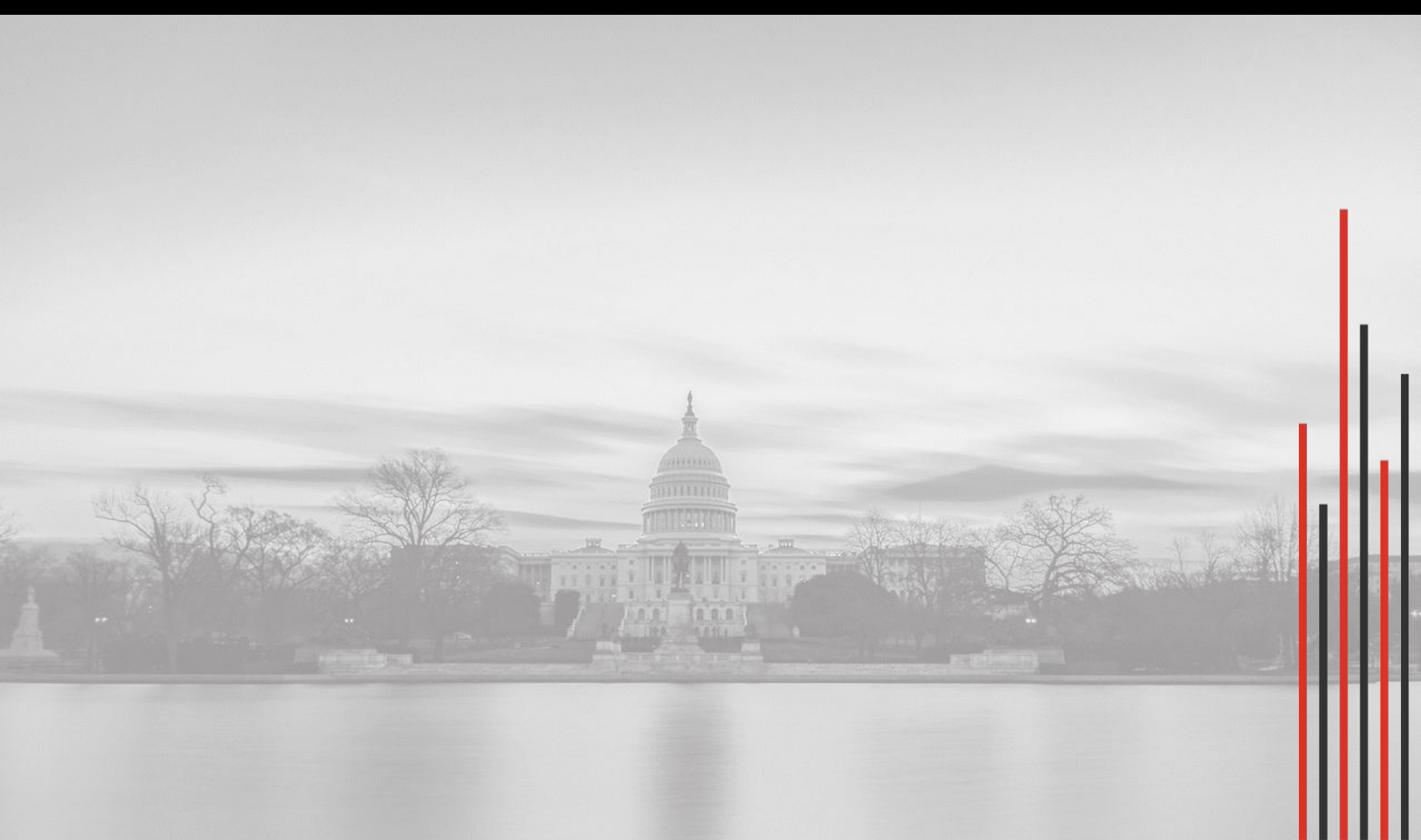


# Post-Election Debrief

November 10, 2022

**PREPARED BY:**

Neil Newhouse, Partner  
Jim Hobart, Partner



# The Political Environment put Democrats at a disadvantage

The mood of the country was the most negative we've ever tested for a mid-term election.



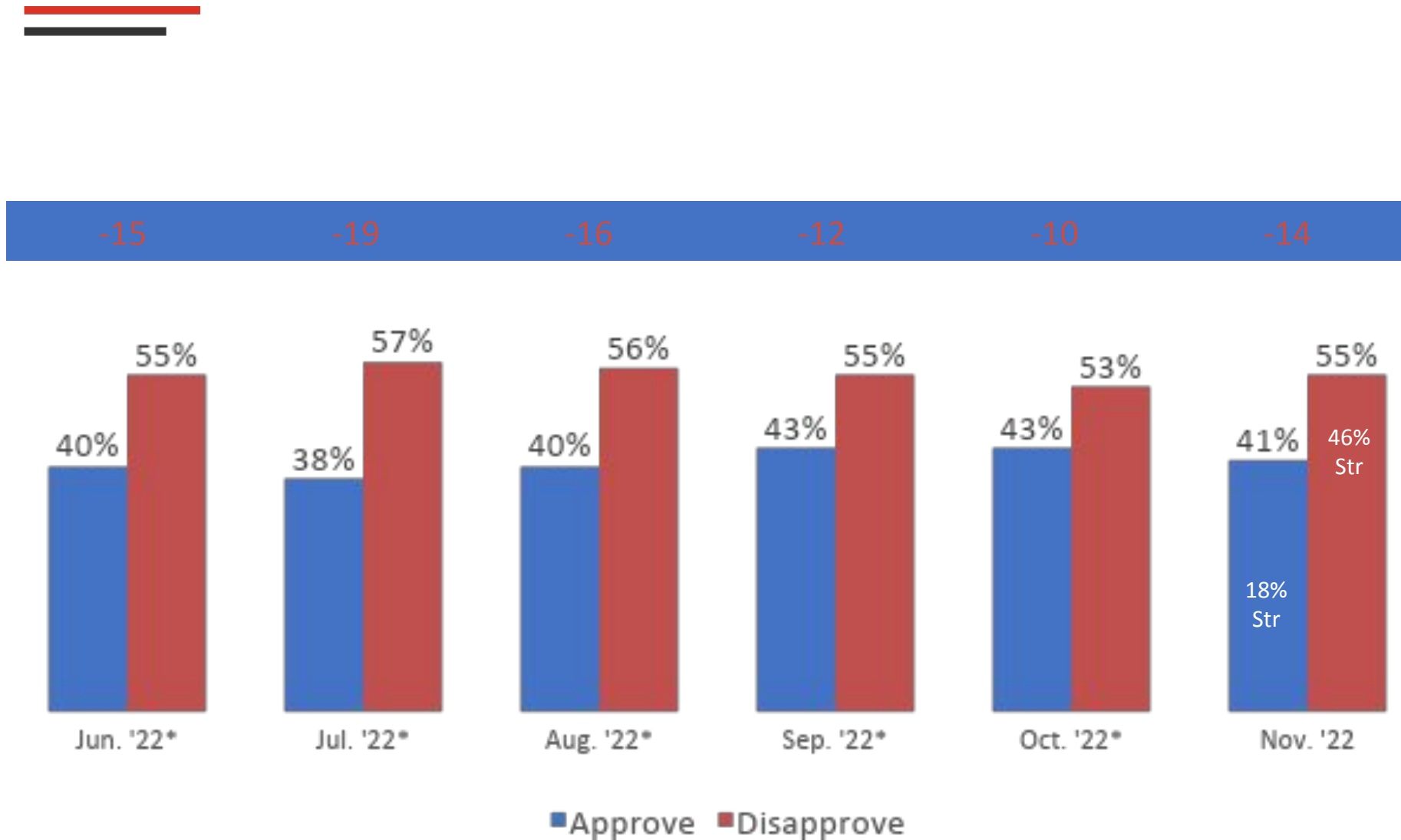
\*POS Post-Election Survey



Now, generally speaking, would you say that things in the COUNTRY are going in the right direction, or have they pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?

