PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH SUMMARY

ENGAGING RURAL VOTERS WITH COMMUNITY-BASED VALUES

MARCH - JULY 2020
ABOUT US

Our mission is to rebuilding a rural America that’s empowered, thriving, and equitable.
TO: President Donald Trump, Senator Mitch McConnell, U.S. Congress

Fully Fund the United States Postal Service

Campaign created by Matthew Hildreth

Congress and the White House must fully fund the United States Postal Service in the next stimulus bill.

Private companies won't deliver to certain remote areas because it's not profitable to do so, but the Postal Service is obligated to serve all Americans regardless of where they live— and, right now, the Postal Service is delivering lifesaving medications and food, supporting voting by mail in primary states, and helping other services necessary for our nation to continue to operate.

Sign this petition

First Name *

Last Name *

Email *

ZIP Code *

Mobile

SIGN

Note: By signing, you agree to receive email messages from MoveOn Civic Action and MoveOn Political Action. You may unsubscribe at any time. See Privacy Policy.
Our **Agenda**

**Quality Employment**
We have a right to our roots. No one should have to leave their hometown in search of a good job with decent pay.

**Justice and Equality**
We believe in governance that protects the rights of all community members regardless of gender, race, color, creed, sexual orientation, or national origin.

**Rural Healthcare**
Rural people and small town folks deserve access to effective and affordable healthcare. No one should have to drive for hours to see the doctor.

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Our **Core Beliefs**

**Education**
Rural should never be a disadvantage. Kids in small towns should get the same quality education as everyone else.

**Sustainable Land Management**
We are fighting to protect critical habitats and natural resources through smart land management programs and policies.

**Welcoming Communities**
We believe communities that are accepting of diversity are best positioned to fight rural population loss and thrive in 21st Century.

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Our **Mission**

Our mission is to rebuild a rural America that is empowered, thriving, and equitable.

**Vision**

**Values**
CHANGE CYCLE

1. Challenge root assumptions about rural people
   Paradigm Change

2. Build rural progressive political power
   Political Change

3. Push for progressive pro-rural policies
   Policy Change
OUR QUESTION

Why do rural people like progressive policies but not progressives?
Why Democratic policies outperform Democratic politicians in rural America

BY MATTHEW HILDETH, OPINION CONTRIBUTOR — 11/18/18 05:00 PM EST
THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY CONTRIBUTORS ARE THEIR OWN AND NOT THE VIEW OF THE HILL
OUR PRIMARY QUESTION
OUR QUESTION
Why do rural people like progressive policies but not progressives?
Small town and rural people think progressives are fighting against them, not for them.
ANSWER TWO

Rural voters feel important civic decisions are made elsewhere and don’t trust others to decide for them.
ANSWER THREE
Small town and rural people don’t see progressives in their communities.
WHO DO WE TALK TO?
WHAT DO WE SAY?
HOW DO WE SAY IT?
IT’S ABOUT EVALUATING Ourselves as Communicators and Leaders
IT HELPS US UNDERSTAND THE BIAS WE BRING TO A PUBLIC CONVERSATION
POLLING SHOULD MAKE LEADERS MORE AUTHENTIC, NOT LESS
RURAL IS AN IDENTITY, NOT JUST A GEOGRAPHY
WE DEFINED RURAL AND EXURBAN USING TARGETSMART ZIP CODES
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RUC</th>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Large-Metro</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Large-Metro</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Small-Metro</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Non-Metro</td>
<td>Rural Adjacent &lt; 20K</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Non-Metro</td>
<td>Rural Remote &lt; 20K</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Non-Metro</td>
<td>Rural Adjacent 2,500 - 19K</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Non-Metro</td>
<td>Rural Remote 2,500 - 19K</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Non-Metro</td>
<td>Rural Adjacent &gt; 2,500</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Non-Metro</td>
<td>Rural Remote K &gt; 2,500</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
● Alaska: 64%
● Georgia: 57%
● Iowa: 72%
● Kansas: 61%
● Maine: 90%
● Montana: 90%
● North Carolina: 67%
● Wisconsin: 64%

RURAL/EXURBAN
BATTLEGROUND
STATE BREAKDOWN
• 1 field experiment
• 2 national surveys
• 8 battleground polls
• 16 qualitative interviews
• 50 state social media analysis
THREE LESSONS WE LEARNED
DITCH YOUR STEREOTYPES
LEAD WITH VALUES

Source: Simon Sinek
DON’T BLEND IN
DITCH YOUR STEREOTYPES
DITCH YOUR STEREOTYPES

1. Rural voters = Trump Voters
2. Rural voters are locked in
3. Rural voters oppose our policies
RURAL VOTERS ≠ TRUMP VOTERS

1. One-in-five are people of color
2. Rural voters care about covid-19
3. Most are embarrassed by Trump’s tone
HOW SERIOUS ARE YOUR CONCERNS ABOUT THE CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK?

