

**GREENBERG QUINLAN ROSNER** RESEARCH

# **More out of touch and more vulnerable: The Republican House Battleground**

December 9, 2011



**DEMOCRACY CORPS**  
CARVILLE ♦ GREENBERG



# Methodology and Overview

**This presentation is based on a unique survey of 1000 likely 2012 voters in 60 Republican battleground districts conducted by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research for Democracy Corps and Women's Voices. Women Vote Action Fund December 4-7, 2011. Unless otherwise noted, margin of error=+/- 3.1% at 95% confidence.**

***Note: The time series data represents the common 50 districts originally selected in March. All other data represents the full 60 districts tested in September and December.***

# The Republican-Obama Districts

- **The 2012 Democracy Corps Congressional battleground research focuses intensely on the Republican-Obama districts; 48 of our 60 districts were won by Barack Obama in 2008 but claimed by Republicans in the 2010 midterm.**
- **Our battleground also includes 12 of the most competitive districts falling outside the Republican-Obama definition. This hybrid model, which includes the 60 most crucial battleground districts, allows Democracy Corps to track public opinion in ways that will define, shape, and structure the public debate going into 2012.**
- **Redistricting will obviously affect some of these districts, but this study is meant as an instructive look at the current districts, and voters, who have swung between the parties over the past four years, in addition to gauging public opinion on these specific Republican incumbents themselves.**
- **The districts are divided into 2 tiers. Tier 1 includes the 30 most competitive districts; Tier 2 is composed of 30 secondary targets.**
- **50 of the 60 districts in this survey were included in our March battleground survey, giving us the unique ability to track changes in public mood and opinion over time in these crucial swing districts.**

# Battleground Districts: Tier 1 – 30 most competitive

District	2008 Presidential vote margin	2010 Congressional vote margin	Representative	Cook PVI
AZ-1	McCain +10	Rep +7	Paul Gosar	R +6
CA-3	Obama +0	Rep +8	Dan Lungren	R +6
CA-24	Obama +3	Rep +20	Elton Gallegly	R +4
CA-26	Obama +4	Rep +17	David Dreier	R +3
CA-50	Obama +4	Rep +18	Brian Bilbray	R +3
CO-3	McCain +2	Rep +4	Scott Tipton	R +5
FL-8	Obama +5	Rep +18	Dan Webster	R +2
FL-22	Obama +4	Rep +8	Allen West	D +1
FL-25	McCain +1	Rep +10	David Rivera	R +5
IL-6	Obama +13	Rep +28	Peter Roskam	Even
IL-8	Obama +13	Rep +1	Joe Walsh	R +1
IL-10	Obama +23	Rep +2	Robert Dold	D +6
IL-11	Obama +8	Rep +14	Adam Kinzinger	R +1
IL-13	Obama +9	Rep +28	Judy Biggert	R +1
IL-14	Obama +11	Rep +6	Randy Hultgren	R +1
IL-16	Obama +7	Rep +34	Don Manzullo	R +2
IL-17	Obama +15	Rep +10	Bobby Schilling	D +3
MN-8	Obama +8	Rep +1	Chip Cravaack	D +3
NV-3	Obama +12	Rep +1	Joe Heck	D +2
NH-1	Obama +6	Rep +11	Frank Guinta	Even
NH-2	Obama +13	Rep +1	Charlie Bass	D +3
NJ-3	Obama +5	Rep +3	Jon Runyan	R +1
NJ-7	Obama +1	Rep +18	Leonard Lance	R +3
NY-25	Obama +13	Rep +0	Ann Marie Buerkle	D +3
OH-6	McCain +2	Rep +5	Bill Johnson	R +2
PA-7	Obama +13	Rep +11	Pat Meehan	D +3
PA-8	Obama +9	Rep + 8	Mike Fitzpatrick	D +2
PA-11	Obama +15	Rep +10	Lou Barletta	D +4
WA-8	Obama +15	Rep +6	Dave Reichert	D +3
WI-7	Obama +13	Rep +8	Sean Duffy	D +3

# Battleground Districts: Tier 2 – 30 less competitive

District	2008 Presidential vote margin	2010 Congressional vote margin	Representative	Cook PVI
AR-1	McCain +21	Rep +9	Rick Crawford	R +8
AZ-5	McCain +5	Rep +9	David Schweikert	R +5
CA-44	Obama +1	Rep +12	Ken Calvert	R +6
CA-45	Obama +5	Rep +10	Mary Bono Mack	R +3
CO-4	McCain +1	Rep +12	Cory Gardner	R +6
FL-10	Obama +5	Rep +32	C.W. Bill Young	R +1
FL-16	McCain +5	Rep +34	Tom Rooney	R +5
IN-8	McCain +4	Rep +20	Larry Bucshon	R +7
IN-9	McCain +1	Rep +10	Todd Young	R +6
MI-1	Obama +2	Rep +11	Dan Benishek	R +3
MI-7	Obama +5	Rep +5	Tim Walberg	R +1
MI-11	Obama +9	Rep +20	Thad McCotter	Even
MN-3	Obama +6	Rep +22	Erik Paulsen	Even
NE-2	Obama +1	Rep +23	Lee Terry	R +6
NY-19	Obama +3	Rep +6	Nan Hayworth	R +3
NY-20	Obama +3	Rep +10	Chris Gibson	R +2
NY-24	Obama +3	Rep +6	Richard Hanna	R +2
NC-2	Obama +5	Rep +2	Renee Ellmers	R +2
OH-1	Obama +11	Rep +7	Steve Chabot	D +1
OH-12	Obama +7	Rep +16	Patrick Tiberi	D +1
OH-15	Obama +9	Rep +14	Steve Stivers	D +1
PA-3	McCain +0	Rep +11	Mike Kelly	R +3
PA-6	Obama +17	Rep +14	Jim Gerlach	D +4
PA-15	Obama +13	Rep +15	Charlie Dent	D +2
TX-23	Obama +3	Rep +5	Francisco Canseco	R +4
TX-27	Obama +7	Rep +1	Blake Farenthold	R +2
VA-2	Obama +2	Rep +10	Scott Rigell	R +5
WA-3	Obama +6	Rep +6	Jaime Herrera	Even
WI-8	Obama +9	Rep +10	Reid Ribble	R +2
WV-1	McCain +15	Rep +0	David McKinley	R +9

# Battleground Districts: by type of district

## Rural

### Upscale Rural

New Hampshire-2  
New York-20

### Downscale Rural

Arkansas-1  
Michigan-1  
Minnesota-8  
Ohio-6  
Wisconsin-7

## Exurban

### Upscale Exurban

Michigan-7

### Downscale Exurban

Arizona-1  
Colorado-3  
Indiana-8  
Indiana-9  
New York-24  
North Carolina-2  
Pennsylvania-3  
Wisconsin-8  
West Virginia-1

## Suburban

### Upscale Suburban

California-3  
California-24  
California-26  
California-44  
Florida-22  
Florida-25  
Illinois-6  
Illinois-8  
Illinois-10  
Illinois-13  
Michigan-11  
Minnesota-3  
Nevada-3  
New Hampshire-1  
New Jersey-3  
New Jersey-7  
New York-19  
Ohio-12  
Pennsylvania-6  
Pennsylvania-7  
Pennsylvania-8  
Pennsylvania-15  
Washington-8  
West Virginia-1

## Suburban

### Downscale Suburban

California-45  
Florida-10  
Florida-16  
Pennsylvania-11

## Metro

### Upscale Metro

Arizona-5  
California-50  
Colorado-4  
Florida-8  
Illinois-11  
Illinois-14  
Illinois-16  
New York-25  
Washington-3

### Downscale Metro

Illinois-17  
Ohio-1  
Texas-23  
Texas-27

## Urban

### Upscale Urban

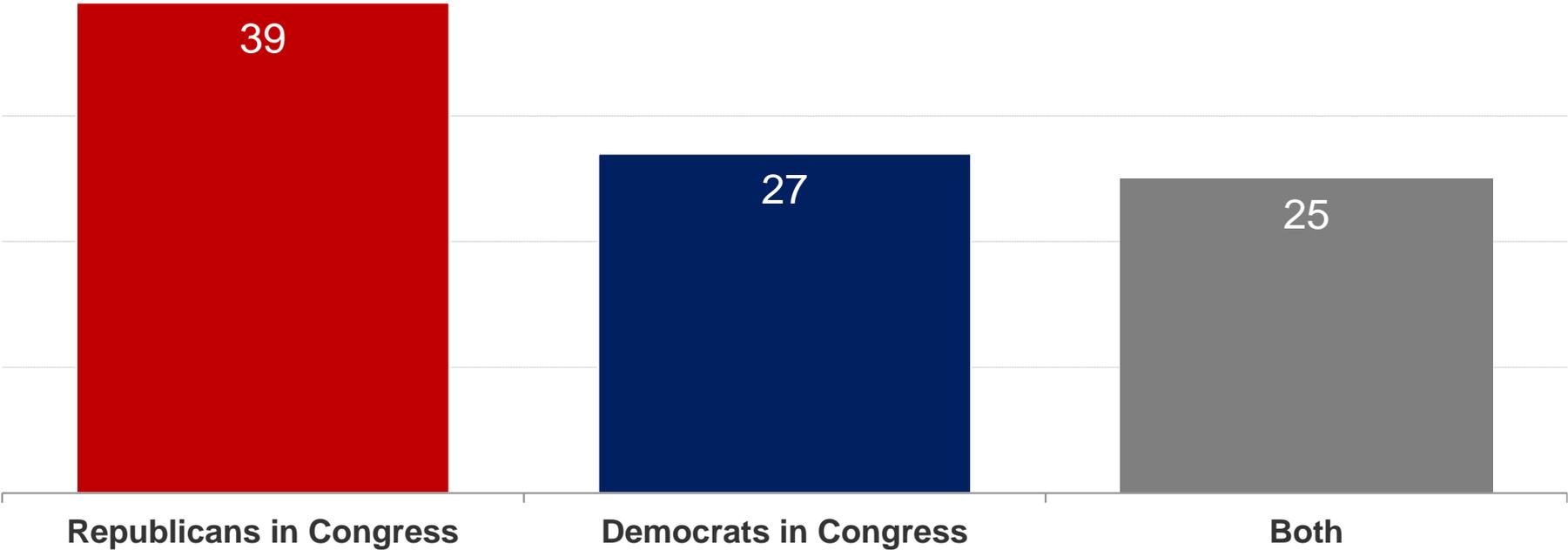
Nebraska-2  
Ohio-15  
Virginia-2

# **Republican incumbents deeply out of touch on big budget debates**

# Voters in these Republican districts blame Republicans for Super-Committee failure

*As you may know, a bipartisan Congressional supercommittee was established in August to come up with a plan to reduce the federal budget deficit by 1.5 trillion dollars over the next ten years, but they just announced they could not reach an agreement. In your opinion, who do you think is mainly at fault for not reaching an agreement, the Democrats in Congress or the Republicans in Congress?*

+12

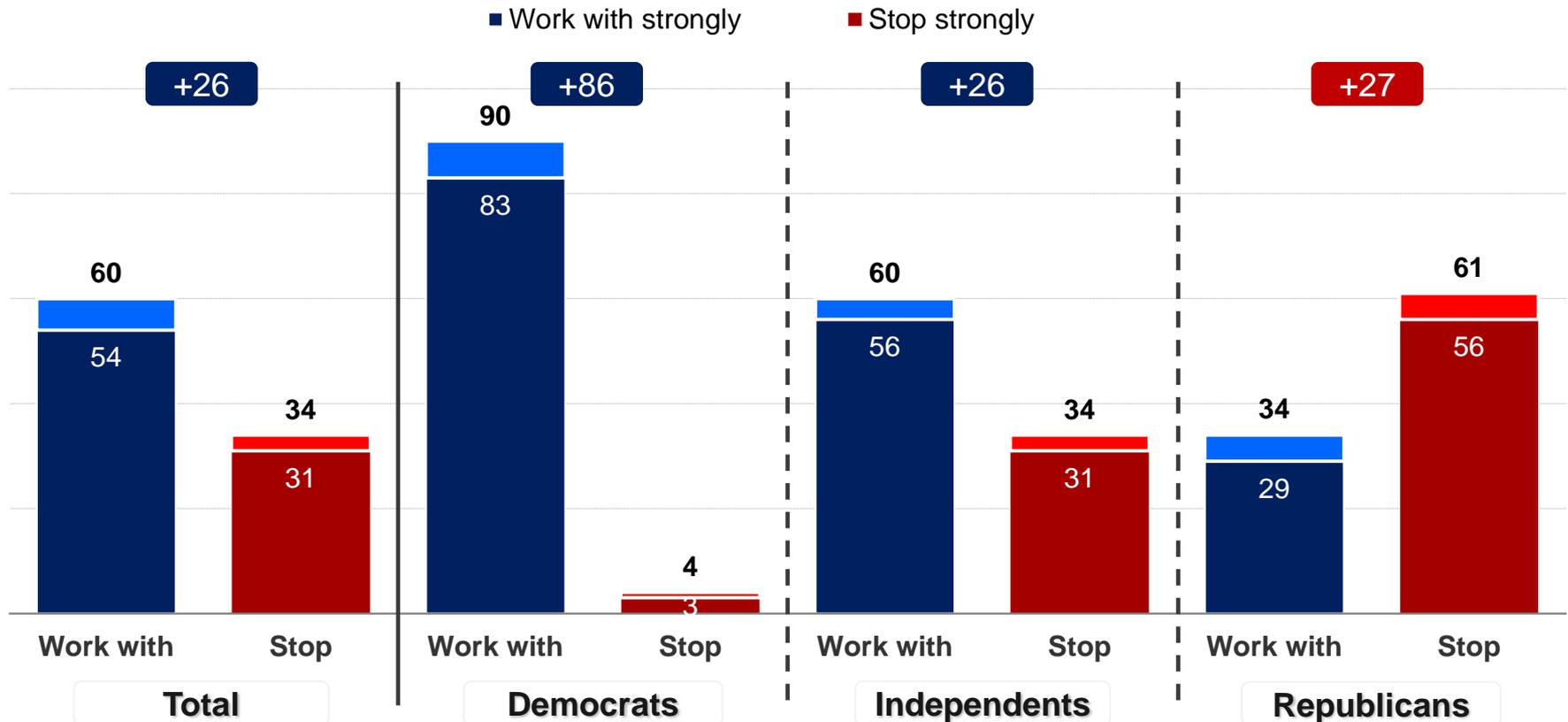


# Out of touch: 60% want member to cooperate with Obama, not try to stop his agenda

Now I'm 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.

