

**GREENBERG QUINLAN ROSNER** RESEARCH

June 3, 2008

# Another Congressional Wave Election?

Survey in 45 Republican House districts

May 19-26, 2008

1,600 Likely Voters in 45 Republican-held battleground districts



**DEMOCRACY CORPS**  
CARVILLE ♦ GREENBERG

## Competitive district types: Republican-held

### Suburban (10 of 45): 21%

33% Middle Atlantic, 26% East North Central

- Connecticut 4
- Illinois 10
- Michigan 9
- Nevada 3
- New Jersey 7
- New York 25
- Ohio 14
- Pennsylvania 6
- Virginia 11
- Washington 8

### Suburban/Rural (6 of 45): 14%

22% Middle Atlantic, 19% Deep South

- Colorado 4
- Missouri 6
- New York 26
- North Carolina 8
- Ohio 16
- West Virginia 2

### Urban (11 of 45): 23%

36% Deep South, 30% East North Central

- Florida 8
- Florida 13
- Florida 21
- Illinois 18
- Minnesota 3
- New Jersey 3
- New Mexico 1
- New York 13
- Ohio 1
- Ohio 15
- Virginia 2

### Rural/Small Town (7 of 45): 17%

46% Mountain States, 24% Middle Atlantic

- Alabama 2
- Alaska 1
- Arizona 1
- Idaho 1
- New Mexico 2
- New York 29
- Wyoming 1

### Exurban (7 of 45): 17%

45% East North Central, 27% Deep South

- California 4
- Florida 24
- Illinois 11
- Michigan 7
- New Jersey 2
- Ohio 2
- Virginia 10

### Urban/Rural (4 of 45): 9%

49% Border States, 27% Deep South, 24% West North Central

- Kentucky 2
- Louisiana 4
- Maryland 1
- Missouri 9

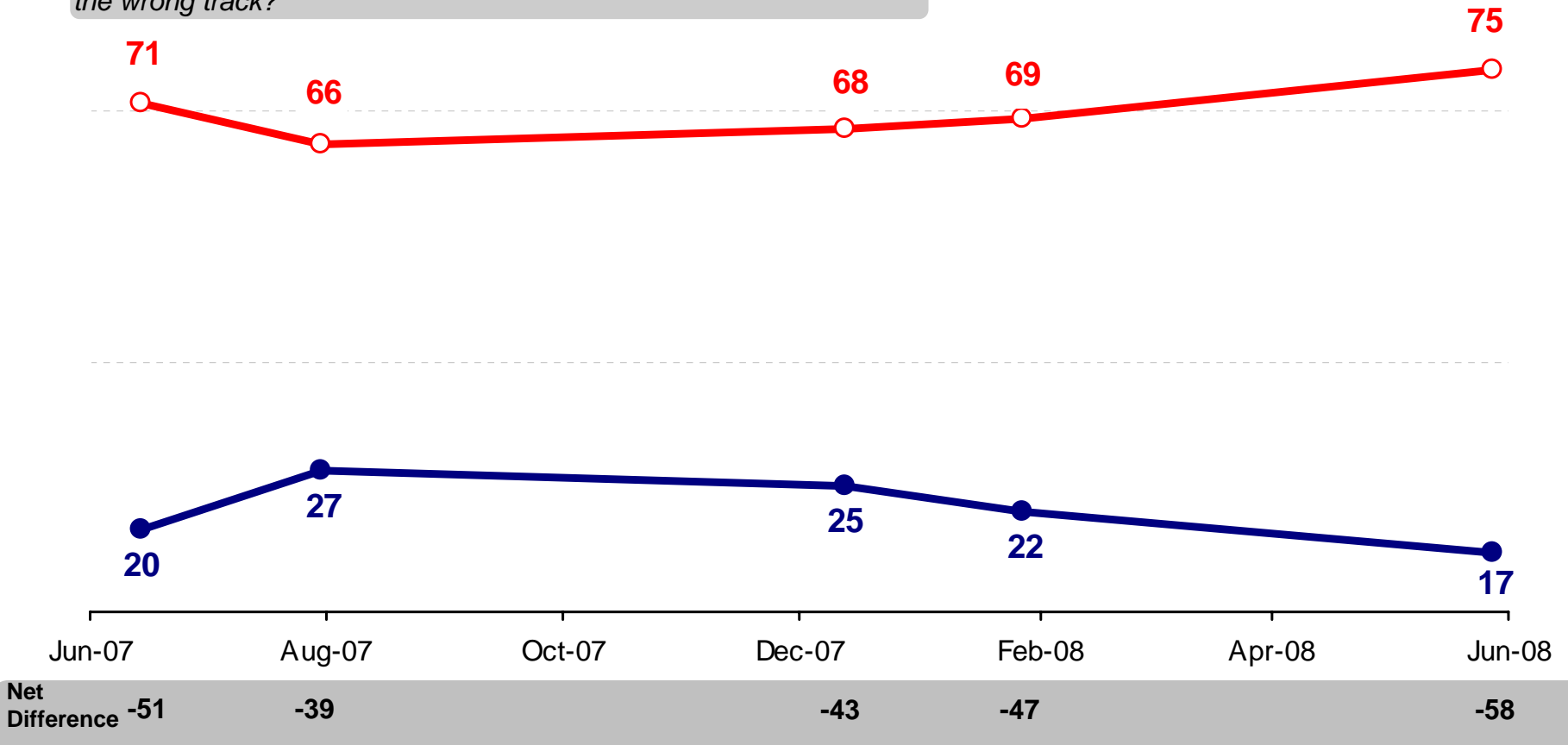
# A change election in the battleground

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# Disgust with status quo at highest level

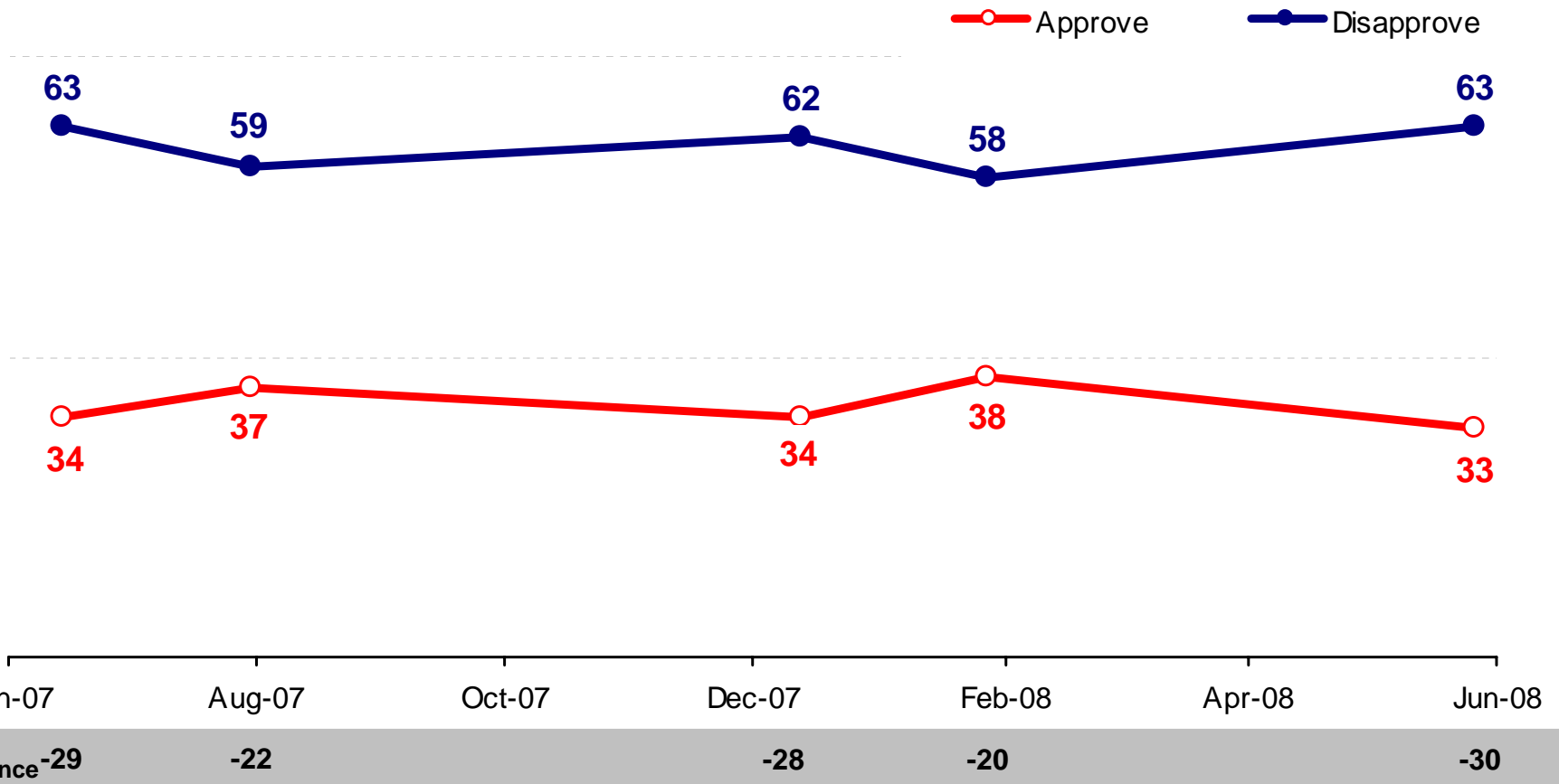
Generally speaking, do you think things in the country are going in the right direction, or do you feel things have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track?

○ Wrong track ● Right direction



# Bush job approval at only 33 percent in Republican districts

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

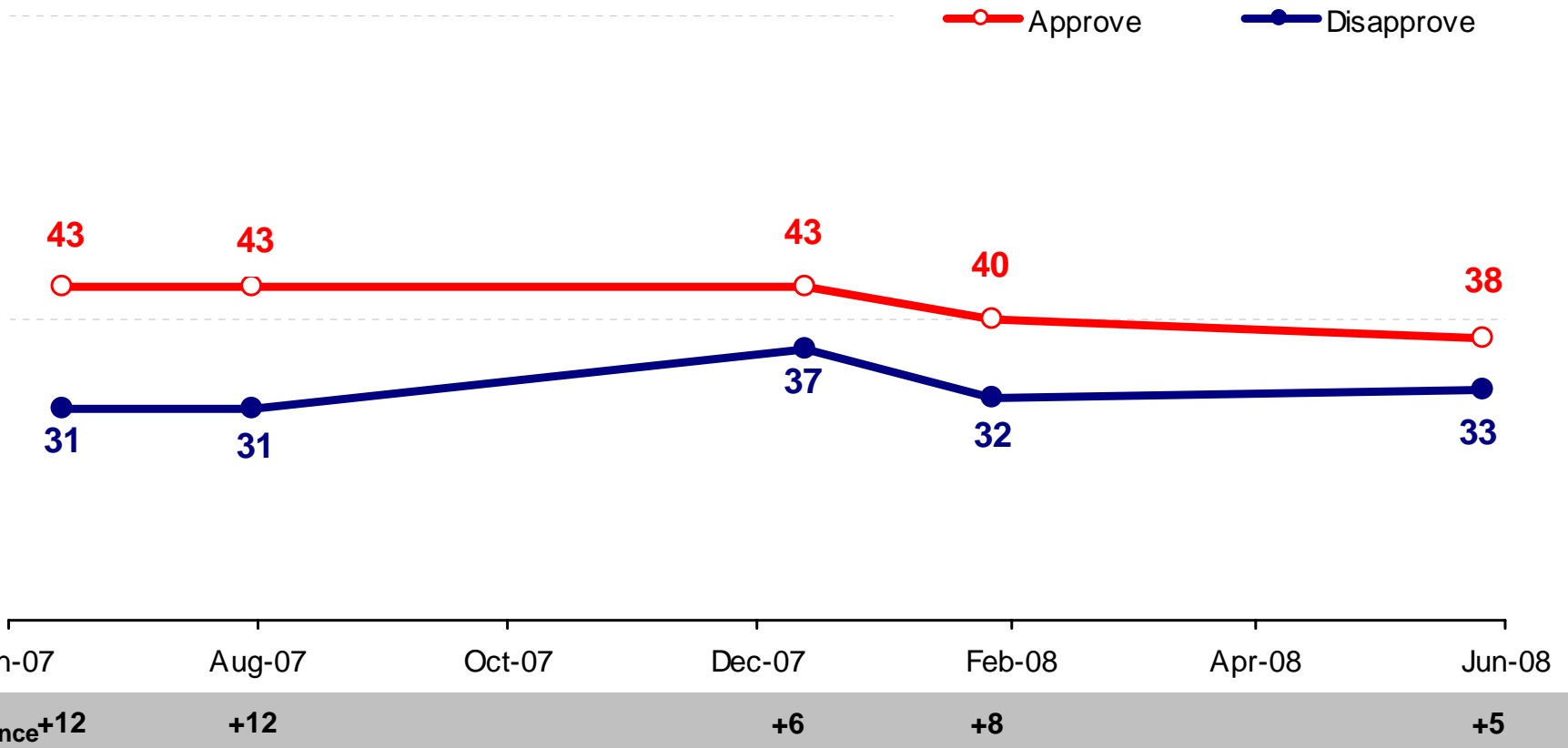


# The Congressional Race

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# Republican incumbent job approval slips to 38 percent

Do you approve or disapprove of the way (member of Congress)\* is handling his/her job as a member of the U.S. Congress?



