

# *The Politics of Cannabis*

## **Pollsters**

*Celinda Lake, Lake Research Partners & Tony Fabrizio, Fabrizio, Lee & Associates*

## **Panelists**

*Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) & Congressman David Joyce (R-OH)*

## **Moderator**

*John Hudak,  
Brookings Institution*

*Presented by:*

**MedMen™**



**FABRIZIO  
LEE**





## The Politics of Marijuana Legalization in 2018 Battleground Districts

Findings from a Statewide Survey of 800  
Likely Voters in 2018 Battleground  
Congressional Districts

Celinda Lake, Daniel Gotoff, and Corey Teter

Washington, DC | Berkeley, CA | New York, NY

[LakeResearch.com](http://LakeResearch.com)

202.776.9066

# Methodology - Survey

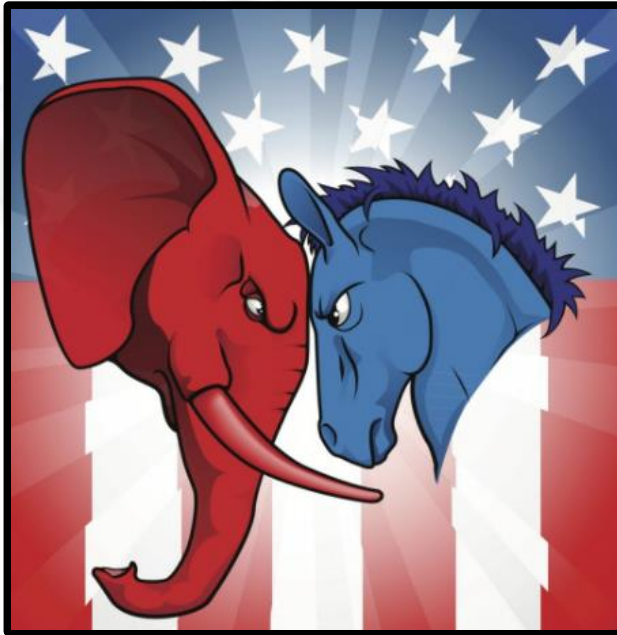
- Lake Research Partners designed and administered this survey, which was conducted by phone using professional interviewers. The survey reached a total of 800 likely November 2018 General Election voters in battleground districts. The list of 60 districts was derived from the DCCC's top-targeted congressional districts. It was then split into two Tiers: the top 40 in Tier 1, and the remaining 20 in Tier 2. The survey was conducted February 7th through February 12th, 2018.
- Telephone numbers for the survey were drawn using a file of registered voters. The sample was stratified to reflect the expected turnout for the November 2018 General Election across the targeted districts. Data were weighted by gender, age, region, race, and party identification, and party registration. The margin of error for the total 800 sample is +/-3.5%. The margin of error for each individual Tier is +/- 4.9%.
- In interpreting survey results, all sample surveys are subject to possible sampling error; that is, the results of a survey may differ from those that would be obtained if the entire population were interviewed. The size of the sampling error depends upon both the total number of respondents in the survey and the percentage distribution of responses to a particular question. For example, if 50% of respondents in the total sample answered "yes" to a particular question, we can be 95% confident that the true percentage will fall within +/- 3.5 percentage points of this percentage or between 46.5% and 53.5%.

# Key Findings: Support for Legalization & Legalization as a Catalyst for Turnout

- A majority (60%) of voters in swing districts supports legalizing the use of marijuana, including 45% who support it “strongly”. Just 36% oppose legalizing the use of marijuana, and only 28% oppose it “strongly.” Support for legalization claims solid majorities across demographic and partisan subgroups in these districts, including 77% of Democrats and 73% of independents. While 34% of Republicans support legalization, 63% oppose it.
- Younger voters and Democrats are the strongest supporters of legalization. Support is also very strong with potential swing voters including independent-leaning white non-college men and women.
- Support for medical marijuana is even stronger, with 79% of voters in swing districts in favor of permitting patients with terminal or debilitating medical conditions to grow, possess, and consume marijuana if their doctors recommend it. Support is incredibly bipartisan: Democrats (87%), independents (83%), and Republicans (67%).
- The strongest pro-legalization message frame highlights how we need legalization to repair the financial and moral damage of the failed war on drugs. In an engaged debate where this frame is pitted against a strong anti-marijuana frame, the pro-legalization frame wins 62% to 26%. This includes 83% to 12% among Democrats, 59% to 34% among independents, and a 42% to 42% split among Republicans.
- When we assign these two frames to candidates with Republican or Democratic party labels, the pro-legalization side is still victorious, though support declines by 9 points (53% to 27%).
- A solid plurality (44%) of voters in swing district says they would be more “more likely” to vote for a political candidate if he or she supported legalizing the use of marijuana, including 26% who say they would be “much” more likely. This includes 64% of Democrats and 45% of independents .
- A solid majority (55%) of voters also says they would be “more likely” to vote if a pro-legalization voter-initiative was on the ballot in their state, including 43% who say they would be “much” more likely. This includes 58% of Democrats and 54% of independents.

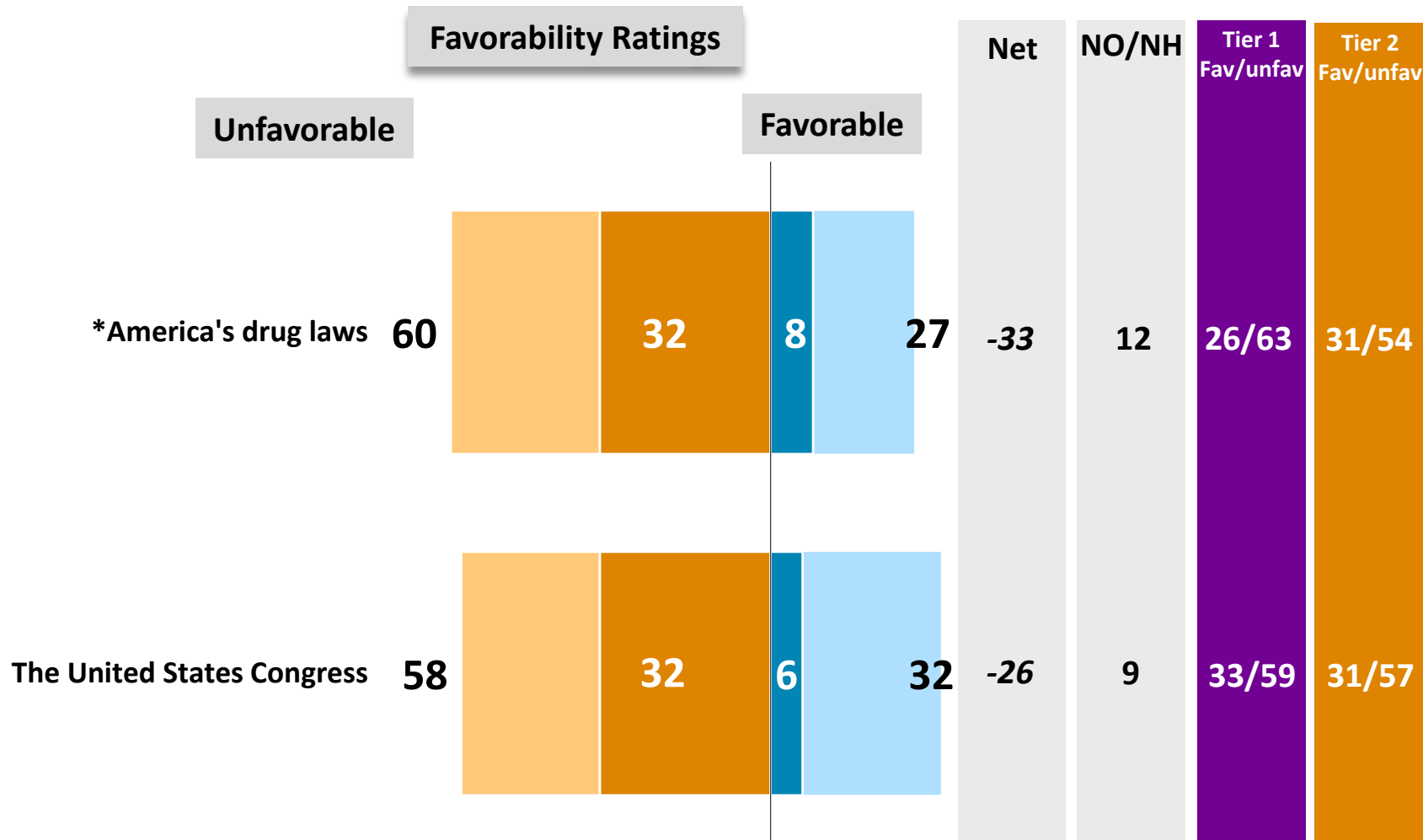
# Key Findings: Messaging

- Several additional positive messages that communicate the benefits of legalization are effective at consolidating our base of support and bringing swing constituencies into the fold. They include:
  1. A pain-centered message that frames legalization as a way to improve the lives of thousands of families who suffer from conditions like epilepsy, cancer and post-traumatic stress disorder.
  2. The potential economic benefits of legalization through job creation in the growing cannabis sector and the collection of tax revenue.
  3. Contextualizing the use of marijuana as an issue of personal freedom of responsible adults that the government should not infringe upon.
  4. How outdated marijuana laws have had a detrimental effect on the lives of millions of young people, particularly in minority communities.
  5. Highlighting the benefits of marijuana as a tool to combat opioid addiction
- Pro-legalization messages are significantly stronger than the best testing opposition messages.



## The Political Context

Voters in 2018 battleground races across the country express a powerful sense of displeasure towards the nation's drug laws and Congress.



Q4. Now I'd like to ask you about some public figures and institutions. For each, please tell me whether you have a VERY favorable, SOMEWHAT favorable, somewhat UNFAVORABLE, or VERY unfavorable impression. If you have heard of the person or institution, but do not know enough to have an opinion, or if you have never heard of them, just say so, and we will move on.

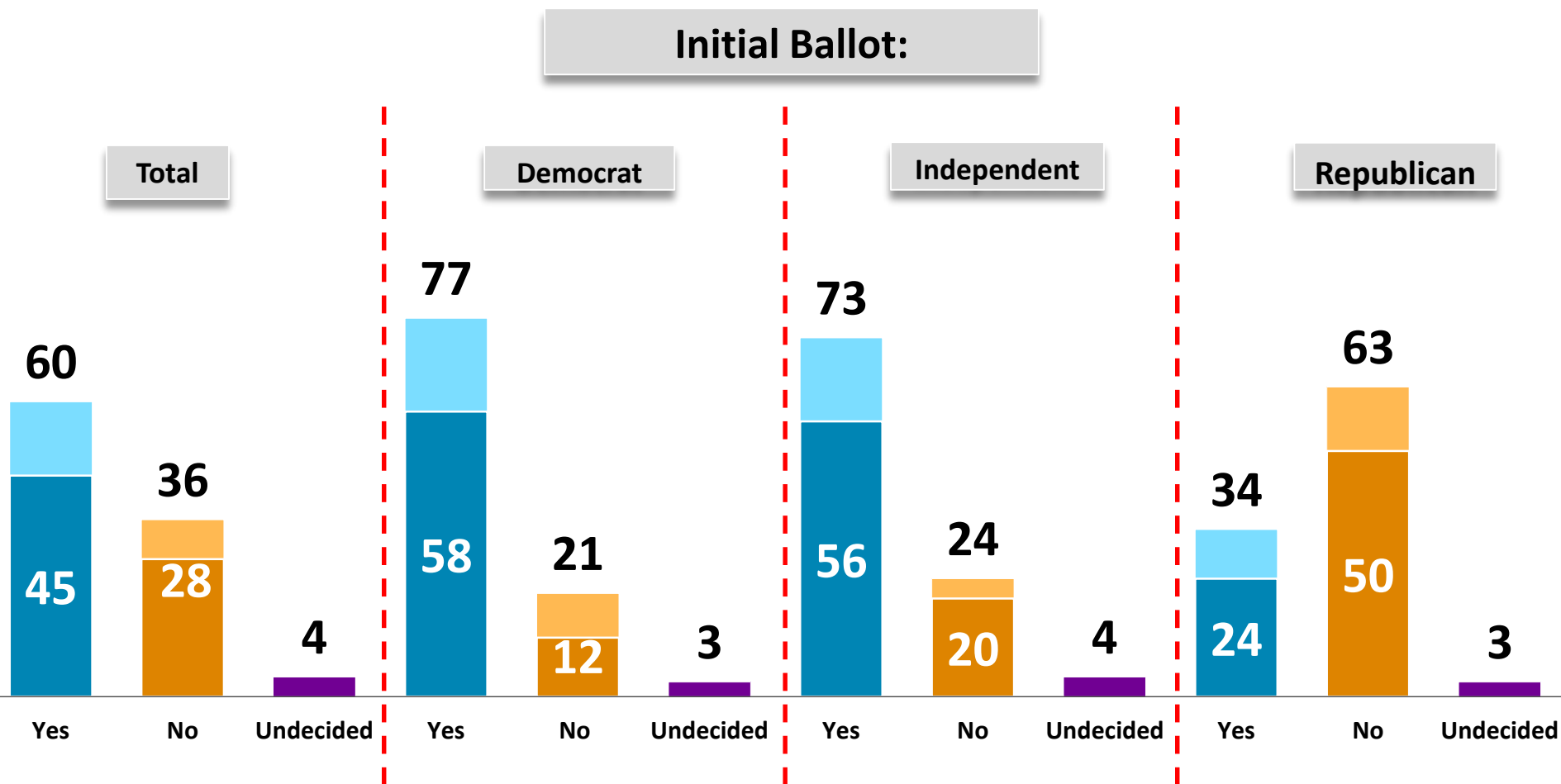
\*Asked of half the sample



## Contours of Support for Marijuana Legalization



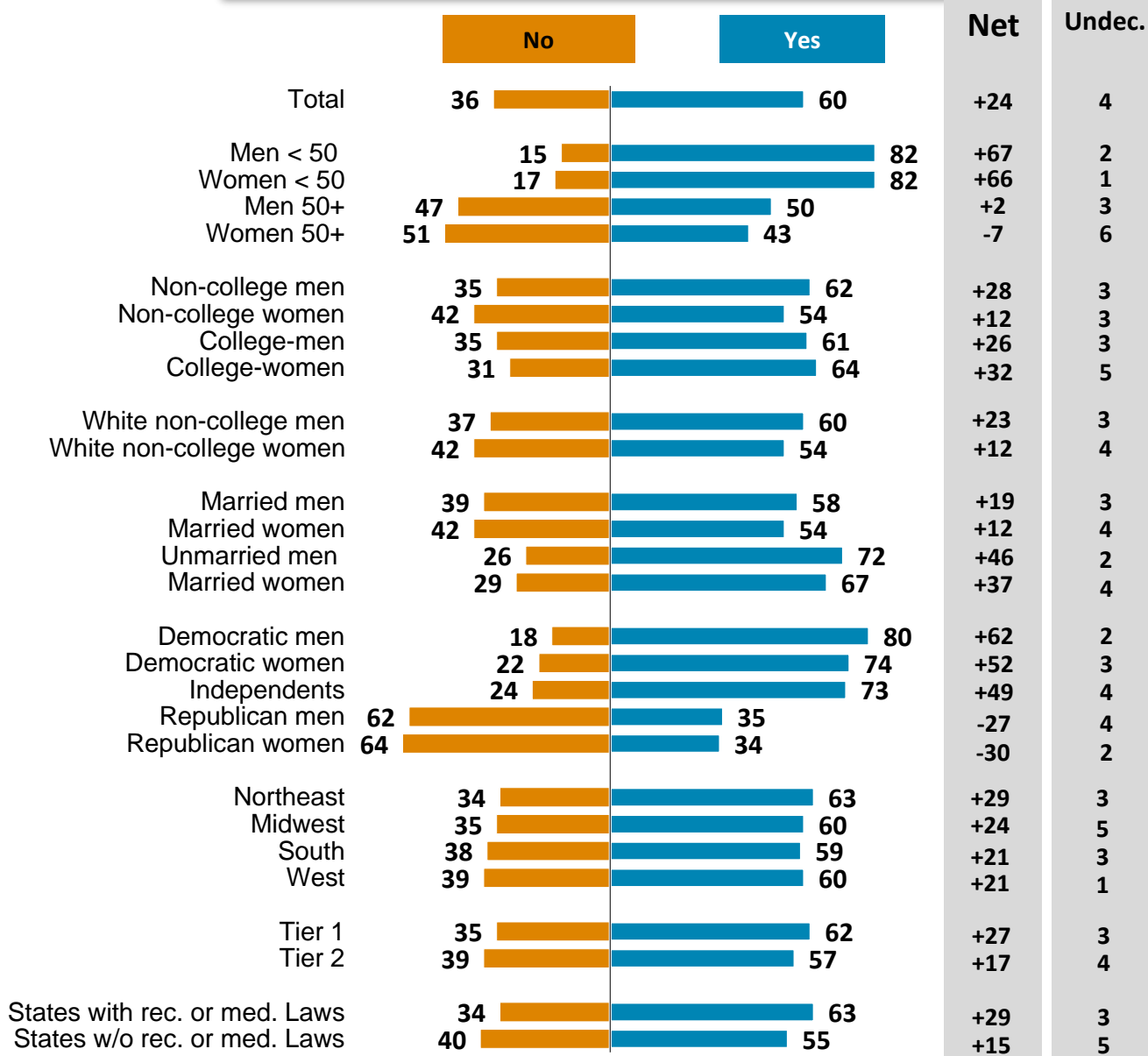
Six-in-ten voters in swing district support legalizing the use of marijuana, including 45% who support it “strongly.” Just 36% oppose legalizing the use of marijuana, with much less intense opposition. Democrats and independents solidly support legalization.



