# Aff

## Uniqueness Answers

### Dems take Senate Now

#### Non unique - Democrats take the Senate now – key swing states go Democrat

Enten 7-5 (Harry Enten, Senior Data Reporter at CNN, Former Senior Political Writer at FiveThirtyEight, “Here's why Democrats could keep the Senate”, CNN, 7/5/22, <https://www.cnn.com/2022/07/05/politics/democrats-senate-2022-republicans-house/index.html>) - aagg

Don't write off the Senate Democrats just yet Perhaps, the biggest polling shock this past week came from the state of Georgia. A Quinnipiac University poll found Democratic Sen. Raphael Warnock with a 10-point lead over Republican Herschel Walker, 54% to 44%. The result was far better for Warnock than the long-term average for the race (which has either candidate up by a point or two, depending on how the average is calculated). But even the average indicates that Warnock could win, despite Biden's approval rating being well below 40% in the Peach State. The Georgia race is among several in 2020 battleground states that the national environment suggests should be leaning Republicans but polling on the ground suggests otherwise. It's an indication that the outcome for Senate control isn't close to being finalized. The 2022 Senate map is rather small. Of the 35 seats up this cycle, I would categorize less than 10 of them at this point as competitive -- i.e., where each side has a better than 10% chance of winning. A few races could make the difference either way. I base that assessment off a simple data model that looks at state-level polling, national indicators (i.e., the generic congressional ballot and the President's approval rating), the past presidential vote, whether the election was a midterm or not, and expert race ratings (by, say, the Cook Political Report). All told, the model indicates that the most likely outcome is for Republicans to pick up a seat or two. That's enough for a majority, as the GOP needs a net gain of just a seat for control. Considering past errors of the model, it suggests that Republicans have a roughly 3-in-5 shot at winning back the Senate. The reason the model is so high on Senate Democrats compared with what you might expect given the national environment is simple: the state-level polling in swing states. Recent public data has looked surprisingly strong for Democrats in places such as Arizona, Georgia, Nevada, New Hampshire and Pennsylvania.

#### Non UQ - Supreme court deicisons have caused leftist backlash

Cohn 22 [Nate Cohn, NYT Chief Political Analyst ; Published 7/13/2022, New York Times ; <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/13/upshot/poll-2022-midterms-congress.html> “Poll shows Tight Race for Control of Congress as Class Divide Widens”; DOA 7/14/22]

Recent unfavorable news for Democrats, in the form of [Supreme Court rulings](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/06/21/us/major-supreme-court-cases-2022.html), and some tragic news nationally might ordinarily mean trouble for the party in power, but that’s not what the results suggest. The survey began 11 days after the Supreme Court’s decision to overturn Roe v. Wade, when cellphones were still buzzing with news alerts about the mass shooting in Highland Park, Ill. In an open-ended question, those who volunteered that issues related to guns, abortion or the Supreme Court were the most important problem facing the country represented about one in six registered voters combined. Those voters preferred Democratic control of Congress, 68 percent to 8 percent. Some of the hot-button social issues thought to work to the advantage of Republicans at the beginning of the cycle, like critical race theory, have faded from the spotlight. Only 4 percent of voters combined said education, crime or immigration was the most important issue facing the country. The Times/Siena survey is not the first to suggest that the national political environment has improved for Democrats since the Supreme Court overturned Roe. On average, Democrats have gained about three points on the generic congressional ballot [compared](https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/maybe-dobbs-did-change-the-race-well-need-more-time-to-know-for-sure/) with surveys taken beforehand. In the wake of the court’s ruling, the poll finds greater public support for legal abortion than previous Times/Siena surveys. Sixty-five percent of registered voters said abortion should be mostly or always legal, up from 60 percent of registered voters in September 2020. The proportion of voters who opposed the court’s decision — 61 percent — was similar to the share who said they supported Roe v. Wade two years ago. Democrats are maintaining the loyalty of a crucial sliver of predominantly liberal and highly educated voters who disapprove of Mr. Biden’s performance **but care more about debates over guns, democracy and the shrinking of abortion rights than the state of the economy.**

#### Non UQ - Subtle polling trends show Dems are gaining ground after roe, even if republicans are up now trends are in the right direction

Panetta 22 [Alexander Panetta, Washington correspondent for CBC news ; “Will Abortion Upend American Politics? Here’s what the early polling tells us” ; DOA 7/14/22 ; Published by CBC news <https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/abortion-american-politics-early-polls-1.6451553>]

The latest Morning Consult poll, from May 6 to 9, found a sudden tightening of the so-called enthusiasm gap after months of Republicans expressing far greater eagerness to vote this year. It showed that the percentage of Democrats describing themselves as "extremely enthusiastic" about voting this year jumped eight percentage points from two weeks ago**. Younger voters are key:** They're especially supportive of abortion access, and their level of enthusiasm increased in the latest Morning Consult poll. Last month, Republicans held a more daunting advantage, with their voters 12 percentage points more likely to call themselves extremely enthusiastic, compared with seven points now. And respondents across different surveys were also more likely to describe abortion as a top issue for them in determining their vote this fall. "It could be a leading indicator of something," said Kathy Frankovic, a representative of the YouGov firm. "There are some inklings that things could be changing. But we really need to wait." There are such inklings in different polls. The Monmouth University Polling Institute says abortion [has surged to the top tier of issues](https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/reports/monmouthpoll_US_051222/) voters find important, suddenly ranking alongside the economy and ahead of other topics. The same pollster says [opinion](https://twitter.com/emmakinery/status/1524407525415739395?s=21&t=qCsHr1fsKEvSH2XyaQJ44A) of the Supreme Court has plunged. There are other data points telling a similar, albeit subtle, story. YouGov finds abortion still ranking as far less important than the economy, but it's climbed up the priority list, particularly for Democrats — going from the top priority of just two per cent of Democratic voters to 10 per cent. "That's [a] pretty big shift," Frankovic said. That's why Easley offers three caveats to his broader takeaway that the current numbers don't look promising for Democrats. His first caveat is that sudden burst of passion. That's a shift, with the wobbling economy and their party struggling to pass signature promises through Congress. Of the looming abortion fight, Easley said: "It has revved up Democratic intensity a little bit." His second caveat? Even a small shift in public opinion could make a difference in one or two close Senate races, and that could decide who controls that powerful chamberThen there's his third and final caveat: that nothing has happened yet

### Thumper – Trump

#### Trump will enter the race – guarantees Dems win.

**Drucker 6/19** (David, senior political correspondent for the Washington Examiner, previously reported for CQ Roll Call and the Los Angeles Daily News, “Trump 2024 launch before November midterm elections could become a problem for GOP,” Washington Examiner, 6/19/2022, <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/campaigns/trump-2024-launch-november-midterm-problem-gop)-> cjtz

Top Republicans are keeping a wary eye on Donald Trump, worried the former president might announce a 2024 bid before Election Day this year, distracting voters from President Joe Biden’s embattled leadership and galvanizing Democratic turnout. With speculation rising that Trump could declare for president before the midterm elections to box out GOP competitors, some Republican strategists and party insiders are anxious. They fret the move would transform a referendum on Biden poised to generate a massive Republican electoral wave on Nov. 8 into a more evenhanded debate between the president, reeling from skyrocketing inflation and myriad crises, and his polarizing predecessor. The fear is not so much that Trump’s direct injection into the midterm campaign turns Biden into a popular president and makes 2022 a Democratic year. Rather, Republicans are concerned the 45th president’s early candidacy would dilute Republican messaging focused on Biden and boost moribund Democratic enthusiasm, shrinking the size of the red wave in a manner that tempers GOP gains in the House and Senate. “Trump being front and center could affect GOP gains in the House by five seats or so,” said Jeff Burton, a Republican strategist in Austin, Texas. “But it could really affect the Senate, which could end up 50/50 again based on how the seats are looking.” “Anything, and I mean anything, that takes the focus off the miserable job Joe Biden is doing is bad for Republicans,” added Josh Holmes, former chief of staff to Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and co-host of Ruthless, a podcast popular among conservatives. Earlier this month, NBC News reported Trump was mulling whether to announce a 2024 bid this summer. Traditionally, Democrats and Republicans planning to run for president wait for the midterm elections to conclude before making overt moves to build their operation, let alone launch a campaign. But the former president’s considerations of an early reveal are based at least in part on a desire to preserve his advantage over multiple other Republicans preparing to run. Despite Trump’s popularity with grassroots Republicans, he would face competition in the 2024 primary. Prominent Republicans who are signaling Trump’s entry into the contest would not preclude them from running include his former running mate, former Vice President Mike Pence; his former secretary of state, Mike Pompeo; and a political ally, Sen. Tom Cotton (R-AR) — among others who are traveling to key early primary states and taking steps to mount White House bids. For Republican politicians and operatives fixated on the election at hand, Trump running for president is not necessarily concerning, versus when he announces. They want a clean shot at Biden and Democrats in Congress so that they have the best opportunity to run up the score and win governing majorities. The Democrats are defending a five-seat House majority. Their Senate advantage rests on Vice President Kamala Harris’s tiebreaking vote. “It would not be in the president’s best interest to launch his campaign that early — and it would definitely be a distraction [in terms of] the midterm elections,” one House Republican said, requesting anonymity to speak critically of Trump. Republicans are hoping the allure of taking credit for a big Republican victory in the midterm elections will forestall an early 2024 announcement. “If Trump is smart, he will get that and declare victory for the largest possible win after it happens,” said a Republican strategist advising several candidates on the 2022 ballot. “The problem is that all Republican candidates would suddenly have to answer a new question — and they’d all prefer to only be talking about Joe Biden," this strategist added. "We need an election that’s a pure plebiscite on Biden’s job approval, an election in which the conversation is about Biden and Biden alone.” With Biden’s job approval ratings cratering at just under 40% and Republicans leading Democrats on the generic ballot 46.4% to 43%, Republicans are positioned for significant gains this fall in Congress and contests for office at the state and local levels.

### Thumper – Inflation

#### Inflation thumps – Foreign policy is nowhere near top issues for voters, even in “Democratic Favorable” agenda

Fingerhut 7-8 (Hannah Fingerhut, Senior writer at the Associate Press, editor at PBS, “Inflation, personal expenses rise sharply as election priorities, poll suggests”, PBS, 7/8/22, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/inflation-personal-expenses-rise-sharply-as-election-priorities-poll-suggests>) – aagg

Concerns about inflation and personal finances have surged while COVID has evaporated as a top issue for Americans, a new poll shows, marking an upheaval in priorities just months before critical midterm elections. Forty percent of U.S. adults specifically name inflation in an open-ended question as one of up to five priorities for the government to work on in the next year, according to a June poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. That’s a sharp rise from 14 percent in December and less than 1 percent the year prior. In all, 77 percent mention the economy in any way, up from 68 percent in December. But just 10 percent specifically mention jobs or unemployment, as U.S. employers continue to hire despite high inflation and weak economic growth. Now, too, Americans increasingly call their personal finances a major issue: 44 percent mention it, up from 24 percent in December and 12 percent the year before. That includes more mentioning gas or energy prices (33 percent now vs. 10 percent in December) and food costs (9 percent vs. less than 1 percent). Those shifts may be advantageous to Republicans as they campaign to win control of Congress in this year’s midterms; the economy has increasingly been a sore subject for President Joe Biden. Still, the economy isn’t the only issue getting more attention this year. Many also prioritize issues that are core to Biden and Democrats’ agenda, including abortion, women’s rights and gun policy, which could help Democrats as they try to pad — or at least protect — their razor-thin majority.

