



# ONE COUNTRY

Q3 2022 Quarterly Rural Media Analysis

October 2022

# Audience Overview

1

## **Rural v. National Traditional Media Coverage Analysis**

*Deep dive into coverage topics in rural outlets and in national top outlets understanding similarities and differences in areas of coverage and the two media landscapes.*

2

## **Rural Traditional Media v. Rural Social Media**

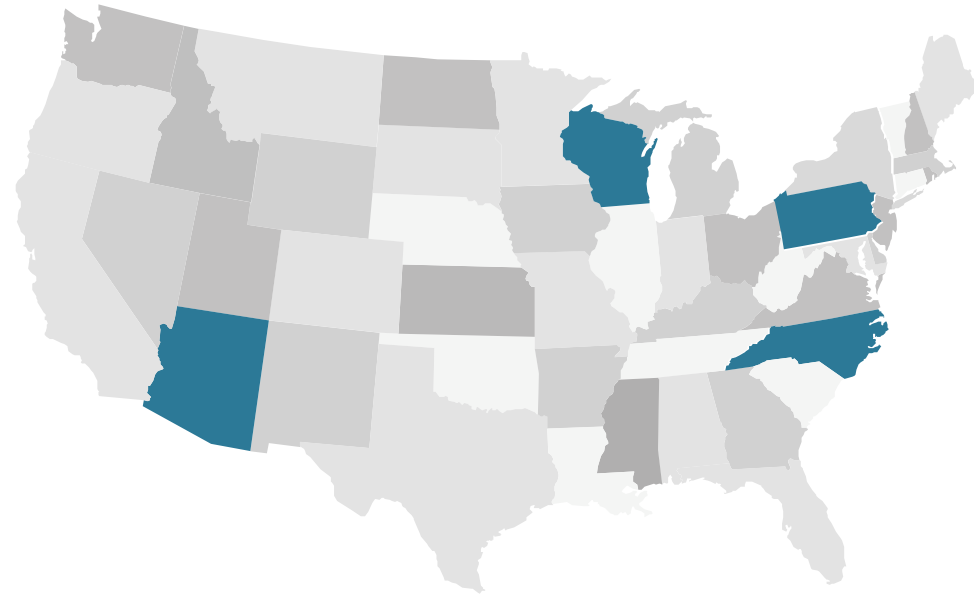
*Understanding areas of coverage and how topics translate from one medium to the other and may impact the discourse in rural communities.*

3

## **Rural Social Media Issue Deep Dive**

*A deep dive into hot topics of the quarter and discussions on social media among rural populations. The Q3 2022 analysis centers around issues of Inflation, Climate and Energy, and Abortion.*

# Audience Methodology



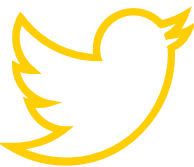
## Traditional Media Rural Outlet Criteria

- Outlet is located within a county that meets the below criteria:
- Population is less than 200,000 residents
  - Won by President Trump in 2020 election
  - Coverage was analyzed from more than 200 newspaper outlets located in key rural counties



## Social Media Rural Audience Criteria

- Twitter users that meet the below criteria:
- Geo-tagged in Arizona, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, or Wisconsin
  - Unverified
  - Do not self-describe as members of the media
  - Are not Geo-tagged in major metro areas connected to most populated 200 U.S. cities



# Rural v. National

*Traditional Media Coverage Analysis*

The logo features the text "ONE COUNTRY" in white, bold, uppercase letters. The text is superimposed on a horizontal rectangular image of a golden field under a blue sky with light clouds.

ONE COUNTRY

# Media Coverage Key Findings



## 1 **Key moments of national policy have become central to rural media coverage as the midterms approach**

Coverage of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and news surrounding state and federal abortion policy have moved from the outside perimeter of coverage in Q2 to central focus areas tightly connected to the rest of rural coverage in Q3. Coverage of the IRA was largely event driven covering proceedings and milestones, while news on abortion included a broader set of news and opinion editorials. Abortion stories focused on ongoing activities in other states and repercussions as well as personal stories of consequences and effects women are facing.

## 2 **Immigration emerged as a key coverage area in both rural and national coverage following news on busing**

Though it is often an underlying theme of other coverage areas, Q3 is the first time we have seen immigration issues distinctly separate out from the coverage network. Both rural and national news focused on migrant influxes in sanctuary cities including buses and planes full of migrants arriving in these cities. Opinions woven into rural coverage focused on this influx of migrants and under-resourced cities receiving them as a failure of Biden's decision to lift Title 42.

## 3 **Election and voting coverage was of greater focus in rural outlets closely following primaries and election integrity**

Coverage of primary results played an outsized role in rural media coverage as results were reported, and then fed into future speculation of effects. The Wisconsin gubernatorial race was of particular interest in coverage as well as critical analysis of the performance of Trump-backed candidates in their primaries. Election integrity also played a key role following closely the review of 2020 results in 3 PA counties and individuals like Doug Frank spreading doubt on the process.

## 4 **Climate and environment concerns grew as heat waves, droughts, wildfires, and floods hit**

Coverage of wildfires and droughts played a key role in rural coverage drawing a connection from these events to broader climate concerns and need for action. International heat waves were also covered in both national and rural coverage as efforts to limit electricity use in the United Kingdom and California were highlighted. National coverage also focused on the impact of flooding in national parks while rural coverage focused on more local flooding concerns and flash flood storms.

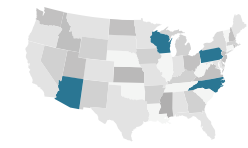
## 5 **COVID-19 has become a supporting story line and not a distinct focus in rural news.**

Coverage of COVID-19 news including booster guidance and news of President Biden testing positive fell within broader areas of health coverage including stories on flu shot guidance and connection to stroke prevention, and emerging science on mental health and panic attack treatment.

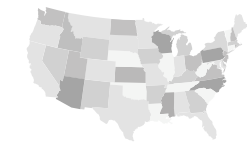


# Rural v. Top National Coverage Topics

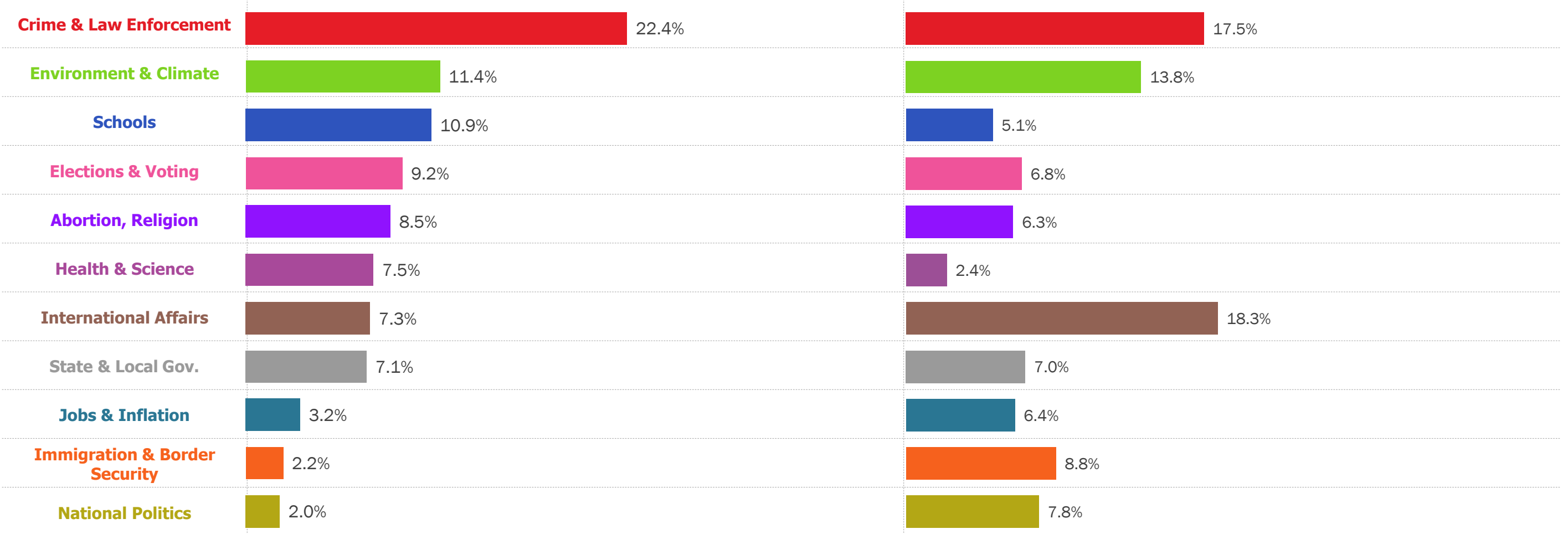
Coverage topic areas largely aligned over Q3 2022. Notable exceptions included a larger focus on schools in rural outlets and a larger focus on inflation in national outlets.



