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Thursday, September 25th

Health Policies and
Messages: A Guide for
Advocates



Credit: Shutterstock/Monster Ztudio

Key Takeaways:

- Americans have mixed views on the quality of their health care, while they rate the availability and affordability of their health care negatively.
- Americans across party think it should be easier to be healthy in the U.S. (including accessing healthy foods), that there are major issues with our health care system, and that corporations should be held accountable for pollution and rigging the health care system to pad their profits.
- MAGA Republicans stand apart from other groups on health and wellness, with stronger preferences for doing their own research over trusting doctors and health professionals, feeling like Americans have become overly reliant on vaccines and prescription drugs and that we should return to more alternative medical treatments, and that the government should provide less access to medicine and vaccines rather than more. Non-MAGA Republicans, independents, and Democrats are aligned against these views.
- Health care professionals are the most trusted resources on health and wellness, though Americans who hold less traditional views of health and wellness gravitate just as much – if not more – toward online resources and social media.

Key Takeaways:

- The most popular health care policies include coverage for annual check-ups/tests as well as preventative care/wellness, tackling pollution and holding polluters accountable, and making schools healthier for children.
- Anti-vaccine policies and the anti-vaccine movement are unpopular, and more Americans are pro-vaccine than anti-vaccine. Childhood vaccines like the measles vaccine are extremely popular, and a strong majority of Americans oppose ending schoolchildren vaccine mandates. This is true even as attitudes towards the coronavirus vaccine are more mixed.
- Going after Republicans for their cuts to health care, including Medicaid, cancer research, and healthy meal options for kids, is the strongest frame against them in this debate.

Building the Positive Case for Democrats:

Democrats remain more trusted on issues of health care, wellness, and public health and should capitalize on those advantages. Progressives should not shy away from reclaiming MAHA-adjacent, popular health policies like:

- Health insurance covering annual check-ups, tests like mammograms, and gym memberships.
- Going after corporate polluters, including with new taxes, new regulations, and bans on PFAS, to protect the air we breathe and the water we drink.
- Making our kids healthier, including through increasing physical activity in schools, healthier school lunches, and removing artificial food dyes.

Democrats should also feel confident acknowledging that:

- It should be easier for American families to access healthy foods.
- Health care is a human right.
- Doctors and scientists are trusted experts who have years of training.
- Our medical system is broken and rigged by big drug and insurance companies that pad their profits and make money off sick American families.

Landing the Hit on Republicans:

The anti-vaccine movement is unpopular, even if views of the coronavirus vaccine are more mixed. Vaccine messages should focus on:

- Ending vaccine mandates for schoolchildren – including Florida as a recent unpopular example
- Defunding mRNA vaccine research (alongside other unpopular funding cuts for medical research, particularly for cancer and Alzheimer's)
- Any limitations of longer-used vaccines, including the measles vaccine, which remains broadly popular across party lines
- "Bans" on the coronavirus vaccine. Even if the vaccine has more mixed views than others, a total ban is deeply unpopular

Focus on an unpopular RFK and anti-vaccine movement as targets, rather than the "MAHA" movement (which is more favorably viewed and also less known than RFK and the anti-vaccine movement).

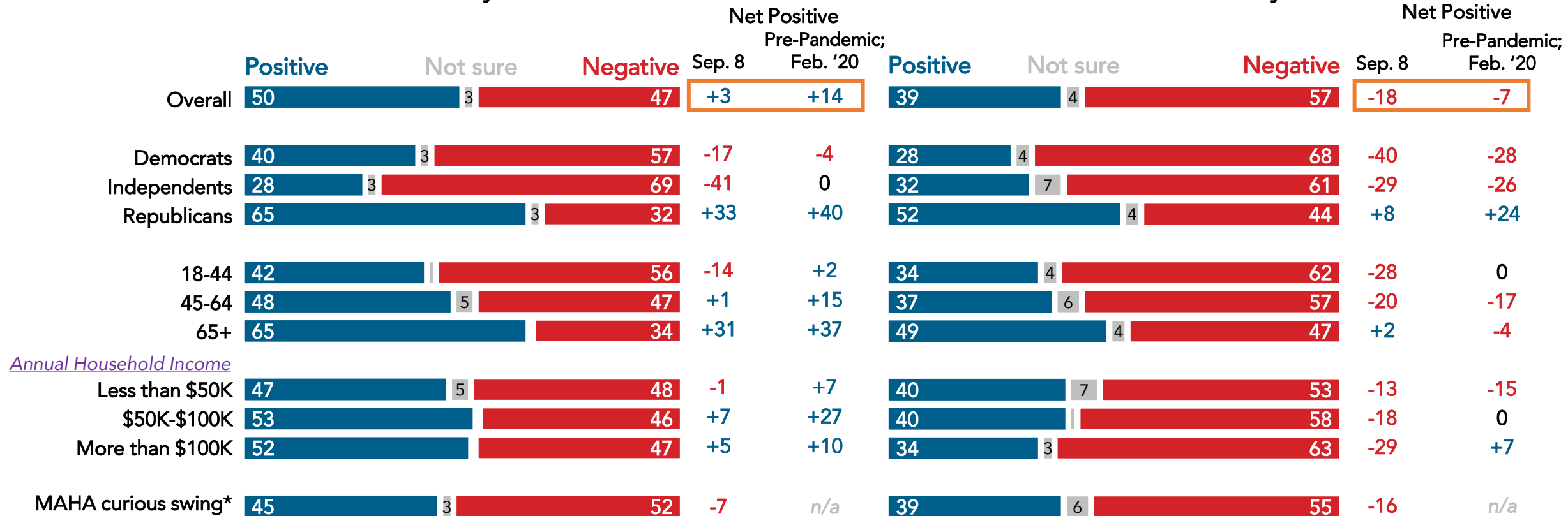
When going after Republicans for their health care policies, make sure to:

- Acknowledge a broken health care system run by special interests who rig the system to pad their own profits, before going after Trump and Republicans for:
 - Unpopular cuts to medical research, school meals, and Medicaid

Confidence in the Quality and Affordability of Health Care in the United States Has Declined Since February of 2020

(Split Sample) How would you rate the overall **quality** of health care Americans receive in the United States today?

(Split Sample) How would you rate the **availability and affordability** of health care in the United States today?



