

CAP Action Fund

Findings from a Survey of Likely Voters
in Battleground States

June 2020

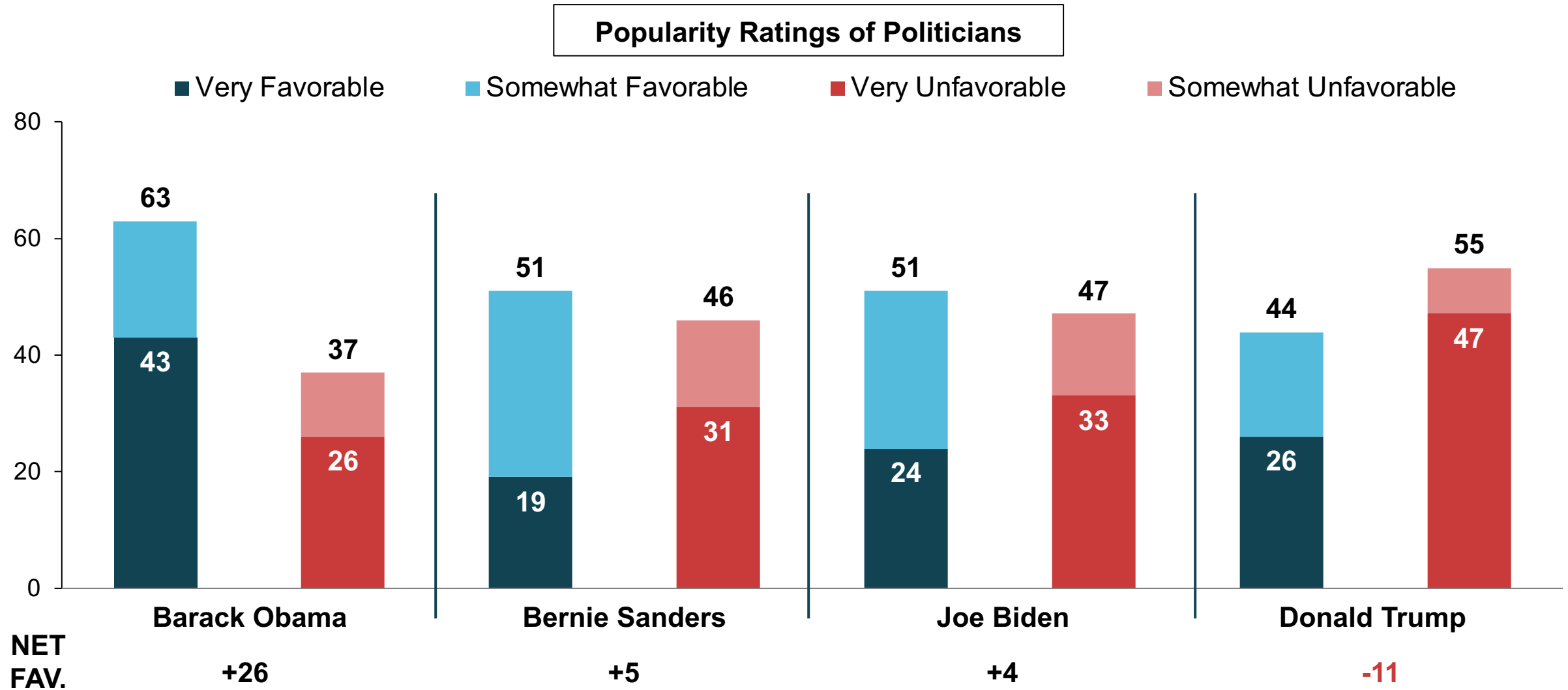
Methodology

- From June 18-24, 2020, ALG Research conducted an online survey among N=952 likely 2020 general election voters in the nine battleground states of Arizona, Florida, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.
- Key Subgroups:
 - **Somewhat Disapprove of Trump (9% of all voters)**
 - Disproportionately:
 - Independent (43%), particularly Independent women (24%) and non-college Independents (27%).
 - Under 35 (30%)
 - Voters of Color (34%)

STATE OF THE RACE

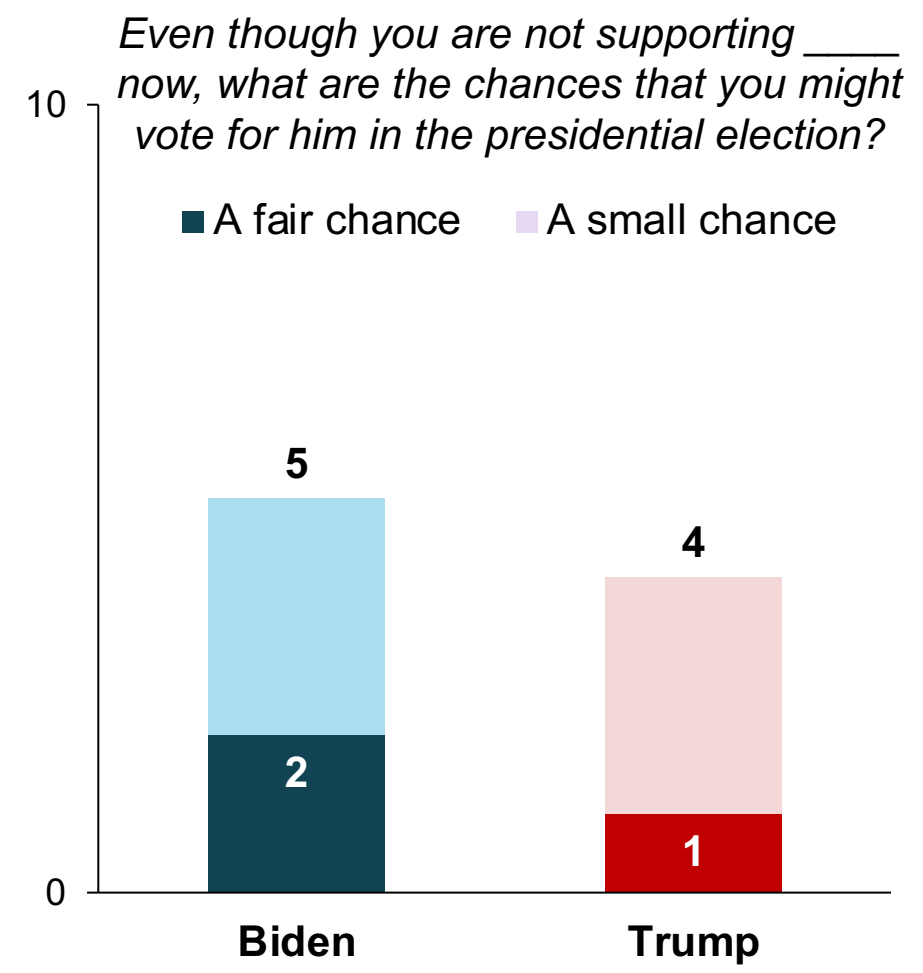
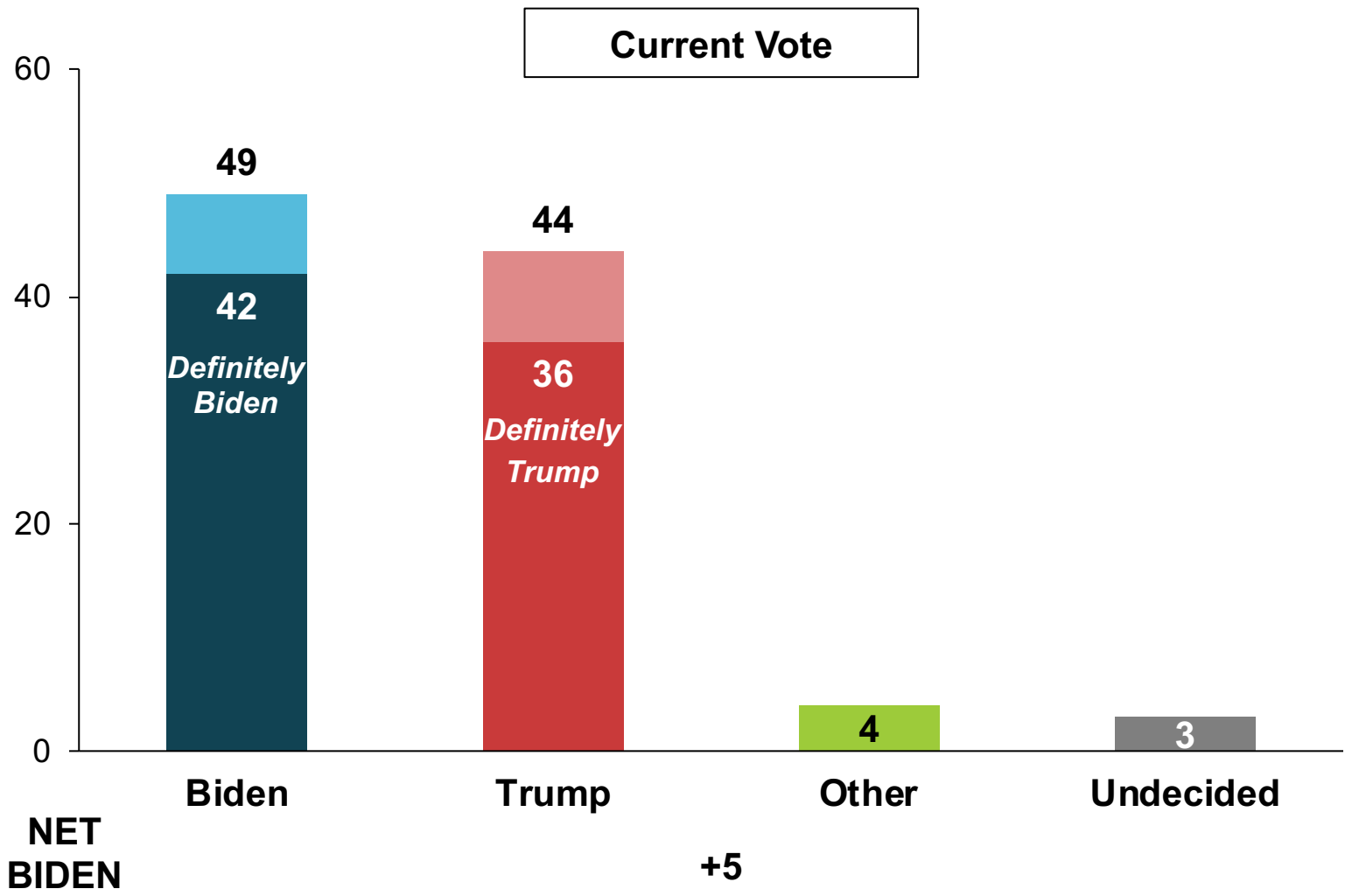
Trump's *very* unfavorable rating exceeds his total favorable rating, while Obama, Sanders and Biden are all net favorable.