**STATEMENT 1:** I want (HOUSE INCUMBENT) to try and work with President Obama to address our country's problems.

**STATEMENT 2:** I want (HOUSE INCUMBENT) to try to stop President Obama from advancing his agenda for the country.



# Out of touch on taxes: almost 60% want member to vote higher taxes on wealthiest

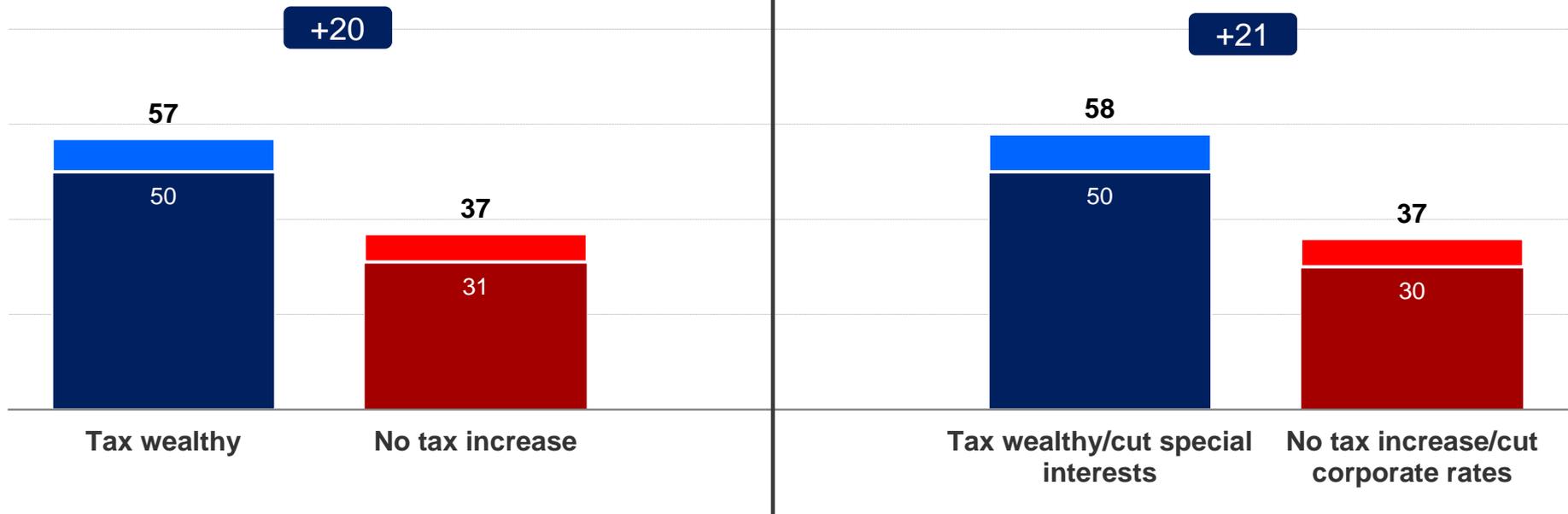
Now I'm going to read you some pairs of statements. After I read each pair, please tell me whether the FIRST statement or the SECOND statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right.

**STATEMENT 1:** I want to vote for a Member of Congress who will ask the wealthiest to pay a greater share of taxes to address our problems and the deficit.

**STATEMENT 2:** I agree with (HOUSE INCUMBENT) who says (HE/SHE) won't vote for any tax increase.

**STATEMENT 1:** I want to vote for a Member of Congress who will ask the wealthiest to pay a greater share of taxes and cut special interest spending to address our problems and the deficit.

**STATEMENT 2:** I agree with (HOUSE INCUMBENT) who says (HE/SHE) won't vote for any tax increase and wants to reform and cut corporate tax rates.



# Out of touch on deficits and Bush tax cuts: raise taxes on wealthiest and protect entitlements

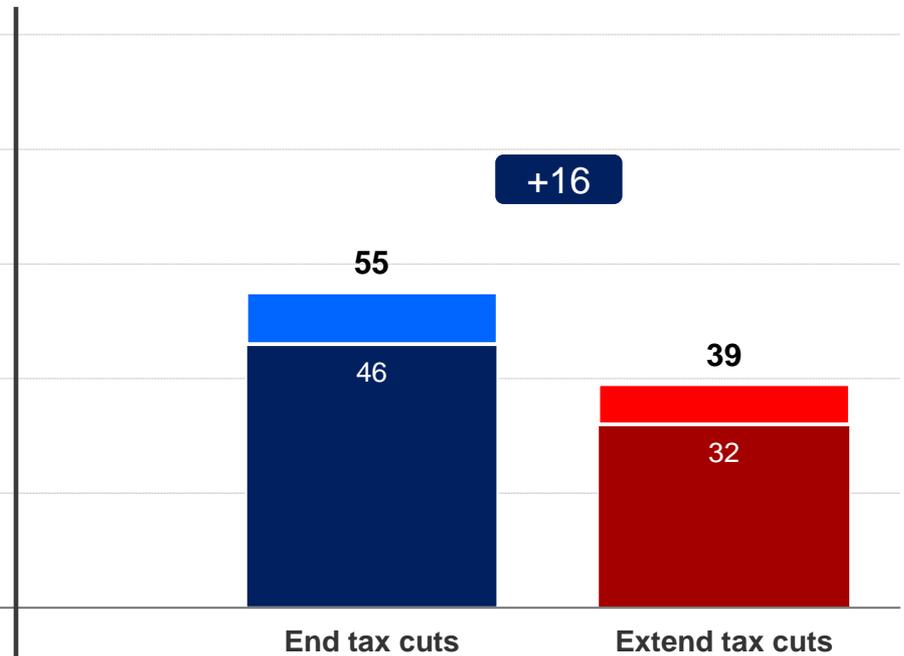
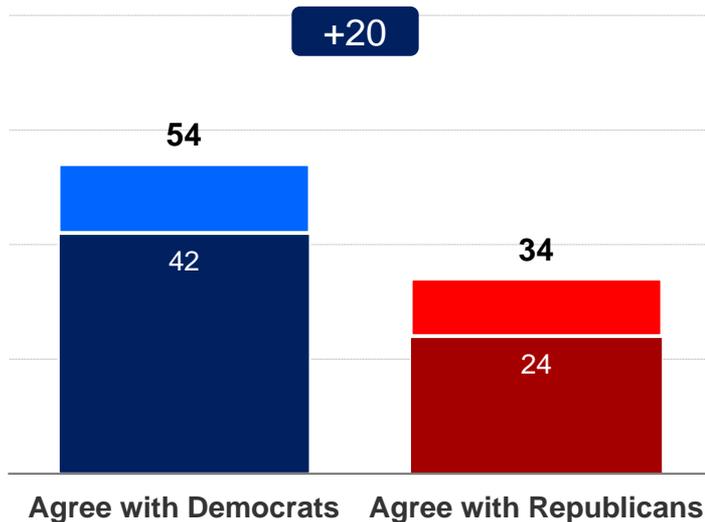
Now I'm going to read you some pairs of statements. After I read each pair, please tell me whether the **FIRST** statement or the **SECOND** statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right.

**STATEMENT 1:** In dealing with the deficit, I agree more with the Democrats who want to raise taxes on the wealthiest and end corporate subsidies, and oppose cuts in Social Security and Medicare.

**STATEMENT 2:** In dealing with the deficit, I agree more with the Republicans who oppose any increase in taxes and want to reduce spending on Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid by making overdue reforms.

**STATEMENT 1:** The Bush tax cuts for those earning over 250,000 dollars should be ended, while maintaining the tax cuts for the middle class.

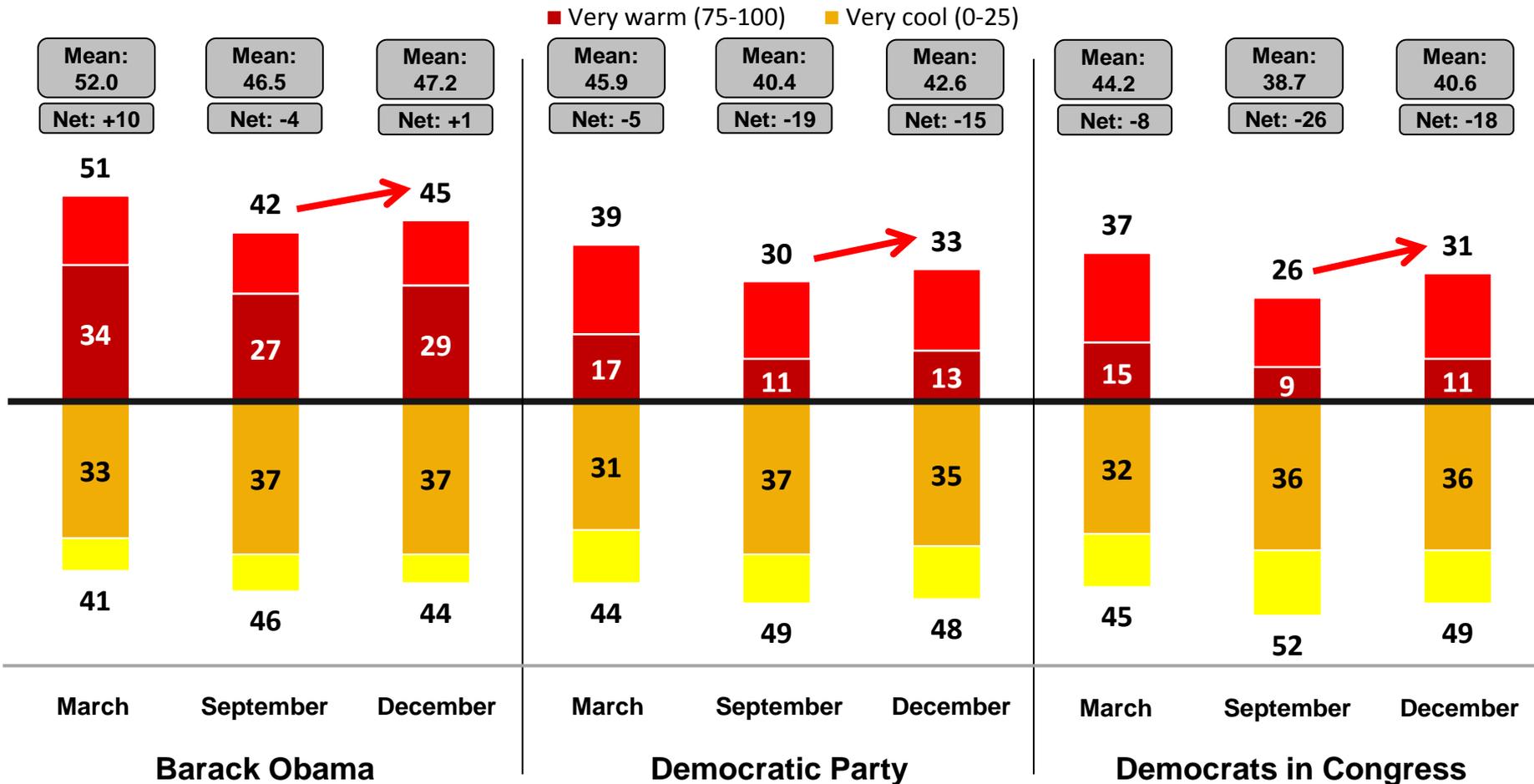
**STATEMENT 2:** The Bush tax cuts should be extended permanently so we raise nobody's taxes.



**Obama and Democrats gain in  
battleground, while Republicans tarnished**

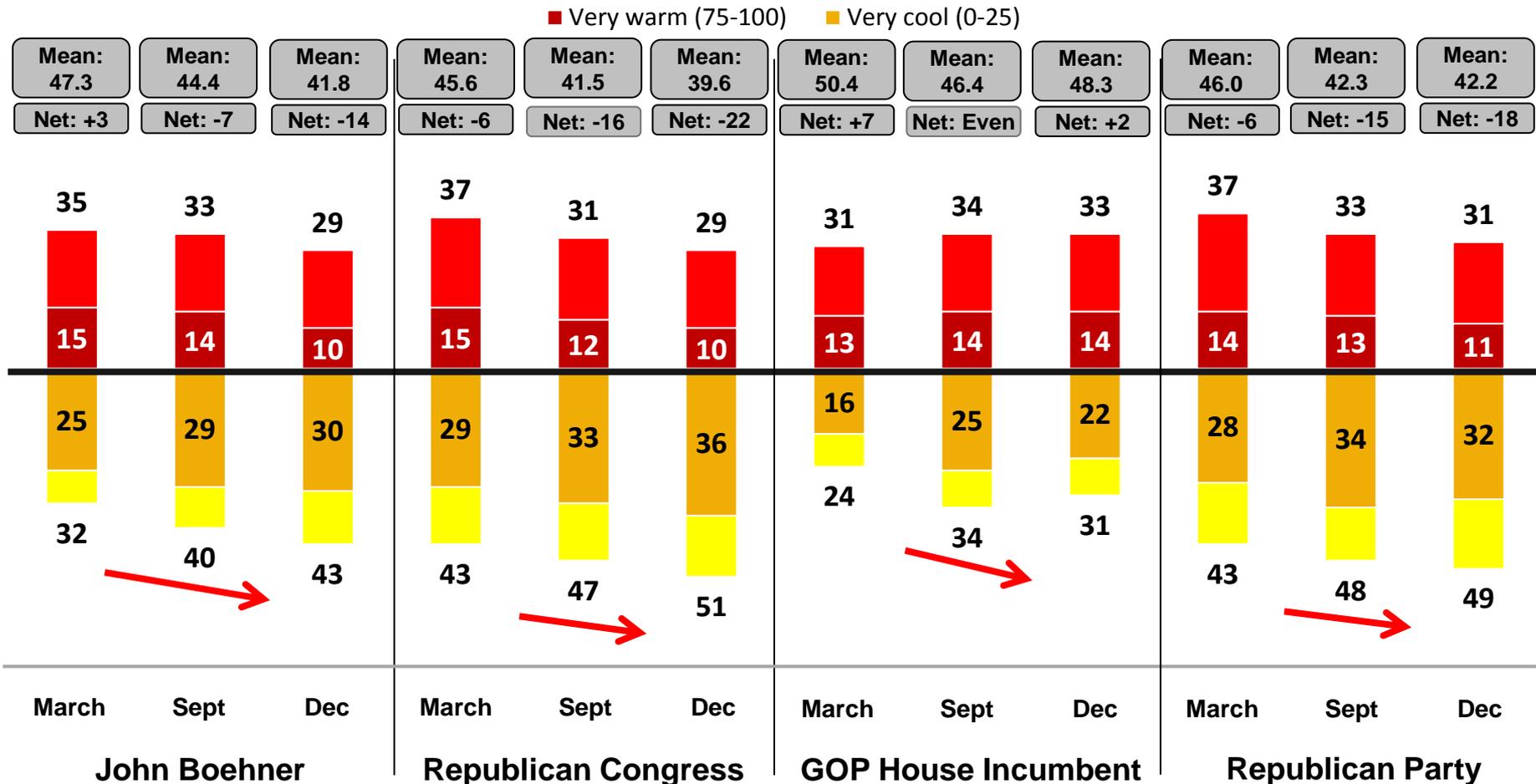
# Democrats' image improved since September...

