

To: Interested Parties

From: Brian Nienaber, *The Tarrance Group*

Re: Observations on recent bipartisan polling by Rock the Vote

Introduction and Overview

From August 24-September 6, 2010, Anzalone List Research and The Tarrance Group conducted multimodal surveys among adults under age 30 nationwide and in the states of key battleground states of Ohio, Pennsylvania, Florida, North Carolina, and Colorado.

All of these studies find that these voters remain engaged in the political process despite battling feelings of cynicism about the past two years. In addition, these surveys find that voters under age 30 are remarkably similar to the overall electorate in their high level of interest in fiscal issues. This combination of factors provides Republican candidates with a strong opportunity to solicit and receive support from this important segment of the electorate.

Remaining engaged in the process – Republicans hold intensity and interest advantage

Fully 81% of these adults nationwide indicate that they are registered to vote and fully 77% of these adults indicate that they are very or somewhat likely to vote. This mirrors the high level of interest and enthusiasm seen in voters nationwide.

Looking at the 50% who identify themselves as “very” likely to vote, Republicans enjoy a nine point enthusiasm advantage (60%-51%) on this measure. In addition, Republicans have a five point interest advantage (20%-15%) among those who say they are paying “a lot” of attention to the election. In addition, Republicans have also made a nine point gain in party identification with these voters since 2008, making these young adults more receptive to appeals from Republican candidates.

Battling feeling of cynicism – Opportunity for GOP appeal

However, young adults have a remarkable level of cynicism about the last two years. A majority (59%) of young voters are more cynical about politics than they were two years ago. A plurality (36%) select that “it makes no difference” to them which political party is in control of Congress and a plurality (37%) say that they are “disappointed” in what Obama has done in his first two years in office.

This frustration and lack of satisfaction with the status quo provides Republican candidates with a strong opportunity to appeal to these voters, particular GOP oriented ones, with a strong message about having a different and better way to turn the economy around. In fact, 70% Republican young adults are “disappointed” in Obama’s performance and 73% of Republican young adults want the GOP to take control of Congress. This group, in particular, is energized and ready to hear appeals about the merits of GOP candidates.

Issues of Concern Mirror Concerns of Overall Electorate

Nationally and in every state polled, jobs and the economy is the top issue by a margin of at least two to one. Nearly every Republican candidate in the country has an appeal about their support for fiscally conservative and job creating economy policies as one of their key campaign points. Given their remarkable frustration and anxiety about the economic status quo, these young adults should be receptive to these Republican appeals on economic policy.

These appeals will particularly hit home with Republican young adults. Fully 72% of them describe themselves as “very concerned” about the national debt.

In addition, a majority (53%) of young adults and 76% of Republican young adults support the Arizona immigration law. This law is nearly universally supported by GOP candidates and provides GOP candidates with an additional issue to target young voters with existing appeals.

Conclusions

The 2010 young electorate looks to be much different than the one that turned out in 2008. Republicans have a clear vote enthusiasm and vote interest advantage with these voters.

Republican candidates would be well served to identify and target potential young voter supporters. These voters are motivated, interested, and open to the appeals that Republican candidates will be making.

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