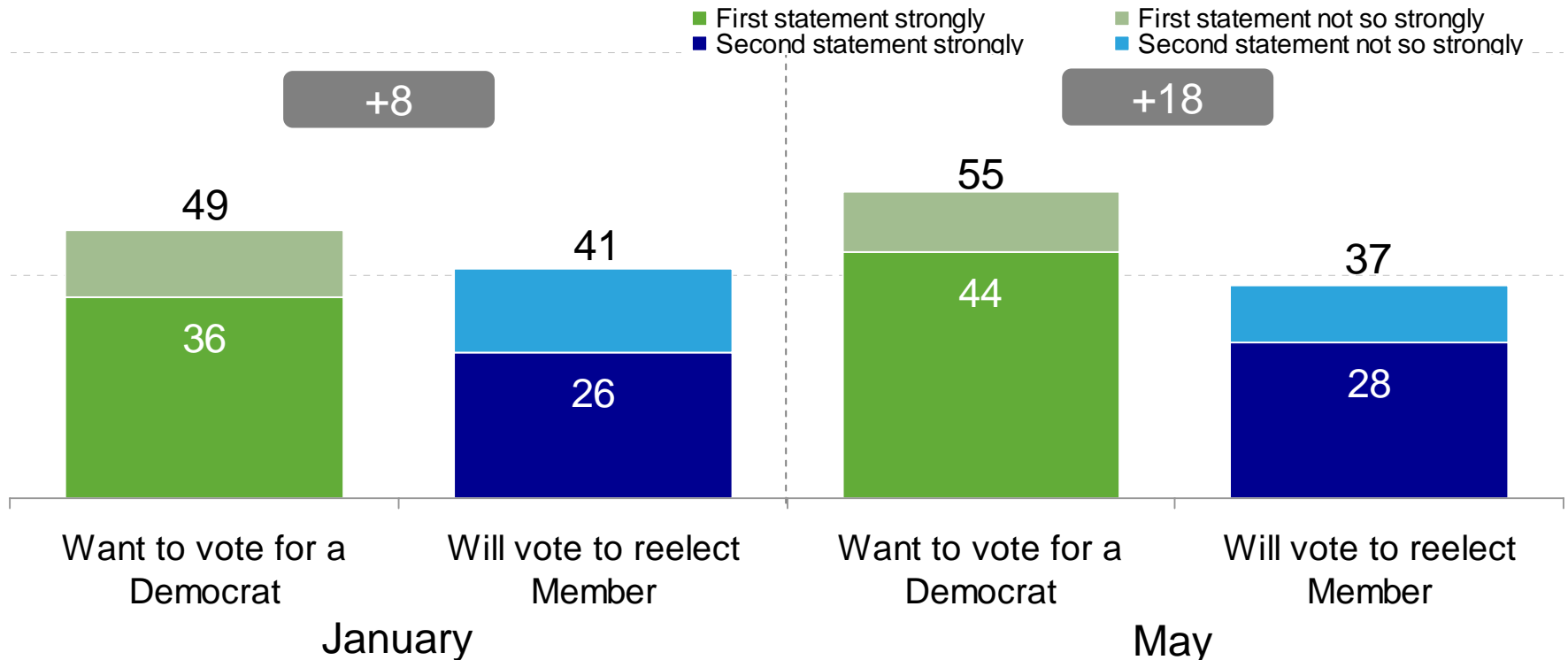
\*Note: Actual names of incumbents inserted.

# Majority now in GOP CDs want to vote for Democrat, not own member

Now I'm going to read you some pairs of statements. As I read each pair, please tell me whether the FIRST statement or the SECOND statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right:

Statement 1: In November, I really want to be able to vote for a Democrat for Congress because at least he or she will fight for change.

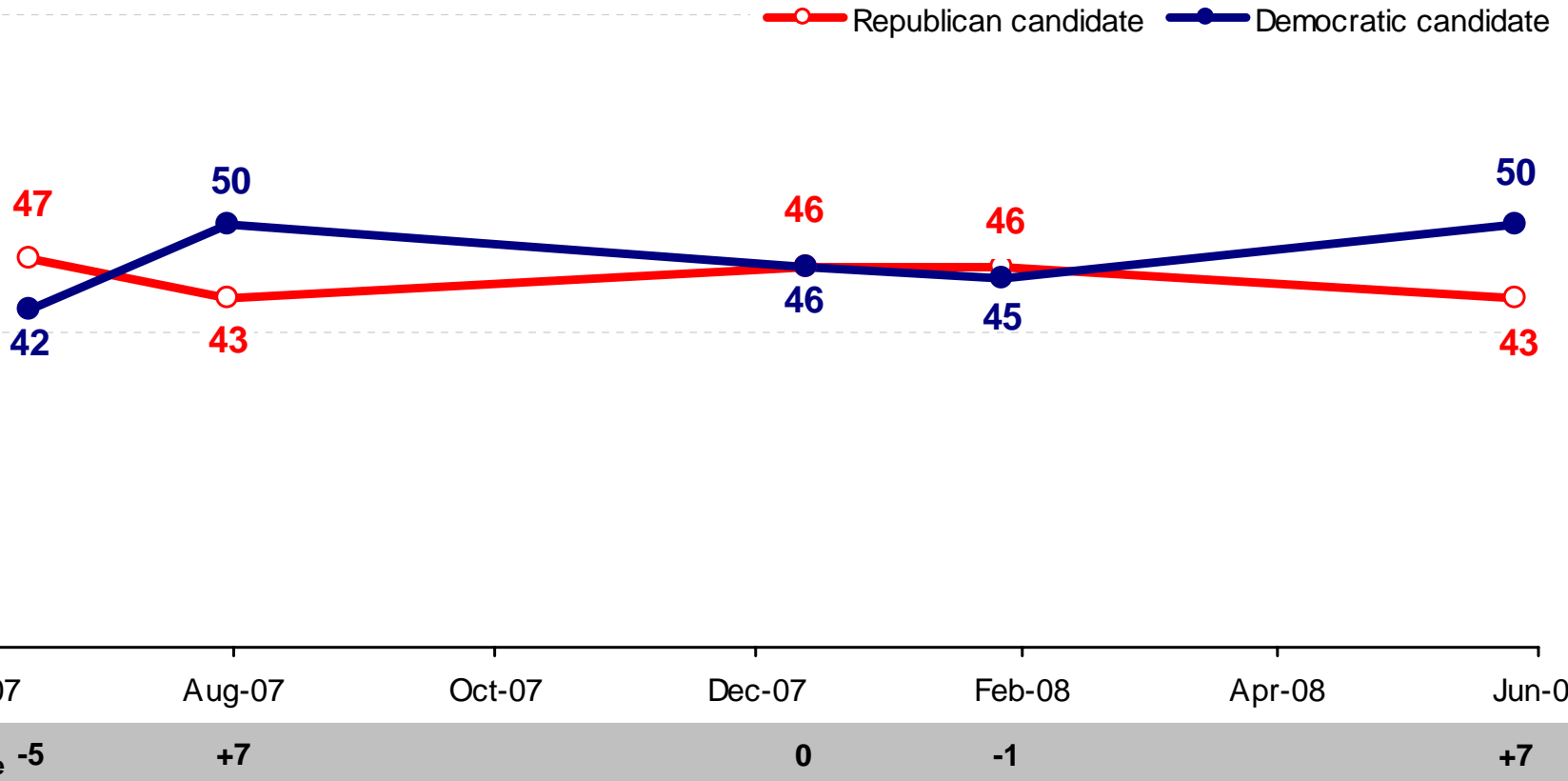
Statement 2: In November, I will vote for (Member of Congress)\* because the new Democratic Congress is just business as usual and getting no more done than the last one.



\*Note: Actual names of incumbents inserted, unless asked in an open seat.

# Democrats take lead in expanded Republican battleground

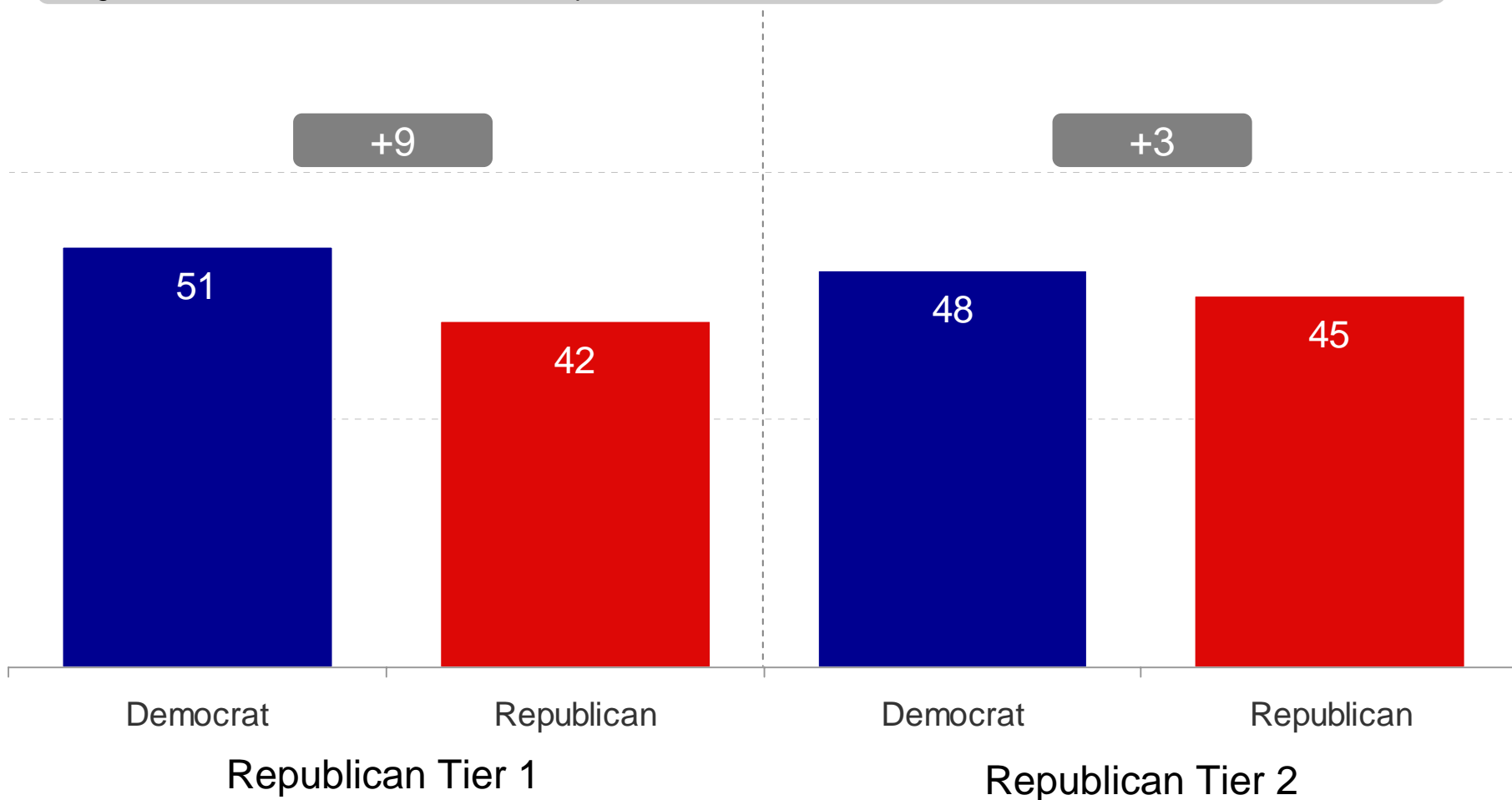
Thinking about the election for Congress in November, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today, would you be voting for the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate\*?



\*Note: Actual names of incumbents inserted, and a generic candidate was inserted for the opposing party.

## Democrats hold lead in most competitive Republican districts

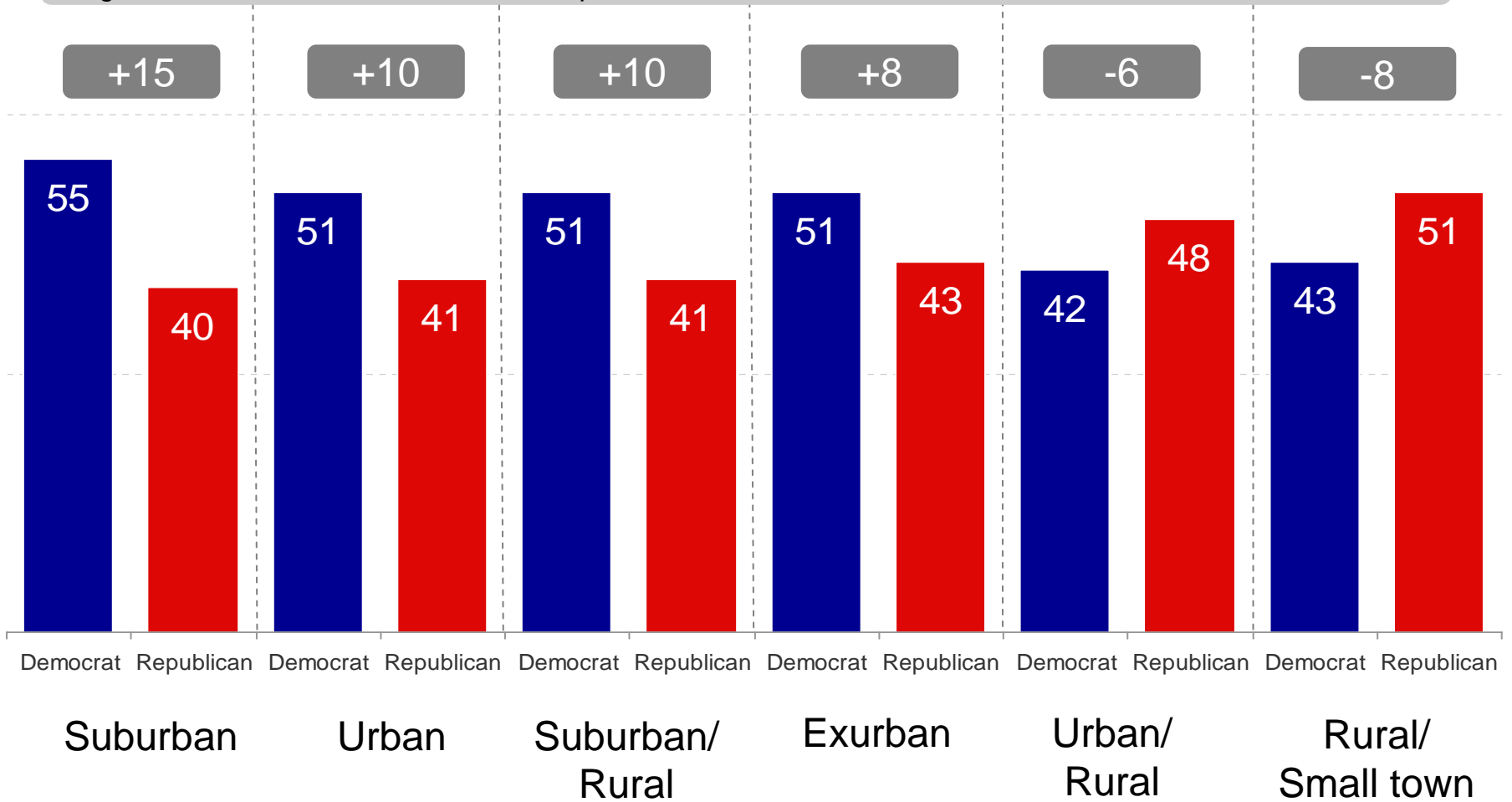
*Thinking about the election for Congress in November, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today, would you be voting for the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate\*?*



*\*Note: Actual names of incumbents inserted, and a generic candidate was inserted for the opposing party.*

