



NO TALK WITHOUT ACTION

**A Strategy for
Winning Voters
Back**

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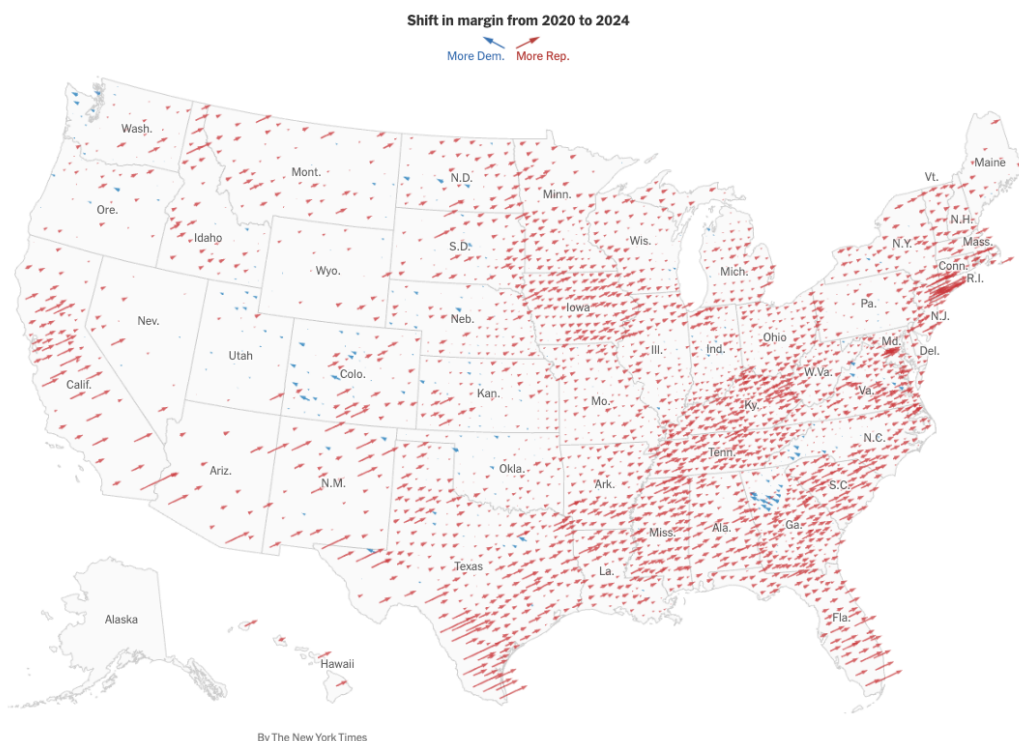
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CONTEXT: The 2024 Election

I am a Democrat. I am going to tell you about my understanding of the election and give you a few thoughts on our path forward. If you are reading this, you are also probably a Democrat which means that we likely won't see eye to eye on almost anything. That's a little joke, but it's true. It's fine if you disagree with me though, but I hope you'll hear me out.

Let's start on the same page. I'm going to have you look at this map:



<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2024/11/06/us/politics/presidential-election-2024-red-shift.html>

The first thing you should be saying to yourself is this: holy shit. This is really bad. Like, really, really bad. We can blame the loss in 2024 on a lot of things, but I think this map tells you something. Red arrows in rural and urban. Red arrows in North and South. Red arrows in East and West. The range of diversity in our loss is astounding. I'm not being facetious. To provide one answer as to why we lost this election and to treat this expansive voterbase as a monolith is political malpractice. You've got to keep this in mind because if we only learn one lesson from this election, we will lose more elections and the consequences will increase in severity from the hell hole of a political system we now stand in.

Let's dig into those numbers, but before we do, keep that map in mind. No one group is "to blame" because we got cooked with voters from every part of the country/voting base. As FiveThirtyEight put it "More than anything else, President-elect Donald Trump appears to have won the 2024 presidential election because of a uniform swing against the Democratic Party."

DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS

The difficult issue we have with constituency analysis is that our main source of truth is the voter file. When a voter registers to vote, they have to fill out a voter registration form. That form asks for a voters information on their name, street address, citizenship and desired political party. It does not, however, ask for demographic information like your race, religion, income, education level, etc.

What this means is it is very difficult to conduct comprehensive analysis on how different groups of voters voted. To try and solve this problem, pollsters usually will ask demographic questions about an individual who answers a poll. The point here is that we can look at polls, exit polls, and general performance in precincts/counties with a high number of people who fit into a demographic category, but we don't have a 100% accurate source of information when it comes to demographics.

WHITE VOTERS

It's no surprise to anyone that Democrats have struggled with white voters for a while. The table below is information from the Voter News Service/The Roper Center regarding exit poll information. On average, Democrats have only achieved 40.71 percent of support from white voters. Obama hit the high mark for Democrats since 2000, reaching 43 percent. Hillary Clinton hit the low mark with 37 percent of support from white voters.

Percentage of White Voters by Election

Election	Candidate	Percent
2000	Gore	42
	W. Bush	54
	Other	4
2004	Kerry	41
	W. Bush	58
	Other	1
2008	Obama	43
	McCain	55
	Other	2
2012	Obama	39
	Romney	59
	Other	2
2016	Clinton	37
	Trump	57
	Other	6
2020	Biden	41
	Trump	58
	Other	1
2024	Harris	42
	Trump	57
	Other	1

What this means is it is very difficult to conduct comprehensive analysis on how different groups of voters voted. To try and solve this problem, pollsters usually will ask demographic questions about an individual who answers a poll. The point here is that we can look at polls, exit polls, and general performance in precincts/counties with a high number of people who fit into a demographic category, but we don't have a 100% accurate source of information when it comes to demographics.

The data isn't interesting because there aren't dramatic swings, but I think there is a story here. **We haven't been able to make gains or hit a majority of support with white voters in 24 years.** The numbers are incredibly stable and therein lies the problem. White voters constituted around 71 percent of the national electorate in 2024.

