirmed that federal money should not be used to remove the United States from NATO — which Trump was threatening at the time — while the bill from this month called on the government to “uphold the founding democratic principles of NATO,” as well for NATO “to continue to provide unwavering support to the people of Ukraine as they fight for their sovereignty, territorial integrity, and a democratic future.”

#### The plan cordons off and alienates the Trump wing of the party

Gest 17 (Justin Gest. Writer for Politico. “The Two Kinds of Trump Voters: Broadly speaking, the president’s white working class supporters come in two types. Democrats have a shot at one of them.” Politico. February 8, 2017. https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/02/trump-voters-white-working-class-214754/)

First, there are those who support Trump primarily because they agree with the authoritarian, nationalist moral order he seeks to establish. We’ll call them the Nationalists. Second, there are those who support Trump primarily because they believe he embodies a cleansing of establishment politics that has left white working-class people poorer and forgotten over recent decades. We’ll call them the Exasperated. The Democrats might never hope to gain the support of Nationalists, for whom Trump is a messianic figure—but they might hope to gain the support of the Exasperated, who are wary of Trump and voted for him out of frustration with the past few decades of politics, embodied by Hillary Clinton. The Nationalists represent an enduring cult of personality. They will be pleased by Trump’s executive orders limiting immigration and punishing sanctuary cities, not even necessarily because they disdain immigrants, but rather because of what immigrants represent. When I spoke to them, these voters sensed that they were losing control of their country and its identity, that they were losing their place in the social hierarchy. Trump’s “America First” approach comforts them and reinforces the supremacy of white people. Trump is likely to maintain Nationalist support until the bitter end, even if he is unable to deliver the economic prosperity he promised, and even if his social agenda is ruled unconstitutional. He will inevitably blame others, and this constituency will believe it. Short of a microphone capturing him trashing these supporters behind their backs, they represent his die-hard base.

#### Furthering divisions within the GOP opens door for DEMS to win midterms.

Zurcher 22 (Anthony Zurcher. North America reporter for BBC News. “Midterms 2022: What will Republicans do if They Win Congress?” BBC News. May 3, 2022. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-61280069)

When asked in January what his party would do if it regained control of Congress next year, Senator Mitch McConnell - who would in all likelihood run the chamber if Republicans prevail - was coy. "That is a very good question," he said. "And I'll let you know when we take it back". In the House, it's a similar problem. Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy has set up a taskforce to come up with a campaign agenda - something easier said than done. When it was attempted prior to the party's national convention in 2020, Republicans were unable to agree on an electoral platform - the US political equivalent of a British party manifesto. The platform for the re-election of Donald Trump was instead simply a renewal of the 2016 document, even with its dated references to Barack Obama and the "failed" incumbent president. The apparent lack of focus is being felt by the rank-and-file voters whose enthusiasm the party will need in November. At the February Conservative Political Action Conference, or CPAC, a gathering of right-wing activists and politicians in Florida, more than one attendee was unimpressed. "I come to CPAC, and I hear a lot of blah, blah, blah, blah, blah," said Florida resident Bernita Gigowski. "And I just want to yell out, 'but you've been in office for 10 or 12 years and what have you done?'" "The Republican Party is currently going through some growing pains," said Daniel Hopping, a college student attending the conference. The lack of a cohesive Republican platform is, in part, a reflection of the changes the party has undergone since Mr Trump won the presidency in 2016, said Mr Hopping. "We're becoming more of a populist, limited-government, culturally-sound party rather than just, 'let's just cut taxes and have a nice trade deal or something.'" As was the case for the Democrats during the Trump years, a common foe can help cover obscure intra-party fault lines. Among Republicans, the divides between the party's big-business, corporate interests, the Christian evangelicals and the white working-class voters who flocked to Mr Trump's America-First rhetoric have been smoothed over but still run deep. But that temporary unity is fragile, and comes with risks. After Republicans won the Senate and held the House of Representatives in 2014, dissatisfaction among rank-and-file voters - particularly on issues such as trade and immigration - may have contributed to the success of Donald Trump's anti-establishment presidential campaign. Those divides haven't entirely vanished, and if Republicans take power next year, acrimony over the direction of the party on social issues, trade, foreign policy and immigration could re-emerge.

### Election interference

#### Russia is interfering in the midterms to help Republicans – the plan gives Democrats the tools to counter these efforts

**Panetta & Haltiwanger ’22** (Grace Panetta is a senior politics reporter at Insider with a particular focus on election administration, voting rights and John Haltiwanger is a senior politics reporter at Business Insider. He reports on all things politics with a particular focus on national security and foreign policy., “Top Senate Democrats sound the alarm about Russian interference in the 2022 midterms,” Business Insider, <https://www.businessinsider.com/senate-dems-sound-the-alarm-about-russian-interference-in-2022-2022-6>, 06/09/2022)

Leading Senate **Democrats** are sounding the **alarm about Russian interference** **in the** 2022 **midterm** elections. A group of 17 Senate Democrats led by Sen. Amy Klobuchar, chairwoman of the Senate Rules Committee and Sen. Jack Reed of Rhode Island, the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, urged some of the nation's top military, intelligence, and national security officials to stay vigilant against interference in a new letter obtained by Insider. "As the Russian invasion of Ukraine has led to an increase in Russian disinformation and warnings of potential cyberattacks, we urge you to **ensure** that your agencies are **prepared to quickly and effectively counter Russian influence campaigns** targeting the 2022 elections," the senators wrote in Thursday's letter. The letter also cites an Insider report from March on how Putin's missteps in Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which has staunchly united the West and bolstered the NATO alliance while isolating Moscow economically and politically, could spur the Kremlin to redouble its efforts **in undermining Western democracy** through both cyber-hacking and disinformation operations that are far cheaper to carry out than a land war on the scale of the Ukraine invasion. "Manipulating social media is incredibly inexpensive compared to Javelins and ammunition," Chris Rouland, the CEO of Phosphorus Cybersecurity, told Insider. "If anything, **Russia would get more aggressive** in its manipulation of social media because it's almost free compared to a tank." Ex-NSA hacker David Kennedy, the CEO of TrustedSec, told Insider that "Putin and the intelligence agencies are **going to** look at how to **cause as much damage as possible**" through cyber operations. He added that the US in particular is a "ripe target" for continued Russian interference efforts because of the major impact Russia had in influencing the 2016 election.

#### The link is unique—the GOP is fighting any effort over election integrity

Schaffer and Marks ’22 (Aaron Schaffer, Technology and cybersecurity policy researcher; Joseph Marks, Reporter for The Cybersecurity 202 newsletter; “Election officials want more funds to combat midterm election cyber threats”; The Washington Post; 2.17.22; https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/02/17/election-officials-want-more-funds-combat-midterm-election-cyber-threats/)//ccs

Election officials are facing a barrage of cybersecurity threats as the midterms approach. But chances are slim that Congress will pitch in any money to help out. Their wish list includes: More cyber testing for election office computer networks. Cyber training for election workers and volunteers. Better physical security to ensure outsiders and rogue staffers can’t monkey with election machines so they’re unsafe to use. That’s on top of money they need for a suite of non-cyber challenges, including replacing staff who’ve quit amid a wave of death threats against election workers, inspired by former president Donald Trump’s false claims of election fraud, as Mike DeBonis and Amy Gardner report. Recent challenges The money crunch is a common dilemma for election officials who’ve faced one crisis after another in recent years, including Russian interference in the 2016 contest, the coronavirus pandemic and disinformation campaigns about elections from foreign and domestic sources. Congress has kicked in to help — including about $800 million for election security between 2016 and 2020 along with another $400 million to run safe elections during the coronavirus pandemic. But that’s only a fraction of what officials have said is necessary to make elections as secure as possible. “When election officials don’t have sufficient funds to run elections, they have to make tough choices and the truth is those choices can adversely impact the accessibility and security of elections,” David Levine, an election integrity fellow at the German Marshall Fund’s Alliance for Securing Democracy, told me. The big ask Election funding proposals have ranged from $20 billion sought by Democratic election officials to a more modest request for $5 billion in the next budget cycle. The Bipartisan Policy Center has suggested spending about $400 million annually on elections and focusing on ideas favored by Republicans and Democrats. But bipartisan consensus is a long way off. Most Democratic proposals link election security efforts with measures to make voting easier — which Republicans oppose. Republicans, who’ve generally been skeptical of federal funding for elections, aren’t keen on pitching in more money regardless.

### Young voters

#### **Young voters like international cooperation – plan pushes them to the polls**

UNCIEF 21 ["Landmark Intergenerational Poll Shows Young People Are 50% More Likely Than Older Generations To Believe The World Is Becoming A Better Place – Yet Impatient For Action On Mounting Crises". Unicef.Org, 2022, https://www.unicef.org/rosa/press-releases/landmark-intergenerational-poll-shows-young-people-are-50-more-likely-older. Accessed 24 June 2022. UNICEF works in some of the world’s toughest places, to reach the world’s most disadvantaged children. ]//DL

NEW YORK, 18 November 2021 – Children and young people are nearly 50 per cent more likely than older people to believe that the world is becoming a better place with each generation, according to a new international survey by UNICEF and Gallup released ahead of World Children’s Day. The survey shows that young people are also more likely to believe childhood itself has improved, with overwhelming majorities believing that healthcare, education, and physical safety are better for today's children than for their parents' generation. Yet, despite their optimism, young people are far from naïve, expressing restlessness for action on climate change, skepticism about information they consume on social media, and struggling with feelings of depression and anxiety. They are far more likely than older people to **see themselves as global citizens**, and more **likely to** **embrace international cooperation to tackle threats** like the COVID-19 pandemic.

The poll, The Changing Childhood Project, is the first of its kind to ask multiple generations for their views on the world and what it is like to be a child today. It surveyed more than 21,000 people across two age cohorts (15-24 years old and 40 years old and up) in 21 countries. Nationally representative surveys were undertaken in countries across all regions – Africa, Asia, Europe, and North and South America – and income levels. Overall, the data paint a picture of young generations as products of globalization. For example, young people (39 per cent) are on average almost twice as likely as older people (22 per cent) to identify most with being part of the world, versus their own nation or locale. With each additional year of age, people are on average about one per cent less likely to identify as a global citizen.

#### **Young voter turnout key to democratic victory in midterms – right now they won’t go but it’s close**

Brownstein 03/22/2022 [Brownstein, Ronald. "Analysis: Youth Turnout Could Save, Or Sink, Democrats In 2022". CNN, 2022, https://www.cnn.com/2022/03/22/politics/young-voters-democrats-midterms-biden/index.html. Accessed 24 June 2022.]

Soaring turnout and big margins among **young voters were central to the Democratic victories in** the 2018 congressional and 2020 presidential elections. But with many young people expressing disenchantment with President Joe Biden's performance, **preserving those advantages looms as one of the biggest challenges facing Democrats in the 2022 midterms**. There's widespread concern among Democrats that turnout for young people this November could fall back from its gains in 2018 toward the meager levels that contributed to the party's crushing losses in the 2014 and 2010 midterm elections. "If you accept the status quo with young people, it's not going to go great," says Democratic pollster Ben Tulchin. "Turnout is not going to be good." My stern warning to the Biden administration and Democrats is you have to take this seriously, because if we do go back to a 2010 or 2014 model where they really fall off it's going to make it very difficult for us in November. BEN TULCHIN, A DEMOCRATIC POLLSTER Most Republicans are expecting exactly that sort of decline, driven both by waning enthusiasm for Biden and diminishing concern about Donald Trump, whose visibility has dimmed since he left the White House. "We are seeing that younger voters who were voting in some of these elections because of Trump don't seem to be inspired by Biden, and I think their turnout will fall back to traditional levels," says GOP consultant John Brabender. Some structural dynamics may help to sustain youth turnout this fall. Many experts note that the large youth turnout of 2018 and 2020 creates momentum for continued participation, because people who register and vote in one election are more likely to vote in the next. Over the past two elections, Democrats and nonpartisan groups have built a significant organizational infrastructure to engage more young voters, and those efforts are continuing through 2022. "The elevated youth turnout and the elevated youth registration and participation that we saw from '16 to '18 to '20 is not magic," says Nsé Ufot, chief executive officer of the New Georgia Project, a non-profit voter registration and mobilization group founded by Stacey Abrams. "It is absolutely a direct result of our investment and our labor and targeting that particular group."

### Cyber

#### Cybersecurity investment is a win for Biden

Riley 21 [Tonya Riley. " The Cybersecurity 202: This House Democrat is pushing for more funding for state and local cybersecurity". 4-8-2021. Washington Post. https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/04/08/cybersecurity-202-this-house-democrat-is-pushing-more-funding-state-local-cybersecurity/. 6-24-2022.] -AL

States have begged for additional resources amid a massive uptick in cyberattacks locking up the computer systems of critical services for a fee, a tactic known as ransomware. The compromise of thousands of local governments and organizations by a massive Microsoft breach and a recent hack of a Florida public water facility has also added urgency to getting resources to states. Clarke also pushed to include cybersecurity funding in Biden's $2.2 trillion dollar infrastructure package. The package does not currently make any specific mentions of cybersecurity. The absence has attracted criticism from both lawmakers and industry groups. “I believe the administration's infrastructure package, the American Jobs Plan, is an opportunity to ensure that security is integrated or baked into critical infrastructure projects at the beginning and not tacked on at the end or patched up along the way,” she said. Current and former officials see the infrastructure package as the perfect vehicle for getting resources to states and local governments who often rely on out-of-date technology more susceptible to cyberattacks. Former Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency director Chris Krebs at a separate event at the Center for Strategic and International Studies also pushed for cybersecurity investments in infrastructure. "I really think that that it is well past time for a 21st century Digital Infrastructure Investment Act, where we provide the equivalent of a block grants state and local [governments] where they can modernize their IT infrastructure," he said. “And yes, it will help stop ransomware.” The Biden administration is working on a plan for cybersecurity in critical infrastructure it hopes to roll out “relatively soon,” Jeff Greene, acting senior director for cybersecurity at the National Security Council, said at the Cybersecurity Coalition event.

### AI

#### Artificial intelligence is a voter priority

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An overwhelming majority of the American public believes that artificial intelligence (AI) should be carefully managed. Nevertheless, as the three case studies in this brief show, the public does not agree on the proper regulation of AI applications. Indeed, population-level support of an AI application may belie opposition by some subpopulations. Many AI applications, such as facial recognition technology, could cause disparate harm to already vulnerable subgroups, particularly ethnic minorities and low-income individuals. In addition, partisan divisions are likely to prevent government regulation of AI applications that could be used to influence electoral politics. In particular, the regulation of content recommendation algorithms used by social media platforms has been highly contestable. Finally, mobilizing an influential group of political actors, such as machine learning researchers in the campaign against lethal autonomous weapons, may be more effective in shifting policy debates than mobilizing the public at large. AI is a general-purpose technology that enables machines to perform tasks that previously required human intelligence. As a result, it has a wide range of commercial and security applications. A 2018 survey conducted by the Center for the Governance of AI found that 84% of the American public believes that AI is a technology that should be carefully managed. Furthermore, the survey suggests that Americans consider most AI governance challenges to have high issue importance, as seen in Figure 1 below. This brief focuses on how public opinion will likely shape the regulation of three applications of AI in the U.S.: facial recognition technology used by law enforcement, algorithms used by social media platforms, and lethal autonomous weapons. These case studies were selected because they involve AI governance issues that the American public characterize as either highly likely to impact them in the next decade or important for tech companies and governments to manage. Political debates around these applications touch on central themes articulated in numerous AI ethics principles, including fairness, privacy, and safety. As shown in the figure below, Americans predict some of these governance challenges as more likely to impact Americans in the next decade than others. The issues thought to be the most likely to impact Americans and rated the highest in issue importance include preventing AI-assisted surveillance from violating privacy and civil liberties, preventing AI from being used to spread fake and harmful content online, preventing AI cyberattacks, and protecting data privacy

### Biotech

#### Voters Overwhelmingly Support government prioritization, and continued investment of biotech - polls prove

BIO no date Biotechnology Innovation Organization What Do Voters Think About the Biotechnology Industry? <https://archive.bio.org/articles/what-do-voters-think-about-biotechnology-industry> accessed 6/27/2022

But, how do you think most American voters responded? To find out the answer to that question, BIO, with the bipartisan pairing of Public Opinion Strategies and Hart Research Associates (the same team that produces the respected Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll), conducted a national survey of 800 American voters to find out what they think about the biotechnology industry. One of the most interesting findings was that during the current economic slowdown, while our elected leaders are making hard choices about our national economic priorities, a majority (53 percent) of American voters believe the federal government should support the biotechnology industry through either direct funding or beneficial tax policies. Role of Government in Biotech Role of Government Without providing any background information, 48 percent of those surveyed had a favorable impression of the industry while only 12 percent had an unfavorable impression (the rest had no opinion). After hearing just a brief, neutral explanation of the work conducted by biotech companies, voters’ impression of our industry improves dramatically. In fact, the number of voters with a favorable impression increased to 87 percent after hearing the description - while only 11 percent had an unfavorable impression and the rest had no opinion. The Image of Biotechnology Companies Image of Biotech Furthermore, the survey indicates that American voters support a continued federal commitment to biotechnology priorities such as research dedicated to finding alternative sources of energy, life-saving medicines and cures. In fact, the survey found that many of the biotechnology industry's important issues are ranked by voters as either "extremely" or "very" important - behind only the economy, education, reducing the deficit/government spending - and alongside of issues such as combating terrorism and reducing taxes. Over three-quarters of voters (76 percent) are supportive of a continued commitment to federal spending on biotech research after hearing that the industry is working to cure diseases such as Alzheimer's, cancer, diabetes and Parkinson's - and that these cures can eventually help patients live longer, healthier lives, cut federal health care spending and in the process save the American budget trillions of dollars. Overall, the survey results shed a positive light on the average American’s views of the biotechnology industry. As previously mentioned, voters rated the importance of finding cures as one of the most important issues and a majority of those voters say that it should be a top or high priority for Congress to commit to continued funding for research focused on alternative energy and finding cures for our most deadly diseases.

