



# Public Opinion on Climate: The State of Play in 2024

# Methodology

## Voters

Global Strategy Group conducted an online survey of **1,036 nationwide registered voters** between July 2 and July 8, 2024.

This analysis includes trend data from an online survey Global Strategy Group conducted of **1,000 nationwide registered voters** between April 13 and April 16, 2023.

## Confidence Interval

The 2024 survey had a confidence interval of +/- 3.0%.  
The 2023 survey had a confidence interval of +/- 3.1%.

The confidence interval is greater on sub-samples.

# Key Findings

**Climate and energy are winning issues for Democrats, especially with the swing voters who will decide the 2024 elections.** While swing voters aren't with us 100% on every climate and energy-related issue, these data could not be clearer: swing voters strongly prefer the Democratic approach of supporting clean energy and climate action over Republicans' focus on boosting fossil fuel production – and this is something that moves voters towards pro-clean energy Democrats.

- When we reframe the generic ballot around the two parties' approach to energy, the Democratic advantage expands by 3 points in an otherwise tough electoral landscape. And when we simulate a balanced debate on the issue, the Democratic advantage expands another 6 points, for a total of a 9-point gain versus the straight generic.
- Moreover, across key groups—even Republicans, climate denialism is a clear political liability.

**Voters increasingly see climate change as a major problem, and they want to see strong action on climate.** Over three-quarters of voters, including 86% of swing voters, believe that climate change is at least a major problem, up 5 points from a year ago. Moreover, over two-thirds believe that climate change is already having a serious impact on the country. As a result, a large majority of voters want to see the U.S. government take strong action to combat climate change.

**Voters reject the false choice between the environment and the economy, and they strongly support stronger environmental regulations.** A huge majority agrees that we don't have to choose between building our economy and protecting our environment. Moreover, voters very much like “environmental regulations” (though they like “safeguards” slightly better).

# Young, non-college women, Hispanic, and rural voters are efficient, persuadable targets on climate issues

## Political Targets



### Base

Always votes Democrat on all Congressional ballots

**Liberals (78% are base)**

**Black voters (59%)**

**Urban (50%)**

**Seniors 65+ (48%)**

**College educated (46%)**

- White college (44%)

**Women (41%)**

- College women (50%)
- Women 45+ (43%)

### Swing

Everyone else

**Independents (65% are swing)**

**Moderates (39%)**

**Ages 18-44 (32%)**

**Hispanic voters (32%)**

**Rural (31%)**

**Non-college educated (27%)**

- Non-college POC (35%)
- Non-college women (30%)

### Oppo

Always votes Republican on all Congressional ballots

**Conservatives (75% are oppo)**

**Rural (44%)**

**White voters (43%)**

- White men (45%)
- White non-college (45%)

**Household incomes >\$100k (45%)**

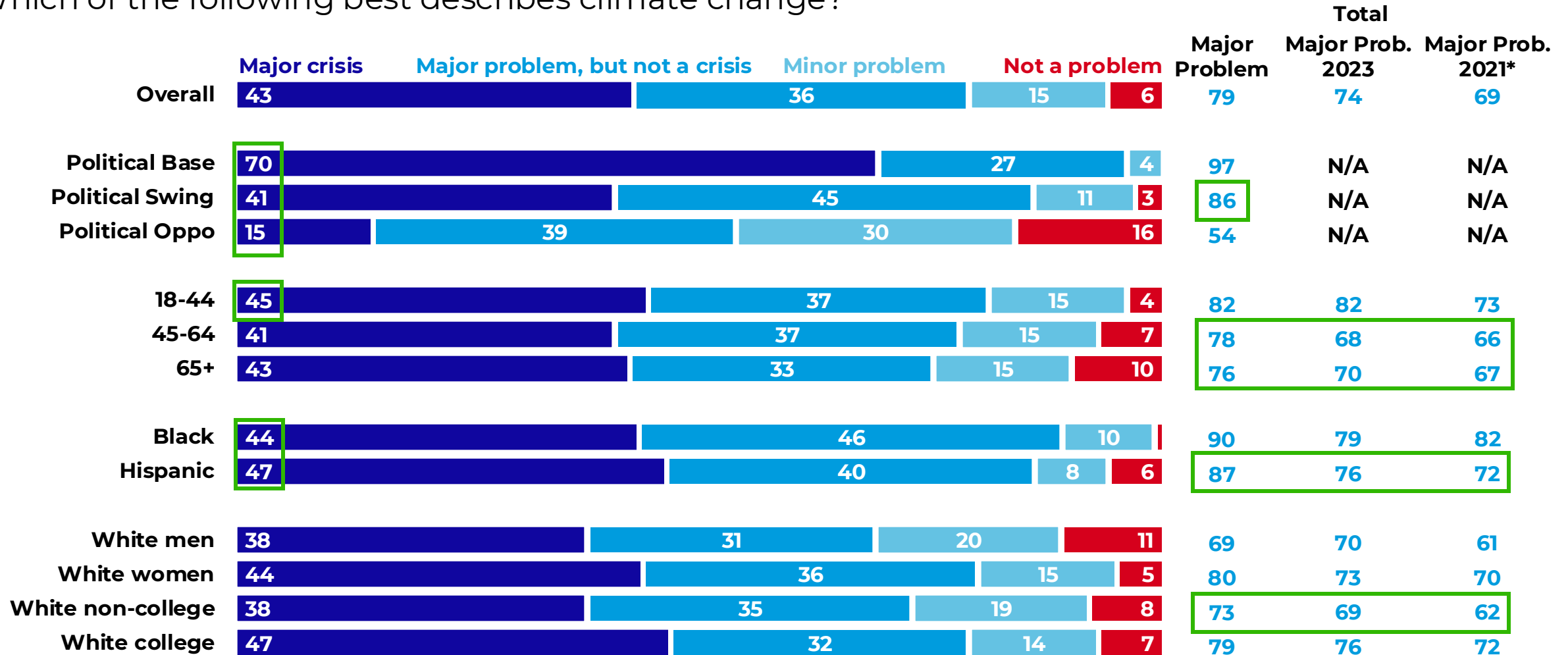
**Midwest (42%)**



# Climate Landscape

# There is broad and growing consensus that climate change is a major problem with increasing awareness driven by traditionally unfriendly groups

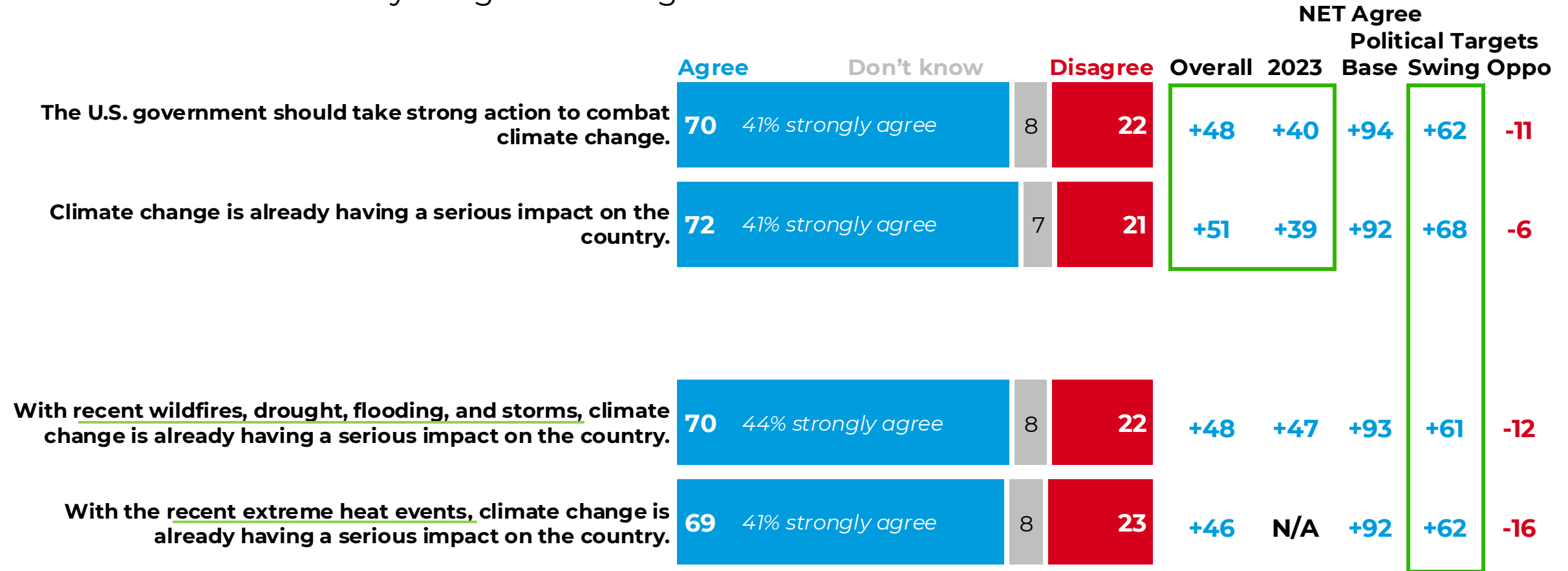
Which of the following best describes climate change?



