



National Public Radio Battleground Survey

Key findings from a survey of 1,200 likely voters in battleground Congressional Districts, conducted October 7-10, 2010



PUBLIC OPINION
STRATEGIES

Project #101309

GREENBERG QUINLAN ROSNER RESEARCH

Methodology

This survey was conducted by Public Opinion Strategies in conjunction with Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research for National Public Radio and is the 31st survey in the NPR series.

These findings are based on a national telephone survey of 1,200 likely voters conducted in battleground Congressional Districts, designated as the 86 most competitive Democratic districts and 10 most competitive Republican districts by the *Cook Political Report* on October 5, 2010. The survey was conducted October 7-10, 2010.

- Democratic Tier 1: Fifty-three (53) Likely GOP/Lean GOP/Toss Up seats currently held by a Democrat, N=450 (MoE: +/- 4.6 percentage points)**
- Democratic Tier 2: Thirty-three (33) Lean Democratic seats currently held by a Democrat, N=450 (MoE: +/- 4.6 percentage points)**
- Republican Tier: Ten (10) Likely GOP/Lean GOP/Toss up/Lean Dem seats currently held by a Republican, N=300 (MoE: +/- 5.66 percentage points)**



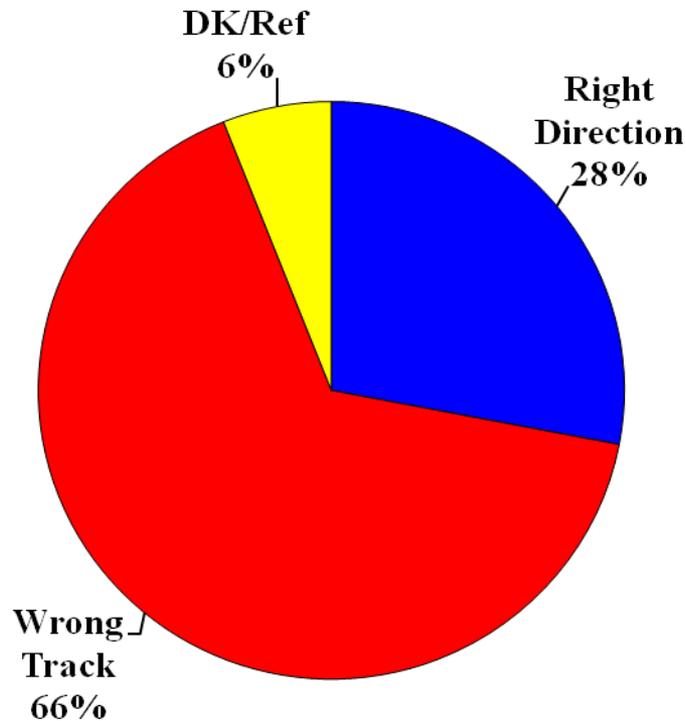
Political Environment



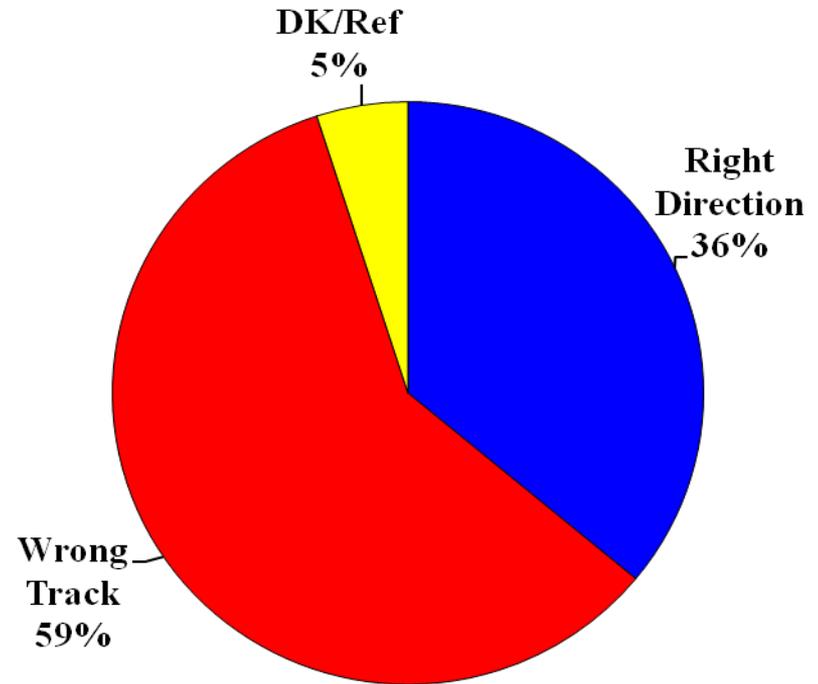
A majority of voters in target Democratic and Republican districts are pessimistic about the country's direction.

National Mood

Democratic Districts



Republican Districts

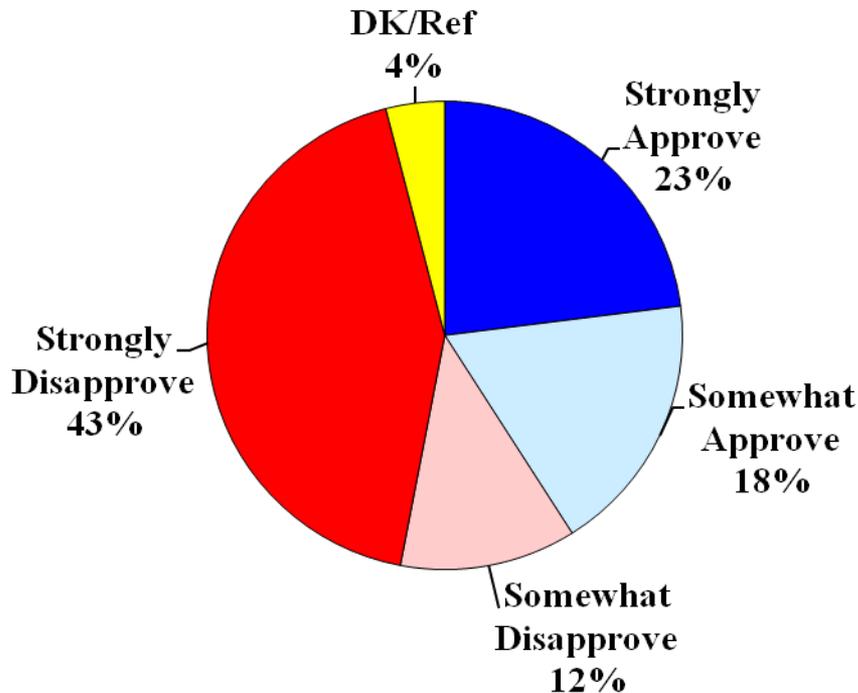


Voters in target Dem-held districts disapprove of Obama, while voters in Republican districts that are top Dem targets approve of the President.