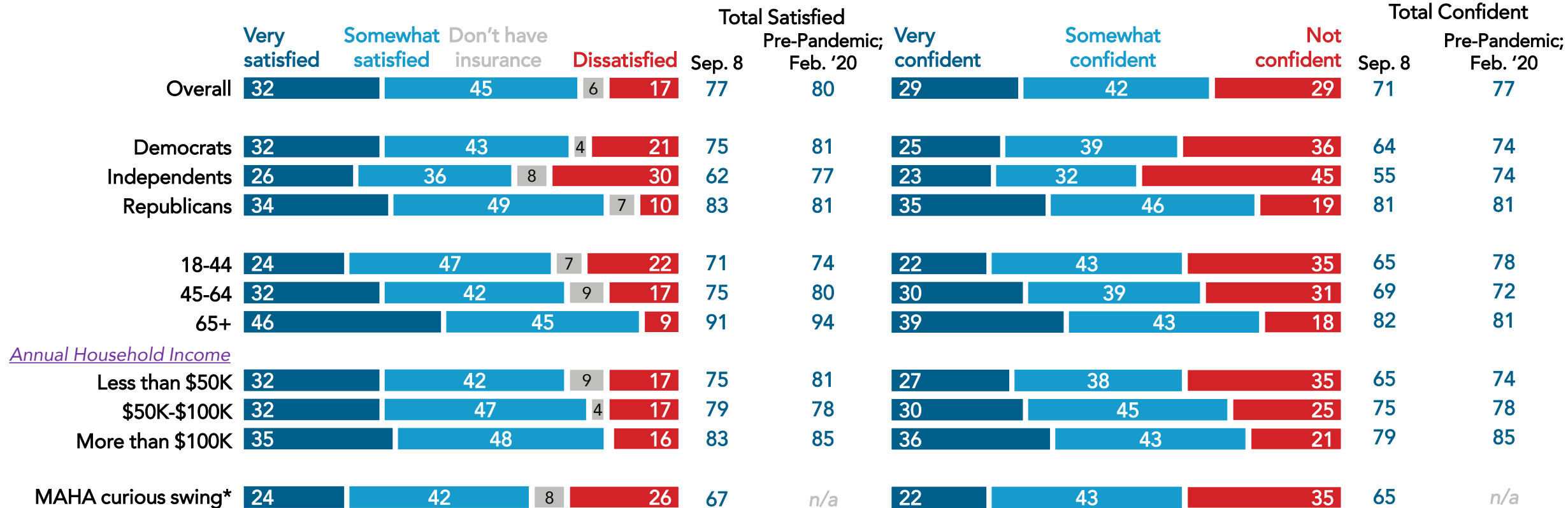
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Fewer Than a Third Are “Very Satisfied” With Their Health Care or “Very Confident” in Their Ability to Access Quality Care

How satisfied are you with your current health care coverage?

How confident are you in your ability to access quality, affordable health care for the foreseeable future?



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Americans Believe in the Importance of Lifestyle/Nutrition, Health Care As a Right, Corporate Accountability for Pollution

Below is a list of statements about health and health care in America. Please indicate how strongly you believe each statement on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means you do not believe the statement at all and 5 means you believe the statement very strongly.

Top 10 of 17 Tested

/ Split Sample

		% 5 – Very strongly		% 4	% Total Believe (4%-5%)				MAHA Curious Swing*
					Overall	Dem	Ind	Rep	
Top 10 of 17 Tested	**It should be easier for every American family to access fresh fruits and vegetables	67		18	86	88	80	84	84
	Good health care is a human right that all American families should have access to	65		19	84	91	83	77	80
	We need to hold corporate polluters accountable and keep them from pouring toxic chemicals into the air we breathe and the water we drink	65		21	86	89	87	83	82
	**Maintaining a healthy lifestyle and diet is just as important as regular visits to the doctor	63		23	86	86	85	87	85
	***The government should make it more affordable for American families to stay healthy	63		21	84	92	85	76	80
	Doctors and scientists should be trusted more than politicians or influencers to share medical advice	59		20	79	87	72	73	73
	***It's important for children to be vaccinated	52	19		71	89	71	54	60
	Big drug and insurance companies have rigged the medical system to pad their profits, writing checks to politicians in exchange for policies that hurt families and make health care too expensive	46	24		70	67	78	70	71
	It's alarming that America has a serious chronic disease problem and worse health outcomes than any other developed nation	45	27		72	71	75	72	71
	***Our health system is designed so drug and insurance companies make more money when Americans are sick	44	27		71	68	73	74	69

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Fewer Believe in Reducing Drug Treatments, Broad Vaccine Hesitancy, and Doing Own Research Over Deferring to Doctors

Below is a list of statements about health and health care in America. Please indicate how strongly you believe each statement on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means you do not believe the statement at all and 5 means you believe the statement very strongly.

Lower 7 of 17 Tested

	/ Split Sample		% Total Believe (4%-5%)				MAHA Curious Swing*
	% 5 – Very strongly	% 4	Overall	Dem	Ind	Rep	
**American institutions have not always told the truth when it comes to health and wellness	36	24	61	52	64	69	74
**The government is just as responsible as pharmaceutical companies for many Americans' poor health	35	26	61	63	64	59	65
I am nervous about the safety of things I put in my body, like food, medicine, and vaccines	22	22	44	33	51	54	54
***We would be better off if we used fewer drugs and relied more on traditional treatments	20	22	41	22	48	59	54
***I prefer to do my own research on health and wellness rather than just defer to doctors	18	20	38	23	40	53	43
**I am more inclined to be skeptical of vaccines than to trust them	18	14	31	19	36	43	41
Hormonal birth control methods are very damaging to your body and alternative natural methods are just as effective at achieving or preventing pregnancy	16	12	29	17	25	41	33

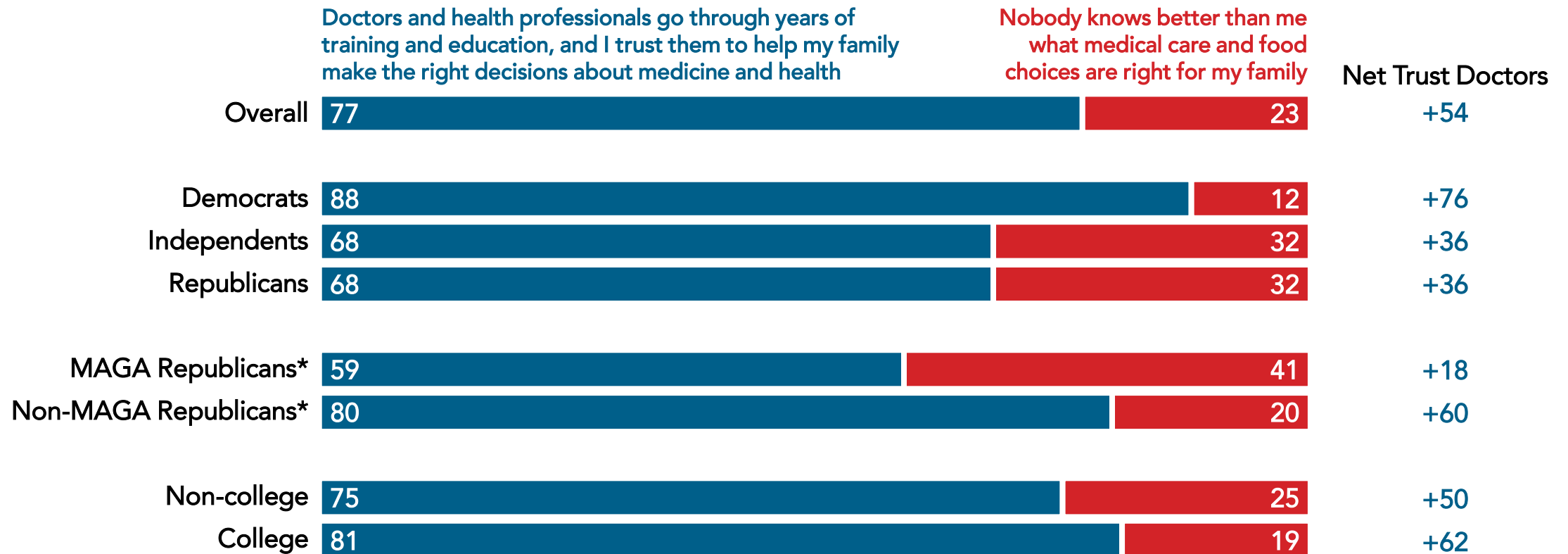
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A Broad Bipartisan Consensus Exists Around Trusting Doctors, Health Professionals on Medicine and Health

Majorities of Democrats (88%) and independents (68%) trust doctors and health professionals on medicine and health, as do majorities of both non-MAGA Republicans* (80%) and MAGA Republicans* (59%).

