



FREEDOM IS FOR  
**EVERYBODY**

**To:** Interested Parties  
**From:** NARAL Pro-Choice America  
**Date:** April 2020  
**Re:** Ad Campaign to Expose Trump Administration Exploiting COVID-19

NARAL Pro-Choice America and the NARAL Freedom Fund launched a six-figure ad campaign in key battleground states to highlight how the Trump Administration is exploiting the pandemic as an excuse to try to ban abortion, using medical disinformation to push their unpopular agenda at the direct expense of people’s health and lives. **The ads have been empirically tested in partnership with Priorities USA and show movement against Trump among key demographics.**

**KEY TAKEAWAYS**

- Highlighting attacks on abortion rights and reproductive freedom **drives down Trump favorability** among key voting blocs in battleground states. While we have seen this to be the case throughout prior research, we found it to hold true even during the pandemic.
- Exposing how Trump dismisses **expert medical advice** in favor of GOP ideology during the pandemic – including by supporting clinic closures and restricting access to reproductive health care – **decreases confidence in Trump's performance** managing COVID.
- Negative movement was especially pronounced **among Independents, suburban voters, and Obama-Trump voters** exposed to these ads, and was notably equivalent for men and women.

The Trump campaign recognized the effectiveness of the ads, as they responded to the ad campaign with even more disinformation: *“It’s disgusting, but not surprising, that the extreme abortion lobby would try to use a global health crisis to promote the killing of unborn children.”*

**ADS EFFECTIVELY CALL OUT TRUMP-PENCE ON EXPLOITING PANDEMIC TO BAN ABORTION**

In “[Even Now](#),” Trump and Pence’s efforts to restrict abortion access are placed side by side with the consequences of the ongoing pandemic – emergency rooms overwhelmed, hospitals facing a lack of ventilators – demonstrating their fixation on controlling women even amid the worst crisis in generations.

*Even Now* is designed to move people from anxiety around coronavirus to the more action-inspiring anger, and **leverages recent research from Avalanche, a cognitive science and artificial intelligence research firm, on which messengers voters trust right now: doctors and health experts, not politicians.**



In “[Zoom](#),” four young women discuss how Trump and Republicans are continuing to try to ban abortion during coronavirus, over a video call.



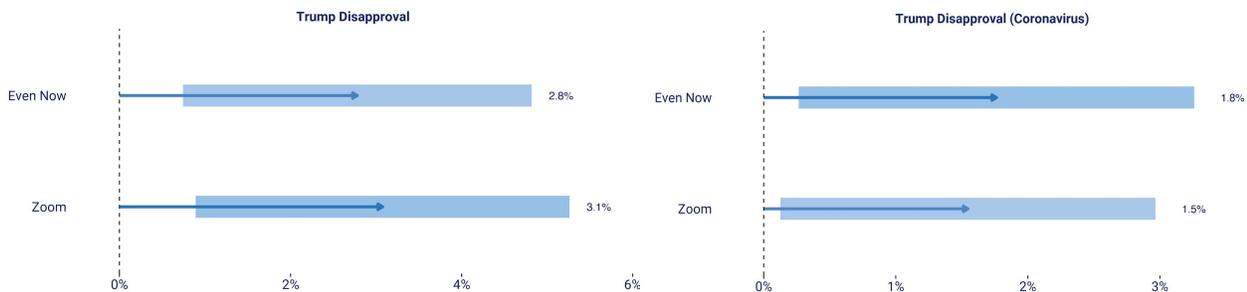
The women have an organic conversation about how anti-choice politicians “have always wanted abortion to be gone, and are now viewing this as a ripe opportunity” and talk about how important it is to vote in November. ***Zoom* leverages insights from NARAL’s extensive research about how to effectively define the opposition in a format that speaks specifically to this unique moment.**

## METHODOLOGY

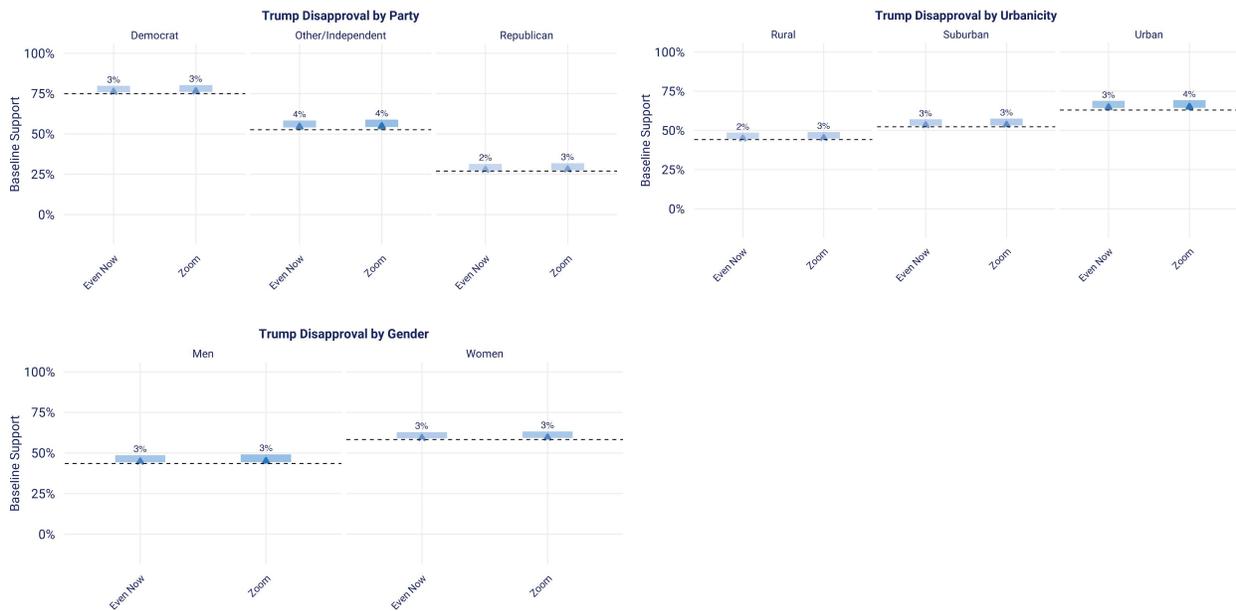
We tested the ads through Civics Analytics, in coordination with Priorities USA, through online panels of likely 2020 voters with a sample size of 3,135. Testing took place in Arizona, Colorado, Iowa, Maine, Michigan, and Minnesota, from Thursday, April 9 - Wednesday, April 15. The testing methodology focused on observing movement in response to viewing each ad by comparing post-message responses to a control group, and weighted characteristics like ethnicity, religion, and income to ensure data was representative of our audience.

