

navigating *the* *battleground

Tuesday, May 26, 2026

Political and Economic
Landscape in the
Congressional Battleground



Methodology



Impact Research conducted a survey of N=1,500 likely 2026 general election constituents in 67 battleground congressional districts.



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



Interviews were conducted between May 5 - 14, 2026.



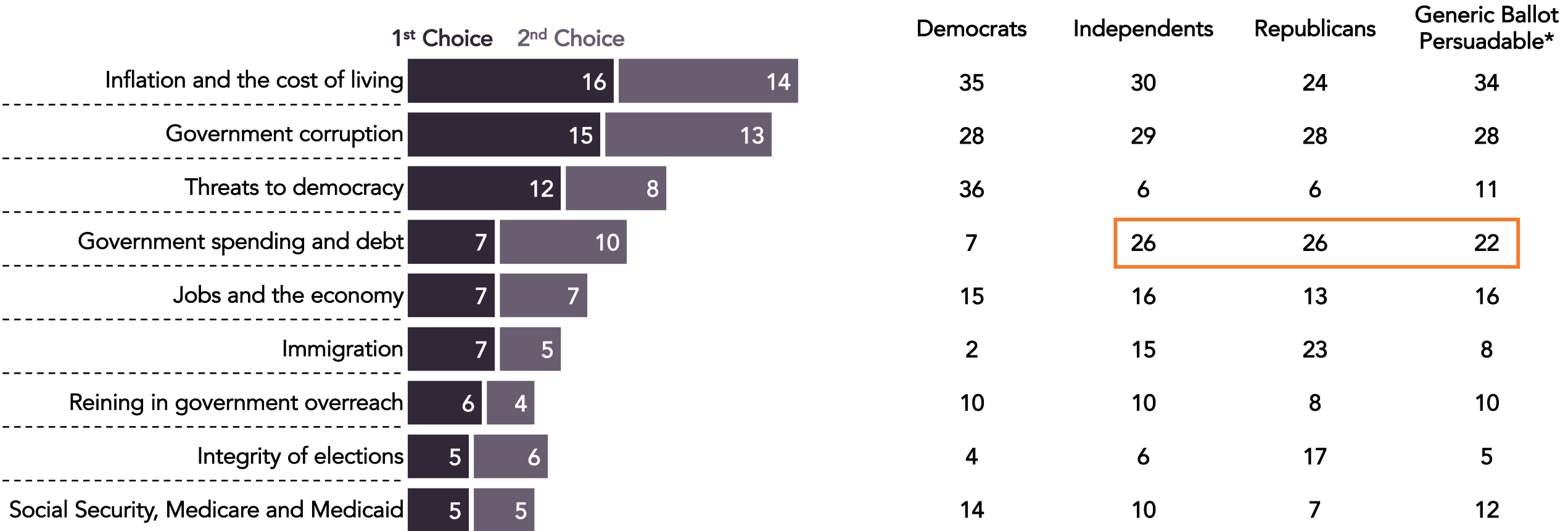
The margin of error for a sample of this size is +/- 2.5 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. The margin of error for subgroups varies and is higher.

Key Takeaways

- Inflation and the economy continue to be dominant issues, followed by government corruption. When it comes to costs, groceries and gas prices are the biggest individual pain points.
- Democrats now hold a 4-point advantage on the generic ballot, up from +2 in February with 18% of battleground constituents still persuadable.
- Americans are increasingly down on the economy and their personal financial situation. Only 32% of voters have a positive perception of the economy – down 7 points from February, and the perception of their own personal finances has fallen as well, a net 11-point decrease from February to today.
- Americans overwhelmingly blame President Trump and Republicans in Congress for the state of the economy.
- Trump’s standing is at its all-time low since returning to office. His popularity and both his overall and economic job ratings are underwater by double digits, with net 5- and 6-point drops since February.
- Named Republican incumbents have also lost a net 5 points on both their overall and economic job ratings, while Democratic incumbents' standings have improved since February.
- Battleground constituents trust Democrats more on lowering costs and they’re mixed on which party handles the economy better.

Inflation and the Economy Are Top Issues for Battleground Constituents Followed by Government Corruption

Which of the following do you feel is the most important issue that Congress should make a top priority?



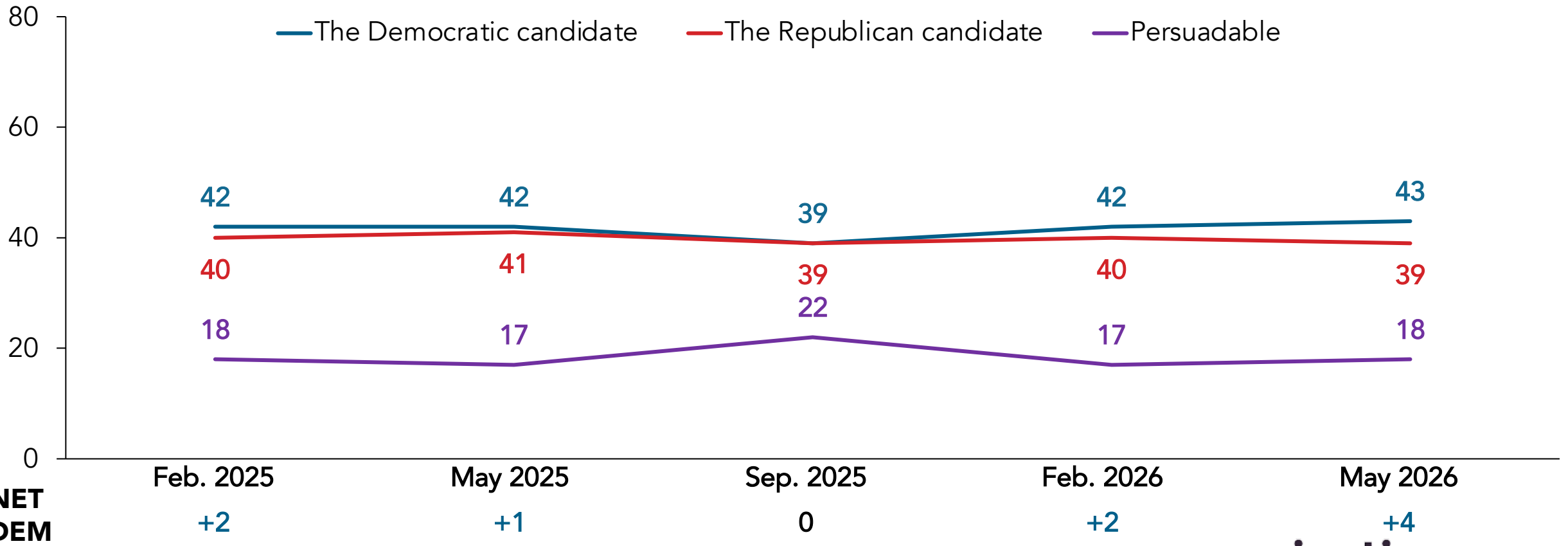
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Democrats Lead Republicans by Four Points in a House Battleground that Trump Won by Five Points

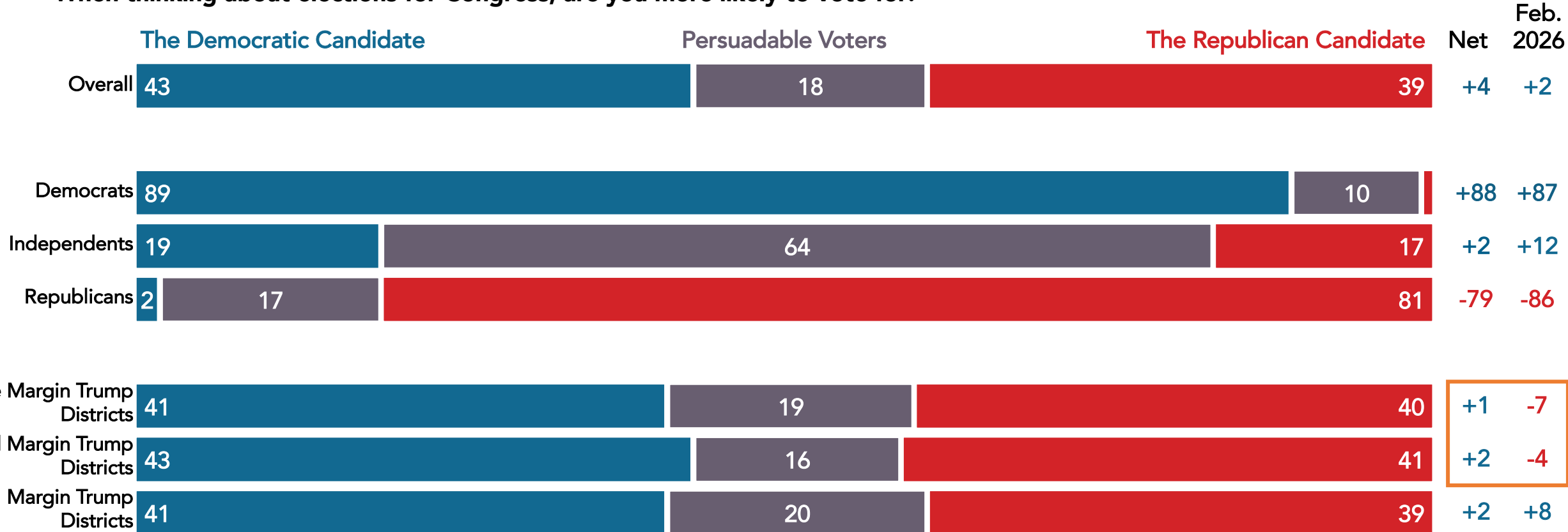
When thinking about elections for Congress, are you more likely to vote for:



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Democrats Have Consolidated Their Base and Made Gains in Districts Where Trump Won by the Most