Which of the following statements do you agree with more, even if neither is exactly right?



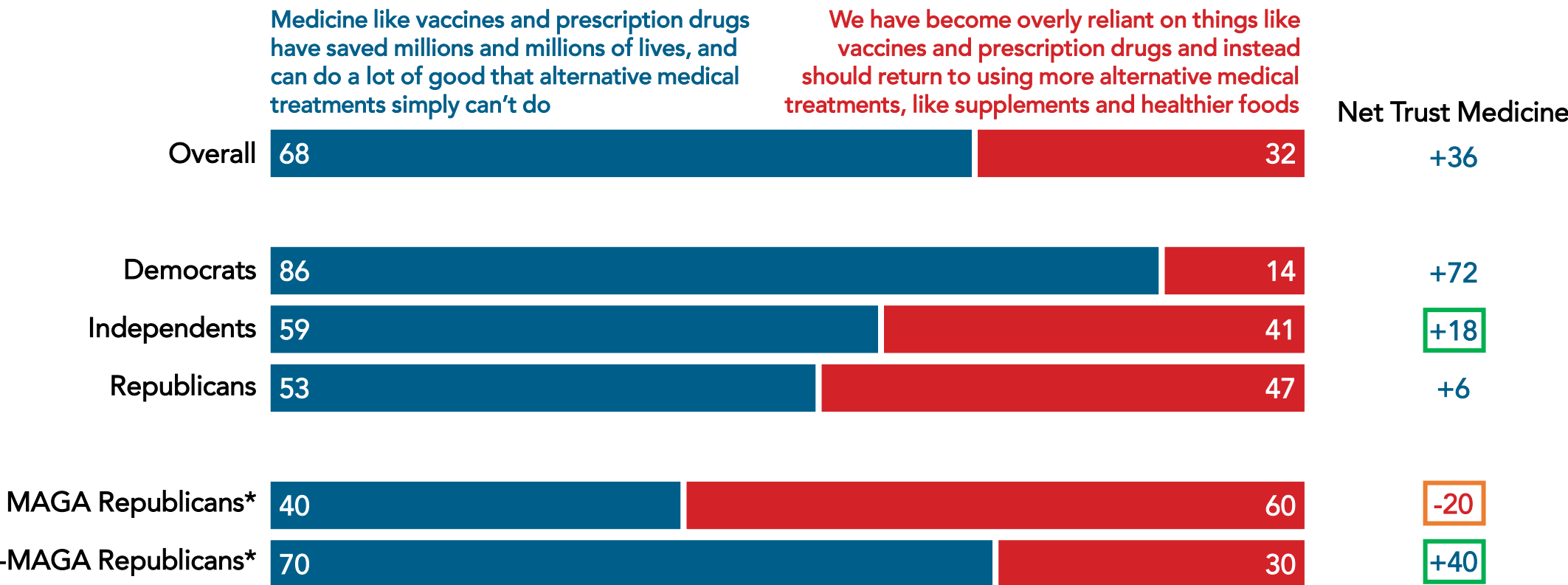
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Two in Three Agree Medicine and Vaccines Have Saved Lives and Have Done a Lot of Good for Society

A majority of independents (59%) and non-MAGA Republicans* (70%) agree that medicine like vaccines is positive, but majorities of MAGA Republicans* (60%) agree more that we have become overly reliant on things like vaccines and prescription drugs.

Which of the following statements do you agree with more, even if neither is exactly right?

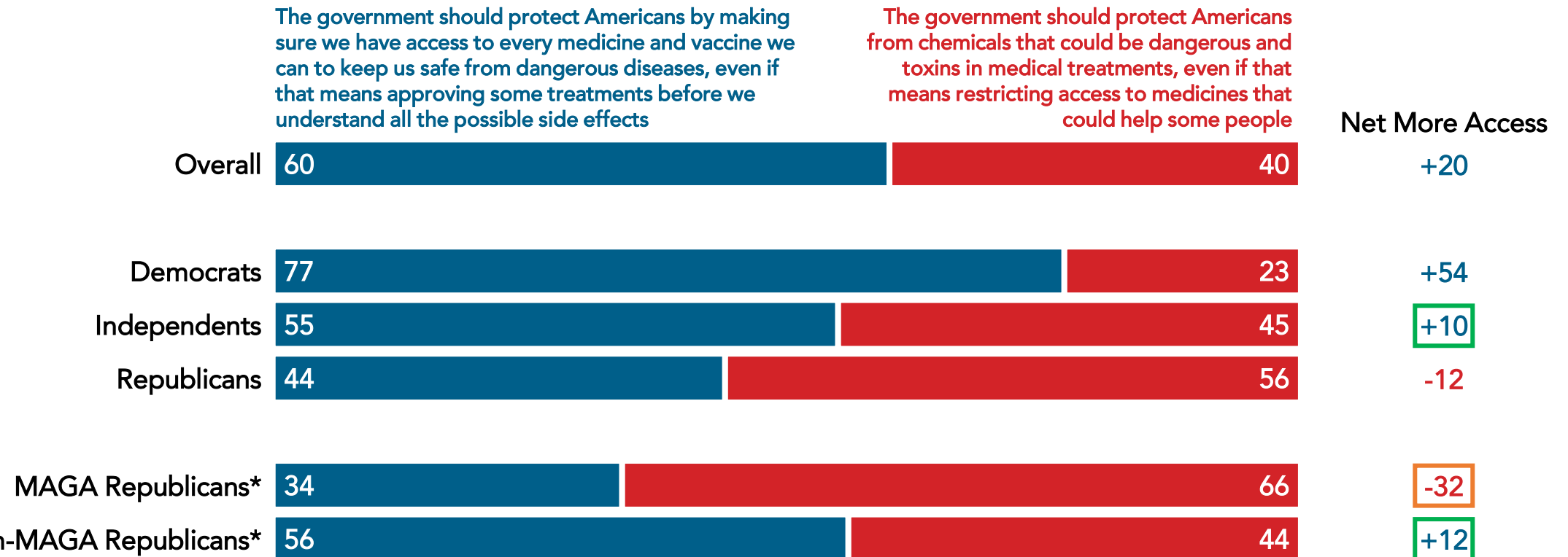


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Americans Prefer Government Provide More Access to Medicine and Vaccines Rather Than Less, Even if Less Tested

Three in five Americans say the government should provide more medical access, even if that means approving some treatments before knowing all of the side effects (60%), including a majority of independents (55%) and non-MAGA Republicans* (56%).

