Clean Energy National Online Survey

Key findings from a national online survey of 1,000 likely voters, conducted October 5-8, 2020.

PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES
turning questions into answers

Project #200842

The Conservation Coalition

CONSERVATIVE ENERGY NETWORK
CEN

Methodology

Public Opinion Strategies is pleased to present the key findings from an online survey of 1000 likely voters nationwide, conducted October 5-8, 2020, with a confidence interval of ±3.53%.

Glen Bolger was the principal researcher. Gabe Imber was the project director, and Carson F. Nicholas provided analytical support.

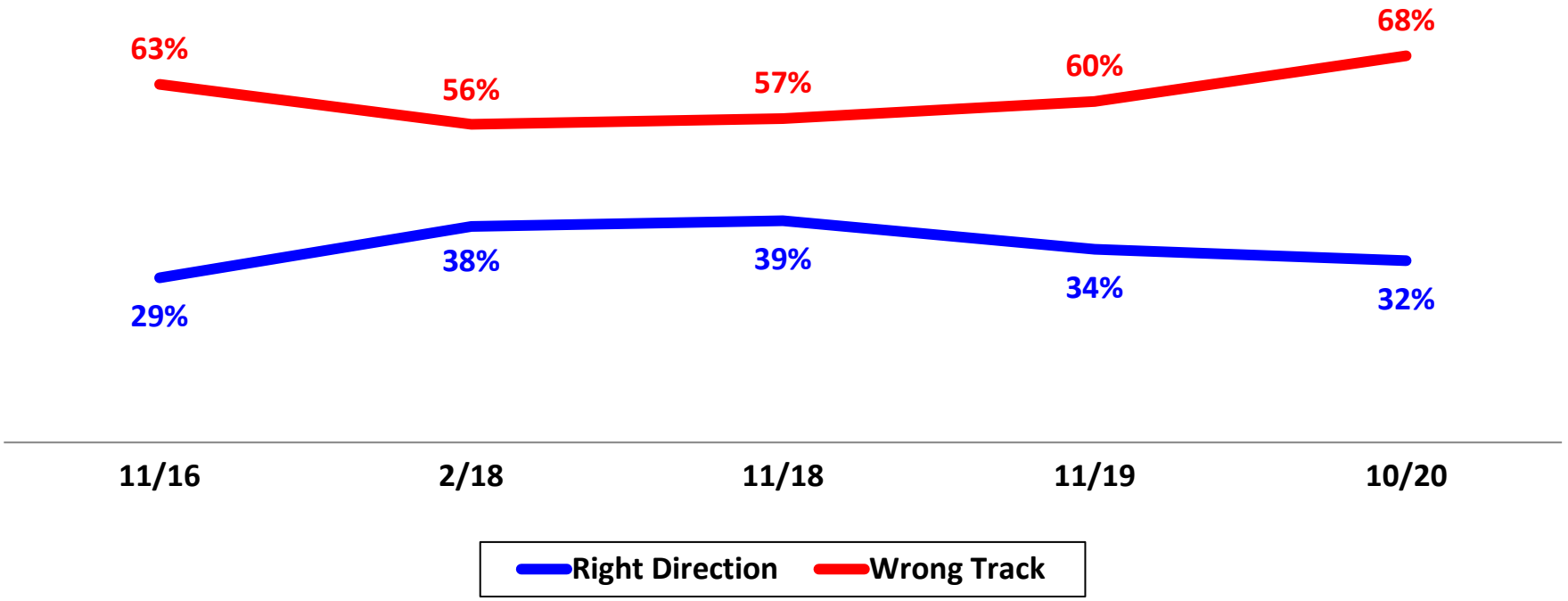
PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES
turning questions into answers

Political Environment

Voter optimism is at a low ebb.

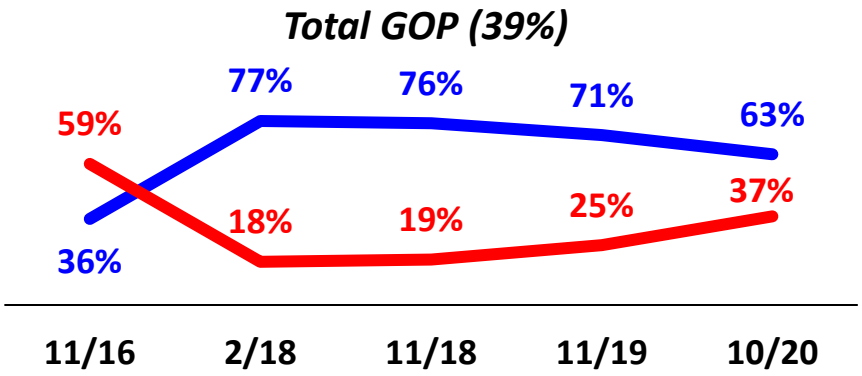
"Would you say that things in the country are going in the right direction, or have they pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?"

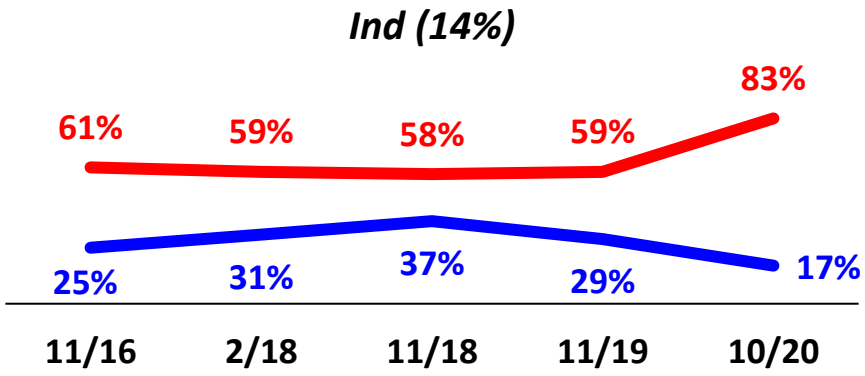
RCP National Average	
Right Direction	31%
Wrong Track	63%

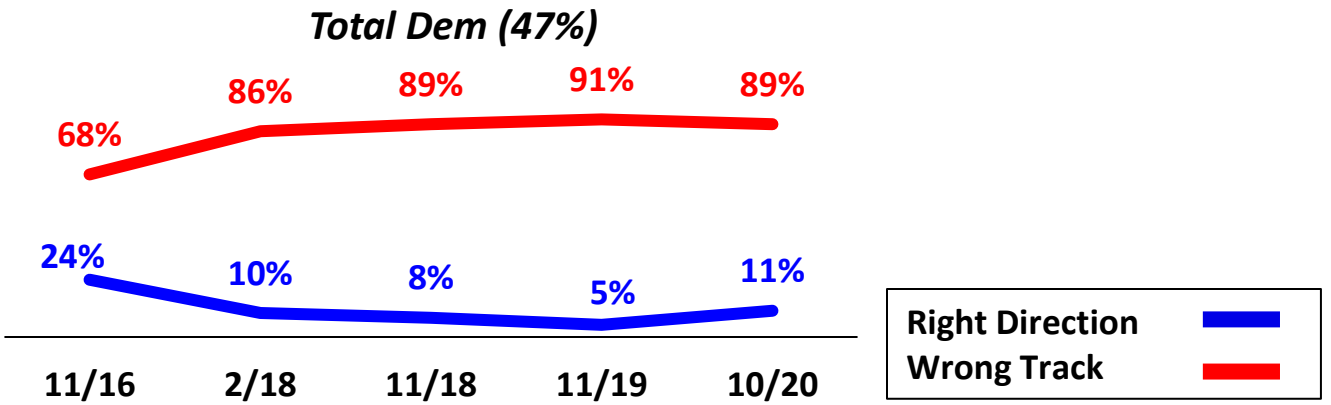


A majority of GOPers remain optimistic, while Inds and Dems remain pessimistic.

National Mood Trend by Party

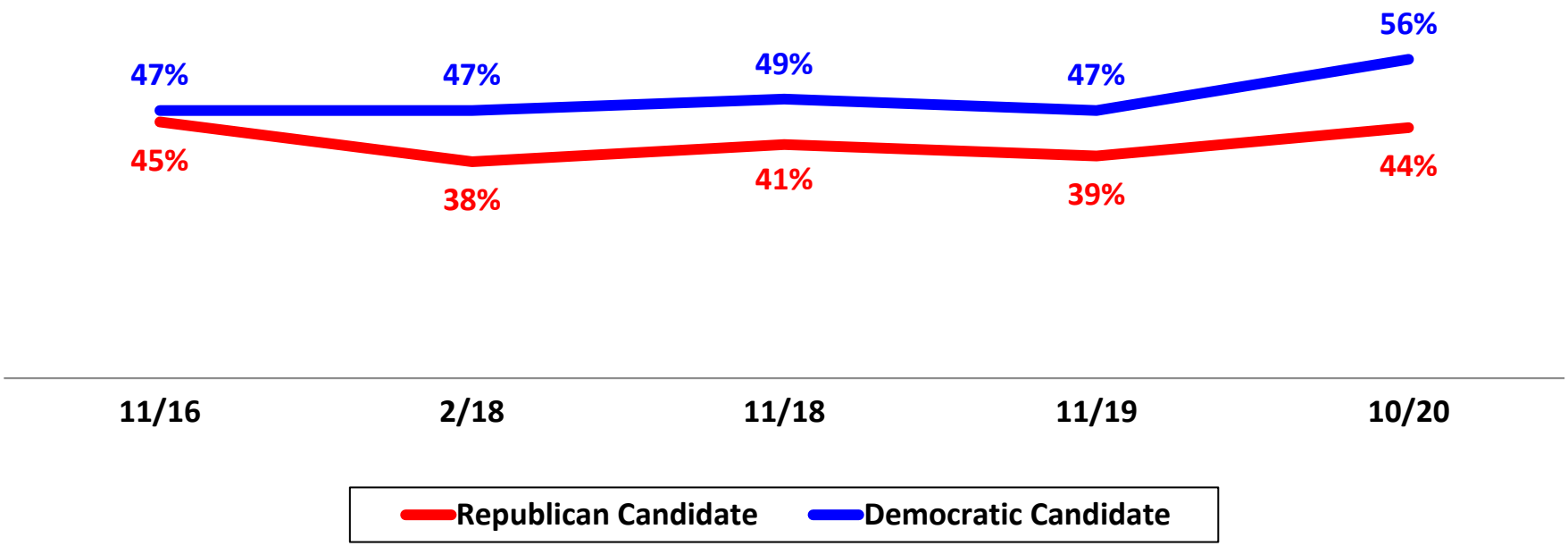






The Dem retains the edge on the generic state legislative ballot.

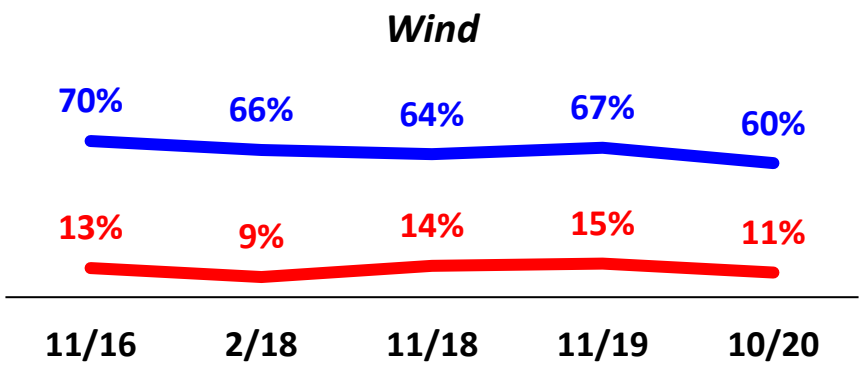
"Now, thinking about the November elections... If the November election for state legislature were being held today, for whom would you vote... the Republican candidate ...or... the Democratic candidate... for state legislature from your district?"

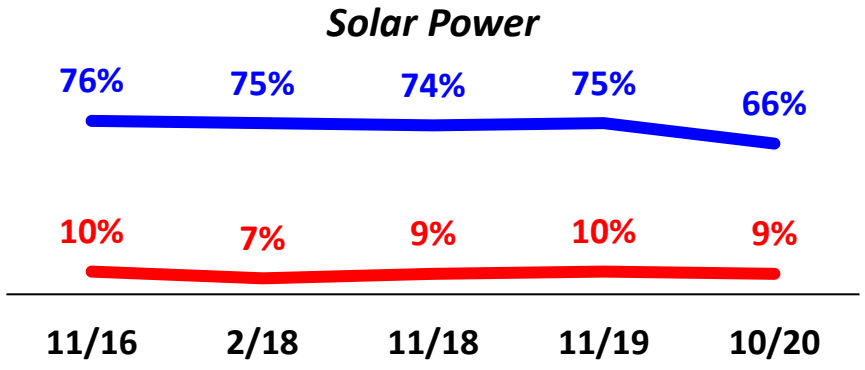


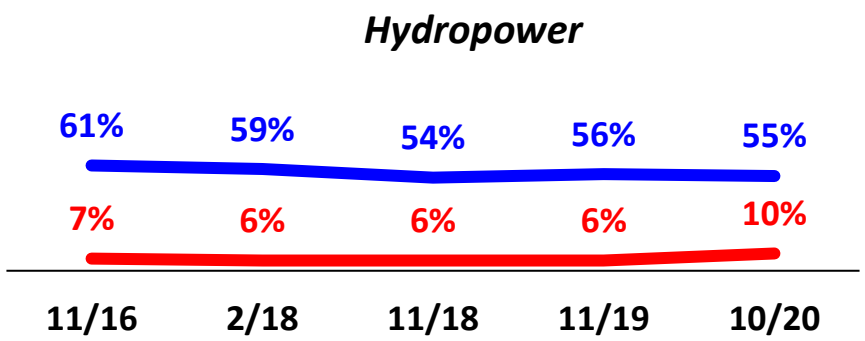
Domestic Energy Production

A solid majority of voters believe the U.S. should put more emphasis on solar, wind, and hydropower.

