



To: Interested Parties

From: Greenberg Quinlan Rosner
EMILY's List
Planned Parenthood Action Fund

Date: March 8, 2012

Re: New Poll Shows that Birth Control Debate Could Impact Races in Key Battleground States – Helping Democrats Who Support Access to Birth Control and Hurting Republicans

Polling of voters in battleground Senate states shows that a debate on birth control provides a boost for Democratic candidates who support access to birth control. In fact, nearly half of voters say that if their member of Congress supported the Blunt Amendment (which would have allowed employers to opt out of covering birth control), it would make them less likely to support him or her. A near consensus exists that women should have access to birth control, that insurers should cover it, and that the decision to use birth control is a private one.

The following memo is based on a survey conducted between February 27th and March 1st, 2012, among 800 likely battleground voters in Florida, Massachusetts, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. It has a margin of error of +/-3.46 percent.

Key Findings:

- By wide margins, battleground voters believe that Democrats do a better job on access to birth control (56 to 18 percent), women's health issues (46 to 28 percent), and abortion (42 to 31 percent). While they give the Republicans a 12 point margin – 44 to 32 percent – on protecting religious freedom, voters are split on which party would respect their individual religious faith (37 percent Democrats to 39 percent Republicans).
- Voters strongly oppose (60 percent) the Blunt Amendment, which was supported by 46 Republican Senators and co-sponsored by 37 Republican Members of Congress. A majority believe that religiously affiliated hospitals and colleges should not have a religious exemption (55 percent). Nearly half (48 percent) say that they would be less likely to support a candidate for office if he or she supported the Blunt Amendment, including 53 percent among Independents and 40 percent among Republicans.

- Access to birth control has the potential to impact actual races. As a starting point, in this battleground, a generic Republican leads a generic Democrat by 5 points (47 percent to 42 percent). In a split experiment, we tested a generic informed match-up between a Democrat and a Republican with half the sample; in this exercise, the Democrat continues to trail by 6 points (47 percent to 53 percent). The other split received the same information with accompanying information about birth control. In this match up, the candidates are tied at 48 percent.
- Voters object to a wide range of attacks on access to healthcare and contraception occurring at the federal and state levels. Moreover, they strongly oppose attempts to defund Planned Parenthood, an organization that 25 percent say that they or someone they are close to has visited for medical care.
 - Nearly two thirds (63 percent) oppose prohibiting Planned Parenthood from receiving federal funds to pay for birth control, maternity care, and cancer screenings; 61 percent oppose it when it is specified that some Planned Parenthood clinics provide abortion services. More generally, 60 percent oppose eliminating federal Title X funding for health clinics that provide services – including access to birth control – to low income women.
 - Over half (57 percent) oppose so-called conscience clauses for pharmacists and health providers to opt out of prescribing and filling prescriptions for birth control, 55 percent support requiring an employer to provide coverage for birth control through their insurance plans, and 52 percent would allow women to get emergency contraception over the counter without a prescription.
 - Even on issues related to abortion, the electorate is divided; voters split evenly on a conscience clause when it includes abortion (46 percent to 48 percent) and undergoing an ultrasound prior to having an abortion (48 percent to 48 percent), though 52 percent oppose an “invasive” ultrasound similar to what was proposed in Virginia.

Appendix

■ **Table 1:** Better Jobs Comparison

Now I am going to read a list of issues and I want you to tell me whether, overall, you think Democrats or the Republicans would do a better job with this issue. If you do not know, just tell me and we will move on to the next item.

