

How to Lose the U.S. Senate: Vote to Cut Social Security and Medicare



December 2011



Will the 2012 Election be more like...



OR

Ron Johnson Will Fight to Preserve Your Benefits ...

Ron believes that keeping America's promise to our seniors is important.

Preserving Your Benefits: Ron is committed to preserving your Medicare and Social Security benefits.

Opposed Government Takeover of Health Care: Ron will vote to repeal the Health Care Bill and replace it with market-based solutions that will include: portability, malpractice reform, mandate reduction, insurance purchase across state lines, lower costs, and a safety net for those with pre-existing conditions.

Fiscal Restraint: Ron knows that wasteful, runaway debt spending in Washington, D.C. takes more hard earned dollars away from Wisconsin's families and hurts our ability to create jobs.

Russ Feingold Cut Medicare by \$523 Billion...

Feingold **cast the deciding vote** on ObamaCare, which made cuts to Medicare that will impact 100,000 Wisconsin seniors utilizing the Medicare Advantage program.

Russ Feingold Stopped Fighting For You...

- X Voted to **increase taxes** on your benefits by **\$569 billion** (S. 1234, CO 1000 FOR H.R. 2004, CO 1000)
- X Used **\$2.2 Trillion** in your Social Security money for government spending (Social Security Administration, www.ssa.gov, Accessed August 14, 2010)
- X Voted to allow **illegal aliens** to receive Social Security benefits (S. 1234, CO 1000 FOR H.R. 1100)

Russ Feingold - Not On Your Side

Paid for by Russ Johnson for Senate, Inc.

The advertisement is split into two columns. The left column features text about Ron Johnson's stance on Medicare, health care, and fiscal restraint, accompanied by a portrait of Johnson and three small photos of him with constituents. The right column features text about Russ Feingold's record on Medicare cuts and other issues, with a list of specific votes marked with a red 'X'. At the bottom, it states "Russ Feingold - Not On Your Side" and includes a small disclaimer: "Paid for by Russ Johnson for Senate, Inc."

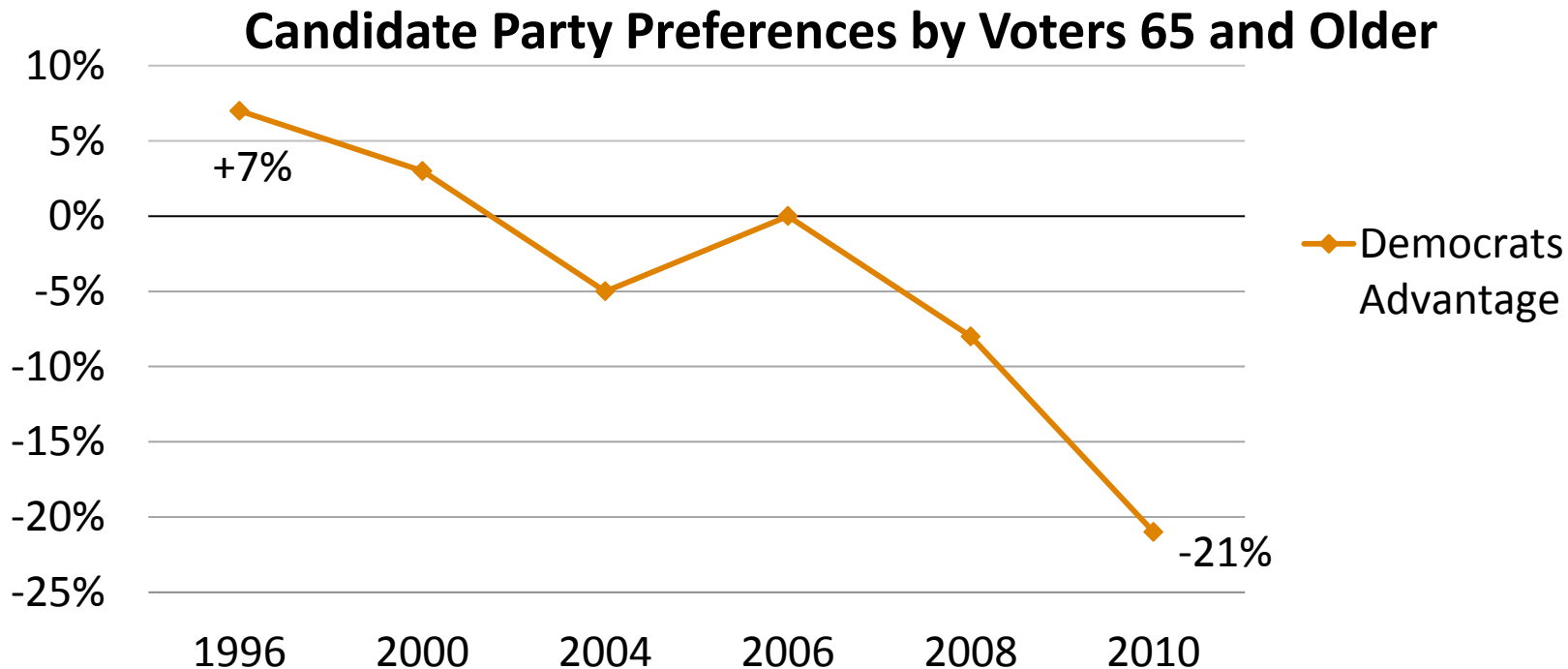
Strategic Summary

- **Democrats are losing senior voters (65+) by worrisome margins.** Democrats *lost* seniors by 21 percentage points in 2010 and by 8 points in 2008. They were *even* with Republicans on Election Day 2006. Democrats *won* seniors by 7 points in 1996.
- **Senior vote was decisive in 2010 Senate races.** Of 25 Senate races in 2010 with data, 11 were won by Democrats. Where a Democrat *lost the senior vote by 11% or more*, the Democrat *lost* the Senate race (except Delaware). Where a Democrat *lost the senior vote by 8% or less*, or they won the senior vote, the Democrat *won* (except Wisconsin).
- **Democrats only recently regained the trust of voters on Social Security.** Since 1995, the Democratic advantage on which party will better handle Social Security has typically been 15 to 20 percentage points. Republicans were up 3 points on Election Day 2010, likely due to Medicare reductions in President Obama's health care reform. Democrats were back on top by 6 points in Sept. 2011, likely due to the House Republican attacks on Medicare.
- **8 of 10 senior voters and 7 of 10 Independent voters strongly oppose cutting Social Security to reduce the deficit.** Slightly lower percentages strongly oppose cutting Medicare. These programs are essentially core values held by the public; politicians cut them at their peril.

Strategic Summary, continued

- **If Democrats support Social Security and Medicare cuts, they could suffer in 2012.**
 - By a margin of 54 to 14, voters would be less likely to vote for their member of Congress who voted for including cuts to Social Security and Medicare in a deficit-reduction proposal.
 - By a margin of 65 to 15, voters in six 2012 top-tier states (Colorado, Florida, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana and Virginia) said that they are less likely to vote for a candidate who supports cutting Social Security benefits to reduce the deficit.
- **Large majorities of voters reject specific cuts Social Security and Medicare.** These include for Social Security raising the retirement to 69, reducing the COLA increase or means testing. These include for Medicare raising the eligibility age to 67, increasing co-pays and cutting doctor reimbursements.
- **Seniors are paying much closer attention to the 2012 elections than any other age group, and Social Security is their top voting issue.**
- **In an engaged debate, 7 of 10 voters agree with the candidate who wants to scrap the payroll tax cap set at \$106,800.** This would make all wages subject to Social Security payroll taxes.

Democrats Lost Ground with Seniors, 1996-2010

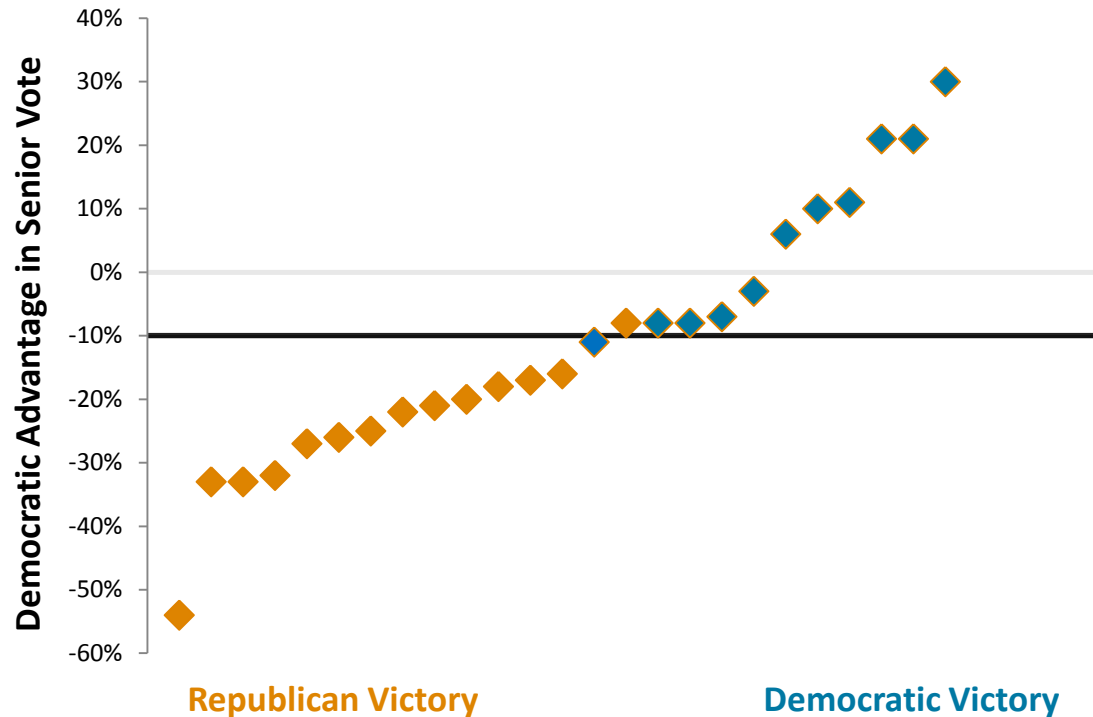


Candidate Preferences by Voters 65 and Older

	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010
Democrats	50%	N/A	50%	N/A	47%	49%	45%	38%
Republicans	43%	N/A	47%	N/A	52%	49%	53%	59%
Democrats Advantage	+7%	N/A	+3%	N/A	-5%	0%	-8%	-21%

Source: National Election Pool Exit Polls

Support of Seniors (65+) Vote in 2010 Senate Elections Was Critical for Democrats



When a Democrat *lost* the senior vote by 11% or *more*, they *lost* the Senate race (except Delaware).