Which of the following statements do you agree with more, even if neither is exactly right?



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MAHA Curious Swing Tend Younger, Non-College, Suburban, 2024 Third-Party/Non-Voters, Politically Disengaged

Institutionalists (46%)

More traditional health care views

More likely to be...

Seniors

31% 65+ (compared to 27% overall)

College-educated

40% college (compared to 33% overall)

2024 Harris voters

64% Harris voters (compared to 43% overall)

White collar

42% white collar (compared to 37% overall)

Liberal

43% liberal (compared to 30% overall)

MAHA Curious Swing (20%)

Mix of skepticism/traditional health care views and not strong partisans

More likely to be...

Younger // Millennials

48% 18-44 (compared to 42% overall)

35% millennials (compared to 30% overall)

Non-college

74% non-college (compared to 67% overall)

Suburban

43% suburban (compared to 37% overall)

2024 third-party/non-voters

27% third-party/non-voters (compared to 12% overall)

Politically disengaged // Passive news consumers

52% politically disengaged (compared to 35% overall)

46% passive consumers (compared to 38% overall)

MAHA Loyalists (11%)

More skeptical health care views

More likely to be...

Middle-aged

41% 45-64 (compared to 31% overall)

Non-college

75% non-college (compared to 67% overall)

2024 Trump voters

82% Trump voters (compared to 44% overall)

MAGA Republicans

61% MAGA Republicans (compared to 25% overall)

Conservative

70% conservative (compared to 36% overall)

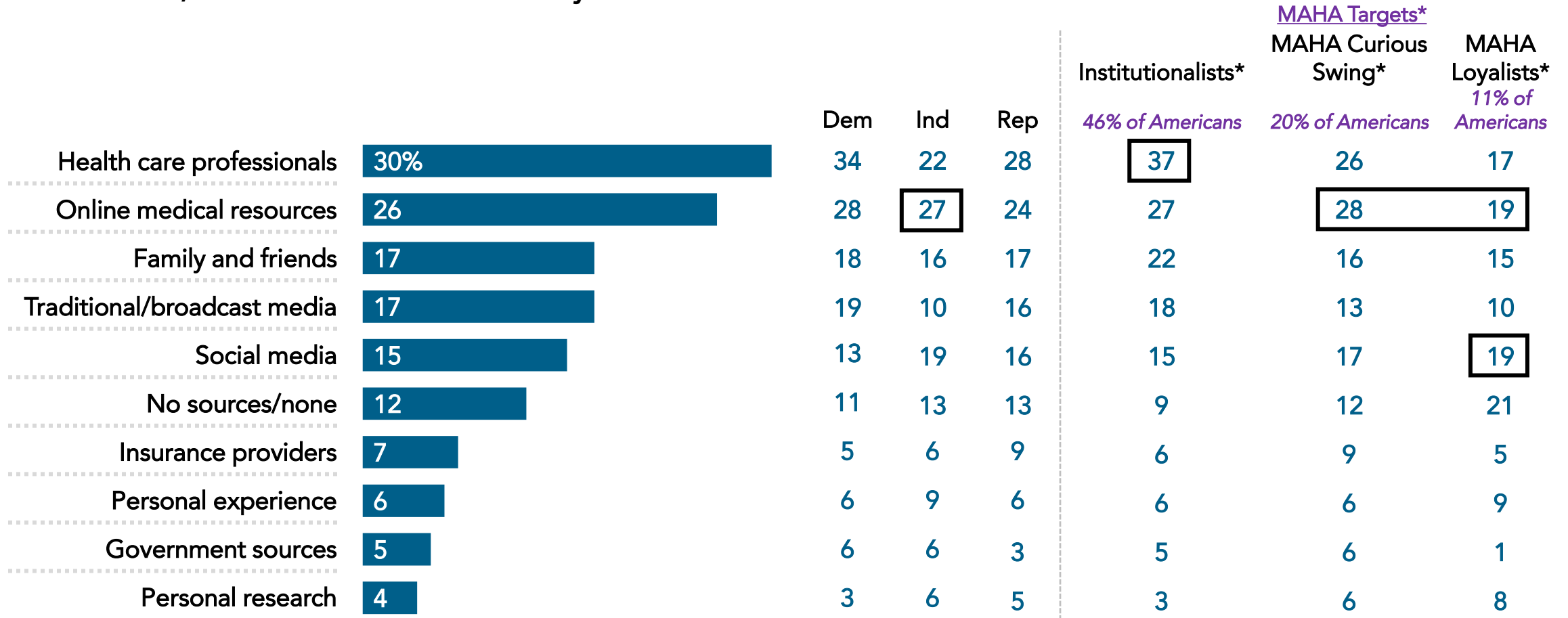
The remaining 24% not profiled here qualify as MAHA Curious but are strong partisans, including 9% who are Democrats and 15% who are Republicans.

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Health Care Professionals Are Most Trusted Messengers, Though Independents/MAHA Curious Rely More on Online Sources

In the last month, what sources of information have you turned to when it comes to health and wellness?



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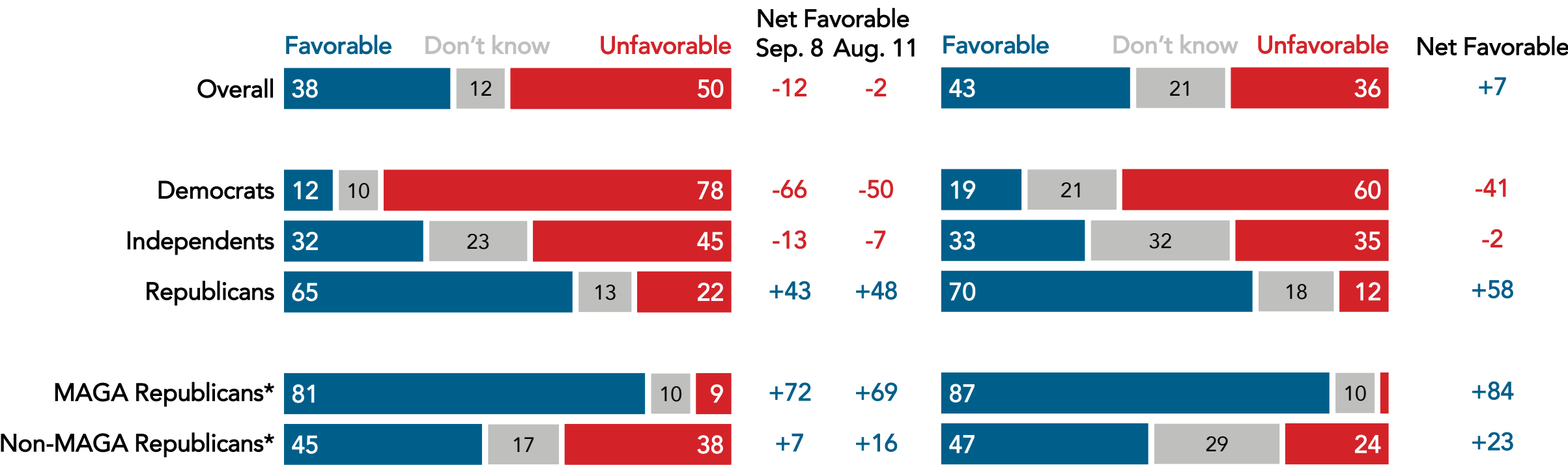
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RFK Is Viewed Increasingly Negatively, While Americans Are More Positive on “Make America Healthy Again” (MAHA)

MAGA Republicans* in particular view both RFK (net +72 favorable) and the “Make America Healthy Again” (MAHA) movement (net +84) positively – non-MAGA Republicans* are more mixed on both, while independents view each negatively (net -13 and net -2, respectively).

