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Black Voters: Pain, Power, & Progress.

NAACP 2022 Cycle of Research

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The HIT Team

HIT Strategies is a firm of young, diverse, innovative social scientists that use research and data to understand and communicate with hard-to-reach and underrepresented voters. We live and work at the intersections of society that are driving rapidly diversifying voter and consumer trends. We represent communities often misunderstood, overlooked, and underserved in American politics.



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NAACP 2022 Voter Engagement Research

1. Volunteer Recruitment Poll
 2. Monthly BlackTrack
 3. Low Propensity Focus Groups
 4. Battleground Message Poll
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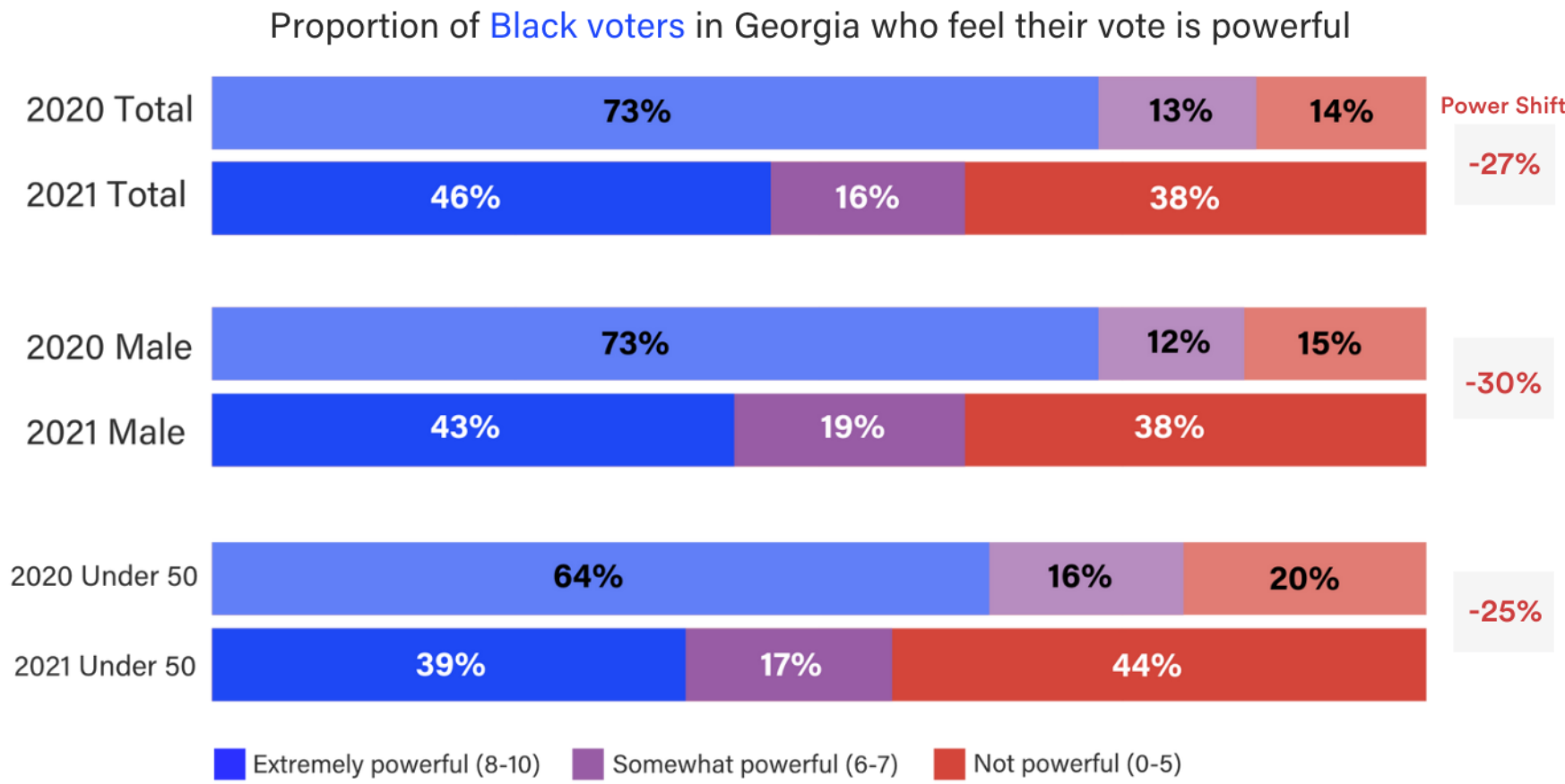
Power & Voter Erosion in 2021



Increasing Black political participation requires increasing perceptions of Black political power

But those perceptions of power have dissipated, particularly among **Black men** and **young Black voters**.

- 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.



