

### **CANDIDATES MATTER**







2022 Midterm Elections: Outcomes & Implications

#### SUMMARY

# Trump's states went red. Biden's went blue. Candidates mattered. Issues did too.

- ✓ While 2022 may officially be a "change election," it was the least change-y change election since 2002:
  - ✓ 27/28 incumbent Governors won reelection
  - ✓ 28/28 Senate incumbents won (27/28 if GA flips)
  - ✓ 356/365 (97.5%) of House incumbents won (may fall slightly)
  - ✓ 17/17 Trump states elected a Republican Senator... 15/16 Biden states elected a Democrat (-1 if GA flips)

#### Voters sought stability at a time of heightened disruption:

- ✓ 2022 resembled 2020, where voters sought less chaos (Biden > Trump) without a mandate for radical change
- ✓ Candidates mattered:
  - ✓ GOP challengers lost Senate races where they frightened voters with extremist positions and/or ran weak campaigns reflecting inexperience
  - ✓ GOP incumbents mostly won when they focused on today's challenges rather than yesterday's conspiracies
- ✓ Issues mattered:
  - ✓ Voters concerned about rising inflation, increasing crime, lack of border security and "woke" intolerance, voted GOP
  - ✓ Voters concerned about abortion criminalization, election denialism and a return to Trumpian chaotic disruption, voted DEM

#### Confrontation, competition and uneasy cooperation will define the next two years:

- ✓ Confrontation: Fiscal Fights; Oversight in Overdrive; "Woke Wars"
- ✓ Competition: Who leads each party? Who wins the working class?
- ✓ Cooperation: Containing China; Taming Big Tech; Promoting Resiliency

#### WHAT JUST HAPPENED?



**HOUSE** 

R+9\*

2021-22 223D-212R 2023-24 221R - 214D **SENATE** 

TBD\*\*

50D-50R

50D - 49R

**GOVERNORS** 

**D+2** 

28R-22D

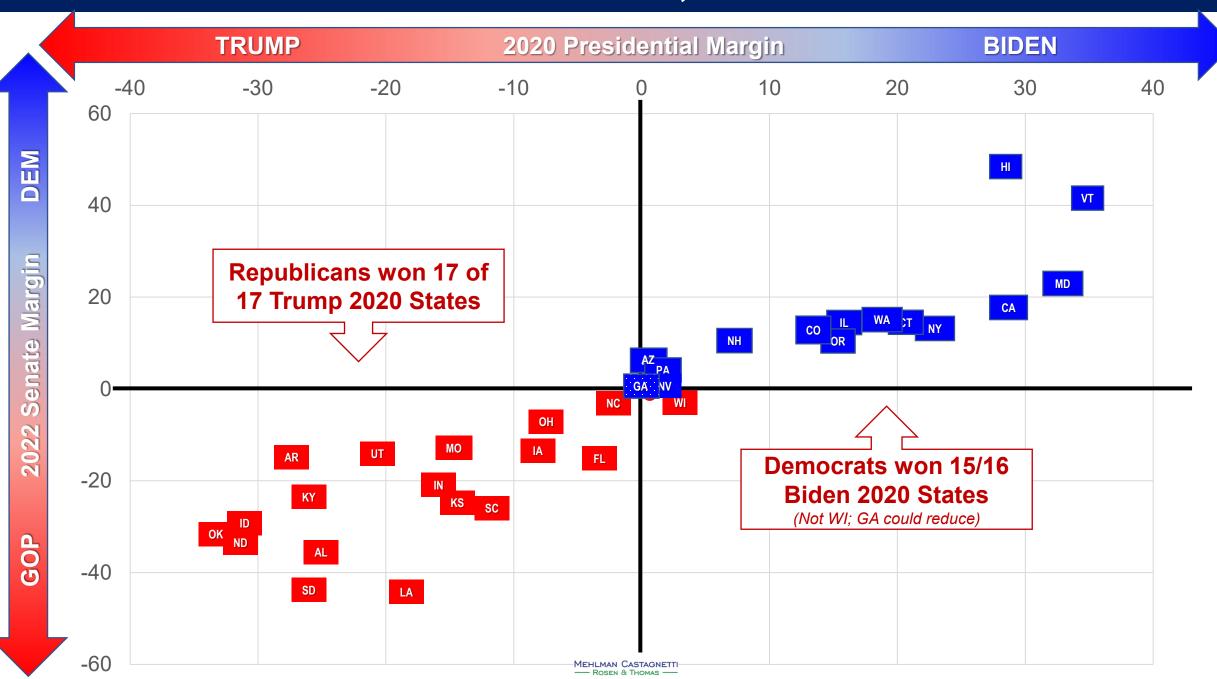
26R - 24D

<sup>\*</sup> Unofficial: several races still not called; this reflects NBC forecast as of 11/18, 7am

\*\* GA runoff 12/6; Counting Independents Sens. Sanders & King as D's

# 8 Broad Takeaways Don't Overthink It

#### TRUMP'S STATES WENT RED, BIDEN'S WENT BLUE



#### **INCUMBENTS OVERWHELMINGLY RE-ELECTED**

#### Voters Sought Stability at a Time of Heightened Anxiety

Incumbent Reelection Rates, 2022

**SENATORS** 

100%

28/28 (but GA could flip)

**GOVERNORS** 

96%

27/28 (only NV)

HOUSE

97.5%

356/365 (may slip 1-2)

