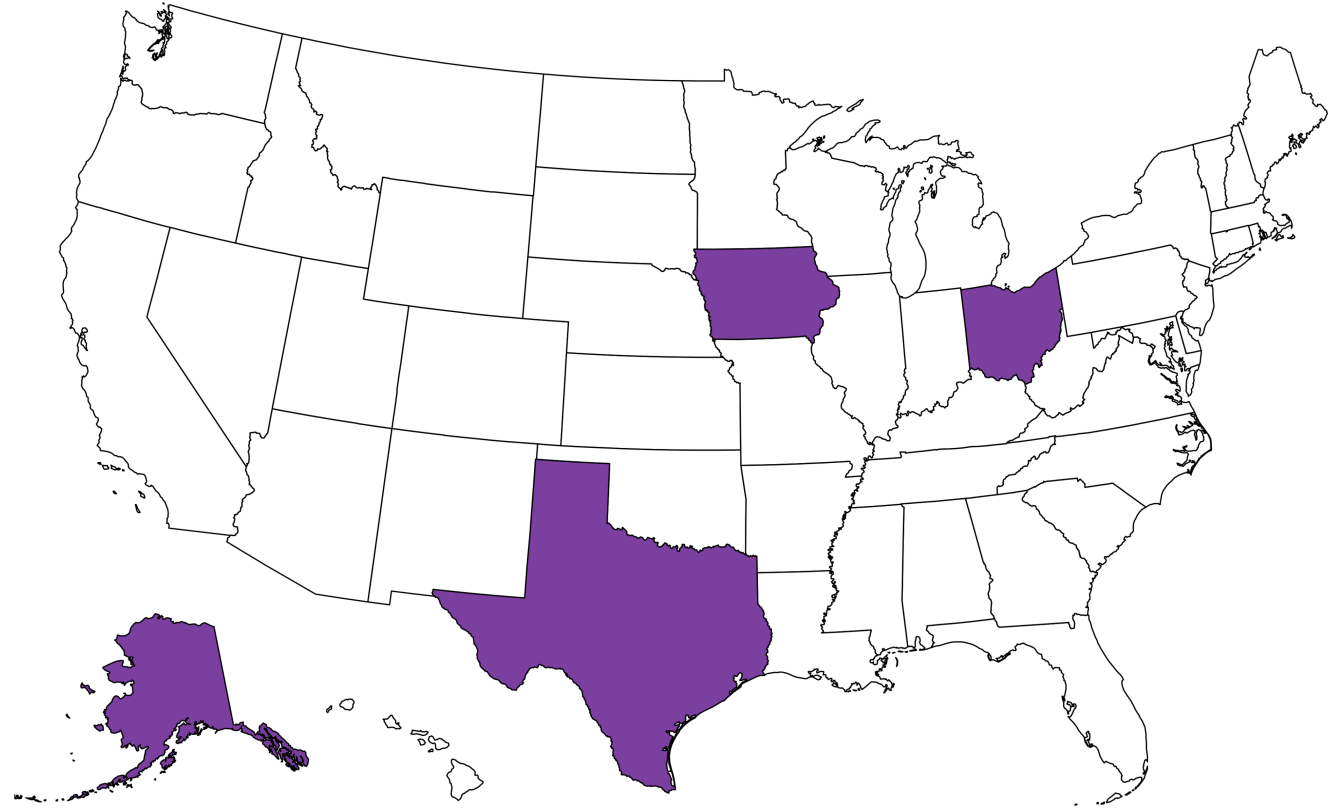


expanding *the* *battleground

September 10, 2026

Expanding the Battleground
– Americans' Perceptions in
Alaska, Iowa, Ohio, and
Texas



IMPACT
RESEARCH

Methodology



Impact Research conducted a survey of N=600 likely 2026 general election voters in each of Alaska, Iowa, Ohio and Texas, for a total sample of N=2,400.



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



Interviews were conducted between August 18-29, 2026.



The margin of error for a sample of this size is +/- 2.0 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. The margin of error for subgroups varies and is higher.

Key Takeaways – Political and Economic Landscape

- **Inflation and the cost of living (48% top five) and government corruption (47%) are the top issues for Americans.** Other top issues for battleground constituents are jobs and the economy (36%), healthcare (34%), and government spending and debt (32%).
- **Trump is underwater overall and on the economy.** Despite Trump winning these states by an average of 13 points, a majority of battleground constituents have an unfavorable opinion of him (-7 net fav) and give him a failing grade overall (-14 net job rating), on the economy (-15 net job rating), and handling the war with Iran (-22 net job rating).
- **Two-thirds of battleground constituents rate the economy negatively (68%) and Trump receives the blame.** By an 11-point margin, battleground constituents place the blame on Trump and Republicans over Democrats. Corporate greed and price gouging (45% top two) is the most popular non-political culprit followed by the Iran war (34%) and tariffs (31%).
- **Nearly three-quarters (74%) of battleground constituents say that it's more important that candidates share their values, rather than being part of the political party they support.** This holds true across partisan lines and is especially true of non-MAGA republicans and those who regret voting for Trump (87% each).

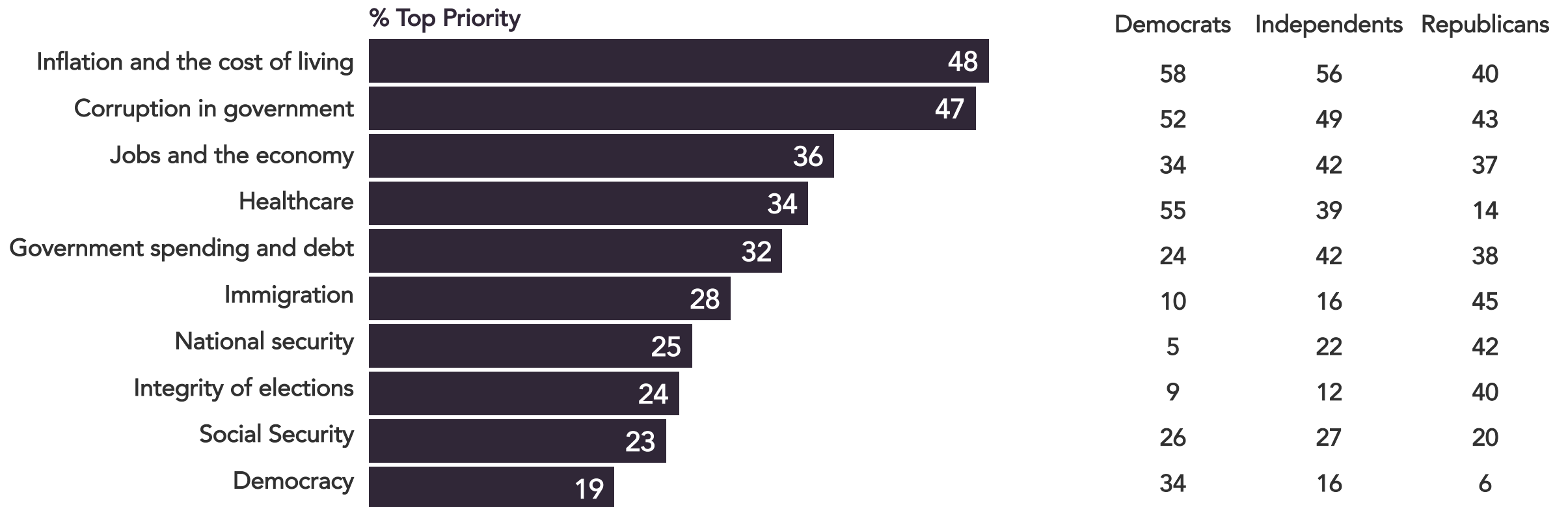
Key Takeaways – Party and Elected Official Branding

- Both parties are well underwater, but Democrats are less popular as a party brand. Democrats in Congress are underwater by 34 points, while Republicans are underwater by 23 points.
- Americans don't view Republicans' priorities as being aligned with theirs. While these voters prioritize the cost of living and the economy, they think Republicans are focused on immigration (59%), foreign conflicts (40%), and election integrity (31%).
- Voters think Democrats are focused on two of their top priorities – healthcare (26% top five) and inflation (22%). They also think Democrats are focused on trans issues (35%), climate change (34%), and abortion (26%).
- Democrats are most trusted on healthcare, creating a pathway to citizenship, protecting Social Security, protecting abortion, and keeping people healthy, while Republicans have the advantage on immigration and sharing my values. Things are more mixed on issues like handling the economy, lowering costs, taking on government corruption, and handling the war with Iran.
- Beyond securing the border, the Republican candidates' brands are weak. Americans don't think they are doing key things like looking out for people like them, getting things done, or fighting inflation.
- Americans think their Republican senator will just vote with Trump all of the time. Only 40% of Americans think a Republican Senator would stand up to Trump in the interest of their state. And this is their biggest concern in a forced choice – that a candidate will blindly follow Trump over things like self-enrichment and doing the bidding of the ultra-wealthy.
- GOP policies are hurting GOP candidates. From their support of tariffs to privatizing Social Security, Americans have very serious concerns about Republican policies.

