



**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 7-9<sup>th</sup> 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 rising 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.

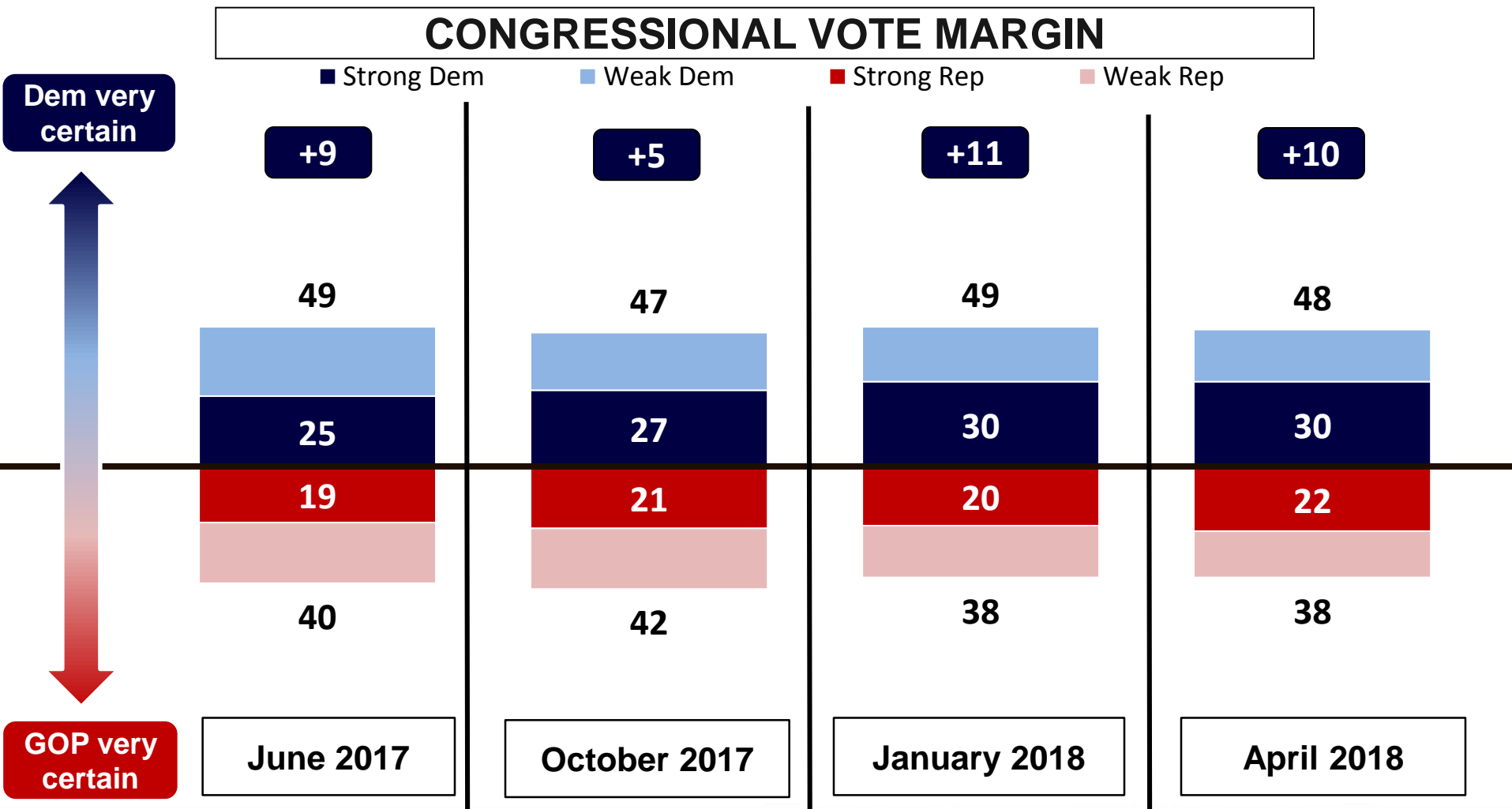
### MESSAGE: PRIORITIZE INVESTMENT

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

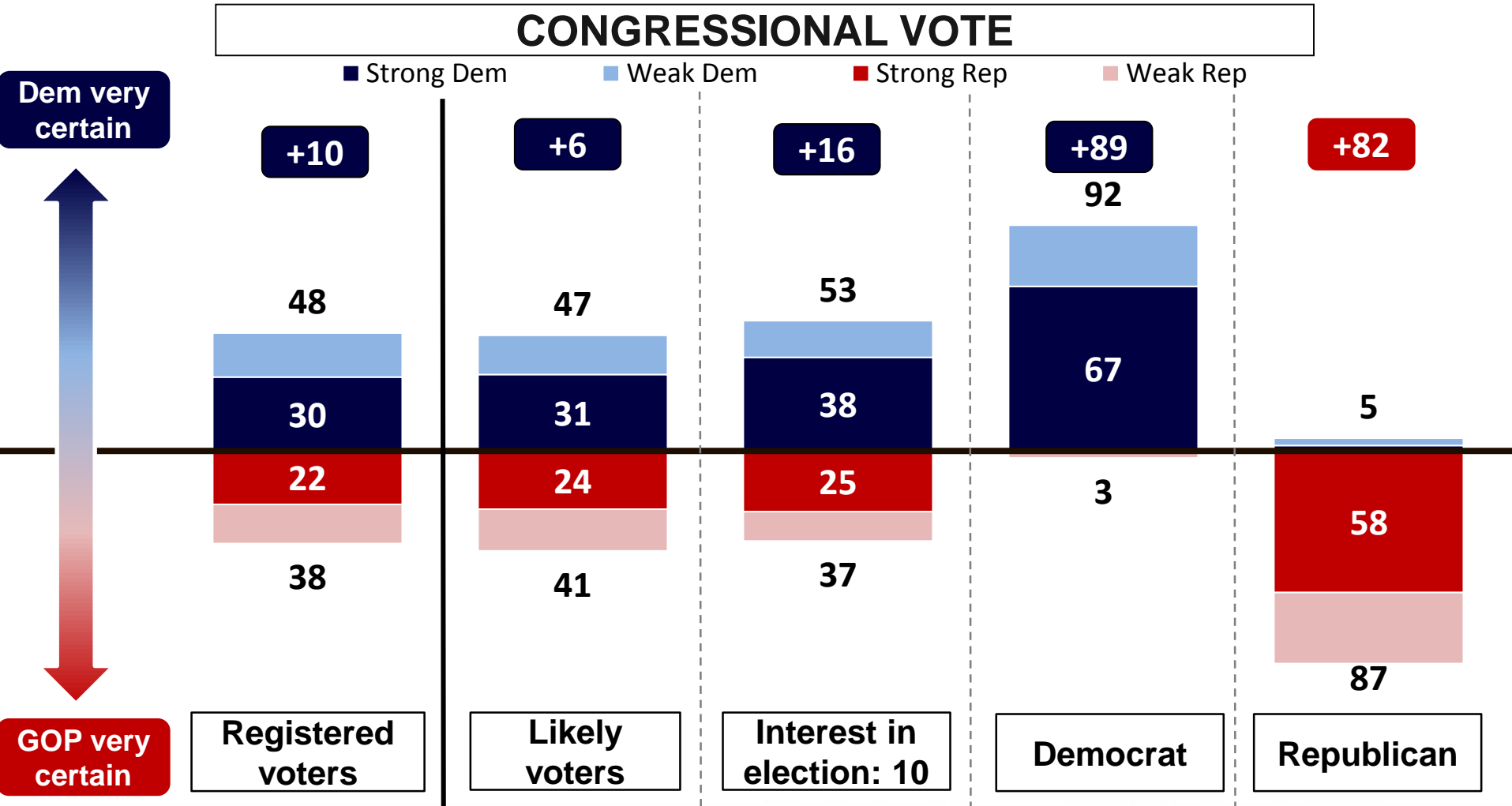
# Democratic congressional vote strong

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

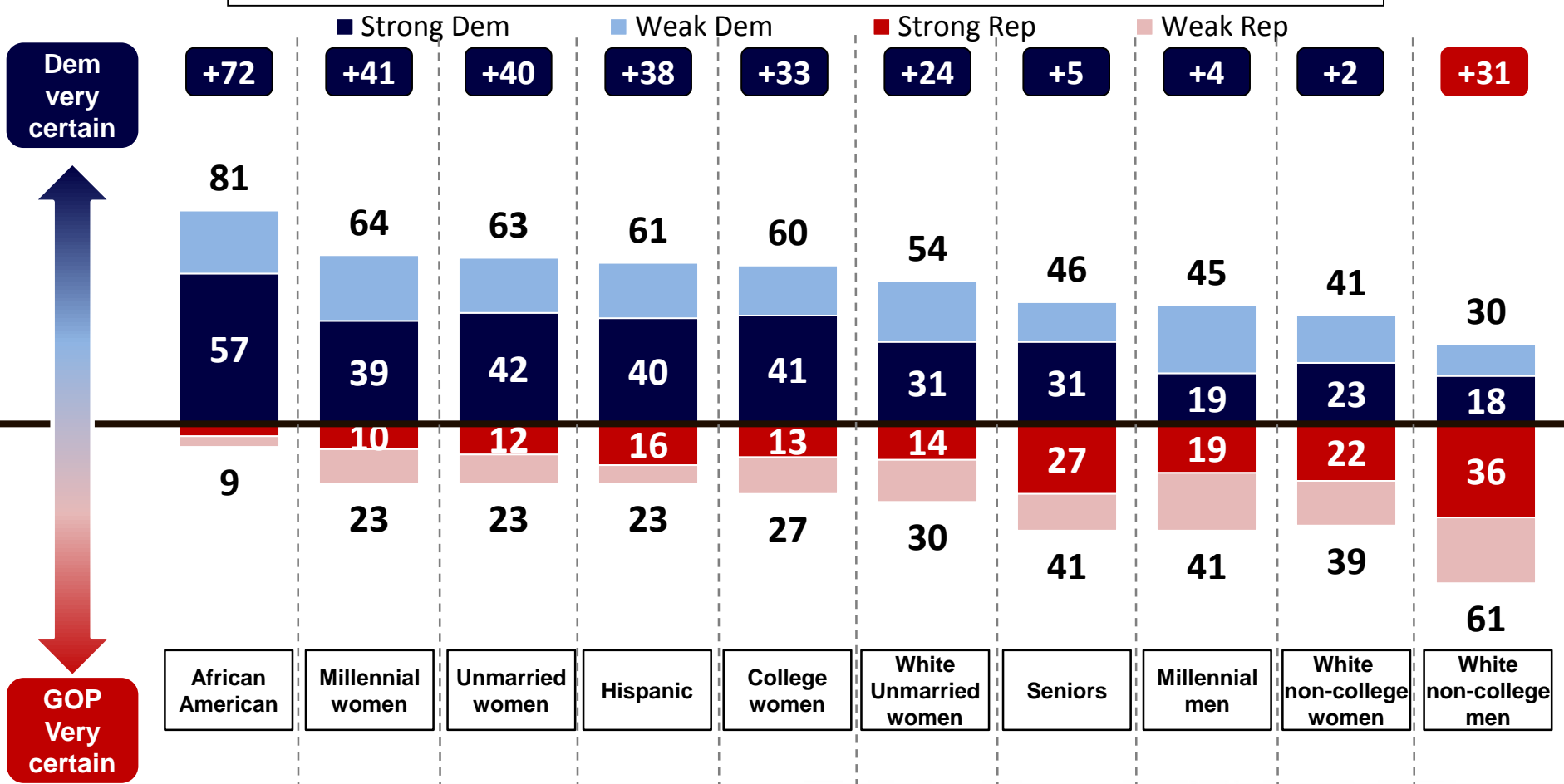
Thinking about the election for Congress in your district in November 2018, will you vote for -- the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate? How certain are you that you would vote for the (CANDIDATE) -- are you very certain, somewhat certain or not certain at all?



