



Path to Victory 2022: Black Voters

Every Democratic path to victory runs directly through their single most loyal voting bloc – Black American voters. Black voters delivered the White House and Congress to Democrats in 2020 and 2021 with historic turnout levels. If Democrats plan to retain the White House, and Congress, and win future elections, **priority number one is to turn out Black voters.**

Pain and power defined Black voters' political participation in 2020 and 2021. After a year of incredible **pain**, Black voters exercised their collective **power** to alter the nation's direction away from Donald Trump and reshape the electoral map.

Now, in 2022, frustration with Democrats' progress on Black folks' priorities threatens to weaken Black voters' belief in their power. At the same time, Republicans have enacted voter suppression laws to strip political power from Black voters. Recognizing and overcoming these twin forces remains an urgent task for the Democratic Party.

Black voters put Biden over the top

State	Margin of Victory	Margin from Black Voters	Larger than Victory Margin
GA	+11,779	+1,262,820	Yes
AZ	+10,457	+127,567	Yes
WI	+20,682	+125,791	Yes
PA	+80,555	+543,593	Yes
NV	+33,596	+88,129	Yes
MI	+154,188	+503,530	Yes

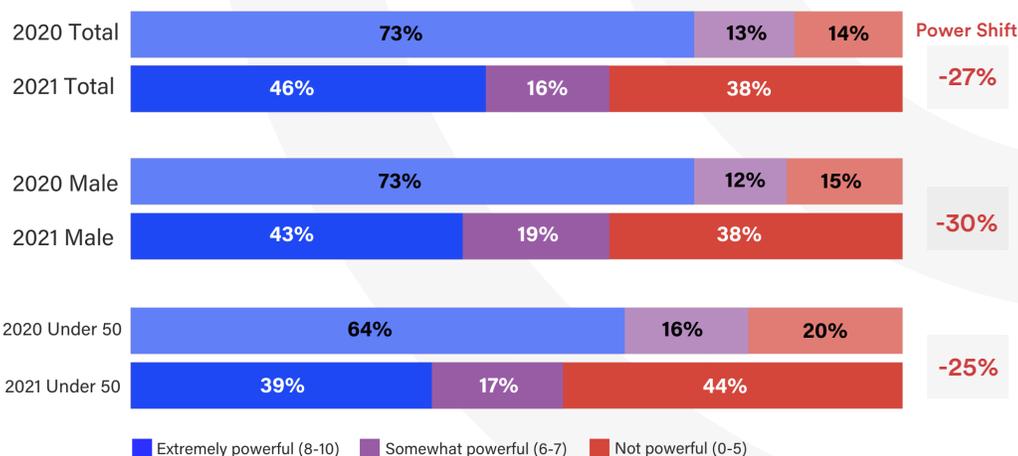
Catalyst: What Happened in 2020

Black Challenges

Black Voter Challenge #1: Black voters no longer believe they have the same level of political power that led to historic turnout in 2018 and 2020.

- Perceptions of Black political power directly correlate with political participation. The less powerful Black voters feel, the less likely they are to vote.
- Perceptions of power are lowest among Black men and Black adults under 50 years old—the two groups most likely to drop off in midterm elections.