When a Democrat *lost* the senior vote by 8% or *less*, or they *won* the senior vote, they *won* (except Wisconsin).

Breakdown of Senior (65+) Vote in 2010 Senate Elections

State	Democrat	Republican	Democratic Advantage in Senior Vote	Winner
South Carolina	19%	73%	-54%	Republican
Florida	17%	50%	-33%	Republican
New Hampshire	33%	66%	-33%	Republican
Louisiana	32%	64%	-32%	Republican
Arkansas	35%	62%	-27%	Republican
Ohio	35%	61%	-26%	Republican
Iowa	37%	62%	-25%	Republican
Illinois	37%	59%	-22%	Republican
Arizona	36%	57%	-21%	Republican
Indiana	37%	57%	-20%	Republican
Pennsylvania	41%	59%	-18%	Republican
Missouri	39%	56%	-17%	Republican
Kentucky	42%	58%	-16%	Republican
Delaware	44%	55%	-11%	Democrat
California	43%	51%	-8%	Democrat
Connecticut	45%	53%	-8%	Democrat
Wisconsin	46%	54%	-8%	Republican
Nevada	45%	52%	-7%	Democrat
Colorado	43%	46%	-3%	Democrat
Oregon	52%	46%	6%	Democrat
Washington	55%	45%	10%	Democrat
West Virginia	55%	44%	11%	Democrat
New York (Gillibrand)	60%	39%	21%	Democrat
Vermont	59%	38%	21%	Democrat
New York (Schumer)	64%	34%	30%	Democrat

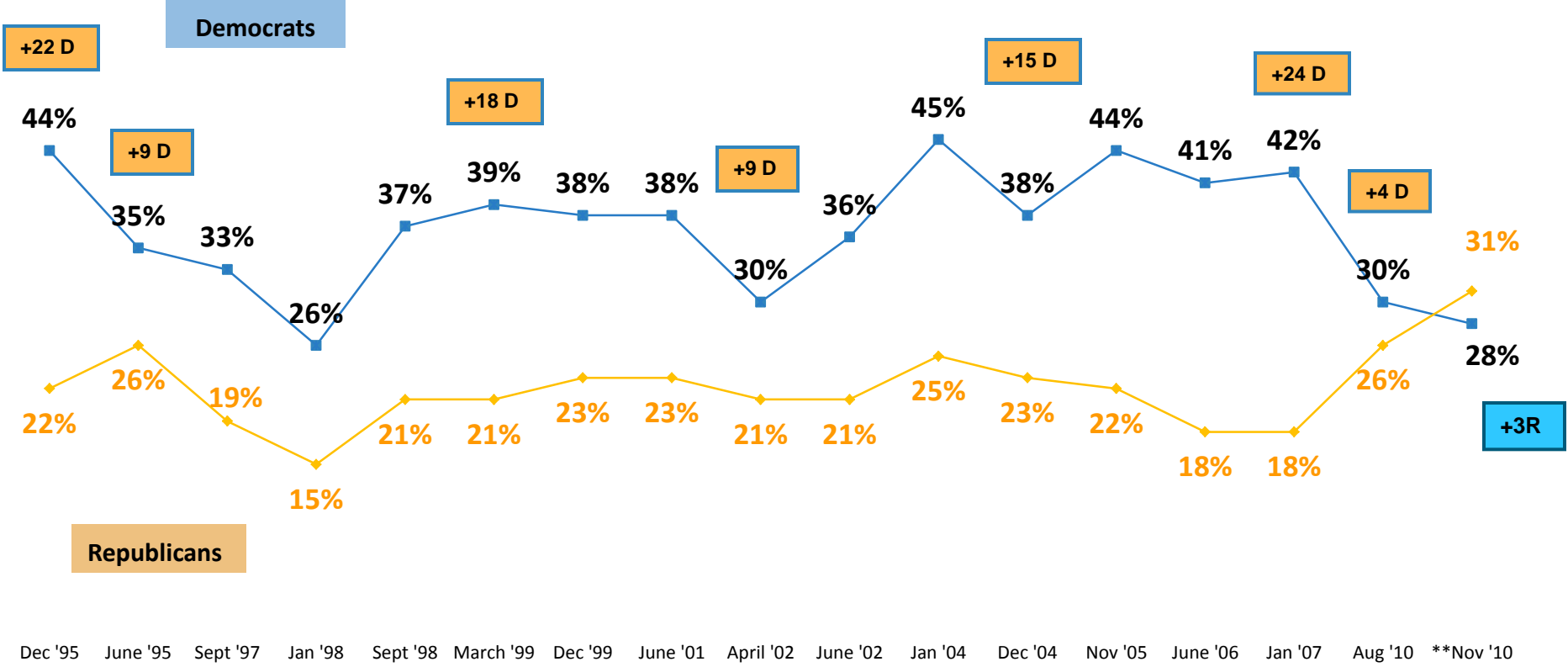
Source: National Election Pool Exit Polls

Data not available for: Alabama, Alaska, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Maryland, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Utah

Democrats' Strong Advantage over Republicans on Who Best Handles Social Security Was Gone by Nov. 2010

In two previous low points – June 1995 and April 2002 – Democrats still had a 10 point advantage

Which Party Would Do Better Job Dealing With Social Security?



"When it comes to dealing with Social Security, which party do you think would do a better job--the Democratic Party, the Republican Party, or both about the same? If you think neither would do a good job, please just say so."

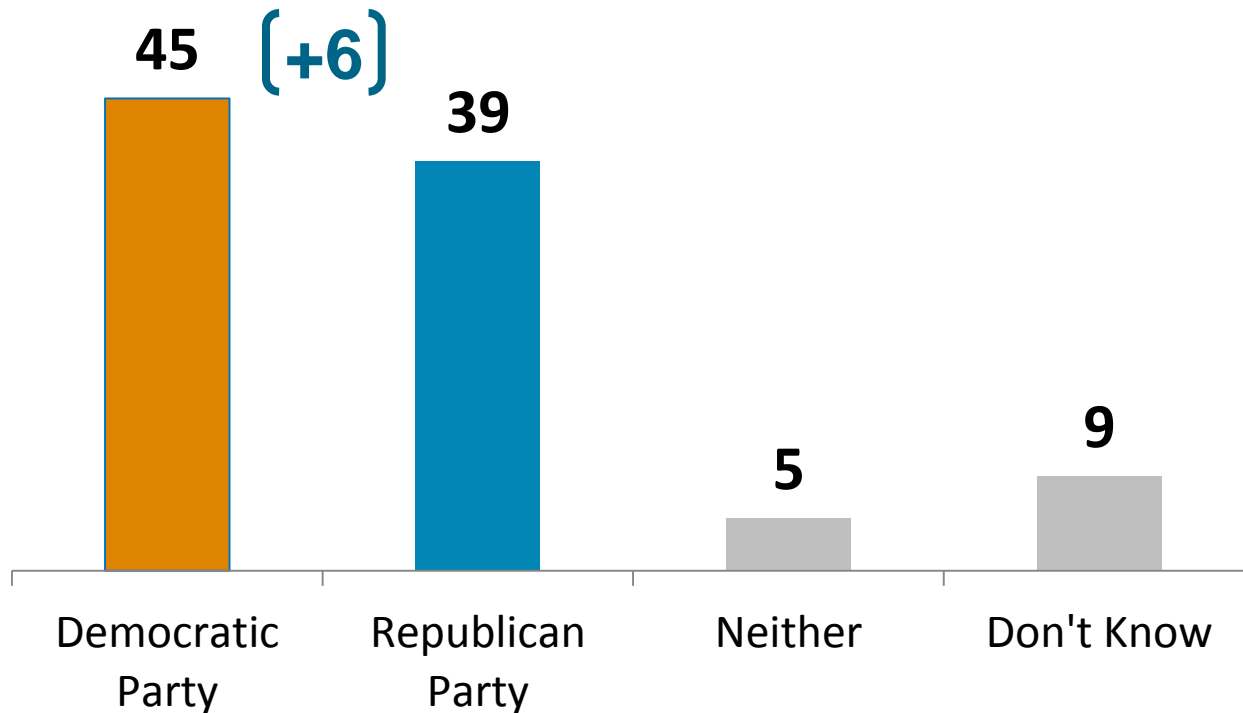
**Different Source and Slightly Different Question Wording: 2010 LRP Poll: "Who do you think will better handle the issue of Social Security: the Republicans in Congress, the Democrats in Congress, or are they both about the same?"

#NBC News/Wall Street Journal; telephone surveys of adults 18+ nationwide; **Lake Research Partners (November 2010)

Congressional Democrats Restored Their Traditional Edge Over Congressional Republicans on Social Security in Sept. 2011

Democratic Gains and Republican losses are likely due to proposed Medicare cuts by Republicans

Which party can do a better job of dealing with the Social Security system?



Source: Pew Research Center, Sept. 22 – Oct. 4, 2011, Q60.