Obama Approval

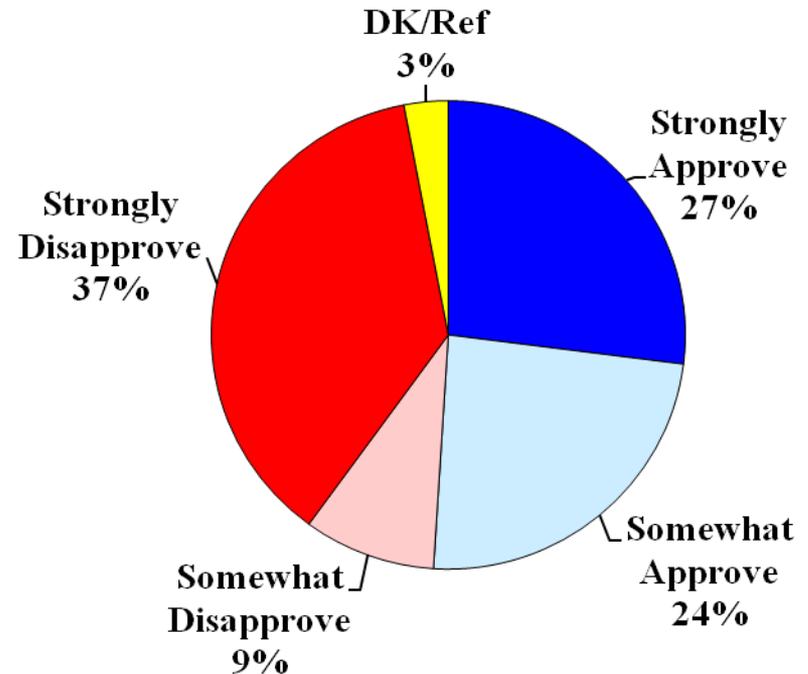
Democratic Districts

Total Approve: 41%
Total Disapprove: 55%



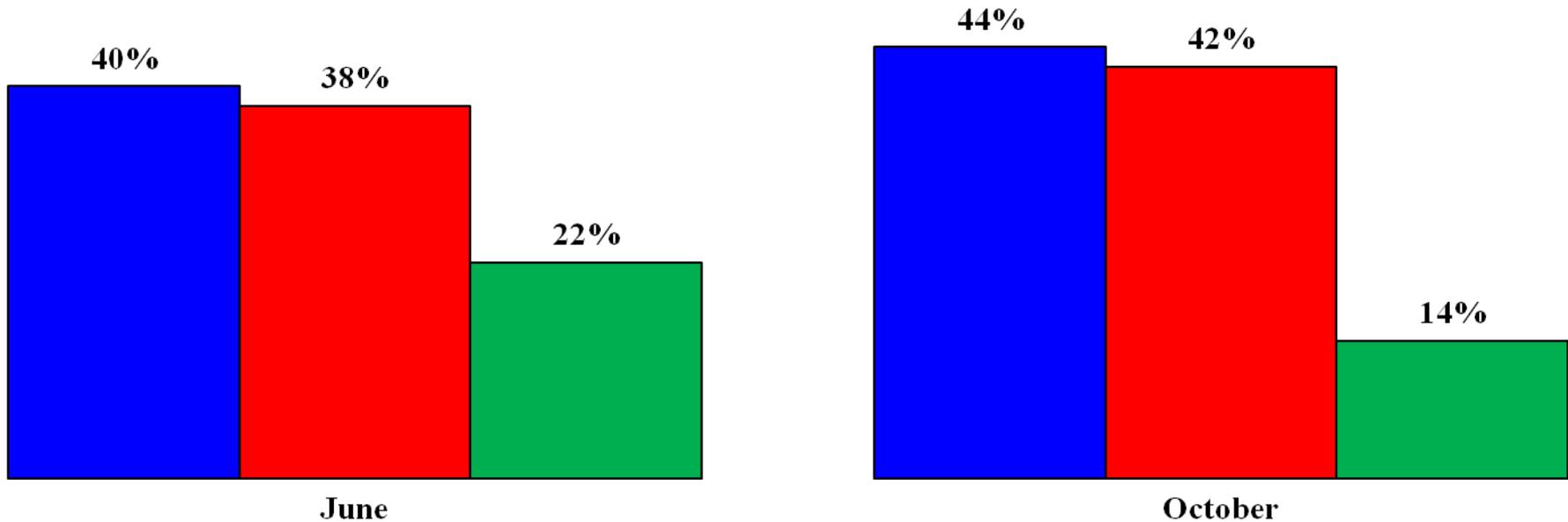
Republican Districts

Total Approve: 51%
Total Disapprove: 46%



Trend on incumbent approval in Democratic districts.*

“And, do you approve or disapprove of the way (HOUSE INCUMBENT NAME) is handling (his/her) job as a member of the U.S. Congress?”



**In 58 common Democratic Battleground districts from June and October*

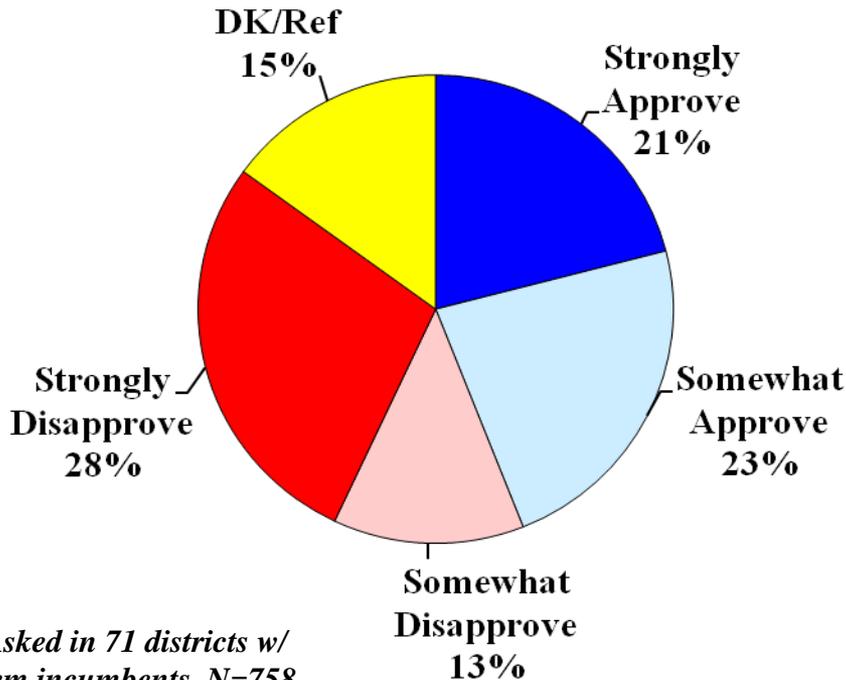
■ Approve ■ Disapprove ■ Don't know

A majority in GOP districts approve of their member of Congress. Voters in Dem districts are more divided.

“And, do you approve or disapprove of the way (HOUSE INCUMBENT NAME) is handling (his/her) job as a member of the U.S. Congress?”

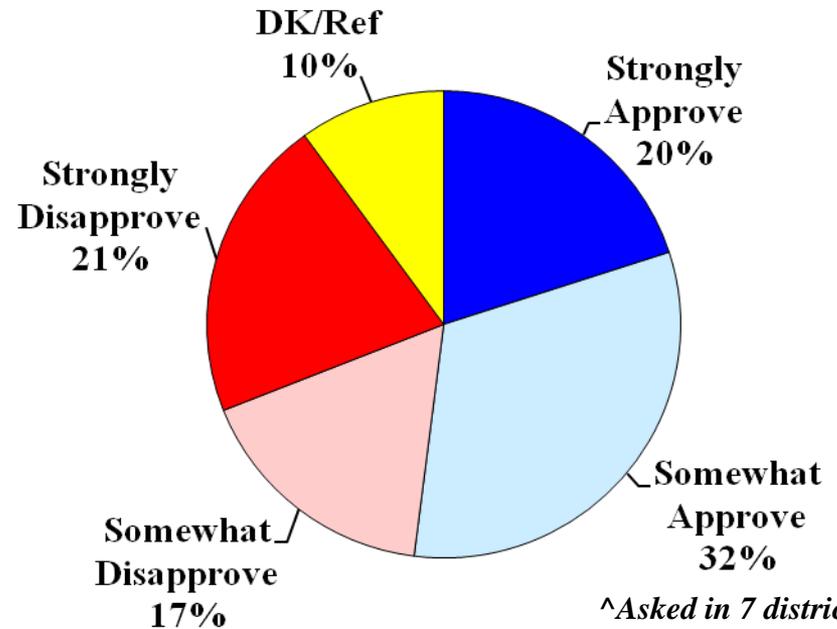
Democratic Districts*

Total Approve: 44%
Total Disapprove: 41%



Republican Districts^

Total Approve: 52%
Total Disapprove: 38%

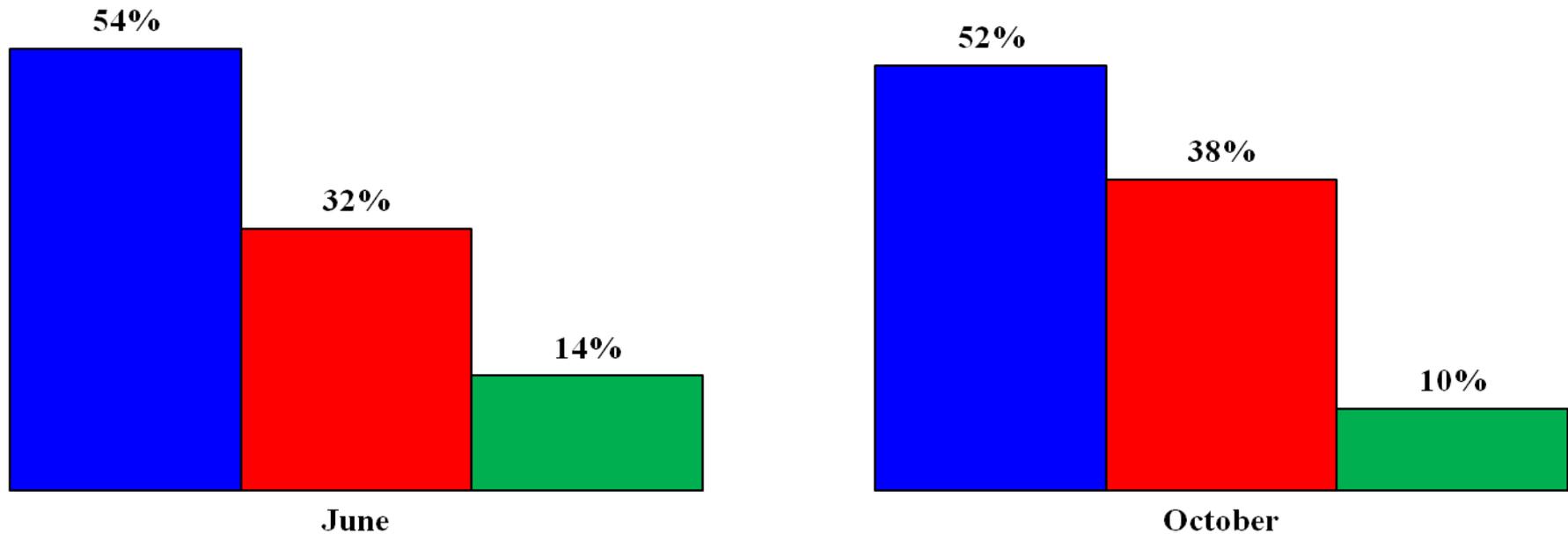


*Asked in 71 districts w/ Dem incumbents, N=758

^Asked in 7 districts w/ GOP incumbents, N=210

Trend on incumbent approval in Republican districts.*

“And, do you approve or disapprove of the way (HOUSE INCUMBENT NAME) is handling (his/her) job as a member of the U.S. Congress?”