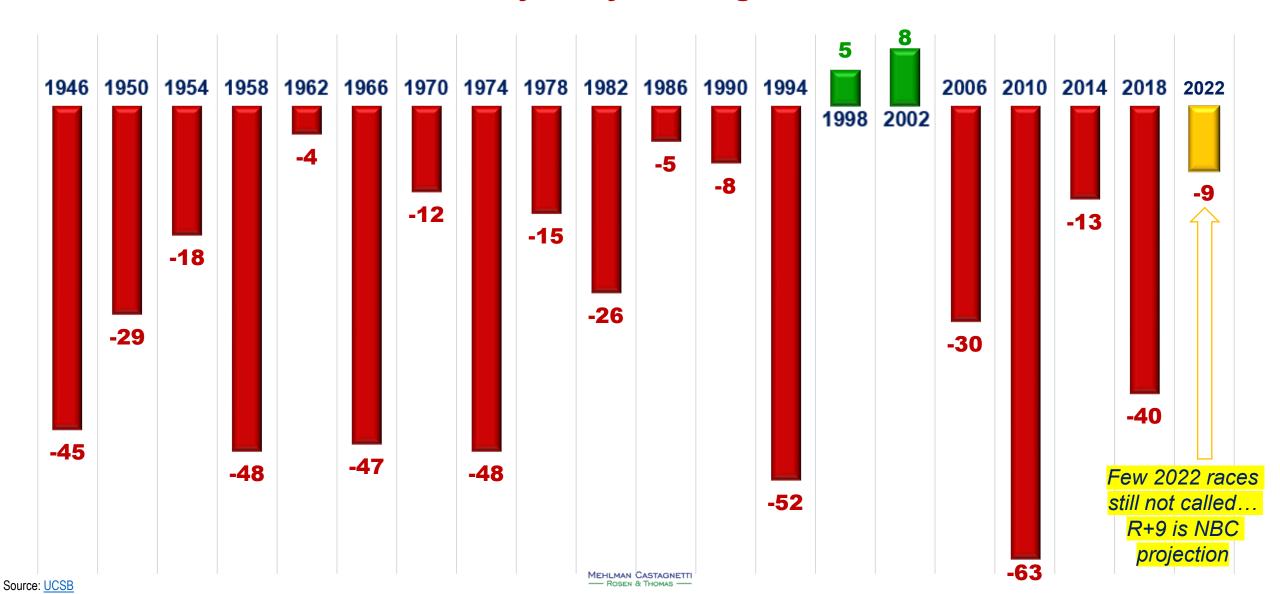
#### PRESIDENT'S PARTY HELD THE SENATE, PER USUAL

# Senate Control Outcomes for Presidents' First Midterm Election When Their Party Held the Senate Pre-Election

PRESIDENT	SENATE
BIDEN (2022)	<b>HELD</b> (+0 or +1)
TRUMP (2018)	<b>HELD</b> (+2)
OBAMA (2010)	HELD (-6)
W BUSH (2002)	<b>HELD</b> (+4)
<b>CLINTON (1994)</b>	LOST (-8)
<b>REAGAN (1982)</b>	HELD (-0)
<b>CARTER (1978)</b>	HELD (-3)
<b>JOHNSON (1966)</b>	HELD (-3)
<b>KENNEDY</b> (1962)	HELD (+4)

#### PARTY IN WHITE HOUSE LOST SEATS, PER USUAL (IF BARELY)

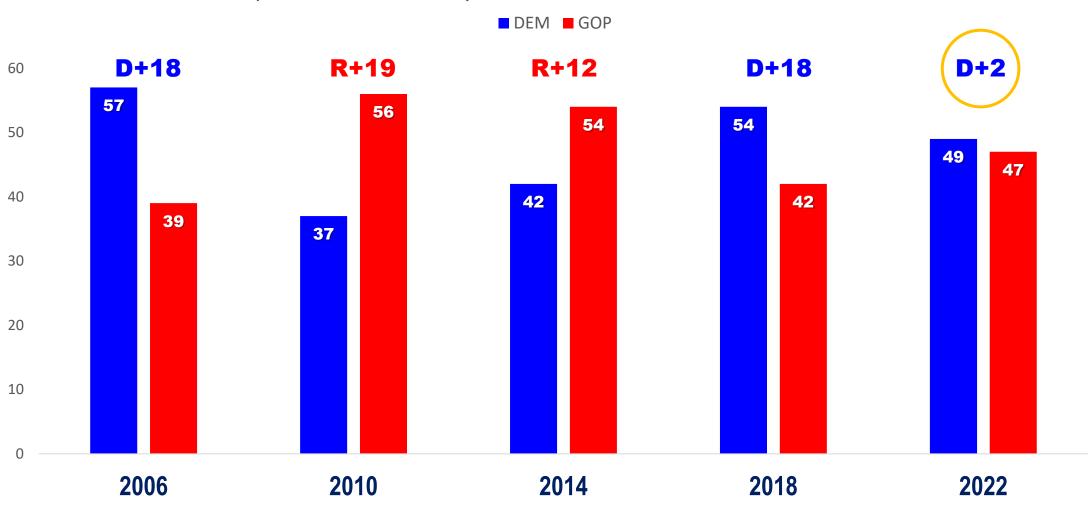
#### House Seats Lost/Won by Party Holding WH in Midterm Elections



#### **INDEPENDENTS BROKE ALMOST EVENLY**

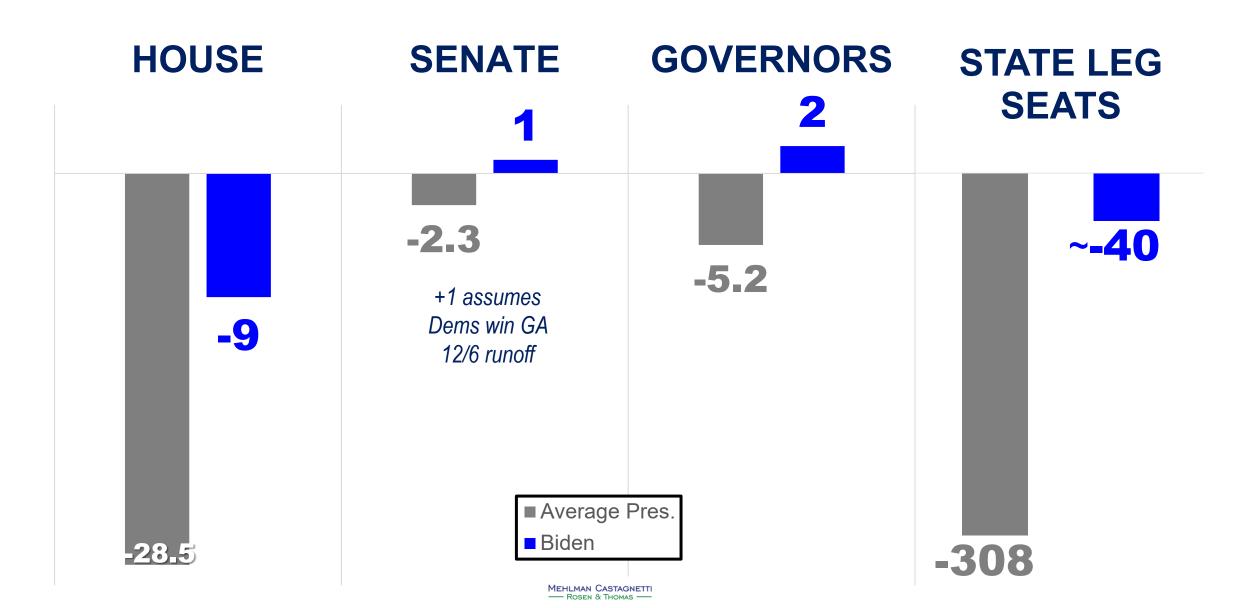
#### Red Wave? Roe Wave? Blue Wave? No Wave!

