TO: Interested Parties  
FROM: Geoff Garin  
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RE: The Better Deal Economic Agenda  

As Senate and House Democrats begin to roll out their new Better Deal Economic Agenda, a review of recent public opinion polling shows that the central themes and frames that are at the heart of this agenda match closely with the experiences, values, and priorities of American voters today. Moreover, the Democratic policies related to curbing excessive corporate power that are being highlighted in the first day of the rollout have real resonance with voters and are strongly supported by a significant majority of Americans.

For example, fully 79% of voters in Senate battleground states agree that, “the rules of the economy today are rigged against average Americans, and America's working families need a better deal.” Eighty-five percent (85%) of those who voted for Hillary Clinton agree with this statement, but so do 74% of those who voted for Donald Trump (43% of whom strongly agree). Indeed, more voters in the battleground states agree with this critique of the economy than a critique that says “the problem with the economy today is a big government that spends too much, taxes too much, and puts too many burdens on businesses.”

Similarly, a large majority of battleground state voters respond favorably to a statement of the premise and direction that define the Better Deal Economic Agenda, transcending partisanship even when the statement is explicitly described as coming from Democrats:

“Too many families in America today feel that the rules of the economy are rigged against them. Special interests have a strangle-hold on Washington—from the super-rich spending unlimited amounts of secret money to influence our elections, to the huge loopholes in our tax code that help corporations avoid paying taxes. The basic bargain that hard-working men and women can keep a good job, make a decent living, and provide for their families is no longer attainable for too many people. But it does not have to be this way. If the government goes back to putting working families first, ahead of special interests, we can achieve a better deal for the American people that will raise their pay, lower their expenses, and prepare them for the future.”

In the red states of Indiana, Montana, Missouri, North Dakota, and West Virginia, 73% express a favorable reaction to this statement of Democratic economic thinking, as do a similar proportion of voters in the purple states of Florida, Ohio,
Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. Support for this Democratic approach withstands Republican criticisms that it would lead to bigger government, higher taxes, and more interference with free enterprise—a contention that only three in 10 voters find to be convincing.

National polling also shows the breadth of concern about excessive corporate power and its impacts. By two to one (67% to 33%), for example, Americans believe it is a bigger problem that “huge corporations and billionaires are using their political power to reduce competition, keep wages low, and get special tax breaks” than that “government is imposing too many job-killing regulations on businesses and taxing people too much.” Indeed, 86% of voters agree that, “our economy is increasingly dominated by a small number of very large corporations,” and most voters believe this leads to consequences that often affect them personally. Fifty-seven percent (57%) say it is true that President Trump and Republicans, “are driving up prices for consumers by allowing a few huge corporations to dominate our government and economy.”

While the 2018 midterm elections likely will be a referendum on the damaging policies of Donald Trump and the rubberstamp Republican Congress, it also is important for voters to know that Democrats are prepared to speak and act boldly on their behalf. Polling suggests that the articulation of Democratic principles and policies in the Better Deal Economic Agenda is an important step in that direction.