Rural Outlets



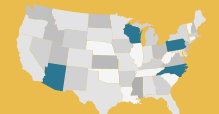
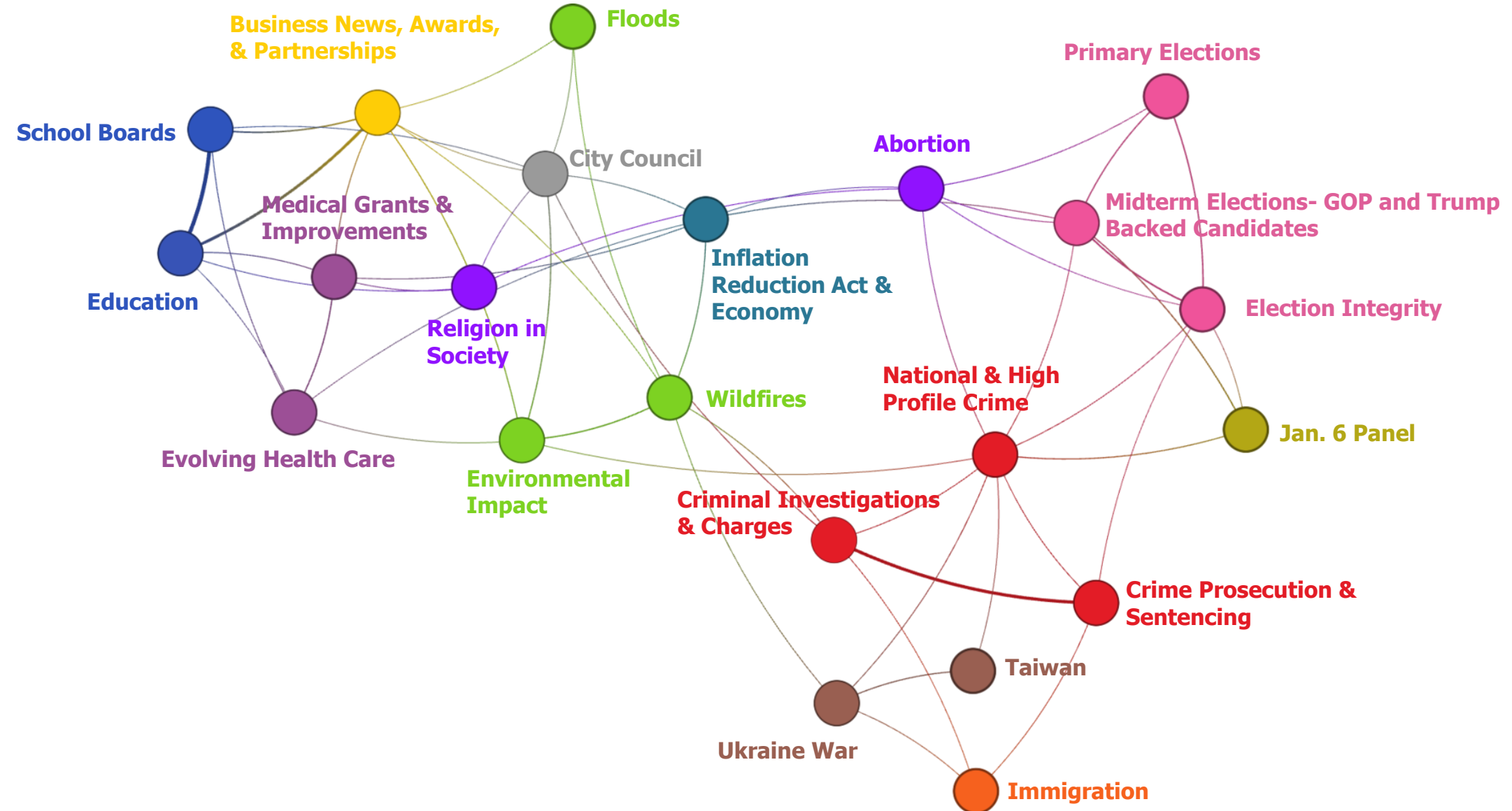
National Top Outlets





# Rural Outlet Coverage Map

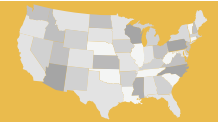
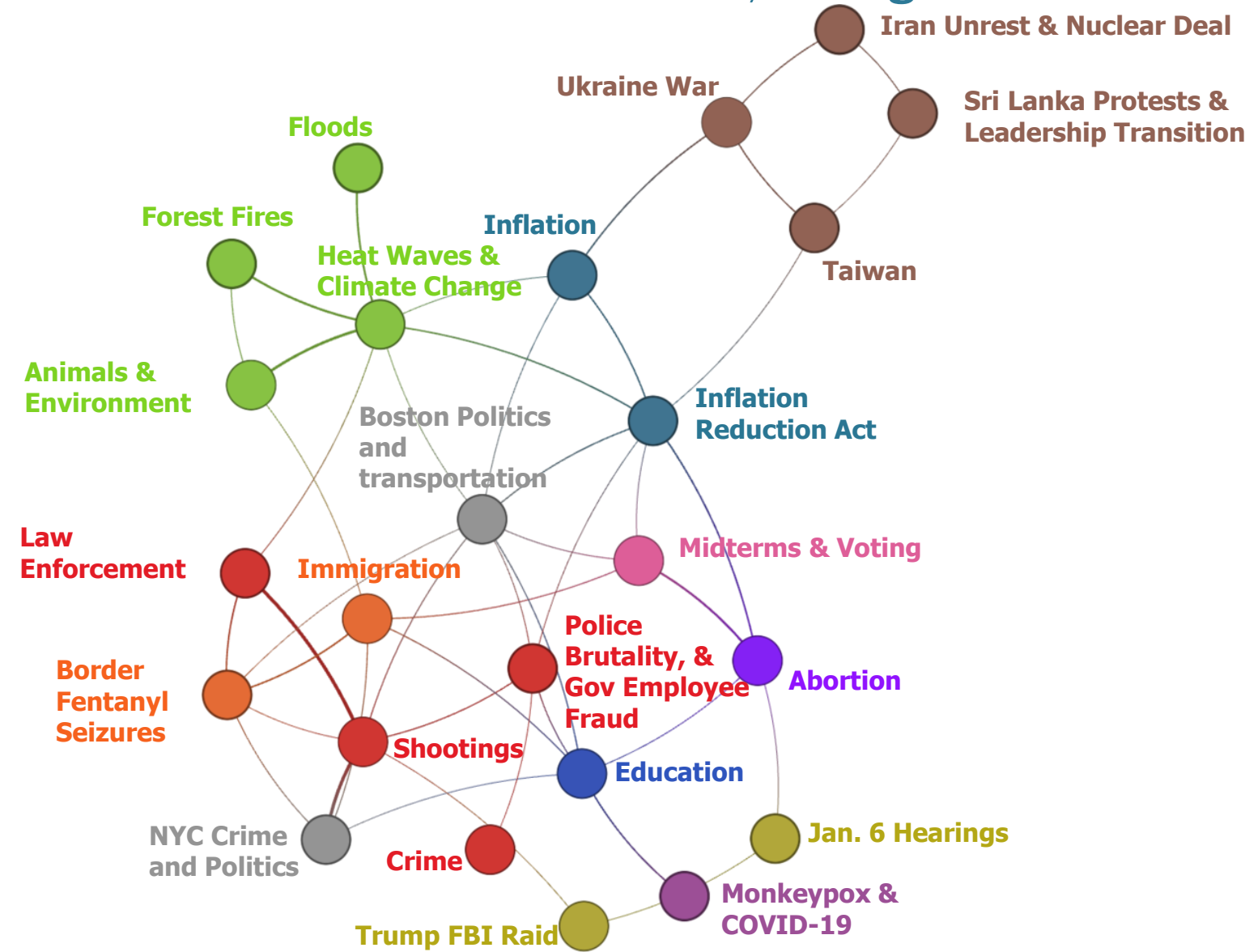
The central locations of the Inflation Reduction Act and Abortion show strong alignment and focus on what is going on in Washington as the midterms approach.





