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To: Interested Parties

From: Navigator Research

Date: July 30, 2025

Re: August Recess - The Critical Moment to Define the Republican Budget and Tax Plan

It is critical for Congressional Democrats to use the August in-district work period as an opportunity to define the recently passed Republican Budget as a win for elites and billionaires – a continuation of the broken status quo – at the expense of kids, families, and seniors. The budget is already unpopular, but [according to Navigator Research](#), about 40% of Americans have only heard a little or nothing about it.

This underscores a critical need for Congressional Democrats to define the budget through in-district town halls, roundtables, op-eds, local media interviews, and engagement with digital content creators, podcasts, and other more non-traditional media sources. Leave no stone unturned and no microphone unattended.

Understand the Moment

Every time people find out more of the truth about this budget and tax plan, they don't like what they hear. The Republican Budget overwhelmingly benefits rich elites with massive new tax breaks while making life more expensive for everyone else with higher health care costs, energy costs and grocery costs. It's the largest cut to Medicaid in American history. Republicans in Congress want people to believe it puts working-class Americans first but the exact opposite is true.

While the Republican Budget is very unpopular, many people still haven't heard enough to form an opinion. [Navigator Research's polling in mid-July](#) found that 50 percent of Americans oppose the Republican Budget while only 35 percent support it. At that time, 15 percent of people did not know enough to rate whether they support or oppose the budget. Critically, 28 percent of independents said they did not know enough to rate the Republican Budget.

Democrats in Congress should continue to focus their proactive messaging on issue areas where they are most trusted. They maintain a trust advantage, across parties, when it comes to health care (+16), Medicaid (+19), Medicare (+14), and Social Security (+14).

Republicans will do two things this recess: (1) Pretend like their law didn't do what it did (e.g., they'll deny it cut Medicaid); (2) Portray this budget as tax cuts for middle class and working people (when that's who pays the price for it). The entire goal behind the Republican Budget is to fund tax breaks for the elite, the wealthy, the people who are already rich. And the money to fund those tax breaks comes out of the pockets of everyday Americans through higher health care, energy and grocery costs.

Messaging Guidance

When communicating about the Republican Budget, it is critical to:

1. Call it the Republican Budget: It's critical to let people know that Republicans in Congress are responsible for these cuts. Moreover, [our recent research](#) shows that calling it the Republican Budget plan is both more negative and introduces less uncertainty than other names. If you want to use other names for it, make sure to include the descriptor that it is the Republican Budget.
2. Convey the real-life impacts: Tell the stories of who will be most impacted by the cuts in the Republican Budget - what will be taken away and from whom. This could be the story of a rural hospital closing or a senior losing her nursing home because of Medicaid cuts. This could be working families unable to pay for rising utility bills because the Republican Budget took away clean energy tax credits. This could be a low-income family no longer able to afford their groceries without SNAP. Americans are under no illusion about who wins and loses in these cuts: 60% of Americans know someone who receives Medicaid benefits and [Medicaid is overwhelmingly popular](#).

Below is a list of potential impacts from the budget plan that was recently passed by Trump and Republicans in Congress. Please indicate how concerning you find each one on a scale of 1 to 5. [Top 10 items]

	Extremely concerning (5)	Somewhat concerning (4)	Total Concerning			
			Overall	Dem	Ind	Rep
As many as 18 million children could lose school meals	59	10	69	90	70	47
As many as 17 million Americans could lose their health care coverage	57	11	68	89	71	47
Health insurance premiums could rise by as much as 75%	57	12	69	90	66	49
Up to 22 million American families could lose some or all of their food assistance	56	11	67	91	62	45
Up to 700 rural hospitals – or roughly 1 in 3 rural hospitals nationwide – could close due to Medicaid cuts	53	14	67	87	69	46
Up to 1 in 4 nursing homes in the U.S. say they could shut down due to Medicaid cuts	52	14	66	89	63	43
The national debt will increase by more than \$3 trillion	51	14	65	88	63	43
The majority of the tax cuts will go to the wealthiest Americans and big corporations	50	13	63	88	65	38
Electricity prices could increase by an average of \$280 a year per household because there will be less solar and wind energy on the grid, creating a shortage	49	14	64	86	64	41
Pollution in our air and water could get worse	49	13	62	87	64	37

Nationwide survey of 1,000 registered voters conducted July 16-July 21, 2025.
For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

Example:

- “As many as 18 million children could lose access to meals at school.”
- “The Republican Budget bill will significantly limit Americans’ access to health care, with as many as 17 million people losing their coverage and insurance premiums rising as much as 75%.”

3. Explain the why: It's essential to make sure people know “why” these cuts are happening, so Trump and Republicans in Congress can fund tax breaks that will benefit those who are already rich.

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Example:

- *"The Republican Budget Bill cuts programs essential to working class Americans to benefit the rich."*
- *"Under the new Republican tax plan, the vast majority of the benefits will go to the wealthy few, while costs will go up for the middle class and working people."*

4. Acknowledge what is broken: It's important to acknowledge that this budget makes an already broken economic system even worse - rigging it for the elite and already wealthy at your expense. The phrase "broken system" remains a critical narrative frame, reinforcing the power of anti-status quo messaging that engages Americans who feel disengaged.

Example:

- *"Our tax system is already unfair and rigged to benefit wealthy people instead of people who work for a living. This new Republican Budget plan gives tax breaks to the wealthy while raising costs and cutting services for everyone else."*

5. Communicate more rather than less: The more Americans learn about Trump and Congressional Republicans' Budget, the more they oppose it. Opposition to the budget grew from 50 percent to 57 percent when given more information about what's included in the budget.

Meet them where they are: [Passive news consumers](#) and independents are less likely to engage with news and information about politics on traditional media. Therefore it's important to engage with digital content creators on social media, conduct interviews on YouTube, and engage on sites like Reddit.