

MEMORANDUM

TO: INTERESTED PARTIES
FROM: RAGNAR RESEARCH
SUBJECT: RAGNAR LABS DATA ON VOTER ENTHUSIASM
DATE: 07/14/2026

Voter Enthusiasm as Traditionally Tested Tells Us Very Little

Campaign surveys keep asking voters to rate their interest in an upcoming election on a scale of 1 to 10. We do this because it's a comfort blanket. It's safe because it's how it's always been done. The problem is that when you ask that question to a group of people who have already been screened as likely voters, almost everyone says they're interested, because of course they are. The question tells us what we already know.

The data we're releasing comes from Oregon, but we've seen it replicated across the United States. Across three legislative districts, roughly 80% of likely voters score as "interested" (scores 7-10), with more than half choosing the highest possible score of 10. More importantly, look at the breakdown between Trump and Harris voters: In all three districts, Trump and Harris voters score within a handful of points of each other.

The lack of behavioral variability across Trump and Harris voters carries through other key demographic groups as well. This makes the interest in the election question of little use to campaign professionals.

10-Point Interest in the General Election

	Total	Trump '24	Harris '24
Not Interested (1-4)	5%	4%	4%
Neutral (5-6)	13%	13%	9%
Interested (7-10)	82%	82%	86%
Very Interested (10)	56%	55%	62%

Question text: Please rate your level of interest in this year's general election for United States Senate on a scale from one to ten. One means you definitely are not interested in the general election, five means you might or might not be interested in the general election, and ten means you are definitely interested in the general election.

Behavioral Proxy to Gauge Voter Engagement

We tested two new questions that might actually help campaign professionals make useful decisions about voter enthusiasm:

- How often are you talking with friends, family, or others about the upcoming election?
- Are you talking about the election more or less than in past elections?

Together, these two questions do something the interest scale cannot: they allow us to see how engaged voters are and, more importantly, how voters view that activity relative to past elections.

On the first new question, gauging conversation frequency, responses are spread across all five answer options in roughly equal proportions. This differentiation solves the existing problem of the vast majority of voters telling us that they're interested in the election, leading to data you can't do anything with.

The second question, gauging conversation momentum, starts to see the kind of meaningful differences between voter groups that were invisible on the interest scale. Harris voters are consistently more likely to say their election conversations are increasing (+40 total, +48, +33, +37 per district). Trump voters are much flatter (+15 total, +24, +7, +14 per district).

That gap is a meaningful signal about who is fired up and who may be cooling off.

Talking About Election Frequency

	Total	Trump '24	Harris '24
Daily or nearly every day	 20%	 18%	 24%
A few times a week	 23%	 25%	 23%
A few times a month	 22%	 21%	 22%
Once or twice total	 22%	 25%	 19%
Not at all	 13%	 11%	 13%

Talking About Election More or Less than Previous Elections

	Total	Trump '24	Harris '24
More than usual	 52%	 48%	 60%
Less than usual	 28%	 33%	 20%
Difference	 +25% more	 +15% more	 +40% more

Question text: In the past few months, how often have you talked with friends, family, or others you know about the upcoming election?
 Compared to previous elections, would you say that you are talking with people about this election **ROTATE** more or less **END ROTATION** than usual?
 IF MORE/LESS, ASK: And, would you say that you talk about the election **MUCH** (more/less) or just **SOMEWHAT**?

The Bottom Line

The standard interest scale is a comfort blanket that puts roughly 80% of likely voters into the same “interested” bucket. It mostly proves likely voters are likely voters, and what are you going to do with that?

Conversation frequency and conversation momentum do the job better: behavioral, comparative, harder to fake, and much harder for a respondent to autopilot.

Good survey questions should give meaningful information. Information that makes decisions easier to make. Use these questions to figure out which groups of likely voters are actually pumped up vs just interested in taking a survey. And, as always, give us a call if you want to chat about it.

Appendix

About Ragnar Research

With over 75 years of combined experience in public opinion research, Ragnar Research is proud of our track record of consistent accuracy on behalf of candidates, Fortune 500 companies, global non-profits, and colleges and universities. We have performed research in nearly every state in the US, and every continent except Antarctica. Ragnar Research is a proud member of AAPOR and our extensive body of work reflects our commitment to those values.

Methodology

Interviews were conducted late June through early July, 2026, by live telephone operators, including landlines and cell phones. Interviews include 300 Likely Voters (LVs) per district across a selection of Oregon State Legislative. Quotas on age, gender, education, race/ethnicity, registered party and region were used to ensure a representative distribution. Each study’s margin of error is $\pm 6\%$.