

GREENBERG QUINLAN ROSNER RESEARCH

August 27, 2008

Mountain West—Congressional Battleground

Presented by:
Stan Greenberg
Chairman and CEO



DEMOCRACY CORPS
CARVILLE ♦ GREENBERG

Methodology

- **Regional survey of 700 likely voters in Battleground Congressional Districts in Montana, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Idaho, Arizona, Nevada, Montana, and Wyoming, including a Hispanic oversample to reach a total Hispanic sample of 139 voters. Survey was conducted from August 17-21, 2008 and weighted to reflect the regional and demographic make-up of this part of the country.**
- **Survey carries a margin of error of 3.7 percent for the base sample**
- **2 Democratic and 10 Republican Congressional Districts surveyed:**
 - **AZ 1, AZ 3, AZ 5, AZ 8, CO 4, ID 1, MT AL, NV 2, NV 3, NM 1, NM 2 & WY AL**

Executive Summary

- **This poll focuses on “swing” congressional districts in the Mountain West. Most of these districts are in play this year, though others may not be that close this year but are potentially competitive in the near term.**

- **Dramatic movement in a short period of time – in a region where Democrats were not even competitive either at the presidential or congressional level just 4 years ago, Democrats are now extremely competitive and poised to make gains.**
 - **Obama has relative strength; he trails only by 5 points (42-47) whereas Kerry and Gore both lost by 16 points in these districts**
 - **McCain is relatively weak, underperforming Bush by 10 points including lagging badly with some pockets of his base (e.g. gun owners w/ 10+ guns)**
 - **Congressional candidates continue to improve; lost by an average of 24% from 2000-2004, then by 5.6% in 2006, and now trail by just 2 points (45-47)**
 - **In 2000 and 2004, Congressional Democratic candidate did WORSE than presidential candidate in these districts; now, poised to do BETTER**

Executive Summary

- **This is all the more remarkable due to demographics of this region**
 - Relatively more Republican (37% Democrat to 38% Republican, -1) than Presidential battleground states (+5) or Top 50 GOP held Congressional districts (+4)
 - Few African Americans
 - Older and more rural – lacking lots of younger voters and urban areas, Obama and Democrats' core base
- **The Obama Bounce – What Obama brings to the table: outperforms Democratic congressional candidates with younger voters (both Democrats and Republicans, and especially women) and liberals**
- **Obama is strong with Hispanics; they like him and he performs just as well with Hispanics in these swing districts as the Democratic Congressional candidate**
- **Democratic congressional candidates run ahead of Obama with older, more conservative voters**

Executive Summary

- **Voters in these Mountain West districts are angry and strongly anti-Washington**
 - Even more anti-Washington than presidential battleground states or Top 50 GOP held seats

- **What do Democrats need to do to strengthen their position?**
 - Focus on CHANGE (Obama's change message), the ECONOMY, and IRAQ
 - Use anti-Washington and Energy attacks against Republicans
 - Inoculate against taxes and spending – be tough on government waste

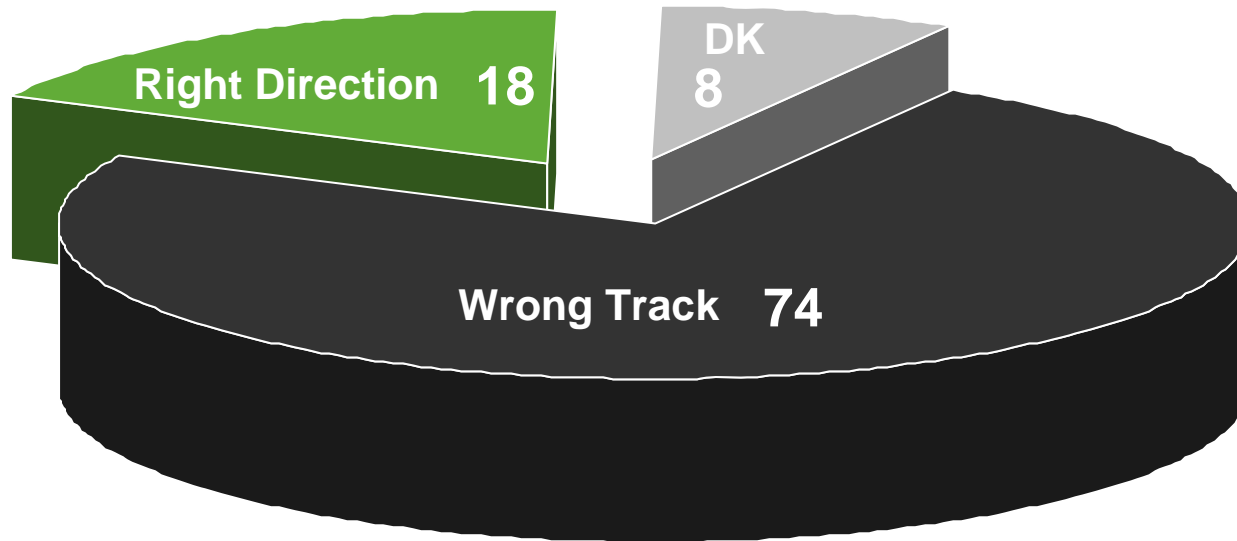
- **After engaging Republicans, Democratic candidates move most with Obama bounce voters; little movement elsewhere.**
 - Democrats must use the three core messages to appeal to moderates and improve performance with Obama bounce voters – lowest hanging fruit.

Executive Summary

- **More about positive messaging for Democrats**
 - **Economy is strongest overall argument – draws most bipartisan support and critical to winning over downscale and rural voters**
 - **Obama's change message (with explicit mention of Obama) helps gain support from Obama bounce voters and independents who are not yet voting for Congressional Democrat**
 - **Iraq is unique to this part of the country; much more salience and more effective as a positive argument for Democrats here than elsewhere in the country (e.g. Midwest and South) – reminds voters why they want change**
 - **Energy – in this oil and gas region, winning a debate on energy is not easy; nationally, Democrats win the debate (+10), but in this region the best they do is battle to a draw**
 - **The poll tested 2 energy messages for Democrats – 1 with drilling, 1 without; they each did equally well overall but did not allow the Democrat to gain ground against the Republican**
 - **The pro-drilling message is stronger with Republicans**
 - **The message without drilling does better with Democrats and independents, but less well with Republicans**
 - **Energy is most effective as an ATTACK against Republicans (in the pocket of big oil – take contributions and give them tax breaks)**

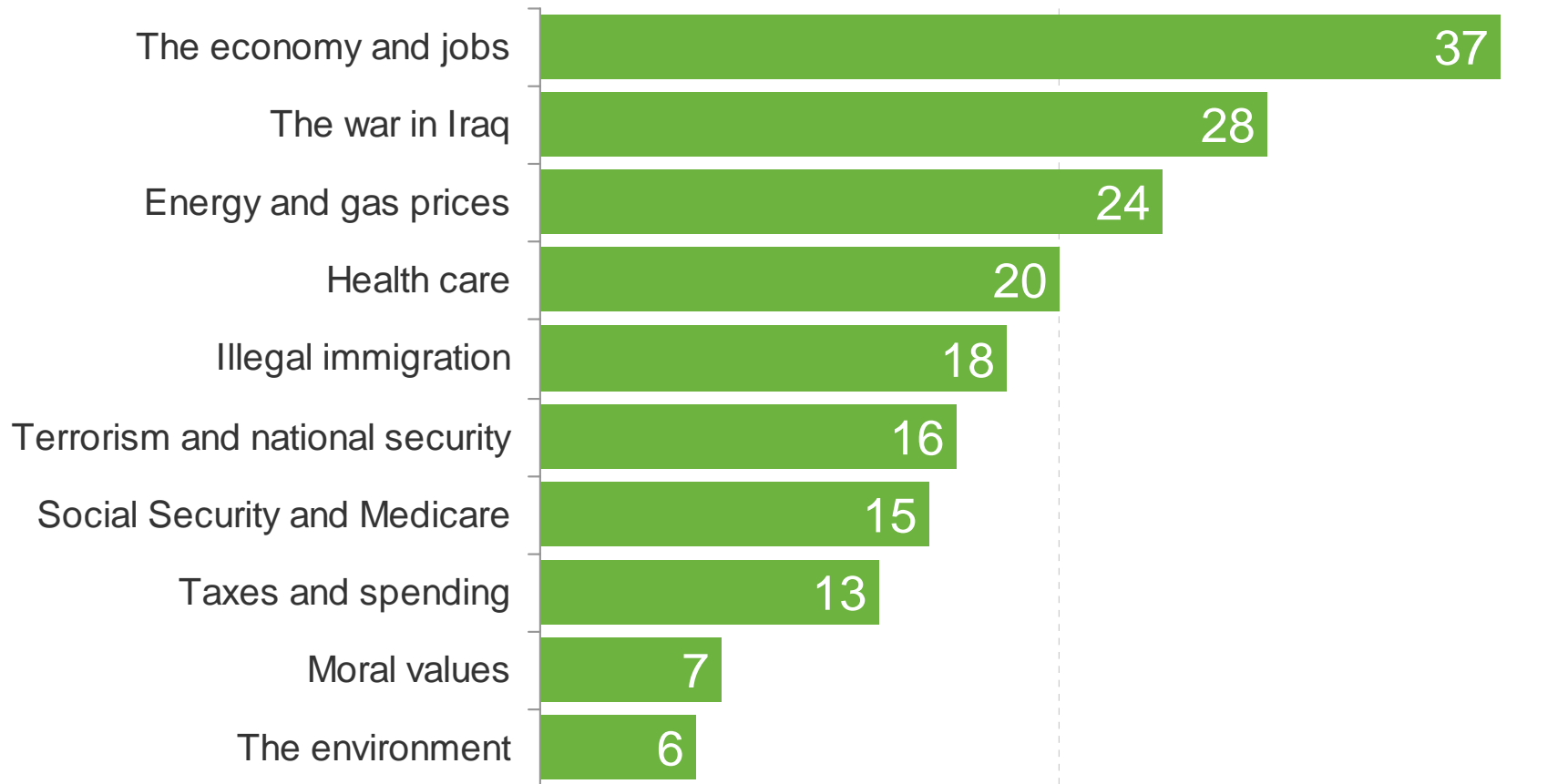
Voters in dark mood

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



Top Concern

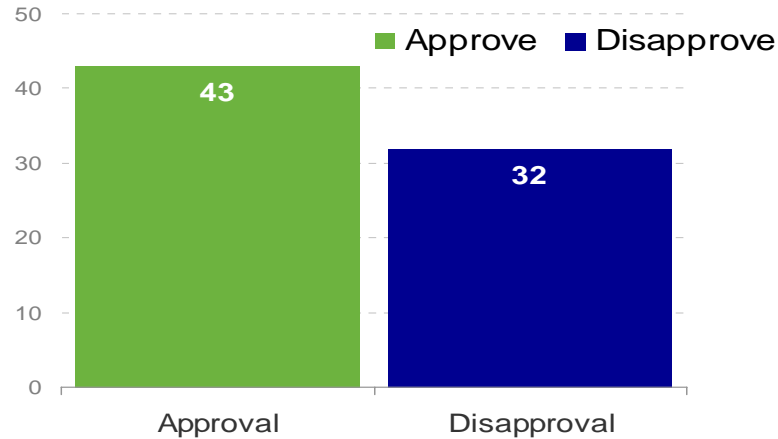
Now, I am going to read you a list of concerns that people have. Please tell me which ONE or TWO of these you think the President and Congress should be paying the most attention to.



Assessing Incumbents: Democrats better positioned than Republicans to pick up seats

