TO: Interested parties
FROM: Franco Caliz-Aguilar National Political Director
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Election Day is nigh. Our voters aren't asking for the old normal back.

I am more cynical than most on the left side of the spectrum, and my current cynicism extends to polling showing Democrats leading in deeply conservative states. Kansas last elected a Democrat to the U.S. Senate in 1932 — yet the respected NYT/Siena poll shows Democrat Adam Hamilton ahead. Texas hasn't elected a Democrat to the Senate since 1988, the year before I was born, and I've lived through both the Beto O'Rourke and Wendy Davis phenomena. Lucy keeps pulling that very large, Lone Star-branded football from us. Ohio has moved dramatically to the right since I've been politically conscious, so a five-point lead for Sherrod Brown seems too good to be true.

And then there's this: the sheer messiness of this year's elections — Maine earlier this year, Michigan this weekend. As a Floridian, I've finally earned the right to make jokes about another state's elections.

But I'm hopeful, and I expect some surprises.

Middle Eastern wars don't play well in the Midwest — see 2006 for how that part of the country reacts. I read our call transcripts in Michigan this weekend like a Dark Ages priest clutching his Bible. **We heard the same thing we've been hearing for months in Michigan, where we've made more than a million calls this cycle.** The Abdul El-Sayed/Stevens insider-politics storyline only came up on one call — and on that call, the voter was angry at Rep. Stevens. Everyone else was deeply concerned about gas prices, housing and utility costs, and how healthcare impacts their lives. Shoutout to our friends at Crowdwave, who dug in with us to see whether Stevens primary voters or undecideds had defected from El-Sayed in the general election and concluded: *"None yet."* In much the same way that Ohio Republican gubernatorial candidate Vivek Ramaswamy's horrendous ad has garnered media attention but appears to have backfired, voters mostly just don't care about inside baseball when they are one missed paycheck away from economic catastrophe.

In Texas, it's as simple as this: where Dems normally win, we're seeing early-vote turnout at 91% of 2024's same-point early vote heading into Election Day; where Republicans normally win, turnout is running at 79% of 2024. Remarkably, two large, 90% or more Latino counties — Hidalgo (McAllen) and Webb (Laredo) — have already turned out more voters than in all of 2024.

The House feels like it's in good shape. If our numbers hold, Hakeem Jeffries will soon be known as Speaker Jeffries, and will go down in history as the first Black Speaker of the U.S. House. We're probably looking at a baseline of 231 seats right now. The Republican mid-decade gerrymanders and the Supreme Court's gutting of the Voting Rights Act in *Louisiana v. Callais* have failed to produce the victories they expected, with only about 4 net seats gained by Republicans. Black and Latino voters in particular are furious at the attempt to rig the system and have elected officials choose their voters instead of voters choosing their elected officials.

The Senate is tighter. I still see a pathway to a 50-50 tie with JD Vance as the tiebreaker, and outcomes range from a 50-50 Republican control on Vance's vote to a 53-47 Democratic majority. I wouldn't sleep on the Florida statewide races, where Republicans will have to turn out in their strongholds like Polk and Pasco counties in large numbers to overcome an 11-point Democratic lead. They may do that, and it's Florida, so my hopes are tempered.

But alongside this hope is something that should not be missed: people are increasingly turning to outside-the-box candidates hoping for outside-the-box results.

Simply returning programs to their pre-Trumpian baselines: the ACA subsidies, or Social Security Disability Insurance or SNAP/WIC funding— won't cut it. Those programs allowed people to survive, not to live and flourish. The pre-Trump baseline is the economy that produced Trump. People, led by young people, have moved far beyond those demands. **If Democrats believe that being "not Trump" or "anti-Trump" will be enough in 2028, they will watch any House and Senate majority fall apart — and likely lose the White House.**

So here is the best political prognostication I can offer to candidates: people don't care about your resume anymore. They want to know that you're gonna stand up to the failed trickle-down agenda of the last 40 years and that you'll deliver and fight for *them*. They are exhausted by elected officials who serve their donors instead of their districts. Talk that was once relegated to political fringes is now front and center at the kitchen table. Ask anyone who has fought a health insurer over a denied claim. The anger at that industry is the most intense thing we hear on the phones, and nobody we talk to thinks it's fringe.