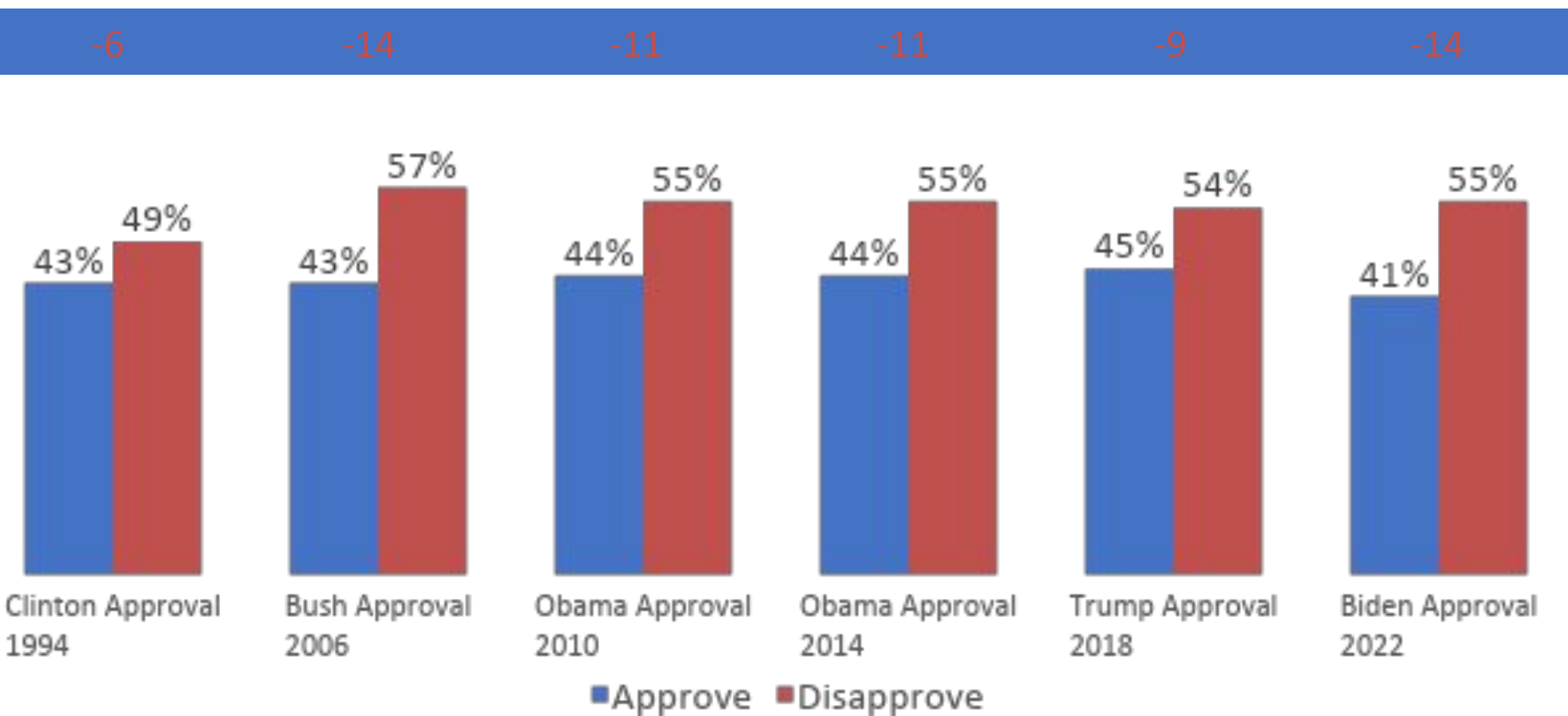


# President Biden's job approval rating failed to break 45%.



\*Monthly RCP Averages

In fact, Biden's job approval was consistent with other Presidents who lost seats in a midterm.



\*POS Post-Election Survey

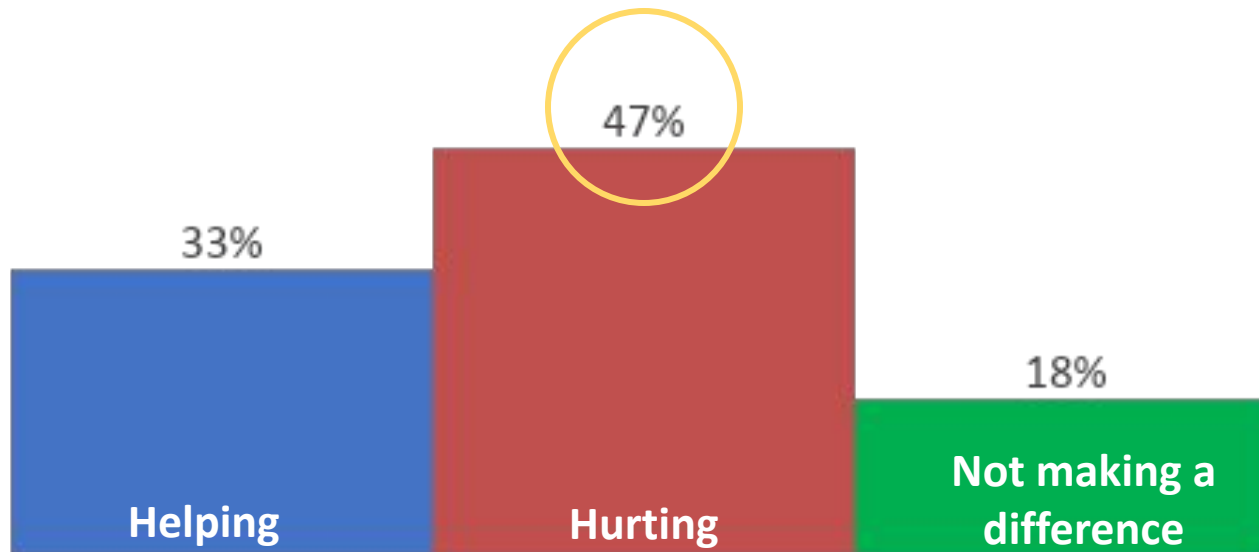


Do you approve or disapprove of the job Joe Biden is doing as President?



Further, Americans generally thought that President Biden's policies were hurting the country.

