

To: Interested parties

From: Global Strategy Group

Date: November 2, 2018

Re: New Survey Shows Youth Voter Engagement Up Significantly over 2014 in Key States

A new poll from NextGen America finds young adults are much more engaged and likely to vote ahead of the 2018 midterm elections than they were in the most recent midterm election and are tilting strongly towards Democratic candidates in a backlash against Donald Trump. Across six battleground states where NextGen has been actively working to register, motivate and turn out young voters (AZ, FL, IA, MI, NV, and WI) **37% of adults aged 18-35 state they are “definitely voting” or have already voted** – compared to just 26% of young Americans who said they would definitely vote in 2014 and 23% of Americans 18-34 who actually did vote in 2014. These likely voters **prefer a Democrat on the generic congressional ballot by 59% to 33%** – that 26-point margin is significantly better than Hillary Clinton’s 15-point margin among young voters in these same states in 2016. Only 28 percent of adults aged 18-35 say they would vote for Donald Trump for re-election – significantly below his 2016 vote share in these states.

Key Findings

Young people are poised to help elect Democrats in 2018. NextGen America’s research finds young people are significantly more excited to vote than in previous midterms, and they favor Democrats by wide margins, particularly in states where NextGen has been active.

- **Young people are excited to vote:** 37% of 18-35-year-old Americans in key states say they are definitely voting or have already voted in 2018, compared to 26% of young Americans who said the same in 2014 – and 23% who actually voted in that midterm.¹
- **Young voters support Democrats by a large margin:** Young people support a Democrat on the generic congressional ballot by 59% to 33%, a margin nearly twice as large as Clinton’s margin over Trump with young voters in 2016.
- **Young people who have been contacted about voting are much more likely to vote:** 46% of young adults in NextGen states say they have been contacted by candidates or political groups urging them to vote during this election campaign, compared to 37% in comparable states in which NextGen is not active. Among those in NextGen states who were contacted about voting multiple times, 53% report they will definitely vote or have already voted.
- **Trump is in trouble with young adults in states he won:** Opinion of Donald Trump is very low among young adults in these six Midwestern and Sunbelt states, five of which Trump won in 2016, with just 30% favorable and 62% unfavorable (**49% “strongly” unfavorable**).

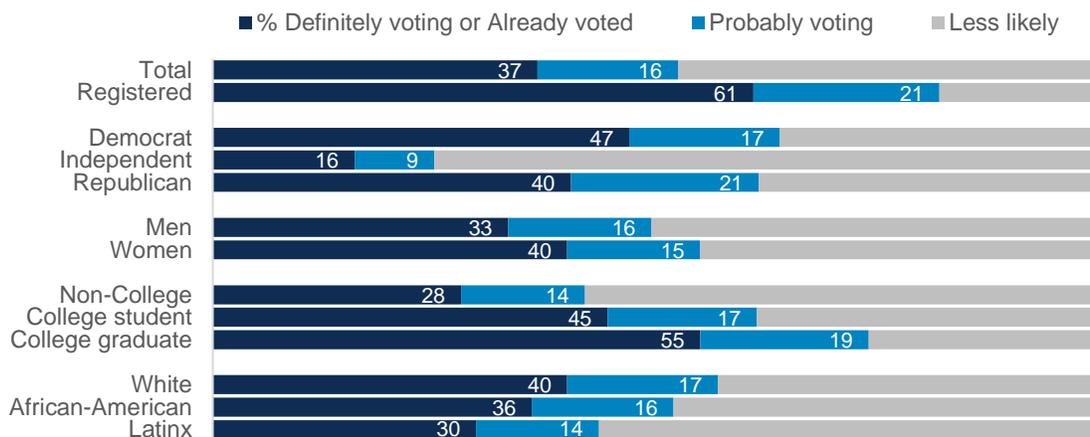
Following the election of Donald Trump, NextGen America [launched](#) NextGen Rising to register, engage and mobilize young people between the ages of 18 and 35. Following its success in the [2017 Virginia elections](#), NextGen expanded the Rising program to 11 battleground states and executed the largest youth organizing program in American history. Through a massive field organizing presence, innovative digital campaign, experiment-informed direct mail program, and partnerships with local organizers focusing on high school students (Our Lives, Our Vote) and young Black voters (Black Lives Rising), NextGen helped a generation find its political voice this year.

¹ 2014 “definitely voting” numbers are from a Harvard Institute of Politics poll that surveyed Americans who were 18-29 years old at the time; an identical question for 18-35 year-olds is not available. Actual turnout from U.S. Census Bureau, data for ages 18-34.