#### Nothing can change perception of inflation.

Rappeport 7/14/22 [Alan Rappeport is an economic policy reporter at The New York Times, based in Washington. He covers the Treasury Department and writes about taxes, trade and fiscal matters. Mr. Rappeport has master’s degrees from the London School of Economics and the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism. He has a bachelor’s degree from Emory University.https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/14/us/politics/democrats-republicans-inflation-midterms.html] CB

WASHINGTON — Triple-digit gasoline bills. Bulging hamburger prices. A Fourth of July holiday that broke the bank. **Prices are rising** at the fastest rate in four decades, a painful development that has **given Republicans a powerful** talking point just months **ahead of the midterm election**s. With control of Congress very much in play, Republicans are investing heavily in a blitz of campaign advertisements that portray a dark sense of economic disarray as they seek to make inflation a political albatross for President Biden and Democrats. According to Kantar’s Campaign Media Analysis Group, candidates running in House, Senate and governor races around the country have spent nearly $22 million airing about 130,000 local and national television ads that mention inflation from early April through the beginning of July. Inflation was the 10th most common issue mentioned by Democrats and 11th most common for Republicans, according to the data, underscoring how critical the issue is to both parties this election cycle. ADVERTISEMENT Continue reading the main story The data released Wednesday showing that prices in June climbed 9.1 percent over the past year gave Republicans fresh ammunition against Mr. Biden and his party, ammunition that includes faulting Democrats for passing a $1.9 trillion stimulus package last year and efforts to push through additional spending in a sweeping climate and economic package known as “Build Back Better.” The **intensifying focus on inflation is already weighing on Mr. Biden’s poll number**s. A New York Times/Siena College poll this week showed his approval at a meager 33 percent, with 20 percent of voters viewing jobs and the economy as the most important problem facing the country. Inflation and the cost of living followed closely behind. The poll also showed that the race for control of Congress is surprisingly tight. While gas prices have fallen from their $5 a gallon peak and there are signs that inflation might be slowing, consumers are unlikely to feel better off anytime soon. Gas prices are still much higher than they were a year ago, with the average national price for a gallon at $4.60 versus $3.15 in 2021, according to AAA. Image Voters view jobs and the economy as among the most important issues facing the country. Voters view jobs and the economy as among the most important issues facing the country.Credit...Hiroko Masuike/The New York Times “It’s a very negative thing politically for the Democrats,” said Jason Furman, an economist at Harvard University and former Obama administration economic adviser. “My guess is that the negative views about inflation are so deeply baked in that nothing can change in the next few months to change them.” The White House, while acknowledging the pain that inflation is causing, has tried to deflect responsibility, saying that it is a global problem and attributing it to shortages of food and oil stemming from Russian President Vladimir V. Putin’s invasion of Ukraine. On Wednesday, Mr. Biden called the latest Consumer Price Index “out-of-date” given the recent fall in gas prices and said the data “is a reminder that all major economies are battling this Covid-related challenge, made worse by Putin’s unconscionable aggression.” 8 Signs That the Economy Is Losing Steam Retail sales. The latest report from the Commerce Department showed that retail sales fell 0.3 percent in May, and rose less in April than initially believed. Consumer confidence. In June, the University of Michigan’s survey of consumer sentiment hit its lowest level in its 70-year history, with nearly half of respondents saying inflation is eroding their standard of living. The housing market. Demand for real estate has decreased, and construction of new homes is slowing. These trends could continue as interest rates rise, and real estate companies, including Compass and Redfin, have laid off employees in anticipation of a downturn in the housing market. Start-up funding. Investments in start-ups have declined to their lowest level since 2019, dropping 23 percent over the last three months, to $62.3 billion. The stock market. The S&P 500 had its worst first half of a year since 1970, and it is down nearly 19 percent since January. Every sector of the index beyond energy is down from the beginning of the year. Copper. A commodity seen by analysts as a measure of sentiment about the global economy — because of its widespread use in buildings, cars and other products — copper is down more than 20 percent since January, hitting a 17-month low on July 1. Oil. Crude prices are up this year, in part because of supply constraints resulting from Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, but they have recently started to waver as investors worry about growth. The bond market. Long-term interest rates in government bonds have fallen below short-term rates, an unusual occurrence that traders call a yield-curve inversion. It suggests that bond investors are expecting an economic slowdown. However, Treasury Secretary Janet L. Yellen has acknowledged that the pandemic aid package contributed to inflation by spurring demand in the economy. Last month, she admitted that she was “wrong” to describe price increases as “transitory.” **Republicans have latched** **on to that as proof that** Democrats and **the Biden administration misled voters** **and** mishandled the economy and to claim — despite a strong labor market and other signs of economic health — **that the nation is on the verge of economic collapse**. An ad funded by One Nation, a nonprofit group aligned with Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, links rising prices to the $1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan that Democrats passed last year. The ad is aimed at Senator Mark Kelly, Democrat of Arizona, and describes him as the “deciding vote” for the bill that passed the Senate 50 to 49 with no Republican “Their spending spree worsened inflation,” the narrator said as images of a gas station and grocery store flashed across the screen. Clips of empty food shelves and a gas station pump meter ticking higher are the backdrop for an ad supporting Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine, a Republican. The TV ad opens with a pointed critique of the president’s handling of the economy: “Joe Biden’s inflation is crushing Americans.” The National Republican Congressional Committee highlighted the soaring sticker prices of hamburgers, buns, propane and gasoline in an ad assailing Representative Dina Titus, a Nevada Democrat, who is running against Mark Robertson, a Republican who is an Army veteran and a business owner. “Democrats’ harmful economic policies are making everything more expensive, and there’s no end in sight,” the narrator said as images of Ms. Titus and Mr. Biden appeared before a backdrop of $100 bills.

### Thumper – Laundry List

#### Voter’s don’t care about Russia anymore – less then 1% cited it as an important problem to the US

Gallup 6/22 (Gallup Inc, a global analytics and advice firm that helps leaders and organizations solve their most pressing problems, “Most Important Problem”, Gallup Inc, 6/22/2022, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/1675/Most-Important-Problem.aspx>) - aagg

What do you think is the most important problem facing the country today?

Recent trend

Jun 22 May 22 Apr 22 Mar 22 Feb 22

%

%

%

%

%

ECONOMIC PROBLEMS (NET) 40 37 39 35 30

High cost of living/Inflation 18 18 17 17 10

Economy in general 13 12 12 11 11

Fuel/Oil prices 5 3 6 4 1

Lack of money 1 1 \* 1 1

Unemployment/Jobs 1 1 2 1 2

Federal budget deficit/Federal debt 1 1 1 1 2

Recession 1 \* \* -- --

Gap between rich and poor 1 1 2 2 2

Foreign trade/Trade deficit \* \* \* -- --

Wage issues \* 1 1 \* \*

Taxes \* \* 1 \* 1

NON-ECONOMIC PROBLEMS (NET) 66 68 67 68 72

The government/Poor leadership 18 19 20 22 20

Guns/Gun control 8 1 1 \* 1

Crime/Violence 6 4 2 1 3

Immigration 5 8 7 5 8

Unifying the country 5 5 4 5 6

Ethics/moral/religious/family decline 4 3 2 2 2

Race relations/Racism 3 6 4 5 4

Poverty/Hunger/Homelessness 3 2 3 3 3

School shootings 2 -- -- -- --

Judicial system/Courts/Laws 2 2 2 2 4

Environment/Pollution/Climate change 2 2 2 2 2

Healthcare 2 3 4 3 3

Energy/Lack of energy sources 2 1 3 3 \*

Education 1 2 1 1 2

Coronavirus/Diseases 1 2 4 3 13

Lack of respect for each other 1 3 2 1 2

Foreign policy/Foreign aid/Focus overseas 1 2 1 2 1

Abortion 1 5 1 -- \*

Elections/Election reform 1 \* 1 1 \*

Welfare 1 1 -- \* \*

Situation with Russia 1 3 5 9 2

### Thumper – Roe v Wade

#### Overturning of Roe V Wade has change Rep political agenda and deterred them away from the midterm elections

Alex seitz-wald & Jonathanallen7/6/22 **[**Political Reporter at NBC News and MSNBC Washington, District of Columbia, United States500+ connections <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2022-election/abortion-politics-complicate-republican-midterm-message-voters-rcna36851>] CB

WASHINGTON — Republicans are torn between their policy goals and political ones in the wake of the Supreme Court’s ruling overturning Roe v. Wade, with activists’ rush to capitalize on the ruling running into the political reality that abortion rights remain popular in many of this year's midterm battlegrounds. “I don’t think this alters the midterm advantage for Republicans because of Biden’s economic woes,” said former Virginia Republican Rep. Tom Davis. “But **in a cycle that is all about turnout, it is a net benefit for Democrats. Angry voters vote**.” For months, all signs have been pointing to a landslide victory in November for Republicans. But some in the GOP now worry that even if they retake the House and make overall gains, **abortion politics could cost them a handful of key races** — and with a 50-50 Senate, every race matters. Democrats call for more action on gun safety after Highland Park mass shooting JULY 6, 202203:54 “This a massive gift to the Democrats and one they could not have conjured up for themselves,” said veteran GOP strategist Mike Madrid, noting the portion of Americans saying they want Democrats in control of Congress has risen in polls taken since the decision. “With inflation as high as it is, for the first time I think it’s a jump ball. The Democrats are now back in it.” “If I were a betting man,” Madrid added. “I would say Republicans pick up a majority, but maybe it’s not as big as it could or should be.” GOP candidates in key battleground states want to focus on inflation and make the election a referendum on an unpopular president, but that may be complicated now that conservative officials are rushing to outlaw abortion in many states, finally given the chance to do so after decades of trying.