**Districts common except for CA-44, which was not included in October.*

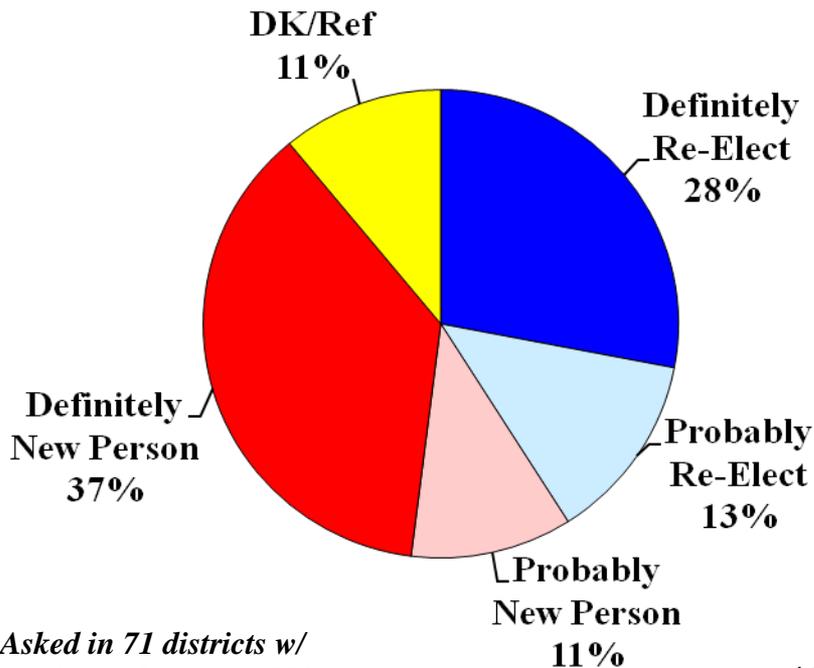
■ Approve ■ Disapprove ■ Don't know

Voters in Dem districts want a new person to represent them in Congress; those in GOP districts are split.

Incumbent Re-Elect

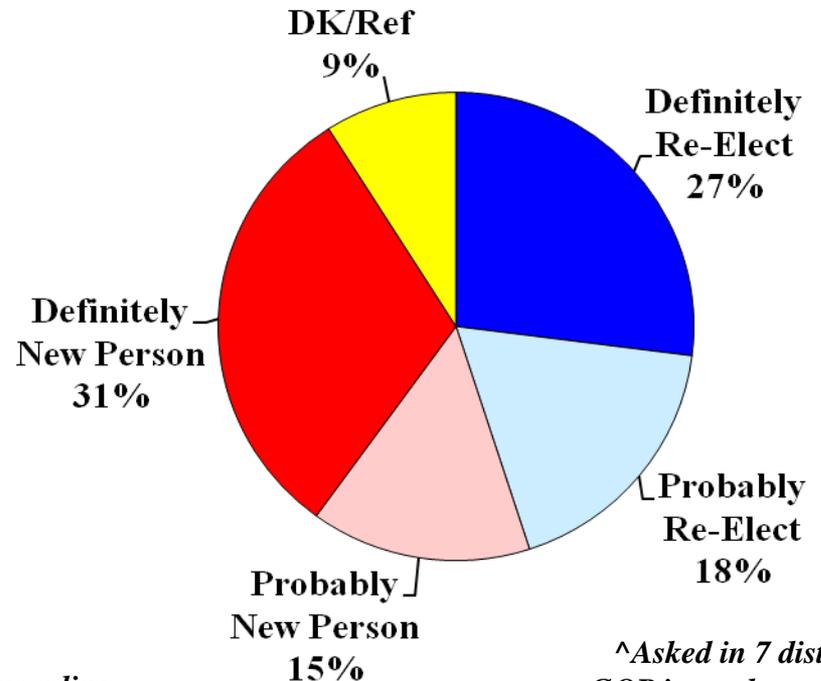
Democratic Districts*

| | |
|-------------------|-------|
| Total Re-Elect: | 41% |
| Total New Person: | 47%** |



Republican Districts^

| | |
|-------------------|-------|
| Total Re-Elect: | 44%** |
| Total New Person: | 46% |



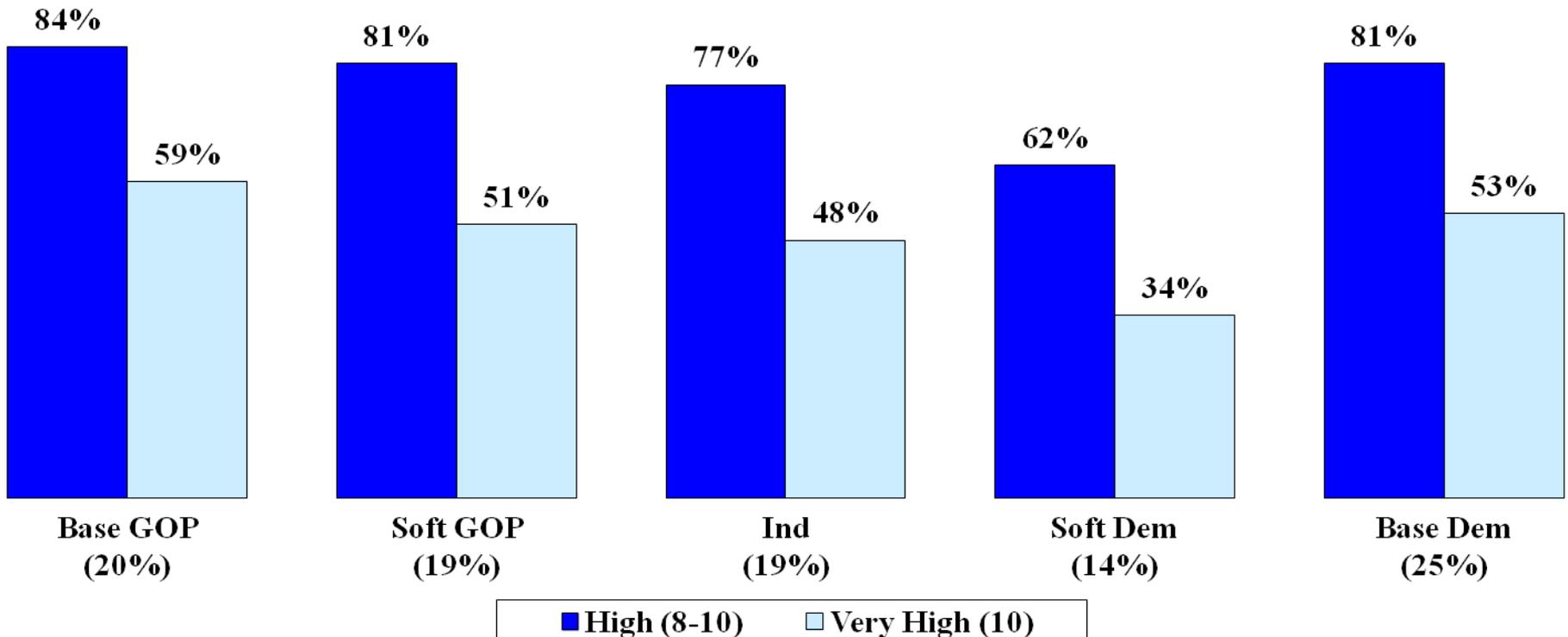
*Asked in 71 districts w/ Dem incumbents, N=758

**Denotes Rounding

^Asked in 7 districts w/ GOP incumbents, N=210

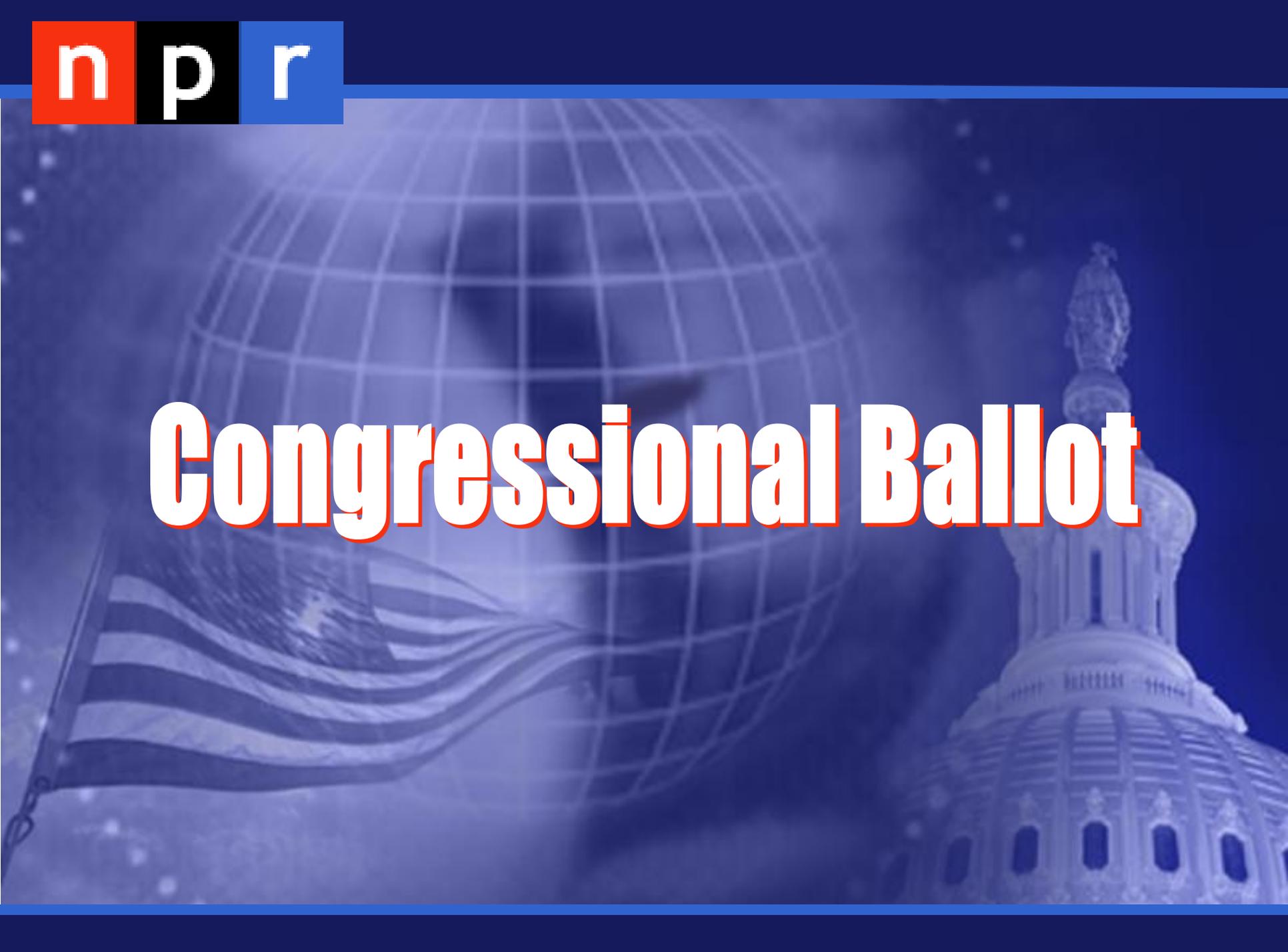
Republicans are more interested than Democrats in the election.