We don't have numbers specific to New Mexico, but according to the 2020 Census, non-Hispanic whites made up about 36.5 percent of the population. The five whitest counties in New Mexico are Catron, Sierra, Quay, and Lincoln. If you want to feel depressed about democratic performance, take a look at those counties. On average, Democrats only achieved 32.15 percent of the vote since 2000. Similar to the national numbers, Barack Obama held the high mark in 2008 hitting 37.37 percent of the vote on average in these counties, while Hillary Clinton holds the low mark with 26.65 percent. The performance gap of nearly eleven points is a little wider than the national numbers, but still, the numbers are fairly stable.

HISPANIC VOTERS

If you pay attention to Democratic politics, you know that we have slowly been losing support among Hispanic/Latino voters nationally. This fact is indisputable, but I think there are some important caveats. The first two caveats go to our concept of Hispanic/Latino voters and the last one looks at historic data. Bear in mind that my last name is Ward, so there are smarter brains out there who can speak to this subject and I recommend you pursue their information over mine.

First caveat, national data usually groups voters from Central and South America as well as Caribbean Latino's. You would have to be pretty ignorant to not just know off the bat that voters originally from Cuba do not share the same culture as voters from Chile, and thus will have divergent voting interests. It's a rarity though for national pollsters to parse out the data in those terms.

Second, grouping in first generation immigrants from Central, South, and Caribbean nations with the families who have called New Mexico home long before Mexico and the United States were a thing is not smart. Family names like Baca, Chavez, Lopez, Padillas, and many more have been in New Mexico since the 16th century.

The point of these two caveats is the media and campaign consultants often put a ton of diverse voters into this group. This can be helpful for some basic level data, but it is poor form at best and racist at worst to think that the incredible diversity reflected in this category can be seen as a monolith. I can't tell you the number of times I've heard of a Spanish language mail piece going out to someone with the last name Santiago even though their family has been here before 1776. We are going to at least try and put some thought into the fact that there is a tremendous amount of diversity in this group nationally and thus when we talk about national polls, we will refer to the data as Hispanic/Latino voters.

Third, the support Democrats have with Hispanic/Latino voters is slightly overstated. Hispanic/Latino voters have generally supported Democrats, but the Obama election skewed those numbers. If we use the Obama elections as our starting point for data analysis with Hispanic/Latino voters, the numbers look a lot worse than if we go back to 2000. This is not to say that the numbers from the last election shouldn't set off some alarm bells.

And now, some national numbers from the Voter News Service/The Roper Center, which provides the exit poll data for all major news outlets on election day.

Percentage of Hispanic Voters by Election

Election	Candidate	Percent
2000	Gore	62
	W. Bush	35
	Other	3
2004	Kerry	53
	W. Bush	44
	Other	3
2008	Obama	67
	McCain	31
	Other	2
2012	Obama	71
	Romney	27
	Other	2
2016	Clinton	66
	Trump	28
	Other	6
2020	Biden	65
	Trump	32
	Other	3
2024	Harris	51
	Trump	46
	Other	3

Look at the table above. Conduct your own analysis, but there are a few things that stick out to me. First, as mentioned, Obama did extremely well with Hispanic/Latino voters. His 71 percent in 2012 is the peak of performance for Democrats with Hispanic/Latino voters. Next, George W. Bush made some inroads with Hispanic/Latino voters in 2004 reaching 44 percent, with John Kerry only carrying 53 percent. This was a low point for our party in this century with Hispanic/Latino voters until... you guessed it, 2024. In 2024, only 51 percent of Hispanic/Latino voters said they supported Harris, while Trump broke Bush's record with 46 percent. On average, Democrats received 62.14 percent support from Hispanic/Latino voters since 2000.

Gender is an enormous factor in the drop of performance for Democrats among Hispanic/Latino voters (see the table below). There isn't data on gender from 2000, 2004, or 2012, but the data available is interesting. In 2008, the gender democratic performance gap among Hispanic/Latino voters was 4 points. The democratic performance numbers for Hispanic/Latino women were steady in 2016, and 2020 at 69 percent of the vote, but the gap widened in 2020 with Hispanic/Latino men support at 59. In 2024, the gap reached its pinnacle with a 14 point spread, with only 44 percent of Hispanic/Latino men supporting Harris and 58 percent of women.

Percentage of Hispanic Voters by Gender & Election

Election	Candidate	% of Latino Men	% Latino Women
2008	Obama	64	68
	McCain	33	30
	Other	3	2
2012	Obama	NA	NA
	Romney	NA	NA
	Other	NA	NA
2016	Clinton	63	69
	Trump	32	25
	Other	5	6
2020	Biden	59	69
	Trump	36	30
	Other	5	1
2024	Harris	44	58
	Trump	54	39
	Other	2	3

As mentioned in the caveats, it would be foolish to group Hispanic voters in New Mexico into one voting block. While we do not have New Mexico specific exit poll data, there are some markers here that indicate that support for Democrats among Hispanic voters is declining.

The top five counties with the highest Hispanic population by percent are Mora, San Miguel, Guadalupe, Rio Arriba, and Doña Ana. On average, democratic performance in these five counties since the 2000 election is 65.52 percent. Similar to the national data, Obama performed extremely well in these counties achieving 72.47 percent of the vote in 2008 and 70.42 percent of the vote in 2012. Unfortunately, the national numbers bear out in the 2024 election in these counties. Harris only received an average of 56.62 percent of the vote in these five counties.

Vote Percentages for Top Five Most Hispanic Populated Counties in New Mexico

Election	Candidate	Percent
2000	Gore	64.36
	W. Bush	32.47
2004	Kerry	62.69
	W. Bush	36.5
2008	Obama	72.4
	McCain	26.53
2012	Obama	70.42
	Romney	26.43
2016	Clinton	60.39
	Trump	28.29
2020	Biden	62.77
	Trump	35.48
2024	Harris	56.62
	Trump	41.59

YOUTH VOTE

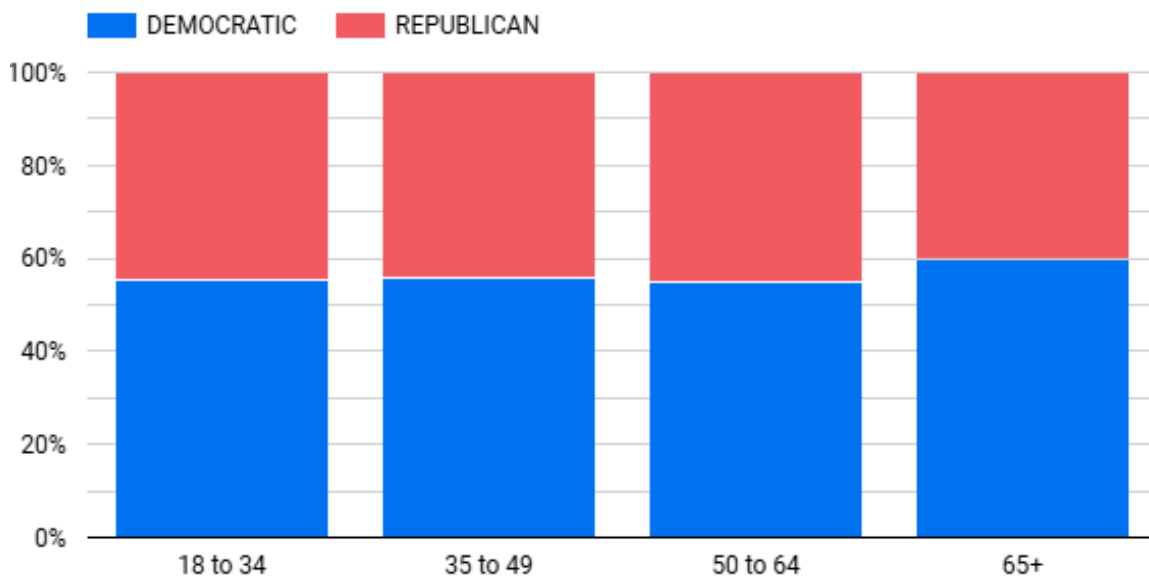
In the 2024 U.S. presidential election, voters aged 18-29 favored Democratic candidate Kamala Harris over Republican candidate Donald Trump by a margin of 51% to 47%. This marked a significant shift from 2020, when Joe Biden held a 25-point lead over Trump among young voters.

In the 2024 election, young voters in New Mexico (ages 18-29) supported Kamala Harris over Donald Trump by a margin of 50% to 46%, with 4% voting for other candidates. In 2020, Biden had won this demographic by 21-points.

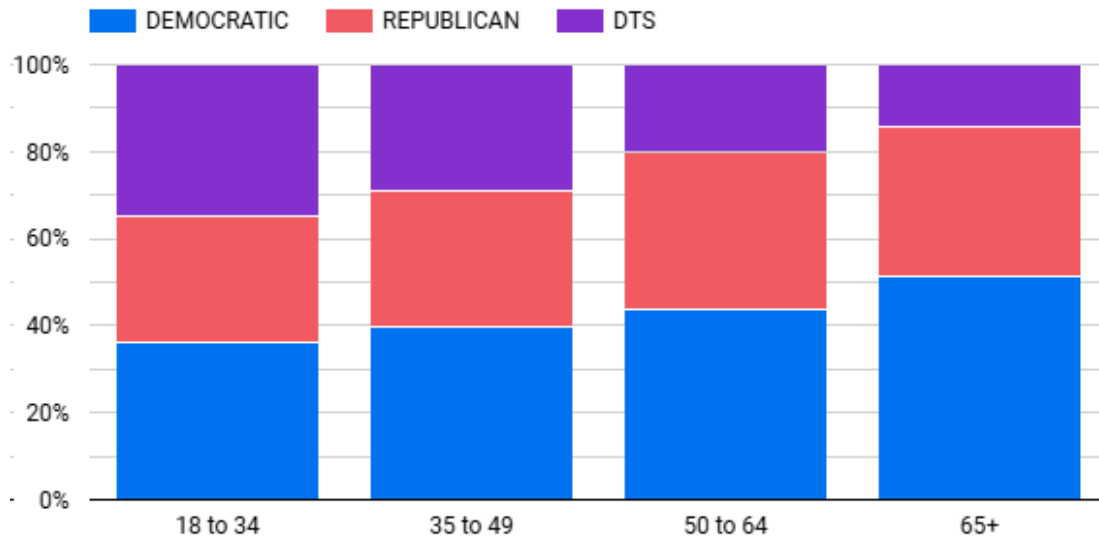
New Mexico's youth vote in 2024 closely mirrored national trends, with Harris winning the demographic but by a drastically reduced margin compared to 2020. The state's nearly identical decline indicates that broader national factors—rather than uniquely local issues—were likely driving the trend, signaling a widespread challenge for Democrats in maintaining youth support.

Source: <https://circle.tufts.edu/2024-election#youth-vote-+4-for-harris,-major-differences-by-race-and-gender>

When we look at how youth voter registration compares to voter registration for other New Mexicans, the first thing that we notice is that the ratio of Democratic registrants to Republican registrants is basically identical regardless of age. This is a fairly significant difference from most states, where older voters tend to be much more Republican than younger voters. This primarily speaks to the strong culture of Democratic support among older New Mexicans, but it is useful context for understanding the next graph.



When we look at independents in addition to registered partisans (called Decline to State voters by the New Mexico Secretary of State's office), we see that the biggest difference is a dramatic increase among young voters in choosing not to affiliate with a party. This is a national trend, but it is particularly notable in New Mexico. Research shows that independent voters tend to vote down the ticket for either Democrats or Republicans, just like registered partisans, but they tend to be less involved in the political process, being less likely to vote and less likely to volunteer. This illustrates the task that we face re-engaging these voters.



Source: DPNM

VOTER TURNOUT

I've heard a lot of people throwing around voter turnout as a reason why Democrats underperformed in 2024. The statement is that voters just didn't show up and therefore Democrats lost. Let's dig into New Mexico before talking about the national impacts. Turnout in New Mexico in 2024 was 67.13 percent.

It's common knowledge that turnout is higher in presidential years than it is in midterm years. This is true in New Mexico. The table below looks at shifts in turnout between cycles:

Shift Turnout Between Presidential Cycles

Election Year	Percent Shift
2020 to 2022	-16.23%
2018 to 2020	13.22%
2016 to 2018	-6.70%
2014 to 2016	22.09%
2012 to 2014	-22.62%
2010 to 2012	10.15%
2008 to 2010	-17.88%
Average Presidential Turnout	65.48%
Average Midterm Turnout	49.88%
Shift Midterm to Presidential	15.60%
Average Presidential Re-election Voter Turnout	66.43%

In 2022, the statewide turnout was approximately 52.38 percent. We see about a +15.6 percent swing in turnout from midterms to a presidential year. $52.38 + 15.6 = 67.98$ percent. Again, the New Mexico turnout was 67.13 percent. It's safe to say turnout was pretty much exactly where one would expect it to be. No big story in New Mexico.

What about nationwide?

- **Michigan:** since 2000, the average voter turnout in presidential years is 67.5 percent. In 2024, voter turnout was 68.3 percent.
- **Pennsylvania:** since 2000, the average voter turnout in presidential years is 61.43 percent. In 2024, voter turnout was 68.5 percent.
- **Wisconsin:** since 2000, the average voter turnout in presidential years is 70.17 percent. In 2024, voter turnout was 76.4 percent.

Could it be that turnout was high because more voters for Trump showed up and Democrats didn't show up? According to the New York Times, "Counties with the biggest Democratic victories in 2020 delivered 1.9 million fewer votes for Ms. Harris than they had for Mr. Biden." The article goes on to say:

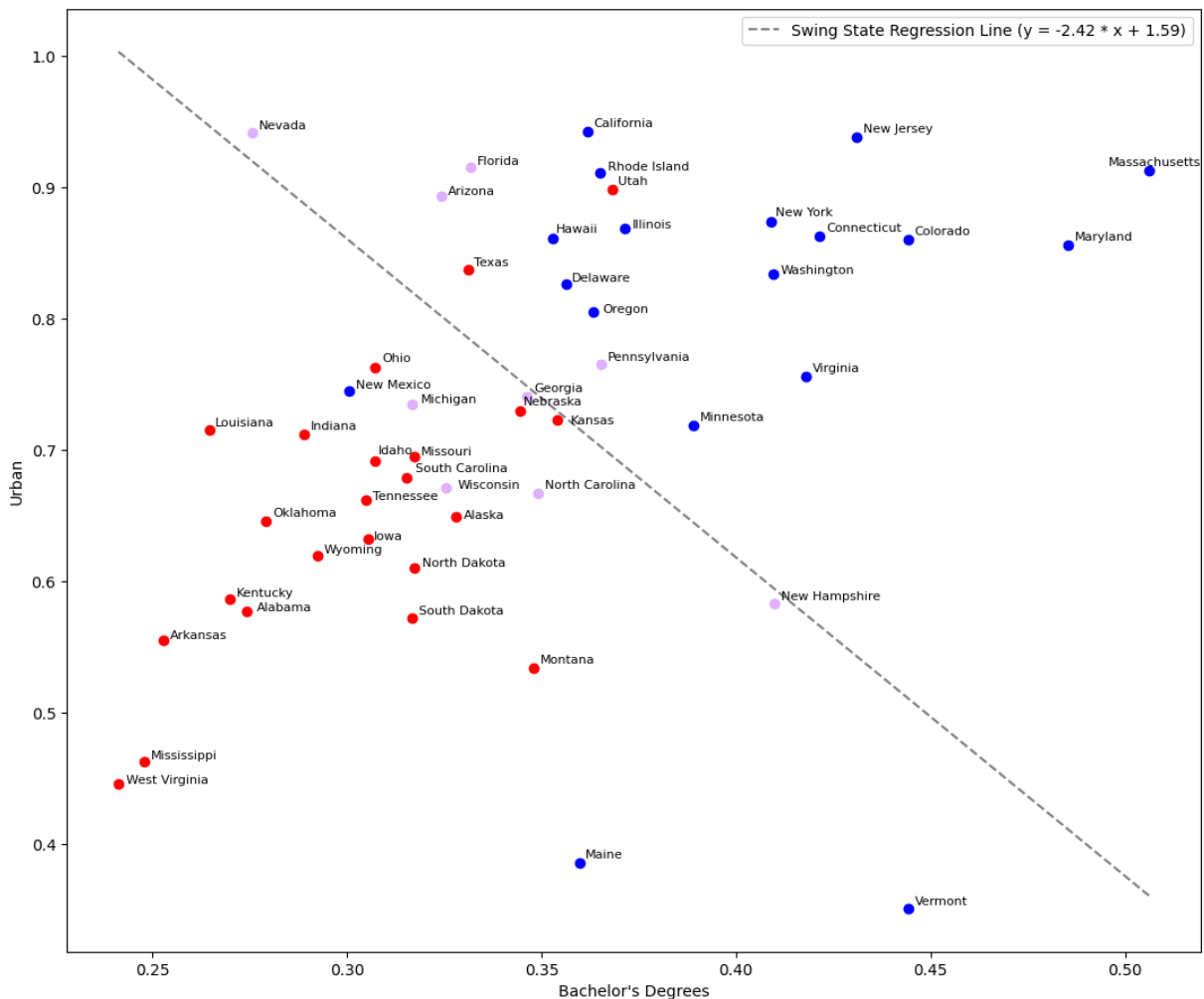
“ In Pennsylvania, the biggest electoral prize on the battleground map, Mr. Trump's victory received an outsize boost from an unlikely place — the five counties with the highest percentage of registered Democrats: Allegheny, Delaware, Lackawanna, Montgomery and Philadelphia. ”

There is some validity in our voters not showing up to the polls, but turnout was high. In my opinion, it would be unwise to attribute the loss solely to turnout.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

There is a lot of attention paid to education and vote choice for a good reason. The correlation is remarkable. In the 2024 U.S. presidential election, the divide between voters with different educational backgrounds was stark. College-educated voters leaned heavily toward Democrats, with 55% of those with a college degree voting for Kamala Harris compared to 44% for Donald Trump, according to AP VoteCast. On the other hand, voters without a college degree were more likely to support Trump, with 56% of this group voting for the Republican candidate, compared to 42% for Harris. This trend was particularly pronounced among white voters without a degree, where Trump captured 66% of the vote, as reported by Pew Research.