Additional Details

Compared to 2014, enthusiasm is up significantly among young adults. Across Arizona, Florida, Iowa, Michigan, Nevada and Wisconsin, 37% of young adults say they have already voted or will “definitely” be voting this election. By comparison, just 23% of adults aged 18-34 voted in 2014. Another 16% report they will probably vote, for a total of 53% who have either already voted or say they will definitely or probably vote. Enthusiasm is particularly high among Democrats and other Democrat-leaning groups.

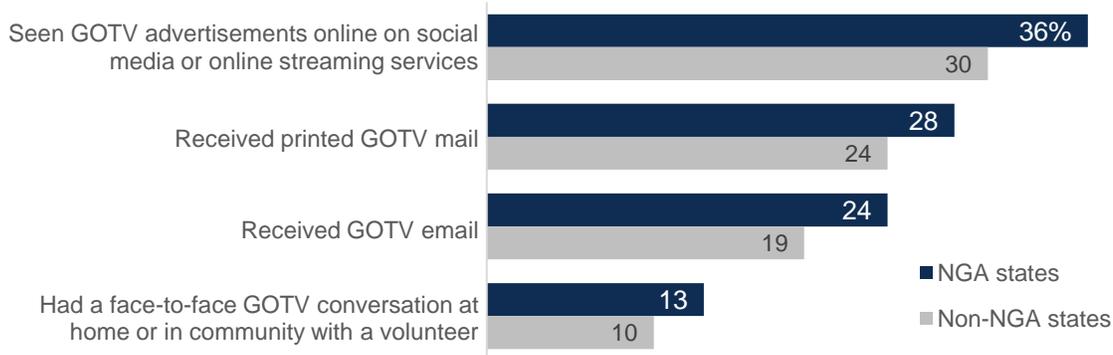
- Overall, 45% of adults aged 18-35 identify as Democrats or independents who lean Democratic, giving them an 18-point party identification advantage over Republicans. Among likely voters – those who say they have already voted or say they definitely will vote – Democrats’ party ID advantage grows to 28 points (58% to 30%).
- Democrats are also seven points more likely than Republicans to say they are “very excited” to vote (32% to 25%). Among those who were old enough to vote in 2014, **47% of Democrats say they are “more enthusiastic than usual”** compared to just 34% of Republicans.
- Beyond partisan politics, enthusiasm is especially high among young women (40% already/definitely voting), college students (45%) and college graduates (55%).
- Both younger whites and African Americans report particularly high levels of vote intention, with younger Latinx expressing a lower level of vote intention than other demographics – but still higher than 2014 turnout.



Enthusiasm is stronger among young adults in NextGen-targeted states than in a comparison set of three other battleground states where NextGen has not been active – and where young people report fewer campaign contacts.

- Across the six NextGen states, young Democrats say they are more rather than less enthusiastic about this election than past elections by a margin of 29 points (47% to 18%). Young Democrats are also more enthusiastic than normal (and more enthusiastic than young Republicans) in three other states with competitive 2018 elections – Missouri, Tennessee and New Mexico – but the margin is lower, at 19 points (39% to 20%).
- Overall, **46% of young adults in NextGen states say they have been contacted by candidates or political groups urging them to vote during this campaign**, whether in person, via text or phone, or online. In the other three battleground states, the number is 37%.

- Overall in NextGen-targeted states, 36% have seen advertisements online or on social media urging them to vote, 28% have received printed mail on the topic, 24% have received email, 23% have received a text message and 13% have been approached for an in-person conversation. In each case, the contact rate is higher in NextGen-targeted states than in the other three states polled.



- Among those who were contacted multiple times, 53% have already voted or say they will definitely vote, nearly double the 29% share among those who report no contacts.

Underlying it all: The Trump factor. Young adults in these six states hold deeply unfavorable views of Donald Trump, and these young Americans are already itching to vote against Trump by defeating pro-Trump Republicans in 2018 and Trump himself in 2020.