NAACP Robust 2022 Research Plan

PROJECT	DATES	PURPOSE	SAMPLE
High Propensity Volunteer Recruitment Survey	June 1st –June 12th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand & encourage NAACP members & high propensity voters' motivations to join the voter engagement program. 	High Propensity Black Voters and NAACP Members in Tier 1 Battleground States (AZ, FL, GA, MD, MI, NC, NV, OH, PA, WI) N= 800
BlackTrack Tracking Survey	June 23rd - 29th July 20th - 25th August 21 st -26 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track issue priorities, Black political attitudes Establish NAACP as market leader on Black intel Consistent feedback on hot-button issues effecting Black voters throughout the volatile election cycle 	Black Registered Voters Nationwide N=1,000
Low Propensity Focus Groups	July 26th – 28th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine most effective messaging to describe progress made on Black voters most important issues Understand Black voters' positions on the economy, shared fate, and top of mind political issues 	Low Propensity Black Voters in PA, OH, MI, GA, FL, AZ, NV and GOP Defecting Men in Philadelphia
Low Propensity Battleground Survey	July 20th – July 29th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine issue pain points for Black voters Understand Black voters' positions on policy achievements Determine which audiences respond to threat vs progress messaging 	Black Surge Voters in Tier 1 Battleground states (AZ, FL, GA, MD, MI, NC, NV, OH, PA, WI) N= 800

Where Black Voters Are

Economic issues are deeply concerning for Black voters particularly the disproportionate effects felt by the Black community

1

- Black voters feel incredibly concerned with this economy
- Black voters want a hand up not a handout from the government
- Respondents don't separate talking about racism/discrimination from talking about the economy

Black voters want solutions to the gun violence epidemic that don't hurt their community

2

- Across groups respondents worry about gun violence
- Men and women differ in talking about mass shootings vs interpersonal gun crime
- Respondents worry that attempts to curb gun violence will lead to over policing of African American communities

3

Abortion access is part of the constellation of issues important to Black voters

- Voters recognize the disproportionate effect abortion restrictions have on Black women
- Abortion access is an important part of decision calculus though not the primary issue
- Men agree that abortion should be decided between a woman and her doctor

Young Voters leaning towards not trusting either party on a multitude of issues

4

- Younger voters lack the confidence and trust in political institutions of previous generations
- Under 50 voters, like Black women, are more adversely affected by the GOP agenda
- Older voters are concerned for Black youth in the US in terms of the education they receive, the violence they deal with, and the economy

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Political Climate

1. Political Climate

2. Economics

3. Gun violence

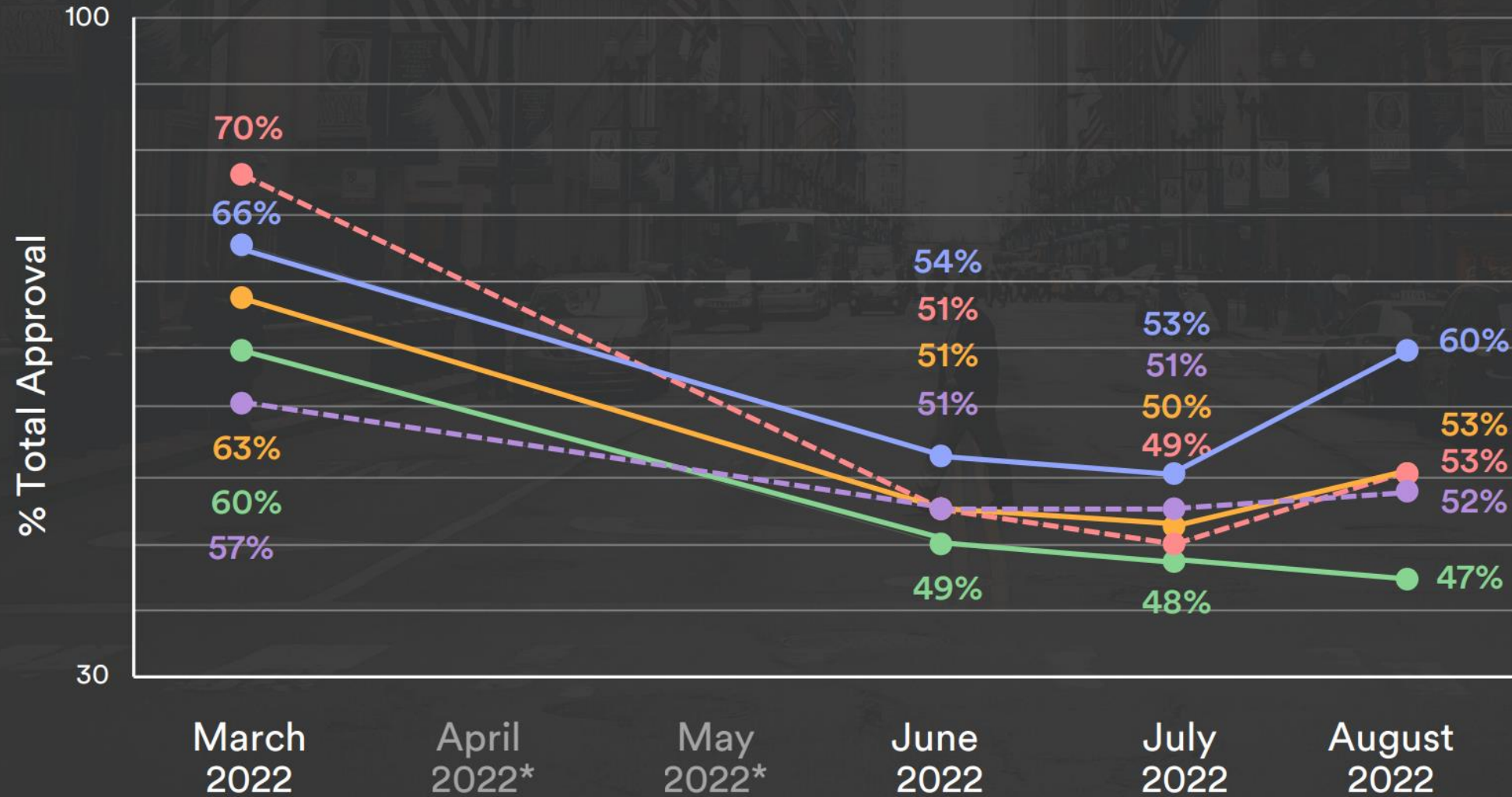
4. Abortion

5. Increasing Black Political Power

6. Conclusion



Black voters were asked, "Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the direction in which the country is headed?"

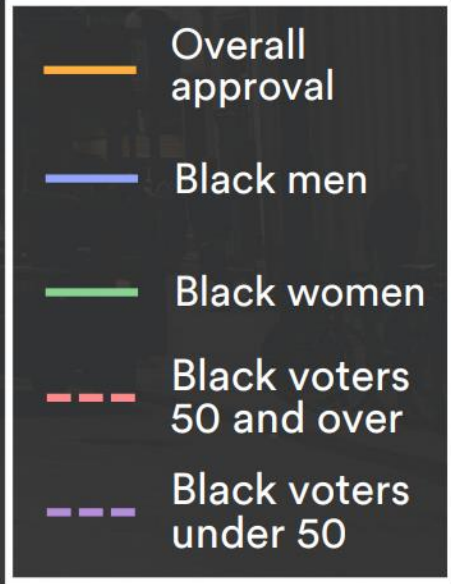
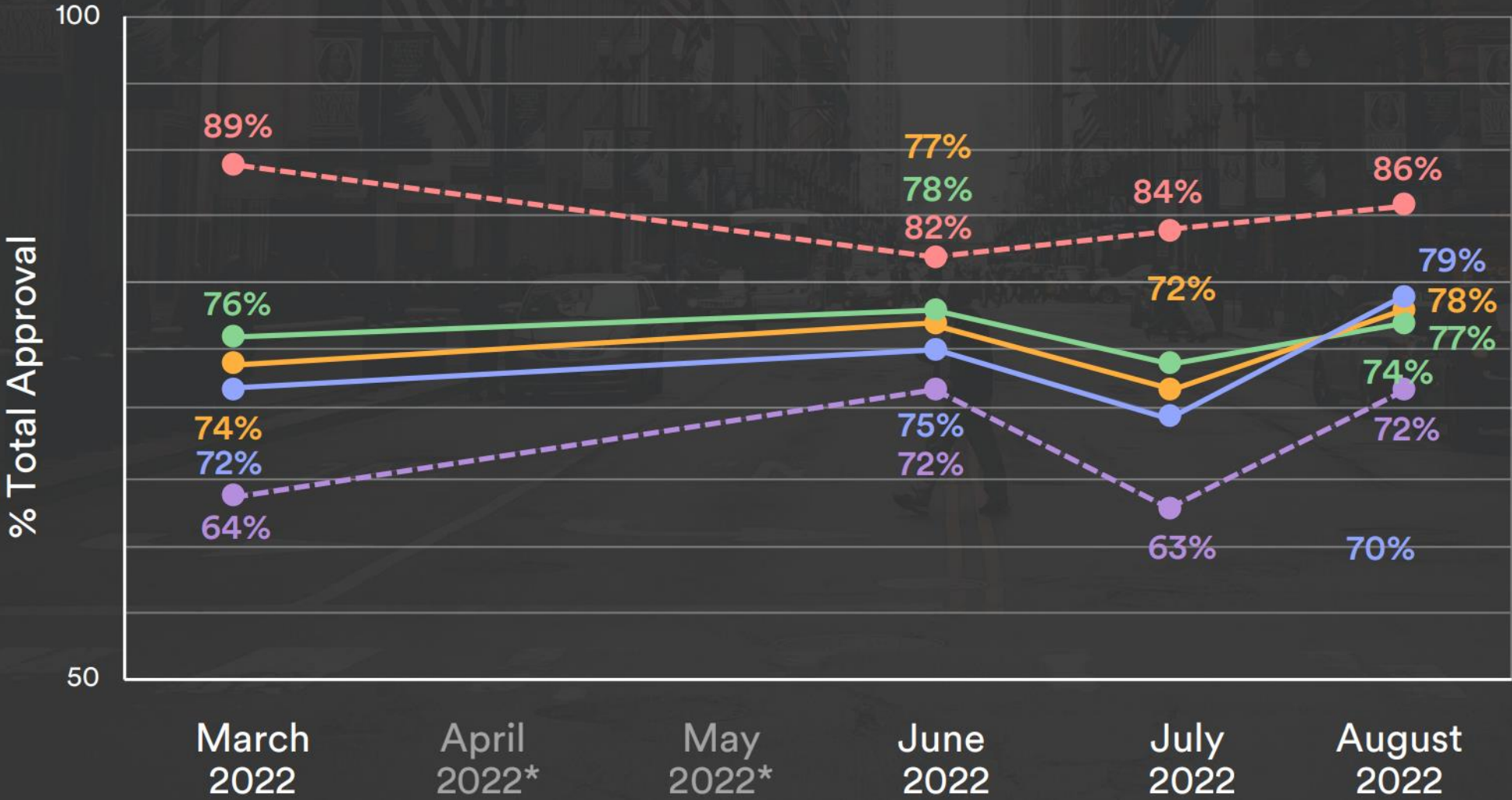


*No data was collected in April or May 2022.

