



WINNING THE IMMIGRATION DEBATE DURING COVID-19

*Key findings from a national survey among 1,011 registered voters
Conducted June 30 to July 5, 2020*

Overview: The Pandemic and Public Opinion on Immigration

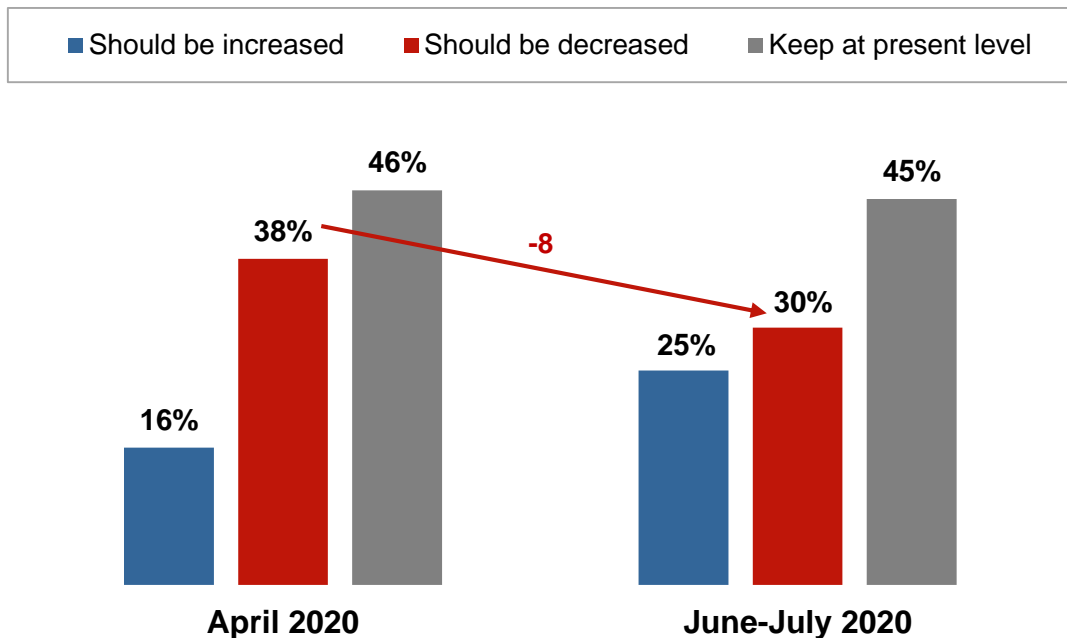
- CAPAF's April survey revealed that the pandemic had caused little change in perceptions of immigrants in the United States, including the undocumented, with continued strong support for immigration reform and DACA. However, Americans did express caution about allowing new people into the country.
- This poll reveals a substantially improved environment since April, with support for immigration and immigrants largely back to pre-pandemic levels. Americans increasingly recognize immigrants' contributions during the current crisis.
- Voters embrace many Democratic immigration initiatives, while rejecting significant elements of the Trump immigration agenda.



PUBLIC OPINION ON IMMIGRATION AND THE CORONAVIRUS

Public opinion shifts in favor of increasing new immigration.

Preferred Level of Immigration



Even with unemployment high, few want undocumented immigrants to leave or feel that they take jobs from American citizens.

Attitudes toward Undocumented Immigrants Currently Living in the United States

**April
2020**

There should be a way for them to stay in the country legally, if certain requirements are met. **74%**

68%

They should not be allowed to stay in the country legally. **26%**

32%

Undocumented immigrants mostly fill jobs American citizens don't want. **71%**
84% Latinx, 76% Blacks, 68% whites

