

# Winning the Tax Debate in 2018

*Key findings from a nationwide survey among 2,065 likely 2018 voters  
Conducted March 3 to 15, 2018*

# SURVEY METHODOLOGY

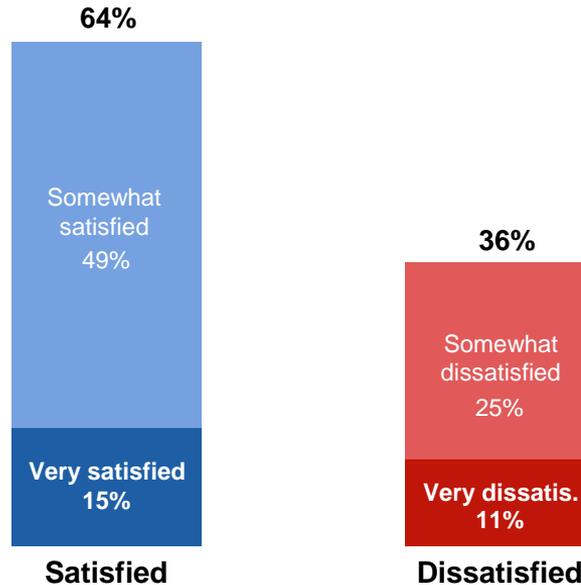
- Interviews conducted online, March 3 to 15, 2018
  - Total sample: 2,065 likely 2018 voters
  - Senate battleground:
    - 348 interviews in Indiana, Missouri, Montana, North Dakota, and West Virginia
  - House battleground oversample:
    - 671 interviews in 37 competitive CDs
- |         |         |         |         |         |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| • AZ-02 | • FL-18 | • ME-02 | • NJ-2  | • TX-7  |
| • CA-10 | • FL-26 | • MI-06 | • NJ-03 | • TX-23 |
| • CA-25 | • FL-27 | • MI-08 | • NJ-7  | • TX-32 |
| • CA-3  | • IA-1  | • MI-11 | • NJ-11 | • VA-02 |
| • CA-45 | • IA-3  | • MN-2  | • NV-02 | • VA-10 |
| • CA-48 | • IL-6  | • MN-3  | • NY-19 | • WA-8  |
| • CO-3  | • IL-12 | • NE-2  | • NY-22 |         |
| • CO-6  | • KS-3  |         | • NY-24 |         |

- Conducted for:



# Broad Economic Satisfaction

*How satisfied are you with the state of the economy today?*

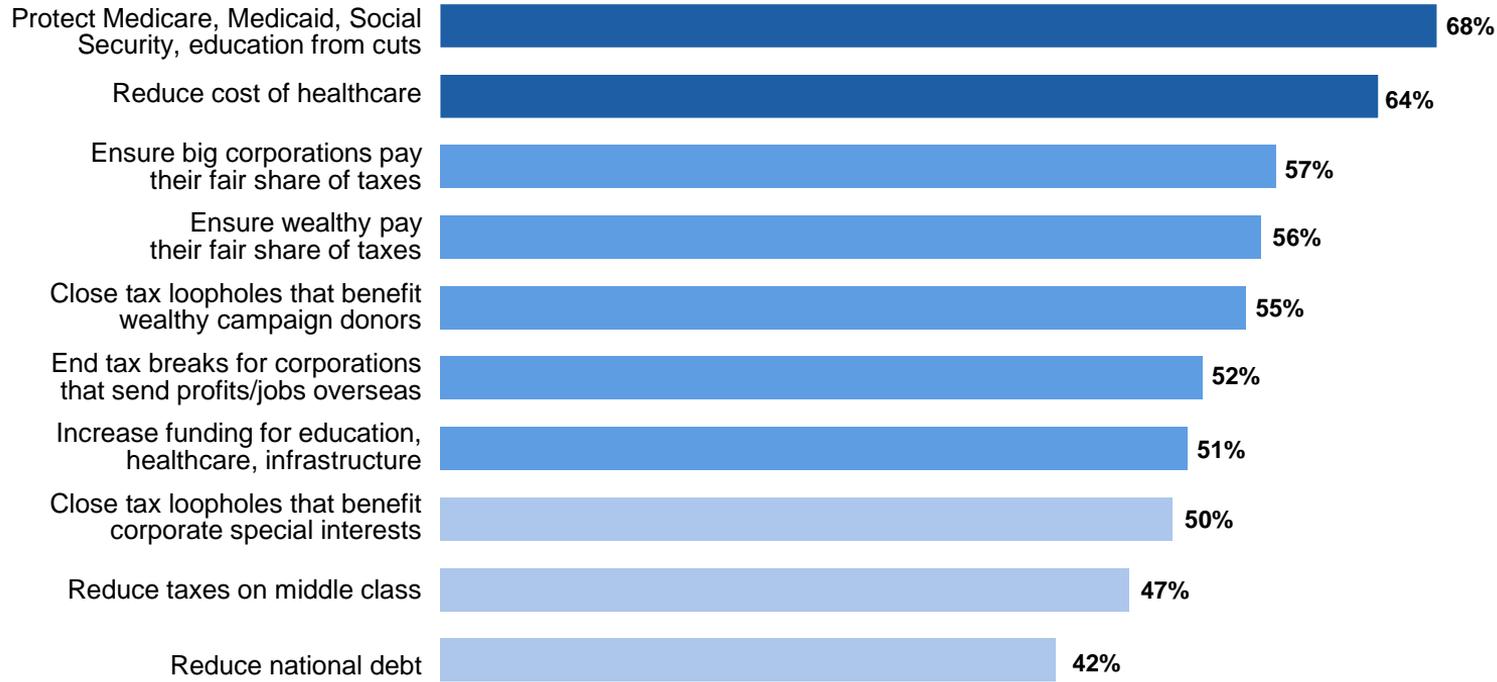


Very/somewhat satisfied	
Democrats	44%
Independents	64%
Republicans	87%
Income under \$50K*	56%
Income \$50K to \$100K*	61%
Income over \$100K*	68%
Northeast	57%
South	70%
Midwest	65%
West	53%
Men	75%
Women	56%

\* Non-retired income (age 18 to 64)

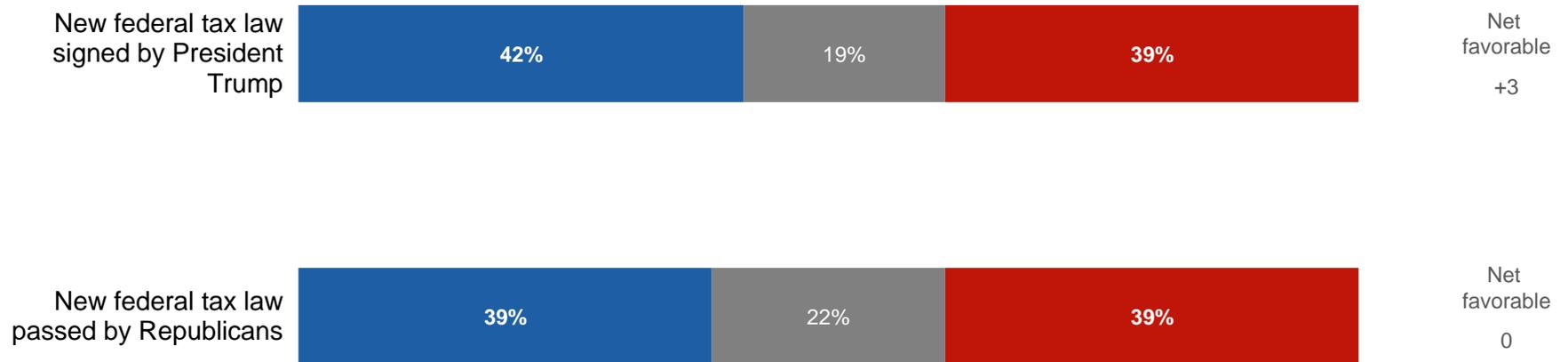
# Strong Support for Progressive Priorities