# National Top Outlet Coverage Map

Focus on international affairs increased in volume in quarter 3, but disconnected from central coverage areas focused on the midterm elections, immigration and the Inflation Reduction Act.





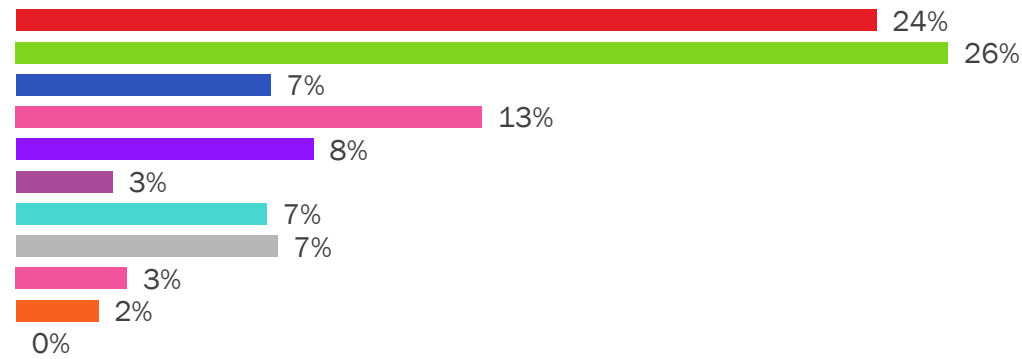


# Media Coverage Key Findings

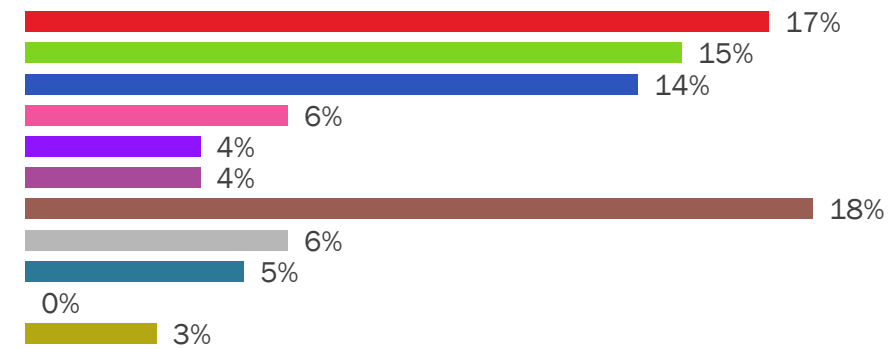
## Rural Coverage by State

Crime led news coverage across states while climate and energy gained traction following natural disaster news.

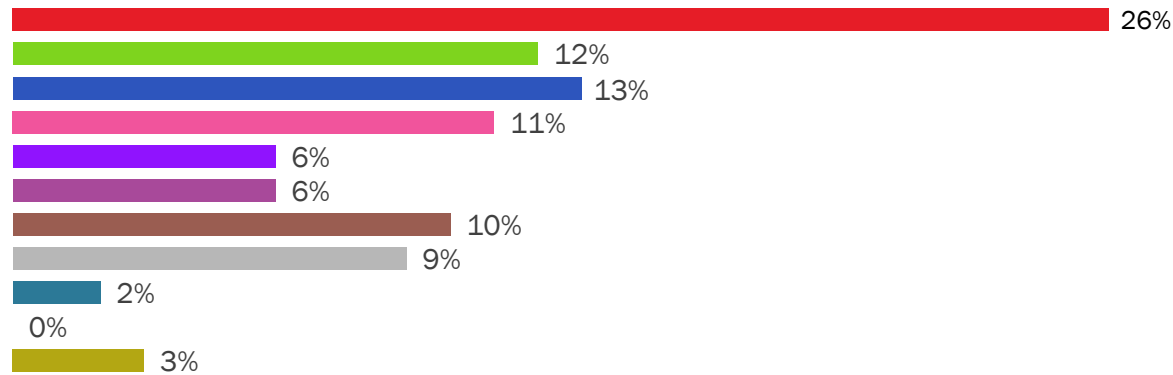
### Arizona



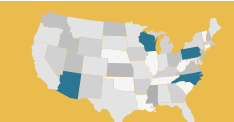
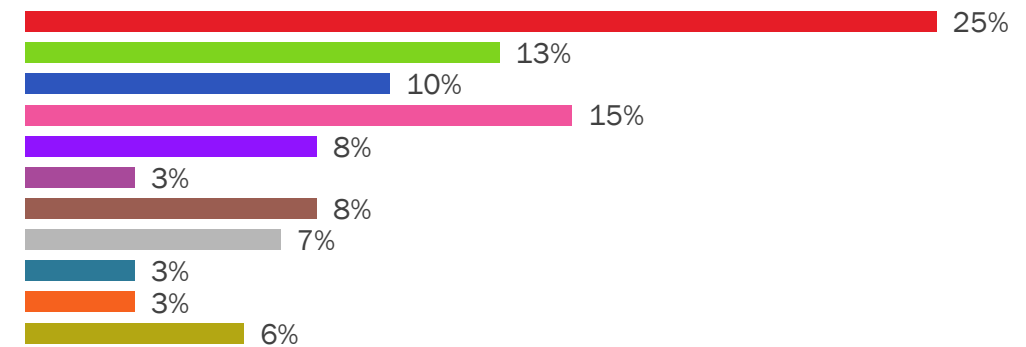
### North Carolina



