

For Immediate Release

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HMF Releases New Messaging Guidance on Reconciliation

Washington D.C. – House Majority Forward is releasing new research and messaging guidance surrounding the Republican budget and reconciliation. The results are clear, an economic contrast argument focused on the Republican agenda prioritizing tax cuts for the wealthy at the expense of basic services that working families rely on is a key to success.

According to HMF's latest polling (Blue Rose Research, 29,974 responses from surveys, collected nationally via online web panels May 14-18):

- The budget's most unpopular provisions focus on cutting basic services while providing tax benefits to the wealthy.
 - Cuts to food assistance (-41% net support) and Medicaid (-37% net support) are most overwhelmingly opposed.
 - The concentration of tax cuts on top earners - even with no associated cuts - is nearly as unpopular (-21% net support).
 - These proof points tend to anchor the best testing messaging on this topic.
- While not part of the bill, ***tariffs remain a key economic concern***, and the data suggests value in pairing with the budget to make a case on broader economic harm being caused.
 - The top-testing message paired the budget with tariffs: *"Trump's tariffs already mean higher prices on basics like groceries ... his tax plan will make healthcare and groceries more expensive for Americans by slashing funding for Medicaid and food assistance to finance more tax breaks for the very rich"* (96th percentile).
- A 44% plurality of voters, including 41% of Swing voters and 18% of Trump voters, believe the budget legislation would make life less affordable for them. Meanwhile only 25% of voters, including 20% of Swing voters, believe the legislation would make life more affordable. 21% are not sure, and are open to persuasion.

Messaging Guidance

- These findings suggest the value of an argument focused on Trump and Republicans' agenda prioritizing tax cuts for the wealthy at the expense of basic services that working families rely on and fits a pattern of making everyday life less affordable for working people.

- **The most effective messages on the budget legislation focus on tying the budget to an overall story of Trump making life less affordable in order to help the wealthy:**
 - *Trump’s economic policies are making life worse for working families and seniors. Trump’s tariffs already mean higher prices on basics like groceries and clothes. And now, his tax plan will make healthcare and groceries more expensive for Americans by slashing funding for Medicaid and food assistance to finance more tax breaks for the very rich and big corporations. It is a one-two punch that will make life worse for millions of Americans.*
 - *Trump’s proposed tax bill makes life less affordable for working families when costs are already too high. Trump’s tax plan will make healthcare and groceries more expensive for millions of Americans by slashing funding for Medicaid and food assistance, all to finance more tax breaks for the very rich and big corporations that they don’t need.*
- **Messages highlighting the impact on vulnerable populations and prioritization of wealthy tax cuts are also quite effective:**
 - *The GOP tax plan cuts over \$600 billion from programs that support millions of Americans including Medicaid and food assistance. The Republicans are making these cuts so they can fund tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans – making billionaires richer while hard-working Americans lose health care and food stamps.*
 - *Trump’s proposed tax bill cuts taxes on the ultra-wealthy and billionaires, paid for by slashing the basics that everyday Americans depend on. Millions of Americans will be at risk of losing Medicaid and food assistance to pay for more tax breaks for billionaires that they don’t need.*

DO’S AND DON’TS	
DO	DON’T
Emphasize the Negative Impact on Working Families: Highlight how Trump’s tax plan raises costs for working families by increasing healthcare and grocery expenses due to cuts in Medicaid and food assistance while providing significant tax cuts to the wealthy.	Avoid Solely Focusing on Deficit Increases: While the \$4 trillion increase in the national debt is an unpopular part of the bill, it is less compelling than direct economic consequences like cuts to Medicaid or higher grocery costs for middle-class families.
Focus on Medicaid and food assistance as Core Messaging Points: Stress that Medicaid cuts will pass costs onto middle-class families, leading to higher co-pays, longer ER wait times, and increased nursing home expenses. Connect these cuts to tax breaks for the	Refrain from Overly Technical Economic Arguments: Instead of abstract numbers and technical details about tax deductions within the bill, use concrete examples of how cuts will increase costs for everyday Americans, such as more expensive insurance

ultra-wealthy.	premiums.
<p>Tie Into a Broader Costs Narrative (e.g. Tariffs): Frame the budget as an additional swipe at working families, combining the impact of tariffs with cuts to essential benefits like food assistance and Medicaid.</p>	<p>Don't Generalize the Impact Without Specific Consequences to Voters: Avoid statements about “tax cuts for the rich” without mention of consequences to everyday Americans. Instead, specify that a billionaire could receive a tax cut, while a typical middle-class family will end up paying more annually in healthcare and living expenses.</p>
<p>Highlight Tax Cuts for the Ultra-Wealthy At the Expense of Working Families: Point out that the budget provides enormous tax cuts for the ultra-wealthy, allowing them to pocket hundreds of thousands in tax savings while working families face rising costs and cuts to benefits.</p>	<p>Avoid Hyperbolic Rhetoric: Testing suggests the bill can be made into a major liability for Republicans, but with limited baseline awareness, voters appear unmoved by more dramatic language, with the weakest testing message tested referring to the bill as a “murder budget.”</p>

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