*Proportion rating each as a high priority for Congress\*:*



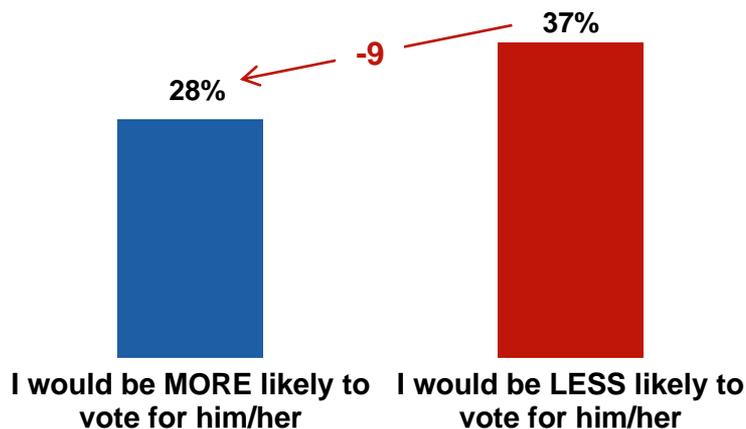
\* 9-10 ratings on a 0-to-10 scale, 10 = should be highest priority

# Voters Are Split over Tax Bill, Whether Associated with Republicans or Trump



# “Yes” Vote for Tax Law Reduces Voter Support for Member of Congress

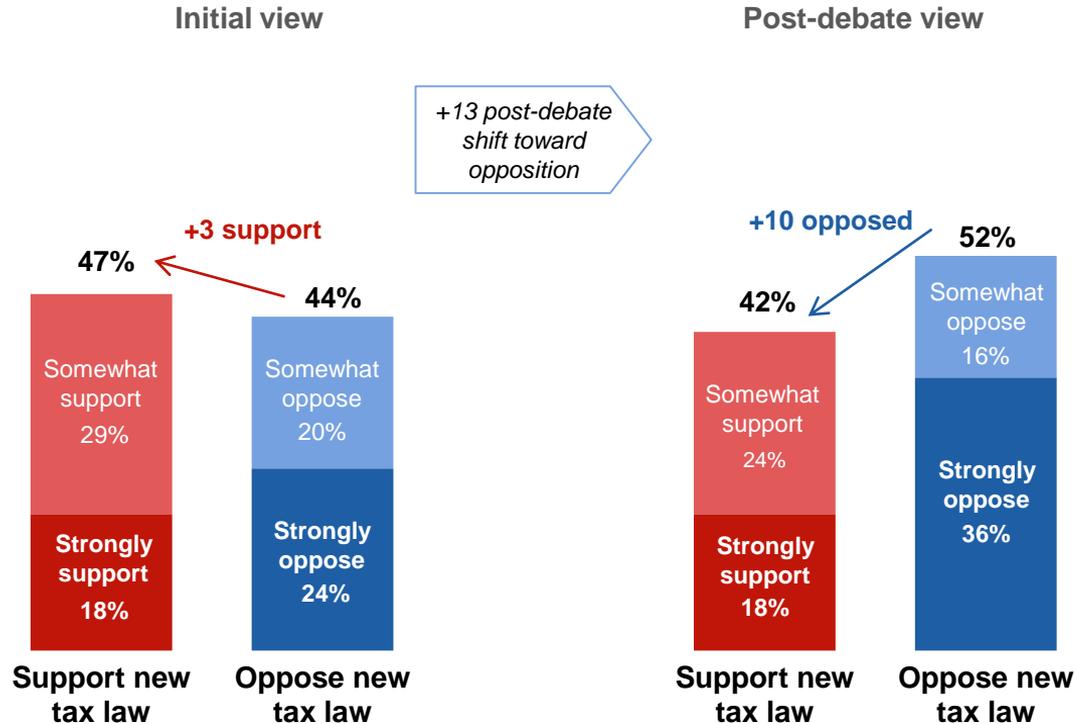
*If my member of Congress voted FOR the tax law:*



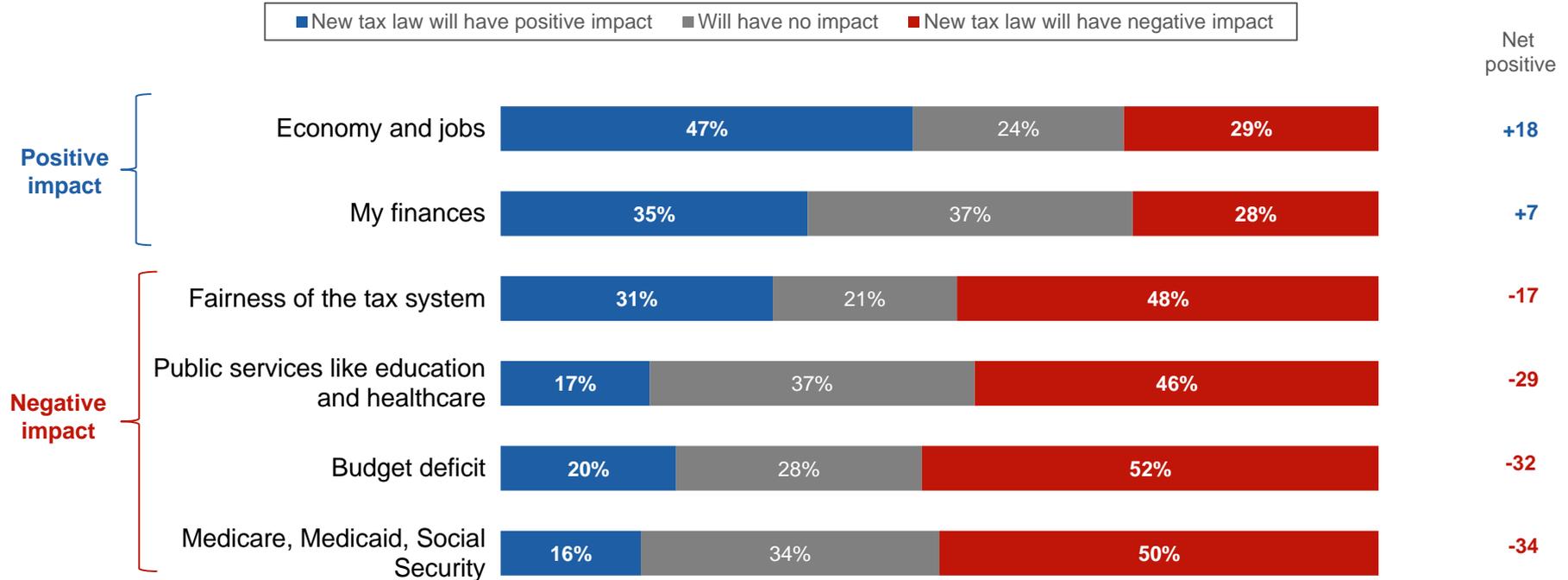
Net more likely to vote for	
Democrats	-63
Independents	-9
Republicans	+51
Frequent voters	-15
Northeast	-18
South	-2
Midwest	-1
West	-15
Age 18 to 34	-16
Age 35 to 49	-6
Age 50 to 64	-13
Age 65/older	+1

# Debate Erodes Support for Tax Bill

Overall, do you support or oppose the new tax law passed by Congress and signed by President Trump?



