A Union of Professionals

DEMOCRACY CORPS
CARVILLE ◆ GREENBERG

GREENBERG RESEARCH

Trump-GOP Tax Cuts & Messaging for 2018

April 2018

CAMPAIGNS | CORPORATIONS | ADVOCACY | WORLDWIDE

Methodology

National phone survey

This national phone survey took place from March 25 – April 2, 2018 among 1,000 registered voters from a voter file sample. Data shown in this deck is among all registered voters unless otherwise noted. Margin of error for the full sample is +/- 3.1 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level. Of the 1,000 respondents, 53 percent were interviewed via cell phone in order to accurately sample the American electorate.

Focus groups in Michigan

The phone survey was preceded by focus groups on March 7-9th among:

- White working class women - Obama-Trump voters & Trump Democrats under 50 from Macomb County, MI;
- White working class women – Obama-Trump voters & Trump-Democrats over 50 from Macomb, County, MI;
- White working class men – Obama-Trump voters & Trump-Democrats from Macomb, County MI;
- African American women from Detroit, MI
- White college educated women – mostly married, Democrats & Independents from Southfield, MI

Key findings

- Democrats hold a 10-point lead in the generic congressional ballot produced by minorities and almost 3-to-1 leads among millennial, college & suburban women. Democrats are now winning seniors and white working class women.
- Strong disapproval of Trump among Democrats exceeds Republicans' strong approval by almost 30 points and there is 16-point margin in the congressional ballot among voters with greatest interest in the election.
- Only 48 percent of voters say their wages are rising and nearly two-thirds say their wages are not keeping up with risings costs.
- Only 39 percent say the tax cut is benefitting them and voters are divided in their support for the new tax law, but opponents have much greater intensity.
- 65 percent say they are more likely to vote for the Democrat that underscores the $2.2 trillion price tag for a tax law that gives 83 percent of the cuts to the top 1 percent and means less money for education, infrastructure and help with healthcare costs.

Key findings, continued

- After a balanced debate, opposition to the tax cut grows 9 points and the enthusiasm margin for Democrats over Republicans grows from 7 to 11 points.

ECONOMIC CONTEXT:

The economy isn't very strong for families like mine because our salaries and incomes can't keep up with the cost of living.

POWERFUL CRITICISMS

- Costs $2.2 trillion over the next decade which could have funded public schools, health care or infrastructure.
- Adds $1.5 trillion to the deficit and now Donald Trump & Republicans say we must pay for it with cuts to Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security.

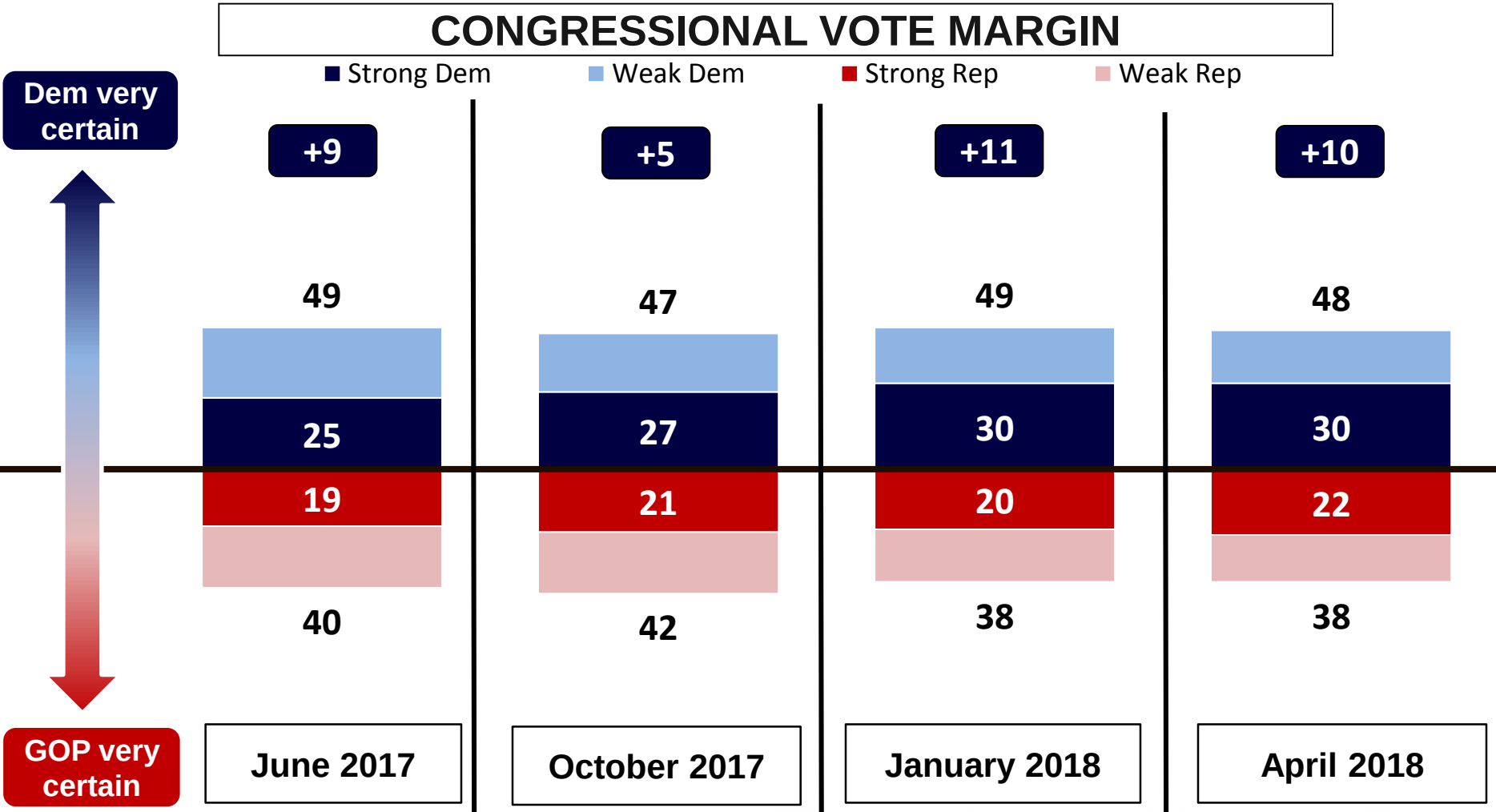
MESSAGE: PRIORITIZE INVESTMENT

The tax law costs $2.2 trillion over the next decade, which means even less funding for investments the middle class needs for a better future. Instead of a law that gives 83 percent of the cuts to the top 1 percent, that money should be used to invest in our public schools and infrastructure and bring down health care costs.

STATE OF THE ELECTION

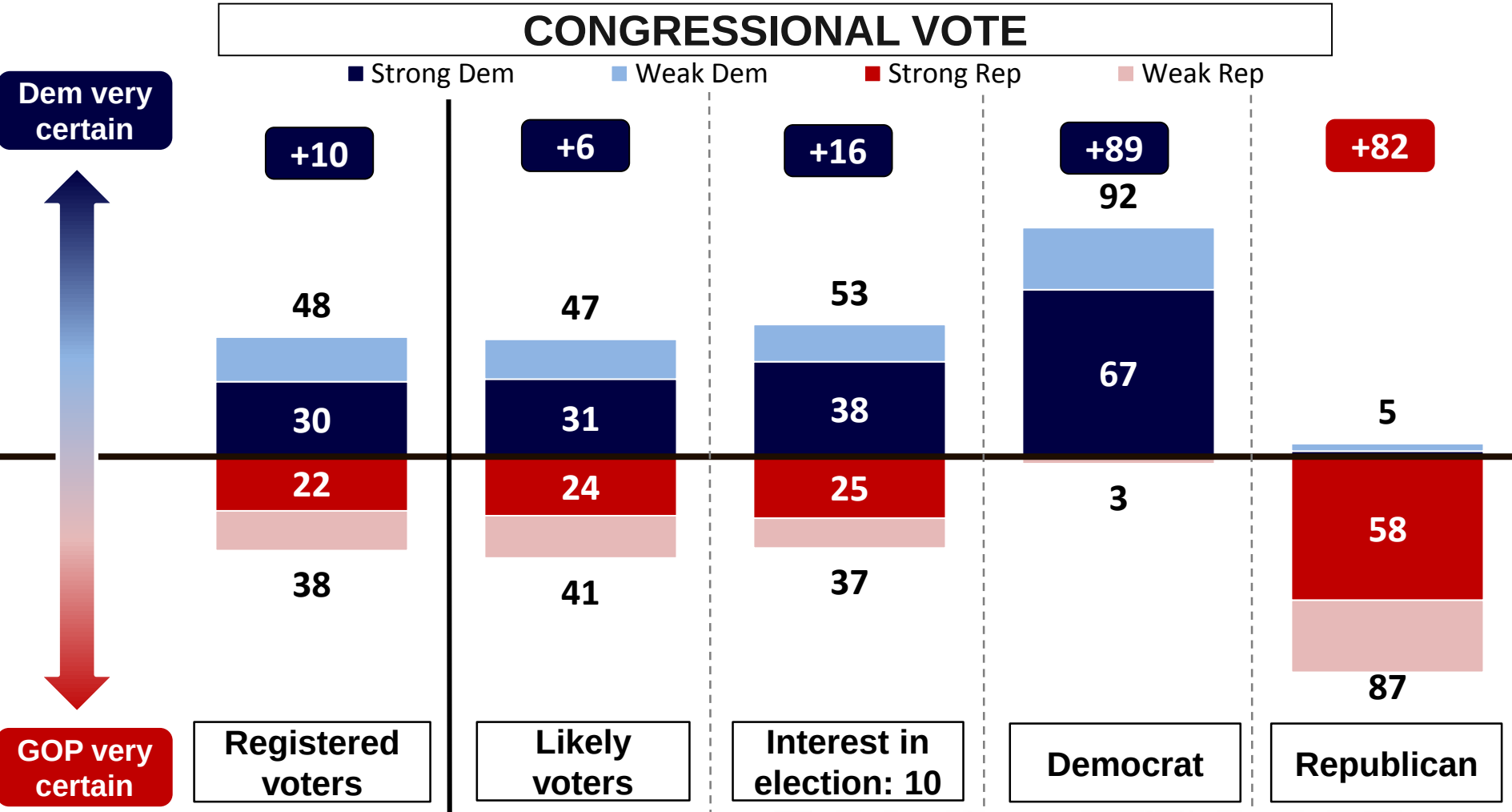
Democratic congressional vote strong

Thinking about the election for Congress in your district in November 2018, will you vote for -- the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate? How certain are you that you would vote for the (CANDIDATE) -- are you very certain, somewhat certain or not certain at all?



