

**GREENBERG QUINLAN ROSNER** RESEARCH

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May 19, 2009

# President Obama and National Security

Democracy Corps



**DEMOCRACY CORPS**  
CARVILLE ♦ GREENBERG

## The Survey

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- **Democracy Corps survey of 1,000 2008 voters**
- **840 landline, 160 cell phone weighted**
- **Conducted May 10-12, 2009**
- **Data shown reflects 852 likely 2010 voters**
- **Margin of error +/- 3.3 percent on likely voter data**

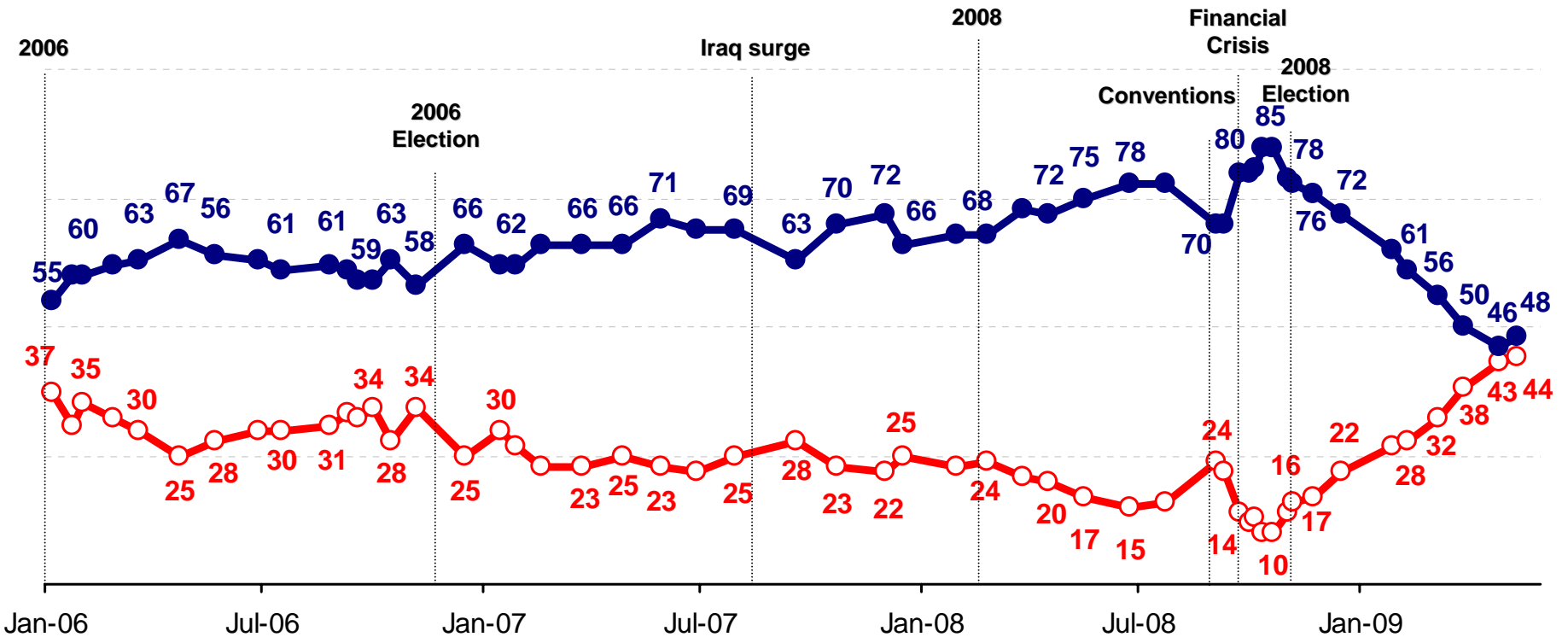
# National Mood and Political Context

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# Country direction

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

○ Right direction  
● Wrong track



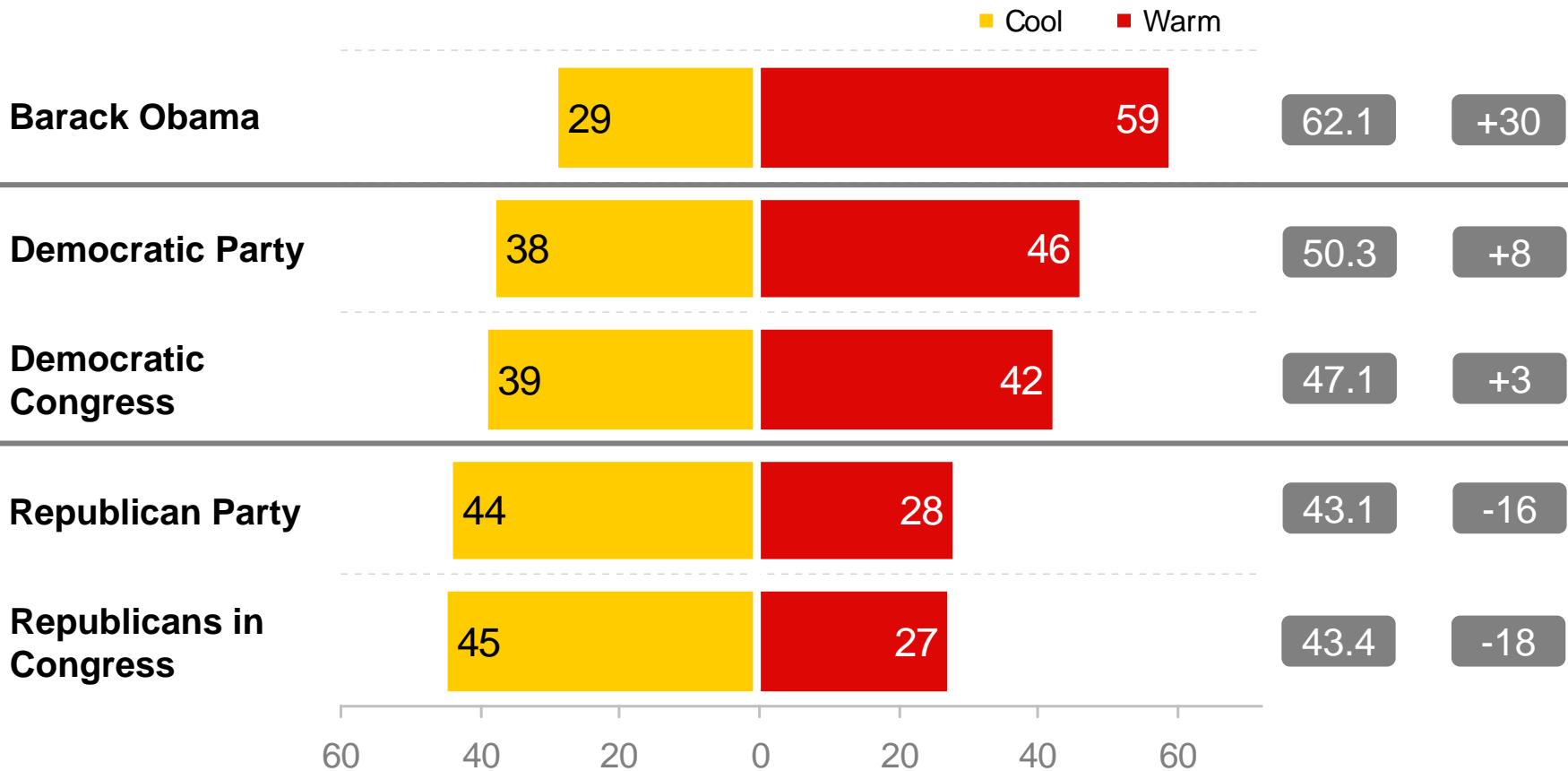
Net Difference: -18, -25, -33, -42, -28, -31, -30, -25, -35, -24, -41, -32, -43, -41, -48, -44, -35, -47, -50, -41, -44, -52, -58, -63, -46, -66, -75, -62, -59, -50, -33, -24, -12, -3, -4

\*Note: From Democracy Corps surveys conducted over the last several years. Data reflects likely voters. After 2008 election, data reflects likely 2010 voters.

