

# navigator\*



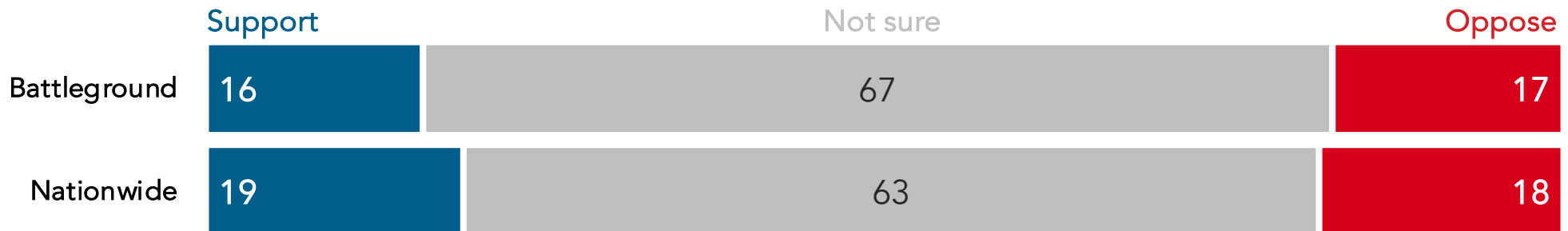
The Comstock Act:  
A Guide for Advocates

# Seven in Ten Americans Have Heard “Nothing” About the Comstock Act

How much have you seen, read, or heard about the Comstock Act?



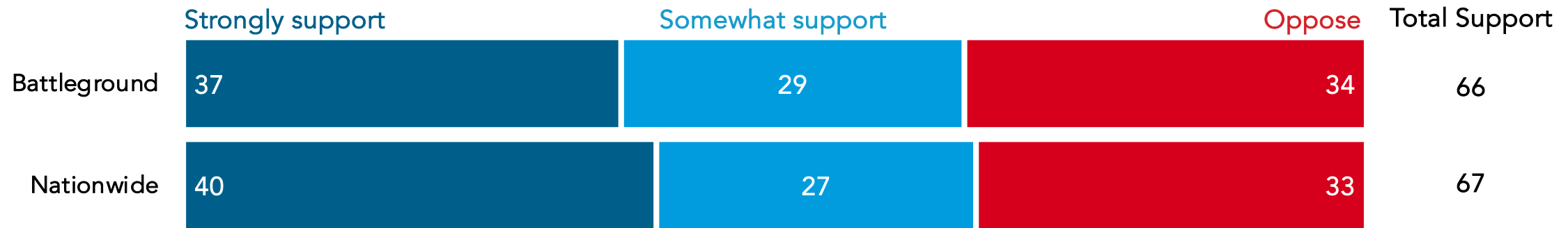
*[Before any information given:]* Based on what you know today, do you support or oppose the Comstock Act?



Nationwide survey of 812 likely 2024 voters conducted May 23-June 4, 2024, with an additional oversample of 400 Americans living in battleground states including Arizona, Florida, Montana, Nevada, Ohio, Texas, and Wisconsin. For more info, visit [navigatorresearch.org](https://navigatorresearch.org).

# Two in Three Americans Support Changing the Comstock Act So It No Longer Applies to Abortion

[After Introductory Message\*:] Do you support or oppose changing Comstock so it no longer applies to abortion?



	Battleground	
	% Strongly support	% Total support
Overall	37	66
Democrat	58	80
Independent	40	76
Republican	17	50
Abortion legal	49	84
Abortion illegal	16	36

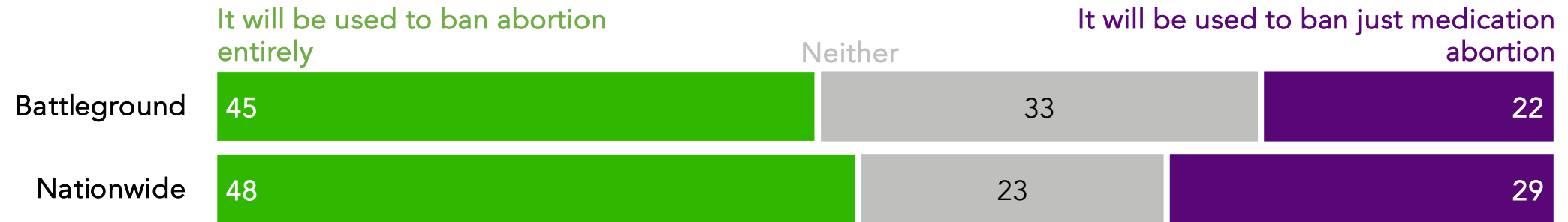
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\*Please see the appendix for the text of the introductory message.