Take a look at this data visualization our Data Director Brian put together. The x-axis represents the percentage of people in a state who have a bachelor's degree. The y-axis represents the percentage of people in the state who live in an urban area. The colors indicate the conventional classification of states as "red," "blue," or "purple," based on their voting patterns in recent elections—Republican, Democratic, or a mix of both. The dotted line is a trend line for the purple states only, showing how purple states tend to be in the middle of both dimensions, or high on one and low on the other.



THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM: International Incumbents & Inflation

A pronounced message came out of elections across the globe in 2024: incumbents be damned. According to an interesting article in MarketPlace, “Incumbent leaders, parties or coalitions in more than 70% of the countries we analyzed lost the presidency or prime ministership in the time period we studied. Less than 30% of incumbents retained those top positions” ([MarketPlace](#)). The interesting thing is it wasn’t a rejection of left policies or right policies. The article continues “Both left-leaning and right-leaning incumbents lost power over the past two years in the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Brazil, Belgium, South Korea, Australia, Indonesia, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden and Argentina” ([MarketPlace](#)).

“ Consumer prices rose significantly since the pandemic across dozens of advanced economies, according to a 2022 Pew Research analysis of 44 countries. In almost all of these countries, the average annual inflation rate had doubled from the first quarter of 2020 to the first quarter of 2022. In roughly a third of those countries, the rate more than quadrupled. ([MarketPlace](#)) ”

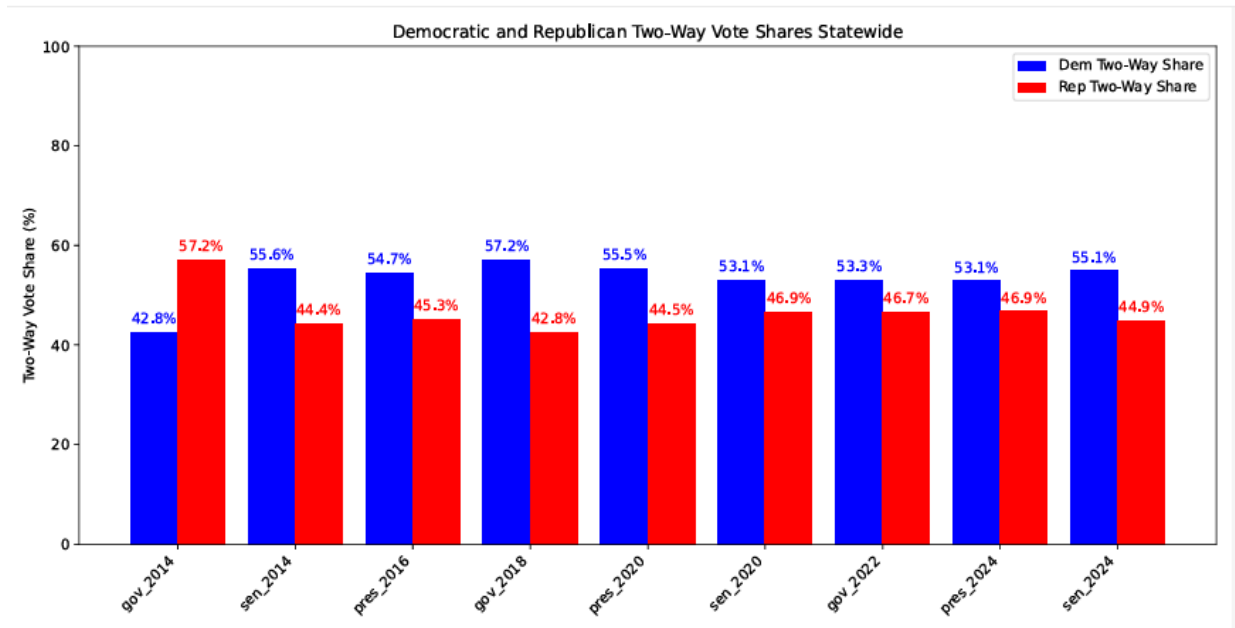
To put it simply, voters across the world were backlashing against a host of reasons including high inflation, unaddressed trauma, and covid policy backlash.

The wallets of voters were stretched thin and to be frank, messaging wasn’t going to make up for that. During the 2024 cycle, the DCCC tested messages and their impact on voters. They first tested a series of messages and determined the most effective message. From there, they tested the message with a group of voters. What they found was that the impact of the most effective message on inflation was negative. It ended up reminding voters of the issue of inflation and in doing so reminded them of their dissatisfaction with how Democrats had handled inflation.

Inflation had a dramatic impact in 2024 on how incumbent parties performed globally, independent of partisanship. Kamala Harris and Democrats felt that backlash unfortunately.

DEMOCRATS IN NEW MEXICO

International and National trends certainly take a lot of our mental bandwidth for a good reason. The topline here in New Mexico though is this: the electorate is incredibly stable. Look at the graph below. Statewide election results in New Mexico have been relatively stable over the past decade, with Democrats generally receiving around 54% of the vote. The 2024 elections continued this trend of continuity.



Harris's poor performance is reflected in New Mexico, but that didn't really harm the popularity of other Democrats down ballot. When comparing 2024 Presidential, Senate, and Congressional results by congressional district, we see that in CD2 and CD3, our Senate and Congressional candidates performed very similarly to each other, and our presidential candidate performed moderately worse. In CD1, all three candidates performed similarly. Overall, this is evidence that Harris's rather weak results in New Mexico do not reflect voters' overall view of the Democratic Party.

Democratic Candidate Performance by Congressional District (New Mexico, 2024)

Congressional District

Performance Markers		1	2	3
Presidential	Count of voters who voted democrat for president	194,147	129,932	151,962
	Total count of votes for all presidential candidates	343,508	265,026	289,682
	Percent of voters who voted democrat for president	56.52%	49.03%	52.46%
Senatorial	Count of voters who voted democrat for their senator	198,099	136,515	159,911
	Total count of votes for all senatorial candidates	346,665	263,023	289,711
	Percent of voters who voted democrat for their senator	57.14%	51.9%	55.2%
Congressional	Count of voters who voted democrat for their congressperson	192,516	137,544	160,913
	Total count of votes for all congressional candidates	341,475	264,367	286,795
	Percent of voters who voted democrat for their congressperson	56.38%	52.03%	56.11%

ELECTION TOP LINES:

DPNM's Post-Election Listening Questionnaire

The Democratic Party of New Mexico sent out a Post-Election Listening Questionnaire in January and collected data until mid-February. The survey results regarding the 2024 election are interesting.

