

September 2022

# Mobilizing youth voters as we approach the midterms

Rise & Avalanche Insights

# Goals & Sample



## Research Goals

- Understanding barriers to voting for youth voters 18–30
- Understanding messaging that will activate and mobilize voters
- Understanding to what extent younger voters think candidates care about them and what attributes set good candidates apart from others

## Sample

- 4,167 Registered voters, Ages 18–30
- States: CA, OR, AZ, NV, NM, WI, MI, PA, OH, CO, NH, MD, VA, GA, NC, TX, LA
- Fielding dates: August 26 – September 4, 2022

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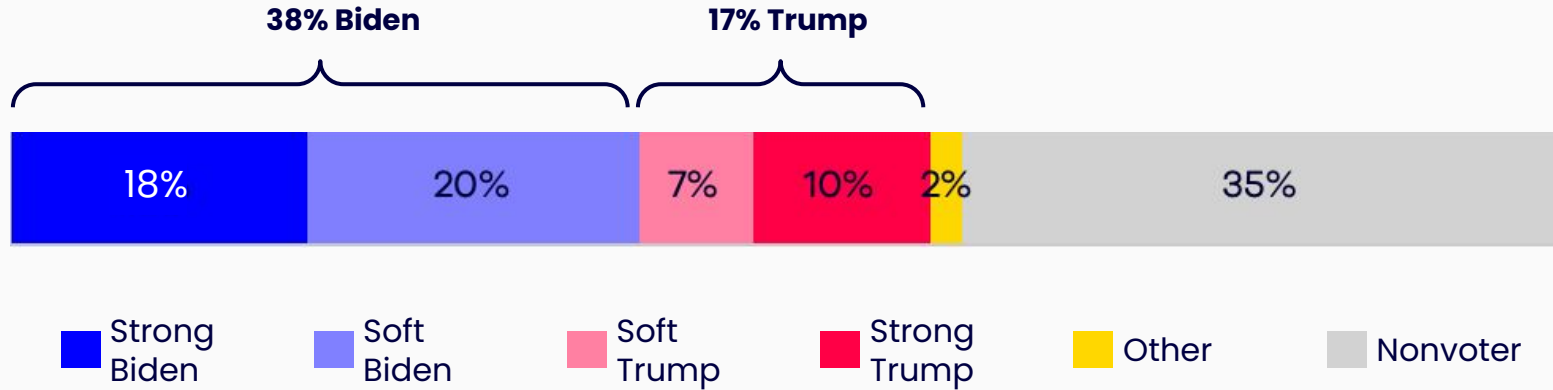
# Understanding key segments



# Across key states, a plurality of youth voters are Biden voters; they are nearly evenly split between Strong Biden and Soft Biden. Over a third did not vote in 2020.

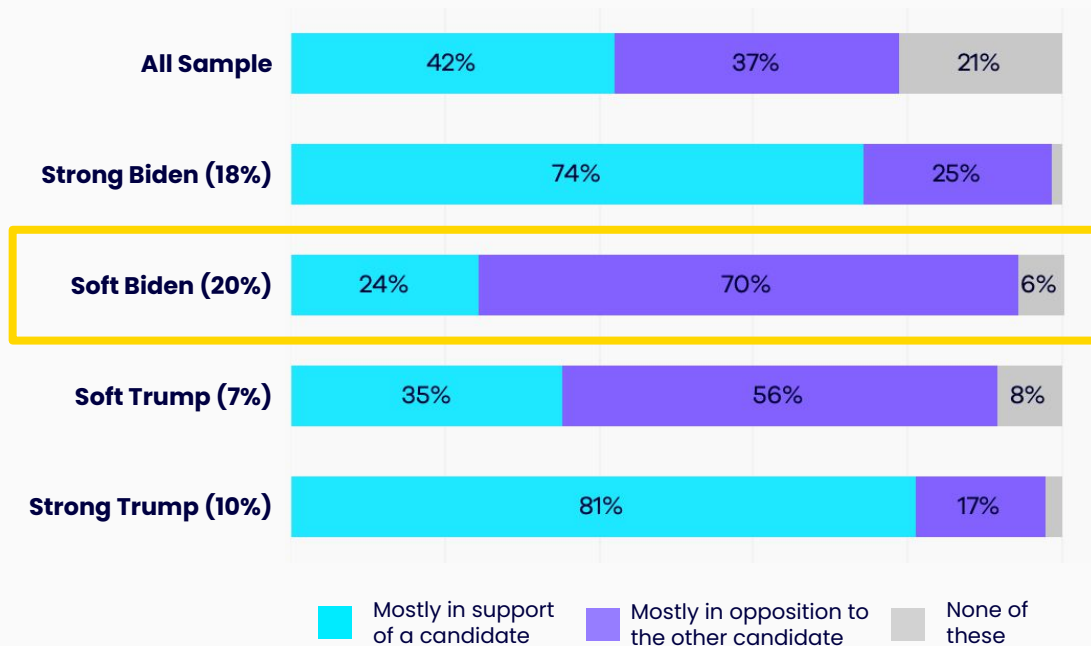
[2020 Vote Choice] Who did you vote for in the 2020 presidential election? (Closed)

[Strong / Soft Support] Did you strongly support [Joe Biden / Donald Trump] or have mixed feelings about supporting him? (Closed)



**Most youth Soft Biden voters say they voted in opposition to Trump in 2020, while only 24% say they voted in support of Biden.**

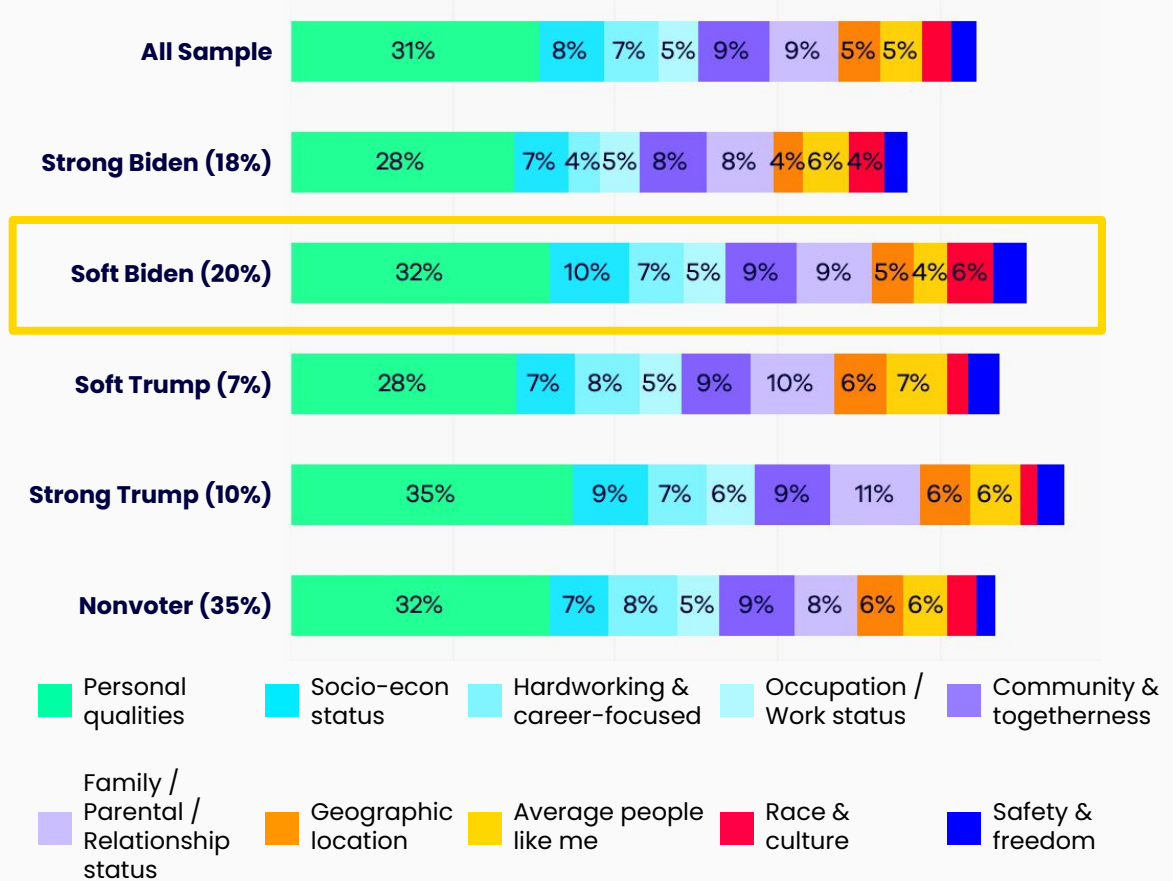
**[Vote Partisanship]** While there may be many factors, would you say were voting mostly in support of your [2020 presidential] candidate or mostly against the other candidate? (Closed)



**Attitudinally, youth Soft Biden voters are much more heterogeneous than Strong Biden.**

**When thinking about their identity, the are relatively more likely to cite personal qualities like honesty and integrity, class, and race/culture.**

**[Personal Community Identity]** When you think about defining yourself or your community, what aspects about you or your life come to mind? (Open)



# Soft Biden

20% of youth voters

Relative to all youth voters, Soft Biden are more likely to be college educated, live in suburbs, be atheist / agnostic, come from a working class background, and have student loan debt.



## Race

62% White (+1)  
13% Black (+0)  
22% Hispanic (+0)  
4% AAPI (+0)



## Gender

46% Man (-2)  
50% Woman (+1)  
3% Nonbinary (+1)  
1% Other (-1)



## Education

**14% High school graduate or less (-10)**  
41% Some post secondary (+0)  
**44% College (+10)**



## Urbanicity

36% Urban (-2)  
**46% Suburban (+8)**  
10% Small town (-3)  
8% Rural Area (-4)



## Religion

**24% Christian (-9)**  
15% Catholic (-1)  
2% Protestant (-1)  
24% Nothing in particular (+6)  
**26% Atheist or Agnostic (+10)**



## Class Identity

13% Lower Class (-1)  
37% Working Class (+4)  
39% Middle class (-2)  
9% Upper-middle class (+0)  
2% Upper class (-1)



## Midterm Motivation

25% Very motivated (-3)  
42% Somewhat motivated (+5)  
7% Not at all motivated (-4)  
26% Not very motivated (+2)



## Student loan status

41% Never had student loan debt (-7)  
18% Had student loan debt in the past (+0)  
**41% Currently have student loan debt (+8)**





# 2020 Nonvoters

## 35% of youth voters

Relative to all youth voters, Nonvoters are more likely to be Latino, women, have a high school degree or less, and live in a small town or rural area.