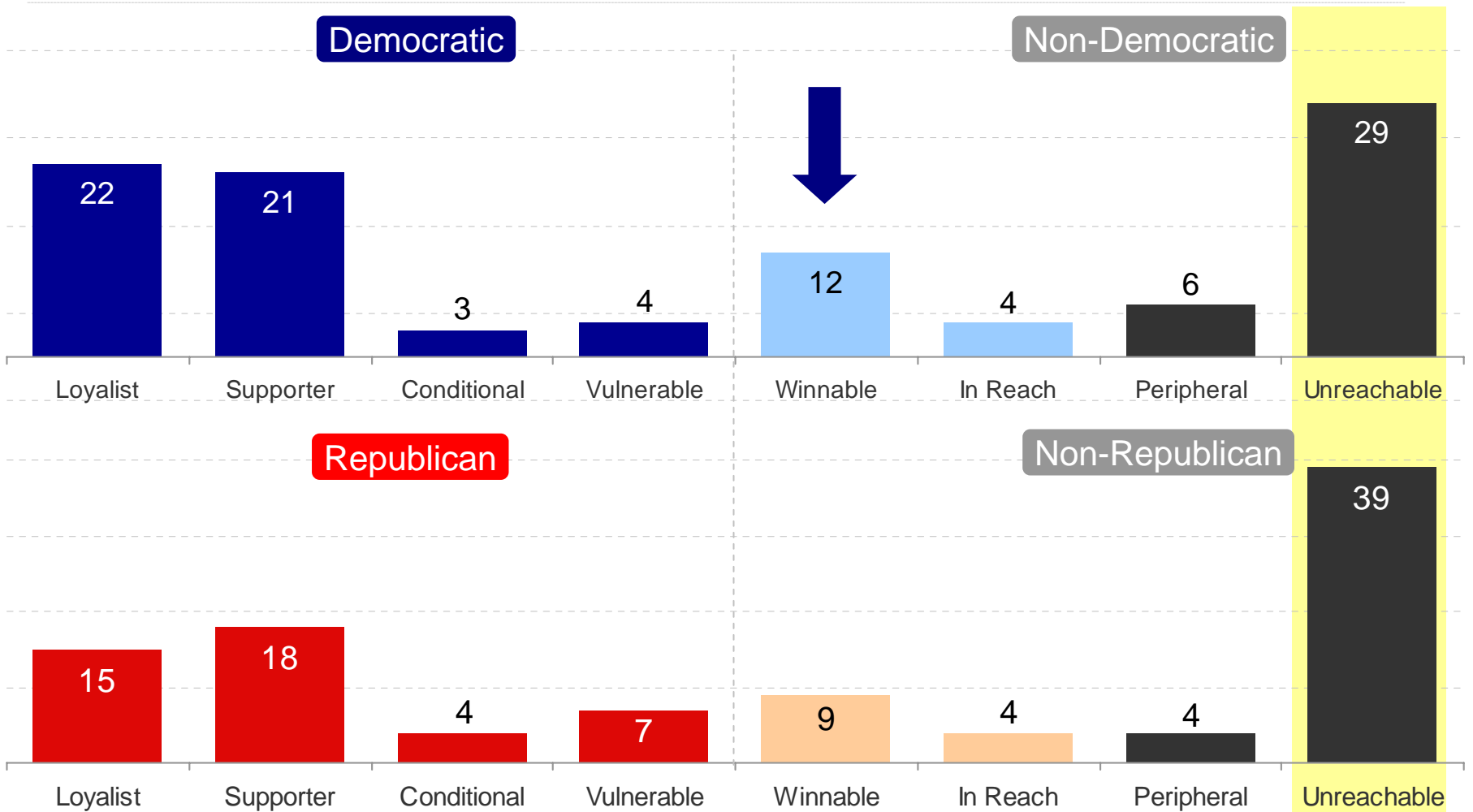
# Democrats best in suburban districts, challenged in rural-small town

Thinking about the election for Congress in November, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today, would you be voting for the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate\*?

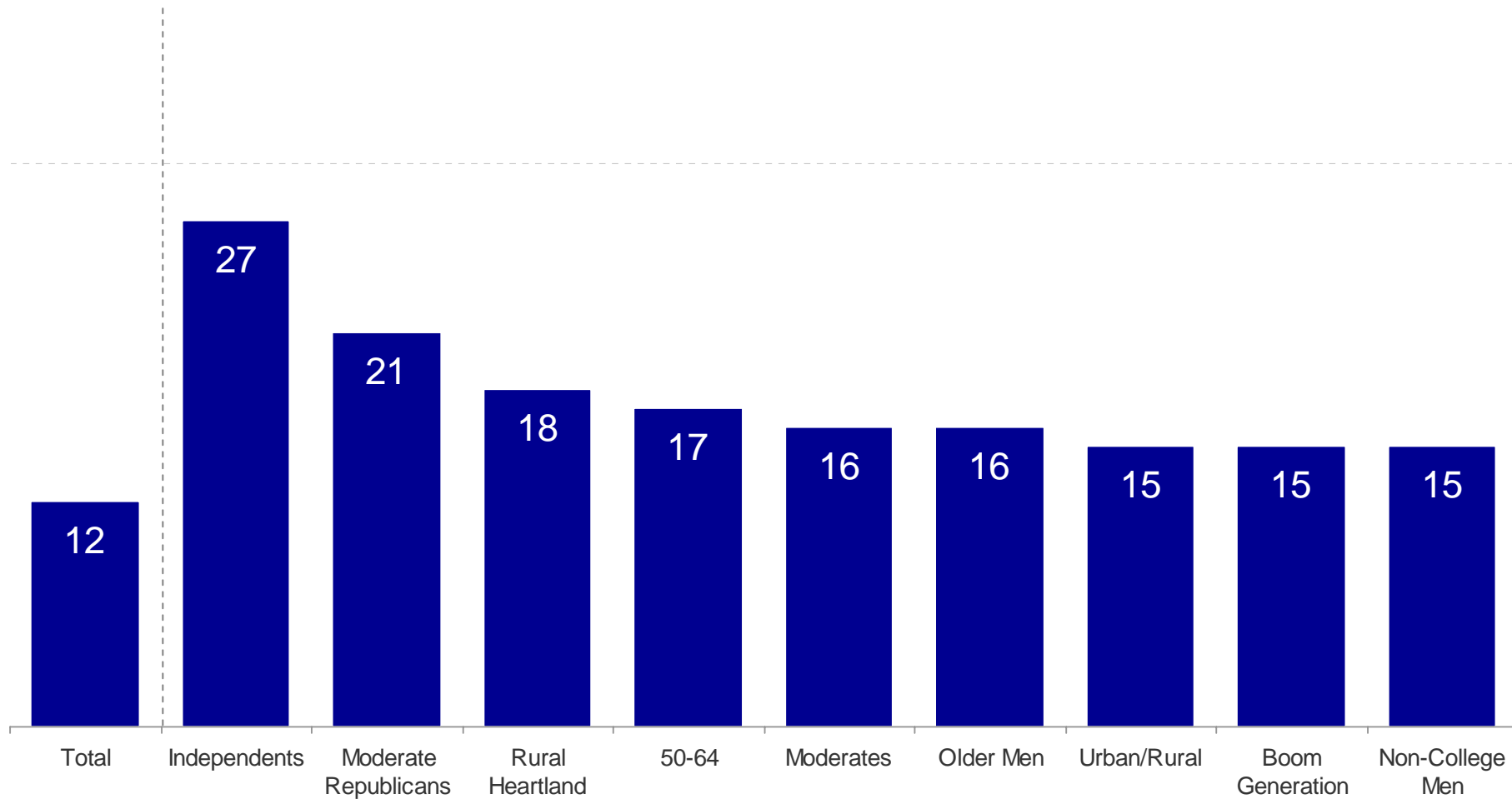


\*Note: Actual names of incumbents inserted, and a generic candidate was inserted for the opposing party.

# Congressional Voter Choice Scale: Democrats have more loyalists and less vulnerable and more winnable



# Those groups most “winnable” from voter choice scale



# The Presidential context

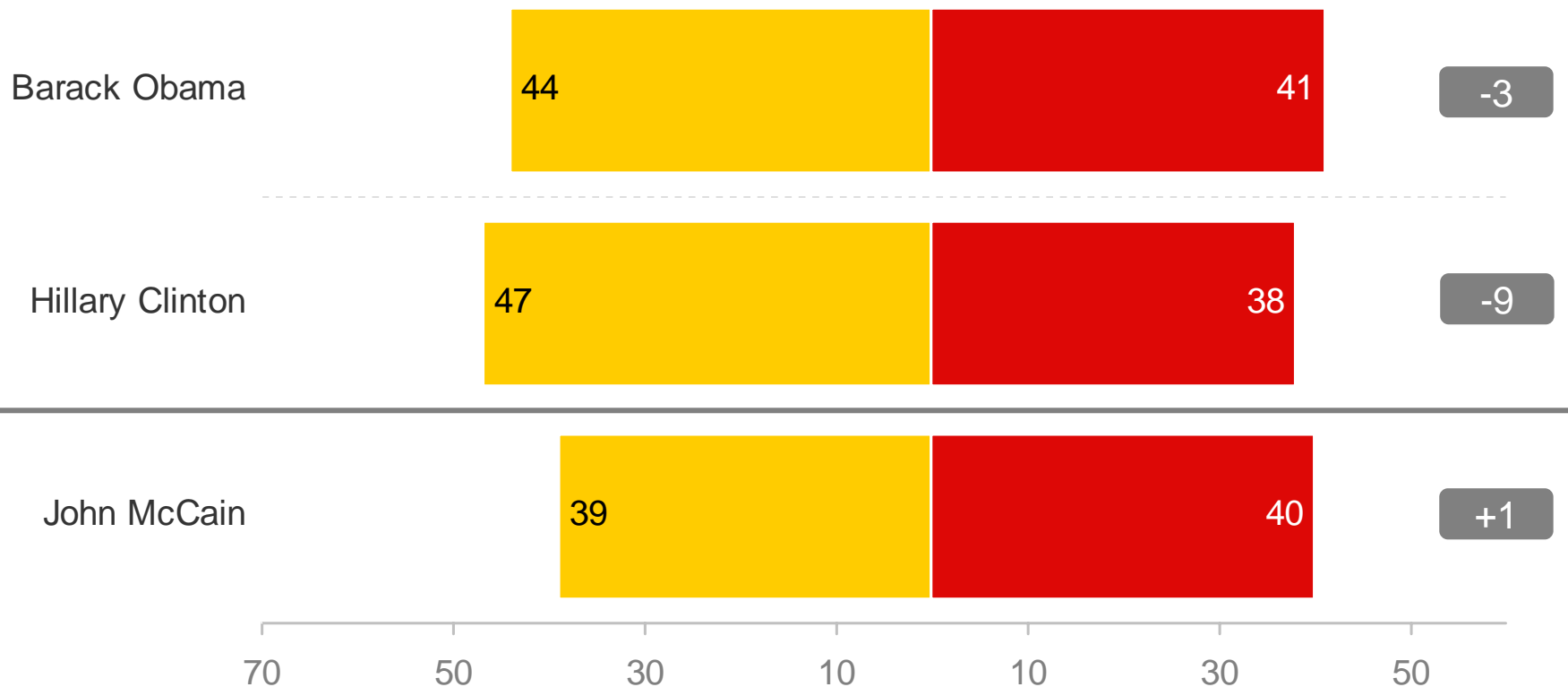
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# Obama and McCain with comparable favorability in GOP districts

Now, I'd like to rate your feelings toward some people and organizations, with one hundred meaning a VERY WARM, FAVORABLE feeling; zero meaning a VERY COLD, UNFAVORABLE feeling; and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold.