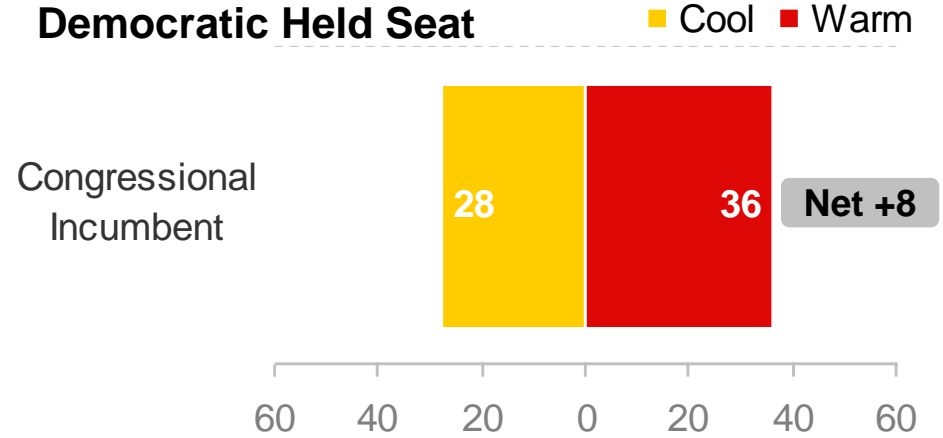
Job Approval

Democratic Held Seat

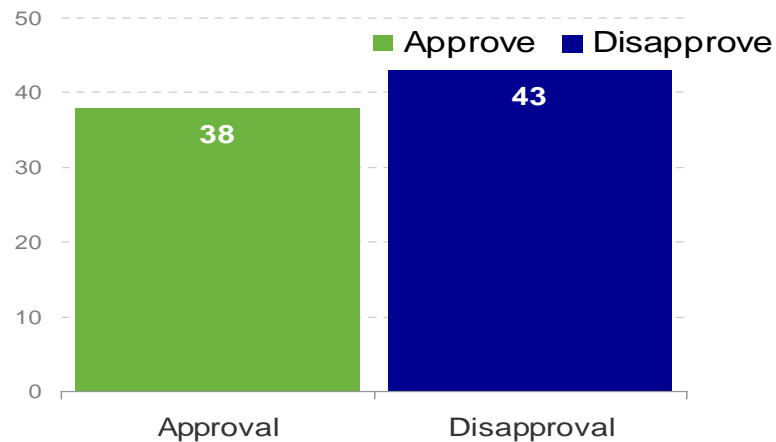


Favorability

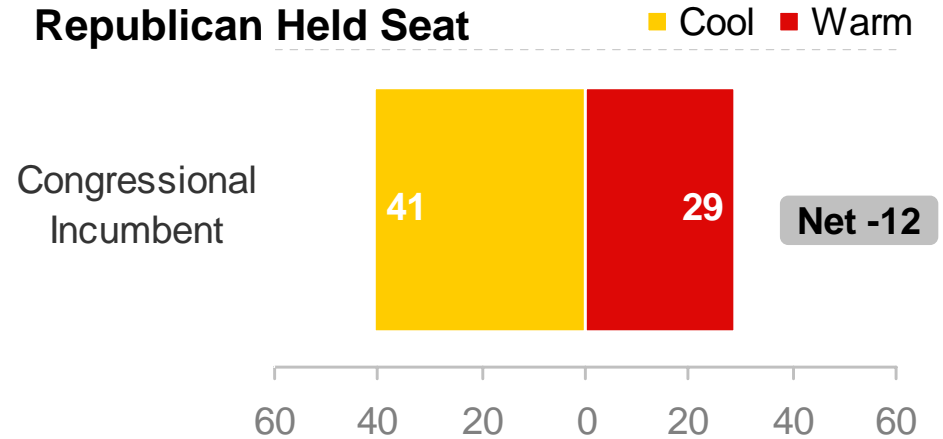
Democratic Held Seat



Republican Held Seat

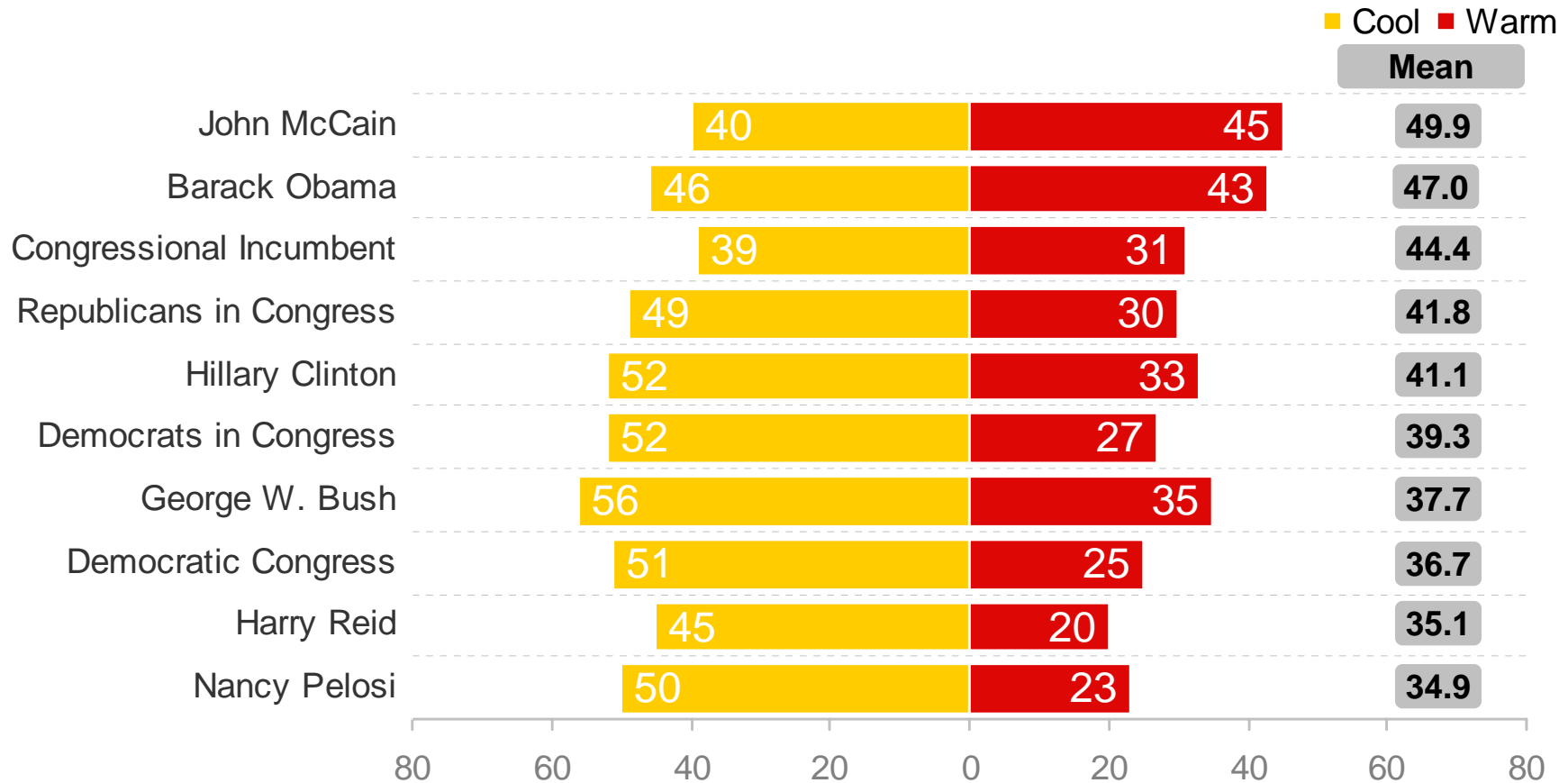


Republican Held Seat



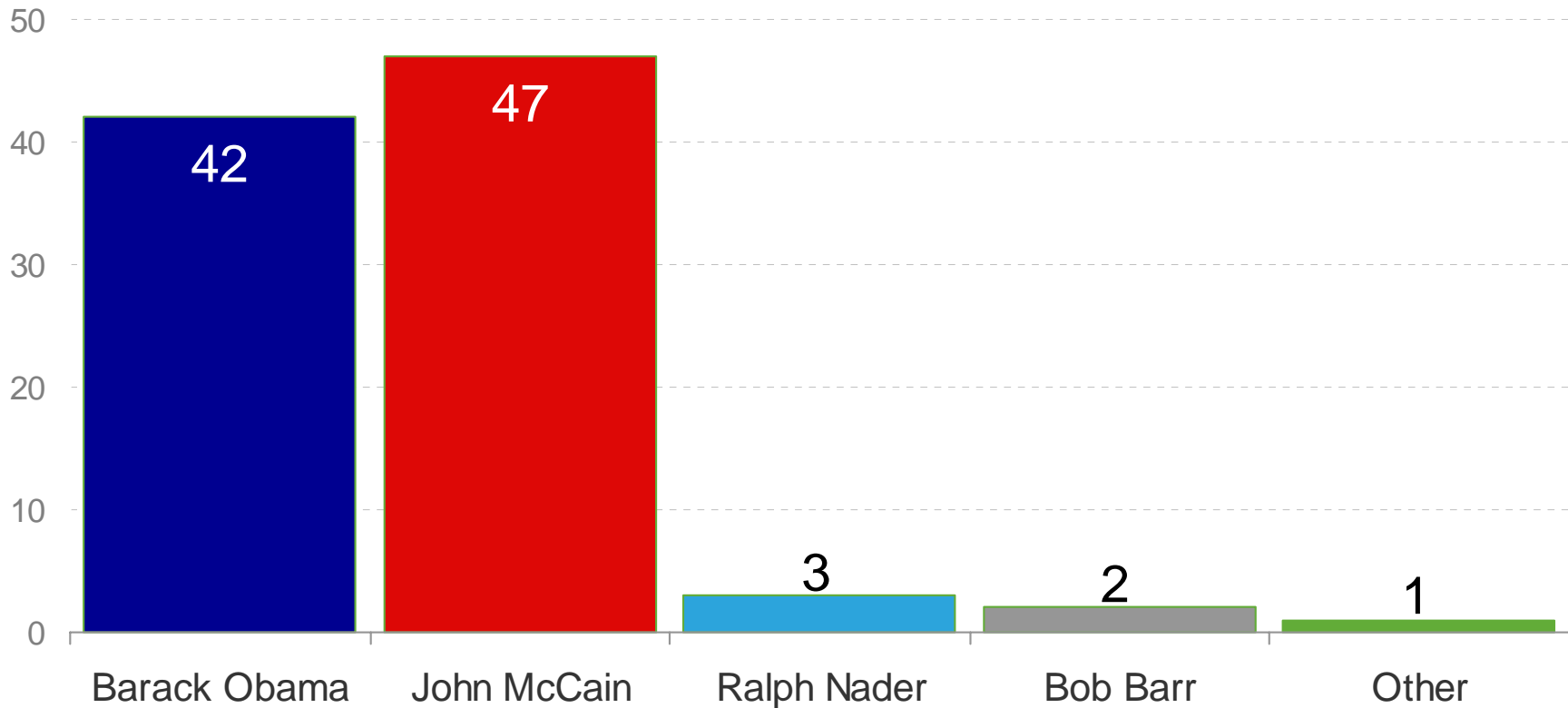
Voters' Angry Mood Reflected in Favorability Ratings

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



Multi-Candidate Presidential Vote

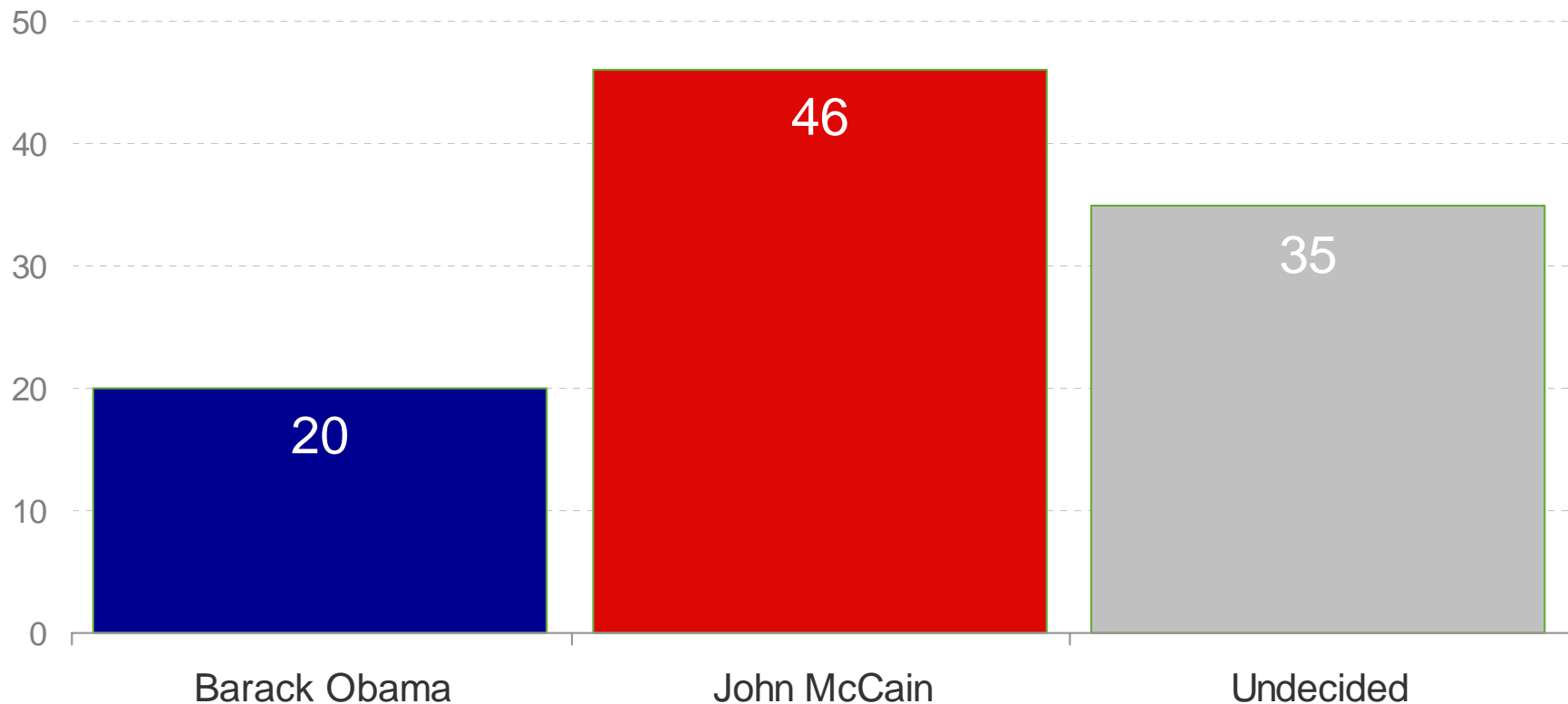
Well, if the election for President were held today and the candidates were Democrat Barack Obama and Republican John McCain, for whom would you vote?



Third Party Candidates Help Obama

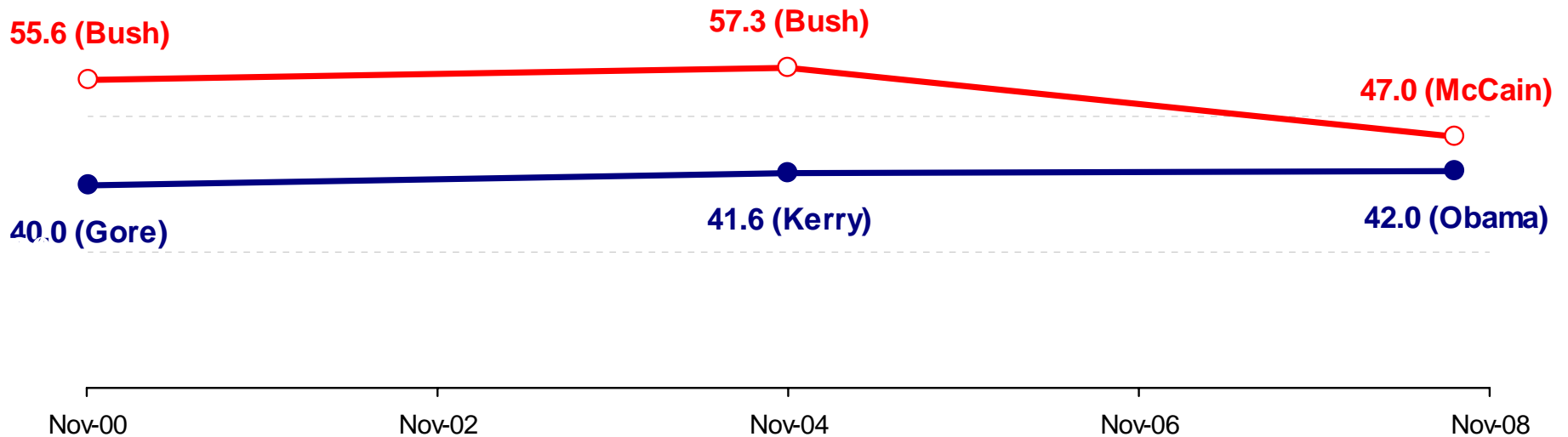
(Asked if voted Nader, Barr, or Other in Multi-Candidate Presidential Vote)

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Vote History Shows McCain Underperforming

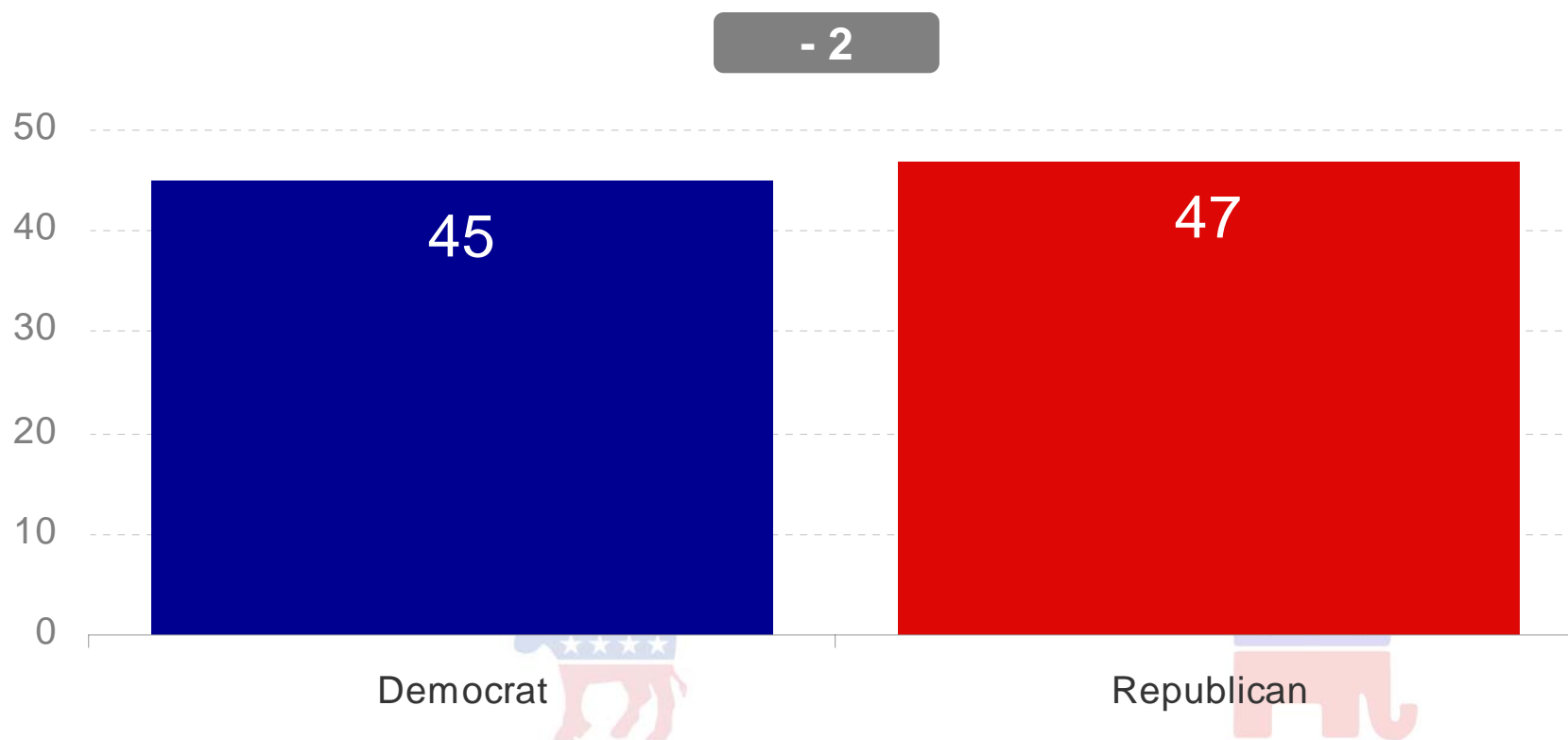
Vote History & Current Poll Results for Mountain West Swing Districts