"Still thinking about this...Do you think that, as a country, the United States should put more emphasis, less emphasis, or about the same emphasis as it does now on producing domestic energy from each of the following sources…"

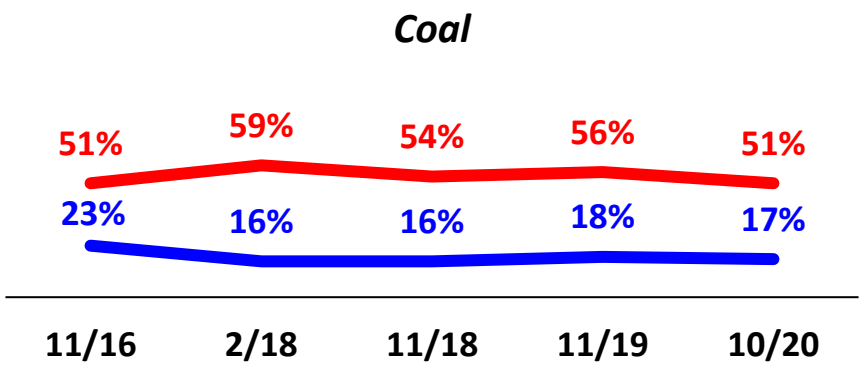


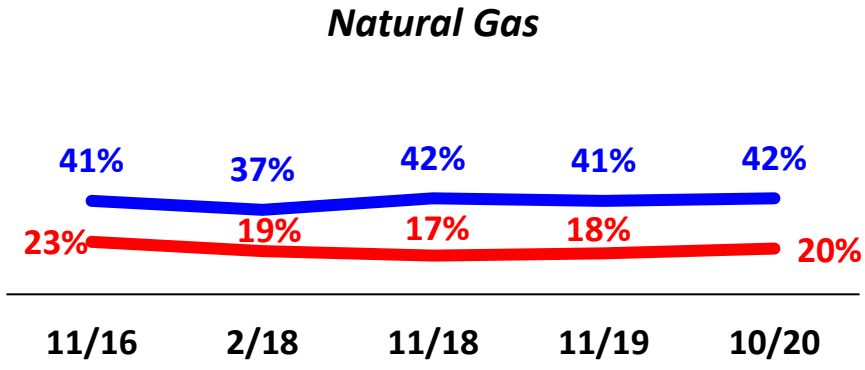


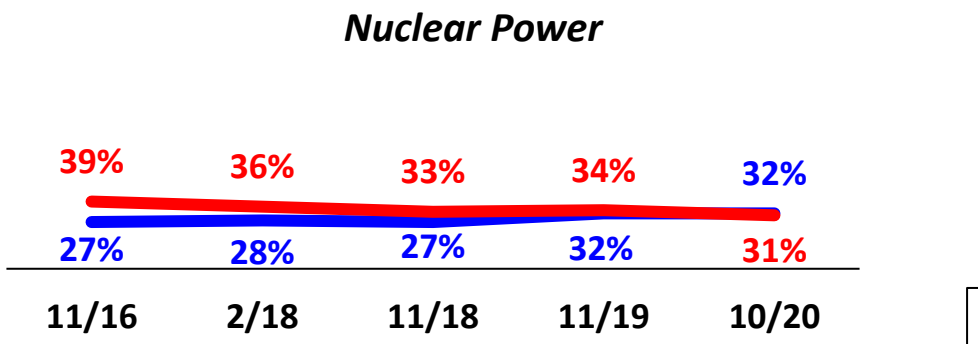


A majority continues to believe the U.S. should de-emphasize coal. A plurality still want more emphasis on natural gas, and voters remain split on nuclear.

"Still thinking about this...Do you think that, as a country, the United States should put more emphasis, less emphasis, or about the same emphasis as it does now on producing domestic energy from each of the following sources…"

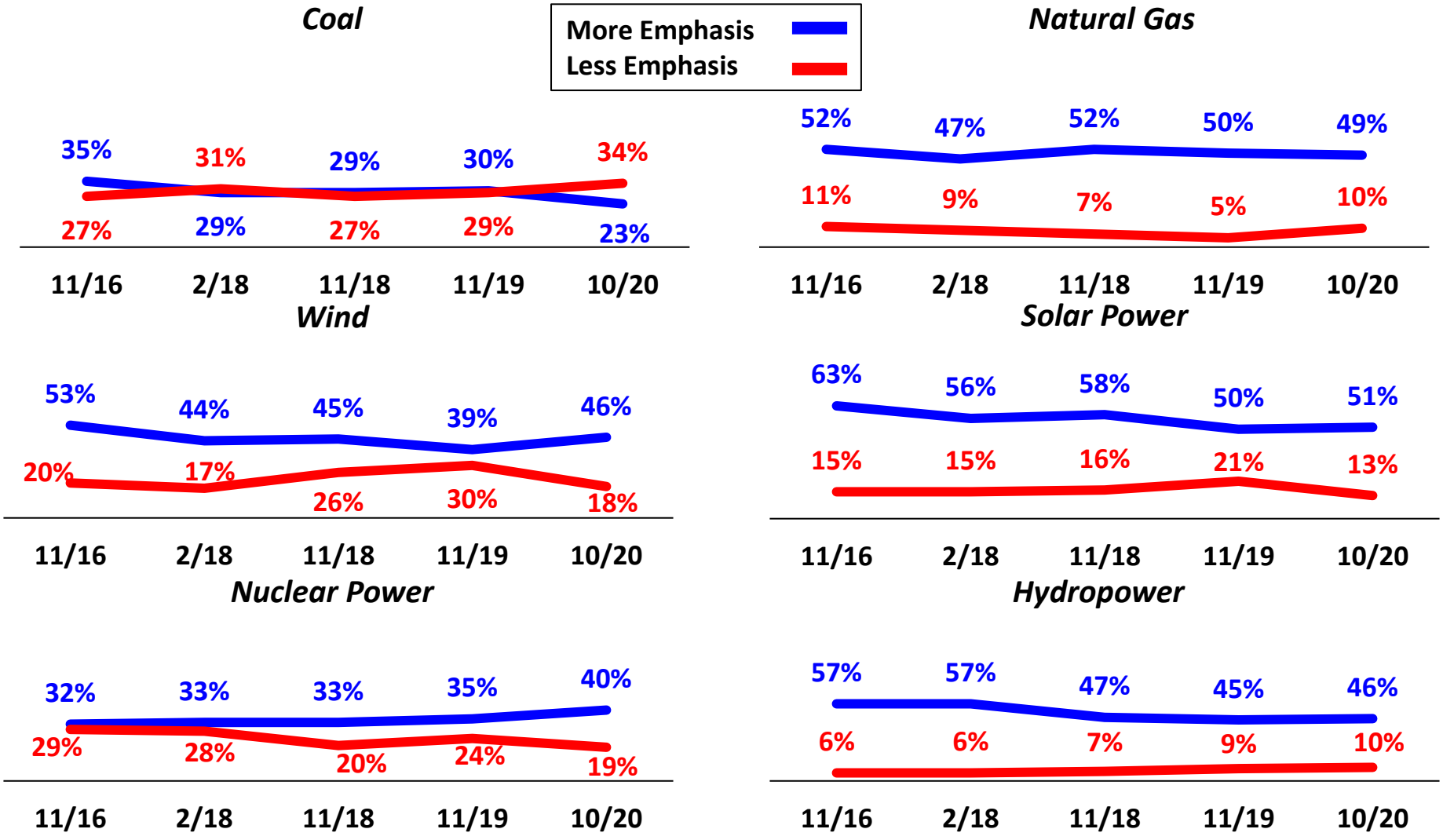






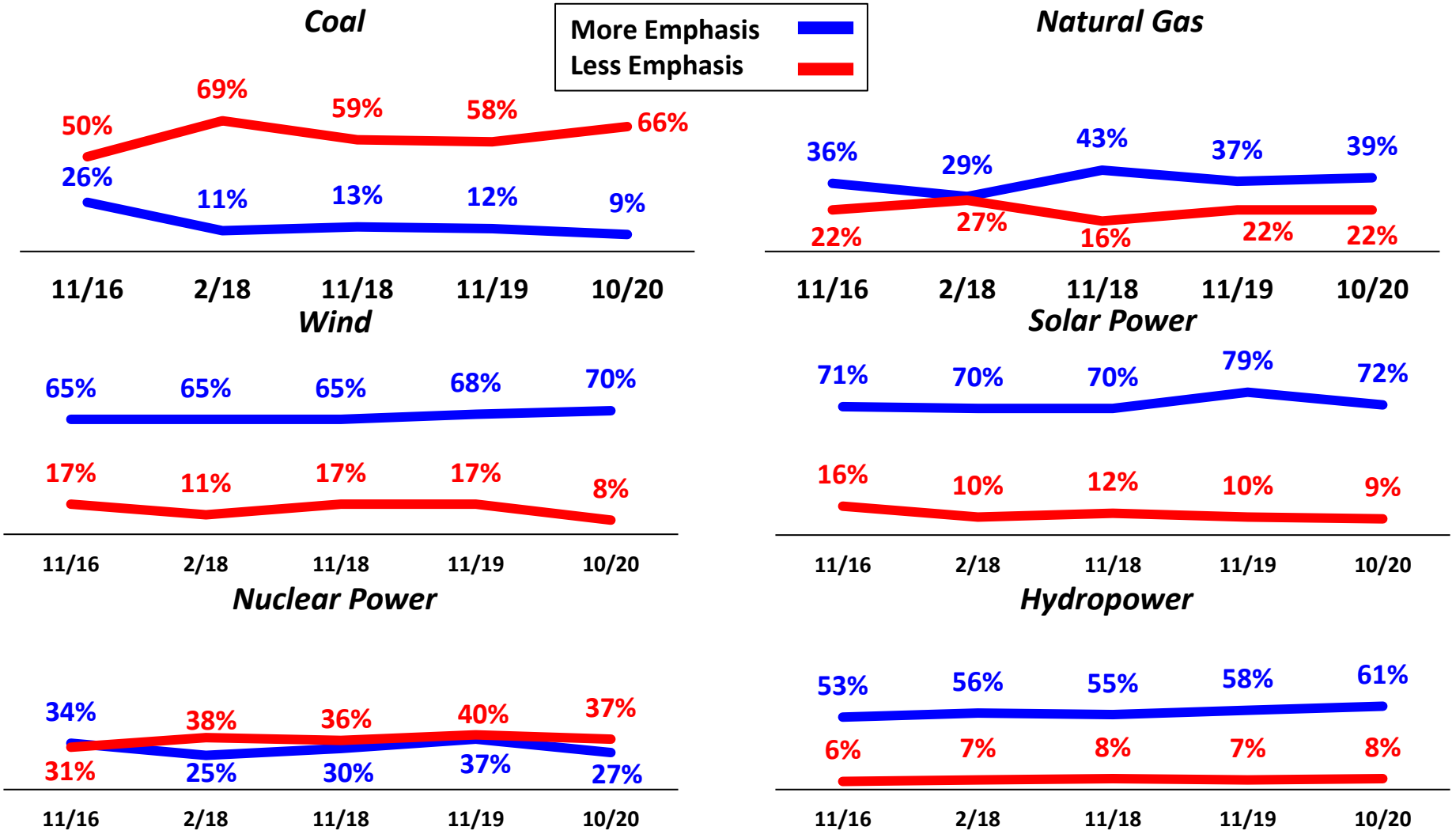
GOPers continue to want an "all of the above" approach to energy, although without coal.

Energy Emphasis Trend by GOPers (39%)



Inds continue to emphasize wind, solar, and hydropower. A plurality want more emphasis on natural gas, and less on nuclear.

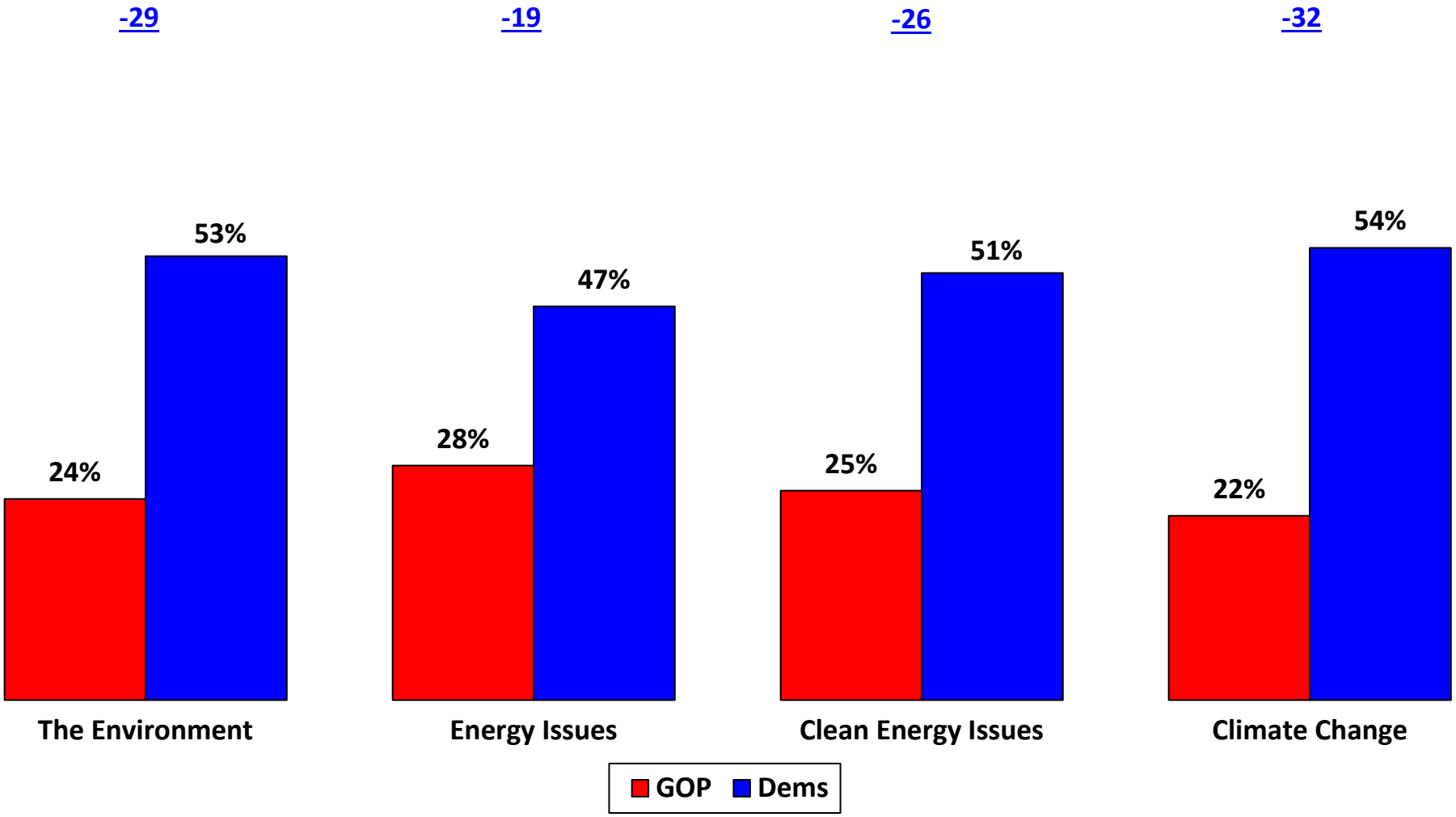
Energy Emphasis Trend by Ind (14%)



Party Issue Handling

Dems clearly hold the high ground on environmental and energy issues.

