

Progressive Narrative Project Canvass Message Test

Research Questions

- Which message – an economic message or a freedom message – prompts targets to report higher enthusiasm about the elections this November?
- Which message prompts targets to report being more fearful about the outcome of the elections this November?
- Which message generates more signed pledge cards?

Canvass Script

Hello, is _____ home? [*Record voter contacted*]

My name is _____ and I'm with [INSERT ORG NAME]. We're in our community, talking to people about the elections this November. Voters in Florida will have an opportunity to vote in important races for the US Senate, US House, and Florida Governor this year.

[Q1] On a scale of 1-10, how enthusiastic are you about the elections this November, with 10 being very enthusiastic and 1 being not enthusiastic at all?

Thank you! Voting is one way we can ensure that the voices of our community are heard, but with so much division in our country, it's hard sometimes to get excited about voting. There are a lot of reasons why people like you and I vote. Why do you think that it's important to vote? (*Listen*) Great! That's a really important reason to vote. I vote because [INSERT MESSAGE VARIATIONS].

[Q2] Now that we've talked, how enthusiastic are you about the elections this November, with 10 being very enthusiastic and 1 being not enthusiastic at all?

[Q3] And how fearful are you about the outcome of the elections this year, with 10 being very fearful of the outcome and 1 being not fearful of the outcome at all?

[Q4] Thank you! One last question, we're asking people to pledge to vote. You simply sign your name on this card, and we'll mail the card back to you shortly before the election as a reminder to vote. Will you please sign this card as a reminder to vote?

- If YES: Thank you! It was great speaking with you today. Thanks for your time.
- If NO: I understand. It was great speaking with you today! Thanks for your time.

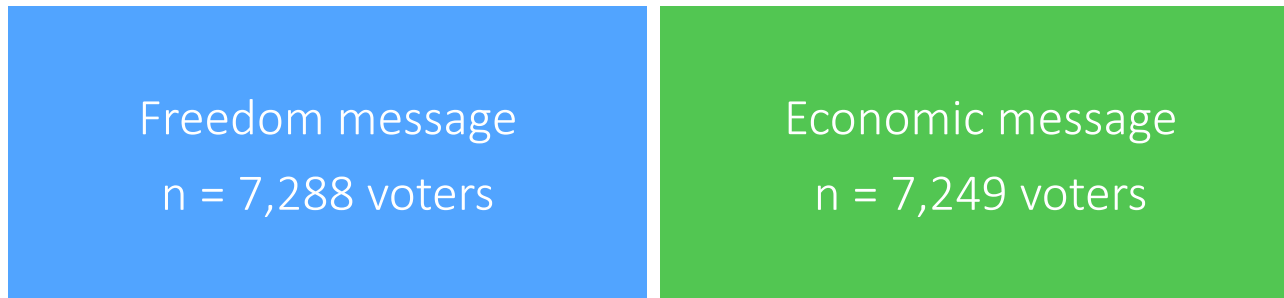
Message Variations

Freedom message: I vote because America was founded on the promise of freedom. That means freedom for all. Not just for some. Whether it's the freedom to love who you want, freedom of religion, freedom to make decisions about our bodies, or the freedom to walk down the street without fear of harassment, discrimination or even violence – we need to get out and vote to protect these freedoms for all Americans.

Economic message: I vote because we need a country that works for the middle class and working families, not just the wealthy and greedy corporations. Though unemployment may be low, the cost of living is high, and too many people are living paycheck to paycheck. We need to get out and vote to elect leaders who will boldly rewrite the rules of the economy so it works for working families and the middle class again.

Experiment Design

1. Identified 14,537 registered voters from 10,933 households in Miami and Orlando with vote propensity scores between 20-70 and partisanship scores 60+
2. Randomized households between 2 experiment conditions