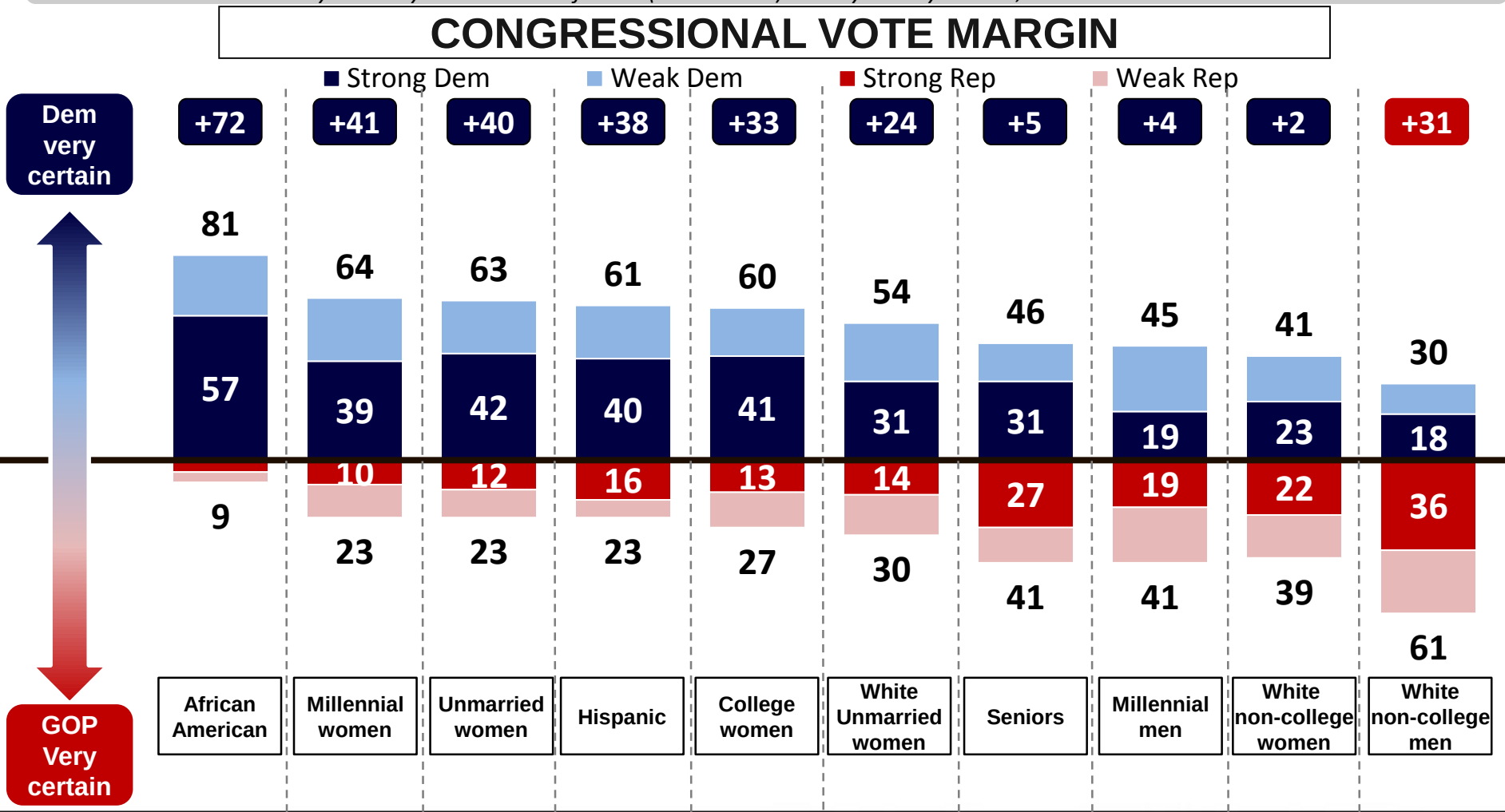
Democratic extreme interest driving up margin

Thinking about the election for Congress in your district in November 2018, will you vote for -- the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate? How certain are you that you would vote for the (CANDIDATE) -- are you very certain, somewhat certain or not certain at all?



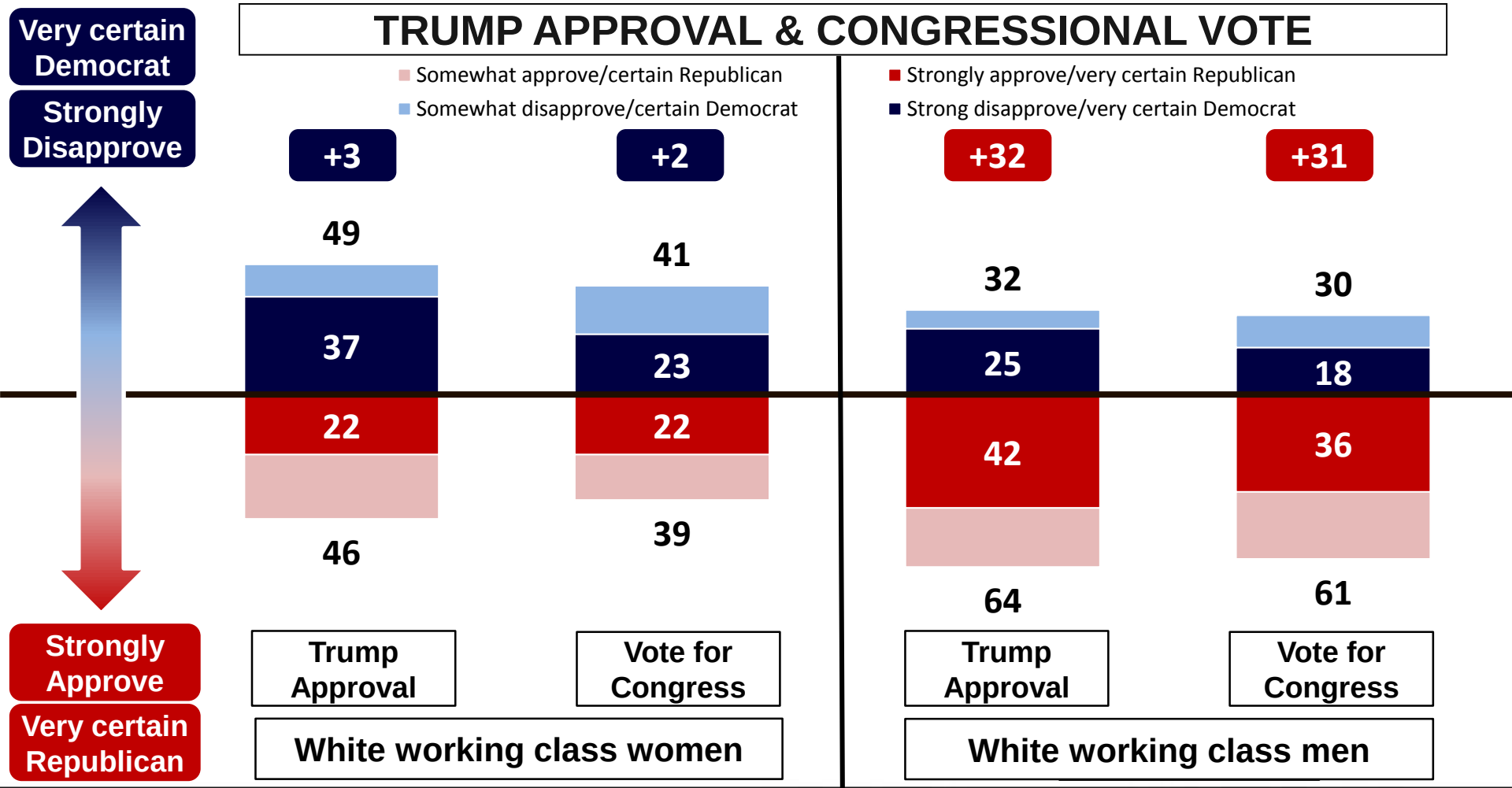
Strong support across base, college, unmarried and millennial women, but also seniors and white working class women

Thinking about the election for Congress in your district in November 2018, will you vote for -- the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate? How certain are you that you would vote for the (CANDIDATE) -- are you very certain, somewhat certain or not certain at all?



The white working class has fractured on gender lines

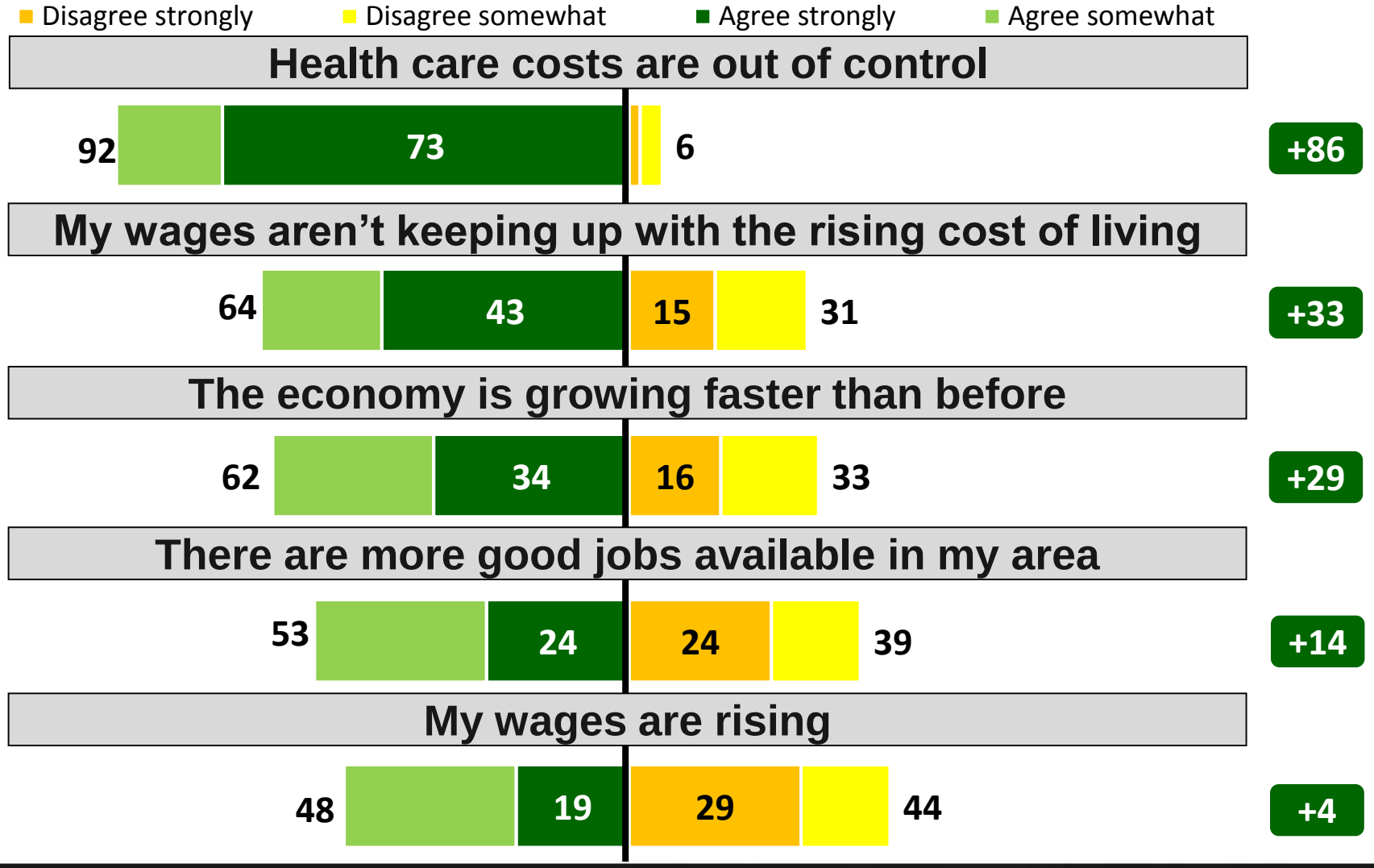
Thinking about the election for Congress in your district in November 2018, will you vote for -- the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate? How certain are you that you would vote for the (CANDIDATE) -- are you very certain, somewhat certain or not certain at all? Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as President?



