

Winning on Climate in the 2020 Election

Findings Prepared by Global Strategy Group & Normington Petts for CAPAF & LCV



Methodology

GSG and Normington Petts conducted two online surveys among voters in the Rust Belt (Minnesota, Michigan, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin) and the Sun Belt (Arizona, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Nevada and Texas*):

Negative Survey on Trump and Climate

Conducted 3/20/2020-3/29/2020

1,205 registered voters:

- 603 persuadable voters**

Margin of error: +/- 4.0

- 300 non-Republican younger voters

Margin of error: +/- 5.6

- 302 non-Republican Latinx voters

Margin of error: +/- 5.7

Positive Survey on Biden and Climate

Conducted 5/1/2020-5/10/2020

1,506 registered voters:

- 502 persuadable voters**

Margin of error: +/- 4.4

- 401 non-Republican younger voters

Margin of error: +/- 4.9

- 301 non-Republican Latinx voters

Margin of error: +/- 5.6

- 302 non-Republican African American voters

Margin of error: +/- 5.6

****Persuadable voters are defined as anyone:**

- Who is in categories 3-5 on the following scale AND is NOT a strong Democrat or a strong Republican
 1. Definitely vote for the Democrat, regardless of who the Democrats nominate
 2. Probably vote for the Democrat, regardless of who the Democrats nominate
 3. Undecided/Depends on candidate, but lean Democrat
 4. Undecided/Depends on candidate, no lean
 5. Undecided/Depends on candidate, but lean Trump
 6. Probably vote for Trump, regardless of who the Democrats nominate
 7. Definitely vote for Trump, regardless of who the Democrats nominate

TX is only included in the younger, Latinx, and African American samples* **2

Key Findings

Key Findings

At this stage in the race, the voters that are still up for grabs in the presidential dislike both Biden and Trump and lean center-right, though they are also pro-climate.

- The voters who remain persuadable are fundamentally Republican leaning, largely because Democrats are more solid in their decision to vote against Trump, but have negative opinions of both Joe Biden and Donald Trump
- Despite their GOP lean, persuadable voters continue to prioritize climate as an important issue during the coronavirus crisis and overwhelmingly support taking strong action to combat climate change including moving to a 100% clean energy economy by 2050 and investing in clean energy as part of our economic recovery.

Biden is significantly out-performing Clinton on 2016 vote-recall, but there is still a huge need to improve his standing, particularly with the persuadable and younger audiences.

- Biden is over-performing 2016 Clinton recall with all four groups, especially younger voters, but his favorability is poor, particularly with the persuadable and younger groups. This is holding Biden back from converting Trump disapprovers among persuadable voters and limiting motivation with younger and Latinx voters.

There are effective ways to push back on Trump's climate and energy messaging.

- A relatively short response is effective at neutralizing a longer message touting Trump's actions on energy and attacking Biden for wanting to "end homegrown American energy" and supporting "AOC's radical Green New Deal."

Negatives against Trump result in real gains with persuadable voters – including knocking him down on the economy – and significantly boost motivation of Latinx and younger voters.

- On metrics like 2020 vote, Trump overall and economic approval, and key traits like looking out for future generations and ignoring experts, negatives move persuadable voters and, to a lesser extent, the Latinx sample. Democrats can also effectively tie Trump's inaction on climate to his troubling response to the coronavirus pandemic across groups.
- This messaging also significantly boosts the percent of younger and Latinx Biden voters who are extremely motivated to vote.

Key Findings (*cont'd*)

Biden positives result in big gains on his favorability and solid gains on the vote, plus solid gains in motivation with Latinx and younger voters.

- Over the course of the survey, Biden makes big gains on favorability with persuadables and younger voters, while making solid gains with Latinx voters, and he also makes solid gains on the vote with the persuadable and Latinx samples. Biden positives also boost motivation with Latinx and younger samples, but not quite as much with younger targets as the negatives on Trump.

After messaging from both sides, persuadable voters overwhelmingly support investing in clean energy as part of economic recovery...

- Democratic messaging that touts the short- and long-term benefits of clean energy AND pushes off GOP support for big oil bailouts handily beats GOP messaging that attacks Dems for using the crisis to push a “Green New Deal socialist wish-list.”
- After this debate, voters overwhelmingly agree that clean energy should be part of our economic recovery.

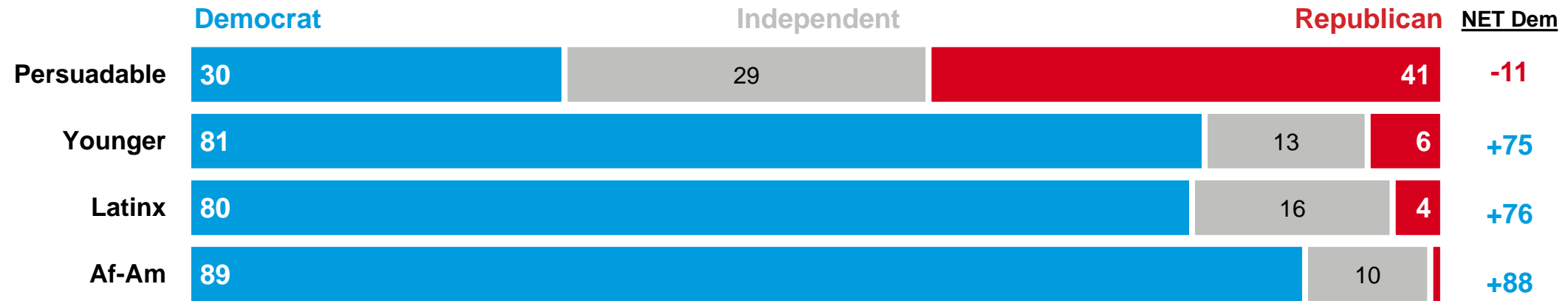
... And there is huge opportunity to win votes down-ballot on climate and clean energy – particularly among center-right white women.

- Moreover, after this debate, when the generic ballot is reframed as a choice between a Democrat who “supports significant investment in clean energy as part of our efforts to rebuild the economy” and a Republican who opposes such investments, this results in a massive net 42-point shift in favor of a generic Democratic candidate.
- Similarly, in a separate exercise, when we reframed the generic ballot as a choice between a Democrat who “supports taking strong government action to combat climate change” and a Republican who opposes such action, this resulted in a net 29-point shift in favor of a Democratic candidate.

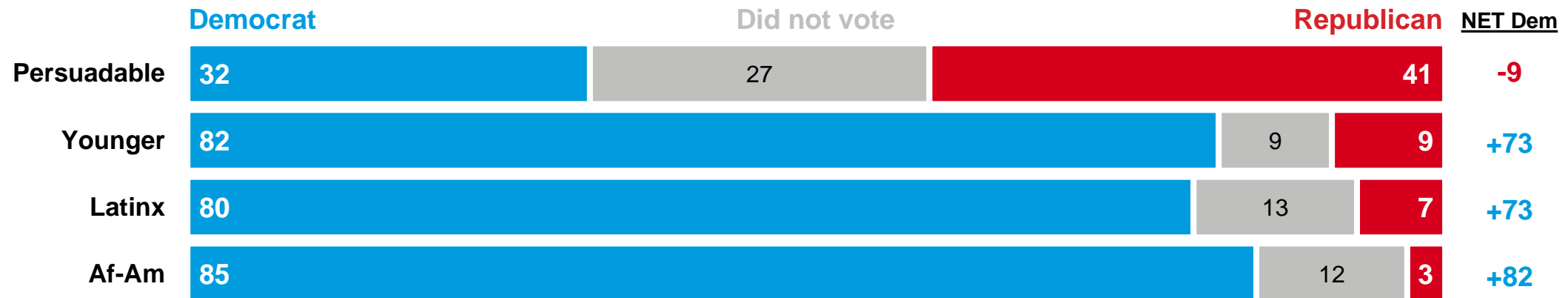
Political and Issue Landscape

Persuadable presidential voters lean to the center-right while the non-GOP samples are Democratic-leaning by design