- No concerns at all: 6.9%
- Minor concerns: 19.8%
- Somewhat serious: 29.7%
- Very serious concerns: 43.6%
HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE JOB THAT DONALD TRUMP IS DOING ON THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) OUTBREAK
THINKING ABOUT THE IMPACT OF THE CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK, HOW SERIOUS ARE YOUR CONCERNS ABOUT EACH OF THE FOLLOWING?

- The virus spreading at local businesses
- Social distancing hurting the economy
- The Postal Service running out of funding
- The lack of widespread testing for the coronavirus
- The virus spreading at schools and universities

'Very serious' concern
RURAL VOTERS ARE SWING VOTERS

1. A large portion voted for Obama
2. 2018 saw large rural swings
3. Young women are especially open
2008 PRESIDENTIAL VOTE

2008 GENERAL ELECTION BY METRO TYPE

- Obama Large Metro: 42.0%
- Obama Non-Large Metro: 11.0%
- McCain Large Metro: 33.0%
- McCain Non-Large Metro: 14.0%
2016 PRESIDENTIAL VOTE

2016 GENERAL ELECTION BY METRO TYPE

- Trump Large Metro: 34.0%
- Trump Non-Large Metro: 15.0%
- Clinton Large Metro: 42.0%
- Clinton Non-Large Metro: 9.0%
2020 PRESIDENTIAL VOTE CHOICE

Biden, Trump and Undecided

- Blue: Biden
- Red: Trump
- Yellow: Undecided
BATTLEGROUNDS PRESIDENTIAL VOTE CHOICE

Rural/Exurban Men

- Undecided: 9.0%
- Biden: 41.0%
- Trump: 50.0%
BATTLEGROUND PRESIDENTIAL VOTE CHOICE

Rural/Exurban Women

- Undecided: 13.0%
- Trump: 38.0%
- Biden: 49.0%
RURAL VOTERS SUPPORT OUR POLICIES

1. Rural voters are with us on healthcare
2. They have an anti-corporate agenda
3. A minority want to outlaw abortion
HEALTHCARE IS THE TOP ISSUE FOR SMALL METRO AND NON METRO VOTERS

SOURCE: MARCH 2020 NATIONAL SURVEY OF 1,213 AMERICANS CONDUCTED BY CHANGE RESEARCH AND COMMISSIONED BY RURALORGANIZING.ORG
TRUMP’S JOB APPROVAL ON HEALTHCARE IS SOFT AMONG NON-METRO VOTERS

SOURCE: MARCH 2020 NATIONAL SURVEY OF 1,213 AMERICANS CONDUCTED BY CHANGE RESEARCH AND COMMISSIONED BY RURALORGANIZING.ORG
Do you approve or disapprove of the job that Donald Trump is doing on each of the following? - Healthcare

- Strongly approve
- Somewhat approve
- Somewhat disapprove
- Strongly disapprove

Nationally

All
18 to 34 Non Large Metro
35 to 49 Non Large Metro
50 to 64 Non Large Metro
+65 Non Large Metro

APRIL 2020 NATIONAL SURVEY OF 1,274 AMERICANS CONDUCTED BY CHANGE RESEARCH AND COMMISSIONED BY RURALORGANIZING.ORG
DO YOU THINK THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR ALL AMERICANS?
50% of non-metro voters say they're *more likely* to vote for a candidate who says that everybody should have the option of enrolling in Medicare.

Source: March 2020 national survey of 1,213 Americans conducted by Change Research and commissioned by RuralOrganizing.org
MESSAGES THAT WORK AMONG NON LARGE METRO VOTERS

Would you be more or less likely to vote for a candidate who said each of the following statements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate Message</th>
<th>Young People</th>
<th>Independents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A handful of corporate monopolies now run our entire food system. We need a moratorium on factory farms and corporate monopolies in food and agriculture.</td>
<td>88% more likely to support</td>
<td>82% more likely to support</td>
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<td>Every person, whether you live in the city or a small town, should have access to a good grocery store and pharmacy.</td>
<td>85% more likely to support</td>
<td>87% more likely to support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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MESSAGES THAT WORK AMONG NON LARGE METRO VOTERS