# Obama enjoys high favorability, Republicans struggling

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.

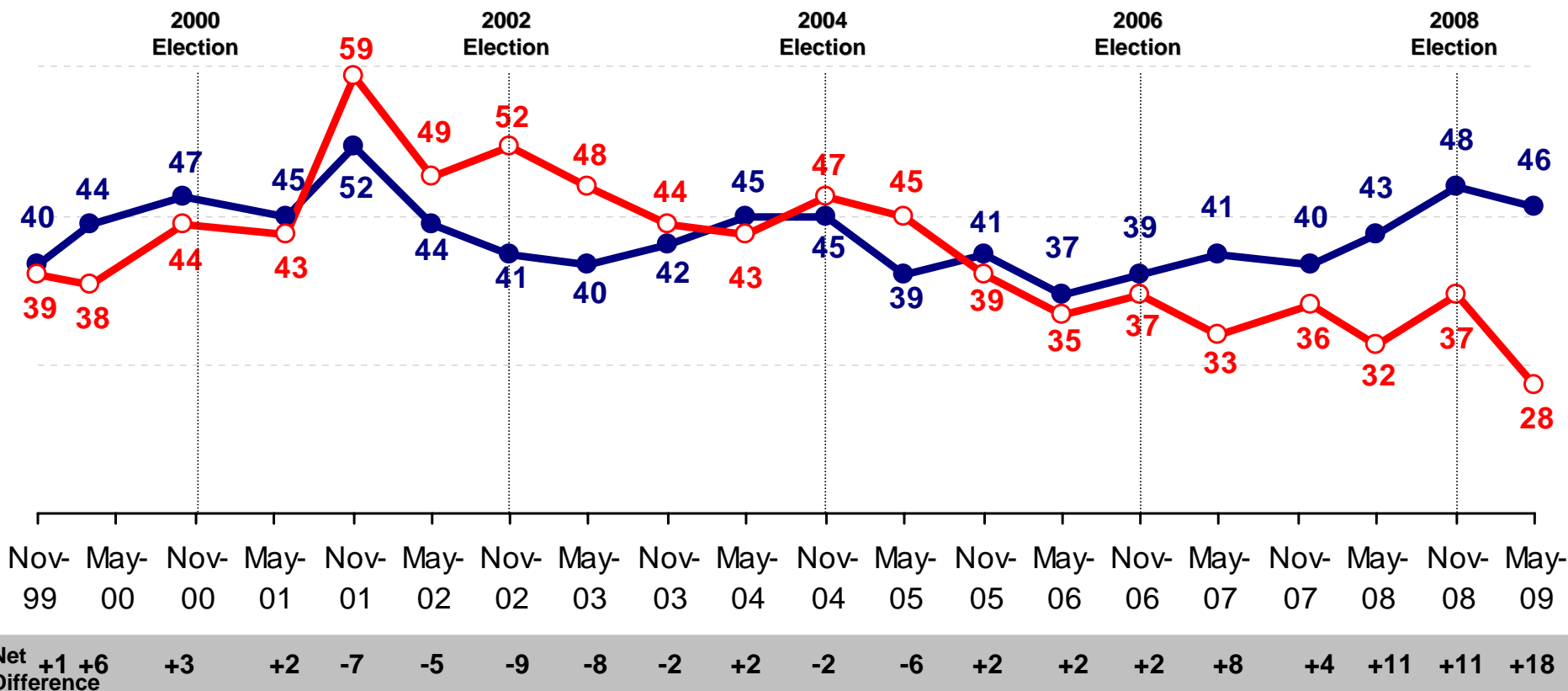
**Therm. Mean** **Warm - Cool**



# Party favorability gap at high point

Now, I'd like to rate your feelings toward some people and organizations, with 100 meaning a VERY WARM, FAVORABLE feeling; zero meaning a VERY COLD, UNFAVORABLE feeling; and 50 meaning not particularly warm or cold.

● Democratic Party  
○ Republican Party



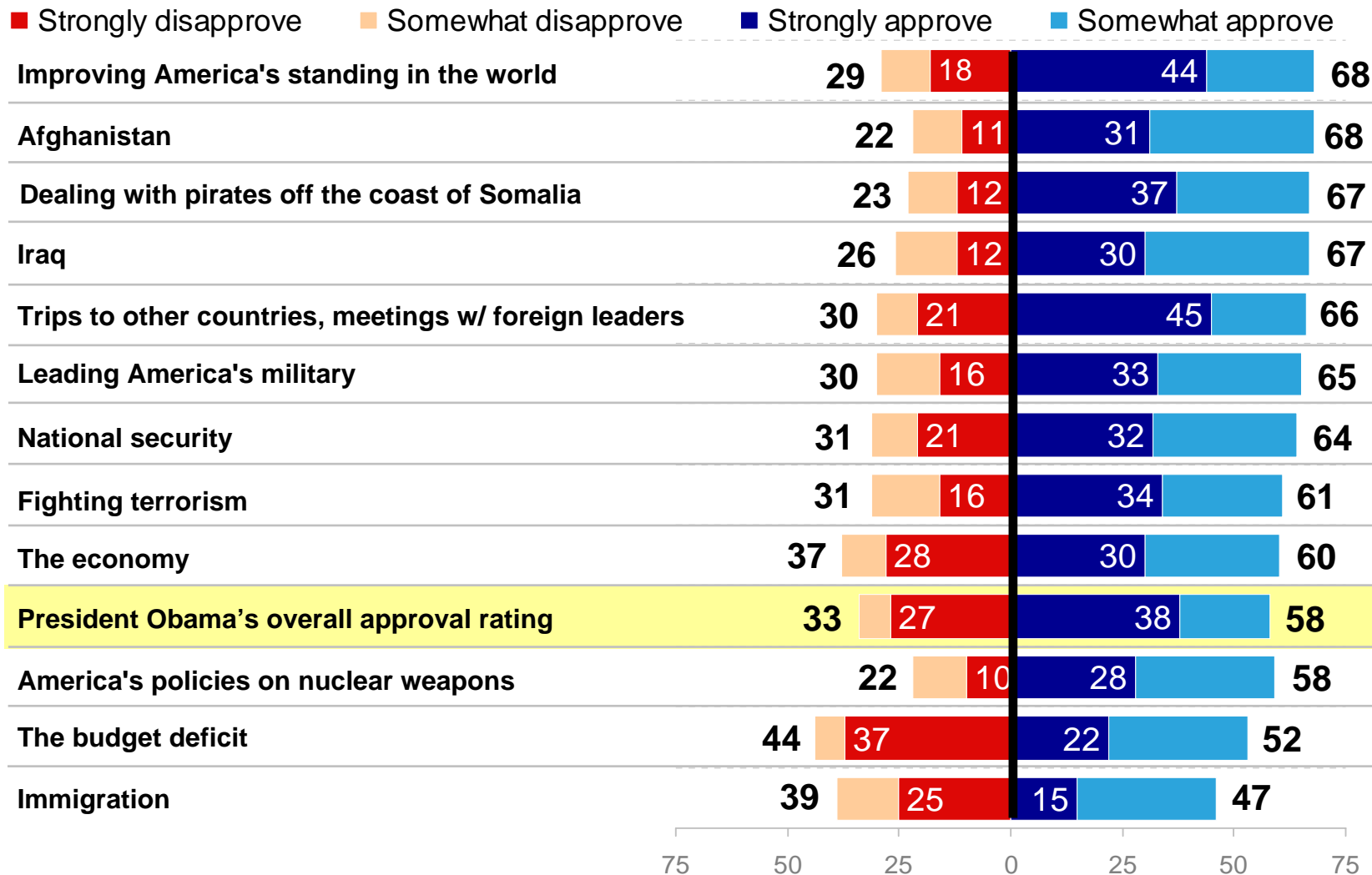
\*Note: Data represents the WARM ratings from Democracy Corps surveys conducted since its inception. Data reflects likely voters giving each party a >50 favorable rating at the marked point in time – rating is representative of one survey at each 6-month point. No survey between each point shows the favorability gap to be greater than +18 at May 2009.