Political and Economic Landscape

Inflation, Cost of Living, and Corruption are the Top Issues for Americans in the Expanded Battleground

Which of the following do you feel are the most important issues that Congress should make a top priority? [FIVE RESPONSES ACCEPTED]

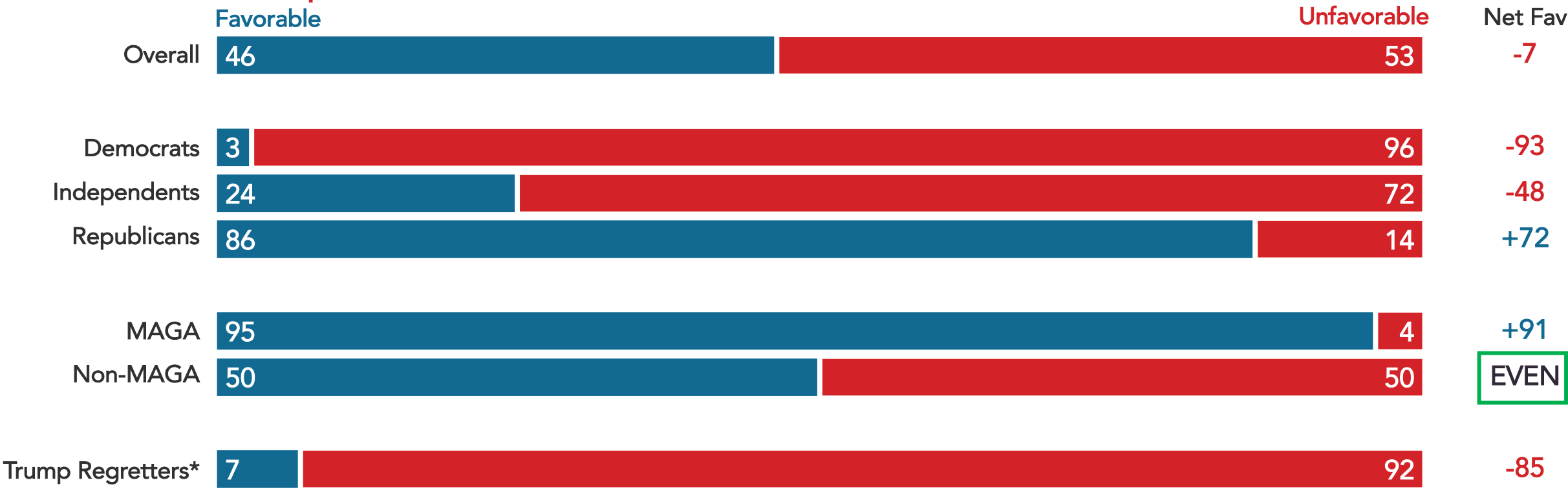


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President Trump is Underwater; Half of Non-MAGA Republicans are Unfavorable Towards Him

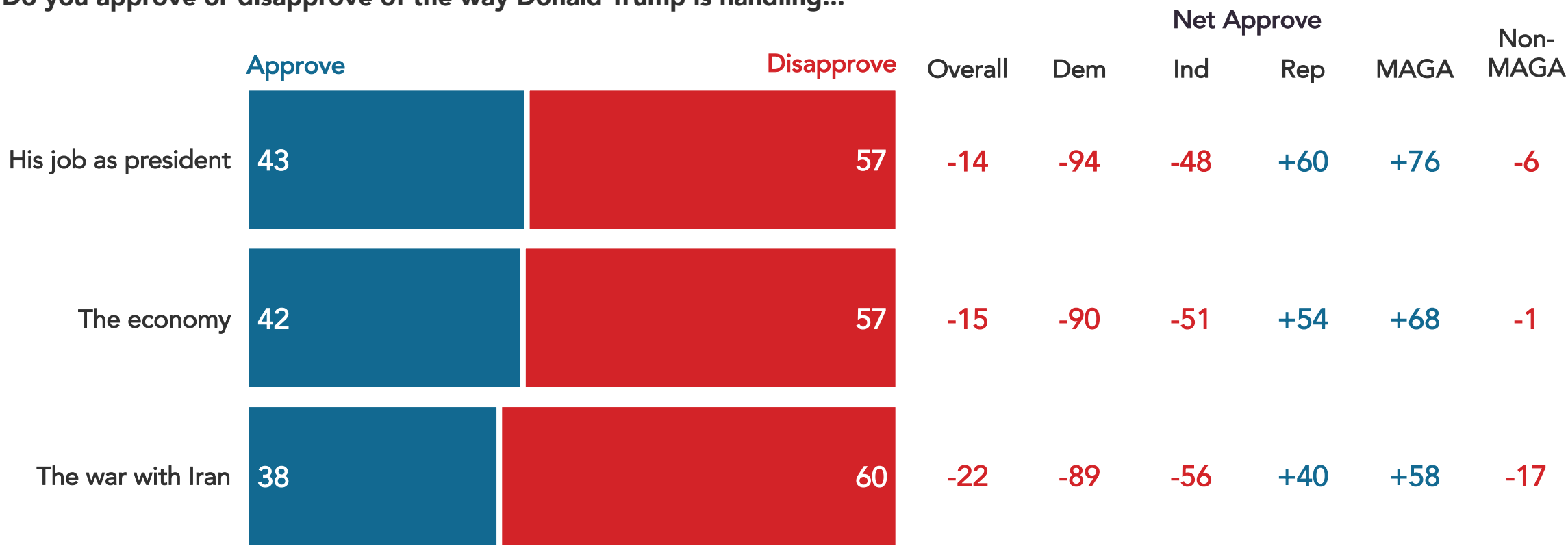
Please indicate whether you have a very favorable view, somewhat favorable view, somewhat unfavorable view, or very unfavorable view of: **Donald Trump**



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Americans in the Expanded Battleground are Deeply Critical of the Job Trump is Doing, Especially the War With Iran

