



PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

SURVEY ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

New Jersey's 7th
Congressional District

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2020

SUPPORTED BY



Methodology

Conducted by: Program for Public Consultation

Field Dates: January 23 – February 19, 2020

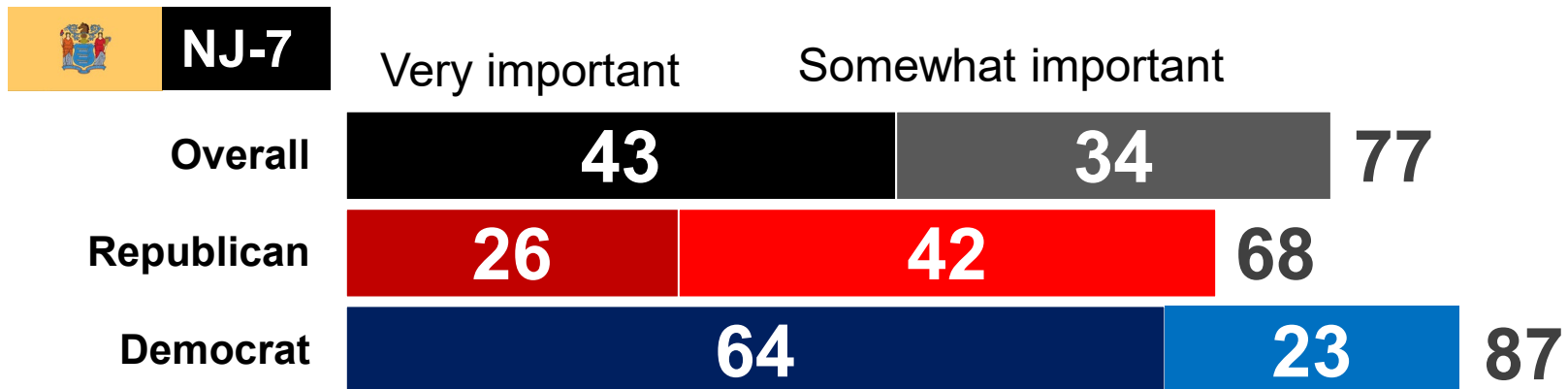
Sample Size: 478 Residents of New Jersey's
7th Congressional District

Weighting: The sample was weighted by age, education, gender and ethnicity using benchmarks for New Jersey's 7th Congressional District that were obtained from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey. The partisan balance was weighted according to the distribution of registrations from the New Jersey Board of Elections.