### Pennsylvania

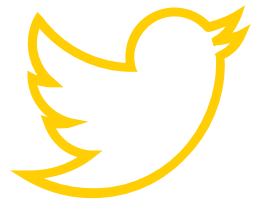


### Wisconsin



# Social Media Analysis

*Focus on Inflation, Energy & Climate, and Abortion*



# Rural Traditional Media v. Rural Social Media

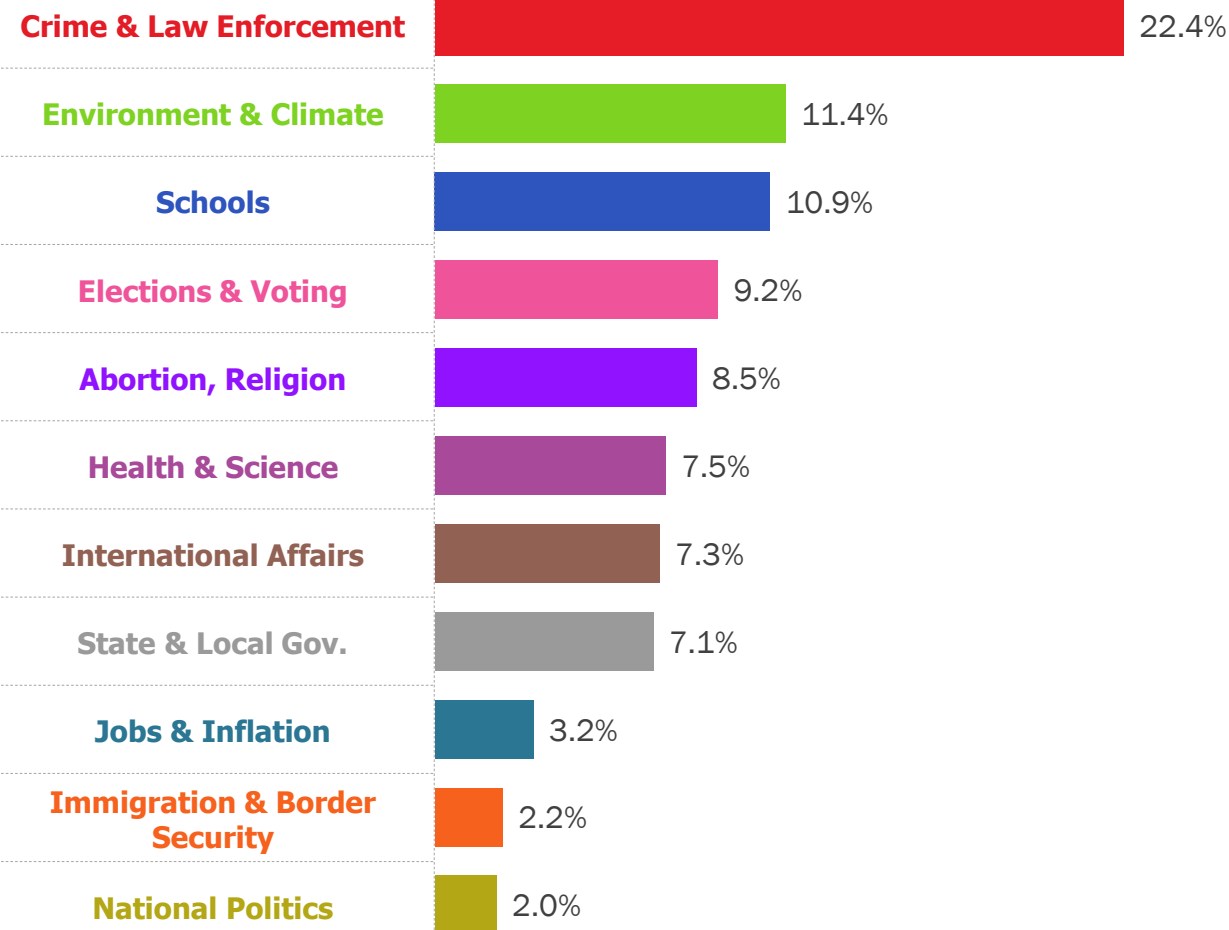
Discussion of upcoming elections and the state of the economy emerged as primary focus on social media.



## Rural Outlet Media Coverage

Share of overall coverage by topic

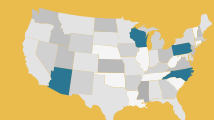
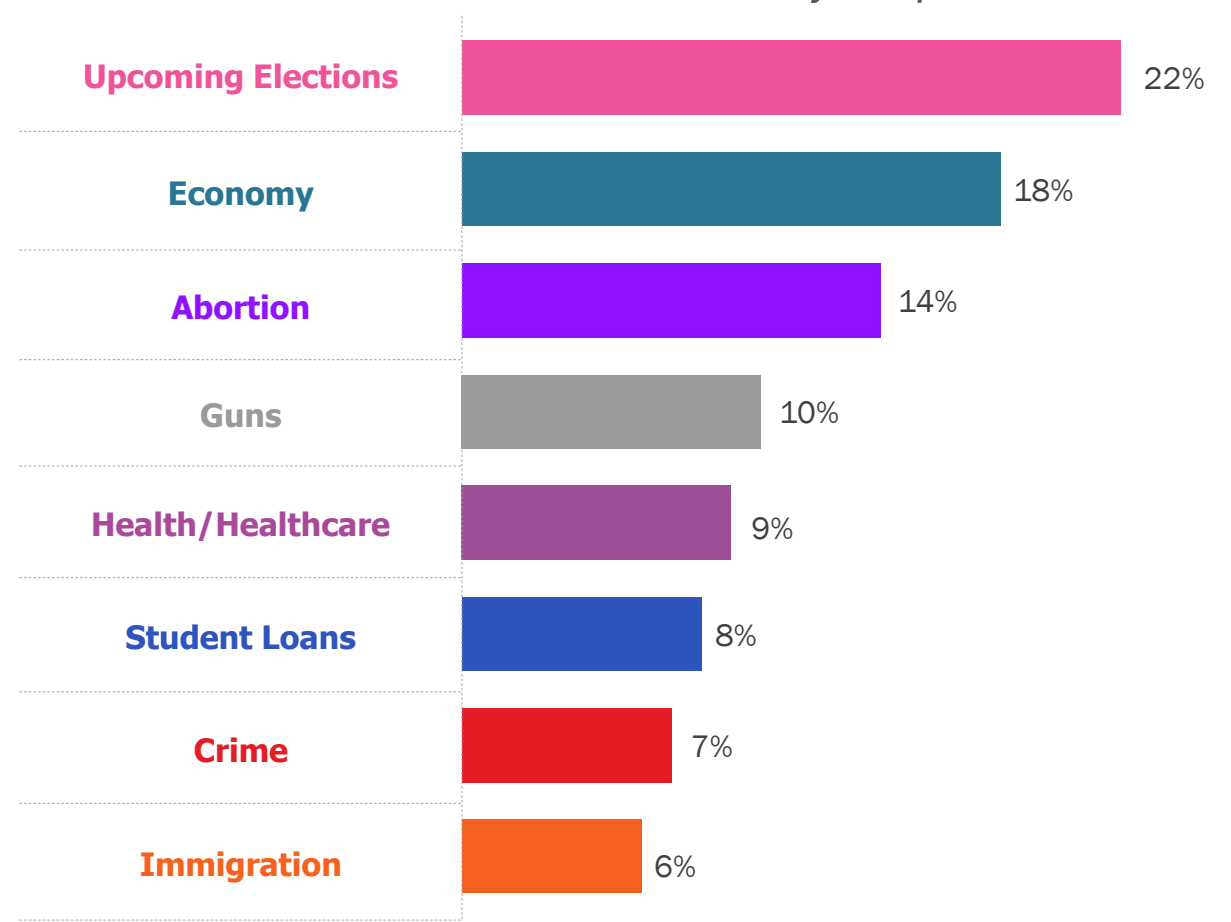
*Courtesy of FTP Insights*