*Effect of Biden's policies on the country*



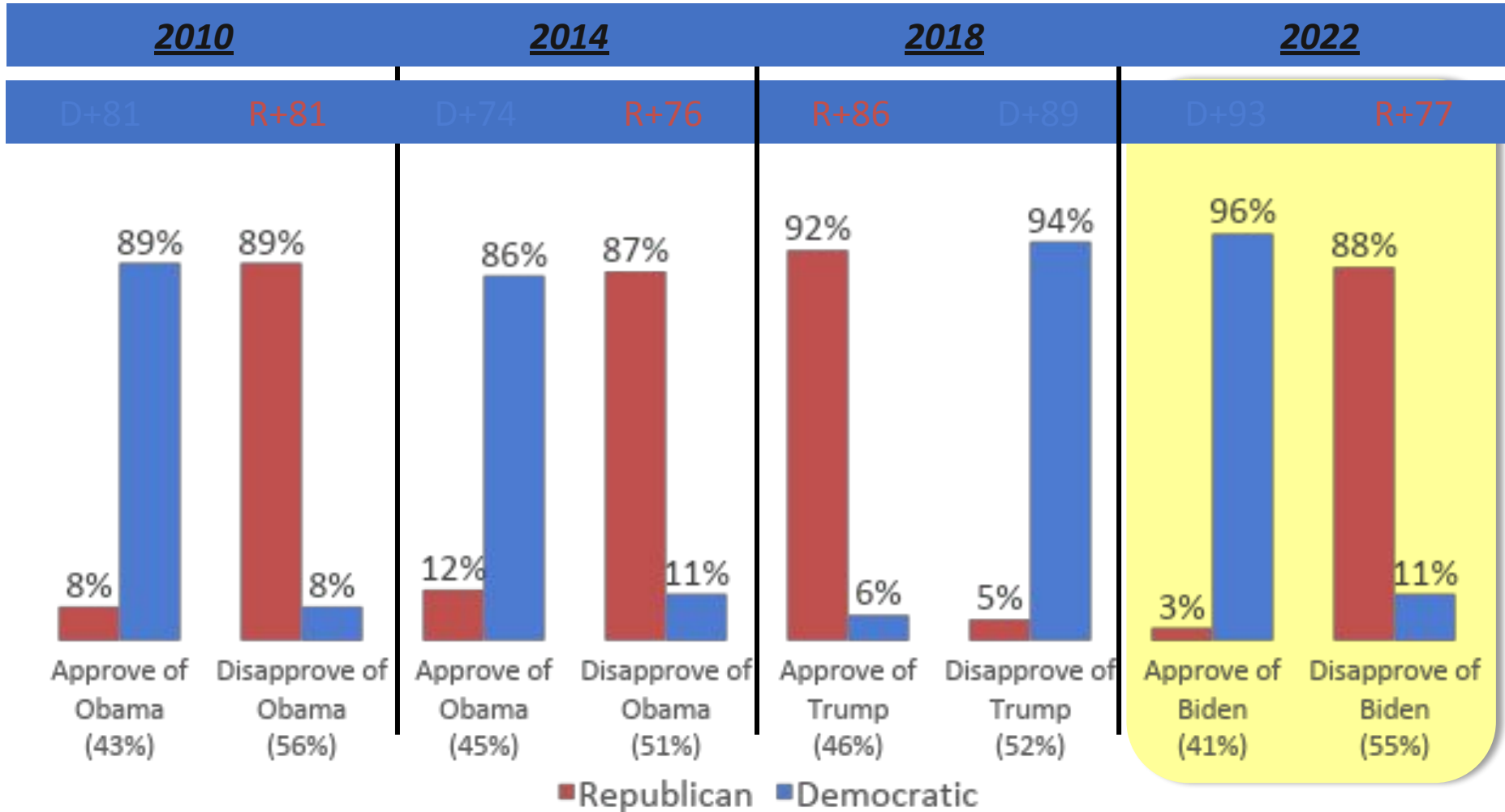
\*CNN Exit Polls

But, the 2022 GOP margin among Independents wasn't wide enough to sustain big gains.

Year	GOP Vote	DEM Vote	Pick Up House Seats
2006	41%	59%	+30
2010	59%	41%	+63
2014	56%	44%	+13
2018	41%	54%	+40
2022	48%	42%	+10?

*\*The New York Times Exit Polls*

One reason Democrats overperformed the fundamentals of wrong track/disapprove is that there was a wider than normal ballot gap between approvers and disapprovers.



\*POS Post-Election Survey

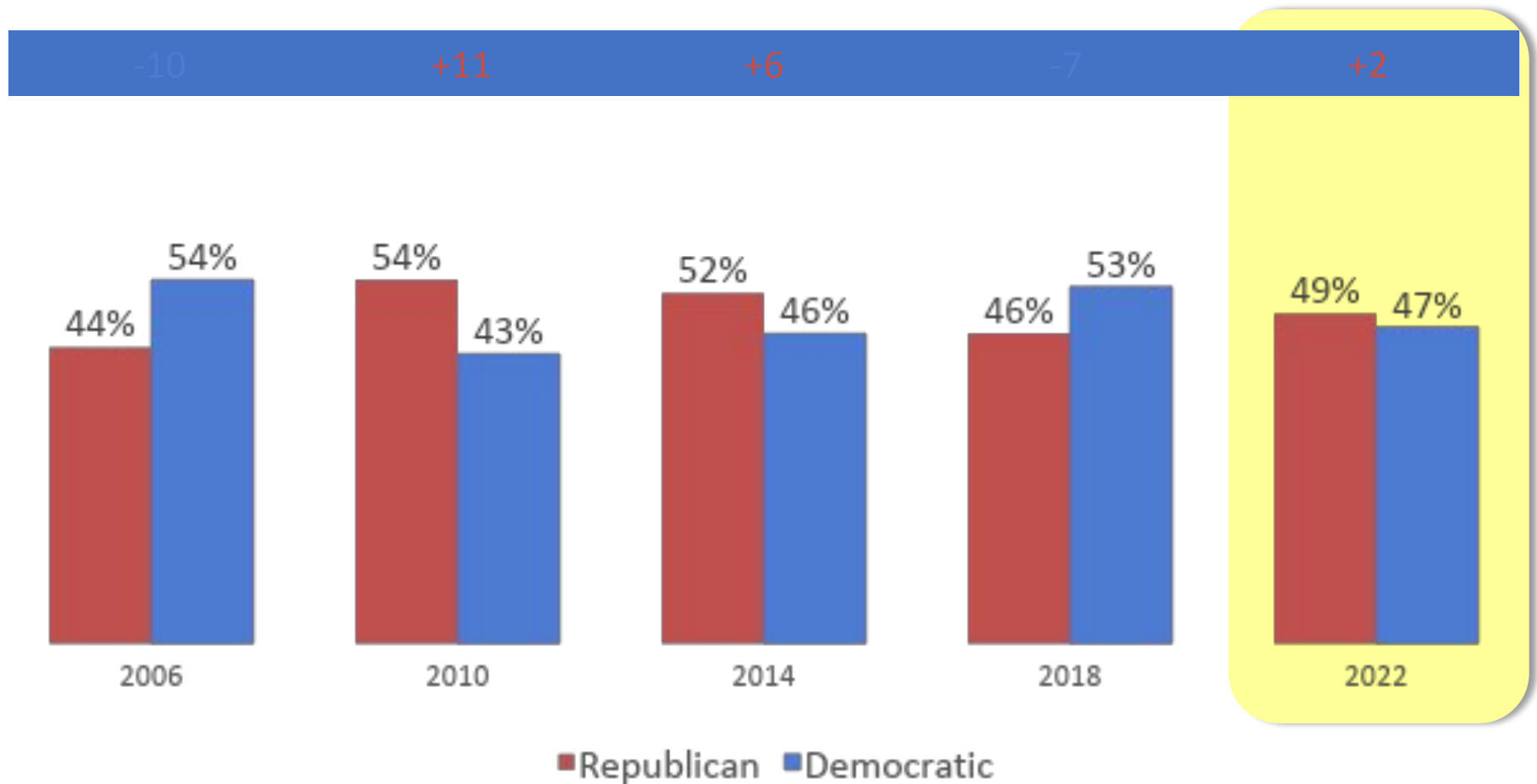


For whom did you vote in the election for U.S. Congress in your district... the Republican candidate or the Democratic candidate?





GOP candidates won the race for Congress by a narrow margin.

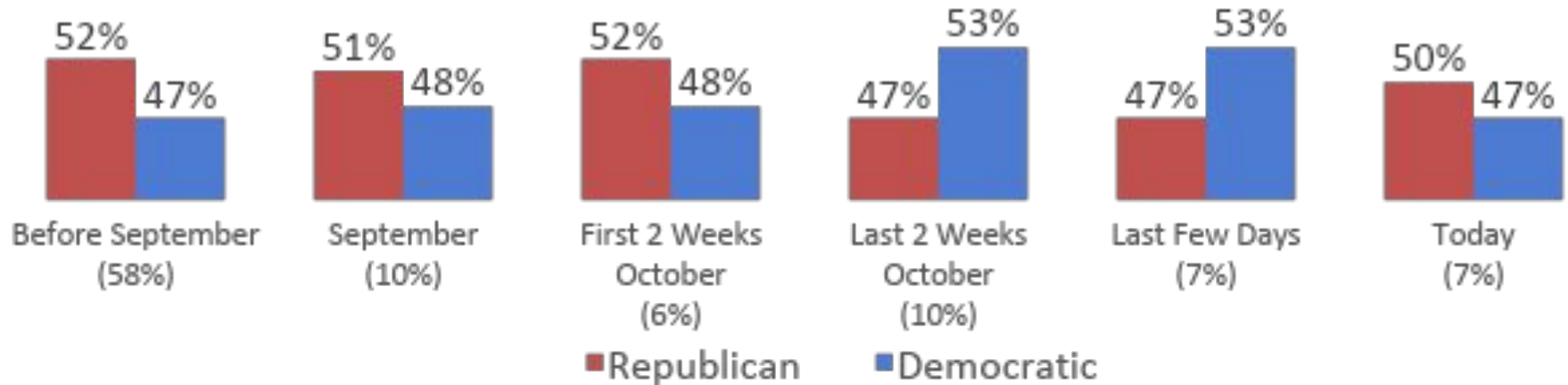
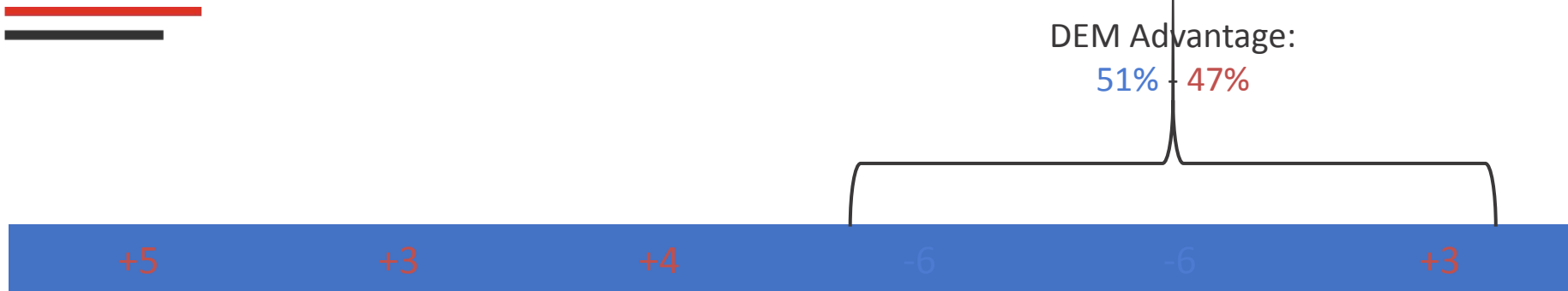