Independent Voters' Party Preference in Modern Midterm Elections

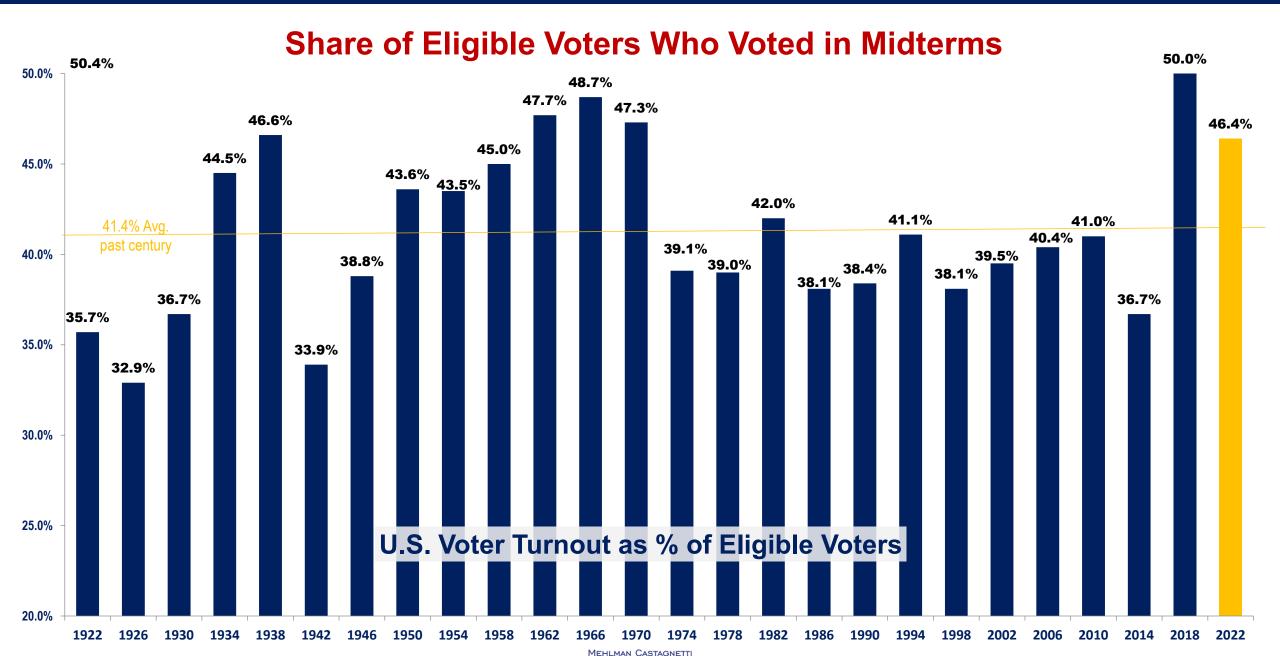


#### **BUT...DEMS MASSIVELY EXCEEDED EXPECTATIONS**

#### Biden Outperformed Presidents' Post-WWII First Midterm Average

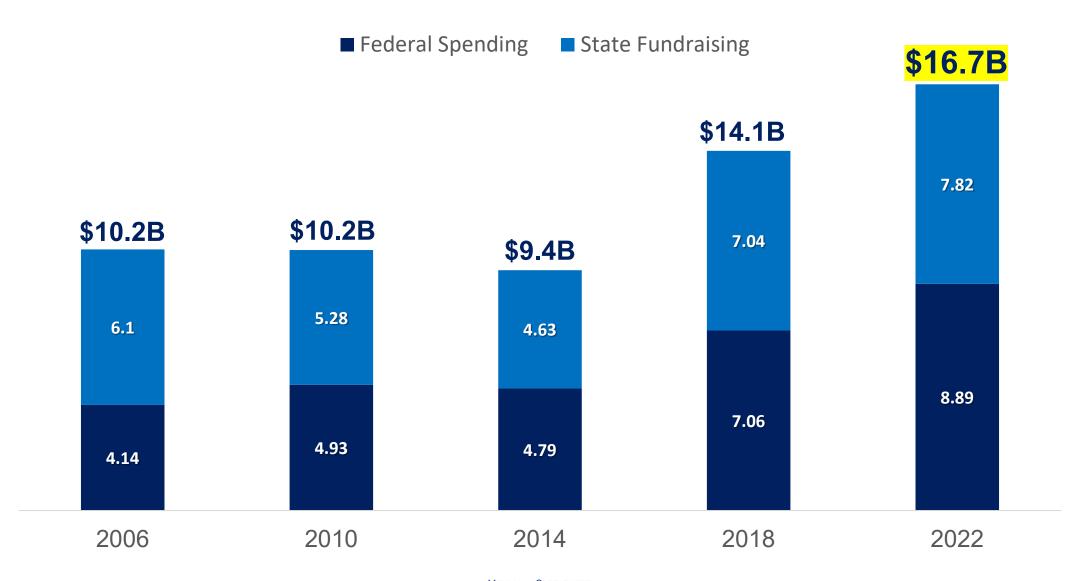


#### **AMERICANS WERE EAGER & ABLE TO VOTE**



#### **ELECTION SPENDING KEPT RISING (BECAUSE IT'S A BUSINESS)**

#### **Another Banner Year for the Anger-Industrial Complex**



# Candidates Matter Poor GOP Candidate Quality Offset Traditional Midterm Tailwinds

#### **VOTERS SEEK STABLE POLITICAL LEADERS AMID DISRUPTION**

Global War







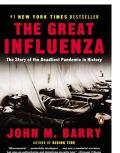






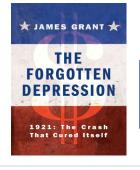














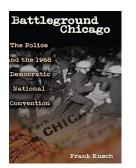


Late 1960s



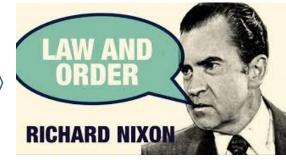












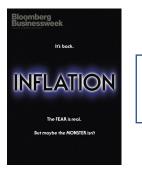
Early **2020s** 











In 2022 known incumbents seemed more stable, less chaotic than many challengers

#### MANY GOP NEWBIES WERE WEAKER CANDIDATES, SEEMED MORE CHAOTIC

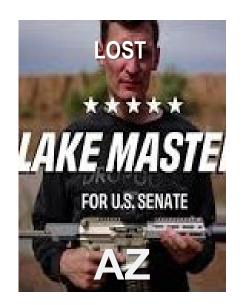
#### First-Time, Anti-Establishment Candidates Often Stumble...



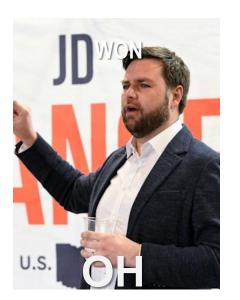


#### ...2022 GOP Novices Showed Inexperience, Failed to Run Strong Campaigns











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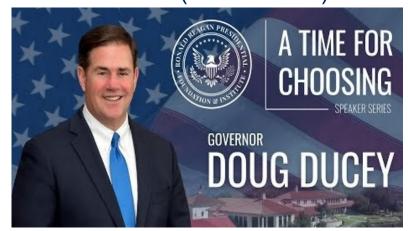
#### STRONGER STATEWIDE REPUBLICANS STAYED OUT OF SENATE CAMPAIGNS

#### In an Alternate (Non-MAGA) Universe, GOP Might Have Run These Guys

New Hampshire (57% in 2022)



**Arizona** (56% in 2018)



**Georgia** (53% in 2022)



**Maryland** (55% in 2018)



#### FLORIDA SHOWED RED WAVE POSSIBLE BY DISCIPLINED CANDIDATES

#### **DeSantis '22 Outperformed Trump '20 Among Every Demographic**

"All the great anti-woke taste, none of the crazy-incompetence calories"



<b>DESANTIS 2022</b>		<b>TRUMP 2020</b>
59.4%	Winning %	<b>51.2</b> %
63%	Men	<b>55%</b>
<b>52</b> %	Women	48%
64%	White	61%
