

*navigating the vote

FOCUS GROUP REPORT

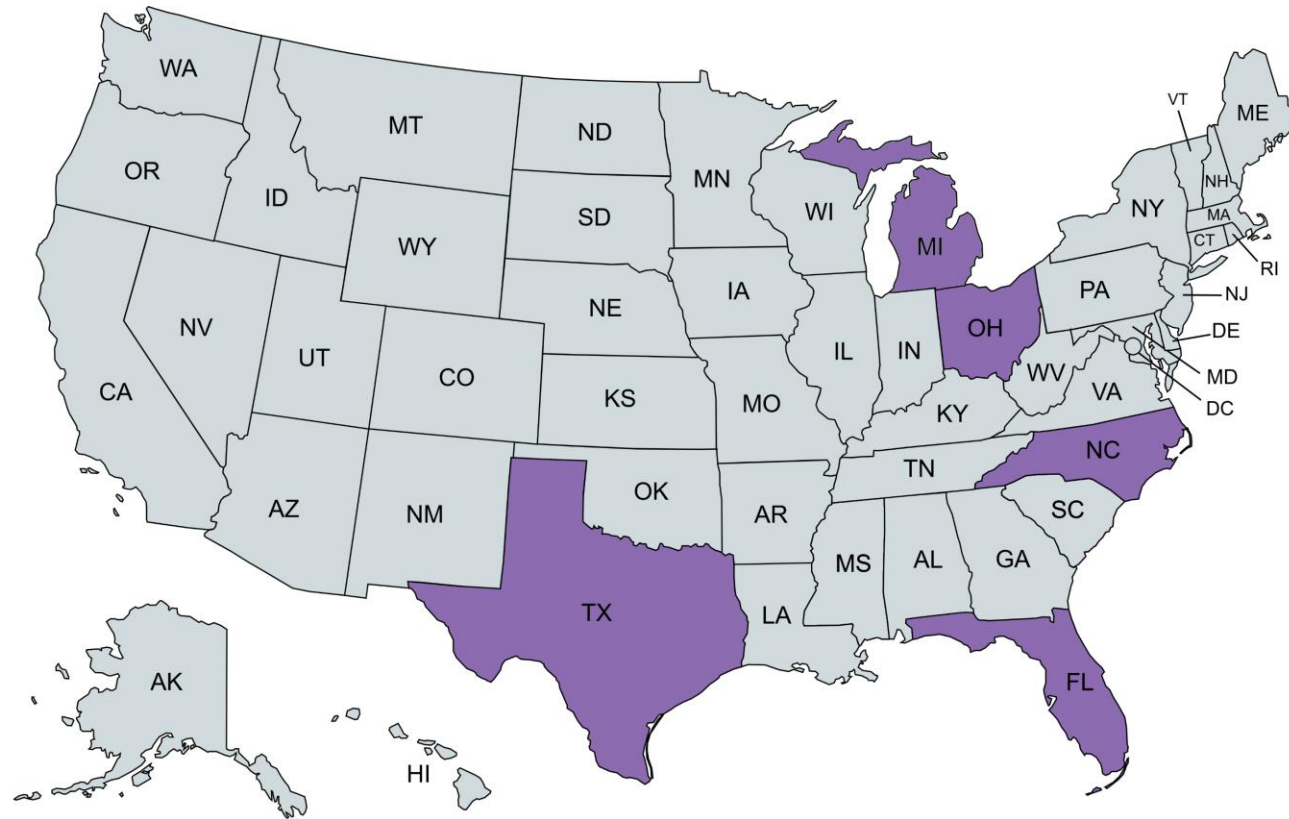
Thursday, October 22, 2026

White Suburban
Mom Trump Regretters



Methodology

On October 8, 2026, GBAO conducted one online focus group with white suburban mothers from Senate battleground states* who voted for Trump in 2024 and now regret their vote or are disappointed in Trump's performance.



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*FL, MI, NC, OH, TX

Key Findings

- The election is stressful, with many feeling accurate information is hard to come by.
- Trump's grades are poor, and many express profound disappointment with his performance.
- While the economy drives regret, so do things like cruel immigration policies and corruption.
- Yet regret does not automatically predict one's midterm vote.
- Many worry about food safety and quality, but MAHA itself is not widely known or liked.

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The Election Fills Moms With Anxiety And Dread

Moderator: Give me one word to describe how you're feeling about the election.