Election	Democrat	Republican	Dem - Rep
2000 Presidential (Mountain West)	40.0	55.6	-15.6
2004 Presidential (Mountain West)	41.6	57.3	-15.7
2008 Democracy Corps Poll (Mountain West)	42.0	47.0	-5.0

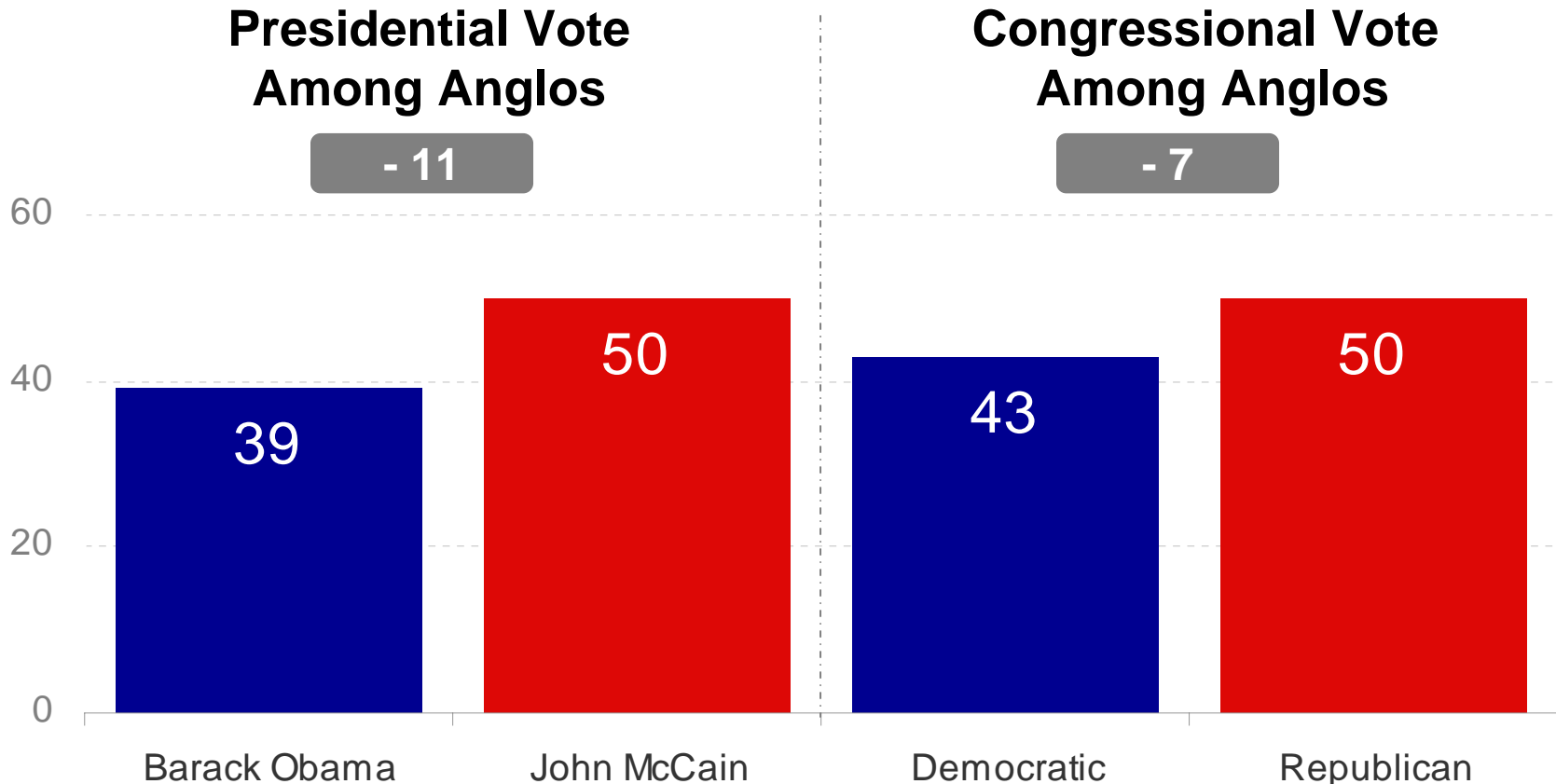
Congressional Vote

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



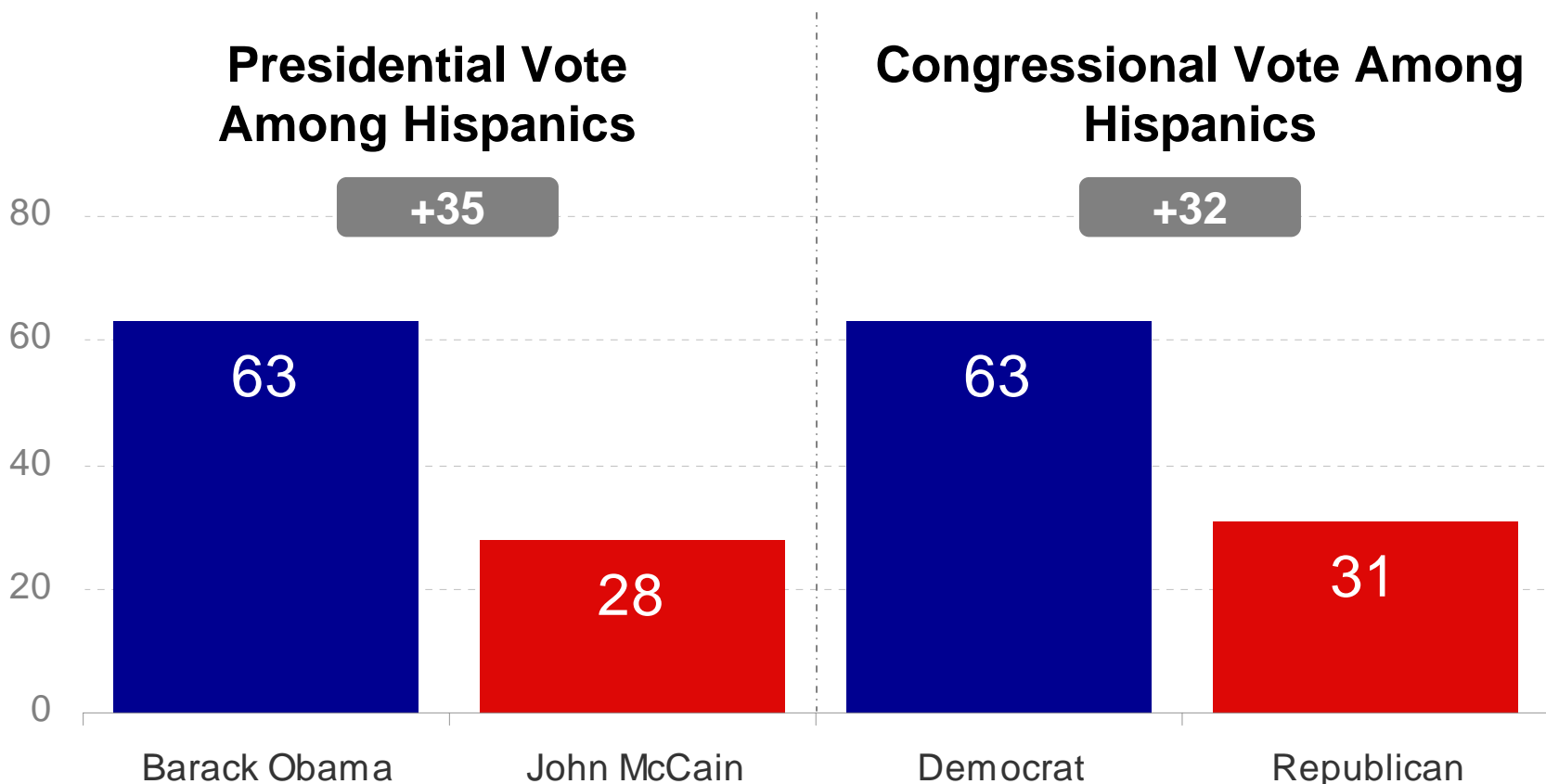
Congressional Democratic candidate does marginally better among Anglos than Obama

Thinking about the election for Congress/President in November, if the election for U.S. Congress/President were held today, would you be voting for (Democratic House candidate/Democrat Barack Obama) or (Republican House candidate/Republican John McCain)?



Obama leads strong showing for Democrats with Hispanics

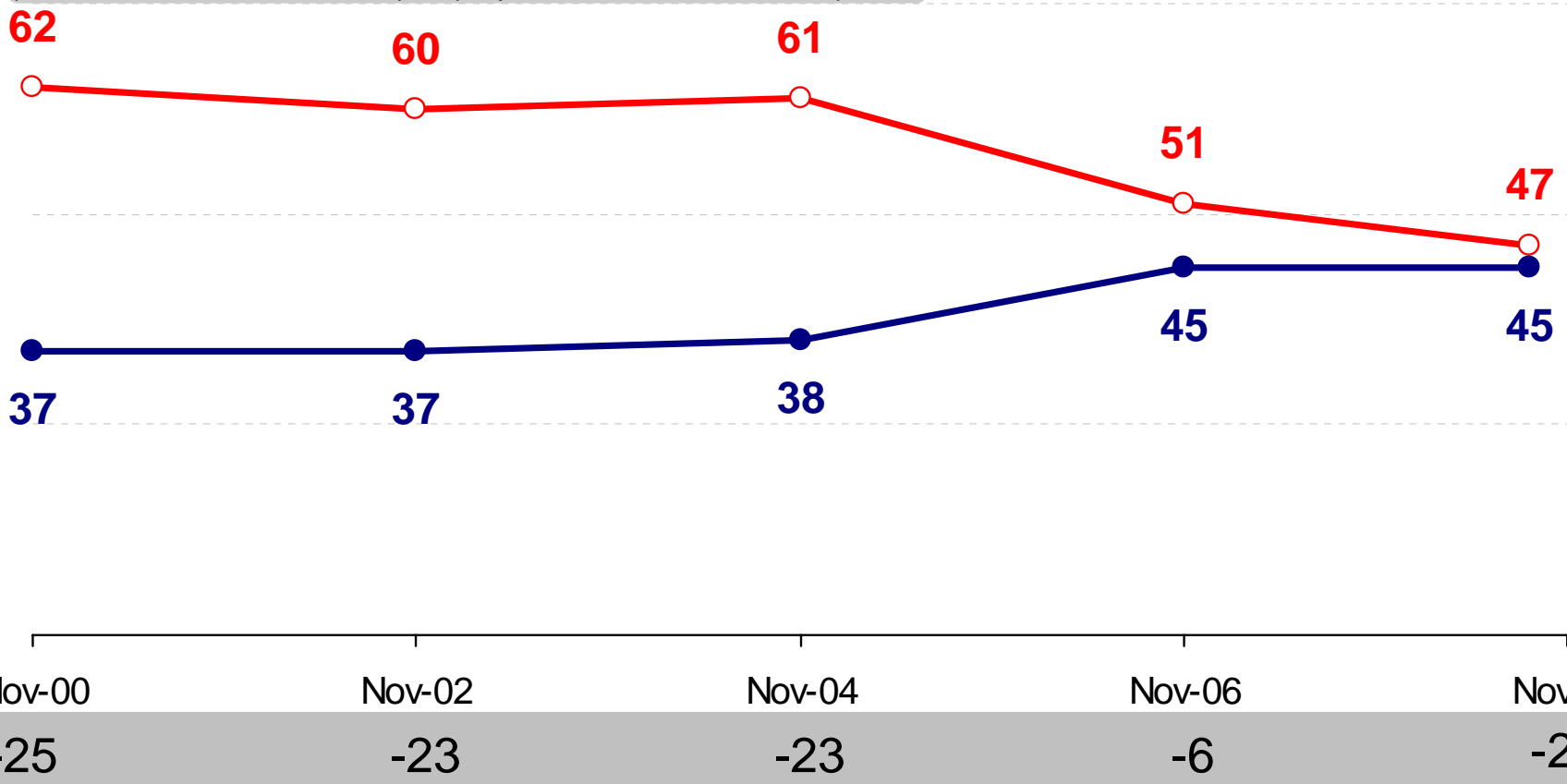
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Historical Congressional Vote in These Districts

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

 Republican  Democrat



Change Message: An Obama change message helps Democrats pull ahead, and does better than not mentioning Obama

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

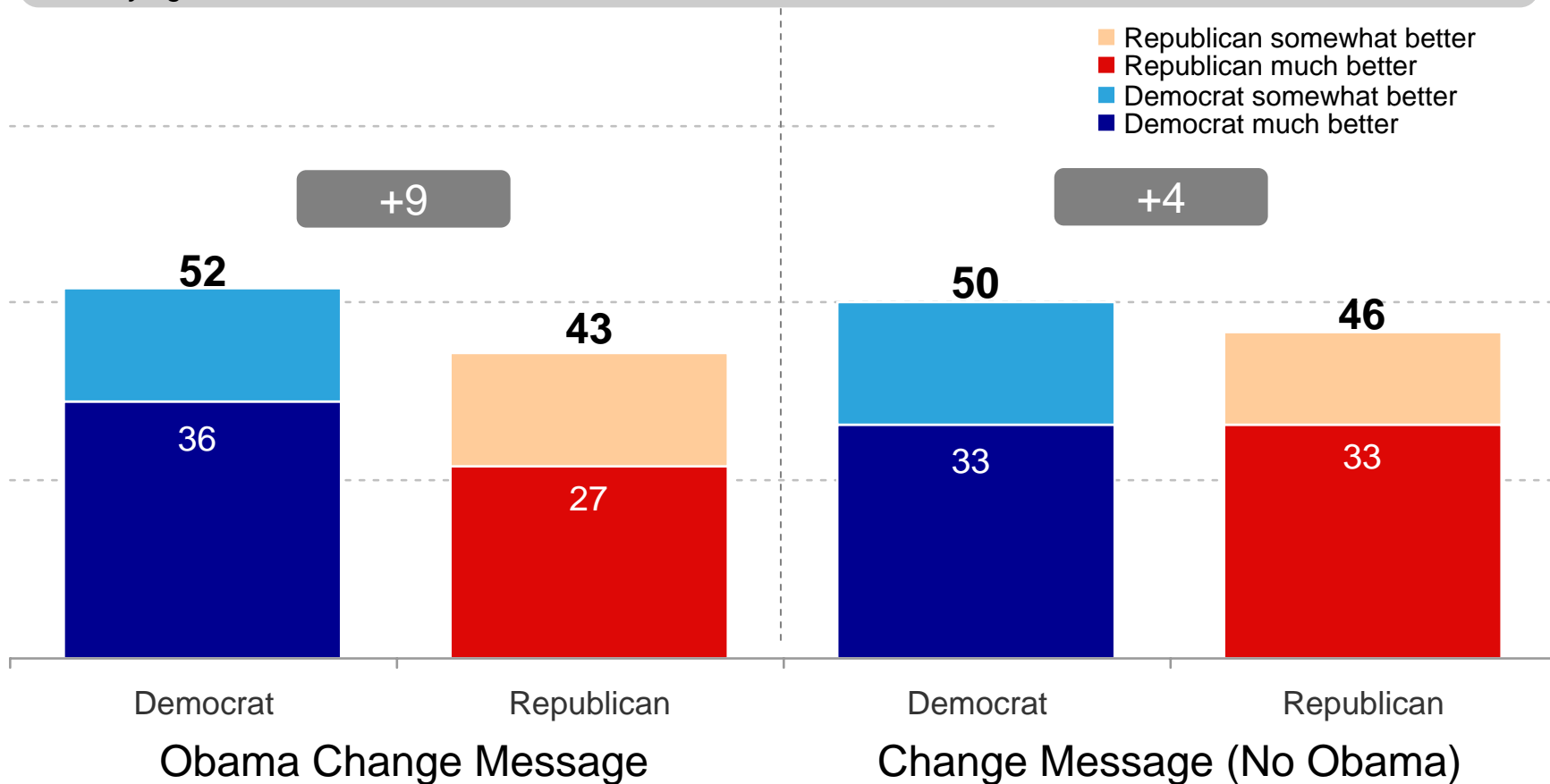
The Democrat will go to Washington and fight for change. This candidate **(agrees with Barack Obama)** OR **(believes)** that special interests have too much power in Washington. Like Obama, this candidate will turn the page on Bush's failed policies and work with both parties to get things done, including cutting taxes for middle class families to get our economy moving, passing affordable health care, and investing in more alternative energy.

