



# Everytown - Gun Safety COVID Messaging Test Results

## Summary

On behalf of Everytown for Gun Safety Action Fund, Civis Analytics measured the impact of various forms of messaging on the 2020 presidential race. We surveyed 16.5K respondents in AZ, CO, FL, GA, IA, MI, MN, NV, NH, NC, PA, TX, and WI from 5/22 to 5/30.

The analysis below shows findings from two lanes of Democratic messaging we tested: Gold Standards messaging (core Democratic arguments on issues such as health care, taxes, Social Security, and Medicare), and largely COVID-related Gun Safety messaging – the full text of the 9 messages tested can be found in the Appendix.

Respondents were randomly served either no message (control group), or a message from one of the two lanes. We then asked them a series of outcome questions, including a 2020 Presidential Vote Choice question that read:

*If the presidential election were held tomorrow and the candidates for president were Republican Donald Trump and Democrat Joe Biden, who would you vote for?*

We compared responses after receiving messaging to control group responses to measure the effect that each message had on vote choice.

## Key Findings

**1. Gold Standards and COVID/Gun Safety messaging were both effective at moving voters towards voting for Joe Biden.** Gold Standards messages overall resulted in a 1.6pp increase in the probability of a respondent choosing Biden, while COVID/Gun Safety messaging resulted in a 1.4pp gain.

| Message          | Vote Choice: POTUS |
|------------------|--------------------|
| Gold Standards   | 1.6%               |
| COVID/Gun Safety | 1.4%               |



2. Looking at specific messages, “Taxes” and “COVID Makes Gun Violence Worse” were the most effective messages to increase Democratic vote share. The “Gun Lobby” message also performed strongly, in the same range of effectiveness as “Medicare/Social Security” and “Healthcare/Pre-Ex.” All messages had a positive effect in moving voters’ 2020 presidential vote choice.

3. Independent voters and young voters were especially responsive to messaging. Both Gold Standards and COVID/Gun Safety messaging overperformed with voters that were Independent or in the 18-34 age bracket, and performed strongly with suburban women voters.

4. Message impacts were largely consistent across states. Across states, “Taxes” was the most persuasive message, while “COVID Makes Gun Violence Worse” was the second most persuasive. Average message effects overperformed the topline the most in Arizona, Nevada, and Colorado.

| Message                        | Vote Choice: POTUS |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Taxes                          | 2.2%               |
| COVID Makes Gun Violence Worse | 2.1%               |
| Medicare Social Security       | 1.6%               |
| Pre Ex                         | 1.5%               |
| Gun Lobby                      | 1.5%               |
| BGCS and COVID                 | 1.4%               |
| Failed to Protect Us           | 1.3%               |
| DV and COVID                   | 1.1%               |
| Taxes Medicare Social Security | 0.9%               |

## Messaging by Demographics/State

| Demographic Group | Taxes | COVID Gun Violence | Medicare/ SS | Pre-Ex | Gun Lobby | BGCS & COVID | Failed to Protect | DV & COVID | Taxes & Medicare/SS |
|-------------------|-------|--------------------|--------------|--------|-----------|--------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|
| Topline           | 2.2%  | 2.1%               | 1.6%         | 1.5%   | 1.5%      | 1.4%         | 1.3%              | 1.1%       | 0.9%                |
| Independent       | 3.2%  | 3.1%               | 2.2%         | 2.2%   | 2.1%      | 2.0%         | 1.8%              | 1.5%       | 1.3%                |
| 18-34 Voters      | 3.0%  | 2.9%               | 2.3%         | 2.1%   | 2.0%      | 1.9%         | 1.7%              | 1.5%       | 1.2%                |
| Suburban Women    | 2.0%  | 1.9%               | 1.5%         | 1.4%   | 1.4%      | 1.3%         | 1.2%              | 1.0%       | 0.9%                |