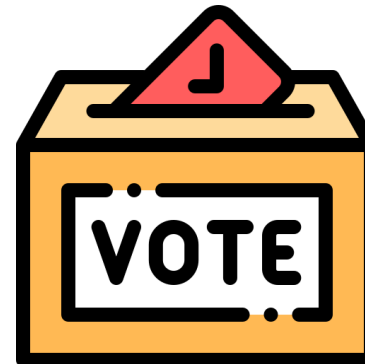
"Kind of nervous....Nervous because I'm pretty much down the middle and I **just don't know which way to go...** I just don't want to make a wrong decision." – OH mom, white 49 year old

"**All over the place.**" – TX mom, white 47 year old

"Focused....This midterm election is probably **the single-most important election cycle of our lives....**Since Trump has taken office in his second term, he has pushed the country into an authoritarian playbook, Project 2025." – MI mom, white 44 year old

"We want to vote for somebody who's **protecting our rights rather than violating them....**We want somebody who's going to bring people together and implement policies that are going to move us in a positive direction rather than standing still or backwards." – OH mom, white 39 year old

"I feel like **it's pretty obvious what might happen....**The Democrats are going to take the House. It usually happens that way." – FL mom, white 47 year old



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The Economy And Gas, Groceries, And Energy Bills Create Acute Struggles

Moderator: What grade would you give the economy, like school?

Grade	Participants
A	0
B	0
C	1
D	2
F	3

"There's people I know personally struggling to buy groceries. When you do work, **the price that you get paid is not balancing what you're purchasing, so I just feel like we're drowning**, and it only started when Trump got in office." – TX mom, white 47 year old

"If we're looking at the costs of things individually, I think that's the telltale sign that the economy is not doing good. Also, **the tariffs trickle down to the consumers**, that further increases price." – OH mom, white 39 year old

"The only thing that it's going to affect for me personally is **the price I pay for gas, and the price I pay to live, and my groceries, my energy bills....** [I gave a D] just because of the rise in gas prices and the rise of everything." – NC mom, white 43 year old

"**I'm not struggling, but so many people are.** I'm repulsed about the tariffs that we've put on our neighbor in Canada, war, basically picking on countries and just starting a war for no reason." – OH mom, white 49 year old

"[Trump] ran on lowering gas prices.... If you're looking at the gas prices versus if I'm going to see a nuclear bomb happen, **I'm more concerned with my gas prices than I am with the nuclear bomb**, to be honest." – FL mom, white 47 year old

Trump Gets Mostly Poor Grades

Moderator: What grade would you give him for how he's doing in his second term?

Grade	Participants
A	0
B	1
C	0
D	1
F	4

"There were some things that I like about Donald Trump, but...**he doesn't have our best interest in mind.**" – OH mom, white 49 year old

"I gave [Trump] an F....[January 6 is] just when my opinion really started changing about how he is as a leader." – OH mom, white 39 year old

"I think maybe [Trump] might have his intentions in the right place. It's just **the way he's going about it is not effective.**" – TX mom, white 47 year old

"I think [Trump's] done pretty well considering we have the lowest illegal immigration crossing....The economy is doing pretty good, even though the gas prices are pretty high, and he has to cut those prices down....Crime is down, but **the war in Iran really messed things up**, so that's why I put it at a B." – FL mom, white 47 year old



Trump's Inner Circle Is Also Not Well Regarded

Moderator: I just want to hear quick reaction...about some of the people around Trump.

"[Vance is] terrible. **Trump's twin.**" – OH mom, white 39 year old

"[Vance is] maybe **Trump's twin without a hothead.** Maybe he's a little more calm."
– TX mom, white 47 year old

"I think [Vance is] **compromised....Corrupt.**" – MI mom, white 44 year old

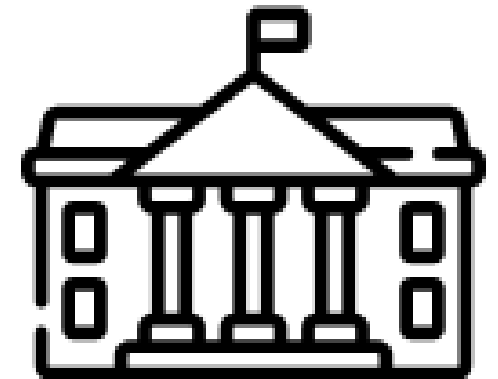
"[Rubio is a] **liar.**" – OH mom, white 49 year old

"I think maybe [RFK Jr.'s] heart's in the right spot, but again, I **don't think he really knows what he's doing at all.**" – NC mom, white 43 year old

"I think [Hegseth's] definitely had some **personal issues that have affected his performance.**" – FL mom, white 47 year old

"I think [Vance is] **kind of weak, too weak.**" – FL mom, white 47 year old

"I think [Hegseth] **should have stayed on TV.**" – OH mom, white 39 year old



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"Regret" Is An Apt Word, Even For Previously Strong Trump Supporters

Moderator: Everybody here told the recruiter that they regret their vote. Tell me a little bit about why that felt true to you.