Most favorable views of Biden are soft.



Biden leads Trump by 5 in these battleground states, with just 3% undecided and 4% saying they are planning to vote for another candidate.

Neither candidate has more than 5% of additional voters open to him.



Biden overperforms partisanship most among Independents under 50 and among college educated Independents.

He is not doing any better among strong Bernie supporters than Hillary did.

	Biden	Trump	Und.	Net	Net – Net Dem.		Biden	Trump	Und.	Net	Net – Net Dem.
Overall	49	44	3	+5	+3	W Non-college Women	45	48	3	-3	+1
Democrats	91	5	2	+86	NA	W College Women	52	40	5	+12	+8
Independents	45	39	7	+6	NA	W Non-college Men	34	58	2	-24	-4
Republicans	8	89	2	-81	NA	W College Men	42	55	1	-13	+11
White	43	51	3	-8	+4	Ind. Women	44	38	9	+6	+6
Black	90	6	2	+84	+8	Ind. Men	46	40	4	+6	+6
Latino	58	26	5	+32	-3	Ind. <50	48	31	8	+17	+17
W Women	47	46	4	+1	+4	Ind. 50+	43	45	6	-2	-2
W Men	38	56	2	-18	+4	Non-college Ind.	39	44	7	-5	-5
W 18-34	45	45	2	—	+4	College Ind.	54	32	7	+22	+22
W 35-49	35	58	4	-23	+1	Very Fav. Bernie	76	15	2	+61	+8
W 50-64	43	49	4	-6	+8	Unfav. Biden and Trump	45	18	12	+27	+12
W 65+	46	50	1	-4	+1						
Union HH	49	47	2	+2	-1						
Non-Union HH	49	44	3	+5	+5						

Those who *somewhat disapprove* of Trump are the voters we need to prevent Trump from making inroads with. They are dramatically different from those who *somewhat approve* of him. Just 9% of the smwt disapprovers rate Trump favorably, but half approve of him on the economy.

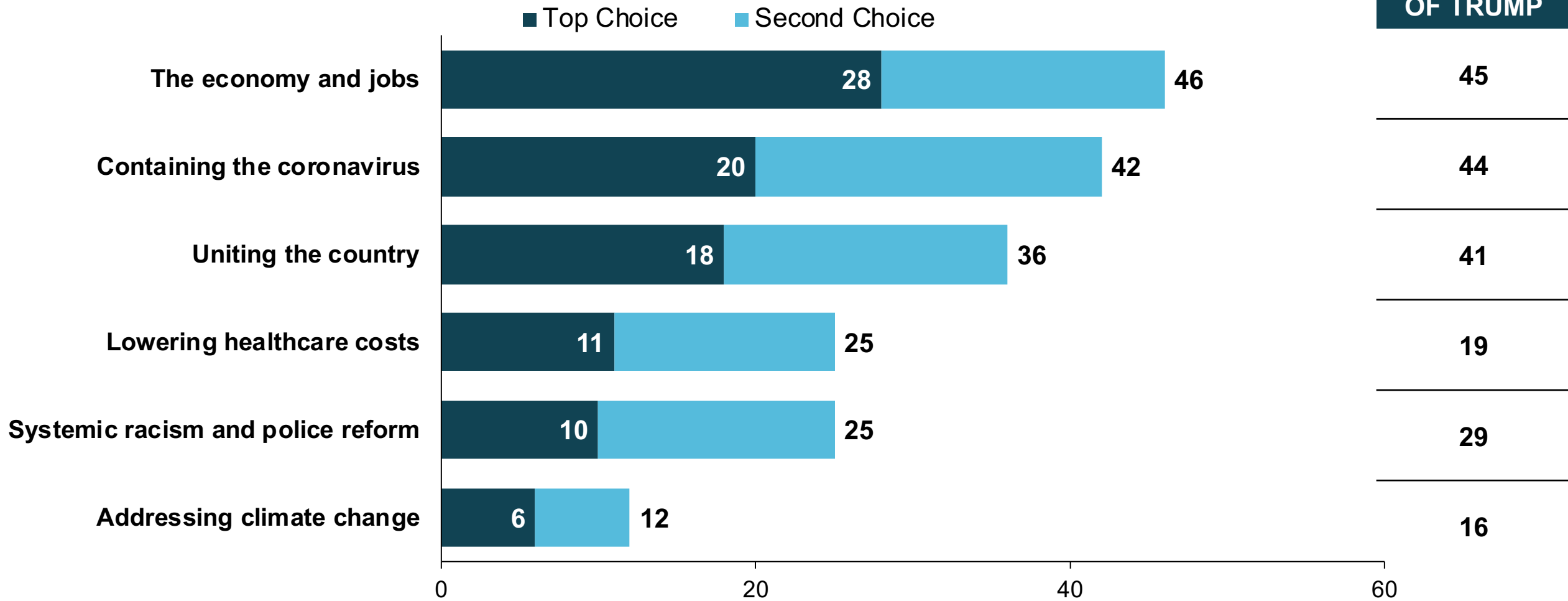
Somewhat Disapprove vs. Somewhat Approve Comparison	Somewhat <i>Disapprove</i> of Trump (9%)	Somewhat <i>Approve</i> of Trump (20%)
Current Presidential Vote	+35 Biden	+76 Trump
Trump Popularity	9% favorable	90% favorable
Biden Popularity	59% favorable	20% favorable
Trump Approval on the Economy	47% Approve	96% Approve
Trump Approval on Coronavirus	16% Approve	81% Approve
“Trump cares more about the wealthy and big corporations than he does about people like me”	75% Agree	39% Agree

ISSUE PRIORITIES

The economy and jobs is the most pressing issue to voters in battleground states, followed closely by containing the coronavirus, with uniting the country third.

The economy, coronavirus, and unity are effectively tied as the top issues with the smwt disapprovers.

Which of the following issues would you most like to see the presidential candidates and our elected leaders in Washington, DC focus on?