The "Total Approval" shown in the graph combines the respondent's choices of "Strongly approve" and "Somewhat approve."



Black voters were asked, "Do you approve or disapprove of the job Joe Biden is doing as president?"

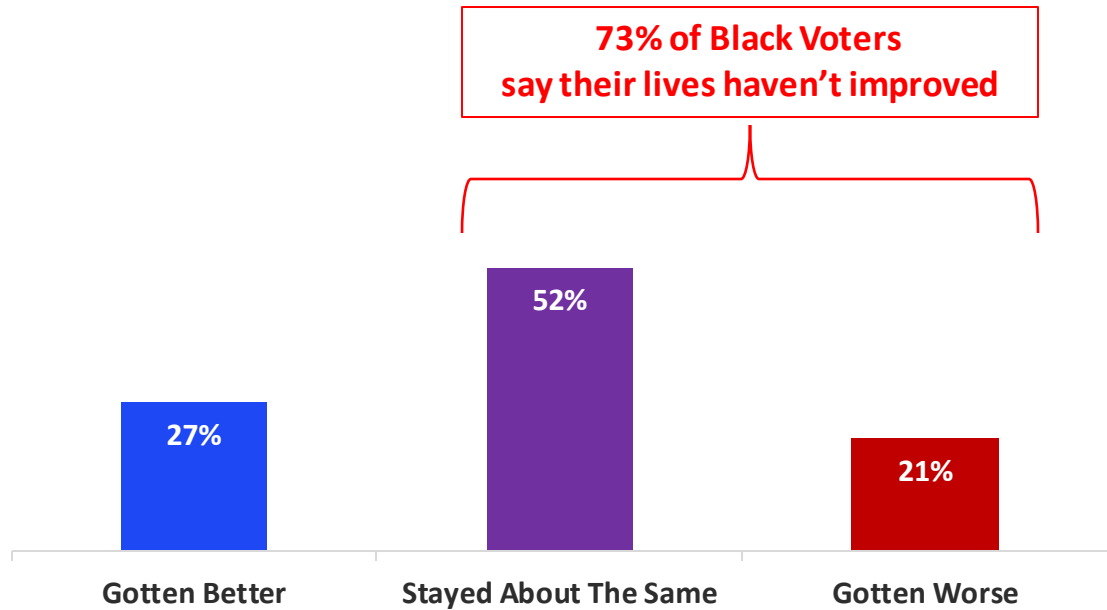


*No data was collected in April or May 2022.

The "Total Approval" shown in the graph combines the respondent's choices of "Strongly approve" and "Somewhat approve."

The benefits of Biden’s presidency have not been readily felt by Black voters, particularly among Black voters under 50 and Black men

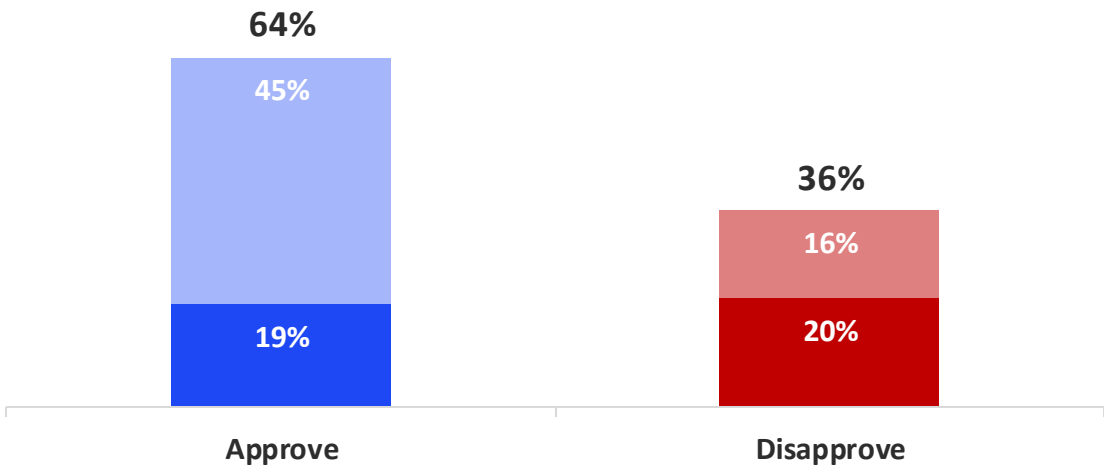
Has the quality of your life gotten better, stayed the same, or gotten worse since Joe Biden became president of the United States?



		Demos			
	Total	Men	Women	Under 50	50 and Over
Gotten better	27%	28%	27%	19%	39%
Stayed about the same	52%	53%	51%	53%	51%
Gotten worse	21%	20%	22%	28%	11%

Do you approve or disapprove of the job the Biden Administration is doing in addressing the needs of the Black community?