THE REAL ECONOMY

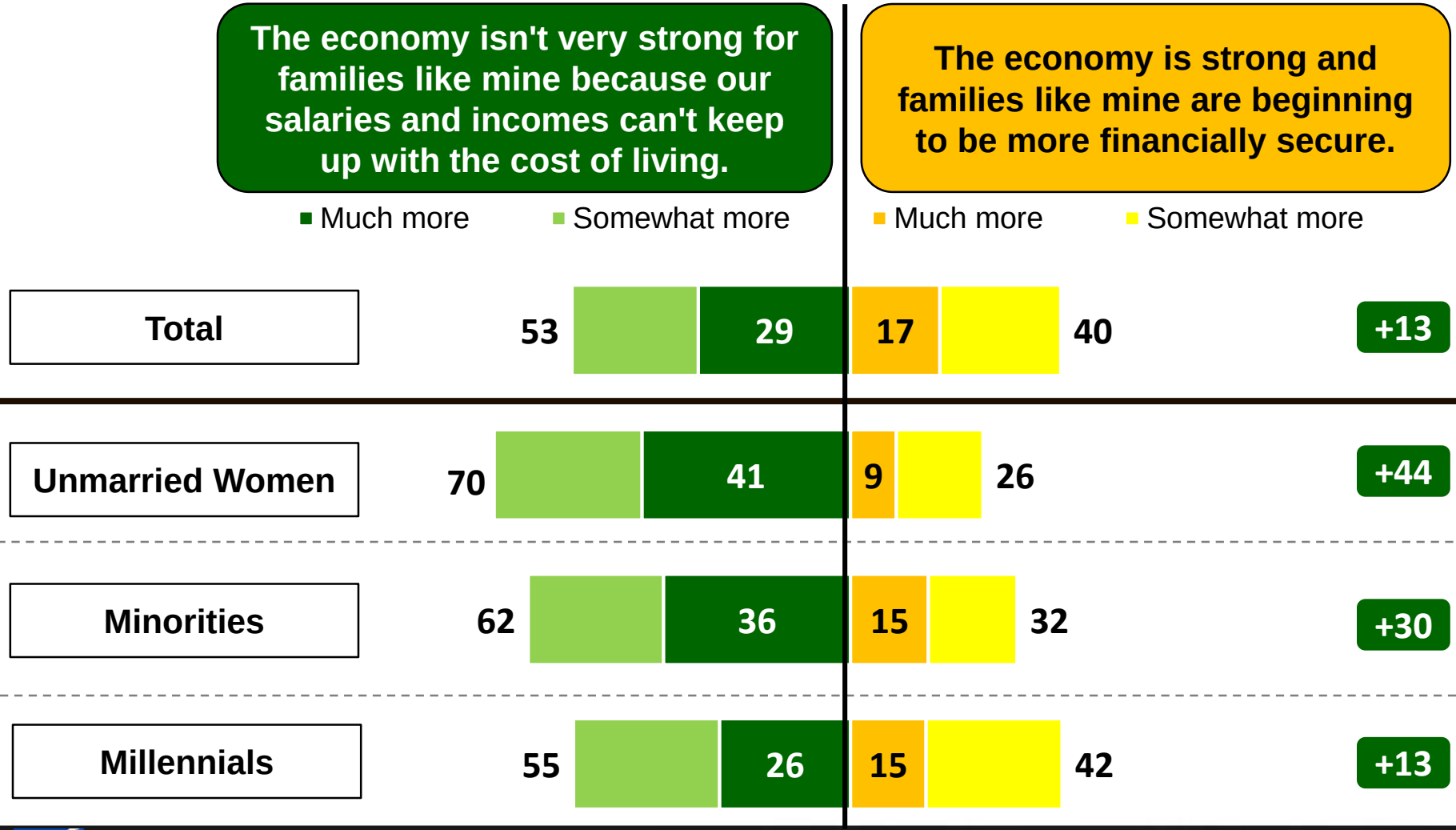
Wages aren't keeping up and health care costs are out of control

Now let me ask you some questions about the economy. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with each statement.



Majority says economy isn't strong because wages don't cover costs

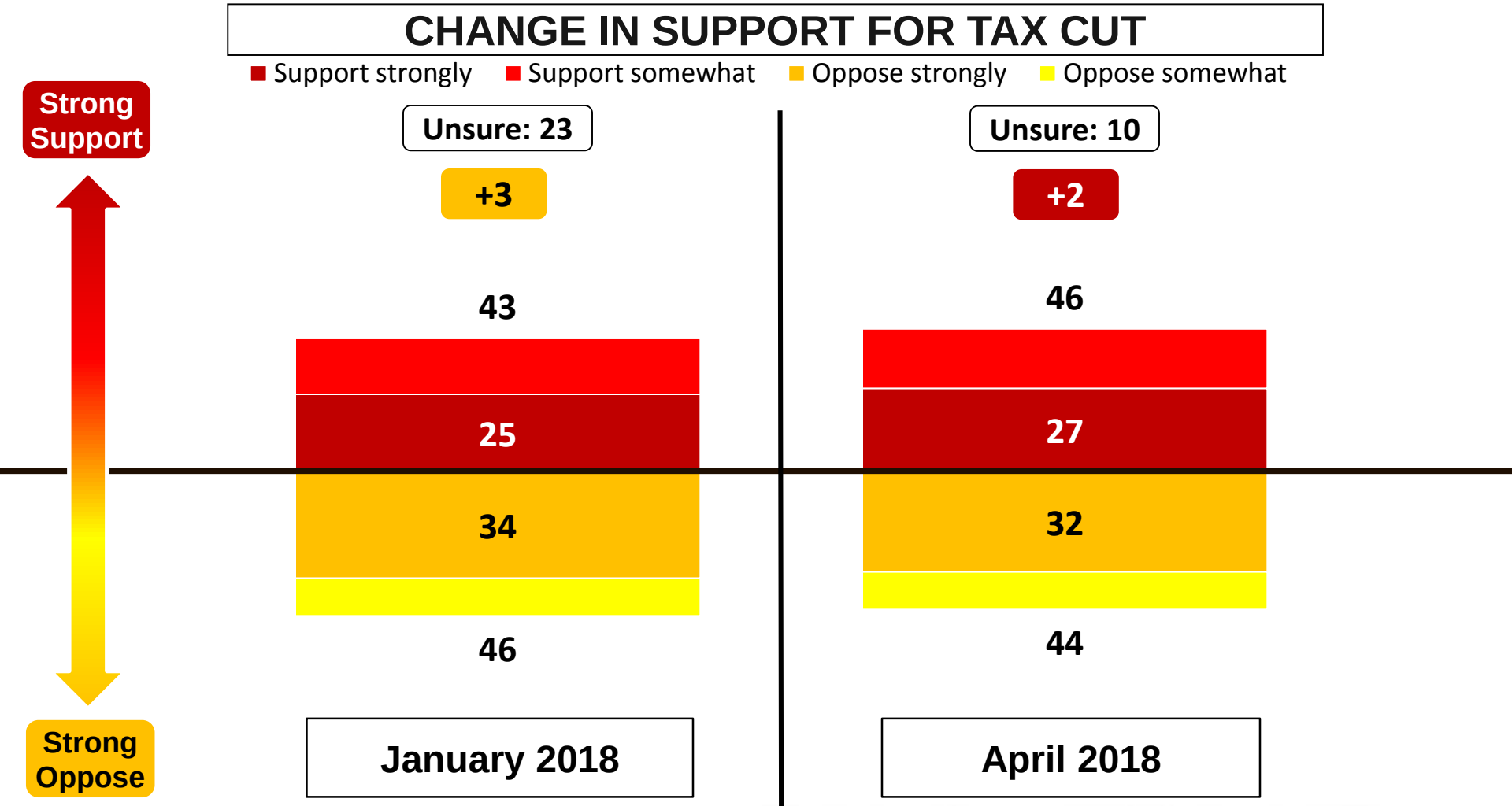
Please tell me which one you agree with more, even if neither is exactly right.



WELCOMING THE TAX BATTLE

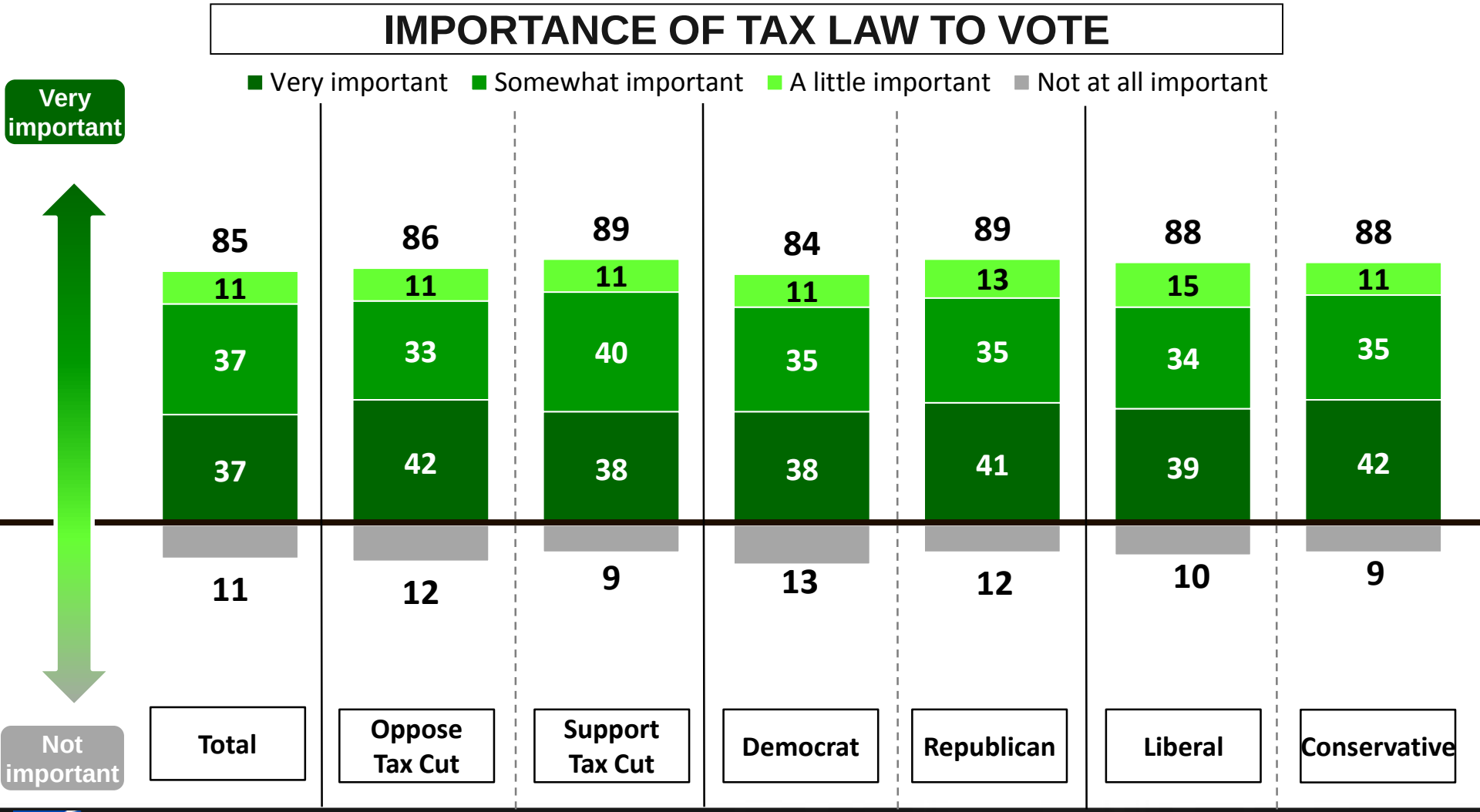
Welcoming the tax cut battle

From what you know, do you support or oppose the tax cut for corporations and individuals passed by the Republicans in Congress and signed by the President at the end of last year?