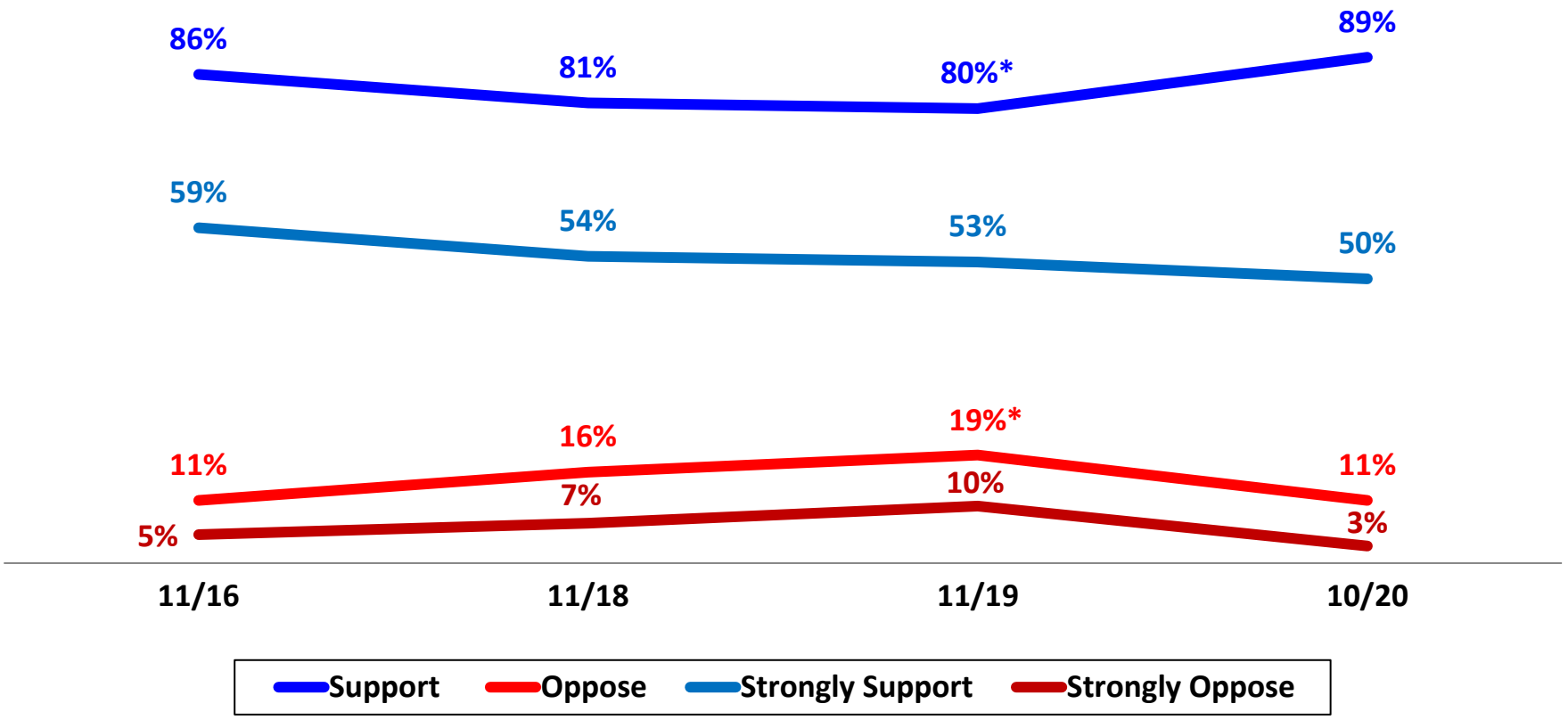
"Now please read the list of issues below and indicate which party you think would do a better job: the Democratic Party, the Republican Party, or both about the same? If you think that neither would do a good job, please indicate that below."



Clean Energy

Half of voters STRONGLY support government action to accelerate the development and adoption of clean energy.

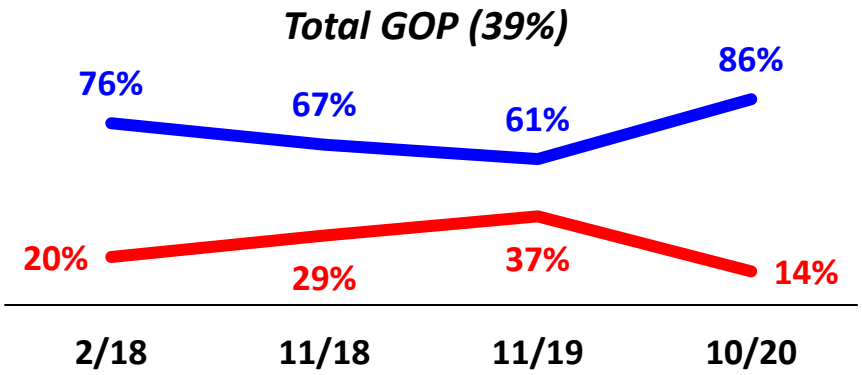
"And, would you say you support or oppose the government taking action to accelerate the development and use of clean energy in the United States?"

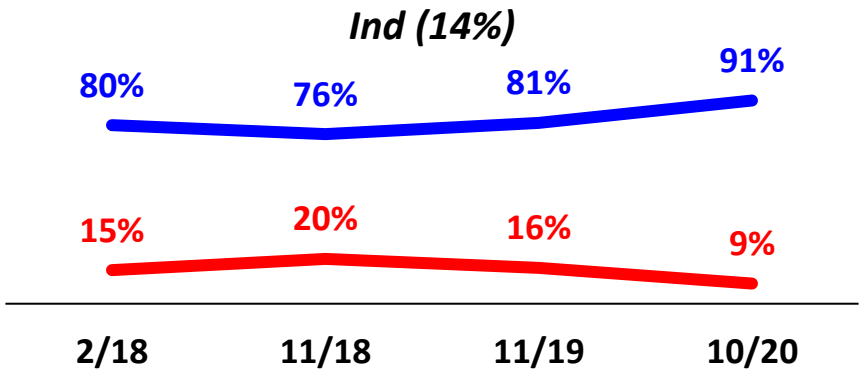


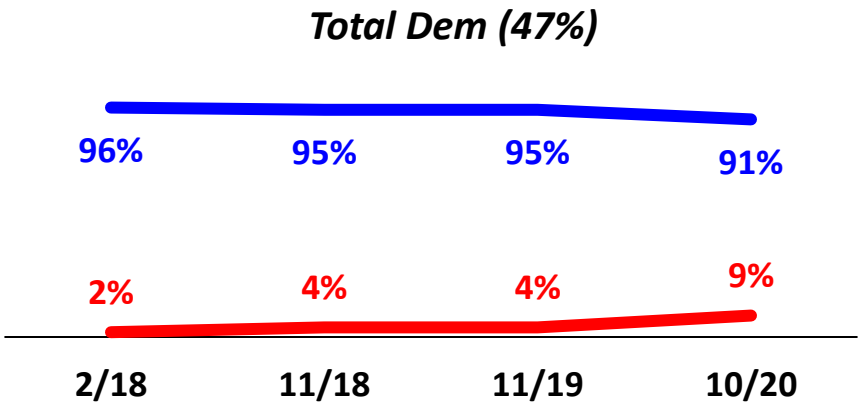
**Denotes Rounding.*

A majority of voters across party continue to support government action to accelerate the development and use of clean energy. GOP support has shot up.

Government Action on Clean Energy Trend by Party



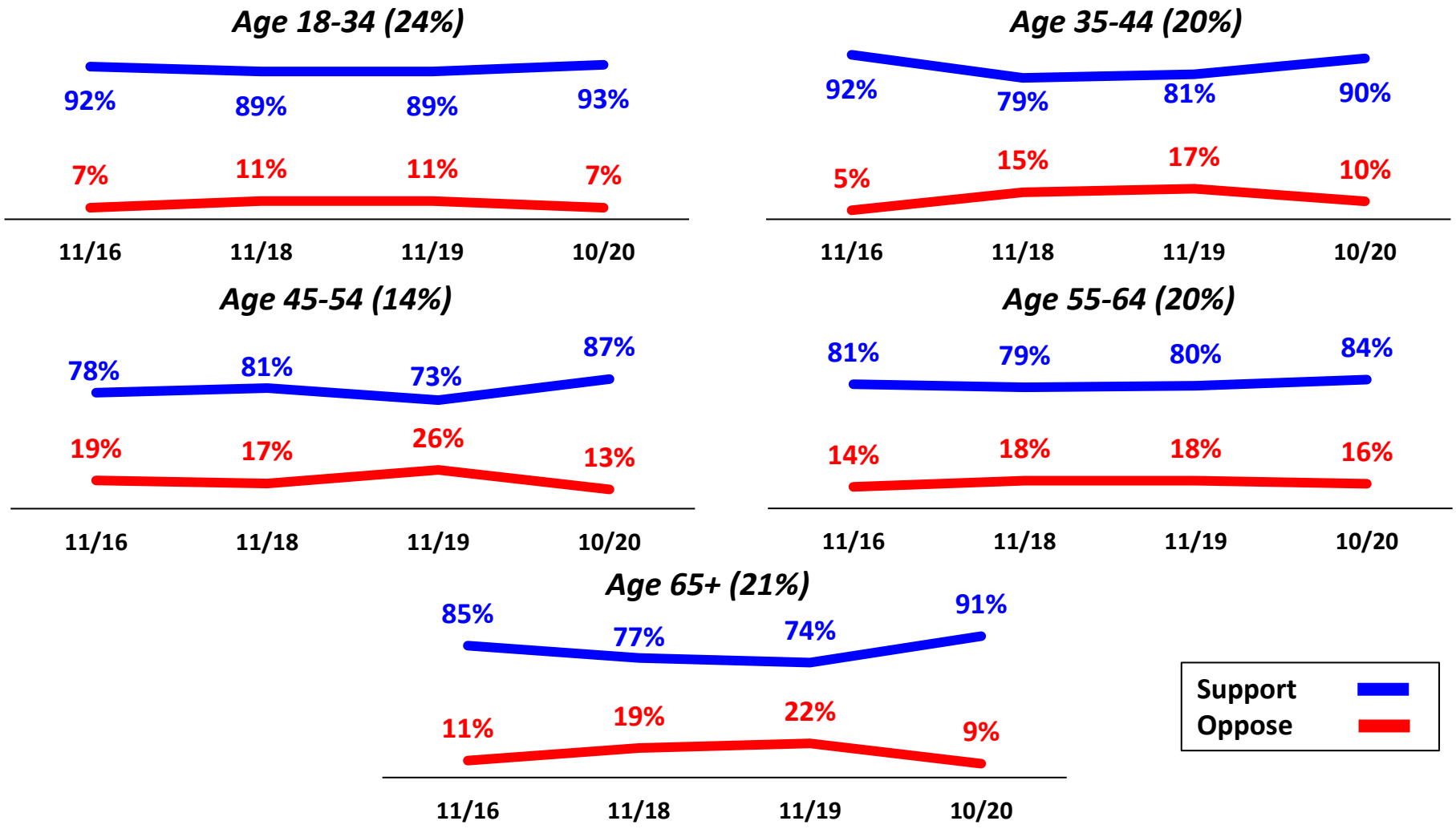




Support
Oppose

Most voters, regardless of age, support government action to accelerate the development and use of clean energy.

Government Action on Clean Energy Trend by Age



A majority of voters prefer a market-based approach to providing more clean energy production.

"To increase clean energy production, would you prefer..."

59% *Approaches that allow markets and businesses to provide more clean energy production*

19% *A price or tax put on carbon emissions*

16% *Government mandates and quotas*

...or...

5% *Taxpayer funded subsidies*

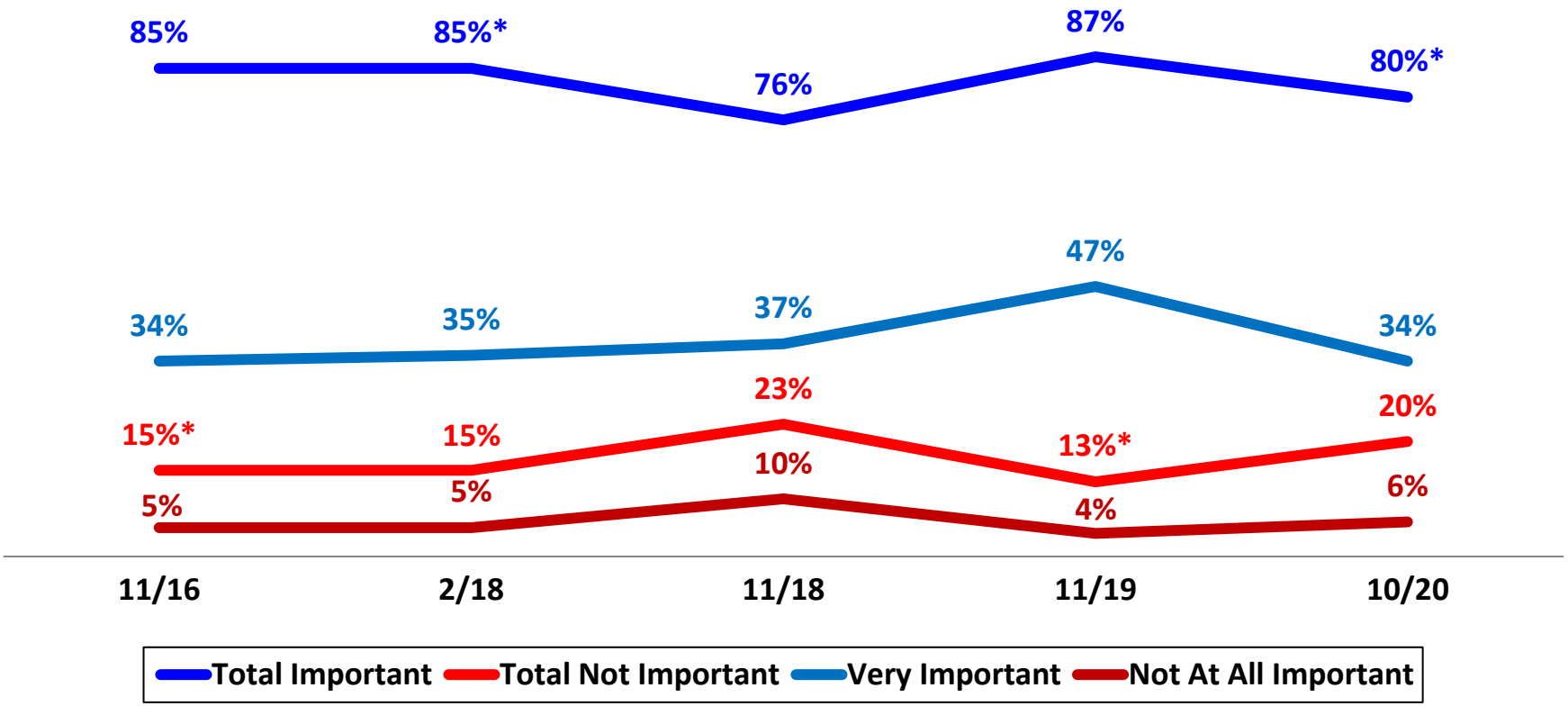
GOPers and Inds are together on this, while support for market-based incentives is nearly 50% among Dems.

Increase Clean Energy Production Trend by Party

	Overall	Total GOP (39%)	Ind (14%)	Total Dem (47%)
Markets & Businesses	59%	69%	68%	49%
Price/Tax on Carbon Emissions	19%	14%	17%	24%
Government Mandates	16%	12%	11%	22%
Taxpayer Funded Subsidies	5%	6%	4%	5%

A significant majority of voters say it is important that a candidate for political office shares their opinion on clean energy issues.