Regarding our messaging, respondents said the following:

- 63.79 percent said “Democrats didn't do enough to address voters concerns with policies during the Biden administration”
- 61.1 percent said “Democrats didn't do enough to connect our policies with voters”
- 30.1 percent said “Democrats concentrated too much on attacking Trump”
- 20.5 percent said “Democrats had good messaging and policies, we lost for other reasons”

Regarding the national election, respondents said the following:

- 52 percent said “We should have had a contentious presidential primary to select a different nominee”
- 48.6 percent said “The process was good, we lost for other reasons”
- 4.9 percent said “Biden should have been our candidate through the election”

Regarding how hopeful respondents are about the Democratic Party's future nationally:

- 55.3 percent said they were somewhat hopeful
- 22.8 percent said not hopeful at all
- 22 percent said very hopeful

The solid performance of Democrats in New Mexico is reflected in responses regarding just New Mexico.

On the question, “How hopeful are you about the Democratic Party's future in New Mexico?” respondents selected the following:

- 48.4 percent selected “Somewhat hopeful”
- 42.8 percent selected “Very hopeful”
- 8.8 percent selected “Not hopeful at all”

On the question “Do you think New Mexico candidates messaging resonated with voters in New Mexico?” respondents selected as follows:

- 59.9 percent said “Yes, somewhat”
- 27.6 percent said “Yes, very much”
- 11.7 percent said “Not very much”
- 0.8 percent said not at all

On the question “In your opinion, what are the key factors that contributed to Democratic wins in New Mexico?”, respondents selected the following:

- 62.2 percent selected “Makeup of the voting population”
- 54.5 percent selected “Popular counties”
- 47.9 percent selected “Weak Republican opposition”
- 42.3 percent selected “Messaging on key issues”
- 35.2 percent selected “Strong ground game and outreach”

CONCLUSION: Trend in Democratic Performance & Why We Lost in 2024

That was a lot of data, so let’s do some summary before stretching into theories of why we lost.

- **White Voters:** the average support for Democrats since 2000 with White voters is 40.71 percent. Obama reached the peak in 2008 with support from 43 percent and Hillary Clinton held the low with 37 percent. The numbers are incredibly stagnant with Democrats performing consistently poorly with this group.
- **Hispanic/Latino Voters:** the average support for Democrats since 2000 with Hispanic/Latino voters is 62.14 percent nationally. Obama reached the peak in 2012 with support from 71 percent. Kamala Harris held the low with 51 percent. Support nationally has been steady among Hispanic/Latino women, but men have moved away from Democrats with only 44 percent supporting Harris in 2024. Here in New Mexico, average Democratic percent in the top five Hispanic counties is 64.19 percent. Harris only held 56.62 percent of the vote in these counties.
- **Youth Vote:** voters aged 18-29 supported Kamala Harris by five points, down considerably by their support of Joe Biden by 21 points.
- **Voter Turnout:** voter turnout was dead on from what we would expect here in New Mexico. In the consistent swing-states, it was actually higher than usual. Turnout in Democratic strongholds was lower than usual.
- **Educational Attainment:** educational attainment is a definite predictor on vote choice. College educated voters supported Harris by 55 percent. Voters without a college degree supported Trump by 56 percent.
- **International Incumbents and Inflation:** incumbents for presidential and prime minister positions lost their elections in more than 70% of countries analyzed in 2024.
- **Democrats in New Mexico:** New Mexicans have been extremely consistent in their support of Democrats. In 2014, Democrat Tom Udall won the vote for Senate with 55 percent. A decade later, Democrat Martin won the vote for Senate with 55 percent of the vote.

Now let's go back to the map ([click here](#)). As noted in the leader, "More than 89 percent of counties in the United States shifted in favor of former President Donald J. Trump in the 2024 presidential election." We got our clocks cleaned almost everywhere.

The diversity of the loss tells me that we can't say that we lost for one reason, but I think the majority of respondents in our survey had it correct. We didn't do enough to address the concerns of voters. They turned away from us because they feel like we turned away from them.

I know this is contentious because the government is complicated and Democrats have made progress despite some real hurdles. We held the House, Senate and Presidency from 2020 to 2022, but Joe Manchin and Krysten Sinema weren't really Democrats so it was hard to do anything positive. I also know that Biden and Democrats were able to pass the American Rescue Plan Act, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Inflation Reduction Act, and we empowered Medicare to negotiate drug prices; all tremendous accomplishments.

On a broader timeline, we have accomplished even more. The Affordable Care Act, the Dood-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act were all important pieces of legislation. On jobs, Bill Clinton noted during his speech at the 2024 DNC:

“ Since the end of the Cold War in 1989, America has created about 51 million new jobs. I swear I checked this three times. Even I couldn't believe it. What's the score? Democrats 50, Republicans one. ”

Democrats have provided the country with better legislation and more jobs than Republicans. We know that Democrats have better policies for everyday people.

My point again is that voters turned away from Democrats because they FEEL like we turned away from them. I think talking about just messaging is selling voters short. If we come out of this election with our only lesson learned being that we have to be better at how we message, who we message to and what platform we are sending those messages on, I think we will continue to lose. Voters aren't dumb. We have to stop freaking out and channel the voters' anger in the right direction but we also have to deliver. To win voters back, we have to become the party that actually fights for them. We have to not just talk the talk, but walk the walk.

The Democratic Party must be the party that believes in no talk without action.

DIAGNOSIS

Every day in between campaign cycles, the national Democratic Party and the state parties from across the country send out press releases, post on social media, and conduct interviews. Every day, congressional offices on our side send information out with statistics on legislation they support. Every day, our side tries to get out our message to voters. The problem is, the voters we most need to reach don't see it. They don't see the interviews on MSNBC or the press releases with new investments into our communities. They don't see the hard work that many of our elected officials do.