# 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?

## CONGRESSIONAL VOTE MARGIN





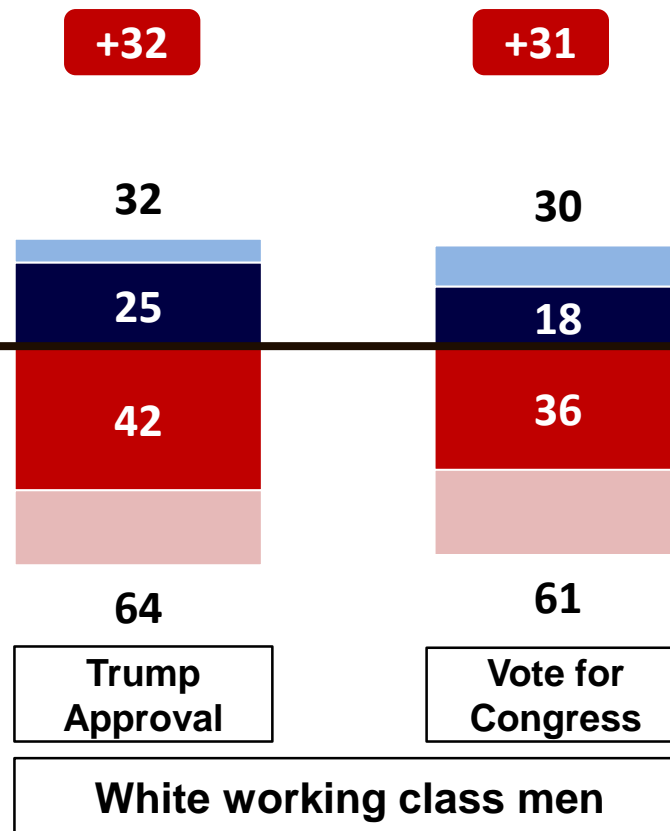
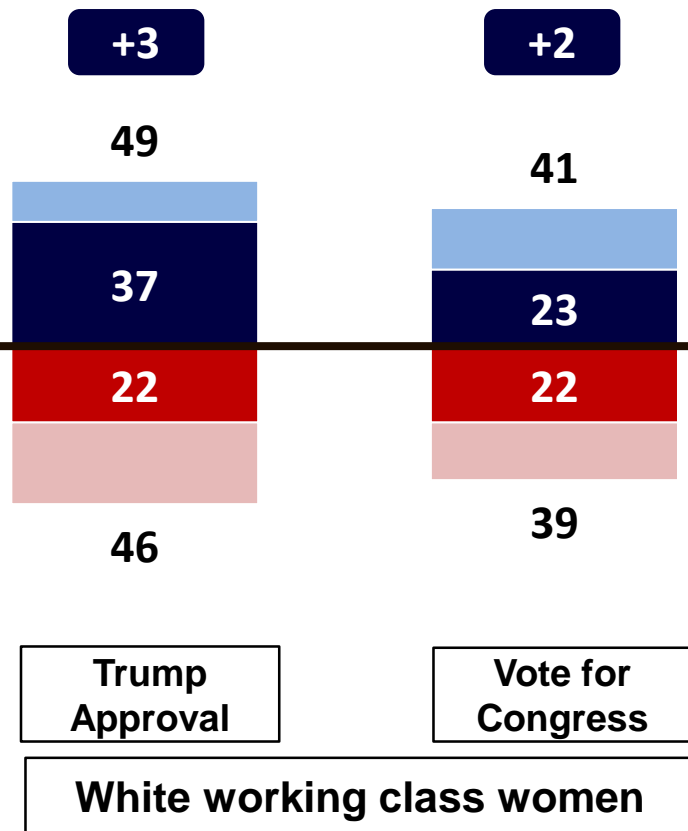
# The white working class has fractured on gender lines

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?

## TRUMP APPROVAL & CONGRESSIONAL VOTE

■ Somewhat approve/certain Republican  
■ Somewhat disapprove/certain Democrat

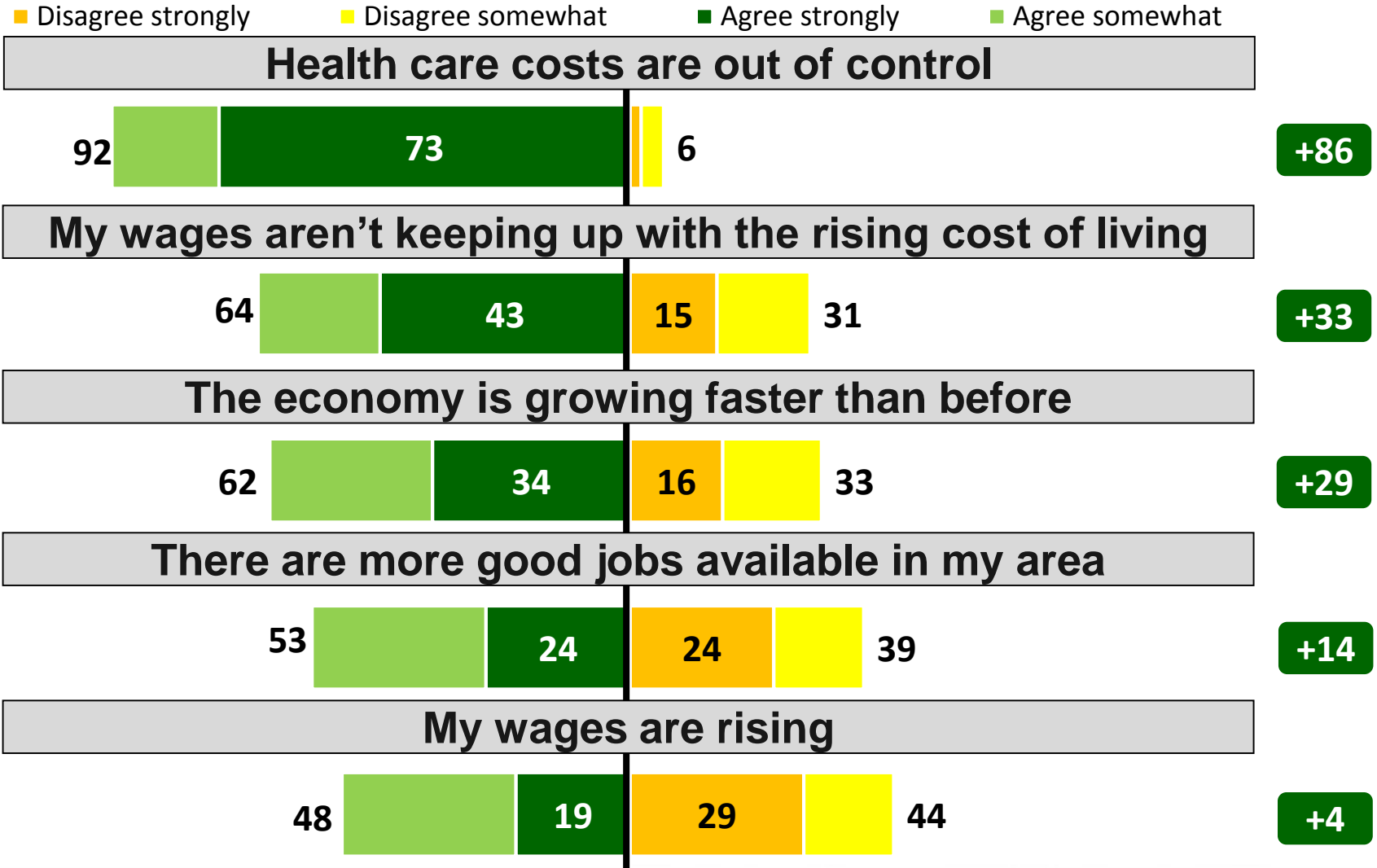
■ Strongly approve/very certain Republican  
■ Strong disapprove/very certain Democrat



# 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.

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

The economy is strong and families like mine are beginning to be more financially secure.