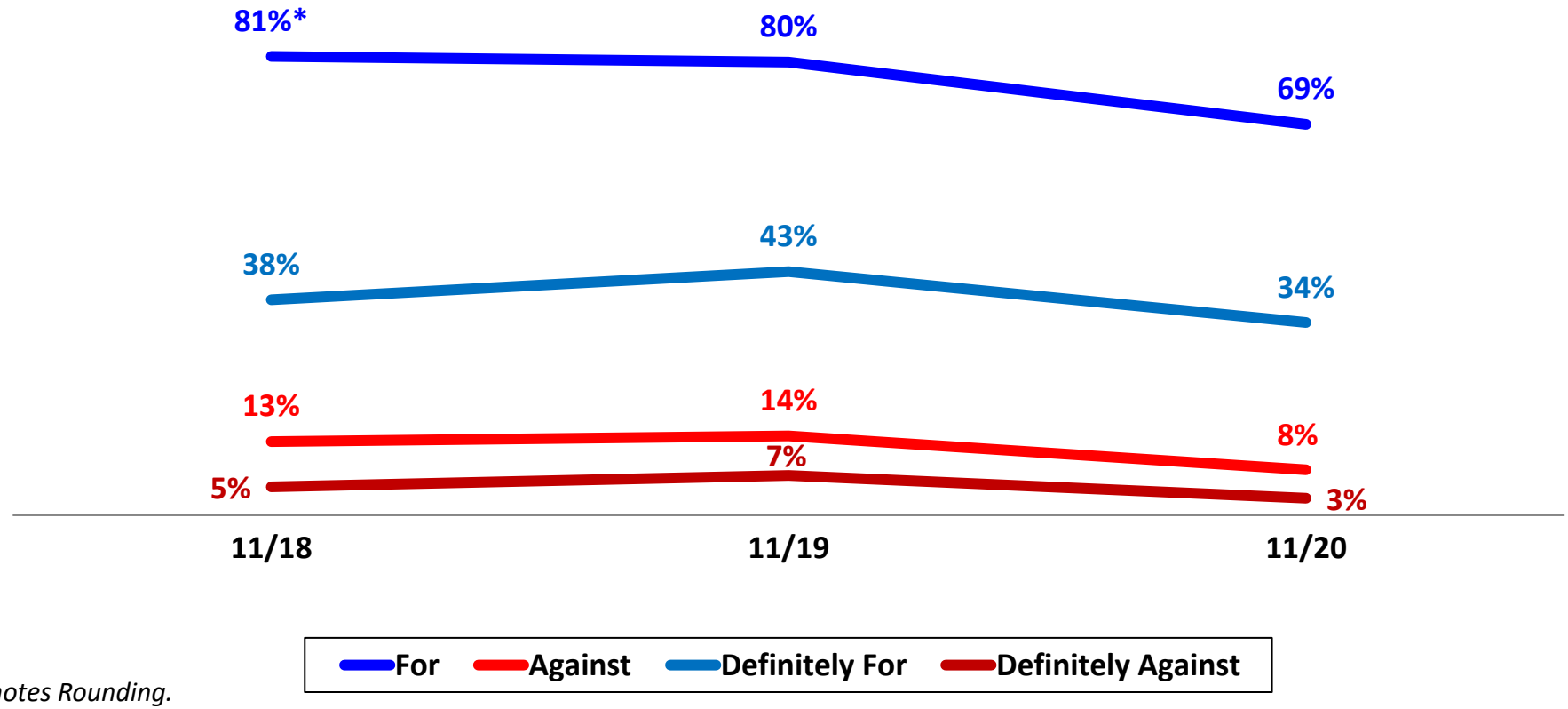
"And, how important is it to you that a candidate for political office share your opinion on clean energy issues? Is it..."



*Denotes Rounding.

Support for candidates who back clean energy development remains high.

"Still thinking about clean energy... Thinking ahead to future elections… would you vote for or against elected officials or candidates who support clean energy development like solar and wind?"



**Denotes Rounding.*

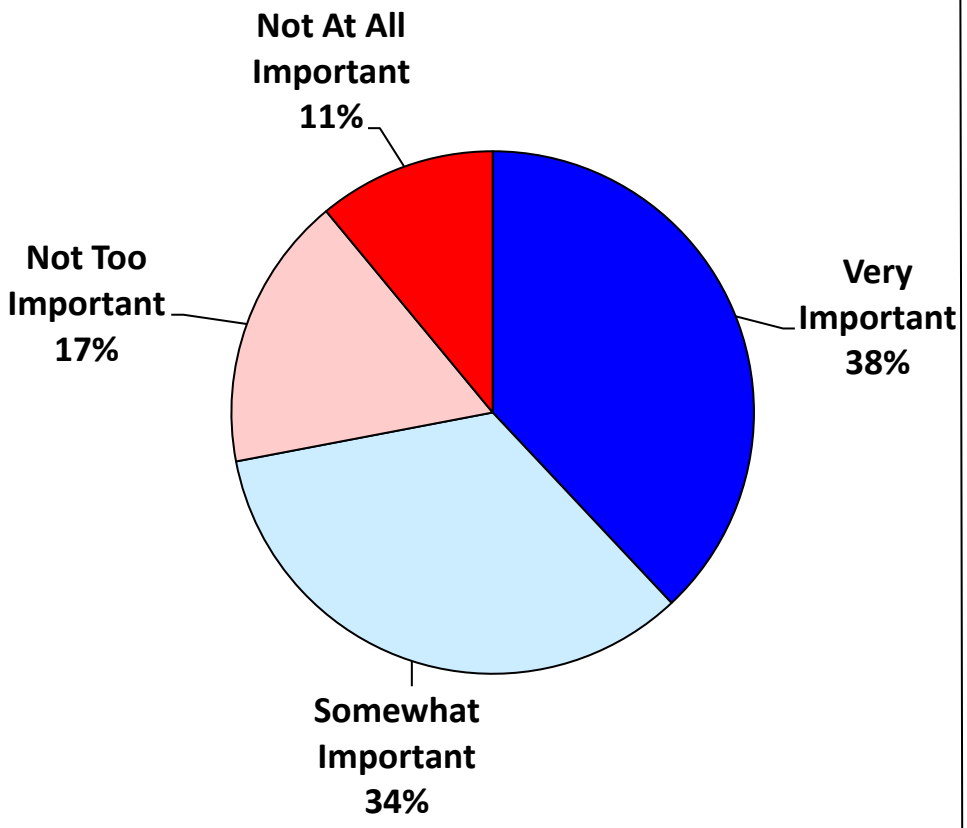
Climate Change

Most voters, including a majority of GOPers, Inds, and Dems, say that climate change is important to their vote.

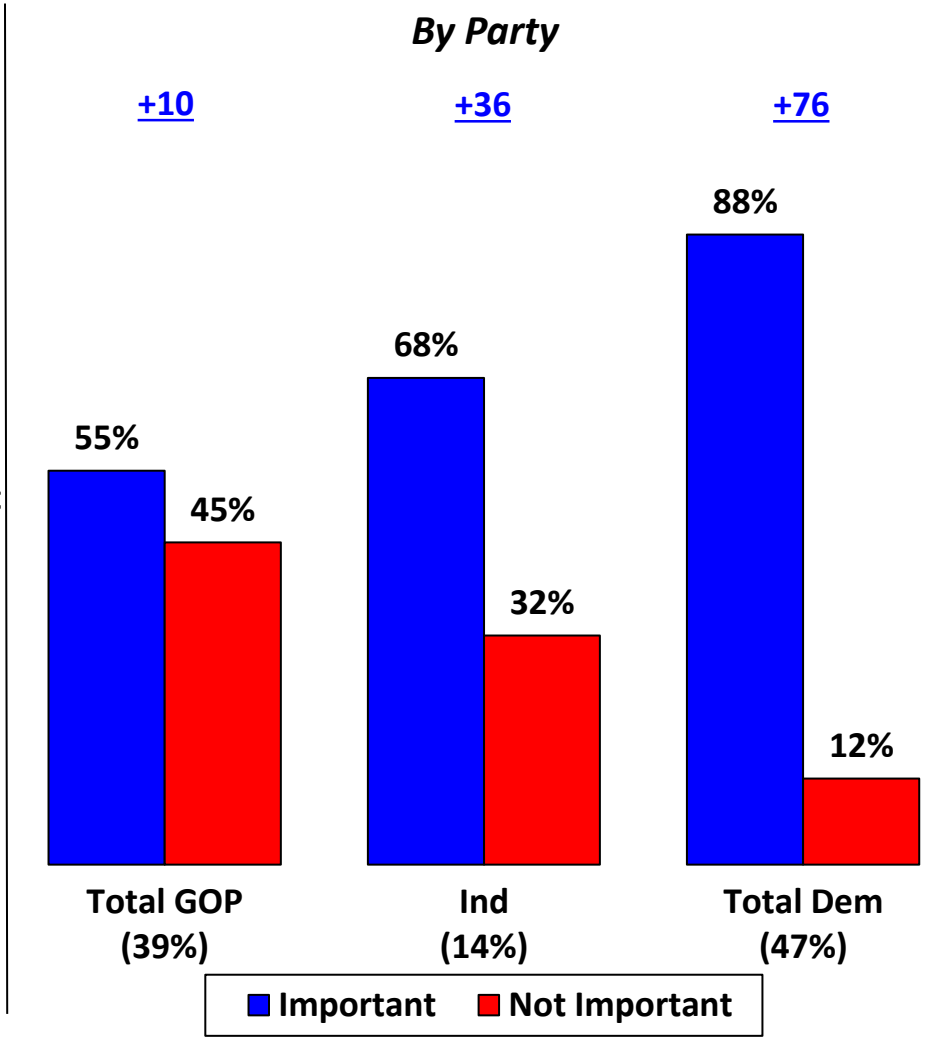
"How important is the issue of climate change to your vote?"

Overall

Total Important	72%
Total Not Important	28%

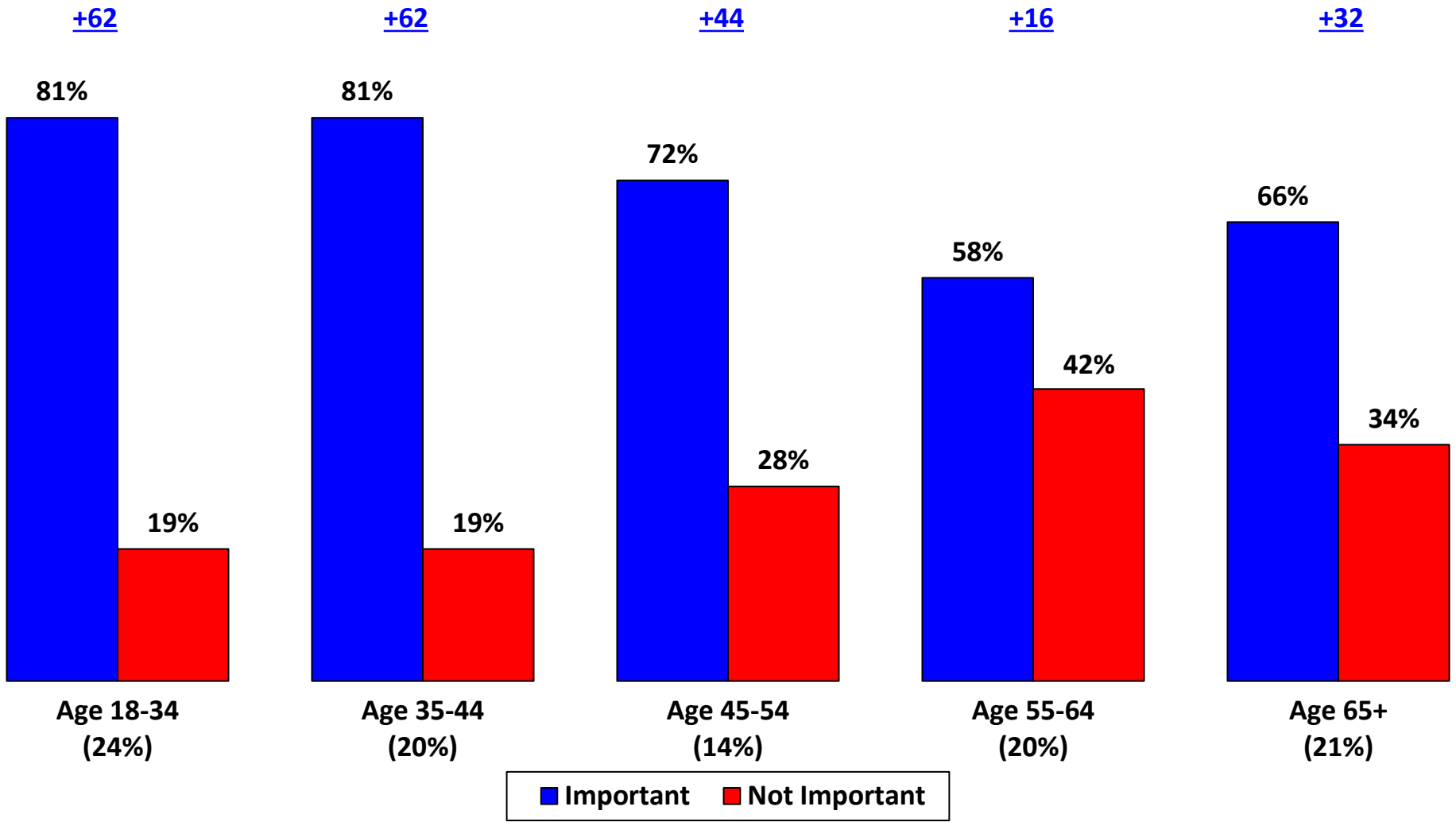


By Party



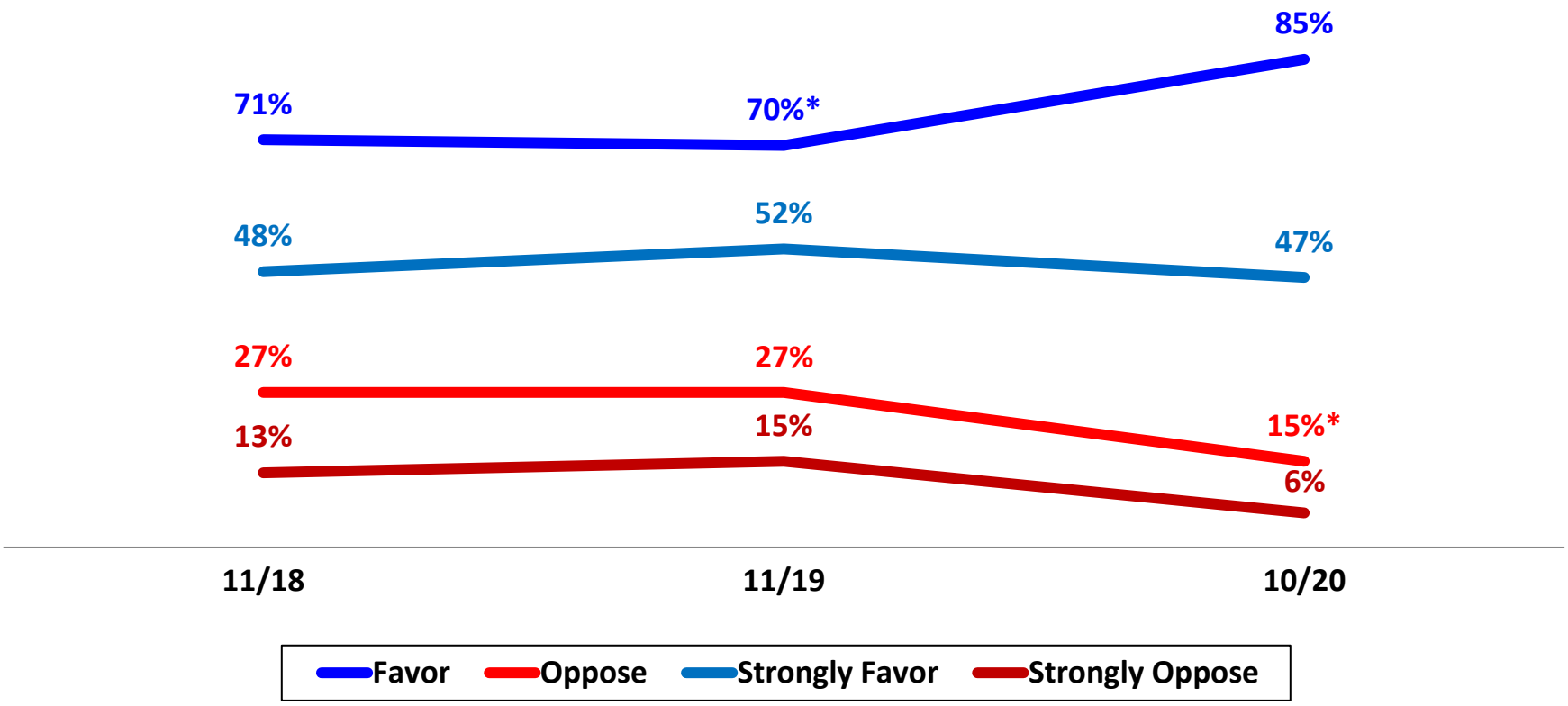
Younger voters are the most likely to say that climate change is important to their vote.