Partisanship – May 2020

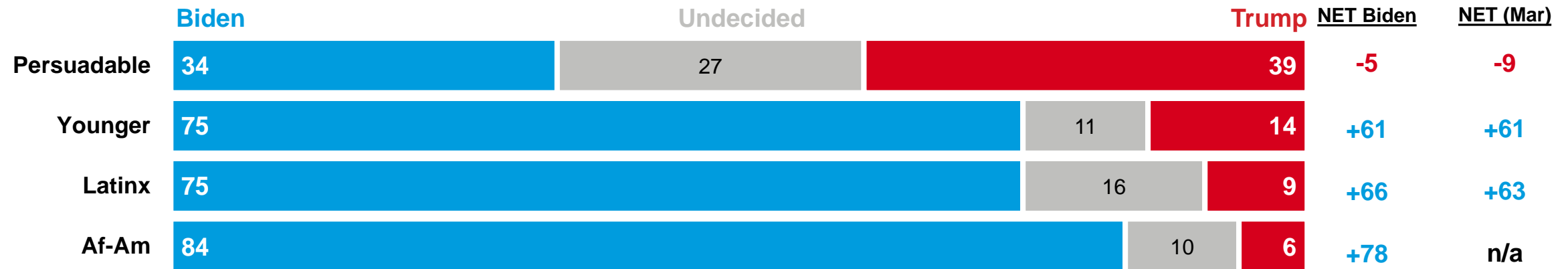


Generic Vote for Congress – May 2020

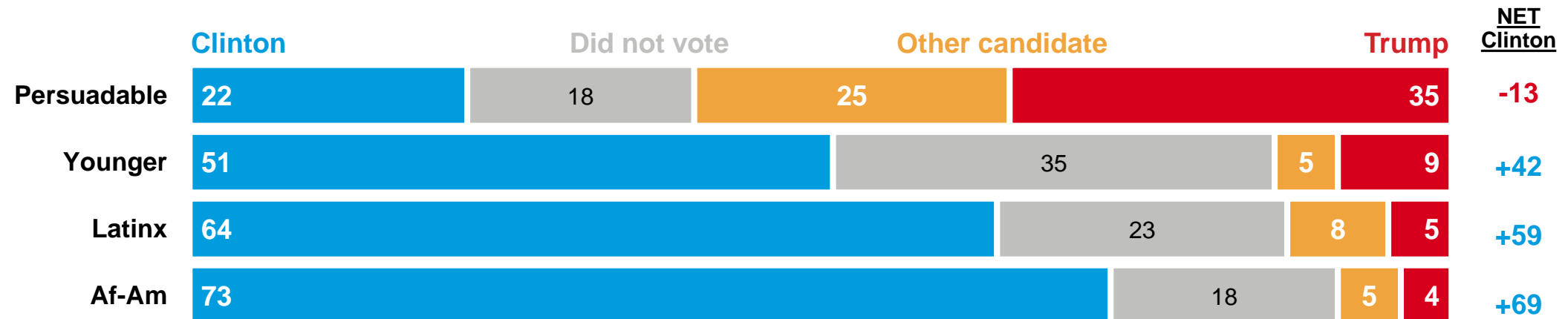


Trump's lead among persuadables has narrowed slightly since March – Biden over-performing 2016 recall with all groups

2020 Presidential Vote – May 2020

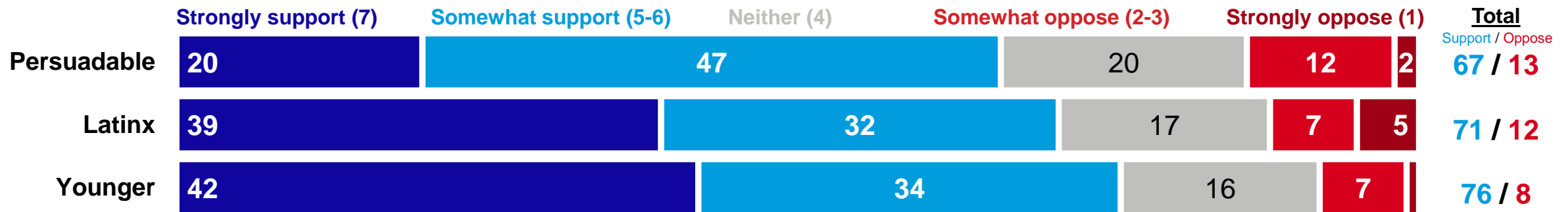


2016 Presidential Vote Recall – May 2020

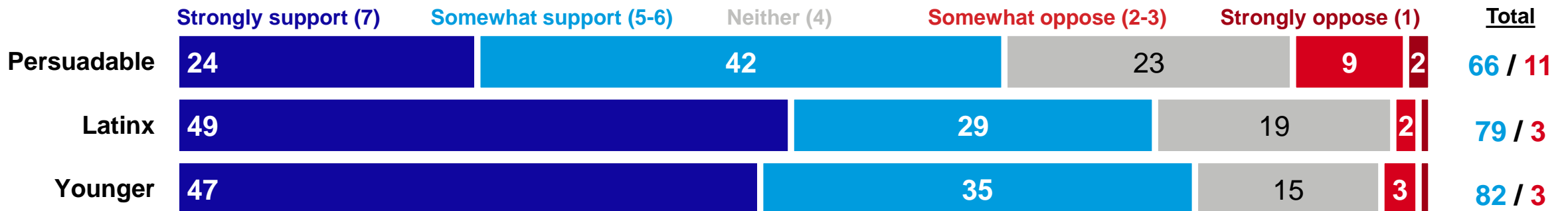


Big margins with all groups in support of strong action on climate change and a shift to a 100% clean energy economy

How strongly do you support the US government taking strong action to combat climate change? – March 2020

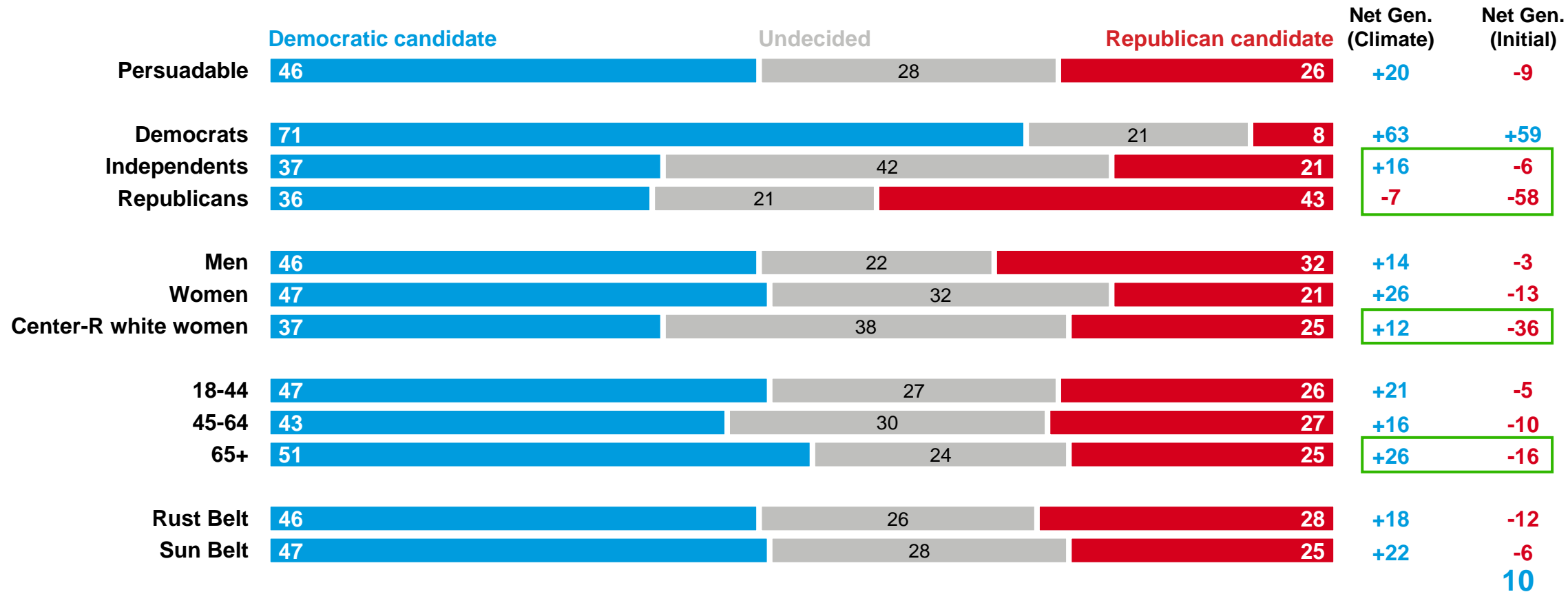


How strongly do you support a plan to move the US to a 100 percent clean energy economy by 2050? – March 2020



Framing the generic ballot around climate action causes a big shift with persuadables, particularly center-right white women

If the election for Congress were held today between a Democratic candidate who supports taking strong government action to combat climate change and a Republican candidate who opposes taking strong government action to combat climate change, for whom would you vote? (Among Persuadables, March 2020)



