



## Supermajority Education Fund: Defining a Women's Agenda

Avalanche Insights fielded two rounds of deep audience listening in partnership with Supermajority Education Fund between June 25 and August 2, 2020. Responses were collected from ~20,000 women (cis or trans) registered voters, nationally.

### SUMMARY

This research found that a winning coalition of women voters can be activated by an intersectional messaging frame that centers racial justice as a core pillar of gender equity. This research further found that within this coalition, there is broad agreement about the top issues and policy priorities that must be addressed in a women's agenda to meet the urgent needs of women in America in 2021 and beyond.

By centering on the voices, priorities and lived experiences of women of color, a powerful coalition of Black, Latina, and progressive to moderate white women can be activated to rewrite the rules that hold women back - and that keep Black and brown woman in particular locked into a struggle for basic needs - so that all of us have the same just and equal opportunity create lives of purpose and promise for ourselves and our loved ones.

### TOPLINES

**A winning coalition of women voters can be activated by an intersectional messaging frame that centers racial justice as a core pillar of gender equity.**

- **Both Gender Equity and Racial Justice are perceived challenges across segments**, with 67% of respondents strongly or somewhat agreeing that rules benefit men more than women & 60% strongly or somewhat agreeing that rules benefit white people more than people of color
- **In our message test**, 73% of all women and 86% of Black women, report strongly or somewhat agreeing with the message that centers racial justice as a core pillar of gender equality
- **Gender equality that doesn't consider racism falls short for POC segments.** Specifically:
  - 68% of Black or AfAm respondents, and 54% of non-white Latina respondents, strongly agree that the rules in America today benefit white people
  - 36% of Black or AfAm respondents, and 34% of non-white Latina respondents, strongly agree that the rules in America today benefit men more than women
  - For all poc segments, race, not gender, leads as the thing that is reported to have biggest influence on the opportunities received and challenges faced

**A strong majority of women of color and moderate to progressive white women agree on the most important issues and solutions.**

- **Across all racial segments, healthcare remains the top policy priority (34%) followed by long term economic well being (25%).** Variance is in the relative weighting with Black and AAPI women skewing towards economic well being and Latina women skewing towards healthcare.

- **When asked about the most pressing day to day challenges, quality healthcare is again the most cited (28%)** followed by cost of living (20%), jobs and wages (16%), COVID (10%), taxes (8%), and racism (8%).
- **However for Black respondents, the most cited pressing day to day challenges is racism (23%),** followed by cost of living and jobs and wages, and then healthcare at 16%.
- **The ranking of specific policy solutions for top priorities, is consistent among Black, Latina and moderate to strongly progressive segments of women.** Specifically:
  - **To address healthcare concerns,** protecting the ACA is the preferred solution at the all respondent level, and is preferred for more than 30% of Black, as well as moderate to strongly progressive respondents. This is followed by no-cost access to COVID testing for all and expanding medicaid which is preferred by 21% and 18% respectively.
  - **To address long term economic wellbeing,** raising the minimum wage to \$15 and ending pay discrimination are tied as the preferred solution at the all respondent level (21%). POC respondents skew towards raising the minimum wage.
  - **To address concerns about voting this year,** protecting vote by mail is the clear priority at the all respondent level (39%). This is consistent among POC segments, who also prioritize early voting and protecting polling places in communities of color.
  - **To address short term economic well being,** a plurality of women prefer beginning stimulus payments for 12 months(32%), led by Black women and progressives . This is followed by extending the expanding unemployment benefit at the \$600 level through the end of the year and providing more funding to state and local governments (18%).
- **When women are asked to focus on the needs of women in particular,** 39% of respondents cite Pay and Work as the most important thing to fix, and 32% cite equality.
- **Most women (68%) believe that addressing COVID is so closely related to their other top issues that the two can't be separated.** Only 12% of respondents prioritize some other issue over COVID.

**An intersectional frame that centres on racial justice as a core pillar of gender equity is activating for a winning coalition and should be adopted in the message frame for the women's agenda.**

## METHODOLOGY

An Avalanche Listening Instrument combines open and closed-ended questions. Open-ended questions provide rich data sets that allow us to analyze beliefs, values, and emotions related to an issue. Closed-ended questions provide clarity and comparability with existing research. Survey responses were collected using quota and rejection sampling in a popular online marketplace, and weighted using the raking methodology proposed by the American National Election Studies (DeBell and Krosnick, 2009) to match the demographics of registered voters in the relevant states.