Please indicate how favorable or unfavorable you are to:
Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

Please indicate how favorable or unfavorable you are to:
The “Make America Healthy Again” (MAHA) movement.

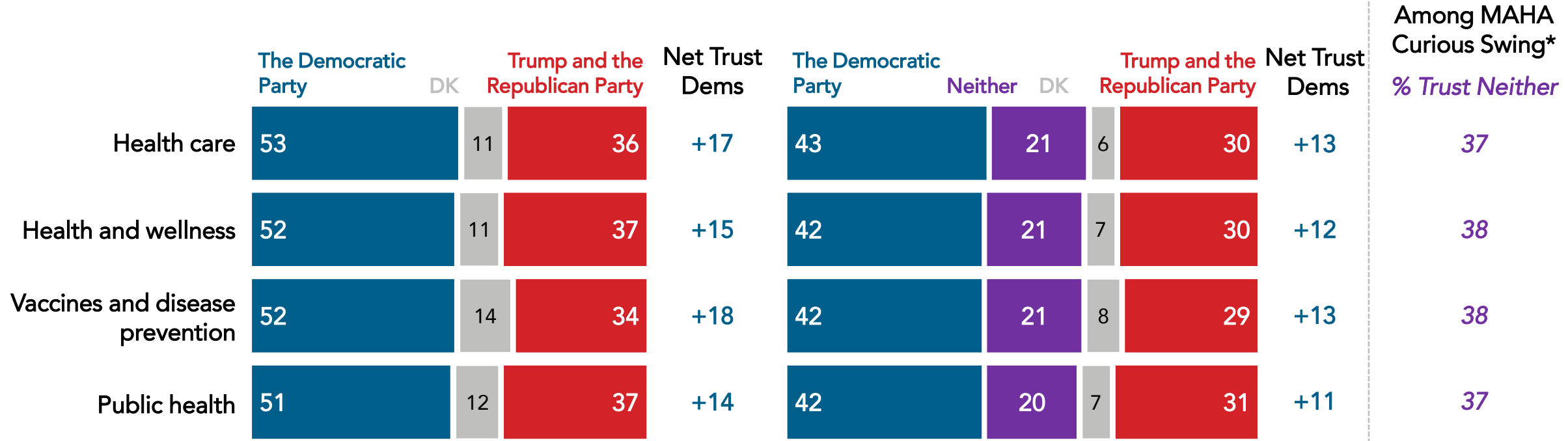


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Democrats Are More Trusted on Health Care, Health and Wellness, Vaccines and Disease Prevention, Public Health

Nearly two in five MAHA curious swing* say they do not trust either party on “health care,” “health and wellness,” “vaccines and disease prevention,” or “public health.”

Please indicate who you personally trust more to handle each one. [Split Sample]

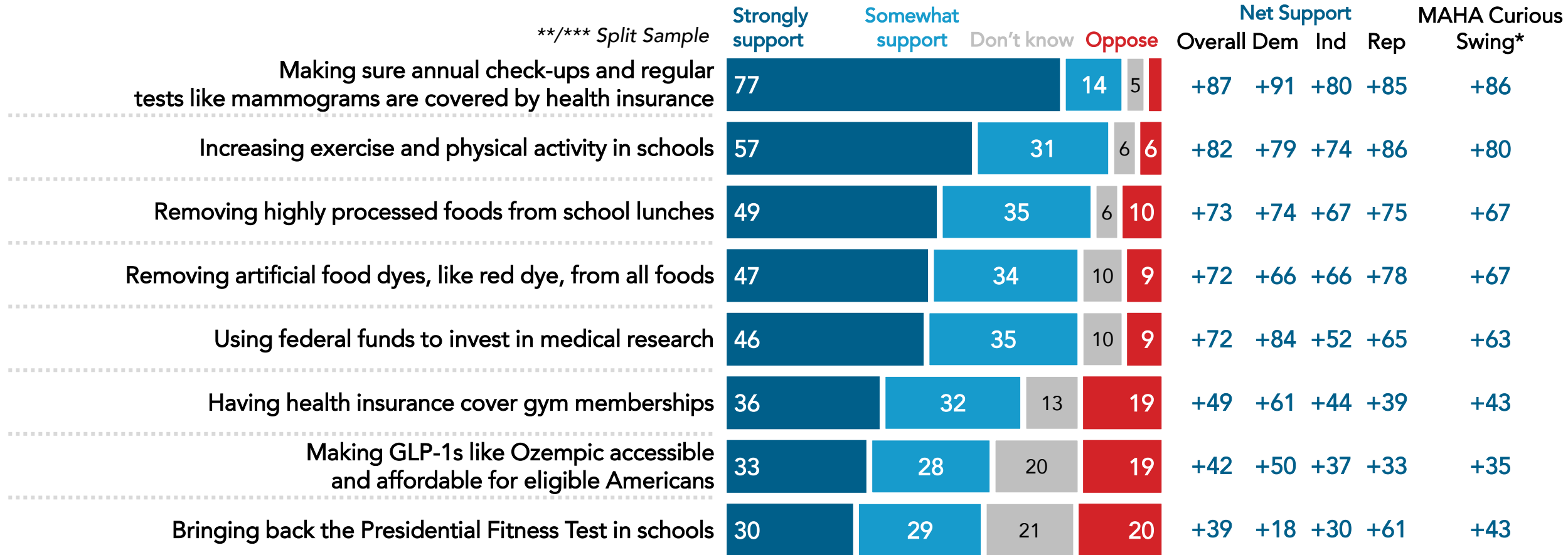


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Most Popular on Health and Wellness: Coverage for Check-Ups and Gym Memberships, Making Schools Healthier

Below is a list of policies and positions related to health and wellness. Please indicate whether you support or oppose each one.



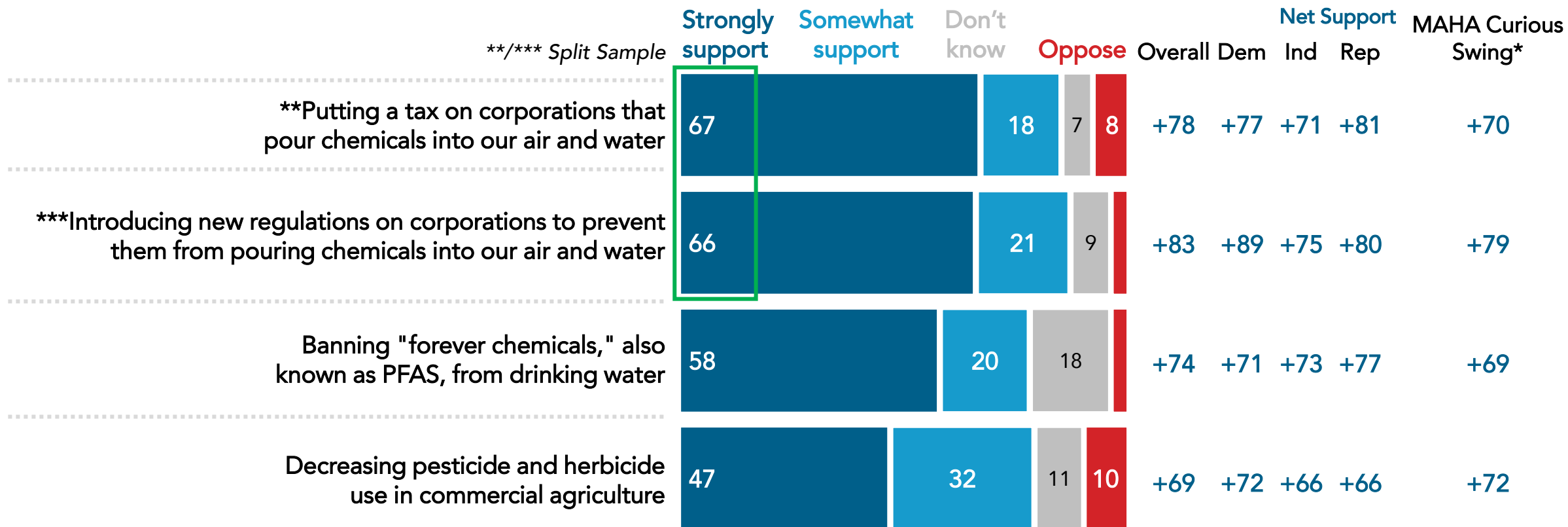
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Tackling Pollution/Chemicals Is a Compelling Answer to MAHA

Two in three Americans strongly support taxing corporations that pollute our air and water (67% strongly support) and putting regulations on corporations to prevent them from polluting our air and water (66%).

Below is a list of policies and positions related to health and wellness. Please indicate whether you support or oppose each one.



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Anti-Vaccine Policies Are Controversial and Deeply Opposed

Banning the coronavirus vaccine is the most opposed (net -37 support), including among MAHA curious swing* (net -31).

Below is a list of policies and positions related to health and wellness. Please indicate whether you support or oppose each one.

	Support	Don't know	Oppose	Overall	Dem	Ind	Rep	MAHA Curious Swing*
/ Split Sample								
**Banning the coronavirus vaccine entirely in the U.S.	26	11	63	-37	-69	-28	-7	-31
***Ending all vaccine mandates, including for students attending public schools	31	11	58	-27	-69	-31	+14	-14
Defunding mRNA vaccine research	26	28	46	-20	-52	-17	+11	-9
***Revoking the FDA's approval of the coronavirus vaccine in the U.S.	31	20	49	-18	-62	-15	+25	+2
**Making all vaccines optional, including for students attending public schools	39	6	55	-16	-42	-11	+11	-10
Eliminating fluoride from public drinking water	43	21	36	+7	-25	+14	+35	+25

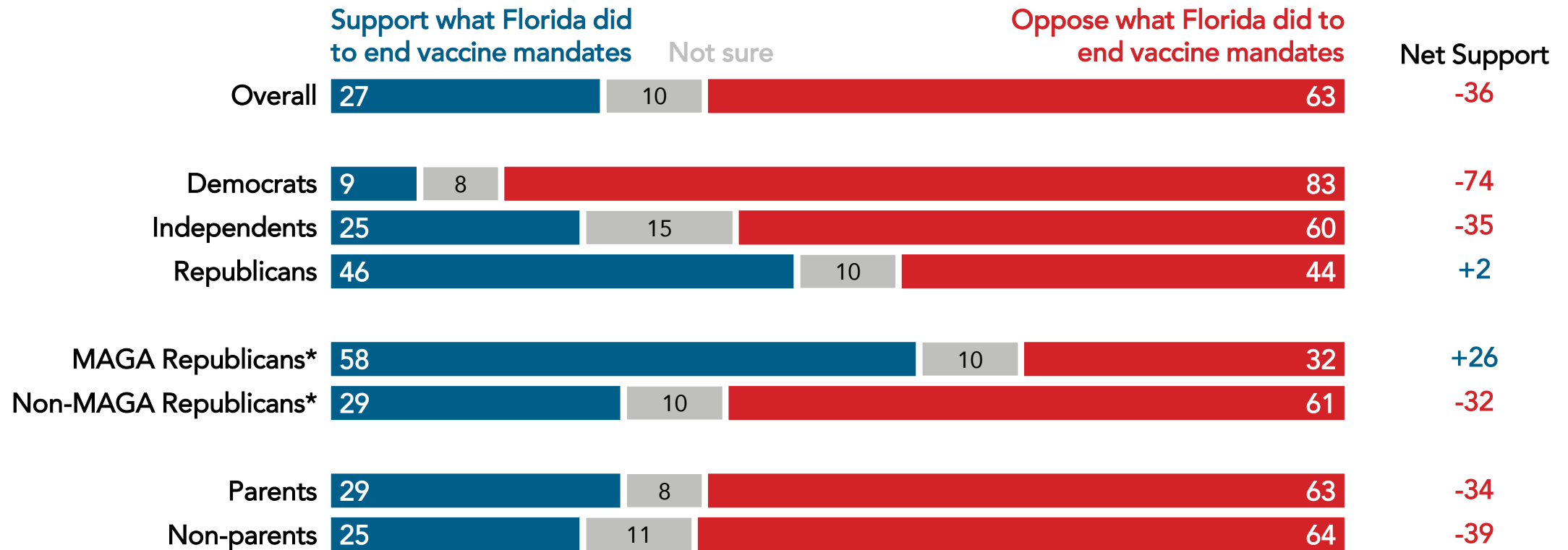
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Nearly Two in Three Oppose Florida's Move to End Vaccine Mandates for Schoolchildren

Republicans overall are divided on the move (net +2 support), while a majority of non-MAGA Republicans* oppose (net -32).

As you may know, the state of Florida recently ended all vaccine mandates, including ending the mandate that schoolchildren must be vaccinated against diseases like measles, mumps, and chickenpox. Knowing this, do you support or oppose Florida ending all vaccine mandates?

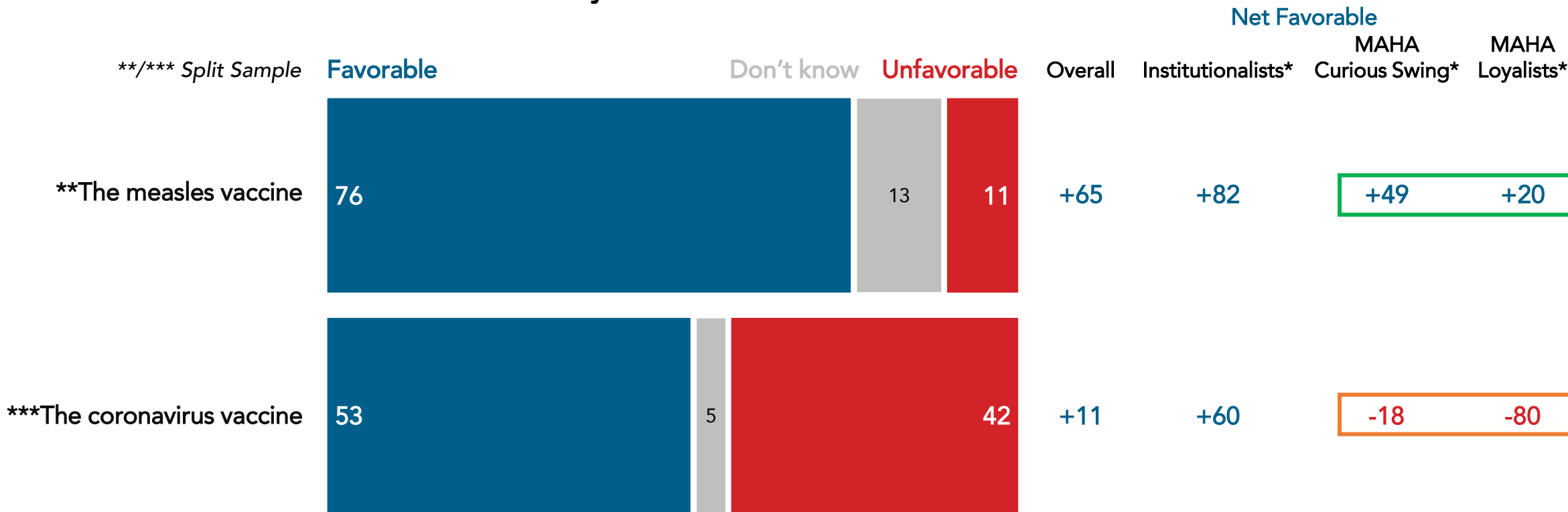


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The Measles Vaccine Is Viewed Very Positively, While Coronavirus Vaccine Views Are More Mixed Among Skeptical Audiences

Three in four are favorable toward the measles vaccine (76%), while only a slim majority are favorable to the coronavirus vaccine (53%). Majorities of MAHA curious swing* (net -18 favorable) and MAHA loyalists* (net -80) view the coronavirus vaccine negatively.

Please indicate how favorable or unfavorable you are to each one.



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Majorities Are Pro-Vaccine Overall, Though Pro-Coronavirus Vaccine Sentiment Has Waned Since 2023

Since 2023, there has been a net 12-point drop in pro-coronavirus vaccine sentiment (from net +42 pro-vaccine then to net +30 now), driven by declines among independents (from net +34 to net +2).

(Split Sample) And generally speaking, when it comes to **vaccines**, would you say you are...

(Split Sample) And generally speaking, when it comes to the **coronavirus vaccine**, would you say you are...

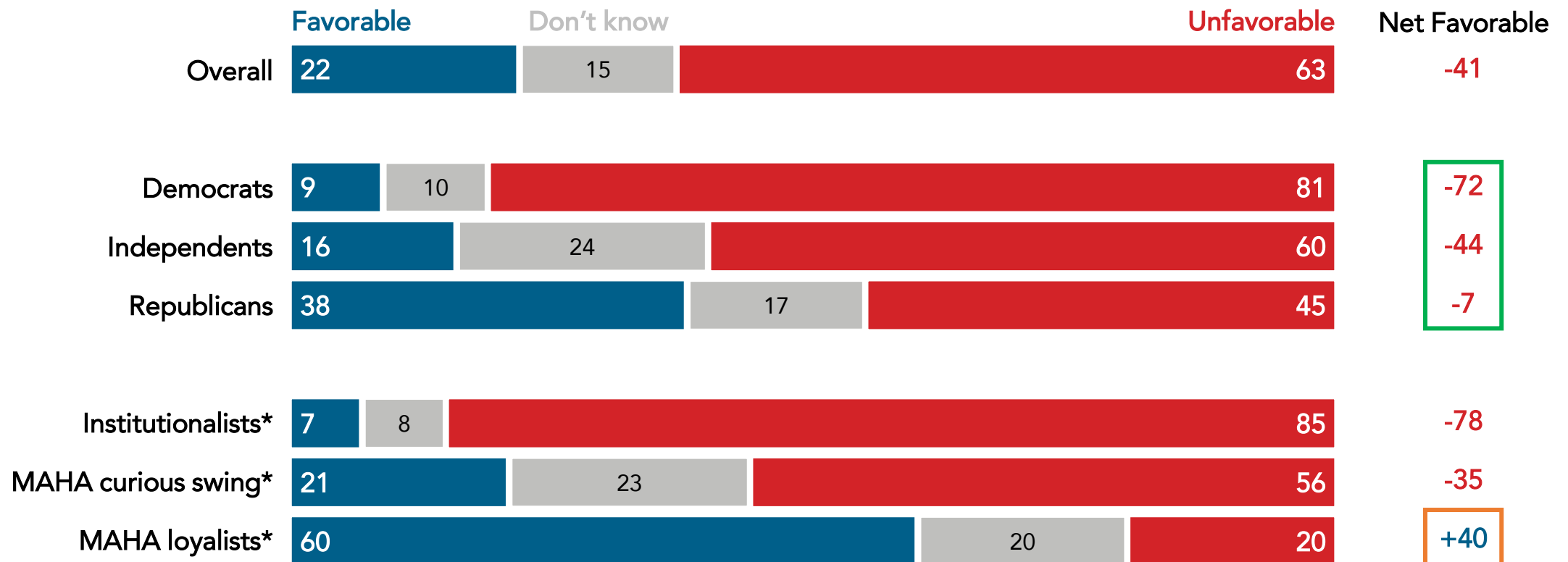
you say you are...					vaccine, would you say you are...					Net Pro-COVID Vaccine		
	Pro-vaccine	Neither	Anti-vaccine	Net Pro-Vaccine	Pro-vaccine	Neither	Anti-vaccine		Sep. 8	Jul. '23	Jan. '23	
Overall	68 42% very pro-vaccine	12	20	+48	59 41% very pro-vaccine	12	29		+30	+34	+42	
Democrats	88 68% very	7	5	+83	80 64% very	7	13		+67	+66	+75	
Independents	56 33% very	23	21	+35	38 23% very	26	36		+2	+34	+34	
Republicans	51 19% very	14	35	+16	42 22% very	14	44		-2	-1	+7	
Parents	65 36% very	12	23	+42	52 36% very	16	32		+20	+18	+33	
Non-parents	71 49% very	12	17	+54	66 47% very	9	25		+41	+40	+46	
Institutionalists*	91 68% very	5	4	+87	80 64% very	11	9		+71	n/a	n/a	
MAHA curious swing*	58 23% very	21	21	+37	45 26% very	22	33		+12	n/a	n/a	
MAHA loyalists*	16 19		65	-49	16 13		71		-55	n/a	n/a	

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The Anti-Vaccine Movement Is Unpopular Across Party Lines

Americans are deeply unfavorable to the anti-vaccine movement (net -41 favorable), including both MAHA curious swing* (net -35) and independents (net -44). Only MAHA loyalists* are more favorable than unfavorable to the movement (net +40).

Please indicate how favorable or unfavorable you are to: The anti-vaccine movement.



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Acknowledging the Broken Health Care System Is Salient When Rebutting the GOP on Health and Wellness

A message decrying our broken health care system and cuts to medical research and school meals, alongside limiting vaccines, is more effective than a Republican statement on wellness (net +36 agree).

Which side do you agree with more?

Those who say our health care system is broken:
for too long, corporations have had too much power over our food and health care. But the answer is not to cut medical research, take away healthy school meal options from kids, or limit vaccines. Instead, we should be cracking down on special interest influence in our government and putting science and facts ahead of politics

Republicans who say we need to get the government and corporate special interests out of the business of telling us what we should put in our bodies. Whether it's vaccines, food additives, or toxins in the ground, Americans are better off doing their own research rather than listening to the so-called "experts" who put their own bottom line first



Net Anti-Republican Argument		
Overall	Ind	MAHA Curious Swing*
+36	+40	+31

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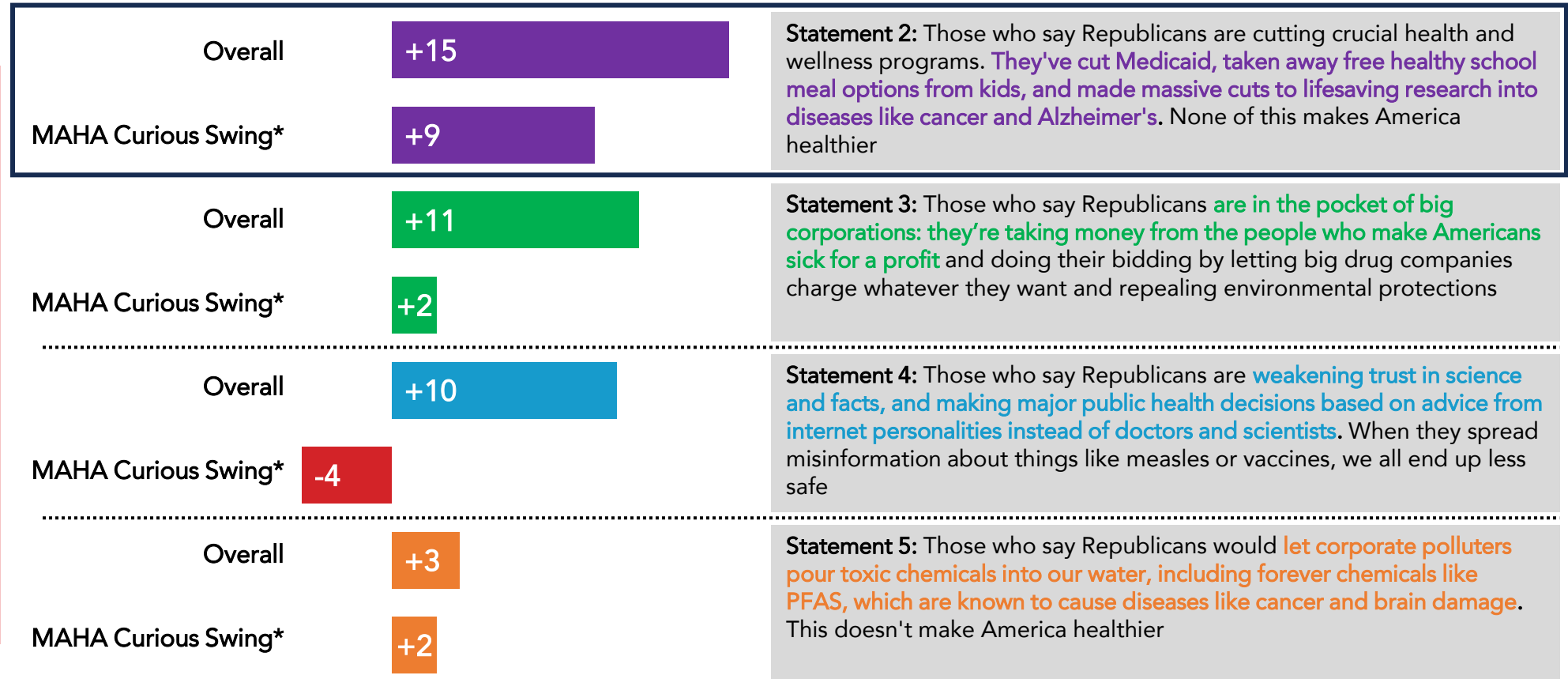
Against the MAHA Argument, Focusing on Health & Wellness Cuts, Like Medicaid, Does Best Overall and With MAHA Curious

Which side do you agree with more?

Net Agree With Anti-GOP Statement

Statement 1:

Republicans who say we need to get the government and corporate special interests out of the business of telling us what we should put in our bodies. Whether it's vaccines, food additives, or toxins in the ground, Americans are better off doing their own research rather than listening to the so-called "experts" who put their own bottom line first



*"MAHA target" groups are based off of respondents' answers to a series of questions around health and wellness, with "institutionalists" holding more traditional views around health and wellness on a series of three statements, "MAHA loyalists" holding none of those more traditional views around health and wellness on those statements, and "MAHA curious swing" and "MAHA curious partisans" mixed between views. "MAHA curious swing" does not include strong Republicans or strong Democrats. Nationwide survey of 1,000 registered voters conducted September 4-September 8, 2025. For more info, visit navigatortresearch.org.

navigator*



About Navigator

In a world where the news cycle is the length of a tweet, our leaders often lack the real-time public-sentiment analysis to shape the best approaches to talking about the issues that matter the most. Navigator is designed to act as a consistent, flexible, responsive tool to inform policy debates by conducting research and reliable guidance to inform allies, elected leaders, and the press. Navigator is a project led by pollsters from Global Strategy Group and GBAO along with an advisory committee, including: Jessica Floyd, The Hub Project; Christina Reynolds; Mike Podhorzer; Jesse Ferguson, progressive strategist; Navin Nayak; Stephanie Valencia, EquisLabs; and Melanie Newman, Planned Parenthood Action Fund.

About the Study

Global Strategy Group conducted a public opinion survey among a sample of 1,000 registered voters from September 4-September 8, 2025. 100 additional interviews were conducted among Hispanic voters. 100 additional interviews were conducted among African American voters. 75 additional interviews were conducted among Asian American and Pacific Islander voters. 100 additional interviews were conducted among independent voters. The survey was conducted online, recruiting respondents from an opt-in online panel vendor. Respondents were verified against a voter file and special care was taken to ensure the demographic composition of our sample matched that of the national registered voter population across a variety of demographic variables. The margin of error for the full sample at the 95 percent level of confidence is +/- 3.1 percentage points. The margin of error for subgroups varies and is higher.

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