### A2 Too early/too late

#### Voters are deciding now—the next few weeks are pivotal

Glasser 22 [ Susan B. Glasser is a staff writer at The New Yorker, where she writes a weekly column on life in Washington. She co-wrote, with Peter Baker, “The Man Who Ran Washington.”6-3-2022 Joe Biden’s “Do Something” Moment Before the Midterms New Yorker https://www.newyorker.com/news/letter-from-bidens-washington/joe-bidens-do-something-moment-before-the-midterms] 6-27-2022

Can Biden turn his political fortunes around? June, as the Democratic strategist Doug Sosnik recently pointed out, is more or less the last chance in a midterm-election year for a President and his party to somehow change course and avert a looming political debacle in the fall. “In the last four midterm elections, by June the public had made up its mind about the leadership in Washington and how they were going to vote in November,” Sosnik observed. Which means that Biden has a few weeks, at best, to somehow revive an approval rating that currently stands in Trumpian territory: an average of 40.8 per cent approval, 54 per cent disapproval, according to the political Web site FiveThirtyEight. It’s one reason, among many bad indicators for Democrats, that forecasters right now predict Republicans will take over the House this fall, and very likely the Senate as well. The nonpartisan Cook Political Report projects Democratic losses of twenty to thirty-five seats in the House, where Republicans need just a handful of wins to gain control. And what will happen in June? The Supreme Court will likely decide to overturn Roe v. Wade. Democrats in the House will try and fail to pass Biden’s assault-weapons ban. There will be more fighting in Ukraine, and the very real possibility that, despite the influx of American weapons, Russia will continue to make territorial gains in the country’s east and inflict heavy casualties. Inflation shows little sign of receding; gas prices may reach record highs. This week, Jamie Dimon, the C.E.O. of JPMorgan Chase, warned of an economic “hurricane” that could push oil from its current price of a hundred and nineteen dollars a barrel—which currently seems nightmarishly high—all the way up to a hundred and fifty dollars per barrel, or even a hundred and seventy-five. According to the American Automobile Association, gas prices at the pump, reportedly the metric that is obsessing Biden’s White House chief of staff, Ron Klain, are currently averaging $4.76 per gallon nationally—up from $3.04 a year ago. covid-19 has not disappeared either, and new variants suggest the possibility of additional spikes this fall. Not all of these events will necessarily boost Republicans. Some may even benefit Biden. Polls suggest that the leak of the Supreme Court’s draft abortion ruling caused a surge in support for abortion rights. A Gallup poll found support for abortion rights at its highest level since 1995; a Wall Street Journal survey found that fifty-seven per cent of Americans back a woman’s right to a legal abortion for any reason, the highest level since the question was first asked by the publication’s pollster, in 1977. If Roe is indeed thrown out, Democrats are hoping to generate a wave of anger-fuelled support this fall, especially among independent-leaning female voters, who were key to the Party’s success in retaking the House in the 2018 midterms and holding it in 2020. June will also mark the opening of public hearings by the select committee investigating the January 6th attack on the Capitol, prime-time proceedings that Jamie Raskin, one of the panel’s Democratic members, has promised will “blow the roof off the House.” Evidence of Trump’s plot to illegally overturn the 2020 election results—and Republicans’ complicity beforehand and refusal to disavow it afterward—will, at a minimum, reinforce Biden’s message to Democratic voters that they must turn out to avoid handing more power to the “ultra maga” and “extreme” forces now controlling the G.O.P. (However, many Republicans, it should be noted, have already started appropriating Biden’s insult as a compliment. “I am ultra maga and I am proud of it,” Elise Stefanik, the third-ranking House Republican, recently said.) And, besides, reminding voters of Trump’s perfidy is not the same thing as resurrecting Biden’s political standing. If the President wants his supporters to turn out this fall, he needs to convince them, once again, of his leadership. Biden’s speech on Thursday night was not aimed at Republicans. It almost certainly will not miraculously produce an end to the congressional impasse over guns, which long pre-dates his Presidency. Yet, somehow, it still seemed important that he delivered the address. “Enough. Enough. Enough,” Biden said, on Thursday. He might not succeed. He probably won’t. But at least, it seems, he has decided that he’s not giving up either.

## Uniqueness

### Uniqueness – econ

#### Dems will lose the election because Biden is blamed for the bad economy.

**Collinson ‘22** (Stephen Collinson, reporter covering the White House and International Politics; “Biden is close to the point of no return with Americans on the economy”; CNN Politics; 5.5.22; https://www.cnn.com/2022/05/05/politics/biden-economy-analysis/index.html)//ccs

(CNN)President Joe Biden and his administration appear perilously close to an irreversible severing of public confidence in his capacity to deliver prosperity and financial security as stiff economic challenges balloon into huge political liabilities. A CNN poll released Wednesday shows that the President's repeated efforts to highlight undeniably strong aspects of the economy's post-pandemic rebound and to offset blame for its bad spots aren't working. The main culprit is inflation, a corrosive force that the White House initially underestimated and has failed to tame. It's been decades since Americans have experienced this demoralizing cycle of spiraling costs for basic goods and services. That shock is twinned with punishing gasoline prices that also hammer family budgets and spread pain across the population -- in a way that a regular recession, which can destroy millions of jobs but not hurt everyone -- may not. CNN Poll: Most Americans have a dismal view of the US economy CNN Poll: Most Americans have a dismal view of the US economy The result is a looming political disaster for Democrats, with voters in a disgruntled mood ahead of midterm elections that were already historically tough for a first-term President. The depth of voter disquiet about the economy also suggests that a potential backlash against the Supreme Court possibly overturning the nationwide right to abortion may not save Democrats in November. The party seems stuck in a dangerous political position of insisting the economy is doing well while voters think it's in the tank. The CNN poll, conducted by SSRS from April 28 to May 1, showed that a majority of Americans think Biden's policies have hurt the economy, while 8 in 10 say the government is not doing enough to combat inflation. It was released on the same day the Federal Reserve made its biggest swing against the rising cost of living in 22 years. White House economic adviser Jared Bernstein admitted on CNN on Thursday that some households are "experiencing extreme discomfort" because of inflation, but said some were in a better position because of the strong job market. "So I think you have to be more nuanced when you're trying to assess the economy ... we're doing all we can to try to help ease these inflationary pressures," Bernstein told Brianna Keilar on "New Day." He pointed to White House efforts to end supply chain blockages, to tackle port congestion, to lower energy prices and the release of millions of barrels of oil from strategic reserves among other measures. Bernstein is right about the external factors pushing inflation. But the problem for the White House is that nuance is the first thing that goes missing in political campaigns and voter anguish offers an easy opening for Republicans. The Federal Reserve raised interest rates by half a percentage point, but it triggered a stocks rally by indicating that despite adjustments to come, it did not anticipate further huge spikes in the price of borrowing. "I'd like to take this opportunity to speak directly to the American people," Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell said at the start of a news conference. "Inflation is much too high, and we understand the hardship it is causing. We are moving expeditiously to bring it back down." Yet the strikingly direct moment may not quell concerns that the Fed and the White House have acted too slowly to tackle inflation, are not using sufficiently aggressive methods to ease it and may still be overtaken by global factors, including the war in Ukraine and the fallout from the Covid-19 pandemic, which clogged supply chains, sent energy prices soaring and triggered other rising prices. Fed raises interest rates as it tries to catch up with inflation 02:00 What the interest rate hike means The rate increase will make new home and car loans and payments on credit card balances more expensive. But in the process, it could cool the housing market, making it easier to buy a home and taking the heat out of rising prices. Justin Wolfers, a professor of economics at the University of Michigan, explained that Americans could see results from the rate hikes in their daily lives, as inflation simmers at the highest levels since Ronald Reagan's 1980s presidency. Here&#39;s how higher rates will impact you Here's how higher rates will impact you "What the Fed is hoping to do is cool inflation a little so your paycheck will go a little further, although that will mean slowing the economy and that might mean a little less bargaining power for workers and fewer prospects of a wage rise anytime soon," Wolfers said on CNN's "Newsroom." The White House is showing clear signs of frustration that inflation is overshadowing the strong aspects of an economy that appears in remarkably robust shape -- despite a small contraction of 1.4% in the first quarter -- given the cataclysm of a two-year pandemic and the worst war in Europe since 1945. Biden, for example, on Wednesday touted cuts in the federal budget deficit and an unemployment rate that is approaching 50-year lows in a speech that appeared to be an attempt to get ahead of the Fed announcement and to signal resolve. Yet his political plight is underscoring why inflation remains a force that is dreaded by political leaders everywhere. Home buyers aren't using a realtor. Here's what they're doing instead 02:42 Despite Republican claims in midterm campaign ads that Biden's public spending policies are the sole cause of inflation, the President is correct to identify outside factors, including the pandemic and the war in Ukraine, as the main drivers of rising prices. But the reality doesn't mean voters will give Biden a pass. It's the nature of the job that when the country is in a grim mood, the President gets the blame. And when the White House's efforts to explain the problems and fix them have sometimes been muddled and too late, the political damage mounts. Biden may never shake off the initial White House line that high inflation was a "transitory" phase coming out of the pandemic. And while the economy is strong in many areas, voters' perception is often more important politically than the data that tells the real story. A daunting poll for the White House The CNN poll, for example, says that only 23% of Americans rate economic conditions as even somewhat good, down from 37% in December. The last time public perception of the economy was this poor in CNN's polling was November 2011. Only 34% approve of Biden's management of the economy. And his approval rating on helping the middle class -- 36% -- is devastating for a President who has made that issue the foundation of his political career. The question of public perception versus the true state of the economy is also borne out in the poll. Americans said by nearly 4 to 1 that they were more likely to hear bad news than good news about the economy. Some 94% of Republicans rate economic conditions as poor. This suggests that views of the economy may be shaped by partisan leanings as much as a neutral judgment of conditions. Conservative news channels keep a constant drumbeat of horror stories about rising prices, and Republicans have made the issue an effective campaign tool while hyping the strength of ex-President Donald Trump's economic performance. Yet 81% of independents and 54% of Democrats also think the economy is poor, suggesting that Biden has taken a hit among some of the voters who put him in office. Americans are more positive about their own finances than about the national economic situation, with 53% saying they're satisfied with their personal financial situations. That could again indicate that a wider sense of malaise is coloring views of the economy. Still, that figure is down from 66% in 2016.

### Uniqueness wall

#### Republicans projected to win midterms, but it’s close.

Lemon 6/2/22 (Jason Lemon. Senior Reporter at Newsweek and founder of StepFeed, middle-East focused media startup. “Republicans’ Chances of Beating Democrats for Control of Senate in Midterms.” Newsweek. https://www.newsweek.com/republicans-chances-flipping-senate-democratic-control-midterms-1712378)

As the midterms approach, [Republicans](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/republicans) feel emboldened by President [Joe Biden](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/joe-biden)'s tanking [approval rating](https://www.newsweek.com/joe-biden-approval-near-record-low-six-months-before-midterms-1711594) and widespread criticism of the [Democrats](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/democrats)' leadership in Washington, D.C.—giving them hope they'll be able to flip the [Senate](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/senate) back to GOP control in November. Democrats currently hold the Senate with the slimmest possible majority. The legislative body has 50 Republican members and 48 Democrats, as well as two independents who caucus with their Democratic colleagues. With that even split, Vice President [Kamala Harris](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/kamala-harris), in her role as Senate president, can cast tie-breaking votes, which gives her party narrow control of the upper chamber of [Congress](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/congress). When voters go to the polls across the country in just over five months, 35 Senate seats will be up for grabs. Of these, 14 are held by Democrats and 21 are held by Republicans. With a zero margin of comfort, Democrats cannot lose even one seat and maintain their control of the Senate. At the same time, most of these seats are considered safe, as they are held by incumbents in states that largely vote for Democrats or Republicans, respectively. Seven seats are considered by analysts to be the most competitive in the 2022 election cycle, although some are more likely to flip than others. Notably, while Republicans may manage to win one or more of these races, Democrats could also pick up a seat or two held by a GOP lawmaker. Analysts are keeping their eyes most closely on Pennsylvania, Georgia, Nevada, Arizona, Wisconsin, New Hampshire and North Carolina. In recent assessments, [CNN](https://www.cnn.com/2022/05/01/politics/senate-race-rankings-may-elections/index.html), [NPR](https://www.npr.org/2022/04/11/1091483542/the-top-10-senate-races-that-are-most-likely-to-flip-to-the-other-party) and [FiveThirty Eight](https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/the-7-senate-races-that-will-likely-decide-control-of-the-chamber/) have all said these Senate races as among the most likely to flip. Of those seats, four are held by Democrats. Overall, [polling shows](https://www.newsweek.com/democrats-chances-beating-gop-control-congress-polls-1704524) Republicans are favored to perform well in the midterms. A CNN/SSRS Opinion Panel carried out from May 3 to 5 showed that 49 percent of registered voters said they'd vote for a generic Republican candidate if the election were held today. Just 42 percent said they'd cast ballots for generic Democratic candidates—giving the GOP a 7-point advantage. Meanwhile, the Real Clear Politics average of recent generic congressional ballot polls currently has the GOP in the lead by 1.9 percent.

#### Polls show that GOP is winning swing state votes.

Milligan 6/7/22 (Susan Milligan. Senior politics writer at US News and World Report. “’Persuadable’ Voters Favor GOP over Democrats – Until Trump is Mentioned.” US News and World Report. June, 7, 2022. <https://www.usnews.com/news/elections/articles/2022-06-07/persuadable-voters-favor-gop-over-democrats-until-trump-is-mentioned-poll>)

In the Democrats' uphill struggle to retain control of Congress, Donald Trump and his MAGA movement may be their best friends. [Polling by Priorities USA](http://priorities.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/June-2022-Press-Briefing.pdf), a Democratic SuperPAC, found that Democrats would lose narrowly to Republicans among targeted voters when people were simply asked if they wanted a Democrat or a Republican in office. On that generic ballot question, Republicans got 44% of the surveyed – which include battleground state persuadable voters and those who are at least somewhat unmotivated to vote this fall – while Democrats got 41% support. That small difference could be pivotal in Senate and gubernatorial races in those states. But when Trump and his Make America Great Again agenda are brought into the picture, it brightens for Democrats, the polling found. When those polled were asked to choose between a Democrat who supports President Joe Biden and a Republican who supports the MAGA movement, 37% chose the Democrat and 30% picked the Republican. The divide was even bigger when it got more personal: Asked if they'd prefer a Democrat who supports Biden or a Republican who supports Trump, those polled preferred the Democrat to the Republican, 41% to 31%. On that question, the hypothetical Democrat got 11% of GOP voters who picked the Republican in the generic ballot question and 32% of third-party voters who initially went with the GOP contender. The survey is based on very circumscribed voters, including "persuasion voters" – basically swing voters – in the battleground states of Arizona, Nevada, Georgia, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Michigan as well as "mobilization" voters, people who are inclined to vote Democratic but whose disinterest or dispiritedness make them less likely to show up at the polls this fall. That group was surveyed in the six battlegrounds as well as Colorado, Florida and North Carolina. But it also shows Democrats what they need to do to hang onto critical Senate seats, gubernatorial posts and some House seats this fall, Priorities USA Chairman Guy Cecil told reporters in a conference call. "What Trump and MAGA are doing is producing cross-pressure for these persuadable voters," Cecil said. "They're frustrated" about the state of the country, but "they're not terribly happy about voting for Trump or a MAGA candidate," he said. "Drawing on that contrast is a necessity if we're going to be successful."

#### Even the Democrats think GOP will win midterms.

Moore 21 (Mark Moore. Reporter at New York Post. “House Dem Calls for Course Correction or GOP could win 2022 Majority. New York Post. August 4, 2021. https://nypost.com/2021/08/04/house-democrat-maloney-warns-gop-could-win-2022-majority/#)

The House Democrat in charge of making sure the party retains control of the chamber after next year’s midterm elections is warning that a course correction is needed or they could find themselves the minority again — with current polling showing the Democrats would lose the majority if elections were held now. Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney, the chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, told a closed-door lunch last week that if the midterms were held now, Republicans would win control of the House, [Politico reported](https://www.politico.com/news/2021/08/03/sean-patrick-maloney-democrats-house-majority-502265) Tuesday. Maloney (D-NY) advised the gathering that Democrats have to embrace and promote President Biden’s agenda because it registers with swing voters. “We are not afraid of this data … We’re not trying to hide this,” Tim Persico, executive director of the Maloney-chaired DCC, ​told Politico in an interview. “If [Democrats] use it, we’re going to hold the House. That’s what this data tells us, but we gotta get in action,” ​Persico said. M​aloney, [in an interview with NPR](https://www.npr.org/2021/08/02/1021921875/how-house-democrats-campaign-chief-plans-to-defy-history-in-2022), said ​issues like climate change, infrastructure, the expanded child tax credits, immigration policies and election reforms will attract voters next fall.

#### Reports show that Republicans will win midterms.

**Sotomayor ’22** (Marianna Sotomayor, Congressional reporter covering the House of Representatives for The Washington Post; “House: Republicans are hoping to add to their success of 2020, and history indicates they will”; The Washington Post; 6.25.22; <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/interactive/2022/house-control-midterms-2022/>)//ccs

When House Democrats are asked how they feel about their chances to keep the majority, the answer often is a sigh or a groan. As the party in the White House, the historical odds have not been in Democrats’ favor — and that was before President Biden’s approval ratings took a tumble, inflation permeated the economy and a war broke out in Ukraine. Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney (N.Y.), chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, made a blunt assessment about the uphill battle the party has to combat the perceptions voters have of them. Story continues below advertisement “They think that we’re divisive and too focused on cultural issues. They think that we’re preachy. They think that we act like we know better than parents when it comes to their kids in schools,” Maloney said in an interview. “The problem is not the voters,” he added. “The problem is us.” Republicans need a net gain of just five seats to retake the House majority. The Cook Report with Amy Walter’s list of competitive races includes 26 Democratic-held seats as either toss-up races or favoring Republicans. House editor Dave Wasserman predicts that number will jump after New Hampshire and New York complete their redistricting processes. By contrast, only nine Republican-held seats are toss-ups or leaning to the Democrats.