3. Ran canvass program between 6/27-7/19
4. Analyzed survey questions embedded in canvass script

Methodological Notes

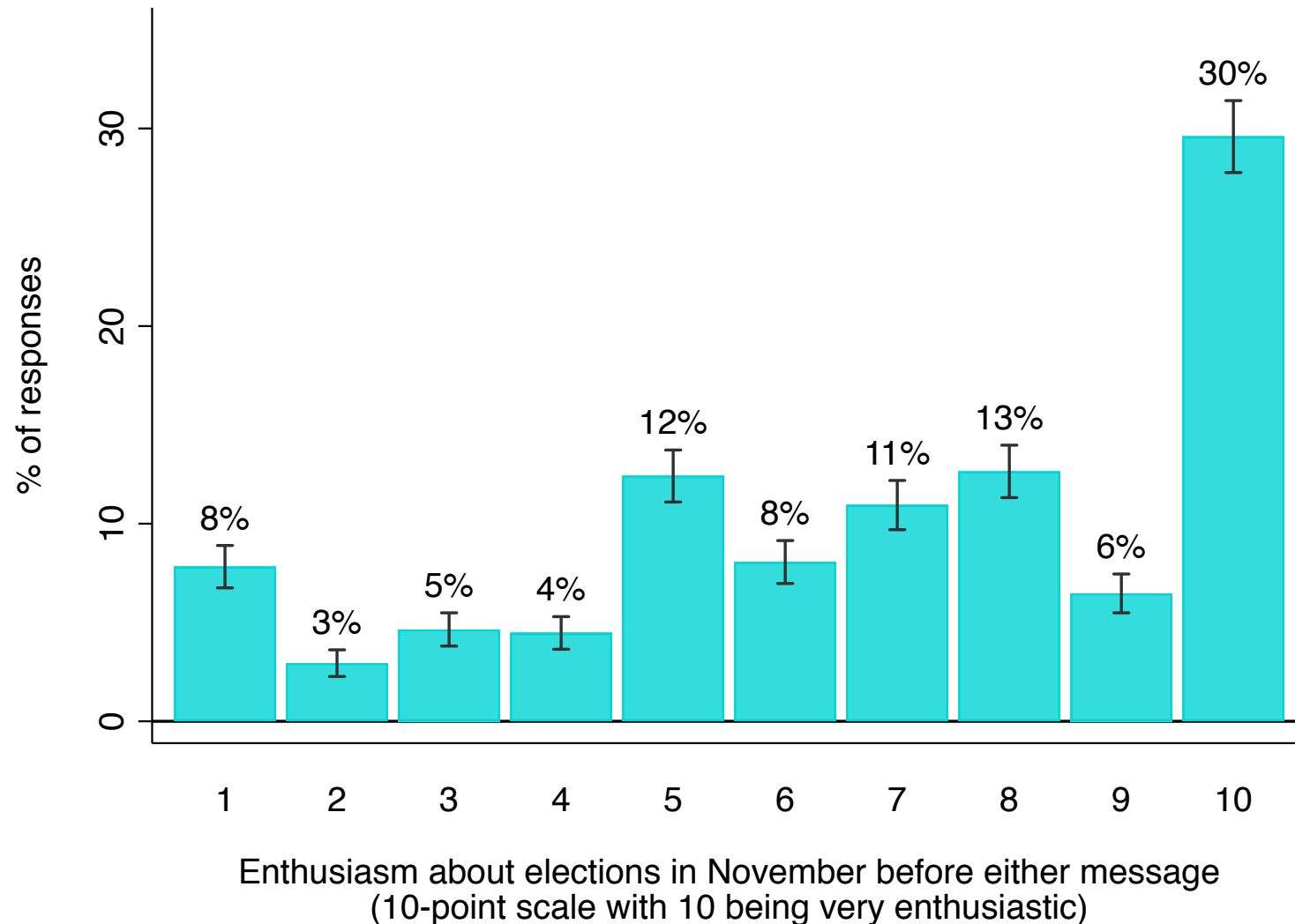
- The gold-standard approach for conducting this experiment would have been to include a placebo group and deliver separate survey calls after the canvass program.
- Due to budget constraints, the Progressive Narrative Project decided to exclude a placebo group and embed survey questions at the end of the canvass script.
- *This alternative approach limits our ability to measure whether either message was truly effective at increasing enthusiasm about the election.*
- Even the most unassuming of canvassers will compel targets to report that they are more enthusiastic about the election after hearing the canvass script. This well-documented tendency is known as “social desirability bias.”
- While we can compare which message was more effective at compelling targets to report greater enthusiasm, we cannot infer whether either message truly increased enthusiasm.