57%	Hispanic	<b>45%</b>
13%	Black	9%
63%	<b>Older</b> (65+)	<b>55%</b>
42%	<b>Younger</b> (18-29)	34%
61%	Married	<b>60%</b>
54%	College	50%
60%	No College	<b>52</b> %
69%	White No Coll.	64%



- ROSEN & THOMAS -Sources: 2022: 2020

#### TRUMP NOT A '22 CANDIDATE, BUT IMPACT FELT

## Recruited & Elevated Weaker Candidates

(same ones pushed by the DNC)



#### Teased '24 Announcement on Eve of '22 Election

(making it a choice > referendum)

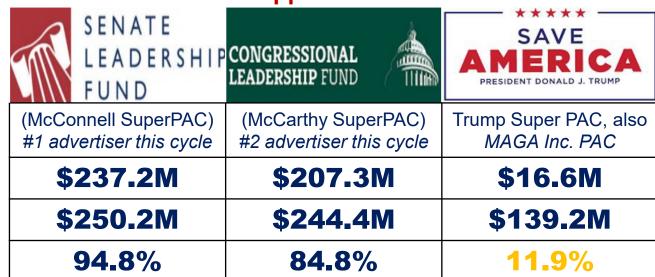


## Discouraged Early Voting

(undoing longtime GOP advantage)



#### **Failed to Support 2022 Candidates**



## Attacked 2022 GOP Candidates in vulnerable seats / swing states







Ad spend

\$ Raised

% Spent

#### DEMOCRATS PROMOTED EASIER-TO-BEAT EXTREMIST GOP CANDIDATES

#### They May Be "Threats to Democracy" But They're Good for Democrats... **Cynical Strategy Appears to Have Worked**

<u>State</u>	<u>Race</u>	Dem spending in GOP primary	Did Far-Right Candidate Win Primary?	Did Far-Right Candidate Win General?
IL	Governor	\$34,500,000	YES	NO
MD	Governor	\$1,700,000	YES	NO
PA	Governor	\$1,200,000	YES	NO
MI	US House, 3rd Dist	\$2,000,000	YES	NO
NH	US Senate	\$3,200,000	YES	NO
NH	US House, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Dist	\$100,000	YES	NO

Source: Washington Post

# A Choice Election: Fear vs Disappointment

#### THE CHOICE OF 2022: WHO FRIGHTENS YOU MORE?

#### **Each Party Painted Frightening Caricatures of the Other's Agendas**

#### **DEMOCRATS**

Inflation-Increasing
Border-Opening
Crime-Ignoring
"Woke Moralizers"



Biden Approval: -15



#### **REPUBLICANS**

Abortion-Criminalizing
Democracy-Undermining
Conspiracy-Peddling
"Chaotic Disruptors"

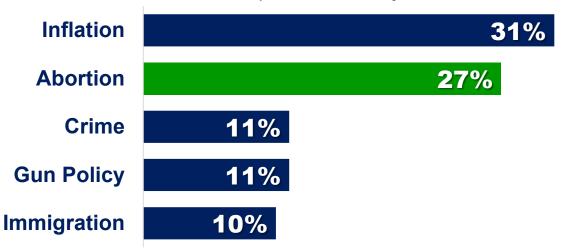
Party Approval: -8

Trump Approval: -19

#### **ABORTION DROVE DEM TURNOUT & SUPPORT**

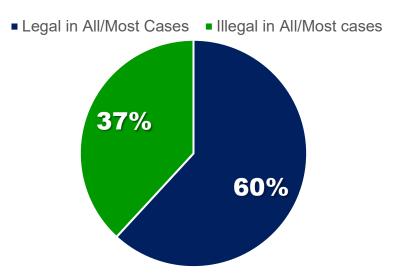
#### **2<sup>nd</sup> Most Important Issue to Voters**

"What as the most important issue to your vote?"