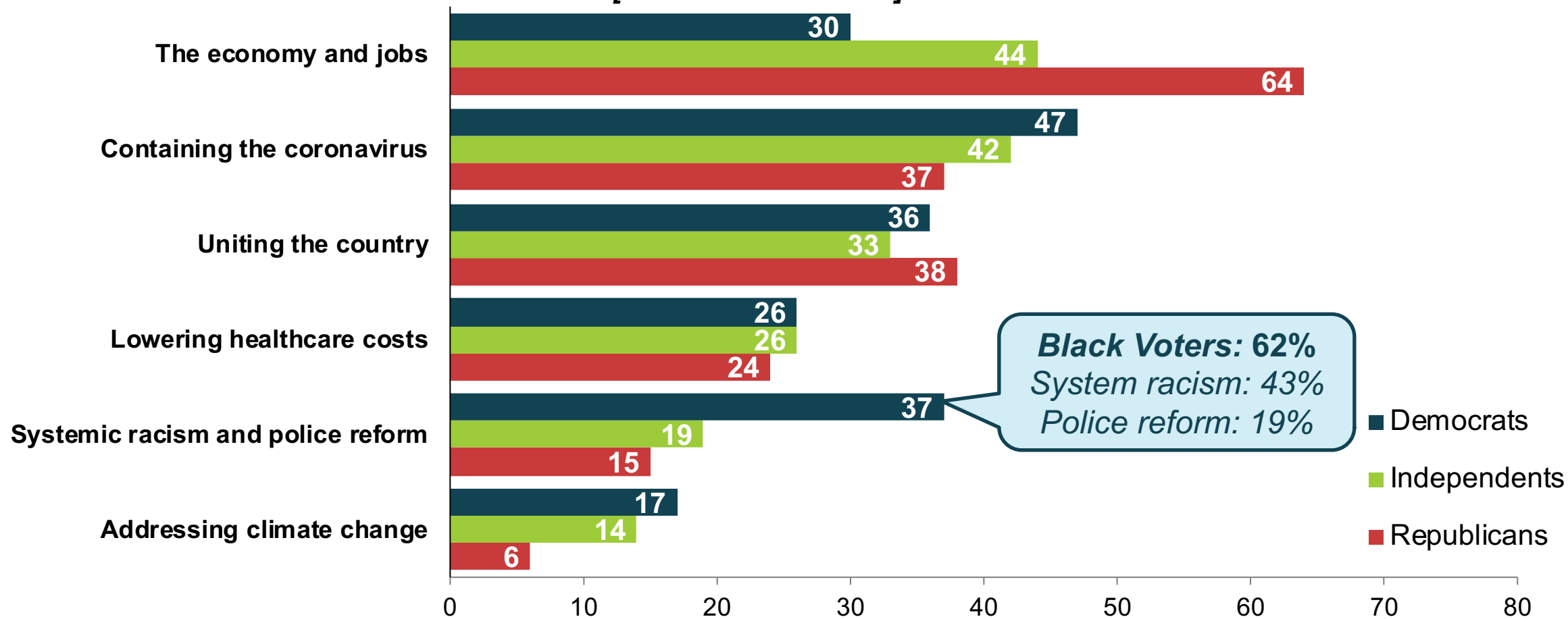


The economy and jobs is dominant with Republicans, while Independents consider containing the coronavirus as just as important. Among Democrats, the coronavirus is most important, followed by systemic racism and police reform, and uniting the country.

Addressing system racism is the dominant priority among Black voters.

Which of the following issues would you most like to see the presidential candidates and our elected leaders in Washington, DC focus on?

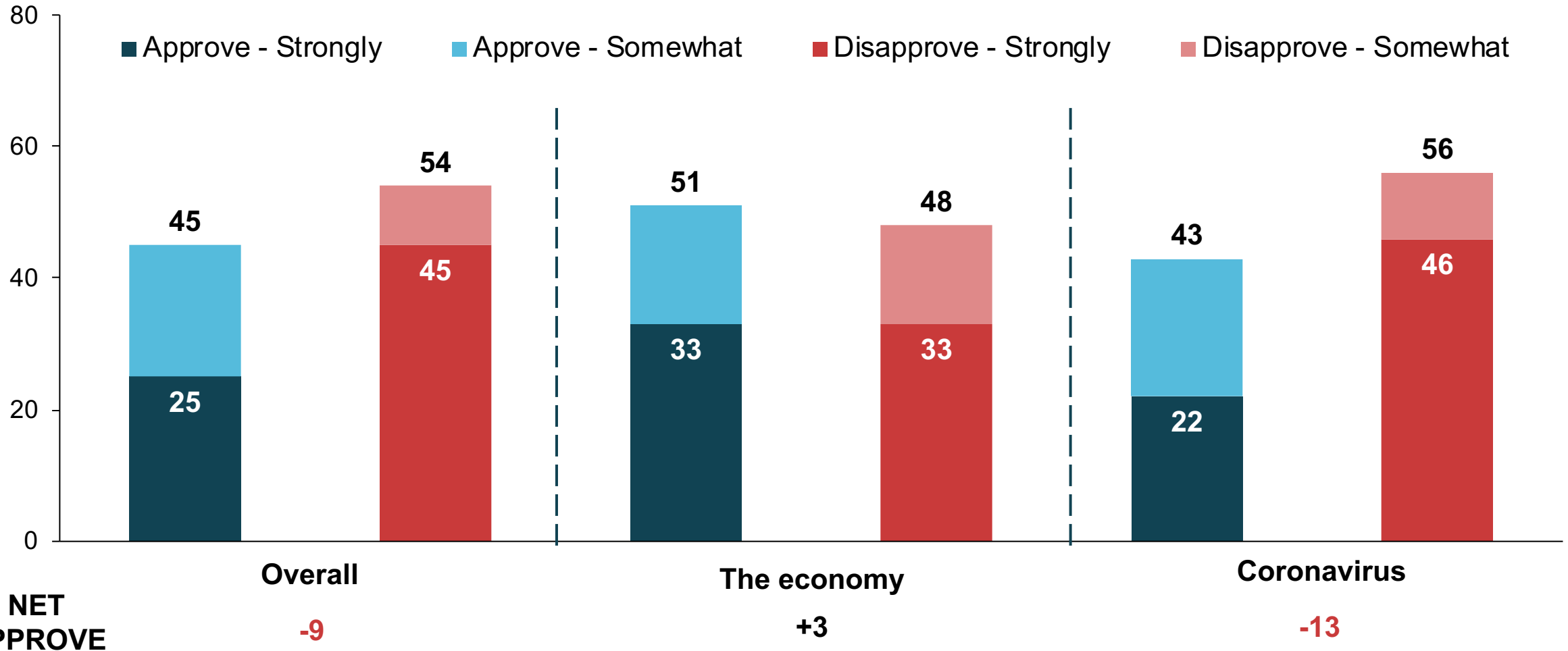
[TOP TWO CHOICES]



VIEWS OF TRUMP

Despite his job approval overall and on the coronavirus being underwater, 51% still give Trump a positive job rating on the economy. It remains his oxygen.

