

To: Interested Parties

From: Joe Dinkin and Adam Gold, Working Families Power

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Re: Messaging Insights from Wave 2 Poll

Background

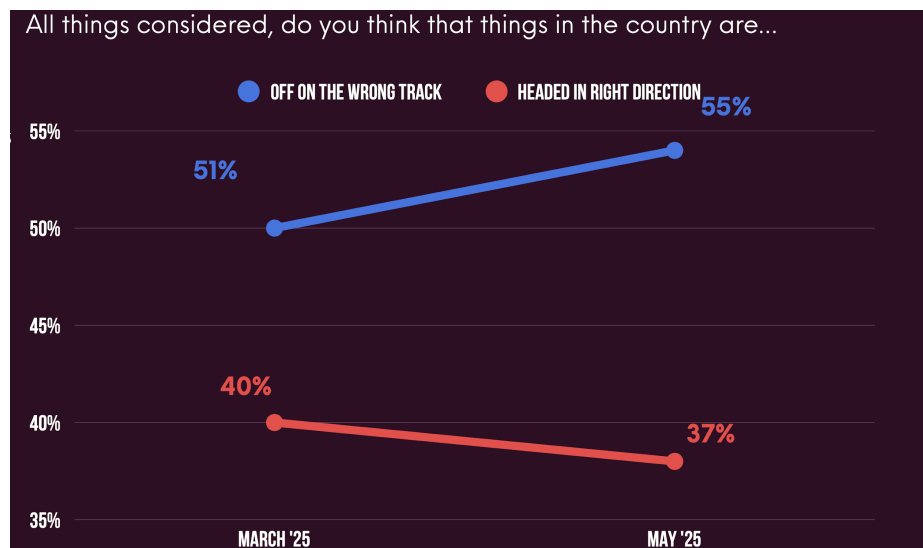
In our ongoing effort to track the views of the Multiracial Working Class (MRWC), Working Families Power conducted a second wave of polling in late May 2025 among working class voters. This research builds on our prior segmentation work that defined seven clusters of working-class voters, including Base segments (Next Gen Left and Mainstream Liberals) and Cross-Pressured segments (Tuned Out Persuadables, Diverse Disaffected Conservatives, Anti-Woke Traditionalists, and Secure Suburbanites).

The poll assessed sentiment toward the state of the country, approval of political figures, and tested a range of policy messages and frames. Overall, the data shows growing discontent, persistent economic anxiety, and new openings to connect with voters through sharp, values-based messaging that pits everyday people against political elites and corporate power.