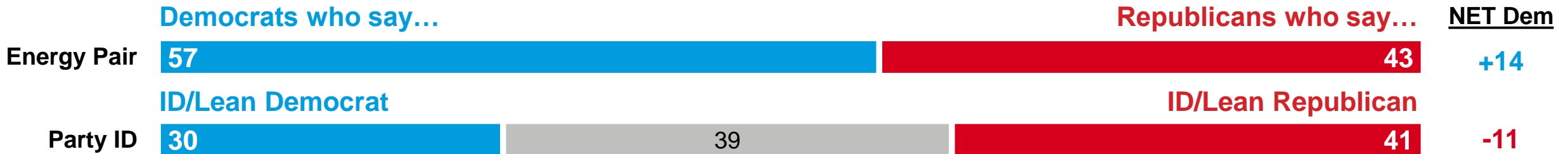
Despite GOP lean of persuadable group, Dem argument in favor of clean energy as part of recovery easily beats GOP argument against

Below are two statements about the kinds of policies that we should implement to help the country's economy recover from this crisis. Which statement do you agree with more, even if neither is exactly right? (May 2020)

Democrats who say that, instead of giving more bailouts to big oil companies and their CEOs as the Republicans want to do, we should be focusing on policies that will provide the best bang for our buck in putting people back to work now AND invest in the jobs and industries that will help us in the future. Investing in clean energy will create millions of good-paying jobs for all kinds of workers while protecting our kids' health.

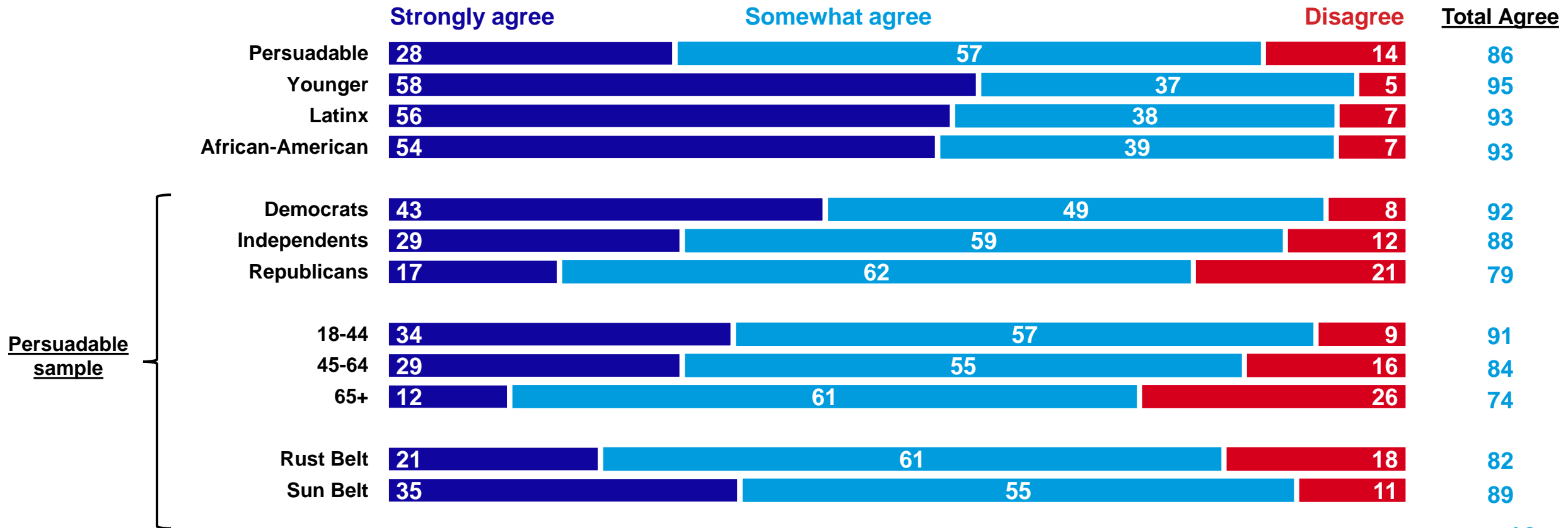
vs.

Republicans who say we should be focusing on policies that will help American workers and business - including the American oil and gas industry - recover from the economic impacts of the coronavirus crisis, not using the crisis as an excuse to push through a wish-list of liberal and socialist policies like the Green New Deal that will drive up the cost of energy for American families and businesses while costing taxpayers trillions of dollars.



After debate, nearly all voters agree with investing in clean energy as part of recovery. High intensity with turnout targets, Sun Belt

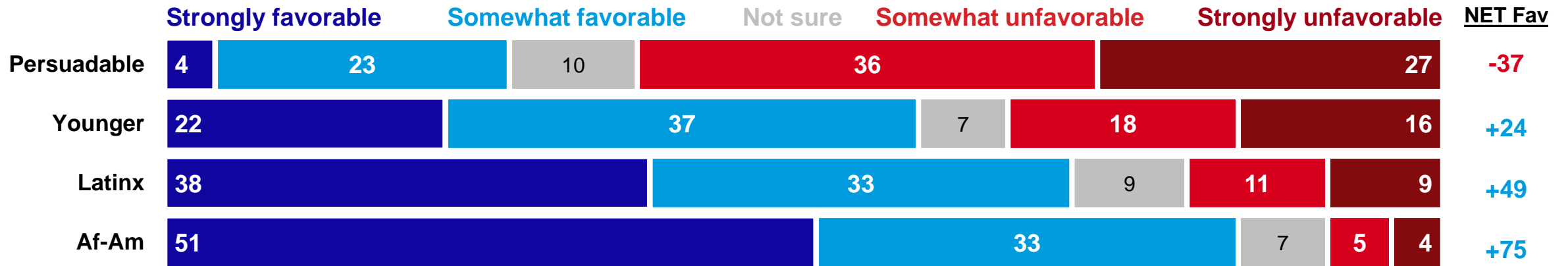
Now that you have read those arguments, please indicate whether you agree or disagree: “We should make significant investments in clean energy as part of our efforts to rebuild the economy.” (May 2020)



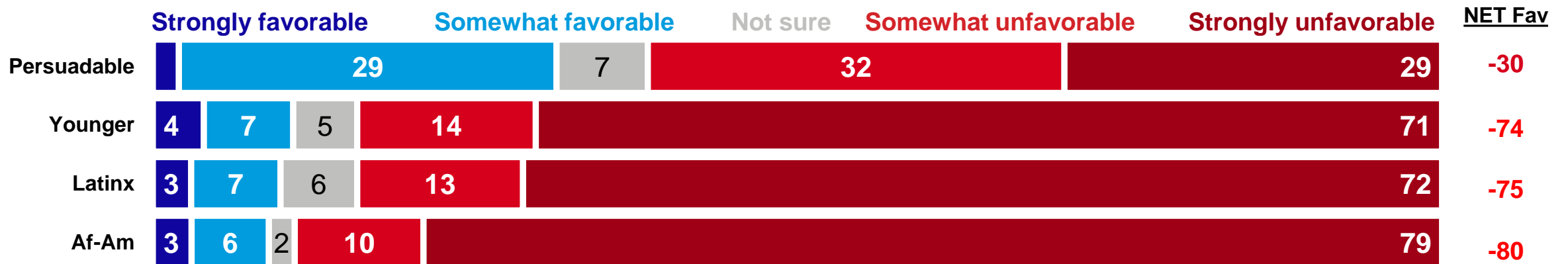
The Candidates, the Vote, and Movement

Despite GOP-tilt, persuadables have a very negative view of Trump (and a less positive view of Biden)