\*2021 Source: Global Strategy Group Navigator survey of 1,000 registered voters nationwide from July 15-19, 2021.

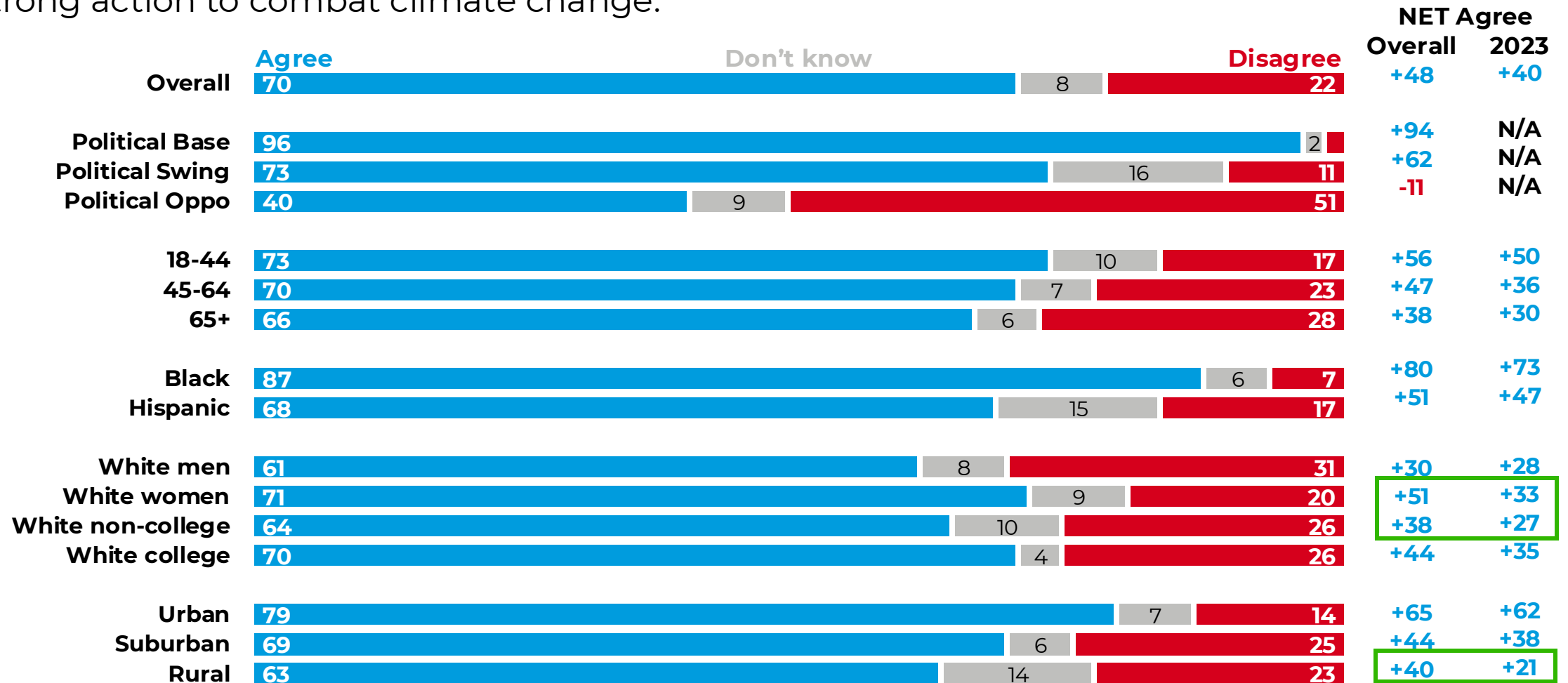
# Voters increasingly believe climate change is impacting the country and want to see strong government action – especially swing voters

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement.



# Non-college, white, rural women are driving the increase in demand over the last year for strong government action on climate change

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statement: “The U.S. Government should take strong action to combat climate change.”



\*Small sample size, results are directional



# Even as consensus continues to grow on climate, Republican leadership seems to be doubling down on climate denialism

**THE HILL**

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

**123 House and Senate Republicans deny climate science: Analysis**

TUCSON  
**Sentinel.com**

LOCAL news

**Amid heat waves & drought, Arizona Republicans reject expert consensus on climate change as 'fake science'**

**Vox**

CLIMATE

**The first GOP debate reveals a disturbing level of climate change denial**

The party's tactics to deny and deflect reality are more polarizing than ever.

**CNN** politics

**As young conservatives try to get climate on the agenda in 2024, denial takes the spotlight instead**

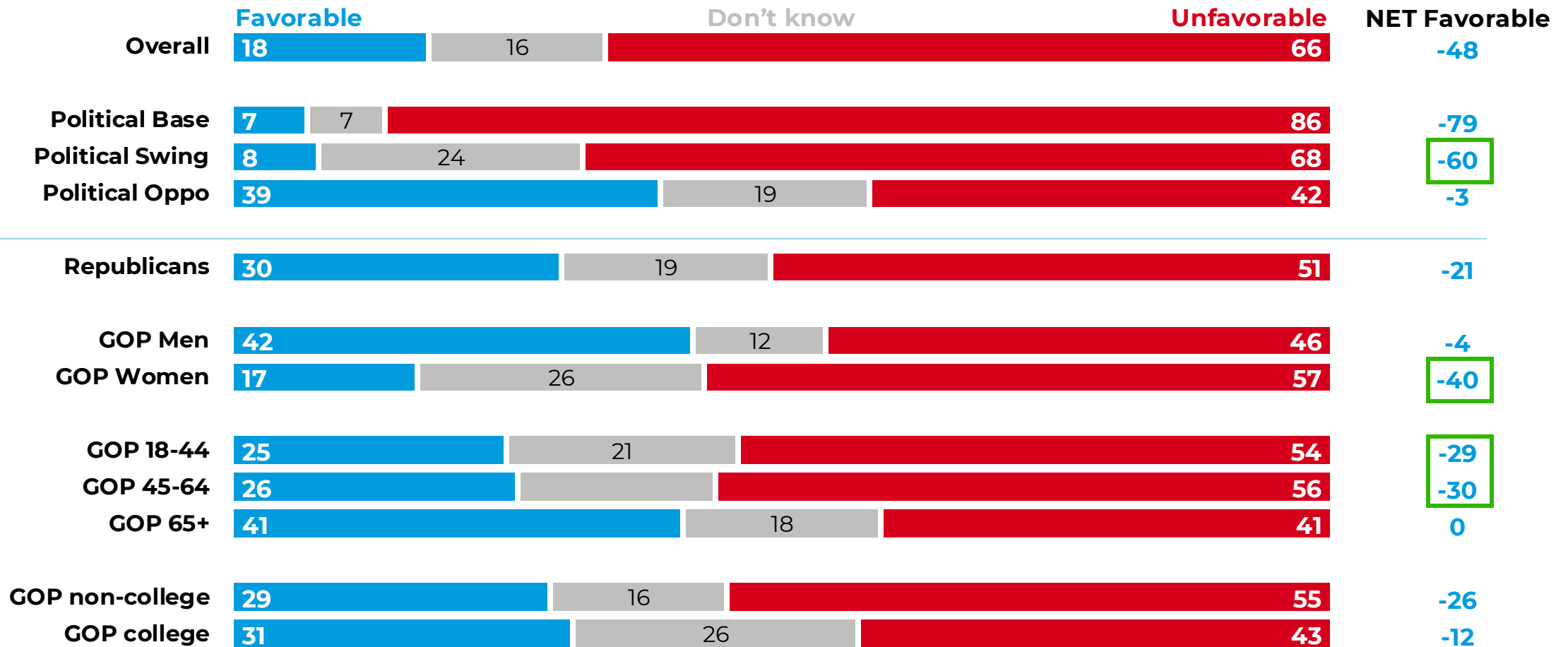
COLORADO **NEWSLINE**

**All 6 Republicans in Colorado's 4th District primary deny the science of climate change**

Rep. Lauren Boebert says climate change happens 'four times every year'