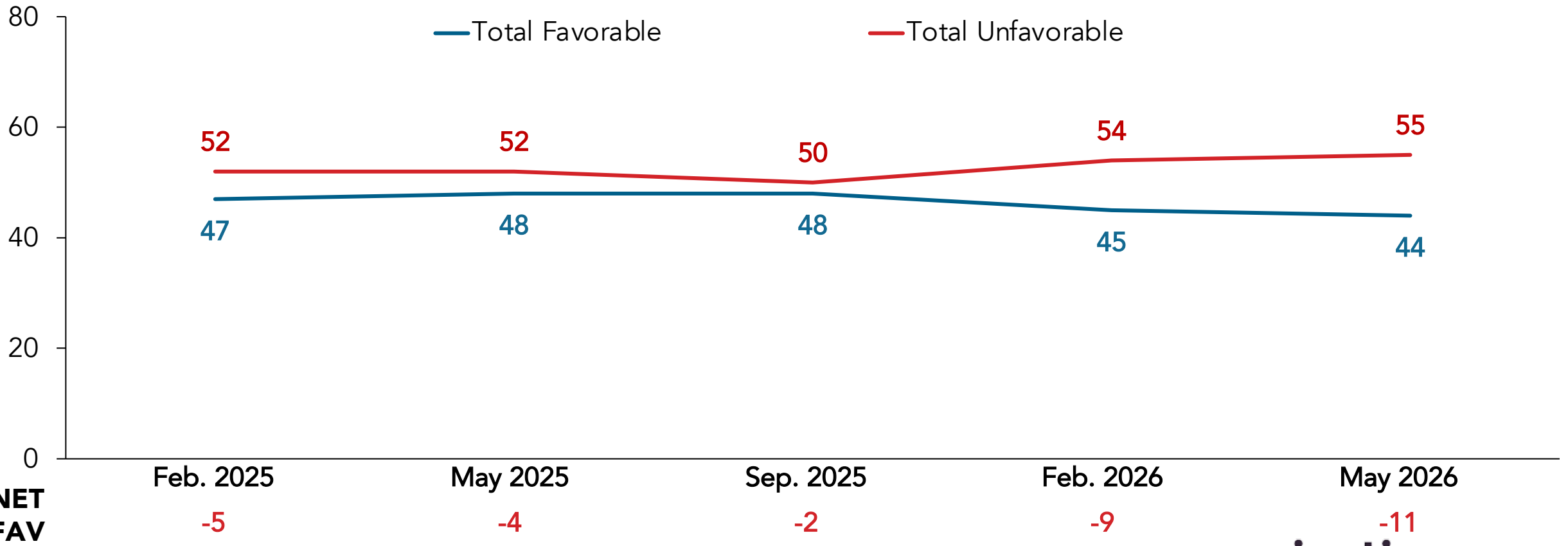
When thinking about elections for Congress, are you more likely to vote for:



“Small margin Trump districts” refer to Congressional districts Trump won by less than 4.5% in 2024; “mid margin Trump districts” refer to Congressional districts Trump won by 4.6 – 10.4% in 2024; “large margin Trump districts” refer to Congressional districts Trump carried by at least 10.5% in 2024.
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Trump's Favorability Hit the Lowest Point of the Cycle

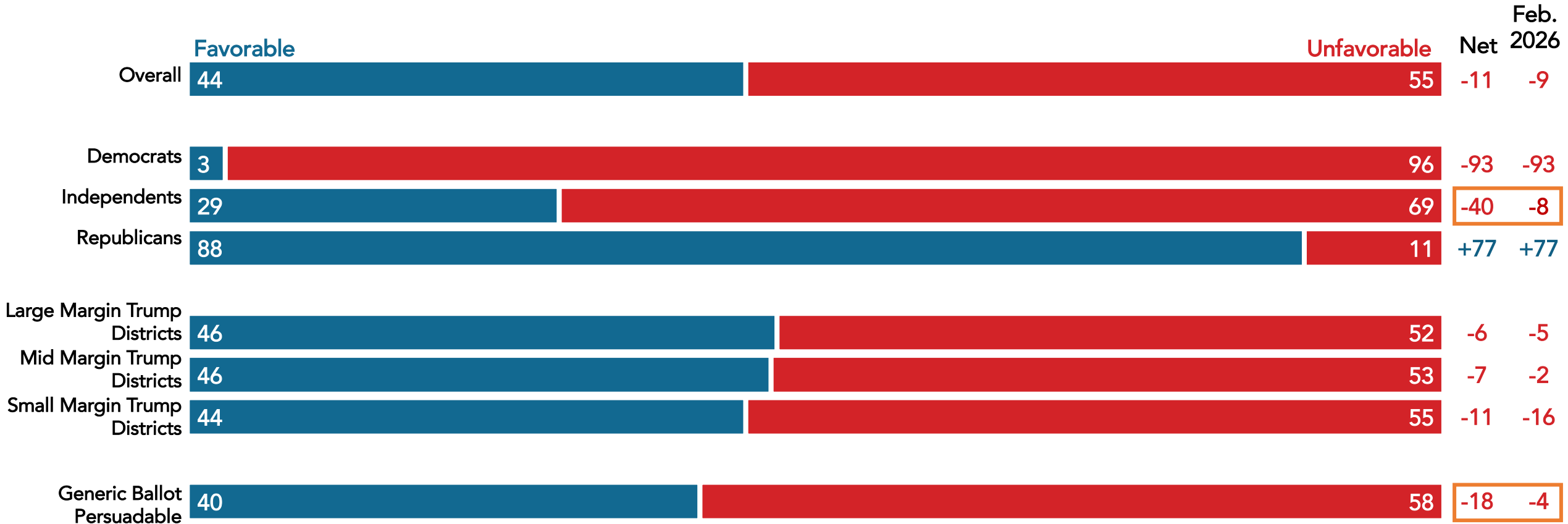
Please indicate whether you have a very favorable view, somewhat favorable view, somewhat unfavorable view, or very unfavorable view. If you have never heard of them, or cannot rate them, please indicate that: **Donald Trump**



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Trump Has Seen a Large Erosion of Support Among Independents

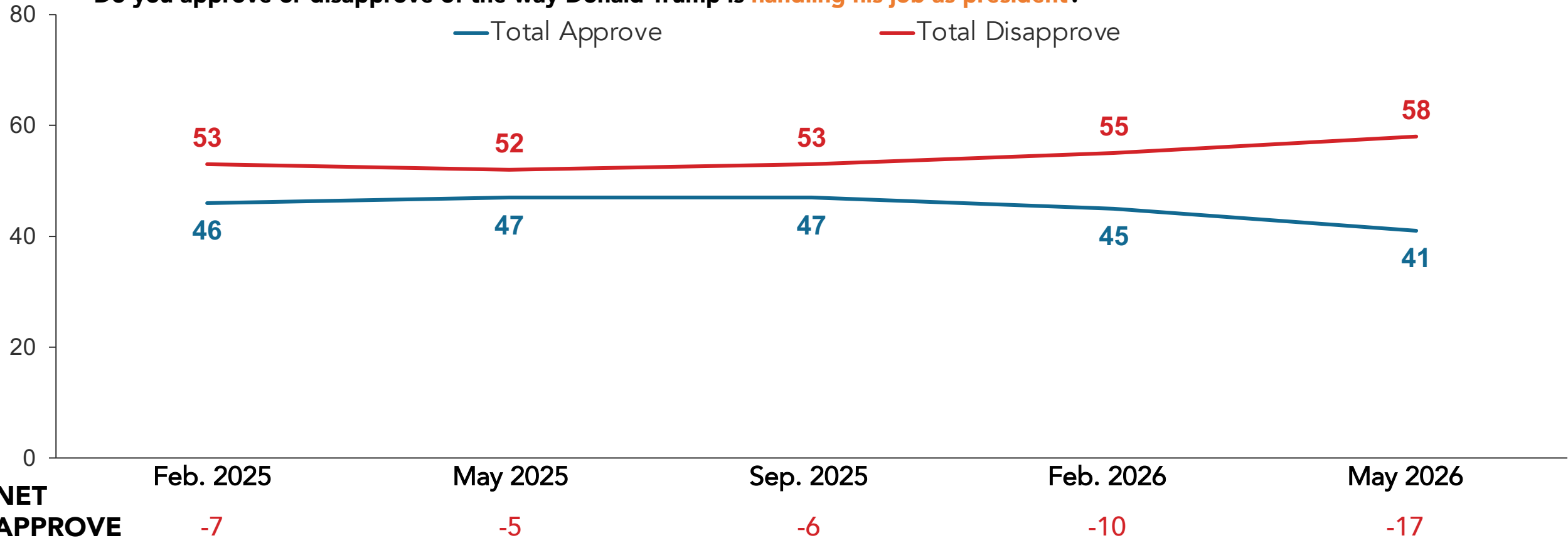
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Trump's Job Approval Dropped 10 Points in the Last Year to an All-Time Low

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is **handling his job as president?**