#### With the overturning of Roe V wade the Democrats are capitalizing from the publics discontent and making it the main model of their midterm campaign

Julia Manchester 6/25/22[Political Reporter at The Hill, Master's degree in political science from American University's School of Public Affairs. <https://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/3536409-roe-v-wade-ruling-injects-new-urgency-into-midterms-for-democrats> CB]

The Supreme Court’s **decision to overturn Roe v. Wade** catapulted the issue of abortion rights directly into the midterms campaign on Friday, with **Democrats seeking to put the issue front and center**. Democratic candidates up and down the ballot issued their reactions in a slew of statements following the decision, while the party’s national campaign apparatus rolled out a website designed to “help voters channel anger into action and organize with local coordinated field campaigns.” While issues like rising inflation, crime and the flow of migrants over the U.S. southern border have dominated campaign rhetoric on the GOP side, **Democrats are hoping to use the high court’s decision to galvanize their own bases.** “This fall, Roe is on the ballot. The right to privacy is on the ballot,” President Biden said at a press conference following the decision’s release on Friday. Democrats and abortion rights advocates point to what they say is conservatives’ goal to ban abortion nationwide. “They won’t give up unless voters stop them. The stakes in November’s midterm elections are higher than ever for reproductive health and rights, including abortion,” Planned Parenthood said in a statement on Friday. In swing states and districts across the country**, Democratic candidates** rolled out their own statements hitting **their Republican opponents over the issue**. In Wisconsin, Senate candidate and Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes (D) called for the filibuster to be abolished so Roe could be “the law of the land.” Fellow Wisconsin Democratic Senate candidate Alex Lasry also called for the filibuster to be abolished, accusing Republicans of “embracing extremism.” In Pennsylvania, Democratic Senate nominee and Lt. Gov. John Fetterman (D) drew a clear contrast with his Republican opponent Mehmet Oz on the issue. “I will protect abortion rights. Dr. Oz will take them away. It’s that simple,” Fetterman said. In Texas, which has an abortion trigger law that will go into effect within the next month, Democratic gubernatorial candidate Beto O’Rourke released a video calling for voters to support his campaign amid news of the ruling. “We have to focus on the way in which we are going to overcome this,” O’Rourke said. “The only way to do this is to win political power.” At the House level, Democratic candidates and incumbents also issued reactions leaning into the issue. Incumbent Rep. Elaine Luria (D-Va.), who is facing a contentious election bid in the commonwealth’s 2nd Congressional District, condemned the decision along with Gov. Glenn Youngkin’s (R) announcement that he will seek a 15-week abortion ban following the decision. “And there it is,” Luria tweeted. “Republicans in Virginia have a plan to remove existing protections for women to make decisions about their body.” In Texas’s 15th Congressional District, Democratic nominee Michelle Vallejo released a statement calling for Roe v. Wade to be codified into law. “**We need representa**tives that will codify Roe V. Wade and **advocate every single day for our right to choose**,” Vallejo. “I will do everything in my power as the next congresswoman from TX15 to be a champion for Texas women and families.” The issue is also poised to play a role in competitive state legislature races, like in Michigan, Arizona, Pennsylvania, Texas, Georgia and North Carolina. “**Republican** majorities in these state legislatures are in for a **rude awakening** **when they start taking away people’s rights**,” said Vicky Hausman, co-founder of Forward Majority, a Democratic group that works elect Democrats to state legislatures. “We see a great deal of outrage driven by this decision and that outrage is happening exactly where Democrats need to be winning in these key districts that present a path to a majority in state legislatures,” she continued. Former Vice President Mike Pence seemed to confirm those concerns when he called for a nationwide abortion ban on Friday. “Having been given this second chance for Life, we must not rest and must not relent until the sanctity of life is restored to the center of American law in every state in the land,” Pence said in a tweet. Republican National Committee Chairwoman Ronna McDaniel also rolled out a statement exclaiming “Life wins!” “As this debate now returns to the states and the American people, we know there is still much work ahead. Republicans will continue to advocate for life, uphold the law, and stand against an extreme Democrat Party’s pro-abortion agenda,” McDaniel said. However, other Republicans are signaling they intend to stay laser-focused on their messaging regarding inflation, crime and the border. “Today’s Supreme Court ruling returns the issue of abortion to the states and allows voters to decide whether they agree with Democrats’ extreme support for taxpayer-funded late term abortion,” said Samantha Bullock, spokeswoman for the National Republican Congressional Campaign Committee. “This ruling does nothing to change the fact that voters’ top concerns are rising prices, soaring crime, and the disaster at the southern border,” she continued. Pennsylvania Republican gubernatorial nominee Doug Mastriano downplayed the ruling, saying in a statement that Democrats want to use the Supreme Court’s decision on Roe to distract voters from issues that matter more to them. “People in this area and in my part of the state across the border here are struggling to make ends meet and they don’t care about those issues over there,” Mastriano, who’s up against Democrat Josh Shapiro, said. “They want to have security. They want crime to be down. They want to be able to put food on the table and gas in their cars.” Democrats say they are keenly aware of the role other issues, like inflation, are playing in campaign discourse, but argue that abortion access is an economic and health care issue. “We can walk and chew gum at the same time,” said Nevada Attorney General Aaron Ford (D), who also serves as co-chair of the Democratic Attorneys General association. “This is an important issue. It is not something that takes second seed to any of the other issues and nor do other issues take second seed to this.” **Anti-abortio**n organizations are signaling they want to play a **leading role in the midterms**. On Thursday, the conservative anti-abortion group Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America launched a $2 million digital ad buy in Arizona, Georgia, Florida, Michigan, North Carolina, Nevada, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin for two weeks. “This is going to be hugely mobilizing for pro-life Americans, who have now seen the fruition of their past political engagement, especially the last 10 years when we’ve focused heavily on Senate races and the White House to give us this court,” said Mallory Carroll, vice president of communications at Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America. The Hill’s Morning Report — Biden leaves Jan. 6 behind with high-stakes Middle East trip The Memo: Jan. 6 panel looks to build on big Hutchinson moment “We’re talking to pro-life Americans, who don’t always vote in non-presidential election years, and people we’ve identified as being persuadable, so the infamous women in the suburbs, Hispanic voters, Black voters [and] traditional Democratic voting groups,” she continued. But Democrats and abortion rights groups are pouring in money as well. In April, the Planned Parenthood Federation of America and Planned Parenthood Action Fund announced a $16 million paid media campaign “to educate and increase urgency around the abortion access crisis facing the country.” “This is more than a Democratic issue,” Ford said. “You have several folks who are Republicans and Independents who support a right to an abortion and who I think will be concerned about the fact that the Supreme Court has now for the first time in our country removed a constitutional right.”

#### Roe v Wade is a winning point for Dems but no momentum for GOP voters

Enten 7/10 [Harry Enten is a Senior Data Reporter and the host of CNN's "Margins of Error" podcast, where he specializes in data-driven journalism. CNN – “Democrats get bounce in polls after Roe v. Wade is overturned,” July 10, 2022 <https://www.cnn.com/2022/07/10/politics/democrats-polls-abortion-biden-boris-johnson/index.html>] Webb

Multiple polls conducted since the Supreme Court's ruling overturning Roe v. Wade find that **broad majorities of the public disapprove** and suggest that in the immediate aftermath **of the ruling**, the decision could be more motivational for Democrats than Republicans. In a new Monmouth University survey released on Tuesday, 60% of US adults disapprove of the Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade, with just 37% approving. There's also a significant intensity gap: 53% of Americans strongly disapprove of the ruling, including 84% of Democrats, compared with 29% who strongly approve, including 58% of Republicans. That's similar to the finding of two other polls conducted after the ruling: an NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist survey (56% of US adults oppose the court's decision, 40% support it) and a CBS News/YouGov survey (59% of US adults disapprove, 41% approve). In the CBS/YouGov survey, 52% overall call the decision a step backward for America, compared with 31% who see it as a step forward. In that poll, 51% also say it will make the lives of most American women worse, compared with 18% who say it will make their lives better. Democrats are more apt to call it a step backward (77%) than Republicans are to say it's a step forward (64%), and while three-quarters of Democrats say it will make life for American women worse (76%), only 33% of Republicans see the ruling as making life better for American women. Just shy of half of US adults, 46%, say it would bother them a lot if abortion were banned in certain states, according to the Monmouth poll, with Democrats 60 percentage points more likely than Republicans to say they would be bothered a lot, 78% vs. 18%. An 85% majority overall say that any such state bans should include exceptions in cases of rape, incest, or when the life of the mother is at risk; 72% say it would bother them a lot of state abortion bans did not include such exceptions. It's still too early to draw strong conclusions about what effect the decision might have on the outcome of the midterm elections. Future polling will show whether the ruling leads to significant and lasting changes either on which party voters prefer, or on which side's voters are more likely to turn out. Most Democrats in the CBS/YouGov poll report that the decision left them feeling upset (78%) and angry (72%), while a somewhat smaller majority of Republicans describe themselves as happy (60%). Half (50%) of Democrats said in the CBS/YouGov poll that the decision makes them more likely to vote in the midterms, compared with just 20% of Republicans who said the same. While this question does not provide an accurate gauge of actual shifts in voters' intention to turn out, it suggests that Democrats are currently more likely than Republicans to consider the Supreme Court's decision a good reason for voting later this year.

### No Link Uniqueness

#### Non-Unique: Working with Ukraine on cybersecurity now.

Baksh 22, 2-1-2022, Mariam Baksh, reporter on federal cyber security, "The U.S. is Working to Improve Ukraine's Cyber Defenses in the Face of Russian Threat" NextGov, <https://www.nextgov.com/cybersecurity/2022/02/us-working-improve-ukraines-cyber-defenses-face-russian-threat/361456/-> RayS

Deputy National Security Advisor for Cyber and Emerging Tech Anne Neuberger will meet with European allies this week as part of an effort to shore up Ukrainian cyber defenses in case of an attack from Russia. “We have been working closely with Ukrainians to harden their defenses, and we will continue to do so in the days ahead,” senior administration officials told reporters Tuesday. “That being said, significant improvements in resilience don’t happen in weeks, and we are realistic about what we can achieve, and also [are] focused on ensuring we have incident response capacity available to them, if needed. The [National Security Council] has been talking to various European counterparts to coordinate that.” The officials said Neuberger will first travel to Brussels to meet with European Union counterparts and members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and then also head to Warsaw to meet with eastern flank NATO members. The effort is coming just weeks after White House officials credited diplomatic channels it established with Russia for the arrest of an individual they believe was responsible for attacking Colonial Pipeline. At the time, the administration said they had not attributed a cyberattack on Ukrainian government websites to Russia. On Monday, officials from Russia and the U.S. publicly squared off over Ukraine’s autonomy in a heated exchange during a U.N. Security Council meeting and western allies are on edge for cyber offenses that they warn could have targets outside Ukraine. “Across all of these engagements, our focus is on ensuring that the United States and our Allies and partners are prepared for any cyber-related contingency and prepared to respond in the current environment,” the senior administration officials said Tuesday. “We will also discuss how we will coordinate and support Ukraine, and each other, in the event that cyberattacks occur.”

### Republicans Lose Key States Now

#### Republicans lose Arizona now --- abortion restrictions unpopular

Bolton 22 (Alexander Bolton is a Staff Writer at The Hill, 06/29/2022, accessed 07/14/2022, The Hill, “The Senate races that could be impacted by end of Roe v. Wade”, <https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/3540603-the-senate-races-that-could-be-impacted-by-end-of-roe-v-wade/>)RMazhankou

Arizona The three leading Republican candidates running to challenge incumbent Sen. Mark Kelly (D) have supported the court’s reversal of Roe v. Wade, giving Democrats ammo in the fall. Arizona has a law dating back to 1901 banning abortion unless one is needed to save the life of a mother. And Gov. Doug Ducey (R) signed a law in March banning abortion after 15 weeks, creating some confusion over which law would take precedent. Pro-abortion rights protesters held rallies in Phoenix, Flagstaff and Tucson after the court handed down its decision in Dobbs. Police fired tear gas at protesters outside the fenced-off state Capitol in Phoenix. A poll by OH Predictive Insights of more than 900 registered Arizona voters in May found that 41 percent said abortion should be legal under any circumstance, 46 percent said it should be legal in certain circumstances and 13 percent said it should be illegal in all circumstances. Three in 5 Arizona voters said they would be very or somewhat impacted by a candidate’s stance on abortion.

