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Battleground Survey

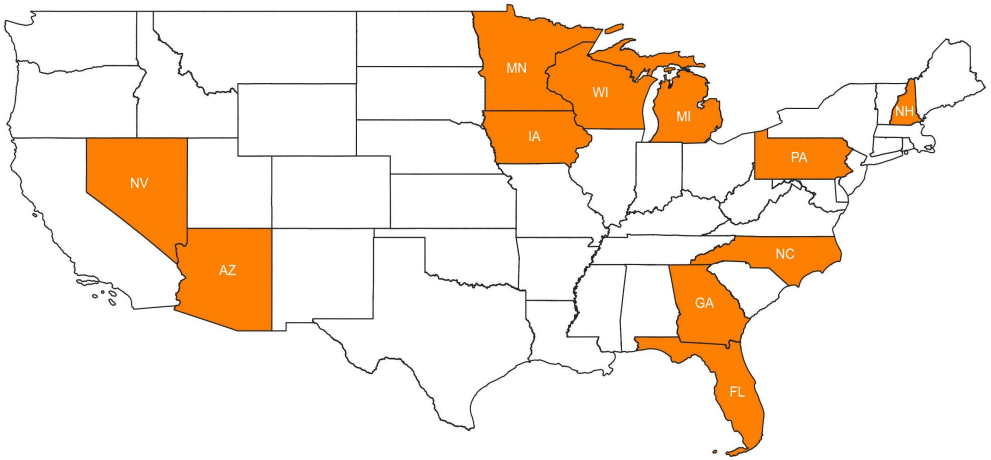
Prepared for CAP Action Fund

March 4, 2020

Center for American Progress Action Fund

Methodology

- This presentation displays the results of an online survey among 1,500 likely voters in the 11 key battleground states of Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.
- This presentation includes an oversample among voters who “somewhat disapprove” of the job Donald Trump is doing as president (n=331).
- The survey was conducted February 6-11, 2020.
- The sample was drawn from an opt-in panel and has sampling error of ± 2.5%.
- The 2016 vote for President in these 11 Battleground states was Clinton 46.8% to Trump 48.6% (Trump +1.8%).



Takeaways

- The central purpose of this project was developing an understanding of those voters who somewhat disapprove of Trump's performance as president. Survey data has consistently shown that this relatively small subset of voters could hold the key to the election.
- Voters who somewhat disapprove of Trump's performance differ from those who strongly disapprove on most measures. Some of the largest differences occur on measures that have implications for message development. Specifically:
  - These voters are more likely to give Trump credit for the economy and "standing up for what he believes."
  - While a majority believe Trump is corrupt, they are less willing to describe him as a "criminal" or a "crook."
  - Trump's corruption, for these voters, is grounded in efforts to enrich himself and undertake favors for his political contributors.
  - To the extent that Trump is viewed as ineffective, they cite his chaotic leadership style and the fact he insults anyone who disagrees with him.
  - Few believe Trump has hurt people like themselves or in their community. To the extent they do, they cite things such as his health care policies and the rising cost of living.

Takeaways (continued)

- Like those who strongly disapprove of Trump, a solid majority of these somewhat disapprove target voters believe Trump is more interested in helping the wealthy and big business than working people.

- This shared dimension that Trump does not care about ordinary people is also the most compelling message for these voters who somewhat disapprove of Trump.

- Merging Trump's temperament and chaotic leadership with outcomes for real people on issues like health care, wages, cost of living and protecting Social Security is a more promising message than focusing solely on Trump's personality/behavior or corruption. To the extent corruption is a message, it should be less about Ukraine and impeachment and more about his efforts to enrich himself and his wealthy benefactors.

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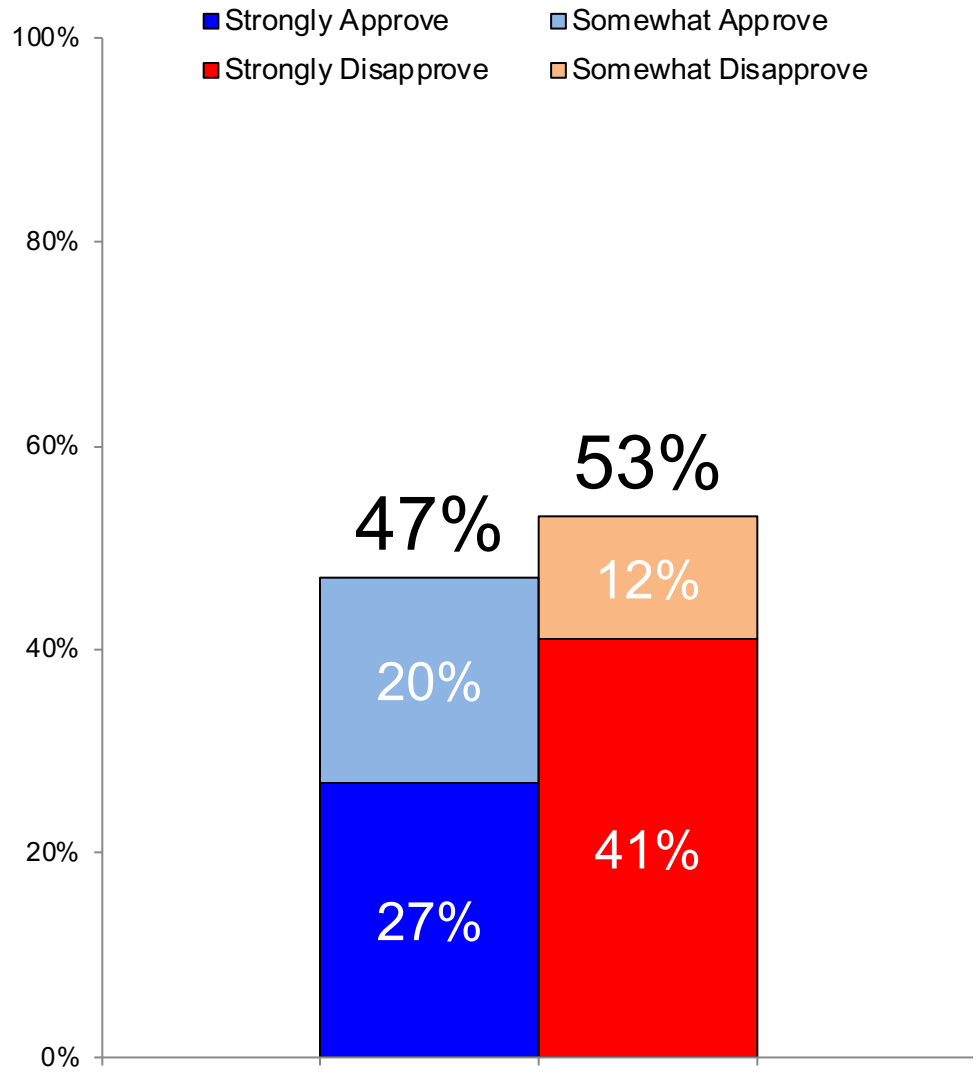
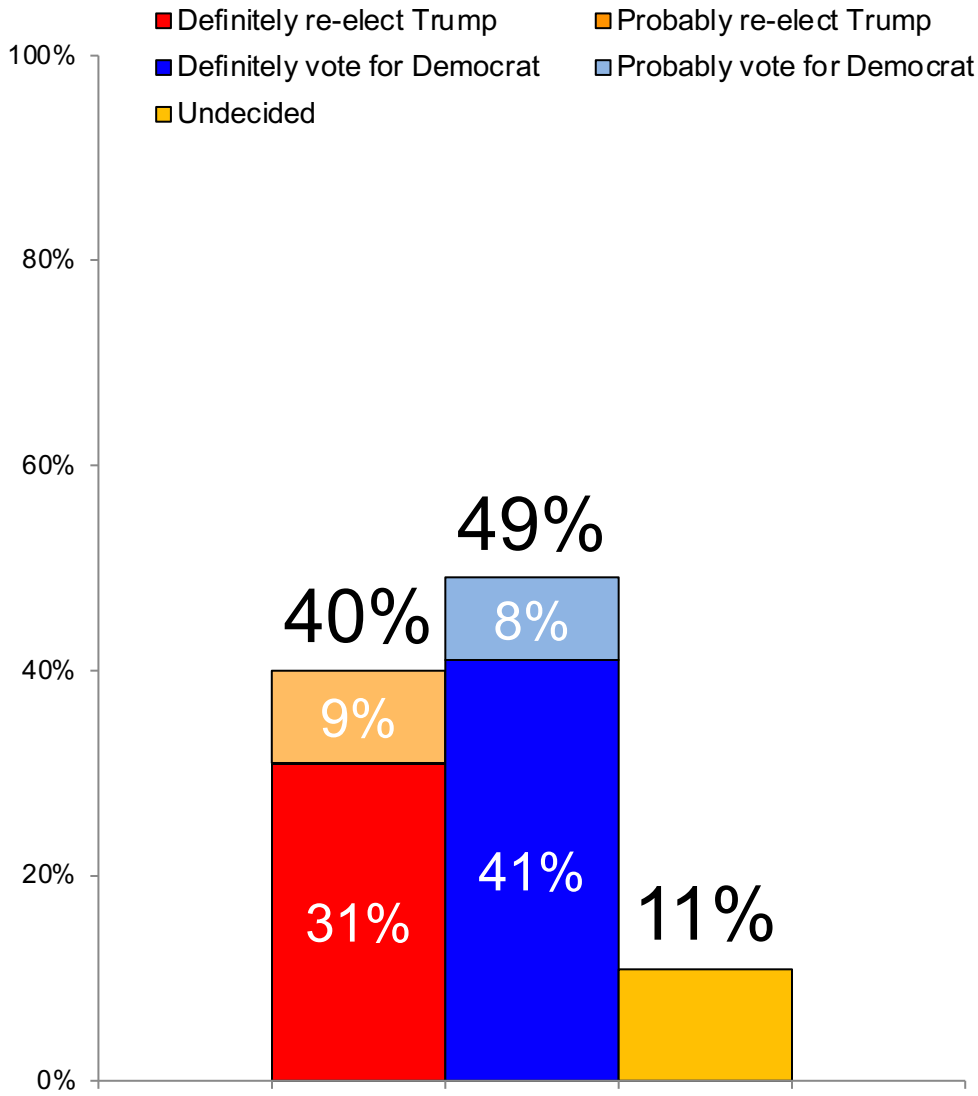
Political Environment