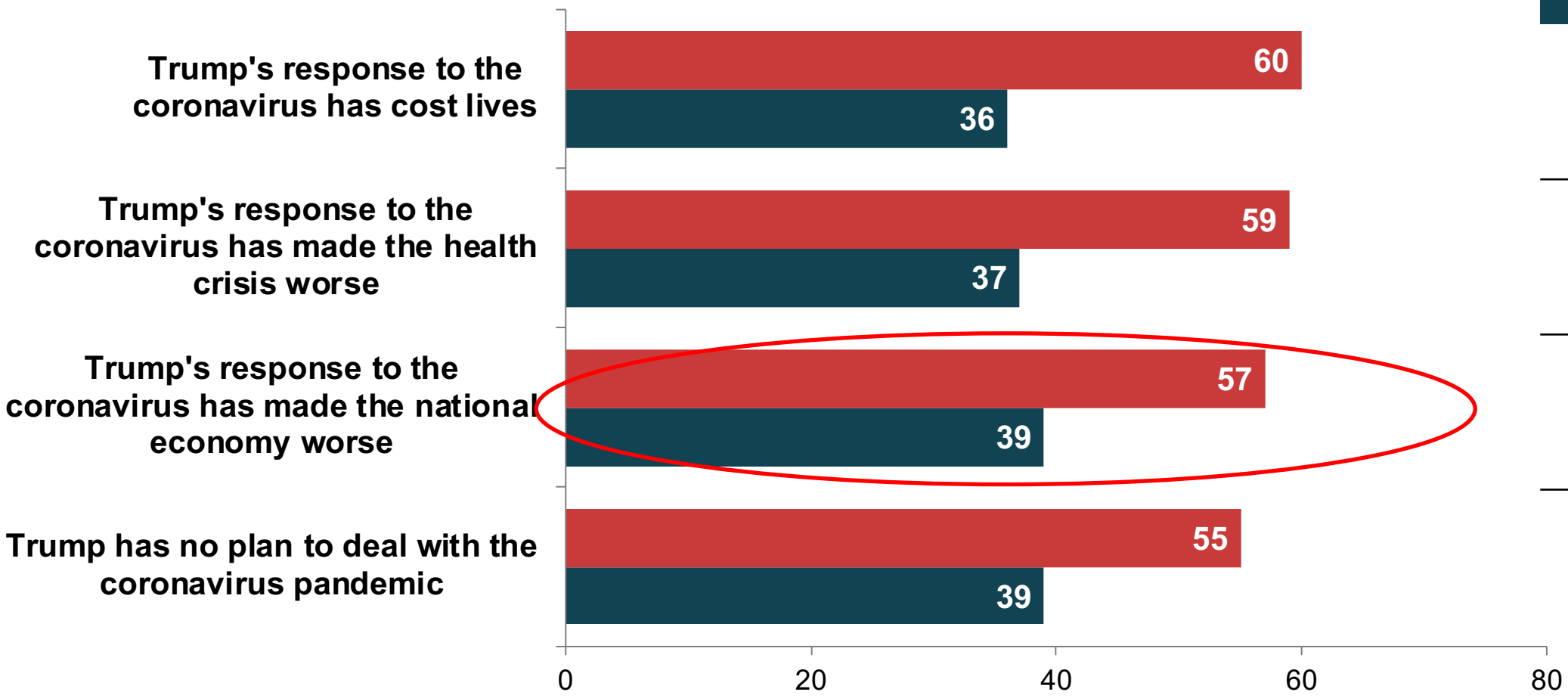
Donald Trump Approval Ratings



Trump's handling of the coronavirus now deeply negative, including that his response made economy worse.

Trump's Response to the coronavirus

■ Agree ■ Disagree



NET AGREE

OVERALL SMWHT DIS. OF TRUMP

+24 +34

+22 +44

+18 +29

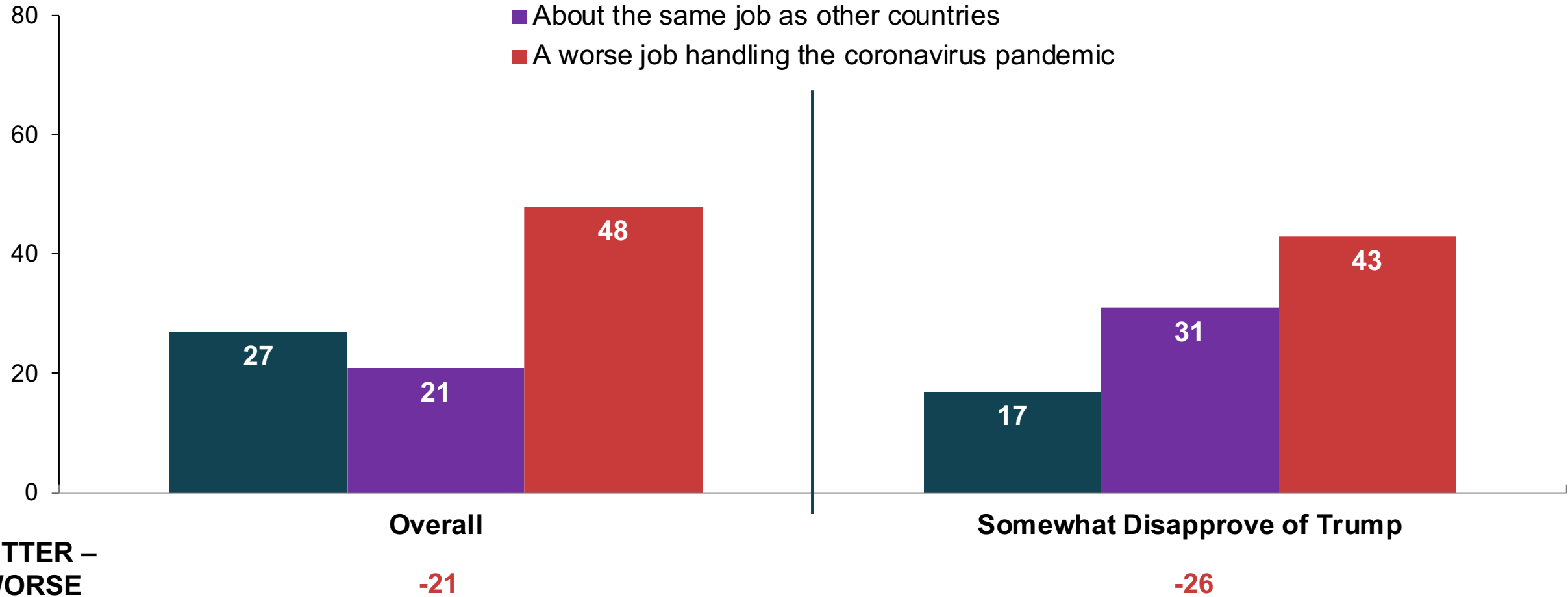
+16 +39

Nearly half of voters now think the U.S. has handled the coronavirus worse than most countries.

Some disapprovers are a little less likely than voters overall to believe we have handled it worse.

Compared to most other countries, do you think the U.S. has done:

- A better job handling the coronavirus pandemic
- About the same job as other countries
- A worse job handling the coronavirus pandemic



BETTER –
WORSE

Overall

Somewhat Disapprove of Trump

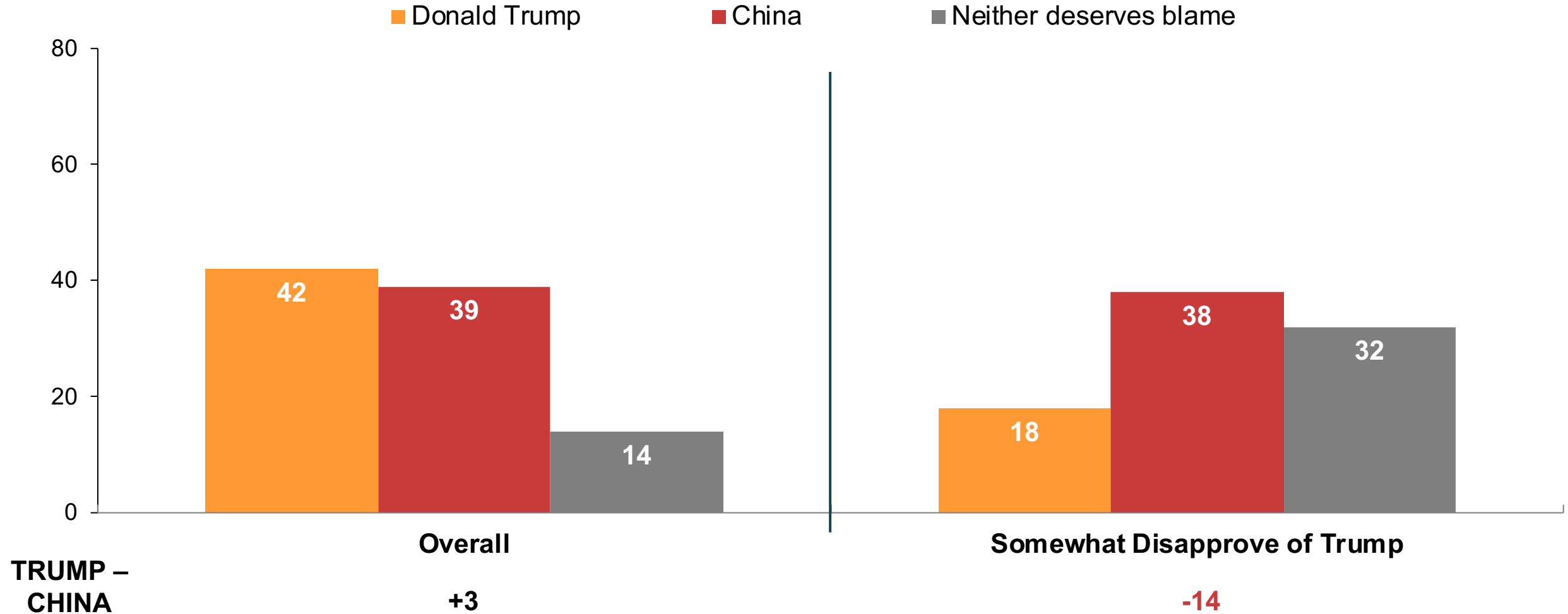
-21

-26

Voters overall are split on whether Trump or China is more to blame for the impact of the coronavirus in the U.S.