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. You can use any number from zero to one hundred, the higher the number the more favorable your feelings are toward that person or organization. If you have no opinion or never heard of that person or organization, please say so.



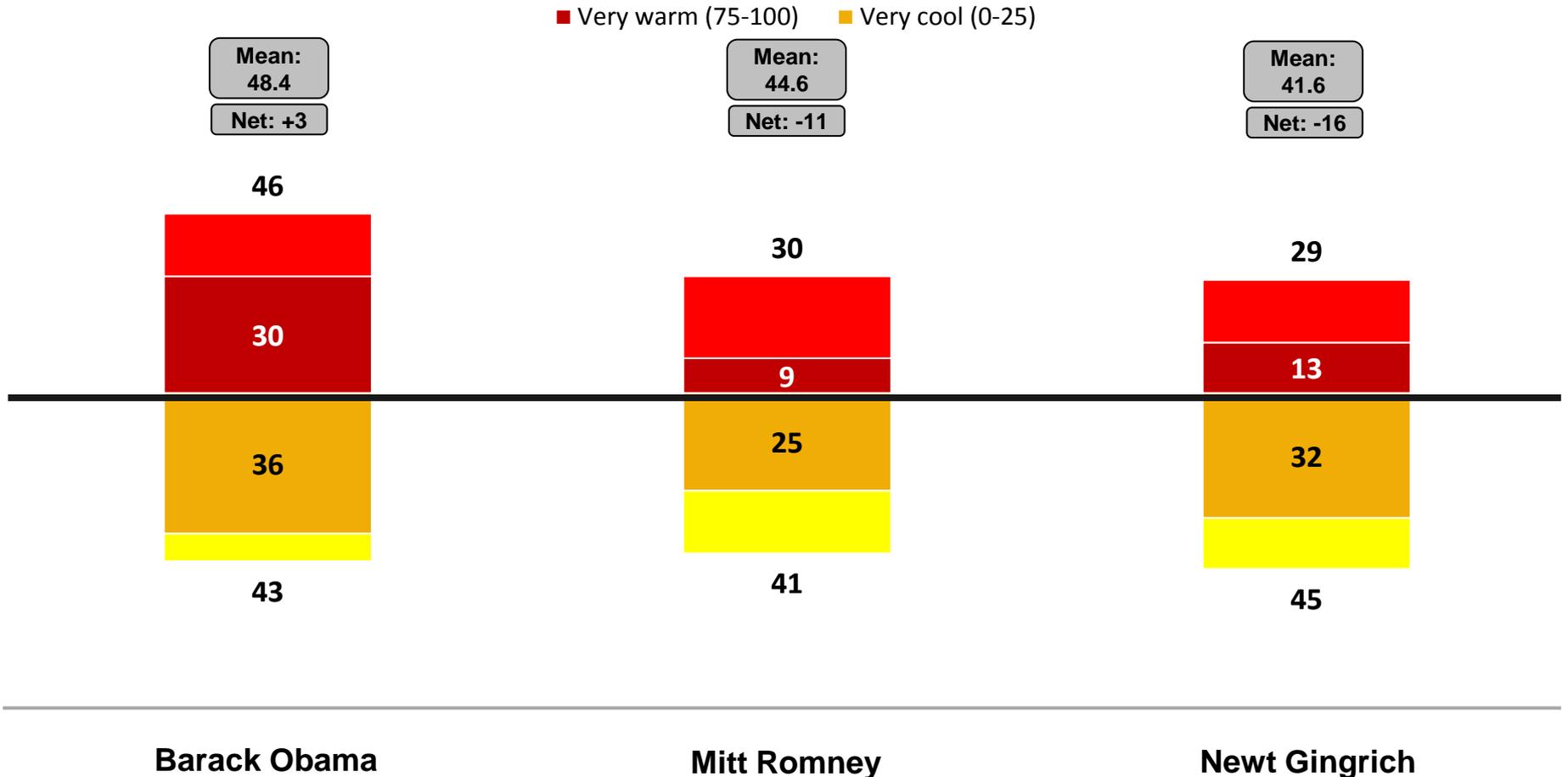
# ...While GOP continue to fall well after debt limit battle

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. You can use any number from zero to one hundred, the higher the number the more favorable your feelings are toward that person or organization. If you have no opinion or never heard of that person or organization, please say so.



# Obama much more favorable than Romney and Gingrich in these Republican districts

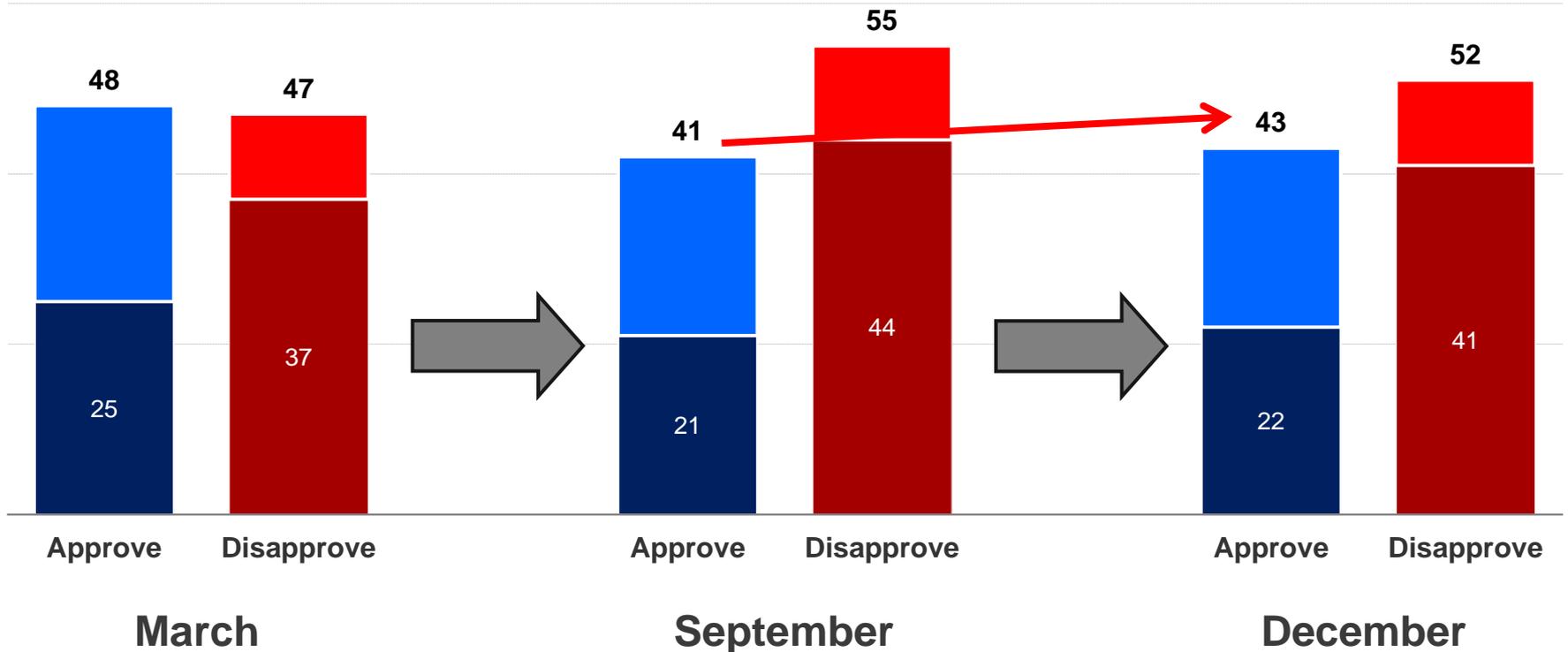
Now, I'd like to rate your feelings toward some people and organizations, with one hundred meaning a VERY WARM, FAVORABLE feeling; zero meaning a VERY COLD, UNFAVORABLE feeling; and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold. You can use any number from zero to one hundred, the higher the number the more favorable your feelings are toward that person or organization. If you have no opinion or never heard of that person or organization, please say so.



# Obama's approval up a little since September

Do you approve or disapprove of the job being done by Barack Obama as president?

■ Strongly approve    ■ Strongly disapprove

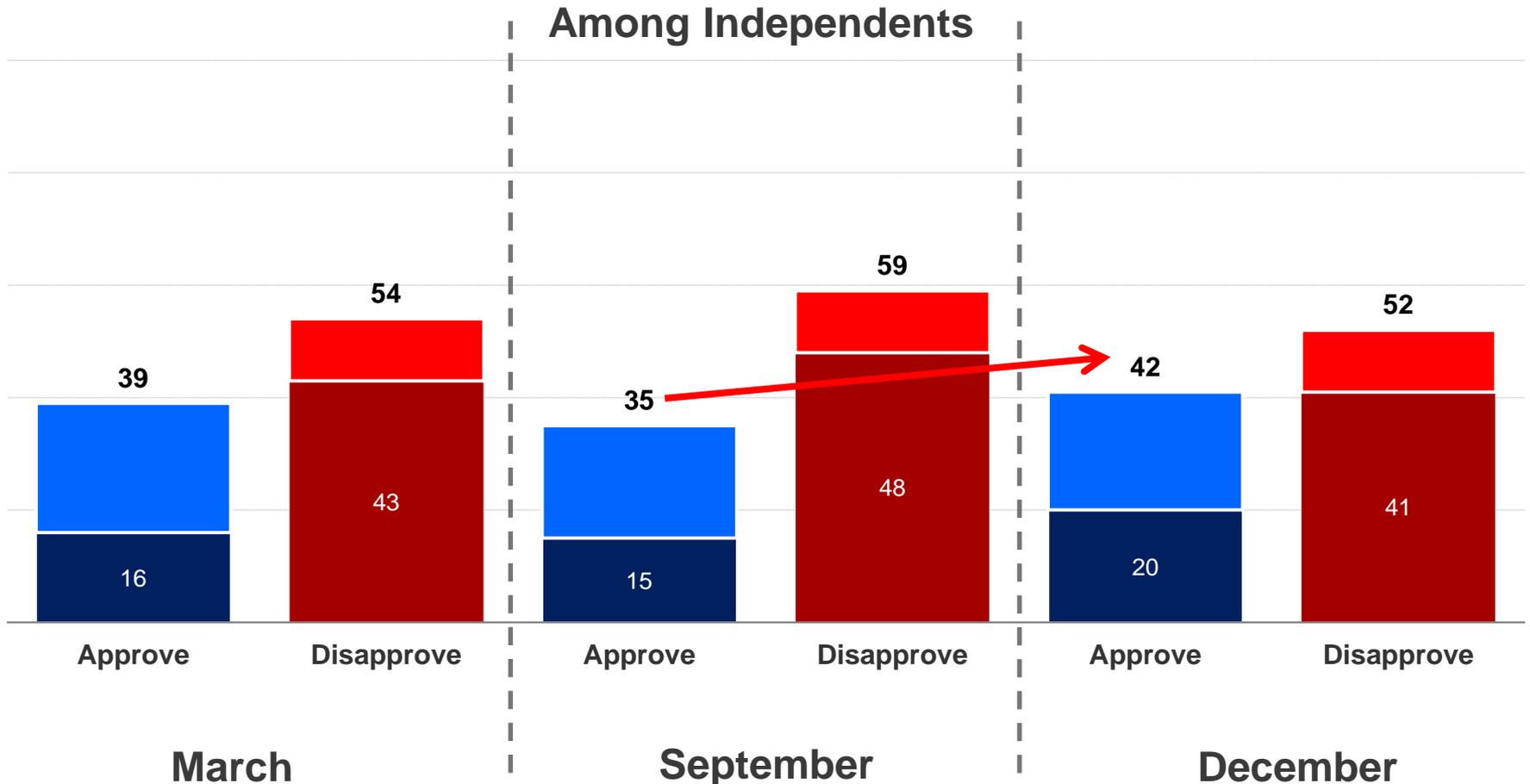


# Among independents, Obama doing much better

Do you approve or disapprove of the job being done by Barack Obama as president?

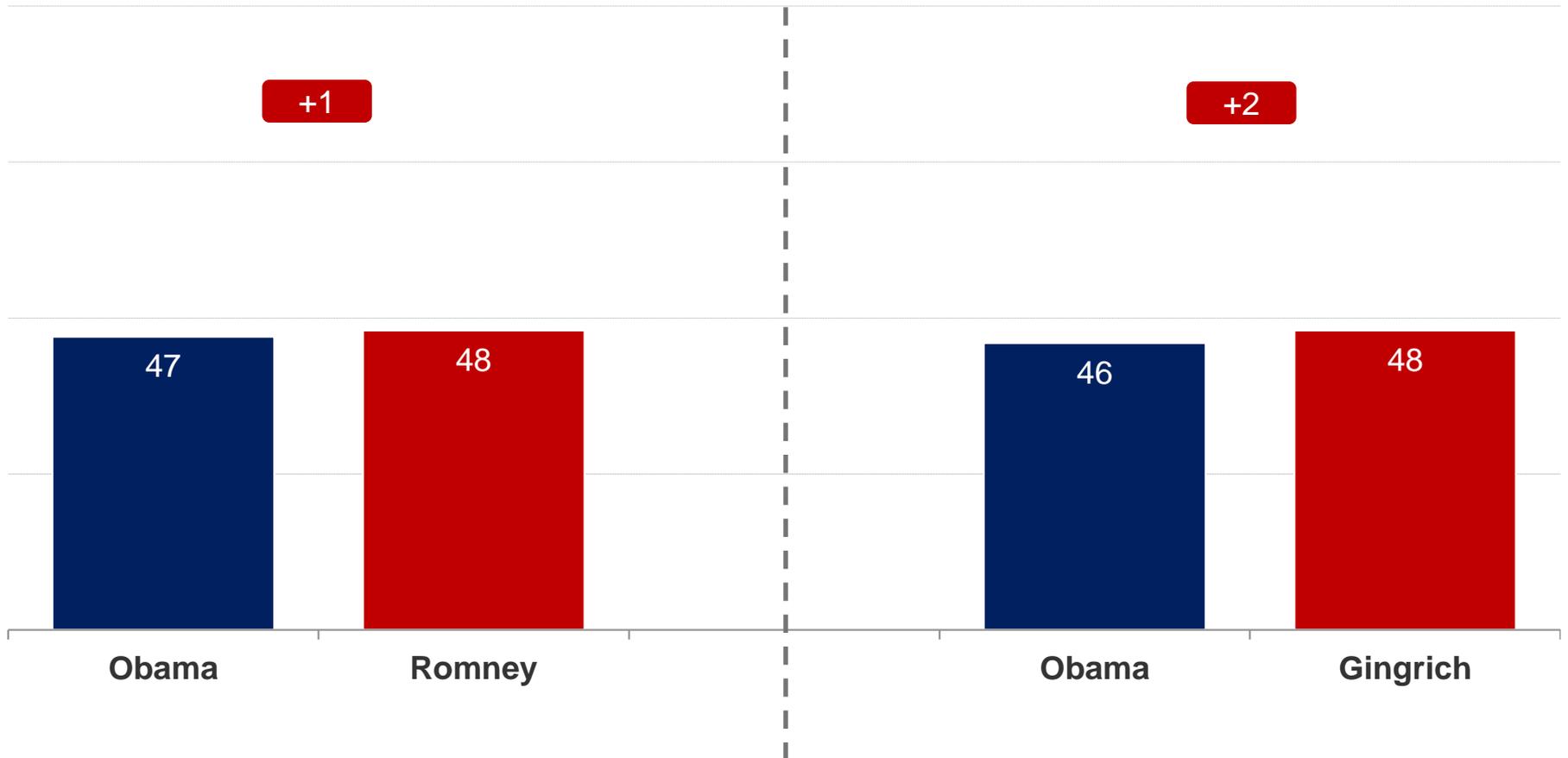
■ Strongly approve   ■ Strongly disapprove