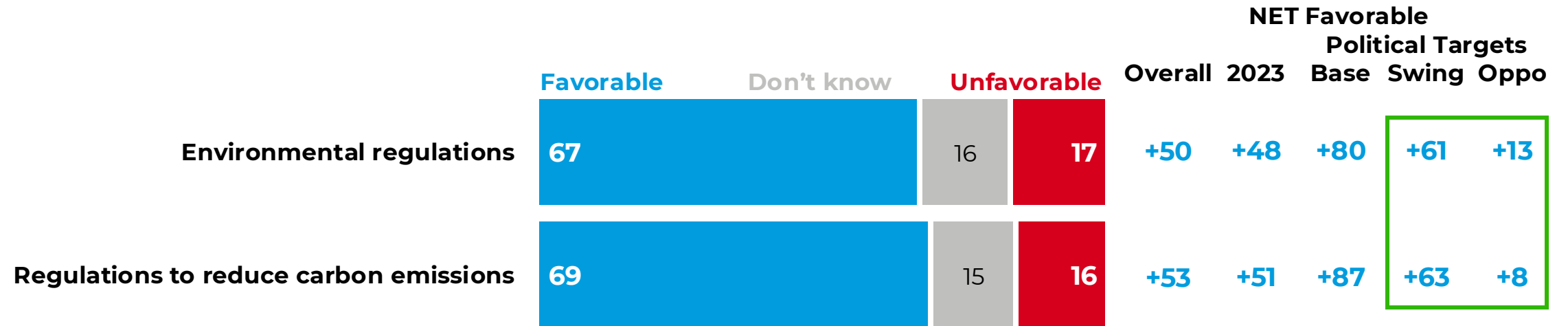
# The opportunity: even among traditionally unfriendly groups—climate denialism is a political liability

Please indicate if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of: “**Lawmakers who deny that climate change is a threat**”



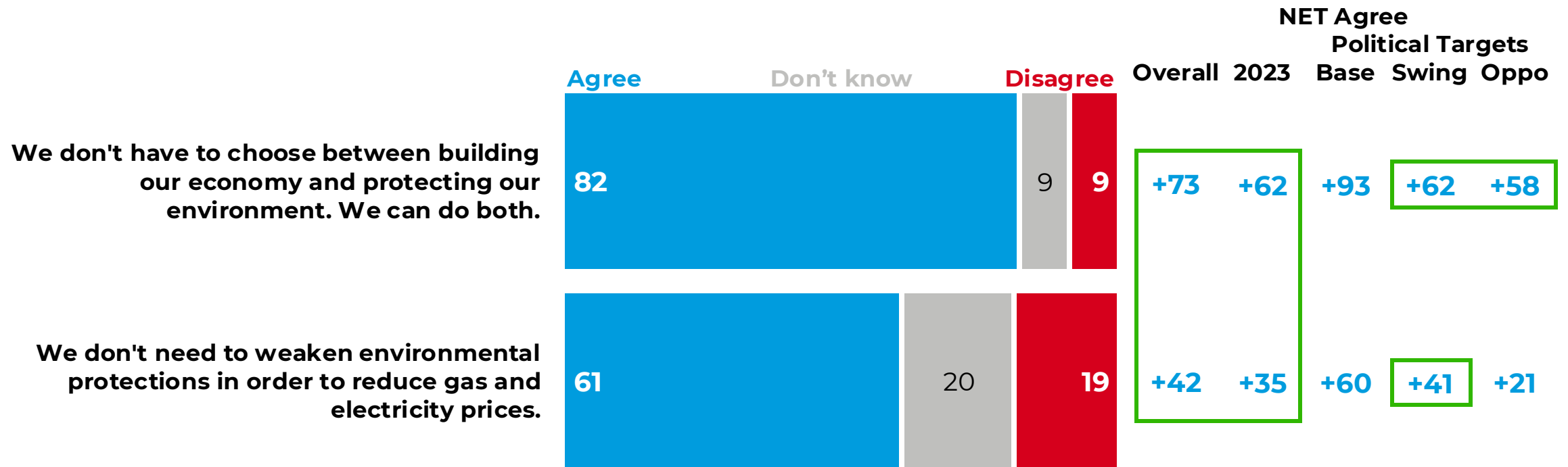
# Voters continue to support stronger regulations to protect the environment and reduce carbon emissions

Please indicate if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of each.



# Voters also continue to reject a false choice between the environment and economy

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement.

