

GREENBERG QUINLAN ROSNER RESEARCH

March 7, 2007

Getting the Public to Listen

National Survey Results

February 14-19, 2007

1014 Likely Voters



Democracy Corps

Key findings: sour view of government and Washington

- **Deep discontent about the country, leadership and government in general that has hardened over time**
- **Republicans may be responsible for much of what is wrong with government -- but is dangerous to assume public will give Democrats a pass. Voters believe both parties are part of the problem.**
- **Skepticism about government and its leadership has intensified to the point that it is now a barrier that keeps them from listening to what Democrats or Republicans have to say.**

Key findings: the accountability problem

- **Perceived lack of accountability is at the center of the challenge -- how politicians and government spend money, how they conduct themselves, and whom they listen to when setting their priorities.**

- **Three key elements that make up an overall absence of accountability:**
 - **Voters believe government wastes money, lacks fiscal accountability, spends money without delivering results**
 - **Perception that politicians play by a different set of rules, lack authenticity**
 - **Sense that politicians listen to the wealthy and corporate interests, which distorts priorities**

- **The public does not view it as a choice between smaller or bigger government -- is a desire for a government that produces results.**

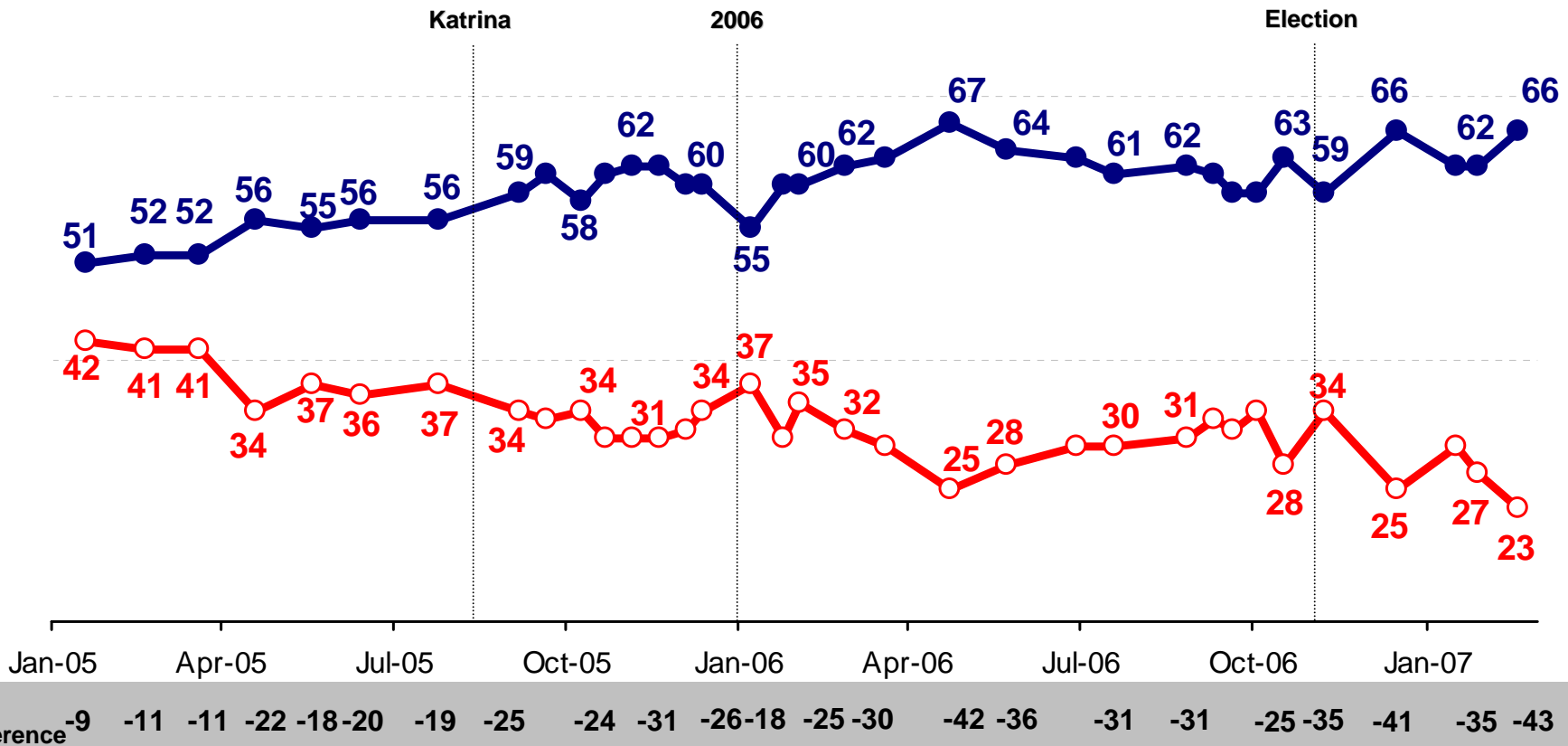
Sour view of Washington

Confidence in country direction at lowest point

Generally speaking, do you think things in the country are going in the right direction, or do you feel things have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track?

○ Right direction

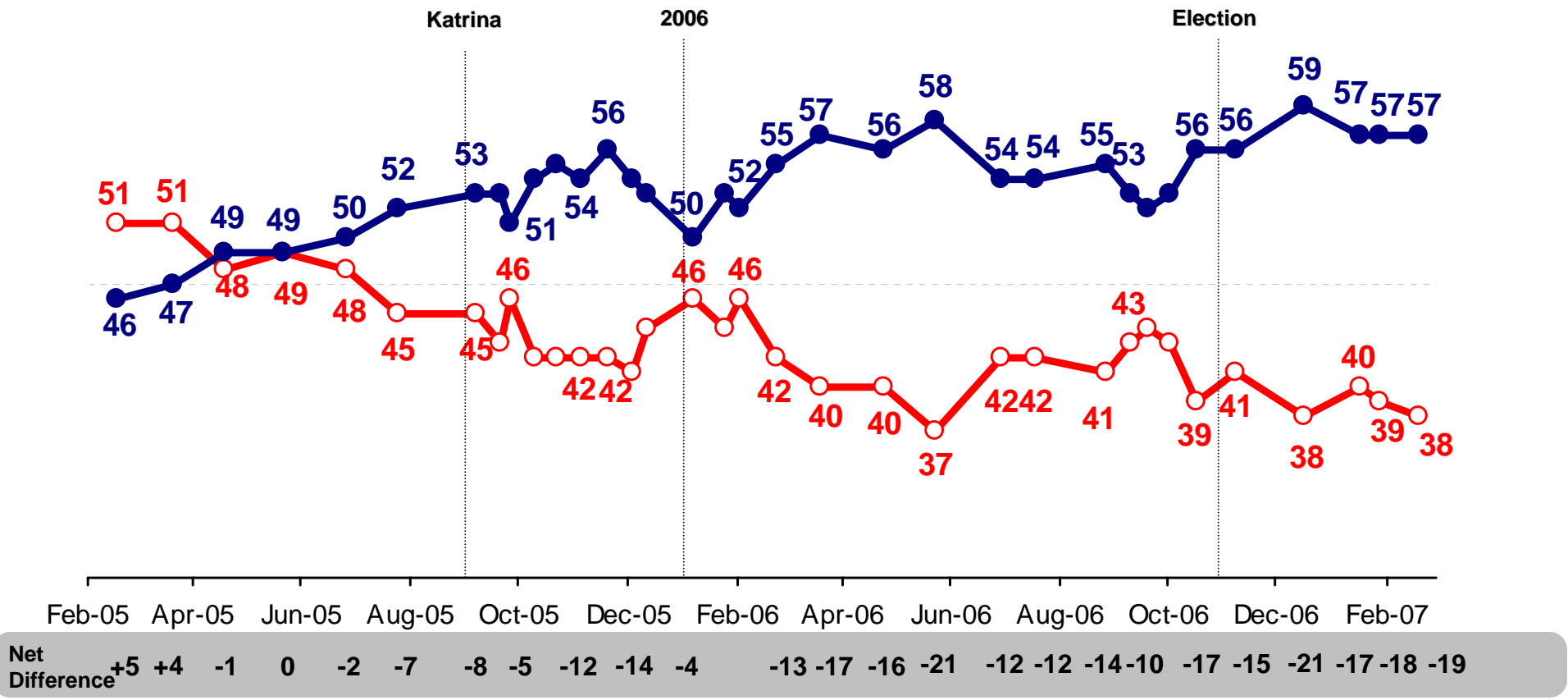
● Wrong direction



Bush disapproval remains high

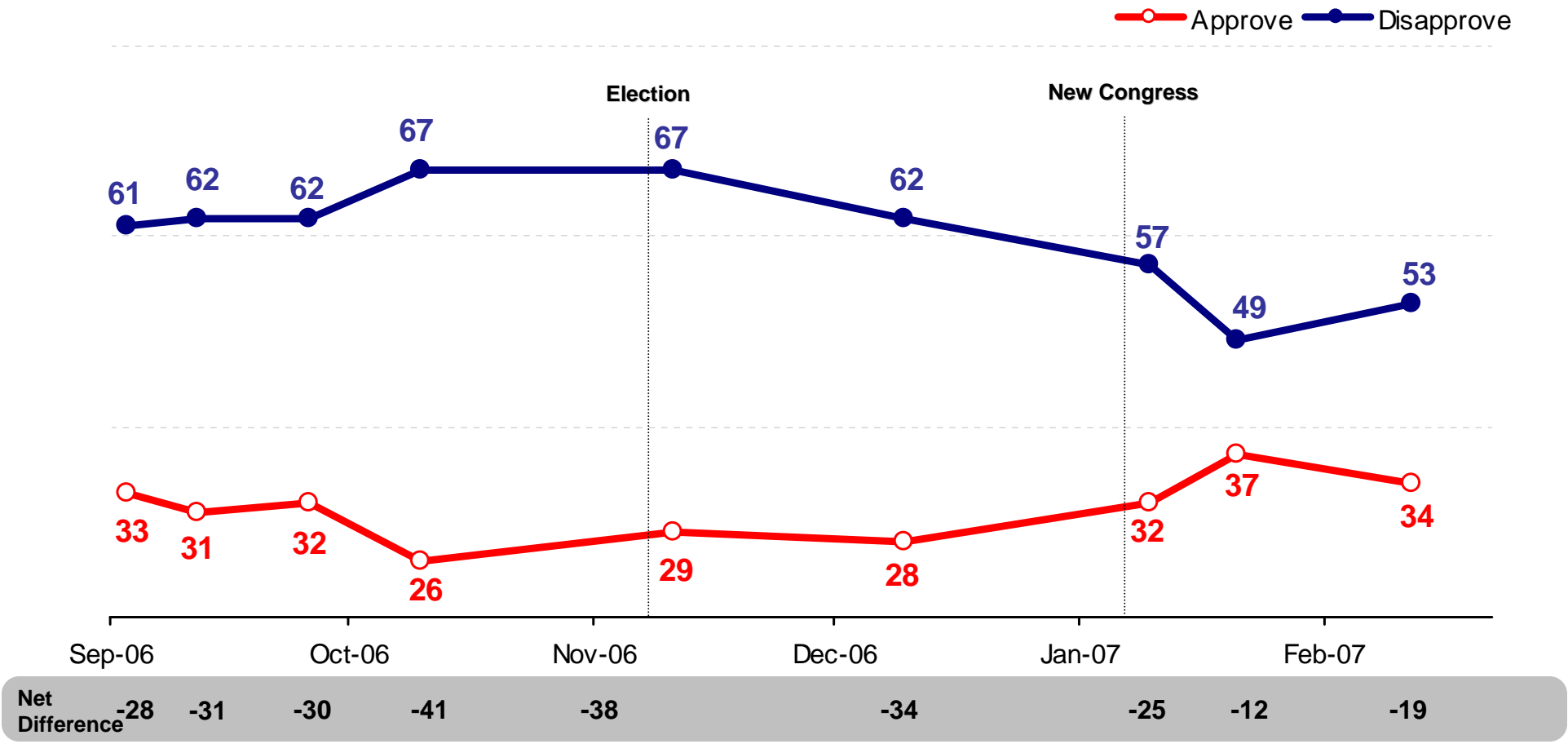
Do you approve or disapprove of the way George Bush is handling his job as President?

