

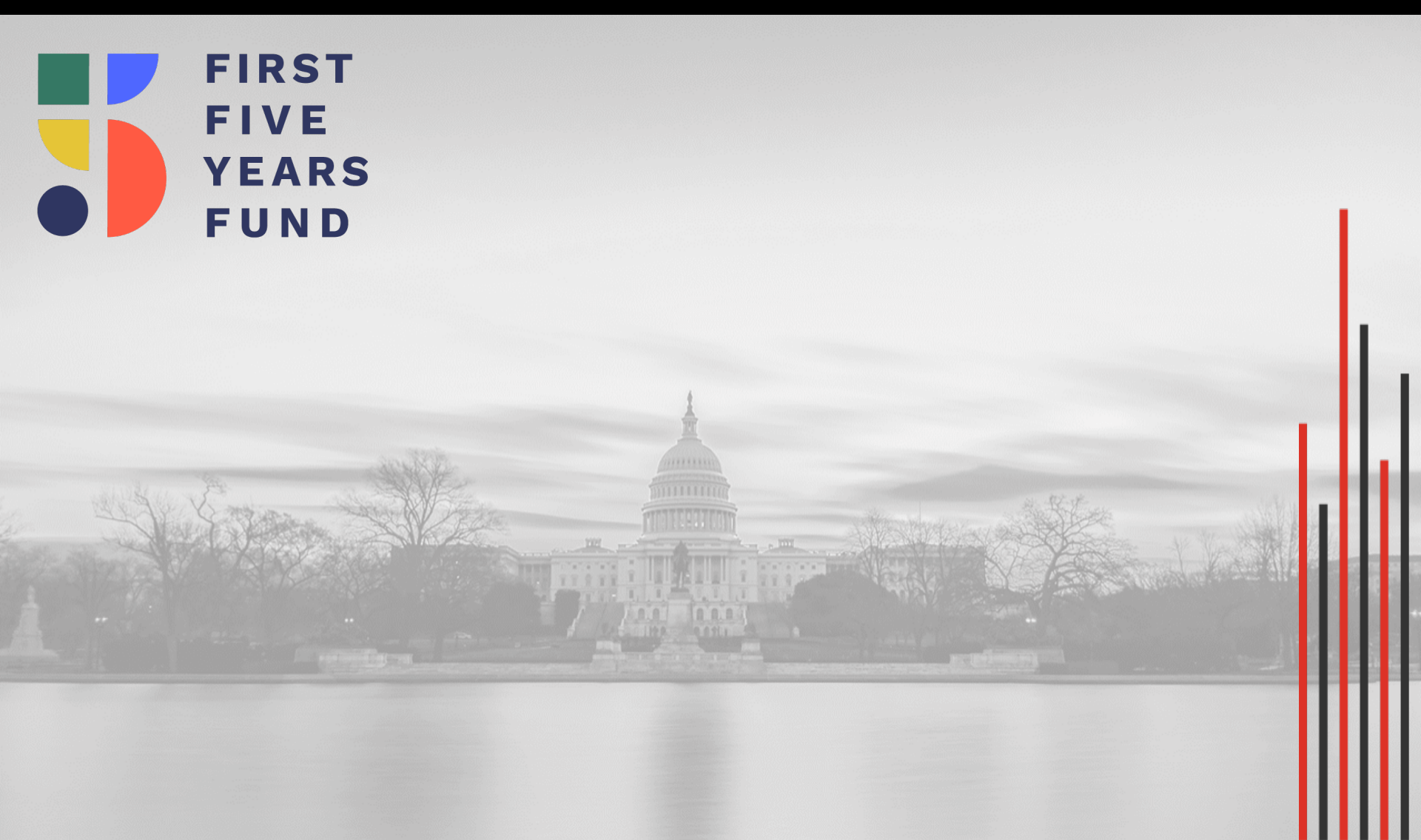
National Polling Shows Child Care to be a Winning Issue among Key Voter Groups

September 2021





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Executive Summary

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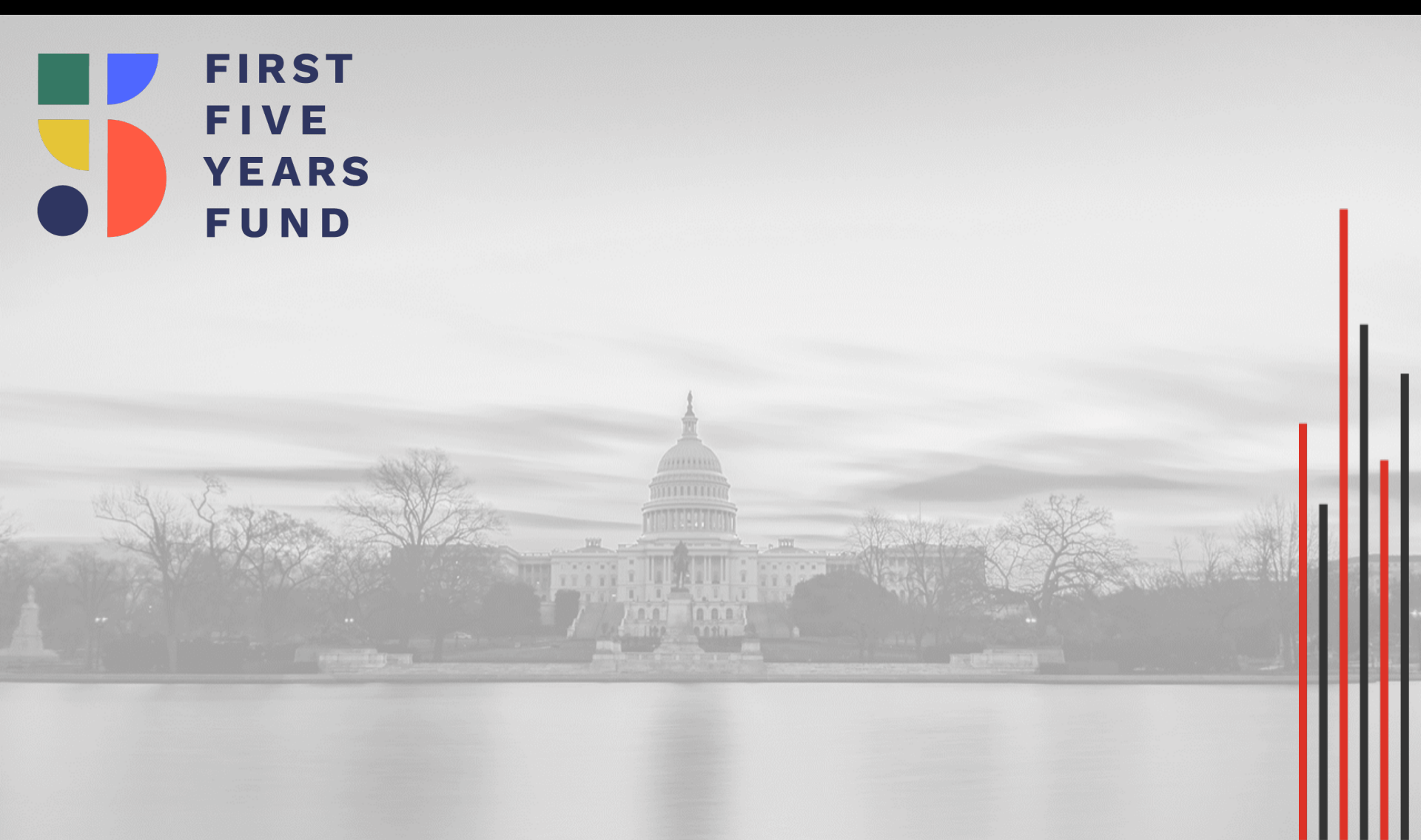
For decades, child care and early learning have been domestic priorities that earn bipartisan voter support and inspire meaningful cooperation across the aisle on Capitol Hill, even when faced with ever-widening partisan division in Washington. Recent economic turmoil put increased pressure on families and businesses and exacerbated the child care challenges that have plagued working parents for decades, reinforcing the essential role that child care plays in the prosperity of our economy.

Voters across the political spectrum, and especially among key voter groups, overwhelmingly support proposals that would save most parents thousands of dollars each year in child care and preschool expenses and build an early learning system that meets the needs of working families and the providers they rely on. As the 2022 midterm elections approach, this new national polling demonstrates that child care is a winning issue in contested races.

This presentation outlines key findings from polling commissioned by the First Five Years Fund and conducted by Public Opinion Strategies in the summer of 2021. The survey polled voter attitudes toward child care and relevant proposals currently being considered in Congress in five key Republican-held Senate seats and 40 Republican-held congressional districts up for election in 2022.



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Key Findings

Take-Away Points

- 1. Proposals for child care investments enjoy overwhelming support from strong Republican-leaning and likely Republican primary voters, even when voters know the cost of the proposals.** Upon learning that child care proposals would cost individual taxpayers an average of \$13 per year, 57% of strong Republican-leaning voters and 70% of those who expect to participate in Republican primaries expressed support for the proposals.
- 2. Key voter groups, especially strong Republican-leaning voters and women, say they will more likely vote for a candidate who supports proposals that make child care more accessible and affordable for working families.** Sixty-three percent of strong Republican-leaning voters and 61% of White suburban women in contested congressional districts say they will more likely vote for a candidate who supports proposals that invest in child care. In states where key Senate races will take place in 2022, 65% of strong Republican-leaning voters, 65% of independent female voters, and 67% of White suburban women say the same.

Take-Away Points

- 3. Voters in swing states such as Florida, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin express strong support for policy proposals that invest in America's child care system.** In each and every one of these five states, three in four voters support child care investment proposals and over 80% of voters say their community would benefit from such proposals.
- 4. Voters across party lines support investments in child care and believe that they would benefit communities.** The majority of Republican, Independent, and Democratic voters support proposals to expand child care for working families and recognize such proposals' benefits for the community they live in and the people they work with, even if they don't benefit directly from the proposals.
- 5. Child care especially resonates with voters whose ballots will likely determine election outcomes in contested states and districts.** Younger voters, Hispanic/Latino voters, low-income voters, parents, and suburban White women are among the strongest supporters of child care. An overwhelming majority of these voters view helping working families afford quality care as extremely or very important and support policies that do so.



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Top Priorities for the President and Congress

When voters are asked the importance of a number of issues facing the country...