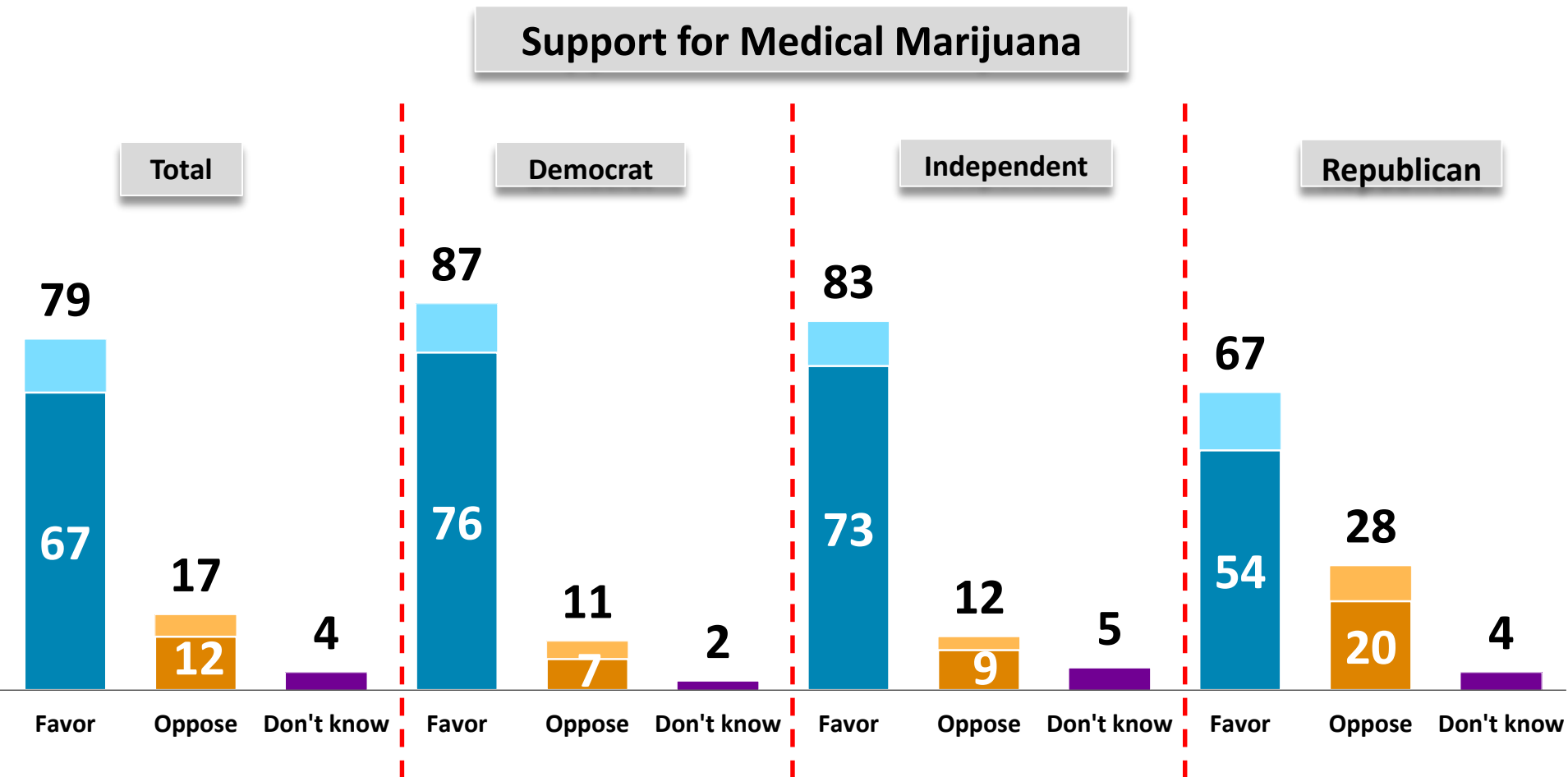
Q6: Now on a different topic, do you think the use of marijuana should be made legal, or not?

## Initial Ballot Contours

Support for legalization claims solid majorities across major demographic and partisan subgroups within these districts including men and women; younger and older voters; blue-collar and college educated voters; Democrats and independents; and voters living in districts in the Northeastern, Midwestern, Southern, and Western regions of the country.



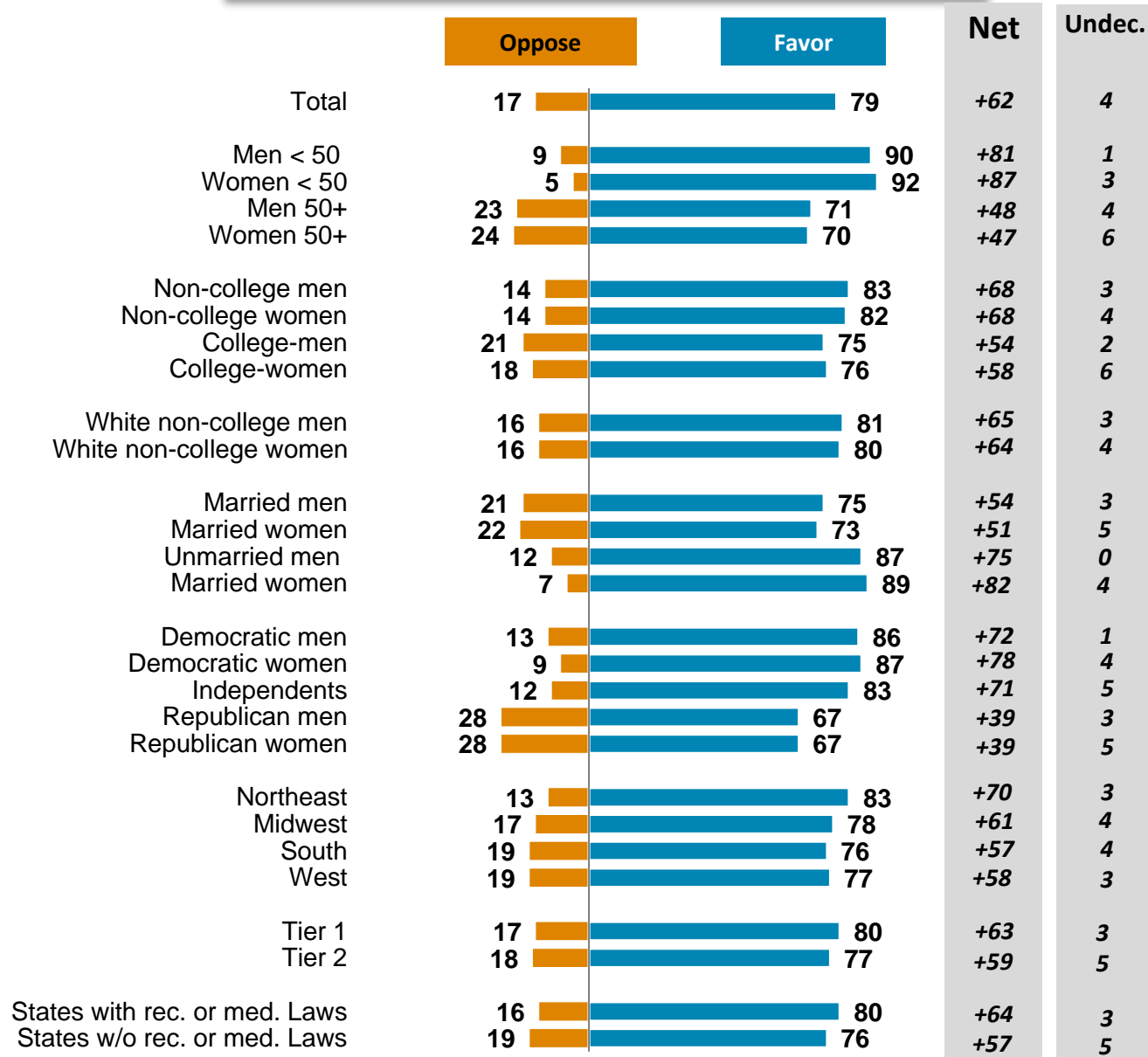
Nearly eight-in-ten voters favor permitting patients with terminal or debilitating medical conditions to grow, possess, and consume marijuana if their doctors recommend it. Support is incredibly strong across partisan lines and verges on a core value.



Q7. And regardless of how you feel about the use of recreational marijuana, do you favor or oppose making it a constitutional right for patients with terminal or debilitating medical conditions to grow, possess, and consume marijuana if their doctors recommend it?

# Medical Marijuana Ballot Contours

Robust support for medical marijuana spans age, educational, partisan, and regional divides, illustrating just how much this issue has become a value in voters' consciousness.



# Text of Engaged Debate Profiles

## Candidate Profiles

### FAILED WAR ON DRUGS

Candidate A **[A DEMOCRAT]**, thinks our nation's marijuana laws are outdated, ineffective, and too costly. He thinks it's wrong that we waste billions every year arresting and locking up and destroying the lives of tens of thousands of people for marijuana violations, the vast majority of whom are low-level and non-violent individuals, and disproportionately young people of color. And these laws don't even make our communities safe since all they do is create an illegal market that is supplied by violent gangs and drug cartels. Candidate A knows regulating marijuana use will provide real public safety while putting an end to the destruction of entire communities.

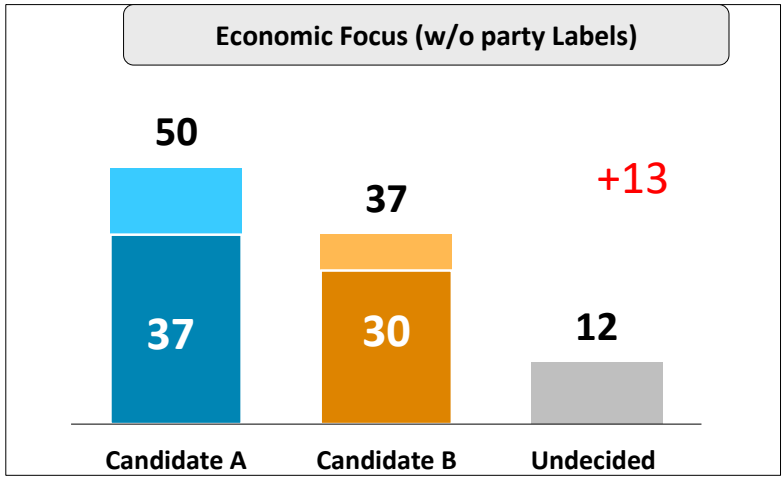
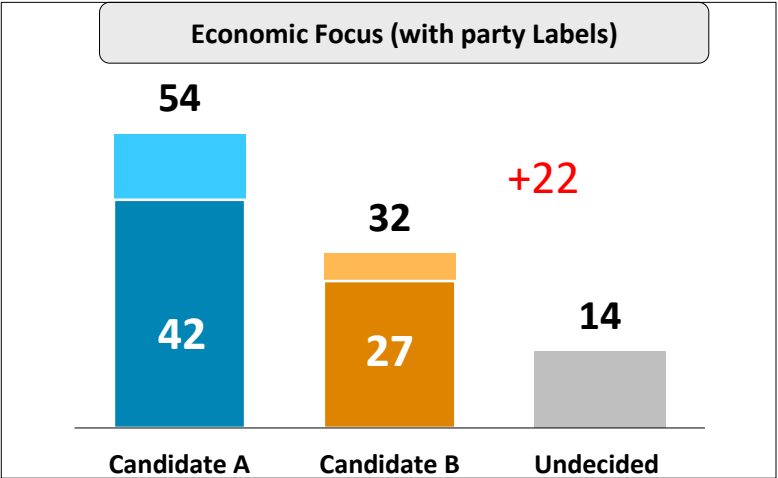
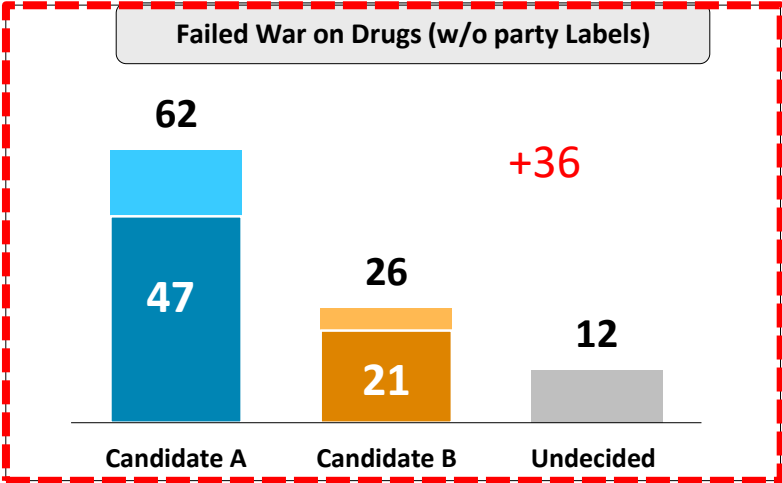
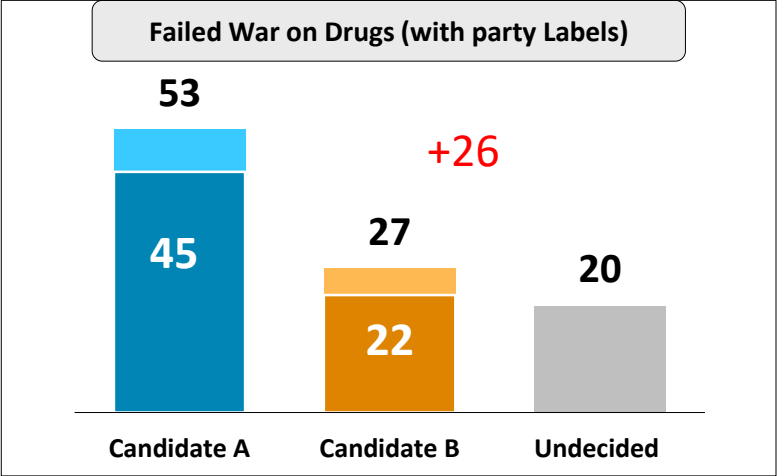
### ECONOMIC FOCUS

Candidate A **[A DEMOCRAT]**, believes our outdated drug & marijuana laws are preventing America from taking advantage of the next economic boom. He knows the legal marijuana market is already a booming industry with the potential to create hundreds of thousands of new jobs and generate billions of state and federal tax revenues over the next decade – money that we can use to invest in real priorities for America's middle class, like improving public schools, making health care more affordable for everyone, repairing our crumbling roads and bridges, and allowing our police officers to focus on real criminal threats while keeping our budget balanced.

### OPPOSITION STATEMENT

Candidate B **[A REPUBLICAN]**, thinks that with marijuana use skyrocketing, legalizing marijuana sends the wrong message to our children. He knows studies show that marijuana is a gateway drug that leads to use of more dangerous drugs, and that drug use has negative impacts on life expectancy, IQ scores, and employment. And Candidate B thinks more marijuana use means more users who are driving while high, increasing traffic deaths and putting us all at risk. He thinks the movement to legalize marijuana is just a back-door effort to legalize all drugs, at the expense of our communities and families' safety.