○ Approve ● Disapprove



Majority disapproves of Congress' performance

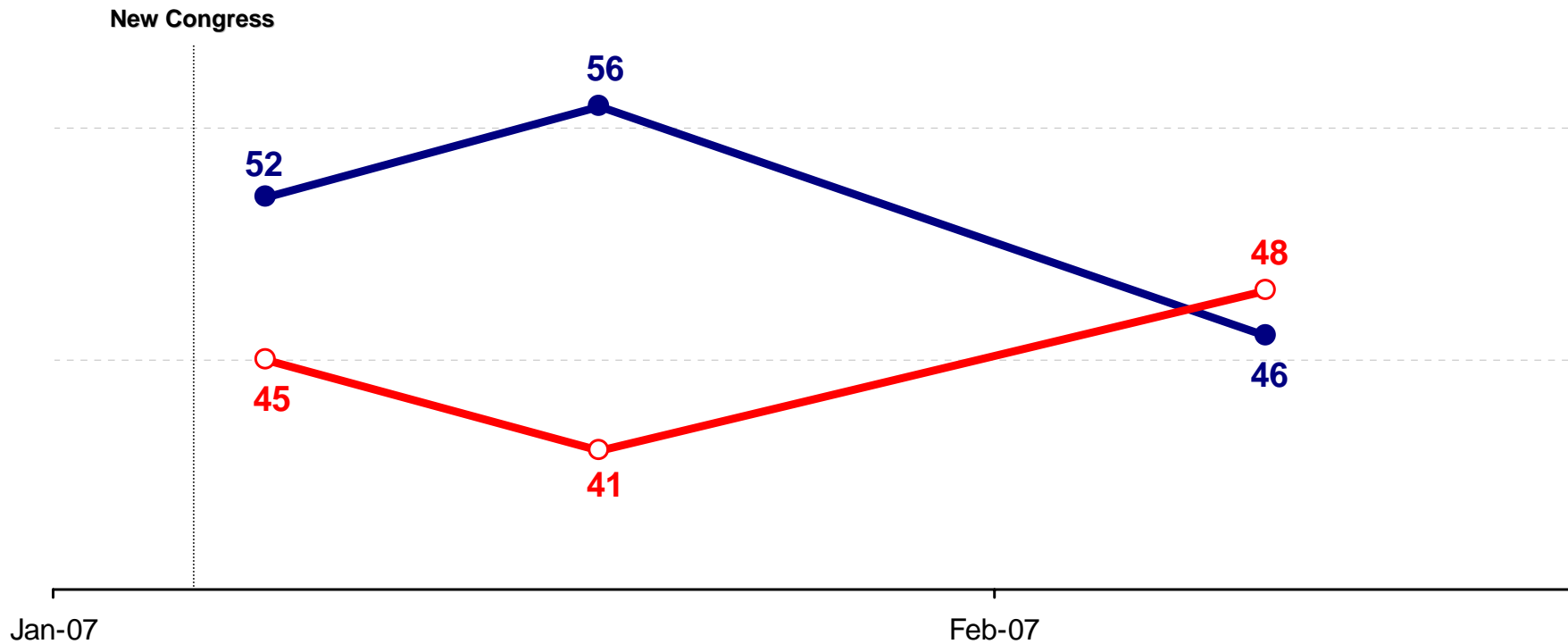
Do you approve or disapprove of the job Congress is doing?



Hope about new Congress eroding

Now I'm going to read you some statements. Please tell me whether the FIRST statement or the SECOND statement comes closer to your own views, even if neither is exactly right:

- I'm hopeful about what the Congress is doing
- I'm doubtful about what the Congress is doing

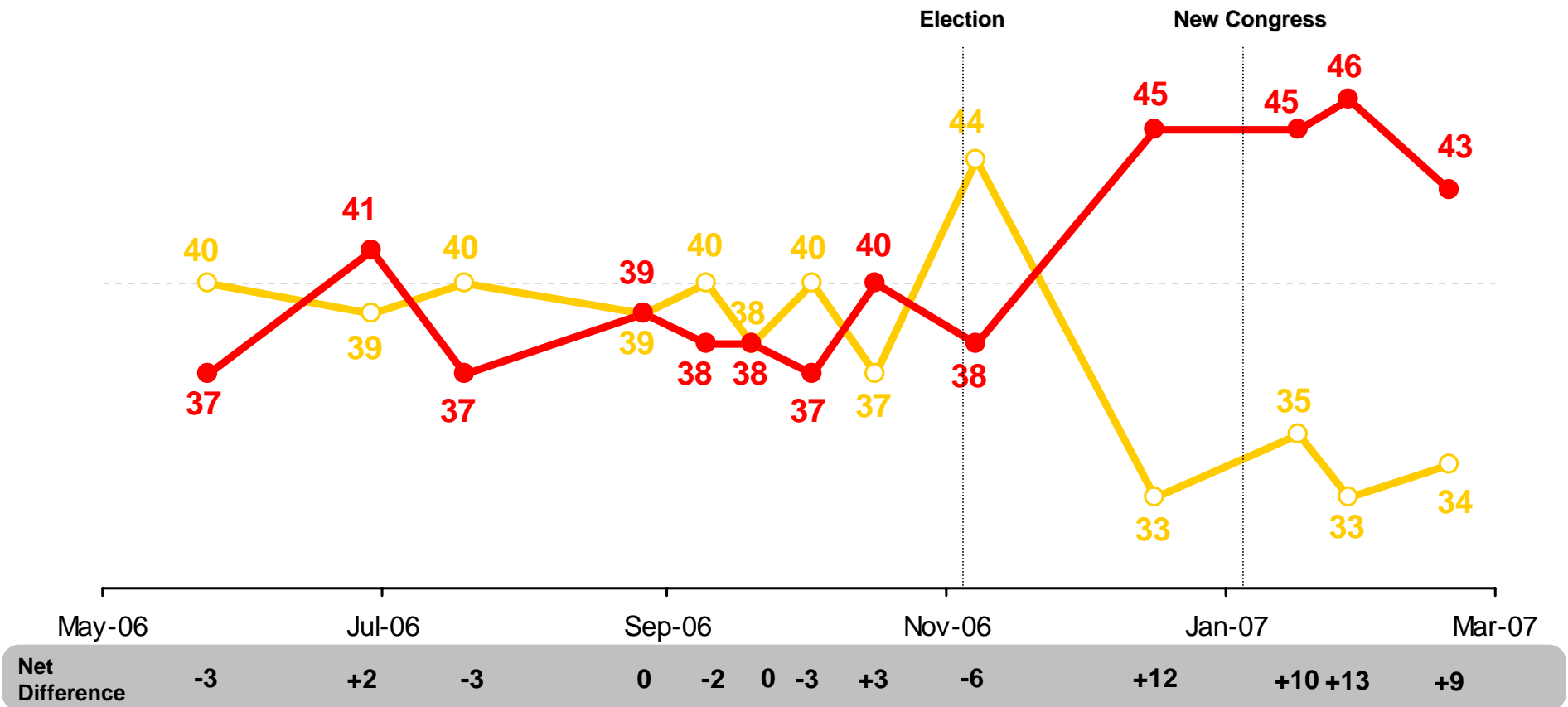


Net Difference	+7	+15	-2
----------------	----	-----	----

Democratic party favorability

Now, I'd like to rate your feelings toward some people and organizations, with one hundred meaning a VERY WARM, FAVORABLE feeling; zero meaning a VERY COLD, UNFAVORABLE feeling; and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold.

