

DATE: May 6, 2024
TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Catalyze/Citizens
REF: Q1 Ad Spending Data Show GOP Doubling Down on Anti-Immigrant Rhetoric

Catalyze/Citizens commissioned [AdImpact](#) to track 2024 political advertising featuring immigration messaging, including data on spending, placement, viewership, and immigration keywords employed by candidates, political action committees, and other groups, across eleven battleground states (AZ, FL, GA, MI, NC, NV, PA, OH, TX, VA, WI). **In the first quarter of 2024, Republican and right-wing candidates and groups outspent Democrats on immigration ads, spending over \$38 million on television broadcast ads in six battleground states** (the amount does not reflect online or other paid communications, such as mailers and text messages).

- In quarter one of 2024, GOP candidates, PACs, and other groups spent **over \$38 million to fund 338 anti-immigrant TV ads across federal, state, and down-ballot races in six battleground states (AZ, MI, NC, OH, TX, WI).**
- The right-wing ads aired **over 84,000 times in critical battleground states (AZ, FL, MI, NC, OH, TX, WI) and were viewed almost 2.3 billion times.**
- The top buzzwords employed in the ads were “[border](#)” (342 mentions), “[crime](#)” (52 mentions), “[crisis](#)” (5 mentions), “[drugs](#)” (9 mentions), and “[wall](#)” (20 mentions).
- Across the ten battleground states (excluding Montana), **Democratic candidates and groups spent \$718,483 on 4 ads that aired 1,058 times.** The ads garnered over 42 million views.
- The majority of immigration ads, across party lines, were placed in North Carolina (40%), Texas (37%), and Ohio (29%).
- In Arizona and Nevada, where immigration is a top issue for voters, Republican candidates and right-wing groups have spent \$3,587 (AZ) and \$0 (NV), respectively, while Democrats have spent \$0 across both states.
- According to AdImpact’s Advocacy & Government Election Advertisements tool, **in Montana, GOP senate candidates have spent a total of \$2,663,029 on anti-immigrant TV ads** which have aired a combined total of 7,930 times and garnered 4.3 million impressions on digital platforms. **Senate Democratic candidate John Tester and Democratically-aligned groups spent a total of \$1,041,873 on TV and digital ads** that aired 11,033 and garnered 2.6 million views.

During the GOP presidential primary, more than \$259 million were spent on ads – [21% of those ads mentioned immigration](#), making the issue the second most discussed in their advertising. AdImpact [projects](#) that over \$10.2 billion will be spent on political advertising this cycle. This Q1 analysis continues to demonstrate that Republican candidates and right-wing groups will continue to use immigration to attack Democrats. They are and have previously outspent Democrats on the issue.

Ceding the issue to Republicans and failing to advertise on immigration is a political misstep. As immigration continues to be a [top issue](#) for voters heading into the November elections, [recent](#)

[Catalyze/Citizens polling](#) shows that President Biden and Democrats have a ripe opportunity to move voters on the issue by expanding legal pathways for Dreamers and long-settled immigrants of mixed-status American families and addressing border security. Most importantly, by delivering their messaging to the voters in paid communications on a balanced approach to immigration and reiterating the threat that Trump and Republican policies (such as family separation and mass deportation) pose to American working families, including immigrant workers, Biden and Democrats can regain trust among voters and mobilize them to the ballot box.

Methodology: AdImpact conducted this research through a team of analysts who watch and label each ad with an issue tag based on its content. After filtering down the ads with the “Immigration” issue tag to only those aired by advertisers in the specified states and races, the analysts used a keyword search of each transcript to determine the total number of ads each term appeared in. (Note: To view any of the ads mentioned in this report, please contact press@catalyzecitizens.org.)