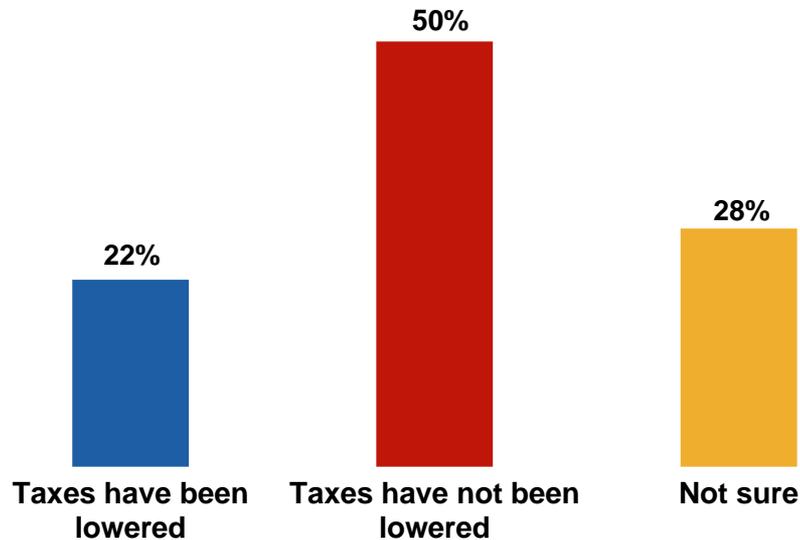
# Perceived Impact of Tax Law



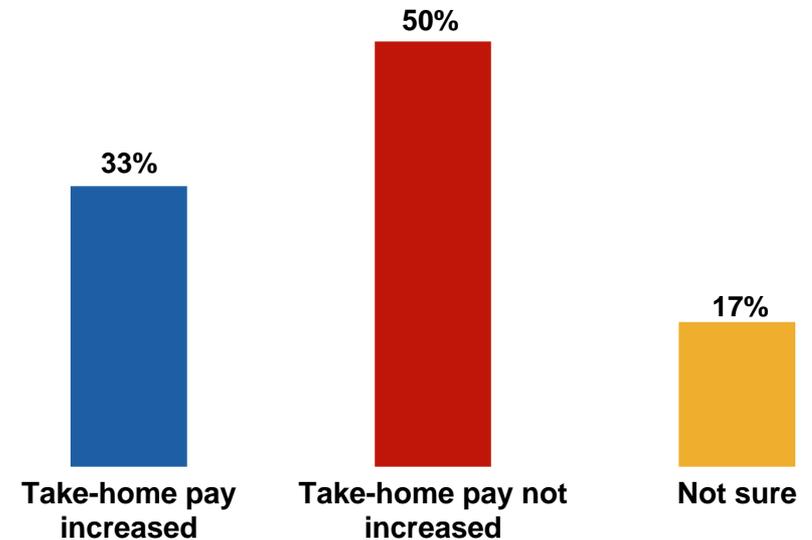
One in three voters (32%) expects to pay less in taxes.

# One-Third Perceive Increase in Take-Home Pay, One-Quarter See Tax Cut

*Have you or your household had your taxes lowered as a result of the tax law?*



*Have you or anyone in your household seen an increase in take-home pay as a result of the tax law?*



# Democrat Who Favors Progressive Tax Changes Beats a GOP Tax Bill Supporter

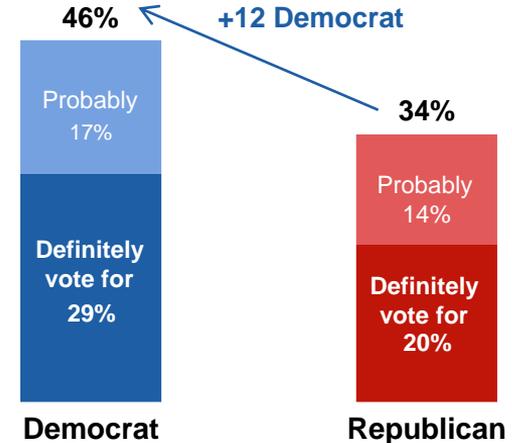
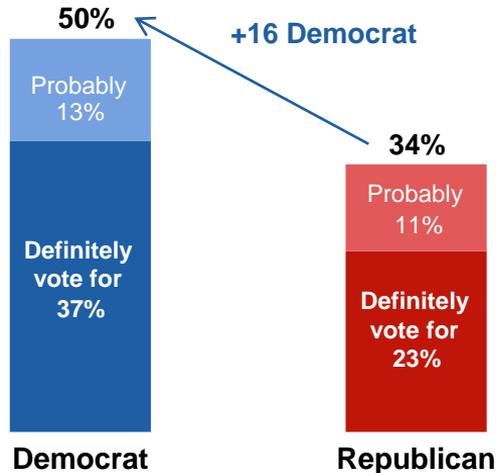
*Preference for Congress, based on support for new tax law:*

**Democrat** who favors repealing law and making wealthy and corporations pay fair share

**Republican** who strongly supports new tax law

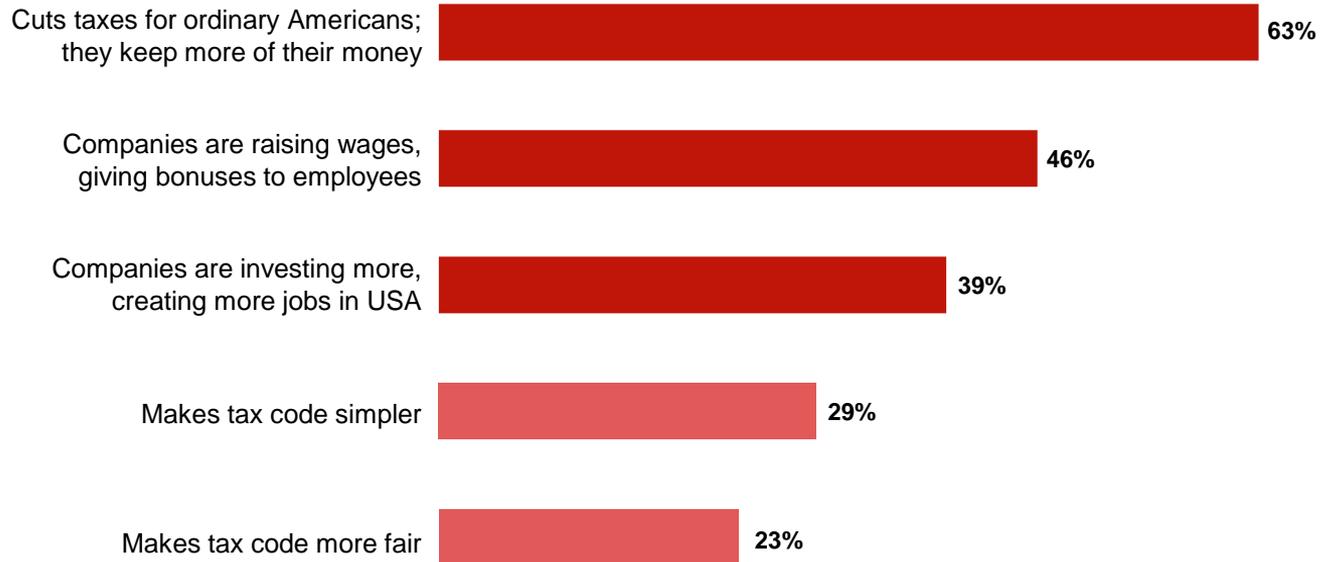
**Democrat** who favors repealing tax cut for wealthy and corporations but keeping tax cuts for middle class