Voters Care About Deficits Because They Worry About Losing Their Social Security Benefits

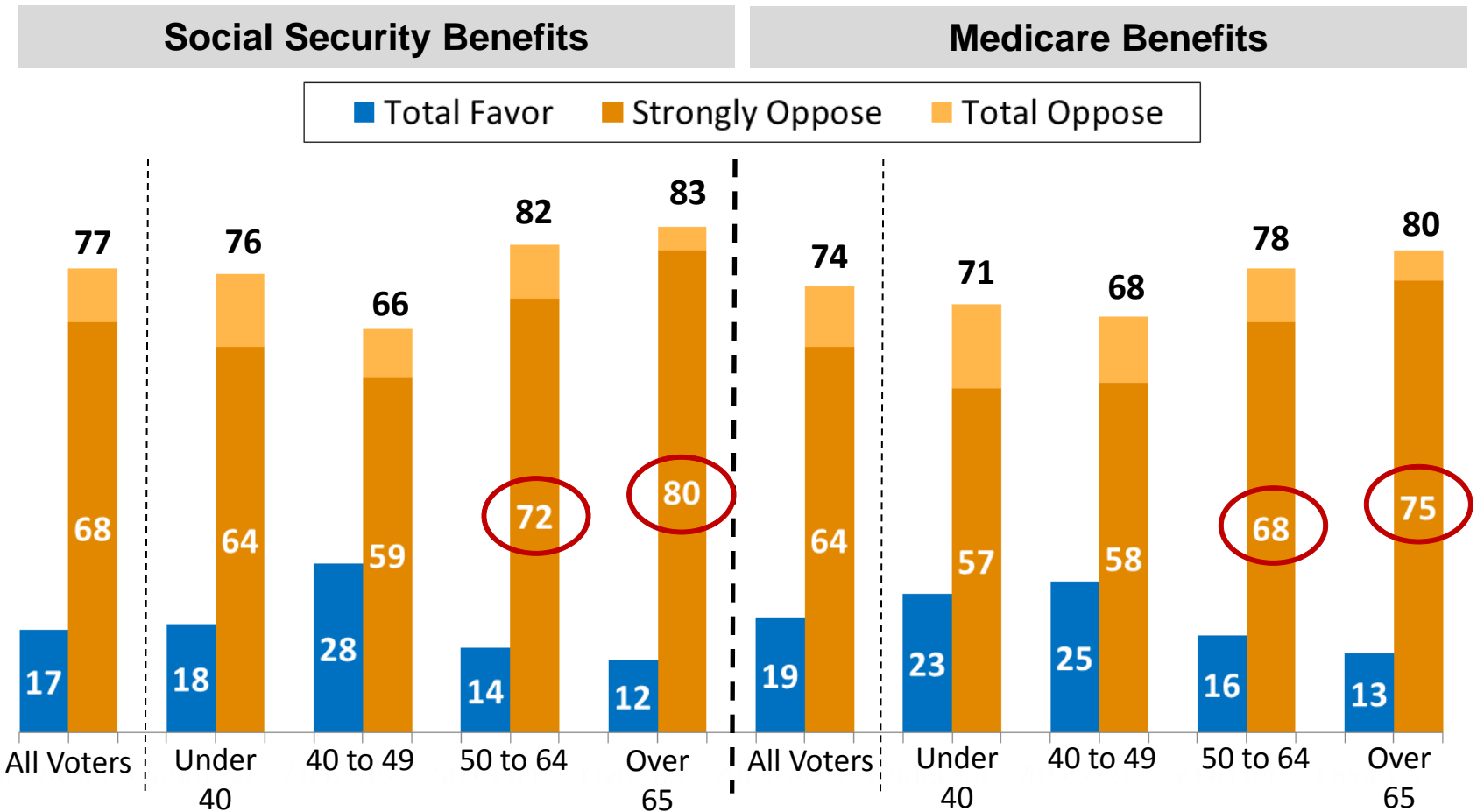
Top two consequences of a large federal deficit that worry you the most:

Consequence	Total %
An economy weighed down by debt that can't grow and create jobs	34
Inability of Social Security to pay future benefits	29

Question: When you think about a large federal deficit, which TWO of the following consequences do you worry about the most?

Large majorities of voters strongly reject cutting Social Security or Medicare benefits to reduce the deficit, particularly seniors and near-retirees

Do you favor or oppose cutting SOCIAL SECURITY/MEDICARE benefits to reduce the deficit? (If Favor or Oppose: And is that strongly or not so strongly?)

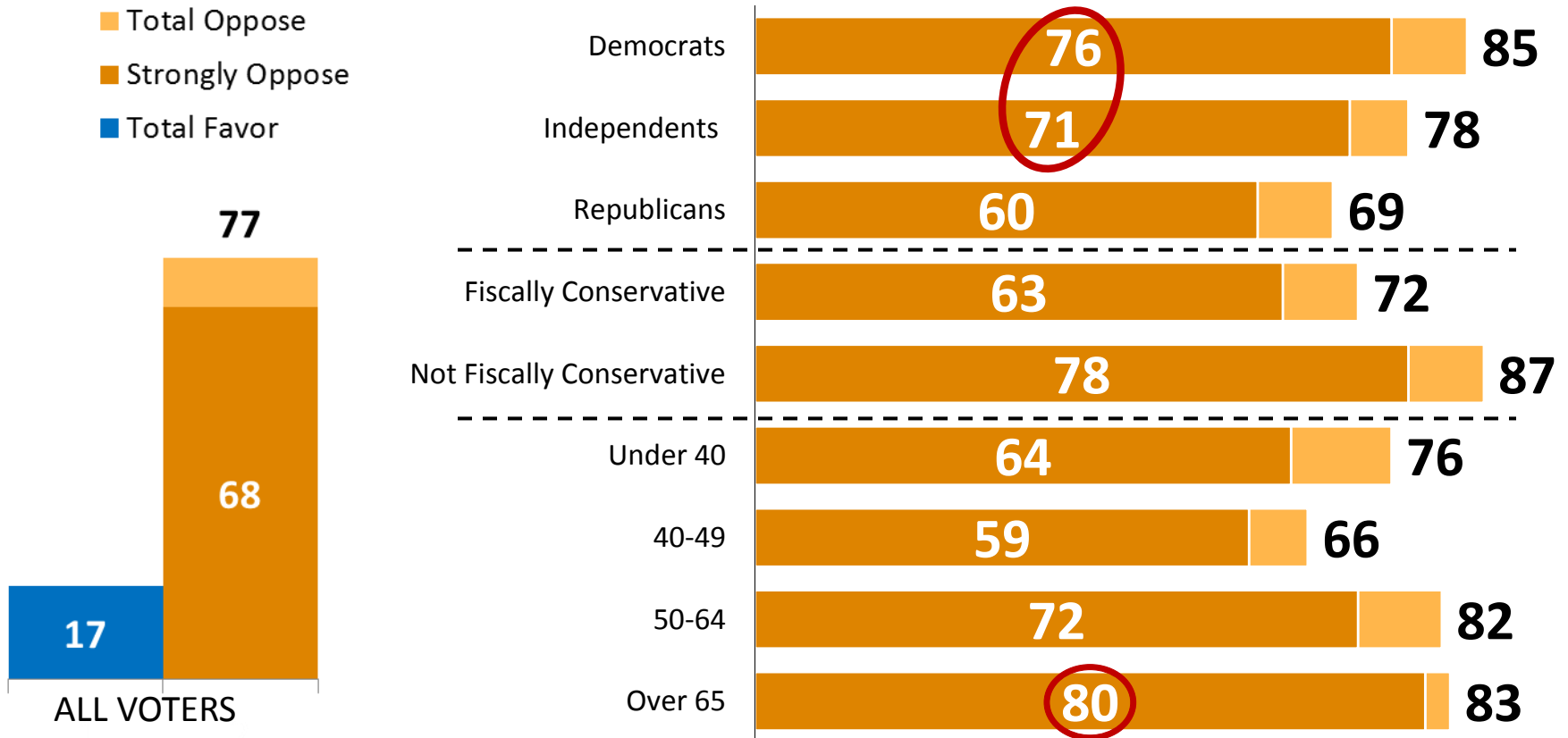


Source: Lake Research Partners and American Viewpoint, Nov. 2011

Democratic base voters, independents, and seniors strongly oppose cutting Social Security benefits to reduce the deficit

Question: Do you favor or oppose cutting Social Security benefits to reduce the deficit? (If Favor or Oppose: And is that strongly or not so strongly?)