Trump Approval Rating



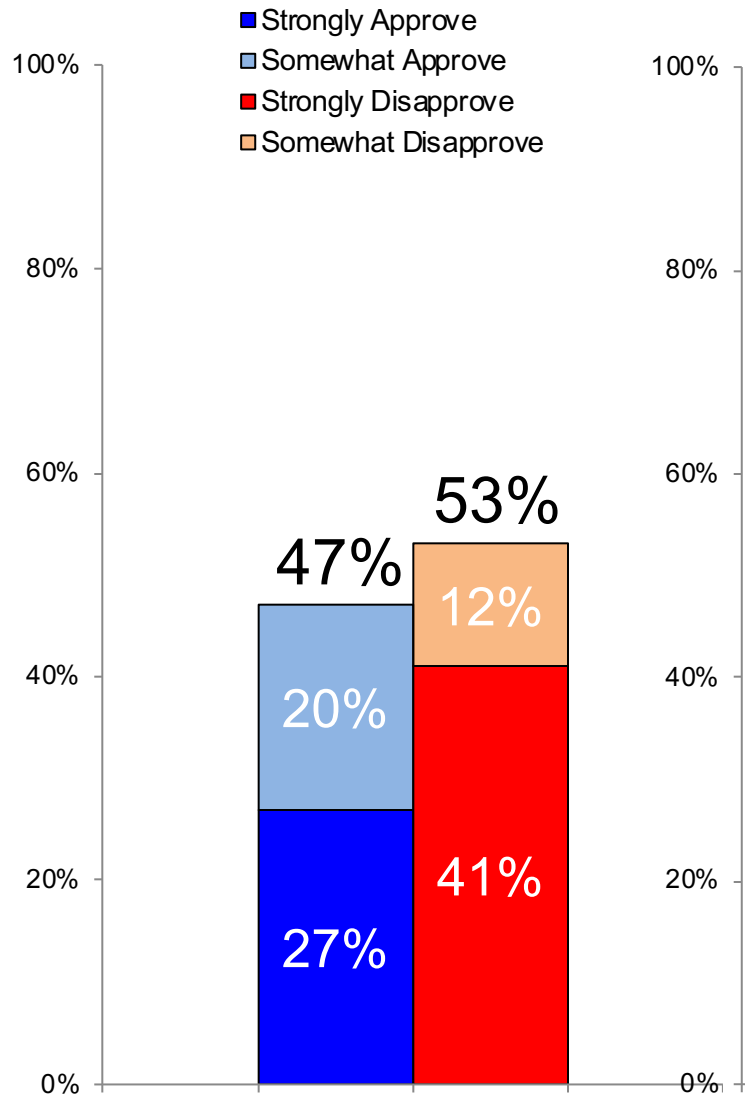
	App	Dis
Men	52%	48%
Women	43%	57%
Dem	9%	91%
Ind	**48%**	**52%**
Rep	90%	10%
Non-White	28%	72%
W Non Col Men	**61%**	39%
W Non Col Women	54%	46%
W Col Grad Men	52%	48%
W Col Grad Women	39%	**61%**
18-34	38%	62%
35-49	46%	54%
50-64	51%	49%
65+	53%	47%

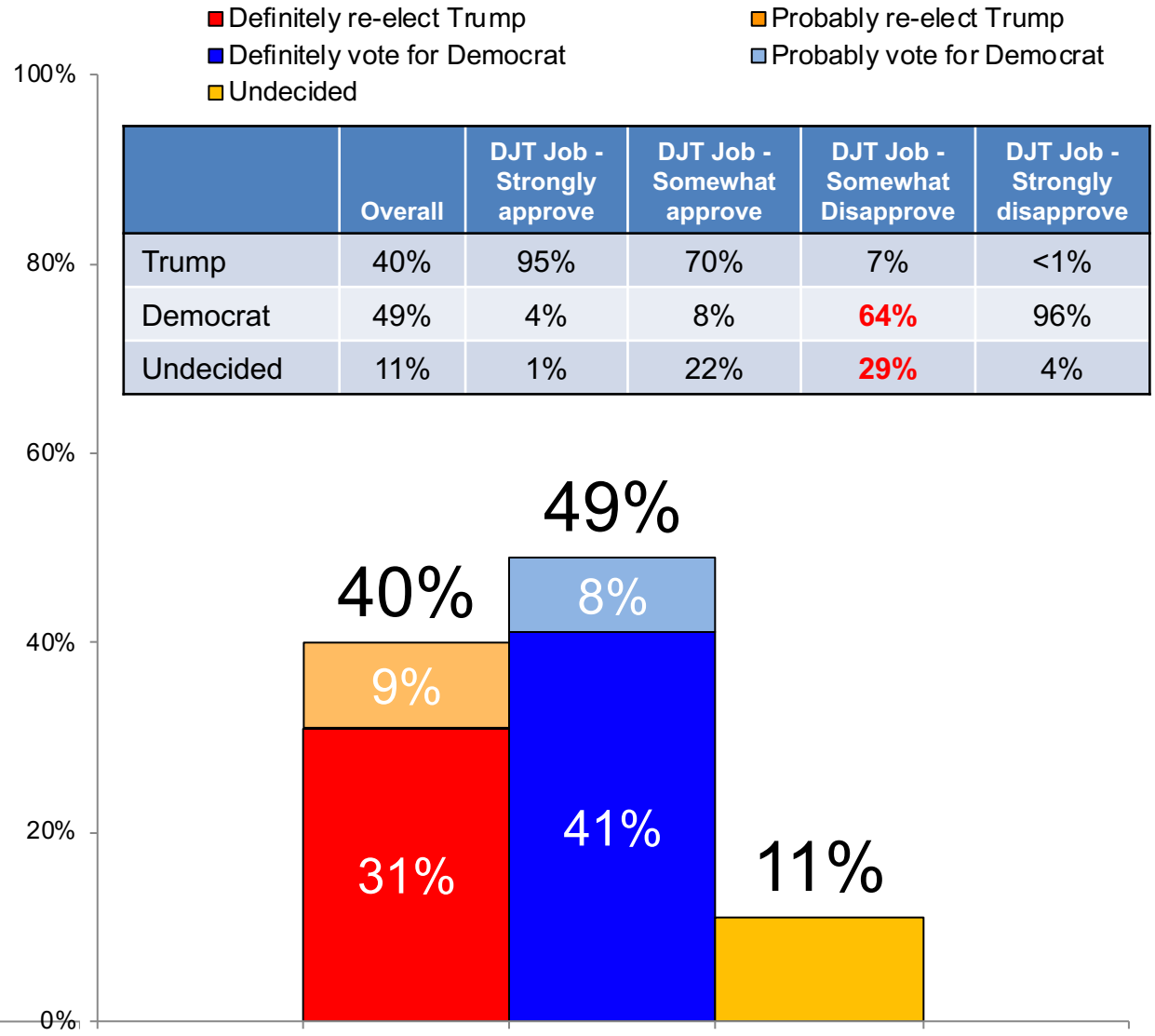
Trump Re-Elect



	Trump	Dem
Men	45%	45%
Women	36%	53%
Dem	3%	93%
Ind	37%	41%
Rep	87%	6%
Non-White	19%	71%
W Non Col Men	54%	36%
W Non Col Women	48%	41%
W Col Grad Men	47%	42%
W Col Grad Women	34%	57%
18-34	29%	62%
35-49	38%	49%
50-64	43%	45%
65+	49%	44%

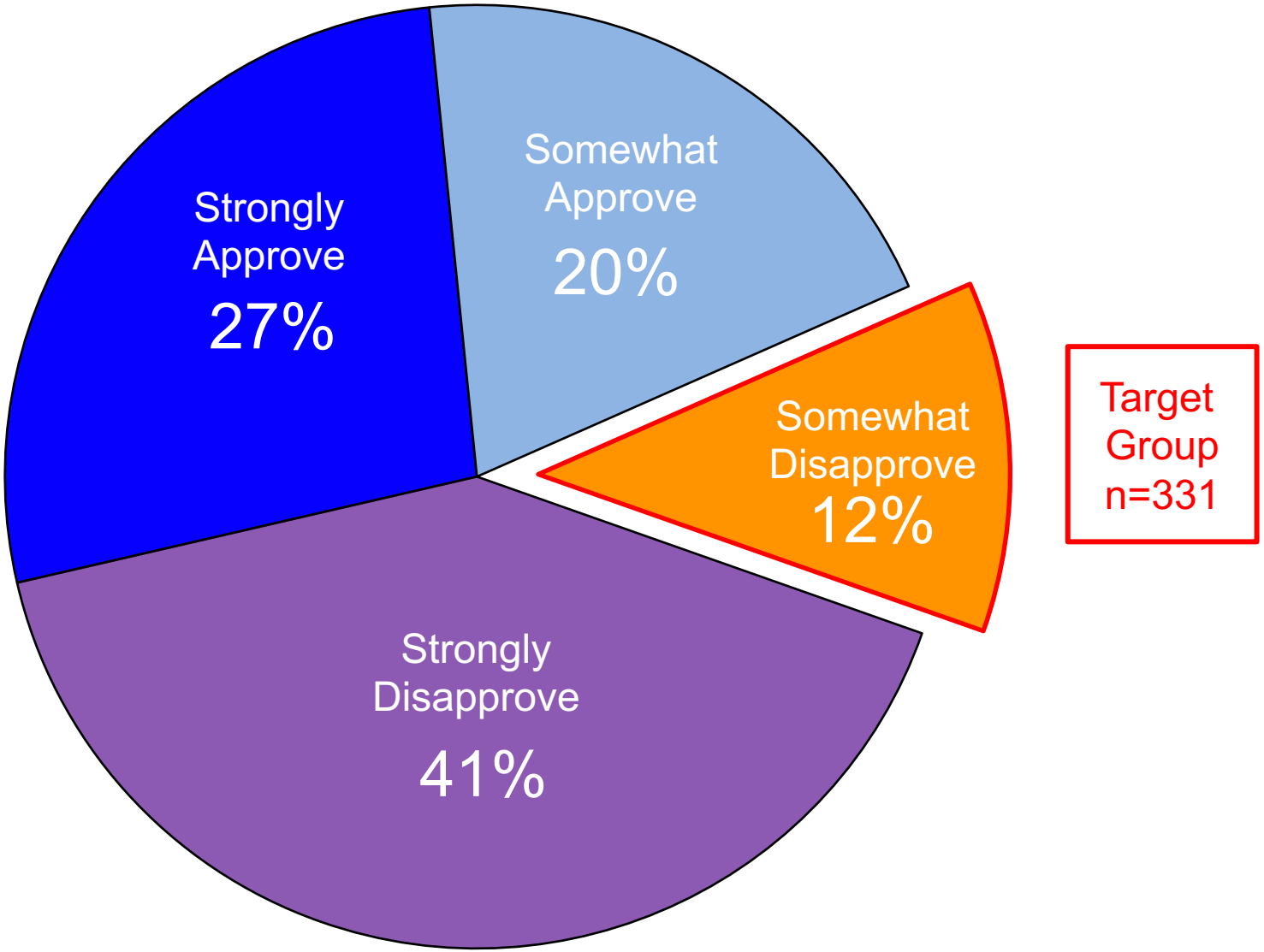
Trump Re-Elect by Trump Approval Rating





	Overall	DJT Job - Strongly approve	DJT Job - Somewhat approve	DJT Job - Somewhat Disapprove	DJT Job - Strongly disapprove
Trump	40%	95%	70%	7%	<1%
Democrat	49%	4%	8%	**64%**	96%
Undecided	11%	1%	22%	**29%**	4%

Trump Approval Rating



Target Group – Who They Are

Overall	Somewhat Disapprove Target (12%)
47% male	39% male
53% female	**61% female**
21% age 18-34	28% age 18-34
24% age 35-49	29% age 35-49
30% age 50-64	28% age 50-64
25% age 65+	15% age 65+
76% White	68% White
13% Black	15% Black
7% Hispanic	13% Hispanic
2% AAPI	4% AAPI
61% no degree	61% no degree
39% college graduate	39% college graduate
29% liberal	24% liberal
35% moderate	**53% moderate**
36% conservative	23% conservative
46% parents	57% parents
22% city	14% city
55% suburb	**64% suburb**
23% rural	21% rural