## Rural Social Media

Share of political conversation by topic

*Courtesy of Impact Social*



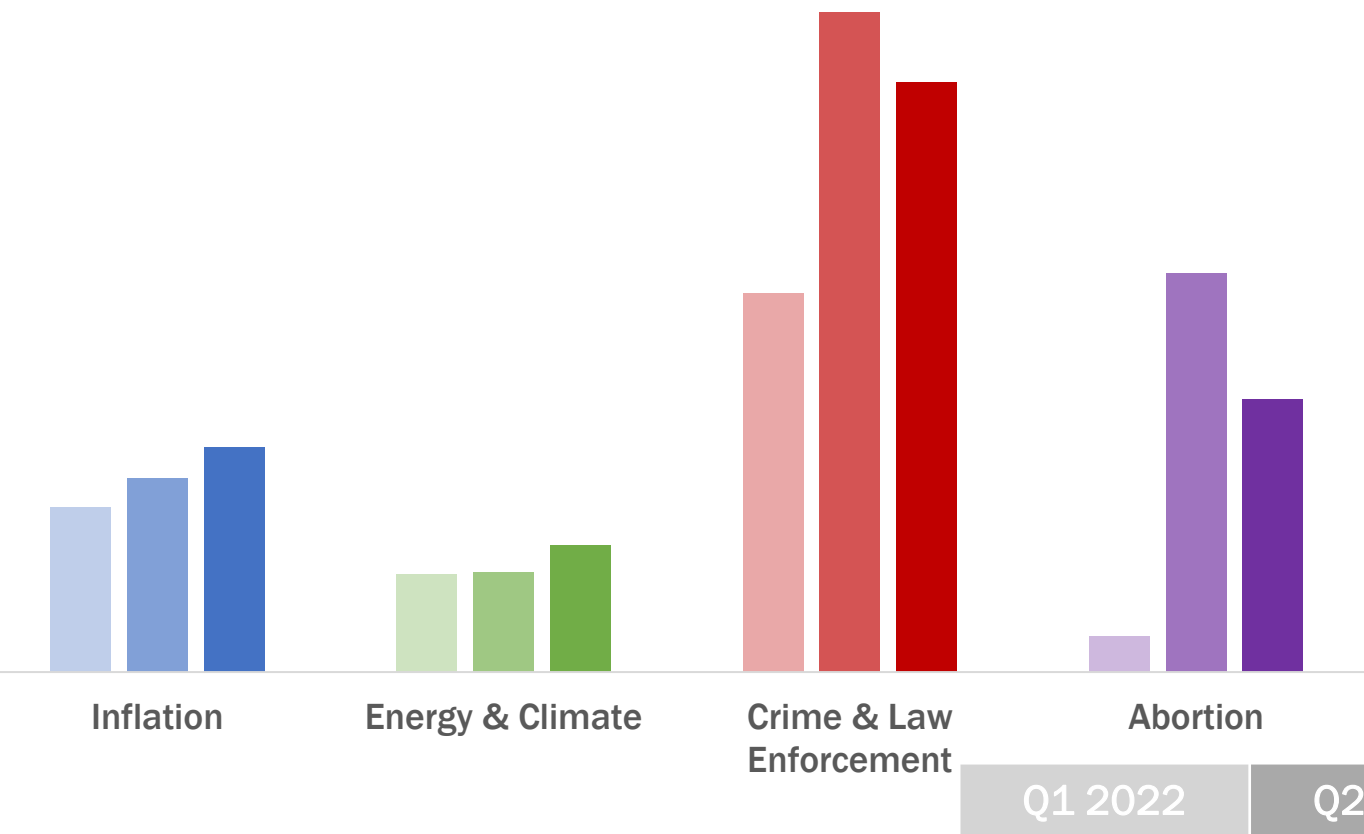


# Social Conversation on Key Issues

Inflation conversation grew slightly in both rural and urban social media conversations while other key topics decreased. Notably, abortion conversations remained more resilient in rural than urban conversations.

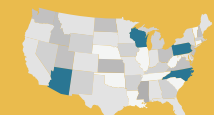
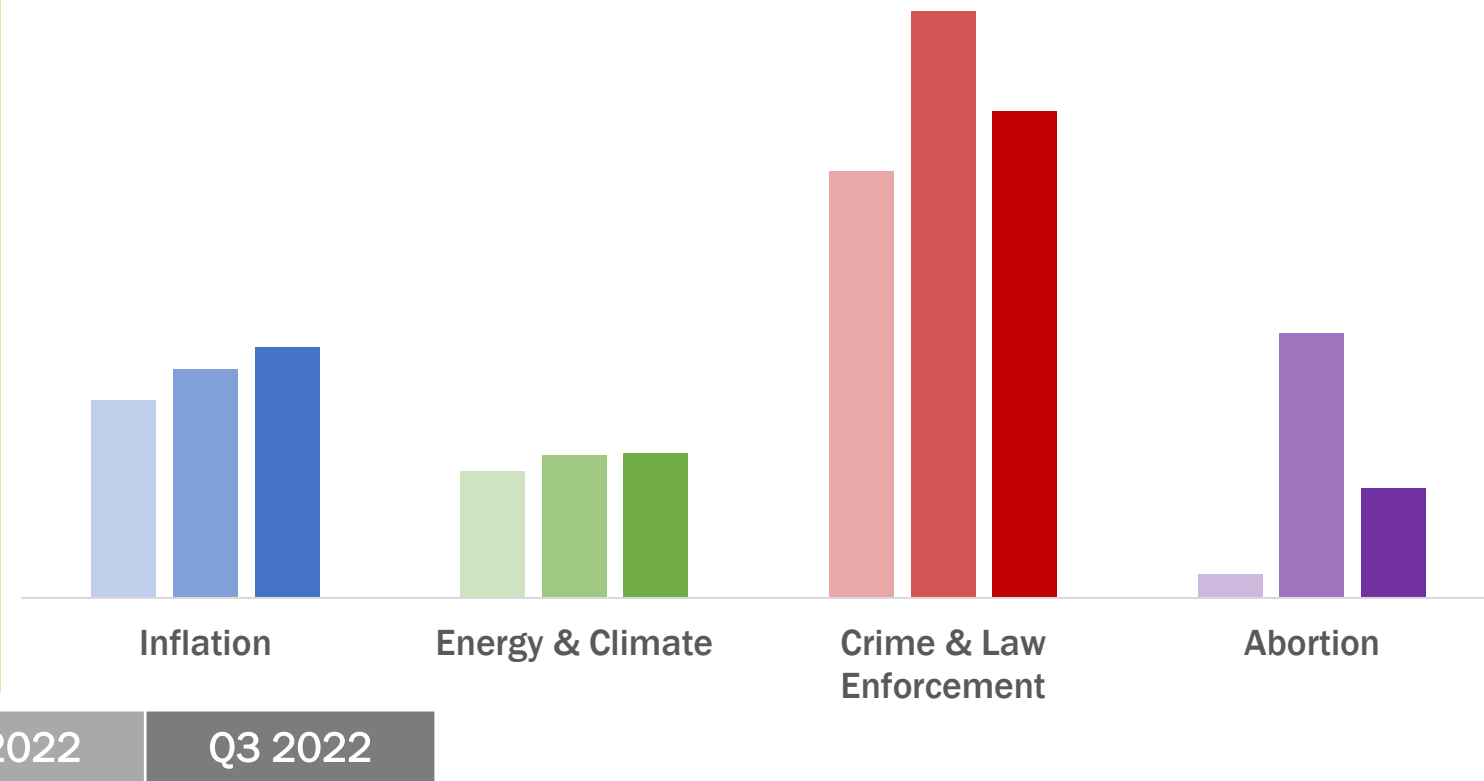
## Rural Social Media Topics

Change in Share of Overall Twitter Conversation by Issue and Quarter

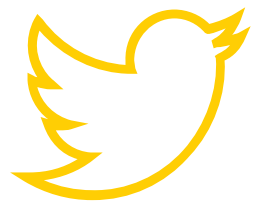


## Urban Social Media Topics

Change in Share of Overall Twitter Conversation by Issue and Quarter



# Abortion

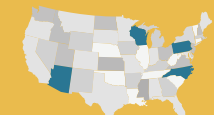




# Abortion Highlights

Conversation shifted to urgency around the midterm elections and discussing extreme policy initiatives and stances of individual politicians.

- Ties of abortion to urgency in midterm elections was the key focus of social media conversation in Q3. Conversation centered around the words and beliefs of specific candidates, campaign messaging, and painting the picture of an extremist GOP agenda.
- Pro-choice voices remain prominent, but pro-life voices have gained confidence and a larger role in the conversation as volume has fallen. Two driving narratives of pro-life messaging are backlash against “my body my choice” as hypocritical, and working to refute claims that abortion restrictions will affect access to medical care.
- Specific policy outcomes and initiatives at both the state and federal level were discussed in frames of evidence of past and future. Messaging focused on the Kansas vote amplifying urgency that abortion is on the ballot, and criticism of extreme policy initiatives in Pennsylvania and Arizona.





# Abortion Subtopics

Abortion discussion remains dominated by pro-choice voices and tied closely to the midterm conversation, and speculation around the GOP agenda.