### **A2 Uniqueness overwhelms**

#### **Midterm losses aren’t guaranteed—history proves**

Greenfield 22 [Jeff Greenfield is a five-time Emmy-winning network television analyst and author. POLITICO 4-7-2022 Opinion https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2022/04/07/history-democrats-midterms-disaster-biden-trouble-00023175] 6-26-2022

Among the most frequently cited observations about politics — along with “it all comes down to turnout” and “a week is a lifetime” — is this factoid about midterm elections: “Since World War II, the party holding the White House has suffered an average loss of 26 House seats and four Senate seats.” This is correct, but it’s not right — at least not as an accurate measure of what has happened in the last several dozen midterms. It’s misleading in the same way it would be to put Bill Gates in a room with nine indigents and conclude that their average worth was $13 billion. The more accurate way to look at midterms is that there is no good way to summarize them. True, only two elections have seen the White House’s party actually gain seats, but there are several where the losses have been minimal, or non-existent, or where each house of Congress has produced different results. The problem for Joe Biden is that this more nuanced history provides almost no encouraging news. If Democrats are to survive November with their congressional majorities intact, they’re going to have to pray Republicans really step in it in a few key races. The most memorable midterms are those that featured huge losses for the party occupying the White House: 1946, when the discontent with the tumultuous post-war environment swept the Republicans into power in both houses of Congress 1958, when Democrats won 49 House seats and 15 Senate seats amid a nasty recession, giving them control that lasted for 22 years in the Senate and 36 years in the House 1974, when voters punished the Republican Party for Watergate, giving Democrats 49 new House seats and four in the Senate 1994, when the collapse of the Clinton health plan gave Republicans both houses of Congress with 54 House and four Senate seats 2006, when the Iraq quagmire and a series of GOP corruption scandals turned both houses over to Democrats 2010, when the slow pace of recovery from the Great Recession and a clumsy start to Obamacare gave the Republicans 63 seats and control of the House 2014, when nine Democratic Senate seats — and control of the body — fell to Republicans (thus giving Barack Obama the dubious distinction of being the only two-term president in living memory to suffer two midterm disasters). Much less well remembered are the midterms where the president’s party escaped serious damage. There are, of course, the two elections where they actually gained seats — 1998, thanks to a booming economy and Republican impeachment overreach, and 2002, when the post-9/11 “rally round the flag” sentiment was still high. But many other midterms were effectively a wash. In 1962, just weeks after the successful resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis, John F. Kennedy’s Democratic Party only lost four House seats and gained four Senate seats. In 1970, with dissent over the Vietnam War, and with Vice President Spiro Agnew denouncing “radical liberals” and a biased news media, the GOP lost 12 House seats while the Democrats lost three Senate seats — one to Conservative Party New Yorker James Buckley. In 1978, President Jimmy Carter saw Democrats lose 15 House seats and three Senate seats. Meanwhile, 1990 provided the “Seinfeld midterms” where more or less nothing happened. George H.W. Bush’s Republicans lost only seven seats in the House and one in the Senate. What unites all of these contests is not only the relatively small change in the lineups, but also the fact that none of these elections changed control of either chamber of Congress. This is where Democrats can take little if any comfort from the midterm elections where the president’s party took only political flesh wounds. Not that long ago, that 1990 result would have been cause for celebration in a White House. This November, however, the net loss of seven House seats and a single Senate seat would turn both chambers over to Republicans. Beyond the numbers, however, it’s hard to see in current surveys or in the underlying political terrain anything that history says aids the Democrats. In 1998, even Clinton’s full-blown sex scandal was not enough to inflict political damage on his party: The economy was producing full employment, low inflation, real wage growth and enormous budget surpluses. Today, low unemployment and solid wage growth is overshadowed by inflation. The relative unity George W. Bush enjoyed among the public in 2002 — with the memory of 9/11 fresh and before the Iraq War had begun — is almost wholly absent today. Republicans may be divided between those who charge that Biden’s weakness provoked Putin and those who think him a neocon warmonger, but few are standing behind the president. The backlash over campus and urban disorder that kept GOP losses relatively small in 1970 has been replaced now by cultural matters — over race, crime, classroom teaching — that threaten Democrats with further erosion of the white working-class vote. And a sour national mood, after two years of a pandemic, has helped drive Biden’s approval ratings down to about 40 percent — a presidential approval number that has in the past foretold midterm disaster. It’s true, as Democrats keep reminding each other, that the picture can change; maybe by autumn we’ll be back to normal. Maybe inflation will ease.

#### Dems can win – turnout of Trump loyalists a big question mark

Balz and Sotomayor 22 [Dan Balz and Marianna Sotomayor. "Key demographics for the 2022 midterm elections". 5-16-2022. Washington Post. https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/interactive/2022/demographics-voters-2022-midterms/. 6-24-2022.] -AL

Strategists in both parties are looking at the same voter groups for clues to the midterm elections: suburban voters, especially suburban women; Latino voters, especially Latino men; Black voters, especially young Black people; and Trump loyalists, especially those in rural and small-town counties. Both their turnout numbers and their party preferences hold keys to the results.

With Trump not on the ballot, one big question mark is how many of his most loyal voters will show up in November. In the smattering of elections in 2021, including for governor in Virginia and New Jersey, they turned out in big numbers for Republicans, particularly in rural areas. If they replicate that performance in November, that could be a big problem for Democrats up and down the ballot.

Democrats have increasingly struggled in rural areas. “It has gotten to be a real challenge for folks to be Democrats in the area,” said Brian Bruening, Democratic chair in Clayton County in rural northeast Iowa. “Just comparing from when I started as chair in 2017, there were a lot of folks engaged then. That has fallen down. The pandemic had a lot to do with it. But at the same time, the animosity toward Democrats has really discouraged a lot of people from participating [or] even saying they’re Democrats at all.”

### A2 Roe

#### Republicans will win the midterms – the only way Dems could have won was through basing the ballot on codifying Roe v. Wade, which they have failed to do.

**Marshall ’22** (Josh Marshall, editor in politics and elections for 25 years, winner of George Polk Award for Legal Reporting; “Democrats Can Win This Fall if They Make One Key Promise”; The New York Times; 6.6.22; https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/06/opinion/democrats-midterms-abortion-roe.html)//ccs

Democrats hope to make November’s midterm elections a referendum on Roe v. Wade, the linchpin decision upholding abortion rights, which the Supreme Court is almost certain to strike down this summer. That strategy makes sense. Polls show that roughly two in three Americans oppose overturning Roe and almost 60 percent support passing a bill to set Roe’s protections in a federal law. What’s more, polls showed a rising number of voters listing abortion as their top midterm issue after news of Roe’s imminent demise leaked in the form of a draft court opinion published by Politico. Unfortunately, their current plan is almost sure to fail. After the Democrats came up with just 49 votes to bring a Roe-protecting bill before the Senate on May 11, they promised to keep fighting and, in the words of Senator Amy Klobuchar, “take that fight right to the ballot box” in November. But you can’t make an election into a referendum on an issue if you can’t point to anything winning the election would accomplish. To make the 2022 elections a referendum on Roe, Democrats have to put protecting Roe and abortion rights on the table.

#### Roe v Wade won’t impact the midterms - Democrats are still set to lose

Panetta 5/13/22

Alexander Panetta is a Washington-based correspondent for CBC News who has covered American politics and Canada-U.S. issues since 2013. He previously worked in Ottawa, Quebec City and internationally, reporting on politics, conflict, disaster and the Montreal Expos. ”Will abortion upend American politics? Here's what the early polling tells us,” May 13, 2021, https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/abortion-american-politics-early-polls-1.6451553

The short answer: Voters aren't budging. The longer answer is polls show subtle shifts. If abortion is about to transform American politics, it's only barely registering so far in the initial public reaction to a draft decision of the U.S. Supreme Court. The early numbers **don't speak to a** seismic **shift in opinion**. A faint rumble, perhaps. We now have several polls to judge public reaction to last week's bombshell news of an unpublished ruling by the country's top court. That leaked draft suggests the court is set to overturn a five-decade precedent that abortion access is a constitutional right and would instead let states set their own policy. Democrats have quickly pivoted to abortion as a potential winning message in this fall's state and congressional midterm elections. The issue is seen as one way to galvanize young voters, whose recent disenchantment puts the majority party at risk of a severe wipeout. Democrats' bid to enshrine Roe v. Wade abortion access as federal law fails in U.S. Senate The future of the U.S. abortion battle: Think pills, not clinics Making abortion the ballot-box question would also allow Democrats to side with the majority of Americans who consistently tell pollsters they want Roe v. Wade to remain intact. That strategy was on display this week as Democrats held a no-hope vote in Congress to pass a law on abortion rights, then turned it into a midterm message. Vice-President Kamala Harris stood outside the Senate chamber and said abortion is now an issue for the voters to decide — the argument being that holding the Senate would allow Democrats to confirm more pro-choice judges and perhaps even pass a law if they win extra seats. After Democrats were unable to pass a vote in the Senate this week on abortion rights, Vice-President Kamala Harris told reporters that the issue will now have to be decided by voters in this fall's midterm elections. "[This] makes clear that a priority for all who care about this issue — the priority should be to elect pro-choice leaders," the vice-president said. "At the local, the state and the federal level." What the headline numbers say U.S. President Joe Biden tweeted a similar message — as have numerous other Democrats who argue that only midterm election voters can prevent abortion rights from disappearing across an estimated two-dozen states if the Supreme Court draft decision holds when the ruling is ultimately handed down. But those voters aren't budging. At least not yet. What several new polls say in a nutshell is that Biden remains unpopular; his party remains in peril; and those numbers haven't changed at all. U.S. law professor Kimberly Wehle says she wasn't surprised by the draft opinion that the Supreme Court could overturn Roe v. Wade. "The early results suggest this is not going to be some panacea for Democrats," said Cameron Easley, a senior editor at the Morning Consult polling firm. "Based on the data we're seeing right now, I think the answer to that question is no." Presidential job approval is considered an indicator of the electorate's mood — and Biden's score remains weak and stagnant. Biden vows to fight for abortion access after U.S. Supreme Court draft ruling leaked His **42 per cent approval rating is consistent** across several large weekly surveys from two weeks earlier: by Morning Consult, Ipsos and YouGov. There's been a **similar lack of movement** in the congressional preference: The polling firms show no statistically significant change, with Democrats clinging to a tiny popular vote lead that would **not likely** be enough to **retain control of Congress.**

#### Abortion right being limited will do little to effect midterm results

Propper 5/15/22

David is a reporter for The Journal News covering the shore towns of Westchester County. He's a graduate of Syracuse University and a native of New Rochelle. “Supreme Court leak over abortion rights didn’t sway voters: poll,” May 15, 2022, https://nypost.com/2022/05/15/supreme-court-leak-over-abortion-rights-didnt-sway-voters-poll/

The recent leak of a draft opinion from the Supreme Court that could scrap abortion rights has **done little to influence voters’** choice of which party they want running Congress next year, according to a new NBC poll. The opinion from Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito, leaked earlier this month, indicates Roe v. Wade could be overturned, dramatically changing abortion rights in the country. However, the news had little effect on which party could be in control following this November’s midterms, the NBC poll finds. The poll, conducted days after the leaked draft was published in Politico, shows 46% of voters want a GOP-controlled Congress while 46% want Democrats in charge. With speculation buzzing over whether the potential doom of Roe v. Wade will have a political impact, the needle didn’t move much for either party. Dating back to March, 46% of voters still picked the GOP and that percentage was the same dating back to August 2021. Democrats only saw a 2% uptick from March polling; in August polling, 47% of voters preferred Democrats. The poll’s margin for error was 3.10%. Hobie Wolff and Violeta Martos shout for reproductive rights at an abortion rights rally on Saturday, May 14, 2022, at Kiener Plaza in downtown St. Louis. The leaked draft sparked national protests. Laurie Skrivan/St. Louis Post-Dispatch via AP But enthusiasm from Democratic voters has shot up, with 61% expressing a high level of interest ahead of this year’s midterms, an eleven-point jump from March, according to NBC. But 69% of Republicans expressed high interest in the midterms, NBC reported**, a notable advantage over Democrats**. “It is true that Democratic interest is up, but we can’t lose sight that Republicans still enjoy an advantage that augurs well for election success,” Republican pollster Bill McInturff of Public Opinion Strategies, who conducted the survey with, told NBC. McInturff conducted the survey with Democratic pollster Jeff Horwitt of Hart Research Associates, according to NBC. Sixty-three percent of Americans support keeping Roe v. Wade in place while 30% want to see it overturned, according to the NBC poll. Voters cast their ballots in the voting booths at the early vote location at the Charleston Coliseum and Convention Center in North Charleston. The poll shows 46% of voters want a GOP-controlled Congress while 46% want Democrats in charge. LOGAN CYRUS/AFP via Getty Images The poll found that 37% believe abortion should always be legal and 23% believe it should be legal most of the time. Thirty-two percent of Americans want abortion illegal with exceptions and 5% think it should be illegal without any exceptions. Fifty-two percent of Americans would be less likely to support a candidate who wants to see Roe v. Wade overturned while 26% are more likely to vote for that candidate. Only 39% of Americans approve of the overall job President Joe Biden is doing, a new low though it is about on par with how voters felt in March when 40% approved. Meanwhile, 56% disapprove of the president’s performance, a slight bump from March when 55% disapproved. President Joe Biden speaks during the National Peace Officers' Memorial Service on the West Front of the Capitol in Washington, Sunday, May 15, 2022, honoring the law enforcement officers who lost their lives in the line of duty in 2021. President Joe Biden’s approval rating fell to a new low, according to the poll. AP/Manuel Balce Ceneta Back in April 2021, 53% approved of Biden. About three-quarters of Americans believe the country is headed in the wrong direction, the poll indicates. Among GOP primary voters, 55% believe former President Trump should continue to lead the GOP. But 33% think while Trump was a good president, it’s time for the party to find new leaders, according to the poll.

## AFF

## Impact

### A2 Readiness

#### No impact to readiness

George 99 (James L. George, former congressional professional staff member for national security affairs, “Is Military Readiness Overrated?” CATO, 5-27-1999, https://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/is-military-readiness-overrated)

Military readiness promises to be a major issue when Congress marks up a defense bill later this year. Some members of Congress are already using readiness as a reason to increase funding in the emergency spending bill for the war in Yugoslavia. Most experts cite the initial stages of the Korean War and the Hollow Force of the late 1970s as cautionary examples of being ill-prepared. A closer look at both those examples, however, shows that they really had little to do with readiness. Moreover, the current crisis in Yugoslavia illustrates once again why readiness may be overrated and the funds better spent elsewhere. Although often used as a generic term for all military capabilities, readiness—defined as the ability to respond with appropriate force with little or no warning—is only one of four pillars of military preparedness. The other pillars are force structure, modernization and sustainability. Thus, an effective military force depends on much more than just readiness. Interestingly, the two favorite examples cited by readiness alarmists fail to prove their case. The performance of Task Force Smith, an ill-prepared battalion quickly sent to the front and fairly easily routed by the North Koreans during the initial days of the Korean War, is often cited as the worst case. “No More Task Force Smiths” has become a mantra for the Army. However, critics of Task Force Smith fail to point out that U.S. commanders made the most basic of military mistakes—including grossly underestimating the enemy and sending TFS to an exposed position. When such blunders occur, the end result will be the same whether it is an ill-trained Task Force Smith in Korea or well-trained Marines in Beirut or elite Rangers in Somalia. Moreover, critics also fail to mention that barely a month later the United States stabilized the situation in South Korea, and in another month the Marines conducted their famous Inchon Landing. In fact, without the Chinese intervention, the United States would have won the Korean War a few months after it began. Not bad for a U.S. force that was supposedly ill-prepared. Similarly, the Hollow Force of the late 1970s was not primarily a readiness problem but a combination of many factors—including a military characterized by low morale after Vietnam, serious drug and racial problems, the erroneous induction of too many mentally substandard recruits and low pay eroded further by high inflation. At the same time, major structural changes were transforming the U.S. military, including the introduction of women into the regular forces, the switch from a draft to an all-volunteer force and the initiation of the Total Force Concept that placed more reliance on the Reserves. Given all of that turbulence, no wonder we had a Hollow Force. Often overlooked, however, is how quickly those problems were solved. In some cases, solutions were found without spending a dime. For example, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Thomas Hayward instituted his “Not in my Navy” program of zero tolerance for drugs. The drug problem was solved almost overnight. The induction of too many mentally substandard recruits by mistake which had lowered standards, was identified and corrected. That correction solved most other personnel problems (and should be a warning to people who want to lower standards today). Some members of Congress are now using the crisis in Yugoslavia to get more funds for readiness by arguing that the military is now stretched “too thin.” (Congress doubled President Clinton’s request for $6 billion in emergency spending for the war.) In fact, the situation is quite the opposite. Leaving aside the question of whether the United States should even be involved in Yugoslavia, the new Clinton Doctrine, which does not plan to use ground troops ( a position that is supported by many Republicans), limits the stress placed on the military. Those decisions are all deliberate political actions that have absolutely nothing to do with readiness. Under a well-conceived strategy, even a modestly capable force will probably perform well; but under a poorly conceived strategy, even a force with the highest degree of readiness will probably have serious problems. The experiences of Task Force Smith and the Hollow Force, as well as the invocation of a Clinton Doctrine that eschews the use of ground forces, have major implications. More forces, for example, could be placed in the reserves and scarce funds spent elsewhere. In addition, the military could switch to what Sen. John McCain (R- Ariz.) has called “Tiered Readiness:” a few forces would be kept on expensive ready status and be augmented by reserve forces that could be mobilized if a substantial threat to U.S. security arose. Military readiness is certainly important, and no one is suggesting a return to the truly shallow force of the late 1940s or the Hollow Force of the 1970s. But a close look at those forces shows that their difficulties involved much more than just poor readiness.

#### The welfare state is key to sustaining the American military

Mittelstadt 18 (2018, Jennifer, Jennifer Mittelstadt is a Professor of History at Rutgers University and is the Harold K. Johnson Chair in Military History at the US Army War College; her work about the relationship between the welfare state and the military has been published by the Harvard University Press, “FOR AMERICA, WELFARE IS ESSENTIAL FOR WARFARE”, War On The Rocks, <https://warontherocks.com/2018/05/for-america-welfare-is-essential-for-warfare/)>