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Specific Attitudes Towards Trump

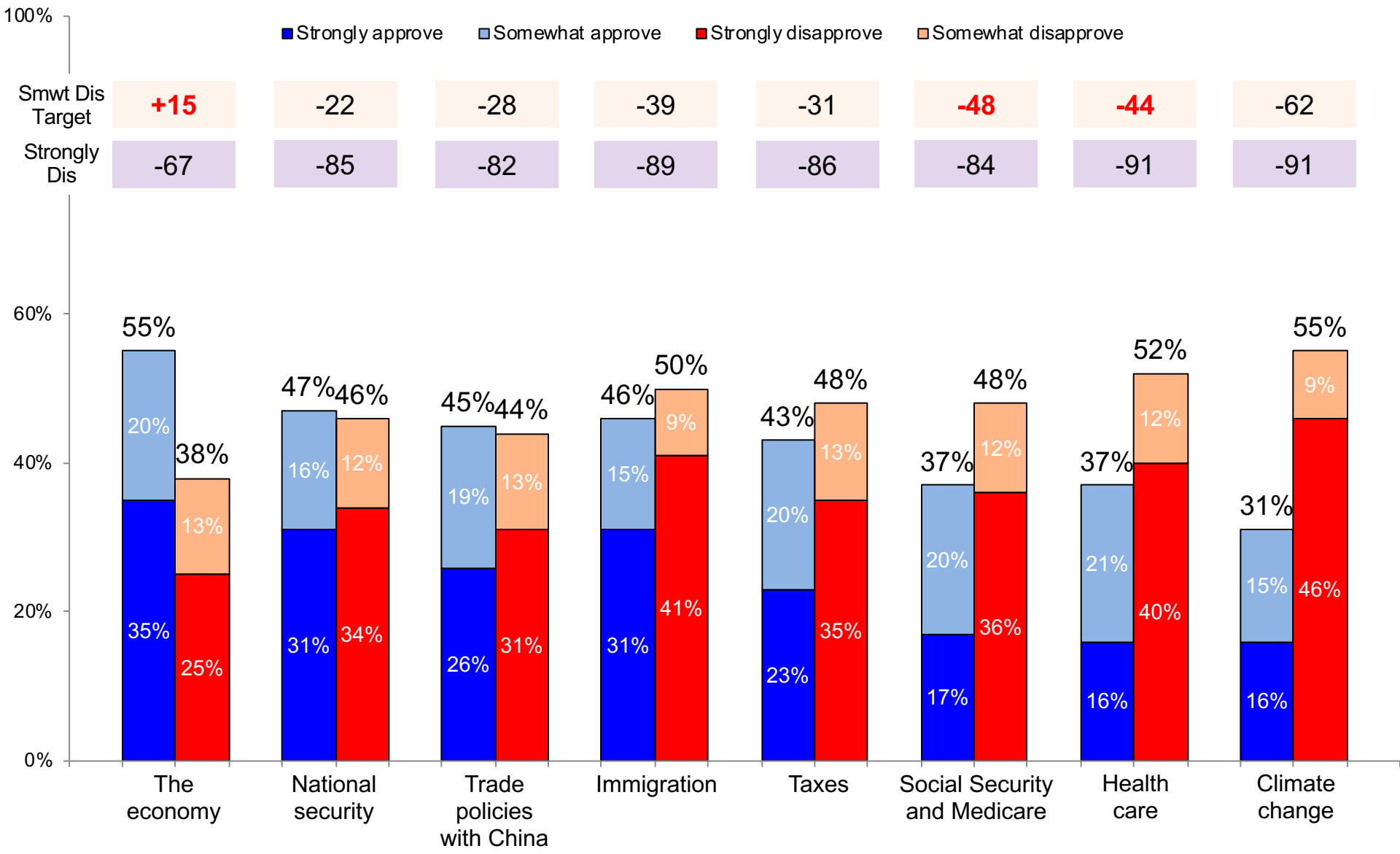
Open End – Trump's Biggest Accomplishment as President

	Overall	DJT – Somewhat Disapprove Target	DJT – Strongly Disapprove
Economy	30%	29%	8%
Immigration	7%	6%	2%
Keeping promises	6%	2%	1%
Putting America first	5%	<1%	1%
Taxes	4%	6%	1%
Keeping us safe	4%	4%	1%
Conservative issues	2%	<1%	1%
Foreign policy	1%	1%	1%
Health care	1%	<1%	<1%
Other	11%	9%	14%
Everything	<1%	0%	0%
No accomplishments	33%	29%	65%
Don't know	6%	17%	5%

Open End – Trump's Biggest Failure as President

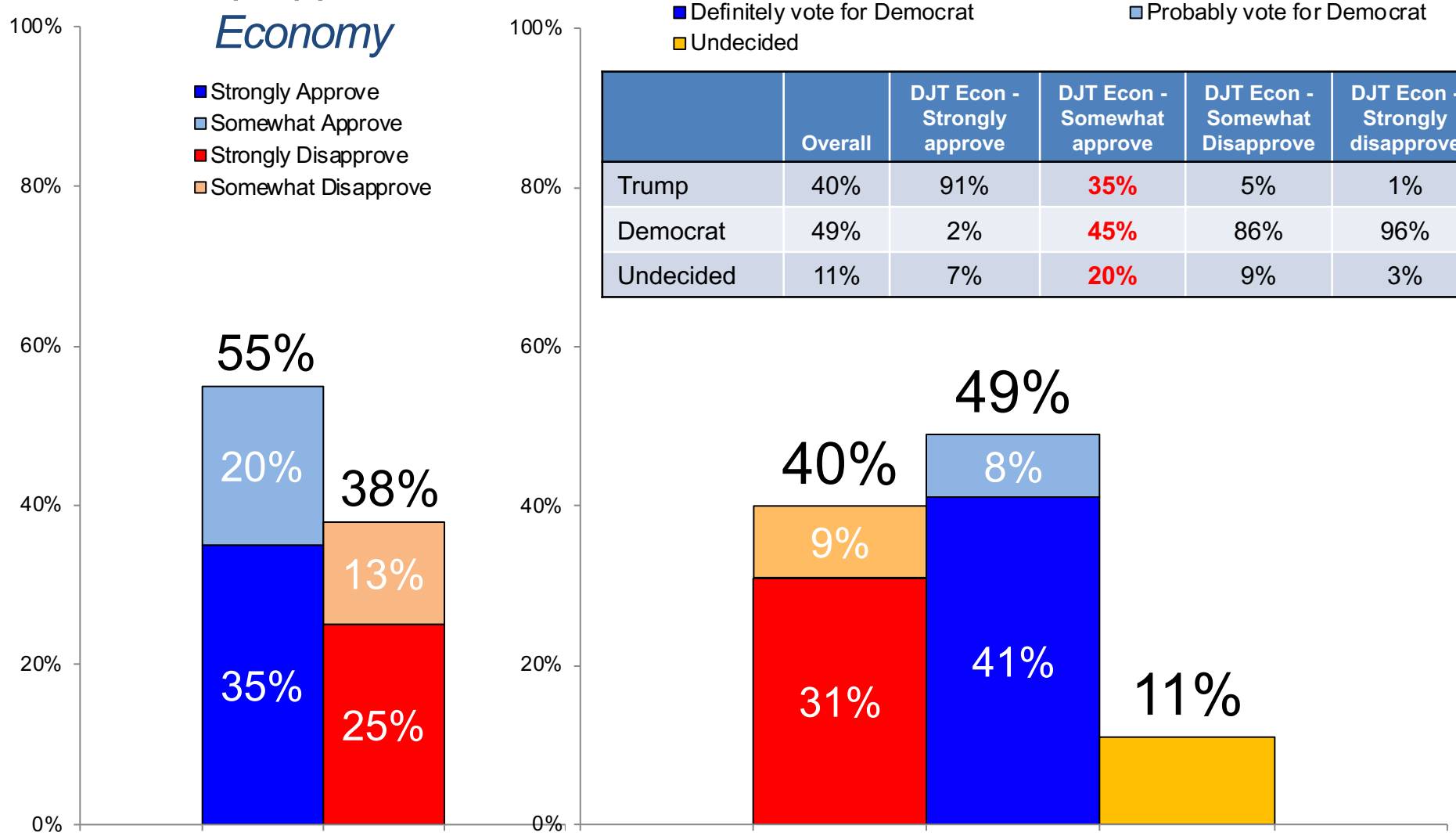
	Overall	DJT – Somewhat Disapprove Target	DJT – Strongly Disapprove
Divisiveness	16%	16%	21%
Personal characteristics	16%	19%	18%
General negative	6%	10%	9%
Immigration	6%	9%	5%
Tweets	5%	5%	<1%
Foreign policy	5%	7%	7%
Health care	**5%**	**5%**	4%
Corrupt	4%	2%	6%
Environment	2%	2%	4%
Taxes	1%	1%	1%
Other	13%	14%	13%
Everything	9%	6%	20%
No failures	12%	3%	1%
Don't know	6%	9%	1%

Trump Issue Job Approval



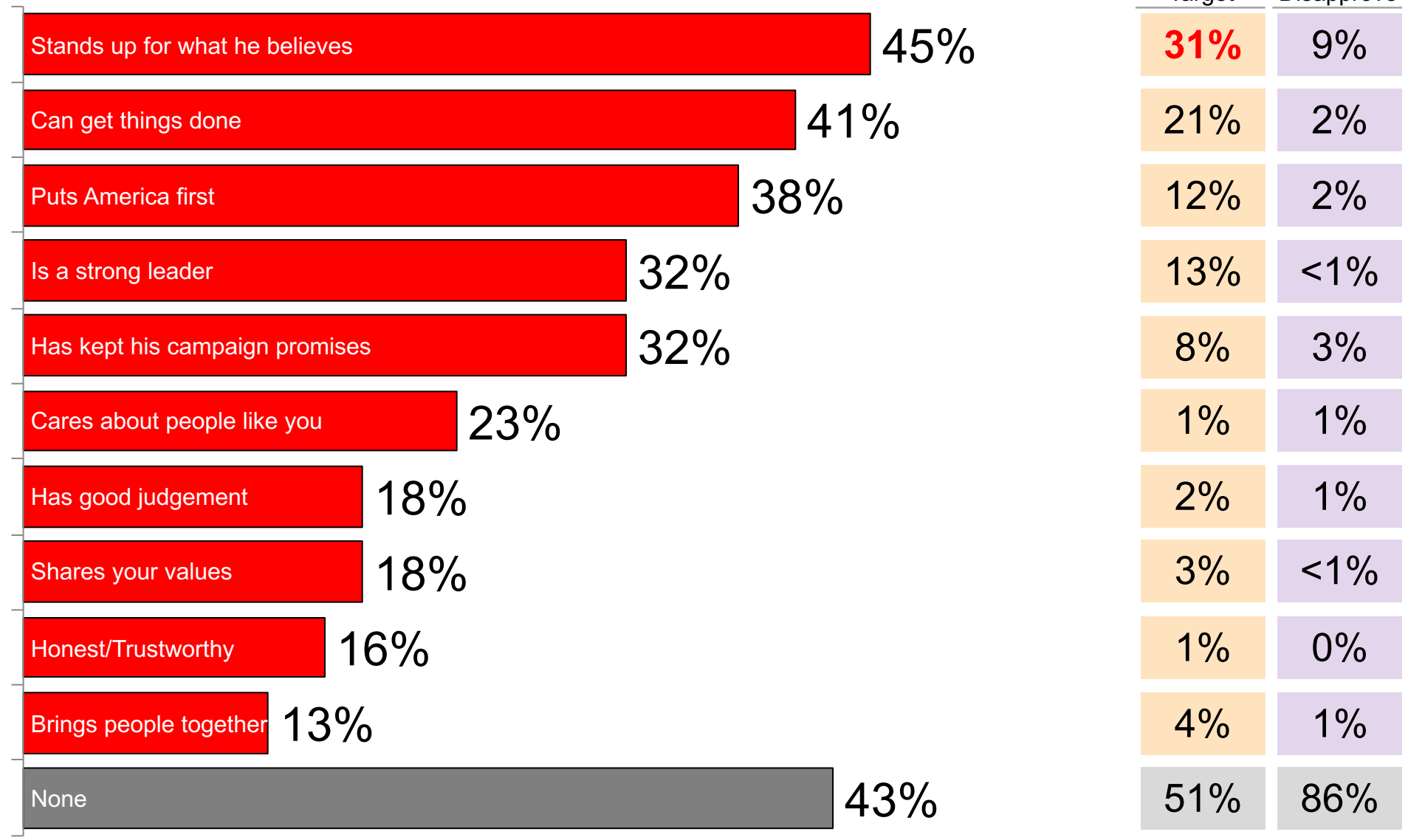
Trump Re-Elect by Trump Approval Rating on the Economy