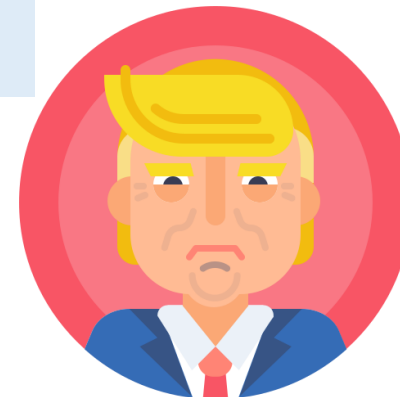
"I was fully...a diehard fan of Trump. Flag supporter, everything. **Now I feel like I regret voting for him**, I'll just be honest." – TX mom, white 47 year old

"I was a diehard supporter, but **it's been a complete back step since pretty much the storming of the Capitol** for me." – OH mom, white 39 year old

"I didn't pay a lot of attention to [the election], which probably infuriates me more because **I disappointed myself**....I would've paid more attention to the issues because what we have in this term is a president who is unencumbered by the laws, does not respect our country, is maliciously self-dealing for him and his other interests of his friends, and every single thing that he's done has been against tradition, against the law." – MI mom, white 44 year old

"I voted for Trump and I **had all these high hopes**, and then he brings on Elon Musk, and what a fiasco that it was." – OH mom, white 49 year old

"[The war] is really the biggest thing that I feel is **why I regret having voted for him**. I think he got wacky with this and he's stuck." – FL mom, white 47 year old



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Beyond Prices, Corruption And Trump's Own Behavior Also Drag His Grades Down

"I feel like [Trump] **cutting down...those trees**, I believe that Japan gifted. I was like, 'Oh my God, why?'...I feel like Trump just **doesn't consider much of anything except what he wants**." – TX mom, white 47 year old

"I don't want to vote in **literal criminals** like we have with Trump." – OH mom, white 39 year old

"What first comes to mind is **him destroying the White House, and building a new wing for himself**, and naming it after himself and not following protocol. And just taking down history, because he's a narcissist. That disgusts me." – OH mom, white 49 year old



"I didn't anticipate the laws that we have being disregarded, **the corruption, the self-dealing**, the clear unwillingness to see people for who they are. **The cruelty is what caught me first** at the very beginning, the cruelty...I don't want the country to be identified like that anymore at all....I'm embarrassed on a world stage." – MI mom, white 44 year old

"You don't know if [Trump's] **lying about certain things**. They keep pushing this Iran situation. One minute you hear him say, 'We got it under control. It's working out. We've bankrupt them. They have no military,' whatever it is. And then the next minute, they're still having negotiations with them." – FL mom, white 47 year old

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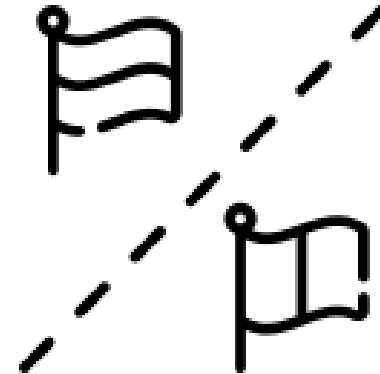
While Wanting A Secure Border, Many Object To ICE's Tactics

"I guess the first thing would be **how ICE has been treating people**. Let's just say Renee Good and that male nurse that they killed, that was not necessary." – NC mom, white 43 year old

"I appreciate the border and illegal aliens, immigrants coming in. I fully understood that needs to happen, but I feel like **ICE was definitely the wrong way of going about a lot of things**." – TX mom, white 47 year old

"Prior to [Trump], it was pretty much opened, our border. **He's controlled the border** very nicely." – FL mom, white 47 year old

"I don't necessarily agree with how he handled the immigration with deporting people. Mainly, I'm **not against the deportation**, I'm against **inhumane treatment in that process**." – OH mom, white 39 year old



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Talking About Regret With Friends And Family Can Be Tense

Moderator: Have you talked about this feeling of regret with other people?...How did those conversations go?