Joe Biden Favorability – May 2020



Donald Trump Favorability – May 2020

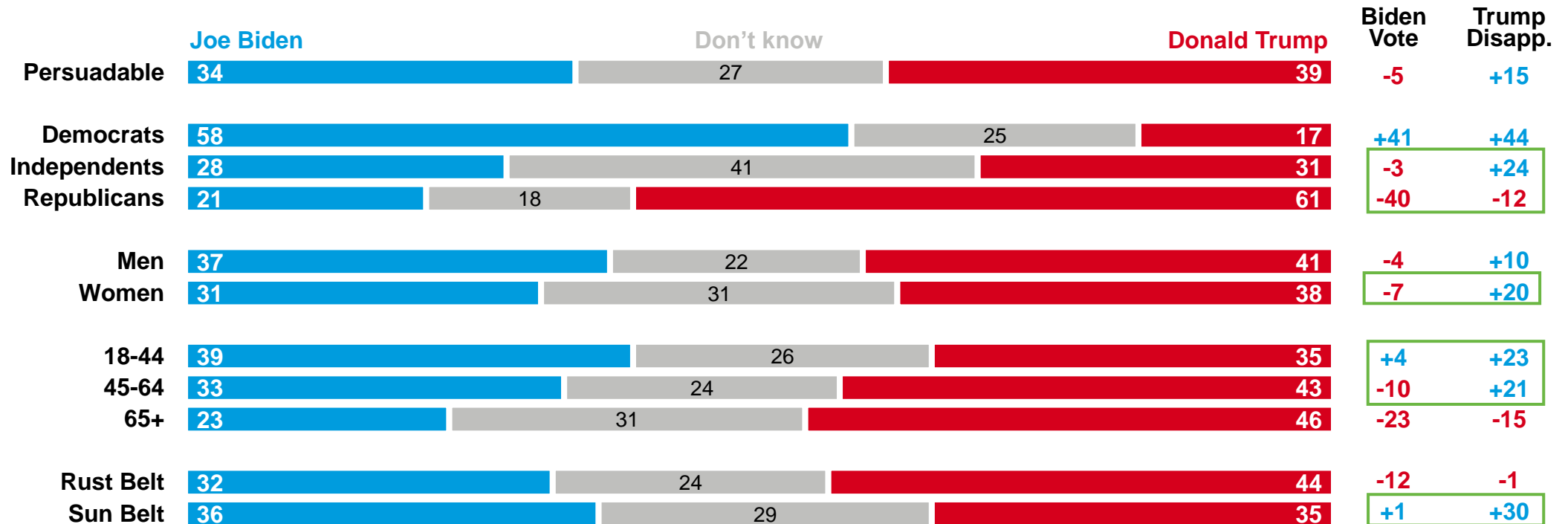


Among persuadables, Biden lags Trump disapproval, especially among women, non-seniors, voters in the Sun Belt, and center-right

Disapproval of Trump (Persuadables) – May 2020



Biden vs. Trump Initial Presidential Vote (Persuadables) – May 2020



Climate attacks move persuadable voters away from Trump across metrics. Biden's favorability jumps following positives

Vote Movement Throughout Surveys

	<u>Persuadable</u>	<u>Younger</u>	<u>Latinx</u>	<u>African American</u>
Trump Negative Survey	<p>Strong movement on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net vote (+15) • Net Trump Approval (-19) • Net Trump Economic Approval (-21) 	<p>Very strong movement on motivation (+12)</p> <p>Solid movement on strong Trump disapproval (+6)</p>	<p>Strong movement on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation (+9) • Strong Trump disapproval (+9) 	N/A
Biden Positive Survey	<p>Very strong movement on Biden net favorability (+40)</p> <p>Solid movement on net vote (+9)</p>	<p>Very strong movement on Biden net favorability (+36)</p> <p>Good movement on motivation (+7)</p>	<p>Strong movement on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biden net favorability (+21) • Motivation (+8) <p>Solid movement on net vote (+8)</p>	<p>Only modest movement on vote, favorability, and motivation (though starting at a much stronger place on the first two)</p>

Trump negatives are effective at driving home several themes, including putting future generations at risk and ignoring experts

Below is the same list of descriptions that you saw earlier. Now that you have read more information, please indicate how well you think each item describes Donald Trump. (March 2020)

<u>Persuadable</u> <i>% describes well</i>			<u>Latinx</u> <i>% describes very well</i>			<u>Younger</u> <i>% describes very well</i>			
Initial	Final	Net	Initial	Final	Net	Initial	Final	Net	
66	76	+10	57	73	+16	52	61	+9	Ignores the advice of trusted figures like military leaders and public health experts**
62	71	+9	63	69	+6	55	63	+8	Puts CEOs, the wealthy and corporate interests ahead of working Americans
62	71	+9	63	73	+10	63	68	+5	Denies reality and ignores truth**
51	65	+14	56	70	+14	52	62	+10	Is putting future generations of Americans at risk**

See appendix for full data on all traits and trait movement. ** - Identified by regressions or survey questions as a driver of the vote

After Biden positives, voters move to believe Biden will leave a better world for future generations and tackle our biggest challenges

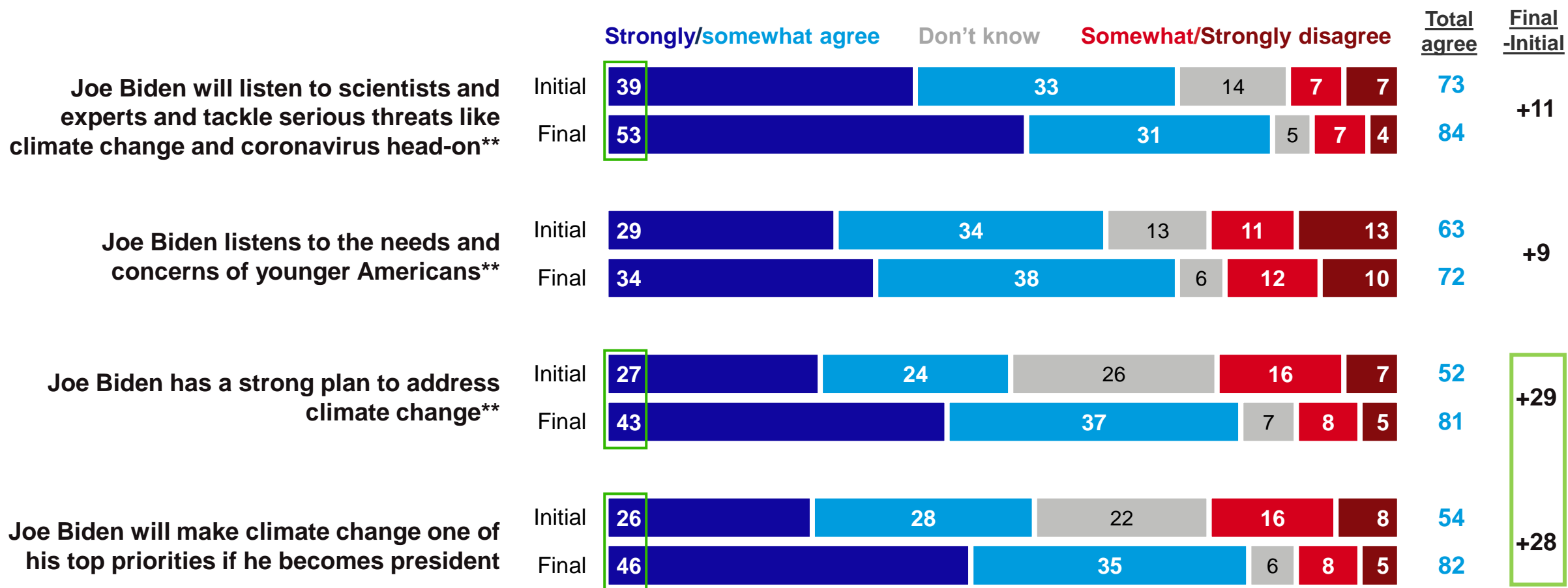
Below is the same list of descriptions that you saw earlier. Now that you have read more information, please indicate how well you think each item describes Joe Biden. (May 2020)

<u>Persuadable</u> <i>% describes well</i>			<u>Younger</u> <i>% describes well</i>			<u>Latinx</u> <i>% describes well</i>			<u>African-American</u> <i>% describes well</i>			
Initial	Final	Net	Initial	Final	Net	Initial	Final	Net	Initial	Final	Net	
45	60	+15	75	85	+10	77	85	+8	87	95	+8	Will leave a better world for future generations*
42	53	+11	70	78	+8	81	84	+3	89	93	+4	Will tackle our biggest challenges
35	41	+6	61	74	+13	77	79	+2	86	90	+4	Will bring needed change to Washington**

See appendix for full data on all traits and trait movement. ** - 1st tier vote driver among persuadables in regression analysis; * - 2nd tier vote driver among persuadables

Belief that Biden has a strong plan to address climate is a strong driver of younger motivation – and he gains nearly 30 points after positives

Below is the same list of statements that you read earlier. Now that you've heard more information, please indicate if you personally agree or disagree with each statement about Joe Biden. (Under 35 RVs, May 2020)



** - 1st tier motivation driver among younger voters in regression analysis

Messaging & Proof Points

Trump's hoax comments and aid to big oil/coal companies are most concerning – but the latter two need context

Below is a list of things that Donald Trump has done on the environment and climate change as president. For each one, please indicate whether it gives you doubts about re-electing Donald Trump. (March 2020)

		<u>Persuadable</u>			
		% Very Major Doubts (Overall)	% Very Major Doubts (Persuasion Swing)	% Most Concerning in Follow-up	% Most Concerning (Persuasion Swing)
Specifics Matter:	Big oil tax breaks – Chevron	42	47	32	32
	Hoax – scientists and NASA	39	44	35	37
	Hoax – public health experts and doctors	39	36	36	36
	Oil and coal lobbyists – 95 Rollbacks	38	43	35	35
	Banned climate change from reports	36	42	14	11
	Mercury pollution – long	35	29	34	33
	Removed limits on pollution – long	34	31	26	25
	Removed limits on pollution – short	34	37	28	31
	Big oil tax breaks – short	33	31	20	26
	Oil and coal lobbyists – short	32	28	26	24
	Mercury pollution – short	31	31	24	23
	Paris Climate Agreement – 196 countries	28	28	21	23
Eliminated clean energy tax credits	27	25	18	17	
Paris Climate Agreement - short	27	25	11	9	

See appendix for full messaging

Trump climate proof point language

Below is a list of things that Donald Trump has done on the environment and climate change as president. For each one, please indicate whether it gives you doubts about re-electing Donald Trump.