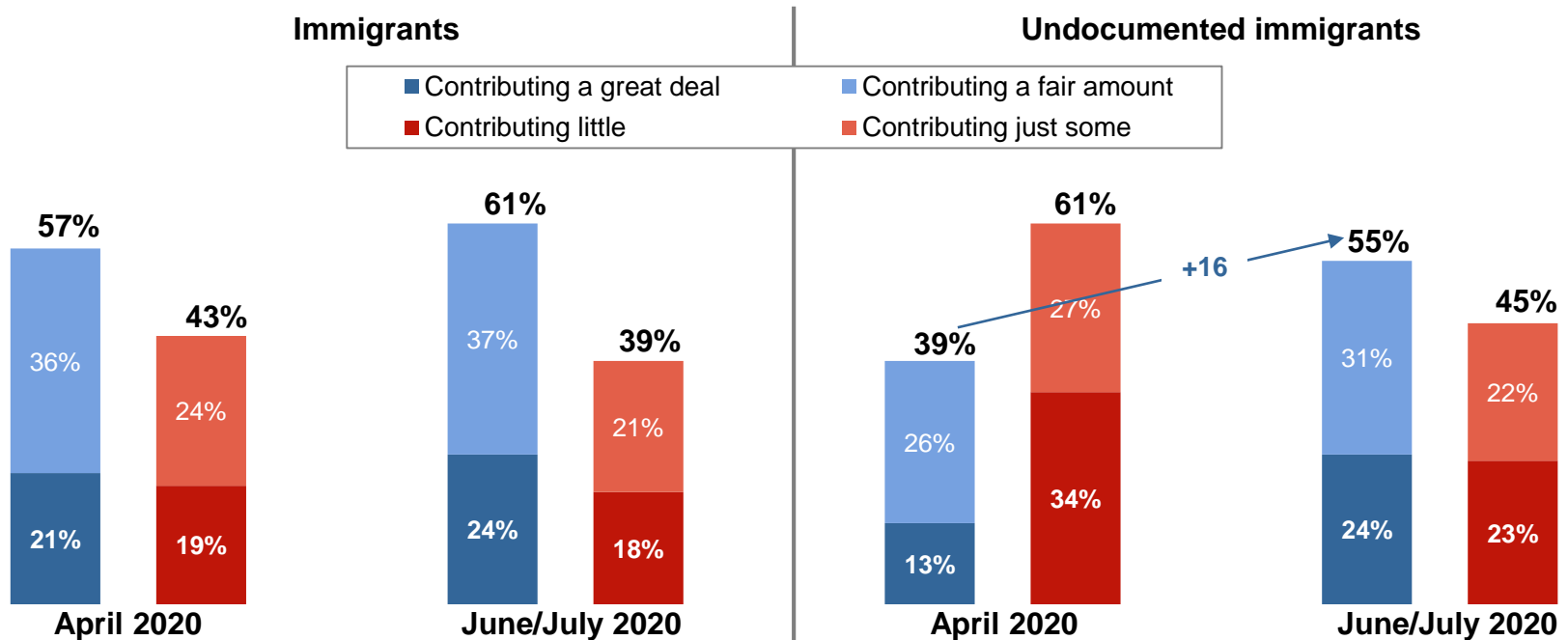
67%

Undocumented immigrants mostly fill jobs that American citizens would like. **29%**

33%

More Americans recognize the critical contribution of immigrants providing essential services during COVID-19

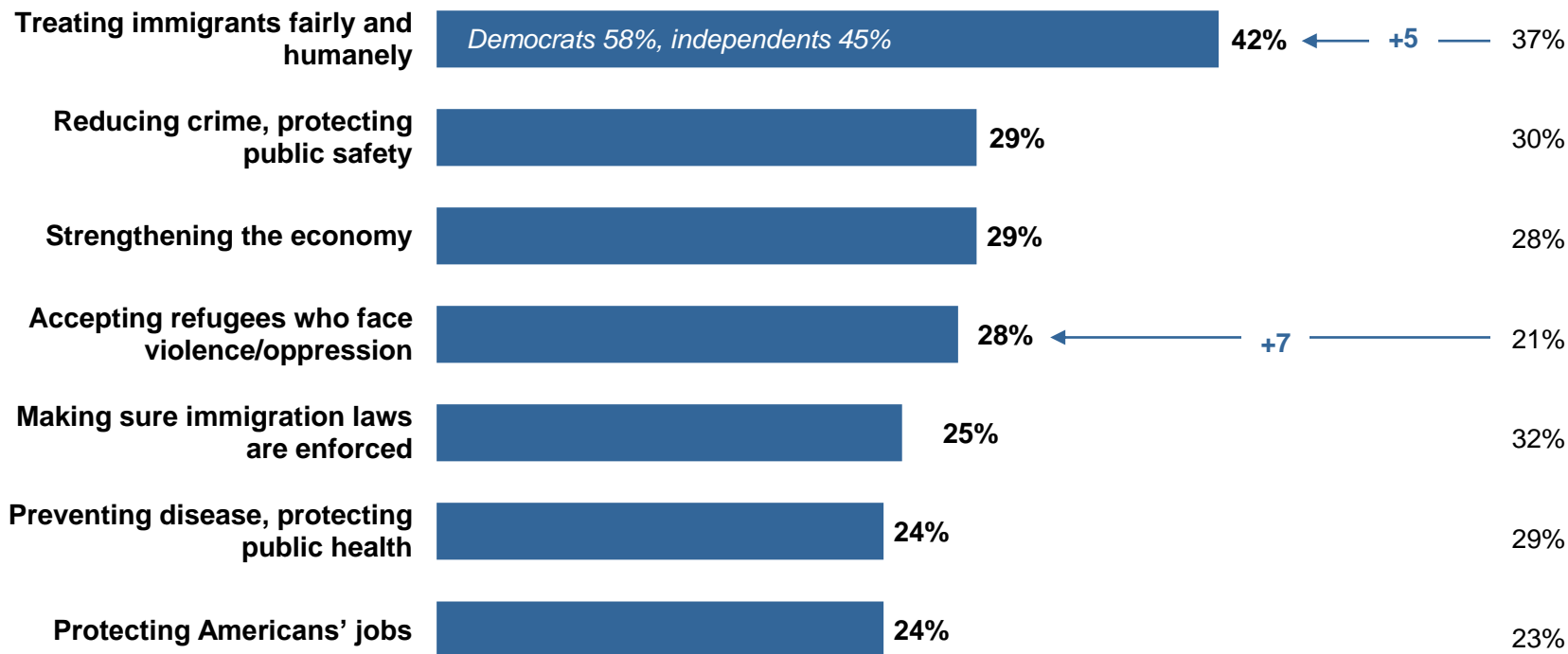
How much are these people contributing to providing medical care to people with the coronavirus, maintaining public services, and keeping grocery stores and other essential businesses open?