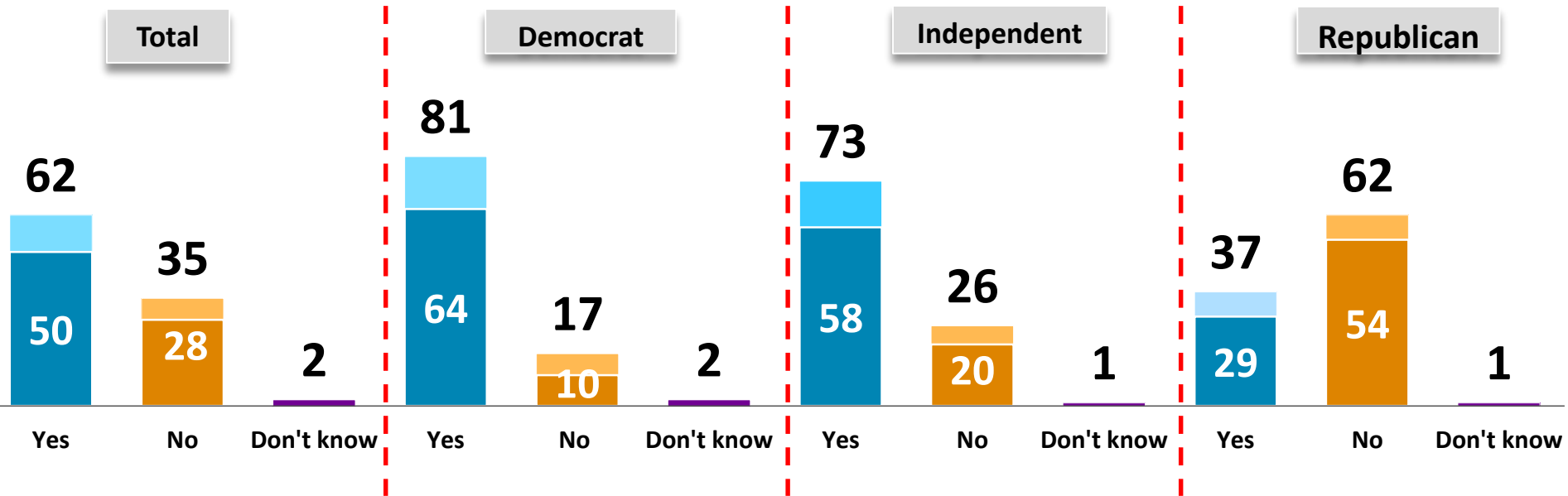
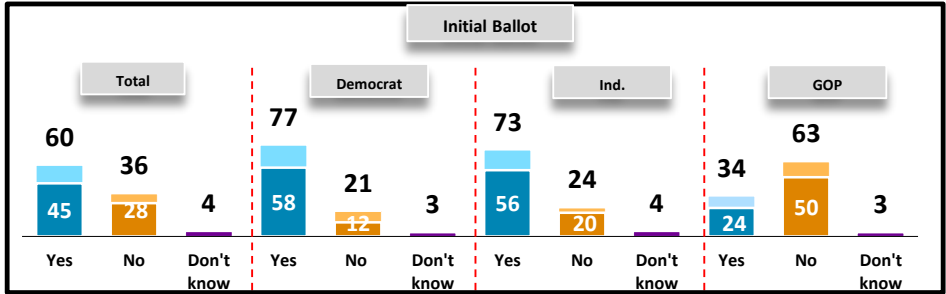
Though the pro-legalization candidate solidly wins all four engaged debate exercises, the strongest frame highlights how we need legalization to repair the financial and moral damage of the failed war on drugs and does not list the party labels of the two candidates. The second strongest profile is the same message with each candidate identified as a Democrat and Republican.



Q:10/11/12/13: Now I am going to read you some descriptions about two hypothetical candidates that might run for elected office in the November 2018 General Election. Each asked of 1/4<sup>th</sup> of the sample.

After messages for and against legalization, support moves up slightly with 62% of voters supporting legalization including 50% who support it strongly. Support holds strong among independents and ticks up modestly among Democrats. Republicans remain consistent in their initial views.

**Final Ballot:**



Q16: Sometimes over the course of a survey like this, people change their minds. do you think the use of marijuana should be made legal, or not?



## Message and Positioning



## Positive Message Ratings

(Message text on next slide)

Other effective pro-legalization messages include highlighting marijuana's potential to help individuals suffering from conditions like epilepsy, cancer PTSD;

the potential economic benefits of legalization through job creation in the growing cannabis sector and increasing tax revenue;

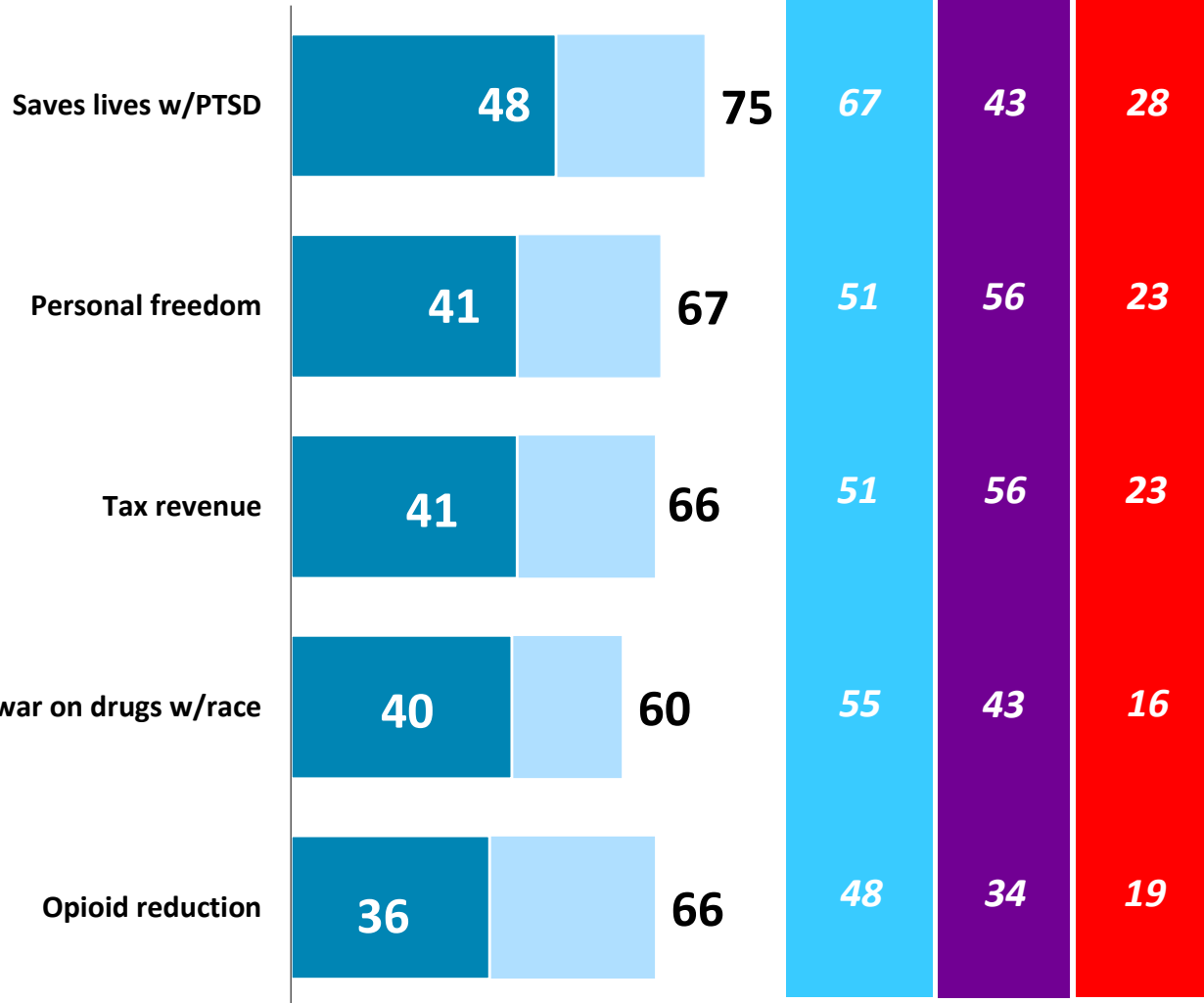
contextualizing the use of marijuana as an issue of personal freedom of responsible adults that should not be infringed upon;

and how outdated marijuana laws have had a detrimental effect on the lives of millions of young people, particularly in minority communities.

A message that highlighting marijuana's potential combat opioid addiction is quite effective with base and swing voters.

Stop the war on drugs w/race

■ Total Convincing ■ Very Convincing



Q14. I am now going to read you some statements people have made about legalizing marijuana. Please tell me whether each statement, assuming it is true, is a VERY convincing, SOMEWHAT convincing, NOT TOO convincing, or NOT AT ALL convincing reason to support legalizing marijuana. If you are not sure how you feel about a particular item, just say so.

## Text of Positive Messages (in order of % Very Convincing)

**[SAVES LIVES w/PTSD]** There are thousands of families across America who would have their lives improved with increased access to the use marijuana. Whether its cancer patients who need marijuana to manage the pain of chemotherapy, children who suffer from epilepsy, or combat veterans struggling with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, legalizing marijuana use would offer Americans in need an additional option to improve their lives.

**[PERSONAL FREEDOM]** One of our most important vales as a nation is that of having respect for an individual's privacy and personal liberties, and legalizing marijuana is about respecting personal freedom. There's no reason to arrest adults who use marijuana responsibly in the privacy of their own homes while causing no harm to anyone else. Legalizing marijuana keeps the government out of our lives and personal decisions.

**[TAX REVENUE]** Legalizing marijuana would be good for our budget. States like Colorado and Washington which have legalized Marijuana use have already generated tens of millions in revenue to fund important priorities like healthcare and schools. And It's estimated that by the year 2020, tax revenues generated from the Marijuana industry will grow to \$2.3 billion nationwide. And that's in addition to the money saved by not arresting people for marijuana.

**[STOP THE WAR ON DRUGS w/RACE]** America's marijuana laws have permanently damaged the lives of thousands of young people. And even though Marijuana use is roughly equal among Blacks and Whites, yet Blacks are more than four times as likely to be arrested for marijuana possession. Legalizing marijuana means putting an end to decades of unfair laws that unfairly target and destroy minority communities across America.

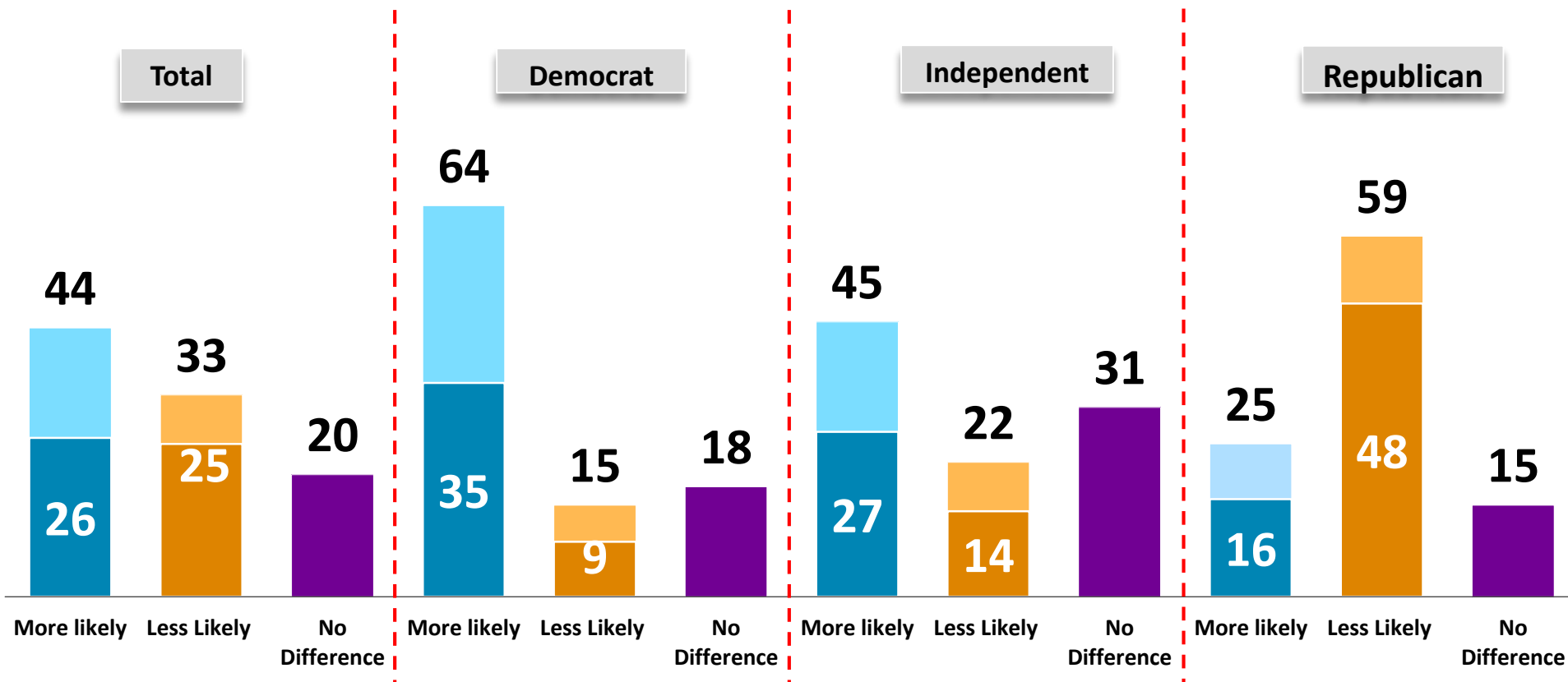
**[OPIOID REDUCTION]** Legalizing marijuana could be an effective tool at combating the opiate addiction crisis that is ravaging our country. In states that permit medicinal marijuana, opiate overdoses drop by an average of 25%, with the effect getting bigger the longer these laws have been in place. And studies have shown marijuana to be an effective alternative to opiates for pain treatment and in medically-assisted relapse prevention.



## Legalization as a Catalyst for Voter Enthusiasm & Turnout

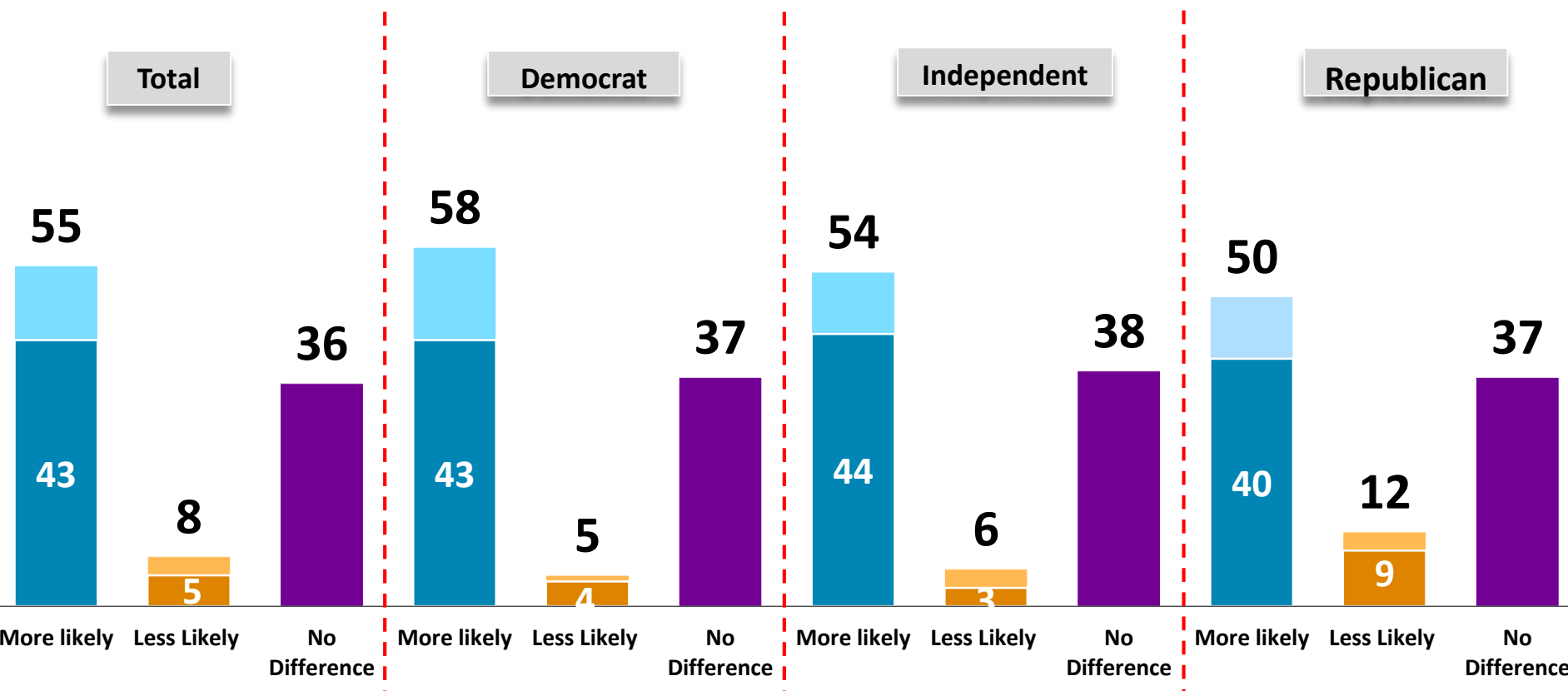
Over six-in-ten Democrats say they would be more likely to vote for a candidate running for elected office if he or she supported legalizing the use of marijuana, including 36% who say they would be much more likely. A plurality of independents also says they would be more likely to support a pro-legalization candidate.

### More/Less Likely to Vote for Pro-Legalization Candidate



A majority of voters – including majorities of Democrats and independents – says the presence of a pro-legalization ballot initiative in their state ballot would make them more likely to vote in November, including 43% who say they would be “much more likely.” While 50% of Republicans say they would be more likely to vote as well, it is likely they would be activating against such an initiative.

**More/Less Likely to Vote if Pro-legalization Ballot Initiative on State Ballot**



Q18. And if there were a ballot initiative in your state to legalize the use of Marijuana, would that make you [ROTATE] MORE or LESS likely to vote in the upcoming November 2018 General election?

