

10-State Survey Shows “Care Economy” Voters Fueled Biden’s Win in Battleground Suburbs

Care Economy Coalition Included 2016 Trump Supporters who Switched to Biden

***3 in 4 Voters Want Congress to Pass Programs
in Biden’s Caregiving Economic Recovery Package***

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WASHINGTON, DC, November 19, 2020 -- Data from ten different battleground states show that a rising tide of “care economy” voters--battered by COVID and focused on issues like child care, elder care, family and medical leave and paid sick days--were critical to electing Joe Biden president by driving suburban victories that helped him flip states Trump won in 2016. The data comes from a major survey released today by the Women Effect Action Fund (WEAF).

These care economy voters supported Biden 61%-37% over Trump in the battleground states, several of which Biden won narrowly. (Only 54% reported supporting Clinton in 2016.) **This improved margin among care economy voters was a decisive factor in Biden’s string of narrow battleground victories.** The polling also showed that a majority of Biden voters said that they were thinking about care economy issues when they voted for him--and didn’t just vote against President Trump.

“President-elect Biden ran on care economy issues, and it’s clear they were critical to securing support from the suburban voters that helped him win the election,” said Lisa Guide, co-founder of WEAF. **“The winning Biden coalition was built on his concern about care.”**

“Three in four battleground state voters want Congress to pass Biden’s package to help Americans care for their families,” added Jill Normington with Normington, Petts and Associates, “including **91% of Democrats, 76% of Independents, and 58% of Republicans.** The care economy agenda won support across every demographic and partisan group that we measured.” The firm was commissioned by WEAF to interview 2,000 voters across the ten battleground states.

The results follow pre-election WEAF polling and message testing showing that **Biden’s support for a care economy agenda was the single most potent message to convert undecided women to supporting him,** and to retain “soft” Biden supporters who had not supported Hillary Clinton for President in 2016. WEAF also supported multi-million dollar voter contact and organizing programs in these ten states to persuade women voters and increase voter turnout.

The battleground survey reached out to voters in Florida, Iowa, Maine, Michigan, Montana, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Wisconsin. A detailed polling memo can be found [here](#). (WEAF also commissioned a 1,000-voter oversample in Wisconsin, which showed that support for care economy issues was a key to Biden flipping Hillary Clinton's narrow 2016 loss into a razor-thin 0.7% win, a margin of 20,000 out of nearly 3.3 million votes.)

Large Majorities of Americans Endorsed a Care Economy Agenda Investment Package

74% of battleground state voters endorsed a package to build a more resilient care system that was a critical part of the Build Back Better platform that Biden ran on. The package would invest at least \$775 billion in programs like childcare, elder and home care. He has also endorsed a national paid family and medical leave program that covers all workers, and paid sick leave.

When battleground state voters assessed the policies one by one, support went even higher:

- Tax credits to care for older/disabled relative: 86%
- Supports for family caregivers and higher wages for paid caregivers so more older and disabled adults can age at home: 83%
- Paid sick leave: 78%
- Affordable childcare: 77%
- National paid family and medical leave: 76%

Care Economy Suburban Voters Were a Key to Biden's Victory

Suburban voters were key to Biden's victory across the battleground states. In 2016 they supported Trump, 46% to 45% with minor parties garnering 9% in these battleground states. In 2020, they swung decisively towards Biden, supporting him 56% to 42%.

Suburban voters are extremely supportive of the care economy agenda:

- 86% support tax credits for caring for older and disabled relatives
- 83% support for caregivers for older and disabled adults
- 78% support paid sick leave
- 77% support national paid family and medical leave
- 76% support affordable childcare

The Profile of the Care Economy Voter

Battleground state care economy voters--31% of all voters surveyed--were people who indicated that elder care, paid family and medical leave and childcare were important issues to them as they cast their ballot in 2020. These care economy voters came from all demographics and backgrounds, but they were especially likely to be white, female, and lack college degrees.

Care Economy Messages Were Effective Persuaders for Undecided Women Voters

The care economy message proved to be a potent message to convert women to supporting Biden, and to retain “soft” Biden supporters who had not voted for Hillary Clinton in 2016. WEAFF’s pre-election research tested six different Biden positive messages with persuadable women voters in Wisconsin (childcare, paid leave, Biden’s “soul of the nation” messaging, health care, the economic rebuild and Biden’s history of taking personal responsibility for his family).

Of the voters who moved to support Biden during the poll, the best testing message was the one about his paid leave plan. The second best message with this group was the economic rebuild message, which also mentioned paid leave.

WEAFF supported voter contact programs focused on persuading women voters and increasing voter turnout in the ten battleground states, by speaking to voters about care economy issues.

***Methodology:** The survey was conducted for the Women Effect Action Fund by Normington, Petts and Associates, which interviewed more than 2,000 voters in ten battleground states from Nov. 4 to 12: Florida, Iowa, Maine, Michigan, Montana, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Wisconsin. The sample’s margin of error should fall within ± 2.2 percentage points of those that would have been obtained from interviewing the entire population of 2020 voters in these battleground states.*

All surveys were weighted to the actual election returns for President and U.S. Senate by region in each state so that the full sample is reflective of the margin at the presidential and senate level (where applicable). As voter file information for who voted becomes available in the coming months, these data will be re-weighted to accommodate known factors such as the actual percentage of the electorate that was female or male. The size of various constituencies is within range of those eventual known factors but not precise. Moreover, as states begin to canvas and certify their election returns, these data could shift as well.

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