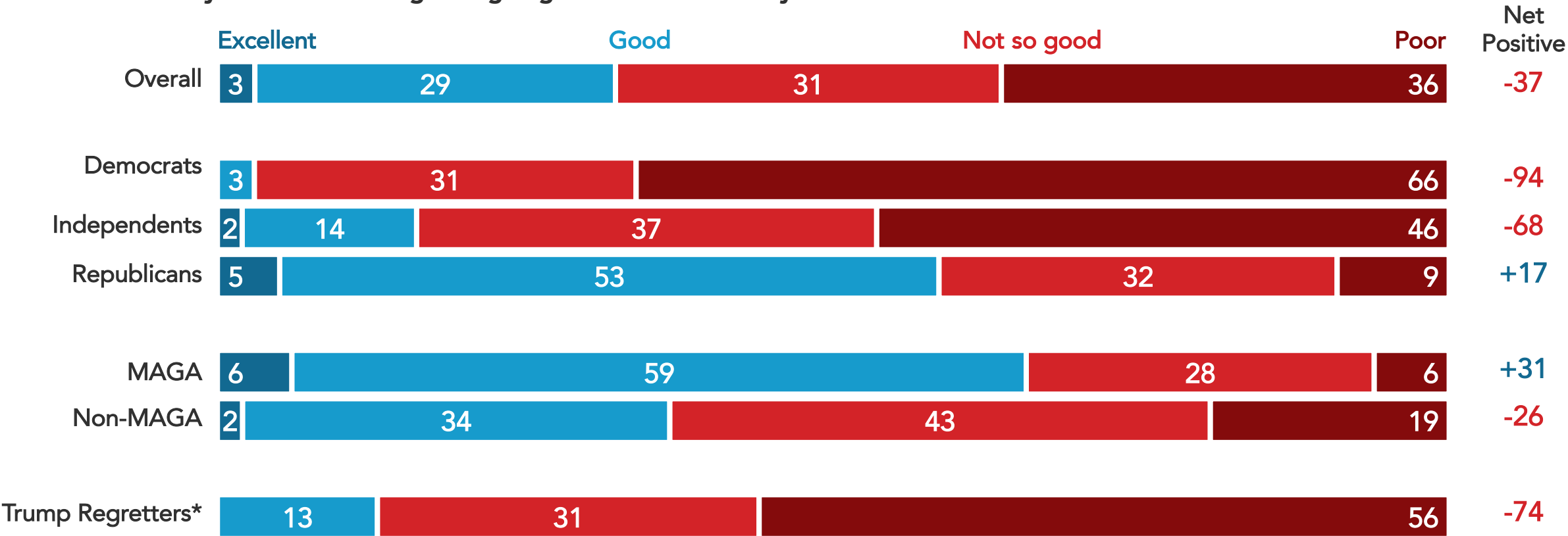
Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling...



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Two-Thirds Have a Negative View of the Economy; Only MAGA Republicans Have a Positive Outlook

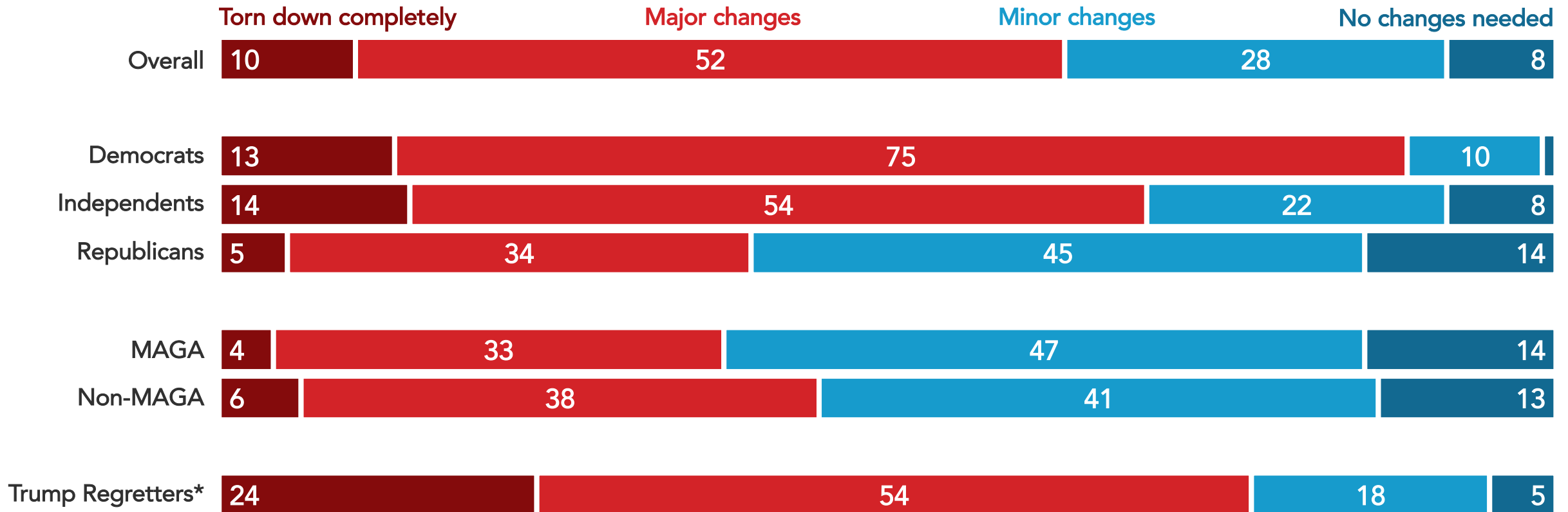
How would you rate how things are going in the U.S. economy?



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A Majority of Americans in the Expanded Battleground Want Major Changes to the Economic System; But Few Want It Torn Down

Which comes closest to your view of the current economic system in America?



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Lowering the Cost of Living Has Broad Appeal in Fixing the System; Democrats Want Higher Taxes on the Wealthy

What are the main changes that you think are necessary to improve the country's current economic system?

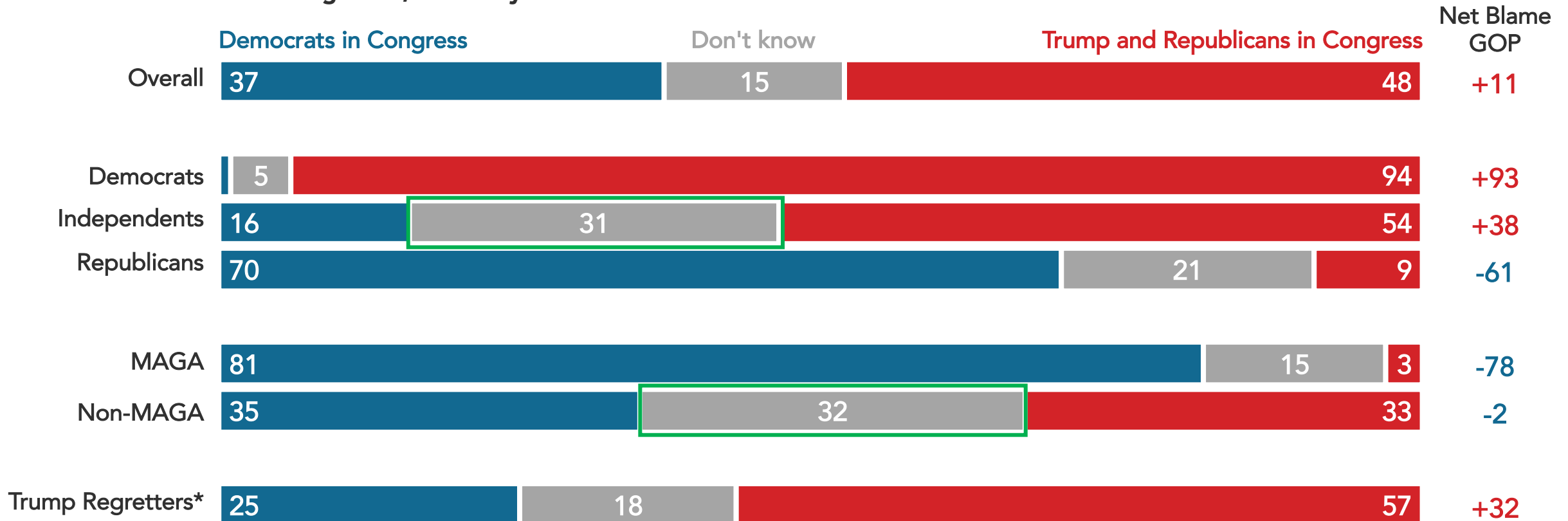
		Overall	Dem	Ind	Rep	MAGA	Non-MAGA
Higher Taxes on the Wealthy	13	13	25	8	3	2	5
Lower Cost of Living and Inflation	10	10	7	11	13	13	15
Stop Fraud / Corruption in Government	9	9	9	8	10	10	6
Cut Government Waste and Deficit Spending	9	9	5	9	13	13	13
Combat Trump / Republicans	7	7	14	9	1	0	4
Stronger Limits on Corporate Power	7	7	9	8	5	5	7
Reduce Overseas Spending and War Costs	7	7	8	9	4	3	7
Less Government Intervention in the Economy	7	7	1	9	11	11	13
Higher Wages and Better Jobs	7	7	6	9	6	6	6
End Tariffs and Trade Barriers	5	5	8	7	2	1	6

*Open-ended. Asked of those who say the system needs changes. Top 10 are shown.
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A Plurality Place the Blame for Rising Costs on Trump and Republicans; Even Non-MAGA Republicans are Divided

When it comes to rising costs, who do you believe is MOST to blame?**



*Trump Regretters are 2024 Trump voters who say they regret their vote.

