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Thursday, September 18th

Trump's National Guard Deployment: A Guide for Advocates
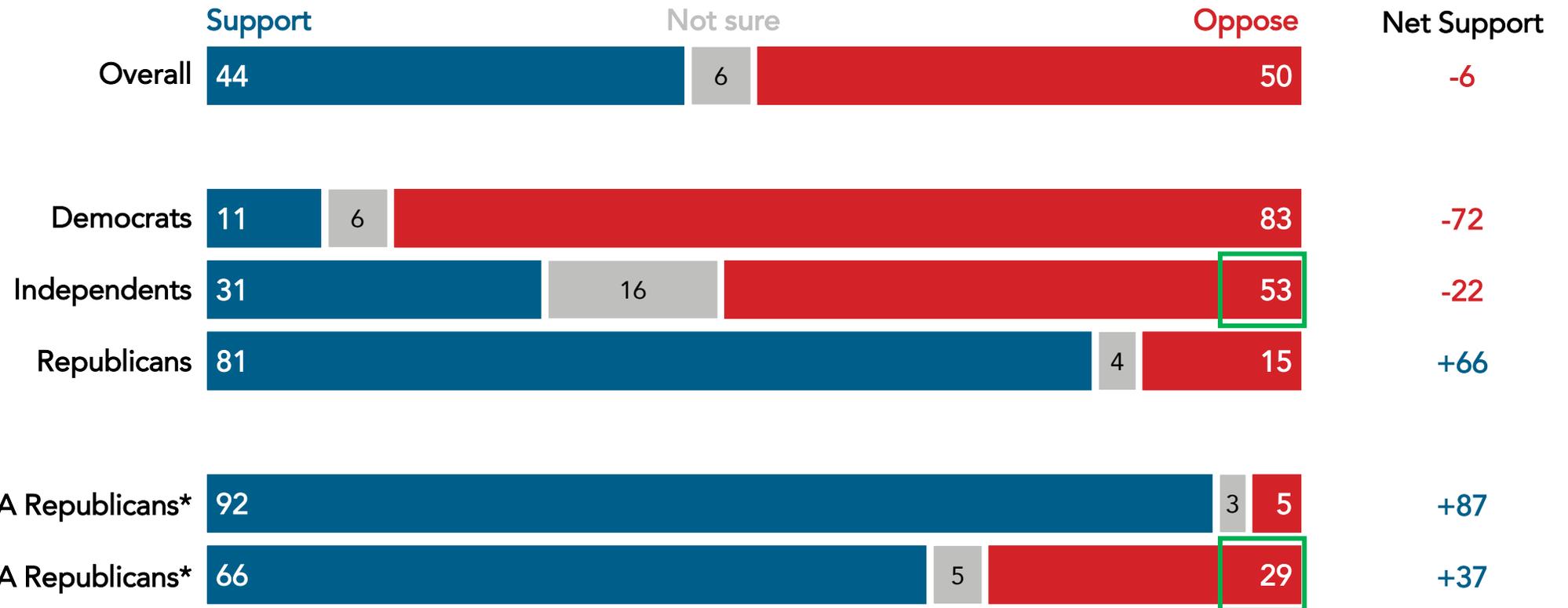
GSG GLOBAL STRATEGY GROUP

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Key Takeaways:

- Americans are divided on Trump deploying the National Guard to D.C., with half opposing the move.

- Crime remains an important issue and debate. But, despite divided opinions on Trump's deployment of the National Guard, Americans trust Trump and Republicans more than Democrats to protect law and order, keep Americans safe, and handle crime.

- To win this debate, Democrats need to acknowledge the problem and demonstrate both why deploying the National Guard is not the solution and provide an alternative vision to solve the problem.

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Half of Americans Oppose Trump Deploying National Guard Troops to D.C.

A majority of independents (53%) and 29% of non-MAGA Republicans* oppose the move.

Regardless of how closely you've been following the situation, do you support or oppose Trump deploying National Guard troops and federal agents to patrol Washington, D.C.?