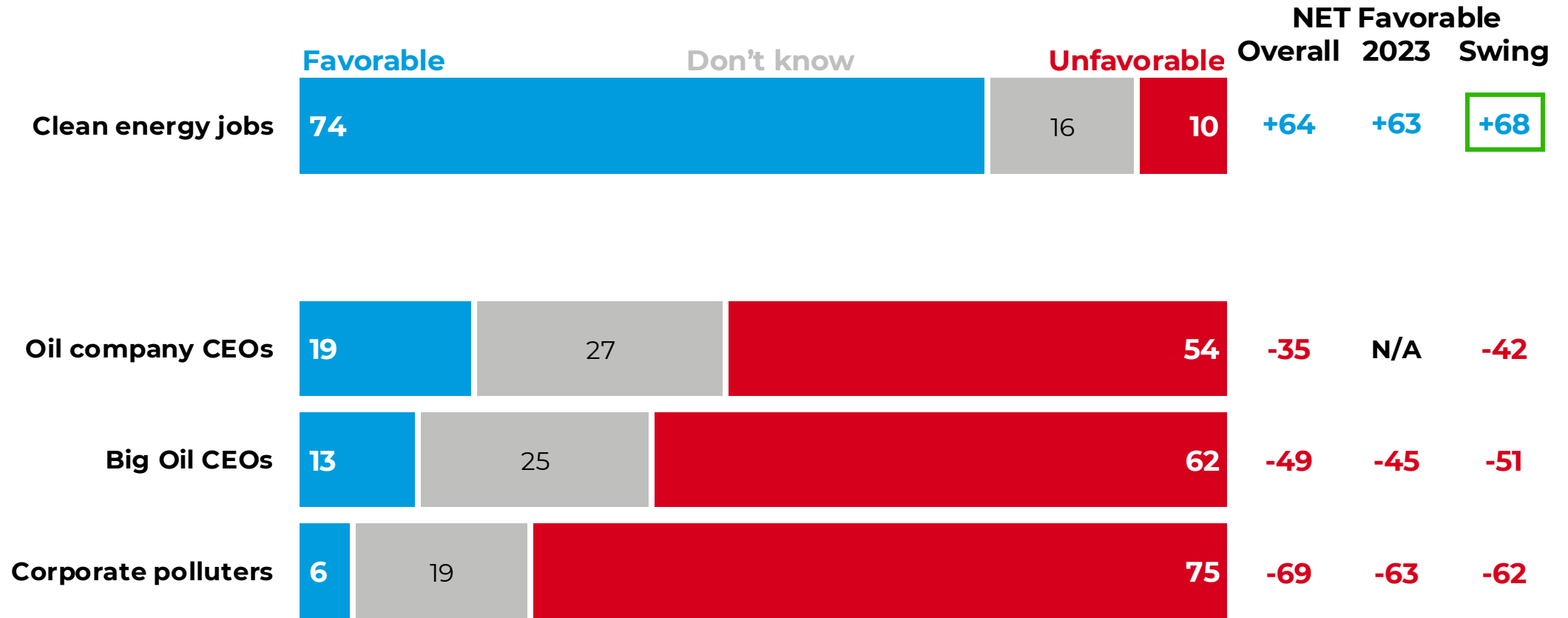




# The Clean Energy Landscape

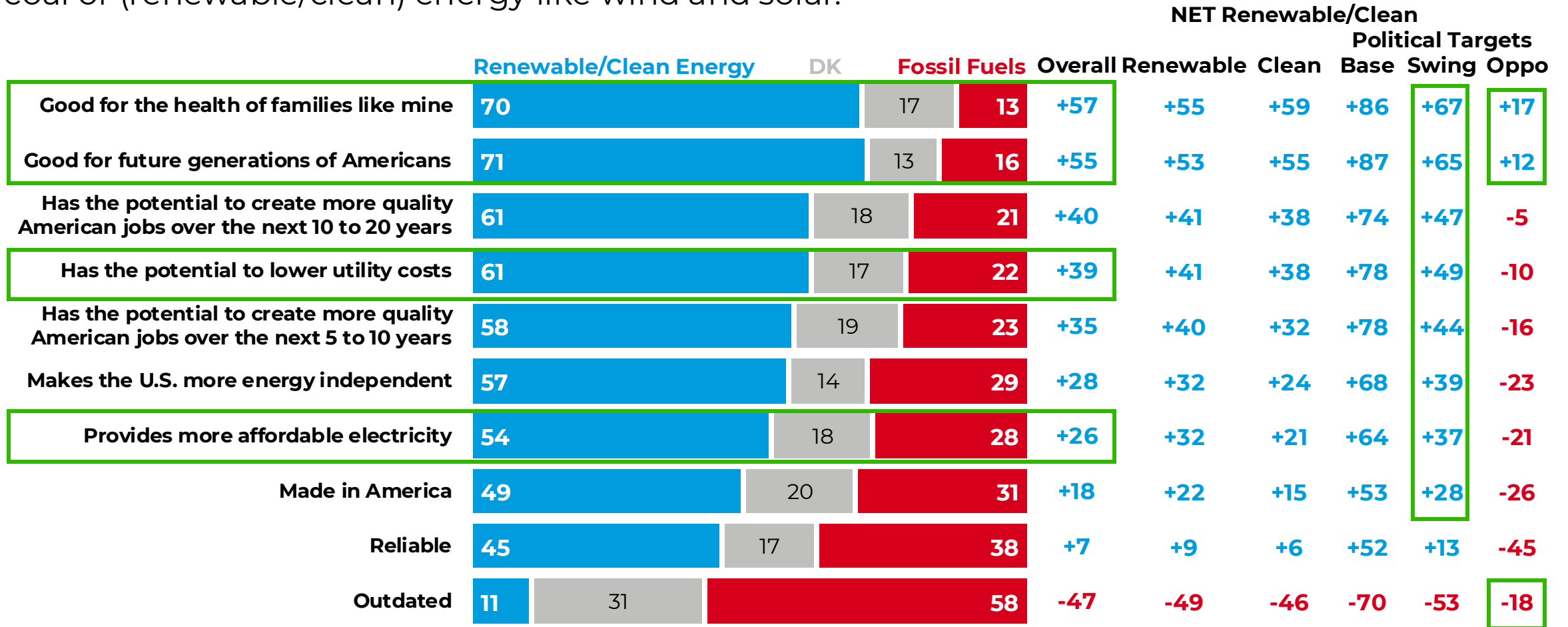
# Voters love “clean energy jobs.” “Big Oil CEOs” or “corporate polluters” are our best foil

Please indicate if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of each.



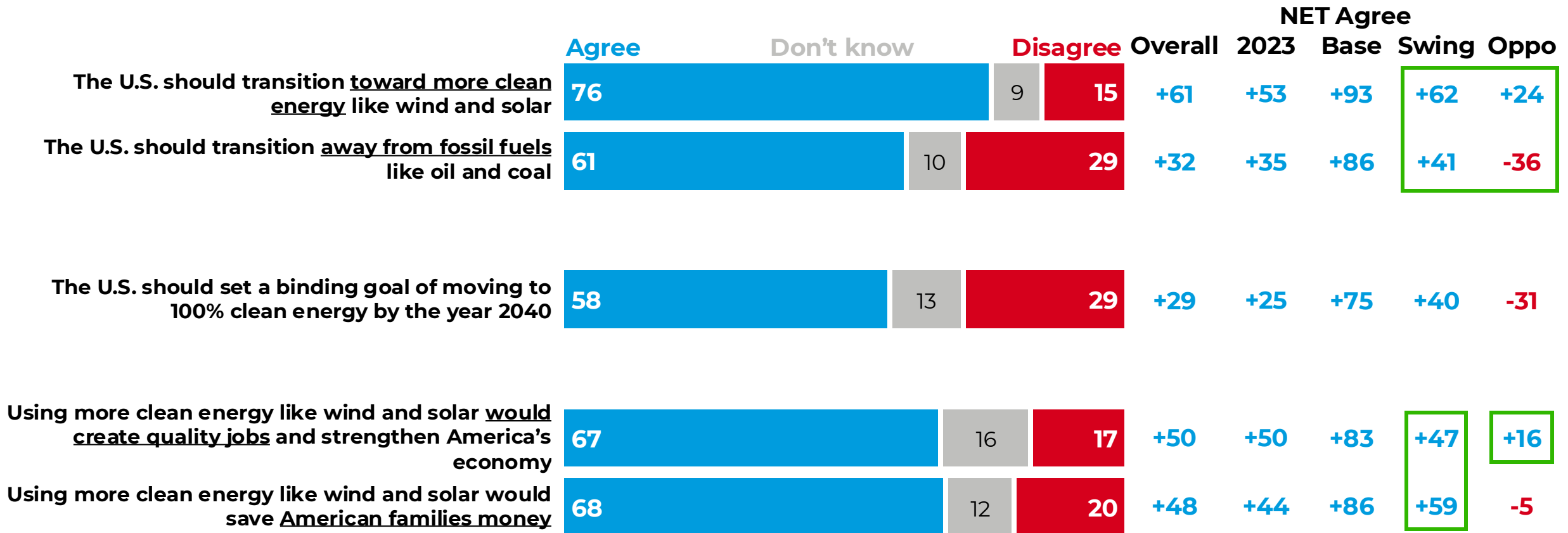
# Voters, especially swing, believe clean energy is better for the families' health and future—and, importantly, their pocketbooks

Please indicate if you think each one of the following better describes fossil fuels like oil, gas, and coal or (renewable/clean) energy like wind and solar.



# Voters support a transition towards clean energy. More conservative voters much more supportive of moving “toward more clean energy” than moving “away from fossil fuels”