**Split

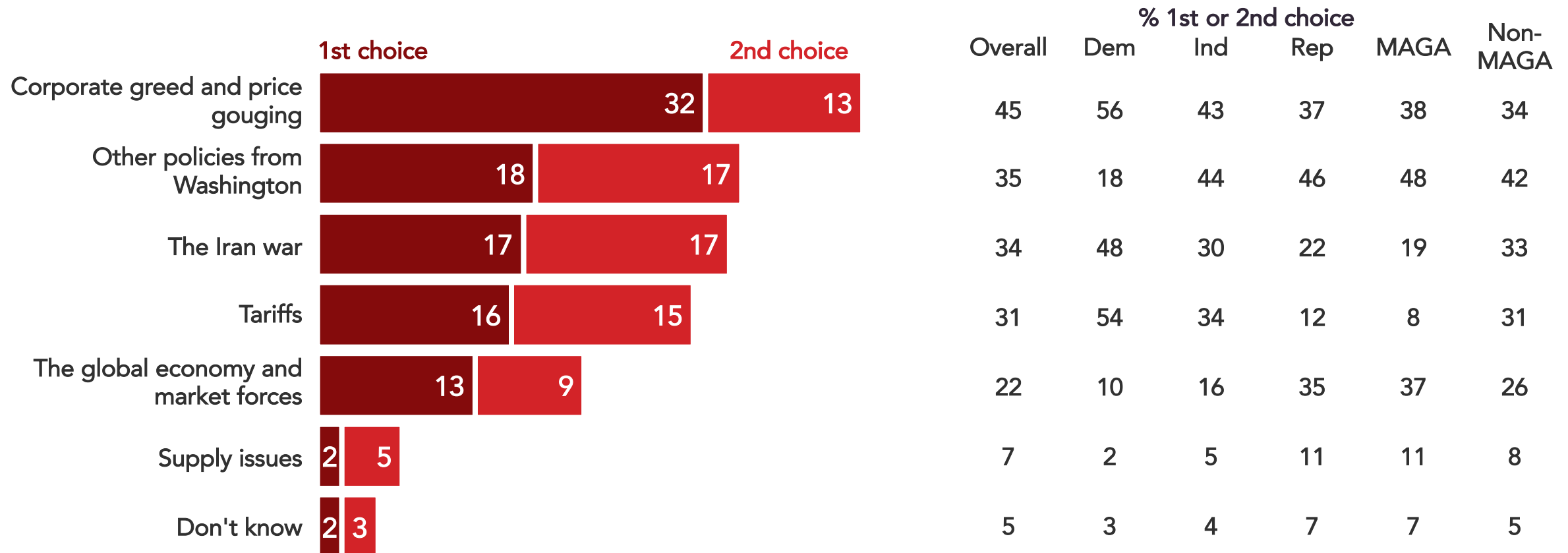
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Americans in the Expanded Battleground Point to Corporate Greed and Price Gouging as the #1 Culprit for High Prices

When it comes to rising costs, what do you believe is MOST to blame?*



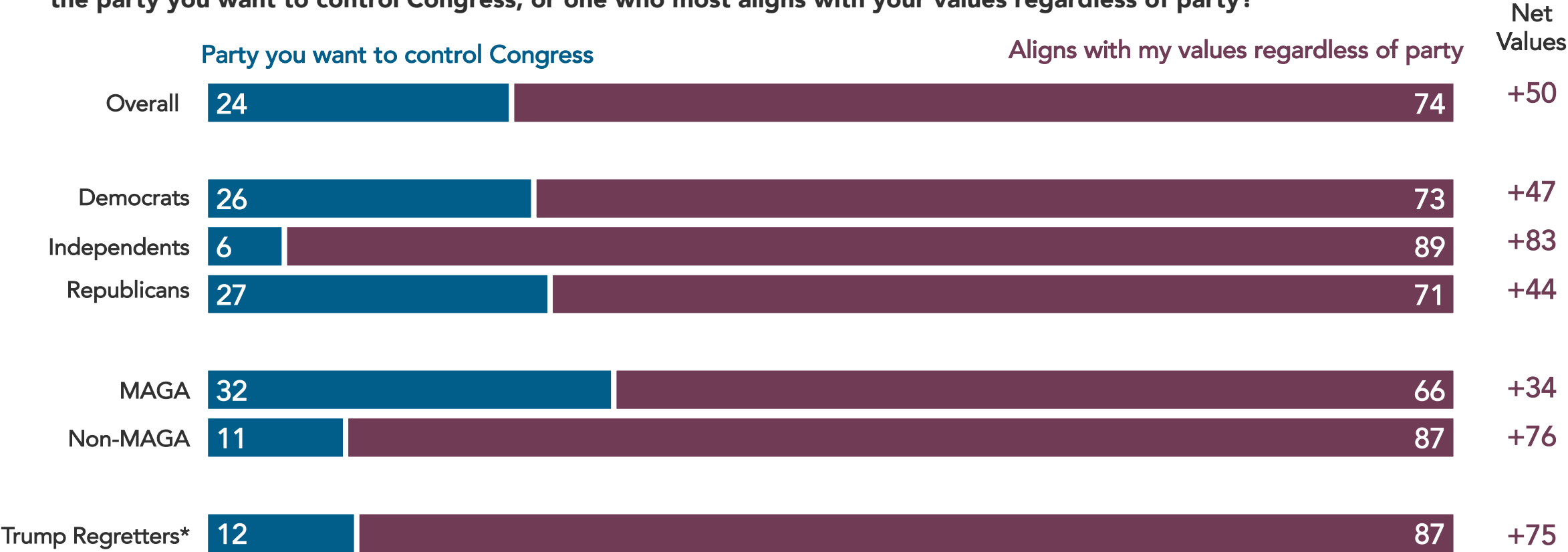
*Split
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Party Branding

Nearly Three-in-Four Say They Vote for Candidates Whose Values Align with Their Own Regardless of Party

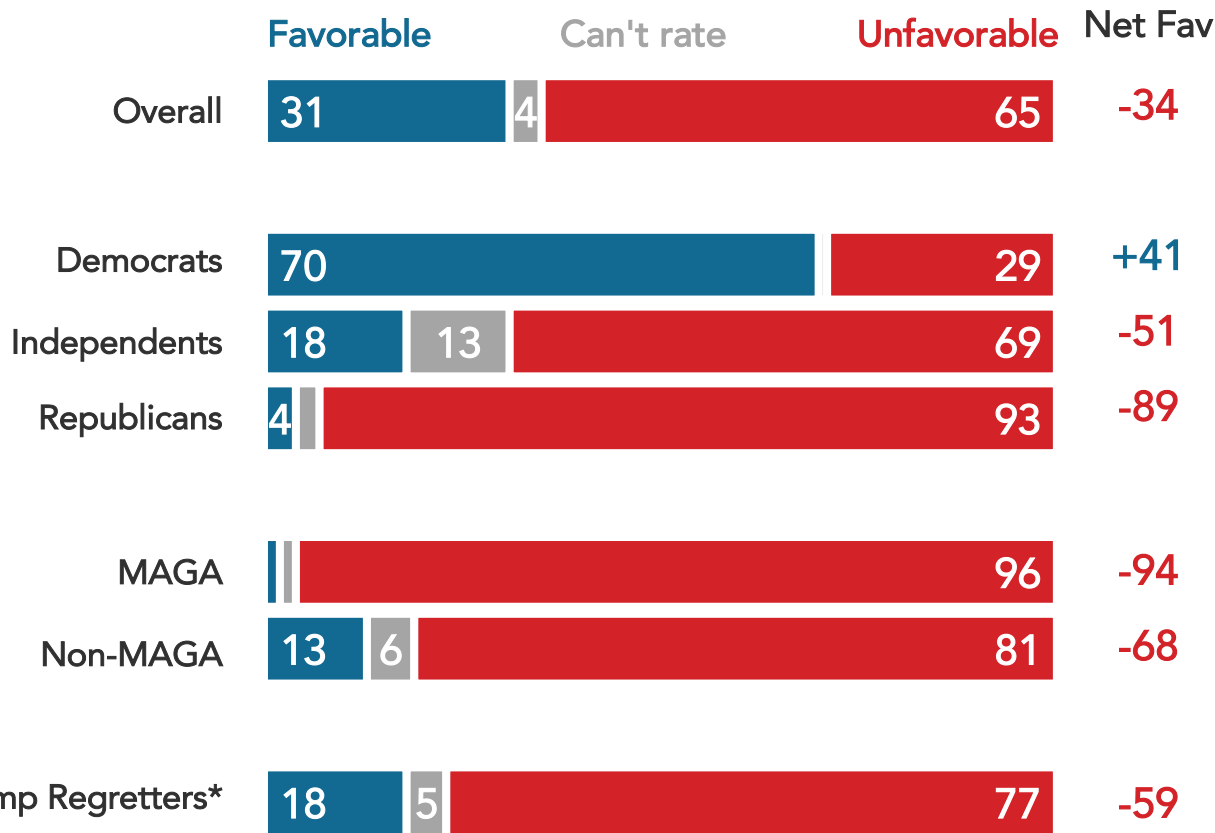
When thinking about elections for U.S. Congress, which is more important to you personally: supporting a candidate who is part of the party you want to control Congress, or one who most aligns with your values regardless of party?