## Among Independents



# Obama in statistical tie with Romney and Gingrich

*I know it's a long way off, but thinking about the presidential election in 2012, if the election for president were held today and the candidates were Democrat Barack Obama and Republican Mitt Romney/Newt Gingrich, for whom would you vote?*

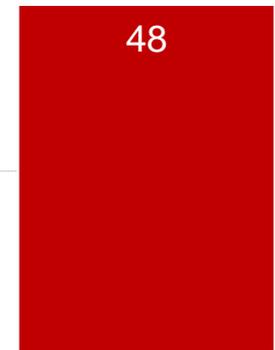
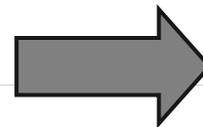


# Gaining significant ground against Romney since September

*I know it's a long way off, but thinking about the presidential election in 2012, if the election for president were held today and the candidates were Democrat Barack Obama and Republican Mitt Romney, for whom would you vote?*

+6

+1



Obama

Romney

Obama

Romney

September

December

# **The very weak Republican incumbents**

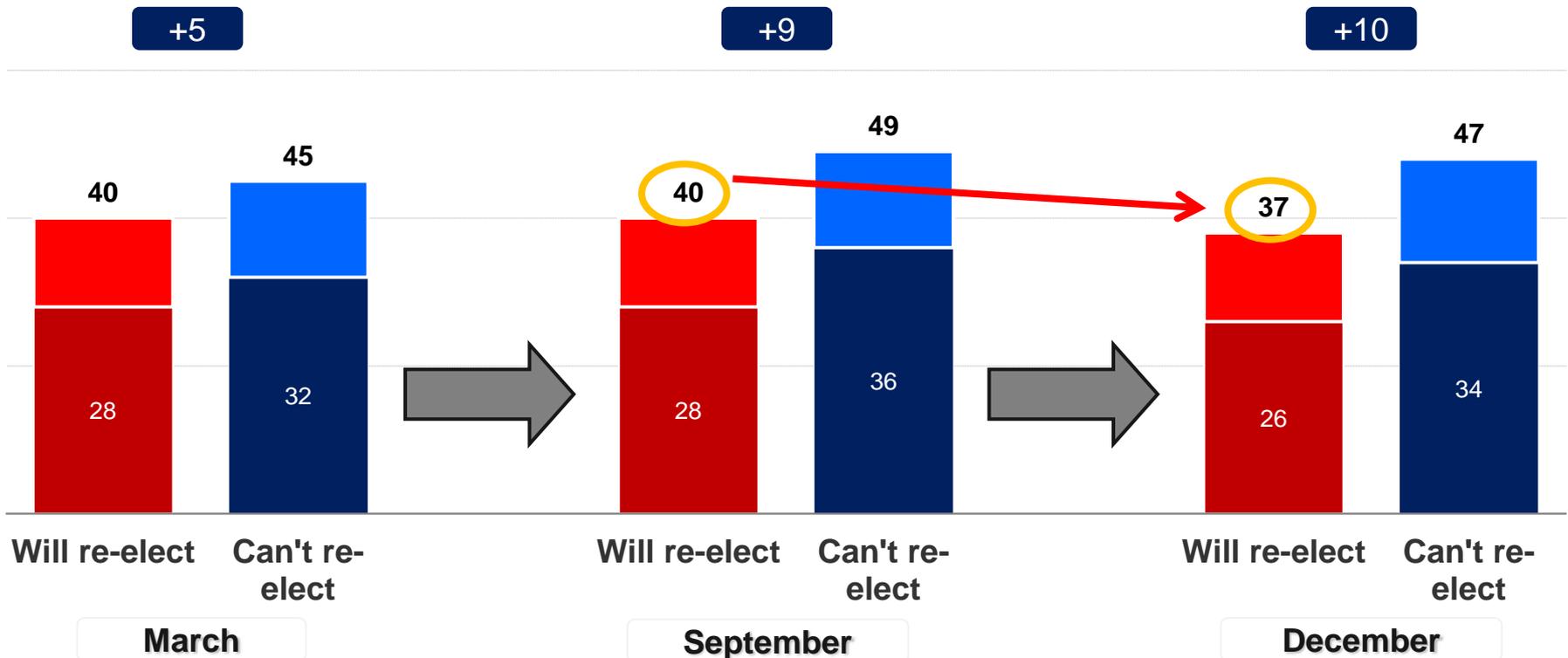
# “Will vote to re-elect named incumbent” at only 37%

Now I'm 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.

**STATEMENT 1:** Next year, I CAN'T vote to reelect (HOUSE INCUMBENT) because we need new people that will fix Washington and get things done.

**STATEMENT 2:** Next year, I WILL vote to reelect (HOUSE INCUMBENT) because (HE/SHE) is doing a good job and addressing issues that are important to us.

■ Will re-elect strongly    ■ Can't re-elect strongly

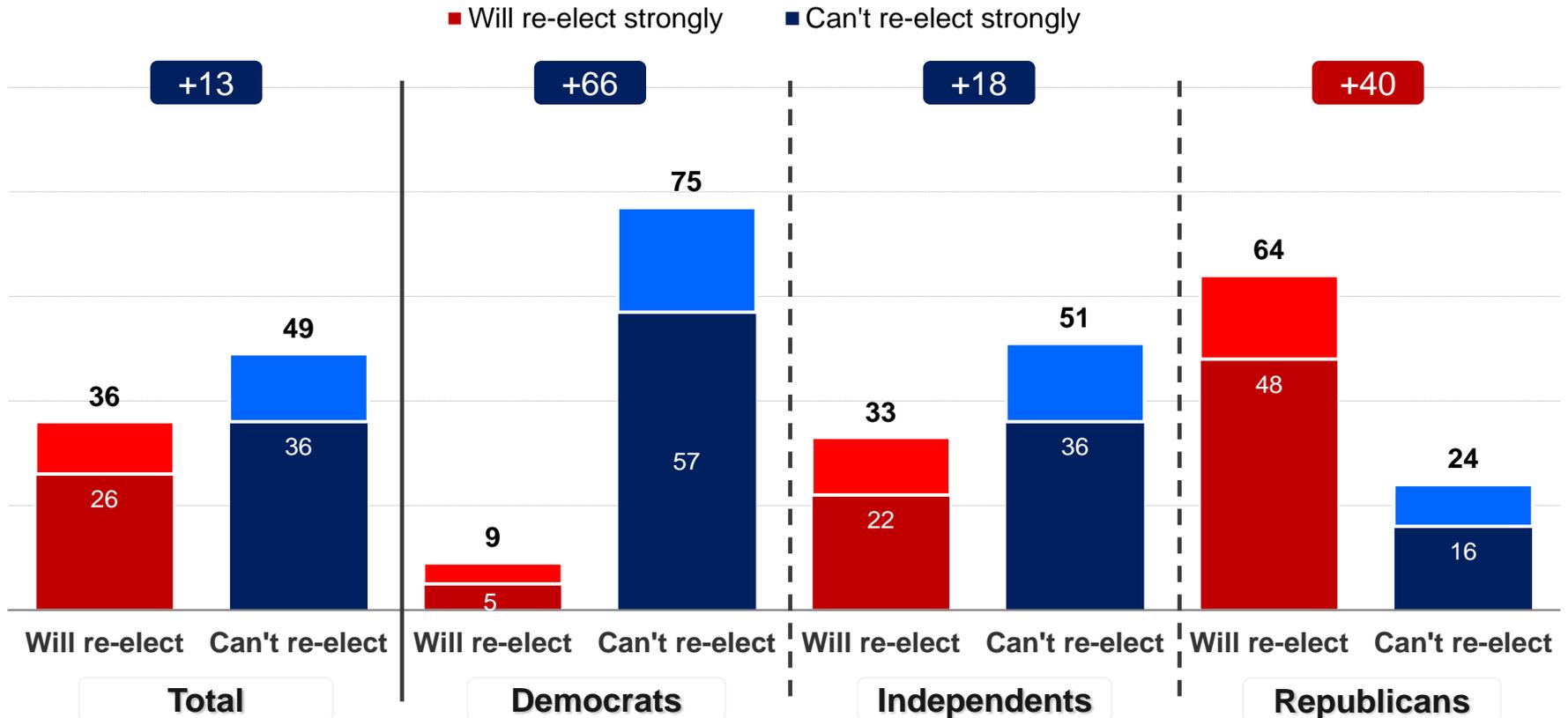


# Majority of independents say can't vote to re-elect

Now I'm 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.

**STATEMENT 1:** Next year, I CAN'T vote to reelect (HOUSE INCUMBENT) because we need new people that will fix Washington and get things done.

**STATEMENT 2:** Next year, I WILL vote to reelect (HOUSE INCUMBENT) because (HE/SHE) is doing a good job and addressing issues that are important to us.



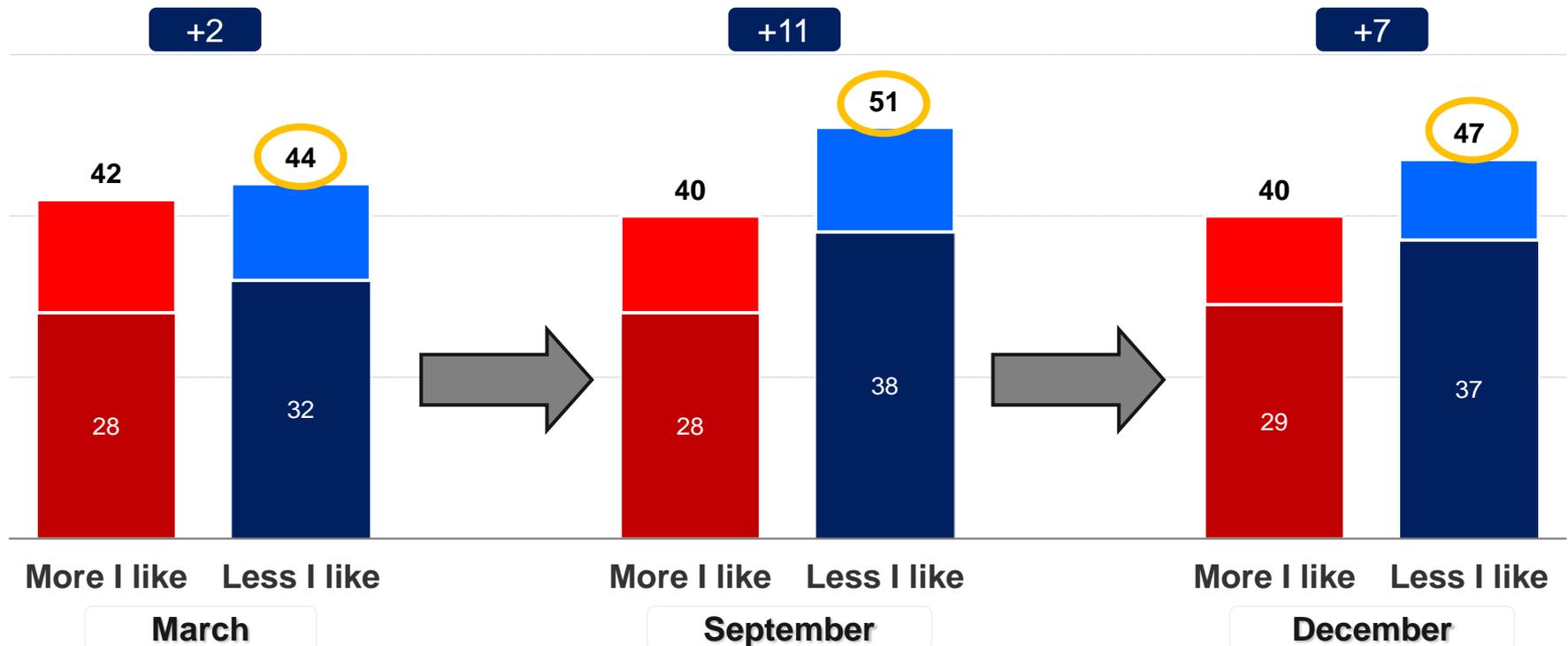
# Incumbent – no warming but a little less negative

Now I'm 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.