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<tr>
<td><em>Tax incentives should prioritize small local businesses over major corporations.</em></td>
<td>79% more likely to support</td>
<td>91% more likely to support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MESSAGES THAT WORK AMONG NON LARGE METRO VOTERS

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<tr>
<td>The choice of whether or not to have an abortion should be up to the woman and her family—not the government.</td>
<td>75% more likely to support</td>
<td>65% more likely to support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MESSAGES THAT WORK AMONG NON LARGE METRO VOTERS

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<th>Young People</th>
<th>Independents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keeping undocumented immigrants off the books and in the shadows hurts US workers and only benefits shady employers, but legalizing immigrants currently working in our communities would benefit all workers.</td>
<td>61% more likely to support</td>
<td>58% more likely to support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LEAD WITH
VALUES
LEAD WITH VALUES

1. Embrace community care values
2. Care, celebrate, then critique
3. Fight FOR, not against
VALUES IN TARGET STATES | URBAN, SUBURBAN, & RURAL
IN-GROUP CARE

The act of helping and caring for the well-being of those around you, especially your family and friends.
~96% OF SMALL & NON METRO VOTERS AGREE

We all want what's best for our loved ones. And helping our neighbors—regardless of their background—is an important part of the rural way of life. That's why we need a president who cares about all groups in my community.

SOURCE: MARCH 2020 NATIONAL SURVEY OF 1,213 AMERICANS CONDUCTED BY CHANGE RESEARCH AND COMMISSIONED BY RURALORGANIZING.ORG
LEAD WITH VALUES

Source: Simon Sinek
We all want what's best for our loved ones. Now, more than ever, we need leaders who are on our side—not politicians who will create divisions in our community for their own political gain.
ACTIONS

That's why we should choose leaders who cares about everyone in our community, a leader who will fight for ALL of us.
RESULTS

But by standing up for everyone in our community and working together, we can pass policies that will improve the lives of our family, friends, and neighbors.
Loving America means loving ALL Americans.

We are fighting for our communities because we love our country.
Fact-based, humorous “in-group” content is effective at engaging young rural voters.
SOCIAL MEDIA USE: A FEW TIMES A DAY OR MORE

SOURCE: MARCH 2020 NATIONAL SURVEY OF 1,213 AMERICANS CONDUCTED BY CHANGE RESEARCH AND COMMISSIONED BY RURALORGANIZING.ORG
DON’T BLEND IN
DON’T BLEND IN

1. Both parties are unpopular
2. Many voters don’t see a distinction
3. Rural people trust local leaders
DEMOCRATS/REPUBLICANS ARE FIGHTING FOR PEOPLE LIKE ME.

SOURCE: MARCH 2020 NATIONAL SURVEY OF 1,213 AMERICANS CONDUCTED BY CHANGE RESEARCH AND COMMISSIONED BY RURALORGANIZING.ORG
WHO IS FIGHTING FOR SMALL TOWNS AND RURAL AMERICA

Democrats and Republicans (Always true)

- Democrats
- Republicans

Sample:
- Battleground
- Alaska
- Georgia
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Maine
- Montana
- North
- Wisconsin

0% 5% 10% 15% 20% 25%

Graph showing the comparison between Democrats and Republicans across different states.
Unfavorability Among Rural Battleground Voters

- BLM Protesters
- The Republican Party
- The Democratic Party
Unfavorability Among Rural Battleground Voters

- 43% BLM Protesters
- 47% Republicans
- 48% Democrats

43% - BLM Protesters
47% - The Republican Party
48% - The Democratic Party
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Message</th>
<th>DO YOU AGREE?</th>
<th>WHO WOULD SAY IT?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total agree</td>
<td>Total disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We must end the corruption in Washington, DC</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers should be required to pay women and men the same wages for the same work</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government policies should benefit working people, not the elite</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate lobbyists have too much influence over the government</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The small town and rural way of life is worth fighting for</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am proud to be an American</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawmakers should be banned from ever becoming paid lobbyists</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We can't allow racism to divide and distract us from the real source of our problems</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A handful of corporate monopolies now run our entire economy</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My faith is very important to me</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER
WHO DO WE TALK TO?
WHAT DO WE SAY?
HOW DO WE SAY IT?
WHO DO WE TALK TO?

○ Rural people of color
○ Young people
○ Women
WHAT DO WE SAY?

*Rural* people look out for each other—no matter what!
WHAT DO WE SAY?

We know what’s best for our families and our communities.
WHAT DO WE SAY?

WE can’t sit back and allow corrupt lobbyist to make decisions that impact us.
HOW DO WE SAY IT?

○ Local radio
○ Local newspapers
○ Facebook