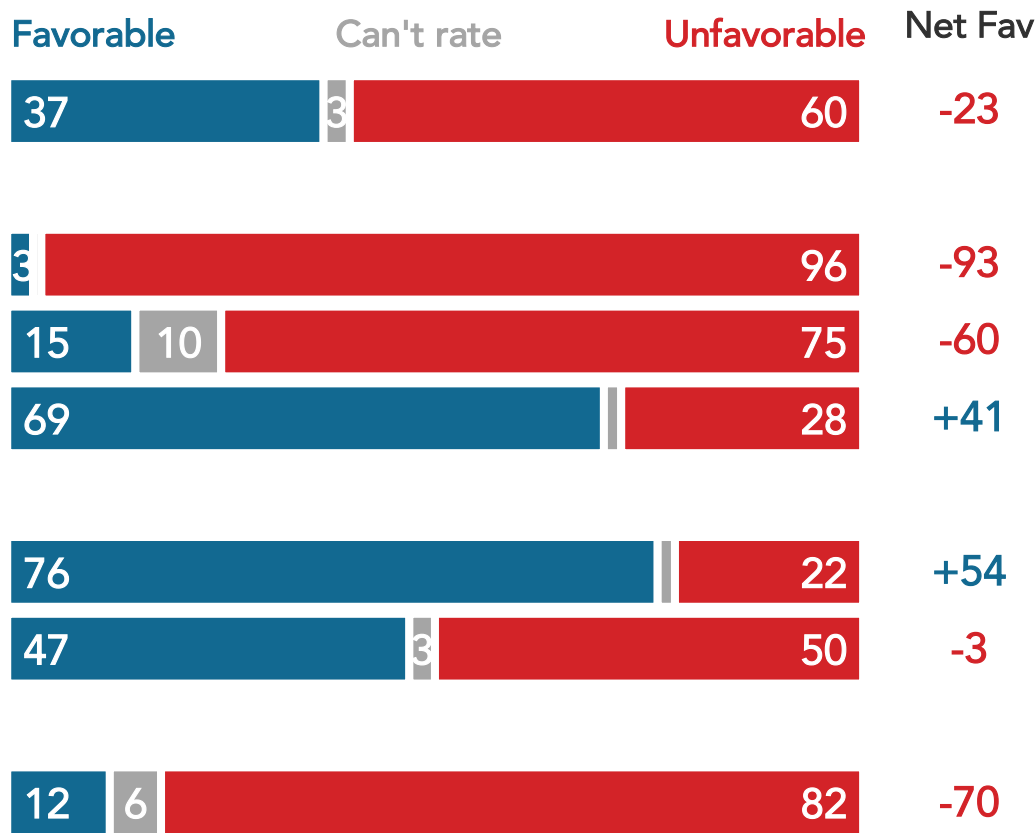
*Trump Regretters are 2024 Trump voters who say they regret their vote.
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Democrats are More Disliked Overall, but Republicans are More Disliked by Independents

Favorability of Democrats in Congress



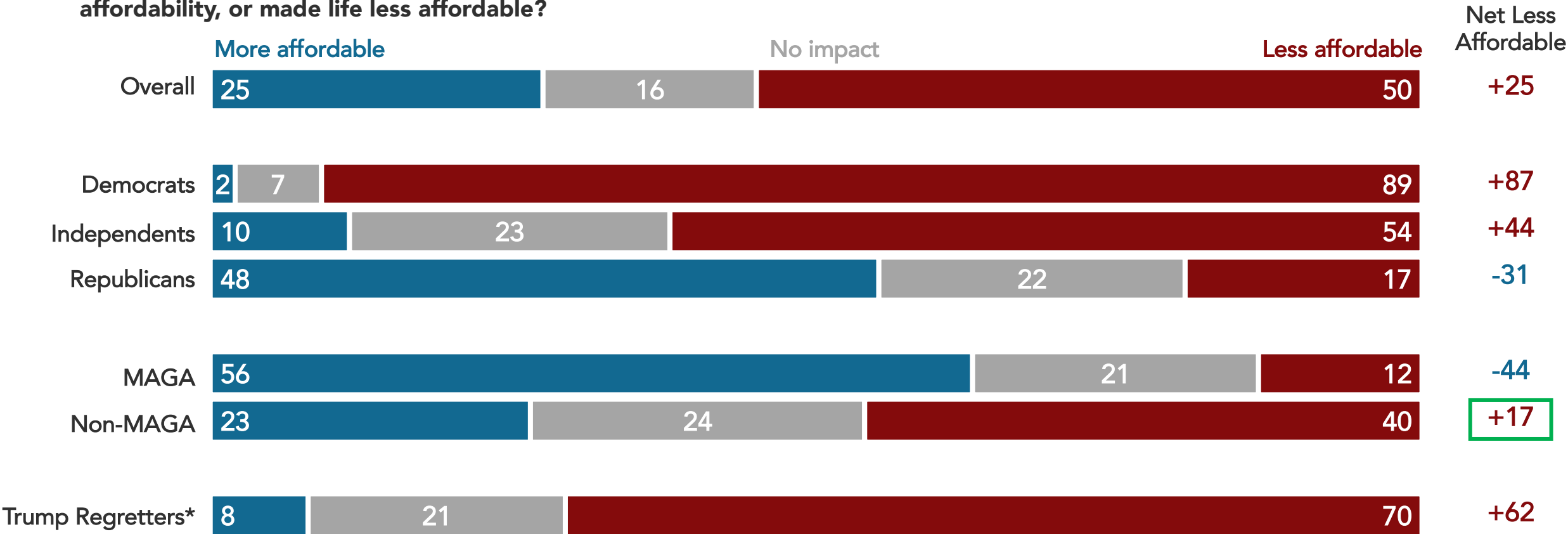
Favorability of Republicans in Congress



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A Majority of Americans in the Expanded Battleground Think Republicans Have Made Life Less Affordable