#### Republicans lose Georgia now

Lemon 07/14 (Jason Lemon is a journalist and writer focusing primarily on U.S. political news as well as cultural and religious topics that intersect with politics, 07/14/2022, accessed 07/14/2022, *Newsweek*, “Raphael Warnock Beats Herschel Walker Among Georgia Independents: New Poll”, https://www.newsweek.com/raphael-warnock-beats-herschel-walker-among-georgia-independents-new-poll-1724732)RMazhankou

Democratic Senator Raphael Warnock leads his Republican opponent Herschel Walker among Georgia's independent voters as well as among the state's voters overall in a new poll—suggesting that the incumbent is **well positioned** to maintain his seat in November's election. In January 2021, Warnock narrowly defeated GOP Senator Kelly Loeffler in a special runoff election, helping Democrats flip the Senate blue. As the legislative chamber remains evenly split, with Vice President Kamala Harris holding the power to cast tie-breaking votes, Warnock losing his seat in November without Democrats simultaneously picking up another would shift control of the Senate back to the Republicans. New polling carried out by AARP from July 5 to 11 showed Warnock **ahead** with independent voters in Georgia as well as with the state's electorate overall. In the survey, Warnock had the support of 48 percent of independent voters, compared with 45 percent who said they'd back Walker, a former football star who has been endorsed by former President Donald Trump. That's **a 3-point lead** for the incumbent Democrat among independents in Georgia. Herschel Walker and Raphael Warnock Republican Senate candidate Herschel Walker is trailing Democratic Senator Raphael Warnock among Georgia's independent voters and the state's voters overall, according to new polling. Above left, Walker waves to fans as he walks onstage during pre-race ceremonies at a NASCAR event on July 10 in Hampton, Georgia. Above right, Warnock attends a Morehouse College event on February 19 in Atlanta. Similarly, Warnock led by 3 points among voters overall. The Democrat had the backing of 50 percent of all likely voters, compared with 47 percent who supported Walker. The poll surveyed 1,197 voters. A late-June poll by Quinnipiac University showed Warnock with a substantially wider lead. In that survey, the senator received support from 54 percent of registered voters and Walker garnered the backing of just 44 percent—**a difference of 10 points**. That poll surveyed 1,497 voters and has a margin of error of plus or minus 2.5 points. The current Real Clear Politics average of Georgia polls, which takes into account data from January through late June, shows a close race, however. Warnock narrowly leads by about 1.6 percent. The senator has the support of about 47.8 percent of Georgians, and Walker is backed by about 46.2 percent. Warnock won his seat in 2021 with 51 percent of the vote to Loeffler's 49 percent. Just ahead of that runoff, President Joe Biden became the first Democratic presidential candidate to win in Georgia since 1992, beating Trump by less than 12,000 votes. Democrats aim to maintain their **momentum** in Georgia in the 2022 midterm election. Meanwhile, Republicans hope to win back Warnock's seat and get back control of the Senate.

### Can’t Predict

#### Too early to predict midterms

Morini 22 (Marco Morini, Professor of Political Science, “The road to the midterm elections: still a blurred picture,” Aspenia Online international analysis and commentary, 5/31/22, https://aspeniaonline.it/the-road-to-the-midterm-elections-still-a-blurred-picture/)-SL

Historically, the president’s party loses votes in midterm elections. For instance, in the 19 midterms between 1946 and 2018, the president’s party gained in the share of the House popular vote just once. The notable exception happened in 2002 when Republicans won the popular vote by 4.6 points, 4.3 points higher than four years earlier. But the context of that midterm election was highly unusual: it was just one year after 9/11 and President George W. Bush was still extraordinarily popular. The results of the Virginia and New Jersey gubernatorial elections last year and the current low approval rating of President Biden may also suggest that a “red wave” is coming in November. However, it is not only bad news for Democrats. In the 35 races for the Senate, 21 seats are currently occupied by Republicans and only 14 by the Democratic Party. Moreover, six Republican senators will not seek re-election: Shelby (Alabama), Blunt (Missouri), Burr (North Carolina), Portman (Ohio), Inhofe (Oklahoma), and Toomey (Pennsylvania); while only one Democrat, Patrick Leahy (Vermont) retired. In total, 15 Republicans and 13 Democrats are running for re-election. Crucially, in contrast to 2018, when Democrats were defending 10 seats in states that Donald Trump won in 2016, Democrats are holding no seats in any state that was won by Trump in 2020. Meanwhile, Republicans are defending two seats (Pennsylvania and Wisconsin) in states that Biden won in 2020, compared to just one seat (Nevada won by Hillary Clinton in 2016) that was up for election in the 2018 cycle. Primary elections with no current senators running are ongoing; however, the real “battle” for the Senate majority seems to be concentrated in five key states: Arizona, Georgia, Nevada, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. Republicans are targeting the first three states, where incumbent Democrats are fighting for a difficult re-election; the Democratic Party has a significant chance of winning the last two, where the GOP will try to keep its seats in states where Biden narrowly prevailed in 2020. For the House election, the picture is still quite blurred. Many primaries are still to be held and at least 49 representatives (as of 25 May 2022) have announced that they will be retiring (31 Democrats, 18 Republicans). One additional complication is that since these elections will be the first conducted after the post-2020 census redistricting, several districts may lack an incumbent or might even have multiple incumbents. The general prediction is that Republicans have a high chance of taking control of the House after six years of Democratic majorities. However, in current politics, six months are an eternity: inflation, war in Ukraine and the COVID-19 pandemic may be very different from what they are now, and Biden’s approval ratings are already providing signs of revival. After reaching a record-low 41% of positive views in February, three months later the RealClearPolitics average favorability rating positions him three points up, with a general impression that his administration’s reaction to the Russian invasion is starting to pay off in terms of popularity.

## Link Answers

### No Links

#### No link – Voters don’t care about foreign policy, won’t distract from inflation

**Cook 22’** (Charlie Edwards Cook, an American political analyst who specializes in election forecasts and political trends, “Foreign Policy Unlikely to Save Democrats in the Fall,” Cook Political Report, 2-24-22, <https://www.cookpolitical.com/analysis/national/national-politics/foreign-policy-unlikely-save-democrats-fall)-AT>

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, 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, 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, both pretty good barometers of which way the wind is blowing and whether it’s light, moderate, or heavy.In my view, Biden and his team are handling this incredibly challenging crisis far better than many other things over the last year. But this is unlikely to save Democrats from what is increasingly looking to be a pretty horrible midterm election.

#### Voters value domestic issues over NATO, no link, and domestic issues deck fo po solvency.

Stokols 5/30/22 (Eli Stokols is a White House reporter based in the Los Angeles Times’ Washington, D.C., bureau. Published 5/30/22,, Accessed 7/13/22, L.A. Times, “News Analysis: Bold in shoring up democracy abroad, Biden is criticized as timid on the domestic front”, <https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2022-06-30/biden-bold-with-nato-but-measured-at-home>) NSH

President Biden’s five days of meetings in Europe and the bold actions undertaken by the U.S. and its Group of 7 and NATO allies reflect an abrupt sea change in the West’s approach to its own defense in response to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. The conclusion of a historic summit here saw members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [ratify a new strategic concept](https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2022-06-29/nato-summit-biden-commits-more-us-forces-europe) that will maintain a stronger military presence in Eastern Europe and the formal invitation of Finland and Sweden to join the alliance. That came on the heels of a G-7 summit in the Bavarian Alps where leaders [committed billions more to Ukraine’s defense](https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2022-06-27/implored-by-zelensky-biden-and-g-7-allies-will-increase-ukraine-defense-aid-economic-support) and agreed to work toward imposing price caps on Russian oil to further stymie the country’s ability to fund its war. “This summit was about strengthening our alliance, meeting the challenges of the world as it is today,” Biden said Thursday during a news conference, adding that “the world is changing. And NATO is changing as well. Allies across the board are stepping up, increasing defense spending.” “The United States,” he added, “is rallying the world to stand with Ukraine.” But the president, resolute in defense of global democracy, has been slower to respond to changes tearing at the democratic fabric of his own country, some say. His summit meetings were overshadowed by the [Supreme Court ruling striking down Roe vs. Wade](https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2022-06-24/supreme-court-overturns-roe-vs-wade-frees-states-to-outlaw-abortion) and a blockbuster congressional hearing at which a [former aide to President Trump testified](https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2022-06-28/jan-6-hearing-day-6) about how Trump’s behavior on Jan. 6, 2021, contributed to the violent insurrection at the Capitol. Biden’s conviction in Bavaria and Madrid is not likely to improve his low standing with voters fixated on pocketbook issues. But it did offer a sharp contrast with what critics see as his hesitation in seeking to shore up democratic institutions in the United States. “We talk about democracy being in crisis in other countries. Democracy is in crisis in the United States, and it doesn’t always feel like this White House understands that,” said Amanda Litman, the founder of Run for Something, a progressive organization that helps young people run for elected office. At Biden’s NATO news conference, his final event before returning to Washington, the questions he received focused as much on domestic issues as the foreign policy moves he and allies made this week. Asked about a [poll](https://apnews.com/article/inflation-russia-ukraine-biden-covid-health-b6d1751b2554555f7246f9e914b87c59) showing 85% of Americans believing that the country is on the “wrong track,” he was defiant, attributing their frustrations over inflation to Russia’s war in Ukraine and the Supreme Court. “America is better positioned to lead the world than it ever has been,” he said. “The one thing that has been destabilizing is the outrageous behavior of the Supreme Court.” Again urging Americans to channel their frustrations into voting in November’s midterm elections, Biden renewed his call for Congress to codify abortion protections into federal law, saying for the first time that he supports an exception to the Senate’s 60-vote filibuster rule so that legislation can advance with just 50 votes to preserve women’s reproductive rights. “If the filibuster gets in the way, like on voting rights, it should be provided an exception for this action,” he said. That position could help soften some of the rising frustration toward Biden on the left in the wake of the court’s Roe decision. But Democrats don’t appear to have the 50 votes needed to change the filibuster requirement and pass federal abortion protections. Although he [forcefully denounced the ruling](https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2022-06-24/watch-live-biden-speaks-on-supreme-courts-roe-vs-wade-decision) as a “tragic error,” his administration has been clearer spelling out what the president won’t do, ruling out a proposal to situate abortion clinics on federal land and the possibility of adding justices to a Supreme Court dominated by conservatives, three of whom were appointed by his predecessor. Many prominent Democrats, including Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren and Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, have expressed disappointment that Biden hasn’t seemed to share their outrage or sense of urgency in helping women in peril. Asked Thursday whether he would call a public health emergency as Warren and others have called for, Biden demurred, saying only that he plans to meet Friday at the White House with a group of governors to discuss actions at the state level. When a reporter questioned whether he was the best messenger to lead his party’s response following the Roe ruling, Biden offered a somewhat glib response. “I’m the president of the United States of America,” he said with a grin. “That makes me the best messenger.” By comparison, Biden’s commitment to defending Ukraine “as long as it takes” was articulated more forcefully, even as he acknowledged the effects on American consumers and the global economy. Asked how long Americans should tolerate paying more for gas as a result of the war in Ukraine, he was blunt, repeating himself: “As long as it takes so Russia cannot in fact defeat Ukraine and move beyond Ukraine,” he said. “This is a critical, critical position for the world.” Republicans, a few of whom attended the summit and met with Biden before he left Madrid, have largely supported the president’s response to Ukraine. Nevertheless, many have also blamed him for rising gas prices and the inflation that’s been exacerbated by the war. “There’s more of a bipartisan spirit when it comes to NATO than any of Biden’s domestic challenges,” said Ash Jain, an expert on democracies at the Atlantic Council. The juxtaposition between how Biden carries himself abroad alongside like-minded allies and at home is evidence that the president faces more constraints and political challenges within the American political system. “It’s just a much harder environment to operate in and the solutions are much more complicated,” Jain said. Despite the seriousness of the commitments outlined this week by G-7 and NATO allies, Biden’s political weakness at home — and that of other G-7 leaders, who’ve seen their own support and governing coalitions wobble in recent weeks — could work to Russian President Vladimir Putin’s benefit over time, as the autocrat seeks to outlast the West on the battlefield. NATO allies continue to express concern about America’s political instability. They worry about making commitments to Biden that might be cast aside should he lose reelection in 2024. “The other leaders want to know what is he is going to do about a Supreme Court stripping away people’s rights, about these efforts by Trump and others to attack American institutions,” said Brett Bruen, a former National Security Council official in the Obama administration. “He has not had a great plan, and if he doesn’t, the domestic quagmire can become a major drag on what he’s able to accomplish internationally.” Presidents have more latitude to act in foreign affairs than on domestic matters, where they are more constrained by Congress and the courts. But Biden’s reluctance to consider structural changes to the Constitution has been a source of frustration among the base of his party long before the Supreme Court’s Roe decision. “Even if there are some very real structural barriers in place, we need to see the White House and the president feel the same rage and fury and frustration that we do,” said Litman, the progressive organizer. “We need to see that he sees the crisis and is unafraid to do whatever it takes within his power because he’s asking us to sacrifice and organize.” With Democrats narrowly controlling the evenly divided Senate thanks to Vice President Kamala Harris’ ability to break a tie vote, Biden nevertheless has seen much of his legislative agenda derailed. Until Thursday, he had been reluctant to call on Democratic leaders to change the filibuster rule requiring 60 votes to advance legislation — after briefly doing so in a failed effort to pass voting rights protections — to codify the right to an abortion in federal law. The gusher of new revelations about Trump’s role in fomenting the mob that attacked police officers and stormed the Capitol in a brazen attempt to halt the Senate’s certification of Biden’s electoral victory only adds to the pressure on the administration. Pressure on the Justice Department to prosecute the former president — and Biden’s potential 2024 challenger — has grown in recent weeks. Biden’s trepidation about such actions, aides confirm privately, mostly have to do with a sense that they would be perceived as political opportunism and exacerbate the country’s polarization.But with an approval rating of just 39%, Biden and Democrats are facing a potentially disastrous mid-term election — especially if frustrated progressive voters opt not to turn out.