Getting the economy going again

Strengthening border security

Fighting the increase in crime

Repairing and expanding our country's infrastructure, like roads and bridges

Helping working families afford quality child care

Improving K-12 public schools

Making health care more affordable

Addressing the issue of climate change

Cutting the federal deficit

Cutting federal taxes

Holding down federal spending

Replacing the Affordable Care Act

“Helping working families afford quality child care” is a higher priority among younger voters, voters of color, younger independents and those with kids under the age of 5 at home.

%Extremely/Very Important	Total	18-34 (18%)	AF AM (10%)	Hispanic (12%)	IND 18-54 (18%)	Kids 0-5 Yrs (11%)
Getting the economy going again	91%	89%	92%	92%	91%	94%
Fighting the increase in crime	82%	74%	85%	85%	75%	86%
Making health care more affordable	81%	84%	94%	85%	84%	81%
Improving K-12 public schools	73%	83%	86%	80%	80%	88%
Repairing and expanding our country's infrastructure, like roads and bridges	70%	63%	75%	66%	60%	68%
Holding down federal spending	68%	60%	55%	72%	66%	75%
Cutting the federal deficit	67%	53%	53%	70%	62%	70%
Strengthening border security	67%	48%	55%	66%	51%	66%
Helping working families afford quality child care	63%	78%	89%	74%	73%	85%
Cutting the federal taxes	61%	52%	66%	63%	57%	65%
Addressing the issue of climate change	60%	71%	70%	73%	68%	63%
Replacing the Affordable Care Act	42%	38%	37%	47%	38%	49%

Key voter groups believe that Congress should do more for working parents.

%Should do more	Total	18-44 (56%)	AF AM (10%)	Hispanic (12%)	Parents (26%)	Kids 0-5 Years (11%)	<\$20K (11%)
Healthcare workers and first responders	62%	63%	74%	66%	59%	64%	64%
Small businesses	60%	60%	60%	64%	58%	61%	65%
Working parents of young children	49%	60%	70%	58%	58%	68%	57%
Restaurants	44%	45%	48%	46%	46%	44%	46%



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GOP Candidate Issue Positions

Voters in these key districts and states were asked whether a Republican candidate's position on key issues would make them more likely or less likely to vote for that candidate...

Has a plan to get the economy going again

Supports policies to strengthen our border security

Is working to fight the increase in crime

Supports policies to repair the country's infrastructure

Supports policies to improve K-12 public schools

Supports policies to help working families afford quality child care

Supports policies to address the issue of climate change

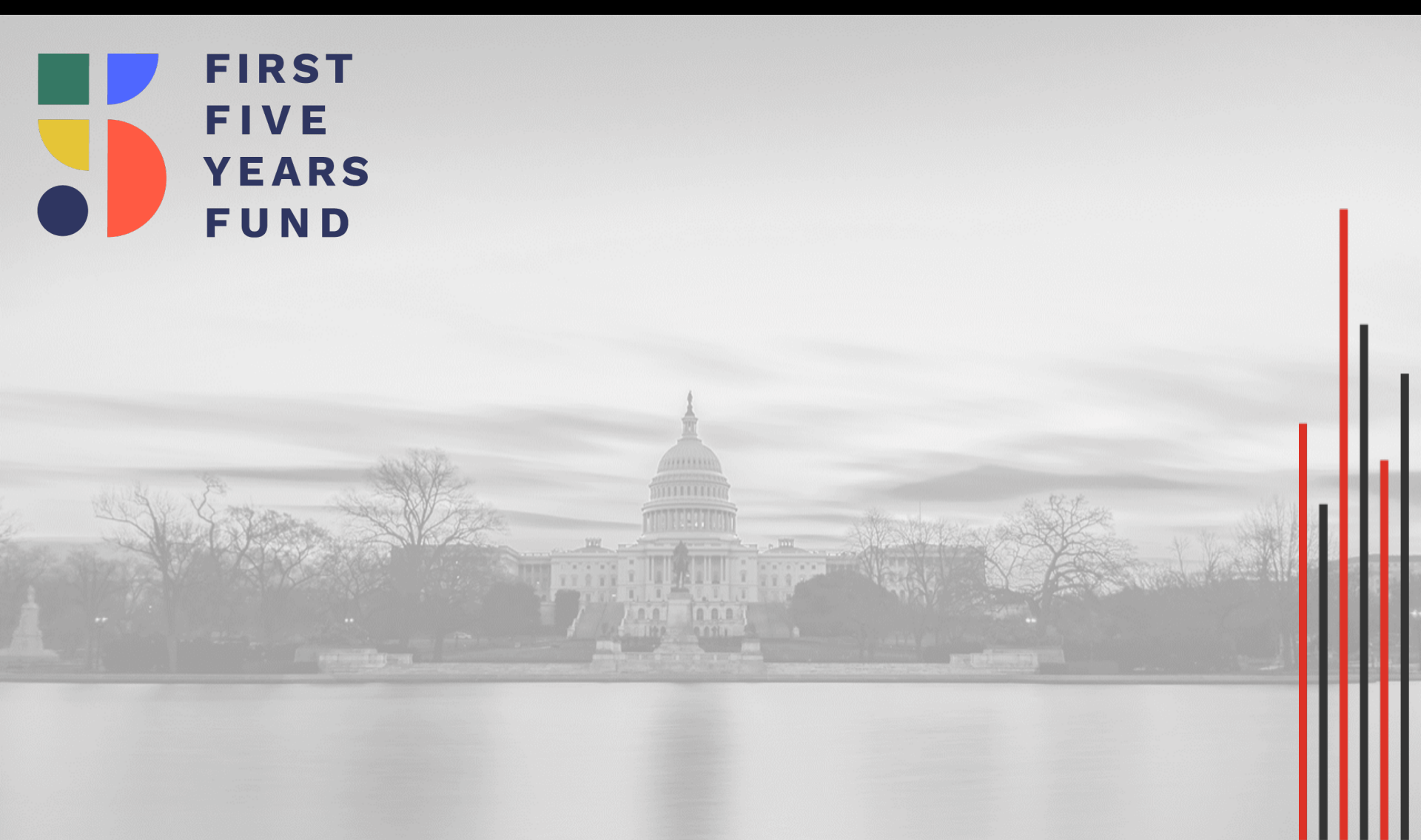
Has a plan to keep health insurance costs and prescription drug costs down

A GOP candidate who supports policies to help working families afford quality child care attracts key voter groups.

%More Likely	Total	18-44 (36%)	Hispanic (12%)	Parents (26%)	Kids 0-5 Years (11%)
Has a plan to keep health insurance costs and prescription drug costs down	77%	78%	77%	80%	80%
Has a plan to get the economy going again	76%	78%	78%	82%	80%
Is working to fight the increase in crime	74%	71%	81%	78%	77%
Supports policies to repair the country's infrastructure	69%	70%	70%	71%	71%
Support policies to improve K-12 public schools	67%	74%	70%	77%	81%
Supports policies to strengthen our border security	63%	56%	60%	68%	65%
Supports policies to help working families afford quality child care	63%	73%	70%	75%	81%
Supports policies to address the issue of climate change	55%	64%	69%	60%	62%