Canvass responses were weighted by gender, race, and age to account for the underrepresentation of African-American, Caucasian, and young voters

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Target universe</i>	<i>Canvassed targets</i>	<i>Weighted canvassed responses</i>
Female	60%	59%	60%
Hispanic	64%	74%	64%
African American	17%	12%	17%
Caucasian	15%	11%	15%
18-29 years old	26%	20%	26%
30-44 years old	30%	28%	30%
45-59 years old	26%	30%	26%
60+ years old	18%	22%	18%
Miami	51%	58%	53%
Registered Democrat	56%	54%	56%
Voted in 2016	94%	95%	95%
Voted in 2014	17%	18%	18%
Average 2018 vote propensity score	41	41	41
Average partisan score	88	88	88

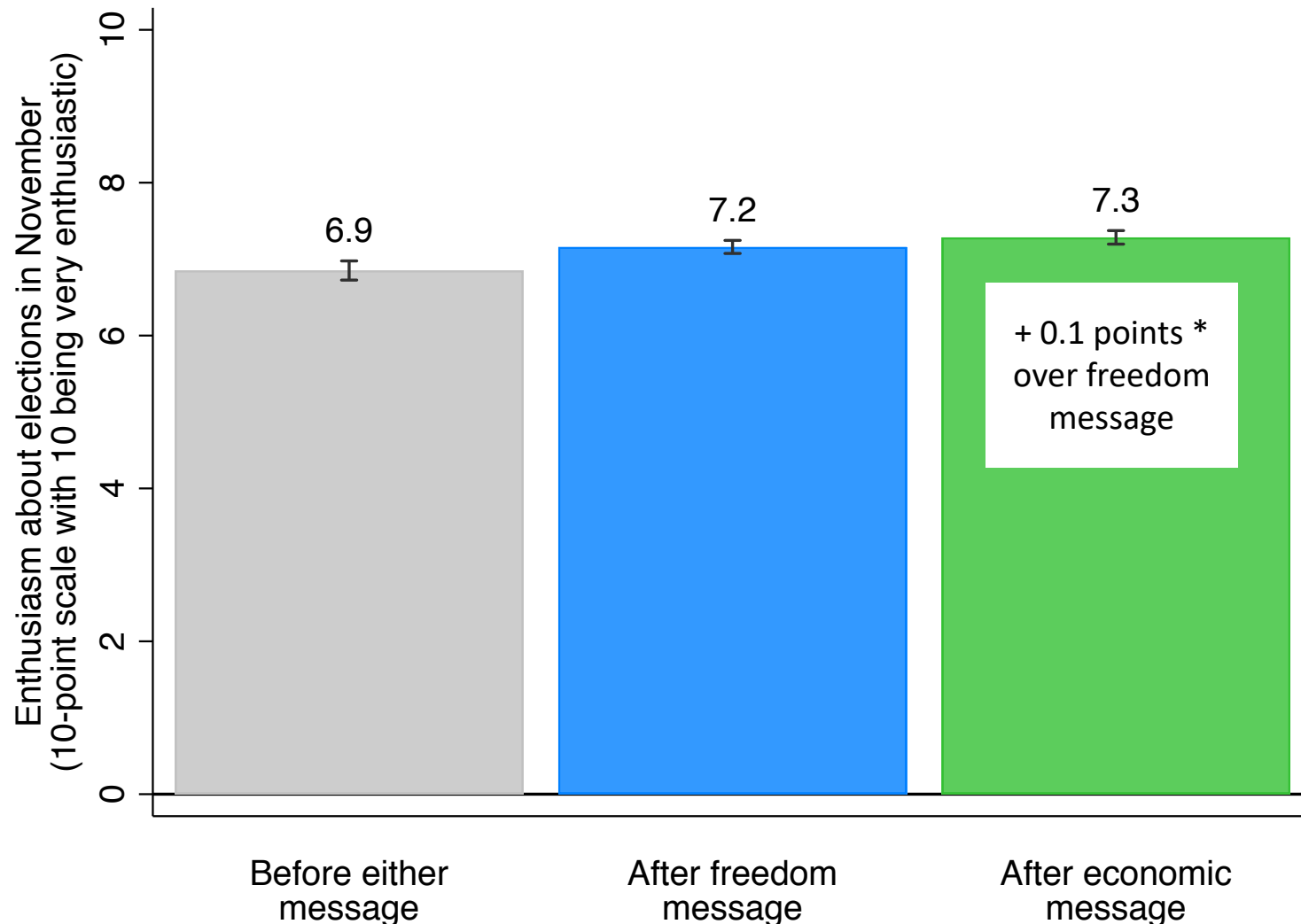
Half of the universe reports being very enthusiastic about the elections this November (8+ on a 10-point scale)

"How enthusiastic are you about the elections this November, with 10 being very enthusiastic and 1 being not enthusiastic at all?"