### Race

55% White (-19)  
14% Black (+1)  
**26% Hispanic (+4)**  
5% AAPI (+1)



### Gender

39% Man (-10)  
**57% Woman (+8)**  
3% Nonbinary (+1)  
2% Other (+1)



### Education

**36% High school graduate or less (+12)**  
42% Some post secondary (+1)  
20% College (-14)



### Urbanicity

33% Urban (-5)  
35% Suburban (-3)  
**18% Small town (+5)**  
**14% Rural Area (+2)**



### Religion

31% Christian (-3)  
13% Catholic (-3)  
2% Protestant (-1)  
23% Nothing in particular (+5)  
15% Atheist or Agnostic (-1)



### Class Identity

**18% Lower Class (+4)**  
34% Working Class (+1)  
38% Middle class (-3)  
7% Upper-middle class (-2)  
2% Upper class (-1)



### Midterm Motivation

16% Very motivated (-12)  
36% Somewhat motivated (-1)  
**18% Not at all motivated (+7)**  
**29% Not very motivated (+5)**



### Student loan status

**58% Never had student loan debt (+10)**  
12% Had student loan debt in the past (-6)  
30% Currently have student loan debt (-3)



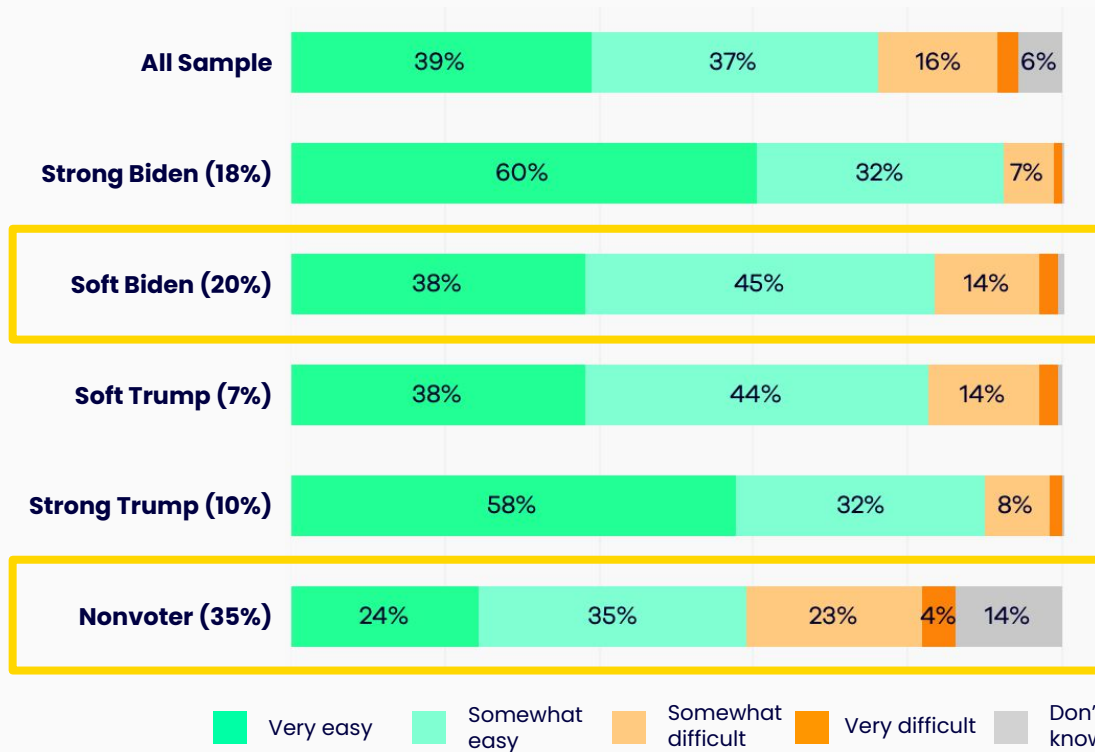
Among youth voters, there is a **gap**  
**between perceived ease of voting and**  
**self-report knowledge** about the  
upcoming elections.



**The majority of youth voters say that voting is somewhat or very easy.**

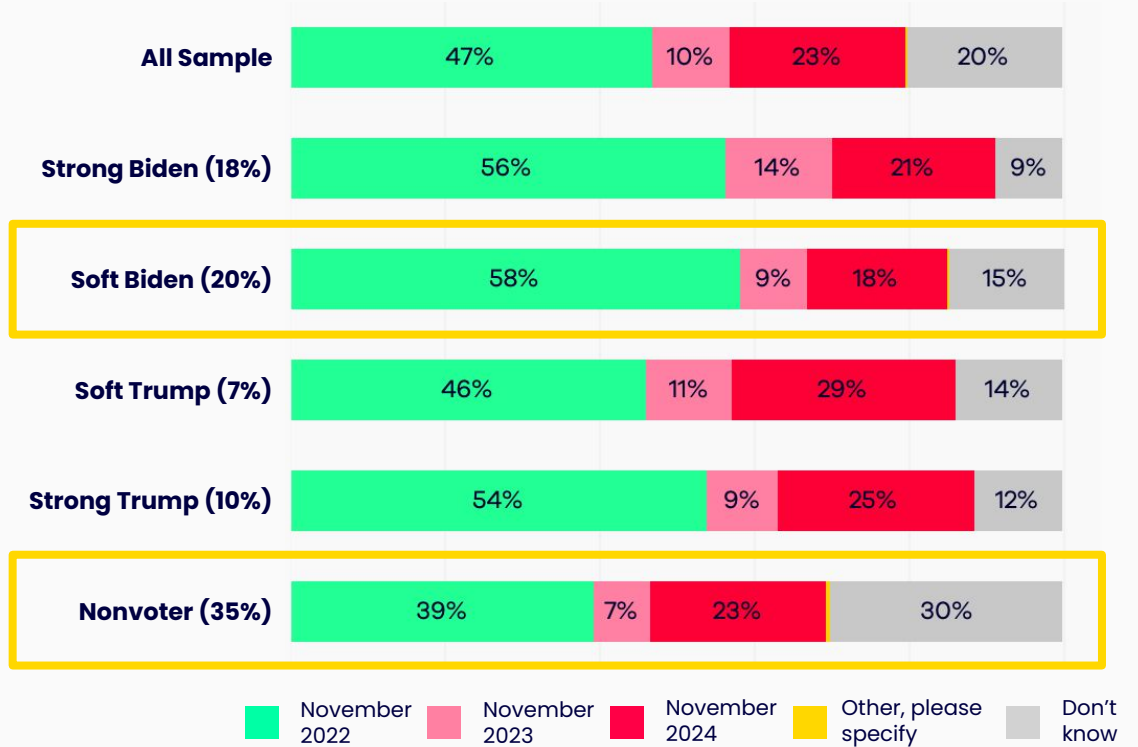
**Soft Biden (38%) are much less likely than Strong Biden (60%) to say voting is very easy.**

**[Voting ease]** Thinking about your experience, how easy or difficult would you say it is to vote when election time comes around? (Closed)



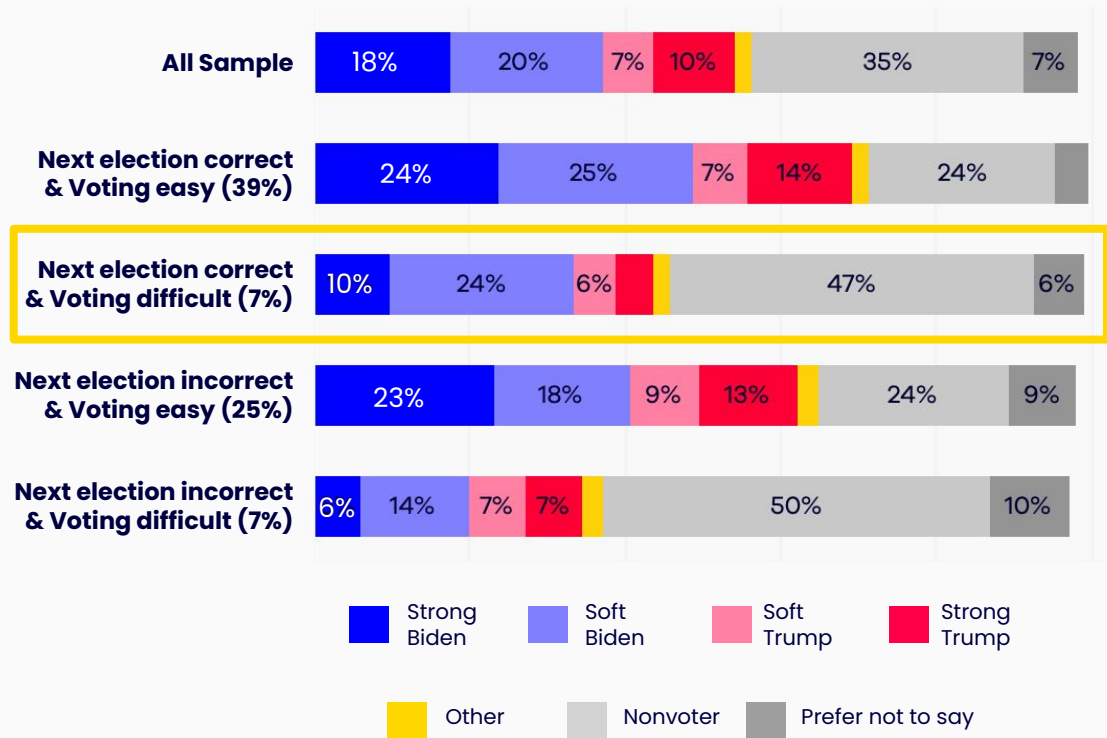
**53% of youth voters either incorrectly identify the next Congressional elections or don't know when they are.**

**[Next Elections]** To the best of your knowledge, when are the next elections for the United States Congress and other elected offices? (Closed)



**Among those who correctly ID the next election date but say that voting is difficult, nearly half say they did not vote in 2020 and almost a quarter are Soft Biden voters.**

**[2020 Vote Choice]** Who did you vote for in the 2020 presidential election?



# Voters who correct ID the next election date but say voting is difficult

7% of youth voters

Relative to all youth voters, these voters are more likely to be college educated, be atheist/agnostic, not motivated to vote, and have student loan debt.



## Race

65% White (+4)  
10% Black (-3)  
22% Hispanic (-2)  
3% AAPI (-1)



## Gender

50% Man (+2)  
45% Woman (-4)  
5% Nonbinary (+3)  
0% Other (-1)



## Education

22% High school graduate or less (-2)  
38% Some post secondary (-3)  
**40% College (+6)**



## Urbanicity

34% Urban (-4)  
39% Suburban (+1)  
13% Small town (+0)  
13% Rural Area (+1)



## Religion

29% Christian (-5)  
18% Catholic (+2)  
3% Protestant (+0)  
18% Nothing in particular (+0)  
**20% Atheist or Agnostic (+4)**



## Class Identity

17% Lower Class (+3)  
29% Working Class (-4)  
45% Middle class (+4)  
7% Upper-middle class (-2)  
2% Upper class (-1)



## Midterm Motivation

16% Very motivated (-12)  
40% Somewhat motivated (+3)  
13% Not at all motivated (+2)  
**31% Not very motivated (+7)**



## Student loan status

44% Never had student loan debt (-4)  
17% Had student loan debt in the past (-1)  
**39% Currently have student loan debt (+6)**



# Barriers to voting



When asked in open-ended form, Soft Biden youth voters are among those most likely to cite **process & logistics** as barriers to voting, followed by **a lack of confidence and a lack of good candidates.**





# 40% of youth voters cite barriers as process & logistics, including wait times, availability, and locations. Soft Biden and Nonvoters also mention confidence/pressure; Nonvoters cite candidates.