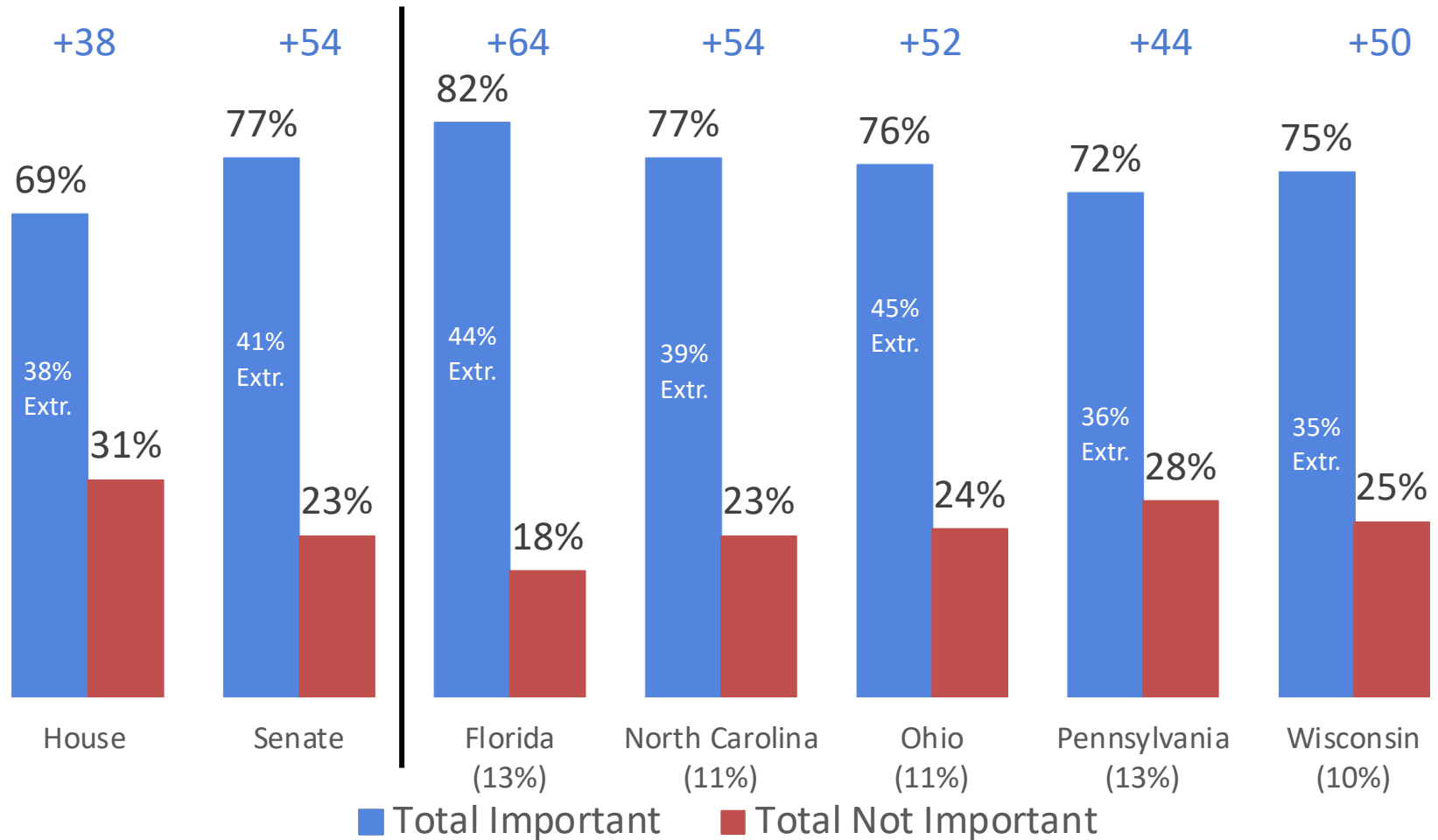


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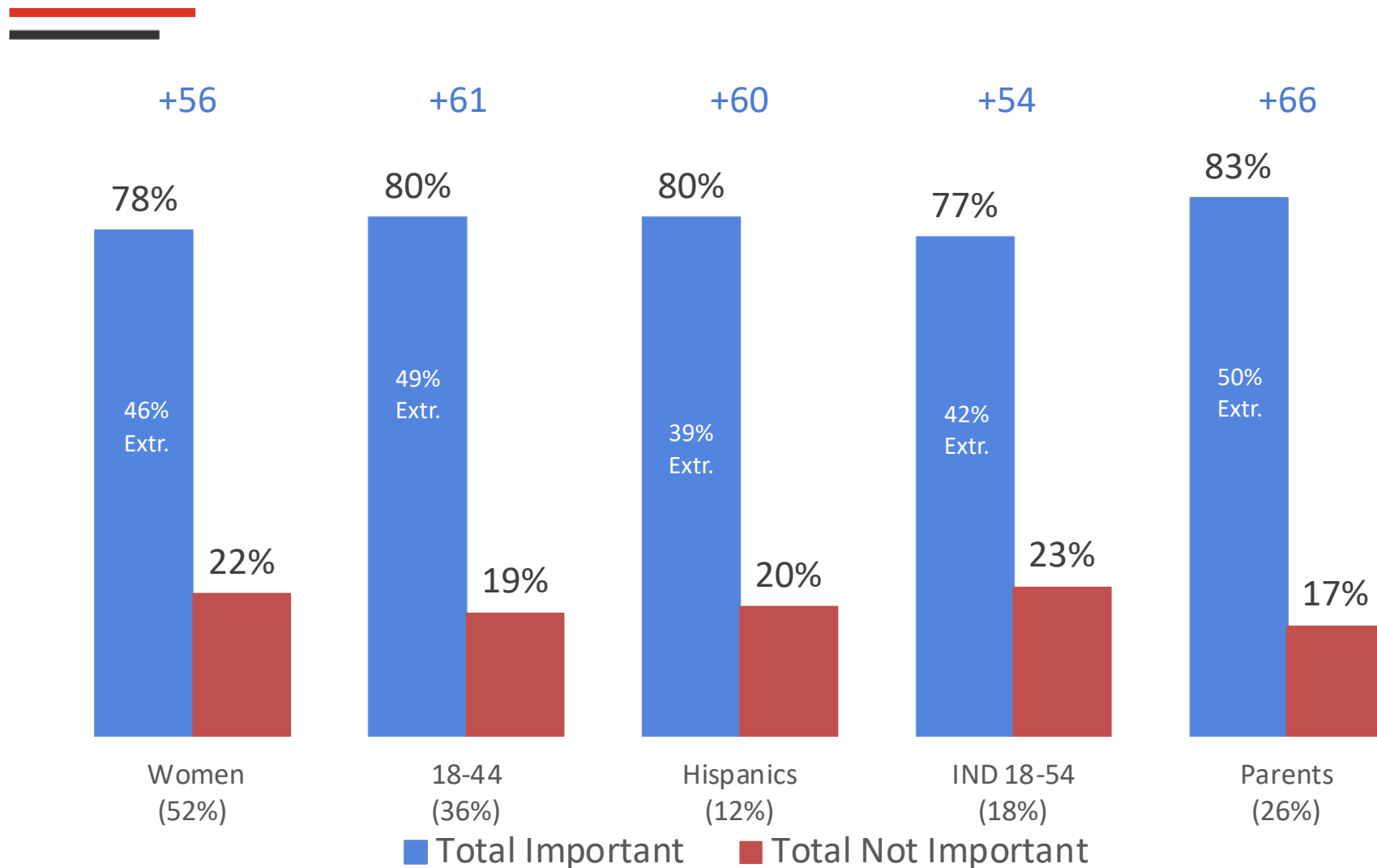


Attitudes Toward Quality Child Care Programs

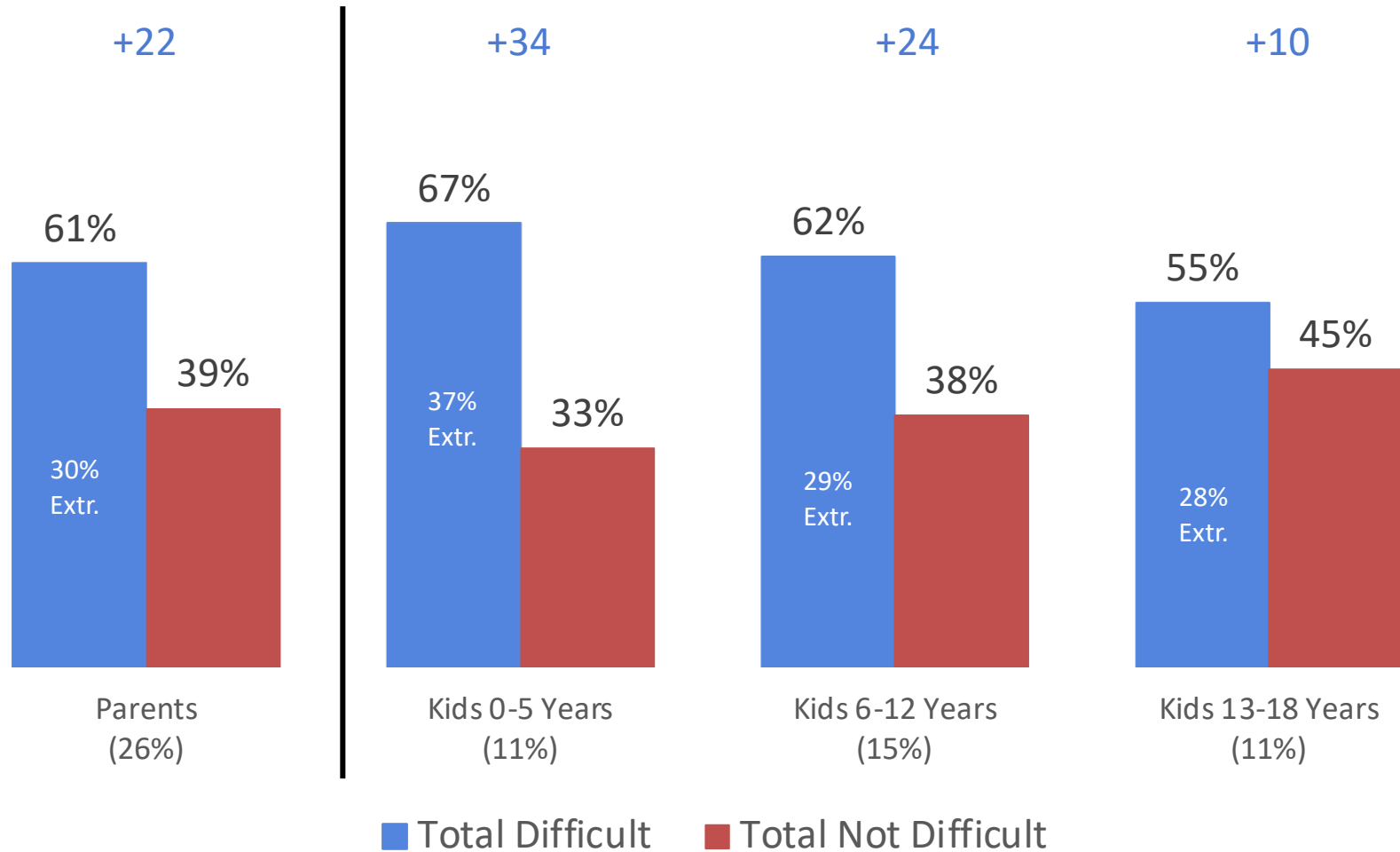
Right around 70% of voters across both the targeted CDs and the Senate seats believe it's extremely or very important for working parents to be able to find and afford quality child care for their kids.



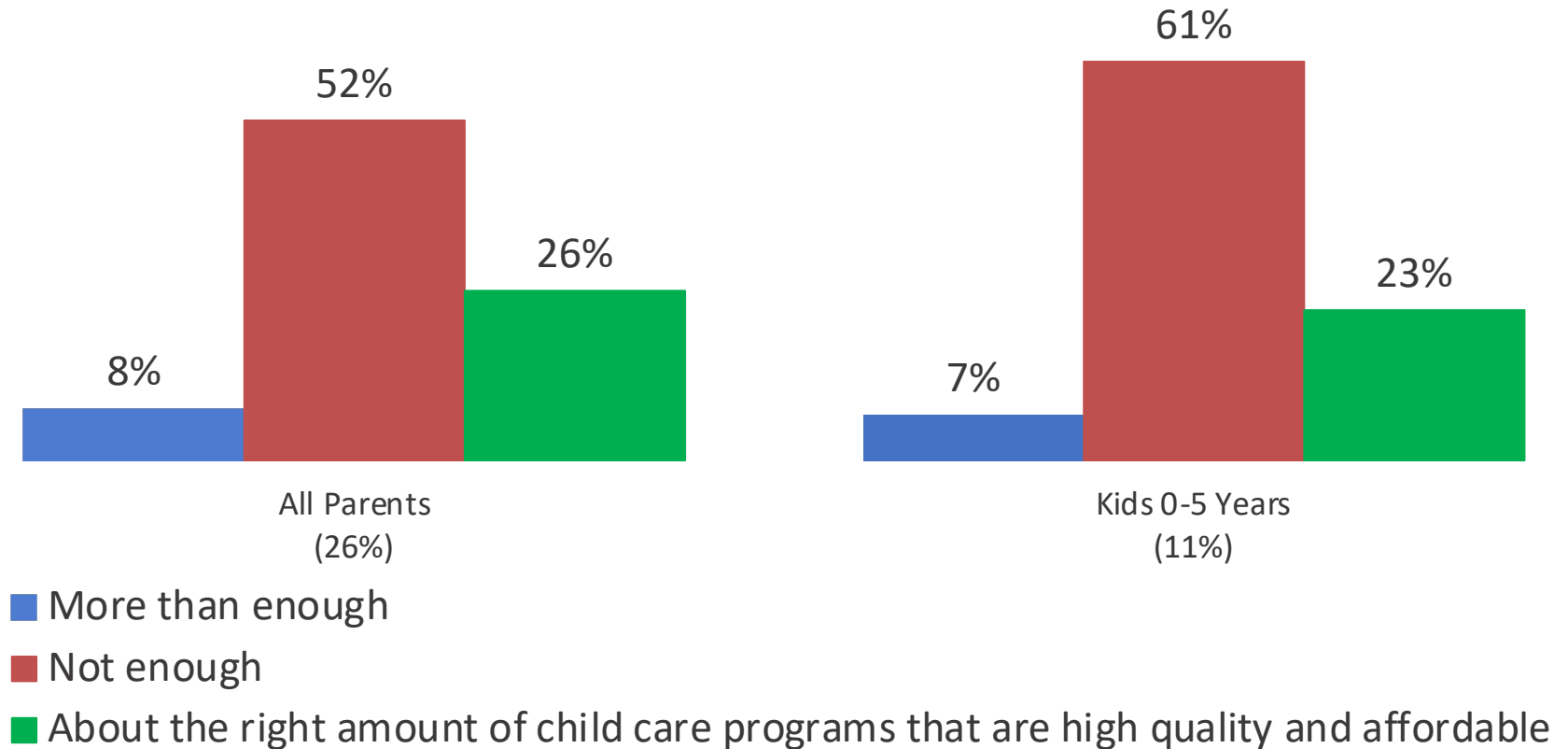
Note the importance of this issue among women, younger voters, Hispanics, younger independents and parents.