# Obama: High Marks on National Security

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# Strong approval for Obama's handling of national security

*Now I'm going to read you a list of issues. For each one, I would like you to tell me if you approve or disapprove of the job being done by President Obama on that issue.*



# Voters Disagree Obama Increasing Risks

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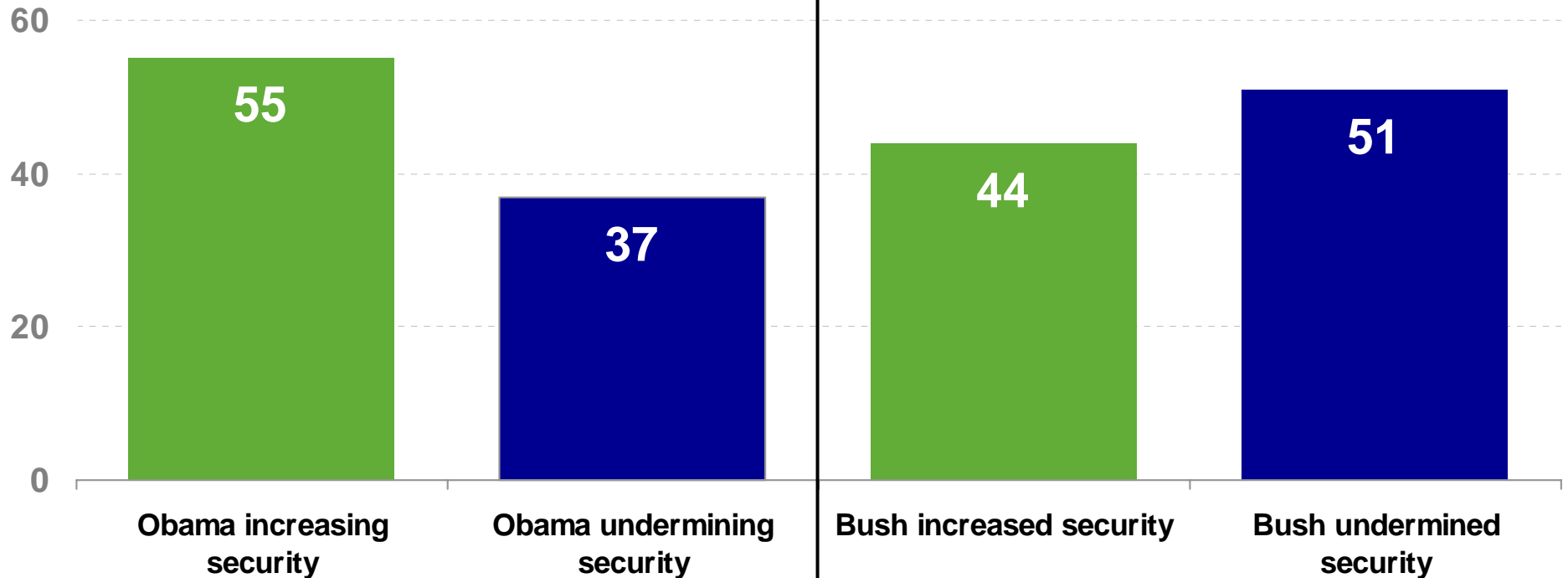
## Obama increasing security; Bush undermined security

**First Statement:** All told, President Obama's foreign and national security policies are **INCREASING** America's security.

**Second Statement:** All told, President Obama's foreign and national security policies are **UNDERMINING** America's security.

**First Statement:** All told, President Bush's foreign and national security policies **INCREASED** America's security.

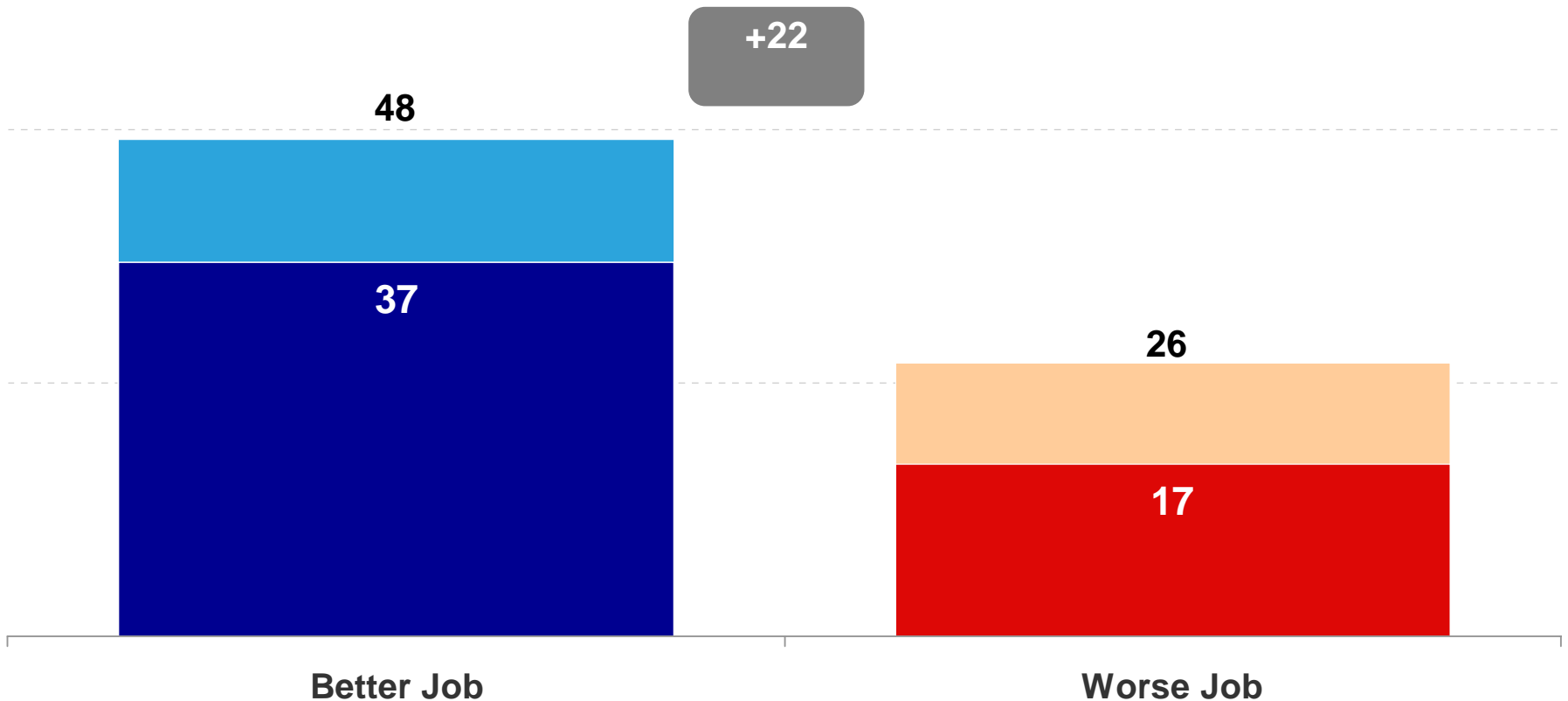
**Second Statement:** All told, President Bush's foreign and national security policies **UNDERMINED** America's security.