Supporters and opponents both say tax cut key to vote

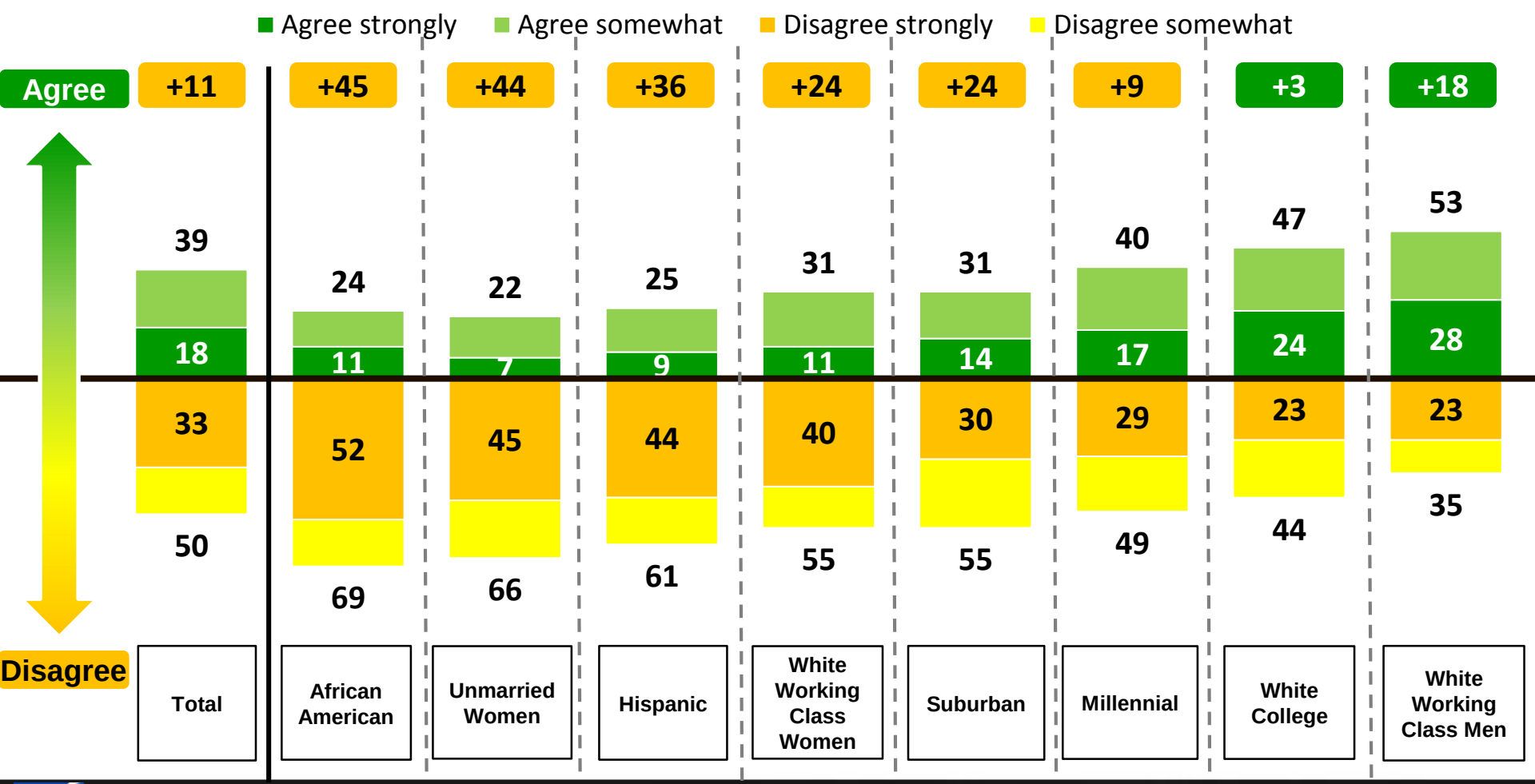
How important is that new tax law to your vote for Congress - very important, somewhat important, a little important or not important at all?



Majority doesn't believe the tax law benefitting them personally

Now let me ask you some questions about the economy. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with each statement.

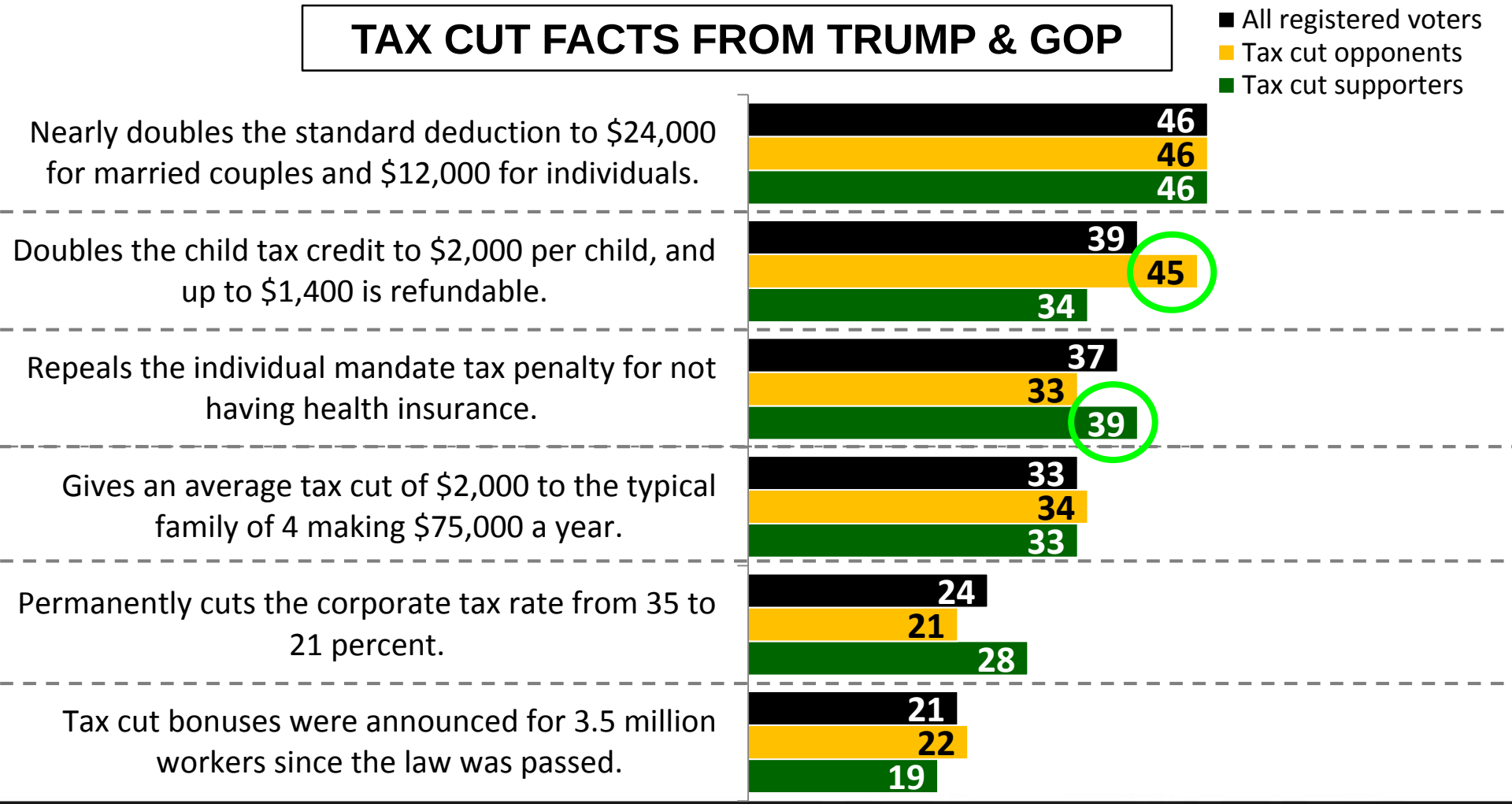
The new tax law is benefitting me personally



DEFINING THE TAX CUT

Facts in favor: doubling standard deduction & child tax credit most important

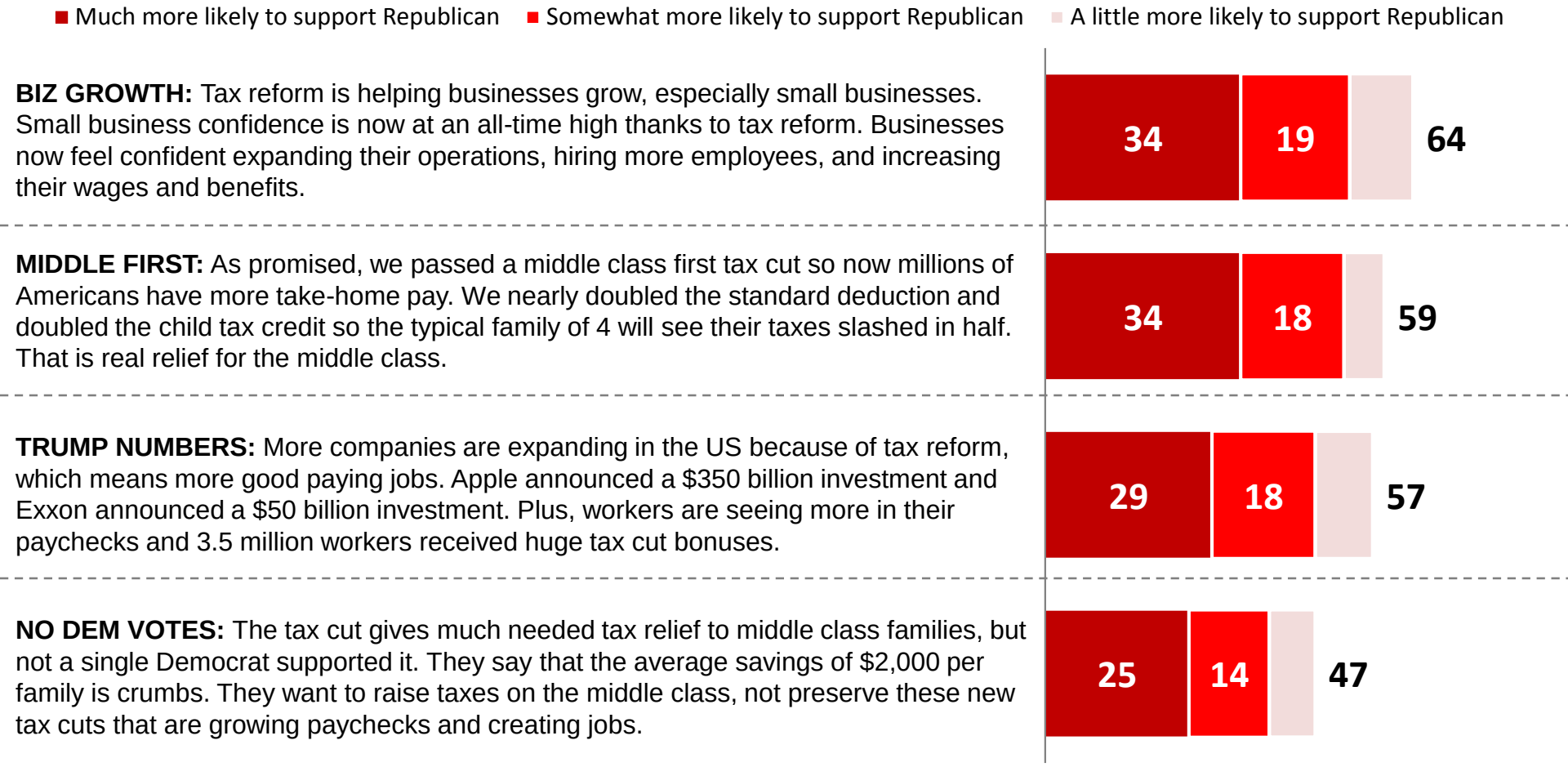
I am going to read you some facts about the new tax law. These are reasons why Donald Trump and Republicans say they support it. Please select the TWO facts that are the most important to you.



