GBAO

To: Vera Action

From: GBAO

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NY3 Post Election Survey Findings

This memo highlights key findings from a post-election survey of 500 voters in the special election for New York's 3rd Congressional District.[1] Some national headlines, and even Speaker Johnson, claimed Suozzi's success was because he ran like a Republican, but what actually consolidated voters was that Suozzi demonstrated he took issues that matter to them seriously. He embraced solutions to immigration that combined better security at the border with a path to citizenship.
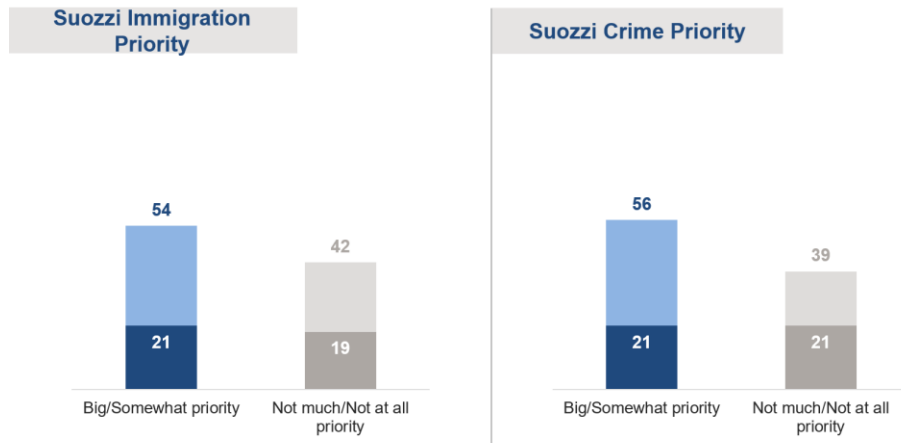
Key Findings On The NY3 Special

- **Tom Suozzi won the special election by consolidating Democrats, winning some moderate Republicans, and holding his own with independents**. Suozzi won self-identifying Democrats 95-5%, while Mazi Pilip only won self-identifying Republicans 91-9%. Importantly, Suozzi won 19% of liberal-moderate Republicans, while Pilip only won 8% of moderate-conservative Democrats. Independent voters split about evenly, 49% Pilip – 48% Suozzi. Suozzi won voters of color 68-31%, while white voters split about evenly, 50-49% for Suozzi.

- **Suozzi's message about working with both parties to actually solve problems, rather than weaponize issues for political gain, met the moment and persuaded voters to support him**. When asked the best reason to support Suozzi, 28% said "he works with both parties to solve problems," 15 points higher than the next highest reasons. Among voters who considered both candidates, an elevated 35% cited Suozzi working with both parties to get things done as the main reason to support him.

- **Immigration was a dominant issue in this race and while the issue favored his opponent, Suozzi contested it enough with his problem-solving approach to show voters he was serious about addressing it**. More than half (56%) of voters named immigration/migrants as one of the two issues that played the biggest role in their vote decisions. Among voters who considered both candidates, this climbed to 70%. Pilip's stance on immigration was the top reason voters gave to support her (27%).

- **Suozzi showed voters that he understood immigration was a serious issue by talking about it at press conferences, with policy proposals, and in advertisements**. A majority of voters felt Suozzi made immigration a priority and he

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outperformed Biden (in 2020 vote recall) with the voters who said Suozzi made immigration a priority by a net 18 points.

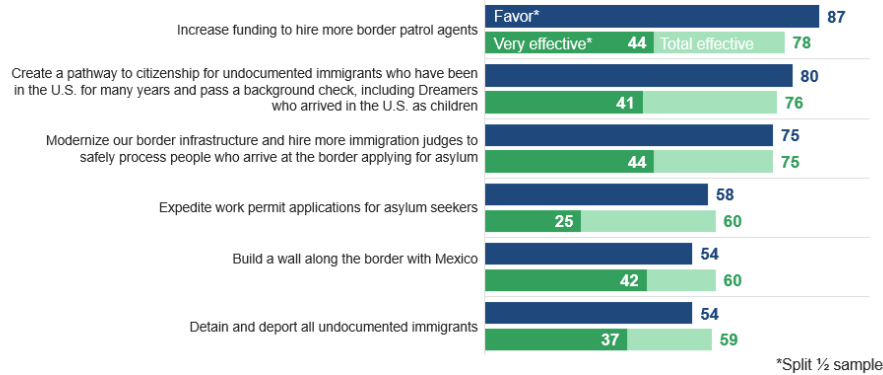| Suozzi Immigration Priority	Suozzi Crime Priority

- **While immigration was the dominant issue, abortion played a key role in motivating Suozzi voters**. One-in-three (32%) voters said abortion was one of their top two voting issues, but this jumps to 55% among Suozzi voters.