Less than one in five of the somewhat disapprovers blame Trump for the impact of the virus.

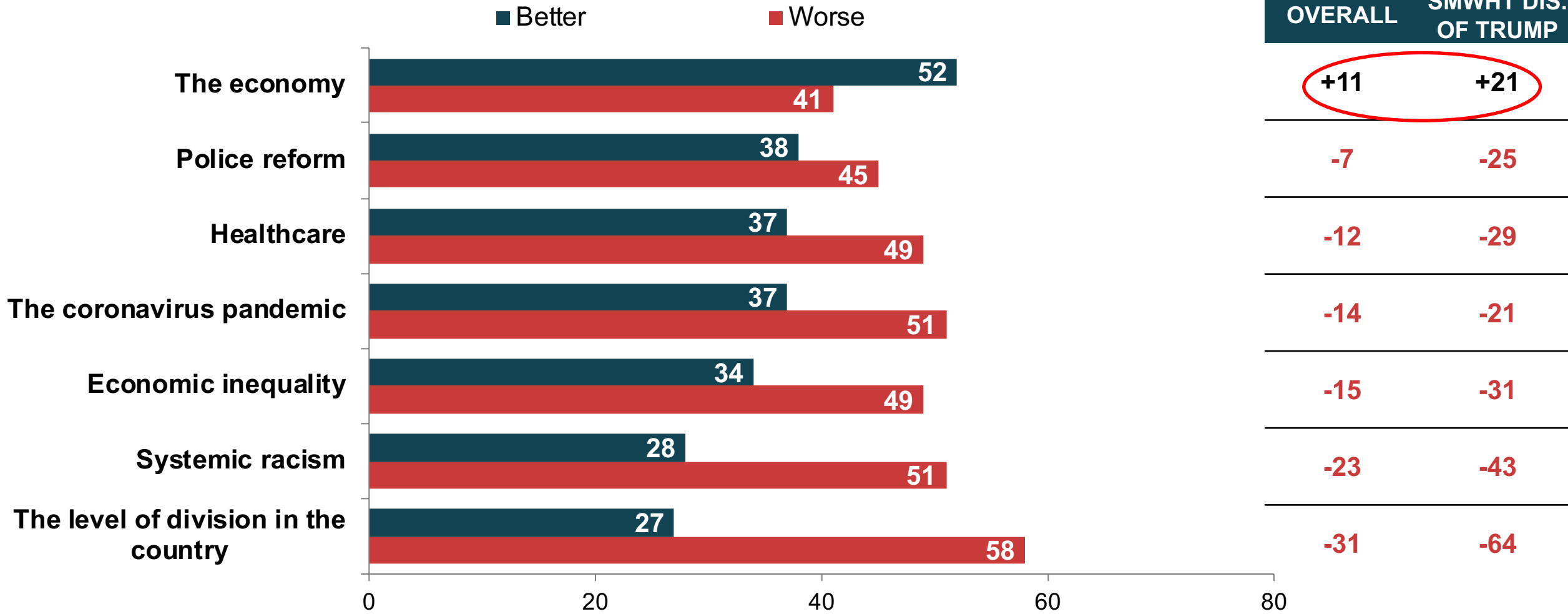
Who do you blame more for the impact that the coronavirus pandemic has had in the U.S.?



Voters also believe that if Trump is re-elected, the economy is more likely to get better than worse by an 11-point margin, the only major issue that they think will improve if he's re-elected.

Smwht disapprovers are even more likely to believe his re-election would help the economy.

Please indicate whether you think that issue will get better or worse if **Donald Trump is re-elected**.



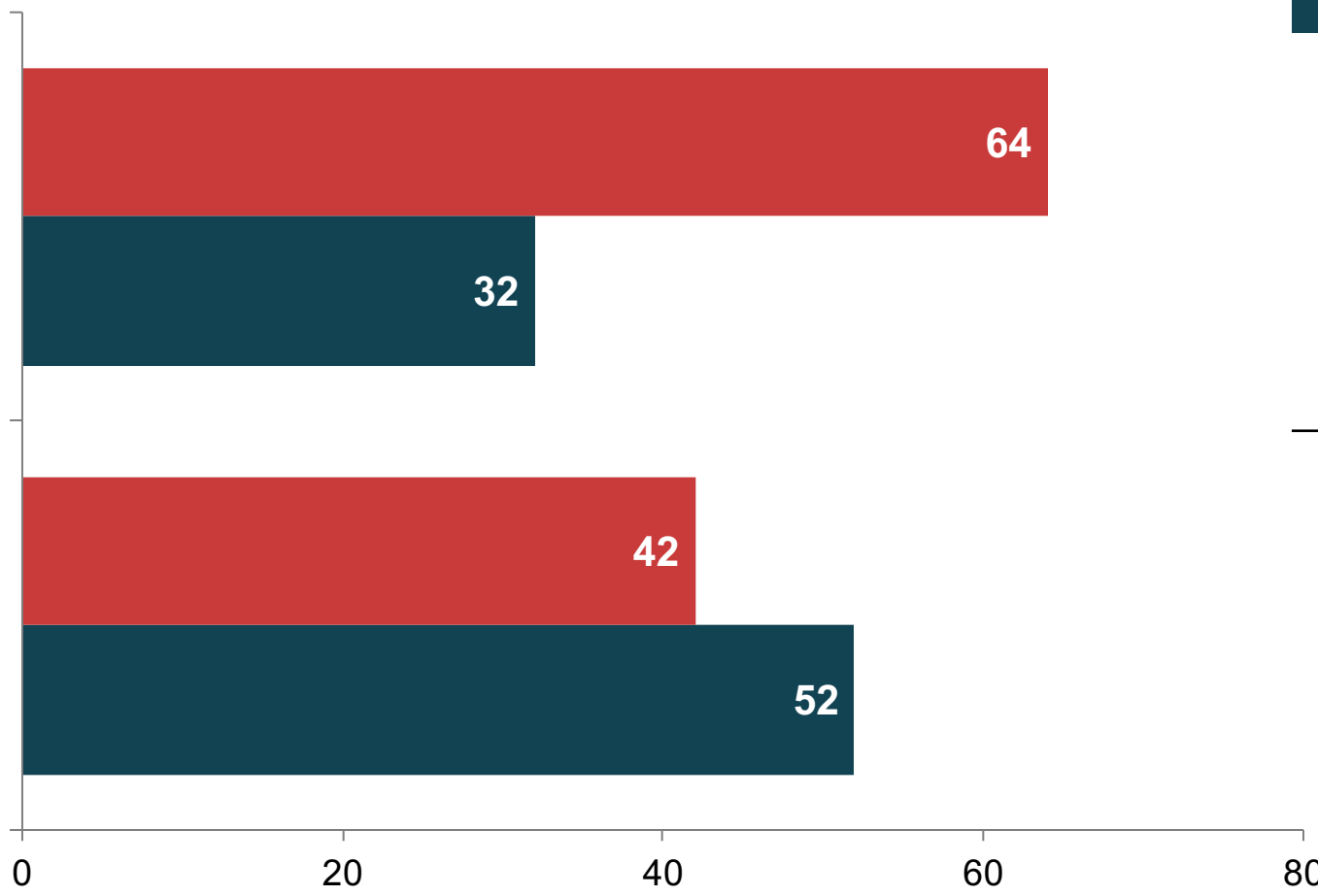
We need to keep the economic debate focused on who each candidate is looking out for, not the economy writ large. Most voters reject the notion that Trump has no plan to help the economy recover. However, nearly two-thirds believe that he cares more about the wealthy and big corporations than people like them.