Proportion of Black voters in Georgia who feel their vote is powerful

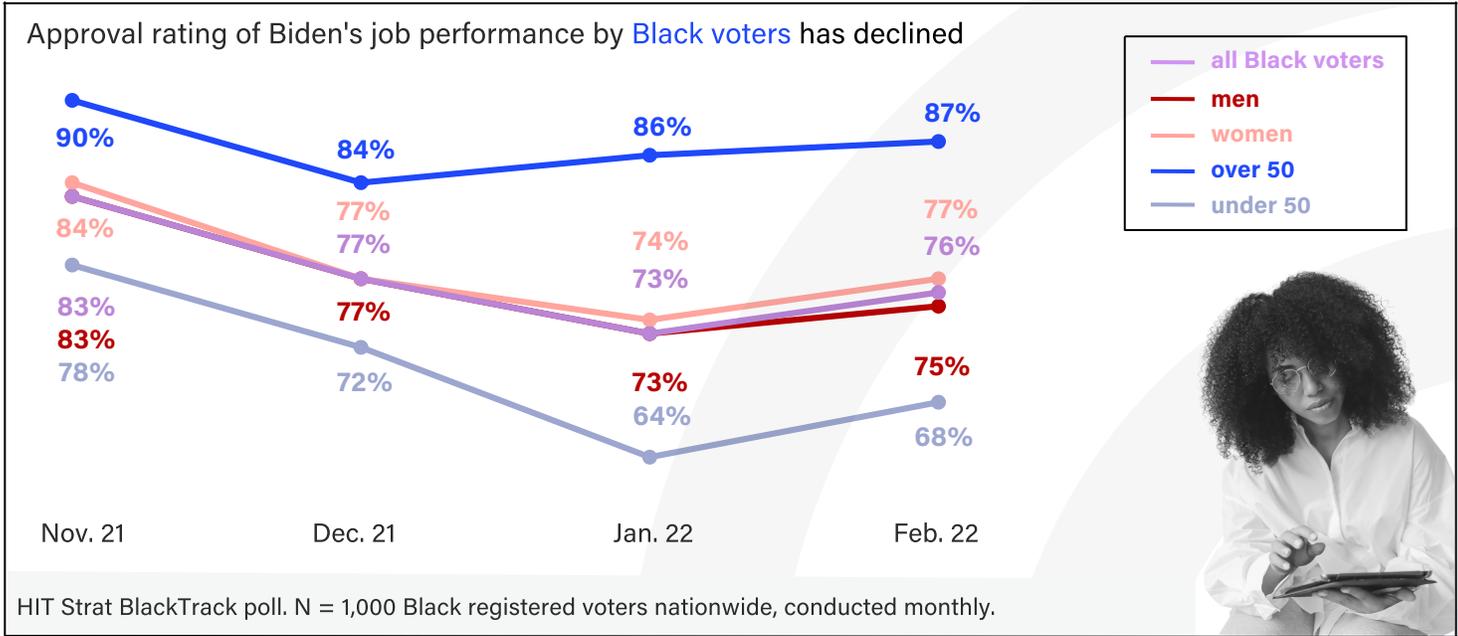


HIT Strat poll commissioned by New GA Project. Black Georgia voters conducted in Oct 2020 (N = 620) and Sept 2021 (N = 1,000).

"I also felt that kind of power in the 2020 election, all the Blacks come together in unity and just with that power to make a change, make something happen... So, it just make me feel that Blacks can do a lot, a whole lot more than what we think we can actually do."
 — Rural, Black, infrequently-voting man, Georgia