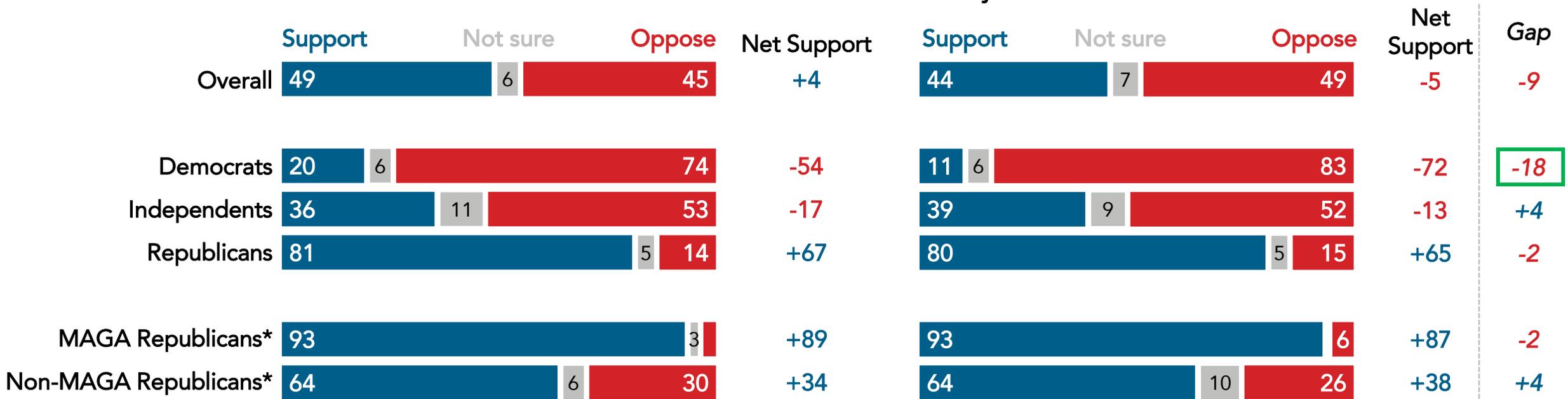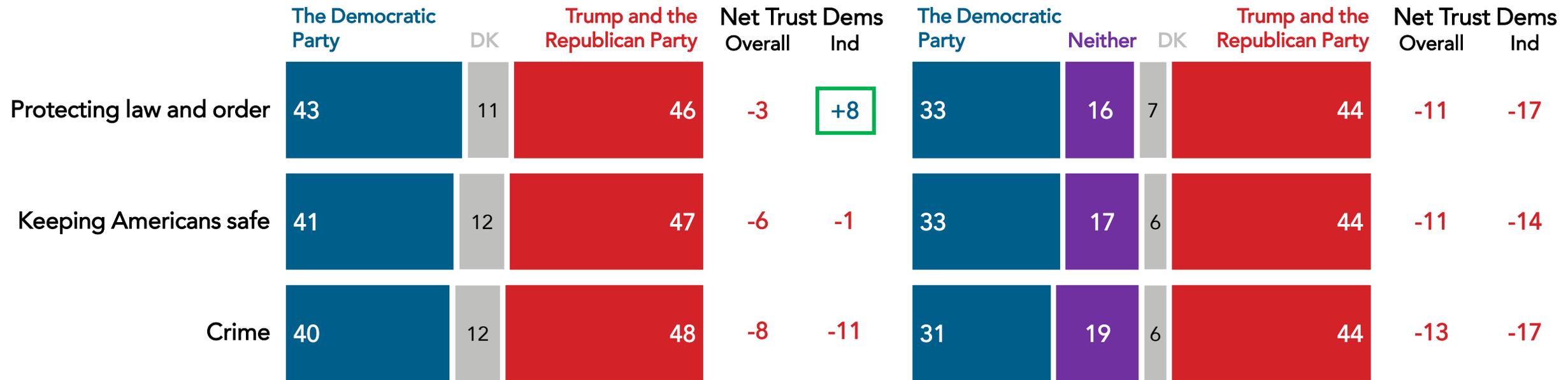|	Support	Not sure	Oppose	Net Support
Overall	44	6	50	-6
Democrats	11	6	83	-72
Independents	31	16	53	-22
Republicans	81	4	15	+66
MAGA Republicans*	92	3	5	+87
Non-MAGA Republicans*	66	5	29	+37

*"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 survey of 1,000 registered voters conducted September 4-September 8, 2025.
For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.

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Mention of Trump in the National Guard Deployment Helps to Drive Up Opposition Among Democrats

Mentioning Trump when discussing the deployment of National Guard troops to big cities drives up opposition among Democrats (18-point net gap), though it does little to change views among independents (4-point net gap) or Republicans (2-point net gap).

(Split Sample) Do you support or oppose sending National Guard troops to big cities across the country to address crime?

(Split Sample) As you may know, Donald Trump has discussed sending National Guard troops to big cities across the country to address crime. Knowing this, do you support or oppose Donald Trump sending National Guard troops to big cities across the country to address crime?