In 2015 I published a book called[The Rise of the Military Welfare State](http://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674286139) that chronicled the history of military benefits and social services in the all-volunteer force. For many in the military, the title constituted fighting words. I didn’t anticipate this when I chose it. Some commenters asked if I thought soldiers were “welfare queens.” Others assumed I was out to cut their benefits. More than a few were angry enough to wish violence on me. If I had a quarter for every incensed email and suspicious question I’ve received, I’d have pocketed far more money than book sales have generated. The title aroused hostility in part due to the widely held belief that the military is separate from civilian life and especially the civilian welfare state. While **military personnel partake of subsidized housing, health care, child care, and many more systems of valuable support**, most Americans – and military personnel – consider those programs “not social welfare,” but a taken-for-granted entitlement in return for the perceived sacrifices of military life. The differentiation between military benefits and welfare goes even further than drawing bright lines between similar programs in different settings. The distinction shapes fundamental choices of where the nation invests in national power. The military and welfare are depicted as opposite poles in a Manichean battle of the budget. Too many political leaders and policy makers set up a zero-sum game scenario in which they pit [“military spending” against “welfare spending”](https://www.ohio.com/akron/editorial/commentary/robert-j-samuelson-the-case-for-increasing-defense-spending), claiming the former is more important than the latter. Others assume that social welfare for civilians creates a weak, dependent society that diminishes national power. The nation must therefore provide funds for worthy “troops” and take them from unworthy “welfare recipients.” For some elected officials, every breath supporting men and women in uniform is matched by a [blast to social welfare spending](http://www.insidesources.com/paul-ryans-exit-spells-trouble-u-s-economy/). These views reflect distorted understandings of social welfare and defense, and, as I’ve learned in spending the past year at the [U.S. Army War College](https://ssl.armywarcollege.edu/), they’re harmful to American national and military power. My conversations with senior leaders have made plain the central role of social welfare in creating the conditions for both military power and national power. The military and welfare are not opposites, **they’re intertwined**. Welfare is short-hand for “social welfare,” which itself derives from “the general welfare” of the populace enshrined alongside “the common defense” in the United States Constitution. While Americans in recent decades have used the word “welfare” pejoratively to signify means-tested programs for the poor, historically welfare had a positive connotation and broader definition. The majority of Americans of the 1950s, including the war hero and [Republican President Dwight D. Eisenhower](https://millercenter.org/president/eisenhower/domestic-affairs), for example, approved overwhelmingly of “welfare” and “the welfare state.” Health, education, old age pensions, disability protections, workplace safety, minimum wages and maximum hours – all these were properly considered “welfare.” [Even the tax system and subsidized home loans constitute social welfare in the US.](https://press.princeton.edu/titles/6220.html) Some Americans receive social welfare through the government, some through private charities. Most partake of both even when they don’t know it; since the 1930s the government has [subsidized the supposedly “private” employer benefits](https://press.princeton.edu/titles/7551.html) through tax breaks to large companies, all in an effort to deliver as many social and economic supports to as many Americans as possible. These many types of social welfare have built and continue to sustain military power. Take the military’s most basic requirement – fielding a force. The modern U.S. military has never been able to mobilize for war without adequate welfare for its populace. It was precisely the poor health, nutrition and education of many potential draftees during both [**World War I and World War II** that **helped make the case for expanding national social welfare programs**](http://www.psupress.org/books/titles/978-0-271-01995-6.html). Military and Selective Service officials as well as veterans organizations made the case for social welfare programs for military preparedness. [During the Cold War decades, the United States filled out its welfare state](https://www.amazon.com/Eisenhower-Republicanism-Pursuing-Middle-Way/dp/0875803628), improving public education, creating food and nutrition programs, and [fostering physical fitness programs to build “readiness” among youth eligible for the draft](http://www.upenn.edu/pennpress/book/15804.html). And since the era of the all-volunteer force began in 1973, **social welfare has become even more essential**. Healthy, able, educated and sound recruits are the sine qua non of the all-volunteer force, and declines in public health and welfare harm the force. Today, standards for military service preclude nearly [70 percent of the youth population](http://time.com/2938158/youth-fail-to-qualify-military-service/) who cannot qualify for service – they are too sick, too physically unfit, or too undereducated. It has not been possible – and **it will not be possible – to fill the ranks to acceptable standards without** [**basic investments in social welfare**](https://www.strongnation.org/missionreadiness). If the military needs strong social welfare programs to fill the force, it also needs them to utilize the force. Military benefits and social services – what I call [the military welfare state](https://aeon.co/essays/how-the-us-military-became-a-welfare-state) – have grown hand-in-hand with the volunteer force in order [to support readiness in garrison and deploymen](https://www.army.mil/article/168539/milley_soldier_readiness_starts_at_home_on_top_quality_army_installations)t. Since the 1970s, the military has expanded social and economic benefits and services to all ranks and created vast new programs such as child care and family support services. [Dozens of social welfare programs](https://www.military.com/join-armed-forces/military-benefits-overview.html) allow military personnel to do the jobs they joined to do, and to do them well. Even with the wrap-around services the military provides, military personnel also continue to rely on the civilian welfare state to fill gaps. Military personnel and their families utilize public schools, child welfare services, and [food stamps](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2018/02/14/how-presidents-food-stamp-cuts-would-impact-military-families.html), to name but a few civilian social welfare programs. The military has not been able to fulfill its missions – and will not in the future – without military and civilian investments in social welfare. Social welfare also contributes to the national power of the United States. Regardless of what one thinks about role of America in the world today, there is no doubt that one of the main sources of its influence has been a healthy, educated, and productive populace. Critics of welfare argue that the populace would be better off with a much-diminished welfare state replaced by private charities, de-regulation, and self-reliance. Indeed, they believe government welfare programs [diminish the economic productivity and personal initiative of Americans](http://thefederalist.com/2015/04/27/dependency-work-incentives-and-the-growing-welfare-state/). Such a view does not correspond with the historical data on the rise of the United States to the status of a global power and later a superpower, however. As historians have documented, the increasing economic and military might of the United States – and thus its global influence – resulted not from a wildly unregulated free market, but from the better-regulated, well-distributed capitalism of the [Progressive and New Deal state](https://www.amazon.com/America-Great-War-Welfare-State/dp/0195049047), which, along with the [World War II regulation](https://www.amazon.com/Warfare-State-World-Americans-Government/dp/019993035X) and postwar expansions of social welfare like the GI Bill, helped produce the [healthiest, best-educated generation in U.S. (and world) history](https://books.google.com/books?id=tS47FVPKATcC&printsec=frontcover&dq=the+richest+generation&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjY4eXK3-LaAhUBh-AKHYRtAfAQ6AEIJzAA#v=onepage&q=the%20richest%20generation&f=false). Indeed, one way the United States exerted its global power was through [exporting its New Deal capitalism abroad](http://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674025363). For their part, my students at **the U.S. Army War College seemed intuitively aware of positive relationships between social welfare and national power.** In my “Theory of War and Strategy” course, officers adhered to a broad definition of national power. Among other attributes, they cited key outcomes of social welfare – a productive economy, civic vitality, and social equality and opportunity. Students expressed modesty about the ability to achieve goals through military force alone and insisted on the inter-connected importance of political, economic, and social institutions to address matters of international concern. When we studied the history of the Peloponnesian War, my students expressed doubts about the long-term viability of the highly unequal Spartan society that directed all its national resources to war. And they identified tragedy in the imperial over-reach of Athens, a city-state whose relative equality and social and cultural investments ought to have sustained its flourishing role in the larger Greek world. Similarly, during an exercise ranking the power of the world’s states, military power never functioned as their sole criterion. **Education, human development, and resultant economic power topped their lists.** It’s no coincidence that **eight of the ten most powerful nations they listed feature** [**significant social safety nets**](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SAFETYNETSANDTRANSFERS/Resources/281945-1124119303499/SSNPrimerNote25.pdf), as defined by the World Bank. In large, complex 21st century societies, **organized social welfare programs contribute to national power**. Maligning welfare and genuflecting to the military are staples of today’s partisan politics, where politicians stoke the worst fears and deepest passions of their electoral bases. But for those who claim to support U.S. national power and military readiness there is little excuse for reductionist thinking about social welfare programs. Yes, meaningful discussion must take place about how to make sure investments in both social welfare and military spending are ethical and sustainable. But no serious reckoning of national security can falsely decouple the two. Pitting military spending against social welfare might be popular for [some versions of politics](https://www.minnpost.com/politics-policy/2018/01/look-congress-2018-agenda-budgets-social-programs-and-maybe-infrastructure;%20http://www.dailyindependent.com/news/get-ready-for-a-congressional-budget-blowout/article_dc207bba-ffb1-11e7-89be-bf5848d5) in the United States today, but it’s also **dangerously wrong.**

#### GOP win means end of support for Ukraine – turns allied commitments

**Kaonga ’22** ( Gerrad Kaonga is a US news reporter, “Russian TV Suggests GOP Midterm Wins Will Scupper U.S. Support For Ukraine,” Newsweek, <https://www.newsweek.com/russian-state-tv-gop-republican-midterms-win-us-support-ukraine-war-russia-1714180>, 6/9/2022)

A Russian TV host has suggested that if **Republicans win** the U.S. midterms, **support for Ukraine** will begin to **dwindle**. A video of state TV host Vladimir Solovyov making these claims has begun circulating on social media. The video has so far been viewed over 80,000 times after being posted by the Daily Beast's Julia Davis. "This compilation of clips explains why the Russians think they're winning and don't need to negotiate," she tweeted. "We don't need to participate in any negotiations, because time is on our side, the tempo is working in our favor." As the conversation between the host and other political scientists and commentators, Solovyov claimed the support for Ukraine would change in the U.S. **after** the **midterms**. "[If the Republicans prevail in November] a lot will change, of course a lot will change, "Solovyov said. "**They will** calmly **say**: '**Why** do we need to be involved and **send so much of our own money**?' "Republicans will come **and** say, '**why** the hell do we **need** a **corrupt, Nazi Ukraine**?' "They will ask, 'Whom are we supporting? Yes, Russia is bad and the sanctions will stay, but why keep throwing so much money over there [when] our schools lack funding, we have plenty of our own problems. "'Instead of fortifying the border with Mexico, helping our small businesses, we've given that money to corrupt Ukraine and no one knows where it went." Newsweek has contacted Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs for comment. As the Democratic Party prepares for crucial midterm elections, where Republicans could be poised to retake the House of Representatives and the Senate, Joe Biden's approval rating sits at a near-record low. The president's approval rating has shown no sign of significant improvement as the country experiences high inflation with just over six months to go until Americans go to the polls on November 8. Poll tracker FiveThirtyEight assessed Biden's approval rating by analyzing a wide variety of polls and using its own system of pollster ratings.

### A2 Econ

#### Economic decline doesn’t cause war – stats prove

Clary 15 Christopher Clary, Ph.D. in Political Science from MIT, Postdoctoral Fellow, Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University, “Economic Stress and International Cooperation: Evidence from International Rivalries,” April 22, 2015, http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\_id=2597712

Do economic downturns generate pressure for diversionary conflict? Or might downturns encourage austerity and economizing behavior in foreign policy? This paper provides new evidence that economic stress is associated with conciliatory policies between strategic rivals. For states that view each other as military threats, the biggest step possible toward bilateral cooperation is to terminate the rivalry by taking political steps to manage the competition. Drawing on data from 109 distinct rival dyads since 1950, 67 of which terminated, the evidence suggests rivalries were approximately twice as likely to terminate during economic downturns than they were during periods of economic normalcy. This is true controlling for all of the main alternative explanations for peaceful relations between foes (democratic status, nuclear weapons possession, capability imbalance, common enemies, and international systemic changes), as well as many other possible confounding variables. This research questions existing theories claiming that economic downturns are associated with diversionary war, and instead argues that in certain circumstances peace may result from economic troubles.

#### No econ impact

**Walt 20** [Stephen M. Walt is the Robert and Renée Belfer professor of international relations at Harvard University. “Will a Global Depression Trigger Another World War?”, May 13th, https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/05/13/coronavirus-pandemic-depression-economy-world-war/]

On balance, however, I do not think that even the extraordinary economic conditions we are witnessing today are going to have much impact on the likelihood of war. Why? First of all, if depressions were a powerful cause of war, there would be a lot more of the latter. To take one example, the United States has suffered 40 or more recessions since the country was founded, yet it has fought perhaps 20 interstate wars, most of them unrelated to the state of the economy. To paraphrase the economist Paul Samuelson’s famous quip about the stock market, if recessions were a powerful cause of war, they would have predicted “nine out of the last five (or fewer).”

Second, states do not start wars unless they believe they will win a quick and relatively cheap victory. As John Mearsheimer showed in his classic book Conventional Deterrence, national leaders avoid war when they are convinced it will be long, bloody, costly, and uncertain. To choose war, political leaders have to convince themselves they can either win a quick, cheap, and decisive victory or achieve some limited objective at low cost. Europe went to war in 1914 with each side believing it would win a rapid and easy victory, and Nazi Germany developed the strategy of blitzkrieg in order to subdue its foes as quickly and cheaply as possible. Iraq attacked Iran in 1980 because Saddam believed the Islamic Republic was in disarray and would be easy to defeat, and George W. Bush invaded Iraq in 2003 convinced the war would be short, successful, and pay for itself.

The fact that each of these leaders miscalculated badly does not alter the main point: No matter what a country’s economic condition might be, its leaders will not go to war unless they think they can do so quickly, cheaply, and with a reasonable probability of success.

Third, and most important, the primary motivation for most wars is the desire for security, not economic gain. For this reason, the odds of war increase when states believe the long-term balance of power may be shifting against them, when they are convinced that adversaries are unalterably hostile and cannot be accommodated, and when they are confident they can reverse the unfavorable trends and establish a secure position if they act now. The historian A.J.P. Taylor once observed that “every war between Great Powers [between 1848 and 1918] … started as a preventive war, not as a war of conquest,” and that remains true of most wars fought since then.

The bottom line: Economic conditions (i.e., a depression) may affect the broader political environment in which decisions for war or peace are made, but they are only one factor among many and rarely the most significant. Even if the COVID-19 pandemic has large, lasting, and negative effects on the world economy—as seems quite likely—it is not likely to affect the probability of war very much, especially in the short term.

#### Republican victory isn’t good for the economy – they’ll pursue the same flawed spending and tax policies

Mitchell 17 Daniel J. Mitchell was a senior fellow at the Cato Institute who specialized in fiscal policy, particularly tax reform, international tax competition, and the economic burden of government spending. Prior to joining Cato, Mitchell was a senior fellow with the Heritage Foundation, and an economist for Senator Bob Packwood and the Senate Finance Committee. His work has been published in numerous outlets, including the Wall Street Journal, New York Times, Villanova Law Review, Public Choice, Emory Law Journal, Forbes, USA Today, Offshore Investment, Playboy, and Investor’s Business Daily. He has appeared on all the major TV networks, and has given speeches in almost 40 states and more than 30 countries. Mitchell earned a PhD in economics from George Mason University. “Republicans Embrace Bad Economics and Bad Policy,’ August 15, 2017, https://www.cato.org/blog/republicans-embrace-bad-economics-bad-policy

To be blunt, Republicans are heading in the wrong direction on fiscal policy. They have full control of the executive and legislative branches, but instead of using their power to promote Reaganomics, it looks like we’re getting a reincarnation of the big‐​government Bush years. As Yogi Berra might have said, “it’s déjà vu all over again.” Let’s look at the evidence. According to The Hill, the Keynesian virus has infected GOP thinking on tax cuts. Republicans are debating whether parts of their tax‐​reform package should be retroactive in order to boost the economy by quickly putting more money in people’s wallets. **That is nonsense**. Just as giving people a check and calling it “stimulus” didn’t help the economy under Obama, giving people a check and calling it a tax cut won’t help the economy under Trump. Tax cuts boost growth when they reduce the marginal tax rate on productive behavior such as work, saving, investment, or entrepreneurship. When that happens, people have an incentive to generate more income. And that leads to more national income, a.k.a., economic growth. Borrowing money from the economy’s left pocket and then stuffing checks (oops, I mean retroactive tax cuts) in the economy’s right pocket, by contrast, **simply reallocates national income**. Indeed, this is one of the reasons why the economy didn’t get much benefit from the 2001 Bush tax cut, especially when compared to the growth‐​oriented 2003 tax cut. Unfortunately, Republicans haven’t learned that lesson. Republicans have taken steps in the past to ensure that taxpayers directly felt the benefits of tax cuts. As part of the 2001 tax cuts enacted by President George W. Bush, taxpayers received rebate checks. The article does include some analysis from people who understand that retroactive tax cuts aren’t economically beneficial. …there are also drawbacks to making tax changes retroactive. …such changes would add to the cost of the bill, but would not be an effective way to encourage new spending and investments. “It has all of the costs of the tax cuts but none of the economic benefits,” said Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget President Maya MacGuineas, who added that “you don’t make investments in the rear‐​view mirror.” I’m not always on the same side as Maya, but she’s right on this issue. You can’t encourage people to generate more income in the past. If you want more growth, you have to reduce marginal tax rates on future activity. By the way, I’m not arguing that there is no political benefit to retroactive tax cuts. If Republicans simply stated that they were going to send rebate checks to curry favor with voters, I’d roll my eyes and shrug my shoulders. But when they make Keynesian arguments to justify such a policy, I can’t help but get upset about the economic illiteracy. Speaking of bad economic policy, GOPers also are pursuing bad spending policy. Politico has a report on a potential budget deal where everyone wins…except taxpayers. The White House is pushing a deal on Capitol Hill to head off a government shutdown that would lift strict spending caps long opposed by Democrats in exchange for money for President Donald Trump’s border wall with Mexico, multiple sources said. So much for Trump’s promise to get tough on the budget, even if it meant a shutdown. Instead, the back‐​room negotiations are leading to more spending for all interest groups. Marc Short, the White House’s director of legislative affairs, …also lobbied for a big budget increase for the Pentagon, another priority for Trump. …The White House is offering Democrats more funding for their own pet projects. The only good news is that Democrats are so upset about the symbolism of the fence that they may not go for the deal. Democrats show no sign of yielding on the issue. They have already blocked the project once. Unfortunately, I expect this is just posturing. When the dust settles, I expect the desire for more spending (from both parties) will produce a deal that is bad news. At least for those of us who don’t want America to become Greece (any faster than already scheduled). Republican and Democratic congressional aides have predicted for months that both sides will come together on a spending agreement to raise spending caps for the Pentagon as well as for nondefense domestic programs. So let’s check our scorecard. On the tax side of the equation, we’ll hopefully still get some good policy, such as a lower corporate tax rate, but it probably will be accompanied by some gimmicky Keynesian policy. On the spending side of the equation, it appears my fears about Trump may have been correct and he’s going to be a typical big‐​government Republican. It’s possible, of course, that I’m being needlessly pessimistic and we’ll get the kinds of policies I fantasized about in early 2016. But I wouldn’t bet money on a positive outcome.

### Internal link defense

#### No internal link—nothing passes after midterms

Beavers and Everett 22 [Olivia Beavers is a congressional reporter for POLITICO, focusing on House Republicans and GOP leadership. John Burgess Everett is the congressional bureau chief for POLITICO, specializing in the Senate since 2013. POLITICO 1-18-22 How a GOP majority in Congress might handle Biden in 2023 https://www.politico.com/news/2022/01/18/gop-majority-congress-biden-2023-527117] 6-26-2022