■ Much more

■ Somewhat more

■ Much more

■ Somewhat more

Total

53

29

17

40

+13

Unmarried Women

70

41

9

26

+44

Minorities

62

36

15

32

+30

Millennials

55

26

15

42

+13

# **WELCOMING THE TAX BATTLE**

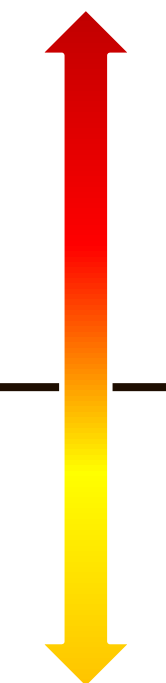
# Welcoming the tax cut battle

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?

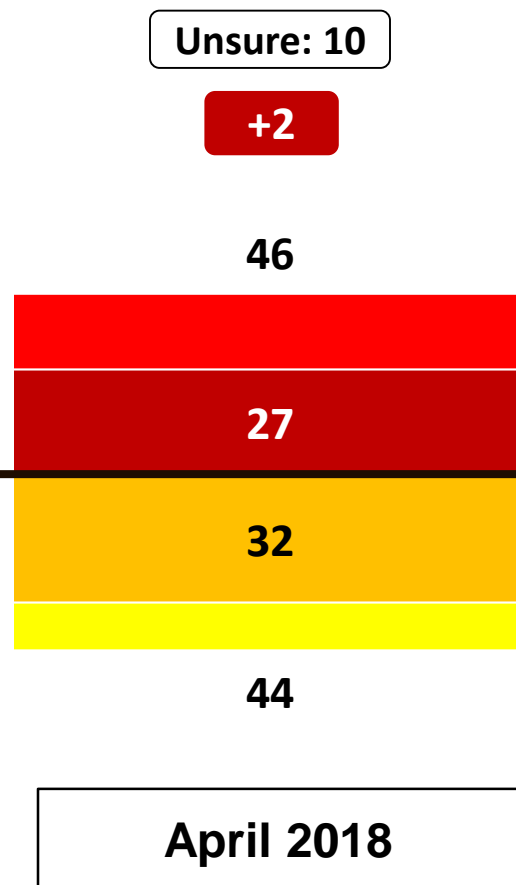
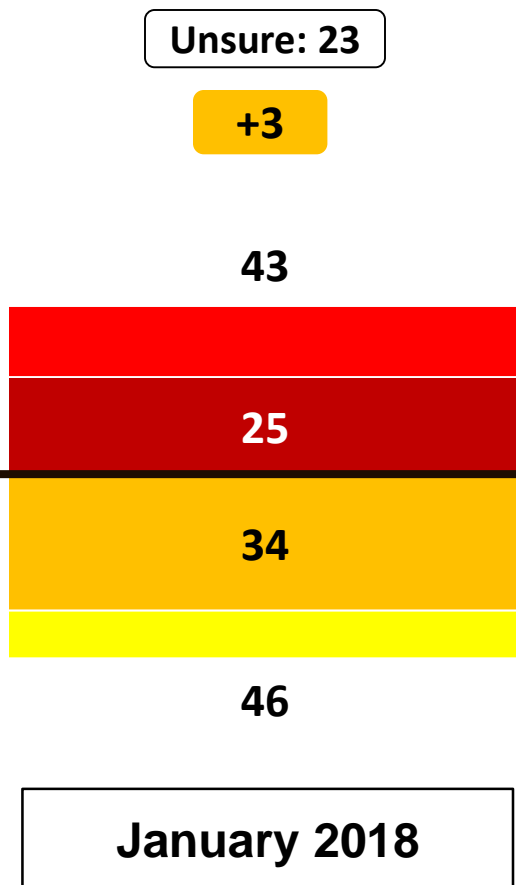
## CHANGE IN SUPPORT FOR TAX CUT