○ Cool
● Warm

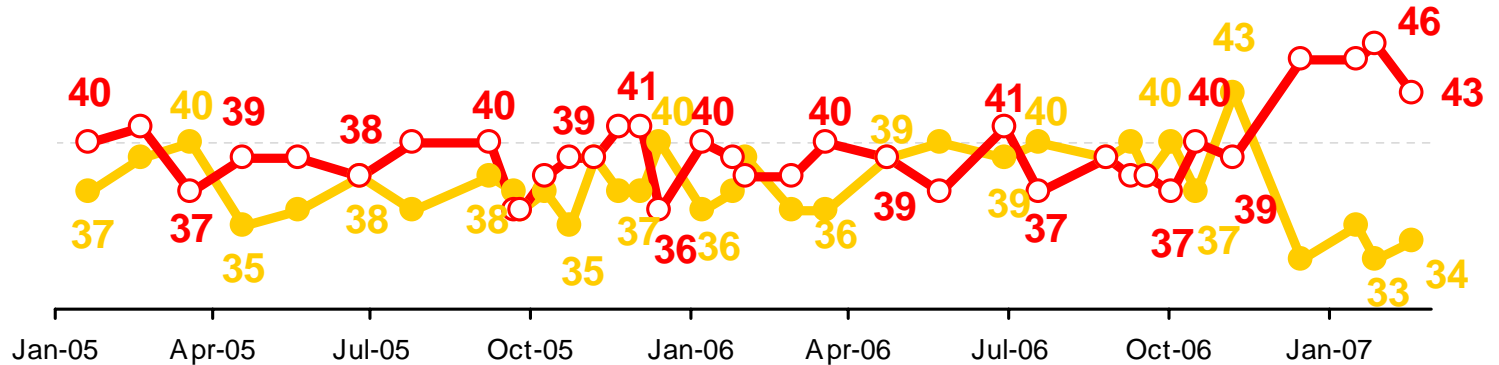


Democrats now to Republicans in '94

—●— Cool —○— Warm

The Democrats

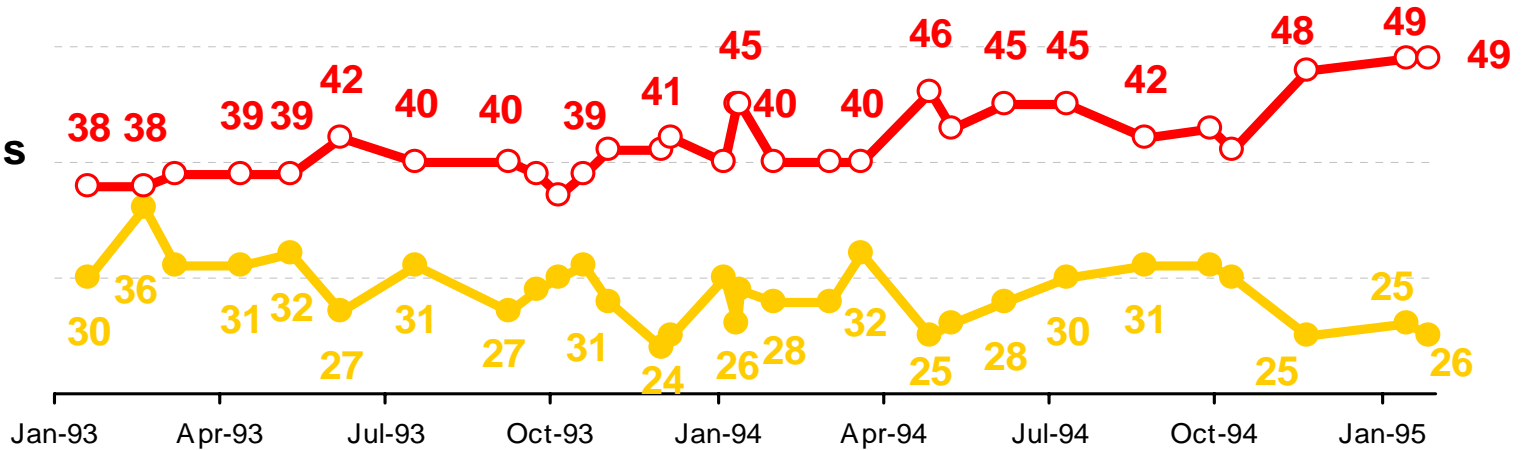
Jan. 2005 –
Feb. 2007



Net Difference	+3	-3	+4	0	+2	+4	+4	-4	+4	+4	0	+2	-3	-3	+3	-4	+10	+13	+9
----------------	----	----	----	---	----	----	----	----	----	----	---	----	----	----	----	----	-----	-----	----

The Republicans

Jan. 1993 –
Feb. 1995

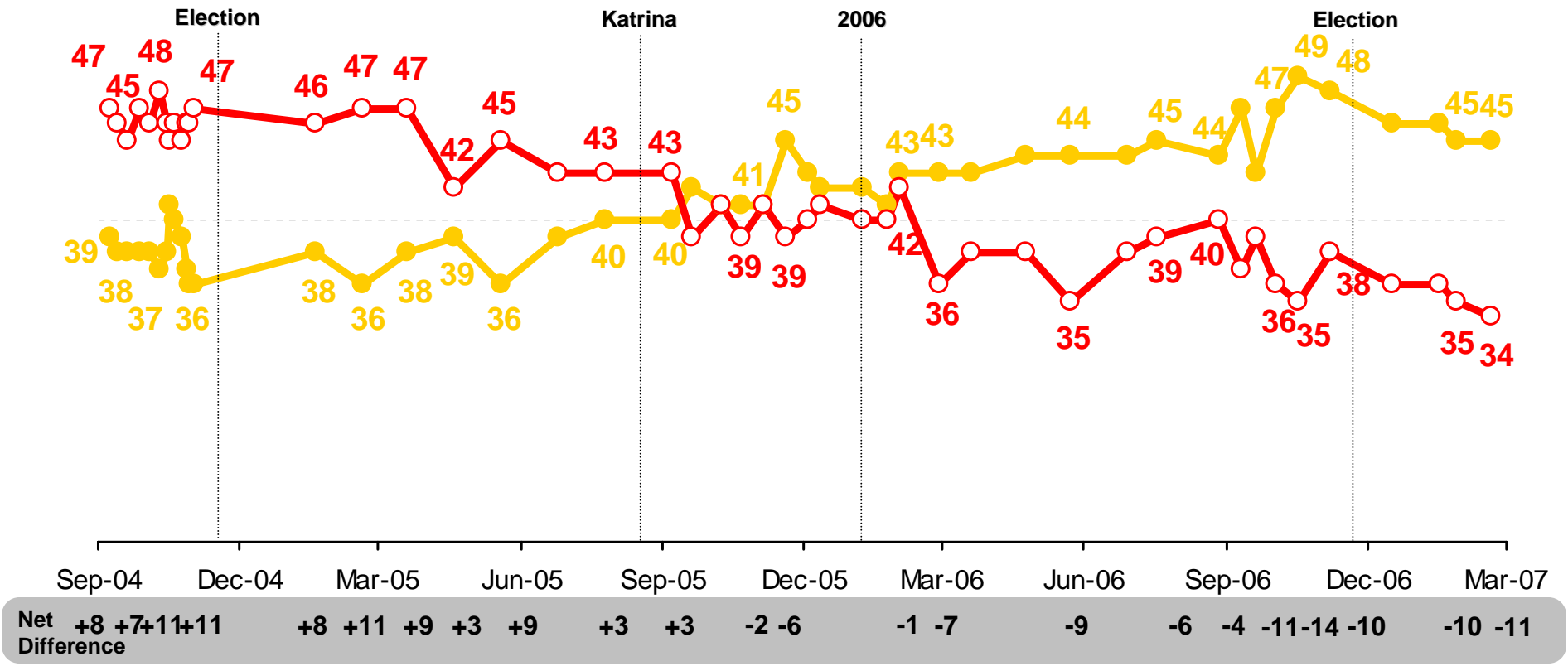


Net Difference	+8	+2	+8	+7	+15	+9	+13	+8	+17	+19	+12	+8	+21	+17	+15	+11	+23	+24	+23
----------------	----	----	----	----	-----	----	-----	----	-----	-----	-----	----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Republican party favorability

Now, I'd like to rate your feelings toward some people and organizations, with one hundred meaning a VERY WARM, FAVORABLE feeling; zero meaning a VERY COLD, UNFAVORABLE feeling; and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold.

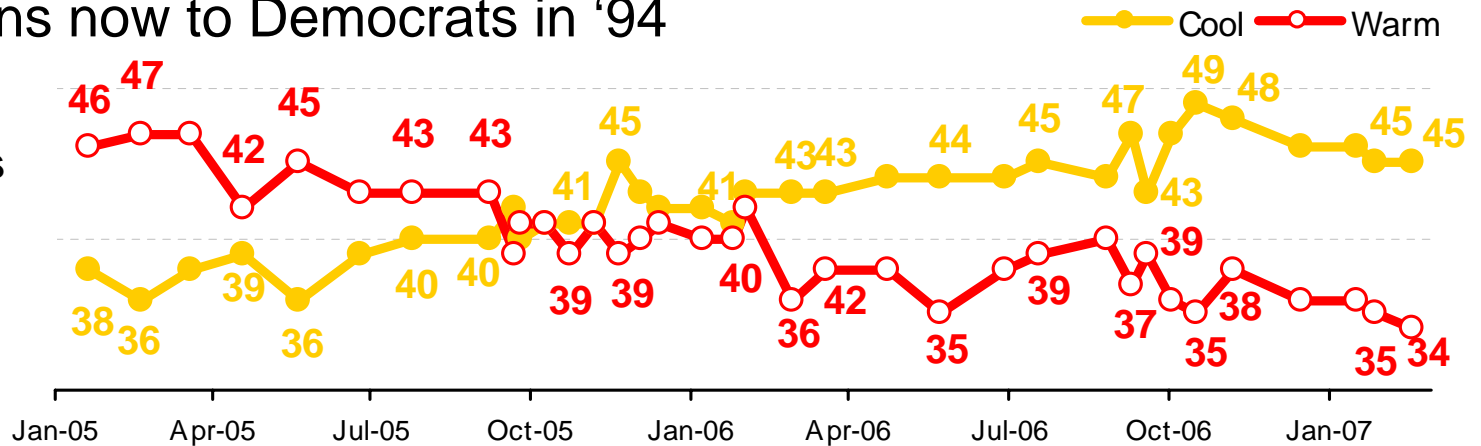
—●— Cool —○— Warm



Republicans now to Democrats in '94

The Republicans

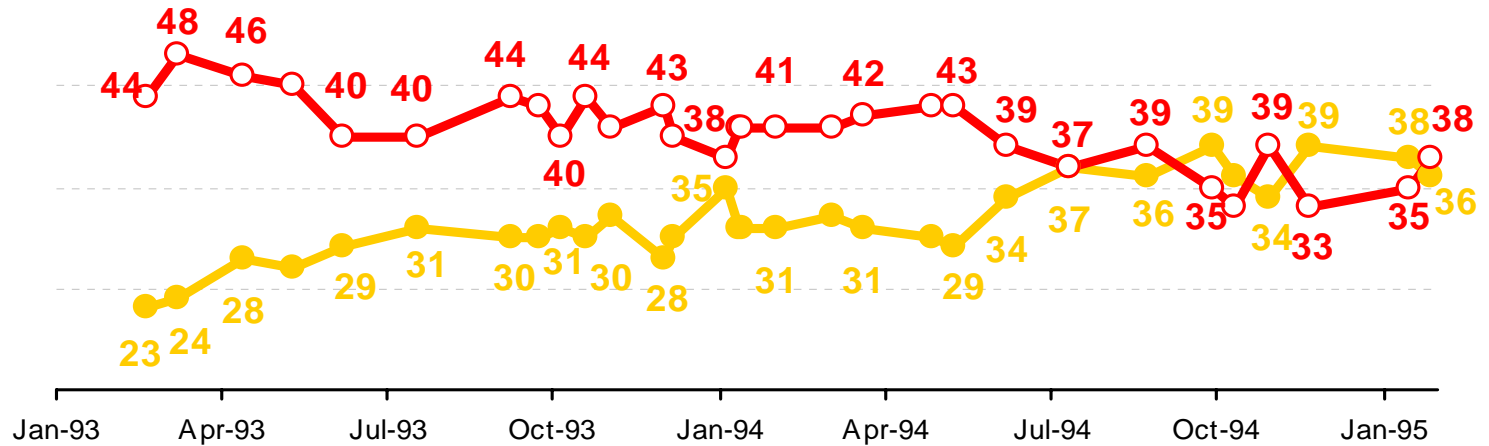
Jan. 2005 –
Feb. 2007



Net Difference	+8	+11	+3	+9	+3	+3	-2	-6	-1	-7	-1	-9	-6	-10	-4	-14	-10	-10	-11
----------------	----	-----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	-----	----	-----	-----	-----	-----