## 3% Abortion Patient Data Concerns

### 8% Impact on Low Income

- 4.0% Child Support Accessibility
- 3.7% Wealth ensures safe and legal abortion access

### 8% Impact on Medical Care

- 4.7% Debate over how abortion laws impact medical care
- 3.3% Effects on ectopic pregnancy and miscarriage

### 8% Federal Initiatives

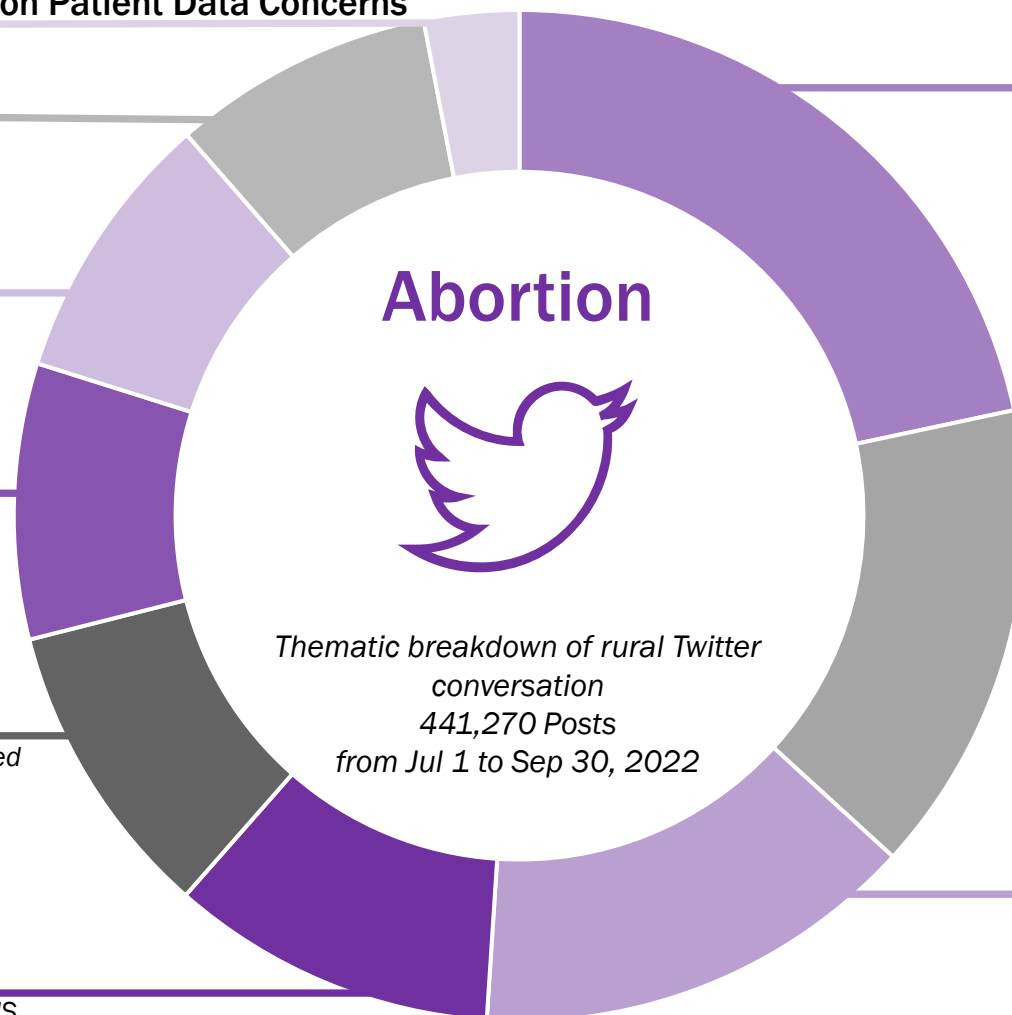
- 4.7% House passes protection bills
- 3.4% Demand for stronger response from Biden

### 9% State Initiatives

- 3.2% Pennsylvania Constitutional amendment rejected and criticized
- 2.9% Arizona judge reinstates ban
- 2.7% Cross state travel enforcement

### 10% SCOTUS Perceptions & Reactions

- 4.8% European Parliament condemns SCOTUS
- 2.4% Criticism of Justices Alito and Thomas
- 2.4% Reactions to overturning of Roe v Wade



## 20% Midterm Elections

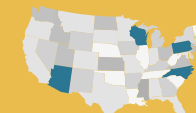
- 8.2% Midterm Messaging from action groups
- 5.8% Abortion on the ballot directly and indirectly
- 3.6% Nationwide abortion ban on GOP agenda
- 2.3% Republican agenda characterized as "Anti-Democracy"

## 14% Individual Candidate Messaging

- 2.8% Ron DeSantis' total ban initiatives
- 3.3% Texas policy restrictions and Beto's ads drive Governor race
- 2.8% Lindsey Graham supports national ban
- 2.6% Doug Mastriano past and present remarks and stances
- 2.4% Blake Masters' remarks and agenda

## 13% Pro Life v Pro Choice Messages & Activism

- 4.2% "Forced birth" messaging used by pro-choice allies
- 4.1% "Killing babies" messaging used by pro-life allies
- 2.6% "My Body My Choice" criticism and hypocrisy
- 2.2% Fundraising success for abortion protection



# Inflation

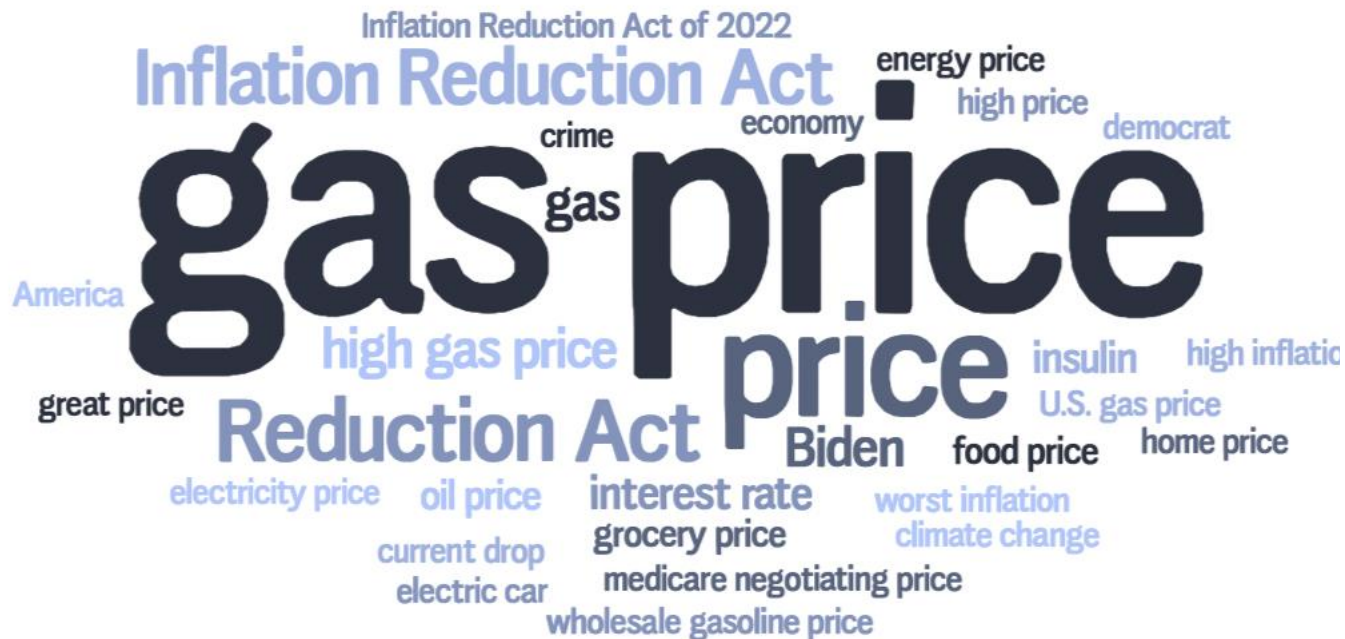




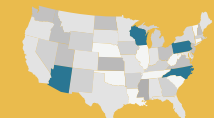


# Inflation Highlights

The Inflation Reduction Act was discussed in detail, with focus on Republican shortcomings and stalling as well as a complicated critique of President Biden.