Climate Change Issue Importance to Vote by Age



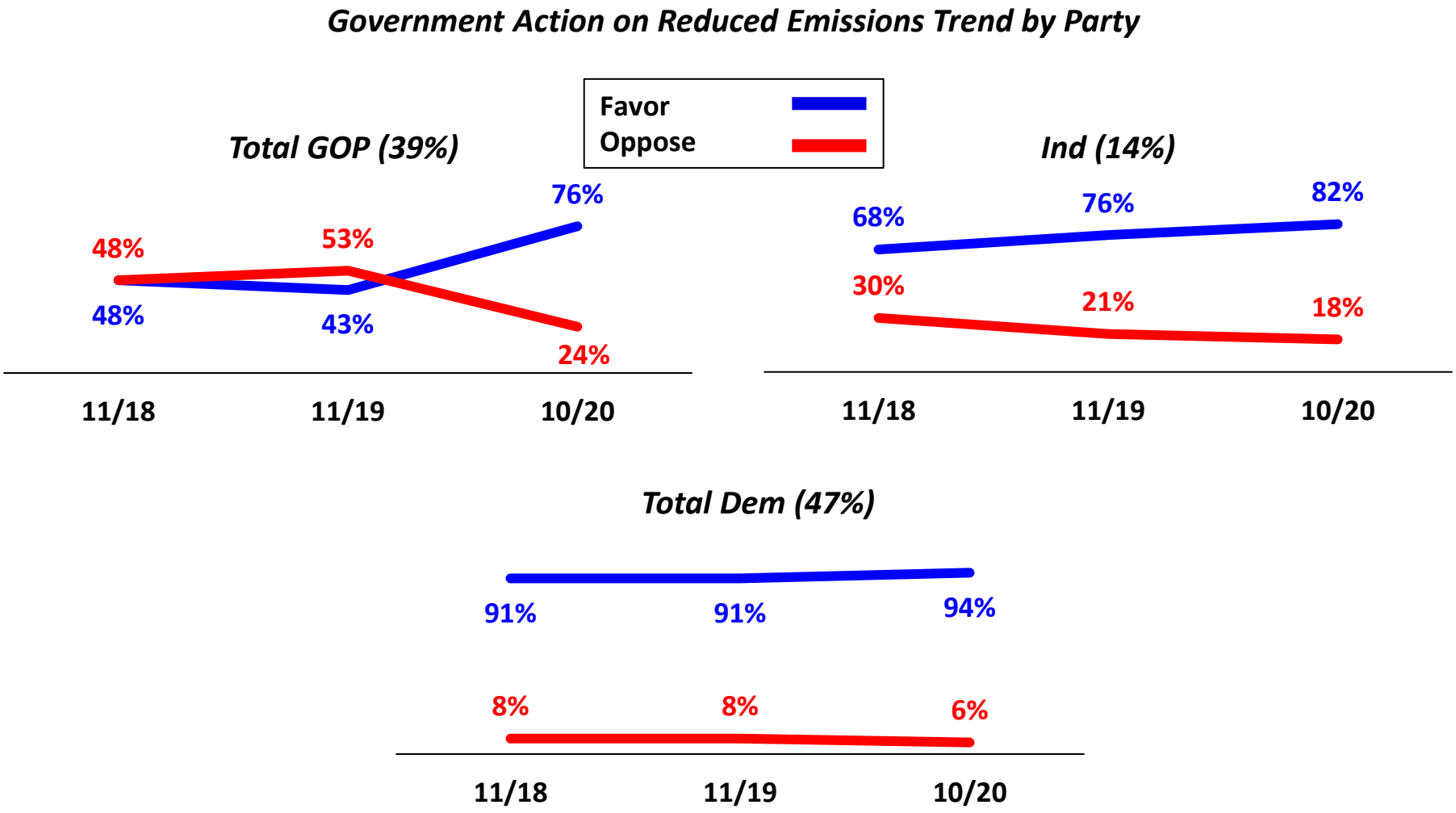
Most voters support government action to reduce gas emissions, and nearly half strongly favor government intervention.

"And, do you favor or oppose the government taking steps to reduce emissions of gases like carbon dioxide and methane emissions that cause global climate change?"



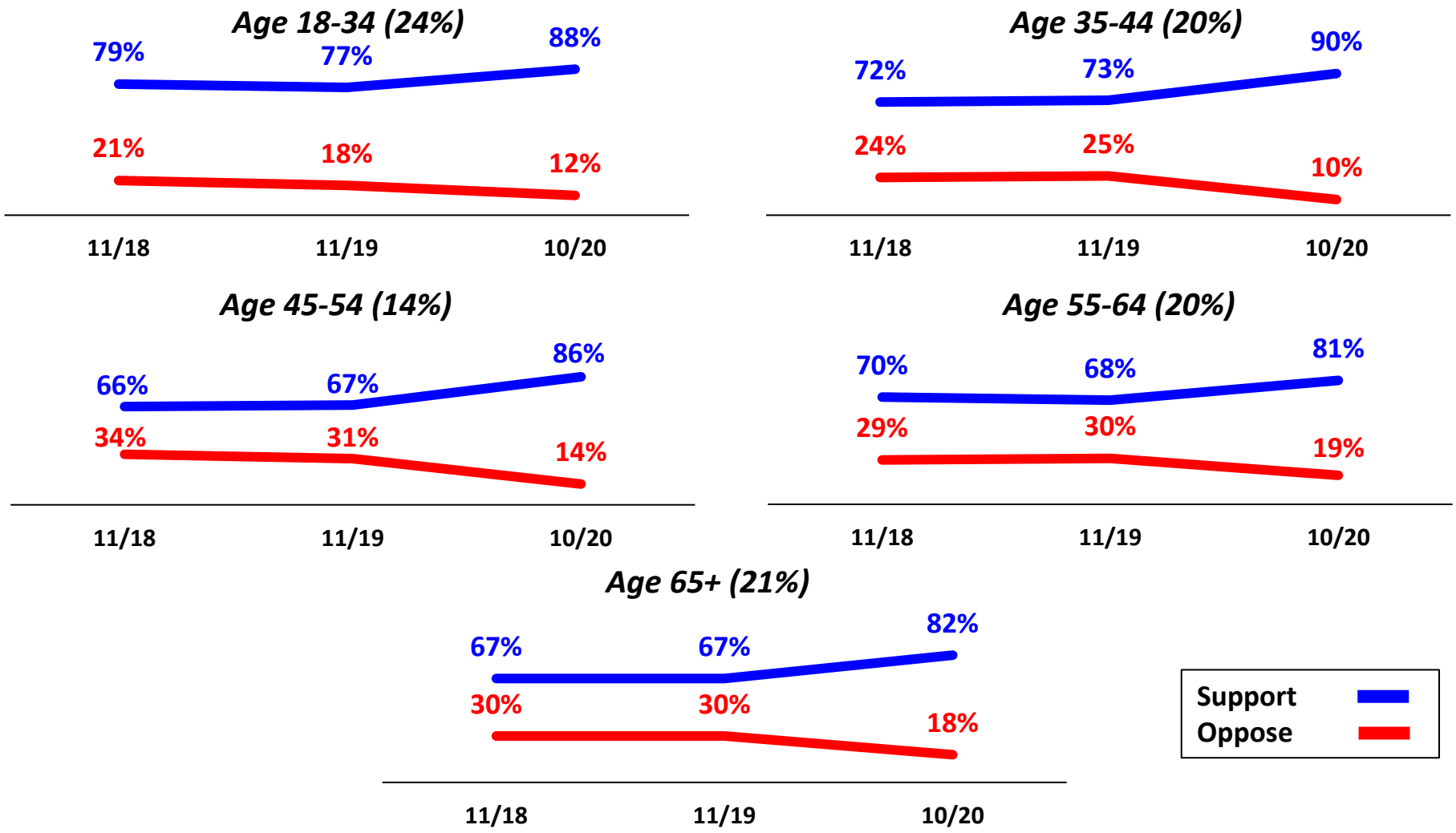
**Denotes Rounding.*

A majority of GOPers now favor government action to reduce emissions, along with a greater majority of Inds and an overwhelming majority of Dems.



Support has shot up by double digits across the board.

Government Action on Reduced Emissions Trend by Age



A significant majority of voters say climate change is a threat.

"Continuing to think about climate change... Please read the following statements about the impact of climate change on society, and after you read each one, please indicate which statement is closest to your own opinion..."

43% *Climate change is an extreme threat.*

34% *Climate change is a threat to be considered.*

16% *Climate change is a minor threat.*

8% *Climate change is not at all a threat.*

A majority of voters including Inds and Dems, say the link between rising global temps and human activity is settled science. GOPers are split.

"Now, please read the following two statements, and after you read each one, please indicate which statement comes closest to your own opinion..."

70%

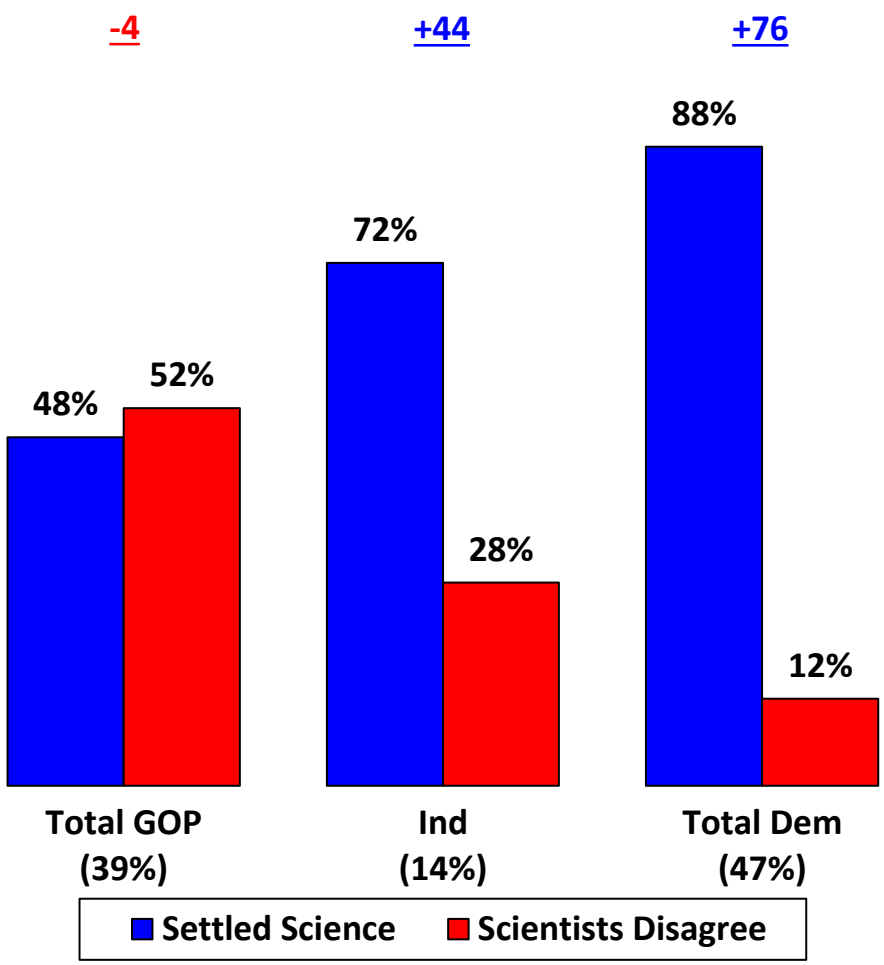
Scientists have established a factual connection between rising global temperatures and human activities like burning fossil fuels.

...OR...

30%

Scientists disagree about whether or not human activities are linked to rising global temperatures.

By Party

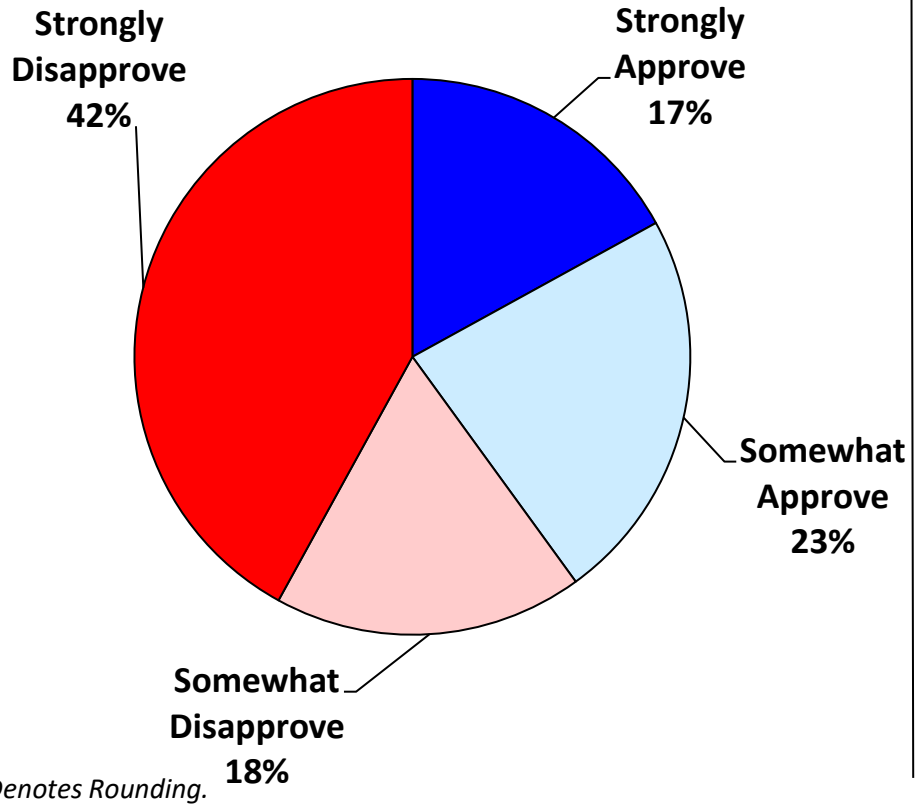


A majority of voters, including Inds and Dems, disapprove of how the GOP is addressing climate change.