Approval of how Biden is addressing the needs of the Black community is lower among battleground voters than among Black voters nationwide (-6) and is lower among Black men (-15)



		Demos			
	Total	Men	Women	Under 50	50 and Over
Total approve	64%	59%	69%	57%	74%
Total disapprove	36%	41%	31%	43%	26%

Racism/discrimination rose to the top for respondents, followed by tangible quality of life issues as the most important issues facing the Black community

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What do you think are the most important issues facing the Black community today? Please select the top three issues most important to you.

		Men	Women	Under 50	50 and Over
Racism/discrimination	44%	42%	45%	44%	44%
Inflation/Cost of living	38%	37%	39%	39%	36%
Criminal justice reform/Police brutality	38%	37%	38%	43%	31%
Affordable housing/Rent	36%	34%	36%	37%	34%
Gun violence	35%	33%	37%	29%	45%
Jobs	26%	25%	27%	30%	21%
Healthcare	19%	18%	19%	19%	19%
Crime in my neighborhood	16%	20%	13%	15%	17%
Abortion rights	14%	13%	15%	13%	16%
Voter suppression	13%	15%	13%	11%	17%
Public Safety	11%	13%	10%	12%	11%
Roads/infrastructure	6%	7%	4%	6%	5%
Former felon enfranchisement	4%	4%	3%	4%	3%

A grayscale background image of a city street scene. A person is walking across the street in the foreground. There are cars parked on the sides and buildings in the background. The image is dimmed to serve as a background for the text.

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Where voters are: Economics

1. Political Climate

2. Economics

3. Gun violence

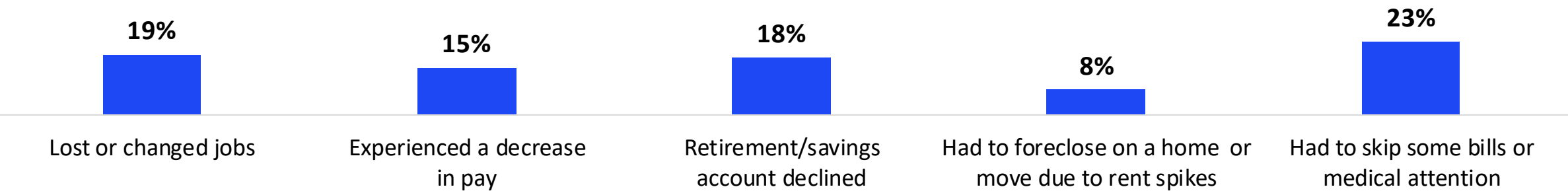
4. Abortion

5. Increasing Black Political Power

6. Conclusion

Young Black voters and Black women have borne the brunt of the economic downturn from the COVID-19 pandemic

Has any of the following happened to you or someone in your household in the last 12 months? Select all that apply.



	Total	Male	Female	Under 50	50 and over
Lost or Changed Jobs	19%	17%	21%	26%	9%
Experienced a Decrease in Pay	15%	17%	14%	17%	12%
Retirement/ Savings Account Declined	18%	16%	20%	17%	21%
Had to Foreclose on a Home or Move Due to Rent Spikes	8%	7%	9%	11%	4%
Had to Skip Bills or Medical Attention	23%	18%	26%	26%	18%

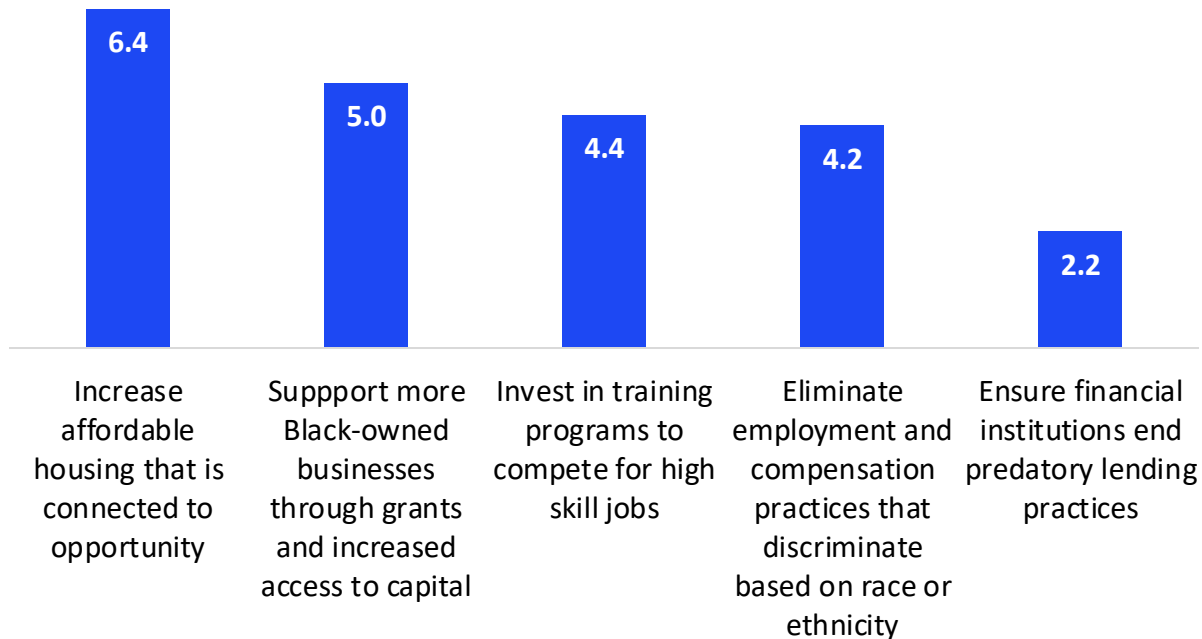
Across groups, participants placed the highest importance on increasing affordable housing, and felt that Democrats need to provide more support through government programs



15

Most important economic priorities for the Black community to vote and organize around in the upcoming election.

