

# END CITIZENS UNITED

DEMOCRATS FIGHTING FOR REFORM

## Who Is End Citizens United?

End Citizens United is committed to ending the tidal wave of unlimited and undisclosed money that has reshaped our politics and damaged our democracy. Our mission is to end Big Money in politics and fix our rigged political system by electing campaign finance reform champions, passing state ballot measures, and elevating this issue in the national conversation.



3,900,000

*members*



400,000

*donors*



2,700,000

*contributions*



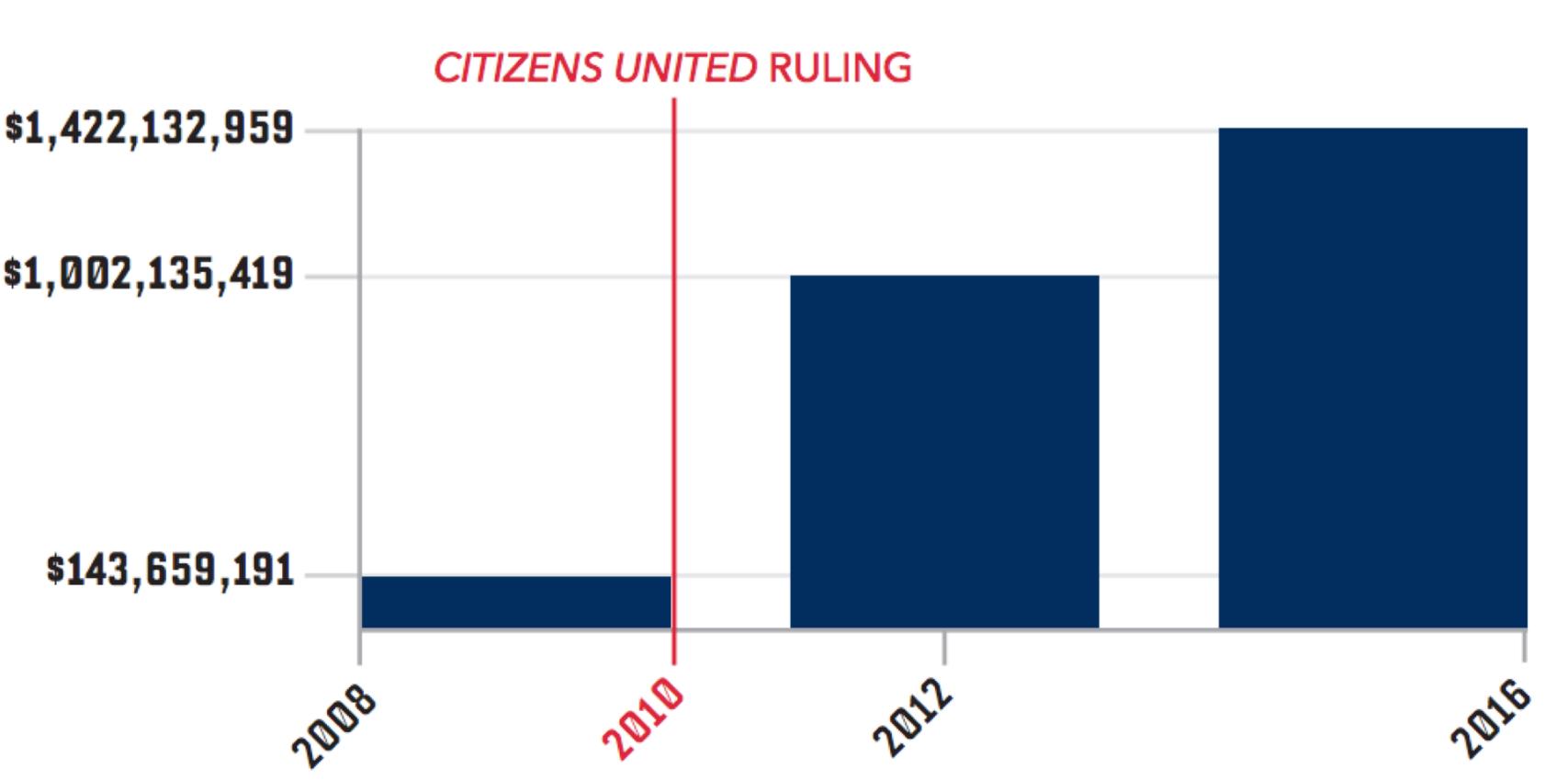
\$38 Million

*raised*

# Engaging on Money in Politics

1. **The world has changed** and the resentment towards special interests influence has a reached a tipping point where voters will make it a central part of their voting decision. **Five years ago they were willing to let it slide, but no longer.** Trump's success reinforces this, at the core of his campaign he ran against the system/both parties/the establishment. This is an opportunity for Democrats to be the party of change