Key Lessons Moving Forward

- **The biggest lesson from the Suozzi special election is that when Republicans attack Democrats on issues that are very salient for voters and where Democrats are vulnerable, Democrats need to lean in to, not shy away from the issue.** Despite voters' clear rejection of Pilip's political posturing, Democrats should expect Republicans to run heavily on immigration in November in suburban New York and across the country. You can't compete on an issue if you don't offer a message and solutions.

- **Voters support comprehensive immigration reform, including a pathway to earned citizenship for undocumented immigrants, modernizing our border infrastructure, and adding more border agents**. When we offered voters six immigration reform proposals, the top three were increasing funding to hire more border patrol agents (87% favor), creating a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants who pass a background check (80%), and modernizing our border infrastructure to hire more immigration judges and safely process asylum seekers (75%). These proposals enjoy broader support than building a wall and deporting undocumented immigrants, but if voters only hear the Right's policies, they will opt for them in the absence of an alternative.

Immigration Proposals

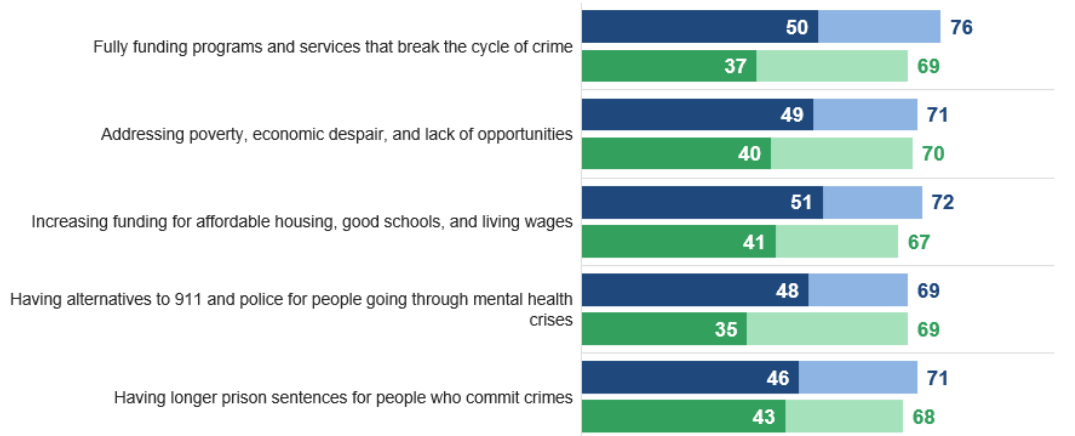| Proposal	Favor* / Very effective*		
Increase funding to hire more border patrol agents	Favor* 87	Very effective* 44	Total effective 78
Create a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants who have been in the U.S. for many years and pass a background check, including Dreamers who arrived in the U.S. as children	80	41	76
Modernize our border infrastructure and hire more immigration judges to safely process people who arrive at the border applying for asylum	75	44	75
Expedite work permit applications for asylum seekers	58	25	60
Build a wall along the border with Mexico	54	42	60
Detain and deport all undocumented immigrants	54	37	59

*Split ½ sample

- **Similarly, voters support comprehensive approaches to addressing crime, including building trust between police and the community, getting illegal guns off the streets, and expanding mental health treatment**. But just like on immigration, candidates running against "tough-on-crime opponents" must, like Suozzi, proactively inoculate or they will be depicted as not caring about these issues. Voters are more pragmatic than dogmatic on crime – they want candidates who take the issue seriously and offer proven solutions.

Safety/Crime Proposals   ● Help a lot   ◗ Help a lot/Help some

Proposal	Safety* / Crime*	Help a lot	Help a lot/Help some
Building trust between the police and the community	Safety*	64	87
	Crime*	51	86
Getting illegal guns off the streets		72	88
		70	82
Increasing access to mental health care		67	86
		57	83
Making sure public safety, not wealth, determines who stays in jail while awaiting trial		56	83
		53	75
Putting 100,000 more police on the streets		52	75
		45	72

Statement	Dark Blue	Light Blue	Dark Green	Light Green
Fully funding programs and services that break the cycle of crime	50	76	37	69
Addressing poverty, economic despair, and lack of opportunities	49	71	40	70
Increasing funding for affordable housing, good schools, and living wages	51	72	41	67
Having alternatives to 911 and police for people going through mental health crises	48	69	35	69
Having longer prison sentences for people who commit crimes	46	71	43	68

*Split ½ sample