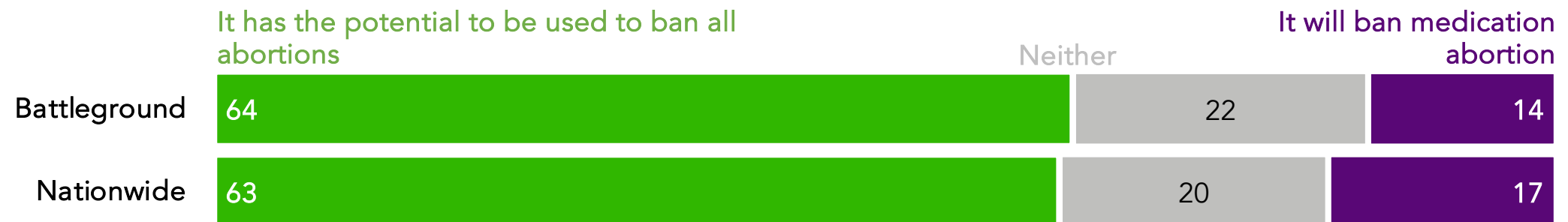
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# Two in Three Are More Concerned That Comstock Has the Potential to Ban All Abortions

Which is more likely?



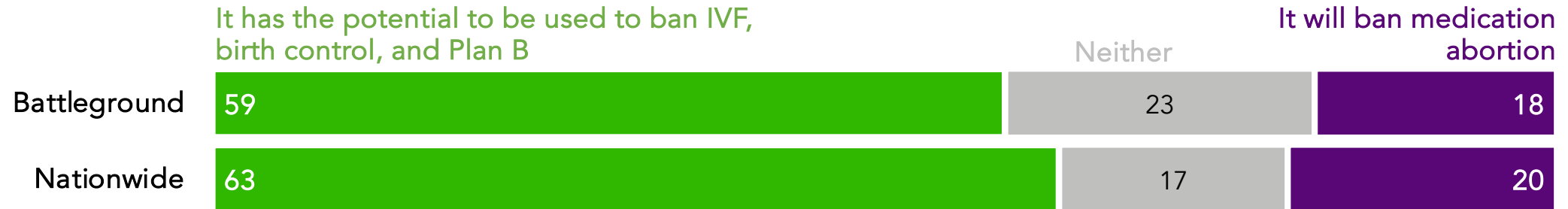
Which is more concerning?



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# Americans Are Most Concerned That Comstock Could Be Used to Ban IVF, Birth Control, and Plan B

Which of the following is more concerning about the Comstock Act?



Which of the following is more concerning about the Comstock Act?



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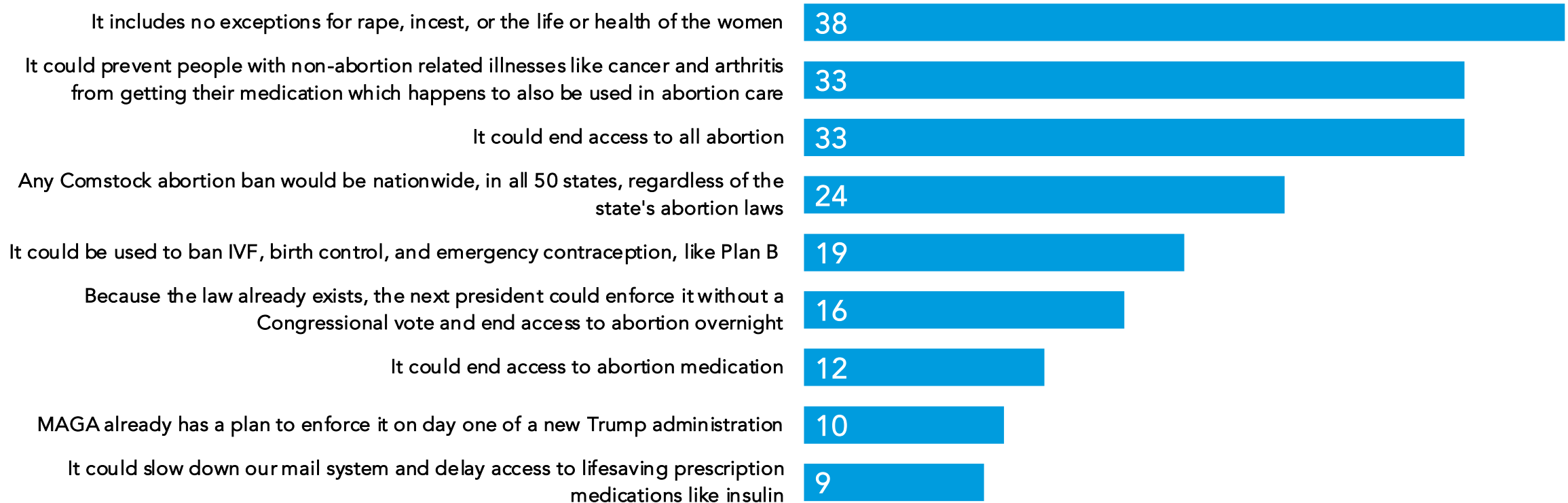
# Most Convincing Reasons to Change Comstock Act Focus on MAGA Extremists Using Comstock To Further Erode Freedoms

