Re: MAHA Audiences & Framework
Date: September 19, 2025

There are many potential audiences who could be persuaded by candidates who can align with certain MAHA policies. Case and point: [Republican polling](#) found that 14% of undecided 2026 voters would be more likely to vote for a MAHA candidate than a MAGA candidate, representing about 2.8 million voters.

Since several MAHA-adjacent policies are extremely popular across different demographic groups, targeting here can be broad, and should largely depend on the demographic makeup of a state or district.

The memo below outlines a few audiences and their key health policy priorities: **right-leaning mothers, young Latinos,** and **politically disengaged voters.**

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1. Right-Leaning Mothers

Key Issues	Food health and safety, pesticides, failures of health agencies under RFK
Lower Priority/Polarizing Issues	Vaccines
Trusted Information Sources	Doctors and nurses, church leaders, social network
Population Estimates	~7M nationally, ~1.16M in competitive 2026 house districts

Demographic Overview:

- Right-leaning mothers (those with children under 18 who are Republican-leaning but not strong Republicans) are highly supportive of the MAHA movement: 72% say they are very or somewhat aligned, compared to 39% of voters overall.

- These voters are conservative and generally supportive of Trump - nearly all of them voted for him in 2024. Their support is tenuous, however: only 18% strongly approve of the job he has done so far.

- Demographically, most of these mothers are white (89%), married (73%), have full- or part-time employment (71%), and are middle-income ($60,000-$200,000 household). More than half are college graduates.

- Women overall are more open to party switching for a MAHA-aligned candidate: 72% of female Trump voters would consider voting (or are unsure about their vote) for a Democrat who champions that MAHA agenda, compared to 59% of male Trump voters.

- This is even more the case for this subset of right-leaning mothers: **91% would consider voting (or are unsure about their vote) for a Democrat who champions that MAHA agenda.** Just 9% would not consider supporting a MAHA-aligned Democrat - which is again notable because nearly all of these voters supported Trump in 2024.

Key Findings

1. **Food health & safety priorities**

   - **Right-leaning mothers are most supportive of MAHA policies that are related to food safety, particularly concerns over synthetic food dyes and pesticides.** Concerns about additives in food may also be compelling, though they do not test as well in this polling.

Support for RFK Policies	All Voters	Right-Leaning Mothers	Trump Voters
Synthetic food dyes pose health risks	66	**81**	80
Pesticides pose health risks	77	**79**	78
Move oversight and regulation of additives	83	77	90
Dietary guidelines need reform	62	**72**	76
Autism is public health emergency	39	57	55
Childhood vaccines linked to autism	22	**55**	41
Fluoride leads to health problems	35	44	47
US should leave the WHO	26	36	52

   - **Banning pesticides** could be a particularly salient issue for this subset. 93% support banning pesticides that Europe has already prohibited because of health risks – a higher rate of support than nearly any other demographic group, though the issue is popular across the board.

   - In other YouGov polling, **banning processed foods** from public school lunches also saw high support across most demographics, and could be compelling for further research with this audience of mothers.

- Recent [polling from KFF](#) found that parents believe highly processed foods are the second largest threat posed to their children's health, trailing only social media. 68% said that they were the biggest threat or a major threat.

2. **Attitudes toward HHS under RFK**

- This audience has long held **mistrust of governmental health agencies**. Before Trump entered office and RFK became head of HHS, [YouGov](#) found that minorities of Republicans and Independents had a favorable opinion of the CDC, NIH, HHS, and the FDA (though the FDA was most popular).

- [Polling from KFF](#) found that **Republican faith in governmental health agencies has not increased since Trump and RFK took office.** Just 41% of Republican parents trust these agencies on vaccines, 35% trust the agencies to make decisions based on scientific evidence rather than views of agency officials, and just 30% trust them to act independently, without interference. Despite the changed leadership at these agencies, self-identified MAGA supporters still have less trust in them than non-MAGA voters.

- [Earlier KFF polling](#) found that just 15% of independents and 27% of Republicans think that recent cuts to federal health agencies will improve food safety. Even fewer think that these cuts will improve cancer research or combatting infectious diseases.

- Relatedly, opinions of RFK have not improved among this audience, and are starting to show signs of strain. Though 57% of right-leaning mothers approve of RFK overall, just 13% strongly approve. This is compared to a 79% approval rate among all Trump voters, with 43% strongly approving of RFK.