Tax cut proponents' strongest arguments

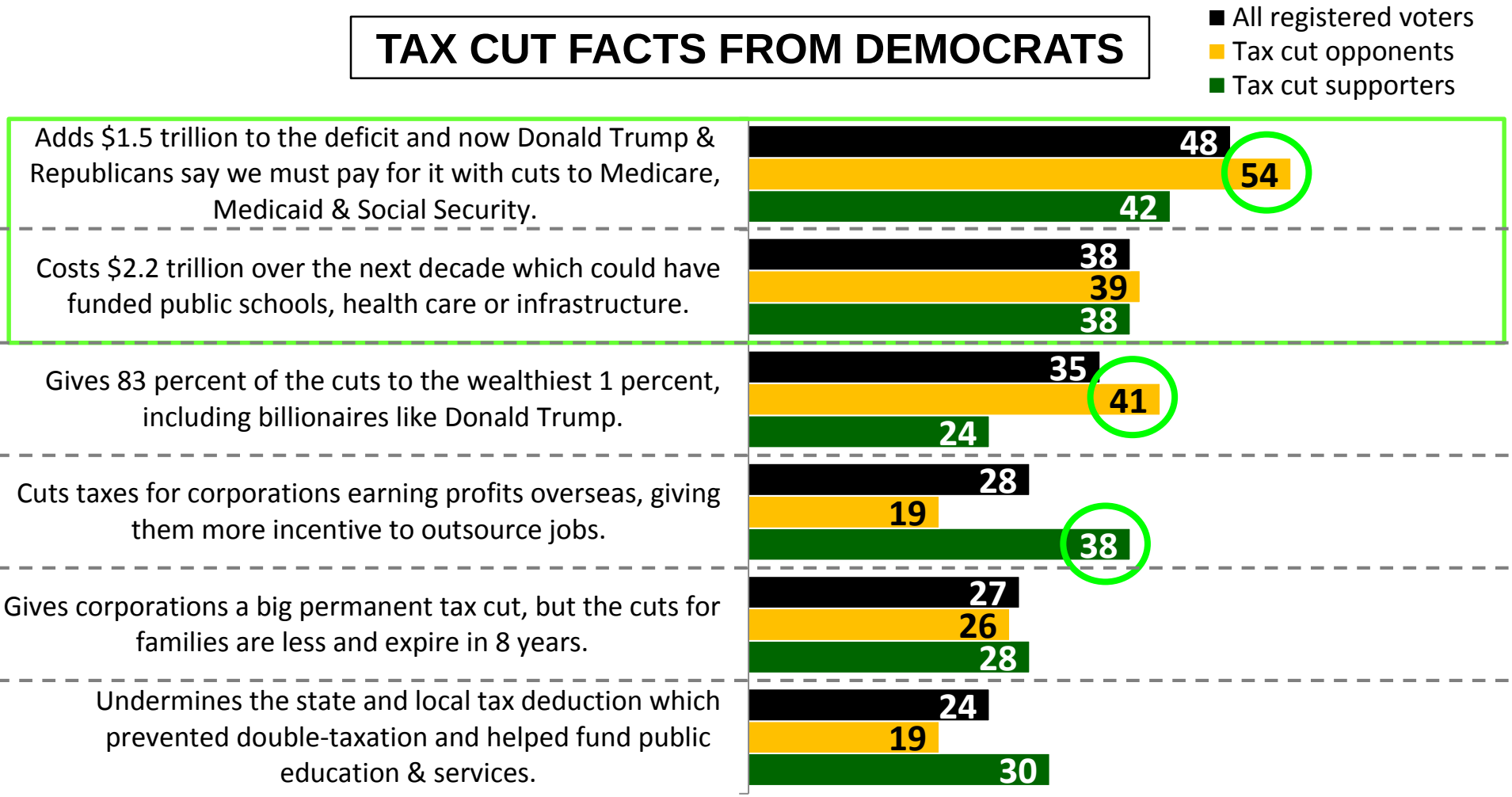
These are some things that Donald Trump and Republicans in Congress are saying about the new tax law. Please tell me whether that statement makes you much more likely, somewhat more likely, a little more likely, or no more likely to support a Republican for Congress.

TAX CUT MESSAGES FROM TRUMP & GOP



Facts against: deficits & cost hits entitlements & investments like education

I am going to read you some facts about the new tax law. These are reasons why Democrats say they oppose it. Please select the TWO facts that are the most concerning to you.

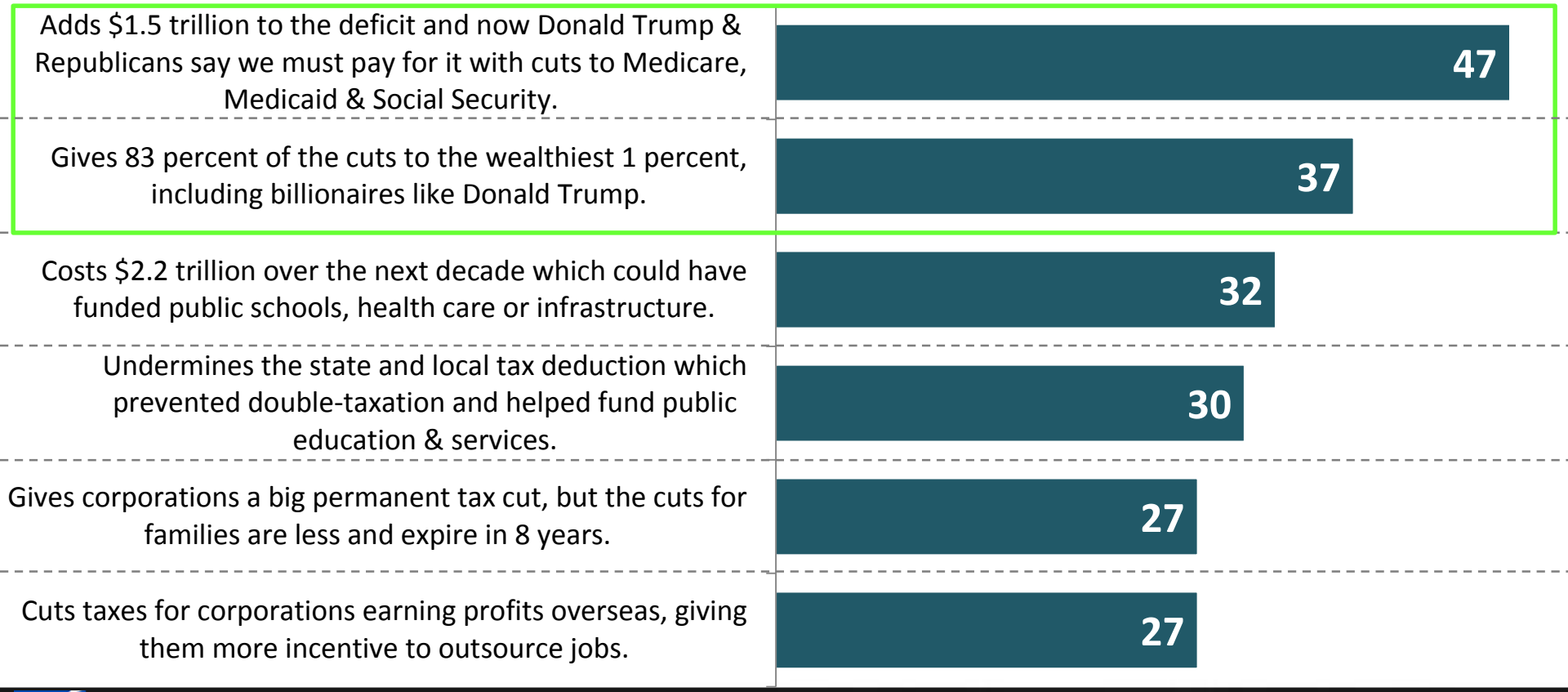


The shifters flagged impact on entitlements & big tax cut for Trump

I am going to read you some facts about the new tax law. These are reasons why Democrats say they oppose it. Please select the TWO facts that are the most concerning to you.

TAX CUT FACTS FROM DEMOCRATS

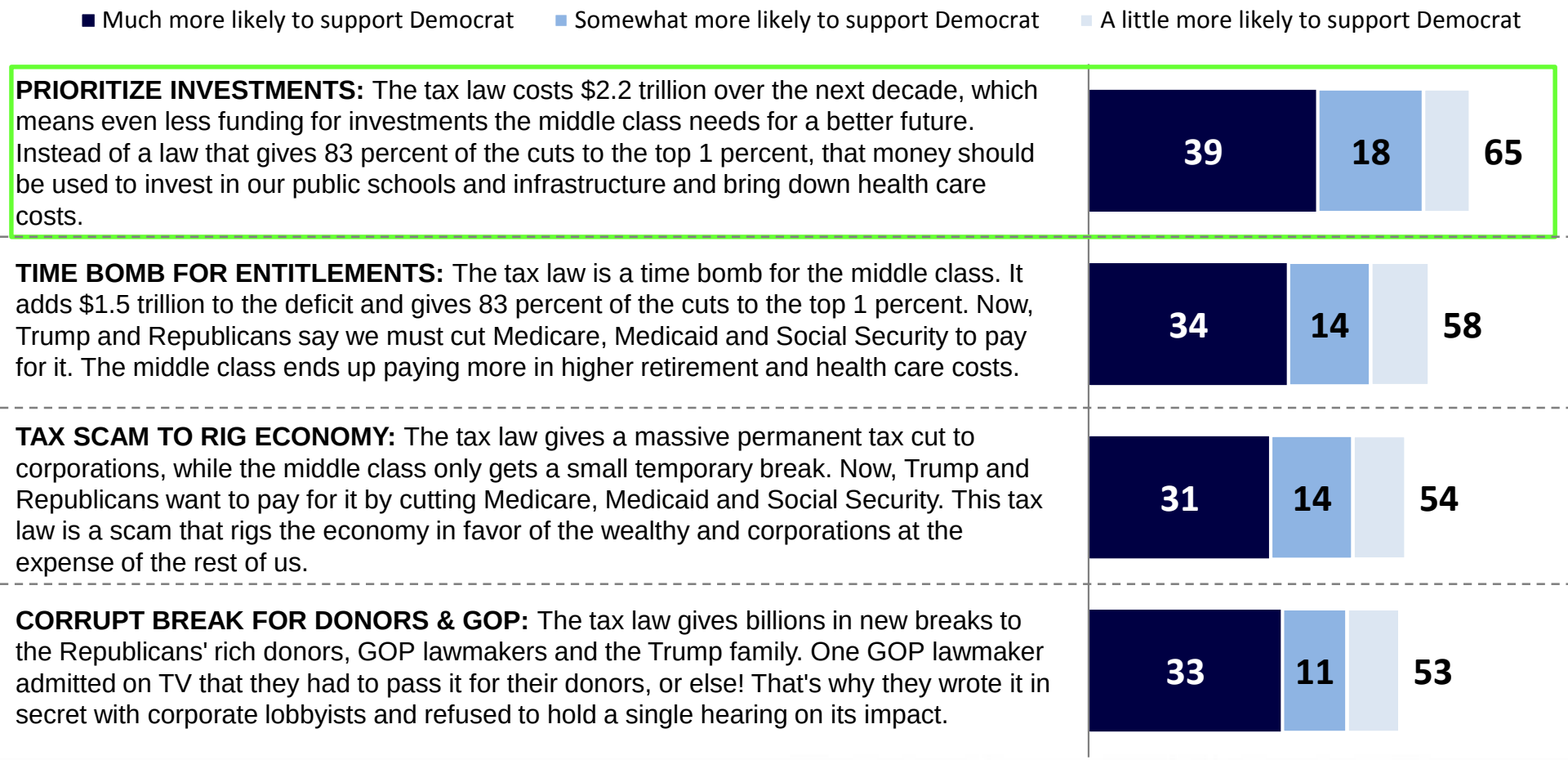
SHIFTERS TO OPPOSE CUT



Not trillions to top 1%; instead invest in education, health care, infrastructure

These are some things that Democrats are saying about the new tax law. Please tell me whether that statement makes you much more likely, somewhat more likely, a little more likely, or no more likely to support a Democrat for Congress.