Chart represents average number of participants who selected each option across groups



How should Democrats respond to economic issues?



"I think they need to, if they're going to elevate the prices and make it where middle class and lower-class families can't really survive, **they need to be able to provide adequate assistant programs** to be able to help them." – Black Woman , Arizona



"**More forgiveness programs.** Of loans or bills, say PGW, a lot of people try to get it, but they can't get it because they make too much. And even when they do get it doesn't help your back payments, it just helps your future. It's little bit more leniency on type of programs where it helps people get caught up on those." – Black Woman, Philadelphia



"We talked about before as a issue of the universal basic income or addressing school debt. **Student loan debt is a huge thing that, if a lot of people were taking that off their plate every month, inflation wouldn't be as bad,** for at least a lot of people who definitely have that looming student debt. ." – Black Man , Michigan



"I'd like for them to raise the minimum wage." – Black Man, Philadelphia

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Where voters are: Gun Violence

1. Political Climate

2. Economics

3. Gun violence

4. Abortion

5. Increasing Black Political Power

6. Conclusion

Respondents associate shootings with racialized violence against the Black community & rate local gun violence as significant issues for their community

Do you think gun violence is a significant problem for the Black community?

"I think it's a problem in every community. Because what we're seeing with those mass shootings, even though we're killing each other like there ain't no tomorrow, something's wrong with them little white boys. Because they be shooting everybody, man. And my question is, why are they so mad?" –Black Man, Georgia

"Yes. Absolutely [a significant problem]." – Black Man, Georgia

When you think of gun violence are you thinking of mass shootings or other kinds of shootings?

"Yeah. Yeah. **That's what come to mind when you think about gun violence. It mass shooting. I mean, every time you turn on the television, it's a shooting somewhere.** You know, where somebody's going into a school, shooting it up. And that directly, when you speak of that, it directly comes to mind." –Black Man, Georgia

"Not if it pertains to Black people." – Black Man, Michigan

"Yeah. Neighborhood, robberies, just road rage, drug violence, stuff like that." – Black Man, Michigan

"Something no senseless in the hood shootings, personally. The mass shootings is, no offense, white people doing it or just gun through just depressed, mental issues." – Black Man, Philadelphia

"I agree it's a everyday thing too. But my first initial thought when I think of gun violence is mass shootings, obviously because they've been really prevalent these past few months with some big things that have been happening. So that's my first initial thought is mass shootings." – Black Woman, Arizona

"And I just feel like with gun violence, I think about it as a whole, not just mass shootings and things. Gun violence is just an issue everywhere, honestly. Someone gets shot every day. It all depends on how the news narrates it and things like that. I just feel like it's an everyday thing." – Black Woman, Arizona

