

To: Interested Parties

Fr: Transgender Freedom Alliance

Date: 1/30/24

Re: Initial Messaging Framework for Transgender Issues

Project & Goals

The Transgender Freedom Alliance is a new, donor-driven project collaborating with progressive opinion researchers and key partners in the transgender community to develop effective messaging on transgender issues and provide training and technical assistance to elected officials, candidates, and other communicators. This memo provides preliminary evidence-based¹ message guidance to frame the topic of transgender issues broadly and to address issues and attacks around transgender people's healthcare and participation in sports.

I. Core Message

Our main communications goal is to show voters that we share their values and priorities. While many voters feel uncertainty or concern around transgender issues, most voters want their lawmakers focused on issues that affect the lives of all Americans (e.g. lowering costs and raising incomes). To connect with voters, invoke shared values, address concerns raised about transgender issues at a broad level, and then turn back to the priorities of everyday people.

Start with this top-testing language to frame the topic by calling out right-leaning politicians for politicizing this issue to create panic and division and distract from kitchen-table issues:

Solving Problems vs. Creating Panic

- *Americans are working hard to make ends meet—and we need real solutions to real problems, not distractions.*
- *And while Republicans are focused on creating a big panic around transgender kids...*
- *... I'm focused on raising incomes and lowering costs for working families.*

The following framing messages also speak to priorities and tested strongly, though it is worth noting these are more likely to invite pushback when engaging directly with opponents:

All Americans vs. Stigmatizing and Interfering

- *I'm focused on issues that affect all Americans like making sure our children's schools are funded and they have access to the mental health resources they need...*
- *... instead of stigmatizing transgender kids or interfering with families' private medical decisions.*

Freedom vs. Control

- *We all deserve the freedom to make decisions about our lives, futures, and families.*
- *But certain politicians are taking away our freedoms. They're banning abortion and banning parents from making healthcare decisions about their own children.*
- *The politicians behind these attacks don't support freedom—their agenda is compliance and control.*

¹ This guidance is informed by work by [Third Way](#), [Impact Research](#) and the [Movement Advancement Project](#).

II. Healthcare Message

When talking about healthcare for transgender young people (or “kids”):

- Emphasize that it’s wrong for the government to interfere in private family decisions.
- Avoid using terms that are unfamiliar or imply that this care is different from other medical care—e.g. “gender-affirming care” or “transition-related care.” Instead, use familiar language like *health care*, *medical care*, *medically necessary care*, etc.

This top-testing message makes our basic case on the importance of ensuring parents can get their transgender child the healthcare they need:

Healthcare: Politicians Overruling Parents

- *All Americans should have the freedom to live their private lives without government interference.*
- *Decisions about a transgender child’s healthcare should be between that child’s parents and their doctor.*
- *Politicians have no business overruling parents and interfering in a family’s private medical decisions.*

III. Sports Message

When talking about rules around transgender young people participating in sports:

- Emphasize participation in sports and the values it teaches as an essential part of kids’ education, rather than elite competition or athletic achievement.
- Be aware of Biden’s newly proposed Title IX regulation, which forbids categorically banning transgender young people from playing on teams according to their gender, but also allows local school authorities to set rules on who can and cannot play to ensure a level playing field.
- Emphasize that rules around participation for transgender young people in sports are already being updated, so politicians’ involvement is not needed.

This top-testing message responds to questions on transgender kids’ participation in sports:

Sports: Schools Updating Rules

- *Kids learn a lot of important life lessons in sports—like leadership, confidence, self-respect, and teamwork.*
- *Local schools across the nation are already updating rules to ensure a level playing field while also protecting transgender kids.*
- *And while Republicans are trying to distract us by making this election about transgender people, I’m focused on raising incomes and lowering costs for working families.*

Contact

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