The Democrats

Jan. 1993 –
Feb. 1995

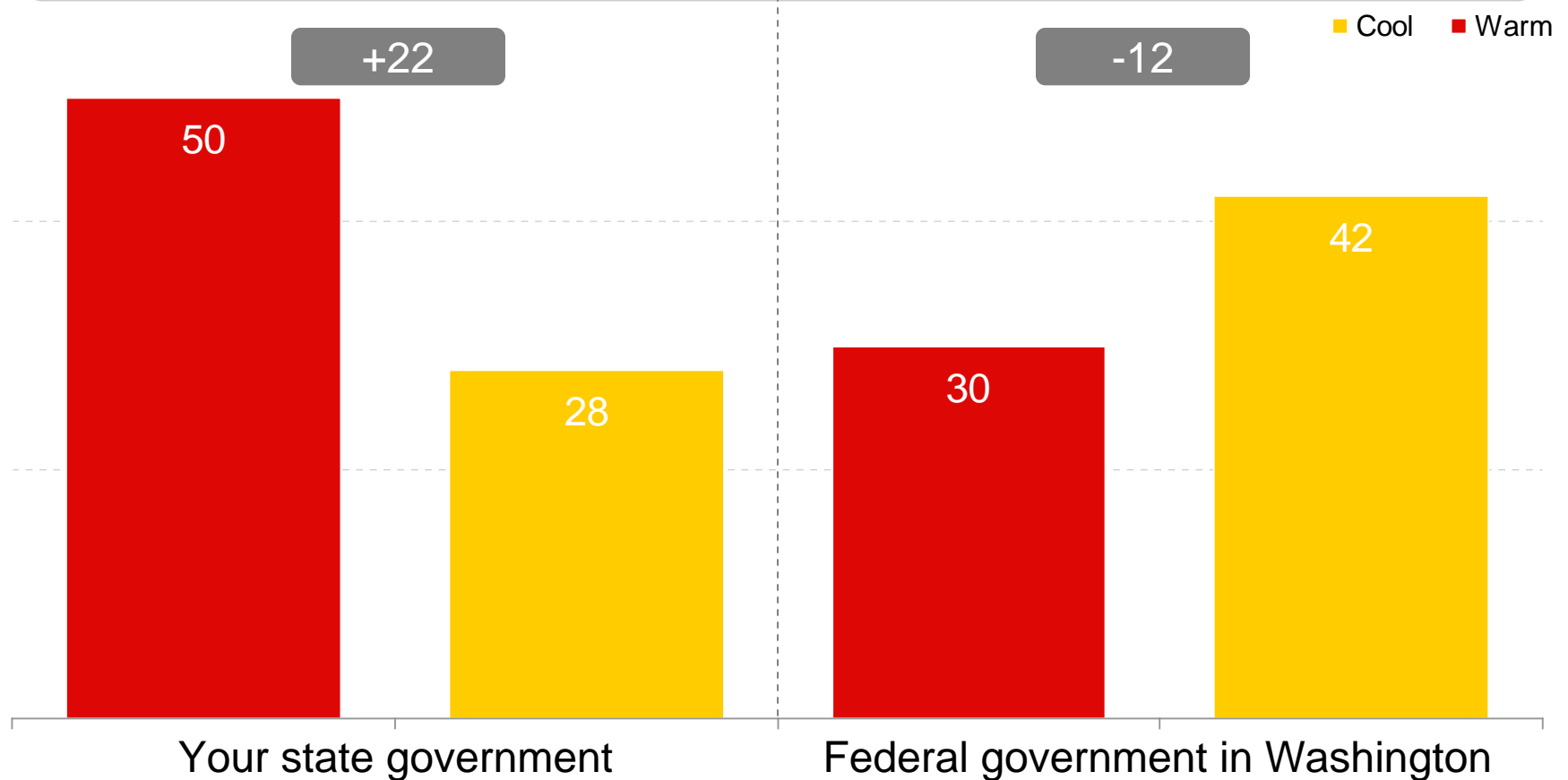


Net Difference	+21	+24	+18	+11	+9	+14	+9	+14	+15	+3	+10	+11	+14	+5	0	+3	-4	+5	-6	-3	+2
----------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	----	-----	----	-----	-----	----	-----	-----	-----	----	---	----	----	----	----	----	----

Perceptions of government and political leadership

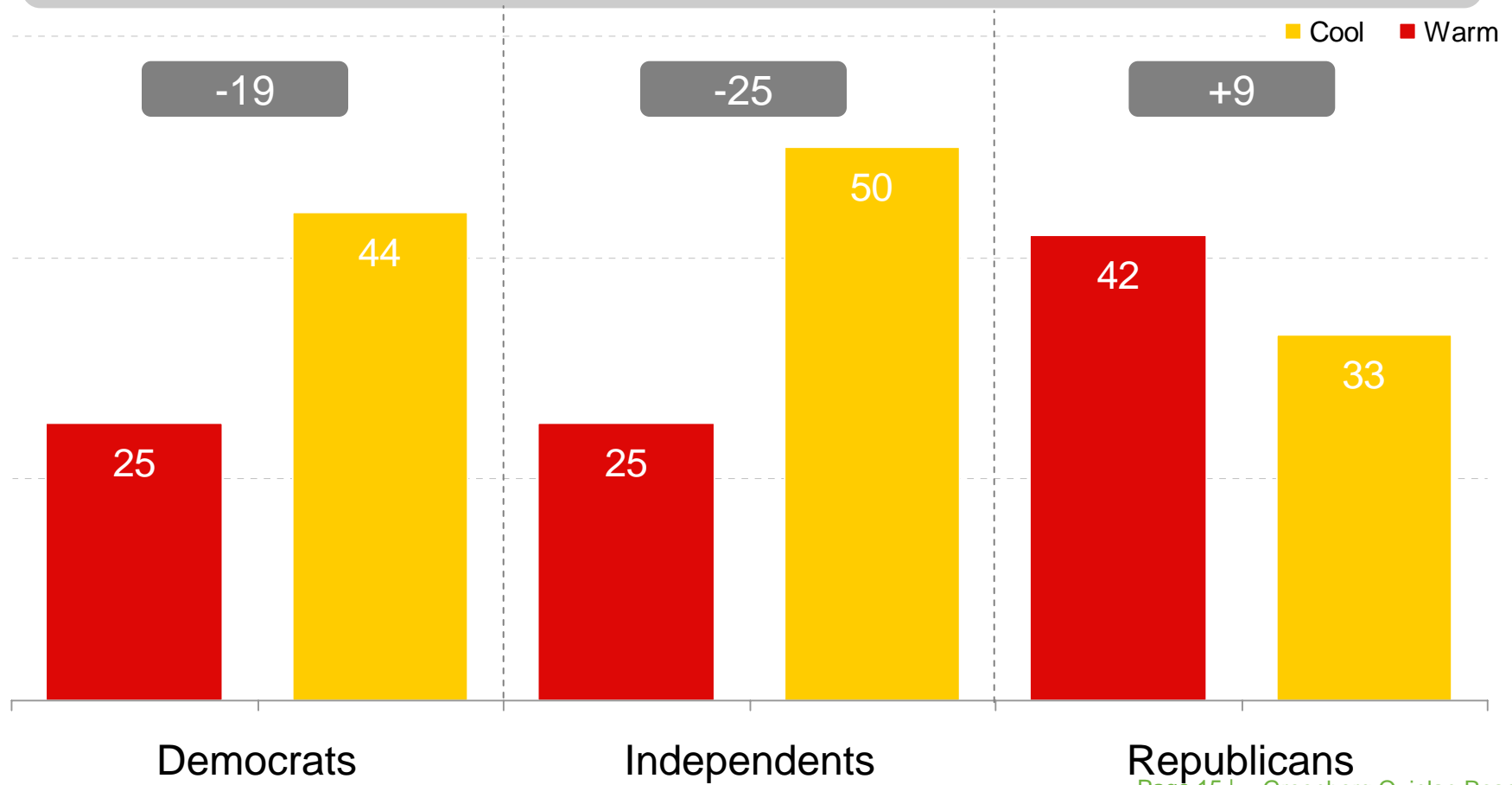
Negative views of the federal government

Now, I'd like to rate your feelings toward some people and organizations, with one hundred meaning a VERY WARM, FAVORABLE feeling; zero meaning a VERY COLD, UNFAVORABLE feeling; and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold.



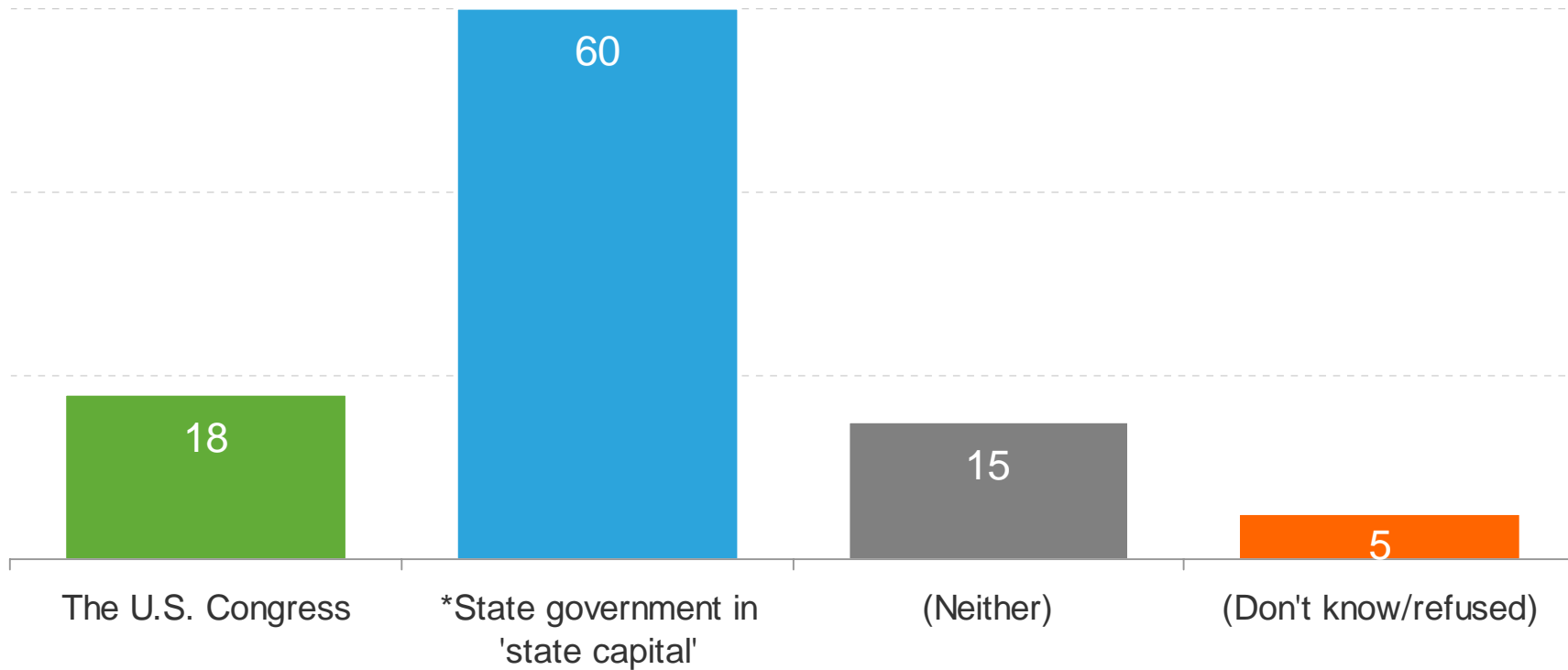
Independents particularly unfavorable toward the federal government

Now, I'd like to rate your feelings toward some people and organizations, with one hundred meaning a VERY WARM, FAVORABLE feeling; zero meaning a VERY COLD, UNFAVORABLE feeling; and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold.