Offsetting the Influence of Big Campaign Donors

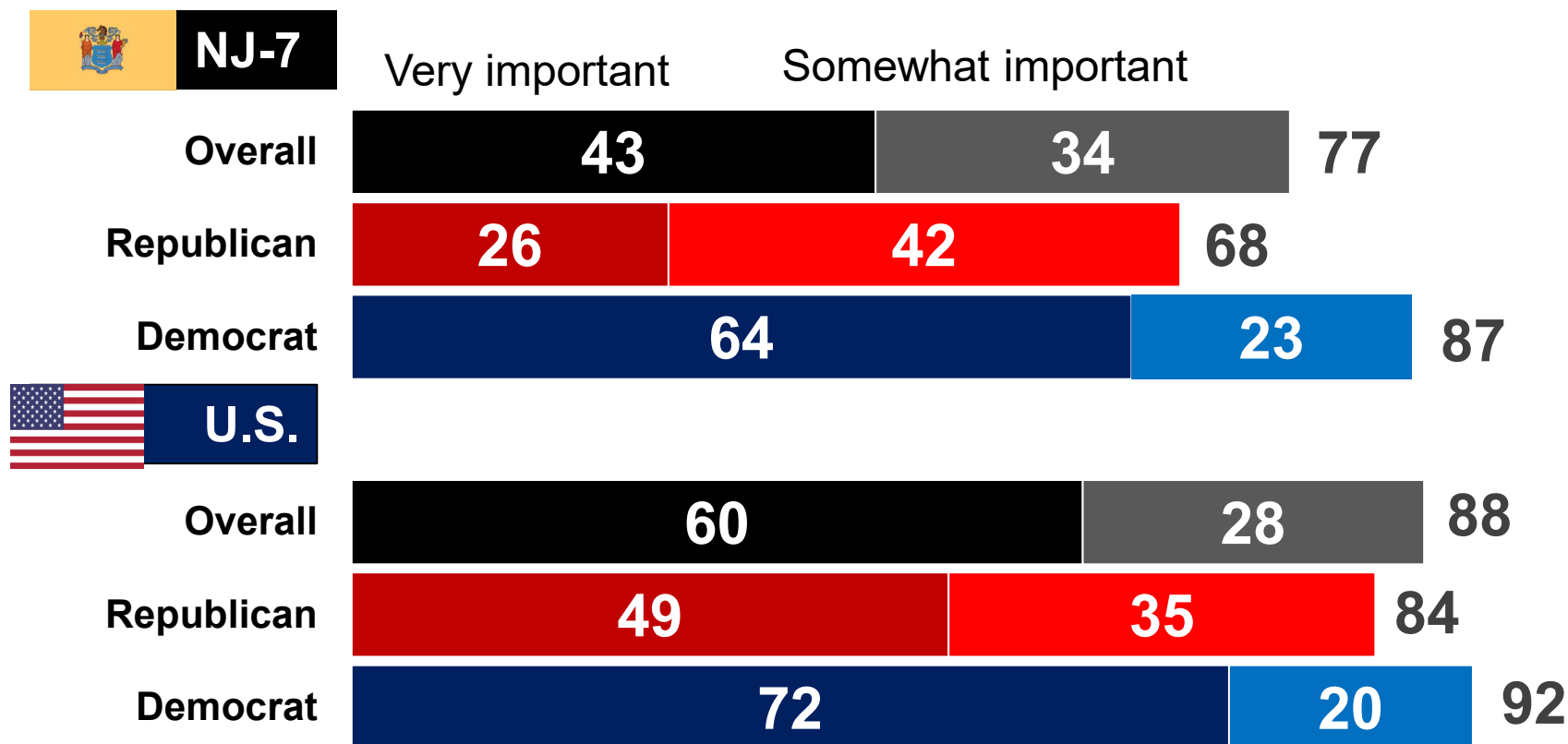
Importance of Issue

How important is the goal of reducing the influence of big campaign donors—including special interests, corporations and wealthy people—on the Federal government?



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OFFSETTING THE INFLUENCE OF BIG CAMPAIGN DONORS

**Increase the Influence of
Small Donors**

When a citizen contributes up to \$50 to a specific candidate:

- half of the contribution would be refundable in the form of a tax credit
- limited to small donors, i.e. people whose total donations to that candidate are no more than \$300

Goal:

- more citizens will make donations
- small donors will make somewhat larger donations
- increase the total amount coming from small donors

Tax Credit for Small Donors

More small donors will reduce influence of large donors

Tax Credit for Small Donors
More small donors will reduce influence of large donors

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

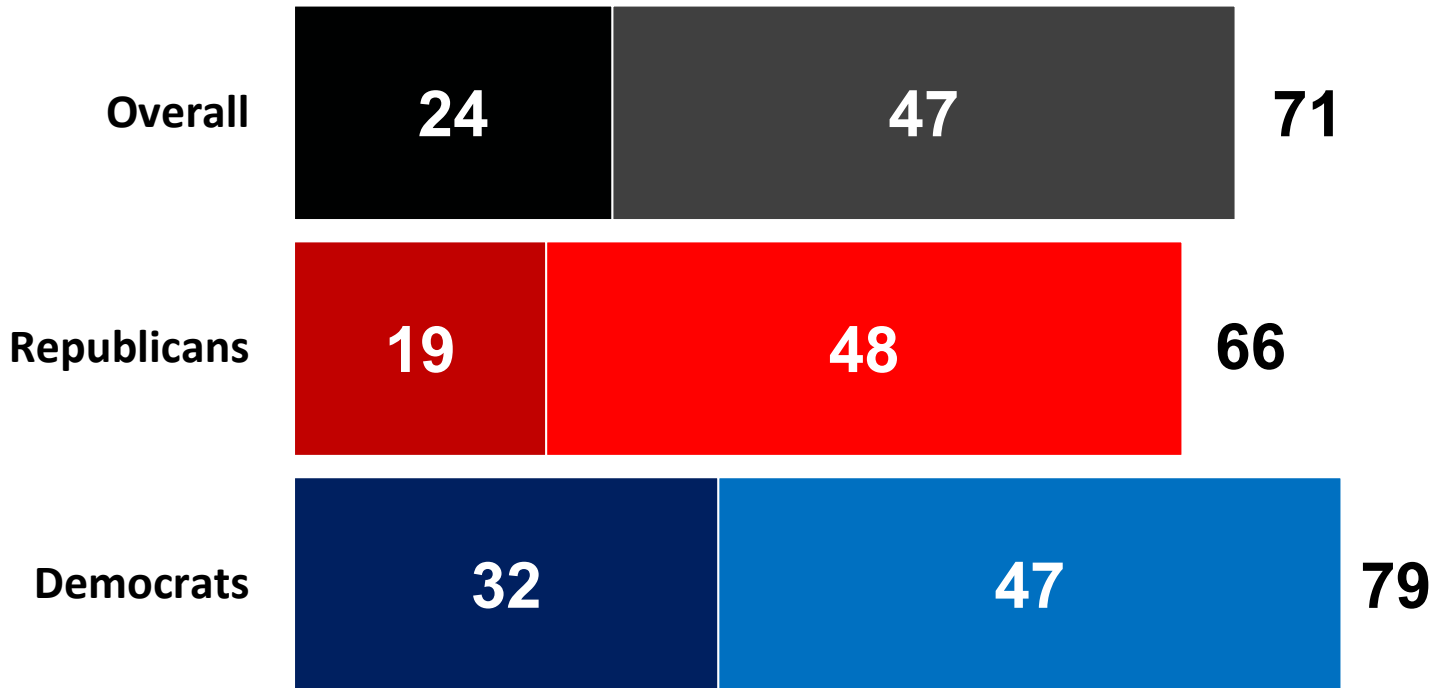
Campaigns cost money. If we encourage more small donors and increase the portion of money coming from small donations, this can free candidates from reliance on a few large donors and make them less influential.

Congress will then be responsible to voters, not well-financed special interests. Candidates who do not want to be beholden to big donors will be more able to run for office and succeed.

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR



Very Convincing Somewhat Convincing



Giving away tax credits to increase the amount of money from small donors effectively spends government funds on election campaigns. This is not a good use of taxpayer money. Furthermore, it is not clear that it will even work.

Big donors will still have a lot more influence than small donors, even if the small donors are more numerous or are able to give a little bit more than they are now.