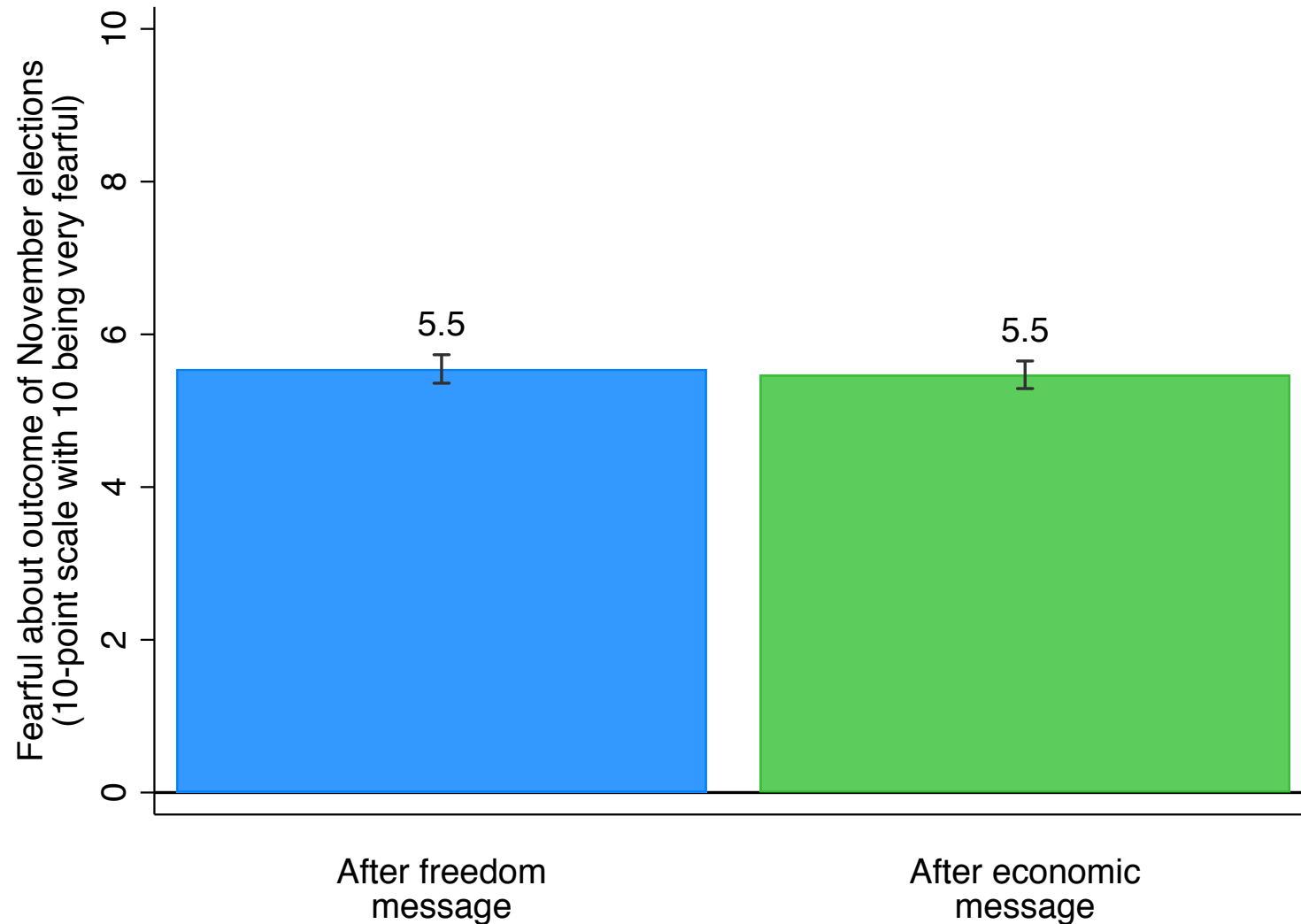
The economic message was more effective than the freedom message at compelling targets to report greater enthusiasm about the upcoming elections

"How enthusiastic are you about the elections this November, with 10 being very enthusiastic and 1 being not enthusiastic at all?"