Trump: Looking out for the wealthy and big corporations vs. no economic plan

■ Agree ■ Disagree

NET AGREE	
OVERALL	SMWHT DIS. OF TRUMP
+32	+63
-10	-4

Trump cares more about the wealthy and big corporations than he does about people like me



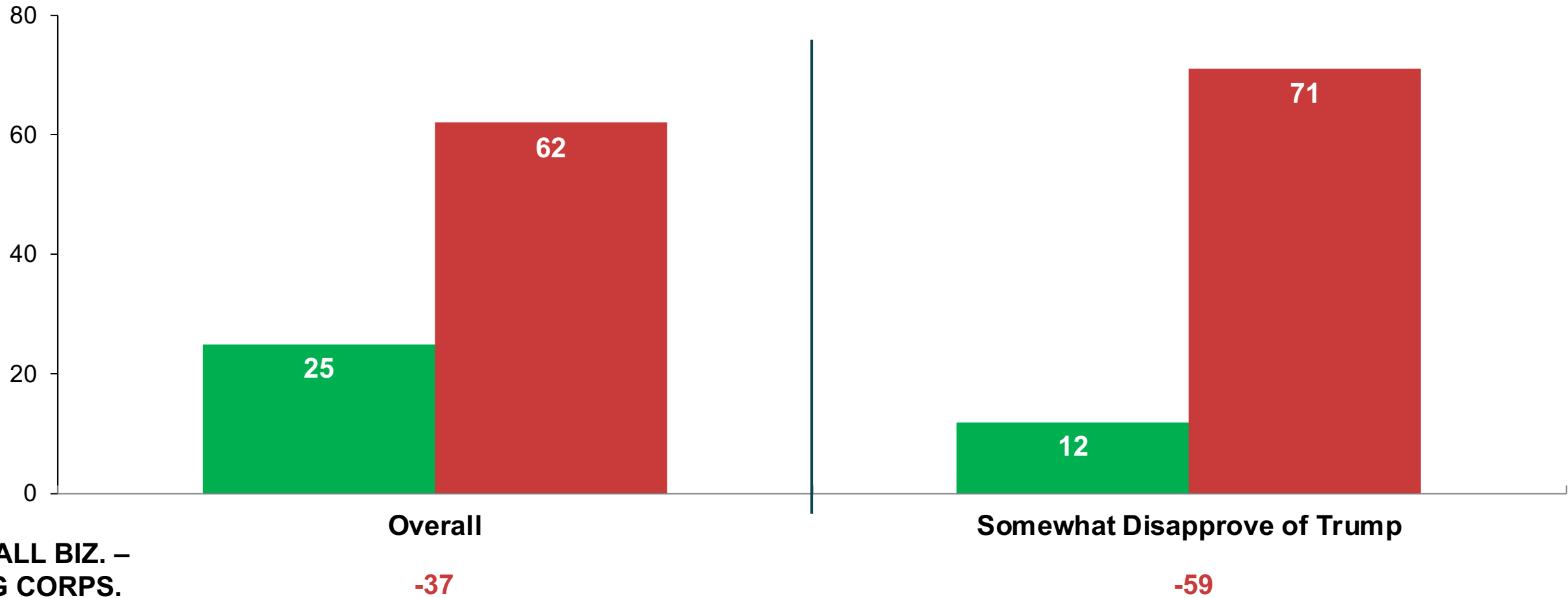
+32 **+63**

-10 **-4**

Nearly two-thirds of voters – and almost three-quarters of smwt disapprovers – believe the Trump administration’s economic recovery efforts have benefited big corporations and the wealthy over small businesses and working families.

Which of the following do you think is benefiting more from the Trump Administration's economic recovery efforts?

■ Small businesses and working families ■ Big corporations and the wealthy



**SMALL BIZ. –
BIG CORPS.**

ANTI-TRUMP MESSAGING

The message hitting Trump on his tax cuts for the wealthy was the most effective message against him among voters overall. That and his efforts to eliminate protections for pre-existing conditions are strong proof points about who he is fighting for.

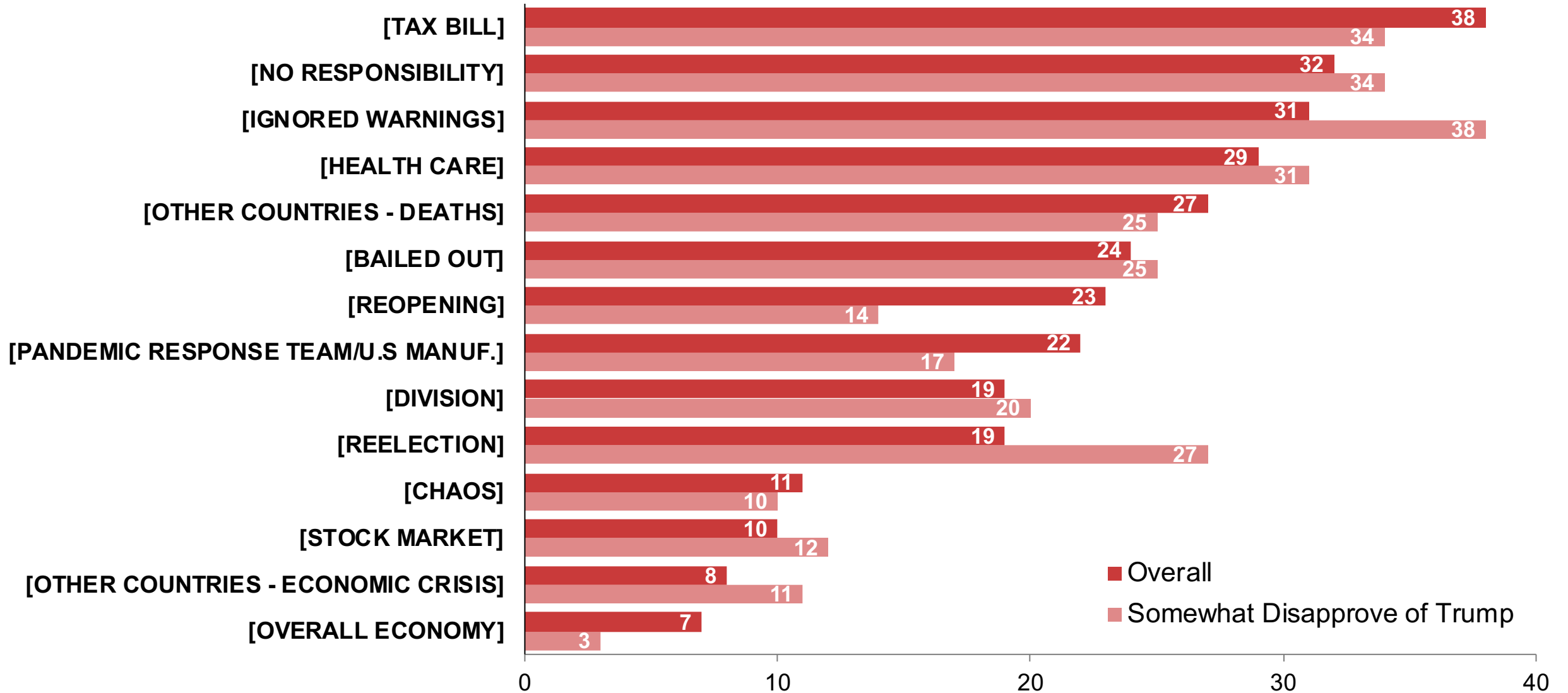
Top Tier Trump Negatives: Who He is Looking Out For <i>% Top Choice / % Top 3 Choices</i>	Overall	Smwht Dis. of Trump	Open to DT & JB	Ind.
<p>[TAX BILL] Trump's tax law will give 83% of its benefits to the richest 1% while increasing the debt by a trillion dollars. Because of the increase in the debt caused by his tax cuts for the wealthy, Trump proposed cutting \$1 trillion from Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid this year.</p>	20 / 38	19 / 34	25 / 36	25 / 39
<p>[HEALTH CARE] Trump promised he would “give everyone great health care”. But drug prices keep rising and Trump still has no plan. During a pandemic, Trump is suing to end the Affordable Care Act, take health care away from 20 million Americans and end protections for those with pre-existing conditions.</p>	13 / 29	14 / 31	12 / 26	11 / 27

The other two top tier messages against him were on the coronavirus: that he ignored repeated warnings and still has no plan to deal with it.

That he ignored repeated warnings was the top negative among the smwt disapprovers.

