



DEMOCRACY CORPUS  
CARVILLE ♦ GREENBERG

---

# 2018 Targets in Trump's GOP

*August national message web-test to establish  
targets, strongest messages and attacks*

**September 2018**

**GREENBERG** RESEARCH

# Methodology:

## **August national web-survey of Republicans.**

Democracy Corps and Greenberg Research conducted a web-survey of 1,200 Republican and Republican-leaning independent registered voters nationally between August 21-26, 2018.

## **Database of 3,018 Republicans from Democracy Corps surveys in 2018:**

- **July national phone survey.** National registered voter survey 395 Republicans via live telephone interview between July 19-26, 2018.
- **June national phone survey.** National registered voter survey 452 Republicans via live telephone interview between June 11-14, 2018.
- **June national web-survey.** National registered voter web-survey of 556 Republicans between June 1-5, 2018.
- **April battleground phone survey.** 12 state battleground (AZ, CO, FL, GA, MN, MI, NV, NM, OH, PA, TN, WI) registered voter survey of 414 Republicans via live telephone interview March 25-April 2, 2018.

# Key Findings:

- President Trump has created a big opportunity to target and deliver messages to a fractured and demoralized GOP.
- 41 percent of the GOP base are in unenthusiastic factions and 26 percent are targetable.
- Progressives can readily identify these GOP targets using partisanship and ideology scores. You can exclude strong Republicans, Evangelicals and Catholic Republicans.
- Almost half of moderates and one-third of secular conservatives want a check on Trump; they show it with very low turnout intention, particularly the women.
- Message to GOP targets: Politicians are polarizing, dividing and gridlocking through ugly rhetoric that hurts the middle class. I will work together with Democrats and Republicans to fix our problems.

# THE FACTIONS OF THE GOP



# Composition of the GOP base

**Trump Loyalists: 43-59%**

**Less Enthusiastic GOP: 41-57%**

**Evangelical  
Conservatives**  
26%

**Tea  
Party**  
17%

**Catholic  
Conservatives**  
16%

**Secular  
Conservatives**  
18%

**Moderates**  
23%

69% strong GOP  
64% Strong Trump  
54% extremely  
interested in 2018  
50% Men  
24% Millennial  
70% Married  
55% Non-metro  
45% South

49% strong GOP  
60% Strong Trump  
49% extremely  
interested in 2018  
60% Men  
25% Millennial  
61% Married  
54% Non-metro  
40% South

54% strong GOP  
55% Strong Trump  
53% extremely  
interested in 2018  
53% Men  
18% Millennial  
66% Married  
47% Non-metro  
30% South

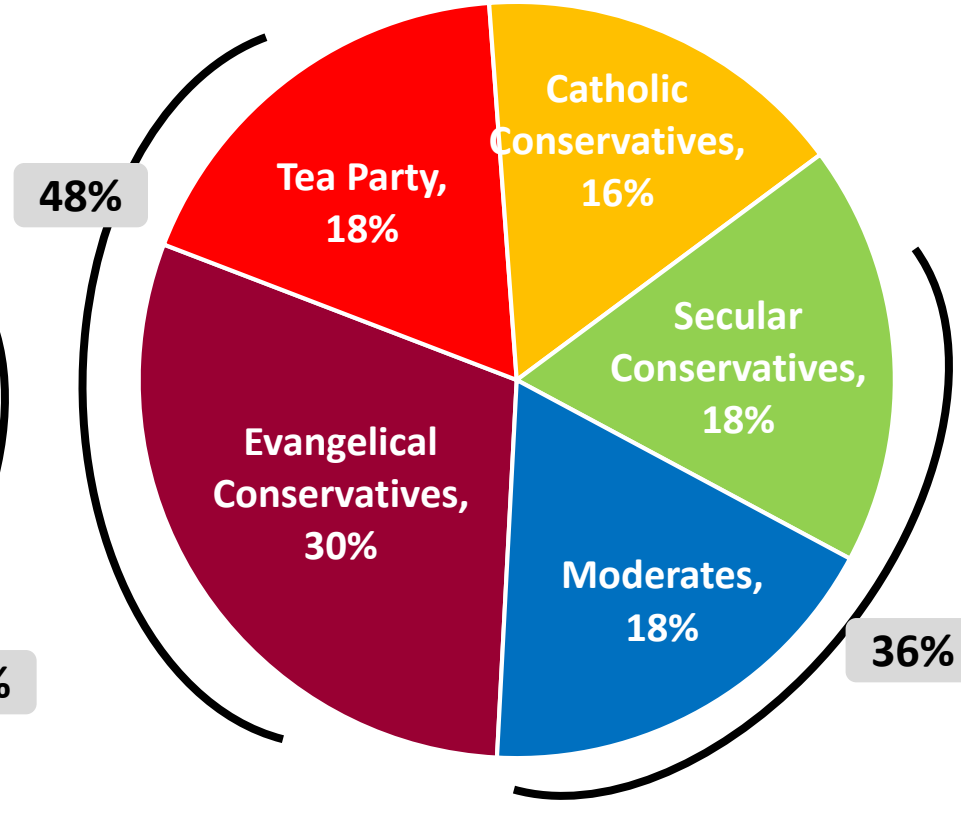
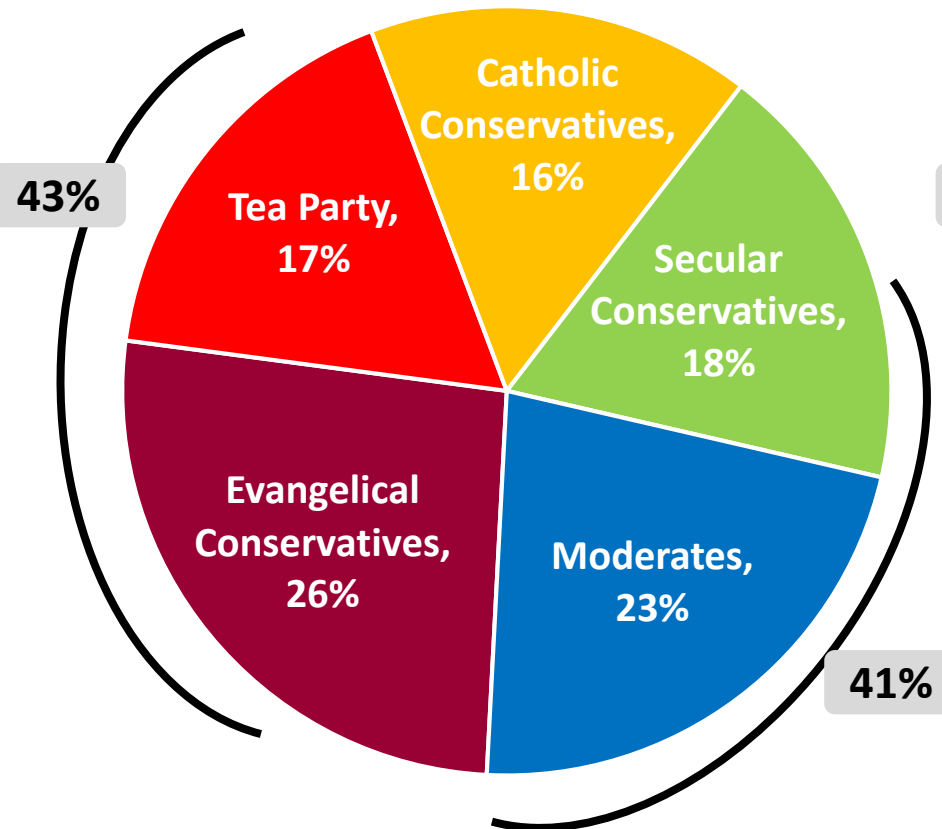
51% strong GOP  
50% Strong Trump  
41% extremely  
interested in 2018  
54% Men  
29% Millennial  
58% Married  
57% Non-metro  
32% South

40% Weak GOP  
28% Strong Trump  
36% extremely  
interested in 2018  
54% Women  
34% Millennial  
62% Married  
53% Non-metro  
35% South