■ Support strongly ■ Support somewhat ■ Oppose strongly ■ Oppose somewhat

Strong Support



Strong Oppose

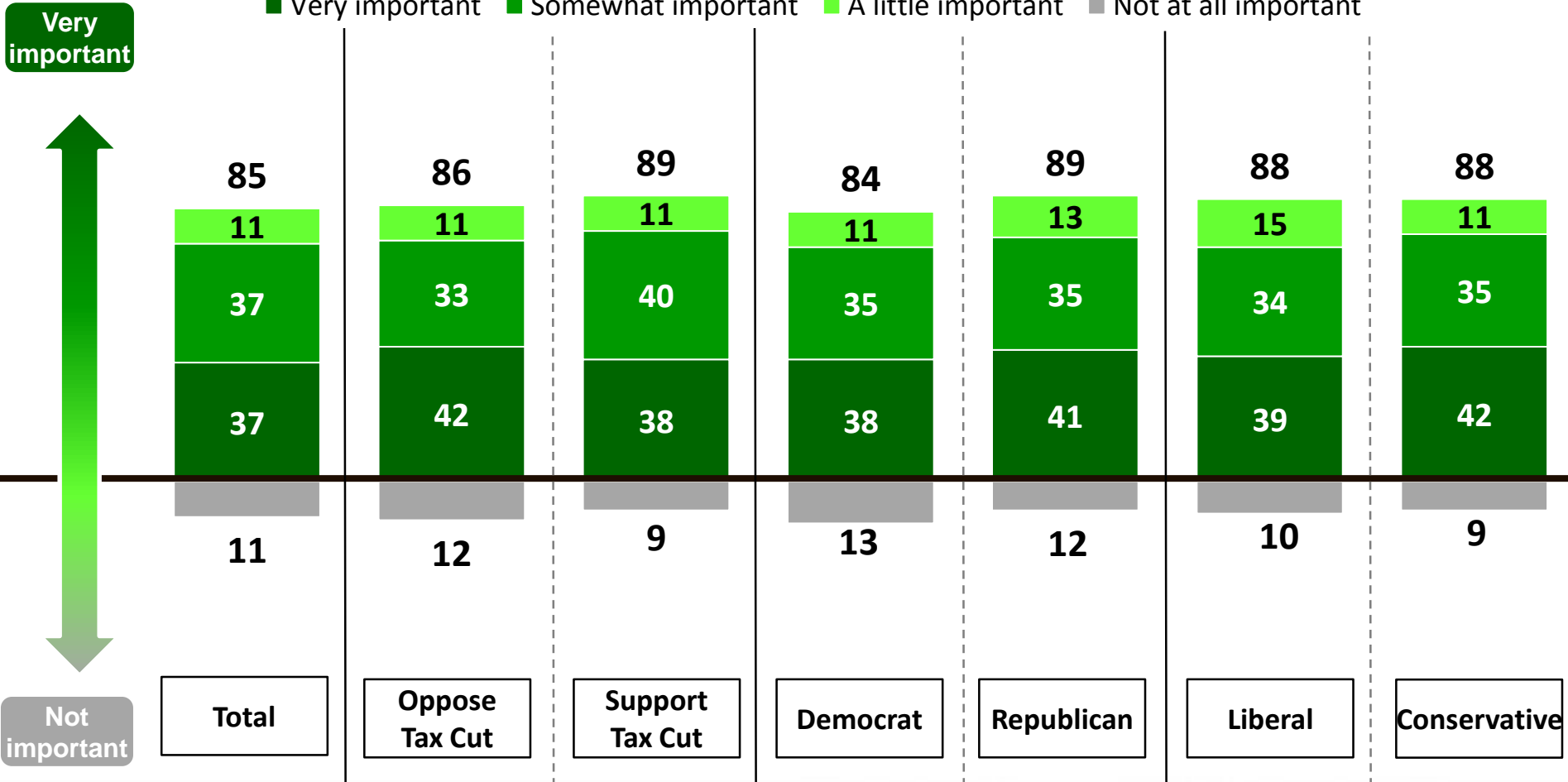


# Supporters and opponents both say tax cut key to vote

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

## IMPORTANCE OF TAX LAW TO VOTE

Very important Somewhat important A little important Not at all important

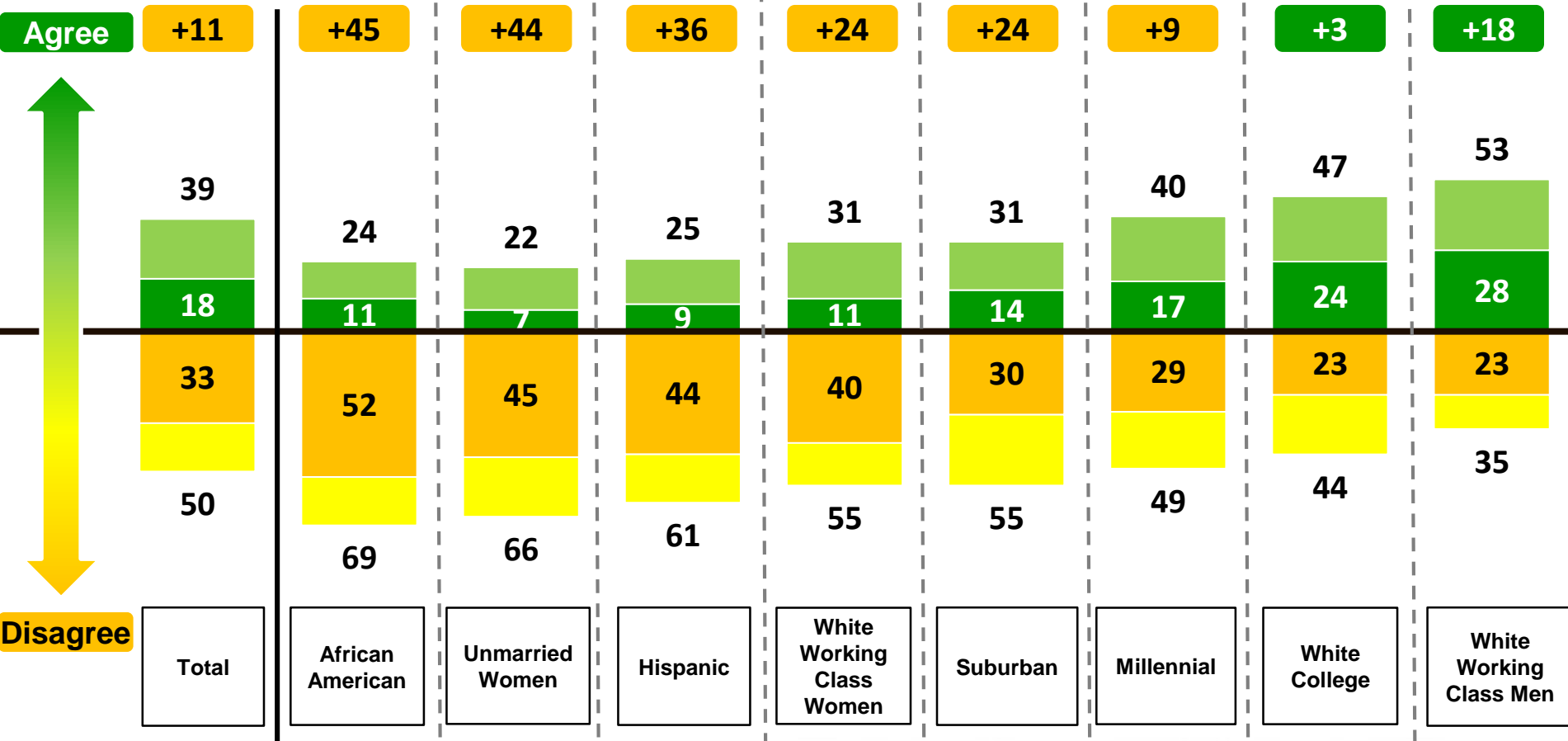


# Majority doesn't believe the tax law benefitting them personally

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

■ Agree strongly   
 ■ Agree somewhat   
 ■ Disagree strongly   
 ■ Disagree somewhat





# 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 FACTS FROM TRUMP & GOP

- All registered voters
- Tax cut opponents
- Tax cut supporters

Nearly doubles the standard deduction to \$24,000 for married couples and \$12,000 for individuals.



Doubles the child tax credit to \$2,000 per child, and up to \$1,400 is refundable.



Repeals the individual mandate tax penalty for not having health insurance.



Gives an average tax cut of \$2,000 to the typical family of 4 making \$75,000 a year.



Permanently cuts the corporate tax rate from 35 to 21 percent.



Tax cut bonuses were announced for 3.5 million workers since the law was passed.



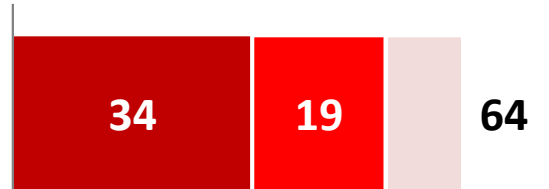
# Tax cut proponents' strongest arguments

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.

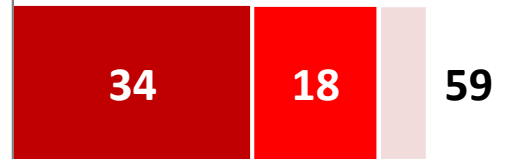
## TAX CUT MESSAGES FROM TRUMP & GOP

■ Much more likely to support Republican ■ Somewhat more likely to support Republican ■ A little more likely to support Republican

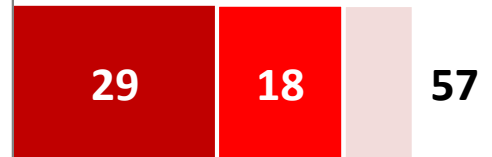
**BIZ GROWTH:** Tax reform is helping businesses grow, especially small businesses. Small business confidence is now at an all-time high thanks to tax reform. Businesses now feel confident expanding their operations, hiring more employees, and increasing their wages and benefits.



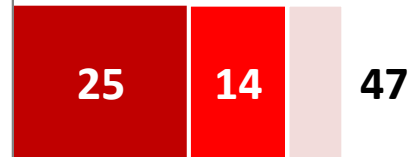
**MIDDLE FIRST:** As promised, we passed a middle class first tax cut so now millions of Americans have more take-home pay. We nearly doubled the standard deduction and doubled the child tax credit so the typical family of 4 will see their taxes slashed in half. That is real relief for the middle class.



**TRUMP NUMBERS:** More companies are expanding in the US because of tax reform, which means more good paying jobs. Apple announced a \$350 billion investment and Exxon announced a \$50 billion investment. Plus, workers are seeing more in their paychecks and 3.5 million workers received huge tax cut bonuses.



**NO DEM VOTES:** The tax cut gives much needed tax relief to middle class families, but not a single Democrat supported it. They say that the average savings of \$2,000 per family is crumbs. They want to raise taxes on the middle class, not preserve these new tax cuts that are growing paychecks and creating jobs.

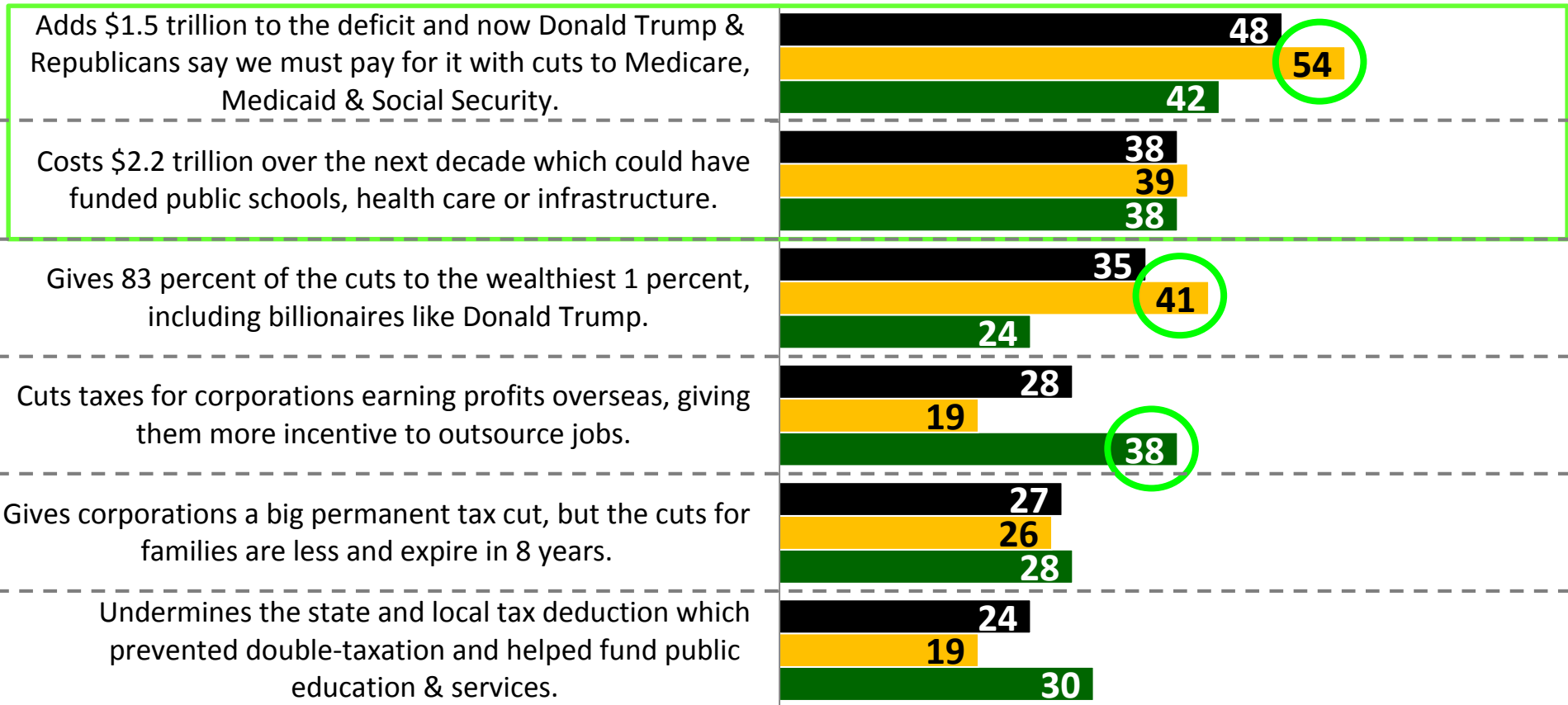


# Facts against: deficits & cost hits entitlements & investments like education

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.

## TAX CUT FACTS FROM DEMOCRATS

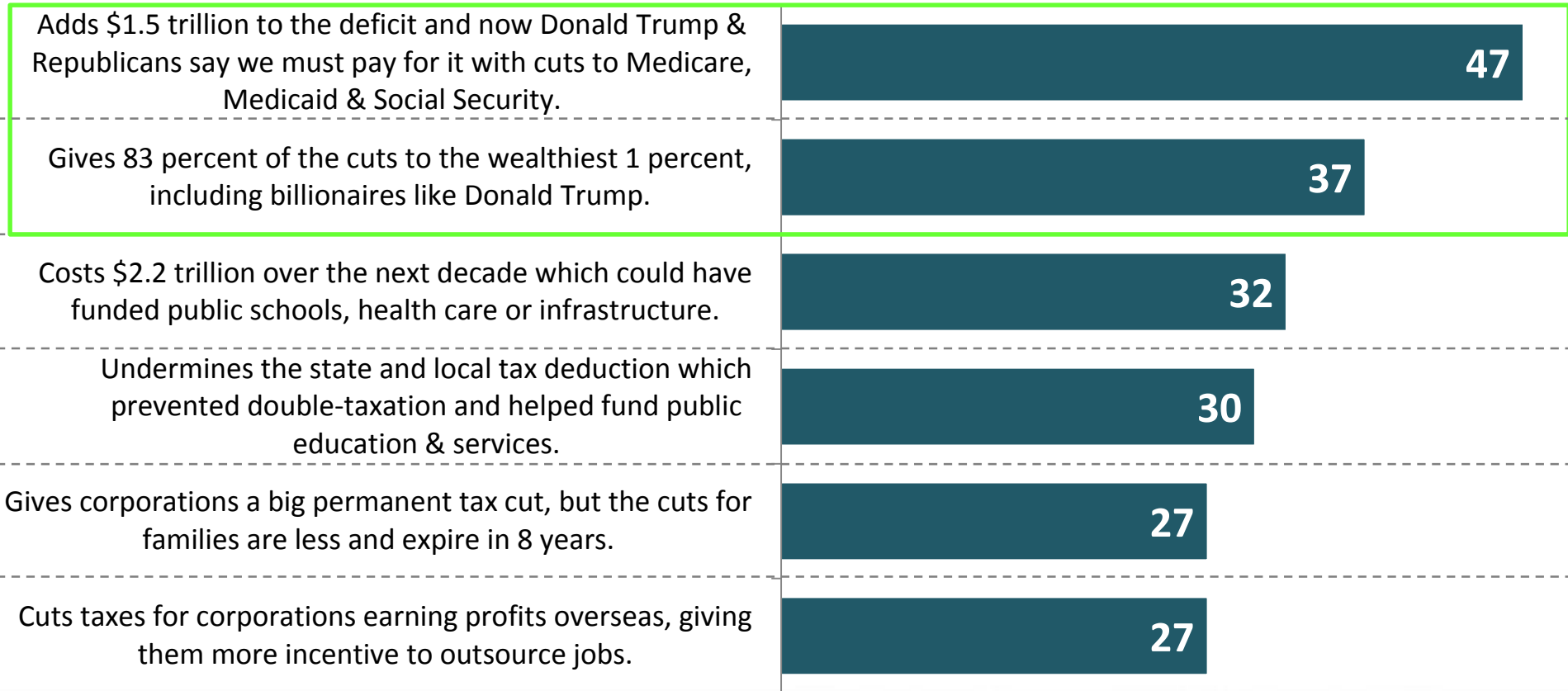
■ All registered voters  
■ Tax cut opponents  
■ Tax cut supporters