	Support	Not sure	Oppose	Net Support	Support	Not sure	Oppose	Net Support	Gap
Overall	49	6	45	+4	44	7	49	-5	-9
Democrats	20	6	74	-54	11	6	83	-72	-18
Independents	36	11	53	-17	39	9	52	-13	+4
Republicans	81	5	14	+67	80	5	15	+65	-2
MAGA Republicans*	93	3		+89	93		6	+87	-2
Non-MAGA Republicans*	64	6	30	+34	64	10	26	+38	+4

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Trump and Republicans Are More Trusted Than Democrats on Law and Order, Safety, and Crime Overall

Independents trust the Democratic Party more to protect law and order (net +8 trust Democrats), though a plurality of independents say they "don't trust either party" when given the option (43% neither).

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

	The Democratic Party	DK	Trump and the Republican Party	Net Trust Overall	Dems Ind	The Democratic Party	Neither	DK	Trump and the Republican Party	Net Trust Overall	Dems Ind
Protecting law and order	43	11	46	-3	+8	33	16	7	44	-11	-17
Keeping Americans safe	41	12	47	-6	-1	33	17	6	44	-11	-14
Crime	40	12	48	-8	-11	31	19	6	44	-13	-17

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Republicans Are Hearing Positive Information About Trump's Recent Actions on Crime; Few Non-GOP Are Hearing Positive

Nearly seven in ten Republicans report hearing positive information or a mix of positive and negative information on Trump recently, with "crime" being among their most cited words: in it, they refer to Trump's handling of crime broadly and bringing down crime in D.C.

[If heard positive/mix] In a few words, what positive things have you seen, read, or heard recently about Donald Trump?

Republicans (69% hearing positive)

Non-Republicans (23% hearing positive)

"He is handling crime and using our troops for country security"

"He cleaned up D.C. and the crime rate plummeted"

"He takes charge of situations. Drugs, crime, foreign issues"

"Trump has cracked down on crime in D.C."

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Instead of Solely Hitting Trump for the D.C. Deployment, It Helps to Acknowledge the Crime Problem and Provide an Alternative

Nearly two in three Americans agree more with a statement acknowledging crime is a problem before pivoting to alternative policy solutions, rather than deploying armed troops (net +28 agree with anti-Trump statement), including majorities of independents (net +36). Fewer side against Trump's deployment of troops when the rebuttal is singularly a hit on Trump for the decision (net +2 overall).

Which side do you agree with more?

[TRUMP HIT] Those who say Trump is breaking the law by deploying the National Guard, manufacturing fear and social media moments, hurting small businesses, and not making cities any safer

Trump and Republicans who say that people don't feel safe, and it's time we took action to change that. The National Guard is helping to restore safety and security to our nation's cities

Net Anti-Trump Argument

	Overall	Ind	Non-MAGA Reps.*
(Trump Hit) 51 / 49	+2	+28	-50
(Crime Concession) 64 / 36	+28	+36	+18

[CRIME CONCESSION/ALTERNATIVE] Those who say <u>our country has a serious problem with crime and safety</u>, but deploying armed troops in our streets isn't the answer. We need to <u>support local law enforcement, keep guns out of criminals' hands, and do more to address the root causes of crime</u> like poverty, drug addiction, and mental illness

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Top Messages Criticizing Trump on D.C. Deployment Include Chaos, Spreading to Other Cities, Power Grab

Please indicate how concerning you find each statement about Donald Trump deploying National Guard troops, where 1 means it is not at all concerning and 5 means it is extremely concerning.

(Top 6 out of 16)

*/** Split Sample*

	% 5 - extremely	% 4	% Extremely Concerning (5)		
			Dem	Ind	Rep
*[CHAOS AND ESCALATION] After months of sending masked ICE agents to conduct raids without any due process, Trump is adding to the chaos by sending the military onto our city streets. Trump just keeps escalating to see how far he can go	45	11	72	46	17
*[SPREAD] This is just the beginning: Trump has said he is considering sending National Guard troops to other liberal-leaning states and cities that don't support him, like New York and Chicago	43	14	70	42	16
*[POWER GRAB] This is just another power grab: Trump is overreaching the powers of the presidency, breaking the law, and causing chaos by deploying the military into American cities just to look like he's being tough on crime	41	11	69	40	13
*[DEFUNDING] Trump says he's sending in the National Guard to keep us safe, but at the same time he's cutting funding and personnel that support law enforcement across the country, including at the FBI	41	16	66	42	15
**[VIOLATING RIGHTS] This is a violation of Americans' civil rights and liberties, as law-abiding citizens are being harassed without doing anything wrong	41	15	66	46	13
*[NATL GUARD WASTE] What Trump is doing with the National Guard is wrong. He's taking National Guard troops away from their homes and families and wasting their time when they have actual work to do and have not been trained on how to be local police, as well as wasting taxpayer dollars to keep them there	41	14	69	40	12

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Weaker Frames on Trump's Deployment to D.C. Include Calling It a Social Media Stunt, Distraction From Epstein

Please indicate how concerning you find each statement about Donald Trump deploying National Guard troops, where 1 means it is not at all concerning and 5 means it is extremely concerning.