■ Cool ■ Warm

Net

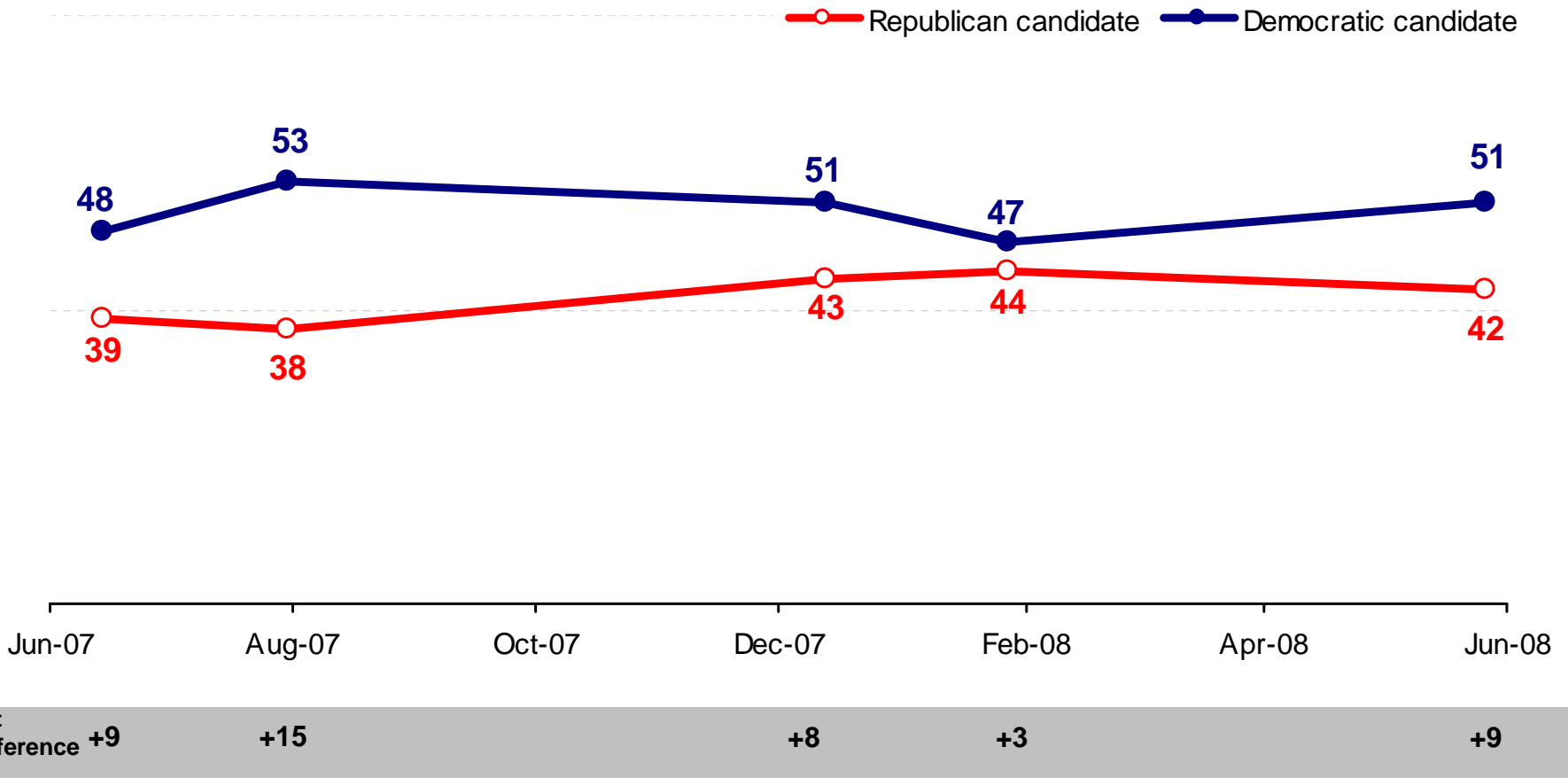






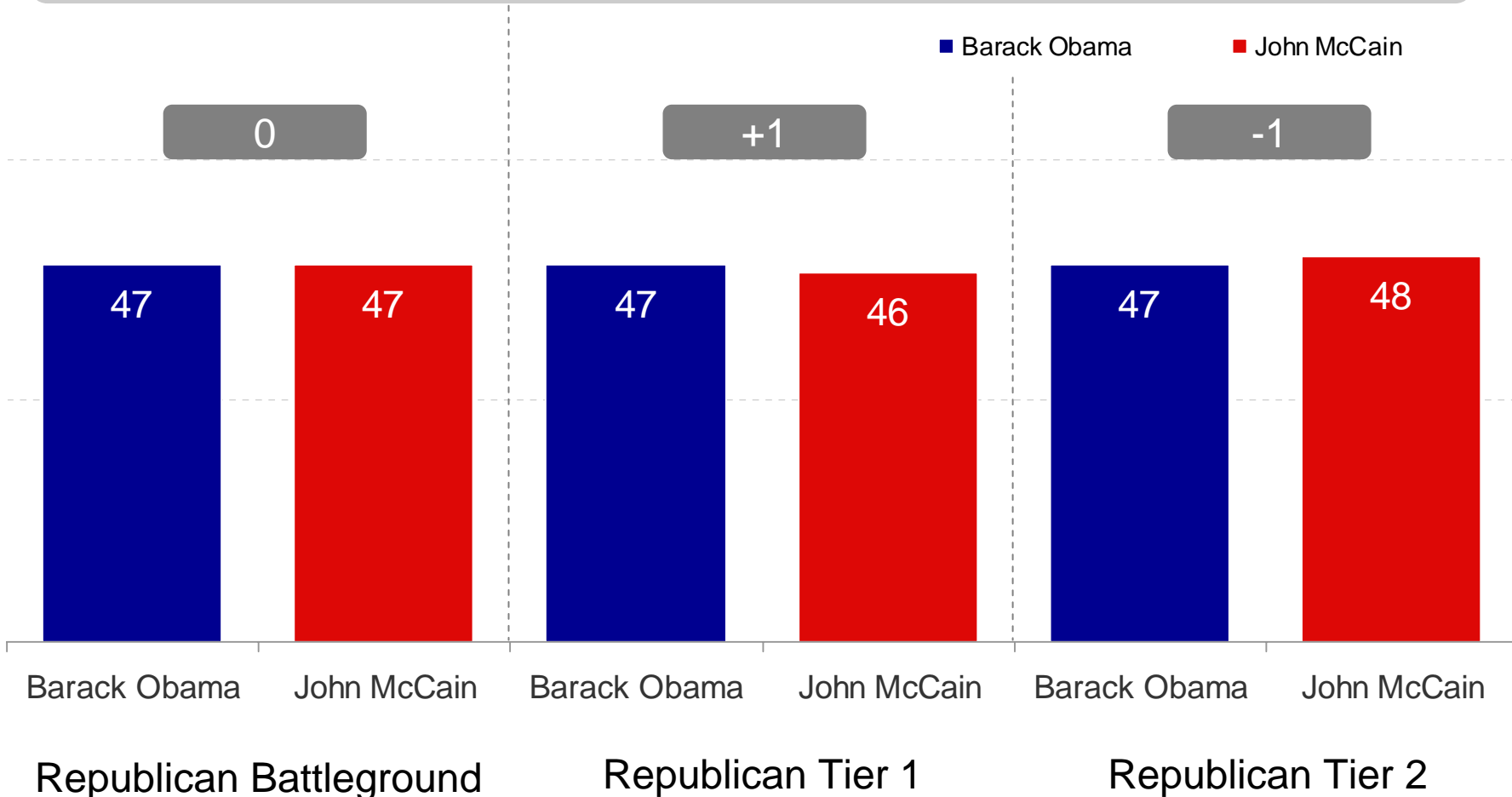
# Democrats lead generic presidential vote in GOP territory

*I know it is a long way off, but thinking about the election in November, if the election for president were held today, for whom would you vote – the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate?*



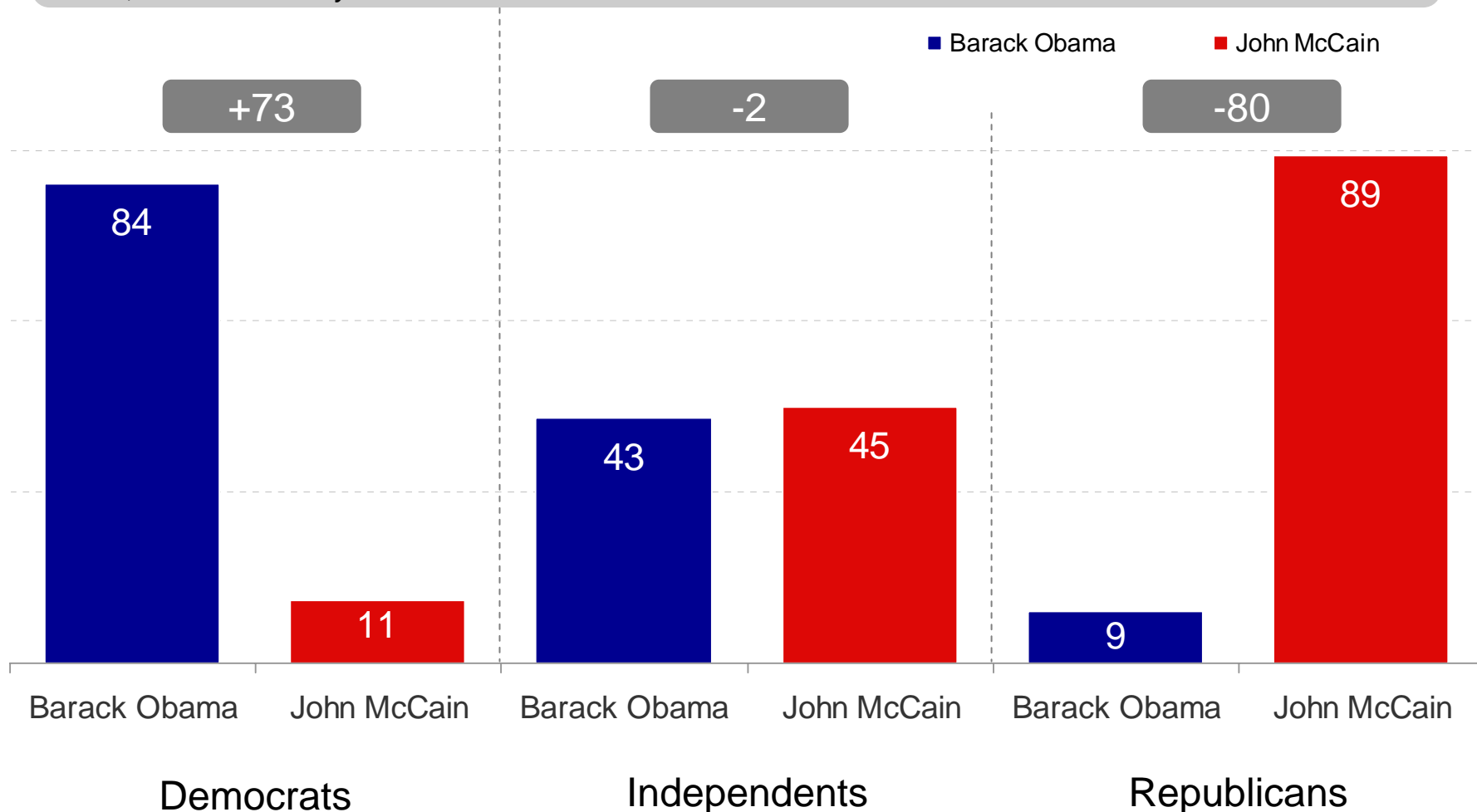
# Obama even in Republican-held congressional battleground

*Now let me ask you again about your vote for President but with the candidate names. I know it is a long way off, but if the election for president were held today and the candidates were – Democrat Barack Obama and Republican John McCain, for whom would you vote?*



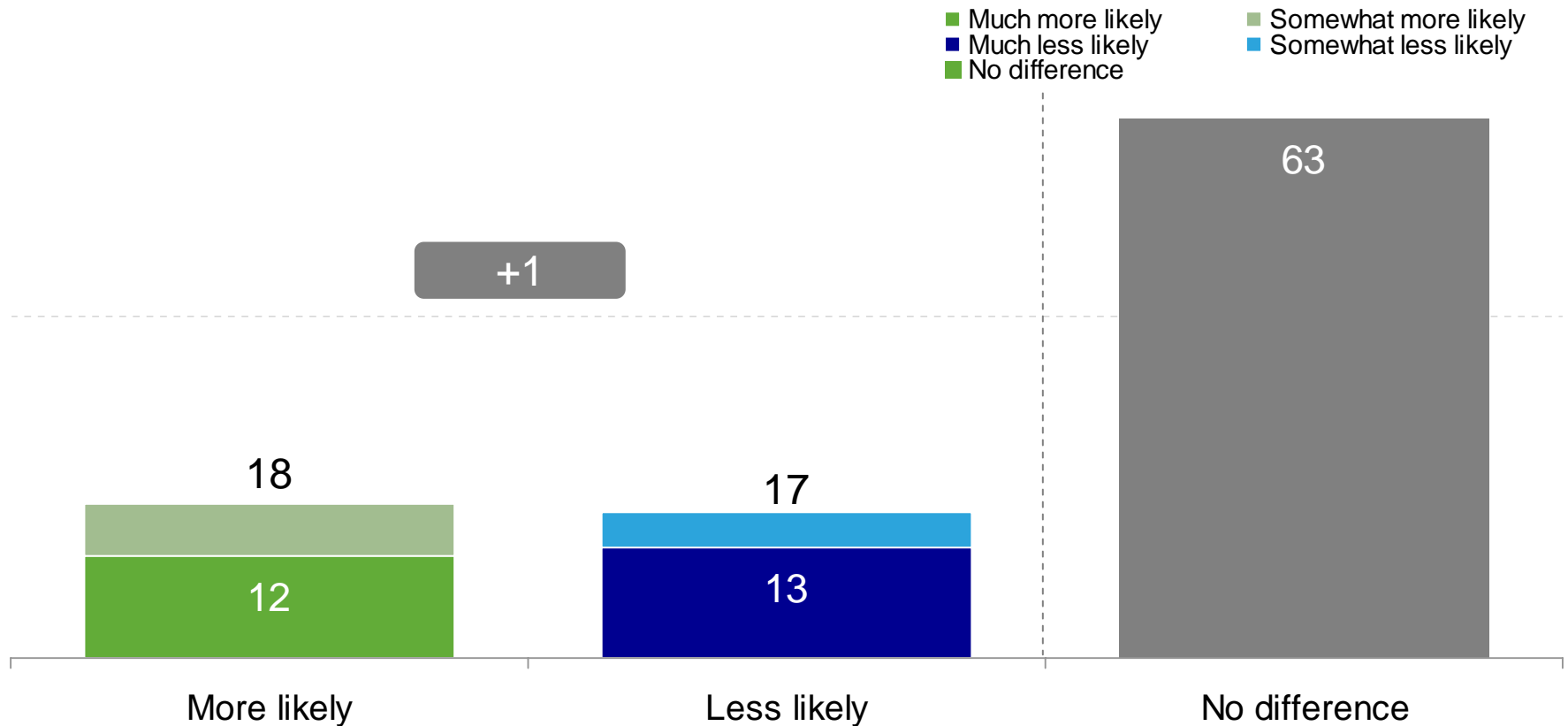
## Obama and McCain split independents in battleground

Now let me ask you again about your vote for President but with the candidate names. I know it is a long way off, but if the election for president were held today and the candidates were – Democrat Barack Obama and Republican John McCain, for whom would you vote?



# Obama not seen as hurting nor helping Democratic candidates

*If Barack Obama emerged from the primaries as the Democratic presidential nominee, would that make you more likely or less likely to support (DEMOCRATIC HOUSE CANDIDATE) for Congress, or would it make no difference to you?*

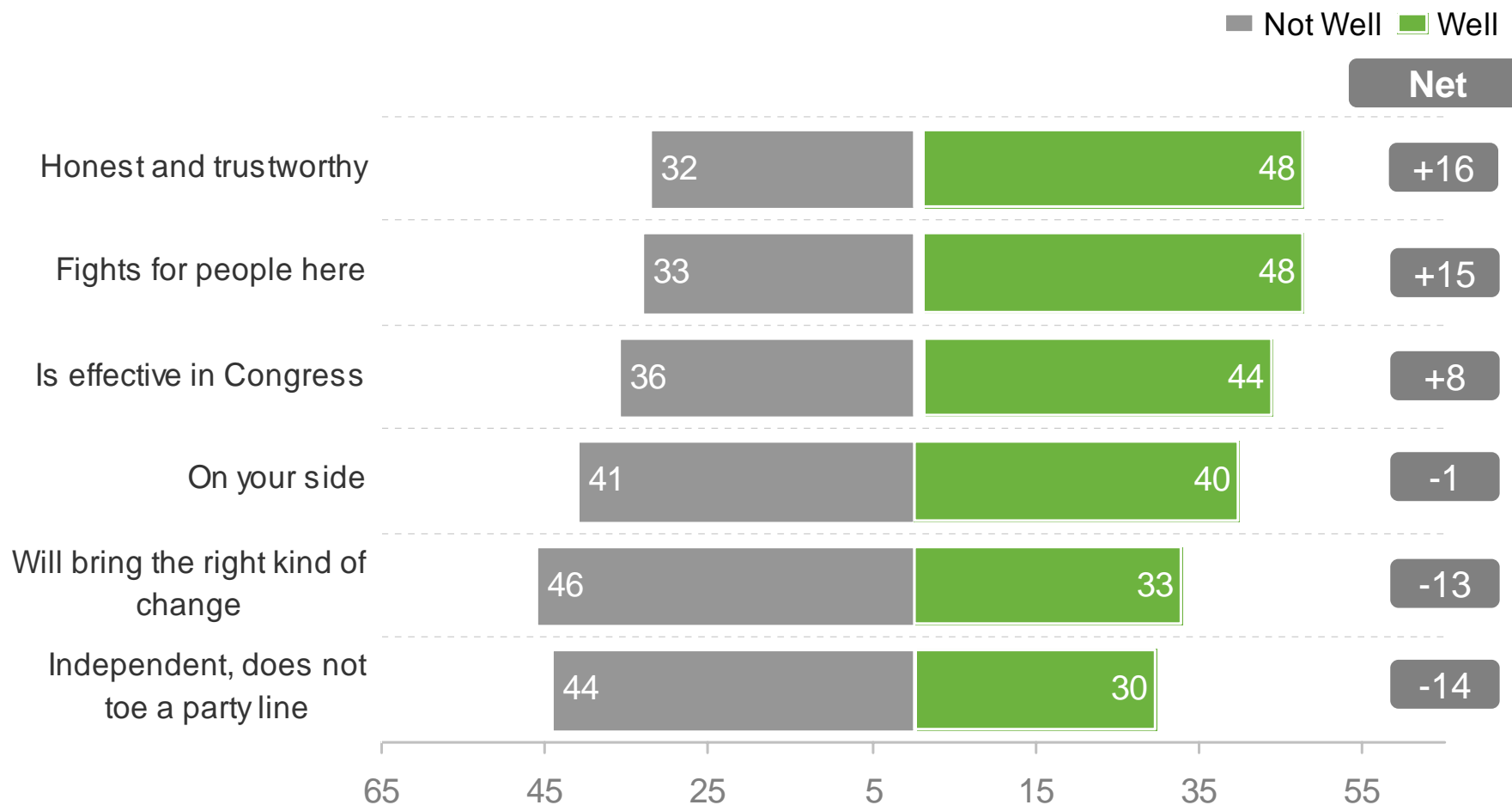


# Incumbents weak personal standing

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## Positive attributes of incumbent: none top 50 percent