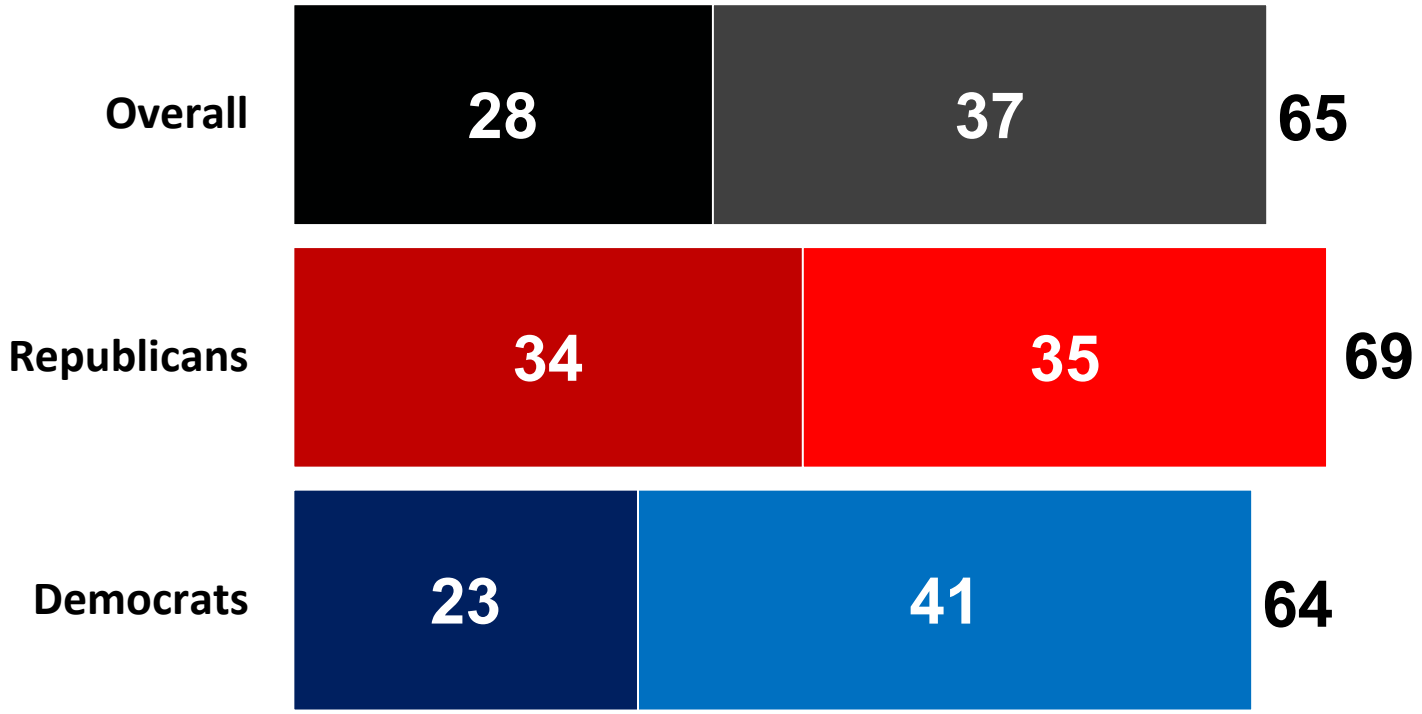
Tax Credit for Small Donors

Don't spend taxpayers' money, big donors will still have more influence

ARGUMENT AGAINST



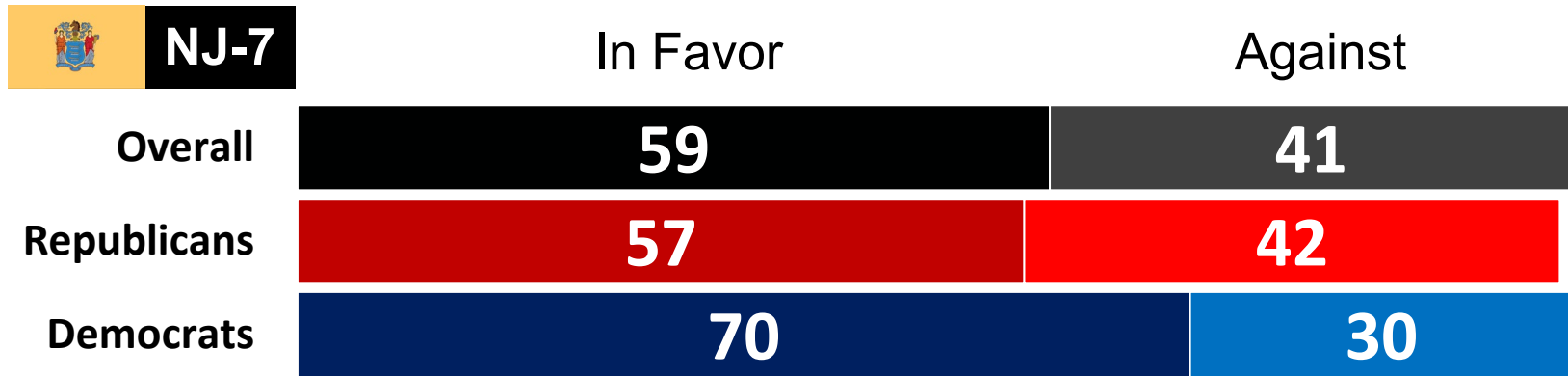
Very Convincing Somewhat Convincing



Tax Credit for Small Donors

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

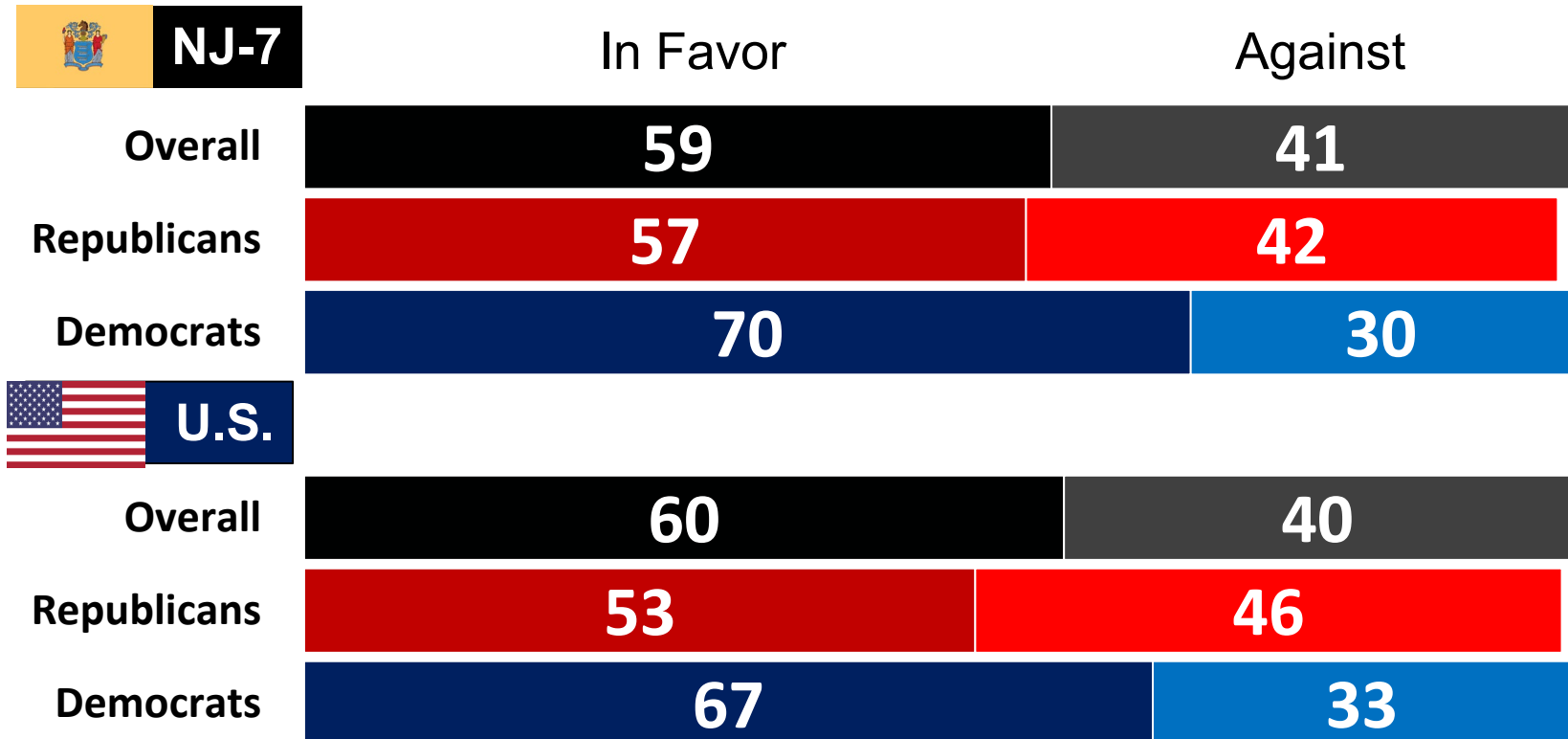
When a citizen contributes up to \$50 to a specific candidate, half of the contribution would be refundable in the form of a tax credit. This would be limited to small donors, which would be people whose total donations to that candidate are no more than \$300.



Tax Credit for Small Donors

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

When a citizen contributes up to \$50 to a specific candidate, half of the contribution would be refundable in the form of a tax credit. This would be limited to small donors, which would be people whose total donations to that candidate are no more than \$300.



There is another proposal that proponents say will reduce the possibility of illegal online donations to Federal campaigns made by foreigners, in excess of legal limits, or with stolen credit cards. Opponents say there is no evidence these are real problems and that the proposed solutions discourage people from making donations.

As you may know, it is illegal for foreign sources—individuals or organizations—to make contributions to US campaigns. However, Americans living abroad may make such donations. The bill would:

require that donors to Federal campaigns who make online credit card donations from abroad are not only US citizens, but also registered voters and that they provide their US voting address.