### Link Turns

#### Plan unpopular – hurts Biden and dems

Nomaan Merchant and Hannah Fingerhut 22, reporter on foreign policy and reporter on public opinion, 2-23-2022, "Majority in U.S. oppose major role in Russia-Ukraine conflict, says AP-NORC poll," PBS NewsHour, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/majority-in-u-s-oppose-major-role-in-russia-ukraine-conflict-says-ap-norc-poll-> RayS

WASHINGTON (AP) — There’s little support among Americans for a major U.S. role in the Russia-Ukraine conflict, according to a new poll, even as President Joe Biden imposes new sanctions and threatens a stronger response that could provoke retaliation from Moscow. Biden has acknowledged a growing likelihood that war in Eastern Europe would affect Americans, though he has ruled out sending troops to Ukraine. Gas prices in the U.S. could rise in the short term. And Russian President Vladimir Putin has a range of tools he could use against the U.S., including cyberattacks hitting critical infrastructure and industries. “Defending freedom will have costs for us as well, here at home,” Biden said Tuesday. “We need to be honest about that.” Just 26 percent say the U.S. should have a major role in the conflict, according to a new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. Fifty-two percent say a minor role; 20 percent say none at all. The findings are a reminder for Biden and fellow Democrats that while the crisis may consume Washington in the coming months, pocketbook issues are likely to be a bigger priority for voters heading into the midterm elections. A December AP-NORC poll showed that Americans are particularly focused on economic issues, including rising inflation. The Biden administration has argued that supporting Ukraine is a defense of fundamental American values and has made a concerted effort to declassify intelligence findings underscoring the dangers it sees for Ukraine and the wider European region. But the survey shows widespread public skepticism of the U.S. intelligence community.

### AT: Turnout

#### Turnout is a myth – Democrat base turnout isn’t enough for the win

Teixeira 6-16 (Ruy Teixeira, Senior fellow at the Center for American Progress, Co-founder at the Liberal Patriot, “Turnout Myths Are the Democrats' Drug of Choice”, theliberalpatriot, 6/16/22, <https://theliberalpatriot.substack.com/p/turnout-myths-are-the-democrats-drug>,) - aagg

There are, however, a number of reasons why this turnout fix is highly unlikely to work and, in fact, borders on the delusional. 1. Some Simple Math. Start with this: when Democrats persuade a voter to switch sides, that nets two votes for the Democrats (one less for the Republicans, one more for the Democrats). When Democrats turn out one more voter to vote Democratic that is, of course, a net of only one vote for them. But it’s really worse than that. Typically, Democrats think of increased base turnout in terms of turning out more voters from various pro-Democratic demographic groups—young voters, black voters, Hispanic voters, college-educated whites, whatever. But not all the voters in these groups favor the Democrats so mobilization of more voters from a given group may well net less than one vote per additional voter. For example, looking at current Congressional ballot preferences, Democrats might net only a third of a vote for every additional Hispanic or young voter, six-tenths of a vote from every additional black voter and just a sixth of a vote from every additional college-educated white voter. The math looks even more unfavorable when the following is considered: Democrats tend to assume that nonvoters from a given demographic are the same politically as voters from the same group….except they don’t vote. But a mountain of political science evidence shows that’s not so. Nonvoters, controlling for demographics, tend to be less ideological and, very importantly, if they do vote tend to swing in the direction of the prevailing political environment—which of course is currently terrible for the Democrats and likely to be so on election day. This means the “yield” for the Democrats from higher turnout could be even less than the data above indicates. Finally, the general assumption seems to be that an aggressively polarized election will juice turnout among Democratic-leaning constituencies....but (somehow) not on the other side. That’s not the way it works. The other side gets to vote too so dialing it up to 11 on the Democratic positions may mobilize the other side just as much—maybe more!—than the left’s side. Once again, the basic math on the turnout-driven strategy is much less favorable than most Democrats assume. 2. The Empirical Record. The evidence for turnout patterns driving Democrats’ electoral fate is extremely thin as conclusively demonstrated in The Turnout Myth: Voting Rates and Partisan Outcomes in American National Elections by political scientists Daron Shaw and John Petrocik. Recent election results bear this out. Take the 2020 election. That election presented a very stark choice to voters. And it was indeed a high turnout election. The problem: everyone’s turnout went up, including among groups Democrats would have preferred stayed home. The net result of higher turnout did not significantly boost Democratic fortunes; if anything Republicans may have a benefitted a bit more from the higher levels of turnout. This helps explain why Biden’s 2020 victory was so much narrower than anticipated and why the election saw Democrats lose ground in the House and in state legislatures Closer to the present, look at the Virginia 2021 gubernatorial election. The highly-polarized election, where Republican Glenn Youngkin beat Democrat Terry McAuliffe in a heavily blue-trending state, was a very high turnout election. Under the state’s newly liberalized voting laws, the number of votes cast in this governor’s race was 25 percent higher than in any previous race. Turnout was strong everywhere, including in important Democratic areas like northern Virginia, black precincts and college towns, but also surged in redder areas of the state. The real reason why McAuliffe lost was, above all, vote-switching—in other words, persuasion. According to a detailed vote history analysis by Civis Analytics, vote-switching from 2020 to 2021 accounted for about 80 percent of the shift away from the Democrats in the gubernatorial election. Finally, cast your mind back to the 2018 midterm election where the Democrats did so well. In that election, the Democrats took back the House (a net 40-seat gain), carried the House popular vote by almost nine points and flipped seven Republican-held governorships. Turnout in that election was outstanding, topping 49 percent — the highest midterm turnout since 1914 and up 13 points over the previous midterm, in 2014 — and the demographic composition of the electorate came remarkably close to that of a presidential election year. (Typically, midterm voters tend to be much older and much whiter than those in presidential elections.) This was due both to fewer presidential “drop-off” voters (people who voted in 2016 but not 2018) and to more midterm “surge” voters (those who voted in 2018 but not 2016). Nonetheless, the overwhelming majority of the Democrats’ improved performance came not from fresh turnout of left-of-center voters who typically skip midterms, but rather from people who cast votes in both elections — yet switched from Republican in 2016 to Democratic in 2018. The data firm Catalist, whose numbers on 2018 are the best available, estimates that around 90 percent of the Democrats’ improved performance came from persuasion — from vote-switchers — not turnout. In its analysis, Catalist notes, “If turnout was the only factor, then Democrats would not have seen nearly the gains that they ended up seeing … a big piece of Democratic victory was due to 2016 Trump voters turning around and voting for Democrats in 2018.” It is hard to avoid the conclusion that higher turnout is not the Holy Grail for the Democrats, either in this coming election or in future ones. Instead, it is time for them to recover the lost art of persuasion. It may be too late in the current cycle for this to be done or done enough to make a difference. But done it will have to be if Democrats are serious about creating a durable majority that can carry their agenda forward. As I have noted previously, Democrats may be better off accepting they will take their lumps in 2022 (while attempting to minimize the damage) but use the election as a teachable moment. That teachable moment should be, above all, about re-acquainting the party with the actually-existing demographics and politics of the country they live in. Given patterns of educational and geographic polarization, they are now at a crippling disadvantage in what remains an overwhelmingly working class and non-urban country. There are simply too many districts and states in the country where polarization redounds to their disadvantage and makes them uncompetitive. That is not a problem that can be solved by “mobilizing the base”. It calls instead for expanding your coalition by persuading more working class and non-urban voters you share their values and priorities.

### AT: 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.”

## Impact Answers

### AT: Econ Internal

#### The economy improves after midterms regardless of who wins.

Klebnikov 22(Sergei Klebnikov is a senior reporter at Forbes covering markets and business news. Published 1/19/22, Accessed 7/14/22, *Forbes,* “Here’s What Happens To The Stock Market If Republicans Take Congress In November”, <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=40f0813d2562>. NSH

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.