**Republican** who strongly supports new tax law



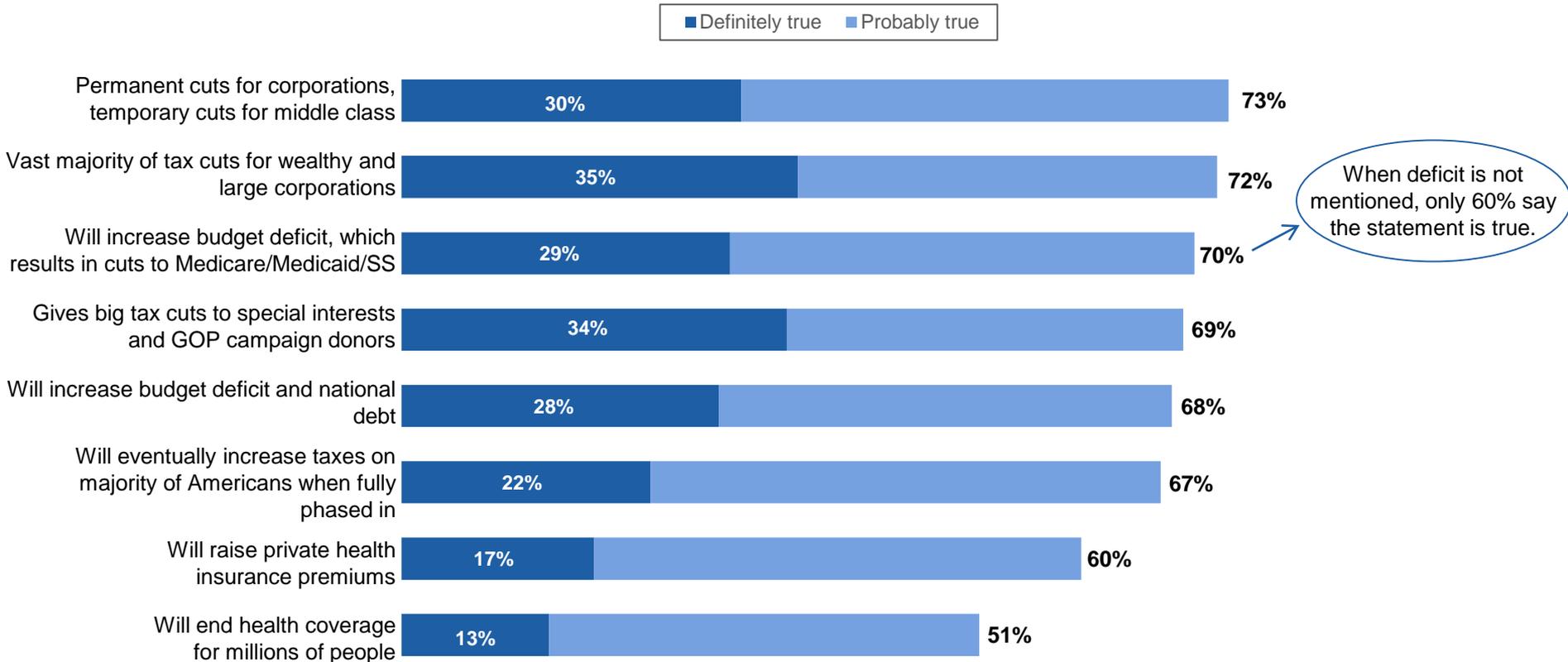
# Top Reason to Support Tax Bill: Lower Taxes for Ordinary Americans

*Proportion ranking each among the top two reasons for supporting the new tax law:*