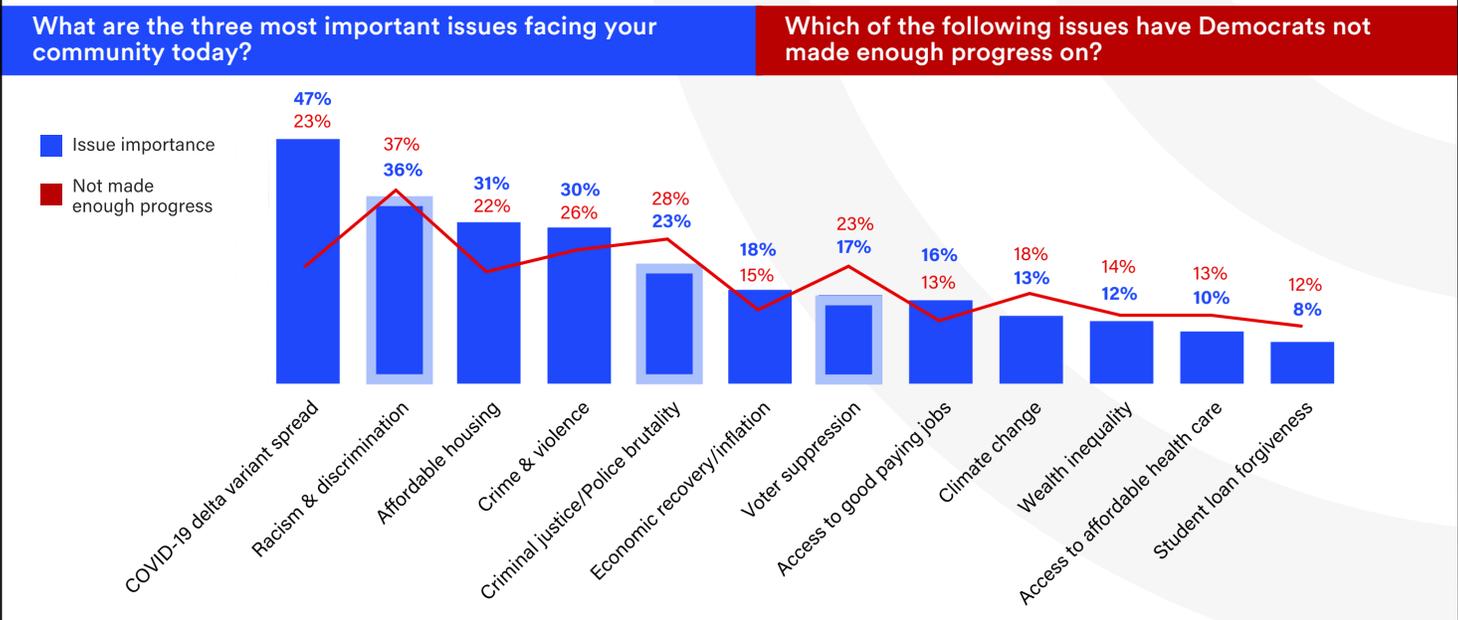


Black Voter Challenge #2: Black voters perceive little progress on their priorities. As a result, Black voters aren't enthusiastic about upcoming elections.



“Passing legislation is a win for politicians in Washington, that’s not a win for me and my family.”
 — Black woman, base voter, battleground state

- Black voters prioritize a mix of racial and economic issues, but racism remains the top issue Black voters don't see enough progress on.



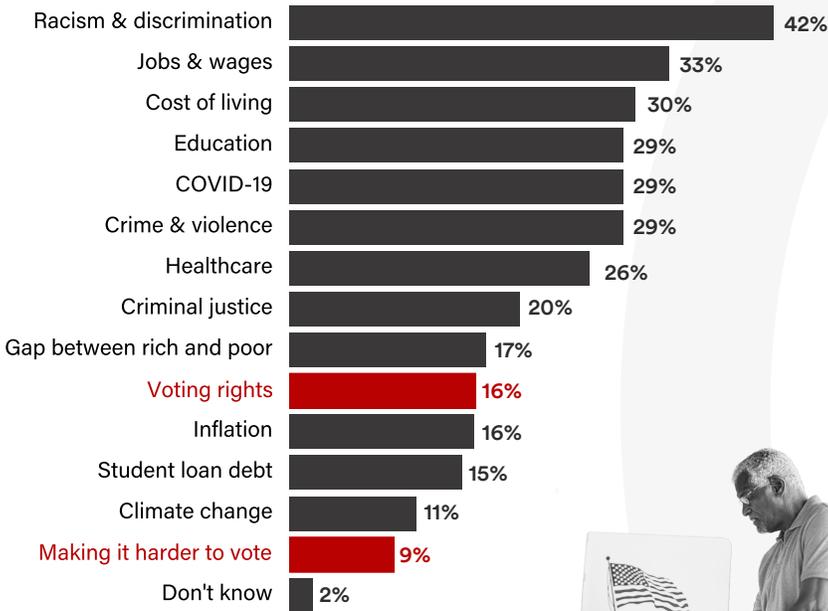
HIT Strat poll commissioned by Democracy Corps. N = 1,200 Black battleground state voters, conducted August 2021.



Black Voter Challenge #3: Intensifying misinformation, disinformation, and voters suppression work in tandem to undermine Black voters' confidence.

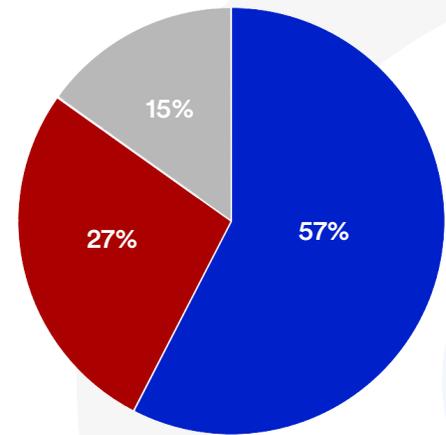
- In 2021, [19 states passed 34 laws](#) intended to reduce the electoral participation of voters of color.
- But as the bar graph shows, voter suppression is not a top issue for Black voters. They are prioritizing daily issues over an issue that will not affect them until it is time to vote.