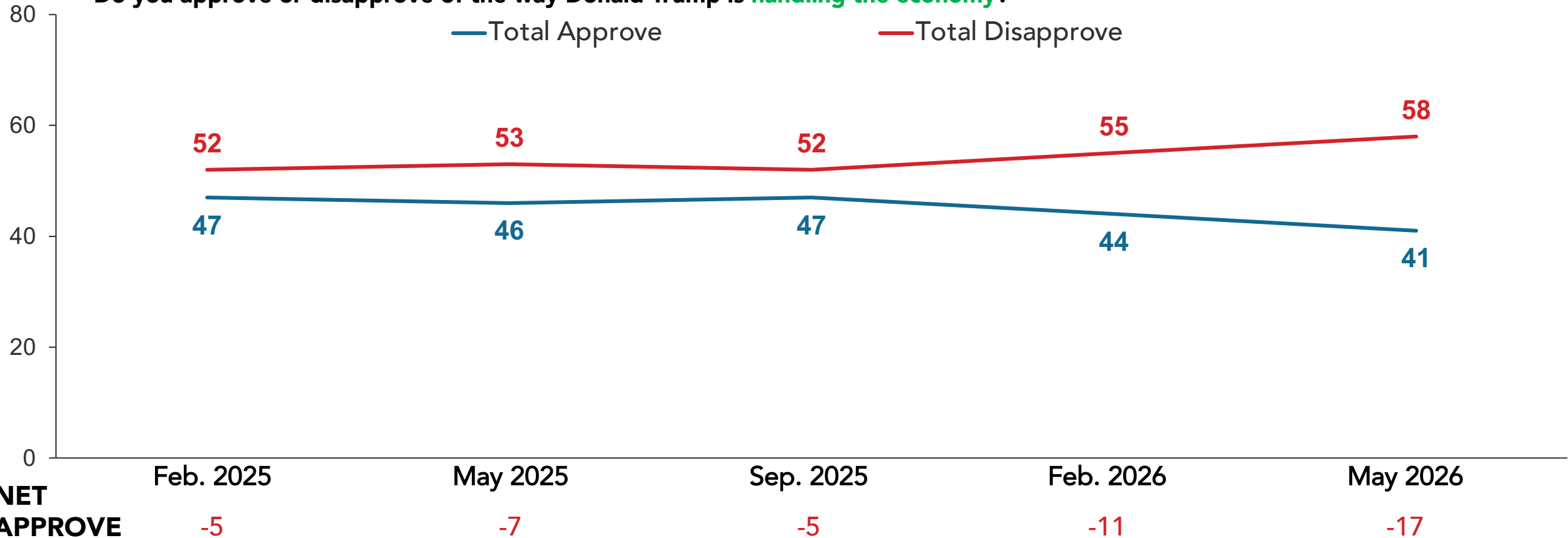


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Trump's Economic Approval Has Fallen Double Digits Over the Last Year

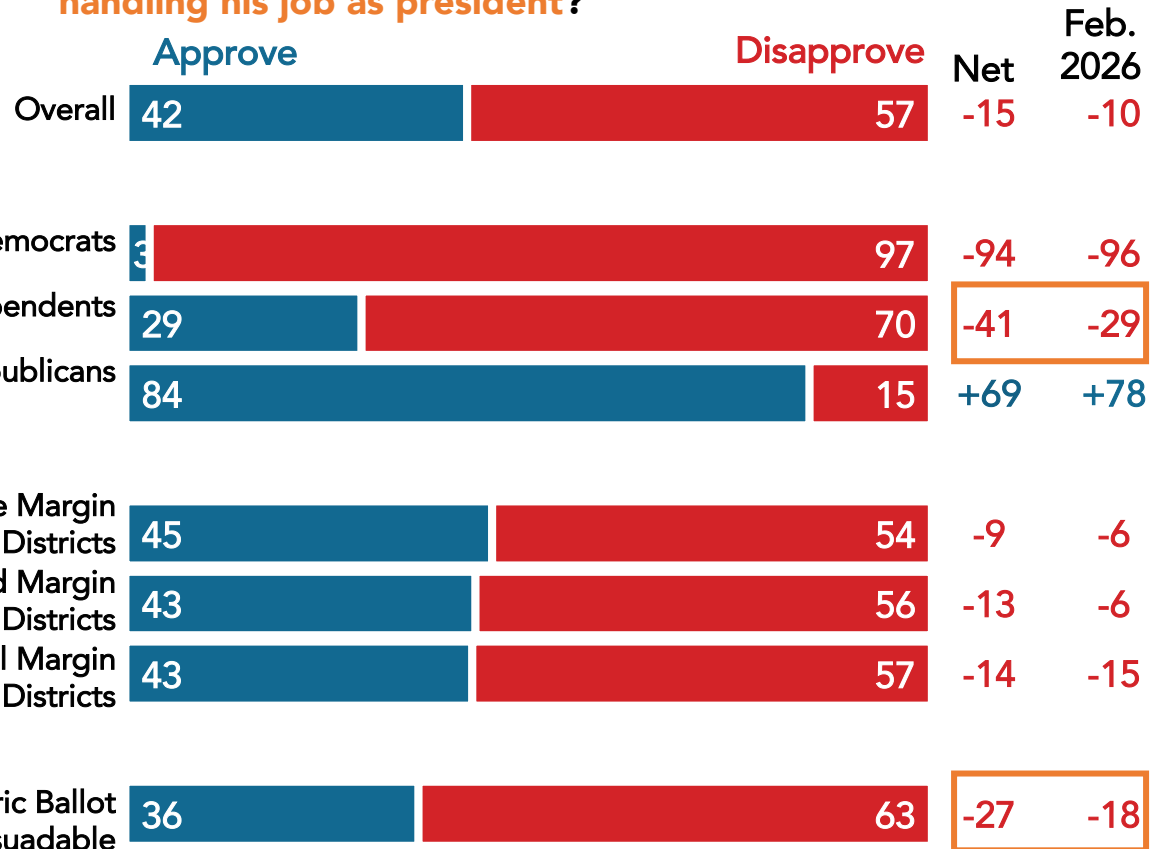
Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is **handling the economy**?



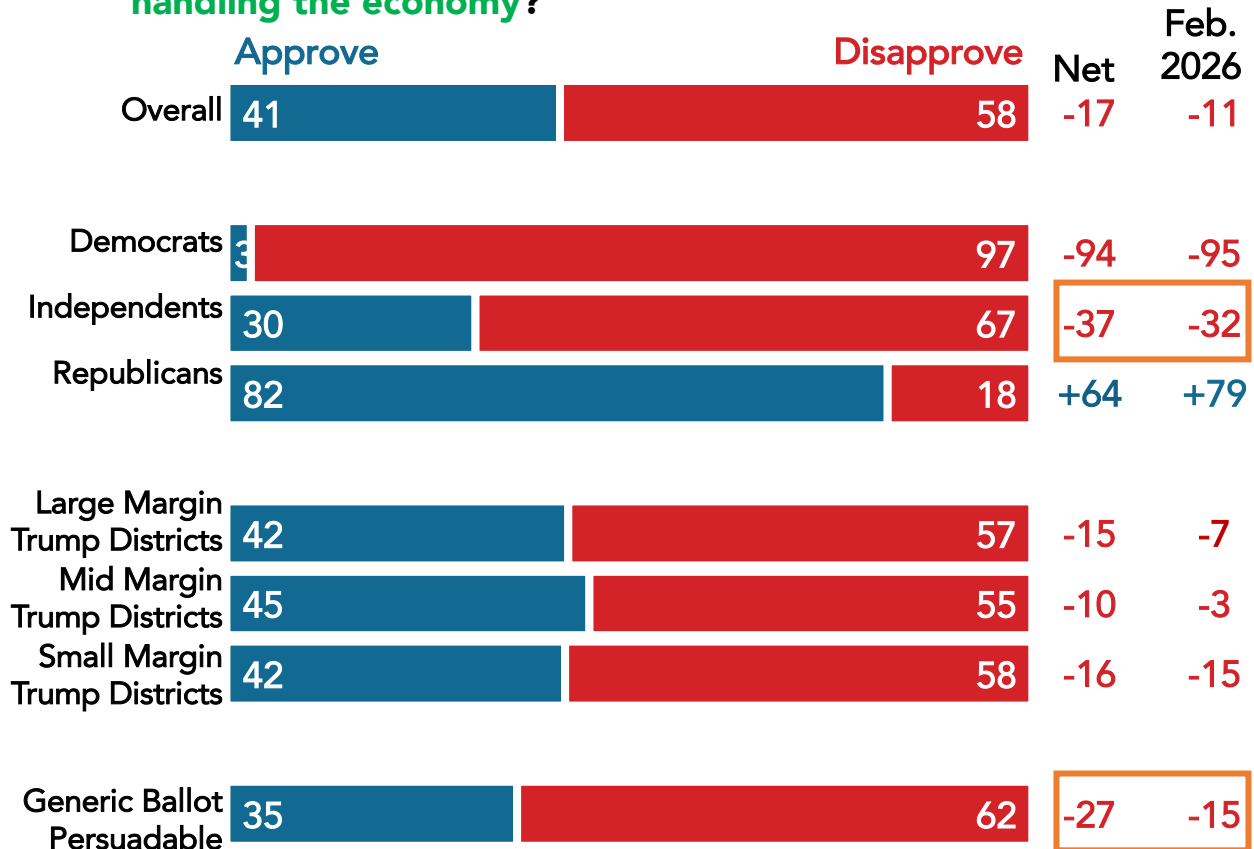
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Trump's Approval Continues to Fall Among Key Constituencies

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as president?



Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling the economy?



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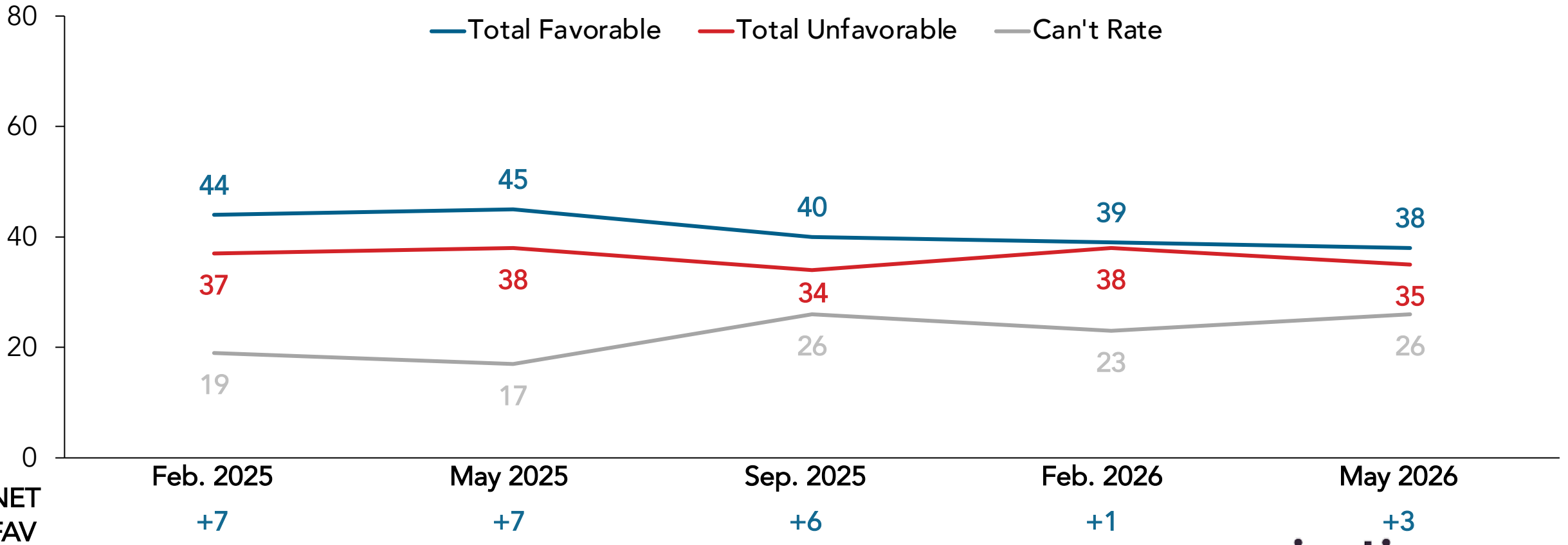
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Democratic Incumbents' Popularity Has Improved Since February, Which Saw Its Lowest Mark