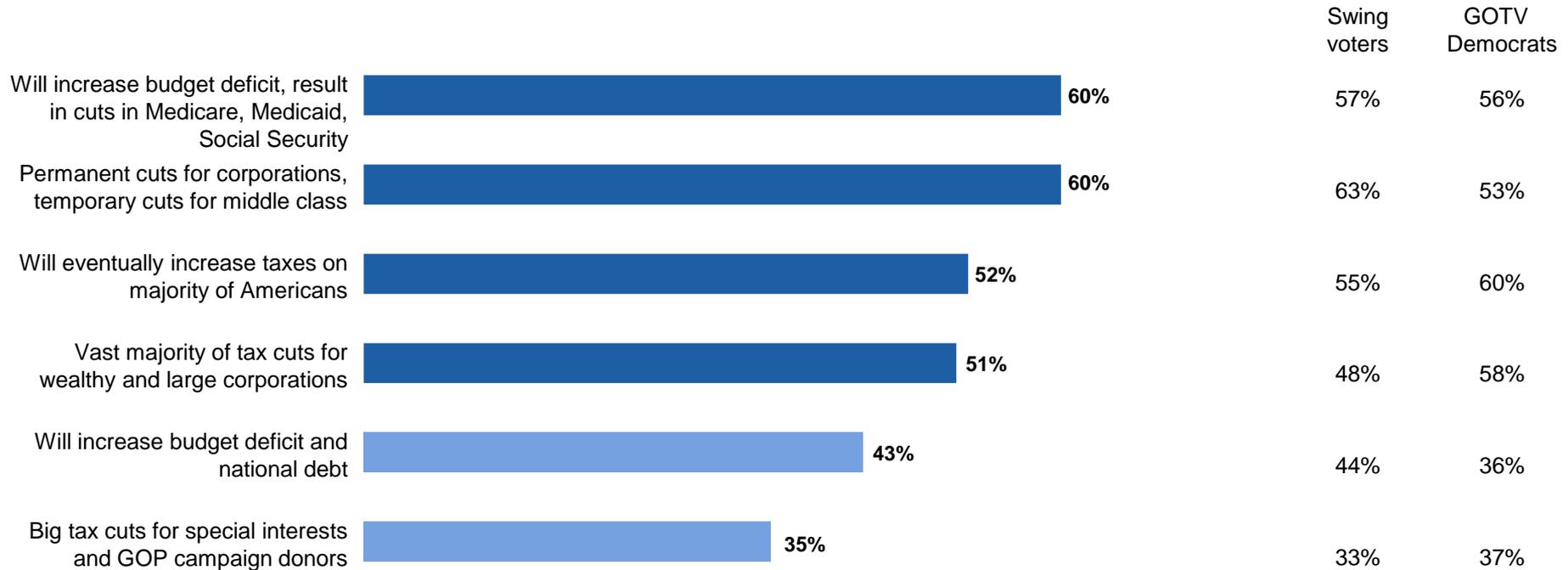
True statement
61%
53%
54%
55%
43%

# Voters Believe Criticisms of Tax Bill Are True

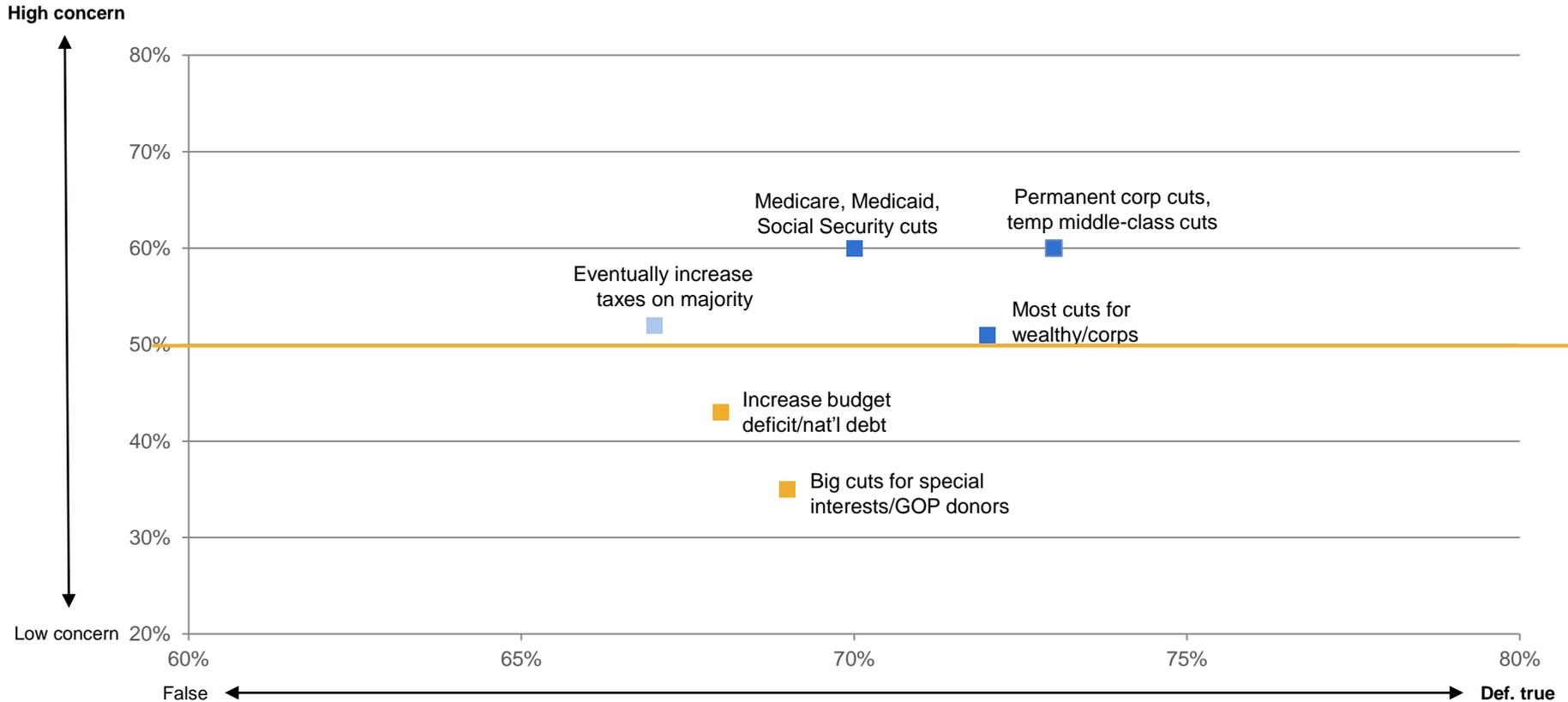


# Top Concerns about Tax Bill: Temporary Cuts for Middle Class, Cuts to Medicare/Medicaid/Social Security

*Proportion ranking each among the top three concerns that Democrats have raised about the new tax law:*



# Criticisms of Tax Bill: Concern vs. Credibility



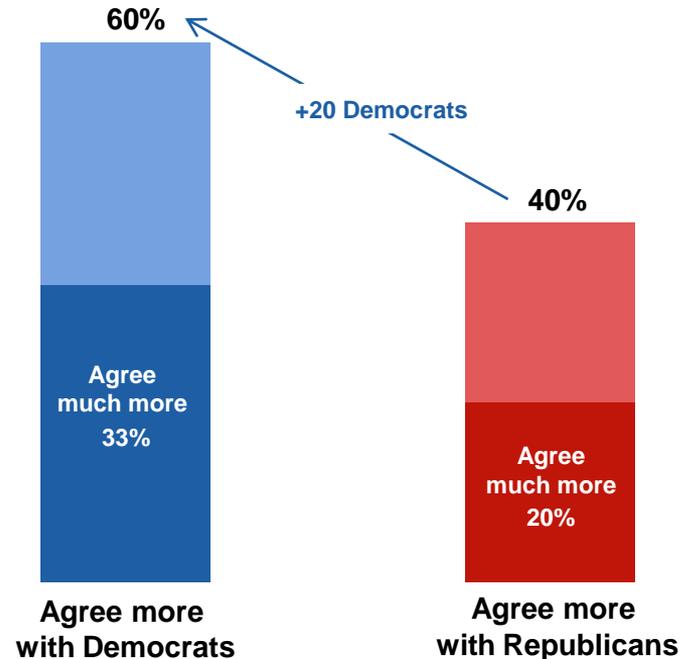
# Democratic Message: Bill Cuts Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and Education

*With which statement do you agree more?*

**DEMOCRATS:** We will pay a price for these huge tax breaks to corporations and wealthy campaign donors. **Republicans are already proposing cuts to Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and education.** Instead, we should make sure the rich and corporations pay their fair share of taxes, so we can protect these priorities. And we should invest in our communities to have better schools, fix roads, bridges, and transit systems, make healthcare more affordable, and provide a secure retirement with dignity.

**REPUBLICANS:** Our tax reform law means that Americans will have a **simpler, fairer tax code that lets them keep more of their hard-earned money.** A typical family of four saves \$2,059 a year. The law doubles the standard tax deduction and the child tax credit, and simplifies your taxes. This reform lets job creators and workers compete and win, which will **create hundreds of thousands of new American jobs.** Republicans kept their promise, and now middle-class families are seeing higher wages and bigger paychecks.\*

\* Same Republican statement in all message tests



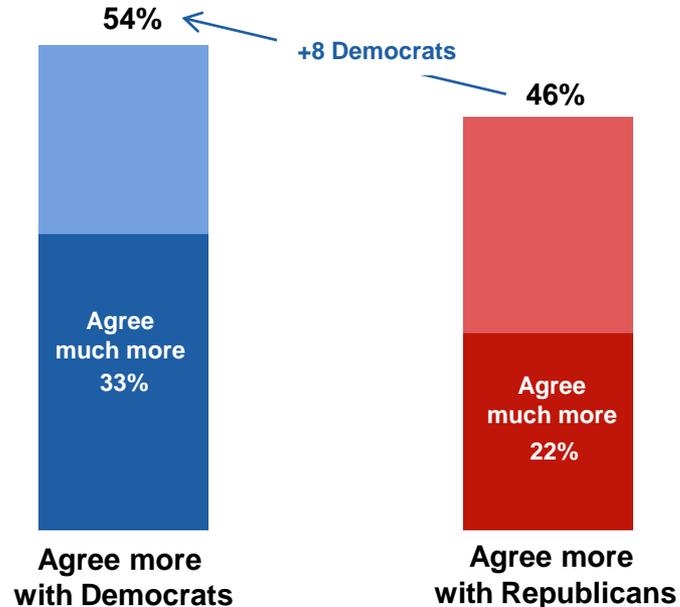
# Democratic Message: Huge Tax Breaks for Millionaires, Permanent Cuts for Corporations Not Average Americans

