

# navigating *the* \*battleground

Friday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Views of Persuadable  
Voters in the  
Battleground



Credit: Phil Roeder/Creative Commons

**IMPACT**  
RESEARCH

# Methodology



Impact Research conducted a survey of N=1500 likely 2024 general election voters in 61 battleground congressional districts.



74% of interviews were conducted by text-to-web and 26% were via online panel.



Interviews were conducted between July 6-12, 2023. Trended results from the April survey are from interviews conducted April 20-27, 2023.



The margin of error for a sample of this size is +/- 2.5 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. The margin of error for subgroups varies and is higher.

# Key Takeaways

- **Persuadable voters continue to be pessimistic about the state of the economy.** By a 60-point margin, they rate the economy negatively.
- **Democratic incumbents are viewed more favorably than their Republican counterparts.** Persuadable voters give Democratic incumbents higher personal ratings, job ratings, economic job ratings; they also don't think Republicans are prioritizing the right things and focused on non-economic issues.
- **Persuadable voters start out supporting the Republican tax plan but move to opposing it after given more information.** They start out supporting the tax plan by 6 points, but oppose it by 24 points after getting details on the tax plan.
- **Republicans are most vulnerable on their support for cutting taxes for the wealthy and corporations.** Persuadable voters have very serious concerns about Republican tax cuts for the wealthy and potential cuts to Social Security and Medicare to pay for them.

# Demographic Profile of Persuadable Battleground Voters

	Overall	Persuadable Voters		Overall	Persuadable Voters
Democrats	32	16	18-34	22	25
Independents*	31	57	35-49	24	24
Republicans	32	20	50-64	28	26
			65+	26	25
Black	6	4	Non-College Grad	60	60
Hispanic	11	12	College Grad	39	38
White	78	77			
Men	46	47			
Women	54	53			

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\*Independents include those who identify as independent, but lean toward either the Democratic Party or the Republican Party.

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# Persuadable Voters Are Down on the Economy, With Nearly Four in Five Rating it as Either "Poor" or "Not so Good"

Despite their pessimism, views of the economy have improved a net 8 points among persuadable voters since April.

How would you rate how things are going in the U.S. economy?

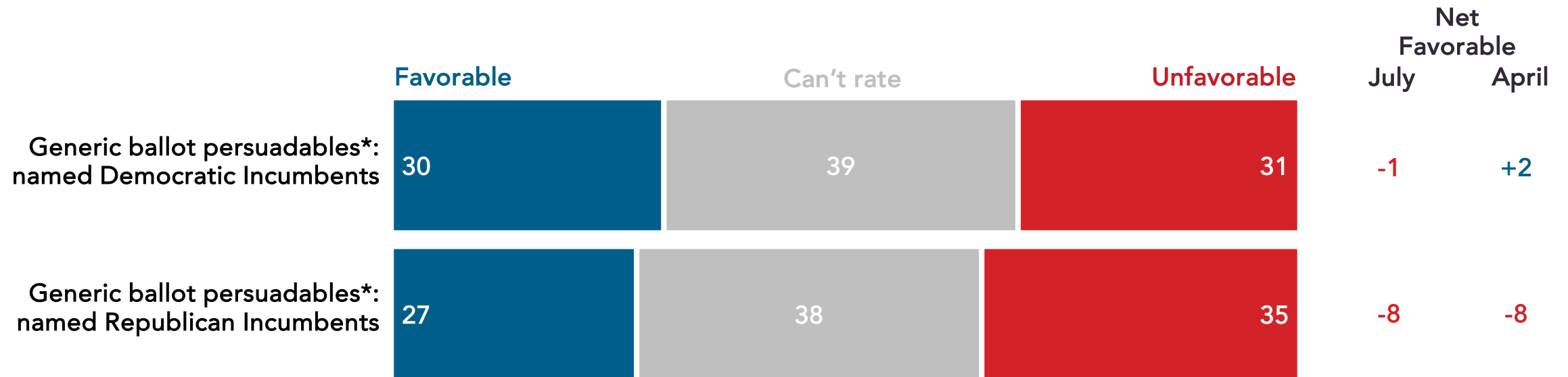


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# Democratic Incumbents Continue to Have Mixed Popularity Among Persuadable Voters; Republicans are Still Underwater

Named Republican incumbents remain a net 8 points underwater, identical to their net favorable rating in April.

Please indicate whether you have a very favorable view, somewhat favorable view, somewhat unfavorable view, or very unfavorable view. If you have never heard of them, or cannot rate them, please indicate that.

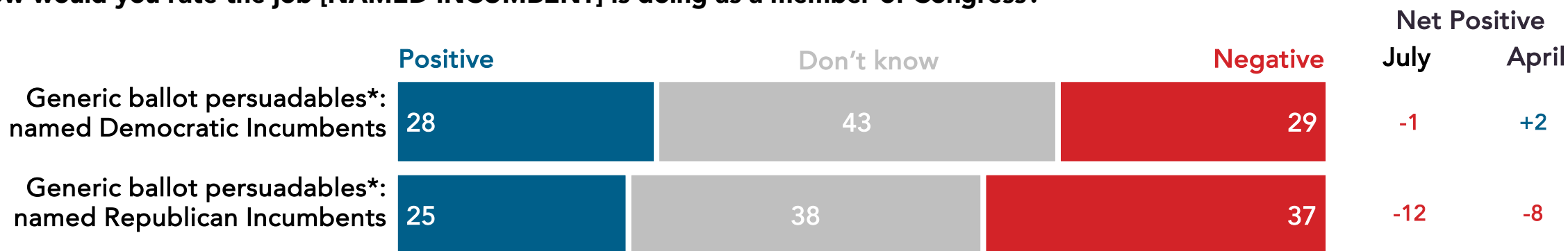


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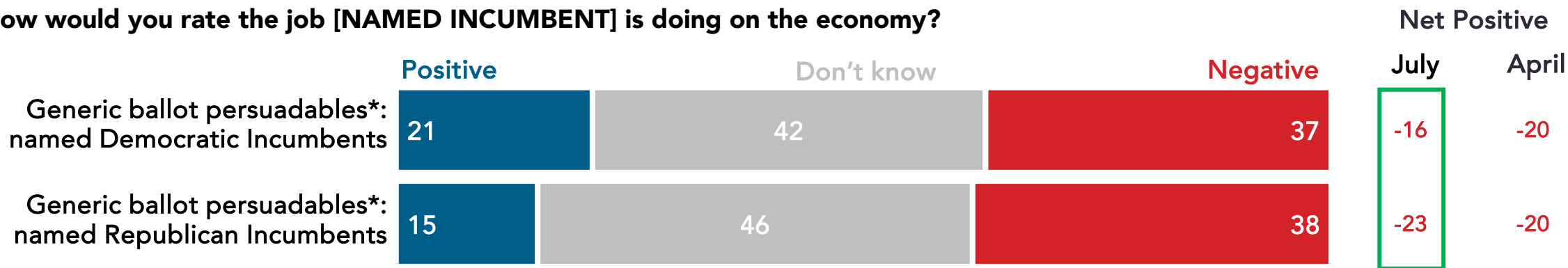
# Democratic Incumbents Have a Mixed Job Rating; Republican Incumbents are Further Underwater Overall and on the Economy

Both Democratic and Republican incumbents are underwater on how they're handling the economy, but fewer give positive ratings to Republican incumbents.

How would you rate the job [NAMED INCUMBENT] is doing as a member of Congress?



How would you rate the job [NAMED INCUMBENT] is doing on the economy?

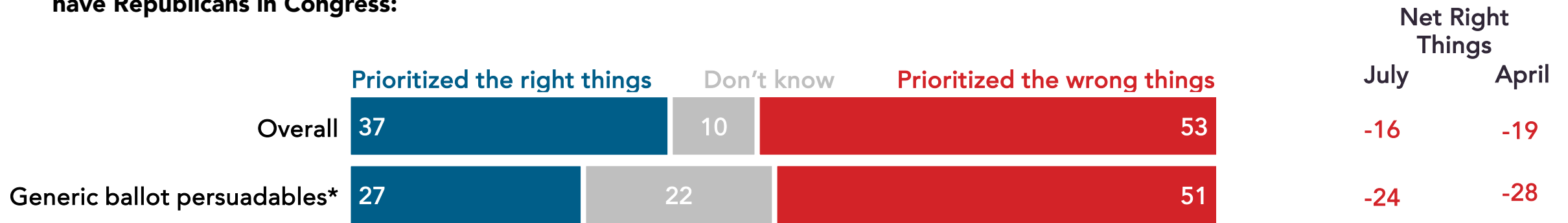


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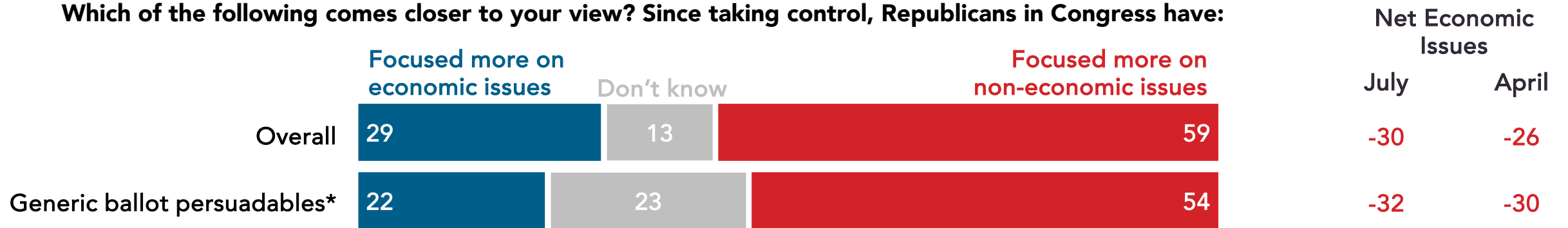
# Persuadable Voters Think Republicans are Prioritizing the Wrong Things And Focused on Non-Economic Issues

Only 22 percent of persuadable voters think Republicans are focused on economic issues.

As you may know, Republicans took control of the U.S. House of Representatives in January 2023. Since taking control, have Republicans in Congress:



Which of the following comes closer to your view? Since taking control, Republicans in Congress have:



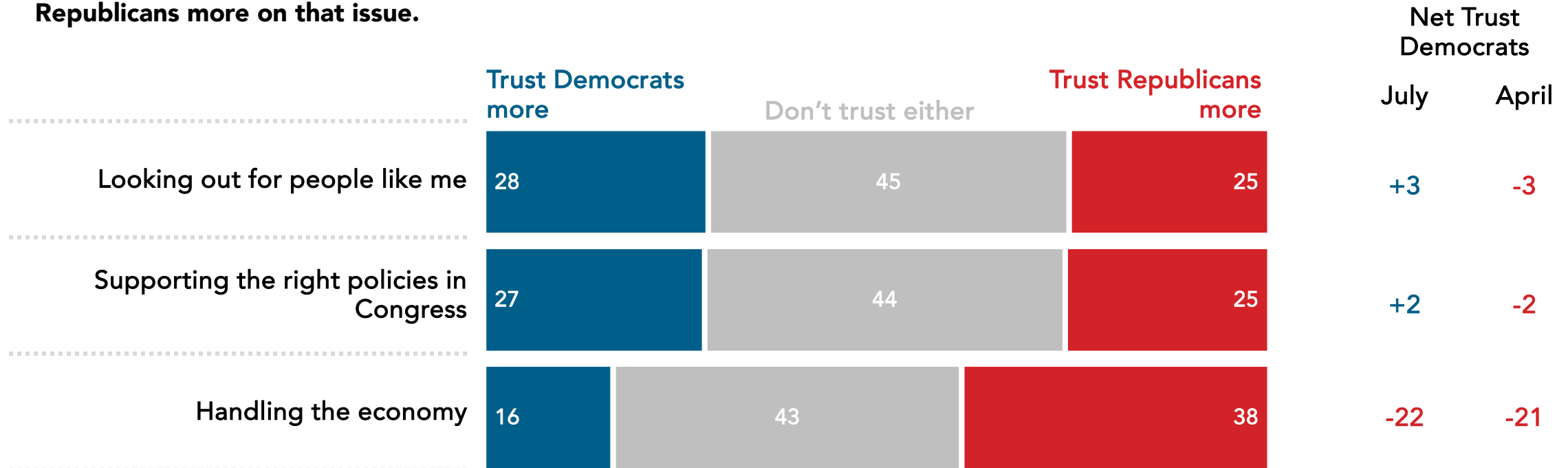
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# Pluralities of Persuadable Voters Don't Trust Either Party to Look Out for Them, Support the Right Priorities, or Handle The Economy

However, by a more than two-to-one margin, persuadable voters trust Republicans more than Democrats on handling the economy.

**[Among generic ballot persuadables\*:]** Here are some different issues. For each one, please indicate whether you trust Democrats or Republicans more on that issue.



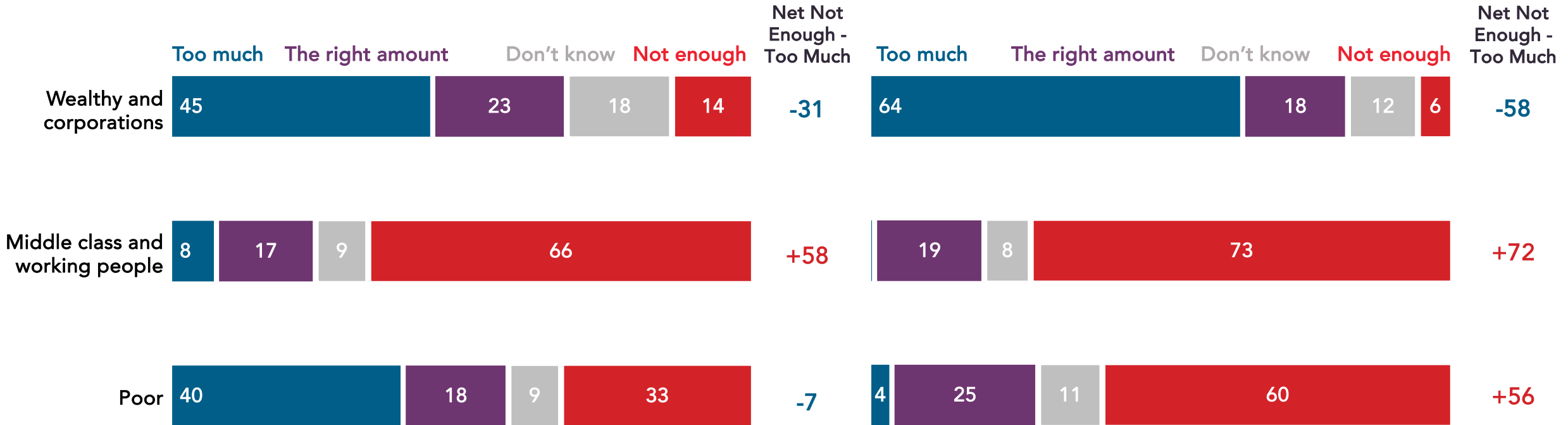
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# A Majority Don't Think Either Party is Focusing on the Middle Class; Most Think Republicans Focus Too Much on the Wealthy

Two-in-three persuadable voters think Republican policies are helping the wealthy and corporations too much.

**[Among generic ballot persuadables\*:] Do Democrats' policies focus on helping the [QUESTION TEXT] too much, the right amount, or not enough?**

**[Among generic ballot persuadables\*:] Do Republicans' policies focus on helping the [QUESTION TEXT] too much, the right amount, or not enough?**



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# Persuadable Voters Overwhelmingly View The Middle Class As Driving The Economy, Not Trickle-Down Economics

Which of the following statements about the economy comes closer to your view?

A strong middle class drives American economic growth. We need to focus our economic policies on making sure the middle class succeeds, which means improving incomes, ensuring access to affordable education, and reducing middle class taxes, all while making the wealthy pay their fair share.

Don't know

Job creation drives economic growth. We need to focus our economic policies on making sure the people who create jobs can succeed, which means cutting taxes on businesses and entrepreneurs while reducing regulations standing in the way of building strong companies with good-paying jobs.

Net Strong Middle Class



Generic ballot persuadables\*

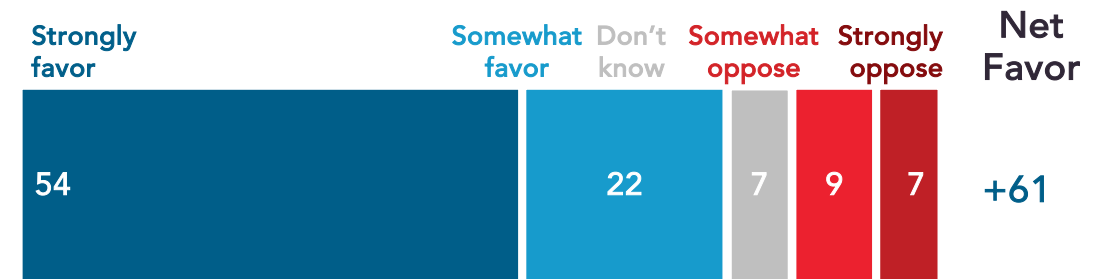
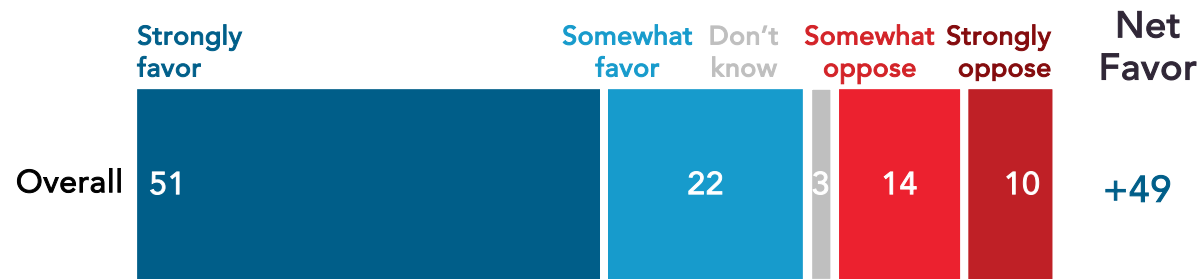


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# Majorities of Persuadable Voters Favor Raising Taxes on and Closing Tax Loopholes for Billionaires and Big Corporations

[SPLIT SAMPLE:] Do you favor or oppose raising taxes on billionaires and big corporations?

[SPLIT SAMPLE:] Do you favor or oppose closing tax loopholes for billionaires and big corporations?



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# A Plurality of Persuadable Voters Lean Towards Supporting a Description of Republican Tax Plan, And a Quarter Aren't Sure

Here are two statements about a tax law that Congress is considering passing this summer. Please indicate which statement you agree with more:

Opponents of the tax law say that this is a tax cut for billionaires and corporations, not working Americans or small businesses. Fifty percent of the tax benefits would go to the richest Americans, with the wealthy getting almost \$20,000 in tax cuts. And, because it slashes taxes on corporations, it will add \$320 billion more to the deficit in just two years.

Don't know

Supporters of the tax law say that working Americans and businesses are struggling with high inflation and need some relief. If this tax law doesn't pass, tens of millions of Americans will see their taxes go up at a time that they are still struggling to put food on the table, and businesses will be forced to raise prices or else risk closing down.

Net Tax Law Supporters

Overall



-16

Generic ballot persuadables\*

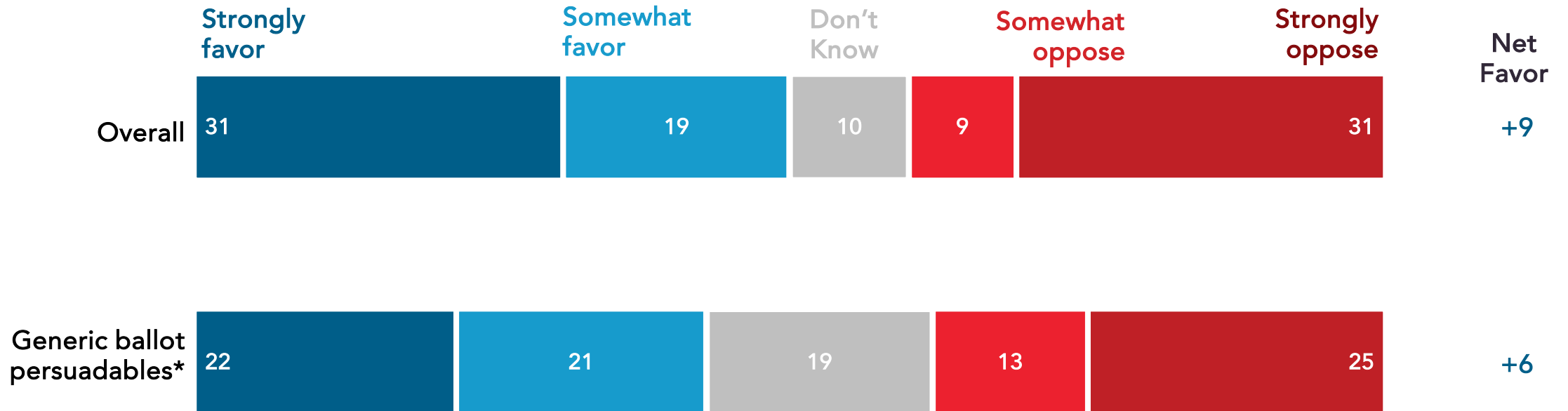


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# Persuadable Voters Initially Favor Making The Trump Tax Cuts Permanent

As you may know, in 2017 President Trump and Congressional Republicans passed a law that cut taxes on individuals and corporations. These tax cuts are set to expire in 2025 unless Congress votes to make them permanent. From what you know, do you favor or oppose Congress making this tax law permanent?

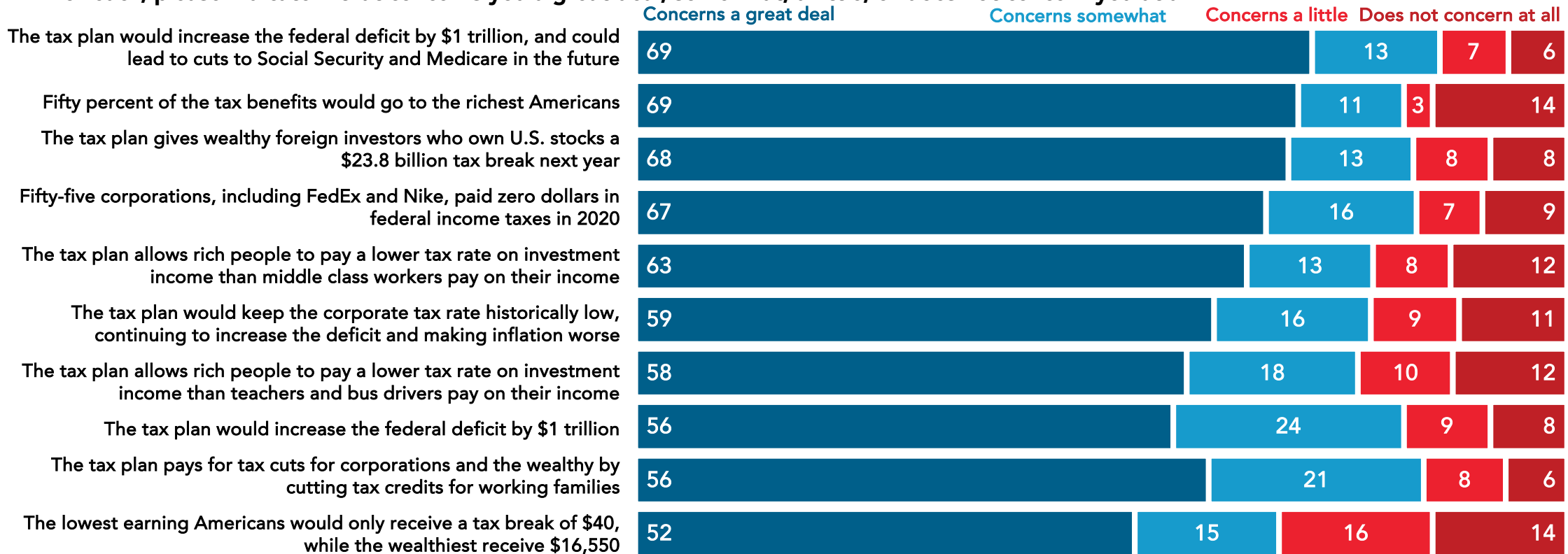


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# However, Persuadable Voters Have Overwhelming Concerns With All Aspects of the Republican Tax Plan

Potential cuts to Social Security and Medicare, tax benefits going to the richest Americans and foreign investors, and corporations paying zero taxes raise the most concerns with persuadable voters.

**[Among generic ballot persuadables\*:]** Here are some statements that critics of the tax law that Congress is considering making permanent might make. For each, please indicate if that concerns you a great deal, somewhat, a little, or does not concern you at all.



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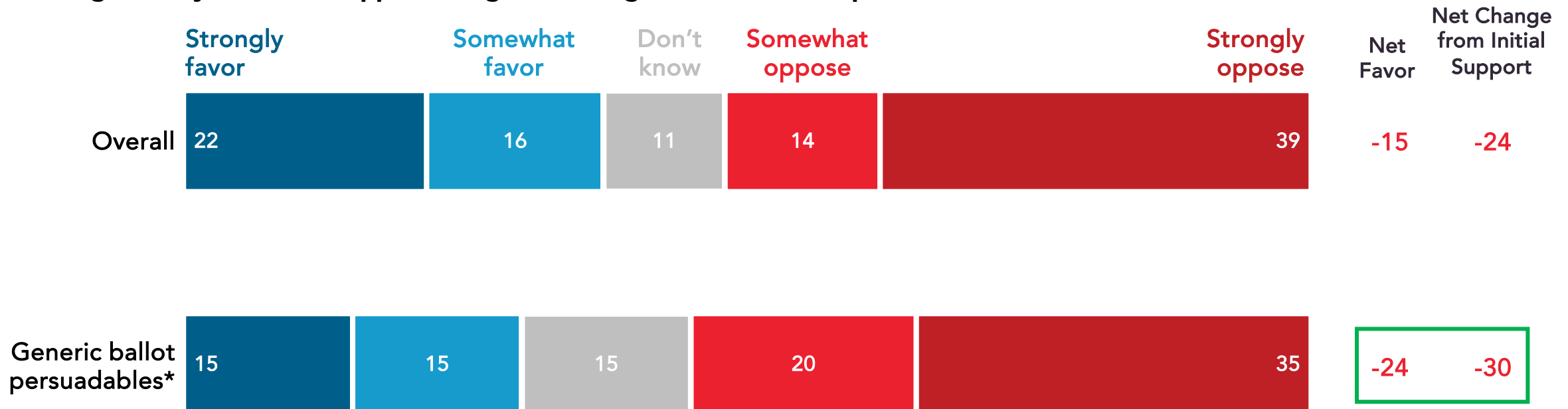
\*\*All statements were split-sampled.

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# Support Among Persuadable Voters For The Republican Tax Plan Drops 30 Points After Learning About the Bill

Persuadable voters shift even more against the Republican tax plan than voters overall after learning what's in the bill.

Once again, do you favor or oppose Congress making the 2017 tax law permanent?



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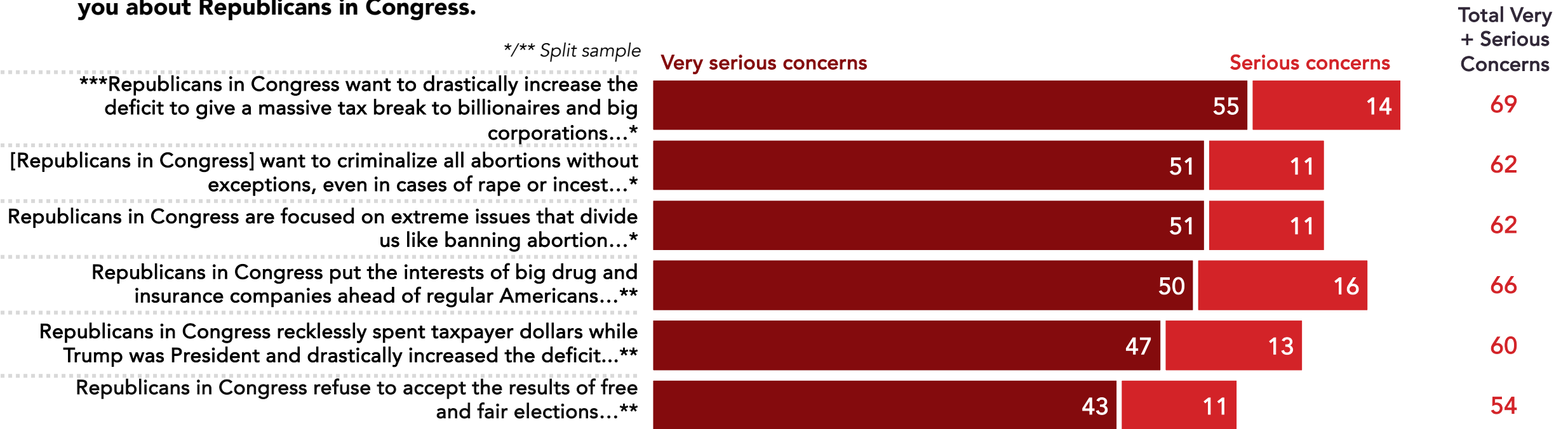


# Top Concerns About Republicans Among Persuadables Include Cutting Taxes For Billionaires and Big Corporations

Republican extremism, including efforts to ban abortion, and their opposition to affordable healthcare also raise concerns with these voters.

**[Among generic ballot persuadables\*\*\*:] Here are some statements that people might make about Republicans in Congress. For each one, please indicate whether that raises very serious concerns, serious concerns, no real concerns, or no concerns at all for you about Republicans in Congress.**

*\*/\*\* Split sample*



\*\*\*Full battery language can be found in the appendix.

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# Appendix: Full Message Language

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Republicans in Congress want to drastically increase the deficit to give a massive tax break to billionaires and big corporations, and even cut earned benefits like Social Security and Medicare that the middle class relies on. Their plans don't just help the rich but hurt everyday Americans.

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Republicans in Congress put the interests of big drug and insurance companies ahead of regular Americans. They want to let insurance companies deny coverage to people with preexisting conditions and charge older Americans more for insurance. They oppose capping the price of insulin at \$35 and oppose letting Medicare negotiate lower prescription drug prices.

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Republicans in Congress recklessly spent taxpayer dollars while Trump was President and drastically increased the deficit. Now they want to cut earned benefits like Social Security and Medicare that the middle class relies on. Their plans don't just help the rich but hurt everyday Americans.

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Republicans in Congress are threatening our individual rights and want the government to interfere in people's private lives. They want to criminalize all abortions without exceptions, even in cases of rape or incest, and want to pass an extreme national ban on abortion that could even be used to jail doctors.

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Rather than listening to the people and making Washington work so we can get our economy back on track, Republicans in Congress are focused on extreme issues that divide us like banning abortion, weakening gun laws, and making it easier to overturn election results they disagree with.

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Republicans in Congress refuse to accept the results of free and fair elections. They voted to overturn the 2020 election and promoted the lie that it was stolen, ignoring the will of the people and leading to the attack on the U.S. Capitol on January 6th. Now they are promoting fringe ideas to rig the next election in their favor.

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# Appendix: Congressional Districts Included In Sample

Dem Incumbent			Rep Incumbent - Biden		Rep Incumbent - Trump	
AK-01	MN-02	OR-06	AZ-01	NY-04	CA-41	TX-15
CA-49	NC-01	PA-07	AZ-06	NY-17	CO-03	WI-01
CO-08	NC-13	PA-08	CA-13	NY-19	FL-07	WI-03
CT-05	NH-01	PA-17	CA-22	NY-22	FL-13	
IL-13	NM-02	VA-07	CA-27	OR-05	FL-27	
IL-17	NV-03	WA-03	CA-40	PA-01	IA-01	
IN-01	NV-04	WA-08	CA-45	VA-02	IA-02	
KS-03	NY-18		NE-02		IA-03	
ME-02	OH-01		NJ-07		MI-10	
MI-03	OH-09		NY-01		MT-01	
MI-08	OH-13		NY-03		NY-02	

# navigating *the* \* **battleground**

a product of **navigator\***

## About Navigator and Navigating the Battleground

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. **Navigating the Battleground** is a project designed to understand messaging nuances in different types of battleground geographies, led by pollsters from Impact Research along with an advisory committee, including: Jessica Floyd, The Hub Project; Christina Reynolds, EMILY's List; Mike Podhorzer, AFL-CIO; Jesse Ferguson, progressive strategist; Navin Nayak, Center for American Progress Action Fund; Stephanie Valencia, EquisLabs; and Melanie Newman, Planned Parenthood Action Fund.

## About the Study

Impact Research conducted public opinion surveys among a sample of 1,500 likely 2024 general election voters from July 6-12, 2023. The survey was conducted by a mix of text-to-web (74 percent) and an opt-in, online panel (26 percent). Respondents were verified against a voter file and special care was taken to ensure the demographic composition of our sample matched that of the 61 congressional districts included in the sample across a variety of demographic variables. The margin of error for the full sample at the 95 percent level of confidence is +/- 2.5 percentage points. The margin for error for subgroups varies and is higher.

For Press inquiries contact:

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