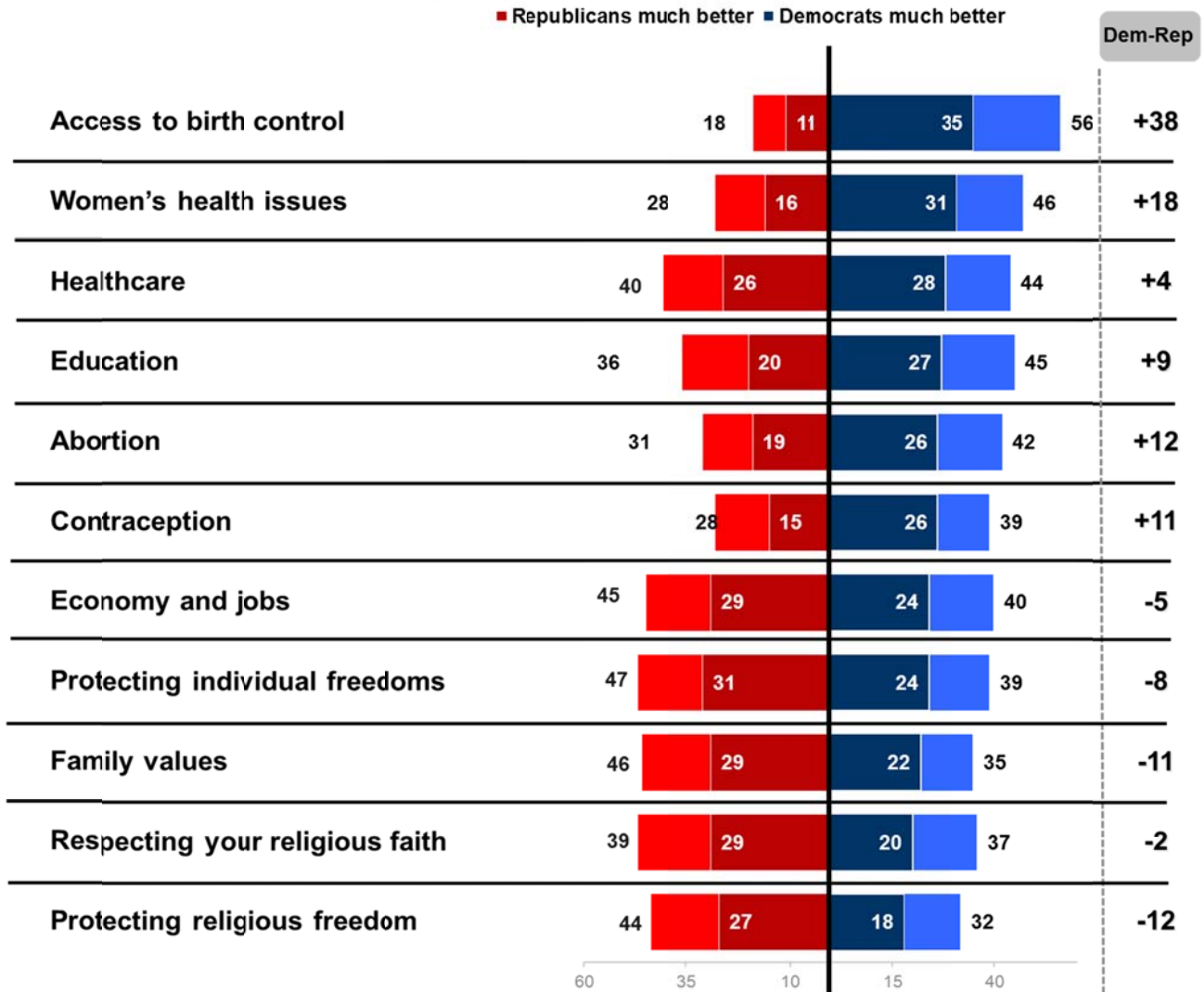


Table 2: Generic Vote Progression

Thinking about the elections for Congress in November, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today, would you be voting for the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate?

Now let me read you descriptions of two candidates running for Congress. After I read these descriptions, please tell which candidate you would be most likely to support.

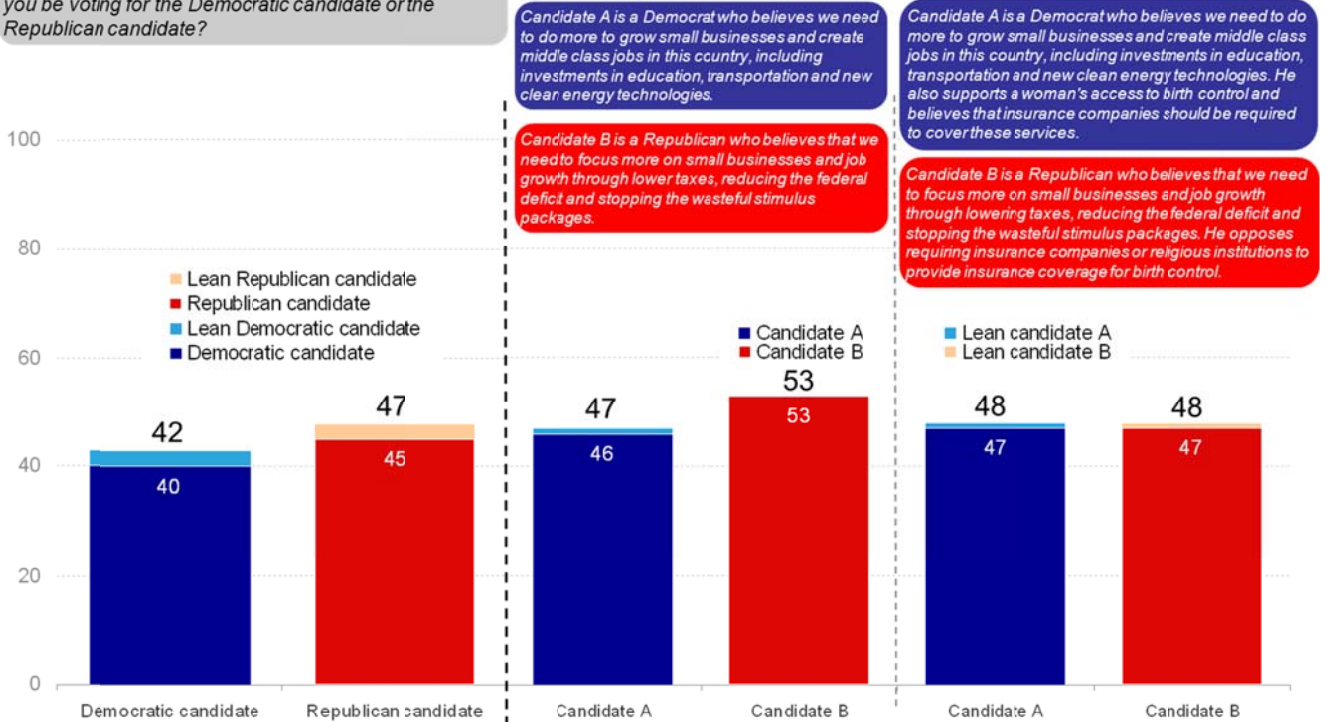


Table 3: Issue Proposals

Now I am going to read you some information on proposals that have been discussed in Congress and some state legislatures and I want you to tell me whether, overall, you agree or disagree with that proposal.