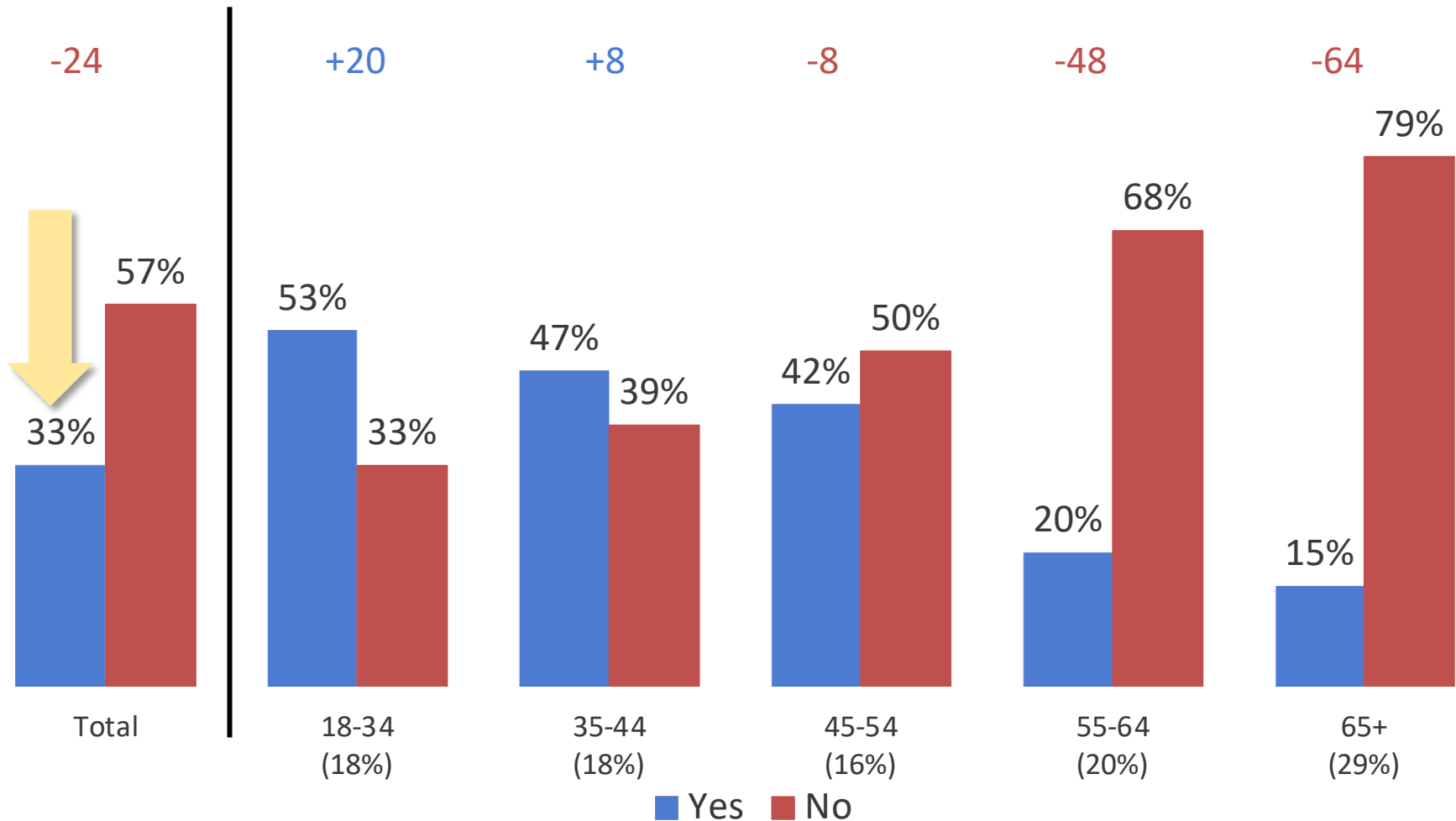
Nearly 70% of parents of children ages 0-5 find it is difficult for working parents to afford quality child care programs for young children.



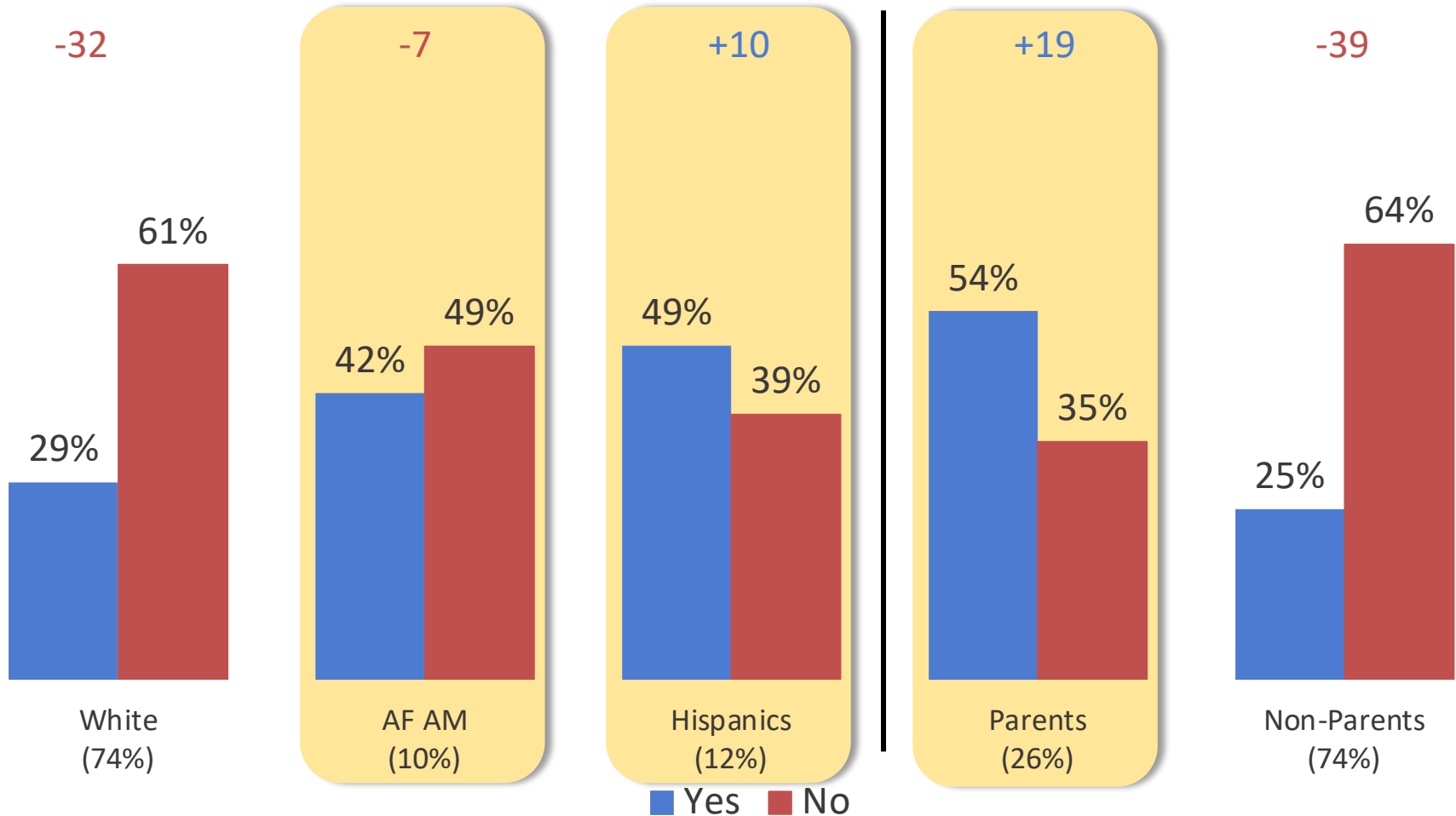
A majority of parents interviewed say there are not enough high quality and affordable child care programs where they live.



Fully one-third of voters in the entire sample say they know someone who has had to cut work hours or forgo work entirely because of the cost and/or availability of child care.

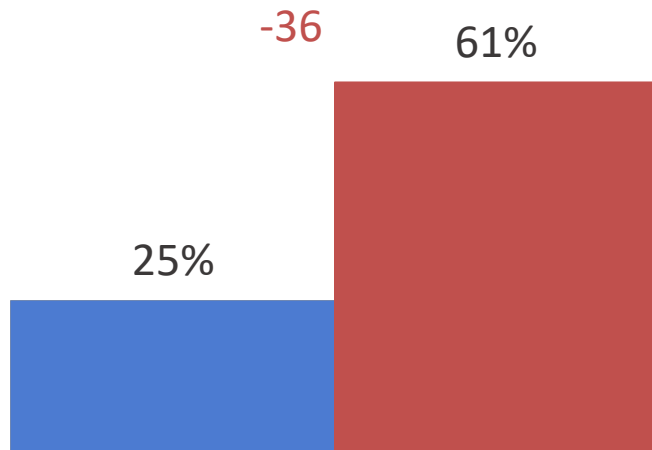


That's particularly true among voters of color and among parents.