# Here's why GOP problems hurt in election, but not primary

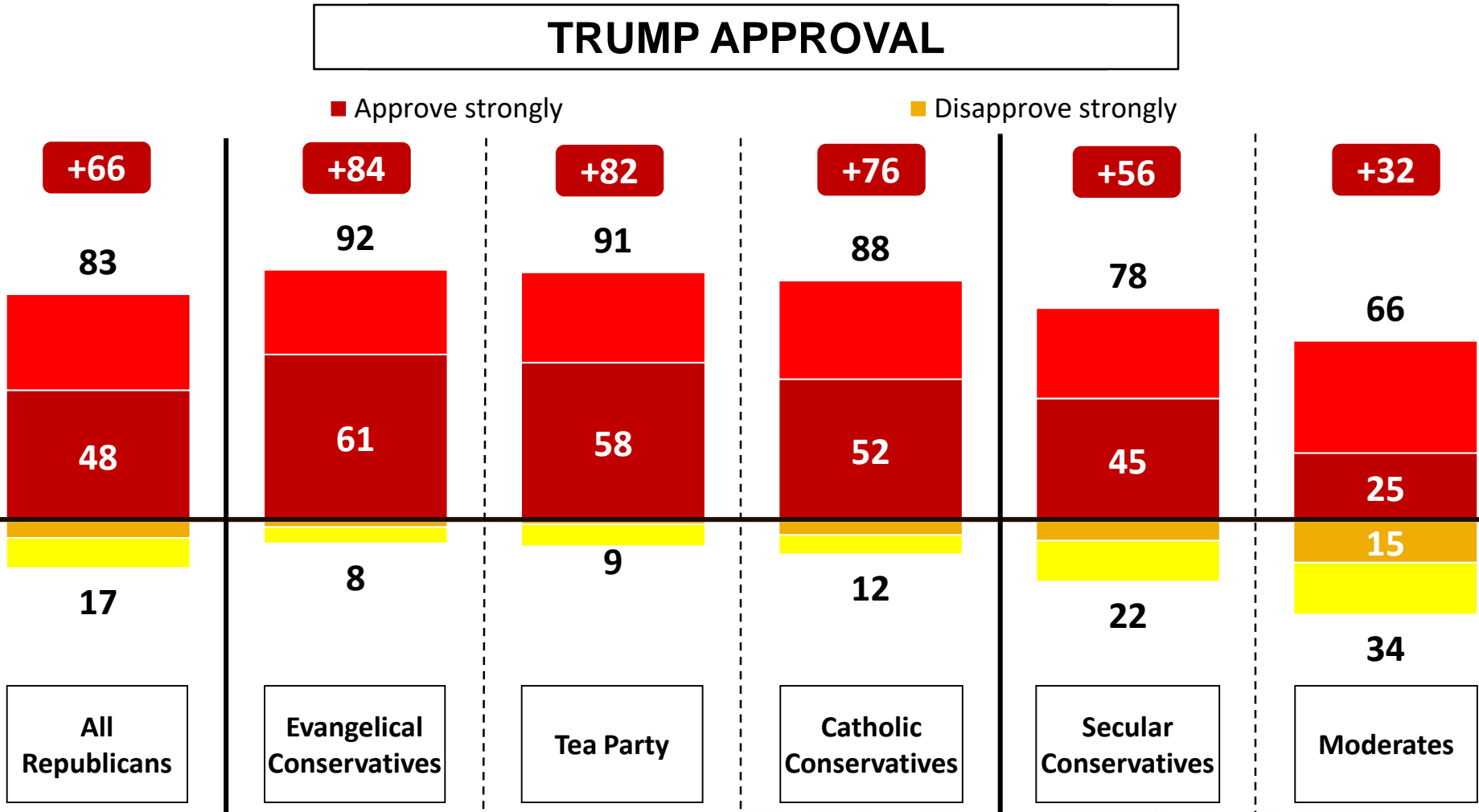
ALL REPUBLICANS

2020 GOP PRIMARY VOTERS



# 1/4<sup>th</sup> of seculars and 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of moderates disapprove

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



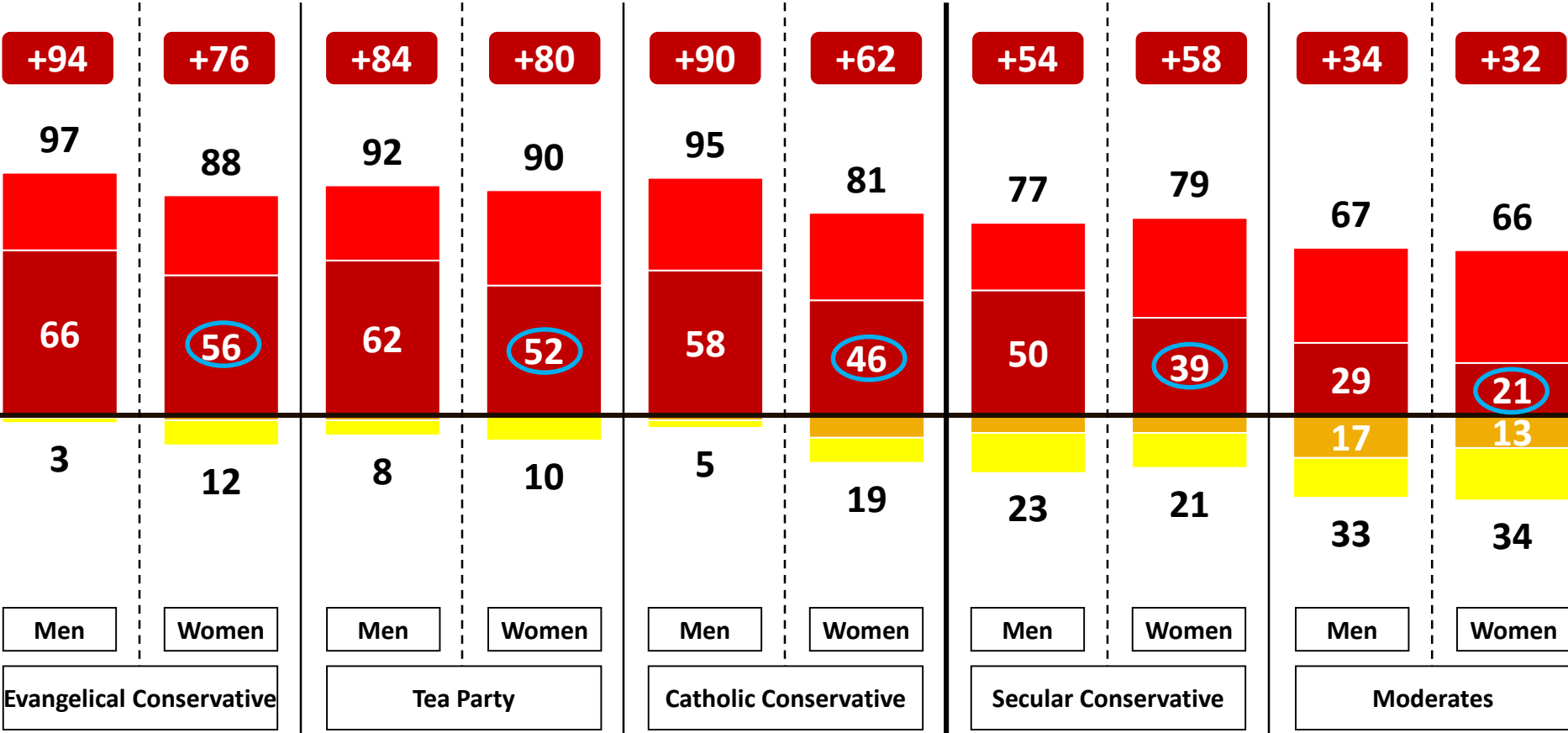
# Women across the board less taken with Trump

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

## TRUMP APPROVAL

■ Approve strongly

■ Disapprove strongly



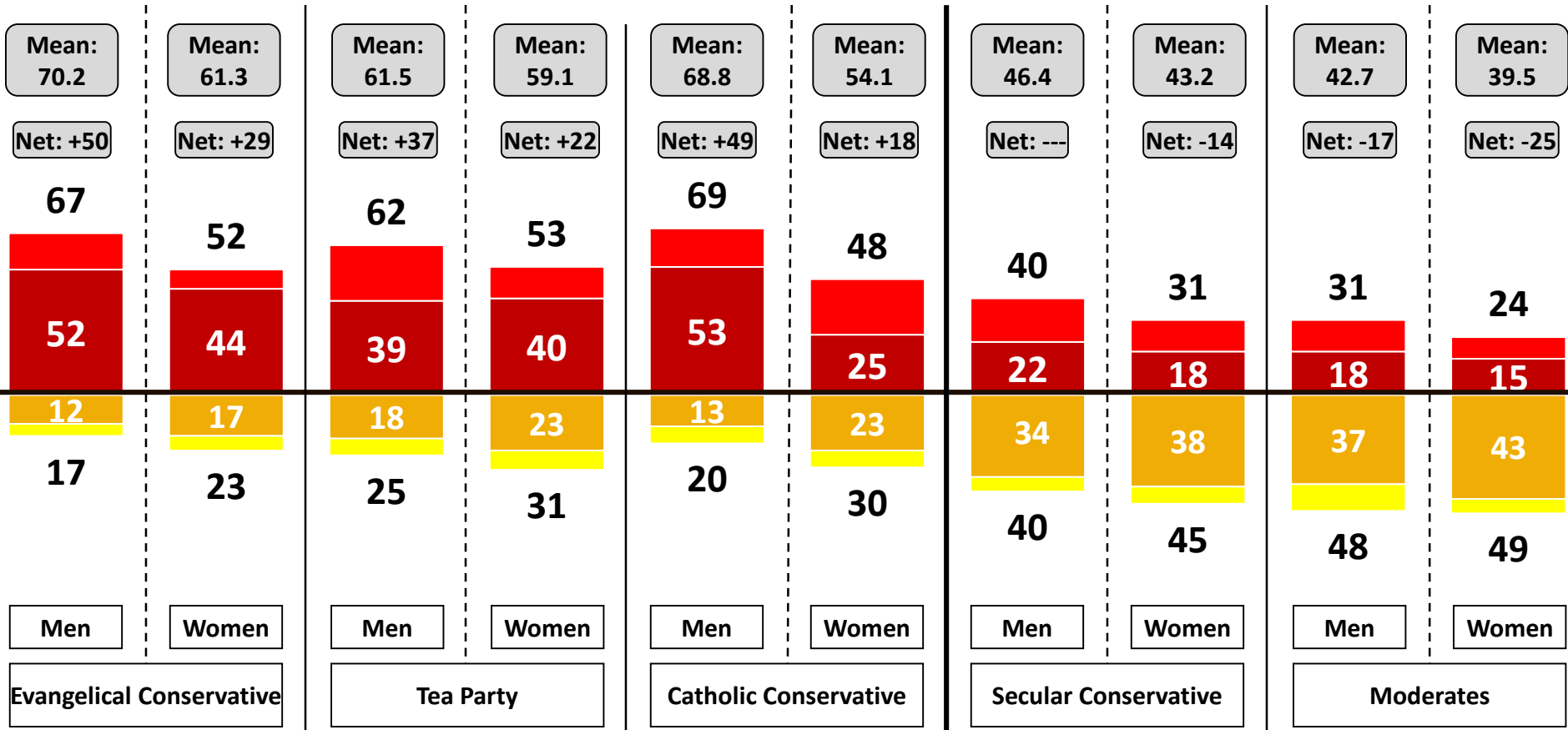


# Seculars and moderates and women off Fox News

Please rate your feelings toward some people, organizations, and concepts, with one hundred meaning a VERY WARM, FAVORABLE feeling; zero meaning a VERY COLD, UNFAVORABLE feeling; and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold.

## FOX News

■ Very warm (75-100) ■ Very cool (0-25)



# 1/2 of moderates & 1/3 of seculars strongly want check on Trump

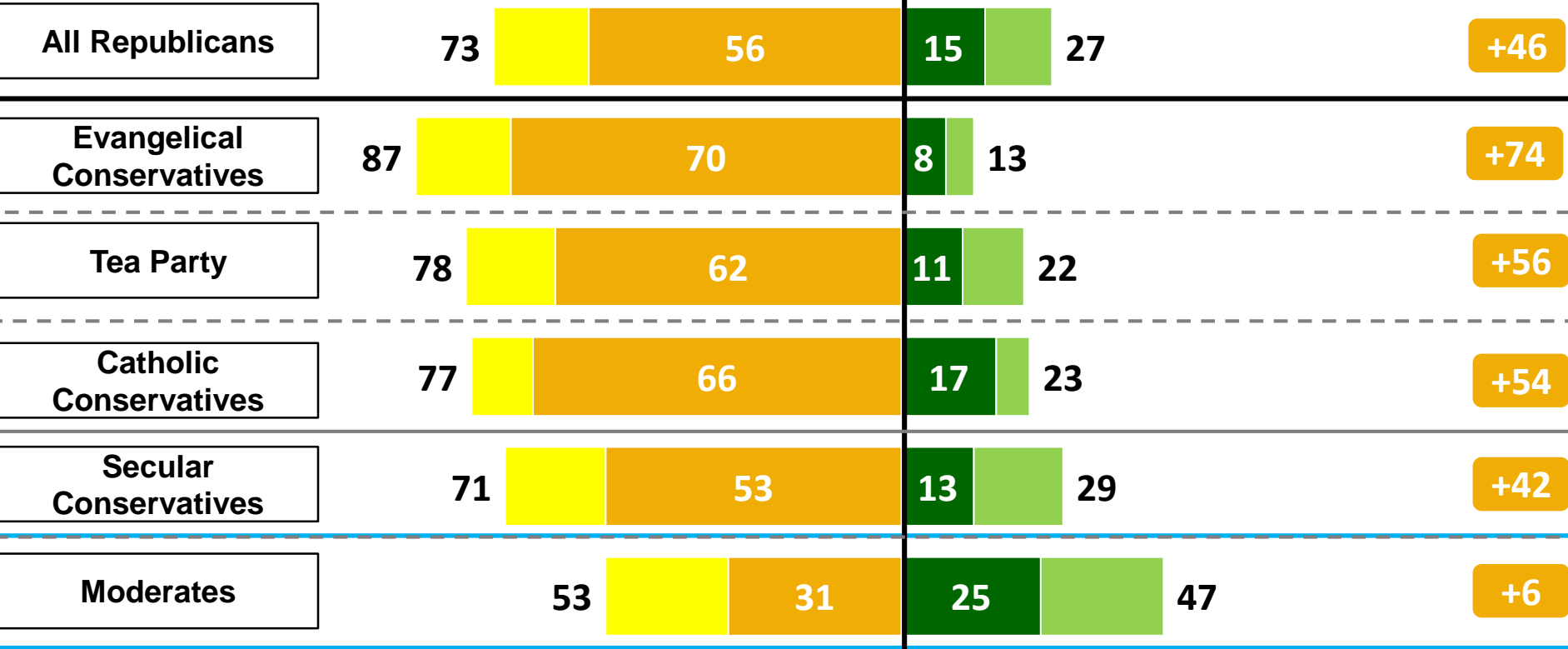
Please tell me which one you agree with more, even if neither is exactly right.

I need to vote in the midterm election in November to elect leaders who will defend President Trump.

I need to vote in the midterm election in November to elect some leaders who will be a check on President Trump.