Treating immigrants fairly and humanely is a top priority for voters.

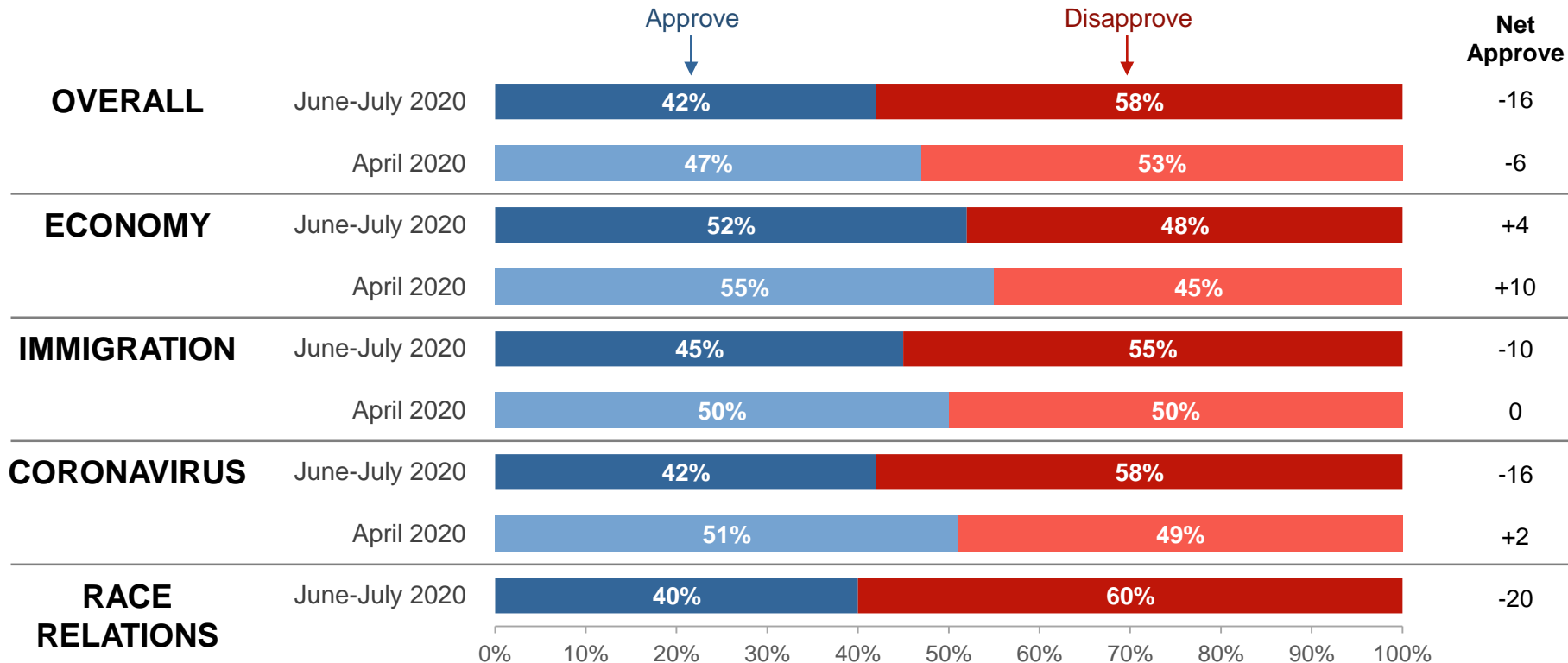
TWO Immigration Policy Goals that Should Have Highest Priority

April
2020



Trump is losing ground, including on immigration.

Assessments of Donald Trump

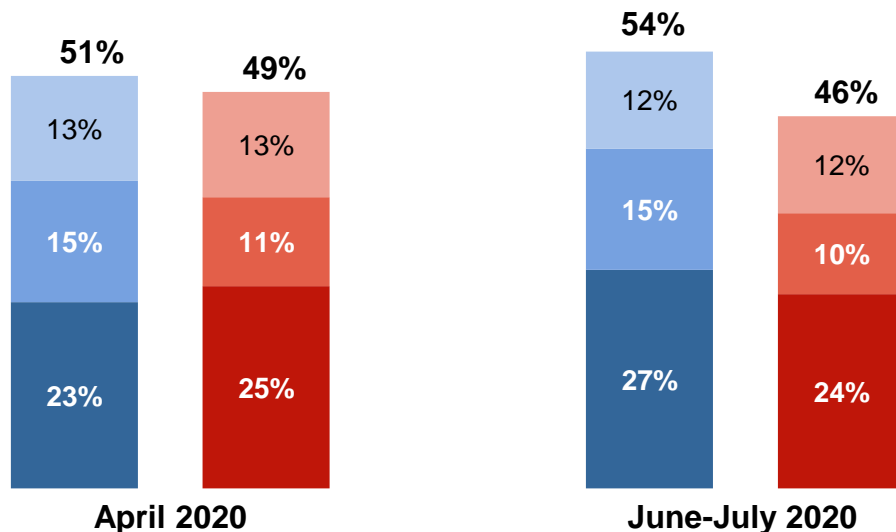


A positive shift on public opinion may represent unrealized opportunity for Democrats.

