

## The Missing DNC Campaign Autopsy

DNC Chair Ken Martin is taking heat from fellow Democrats for refusing to release the 2024 campaign autopsy. On a recent episode of Pod Save America, host Jon Favreau confronted Martin about the report. Martin said, *"I don't have a time machine...we can't change what happened in '24. The only thing we can do is actually change what happens in the future..."* Favreau asked: *"Why wouldn't you just release it then?"* Martin responded, *"Because we want to keep the focus on the lessons."*

Since the DNC won't release their campaign autopsy, we are re-releasing our [2024 post-election report](#) about what happened. Our report is based on the Winning the Issues Election survey of 1,250 respondents who voted in the 2024 election (November 3-5, 2024) and Edison Research exit polls.

Here are the key takeaways from the election:

**1.) Democrats' proportion of the electorate significantly dropped to a historic low, making Democrats de facto the third party in this election.** Democrats went from 37% of the Presidential electorate in 2020 to 31% in 2024, a 6-point drop.

**2.) For the first time since the Watergate era, independents surpassed one of the major political parties to rank second in terms of party identification.** Independents went from 27% in 2020 to 34% in 2024, a significant 7-point increase.

**3.) Republicans had a +4 party ID advantage at the presidential level, after not having any advantage in the ten prior presidential elections.**

- Republicans had a presidential party ID advantage over Democrats in all seven competitive states, and independents were a larger portion of the electorate than Democrats in five of those states.
- These shifts were significant positives for Republicans at the Congressional level, who were able to sustain their 2022 party ID advantage of +3 points as independents surpassed Democrats, who fell to third place as a portion of the Congressional electorate as well.

**4.) The top voter priority was the economy, not abortion.**

- The first election of Trump in 2016 was a rejection of the status quo and political establishment. The 2024 election was a rejection of the policy direction of the Biden-Harris administration. The view of the economy was extremely negative. The overwhelming majority said inflation had been a hardship, and a large portion of the electorate said their financial situation had gotten worse in the last four years.
- While Democrats tried to focus on abortion to take attention off the economy, in the end, polls showed Biden's negative job approval overwhelmed the Harris messaging and tied her to his record.
- The electorate's prioritizing of the candidate attributes of leadership and change —which Trump won decisively—helped overcome his negative image in voter decision-making.

**5.) Democrats lost ground with a variety of key voter groups.**

- Harris could not sustain Biden's performance with independents. He won them by 13 points; her margin was only 3.
- Trump won 46% of Hispanics, a significant increase from 32% in 2020.
- Among women, the margin for Harris was only +8, compared to +15 for Biden in 2020 and +13 for Clinton in 2016.

Read more in our full report [here](#) for additional details on the factors in voter decision-making, views of the candidates and campaign messaging.

Have a good weekend.

*David & Myra*