\*POS Post-Election Survey



For whom did you vote in the election for U.S. Congress in your district...The Republican candidate...or...The Democratic candidate?

GOP candidates won among early deciders, but DEMs had an edge among late deciders.



\*POS Post-Election Survey



For whom did you vote in the election for U.S. Congress in your district...The Republican candidate...or...The Democratic candidate?

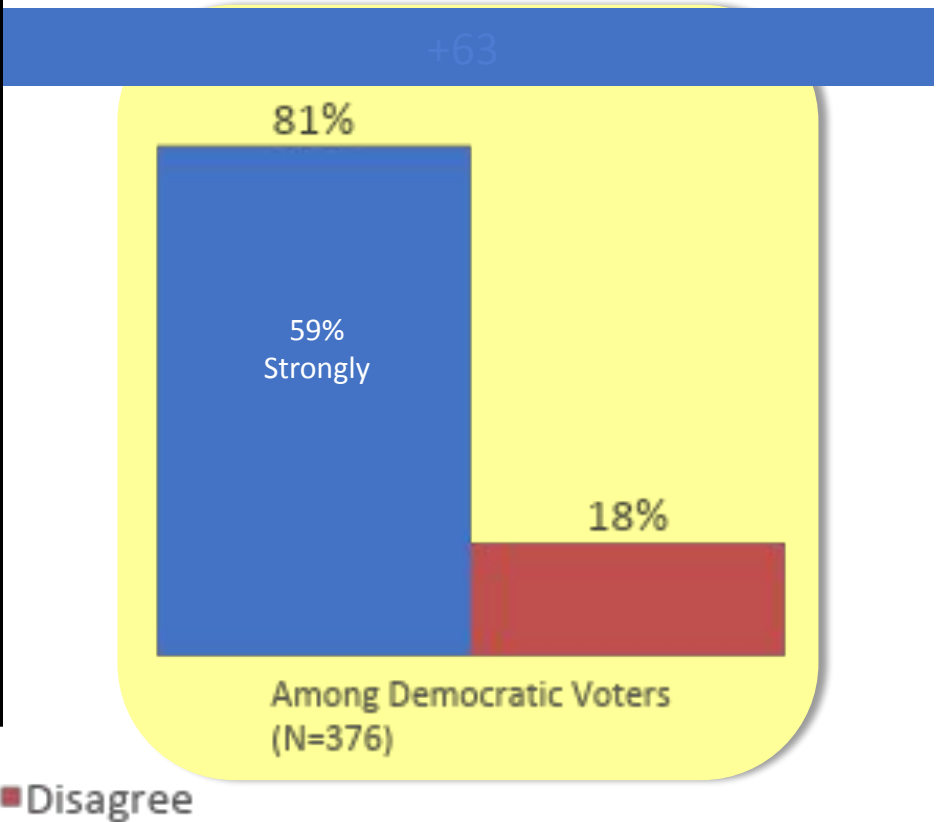
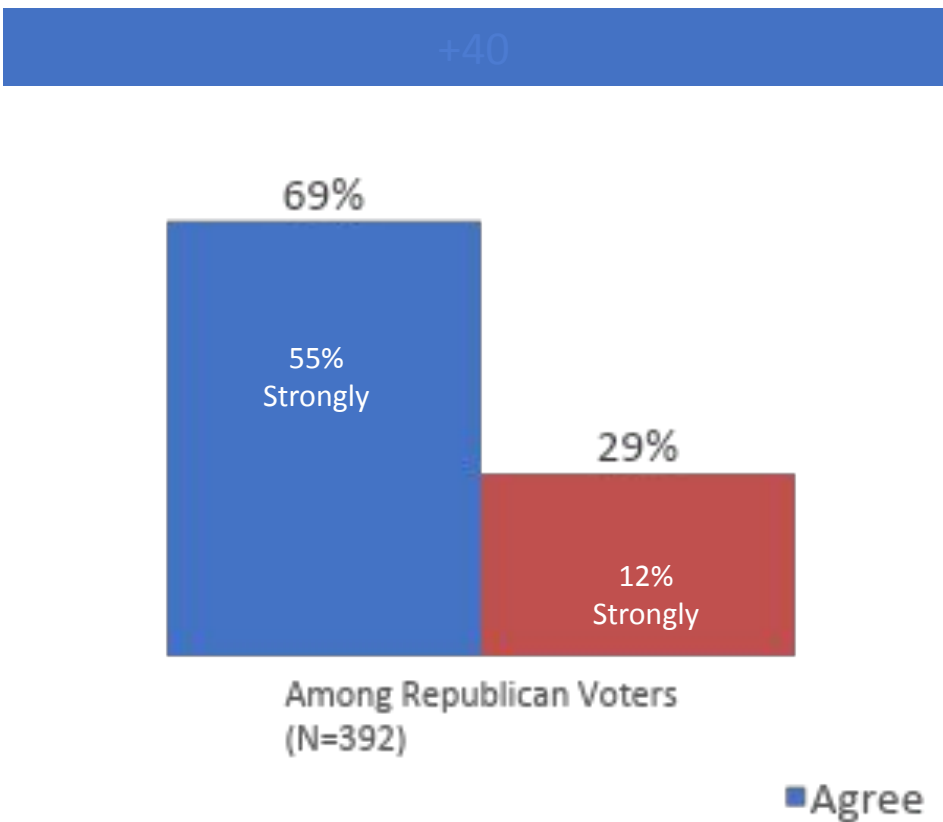


# Another key: more Democrats see the GOP as a threat to democracy.



And, do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
Democrats represent a threat to democracy that, if not stopped, will destroy America as we know it.

And, do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
Republicans represent a threat to democracy that, if not stopped, will destroy America as we know it.



\*POS Post-Election Survey

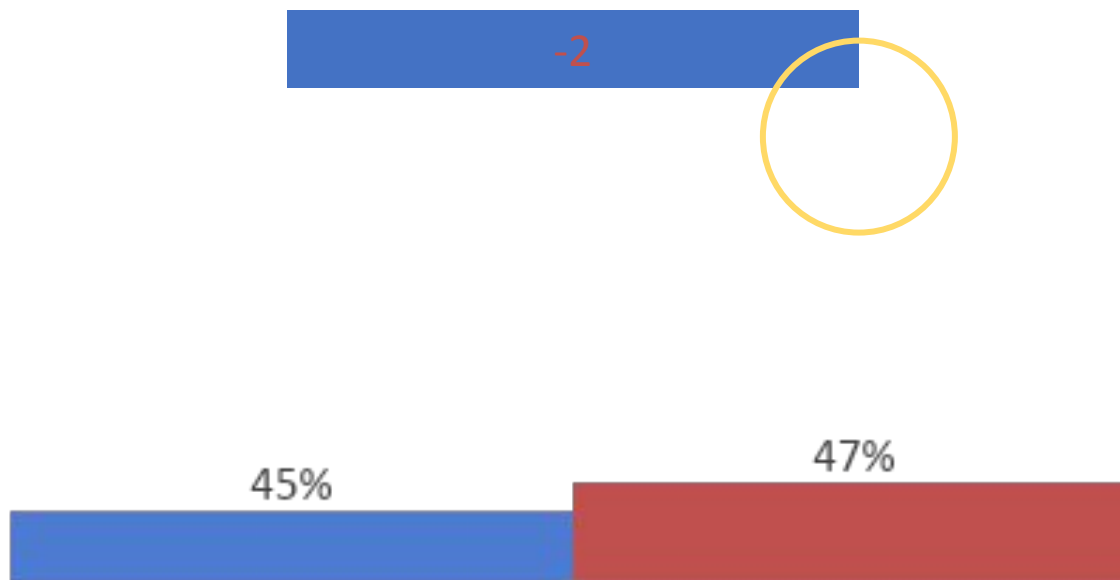
Despite the exit polls giving GOP candidates an edge, Americans were nonetheless concerned about Republicans making the wrong kind of change.