**STATEMENT 1:** The more I hear from Republicans in Congress like (HOUSE INCUMBENT), the LESS I like.

**STATEMENT 2:** The more I hear from Republicans in Congress like (HOUSE INCUMBENT), the MORE I like.

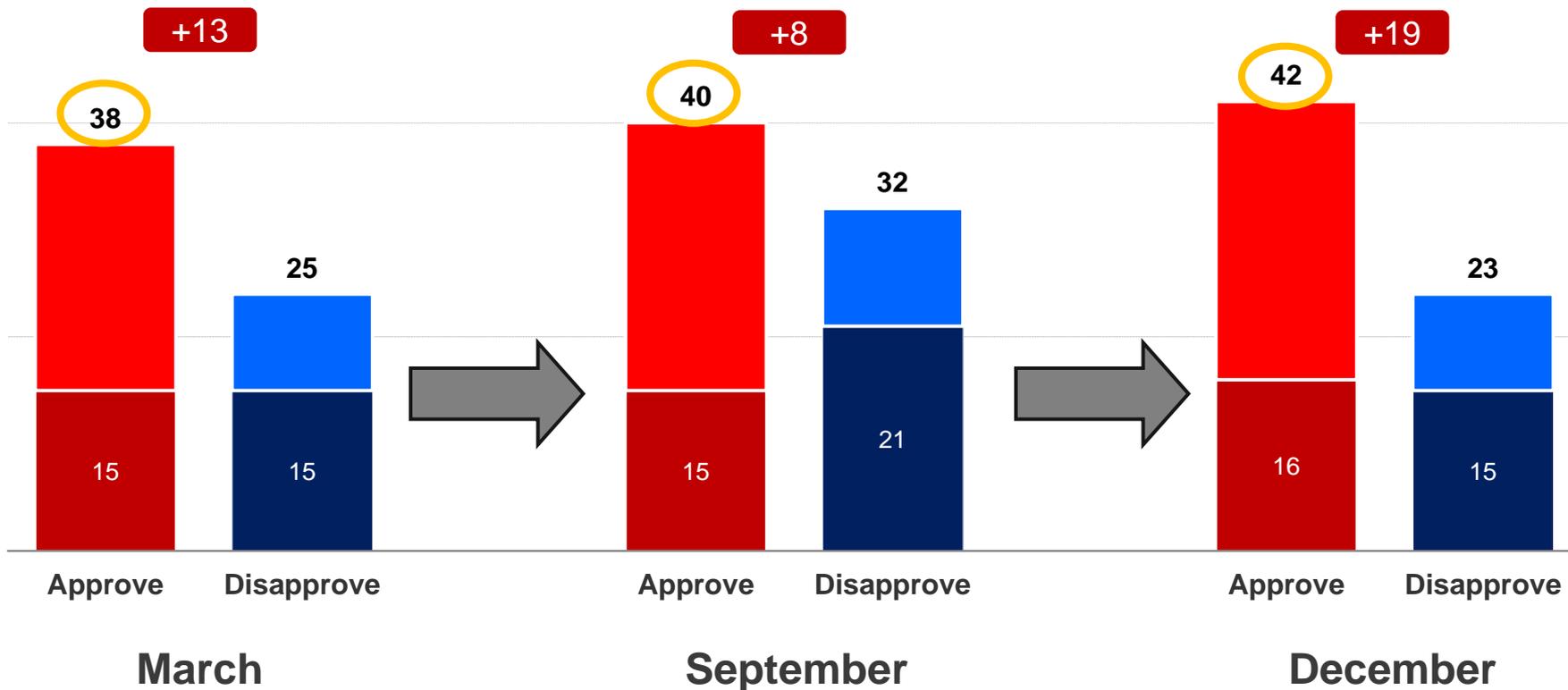
■ More I like strongly ■ Less I like strongly



# Approval up marginally but stuck in low 40s

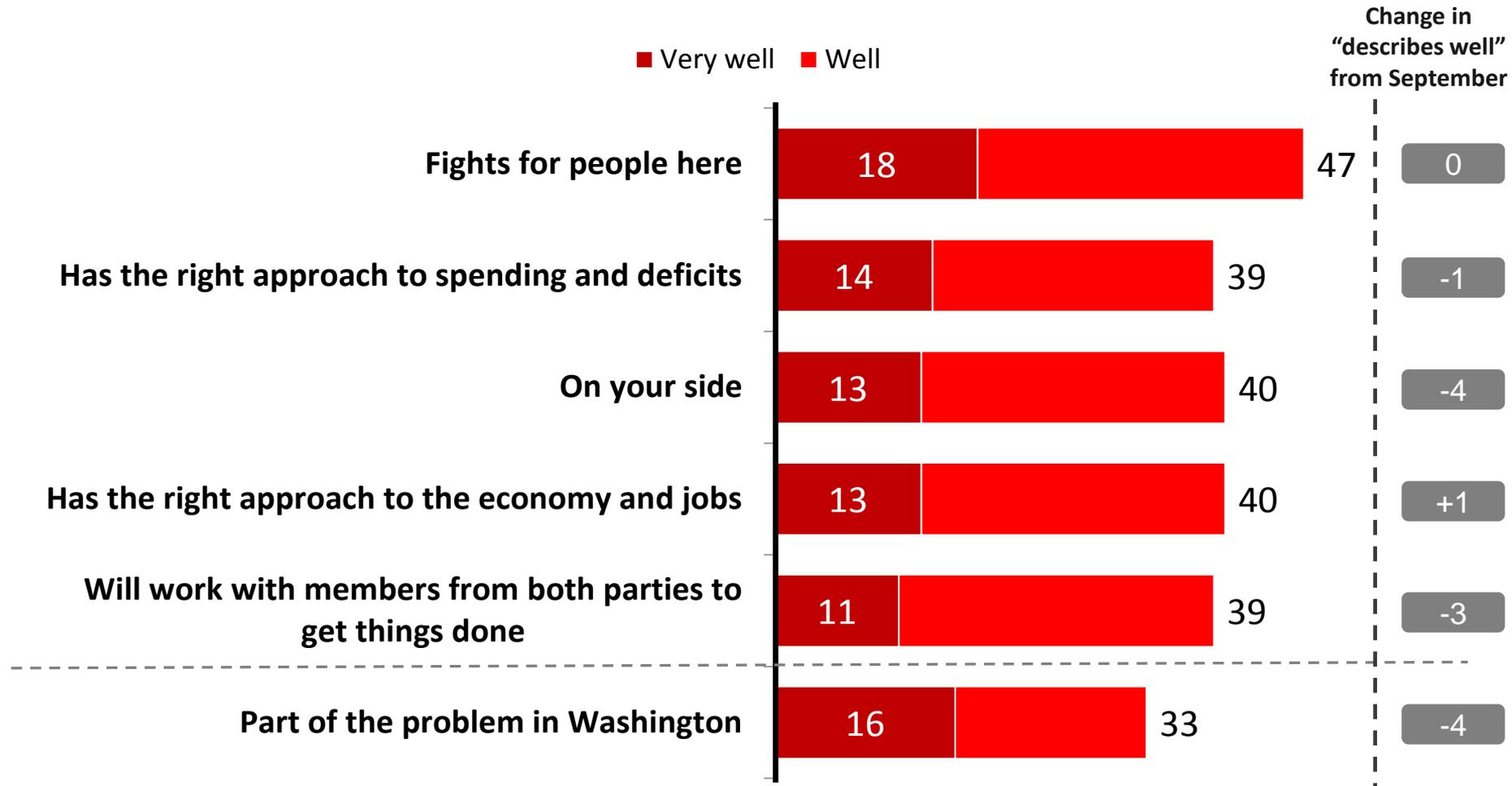
Do you approve or disapprove of the way (HOUSE INCUMBENT) is handling his/her job as a member of the U.S. Congress?

■ Strongly approve ■ Strongly disapprove



# House incumbents continue to have weak positive image in these districts

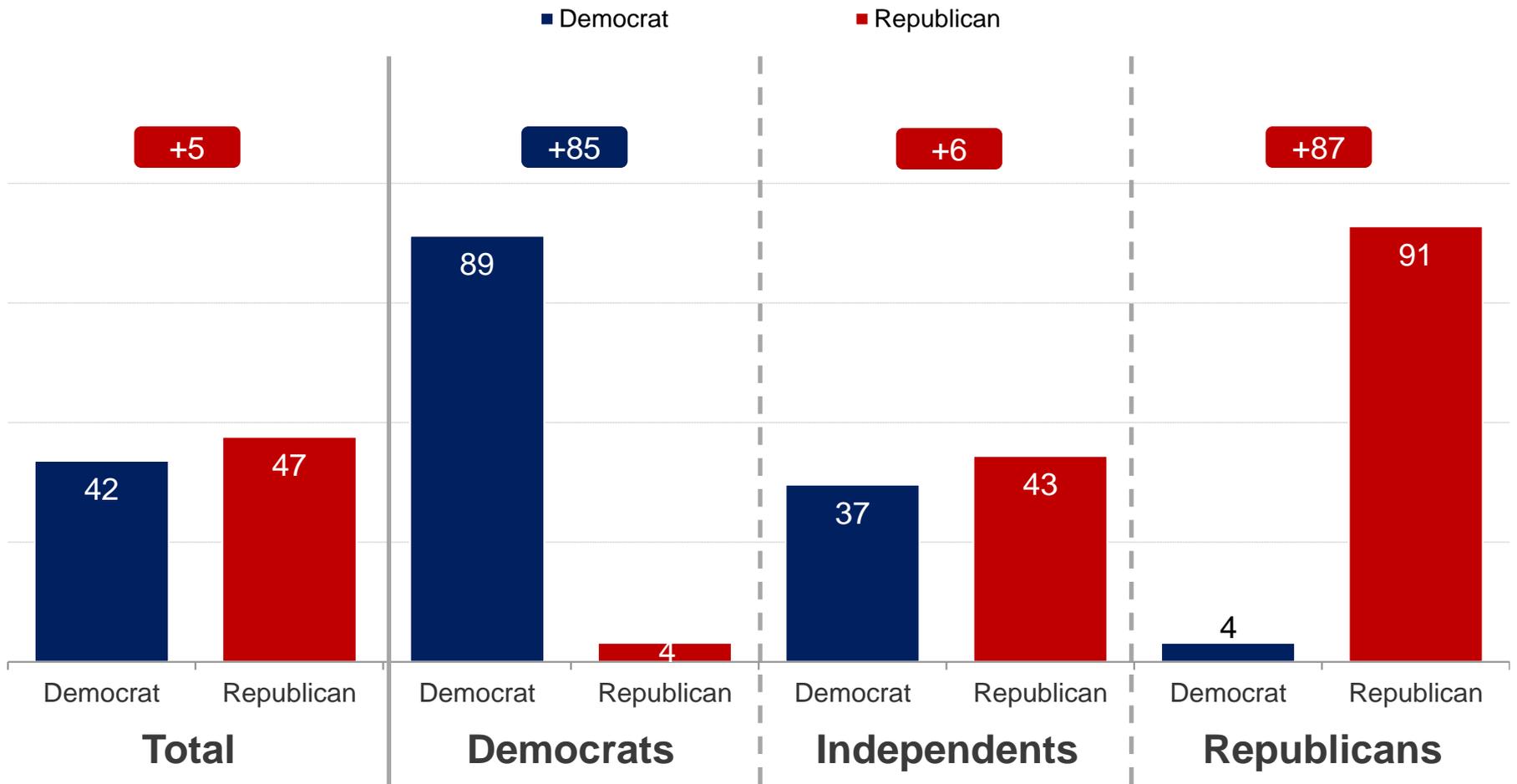
Now, I am going to read you a list of words and phrases which people use to describe political figures. For each word or phrase, please tell me whether it describes (HOUSE INCUMBENT) very well, well, not too well or not well at all.



**Republicans weakening in battleground and vulnerable to attack**

# Close in entire battleground – member below 50 percent and independents competitive

*I know it's a long way off, but thinking about the election for Congress in November 2012, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today, would you be voting for – the Democratic candidate or Republican (HOUSE INCUMBENT)?*



*\*Note: Incumbent names were inserted with party identification. Generic challengers were inserted as "The Democratic Candidate."*

# Big shift in the vote after hearing attacks from both sides – dead even with incumbent at 44 percent

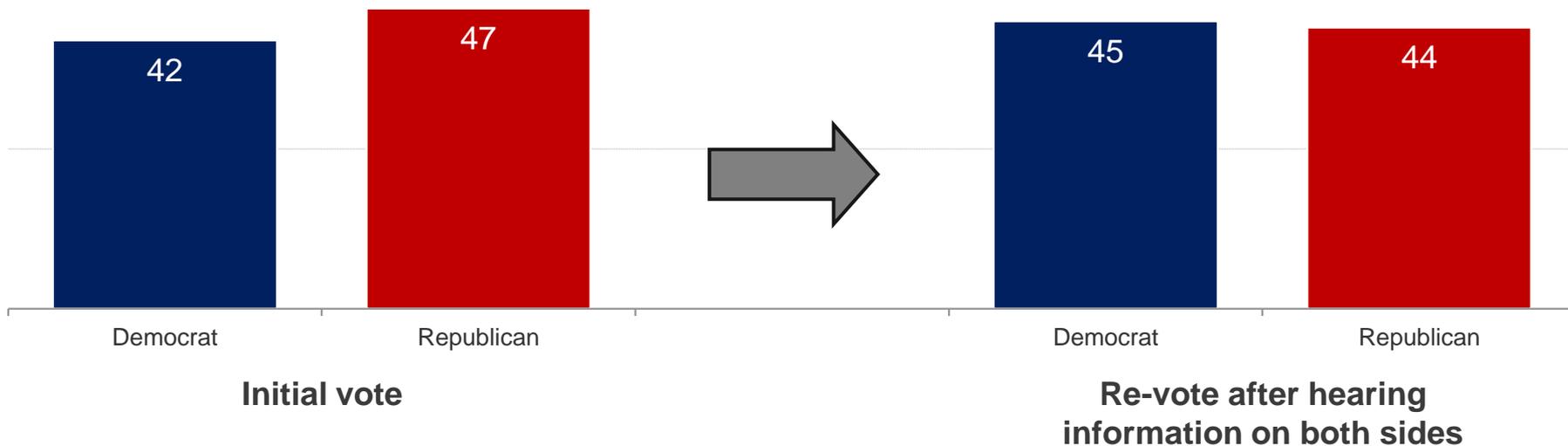
Now let me ask you again, I know it's a long way off, but thinking about the election for Congress in November 2012, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today, would you be voting for – the Democratic candidate or Republican (HOUSE INCUMBENT)?