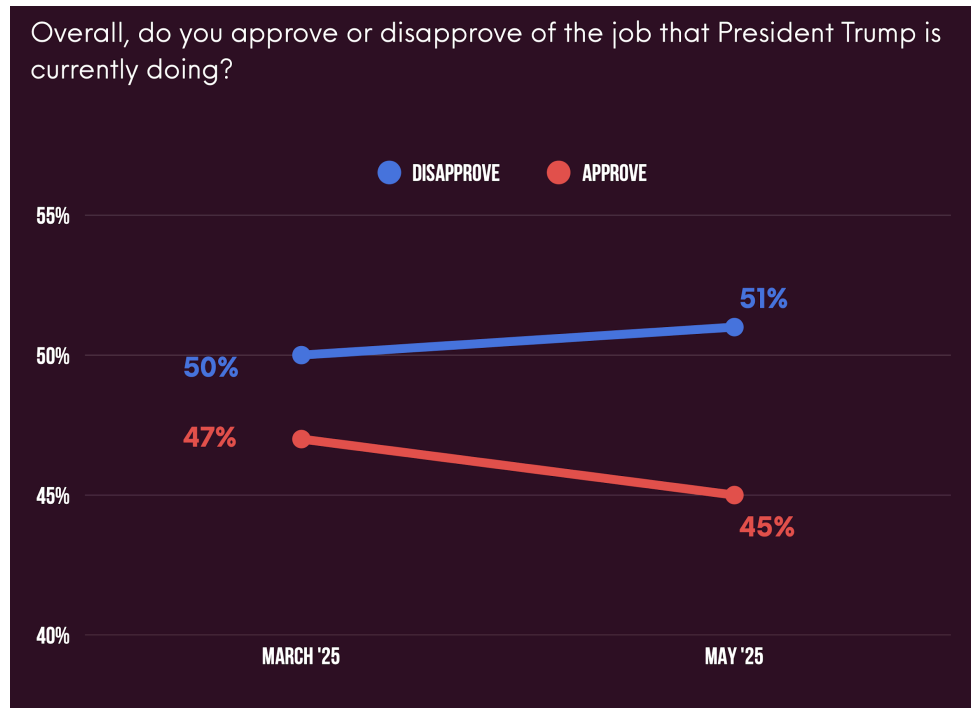
Key Findings

1. More Voters Say the Country Is on the Wrong Track, Especially Among the Persuadable Working Class Segments

Perceptions of the country's direction continue to deteriorate. A majority of voters (55%) now say the country is on the wrong track, up 4 points since March. Among Cross-Pressured working-class voters, optimism fell even further—from 42% saying the country was headed in the right direction in March to just 38% in May. Meanwhile, the share who say the country is off on the wrong track rose to 53%.

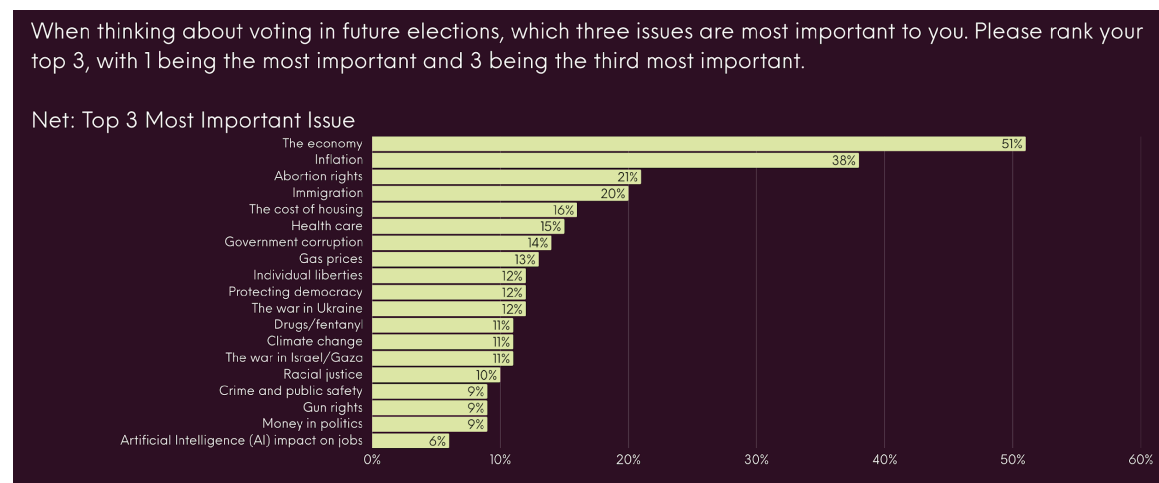


President Trump's approval has declined in parallel. His overall job approval dropped from 47% to 45%, and his net approval rating fell to -6%. Among Cross-Pressured voters, who were evenly split in March, Trump's net approval is now -4%. When asked to grade Trump's first 100 days, only 8% of Cross-Pressured voters gave him an A, while 30% gave him a D or F.