Which of the following represents the bigger concern to you regarding the results of this November's Congressional election?

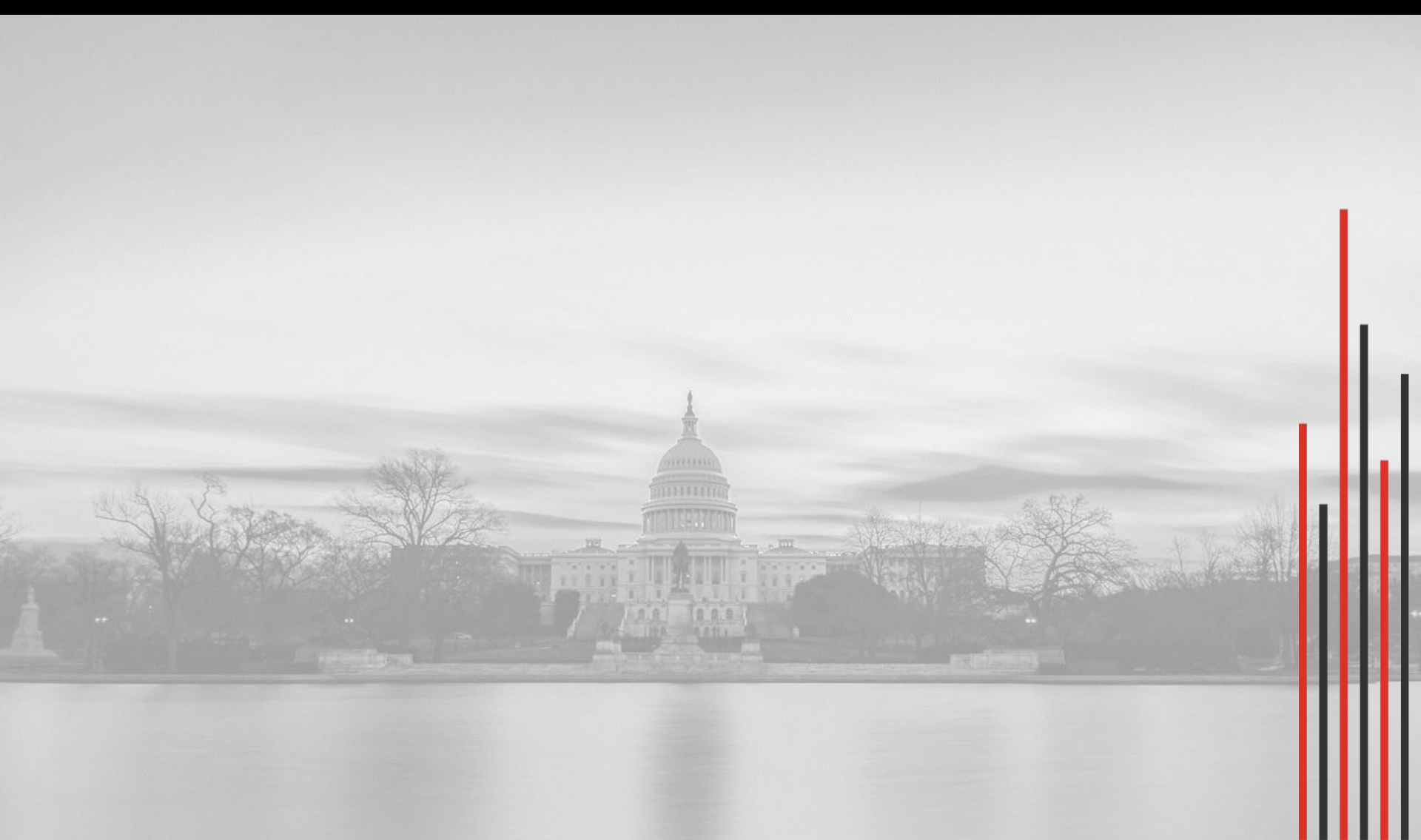
*The Democrats continue to control Congress, and there is not enough change in current policies.*

*...or...*

*The Republicans take over control of Congress, and they make the wrong kinds of changes in current policies.*