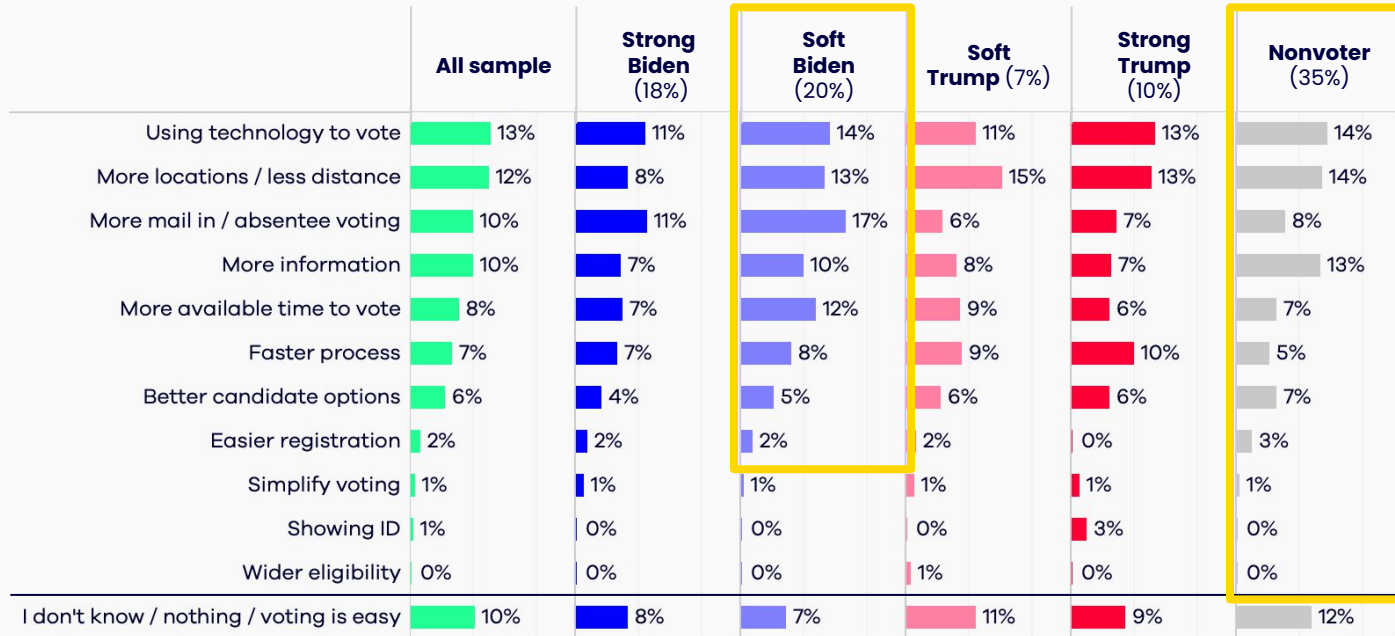
**[Voting Difficult]** Thinking about your experience, what are the specific things that make voting the most difficult? (Open)

	All sample	Strong Biden (18%)	Soft Biden (20%)	Soft Trump (7%)	Strong Trump (10%)	Nonvoter (35%)
<b>Process &amp; logistics</b>	40%	32%	49%	42%	39%	40%
Waiting / long lines	13%	11%	17%	14%	18%	12%
Timing	12%	10%	17%	16%	10%	12%
Getting to poll locations	12%	8%	15%	10%	9%	14%
Registering	4%	3%	4%	5%	2%	4%
<b>Confidence</b>	14%	10%	15%	13%	9%	16%
Not knowing enough	12%	9%	13%	11%	8%	15%
Other people's opinions and pressure	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%	2%
<b>Candidates</b>	13%	11%	11%	14%	11%	17%
Choosing a candidate	9%	8%	7%	8%	7%	12%
Don't like the candidates	4%	4%	4%	7%	4%	5%
<b>Nothing / Voting isn't difficult</b>	9%	13%	7%	8%	15%	6%



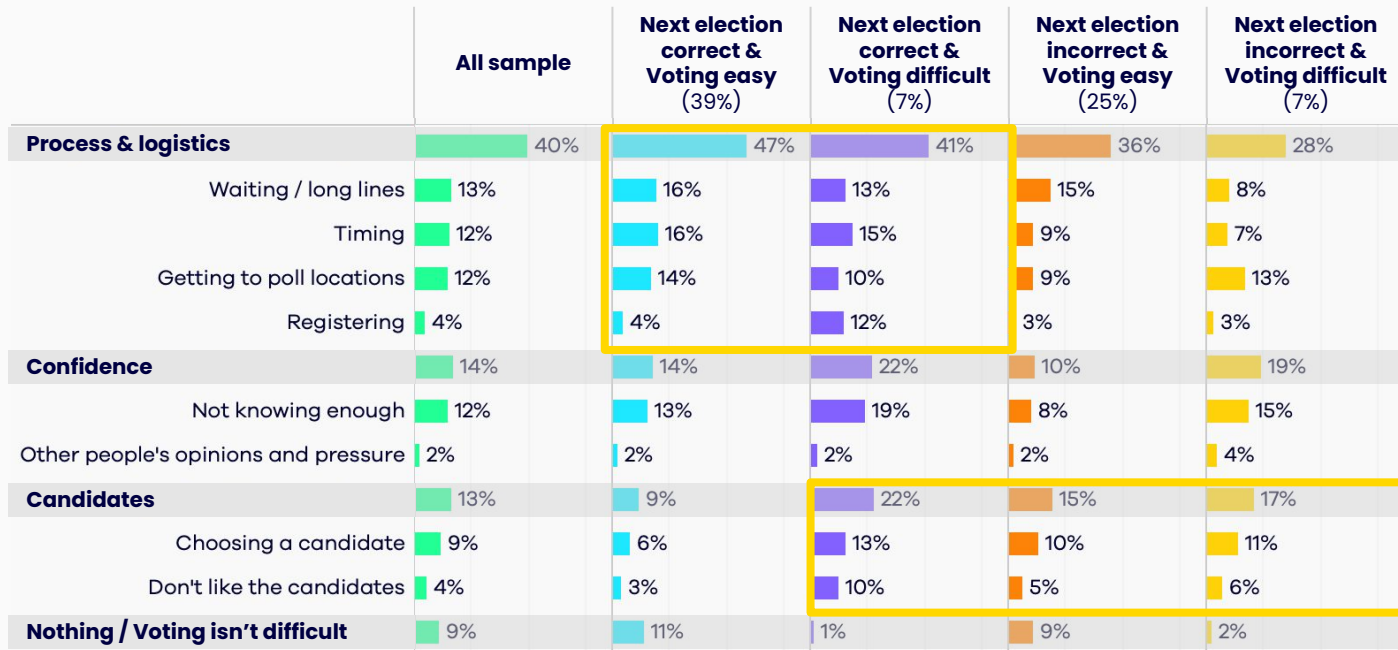
# Soft Biden are particularly likely to say mail-in can make voting easier. Nonvoters' top suggestions are using technology, more voting locations, and more information.

**[Voting Ease]** Thinking about your experience, what is one specific thing that would make voting easier? (Open)



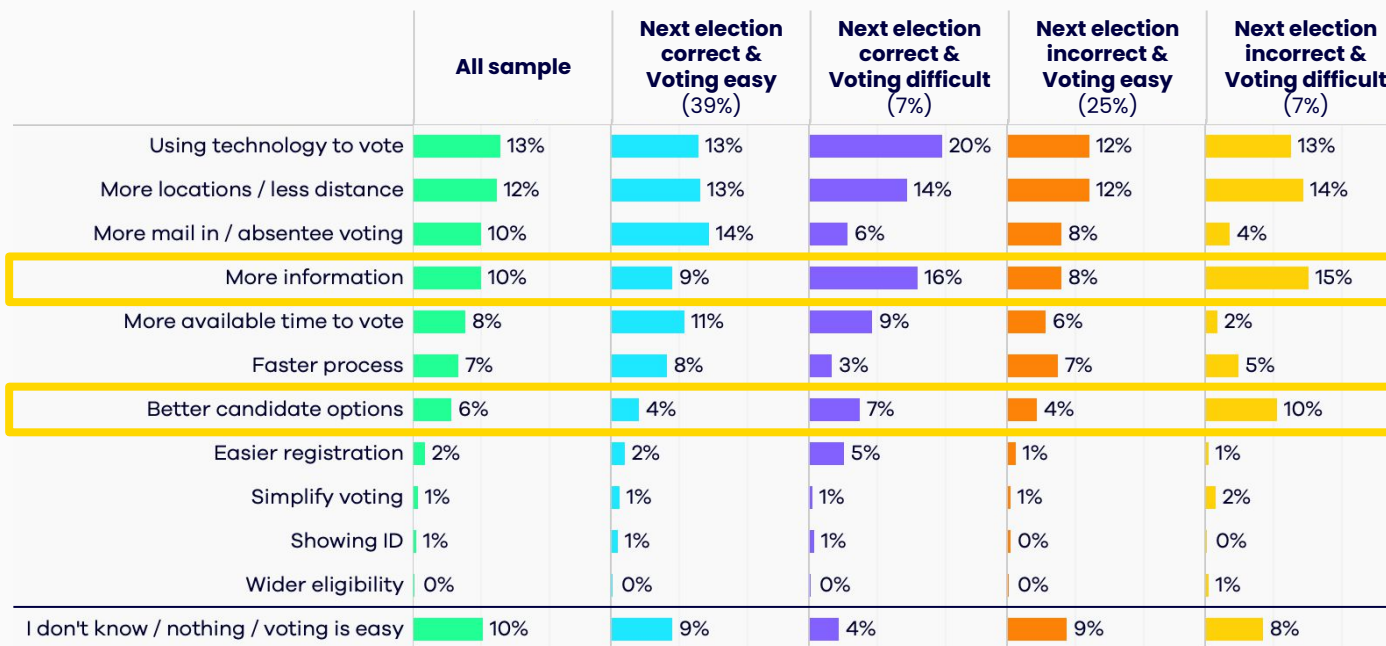
# Youth voters who correctly ID the next election date are more likely to cite process and logistics as barriers than those who do not. Those who incorrectly ID the next election or who say voting is difficult are more likely to cite candidates.

[Voting Difficult] Thinking about your experience, what are the specific things that make voting the most difficult? (Open)



# Voters who say voting is difficult are more likely to say that more information and better candidates would make voting easier than those who say voting is easy.

**[Voting Ease]** Thinking about your experience, what is one specific thing that would make voting easier? (Open)

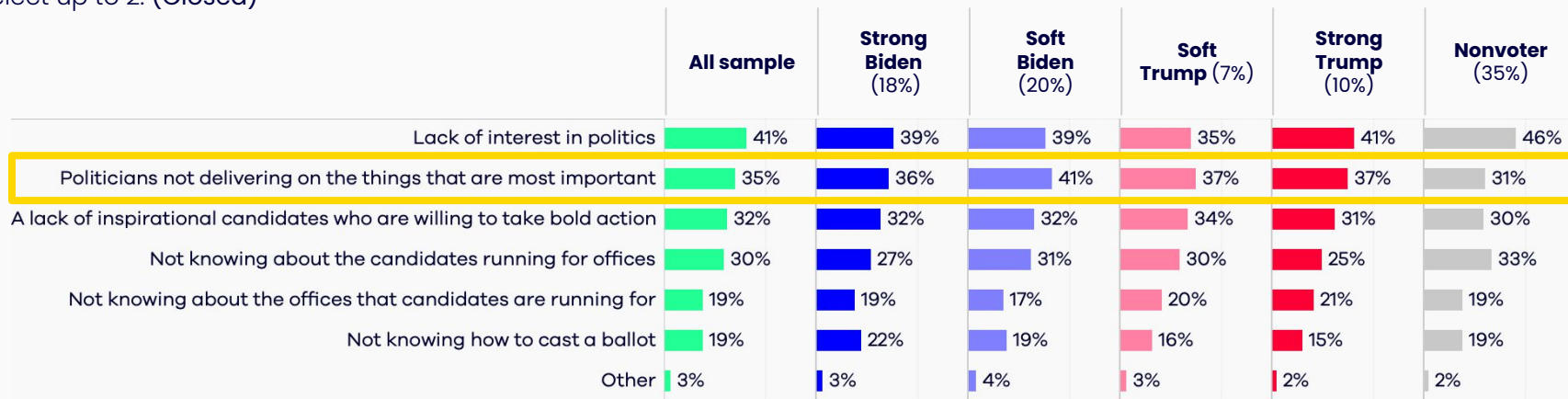


When asked about specific barriers, youth voters are most likely to select **'lack of interest in politics'** and **'politicians not delivering'**.