### AT: Econ Impact

#### Economic decline doesn’t lead to war – counterexamples, rational actors, motivation

Walt 20 (Stephen M. Walt is a professor of international relations at Harvard University. “Will a Global Depression Trigger Another World War?” Foreign Policy. Published 5-13-20, accessed 7-21-21. 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.

#### 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/]

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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.

### Gridlock Bad

#### Political gridlock bad--- affects infrastructure

Fishbane & Tomer ’19(Lara, Adie, Adie Tomer is a Senior Fellow at Brookings Metro and leads the Metropolitan Infrastructure Initiative. Tomer is an expert in infrastructure policy and urban economics, with a particular focus on transportation and digital technology issues, Lara Fishbane is a former senior research assistant with the Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, “Political gridlock blocks infrastructure progress and costs our economy”, 4/25/19, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2019/04/25/political-gridlock-blocks-infrastructure-progress-and-costs-our-economy/>) SM

Infrastructure talks are heating up again. In just the last week, 2020 presidential candidate Amy Klobuchar pitched a trillion-dollar infrastructure proposal while the Trump administration and Congress continue to flirt with major infrastructure packages. This kind of thinking reflects clear public support for greater investment. While these concepts and conversations suggest bipartisanship could deliver infrastructure reform, the current state of national politics delivers anything but an infrastructure boost. Put bluntly, when political discord leads to infrastructure failure, it doesn’t just deepen our distrust of government—it also takes our economy down with it. After all, it was only months ago when fights between House Democrats and the Republican White House spilled over into our airports. With public employees and contractors forced to work without pay during the budget shutdown, it was little surprise that TSA security officers and air traffic controllers started calling in sick. Then, 35 days after the shutdown began, LaGuardia Airport closed due to staffing shortages. The budget fight ended just hours later. While the budget fight may be over (for now), our political system is regularly causing less perceptible but more sustained disruptions to our road, water, and other physical networks. We can no longer afford this kind of unnecessary economic harm due to short-sighted politics. This administration’s trade and tariff policies serve as a potent example of self-inflicted economic harm. Since the Trump administration applied tariffs on imported steel and aluminum, the cost index for steel mill products alone rose by almost 14 percent from March 2018 to January 2019. This directly impacts our state departments of transportation, their local peers, and water authorities who all rely on steel and aluminum to construct major capital projects. As Mark Niquette at Bloomberg reported, states from California to Michigan to Virginia have already seen certain project costs jump by millions of dollars. Meanwhile, steel and aluminum manufacturers in the U.S. have been hit hard by the costs, needing to lay off workers to close budget gaps. Price increases can act as a fiscal virus, infecting an agency’s entire project pipeline. Since infrastructure agencies work on tight budgets and are naturally capital-constrained, there’s only so much construction to go around. So, when current projects start costing significantly more, agencies have no choice but to delay other projects. If the tariffs remain in future years—and the politically-motivated rhetoric suggests the president will keep them—the effects will only compound as more projects are either delayed or outright scrapped. The net result: lower quality infrastructure than if the country never instituted the new tariffs. Oddly enough, while the president pushes a trade war to boost global competitiveness, our domestic infrastructure will be less prepared to power our economy once the war is over. Politics disrupting our infrastructure stretches far beyond tariff fights. For example, the U.S. Department of Transportation has now twice delayed promised capital grants to local transit agencies. Similarly, Congress and the Federal Aviation Administration cannot agree on how to manage and comprehensively fund a new satellite-based air traffic control system. They’re all guaranteed ways to raise infrastructure costs in the long-term and reduce public trust today. That’s why these next two- and four-year periods are so important at the federal level. For the nearly two years remaining on President’s Trump term, there is a major negotiation coming with congressional Democrats around our next surface transportation bill, if not a larger infrastructure package. If the two parties can craft a bill that boosts investment around long-run needs—from resilience to electrification to digitalization—and reduce tariff impacts in the process, we’ll all be in a better place. Washington has the chance to give long-run certainty to our state and local partners, who build all the projects and pay the majority of costs, anyway. But if political compromise doesn’t happen—and we have our doubts—the pressure will only be higher on the next Congress and president to deliver a more collaborative, bipartisan vision for the country’s future. It’s why we’re not just watching what happens on the Hill these next couple years, but why we all should carefully watch the infrastructure and trade platforms put together by the Democratic candidates for president. Of course, everyday Americans use infrastructure systems that remind us what political compromise can deliver. The national highway network is still one of the world’s great capital projects. The commercial air network is the busiest and safest in the world. We’ve grown accustomed to clean water access and are shocked when it fails. But we have to remember how easily our politics can upend high-functioning infrastructure. As the budget fight grounded planes at one of the busiest airports in our nation’s biggest city, stacking up on the runway, the image said it all. Unnecessary gridlock eventually drags us all down.

#### Gridlock is bad – stops change and solving problems, Congress must cooperate

Clark ’20 (Suzanne P. Clark is an American business executive. She is currently the president and CEO of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the first woman to hold that office, “Gridlock simply isn’t an option for business. We shouldn’t accept it from Washington, either” , 10/7/20, <https://www.dialogueproject.study/perspectives/suzanne-p-clark>) SM

WE MUST ALL STRENGTHEN THE ‘GOVERNING CENTER’ In business, building consensus is a fact of life. The companies, both large and small, that ultimately succeed are those propelled by a can-do spirit and a relentless drive for solutions. And the executives who lead them must bridge divides and rally teams around shared goals every day in order to boost productivity, support morale, serve customers, and drive growth. These leaders welcome various viewpoints and vigorous exchanges of ideas because it’s often through the questioning and challenging that breakthroughs are achieved and innovations are discovered. Gridlock is not an option for business, and it shouldn’t be an option for the elected officials who run our government. Voters rightly expect results from the men and women who represent them. And businesses—of all sectors and sizes whose interests the U.S. Chamber represents—expect our leaders to work through differences and make smart policy decisions that will allow them to invest, hire, and grow. We need a Washington that works, driven by men and women who work together, to help rebuild our country and ensure all its citizens have equal opportunity to succeed. In today’s polarized political environment, this is easier said than done. For many, compromise is a four-letter word and consensus is a fantasy. But that does not have to be the case—and given the sobering slate of challenges before us, it cannot be. We need a Washington that works, driven by men and women who work together, to help rebuild our country and ensure all its citizens have equal opportunity to succeed. Challenges of the magnitude we face—an economic crisis caused by the pandemic and a national reckoning over systemic inequalities—should compel our leaders to rise to the moment. They can reject the tribalism that has fractured not only our political system but also our society. They can lead with constructive discourse in pursuit of real solutions. That requires listening to all viewpoints. Negotiating in good faith acknowledges the skills, knowledge, and perspectives others bring to the table—including those with whom you disagree. Shutting them out of the conversation will not build the good will needed to achieve compromise. Our leaders also must focus on achieving an outcome, not getting credit (or assigning blame). This is easier when operating from the assumption that everyone fundamentally shares the same goals of helping people and solving problems, even if ideas on how to get there differ. When it comes to serving our country, our leaders will succeed as a group, or fail as a group—regardless of party affiliation. Inevitably, there will be issues where the gulf seems too wide. That is why we need a strong governing center, populated by lawmakers from both parties who have the courage to reach across the aisle and build consensus. We know these leaders exist—and they are crucial to restoring a well-functioning government. In order to help grow the governing center, the Chamber recently revamped its congressional scorecard for the first time in 40 years. Now lawmakers can earn the Chamber’s support not only by voting for the business position on key bills, but also by demonstrating bipartisanship and legislative leadership. We were proud to recognize the 59 Democratic and Republican members of Congress who earned the highest scores by these measures at our first annual Governing with Distinction Awards earlier this year. We are committed to championing them and growing their ranks. Such leaders have long been part of our legacy. As President George W. Bush said in his moving eulogy for Rep. John Lewis, “John and I had our disagreements, of course. But in the America John Lewis fought for, and the America I believe in, differences of opinion are inevitable elements and evidence of democracy in action.” Collegiality and cooperation—not just in politics, but across the public discourse—will be needed to confront the most daunting set of challenges in decades: a global pandemic, a devastated economy, and deep-seated inequality of opportunity. These crises are intertwined, and if we don’t work together to address them, they will compound the problems dividing our country.

### AT: Energy Security

#### Foreign competition and the switch to renewables make long-term energy independence impossible.

Haley **Zaremba 21**. Writer and journalist based in Mexico City. She has extensive experience writing and editing environmental features. "The Four Biggest Threats To U.S. Energy Independence". OilPrice. 5-20-2021. https://oilprice.com/Energy/Energy-General/The-Four-Biggest-Threats-To-US-Energy-Independence.html accessed 7-21-2021

**2. Competition** All of the developments in the global clean energy transition outlined above mean that sitting on top of massive petroleum reserves **no longer translates** to **global power** and **influence** like it used to. Clean energy, in many ways, is a democratizing development in global energy industries, as practically anyone with the infrastructure can produce their own energy relatively cheaply. Of course, while generally true, this is a gross oversimplification. Even renewable energy and electric vehicles require finite resources that certain countries have in spades and which others do not. This will likely be a **major geopolitical factor** in the **energy landscape** of the future--but it won’t be in the United States’ favor. A clean energy resource war could be brewing between the first and second biggest economies in the world. Renewables are currently reliant on lengthy supply chains for finite **rare earth minerals** and metals including lithium and cobalt, and at present **China** is **in control** of more than **90 percent** of some of these **essential resources.**  While China has been keen to become energy independent and energy secure for a long time now, renewables have emerged as the nation’s clearest path to achieving that goal, as well as to establishing Beijing as one of the major energy-industry superpowers of the world, if not the outright global leader. While the United States will still be able to produce plenty of its own energy through natural gas and its own clean energy production, there is no doubt that the United States’ overall **energy independence** and **exporting power** will fade right along with the **shale revolution** as other powers around the globe **expand their own energy production capacity.**

#### Oil dependence doesn’t cause war.

Meierding 16—Assistant Professor at the Naval Postgraduate School [Emily, “Dismantling the Oil Wars Myth,” *Security Studies*, 25(2): 258-288, Emory Libraries]

These findings indicate that oil wars, as conventionally conceived, do not exist. Oil is an extremely valuable natural resource. However, invasion, occupation, international, and investment costs reduce the payoffs of seizing foreign resources. Profiting from seized oil is difficult at best and impossible at worst. As a result, petroleum prizes are not sufficiently valuable for oil to be a significant contributor to leaders’ decisions for international war. Consequently, a territory’s petroleum endowments are a poor predictor of its ability to inspire interstate conflict. These observations have positive implications for contemporary disputes in oil-rich regions like the South China Sea, East China Sea, eastern Mediterranean, and Arctic, as they suggest that competition over these territories’ oil resources will not lead to intense militarized conflicts. However, one might counter this optimistic assessment by arguing that the contemporary contests are not analogous to the historical cases. The greatest difference between them is that, in the current disputes, political authority is ambiguous; multiple countries have legitimate claims to contested territories. Consequently, in these areas, an aggressor would not be seizing “foreign” oil. This distinction would reduce occupation costs, as local resistance would be more restrained.140 Invasion costs would also be lower, since most of the resources at stake in these contests are prospective; there is less oil infrastructure for aggressors and targets to destroy.141 These arguments have some merit. However, prospective resources also generate higher investment costs, as countries must explore for oil instead of just producing it. The total payoffs that an aggressor can accrue from prospective resources are also very uncertain. In addition, international costs remain high, as the international community condemns the use of force in all territorial disagreements, including those where political authority is ambiguous. Hence, the costs of aggression should still deter contemporary adversaries from fighting for oil. This is not to say that current disputes in purportedly oil-rich regions will never escalate. However, if they do, it will be for other, more pressing reasons. The resultant conflicts will not be oil wars