## TESTING SHOWS MOVEMENT AWAY FROM TRUMP AND EROSION OF FAVORABILITY

We found that *Zoom* increased Trump’s overall disapproval by 3.1 percentage points, and *Even Now* increased disapproval by 2.8 percentage points, numbers that Priorities USA noted are on the higher end of what they typically see for this question. Both ads also increased Trump’s disapproval specifically when it comes to coronavirus response, *Even Now* by 1.8pp and *Zoom* by 1.5pp.



We saw positive movement specifically among our target demographics. For independents, both ads increased Trump disapproval by four percentage points. In suburban areas, *Zoom* and *Even Now* increased Trump disapproval by three percentage points each. Notably, we saw that increases in Trump disapproval were the same for both women and men, at around three percentage points.



When split according to '12 and '16 votes, *Even Now* was found to move Trump disapproval by 3pp among Obama-Trump voters, 4pp among other/independent voters, and 3pp among Romney-Clinton voters. *Zoom* was found to increase disapproval by 3pp among Obama-Trump voters, 5pp among other/independent voters, and 4pp among Romney-Clinton voters.

Additionally, both *Even Now* and *Zoom* moved vote choice toward Biden and tested positively on mobilizing voters.



## BACKGROUND: ANTI-CHOICE REPUBLICANS CONTINUING EFFORTS TO BAN ABORTION BY EXPLOITING A PANDEMIC

In the midst of the COVID-19 crisis, the Trump-Pence Administration and anti-choice Republicans are putting ideology over science and endangering lives. Those who follow the fight for reproductive freedom and justice know that this is nothing new for radical rightwing politicians – we have seen them use disinformation to close clinics; block access to contraception; force medically unnecessary ultrasounds, and put ideology at the forefront, no matter the cost to women and families.

Today, anti-choice politicians in thirteen states are trying to ban abortion as part of their response to the pandemic, demonstrating that their political interests will take precedent over people’s lives every time. These same states saw efforts to ban abortion in 2019; what we’re seeing right now is simply another step in the long-term campaign to control women’s lives – a campaign that continues even amid global crisis.



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In the midst of emergency negotiations, Trump and White House Republicans [held up](#) the coronavirus relief bill in order to restrict access to abortion care. And Vice President Mike Pence [held a call](#) with anti-choice leaders related to COVID-19.

It's clear that the Trump-Pence Administration and anti-choice Republicans have a concerted effort to exploit the pandemic to limit women's access to reproductive freedom. We know now that we have the power to ensure this strategy backfires. Our ad campaign has shown that Trump's exploitation of this crisis to advance his agenda to ban all abortions, against the advice of experts, moves voters to our side. NARAL is committed to making sure that voters know about these egregious actions and that anti-choice politicians don't get away with unpopular decisions under the cover of a health crisis.

### **NARAL'S LARGEST-EVER ELECTORAL PROGRAM TARGETS KEY VOTING BLOCS**

The COVID-19 ads are being run as part of NARAL Pro-Choice America's multi-faceted, largest-ever electoral program for the 2020 election. NARAL's 2020 strategy aims to reach, persuade, and mobilize key voter segments including soft-partisan persuadable women voters and low-propensity, pro-choice voters who are motivated by Trump and Republicans' commitment to ending *Roe v. Wade*, criminalizing abortion, and punishing women. These critical voting blocs value reproductive freedom and align with the 77% of Americans who support *Roe v. Wade*. Key to NARAL's strategy is inoculating voters against the extreme disinformation campaigns that have become anti-choice movement calling cards.

NARAL's comprehensive strategy combines wrap-around communications – informed by our one-of-a-kind opposition research team and in-depth message research work – with member-led organizing. The program will achieve 3.6 million in voter contacts, and is focused on key battleground states that will determine the outcome of the Presidential and Senate races: Arizona, Colorado, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Georgia, Iowa, and North Carolina.

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