Election Interest by Party



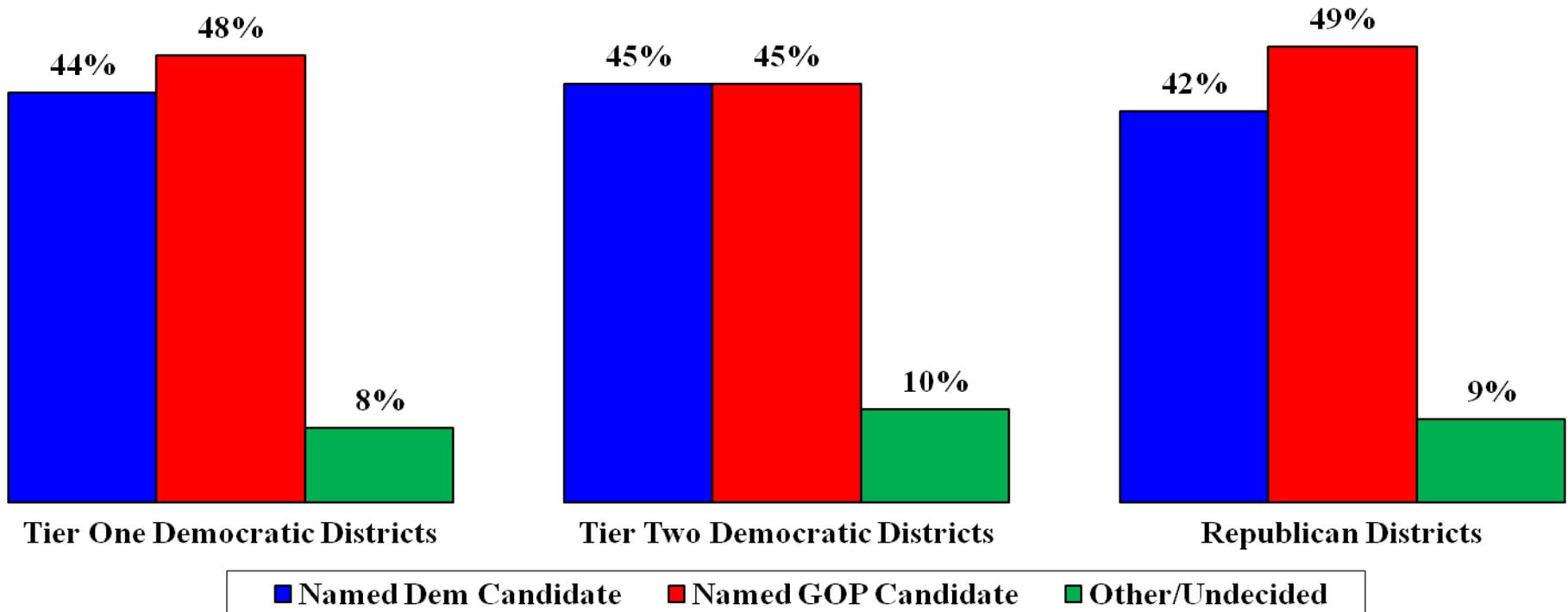
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Congressional Ballot



Republican candidates have a small lead in Tier One Dem/ GOP districts. The ballot is tied in Tier Two Dem districts.

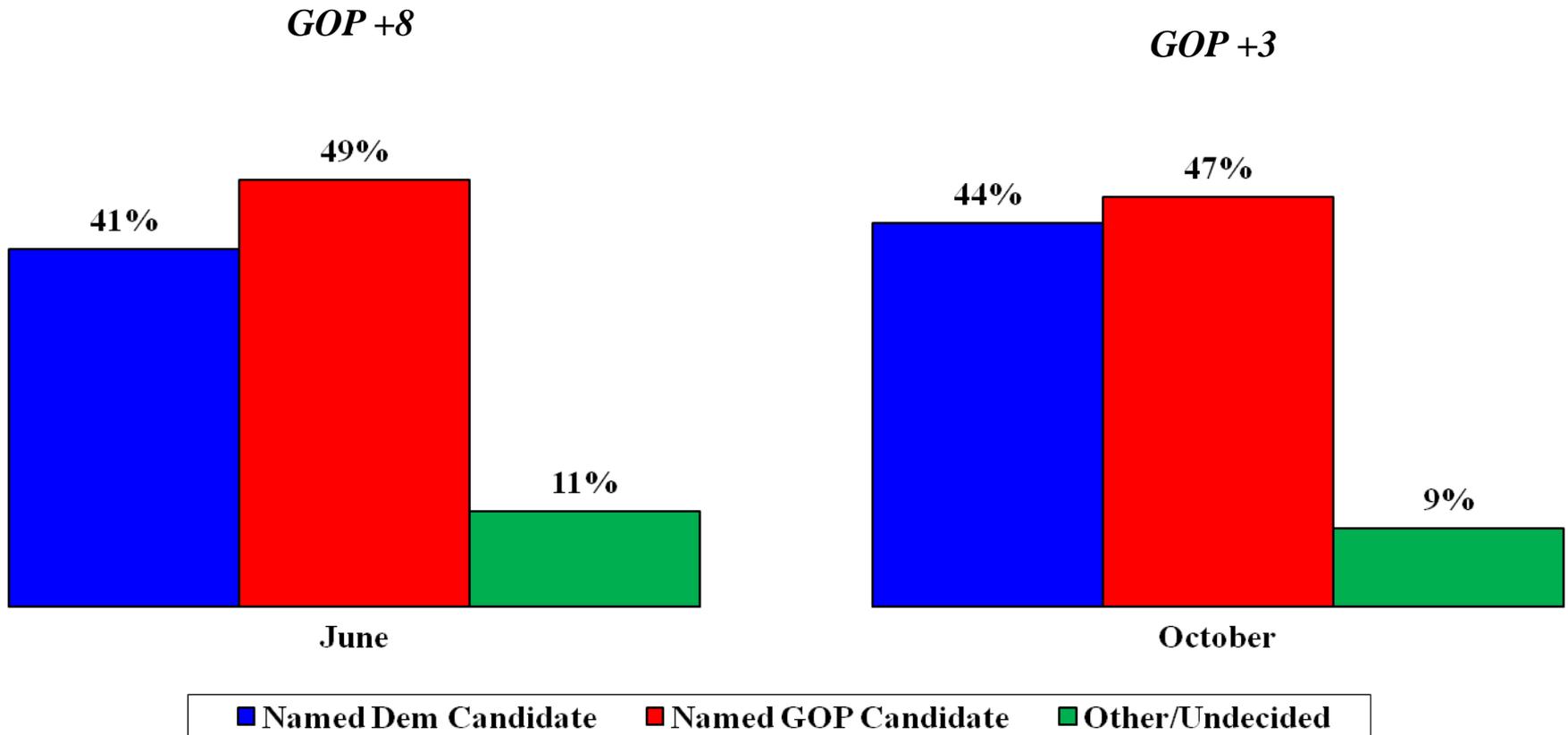
Congressional Ballot*



*Candidate names were used in each Congressional District

Democrats have improved standing in common battleground districts since June.