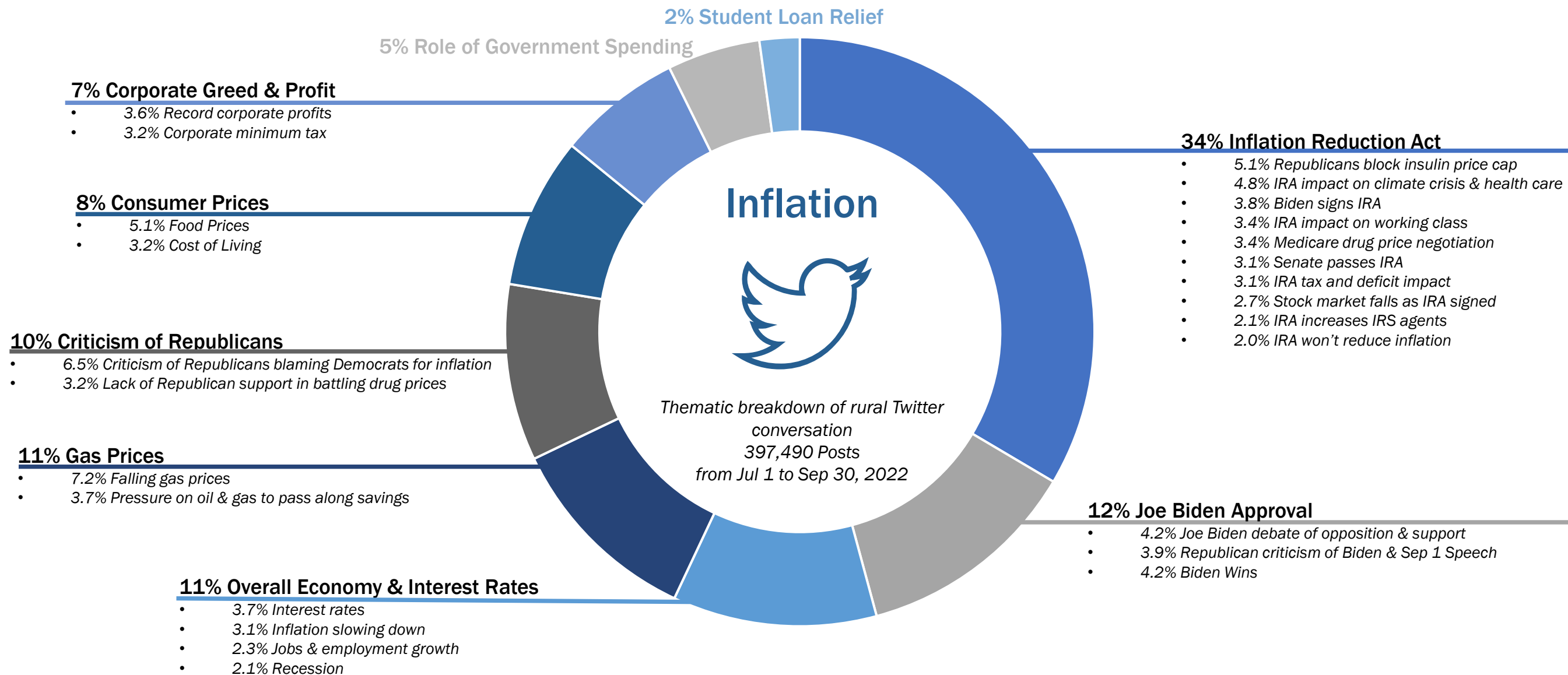
- The Inflation Reduction Act was the focus of conversation as rural voices dissected the content of the bill, critiqued spending, and celebrated passage. Focus on Republicans voting against key measures, such as insulin price caps, continued narratives from Q2 driving engagement on shortcomings and missteps.
- President Biden played a central yet complicated role in conversation. He was both the object of scrutiny as his policy was celebrated and criticized, and also the driving voice as content posted by the POTUS and White House Twitter accounts generated significant engagement. Initiatives to celebrate “Biden Wins” gave direct credit for falling fuel prices and resonated strongly.
- Government spending was the key area for criticism in the IRA as well as broader sources of inflation. Critics chastised celebration of the IRA’s passage amid a falling stock market and questioned the math and impact behind the reported spending included in the bill.



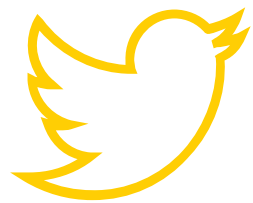


# Inflation Subtopics

The Inflation Reduction Act leads conversation while falling fuel prices have failed to gain focus.



# Energy & Climate



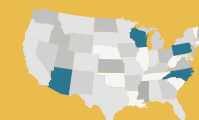


# Energy & Climate Highlights

Democrats were given credit for positive initiatives in the Inflation Reduction Act, while scrutiny on cost remained.



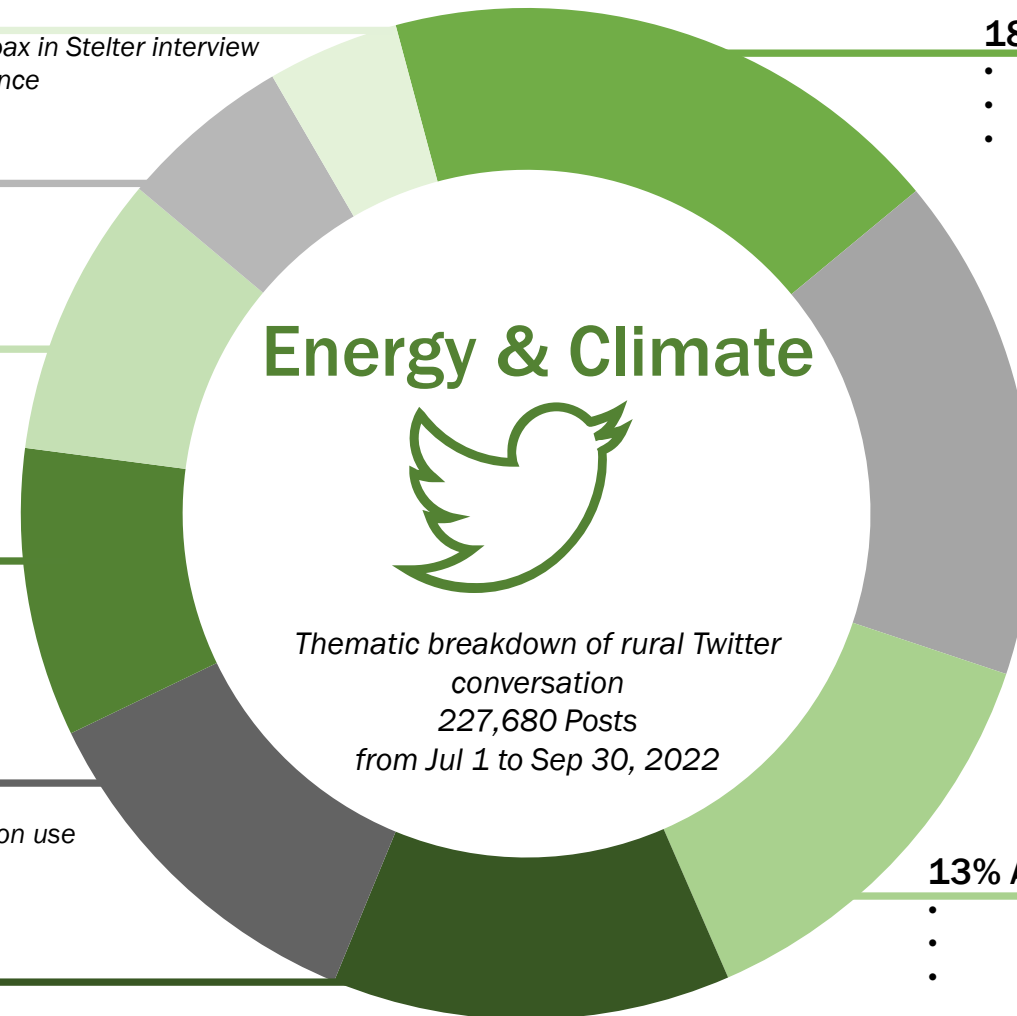
- The Inflation Reduction Act led positive conversations around initiatives from Democrats. Conversations and specific credit to Democrats was not common, but amplification and sharing of celebratory messages from politicians and influencers was widespread.
- Electric vehicles remained in focus as discussion around how to build a proper infrastructure were outlined. Concerns were amplified by power conservation efforts amid droughts in California. Elitism continued to resonate as increasing prices of vehicles was compared against tax breaks included in the Inflation Reduction Act.
- A growing narrative of climate change denial emerged as several influential voices spread doubt. Additional evidence of denial was amplified in the interpretation of a NASA statement from 2000 that “changes to planetary weather are natural and normal.”