Online Credit Card Donations

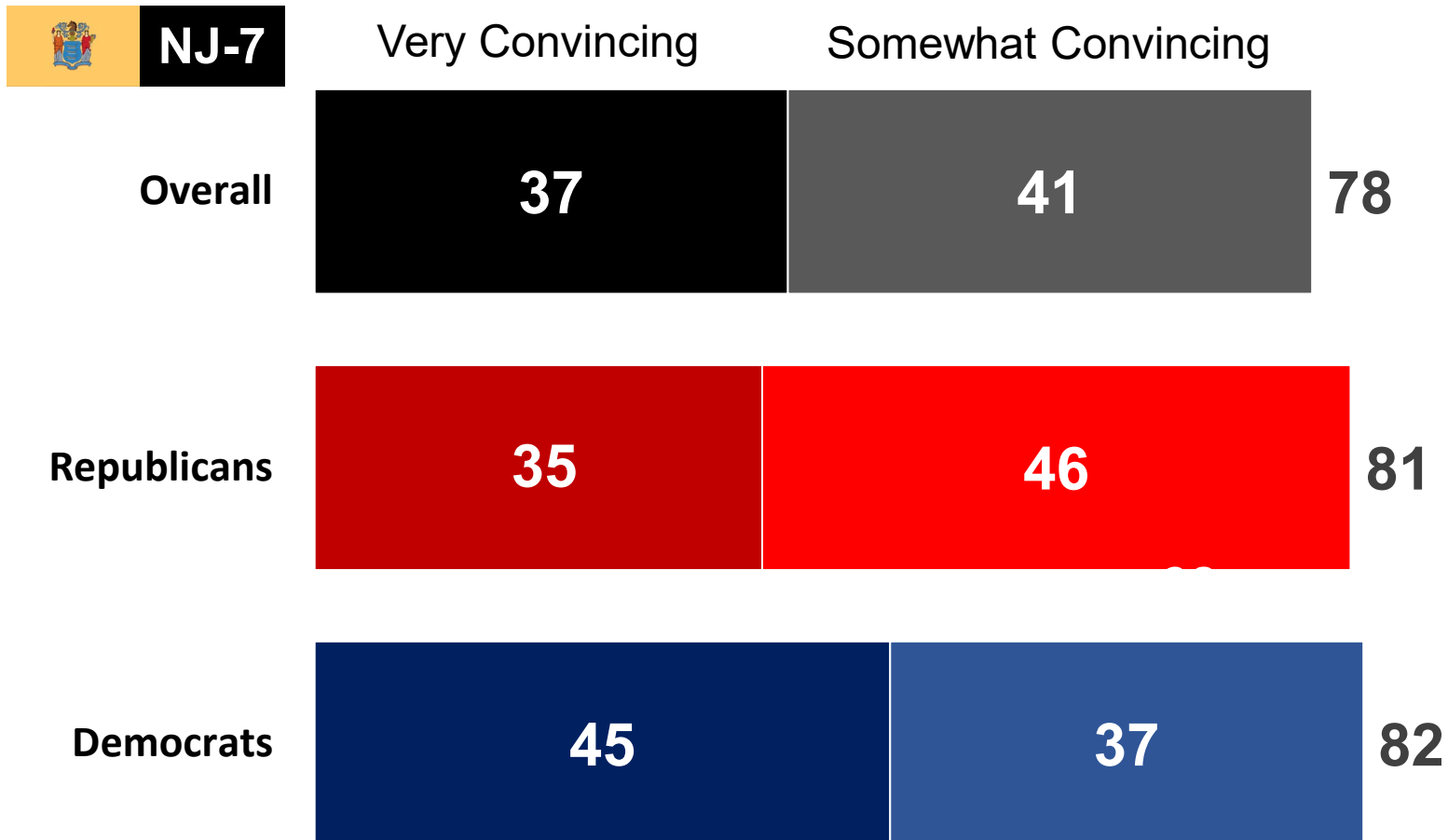
ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Online Credit Card Donations
ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

We need to ensure that foreigners are not influencing our Federal election process by making illegal contributions.

If online credit card donors are required to provide the billing address and the CVV code of the credit cards they are using, it will be harder for foreign sources to make campaign donations.

If a foreign source gives a false U.S. address, the CVV code would help identify this misbehavior.