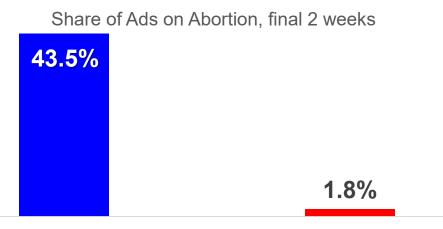


#### 60/40 Issue, Dems on Winning Side

**Should Abortion be...** 

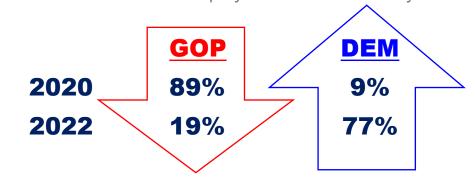


#### **Dems Prioritized Issue**



#### Post-Dobbs R's Less Motivated by Issue

% voters who said abortion played a role in how they voted



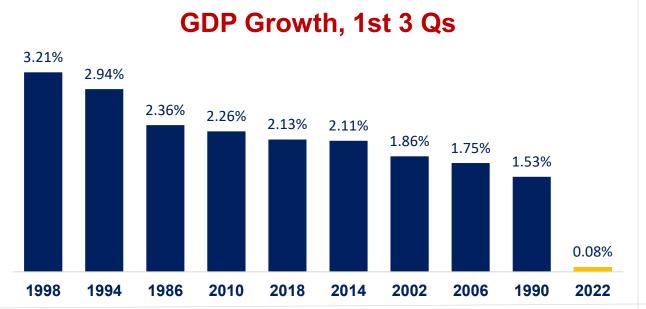
Sources: 2022 Exit Polls: AdImpact

Democrats

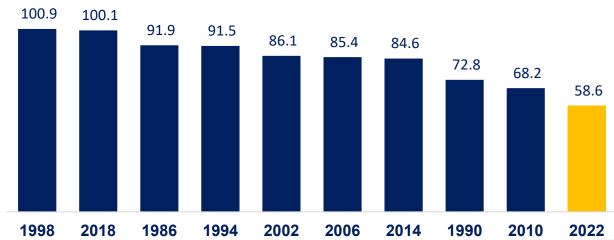
Republicans

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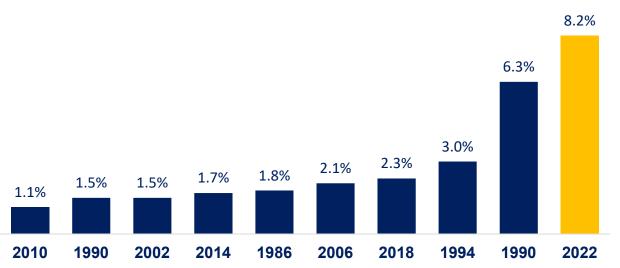
#### HARSHEST ECONOMIC HEADWINDS OF PAST 10 MIDTERMS SLOWED DEMS



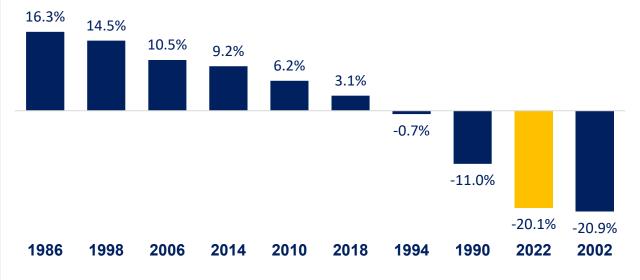
#### Consumer Confidence (Sept)



#### Inflation (Sept)



#### S&P500, Jan. 1 - Election Day



#### **ELECTION DENIAL HURT CANDIDATES, ESPECIALLY WITH INDEPENDENTS**

#### Winners Focused on Today's Problems, Not Yesterday's Conspiracies

Gubernatorial Candidates NOT Relitigating Spurious Claims of "Stolen" Elections (+/-Indy's)

(OH) DeWine: +25

(NH) Sununu: +21

(FL) DeSantis: +8

(NV) Lombardo: +3

(GA) Kemp: +1

(TX) Abbott: -2

(VT) Scott: № exits

Gubernatorial Candidates Running on Unproven Claims of Past "Stolen" Elections (+/-Indy's)