Shorthand

Full Message Text

Oil and coal lobbyists – short

He put oil and coal company lobbyists in charge of protecting our air, water, climate and public lands

Oil and coal lobbyists – 95 Rollbacks

He put oil and coal company lobbyists in charge of protecting our air, water, climate and public lands – and they immediately went to work rolling back 95 different environmental safeguards

Hoax – public health experts and doctors

He has repeatedly called climate change a “hoax,” even though public health experts and doctors all say it is real and a threat

Hoax – scientists and NASA

He has repeatedly called climate change a “hoax,” even though 97% of scientists, NASA, and our military leaders all say it is real and a threat

Big oil tax breaks – short

He gave big oil companies hundreds of billions of dollars in new taxpayer-funded subsidies and tax breaks

Big oil tax breaks – Chevron

He gave big oil companies hundreds of billions of dollars in new taxpayer-funded subsidies and tax breaks and, thanks to his plan, Chevron did not pay any federal taxes at all last year

Cleaning up pollution in low-income communities pops across groups. \$10 trillion beats \$5 trillion with turnout groups, same with persuadables

Biden Climate Policies (RANKED BY NET MORE LIKELY TO SUPPORT BIDEN) – May 2020

	<u>Persuable</u> <i>Net More likely</i>	<u>Persuable</u> <i>% Top choice</i>	<u>Younger</u> <i>% Much more likely</i>	<u>Younger</u> <i>% Top choice</i>	<u>Latinx</u> <i>% Much more likely</i>	<u>Latinx</u> <i>% Top choice</i>
Protect 30% of land and oceans by 2030	+58	14	41	12	56	9
Pay farmers \$5 billion/year to absorb carbon pollution	+57	14	33	9	40	13
Clean up water and air pollution in low-income communities	+54	28	53	30	52	27
Pursue criminal charges against oil CEOs who lied	+47	19	32	12	52	11
Support workers by creating good jobs in clean energy	+42	19	35	13	52	14
Invest \$5 trillion in clean energy infrastructure	+39	12	30	5	36	11
Invest \$10 trillion in clean energy infrastructure	+38	11	36	13	43	18
Require fossil fuel projects to verify they are climate neutral	+36	5	33	5	43	3
Move U.S. to 100% clean energy economy by 2050	+35	11	37	21	46	14
Create a National Climate Council	+35	6	33	10	43	12
Rejoin the Paris Climate Agreement	+30	8	40	12	44	11
Require the U.S. to have 100% clean electricity by 2030	+27	12	40	19	31	7
Adopt Sanders' plan to pursue charges against oil CEOs	+25	14	45	15	39	18
End all tax breaks for oil, gas, and coal companies	+18	11	36	6	38	15
Create a new cabinet position to combat climate change	+16	5	40	4	38	7

Biden climate policy language

Below are some policies that Joe Biden supports or says he is considering to combat climate change. For each one, please indicate whether you would be more likely or less likely to vote for Joe Biden if he supported that policy.

Shorthand	Full Message Text
Protect 30% of land and oceans by 2030	Setting a national goal of protecting 30% of our country's lands and oceans by 2030
Pay farmers \$5 billion/year to absorb carbon pollution	Paying farmers and ranchers an additional \$5 billion a year to implement practices that combat climate change by absorbing carbon pollution into their farmlands and boosting rural economies
Clean up water and air pollution in communities of color	Cleaning up air and water pollution, such as lead, in communities of color and low-income communities with higher instances of asthma, cancer, or birth defects
Pursue criminal charges against oil CEOs who lied	Pursuing criminal charges against oil company CEOs who knowingly lied to the American people about their companies' impact on climate change
Support workers by creating good jobs in clean energy	Supporting workers by guaranteeing the pensions and benefits of workers currently in the fossil fuel industry and creating high-quality union jobs in clean energy and other sectors
Invest \$5 trillion in clean energy infrastructure	Investing \$5 trillion over the next ten years to build the infrastructure we need to scale up clean energy and combat climate change
Invest \$10 trillion in clean energy infrastructure	Investing \$10 trillion over the next ten years to build the infrastructure we need to scale up clean energy and combat climate change
Move U.S. to 100% clean energy economy by 2050	Moving the U.S. to a 100% clean energy economy and eliminating all carbon pollution no later than 2050

The “Authority/Corona” negative is strongest across groups, joined with “Legacy/Hoax,” “Big Energy”

Top Negative Messages against Trump

<u>Persuadable</u>			<u>Younger</u>		<u>Latinx</u>	
% Very convincing	%Top 2 most concerning		% Very convincing	%Top 2 most concerning	% Very convincing	%Top 2 most concerning
38	37	Authority/Corona Our politicians have a duty to listen to our nation’s most respected leaders and experts...	61	40	62	41
33	35	Legacy/Hoax We have a basic responsibility to leave a better world for our children...Yet, Trump..	55	32	63	32
33	37	Big Energy After oil and coal CEOs donated millions to Trump, he put oil and coal lobbyists in ...	53	33	62	33
32	33	Populist Trump has given billions in tax breaks to oil and coal companies and their CEOs, while regular people ...	57	28	59	34
29	22	Cost of Inaction ...climate-related disasters have killed more than 3,000 Americans and cost the country...	53	29	63	23
29	17	Moral Imperative The world’s leading scientists tell us that if we want to avoid the worst impacts of climate change...	50	23	57	20
26	18	Strange/Nostalgia The seasons used to be normal...	43	15	52	18

Trump negative message language

Below is a list of statements that some people have made about Donald Trump. For each, please indicate how convincing of a reason it is to vote against Donald Trump in the 2020 presidential election.

[AUTHORITY/CORONA] Our politicians have a duty to listen to our nation's most respected leaders and experts, especially in a time of crisis, but Trump dishonors them by insisting he knows better. First, he dismissed our military leaders when they said climate change was a growing threat to our country. Then, for eight weeks, he ignored the Centers for Disease Control's warnings about the threat of coronavirus and even overturned their proposed plans to fight the virus.

[LEGACY/HOAX] We have a basic responsibility to leave a better world for our children, but 97% of scientists, NASA, public health experts and our military leaders agree that climate change is a threat to the country and our kids' future. Yet, Trump has denied reality, and put our kids at risk. He has repeatedly called climate change a "hoax" and even changed the rules to allow polluters to release unlimited amounts of the carbon pollution that is disrupting our climate.

[BIG ENERGY] After oil and coal CEOs donated millions to Trump, he put oil and coal lobbyists in charge of our environment, sold off our public lands for drilling and mining, and allowed corporate polluters to boost their profits by pumping more mercury, arsenic, and carbon pollution into our air and water. And Trump gave oil and coal companies billions in new tax breaks even as they continue to endanger the future for our children and the planet.

[POPULIST] Trump has given billions in tax breaks to oil and coal companies and their CEOs, while regular people have been left behind. The renewable energy industry employs over three million Americans and is key to combatting climate change. Yet, Trump eliminated tax incentives for wind and solar power and put tariffs on solar panels, making renewable energy more expensive for middle-class American families and costing over 170,000 US workers their jobs.

[STRANGE/NOSTALGIA] The seasons used to be normal – spring was spring, and fall was fall. Something's changed. People didn't used to have to worry about 500-year storms and floods happening every year. Ice caps are melting, forests are burning, and millions of species are going extinct. Donald Trump promised that he'd preserve our way of life, but instead of leading us back to the days we remember, he's letting polluters make everything worse.