Which party do you have more confidence in to deal with the issue of immigration?

DEMOCRATS: ■ Much more ■ Somewhat more ■ A little more
REPUBLICANS: ■ Much more ■ Somewhat more ■ A little more

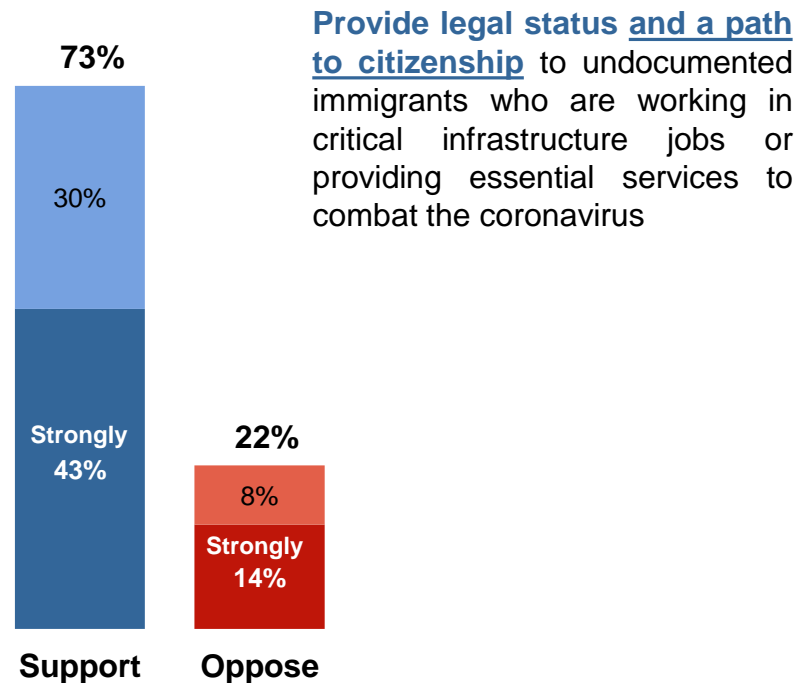
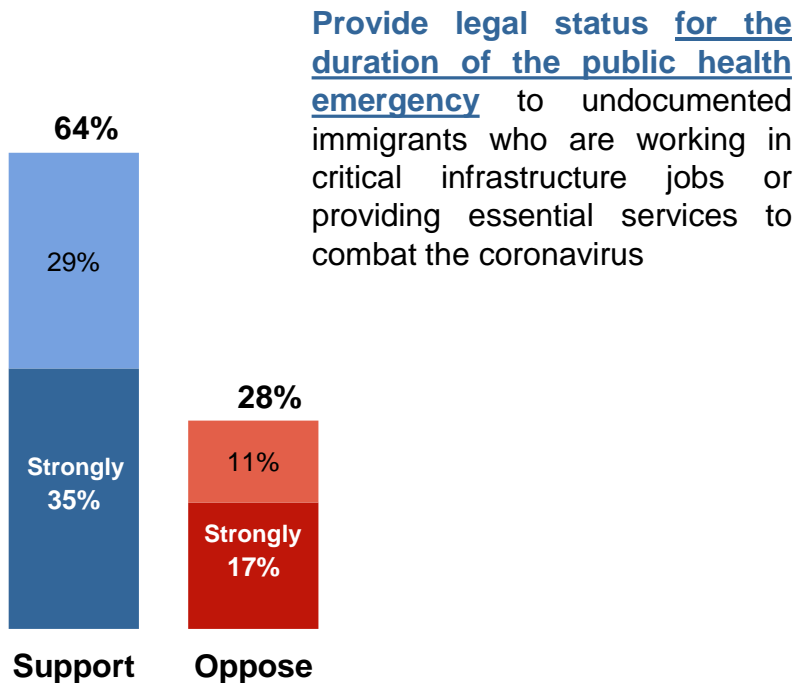
Democrats' growing advantage with voters on immigration trails behind the larger positive shift in immigration attitudes.



ESSENTIAL WORKERS

There is broad support for protecting critical infrastructure workers, especially for a path to citizenship.

Support for Immigration Policies of Democrats in Congress

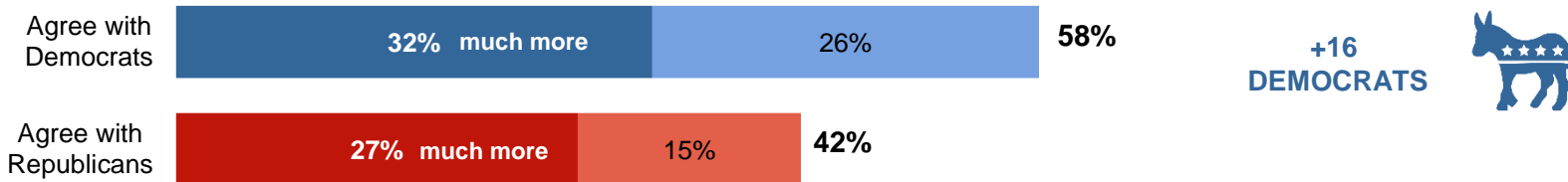


Voters agree with the Democratic position to provide legal status for essential workers.