X (PA) Mastriano: -31
X (MI) Dixon: -13

(AZ) Lake: -7

X (WI) Michel: -6

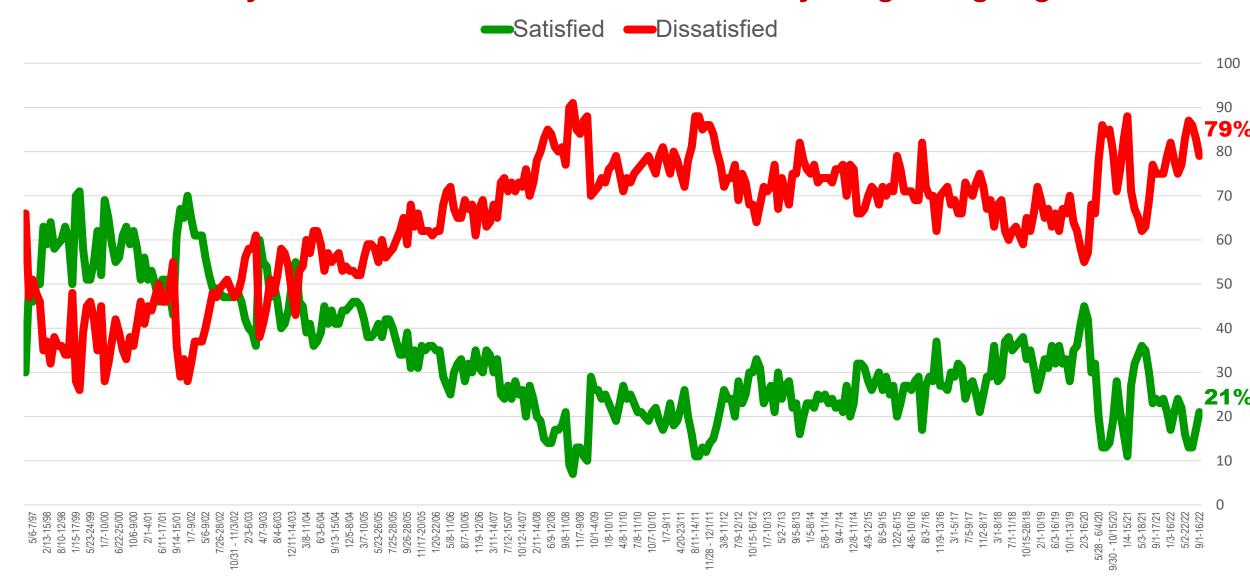
(GA) Abrams: -1

X (MA) Diehl: No exits

(MD) Cox: No exits

#### MOOD: VOTERS DISSATISFIED WITH PRESENT... BUT DON'T WANT TO GO BACK

#### "Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going?"



# What's Next 10 Things to Watch for in 2023-2024

#### **#1. LAME DUCK CONGRESS CONVENES**

#### MUST / WILL DO

- 1. FY '23 Appropriations or CR
- 2. Nat'l Defense Authorization
  Act (with Intelligence, Coast Guard
  & WRDA reauthorizations, maybe
  Taiwan Policy Act)
- 3. Health care (extenders; mitigating cuts; telehealth)
- 4. Judges & Nominations

#### **SOLID CHANCE**

- 1. Spending riders (Ukraine \$; pandemic \$; Disaster \$; Flood Ins.; FDA user fee riders)
- 2. Respect for Marriage act
- 3. Electoral Count Reform
- 4. Secure 2.0 (pensions)
- 5. EQUAL Act (cocaine/crack sentencing)
- 6. SAFE banking (cannabis)
- 7. Tax extenders
- 8. Tax expansion (R&D; CTC; EBITA)

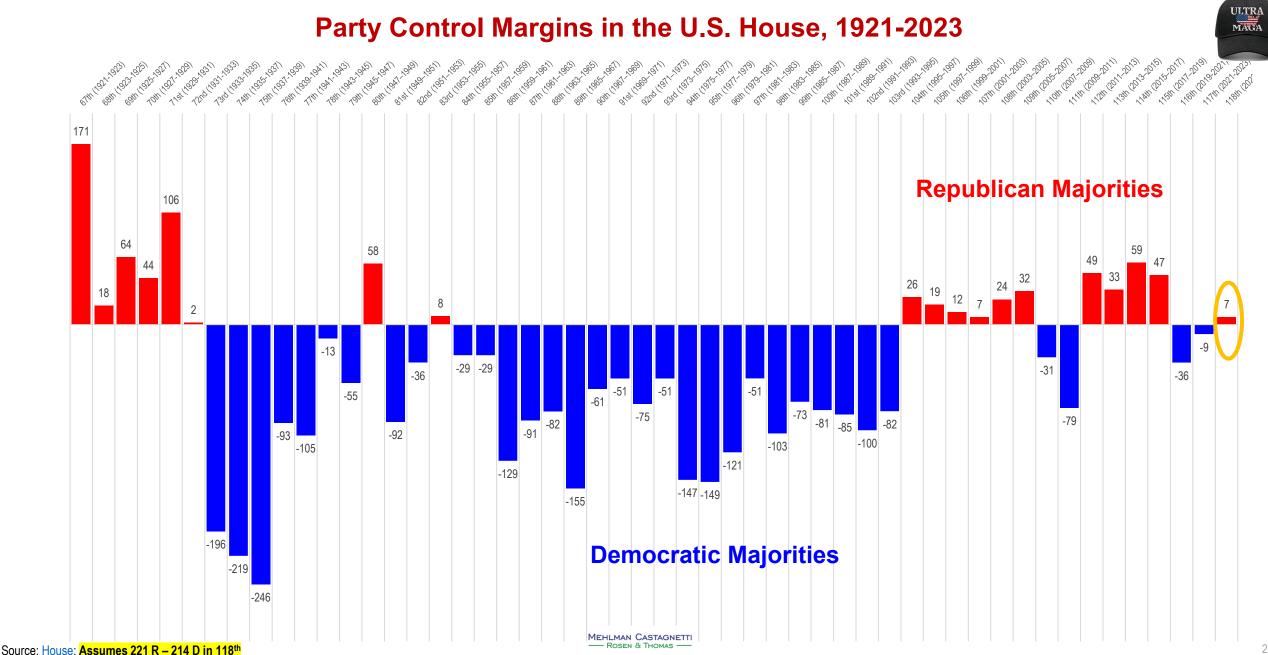
#### HARD, BUT MAYBE

- 1. Antitrust reform
- 2. Privacy regulation (ADPPA)
- 3. Cryptocurrency reform
- 4. Debt ceiling extension
- 5. Member stock trading ban
- 6. Outbound CFIUS
- 7. Energy permitting reform
- 8. Kids' privacy (KOSA; COPPA 2.0)



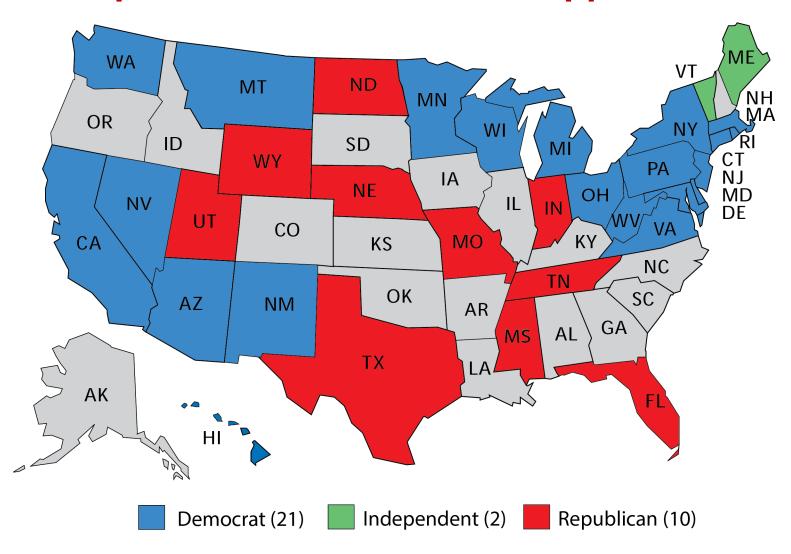


#### **#2. NARROWER MAJORITIES EMPOWER FACTIONS**



#### **#3. SENATE DEMS: BRUTAL 2024 BATTLEFIELD**

#### Multiple At-Risk States, Few Opportunities



#### **#4. OVERSIGHT WILL GO INTO OVERDRIVE**

#### **Competing Committees Aiming to Score Points, Send Messages**

#### **DEMOCRATS\***

- 1. Trump Admin & Business
  - 2. "UnWoke" CEOs
  - 3. Climate (Oil Co's)
  - 4. China Collaborators
  - 5. Falsehoods Online
- 6. Regulatory Under-Enforcement
  - 7. COVID Profiteering
    - 8. Election Deniers
  - 9. Refugee Maltreatment
  - 10. Inflation & Corporations