# INTEGRATED RACIAL JUSTICE AND GENDER EQUALITY FRAME

Given your goal to activate Black women and women of color, and to build a coalition with allied white women, an integrated racial justice and gender equality frame is recommended.

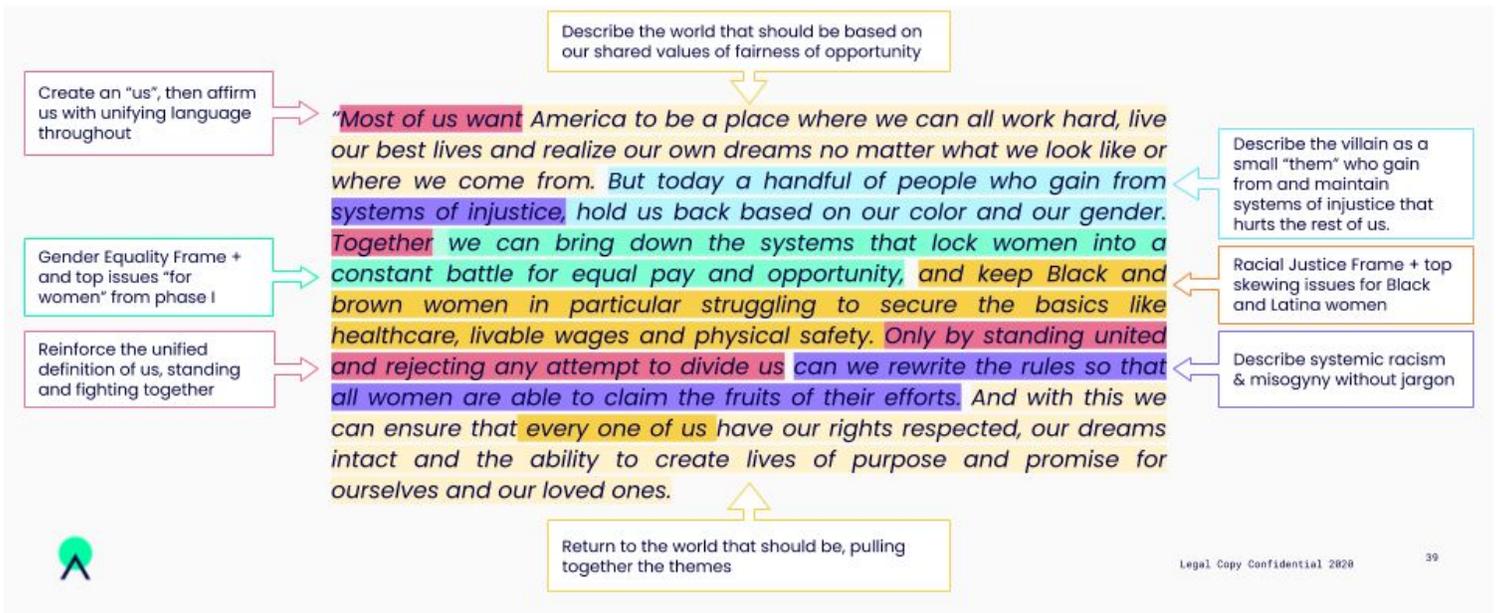
**73% of women and 86% of Black women, strongly or somewhat agree with a gender equality message that centers racial justice.**

An integrated racial justice and gender equality frame should include the following components:

- **Center Black and Latina women, and invite everyone:** even *somewhat* progressive and moderate white woman are supportive of racial justice so include both justice and equality
- **Create an “us” and reinforce it:** the most cited parts of the messages we tested were standing together, rising together and being united. An “us” often needs a them, so whenever possible also reference the villain that reinforcing the systemic racism in inequity holding us back
- **Show what’s possible:** doubt about racial justice, especially among *somewhats and moderates*, stems largely from not believing change is possible or will be supported broadly. Invoke hope and demonstrate support.
- **Careful of blowback:** it’s okay to make opposition mad, but make sure you activate more support than opposition
- **Don’t jargon or explain:** be succinct and accessible

## Example Intersectional racial justice and gender equality frame

The following is an example of an intersectional frame that centers racial justice as a core pillar of gender equity. This represents learning from two rounds of research and two message tests. This frame hasn't been tested. It should be, and then further refined.