# Since the 2010 ruling, outside spending has skyrocketed



**Total Outside Spending** (Center for Responsive Politics)

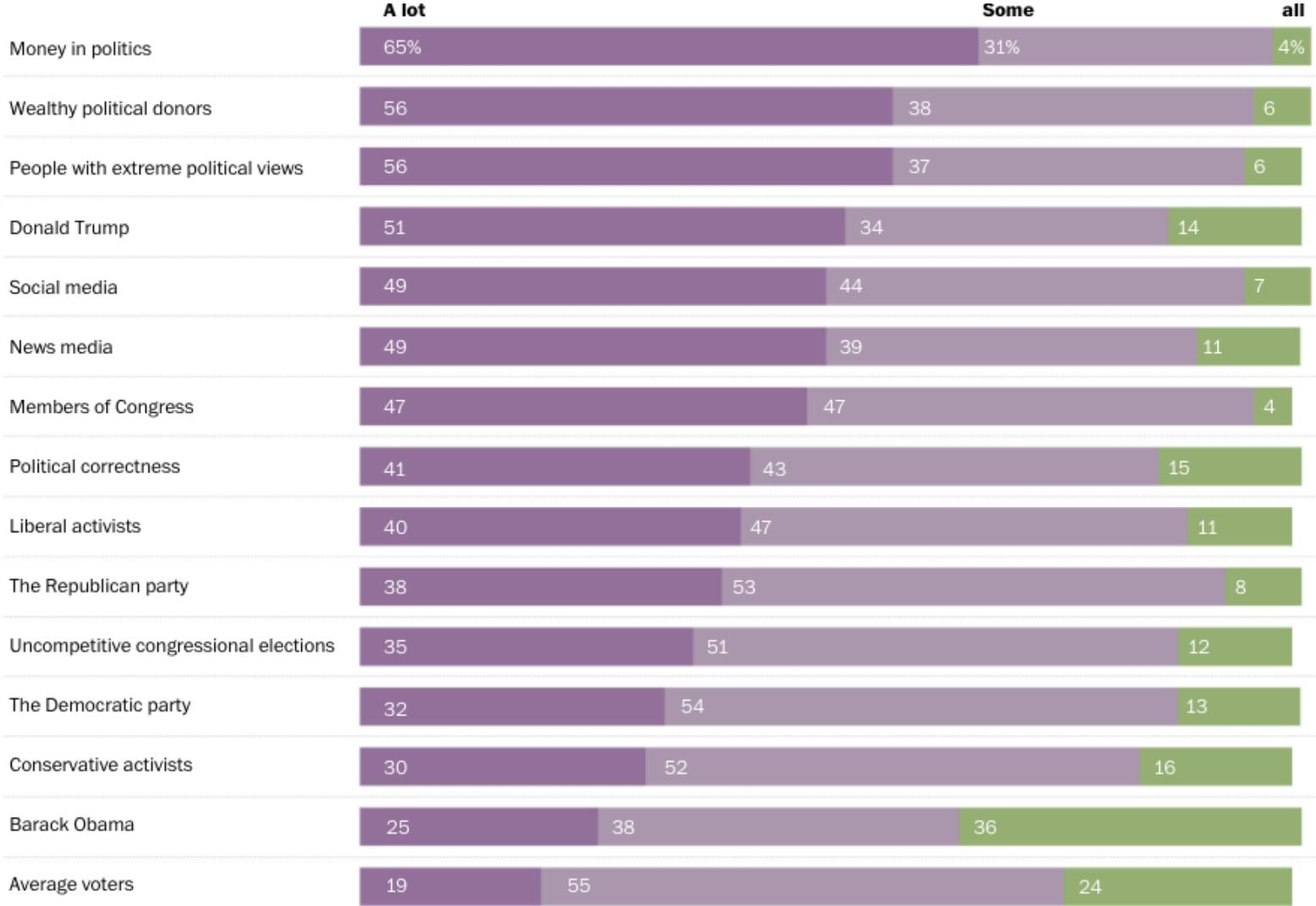


# Voters see money in politics as the root of Washington's dysfunction

An October 2017 Washington Post / University of Maryland poll showed that **more than anything else, Americans believe money in politics is at the root of Washington's dysfunction.**

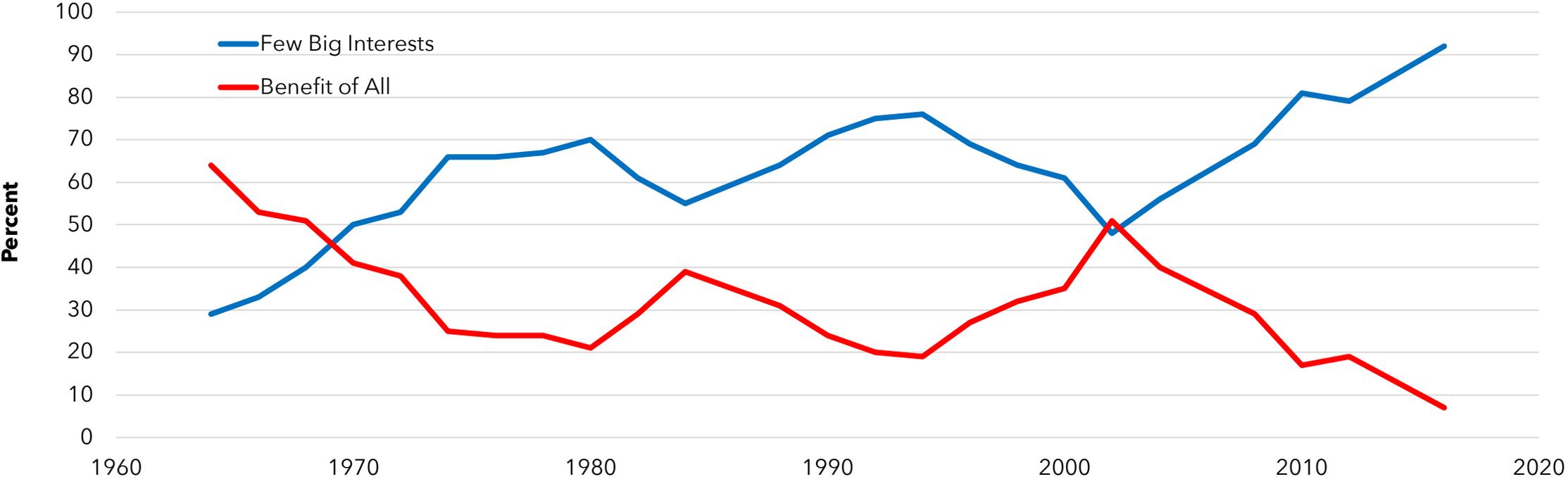
*How much, if at all, do you blame each of the following for causing dysfunction in the U.S. political system?*

- 96 percent of voters said they blame money in politics "a lot" or "some," including 65 percent who responded "a lot."
- 94 percent of voters said they blame wealthy political donors "a lot" or "some," including 56 percent who responded "a lot."



# They increasingly believe the government is run by big interests at the expense of everyone else

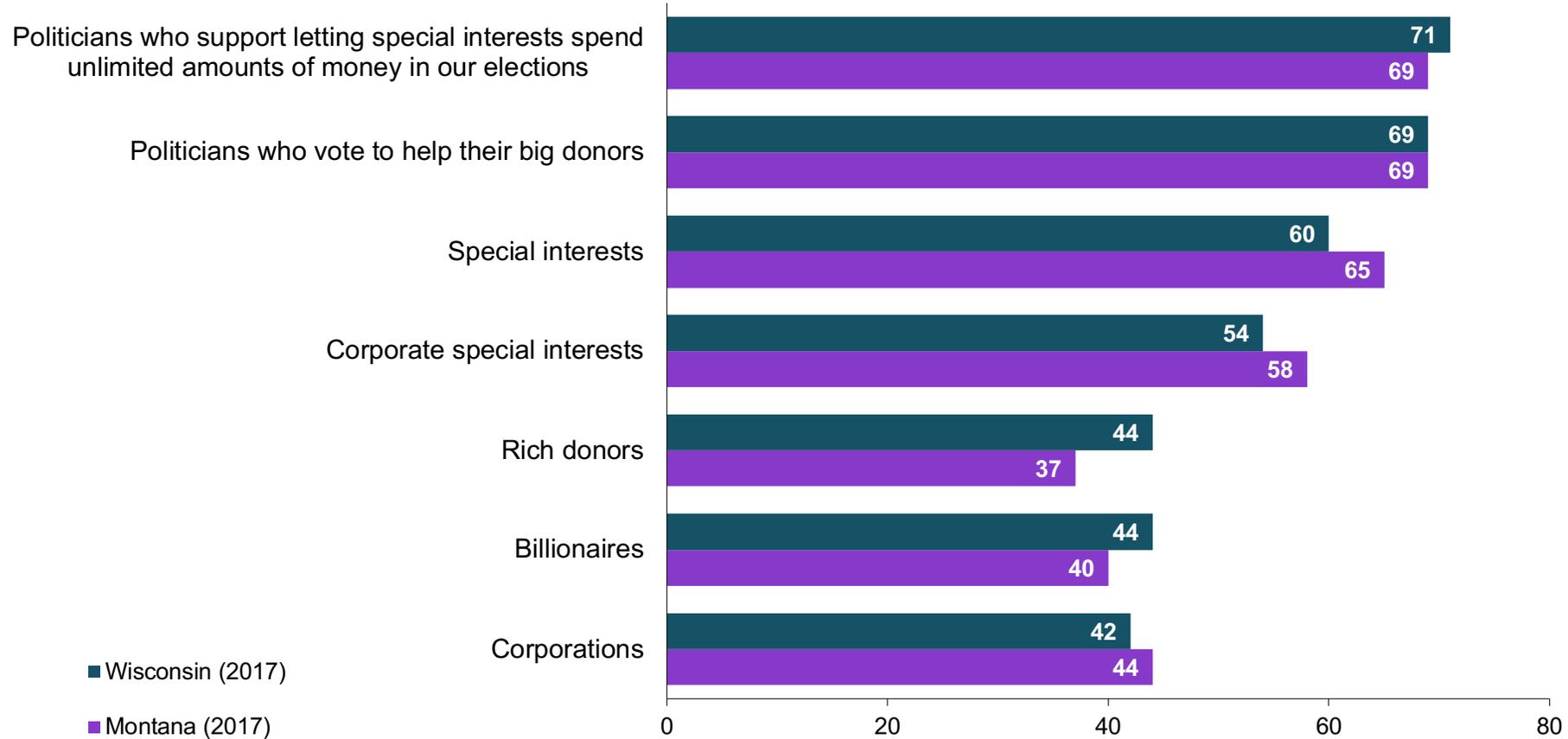
*Would you say the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves, or for the benefit of all the people?*