■ Check strongly

■ Defend strongly



# VALUES & ATTITUDES

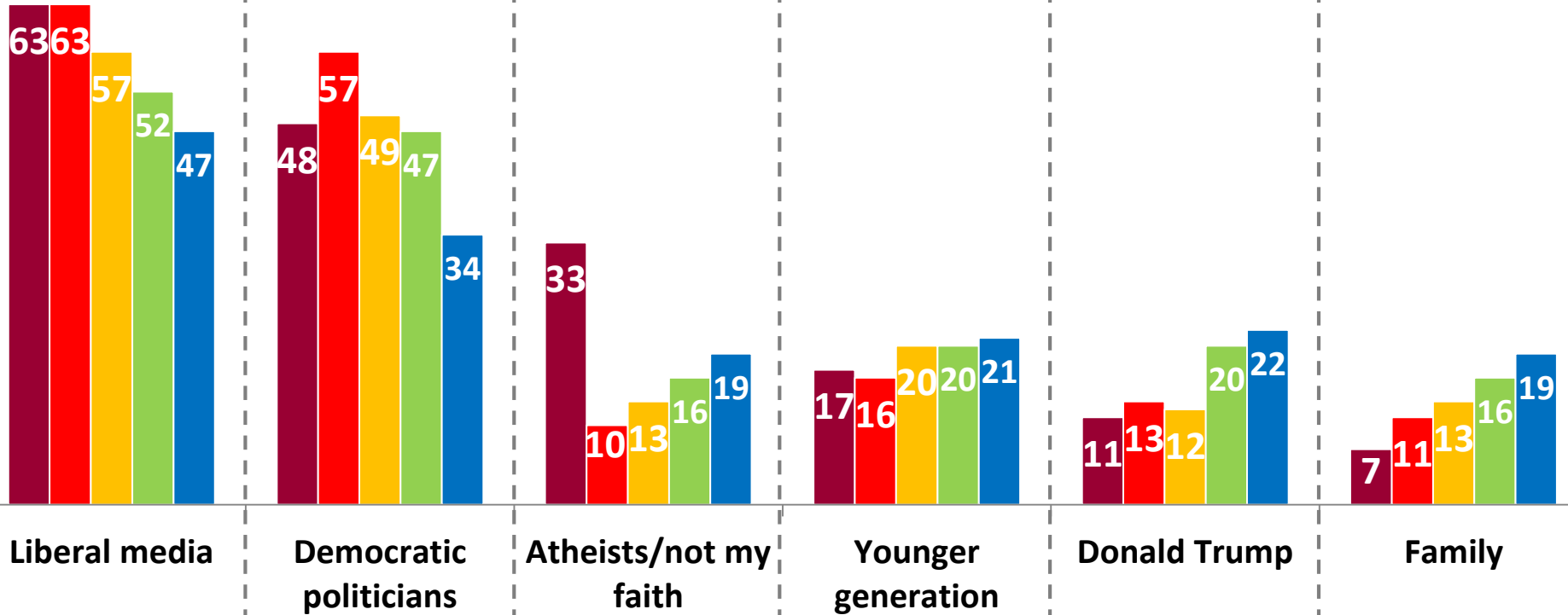


# Liberal media and Democratic politicians biggest challenge

Which TWO of the people and institutions below challenge your beliefs, values, and choices the most?

## CHALLENGERS OF BELIEFS & VALUES

■ Evangelical conservatives ■ Tea Party ■ Catholic Conservatives ■ Secular Conservatives ■ Moderates

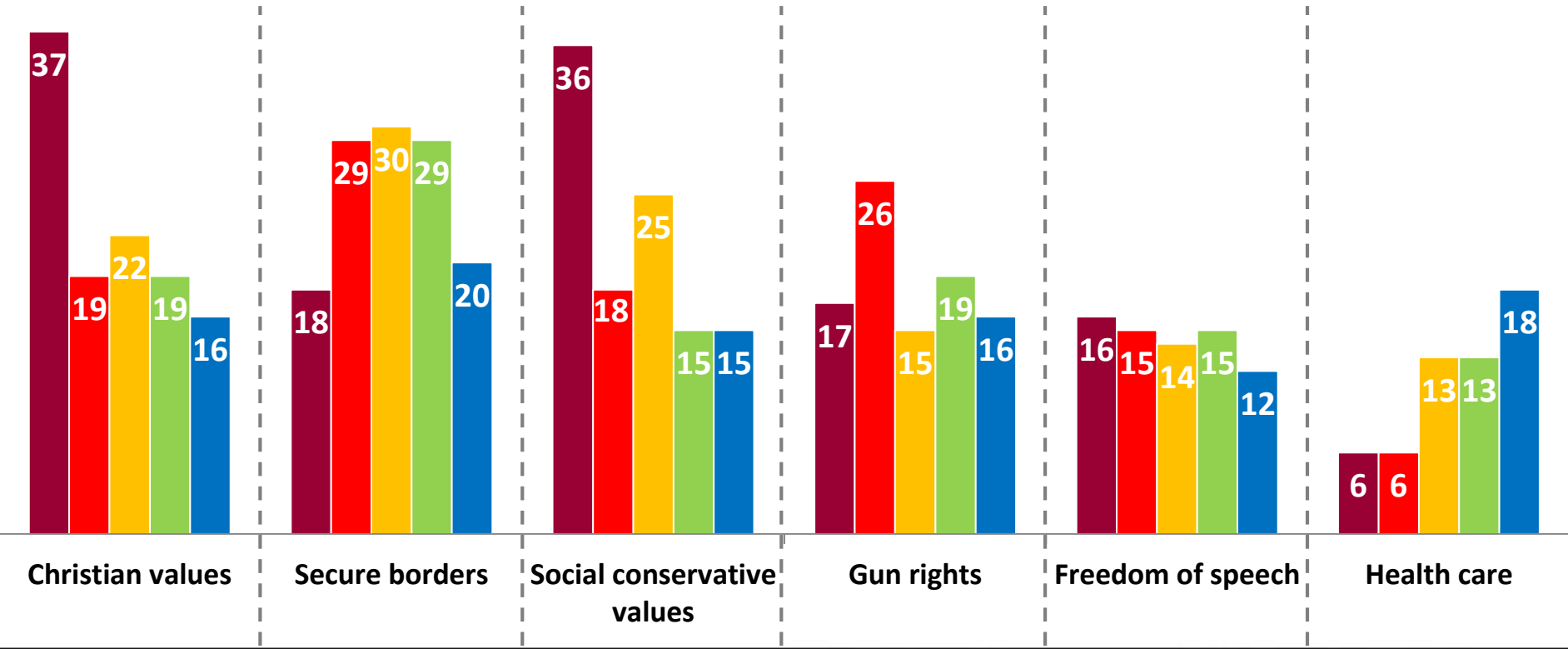


# Liberal media and Democratic politicians biggest challenge

Which TWO of the people and institutions below challenge your beliefs, values, and choices the most?

## MOST CHALLENGED VALUES & BELIEFS

■ Evangelical conservatives ■ Tea Party ■ Catholic Conservatives ■ Secular Conservatives ■ Moderates



# Split over whether conservatives are on defense, Evangelicals say on offense

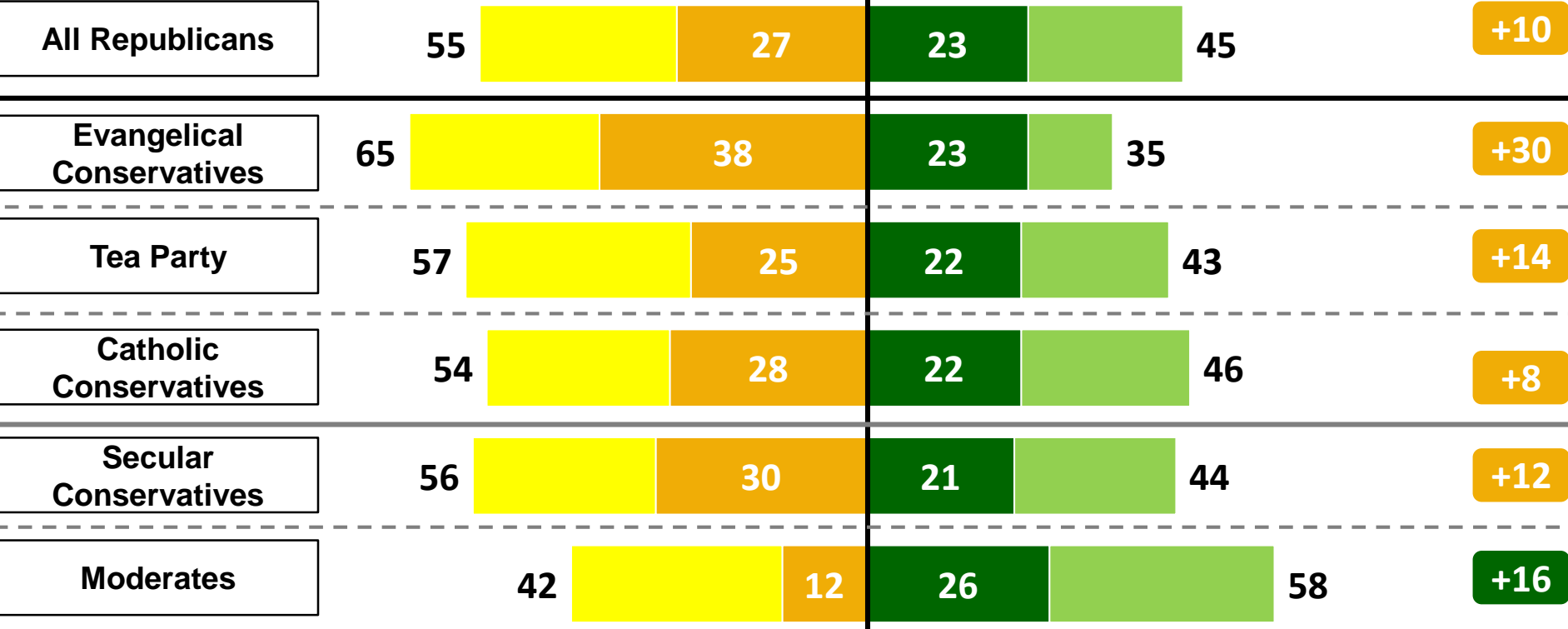
Please tell me which one you agree with more, even if neither is exactly right.

Conservatives are making progress.

Conservatives are on the defensive.

■ Defensive strongly

■ Progress strongly



# 4-in-10 keep their Trump vote to themselves

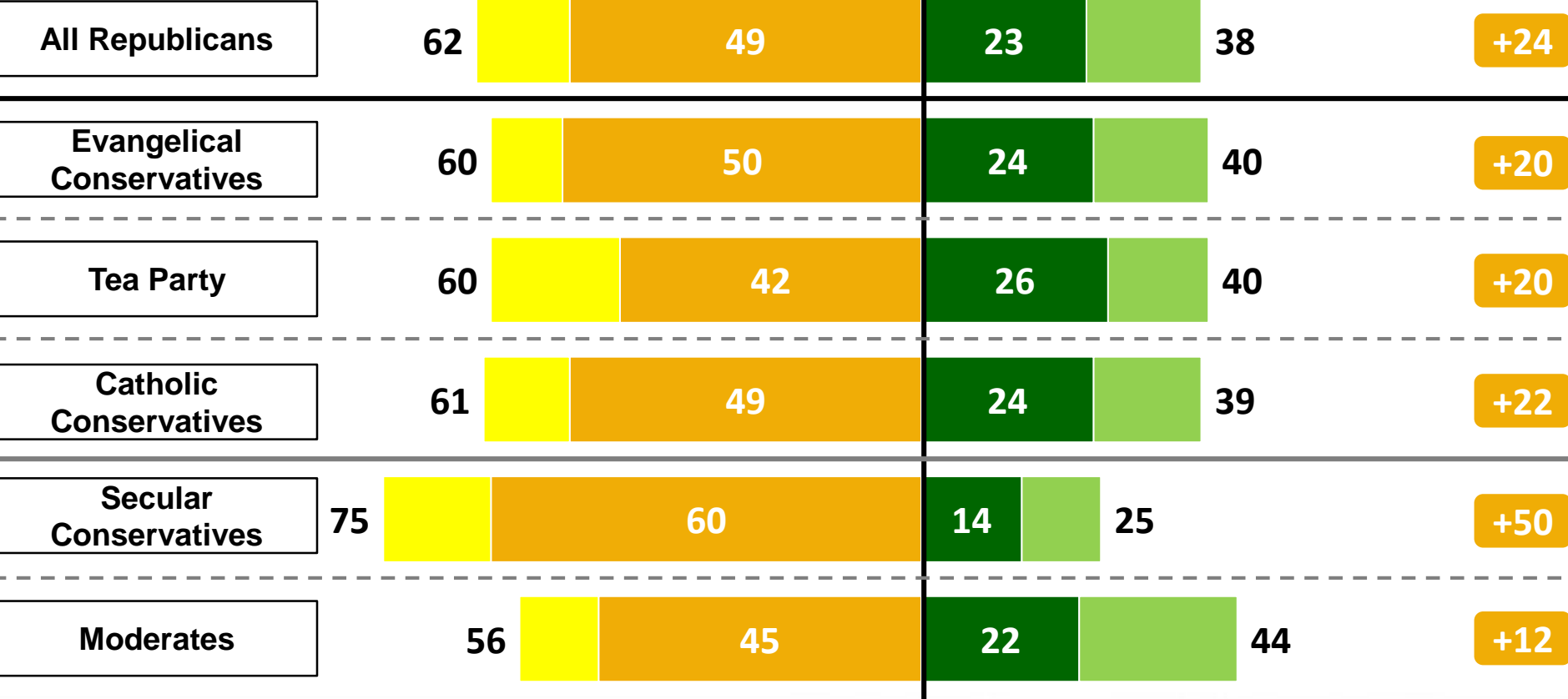
Please tell me which one you agree with more, even if neither is exactly right.