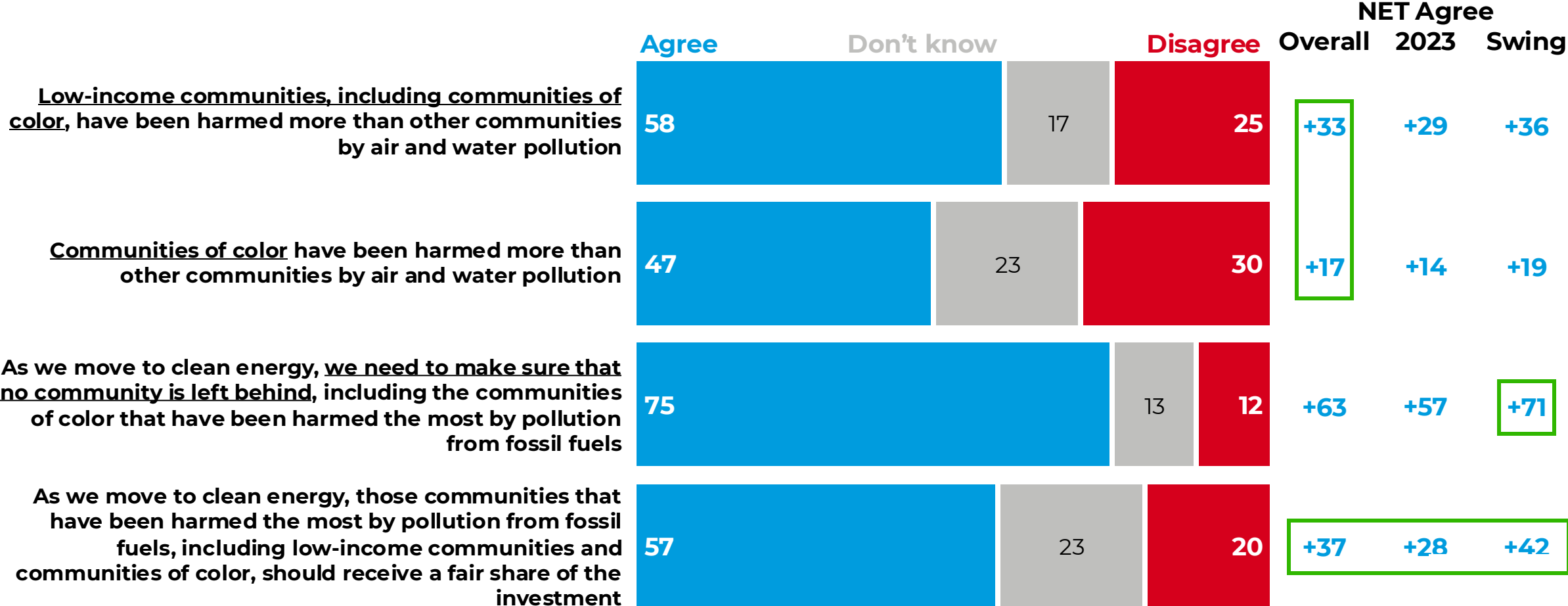
Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement.





# There is growing agreement that communities harmed by pollution should get a fair share of investment. Inclusive language is stronger, especially “no community left behind

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement.

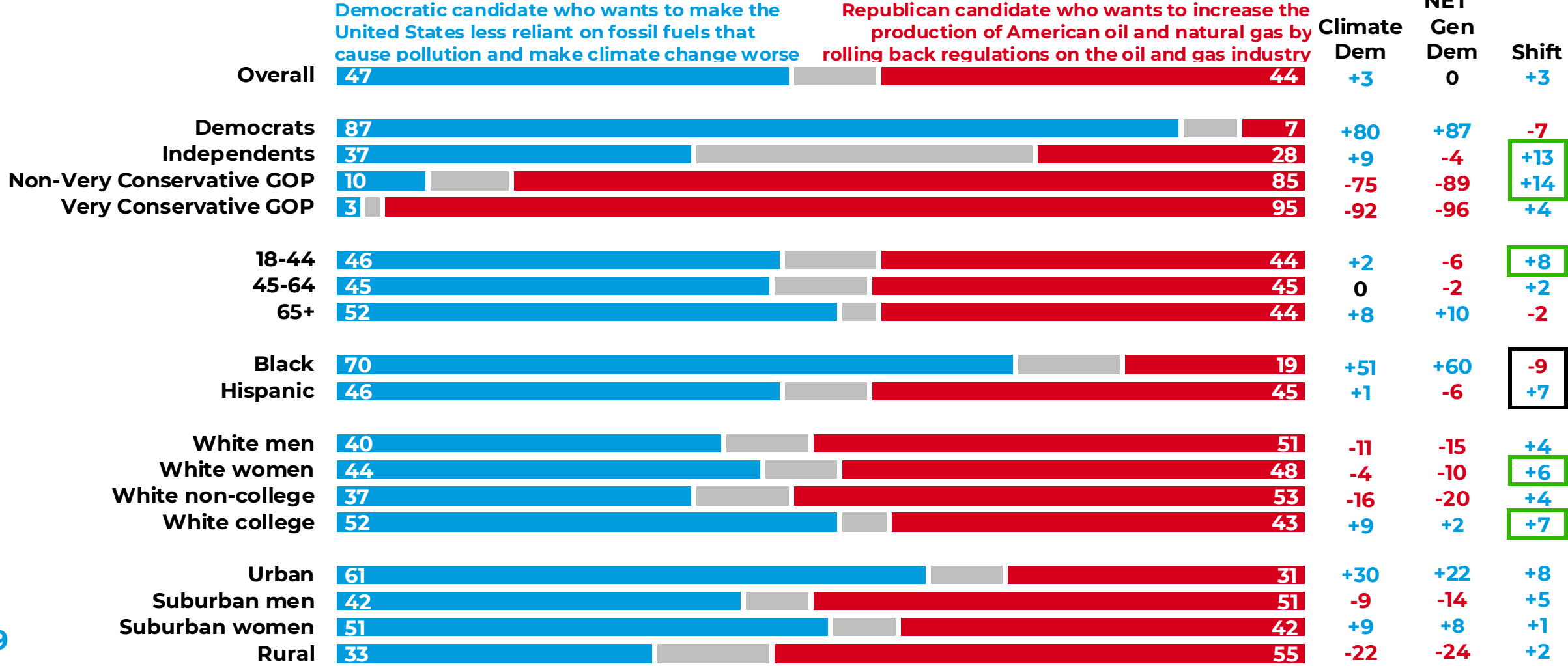




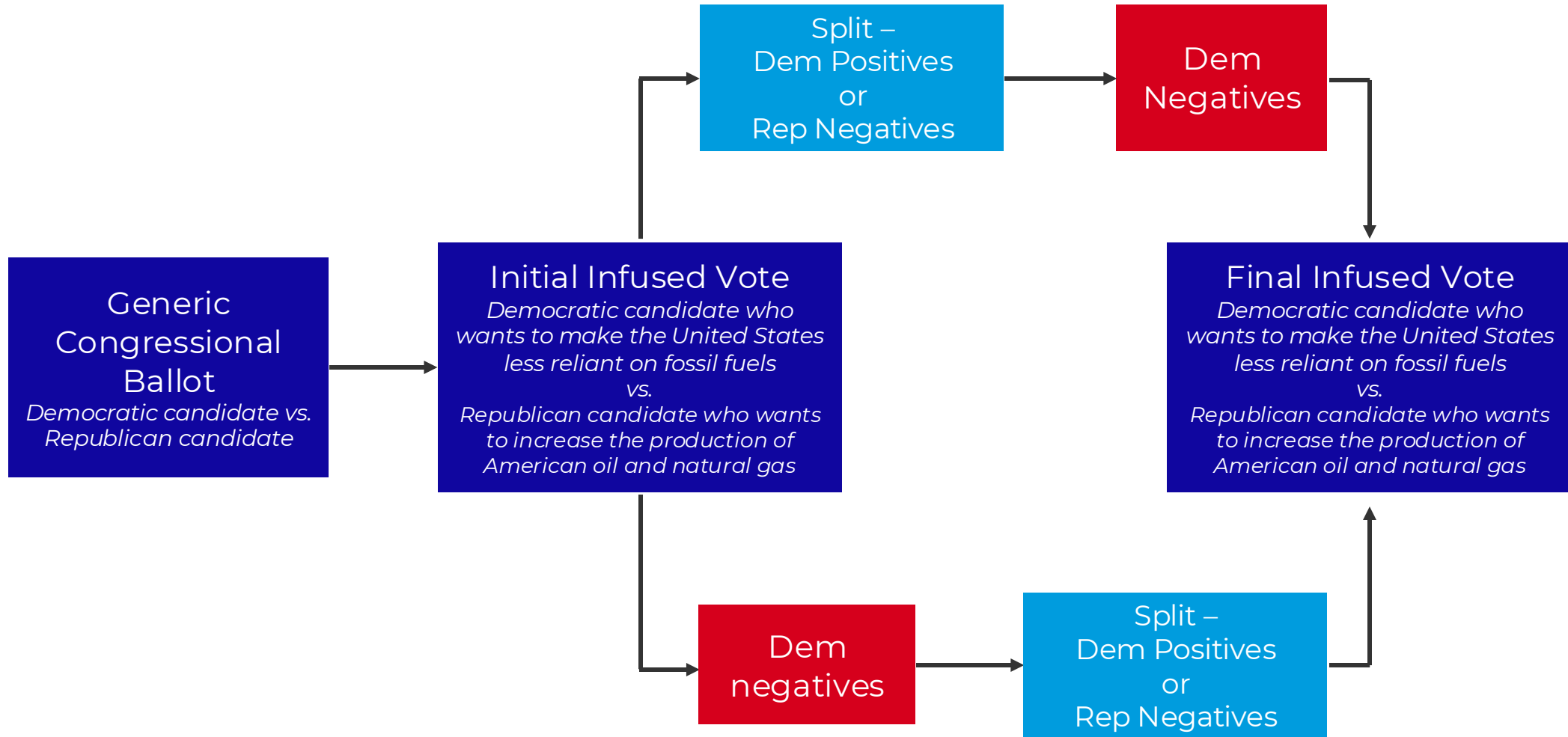
# Climate is a political winner for Democrats