OR

The Republican says we need the right kind in Washington. Barack Obama and the Democrats talk about change, but their change means raising taxes, saying no to more drilling at home, and pulling our troops out of Iraq too soon, making us less safe. This Republican offers tough leadership that can fix our problems and make us stronger at home and abroad.

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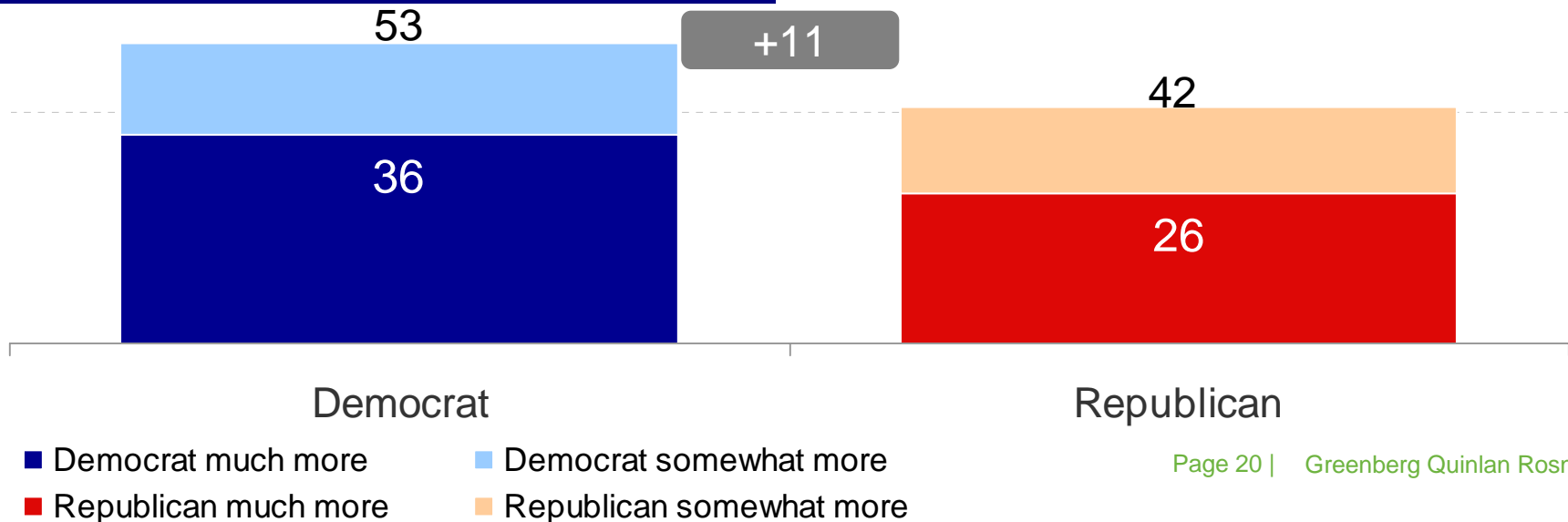


Economy Gives Democrats Biggest Advantage

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The Democrat says our country is built on a vibrant and growing middle class. But today, our middle class is struggling. We should cut taxes for working families and put an end to tax breaks for companies that ship jobs overseas and reward those who create jobs in the U.S. We need to make health care more affordable, and invest in alternative energy that will create jobs and lower energy costs. This candidate will cut wasteful spending and won't take a pay raise until the budget is balanced.

The Republican says we need to cut taxes for families and American businesses, which face the highest tax rates in the industrialized world. We need a simpler, fairer tax code without thousands of rules and regulations. We need to maintain free trade, which lowers costs for American consumers and creates jobs. And we also need to root out government waste in Washington and cut funding for unnecessary social welfare programs.

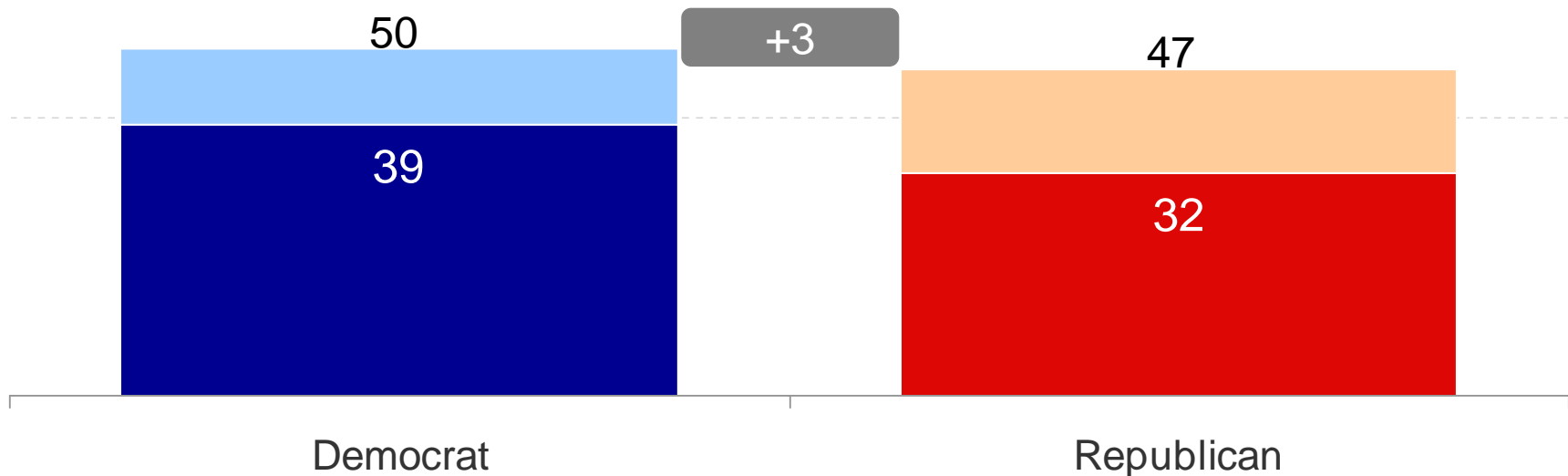


War in Iraq – Divided; Base is Galvanized

Here are two more statements candidates for Congress have made, again after you hear both please tell me which comes closer to your own point of view.

The Democrat says the war in Iraq has been badly managed, has gone on too long, and cost us too much money. We're spending billions a month with no accountability. We need to get the Iraqis to solve their own problems so we can reduce our troops there responsibility, deal with Afghanistan and invest more resources here at home.

The Republican says we have made progress in Iraq and we need to finish the job. The surge is working as violence is declining, Iraq is more stable, and its economy is growing stronger. If we pull our troops out now, we will make things worse. We need to stay on the offensive against the terrorists to keep us secure.



- Democrat much more
- Democrat somewhat more
- Republican much more
- Republican somewhat more

Energy: In this energy producing region, Democrats and Republicans battle to a draw

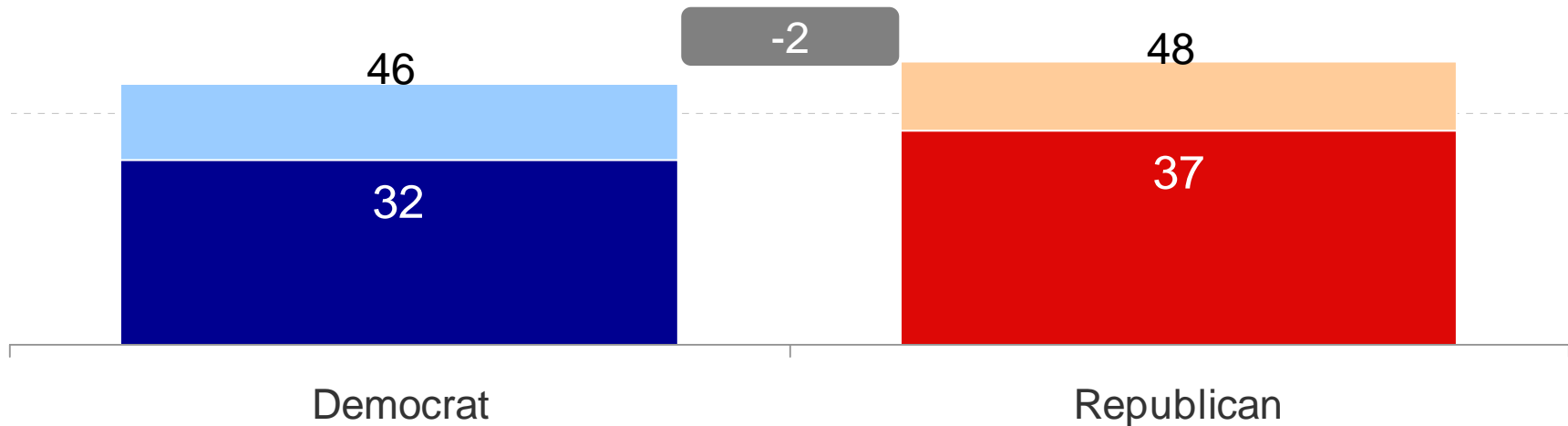
Democratic Message

(No mention of drilling)

The Democrat says American families are hurting because of the high cost of gas, and we need to change our energy policy. While Republicans are in the pocket of oil companies and oppose renewable energy, this Democrat believes we should invest in cleaner and cheaper alternative energy sources, like wind and solar power, and invest in more fuel efficient vehicles. This will create jobs and reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

Republican Message

The Republican says we need an all of the above energy policy that includes all options to solve our energy crisis and protect our national security and prosperity. While Democrats are too close to national environmental groups and oppose drilling for more oil, this Republican believes we need more drilling, including offshore drilling, and more natural gas from the U.S. We must increase our use of clean coal and nuclear power, while also investing in alternative energy.



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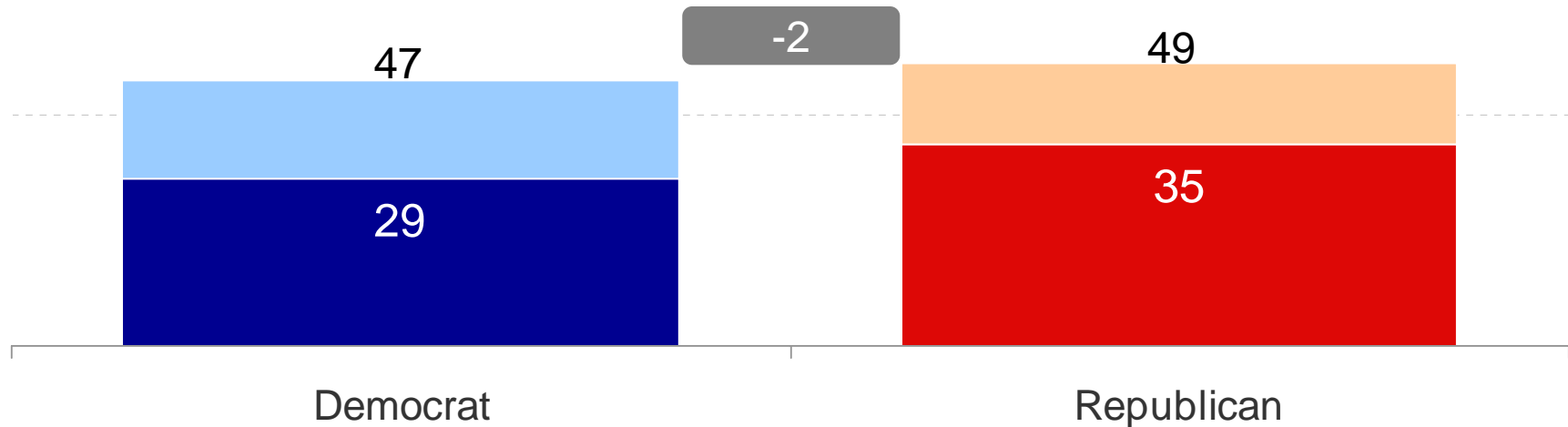
Democratic Message

(Pro drilling)

The Democrat says American families are hurting because of the high cost of gas, and we need to change our energy policy. We need to drill for more oil in the U.S. in areas already open to drilling. While Republicans are in the pocket of oil companies and oppose renewable energy, this Democrat will invest in cleaner and cheaper alternative energy sources, like wind and solar power, and more fuel efficient vehicles. This will create jobs and reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

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Negative Messages Against Democrats

Now let me read you a series of statements some people have made against Democrats running for Congress. 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 candidates.

Immigration

This Democratic candidate supports amnesty for illegal aliens and has supported efforts to allow illegal aliens to continue receiving tax-payer funded government services.

Very Serious
Doubts

Total Serious
Doubts

30

59

Raise Taxes

This Democratic candidate wants to increase taxes on 100 million Americans and increase pay roll taxes. These new taxes will increase government waste and inefficiency, hurt the economy and take more money out of your pocket.

29

59

Wrong Change

This Democratic candidate supports the wrong kind of change for America; this radical agenda includes higher taxes for American families and businesses, nearly four-hundred billion dollars in increased government spending, a reckless pull-out from Iraq and weakened national security.

28

57

Iraq Pullout

Just when the surge has worked and we've made real progress in Iraq, this Democratic candidate wants to pull our troops out of Iraq, which will lead to massive chaos and blood-shed in Iraq, undermine America's war on terrorism, give a huge victory to Al Qaeda and dishonor our troops.

27

58

Negative Messages Against Republicans

Now let me read you a series of statements some people have made against Republicans running for Congress. 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 candidates.