Trust: federal vs. state

When it comes to government spending and fiscal responsibility, who do you trust more?

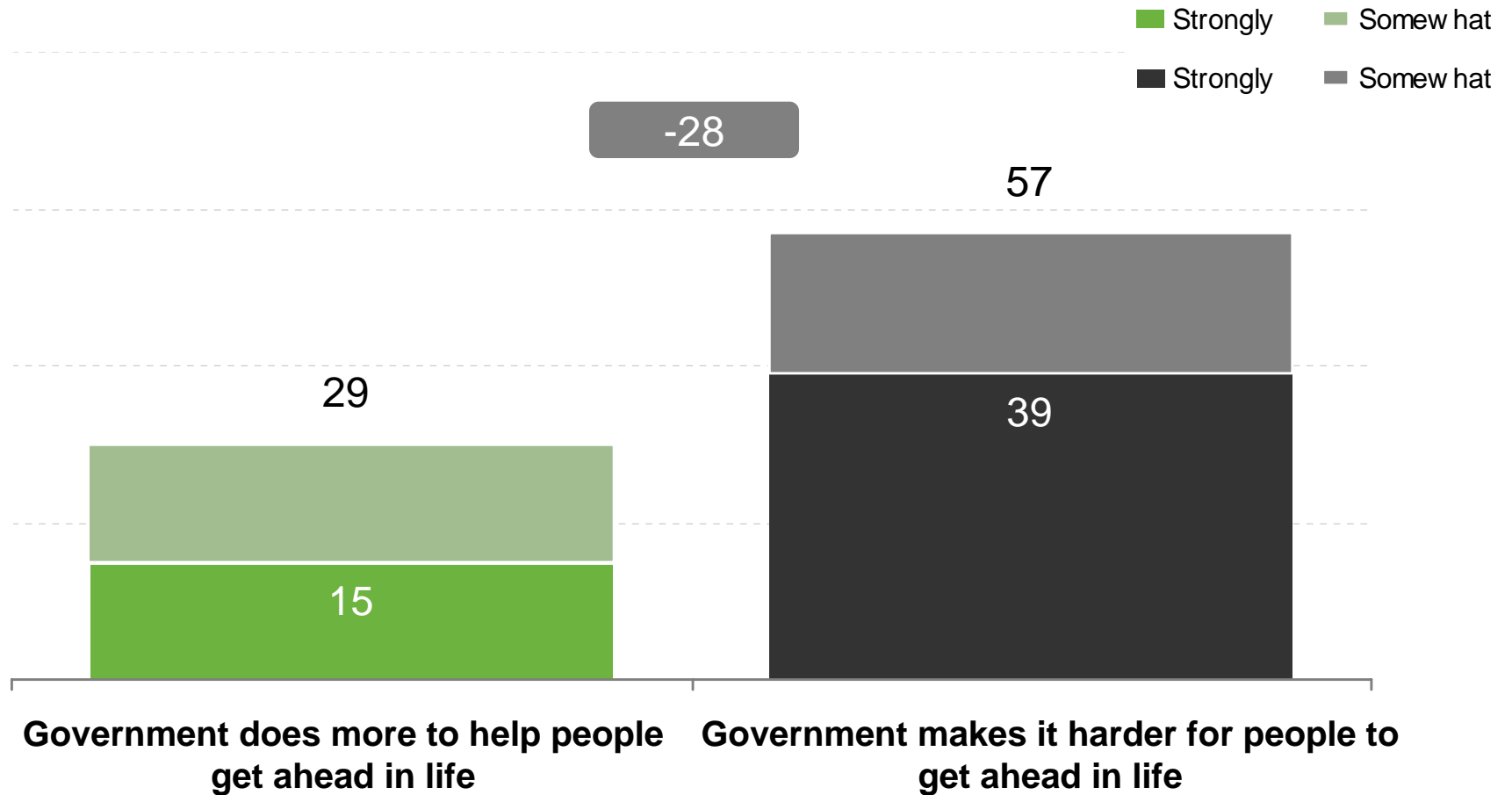


**Note: Names of state capitals inserted accordingly*

Government perceived as barrier to success

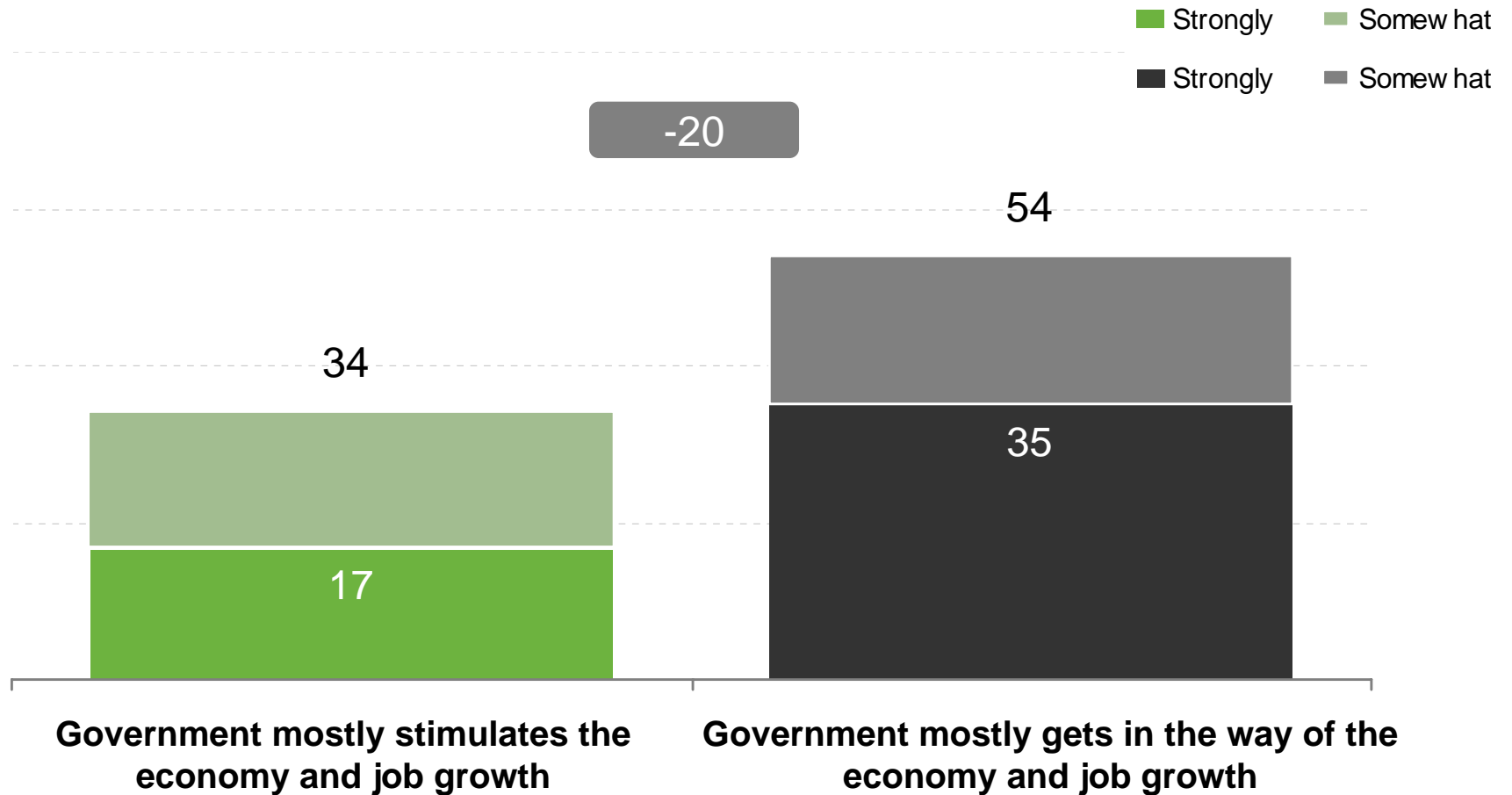
Government seen as impediment to progress for people

Now I'm going to read you some pairs of statements. After I read each pair, please tell me whether the FIRST or the SECOND statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right.



