

# AMERICAN ACTION NETWORK

To: Interested Parties  
From: Randall Gutermuth, President & CEO of American Viewpoint  
Re: Recent Debt Ceiling Polling Findings in Battleground Congressional Districts  
Date: April 18, 2023

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Summary: American Action Network commissioned a survey of Americans in 87 battleground congressional districts, where Joe Biden won by an average of five points in 2020, to gauge public sentiment on the upcoming debt ceiling battle. The survey finds:

- Americans overwhelmingly support cutting federal spending before raising the debt ceiling and find conservative arguments far more persuasive on the debt ceiling over President Biden's.
- **There is overwhelming majority support among battleground voters for proposed savings by Speaker Kevin McCarthy in exchange for raising the debt ceiling.**
- Majorities believe Speaker McCarthy is negotiating in good faith, and most Americans will blame President Biden if the debt ceiling isn't raised.

## KEY FINDINGS:

### 1. Voters oppose increasing the debt ceiling without cutting government spending.

*(Question) The debt ceiling is the borrowing limit of debt the federal government can incur without additional authorization from Congress. The federal government has reached its debt ceiling and will likely begin to default on its debt obligations sometime this summer if the debt ceiling is not increased. Knowing this, do you favor or oppose Congress increasing the debt ceiling without cutting government spending?*

**Battleground Results: Oppose: 50% to Support: 37%**

This includes majorities of Independents who oppose a deal without spending cuts. 52% of Independent men and 51% of Independent women oppose a deal without spending cuts.

### 2. By large margins, voters in battleground districts agree more with the Speaker's overall position on the debt ceiling than President Biden's.

*(Question) Which statement do you agree with more: Speaker McCarthy and Republicans in Congress believe that the debt ceiling should be raised but it would be irresponsible to do so without enacting spending cuts that get our ballooning debt under control and passing policies that help grow our economy. President Biden and Democrats in Congress believe that the debt ceiling should be raised to ensure the United States does not default on its debt obligations, sending our economy into crisis, before engaging in negotiations on cutting spending.*

**Battleground Results: Speaker McCarthy/Republicans: 53% to President Biden/Democrats: 39%**

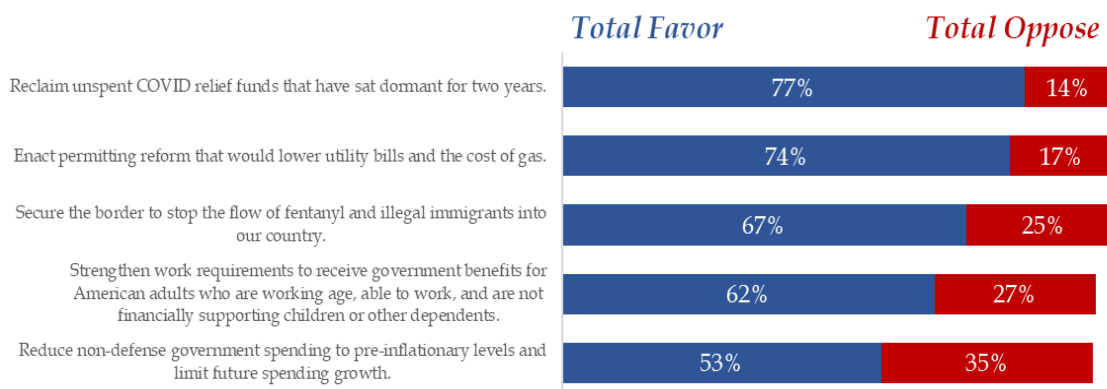
This includes large margins of Independents. Independent men agree more with the Speaker's position by 21-points (56%-35%). Independent women agree with it by 20-points (53%-33%).

### 3. Americans believe that Speaker McCarthy is negotiating in good faith with President Biden, and a majority say President Biden will be to blame if a compromise is not reached.

- **Americans agree by a 52% - 36% margin** that “Speaker McCarthy is negotiating to raise the debt ceiling in good faith while rightfully insisting that any negotiation includes cutting out-of-control government spending.”
- **Voters agree by a 51% - 40% margin** that “if the debt ceiling is not raised and the United States defaults on its debt, causing a national economic crisis, President Biden and Democrats in Congress will be to blame.”

**4. There is overwhelming support from battleground voters for the proposed savings by Speaker Kevin McCarthy.**

(Question) *The following are several policies Republicans in Congress could push for in exchange for a deal to raise the debt ceiling. Please tell me if you favor or oppose each action.*



Independent voters favor strongly reclaiming COVID funds with 84% of Independent men and 76% of Independent women supporting, and 75% of Independent women support energy reforms.

**5. Americans in battleground districts are far more persuaded by Republican arguments than Democratic arguments on the debt ceiling. Republican arguments poll nearly 20 points higher than Democrat ones.**

Republican Arguments	Total Convincing - Total Not Convincing
As we saw during the pandemic, our country is far too dependent on China for our supply chain of everyday goods. As part of raising the debt ceiling, Congress must pass policies that support American manufacturing and reduce our dependence on foreign countries.	76% - 18%
Billions of dollars of COVID relief funds remain unspent and have sat dormant for over two years. It would be irresponsible to raise the debt ceiling without reclaiming these funds.	73% - 20%
Democrat Arguments	Total Convincing - Total Not Convincing
Raising the debt ceiling will prevent the United States from defaulting on its debt obligations, which would severely damage the economy, hurt the strength of the dollar, and cause a run on banks that could threaten our financial system.	57% - 33%
Republicans in Congress have been unable to pass a budget outlining what specific spending cuts they support. Without passing a budget, it is unreasonable for Republicans in Congress to insist President Biden negotiate spending cuts as part of a deal to raise the debt ceiling.	52% - 39%

*This survey was conducted by American Viewpoint and commissioned by American Action Network. n=750 interviews were conducted with likely voters across 87 battleground Congressional districts April 5<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The margin of error for the full sample is +/- 3.6% at the 95% confidence level.*