Source: American National Election Survey, CBS News, New York Times, Washington Post, Merit, PIPA, WPO, University of Maryland Program for Public Consultation, Gallup

# And the core blame goes to Politicians

**Blame for Amount of Money in Politics (% A lot of blame)**



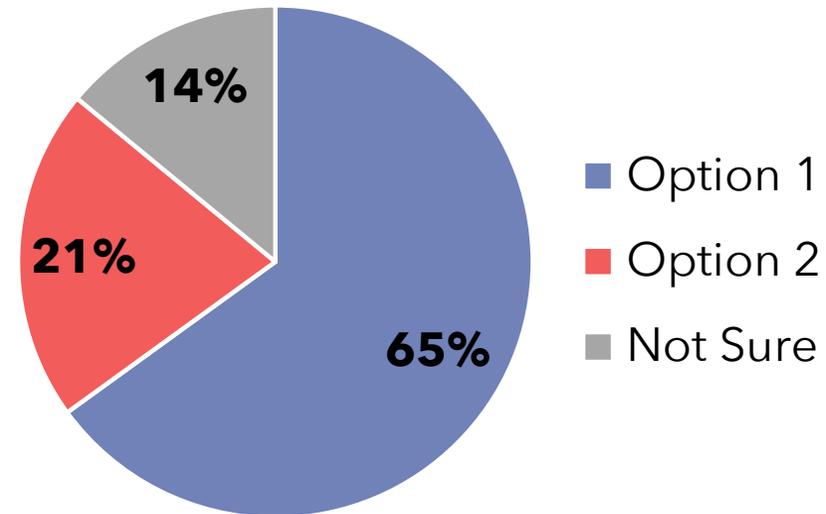
ECU/ALG Polls, April 21-26, 2017, 800 interviews in WI and MT, margin of error: +/-3.46%

# Voters do not need to be convinced that money in elections matters

In fact, **65% of voters say that special interests spending money in elections affects them or their families.**

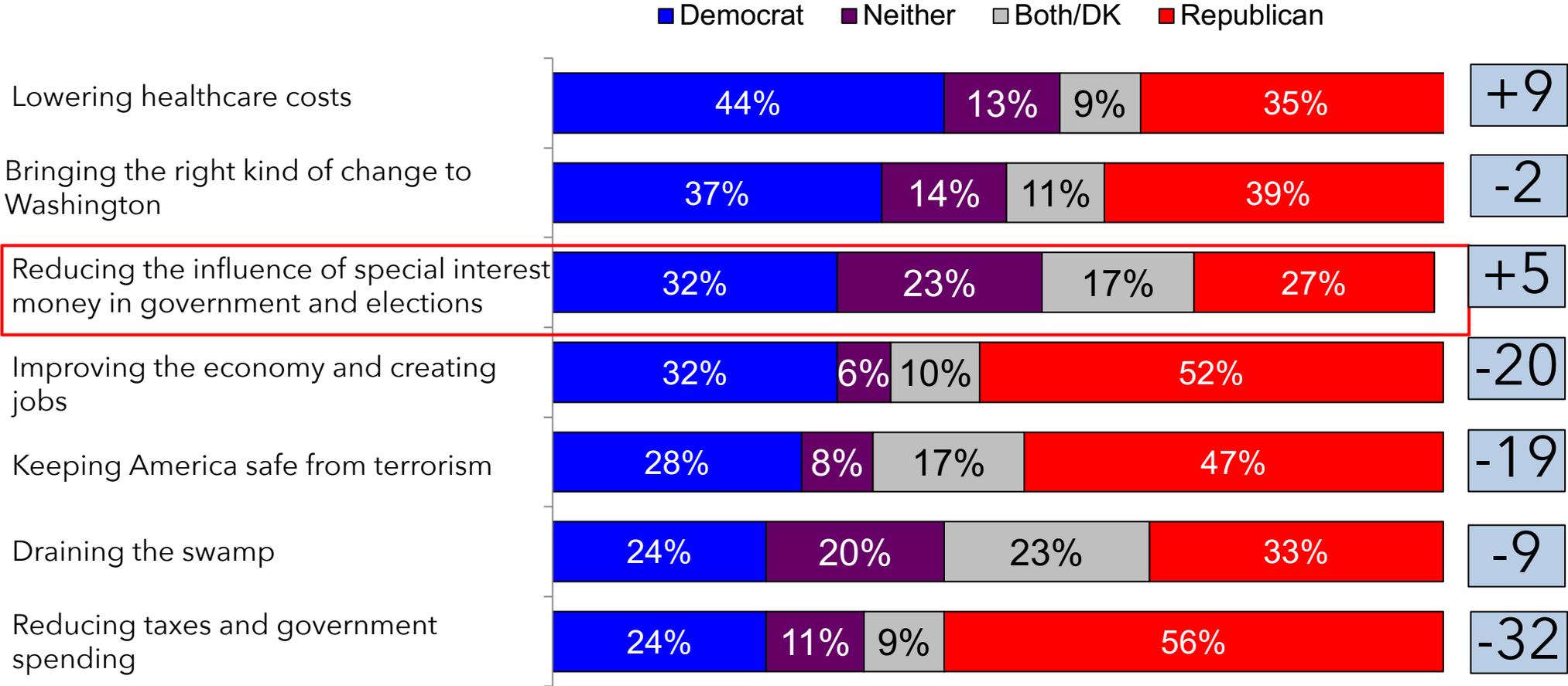
**OPTION 1:** The amount of money that special interests spend on political campaigns impacts issues that affect me or my family.

**OPTION 2:** Even though I may not like how much special interests spend on political campaigns, it does not impact issues that affect me or my family.