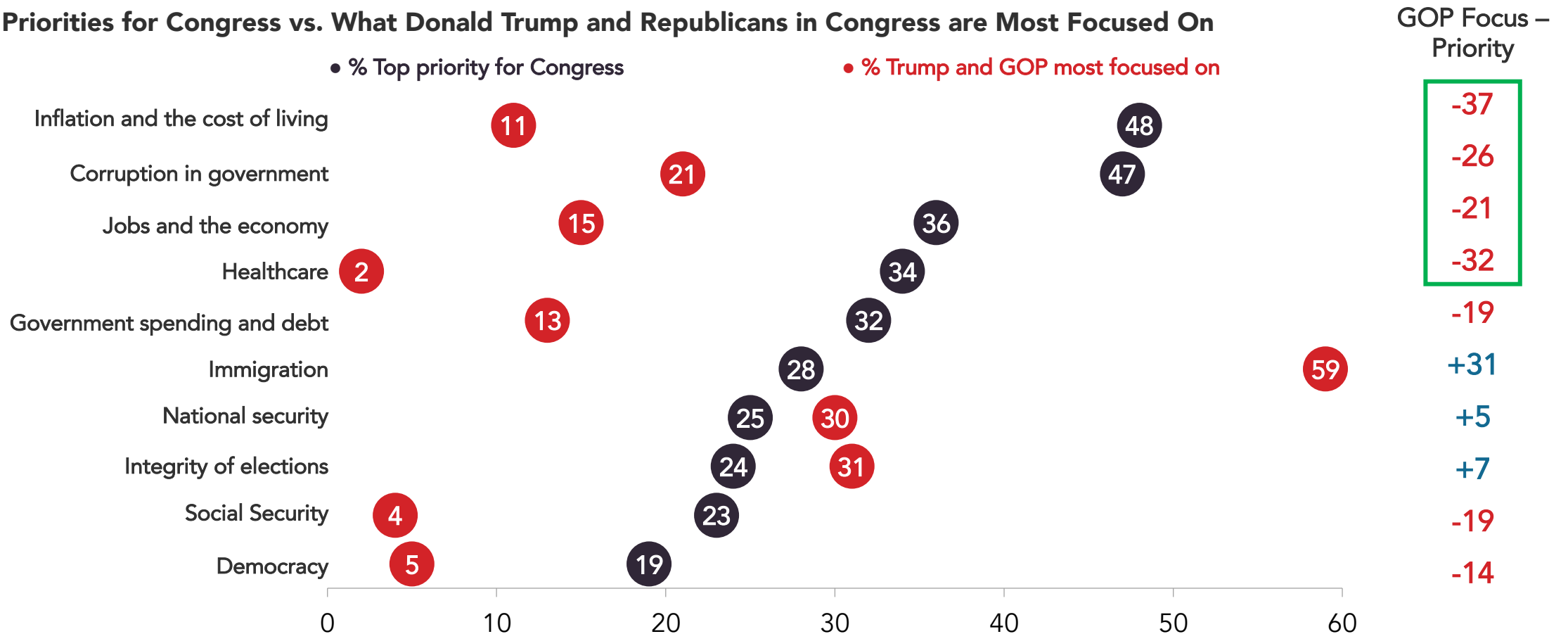
From what you know, have Republicans in Congress focused on policies that have made life more affordable, had no impact on affordability, or made life less affordable?



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Americans Don't Think Trump and Republicans are Focused on Some of Their Top Priorities Like Inflation and Healthcare

Top Priorities for Congress vs. What Donald Trump and Republicans in Congress are Most Focused On

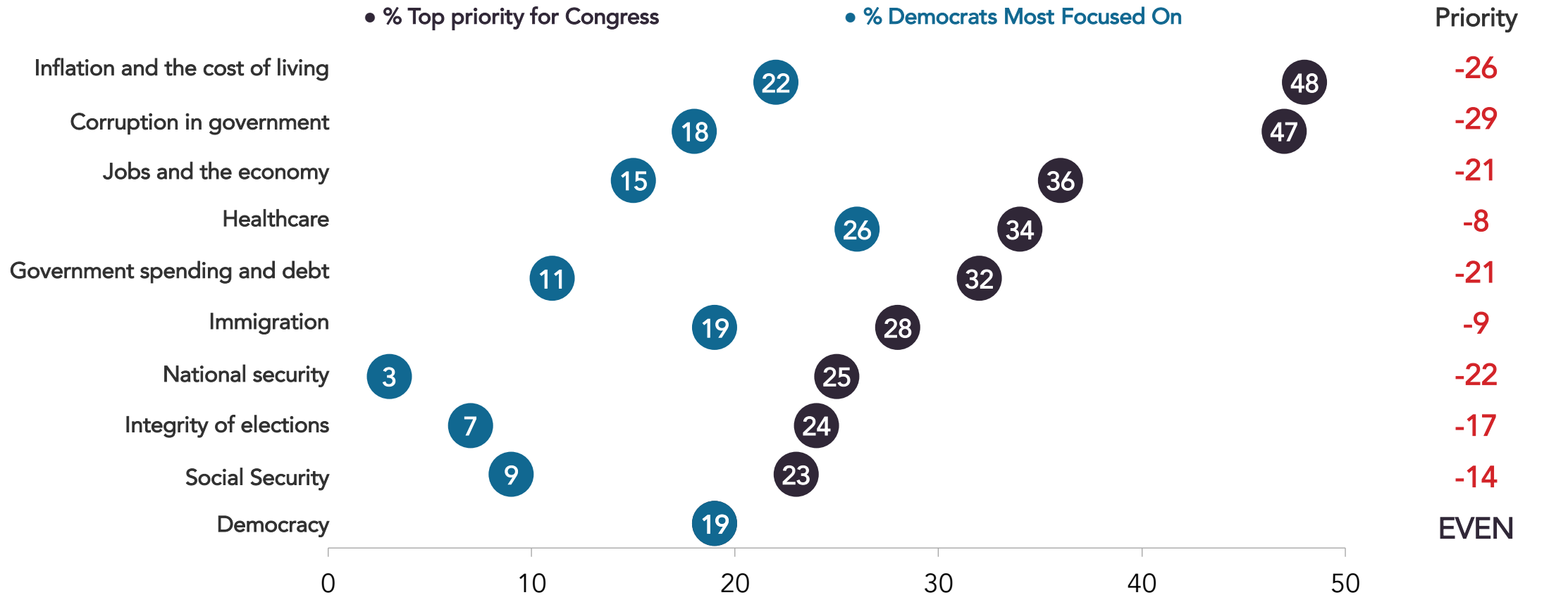


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Americans Think Democrats are More Focused on Healthcare and Inflation Than Republicans, But Still Lagging Americans' Priorities

Top priorities for Congress vs. what Democrats in Congress are most focused on [Split B]

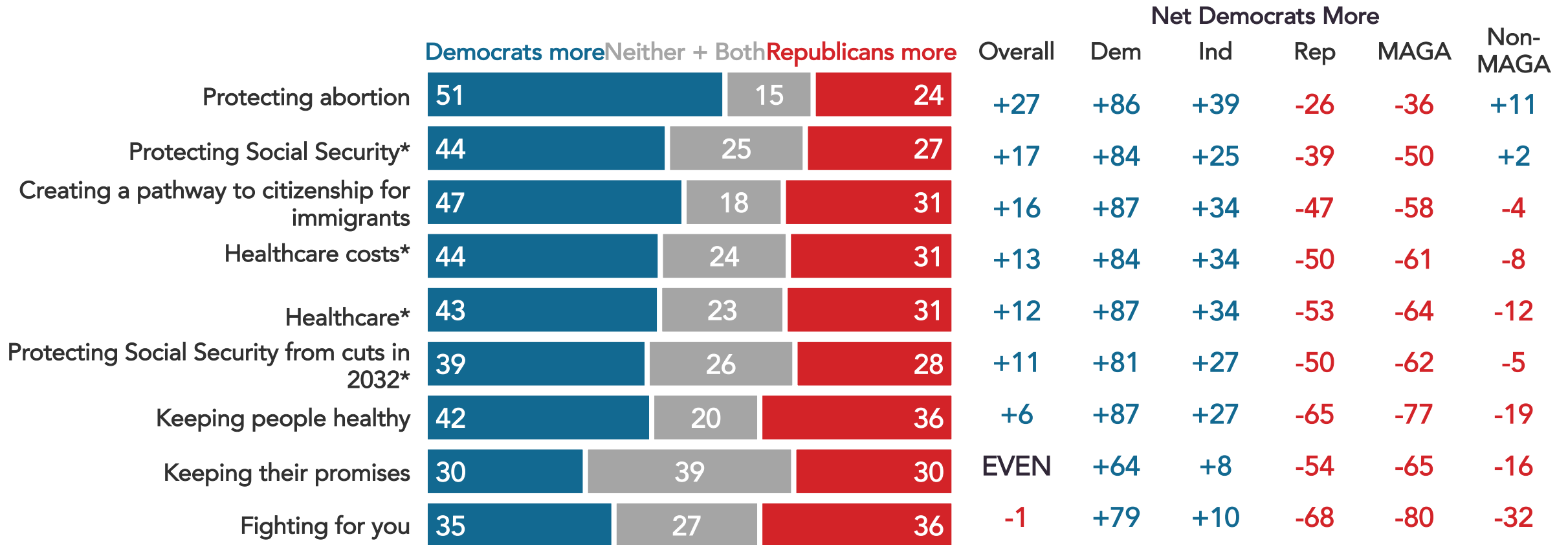


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Democrats Hold Notable Trust Advantages on Social Security and Healthcare

Which party do you trust more to handle each of the following?