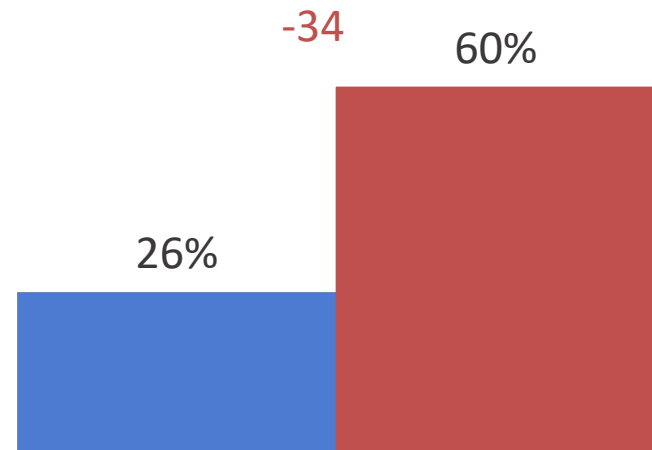


By more than two-to-one, voters believe that public programs should help working parents afford child care.

When it comes to being able to afford high-quality child care and early learning programs for their children from birth to age five, do you believe that...



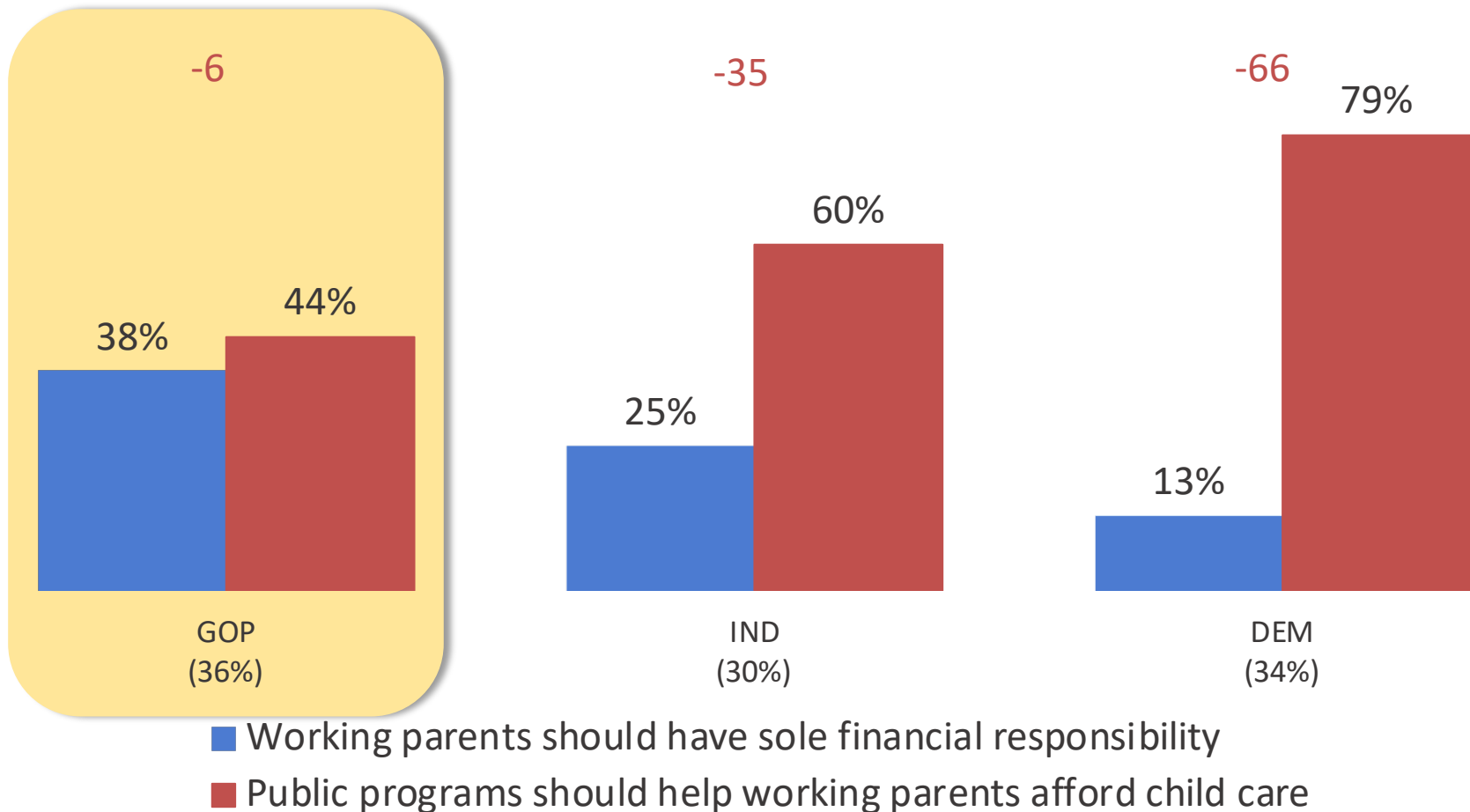
As you may know, the average cost of child-care is roughly \$10,000 a year. When it comes to being able to afford high-quality child care and early learning programs for their children from birth to age five, do you believe that...



Merged Data	
Working parents should have sole financial responsibility	26%
Public programs should help working parents afford child care	60%

- Working parents should have sole financial responsibility
- Public programs should help working parents afford child care

While Democrats and Independents strongly agree with this, a plurality of Republicans also support it.



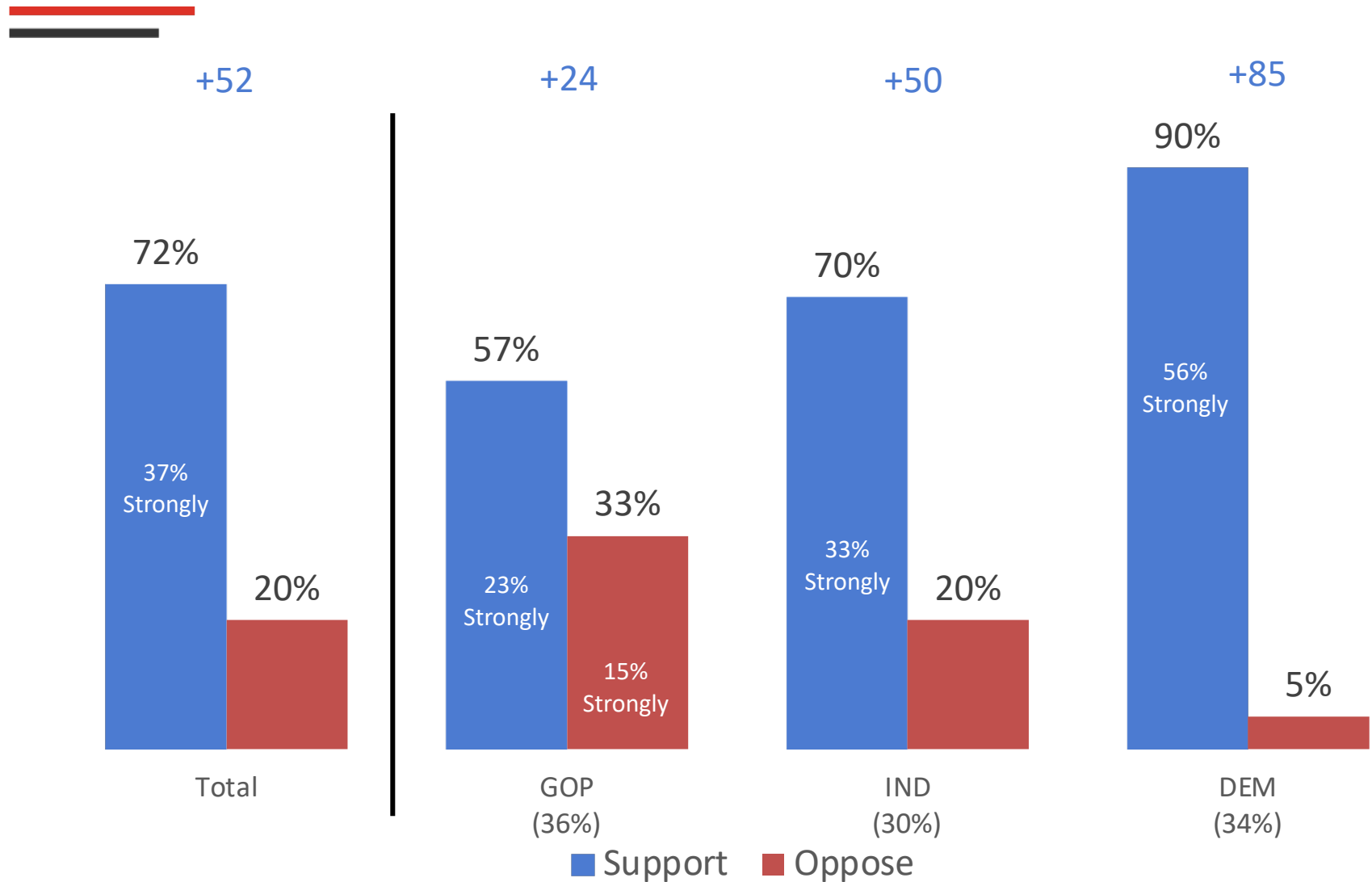
When voters are asked about a child care/early learning proposal...

Please read the following description of a policy that is being considered related to child care and early learning programs for children who are too young for Kindergarten and indicate whether you would support or oppose that policy...