■ Democrat

■ Republican

+5

+1

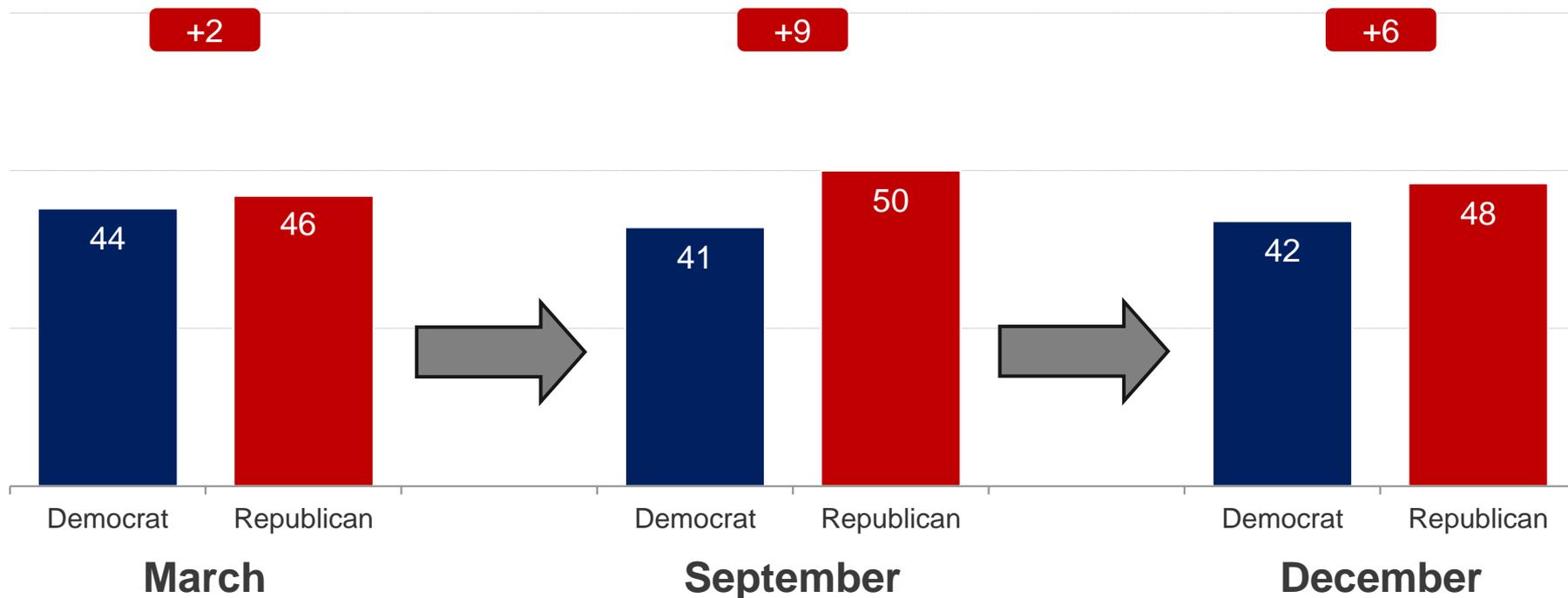


\*Note: Incumbent names were inserted with party identification. Generic challengers were inserted as "The Democratic Candidate."

# House members weaker in election and now below 50 percent

*I know it's a long way off, but thinking about the election for Congress in November 2012, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today, would you be voting for – the Democratic candidate or Republican (HOUSE INCUMBENT)?*

■ Democrat      ■ Republican

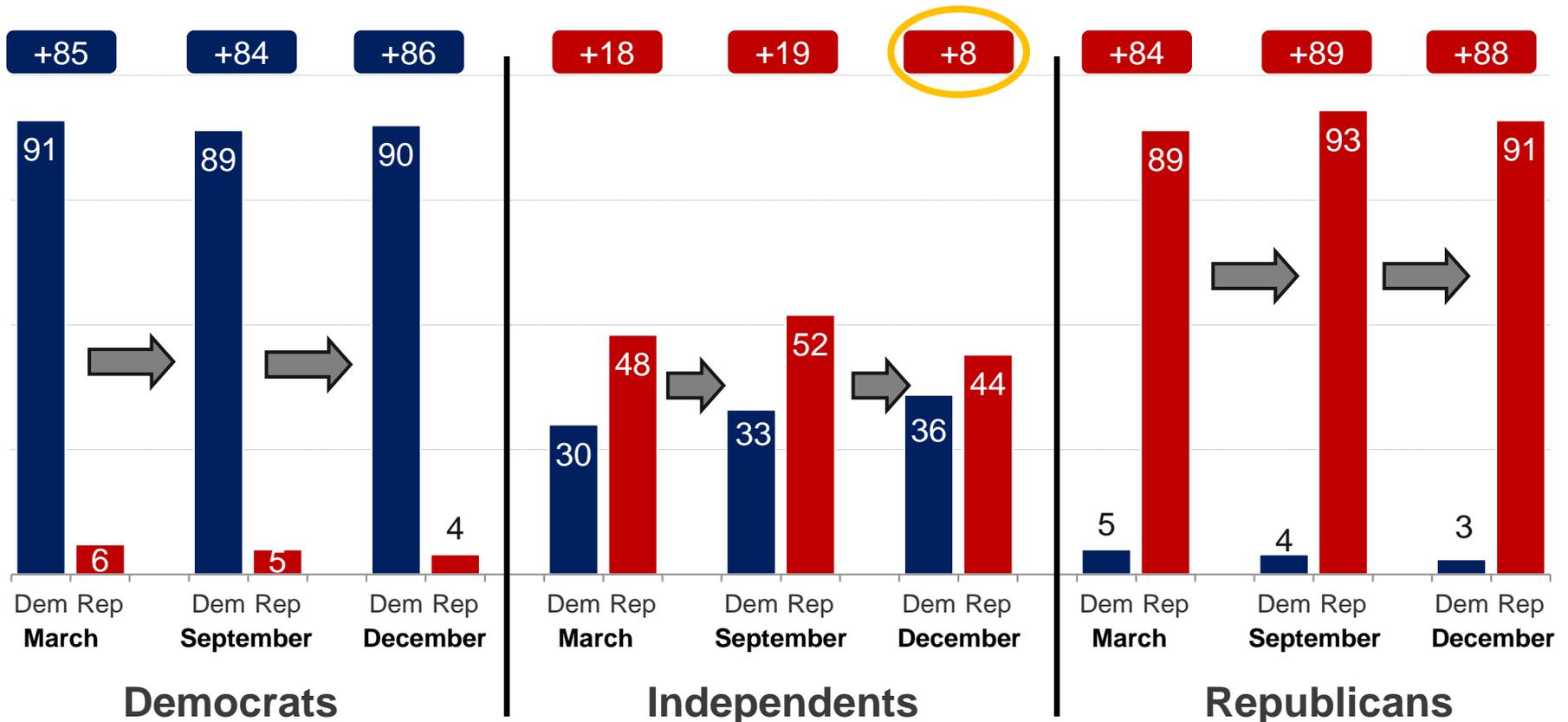


*\*Note: Incumbent names were inserted with party identification. Generic challengers were inserted as "The Democratic Candidate."*

# Republican member loses big among independents

*I know it's a long way off, but thinking about the election for Congress in November 2012, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today, would you be voting for – the Democratic candidate or Republican (HOUSE INCUMBENT)?*

■ Democrat ■ Republican

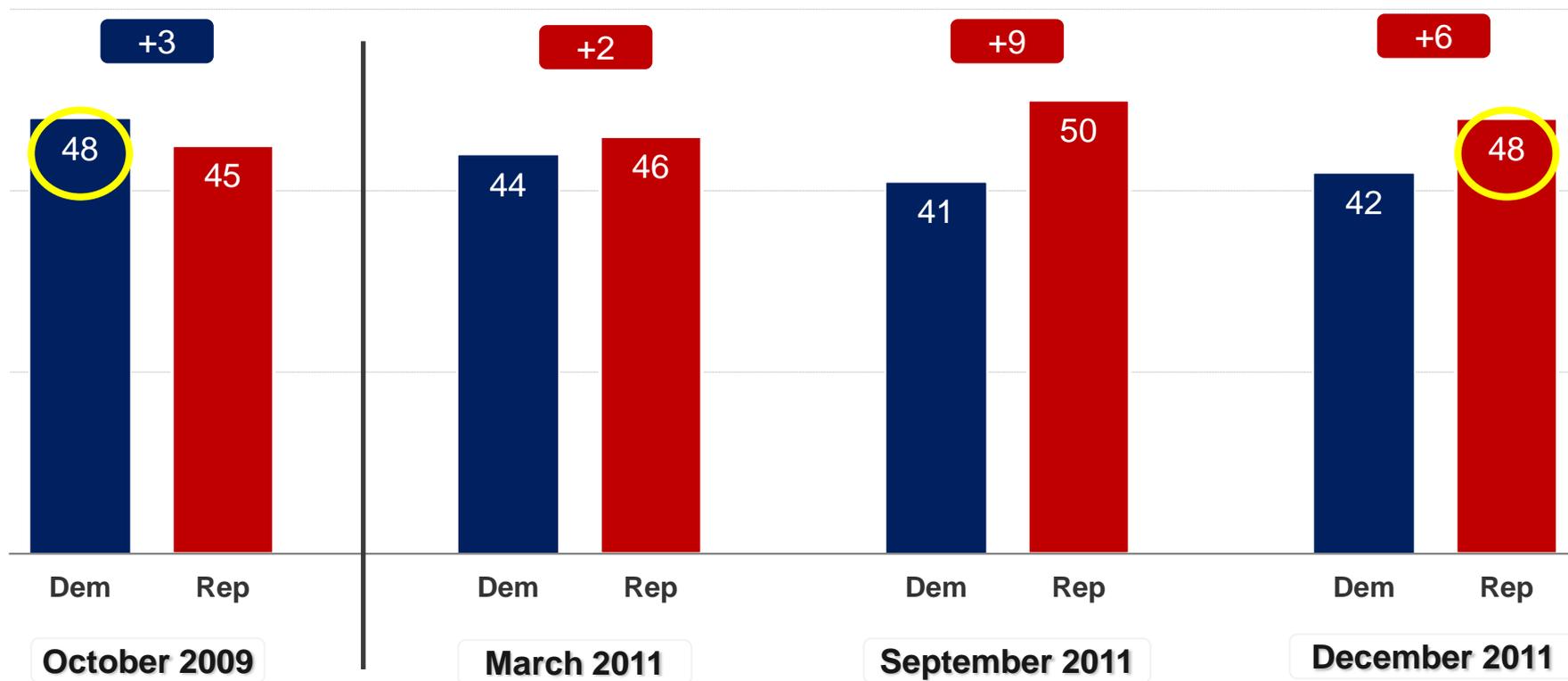


\*Note: Incumbent names were inserted with party identification. Generic challengers were inserted as "The Democratic Candidate."

# Republicans are exactly where Democrats stood in 2010 campaign when they lost 63 seats

*I know it's a long way off, but thinking about the election for Congress in November 2012, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today, would you be voting for – the Democratic candidate or Republican (HOUSE INCUMBENT)?*

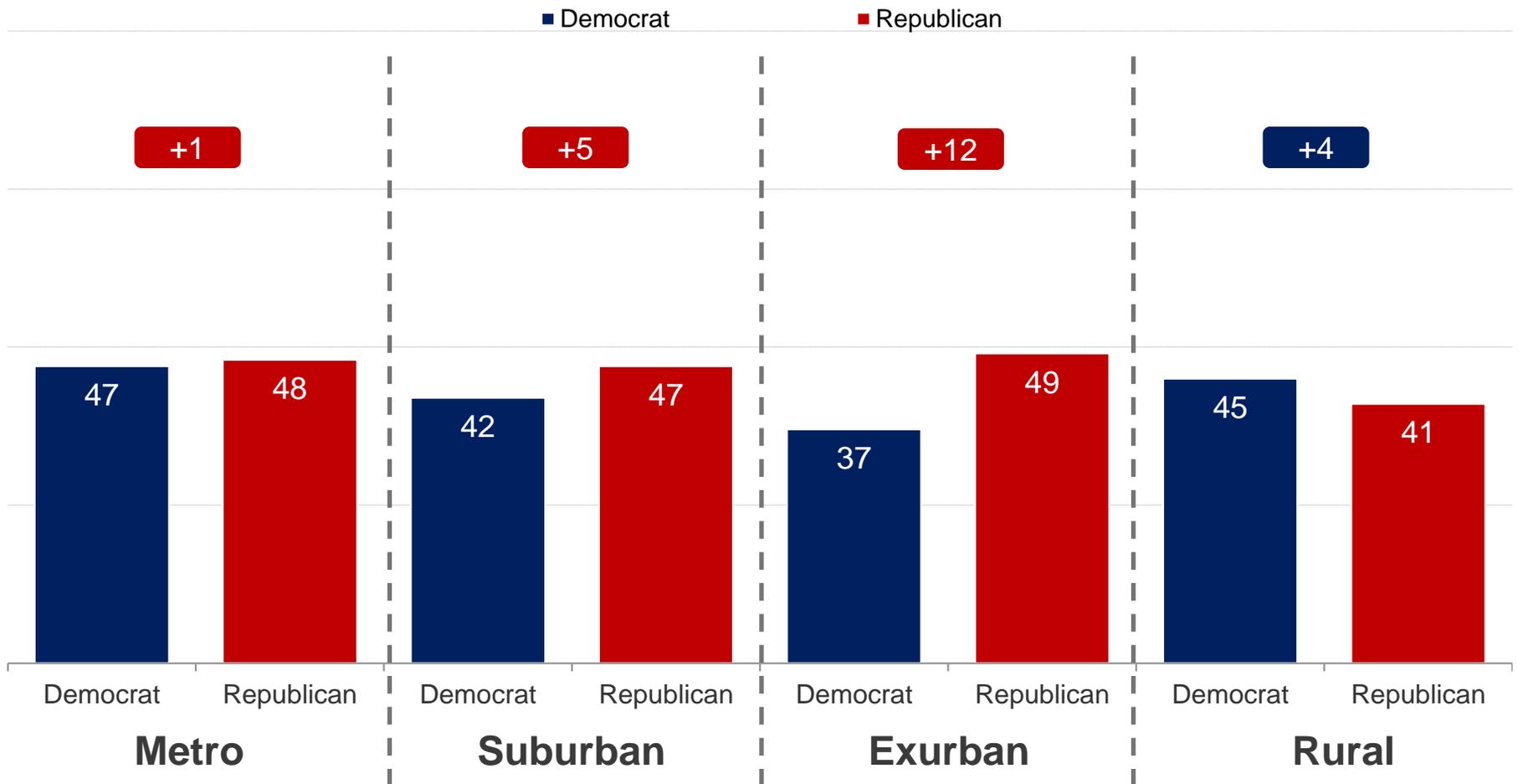
■ Democrat ■ Republican



\*Note: In 2011, HOUSE INCUMBENT refers to a Republican; in 2009, HOUSE INCUMBENT refers to a Democrat.