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Where voters are: Abortion

1. Political Climate

2. Economics

3. Gun violence

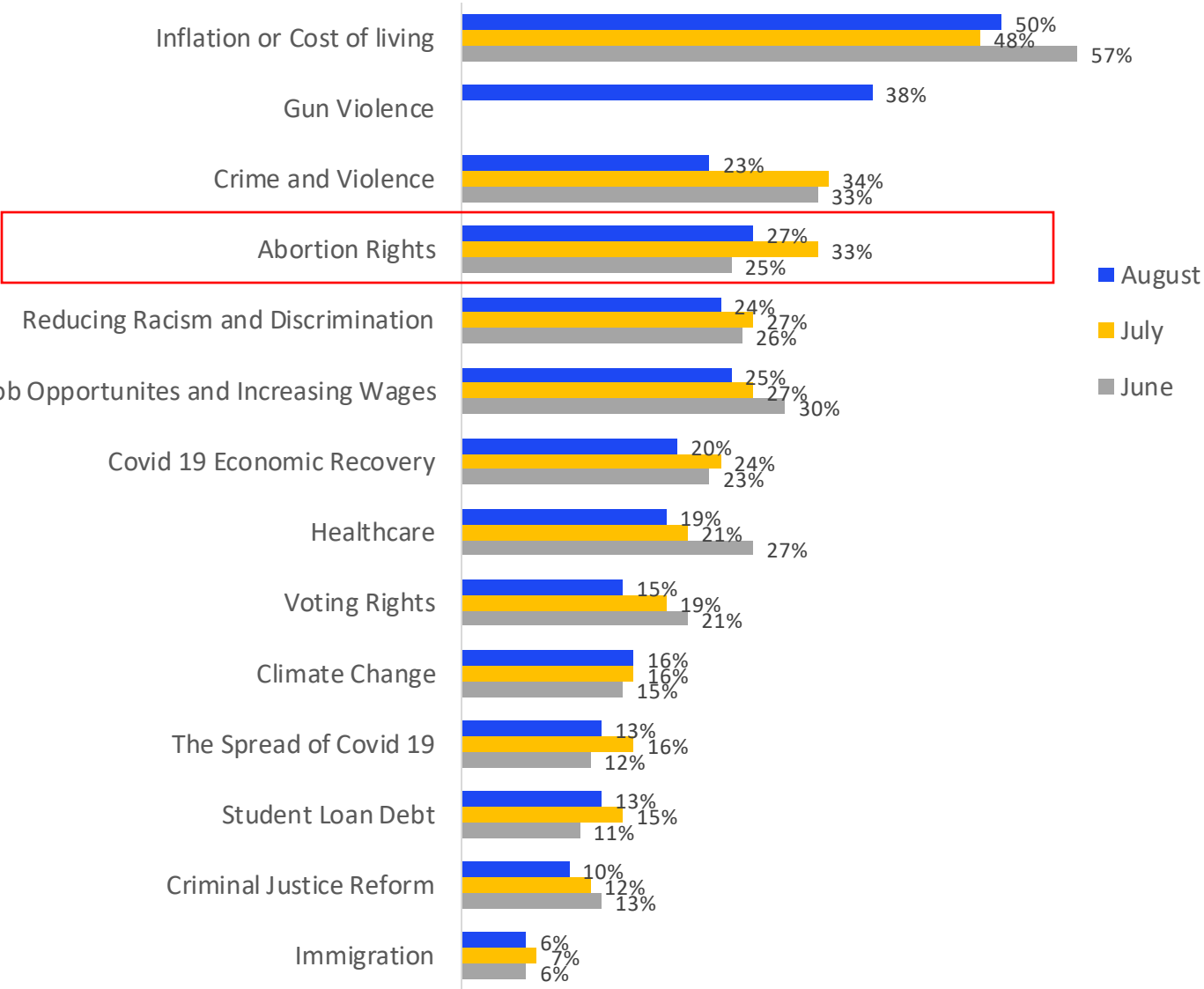
4. Abortion

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6. Conclusion

Abortion Rights as an issue among registered voters has gone up slightly since the Dobbs decision but it remains behind quality-of-life issues

What issue should President Biden’s top priority be to improve your community?
Please select top 3



If there were restrictions on abortion, what kind of restrictions would you be okay with, if any? A restriction after 6 weeks, after 15 weeks?



“No restrictions at all... I don't think there should be any restrictions at all. I don't understand why politicians are deciding, like who made up this rule?”
– Black Woman, Philadelphia



“First of all, I think they should have left that law as it was. Because it's taking away the woman's right to her body. To have control of her body. And yeah, it should be at the federal level. But me personally, I think that women should have this total say over whatever they do with their body.” –Black Man, Georgia



“I have endometriosis. And if I were to have a child, it does make that process very hard just because there's a chance of me not being able to have the child and it could pop in mid pregnancy. It can happen [with] me trying. So having to deal with that fear and seeing these laws and everything be passed around me. I use birth control to help deal with the pain. And so if they take away birth control, there's not a lot of research on endometriosis as is.”
– Black Woman, Arizona

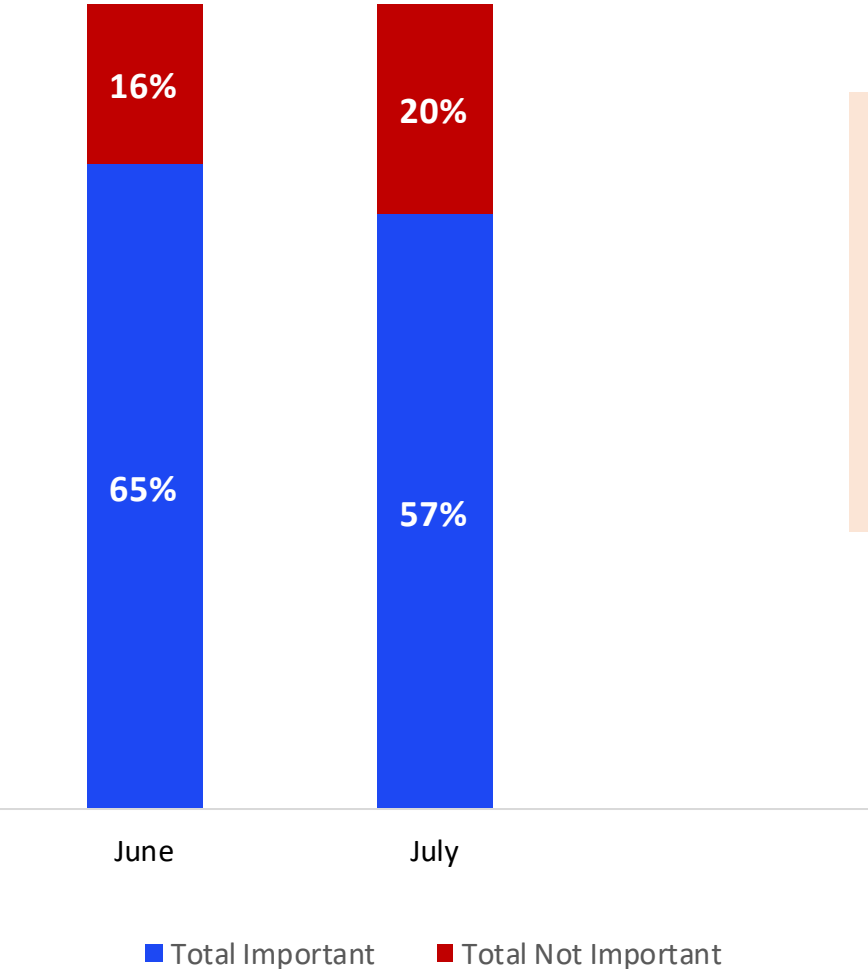


“It's a term that [for] when the fetus is able to survive outside the body. I think it's around like 22 weeks or something like that. So I do believe, in my opinion, I would say, "Yeah, that's too far at that point." If the fetus could survive at that point, then that's probably too far. That's too far.”
–Black Man, Michigan