# Democrats lead on reducing money in politics, but trail on Drain the Swamp and bringing change to Washington - and there are large undecided blocs

"I'm going to read you another list of issues. This time, I'd like you to tell me which political party you think will do a better job handling that issue"

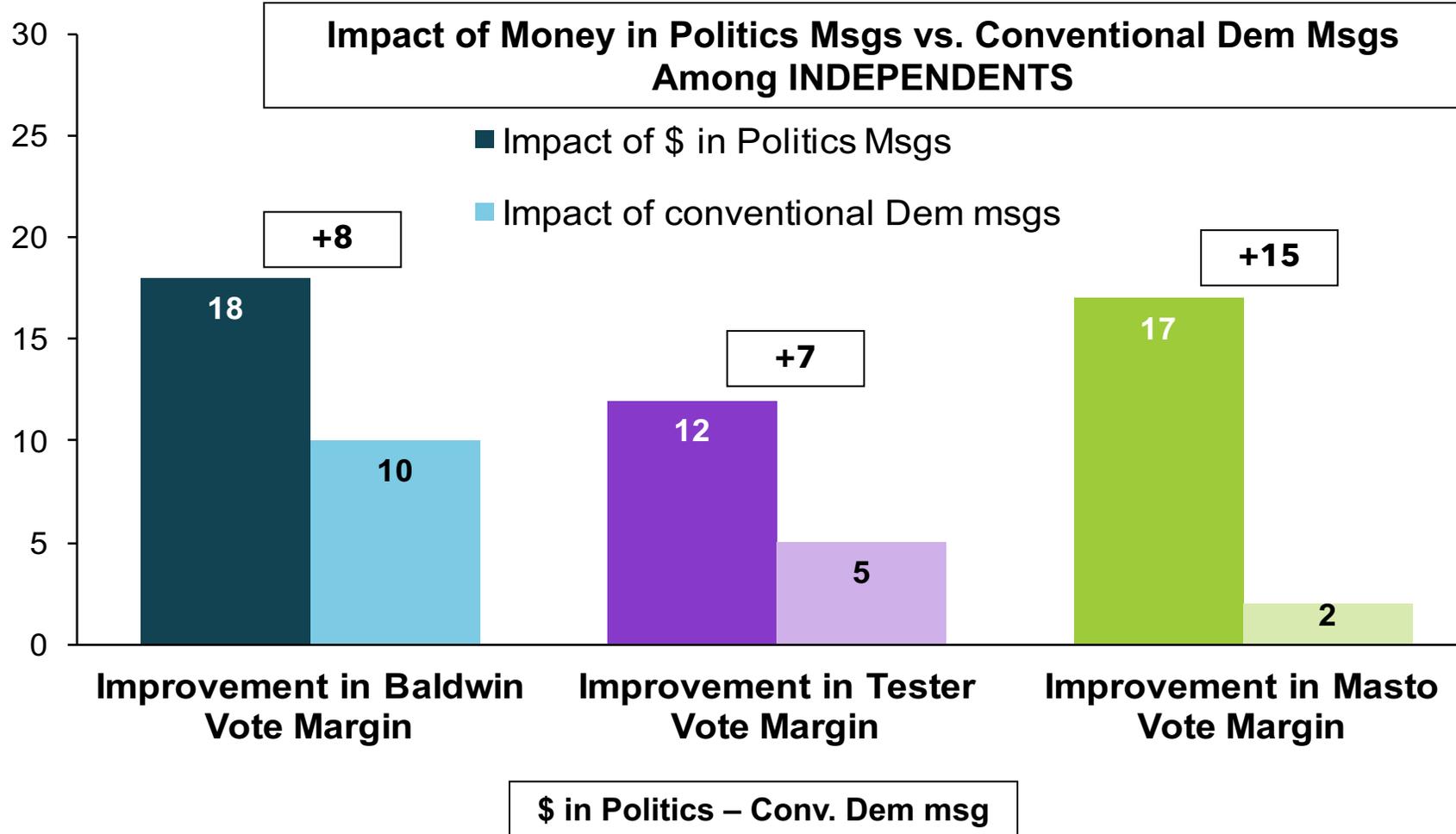


ECU/GQR Poll, January 16-24, 2018, 1000 interviews in congressional battleground districts, margin of error: +/-3.1%

# Engaging on Money in Politics

1. The world has changed and the resentment towards the influence of special interests has reached a tipping point where voters will make it a central part of their voting decision.
2. **Using campaign finance and reform as part of your campaign opens doors and reaches audiences where the typical Democratic messages aren't always enough.**

# This issue moves key voters



**Groups Most Impacted by Money in Politics Messages**

<b>WISCONSIN (2017)</b>		
➤ Rural voters		+30
➤ Smwt Conservative		+24
➤ Non-college Indep		+21
<b>MONTANA (2017)</b>		
➤ Moderate Men		+21
➤ Non-college Indep		+18
➤ Rural voters		+17
<b>NEVADA (2016)</b>		
➤ Latinos		+24
➤ Non-white men		+22
➤ Independents		+17

ECU/ALG Polls, April 21-26, 2017, 800 interviews in WI and MT, margin of error: +/-3.46%; ECU/GQR Poll, July 23-27, 2016, margin of error: +/- 3.46%.

# Nevada 2016 Case Study

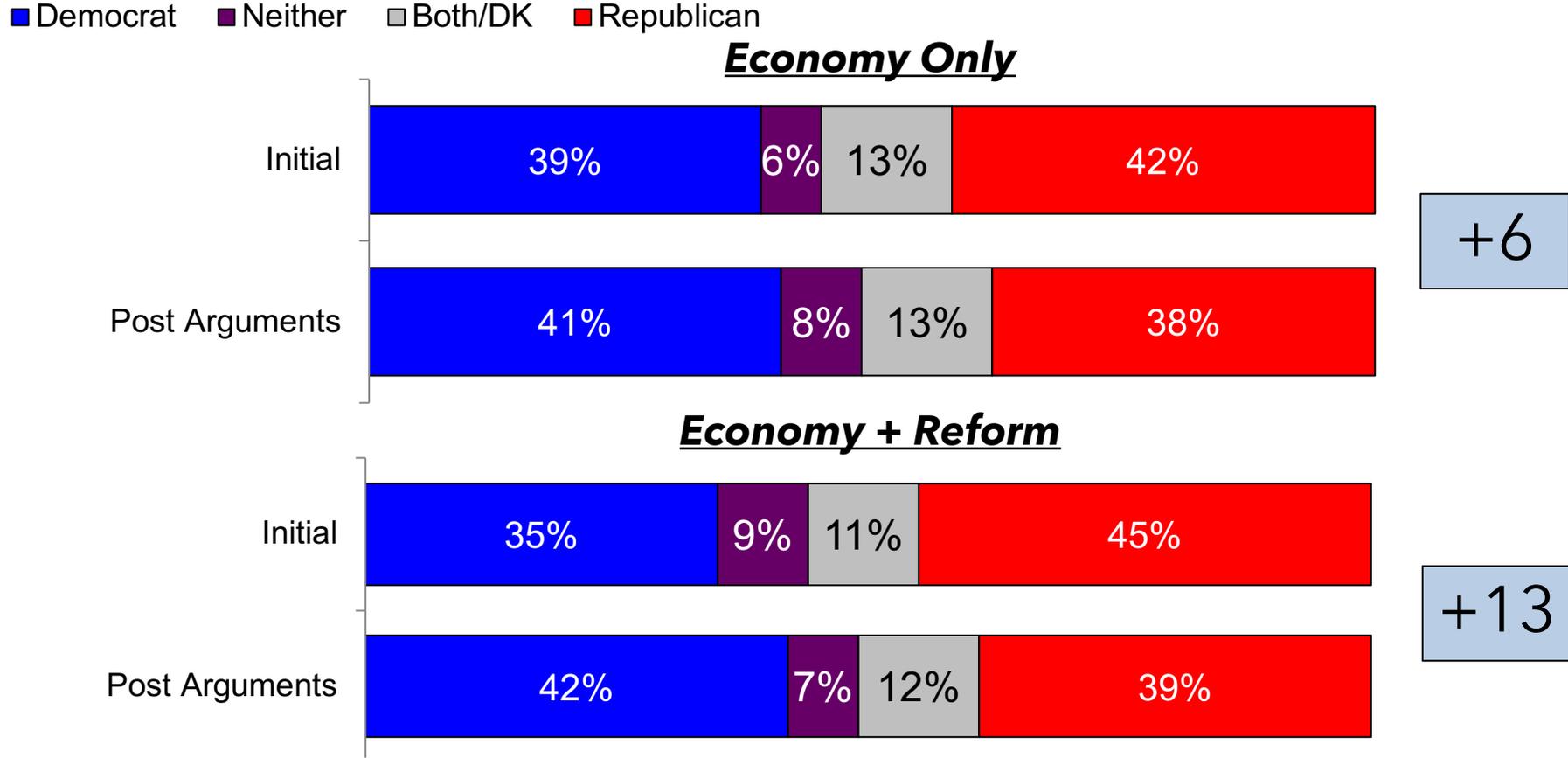
- In late July, an ECU survey showed Catherine Cortez Masto underperforming Joe Heck with key voters, including Hispanics and Independents.
- ECU tested a battery of **reform** messages vs. a battery of **Traditional Democratic** messages, finding that the reform track moved key demographics