TAX CUT ATTACKS FROM DEMOCRATS



Less $ for investment top attack for those shifting to oppose & high interest

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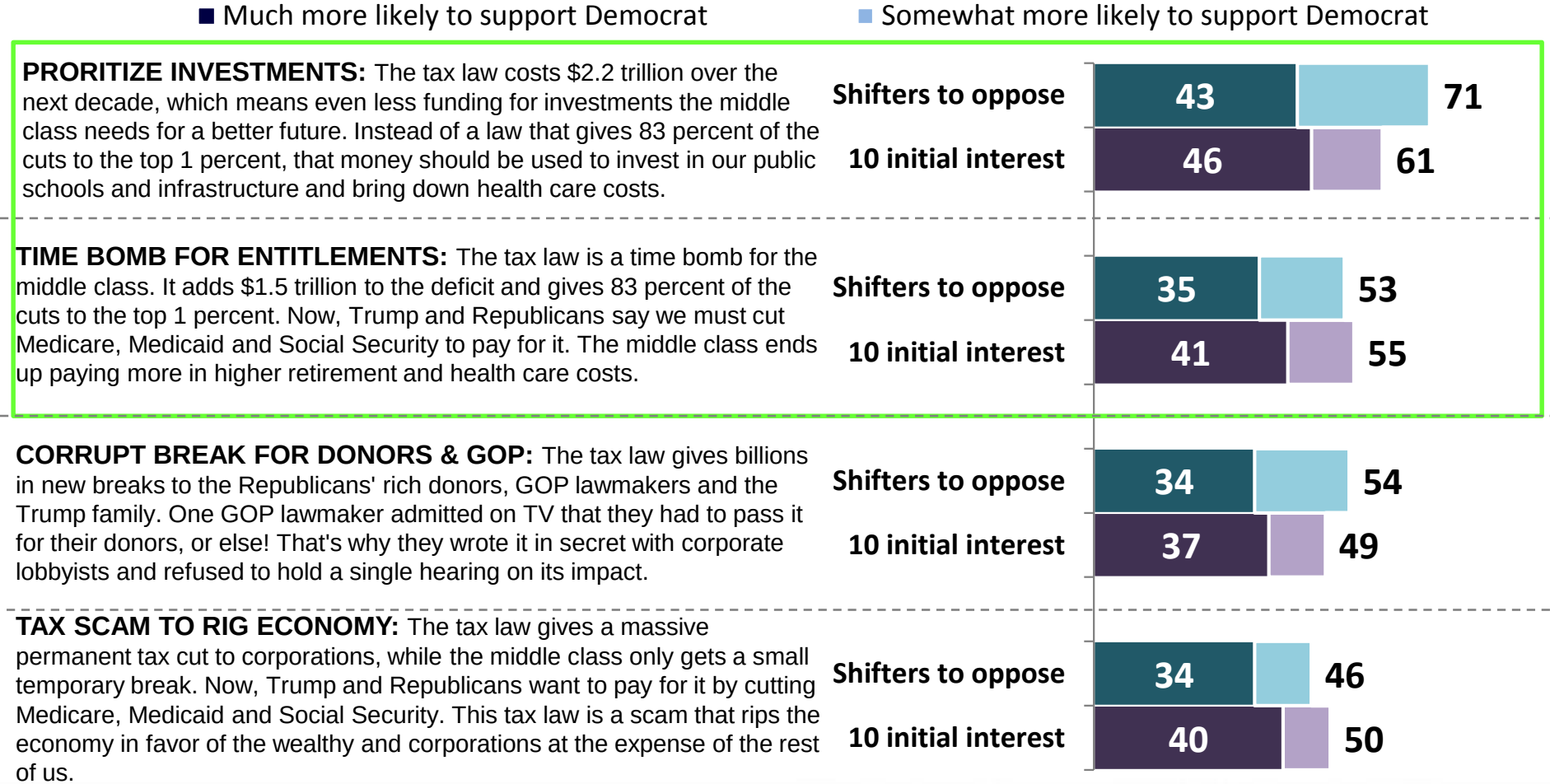
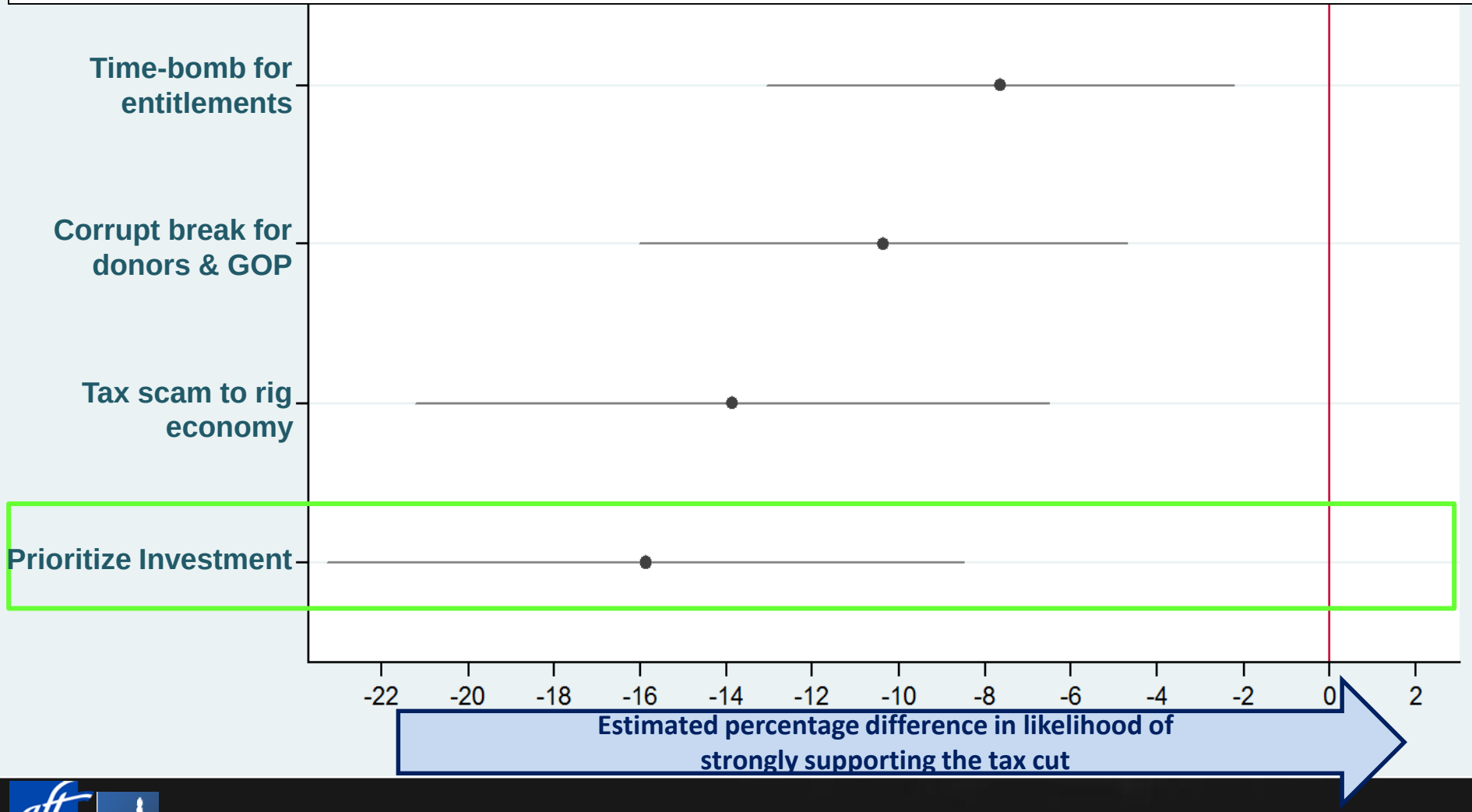
TAX CUT ATTACKS FROM DEMOCRATS



Confirmed by regressions showing receptivity to "Prioritize investment" attack leads to greater likelihood of producing shift away from support

REGRESSION: TAX CUT ATTACKS ON RE-ASK OF TAX CUT SUPPORT

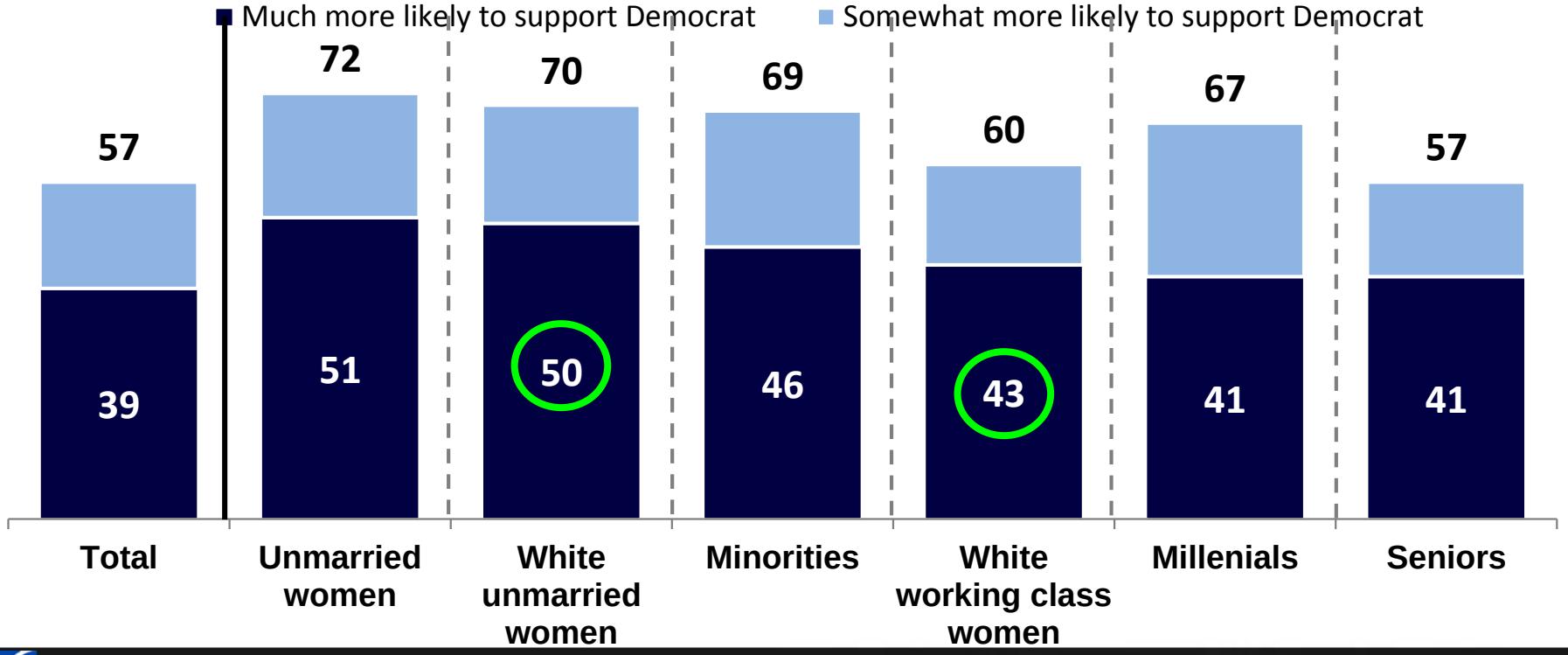


Investment attack strong reason to support Democrat with key targets

These are some things that Democrats are saying about the new tax law. Please tell me whether that statement makes you much more likely, somewhat more likely, a little more likely, or no more likely to support a Democrat for Congress.