Top three most important community issues for Black voters



- As the pie graph demonstrates, more than 1 in 4 Black voters have become susceptible to conservative messaging that voter fraud is a problem and stricter voting regulations are necessary.

Which is a bigger problem with the American electoral system?



- Voter Suppression
- Voter Fraud
- Don't Know/Neither

HIT Strat poll commissioned by SEIU. N = 2,800 battleground state voters of color, conducted Oct 18 – Nov 8, 2021.

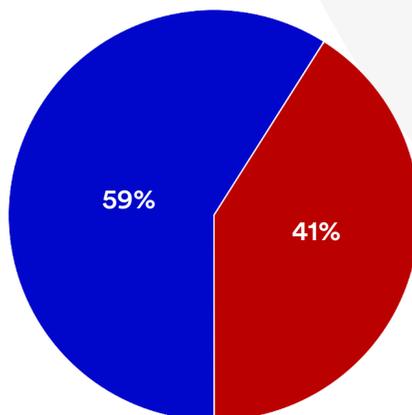
Which of these statements do you agree with more?

Statement A:

Joe Biden and Democrats are making good progress on the needs and priorities of the Black community.

Statement B:

Joe Biden and Democrats are putting the needs of other communities like [LGBTQ or AAPI community] over the needs of the Black community.



- This poll confirms something we detect in focus groups. Black voters who are cynical of real progress believe Democrats prioritize the issue of other communities, like AAPI and queer communities, over the Black community.
- Such a narrative represents a classic divide-and-conquer strategy and is perpetuated by disinformation from Republicans.

HIT Strat poll commissioned by Democracy Corps. N = 1,200 Black battleground state voters, conducted Aug 2021.

Despite the challenges threatening to suppress Black voters ahead of the 2022 midterms, there remains an even greater opportunity to reengage Black voters. Overcoming these challenges and capitalizing on these opportunities require progressive candidates and organizations to begin investing in Black voters ~~now~~ not in the final campaign stretch.



Black Opportunities



Black Voter Opportunity #1: Unfinished business: Democrats can communicate progress made, articulate vision for future progress.

In **2020**, we defeated Trump.

In **2022**, we have unfinished business in defeating Trumpism.

Don't say: If GOP wins in 2022, they will act/govern like Trump.

Do say: If GOP wins in 2022, they will install Trump in 2024.

In **2020**, we made progress on the Black agenda.

In **2022**, we have unfinished business in defeating fulfilling the Black agenda.

Don't: Make promises about advancing the Black agenda in the next two years.

Do: Connect promises to progress that has been made in the last two years.

Proof Points: Unfinished business in defeating Trumpism

1. Jan 6 insurrection, Republicans railing against investigation
2. Republicans in every primary are trying to out-Trump one another, are embracing the Big Lie
3. 19 GOP-led states passed voting rights restrictions in 2021

Proof Points: Concrete progress to connect to promises on Black agenda

1. Criminal Justice Reform: Biden DOJ has banned chokeholds and no-knock warrants, is investigating police departments
2. Education: Biden relieved \$16B in student loans, allocated \$5.7B to HBCUs
3. Economic relief: Biden expanded Child Tax Credit cut Black child poverty by 20%, allocated \$21B in rental assistance
4. Racism/discrimination: Biden appointed first Black woman to SCOTUS, allocated \$15B to replace lead pipes in Black communities, sued GA and TX for voter discrimination

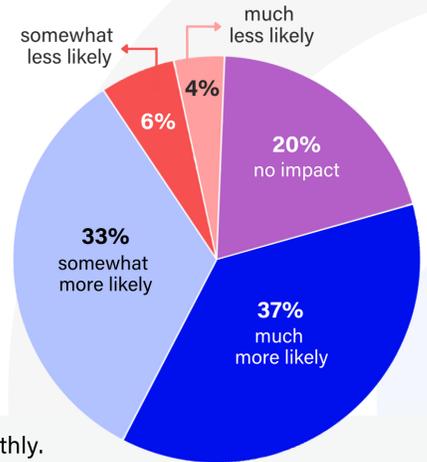


Black Voter Opportunity #2: As the GOP doubles down on racism as a political strategy, Democrats have to counter with a non-divisive, explicitly anti-racist alternative.