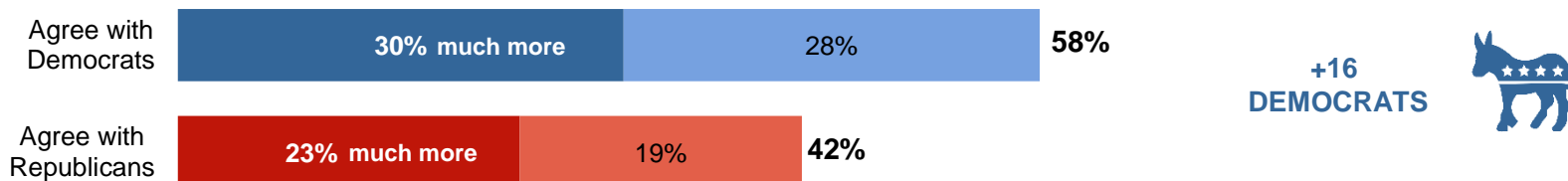
In each pair, which do you agree with more?

Republicans say (same in both pairs) **the Democrats want to reward people who entered our country illegally** with citizenship, including many who could be public safety risks. We should not offer amnesty to millions of illegal immigrants, especially when it would jeopardize the economic and physical security of American citizens.

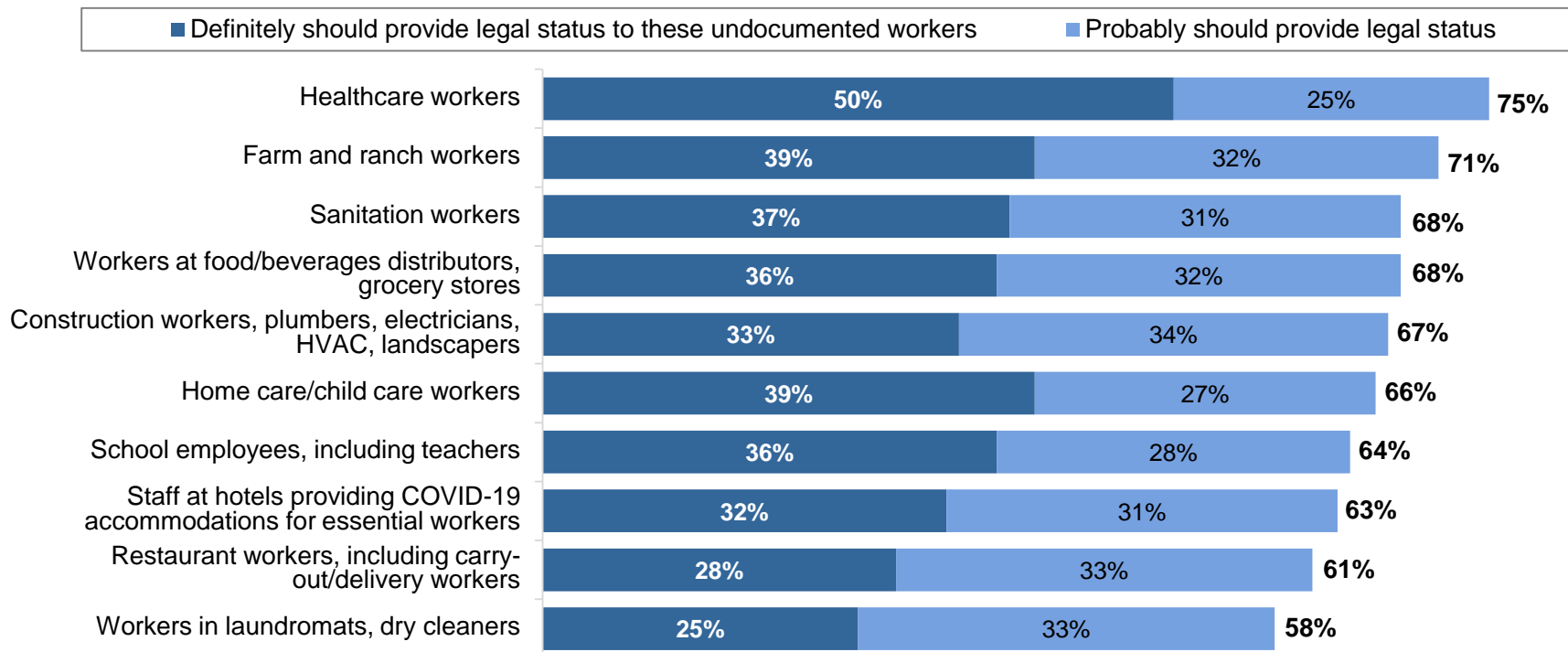
Democrats say immigrants have played a critical role alongside other Americans as essential workers on the front-lines of the current public health crisis. They stepped up for our country when we needed them most and have earned the opportunity to become permanent members of the American family.