	Full Sample	Reform Track		Conventional Track	
	Initial Vote	Post Doubts	Net Diff.	Post Doubts	Net Diff.
<b>Total</b>	45-50	48-48	+7	46-48	+5
<b>Independent</b>	37-55	44-52	+17	35-52	-2
<b>Unaffiliated</b>	40-57	56-41	+24	35-59	-1
<b>Hispanic</b>	52-42	64-33	+24	53-41	+10

- ECU then ran two TV ads on money in politics
- A follow-up poll found that 1) the race had closed among key groups, and 2) there was clear recognition of the ads in open-ends.

# It can open the door on the economic debate.



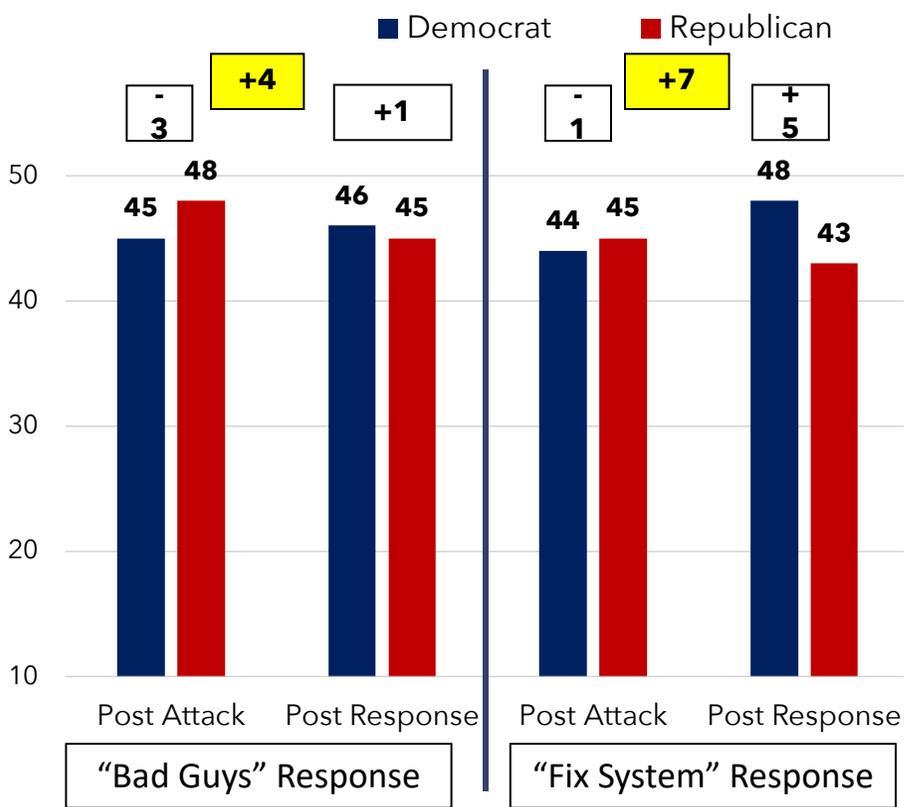
*ECU/Normington Petts Poll, September 2017, 1000 interviews in congressional battleground districts, margin of error: +/-3.1%*

# Engaging on Money in Politics

1. The world has changed and the resentment towards special interests has reached a tipping point where voters will make it a central part of their voting decision.
2. Using campaign finance and reform as part of your campaign opens doors and reaches audiences where the typical Democratic messages aren't always enough.
3. **Don't run away from the hypocrisy attack - engage in it and stick with it. No incumbent Republican wants a prolonged October debate about who is better on money in politics. It's worth engaging in even if our side isn't perfect**

# The best response? Fix the system

**ATTACKED FOR HYPOCRISY?** Focusing on the need to defeat candidates who support the status quo on money in politics is a very effective response to charges of hypocrisy, and is far more effective than a more defensive response focused on a candidate's lack of control over outside groups.



**HYPOCRISY ATTACK:** The Republican candidate says that the Democrat is a hypocrite. Democrats also take millions of dollars of secret contributions from special interests like liberal labor unions and trial lawyers, which cost Americans billions of dollar in frivolous lawsuits. They have their own set of billionaire funders, like Tom Steyer, a liberal environmentalist who pushes an agenda against energy independence leading to higher gas prices. Democrats are just as beholden to special interests as Republicans.