Battleground	National	% very convincing
42	45	<b>[GOP PATTERNS/BELIEVE THEIR PROMISES]</b> MAGA extremists warned us that they wanted to overturn Roe v. Wade. Then they did. They said they'd restrict IVF access. Then they did. They said they'd ban abortion in Texas and Florida. And they did. When they say they're going to use Comstock to ban abortion, they will.
48	46	<b>[BYPASSES ABORTION BAN VOTE W/ QUOTE]</b> MAGA extremists see Comstock as their chance to ban abortion nationally. Because it is an existing law, Congress doesn't even have to vote on it. They can ban abortion in every state, overnight, with a single decision by the President. The lawyer who represented Trump before the Supreme Court warned us, "We don't need a federal ban when we have Comstock on the books."
41	46	<b>[TRUMP WILL ENFORCE]</b> Trump has been clear at every turn: He will take away our reproductive freedom. He bragged about overturning Roe v. Wade, saying he is "proudly the person responsible for the ending" of our guaranteed right to abortion and unless we change Comstock, he will finish the job and take away our rights completely.
37	35	<b>[WILL EVENTUALLY BE ENFORCED]</b> Even if Trump doesn't win in November, eventually a Republican will win the presidency and use The Comstock Act to ban abortion nationwide. If we don't update the Comstock Act, this easy tool to ban abortion will always be available to future presidents.
39	41	<b>[LATEST EFFORT]</b> Calling to enforce The Comstock Act against abortion is just the latest effort by MAGA extremists to ban all abortion, everywhere, for any reason. They passed extreme abortion bans and restrictions in states across the country like Texas' law that bans abortion and laws seeking to prosecute people for even helping a woman cross state lines to have a legal abortion in another state.
39	43	<b>[BYPASS ABORTION BAN VOTE W/O QUOTE]</b> MAGA extremists see Comstock as their chance to ban abortion nationally. Because it is an existing law, Congress doesn't even have to vote on it. They can ban abortion in every state, overnight, with a single decision by the President
42	41	<b>[ALITO AND THOMAS]</b> We can't rely on the Supreme Court to stop enforcement of The Comstock Act. Recently, two Supreme Court Justices, Justices Thomas and Alito, went out of their way to comment on and lay the groundwork for a future decision that Comstock's abortion medication ban is legal and should be enforced.
40	40	<b>[PROJECT 2025]</b> Trump administration officials are already making plans for Day One. Their plan provides clear instructions on how to enforce The Comstock Act and ban abortion in every state starting on day one
38	41	<b>[GOP SUPPORT W/ QUOTE]</b> MAGA extremists all support enforcing The Comstock Act. 145 Members of Congress wrote a letter and joined Republican Senator Josh Hawley when he said "we must take action to restrict access to medication abortion and prevent the dissemination of abortion-inducing drugs. Enforcing laws like The Comstock Act is crucial."
34	37	<b>[LAWYER QUOTE]</b> The anti-abortion lawyers representing Trump before the Supreme Court call abortion medication "the single greatest threat to unborn children in a post-Roe world" and are determined to enforce Comstock

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# Top Reason to Change Comstock Act: No Exceptions for Rape, Incest, or the Lives of Women