Democrats say as our country works to rebuild our economy, **immigrant workers who were essential in the pandemic are going to be essential to rebuilding our economy**. We should extend a pathway to citizenship to essential workers now because we need them to help move our nation forward.



There is strong support for providing legal status to a diverse group of essential workers.

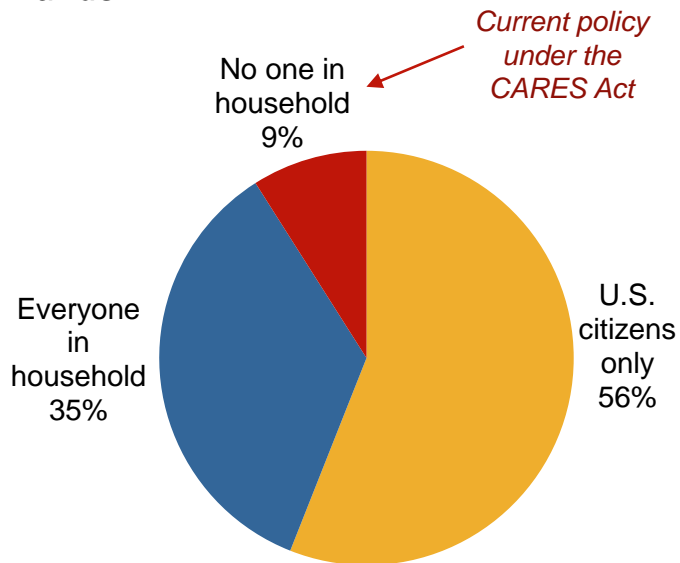




CASH ASSISTANCE AND MIXED-STATUS HOUSEHOLDS

Voters want citizens to receive federal relief benefits.

In households with citizens and undocumented immigrants, these people should be eligible to receive cash assistance from federal coronavirus relief funds:



My bigger concern about the next coronavirus legislation is:

Some **U.S. citizens will be denied benefits** based on the immigration status of the family members they live with.



Taxpayer-funded **benefits will be given to illegal immigrants.**

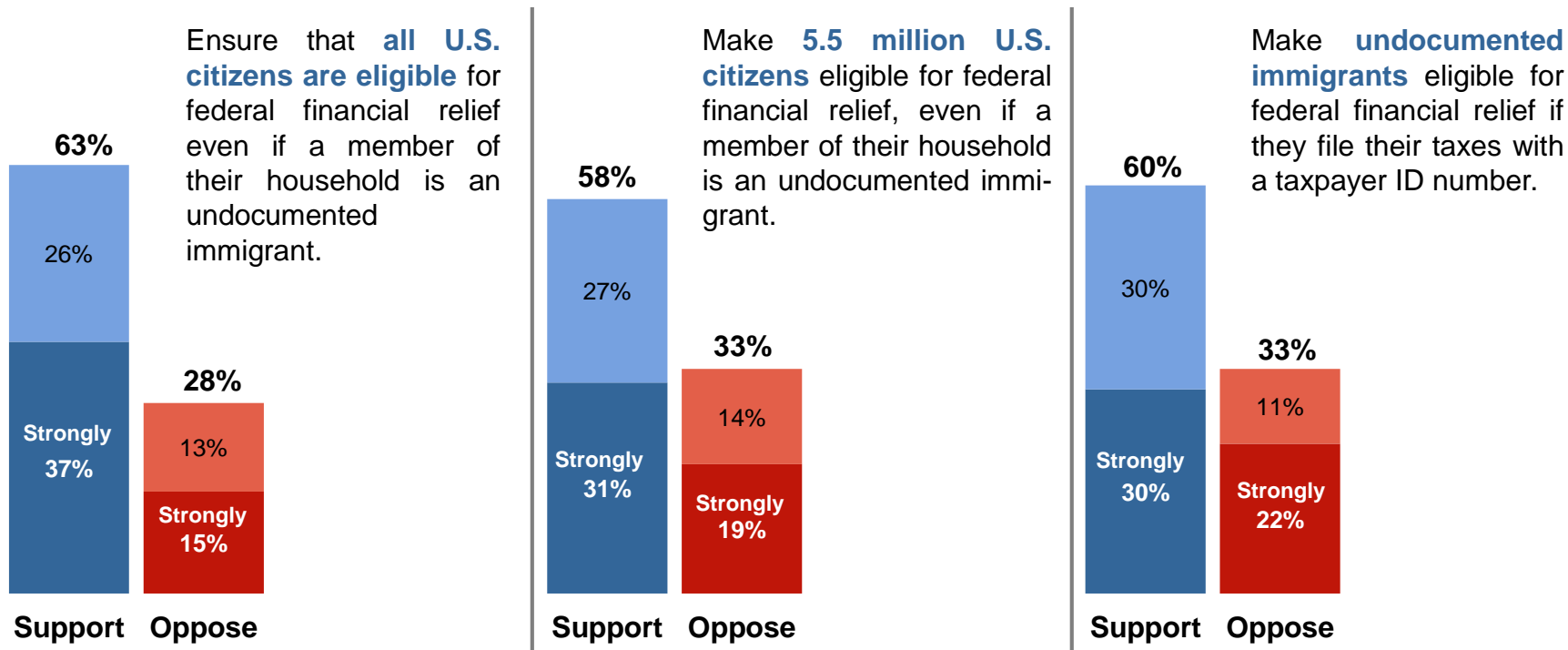


Neither is a concern.