[MORAL IMPERATIVE] The world's leading scientists tell us that if we want to avoid the worst impacts of climate change and ensure we have a livable world for future generations, we need to commit to action now. That's why youth around the world are demanding action, and it's why this election is the most important of our lifetime. If Trump is re-elected, he will continue to roll back the progress we've made and set us back a decade or more. We can't sit this election out.

[COST OF INACTION] In just the last three years, climate-related disasters have killed more than 3,000 Americans and cost the country more than \$450 billion. Economists say that if we don't act, climate change could cut the US economy by up to 10 percent, kill millions of jobs, and cost Americans tens of trillions of dollars in the coming decades. Instead of preparing for this threat, Trump is making the problem worse by eliminating limits on the carbon pollution that causes climate change.

The “Recovery” message is clearly strongest with all groups. “Generational” and “Climate/COVID” in second tier. “GND”/“Record” lower

Below is a list of statements from supporters of Joe Biden. Regardless of who you plan to vote for in the 2020 election, please rank the statements in order of most to least convincing, with 1 being the most convincing and 7 being the least convincing.

<u>Persuadable</u>		<u>Younger</u>	<u>Latinx</u>	<u>Af-Am</u>
2.91 <i>Mean ranking</i>	Recovery Joe Biden believes that as we rebuild our economy after the coronavirus crisis, we should be investing in industries that will create good jobs right now...	3.25	3.40	3.39
3.53	Generational Message As a parent and grandparent, Joe Biden believes we have a basic responsibility to leave a better world for future generations...	4.08	3.51	4.02
3.67	Climate/COVID Joe Biden knows that our politicians have a duty to listen to our nation’s most respected leaders and experts, especially in a time of crisis...	3.95	3.99	4.02
3.98	CEOs vs. Workers Joe Biden will put workers first, not CEOs or corporations. He’ll end the special tax breaks for oil and gas companies...	3.95	3.80	3.56
4.18	Environmental Justice Joe Biden understands that low-income communities and communities of color have paid the highest price for our dependence on dirty energy sources...	3.78	4.10	3.31
4.70	Record Joe Biden has been called a “climate change pioneer” for his longstanding commitment to tackling climate change...	4.73	4.46	4.86
5.03	Green New Deal Joe Biden believes the Green New Deal captures two basic truths which are at the core of his climate plan...	4.26	4.73	4.84

Biden positive message language

Below is a list of statements from supporters of Joe Biden. Regardless of who you plan to vote for in the 2020 election, please rank the statements in order of most to least convincing.

[RECOVERY] Joe Biden believes that as we rebuild our economy after the coronavirus crisis, we should be investing in industries that will create good jobs right now and provide benefits to the country for decades to come. That's why he is proposing the largest ever investment in clean energy to create 10 million good-paying middle-class jobs while also protecting our kids' health, spurring innovation and economic growth, and combatting climate change.

[GENERATIONAL MESSAGE] As a parent and grandparent, Joe Biden believes we have a basic responsibility to leave a better world for future generations. After listening to the concerns of people across the country, especially young people, Biden made his climate plan even more ambitious, adopting concrete near-term goals to move to clean power and electric vehicles and increase investments in the infrastructure needed to move to a clean energy economy.

[CLIMATE/COVID] Joe Biden knows that our politicians have a duty to listen to our nation's most respected leaders and experts, especially in a time of crisis. As president, Biden will make decisions based on evidence and facts and work with our top scientists, public health experts, and military leaders to develop plans to deal with our country's biggest challenges, including responding to the coronavirus crisis and combatting the long-term threat of climate change.

[CEOS VS WORKERS] Joe Biden will put workers first, not CEOs or corporations. He'll end the special tax breaks for oil and gas companies and oppose any bailouts for the oil and gas CEOs who have enriched themselves but left workers behind. Biden will stand by workers in these industries and fight for a clean energy economy that creates well-paying jobs with strong benefits and worker protections for people both with and without a college education.

[ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE] Joe Biden understands that low-income communities and communities of color have paid the highest price for our dependence on dirty energy sources in the form of polluted air and water. These communities suffer from greater levels of asthma, cancer, and birth defects. He understands that cleaning up this toxic legacy is the only way to build a clean and pollution-free future that gives all our children an opportunity to succeed.

[RECORD] Joe Biden has been called a "climate change pioneer" for his longstanding commitment to tackling climate change. He introduced one of the first-ever climate bills in Congress, which experts called a "watershed moment." Since then, Biden has fought to end subsidies for big oil executives, worked with President Obama to oversee the largest investment in clean energy in U.S. history, and rallied the world around the groundbreaking Paris Climate Agreement.

[GREEN NEW DEAL] Joe Biden believes the Green New Deal captures two basic truths which are at the core of his climate plan - the United States needs to embrace ambition on an epic scale to meet the scope of this challenge, and our environment and our economy are completely connected. By harnessing America's unmatched innovation, we can turn this threat into an opportunity to revitalize the US economy, create jobs, and build a safer world for our children.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions & Recommendations

Maximizing gains on both persuasion and motivation will require both positive and negative messaging – with perhaps a slight tilt toward the negatives.

Messaging, positive and negative, should aim to drive home the following overall themes:

- Trump denies reality and ignores the advice of trusted experts while Biden will provide steady leadership, listen to experts, and tackle our biggest challenges head-on.
- Trump's giveaways to CEOs are damaging the economy and the environment. Biden will focus on investments that create good working- and middle-class jobs right now AND provide benefits for decades to come.
- Trump's denial of reality is putting future generations at risk, but Biden will leave a better world for our kids and grandkids

Positive messaging should be less about Biden's decades-long track record on climate and much more focused on laying out his vision.

- While Biden's track record is impressive, messaging focused on what he wants to do moving forward is much more powerful across all groups.

With younger voters, the biggest imperatives are to educate them about Biden's climate plans and that he is listening to both younger Americans and experts.

- When young voters are educated about Biden's proposals, including some under consideration, it is a significant driver of motivation. They don't initially assume that he has a strong plan on climate or will make it a priority but can be convinced on both.

The Three Prongs of a Climate Critique of Trump

- **Highlight how Trump ignores and dishonors experts.** Scientists, the CDC, NASA, public health experts and, to a lesser extent, military leaders are all viewed positively by persuadable voters. Further, a message that slams trump for dismissing military leaders and the CDC about both climate change and coronavirus is top testing among persuadable voters and both turnout groups. This concept comes through clearly in text highlighting and the open ends, is the trait that voters rate the most concerning about Trump and results in excellent movement throughout the survey, with 76% of persuadable voters saying it describes Trump well at the end of the survey.
- **And how, instead, he has sold the farm to big oil and coal companies and their CEOs.** The “Big Energy” message did well across all three audiences and can be improved by incorporating Chevron not paying taxes last year and Trump-appointed oil and coal lobbyists’ rollbacks of 95 environmental safeguards.
- **As a result, Trump’s denial of reality has put future generations at risk.** Regression analysis shows that a belief that Trump is putting future generations at risk is closely correlated with the vote, and this also results in excellent movement. Moreover, a message that ties Trump’s repeated labeling of climate change as a “hoax” in the face of expert consensus (which pops throughout the survey, particularly in the open ends) with its impact on our kids’ future is a top message among all groups.

Helpfully, these three lanes are the strongest with all three target audiences, meaning Democrats can use the same core messaging with all three. However, there should be modest differences in emphasis. The “Big Energy” piece is more important for persuadable voters. It is helpful with the two turnout audiences, but a step below Trump ignoring/dishonoring experts and denying reality.

Recommended Language: Trump

Main Message:

Our politicians have a duty to listen to our nation's most respected leaders and experts – and a basic responsibility to leave a better world for our children. Yet Trump puts our kid's future at risk and dishonors the experts by insisting that he knows better.

First, Trump denied reality and dismissed scientists, NASA, and our military leaders when they said climate change was a threat to the country – repeatedly calling climate change a “hoax” and even changing the rules to allow polluters to release unlimited amounts of the carbon pollution that is disrupting our climate and putting future generations at risk.

Then, for eight weeks, he ignored the Centers for Disease Control's and other public health experts' warnings about the threat of coronavirus and even overturned their proposed plans to fight it.

Secondary Message, Especially with Persuadable Voters – Add in Giveaways to Big Energy:

Instead of listening to scientists and public health experts, Trump put oil and coal lobbyists in charge of protecting our air, water, climate, and public lands – and they immediately went to work rolling back 98 different environmental safeguards. And Trump not only helped big oil and coal CEOs boost their profits by pumping more mercury, arsenic, and carbon pollution into our air and water, he gave them hundreds of billions of dollars in new tax breaks and subsidies. Thanks to his plan, Chevron did not pay any federal taxes.