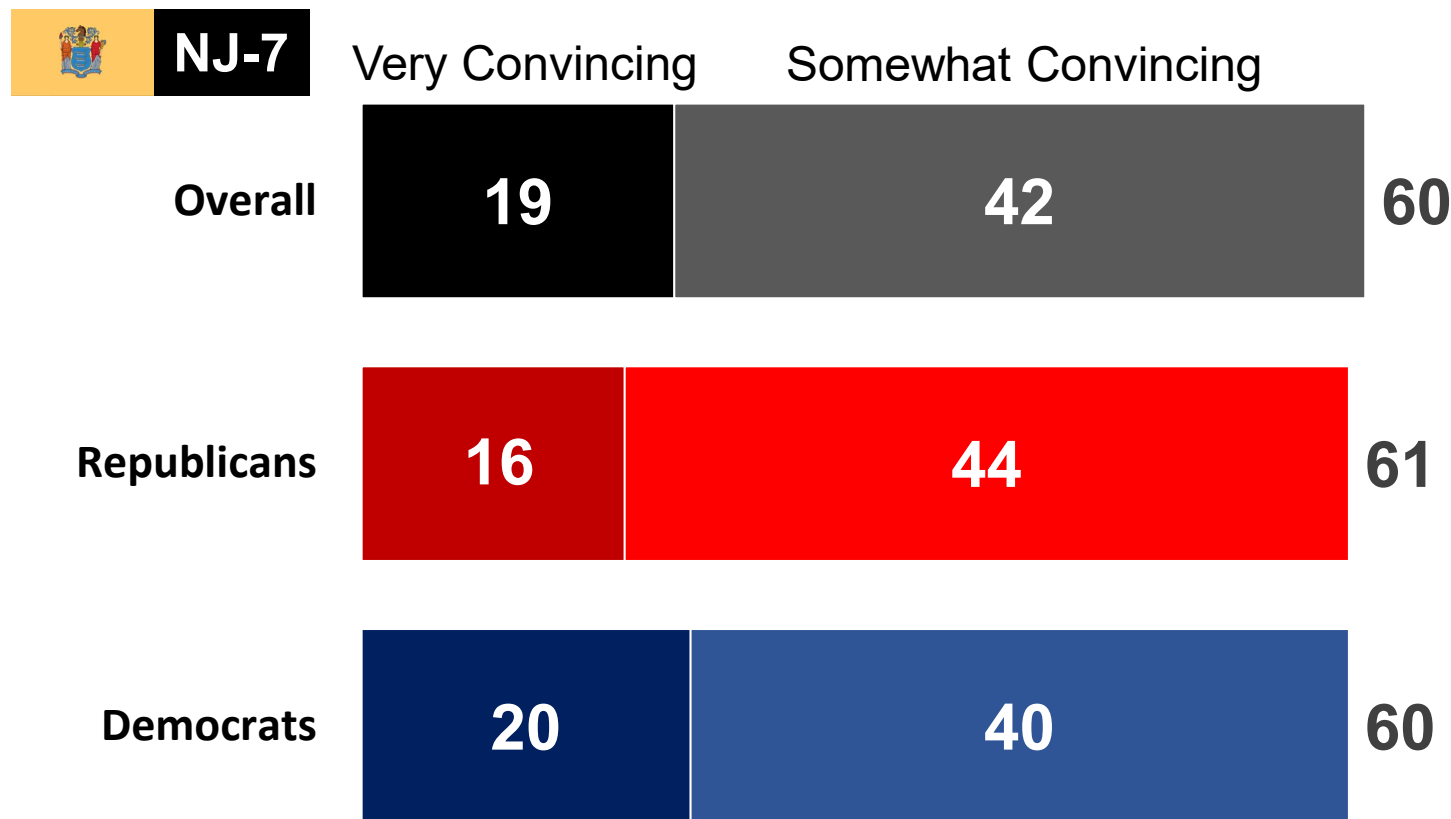


This bill is a solution without a problem. The Federal Reserve Commission has not reported any significant problems of online credit cards being used by foreign sources to make illegal contributions.

The bill would create a new limitation on Americans living abroad by requiring that they be currently registered to vote and have a US address—something that people living abroad may not be able to do.

Online Credit Card Donations

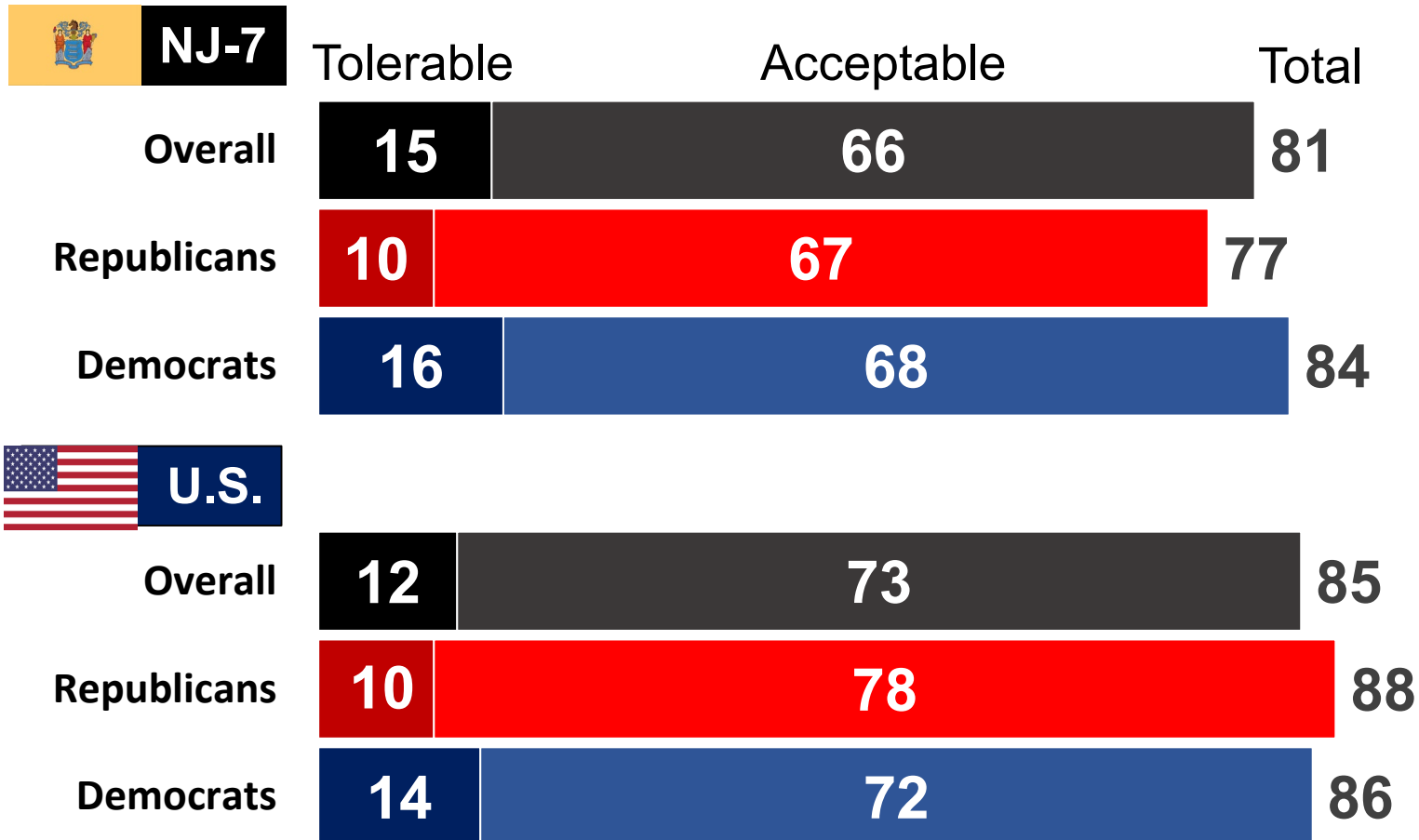
ARGUMENT AGAINST



Online Credit Card Donations

ASSESSMENT

Proposal that would require that donors to Federal campaigns who make online credit card donations from abroad are not only US citizens, but also registered voters and that they provide their US voting address.