Cutting SOCIAL SECURITY Benefits to Reduce the Deficit

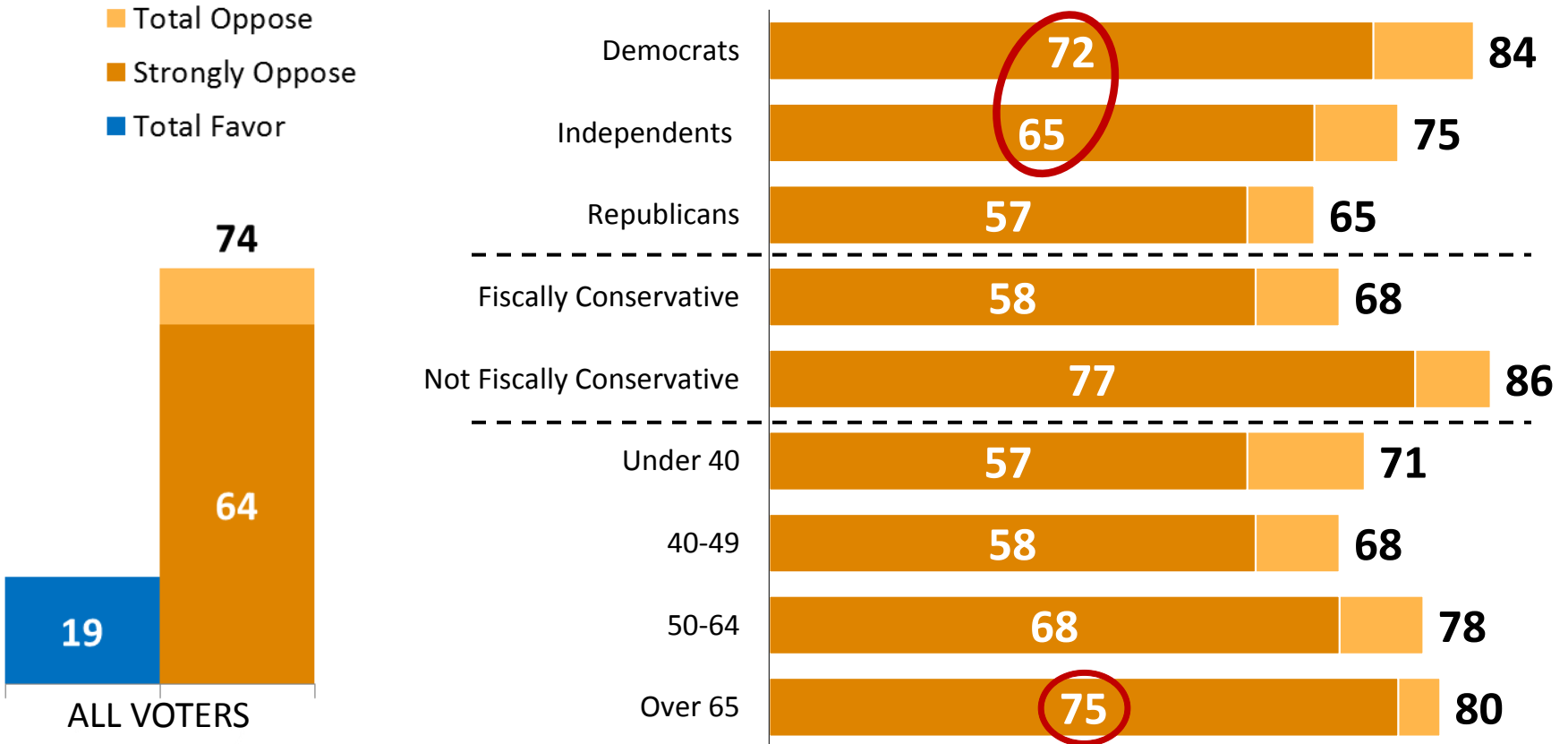


Source: Lake Research Partners and American Viewpoint, Nov. 2011

Similarly, Democratic base voters, independents, and seniors strongly oppose cutting Medicare benefits to reduce the deficit

Question: Do you favor or oppose cutting Medicare benefits to reduce the deficit? (If Favor or Oppose: And is that strongly or not so strongly?)

Cutting MEDICARE Benefits to Reduce the Deficit



Source: Lake Research Partners and American Viewpoint, Nov. 2011

When asked to choose, voters of all age groups believe it is more important to maintain Social Security and Medicare benefits than to reduce the deficit

Question: What is more important, taking steps to reduce the budget deficit or keeping Social Security and Medicare benefits as they are?

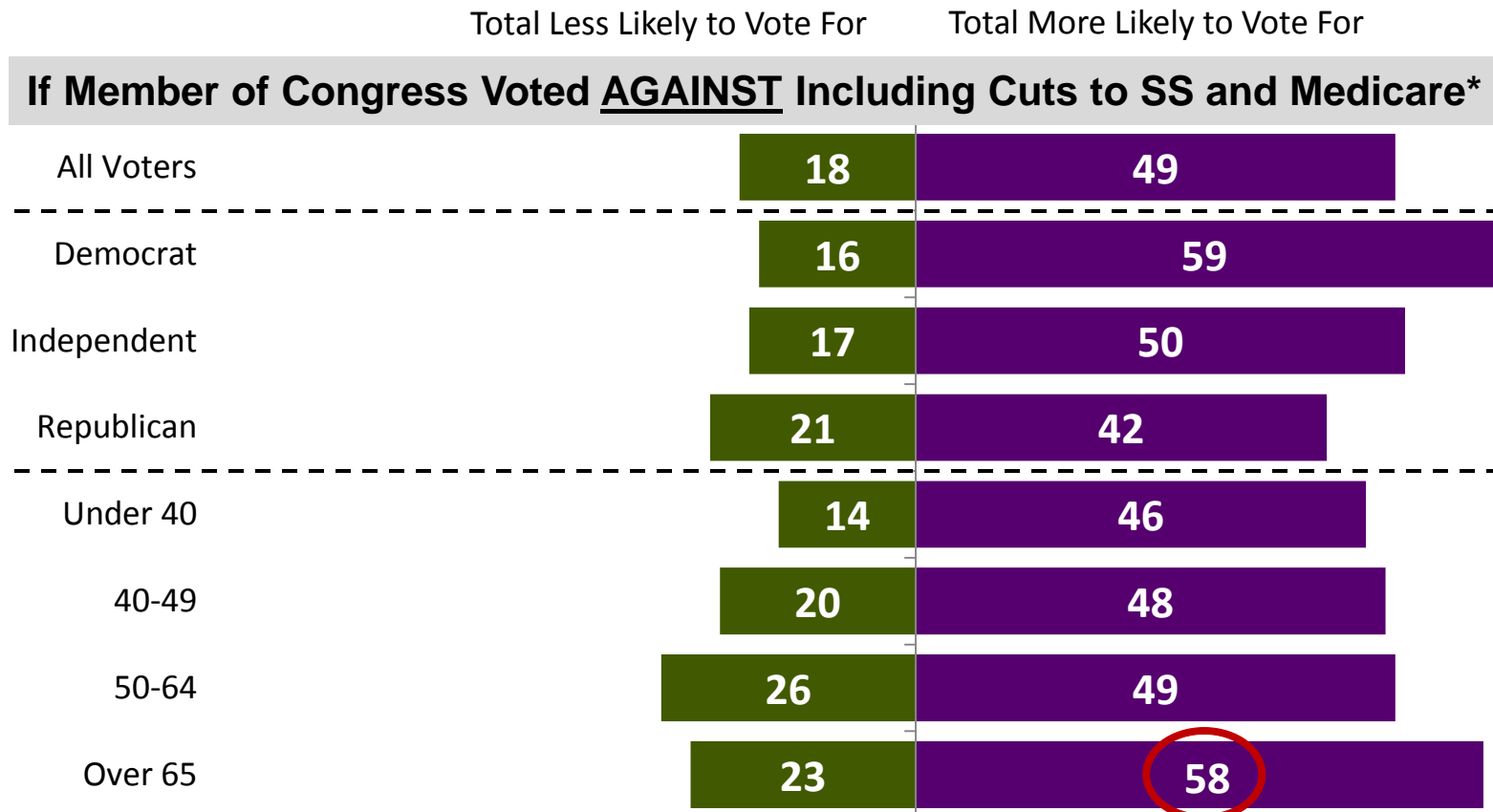
- Keeping Social Security and Medicare benefits as they are
- Taking steps to reduce the budget deficit



Source: Pew Research Center, Sept. 22 – Oct. 4, 2011, Q77.

Voters would support their Member of Congress for voting AGAINST including Social Security and Medicare cuts to the proposal...

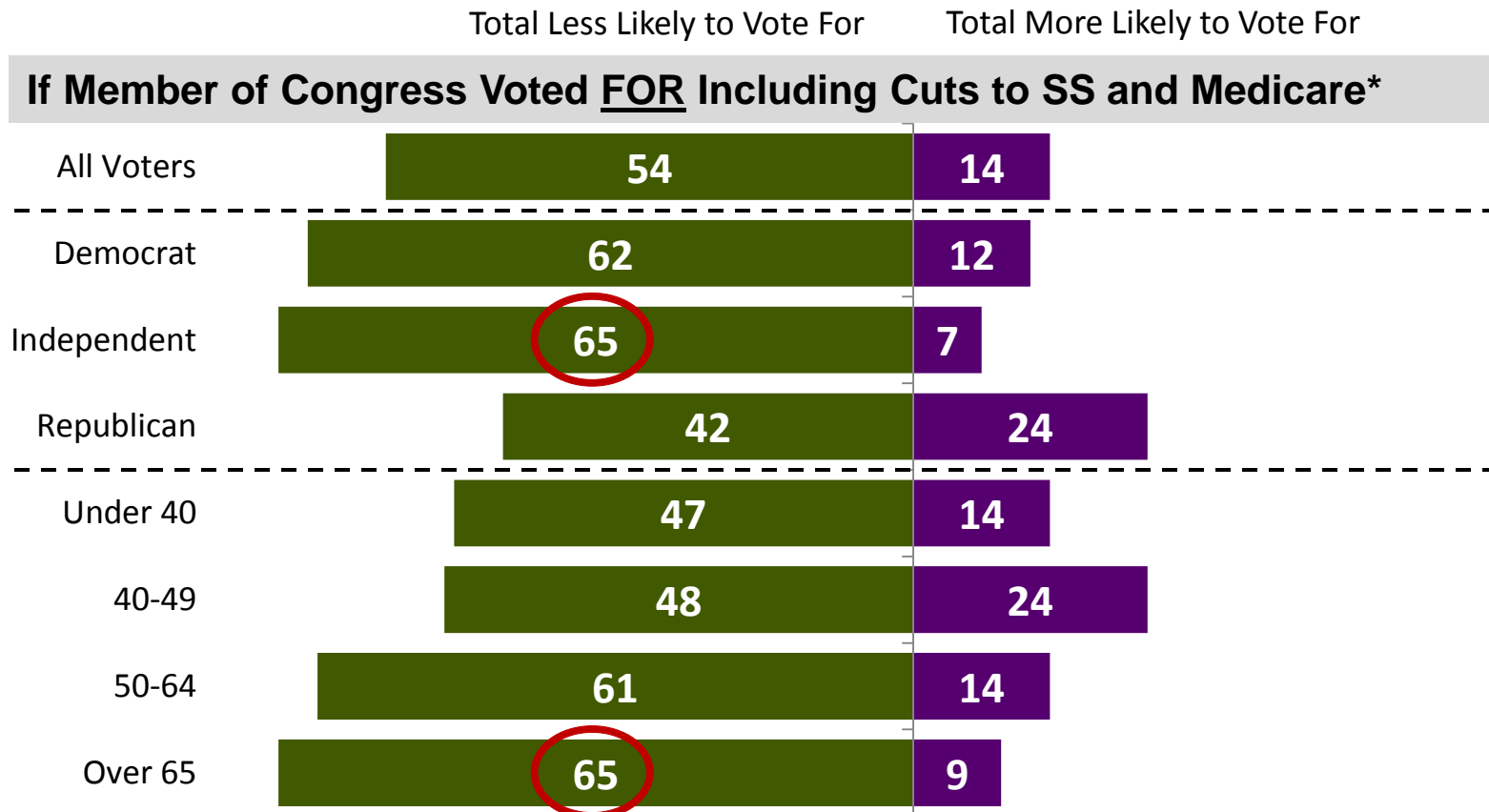
Question: And if your member of Congress VOTED AGAINST including cuts to Social Security and Medicare in this proposal, would you be more likely or less likely to vote for your Member of Congress, or would it not make a difference to you?*



*Split sampled question

...And would oppose their Member of Congress for voting FOR including Social Security and Medicare cuts to the proposal

Question: And if your member of Congress VOTED FOR including cuts to Social Security and Medicare in this proposal, would you be more likely or less likely to vote for your Member of Congress, or would it not make a difference to you?*



*Split sampled question

Source: Lake Research Partners and American Viewpoint, Nov. 2011

Voters reject proposals to alter Social Security and Medicare, but support raising Social Security's cap on wages

Now I am going to read you a list of specific proposals that might be in the final bill Congress votes on in the fall to reduce the federal deficit. After I read each proposal, please tell me if you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose the proposal.