Trump Approval – Economy



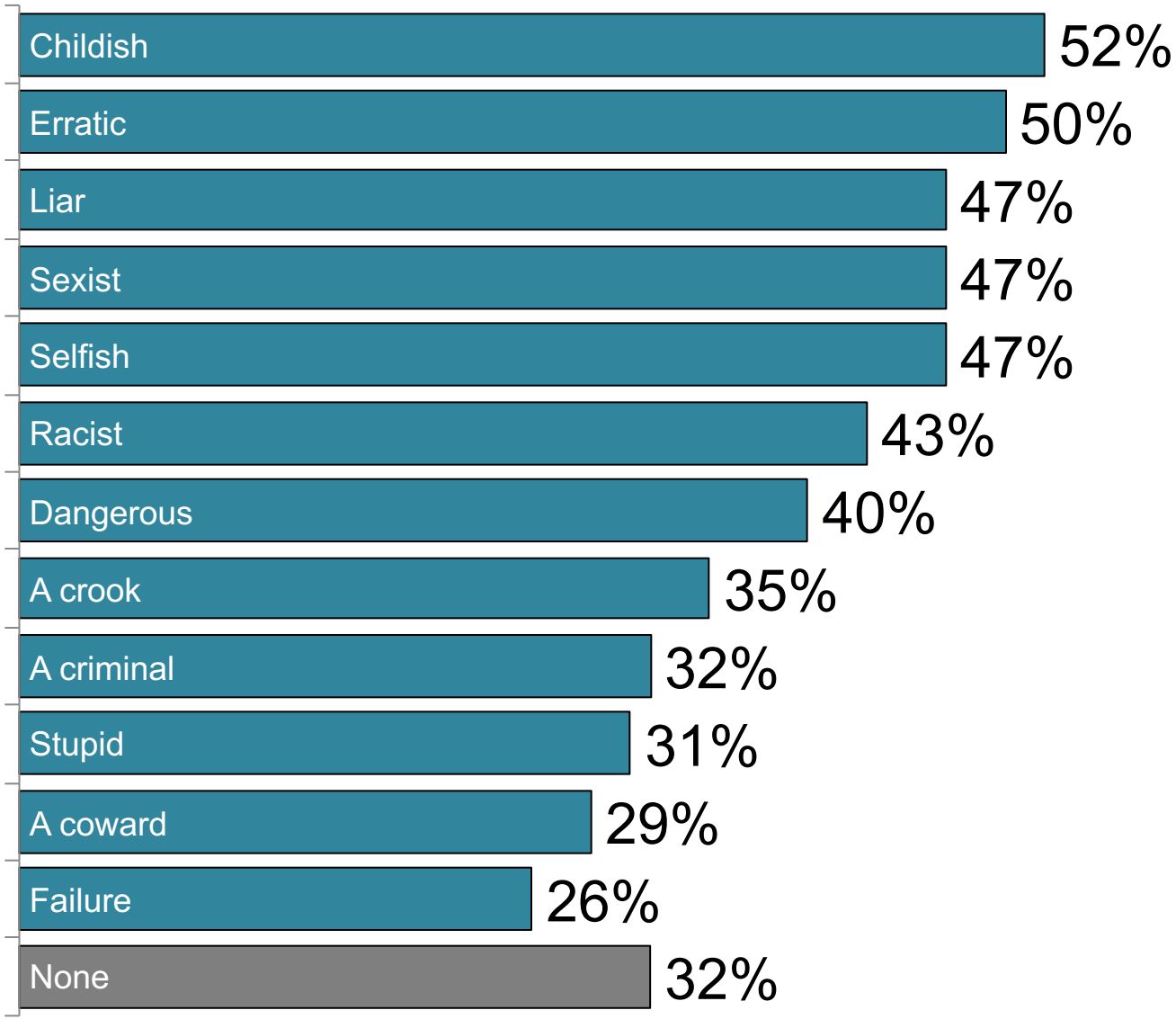
	Overall	DJT Econ - Strongly approve	DJT Econ - Somewhat approve	DJT Econ - Somewhat Disapprove	DJT Econ - Strongly disapprove
Trump	40%	91%	35%	5%	1%
Democrat	49%	2%	45%	86%	96%
Undecided	11%	7%	20%	9%	3%

Personal Characteristics and Qualities That Apply to Trump - Positives



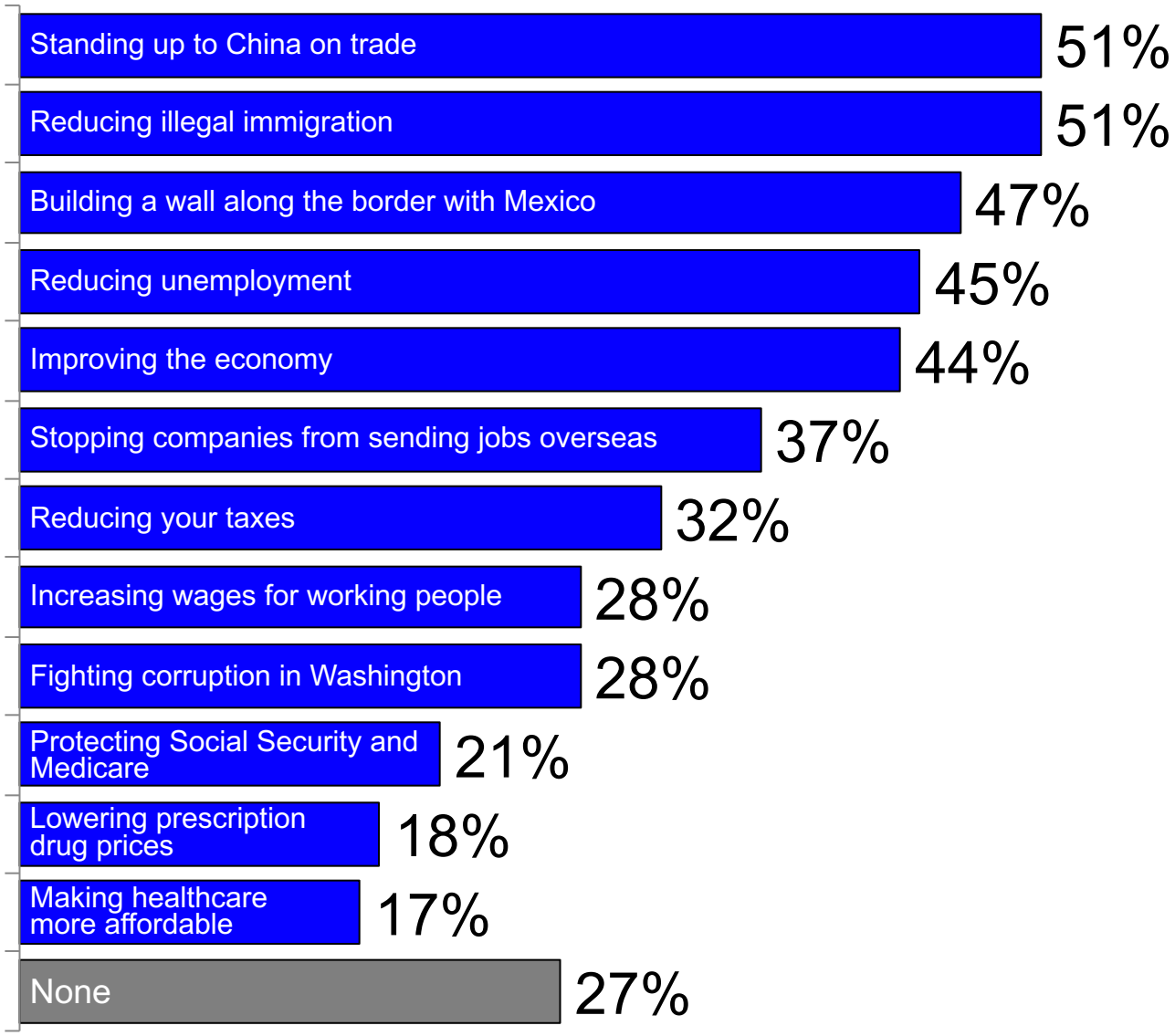
	Smwt Dis - Target	Strongly Disapprove
Stands up for what he believes	**31%**	9%
Can get things done	21%	2%
Puts America first	12%	2%
Is a strong leader	13%	<1%
Has kept his campaign promises	8%	3%
Cares about people like you	1%	1%
Has good judgement	2%	1%
Shares your values	3%	<1%
Honest/Trustworthy	1%	0%
Brings people together	4%	1%
None	51%	86%