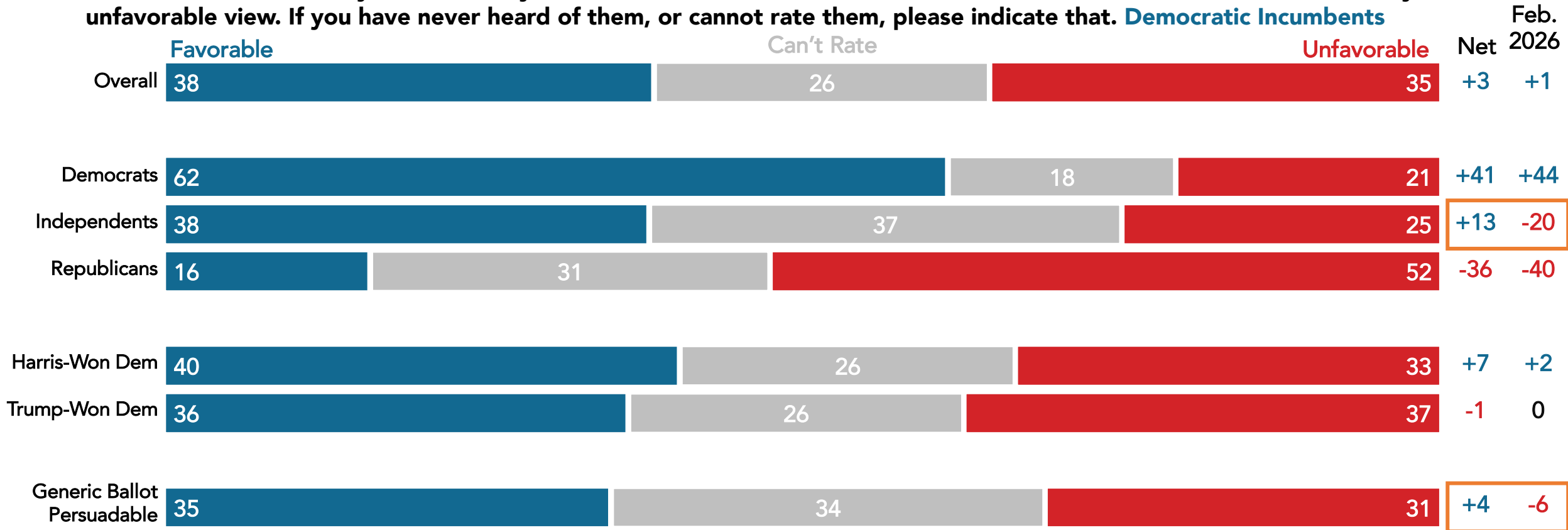
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Democrats' Brand Improved Most Among Independents

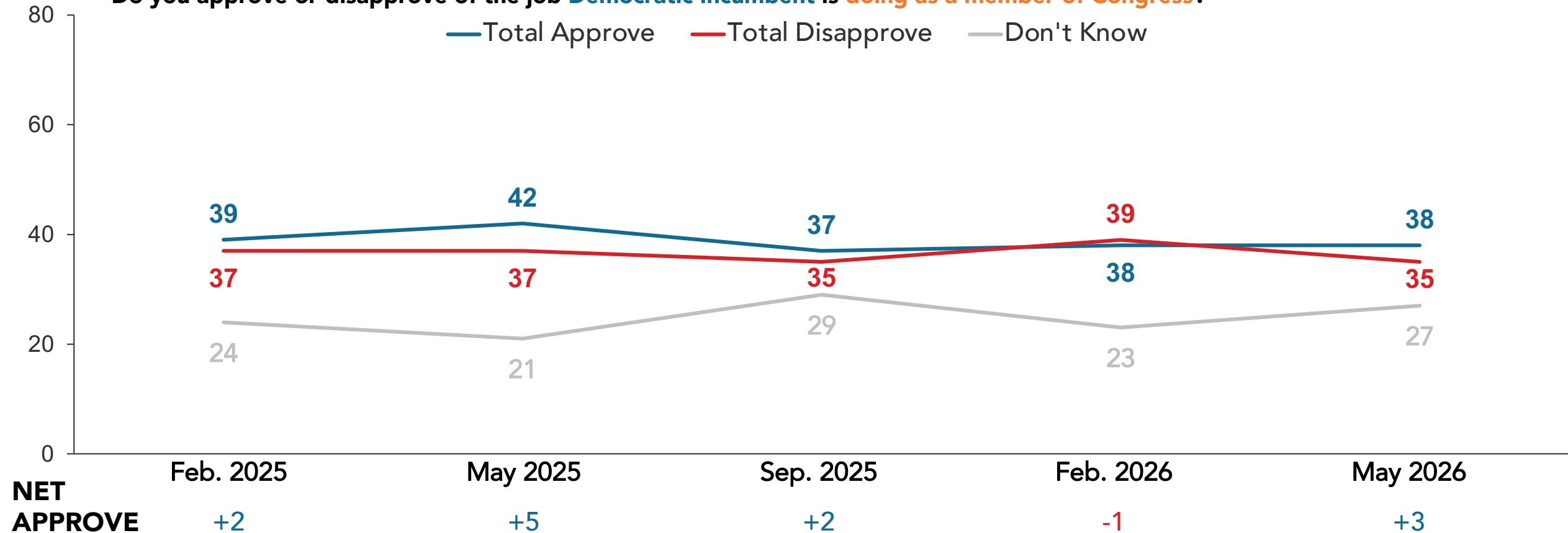
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Democratic Incumbents Have a Net +3 Job Rating – Up a Net 4 Points Since February

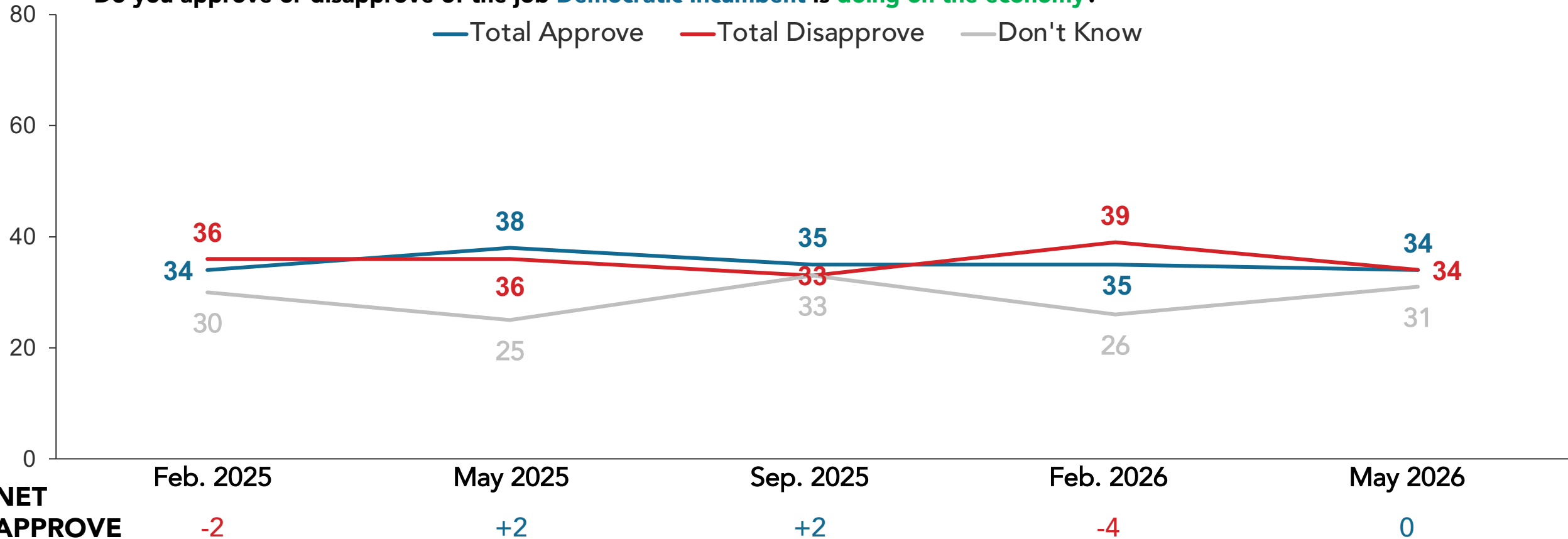
Do you approve or disapprove of the job Democratic Incumbent is doing as a member of Congress?