Social Security

For \$60K earners, reducing their SS benefits when they retire

Raising the retirement age for Social Security from 67 to 69

Reducing COLA increases for beneficiaries now and in the future

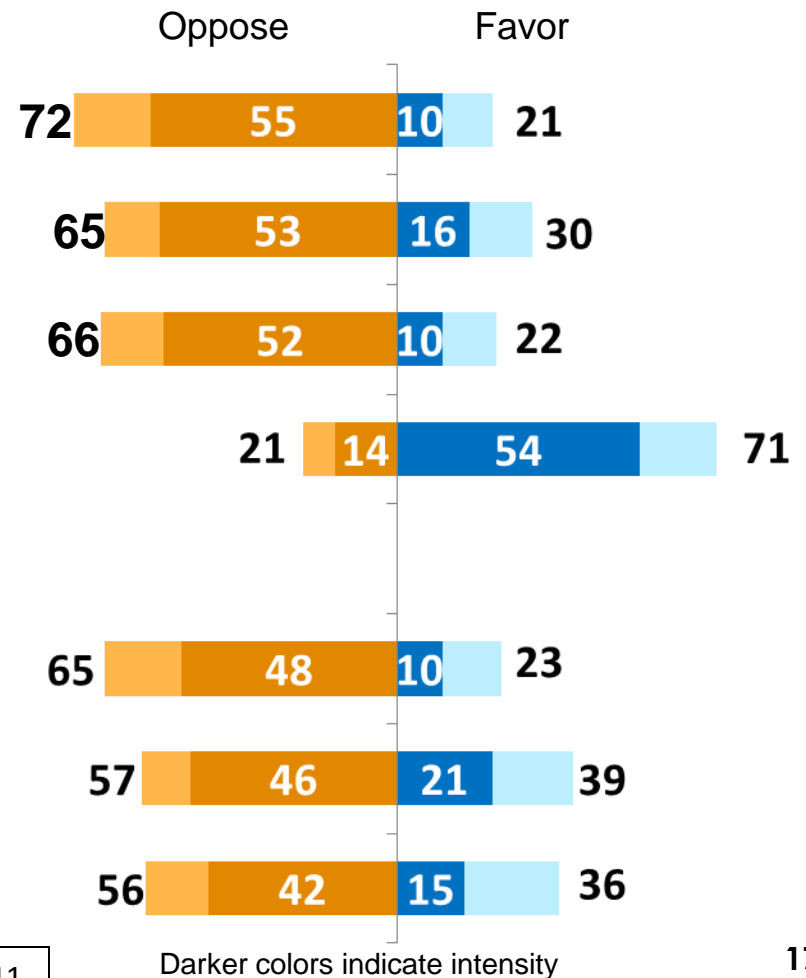
Gradually requiring taxes on income above \$106K

Medicare

Cutting reimbursements to doctors

Raising the Medicare eligibility age from 65 to 67

Increasing amount Medicare beneficiaries pay in co-pays

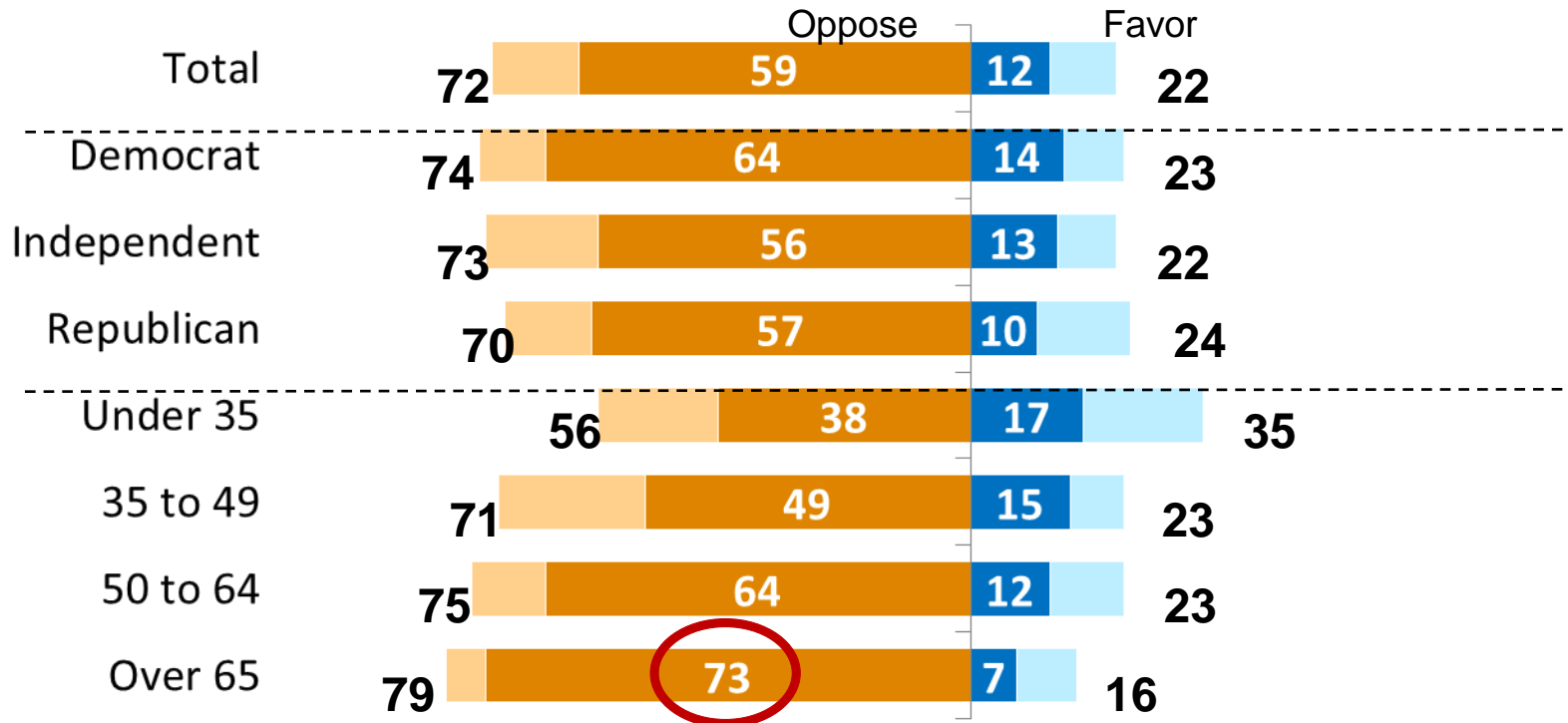


Americans, especially those 65 or older, strongly oppose reducing Social Security COLA increases, when given a description of the proposed change

Currently, Social Security benefits increase to adjust for inflation in the price of goods and services that occurred over the year. This annual increase is known as a cost of living adjustment, or COLA.

Congress is now considering a proposal to reduce the federal deficit by reducing COLA increases for beneficiaries now and in the future. Do you support or oppose this proposal? (IF CHOICE) And is that strongly or not so strongly?