	Very Serious Doubts	Total Serious Doubts
This Republican candidate has taken large campaign contributions from big oil companies and supports the same energy policy written by George Bush and Dick Cheney that got us into this mess in the first place. That's why this candidate opposes renewable energy while supporting tax breaks for the oil companies that are making record profits and raising gas prices to record highs.	31	58
Even while the Iraqi Prime Minister supported withdrawing American troops within 16 months, this Republican candidate supports an open-ended commitment to Iraq which has cost this country one-trillion dollars, more than 4,000 lives, hurt the economy and undermined our efforts in Afghanistan.	29	56
This Republican candidate supports the same Bush economic policies that have undermined the middle class in this country and led to our current economic problems, including huge tax breaks for the wealthy and big corporations, run-away spending and record deficits with no accountability for how the money is spend and cuts in education and jobs programs designed to help people in these tough times.	27	59
This Republican candidate says he is for the troops, but has consistently voted against increases in veterans health care funding to treat wounded soldiers. He even tried to reduce benefits for the new GI Bill that provides veterans a chance to attend college after they have served in Iraq and Afghanistan.	27	58

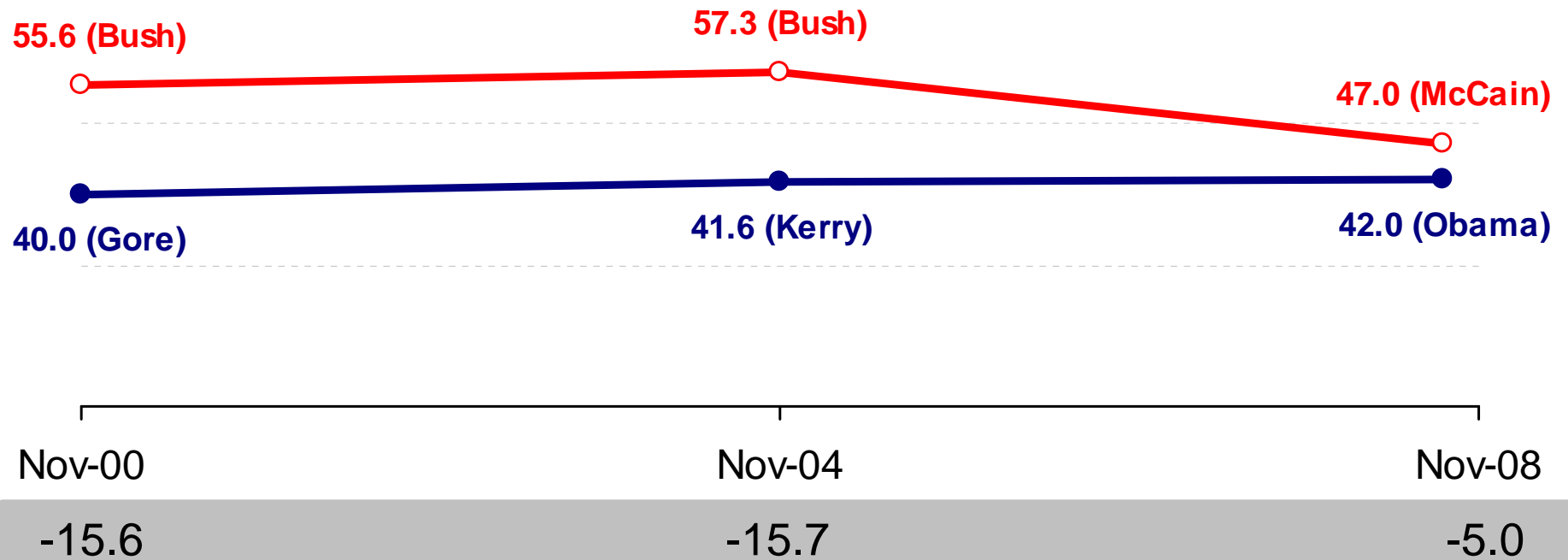
Obama's Impact on the Congressional Vote

Historical Presidential Vote in These Districts

- Obama much stronger than either Kerry or Gore in terms of margin
- McCain significantly underperforming Bush

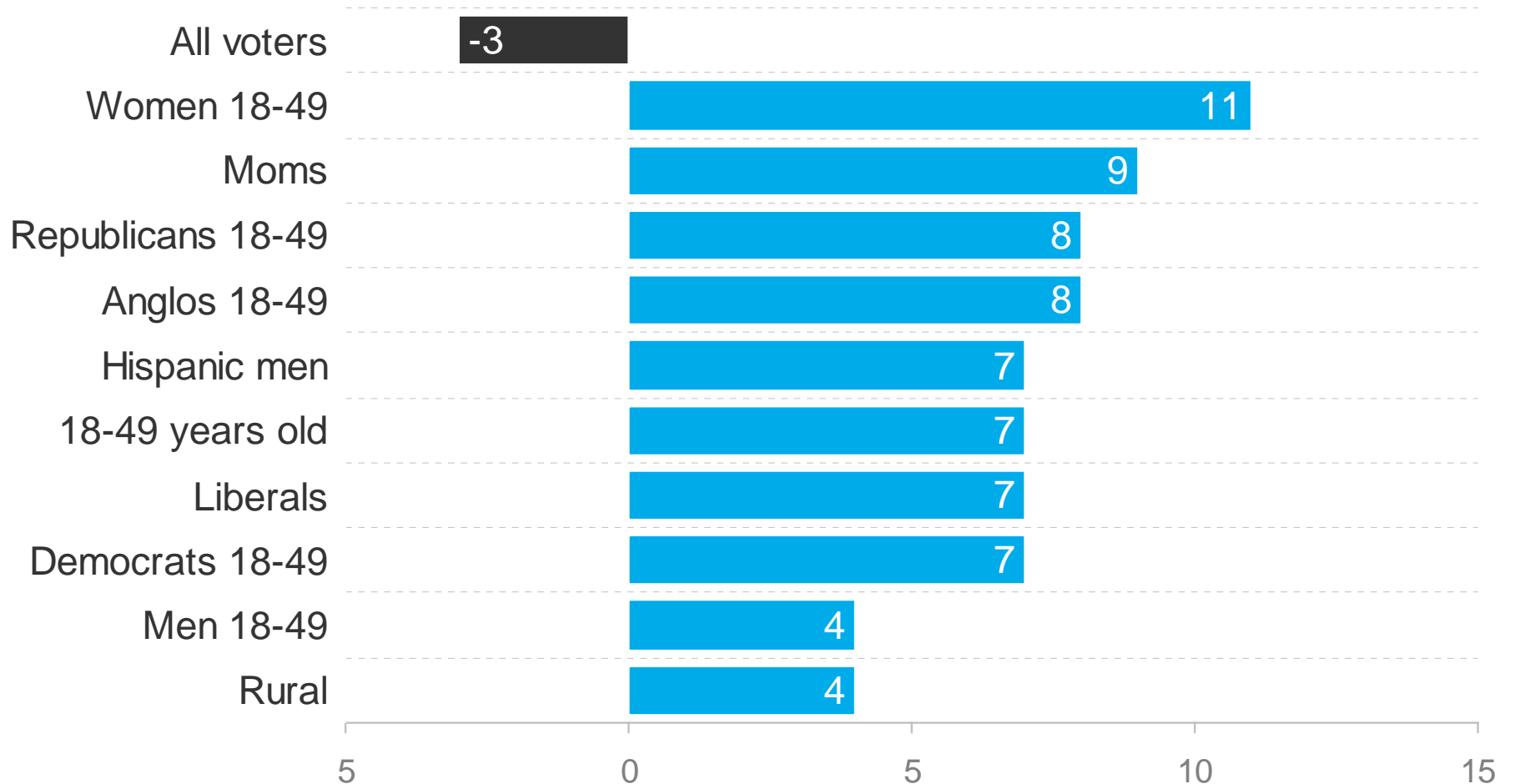
Now thinking about the presidential election in November. If the election for president were held today and the candidates were -- for whom would you vote?


○ Republican
 
● Democrat



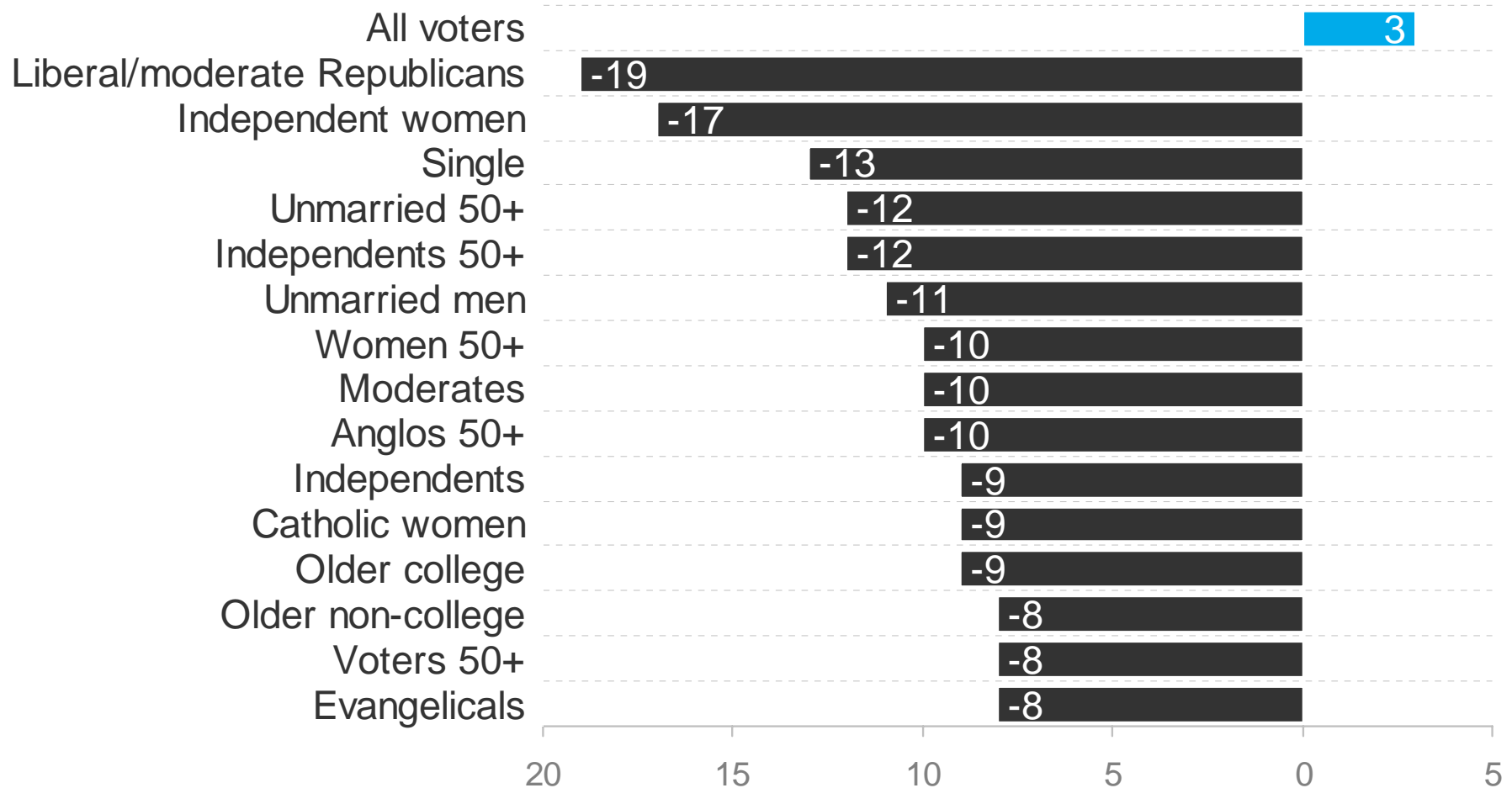
Targets for Congressional Democratic Candidates = Obama Bounce Voters

Obama does better with key groups of voters than Congressional Democratic candidates (9% of the electorate)



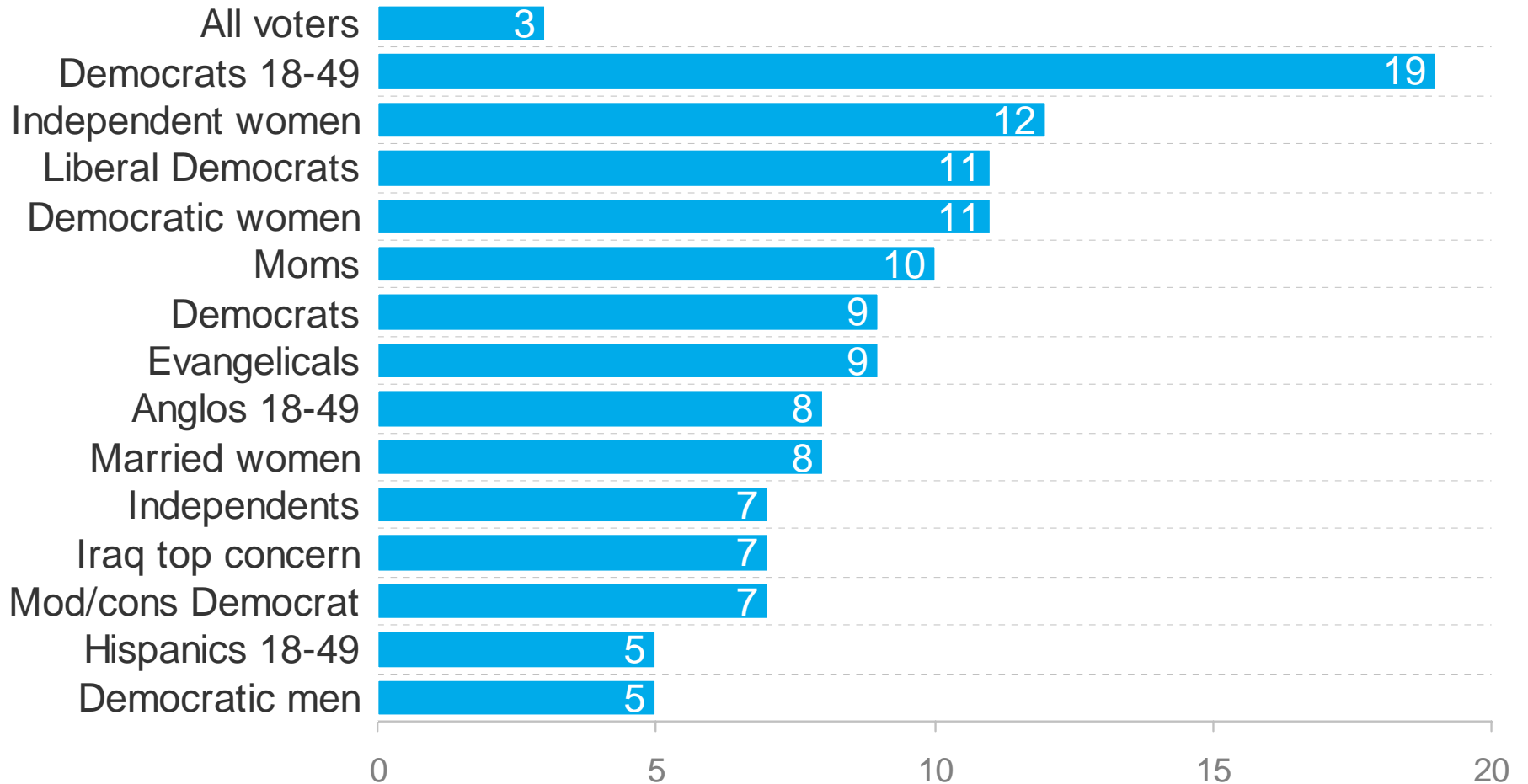
Obama Defectors

Voters who support Democratic Congressional candidate but are not currently voting for Obama (10% of electorate)

