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To: Interested Parties

RE: AMERICAN VOTERS DID NOT ENDORSE TRUMP'S EXTREMIST POLICY
        AGENDA IN 2016 ELECTION

The Center for American Progress and GBA Strategies recently completed a comprehensive 2000-interview post-election poll of 2016 voters exploring what was on voters' minds going into the election and what issue priorities these voters would like to see as priorities for the next administration and Congress.*

From this survey of the electorate, it's clear that many Americans were dissatisfied with the status quo political establishment and many—although notably less than a national majority—backed Donald Trump as an agent of change. Majorities of Americans did not, however, vote to endorse Trump's and the GOP's more radical ideas to cut the social safety net, lower taxes for corporations, or build a wall along the Mexican border.

Equally important, this survey finds that solid majorities of both Trump and Clinton voters support concrete policies designed to improve the economic security of working families—issues like paid family and medical leave and child care support—and to clean up government by addressing the role of special interest money in politics. There is even strong consensus among Trump and Clinton supporters for a comprehensive legislative package of border security and a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, and strong majority support across both groups of voters for universal background checks on all gun sales.

Unlike much of the pre-election commentary and opinion making about the election, these results provide a far more complex and complete understanding of what Americans actually want President-elect Donald Trump and congressional leaders to do in the upcoming years to advance common needs and goals. Although a substantial number of Americans backed Trump as a force for change, the vast majority of voters did not provide an electoral mandate for political leaders to pursue radical policies that divide the country and undermine the economic standing of American families.

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* GBA Strategies conducted an online survey of 2,000 registered voters who indicated they voted in the November 2016 election. The survey was conducted November 9-14, 2016 among respondents drawn from a custom database of more than six million Americans recruited by phone, online, and through social media. The survey carries a margin of error of 2.2 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level.

Some of the major findings from the poll include:

Half of Donald Trump's voters said they voted for Trump mostly to "shake up the political establishment in Washington" and less than 3 in 10 said they voted mostly for his policy agenda. The survey asked voters what was the most important influence in determining their respective decisions for president presenting each group of voters with three distinct options. A full 50 percent of Trump supporters said, "I wanted to vote for Donald Trump and the chance to shake up the political establishment," compared to only 29 percent of Trump voters who said, "I wanted to vote for the policy agenda of Donald Trump and the Republicans." Just 21 percent of Trump voters reported, "I wanted to vote against Hillary Clinton and everything she stands for."

In contrast, issues and opposition to Trump mattered most for Clinton voters. Forty-four percent of Clinton voters said the most important influence on their vote for president was that, "I wanted to vote for the policy agenda of Hillary Clinton and the Democrats." Another 35 percent of Clinton voters said, "I voted against Donald Trump and everything he stands for," and 20 percent reported, "I wanted to vote for Hillary Clinton and the chance to support the first woman president."

Trump's voters were primarily driven by anti-establishment and anti-elite sentiments. The survey asked all voters whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements designed to measure support for populist and anti-establishment ideas about government, the economy, and society. Although populist sentiments are present in both groups of voters, certain ideas really stand out as important to many Trump supporters.

For example, 50 percent of Trump voters strongly agree, and 91 percent agree in total, with the idea that, "Ordinary people's opinions are more honest and correct than those of experts in politics and the media." In contrast, only 29 percent of Clinton voters strongly agree with this sentiment. Likewise, 77 percent of Trump voters strongly or somewhat agree that, "Globalization and international trade have done more to hurt than to benefit people like me," compared to only 47 percent of Clinton voters.

On the overall integrity and focus of the political system, there is widespread agreement among both Trump and Clinton voters that, "Our government is rigged in favor of the very rich and the very poor, and the middle class gets left behind": 82 percent of Trump voters and 78 percent of Clinton voters back this statement.

There are notable divides between Clinton and Trump voters in terms of openness to rising diversity. Nearly 6 in 10 Clinton voters (57 percent) said they strongly agree with the idea, "I am comfortable living in a more diverse America and being around people who come from a different racial, ethnic, or religious background than me," compared to 27 percent of Trump voters who strongly agree with this idea.