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# Nationwide Likely Voter + House Target OS Survey

1000 Likely Voters Nationwide

500 Target House LV

February 19-25, 2018

# Methodology

- 1,000 likely 2018 voters were surveyed nationwide from February 19-25, 2018, with oversamples taken in 53 target Congressional districts, according to Cook Political Report ratings, to reach 500 likely voters.
- Interviews were stratified into proportionate units based on turnout data from previous mid-term elections.
- 50% of respondents were surveyed on a landline phone and 50% on a cell phone.
- Margin of sampling error for 1,000 likely voters is  $\pm 3.1\%$ . Margin of sampling error for 500 likely voters is  $\pm 4.4\%$ .



# Key Take-Aways:

- Support for Medical Marijuana is near universal even across partisan lines.
- There is NO political penalty for supporting Medical Marijuana, but likely a backlash for opposing it even among GOP voters.
- A candidate's position on Medical Marijuana has saliency with voters as 3 in 4 say it is at least somewhat important in deciding how they will vote.
- Voters are adamant that the federal government should NOT fight states who legalize Medical Marijuana and strongly support Congress changing banking regulations to allow Medical Marijuana companies to have bank accounts.
- Underscoring the universal support for Medical Marijuana, overwhelming majorities support having either Medicare, Medicaid or Private Health Insurers pay for Medical Marijuana prescriptions – even GOP voters.
- Medical Marijuana is clearly seen as an preferable alternative to Opioids:
  - Voters overwhelmingly see Medical Marijuana as safer than Opioids.
  - They want to replace Opioids with Medical Marijuana to treat pain.
  - Given the Opioid epidemic, they want Congress to make it easier for states to legalize Medical Marijuana as a replacement.
  - And they would reward Members of Congress who voted to legalize Medical Marijuana as an alternative to Opioids with their votes.

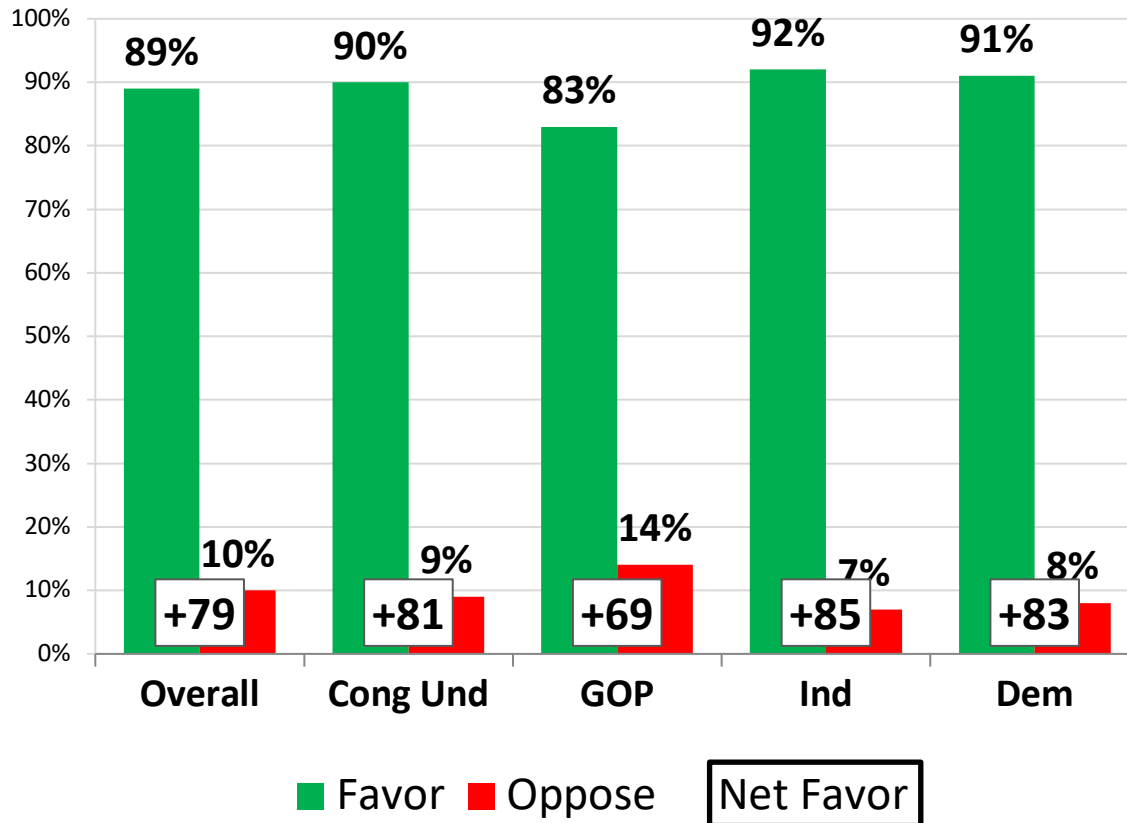


# Attitudes on Medical Marijuana

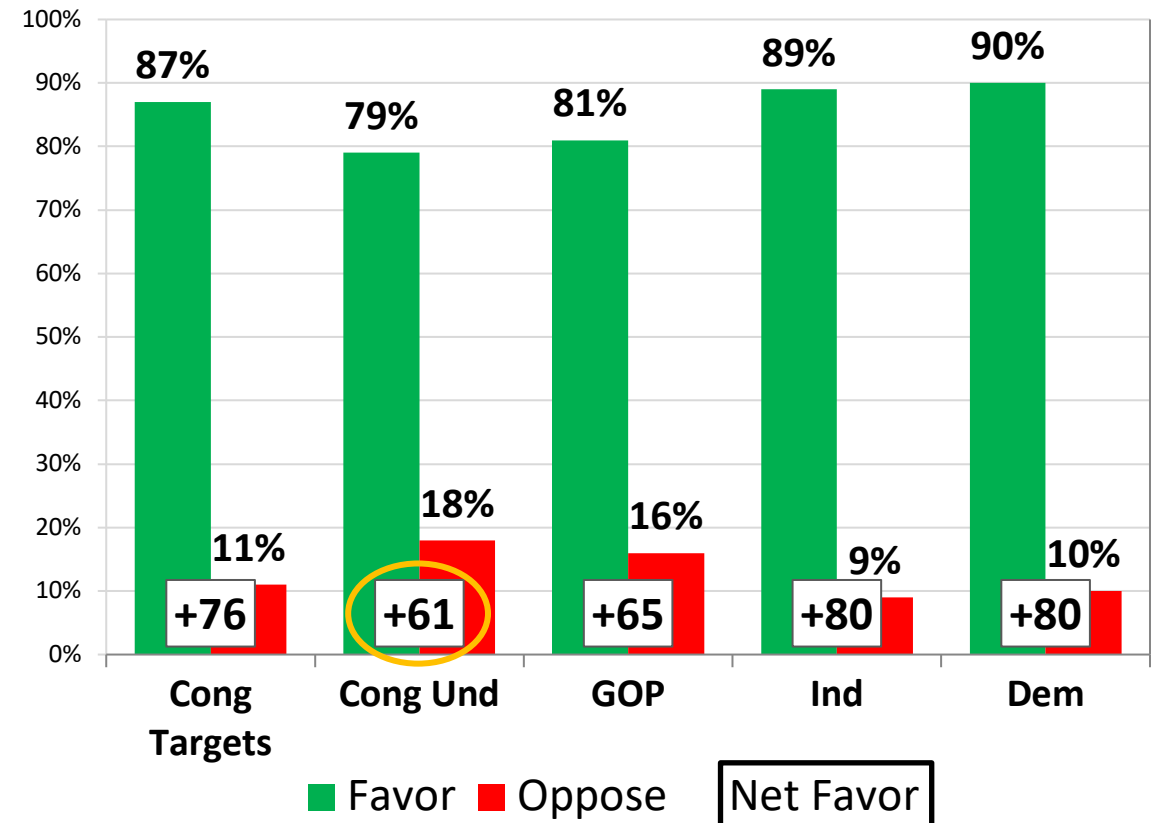
# Medicinal Marijuana Prescribed by Doctor

- Medicinal marijuana prescribed by a doctor is almost universally favored – 89% are in favor while just 10% are opposed.
- While there are minor party differences, Republicans nationwide (net +69 favor) and in targeted Cong races (+65) still overwhelmingly favor MM.
- Those undecided in targeted Congressional races are somewhat more skeptical of MM, but still almost 80% favor it.

**Nationwide**



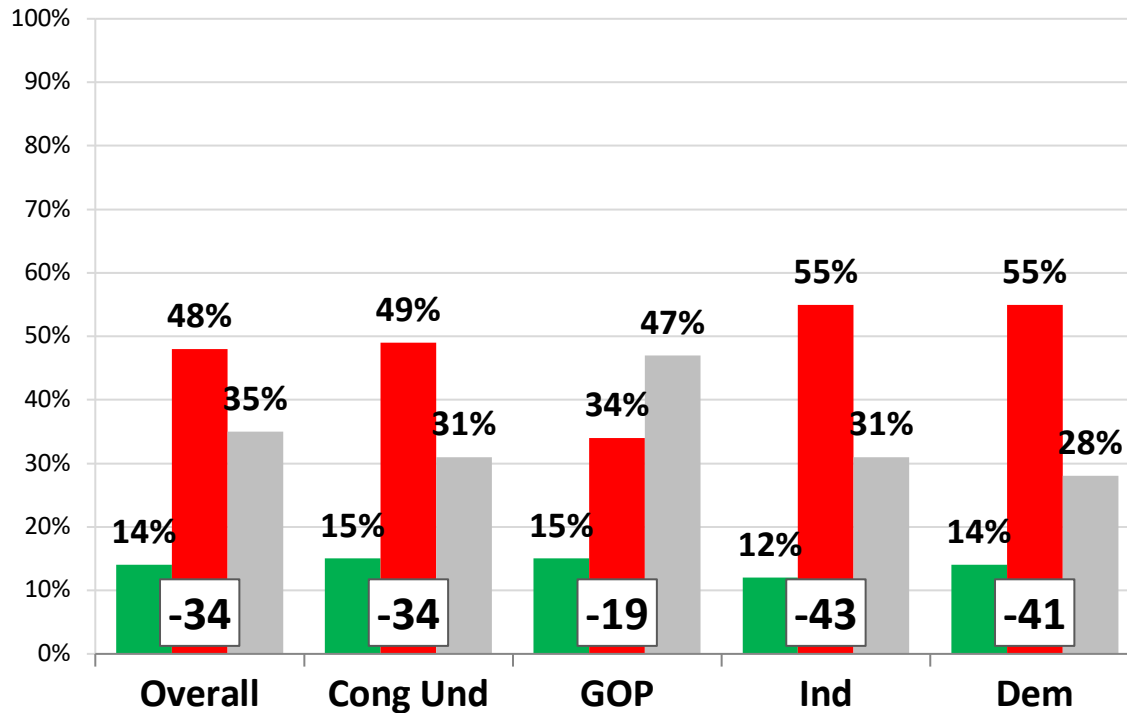
**Targeted Congressional Races**



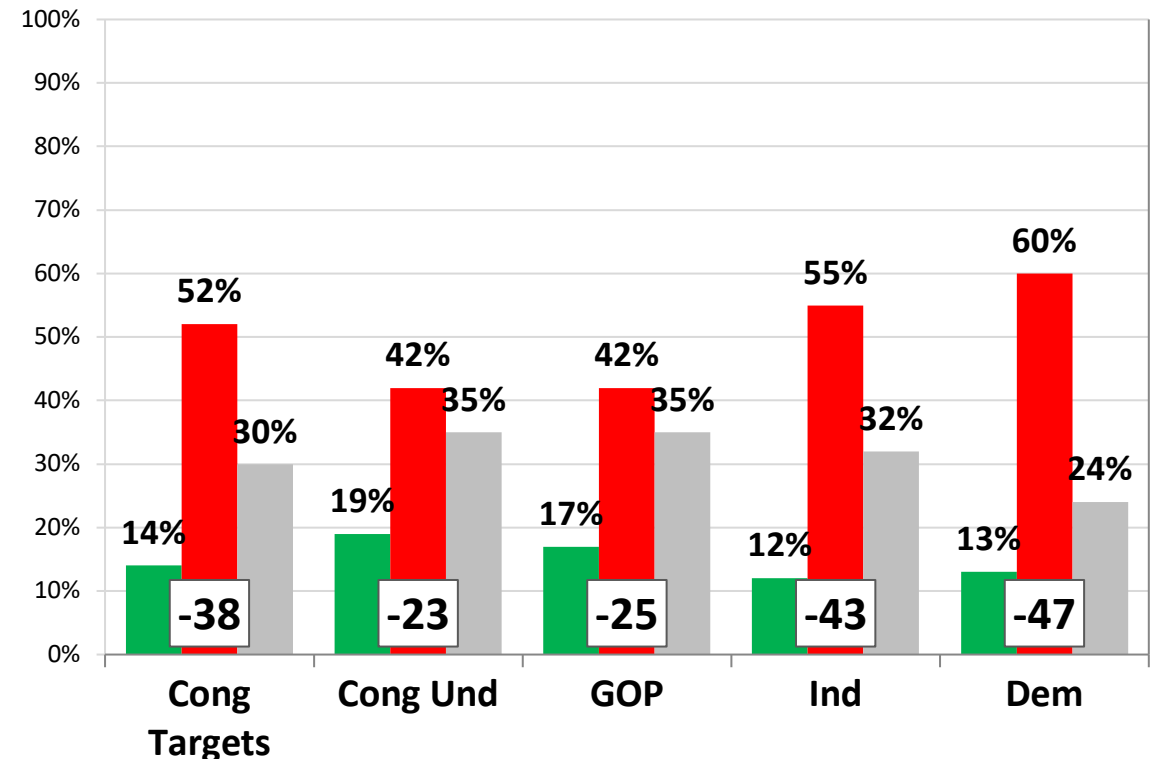
# Opposing Med. Marijuana – Vote Impact

- Opposing Medical Marijuana would be costly for a member of Congress at the ballot box – 48% say they’d be less likely to vote for them vs. just 14% who say more likely.
- Undecideds nationwide (-34 net more likely) are very likely to oppose someone who voted against MM.
- Even Republicans and undecideds in targeted Congressional races are more than 2-to-1 less likely to vote for a MM opponent.

**Nationwide**



**Targeted Congressional Races**



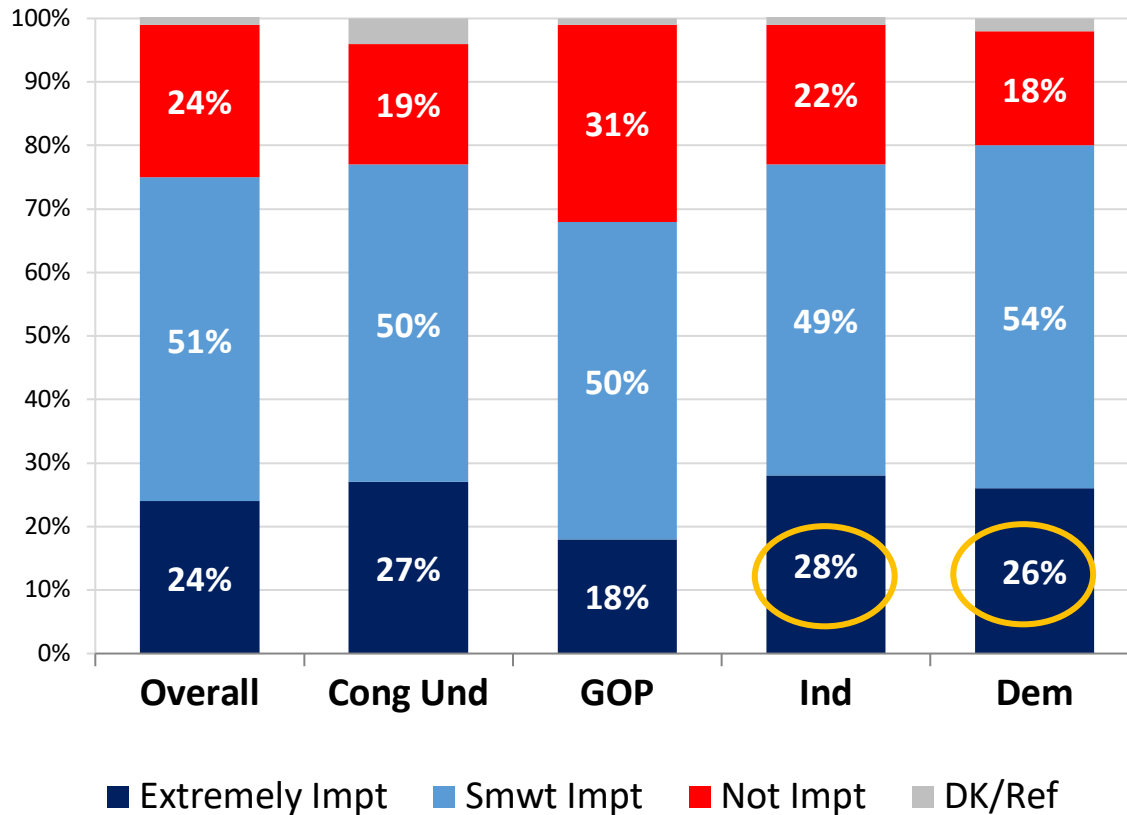
More Likely Less Likely No Impact **Net More Likely**