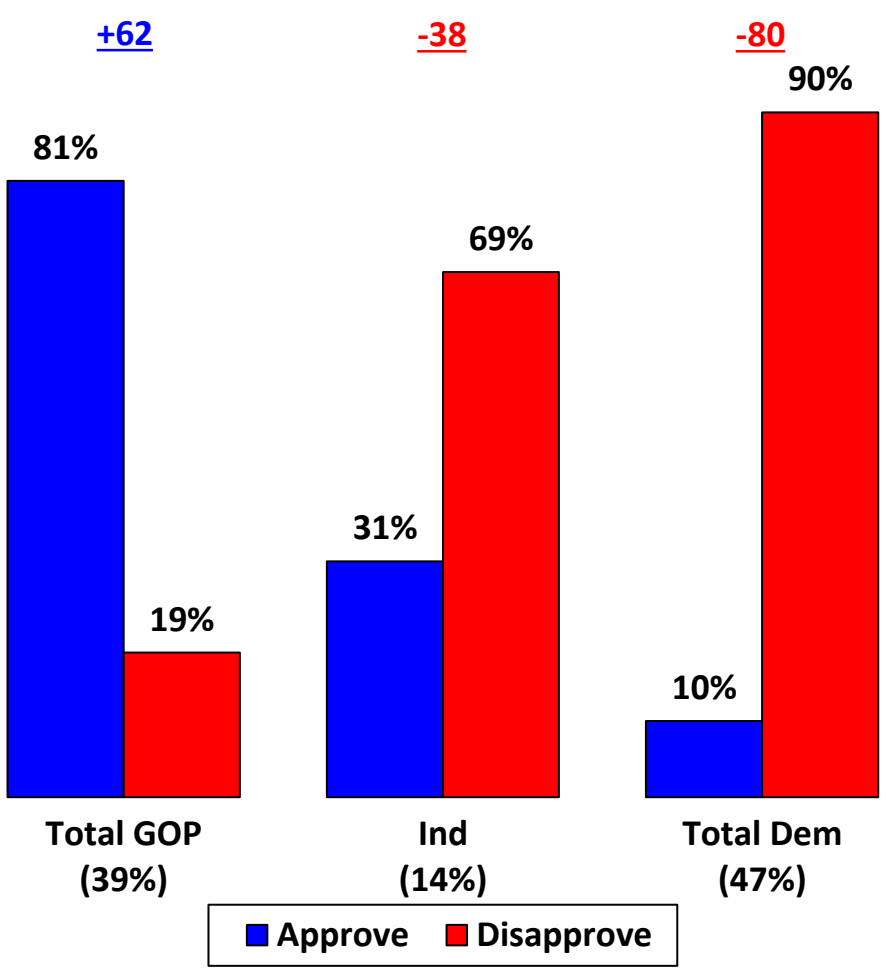
"And do you approve or disapprove of the job the Republican Party is doing in addressing climate change?"

Overall

Total Approve	41%*
Total Disapprove	59%*



By Party



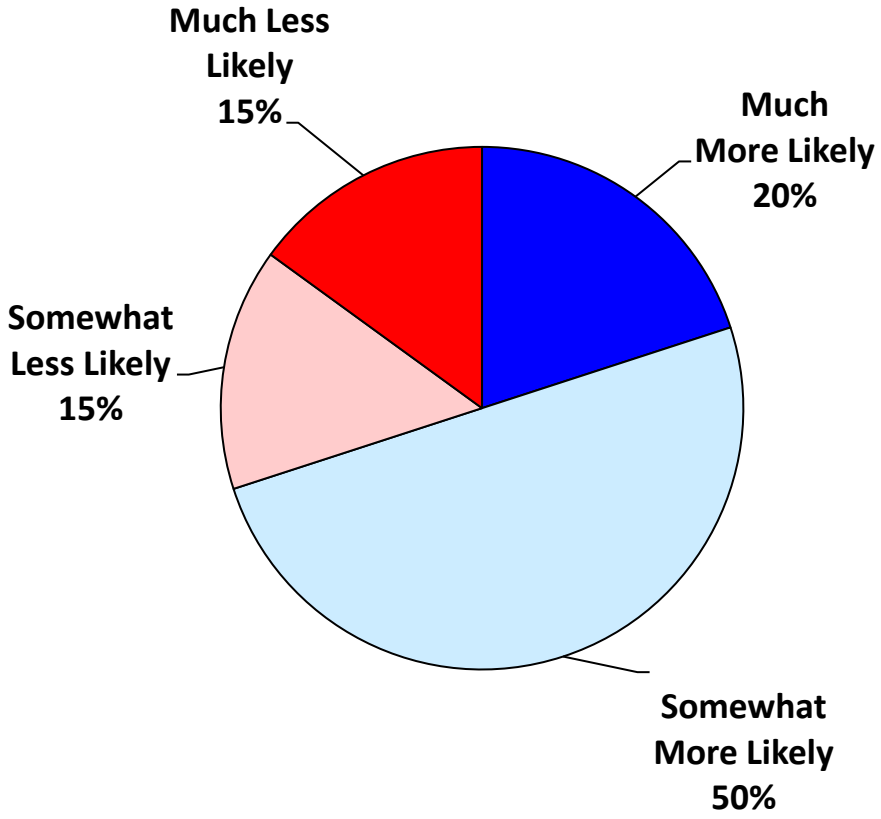
**Denotes Rounding.*

Most voters say they are more likely to support a GOP candidate who embraces an innovation-based approach to addressing climate change.

"Would you be more likely or less likely to support a Republican candidate who embraces an innovation-based approach to addressing climate change?"

Overall

Total More Likely	70%
Total Less Likely	30%



More Likely Among Independents

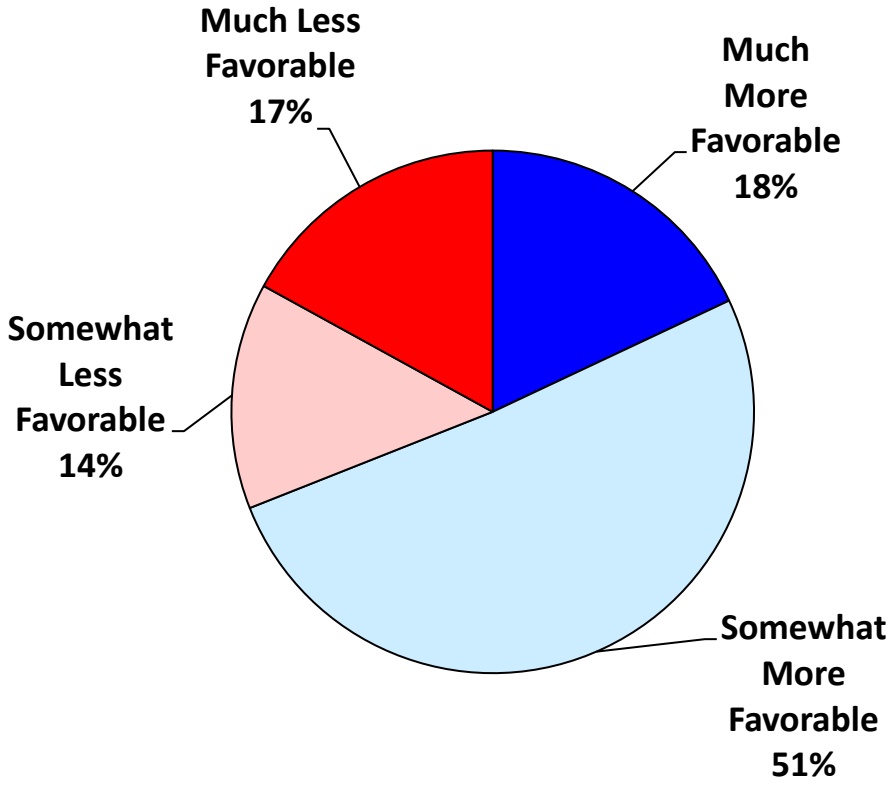
Ind w/ Degree	79%
Ind 18-54	78%
Moderate GOP/Ind	78%
Ind Women	77%
Ind	76%
Ind Men	75%
Ind 55+	73%

A majority of voters across party say they would view Trump more favorably if he embraced a conservative approach to clean energy and climate change.

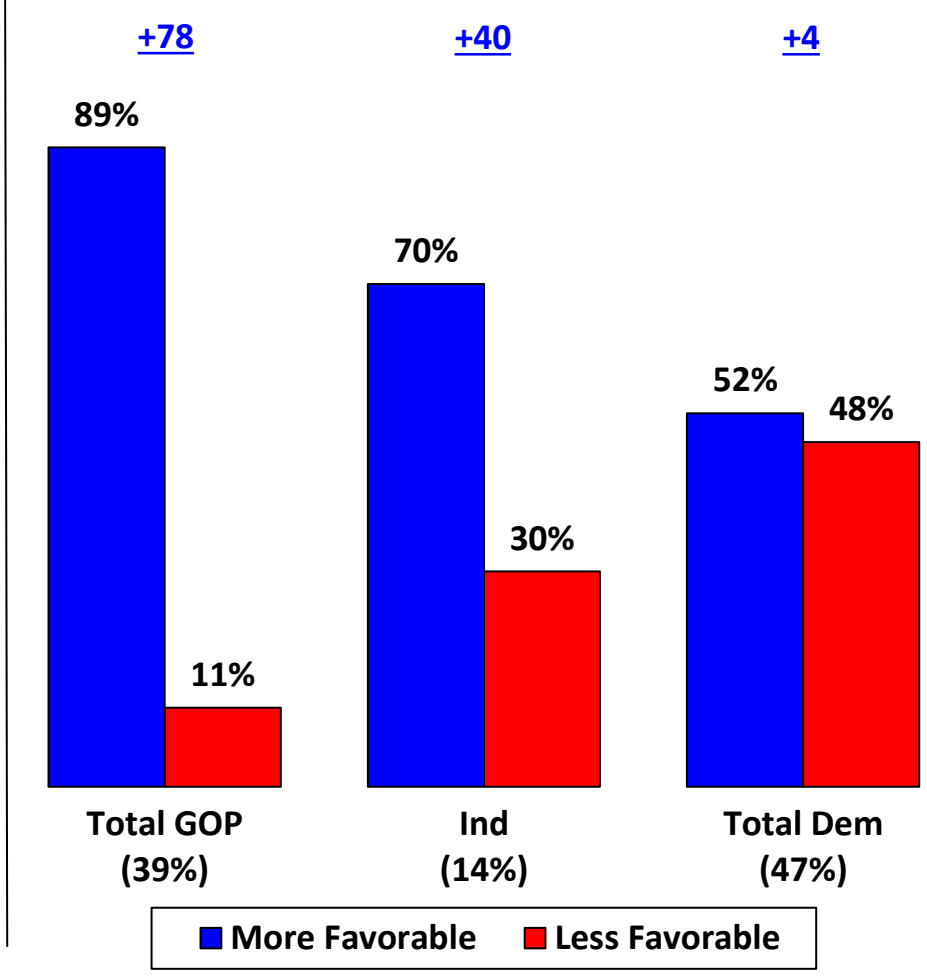
"Would your view of President Trump be more favorable or less favorable if he embraced a conservative approach to addressing clean energy and climate change by prioritizing technology, innovation, and competition?"

Overall

Total More Favorable	69%
Total Less Favorable	31%



By Party

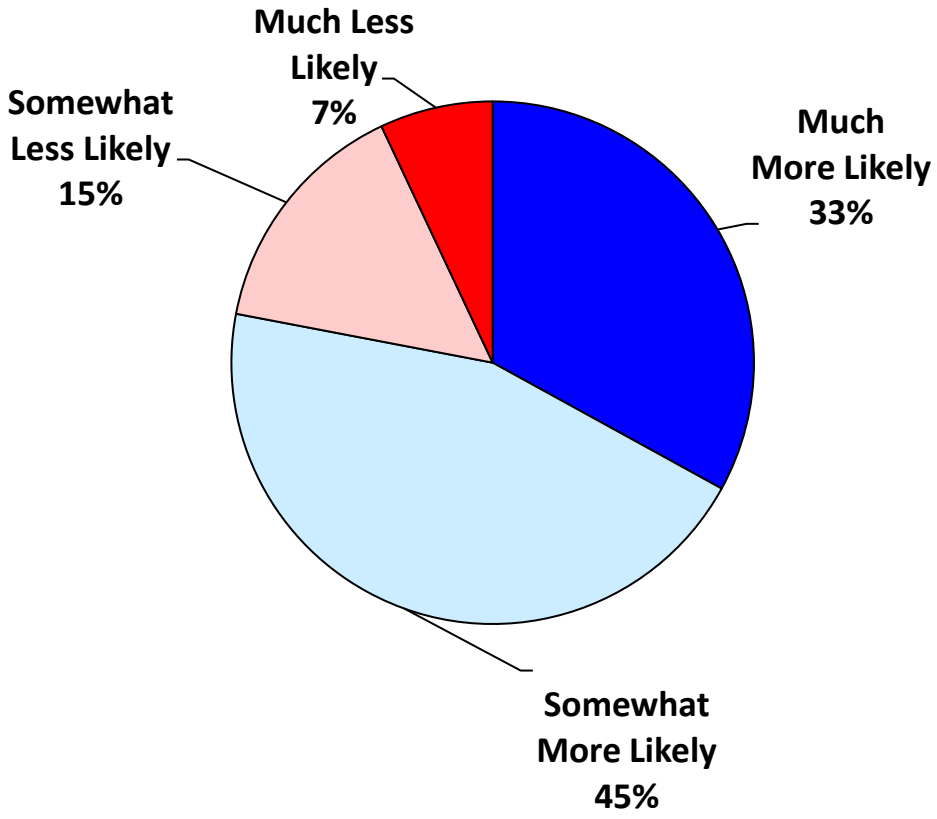


A majority of voters across party say they are more likely to support a candidate for office who acknowledges human-caused climate change.