LESS FOR INVESTMENTS

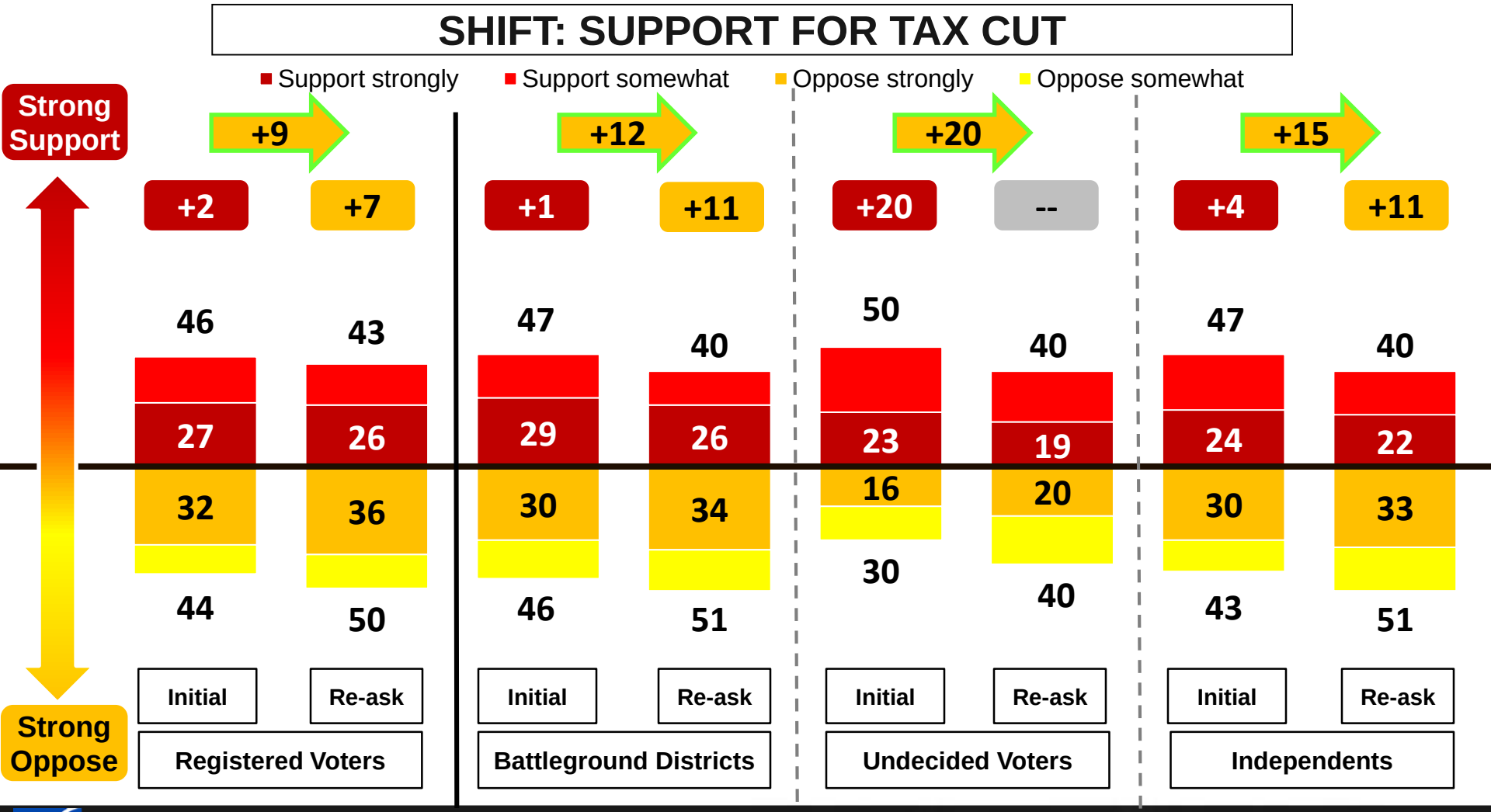
The tax law costs $2.2 trillion over the next decade, which means even less funding for investments the middle class needs for a better future. Instead of a law that gives 83 percent of the cuts to the top 1 percent, that money should be used to invest in our public schools and infrastructure and bring down health care costs.



POWERFUL IMPACT OF MESSAGING

Balanced tax debate yields more opposition to cut where matters

From what you know, do you support or oppose the tax cut for corporations and individuals passed by the Republicans in Congress and signed by the President at the end of last year?



Democrats become even more intensely opposed; no change for Republicans

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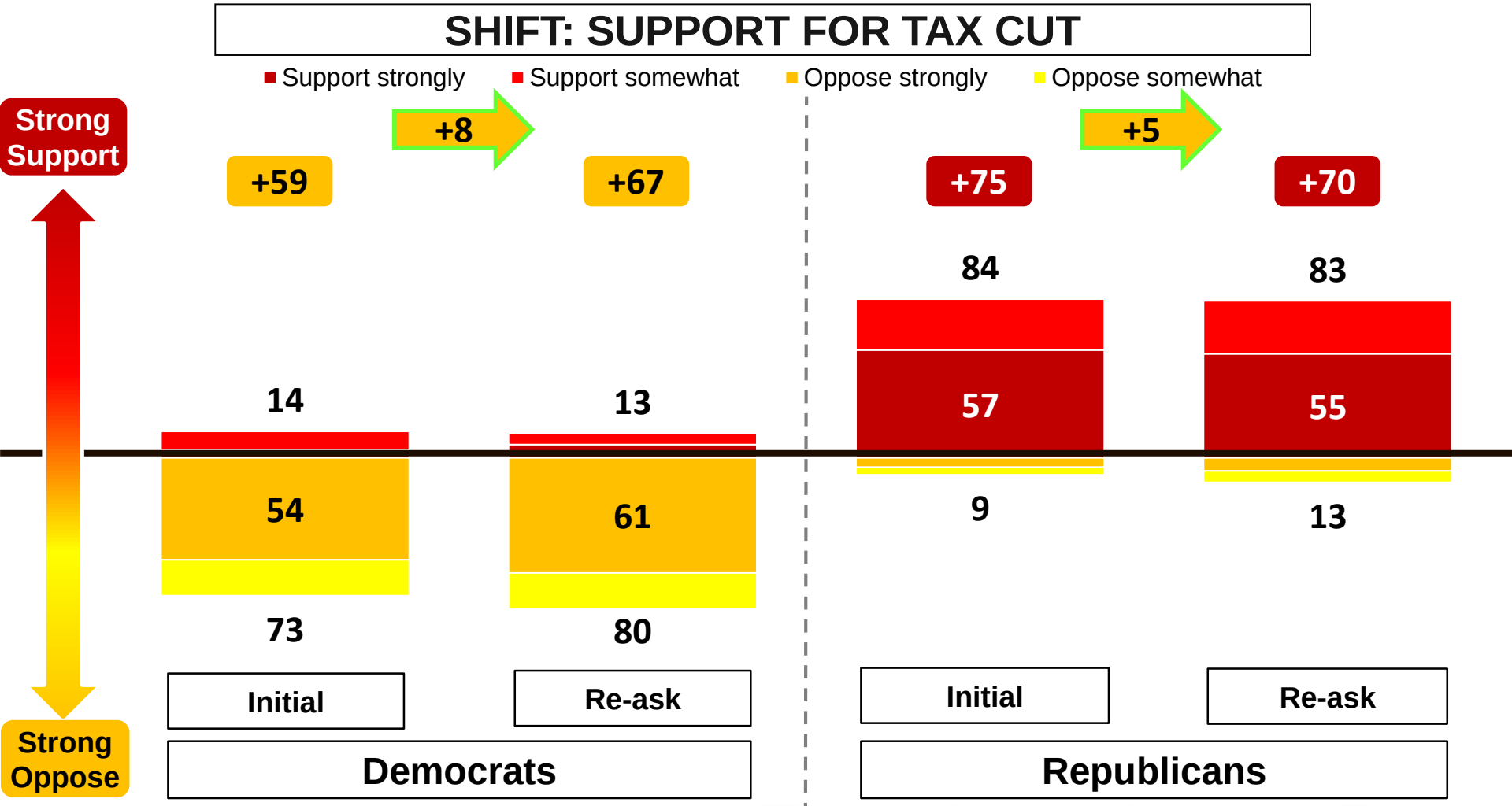
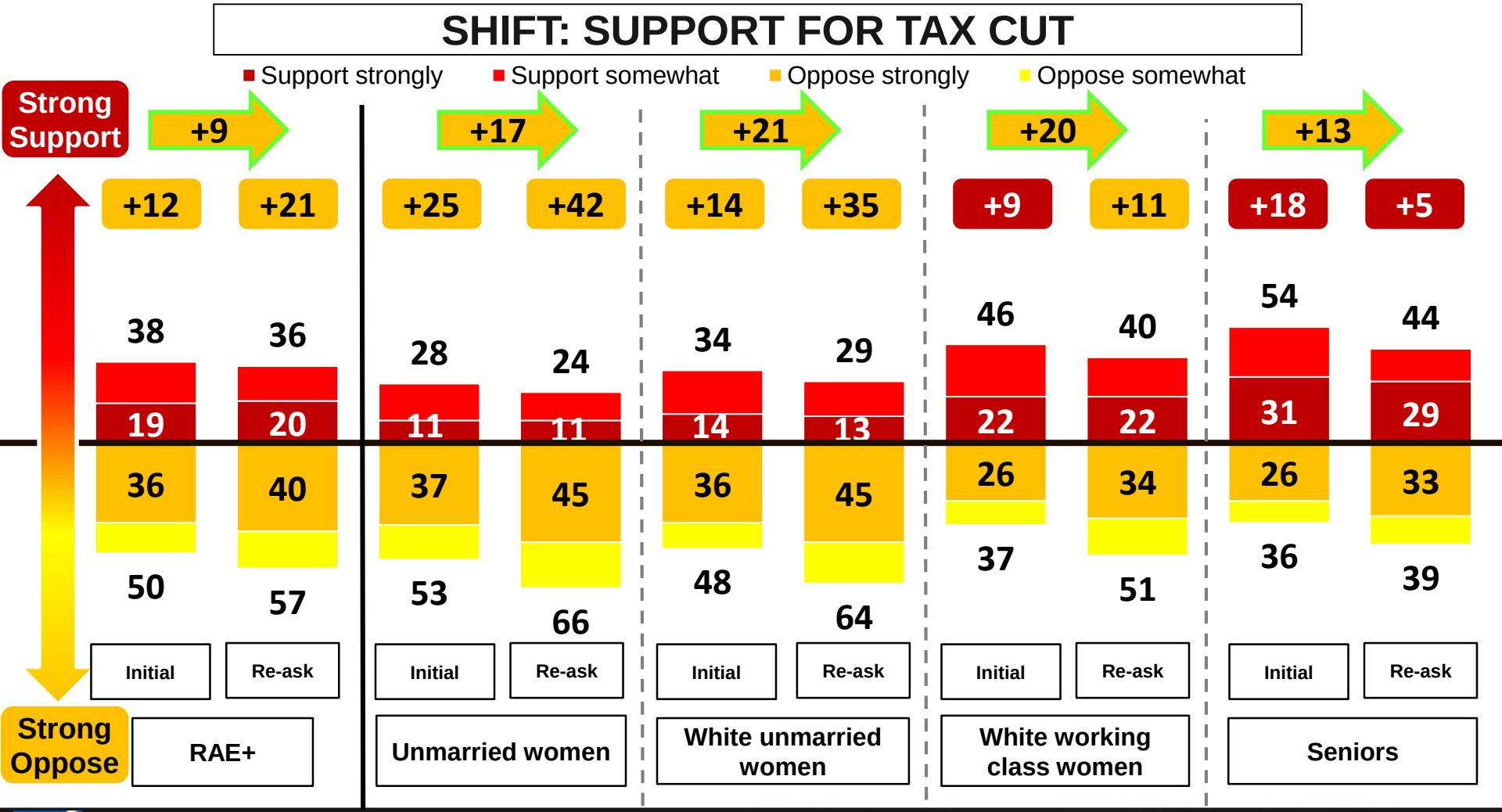