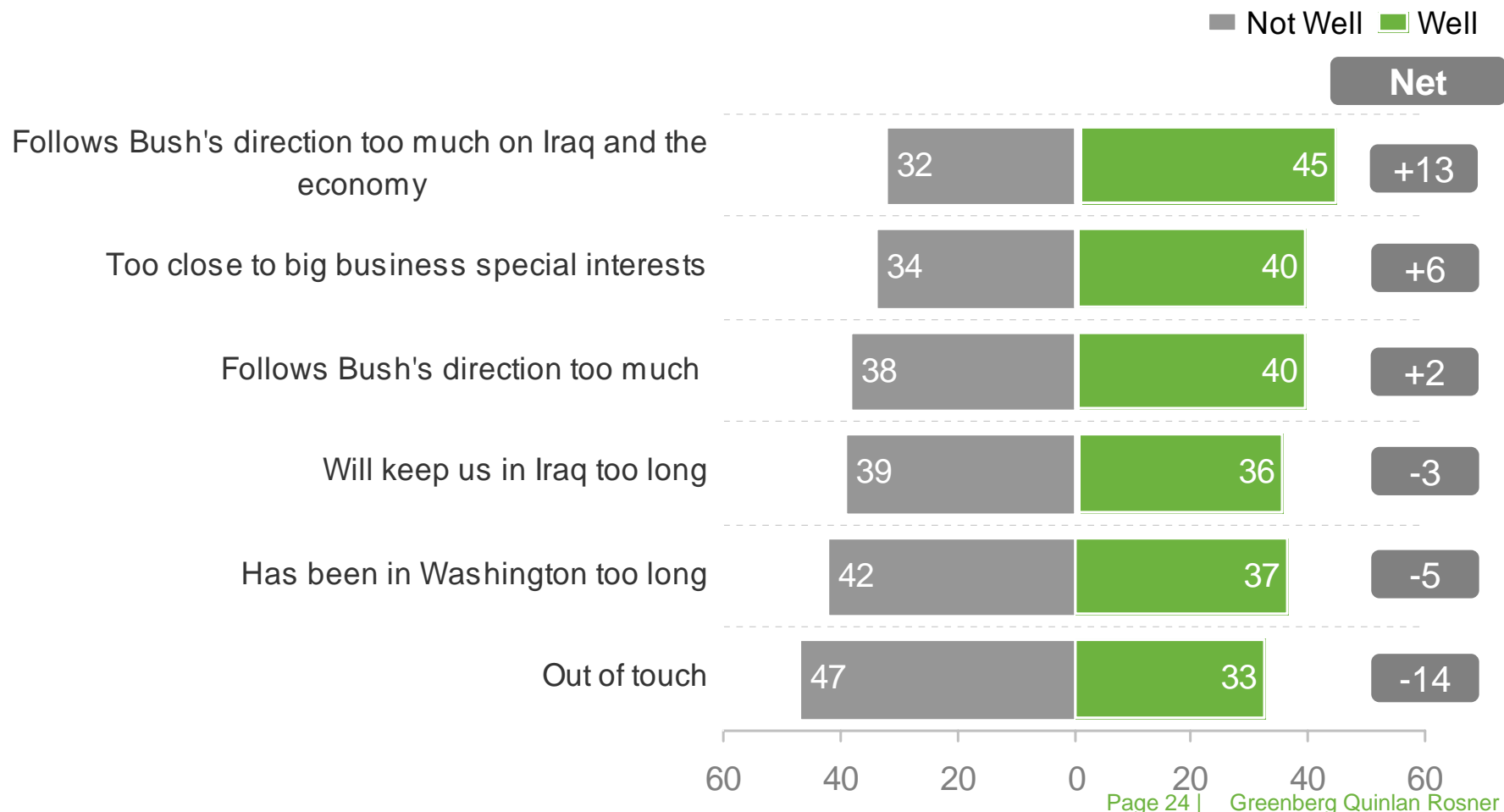
Now, I am going to read you another list of words and phrases which people use to describe political figures. For each word or phrase, please tell me whether it describes (Member of Congress)\* very well, well, not too well, or not well at all.



\*Note: Actual names of incumbents inserted.

## Negative incumbent attributes: following Bush, special interests are key

Now, I am going to read you another list of words and phrases which people use to describe political figures. For each word or phrase, please tell me whether it describes (Member of Congress)\* very well, well, not too well, or not well at all.

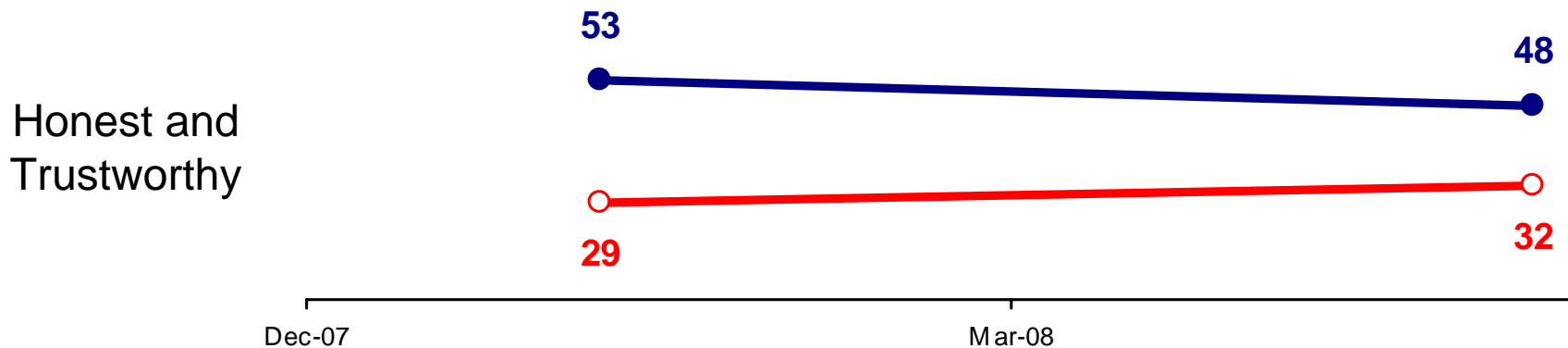


\*Note: Actual names of incumbents inserted.

# Republican incumbents seen as less honest, unable to bring change

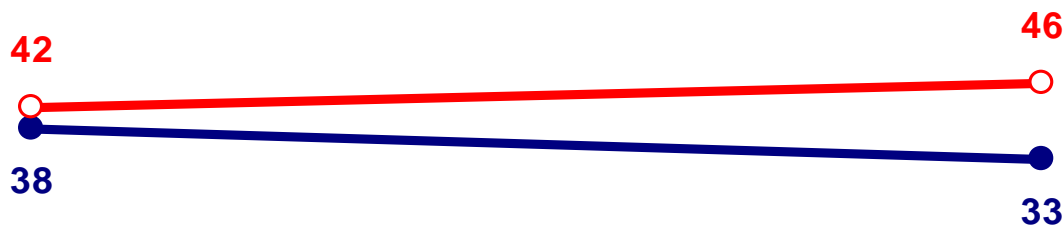
Now, I am going to read you another list of words and phrases which people use to describe political figures. For each word or phrase, please tell me whether it describes (Member of Congress)\* very well, well, not too well, or not well at all.

—●— Total Well  
—○— Total Not Well



**Net Difference**                      **+24**    **+16**

Will bring the right kind of change



**Net Difference**                      **-4**    **-13**

\*Note: Actual names of incumbents inserted.

## Honest and trustworthy, following Bush are attributes driving vote

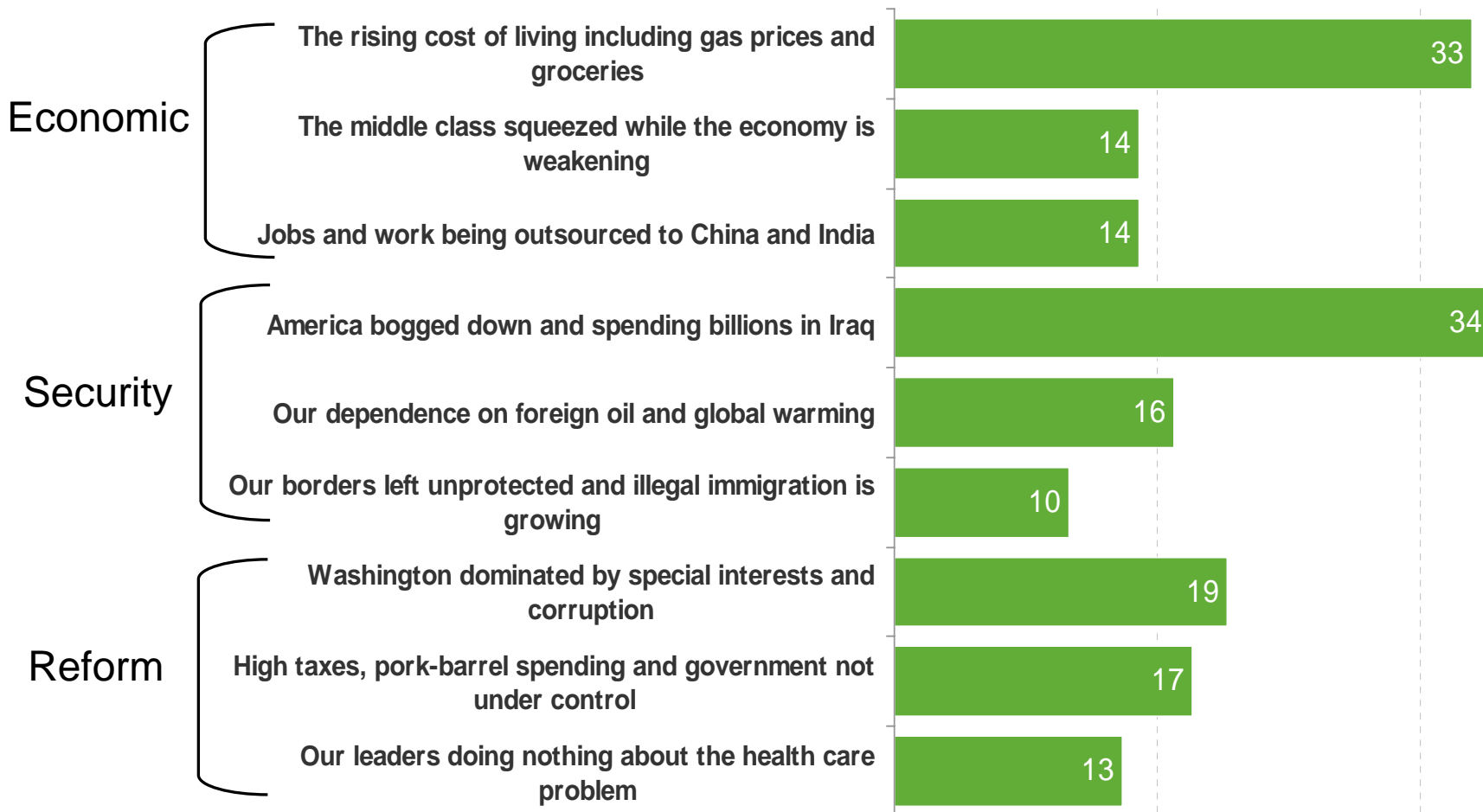
Attributes that drive the final vote:	Odds Ratio
• <i>Honest and Trustworthy</i>	1.65
• <i>Follows Bush – Iraq/economy</i>	1.32
• <i>Fights for people here</i>	1.30
• <i>Will bring the right kind of change (comb.)</i>	1.26
• <i>Out of touch</i>	1.26
• <i>Too close to big business/special interests</i>	1.21
Attributes that drive incumbent them:	
• <i>Is effective in Congress (comb.)</i>	1.63
• <i>Will bring the right kind of change (comb.)</i>	1.60
• <i>On your side (comb.)</i>	1.50
• <i>Will keep us in Iraq too long (comb.)</i>	1.36
• <i>Out of touch (comb.)</i>	1.34
• <i>Honest and Trustworthy (comb.)</i>	1.31

# Republicans losing issues in own areas

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# What is wrong: underlying issues

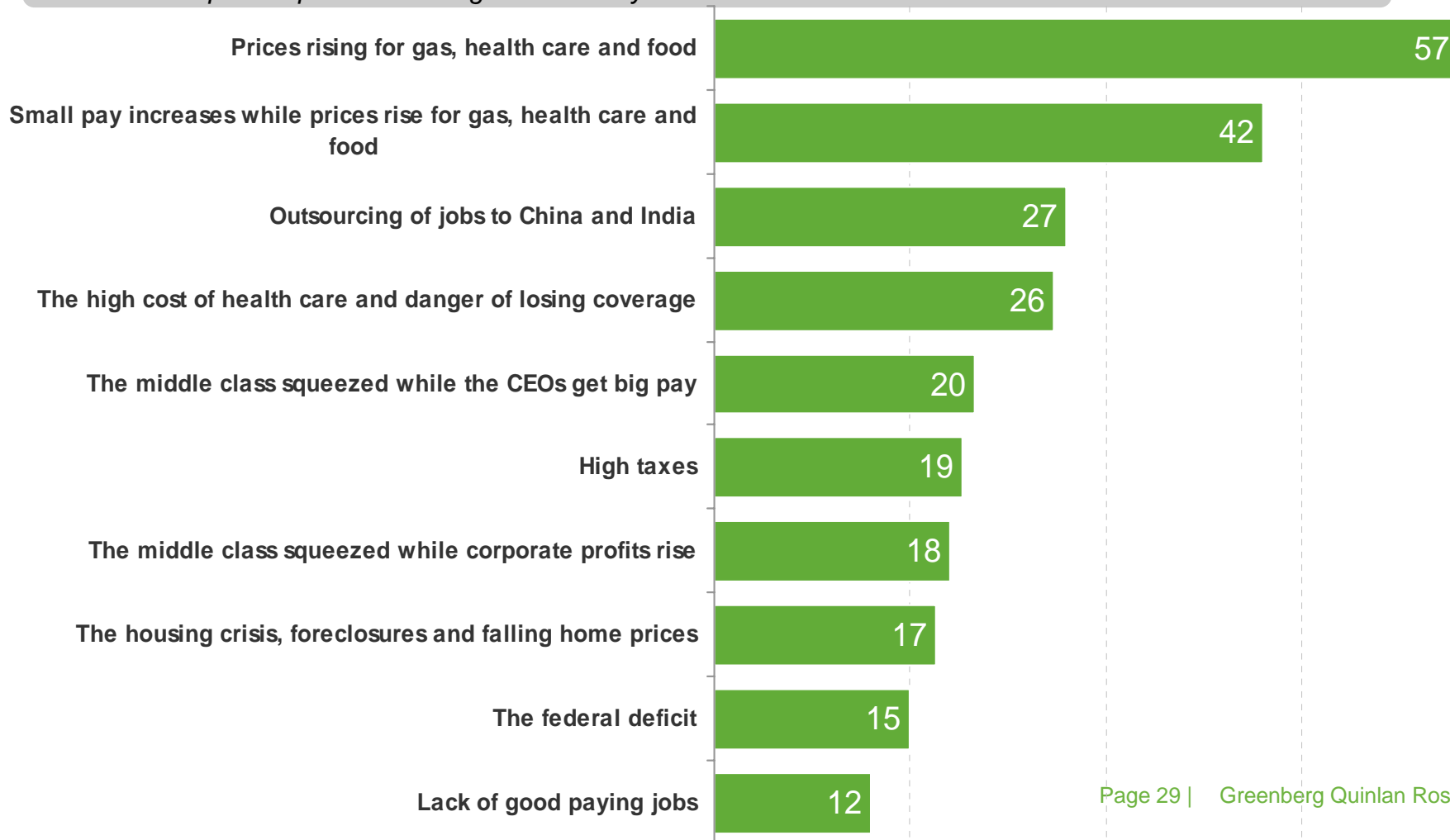
Now I am going to read a list of phrases people use to describe why our country is going in the wrong direction. After I read the list, please tell me which TWO come closest to your own view of why the country is going in the wrong direction.