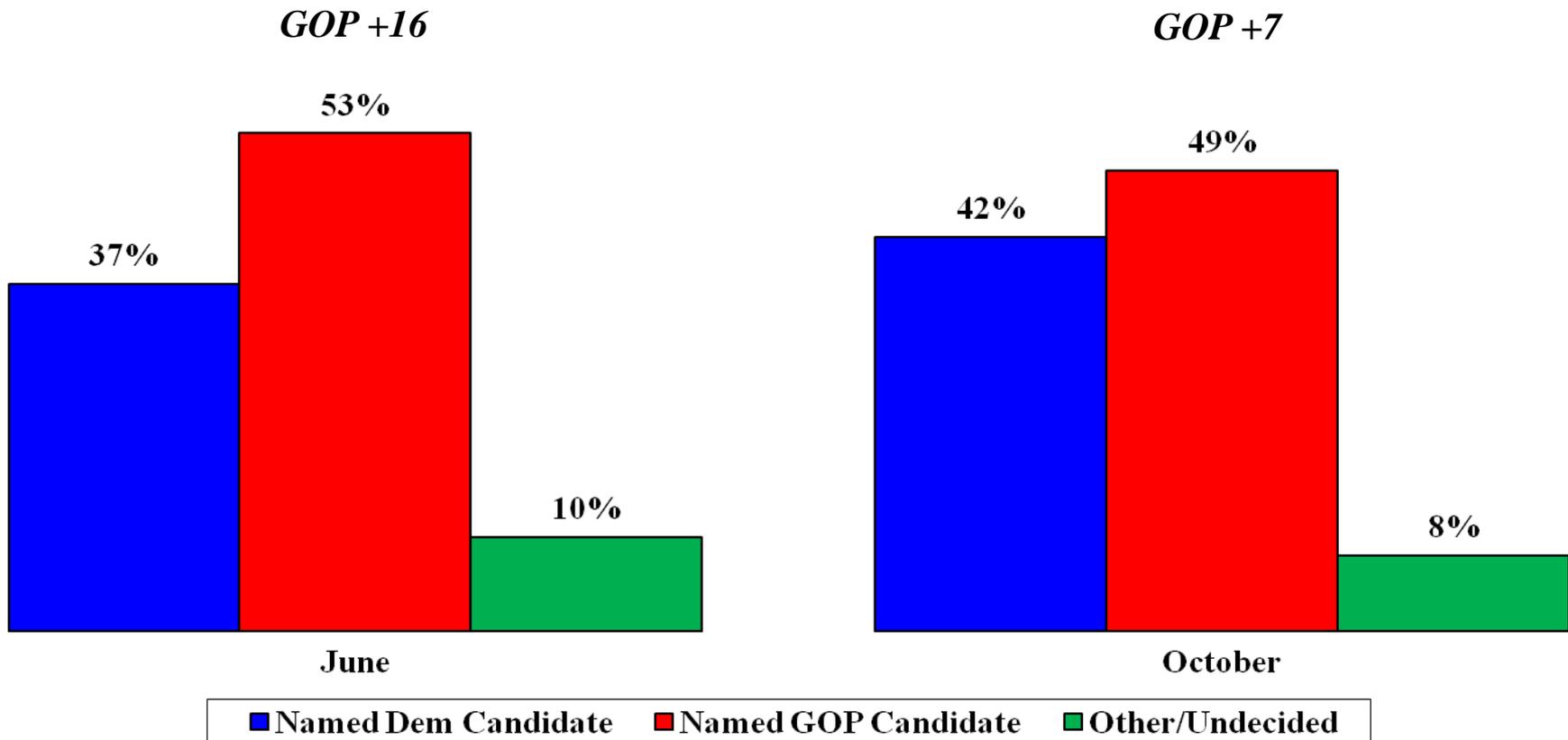
Congressional Ballot



*In 58 common Democratic Battleground districts from June and October

There has been similar positive movement toward Democratic candidates in Republican battleground.

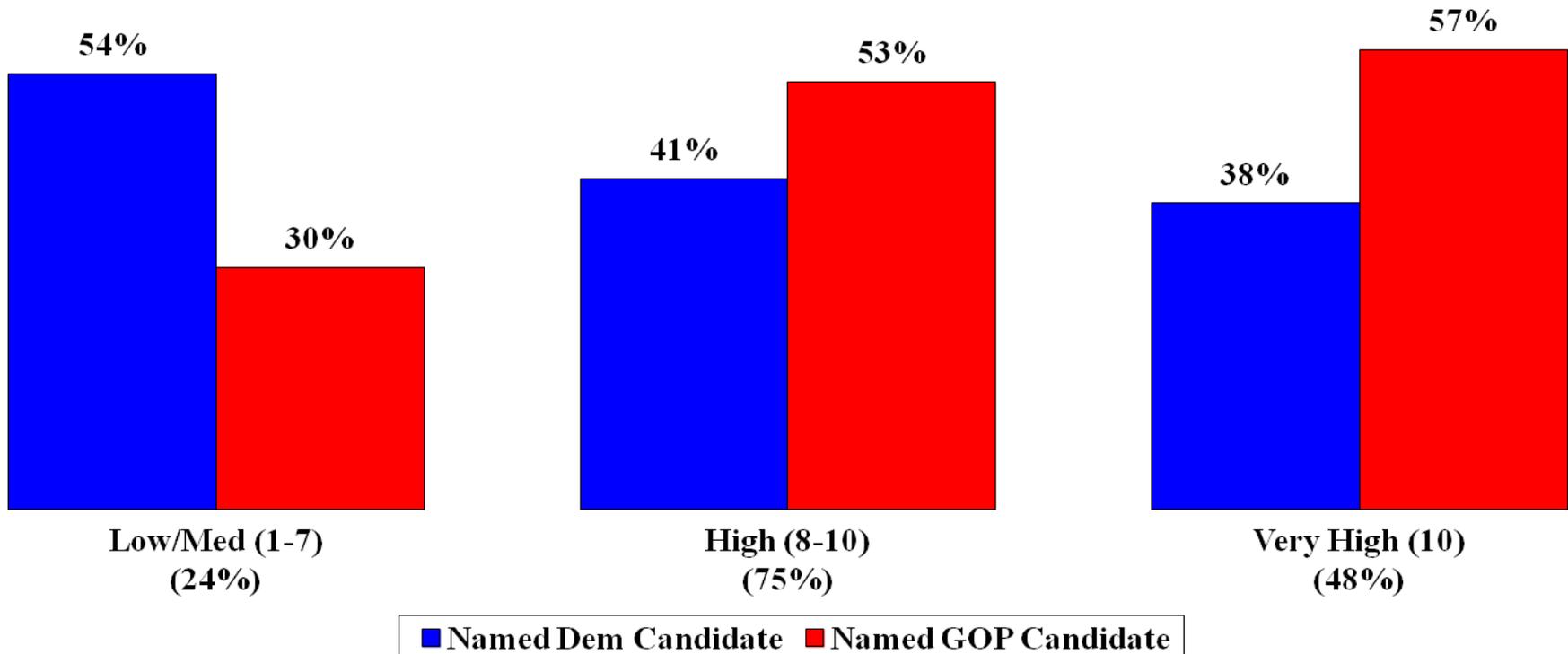
Congressional Ballot



*Districts common except for CA-44, which was not included in October.

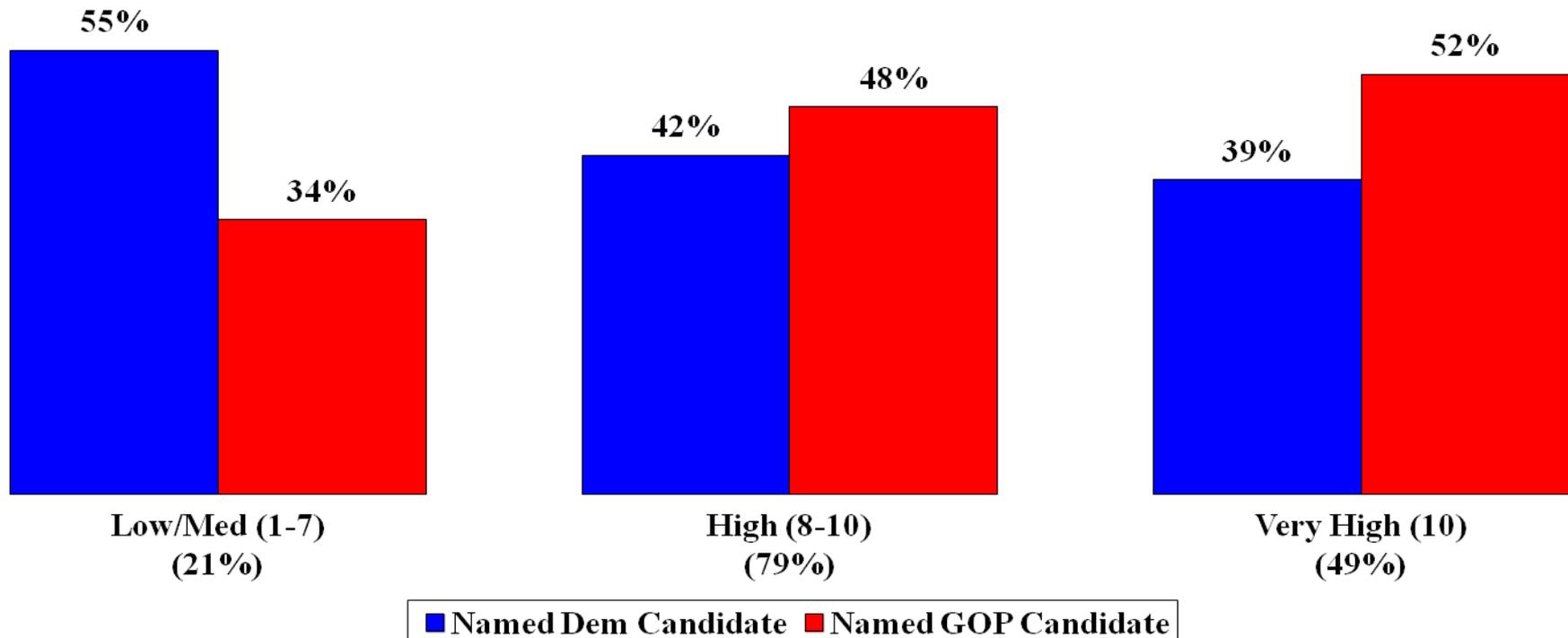
Republican candidates widen their lead with high interest voters in Dem Tier One districts.