## DETAILED FINDINGS

**Both Gender Equity and Racial Justice are perceived challenges** for the majority of women, a plurality of whom agree that the rules in America benefit men and white people more than women or people of color.

**67%** strongly or somewhat agree that rules in America benefit men more than women

**60%** strongly or somewhat agree that rules benefit white people more than people of color

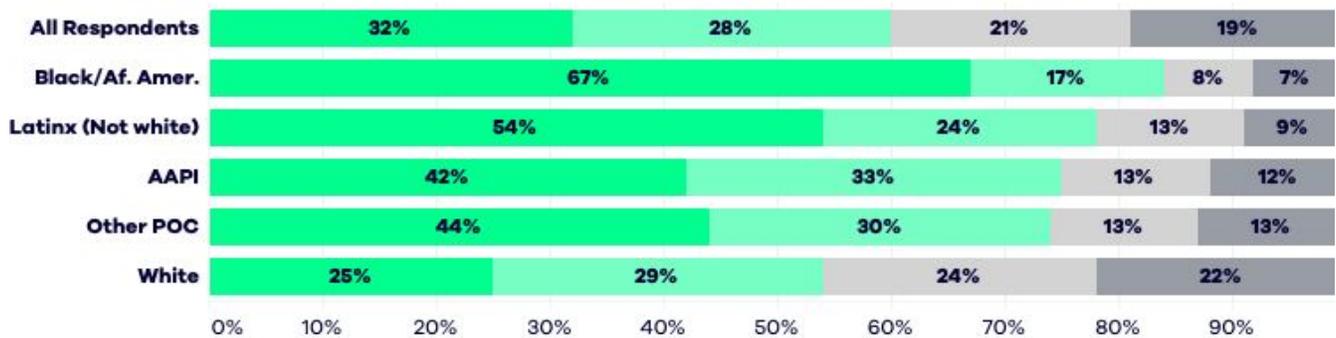
### But gender equality that doesn't consider racism falls short for POC segments.

When asked in open ended format what they would change if they could change anything about America, **Justice and Equality is the most cited theme among people of color (34%)**, and within that theme racism is the most cited specific challenge (33%). Black respondents cite racism more than twice as often as white respondents.

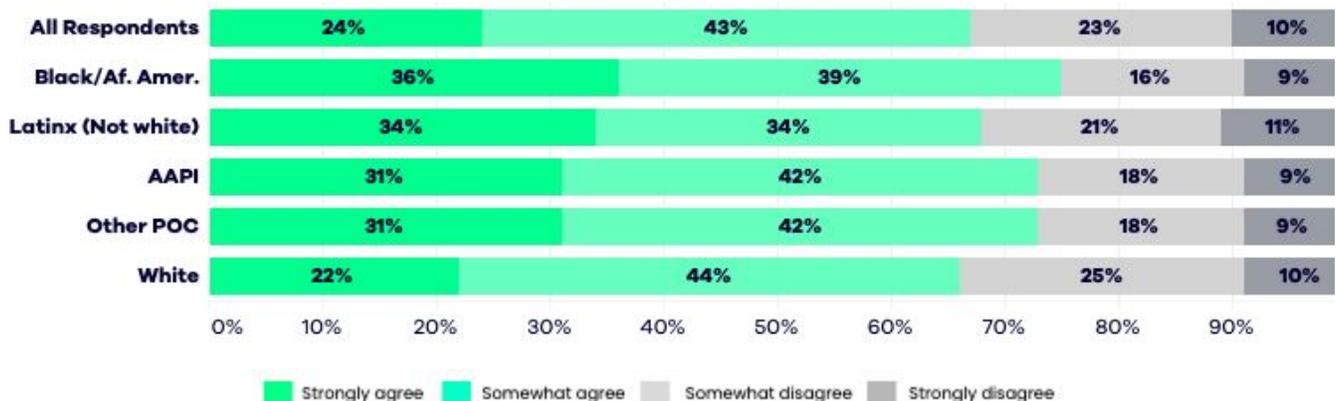
### The importance of racial justice for women of color is clear in the responses about the rules in America:

- **36% of Black** or African American respondents, and 34% of non-white Latina respondents, strongly agree that the rules in America today benefit men more than women
- **68% of Black** or African American respondents, and 54% of non-white Latina respondents, strongly agree that the rules in America today benefit white people

#### Do you agree that the rules in America today benefit white people more than black and brown people?

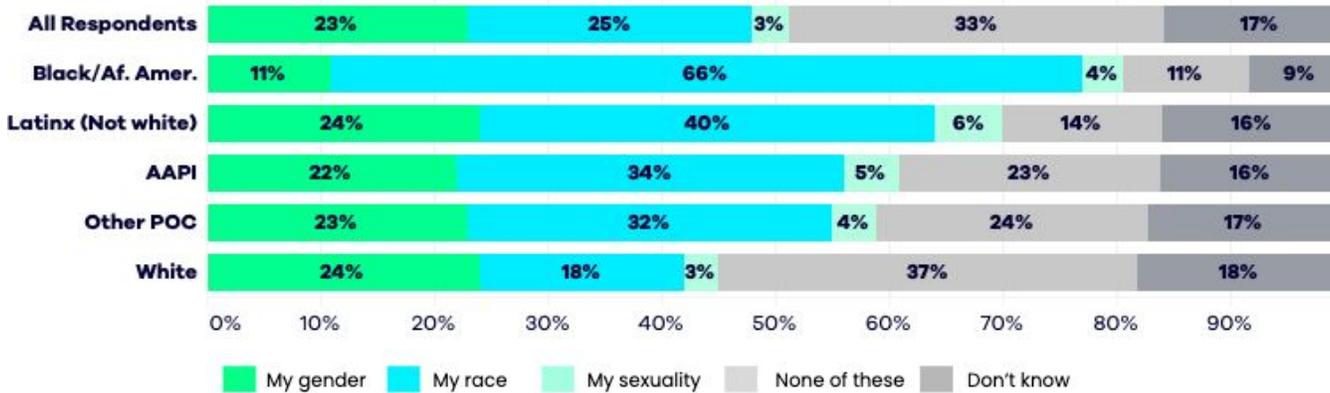


#### Do you agree that the rules in America today benefit men more than woman?



**Only white women report believing their gender has a greater impact than their race.** Furthermore, 66% of Black or AfAm respondents, and 40% of non-white Latina respondents, select their race at the factor that is most determinant of the challenges face and opportunities they have.

Which of the following things has the biggest influence on the opportunities you receive and the challenges you face?



**Uniting to change the rules that hold women, and especially women of color back, is cited by progressive to moderate women.**

The following open ended responses are representative of the language women use to explain their position and priorities.

**Standing together for justice**

We are not standing united in this fight. **We are greatly divided right now.** We have to come together!

-White, 61 years old, moderate

"In order for women; **especially black and brown women** to break the income barrier we must be **united** and stand up for our rights."

-Black or African-American, 40 years old, moderate

"**Working together** for the greater good. Demand justice."

-Black or African-American, 64 years old, moderate

"Women need to **stick together** to have a better chance to fight injustice."

-White, 60 years old, somewhat progressive

**Racial justice**

"I have been **witness to systematic racism** and have watched **inequality grow** over the years .It has been very much like a cancer."

-Black or AfAm, 72 years old, moderate

"We have **serious systemic racism problems** in this country. I hope and pray there are more good than bad, and that we can fix what is going on and change the evil road we travel."