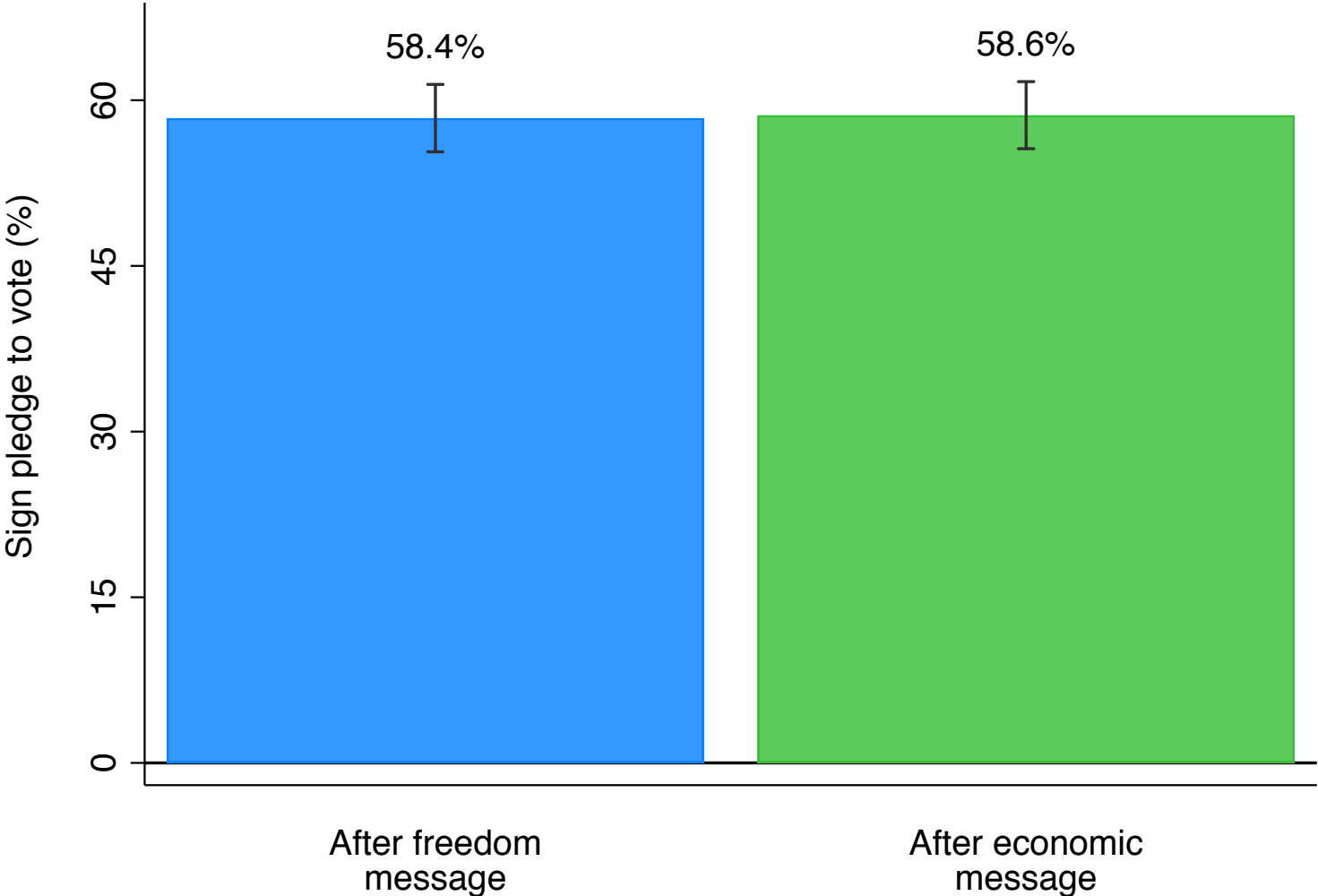
Both messages prompted respondents to report the same level of fear about the election outcome

"How fearful are you about the outcome of the elections this year, with 10 being very fearful of the outcome and 1 being not fearful of the outcome at all?"



Both messages prompted respondents to sign the pledge card at the same rate

“One last question, we’re asking people to pledge to vote. You simply sign your name on this card, and we’ll mail the card back to you shortly before the election as a reminder to vote. Will you please sign this card as a reminder to vote?”



Summary and Recommendations

- 30% of targets in this universe already report being a 10 on enthusiasm about the upcoming elections, and about half of voters report being at least an 8.
- The economic message outperformed the freedom message at compelling targets to report higher enthusiasm about the upcoming elections.
- There were no statistically-significant (nor substantively-significant) differences between messages at compelling targets to report greater fear of the election outcome or to sign a pledge card.
- While the economic message outperformed the freedom message in this experiment, we cannot conclude that the economic message is the best message to use in your GOTV programs this fall. Please review the Analyst Institute's Recommended Practices for GOTV to ensure that your GOTV canvass programs are as effective as possible.