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Battleground Constituents Mixed on Dem Incumbents' Handling of the Economy, With a Third Unsure

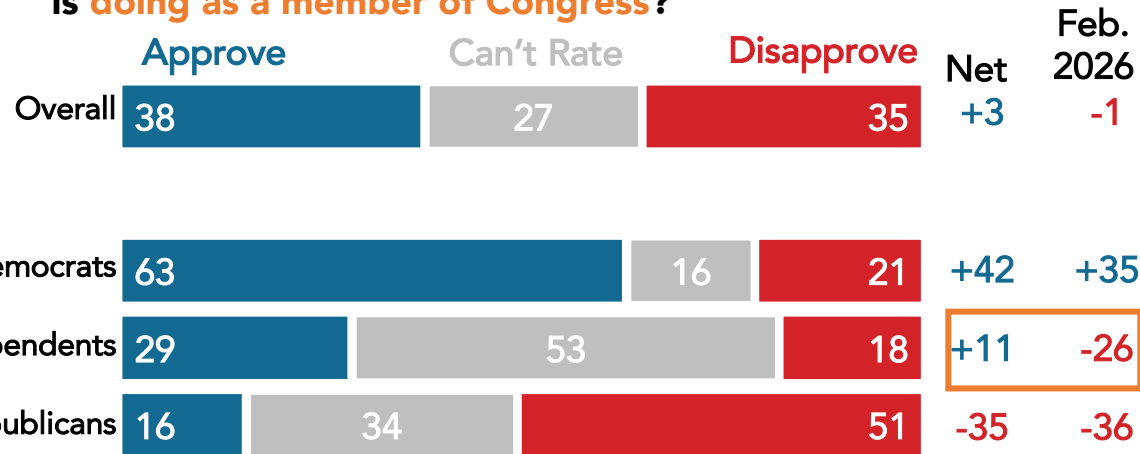
Do you approve or disapprove of the job Democratic Incumbent is doing on the economy?



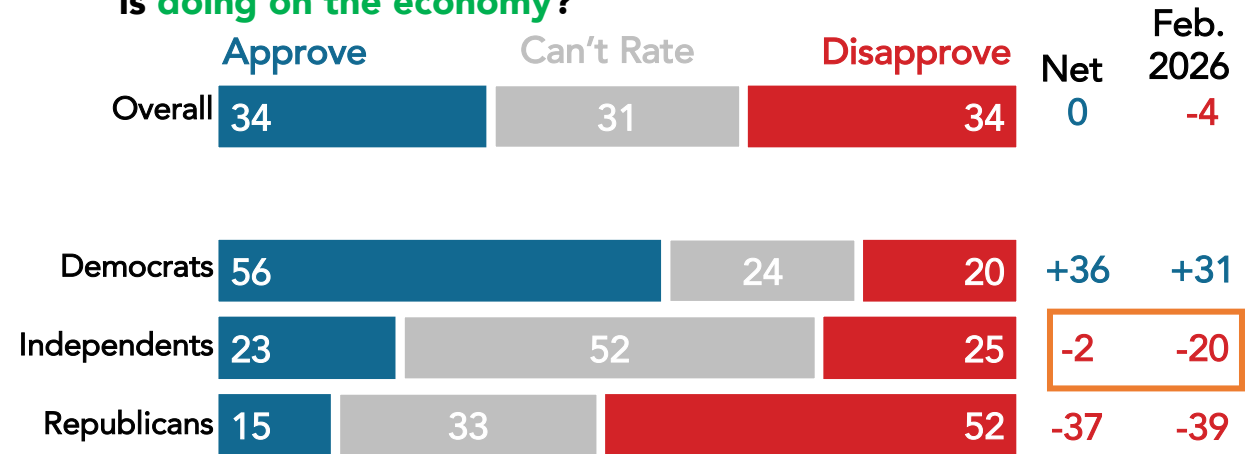
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Democratic Incumbents' Ratings Improved by Double Digits Among Independents

Do you approve or disapprove of the job **Democratic Incumbent** is **doing as a member of Congress**?



Do you approve or disapprove of the job **Democratic Incumbent** is **doing on the economy**?



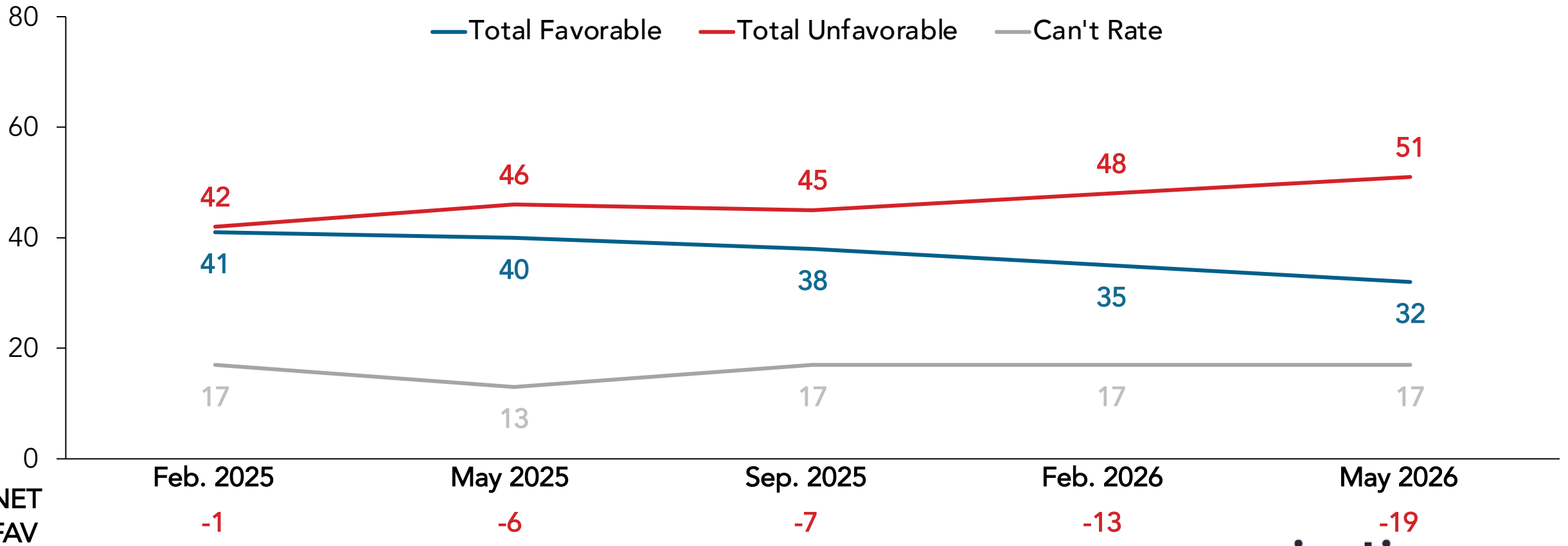
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Republican Incumbents' Popularity Has Steadily Decreased Since February 2025

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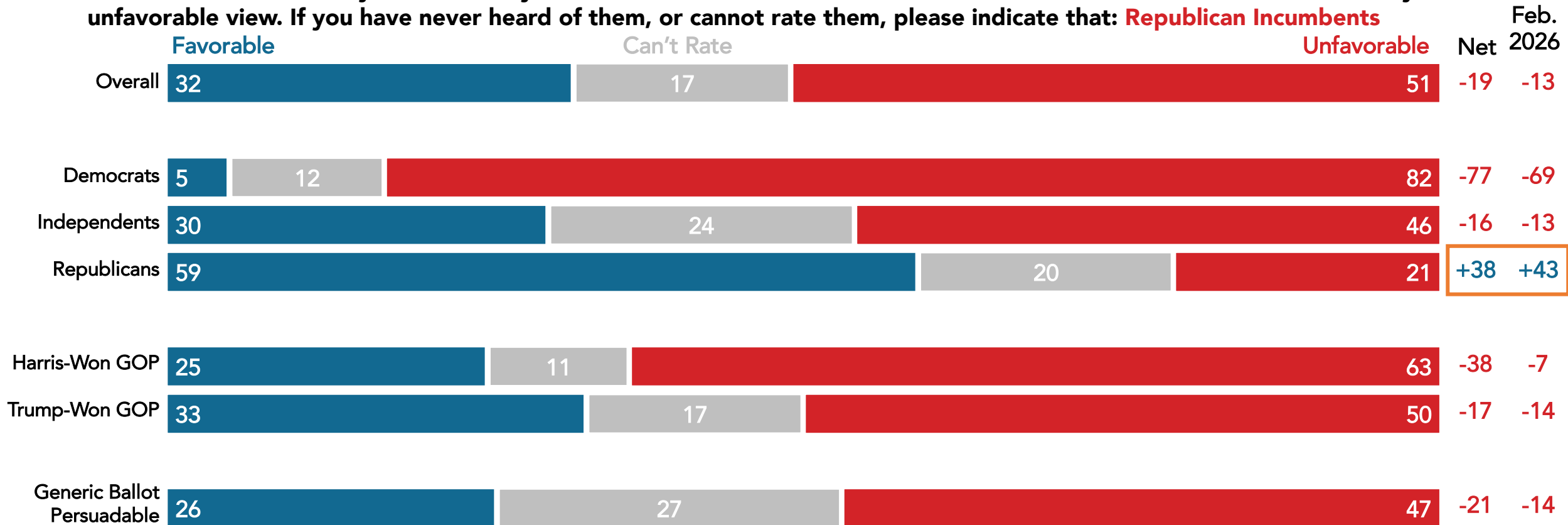


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Republican Incumbents' Popularity Has Fallen Across The Board Since February, Including Among Republicans