# Ahead in rural, close in metro and suburban areas

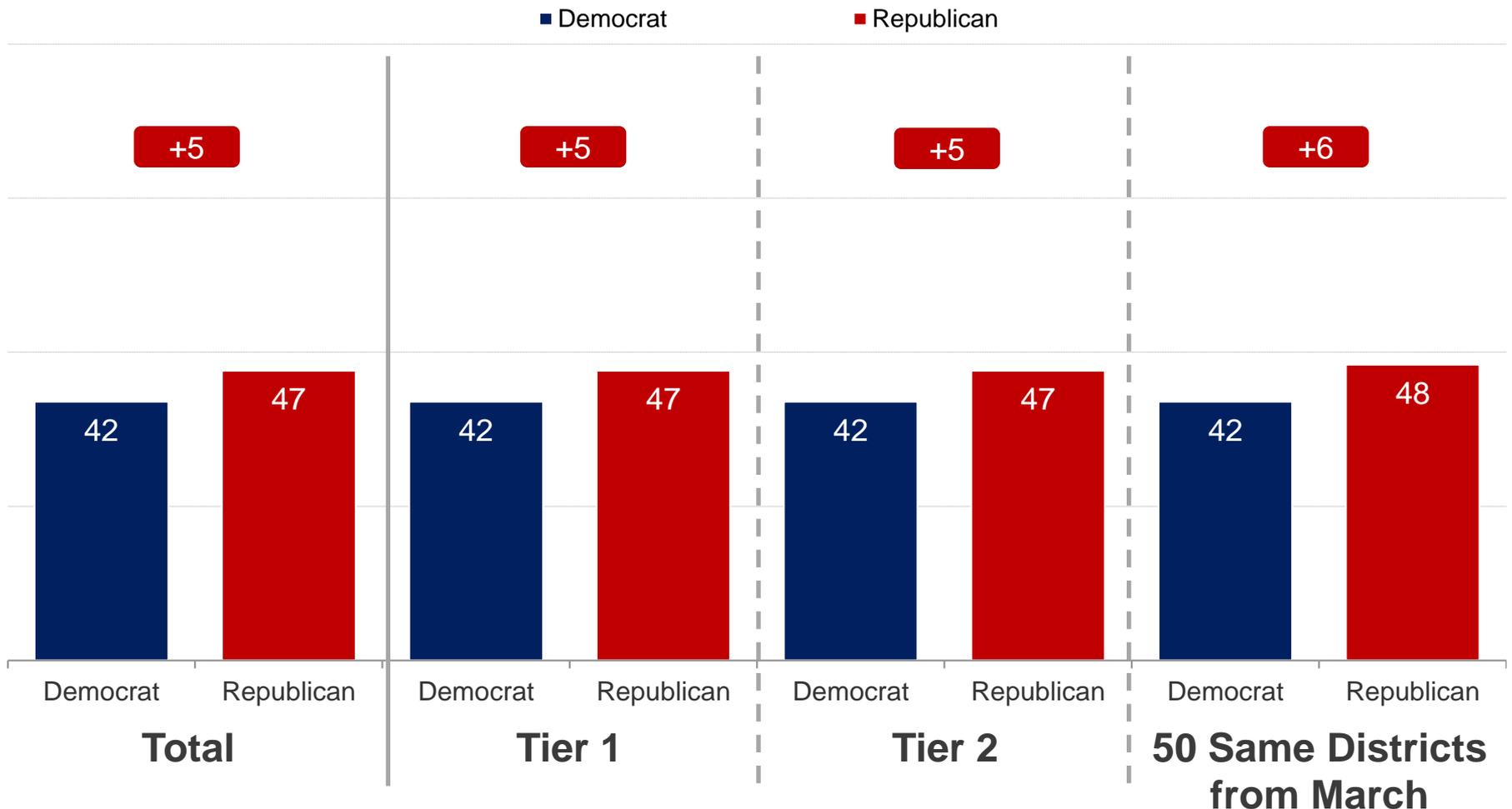
*I know it's a long way off, but thinking about the election for Congress in November 2012, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today, would you be voting for – the Democratic candidate or Republican (HOUSE INCUMBENT)?*



*\*Note: Incumbent names were inserted with party identification. Generic challengers were inserted as "The Democratic Candidate."*

# The race for Congress is no different across levels of competitiveness – whole battleground in play

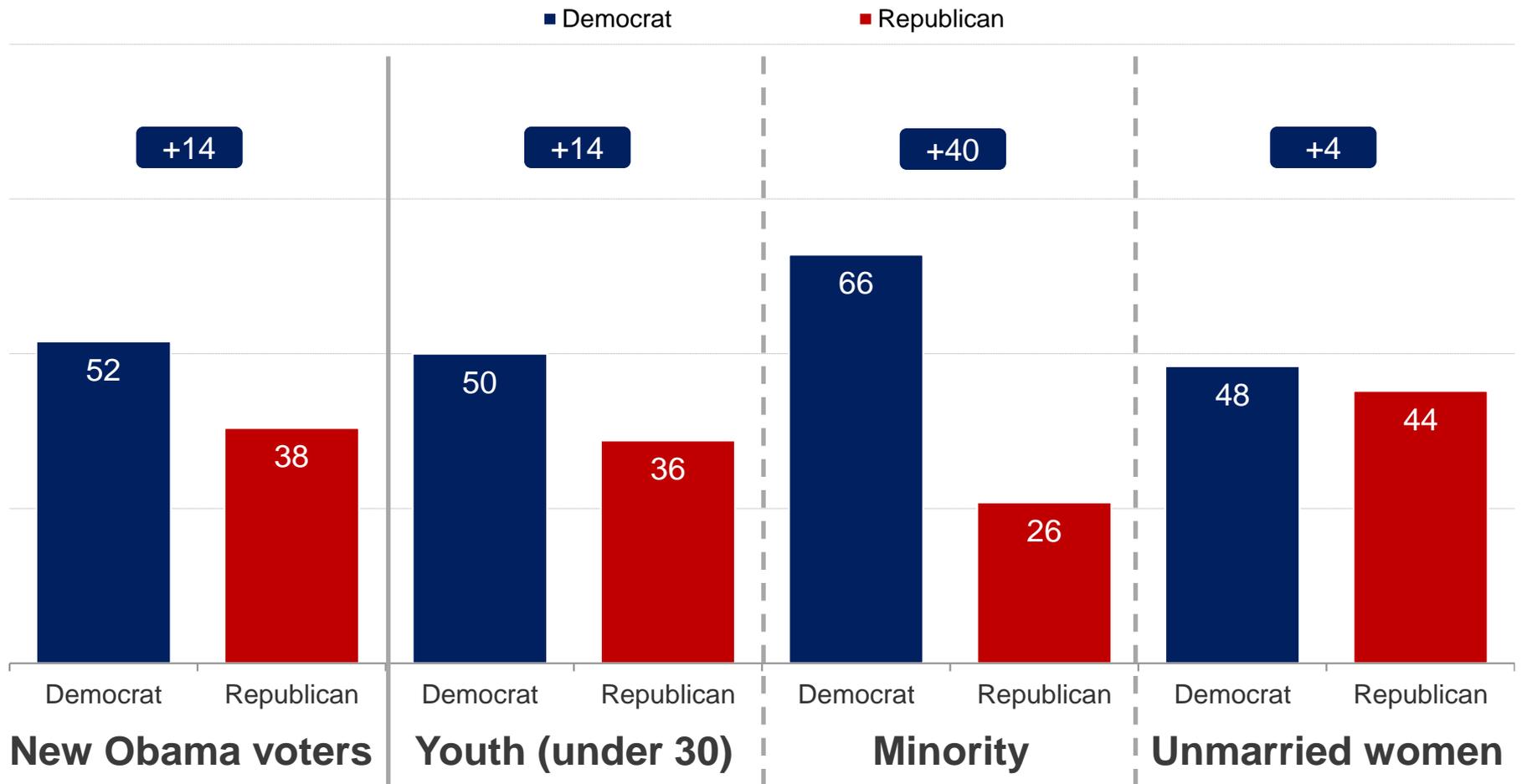
*I know it's a long way off, but thinking about the election for Congress in November 2012, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today, would you be voting for – the Democratic candidate or Republican (HOUSE INCUMBENT)?*



*\*Note: Incumbent names were inserted with party identification. Generic challengers were inserted as "The Democratic Candidate."*

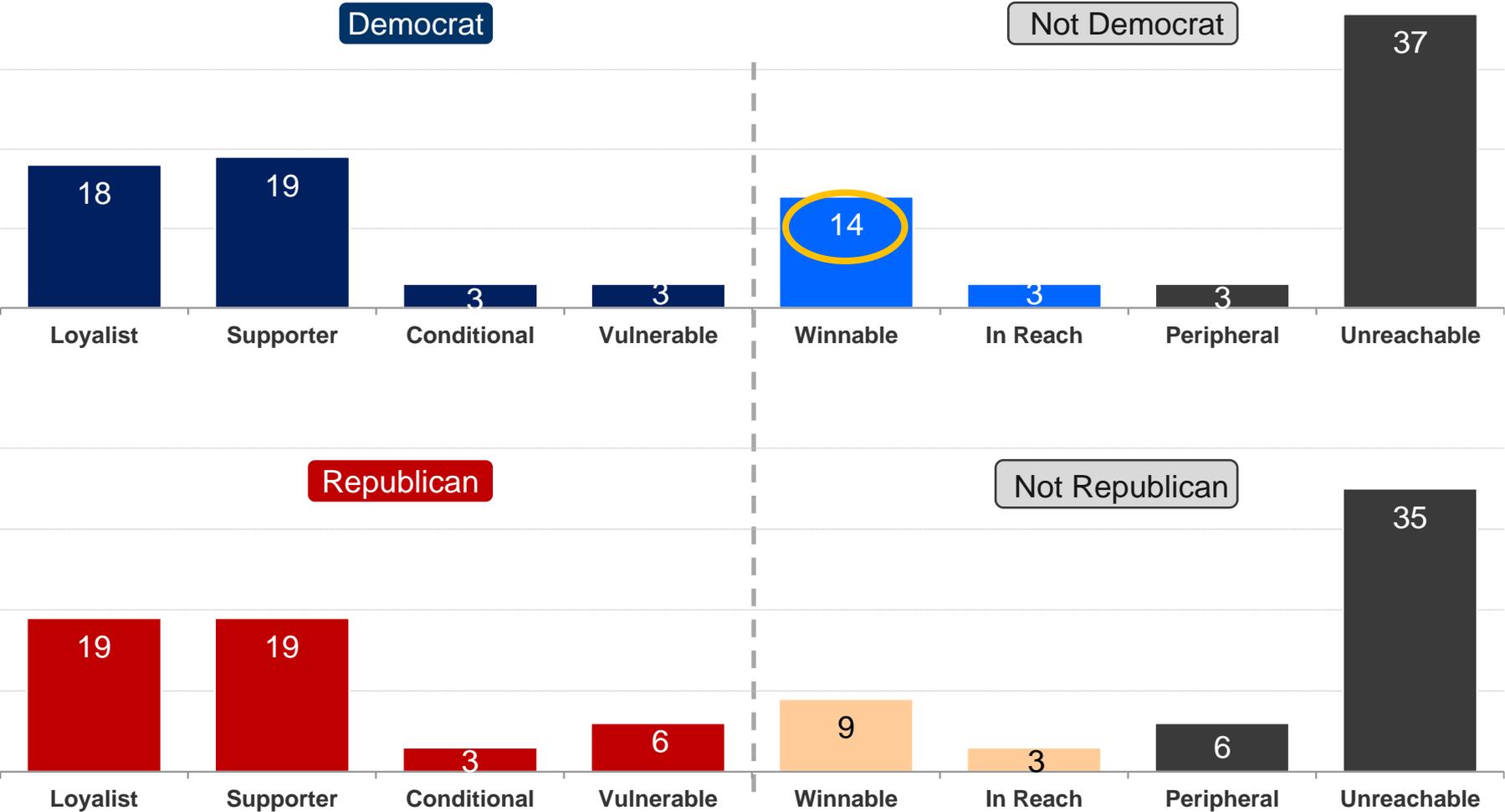
# Democrats have potential to gain among the new progressive base

*I know it's a long way off, but thinking about the election for Congress in November 2012, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today, would you be voting for – the Democratic candidate or Republican (HOUSE INCUMBENT)?*

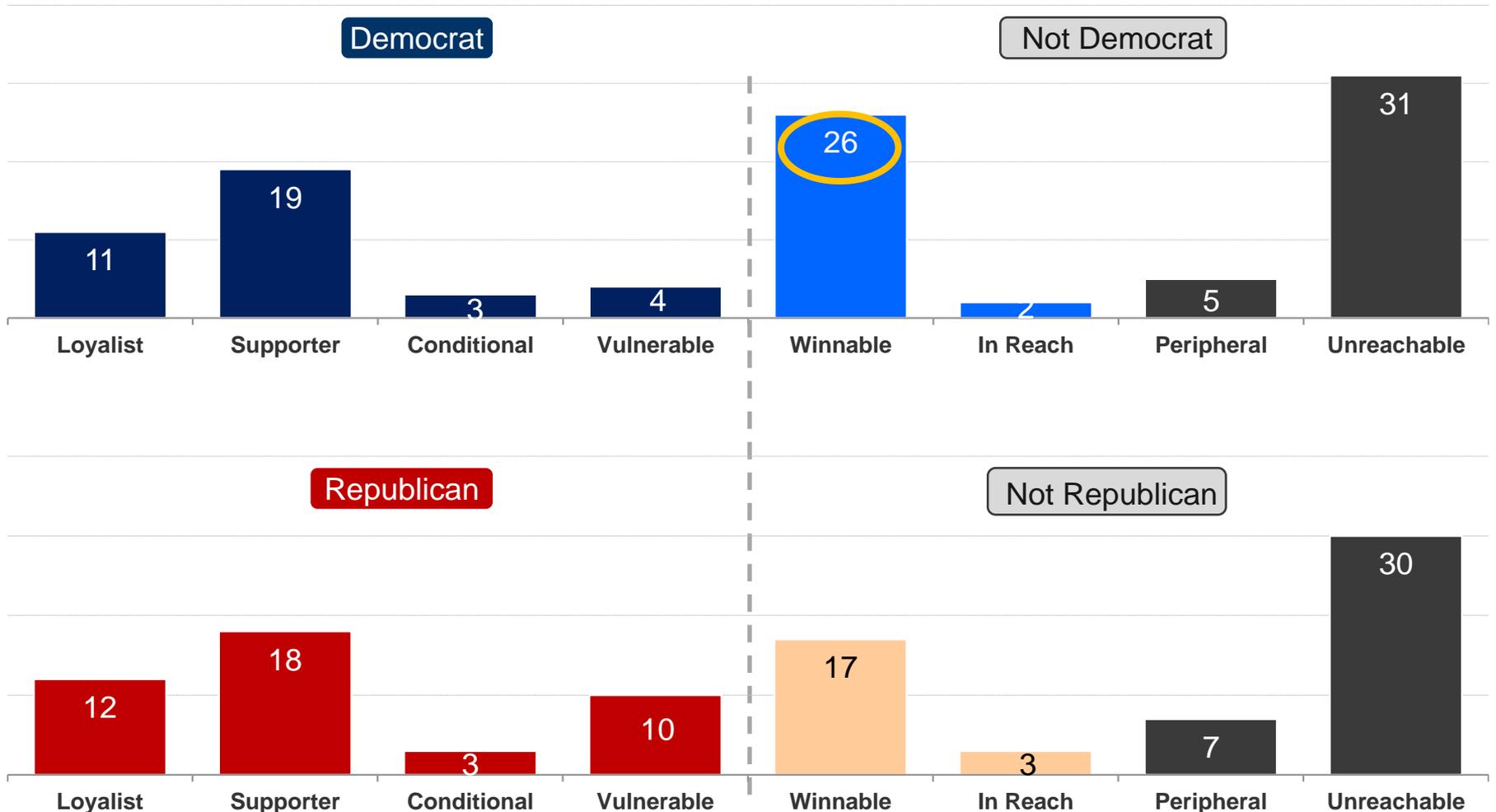


*\*Note: Incumbent names were inserted with party identification. Generic challengers were inserted as "The Democratic Candidate."*

# Democrats have more winnable, fewer vulnerable voters



# Democrats have much greater potential to win over independent voters



**Attacks expose Republican weaknesses  
and shift the vote**

# Attack on cuts to Medicare to pay for more special interest tax breaks powerful, but Social Security attack is strongest driver in regressions

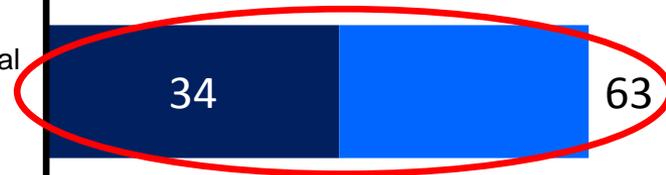
Now let me read you some statements that some people have made about (HOUSE INCUMBENT). After I read each statement, please tell me whether this raises very serious doubts, serious doubts, minor doubts, or no real doubts in your own mind about (HOUSE INCUMBENT).