Republicans are feeling so good about their chances of retaking Congress this fall that they’re already debating their governing relationship with President Joe Biden. And they’re divided over how to handle their potential big wins. With Biden and Democrats floundering right now, the GOP is increasingly favored to vault back to partial power in Washington by flipping the House, and potentially also the Senate, in the coming midterms. What comes next isn’t quite clear: Some Republicans are mulling ways to collaborate with Biden on issues like trade, energy or tech; others are prepared to go scorched-earth as their party eyes the bigger prize of retaking the White House in 2024. The GOP’s pro-bipartisanship camp may not have a lot of space in 2023 to work with the president: funding the government and raising the debt ceiling will be a major challenge, given how often House and Senate Republicans diverge on critical pieces of legislation. And former President Donald Trump will continue trying to influence the party’s direction, criticizing Senate GOP Leader Mitch McConnell and anyone else who steps out of line with his combative politics. Given those dynamics, there’s no unified GOP agenda for voters to examine this fall — other than an up-or-down vote on Biden and congressional Democrats’ record. Republicans aren’t sure what will happen next if they actually win. “It’s really going to be a referendum on him and his administration and on the Democrat leadership in the Congress,” John Thune, the No. 2 Senate Republican who is also running for reelection this fall, said of Biden. “So we need to stay out of our own way.” “It’s really important for us to highlight our differences, how we would do it differently,” the South Dakotan added. “And then … have some things that we would do or could do if there was a willingness to work together.” House GOP plots to keep advantage for 2022 midterms For now it’s Democrats, holding shaky but singular power in Washington, consuming the Capitol’s oxygen as they struggle to enact Biden’s agenda. But the GOP’s splits over whether to work with Biden, even now from the minority, would become the nation’s central political story if it retakes part or all of Congress this fall. With that victory would come the messy job of actually governing, preventing credit defaults and government shutdowns at a minimum. And just as a trio of conservative senators once battled former President Barack Obama on all fronts as they sought the White House, there’s a stable of Senate and House Republicans with national political ambitions that could cut against any attempts to collaborate with Biden. Not to mention the passel of Republicans disinterested in the presidency who are already signaling they’ll push to block Biden at every turn. “Putting a stop to his agenda is the first thing that we would do, because that’s presumably what people would be voting for,” said Sen. Josh Hawley (R-Mo.), a potential 2024 GOP White House hopeful who led the objections to Biden’s election certification. “The message would be: If we’re in the majority, we need to stop what he’s currently doing.” Still, the most powerful Senate Republican has indicated an openness to work with Biden. Already feeling bullish on his party’s chances this fall, McConnell said in a late-September interview: “I don’t think people send us here to do nothing.” “When you have a closely divided government, or a divided government,” McConnell added then in previously unreported comments, “I think the American people are saying, ‘We know you have some big differences, and either of you may not be able to move the ball the way you’d like to. But why don’t you look for things you agree on, and do those?’” McConnell pointed to trade as a potential area of future cooperation with Biden. As Senate majority leader during the last two years of Obama’s administration, McConnell famously blocked the president from filling a Supreme Court vacancy and slowed other judicial confirmations to a trickle. McConnell won’t say how he’d handle a Supreme Court vacancy if one comes up in 2023 or 2024 and he controls the Senate, though Democrats are positive he wouldn’t fill one for Biden either. Yet McConnell also cut a deal with Obama to fast-track new trade deals that then-Democratic leader Harry Reid did not lend a hand with. McConnell later clinched a bipartisan transportation deal with Obama and Democrats. As minority leader during this Congress, McConnell signed off on a huge Biden-backed infrastructure bill and after repeated threats that he would do otherwise, allowed the debt ceiling to increase. House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy and House Republicans opposed those accommodations by the Kentucky Republican — as did Trump. And unlike McConnell, McCarthy and his conference are in the thrall of the party’s former president. That means the House Freedom Caucus and other allies of the former president will be trying to maximize Democrats’ losses even at the expense of legislation some rank-and-file Republicans would otherwise support, particularly in the Senate. When asked about areas House Republicans could team up on with the Biden administration, Georgia Rep. Drew Ferguson, a member of GOP leadership, replied tersely: ”On anything that’s not socialist.” That public posturing reflects a real concern among some Republicans that Biden might not be willing to pivot from his current agenda of expanding social and climate programs, and gutting the filibuster to pass elections reform, in order to work with Republicans on what would probably be small-bore issues. With a bipartisan infrastructure package already law, there’s fewer obvious opportunities for collaboration with the other party at the moment. Rep. John Curtis (R-Utah) suggested immigration as an avenue for partnership. House Minority Whip Steve Scalise (R-La.) wants to work with Biden on battling inflation. Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) said Republicans could talk to Biden about making Social Security “more sustainable.” But it’s hard to imagine a split government delivering on even one of those big-ticket items. And some Republicans are already downplaying any ideological intersection with Biden after the past year. “Are we going to get the president that was a self proclaimed dealmaker in the Senate for his entire career? Are we going to get the guy that’s down in Georgia [for] a face-saving speech to his base because he can’t get something through the Senate?” asked Rep. Kelly Armstrong (R-N.D.). “A lot of it depends on which president we get.” Indeed, Armstrong and other Republicans singled out the tone of Biden’s speech in Georgia last week, in which the president suggested that lawmakers who oppose Democrats’ voting rights legislation will be on the same side of history as segregationists and the head of the Confederacy. McConnell quickly condemned Biden’s remarks, calling them “beneath his office,” and Biden later sought to clarify that he hadn’t made that direct comparison about the GOP leader. One telling metric: Even Republicans who voted to impeach Trump last year aren’t sure whether they can find any substantive common ground with Biden if they are in the majority. “Boy, my answer would have been a lot different a year ago,” said freshman Rep. Peter Meijer (R-Mich.), who voted to impeach Donald Trump earlier this year. “I’ve been astounded at the number of areas where we’ll talk with people from the administration. … And then just nothing happens.”

#### Dems holding onto the Senate, staying close to 50 Senators enough to prevent change in agenda

Robison ’22 (Matt Robison, congressional staffer and campaign manager; “Will Democrats Lose in the Midterms? Probably. But It's the Wrong Question”; Newsweek; 5.24.22; https://www.newsweek.com/will-democrats-lose-midterms-probably-its-wrong-question-opinion-1708947)//ccs

If it's the usual one—"Will Republicans take over majorities in Congress?"—then sure, there's a lot of evidence to say yes, they will. But that's not a very profound insight, is it? The President's party has almost always bled seats in midterms, and this year, even a handful of losses will mean a Republican majority. Even Presidents with soaring approval ratings still lose an average of three House seats in midterm elections, and we all know that President Biden's approval is 11 points below his disapproval. Reflecting the Democrats' unpopularity more widely, the "generic ballot" polling question has the Democrats down 2.5 percent. But what if that's the wrong question? NEWSWEEK NEWSLETTER SIGN-UP > I'd argue that there are two much more important questions we should be asking as we close in on November's midterms. Can the Democrats keep things close? Instead of asking whether the Democrats are going to lose their majority—a question we can all agree is best answered with a yes—I'd argue that we should be asking whether the Democrats can keep things close. If you're thinking that "close" only counts in horseshoes and hand grenades, think again: There's a huge difference between losing narrowly and getting blown out, for the same reason that you'd rather be down a field goal than two touchdowns at halftime. The Democrats WASHINGTON, DC - APRIL 06: U.S. President Joe Biden (C) signs the Postal Service Reform Act into law during an event with (L-R) Sen. Gary Peters (D-MI), Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer (D-NY), Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), House Majority Whip James Clyburn (D-SC), House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD) and retired letter carrier Annette Taylor and others in the State Dining Room at the White House on April 6, 2022 in Washington, DC. A part of Postmaster General Louis DeJoy’s controversial 10-year restructuring plan, the law provides $107 billion to modernize and streamline the long-beleaguered Postal Service. CHIP SOMODEVILLA/GETTY IMAGES NEWSWEEK SUBSCRIPTION OFFERS > For one thing, if Democrats can hold just the Senate, they retain critical levers of power that are currently making a real difference. Consider the fact that President Biden has been getting his nominees for federal judges confirmed at a record pace, offsetting some of President Trump's massive reshaping of the judiciary. The Democratic-led Senate has successfully confirmed 369 of 521 nominees for key agency positions so far, and given congressional gridlock, these are the people shaping most of what is happening in government. As just one example, note that the Trump Administration rolled back 112 environmental rules, 30 of them on emissions. Now, Biden's agencies are overturning those changes, including critical rules on fuel standards, gas pipelines, and methane emissions. They need the leadership in place to keep that going. But even if Democrats lose the Senate, keeping the margins narrow means having to take out fewer Republican office-holders in 2024. That matters because incumbents usually start off with about a three-point election advantage. Moreover, consider the fact that slim House majorities are much harder to manage than fat ones. Just look at Nancy Pelosi's recent headaches; the most vulnerable representatives are always on the hot seat. A big majority allows those swing seat members to go against their party on the toughest votes and look bipartisan. Without that shield, the biggest targets are exposed. The good news for Democrats is that the chances of limiting their losses are actually fairly high. Modeling from highly-regarded analyst Alan Abramowitz suggests that Democrats currently have an even shot to hold the Senate and are on track to lose only about 20 House seats. It's not great, but it's within striking distance, and would be hardly a "shellacking." But there's a second and even better question we should be asking, and it's this: Can Democrats win enough races to protect American democracy from disaster? America is likely facing an existential crisis in 2024 from Big Lie MAGAists planning to subvert elections to reinstate Donald Trump or a near clone. Bill Clinton once said that our priority was to "save Social Security first." Today, the mantra has to be "save democracy first." Can Democrats accomplish that? Yes. Step one is to limit their 2022 losses for the reasons noted above, and also because if they can stay positioned to win back enough seats in 2024, it lowers the chances that Republicans can pull another Eastman Memo maneuver, muck with the electoral count, and have the election decided by cronies in the House. Second, Democrats must focus on keeping the Big Lie cabal from winning strategically important offices and legislative majorities in swing states. Closely divided bodies that could flip in 2022 include chambers in Arizona, Georgia, Michigan and Pennsylvania. Secretaries of State will be at the epicenter of the assault on elections, so Democrats must hold offices like Michigan and flip offices in states like Arizona, Georgia, and Nevada. Just to give a sense of the stakes, in Colorado the Democratic Secretary of State, a person who has received countless death threats, is up against a Republican county clerk facing criminal charges for tampering with voting equipment and who a judge barred from overseeing elections. In Pennsylvania, the Republican nominee for governor is a leading voice in the election denial movement and gets to pick the Secretary of State. Democrats must win as many of these critical races as possible. And is that do-able? Yes. Posing the right question means focusing on what you really care about. Democratic doomscrolling of the midterm election is understandable—it has the same appeal as watching the Johnny Depp trial—but what has to matter most is making sure there are still elections to care about in the future, to say nothing of the broader aim the party is supposed to stand for: an inclusive and ever-expanding vision of opportunity. Those are the real goals. And yes, Democrats can still achieve them, even if they lose in the midterms. Of course, the Democrats could still turn this around completely: There are historical outliers where the President's party held serve, and plenty of times where Republicans nominated such extreme candidates that they lost winnable races. But in general, the basic positioning of the parties tends to hold in the runup to an election, while jolts to the race tend to work against the party that holds the White House. Which is why Democrats should be focused on the achievable goals that are very much in reach.

### Dems good – climate

#### Republican win locks in climate change and pollution

Kolbert 20 Elizabeth Kolbert has been a staff writer at The New Yorker since 1999. Previously, she worked at the Times, where she wrote the Metro Matters column and served as the paper’s Albany bureau chief. Her three-part series on global warming, “The Climate of Man,” won the 2006 National Magazine Award for Public Interest. In 2010, she received the National Magazine Award for Reviews and Criticism. She is the editor of “The Best American Science and Nature Writing 2009” and the author of “The Prophet of Love: And Other Tales of Power and Deceit,” “Field Notes from a Catastrophe,” and “The Sixth Extinction,” for which she won the Pulitzer Prize for general nonfiction in 2015. She received the Blake-Dodd Prize, from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, in 2017. Her latest book is “Under a White Sky: The Nature of the Future.” “An Earth Day Reminder of How the Republicans Have Forsaken the Environment ,” April 22, 2022, https://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/an-earth-day-reminder-of-how-the-republicans-have-forsaken-the-environment

The idea for Earth Day came to Gaylord Nelson all of a sudden one day in the middle of 1969. That summer, “teach-ins” about the Vietnam War were all the rage. It occurred to Nelson, then the junior U.S. senator from Wisconsin: How about a “teach-in” about the environment? To attract the widest possible audience, Nelson, a Democrat, invited Representative Pete McCloskey, a Republican from California, to co-chair the event. The response was way more enthusiastic than either man had anticipated: on April 22, 1970, some twenty million Americans—a tenth of the country’s population—took to the streets. It was the largest public demonstration in U.S. history, and, as Jamie Henn, one of the founders of 350.org, has put it, it “had bite.” By the end of the year, a Republican President, Richard Nixon, had created the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. This was followed in relatively short order by the passage of the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Endangered Species Act. All of these measures were approved with overwhelming bipartisan support. Today, as Earth Day turns fifty, it’s hard to imagine more dolorous circumstances for the occasion. covid-19 has forced online (or cancelled) virtually all the celebrations and protests that had been planned for the anniversary. The Trump Administration has barely even taken the day off from gutting the nation’s environmental regulations. (Last week, the Administration weakened rules governing the emission of mercury and other toxic chemicals from power plants; late last month, it weakened fuel-efficiency standards for cars and light trucks.) Meanwhile, in Congress, environmental protection has become such a thoroughly partisan issue that across-the-aisle collaborations like Nelson and McCloskey’s are rarer than Amur leopards. Owing to this divide, **environmental problems** that have emerged since 1970 **have** simply **gone unaddressed**. Congress has not passed—or even really come close to passing—a single piece of legislation aimed at addressing climate change. (All the steps taken by the Obama Administration to try to curb carbon emissions were done through regulation.) Precisely at the “moment when such legislative action is most needed,” James Morton Turner, a professor at Wellesley College, and Andrew Isenberg, a professor at the University of Kansas, have written, it has become “almost politically unimaginable.” How and why this happened is the subject of Turner and Isenberg’s recent book, “The Republican Reversal: Conservatives and the Environment from Nixon to Trump.” The two trace the G.O.P.’s turn against conservation to Ronald Reagan, who equated environmentalism with pessimism, and pessimism with a lack of patriotism. Reagan combined a sunny faith in the future with an equally sunny indifference to facts. Running for President in 1980, he claimed that acid rain was not caused by power-plant and auto emissions, as scientists had shown, but by the eruption of Mt. St. Helens, in Washington State, earlier that year. Also during the campaign, he declared that “eighty per cent of our air pollution stems from hydrocarbons released by vegetation.” Once elected, Reagan appointed Anne Gorsuch—an inexperienced ideologue (and the mother of the future Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch)—to head the E.P.A. Among her first moves was to propose slashing the agency’s budget by more than forty per cent. One staffer complained that morale was so low there was “no known scientific method to measure it.” Since Reagan, control of the White House has, of course, swung between the parties, as has control of Congress. Throughout the swings, anti-environmentalism has only become that much more entrenched in G.O.P. politics. (McCloskey, it’s worth noting, switched his party affiliation from Republican to Democrat, in 2007, at the age of seventy-nine.) A great deal of money has changed hands to help change minds; according to the Web site Open Secrets, which tracks federal campaign contributions, the oil-and-gas industry contributed nearly twenty-four million dollars to House and Senate Republicans during the past election cycle, compared with five million to Democrats. But, according to Turner and Isenberg, money is only part of the equation; the other part is votes. For Republican politicians, there’s **no incentive to**, say, **back legislation to limit climate change**: “Neither their corporate donors nor evangelicals nor the struggling Rust Belt workers who voted for Trump in 2016 see any advantage to it.” The situation is such that, as Aaron Huertas, who works with WeCanVote.US, recently pointed out, were Democrats inclined to pass meaningful climate legislation, they’d need to win not just the Presidency this fall but also a filibuster-proof majority in the Senate. Can this situation be changed? Certainly the hour is late and the facts—if you happen to be concerned about such things—are stark. What the original Earth Day showed is that, when Americans are mobilized, remarkable things are possible. What the past few years have shown is that Americans can be mobilized by the most remarkable falsehoods. To say that the future of the world depends on which of these tendencies prevails is at this point, unfortunately, no exaggeration.

#### Warming leads to extinction

Kareiva 18, Ph.D. in ecology and applied mathematics from Cornell University, director of the Institute of the Environment and Sustainability at UCLA, Pritzker Distinguished Professor in Environment & Sustainability at UCLA, et al. (Peter, “Existential risk due to ecosystem collapse: Nature strikes back,” *Futures*, 102)

In summary, six of the nine proposed planetary boundaries (phosphorous, nitrogen, biodiversity, land use, atmospheric aerosol loading, and chemical pollution) are unlikely to be associated with existential risks. They all correspond to a degraded environment, but in our assessment do not represent existential risks. However, the three remaining boundaries (climate change, global freshwater cycle, and ocean acidification) do pose existential risks. This is because of intrinsic positive feedback loops, substantial lag times between system change and experiencing the consequences of that change, and the fact these different boundaries interact with one another in ways that yield surprises. In addition, climate, freshwater, and ocean acidification are all directly connected to the provision of food and water, and shortages of food and water can create conflict and social unrest. Climate change has a long history of disrupting civilizations and sometimes precipitating the collapse of cultures or mass emigrations (McMichael, 2017). For example, the 12th century drought in the North American Southwest is held responsible for the collapse of the Anasazi pueblo culture. More recently, the infamous potato famine of 1846–1849 and the large migration of Irish to the U.S. can be traced to a combination of factors, one of which was climate. Specifically, 1846 was an unusually warm and moist year in Ireland, providing the climatic conditions favorable to the fungus that caused the potato blight. As is so often the case, poor government had a role as well—as the British government forbade the import of grains from outside Britain (imports that could have helped to redress the ravaged potato yields). Climate change intersects with freshwater resources because it is expected to exacerbate drought and water scarcity, as well as flooding. Climate change can even impair water quality because it is associated with heavy rains that overwhelm sewage treatment facilities, or because it results in higher concentrations of pollutants in groundwater as a result of enhanced evaporation and reduced groundwater recharge. Ample clean water is not a luxury—it is essential for human survival. Consequently, cities, regions and nations that lack clean freshwater are vulnerable to social disruption and disease. Finally, ocean acidification is linked to climate change because it is driven by CO2 emissions just as global warming is. With close to 20% of the world’s protein coming from oceans (FAO, 2016), the potential for severe impacts due to acidification is obvious. Less obvious, but perhaps more insidious, is the interaction between climate change and the loss of oyster and coral reefs due to acidification. Acidification is known to interfere with oyster reef building and coral reefs. Climate change also increases storm frequency and severity. Coral reefs and oyster reefs provide protection from storm surge because they reduce wave energy (Spalding et al., 2014). If these reefs are lost due to acidification at the same time as storms become more severe and sea level rises, coastal communities will be exposed to unprecedented storm surge—and may be ravaged by recurrent storms. A key feature of the risk associated with climate change is that mean annual temperature and mean annual rainfall are not the variables of interest. Rather it is extreme episodic events that place nations and entire regions of the world at risk. These extreme events are by definition “rare” (once every hundred years), and changes in their likelihood are challenging to detect because of their rarity, but are exactly the manifestations of climate change that we must get better at anticipating (Diffenbaugh et al., 2017). Society will have a hard time responding to shorter intervals between rare extreme events because in the lifespan of an individual human, a person might experience as few as two or three extreme events. How likely is it that you would notice a change in the interval between events that are separated by decades, especially given that the interval is not regular but varies stochastically? A concrete example of this dilemma can be found in the past and expected future changes in storm-related flooding of New York City. The highly disruptive flooding of New York City associated with Hurricane Sandy represented a flood height that occurred once every 500 years in the 18th century, and that occurs now once every 25 years, but is expected to occur once every 5 years by 2050 (Garner et al., 2017). This change in frequency of extreme floods has profound implications for the measures New York City should take to protect its infrastructure and its population, yet because of the stochastic nature of such events, this shift in flood frequency is an elevated risk that will go unnoticed by most people. 4. The combination of positive feedback loops and societal inertia is fertile ground for global environmental catastrophes Humans are remarkably ingenious, and have adapted to crises throughout their history. Our doom has been repeatedly predicted, only to be averted by innovation (Ridley, 2011). However, the many stories of human ingenuity successfully addressing existential risks such as global famine or extreme air pollution represent environmental challenges that are largely linear, have immediate consequences, and operate without positive feedbacks. For example, the fact that food is in short supply does not increase the rate at which humans consume food—thereby increasing the shortage. Similarly, massive air pollution episodes such as the London fog of 1952 that killed 12,000 people did not make future air pollution events more likely. In fact it was just the opposite—the London fog sent such a clear message that Britain quickly enacted pollution control measures (Stradling, 2016). Food shortages, air pollution, water pollution, etc. send immediate signals to society of harm, which then trigger a negative feedback of society seeking to reduce the harm. In contrast, today’s great environmental crisis of climate change may cause some harm but there are generally long time delays between rising CO2 concentrations and damage to humans. The consequence of these delays are an absence of urgency; thus although 70% of Americans believe global warming is happening, only 40% think it will harm them (http://climatecommunication.yale.edu/visualizations-data/ycom-us-2016/). Secondly, unlike past environmental challenges, the Earth’s climate system is rife with positive feedback loops. In particular, as CO2 increases and the climate warms, that very warming can cause more CO2 release which further increases global warming, and then more CO2, and so on. Table 2 summarizes the best documented positive feedback loops for the Earth’s climate system. These feedbacks can be neatly categorized into carbon cycle, biogeochemical, biogeophysical, cloud, ice-albedo, and water vapor feedbacks. As important as it is to understand these feedbacks individually, it is even more essential to study the interactive nature of these feedbacks. Modeling studies show that when interactions among feedback loops are included, uncertainty increases dramatically and there is a heightened potential for perturbations to be magnified (e.g., Cox, Betts, Jones, Spall, & Totterdell, 2000; Hajima, Tachiiri, Ito, & Kawamiya, 2014; Knutti & Rugenstein, 2015; Rosenfeld, Sherwood, Wood, & Donner, 2014). This produces a wide range of future scenarios. Positive feedbacks in the carbon cycle involves the enhancement of future carbon contributions to the atmosphere due to some initial increase in atmospheric CO2. This happens because as CO2 accumulates, it reduces the efficiency in which oceans and terrestrial ecosystems sequester carbon, which in return feeds back to exacerbate climate change (Friedlingstein et al., 2001). Warming can also increase the rate at which organic matter decays and carbon is released into the atmosphere, thereby causing more warming (Melillo et al., 2017). Increases in food shortages and lack of water is also of major concern when biogeophysical feedback mechanisms perpetuate drought conditions. The underlying mechanism here is that losses in vegetation increases the surface albedo, which suppresses rainfall, and thus enhances future vegetation loss and more suppression of rainfall—thereby initiating or prolonging a drought (Chamey, Stone, & Quirk, 1975). To top it off, overgrazing depletes the soil, leading to augmented vegetation loss (Anderies, Janssen, & Walker, 2002). Climate change often also increases the risk of forest fires, as a result of higher temperatures and persistent drought conditions. The expectation is that forest fires will become more frequent and severe with climate warming and drought (Scholze, Knorr, Arnell, & Prentice, 2006), a trend for which we have already seen evidence (Allen et al., 2010). Tragically, the increased severity and risk of Southern California wildfires recently predicted by climate scientists (Jin et al., 2015), was realized in December 2017, with the largest fire in the history of California (the “Thomas fire” that burned 282,000 acres, https://www.vox.com/2017/12/27/16822180/thomas-fire-california-largest-wildfire). This catastrophic fire embodies the sorts of positive feedbacks and interacting factors that could catch humanity off-guard and produce a true apocalyptic event. Record-breaking rains produced an extraordinary flush of new vegetation, that then dried out as record heat waves and dry conditions took hold, coupled with stronger than normal winds, and ignition. Of course the record-fire released CO2 into the atmosphere, thereby contributing to future warming. Out of all types of feedbacks, water vapor and the ice-albedo feedbacks are the most clearly understood mechanisms. Losses in reflective snow and ice cover drive up surface temperatures, leading to even more melting of snow and ice cover—this is known as the ice-albedo feedback (Curry, Schramm, & Ebert, 1995). As snow and ice continue to melt at a more rapid pace, millions of people may be displaced by flooding risks as a consequence of sea level rise near coastal communities (Biermann & Boas, 2010; Myers, 2002; Nicholls et al., 2011). The water vapor feedback operates when warmer atmospheric conditions strengthen the saturation vapor pressure, which creates a warming effect given water vapor’s strong greenhouse gas properties (Manabe & Wetherald, 1967). Global warming tends to increase cloud formation because warmer temperatures lead to more evaporation of water into the atmosphere, and warmer temperature also allows the atmosphere to hold more water. The key question is whether this increase in clouds associated with global warming will result in a positive feedback loop (more warming) or a negative feedback loop (less warming). For decades, scientists have sought to answer this question and understand the net role clouds play in future climate projections (Schneider et al., 2017). Clouds are complex because they both have a cooling (reflecting incoming solar radiation) and warming (absorbing incoming solar radiation) effect (Lashof, DeAngelo, Saleska, & Harte, 1997). The type of cloud, altitude, and optical properties combine to determine how these countervailing effects balance out. Although still under debate, it appears that in most circumstances the cloud feedback is likely positive (Boucher et al., 2013). For example, models and observations show that increasing greenhouse gas concentrations reduces the low-level cloud fraction in the Northeast Pacific at decadal time scales. This then has a positive feedback effect and enhances climate warming since less solar radiation is reflected by the atmosphere (Clement, Burgman, & Norris, 2009). The key lesson from the long list of potentially positive feedbacks and their interactions is that runaway climate change, and runaway perturbations have to be taken as a serious possibility. Table 2 is just a snapshot of the type of feedbacks that have been identified (see Supplementary material for a more thorough explanation of positive feedback loops). However, this list is not exhaustive and the possibility of undiscovered positive feedbacks portends even greater existential risks. The many environmental crises humankind has previously averted (famine, ozone depletion, London fog, water pollution, etc.) were averted because of political will based on solid scientific understanding. We cannot count on complete scientific understanding when it comes to positive feedback loops and climate change.