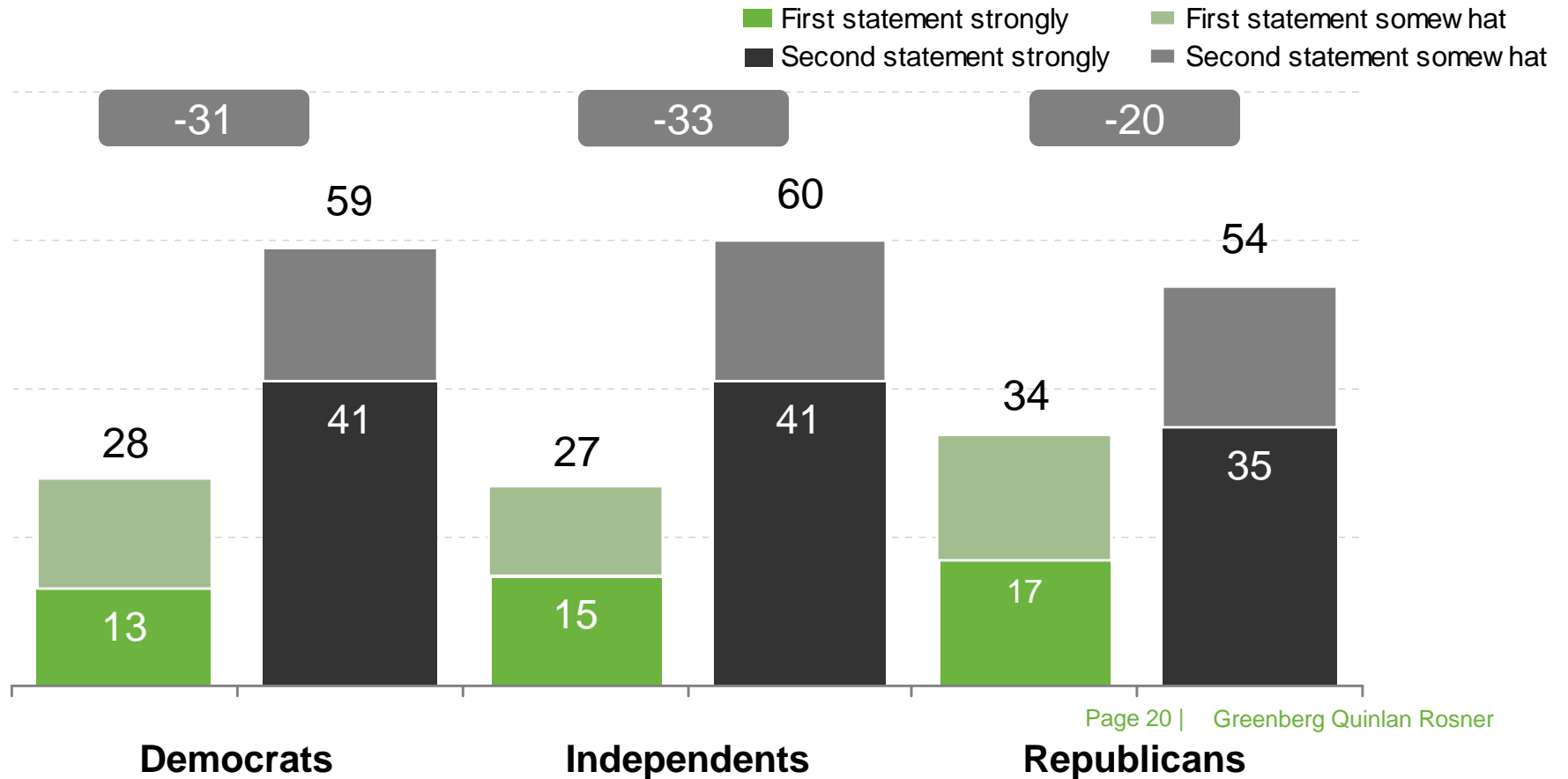
Government perceived as hindrance to economic growth

Now I'm going to read you some pairs of statements. After I read each pair, please tell me whether the FIRST or the SECOND statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right.



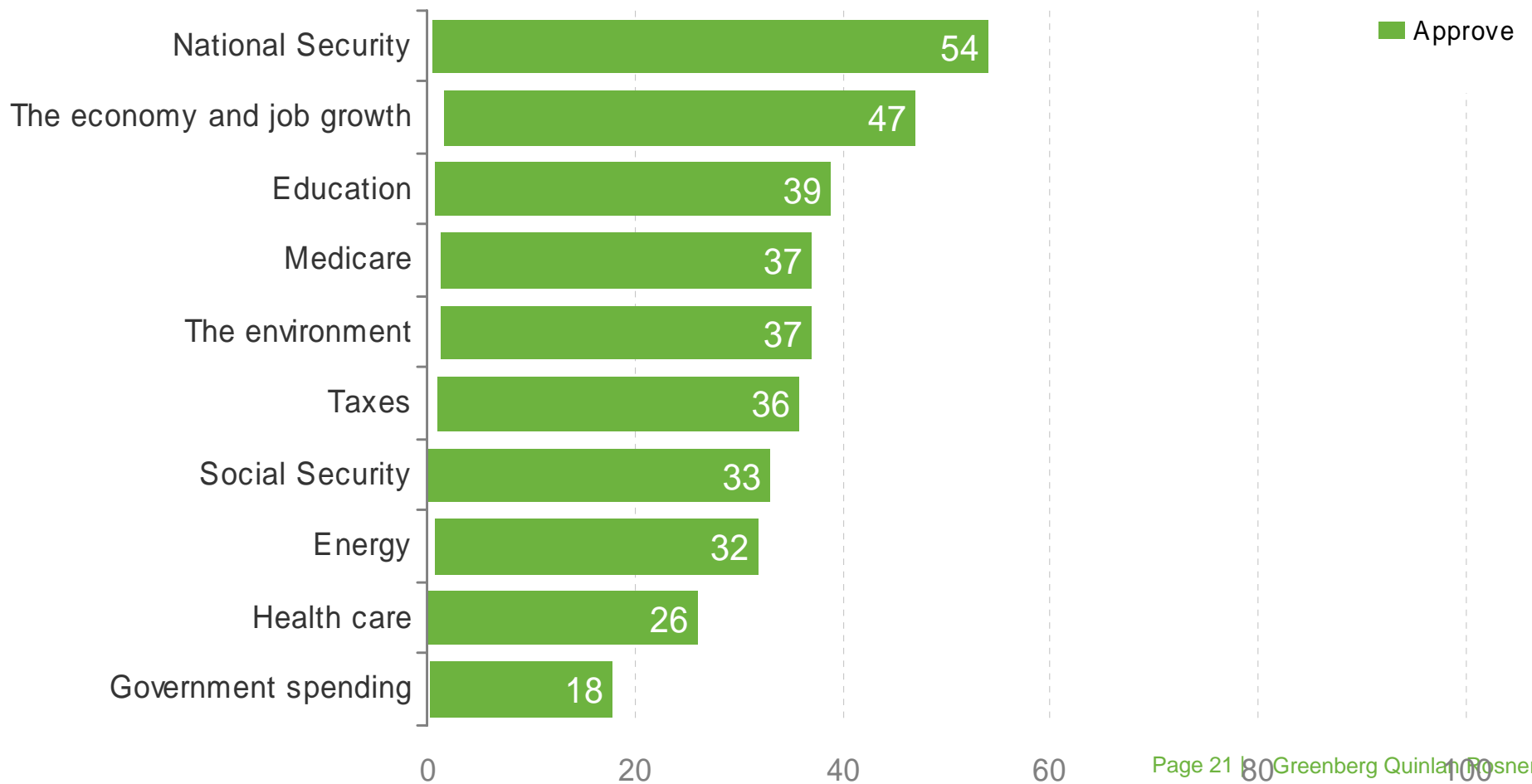
Government also seen as impediment across party lines

Now I'm going to read you some pairs of statements. After I read each pair, please tell me whether the *FIRST* or the *SECOND* statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right:
 Government does more to help people get ahead in life
 OR
 Government makes it harder for people to get ahead in life



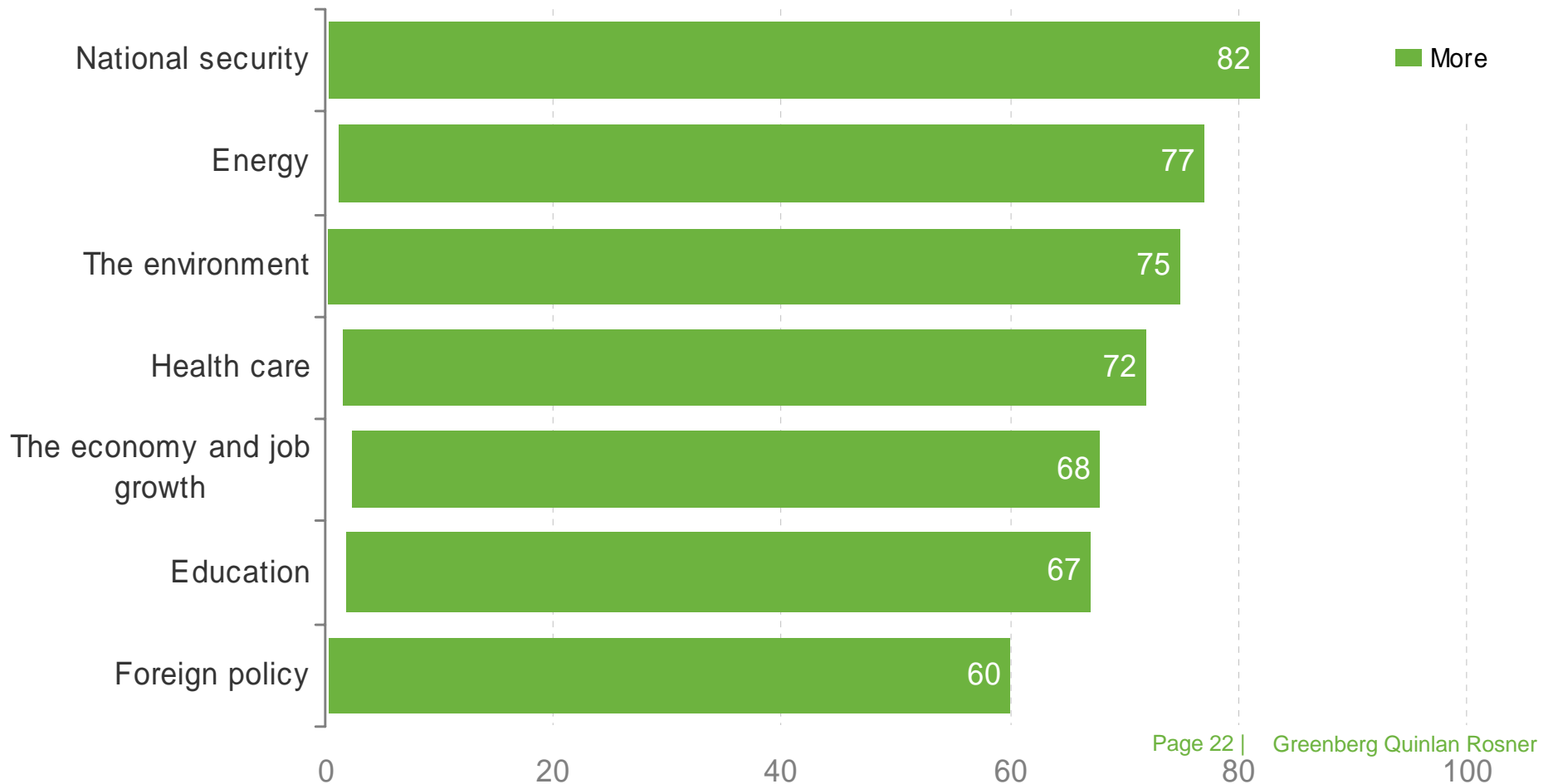
Voters disapprove of government performance on nearly every issue

Now let me ask you about a number of issues and how the government is handling each issue. For each one, please tell me whether you approve or disapprove of the way the government is handling the issue.