"When Renee Good got killed, and I remember posting something about it on Facebook, like, 'This is unnecessary.' And then **all of my friends who are extreme Trump lovers attacked me**, and I'm like, 'I don't know, he just makes people lose their human decency.'" – NC mom, white 43 year old

"I was a diehard Trump supporter as well as my partner....I've even asked [my partner], 'Do you regret it?' And **he just refuses to even admit that he regrets it**, but I can see that I think he regrets it. But to avoid arguments, I don't really press too much....We can get into some heated debates about that." – OH mom, white 39 year old

"My husband's very much a Democrat. We don't really talk about it because he doesn't want to hear anything....I don't want to get into debates with people, so **I keep my mouth shut, but I listen**." – OH mom, white 49 year old

"**It's really hard for people to admit when they're wrong** in general....I generally just ask people, Democrat, Republican, do you believe that this country was founded on values, and a check and balance system, and laws that every person in office should respect and follow? Because almost everybody can agree on that." – MI mom, white 44 year old

"For the most part, **everyone agrees with me** because most of my friends, family members, acquaintances, they all agreed....'Okay, he didn't live up to nothing he said. Everything he represented, everything he made us believe, is not true.' And now I feel like he's in office and all this is a personal vendetta for him." – TX mom, white 47 year old

"I haven't [talked about it]. **The biggest thing people talk about are prices**. That's the economy, stupid, as they say." – FL mom, white 47 year old

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Animals That Describe Trump – Like Mammoth, Possum, Pig, And Ostrich – Suggest He Is Unruly Or Fake

Moderator: If Trump was an animal, what kind of animal would he be?

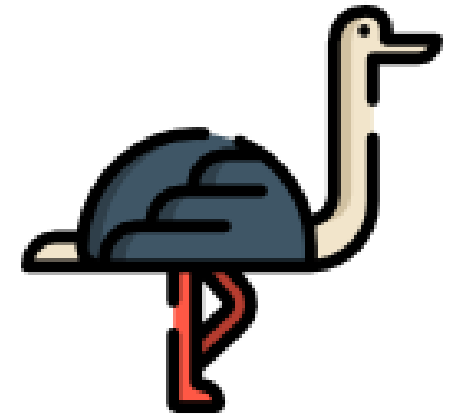
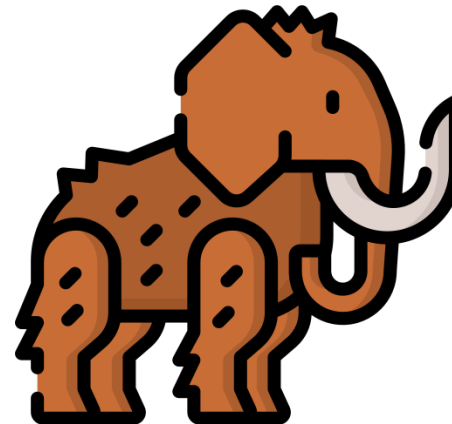
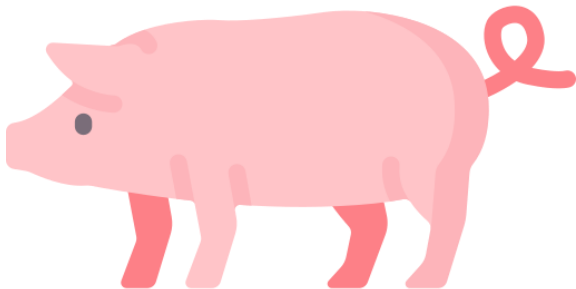
"A mammoth...I just thought of his hair, and I thought of it flying all over the wind and I just seemed like this hairy animal." – TX mom, white 47 year old

"Ostrich...I just think he looks like an ostrich to me, and they're not really the best characters or the best animals." – OH mom, white 39 year old

"A possum...Because they try to act ferocious like they're big and bad, but they are just little gentle creatures." – NC mom, white 43 year old

"I was going to say maybe a tiger or something like that." – FL mom, white 47 year old

"A pig." – OH mom, white 49 year old



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Views Are Mixed On Voting – Some Are More Motivated, Others Despondent And Frustrated

Moderator: How...have your feelings about Trump...impacted how you feel about voting in November?