Congressional Ballot by Election Interest –Tier One Dem Districts



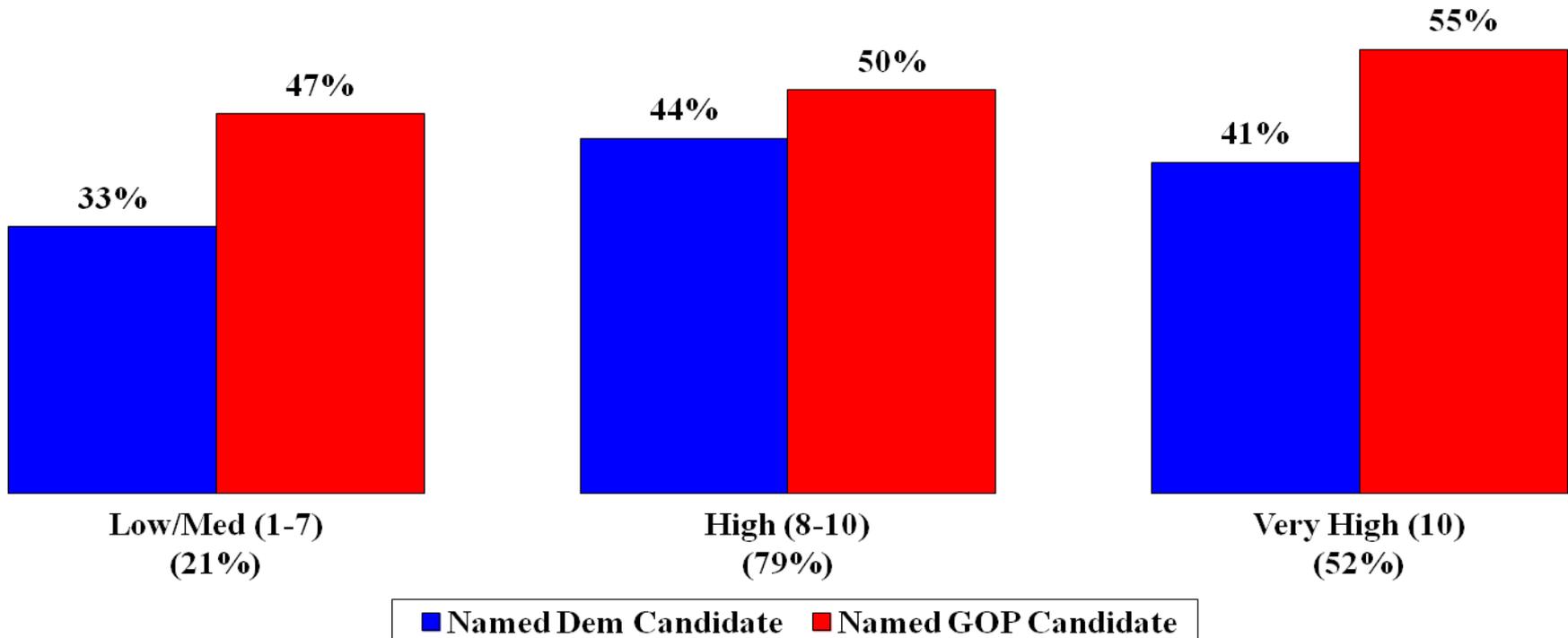
Republican candidates take a lead among high interest voters in Tier Two Dem districts as well.

Congressional Ballot by Election Interest –Tier Two Dem Districts



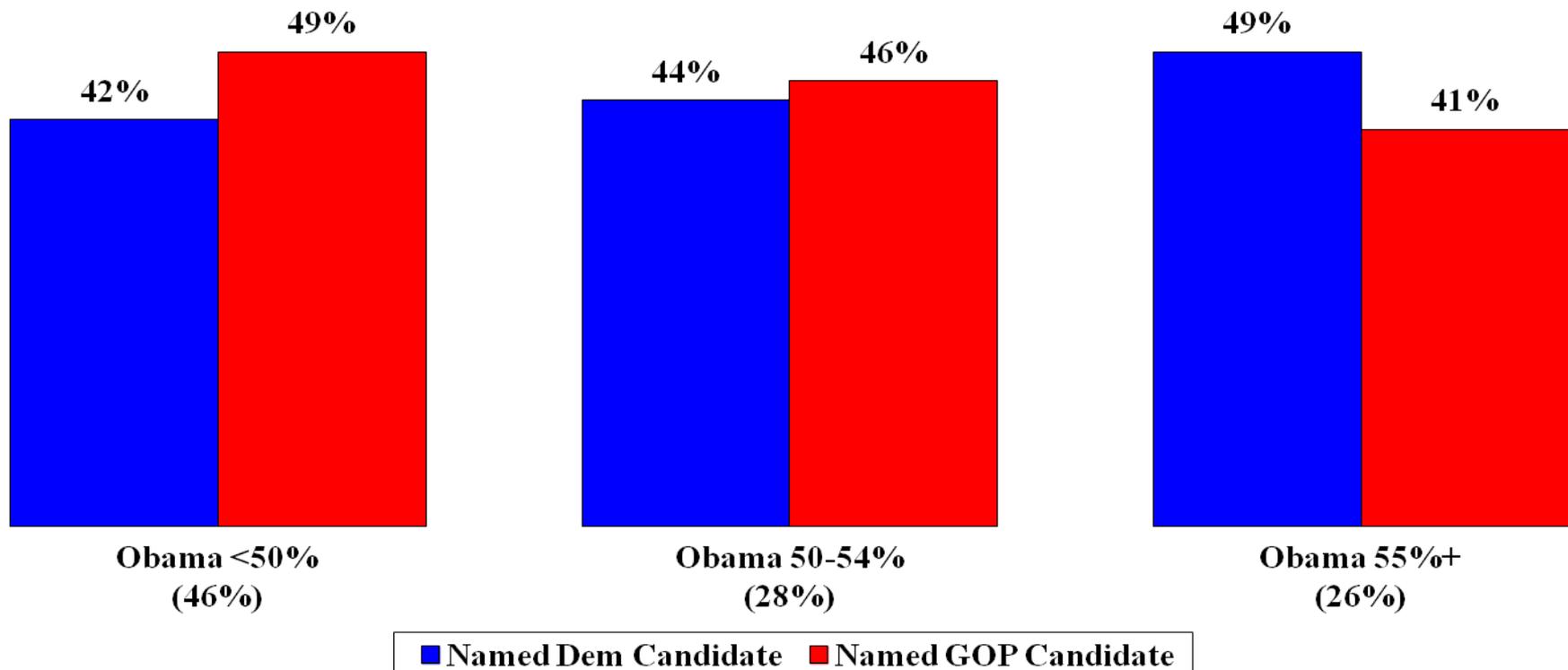
Interest level does not affect the data much in Republican-held districts.

Congressional Ballot by Election Interest – Republican Districts



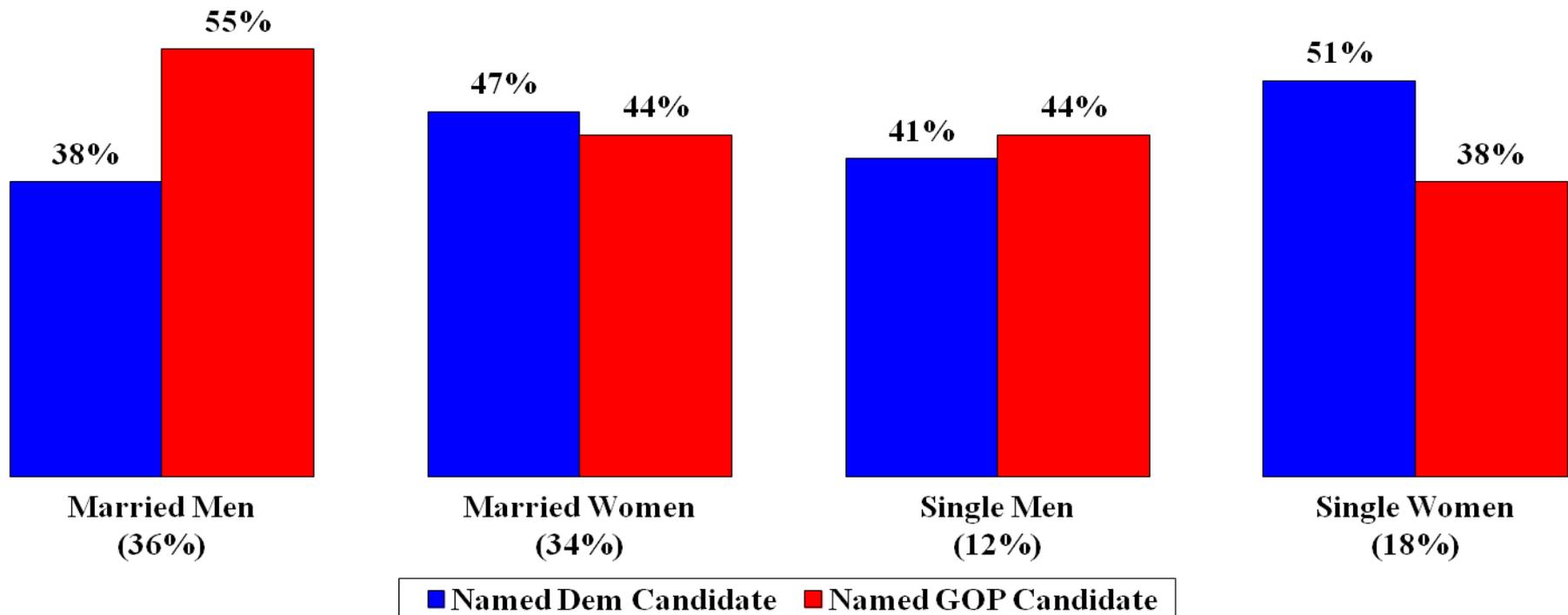
Dem candidates do well in districts where the President received over 55% of the vote. Districts where he did not do as well are more problematic.