Instead, what they see is campaigns sending them mail, placing ads, and sending volunteers to their door in the days and weeks leading up to the election. They see someone asking for a vote without providing them a benefit. They see a one sided transaction and they are sick of it. **Voters are sick of the talk without action and that is why, in my admittedly not so humble opinion, the small but important percent of nonpolarized voters are swinging between the parties. Voters are sick of talk without action when it comes to their communities and their lives.**

That's the problem we solve for.

**NO TALK WITHOUT ACTION
(NTWA):**

**A GRASSROOTS PLAN TO
FIGHT MAGA**

THE PROBLEM: Democrats Talk, But Voters Don't See Action

Every day between elections, Democrats send press releases, post on social media, and do interviews. Every day, our congressional offices put out information about the legislation they're working on. And every day, the voters we most need to reach don't see it.

They don't watch MSNBC. They don't read press releases about investments in their communities. They don't hear about the hard work Democrats are doing.

What do they see? Campaigns that show up in the final stretch before an election, asking for votes but not offering anything in return. They see a party that talks a lot but doesn't deliver in their daily lives. And that's why some of the most critical voters—working-class, young, and Latino voters—are either sitting out elections or swinging between parties.

This is the problem we have to fix.

THE SOLUTION: No Talk Without Action

If we want to win, we need to fundamentally change how we organize between elections. Instead of focusing on voter outreach, we need to focus on voter involvement. That means:

- **Making our party part of voters' everyday lives.**
- **Engaging voters in the legislative process year-round.**
- **Proving that we deliver—not just talk.**

How it Works

We're building NTWA (No Talk Without Action) teams that focus on direct, ongoing engagement with voters in key communities.

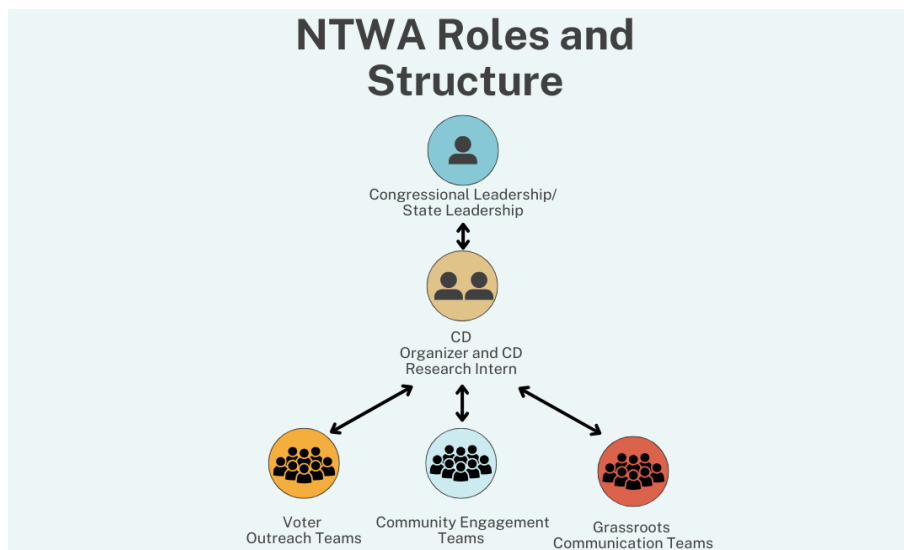
Each NTWA team has a specific mission:

- **Voter Outreach Teams:** Build real relationships with 30 targeted, swing-voters and maintain engagement throughout the election cycle.
- **Community Engagement Teams:** Volunteers conduct targeted outreach and hold **town halls** with key constituencies to ensure policy priorities match voter concerns.
- **Grassroots Communications Teams:** Volunteers **find and amplify voter stories** to make Democratic policies more tangible and relatable.

The diagnosis and solution simply put:

Voters aren't stupid. Saying that we need to just change our messaging does a huge disservice to them. Messaging is hollow and they deserve better. We need to build affinity with voters by showing them that we care about the things they care about and that we, as Democrats, are actually fighting to deliver for them. Grassroots organizing should be about creating policies from the ground up, not the top down. In addition to this work, we will create a communications structure to amplify that work and show that voters are front and center of the work of elected Democrats at all levels.

The below pages describe the roles in detail.



VOLUNTEER ROLES

NTWA Voter Outreach Teams

We must build transformational, not transactional, community with our voters. Our party and Democrats can't be seen as some outsider not doing the real work. We must show up with the voters we are asking to support us. We've got to be part of their lives and their communities.

Studies show that voters are much more likely to be persuaded to take a political action if it comes from someone they know. A study conducted by Outvote and Columbia University during the 2018 midterm elections found that voters were 8.3 percent more likely to vote when they received a text from a friend, compared with a 0.29 percent increase when receiving a mass text. ([Columbia University Study](#)) A case study from a 2016 U.S. House primary campaign demonstrated that voters contacted through relational organizing showed a 9% increase in turnout. Additionally, the study observed a 17% rise in strong support and a 16% decrease in undecided voters when outreach was conducted by acquaintances, highlighting the persuasive power of personal connections. ([Outreach Circle](#))

The problem that I have with relational organizing is that oftentimes there is little overlap between the people who volunteer and the voters that we must reach. You probably know a few persuadable voters, but I'm guessing you don't know enough. To solve that problem, we should work backwards. Rather than giving our volunteers that are giving their time up to have an impact a new list of unknown voters every time they volunteer, we should help our volunteers have a higher impact by helping them build a relationship with a small group of voters.

We will assign a list of 30 voters to each volunteer to dedicate themselves to for the 2026 election. These voters will be grouped into one community so that our volunteers can get to know it better. NTWA volunteers will be the primary messenger through a campaign cycle to turn them out to vote, but more importantly, they will continue to engage the voters throughout the process of the program steps.

NTWA Community Engagement Teams

As mentioned above, Democrats are suffering with working-class voters, young voters, and Hispanic voters. Additionally, we need to make inroads with rural voters. We make inroads with these communities by showing up, but that isn't good enough. We also must deliver for them. Again, many of these groups have supported Democrats in the past, but they moved away from our party because they FEEL like we moved away from them. We will ask NTWA Community Engagement Volunteers to be responsible for certain groups. The volunteer should reflect the group they are conducting outreach to. NTWA Community Engagement Volunteers will hold virtual or in-person town hall meetings to discuss the onslaught of bad policies proposed by Trump while also asking questions on policies that would make a difference in their lives.