"I've actually thought about just not even voting....I feel like I don't want to make the wrong choice, because I feel like I did make maybe not such a smart one on voting for Trump." – TX mom, white 47 year old

"I feel the opposite, that **the privilege of voting was fought for and won by women before me**. I took it for granted and threw it away....I had to stand in line for almost two and a half hours at my primary election station." – MI mom, white 44 year old

"I'm also **tired of choosing the lesser of two evils** instead of choosing someone that I truly have faith in and support....I just don't think our voices really count." – OH mom, white 39 year old

"[The election is] **choosing the lesser of two evils**." – NC mom, white 43 year old

"I will vote....I do think in a lot of ways that **our voice doesn't matter anymore**. I think Congress sucks, honestly." – FL mom, white 47 year old

"I feel like **we have to vote or else we don't really have a say**." – OH mom, white 49 year old



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Whether On Trump Or Midterm Contests, Moms Say They Struggle To Find Accurate Information

"I would say misinformed....Pretty much all of the advertisements and propaganda surrounding elections, it makes it difficult to choose a candidate. Also, **we don't know who's actually telling the truth**....I just want to be fully informed." – OH mom, white 39 year old

"We're misinformed and you can get one candidate that says something like, 'Oh, okay, I can listen to this.' Then they'll bash another one....It's like **my head spins** like, 'Okay, I like this guy. I don't like this guy. Oh, okay.'" – TX mom, white 47 year old

"I'm trying to inform myself and educate myself, but there's a lot." – OH mom, white 49 year old

"When we use our power to vote, the easiest way is to **allow the campaign ads to dictate what we believe**, but there's not a lot of people that go and...really take the time to research it ourselves, so that we can figure out who is lying or what the case really is." – MI mom, white 44 year old

"You hear about rigged elections all the time. I don't know what's going..." – FL mom, white 47 year old



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A Candidate's Position On Trump Matters To Some, But Not All, Leaving Some Still On The Fence

Moderator: Is it enough to know how the candidates stand on Trump?

"It is enough for me to hear [a candidate say] that **I am not going to rubber stamp [Trump's] policies**....Did they vote against the war powers resolution or did they vote giving him the congressional authority to keep pursuing these wars? That's enough for me....There are a lot of good Democratic people running for Senate." – MI mom, white 44 year old

"I think I'm going to vote for Roy Cooper....Even though I don't like him, he is the lesser of two evils....**I don't care how they feel about Trump**. I'm going to base my decision on my research and what they've done or haven't done....I have no problem voting Democrat." – NC mom, white 43 year old

"[A Trump endorsement] **wouldn't be a deal breaker**. It wouldn't get my vote if he was [endorsed] and it wouldn't lose a vote." – TX mom, white 47 year old

"I think I'm leaning more Democratic this election....[Vivek Ramaswamy is] so selfish and **he's up Donald's rear end, and that does it for me**." – OH mom, white 49 year old

"I'm not opposed to voting Democrat. I would prefer to vote Republican....**This is the first time I'm actually considering it**, so I'm not there, but I would think about it." – TX mom, white 47 year old

"Whether [candidates] like [Trump] or not to me is neither here nor there. **Identifying his errors and proposing plans to address them**, that's to me a different story, and that part does matter to me." – OH mom, white 39 year old



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There Is Consistent Worry About Declining Food Quality And Safety

Moderator: How often would you say you think about issues around health and wellness for your family?

"I think about [health and wellness] daily, not only just about health visits, wellness checkups, the ingredients in food, processed food, what we're feeding them....I'm **almost staying away from the middle of the grocery store** and it's driving me crazy....If you go to a farmer's market, it's like four times the price." – TX mom, white 47 year old

"Why did [my daughter] get an autoimmune disease? **It's all in the food that we're eating.** We have more chronic diseases in America than we do anywhere else....I just think in America we have much less regulations than in Europe." – FL mom, white 47 year old

"How about [the administration] **importing millions of pounds of beef that was already refused by Europe?**" – MI mom, white 44 year old

"Red dye. Red dye. **Just everything's unhealthy.**" – OH mom, white 39 year old

"I just feel like **food is such a business in the US.** It's such a big business. I'm Greek, so we go to Greece a lot of summers and everything is fresh....There's no bread that sits on a shelf for five months." – OH mom, white 49 year old



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MAHA Is Not Universally Known, And Many Are Unsure Why Food Safety Seems To Be Declining

"I think with RFK, especially he was the one who put this all in place. How are we going to change the food dyes, and take out certain things in our school lunches? Trying to figure out what vaccines may be best and not necessary for everybody...I don't know if it has [been effective]. Although I do think it is a wake-up call...I do think that people are talking about our food more now than they used to. – FL mom, white 47 year old