Congressional Ballot by 2008 Presidential Election – Democratic Districts



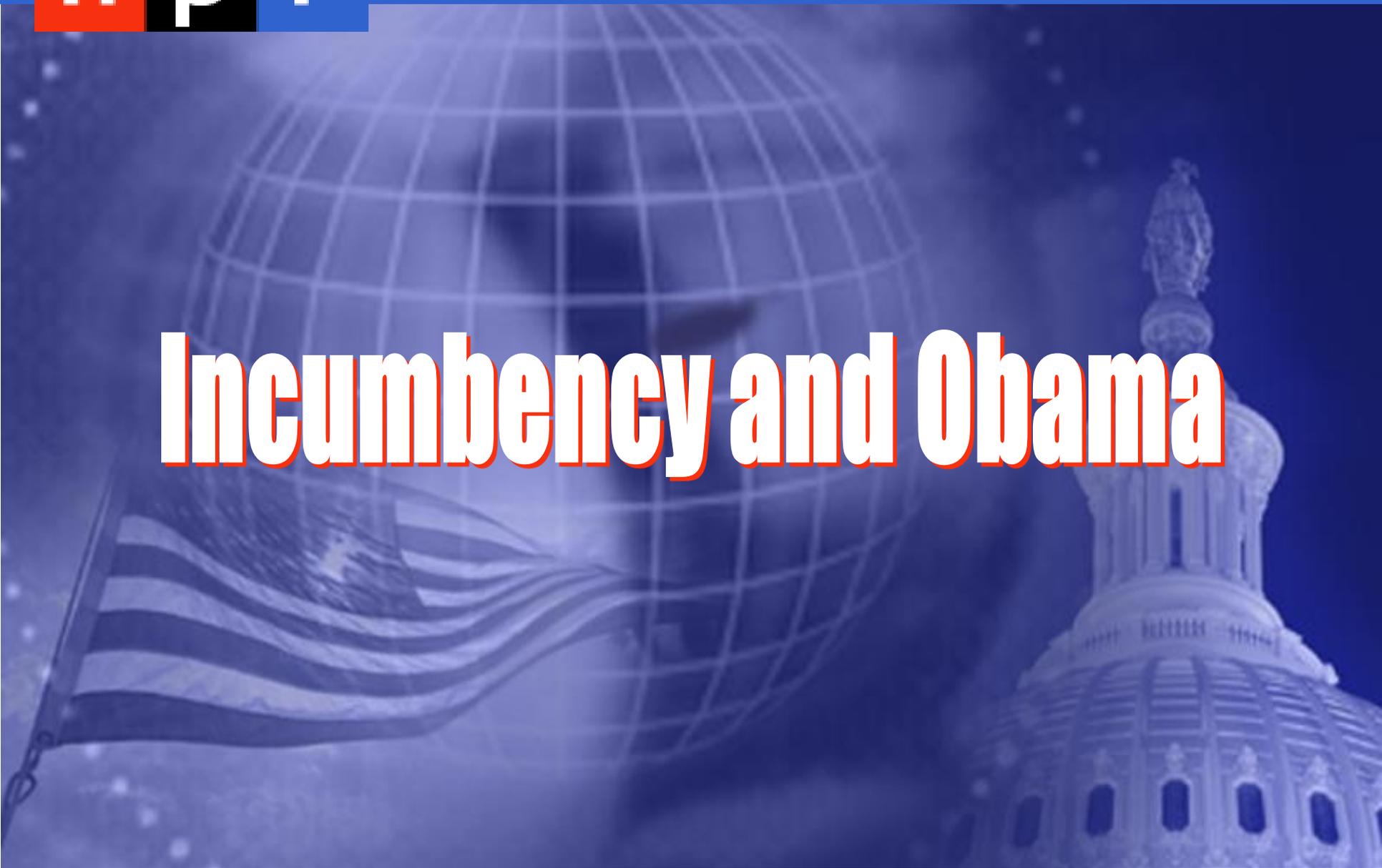
A majority of married men support GOP candidates, and a majority of single women back Dem candidates. Married women and single men are more divided.

Congressional Ballot by Marital Status





Incumbency and Obama



Voters in Dem districts narrowly say they won't vote to re-elect their incumbent members of Congress.

“Now, I am going to read you some pairs of statements. After I read each pair, please tell me whether the first statement or the second statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right.”

Dem Districts* GOP Districts^

45% **48%**

I will vote to re-elect (HOUSE INCUMBENT NAME) because (he/she) is doing a good job and addressing issues that are important to us.

...or...

49% **46%**

I won't vote to re-elect (HOUSE INCUMBENT NAME) because we need new people who will fix Washington and get things done.

*Asked in 71 districts w/ Dem incumbents, N=758

^Asked in 7 districts w/ GOP incumbents, N=210

One-half of voters in Republican districts say they will vote for the Democratic candidate for Congress.

*“Now, I am going to read you some pairs of statements. After I read each pair, please tell me whether the first statement or the second statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right.”**

50%

I will vote for a Democrat for Congress because at least (he/she) will try to get past the partisan gridlock to get the change we need.

...or...

43%

I will vote for (HOUSE INCUMBENT NAME) because the Democratic Congress is just business as usual in Washington and more of the same tax and spend policies.

**Asked in 7 districts w/ GOP incumbents, N=210*

Voters in Tier One districts side with the Republican. Those in Tier Two districts prefer the Dem incumbent.

“Now, I am going to read you some pairs of statements. After I read each pair, please tell me whether the first statement or the second statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right.”

Dem Tier One
Districts*

Dem Tier Two
Districts^

44% **47%**

I will vote for (HOUSE INCUMBENT NAME) because (he/she) fights for people here and is trying to get Washington to do the right thing.

...Or...

50% **44%**

I will vote for a Republican for Congress because at least (he/she) won't be a rubber stamp for President Obama and the national Democrats and all of their wasteful spending.

*Asked in 40 districts w/ Dem incumbents, N=335

^Asked in 31 districts w/ Dem incumbents, N=423

A majority of voters in Dem-held districts say Obama's policies have run up the deficit and failed to end the recession. Voters in GOP districts favor Obama's policies.

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

Dem Districts* GOP Districts^

40% 53%

President's Obama's economic policies helped avert an even worse crisis, and are laying the foundation for our eventual economic recovery.

...OR...

57% 44%

President Obama's economic policies have run up a record federal deficit while failing to end the recession or slow the record pace of job losses.

*N=448

^N=152

Voters in both GOP and Dem-held districts believe Bush is more responsible for problems with the economy.

“Now, I am going to read you some pairs of statements. After I read each pair, please tell me whether the first statement or the second statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right.”

Dem Districts* GOP Districts^

45% 60%

Former President Bush is more responsible for the problems with the economy.

...Or...

40% 32%

President Obama is more responsible for the problems with the economy.

*N=447

^N=153



The Big Message Debate



The Dem and GOP candidate statements on overall message test about evenly, but Dems higher than their vote.

“Next, I am going to read you some pairs of statements about what the two candidates in your district might say on some key issues. After I read each pair, please tell me which statement comes closest to your own view, even if neither is exactly right.”

Total

Versus Vote Share

48%

(DEM CANDIDATE NAME) might say “We have to change Washington. That means eliminating the special deals and tax breaks won by corporate lobbyists for the oil companies and Wall Street, paid for with higher deficits. (GOP CANDIDATE NAME) has pledged to protect those breaks for Wall Street CEOs, oil companies like BP and companies that ship our jobs to India and China. I’ll take a different approach by cutting taxes for the middle class and small businesses so they can start creating jobs again. Let’s make our country work for the middle class.”

+4

...while...

46%

(GOP CANDIDATE NAME) might say “We need a check and balance in Washington. One party control by the Democrats has led to higher unemployment, tripling the deficit, giving more control of our health care to bureaucrats, and increasing the size of government. (DEM CANDIDATE NAME) made things worse by supporting Nancy Pelosi and an agenda that grew government, cut Medicare, and gave tax breaks to companies manufacturing in China and India. I’ll take a different approach by working to cut wasteful spending, and focusing on policies that help create jobs, not kill jobs.”

-1

Voters are divided on these candidate messages on priorities as well.

“And, Now, thinking about a different issue...”

Total

46%

(DEM CANDIDATE NAME) might say “This election is about putting regular Americans back in the driver’s seat in Washington. We should ban pay increases for Congress until they balance the budget and government should make it easier for small businesses to create jobs and the middle class to succeed. But (GOP CANDIDATE NAME) is fighting to protect the special breaks for their special interest allies and Wall Street and policies that caused this jobs crisis. My priorities are middle class tax cuts, end to tax breaks for companies that outsource jobs and cutting red tape and more credit for small businesses. We need common sense in Washington.”

Versus Vote
Share

+2

...while...