Personal Characteristics and Qualities That Apply to Trump - Negatives



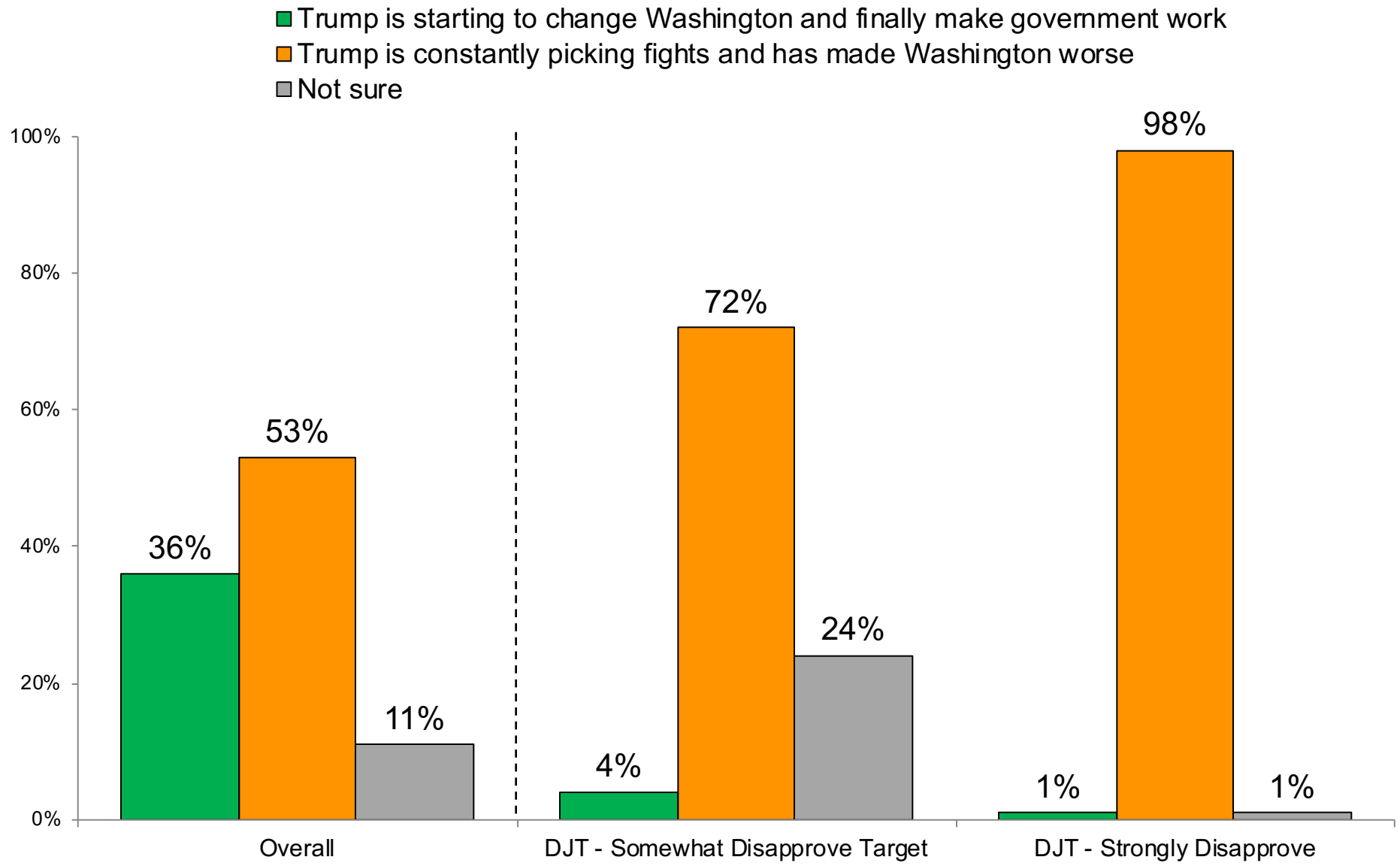
	Smwt Dis - Target	Strongly Disapprove
Childish	**59%**	88%
Erratic	**52%**	85%
Liar	47% ⟷	92%
Sexist	**53%**	88%
Selfish	**53%**	85%
Racist	42% ⟷	85%
Dangerous	35% ⟷	83%
A crook	**23%** ⟷	74%
A criminal	**18%** ⟷	70%
Stupid	20%	65%
A coward	15%	65%
Failure	10%	58%
None	8%	1%

Trump – Has Tried to Keep His Campaign Promises

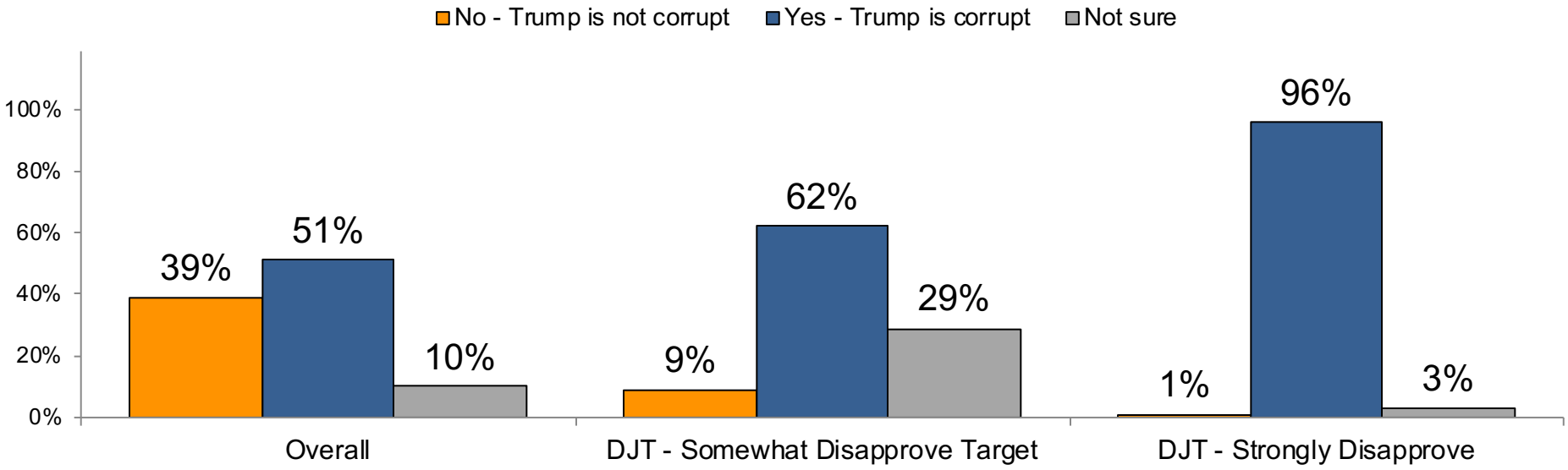


	Smwt Dis - Target	Strongly Disapprove
Standing up to China on trade	**40%**	24%
Reducing illegal immigration	35%	25%
Building a wall along the border with Mexico	35%	23%
Reducing unemployment	**31%**	9%
Improving the economy	**32%**	8%
Stopping companies from sending jobs overseas	24%	6%
Reducing your taxes	16%	5%
Increasing wages for working people	10%	2%
Fighting corruption in Washington	4%	2%
Protecting Social Security and Medicare	2%	2%
Lowering prescription drug prices	2%	1%
Making healthcare more affordable	3%	1%
None	23%	52%

Closer To Your Opinion About Donald Trump

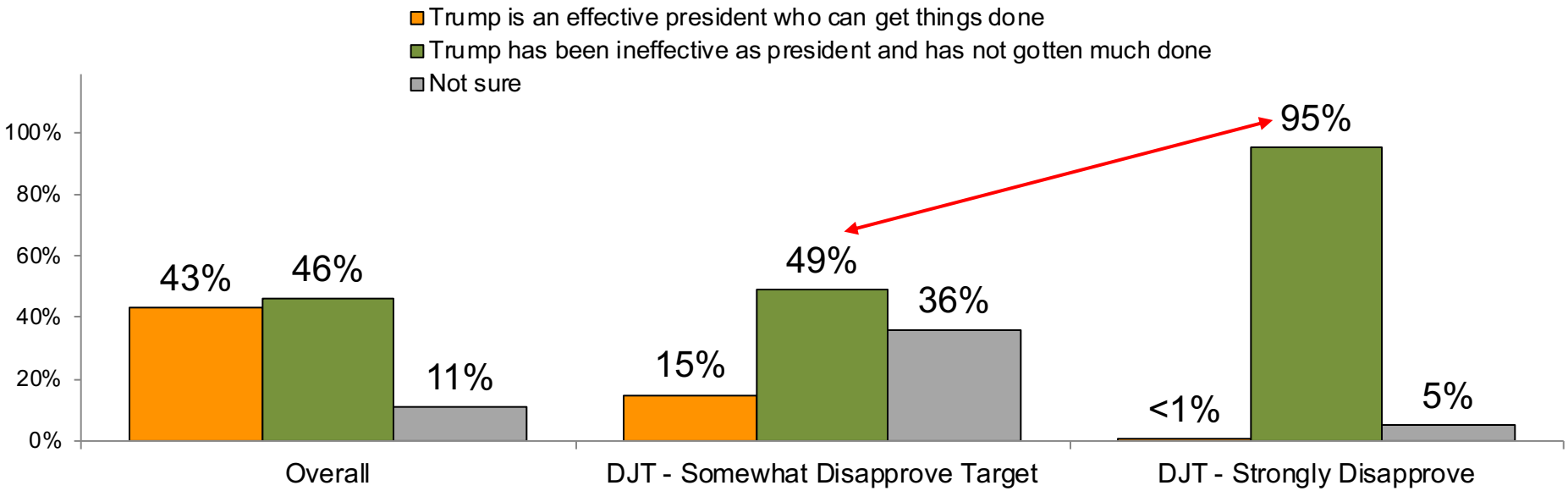


Donald Trump - Corruption



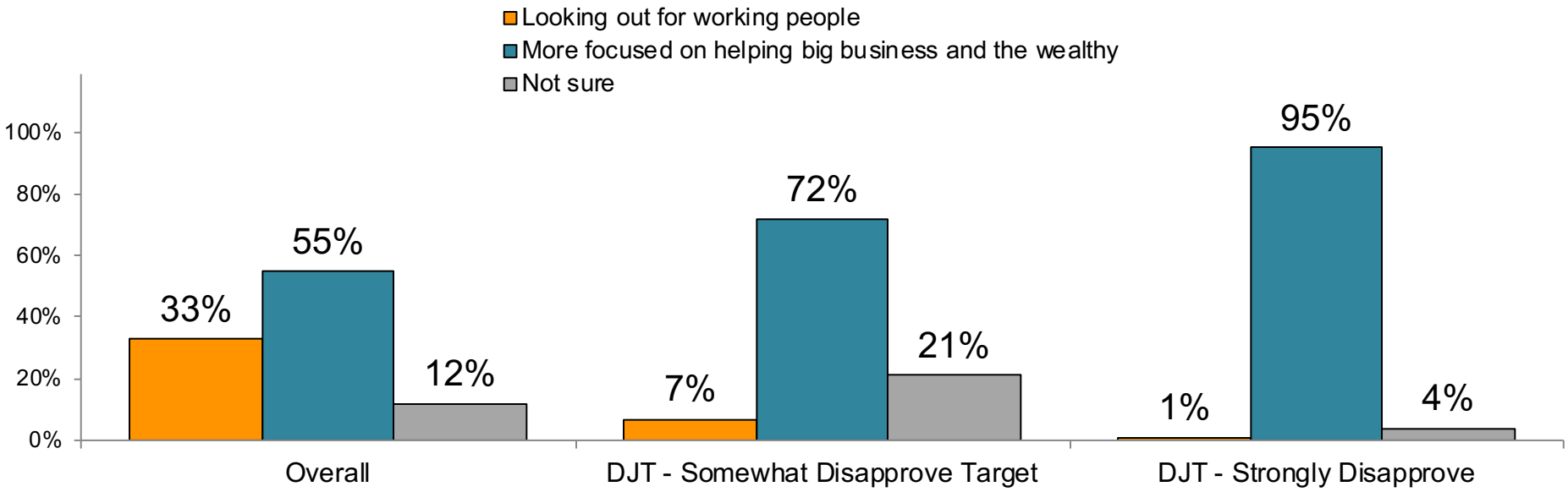
Top Three Reasons (n=768)	Overall	DJT – Smwt Dis Target	DJT – Strongly Disapprove
He is enriching himself while president	59%	**46%**	66%
He was impeached for extorting Ukraine	50%	33%	**57%**
He has done political favors for his largest campaign donors	40%	**41%**	39%
He paid a porn star hush money to help his election	33%	35%	32%
His campaign manager and personal lawyer went to jail	26%	34%	23%
None	2%	5%	1%