More Likely Less Likely No Impact **Net More Likely**

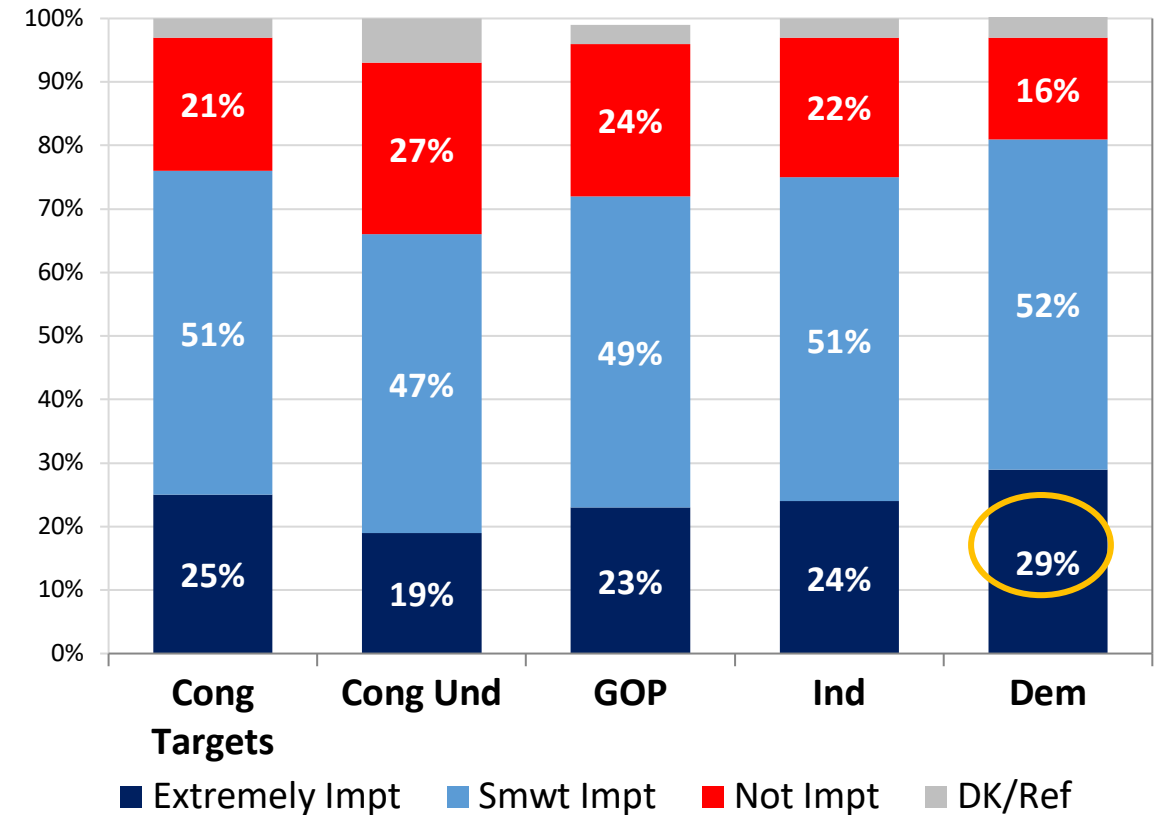
# Medical Marijuana Importance to Vote

- Three quarters call a candidate's position on MM at least somewhat important to their vote.
- Nationwide Democrats and Independents are more likely to call the issue extremely important than their Republican counterparts.

**Nationwide**

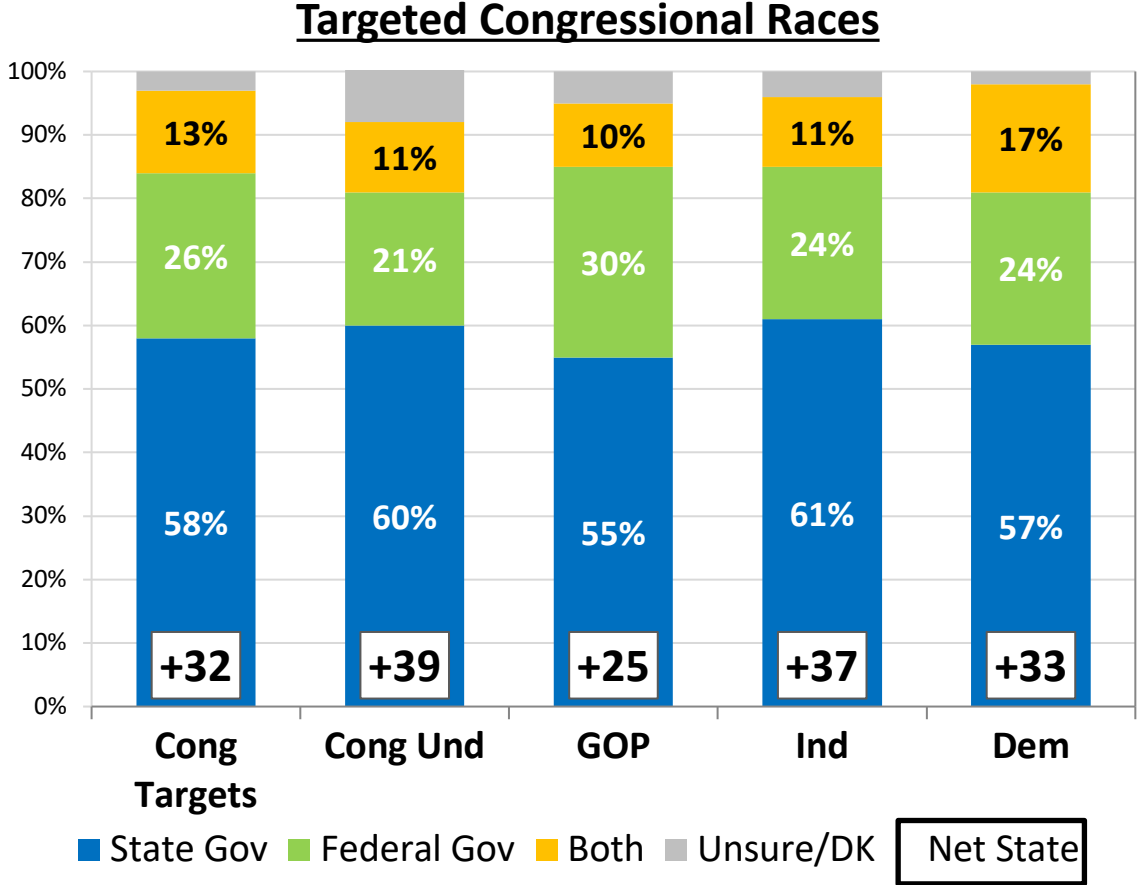
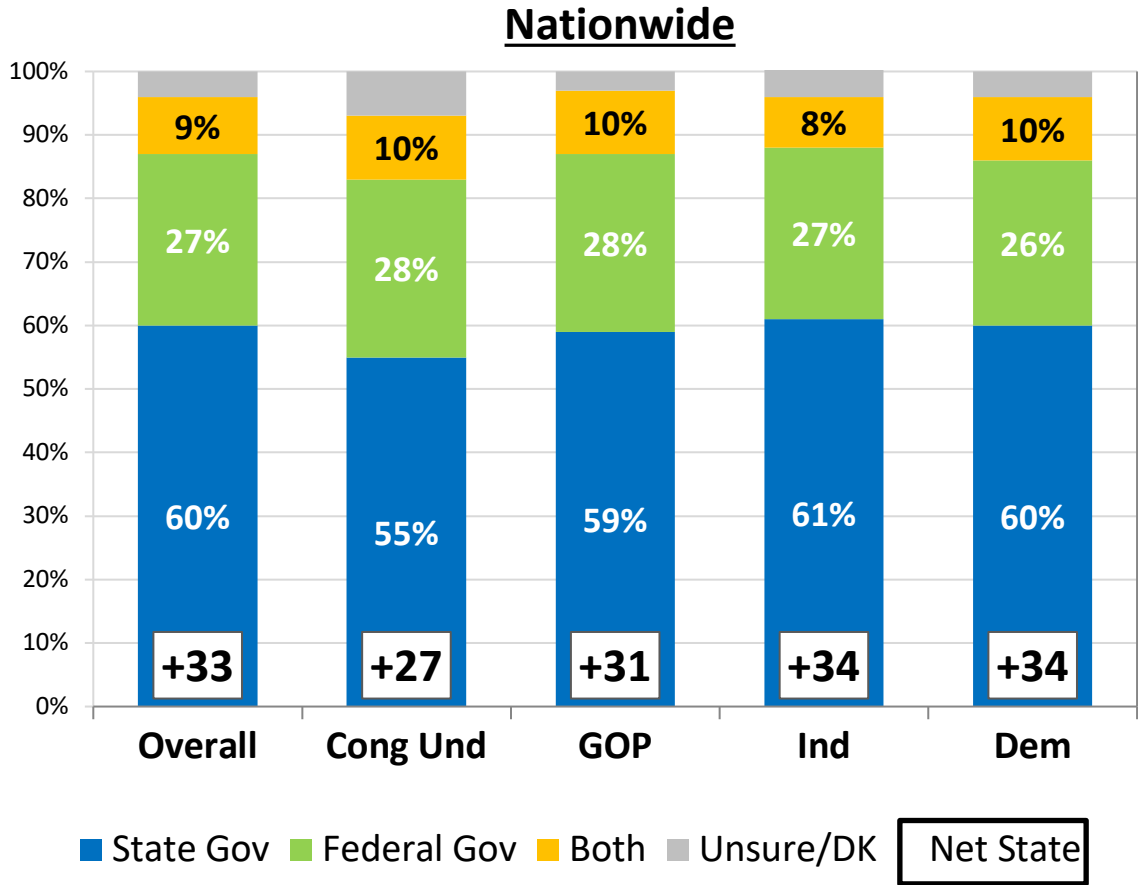


**Targeted Congressional Races**



# State vs. Fed – Power to Make Marijuana Laws

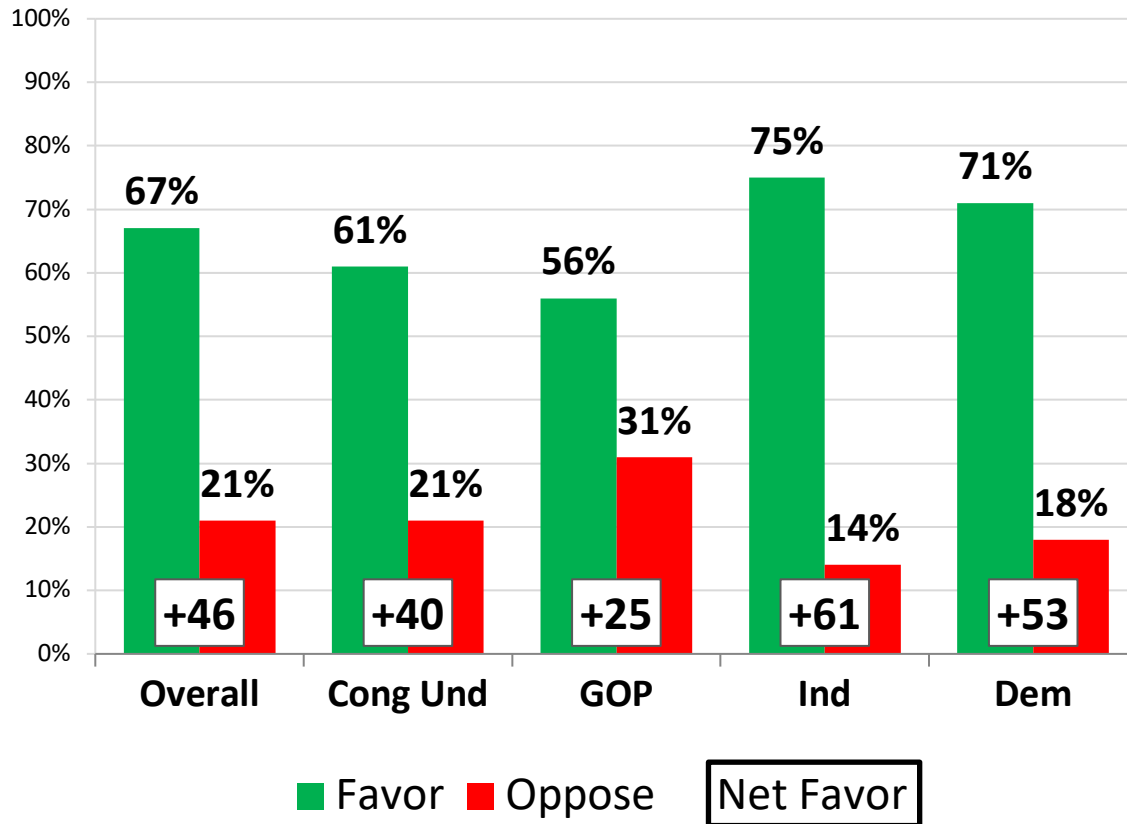
- 6-in-10 voters say the states should have the power on setting laws about marijuana use, while just over a quarter want it in the hands of the feds.
- This large majority in favor of states setting the policy holds up across party lines and in the targeted Congressional races.



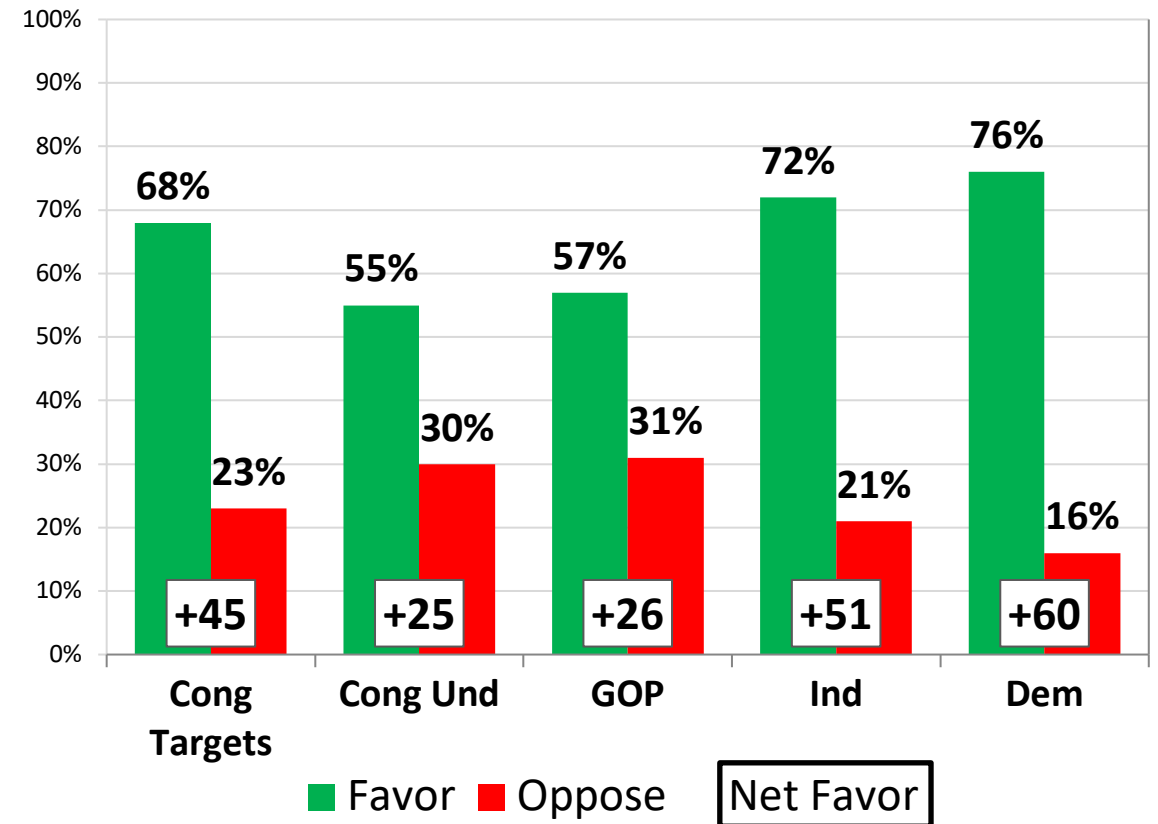
# Congress Allow Marijuana Cos. Bank Accounts

- By a more than 3-to-1 margin, voters think Congress should change the law to let marijuana companies have bank accounts.
- Majority support exists across the target groups, though weaker with Republicans.