# 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



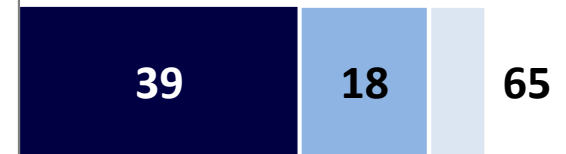
# Not trillions to top 1%; instead invest in education, health care, infrastructure

*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.*

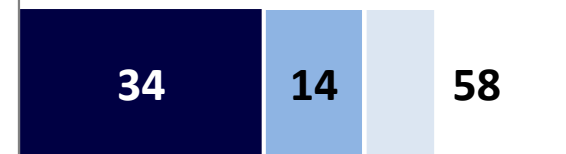
## TAX CUT ATTACKS FROM DEMOCRATS

■ Much more likely to support Democrat   ■ Somewhat more likely to support Democrat   ■ A little more likely to support Democrat

**PRIORITIZE 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.



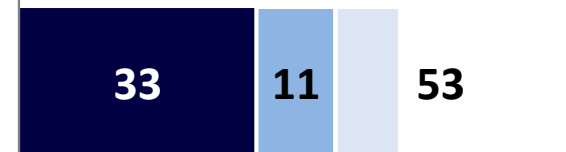
**TIME BOMB FOR ENTITLEMENTS:** The tax law is a time bomb for the middle class. It adds \$1.5 trillion to the deficit and gives 83 percent of the cuts to the top 1 percent. Now, Trump and Republicans say we must cut Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security to pay for it. The middle class ends up paying more in higher retirement and health care costs.



**TAX SCAM TO RIG ECONOMY:** The tax law gives a massive permanent tax cut to corporations, while the middle class only gets a small temporary break. Now, Trump and Republicans want to pay for it by cutting Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security. This tax law is a scam that rigs the economy in favor of the wealthy and corporations at the expense of the rest of us.



**CORRUPT BREAK FOR DONORS & GOP:** The tax law gives billions in new breaks to the Republicans' rich donors, GOP lawmakers and the Trump family. One GOP lawmaker admitted on TV that they had to pass it for their donors, or else! That's why they wrote it in secret with corporate lobbyists and refused to hold a single hearing on its impact.



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

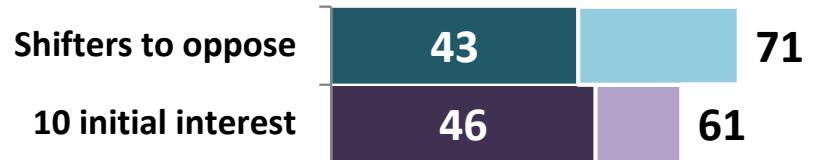
*These are some things that Democrats are saying about the new tax law. Please tell me whether that statement makes you much more likely, somewhat more likely, a little more likely, or no more likely to support a Democrat for Congress.*

## TAX CUT ATTACKS FROM DEMOCRATS

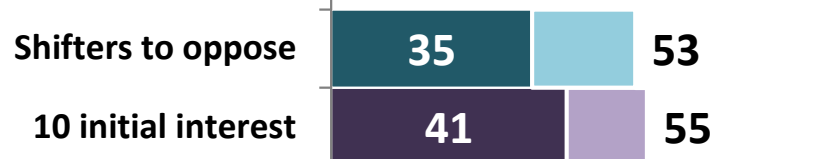
■ Much more likely to support Democrat

■ Somewhat more likely to support Democrat

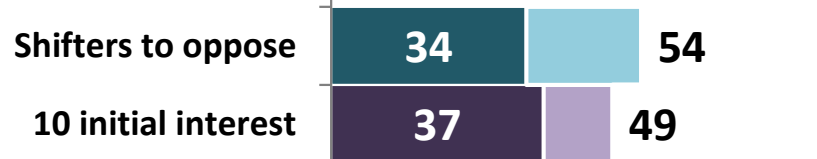
**PRORITIZE INVESTMENTS:** The tax law costs \$2.2 trillion over the next decade, which means even less funding for investments the middle class needs for a better future. Instead of a law that gives 83 percent of the cuts to the top 1 percent, that money should be used to invest in our public schools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



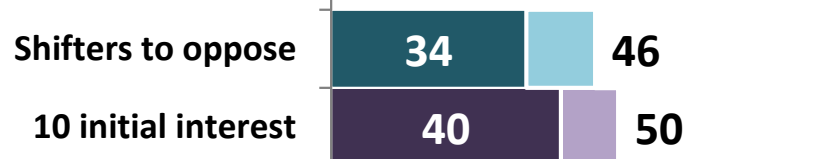
**TIME BOMB FOR ENTITLEMENTS:** The tax law is a time bomb for the middle class. It adds \$1.5 trillion to the deficit and gives 83 percent of the cuts to the top 1 percent. Now, Trump and Republicans say we must cut Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security to pay for it. The middle class ends up paying more in higher retirement and health care costs.



**CORRUPT BREAK FOR DONORS & GOP:** The tax law gives billions in new breaks to the Republicans' rich donors, GOP lawmakers and the Trump family. One GOP lawmaker admitted on TV that they had to pass it for their donors, or else! That's why they wrote it in secret with corporate lobbyists and refused to hold a single hearing on its impact.

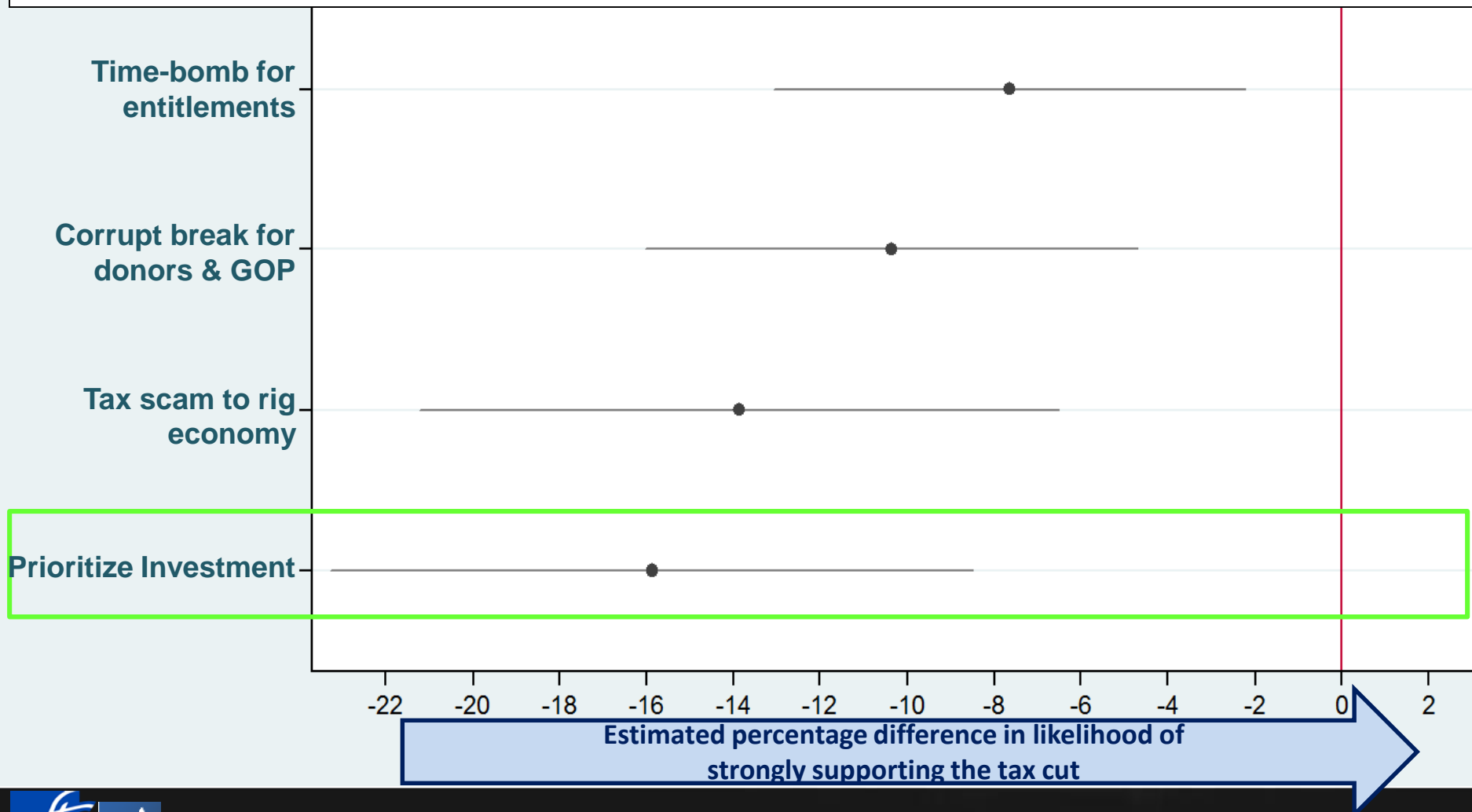


**TAX SCAM TO RIG ECONOMY:** The tax law gives a massive permanent tax cut to corporations, while the middle class only gets a small temporary break. Now, Trump and Republicans want to pay for it by cutting Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security. This tax law is a scam that rips the economy in favor of the wealthy and corporations at the expense of the rest of us.