*Split

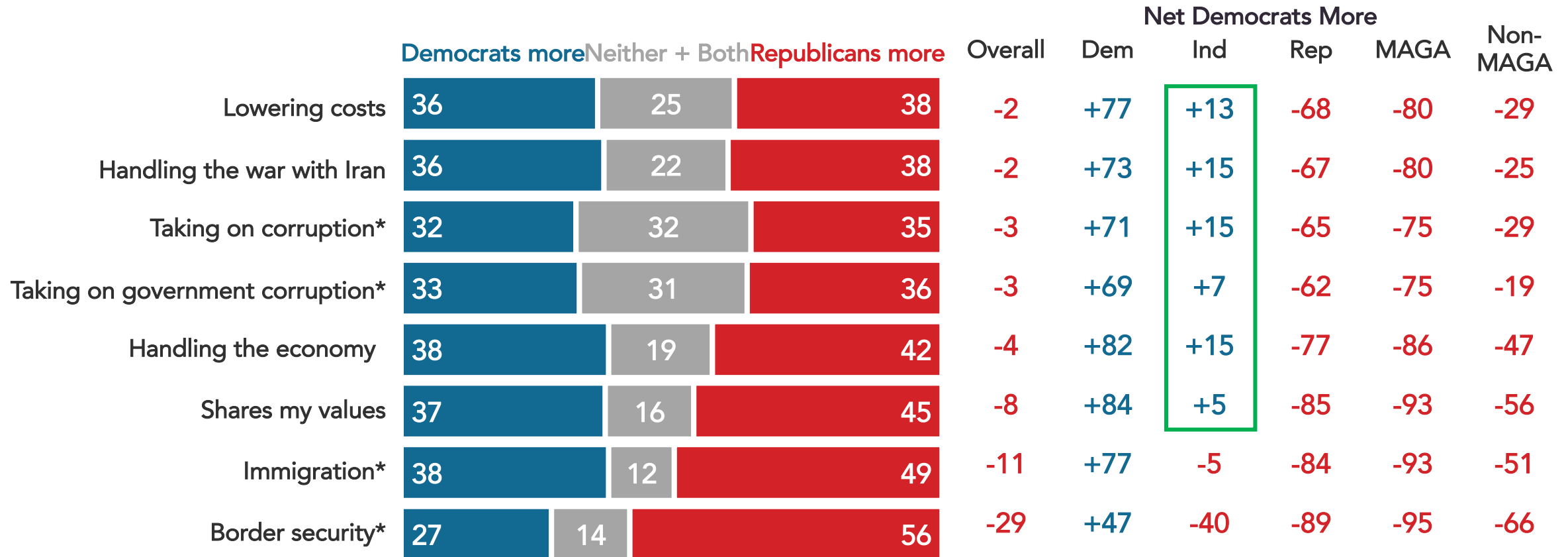
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Democrats are Competitive With Republicans on Key Priorities, Including Costs and Corruption Driven by Strong Advantages with Independents

Which party do you trust more to handle each of the following?



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Branding of Elected Officials

Republican Elected Officials are Only Described as Being Strong on Securing the Border

How well does each of the following describe [Named Republican Elected Official]?

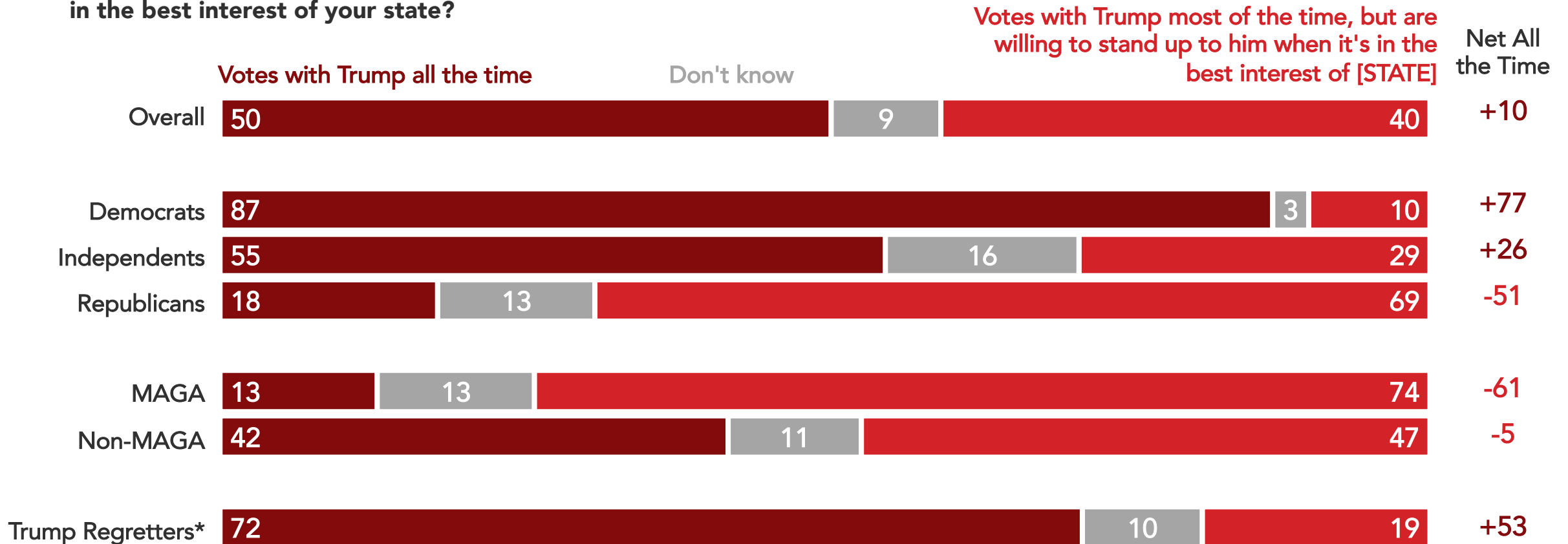
	Net Describes Well			Overall	Dem	Ind	Rep	MAGA	Non-MAGA	Trump Regret.*
	Well	Don't know	Not well							
Bringing needed change	31	17	52	-21	-87	-52	+40	+54	-8	-47
Fighting inflation	30	19	51	-21	-86	-53	+39	+52	-7	-57
Making health care and prescription drugs more affordable	29	21	49	-20	-83	-54	+40	+51	+5	-35
Lowering costs for working families	32	17	51	-19	-87	-53	+44	+56	+3	-44
Standing up to corruption	32	17	51	-19	-84	-49	+41	+55	-7	-53
Looking out for people like me	35	15	51	-16	-85	-50	+48	+59	+7	-50
Shares my values	37	14	49	-12	-85	-42	+54	+66	+12	-37
Ensuring our food and water is safe	33	23	44	-11	-78	-39	+52	+62	+18	-26
Getting things done	37	17	46	-9	-78	-35	+53	+63	+19	-38
Securing the border	49	19	32	+17	-45	+2	+74	+80	+54	+7

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A Majority of Americans Think Republican Senators Vote With Trump Even if it Means it's Against the Interest of Their States

Do you believe Republican Senators vote with Trump all of the time, or most of the time, but are willing to stand up to him when it's in the best interest of your state?