**Nationwide**



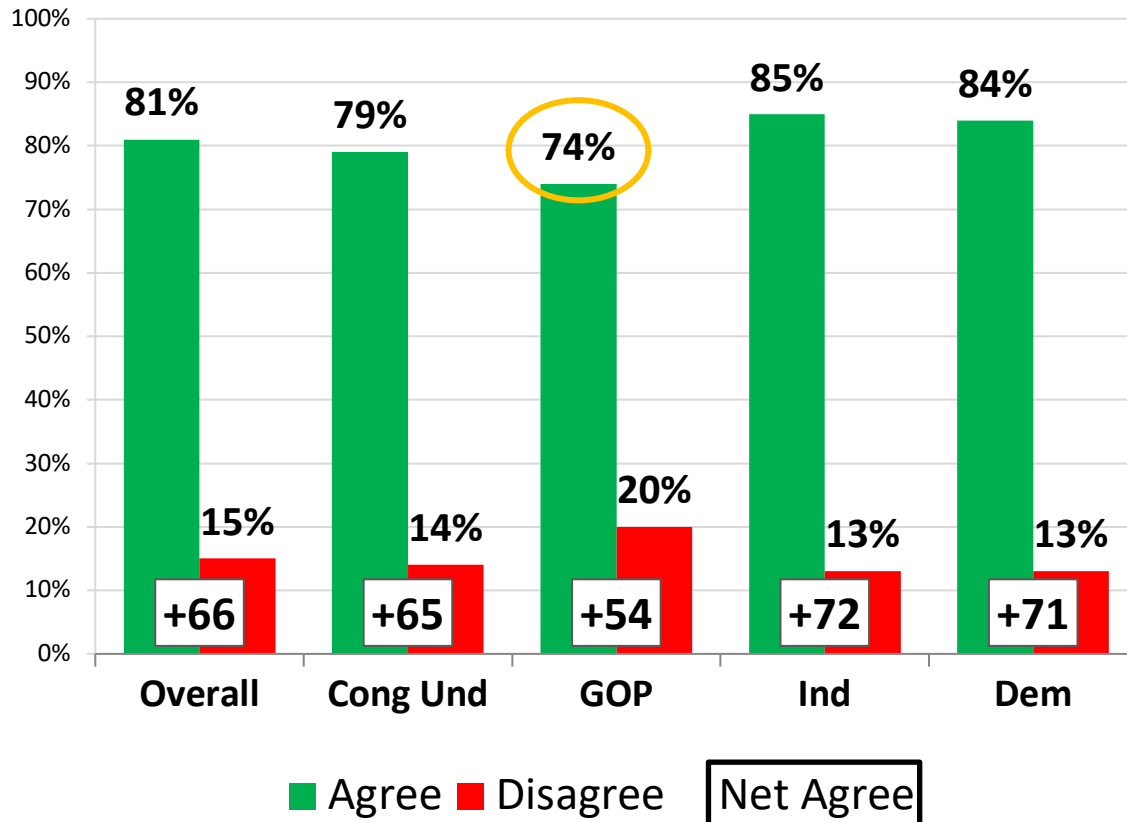
**Targeted Congressional Races**



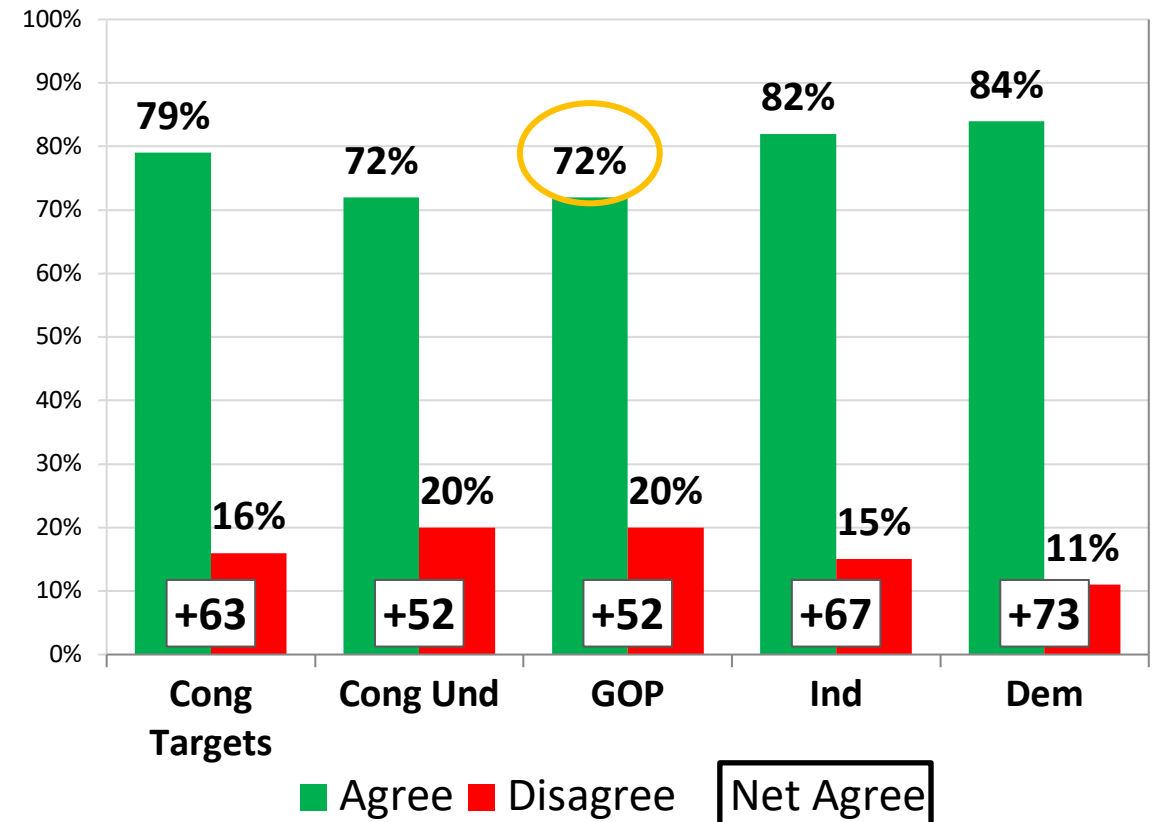
# Fed Gov't Should NOT Fight State Med. Marijuana

- Very few voters want the federal government to fight state medical marijuana. 15% want them to fight it vs. 81% who do not.
- Nationwide and in targeted Congressional races, Republicans are somewhat more inclined for the feds to fight it, but even ¾ of GOPers think they should not get involved.

**Nationwide**



**Targeted Congressional Races**

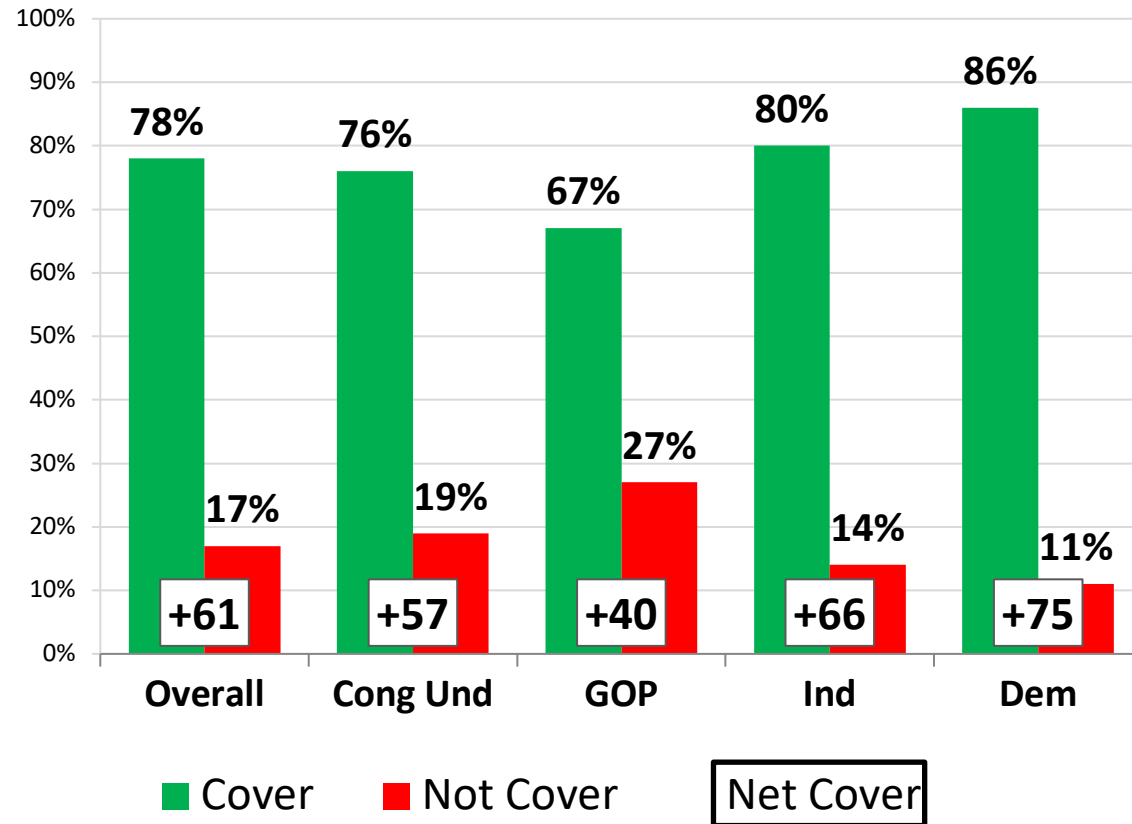




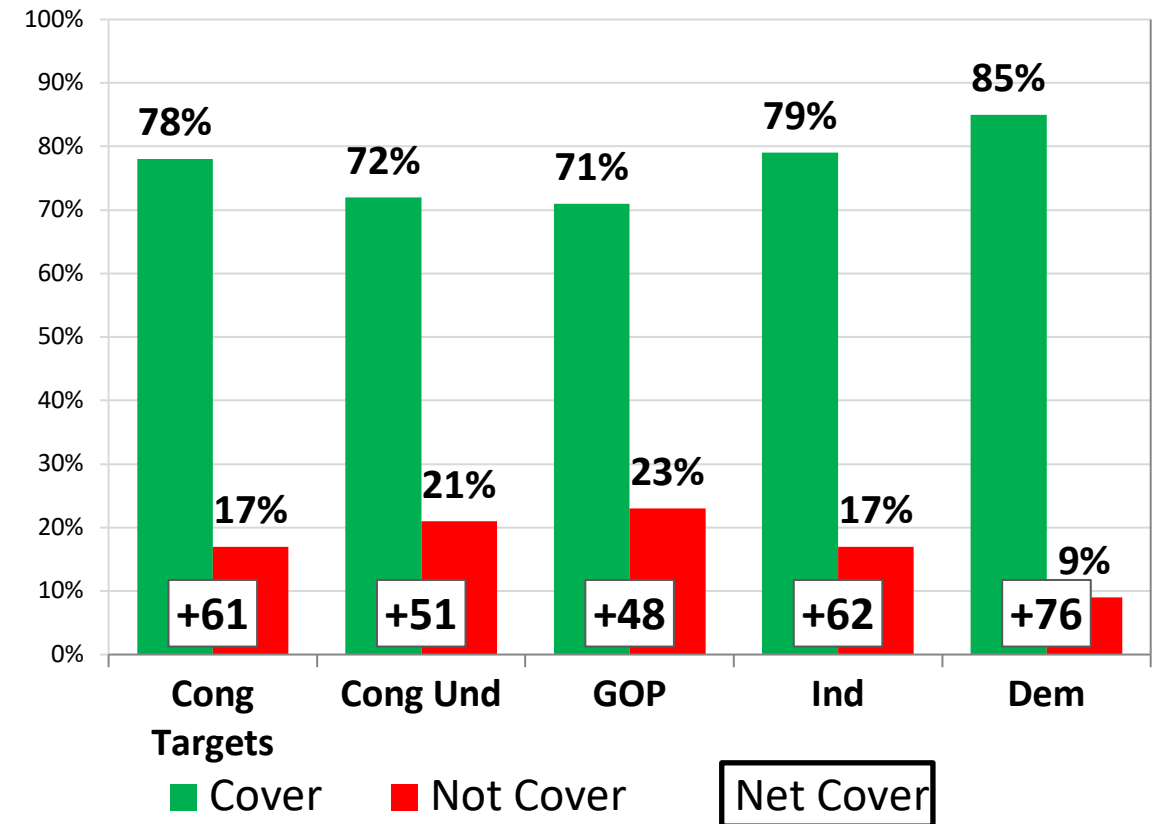
# Medicare Cover Medical Marijuana

- There is widespread agreement Medicare should cover Medical Marijuana like any other legal prescription.
- A similar gap between Republicans and Democrats exists as on other questions, but still 2/3rds of Republicans are supportive of the idea.

**Nationwide**



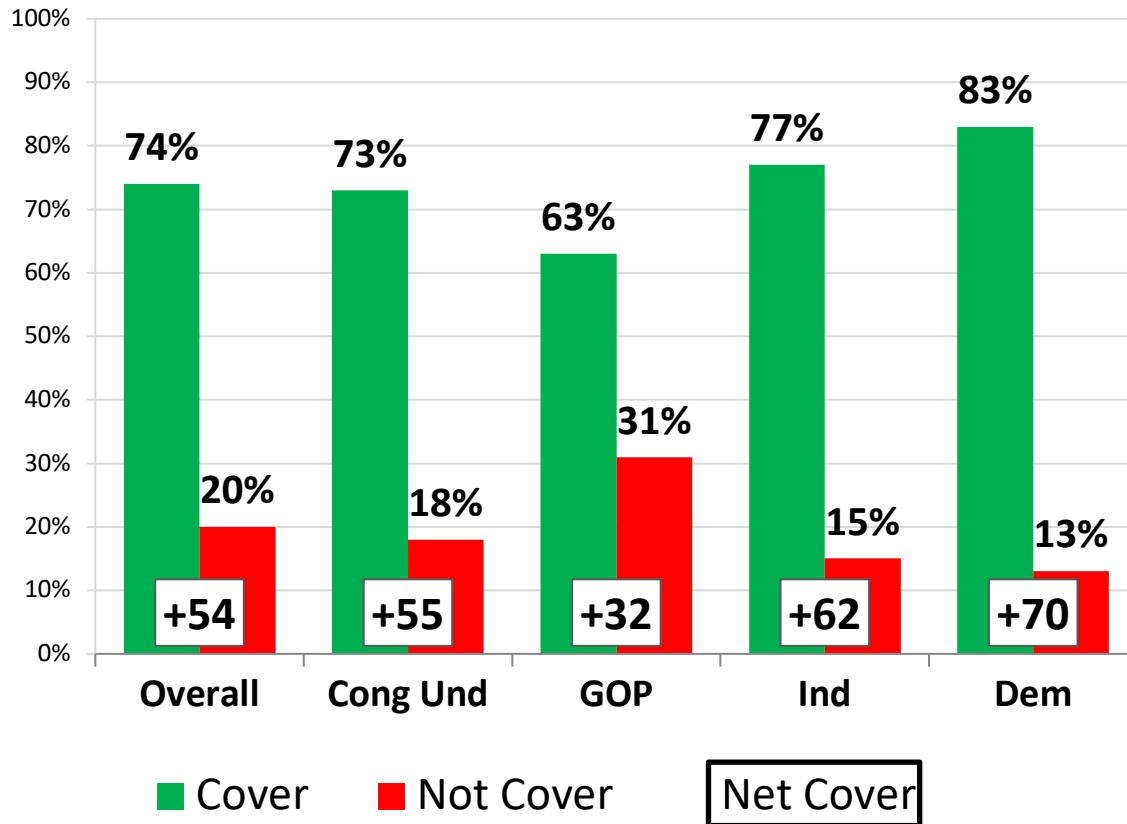
**Targeted Congressional Races**



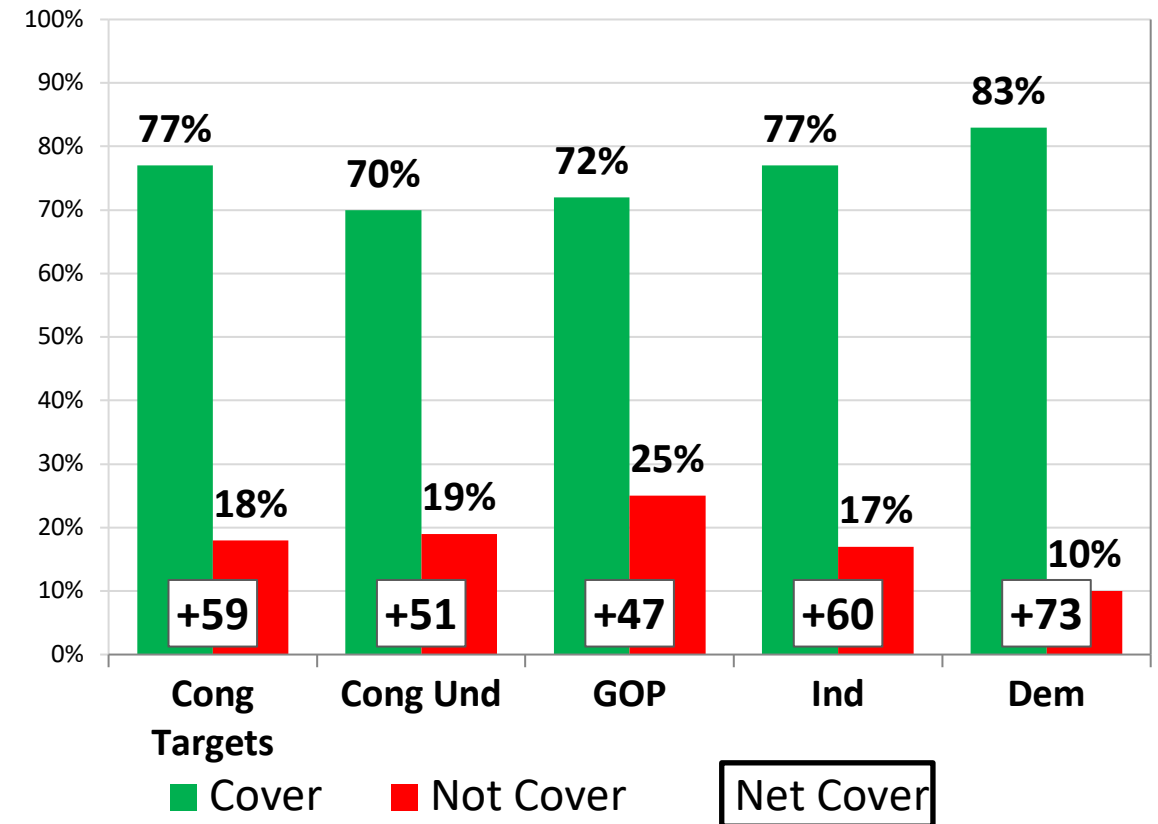
# Medicaid Cover Medical Marijuana

- Medicaid should cover MM according to most voters – ¾ say yes while 1-in-5 are opposed – with similarly large margins in the targeted Congressional races.
- Even among less supportive Republicans, coverage receives 2-to-1 support.