**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**



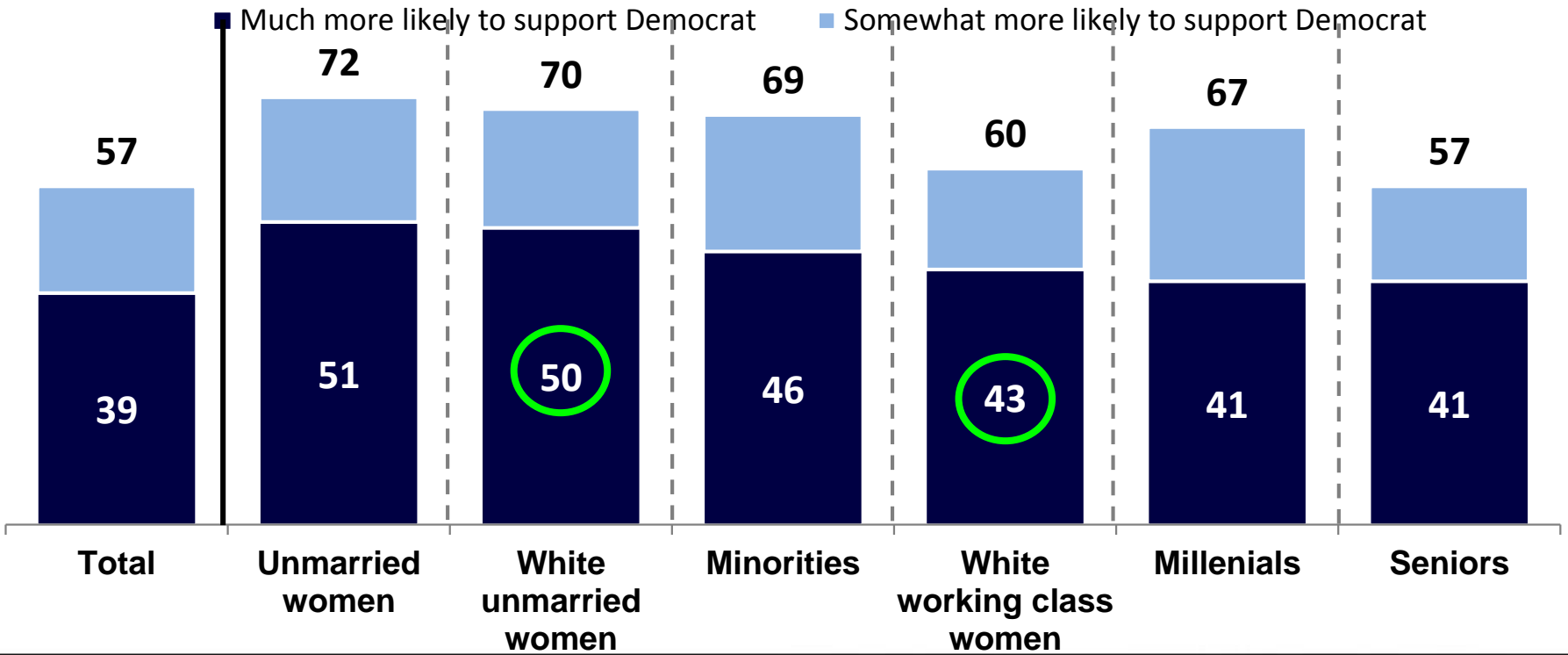


# Investment attack strong reason to support Democrat with key targets

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.

