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Wednesday, August 20th

Government Funding Debate: A Guide for Advocates



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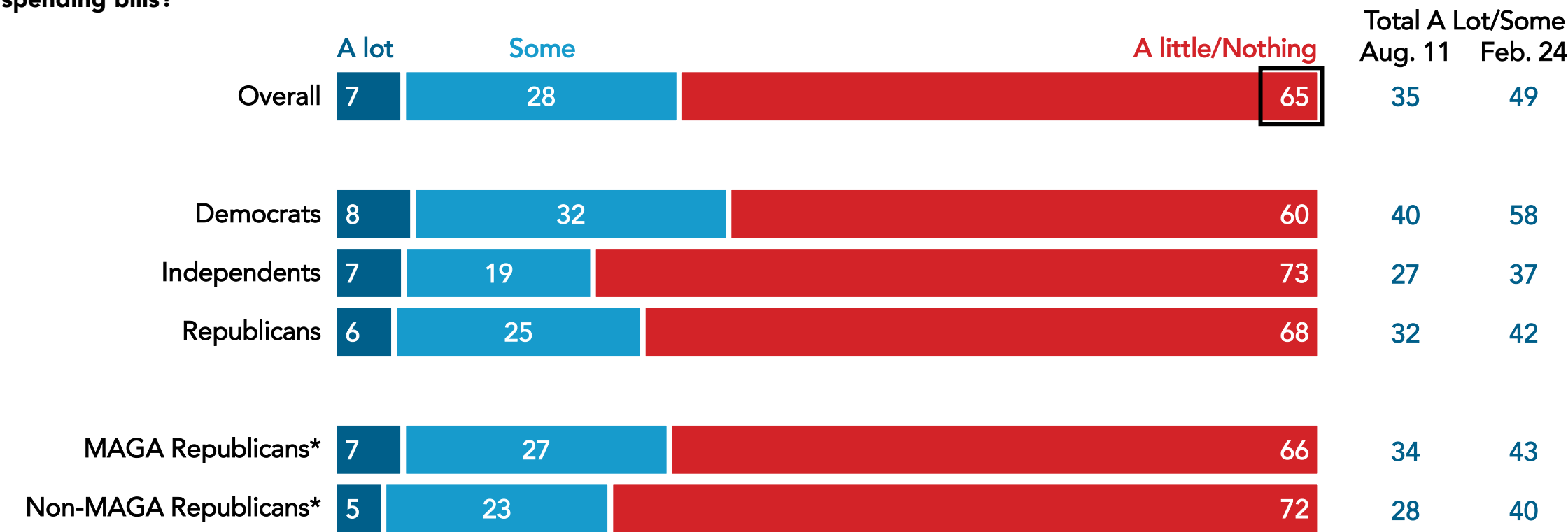
Key Takeaways:

- Few Americans report hearing about a potential government shutdown recently. Nearly half say they would blame Trump and Republicans in Congress for a shutdown, while only a quarter would blame Democrats.
- Support is higher for Democrats framing the government funding fights as supporting bills as long as they meet certain conditions, rather than opposing them unless they meet certain asks.
- The most worthwhile priorities for Democrats to push for, even if it means shutting down the government to get them, are reversing Medicaid cuts and blocking tax breaks for the rich and big corporations. Persuadable groups also prioritize stopping health insurance premiums from going up.

Few Americans Are Hearing Anything About a Potential Government Shutdown

Two in three Americans (65%) report hearing “a little” or “nothing” about a potential government shutdown; Democrats are slightly more likely to report hearing about a shutdown (40% hearing “a lot” or “some”) than Republicans (32%) or independents (27%).

How much have you seen, read, or heard about a potential government shutdown in the coming months if Congress cannot pass their annual spending bills?