1. Forging a multi-racial coalition requires a multi-racial vision. The Democratic Party can't be passive observers in the Republican-waged culture wars.
2. Racism and discrimination remain a top issue for Black voters, women, young people, and voters of color.
3. Black voters take credit for combatting racism and defeating Trump in 2020. Democrats can mobilize Black voters to fight Trumpism—but only if we tie that racism to Republican candidates in 2022.
4. Anti-racist positions (teaching accurate history, reducing racial profiling, combatting hate crimes) are incredibly popular—not just with Black people or just with Democrats, but with Americans of all ideologies/identities.

Does hearing that a candidate is actively combating racism and discrimination make your more or less likely to vote for them?

- Black voters are much more likely to support candidates that actively combat racism and discrimination.
- Assertively engaging on these issues can mobilize the young Black voters who are most likely to drop off in support of Democrats in the 2022 election.



HIT Strat Black Track poll. N = 1,000 Black registered voters nationwide, conducted monthly.



“It just pisses me off because we know exactly what they [Republicans] are doing with the CRT ads and parents’ rights; it’s all racism to get more of their people to vote. But we [Democrats] act like we are afraid to call it racism or to be as aggressive about the way we talk about it. That’s why [Terry McAuliffe] just kinda said something instead of really defending it—and now look what happened to him.”

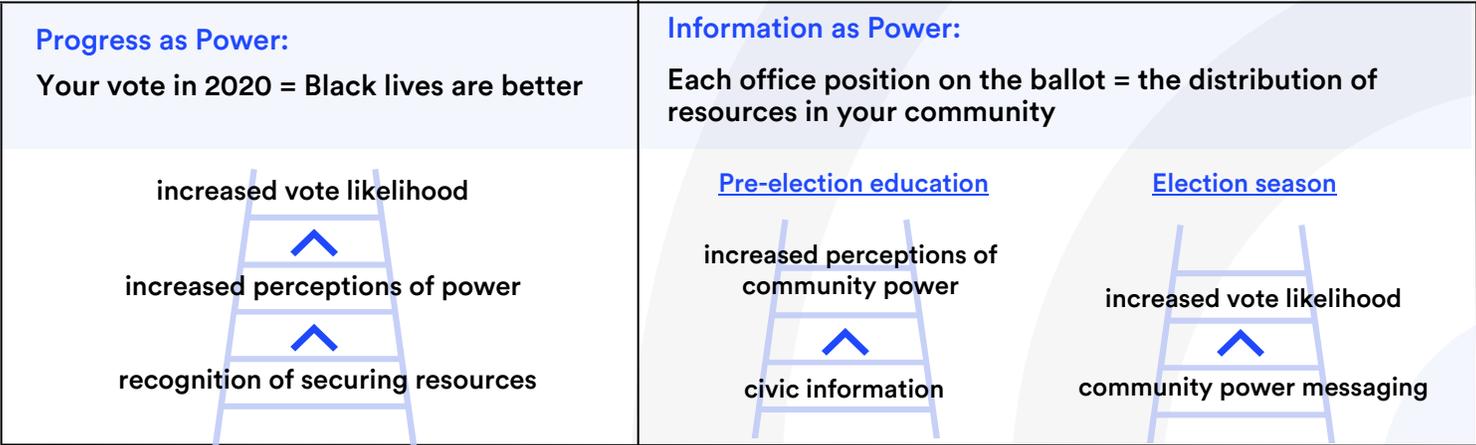
— White Man, Richmond, VA. December 2021 Post-Election Focus Groups