# Obama seen as doing better on national security than Bush

*When it comes to national security policy, do you think President Obama is doing better, worse, or about the same as President George W. Bush?*

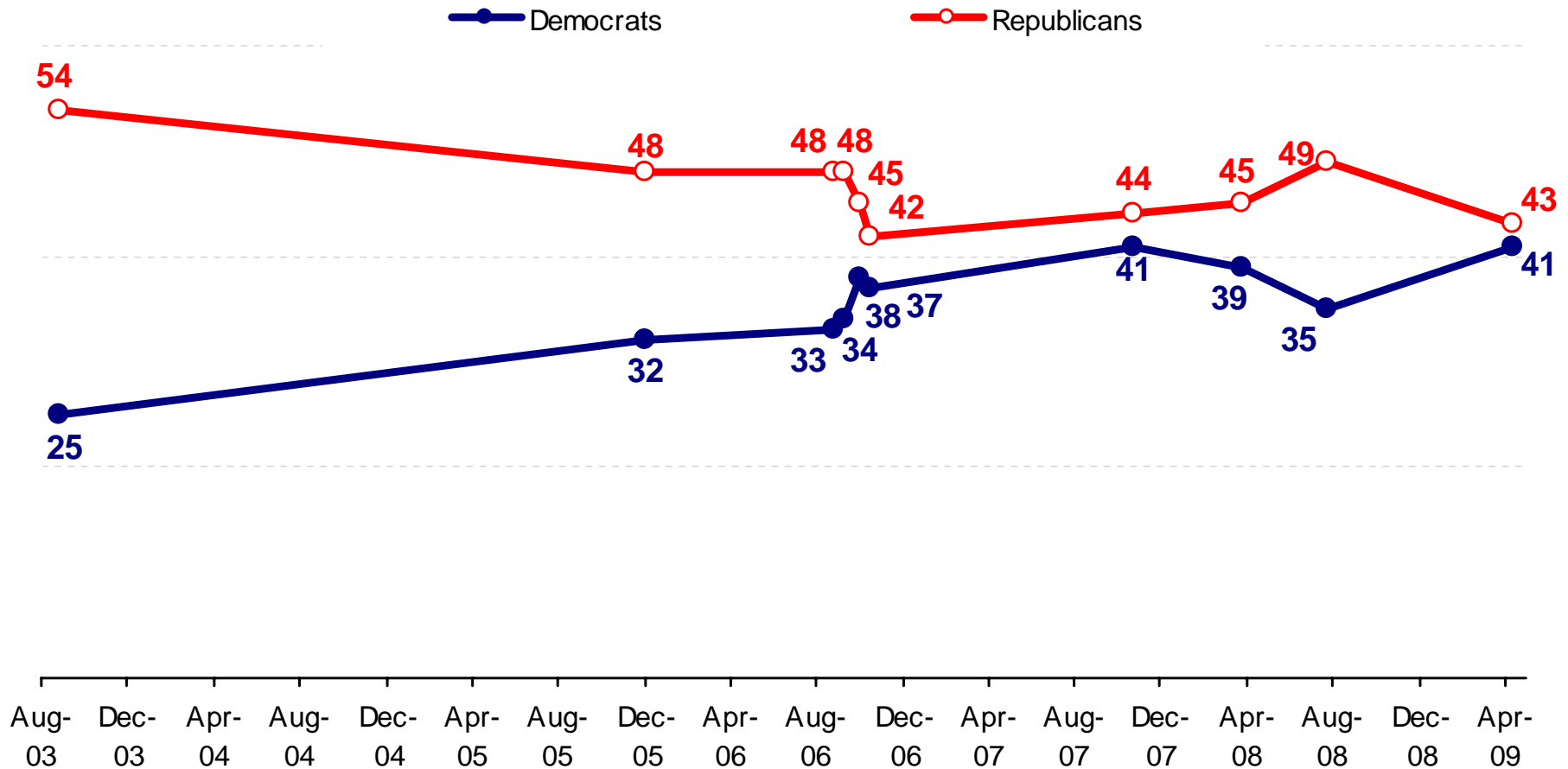
■ Much Better     
 ■ Somewhat Better     
 ■ Much worse     
 ■ Somewhat worse



Democratic National Security Gap Erased

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# Which party better on “national security”