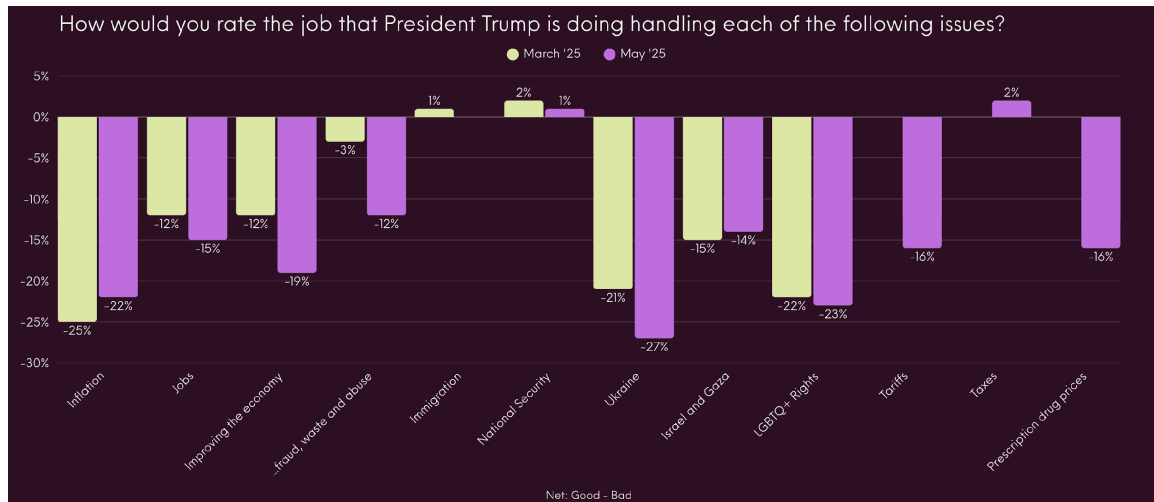


2. Economic Pain Remains Central, but Trump's Issue Ratings Are Slipping

The economy and inflation dominate voters' issue concerns. A majority of working-class voters (51%) listed the economy as a top concern, followed by 38% who named inflation. But on both issues, voters give Trump poor marks. His net rating on handling inflation is -25% and -22% on the economy. Among Cross-Pressured voters, the numbers are even worse, and his perceived mishandling of "fraud, waste, and abuse" in government dropped a staggering 17 points with this group.

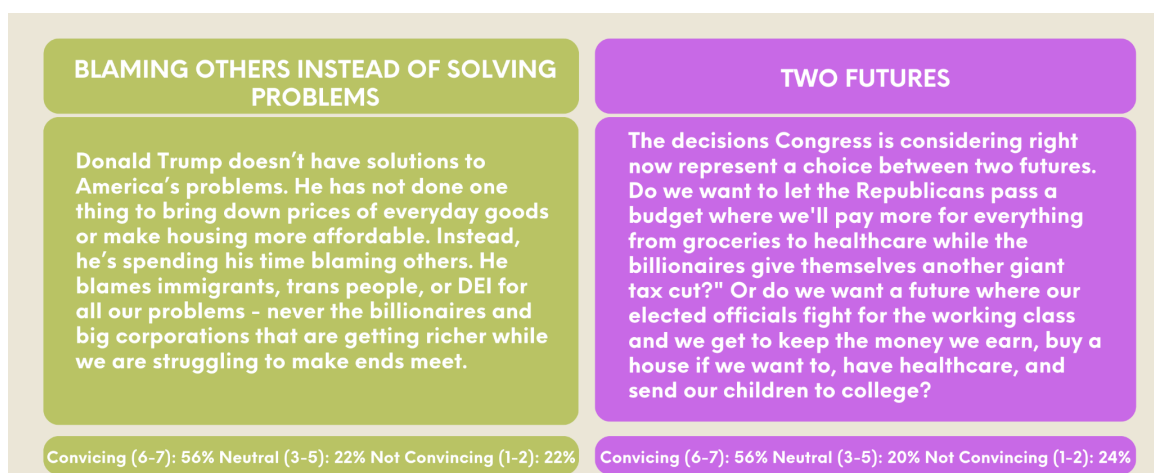


Moreover, Trump’s standing on foreign policy (prior to the attack on Iran) was deteriorating. His ratings on Ukraine fell 6 points overall—and 9 points among Cross-Pressured voters—since March. This reinforces a narrative that he is distracted by foreign entanglements and personal vendettas, rather than staying focused on voters’ top concerns.