Note: Question asked only of those who responded that the country was going in the wrong direction.

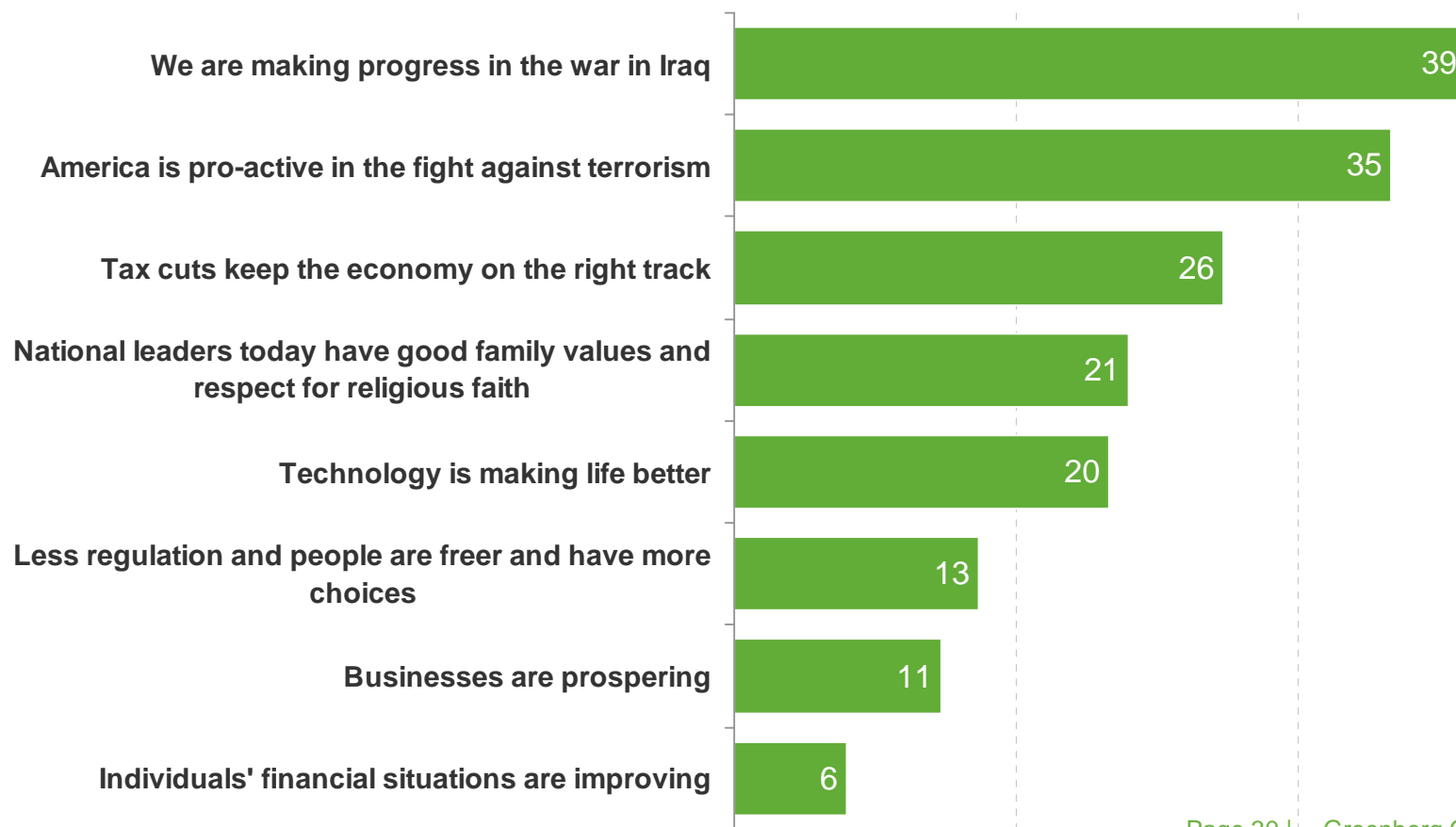
## Problems with the economy—rising costs is paramount concern

Now I am going to read you a list of problems relating to the economy. After I read the list, please tell me which TWO are the most important problems facing our economy.



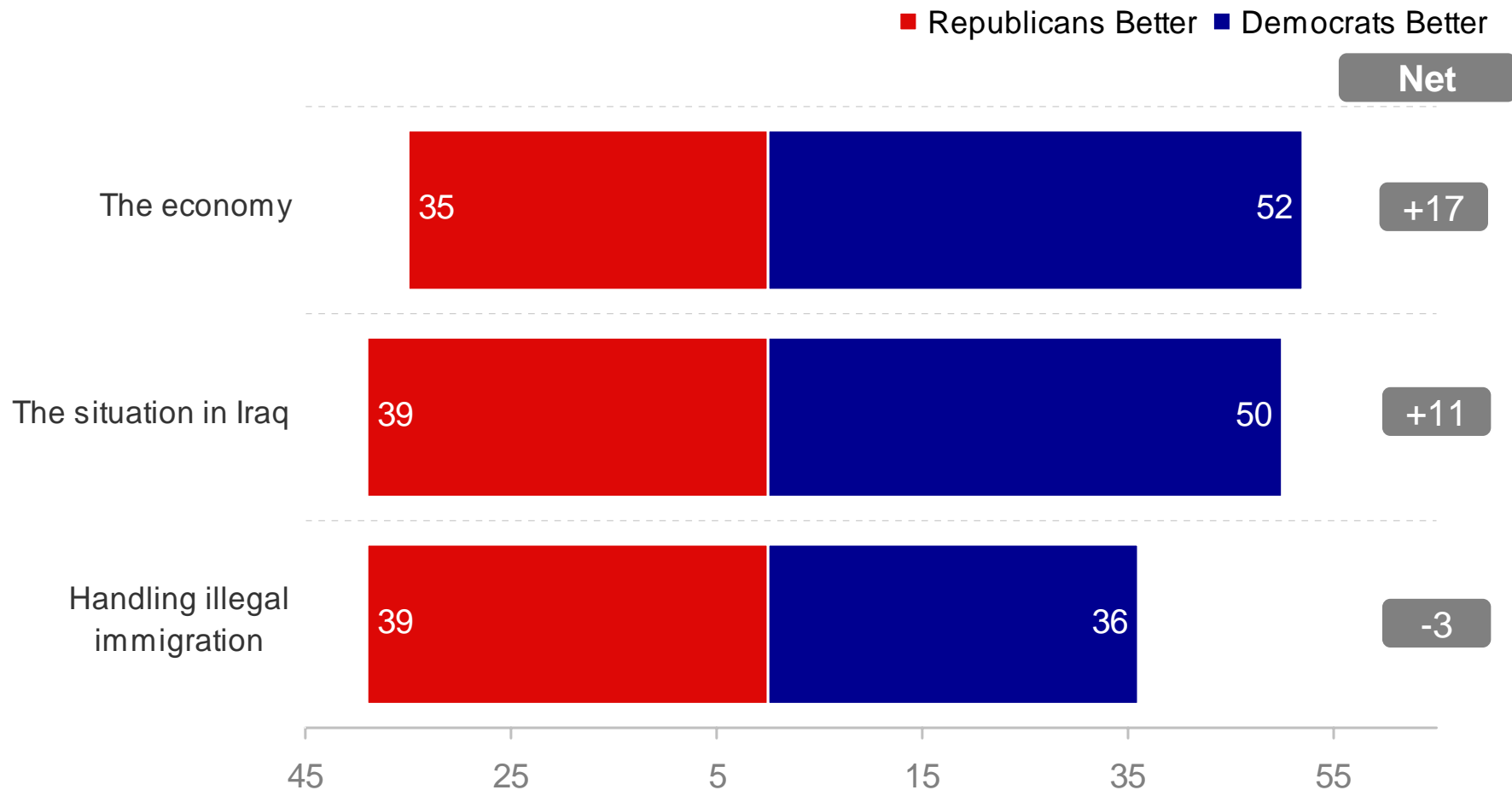
## What's right?

*Now I am going to read you a list of phrases that people use to describe why our country is going in the right direction. After I read the list, please tell me which TWO come closest to your own views of why the country is going in the right direction.*



# Democrats better positioned to handle the economy, situation in Iraq

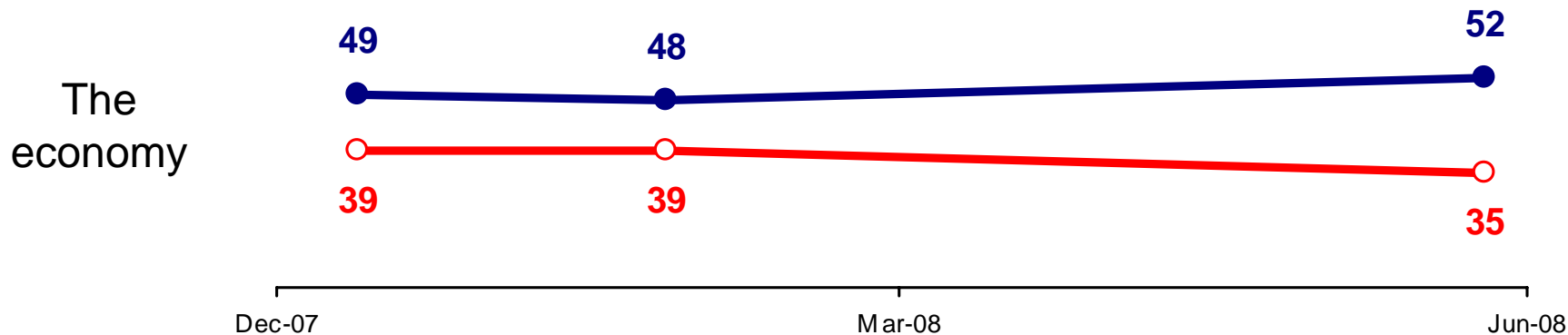
Now I am going to ask you something different. I am going to read a list of issues and I want you to tell me whether, overall, you think the Democrats or the Republicans would do a better job with this issue:



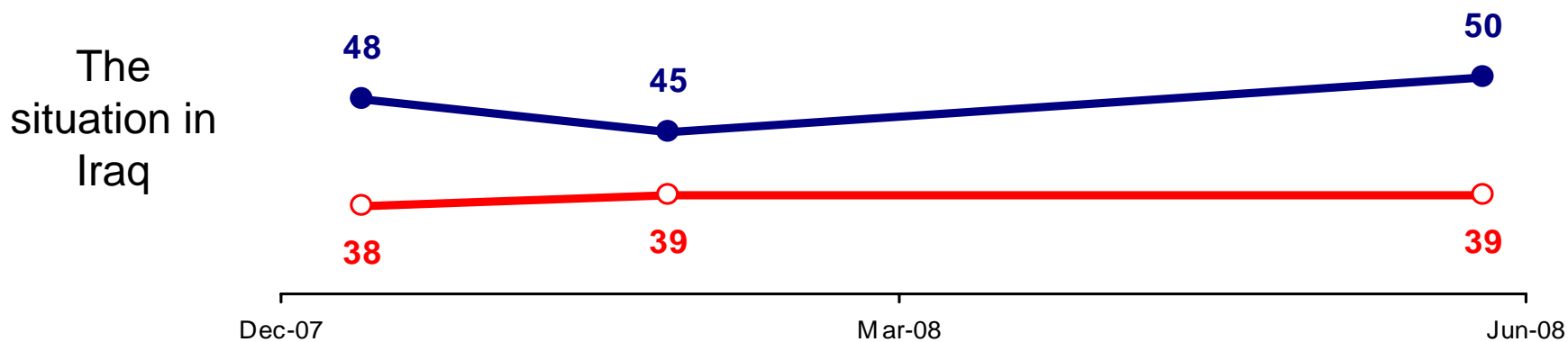
# Democrats improve advantage on handling economy, situation in Iraq

Now I am going to ask you something different. I am going to read a list of issues and I want you to tell me whether, overall, you think the Democrats or the Republicans would do a better job with this issue:

● Democrats  
○ Republicans



Net Difference: +10 (Dec-07), +9 (Mar-08), +17 (Jun-08)



Net Difference: +10 (Dec-07), +6 (Mar-08), +11 (Jun-08)

## Economy, Iraq are better job measures driving the vote

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Better job measures that drive the final vote:	Odds Ratio
• <i>Economy</i>	1.52
• <i>Iraq</i>	1.43
• <i>Illegal Immigration</i>	1.20

Better job measures that drive incumbent them:	Odds Ratio
• <i>Illegal Immigration</i>	1.18
• <i>Iraq</i>	1.14
• <i>Economy</i>	1.14

# Negative attacks and campaign impact

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## Attack on Democratic House candidates

<i>Now let me read you a series of statements about (DEMOCRATIC HOUSE CANDIDATE). For each statement, please tell me whether this description, if accurate, raises very serious doubts, serious doubts, minor doubts or no real doubts in your own mind about (DEMOCRATIC HOUSE CANDIDATE).</i>	Very Serious Doubts	Total Serious Doubts
<b>(DEMOCRATIC HOUSE CANDIDATE) would grant amnesty to millions of illegal immigrants by providing them with a path to citizenship. This would reward undocumented aliens who broke the law, while others who waited in their home country and played by the rules will get nothing.</b>	26	64
<b>(DEMOCRATIC HOUSE CANDIDATE) is out of touch with America's mainstream values. If elected, the Democratic candidate would support Barack Obama's (buh-ROCK owe-BAHM-uhs) liberal agenda of allowing gays to get married, legalizing partial-birth abortions and taking guns away from law-abiding citizens.</b>	26	50
<b>(DEMOCRATIC HOUSE CANDIDATE) supports the largest tax increase in American history which would take money out of your pocket and damage our economy at the worst possible time. The Democratic candidate wants to roll back Bush's tax cuts and add trillions in new taxes to fund more wasteful pork spending and new government programs.</b>	24	54
<b>(DEMOCRATIC HOUSE CANDIDATE) supports Senator Obama's government-run health care plan that will cost billions and mean higher taxes for American families at a time of a weakening economy. This "one-size-fits all" approach will reduce choice for individuals and make the system more costly, wasteful and inefficient.</b>	20	52