Both Trump and Clinton voters are at odds with congressional Republicans on issues like Social Security and Medicare and corporate taxes. Our poll presented an exhaustive list of issues to assess what was on voters' minds as they decided on their vote and to determine which issues are the most important priorities for them in the upcoming year. Based on a 0 to 10 scale, with 0 meaning the issue should not be a priority for the next president and Congress, and 10 meaning the issue should be one of the highest priorities, the top tier issue priorities—with at least 70 to 80 percent of both Trump and Clinton voters saying that issue should be a priority—are focused on big-ticket items like jobs and the economy, protecting the social safety net, and fighting ISIS and terrorism.

Importantly, Trump and Clinton backers are united in their desire to preserve major governmental social welfare and safety net programs. A full 80 percent of Trump voters and 84 percent of Clinton voters believe "protecting Social Security and Medicare" should be a priority for the next president and Congress. In contrast, Trump and Clinton voters place a noticeably lower priority on the issue of "lowering taxes for corporations": only 49 percent of Trump votes and 33 percent of Clinton voters believe corporate tax reduction should be a priority in the upcoming year.

There is notable alignment between Trump and Clinton voters on progressive issue priorities like equal pay, money in politics, gun violence, and criminal justice reform. Contrary to preconceptions about Trump and Clinton voters, this survey finds surprising agreement between the two groups of voters about what are traditionally thought of as progressive issues. For example, 62 percent of Trump voters and 79 percent of Clinton voters believe "equal pay for equal work" should be a priority for the next administration and Congress. Sixty-nine percent of Trump voters and 67 percent of Clinton voters view "getting special interest money out of politics" as a priority. And although the intensity of support is not as high as it is among Clinton voters, we also find a majority of Trump voters believing that "preventing gun crimes and reducing gun violence" (59 percent) should be a priority for the next president and Congress, and 52 percent feeling similarly about "addressing structural racism and reforming the criminal justice system."

In contrast, a major fissure emerges between the two groups of voters on Trump's signature campaign issue of building a wall along the Mexican border. While 63 percent of Trump voters believe building a wall along the Mexican border should be a priority, 68 percent of Clinton voters say this should *not* be a priority for political leaders.

Strong majorities of both Trump and Clinton voters support a series of concrete proposals to advance economic security for all Americans, to protect our nation, and to repair our systems of government. Although there are some differences in intensity of support, our poll tested 14 distinct policy proposals (full list in the attached poll) and found majority support from both groups of voters on all but one of these issues. The proposals with notable consensus support are:

Invest $1 trillion over the next five years on comprehensive infrastructure needs including physical infrastructure like roads, bridges, airports and public transport; energy infrastructure to increase production and use of clean energy; and human infrastructure to help workers with good jobs that pay decent wages, affordable education, and child care support.
Trump Voters = 88 total support
Clinton Voters = 87 total support

Issue an executive order to help safeguard the integrity of our democratic institutions by requiring government contractors to fully disclose any political spending to the public.
Trump Voters = 84 percent support
Clinton Voters = 91 percent support

Pass legislation to ban congressional committee members from raising money from corporations or special interests that fall under the jurisdiction of their committee.
Trump Voters = 86 percent support
Clinton Voters = 89 percent support

Pass a single package of legislation that enhances border security, modernizes the legal immigration system, and creates a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants provided they register with the government, pay a fine and taxes, learn English, and pass criminal background checks.
Trump Voters = 83 percent support
Clinton Voters = 87 percent support

Pass legislation requiring background checks on all gun sales, including those sold online or at gun shows.
Trump Voters = 82 percent support
Clinton Voters = 93 percent support

Create a national paid family and medical leave program that would provide workers some income for up to 12 weeks of leave from their jobs if they have a new child, face a serious illness, or need to care for a seriously ill family member.
Trump Voters = 68 percent support
Clinton Voters = 89 percent support

Increase federal investments in childcare to ensure that no family in America pays more than 10 percent of its income on high-quality child care.
Trump Voters = 65 percent support
Clinton Voters = 86 percent support

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After a divisive and hard fought election year, American voters across the spectrum want our leaders to take action on concrete measures and priorities to improve their lives and the overall standing of the nation. They do not agree on moving forward with many of the more extreme policies from the campaign cycle, and both President-elect Trump and congressional leaders would be wise to heed the shared priorities identified by their own voters and those on the other side.