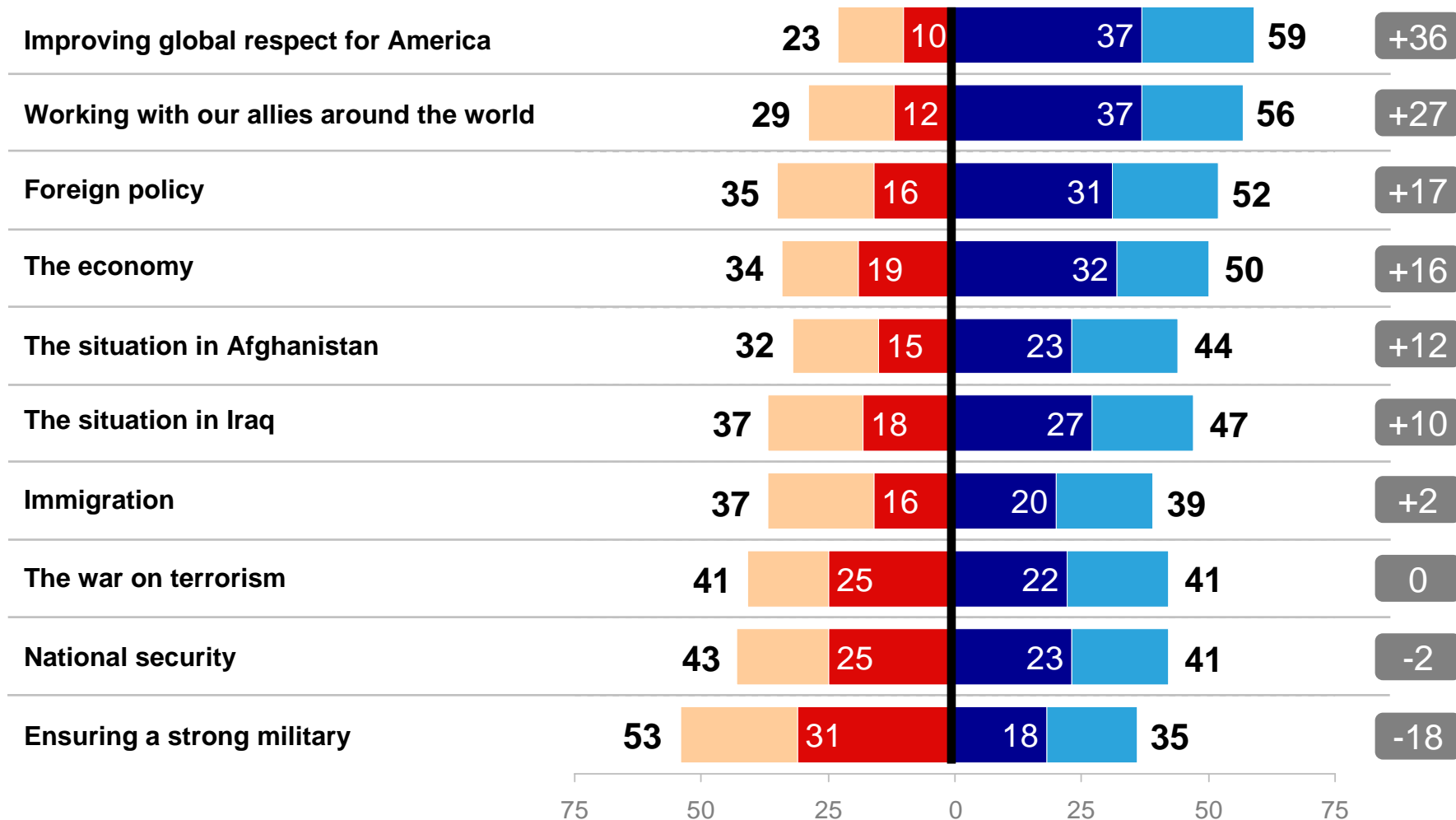


# Democrats favored on wide range of foreign policy issues

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

Dem. –  
Rep.

■ Reprs. much better ■ Reprs. somewhat better ■ Dems. much better ■ Dems. somewhat better



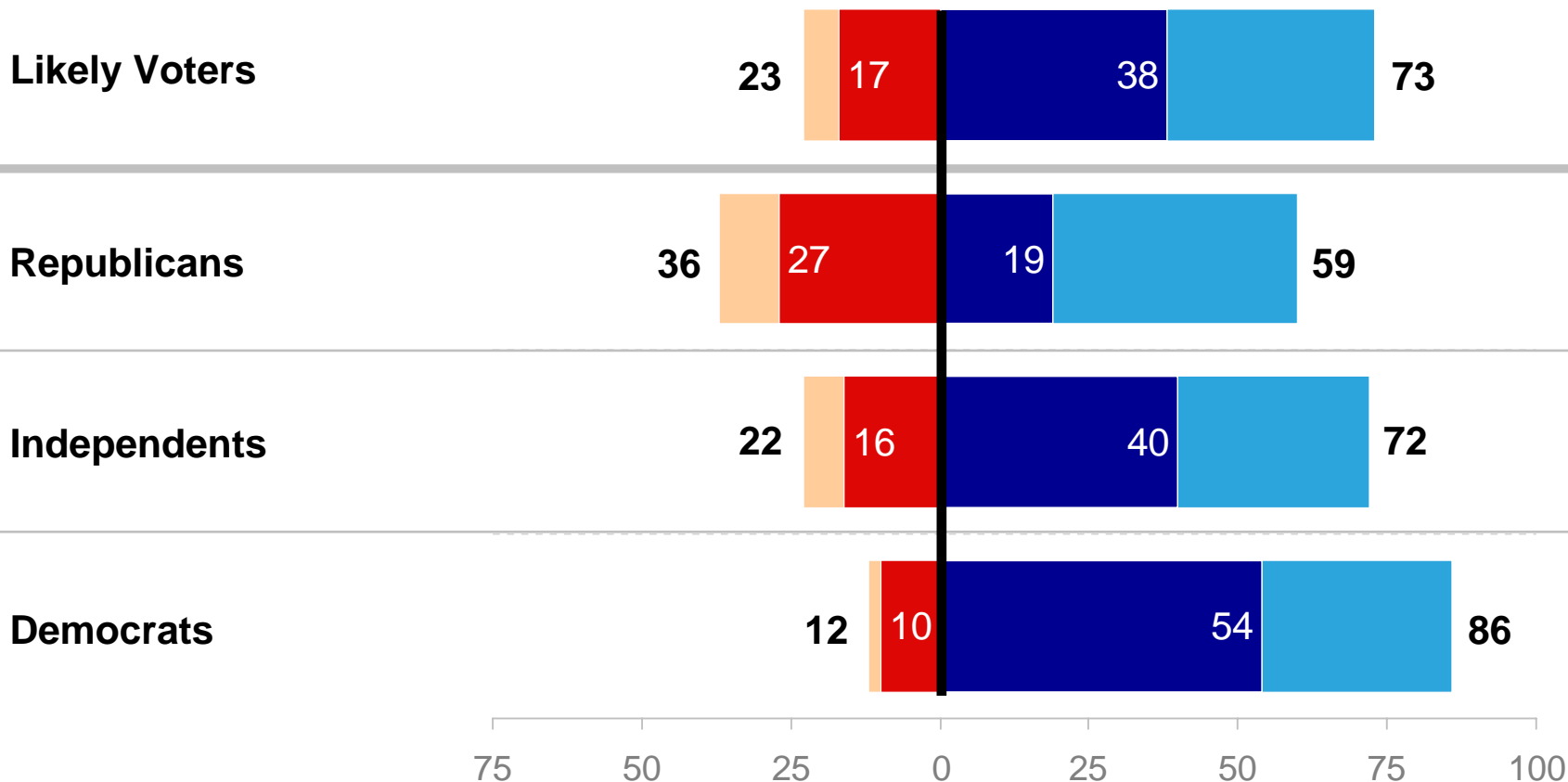
Iraq

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## Bipartisan support for Iraq withdrawal plan

*As you may know, President Obama announced that he will withdraw America's combat troops in Iraq by August 2010, but will leave up to fifty-thousand support troops for functions such as training, logistics, and support until 2011. Do you approve or disapprove of this plan?*

■ Strongly Disapprove    
 ■ Somewhat Disapprove    
 ■ Strongly Approve    
 ■ Somewhat Approve