### Dems good – laundry list

#### Democrats win is good – federal judges, GOP agenda, investigations, 2024 Senate

Zhouli 22 [Li Zhouli. "Why a Democratic Senate majority still matters ⁠— even if they lose the House". 5-2-2022. Vox. [https://www.vox.com/2022/5/2/23048641/senate-majority-democrats-control-midterms. 6-25-2022](https://www.vox.com/2022/5/2/23048641/senate-majority-democrats-control-midterms.%206-25-2022).] – AL

If Democrats lose the House this fall, as they’re widely expected to, their ability to do ambitious bills will be all but moot. Given Republican opposition, it’s likely most legislation, barring must-pass measures like appropriations, will be dead on arrival. That prompts the question: Does it matter if they lose the Senate, too? In fact, holding their majority in the upper chamber is still extremely important for a number of reasons, perhaps none more so than the courts. If elected, a Democratic Senate would be able to confirm more of President Joe Biden’s judicial nominees, including any upcoming theoretical Supreme Court pick. Even without the House, they could approve judges for district courts, circuit courts, and the high court with a simple Senate majority. And that’s not the only benefit: Keeping this majority would also mean that lawmakers could set their own floor agenda and reject bills approved by a GOP-led House. Senate Democrats could ensure, too, that hearings and committee time aren’t used on investigations of Biden and other members of his administration. “Given that it will be investigations on steroids over in the House, the question is how the Senate could serve as a buffer,” says Democratic strategist Jim Manley, a former staffer for former Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid. Securing that buffer won’t be easy as the prospects for Democrats this fall are looking increasingly grim. Due to the backlash the president’s party typically faces, and other factors like the country’s ongoing struggles with inflation, Democrats are likely to see some major losses in the House and have no room for error in the Senate. Because of the 2022 Senate map and candidates’ past patterns of bucking national trends, however, Democrats have a slightly better chance of sustaining their narrow hold on the upper chamber. Three reasons Senate control matters Democrats would be pretty limited legislatively under divided government — but there are still three key areas where Senate control matters. Judges “The main difference between a split Congress and one controlled by Republicans completely would be Biden’s ability to fill judicial and other vacancies,” says Kyle Kondik, managing editor of Sabato’s Crystal Ball at the University of Virginia. A GOP Senate majority would be able to vote down Biden’s judicial nominees (including any that come up on the Supreme Court), block them wholesale from consideration, and pressure the White House to pick what they perceive as more moderate options. Republican lawmakers have already signaled that they may not consider Biden’s nominees. In April, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell wouldn’t commit to giving a Supreme Court pick a hearing in 2023 if the Republicans retook their majority. It’s something he’s done before: During the Obama administration, McConnell notably blocked Supreme Court nominee Merrick Garland from ever getting a hearing by arguing that his nomination was in an election year. Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC) has said that the “Garland rule” could be used if a high court vacancy comes up in 2024. Such opposition could seriously stymie Biden’s efforts on the courts: In his first year, Biden appointed the most federal judges of any president since Ronald Reagan, including more women, more people of color, and more public defenders than his predecessors. His attempts to continue doing so would be severely constrained without a Democratic Senate majority. Since these judges have lifetime appointments, their appointments have long-term impacts that extend far beyond the administration that nominated them. Trump and a Republican-controlled Senate confirmed more than 200 judges during his presidency, many of whom have contributed to pivotal decisions on immigration policy, mask mandates, and abortion rights. Setting legislative priorities In the majority, Democrats would be able to set the floor schedule and ignore bills that Republicans send over from the House. “It’s crucial to keep the Senate if only to serve as a bulwark against every bad idea that House Republicans are going to think of when they try to send them over to the Senate,” said Manley. If Republicans had Senate control, any bills that passed both chambers could still be vetoed by Biden. In the process, however, they could force vulnerable Democrats to take difficult votes on contentious issues. Similarly, Republicans could use tools like the Congressional Review Act and budget resolutions for messaging votes. Using the CRA, lawmakers could try to undo rules recently imposed by the Biden administration. If a simple majority in both chambers disapproves of a rule, they can pass a resolution trying to repeal it. Biden could also veto this, but Democrats would be pushed to take tough votes on the administration’s policies in the interim. Budget resolutions also only require a simple majority to pass the Senate and could be another forum for Republicans to score political points. Using these resolutions, which are also subject to a presidential veto, they could approve changes to the tax code or spending on climate programs and reproductive health. Investigations Republicans have already vowed to serve as a check on the Biden administration once they retake the majority in either chamber. House Republicans, for example, have announced plans to investigate the business practices of the president’s son Hunter Biden, and even pursue impeachment of certain Cabinet members. “Immediately, the House Republicans are going to start investigating the White House and the administration, basically looking for anything to embarrass the administration as much as they can,” says Neilan Chaturvedi, a political science professor at Cal Poly Pomona. While a GOP-controlled House would be able to dedicate time and resources to these efforts, a Democrat-controlled Senate could make sure that their chamber’s committees didn’t focus hearings on these issues. Additionally, the Senate could attempt to avoid a trial if the House approves articles of impeachment for an administration official. “The House could go ahead and vote to impeach, but there is some ambiguity about whether or not the Senate is compelled to hold a trial,” said George Washington University political science professor Sarah Binder. Democrats’ 2022 wins could decide control of the Senate for years Democratic wins this cycle would cushion potential losses the party could experience in the next election. Since senators hold six-year terms, anyone elected in 2022 would play a major role in preserving the party’s numbers for Congressional terms to come. “I think it matters more down the line because Democrats are staring at a really brutal map in 2024,” says Cook Political Report’s Jessica Taylor. As Vox’s Andrew Prokop has explained, Democrats aren’t currently defending any seats in states that Trump took in 2020. The four most contentious Democratic seats that are up — Nevada, Georgia, New Hampshire, and Arizona — are all places Biden won. Two other swing seats currently held by Republicans — Pennsylvania and Wisconsin — are also places Biden previously won, putting them in Democrats’ potential reach. The 2024 map, however, is far more challenging. That year, Democrats will be defending Sen. Joe Manchin’s seat in West Virginia, Sen. Jon Tester’s seat in Montana, and Sen. Sherrod Brown’s seat in Ohio, all states that voted for Trump in the last election. Additionally, several other Democrat-held seats will be up in states like Arizona, Michigan, and Maine. Essentially, the more seats Democrats can win in 2022, the better position they’ll have to withstand any shake-ups two years from now.

## Uniqueness

### Non-unique

#### Democrats are likely to win the midterms – Trump, GOP candidates, unemployment

McNally 02/09/22 Joel McNally is a national-award-winning newspaper columnist and a longtime political commentator on Milwaukee radio and television. After graduating from Indiana University, Joel worked for two years at The Chicago Tribune and for 27 years at The Milwaukee Journal where he won a National Headliners Award for “Consistently Outstanding Local Column” and numerous state and local journalism awards. Since 1997, Joel has written a column for the Shepherd Express where he also was editor for two years. “ Don’t Believe Everything You Hear about Republicans Winning the Midterms,” Shepard Express, February. 09, 2022, https://shepherdexpress.com/news/taking-liberties/don%E2%80%99t-believe-everything-you-hear-about-republicans-winning-/

Despite everything you’ve heard, there are still plenty of reasons Democrats could do much better in November’s midterm elections than Republicans and much of the media expect. In fact, the future of American democracy depends on it. Democrats certainly know in normal election years a new president’s party historically loses congressional seats in the first midterms because opponents angry over losing power are more motivated than the winners to vote in low-turnout midterms. But every American also should realize there will never be another normal election year in this country until Republicans free themselves from the control of their defeated president and the violent militias and hate groups that support him who refuse to accept the results of free and fair elections. Rather than distancing themselves from their divisive, unpopular president who was thrown out of office after a single term by the largest voter turnout in history, Republican leaders who know better have joined a lunatic fringe within their party in supporting Donald Trump’s preposterous lie President Biden somehow stole the election by manufacturing millions of fraudulent votes. Extreme Candidates As a result, Republicans will be saddled with a lot of extreme candidates in those November midterms they’re so confident of winning. Adding to the chaos will be Trump himself campaigning for the worst among them who are running against Republicans he wants to punish for accepting accurate election results or condemning his supporters’ terrorist attack on the Capitol. Trump is one of the best agents Democrats have to get out the vote in their party. In the past two national elections, Democrats set new voter turnout records in the 2018 midterms flipping 40 seats to gain House control and in 2020 defeating Trump. 2022 could make it three in a row. The absurd Republican candidates in the midterms include at least five running for House seats who actively participated in that violent Jan. 6 insurrection. A New Hampshire candidate promises to run from prison if he’s incarcerated for breaking into the Capitol. The Ron Johnson Opportunity Wisconsin already provided a prime opportunity in the midterms for Democrats to increase Senate control by flipping the seat held by Ron Johnson, a national embarrassment who’s denied the violence of the attack resulting in five deaths and serious brain injuries to police beaten with iron pipes, hockey sticks and baseball bats. He’s discouraged vaccinations during the latest surge of a new, highly contagious COVID variant endangering the lives of the unvaccinated. Johnson could be joined on the midterm ballot by former Republican Lt. Gov. Rebecca Kleefisch running against Democratic Gov. Tony Evers. Kleefisch enthusiastically supports Trump’s fraudulent election claims and Michael Gableman’s corrupt investigation into Biden’s victory in Wisconsin for Assembly Republicans that’s expected to recommend new Wisconsin voting restrictions. All but the most dimwitted Republican leaders have to realize how dangerous Trump and his violent supporters are to the future of democracy. But they believe they need Trump’s supporters to win the midterms. They’ll worry about controlling the contempt for democracy in their party later. By then, they’ll be the ones under control. The Good News So here’s some more positive news about how much better the political landscape could be for Democrats in those fall midterms. The media have been warning us Republican state legislatures can easily win control of the House of Representatives with their usual corrupt gerrymandering of congressional districts in response to the 2020 census. Surprise, it’s not happening. The latest analysis by David Wasserman, redistricting expert for the non-partisan Cook Political Report, concludes redistricting is on track to create a congressional map slightly less biased in favor of Republicans than it’s been for the past decade. It should actually add a few more Biden-won districts. Wisconsin was specifically cited for one of the biggest ironies. After the racist anti-Obama tea party elections of 2010, Wisconsin and other Republican states drew such extremely gerrymandered maps it’s difficult for Republicans to make them any worse. In some Republican states, nonpartisan commissions and courts also are making a difference. Here’s more positive news for Democrats you haven’t heard nearly enough about. Nobel-prize-winning economist and columnist Paul Krugman described the first year of Biden’s presidency as “a year of spectacular economic recovery.” In early November, a Federal Reserve survey of economists predicted a year-end unemployment rate of 5.8%. Instead, November’s unemployment was 4.2% declining further to 3.9% in December. If supply chain problems keep easing in the coming year to reduce inflation, Biden’s economic success will continue. Here’s more. Not even Joe Manchin or Kyrsten Sinema want their party to be the minority in the Senate after the midterms. They’ll vote for a substantial new package of Biden’s Build Back Better legislation before long to improve the everyday lives of ordinary Americans. Biden and Democrats could go into the midterms in good shape after another successful year. That would be very good news for American democracy.

### Non-unique – Roe

#### Outrage over Roe vs Wade overturn flips the script on midterms - democrats will win now

Morgan 06/24 [Morgan, David, reuters.com, “With Roe overturned, U.S. Democrats turn abortion battle to November midterms”, <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/with-roe-overturned-us-democrats-turn-abortion-battle-november-midterms-2022-06-24/> Date accessed: June 24th 2022]

WASHINGTON, June 24 (Reuters) - **Leading Democrats sought to turn Friday's Supreme Court decision overturning Roe v. Wade into a rallying cry for the November elections**, warning of grim consequences for women, contraception and gay marriage if Republicans regain control of Congress. In a 5-4 ruling powered by its conservative majority, the high court overturned the 1973 landmark decision that had recognized a woman's right to an abortion, and had legalized it nationwide, for nearly half a century. The decision was greeted as a stunning victory by anti-abortion Republicans and other conservatives, while Democrats and abortion-right activists protested what they described as a step backwards for the rights of American women. But with control of the House of Representatives and the Senate at stake in the Nov. 8 midterm elections, Democrats also warned that the rights of women and others would face further dangers if Republicans regain control of Congress. "The Republicans are plotting a nationwide abortion ban. They cannot be allowed to have a majority in the Congress to do that," said House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi, the chamber's top Democrat, told reporters. "It is clear that we just have to win a majority in November. Everything is at stake," added Pelosi, a Catholic who was barred from taking communion last month by the archbishop of San Francisco because of her support for abortion rights. **About 71% of Americans - including majorities of Democrats and Republicans - say decisions about terminating a pregnancy should be left to a woman and her doctor, rather than regulated by the** government, according to Reuters/Ipsos polling. Democrats hope **voter anger about the Supreme Court's decision will help them retain their razor-thin margins of control in the House and Senate**. With President Joe Biden's approval rating slumping, most forecasters have so far favored Republicans' chances of winning a majority in at least the House. "This fall, Roe is on the ballot. Personal freedoms are on the ballot. The right to privacy, liberty, equality are all about it," Biden said on Friday. It was not clear how easily Democrats could use the abortion rights message to mobilize support. Despite having control of the White House and both chambers of Congress for nearly 18 months, Biden and his Democratic allies have disappointed their core supporters with repeated failures on hot-button issues including abortion, voting rights and social spending. Efforts to reform the Senate filibuster and overcome Republican opposition to the Biden agenda have been hamstrung by opposition from within their own party, specifically Democratic Senators Joe Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema. Even their success at enacting moderate gun-safety legislation proved uninspiring to strong gun-control advocates and was overshadowed twice by the Supreme Court, which broadly expanded gun rights a day before overturning Roe v. Wade. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said voters would now have a clear choice between Democrats and "MAGA Republicans," using an acronym for allies of former President Donald Trump. "Elect more MAGA Republicans if you want nationwide abortion bans, the jailing of women and doctors and no exemptions for rape or incest. Or, elect more pro-choice Democrats to save Roe," Schumer said in a statement. House Republicans welcomed the ruling and talked openly about a path forward to "end abortion in this country." "The Supreme Court's decision overturning Roe v. Wade, overturning that flawed decision finally allows states and Congress to protect life in ways that we never were able to for the last 50 years," Representative Steve Scalise, the No. 2 House Republican, told reporters.