## Both economic attacks on GOP candidates raise biggest doubts

<i>Now let me read you a series of statements about (REPUBLICAN HOUSE CANDIDATE). For each statement, please tell me whether this description, if accurate, raises very serious doubts, serious doubts, minor doubts or no real doubts in your own mind about (REPUBLICAN HOUSE CANDIDATE).</i>	Very Serious Doubts	Total Serious Doubts
<b>(REPUBLICAN HOUSE CANDIDATE)'s economic plan would give 2 trillion in new tax cuts to corporations and the rich, but it offers virtually nothing for middle class Americans. It lowers taxes on millionaires, cuts taxes on big corporations by 30 percent and even protects tax cuts for companies that shift jobs overseas.</b>	28	65
<b>(REPUBLICAN HOUSE CANDIDATE) supports an economic plan that is full of giveaways for corporate special interests. While offering virtually nothing for the middle class, this plan would give tax breaks worth nearly 4 billion a year to the biggest oil companies and nearly 2 billion a year to the biggest health insurance companies.</b>	26	63
<b>After five years, a trillion dollars spent and four thousand American lives lost in Iraq, our troops are still policing a religious civil war. Yet, (REPUBLICAN HOUSE CANDIDATE) supports keeping the troops there for at least five more years and will spend billions more in Iraq instead of using that money to help our economy, health care, and investing in alternative energy.</b>	25	57
<b>On the most important issues facing America (REPUBLICAN HOUSE CANDIDATE) is in lockstep with President Bush. (HE/SHE) supports Bush's budget-busting policy of tax cuts for corporations and, like Bush, (HE/SHE) opposes any effort to bring troops home from Iraq.</b>	21	51

## Attacks that are driving the vote

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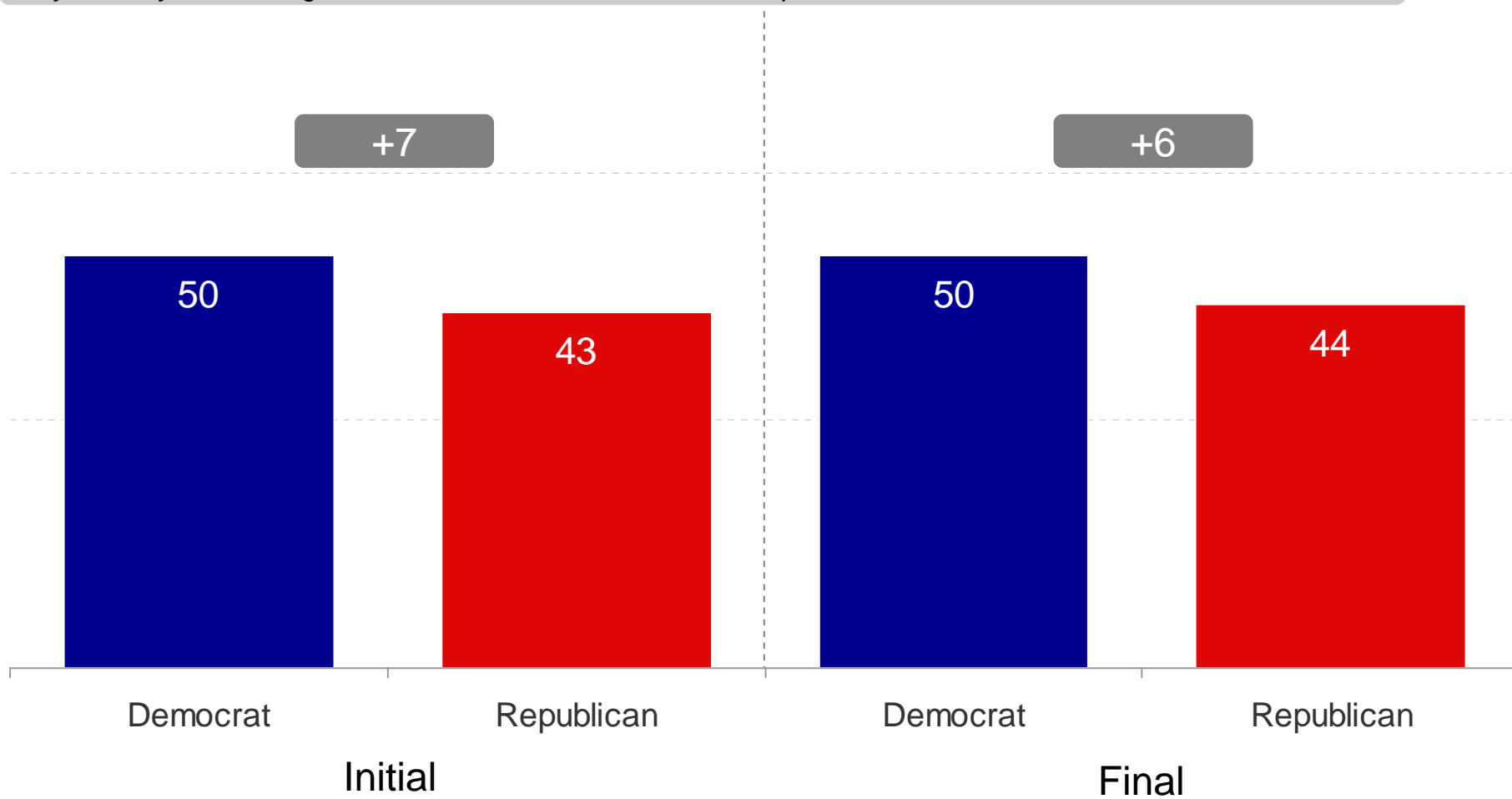
Attacks on Democrats that drive the final vote:	Odds Ratio
• <i>Increase taxes/wasteful spending</i>	1.46
• <i>Government run health care</i>	1.43

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Attacks on Republicans that drive the final vote:	Odds Ratio
• <i>Follows Bush's tax cuts/refuses to return troops</i>	1.43
• <i>Tax cuts for the rich, nothing for middle class</i>	1.33

## Democrats maintain lead after debate

Now let me ask you again about your vote for Congress in November. If the election for U.S. Congress were held today, would you be voting for the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate\*?



\*Note: Actual names of incumbents inserted, and a generic candidate was inserted for the opposing party.

# Iraq debate

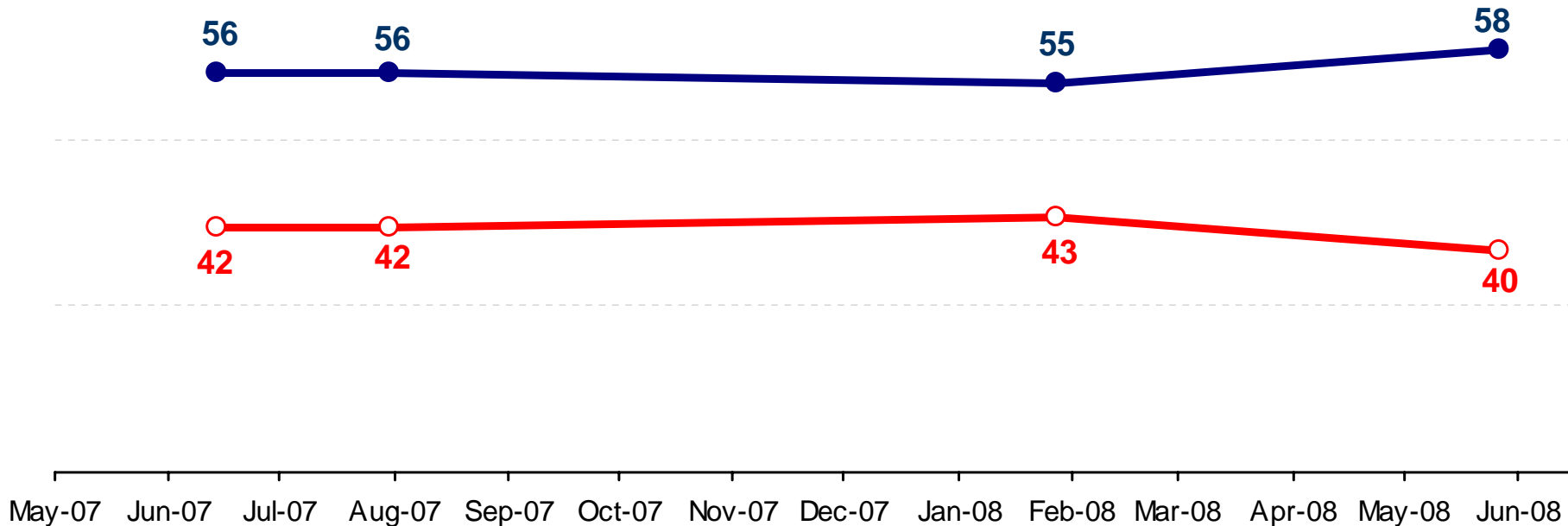
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# Growing majority want to start reducing troops, not stay for stability

Now I'm going to read you some statements. Please tell me whether the FIRST statement or the SECOND statement comes closer to your own views, even if neither is exactly right:

● Need to start reducing US troops in Iraq

○ We must stay the course in Iraq

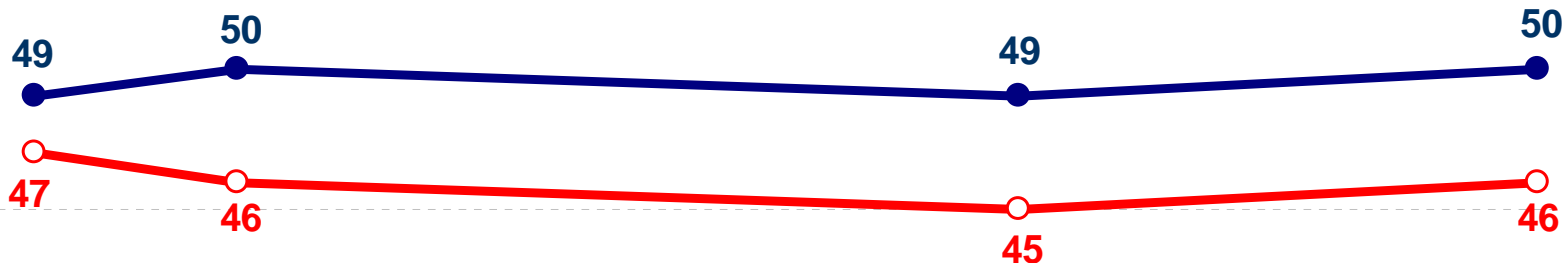


\*Note: From Democracy Corps battleground surveys conducted over the last few months.

# Consistent worry Republicans will stay too long

Now I'm going to read you some statements. Please tell me whether the FIRST statement or the SECOND statement comes closer to your own views, even if neither is exactly right:

- I'm more concerned that the Republicans will wait too long to withdraw our troops from Iraq
- I'm more concerned that the Democrats will leave Iraq too quickly



May-07                      Aug-07                      Nov-07                      Feb-08                      May-08

Net Difference	+2	+4	+4	+4
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\*Note: From Democracy Corps battleground surveys conducted over the last several months.

## Iraq paired debate – with Obama reference

*Now I'm going to read you what the candidates for Congress are saying on Iraq. Regardless of who you would vote for, please tell me whether the Democratic statement or the Republican statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right. .*

The Democratic candidate says the war in Iraq has cost us trillions of dollars while our economy has weakened, and has made America less secure. We must strengthen America's security by following Barack Obama's plan to start reducing our troops in Iraq in a responsible way, force the Iraqi government to use its oil money to pay for reconstruction and work with other nations to bring stability. We need to invest the money we are currently spending in Iraq to restore our military, deal with Afghanistan and strengthen America's own economy and security. But the Republican candidate for Congress wants to keep our troops in Iraq for at least another 5 years.

OR

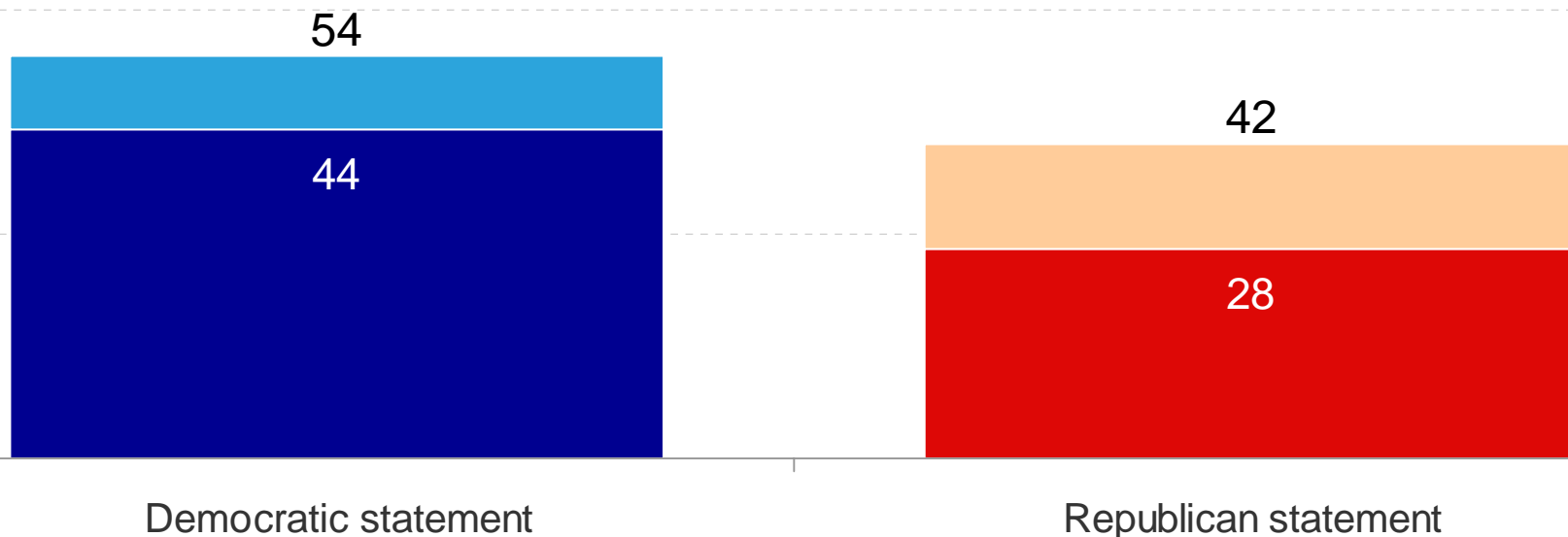
The Republican candidate says there has been military and political progress in Iraq, and that to withdraw now would cost more in lives and create more instability in the Middle East. If we follow John McCain's lead to see our commitment through until the end of his first term, by 2013 America will have welcomed most of our troops home and the Iraq war will have been won. Though some violence will still occur, Iraq will be a functioning democracy with al Qaeda defeated and the U.S. maintaining just a small military presence that does not play a direct combat role. But the Democratic candidate for Congress wants to pull our troops out precipitously and give al Qaeda a big victory.