# Democrats makes gains with center-right voters when generic ballot is reframed around parties' approach to energy

Climate-Infused Generic Vote for Congress

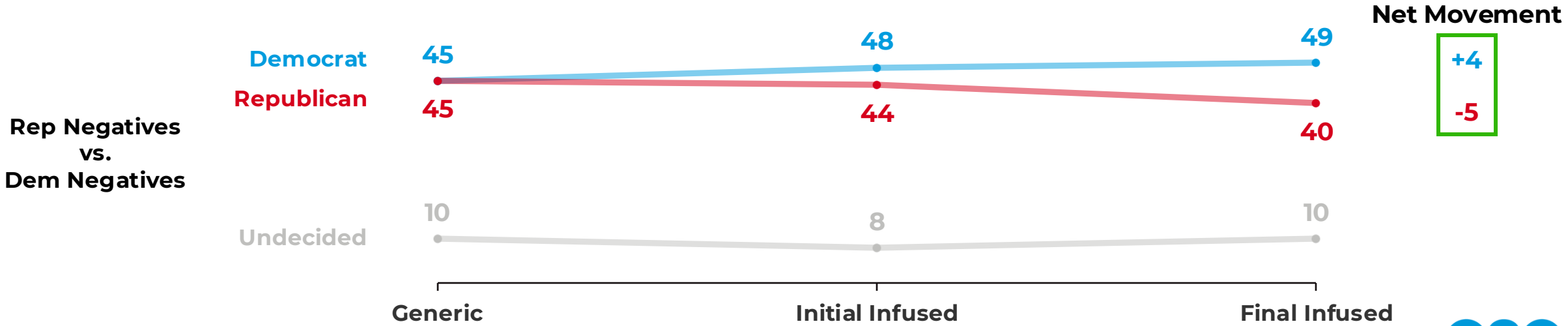
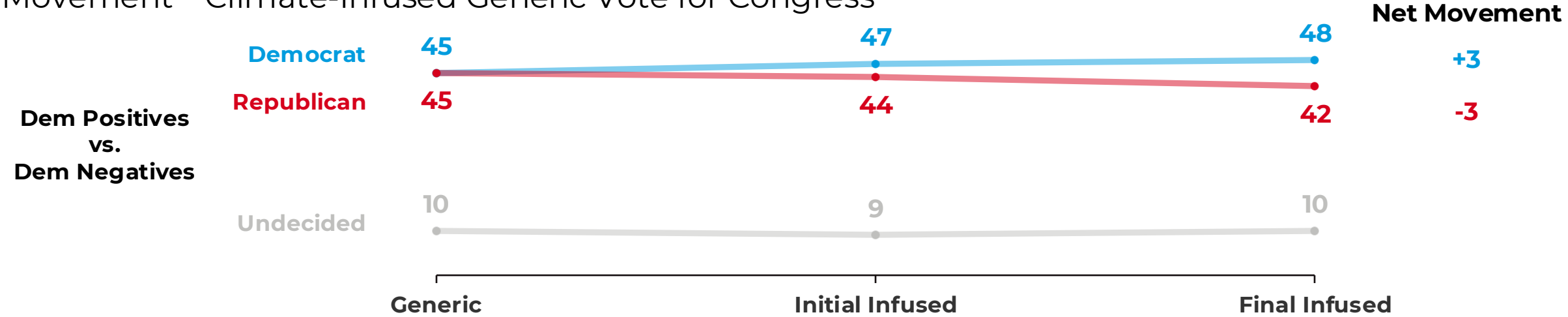


# Survey structure



# Democrats win a balanced back and forth over clean energy—hitting Republicans is more effective than positive

Movement – Climate-Infused Generic Vote for Congress



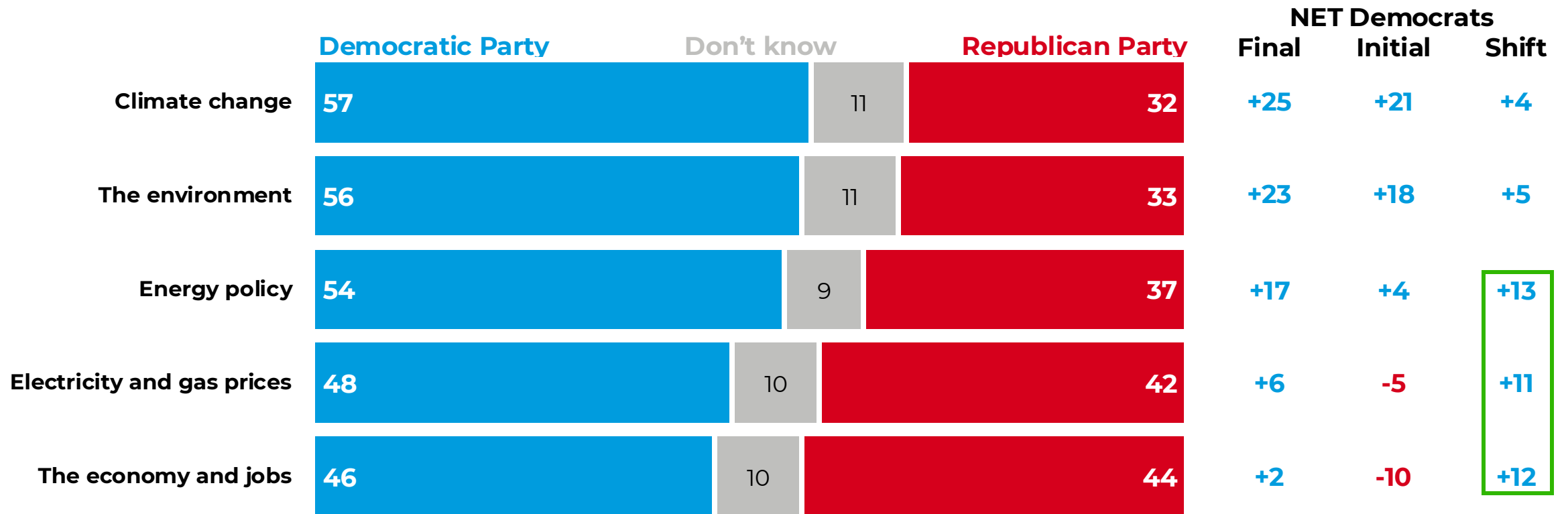
# Movement is driven by younger (<45), white non-college, and rural women. Also big gains with Hispanic voters

Vote Movement – Generic & Climate-Infused Vote for Congress

	Generic	NET Support		Change
		Initial Infused	Final Infused	
<b>Overall</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+3</b>	<b>+8</b>	<b>+8</b>
Men	-7	-4	+2	+9
Women	+5	+9	+12	+7
18-44	-6	+2	+8	+14
45-64	-2	0	+3	+5
65+	+10	+8	+11	+1
Black	+60	+51	+55	-5
Hispanic	-6	+1	+5	+11
White men	-15	-11	-8	+7
White women	-10	-4	0	+10
White non-college	-20	-16	-10	+10
White college	+2	+9	+8	+6
Urban	+22	+30	+31	+9
Suburban	-1	+1	+4	+5
Rural	-24	-22	-11	+13

# 2023 survey: Debates over H.R.1 and IRA result in sizeable gains for Democrats on energy policy, prices, and the economy

Please indicate who you trust more to handle each issue.