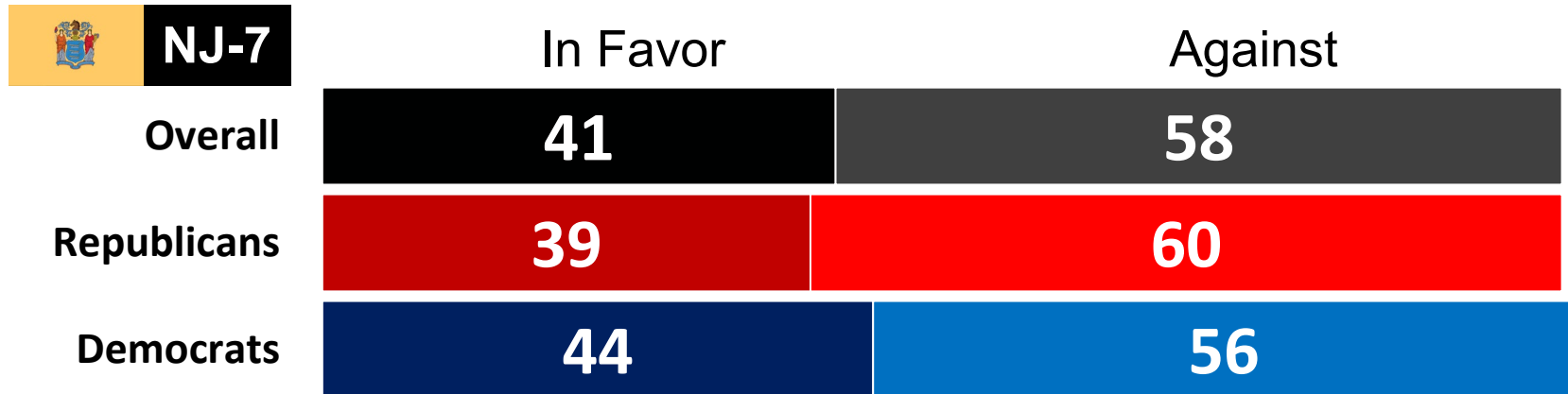
- Candidate must first agree not to take any donations over \$1,000
- The government will match 6 to 1 all donations up to \$150

For example, if someone were to make a donation of \$100, the government would provide \$600.

Government Matching Small Donations

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

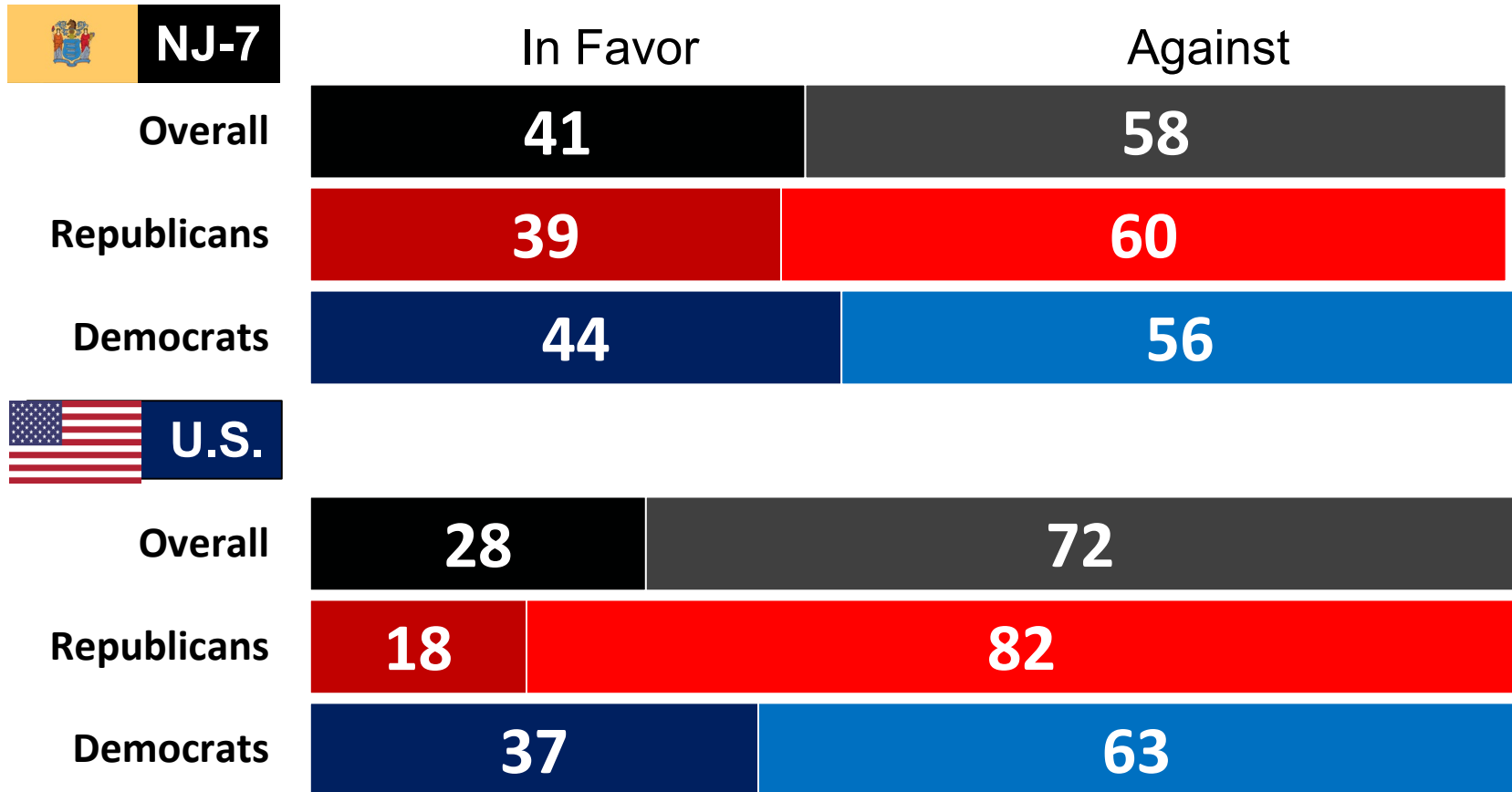
Candidate must first agree not to take any donations over \$1,000. Then, the government will match 6 to 1 all donations up to \$150.