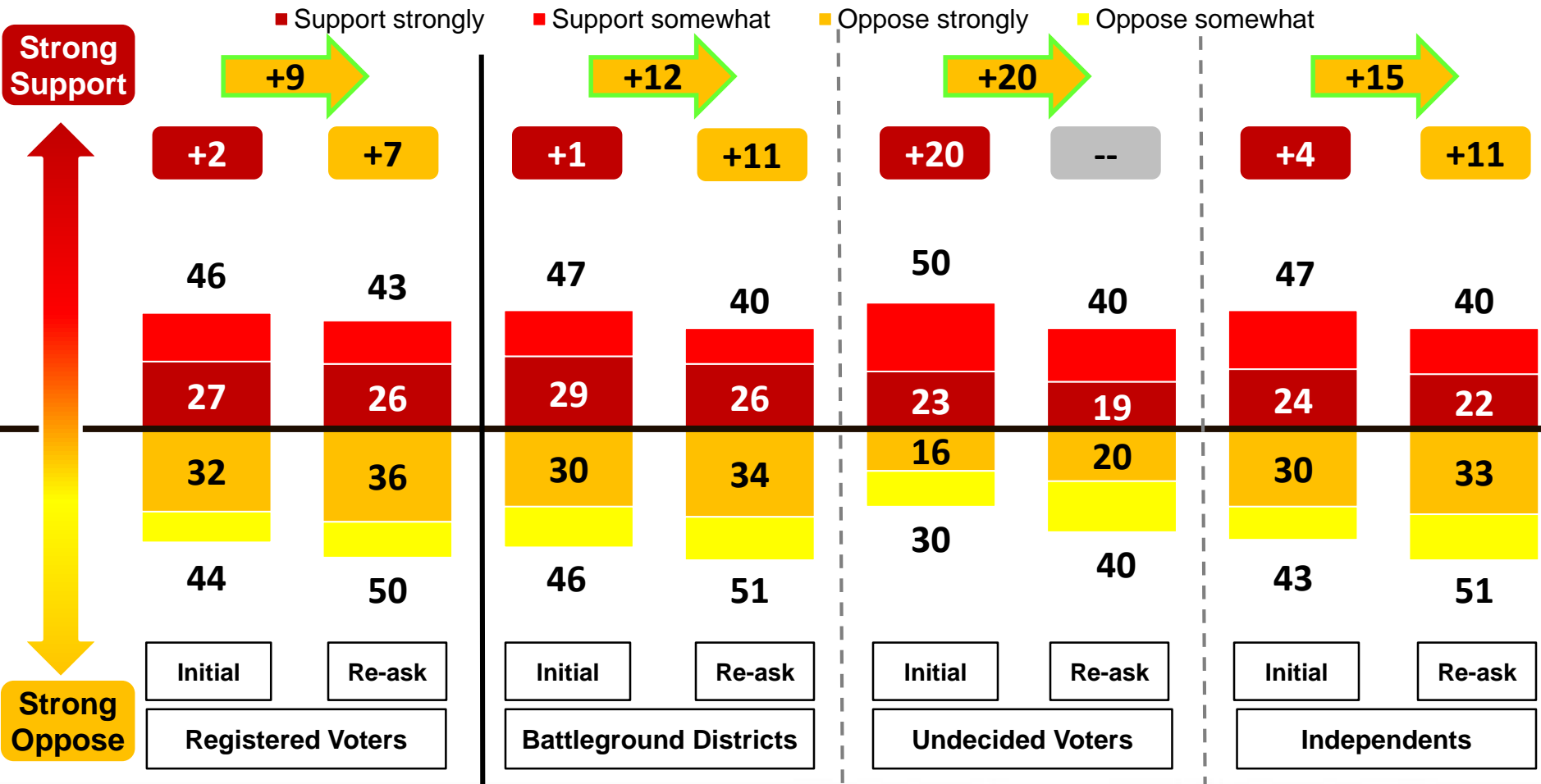


# **POWERFUL IMPACT OF MESSAGING**

# Balanced tax debate yields more opposition to cut where matters

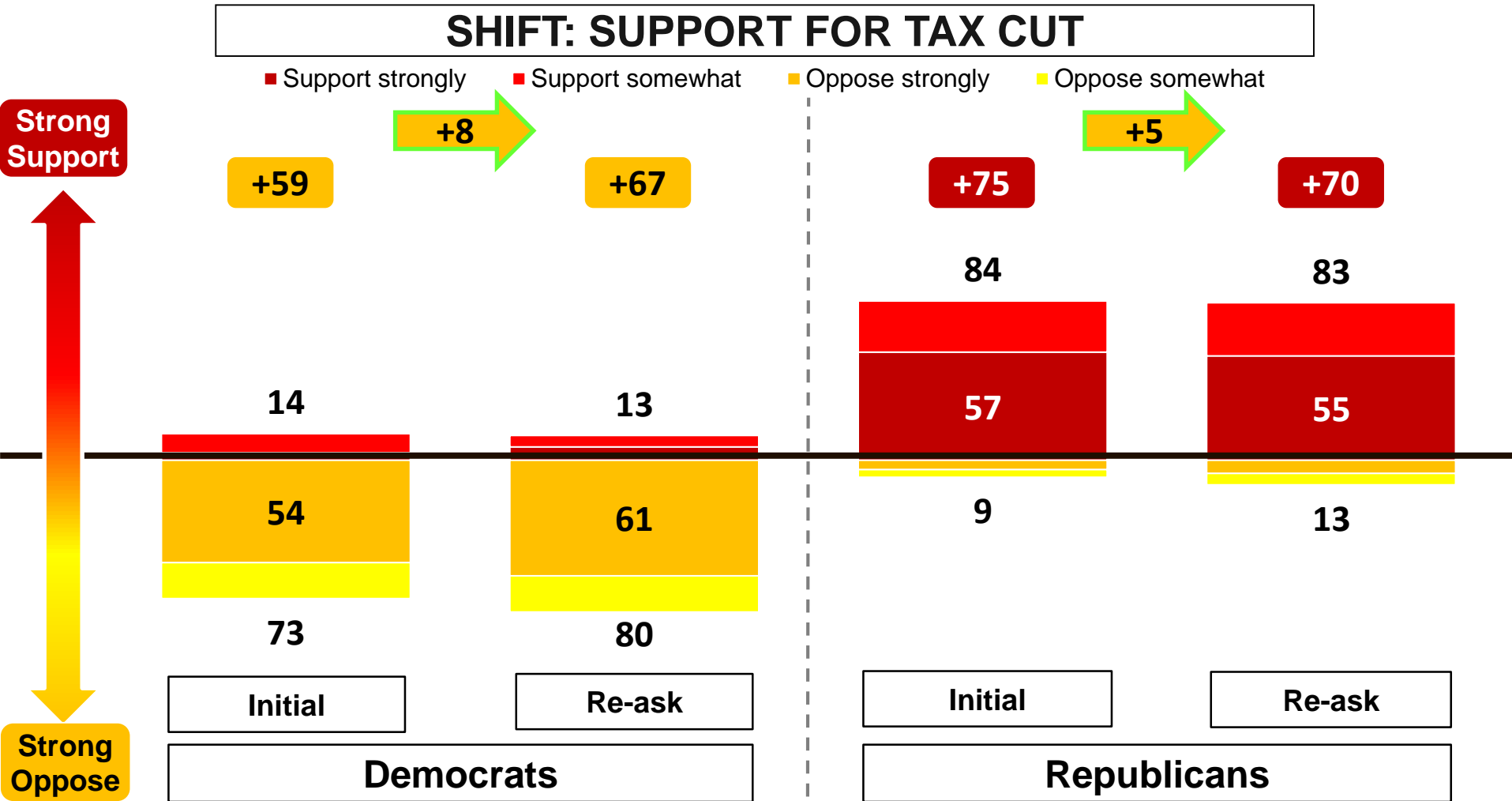
From what you know, do you support or oppose the tax cut for corporations and individuals passed by the Republicans in Congress and signed by the President at the end of last year?

## SHIFT: SUPPORT FOR TAX CUT



# Democrats become even more intensely opposed; no change for Republicans

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?

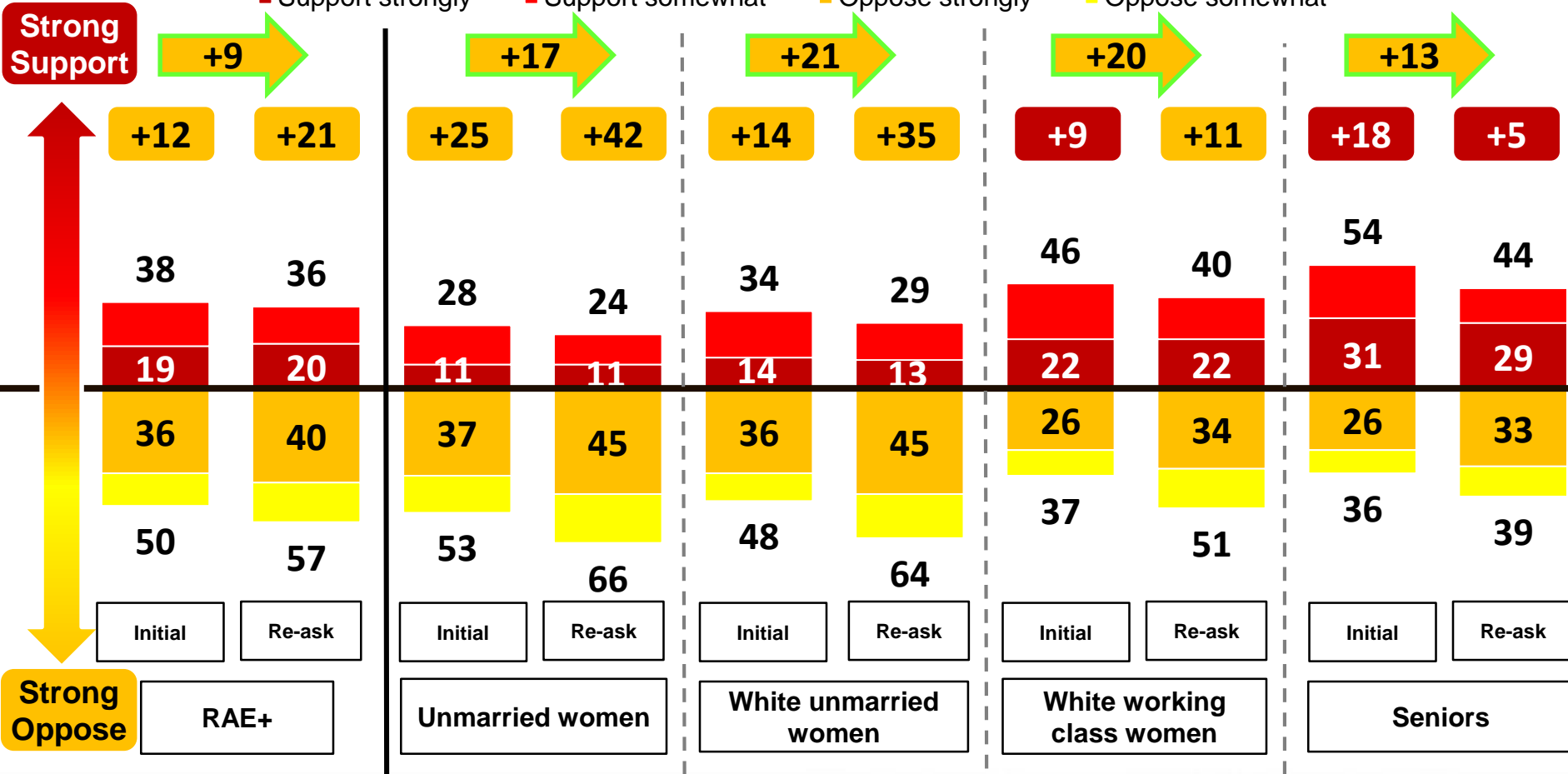


# White working class women (driven by unmarried) & seniors oppose post-debate

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?

## SHIFT: SUPPORT FOR TAX CUT

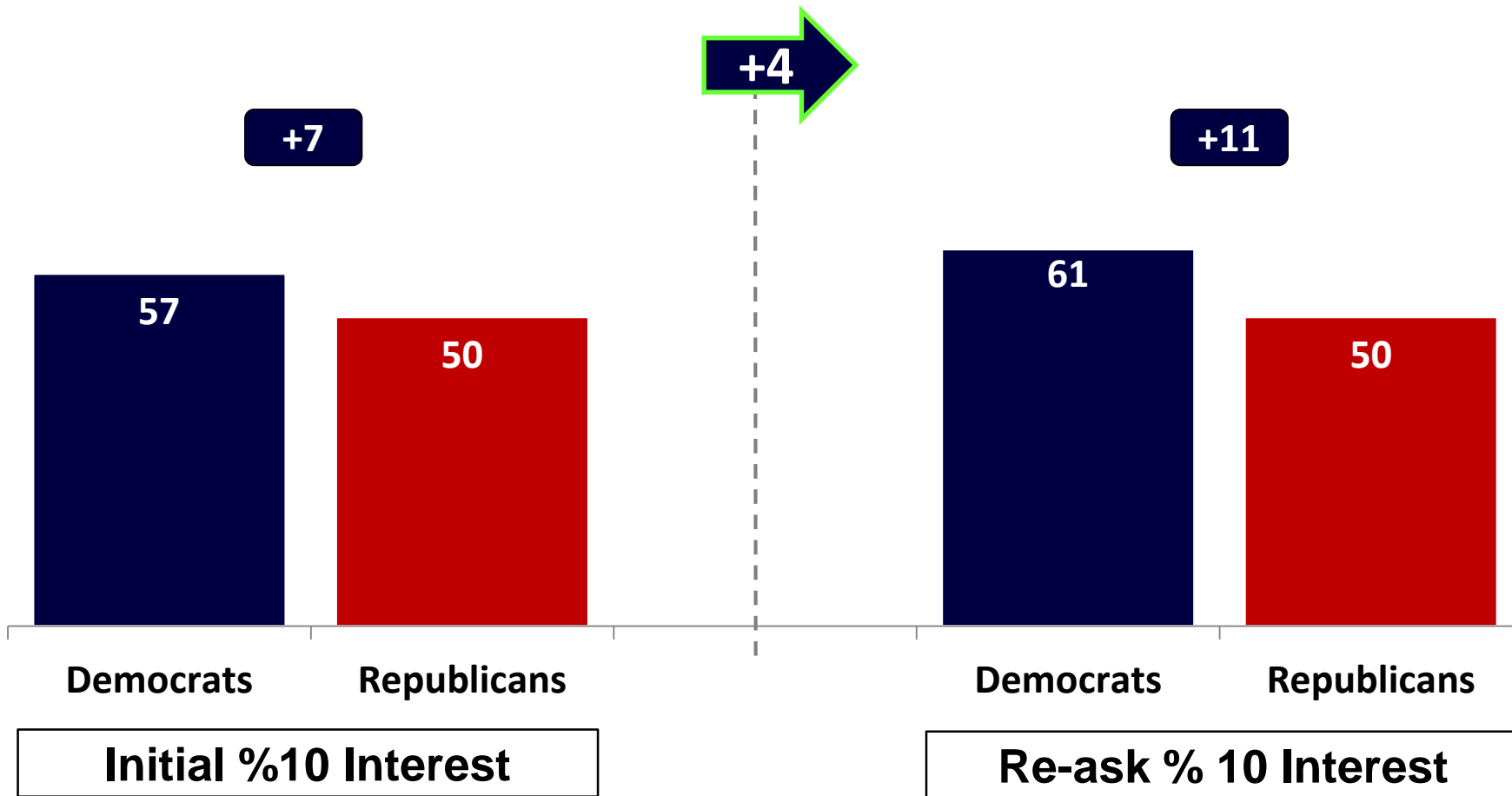
■ Support strongly ■ Support somewhat ■ Oppose strongly ■ Oppose somewhat