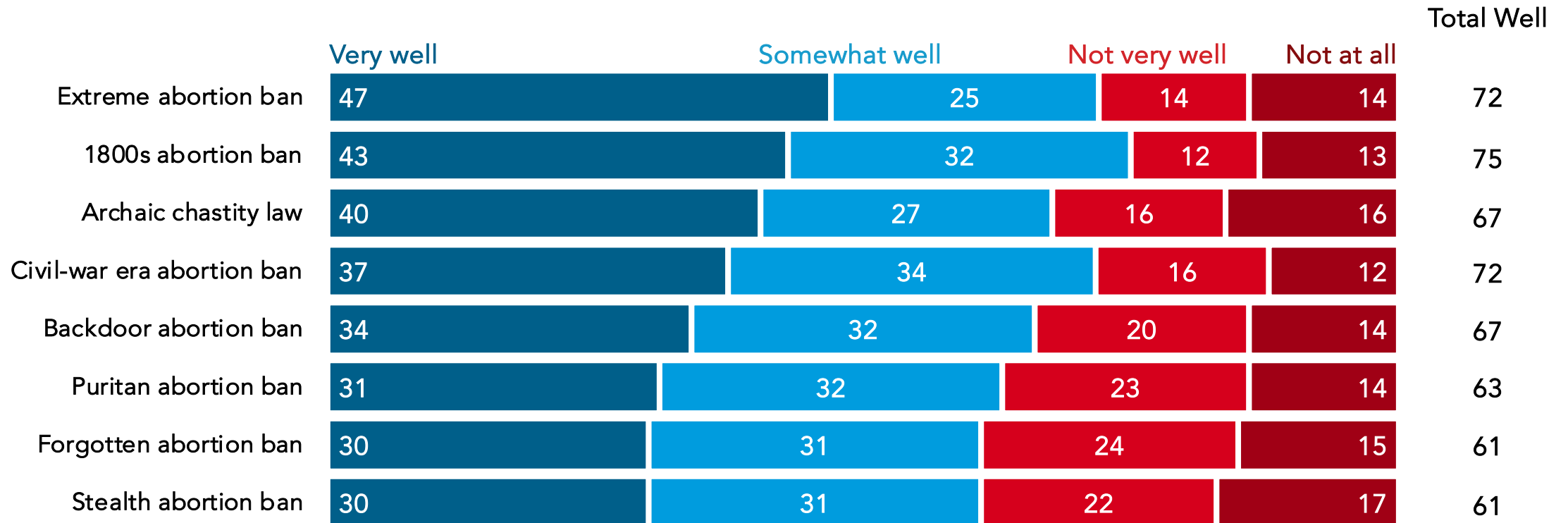
Which of the following are the top two reasons to support changing the Comstock Act so that it does not apply to abortion?



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# Three in Four Say “Extreme Abortion Ban” and “1800s Abortion Ban” Most Apply to the Comstock Act

How well do each of the following terms apply to the Comstock Act?