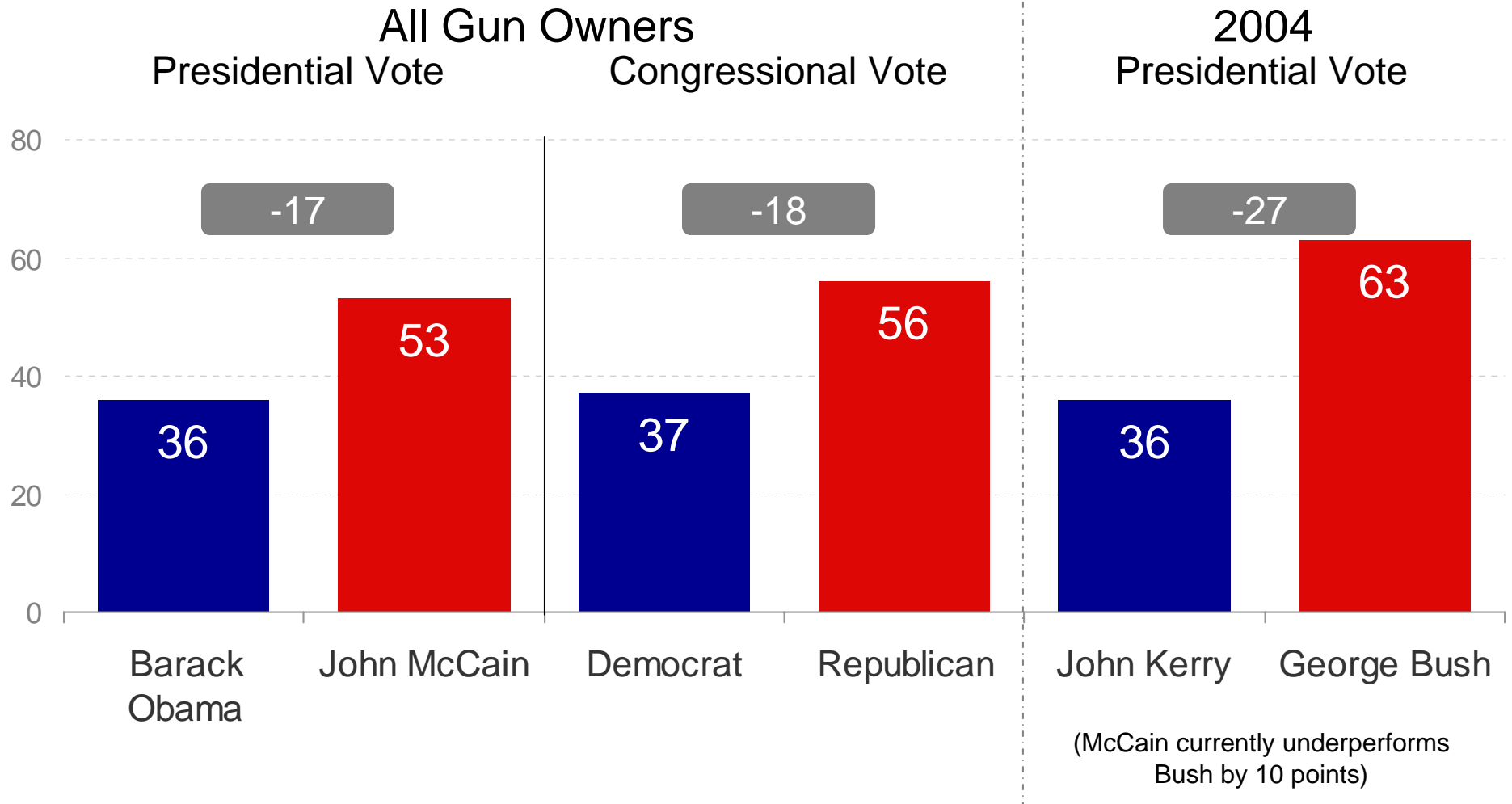


Swing Voters who move to Democrats

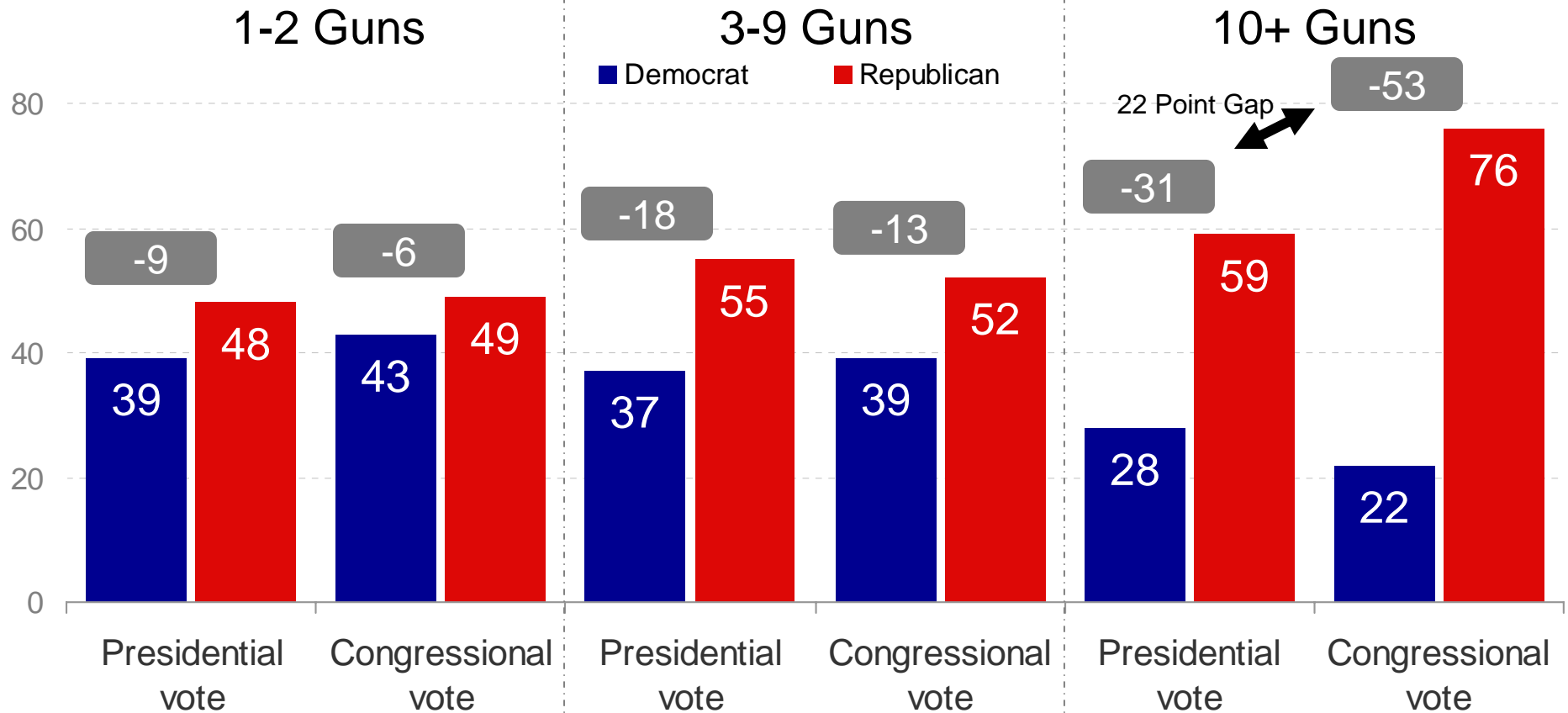
Many are “Obama bounce” voters where, after arguments for the Congressional candidates, the Democratic candidate matches Obama’s stronger initial performance



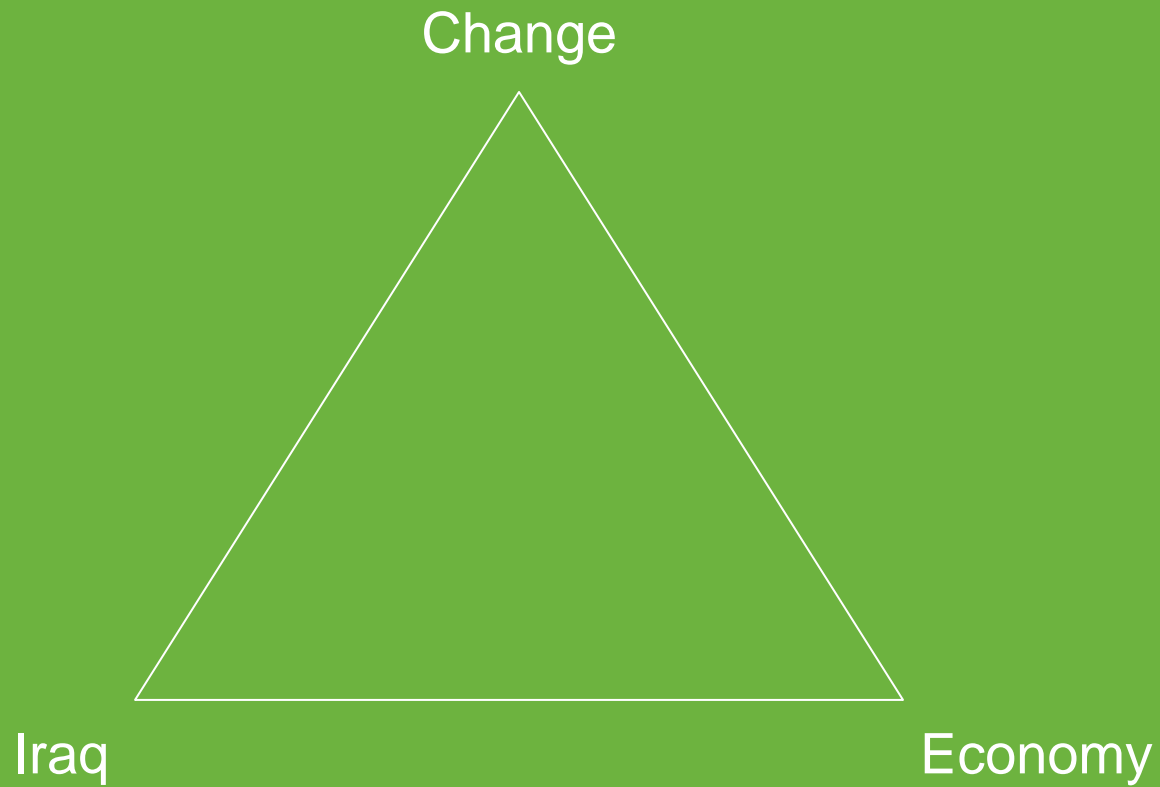
Among Gun owners, Obama Shows Relative Strength While McCain Struggles Compared to Bush



Sportsmen for Obama: Among Gun Owners, McCain Underperforms Badly Among Voters Who Own a lot of Guns



Message Strategy



Obama Change Message Strongest with Obama Bounce Voters and Independents

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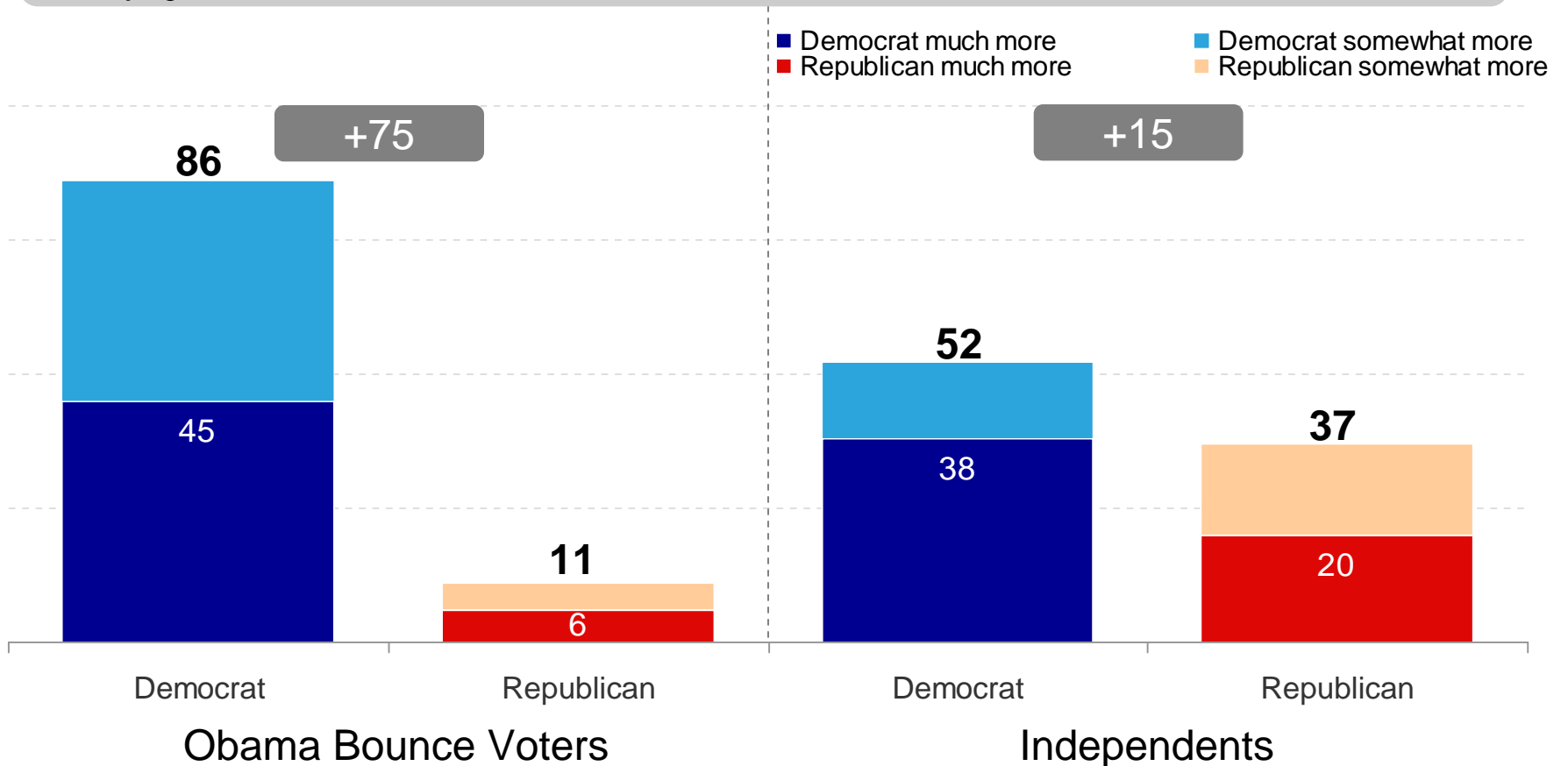
The Democrat will go to Washington and fight for change. This candidate agrees with Barack Obama that special interests have too much power in Washington. Like Obama, this candidate will turn the page on Bush's failed policies and work with both parties to get things done, including cutting taxes for middle class families to get our economy moving, passing affordable health care, and investing in more alternative energy.

OR

The Republican says we need the right kind in Washington. Barack Obama and the Democrats talk about change, but their change means raising taxes, saying no to more drilling at home, and pulling our troops out of Iraq too soon, making us less safe. This Republican offers tough leadership that can fix our problems and make us stronger at home and abroad.

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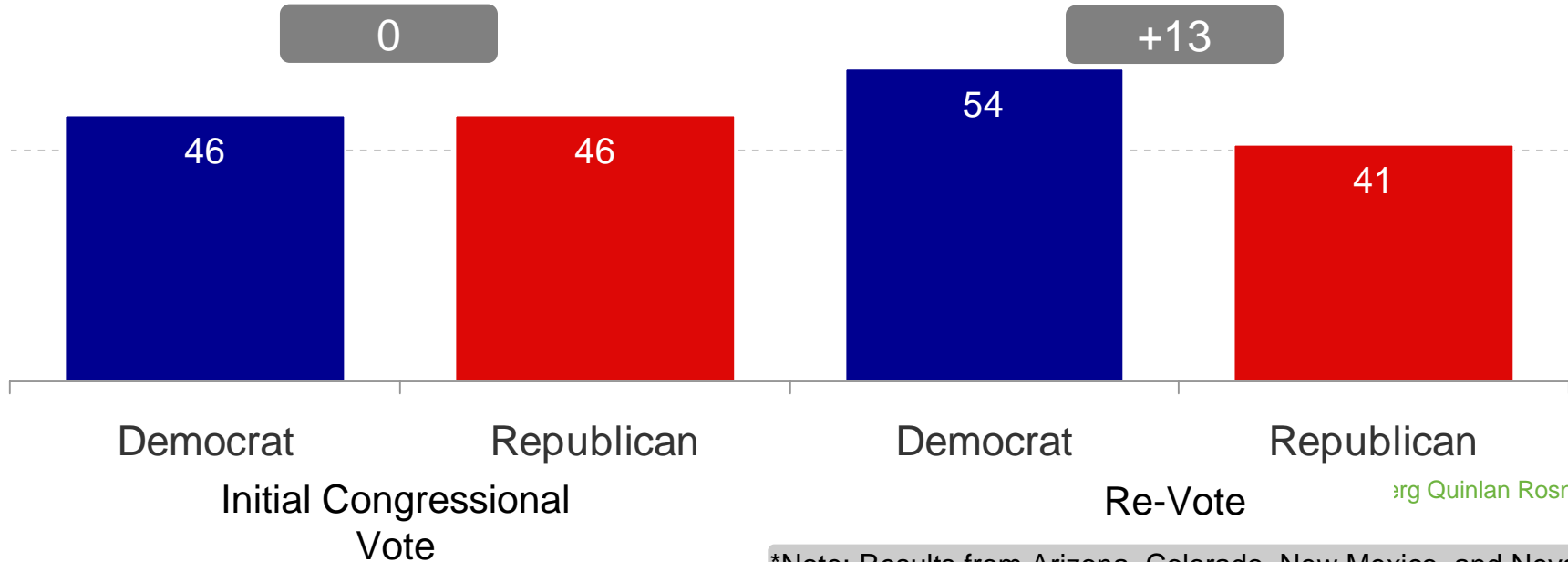
- Overall, the Democratic candidate wins by 9 points with this message; much better than Obama's 5-point deficit or the Congressional Democrat's 2-point deficit
- This message does even better in the Southwest (AZ, CO, NM, and NV), giving the Democrat a +12 advantage compared to -1 in the initial congressional vote
- This is by far the best message with Obama bounce voters and independents (better than Economy and Iraq War messages)
 - Among Obama bounce voters, 86% side with the Democratic candidate vs 11% for the Republican on this argument match-up
 - (remember: they are NOT voting for the Democratic Congressional candidate initially)
 - This +75 margin strengthens the Democratic candidate's performance with these ticket splitters
 - The Democrat wins independents 52-37 (+15) with this message vs 41-43 and -2 in the initial Congressional vote