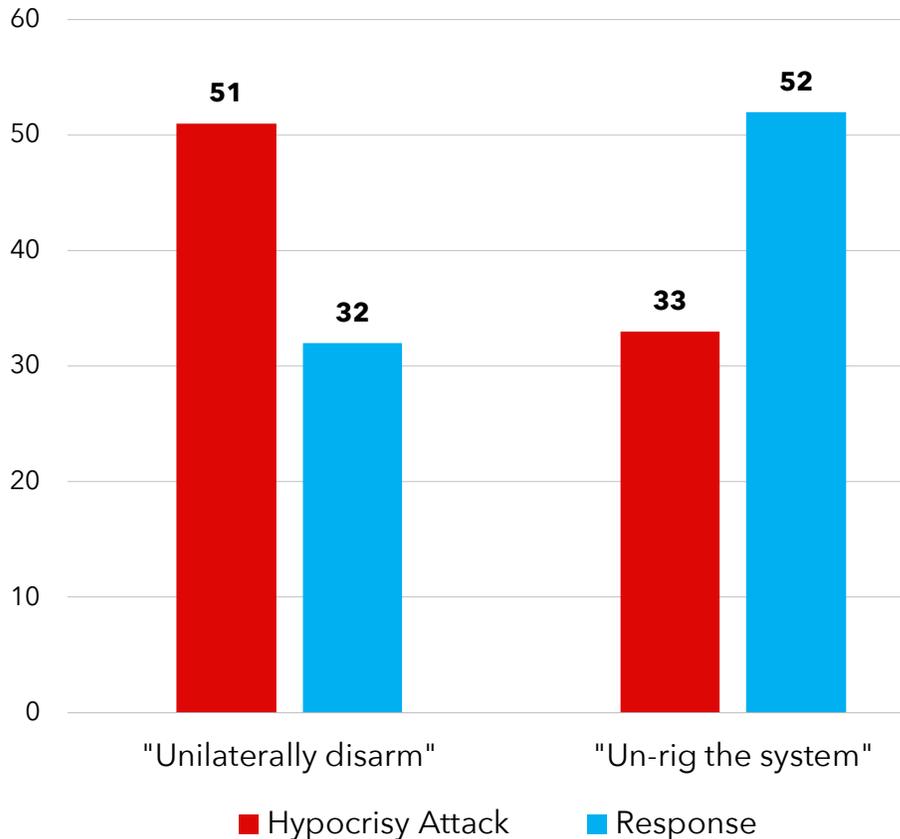
**"BAD GUYS" RESPONSE:** The truth is politicians who take secret millions from CEOs and their corporations push an agenda that costs Americans every day in higher taxes and higher costs for things like prescriptions drugs and health care. These politicians push policies that help CEOs send jobs overseas and keep their profits, at the expense of American families. These politicians are bought and paid for by big corporations, and the results is American families pay with higher costs and taxes.

**"FIX THE SYSTEM" RESPONSE:** The Democrat says that the only way to solve the problem is to actually fix the broken system, when given the opportunity the Republican has voted against making changes. The Democrat supports plans to stop special interests from spending unlimited amounts of money so that the politicians pay more attention to real people.

ECU/GQR Poll, January 16-24, 2018, 1000 interviews in congressional battleground districts, margin of error: +/-3.1%

# Past data yielded similar results

Past results has shown that responding to hypocrisy attack with focus on fixing the system yields the best results.



**HYPOCRISY ATTACK:** Candidates who want to reduce the role of special interests but still take contributions from them and allow them to spend money on their behalf are hypocrites. If they want to reform our politics, they should not accept money from special interests or allow them to spend money on their behalf.

**"UNILATERALLY DISARM" RESPONSE:** If one candidate refuses to accept the money while the other does not, it creates an unequal playing field that will allow the special interests to win. Candidates cannot legally control special interests or how much money they spend anyway.

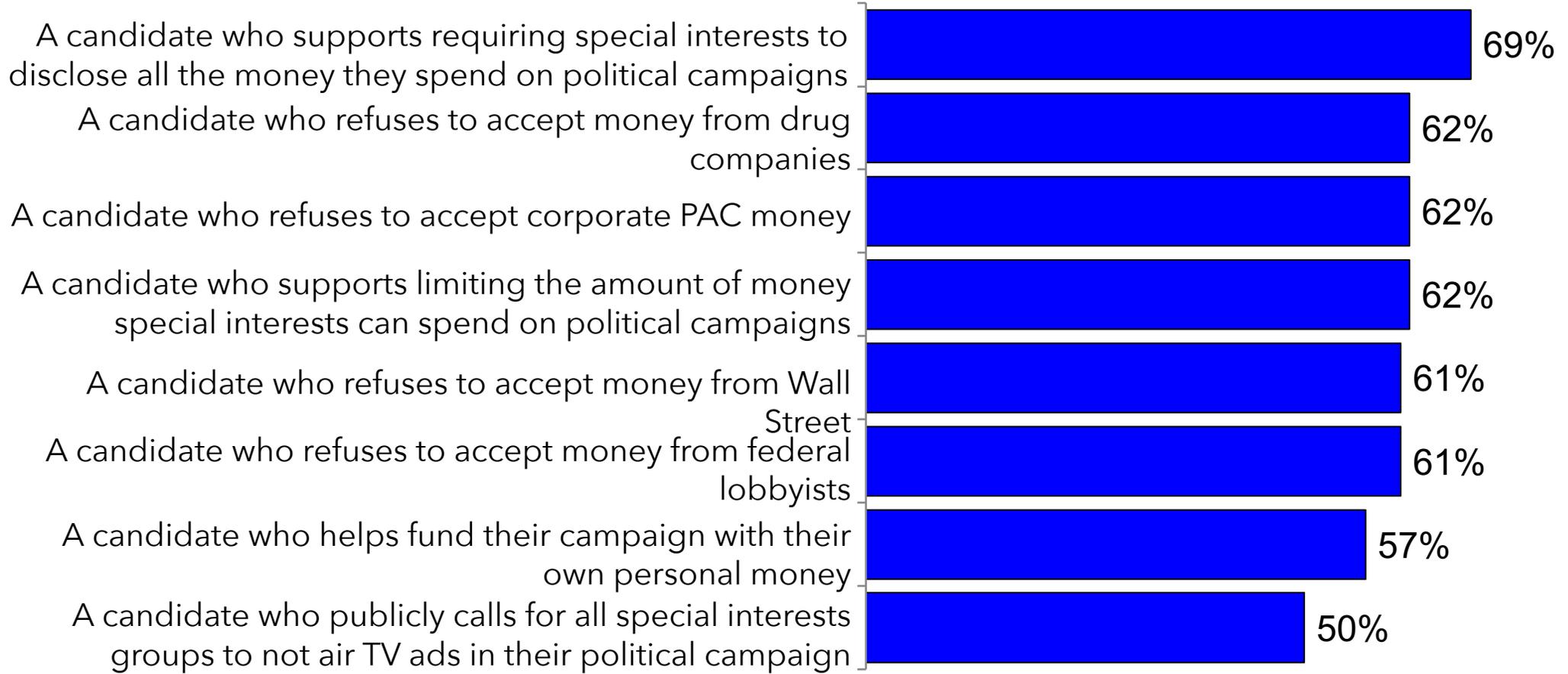
**"UN-RIG THE SYSTEM" RESPONSE:** The only way to reduce the influence of special interests and change our political system is to defeat candidates who want to allow special interests to continue spending unlimited amounts of money to influence our elections. We must elect candidates who support limits on how much special interests can spend on our elections.