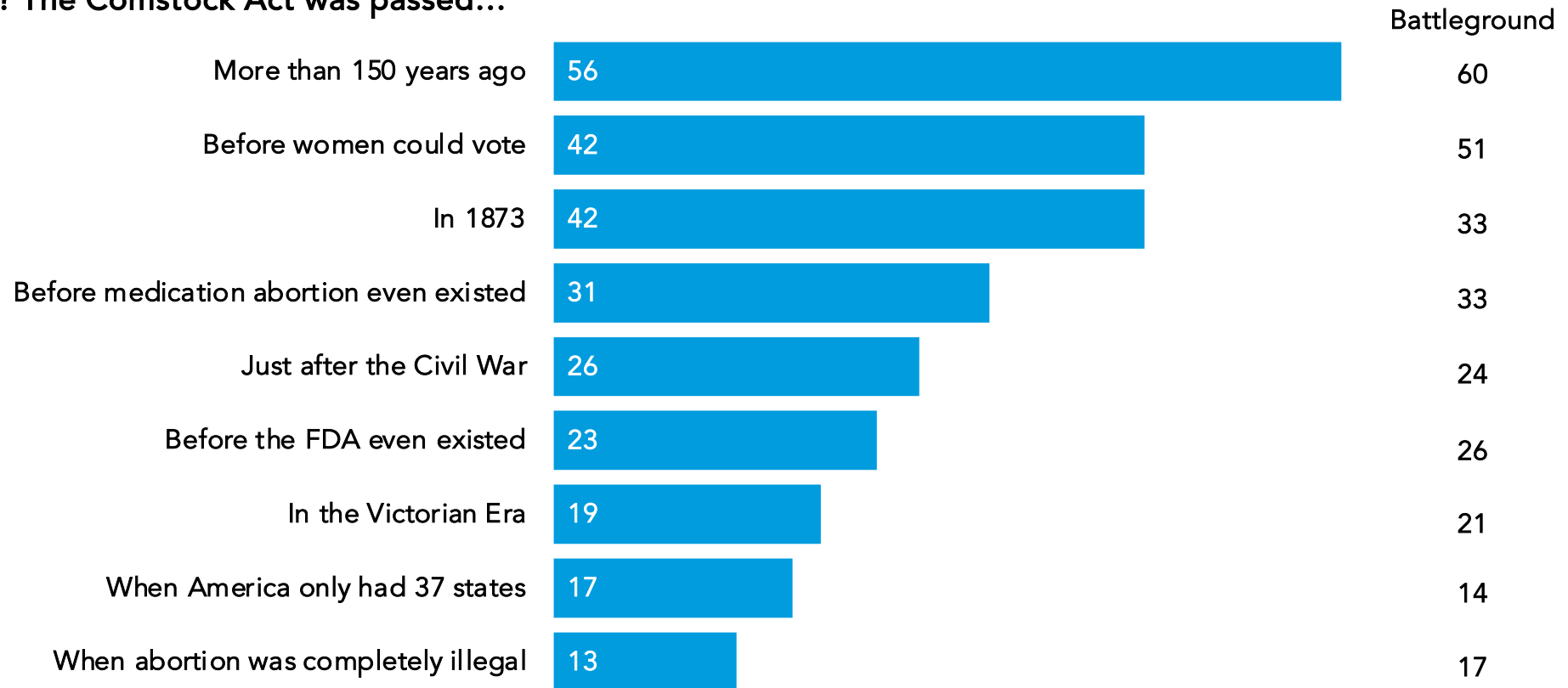


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# Term That Best Describes the Comstock Act's Age: "More than 150 Years Old"

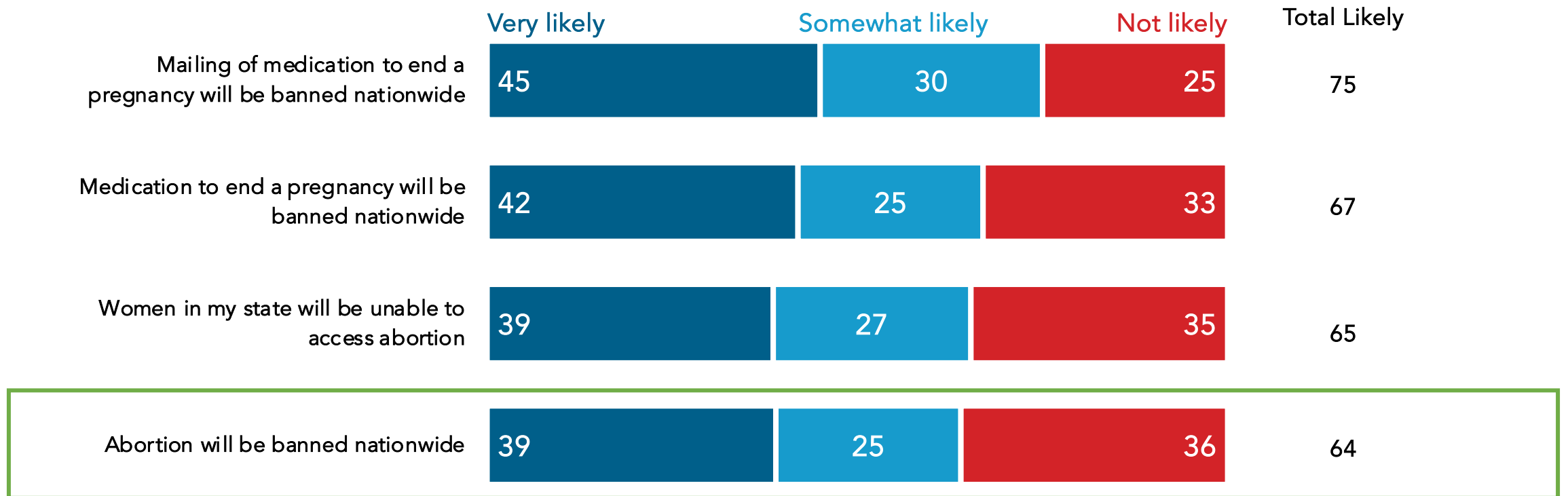
Below are some reasons people say the Comstock Act is old and needs updating. Which three of the following descriptions sound oldest to you? The Comstock Act was passed...