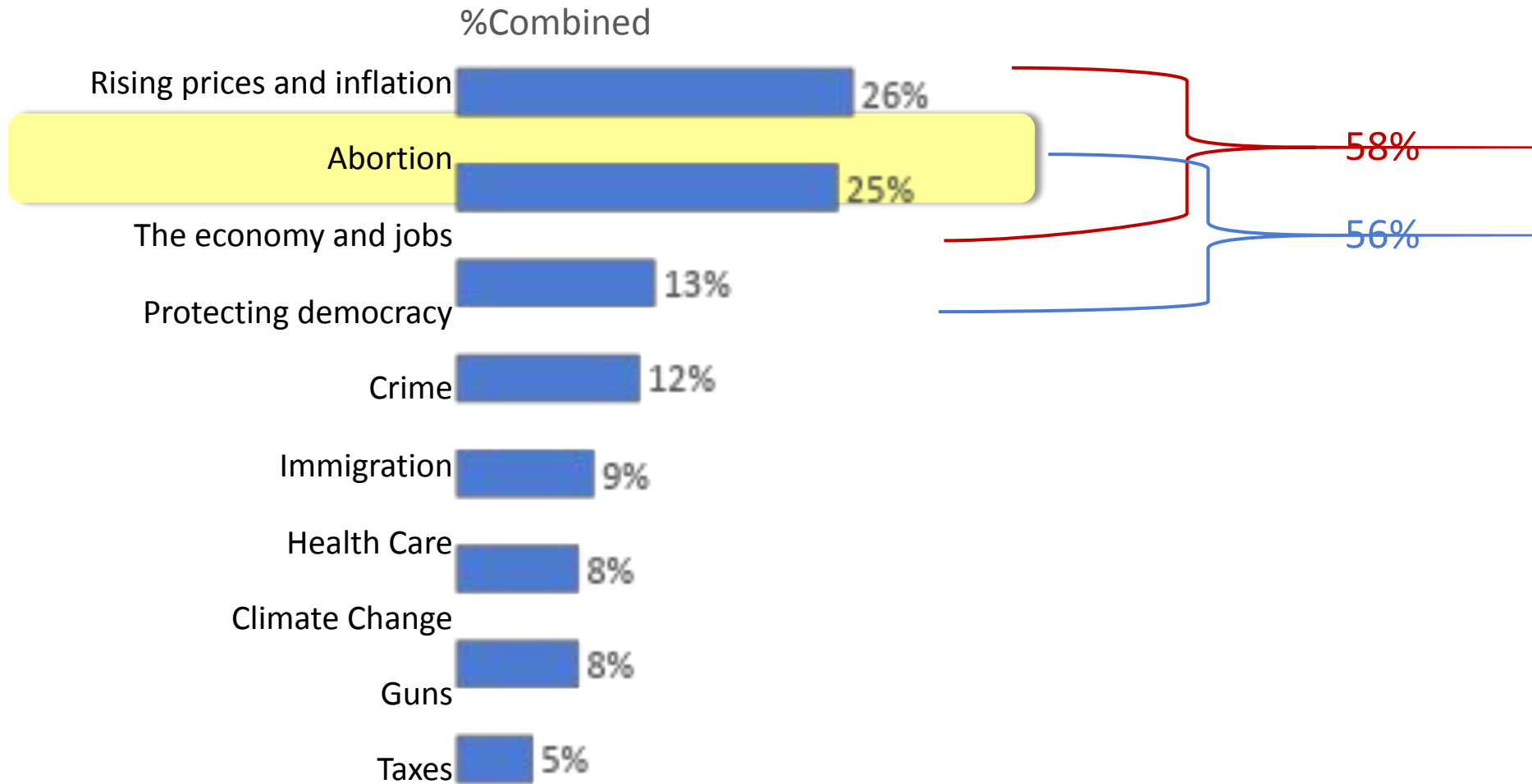


\*NBC News Poll, November 3-5, 2022



# The Issue Agenda

# Abortion was more of a factor than the pre-election polls indicated.



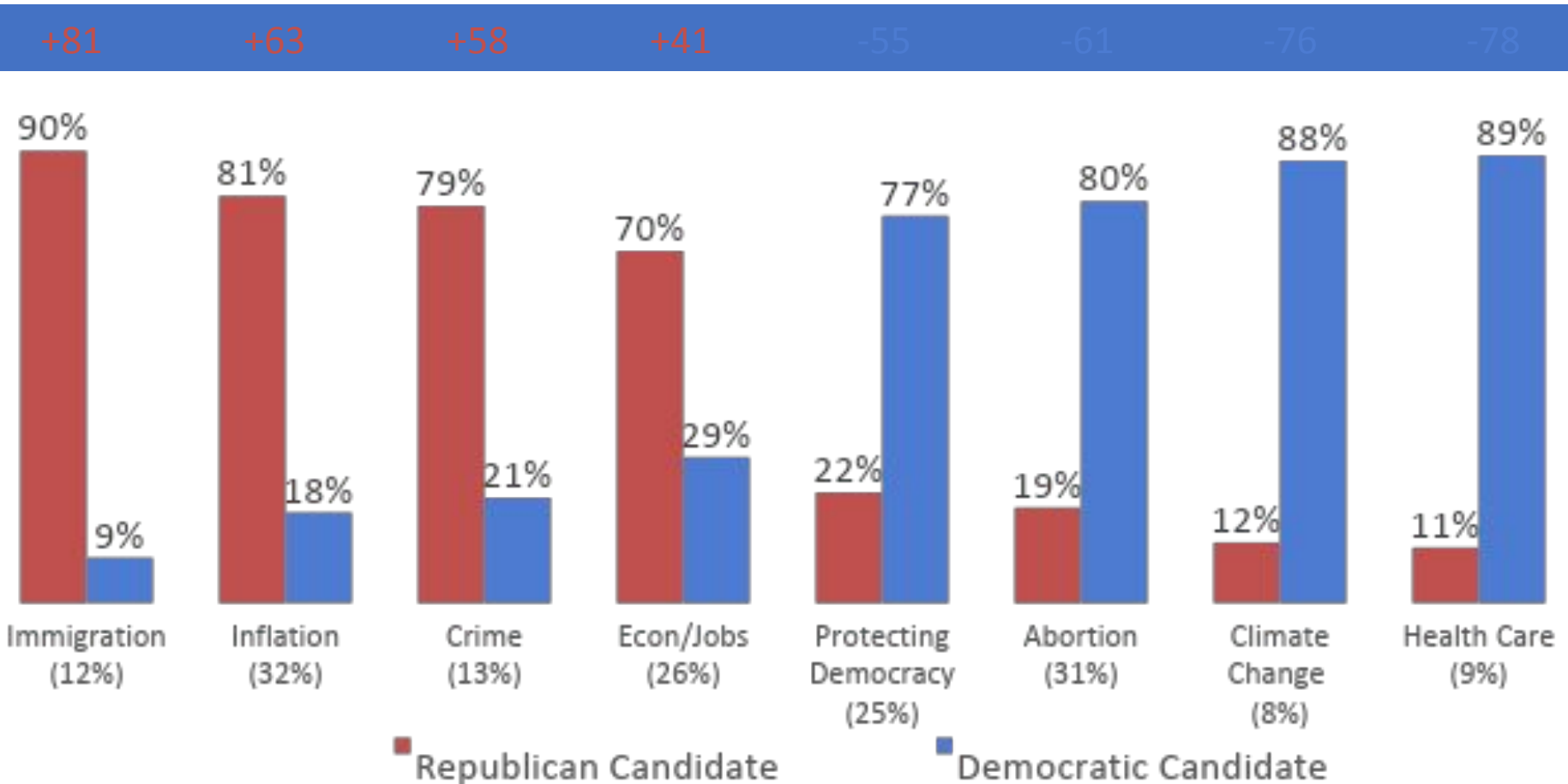
\*POS Post-Election Survey



Now, let me list some issues that may have factored into deciding your vote for Congress today. Please tell me which one or two of these items you think was the most important factor in deciding your vote. And, which of these issues was the second most important factor in deciding your vote?



GOP candidates won handily among those concerned about economic issues, immigration and crime, while Democrats fared better on democracy, abortion, climate and health care.



\*POS Post-Election Survey

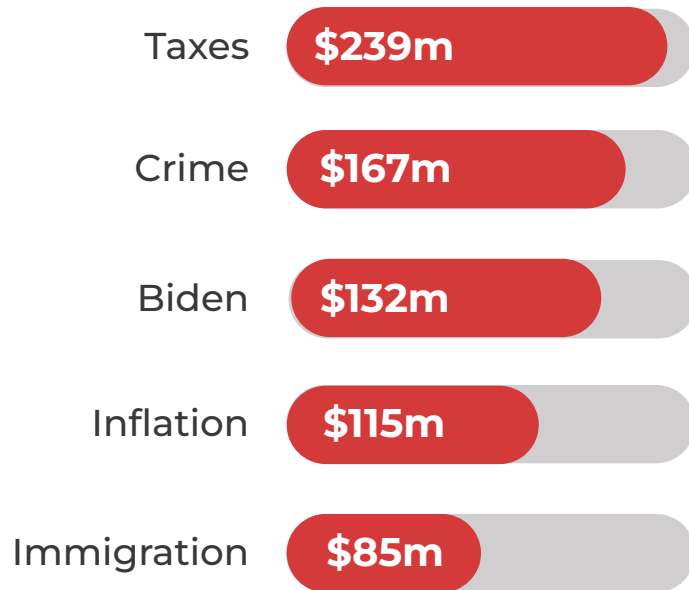


For whom (did/will) you vote in the election for U.S. Congress in your district... the Republican candidate or the Democratic candidate?