- **Respondents distinguished between support for MAHA policies and their views of RFK's implementation.**

3. **Mixed response with vaccine messaging**

- This audience is somewhat vaccine-skeptical, and is likely to hold more extreme views on vaccine safety (particularly the COVID-19 vaccine for children) than the average voter.

- 55% believe that childhood vaccines may be linked to autism - this is a higher share than Trump voters or Republicans overall.

- [Polling from KFF](#) found that *non-MAGA Republican parents* (a somewhat similar group) remain highly supportive of the MMR (94% say important) and polio vaccine (92%). However, fewer than half feel that flu or COVID vaccines are important for their children. **Just 35% believe that COVID vaccines are safe for children.**

- Overall, 43% of non-MAGA Republican parents say that they are pro-vaccine, and just 5% say they are anti-vaccine. Vaccine-related messaging showed potential to be polarizing. These respondents expressed concern about vaccines but were not firmly anti-vaccine, suggesting the issue is complex and potentially divisive across different audiences.

Key Messengers

- Among medical professions, [YouGov](#) found that this audience has much more trust in **doctors** and **nurses** than medical researchers, public health officials, and therapists. 88% of Trump supporters, 85% of women, and 83% of independents trust that nurses will act in their best interests; trust in doctors is similar. On the other hand, just 43% of Trump voters and 53% of independents trust public health officials.

- Right-leaning mothers are more likely to regularly attend church than other voters - 32% attend church at least a few times a month. For these voters, **church leaders** may be effective messengers, especially on issues of childhood well-being.

- Like others, the most trusted messengers are often **friends and family**. For mothers, this can extend to the online and offline networks of other mothers.

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2. Young Latinos

Key Issues	Environmental health, clean air and water
Lower Priority Issues	Pesticides and agricultural regulation, fluoride in water
Trusted Information Sources	Doctors, nurses, pharmacists, journalists
Population Estimates	~18M eligible Latino voters under 40; ~3-4M in competitive 2026 house districts

Demographic Overview:

- Overall, Latinos are among the most aligned demographic group with the MAHA movement, and the most open to supporting a candidate from an opposition party who is aligned with the MAHA movement.
    - Among Democrats and Independents, 42% of Latino voters are somewhat or very aligned with the MAHA movement, compared to just 28% of white Democrats and Independents.
    - Among Republicans, 89% of Latino voters are somewhat or very aligned with the MAHA movement, compared to 71% of white Republicans.

- **Age:** Latino voters under 40 are far more aligned with the MAHA movement than those over 40:
    - 57% of Latinos under 40 say they are aligned with the MAHA movement; just 36% of Latinos over 40 say they are aligned.
    - 75% of Latinos under 40 would support a candidate from another party who prioritizes popular MAHA issues.
    - 40% of Latinos under 40 would support a Democrat who champions RFK's MAHA agenda, the highest support rate of any age/ethnicity combo.

- **Gender**: Latino men and women are *both* open to candidates aligned with parts of the MAHA movement. Young Latino men are very open to supporting a MAHA candidate from the opposing party (82%) - slightly more open than young Latina women. **In general, women make up more of the prospective audience for a MAHA-oriented Democrat, but Latino men are an important exception to that rule.**

Messaging Framework

1. **Environmental health ranked higher than food safety**

    - In public [YouGov polling](), **Latino voters and young voters were more likely to pick air and water quality as a top government health priority, and less likely to pick food safety**, as compared to other demographic groups. 89% of Latino voters surveyed in November, 2024 said that it was important for the government to address air and water quality.

    - In [polls]() stretching back to 2016, Latino voters have consistently been strong supporters of clean air and water, more than other racial or ethnic groups. Across polls, there is ~90% support among Latino voters for enforcing and strengthening

the Clean Water Act and 85% support for reducing smog and air pollution. Latinos are most likely to be impacted by extreme weather (56%) and are overrepresented in industries most impacted by the environment.

- Many food and food safety issues - additives, processed foods, synthetic food dyes, and reformed dietary guidelines - are still popular with young Latino voters, but they are not top among potential messages. This differs from other audiences outlined in this memo.
    - Latino voters are least likely to believe that processed foods are driving the obesity epidemic.
    - Latino voters are most likely to [report](#) being in good health.

- There is some [evidence](#) that messaging around pesticides is less useful in winning over Latino voters. They are less likely than other groups to have concerns about pesticide use, and less likely to support regulation of pesticides in agriculture.