NTWA Community Engagement Volunteers will continue to be the primary messenger through a campaign cycle to turn them out to vote, but more importantly, they will continue to engage the community throughout the process of the program steps. Local, state, and federal elected officials would ideally participate in the community town hall meetings to assist with the connection between outreach and policy action.

NTWA Grassroots Communication Volunteer Teams

Democrats rightly have complex solutions to complex problems. Our messaging can't be complex though. Personal stories and narratives are more effective than statistics according to research. The Wilder Foundation found that personal stories enhance comprehension and elicit empathy more than factual data (Wilder.org). A study conducted by the Centre for Economic Policy Research concurs and notes that stories are more memorable than statistics which leads to a stronger long-term impact on beliefs (cepr.org).

Our messaging should be hyper focused on the people most impacted by policies. NTWA Grassroots Communication Teams will search through answers on the questionnaires to identify individuals with powerful stories related to policies. Grassroots Communication will reach out to the individuals identified by Voter Outreach Teams and Community Engagement Teams and ask if they are willing to share their stories. Grassroots Communication Volunteers will help individuals interested in developing their message. After developing the message, Grassroots Communication Volunteers will film or take down individuals sharing their stories.

The Democratic Party of New Mexico will then post their stories on our social media account and ask the individuals to share locally to flood the zone. Grassroots Communication Volunteers will also work with individuals to craft their stories in a way that elected officials can share stories to help combat bad policies or argue for good policies.

Research Interns

Research Interns will work with Federal and State Elected Officials craft legislation based on the feedback provided by community and voter engagement teams.

Voters feel like there is a disconnect from their needs and policy. According to a Pew Study, 73 percent of Americans believe lobbyists and special interest groups have too much influence on politics. They are right to feel that way.

Professors Martin Gilens (Princeton University) and Benjamin Page (Northwestern University) looked at the influence the general public has on policy making. What did they find? According to their study, "it makes very little difference what the general public thinks. The probability of policy change is nearly the same (around 0.3) whether a tiny minority or a large majority of average citizens favor a proposed policy change" (cambridge.org).

Messaging doesn't matter when you don't have anything to message about. We need to create policies that center around voters. We need real answers to their problems and needs if we are going to counter MAGA populism. NTWA Policy Research and Development Interns will develop issue and policy questionnaires that will be utilized by Voter Outreach Volunteers and Community Engagement Volunteers. NTWA Policy Research and Development Interns will craft legislation proposals based on feedback from the Voter Outreach Volunteers Questionnaire's and the NTWA Community Engagement Volunteers Town Halls. The legislation should transpose the feedback from communities with the platform and positions of the

NTWA Roles, Structure, & Assignment

The Democratic Party has a unique advantage over any organization. There is a state party in every single state and territory. I would imagine that there is at least one Democrat in every single one of the 3,144 counties across the United States. We certainly have the largest organization working to counter Trump and the largest potential impact.

The traditional model of our party has roles like County Chair, Vice Chair, and Treasurer. Larger counties have ward chairs and sometimes even precinct chairs. We still need those roles, but there is a problem with the typical structure. Our most active Democratic Parties are in the areas that are the most Democratic. While those are important areas in their own way, they are not the communities we need to make inroads with. We need to create a structure that reaches the voters we are losing because they feel left behind and through our structure we need to plug them into the process of legislation and action.

The NTWA structure will work within a congressional district to ensure that policy feedback is developed with the appropriate congressional offices. Beyond the congressional district level, the NTWA structure will not be strictly area focused, it will be voter and community oriented. Each Congressional District will be assigned a Congressional District Organizer and a Congressional District Research Intern. Congressional District Organizers will work with NTWA Voter Outreach, Community Engagement and Grassroots Communications Teams. Congressional District Research Interns will work with Federal and State Elected Officials to craft legislation based on the feedback provided by community and voter engagement teams.

IMPLEMENTATION OF NTWA PLAN

With the assistance of staff, the following initial steps should be instituted.

This plan only works if we have real volunteer participation, paid organizers, and resources.

1. **Recruit NTWA volunteers.**
 - Start with Democratic State Central Committee (SCC) members, targeted volunteers in VoteBuilder, and responses from the 2024 Post-Election Listening Survey.
2. **Develop the NTWA voter outreach survey.**
 - This will guide initial conversations and identify key concerns among targeted voters.
3. **Assign each NTWA Voter Outreach Team member their 30 voters.**
 - These volunteers will establish personal relationships and maintain regular contact.
 - [Click here](#) for the intro conversation script
4. **Engage communities through town halls.**
 - NTWA Community Engagement Volunteers will hold meetings focused on constituency groups we need to win over.
5. **Identify and elevate compelling personal stories.**
 - NTWA Grassroots Communication Volunteers will work with voters to develop and share their experiences.
6. **Develop policy solutions based on voter input.**
 - Congressional District Research Interns will work with elected officials to turn voter concerns into real proposals.
7. **Mobilize support for grassroots-backed legislation.**
 - NTWA teams will circulate petitions and gather community co-signers to push policies forward.
 - [Click here for community co-signer petition template](#)
8. **Keep voters engaged in the process.**
 - Outreach volunteers will follow up with their 30 voters to keep them informed on policy progress and election efforts.

WHY THIS WILL WORK

- It's not just outreach—it's organizing. NTWA makes Democrats part of voters' daily lives.
- It shifts power to the grassroots. Voters are sick of talk without action. In this plan, voters drive the agenda, not just politicians.
- It builds real trust. People trust those who show up—and we'll be there year-round.
- It prepares us to win elections. By the time the campaign cycle starts, we won't just be asking for votes—we'll have already earned them.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Voters aren't stupid. They know when they're being talked at instead of listened to. The Democratic Party can't just be about messaging—it has to be about action. **That's what NTWA is about.**

The best way to fight back against Trumpism isn't another press release. It's showing up, delivering results, and making sure voters see it.

Let's get to work.