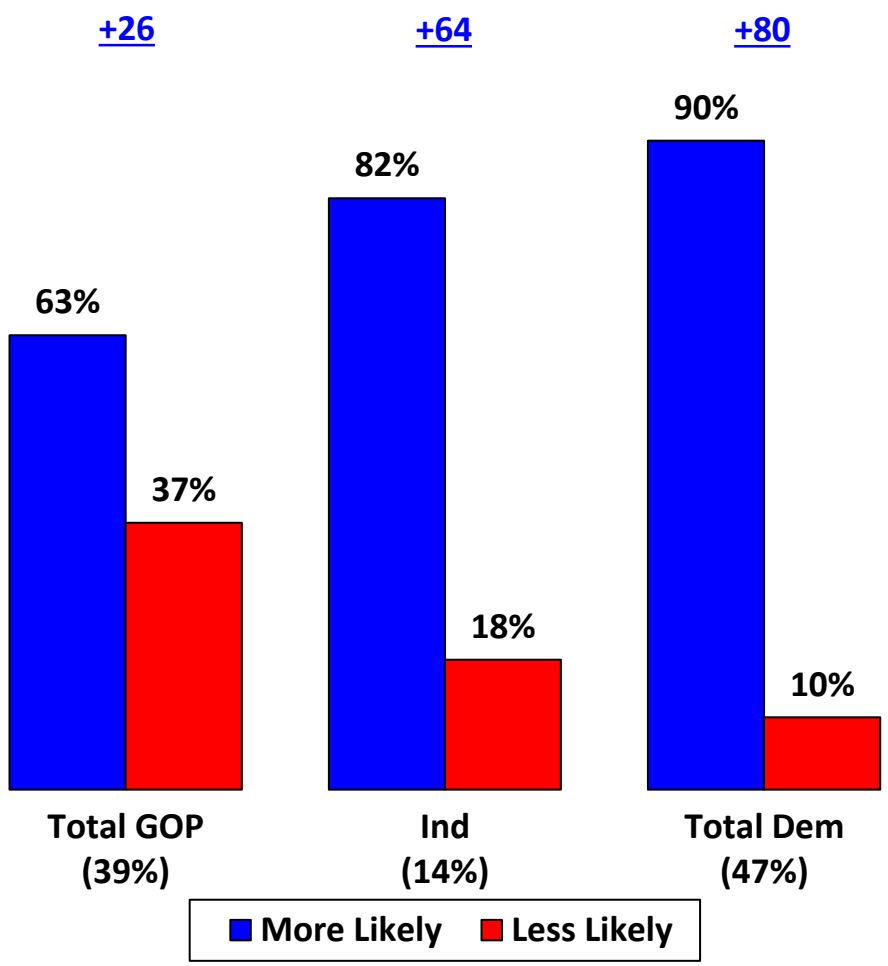
"Are you more likely or less likely to support a candidate for public office who believes human activity is contributing to climate change?"

Overall

Total More Likely	78%
Total Less Likely	22%



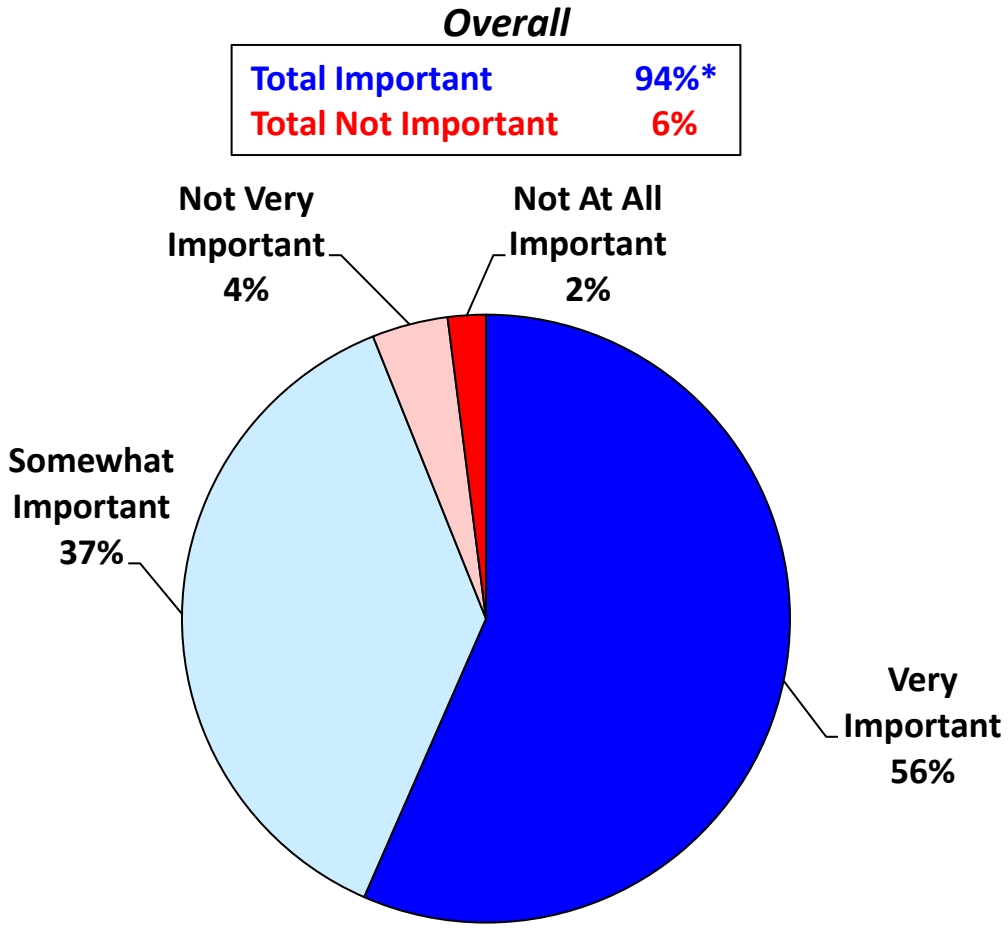
By Party



The Electric Grid

A majority of voters say it is very important the U.S. takes steps to protect our electric grid from calamity.

"Now thinking about our electric grid... Given America's unpreparedness for the Coronavirus pandemic, how important it to you that we apply lessons learned and begin taking steps to protect our electricity grid from disaster, which experts say is just a matter of time?"



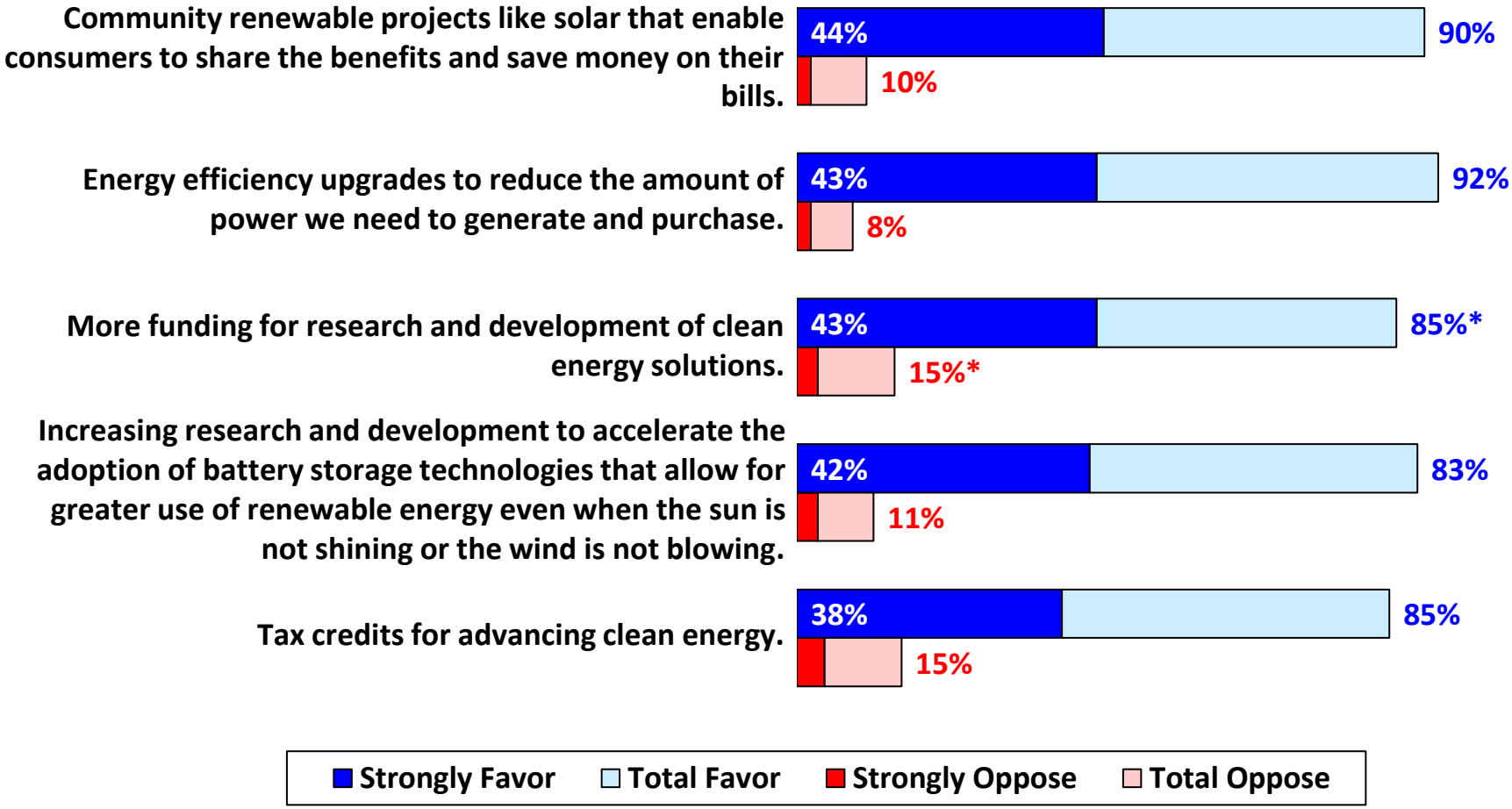
**Denotes Rounding.*

Clean Energy Policy Proposals

Voters say policies emphasizing community renewable projects, energy efficient upgrades, and further funding R&D are the most favorable.

"Please read the following list of policies that supporters have proposed to help expand your state's commitment to clean energy. After you read each one, please indicate whether you favor or oppose that policy."

Ranked by % Strongly Favor

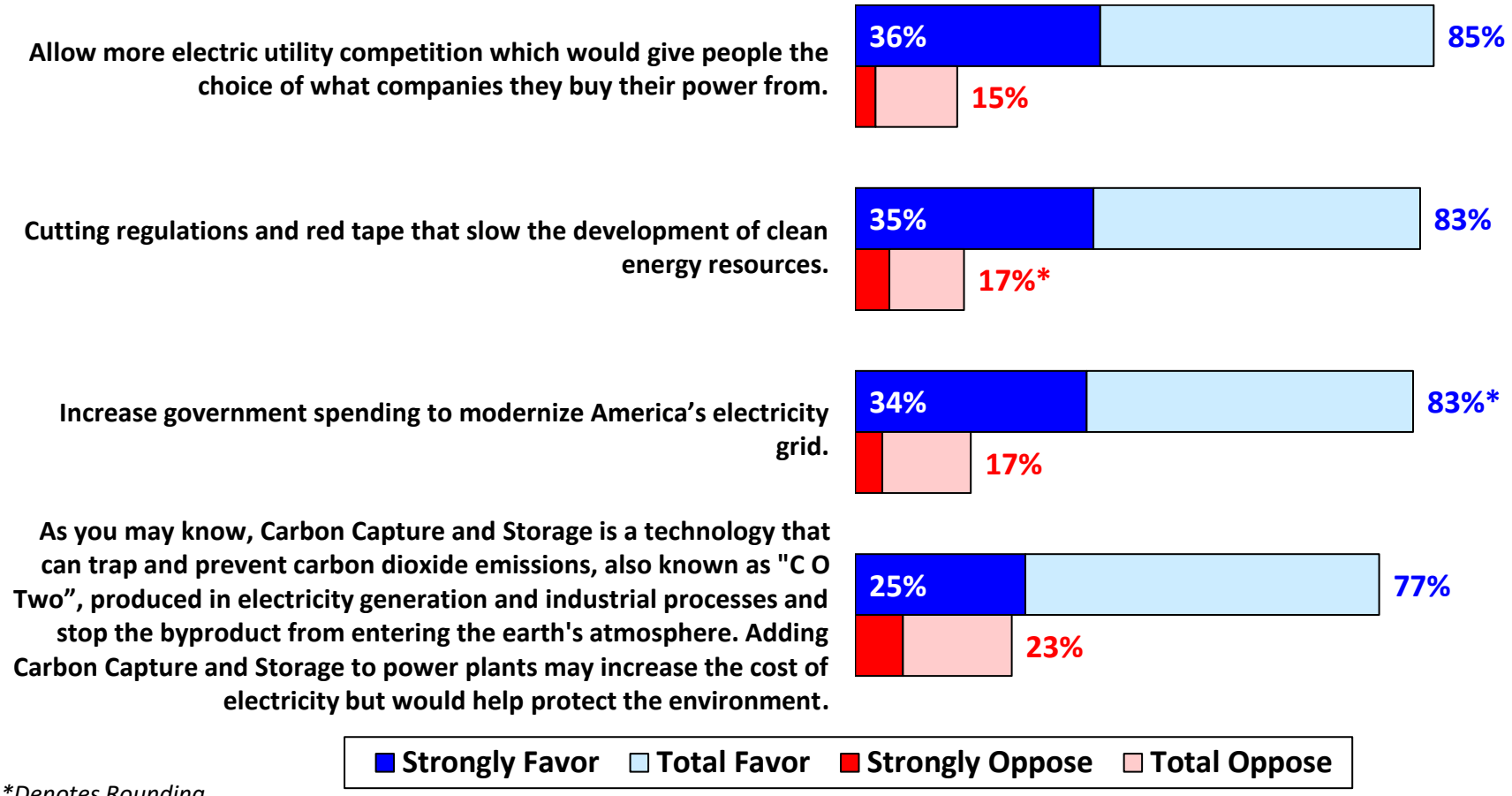


**Denotes Rounding.*

A majority of voters favor more electric utility competition, cutting regulations, and modernizing our electric grid.

"Please read the following list of policies that supporters have proposed to help expand your state's commitment to clean energy. After you read each one, please indicate whether you favor or oppose that policy."