#### Democrats are going to win because of Roe

**Khaled ’22** ( Fatma Khaled is a staff writer at Newsweek, “Republicans Fear Abortion Ruling Will 'Bail the Dems Out' in 2024, Midterms,”, Newsweek, <https://www.newsweek.com/republicans-fear-abortion-ruling-will-bail-dems-out-2024-midterms-1719179>, 6/25/2022)

Still, some **Republicans believe** that the **Supreme Court's decision** will backfire **against their party**, including former President Donald Trump, who privately told his advisers that **overturning Roe** is "**bad** **for Republicans**" as it could potentially impact some key voters such as suburban women, The New York Times reported Friday. Jason Roe, the former executive director of the state Republican Party in Michigan, said he is "nervous" about the political implications of the Court's decision, according to Politico, because "the opportunities we should have with suburban women become more complicated when that issue is on the table, and I think it puts us on defense." One Trump adviser said that the former president is "convinced it won't help him in the future," referring to abortion, according to The Washington Post on Friday, and that it is better if other issues became the primary focus in the wake of the midterms and the 2024 election. However, the **Court's ruling** might work **in the Democrats'** favor, according to a former GOP congressman, who preferred to be anonymous. "**The** only **thing** [Democrats] have got **going for them is** the **Roe** thing, which is what, 40 years of settled law that will be changed that will cause some societal consternation," the congressman told Politico. "And can they turn that into some turnout? I think the answer is probably 'Yes.'" "Maybe instead of losing 45 seats, they lose 30," he added. "There will be a few seats that Republicans would have won without [the abortion rights decision], and they may not win them now." Meanwhile, a Republican operative familiar with polling in state and federal races, who also spoke with Politico on the condition of anonymity, noted that overturning Roe impacts swing voters who lean Republican. "It takes a sizeable bloc of voters who were leaning [Republican], and **it gives them reason to vote Democrat**," he said. "And they haven't had any reason to vote Democrat in quite a while." Political commentator S.E. Cupp told CNN on Friday that politically she "can't imagine a better voter turnout engine than this ruling for Democrats" in the midterms. "And you can make the argument that the Republicans' legislative victories and the Supreme Court victory by a conservative court are regressive, they're taking us backwards. Whether you like them or not, you can't deny the fact that they're going backwards...They're taking us back to a different time when these weren't rights," she said, and added: "It really does feel anachronistic with where the country is, and so I think that's a good message for Democrats." Newsweek reached out to political scientist at Georgetown University Hans Noel, the spokesperson for Republican political strategist Sarah Longwell, and Republican political strategist Danny Diaz for comment.

### Uniqueness overwhelms

#### The Democrats will be wiped out – history, Biden approval, inflation, secondary issues

Hulsman 5-14 [John C. Hulsman is the president and managing partner of John C. Hulsman Enterprises, a prominent global political risk consulting firm. 5-14-2022 The Case For A Republican Clean Sweep In The 2022 Midterms – OpEd Eurasia Review https://www.eurasiareview.com/14052022-the-case-for-a-republican-clean-sweep-in-the-2022-midterms-oped/] 6-26-2022

In 2020, my firm reached one of its peaks, correctly calling close but clear wins for the Democrats in the House of Representatives and the presidency, as well as precisely predicting the 50-50 split in the Senate. For all our pride in this, the 2022 midterms are just around the corner, with a new set of political imperatives that need to be mastered. So, without further ado, here we go: The 2022 midterms will result in a Republican wipeout of the Democrats, with the GOP gaining upwards of 30 seats in the House and one or two in the Senate, giving them full control of the Congress. Here is the case for our bold prediction.

First, the historical record is squarely against President Joe Biden and the Democrats. Since 1870, only four elections out of 38 resulted in the party holding the White House losing fewer than five seats, which is the size of the party’s present paper-thin majority in the House. Traditionally, the country tends to have so-called buyer’s remorse after the first two years of a presidency, either faulting the new team for failing to live up to its campaign promises or conversely fearing the new White House is trying to do too much. In either case, the opposition party has been supported 34 out of 38 times as an institutional check on the new president’s power.

The rare exceptions to these overwhelming numbers merely prove the rule. Only exceptional circumstances (such as George W. Bush benefiting from the rally-round-the-flag sentiment prevailing after 9/11) or presidents possessing exceptional political skills (such as Franklin Roosevelt and Bill Clinton) buck this historical near-inevitability.

To put it mildly, Biden has neither of these attributes going for him. In the past generation, the best guide to a party’s congressional results has been the president’s approval numbers, as House elections have increasingly become nationalized referendums on the occupant of the White House. The RealClearPolitics’ average of polling finds Biden’s approval ratings under water, with only 42 percent supporting him, while 53 percent disapprove of the job he has been doing. Far from bucking the historical trend, Biden’s polling looks set to make it even worse than usual.

Second, out-of-control 8 percent inflation is seen as by far the most important issue in polling and the Biden White House entirely owns it. No one is buying that this is “Putin’s price hike,” as the president has feebly taken to saying in an effort to pass the policy failure on to the Russian leader. This is not working out in the country for the simple reason that the beast of inflation had already loosed its chains well ahead of the Ukraine war starting in late February. The timing simply does not work for rampant inflation to be anything other than primarily a Western institutional failure.

While spikes in energy and food prices have resulted directly from the conflict, they amount to only the icing on the cake. As former Treasury Secretary Larry Summers has made incisively clear, the Biden White House and the Federal Reserve greatly overestimated the damage the COVID-19 pandemic would do. As a result, the overegged economy had to deal with 15 percent extra federal spending even as it quickly bounced back. The obvious result of this pouring gasoline on to a roaring fire is the present 8 percent-plus inflation the US has and the cost-of-living crisis that flows naturally from it. Stagflation (the US economy declined in the first quarter of the year) absolutely destroyed the presidency of Jimmy Carter 40 years ago. It is now doing the same to the hapless Biden White House.

Third, a series of important but secondary issues — all seen as traditional weaknesses of the Democratic Party — are coming back to bite them. A crime wave in American inner cities has been blamed on earlier suicidal calls by the left wing of the party to defund the police. And illegal immigration at the southern border, another traditional weakness of the party, has swollen to a torrent. Finally, America’s families are sick of recalcitrant (overwhelmingly Democratic) teachers’ unions who indefensibly seem to want their members to stay home for ever, however badly the country’s children are doing educationally after years of distance learning. Parents blame the unions for this calamity, along with their woke allegiance to a critical race theory that paints America as irredeemably racist. The self-hatred of the Democratic progressive left is generally a bad political platform; it is badly wounding the party in general.

Worse still for the Democrats, none of these things are likely to change. The historical numbers are what they are; inflation is unlikely to dramatically trend downwards, and immigration and the crime wave will not be greatly altered in the next few months. There is no avoiding the reality that a Democratic Party wipeout in the midterms is by far the most likely outcome of the 2022 race. This call is an easy one to make.

#### Clean sweep for GOP – history, Biden, coalition, generic ballot, candidate strength, enthusiasm, fundraising, primary turnout

Greenblatt 5-27 [Alan Greenblatt -- Senior Staff Writer. Alan covers politics as well as policy issues for Governing. He is the coauthor of a standard textbook on state and local governments. He previously worked as a reporter for NPR and CQ and has written about politics and culture for many other outlets, print and online., 5-27-2022 You Don't Need to Be a Fortune Teller: Signs Point to GOP Sweep This Year Governing https://www.governing.com/now/you-dont-need-to-be-a-fortune-teller-signs-point-to-gop-sweep-this-year] 6-26-2022

For Democrats this year, the only real question is whether the elections will be only moderately bad or completely terrible. If you think like a weather forecaster, all kinds of data point to a major storm. By basically every metric you can think of — fundraising, candidate recruitment, voter enthusiasm, demographic shifts — a big wave is forming that will sweep hundreds of Democrats out of office, up and down the ticket. The main reason isn’t hard to suss out. Every president can count on his party losing seats in midterms, but President Biden’s approval ratings are particularly bad. On average, 41 percent of Americans approve of the job he’s doing, compared with 54 percent who disapprove. “That is one of the lowest marks of any president since World War II,” says Henry Olsen, a conservative analyst at the Ethics and Public Policy Center. “Unless that changes, I would expect a solid Democratic defeat.” Granted, President Donald Trump’s approval ratings were similarly bargain basement in 2018 — but then, Republicans lost control of the House that year, along with seven governorships. The more important comparison, at any rate, is not with Trump but with Biden himself. Biden won the presidency in 2020 by 4.5 points. If he’s down 13, that represents a huge drop in support, which seriously imperils his party. Swing voters have swung hard against Biden. His net approval rating among independents is roughly minus 20. That’s a group he carried in 2020 by 13 points, according to exit polls. We’ve already witnessed a demonstration of how the president’s numbers can drag down other Democrats. Last November, Biden’s net disapproval numbers were 12.5 percent points lower than his victory margin in 2020. Guess what? The swing from Biden’s share of the vote to that won in 2020 by the Democratic candidates for governor was 12 points. Gov. Phil Murphy managed barely to hold on in New Jersey, but Democrat Terry McAuliffe lost the governorship to Republican Glenn Youngkin in Virginia — a state Biden had carried a year earlier by 10 points. Now, Biden’s numbers are even lower than they were back in November. This means any Democrat who won their last election by less than double-digit margins should be nervous. That certainly includes vulnerable governors such as Tony Evers of Wisconsin and Laura Kelly of Kansas. “The president’s dismal ratings are what people care about the most,” says GOP consultant David Carney. “It could be a bloodbath up and down the ballot, from the school board to Congress." There are several known unknowns that could shift the landscape between now and Nov. 8. Inflation might tick lower and the war in Ukraine may have played out in a way that helps Biden politically. Perhaps Tuesday’s school shooting in Texas will activate voters in a way that other mass shootings have failed to do. An NPR/Marist poll released last week found that the expected Supreme Court action to overturn Roe v. Wade should help energize Democrats. Sixty-six percent of Democrats said it would make them more likely to vote this fall, versus 40 percent of Republicans. “There are two big things that we don’t know yet how they will play: The first one is the Jan. 6 committee and its hearings, and the second one is this abortion decision,” says Lara Brown, a political scientist at George Washington University. “Depending on how those capture the attention of the country and different demographics, I do think that can impact the magnitude of what ever wave the Republicans are looking at.” But in the weeks since Justice Samuel Alito’s majority opinion on abortion law was leaked, there’s been no evidence of a surge in Democratic participation in primaries or early voting. Not even any real uptick. “I’d be surprised if Roe v. Wade did not energize the marginal Democratic voter, the sort that would usually vote in the presidential race but not necessarily in the midterm, but that only gets you so far,” Olsen says. “The real game is the swing voter.” Undoing Obama’s Coalition Biden’s old boss, Barack Obama, put together a winning coalition during his presidency, combining college-educated whites with young, Black and Latino voters. The danger for Democrats is that Biden appears to be unraveling that coalition. About the only groups still solidly in his camp are dedicated members of the Democratic base, such as Black voters and college-educated women. Biden carried close to two-thirds of Hispanic voters in 2020, but their shift toward Trump, compared to 2016, was notable, especially in states such as Florida and Texas. In the Texas primaries in March this year, participation in GOP primaries was up dramatically in heavily Hispanic portions of South Texas that traditionally have been overwhelmingly Democratic. An NPR/Marist poll released last month found that 52 percent of Latinos say they’re more likely to support Republican candidates for Congress; just 39 percent favor Democrats. Young voters have been a particular problem for Biden. Voters under 30 favored Biden over Trump, 60 percent to 39 percent, in 2020, but they’ve soured on him since. Biden’s approval rating among young voters has dropped by 18 points over the past year, according to a Harvard Institute of Politics poll – which is in line with what other pollsters are finding. Even as Democrats shed support among Latinos, young voters and parents, the party’s longstanding problem with working-class white voters continues to worsen. The April NPR/Marist poll found Democrats are only favored by a third of white voters without college degrees, compared to 55 percent who say they are likely to support Republicans. “The people who are left backing Biden are the people who would back any Democrat under anything except extreme circumstances,” Olsen says. “That’s a terrible place to be in for an election. You’ve lost America’s middle.” Generically Bad The NPR/Marist poll asked what is known as a generic ballot question — are you more likely to favor a Republican or a Democrat — rather than asking about any individual candidates who might be on the ballot. Candidates do matter. Republicans were notably unhappy that Pennsylvania voters decided to nominate conspiracy-minded state Sen. Doug Mastriano for governor last week, viewing him as more likely to lose in November than other potential picks. Similarly, Republican officials in Missouri are hoping another candidate can coalesce enough support to stop Eric Greitens, who resigned as governor in disgrace in 2018 amid multiple scandals, from winning nomination to the Senate. Republicans left winnable seats on the table in 2010 and 2012 by nominating “unacceptable” candidates unable to win in the general election, as Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky himself said last month. “From an atmospheric point of view, it’s a perfect storm of problems for the Democrats,” McConnell said. “How could you screw this up? It’s actually possible. And we’ve had some experience with that in the past.” McConnell was referring to the 100-seat Senate, which is currently tied. There are relatively few Democratic seats in play this year, meaning each race will count enormously. Still, Republicans have enough opportunities not only to win the majority but come away with a total of perhaps 53 or 54 seats. The GOP needs only five seats to take control of the 435-member House. Redistricting has turned out to be more or less a wash, but on net Republicans gained a slight advantage. A lot of GOP-tilted seats have been fortified against all but the worst-case scenarios, while Democrats hold more seats that are marginal. They’ll have little protection in a wave year. There’s hardly any ticket-splitting, with voters favoring candidates of one party or the other up and down the ballot. There are only 16 seats in the House where the district voted one way for president in 2020 and the other for Congress. The players matter, but sometimes the playing field matters more. In the most competitive House districts, generic Republicans are leading generic Democrats by 47 percent to 39 percent. That’s according to internal polling by the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. Even bad candidates can win in the right environment, which this is shaping up to be for Republicans. “We’re going to have a lot of people winning that no one ever heard of,” Carney says. Messaging and Money The abortion issue may help Democrats politically in a couple of ways. It could help inspire young voters who don’t like the GOP but aren’t Biden stans. It also gives the party something to talk about. Since the Alito leak, Democrats have been much more full-throated in support of abortion rights than Republicans have been about its demise. Democrats would like to think they can easily convince voters that Republicans can’t be trusted since they support the election lies of a twice-impeached coup leader. But if tying Republicans to Trump were a winning strategy, it would have paid off for McAuliffe in Virginia, who certainly tried it. Republicans aren’t made of Teflon. The very term “culture war” suggests there are two sides battling, so efforts to ban books or restrict the teaching of racial history and gender identity won’t play well with everyone. “The more the party focused on these culture war issues, I actually believe the less it will help them in the suburbs,” says Brown, the George Washington University professor. But culture war issues motivate the party’s base. And, to appeal to swing voters, Republicans have plenty of other clubs with which to beat Biden and the Democrats. Maybe you’ve already heard this, but inflation has jumped the most in four decades. Gas prices, already at a retail average of $4.60 per gallon, may well go higher with summer travel demand — perhaps as high as $6. Homicides have increased dramatically since 2019, fueling a return to “tough on crime” rhetoric among Republicans. It's all easy fodder for an opposition party to run on. Polls indicate that voters trust the GOP more, by significant margins, when it comes to inflation and the economy in general. Republicans are enjoying their biggest advantage regarding the crime issue in decades. All of this is reflected in how partisans are responding. The gap between the numbers of Democrats and Republicans retiring from Congress is the highest it’s been in decades. At the legislative level, Republicans are leaving fewer seats open than Democrats. Republicans raised $170 million from January to March through WinRed, an online fundraising platform. That still lags the Democrats’ ActBlue, which has traditionally been much more robust, but represents nearly a one-quarter jump for WinRed over the same period in 2020. The Republican Governors Association raised $33 million in the first quarter of the year, which was nearly $10 million more than the Democratic Governors Association. The Republican State Leadership Committee brought in just over $10 million, compared with $6.5 million for the Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee. Who Will Turn Out? In the end, voter behavior matters most of all. Again, the GOP has a big advantage. A slew of polls have showed large and indeed growing gaps in terms of levels of enthusiasm about voting this year between Republicans and Democrats. But we don’t have to rely strictly on polls any more. We’re still relatively early in the primary season, but Republicans are showing up in ways that Democrats are not. In the first 10 states to hold primaries this year, Republicans received 61 percent of the total vote, according to an analysis by GOP pollster John Couvillon. The party generating more enthusiasm in primaries has fared quite well in the last few midterms. Democrats received 54 percent of the primary vote in 2018 — a solid midterm year for them — while Republicans got 55 percent in both 2010 and 2014, landslide years for the party. It’s true that primary turnout isn’t a perfect measure, since not all races are equally competitive. On Tuesday, for example, Stacey Abrams was unopposed for the Democratic nomination for governor of Georgia, while GOP Gov. Brian Kemp faced a contentious, if ultimately easy, contest against former Sen. David Perdue. Turnout on the GOP side increased by a half-million votes, compared to the 2018 primary. But looking at the total picture, it’s clear more Republicans are turning out. A lot more Republicans. Overall Republican primary turnout is up 32 percent, while Democratic turnout has actually declined 3 percent. All this paints a pretty grim picture for Democrats. They’re running behind on the issues that concern voters most. Their leader is losing support among key constituencies. Their potential candidates are less likely to run, while their voters are less likely to turn out. It’s clear that Republicans will be stronger at the end of the year than they are now. It’s not yet possible to say how much stronger, but if anyone offers to bet you Democrats will retain power in Congress, take their money. At the state level, GOP victories may not be as momentous, but that’s only because they already hold majorities among governors, legislators and legislative chambers. For Republicans, it’s beginning to look a lot like Christmas will fall early this year, on Nov. 8.

## Link

### A2 Win for Biden

#### Russia actually not a win for Biden in the mind of voters

Vakil 02/25/22 Caroline Vakil is currently a breaking news reporter at The Hill where I cover a range of political and national interest stories. I am especially passionate about covering housing/infrastructure and transportation. Throughout my various work experiences, I've enjoyed exploring how to apply my reporting and research across different platforms including newspapers, magazines, TV, and a podcast. “62 percent of voters say Putin wouldn’t have invaded Ukraine if Trump were president: poll” The Hill, February 25, 22, https://thehill.com/homenews/administration/595919-62-percent-of-voters-say-putin-wouldnt-have-invaded-ukraine-if-trump/

A majority of American voters say that Russian President Vladimir Putin would not have invaded Ukraine had former President Trump still been in office, according to a new survey released on Friday. A new Harvard Center for American Political Studies (CAPS)-Harris Poll survey released Friday found that **62 percent** of those polled believed Putin would **not be moving against Ukraine if Trump had been president**. When looking strictly at the answers of Democrats and Republicans, 85 percent of Republicans and 38 percent of Democrats answered this way. However, 38 percent of all Americans polled believed that Putin would have invaded Ukraine even if Trump had been president. Trump’s critics contend that the former president’s relationship with Putin was extremely cozy. For example, Trump publicly called for Russia to be admitted to the G-7 and has repeatedly criticized Ukraine. Meanwhile, the Biden administration has staunchly defended the independence of Ukraine. The House twice impeached Trump, the first time related to his opposition to providing Ukraine with military aid. A majority of Americans polled — **59 percent** — also said they believed that the Russian president moved on Ukraine because Putin **saw weakness in President Biden**, while 41 percent said that it was not a factor in Putin’s decision to invade Ukraine. Soon after Russia invaded Ukraine late Wednesday, President Biden condemned what he described as an “unprovoked and unjustified attack” and expressed solidarity with Ukraine. The U.S. has imposed sanctions on Russian financial institutions, Russian elites and their family members, the Nord Stream 2 AG — the parent company of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline — and, the White House confirmed Friday, Putin himself, among other entities. However, the U.S. has resisted calls to kick Russia out of the SWIFT international banking system, despite appeals from Ukrainian officials and some U.S. lawmakers. The polling comes after Biden has suffered low approval ratings in recent months. Since taking office, the president has had to navigate a multitude of issues, including a lingering COVID-19 pandemic, a chaotic evacuation from Afghanistan, infighting among Democrats over the administration’s legislative agenda and now the invasion of Ukraine. The Harvard CAPS-Harris Poll survey was conducted between Feb. 23 and Feb. 24 with 2,026 registered voters. The survey is an online sample drawn from the Harris Panel and weighted to reflect known demographics. As a representative online sample, it does not report a probability confidence interval.