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Support for Data Centers and Tariffs and Opposition to Stock Trading Bans are a Major Concern for Americans

On a scale of 1-10, how concerned would you be if your representative in Congress did each of the following?

	% 10 - Serious concern	Average	Dem	Ind	Rep	MAGA	Non-MAGA	Trump Regret.*
Created a taxpayer funded slush fund that would give members of Congress a half a million-dollar payout	76	9.1	88	81	65	64	68	83
Supported allowing big tech companies to build data centers with no restrictions**	62	8.2	80	65	45	47	41	63
Refused to ban pesticides that pollute water	59	8.3	79	61	43	43	42	57
Supported one of the biggest tax increases in history on goods, like cars and medicine	58	8.3	75	54	45	45	50	57
Opposed a stock trading ban for members of Congress	56	7.8	65	57	48	48	51	63

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**Split
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There are Concerns About Elected Officials Being Too Close with Big Pharma, Utility Companies, and Big Food Corporations

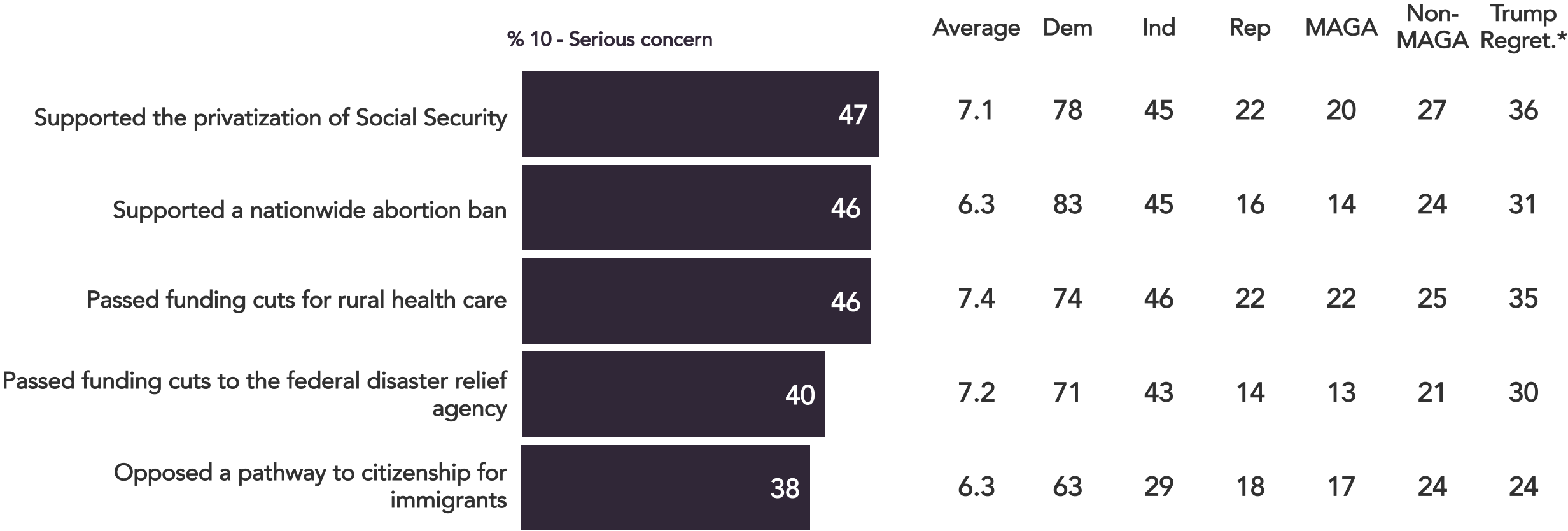
On a scale of 1-10, how concerned would you be if your representative in Congress did each of the following?

	% 10 - Serious concern	Average	Dem	Ind	Rep	MAGA	Non-MAGA	Trump Regret.*
Is supported by big Pharma and the health care industry	54	8.2	66	57	44	44	44	62
Allowed utility companies to raise utility rates	51	8.0	65	51	40	41	37	48
Supported building data centers that pollute local waterways**	51	7.6	75	49	33	32	36	59
Passed handouts for and decreased regulations on big food corporations	49	7.9	71	53	30	30	32	55
Supported ICE raids in communities that have killed innocent civilians	48	6.2	90	45	14	11	27	40

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Americans in the Expanded Battleground are Less Concerned About Opposing a Pathway to Citizenship for Immigrants

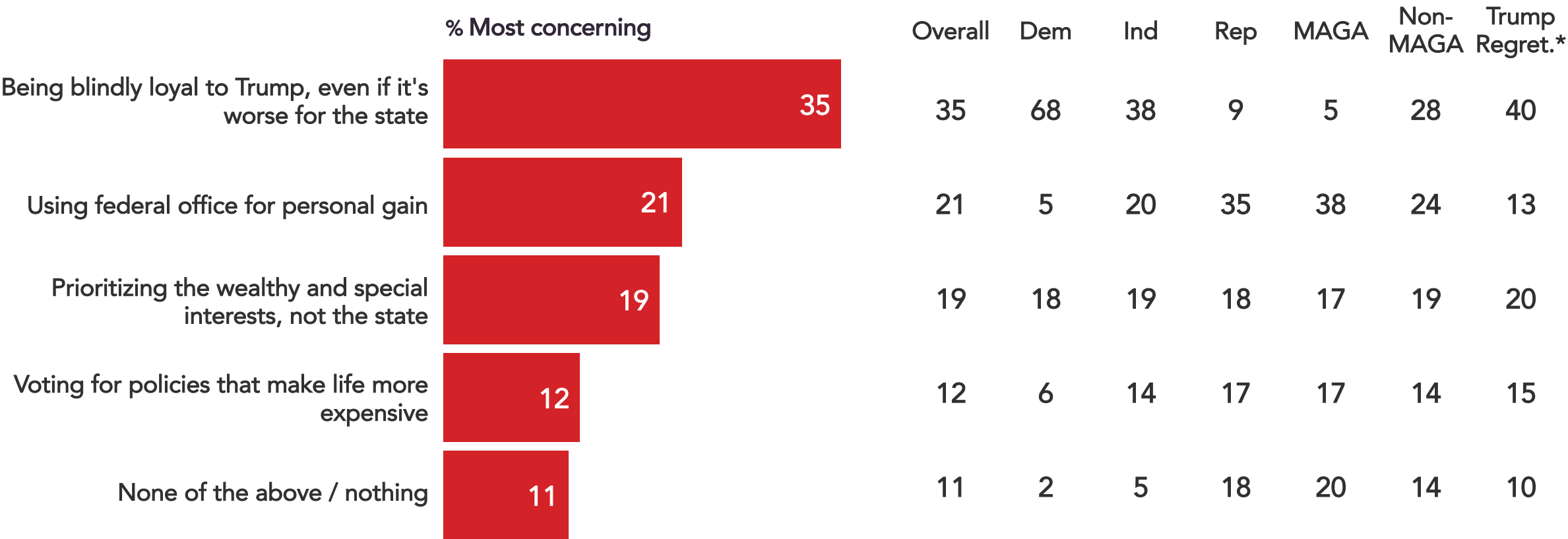
On a scale of 1-10, how concerned would you be if your representative in Congress did each of the following?



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Americans in the Battleground are Most Concerned About an Elected Official Being too Loyal to Trump

Which of the following is the most concerning policy action your elected representative could take?



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About Navigator and Expanding 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. Expanding the Battleground is a project designed to understand messaging nuances in different types of battleground geographies, led by pollsters from Impact Research.

About the Study

Impact Research conducted public opinion surveys among a sample of 600 voters likely 2026 general election voters in each of Alaska, Iowa, Ohio and Texas for a total sample size of 2,400 between August 18-29, 2026. The survey was conducted via text-to-web interviews. Respondents were verified against a voter file and special care was taken to ensure the demographic composition of our sample matched that of each state 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 +/- 2.0 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
Expanding the Battleground:

<http://navigatorresearch.org>

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