"It was that FDA with all the ingredients in the food....What do we do? **Do we have one? Do we not have one?...**[Food safety] definitely got worse, I would say the last 15 years." – TX mom, white 47 year old

"The guardrails for the safety committees have been **stripped by Elon Musk's DOGE**, and by this administration not really caring. If it's going to make them money, they'll take every safety system that is for us." – MI mom, white 44 year old

"I don't know if you can blame [food quality] on an administration or not. I also have a daughter who has ADD, so yeah, I'm looking for those dyes, and try not to give her processed foods....I can't pinpoint or finger point to Democrat or Republican, but it's something that needs to be done and taken seriously. I think, like [another participant] said, we are making steps, but it's got to get going." – OH mom, white 49 year old



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Many Want To See Effective Constituent Services And A Focus On Issues Constituents Care About Most

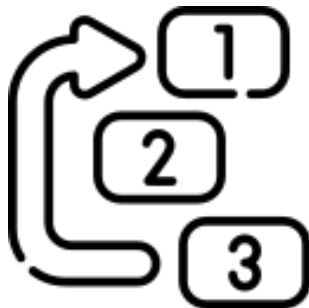
Moderator: How would you know if a candidate was really fighting for you?

"Simple. **When you contact their office, are they responsive?** Do they have a team that is responsive to the people that they serve? A lot of people don't ever try to reach out to their representatives, but that'll tell you a lot." – MI mom, white 44 year old

"[Candidates fighting for me] would be **addressing these issues that we're prioritizing**, considering plans of actions to address them would be the two biggest and most important things to me. Just actions speak louder than words too." – OH mom, white 39 year old

"I feel like it's a gamble either way. They can say what they want....Only thing I can think is if their past history, **have they actually done things that showed proof of that?**" – TX mom, white 47 year old

"We're the ones that are voting for [members of Congress] to work with us, to work for us....Nowadays, they vote, we end up electing them and **they do whatever the hell they want.**" – FL mom, white 47 year old



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Few Are Optimistic Any Party Can Or Would Truly Fight To Lower Caregiving Costs

Moderator: When you think of things around whether it's childcare, pre-K, elder care, are those things that you grapple with...?

"[Politicians] always talk about childcare and they never do anything about it....My daughter's in fifth grade now, but at the time we were paying \$1,200 a month for daycare....I think **they just both say it and that they don't do anything about it.**" – FL mom, white 47 year old

"I think everyone throws it out there. 'We're going to help Medicare and social security,' but I **don't see that they ever really do.**" – TX mom, white 47 year old

"A lot of moms cannot afford to work and have childcare....My father-in-law right now, he has the means, but he's spending \$15,000 a month on care....**It's not fair for people who don't have the money to not get top care....**Is that a socialist thing? I don't know." – OH mom, white 49 year old

"**The cost of insurance is through the roof....**If you call off from work to go to a doctor's appointment, then you're missing work, so you can't even do that....Things like the changes to Medicaid requirements, food stamp requirements, all of that, the ingredients, all of that matters to me." – OH mom, white 39 year old

"**[Childcare and elder care costs] don't matter [to my vote].**" – NC mom, white 43 year old

And Lowering Costs Is A Higher Priority Than Investigations Over Corruption

"[A candidate fighting for me] would want to **lower the cost of living, not just for me, but for everybody**. And they don't mention this back and forth like this, 'We're going to investigate this party, or this party's going to investigate this party.' **That shouldn't be their focus...** They're just worried about seeking revenge and spending our tax dollars doing these investigations." – NC mom, white 43 year old



"When there's mudslinging, it takes away from what you can do." – OH mom, white 49 year old

"Instead of going against each other, I'm just waiting for one of them to be like, 'I'm going to do this, this, this.'" – TX mom, white 47 year old

"Trump has to figure out a way to get these gas prices down." – FL mom, white 47 year old



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About Navigator

In a world where the news cycle is the length of a tweet, our leaders often lack the real-time public-sentiment analysis to shape the best approaches to talking about the issues that matter the most. Navigator is designed to act as a consistent, flexible, responsive tool to inform policy debates by conducting research and reliable guidance to inform allies, elected leaders, and the press. Navigator is a project led by pollsters from Global Strategy Group and GBAO.

About the Study

On October 8, 2026, GBAO conducted one online focus group with white suburban mothers from Senate battleground states* who voted for Trump in 2024 and now regret their vote or are disappointed in Trump's performance.

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To learn more about Navigator:

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