Despite the rise in Abortion Rights as an issue priority, the degree to which it is prioritized as a reason to vote in the midterms has slightly decreased



When thinking about going to vote in the 2022 midterm elections, how important is the issue of abortion access in your decision to go vote? Rate on a scale 0-10



Black Men in focus groups are incredibly supportive of abortion access, even ones who'd voted for Trump in 2016

Would removing the protection of the right to abortion and increasing abortion restrictions in the United States help anyone? What kind of effect do you think this would have on Black women?

“I think it should be federal as well, because it's basic healthcare. And I think a lot of people, regardless, it should still be, in my opinion, that person's right. But a lot of people also seem to think of abortion as just the 16 year old girl that gets pregnant or whatever, doesn't want to have a baby, when there's so many health crises where women are not advised to continue with their pregnancy or they're having ectopic pregnancy where they literally have to terminate the pregnancy or they will die. And I've been hearing those situations now where people are literally going to the hospital with an ectopic pregnancy and they're having to call a judge or whoever else, in order to get approval to have an abortion. And a physician can't proceed without risking his license. And that woman's basically sitting there dying and that's insane.”
– Black Man, Michigan

“I think that they would be like, I think it would turn into like a criminalization thing. I think that more Black women would be harassed just for wanting to go through with a procedure like that. I think that it would just be a criminalization issue really. In short.” – Black Man, Philadelphia

“Also, people might die more because they might go through those back alley abortions people, like back in the day, doing, with the bootleg abortions and not being properly trained stuff.”
– Black Man, Philadelphia

A grayscale background image of a city street scene. A person is walking across the street in the foreground. There are cars parked and driving on the street. Buildings line the sides of the street, and a traffic light is visible on the right. The overall tone is somber and urban.

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Increasing Black Political Power

1. Political Climate

2. Economics

3. Gun violence

4. Abortion

5. Increasing Black Political Power

6. Conclusion

Increase Perceptions of Power = Increased Vote Likelihood

1 Information = Power

- When? Where? How to vote?
- The role Black voters played in 2020



2 Black Power = Black Progress

- Must demonstrate progress over the last 2 years before making promises over the last 2 years
- Must give voters, not politicians, credit for the progress that has been made
- Must use actual people to describe how actual policies have actually improved their lives

3 Representation = Collective Power

- Electing a Black Governor or Black Senator is not enough on its own.
- Changing the face of politics to better reflect the diversity of America is a continuation of progress that they benefit from and an expression of their power

Thank You

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Appendix

1. Political Climate

2. Economics

3. Gun violence

4. Abortion

5. Increasing Black Political Power

6. Conclusion

Respondents across groups see young people as being heavily affected by our current political climate

In every group and issue area we discussed, respondents lifted up concerns about Black Youth



“But my frustration is, we talk about black leadership. We just in this country have a void of leadership. Trump's a leader, but not in the direction I want to go. But he's one of the last big leaders that are getting galvanizing people. Getting them together and they're staunchly behind him no matter what. But my point is, we got two jokers that are seniors, and both of them are talking about running next election? Come on. We need... Where is the next generation of young leaders? Because that's what's needed. We talking about these two old dudes that might not even be around.” –Black Man, Florida



“For me personally, it's the amount of trouble our youth are getting into in our community. It makes me feeling uneasy about the direction that my community will be in the future. So definitely about the youth in the community and where... How is that going to look in 10, 20 years from now?” –Black Man, Ohio



“I feel discouraged for the kids. I feel like people gave up [on] these kids. I think the news is perpetuating fear, so it's making people more scared of the kids than wanting to help them...Like just pretty much if a kid from a certain neighborhood or look a certain way, dress a certain way, then they just deemed a certain way, and they put into a box that way.” – Black Man, Philadelphia, GOP Defector



“ I was going to say some of the good things I see happening in my community is school safety. So after the big mass shooting, I see them trying to incorporate some more safety measures in order to keep children safe. So I would say that's one of the good things so far. There could always be done more, but we are progressing in that area.” – Black Woman, Arizona



“ Just with the same things with Roe v. Wade. I know that, well now here in this state it's banned, but a lot of healthcare stuff that's really important and I kind of want someone elected who's not going to politicize everything. And just more focus in the schools too. I worked in the schools before I started doing healthcare, and a lot of what governor Doug Ducey would implement directly affected my work life and the kids as well. Like not giving funding to schools that let the students wear masks, that was a big thing in our school district. They had meetings and arguments over it. A lot of kids had sicknesses or chronic illnesses, but couldn't stay home and risk their education. So I think that having someone come in would be crucial with those things.” –Black Woman, Arizona



“Programs for youth [should be added to the Black Economic Agenda].” –Black Mother, Philadelphia