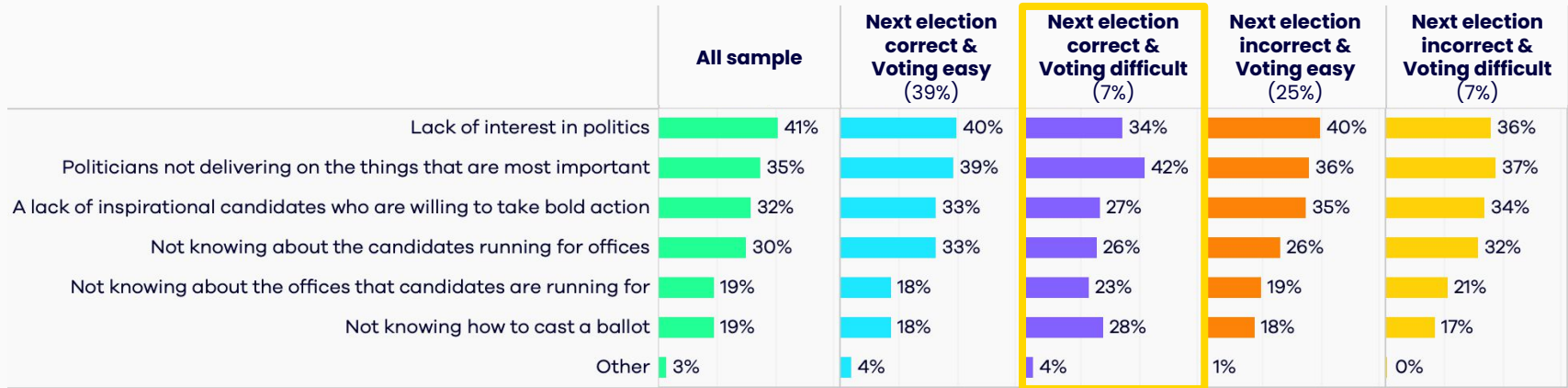
# Soft Biden voters are most likely to cite politicians not delivering on their promises. Nonvoters are among those most likely to say they are not interested in politics.

**[Not Voting Reasoning]** Keeping your experience in mind, which of the following do you think is the biggest barrier to voting? You may select up to 2. (Closed)



# Those who correctly ID the next election date and say voting is difficult are particularly likely say 'politicians not delivering', 'not knowing how to cast a ballot', and 'not knowing about offices candidates are running for' are barriers to voting.

**[Not Voting Reasoning]** Keeping your experience in mind, which of the following do you think is the biggest barrier to voting? You may select up to 2. (Closed)



# Vote choice and the 2022 elections





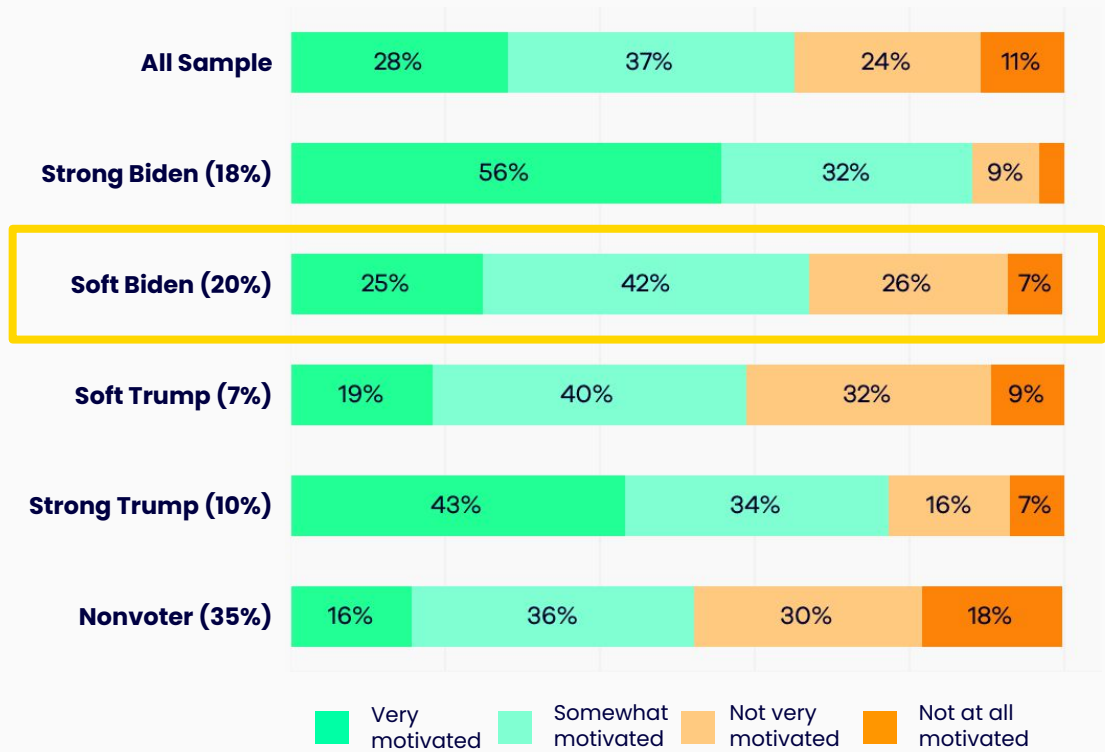
While a plurality of youth voters say they will vote for Democrats in the next election, roughly **a third say they are undecided or won't vote.**



**Youth Soft Biden voters are much less likely (25%) than Strong Biden (56%) to say they are very motivated to vote in the elections this November.**

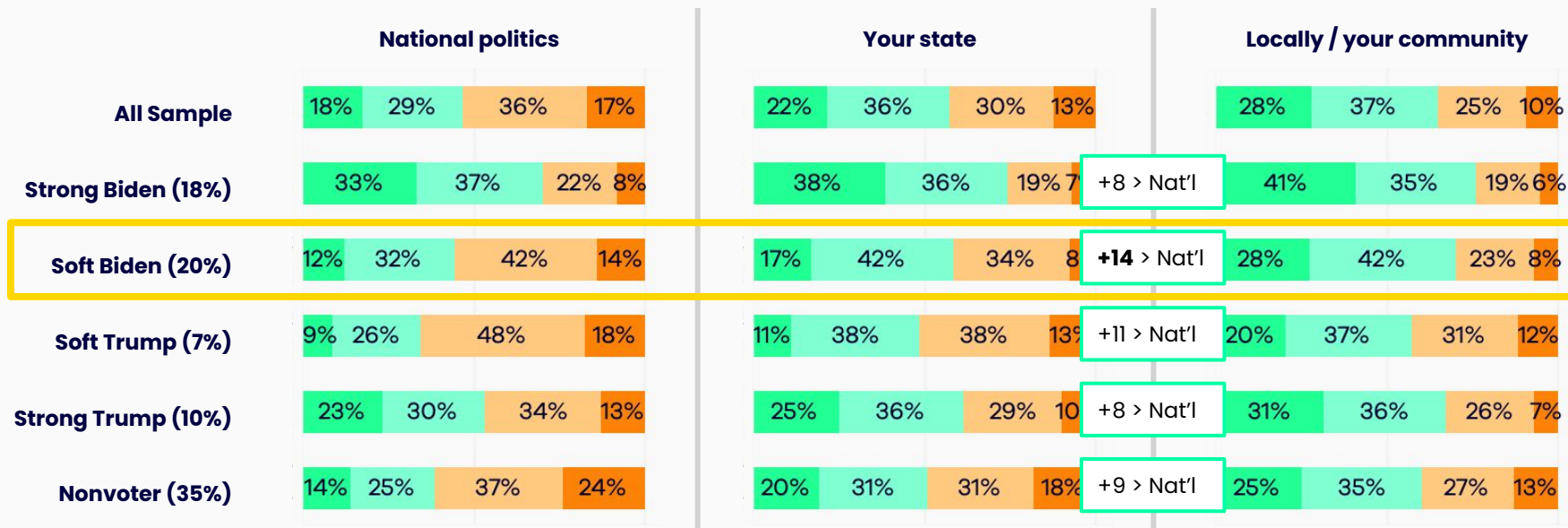
**Nonvoters are divided, and nearly half say they are not motivated.**

**[2022 Vote Motivation]** How motivated do you currently feel to vote in the elections this November? (Closed)



# Youth voters, and Soft Biden voters in particular, are much more likely to say their vote makes a difference locally or at the state level rather compared to the national level.

[Voting Impact Grid] How much do you think your vote makes a difference in each of the following? (Closed)



+8 > Nat'l

+14 > Nat'l

+11 > Nat'l

+8 > Nat'l

+9 > Nat'l

■ A significant difference
 ■ Some difference
 ■ Little difference
 ■ No difference at all

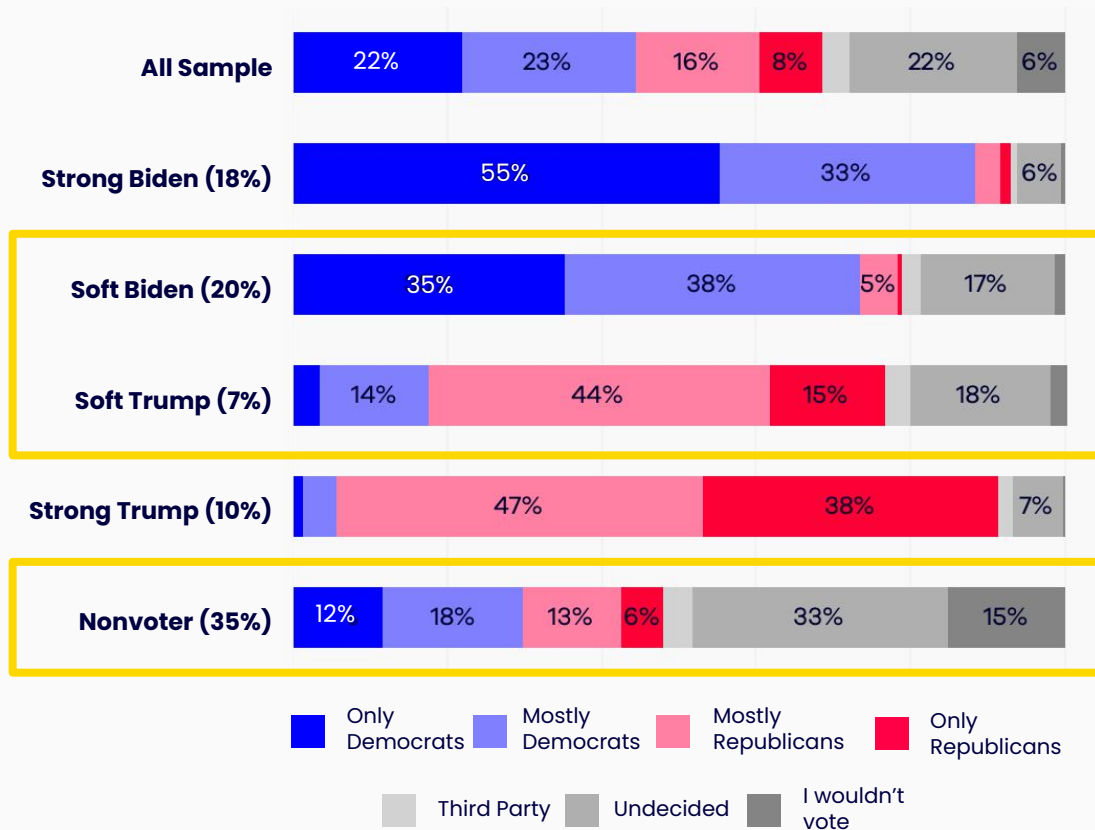
Confidential



**While most will vote Democrat, roughly a quarter of Soft Biden voters are either undecided, wouldn't vote, or say they would vote GOP if the election were held today.**