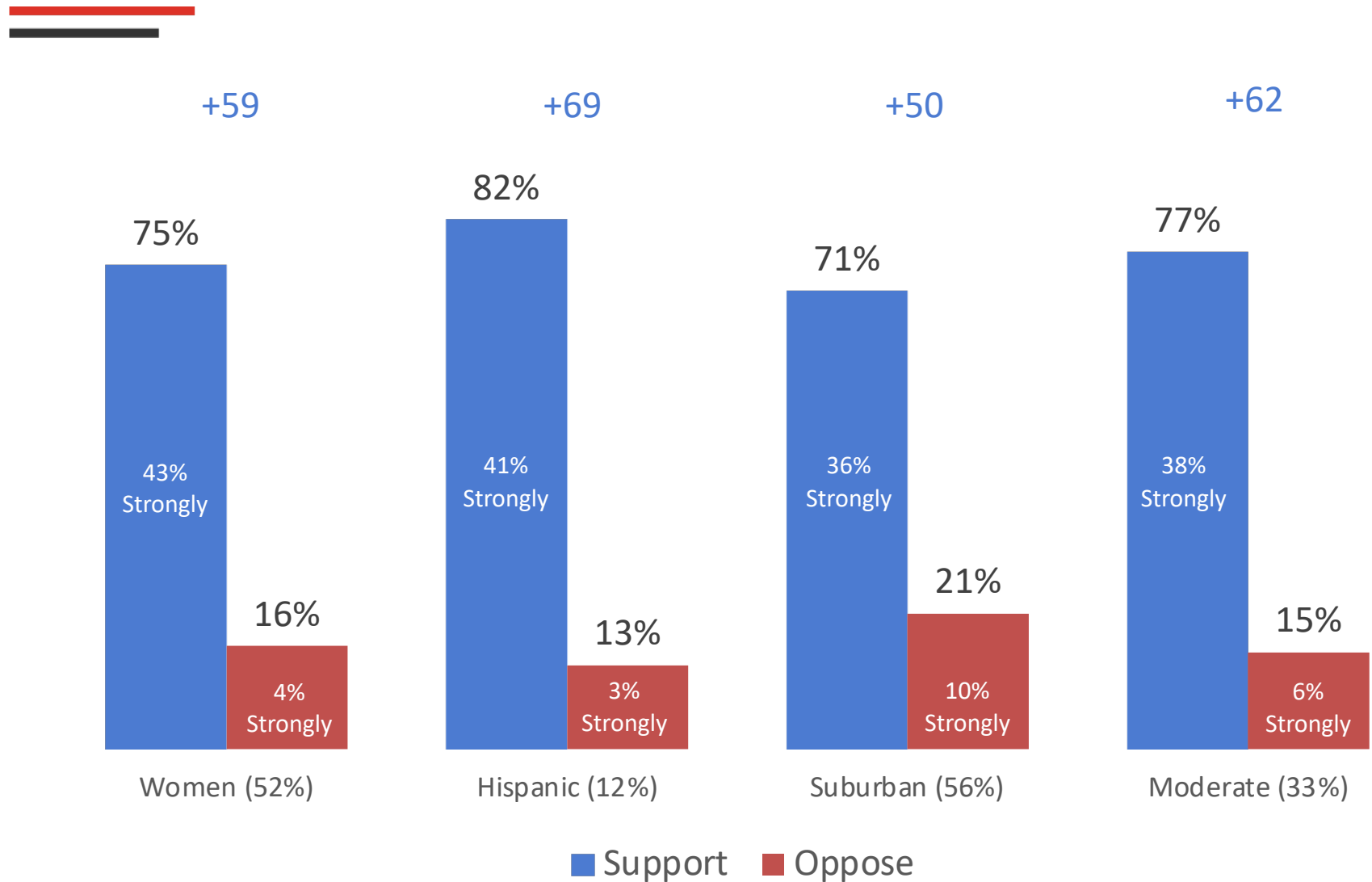
The federal government would provide funding to states to expand their child care systems so that every working parent who wants to do so could send their child, from birth through age five, to a high-quality child care or early learning program, including child care centers, home-based child care facilities, faith based providers and Head Start centers. The amount that parents would pay out of pocket would be determined by their household income, with the lowest-income families receiving care at low or no cost. Each state would be responsible for overseeing these systems, which would be required to meet established quality and safety standards.

Would you support or oppose this policy?

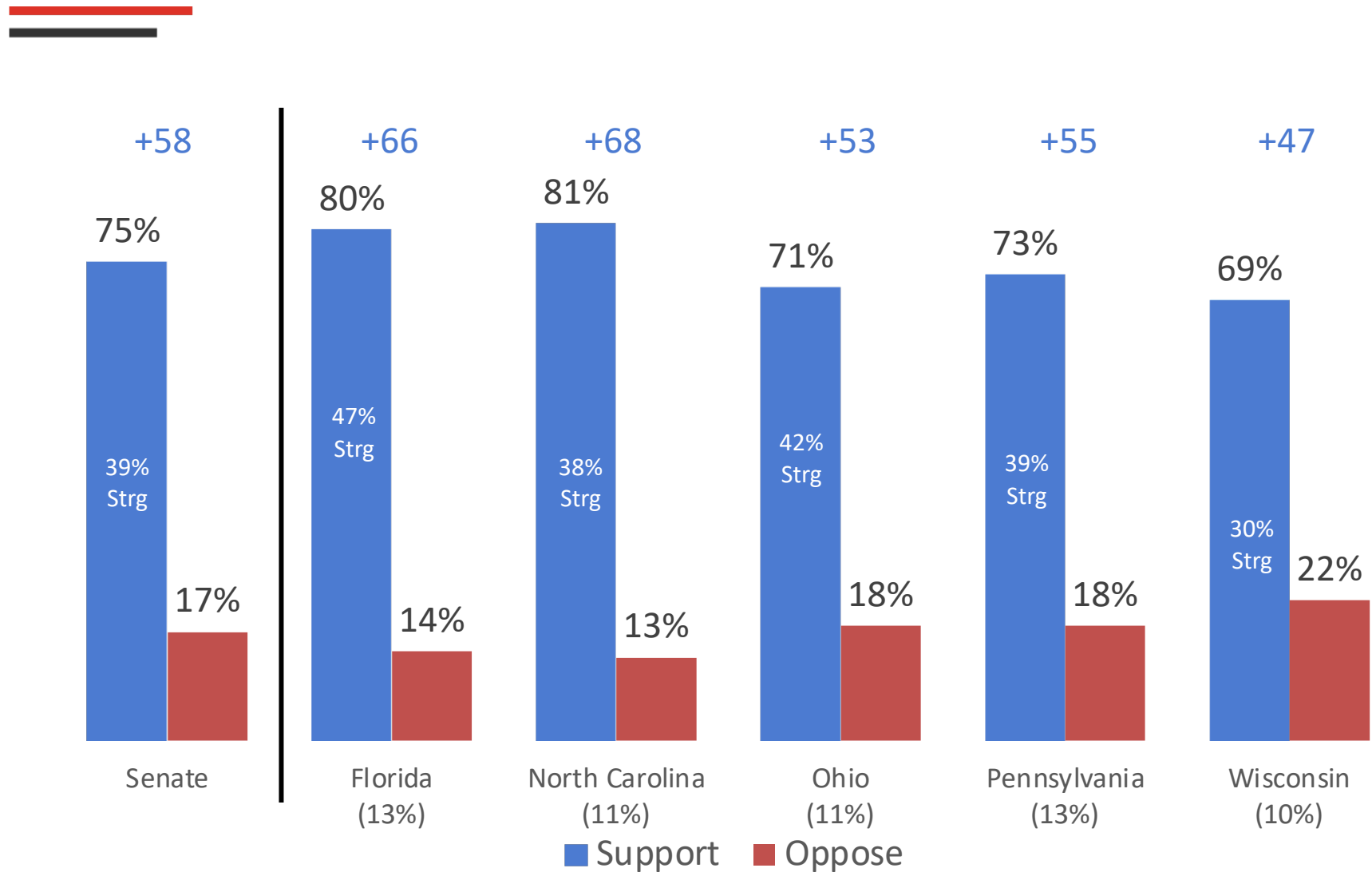
The proposal wins strong support across party lines.



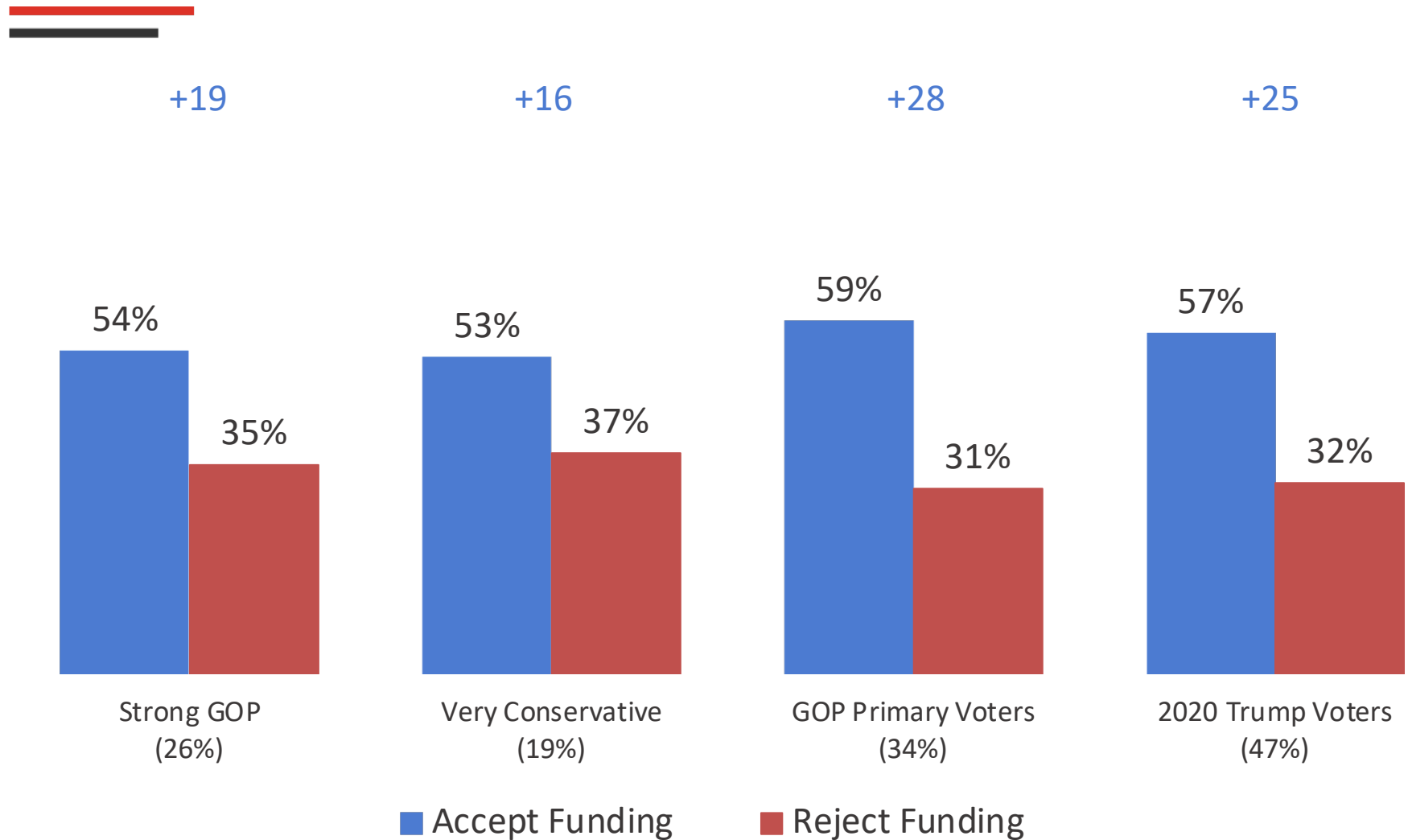
It wins overwhelming support from key voter groups.