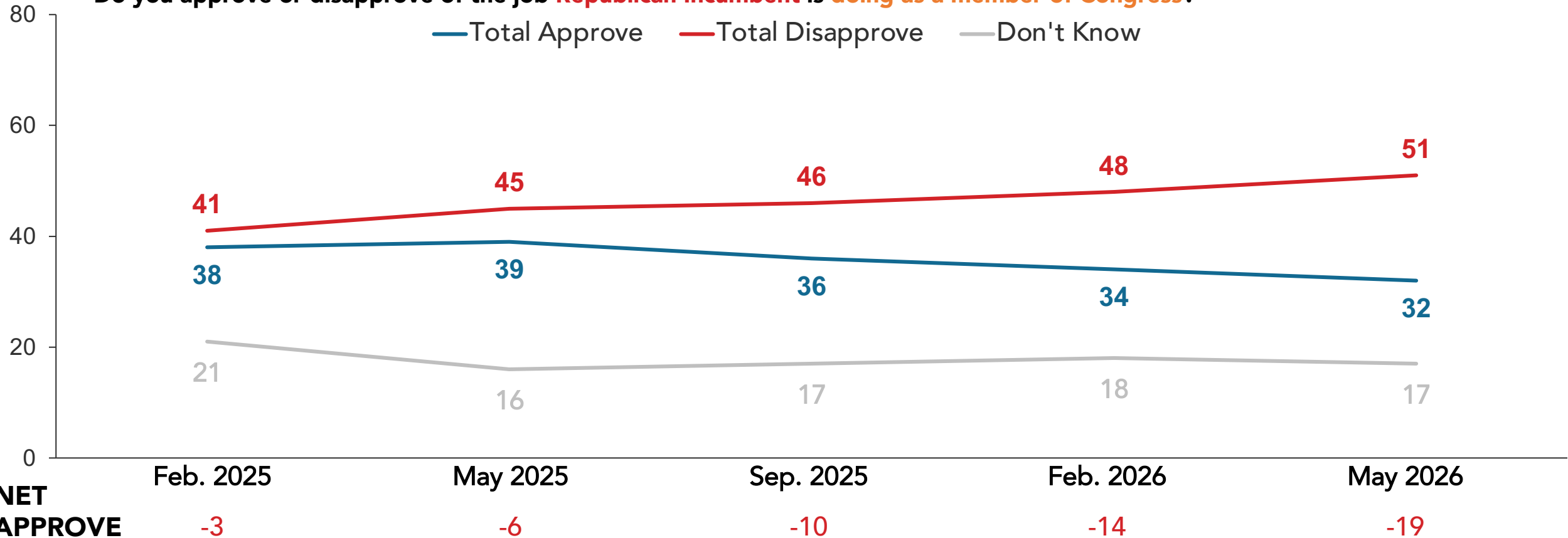
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A Majority of Battleground Constituents Disapprove of the Job Their Republican Incumbent Is Doing in Congress

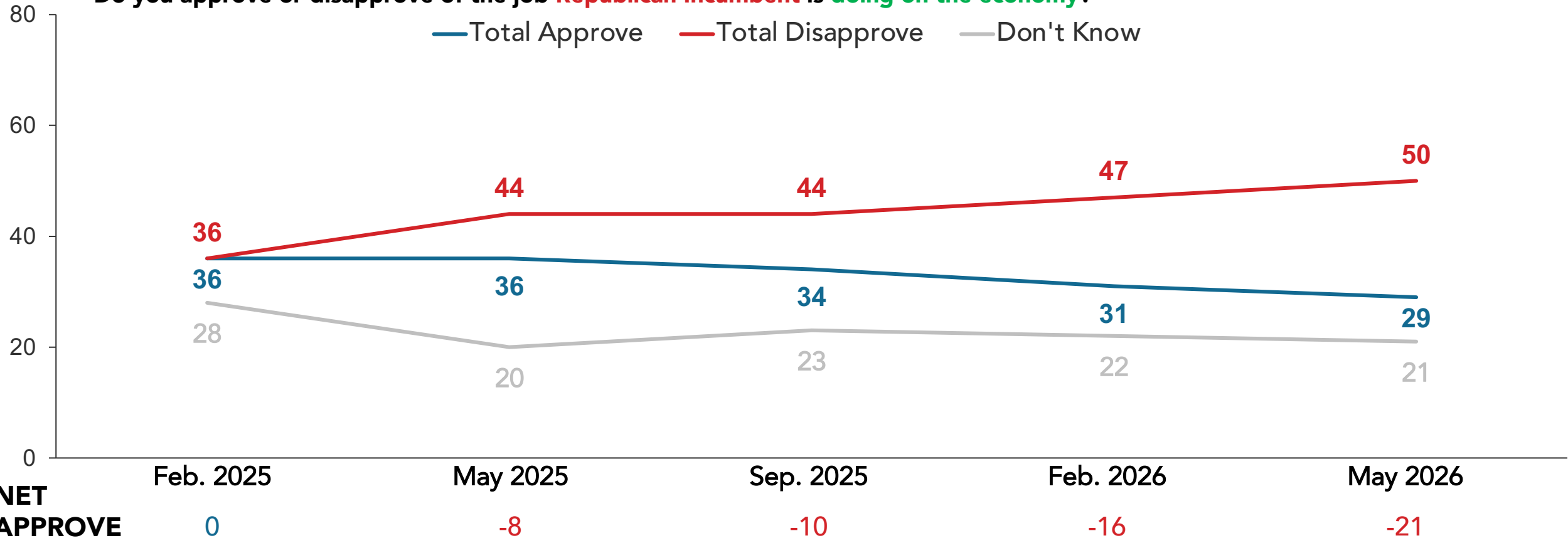
Do you approve or disapprove of the job **Republican Incumbent** is **doing as a member of Congress**?



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Approval of Republicans Incumbents' Handling of the Economy Fell by 21 Points Since February 2025

Do you approve or disapprove of the job **Republican Incumbent** is **doing on the economy**?



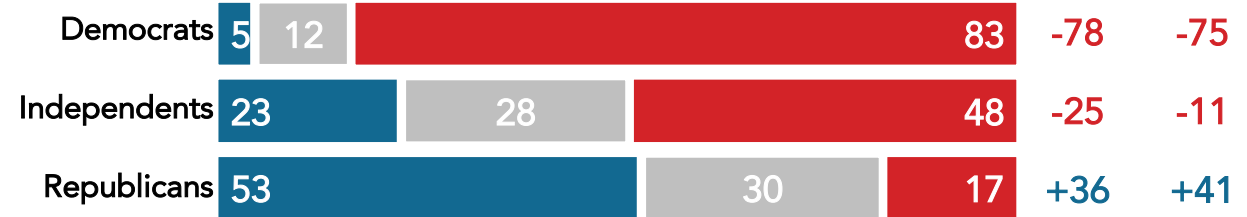
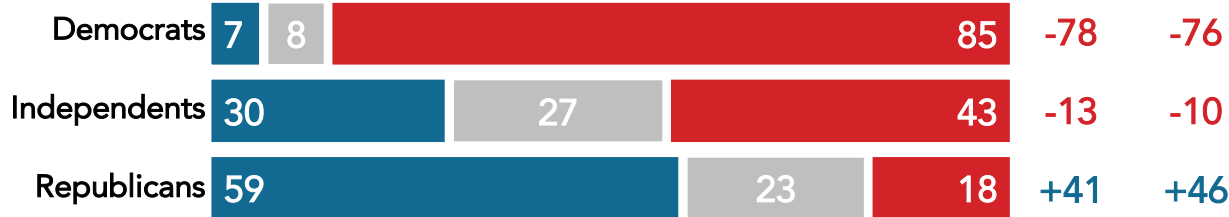
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Republican Incumbents' Ratings Dropped Double Digits Among Persuadable Voters Since February

Do you approve or disapprove of the job **Republican Incumbent** is **doing as a member of Congress?**



Do you approve or disapprove of the job **Republican Incumbent** is **doing on the economy?**



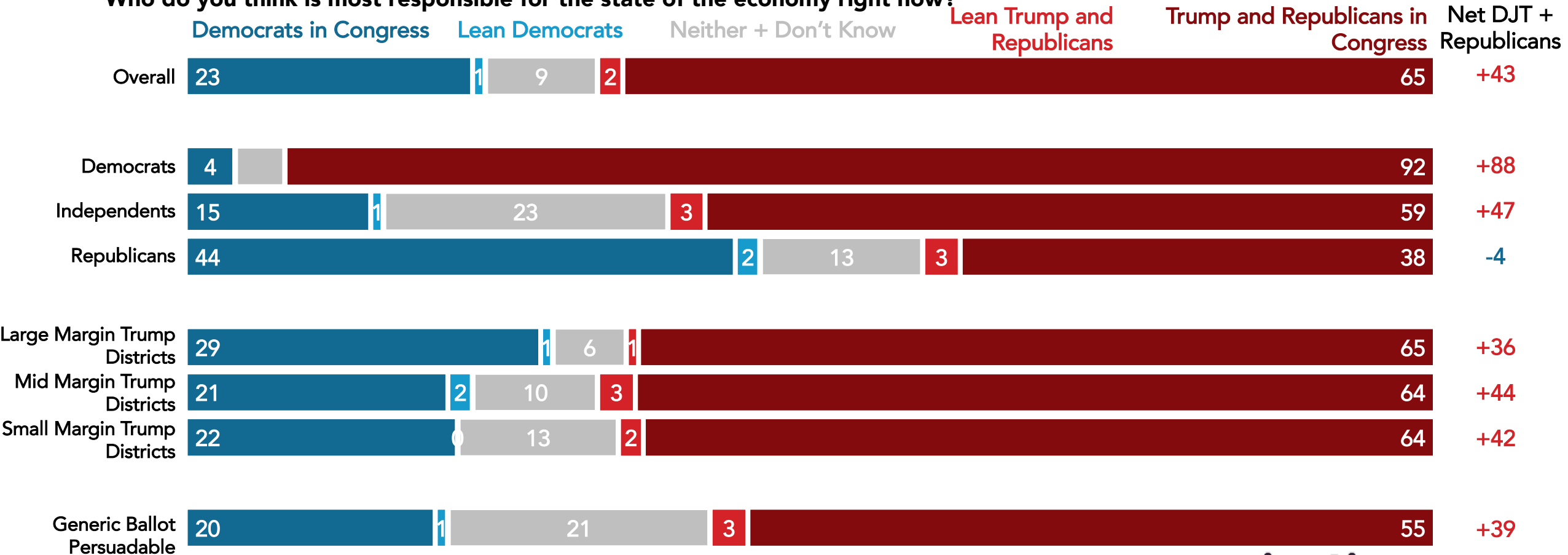
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Two-Thirds of Battleground Constituents Say Blame for the Economy Belongs to Trump and Republicans in Congress

Who do you think is most responsible for the state of the economy right now?