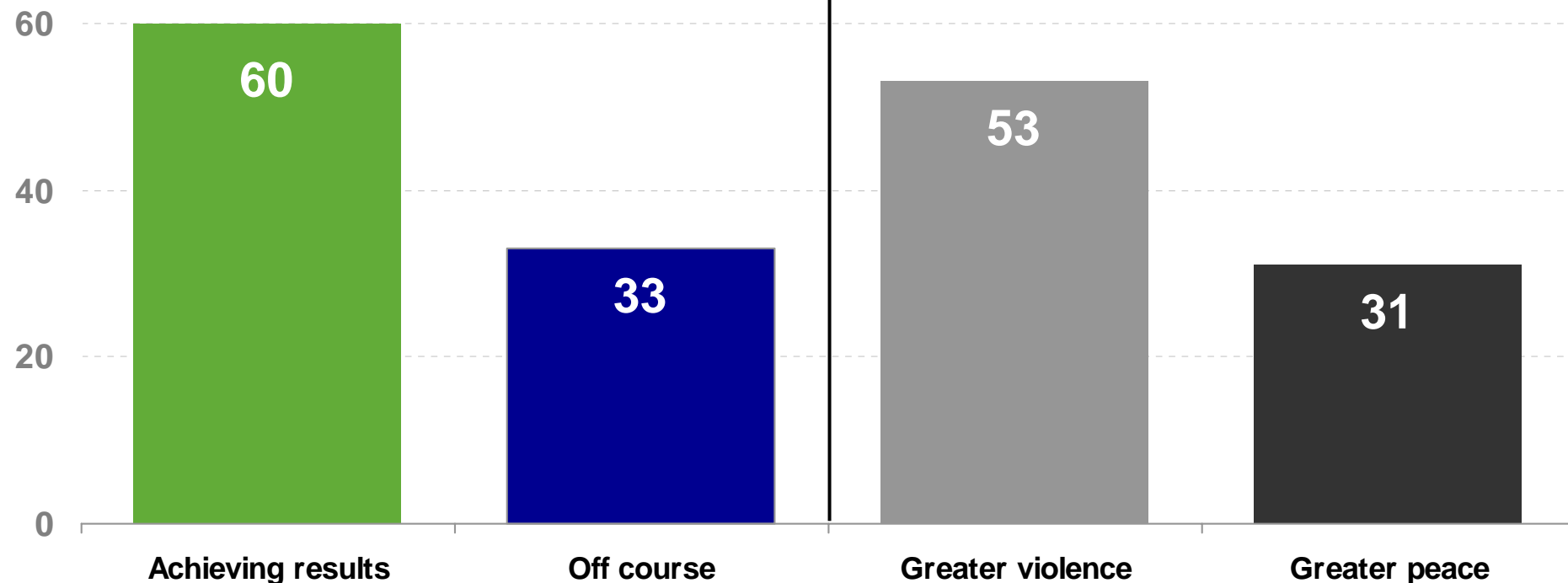


## Strategy in Iraq is achieving results, but withdrawal will create violence

**First Statement:** The strategy that the U.S. and its allies are pursuing in Iraq is achieving results

**Second Statement:** The strategy that the U.S. and its allies are pursuing in Iraq is seriously off course

As you may know, the US is pursuing a plan to withdraw its combat forces from Iraq over the coming months. After the United States withdraws its combat forces, do you think Iraq will move toward greater peace or greater violence?



# Afghanistan

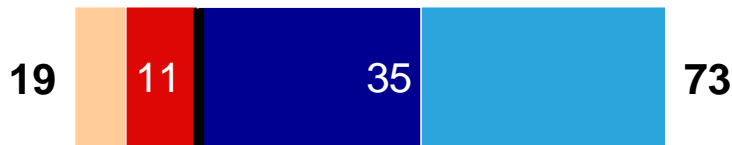
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# Obama's Afghanistan strategy supported across party lines

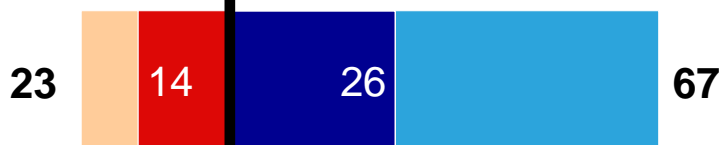
*As you may know, President Obama recently announced a new strategy for the war in Afghanistan, which includes our NATO allies sending more support personnel, and the US sending an additional seventeen-thousand combat troops. Based on what you know, do you approve or disapprove of this new strategy?*

■ Strongly Disapprove    
 ■ Somewhat Disapprove    
 ■ Strongly Approve    
 ■ Somewhat Approve

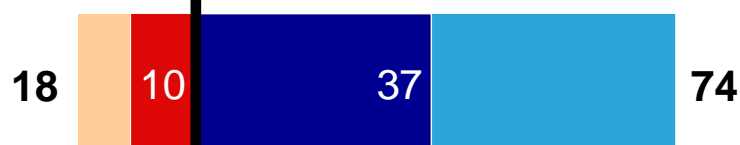
**Likely Voters**



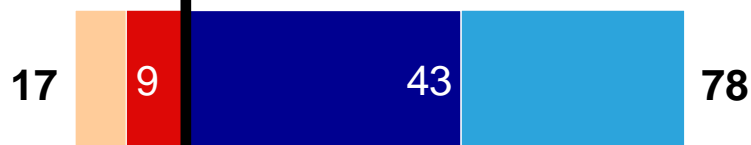
**Republicans**



**Independents**



**Democrats**



75    50    25    0    25    50    75    100

# Many unclear about Afghanistan mission

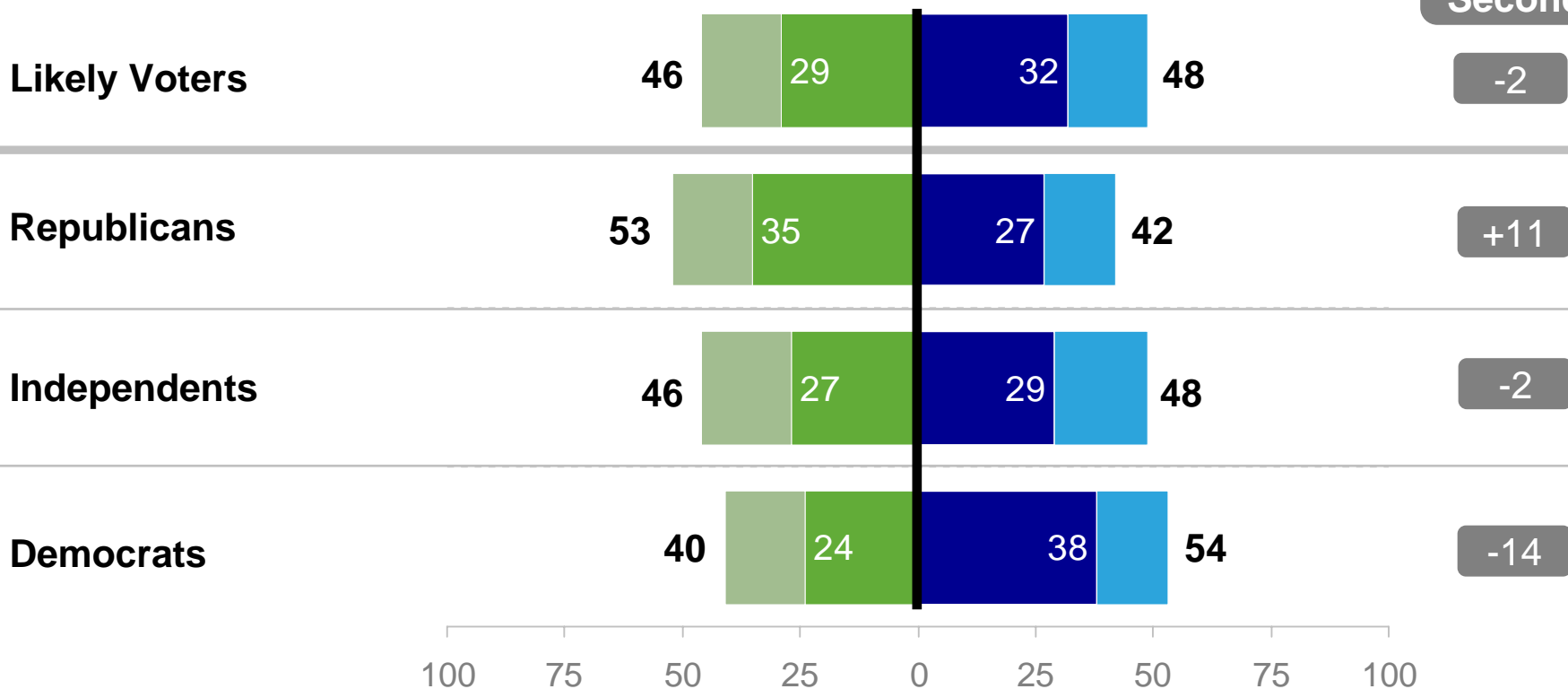
Now I'm going to read you some pairs of statements. After I read each pair, please tell me whether the FIRST statement or the SECOND statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right.