Democrats must respond to Trumpist message with one of multi-racial strength

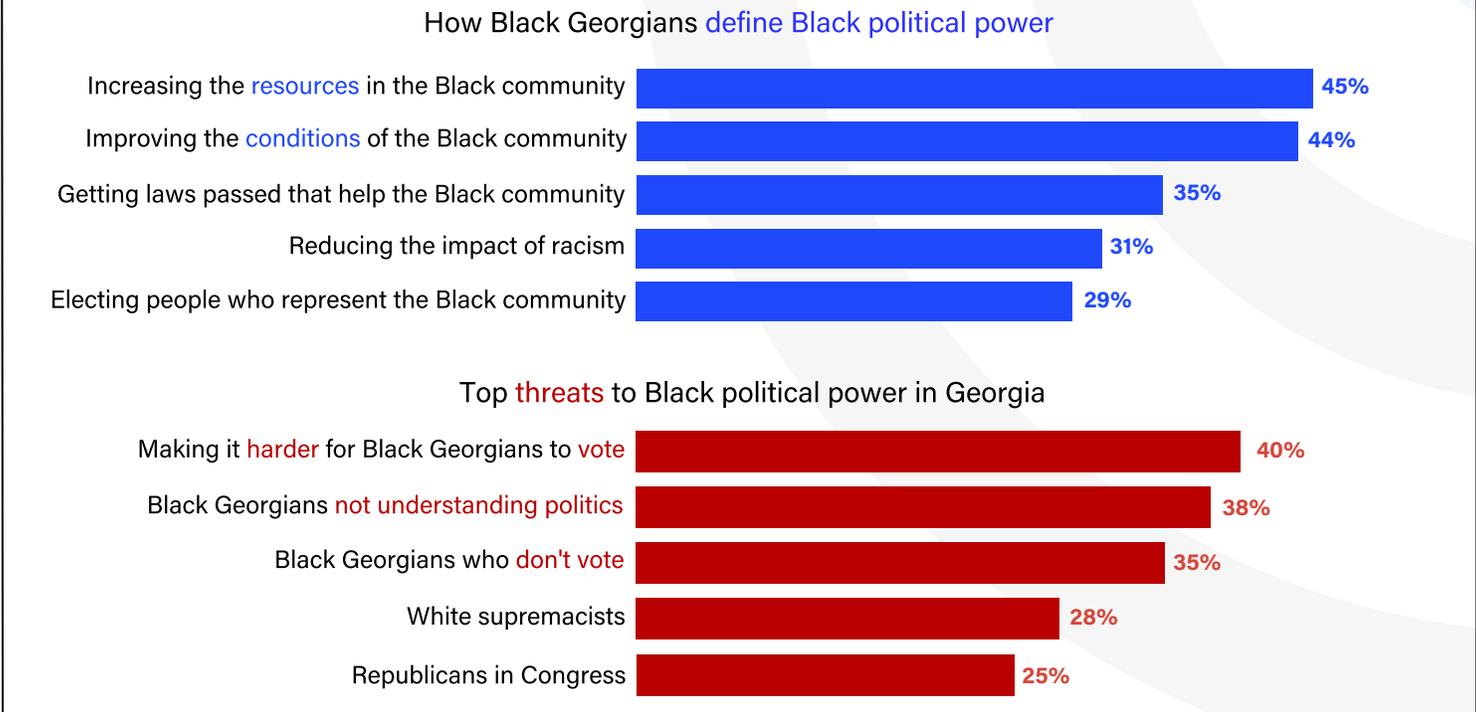
Republicans believe that we are too afraid to:	Democrats believe that we are strong enough to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine the uncomfortable parts of our history. • Accept people from different places with different ways of life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at the darkest parts of our past to forge a brighter future. • Embrace our differences, empower more communities, and garner strength from diversity.

Black Voter Opportunity #3: 4 million Black voters voted for the first time in 2020. Civic education that empowers surge voters with information leads to increased perceptions of power and turnout.

- Black voters define Black political power as securing resources for their community. Connecting Black voters to resources increases perceptions of vote power, which in turn drives turnout.
- Explaining the role of elected officials in distributing resources (civic information) increases perceptions of community power among Black voters. Once primed through this pre-election education, community power messaging (“together, our votes are powerful”) can activate Black voters during election season.



- Voter suppression and lack of information are the biggest threats to Black political power.
- Clear information about where, when, and how to vote will be critical for surge voters who are new to midterms—particularly in an environment filled with disinformation.



HIT Strat poll commissioned by New GA Project. N = 1,000 Black Georgia voters, conducted in Sept 2021.