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# Americans Broadly See Abortion as at Risk if Trump Wins

Imagine that Donald Trump wins the next presidential election. How likely do you think each of these scenarios is?



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# Appendix: Comstock Act Introductory Message

Respondents read one of the following statements:

**[LONGER HISTORY + MEDICATION ABORTION]** The Comstock Act was spearheaded by self-described "anti-sex crusader" Anthony Comstock and signed into law by President Ulysses S. Grant in 1873 - over 150 years ago. This law gives government the power to search, confiscate, and destroy anything mailed or shipped that officials deem "obscene" or "indecent," including medication used to cause an abortion. And worse, it gives the government the power to jail anyone who sent or received that material in the past five years. The government repeatedly used this "chastity law" to justify jailing doctors who provided abortion care and to burn millions of books, pictures, and news sources. The Comstock Act hasn't been enforced for decades but now that anti-abortion extremists have successfully overturned *Roe v. Wade* and taken away the Constitutional right to an abortion, they want to go a step further. These extremist politicians are pushing the next president to enforce the Comstock Act, which would ban doctors and pharmacies from shipping FDA-approved medication abortion and women from using it, in all 50 states, even in those where abortion is currently legal. It would end access to medication abortion nationwide.

**[LONGER HISTORY + ABORTION GENERALLY]** The Comstock Act was spearheaded by self-described "anti-sex crusader" Anthony Comstock and signed into law by President Ulysses S. Grant in 1873 - over 150 years ago. It bans mailing or shipping anything government officials deem "obscene" or "indecent," and it gives government the power to ban abortion. The government repeatedly used this "chastity law" to justify jailing doctors who provided abortion care and to burn millions of books, pictures, and news sources. The President couldn't enforce The Comstock Act when *Roe v. Wade* was in effect. Now that *Roe v. Wade* has been overturned and no longer protects the legal right to abortion, the President can enforce The Comstock Act. Extremist politicians are pushing the next president to enforce the Comstock Act, which would ban abortion with no exceptions, in all states, even in those where abortion is currently legal. It would even ban FDA-approved medication abortion, which accounts for more than half of all abortions nationwide. It would end access to abortion nationwide.

**[SHORTER HISTORY + MEDICATION ABORTION]** The Comstock Act is a 150-year-old law that gives government the power to search, confiscate, and destroy anything mailed or shipped that officials deem "obscene" or "indecent," including medication used to cause an abortion. And worse, it gives the government the power to jail anyone who sent or received that material in the past five years. The President couldn't enforce The Comstock Act when *Roe v. Wade* was in effect. Now that *Roe v. Wade* has been overturned and no longer protects the legal right to abortion, the President can enforce The Comstock Act. Extremist politicians are pushing the next president to enforce The Comstock Act, which would ban doctors and pharmacies from shipping FDA-approved medication abortion and women from using it, in all 50 states, even in those where abortion is currently legal. It would end access to medication abortion nationwide.

**[SHORTER HISTORY + ABORTION GENERALLY]** The Comstock Act is a 150-year-old law that gives government the power to ban abortion. The President could not enforce The Comstock Act when *Roe v. Wade* was in effect. Now that *Roe v. Wade* has been overturned and no longer protects the legal right to abortion, the President can enforce The Comstock Act. Extremist politicians are pushing the next president to enforce the Comstock Act, which would ban abortion with no exceptions, in all states, even in those where abortion is currently legal. It would even ban FDA-approved medication abortion, which accounts for more than half of all abortions nationwide. It would end access to abortion nationwide.

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## 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, 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

Global Strategy Group conducted a public opinion survey among a sample of 812 likely 2024 voters from May 23-June 3, 2024. 400 additional interviews were conducted in battleground states, including Arizona, Florida, Montana, Nevada, Ohio, Texas, and Wisconsin. 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.

**For Press inquiries contact:**

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**To learn more about  
Navigator:**

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