**Nationwide**



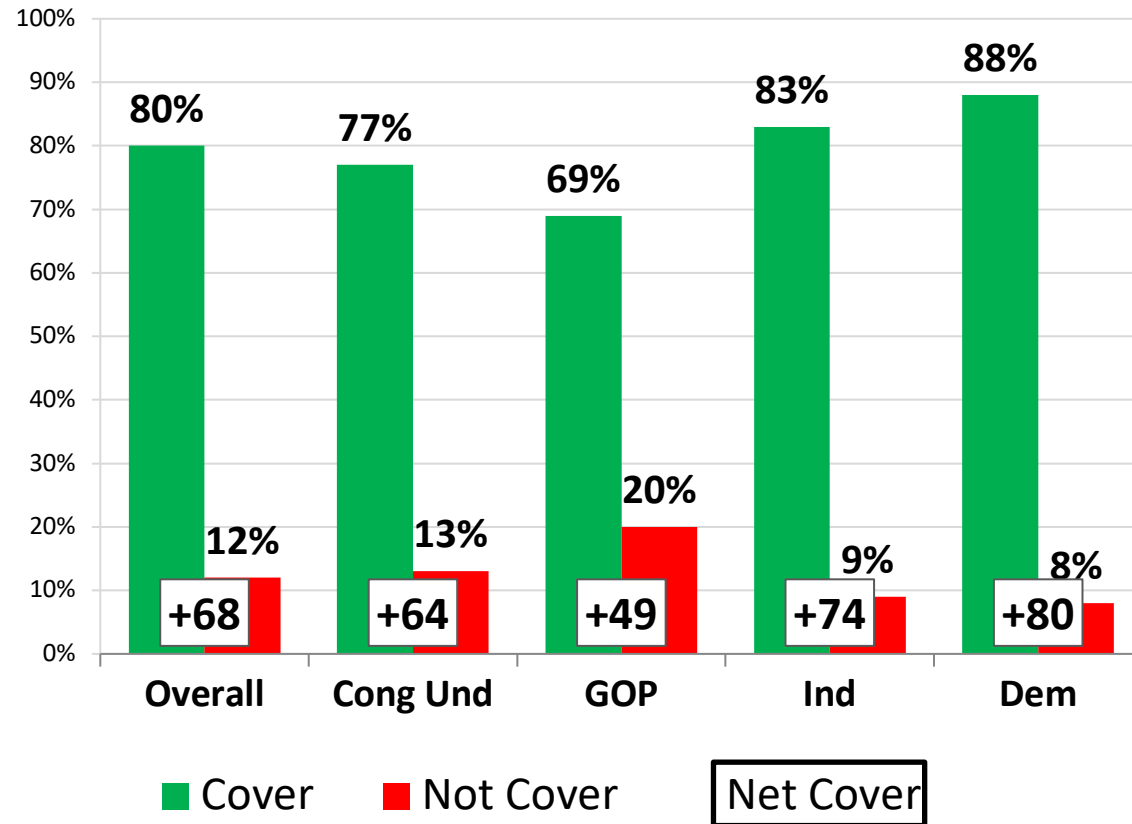
**Targeted Congressional Races**



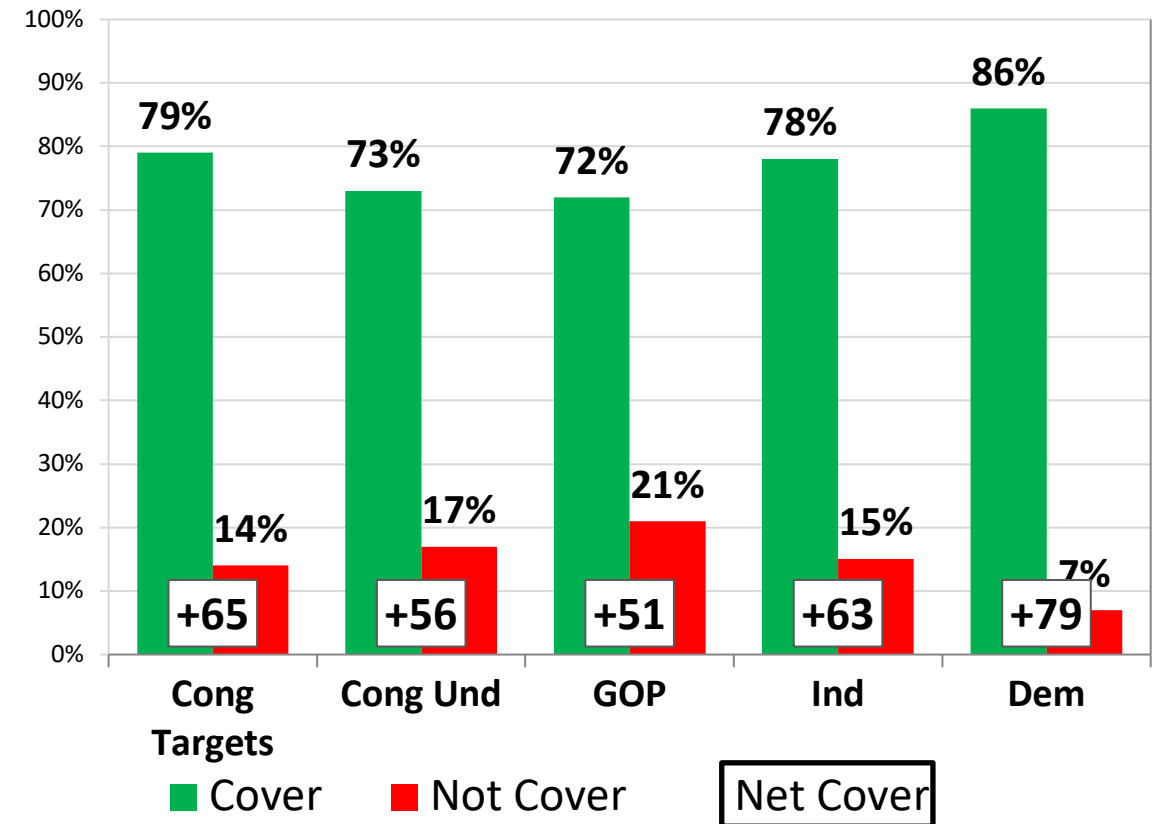
# Private Health Insurance Cover Medical Marijuana

- Voters overwhelmingly agree private health insurance should cover MM – 80% say cover while just 12% say not cover.
- Democrats are almost unanimously supportive of coverage, as are most Independents and more than 2/3rds of Republicans.

**Nationwide**



**Targeted Congressional Races**



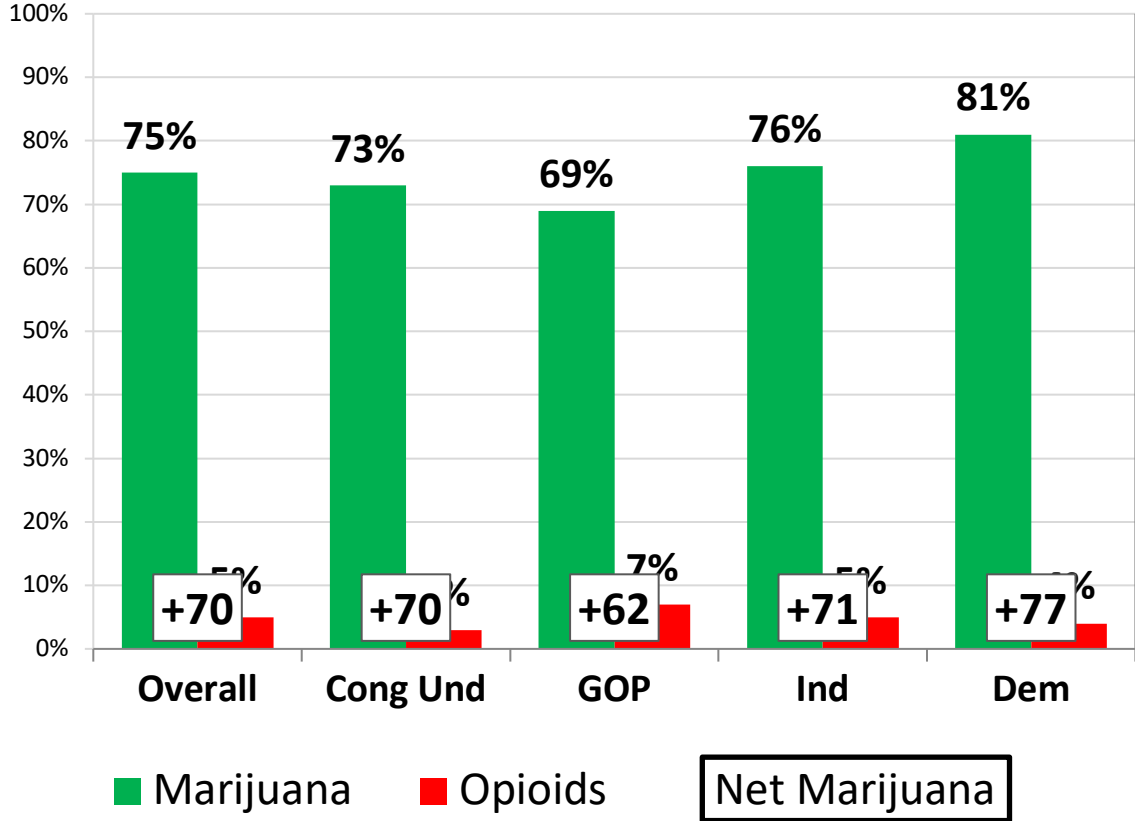


# Marijuana vs. Opioids

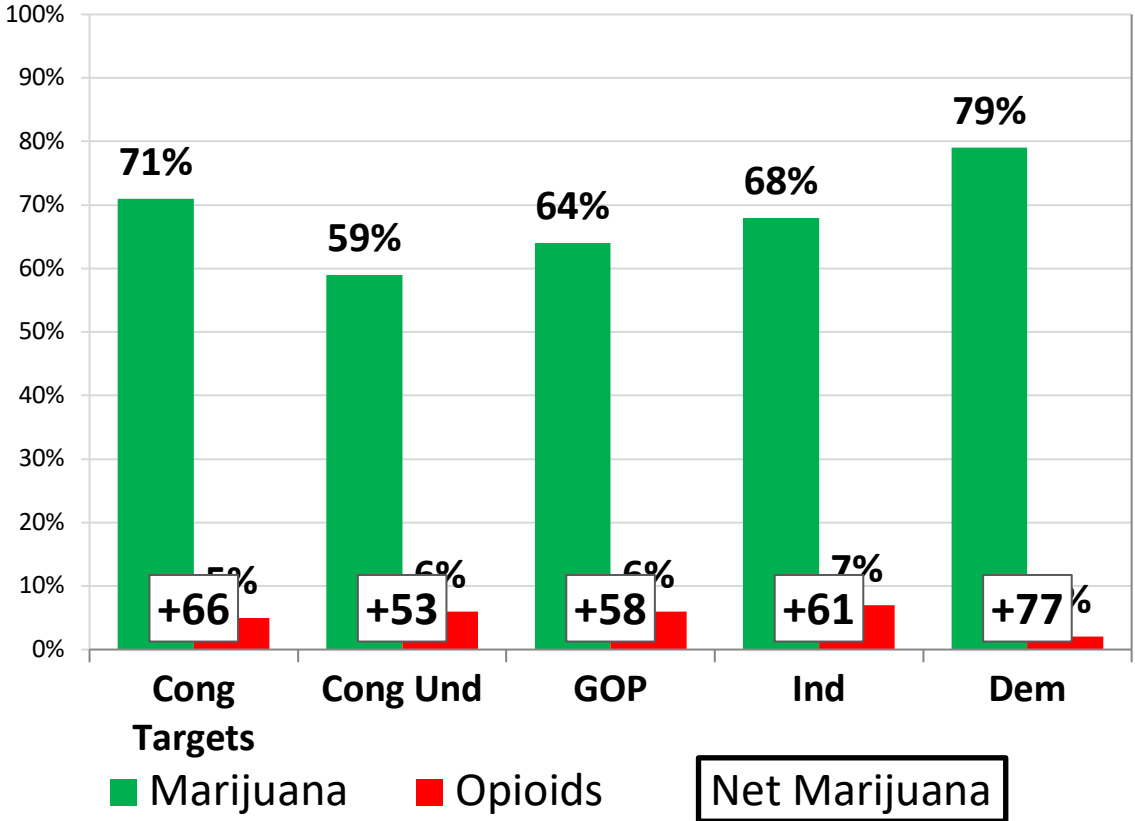
# Safer: Marijuana or Opioids

- Voters widely agree marijuana is safer than opioids – 75% say marijuana vs. just 5% saying opioids.
- No group is in double digits saying opioids are a safer method to treat pain.