Support For Reducing COLA Increases – WITH EXPLANATION OF COLAS



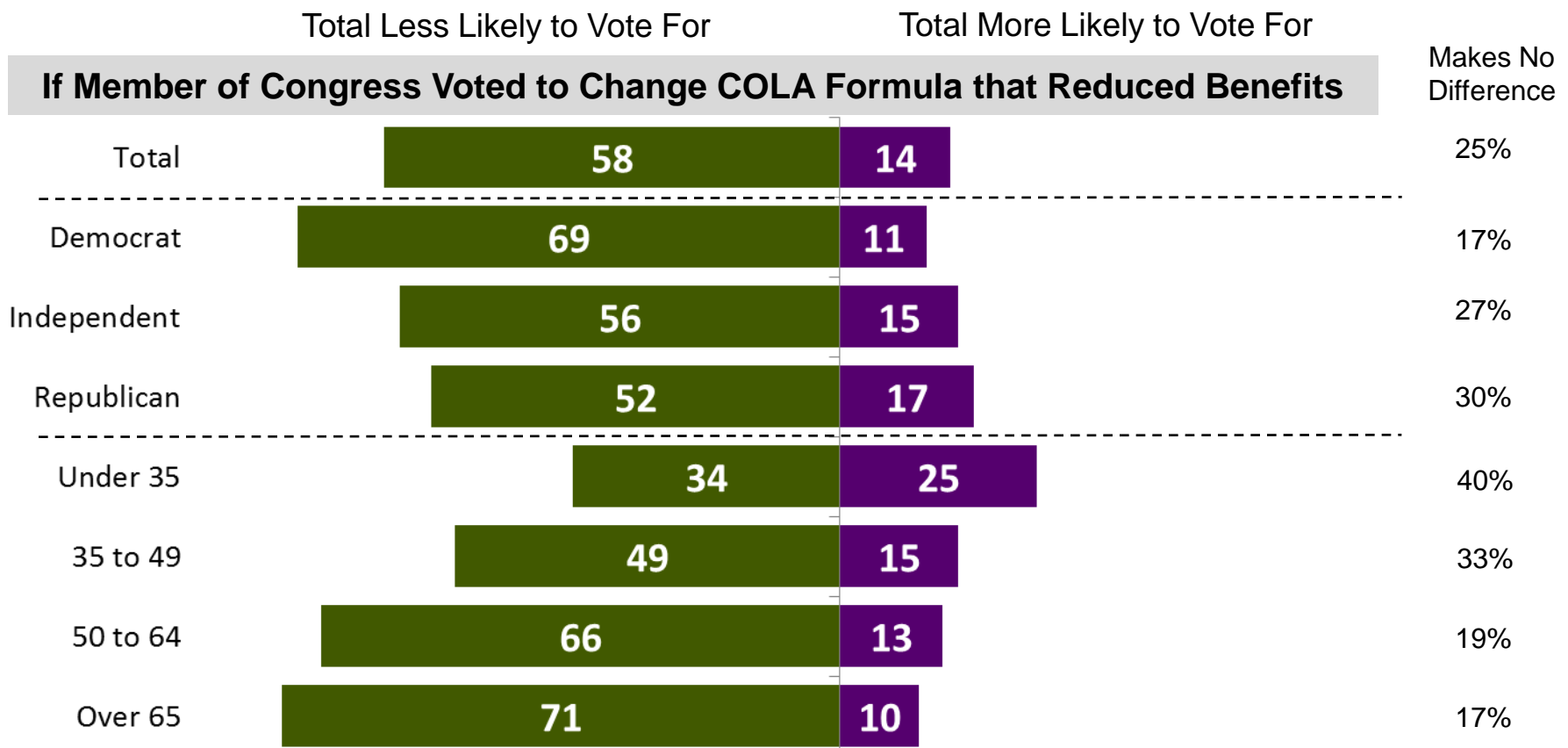
Darker colors indicate intensity

*Split sampled question

Source: Lake Research Partners, Nov. 17, 2011

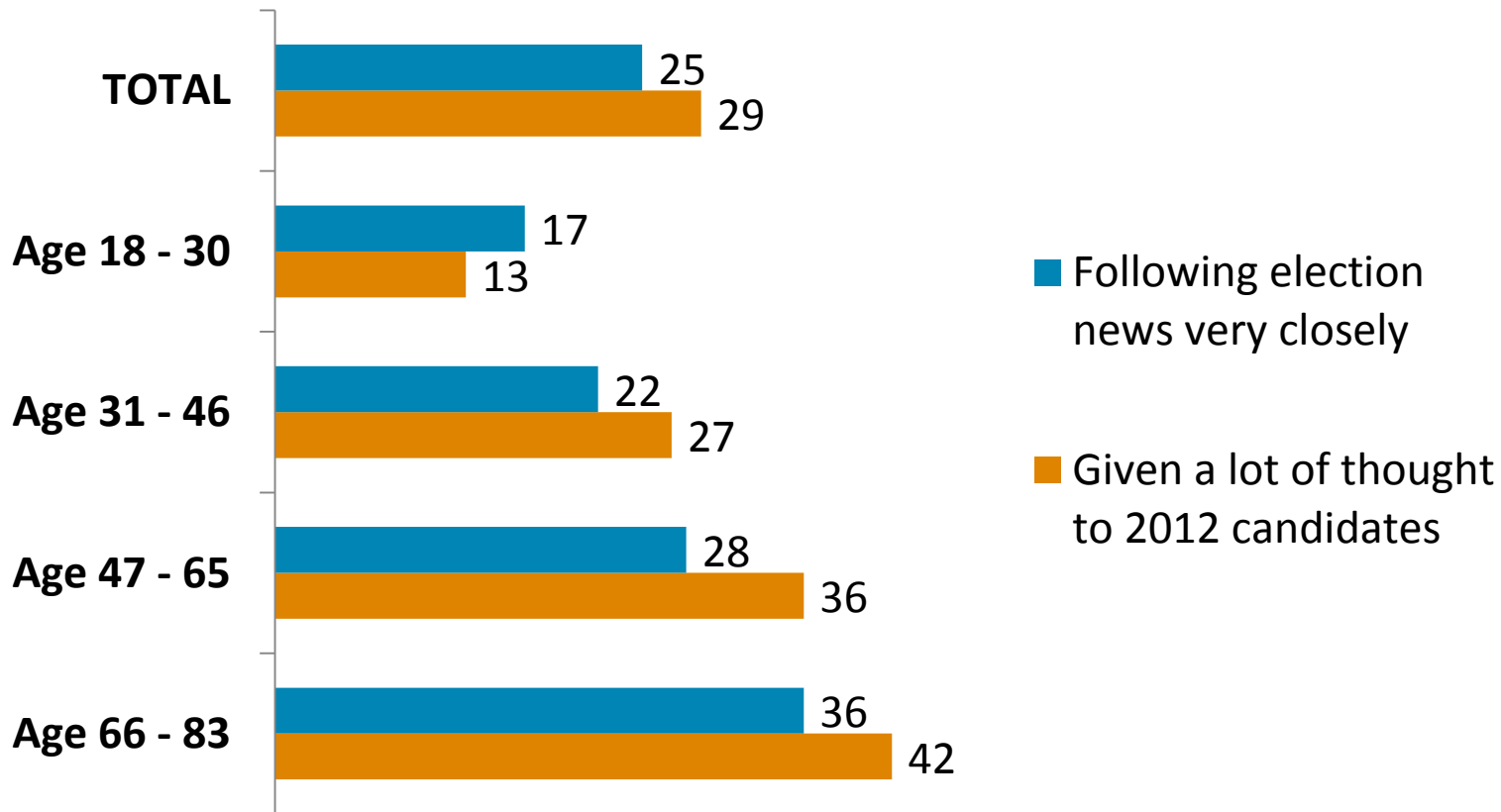
Americans across partisan lines, and especially retirees and near retirees, would be less likely to vote for their member of Congress if he or she votes to change Social Security COLA's in a way that reduces benefits

If your member of Congress votes to change the cost of living adjustment formula in a way that reduces Social Security benefits now and in the future, would you be more or less likely to vote for them or would it make no difference to you?



Seniors are paying closer attention to the 2012 elections than any other age group, and will notice if Social Security and Medicare are cut

Percentage of age group that is...



Source: Pew Research Center, Sept. 22 – Oct. 4, 2011, Q25. Figures for campaign news interest based on aggregated data from mid-September to early October. Both measures based on general public.

Social Security is a top voting issue in 2012 for a significant part of the electorate

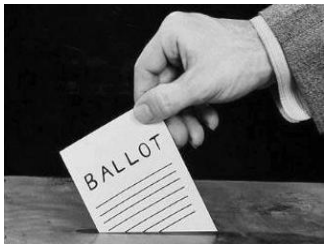
	Age 18 - 46		Age 47 - 65		Age 66 - 83	
	Main source of income	Not main source of income	Main source of income	Not main source of income	Main source of income	Not main source of income
Social Security is a top voting issue in 2012*	25%	14%	48%	23%	59%	29%
Single most important issue	12%	4%	23%	9%	33%	15%

*Percent choosing Social Security as their first or second most important issue in their presidential vote.
 Source: Pew Research Center, Sept. 22 – Oct. 4, 2011, Q87,88. Generations are divided into those who are receiving or expect to receive most of their retirement income from Social Security, and those who do not. The 18-30 and 31-46 age groups have been combined here (by Pew) to achieve significant sample sizes.

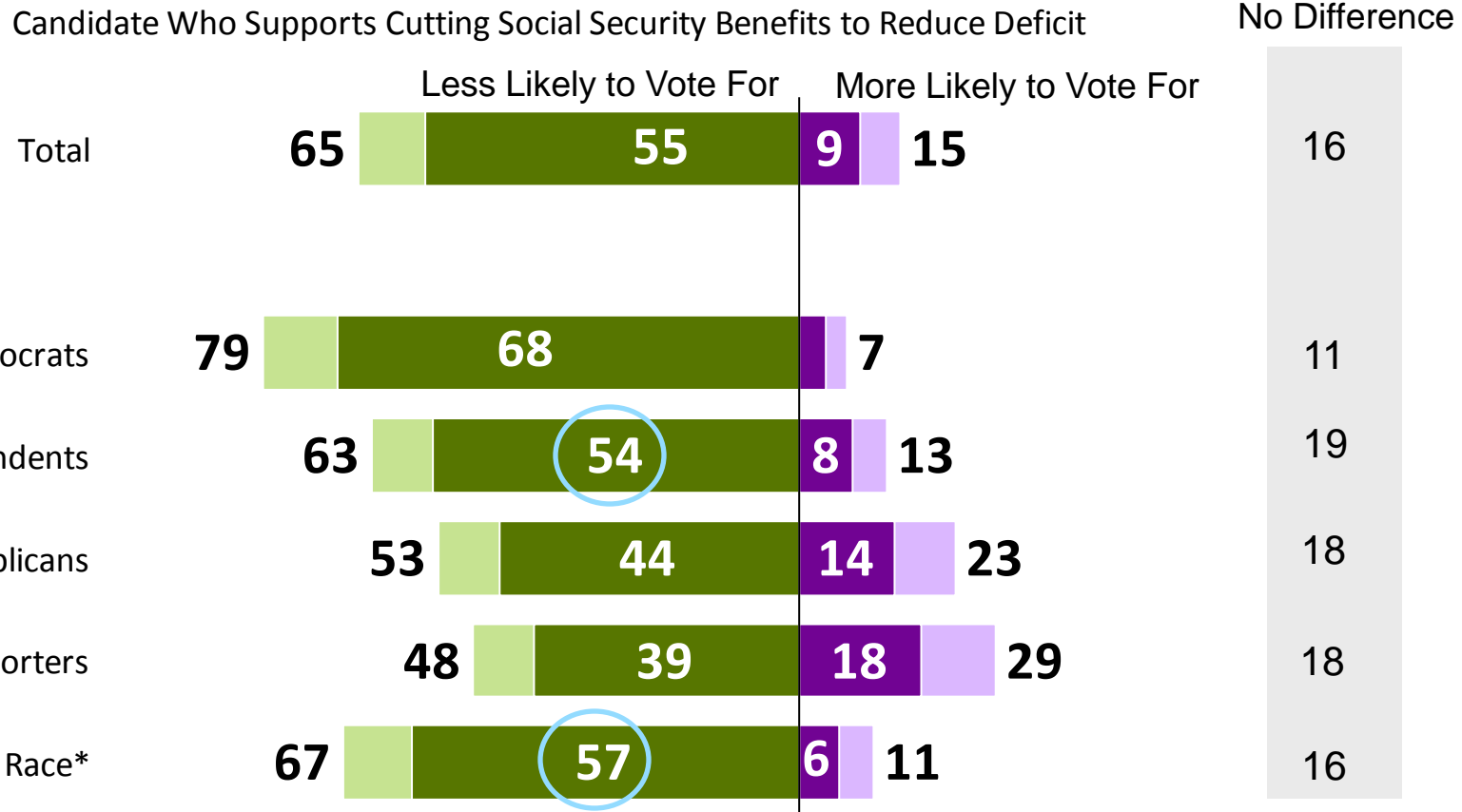
Voters Will Punish Politicians Who Cut Social Security and Medicare Benefits