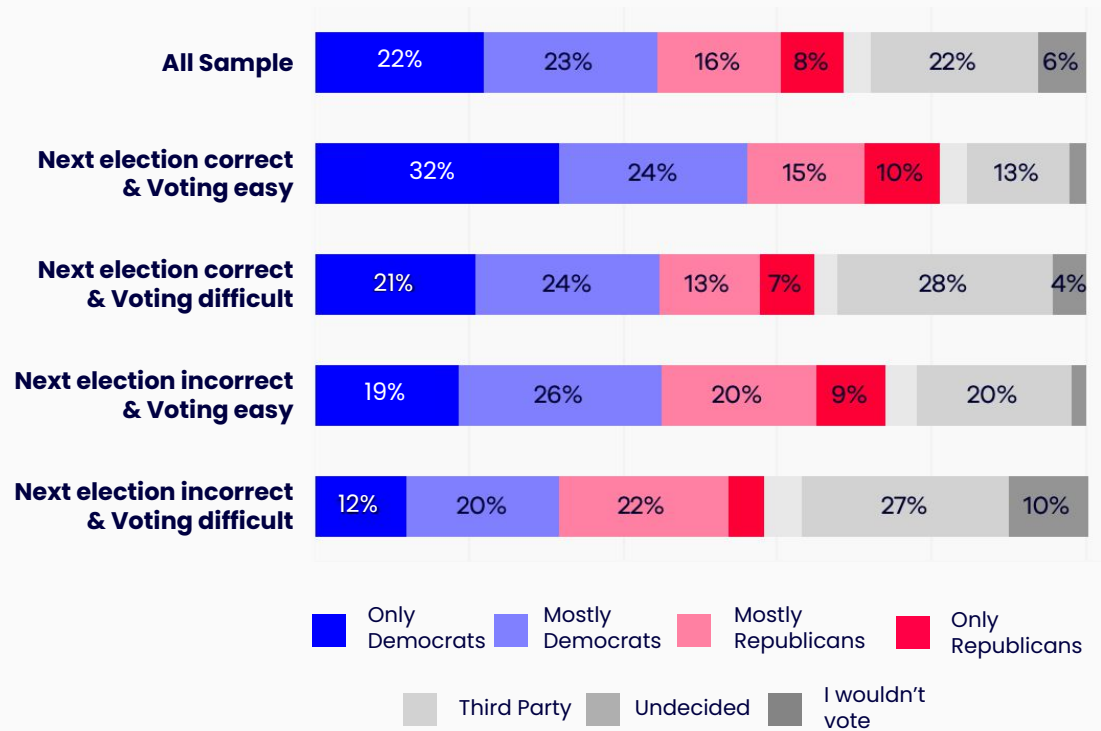
**A fifth of Soft Trump voters say they would vote for Democrats.**

**[2022 Vote Choice]** If the elections this November were held today, who would you vote for? (Closed)



**Among youth voters, there is a slight correlation between being able to correctly ID the next election date and Democratic vote share.**

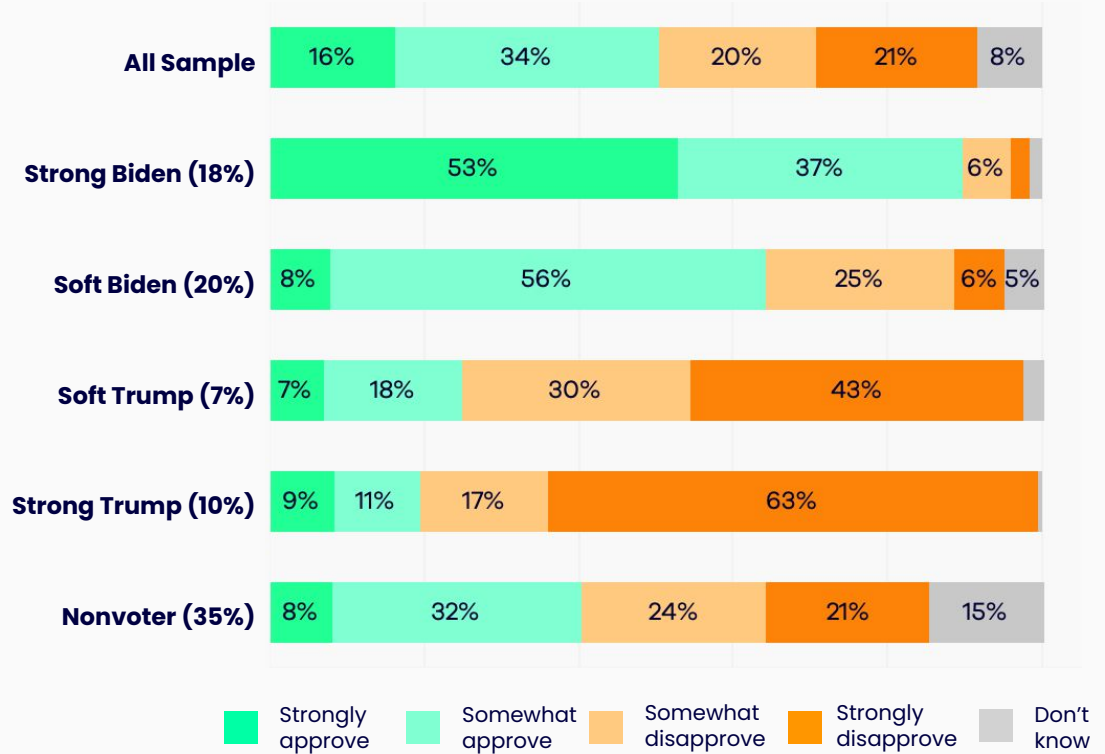
**[2022 Vote Choice]** If the elections this November were held today, who would you vote for? (Closed)



**While most Soft Biden voters approve of Biden's job as President, intensity of approval is very low.**

**4 in 10 Nonvoters approve of Biden but intensity is similarly low.**

**[Biden Approval]** Do you approve or disapprove of the job Joe Biden is doing as president? (Closed)



**Student loan debt cancellation** is popular among Soft Biden youth voters.

Most youth voters **support cancellation overall.**



# Unaided, student loan forgiveness is top of mind among Soft Biden voters when thinking about what Biden has recently done to benefit people. Few voters explicitly cite climate (or the IRA).

**[Biden Benefit]** What, if anything, has Joe Biden recently done that you think is of benefit to people in the country? (Open)

	All sample	Strong Biden (18%)	Soft Biden (20%)	Soft Trump (7%)	Strong Trump (10%)	Nonvoter (35%)
<b>Student debt forgiveness</b>	27%	26%	47%	16%	12%	27%
<b>He's done nothing</b>	22%	5%	12%	39%	51%	24%
<b>Improved the economy</b>	10%	16%	12%	8%	7%	9%
Reduced inflation/cost of living	4%	8%	7%	2%	3%	3%
Provided direct financial help	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%
Created jobs & improved the economy	2%	4%	1%	1%	1%	2%
<b>Worked on COVID response, climate change, abortion, etc.</b>	8%	12%	10%	3%	4%	8%
Led COVID response	2%	4%	2%	1%	1%	2%
Addressed climate change	2%	2%	3%	0%	1%	2%
Protected abortion	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%
<b>He's trying &amp; is better than Trump</b>	2%	4%	3%	1%	1%	2%





# In their own words:

## Student debt forgiveness (27%)

*Most respondents just cite 'student loan forgiveness or cancellation', below are a few respondents who elaborated further.*

*"His commitment to federal student loan debt forgiveness is easily one of the best things he has done very recently to benefit the people in this country." - 30, NH white, Male, Strong Biden*

*"I'm not sure he's done much of anything; the student loan pauses and forgiveness has helped me tremendously." - 18-29, NH white, Female, Strong Trump*

*"The college debt forgiveness plan could be helping lots of Americans." - 18-29, Latinx, Male, Soft Trump*

*"Some student loan debt relief will help but still need to address inflation and cost of living expenses." - 30, NH white, Female, Soft Biden*

*"He is helping pass something that helps people with student loans get some of their loans paid off. This will help with people who want to buy houses, cars, etc, but are told they cannot because they have outstanding student loans that they are working their tails off to try and pay off." - 18-29, NH White, Female, Nonvoter*

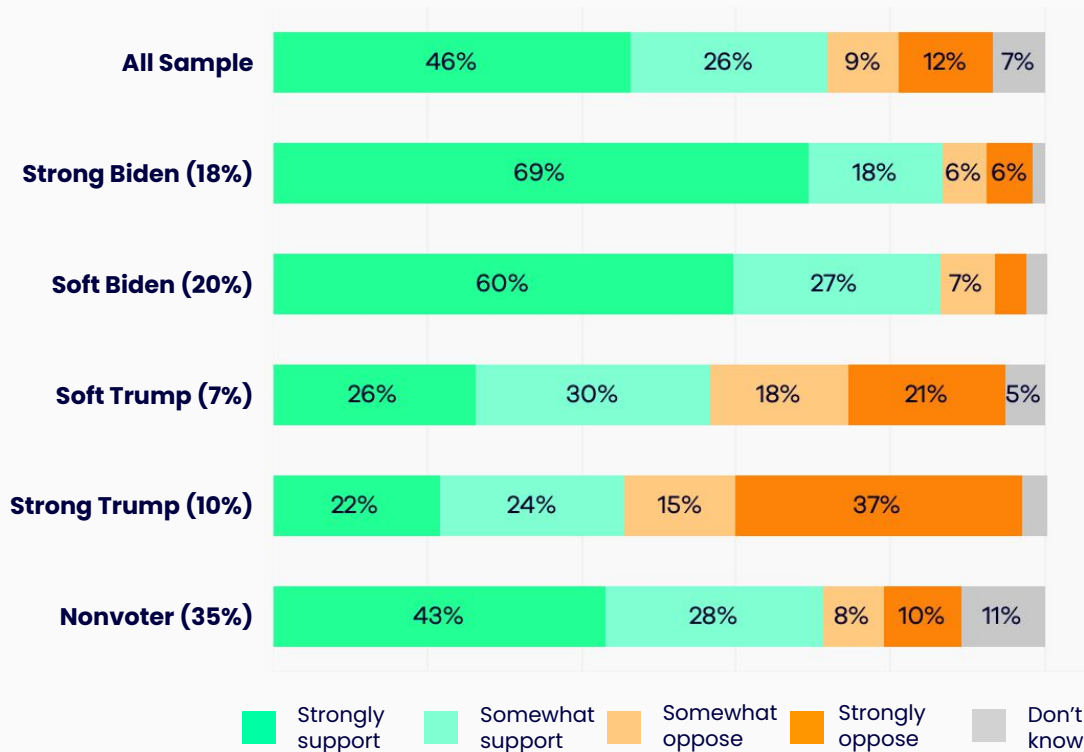
*"The idea of helping with student loans is nice and could help a lot of people even though I don't have any. Gas prices are returning to normal as well." - 18-29, NH White, Female, Soft Biden*

*"He's pushing to forgive student loan debt, and we really need that painfully." - 18-29, Black, Female, Strong Biden*



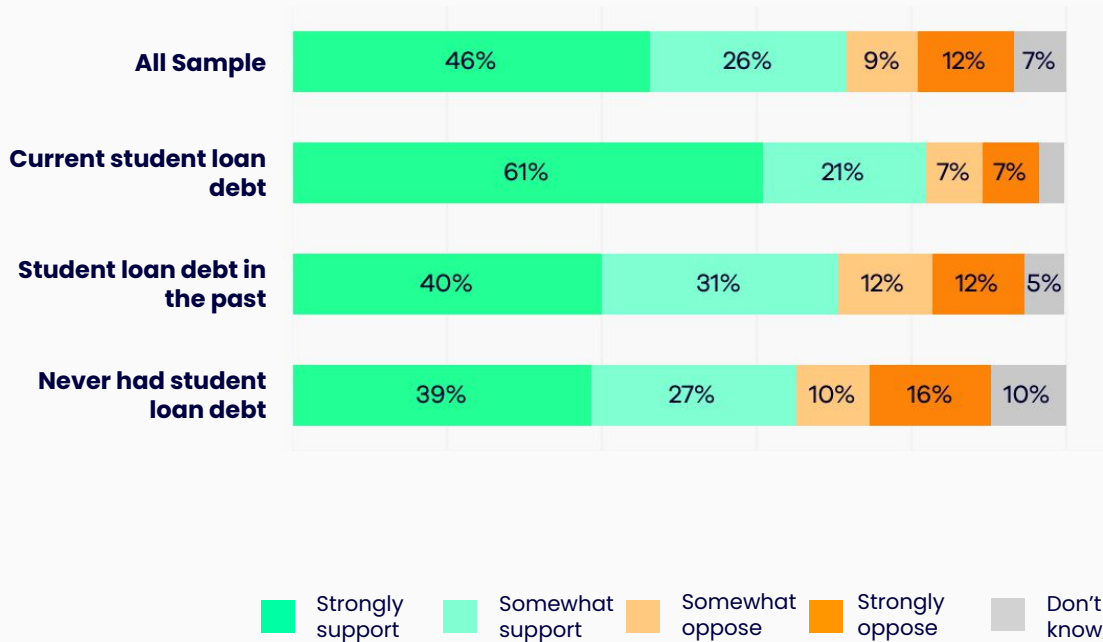
**When asked about student loan cancellation, the vast majority of Biden voters and more than half of Soft Trump voters strongly or somewhat support student debt relief.**