#### No one cares about foreign policy during midterms.

Cook 22 (Charlie Cook. Cook is an American political analyst for the Cook Political Report. “Foreign Policy Unlikely to Save Democrats in the Fall”. National journal. February 2022. https://www.cookpolitical.com/analysis/national/national-politics/foreign-policy-unlikely-save-democrats-fall)

Biden’s 41 percent overall approval rating in Gallup was bracketed by a [47 percent approval on handling the coronavirus](https://news.gallup.com/poll/390086/biden-ratings-economy-foreign-affairs-russia-near.aspx), 36 percent on handling “the situation with Russia,” 37 percent on the economy, and 40 percent for foreign policy. Given how monolithic partisans are in their approval ratings and actual voting, it is always useful to look only at independents, the ‘jump ball’ Americans. Biden’s overall rating among them was 35 percent (5 points below his approval among all adults). His best marks were on dealing with the coronavirus (45 percent approval), followed by foreign policy (37 percent), Russia (35 percent), and the economy (30 percent). It is pretty clear the president and his administration’s denial of the threat of inflation and slow reaction to it was exceedingly damaging to him. (While we are on the subject, it is fascinating to see Senate Democrats, after so passionately advocating for more infrastructure spending this past year, propose suspending the gasoline tax for the rest of the year, no matter that the gas tax is the primary regular funding source for transportation infrastructure. Panic is never pretty.) While we don’t know the trajectory that the Russia/Ukraine crisis will take, and there are [many factors that can impact on midterm elections](https://www.vox.com/22899204/midterm-elections-president-biden-thermostatic-opinion), we do know that in the absence of a large number of U.S. military deaths, Americans rarely vote on foreign-policy issues, particularly in midterms. The state and direction of the economy, particularly [change in real disposable personal income](https://www.mischiefsoffaction.com/post/2022-midterm-forecast), is far more determinative. Turnout and the relative levels of enthusiasm between the two parties’ bases is key. There was a big gap heading into the 2018 midterm elections with, as usual, the party out of power much more motivated going into the fall of that year—though the Brett Kavanaugh Supreme Court nomination did a lot to close the gap in predominantly rural areas, which helped Republicans actually score a net gain in the Senate while getting hosed (a political science term) in the House. Right now, Democrats are the party suffering from a lack of motivation among their base. If someone wanting a read on a midterm is only going to watch two things, it should be a president’s approval rating and the [generic congressional ballot test](https://centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/articles/forecasting-the-2022-midterm-election-with-the-generic-ballot/), both pretty good barometers of which way the wind is blowing and whether it’s light, moderate, or heavy.

#### The plan distracts Democrats – they need to focus on the economy to win midterms

Rosenberg 1/27/22 President, NDN and the New Policy Institute, a think tank based in Washington, DC Prominent American political strategist, thought-leader and commentator An experienced television news producer and highly regarded political strategist and thought-leader, Simon has spent three decades in national media and politics. He is a veteran of two Presidential campaigns, including a senior role in the famous 1992 Clinton War Room. In his current capacity as President of NDN/New Policy Institute, Simon advises leading politicians, Administration officials and policy makers on a wide range of issues here in the United States and abroad. He is a frequent commentator in the national media, appearing regularly in major newspapers and websites, political journals and on cable and network television. A few years ago GQ magazine named him one of the 50 most powerful people in Washington. In this past election cycle, he was a senior advisor to the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, helping craft the stategy which netted the Democrats 40 seats and earned the highest vote share by either party since 1986. Simon is a graduate of Tufts University and currently serves on the board of the Tisch College of Civic Life at Tufts, where he recently taught a semester-long seminar to undergraduates on American politics. He is a Henry Crown Fellow at the Aspen Institute, a member of the U.S. State Department’s Advisory Committee on International Information and Communications Policy and an advisory board member of the Open Source Elections Technology Institute. Outside of his work with NDN, Simon has advised private corporate and political clients, including Univision, Nanomix, Discourse Intelligence, and the DCCC. He and his wife, Caitlin Durkovich, and their three teenage children live in Washington, DC. “Memo: Dems Need To Focus On Winning The Economic Argument,” January 27, 22, https://www.ndn.org/memo-dems-need-focus-winning-economic-argument

Winning The Economic Argument – This week we hosted noted economist Rob Shapiro for a terrific discussion of his two recent essays in the Washington Monthly, It’s A Biden Boom – And No One Has Noticed Yet and The Biden Boom Is Bigger Than We Thought. You can watch it here. The two essays make clear that 2021 was a banner year for the American economy, one of the best in the post WWII era – 6m jobs, 5+% GDP growth, record new business formations, real wage gains for the bottom 50% of workers, 5m people gaining health insurance, booming housing and stock markets. There can be no doubt that the **vast majority** of Americans are **better off today than they were a year ago**, and given the daily adversity we all faced due to COVID, we need to tip our hats to the resilience, ingenuity and can do spirit of the American people. The question of why the electorate doesn’t understand that the economy is better, and why Americans give Republicans a big advantage on the economy right now when their recent track while in office is among the worst in American history (3 consecutive recessions) are among the most important questions in American politics today. It is very hard to see how Democrats are competitive in the elections this fall without doing something significant to change voter’s basic understanding of how just much better the economy is today, and how much better the economy has been with Democrats in power over the past 30 plus years (40m of the 42m jobs created since 1989 have been created under Democratic Presidents). As a matter of politics, changing this understanding should be the singular mission of the Democratic Party in 2022. There are many forms a big campaign like this could take, but there are two pieces which Democrats should consider right away: The DNC Leads A Big Conversation About How With Democrats Things Get Better – The DNC should take on this mission, and organize a yearlong education effort involving every element of the party across the country. Power points, videos, fact sheets, web sites should be developed, and every state and local party have to make it be their goal to be loud and proud about the achievements of Joe Biden and the Democrats more broadly this year. Language and arguments should be tested, workshopped. A large multimedia ad campaign should be developed to support the free media effort, and it should run in the second quarter of this year, from mid-April to July 4th. Every Democrat should be asked to contribute to this vital effort, and a target goal of $50m should be established. Voters need to know this information now, not in the fall – that is when candidates have to do their job. Other elements of the center-left family with resources can amplify the effort. At a strategy level the goal should be to **get the Democrats even or ahead with Republicans on the economy** by Labor Day, making it far more likely the election will be competitive this fall. A campaign like this also has the benefit of bringing the party back together around a singular mission, something we think the party can use right now. Elected Officials Do Months of Events Showing How Much Better Things Are – In research NDN did in late 2010 and early 2011, we asked voters who did they need to hear from to know a recovery was taking place. The clear answer was local business people. Voters told us that if they heard it from a brewery which had hired a few more people, or a factory that was going to two shifts, then they would believe a recovery was taking place. That work informed the work of the Obama White House, and Senate and House Democrats over the next few years as we struggled to help people understand a recovery was indeed taking place. Today’s elected Democrats should tear some pages from this playbook, and spend most of their public events in state or district in the coming months with local business people who can validate that things are better. These local leaders could also become stars in campaign ads and videos. The efforts to play up the Infrastructure Bill should be seen as part of this effort, and not stand alone; for there are limits to how much political benefit Democrats will get from things people will not see or feel before November. As the incumbent party, Democrats will be judged this fall largely on whether voters think we’ve done a good job, that things are better. Things are better, and we should spend the next 10 months relentlessly making the case that they are. Every moment we spend talking about things which will not be felt by the election should be understood now as a distraction. We have a vital argument to win this year; one we can win; and one we must win to make the elections competitive this fall. And we need to keep repeating – if we can’t get credit for what we’ve done, it’s unlikely we are going to get credit for things which haven’t happened yet. Things are better. With Democrats things are better. Things are better today than they were a year ago. Let’s get to work people. Final note – we are not as convinced as others that inflation is the central reason Democrats have struggled to break through on the economy this year. For more on that see here. We believe the central reason we haven’t broken through is that we haven’t tried hard enough. That’s a fixable thing, and what this plan tries to address. Does this plan assume the economy stays strong in 2022, and we can keep making the argument? Yep. It is the likely scenario and we should go for it.

### A2 NATO

#### Republicans support NATO expansion, Finland and Sweden will help share the load with military.

**Zengerle ’22** (Patricia Zengerle is a Correspondent for Congress and National Security in the Thomson Reuters, “U.S. Republicans Join Democrats in Backing NATO Expansion Despite Rising Nationalism,” U.S.News, 5/23/2022, https://www.usnews.com/news/top-news/articles/2022-05-23/u-s-republicans-join-democrats-in-backing-nato-expansion-despite-rising-nationalism)

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Democratic and Republican U.S. Senate leaders introduced a resolution on Monday backing Sweden and Finland's bids to join NATO, underscoring support for expanding the alliance despite growing nationalism in the Republican party. It will take a two-thirds majority in the 100-member Senate to approve the expansion of the alliance, requiring "yes" votes from at least 17 Republicans along with every Democrat. Many U.S. Republicans have been following the lead of former President Donald Trump - the party's leader - toward more nationalist foreign policy. Trump accused **NATO allies** of **not spending enough on their own defense** and excessively **burdening** **the U**nited **S**tates. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has prompted Finland and Sweden to apply to join NATO. In the Senate, 11 Republicans voted "no" last week against legislation providing $40 billion to help Ukraine, with some saying they wanted the funds director to Americans. Last month, 63 Republican members of the House of Representatives, nearly one-third of the full caucus, opposed a bill reaffirming U.S. support for NATO. The top Senate Republican, Mitch McConnell, and Jim Risch, the top Republican on the foreign relations panel, joined Democratic Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and committee chairman Bob Menendez and other senators in introducing the resolution. "We fully support their application to become NATO members and are looking forward to their swift ascension in the coming months," Menendez said in a statement. McConnell referred to **Finland and Sweden** as "strong countries with formidable military capabilities" and said in his statement, "both nations' robust defense funding means their accession **would** meaningfully **bolster our pursuit of greater burden-sharing across the alliance**. I fully support the Senate providing its advice and consent as quickly as possible." (Reporting by Patricia Zengerle; editing by Grant McCool)

#### GOP supports NATO unification, Ukraine a reason.

Livingston 4-6 [Abby Livingston, Washington Bureau Chief, The Texas Tribune 4-6-2022 Texas Republicans who opposed resolution supporting NATO criticize and question its language Texas Tribune https://www.texastribune.org/2022/04/06/congress-nato-support-texas-representatives/] 6-27-2022

**Republican** U.S. Rep. Michael McCaul of Austin is the top House Republican on foreign affairs and voted to **support NATO**. On Wednesday, he sported a blue-and-gold Ukrainian ribbon on his suit jacket at the Capitol. He told The Texas Tribune that **NATO countries are “stepping up**” in ways some countries had **lagged before**. A frequent conservative critique of NATO is that many European countries fall short of the expected standard that all member countries spend at least 2% of their GDP on defense. “NATO is more unified than it’s ever been. Germany now is putting in 2% of their GDP. And they are sending weapons and they are training,” he said. NATO bonds further frayed in recent years, as Trump regularly railed against the alliance. But his criticism did lead to several NATO countries deciding to increase their **defense spending**. Everything changed six weeks ago when Russian President Vladimir Putin invaded Ukraine, a country on the Eastern European frontier that long aspired to join the organization. Several NATO countries located near Ukraine, like Poland, are most impacted by the refugee exodus from Ukraine. At the heart of NATO is an agreement among all 30 countries known as Article 5, which states an attack on one NATO member country is an attack on all NATO allies. The 9/11 attacks on the United States are the single time in the alliance’s existence that Article 5 has been invoked. Former NATO Ambassador Kay Bailey Hutchison addressed the vote in an interview with the Tribune on Wednesday. Hutchison carefully noted she had not read the language in the House resolution but insisted the political establishment is behind NATO. “I know we have **bipartisan support for NATO** — I know that,” she told Tribune CEO Evan Smith, pointing to her former colleagues in the U.S. Senate. “We have that bipartisan support,” she later added. “I’ve seen it.” **U.S. Rep**. Colin Allred, a Dallas Democrat who serves on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, seemed mystified that so many Texans voted against a resolution supporting **NATO**, noting that the last two Republican presidents prior to Trump — George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush — were NATO boosters. “I really don’t know what to make of it,” he said. “We’ve seen how **important** it is, and I find it really hard to understand.”

### Election interference

#### Foreign interference won’t affect outcomes—no external internet accessibility and too many built in redundancies.

Shaban 16 [Hamza Shaban, Hamza Shaban is a technology policy reporter for BuzzFeed News and is based in Washington, D.C. State Election Officials Confront Fears Of Election Day Hacking, BuzzFeed, 9-9-2016, Accessible Online at https://www.buzzfeed.com/hamzashaban/state-election-officials-confront-fears-of-election-day-hack?utm\_term=.tkb76qeB8#.ju2VRwDeK] SW 9-14-2016

A month after 20,000 private emails from the Democratic National Committee were published online, election officials across the country received a series of warnings from the FBI: Hackers were targeting states’ election websites and, in at least one case, were able to steal voter registration data. The Department of Homeland Security has since created an election cybersecurity action campaign, and US intelligence officials have begun investigating the possibility of a covert Russian intelligence operation that seeks to undermine the integrity of the American election.

But despite the growing concerns over foreign meddling coming from Congress, intelligence experts, and the Clinton campaign, state election officials say American voters have little to fear.

“There are over 9,000 jurisdictions that operate elections at a very local level, so that’s both a blessing and a curse,” Denise Merrill, Connecticut’s secretary of state and president of the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS), a nonpartisan organization that represents the country’s top state election officials, told BuzzFeed News. “It really saves us from worrying too much about cybersecurity — we have other concerns, but that’s kind of not one of them.”

Merrill was appointed by NASS to join Homeland Security’s special working group on election cybersecurity. The group’s goal is to build closer ties between the federal government and local election officials, and also to consider designating state voting systems as “critical infrastructure,” akin to dams and power grids, granting election offices additional resources and protections from the federal government.

Merrill, along with the secretaries of state and election officials representing California, Florida, Ohio, Minnesota, Colorado, and Iowa, told BuzzFeed News that pre–Election Day simulations, paper trail audits, and the fact that voting machines are not connected to the web provide strong safeguards to the electoral system.

State election officials emphasized that the recent hack into voter registration databases differs from the risks faced by their offices, because these databases aren’t directly tied to voting on Election Day and because voting machines cannot be accessed remotely through the internet. “That’s the voter registration system, which is not at all connected to the actual voting,” Merrill said, adding that in almost every state, voter registration is completed on paper. “There are backup paper systems for every process in our election, and that means cybersecurity is not the concern that it’s being portrayed to be nationally.”

### Emerging tech

#### Americans don’t support emerging tech legislation

Zhang 19 [Baobao Zhang . "Public opinion lessons for AI regulation". 12-10-2019. Brookings. https://www.brookings.edu/research/public-opinion-lessons-for-ai-regulation. 6-23-2022.] -AL

An overwhelming majority of the American public believes that artificial intelligence (AI) should be carefully managed. Nevertheless, as the three case studies in this brief show, the public does not agree on the proper regulation of AI applications. Indeed, population-level support of an AI application may belie opposition by some subpopulations. Many AI applications, such as facial recognition technology, could cause disparate harm to already vulnerable subgroups, particularly ethnic minorities and low-income individuals. In addition, partisan divisions are likely to prevent government regulation of AI applications that could be used to influence electoral politics. In particular, the regulation of content recommendation algorithms used by social media platforms has been highly contestable. Finally, mobilizing an influential group of political actors, such as machine learning researchers in the campaign against lethal autonomous weapons, may be more effective in shifting policy debates than mobilizing the public at large. Algorithms used to recommend content on social media have increasingly come under scrutiny. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube use machine learning to suggest media content and advertisements that optimize for user engagement. Civil society groups and researchers have expressed concerns that these algorithms help spread misinformation, proliferate digital propaganda, create partisan echo chambers, and promote violent extremism. Unlike facial recognition technology that could more readily be managed at the local or state level, social media platforms have users across the U.S. and around the world. California has sought to regulate online bots and protect consumer privacy, setting the terms of the debate for federal regulations. However, it remains to be seen if the federal government will follow the way of California or oppose the state’s policies. In the U.S., legislation to regulate social media platforms has stalled because of the divergent policy priorities of the two parties. In light of Russian intervention in the 2016 U.S. presidential election and the Cambridge Analytica scandal, Congress has held several hearings to investigate and castigate tech companies. The techlash from the left and the right are different: Democrats prioritize the prevention of digital manipulation and consumer privacy while Republicans focus on alleged bias against conservatives. Democratic senators have introduced legislation that would increase transparency for online campaign advertisements and require tech companies to safeguard users’ sensitive data. Republican lawmakers have accused social media platforms of censoring conservative viewpoints, despite evidence to the contrary. The Trump White House is reportedly drafting an executive order to combat this alleged bias. The American public is concerned about the lack of accountability by tech companies that operate social media platforms, but does not agree on policy solutions. According to a report from the Pew Research Center, 51% of the U.S. public thinks that tech companies should be regulated more than they are now. At the same time, Americans indicate that they have greater trust in tech companies than the U.S. federal government to manage the development and use of AI in the best interests of the public, per data from the Center for the Governance of AI. The public is evenly split on whether there should be regulation of content recommendation algorithms based on political affiliations or political viewpoints, according to a 2017 Harvard/Harris Poll survey. The partisan division among lawmakers in Congress is also reflected in public opinion. There exists a stark asymmetry in how Republicans and Democrats perceive bias in social media platforms and tech companies. While 54% of Republicans think it is very likely that social media platforms censor political viewpoints, only 20% of Democrats do, according to a survey from the Pew Research Center. Conversely, while 53% of Democrats think major tech companies support the views of liberals and conservatives equally, only 28% of Republicans feel the same way. With political gridlock hindering governmental regulation of algorithms used by social media platforms, tech companies have tried to answer their critics through industry self-regulation. Nevertheless, industry self-regulation is not immune to underlying conflicts in American politics. For instance, Google’s AI ethics board dissolved after the company’s employees and outside civil society groups protested the inclusion of Heritage Foundation president Kay Coles James and drone company CEO Dyan Gibbens on the board.