# Energy & Climate Subtopics

Rural audiences met news of climate initiatives with positive skepticism and cost remained in focus.



## 4% Climate Change Denial

- 2.1% Weather executive notes Climate Change is a Hoax in Stelter interview
- 2.1% Doug Mastriano Calls Climate Change Fake Science

## 6% West Virginia v EPA and Emissions

## 6% Electric Vehicles

- 4.6% Electric vehicle development
- 4.4% Electric vehicle grid concerns & affordability

## 9% Natural Disasters

- 3.8% Floods, Water Supply, & Droughts
- 3.2% Heat waves around the world
- 2.2% Hurricane Ian debate over ties to climate change

## 12% Oil & Gas Industry

- 4.1% Fuel prices at the pump
- 3.9% Natural gas industry supply to Russia and restrictions on use
- 3.6% Oil & gas prices, supply and leases

## 13% Renewable Energy Sources & Development

- 3.5% Future focus of climate work & developments
- 3.3% Solar Panel inefficiency & Supply Chain
- 3.2% Wind Power development and efficiency
- 2.7% Renewable Energy Development & new technologies

## 18% IRA & Biden Actions

- 7.9% Inflation Reduction Act passes
- 7.2% Biden's Achievements on Climate
- 3.0% Biden Declares Climate Emergency

## 16% Political Messaging & Upcoming Elections

- 6.9% Vote Dem Messaging tied to climate as listed win
- 3.6% Fossil fuel lobbying and candidate support
- 3.3% Criticism of Senate Republicans
- 2.6% Criticism of Green New Deal and spending

## 13% Activism

- 6.2% Global Warming terminology argument
- 4.6% Climate Action
- 2.5% Urgency to Care for Planet

# Appendix

# Network Analysis Methodology

## Analysis Process



A detailed Boolean search is constructed by an analyst to identify content for analysis



The algorithm reads the content, paragraph by paragraph, to identify keywords, phrases, and entities



The algorithm draws links between content based on similar language



The algorithm then groups articles by theme and arranges clusters based on their interconnectivity, producing a topical map of conversations



Once a network is generated, it is reviewed by an analyst who interprets and names each cluster based on the content within it

## Interpreting a Network

Each node represents a news story, each connection represents similar language

Node size indicates the number of times a story was reprinted and its similarity to other stories within the cluster

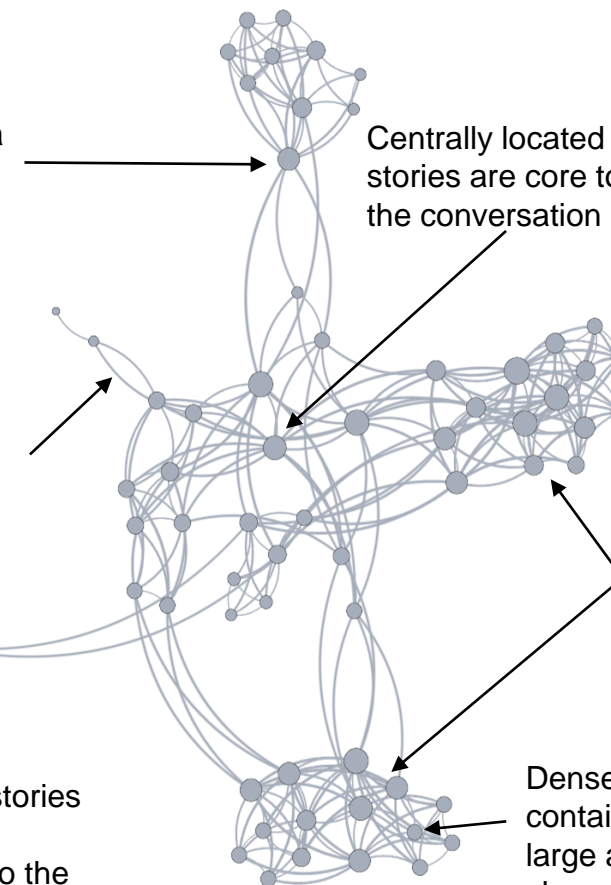
Connections represent similar language used across nodes

Peripheral stories are not yet connected to the core of the coverage

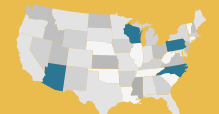
Centrally located stories are core to the conversation

Greater distance indicates a lack of shared language

Dense clusters contain stories with a large amount of shared language; signaling similarity of source and news



Crime & Law Enforcement	Environment & Climate	Schools	Elections & Voting	Abortion, Religion	Business & Finance	Health & Science	International Affairs	State & Local Gov	Jobs & Inflation	Immigration & Border Security	National Politics
22.4	11.4	10.9	9.2	8.5	7.8	7.5	7.3	7.1	3.2	2.2	2
13 Crime (Charges, surrender, investigation)	5.8 Environmental Impact	5.9 School Boards	4.5 Midterm Elections- GOP and Trump Backed Candidates	4.3 Abortion	7.8 Business News, Awards, & Partnerships	4.4 Evolving Health Care	5.3 Ukraine War	7.1 City Council	3.2 Economy, IRA	2.2 Immigration	2 Jan 6 Panel
5 Crime (prosecution and court proceedings)	3.6 Wildfires	5 Education	2.4 Primary Elections	4.2 Religion in Society		3.1 Medical Grants & Improvements	2 Taiwan				
4.4 National Crime	2 Floods		2.3 Election Integrity								





Crime & Law Enforcement	Environment & Climate	Schools	Elections & Voting Rights	Abortion	Business & Finance	Health & Science	International Affairs	State & Local Gov	Jobs & Inflation	Immigration & Border Security	National Politics
17.5	13.8	5.1	6.8	6.3		2.4	18.3	7	6.4	8.8	7.8
6.6 Crime (shootings)	5.7 Animals & Environment	5.1 Education	6.8 Midterms & Voting	6.3 Abortion		2.4 Monkeypox & COVID-19	11 Ukraine War	3.7 Boston Politics and transportation infrastructure	3.3 Inflation	5.9 Immigration	5 Trump FBI Raid
5 Crime	4 Heat Waves & Climate Change						2.8 Taiwan	3.3 NYC Crime and Politics	3.1 Inflation Reduction Act	2.9 Border Fentanyl Seizures	2.8 Jan. 6 Hearings
3.2 Law Enforcement	2.1 Forest Fires						2.5 Sri Lanka Protests & Leadership Transition				
2.7 Crime (police brutality, teens, gov employee fraud)	2.0 Floods						2.0 Iran Unrest & Nuclear Deal				