I don't have any problem letting people know I voted for Donald Trump.

I sometimes keep my vote for Donald Trump to myself.

No problem strongly

Keep to myself strongly



# Evangelicals and Catholics feel constrained expressing beliefs

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

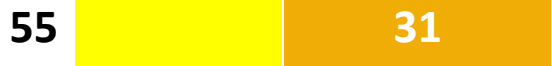
I feel free to tell people what I believe anywhere

Because of my beliefs, I feel on the defensive in many places where I shouldn't be.

■ Defensive strongly

■ Feel free strongly

All Republicans



+10

Evangelical Conservatives



--

Tea Party



+18

Catholic Conservatives



+14

Secular Conservatives



+22

Moderates



+24





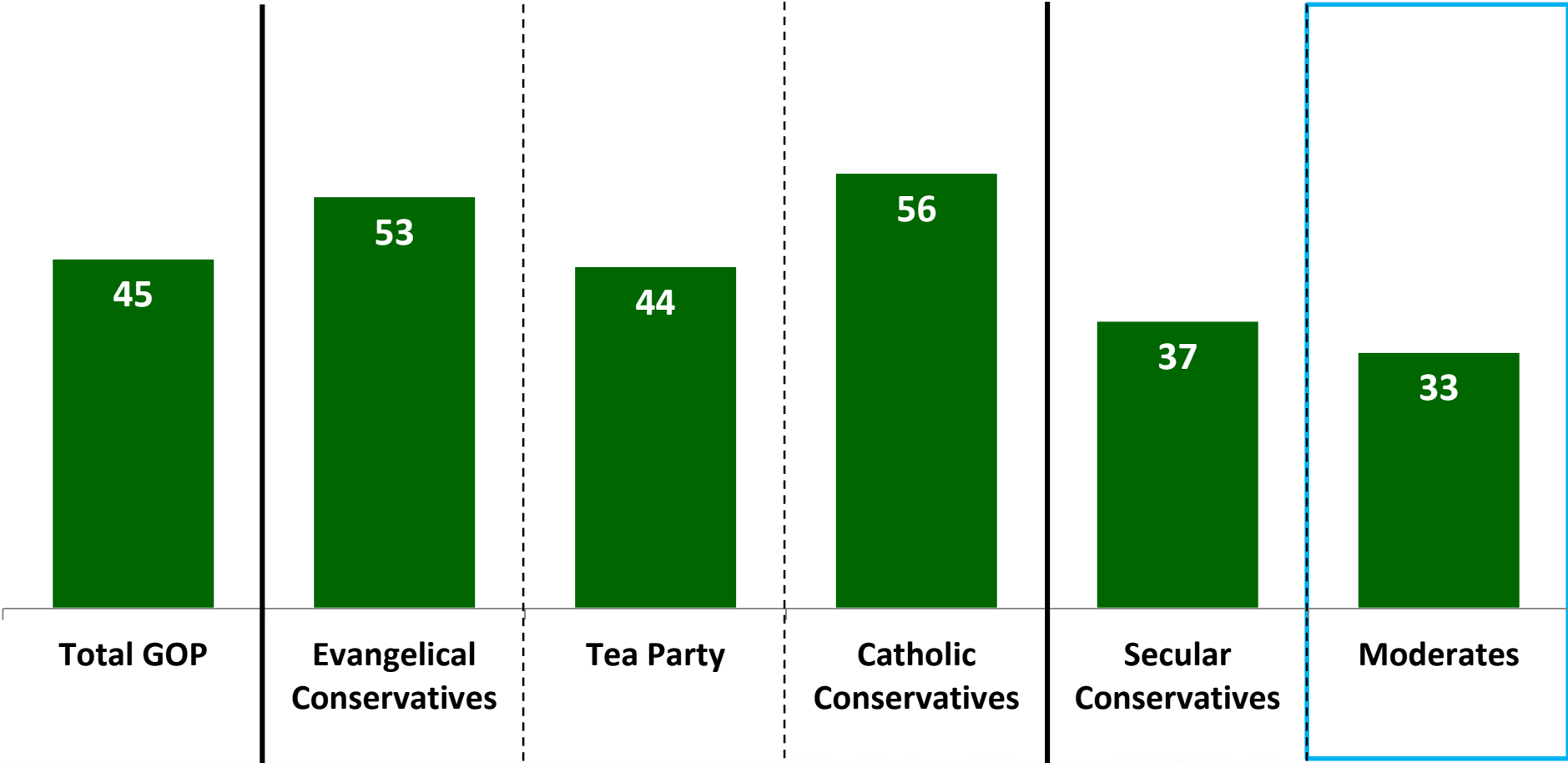
**2018**



# Moderates & seculars much less interested in election

How interested are you in the elections in November? 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.

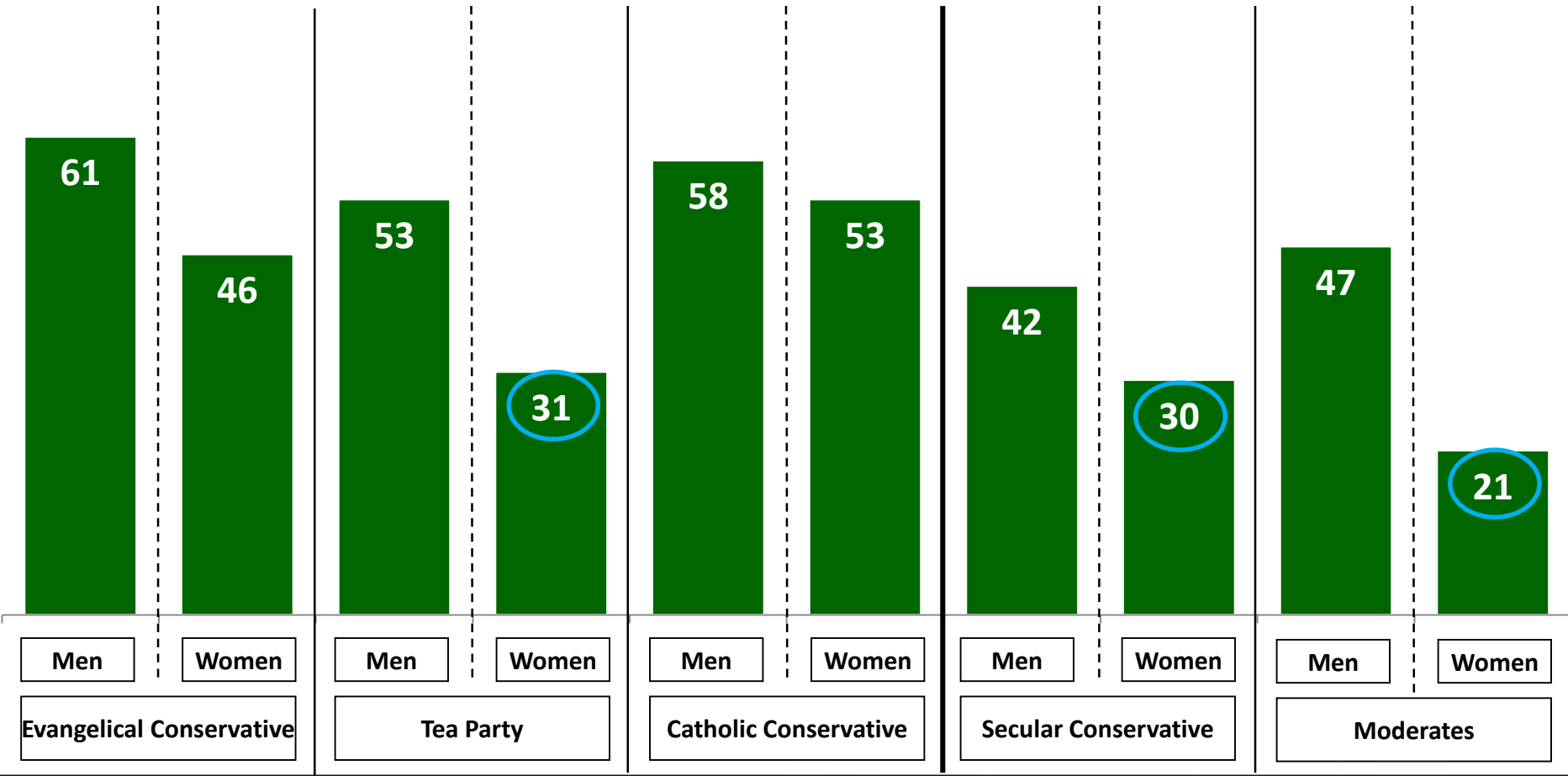
**% 10 – EXTREMELY INTERESTED IN ELECTION IN 2018**



# Women across board dramatically less interested in election

How interested are you in the elections in November? 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.

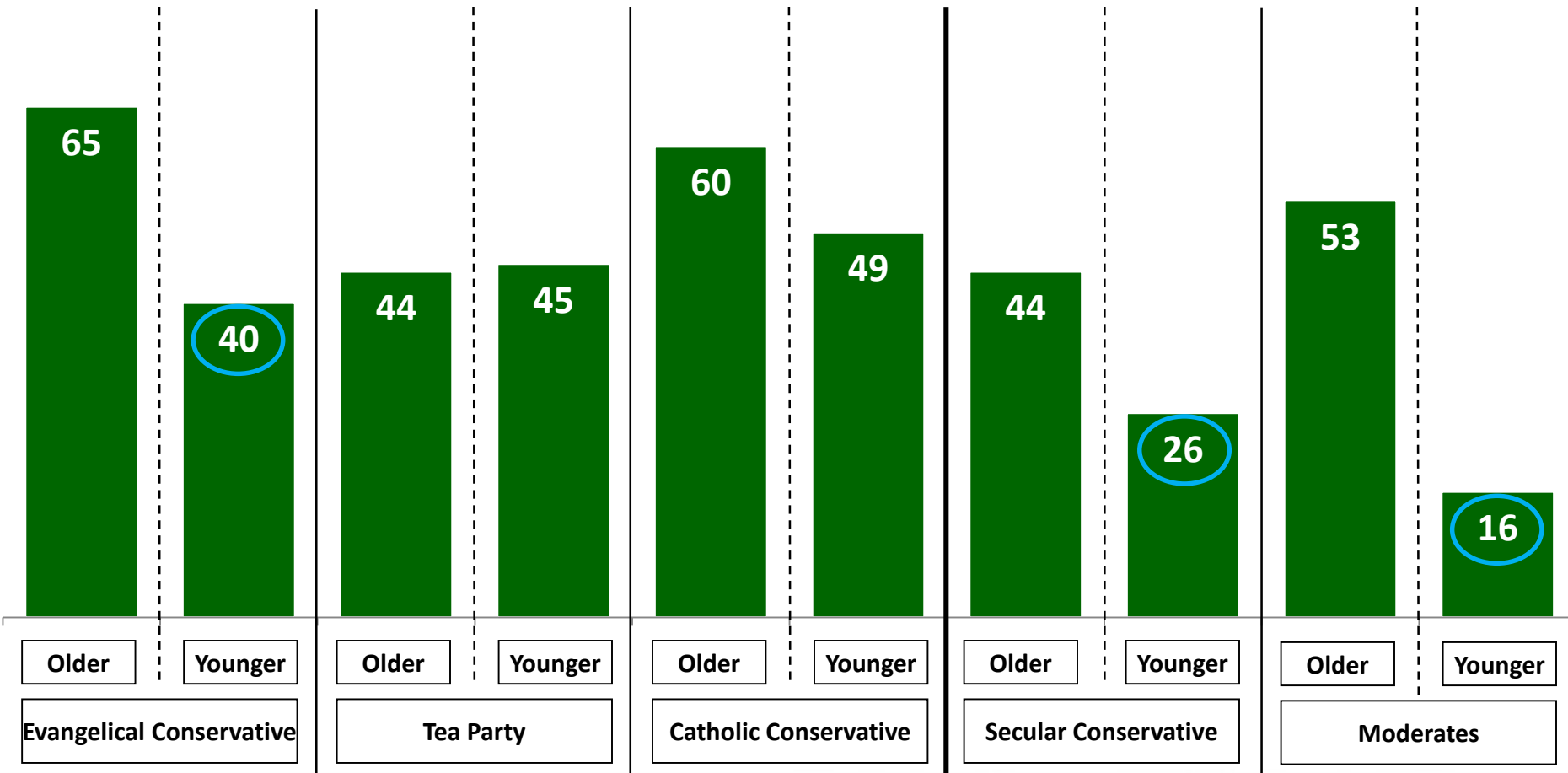
**% 10 – EXTREMELY INTERESTED IN ELECTION IN 2018**



# Younger moderates and seculars could stay home

How interested are you in the elections in November? 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.