48%

(GOP CANDIDATE NAME) might say “This election is about whether we take a path that grows government and hurts small businesses, or one that gives people the power to create jobs. There are too many people out of work, and simply spending ourselves deeper into debt shows that the government stimulus package supported by (DEM CANDIDATE NAME) was a failure. To get our country’s economy moving again, we need to change the way Congress works, keep government from taking control over everything, and pass policies that make it easier for America’s small businesses to lead the way out of the recession.”

+1

Voters split on these jobs/economy messages also.

“And, Now, thinking about a different issue...”

Total

47%

(DEM CANDIDATE NAME) might say “My passion is ‘made in America,’ working to support small businesses, American companies and new American industries. (GOP CANDIDATE NAME) opposed efforts to make it easier for small businesses to get credit and has pledged to support job-killing free trade deals and to protect tax breaks for companies that send American jobs to places like India and China. I have a different approach: cutting taxes for companies that create jobs right here in America and helping small business expand and hire new workers by cutting red tape and making it easier for them to get credit.”

Versus Vote
Share

+3

...while...

45%

(GOP CANDIDATE NAME) might say “Congress is way off track when it comes to jobs and the economy. (DEM CANDIDATE NAME) supports an Obama-Pelosi agenda that kills jobs by trying to raise taxes on energy, increasing costly regulations on nearly all businesses with a trillion dollar health care law, and eight hundred billion dollars on an economic stimulus bill that failed to lower unemployment. I have a different approach that allows small businesses to take tax deductions to create jobs, repeal the small business mandates in the new health care bill, and limits federal spending.”

-2

The GOP message on tax cuts is slightly stronger than the Dem message.

“And, Now, thinking about a different issue...”

Total

Versus Vote Share

44%

(DEM CANDIDATE NAME) might say “In these tough times, it is critical that our priority be the middle class and permanent middle class tax cuts. (GOP CANDIDATE NAME) starts at the top. Cuts taxes for Goldman Sachs, the richest two percent and companies that export American jobs. To pay for it, the official Republican budget cuts programs paid for by the middle class. It would end guaranteed benefit levels for Social Security and end Medicare as we know it. I’ll take a different approach, with tax cuts for small business and new American industries that create jobs to turn our economy around for the middle class.”

0

...while...

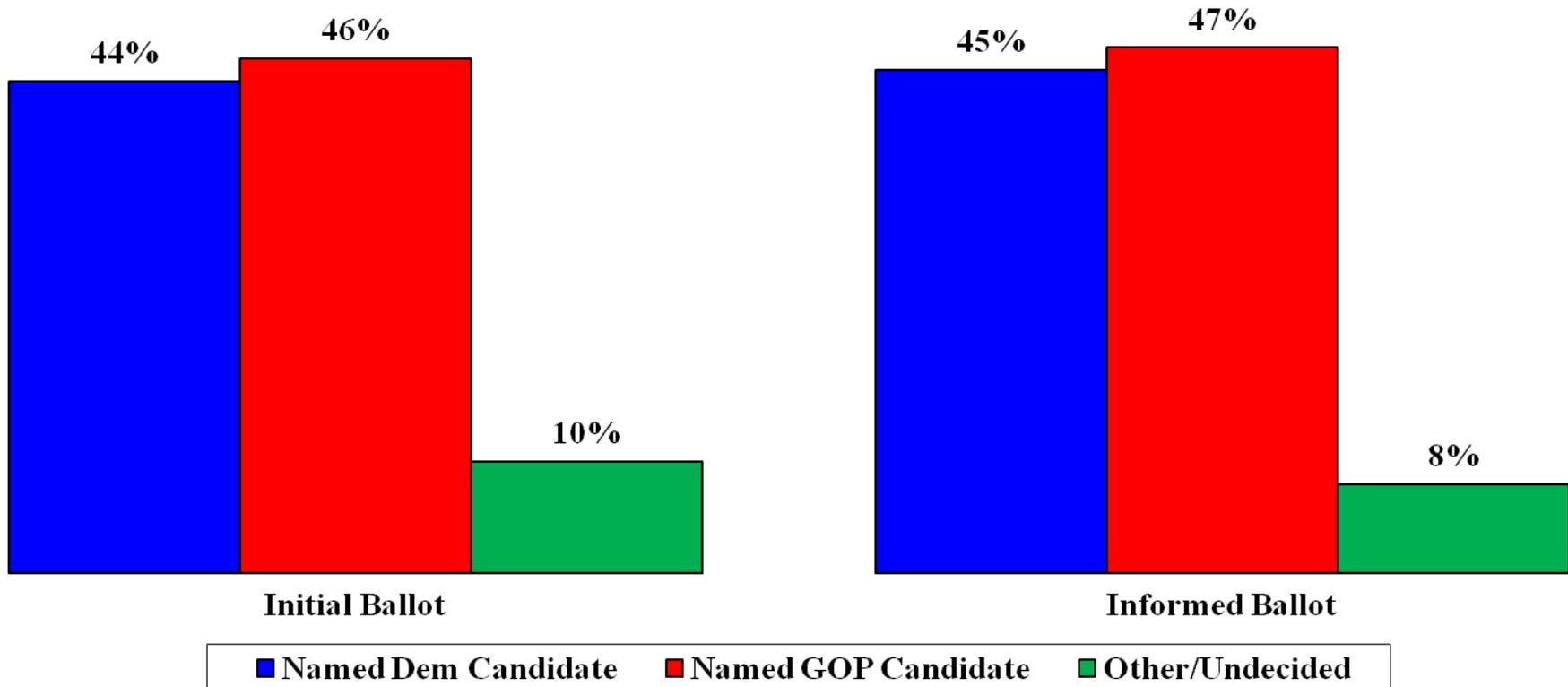
49%

(GOP CANDIDATE NAME) might say “Raising taxes in a bad economy is the wrong thing to do. Yes, (DEM CANDIDATE NAME) supports job-killing tax hikes. One party control of Washington has already piled on more spending and debt for now and the future. Now the Democrats want to increase taxes to pay for their spending binge. They have cut Medicare and are trying to scare seniors about Social Security. I say it is time for a new direction. Let’s stop Washington from targeting middle class families and small businesses so we can turn our country around.”

+2

There is little change on the informed Congressional ballot in Democrat-held districts.

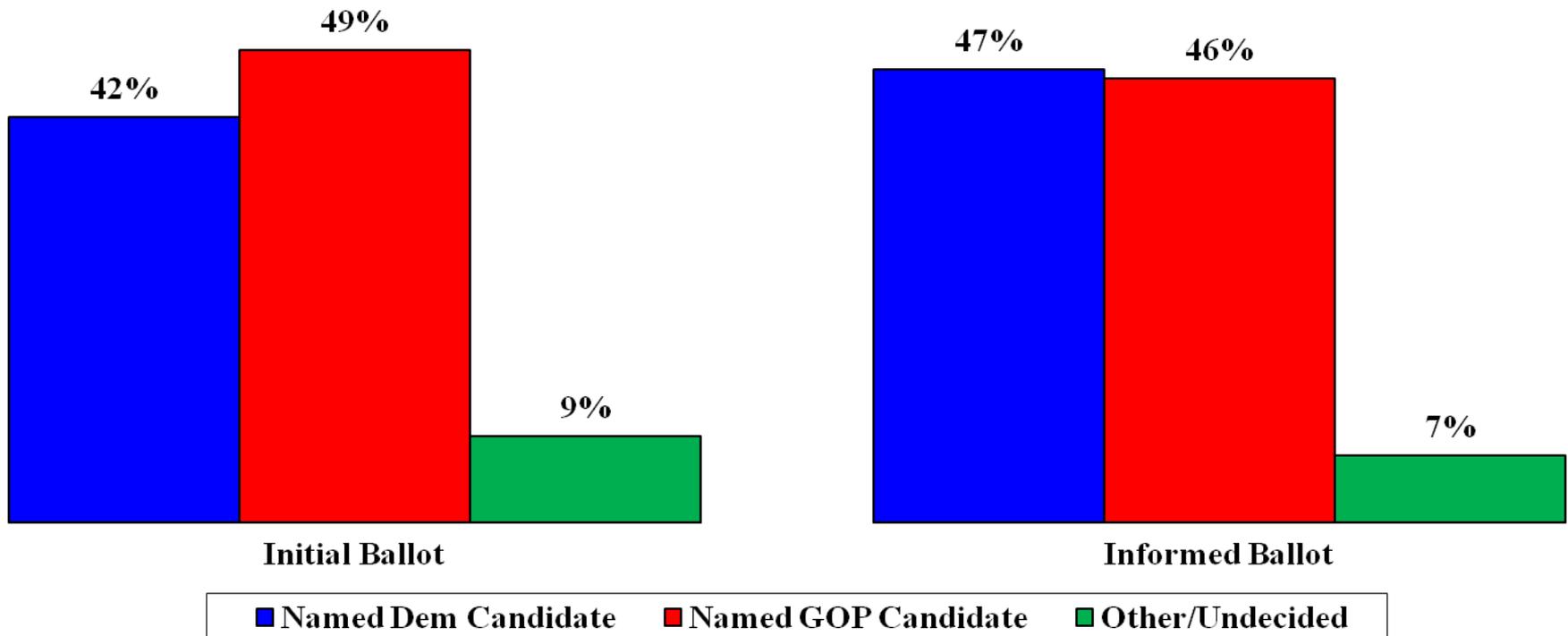
*Congressional Ballot – Democratic Districts**



*Candidate names were used in each Congressional District

Democratic candidates pull ahead on the informed Congressional ballot in GOP-held districts.

*Congressional Ballot – Republican Districts**



*Candidate names were used in each Congressional District



***For more information about this presentation,
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