What the voters are saying to us

Over the past months, Community Change Voters has built the nation's largest Independent Expenditure phonebanking program heading into Election Day. We've reached out to more than 4.2 million infrequent voters in key districts — moderate-to-left-leaning, and making less than $75,000 a year — and that doesn't include the voters in our mail and canvass programs. Trump's policies have harmed this cohort the most. **We're running the largest phone program in the America Votes network in Maine, Michigan, North Carolina, Nebraska, Nevada, Texas, and Wisconsin.**

The extremely atypical numbers from Latino voters and Black voters under 40 are astounding, and it bears repeating: this feels like a rejection of our current economic and political environment — and of our current discourse. This cohort wants fundamentally different solutions. Both groups are demanding significant economic relief. Universal childcare, an expanded child tax credit, and yes, some form of student loan relief are enormously popular with these voters. The under-40 Latino vote turnout is through the roof in many places. Living with your parents until much later in life and being unable to conceive of starting your family for fear of being unable to provide for them is unacceptable to voters. They're acting on it at the ballot box.

When we ask what the most important issue is, voters say economic issues. But in longer conversations on doors and phones, we hear something else too: the impact of ICE on friends and community members has created a deep resentment of this administration. Even voters who supported Trump's promise to "deport criminals" are appalled at how the policy has been executed — a mass deportation vehicle with little to no humanity or nuance.

One place this has made a difference is Nevada. Nevada is where the Latino shift toward Trump in 2024 was supposed to be permanent. The state has historically had a mixed and apprehensive relationship with immigration. The Latino turnout in Clark County — home to Las Vegas — is huge: there are 78,000 more Democratic votes banked in Clark than at this point in the 2024 election heading into election day. We've been concerned about Aaron Ford's race for governor, which is part of why we made nearly 600,000 calls into the state — and we're feeling good about how things are shaking out. We keep hearing stories about how ICE is harming tourism in Vegas — something that has both economic and social costs for this community.

If anyone has questions, email me at fcaliz@communitychange.org or tweet me @fcaliz.

State	Candidate	District	% Support
GA	Keisha Lance Bottoms	Governor	93.3%
GA	Jon Ossoff	Senate	96.6%
ME	Matt Dunlap	2	85.3%
MI	Hillary Scholten	3	95.5%
MI	Sean McCann	4	92.3%
MI	William Lawrence	7	93.5%
MI	Christina Hines	10	93.7%
MI	Garlin Gilchrist	Secretary of State	93.9%
MI	Abdul El-Sayed	Senate	88.7%
NC	Don Davis	1	93.7%
NC	Jamie Ager	11	96.9%
NC	Roy Cooper	Senate	92.6%
NE	Denise Powell	2	90.1%
NE	Dan Osborn	Senate	91.6%
NV	Dina Titus	1	97.3%
NV	Teresa Benitez-Thompson	2	98.1%
NV	Susie Lee	3	96.1%
NV	Steven Horsford	4	97.3%
NV	Aaron Ford	Governor	93.3%
OH	Marcy Kaptur	9	86.0%
OH	Sherrod Brown	Senate	92.6%
PA	Bob Brooks	7	91.6%
PA	Paige Cognetti	8	92.9%
PA	Janelle Stelson	10	92.8%
TX	Bobby Pulido	15	97.1%
TX	James Talarico	Senate	93.4%
WI	Mitchell Berman	1	93.2%
WI	Rebecca Cooke	3	92.3%
WI	David Crowley	Governor	85.7%