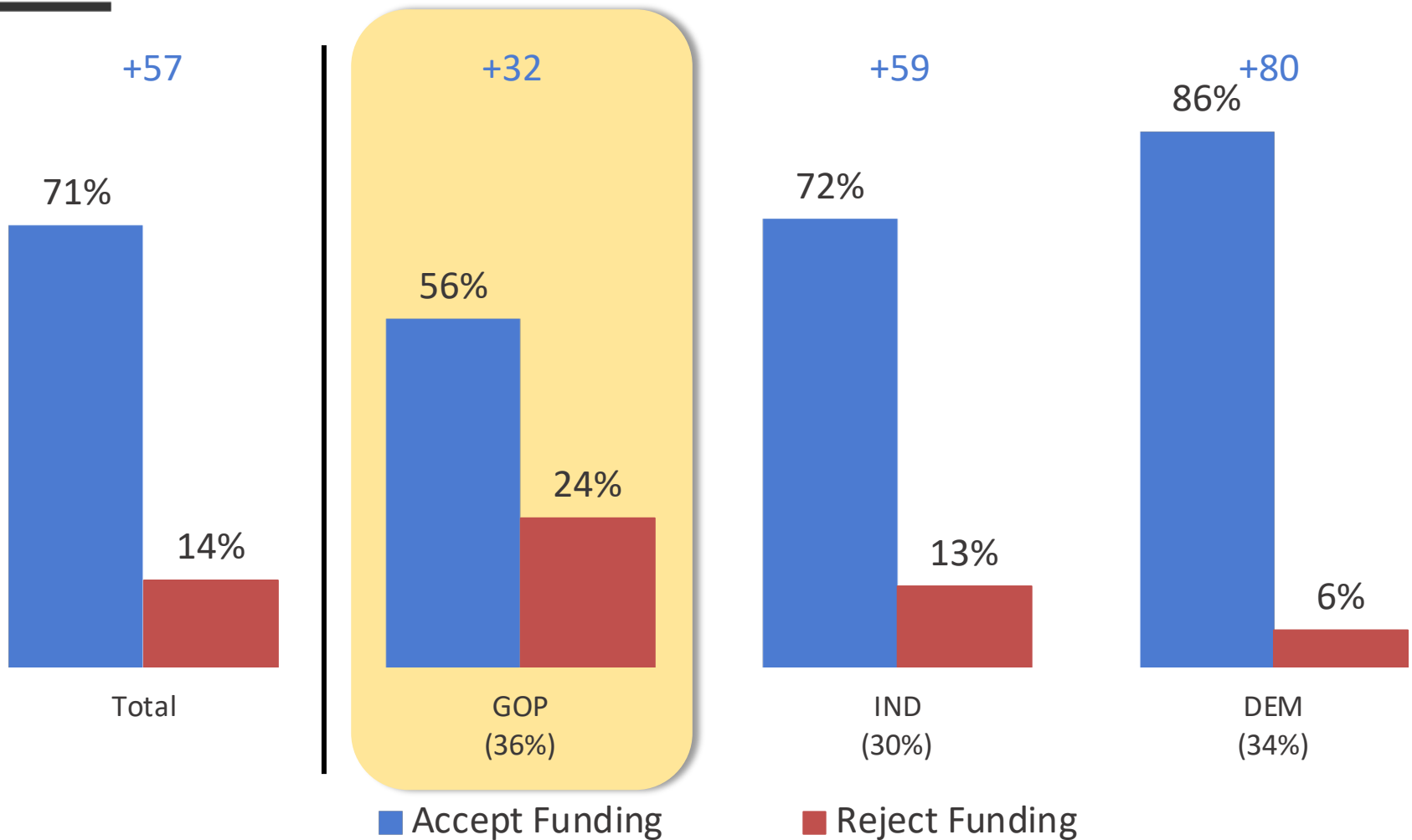
It also wins across all five key Senate states.



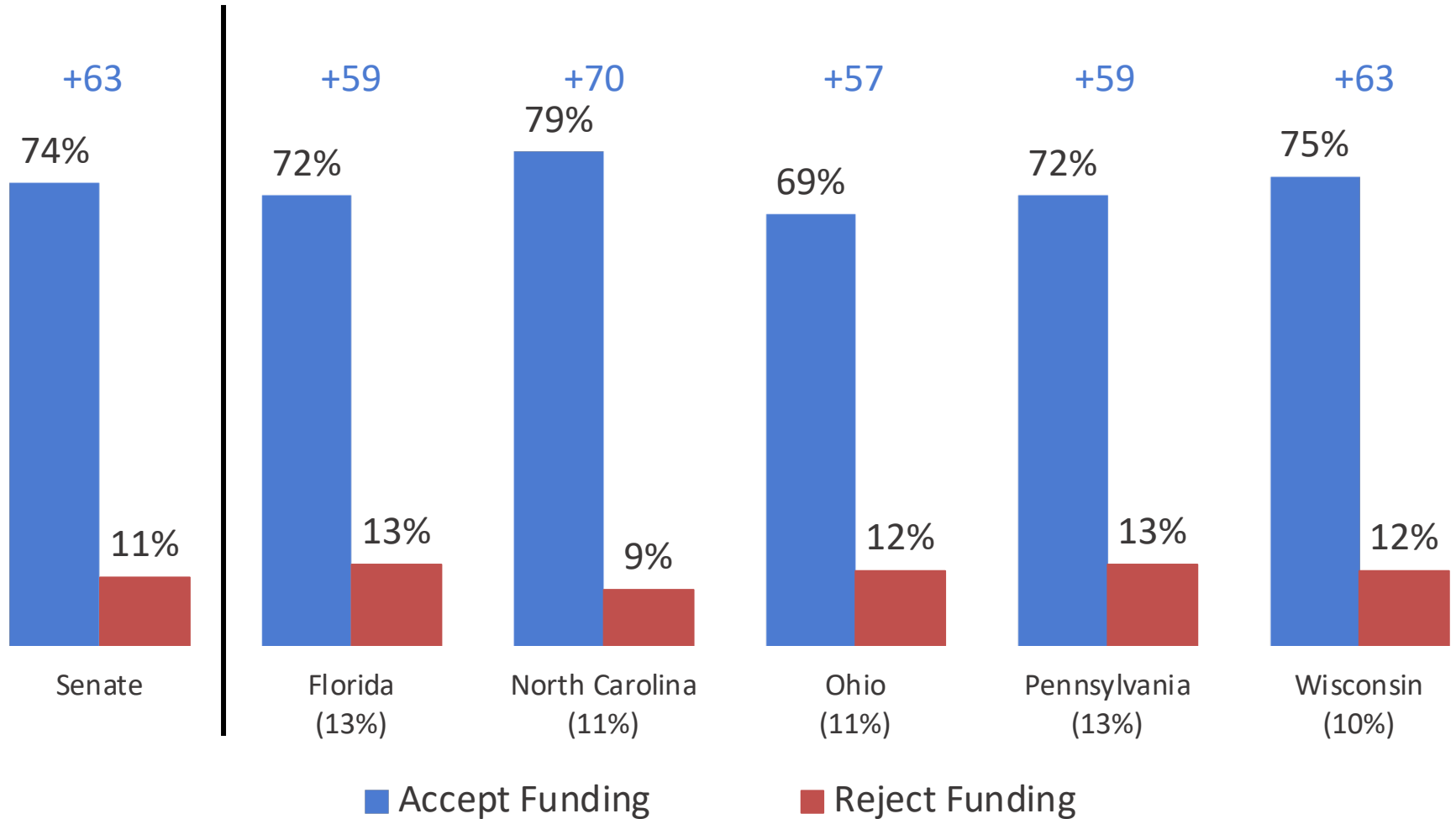
It even wins support from the strongest GOP groups.



Overwhelmingly, voters across party lines believe that if this legislation becomes law, their Governors should accept the funding to expand their state's existing child care program.