**[Student Loan Support]** How much do you support or oppose this action by the Biden administration? (Closed)



**While the intensity is lower among those who don't currently have student loans, most youth voters support student loan cancellation.**

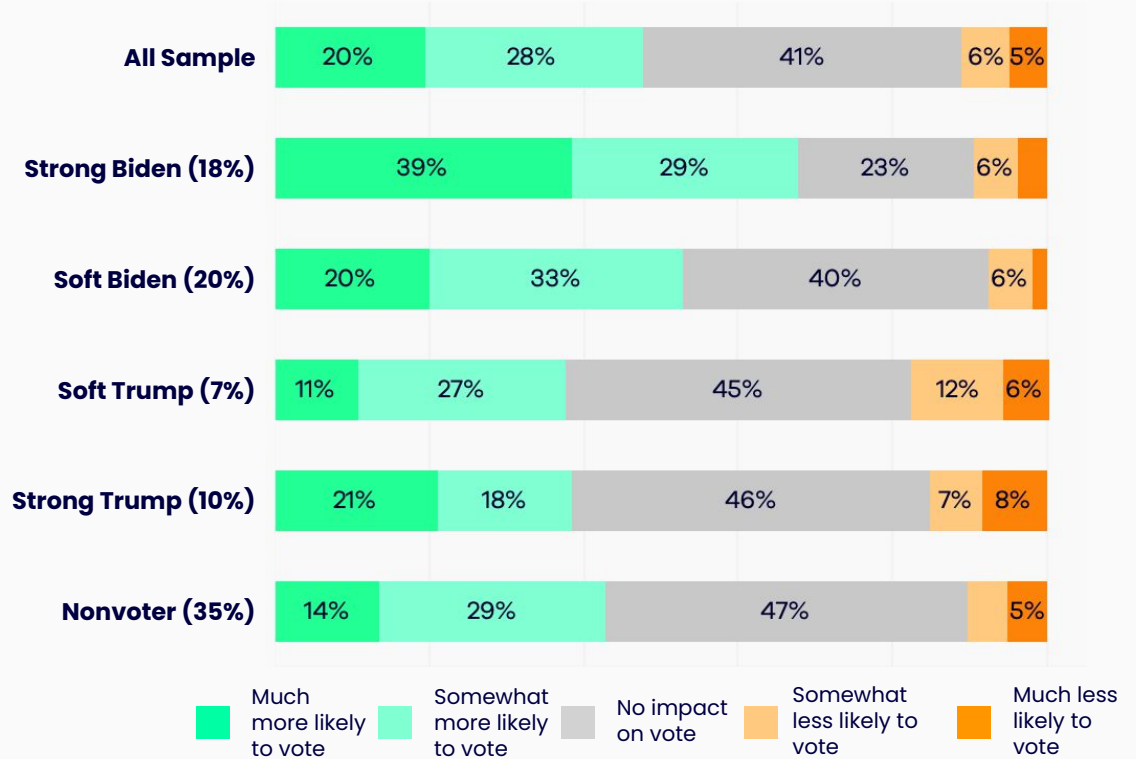
**[Student Loan Support]** How much do you support or oppose this action by the Biden administration? (Closed)



**Most Strong Biden and a slim majority of Soft Biden say they are more likely to vote as a result of the Biden administration's student loan cancellation.**

**4 in 10 youth voters overall say it has no impact on their vote.**

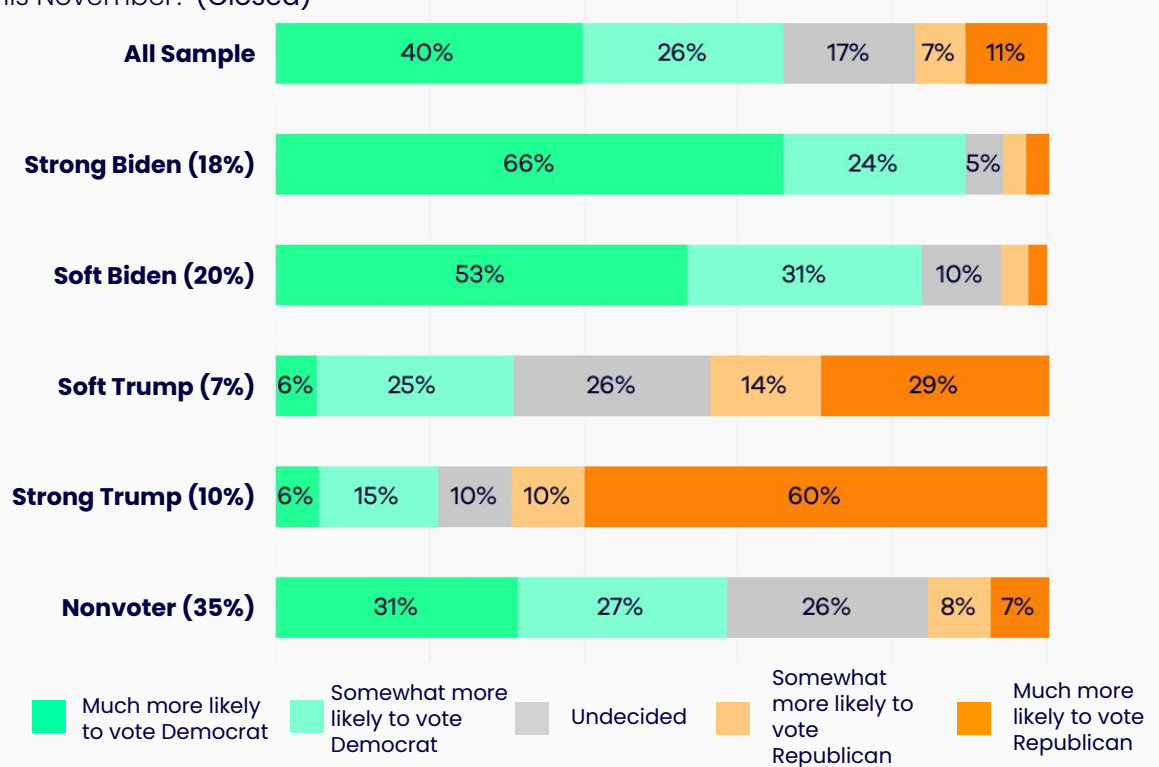
**[Student Loan Vote Likelihood]** How, if at all, does student loan cancellation impact how likely you are to vote in the elections this November? (Closed)



**Among youth voters who are more likely vote, most say it makes them more likely to vote Dem.**

**84% of Soft Biden and 58% of Nonvoters who are more likely to vote say it makes them more likely to vote Dem.**

**[Student Loan Vote Party]** You indicated that you are more likely to vote due to student loan debt cancellation. Which party does this make you more likely to vote for this November? (Closed)



Note: This slide only displays respondents who answered "Much more" or "Somewhat more likely to vote" on the previous question.



# Framing the choice in this election



# Arguments for Voting

## Acknowledge limit + Fair & just

Voting in this election isn't going to solve all of our problems, but if we are going to have any chance at making our country more fair and just for everyone — regardless of class, race, or background — we have to vote better leaders into office.

## Cost of living + Help people thrive

We need leaders who are working to reduce the cost of living and address inflation. Voting for leaders who will reduce student loans, increase affordable housing, and create good paying jobs will help people thrive.

## Economy for us + Big corporations

We need leaders who are helping to build an economy that works for us, not the other way around. Too many leaders only help big corporations get tax breaks. We have to vote for leaders who help hardworking people achieve their goals.

## Voting + Democracy

Our freedoms in this country come from us choosing leaders who represent us and voting out those that don't. At a time when so many leaders are willing to ignore our voices, we have to vote for leaders who will protect our voting rights and strengthen our democracy.

## Protect abortion rights

We need leaders who are working to protect abortion rights. Voting for leaders who will protect our rights is the only way to expand abortion rights in states where it is banned.

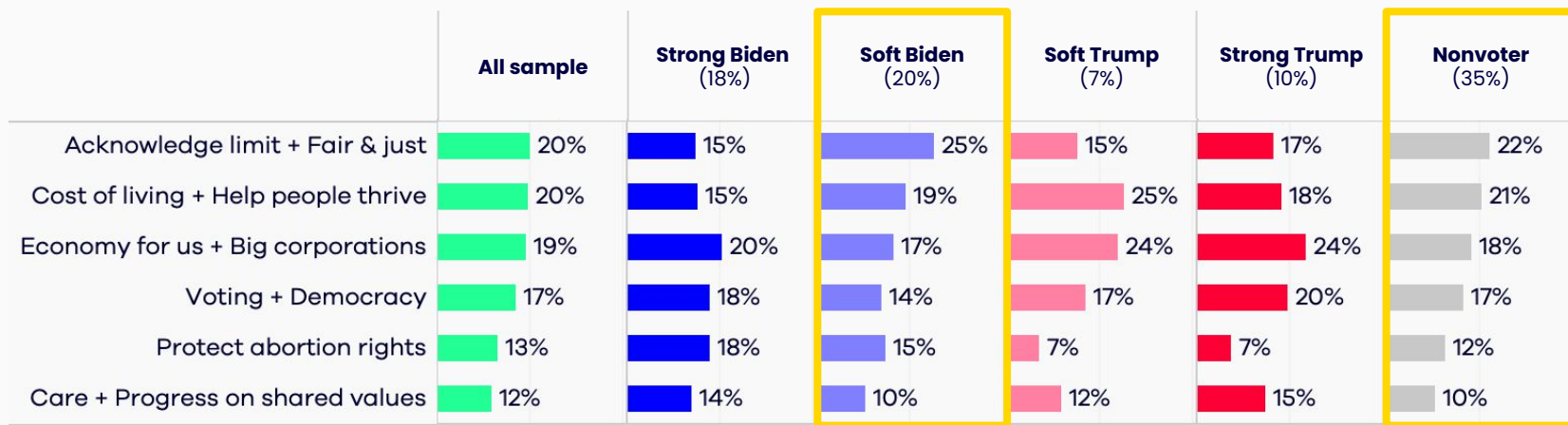
## Care + Progress on shared values

Voting is the only way to ensure our leaders care enough about people to keep fighting for progress on our shared values and the things that really matter like building a country that works for all people.



# Soft Biden voters select 'Acknowledge + Fair & just' as the best case for voting followed closely by 'Cost of living' and 'Economy for us + not big corporations'.

**[Arguments for voting]** Regardless of who you plan to vote for personally, which do you think makes the best case for why you should vote in the elections this November?





# For voters who select 'Acknowledge + Fair & just' as the best case for voting, the 'Voting + Democracy' case ranks second best.