# 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.

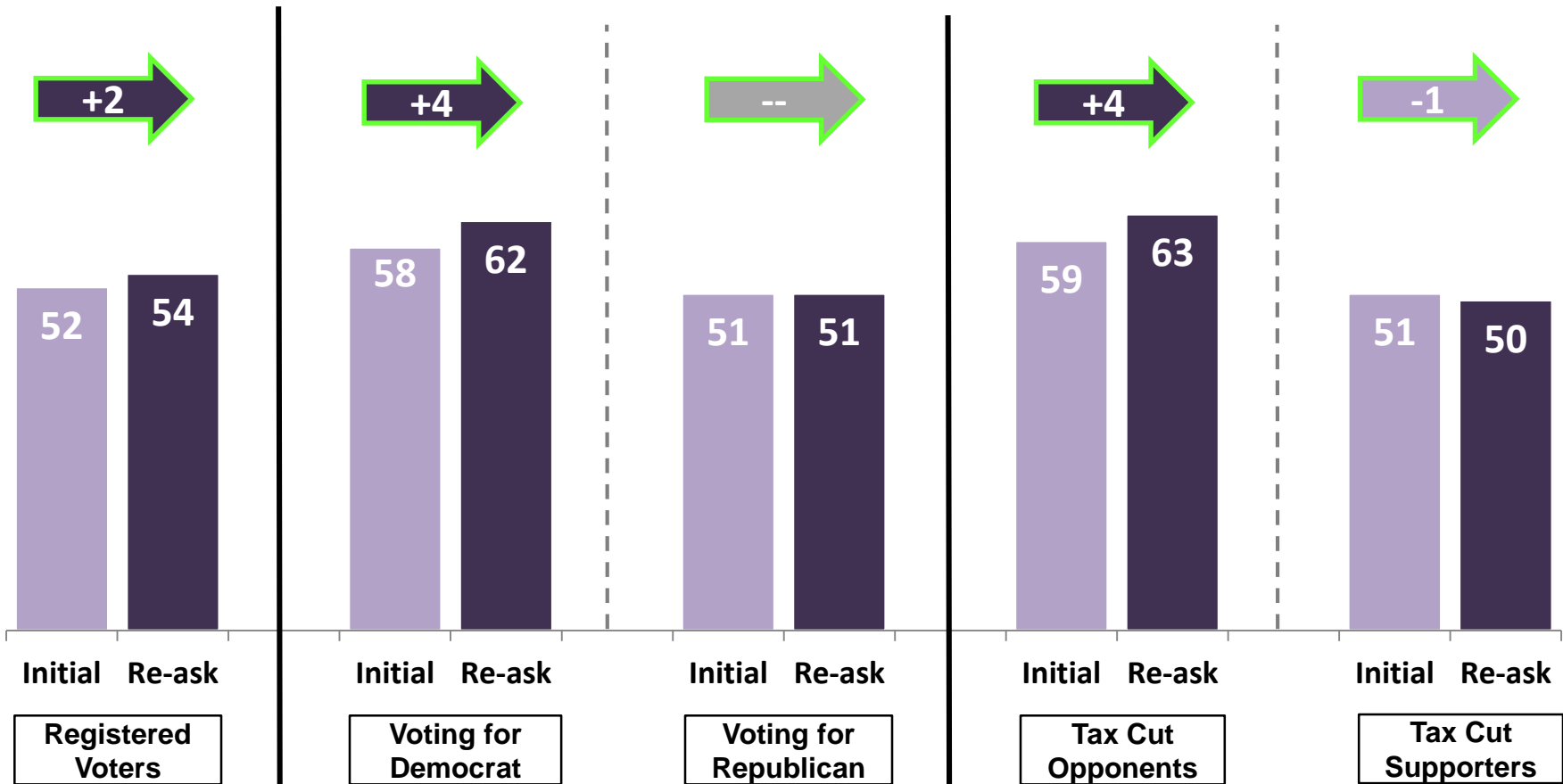
**MARGIN OF %10 INTEREST IN 2018**



# 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

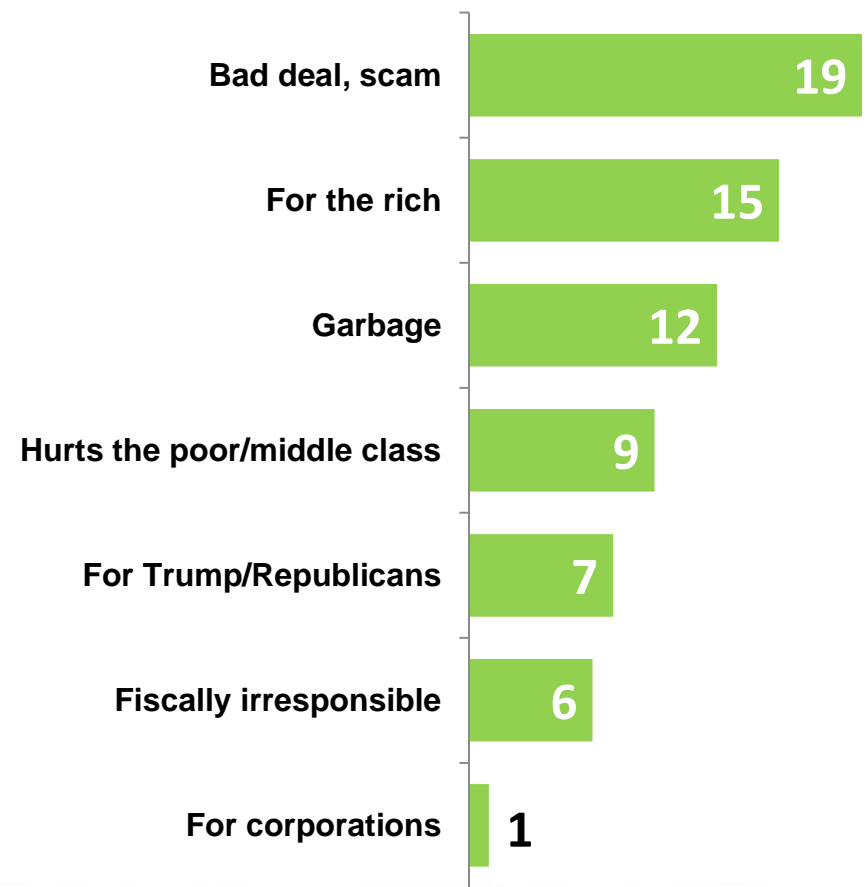
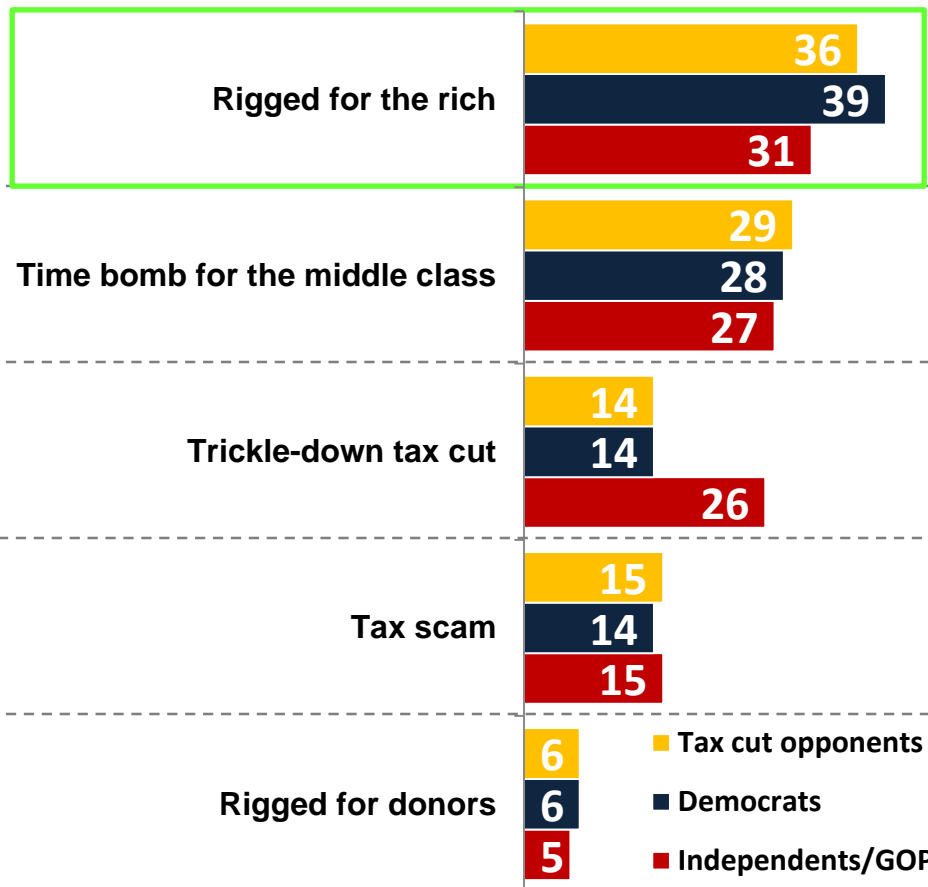


# Opponents name it “rigged for the rich”

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





# CONTACT US



## DEMOCRACY CORPS

1875 Connecticut Ave. NW  
Floor 10  
Washington, DC 20009

Phone: +1 202 499 6901

[www.democracycorps.com](http://www.democracycorps.com)

## GREENBERG RESEARCH

1101 15<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
Suite 900  
Washington, DC 20004

Phone: +1 202 478 8300

[www.greenbergresearch.com](http://www.greenbergresearch.com)

## AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

555 New Jersey Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20001

Phone: +1 202 879 4400

[www.aft.org](http://www.aft.org)