- Opinion of Donald Trump is very low among young adults in this collection of six Midwestern and Sunbelt states, five of which Trump won in 2016, with just 30% favorable and 62% unfavorable (49% “strongly” unfavorable).
 - Trump’s unpopularity transcends partisanship to some extent: while 87% of Democrats dislike the president, his “favorable” number is only 71% among Republicans. Young independents are no fans either, with 25% favorable and 57% unfavorable (among young independent women, the split is 16% to 66%).
- In a further sign that Trump is a drag on his party and its hopes of holding onto the House this November, likely voters prefer a Democratic candidate who will be a check and balance on Trump over a Republican who will support Trump’s policies by a margin of 66% to 30%, a significantly wider gap than the generic ballot when Trump is not mentioned (59% to 33%).
- These newly energized young voters also appear to be a weight on Trump’s own 2020 re-election hopes. While Trump did poorly with this group in 2016 – winning 37% of voters age 18-29 across these six states² – he is doing significantly worse now. Only 26% of registered voters age 18-29 in these states say they would vote for the president’s re-election today.

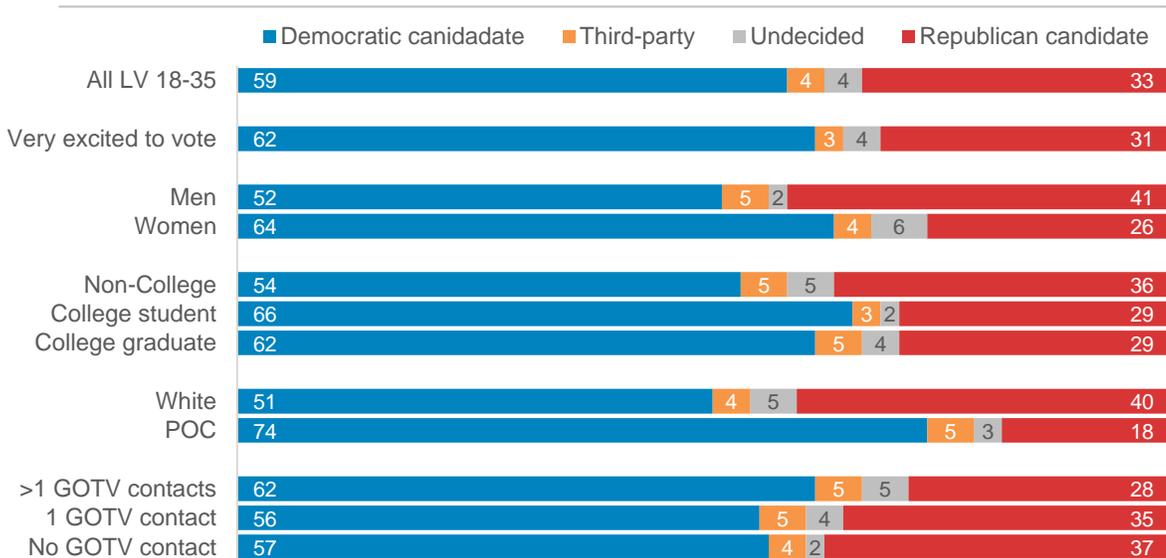


² Estimate based on statewide Exit Polls.

- While there was much speculation that the debate over Brett Kavanaugh’s confirmation may have helped Trump, it likely hurt Trump and Republicans with young adults. **Kavanaugh’s favorability is upside-down with just 19% favorable and 41% unfavorable.**
 - Among the most likely voters, Kavanaugh is better known but no better liked, with 29% favorable and 53% unfavorable (40% “very” unfavorable). Among young *female* likely voters, Kavanaugh is even more disliked (21% favorable to 57% unfavorable).

Democrats hold a commanding lead on the generic ballot among young adults. The bottom line is Democrats running for office across these battleground states are likely to benefit from a windfall of youth support.

- **On a congressional ballot, a generic Democrat leads a generic Republican by 26 points, or 59% to 33%,** among likely voters in the NextGen-targeted states polled. A generic third-party candidate takes 4%. This is a more favorable split for Democrats today than Clinton’s 15-point margin in the same states among the youngest segment of voters.
- Familiar disparities exist among young voters, but Democrats lead with virtually every group:
 - Democrats benefit from a yawning gender gap and a much larger lead with young women (D+38) than men (D+11). There is also a gap between students who have never attended college (D+18) and those who have (D+31), and between white voters (D+11) and young people of color (D+56).
- Like voters in the wider electorate, health care is important to young adults, and 91% want it to be a top priority for the next Congress.



ABOUT THIS POLL

Global Strategy Group conducted an online survey of 2,005 adults ages 18-35, including 1,335 interviews in six NextGen Rising states (AZ, FL, IA, MI, NV, WI) and 670 interviews in three additional states (MO, NM, TN) from October 24-28, 2018. Care has been taken to ensure the geographic and demographic divisions of the population are properly represented based on the U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey.