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Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Perceptions of Incumbents and Economic Outlook by District Type

IMPACT RESEARCH

Methodology

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

100% of interviews were conducted by text-to-web.

Interviews were conducted between October 19-25, 2023. Trended results from the July and April surveys are from interviews conducted between July 6-12, 2023 and April 20-27, 2023, respectively.
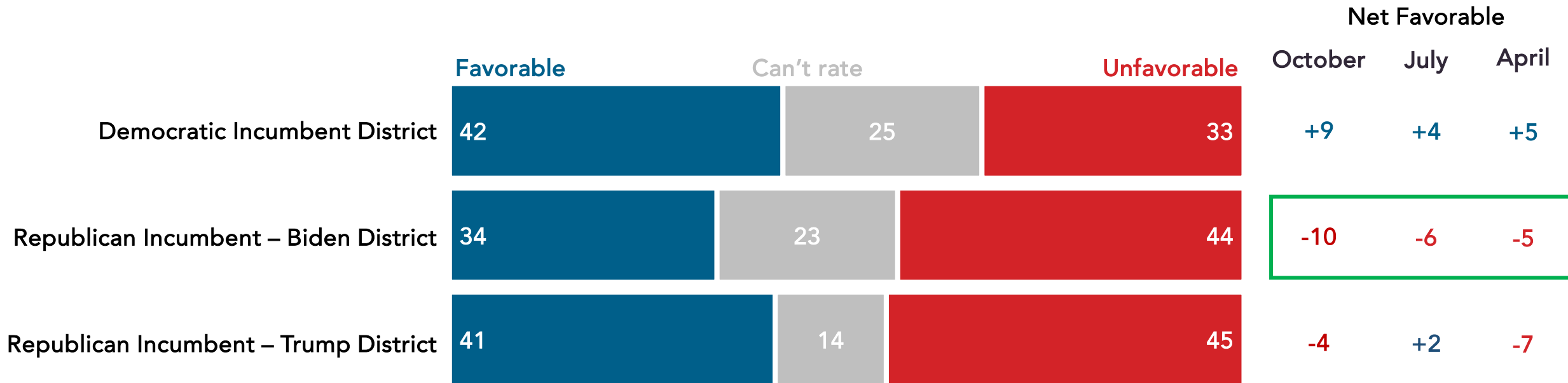
The margin of error for a sample of this size is +/- 2.5 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. The margin of error for subgroups varies and is higher.

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Key Takeaways

- **Democratic incumbents have gotten more favorable in the battleground while Republican incumbents have declined in favorability since July.** Moreover, regardless of whether a district in the battleground has a Democratic incumbent or a Republican incumbent, constituents believe Republicans in Congress are focused on the wrong things.

- **A majority of battleground voters across different district types hold a negative view of the health of the economy.** They give poor ratings across the board on economic indicators like the inflation rate and cost of goods, and few believe the situation has improved over the past year.

- **Battleground constituents are more likely to support members of Congress who favor protecting Social Security and Medicare.** Constituents are more likely to support their members of Congress if they support protecting Social Security and Medicare and giving Medicare the power to negotiate lower prices.

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Democratic Incumbents Have Improved Their Favorability Since July, While Republican Incumbents Have Grown More Unpopular
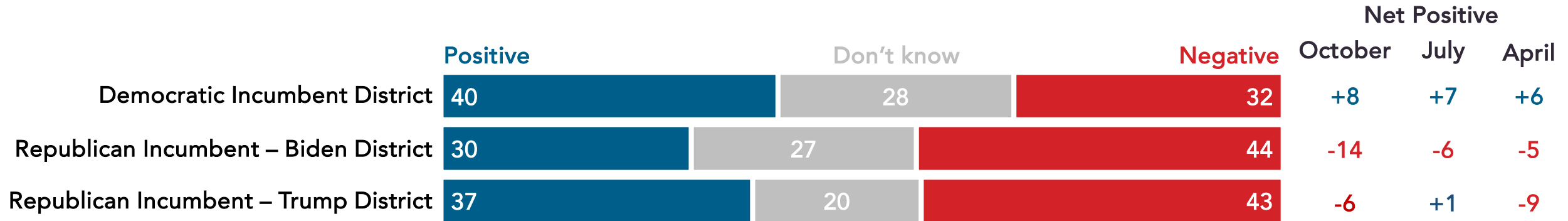
On the following screens are some names of people and groups. Please indicate whether you have a very favorable view, somewhat favorable view, somewhat unfavorable view, or very unfavorable view. If you have never heard of them, or cannot rate them, please indicate that:

	Favorable	Can't rate	Unfavorable	Net Favorable October	July	April
Democratic Incumbent District	42	25	33	+9	+4	+5
Republican Incumbent – Biden District	34	23	44	-10	-6	-5
Republican Incumbent – Trump District	41	14	45	-4	+2	-7

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Republicans Incumbents in Biden-Won Districts Are Underwater By Double Digits on Overall Job Ratings and Handling the Economy

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

	Positive	Don't know	Negative	Net Positive October	July	April
Democratic Incumbent District	40	28	32	+8	+7	+6
Republican Incumbent – Biden District	30	27	44	-14	-6	-5
Republican Incumbent – Trump District	37	20	43	-6	+1	-9

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

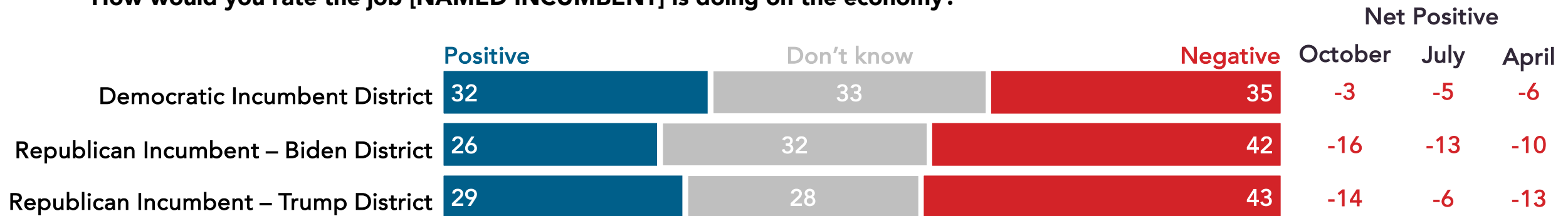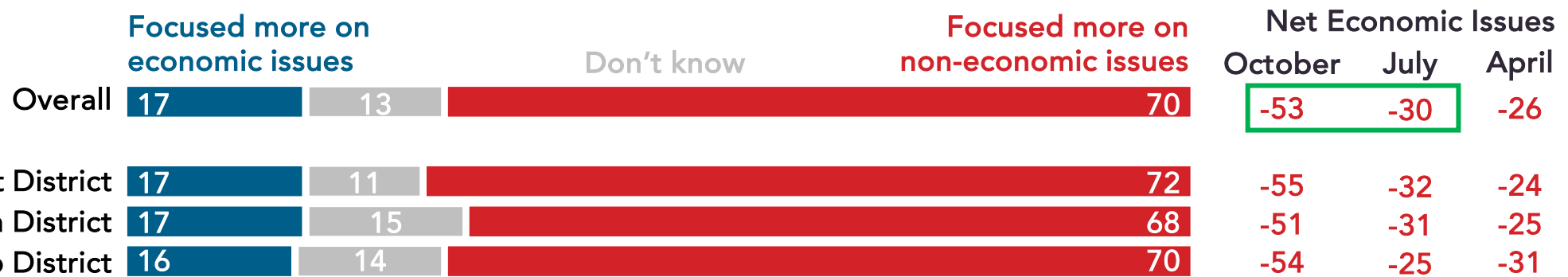|	Positive	Don't know	Negative	Net Positive October	July	April
Democratic Incumbent District	32	33	35	-3	-5	-6
Republican Incumbent – Biden District	26	32	42	-16	-13	-10
Republican Incumbent – Trump District	29	28	43	-14	-6	-13

Nationwide survey of 1,500 likely 2024 general election voters across 61 battleground districts conducted October 19-October 25, 2023.
For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org/battleground.

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Battleground Constituents Believe Republicans Are Prioritizing the Wrong Things and Focusing More on Non-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:

	Prioritized the right things	Don't know	Prioritized the wrong things	Net Right Things October	July	April
Overall	20	11	68	-48	-16	-19
Democratic Incumbent District	21	10	69	-48	-17	-17
Republican Incumbent – Biden District	21	11	68	-47	-18	-19
Republican Incumbent – Trump District	17	15	68	-51	-13	-21

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

	Focused more on economic issues	Don't know	Focused more on non-economic issues	Net Economic Issues October	July	April
Overall	17	13	70	-53	-30	-26
Democratic Incumbent District	17	11	72	-55	-32	-24
Republican Incumbent – Biden District	17	15	68	-51	-31	-25
Republican Incumbent – Trump District	16	14	70	-54	-25	-31

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Constituents Are More Likely to Support Members of Congress Who Protect Medicare and Social Security, Drug Cost Caps

For each one, please indicate if you would be much more likely to vote for your Congressperson if they supported that policy, somewhat more likely, somewhat less likely, much less likely, or if it would have no impact on your vote.
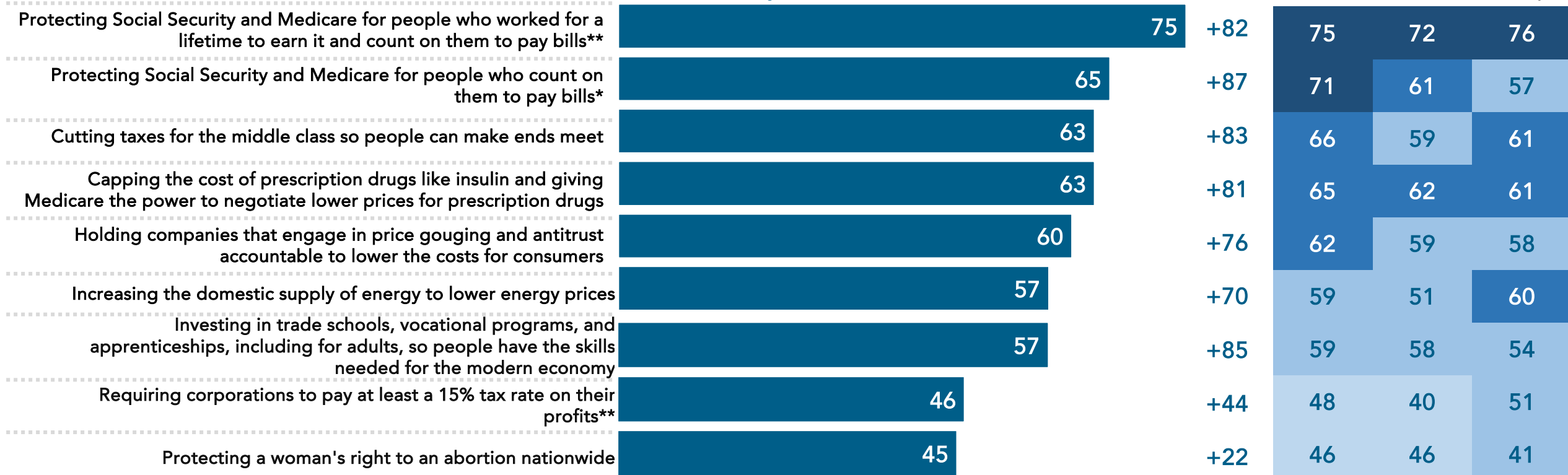
*/** Split sample

Much more likely

Policy	Much more likely	Net More	% Much More Likely		
			Dem. Inc	Rep. Inc – Biden	Rep. Inc – Trump
Protecting Social Security and Medicare for people who worked for a lifetime to earn it and count on them to pay bills**	75	+82	75	72	76
Protecting Social Security and Medicare for people who count on them to pay bills*	65	+87	71	61	57
Cutting taxes for the middle class so people can make ends meet	63	+83	66	59	61
Capping the cost of prescription drugs like insulin and giving Medicare the power to negotiate lower prices for prescription drugs	63	+81	65	62	61
Holding companies that engage in price gouging and antitrust accountable to lower the costs for consumers	60	+76	62	59	58
Increasing the domestic supply of energy to lower energy prices	57	+70	59	51	60
Investing in trade schools, vocational programs, and apprenticeships, including for adults, so people have the skills needed for the modern economy	57	+85	59	58	54
Requiring corporations to pay at least a 15% tax rate on their profits**	46	+44	48	40	51
Protecting a woman's right to an abortion nationwide	45	+22	46	46	41

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Regardless of Whether Constituents Are Represented by a Democrat or Republican, the Economy Has Negative Ratings

How would you rate how things are going in the U.S. economy?
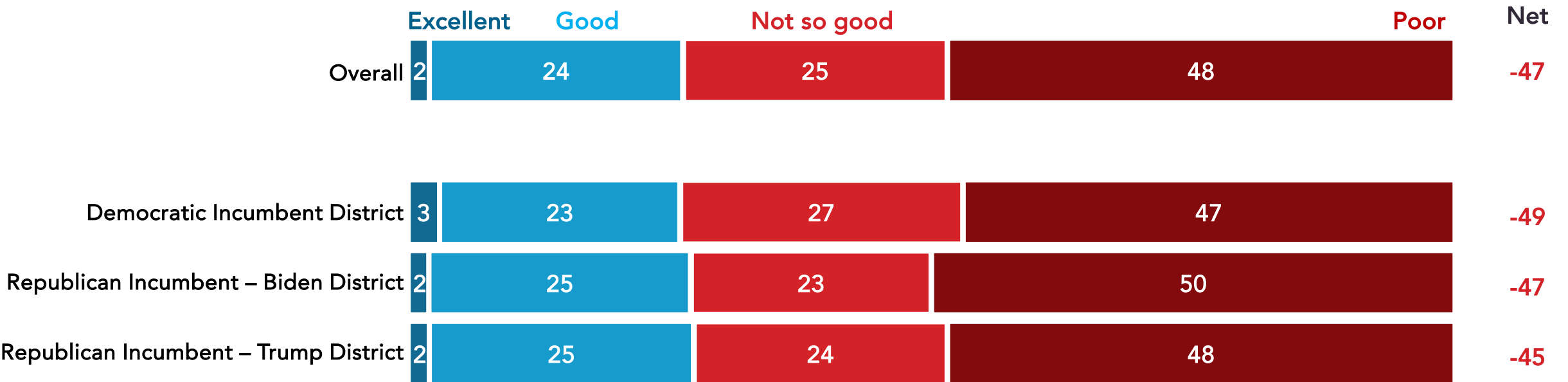
	Excellent	Good	Not so good	Poor	Net
Overall	2	24	25	48	-47
Democratic Incumbent District	3	23	27	47	-49
Republican Incumbent – Biden District	2	25	23	50	-47
Republican Incumbent – Trump District	2	25	24	48	-45

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Battleground Constituents Are Deeply Negative on All Economic Indicators, Particularly Cost-Related Indicators

Next are some economic indicators that people use to measure the health of the U.S. economy. For each one, please rate how you think it is going as either excellent, good, not so good, or poor.

% Negative Rating	Overall	Democratic Incumbent District	Republican Incumbent – Biden District	Republican Incumbent – Trump District
Food prices	95	96	94	92
Consumer good prices	91	91	93	88
Housing prices	87	88	86	88
The inflation rate	87	88	89	80
Energy and gas prices	86	86	91	82
The ability to get into and stay in the middle class	82	83	82	81
Wages and salaries	68	69	71	74
The health of local and small businesses	68	68	73	62
The gross domestic product	54	53	56	52
The stock market	51	48	57	51

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Some Battleground Constituents Acknowledge Progress on Jobs & Wages in the Last Year, But Few Do So Regarding Costs

Next are some economic indicators that people use to measure the health of the U.S. economy. For each one, please rate how you think it is going as either excellent, good, not so good, or poor.

% Gotten better over past year	Overall	Democratic Incumbent District	Republican Incumbent – Biden District	Republican Incumbent – Trump District
Availability of jobs and the amount of people working	31	30	36	28
Wages and salaries	23	24	21	24
The inflation rate	17	16	18	17
The gross domestic product	17	18	17	16
The stock market	12	13	13	11
Energy and gas prices	11	11	12	9
The health of local and small businesses	11	9	12	14
Consumer good prices	5	5	4	7
Housing prices	5	6	4	6
The ability to get into and stay in the middle class	5	4	4	6

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A Slim Majority of Voters Overall Rate Their Personal Financial Situation Positively

Thinking about your personal financial situation. How would you rate how things are going for you personally?

Thinking about your personal financial situation. Are you:

	Excellent	Good	Poor	Not so good
Overall	7	47	31	13
Democratic Incumbent District	8	47	31	13
Republican Incumbent – Biden District	6	53	26	13
Republican Incumbent – Trump District	8	41	38	11

	Having no trouble making ends meet	Making ends meet but just barely	Not making ends meet
Overall	38	50	10
Democratic Incumbent District	36	51	12
Republican Incumbent – Biden District	37	51	11
Republican Incumbent – Trump District	46	47	7

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A Plurality Believe Their Financial Situation Will Be the Same a Year From Now; Only One in Five Think It Will Be Better

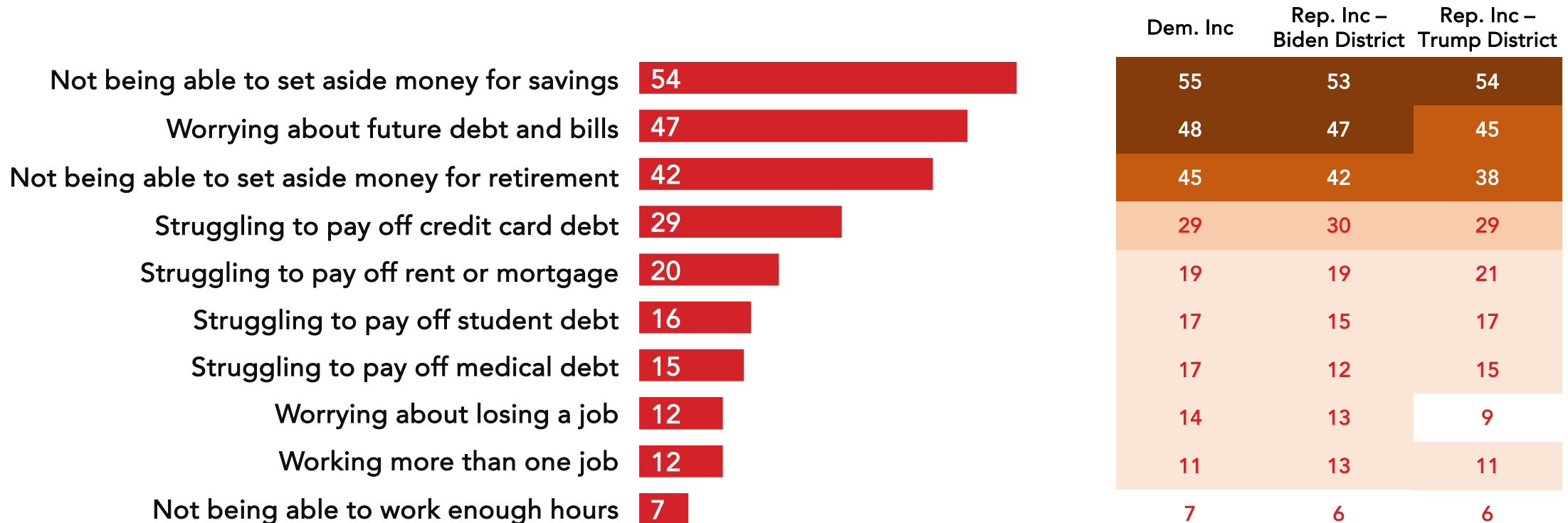**Which of the following comes closest to your view about your personal financial situation?**

	It will be better a year from now	Don't know	It will be about the same a year from now	It will be worse a year from now
Overall	18	10	47	26
Democratic Incumbent District	19	9	46	27
Republican Incumbent – Biden District	17	11	47	25
Republican Incumbent – Trump District	18	10	47	26
Personal Financial Situation – Positive*	24	6	62	8
Personal Financial Situation – Negative*	9	15	29	48

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Most Voters in All Battleground Districts Are Concerned About Being Able to Set Aside Money for the Future

**Please indicate any of the following things that you are personally dealing with right now. Select all that apply.
[MULTIPLE RESPONSES ACCEPTED]**

	Dem. Inc	Rep. Inc – Biden District	Rep. Inc – Trump District
Not being able to set aside money for savings — 54	55	53	54
Worrying about future debt and bills — 47	48	47	45
Not being able to set aside money for retirement — 42	45	42	38
Struggling to pay off credit card debt — 29	29	30	29
Struggling to pay off rent or mortgage — 20	19	19	21
Struggling to pay off student debt — 16	17	15	17
Struggling to pay off medical debt — 15	17	12	15
Worrying about losing a job — 12	14	13	9
Working more than one job — 12	11	13	11
Not being able to work enough hours — 7	7	6	6

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Nearly Three in Five Constituents in Trump-Won Districts Blame Corporate Price Gouging for the High Costs of Goods

In your opinion, who is most to blame for the high costs that you are experiencing?

	Corporations raising prices and price gouging	Disruptions in supply chains driving up prices	Price increases in other countries	Don't know
Overall	54	31	2	13
Democratic Incumbent District	56	30	2	13
Republican Incumbent – Biden District	50	33	4	14
Republican Incumbent – Trump District	58	29	2	11

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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	

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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 October 19-25, 2023. The survey was conducted by text-to-web (100 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.