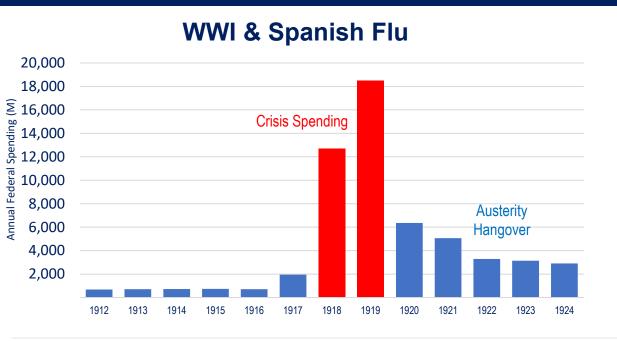


#### **REPUBLICANS**

- 1. Biden Family & Admin
  - 2. "Woke" CEOs
  - 3. Climate (ESG)
  - 4. China Collaborators
  - 5. Free Speech Online
- 6. Regulatory Over-Reach
- 7. COVID Origins / Fauci
- 8. Deep State (FBI, IRS)
- 9. Border/Immigration
- 10. Inflation & Big Government

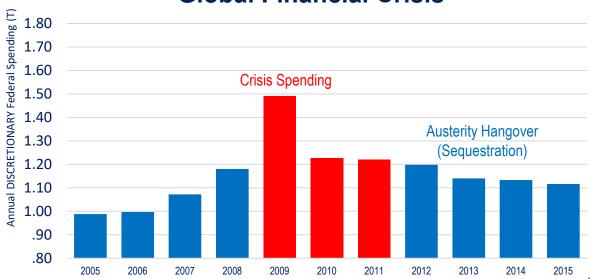


#### **#5. FISCAL FIGHTS WILL FOLLOW CRISIS SPENDING**









#### Extraordinary Economics of 2020-22 → Backlash

U.S. National Debt +31.6%

**Federal Spending +42.5%** 

U.S. Inflation 40 year-high





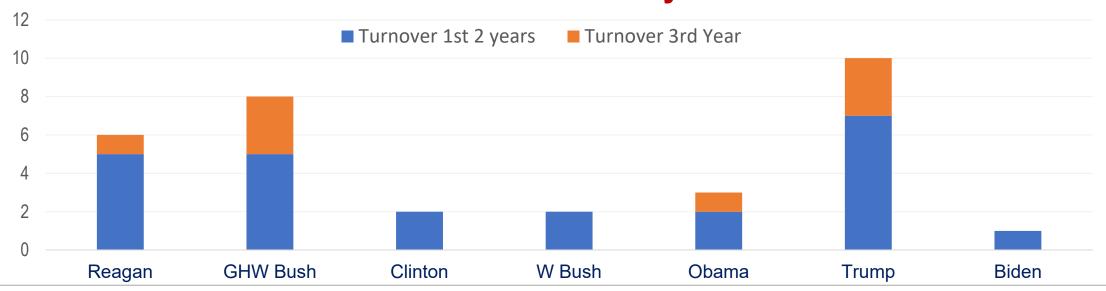


Source: White House Budget Office

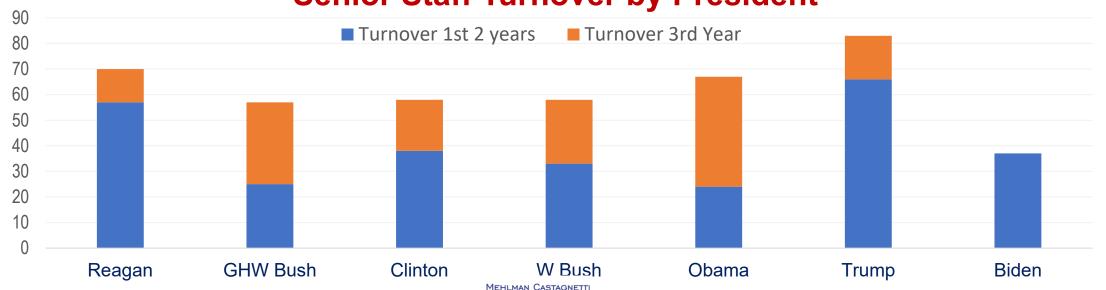
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#### #6. THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH SHUFFLE: TURNOVER LIKELY IN TEAM BIDEN





#### **Senior Staff Turnover by President**



Source: Brookings (but added -1 Biden OSTP Lander)

#### **#7. AGENCIES WILL GET MORE AGGRESSIVE**

#### Driving the Agenda by "Phone & Pen"

**OVERSIGHT** 









**REGULATION** 









**ENFORCEMENT** 









#### **#8. IMPLEMENTATION IMPERATIVE WILL DOMINATE AGENCIES**

#### Massive Amount of New Spending (& Taxes) to Oversee

Select Stimulus Bills	COST (2020 Dollars)	% US GDP
American Rescue Plan (2021)	\$1.90T	8.4%
Inflation Reduction Act (2022)	\$1.22T*	5.3%
Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (2021)	\$1.20T	5.2%
Student Loan Forgiveness (2022)*	\$519B	2.4%
CHIPS for America (2022)	\$280B	1.3%
Phase 4 Covid Relief (2020)	\$900B	4.3%
<b>CARES Act (2020)</b>	\$2.02T	10.2%
Trump Tax Cuts (2017)	\$1.46T	7.5%
ARRA (Obama Stimulus) (2009)	\$1.03T	5.8%
Marshall Plan (1948-1951)	\$144B	~2%
New Deal (1933-1940)	\$793B	40.1%