Donald Trump – Effectiveness



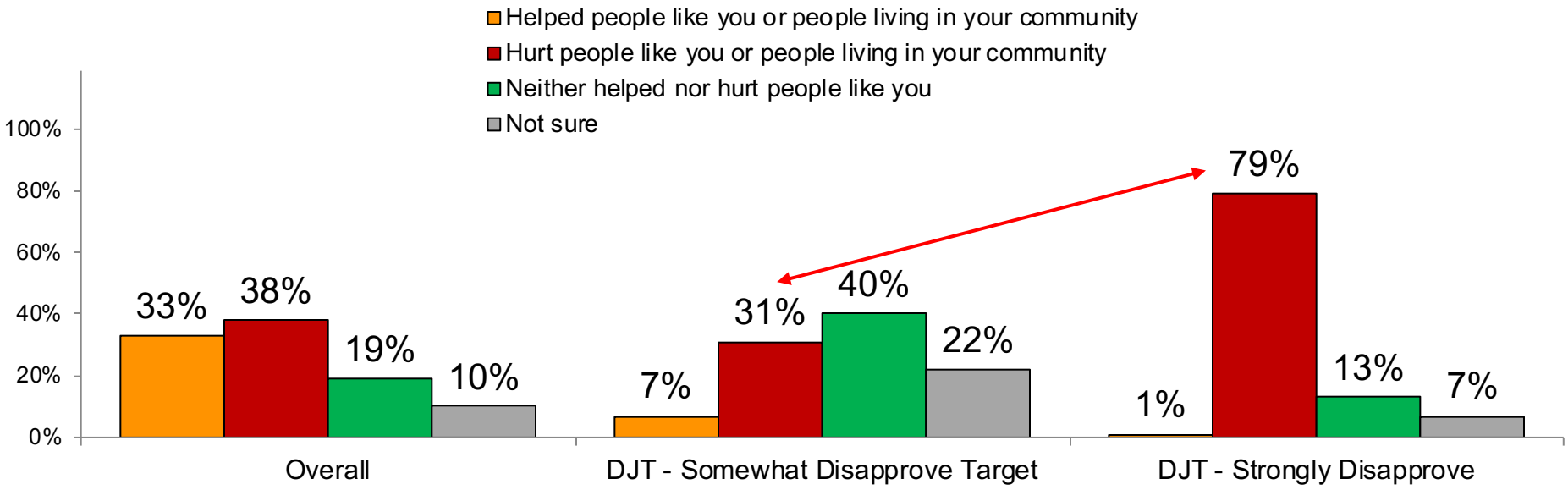
Top Three Reasons (n=695)	Overall	DJT – Smwt Dis Target	DJT – Strongly Disapprove
He insults anyone who disagrees with him	80%	**65%**	81%
He doesn't have a real plan to solve problems	64%	41%	68%
His leadership style is too chaotic	63%	**57%**	65%
People in his administration keep leaving or getting fired	46%	**47%**	46%
His constant use of Twitter	27%	39%	25%
Democrats refuse to work with him	6%	17%	4%
None	1%	2%	1%

Donald Trump – Working People or Big Business and the Wealthy



Top Three Reasons (n=818)	Overall	DJT – Smwt Dis Target	DJT – Strongly Disapprove
His tax cuts benefit the wealthy and big corporations	78%	**62%**	85%
He is proposing to cut SS and Medicare to pay for his tax cuts	55%	40%	63%
His failure to reduce healthcare costs	42%	40%	44%
The cost of living keeps going up for working families	37%	**47%**	34%
Wages and salaries are not increasing	34%	36%	33%
He is a Republican	18%	22%	16%
None	4%	6%	2%

Donald Trump – Helped or Hurt People Like You



Top Three Reasons (n=565)	Overall	DJT – Smwt Dis Target	DJT – Strongly Disapprove
His tax policies	62%	46%	63%
His health care policies	58%	**52%**	60%
His cuts to Social Security and Medicare	47%	**52%**	48%
The cost of living keeps going up	46%	**57%**	46%
His trade war with China	36%	26%	37%
His anti-immigration policies	32%	18%	34%
None	1%	2%	<1%

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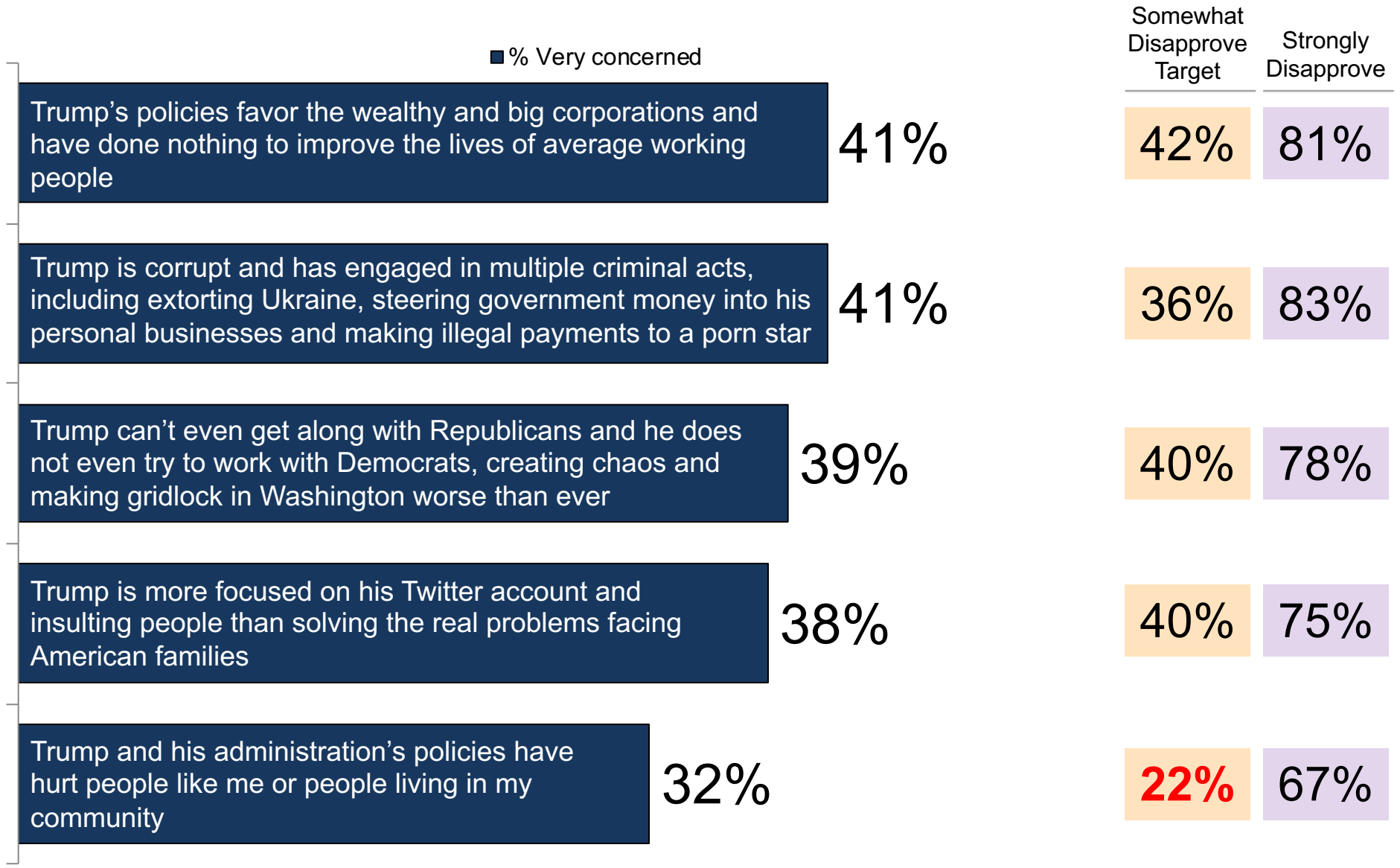
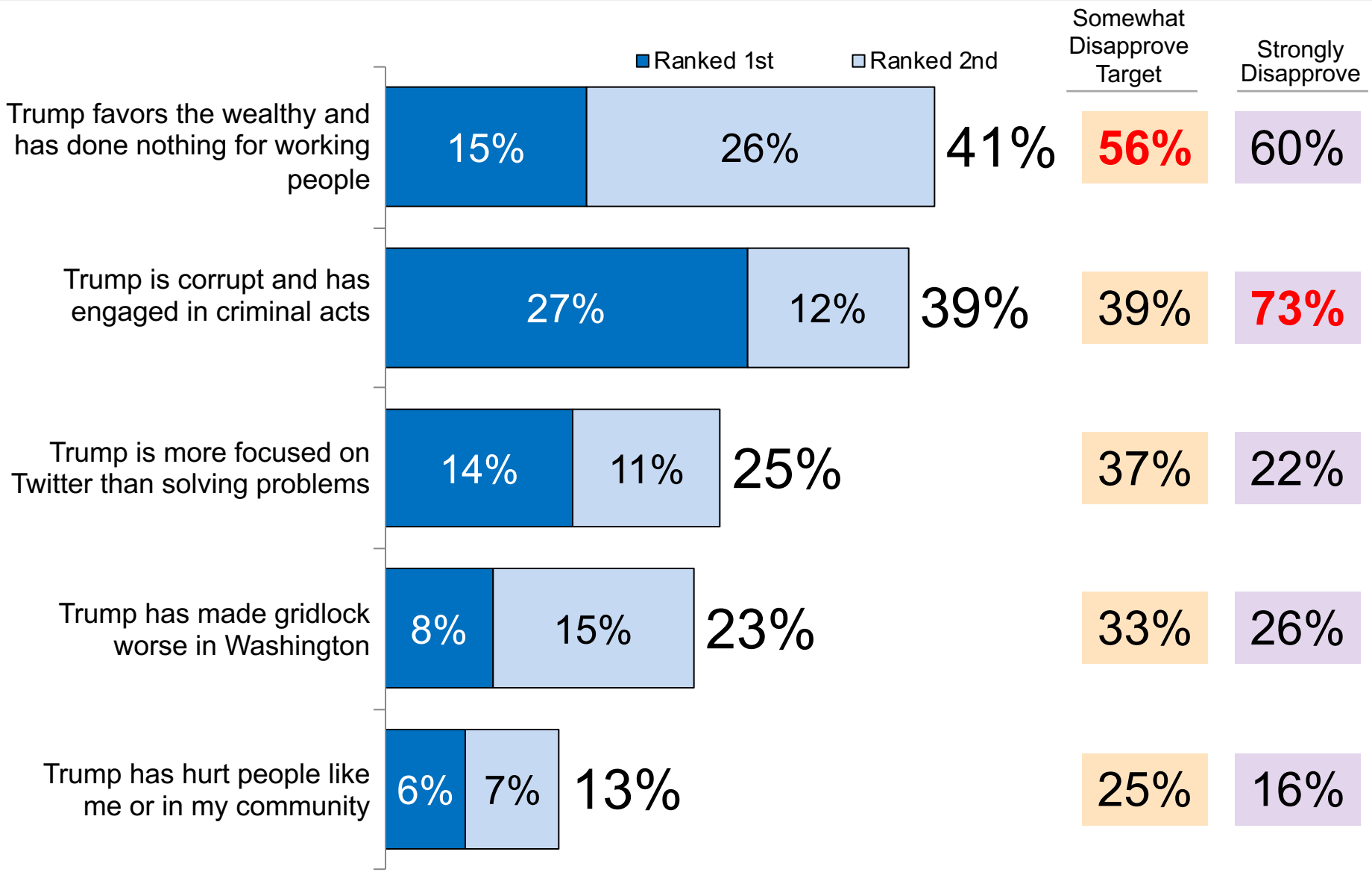
Messaging

Concerns About Re-Electing Trump



Biggest Concerns About Re-Electing Trump - Ranked



Message Hierarchy

Chaos has a Price

The chaos of the Trump administration is having serious consequences for real people because there is no progress on the issues affecting working families. The cost of living, especially health care costs, continues to increase while wages lag behind. The insults, tweeting, childish behavior and erratic leadership has a cost that real Americans are forced to pay every day.