Despite disapproval levels, solid majorities want more involvement

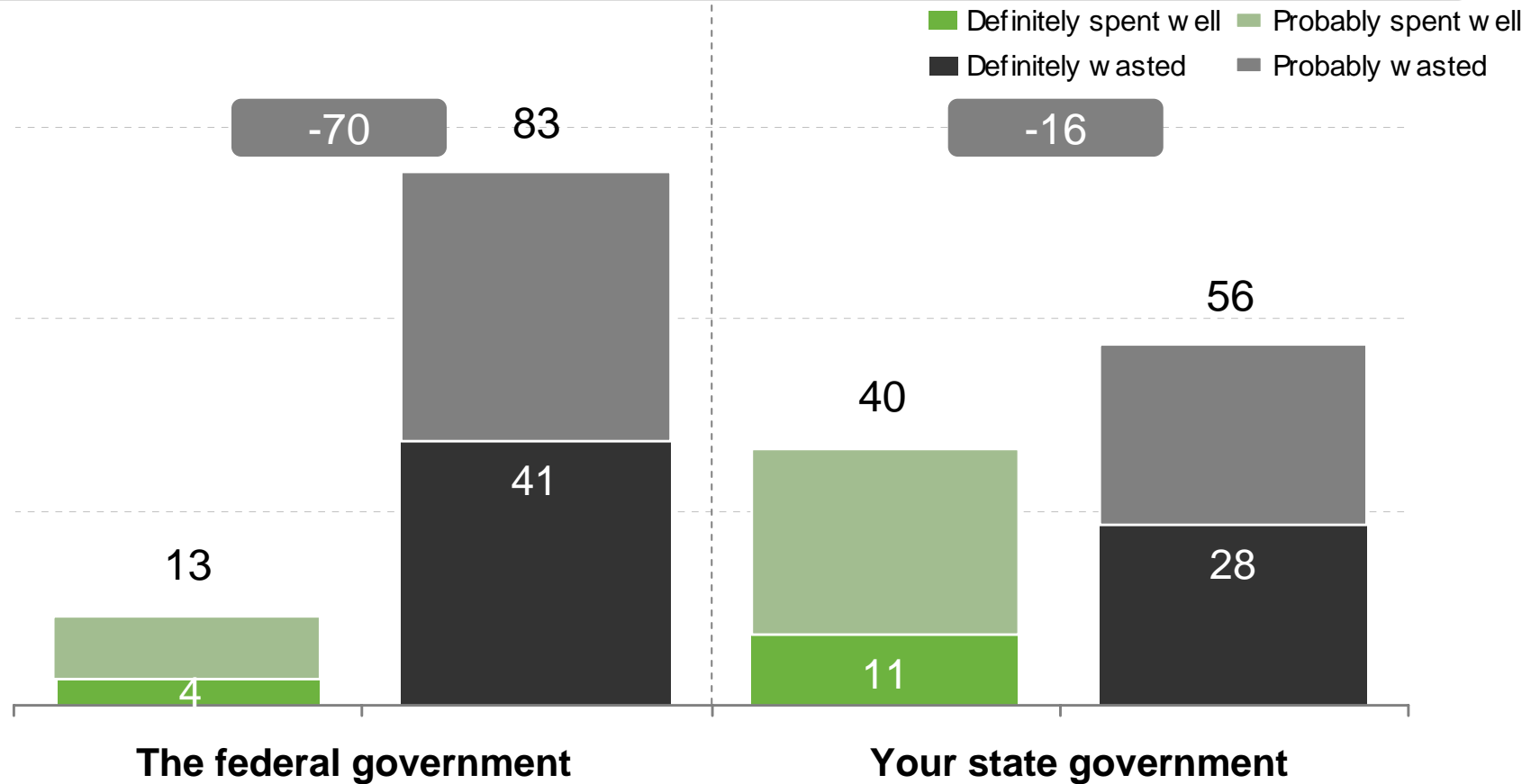
Now let me ask you about a number of issues and the government's role in dealing with this issue. For each one, please tell me whether it's an area where there should be more governmental involvement or an area the government should be less involved in.



Lack of accountability stands in the way

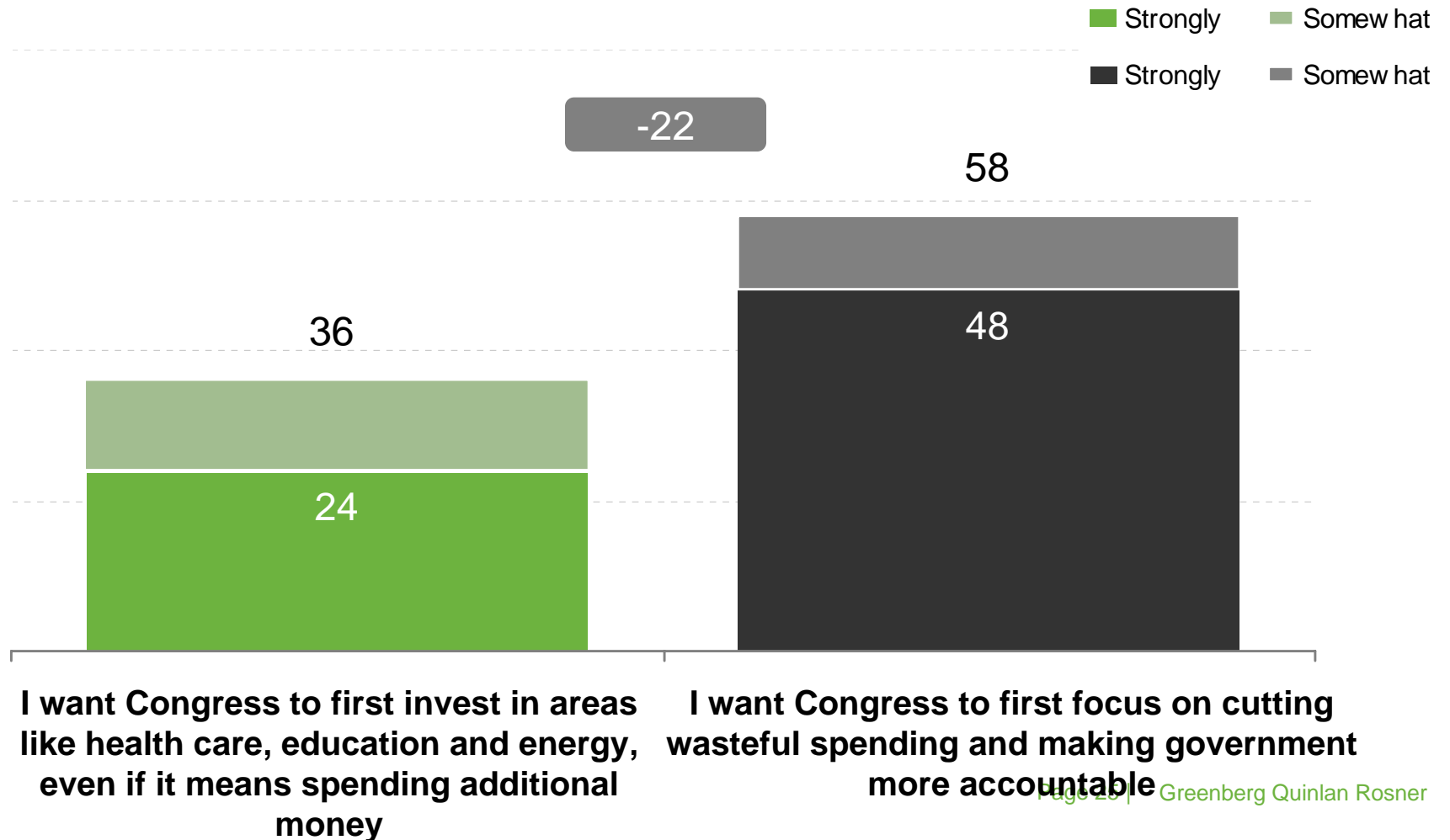
Public lacks trust in government's management of tax dollars

If the following were to receive additional money, do you think the additional money is more likely to be spent well or is it more likely to be wasted?



Voters want accountability first

Now I'm going to read you some pairs of statements. After I read each pair, please tell me whether the FIRST or the SECOND statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right.



The accountability problem: spending, politicians, special interests

Dimensions of the problem

After I read each of the following, please tell me whether you think it is a very serious, serious, somewhat of a problem or not a problem in government.

**Total
serious
problem**

Government is not accountable for how it spends money	75
The powerful and wealthiest have too much influence in government	70
Officials in government put their own interests ahead of what is best for the people	66
Government has the wrong priorities and does not focus on what is most important	56
Government is too big and bureaucratic and has not changed to reflect the 21st century	53
Government has too many regulations that get in the way of economic growth and creating jobs	45

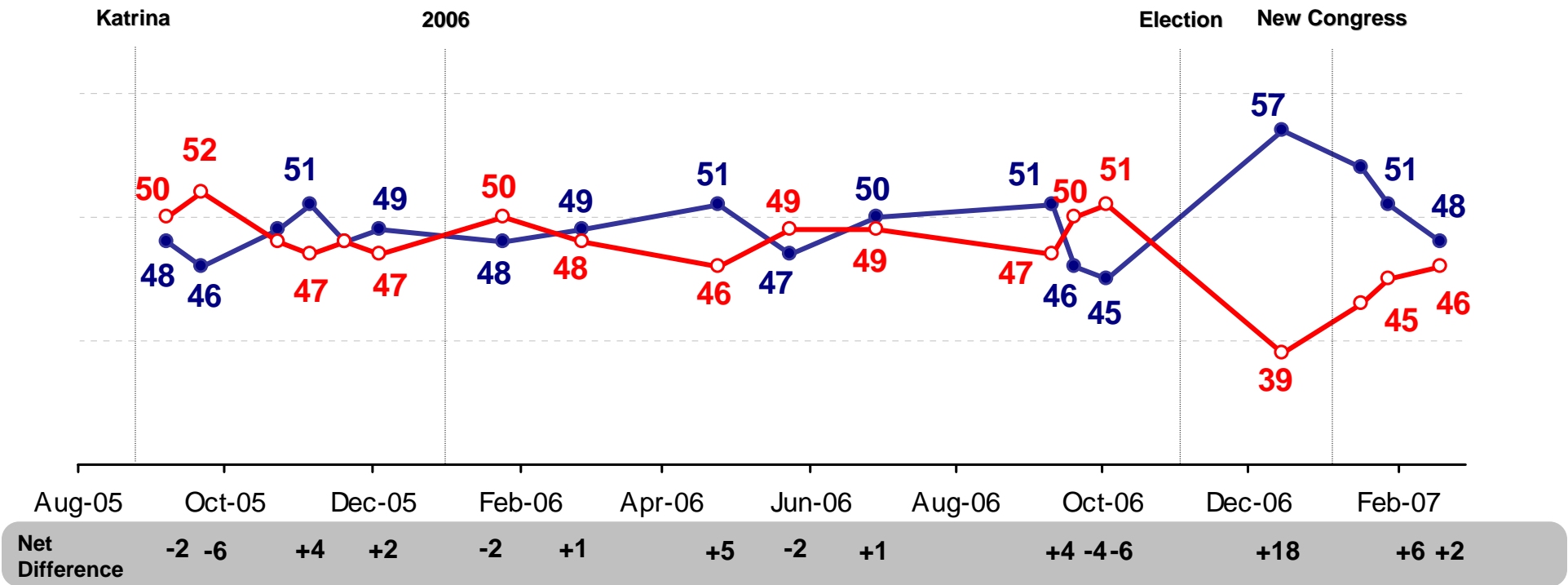
Accountability in voters' own words

- ***“They have to account for spending money”***
- ***“Ending the bureaucracy, making sure the money is well spent”***
- ***“Having less waste, more efficiency and more transparency to how [the government] spends my money”***
- ***“They should be held accountable for what they say they’re going to do”***
- ***“The decisions they make they need to follow through with; if it’s the wrong decision, they need to own up to it”***

