



MEMORANDUM

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: American Edge Project (AEP)
RE: Voters Want Candidates to Focus on Issues that Impact Economic Security, Health, and Stability at Home and Ensuring Our Competitive Edge Abroad, Not Further Regulation of U.S. Tech Companies
DATE: October 2024

New Poll: 9-in-10 Voters Prioritize Economic and National Security Issues

In the final stretch leading up to the 2024 presidential election, a new poll finds that voters nationwide and in Senate battleground states want their elected officials to prioritize national security and pressing pocketbook issues – like the cost of living, health care, and Social Security – instead of pursuing regulatory policies targeting U.S. tech companies.

Voters are also worried about technological threats from foreign adversaries. They want to take steps to ensure the U.S. remains a global tech leader – for example, by opposing excessive regulations that would stifle innovations and by encouraging both open- and closed-source AI models.

“Voters are very clear what they want from elected officials,” said Doug Kelly, CEO of American Edge Project. “They want policymakers to address the everyday pocketbook issues that are challenging their lives, not undermining the American tech innovators that help their families and our country stay ahead. Politicians who prioritize anti-innovation policies are playing a losing hand.”

This survey, conducted by Mercury Analytics, was fielded between October 3 and October 10, 2024. It surveyed 1,504 likely voters nationwide and 515 likely voters in U.S. Senate battleground states (Arizona, Michigan, Montana, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin).

Key findings include:

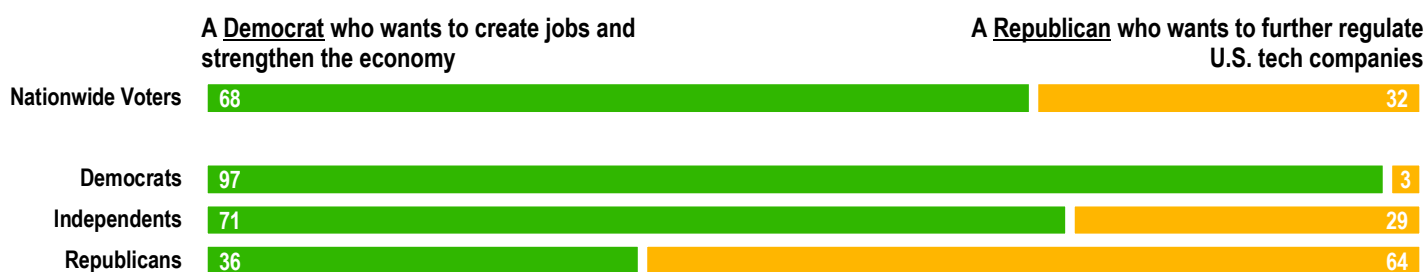
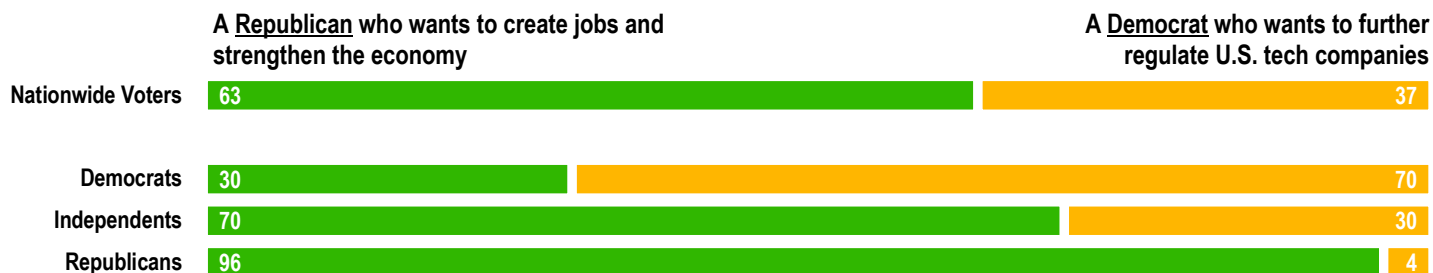
- Candidates campaigning on tech regulation are pursuing a low priority issue. Regulating U.S. tech companies is a relatively low priority. Rather, across party lines and in Senate battleground states, voters want their elected officials to focus on key economic, health care and national security issues.

Question: For each issue, please indicate how much of a priority it is for you that the government address that issue.

Table with 5 columns: Issue, Major + Top Priority, Dem Voters, Ind Voters, GOP Voters, Senate BG Voters. Rows include Inflation & cost of living (94), Health care (91), Medicare & Social Security (91), Jobs & the economy (90), National security (90), Taxes (87), and Reg. of US tech companies (58).

- Candidates on both sides who prioritize key pocketbook issues over far-reaching tech regulation are more likely to come out ahead.** Across party lines, candidates who prioritize key election issues – like creating jobs and strengthening the economy – have a significant edge over candidates who are focused on breaking up American tech companies.

*Question: If there was a Congressional election tomorrow, which candidate would you be more likely to support?*



- Voters are worried about foreign technology surpassing American tech and threatening U.S. national security.** Nationwide and in key Senate battleground states, the vast majority of voters are worried about technological threats from foreign adversaries. Specifically, voters fear cyberattacks on U.S. infrastructure and falling behind countries like China on tech innovations (e.g., advancements in AI).

*Question: Thinking about the future of America, how worried are you, if at all, about each of the following?*



- Voters see open-source AI as a way to strengthen our core values and keep the U.S. at the forefront of technology and freedom.** Nationwide and in key Senate battleground states, over two-thirds of voters agree that open-source AI would strengthen our core values – like free speech, an open internet, and an open society – while also ensuring the U.S. remains a global tech leader.

*Question: Many of us value principles like free speech, an open internet, and an open society, all of which have contributed to making the U.S. strong and resilient. In the same spirit, open source AI makes all of its computer code, operating rules, and data available for everyone to use and improve upon.*

*Do you agree or disagree that open source AI would strengthen our core values and keep the U.S. at the forefront of technology and freedom?*



- **Voters want to encourage both open- and closed-source AI models, so that the U.S. can be a global leader in shaping the future of AI.** To ensure the U.S. remains a global leader on AI, voters support both open- and closed-source AI models. They also oppose heavy-handed regulations that would prevent maximum innovation and security.

*Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?*

*To remain the global tech leader, the U.S. should encourage both open and closed source AI development to ensure maximum innovation and security. By avoiding heavy-handed regulation at this early stage of development, we allow the market to grow and let American companies lead in shaping the future of AI.*



**The bottom line:** In next month's election, voters are prepared to stand with candidates who prioritize their stability and safety. They want to see political leaders address the priorities that matter to them – issues like the cost of living, health care, Social Security, and national security. Misguided policies that further regulate U.S. tech could have negative unintended consequences that voters are worried about, including greater threats to national security, the stunting of innovations in AI technology, and the U.S. losing its competitive edge to China.

#### Additional Methodology Notes

Mercury Analytics, on behalf of American Edge Project, conducted a survey between October 3 and October 10, 2024. A sample of 1,504 likely voters nationwide and 515 Senate Battleground voters were interviewed online.

The margin of error among the nationwide audience at the 95% confidence interval level is +/- 2.5%. The margin of error among the Senate Battleground audience at the 95% confidence interval level is +/- 4.3%. The margin of error on subsamples is greater.

#### About American Edge Project

The American Edge Project is a coalition dedicated to the proposition that American innovators are an essential part of U.S. economic health, national security, and individual freedoms.

For more information, visit <https://americanedgeproject.org/>