



November 16, 2022

## Equality Voters Stopped the Red Tide

Post-election survey

**To:** Interested parties

**From:** HRC and GQR

The 2022 election defied pre-election predictions of a massive red wave in no small measure because Equality Voters pushed back against extremism and voted to protect commonly held values and our democracy. Across the country, election deniers and right-wing social warriors lost winnable elections because they advocated views that are out-of-touch with average voters, particularly the huge number of Equality Voters who made the critical difference up and down the ballot.<sup>1</sup>

Equality Voters are a group of voters modeled to support LGBTQ+ equality, numbering 62 million nationwide. They represent 38 percent of the 2022 electorate—a number that reflects the growing political strength of this community—and tend to be younger and more racially diverse than the electorate as a whole.

### Key Findings

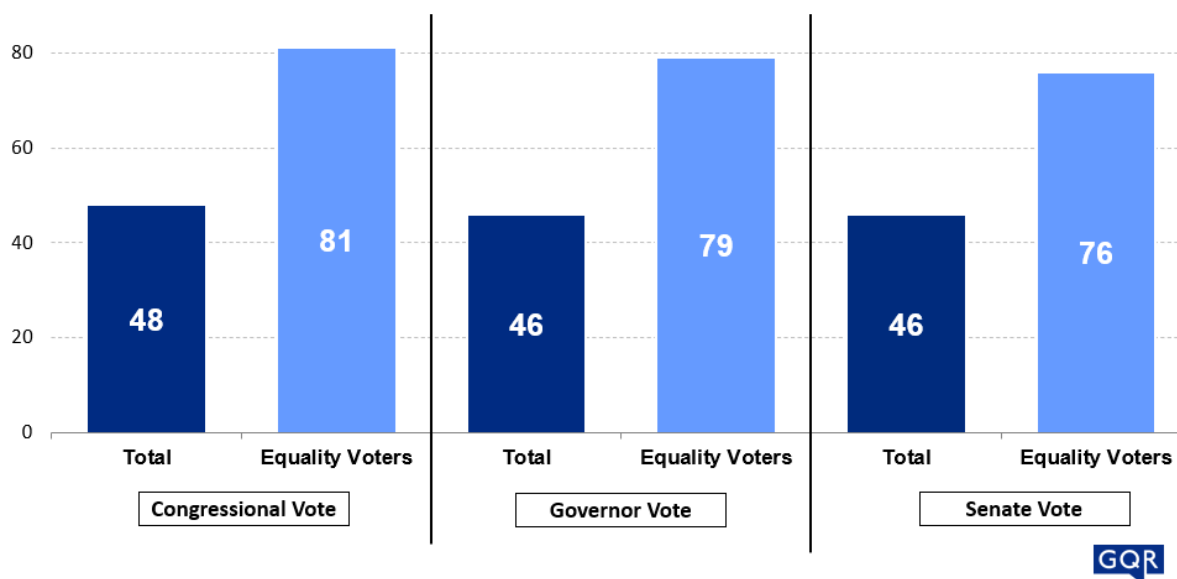
- ✓ **Equality Voters delivered huge margins to Democrats at every level of the ballot.** At the U.S. House level, 81 percent of Equality Voters supported the Democratic candidate. This number is comparable to the level of support Equality Voters gave Joe Biden two years ago (also 81 percent) and nearly matches the level of support Black voters delivered this cycle (87 percent). Among self-identified LGBTQ+ voters, who made up a midterm record 7 percent of the 2022 electorate, fully 80 percent supported U.S. House Democrats.

Equality Voters delivered similar margins for Democratic U.S. Senate candidates and Democratic candidates for Governor.

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<sup>1</sup> This memorandum reflects a survey of 2022 1,000 2022 voters taken November 5-9, 2022. This survey is multi-mode; half the surveys were conducted online and half on phones. It carries a margin of error of +/- 3.10 points. The project included oversamples in AZ, GA, MI, PA, NV, and WI.