## % 10 – EXTREMELY INTERESTED IN ELECTION IN 2018

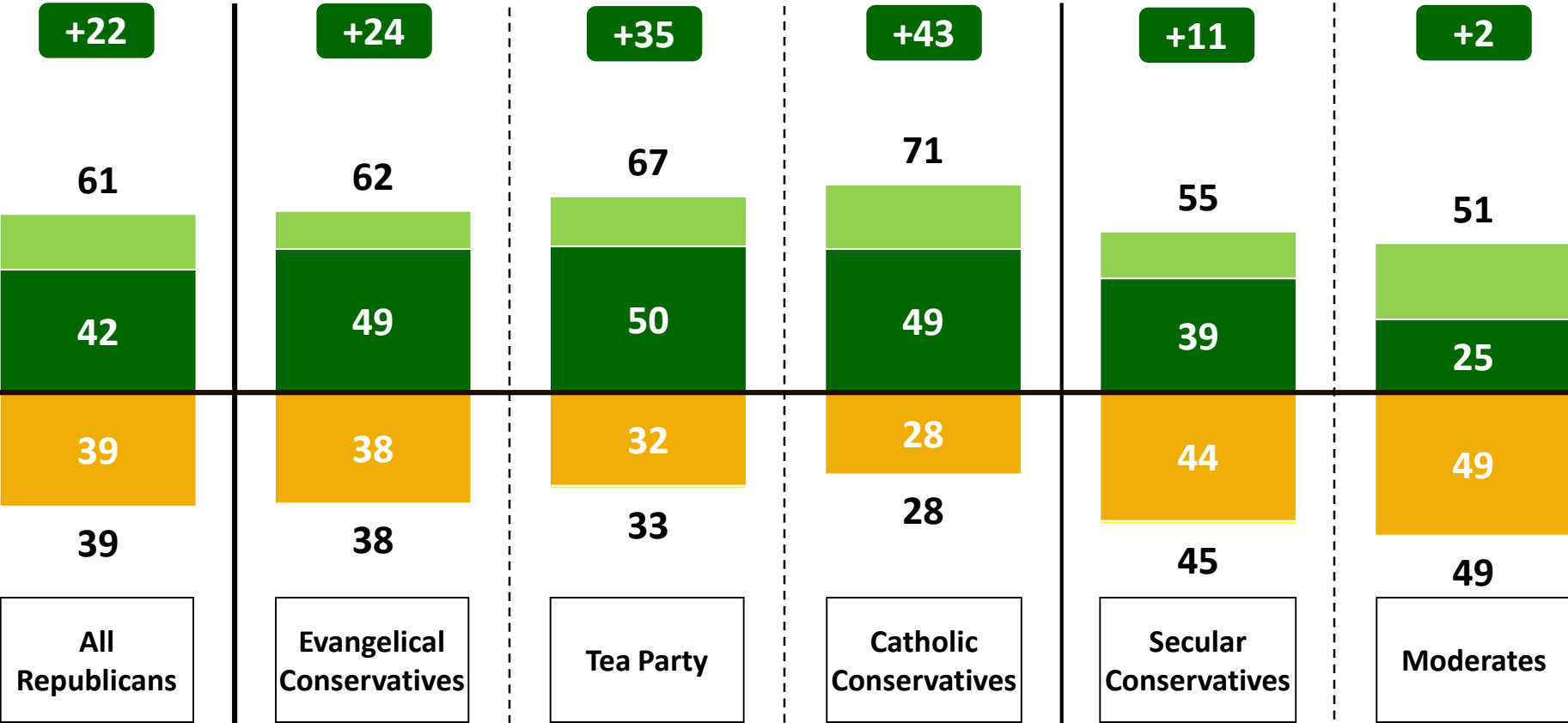


# Evangelicals, Tea Party & Catholics say this midterm more important

Compared to previous midterm elections, do you think it is more important for you to vote, less important for you to vote, or about the same?

## IMPORTANCE OF ELECTION RELATIVE TO PAST MIDTERMS

Less important    About the same    Somewhat more important    Much more important

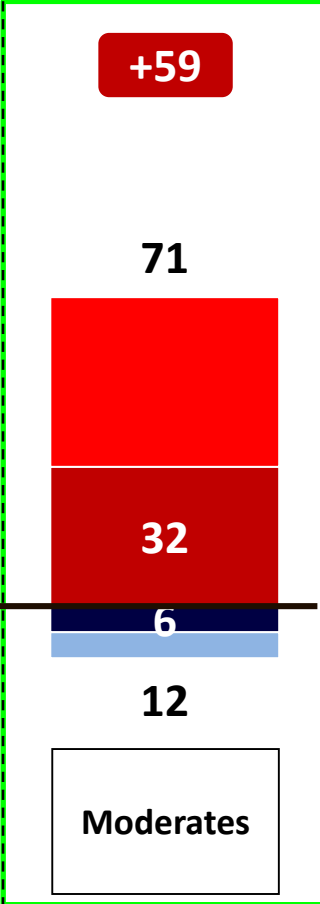
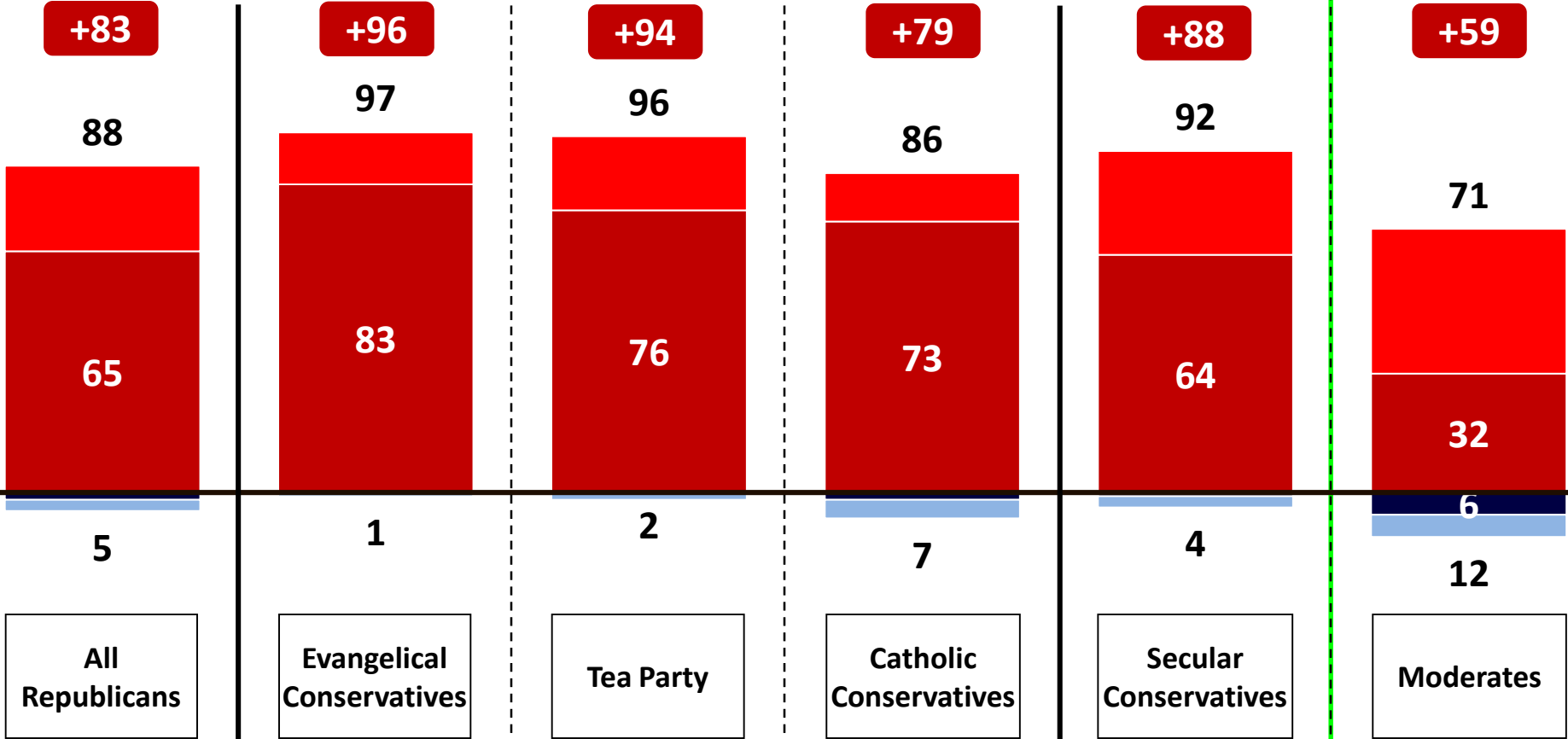


# GOP Congressional vote strong, except with less enthusiasm

Thinking about the election for Congress in your district in November, 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 BALLOT