**Nationwide**



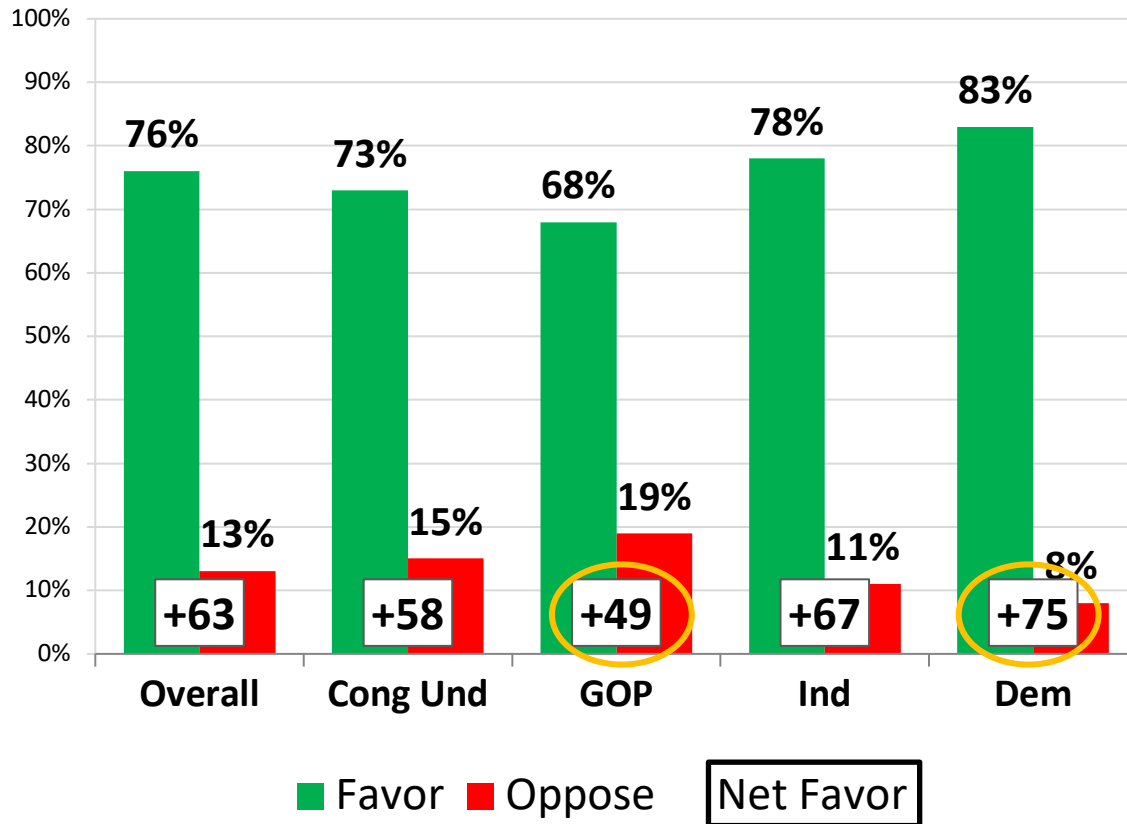
**Targeted Congressional Races**



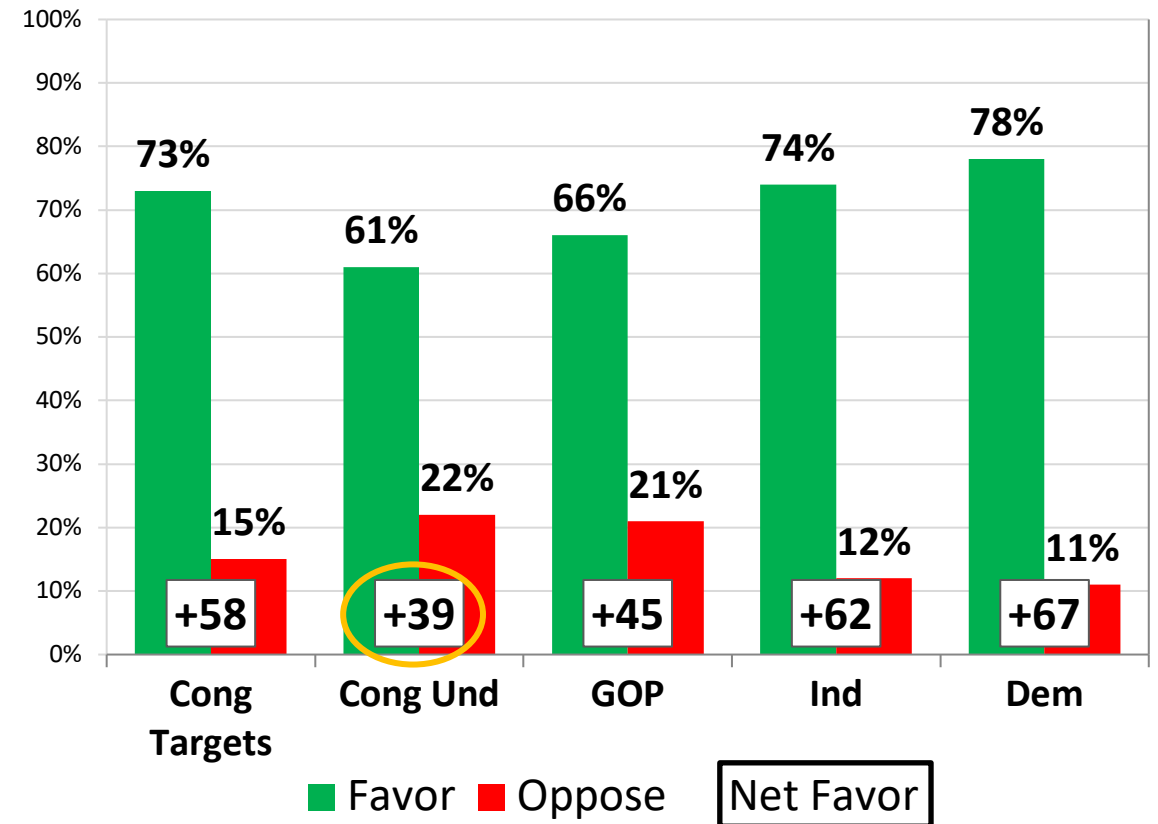
# Replace Opioids with Medical Marijuana

- By a 63-point margin nationwide and 58-points in the targeted Congressional races voters favor replacing opioids with MM to treat chronic pain.
- Nationwide there is a sizable partisan gap between Republicans and Democrats, with undecided voters closer to Republicans in the targeted races. However it is necessary to emphasize even among the 'weaker' groups the idea of replacing opioids with medical marijuana is overwhelmingly favored.

**Nationwide**



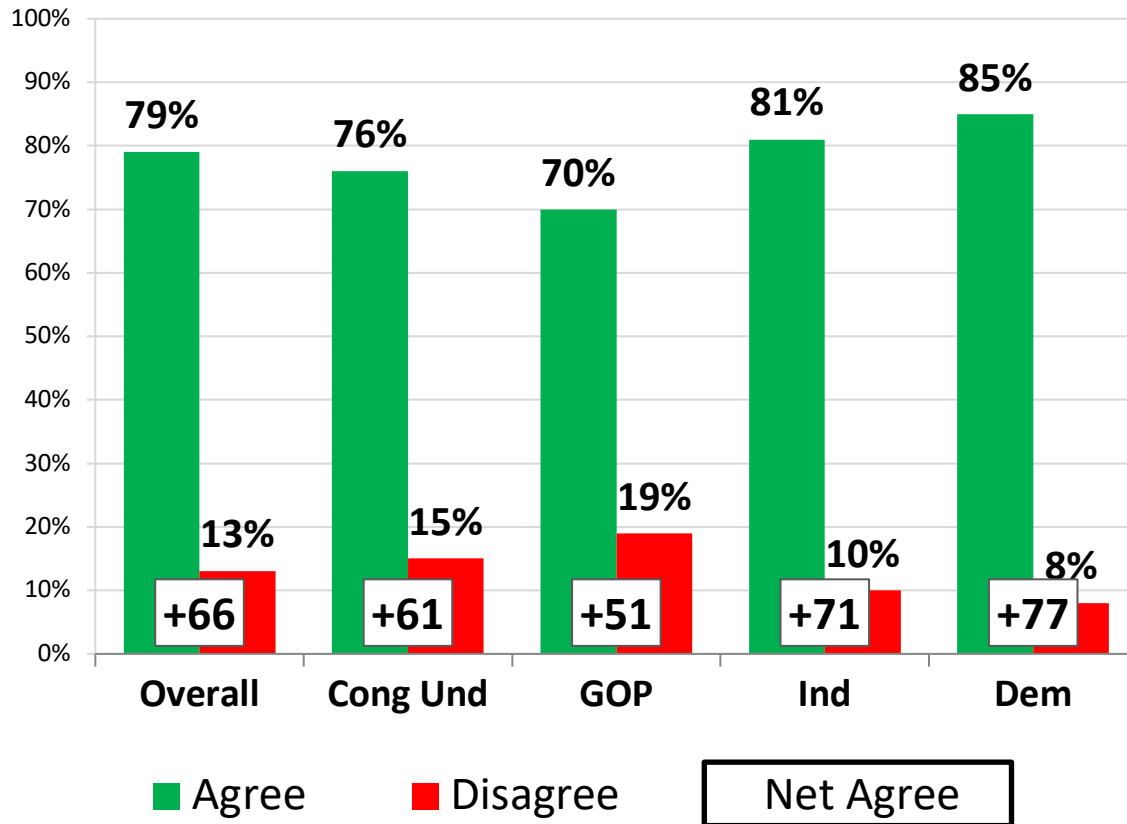
**Targeted Congressional Races**



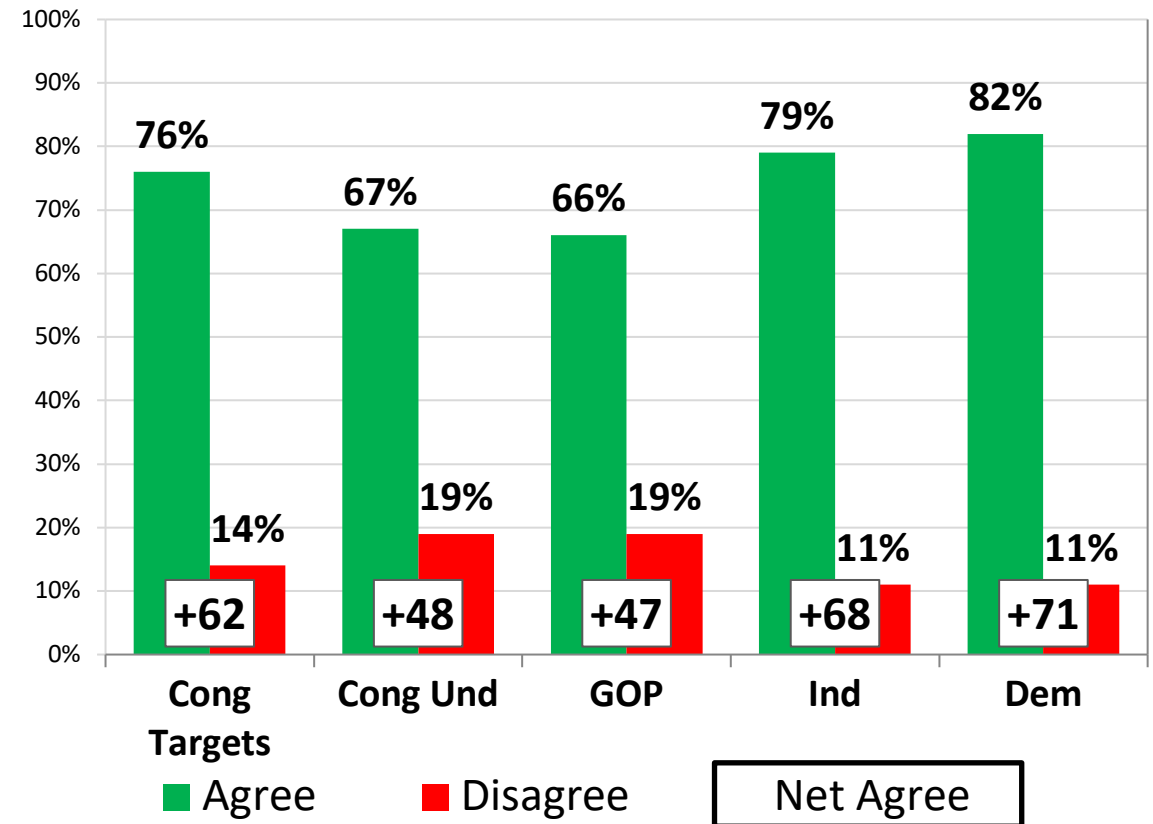
# Congress Make Easier for MM to Replace Opioids

- Voters say Congress needs to make it easier for states to legalize MM to replace opioids – 79% agree vs. 13% who disagree.
- Again, there is widespread support for this among undecided voters & members of all parties.

**Nationwide**



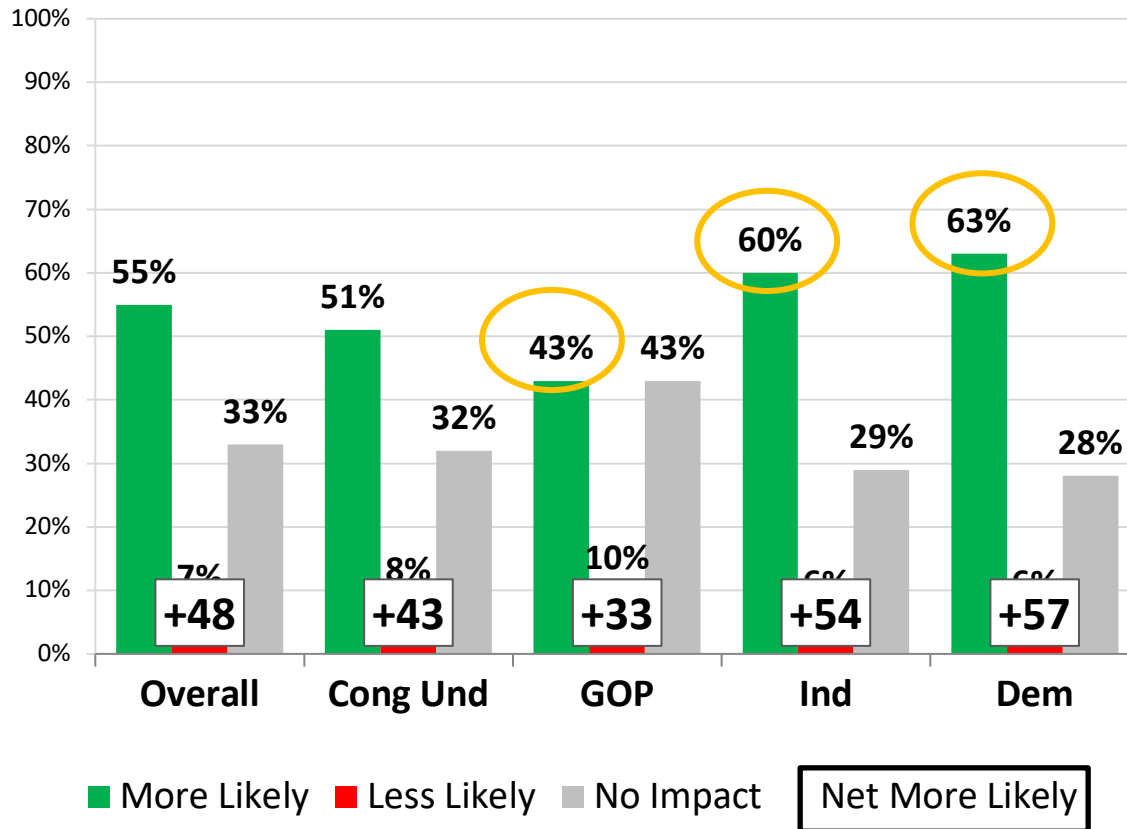
**Targeted Congressional Races**



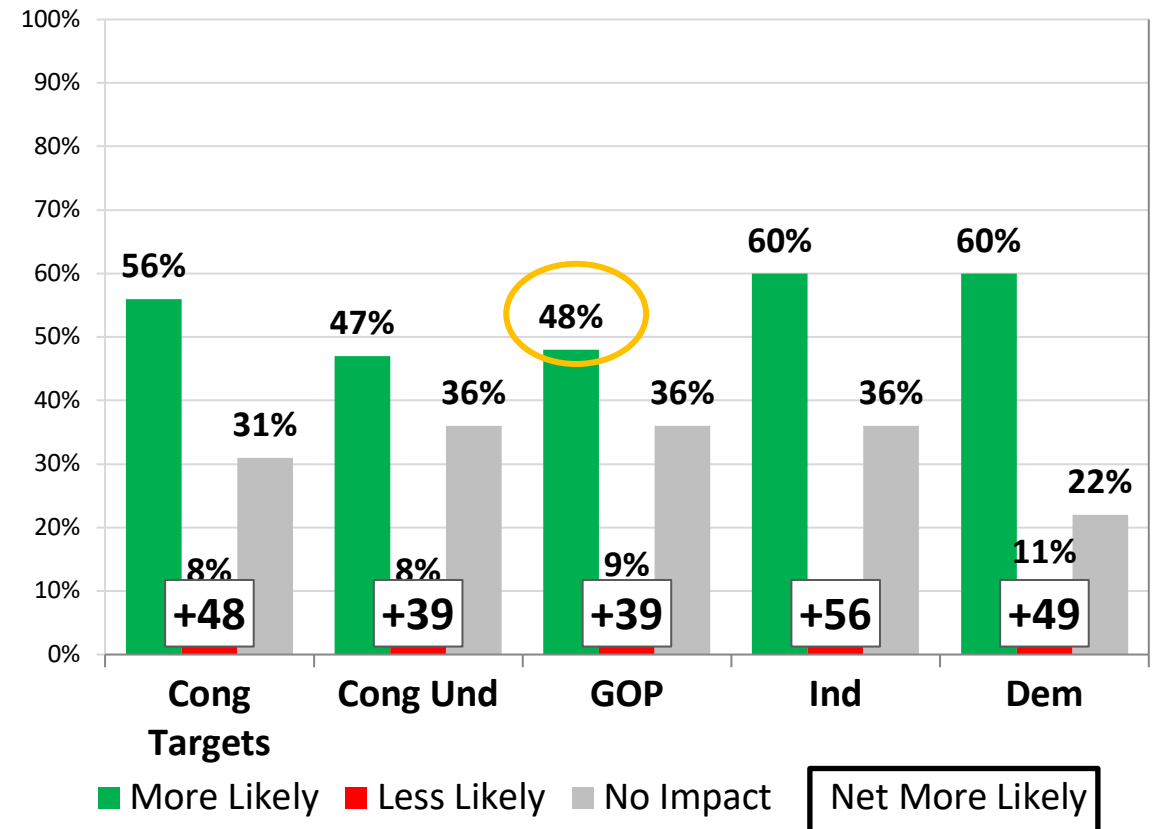
# Legalize MM as Opioid Alternative – Vote Impact

- MoCs supporting MM as an alternative to opioids for pain will get a boost on election day – 55% of voters say more likely vs. just 7% who say less likely.
- Even 43% of Republicans nationwide and 48% in targeted Congressional races say they'd be more likely to back a Congressman who supported this, with Indies and Dems significantly higher.

**Nationwide**



**Targeted Congressional Races**





# *The Politics of Cannabis*

## **Pollsters**

*Celinda Lake, Lake Research Partners & Tony Fabrizio, Fabrizio, Lee & Associates*

## **Panelists**

*Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) & Congressman David Joyce (R-OH)*

## **Moderator**

*John Hudak,  
Brookings Institution*

*Presented by:*

**MedMen™**

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