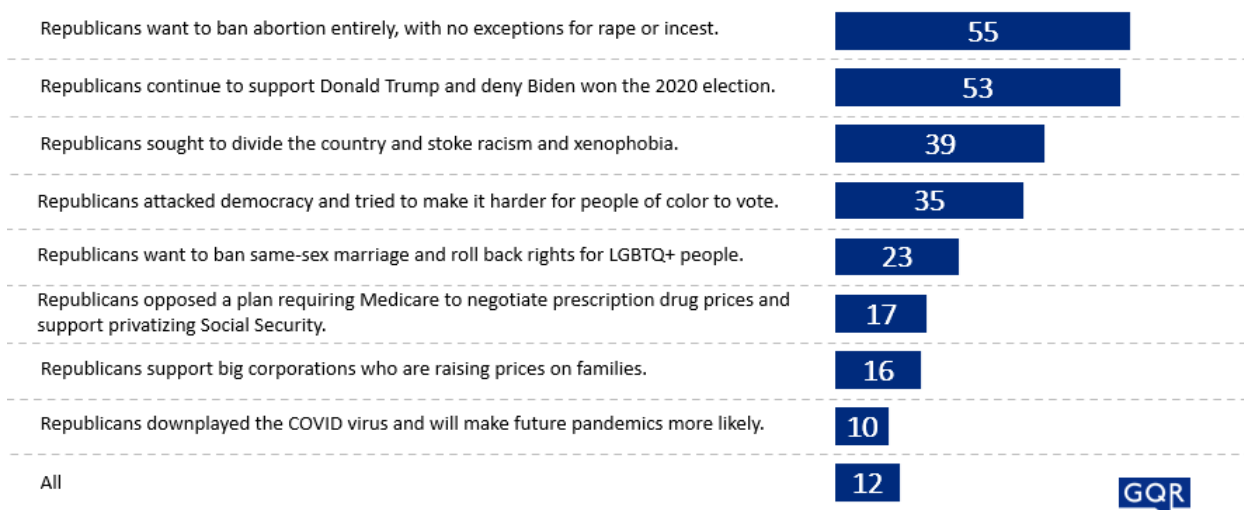
## Equality Voters deliver huge margins up and down ballot



- ✓ **Dobbs and Trump defined Republican extremism for many voters, but anti-equality issues and attacks on marginalized people also defined right-wing radicalism this year.** Among voters who voted against Republicans, a majority identify either abortion or support for Trump and election denial as the most important reason for doing so. Attacks on people of color and LGBTQ+ people rank next on this list.

## Abortion, Trump, and Anti-Equality main reasons to vote against Republicans

*I am going to read you a list of reasons some people have given about why they oppose Republicans this year. Thinking specifically about your support for Democrats, please tell me which THREE are the most important to you.*



- ✓ **Right-wing efforts to spread propaganda about and attack transgender people failed.** In this survey, we asked voters which specific issues motivated them to vote this year. Inflation (52 percent) and abortion (29 percent) rank first and second on this list. Less than 5 percent identify gender affirming care for transgender youth or transgender participation in sports as issues motivating them to vote, last on this list.

This confirms extensive research prior to the election that found anti-transgender attacks were effective in riling up extreme members of the conservative base, which is why the attacks were so prominent in paid media during Republican primaries. While the attacks were ineffective with the general electorate, they still caused harm, including increasing stigma, discrimination, and violence against the transgender community.

- ✓ **Voters will tolerate no retreat on marriage.** A week before a pivotal U.S. Senate vote on marriage equality, a convincing 61 percent of voters in this fairly conservative, midterm electorate support Congress passing a law to protect the federal right to same-sex marriage. This majority includes 67 percent of Independent voters, 54 percent of voters over age 50, 62 percent of non-college women, and, of course, a resounding 81 percent of Equality Voters.

## Conclusion

As anti-equality politicians line up in a circular firing squad in the aftermath of historic losses, they would do well to recognize that they lost because they nominated extreme candidates who advocated extreme positions, including attacks on an LGBTQ+ community that grows more politically powerful every election cycle.

“We underperformed among independents and moderates because their impression of many of the people in our party and leadership roles is that they’re involved in chaos, negativity, excessive attacks, and it frightened independent and moderate Republican voters. [...] As a result of the perception many of them had that we were not dealing with issues in a responsible way, and we were spending too much time on negativity, attacks and chaos, they were frightened. So they pulled back.”

–Senator Mitch McConnell, 11/15/22