(Bottom 10 out of 16)

*/** Split Sample*

Statement	% 5 - extremely	% 4	% Extremely Concerning (5)		
			Dem	Ind	Rep
*[DISTRACTION FROM INFLATION] Trump is just using the deployment of the National Guard as a distraction from the fact that he has broken his promise to bring down inflation and costs. In fact, costs are on the rise because of his tariff policies and cuts to programs like Medicaid	39	14	66	38	13
**[FASCIST] This is another dangerous step towards fascism and authoritarianism, with Trump deploying the military to patrol the streets of American cities in a way that has never been done before	38	17	67	40	9
**[SPREAD POLITICAL] This is just another way for Trump to try to silence those who disagree with him and isn't actually about crime at all. Trump is only going after leaders and cities in blue states and not a single one in red states – despite many of those cities in red states being some of the most violent cities in America, according to FBI data	38	15	65	46	9
*[CRIME STATS] Crime is down in D.C. and other cities and Trump is lying about crime rates in order to scare people and justify sending in the military to do the job local police are already doing	38	13	64	32	13
**[GUNS] Trump says he's sending in the National Guard to keep us safe, but at the same time he's weakening our gun laws and policies, making it easier for people who shouldn't have guns to get them, all to help the gun lobby donors and industry CEOs who donate millions to Republican campaigns	37	15	60	47	10
**[NATL GUARD] What Trump is doing with the National Guard is wrong. He's taking National Guard troops away from their homes and families and wasting their time when they have actual work to do and have not been trained on how to be local police	36	15	64	38	8
**[INCOMPETENT] This is all just a political stunt for Trump and his administration and is not about reducing crime: they have not been sending National Guard troops to the areas of the city where crime is actually highest or coordinating with local and state law enforcement to actually bring down crime. It's all for show	36	14	61	39	11
**[LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT] What Trump is doing with the National Guard is wrong. These troops are getting in the way of local law enforcement, making it harder for them to do their jobs and keep their communities safe	35	18	59	38	9
**[DISTRACTION FROM EPSTEIN] Trump is just using the deployment of the National Guard as a distraction from news coverage about his connections to Jeffrey Epstein	33	14	59	32	9
*[STUNT] This is all just a social media stunt for Trump and his administration and not about reducing crime: they just want to share photos and videos of National Guard troops to manufacture social media moments that go viral	33	14	56	26	11

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For Independents, Most Concerning: Weakening Gun Laws, Deploying to Blue States Only, Chaos, Rights Violated

[Among Independents] Please indicate how concerning you find each statement about Donald Trump deploying National Guard troops, where 1 means it is not at all concerning and 5 means it is extremely concerning.

(Top 8 out of 16)

*/** Split Sample

Statement	% 5 - extremely	% 4
**[GUNS] Trump says he's sending in the National Guard to keep us safe, but at the same time he's weakening our gun laws and policies, making it easier for people who shouldn't have guns to get them, all to help the gun lobby donors and industry CEOs who donate millions to Republican campaigns	47	18
**[SPREAD POLITICAL] This is just another way for Trump to try to silence those who disagree with him and isn't actually about crime at all. Trump is only going after leaders and cities in blue states and not a single one in red states – despite many of those cities in red states being some of the most violent cities in America, according to FBI data	46	20
*[CHAOS AND ESCALATION] After months of sending masked ICE agents to conduct raids without any due process, Trump is adding to the chaos by sending the military onto our city streets. Trump just keeps escalating to see how far he can go	46	15
**[VIOLATING RIGHTS] This is a violation of Americans' civil rights and liberties, as law-abiding citizens are being harassed without doing anything wrong	46	14
*[SPREAD] This is just the beginning: Trump has said he is considering sending National Guard troops to other liberal-leaning states and cities that don't support him, like New York and Chicago	42	18
*[DEFUNDING] Trump says he's sending in the National Guard to keep us safe, but at the same time he's cutting funding and personnel that support law enforcement across the country, including at the FBI	42	22
**[FASCIST] This is another dangerous step towards fascism and authoritarianism, with Trump deploying the military to patrol the streets of American cities in a way that has never been done before	40	22
*[POWER GRAB] This is just another power grab: Trump is overreaching the powers of the presidency, breaking the law, and causing chaos by deploying the military into American cities just to look like he's being tough on crime	40	16

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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 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.