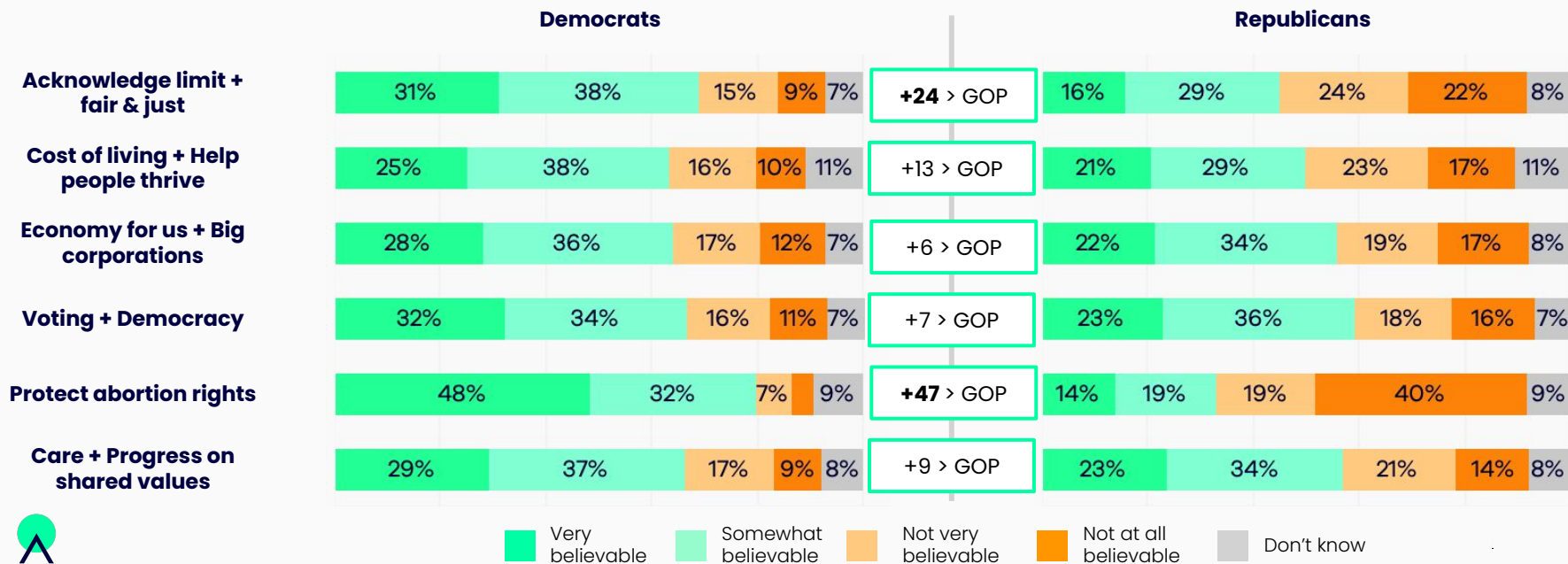
**[Arguments for voting 2]** Of the ones that remain, which makes the second best case for why you should vote in the elections in November?

	Acknowledge limit + Fair & just	Cost of living + Help people thrive	Economy for us + Big corporations	Voting + Democracy	Protect abortion rights	Care + Progress on shared values
Acknowledge limit + Fair & just	0%	19%	20%	24%	20%	21%
Cost of living + Help people thrive	19%	0%	31%	19%	27%	20%
Economy for us + Big corporations	22%	29%	0%	27%	21%	22%
Voting + Democracy	25%	21%	22%	0%	17%	21%
Protect abortion rights	17%	16%	13%	14%	0%	17%
Care + Progress on shared values	17%	15%	15%	17%	15%	0%



# 'Acknowledge + Fair & just' and 'Protect abortion rights' offer the greatest points of contrast on credibility from Dems vs. the GOP.

[Argument credibility] How believable is this argument coming from [Democratic/Republican] candidates?



# **Priorities and desired attributes for electeds**



Financial relief remains a top issue priority and youth voters emphasize **honesty, trust, care, and fight** as the top desired attributes they want candidates to have this November.



# In the past year, youth voters overall are most likely to say elected officials haven't improved their lives. However, unaided, at least a quarter cite some form of financial relief, including student loans.

**[Elected Priorities Past Year]** What is the most important thing elected officials have done to improve your life within the last year?  
(Open)

	All sample	Strong Biden (18%)	Soft Biden (20%)	Soft Trump (7%)	Strong Trump (10%)	Nonvoter (35%)
<b>Nothing</b>	41%	20%	33%	47%	50%	52%
<b>Student loan forgiveness &amp; other financial relief</b>	28%	28%	40%	24%	24%	25%
Student loan forgiveness	13%	12%	24%	9%	7%	13%
Financial relief	10%	10%	11%	11%	10%	9%
Lower costs & reduce inflation	6%	8%	7%	5%	8%	5%
<b>Creating jobs &amp; increasing wages</b>	3%	4%	2%	3%	3%	2%
<b>Addressing COVID</b>	3%	5%	3%	4%	3%	1%



# In the next year, youth voters want to see reduced cost of living and financial relief. 14% of Soft Biden and 11% of Nonvoters cite protecting reproductive freedom.

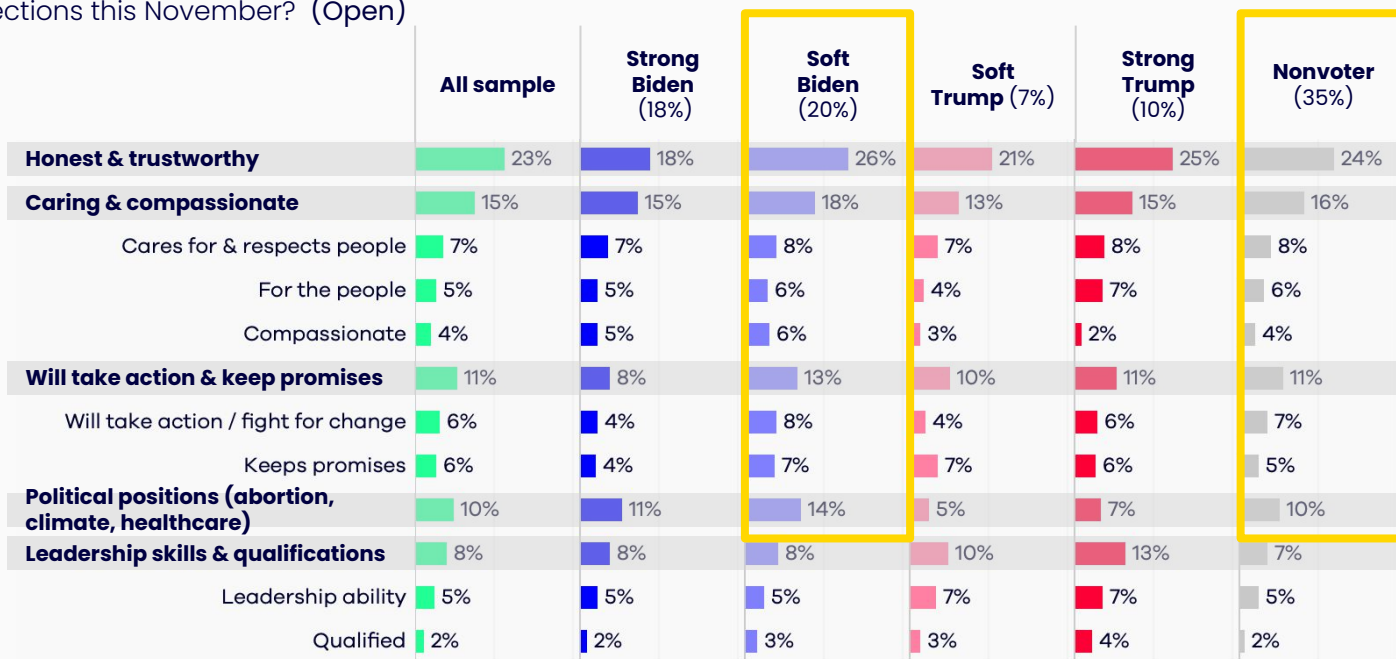
**[Elected Priorities Next Year]** What is the most important thing elected officials could do to improve your life within the next year?  
(Open)

	All sample	Strong Biden (18%)	Soft Biden (20%)	Soft Trump (7%)	Strong Trump (10%)	Nonvoter (35%)
<b>Fix inflation &amp; lower the cost of living</b>	31%	21%	27%	43%	41%	34%
<b>Financial assistance &amp; Student loan debt relief</b>	17%	13%	19%	17%	21%	16%
Financial assistance	13%	10%	12%	14%	17%	13%
Student loan debt forgiveness	4%	3%	6%	4%	5%	4%
<b>Protect / Reinstate abortion rights</b>	9%	9%	14%	4%	2%	11%
<b>Increase wages &amp; create jobs</b>	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%	8%
<b>Improve housing access</b>	4%	4%	6%	4%	2%	4%
<b>Affordable / Universal healthcare</b>	3%	3%	7%	2%	1%	3%
<b>Rights, equality, &amp; freedom</b>	3%	3%	3%	0%	2%	3%
<b>I don't know / Nothing</b>	8%	7%	6%	8%	5%	10%



# Honesty, care, and fight lead as desired attributes in candidates this November. Soft Biden voters are among those most likely to cite each of these relative to others.

**[Attributes]** What specifically do you think is the most important characteristic or quality for a candidate to have in order to get your vote in the elections this November? (Open)



# Reasons why 32% cite Honest, Trust, Care, or Compassion

## Need leaders we can trust (30%)

"I am voting for **specific beliefs that people have and share with me**. If I can **trust** that they'll do what they say they'll do then **I will feel confident in my vote.**"

*-18-29, NH white, Female, Soft Trump*

"The entire concept of having a representative of the people who **lacks integrity and honor fails if they cannot be relied on to do what they were elected to do**, use their office to pursue their **own interests**, or otherwise demonstrate a **serious moral failing.**"

*-18-29, NH white, Female, Strong Biden*

## Anti-politician (19%)

"So many popular politicians and people in society **lack those basic emotions** and it makes it difficult to speak to others and **understand them when you have no empathy or compassion.**"

*-18-29, Hispanic, Female, Nonvoter*

"I am **frustrated by all the corruption and how money and weapons are valued over people**, especially women, in today's society and legislation"

*-18-29, NH white, Female, Strong Biden*

"There are **too many liars in leadership positions** as it is."

*-18-29, AAIP, Female, Soft Biden*

## It's what we need (9%)

"**Compassion is absolutely necessary** for someone to create **equity or provide aid to those that need it.**

Without it, those would not be priorities, if even considered."

*-18-29, NH White, Non-binary, Soft Biden*

"We need a candidate who is **honest about what he can and will do for us** and our families."

*-18-29, Black, Male, Strong Trump*

"I am **sick of liars** being elected and working against the people. We need someone who will **lay out specific policies and actually get them passed.**"

*-18-29, Soft Biden, White, Male*

## Personal identity (7%)

"If the candidate cannot **put themselves in the shoes** of different types of individuals and **see things from all perspectives**, or at least wholeheartedly attempt to, then I don't see them being **fit to be in charge of this entire country** and make decisions for people."

*-18-29, White, Female, Soft Trump*

"I don't want to **live in poverty**. I didn't ask to be born in a broken home, but if we have the **right leaders we can come out of poverty** and maybe one day be like the president."

*-18-29, Black, Female, Strong Biden*

## Leadership qualities (6%)

"American leaders of late have been **shadows of our former leaders** and even they weren't great, we need someone who is going to **put America first** not businesses and corporations and the already rich and someone who's going to **work towards the future that we deserve.**"

*-18-29, White, Male, Soft Biden*

"The future of our country depends on **trusting elected leaders** to do the right thing."

*-18-29, White, Male, Soft Biden*





# Reasons why 15% say Take action for the people

## Need leaders we can trust (27%)

"I know no candidate will ever truly represent all my views, since **everyone is individual and different**. Still, if a candidate has a **track record of upholding the views I have, I can trust they will carry that into office.**"

-18-29, Hispanic, Female, Nonvoter

"Elected officials often times **say anything in order to get into office**. They then **don't follow through** or they change their stance depending on what the current popular consensus is. This type of **inconsistency is dangerous for our country.**"

-30-39, NH white, Female, Strong Trump

## Anti-politician (16%)

"Corrupted governments happen when elected officials **don't have the community's needs in mind** and are operating based on **money and class politics.**"

-18-29, NH white, Female, Strong Biden

"Because we are **getting walked all over by politicians and their own greedy agendas.**"

-18-29, NH white, Female, Soft Trump

"There are so many **old career politicians I feel like we are stuck in a rut** because they're **too stubborn to change their mind on anything.**"

-18-29, NH white, Female, Soft Trump

## It's what we need (11%)

"Too many candidates get votes for saying things they will do, but **never follow through**. This country **needs change, and someone willing to make that change.**"

-18-29, NH white, Female, Soft Trump

"I'm tired of **half ass promises**. Or people who change their minds due to their party not agreeing. **If you say you feel one way, stick with it. Don't back track.**"

-30-39, Hispanic, Female, Prefer not to say

"We need a leader to **stand for the people and not back down on decisions** moving forward."