### AT: Readiness

#### Readiness impact cards are lobbying tactics.

Adams 18 Gordon Adams, professor of international relations at American University's School of International Service and is a distinguished fellow at the Stimson Center. [The Military’s 'Readiness' Scam Worked Again, 2-14-2018, https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/02/15/the-militarys-readiness-scam-worked-again/]

For the next two years, at least, the American public should be spared the U.S. Defense Department’s **wailing about “readiness.”** After seven years of teeth-gnashing and garment-rending, the military is finally getting what it wants: more money than ever. The Donald Trump administration’s defense budget request for fiscal year 2019 is out, less than a week after Congress cut an overall deal on spending levels for 2018 and 2019. Unlike the domestic spending part of the administration’s budget request, the defense numbers aren’t dead on arrival — in fact, the military can count on getting every cent. The congressional deal set **new levels for defense**, agreeing to $700 billion for national defense in 2018 and $716 billion in 2019. That’s nearly $165 billion more than the military had anticipated prior to this year. The United States is back to defense spending, in constant dollars, that is higher than the peak spending levels under Ronald Reagan. Only in 2010, at the height of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, was defense spending higher. It’s worth thinking about why defense spending is about to explode. It’s not because of some revolutionary change in the global security environment — aside from those pesky North Koreans and their nukes, America has never been so secure. It’s not because the U.S. military’s effectiveness has declined; it remains the most powerful force in the world, highly capable and very ready. The reason the Pentagon’s budget is now on a long-term upswing is because the military has spent years **loudly lobbying** for such an increase while complaining about an alleged “readiness crisis.” Complaining works, at least when the military does it, because politicians in both parties **fear the military’s wrath**. Partisan gridlock can still impede efforts to bump up the military’s resources, but now that Republicans are in control of Congress and the White House, there are no more hurdles standing in the way. None of this is to suggest, however, that the congressional generosity will buy Americans more security or a better force than the one they have today. Every military leader in history has wanted more resources at his or her disposal. U.S. secretaries of defense have been especially adamant since 2011, when the Budget Control Act first set limits on both defense and domestic spending. The tears shed by the Pentagon went beyond complaining about those pesky budget caps. They also touched on declining military readiness, units that weren’t combat ready, Chinese military expansion, and just about anything else that defense officials thought might put the spending train back on the tracks. All the Pentagon’s complaints **ignored** the **reality** that since 2001 the military has been receiving tens, and sometimes even hundreds, of billions of dollars in additional funding — above and beyond the budget caps — thanks to a **special slush fund, the O**verseas **C**ontingency **O**perations account. That money is supposed to be designated for emergencies, but both the Pentagon and the Congress have routinely used this budget for nonemergency purposes, such as paying, training, and supporting existing troops (all normally in the Pentagon’s base budget) and buying equipment already in the long-term defense plan. Nevertheless, the military has complained that its readiness is in tatters. And after all those years of deployments, military officials testifying to Congress could always come up with a sad anecdote about planes being cross-decked to an outgoing carrier, fighters not ready to fly, or missing pilots. U.S. policymakers have seen this movie many times before. I experienced it myself in the 1990s, when the brass was displeased with the budget levels set by the Bill Clinton administration and whined about readiness problems to the Office of Management and Budget, where I worked. My follow-up with the Pentagon’s civil servants made it clear that the measures they were using were rigged to show low levels of readiness; they set standards that called units “ready” only if they had every capability imaginable to fight a major ground war, and they counted as “unready” units that were back from deployments and had missed a training slot for that big war, one they would soon be scheduled to receive. We knew the Pentagon was using **manipulated numbers to bludgeon us** with demands for more funding. Nevertheless, we caved: In 1994, we added more than $20 billion to the defense budget, not really to fix readiness but to try to make the issue go away before the midterm elections that year. (It didn’t work, by the way.) Four years later, we did it again, busting previous budget commitments to add billions of dollars more. (For an excellent analysis of that fight, read This War Really Matters: Inside the Fight for Defense Dollars by the late George C. Wilson, once the premier Pentagon correspondent for the Washington Post.) Plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose — the more things change, the more they stay the same — as military parade leaders in France might say. Today, once again, the U.S. military stands on the brink of **an alleged readiness crisis**, and more money is needed, pronto. **The trail of tears became so deep** that it caught up Republicans and Democrats (always eager to portray themselves as “tough on national security”). It caught up in the lachrymose flow virtually all of the think tank preachers at the American Enterprise Institute, the Heritage Foundation, the Center for a New American Security, and large panels of bipartisan heavyweights reviewing the Pentagon’s four-year defense studies. Everyone in Washington seems to have been swept up in the tide; even some of the most careful, independent analysts are on board. As Todd Harrison of the Center for Strategic and International Studies noted, “We are stretched too thin.… We are trying to do too much with the size force that we have all around the world.” All this hand-wringing is happening about a ground force that, after nearly two decades of war, is **highly experienced** and **primed** — and largely back at home; a Navy that is larger than any other navy in the world and the only one with global reach; an Air Force that is **larger** and **more technologically advanced** than any other, flying, bombing, tanking, airlifting globally. **America’s is the only military** that has **global basing**, **logistics**, **communications**, **transportation**, and **intelligence**; **nobody else**, not the Chinese and certainly not the Russians, **comes even close**. But this is Washington, where the policy and analytical sheep gather under one tree to be safe from the storm of political criticism. The British novelist Lawrence Durrell comes to mind: “How nugatory and how glum / The endomorphs of scholarship / Like hippos on a sinking ship / Stand bum to silly bum.” (Just replace scholarship with politics and the comparison is apt.) So, on what will the Pentagon spend this largesse? The last time the Pentagon got this kind of fiscal bump-up — in 1981-1982 under Reagan — bureaucrats and military officers were reaching into desk drawers to dust off plans they never thought would be funded. As Reagan might have said, “There they go again.” There is now a lot of discussion of funding going into training, equipment maintenance, and repair personnel. But the big bucks, according to the Pentagon’s own briefing, will go into conventional military equipment. That means more F-35s and F-18s than planned, a new presidential helicopter, Navy surveillance planes and destroyers, Marine helicopters, space launch rockets, tank modifications, another Army multipurpose vehicle, and a joint tactical vehicle the Army, Marines, and Air Force can all use. Basically, the services will soon have shiny new hardware. There will also be a push to modernize the country’s nuclear arsenal. This will be done under the guise of “enhanced deterrence,” but really this amounts to a game of maintaining appearances and “keeping up with the Joneses” — or the Russians, Chinese, and North Koreans. The strategic reasons for this effort are meager; the reality is that the United States has **more than enough deterrent force today** and all the additional nuclear forces in the world will only undermine deterrence and stimulate even more arms racing. All this will be combined with accelerated investments in sea- and ground-based missile defense systems, which have yet to prove themselves, despite decades of testing and billions of dollars invested. The contribution of all this spending to solve an alleged “readiness crisis” is not obvious. It’s worth heeding what Defense Secretary James Mattis promised after the deal was signed: “I am very confident that what the Congress has now done, and the president is going to allocate to us in the budget, is what we need to bring us back to a position of primacy.” **An unobtainable primacy**, of course, is not the same thing as readiness.

#### No impact---American power isn’t key to global stability.

Christopher **Fettweis 17**. Associate Professor of Political Science at Tulane University. “Unipolarity, Hegemony, and the New Peace,” Security Studies, 26:3, 423-451, 5-8-2017, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09636412.2017.1306394, accessed 7-17-2021

Conflict and Hegemony by Region Even the most ardent supporters of the hegemonic-stability explanation do not contend that US influence extends equally to all corners of the globe. The United States has concentrated its policing in what George Kennan used to call “strong points,” or the most important parts of the world: Western Europe, the Pacific Rim, and Persian Gulf.64 By doing so, Washington may well have contributed more to great power peace than the overall global decline in warfare. If the former phenomenon contributed to the latter, by essentially providing a behavioral model for weaker states to emulate, then perhaps this lends some support to the hegemonic-stability case.65 During the Cold War, the United States played referee to a few intra-West squabbles, especially between Greece and Turkey, and provided Hobbesian reassurance to Germany’s nervous neighbors. **Other**, equally plausible **explanations exist for stability** in the first world, including the presence of a common enemy, democracy, economic interdependence, general war aversion, etc. The looming presence of the leviathan is certainly among these plausible explanations, but only inside the US sphere of influence. Bipolarity was bad for the nonaligned world, where Soviet and Western intervention routinely exacerbated local conflicts. Unipolarity has generally been much better, but whether or not this was due to US action is again **unclear**. Overall US interest in the affairs of the Global South has dropped markedly since the end of the Cold War, as has the level of violence in almost all regions. There is less US intervention in the political and military affairs of Latin America compared to any time in the twentieth century, for instance, and also less conflict. Warfare in Africa is at an all-time low, as is relative US interest outside of counterterrorism and security assistance.66 Regional peace and stability exist where there is US active intervention, as well as where there is not. **No direct relationship seems to exist across regions**. If intervention can be considered a function of direct and indirect activity, of both political and military action, a regional picture might look like what is outlined in Table 1. These assessments of conflict are by necessity relative, because there has not been a “high” level of conflict in any region outside the Middle East during the period of the New Peace. Putting aside for the moment that important caveat, some points become clear. The great powers of the world are clustered in the upper right quadrant, where US intervention has been high, but conflict levels low. US intervention is **imperfectly correlated** with stability, however. Indeed, it is conceivable that the relatively high level of US interest and activity has made the security situation in the **Persian Gulf** and broader **Middle East worse**. In recent years, substantial hard power investments (Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq), moderate intervention (Libya), and reliance on diplomacy (Syria) have been **equally ineffective** in stabilizing states torn by conflict. While it is possible that the region is essentially unpacifiable and no amount of police work would bring peace to its people, it remains hard to make the case that the US presence has improved matters. In this “strong point,” at least, **US hegemony has failed to bring peace**. In much of the rest of the world, the United States has not been especially eager to enforce any particular rules. Even rather incontrovertible evidence of genocide has not been enough to inspire action. Washington’s intervention choices have at best been erratic; Libya and Kosovo brought about action, but much more blood flowed uninterrupted in Rwanda, Darfur, Congo, Sri Lanka, and Syria. The US record of peacemaking is not exactly a long uninterrupted string of successes. During the turn-of-the-century conventional war between Ethiopia and Eritrea, a highlevel US delegation containing former and future National Security Advisors (Anthony Lake and Susan Rice) made a half-dozen trips to the region, but was unable to prevent either the outbreak or recurrence of the conflict. Lake and his team shuttled back and forth between the capitals with some frequency, and President Clinton made repeated phone calls to the leaders of the respective countries, offering to hold peace talks in the United States, all to no avail.67 The war ended in late 2000 when Ethiopia essentially won, and it controls the disputed territory to this day. The Horn of Africa is hardly the only region where states are free to fight one another today without fear of serious US involvement. Since they are choosing not to do so with increasing frequency, something else is probably affecting their calculations. Stability exists even in those places where the potential for intervention by the sheriff is minimal. Hegemonic stability can only take credit for influencing those decisions that would have ended in war without the presence, whether physical or psychological, of the United States. It seems hard to make the case that the relative peace that has descended on so many regions is primarily due to the kind of heavy hand of the neoconservative leviathan, or its lighter, more liberal cousin. **Something else appears to be at work**.