# **How Democrats can talk about climate and clean energy**



# Democrat Positive and Republican Negative Messaging Statements Tested

**[LEGACY/CLIMATE]** We have a basic responsibility to leave a better world for our kids, but 99% of scientists, NASA, and the Department of Defense all agree that unchecked pollution from dirty energy sources is putting our children's future at risk. By accelerating the transition to clean energy, the Democrats' new clean energy law will reduce the carbon pollution that is disrupting our climate and leave a better future for our children and grandchildren.

**[POLLUTION/HEALTH]** Democrats understand that pollution from dirty energy sources is putting the health of our families at risk. That's why they expanded clean energy, strengthened the Clean Air and Water Acts, passed a law to replace 100% of the lead pipes still in use across America, and now announced the first ever limits on cancer-causing "forever chemicals," which will protect the drinking water of 100 million Americans.

**[BIG OIL/COSTS]** Big Oil CEOs are making record profits by gouging Americans at the pump. Meanwhile, the cost of wind and solar is already cheaper than coal and gas and continues to drop. By expanding the use of affordable clean energy and providing rebates for things like energy-efficient appliances and solar panels, the Democrats' new clean energy law will save the average family hundreds of dollars per year.

**[CLEAN ENERGY JOBS]** Democrats passed a new law that will triple the production of clean energy and it's already giving our economy a much-needed boost. In the two years since the Democrats' law passed, companies around the country have announced over 1,000 new clean energy projects that will create over 250,000 new good-paying jobs - most of which don't require a college degree.

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**[LEGACY/CLIMATE]** Our leaders have a duty to listen to our nation's most respected experts, but even though 99% of scientists, NASA, and the Department of Defense all agree that climate change means a future filled with increased storms, extreme heat, and water shortages, Republican leaders insist that climate change is a "hoax" and have promised the Big Oil CEOs that they will roll back limits on the pollution that is disrupting our climate.

**[POLLUTION/HEALTH]** Republicans are selling out our children's health to the corporate polluters who fund their campaigns. They tried to pass a law that would have given the Big Oil CEOs a free pass to make even bigger profits by pumping more pollution into our air and water. Their plan would have eliminated commonsense safeguards that keep arsenic, sulfur, and benzene pollution out of our air and drinking water even though doctors say these toxic pollutants increase the rates of asthma, heart disease, lung disease, and even cancer.

**[BIG OIL/COSTS]** We just learned that Big Oil CEOs have been colluding with countries like Saudi Arabia and Venezuela to drive up prices at the pump and make record profits. Meanwhile, the cost of wind and solar is already cheaper than coal and gas. Yet, Republicans not only promised those same CEOs that they would repeal investments in affordable clean energy, they also tried to pass a law that gives the CEOs a free pass to make even bigger profits by eliminating important environmental safeguards and tax breaks.

**[CLEAN ENERGY JOBS]** Clean energy is booming across America, creating over 250,000 new high-paying jobs across the country in just the last couple of years – most of which don't need a college degree. Yet Republicans have promised the Big Oil CEOs that if they take control of Washington, they will repeal the investments in wind and solar power that have led to America's clean energy boom.

# All messages score well but talking about the impact of climate denialism on future generations scores highest

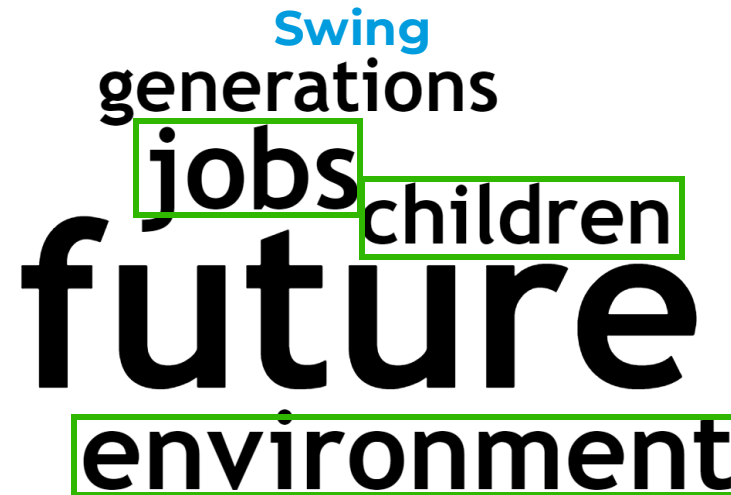
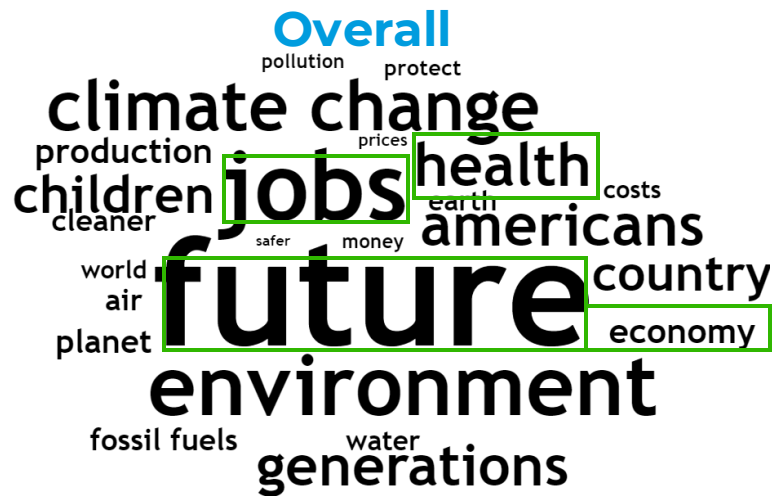
Messaging – Democrat Positives and Republican Negatives

Overall	Base	Swing	Oppo	
<i>Mean convincing (1 is not at all convincing, 5 is extremely convincing, and 3 is in the middle) to vote for a Democrat/against a Republican</i>				
3.45	4.28	3.51	2.51	[LEGACY/CLIMATE] Combined messages
3.37	4.22	3.40	2.43	[BIG OIL/COSTS] Combined messages
3.37	4.23	3.37	2.41	[CLEAN ENERGY JOBS] Combined messages
3.33	4.22	3.35	2.34	[POLLUTION/HEALTH] Combined messages

*The relative strength of each message was the same regardless of whether the approach was a positive for a Democrat or negative for a Republican.*

# After messaging, swing voters point to the future and jobs as the best reasons to vote for Democrat who supports clean energy

What is the best reason to vote for a Democratic candidate who wants to increase the production of American clean energy?



“It would boost the national **economy** and help make new **jobs** for people who need them. It would also start our country moving in the right direction by protecting the **future** of our nation by using **less fossil fuels**.”

“Better for **future generations**.”

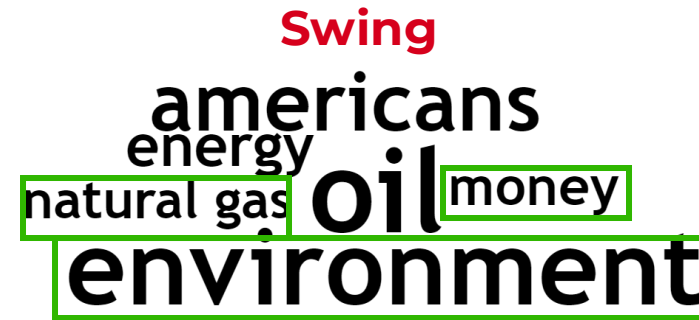
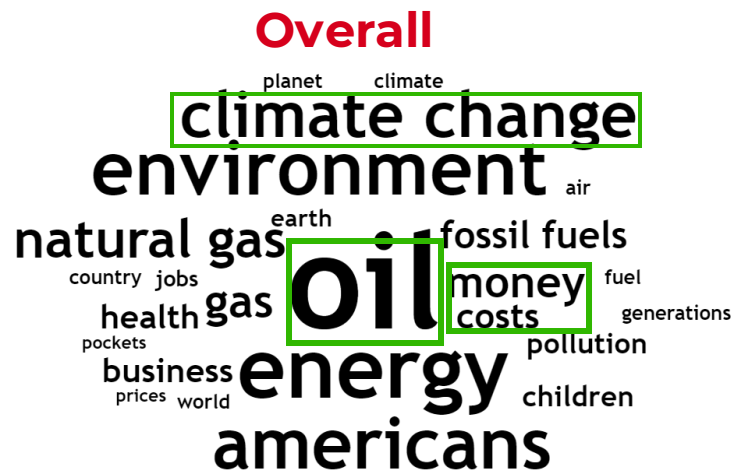
“For ours and our **children's future**.”