Top Tier Trump Negatives: The Coronavirus <i>% Top Choice / % Top 3 Choices</i>	Overall	Smwht Dis. of Trump	Open to DT & JB	Ind.
<p>[NO RESPONSIBILITY] Five months after the U.S. got its first case and more than 100,000 Americans are dead, Trump still has no plan to deal with the crisis. Trump’s coronavirus task force has even stopped meeting regularly. Despite all of this, Trump said "I don't take responsibility at all."</p>	13 / 32	13 / 34	10 / 29	15 / 34
<p>[IGNORED WARNINGS] Starting in early January, Trump ignored numerous warnings from experts inside and outside the government about the coronavirus, including more than a dozen warnings in his daily intelligence briefings. By ignoring these warnings, Trump wasted a critical 70-day window to prepare for the virus.</p>	10 / 31	12 / 38	6 / 28	8 / 35

Trump Negatives: % Top 3 Choices



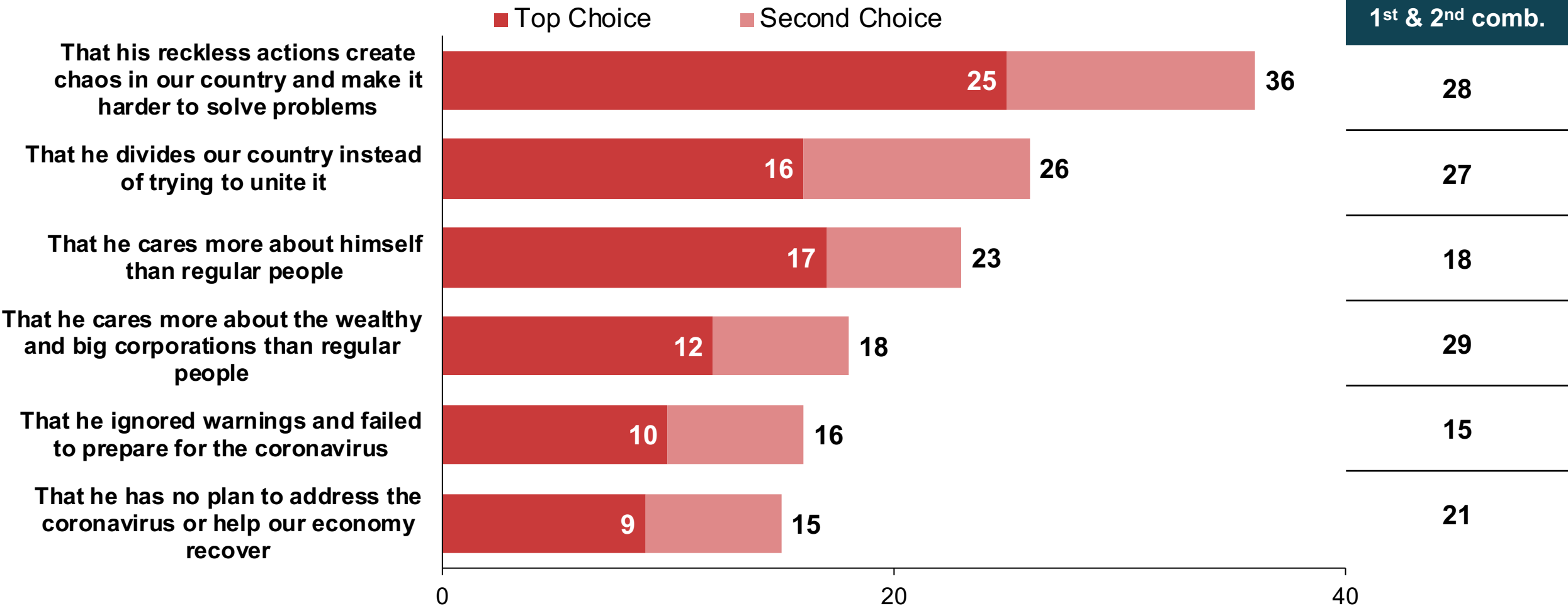
The least effective messages drew comparisons to the economy under Obama, to the economies of countries that handled the crisis better, and faulted Trump for focusing too much on the stock market. Chaos is an effective frame but ONLY if tied to specifics

Trump Negatives: Bottom-Tier Messages <i>% Top Choice / % Top 3 Choices</i>	Overall	Smwht Dis. of Trump
<p>[CHAOS] Trump promised that he would fix many of the problems facing the country. But Trump has been more focused on his Twitter account than on delivering on his promises. He has created more chaos in Washington and has no plan for the biggest challenges facing the country.</p>	<p>5 / 11</p>	<p>6 / 10</p>
<p>[STOCK MARKET] Trump is more focused on the stock market and helping the wealthy than working people. Even though 40 million Americans have filed for unemployment since March, Trump keeps tweeting about how great the stock market is doing. He's completely out of touch with the challenges facing working people.</p>	<p>2 / 10</p>	<p>0 / 12</p>
<p>[OTHER COUNTRIES - ECONOMIC CRISIS] Trump's failure to prepare for the coronavirus has worsened the economic crisis we are now facing. The U.S. unemployment rate is now 13%, more than twice as high as other countries like Germany and South Korea that put testing plans in place and have re-opened their economies.</p>	<p>1 / 8</p>	<p>4 / 11</p>
<p>[OVERALL ECONOMY] Trump inherited a strong economy, but on his watch, 15 million Americans who had jobs at the end of the Obama administration are unemployed today. Independent analysts say 15 million jobs would have been saved if Trump acted earlier, but now unemployment is at 13%, the highest since the Great Depression.</p>	<p>2 / 7</p>	<p>1 / 3</p>

The chaos Trump creates due to his reckless actions is the biggest concern about him following the messaging. Talking about chaos in the abstract isn't effective, but it is effective theme when we link it to Trump's specific actions and their impact on people's lives. Siding with the wealthy, chaos, and dividing the country are the top concerns with smwt disapprovers.

Which of the following concerns you most about Donald Trump?
[NOT ASKED IF DEFINITELY VOTING FOR TRUMP]

SMWT DIS. OF TRUMP
1st & 2nd comb.



PRO-TRUMP MESSAGING

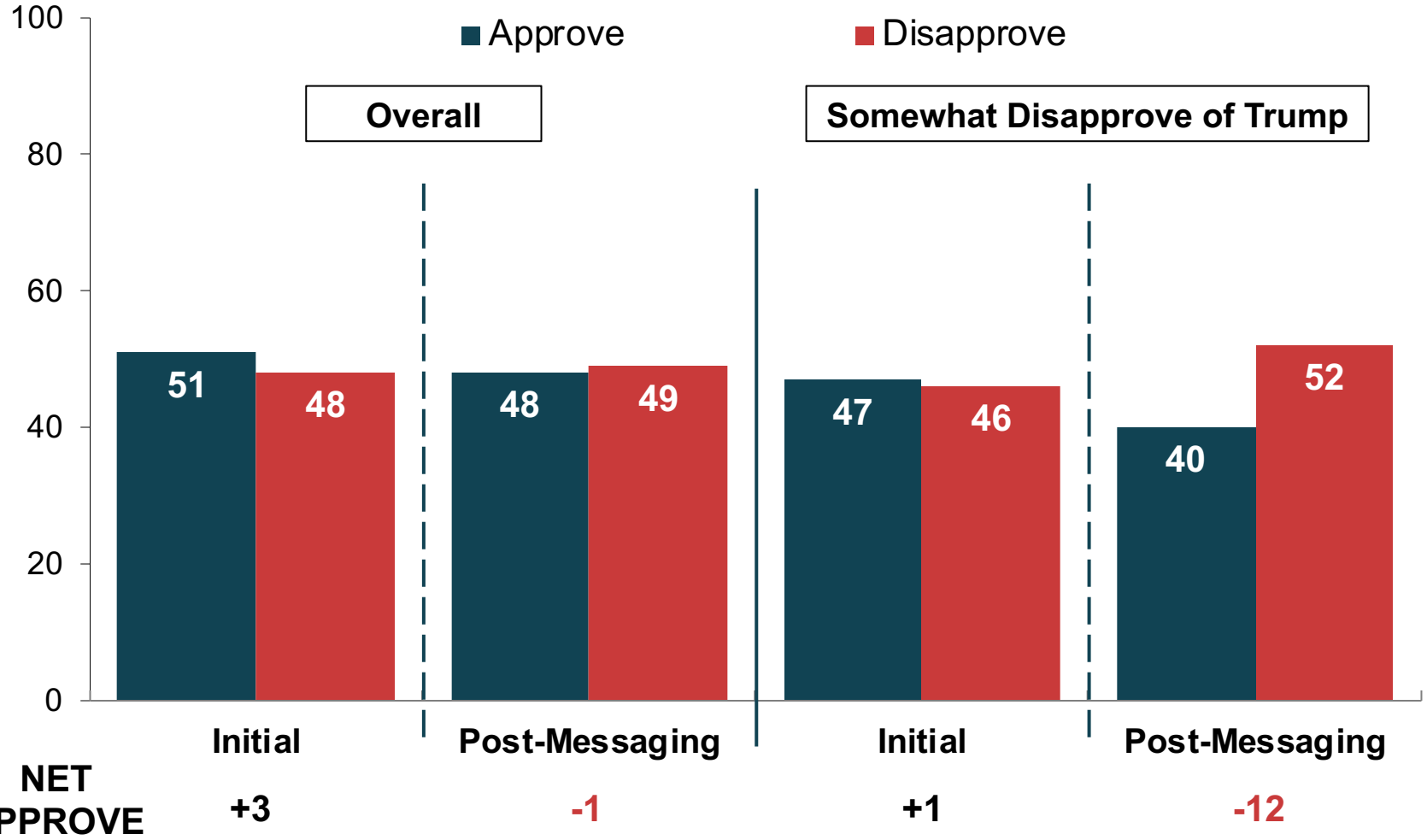
Trump’s messages about the strength of the economy (pre-pandemic) and his ability to get things done are the most effective for him, but lack intensity with “somewhat disapprove” voters.