*With which statement do you agree more?*

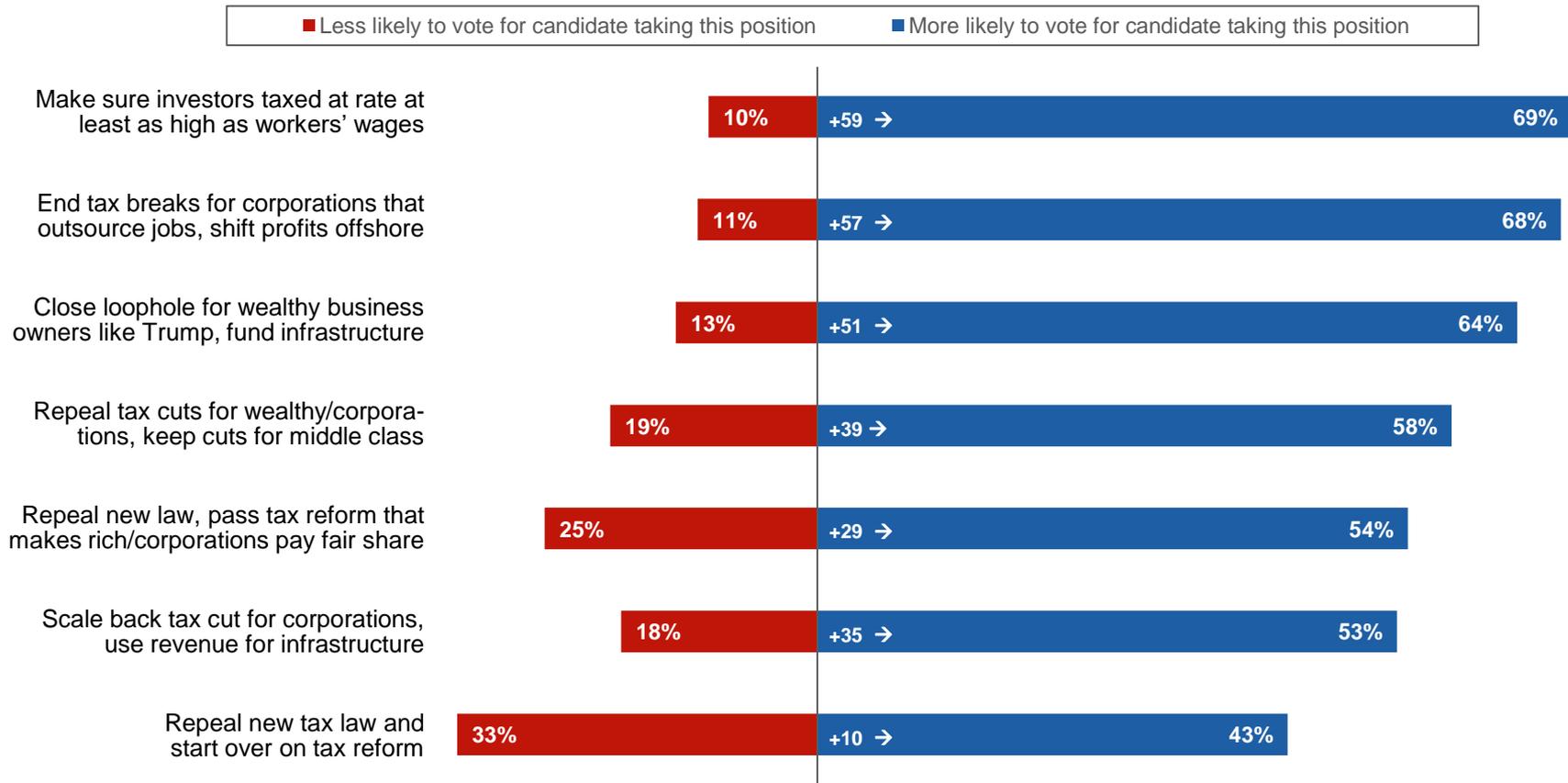
**DEMOCRATS:** This law delivers huge tax breaks to millionaires and wealthy corporations, while middle-class families are left to pick up the tab yet again. 83% of the tax cuts go to the richest 1%, while a majority of Americans will eventually end up paying higher taxes. Republicans gave permanent tax cuts to big drug companies, big oil, and other corporations, but average Americans only got temporary tax cuts. This law rigs the tax code and the economy even further in favor of those at the top.

**REPUBLICANS:** Our tax reform law means that Americans will have a simpler, fairer tax code that lets them keep more of their hard-earned money. A typical family of four saves \$2,059 a year. The law doubles the standard tax deduction and the child tax credit, and simplifies your taxes. This reform lets job creators and workers compete and win, which will create hundreds of thousands of new American jobs. Republicans kept their promise, and now middle-class families are seeing higher wages and bigger paychecks.\*

\* Same Republican statement in all message tests



# Strong Support for Changing Tax Bill



# Weak Ratings for Republican Campaign Messages

**Concern about Democrat who voted against new tax law:** “Tax reform is sweeping across America. Small businesses are growing. Paychecks are going up. Families are saving more for what matters. Democratic politicians said they would support tax cuts for hard-working families, but when they had the chance they said no, voting against tax cuts for you. They stood with Chuck Schumer and Nancy Pelosi instead of with us. Democrats should not have put politics ahead of good jobs and tax cuts.”

**Serious concern about Democrat\***



Mean = 4.9

**From Republican who voted in favor of new tax law:** “Our historic tax reform is working for America. It’s working for families, it’s working for businesses, and it’s working for our economy. 90% of working people will see bigger paychecks, and the typical family of four will see a tax cut of more than \$2,000. Company after company has been announcing new bonuses, increased wages, and renewed investment in America. We produced a simpler, fairer tax code that allows Americans to keep more of their hard-earned paychecks, and it is improving people’s lives.”