The Three (and a half) Prongs of a Positive Case for Biden

The overall argument for Biden is largely the inverse of the overall argument against Trump:

The centerpiece of positive messaging should focus on investing in clean energy to turbocharge our economic recovery right now while combating climate change and providing other benefits in the long-term – with a populist twist.

- The “Recovery” message was clearly the most compelling among persuadable, younger, Latinx, and African American voters, and there is a huge need to boost Biden on the economy.
- This message can be improved by incorporating two strong populist proof points – pursuing criminal charges against bad CEOs and supporting workers by creating clean energy jobs, which will also create a strong contrast with a negative on Trump’s giveaways to energy CEOs and lobbyists.

The most important secondary positive messaging should:

Demonstrate Biden’s leadership on both climate and COVID to set up the contrast argument against Trump.

- The “Climate/COVID” message was solid to strong across all groups and listening to experts and leadership traits are both strong drivers of both vote and motivation. This is going to be central to the campaign and is the strongest negative against Trump, so a positive message that ties climate and COVID together makes sense as part of the overall contrast between Biden and Trump.

Make the case that Biden’s leadership will leave a better world for future generations.

- The “Generational” message was, again, solid to strong across target groups, and in both surveys looking out for future generations is a driver of vote and motivation. This also generates a contrast with Trump.
- This positive is particularly compelling to Latinx targets.

Complement the above with a pollution-focused environmental justice message – particularly with younger and AA targets.

- An environmental justice message that is focused on cleaning up pollution can be an effective complement with persuadables, particularly when added to a populist economic message.
- Democrats SHOULD lean into environmental justice heavily with younger and African American targets, where this ranks behind only the “Recovery” message.

Recommended Language: Biden

Main Message:

Joe Biden believes that as we recover from the coronavirus crisis, we should focus on rebuilding an economy that works for regular Americans, not CEOs, by making investments that will create high-quality union jobs right now and provide benefits to the country for decades to come.

That's why Biden is proposing the largest ever investment in clean energy to create 10 million good-paying middle- and working-class jobs while also protecting our kids' health, spurring innovation and economic growth, and combatting climate change.

(And Biden will not only end the special tax breaks for big oil CEOs, he'll pursue criminal charges against CEOs who knowingly lied to the American people about their companies' impact on climate change.)

Recommended Language: Biden (cont'd)

Supporting Messages:

- *Joe Biden knows that our politicians have a duty to listen to our nation's most respected leaders and experts, especially in a time of crisis. As president, Biden will bring steady leadership, make decisions based on the facts, and work with our top scientists and public health experts to develop plans to deal with our country's biggest challenges, including responding to the coronavirus crisis, rebuilding our economy, and combatting the long-term threat of climate change.*
- *Biden understands that we have a basic responsibility to leave a better world for future generations. His climate plan will move the US to 100% clean energy and eliminate carbon pollution by 2050. And after listening to scientists, experts (and the concerns of younger Americans), Biden made his plan even more ambitious, including a major investment over the next ten years to build the infrastructure we need to scale up clean energy and combat climate change.*
- *Joe Biden understands that communities of color and low-income communities have paid the highest price for our dependence on dirty energy sources in the form of polluted air and water and greater levels of asthma, cancer, and birth defects. That's why he will clean up air and water pollution – like lead, mercury and toxic chemicals – in these communities.*

Thank You

New York

Washington, DC

Hartford

Chicago

Denver

Seattle

Appendix

Biden Climate Policies *(cont'd)*

Below are some policies that Joe Biden supports or says he is considering to combat climate change. For each one, please indicate whether you would be more likely or less likely to vote for Joe Biden if he supported that policy.

Shorthand

Full Message Text

Require fossil fuel projects to verify they are climate neutral

Requiring federally-approved fossil fuel projects to verify that they will not make climate change worse

Create a National Climate Council

Creating a new National Climate Council to coordinate the country's efforts to combat climate change

Rejoin the Paris Climate Agreement

Rejoining the Paris Climate Agreement and leading an effort to get every major country to set more ambitious climate goals

Require the US to have 100% clean electricity by 2030

Requiring that the U.S. get 100% of its electricity from clean energy sources like wind and solar by the year 2030

Adopt Sanders' plan to pursue charges against oil CEOs

Adopting Bernie Sanders' plan to pursue criminal charges against oil company CEOs who knowingly lied to the American people about their companies' impact on climate change

End all tax breaks for oil, gas, and coal companies

Immediately ending all taxpayer subsidies and tax breaks for oil, gas, and coal companies

A relatively short response is effective at neutralizing the longer attack from Trump

Statement from supporters of Donald Trump: President Trump has ushered in a new era for American energy. Instead of relying on foreign oil, we now rely on American energy and American workers like never before. He caused a boom in energy production, established US energy dominance, revitalized local economies, and created millions of good-paying jobs. Trump's America First policies built the strongest economy ever until the coronavirus from China devastated our economy.

Instead of rebuilding our economy, Joe Biden has vowed to end investment in homegrown American energy like coal, oil and natural gas, which would devastate local economies across the country and put hundreds of thousands of Americans and small businesses out of work. He even said recently "no more oil drilling, even offshore."

And Biden supports the radical Green New Deal energy plan proposed by self-described Socialist Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. The Biden-AOC plan would cost Americans one hundred trillion dollars in higher taxes and energy costs, put millions of American jobs at risk at a time when our economy can least afford it, disproportionately harm minority communities, outlaw gasoline-powered cars, and even force Americans to eat less meat.

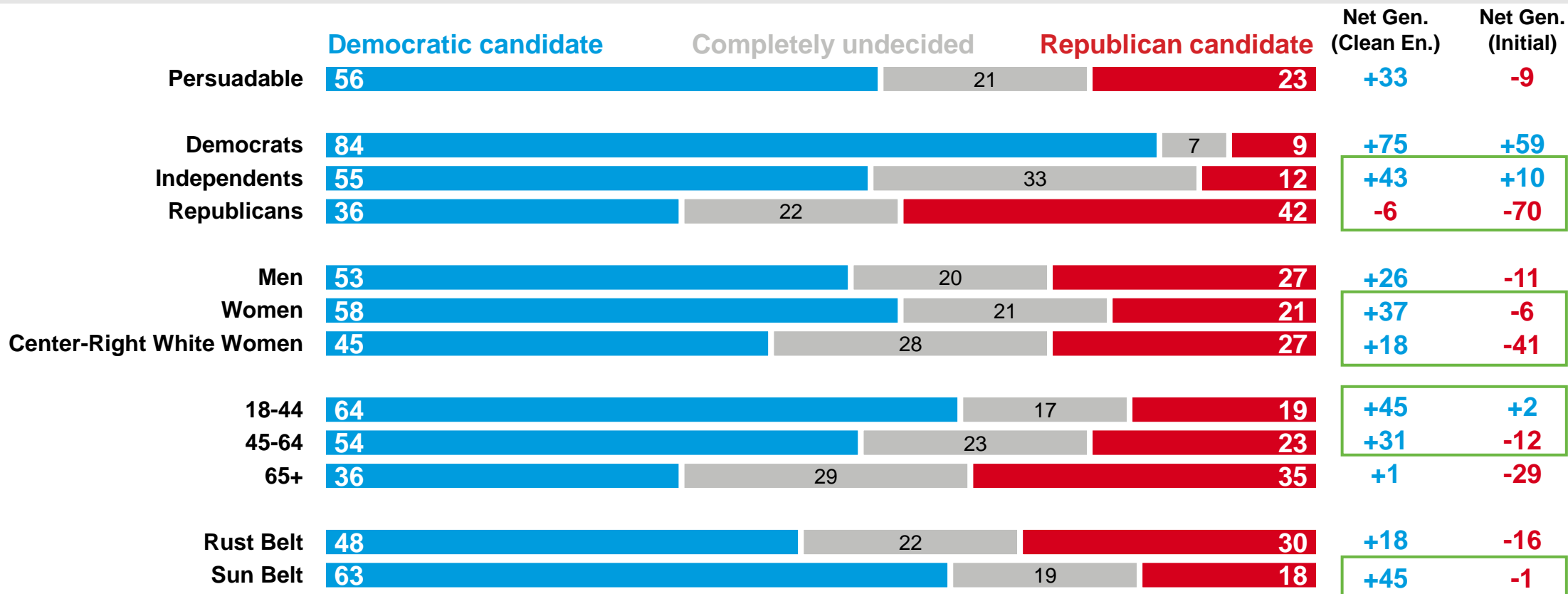
Response from supporters of Joe Biden: Scientists, NASA and our military leaders all agree that climate change is a threat to our children's future. Yet Donald Trump has ignored and dishonored these trusted experts, repeatedly called climate change a "hoax," and even changed the rules to allow polluters to release unlimited amounts of carbon pollution. Now Trump is trying to distract from his own dismal record on the issue by making disproven claims and lying - again - about Joe Biden.