Prioritizing the Wealthy and Corporate America Hurts Working People

The Trump administration prioritizes the needs of the wealthy and corporate America at the expense of average Americans. From his tax cuts to his healthcare policies to proposed cuts to Social Security and Medicare, Trump has shown he is not looking out for working people.

Do's and Don'ts

- Merging Trump's temperament and chaotic leadership with outcomes for real people on issues like health care, wages, cost of living and protecting Social Security is a more promising message than focusing solely on Trump's personality.

- These target voters who somewhat disapprove of Trump do not believe he is starting to change Washington and making government work. On the contrary they believe he has made Washington worse, and in a way that has failed to improve their lives. However, while voters who strongly disapprove of Trump believe he and his administration have damaged the lives of themselves or people in their community, this view is not shared by the target voters who somewhat disapprove of his performance.

- While target voters believe Trump's policies favor the wealthy at the expense of the middle class, it's a stretch for these target voters to say that he has been an abject failure, especially on the economy. In fact, they give him some credit on the economy. Furthermore, they rate both the national economy and their own personal economic situation positively.

- To the extent corruption is a message for these target voters, it should be less about Trump's destruction of governmental norms, Ukraine or impeachment and more about his efforts to enrich himself and his wealthy contributors.

Do's and Don'ts Continued

Do's

Trump has not changed Washington for the better. He has made gridlock worse.

Trump's chaotic leadership, insults, childish behavior and tweeting have prevented progress on issues that matter to working people.

Trump's policies benefit the wealthy and corporations--he's not looking out for working people.

Trump has failed to help the middle class on issues like health care and wages.

Trump is corrupt and personally enriching himself as president along with his political contributors.

Trump has not kept his campaign promises to protect Social Security, lower drug prices and increase wages

Don'ts

Trump has been a failure as president.

Trump is dangerous and temperamentally unfit to be president.

Trump's policies are hurting people and destroying lives.

Trump's economic policies have been a failure.

Trump is a criminal who engaged in criminal acts by extorting Ukraine.

Trump has broken all his campaign promises

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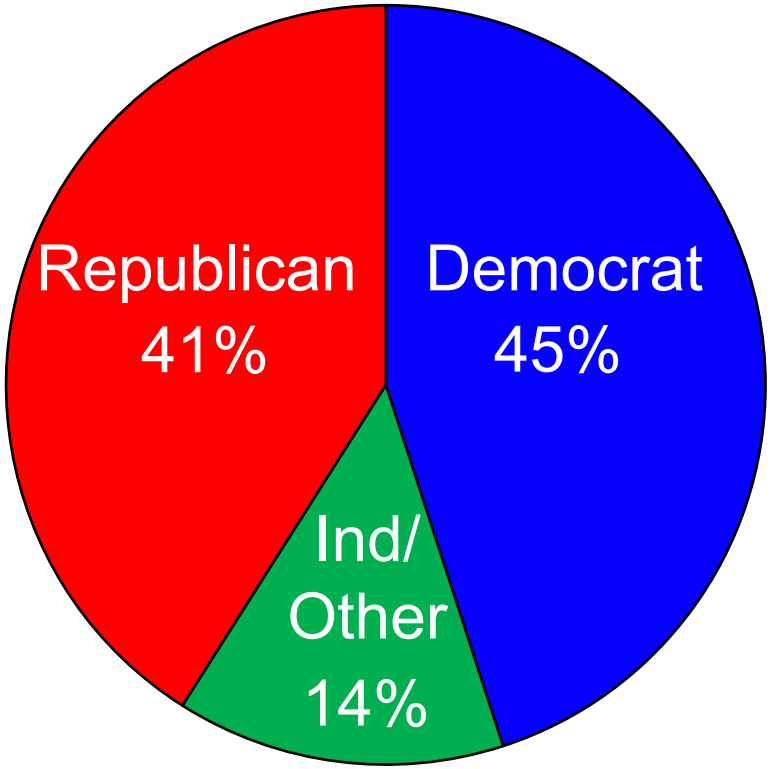
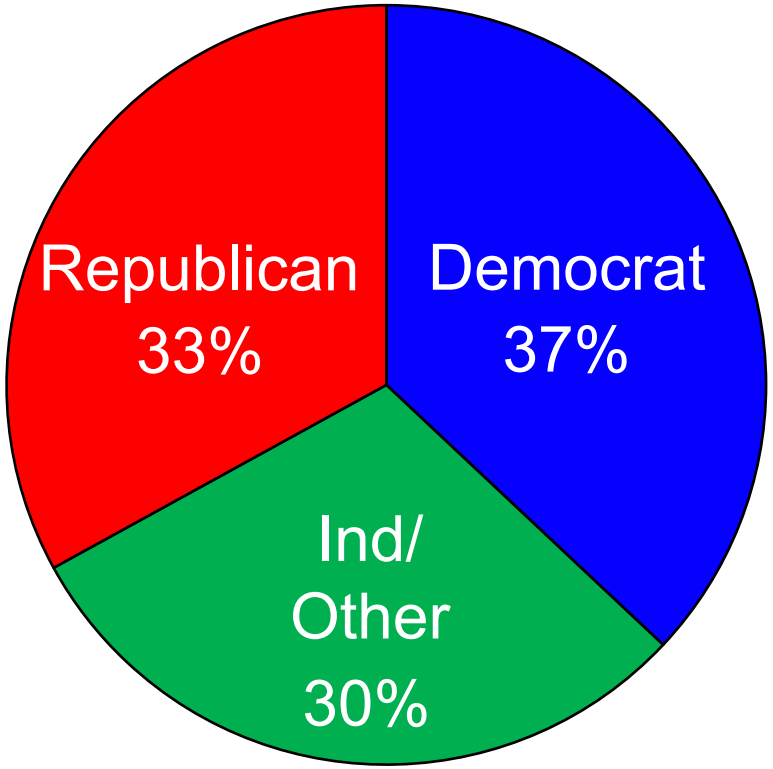
Appendix

Party Identification

Party ID with Leans



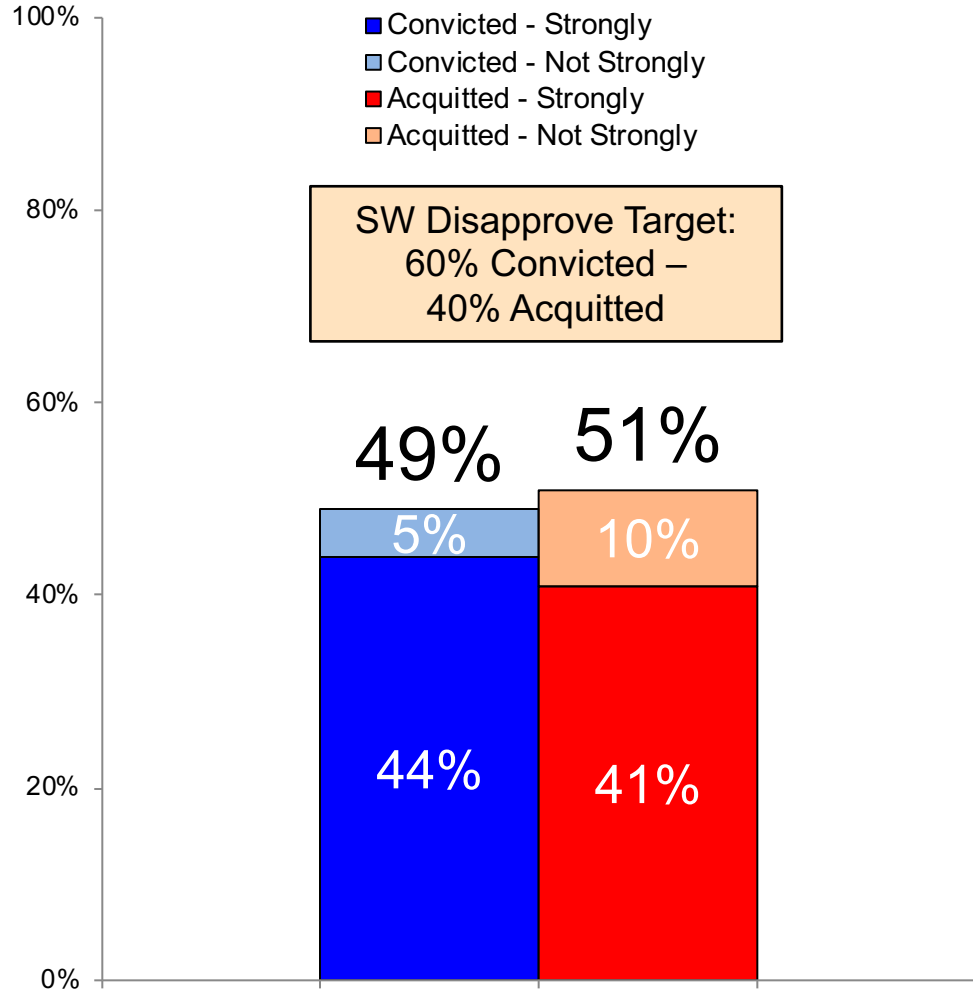
Party ID without Leans



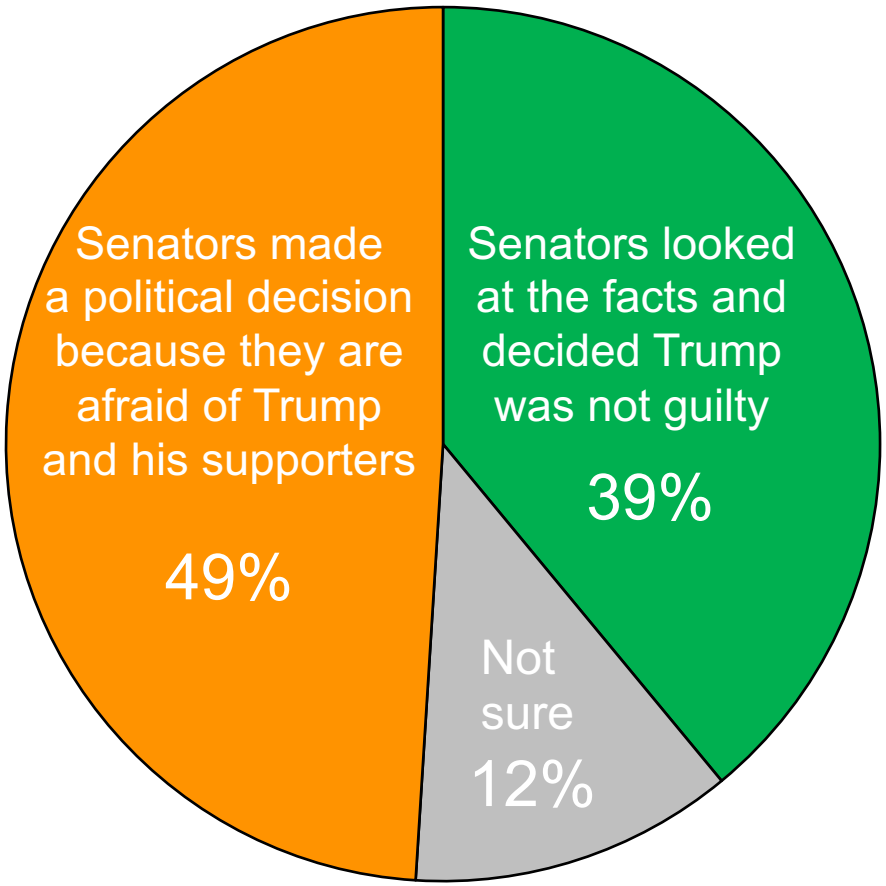
Party referenced throughout remainder of presentation

Impeachment

Do you think Trump should have been...?