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4. **This issue helps define the character of a Democrat. It is more than just an "issue" that is balanced against things like Social Security, jobs, education, etc. Conor Lamb did this exceedingly well.**

# For instance, refusing to accept corporate PAC money helps demonstrate a candidates seriousness about reform

## Total Serious About Reform (8-10)



ECU/Normington Petts Poll, September 2017, 1000 interviews in congressional battleground districts, margin of error: +/-3.1%

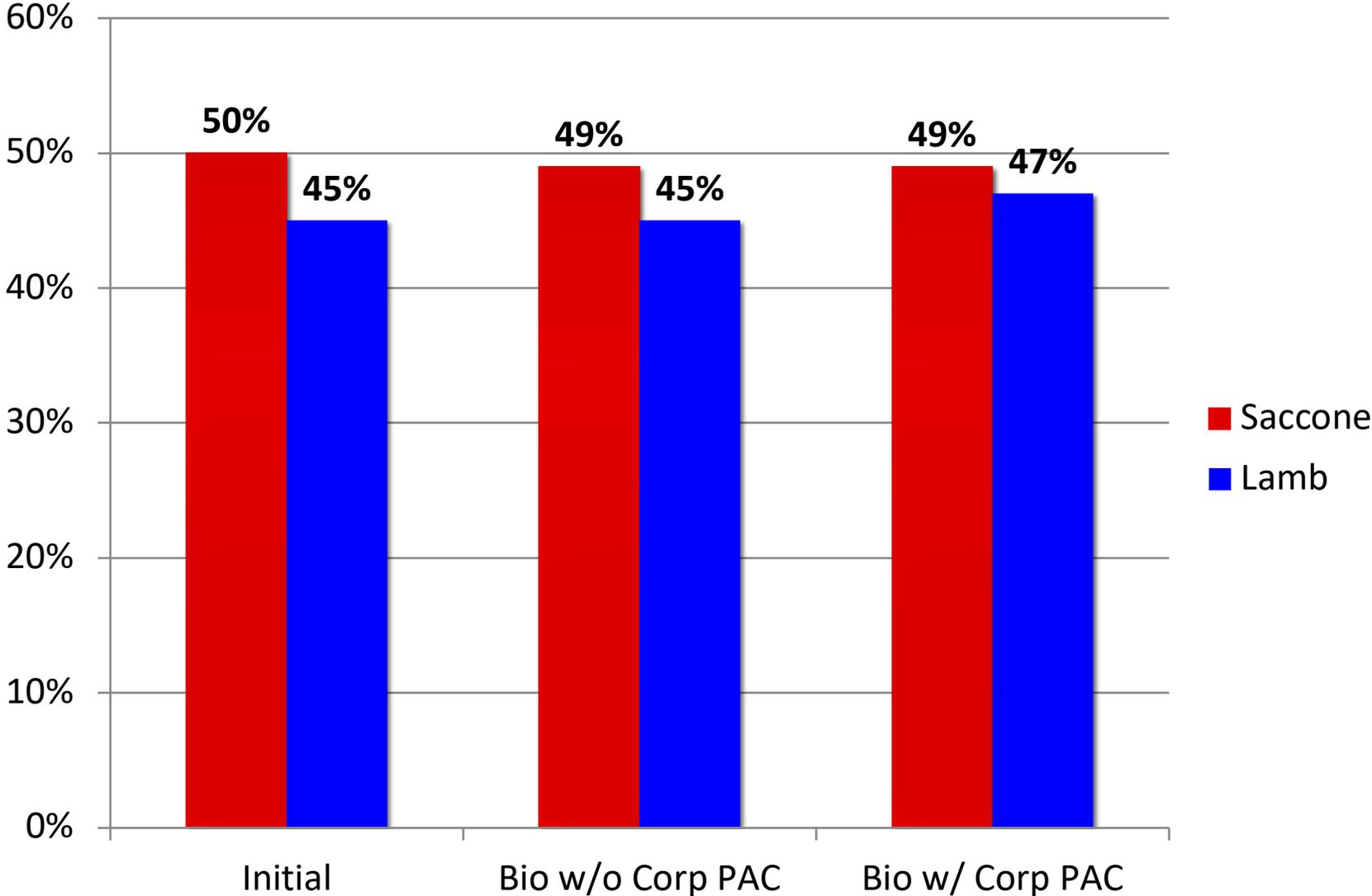
# Conor Lamb's No Corporate PAC Pledge: A Case Study on Winning in Battleground Districts

- End Citizens United was the first group to endorse Lamb in his longshot upset bid to win a Trump +20 district
  - Lamb committed to **rejecting corporate PAC money** as part of his announcement
- Lamb heavily incorporated his no corporate PAC commitment and money in politics themes throughout campaign
- ECU was the first non-party outside group on the air in support of Lamb
- This messaging helped Lamb **gain voter trust, enhance his economic message, draw contrast with Saccone**
- Lamb raised more than \$3 million in grassroots donations, including \$300,000 from ECU members
- This issue was **critical for Lamb** and can **help Democrats everywhere, especially the ones running in Trump districts** where voters are fed up with the system that they justifiably believe is rigged against them



# And was critical in the recent Special Election

When voters heard balanced bios of both candidates, the vote improved 3 points (from Lamb down 5 to Lamb down 2) when they heard about his no corporate PAC pledge.



ECU/Global Strategy Group Poll, Feb. 1-5, 2018, 400 interviews, margin of error: +/-4.9%

# Post-Election Polling Showed No Corporate PAC Money Was A Winning Message For Lamb

- More than **75%** of voters knew that Lamb had refused corporate special interest money in his campaign
- His rejection of Corporate Special Interest money was listed as the **2<sup>nd</sup> biggest reason for voting for him** – behind only protecting Social Security and Medicare. It topped other important issues like being a veteran, protecting workers, etc.
  - **Included 28% of Trump voters & 26% of Independent voters**
- Almost 50% of the electorate said that Lamb’s decision to reject money from corporations made him more likely to vote for him – including 20% of Trump voters & 61% of Independents
- **85% of voters believe special interest money in politics is a problem and a whopping 95% of voters believe that politicians in Washington promote policies that help special interest groups who donate to their campaigns.**

*ECU Poll, PPP Poll, PA-18, 3/26-3/27 2018, 538 Voters*

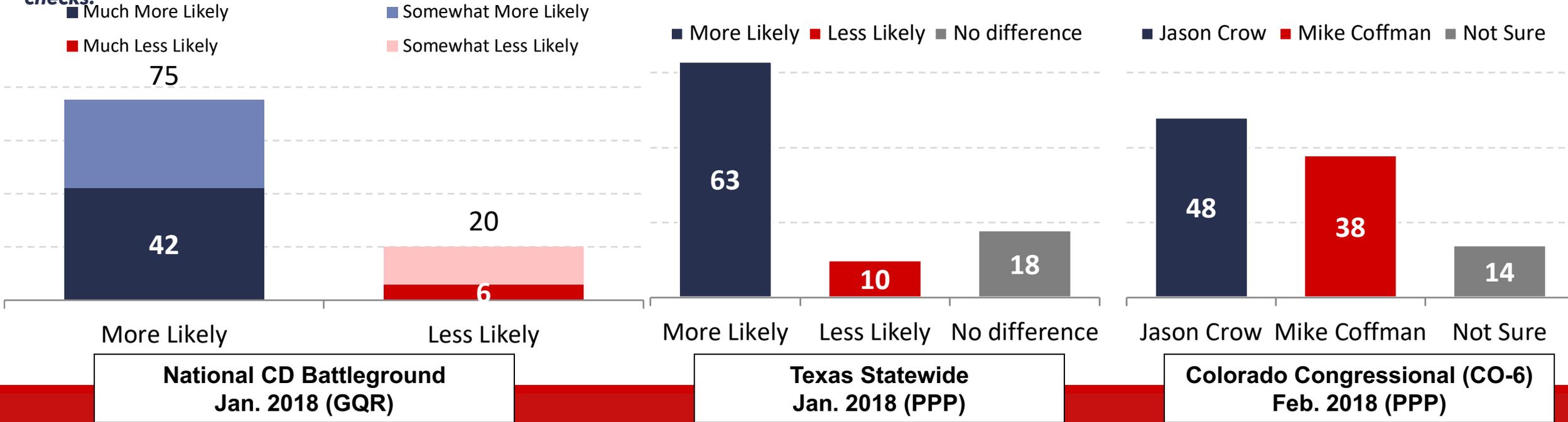


# The No Corporate PAC Pledge is popular in a variety of geographies and used in various ways...

*"Corporate special interests are using their money to drown out the voices of everyday people. Instead of cutting taxes for the middle class and lowering the costs of prescription drugs, politicians who promised to change the system are being bought and paid for by special interests and padding the bottom line of corporations. We need to stop the flood of unlimited and undisclosed money from special interests trying to buy our elections. **That's why I am refusing to accept Corporate PAC money in this election, because I am running to represent everyone not just those with the biggest checks.**"*