2. Limited focus on regulation

- Latino voters are generally less likely to support additional regulation of health-related industries, as compared to other voters:
    - [YouGov polling](#) found that Latino voters were least likely to want more regulation of the health insurance industry - just 50% wanted more regulation, versus 64% of voters overall).
    - This extended to other health-related industries: the health care industry (52% wanted more regulation), the food and beverage industry (48%), the grocery industry (41%), and the agriculture industry (41%).

3. Lower awareness of some MAHA policies

- Young Latinos have high rates of uncertainty about:
    - Their alignment with MAHA (28% unsure)
    - Their approval of RFK (32% unsure)
    - Their support for a MAHA Republican (48% unsure) or Democrat (42% unsure)

- In [YouGov/Economist polling](#), Latino voters were also most likely to have "somewhat favorable" views of the MAHA movement (rather than "very favorable" or "very unfavorable" views). The lack of intensity also suggests that it will take some work to bring this issue to the forefront and change vote preferences.

- **While these voters showed openness to MAHA issues, awareness levels varied, suggesting the issues are not yet top-of-mind for many** We know that persuadable voters are least likely to pay close attention to politics, so that work must extend beyond traditional news sources and official channels. Those methods are unlikely to reach persuadable voters of all kinds, and even less likely to reach young Latino voters.

4. **Divergent views on fluoride and other contested issues**

- Young Latino voters - as compared to other audiences outlined in this memo - share more of the "extreme" (and less popular) MAHA beliefs. In particular, voters have concerns about fluoride in water.
   - These issues are generally *not* popular with other persuadable audiences, and risk some backlash.
   - Concerns about fluoride are particularly prevalent in the Latino community - even before RFK took office, 39% of Latino voters supported removing fluoride from public water supplies.

Support for RFK Policies	All Voters	Young Latinos	Young Voters, Not Latino
Move oversight and regulation of additives	83	71	84
Synthetic food dyes pose health risks	66	65	61
Pesticides pose health risks	77	60	66
Dietary guidelines need reform	62	57	58
Fluoride leads to health problems	35	48	39
Autism is public health emergency	39	40	32
US should leave the WHO	26	28	18
Childhood vaccines linked to autism	22	17	15

- In KFF's most recent survey of parents, **Latino parents reported high vaccine confidence** as compared to other groups: 87% were confident in the safety of the polio vaccine, 87% were confident in the MMR vaccine, 69% were confident in the flu vaccine, and 49% were confident in the safety of COVID-19 vaccine for children. For each of these, Latinos reported more trust in vaccine safety than any other racial group.

Key Messengers

- RFK is not a trusted source for young Latino voters. While many support MAHA policies, just 8% strongly approve of RFK.

- Even prior to the Trump administration, [polling](#) found that Latino voters had less favorable views of governmental health agencies: CDC (59% favorable), NIH (53% favorable), HHS (59%), FDA (58%), as compared to other groups. Latino voters also reported lower trust in public health officials.

- The best MAHA messengers may include individual providers: **doctors** (79% trust), **nurses** (76% trust), and **pharmacists** (73% trust). Other [broader research](#) on Latino persuasion has found that journalists can also be particularly effective messengers - this may be especially helpful for messaging around environmental health.

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3. Politically Disengaged Voters

Key Issues	Failure of Trump administration on MAHA issues, regulation of pharmaceutical and food industry
Lower Priority Issues	"MAHA" umbrella branding
Trusted Information Sources	Health influencers, friends and family
Population Estimates	~69M nationally, ~11M in competitive 2026 house districts

Demographic Overview:

- **Politically disengaged voters are difficult to poll, and difficult to message.** They are, however, an increasingly important set of swing voters. Democratic support among new voters and those who did not vote in the previous presidential election has declined every cycle since 2012. **In 2024, support among this group dropped below 50% for the first time in decades.**

- Demographically, disengaged voters tend to be younger, politically independent, less likely to have a college degree, and lower income. Estimates differ by poll, but they are about half white, 20% Black, and 20% Latino.

- These voters moved away from Democrats in recent years, but they have low Trump approval ratings (26% approval, just 9% strongly approve), despite a majority voting for Trump.

- They also have low RFK approval ratings (25%), though even more have no opinion (33%, as compared to 17% of voters overall). Though he has waned in popularity, RFK did overperform with these voters in the 2024 election - about half of his supporters were part of this group.

- MAHA issues may be a motivating message for some of these voters *if* they know about them: 75% would be open to voting for a candidate from the opposing party who prioritized popular MAHA policies - 10 points more likely than voters overall.