■ Very serious doubts ■ Serious doubts

**(MEDICARE CONTRAST)** (HOUSE INCUMBENT) voted to end Medicare as we know it, forcing seniors to pay 6,400 dollars more out of pocket every year, and to use that money to continue tax breaks for those earning over 200,000 dollars and special interest subsidies for oil companies.



**(SOCIAL SECURITY)** (HOUSE INCUMBENT) voted to privatize Social Security, raise the retirement age and reduce guaranteed health care benefits for seniors.



**(REFORM)** (HOUSE INCUMBENT) promised to change Washington but (he/she) has taken thousands from lobbyists at Washington fundraisers, while voting three times to protect 50 billion dollars in taxpayer-funded subsidies for the oil companies and refusing to block bonuses to Wall Street CEOs.



**(UPSIDE DOWN)** The economy is upside down. Gas prices, bills, and tuition go up but wages and benefits remain stagnant for the smashed middle class. Ninety-nine percent of us are suffering, but (HOUSE INCUMBENT) cares more about keeping tax breaks for the top one percent than helping out the struggling middle class.

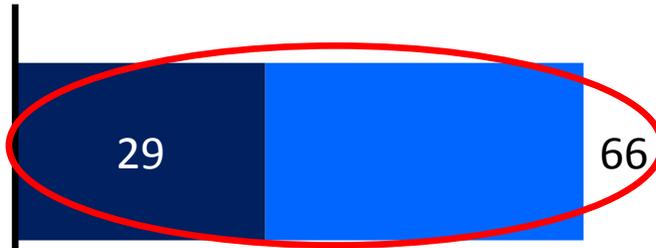


# Attacking Republicans' budget plan to cut taxes for the wealthiest and corporations drives the vote against them

Now let me read you some statements that some people have made about (HOUSE INCUMBENT). After I read each statement, please tell me whether this raises very serious doubts, serious doubts, minor doubts, or no real doubts in your own mind about (HOUSE INCUMBENT).

■ Very serious doubts ■ Serious doubts

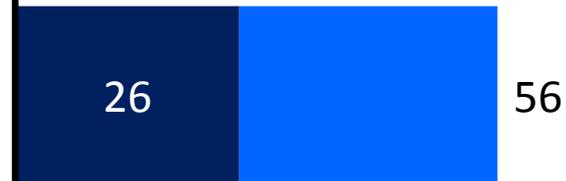
**(DEBT)** (HOUSE INCUMBENT) says (he/she) wants to reduce our country's debt, but (he/she) voted for a budget plan that cuts taxes for the wealthiest and corporations and adds 8 trillion dollars to the national debt over the next 10 years.



**(PAYROLL TAX)** (HOUSE INCUMBENT) opposed extending the payroll tax cut of almost fifteen hundred dollars for 160 million working families and businesses because (he/she) did not want to raise taxes on millionaires by 3 percent to pay for these middle class tax cuts.



**(OBSTRUCTIONISM)** (HOUSE INCUMBENT) promised to change Washington but instead threatened to have America default its debts, producing gridlock that led to a credit downgrade of America that hurt our economy. (He/she) supports leaders who say their number one goal is to make President Obama a one-term president.

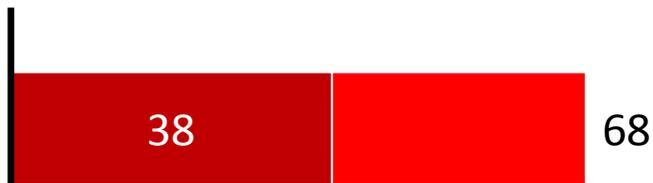


# Taxes, regulations attacks on Democrats fall flat

Now let me read you some statements that some people have made about Democrats in Congress. After I read each statement, please tell me whether this raises very serious doubts, serious doubts, minor doubts, or no real doubts in your own mind about Democrats in Congress.

■ Very serious doubts    ■ Serious doubts

**(SOLYNDRA)** The Democrats in Congress gave half a billion taxpayer dollars to a solar power company that donated to the Obama campaign, even though the company was on a path to bankruptcy. After the company eventually defaulted on its loan, the Democrats changed the terms to let the company continue taking taxpayer money. Now the company is bankrupt and taxpayers are stuck with the bill, but the Democrats approved another billion dollars in loans to similar companies who also donated to Democrats.



**(OBAMA HEALTH CARE)** The Democrats in Congress supported Barack Obama's trillion dollar government takeover of our health care system, which raised the cost of health insurance premiums, increased taxes, and forced small businesses to pay for expensive insurance they can't afford, all while making it harder for people to see their doctors and get access to quality care.



**(SPENDING)** The Democrats in Congress passed a stimulus bill that added hundreds of billions to the debt, yet failed to create any jobs. They continue to support tax-and-spend policies that will burden middle class families with more debt, and cost our children their economic future.



**(ANTI-BUSINESS)** In a weak economy, Democrats in Congress support an anti-business, job killing agenda. They support Obamacare, which is filled with new red tape and mandates on businesses, and a new energy tax and environmental regulations that would drive up costs for manufacturers.



**(TAXES)** The Democrats' deficit reduction plan actually raises taxes on job creators. It increases the already high corporate tax rate, raises the top individual tax rate, and is sure to create a stranglehold on the economy. We can debate about how to fix the deficit, but raising taxes during a recession is not the right place to start.



# Big shift in the vote after hearing attacks from both sides – incumbent falls to only 44 percent

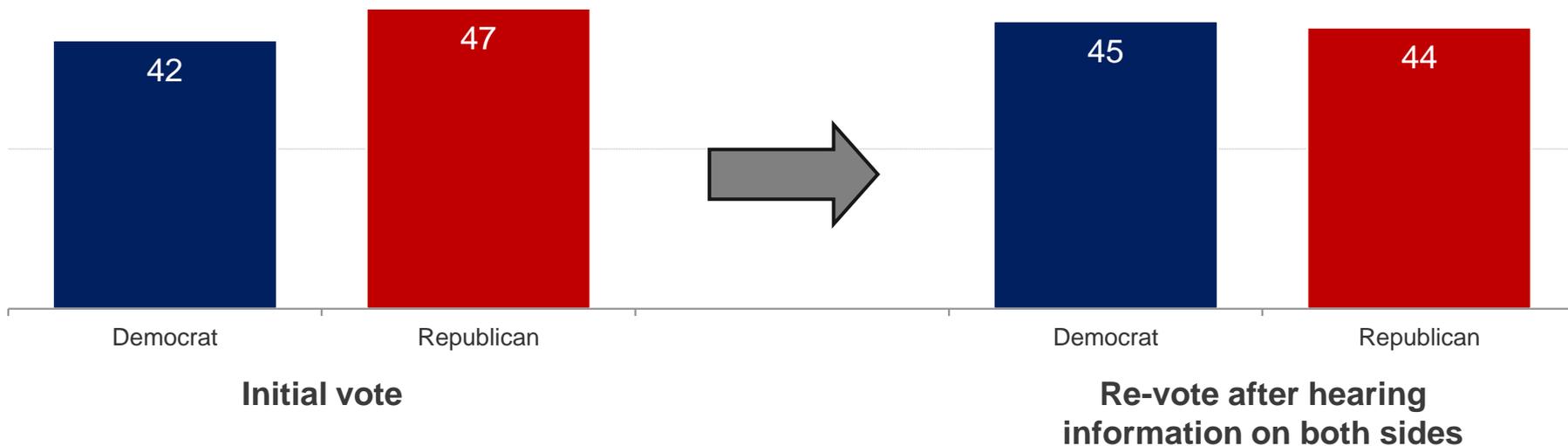
Now let me ask you again, I know it's a long way off, but thinking about the election for Congress in November 2012, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today, would you be voting for – the Democratic candidate or Republican (HOUSE INCUMBENT)?

■ Democrat

■ Republican

+5

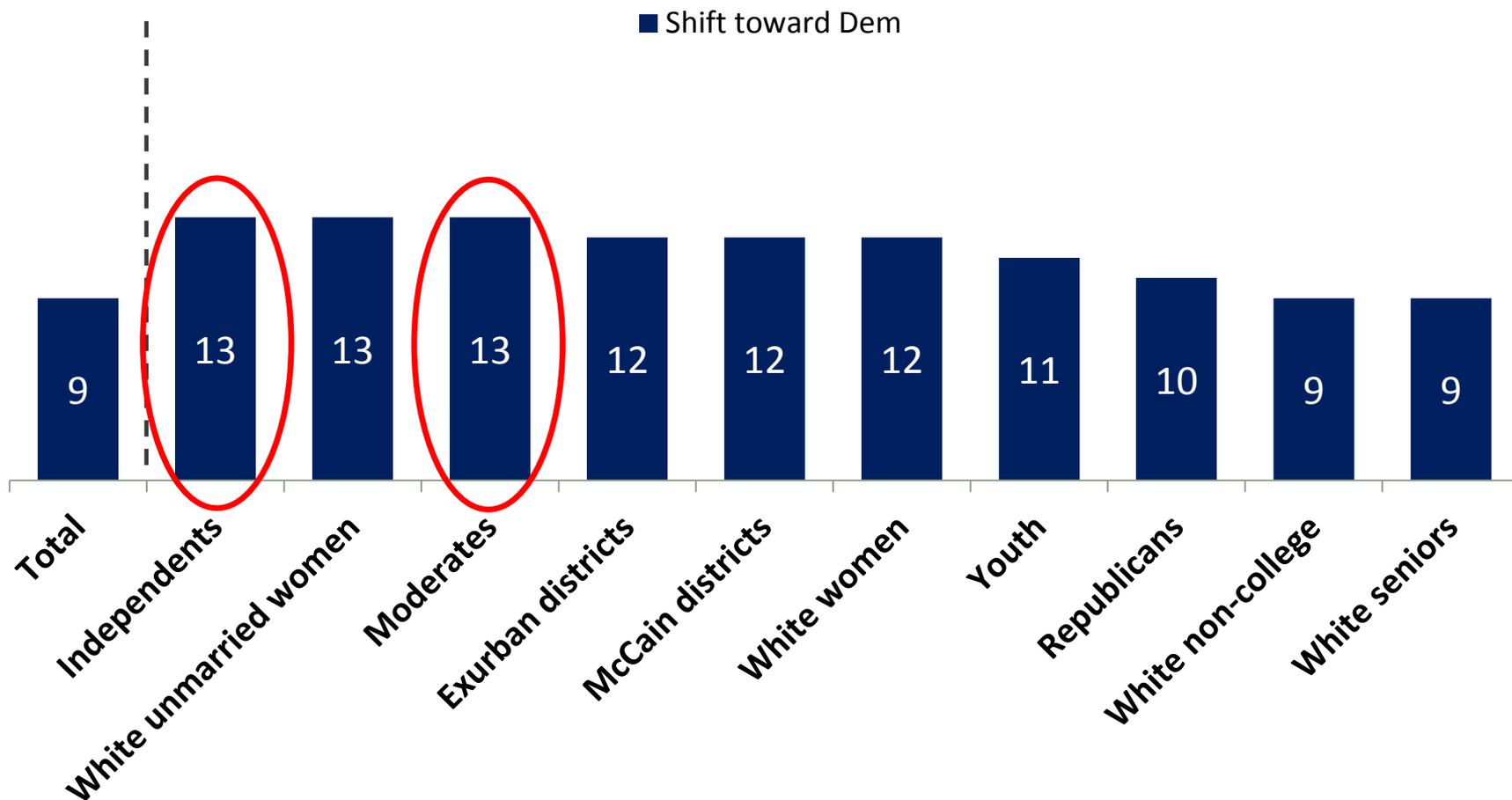
+1



\*Note: Incumbent names were inserted with party identification. Generic challengers were inserted as "The Democratic Candidate."

# Big shifters in congressional vote – even Republicans shift away from their incumbents

Now let me ask you again, I know it's a long way off, but thinking about the election for Congress in November 2012, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today, would you be voting for – the Democratic candidate or Republican (HOUSE INCUMBENT)?



# **GREENBERG QUINLAN ROSNER** RESEARCH

## WORLD HEADQUARTERS

10 G Street, NE  
Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20002  
T: 202.478.8300  
F: 202.478.8301

## EUROPEAN HEADQUARTERS

405 Carrington House  
6 Hertford Street  
London, UK W1J 7SU  
T: +44.(0).207.096.5070  
F: +44.(0).207.096.5068

## LATIN AMERICAN HEADQUARTERS

Cabrera 6060, 7D  
C1414 BHN  
Ciudad de Buenos Aires, Argentina  
T: +54.11.4772.0813

[www.greenbergresearch.com](http://www.greenbergresearch.com) | [www.gqrr.com](http://www.gqrr.com)