**First Statement:** Our military mission in Afghanistan seems pretty clear to me.

**Second Statement:** I do not believe we have a clear military mission in Afghanistan.

■ First Statement Strongly ■ First Statement Somewhat ■ Second Statement Strongly ■ Second Statement Somewhat

**First – Second**



## Why the US is fighting in Afghanistan

Now I am going to read you a list of reasons some people give for why the U.S. is fighting in Afghanistan. Which TWO do you think are main reasons the US is fighting in Afghanistan?

**Prevent it from becoming a safe haven for terrorists like al Qaeda**

54

**Stop the resurgence of the Taliban**

42

**Prevent Pakistan from falling to Islamic extremists**

26

**Capture Osama bin Laden**

20

**Protect oil interests**

18

**Promote democracy in that region**

18

0 15 30 45 60

# Nuclear Policy

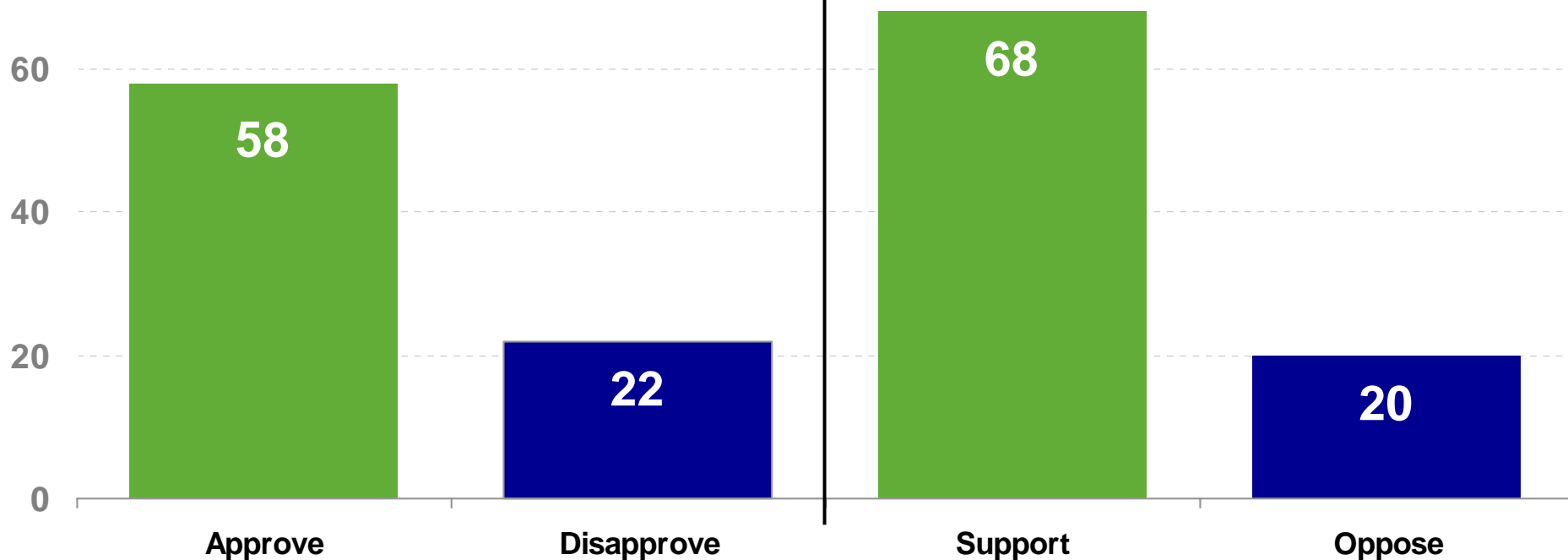
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## Support for Obama policies and job performance on nuclear weapons

*Now I'm going to read you a list of issues. For each one, I would like you to tell me if you approve or disapprove of the job being done by President Obama on that issue....*

***"America's policies on nuclear weapons"***

*While in Europe, President Obama announced the US would pursue [the goal of a world without nuclear weapons, including] new negotiations with Russia to reduce both countries' nuclear arsenals, a global ban on nuclear testing, & new efforts to stem proliferation of nuclear materials and weapons. Based on what you know, do you support or oppose these policies?*



# Opposition to total elimination of nuclear weapons

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.

**First Statement:** It should be America's goal to eliminate all nuclear weapons in the world.

**Second Statement:** Eliminating all nuclear weapons in the world is not realistic or good for America's security.

■ First Statement Strongly ■ First Statement Somewhat ■ Second Statement Strongly ■ Second Statement Somewhat