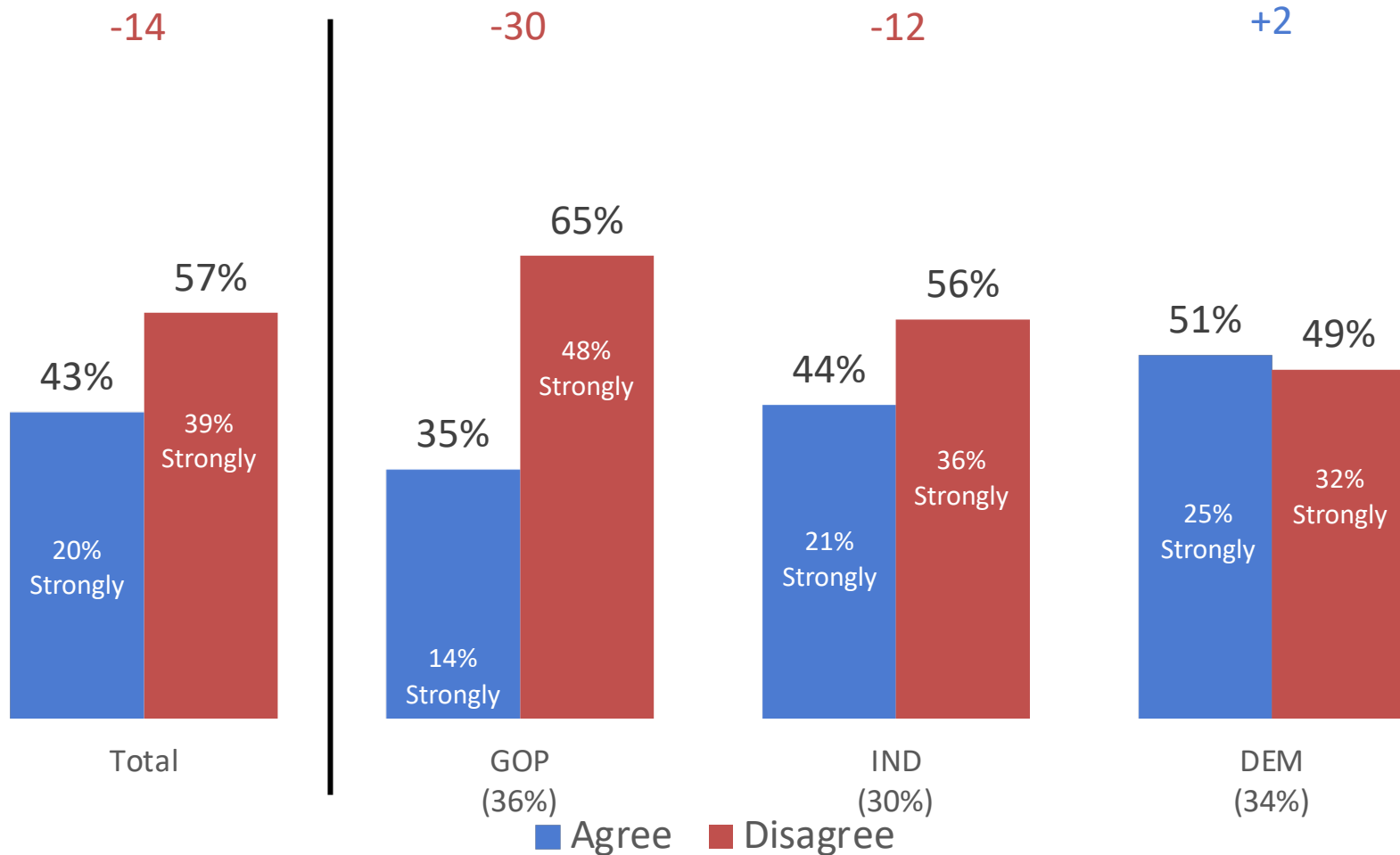


And, voters across the five key Senate states agree.



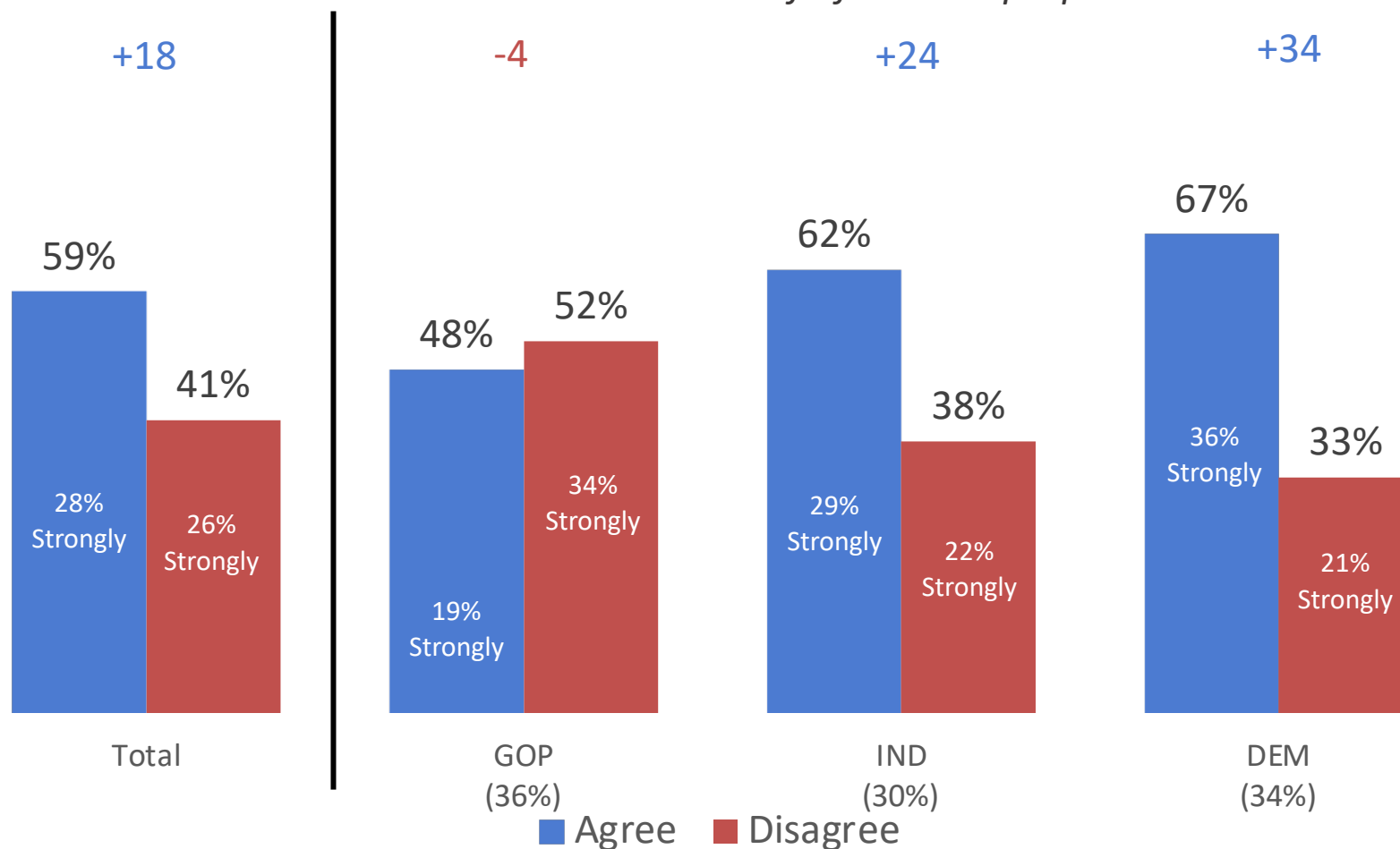
While fewer than half of voters say their family would benefit from this proposal...

My family would directly or indirectly benefit from this proposal.



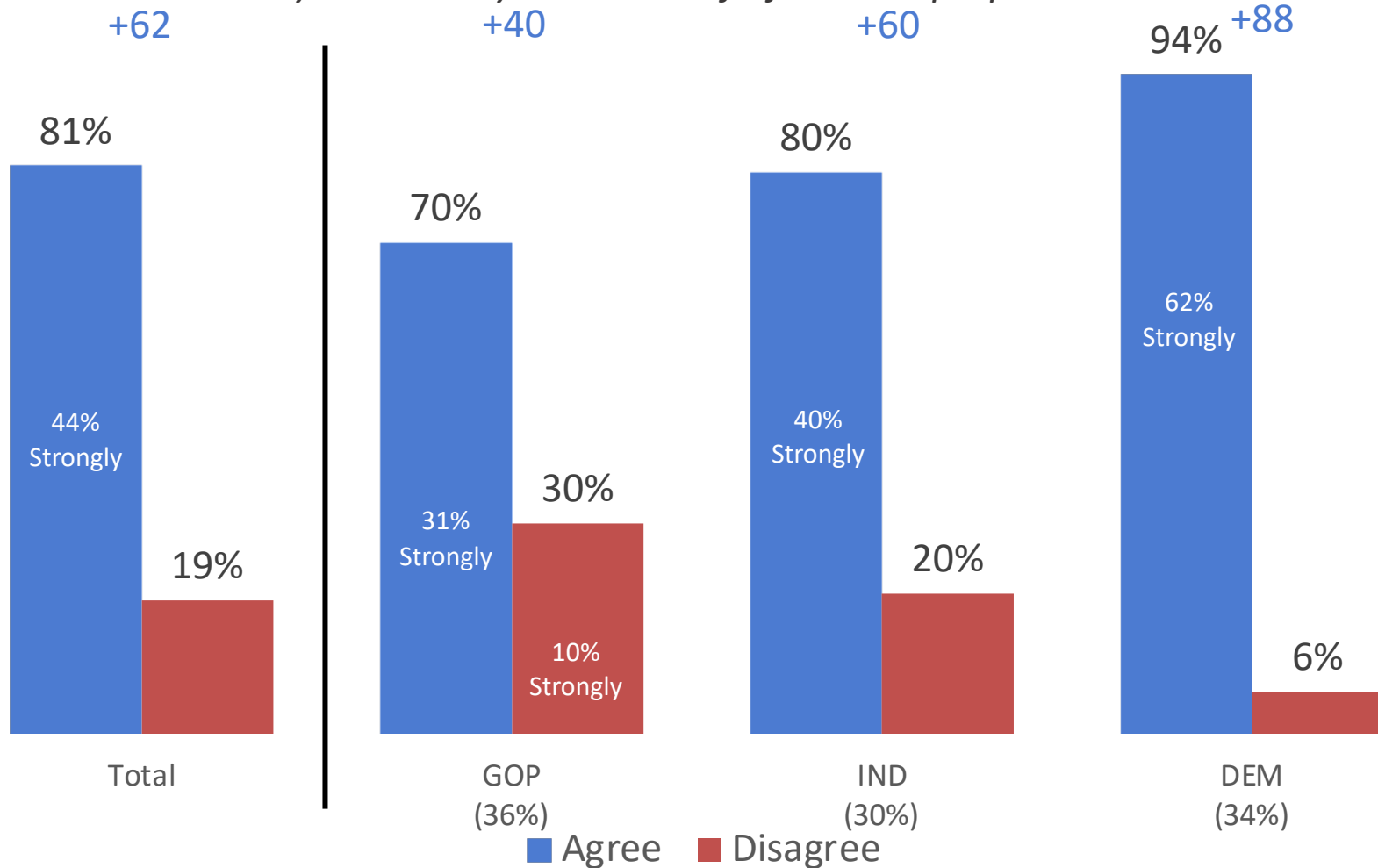
Nearly 60% say that someone they work with will...

Someone I work with will benefit from this proposal.



And, more than 80% say that their community would benefit.

My community would benefit from this proposal.






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Methodology

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- On behalf of First Five Years Fund, Public Opinion Strategies completed an online survey of 1000 registered voters in 40 key GOP-held congressional districts and 1000 registered voters in five key GOP-held Senate states.
- Congressional districts surveyed include AZ-06, CA-21, CA-22, CA-25, CA-39, CA-48, CA-50, CO-03, FL-26, FL-27, IL-13, IN-05, IA-01, IA-02, MI-03, MI-06, MN-01, MO-02, NE-02, NJ-02, NY-01, NY-02, NY-22, NY-24, NC-08, OH-01, OK-05, PA-01, PA-10, SC-01, TX-06, TX-10, TX-21, TX-22, TX-23, TX-24, TX-31, UT-04, VA-05, WA-03.
 - States surveyed include Florida, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.

The survey was conducted August 6-13, 2021 and has a credibility interval of $\pm 2.50\%$.