3. Populist Messaging That Frames Trump as Self-Interested and Out of Touch Performs Best

We tested a range of message frames against Trump, and the top-performing messages framed him as disconnected from the struggles of working people. The most convincing message—rated 6 or 7 out of 7 by 56% of voters—accused Trump of “blaming others instead of solving problems.” It was closely followed by “Two Futures” (56%) and “Class Conflict” (55%), both of which highlighted economic inequality and attacks on public services to fund tax breaks for billionaires.



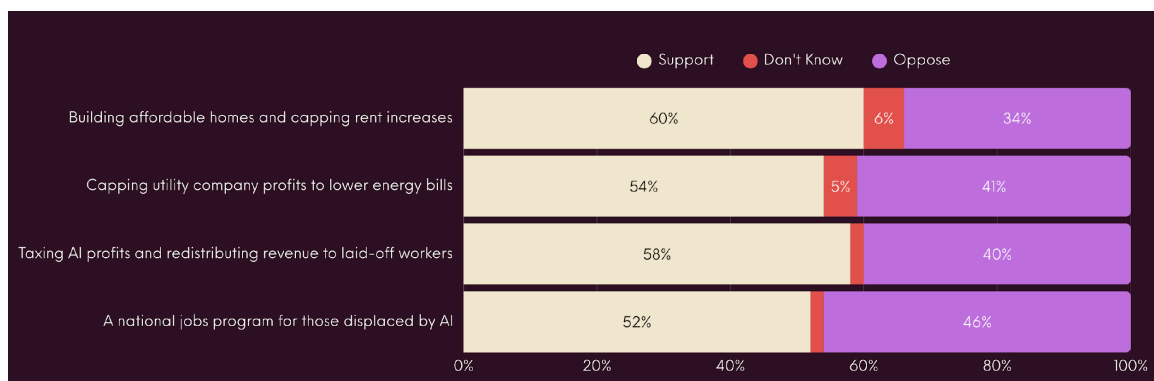
Messaging that names Trump’s billionaire allies and personal distractions—like attempting to buy Greenland or courting Elon Musk—also lands. Messages that emphasize Trump’s focus on the rich and powerful, rather than on helping working people, consistently outperformed more moderate frames.

Populist versions of policy critiques—such as calling Medicaid and food stamp cuts a “sick tax” for the poor—beat moderate messages by up to 12 points, particularly on issues like AI, energy, and housing. These messages show the power of framing policy as a clash between elites and everyday people.

4. Working-Class Voters Back Bold Policy Solutions, Especially When Framed as Taking on Corporate Power

Our policy tests show clear majorities support bold reforms when they are connected to material benefits and fairness. Among working-class voters:

- **60% support** building affordable homes and capping rent increases. That includes 57% of Cross-Pressured voters.
- **54% support** capping utility company profits to lower energy bills.
- **58% support** taxing AI profits and redistributing revenue to laid-off workers.
- **52% support** a national jobs program for those displaced by AI.



Conclusion


The polling continues to show that many working-class voters—especially the Cross-Pressured segments—are disillusioned with Trump’s performance and broadly open to populist economic messaging that names villains and champions working people. While the electorate remains skeptical of both major parties, messages that frame Trump and his allies as serving billionaires over ordinary Americans offer a powerful way to break through. By focusing on economic urgency, corporate accountability, and structural change, there is an opportunity to mobilize a winning coalition for 2026 and beyond.

Methodology

National online survey of N=2,002 registered voters conducted in May 2025, including 1,550 working class voters. Data were weighted to match U.S. Census and ACS benchmarks on 14 demographic variables.

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