Ranked by % Strongly Favor

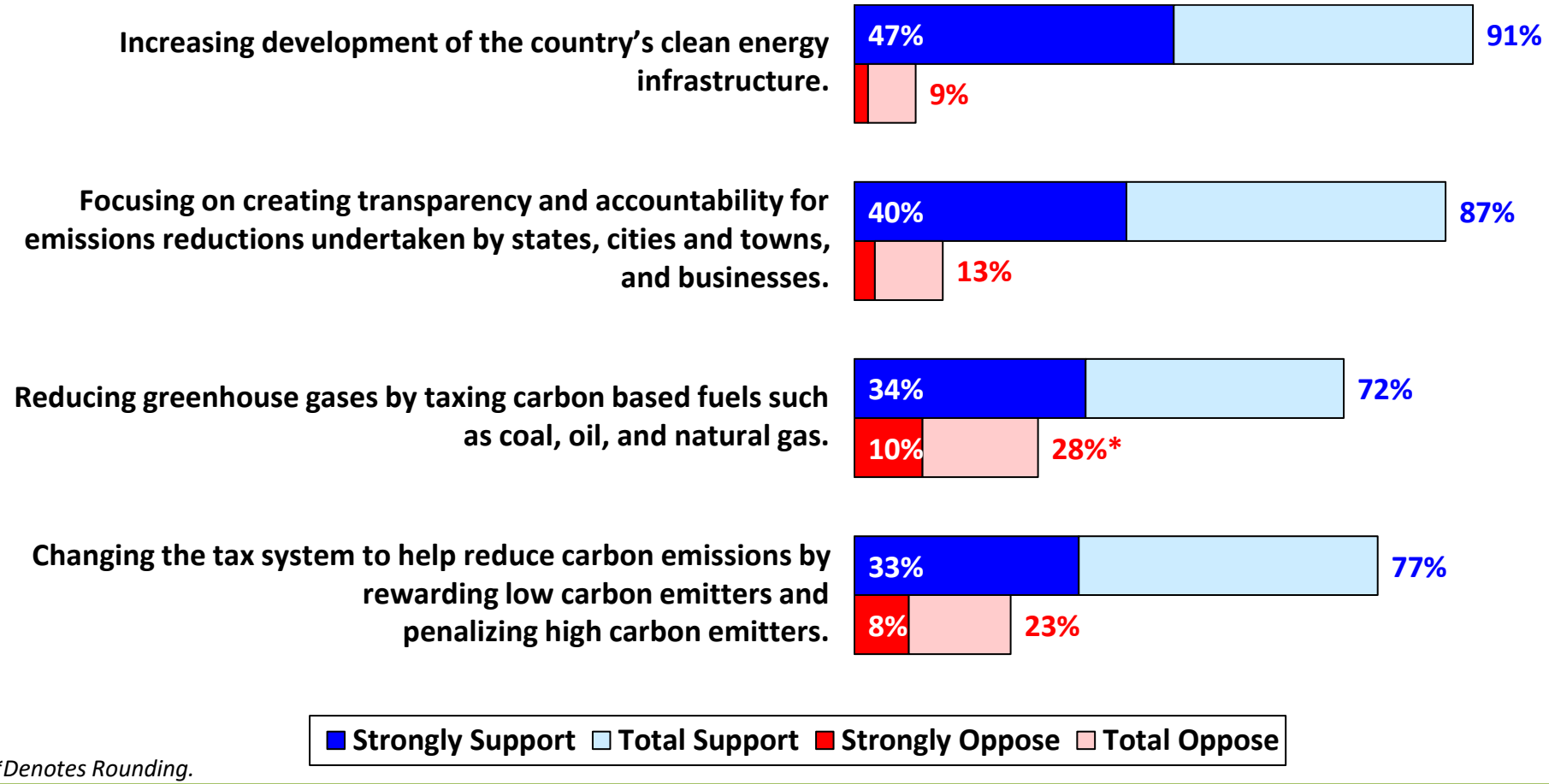


**Denotes Rounding.*

Voters most strongly support increasing development of clean energy infrastructure and boosting accountability for emissions reductions among relevant parties.

"Now, please read the following list of proposals that have been put forth to help expand clean energy in the United States. After you read each one, please indicate whether you support or oppose that proposal."

Ranked % Strongly Support



**Denotes Rounding.*

Message Testing

An overwhelming majority of voters continue to support a new system for purchasing electricity, one emphasizing consumer choice.

"Now, please read two additional options about purchasing electricity, and please indicate which one you prefer."

84% ***A new system that allows people to have a choice of where they purchase electricity and what kind of electricity, such as clean energy.***

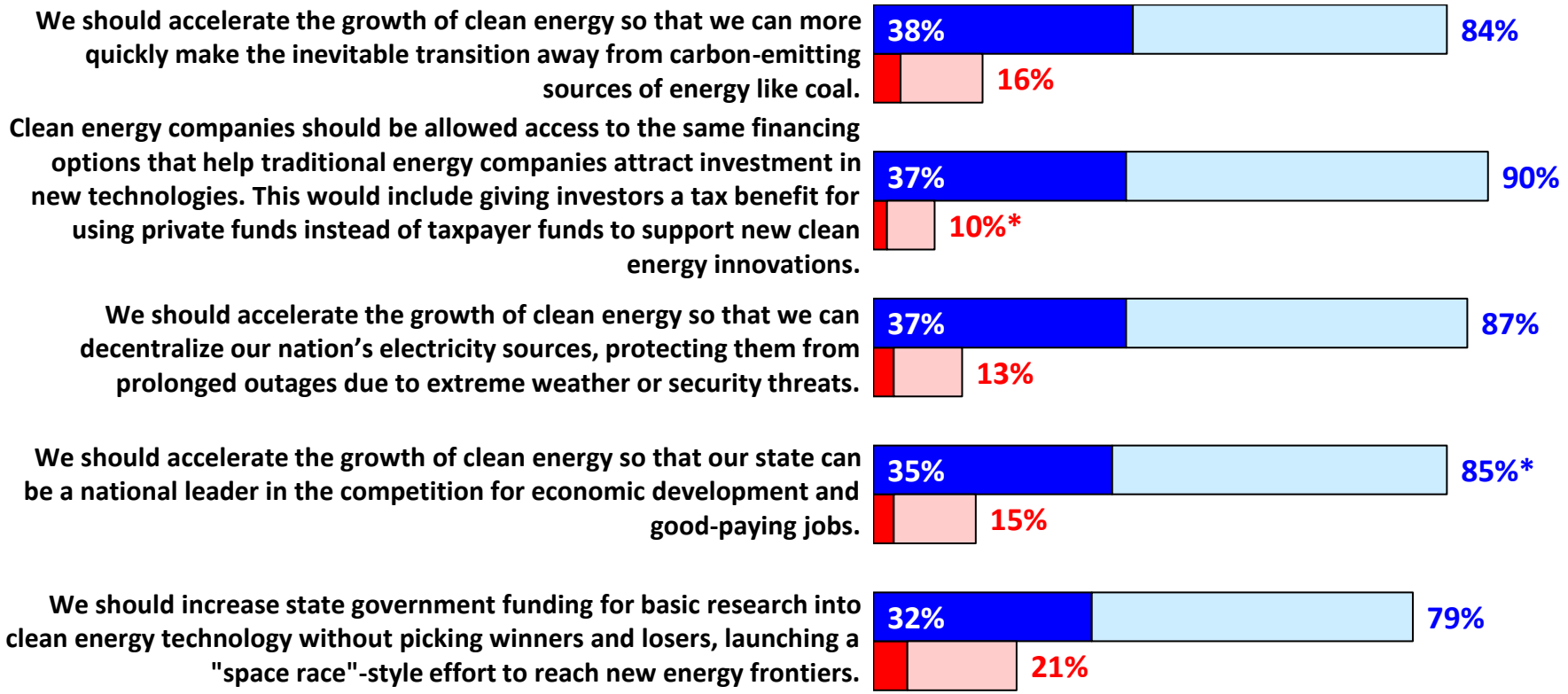
…or…

16% ***The current system, in which nearly everyone purchases their electricity from one monopoly utility.***

All statements test well, but voters support the acceleration of clean energy, as well as leveling the playing field for financing clean energy companies the most.

"Thinking again about clean energy... Please read the following statements about why some people want to accelerate the growth of clean energy, by speeding up the development of sources of renewable energy like wind and solar power. After you read each statement, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with that statement."

Ranked by % Strongly Agree

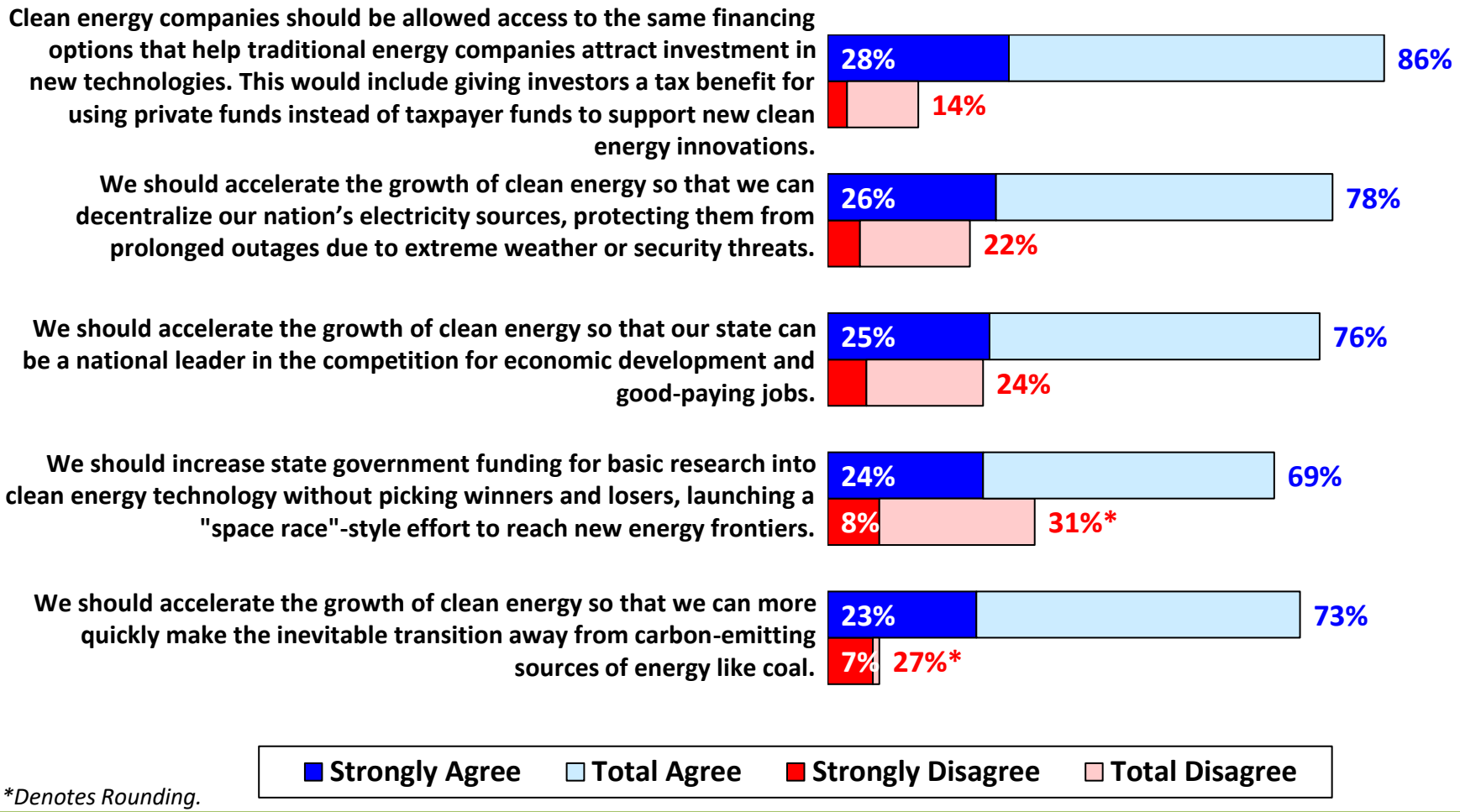


**Denotes Rounding.*

GOPers agree with these statements, but intensity is weak.

"Thinking again about clean energy... Please read the following statements about why some people want to accelerate the growth of clean energy, by speeding up the development of sources of renewable energy like wind and solar power. After you read each statement, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with that statement."

Ranked by % Strongly Agree Among GOPers (39%)

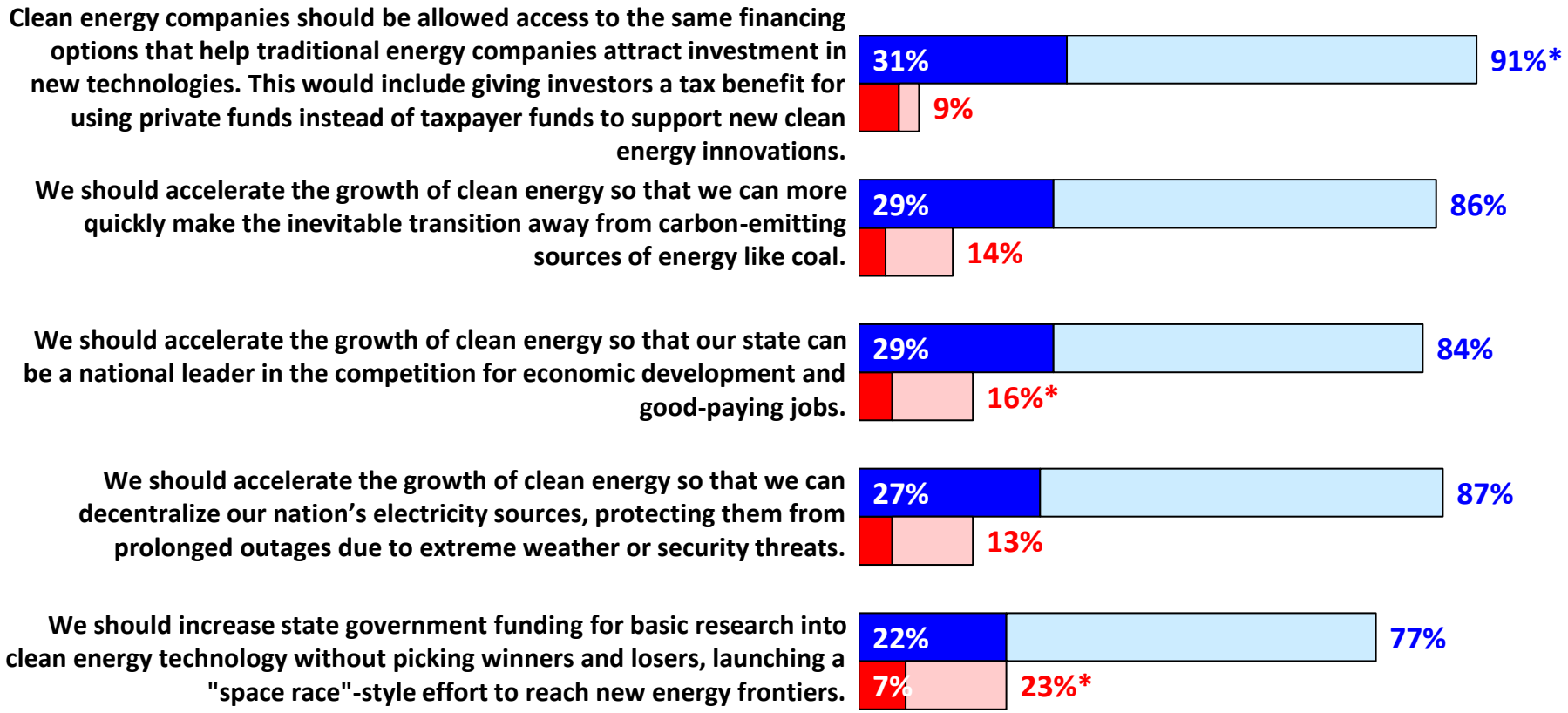


*Denotes Rounding.

Inds agree the most that clean energy companies should have access to the same financing options that traditional energy companies are given.

"Thinking again about clean energy... Please read the following statements about why some people want to accelerate the growth of clean energy, by speeding up the development of sources of renewable energy like wind and solar power. After you read each statement, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with that statement."

Ranked by % Strongly Agree Among Inds (14%)



*Denotes Rounding.

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For more information about this presentation or about Public Opinion Strategies, please give us a call.

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