**Strong reason to support Republican\***

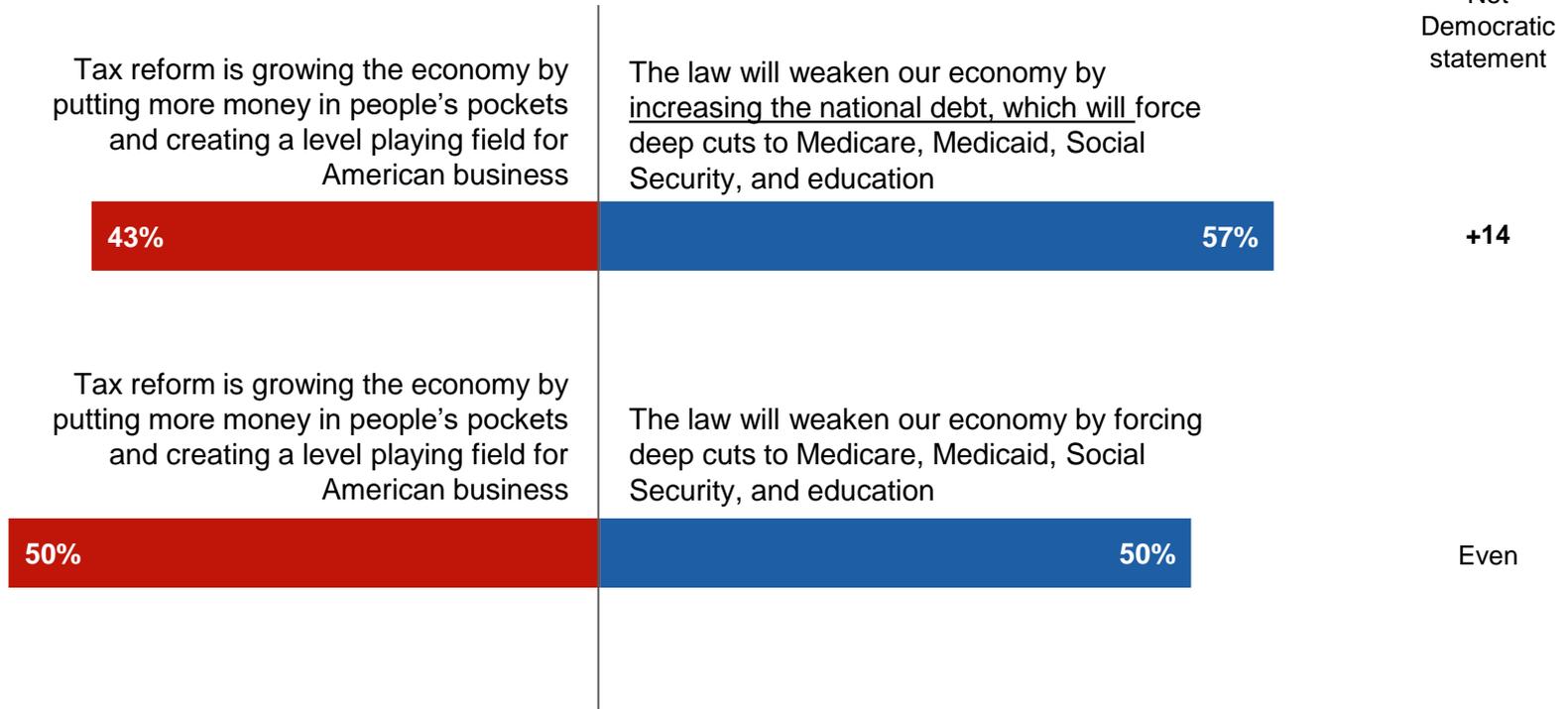


Mean = 4.3

\*6-7 ratings on a 1-to-7 scale, 6, 7 = extremely serious concern about Democrat, extremely strong reason to support Republican

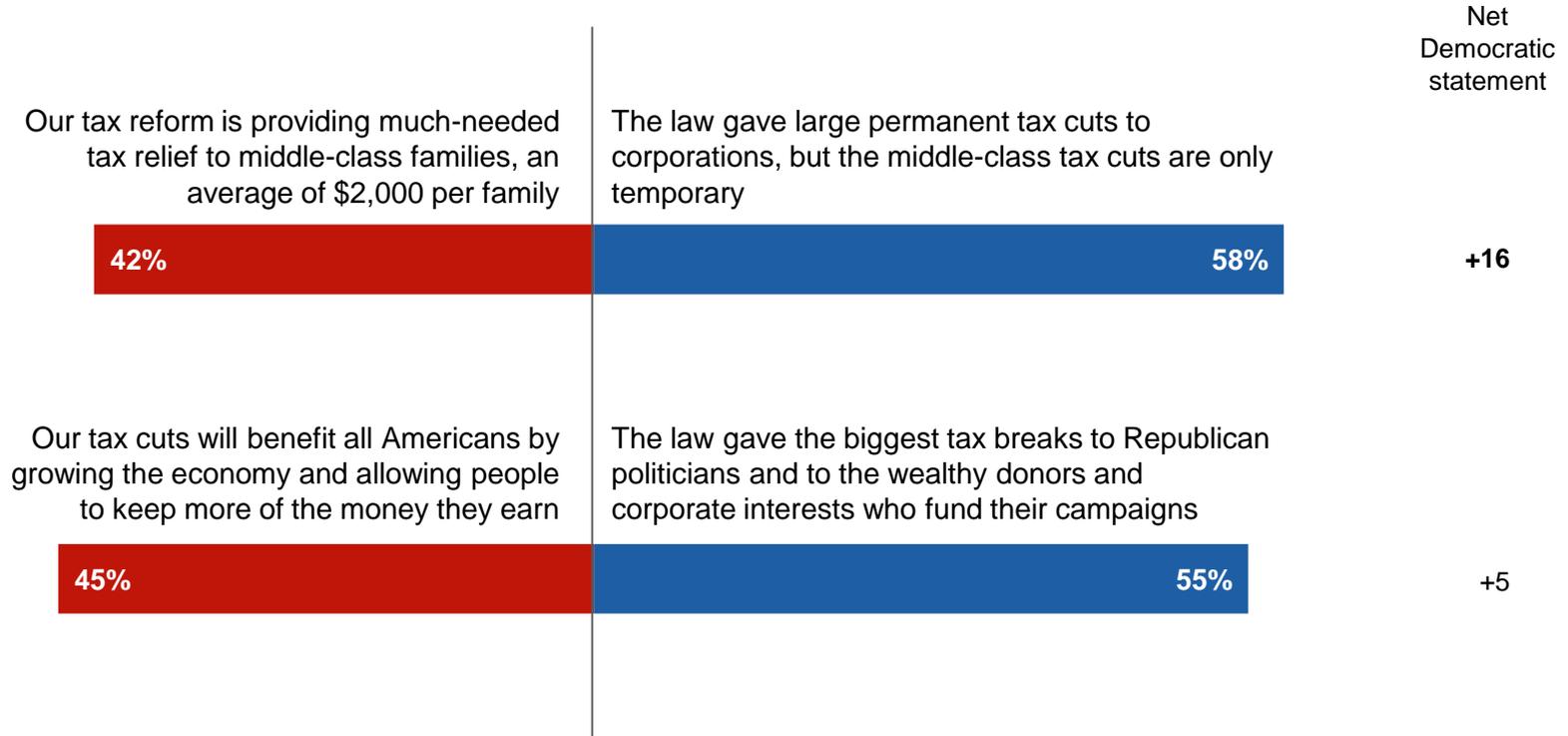
# Rebuttal to GOP Economic Message: Law Increases Debt, Will Force Cuts to Medicare/Medicaid/Social Security/Education

*In each pair, which statement is more convincing regarding tax issues?*



# Rebuttals to GOP Tax Cutting Message: Middle-Class Cuts Are Temporary, Breaks for Wealthy Donors and Corporate Interests

*In each pair, which statement is more convincing regarding tax issues?*



# Rebuttals to GOP Business Messages: Few Bonuses/Raises, Benefits to CEOs and Wealthy Stockholders

*In each pair, which statement is more convincing regarding tax issues?*

More than 400 companies have announced bonuses, wage hikes, or other employee benefits, affecting more than four million workers, since tax reform passed

42%

Only a tiny fraction of America's 26 million businesses have given their workers bonuses or a raise, but corporations have spent \$200 billion on stock buybacks to benefit CEOs and wealthy shareholders

58%

Net Democratic statement

+16

Thanks to tax reform, companies have announced \$480 billion in new investments in America that will create thousands of new jobs

48%

Studies show that these are not new investments, it is what corporations had already planned to spend before the tax cuts became law

52%

+4

Voters are generally not familiar with "stock buybacks," and need further explanation.