### AT: Dems win 2024

#### Midterm results can’t be used to predict the 2024 election

**Skelley and Yi** (Geoffrey Skelley and Jean Yi, election analyst at FiveThirtyEight and a former politics intern at FiveThirtyEight, “Stop Using The Midterms To Predict Presidential Elections”, FiveThirtyEight, February 25, 2022, <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/stop-using-the-midterms-to-predict-presidential-elections/)-> LASA IS

But while a strong Republican performance in 2022 might influence Biden’s thinking on 2024, it’s a mistake to expect the midterm result to predict how the country will vote in the ensuing presidential election. As the chart below shows, there’s little relationship between the margin in the national popular vote for the U.S. House in a midterm election and the national popular vote margin in the next presidential contest. So whatever happens in the House this November, don’t expect it to forecast the results of the next presidential race. More often than not, midterm and presidential results have been miles apart. For instance, in 1994, the GOP captured Congress in the midterm “Republican Revolution” amidst then-President Bill Clinton’s poor approval ratings, winning the House popular vote by about 7 percentage points. But in 1996, Clinton ended up claiming a sleepy reelection victory by 8.5 points over Bob Dole — a swing of more than 15 points. In fact, on average, there’s been a swing of about 12 points from the midterm to the subsequent presidential contest. That said, midterm elections and their following presidential races have sometimes run close together: Democrats swept back into power in the 2006 midterm election with an 8-point edge in the House vote, for instance, and then-President Barack Obama won by a similar 7-point margin nationally in 2008. In fact, midterm and presidential elections have run closer together in recent years — but importantly, there is still not much of a relationship despite this. Rather, this seems to be happening because landslide presidential wins are increasingly a thing of the past. Instead, lopsided midterm results for the party not in the White House are increasingly becoming the norm, then followed by highly competitive presidential races.

#### GOP win locks in Trump’s victory in 2024—independently wrecks democracy

Mershon (Tony Mershon, student at Ohio State University, “Midterm Elections for Statewide Election Officials Could Spell Trouble for 2024”, Democratic Erosion, February 14, 2022, https://www.democratic-erosion.com/2022/02/14/midterm-elections-for-statewide-election-officials-could-spell-trouble-for-2024/) – LASA IS

In the aftermath of the 2020 Presidential election and President Trump’s attempt to subvert its results, there has been an increased focus on the oft overlooked statewide position of secretary of state. During his attempts to subvert the results of the election, President Trump put pressure on secretaries of state across the country to undermine the results in their respective states. As the midterm elections draw near, and with many Secretary of State positions on the ballot, the former President is endorsing candidates in key battleground states who agree with his claims of fraud in the 2020 Presidential election. If they are appointed to office, these candidates could undermine the nation’s free and fair elections in 2024. The secretary of state responsibilities include the management and oversight over elections within their respective state. While they run with the affiliation of a political party, the office tends to act in a bureaucratic sense and does not get involved with partisan conflicts. The position had very little spotlight until the aftermath of the 2020 presidential election when former President Trump attempted to overturn the results of the election. This is most evidently seen in his call to Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger, a Republican, to “find” about 11,000 ballots needed to flip the results in the state from a Trump loss to a win. Raffensberger refused President Trump’s demand, and the election in Georgia was certified as a Biden victory, supported by several recounts that reinforced the same result. With current officials across both parties refusing to help President Trump overturn the election, he has begun to endorse candidates for Secretary of State who support his claim of fraud. With the 2022 midterm elections approaching, 27 secretary of state seats are up for election across the nation. Within these races there are 21 candidates in 18 states who deny the validity of the last Presidential election’s results. Of these, Trump has endorsed three candidates for the position in Arizona, Georgia, and Michigan: three competitive states from the last election cycle. One such example is Arizona state Representative Mark Fincher, who attended the January 6 riot and has introduced a bill to decertify Arizona’s 2020 election. Even in Georgia, Raffensperger faces a primary challenge from U.S Rep Jody Hice, who is seeking the position to “aggressively pursue voter fraud.” While these candidates actively sow doubt about the previous election, they are attempting to be elected to control the next ones. If elected, they can use their office to skew and manipulate election results in Trump’s favor if he runs again in 2024. If elected, Secretaries of State who support baseless claims of election fraud will weaken U.S democracy by undermining the country’s free and fair elections. President Trump’s current attempt to put supporters of his claims of fraud into secretary of state offices across the country would enable him to politicize election institutions, decrease faith in the stability of elections, and potentially overturn unfavorable results. If these hyper-partisan candidates are elected, it would mark a stark change in the office of secretary of state, making it a much more political body. Instead of acting in a nonpartisan manner, these new secretaries would be able to use the powers of their office for the benefit of Trump’s election attempts. While there are concerns that these candidates could take action against election results, they would also diminish faith in America’s democracy and electoral system. A January 2022 poll from Quinnipiac found that 58 percent of Americans believe that the country’s democracy is under the threat of collapse. Since the Secretary of State leads elections in each state, if there is not faith in them to properly fulfill their duties, there is little chance that the public would believe that elections are free and fair. With a majority of Americans believing that democracy is under threat, it is important that the people in charge of elections are able to instill the public’s trust in the electoral system’s ability to uphold democracy. It would be a hard task to strengthen democracy while those in charge of elections are actively supporting notions of fraud. Furthermore, if Trump runs once again in 2024, supporting Secretaries of State in key states could potentially help undermine election results, in the guise of security, in their states to reverse results in favor of Trump. Altogether, these factors demonstrate the threat that these candidates can potentially have to U.S democracy.

### Impact Turn – Populism

#### Republican win lead to populism

Ulmer 5/26/22 – (Alexandra Ulmer is a U.S. National Correspondent with Reuters. “Beyond Donald Trump, Trumpism is the winner in U.S. midterm primaries," Japan Times, 5-26-2022, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2022/05/26/world/us-midterms-trumpism/>) – LASA LC

The crushing defeat of David Perdue in Tuesday’s Republican gubernatorial primary in Georgia likely delighted Donald Trump’s adversaries, who have been keeping scorecards to measure the performance of election candidates backed by the former U.S. president. **Trump has weighed in on November’s midterm elections like no former president, announcing more than 190 endorsements and holding rallies with his proteges**. The success of his endorsees is seen as a key sign of his continued influence over the party as he hints at another run for the White House in 2024. But political analysts and Republican strategists caution that any jubilation among Trump’s enemies over Perdue’s loss to Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp is short-sighted, and that any scorecard is a poor barometer for the state of **Trumpism in the United States in 2022.** While Trump’s candidates have had mixed success so far this year in party primaries, **many Republican voters still embrace Trump’s false claims** of voter fraud in the 2020 election, as well as his right-wing, **“America First” populist ideology**. And failure to win Trump’s endorsement has not stopped some Republican candidates from going hard-right to try to win over his base. “In 2016, Trump was really the only candidate running as that sort of populist. Now it’s increasingly what most Republican primary candidates sound like,” said Republican strategist Alex Conant. That underlines the continuation of the Trump-led metamorphosis of the Republican Party since he was voted out of the White House in 2020, even as some party leaders seek to move the party away from Trumpism, the strategists and analysts said. “I think the No. 1 thing **Trump has absolutely changed in the party** is that **Republicans don’t even try playing nice anymore.** My side has become more angry,” said Republican strategist Chuck Warren. The people’s ‘Make America Great Again’ Trump’s kingmaker status was put to the test this month when several high-profile, Trump-backed candidates faced Republican primaries in Ohio, Pennsylvania, North Carolina and Georgia. Around two-thirds of high-profile candidates backed by Trump triumphed in their contests in May, although some were running unopposed or against weak challengers. One race, the Republican senate contest in Pennsylvania between television personality Mehmet Oz, who received Trump’s endorsement, and former hedge fund executive David McCormick, has yet to be decided. In lobbying for the former president’s endorsement, both men **cast aside their elite backgrounds to espouse the Trump-style populism that now resonates with Republicans.** The primary was shaken up by Kathy Barnette, a conservative political commentator, who came from nowhere at the 11th hour to tighten a race that had until then appeared to be a two-man contest. While she finished a distant third in the primaries, analysts said she was emblematic of how Trump’s Make America Great Again movement has expanded beyond his control. “MAGA does not belong to President Trump,” Barnette said during a Republican debate last month, even as Trump spoke out against her. “Although he coined the word, **MAGA actually belongs to the people**.” Republican voters in Pennsylvania also backed Trump-endorsed far-right candidate Doug Mastriano for governor, who supports abortion bans with no exceptions and backs Trump’s false claims of election fraud. Mastriano won his contest. In North Carolina, Republican voters powered Trump-backed Representative Ted Budd, who voted to overturn Joe Biden’s election win, to victory in the state’s Republican Senate nomination. Georgia’s governor’s race, where Perdue was pummeled on Tuesday by Kemp, shows how the Republican Party has shifted to the right, irrespective of how Trump-endorsed candidates perform in these primaries. While Kemp did not entertain Trump’s conspiracy theories of 2020 election fraud, he did enact sweeping voting restrictions, limited abortions and expanded gun rights. But voters were only willing to follow Trump so far in backing flawed candidates in May’s nominating contests. In another race on Tuesday, for Georgia’s secretary of state position, some experts had forecast neither securing a majority, triggering a run-off. Instead, incumbent Brad Raffensperger narrowly defeated Trump-endorsed Rep. Jody Hice, who amplified Trump’s baseless claims that he actually won the Georgia presidential vote in 2020. In North Carolina, voters ousted scandal-plagued congressman Madison Cawthorn despite Trump’s last-minute plea to give him “a second chance.” And in Nebraska, Trump’s choice for governor, Charles Herbster, lost amid accusations that he had sexually harassed several women. But what is already clear, analysts say, is that Trump’s winning 2016 strategy to seize on the issues **bitterly polarizing** Americans is increasingly being emulated by Republican candidates this year and enthusiastically embraced by party supporters. **The spread of this right-wing populism** may ultimately open the door for more challengers to Trump’s vice-like grip on the party ahead of the next presidential election, said Conant, the Republican strategist.