-White, 57 years old, somewhat progressive

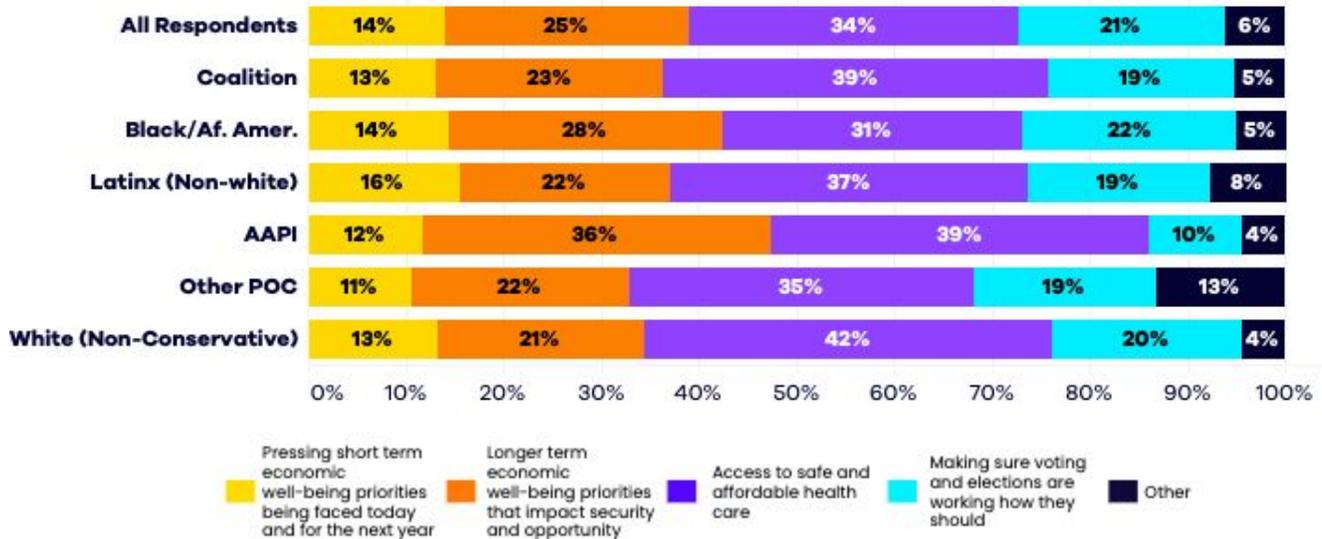
"I believe that **our systems hold people-- especially people of color--back** and we need to tear them down and rebuild them in order to create a more equitable society."

-White, 28 years old, somewhat progressive

## TOP ISSUES

### A strong majority of women of color and moderate to progressive white women agree on the most important issues and solutions.

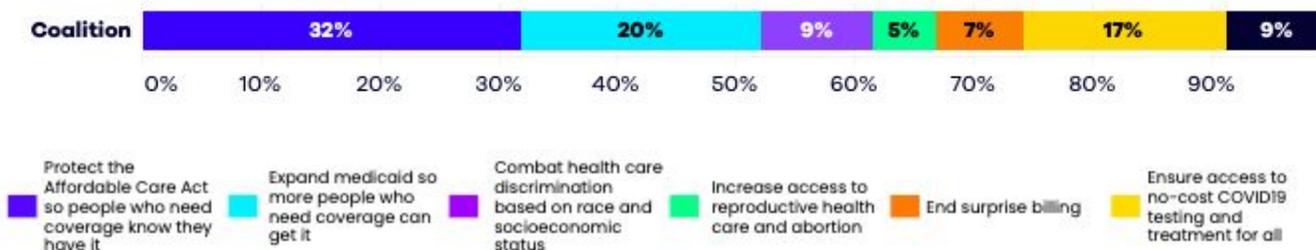
While differences in lived experiences are reflected in variation in the relative weighting of issues & solutions between segments, the overall ranking is shared by a coalition whose agenda is driven by the priorities of Black and brown women, and supported by progressive and moderate white women.



**Access to safe and affordable health care** is selected as the most important priority for policy makers to work on for 34% of respondents and 39% percentage of the coalition.

**To address healthcare concerns**, protecting the ACA is the preferred solution at the all respondent level is the preferred solution of 32% of the coalition, including more than 30% of Black respondents. This is followed by no-cost access to COVID testing for all (20%) and expanding medicaid (17%) respectively.