Obama Change Message Resonates Strongly in the Southwest

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rg Quinlan Rosner

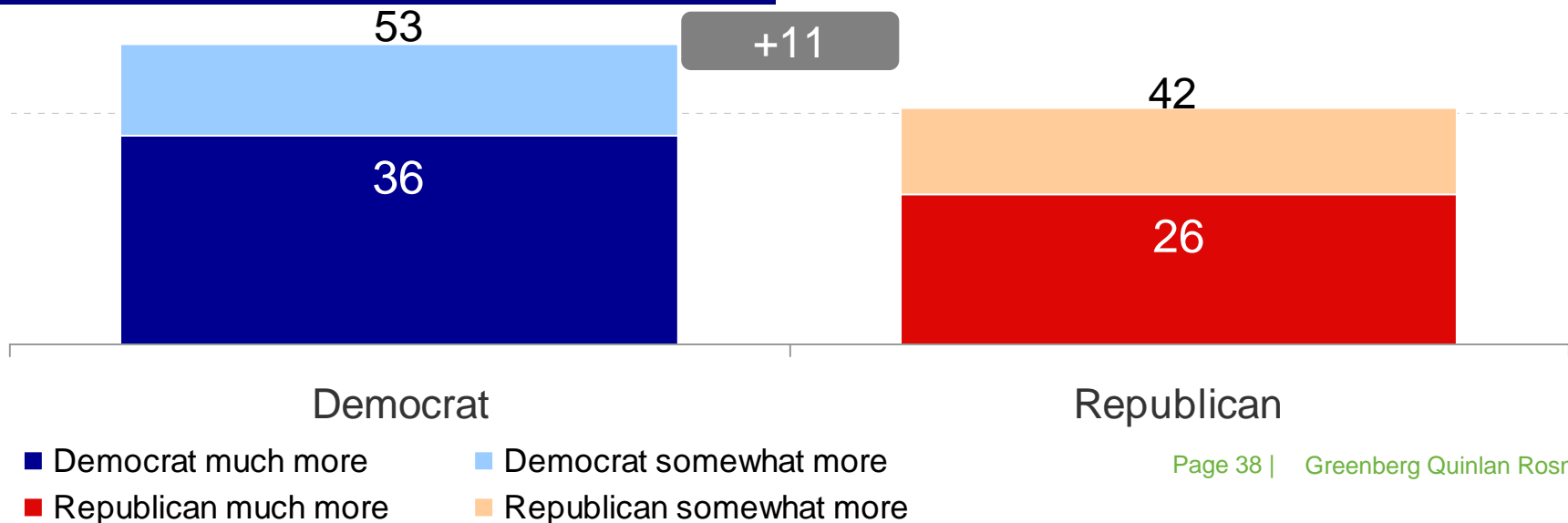
*Note: Results from Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and Nevada

Economy Gives Democrats Biggest Advantage

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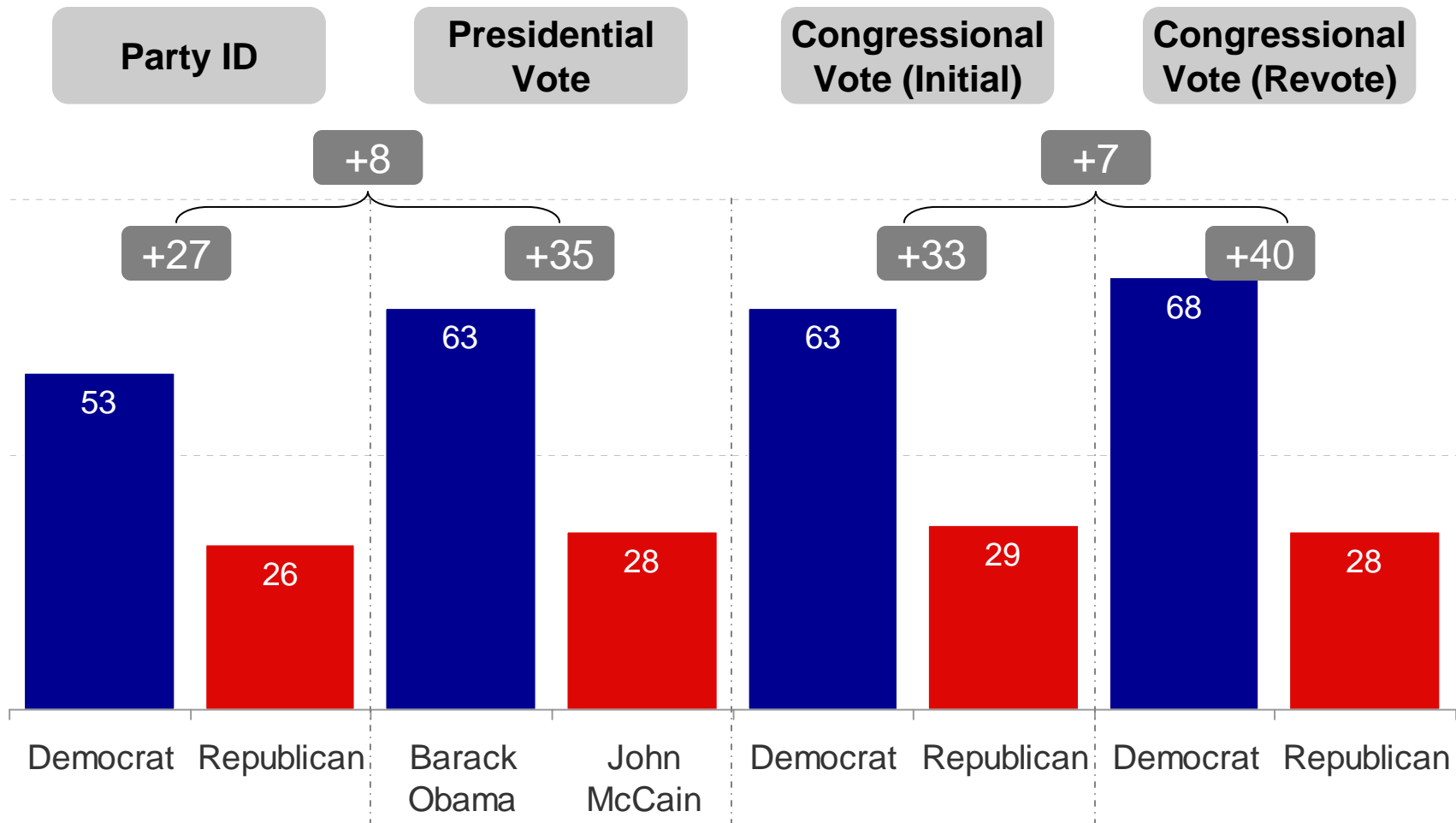


Democrats Need to Engage on the Economy in these Mountain West Districts

- The Economy message is Democrats' strongest, giving Democratic congressional candidates a +11 advantage
- It draws the most bipartisan support, and is the best message with Republicans
- The Economy message resonates strongly with voters making less than \$50,000 a year and allows us to make inroads with these voters

Iraq War Benefits Democratic Congressional Candidates

Among voters who choose the Iraq war as one of their top concerns:

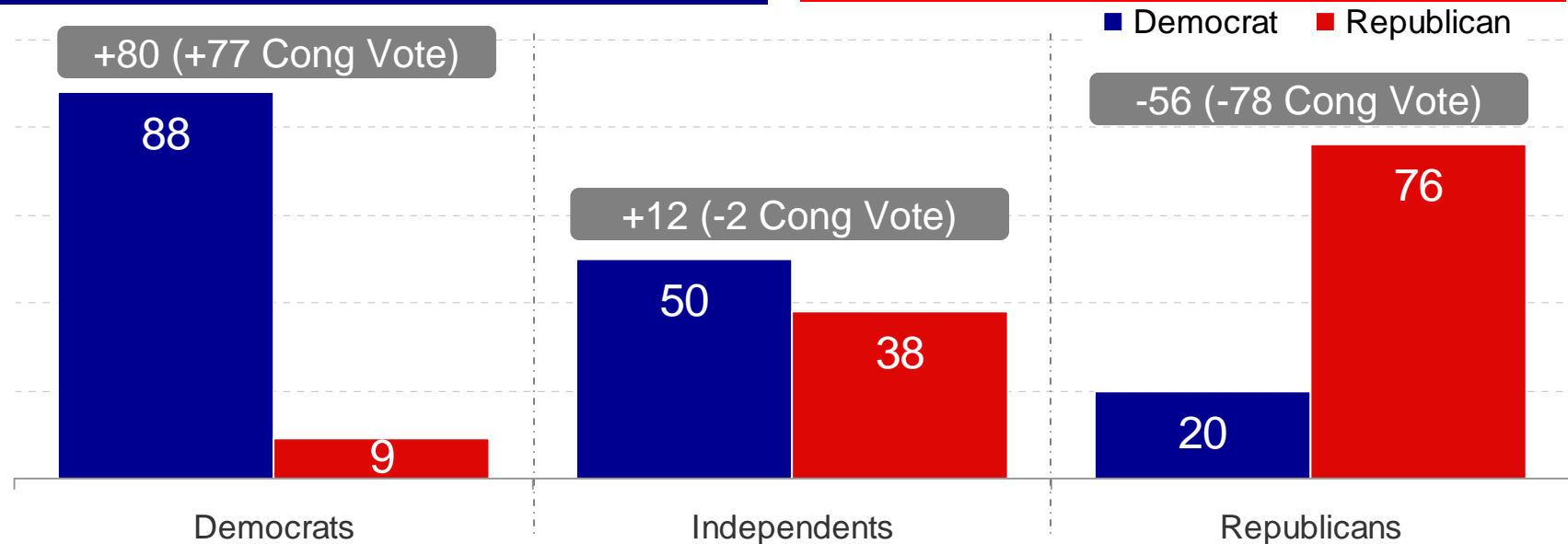


Economy Message by Party

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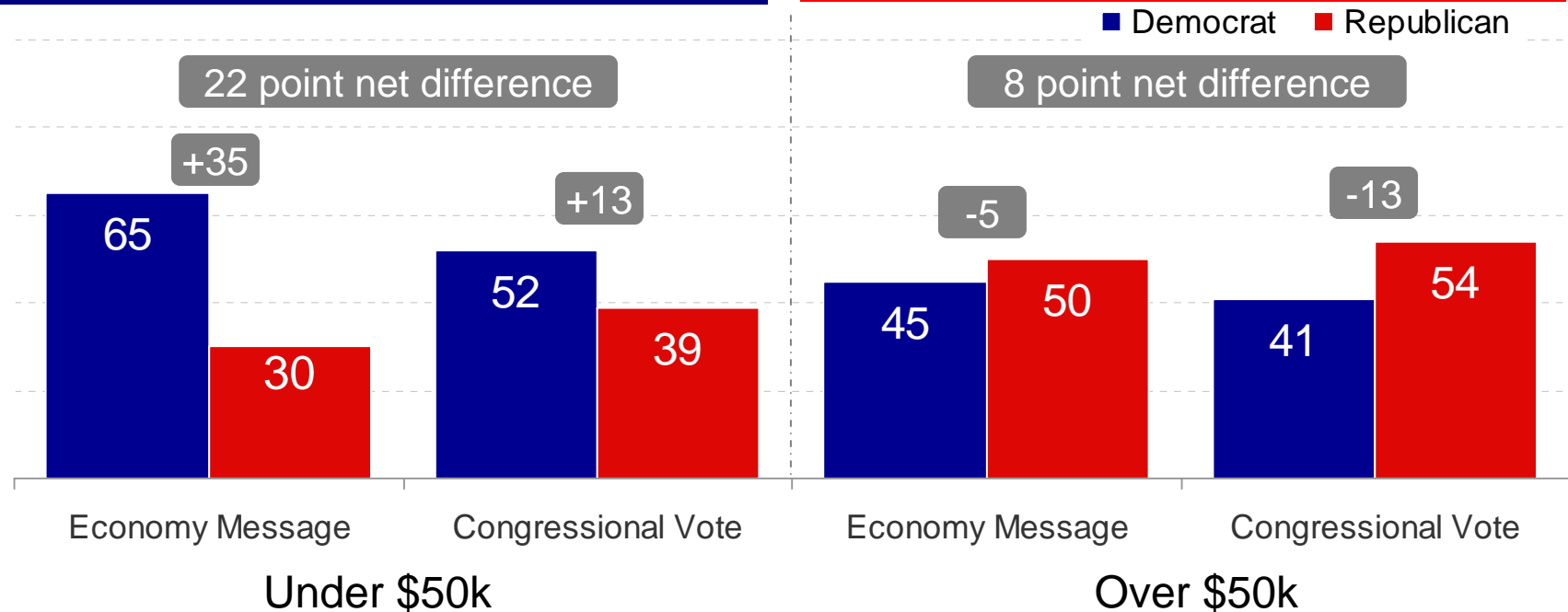


Economy Message by Income

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The Democrat says our country is built on a vibrant and growing middle class. But today, our middle class is struggling. We should cut taxes for working families and put an end to tax breaks for companies that ship jobs overseas and reward those who create jobs in the U.S. We need to make health care more affordable, and invest in alternative energy that will create jobs and lower energy costs. This candidate will cut wasteful spending and won't take a pay raise until the budget is balanced.

The Republican says we need to cut taxes for families and American businesses, which face the highest tax rates in the industrialized world. We need a simpler, fairer tax code without thousands of rules and regulations. We need to maintain free trade, which lowers costs for American consumers and creates jobs. And we also need to root out government waste in Washington and cut funding for unnecessary social welfare programs.