\*IRA: \$790B new taxes \$485B spending + tax breaks

#### #9. "WOKE" WARS WILL EXPAND, ESG WILL GET HARDER

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL**







#### SOCIAL







#### **GOVERNANCE**





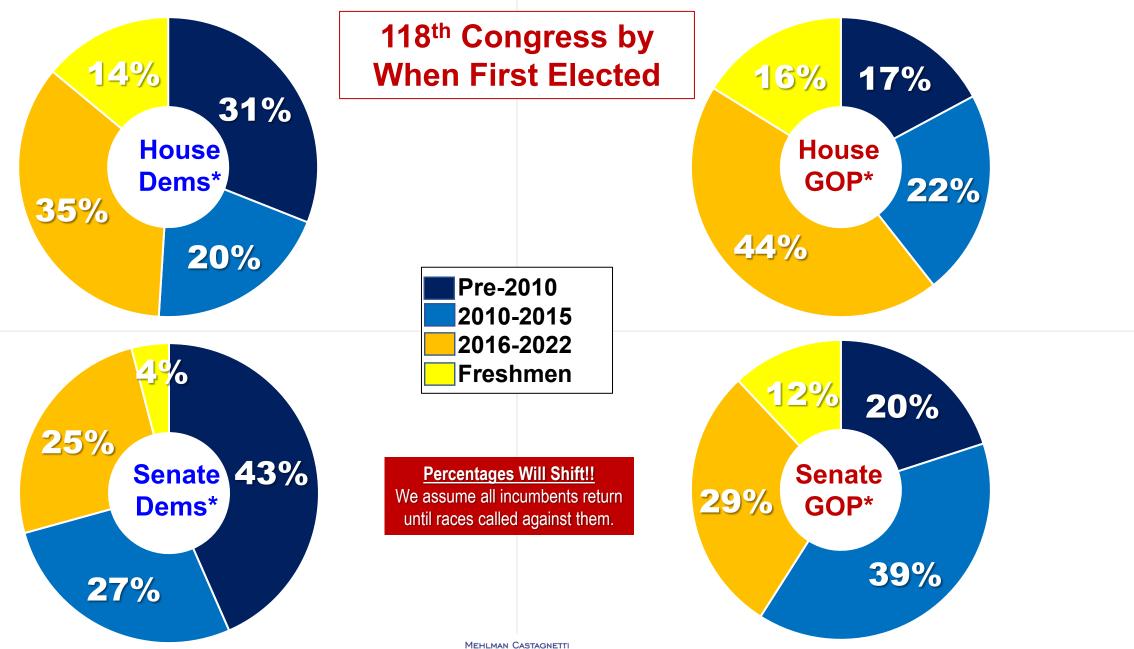


#### #10. "RED SCARE" REBORN: AREA OF GREATEST BIPARTISAN AGREEMENT



# So What? 3 Recommendations for Businesses & Groups

#### GET TO KNOW NEWER MEMBERS BEFORE YOU NEED THEM



#### STAY ENGAGED: THINGS ARE STILL GETTING DONE

#### Reports of the Death of Bipartisanship are Greatly Somewhat Exaggerated

HOUSE VOTE	SELECTED LEGISLATION IN 117th CONGRESS	SENATE VOTE
221-201	INFRASTRUCTURE: 11&JA	69-30
243-193	GUNS: BSCA	65-33
363-70	DEFENSE: FY '22 NDAA	88-11
342-92	POSTAL: PSRA	79-19
342-92	POSTAL: PSRA  CIVIL RIGHTS: Anti-lynching law	79-19 Unanimous

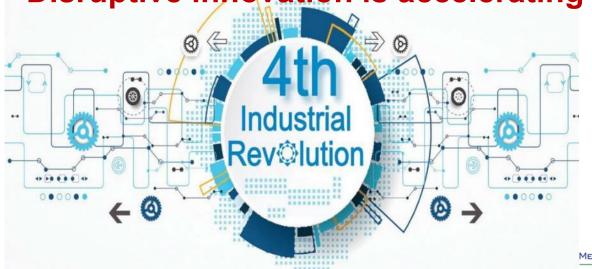
#### MACRO TRENDS ARE BIGGER THAN ELECTION CYCLES







#### Disruptive innovation is accelerating



#### More diverse & inclusive, older & sicker



#### **BONUS SLIDE: UNCONVENTIONAL WISDOM**

- 1. Polling mostly got it right (say the pollsters): "Absolute avg. error of polling averages in competitive Senate elections looks likely to be half the expected error since 1998, underestimating Dems by ½ to 1 point." (Pollster for The Economist)
- 2. Georgia's new voting law did not disenfranchise: 2022 turnout in GA (52.6%) was higher than in NY (42.6%), DE (43.2%), MA (49.3%) & near WA (55.2%), where all voters receive a ballot in the mail! (U.S. Elections Project, estimates as of 11/18)
- 3. Michigan epitomized GOP failures in 2022: First-time gubernatorial candidate / election denier with abortion on the ballot in a state where Trump attacked a GOP incumbent (Meijer) = Dems won "trifecta" (House, Senate, Gov), just 4 years after GOP held a trifecta & super-majority. (WSJ)
- 4. NY gerrymander fail may have cost Dems House: Failed attempt to draw hyper-partisan lines replaced by Court-drawn alternative likely costing Dems 4 House seats. (NYT)
- 5. DeSantis' gerrymander may have won the House for Republicans: New FL lines led to 4 more GOP seats in 2022. (NYT)
- 6. D's outspent Rs at all levels: Spending margins in Senate (\$101M), House (\$113M) & Governors' races (\$142M) (Smart Media Group)
- 7. 1914: The last time no incumbent Senator lost, also when Babe Ruth first signed to play baseball (for the Orioles) (WaPo).
- 8. 1934: Last election where opposition party lost net Senate AND Governor seats, same year Alcatraz opened as a prison (WP).
- 9. Bringing the Miami Heat: Hillary Clinton won Miami-Dade County by 29 points in 2016. DeSantis won it by >10 in 2022.
- 10. Time to Buy?: S&P 500 increased over the 365 days following every midterm election since 1950 (Silverlight Asset Management)

#### TO RECEIVE FUTURE REPORTS: bruce@mc-dc.com

-or- https://www.linkedin.com/in/bruce-mehlman-51239136/

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