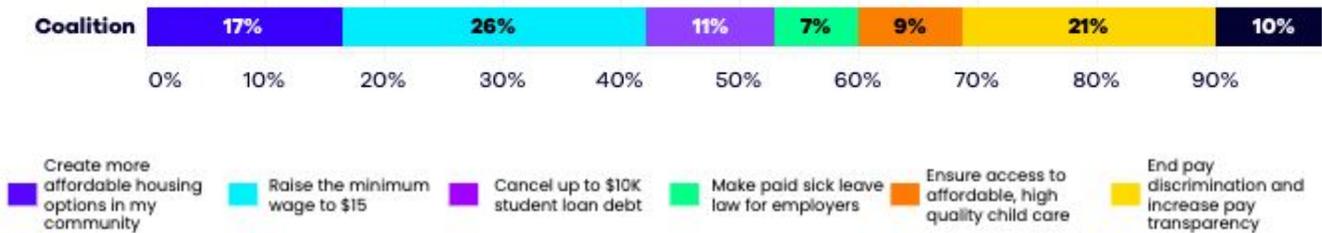
**We know women have historically been concerned about access to safe and affordable healthcare, and that that concern has grown in the COVID19 context. Among this list of solutions to address healthcare, which would most help to reduce your fears, worries or stress?**



**Long term economic well-being** is selected as the most important priority for policy makers to work on for 25% of all respondents and 23% percentage of the coalition.

**To address economic wellbeing**, raising the minimum wage to \$15 and ending pay discrimination are tied as the preferred solutions at the all respondent level. When we focus on the coalition, raising minimum wage is the most important priority to 26%, while ending pay discrimination drops to 21%. Among women of color, respondents skew towards raising the minimum wage.

**Among this list of solutions to address longer term economic well-being priorities, which is most important to you?**



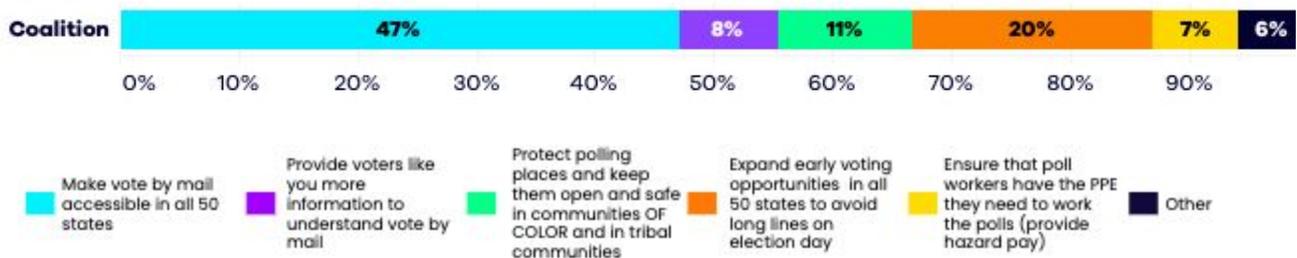
The salience of economic equality for women emerged earlier in the survey when respondents were asked in open ended format what would be the most important thing for the government to fix if they were to focus on the needs of women in particular. The theme of *pay and work* was most cited (39%) followed by the theme of *equality* (32%).

**Making sure voting and elections are working how they should** is

selected as the most important priority for policy makers to work on for 21% of all respondents and 19% percentage of the coalition.

**To address concerns about voting this year**, protecting vote by mail is the clear priority at the all respondent level (39%) and jumps to 47% among the coalition. This is followed by expanding early voting (20%). This is consistent among POC segments, who also prioritize protecting polling places in communities of color which spikes to 18% among the Black or African American segment.

**Many women have concerns about voting in the 2020 election during the ongoing COVID19 pandemic. Which solutions would best address your concerns about voting this year?**



**Short term economic priorities** are selected as the most important priority for policy makers to work on for 14% of respondents and 13% percentage of the coalition.

**To address short term economic priorities**, beginning recurring stimulus payments for twelve months is the clear priority at the all respondent level (32%) as well as the coalition (36%), followed by providing funding to local governments to support their communities (18%) and extending expanded unemployment. This is consistent among Black and Latiana segments, who also skew in their prioritization of support for businesses owned by women of color.

**We know women are especially concerned about their economic well-being in the COVID19 context. Among this list of solutions to address pressing short term economic priorities, which would most help to reduce your fears, worries or stress?**



**Across segments, COVID is prioritized over other priorities, but the majority see their top priority and COVID being closely related.**

Most women (68% of all respondents, 72% of coalition) believed that any other issue and COVID are so closely related right now, that policy makers would need to consider both to make progress on any issue. Only *making sure voting and elections work how they should* is prioritized over COVID at the all respondent level.

**Is it more important to you that policy makers focus their attention on that issue or on addressing COVID?**