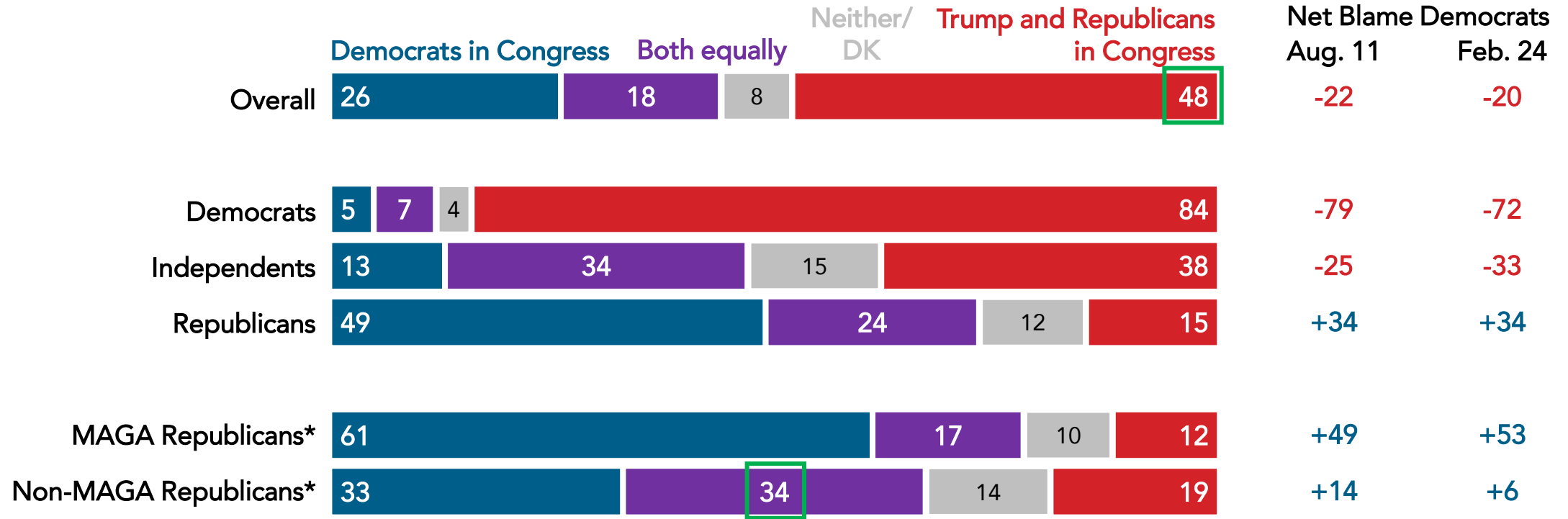


*"MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who identify as "a supporter of the MAGA movement" on a separate question, while "non-MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who do not consider themselves supporters of the MAGA movement or are not sure.
Nationwide surveys of registered voters; Each wave represents approximately 1,000 interviews taken over the prior three-five days.
Latest wave conducted August 7-August 11, 2025. For more info, visit navigatortresearch.org.

Large Pluralities Continue to Say Shutdown Responsibility Would Lie With Trump and Republicans

Nearly half of Americans (48%) say they would blame Trump and Republicans in Congress for a shutdown, while only a quarter (26%) would blame Democrats in Congress. Nearly one in five say they would blame both equally (18%).

If the government were to shut down in the coming months, who would you blame most?



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In Framing the Funding Debate, Better to Focus on Spending Conditions to Support Than Opposition Unless Meeting Conditions

Roughly three in five Americans (59%) feel that Democrats should support spending bills if they meet their conditions – namely not cutting critical programs – while far fewer independents and Republicans agree with Democrats who say they should threaten a shutdown.

Which is closer to your view, even if you don't agree with either side fully?

[SUPPORT IF MEET CONDITIONS] Democrats who say they should be willing to support the spending bills, as long as they meet their conditions: that they don't cut funding for public schools, take away health care that people depend on, or defund research into lifesaving cures

Democrats who say that without the majority there's not much they can do to stop Trump, and so they should at least keep the government working

Net Agree With Democrats Pushing Back



[OPPOSE UNLESS MEET CONDITIONS] Democrats who say they need to oppose the spending bills and threaten to shut down the government, unless they are able to stop Trump's power grab and Republicans' outrageous budget cuts

Nationwide survey of 1,000 registered voters conducted August 7-August 11, 2025.
For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

Most Important Spending Priorities to Include Are Health Care (Medicaid and Premiums) and Tax Breaks

Below is a list of priorities Democrats could have for upcoming bills, including the annual spending bills. Please select the three that would be most worthwhile for Democrats to push for, even if that could mean shutting down the government to get them.

	% top three most worthwhile	Dem	Ind	Rep	MAGA Reps*	Non-MAGA Reps*	Double Haters**	Blame Both***
Reverse Medicaid cuts	36%	46	33	28	24	33	38	36
Block tax breaks for the rich and big corporations	36	47	34	26	20	34	35	35
Check Trump's power	27	44	28	9	6	13	33	16
Stop increases in health insurance premiums at the end of the year	25	20	25	32	30	34	26	35
Stop Trump's attacks on the government and firing of federal workers	21	33	21	10	6	16	22	14
Make sure any federal spending is approved by Congress	21	19	21	23	21	25	19	26
Protect funding for medical and scientific research	21	27	16	16	14	19	22	23
Protect disaster relief for recently impacted areas	20	17	18	23	21	25	17	22
Prevent further government spending cuts	14	17	13	12	12	12	16	14

*"MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who identify as "a supporter of the MAGA movement" on a separate question, while "non-MAGA Republicans" are Republicans who do not consider themselves supporters of the MAGA movement or are not sure. ***"Double haters" say they view both the Democratic Party and the Republican Party unfavorably on separate questions. ****"Blame both" say they would blame both Democrats in Congress and Trump and Republicans in Congress equally if the government were to shut down. Nationwide survey of 1,000 registered voters conducted August 7-August 11, 2025. For more info, visit navigatortresearch.org.

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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; 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 August 7-August 11, 2025. 100 additional interviews were conducted among Hispanic voters. 100 additional interviews were conducted among African American voters. 77 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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