It's not about limited government, but about government getting results

Now I'm going to read you some statements. Please tell me whether the *FIRST* statement or the *SECOND* statement comes closer to your own views, even if neither is exactly right:

- America is most successful when our government helps create conditions so that many can prosper, not just a few
- America is most successful when we have a limited government that keeps taxes low so that businesses and individuals can prosper



The accountability problem

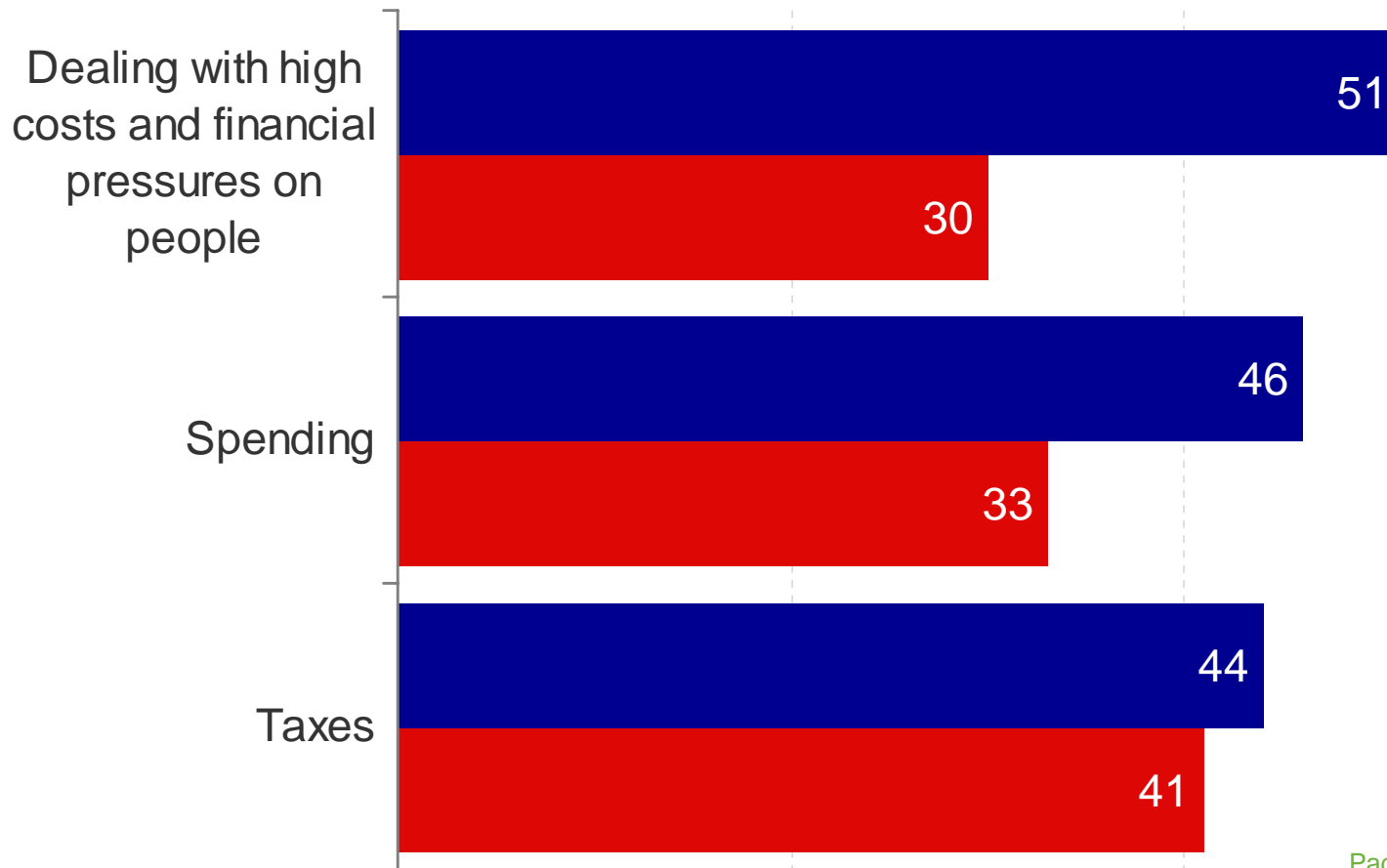
- **Government is perceived as wasting money, fiscally irresponsible and lacking accountability.**
- **Politicians are viewed as living by a different set of rules, taking care of themselves, and not speaking straight with people and taking responsibility for what they say and do.**
- **The influence of special interests, corporate interests and the wealthy is seen as distorting government's priorities.**

Big opportunity for Democrats to be the
accountability party

Republican disadvantage on every accountability measure

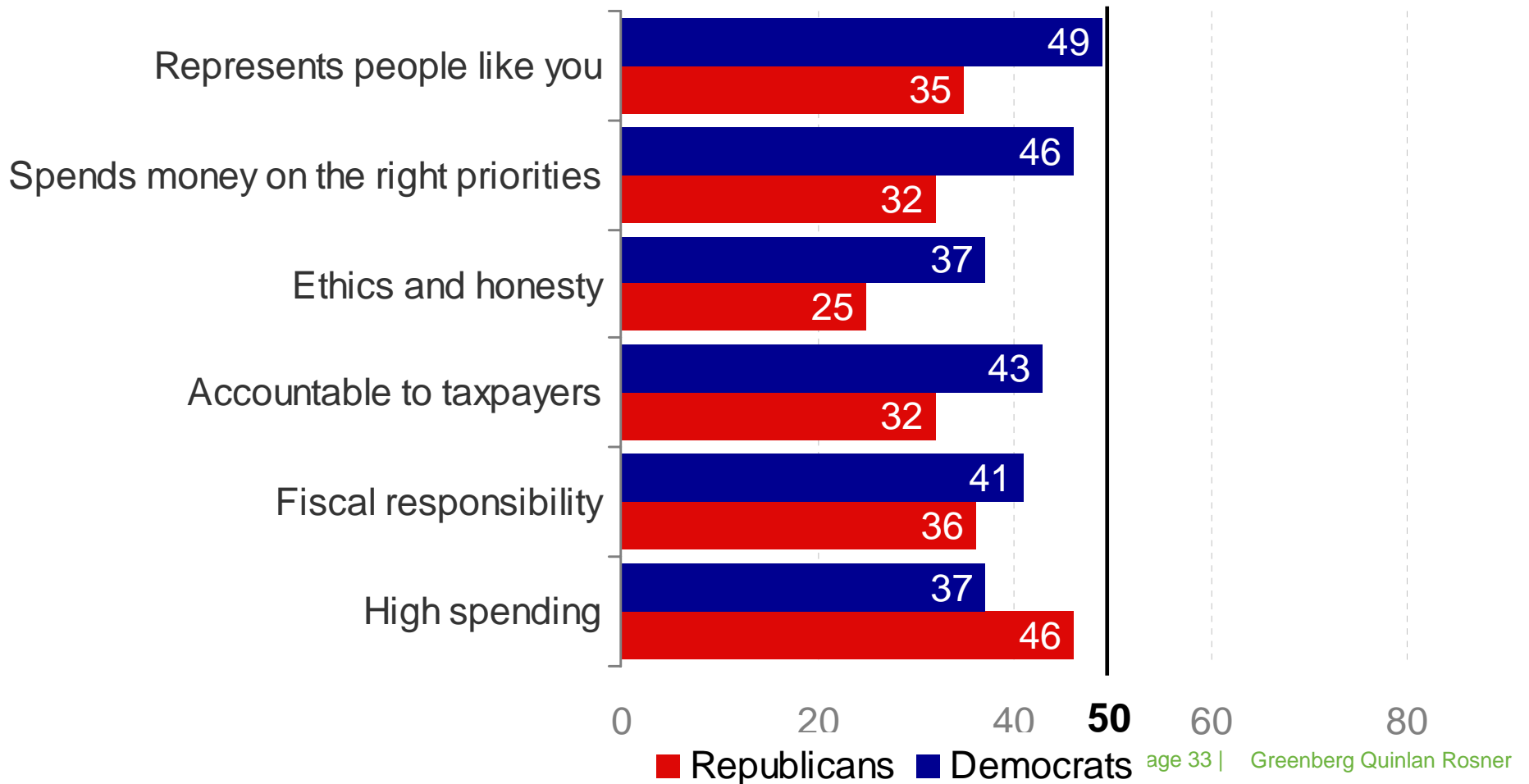
I am going to read you a list of statements and I want you to tell me whether, overall, you think the Democrats or the Republicans would do a better job with this issue.

■ Republicans ■ Democrats



Party associations

Now I'd like to ask you which party you associate more with these terms, the Democrats or the Republicans.



Federal audits lead proposals to reduce waste

Would this make you much more likely, somewhat more likely, a little more likely, no more likely, or less likely to support the Democratic Congress?

	Much More likely	Total More likely
Audit every federal department and agency to make sure their funding is going to meaningful projects, instead of the bureaucracy	44	75
Institute a strong whistle-blower law to protect government employees from retribution if they report waste or corruption	41	68
Eliminate no-bid contracts when companies get government contracts by requiring all government contracts to be awarded through a competitive bidding process	39	69
Create an Iraq Inspector General to oversee U.S. spending in Iraq, institute tough accountability measures to make sure money isn't being wasted	39	65

Strategic recommendations

- 1. Resist the temptation to remain the defender of the federal government; instead, seize the mantle of change and accountability.**
- 2. Authenticity, honesty and straight talk are crucial, and assume responsibility for what you say you will do.**
- 3. Include accountability as a core element in everything you propose so you can be heard by a skeptical public.**
- 4. Advance a strong fiscal accountability agenda that cuts waste, makes government more efficient and results-oriented.**
- 5. Go further on anti-corruption, ethics, lobbying reform.**
- 6. Establish a willingness to share in the burden by prohibiting a pay rise for Congress.**