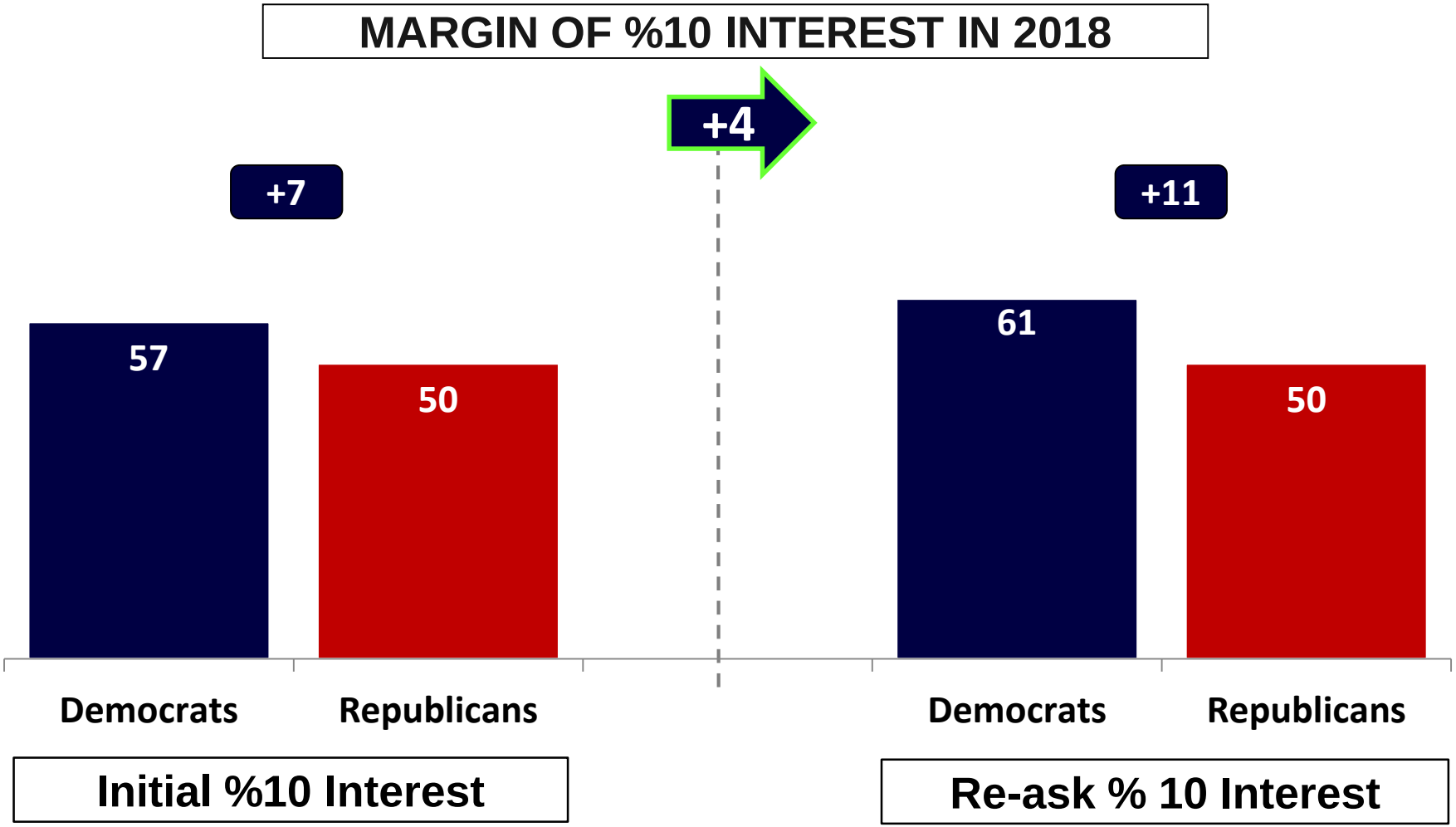
White working class women (driven by unmarried) & seniors oppose post-debate

From what you know, do you support or oppose the tax cut for corporations and individuals passed by the Republicans in Congress and signed by the President at the end of last year?



Democrats' higher interest new dynamic

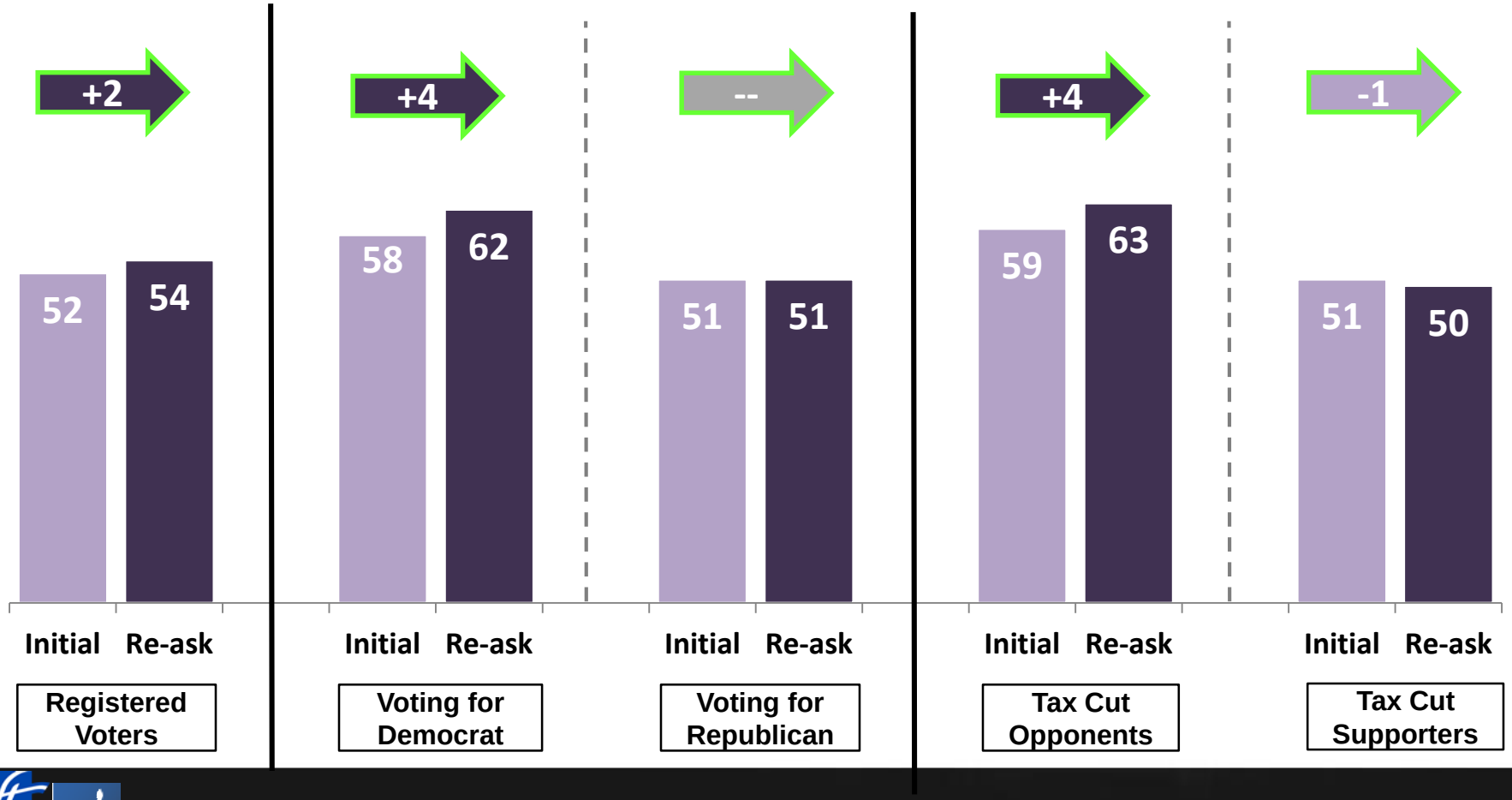
How interested are you in the elections in November for U.S. Congress and other state and local offices? Please rate your interest from 1 to 10, with 1 meaning that you have no interest in this election and 10 meaning that you are extremely interested.



Democratic voters & cut opponents more interested in '18 election

How interested are you in the elections in November for U.S. Congress and other state and local offices? Please rate your interest from 1 to 10, with 1 meaning that you have no interest in this election and 10 meaning that you are extremely interested.

SHIFT IN %10 INTEREST IN 2018

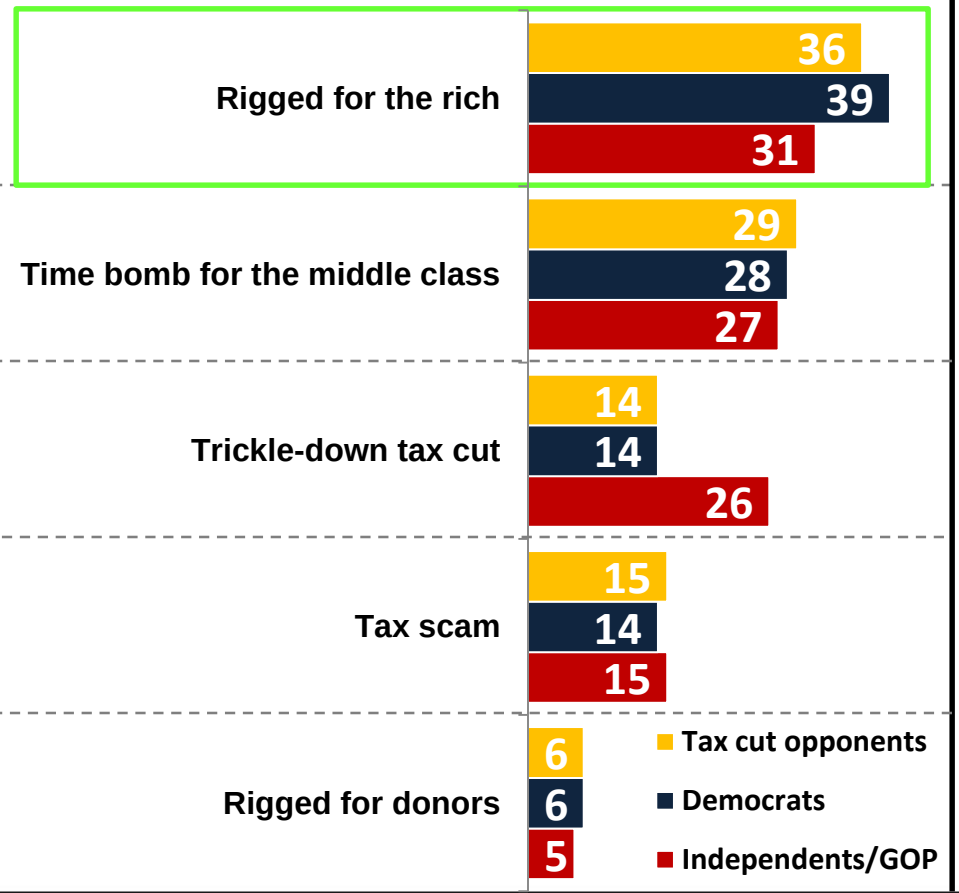


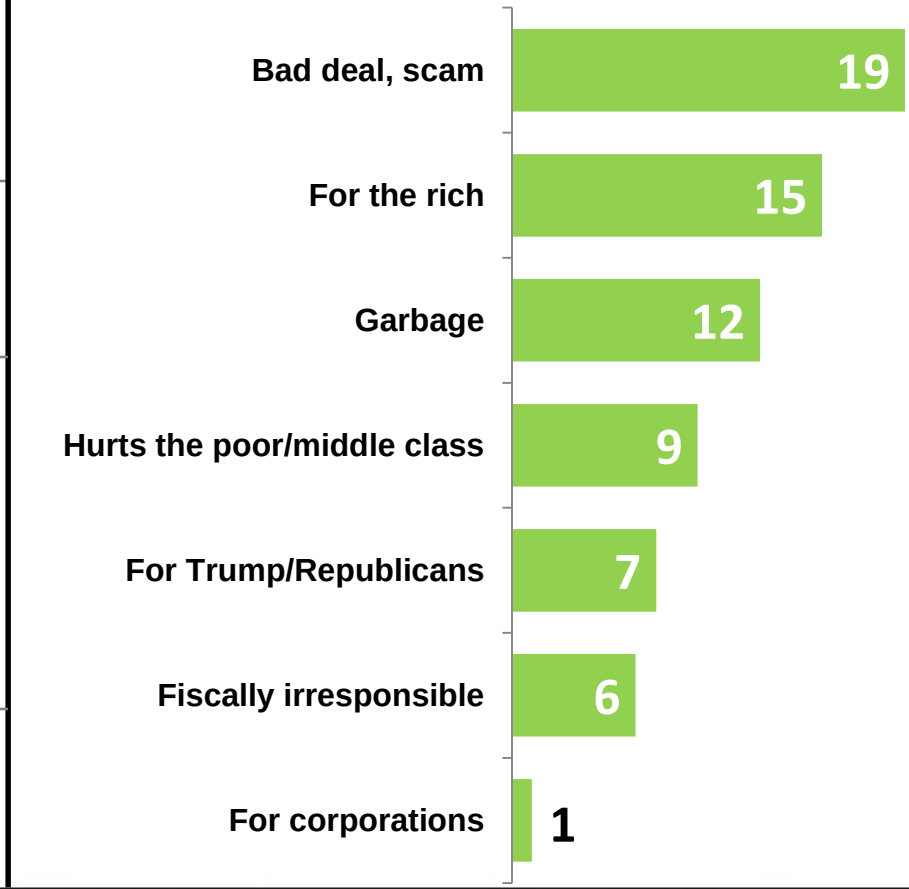
Opponents name it “rigged for the rich”

I am going to read you a list of nicknames for the new tax law. Please tell me which one resonates with you most.

If you had to give a nickname to the new tax law, what would you name it?

POST-DEBATE NICKNAME FROM OPPONENTS





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