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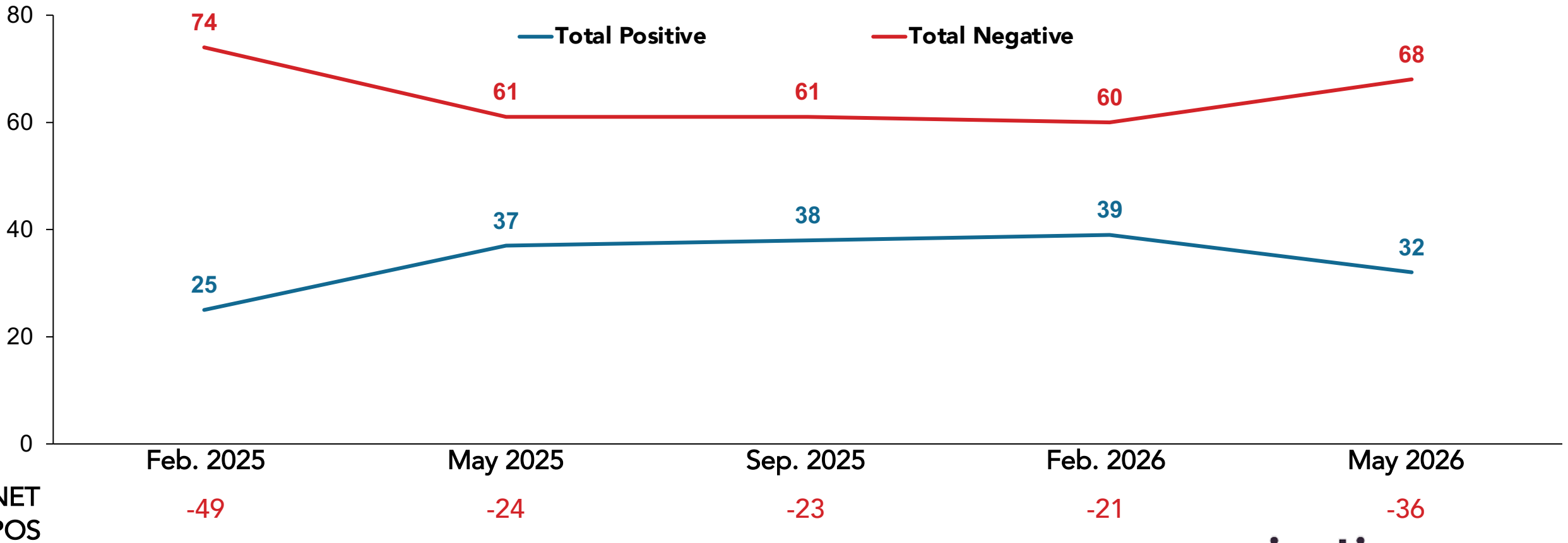
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Battleground Constituents' Outlook on the Economy Hits its Worst Level Since February 2025

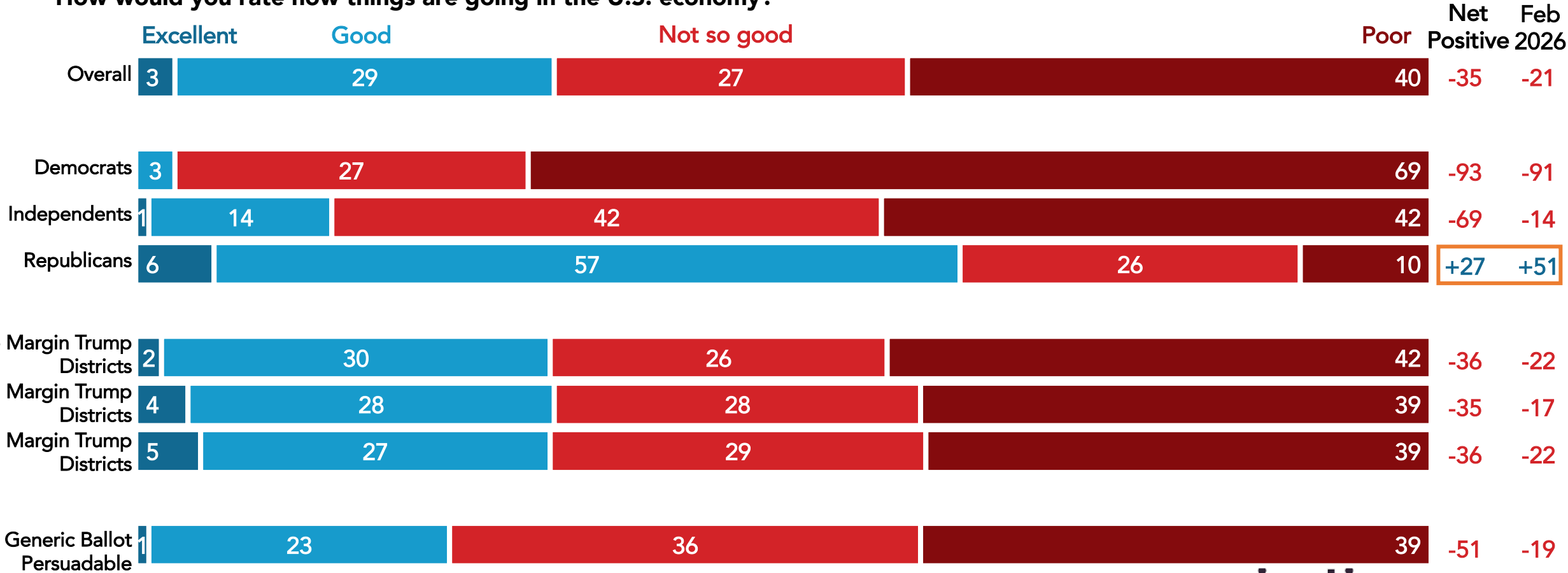
How would you rate how things are going in the U.S. economy?



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Battleground Constituents' Pessimism Has Increased By a Net 14 Points In Less Than Four Months

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



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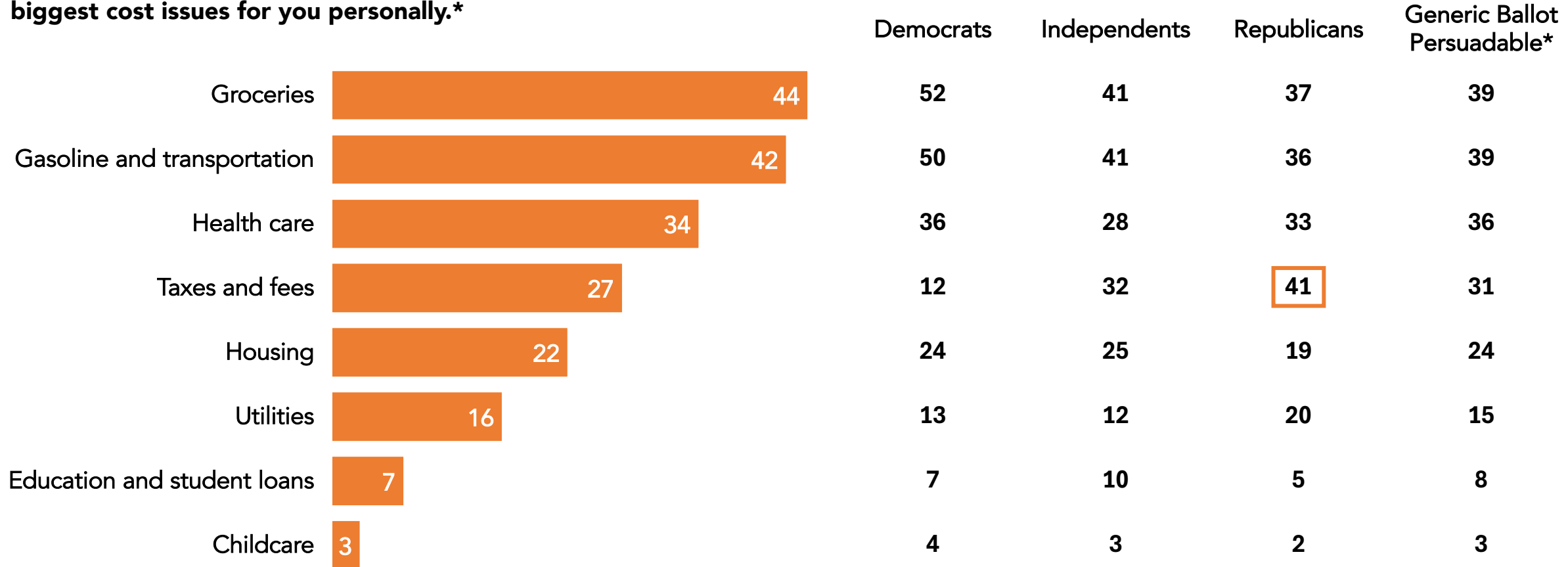
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Groceries, Gas and Transportation, and Health Care Are the Biggest Cost Concerns in the Battleground

Next is a list of everyday costs that some people say are too high. Please choose which TWO are the biggest cost issues for you personally.*