■ Strong Democratic Candidate      ■ Strong Republican candidate



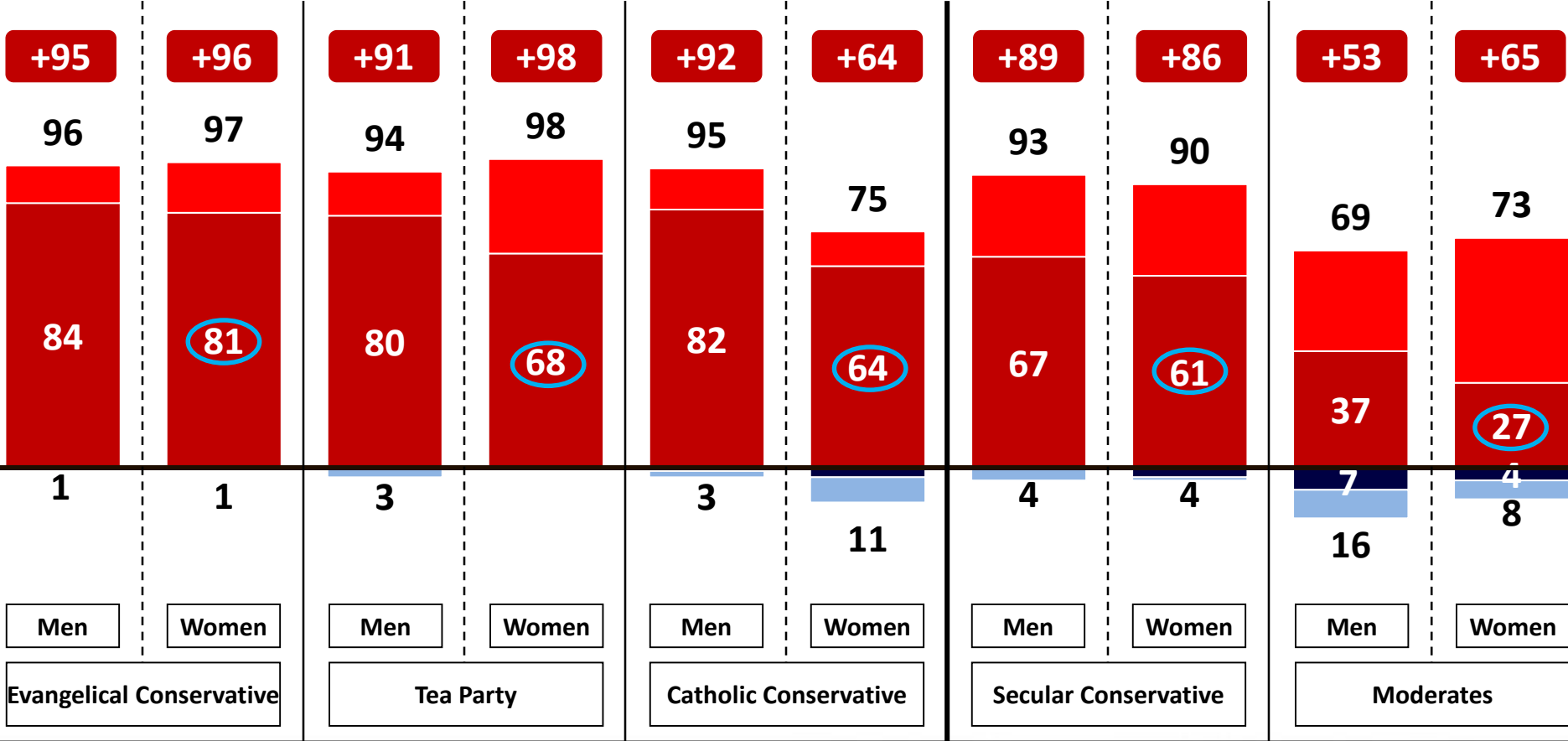
# Less certainty for GOP among women, only 1/4 of moderate women

Thinking about the election for Congress in your district in November, 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 BALLOT

■ Strong Republican Candidate

■ Strong Democratic Candidate



# SHIFTING THE GOP VOTE

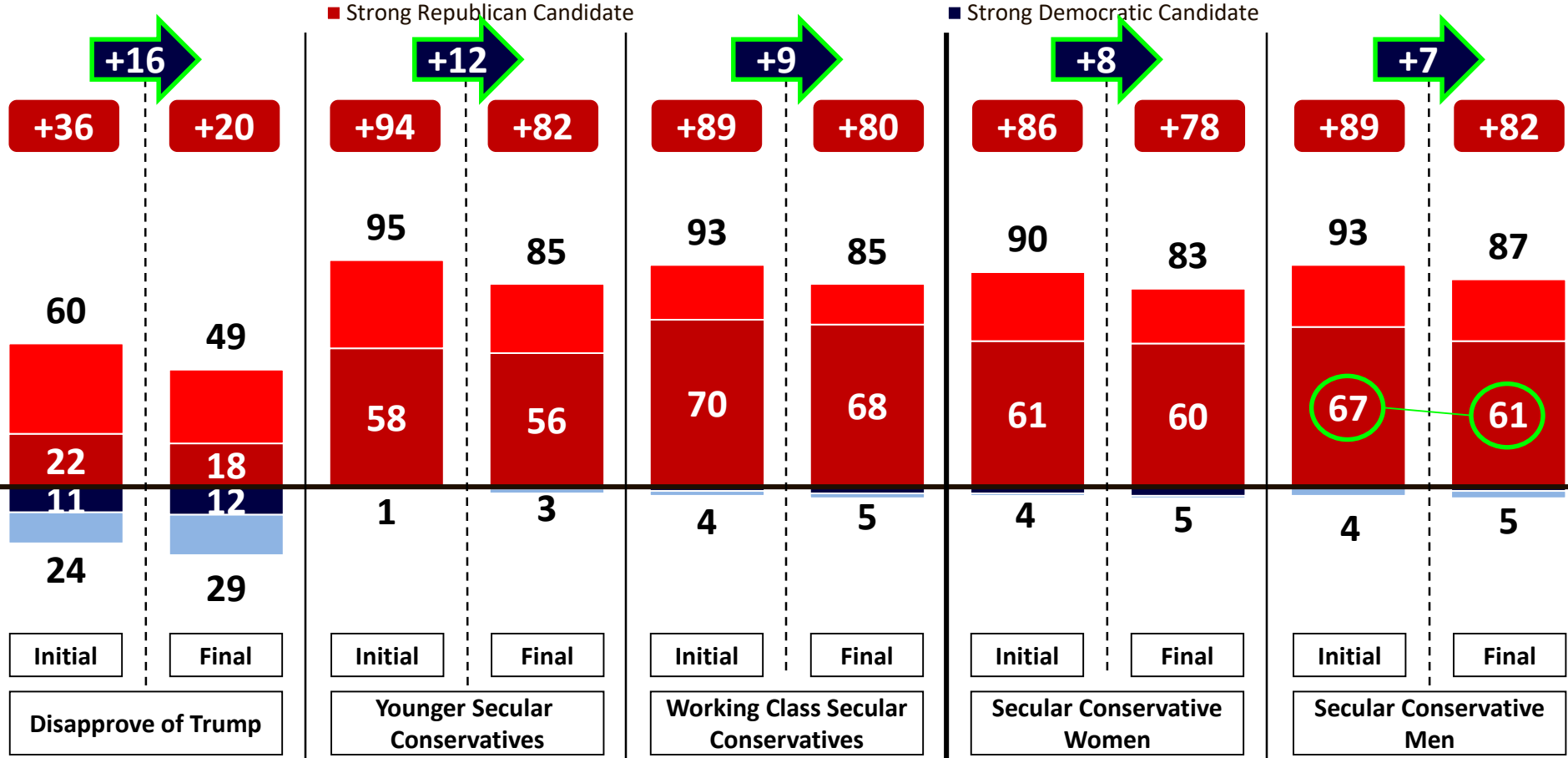




# Secular conservatives & anti-Trumpers shift away from GOP most

Thinking about the election for Congress in your district in November, 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?

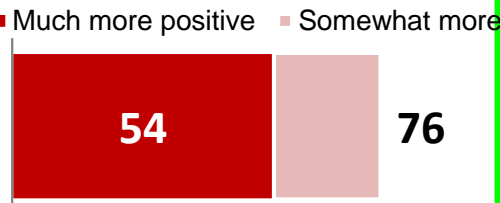
## CONGRESSIONAL BALLOT



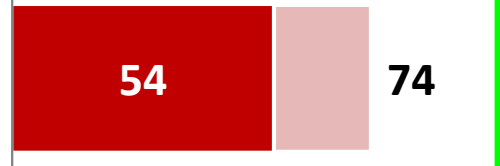
# Best GOP messages: positive accomplishments & immigration

Below is something that Donald Trump is saying about the country and why it is important to vote for Republicans for Congress and other offices in November. How much more positive do you feel about the Republican candidates for Congress and other offices after hearing that?

**GREATEST HITS:** In just 18 months we have grown the economy at a record rate and unemployment is at a 20-year low. We passed the biggest tax cut and reform in history. We're appointing conservatives like Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court. We're defending our borders, strengthening our military, and doing things people never thought possible on trade and North Korea. We must elect Republicans so this success continues.



**IMMIGRATION:** America is finally getting tough on immigration, protecting American workers, building the wall, and supporting our law enforcement like I.C.E, which deports criminals like MS-13. Democrats want to abolish I.C.E, protect Sanctuary Cities, and open our borders so drugs and crime pour in. We want America to be a sanctuary for law-abiding Americans, not criminal aliens.



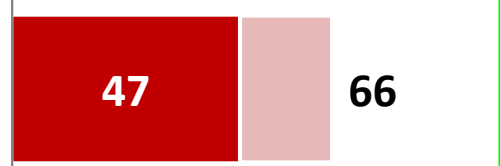
**ECONOMY:** America has the greatest economy in history. The economy grew at an incredible 4.1% rate last quarter, unemployment is at a 20-year low, and we created 40,000 new manufacturing jobs in July alone. And we passed the biggest tax cut in history, so more companies are investing here and you're getting more money in your paycheck. We must elect Republicans, so this growth continues.



**STANDING:** America is respected and strong again. We are defending our borders, supporting our law enforcement, and taking care of our vets. Our military will soon be stronger than it ever has been before. We are out of the crazy Iran deal and North Korea is giving up their nukes. Democrats don't want America to be America. We must elect Republicans so we can continue to stand up for America.

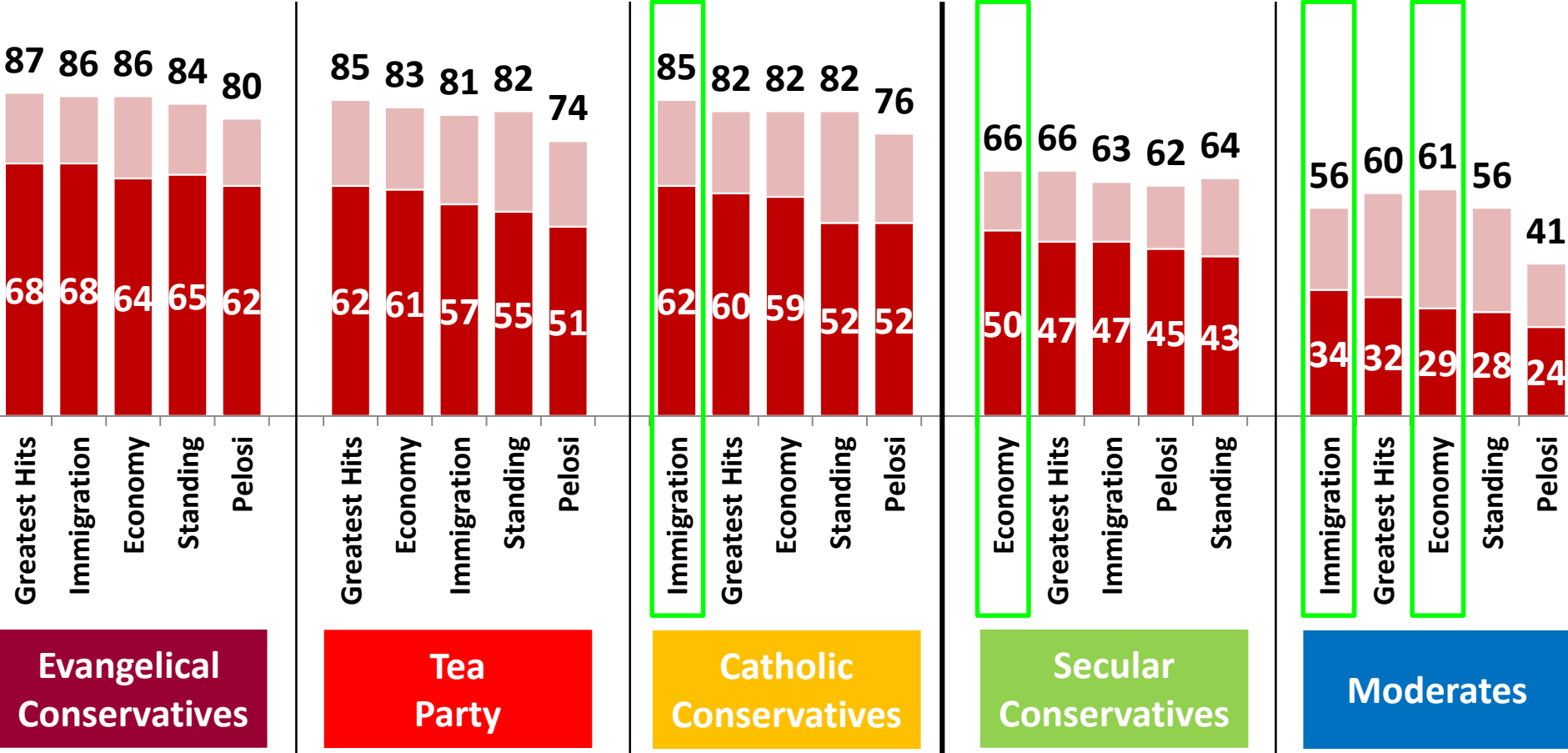


**PELOSI:** The Democrats and the dishonest media are losing their minds because they lost the election. They're owned by Nancy Pelosi and crazy Maxine Waters and they'll undo everything turning our country around. They'll raise your taxes, take your guns, continue their witch hunt, and open the border to drugs and crime. We must elect Republican to stop their unamerican agenda.