## Democrats win Iraq debate with reference to Obama's call to reduce troops

*Now I'm going to read you what the candidates for Congress are saying on Iraq. Regardless of who you would vote for, please tell me whether the Democratic statement or the Republican statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right.*

- Democratic statement strongly
- Democratic statement somewhat
- Republican statement strongly
- Republican statement somewhat

+12



## Iraq paired debate – without reference to Obama's plan

*Now I'm going to read you what the candidates for Congress are saying on Iraq. Regardless of who you would vote for, please tell me whether the Democratic statement or the Republican statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right. .*

The Democratic candidate says the war in Iraq has cost us trillions of dollars while our economy has weakened, and has made America less secure. We must strengthen America's security by starting to reduce our troops in Iraq in a responsible way, force the Iraqi government to use its oil money to pay for reconstruction and work with other nations to bring stability. We need to invest the money we are currently spending in Iraq to restore our military, deal with Afghanistan and strengthen America's own economy and security. But the Republican candidate for Congress wants to keep our troops in Iraq for at least another 5 years.

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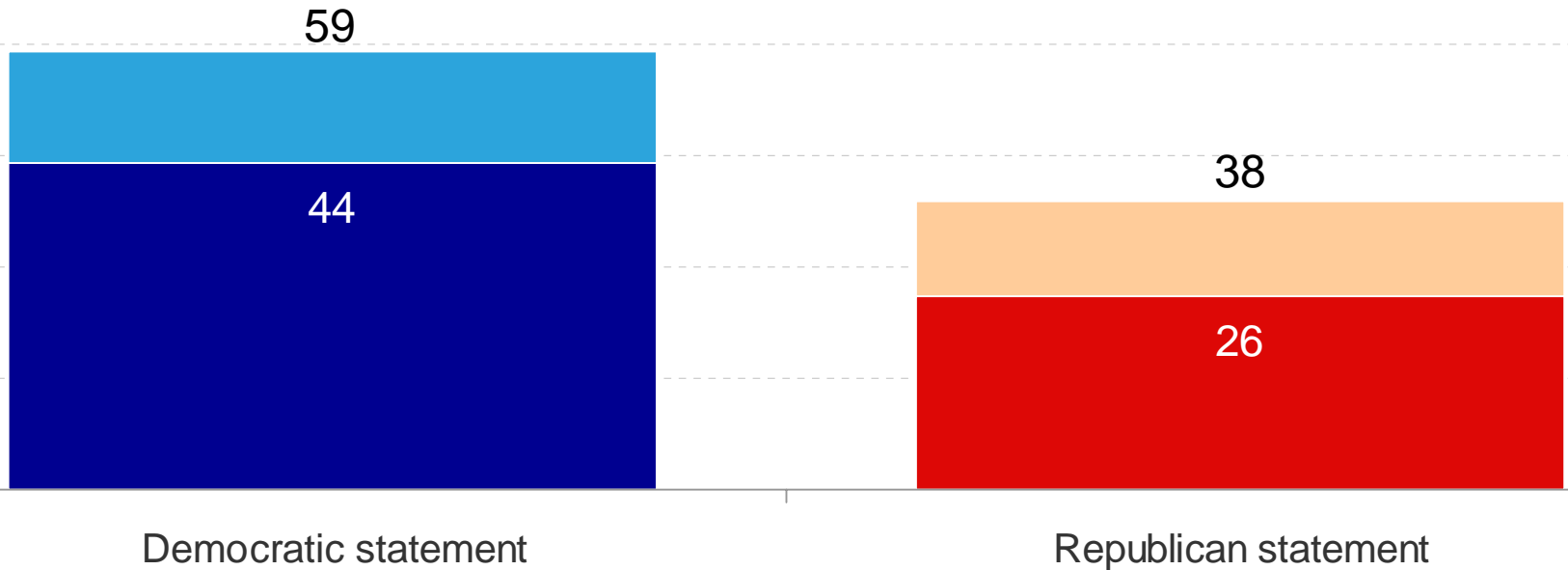
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# Democrats expand lead on Iraq debate without mention of Obama's plan

*Now I'm going to read you what the candidates for Congress are saying on Iraq. Regardless of who you would vote for, please tell me whether the Democratic statement or the Republican statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right.*

- Democratic statement strongly
- Democratic statement somewhat
- Republican statement strongly
- Republican statement somewhat

+21



# Gay marriage: California impact?

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## Gay marriage debate: over 60% support either marriage or civil unions

*Which one of the following statements do you most agree with when it comes to the issue of gay marriage?*



## Gay marriage debate

*Now I'm going to read you what the candidates for Congress are saying about gay marriage. Regardless of who you would vote for, please tell me whether the Democratic statement or the Republican statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right.*

The Democratic candidate says, I believe we need to be fair and support granting civil unions to gay and lesbian couples, which grant many of the legal rights and responsibilities of married couples. But I oppose a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage because decisions about marriage should be left to the states as they always have been. This debate is important, but the Republican candidate for Congress is using it to divide our country and distract our attention from their lack of solutions to end the war in Iraq and fix our struggling economy.

OR

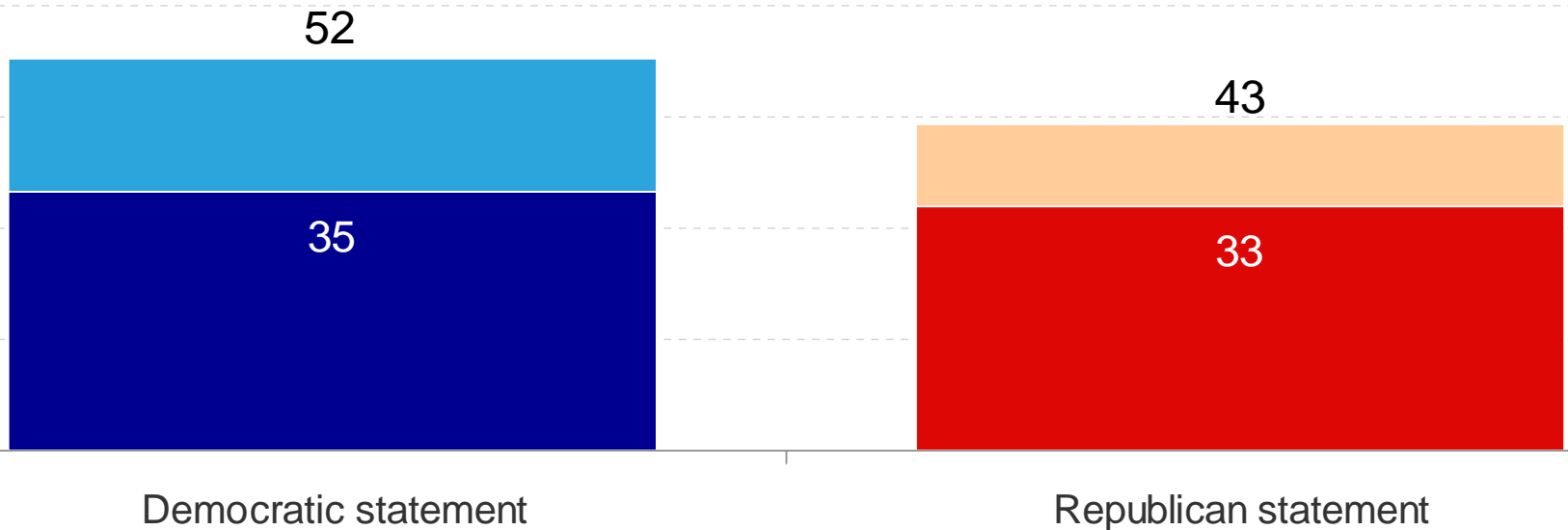
The Republican candidate says, the recent decision by the California Supreme Court to legalize gay marriage is a big step that can lead to force other states to accept marriage between gay and lesbian couples. We need a constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage and preserve the sanctity of marriage between a man and a woman. Of course, this country faces a lot of other problems than need to be addressed, but our core values are under assault and it is a shame that Democrats are not standing up for American families.

# Democratic position on gay marriage, civil unions is favored by electorate

*Now I'm going to read you what the candidates for Congress are saying about gay marriage. Regardless of who you would vote for, please tell me whether the Democratic statement or the Republican statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right.*

- Democratic statement strongly
- Democratic statement somewhat
- Republican statement strongly
- Republican statement somewhat

+9



# Gas Tax

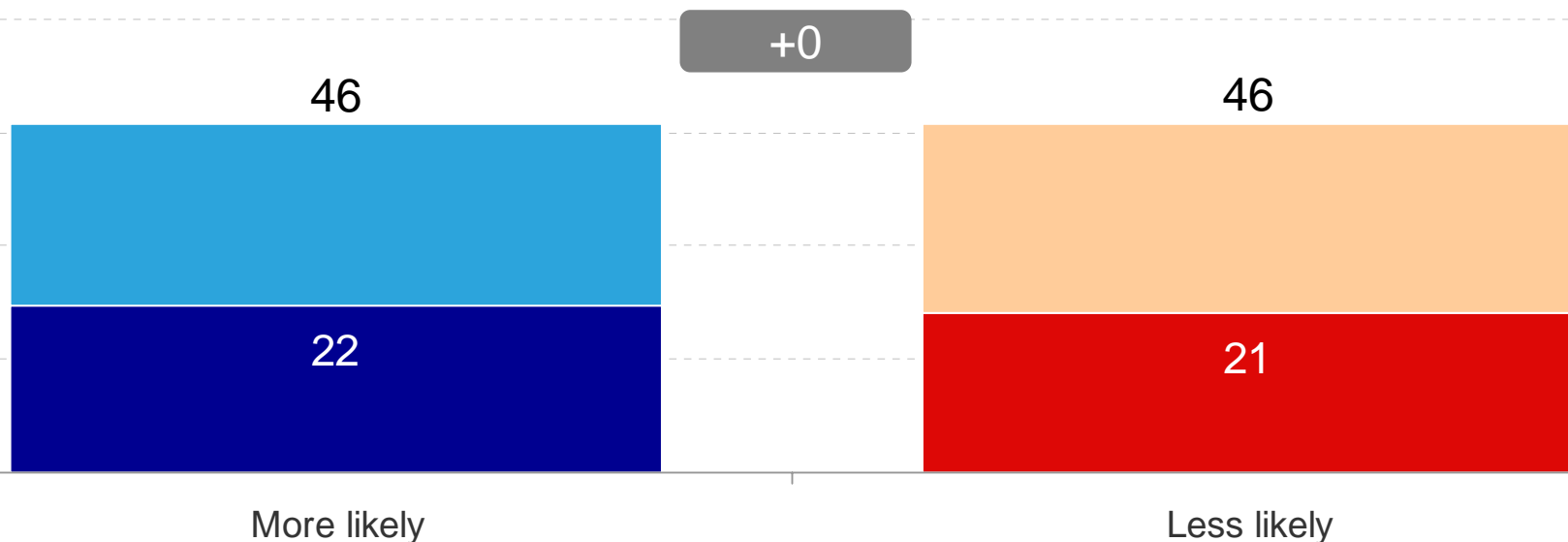
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# Supporting gas tax summer holiday doesn't help Democrats electorally

Now let me read you what some Democrats are saying about gas taxes. After I read the statement, please tell me whether that makes you more likely or less likely to support that Democratic candidate for Congress.

Democrats say: For years the Bush administration let gas companies write our energy policy. Now gas prices are sky rocketing and American families are paying the price. We must act immediately to lower the cost of gas for consumers by lifting the federal tax on gasoline for the summer months. Opponents say: Lifting the federal tax on gasoline for the summer is empty political pandering that won't solve our energy crisis and will benefit the oil companies more than giving any real savings to drivers.

■ Much more likely    ■ Somewhat more likely    ■ Much less likely    ■ Somewhat less likely



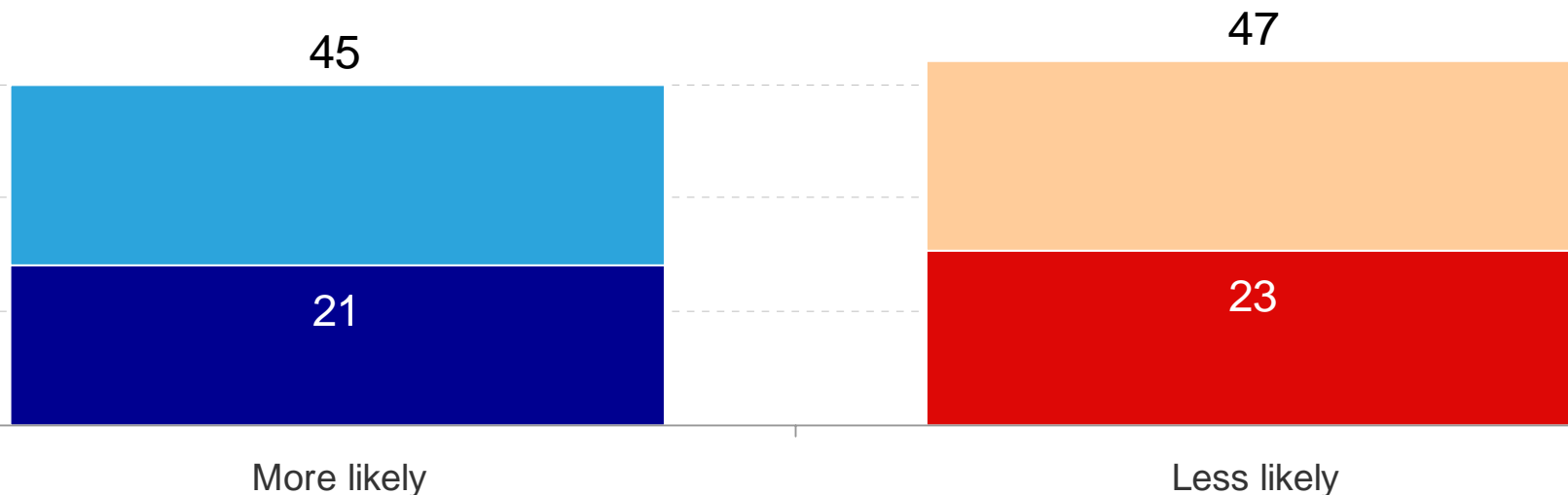
## Opposing gas tax holiday doesn't boost Democrats either

Now let me read you what some Democrats are saying about gas taxes. After I read the statement, please tell me whether that makes you more likely or less likely to support that Democratic candidate for Congress.

Democrats say: Lifting the gas tax for the summer months is the same pandering we've been hearing from Washington politicians for years. It is a giveaway to oil companies that won't solve our long-term energy crisis and will pull resources away from the Highway Trust Fund for road construction and maintenance. Opponents say: Democrats are denying Americans a little relief that they desperately need during this terrible time of high gas prices and a troubled economy.

■ Much more likely    ■ Somewhat more likely    ■ Much less likely    ■ Somewhat less likely

-2



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