-18-29, Hispanic, Male, Soft Biden

## Personal identity (9%)

"C. Wright Mills' power elite has taken on a **frightening modern form**. I'm concerned that **no matter what side a candidate is on, their priority will be with helping billionaires and corporations.**"

-18-29, NH white, Female, Soft Biden

"I care about **social issues and usually vote heavily based on the social beliefs** I have. However, I am **struggling financially and this might impact my vote more this time around.**"

-18-29, NH white, Female, Strong Biden

## Need to improve the economy (7%)

"We need affordable healthcare, we need to **lower the cost of living**, and we need to **start minimum at least \$20 an hour.**"

-18-29, Hispanic, Female, Soft Biden

"It's important to me that **someone has pride and love for our country**, because they put us first. Many countries are dependent on the US, which is great in a way, but in times of trouble we only have ourselves, and **it's good to know someone will fight for our rights, wellbeing, economy, and safety.**"

-18-29, Hispanic, Female, Strong Trump

# Reasons why 10% cite Political positions (abortion, climate, health)

## Personal identity (18%)

"I have **progressive ideologies myself**. My beliefs are based off of the idea that **every single human being should be treated equally**. I want the people in office to have that same belief. And transparency is very important to me. I think there's a lot of **distrust between the political officials and the people** they serve and the only way to heal that distrust is to have **transparency**."  
-18-29, Hispanic, Female, Soft Biden

"**I'm a feminist** and I believe the economy should support people.. not consume them."  
-30-39, NH white, Female, Soft Biden

## Protecting rights (17%)

"Everyone in this country has a **right to live and love and prosper**, it's about time it was standard practice in the USA to **treat people right and protect those that need protecting**."  
-18-29, NH white, Female, Soft Biden

"With the overturning of Roe v. Wade, women in America have had their **rights torn away from them for no good reason**, and I find that both unacceptable and the most **pressing matter for our country to attend to at the current moment**."  
-18-29, NH white, Male, Soft Biden

## We need better lives (11%)

"We currently live in a **world dominated by pointless wars** where the country I live in **no longer feels safe for myself, or those I love and care about**. Politicians should be **fighting to keep our country safe**, which means also keeping other countries safe."  
-18-29, NH white, Non-binary, Soft Biden

"It's incredibly **difficult for people in my generation to make a living**. It looks like it'll be near **impossible for anyone to retire**. I don't know how I'll ever **get a home either**."  
-18-29, NH white, Female, Nonvoter

## Need leaders we can trust (10%)

"Tired of voting for more of the same. **Establishment democrats and Republicans** are **essentially the same**, but democrats sort of **pretend to care about marginalized groups**. Would like to see politicians who want **real change and aren't part of the system**."  
-18-29, NH white, Female, Soft Biden

"If I don't know where the candidate **clearly stands on those issues**, how can they **represent mine**?"  
-18-29, AAPI, Female, Soft Biden

## It's what we need (7%)

"So many **progressives become more moderate once they are in office** (AOC, Sinema). We need "progressives" on the campaign trail to **remain just as progressive throughout their terms in office**, in order to see real change (such as universal Healthcare, more public housing, etc)."  
-18-29, NH white, Non-binary, Soft Biden

"Our country is stuck in old ways. **We need change** if we're ever going to **make a country that works for everyone**."  
-30-39, NH white, Female, Strong Biden

# Key Takeaways

1

**Youth voters display a notable degree of dissonance between their voting perceptions and behavior. However, they consistently express a lack of inspiration from politics / politicians.**

Most youth voters say voting is easy but many cannot correctly identify the next election.

Most also say their vote can make a difference locally or at the state level but turnout is low for down ballot races.

2

**When asked to choose between barriers to voting, youth voters select a lack of interest in politics and politicians not delivering most frequently.**

Unaided Soft Biden and Nonvoters are most likely to cite process & logistics as things that make voting difficult. However, these segments also cite a lack of confidence/knowledge and a lack of likeable candidates as barriers.

3

**Many cite student loan debt cancellation as a beneficial action by the Biden administration.**

**Motivation to vote in 2022 remains lukewarm.**

When asked unaided to describe a recent beneficial action by Biden, over a quarter of youth voters and nearly half of Soft Biden explicitly cite student loan debt cancellation (more than 'nothing' at 22%).

4

**The best cases for voting are:  
1) Acknowledging that voting won't fix everything but we can make our country more fair & just and  
2) reducing the cost of living.**

Among those who select 'Acknowledge limits + Fair & just', 'Voting + Democracy' is the second best case. This indicates that while cost of living remains a central issue, youth voters recognize the stakes in this moment have to do with fairness and rights.

5

**Financial relief is the top priority youth voters want elected officials to focus. The top desired attributes in candidates are honesty, trust, care, and willingness to take action & fight.**

In addition to financial well-being, Soft Biden and Nonvoters want leaders to protect abortion rights. When asked about desired attributes in candidates, Soft Biden in particular emphasize honesty, trust, care, and fight while citing issues like abortion and the climate.

# Strategic Recommendations

## 1

**Focus on what we must keep fighting *for*. Be race/class forward. And lead with the values of fairness, honesty, and care.**

Youth voters lack interest in uninspiring or clearly partisan candidates. They express a desire for candidates who will be honest, show that they care, and take action for a country that is fair and just for *all*.

Honesty = Get real and don't bullshit us about progress.

Care = Give a shit and show that you're working to help people.

Take action = Show us you will fight.

## 2

**Get real. Start by acknowledging that elections don't fix everything. But we have to *keep fighting*.**

**Use student loan debt cancellation & climate action as proof points.**

Demonstrate the impact of voting by using wins on student loan debt cancellation and climate (which has not yet been broken through) to activate voters.

The same can happen if we fight to protect abortion rights. And this is the choice.

## 3

**Speak to lived experience and "rising costs of living" and make youth voters the protagonists and heroes of the story.**

Cost of living is the #1 concern for youth voters. While student loan debt cancellation helps, youth voters express concerns about prices and the ability to make ends meet.

We need our leaders to reduce costs, create better paying jobs, and protect workers, so we will show up to vote those leaders in.

Remind voters that Republicans don't care about them, and are more focused on keeping big corporations profitable.

## 4

**Take voters on a journey from disillusionment to determination.**

Youth voters don't see inspiring candidates, and have less faith that our political system works.

They're slogging through a tough couple of years, and the only positive impact they can name since Dems took office is student debt cancellation.

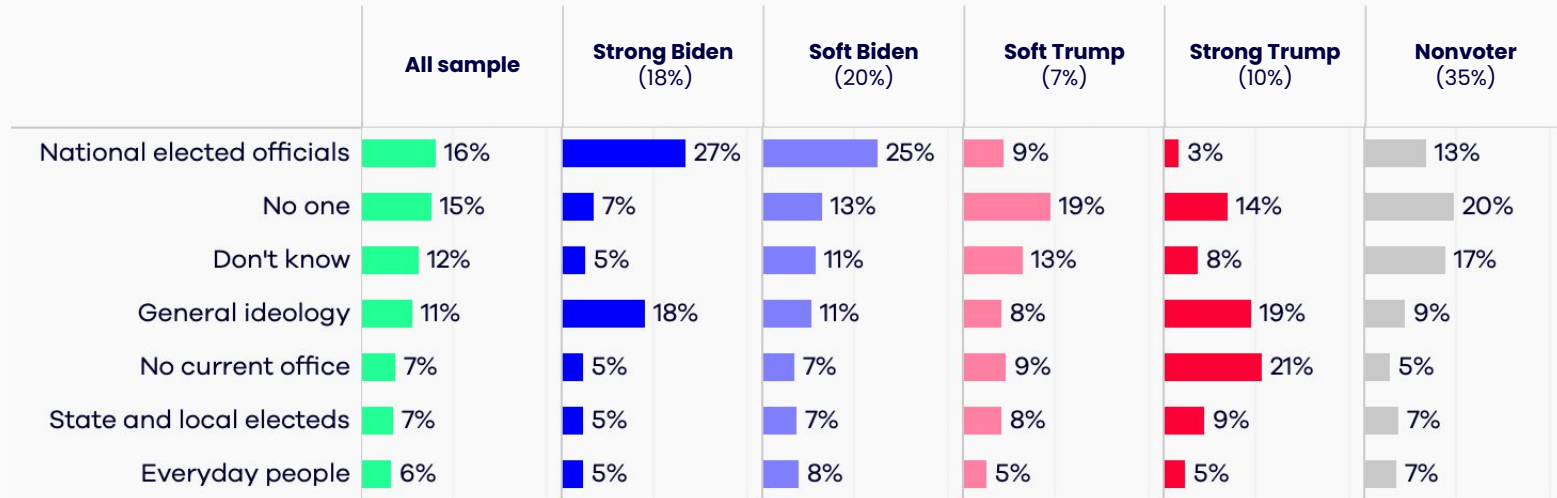
To be effective, we need to evoke determination and agency. Tell stories of how generations before us have overcome the great challenges. So can we. It's our time.

# Appendix



# Key Leaders

**[Key Leaders]** Who are the people who you believe are doing good work when it comes to politics or the public? (Open)



# Loans and Likelihood to Vote

**[Student Loan Vote Likelihood]** How, if at all, does student loan cancellation impact how likely you are to vote in the elections this November? (Closed)

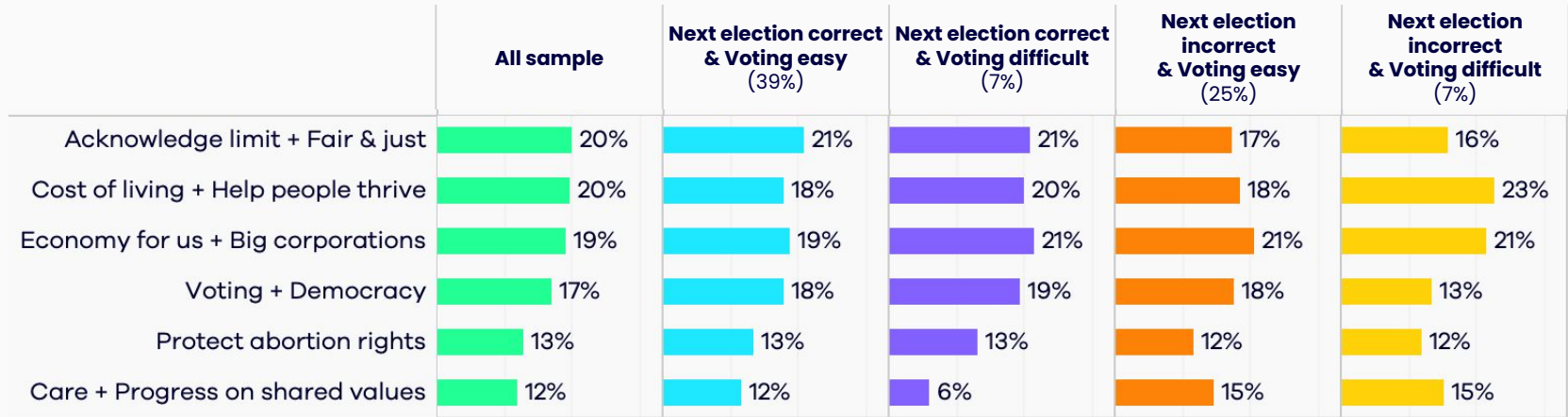


Much more likely to vote    Somewhat more likely to vote    No impact on vote    Somewhat less likely to vote    Much less likely to vote



# Correct ID and Cases

**[Arguments for voting]** Regardless of who you plan to vote for personally, which do you think makes the best case for why you should vote in the elections this November?







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