*Would you be more likely or less likely to support a candidate who has pledged to not take any money from corporate special interests or would it not make a difference?*

*Jason Crow is not taking a dime from corporate special interest PACs. His campaign is primarily funded by individuals. If elected, Jason Crow will work for the people of Colorado not special interests in Washington. Mike Coffman accepted \$1.6 million from corporate PACs and just voted to give corporations a huge tax cut. Let me ask you again, who would you vote for?*

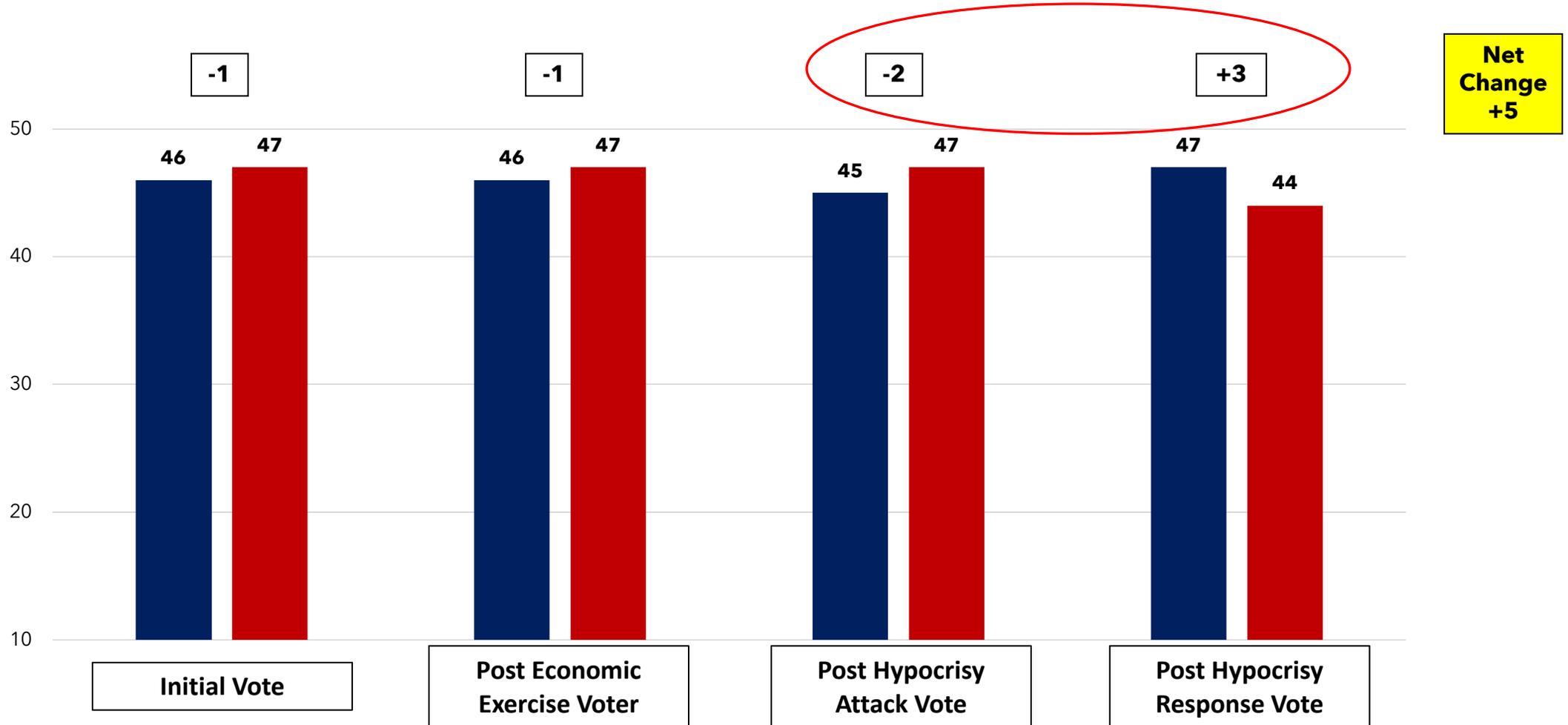


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5. **As a campaign, you need to build the advantage on this throughout the race. At the outset as many as 40% of voters do not know who is better on reducing the influence of special interests, but when we engage in a debate, we move swing voters and win.**

# Staying on the reform debate, even when hypocrisy is discussed, creates electoral gains for Democrats

...Moving voters in the current environment is hard, often we don't see much change and gains can be hard to come by. But, continuing to beat the drum on reform is beneficial to Democrats



ECU/GQR Poll, January 16-24, 2018, 1000 interviews in congressional battleground districts, margin of error: +/-3.1%



## ***Positive Messages to Test***

*In general, keep it simple and don't rely too much on unfamiliar terms. And do NOT use "draining the swamp"*

Because our system allows for unlimited, secret donations, it is possible for foreign companies and governments to influence American elections without the public knowing. We need to eliminate the possibility that countries can influence our elections and politicians.

Corporate special interests are flooding our elections drowning out the voices of everyday people. We need to eliminate the ability of special interests to make secret donations to political campaigns, known as "dark money" and require full disclosure of all political spending. And politicians should not be allowed to accept any corporate PAC money.

Corporations can spend millions of dollars on a campaign while middle class voters cannot. We need to end the system of corporations making unlimited campaign donations, making it easier for corporations to use their money and influence to get special tax breaks, protect tax loopholes, and other benefits not available to ordinary Americans.

Special interests have too much influence at the expense of regular people. Republicans in congress receive millions of dollars from pharmaceutical companies to fund their campaigns. This has led to tax breaks for those corporations while Americans watch the costs of prescription drugs continue to rise.

## *Negative Messages to Test*

(OPPONENT) is bought and paid for special interests who can spend unlimited amount of money keeping him in Washington. That is why he opposes reforms that would stop special interests from spending unlimited amounts of money, make sure all secret donations are disclosed and keep foreign money out of our democracy.

Rick Saccone will work for the special interests that are funding his campaign. They are funding his campaign with out of state shady money, and he promises to cut Social Security, give them a big tax break, and cut your health care. Rick Saccone will fit right in to Congress. He's another Harrisburg politician with a long history of using taxpayer money for meals, per diem payments, and other questionable expenses.

### ***Building an Attack Against a Republican***

**Part 1:** The Republican is bought and sold (or in their pocket) by XX (pharma/special interests/Wall Street etc.)

**Part 2:** S/He stands with them – not with you. Is being propped up by special interests and promises to do their bidding. And it will hurt you.

**Part 3:** This is about values and character. Who they can trust vs who they think is corrupted?