**First – Second**

**Likely Voters**

32 25 43 63

+31

**Republicans**

25 17 55 67

-42

**Independents**

31 27 42 66

-35

**Democrats**

39 30 34 59

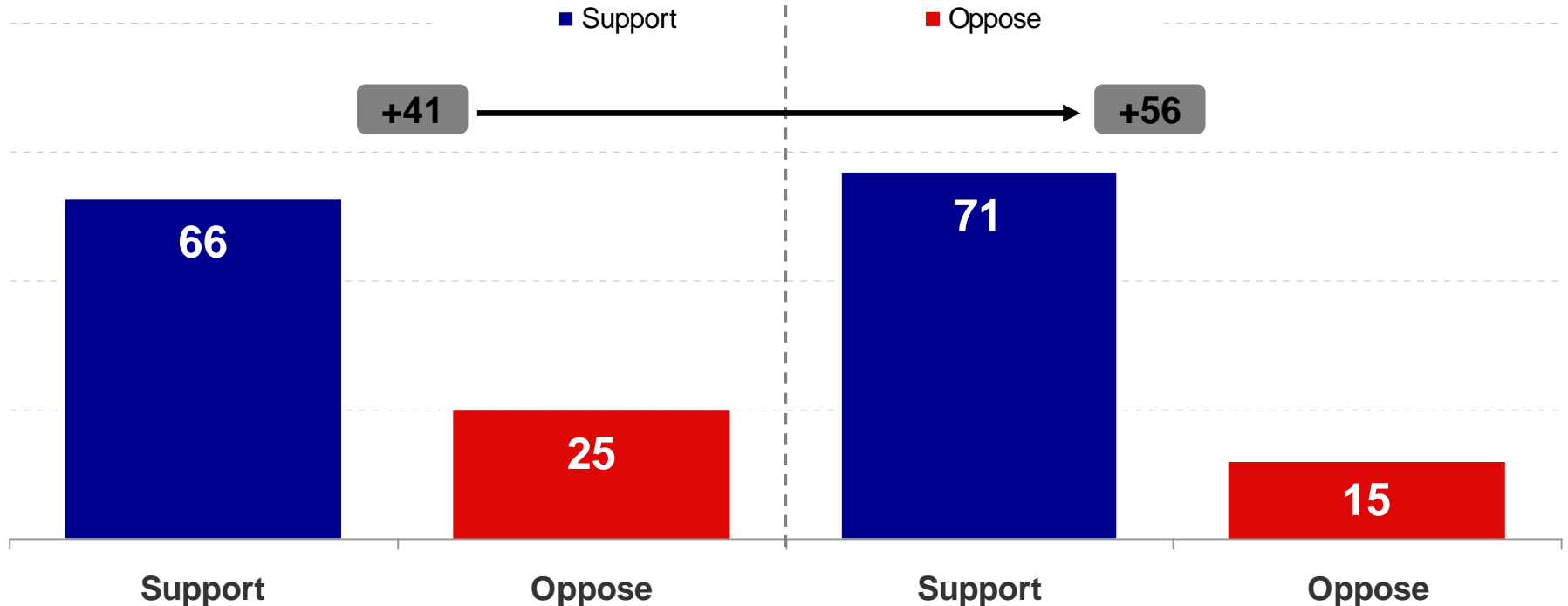
-20



## Support for Obama nuclear policy: with and without “zero option”

While in Europe, President Obama announced that the U.S. would pursue **the goal of a world without nuclear weapons**, including new negotiations with Russia to reduce both countries' nuclear arsenals, a global ban on nuclear testing, and new efforts to stem the proliferation of nuclear materials and weapons. Based on what you know, do you support or oppose these policies?

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## WMD terrorism, hostile states with nukes biggest threats to U.S. security

*Now I am going to read you a list of threats that some people say America faces. Please tell me which TWO of these you personally consider to be the biggest threats to America's security?*

**Terrorists obtaining nuclear, chemical, or biological materials**

**34**

**Nuclear weapons programs in Iran, North Korea, and other hostile states**

**32**

**America's dependence on foreign oil**

**28**

**Drug violence and immigration from Mexico**

**24**

**Terrorist attacks**

**21**

**Resurgence of the Taliban and al Qaeda in Afghanistan**

**18**

**Increasing power of Russia and China**

**15**

**Continuing extremist violence in Iraq**

**6**

**Global epidemics, like swine flu**

**5**

0 10 20 30 40

# Torture

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# Public split on partisan lines on whether torture justified

**First Statement:** It is sometimes justified for the US officials to torture detainees, such as to prevent terrorist attacks.

**Second Statement:** It is never justified for American officials to use torture to get information from detainees.

■ First Statement Strongly ■ First Statement Somewhat ■ Second Statement Strongly ■ Second Statement Somewhat

**First – Second**

**Likely Voters**

50 35 39 45

+5

**Republicans**

70 53 19 25

+45

**Independents**

52 37 38 42

+10

**Democrats**

30 18 58 66

-36



# Opposition to inquiry into Bush administration interrogation policies

**First Statement:** It is important to launch a bipartisan inquiry into the Bush administration's use of harsh interrogation techniques such as waterboarding.

**Second Statement:** It is not useful to launch a bipartisan inquiry into the Bush administration's use of harsh interrogation techniques such as waterboarding.

■ First Statement Strongly ■ First Statement Somewhat ■ Second Statement Strongly ■ Second Statement Somewhat

**First – Second**

**Likely Voters**



-23

**Republicans**



-60

**Independents**



-24

**Democrats**



+8



# Leadership of the Military

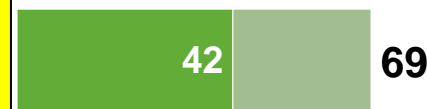
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# Obama messages on national security

*Now, I am going to read you some things President Obama might do or say. For each one, please tell me whether it would make you feel much more favorable about President Obama, somewhat more favorable, just a little more favorable, no more favorable, or less favorable about President Obama.*

■ Much more favorable ■ Somewhat more favorable

Obama says: I believe the foundation of our national security are our men and women in uniform. That is why I proposed a \$17 billion increase in defense spending, including the largest increase in benefits for veterans in history, with quality health care for 500,000 low-income veterans previously ineligible.



Obama says: I am determined to use our influence in the world to improve life for Americans. That is why I am working to reduce our dependence on foreign oil, working with foreign leaders to regulate the financial sector worldwide, and closing down tax loopholes that allow co.s to send US jobs abroad.



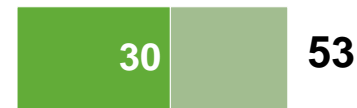
Obama says: I am determined to deter and defeat the terrorists who endanger America. That is why I sent additional US troops to fight al Qaeda in Afghanistan, and launched new efforts to prevent rogue states and terrorists from getting their hands on nuclear weapons or materials.



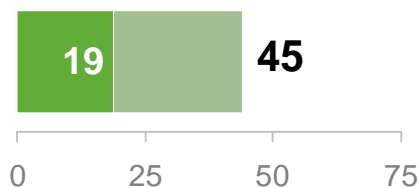
Obama says: I am determined to address the full range of threats that now face America. That is why we expanding the fight against drug wars on the Mexican border, launching new efforts to combat global warming, and taking aggressive steps to prevent the spread of global epidemics like swine flu.



Obama says: I am determined to restore America's leadership in the world. That is why I coordinated with our NATO allies on new strategies in Iraq and Afghanistan, closed the prison at Guantanamo, and stepped-up global negotiations to combat global warming.



Obama says: SecDef Gates and I are launching deep reforms in procurement & cancelling unneeded weapons systems. That will save billions, which we are using to expand the troop strength of army, the marines, and our special forces, and investing in new intelligence capabilities, such as the unmanned aerial vehicle highly in demand Iraq and Afghanistan.



# The Domestic Connection

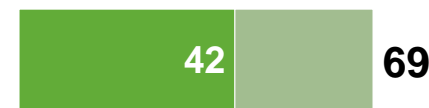
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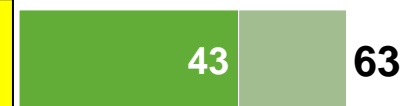
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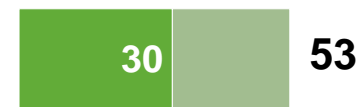
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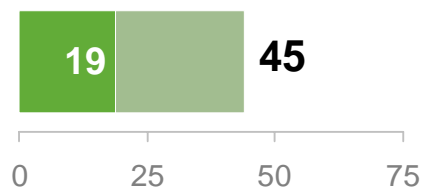
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