Findings from Voters in 6 Senate/Presidential Battleground States

- Colorado
- Florida
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- Montana
- Virginia



Majorities of Democrats, independents, and Republicans in 6 Senate/Battleground states say they would be less likely to vote for a candidate if that candidate supported cutting Social Security benefits in order to reduce the federal deficit, including nearly 6 in 10 swing voters on the generic 2012 Senate ballot* who say they would be much less likely.



Source: Lake Research Partners, March 2011

Darker colors indicate intensity

And, please tell me, would you be more or less likely to vote for a candidate for Senate who supports cutting Social Security benefits in order to reduce the federal deficit, or would it make no difference to you? [IF MORE/LESS: Is that MUCH MORE/LESS or SOMEWHAT MORE/LESS?]

COLORADO VOTERS WERE ASKED: And, please tell me, would you be more or less likely to vote for a candidate for Congress who supports cutting Social Security benefits in order to reduce the federal deficit, or would it make no difference to you? *Colorado voters were asked about the generic ballot for the U.S. House of Representatives for 2012.

In an engaged debate nearly three-quarters of voters agree with the candidate who says that Social Security should not be on the table for cuts to address the deficit because it is funded by and belongs to the people who have worked hard and paid into the program. They pick this candidate over one who makes the argument that we must cut Social Security to avoid burdening future generations.

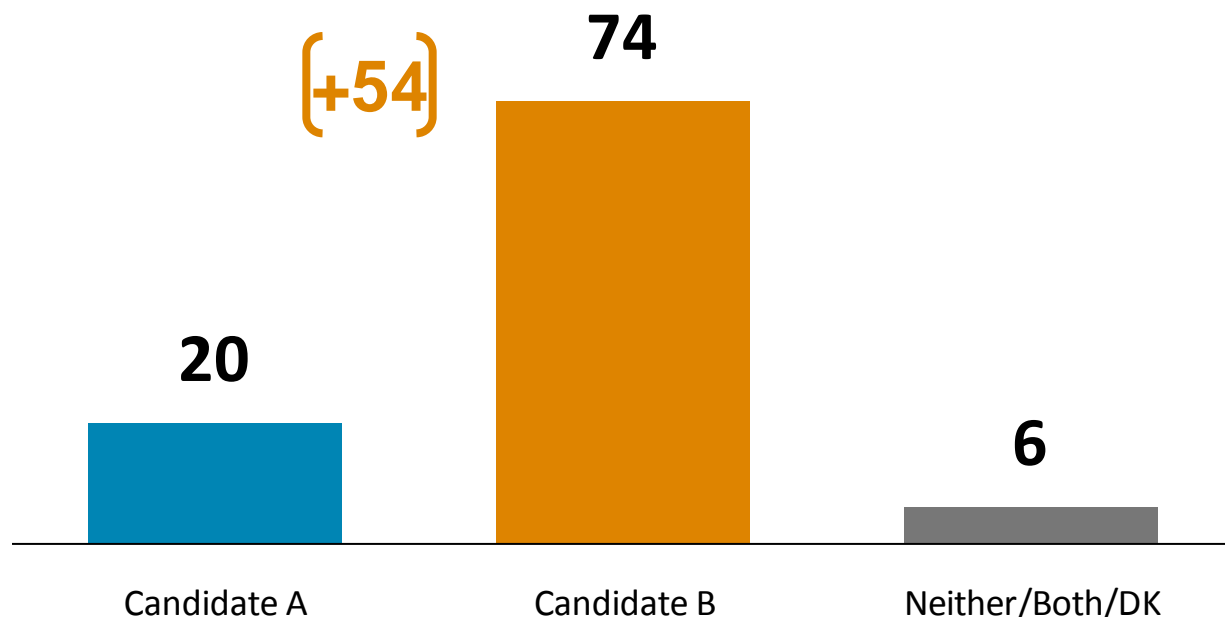
*Now I am going to read two statements that might be made by a U.S. Senator in your state. Which one comes closer to your point of view?

Candidate A Split Sampled question

Says it is simply wrong to shackle future generations with such a massive debt burden. We must cut our entitlement spending now to leave our children and grandchildren a better future. Everything has to be on the table, including cutting Social Security.

Candidate B:

Says Social Security did not cause the federal budget deficit and it is fully funded. Social Security is funded by contributions from working Americans. It belongs to the people who have worked hard and paid into the program, not to the government. Social Security has not contributed to the federal deficit, and should NOT be on the table for cuts to address the deficit.



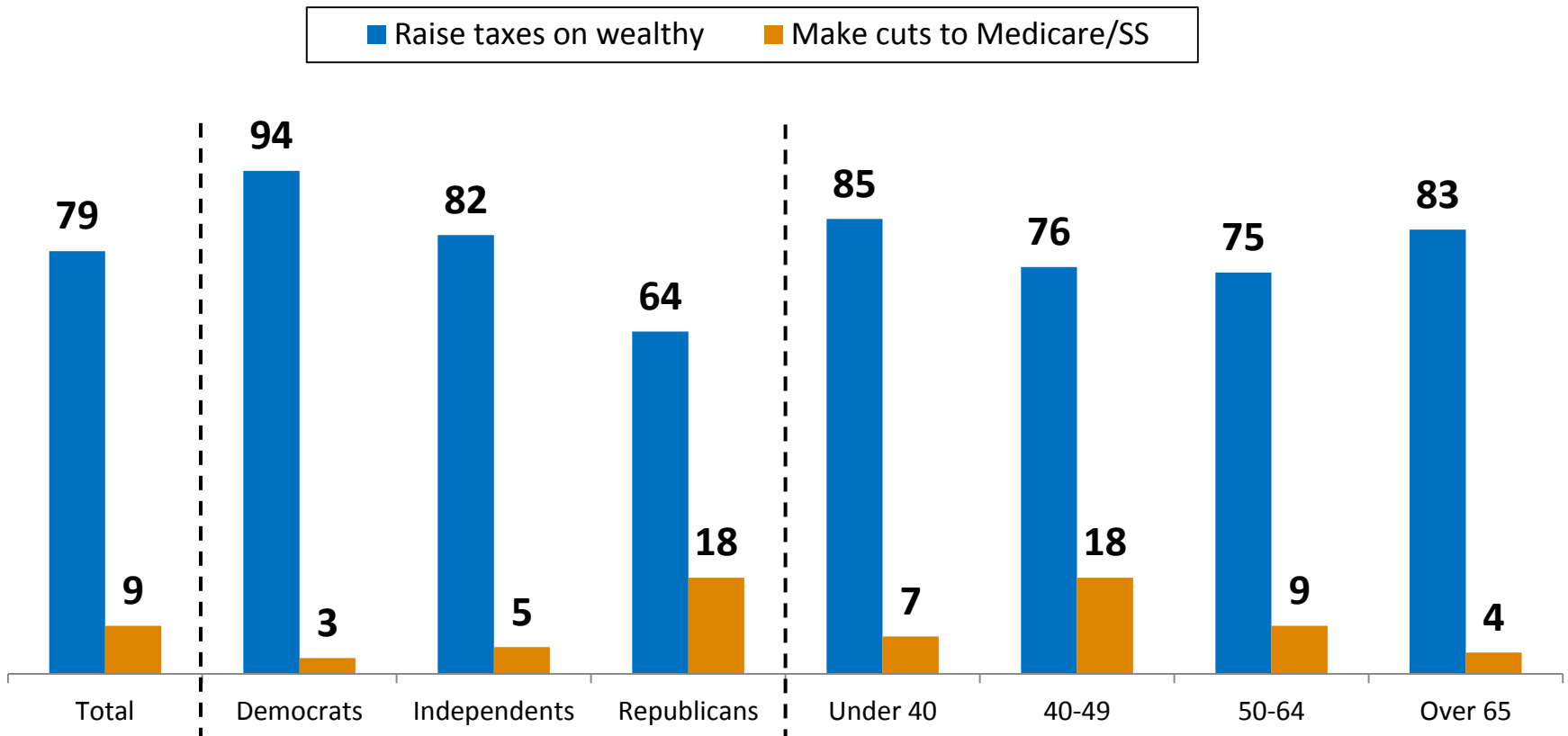
*COLORADO VOTERS WERE ASKED: I am going to read you two statements that might be made by a U.S. Member of Congress in your state. Please tell me which one comes closer to your point of view.

Source: Lake Research Partners, March 2011

Voters of all ages and across party lines favor raising taxes on the wealthy by wide margins over making cuts to Medicare and Social Security

Question: And which of the following ways to reduce the deficit do you prefer, [ROTATE STATEMENTS] Raising taxes on the wealthiest two percent of income earners Or Making cuts to Medicare and Social Security?