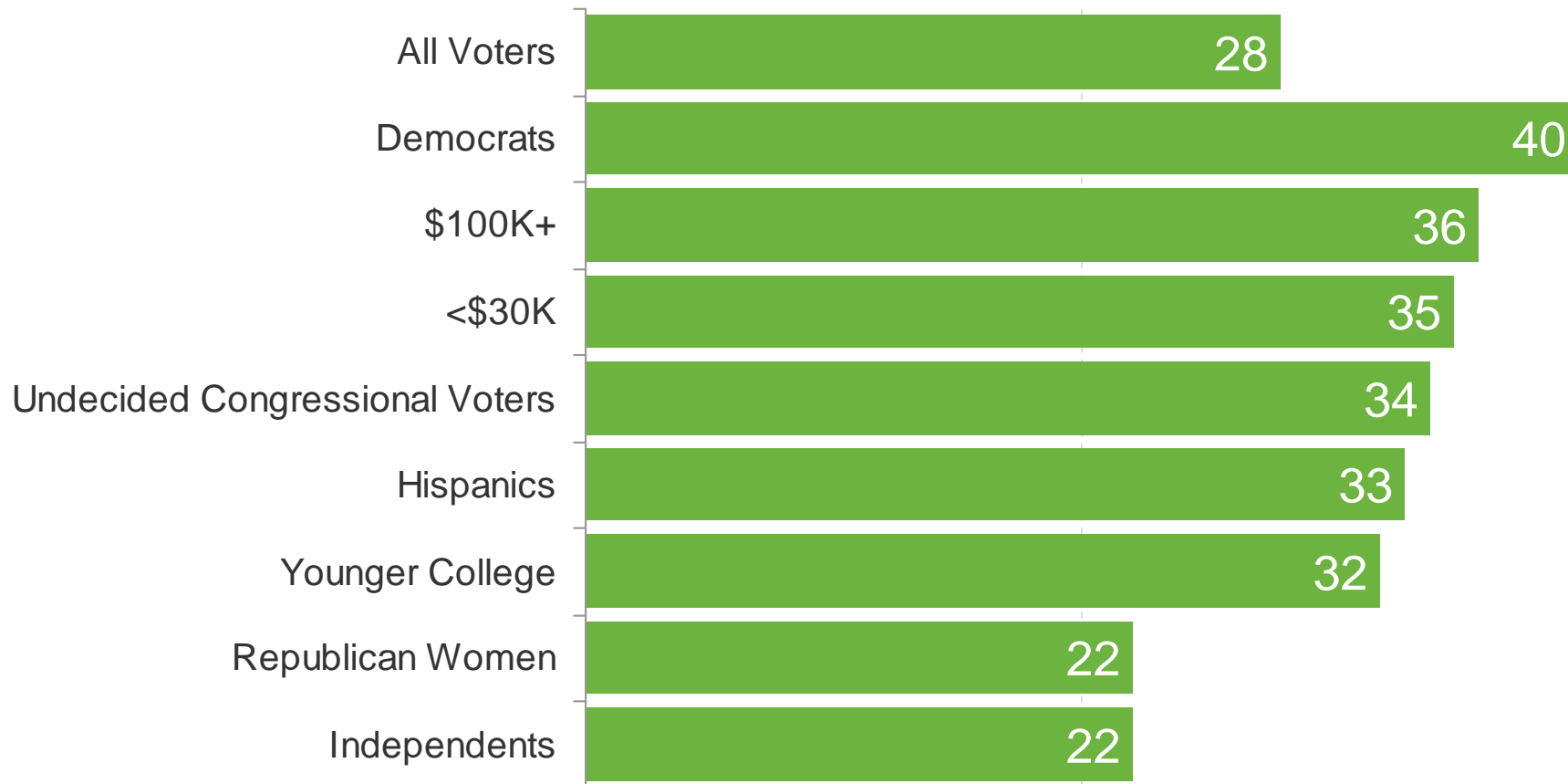


War in Iraq: more Saliency in the Mountain West and Evidence that it Benefits Democrats

- The Iraq War ranks 2nd behind the economy
- Voters in these Mountain West districts are more worried about the Iraq War on a relative basis than voters in other parts of the country, namely the Midwest and the South.
- The issue cuts across party lines and allows Democratic candidates to appeal to targeted Republicans
- The issue galvanizes our base, Obama bounce voters, and voters undecided in the Congressional race
- Once we engage on this issue, we gain ground among voters who care the most about it, which is not the case with any other issue
- The War reminds voters why they want CHANGE and one major reason they are so upset about the country's direction

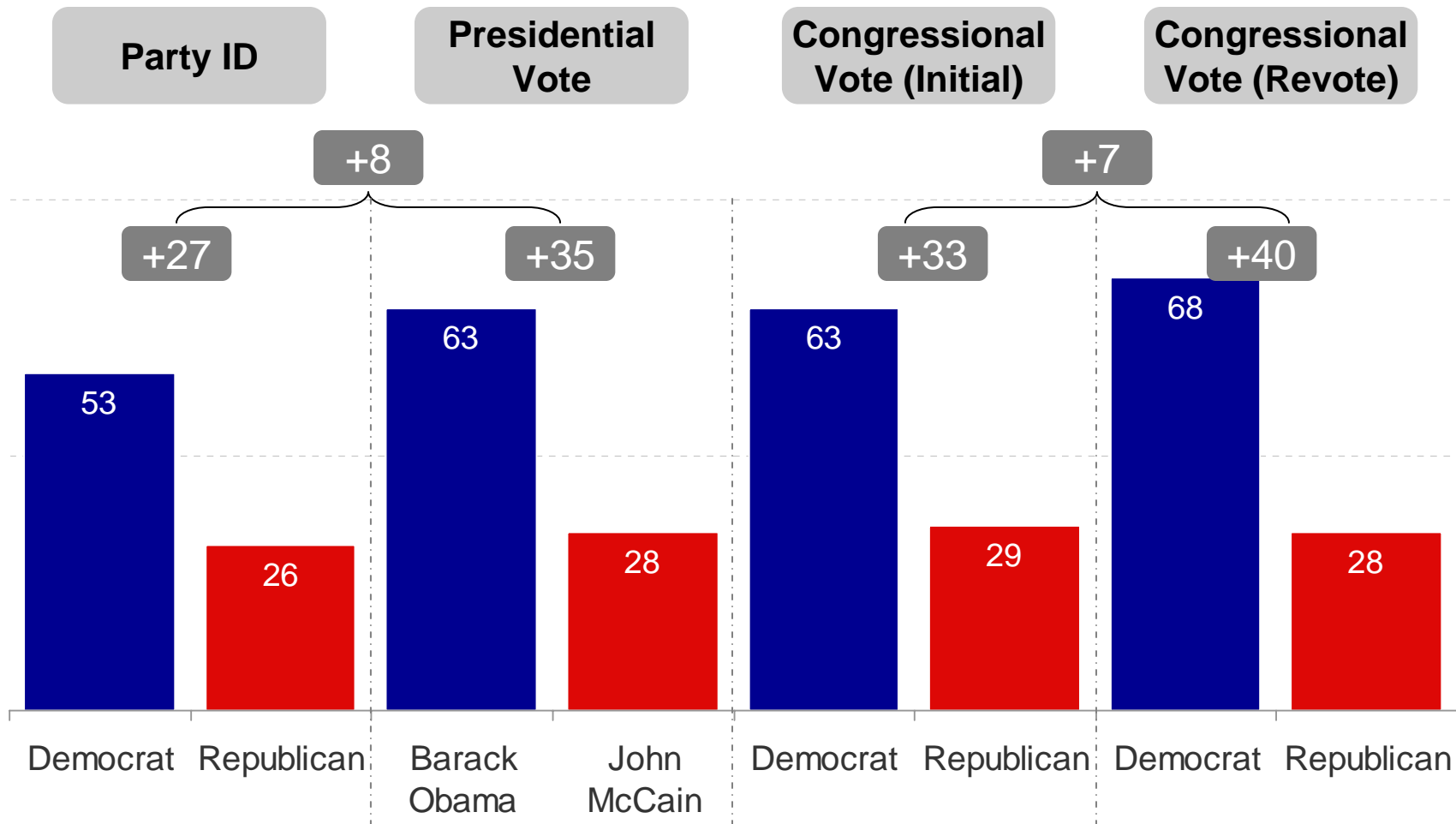
War in Iraq as Top Concern by Demographic Group

Now, I am going to read you a list of concerns that people have. Please tell me which ONE or TWO of these you think the President and Congress should be paying the most attention to.



Iraq War Benefits Democratic Congressional Candidates

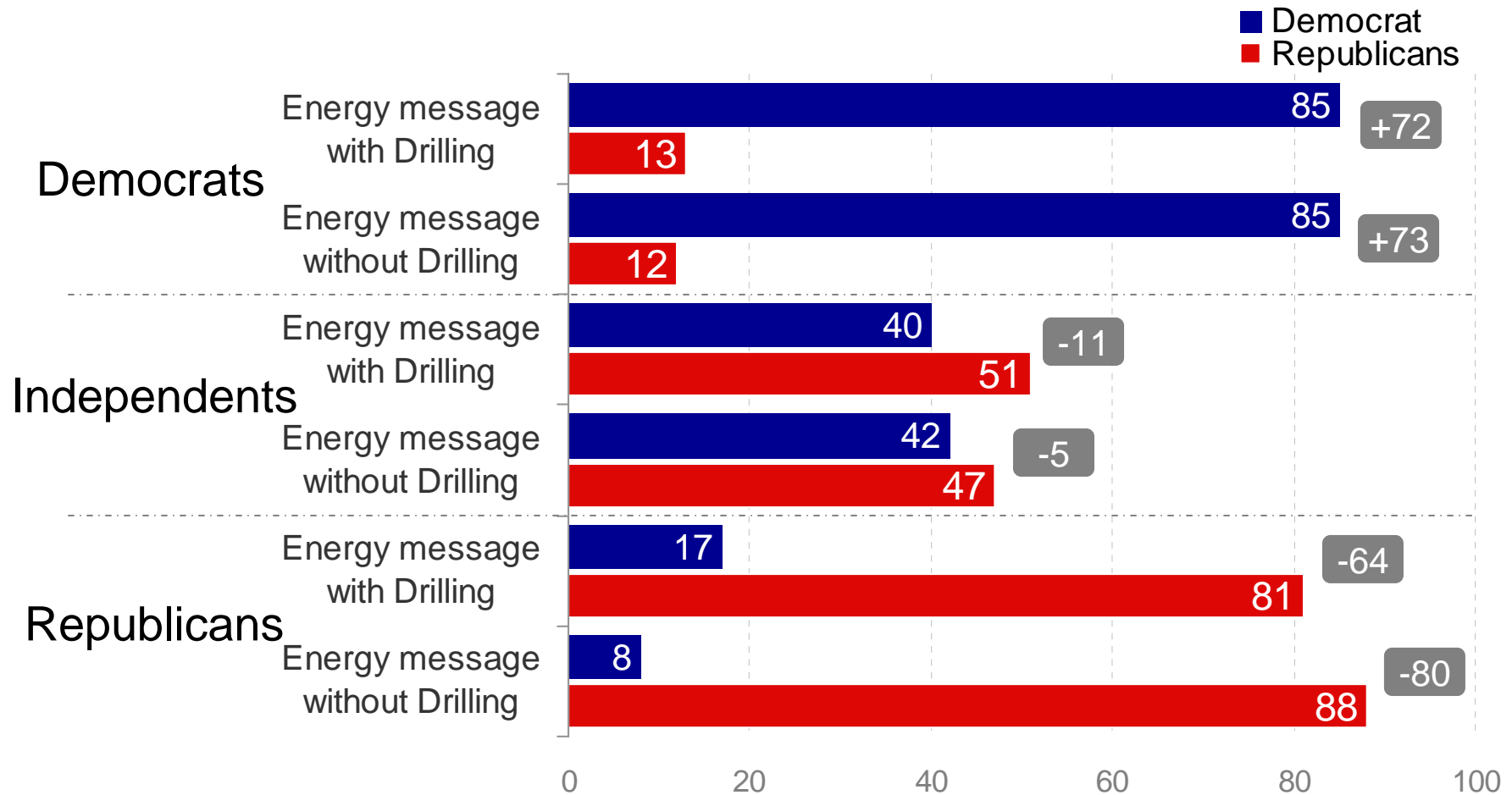
Among voters who choose the Iraq war as one of their top concerns:



Democratic Energy Message

- An energy debate is a challenge for Democrats in this oil and gas producing region
- Democrats in this region battle to a draw on this issue
 - In the region, Democrats do not gain an electoral advantage in the campaign for Congress by focusing on a positive debate about energy
 - In contrast to the draw in these swing Mountain West districts, Democrats can win a debate on energy at the national level (per recent Democracy Corps polling)
- A Democratic message that includes drilling fares the same as one that does not include drilling
 - A pro-drilling Democrat gains some ground with Republicans but loses some ground with independents and intensity with the Democratic base
 - A Democratic energy message with no mention of drilling draws more intense support from Democrats and does slightly better with independents, but does worse with Republicans
- The energy issue is most effective as an ATTACK against Republicans
 - This attack is made even stronger if the Republican has opposed alternative energy

Democratic Energy Message



In a National Energy Debate, Democrats Win

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

Barack Obama says we need a new energy plan that frees America from dependence on big oil and recharges our economy by fast tracking production of clean, alternative energy like wind and solar power, which will create good American jobs. For 26 years, John McCain has been in Washington voting against investments in alternative energy to protect the oil companies. We need to end the tax breaks for big oil companies and use that money to develop alternative energy. We should drill in areas where oil companies already have leases they're not using. And we should require car companies to build more efficient cars to save drivers money.

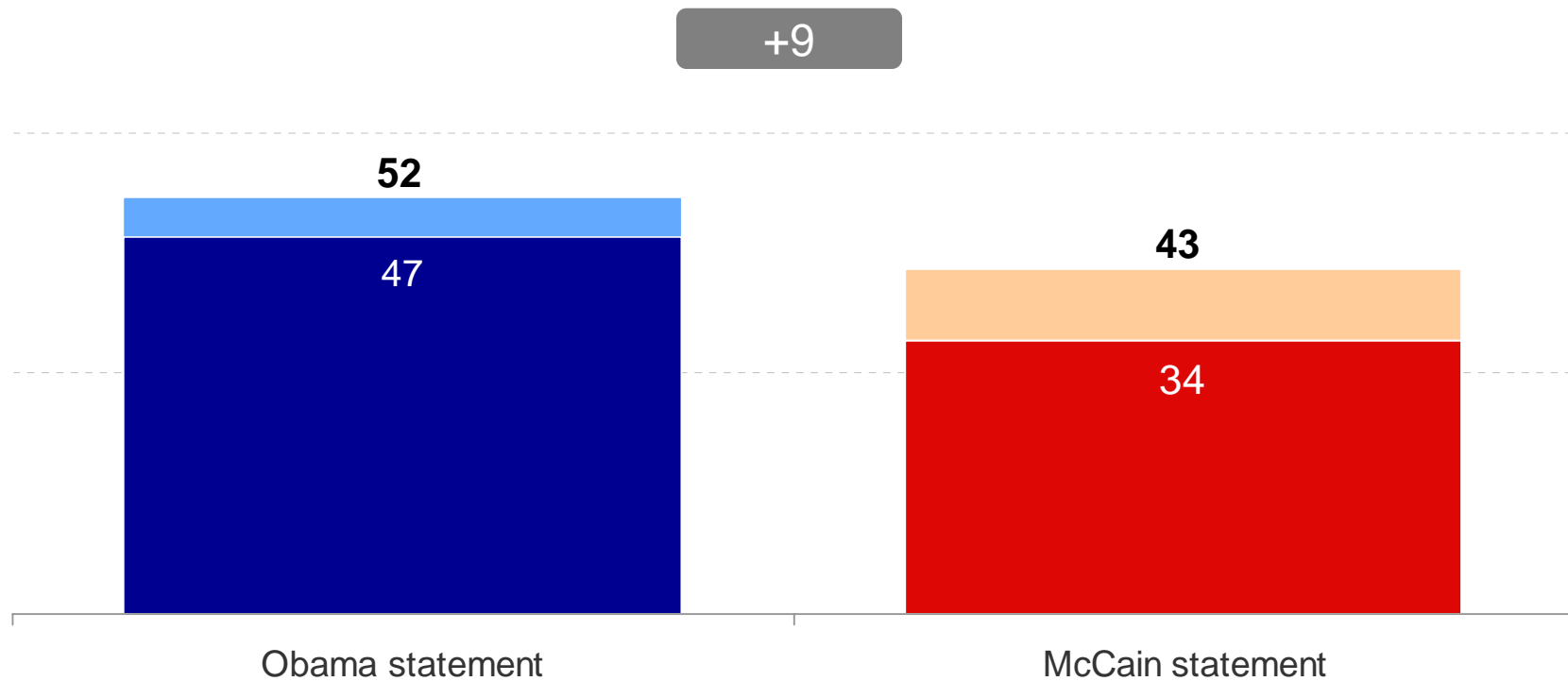
OR

John McCain says we are dangerously dependent on foreign oil because Democrats like Barack Obama oppose efforts to drill for new American oil. McCain's policies will expand U.S. oil production to reduce gas prices and build more refineries to expand our oil capacity here in the US. We should build new nuclear power plants and invest in clean coal technology, and expand alternative energy sources to achieve independence. This shouldn't be a choice between more oil production or alternative energy. We should do both because alternative energy is the future, but right now we live in an oil and gas economy and we need more American oil.

**Note: From Democracy Corps presidential battleground survey of 1,600 likely voters conducted August 12-17, 2008*

In a National Energy Debate, Democrats Win

- Obama statement strongly
- Obama statement not so strongly
- McCain statement strongly
- McCain statement not so strongly



**Note: From Democracy Corps presidential battleground survey of 1,348 likely voters conducted August 12-17, 2008*

GREENBERG QUINLAN ROSNER RESEARCH

www.greenbergresearch.com

Washington, DC
10 G Street NE,
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20002

Ph: +1 202 478 8300
Fax: +1 202 478 8301

California
50 California Street,
Suite 1500
San Francisco, CA 94111

Ph: +1 415 277 5403
Fax: +1 415 358 9599

London, UK
405 Carrington House,
6 Hertford Street
London, UK W1J 7SU

Ph: +44 (0) 207 499 5204
Fax: +44 (0) 207 499 5284