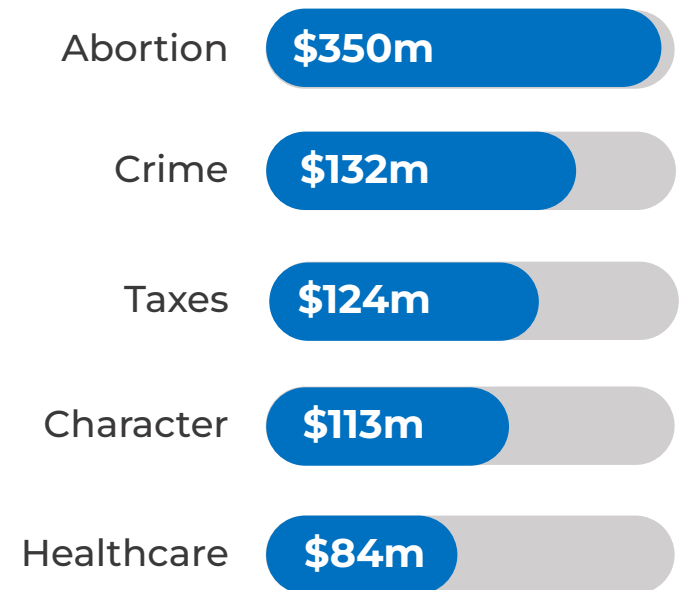


# GOP and Democratic campaigns spent their advertising dollars driving their top issues.

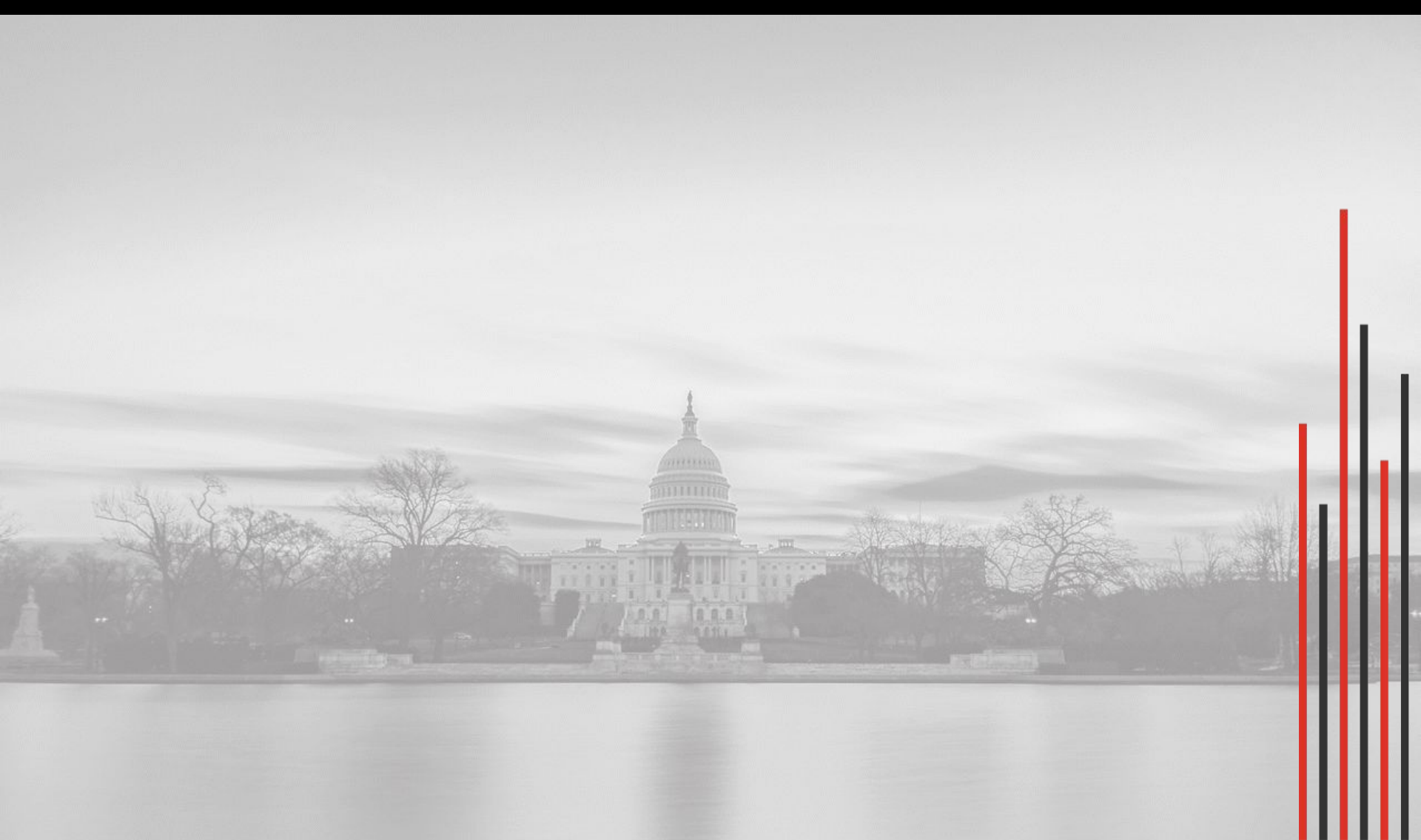
## Republican Advertising Spending by Issue



## Democratic Advertisement Spending by Issue







**This election was NOT good news for former President**

Many of his hand-picked statewide candidates lost.

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Mehmet Oz, PA Senate



Tudor Dixon, MI Governor



Blake Masters, AZ Senate



Tim Michels, WI Governor



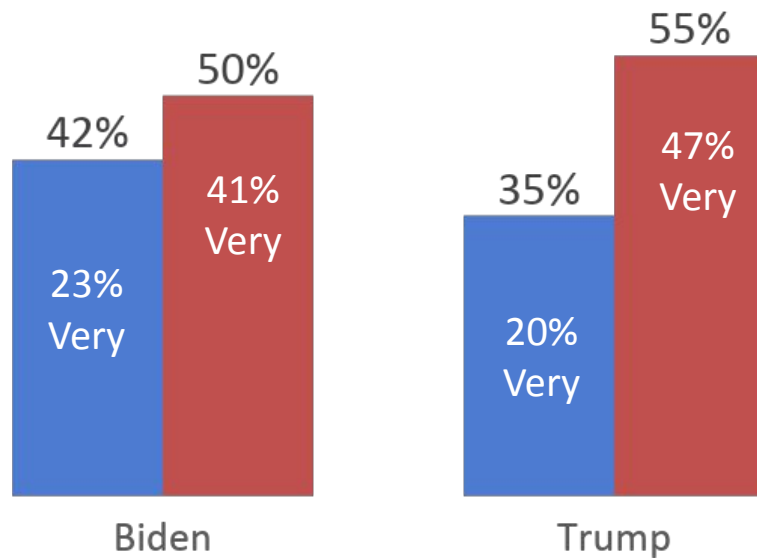
Don Bolduc, NH Senate



Doug Mastriano,  
PA Governor

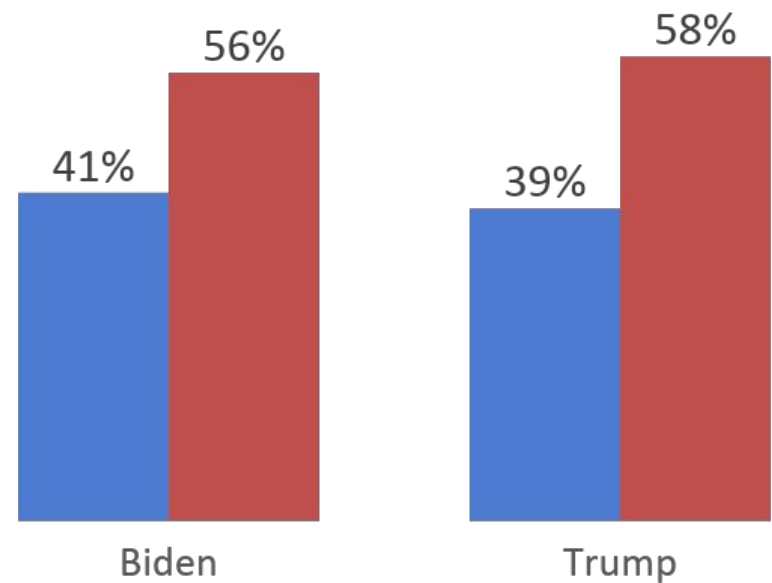
And, both our pre-election polling and the exit polls indicate Biden is more popular than the former President.