“It’s a way to be self sufficient and create **future American jobs** as well as being less harmful.”

“**Clean energy** is the best option for our **environment** and **health** and will be the **future** of sustainable energy.”

# After messaging, swing voter point to Republicans' fealty to Big Oil money as a top reason to vote against Republicans who oppose clean energy

What is the best reason to oppose a Republican candidate who wants to increase the production of American oil and natural gas?



“They just want to **line their pockets with money** donated by oil companies.”

“Climate change results **in droughts which increases food costs**, and increase pollution causes developmental and long-term **health** issues.”

“Any candidate that is looking to increase the production of **oil and natural gas** is **not someone who is working for the people.**”

“The fact that they are dismissing climate change in **order to profit from oil CEOs campaign money.**”

# Our messaging defeats messaging from the GOP, but Democrats are most vulnerable to false claims they are forcing expensive EVs on everyone and driving up costs with regulations

## Negative Democrat Messaging

### Overall Swing

Mean convincing to vote against a Democrat (1-5)

3.17	3.25	<b>[SPLIT- ELECTRIC VEHICLES]</b> Democrats are constantly forcing their liberal lifestyle on all Americans. For instance, they want to take away your freedom to buy a car by forcing you to drive an expensive electric vehicle-even when most Americans can barely afford a car at all. Republicans will instead fight against this de facto EV mandate that will just drive-up costs and ensure Americans have a choice.
3.11	3.26	<b>[COSTS]</b> The Democrats' woke anti-oil policies like shutting down the Keystone XL pipeline already drove gas prices to record heights. Now, the excessive regulations in the Democrats' green energy law are making things even worse by forcing America to abandon affordable and reliable oil and natural gas and replace them with expensive and untested technologies, driving up costs for families and businesses.
3.04	3.06	<b>[ECONOMY/JOB]</b> To grow our economy and create good-paying jobs, we need to get the federal government out of the way. Republicans will do just that by unshackling the American energy industry to produce more energy here - at home. Meanwhile, the Democrats' excessive regulations and green energy boondoggle are strangling the American oil and gas industry and will kill millions of American oil and gas jobs.
3.0	3.18	<b>[NATIONAL SECURITY]</b> Democrats misguided green energy policies are jeopardizing our national security - making America and the rest of the world more reliant on dirty energy from places like Russia and Saudia Arabia while funneling American taxpayer dollars to China and making us more dependent on the Chinese companies that dominate the renewable energy industry.
2.99	3.14	<b>[SPLIT- LIBERAL]</b> Democrats are constantly forcing their liberal lifestyle on all Americans. The truth is the science is mixed on climate change and there are differing views on the impact of traditional energy sources. Meanwhile, Republicans will take a balanced approach to energy and climate - promoting clean energy sources like natural gas while expanding American energy production to create jobs and lower costs.



# **Conclusions and Recommendations**

# Conclusions and Recommendations

**Democrats should embrace a fight over climate and energy.** Republicans believe they have a winning issue with clean energy but are clearly misguided. While voters are not looking for a war on fossil fuels, there is a strong desire to move toward clean energy.

**Climate denial is a potential wedge issue for Republicans.** Not only do swing voters not find “lawmakers who deny climate change is a threat” acceptable, but opposition voters no longer do either—showing just how out of touch Republican leadership has become on this issue.

**There is an opportunity to go on offense when it comes to costs.** American voters are concerned about costs and inflation, yes, but they reject the notion they must choose between lower costs and clean energy. In fact, by large numbers, swing voters believe that moving toward clean energy, like wind and solar, will save American families money.

**Focus more on the transition TOWARD clean energy than the transition AWAY from fossil fuels...** While we know that, in the end, this is a zero-sum game, voters don't think about energy that way. They are more in favor of clean energy than they are opposed to fossil fuels. This isn't to say that we should not talk about moving away from fossil fuels, just that it should always be paired with what we're moving towards, which should have greater emphasis.

# Conclusions and Recommendations

**While we win either way, Democrats do better attacking Republicans on climate than touting their own, positive record.** When matched against attacks from Republicans, both positive Democratic messaging and messaging attacking Republicans move the vote in our favor. However, we make more gains when going negative on Republicans.

**Remind people why we need to act now: a responsibility to leave a better future for our kids.** The idea that we have a responsibility to address climate change in order to leave a better and healthier world for our children and grandchildren continues to remain the most powerful frame.

- **When going negative on Republicans, highlight their fealty to Big Oil – and what that means for Americans’ pocketbooks:** Big Oil CEOs have been caught colluding with foreign governments to drive prices up, yet Republicans have promised those same CEOs that they will give them handouts and kill clean energy, even though clean energy is cheaper.
- **Paint a picture of what it will look like for our children if Republicans get their way:** more severe—and strange—weather like storms, extreme heat, and water shortages. While both positive and negative frames work, we get more of a lift from hitting Republicans.
- **And talk about high-quality jobs, including for those without a college degree:** Voters liked hearing about new jobs that are being created and giving a boost to the economy—especially that many of these are good paying jobs that do not require a college degree. Even opposition voters concede that clean energy will create quality jobs and strengthen America’s economy.



# Conclusions and Recommendations

**Don't be afraid of including environmental justice in your messaging but be inclusive and thoughtful in how you deploy justice messaging.** Even a few years ago, an explicit focus on environmental justice could end up hurting our cause. That's not the case now (at least in most cases). We have found that environmental justice messaging is strongest – not only with swing voters but with our base and voters of color as well – when it is more inclusive. I.E., we are stronger when we focus on “low-income communities, including communities of color” than when we simply say “communities of color.”

- **Even better, stress that “no community should be left behind (including the communities of color that have been harmed the most by pollution).”** It is even stronger to talk about how “every community deserves a fair opportunity to thrive” and how “no community should be left behind.”

**Stop worrying and learn to love environmental regulations (or, even better, “clean air and water safeguards”).** The conventional wisdom is that “regulation” is a bad word with swing voters. But that is not at all the case, at least when it comes to the environment. Voters have an overwhelmingly favorable view of (clean air and water/environmental) regulations, and they agree that we need stronger regulations on oil and gas companies. We have seen in past work, (clean air and water/environmental) “safeguards” are slightly stronger than “regulations,” but both are quite popular. Meanwhile, while “environmental” (regulations/safeguards) are popular, “clean air and water” (regulations/safeguards) are even more so.

# Conclusions and Recommendations

Instead of doing this:	Do this:
× <b>Playing defense</b> on climate or energy.	✓ <b>Embrace the debate</b> and <b>go on offense</b> .
× <b>Ceding the economic or cost debate</b> to anti-environment politicians	✓ Aggressively, and proactively, <b>make the case that clean energy and climate action will create good-paying jobs and bring down energy prices.</b>
× Focusing primarily on <b>moving away from fossil fuels.</b>	✓ Put more focus on <b>moving towards clean energy.</b>
× <b>Being afraid to talk about “regulations.”</b>	✓ <b>Embrace the idea of stronger environmental regulations.</b> Even better, talk about the <b>need for stronger “clean air and water safeguards.”</b>
× <b>Talking about pollution</b> generally.	✓ <b>Talk about “toxic” pollution/chemicals</b> and mention <b>specific pollutants like mercury, benzene, arsenic, etc.</b>
× Using the term <b>“electric vehicles.”</b>	✓ Use the term <b>“zero emission vehicles.”</b>
× Only talking about <b>“extreme weather.”</b>	✓ Talk about <b>“strange and severe weather”</b> and <b>tie climate change to specific examples like wildfires, drought, flooding, storms, or extreme heat.</b>
× Focusing environmental justice arguments on <b>“marginalized communities”</b> or <b>“communities of color.”</b>	✓ Focus them on <b>“low-income communities, including communities of color”</b> and talking about how <b>“no community should be left behind.”</b>
× Using the term <b>“green jobs”</b>	✓ Use the term <b>“Clean energy jobs.”</b>

# Thank You

New York

Washington, DC

Hartford

Chicago

Denver

Seattle