Relief is favored for citizens in mixed status households and undocumented immigrants who pay taxes.

Support for Immigration Policies of Democrats in Congress



Democrats win debate on mixed-status households by rejecting discrimination.

In each pair, which do you agree with more?

Republicans say (same in both pairs) it is wrong to take billions of dollars from U.S. taxpayers for a handout to people who broke our immigration laws—**federal assistance should be reserved for Americans and legal residents.**

Democrats say all Americans who pay into the system should receive cash assistance, regardless of who they live with or who they marry. It is **wrong to discriminate against U.S. citizens based on who they marry or who their parents are.**



+8
DEMOCRATS



Democrats say all of us are better off when everyone can get the relief that they need. Relief payments benefit not just families but also our communities—they are a smart investment for the nation.



+2
REPUBLICANS



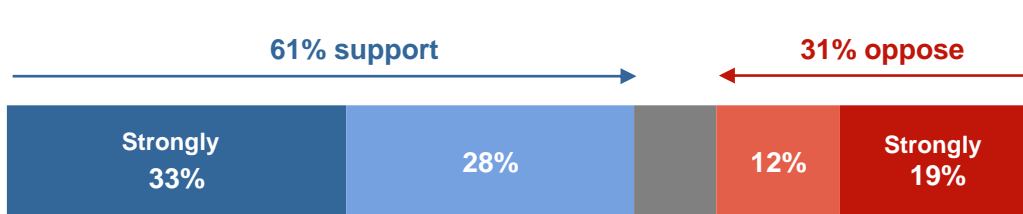


ENFORCEMENT AND DETENTION

Voters strongly support shifting funds from enforcement to other progressive priorities.



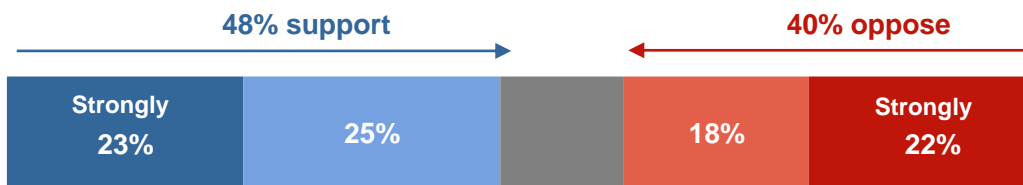
Reduce funding for detention and deportation of undocumented immigrants, and use the savings to fund public health investments to combat the coronavirus



Net support

+30

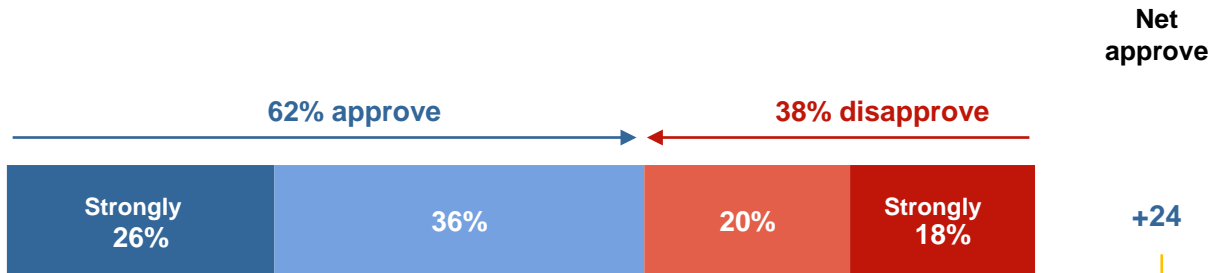
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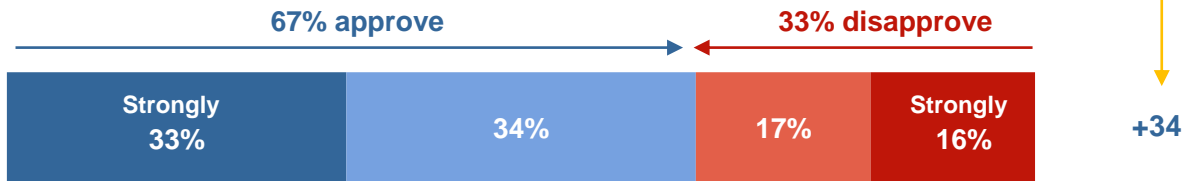
+8

Telling voters the U.S. spends more on immigration enforcement than all other law enforcement combined raises support for shifting enforcement funds to progressive priorities .