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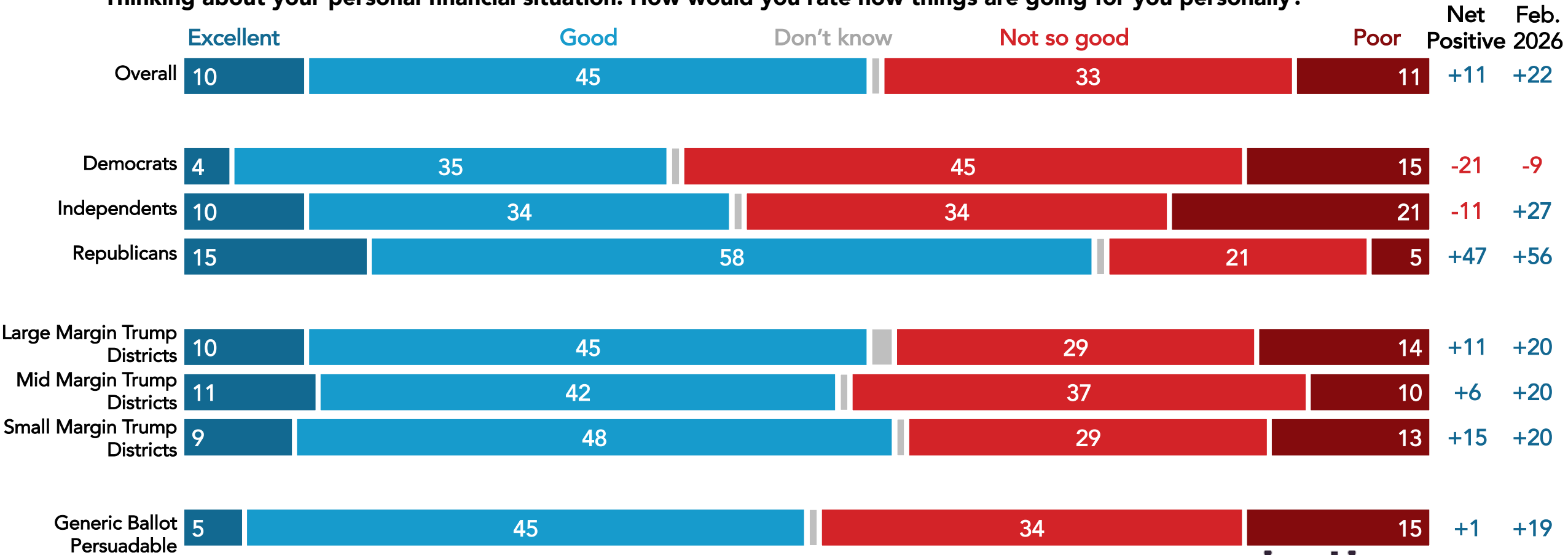
*Up to two responses accepted.

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Battleground Constituents Have Grown More Concerned About Their Personal Financial Situation Since February

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



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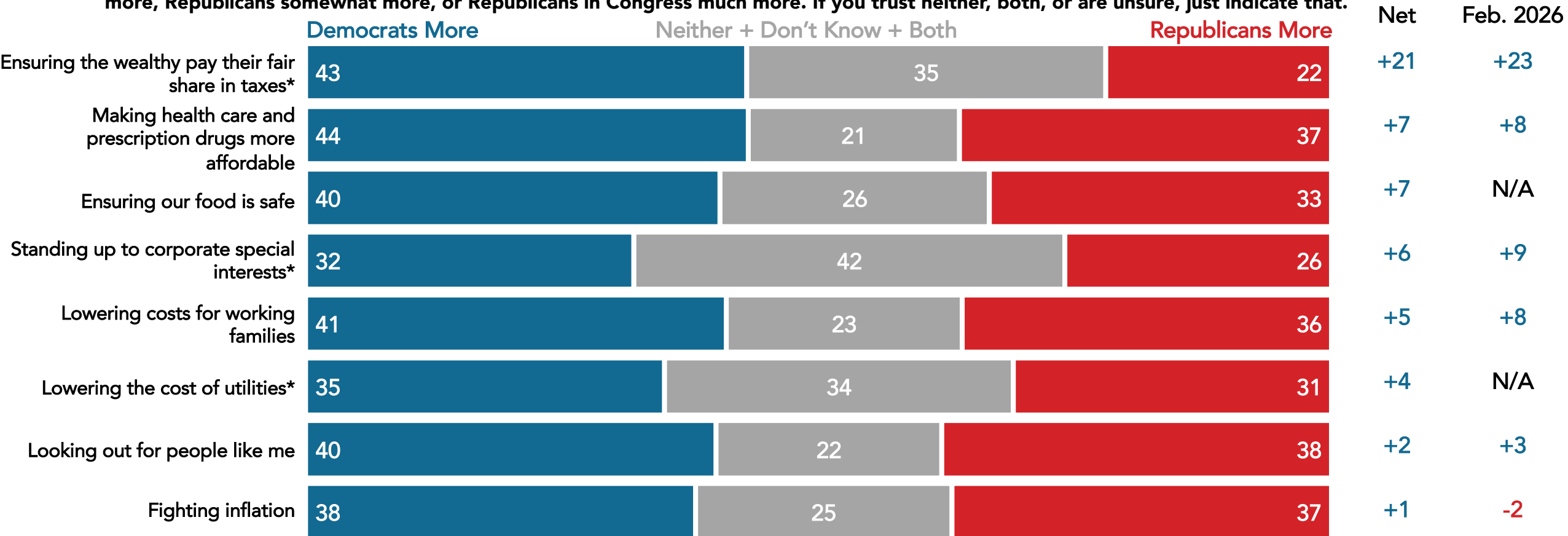
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Democrats Are Trusted Most in Ensuring the Wealthy Pay Their Fair Share in Taxes and Have Made Gains in Fighting Inflation

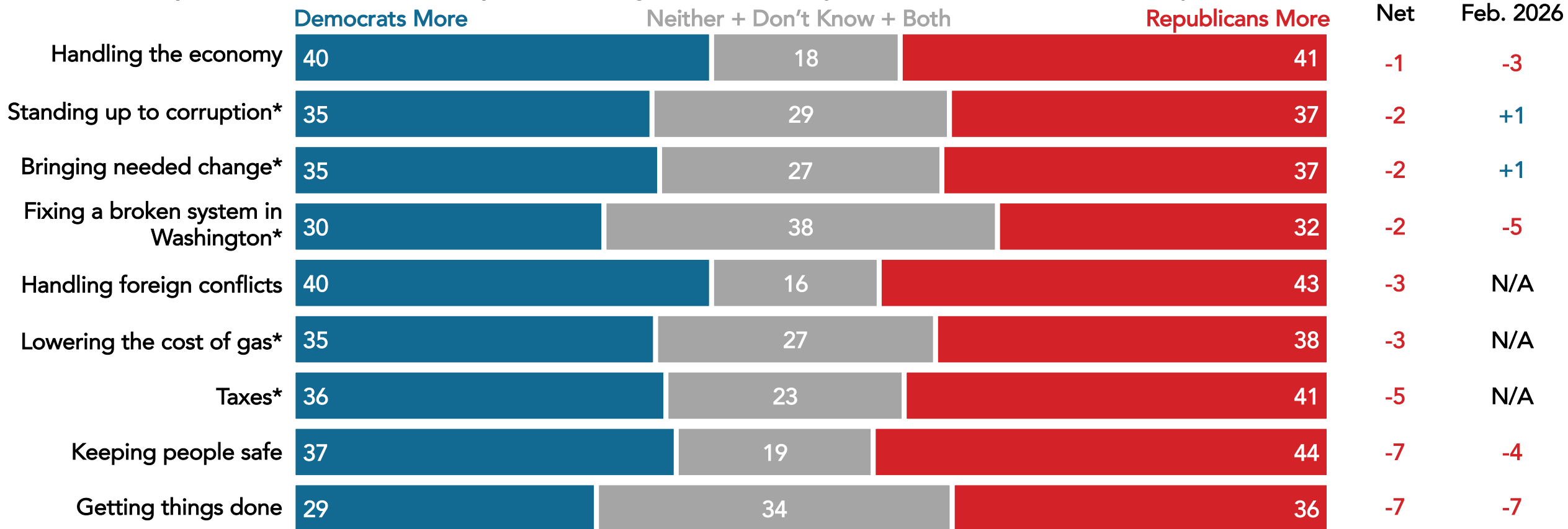
Here are some issues facing the country. For each of the following, do you trust Democrats in Congress much more, Democrats somewhat more, Republicans somewhat more, or Republicans in Congress much more. If you trust neither, both, or are unsure, just indicate that.



*Split
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Battleground Constituents Are Mixed on Which Party They Trust More to Handle the Economy

Here are some issues facing the country. For each of the following, do you trust Democrats in Congress much more, Democrats somewhat more, Republicans somewhat more, or Republicans in Congress much more. If you trust neither, both, or are unsure, just indicate that.



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Appendix: Congressional Districts Included In Sample

| Dem Incumbent | | | Rep Incumbent - Harris | Rep Incumbent - Trump | | | |
|---------------|-------|-------|------------------------|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| CA-13 | NV-03 | TX-34 | CA-48 | AK-01 | IA-01 | NC-11 | VA-01 |
| CA-45 | NV-04 | TX-35 | NE-02 | AZ-01 | IA-02 | NJ-07 | VA-02 |
| CA-47 | NY-03 | VA-07 | NY-17 | AZ-02 | IA-03 | OH-07 | WI-01 |
| CT-05 | NY-04 | WA-03 | PA-01 | AZ-06 | KY-06 | OH-10 | WI-03 |
| IN-01 | NY-19 | | | CA-22 | MI-04 | OH-15 | |
| ME-02 | NY-22 | | | CO-05 | MI-07 | PA-07 | |
| MI-08 | OH-01 | | | CO-08 | MI-10 | PA-08 | |
| NC-01 | OH-09 | | | FL-07 | MC-01 | PA-10 | |
| NJ-09 | OH-13 | | | FL-13 | MO-02 | SC-01 | |
| NM-02 | OR-05 | | | FL-15 | MT-01 | TN-05 | |
| NV-01 | TX-28 | | | FL-27 | NC-03 | TX-15 | |

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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; 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 2026 general election voters from May 5-14, 2026. 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 67 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:

press@navigatorresearch.org

To learn more about Navigator or
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<http://navigatorresearch.org>

@NavigatorSurvey on Twitter