# Citing Benefits of Law for Powerful Interests and Republicans Is Powerful

*Proportions rating each as a SERIOUS CONCERN\* about Republicans who voted for the new tax law:*

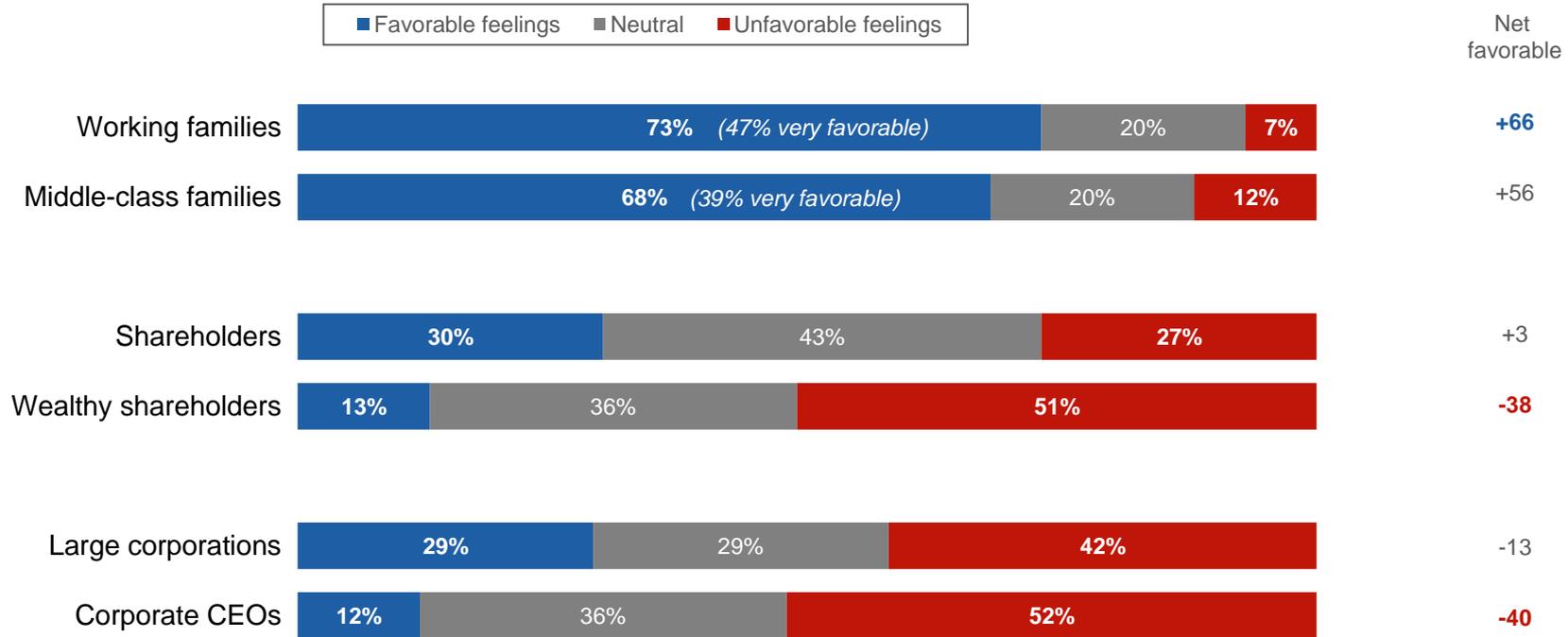
- 63%** Dozens of **Republican politicians** voted for a **special tax loophole** that will cut their own **taxes** by an average of more than \$50,000 per year.
- 62%** Republicans gave **pharmaceutical and health insurance companies** **billions in new tax breaks**, but now those companies are raising drug prices and our insurance premiums.
- 57%** Republicans gave a **tax cut of more than \$1 billion a year** to the **billionaire Koch brothers**, who promised to spend \$400 million to reelect Republicans who voted for the law. This was a political payoff.
- 56%** Republicans opened up a **huge new loophole** that gives billions to wealthy **business owners and real estate developers like Donald Trump** who can game the system—but working people don't qualify.

\* 6-7 ratings on a 0-to-7 scale, 7 = extremely serious concern

# Volunteered Reasons to Oppose Tax Law, after Debate

	All voters	Swing voters	Voters who move to oppose
<b>Benefit rich, corporations; tax cuts permanent for corporations</b>	40%	32%	26%
<b>Bad for middle class; tax cuts will expire, will raise taxes</b>	32%	35%	34%
Medicare/Medicaid, Social Security, education; destroying, gutting programs	14%	9%	12%
Bad for economy, trickle down, jobs will be lost	11%	10%	11%
Criticisms of Trump, Republicans, Ryan, McConnell	9%	6%	5%
Lying, dishonest, scam	8%	9%	10%

# Getting Language Right



# Rating Potential Slogans

*Proportion selecting each among their top three concerns about the new tax law:*

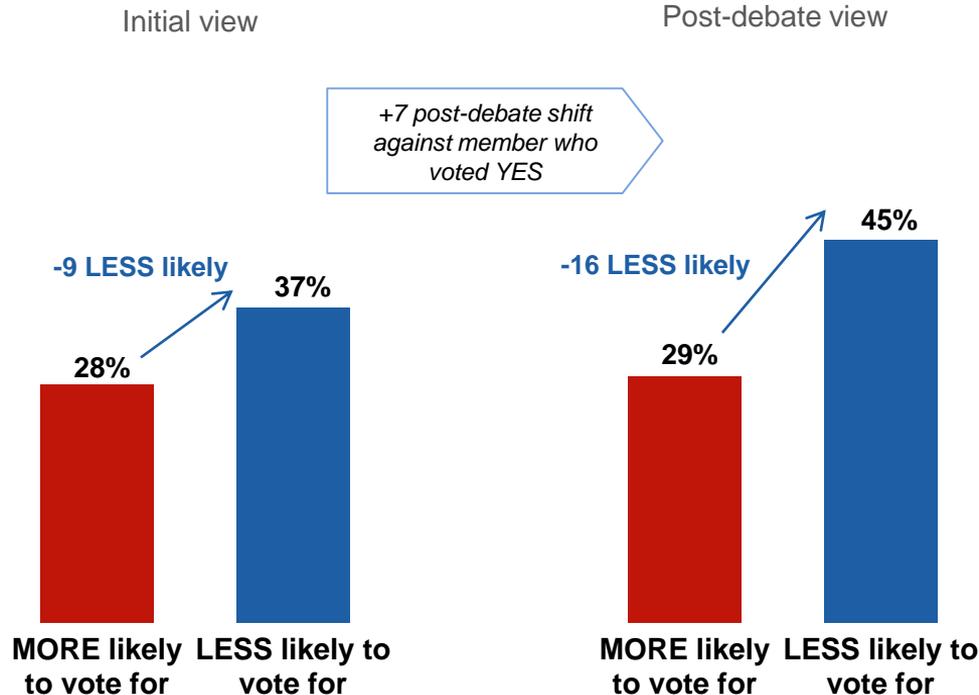
	Swing voters	GOTV Democrats
<b>Time bomb for the middle class</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>42%</b>
<b>Dishonest and deceptive</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Shortchanging our future</b>	<b>27%</b>	27%
<b>Republican tax scam</b>	21%	<b>34%</b>
Republican tax giveaway	22%	21%
Bait and switch	18%	21%
Corrupt deal	17%	26%
Trickle down	13%	13%
Tax heist	5%	7%

**Trump tax scam:**  
Swing voters 21%  
GOTV Democrats 46%

**Trump tax giveaway:**  
Swing voters 18%  
GOTV Democrats 26%

# After Debate, Yes Vote Is Bigger Liability for Member of Congress

If my member of Congress *voted FOR* the tax law:



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