# GOP messages dramatically weaker with secular conservatives and moderates

Below is something that Donald Trump is saying about the country and why it is important to vote for Republicans for Congress and other offices in November. How much more positive do you feel about the Republican candidates for Congress and other offices after hearing that?

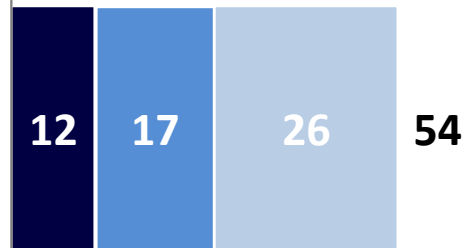


# Democratic message platform: politicians stop dividing & start working together

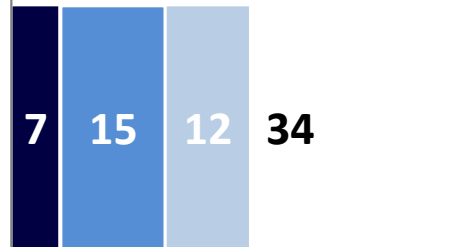
*Below is something that a Democratic candidate is saying about the country and why it is important to vote for Democrats for Congress and other offices in November. How much more positive do you feel about the Democratic candidates for Congress and other offices after hearing that?*

■ Much more positive  
■ Somewhat more

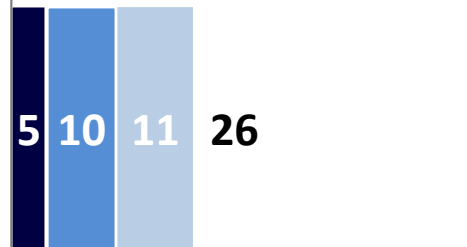
**WORK TOGETHER:** The political leaders in this country have created too much division and polarization. It is gridlocking our country so nothing gets done for the middle class. Listening to each other and working together is how we will help people earn enough to support themselves and their families, get the health care they need, and protect Social Security and Medicare. I will work with anyone, Democrat or Republican, to fix our problems.



**TAX SCAM FOR RICH:** We need new political leadership in Washington. They are dividing the country and handing the government over to their wealthy donors and corporations at the expense of working people and the middle class. The Republicans' tax scam for the rich recklessly drives up the deficit to justify their cuts to Social Security & Medicare and even less investment in education, infrastructure and health care. I won't take contributions from corporations, and I believe the very richest must pay more in taxes so we can invest in education and make health care more affordable.

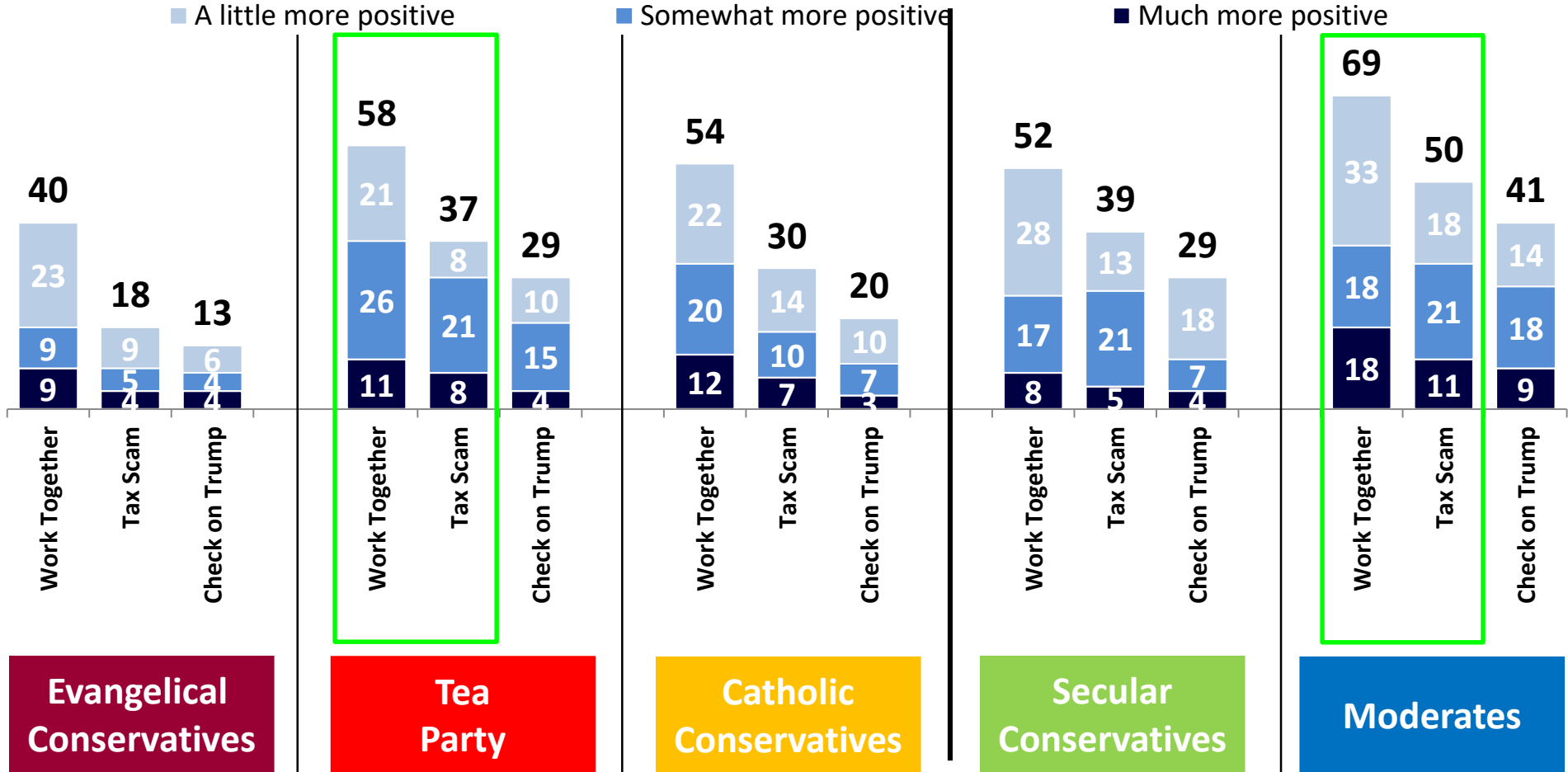


**CHECK ON TRUMP:** The political leaders in this country haven't had the backbone to be a check on President Trump. They're rubber-stamping his agenda to criminalize abortion. They ignore Trump's disrespectful behavior so he keeps saying and tweeting divisive things. And they can't be trusted to hold him accountable for scandals and corruption. What if the F.B.I. finds proof he or his campaign committed crimes? We must elect more Democrats so everyone must come together.



# Democrats vowing to put aside division to fix priorities & against the GOP tax scam for the rich viewed more positively by GOP targets

Below is something that a Democratic candidate is saying about the country and why it is important to vote for Democrats for Congress and other offices in November. How much more positive do you feel about the Democratic candidates for Congress and other offices after hearing that?



# Divisiveness, health care & swamp produce biggest doubts

Now you are going to read some reasons why some people say they cannot vote for the Republican candidate for Congress in November. For each one, indicate whether it raises very serious doubts about the Republican candidate, somewhat serious doubts, minor doubts, or no real doubts.

■ Very serious doubts ■ Somewhat serious ■ Minor



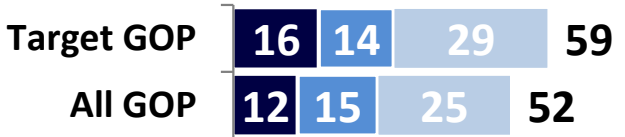
Target GOP excludes self-identified strong Republicans, religious Evangelicals, and religious Catholics = 26% of GOP

# Less powerful doubts about Republicans

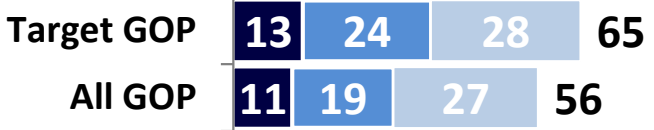
Now you are going to read some reasons why some people say they cannot vote for the Republican candidate for Congress in November. For each one, indicate whether it raises very serious doubts about the Republican candidate, somewhat serious doubts, minor doubts, or no real doubts.

■ Very serious doubts ■ Somewhat serious ■ Minor

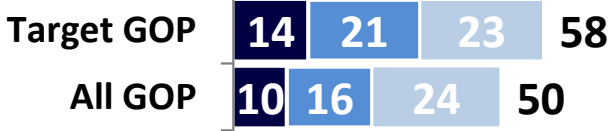
**MUELLER:** Our leaders can't be trusted to hold people accountable for breaking the law and interfering in our elections. They're calling the investigation into Russian interference a waste of time even though the Special Counsel has already issued 35 indictments and Trump's lawyer plead guilty to committing crimes at the President's direction.



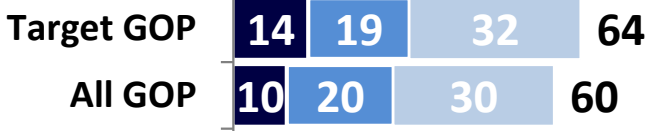
**WAGES STAGNANT:** Our leaders say this is the best economy in history with record low unemployment with rising wages but jobs don't pay what they used to and real people haven't seen a raise in years, while the cost of living keeps going up.



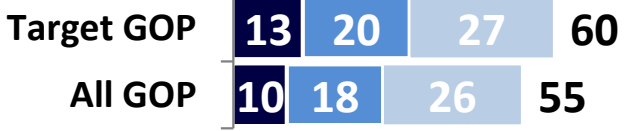
**ROE V WADE:** Our leaders in Congress are creating an extreme conservative majority on the Supreme Court that will overturn Roe v. Wade, the decision that governed abortion for the last 40 years. This would be an historic mistake that could make abortion illegal in some states, invade women's right to privacy and prevent women making their own reproductive choices.



**CONSERVATIVE:** Our leaders are not acting like real conservatives. They shouldn't be telling businesses who to hire or fire, picking winners and losers, restricting trade and imposing tariffs. The free market should decide, not political leaders on either side.



**ENVIRONMENT:** Our leaders have put our health and safety at risk by rolling back laws protecting the environment from pollution and refusing to address climate change.