The truth is Biden's plan is focused on rebuilding the middle-class who are the backbone of this country and creating good-paying jobs that can help support a family. That means spurring innovation and moving the US to 100% clean energy instead of following Trump's plan that gave massive tax breaks to big corporations and CEOs.

	<u>Persuadable</u>	<u>Younger</u>	<u>Latinx</u>	<u>African-American</u>
Shift in Net Vote	0	-1	-2	-2

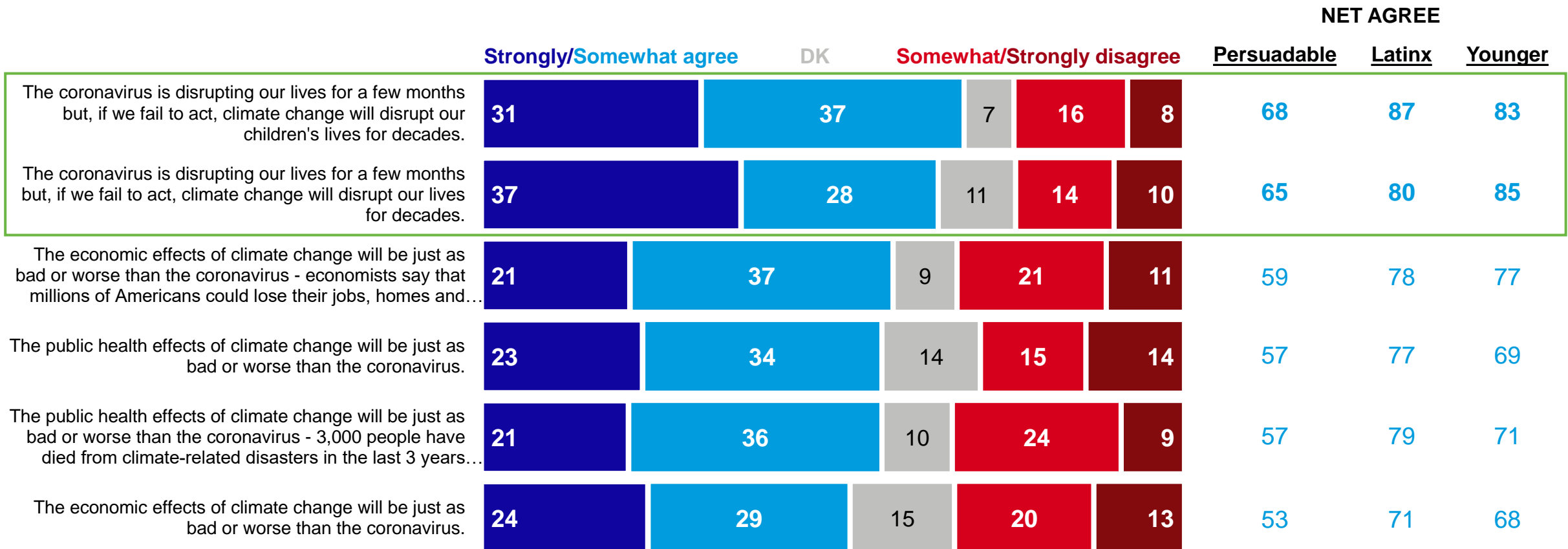
After debate, centering generic ballot around clean energy as part of the recovery shifts it toward Dems by a net 42 points

If the general election for Congress were today between the Democratic candidate who supports making significant investments in clean energy as part of our efforts to rebuild the economy and the Republican candidate who opposes making significant investments in clean energy as part of our efforts to rebuild the economy, for whom would you vote? (Among Persuadables, May 2020)



While COVID a bigger immediate concern for voters, strong agreement that climate change will disrupt our lives for much longer

Below is a list of statements about climate change and coronavirus. For each, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with that statement. (March 2020)



Trump negatives generate significant movement on vote and approval among persuadables and a boost in motivation with Latinx and Younger

Vote Movement Throughout the Negative Survey

Persuadable Voters

	Initial	Following Negatives	Δ through full survey
Biden vs. Trump	30 / 39 -9	36 / 30 +6	+15
Trump Job Approval	47 / 48 -1	36 / 56 -20	-19
Trump Economic Approval	59 / 33 +26	48 / 43 +5	-21

Latinx

	Initial	Following Negatives	Δ through full survey
Biden vs. Trump	76 / 13 +63	80 / 11 +69	+6
Trump STRONG Disapproval	63%	72%	+9
Motivation to Vote in 2020 <i>% extremely motivated (among Biden supporters)</i>	75%	84%	+9

Younger

	Initial	Following Negatives	Δ through full survey
Biden vs. Trump	75 / 14 +61	76 / 12 +64	+3
Trump STRONG Disapproval	58%	64%	+6
Motivation to Vote in 2020 <i>% extremely motivated (among Biden supporters)</i>	67%	79%	+12

Biden positives boost his favorability significantly while upping motivation with younger and Latinx targets. AAs start high so less room for growth

Vote Movement Throughout the Positive Survey

Persuadable Voters

Young Voters

Latinx Voters

Af-Am Voters

	Initial	Following Positives	Δ through full survey	Initial	Following Positives	Δ through full survey	Initial	Following Positives	Δ through full survey	Initial	Following Positives	Δ through full survey
Biden vs. Trump	34 / 39 -5	36 / 32 +4	+9	75 / 14 +61	77 / 12 +65	+4	75 / 9 +66	81 / 7 +74	+8	84 / 6 +78	87 / 5 +82	+4
Biden Favorability	26 / 63 -37	47 / 44 +3	+40	59 / 35 +24	78 / 18 +60	+36	70 / 21 +49	82 / 12 +70	+21	84 / 9 +75	90 / 6 +84	+9
Motivation to Vote <i>% extremely motivated (among Biden supporters)</i>				70%	77%	+7	67%	75%	+8	68%	71%	+3

Trump negatives are effective at driving home several negative themes, including putting future generations at risk and ignoring the advice of experts

Below is the same list of descriptions that you saw earlier. Now that you have read more information, please indicate how well you think each item describes Donald Trump. (March 2020)

<u>Persuadable</u>			<u>Latinx</u>			<u>Younger</u>			** - Identified by regressions or survey questions as a driver of the vote
Initial	Final	Net	Initial	Final	Net	Initial	Final	Net	
% describes well			% describes <u>very</u> well			% describes <u>very</u> well			
66	76	+10	57	73	+16	52	61	+9	Ignores the advice of trusted figures like military leaders and public health experts**
62	71	+9	63	69	+6	55	63	+8	Puts CEOs, the wealthy and corporate interests ahead of working Americans
62	71	+9	63	73	+10	63	68	+5	Denies reality and ignores truth**
54	62	+8	61	69	+8	55	62	+7	Consistently lies to the American people
51	65	+14	56	70	+14	52	62	+10	Is putting future generations of Americans at risk**
50	59	+9	57	68	+11	51	63	+12	Is corrupt and uses his presidency to further enrich his donors, family, and himself

After Biden positives, voters move to believe Biden will leave a better world for future generations and tackle our biggest challenges

Below is the same list of descriptions that you saw earlier. Now that you have read more information, please indicate how well you think each item describes Joe Biden. (May 2020)

<u>Persuadable</u>			<u>Younger</u>			<u>Latinx</u>			<u>African-American</u>			
Initial	Final	Net	Initial	Final	Net	Initial	Final	Net	Initial	Final	Net	
% describes well			% describes well			% describes well			% describes well			
62	70	+8	85	87	+2	83	89	+6	93	94	+1	Listens to the advice of trusted figures...
45	60	+15	75	85	+10	77	85	+8	87	95	+8	Will leave a better world for future generations*
44	51	+7	72	75	+3	79	82	+3	89	92	+3	Has the leadership skills we need in a time of crisis**
43	50	+7	70	76	+6	77	82	+5	88	92	+4	Cares about people like me
42	53	+11	70	78	+8	81	84	+3	89	93	+4	Will tackle our biggest challenges
39	45	+6	68	74	+6	73	80	+7	85	91	+6	Shares my values
35	41	+6	61	74	+13	77	79	+2	86	90	+4	Will bring needed change to Washington**

** - 1st tier vote driver among persuadables in regression analysis; * - 2nd tier vote driver among persuadables