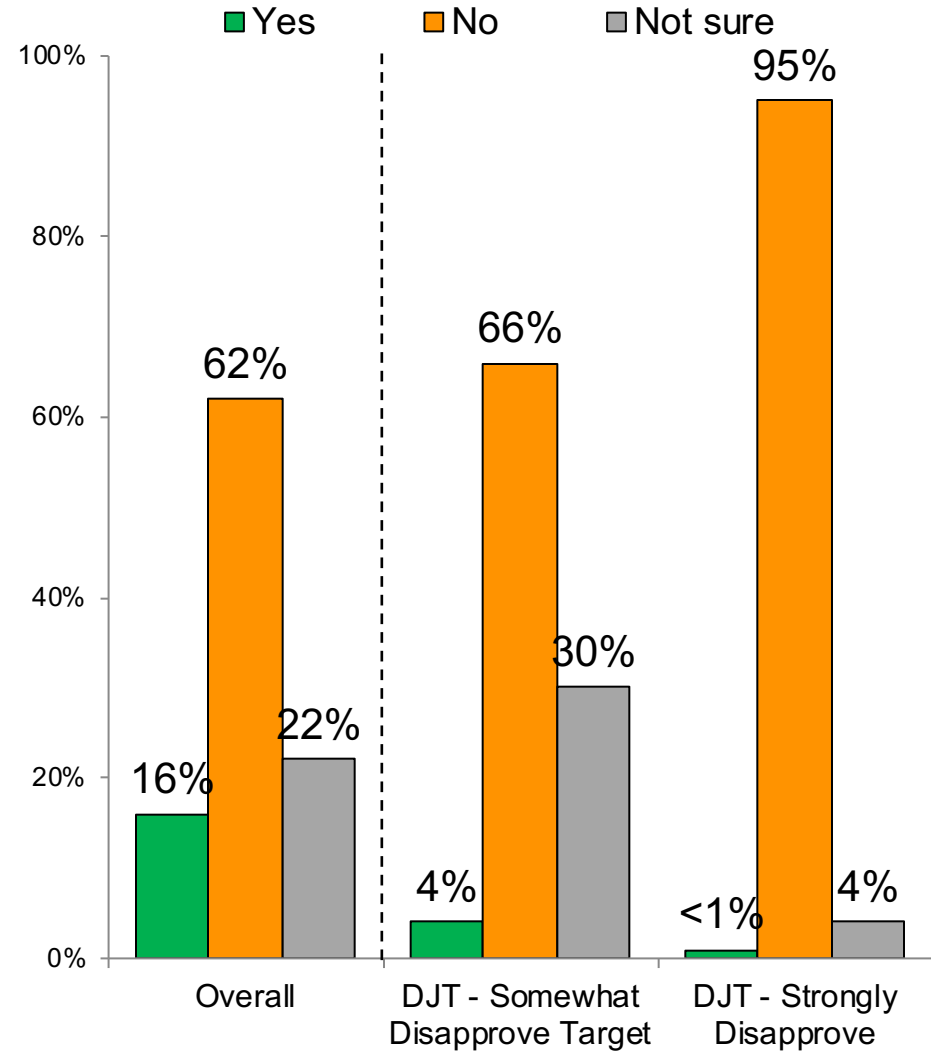


Which of the following do you think is the reason Senate Republicans decided to acquit Trump?

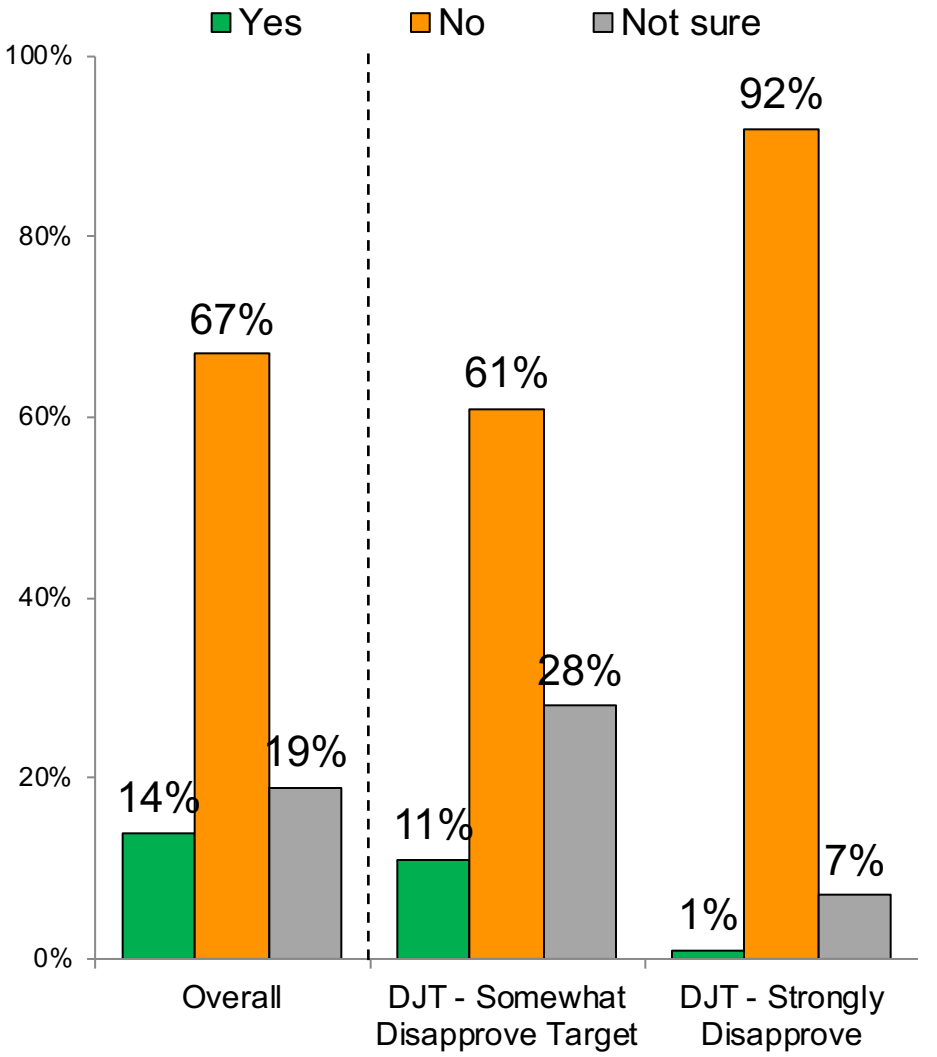


Will Keep Promise In His Second Term

Making Health Care More Affordable (n=1238)

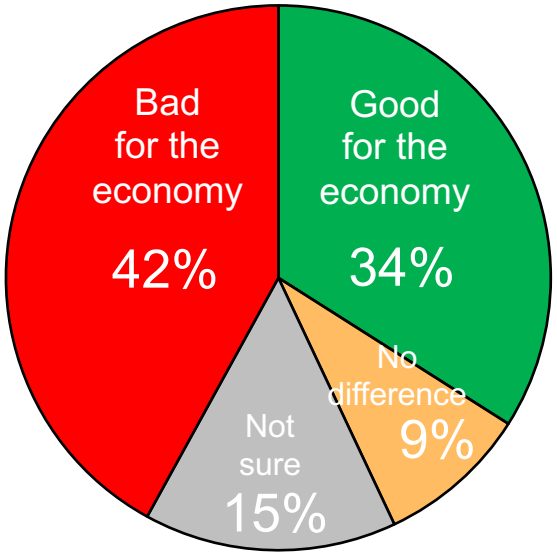


Increase Wages for Working People (n=1076)

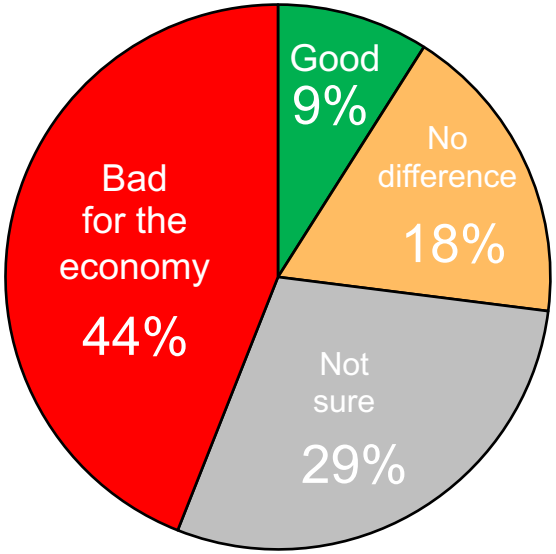
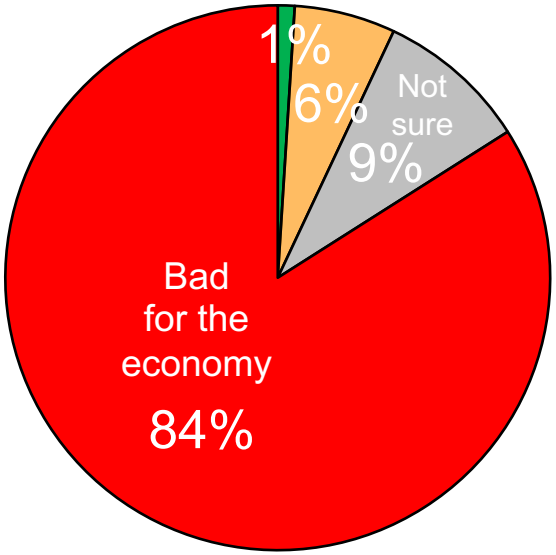


Trump's Trade War with Other Countries

Overall



DJT – Somewhat Disapprove Target



DJT – Strongly Disapprove