Target GOP excludes self-identified strong Republicans, religious Evangelicals, and religious Catholics = 26% of GOP

# EXECUTING

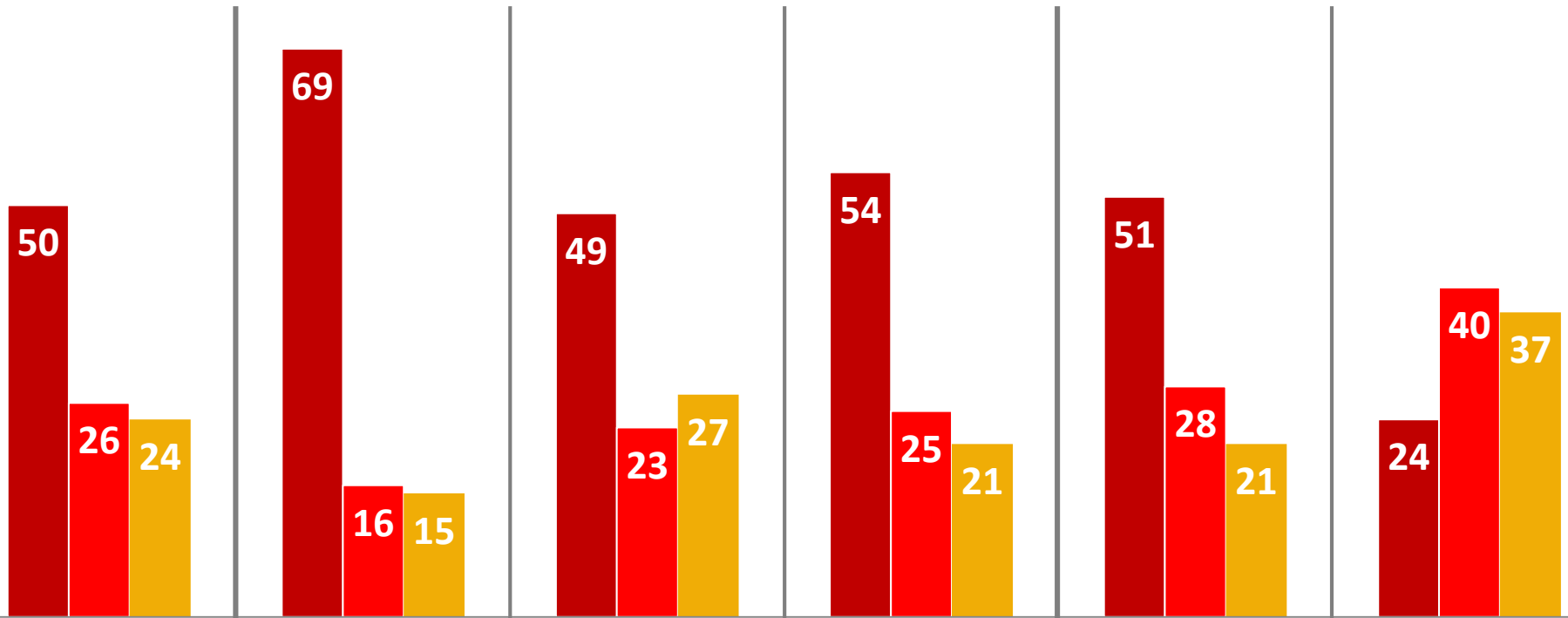




# GOP targets disproportionately independents and weak partisans

## SELF-REPORTED PARTY AFFILIATION

■ Strong Republican    ■ Weak Republican    ■ Republican-leaning Independent



All Republicans

Evangelical  
Conservatives

Tea Party

Catholic  
Conservatives

Secular  
Conservatives

Moderates

# Partisan score validated with self-reported party ID

PARTISAN SCORE								
JULY NATIONAL PHONE SURVEY	Total RV	Strong Democrat	Weak Democrat	Independent lean Democrat	Independent	Independent lean Republican	Weak Republican	Strong Republican
<i>0 to 19</i>	27	1	6	16	17	43	51	62
<i>20 to 39</i>	12	6	7	6	18	21	18	14
<i>40 to 59</i>	11	7	15	9	15	16	12	11
<i>60 to 79</i>	11	9	18	22	12	7	11	5
<i>80 to 100</i>	40	77	54	47	38	12	9	7
JUNE BATTLEGROUND PHONE SURVEY	Total RV	Strong Democrat	Weak Democrat	Independent lean Democrat	Independent	Independent lean Republican	Weak Republican	Strong Republican
<i>0 to 19</i>	29	9	13	7	19	37	54	55
<i>20 to 39</i>	11	2	8	12	19	17	16	13
<i>40 to 59</i>	12	6	12	14	18	18	17	11
<i>60 to 79</i>	11	10	22	13	22	10	4	7
<i>80 to 100</i>	37	73	45	54	22	17	9	14



# Ideology score also overlays well with self-reported party ID

IDEOLOGY SCORE								
JULY NATIONAL PHONE SURVEY	Total RV	Strong Democrat	Weak Democrat	Independent lean Democrat	Independent	Independent lean Republican	Weak Republican	Strong Republican
<i>0 to 19</i>	19	2	3	8	10	27	27	51
<i>20 to 39</i>	19	6	13	13	24	34	34	23
<i>40 to 59</i>	22	18	17	29	29	30	24	18
<i>60 to 79</i>	20	27	43	32	22	6	9	6
<i>80 to 100</i>	20	47	24	18	14	3	7	2
JUNE BATTLEGROUND PHONE SURVEY	Total RV	Strong Democrat	Weak Democrat	Independent lean Democrat	Independent	Independent lean Republican	Weak Republican	Strong Republican
<i>0 to 19</i>	20	5	5	3	11	25	38	43
<i>20 to 39</i>	19	6	22	19	20	27	25	25
<i>40 to 59</i>	22	17	19	21	40	29	28	17
<i>60 to 79</i>	23	36	34	34	22	15	5	12
<i>80 to 100</i>	16	35	19	22	7	4	4	3



# GOP target group = 26% of GOP

**DEFINITION:** excludes self-identified strong Republicans, religious Evangelicals, and religious Catholics

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

I need to vote in the midterm election in November to elect leaders who will defend President Trump.

I need to vote in the midterm election in November to elect some leaders who will be a check on President Trump.

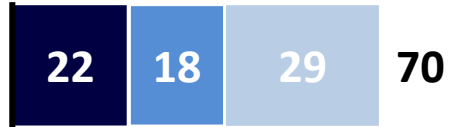


+16

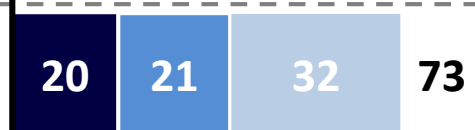
Now you are going to read some reasons why some people say they cannot vote for the Republican candidate for Congress in November. For each one, indicate whether it raises very serious doubts about the Republican candidate, somewhat serious doubts, minor doubts, or no real doubts.

Very serious doubts   Somewhat serious   Minor

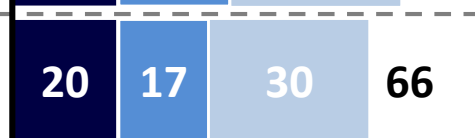
**DIVISIVE:** Our leaders are dividing the country. Their combative rhetoric and ugly statements about the other party keep us from working together and getting things done.



**REPEAL ACA:** Our leaders promised to repeal and replace Obamacare with better, more affordable plans. Instead they pushed premiums up by 30%, did nothing about skyrocketing prescription drug costs, and now they're allowing insurance companies to charge more for pre-existing conditions.



**DRAIN SWAMP:** Our leaders promised to drain the swamp, but instead they approved a cabinet full of billionaire donors and Wall Street bankers who have had more ethics violations than any administration or congress in history. Corporate lobbyists have unprecedented access and are giving record breaking sums of campaign dollars to get them re-elected and get their way.



## DEMOCRATIC MESSAGE PLATFORM

**WORK TOGETHER:** The political leaders in this country have created too much division and polarization. It is gridlocking our country so nothing gets done for the middle class. Listening to each other and working together is how we will help people earn enough to support themselves and their families, get the health care they need, and protect Social Security and Medicare. I will work with anyone, Democrat or Republican, to fix our problems.

**DIVISIVE:** Our leaders are dividing the country. Their combative rhetoric and ugly statements about the other party keep us from working together and getting things done.

## OTHER STRONG DOUBTS ABOUT REPUBLICANS

**REPEAL ACA:** Our leaders promised to repeal and replace Obamacare with better, more affordable plans. Instead they pushed premiums up by 30%, did nothing about skyrocketing prescription drug costs, and now they're allowing insurance companies to charge more for pre-existing conditions.

**DRAIN SWAMP:** Our leaders promised to drain the swamp, but instead they approved a cabinet full of billionaire donors and Wall Street bankers who have had more ethics violations than any administration or congress in history. Corporate lobbyists have unprecedented access and are giving record breaking sums of campaign dollars to get them re-elected and get their way.

## POTENTIAL DOUBTS ABOUT REPUBLICANS

**PERSONAL EXCESS:** Republican leaders promised to change Washington, but their misuse of taxpayer dollars is business as usual. One cabinet official violated the law by spending \$43,000 on an unneeded soundproof phone booth for his personal use and spent \$153,000 on first class and chartered flights in 2017, but they looked the other way.

**GET RICH IN OFFICE:** Republican leaders said enough corruption, but then they rushed to cash in. Just this month two top Republicans in Congress were arrested for insider trading and illegally using \$250,000 in campaign funds on personal expenses. They think the rules don't apply to them.

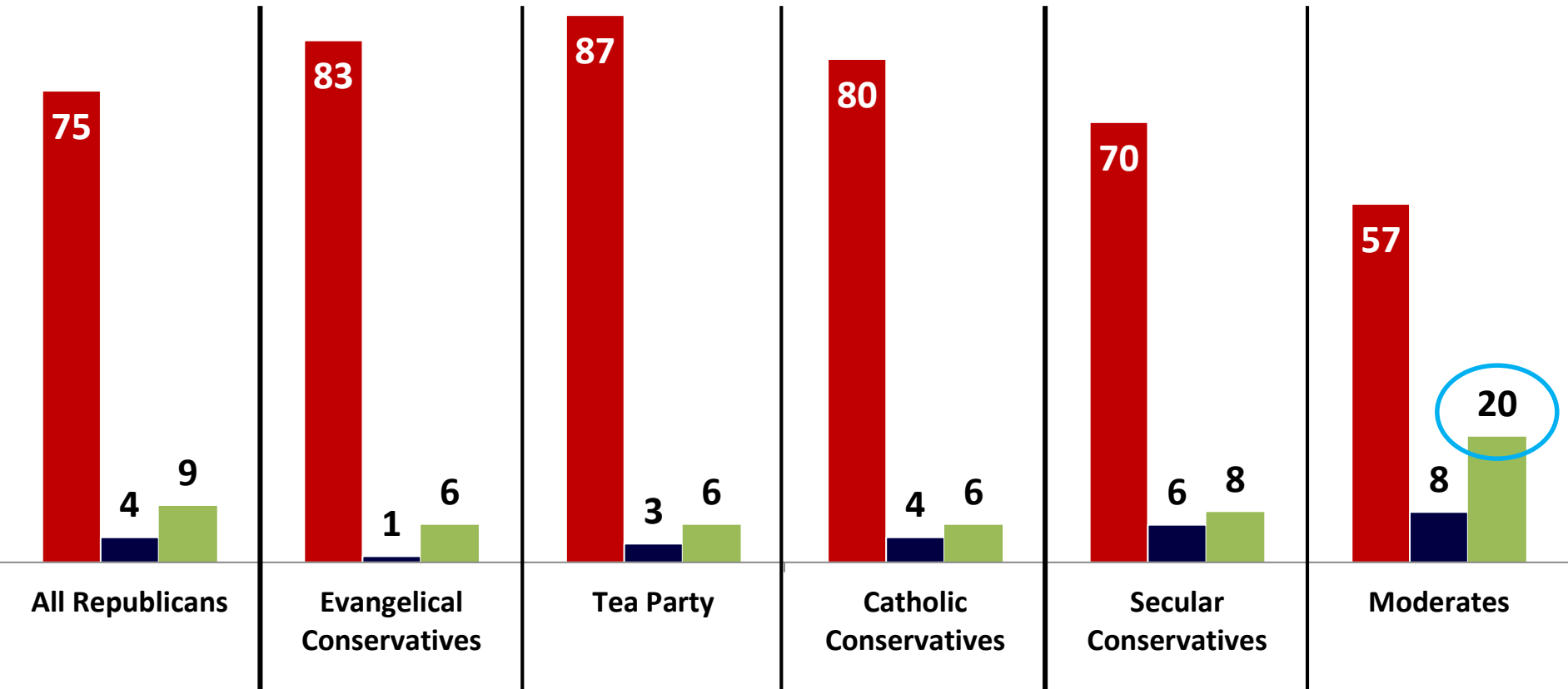


# Independent in 2020? 1/10<sup>th</sup> of GOP & 1/5<sup>th</sup> of moderates

*I know it's a long way off, but thinking about the election for President in 2020, would you vote for Republican Donald Trump, the Democratic candidate, or Third Party Independent candidate John Kasich?*

## 2020 3-WAY PRESIDENTIAL BALLOT

■ Republican Donald Trump    
 ■ Democratic Presidential Candidate    
 ■ Independent John Kasich



# 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 20005

Phone: +1 202 478 8300

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