Reduce funding for federal enforcement agencies, and invest more in other areas such as education and infrastructure

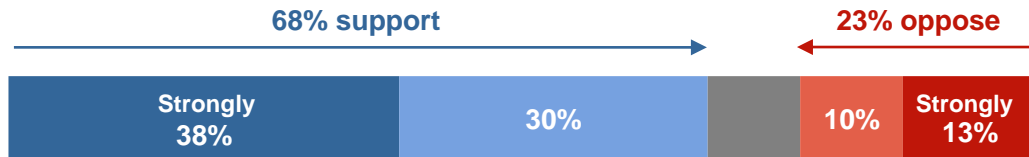


The U.S. currently spends more money on immigration enforcement than all other law enforcement combined: Reduce funding for federal enforcement agencies, and invest more in other areas such as education and infrastructure

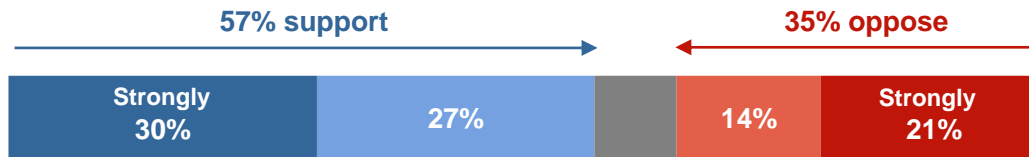


Two-thirds want to limit the number of immigrants held in detention facilities.

Limit the number of immigrants held in federal detention facilities, unless the government demonstrates it can hold people without jeopardizing the health and safety of detainees, facility staff, and the public.



Release immigrants with medical conditions and other vulnerabilities from federal detention facilities, unless the government demonstrates it can hold people without jeopardizing the health and safety of detainees, facility staff, and the public.



Support for limiting immigration detention is reduced in debate with opponents.

Democrats have proposed limiting the number of immigrants held in federal detention facilities, unless the government demonstrates it has the problem under control and can safely hold more people:

Who do you agree with more on this issue?

52%

22%

Agree much more 30%

Democrats say that with the number of people in immigration detention centers testing positive for the coronavirus increasing, allowing the coronavirus to spread throughout immigration detention facilities **jeopardizes not only the lives of detained people, but also facility staff, their families, and their communities.** The administration should release detainees who pose no serious threat to the public before the situation gets further out of hand.

Agree with Democrats

48%

18%

Agree much more 30%

Republicans say that we need to prioritize the protection of our communities, and right now that requires detaining people who come here illegally. **Releasing dangerous criminal immigrants** onto the streets of our communities will put public health and safety at risk.

Agree with Republicans



+4
DEMOCRATS

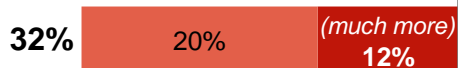


MESSAGING

Referencing immigrants is more compelling than immigration.

In each pair, which statement do you agree with more?

IMMIGRANTS generally make things worse in America.



IMMIGRANTS generally make things better in America.



**+36
BETTER**

IMMIGRATION generally makes things worse in America.



IMMIGRATION generally makes things better in America.



**+20
BETTER**

Top immigration concerns about Trump/GOP: separating families and blocking legal status for frontline workers.

<i>My TOP THREE CONCERNS about Trump/Republican immigration policies:</i>	All voters	Independents
Trump and the Republicans are continuing to separate immigrant families and put children in cages.	47%	52%
Trump and the Republicans are blocking legal status for many immigrant workers on the frontlines in the fight against the coronavirus who are providing vital services our nation needs.	36%	46%
Trump and the Republicans are detaining and deporting law-abiding immigrants who have lived in and contributed to the United States for many years.	35%	33%
Trump and the Republicans are wasting resources on detaining and deporting immigrants that should be used to fight the coronavirus and restart our economy.	33%	33%
Trump and the Republicans are using the pandemic to push through anti-immigrant, racially motivated policies they have long favored, but which have nothing to do with the current crisis.	30%	33%
Trump and the Republicans are pushing ahead with their attacks on DACA recipients even after a loss at the Supreme Court , refusing to pass legislation to provide permanent immigration status to “Dreamers.”	30%	25%
Trump and the Republicans are attacking immigrants to divide the country for political advantage and distract from their poor performance dealing with the virus and the economy.	32%	35%

Strong Pro-Immigration Messages

Proportions who say each is a VERY/FAIRLY CONVINCING statement about immigration issues

- 68%** We need to know who is coming in and out of our country, but we do not need to separate families or put children in cages. We can keep our communities safe and secure, and **treat immigrants fairly and humanely.**
- 66%** America has always been a land of opportunity where people can strive for a better life. **Immigrants** who work hard to build a future for their family also **contribute to our communities and make our nation stronger.**
- 66%** When our country emerges from the coronavirus pandemic, we will **owe a significant debt of gratitude to those who worked at great personal risk on the frontlines, regardless of their immigration** status.
- 65%** This is a **time for Americans to come together, not a time for politicians to stir up fear** of immigrants and divide Americans for political benefit.
- 65%** During this crisis, **immigrants across our nation, from janitors, to doctors, to farm workers, are working shoulder to shoulder with their fellow Americans** to keep the country moving forward.