NBC Pre-Election Poll



■ Total Positive ■ Total Negative

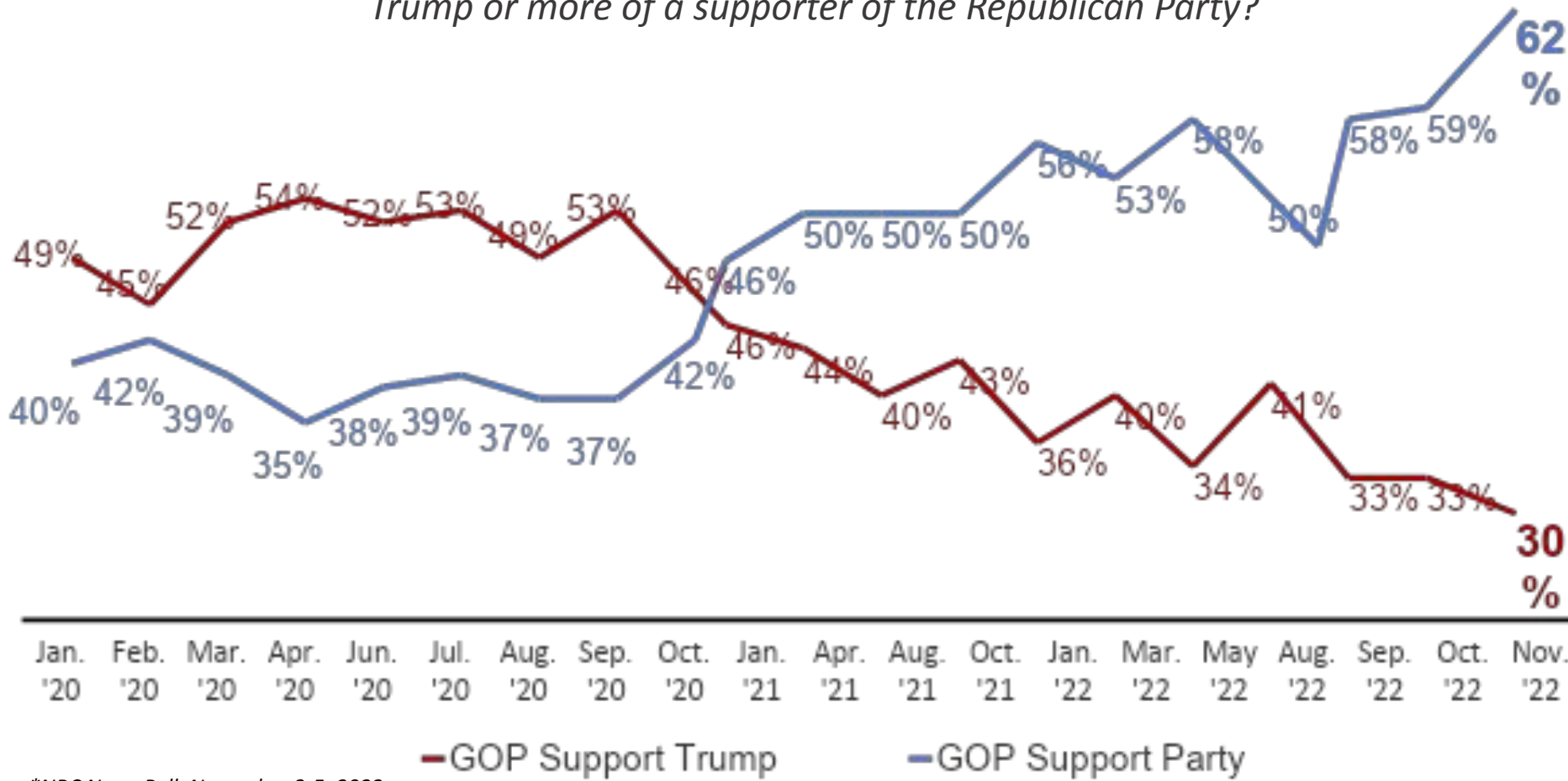
CNN Exit Polls



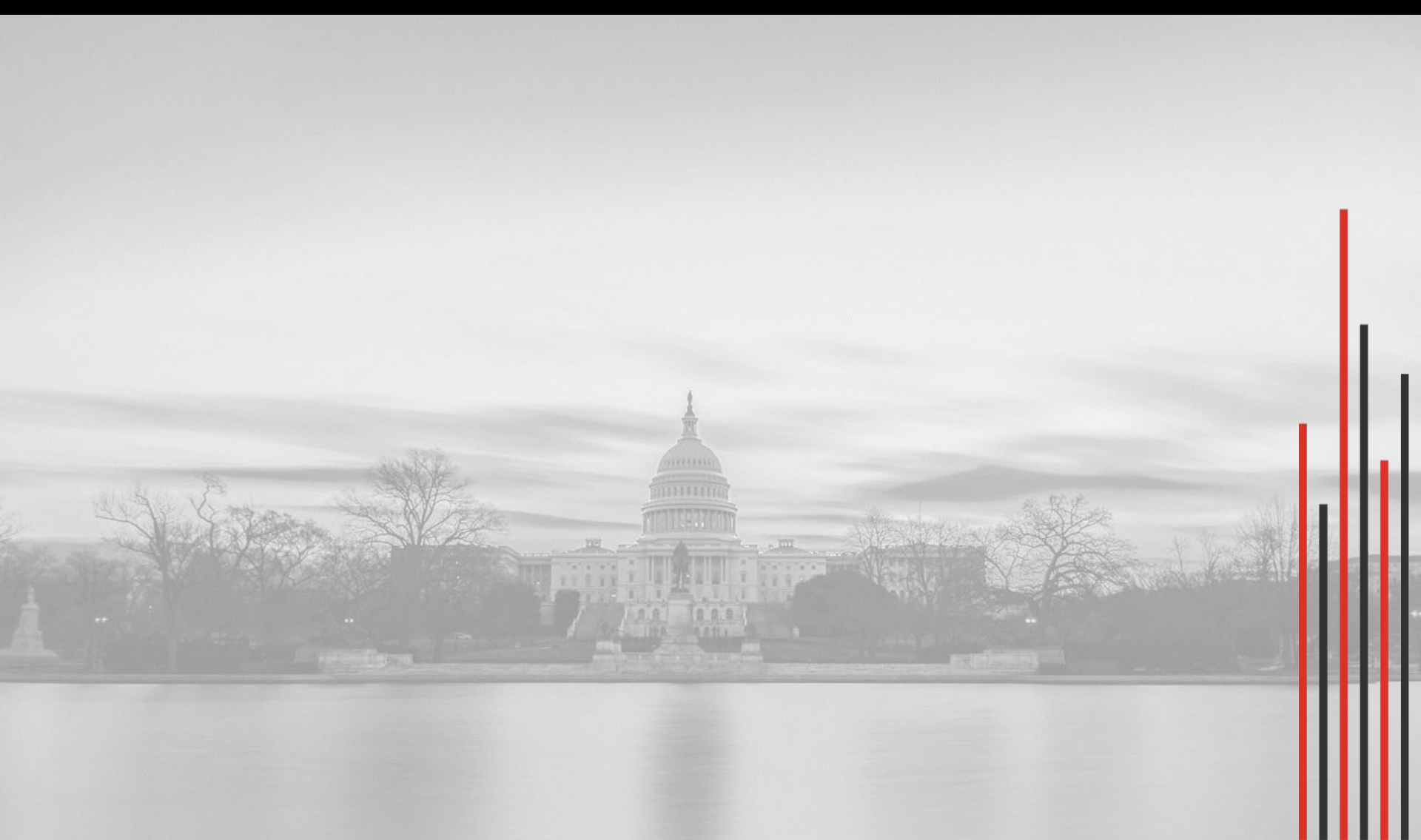
■ Favorable ■ Unfavorable

Further, there is clear evidence that GOPers may be falling out of love with President Trump.

*Do you consider yourself to be more of a supporter of Donald Trump or more of a supporter of the Republican Party?*



\*NBC News Poll, November 3-5, 2022



# Take-Away Points

## Take-Away Points

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- 1. Despite the record-breaking negative mood of the country, and lackluster Biden approval scores, the GOP's narrow margin on the generic ballot translated into a smaller advantage than anticipated in the US House.**
- 2. Voters' top issues were "rising prices and inflation" and "abortion," followed by "the economy and jobs" and "protecting democracy." Inflation/economic issues were cited by 58% of voters, while abortion and protecting democracy were cited by 56%, providing the GOP with only a modest advantage.**

## Take-Away Points

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- 3. Democrats put their money behind the abortion issue and rode that all the way to Election Day. Expect abortion to remain “on the ballot” in 2024.**
- 4. One key to the better-than-expected Democrat performance in the election is the threat that Democrats believed GOP candidates posed to the country. Fully 81% of Democratic voters agree that “Republicans represent a threat to democracy that will destroy America as we know it.”**

By way of comparison, just 69% of Republicans feel the same way about Democrats. This data seems to point to the sentiment that, while voters were ready and willing to make a change, they didn't fully trust the GOP to be that change.

## Take-Away Points

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- 5. Our polling indicates Democrats had the late momentum, as late deciders (24% of the electorate) broke 51%-47% in their favor.**
- 6. It wasn't a good night for President Trump—many of his hand-picked candidates lost, his potential '24 challenger picked up a ton of steam, and GOP voters seem to be questioning their allegiance to the former President.**



## BOTTOM LINE

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**Regardless of the final numbers and the outcome of the House and Senate races where votes are still being counted, Democrats out-performed expectations and Americans once again reinforced the extreme partisan divide in the country.**



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