Preferred Way To Reduce Deficit



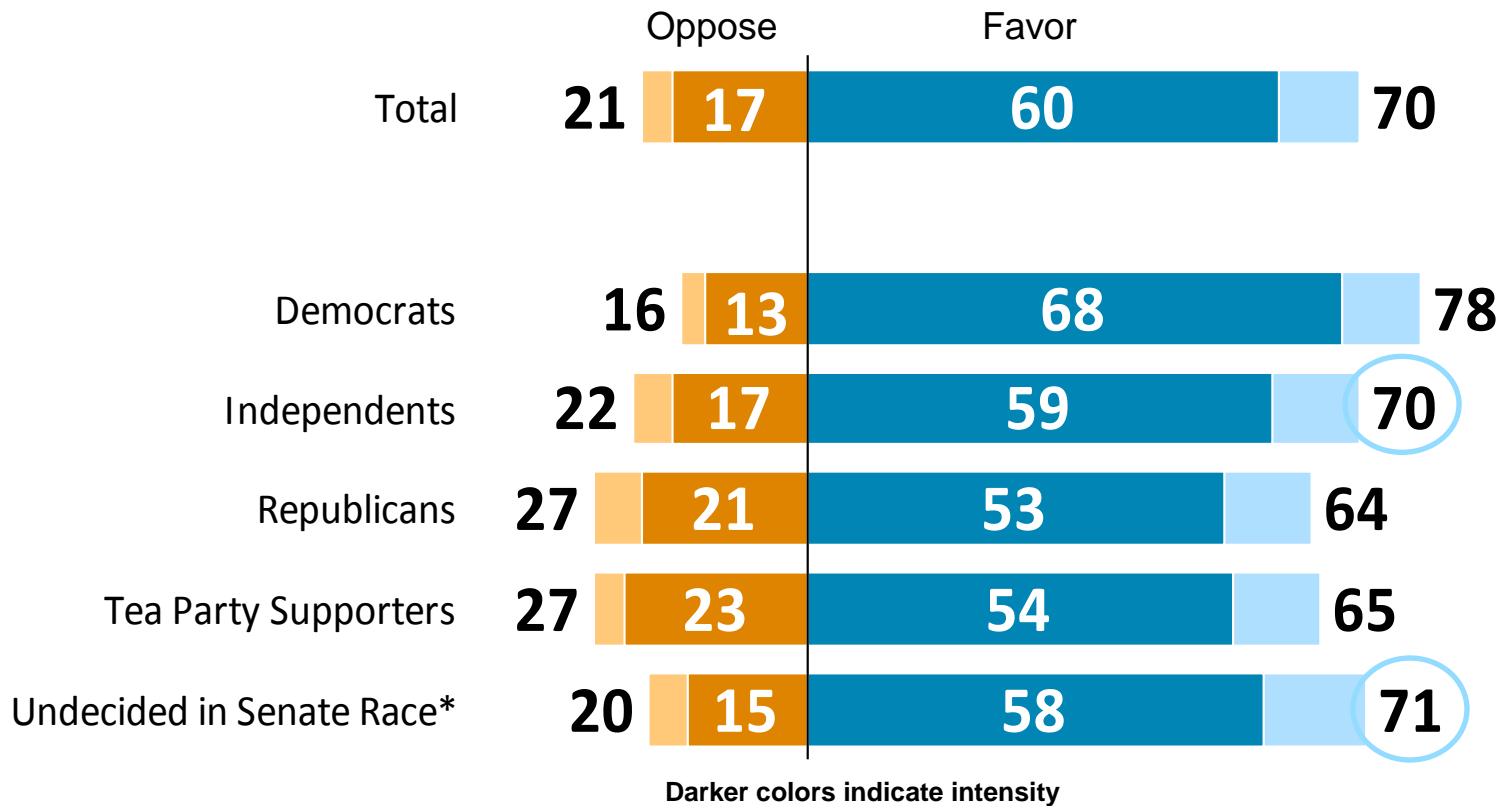
Source: Lake Research Partners and American Viewpoint, Nov. 2011

*Split sampled question



Across political lines, robust majorities of voters in 6 Senate/Battleground states strongly favor gradually requiring employees and employers to pay Social Security taxes on all wages above \$106,800, which they do not currently do. Swing voters also strongly support this proposal

Requiring Employees & Employers to Pay Social Security Taxes on All Wages Above \$106,800



Source: Lake Research Partners, March 2011

Here are some changes people are proposing to help make Social Security more solvent. Please tell me if you would favor or oppose each of the following proposals to make Social Security more solvent [IF FAVOR/OPPOSE: Is that strongly or not so strongly?] Q. Gradually requiring employees and employers to pay Social Security taxes on all wages above one-hundred and six thousand eight-hundred dollars, which they do not do now. *Colorado voters were asked about the generic ballot for the U.S. House of Representatives for 2012.

In an engaged debate, seven in ten voters agree with the candidate who argues that instead of drastic cuts to Social Security, what is needed is closing the loophole to make all wages over \$106,800 subject to Social Security payroll taxes. They pick the candidate who makes this argument over the candidate who calls for cutting benefits for solvency's sake

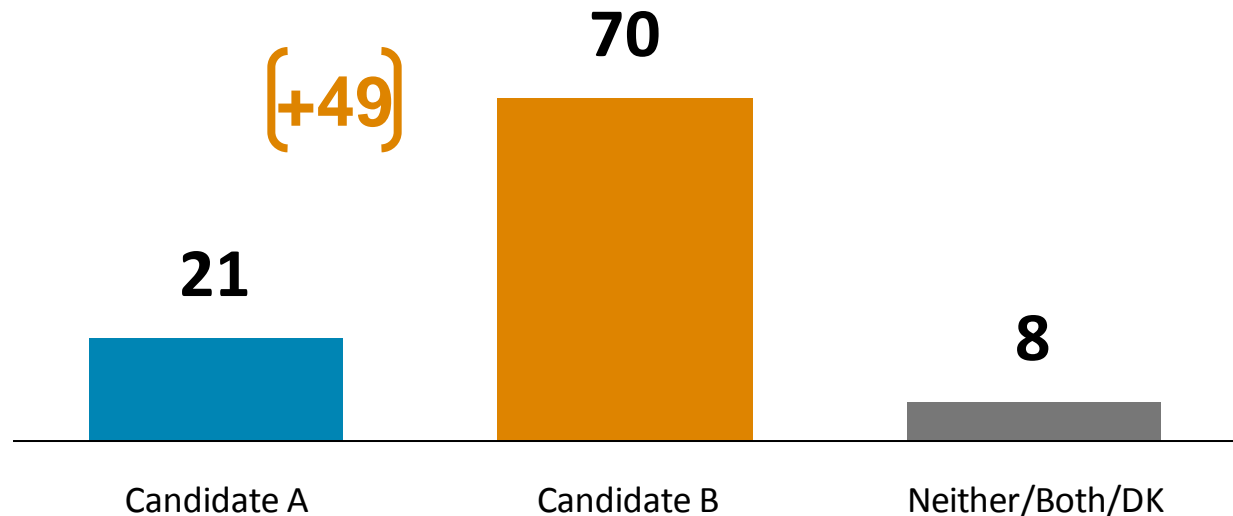
*Now I am going to read two statements that might be made by a U.S. Senator in your state. Which one comes closer to your point of view?

Candidate A

Says the Social Security program is going broke, leaving us with some very difficult choices to make. In order to protect the program for our children and our grandchildren we must make changes, including raising the retirement age to 69 and make cuts in other Social Security benefits.

Candidate B:

Says Social Security is fully funded through 2037, so drastic cuts are not needed. Instead, to protect the program for future generations we should close a loophole, and make all wages over \$106,800 subject to Social Security payroll taxes, which they are not now. Doing this will ensure that Social Security is fully funded for the next 75 years.



*COLORADO VOTERS WERE ASKED: I am going to read you two statements that might be made by a U.S. Member of Congress in your state. Please tell me which one comes closer to your point of view.

Methodology for Lake Research Partners/American Viewpoint Survey, Nov. 2011

Lake Research Partners and American Viewpoint designed and administered this bipartisan survey, which was conducted by phone using professional interviewers on Sept. 8-12, 2011. The survey reached a total of 800 likely voters nationwide. Lake Research Partners is a Democratic-leaning polling firm and American Viewpoint is a Republican-leaning polling firm. Telephone numbers were drawn from a voter file sample. The sample was stratified geographically based on the proportion of voters in each region. Data were weighted slightly by party identification, age, and region to reflect the attributes of the actual population. The margin of error for the overall survey is +/- 3.5%. It is higher among subgroups. Due to rounding some of the numbers will not always add to 100%.

Methodology for Lake Research Partners Survey, Nov. 17, 2011

Lake Research Partners designed this survey that was administered by Caravan in an omnibus survey conducted by telephone using professional interviewers. The survey reached a total of 1,000 adults 18 years of age and older nationwide in the continental United States. The survey was conducted from November 10-13, 2011. Completed interviews were weighted by four variables: age, sex, race and census region to ensure reliable and accurate representation of the total population, 18 years of age and older. The margin of error is +/- 3.1 percent.

Methodology for Lake Research Partners Six State Polls Survey, March 2011

- Lake Research Partners designed and administered six statewide surveys, which were conducted by telephone by professional interviewers from March 3-10, 2011. The survey reached likely voters in:
 - Colorado: 502 likely voters
 - Florida: 503 likely voters
 - Minnesota: 584 likely voters
 - Missouri: 502 likely voters
 - Montana: 422 likely voters
 - Virginia: 603 likely voters
- Each state’s survey is representative of likely voters in each respective state. The “total” data contained in these slides combines the data from all six state surveys, with each state weighted equally.
- Telephone numbers for the base sample were drawn from a listed voter sample. The sample was stratified geographically based on the proportion of likely voters in each region of the state. Data have been weighted slightly by gender, age, education, race, marital status, region, and party identification to reflect the attributes of the actual population in each state. The margin of error for the combined, “total” survey data is +/- 1.8 percentage points. The margin of error for the surveys in Colorado, Florida, and Missouri is +/- 4.4 percentage points. The margin of error for the survey in Minnesota is +/- 4.1 percentage points, Montana is +/- 4.9 percentage points, and Virginia is +/- 4.0 percentage points.