| State | Taxes | COVID Gun Violence | Medicare/ SS | Pre-Ex | Gun Lobby | BGCS & COVID | Failed to Protect | DV & COVID | Taxes & Medicare/SS |
|-------|-------|--------------------|--------------|--------|-----------|--------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|
| AZ    | 2.3%  | 2.2%               | 1.7%         | 1.6%   | 1.5%      | 1.5%         | 1.3%              | 1.1%       | 0.9%                |
| CO    | 2.2%  | 2.1%               | 1.6%         | 1.5%   | 1.5%      | 1.4%         | 1.3%              | 1.1%       | 0.9%                |
| FL    | 1.9%  | 1.8%               | 1.4%         | 1.3%   | 1.3%      | 1.2%         | 1.1%              | 0.9%       | 0.8%                |
| GA    | 1.8%  | 1.7%               | 1.3%         | 1.2%   | 1.2%      | 1.1%         | 1.0%              | 0.9%       | 0.7%                |
| IA    | 2.1%  | 2.0%               | 1.5%         | 1.4%   | 1.3%      | 1.3%         | 1.1%              | 0.9%       | 0.8%                |
| MI    | 2.0%  | 1.9%               | 1.4%         | 1.4%   | 1.3%      | 1.3%         | 1.2%              | 1.0%       | 0.8%                |
| MN    | 2.0%  | 2.0%               | 1.5%         | 1.4%   | 1.4%      | 1.3%         | 1.2%              | 1.0%       | 0.8%                |
| NC    | 1.8%  | 1.7%               | 1.3%         | 1.2%   | 1.2%      | 1.2%         | 1.1%              | 0.9%       | 0.7%                |
| NH    | 1.9%  | 1.9%               | 1.4%         | 1.4%   | 1.3%      | 1.2%         | 1.1%              | 0.9%       | 0.7%                |
| NV    | 2.2%  | 2.1%               | 1.6%         | 1.6%   | 1.5%      | 1.4%         | 1.3%              | 1.1%       | 0.9%                |
| PA    | 1.9%  | 1.8%               | 1.3%         | 1.3%   | 1.2%      | 1.2%         | 1.0%              | 0.9%       | 0.7%                |
| TX    | 2.1%  | 2.0%               | 1.5%         | 1.5%   | 1.4%      | 1.4%         | 1.2%              | 1.0%       | 0.9%                |
| WI    | 2.0%  | 1.9%               | 1.4%         | 1.4%   | 1.3%      | 1.3%         | 1.1%              | 0.9%       | 0.8%                |

## Appendix

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Full text of messages tested:

Lane 1: Gold Standards Messaging

- **[HEALTHCARE/PRE-EX]** Republicans in Congress supported a dangerous health care plan that increases out-of-pocket costs for millions of Americans, raises premiums for people aged 50-64, and strips protections for people with pre-existing conditions.
- **[MEDICARE/SOCIAL SECURITY]** Republicans in Congress supported cutting benefits for seniors - including cutting hundreds of billions of dollars from Medicare and Social Security that would break the promise we have made to seniors that their guaranteed retirements would be secure.
- **[TAXES]** Republicans in Congress passed a tax plan that gives 83% of the benefits to the richest Americans and corporate special interests while ultimately raising taxes on middle class families and adding 1.9 trillion to the national debt.
- **[TAXES and MEDICARE/SOCIAL SECURITY]** Republicans in Congress supported a tax plan that gives 83% of the benefits to the richest Americans and corporate special interests while ultimately raising taxes on middle class families and adding \$1.9 trillion to the national debt. Republicans in Congress have already said they plan to pay for it by cutting hundreds of billions of dollars from Medicare and Social Security.

Lane 2: COVID/Gun Safety Messaging

- **[DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & COVID]** With Americans staying at home to slow the spread of COVID-19, women who suffer domestic abuse are being trapped at home with their abusers. Since the pandemic, calls to domestic violence hotlines have spiked. Despite this, Republicans in Congress oppose a law that would prohibit domestic abusers from being able to purchase guns, even when they are under a restraining order from their victim.
- **[BACKGROUND CHECKS & COVID]** Gun sales are skyrocketing during the COVID-19 pandemic, which means an even greater risk that guns will fall into dangerous hands. But Republicans in Congress oppose common-sense gun safety laws like background checks on all gun sales, including those sold online and at gun sales.
- **[FAILED TO PROTECT US]** Republicans in Congress have failed to protect our health and safety. They support allowing insurance companies to discriminate against people with pre-existing conditions even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, when people with pre-existing conditions are most at risk. They voted to cut funding for the Centers for Disease Control, leaving us unprepared for the pandemic. And they oppose common-sense gun safety laws like background checks on all gun sales, that would address the epidemic of gun violence.
- **[COVID MAKES GUN VIOLENCE WORSE]** The coronavirus pandemic is actually making gun violence worse. Gun sales are skyrocketing; Shootings are up in many places; Domestic violence is up; and more children are being unintentionally shot and killed at home. But still, Republicans in Congress oppose common-sense gun safety measures like background checks on all gun sales.
- **[GUN LOBBY]** After taking millions of dollars in campaign contributions from the corporate gun lobby, Republicans in Congress have consistently put the interests of the corporate gun lobby ahead of the health and safety of Americans, by opposing even common sense-gun safety laws like background checks on all gun sales, including those sold online and at gun shows.