Trump Positives: Most Convincing Messages % Very Convincing	Overall	Smwht Dis. of Trump
<p>[STRONG ECONOMY] Before the pandemic, Trump created the strongest economy in our history with unemployment at just 3.5%. As a businessman, he is the only person who can rebuild our economy even stronger. Just last month, the economy added 2 million new jobs-faster than anyone predicted-which is why unemployment is already coming down.</p>	35	18
<p>[GETS THINGS DONE] Donald Trump isn't always polite, but he does things his way, not the Washington way, and he gets things done. Trump helped build an economy with record low unemployment, his decision to ban travel from China saved countless lives and now he is fast-tracking the development of a vaccine. Some may not like his style, but Trump gets things done.</p>	32	14
<p>[TRAVEL BAN] Donald Trump was ahead of the curve in protecting Americans from the coronavirus by instituting a ban on travel to the U.S. from China. This ban saved countless lives and was opposed by Democrats and called “racist” by Joe Biden.</p>	32	18
<p>[CHINA] It is really China that deserves the responsibility and the blame for the coronavirus crisis in the U.S., not Donald Trump. China lied about the severity of the virus to the rest of the world and falsified data to make it seem less dangerous than it was.</p>	31	22

VOTER MOVEMENT

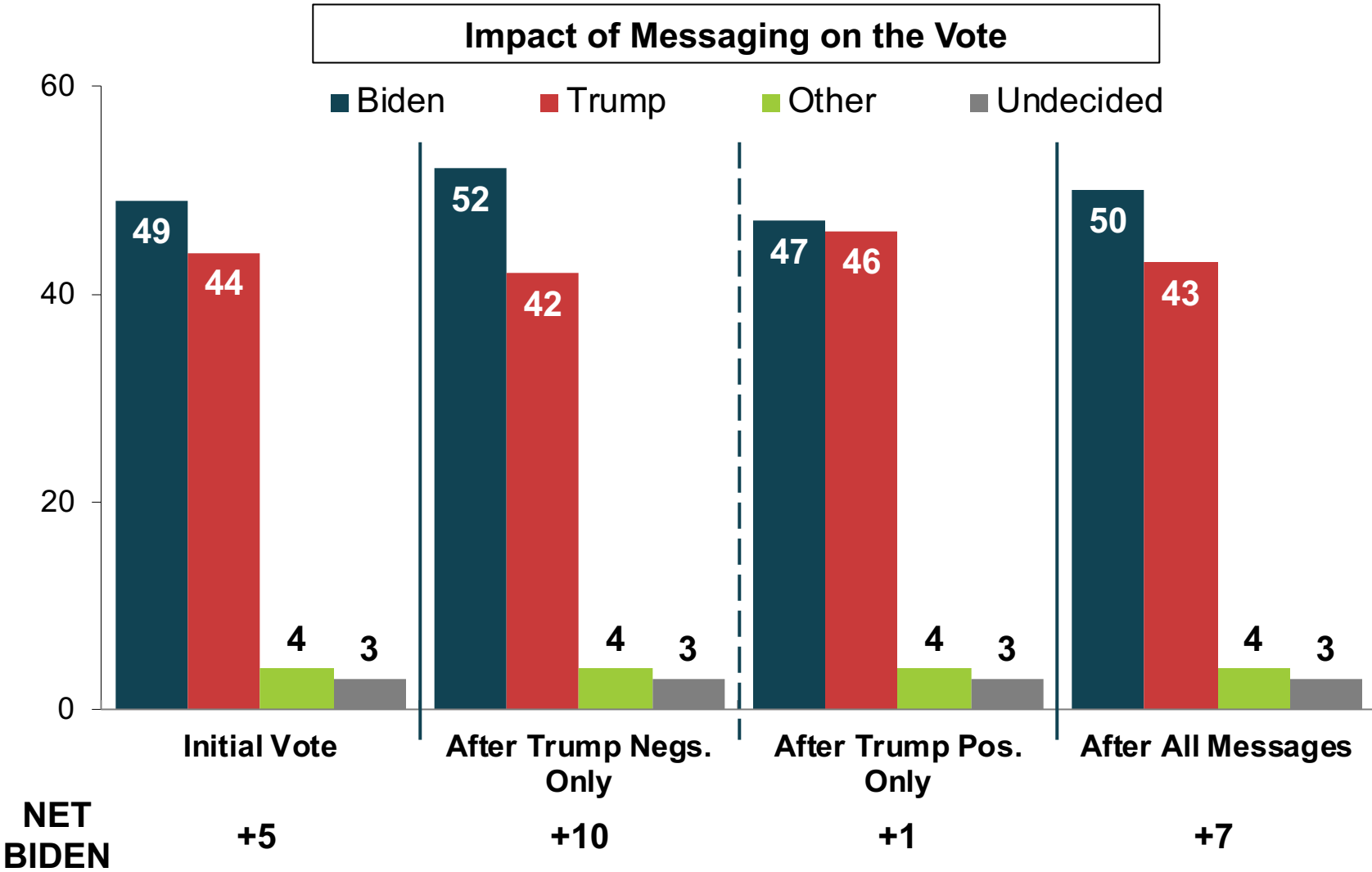
Following messaging from both sides, Trump's net approval on the economy fell by 4 points overall and by 12 points among the somewhat disapprovers. The decline was biggest with White Indy women, younger Republicans and younger White women.

Impact of Messaging on Trump Economic Approval



Biggest Trump Econ. Approval Losses <i>Net Shift in Approval Rating</i>	
Overall	-4
White Independent Women	-14
Republicans <50	-14
White Women <50	-13
White non-college Women	-11

Although there was minimal movement in the vote following messaging from both sides, Biden's lead doubled to 10 points after just the negatives on Trump. Our priority is to prevent Trump from making gains, not expanding Biden's lead.



Biggest Biden Gains Net Shift from IV to After All Msg.	
Overall	+2
White College Independents	+7
White Independents 50+	+6
Republicans <50	+6
Men Age <50	+6
Latino	+5

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Key Takeaways

- **Trump's failed handling of the pandemic and chaotic approach has put him behind in the race.** We need to keep reminding voters of these facts while also tying it to the economic hardship Americans are experiencing.
- **Weakening Trump on the economy is critical.** It remains his oxygen, as it is the top priority of voters and a majority of voters (51%) still approve of his handling of it. It is also his only opening with the 9% of voters who somewhat disapprove of him, the group he needs to make inroads with. We have two effective lines of attack on Trump on the economy:
 - **That he cares more about the wealthy and big corporations than regular people:** Nearly two-thirds of voters and 75% of the somewhat disapprovers agree with this assessment of Trump. Our economic debate needs to focus on who he is looking out for, not on job creation or the economy overall.
 - His tax cuts for the wealthy and big corporations that exploded the debt and threaten Social Security and Medicare.
 - That he is trying to eliminate protections for pre-existing conditions and take away healthcare from 20 million Americans.
 - **Make the case that he is responsible for the recession by highlighting his failures on the coronavirus:** 57% of voters agree that Trump's response to the coronavirus has made the national economy worse.
 - He ignored repeating warnings – including a dozen daily intelligence briefings – resulting in him wasting a critical 70 day window to prepare.
 - He still has no plan to deal with the crisis and his coronavirus task force has even stopped meeting regularly.