

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Geoff Garin
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RE: House Republicans Just Gave Democrats Big Gifts for 2024

President Biden and congressional Democrats saved the country from economic catastrophe by forcing Republicans to avoid a default without agreeing to the draconian cuts to domestic spending that MAGA Republicans were demanding. And it is no small matter that President Biden and congressional Democrats delivered a result that avoids a catastrophic default while beating back the cruel Republican plan to take healthcare away from Americans who are unable to meet a bureaucratic Medicaid work requirement.

Beyond these substantive achievements, there are important political legacies of the default fight that will benefit frontline Democrats in 2024 and hurt Republican incumbents, especially those running in districts that President Biden won in 2020.

Frontline Democrats running for reelection next year will now be able to say that they voted for the bipartisan Fiscal Responsibility Act that will cut \$2.1 trillion in spending over the next six years. **If Republicans were planning on using the issue of federal spending as a sword against Democrats next year, they now have conspired to give Democrats a shield with which to combat those attacks.**

Moreover, frontline Democrats running for reelection next year can rightfully take credit for pushing back against the economic extremism of MAGA Republicans. In recent polling for House Majority PAC, Courage for America, and CAP Action conducted among 1,409 voters across 65 House battleground districts, 59% of voters said they had major concerns about House Republicans because of their willingness to create a major economic crisis and send the country into financial default in order to force massive cuts to healthcare, education, cancer research, and environmental protection. This is a perfect real world example of the kind of radical Republican extremism that voters will elect Democrats to prevent.

The biggest losers in the default fight, by far, are the House Republicans who will be running for reelection in districts won by President Biden, because all of them voted for the Default

on America Act (the so-called “Limit, Save, Grow Act”). Speaker McCarthy forced his most vulnerable members to walk the plank in voting for this extreme MAGA legislation, and then got almost none of it enacted into law. **This is a vote that will come back to haunt Republican incumbents next year.** Indeed, it would be political malpractice if Democratic campaigns did not hold Republicans accountable for supporting this dangerous and extreme legislation.

In our battleground district poll, voters were told the following:

Every Republican in the House of Representatives recently voted for legislation that would require major cuts in many programs that individuals and communities depend on. The Republicans' bill would require cuts of 22% or more to important health care programs, as well as cuts of 22% or more to education, transportation, the FBI, and the agencies that enforce environmental protections and safety laws. Economists project that the Republican legislation would result in a loss of almost 800,000 jobs in the first year alone.

There is nothing but downside for Republicans in this vote. Among swing voters (38% of the electorate who do not have a definite preference in a generic House trial heat, evenly split between Democratic-leaning and Republican leaning), 59% say this vote makes them less favorable to House Republicans, while only 14% say it makes them more favorable. Twenty-three percent of voters who initially intend to vote Republican next year say this vote makes them less favorable to Republicans – creating a large pool of voters for Democratic campaigns to target based on this vote.

The bottom line: Republicans in Biden districts should expect to hear early and often about their reckless and meanspirited vote for massive domestic cuts and what those cuts would mean for American families. This was a bad vote, and Republicans will pay a price for it.

Note: The survey mentioned in this memo was conducted May 4-10, 2023, with a representative cross section of 1,409 voters in 65 battleground congressional districts.