- One additional thing to keep in mind: **many of these voters will not vote in 2026, and so persuasion effects will be small if they are not followed with mobilization efforts.**

Messaging Framework

MAHA issues have the potential to motivate these voters if they are couched in a general anti-establishment frame. Many disengaged voters are skeptical of the government and government systems. For these voters, it will be important to tie popular MAHA issues to government failures of the past and present, and then present a new way forward. **Additional research with this group could help refine understanding of how health policy priorities motivate political engagement.**

1. **Critical views of the current administration to improve health and safety**

   - Overall, disengaged voters have **low approval of the Trump administration**, despite breaking for him in 2024. Only 9% strongly approve of Trump's job in office.

   - In public polling, **belief that "the federal government keeps me safe" has greatly decreased among disengaged voters** - from 40-50% during the Biden administration to 29% in the Trump administration.

   - Disengaged voters have the least faith in government agencies - both before RFK became the head of HHS and after.
     - Though not a complete proxy, YouGov polling found that independent voters, who are overall less engaged in politics, had the lowest favorability ratings of the CDC (19% strongly favorable), NIH (14%), HHS (14%), and the FDA (13%).

- Though there is general mistrust in government, [overall](#) 72% of voters believe that an expert and non-political federal workforce is critical to our county's wellbeing.

- Though many of these voters did not track the recent firing of the CDC director, recent polling found that it was not popular among most audiences of disengaged voters: just 20% of political moderates and 18% of non-voters approved of the decision. [Similarly,](#) just 21% of moderates approved of the firing of the CDC Immunization Advisory Committee.

2. **Support for regulation & combatting corporate influence**

- Despite a general anti-government tilt of disengaged voters, they are **in favor of more regulation of some industries**. 93% prefer a candidate who promises to remove chemicals linked to cancer and infertility, even if some regulations increase. This is higher than the rate of voters overall.

- Of all of the MAHA issues polled, the most compelling to this group was that "there should be more oversight and regulation when it comes to additives in our food" (78% support).

- **Regulation of the pharmaceutical industry** could also be a compelling issue for these voters. Outside [polling](#) found this issue was popular across the board, including support from 64% of Independents and 75% of young people. Voters thought the pharmaceutical industry was most in need of more regulation, but also supported **more regulation of the health insurance industry, the health care industry,** and the **food and beverage industry.**

- The food industry may also be an effective target for disengaged voters. In recent [NBC polling](#), voters identified the food industry as deserving of the most blame for chronic health problems. This was particularly true for young voters, while older voters were more likely to blame "the choices of individuals."

3. **Focus on specific policies vs. MAHA umbrella**

- Unlike the other audiences in this memo, **putting these issues under the "MAHA" umbrella** does not really increase support. Knowledge of the MAHA movement is generally low (31% have no opinion of the movement, and just 29% have a strong opinion of the movement). **Certain underlying MAHA policies are popular, and messaging should focus on those without the MAHA labeling.**

- Though there is lower intensity of support as compared to other groups, key MAHA policies remain very popular for this very persuadable part of the electorate. **Oversight and regulation of additives, concerns about pesticides,** and **risks of synthetic food dyes** all tested very well with disengaged voters.

Support for RFK Policies	All Voters	Politically Disengaged	Trump Voters	Harris Voters
Move oversight and regulation of additives	83	**78**	90	81
Pesticides pose health risks	77	**73**	78	78
Synthetic food dyes pose health risks	66	**64**	80	54
Dietary guidelines need reform	62	54	76	55
Fluoride leads to health problems	35	38	47	17
Autism is public health emergency	39	37	55	26
Childhood vaccines linked to autism	22	18	41	8
US should leave the WHO	26	17	52	7

Key Messengers

We are lacking good polling on who might be a good messenger for this group on MAHA issues specifically. Based on other polling, there are some types of messengers that are more persuasive with disengaged voters across the board:

- Because disengaged voters are more likely to get their news from social media, **health and wellness influencers** may be helpful in both researching and persuading this audience.

- Disengaged voters often identify **friends and family** as their most trusted source of political information. This can be difficult for large-scale outreach, but does lend itself to on-the-ground organizing and outreach and relational organizing.

- **RFK is not particularly popular** - in part because he is in the government. However, he once had significant support from disengaged voters. If distanced from the current administration, RFK could be a compelling voice.

- **Official sources are going to be less persuasive for this group** since there is so much mistrust of these institutions. This includes most mainstream media sources and official government sources.