Government Matching Small Donations

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

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OFFSETTING THE INFLUENCE OF BIG CAMPAIGN DONORS

**Requiring Greater
Public Disclosure Of
Campaign-Related
Donations**

Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations

- There are donations that can be made anonymously to certain organizations that can support candidates and political causes. Critics call this ‘dark money.’
- With U.S. Supreme Court’s “Citizens United” decision, no longer any limits on such donations.
- Since then, the amount of such anonymous donations has gone up dramatically.
- There are a number of proposals for requiring that such donations be publicly disclosed.

Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations

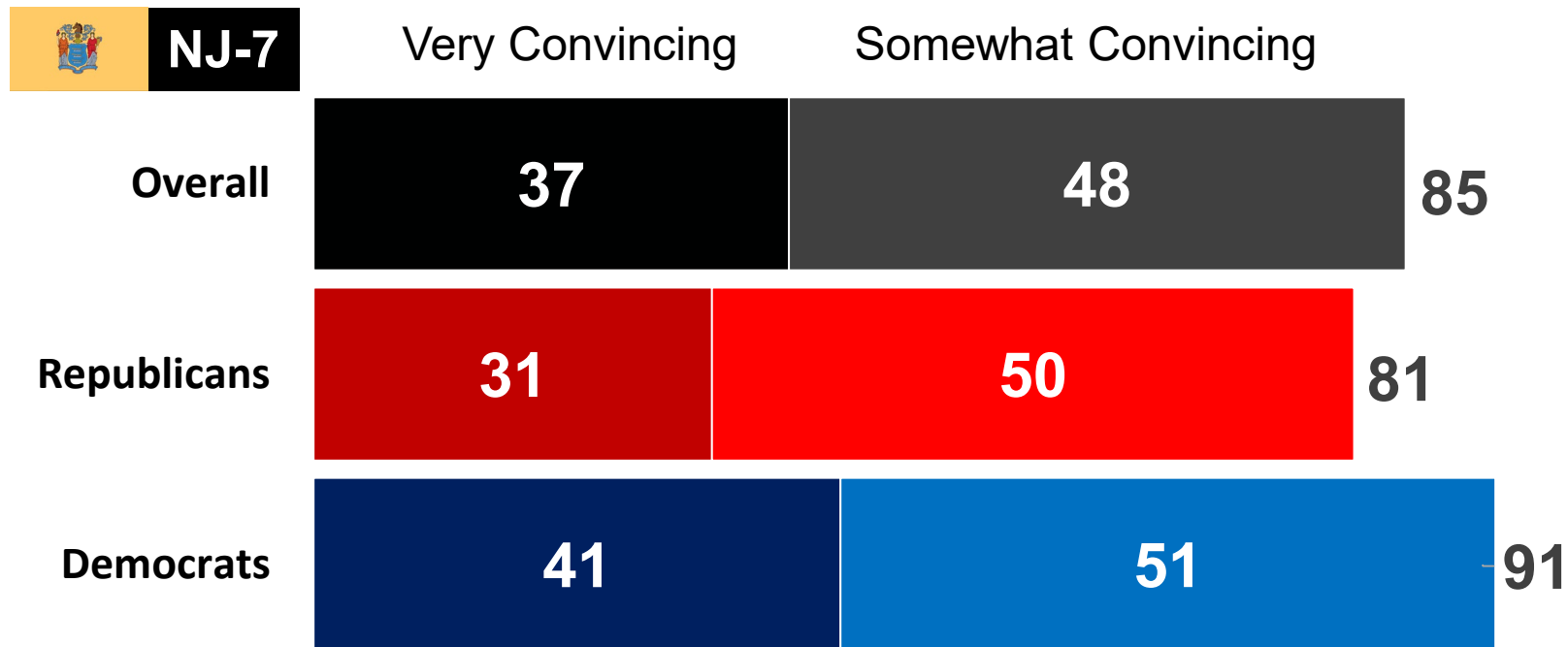
Makes it harder to use donation to get influence

Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations
Makes it harder to use donations to get influence

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR #1

When campaign-related donations are fully disclosed, it makes it more difficult for elected officials to do favors, taking actions that serve the interests of the donor, rather than the common good. If the donation is disclosed, the public, the media, and watchdog groups can question whether an action was a favor in exchange for a donation. This will create political costs for the elected official, as well as discourage donors from seeking favors through donations.

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR #1

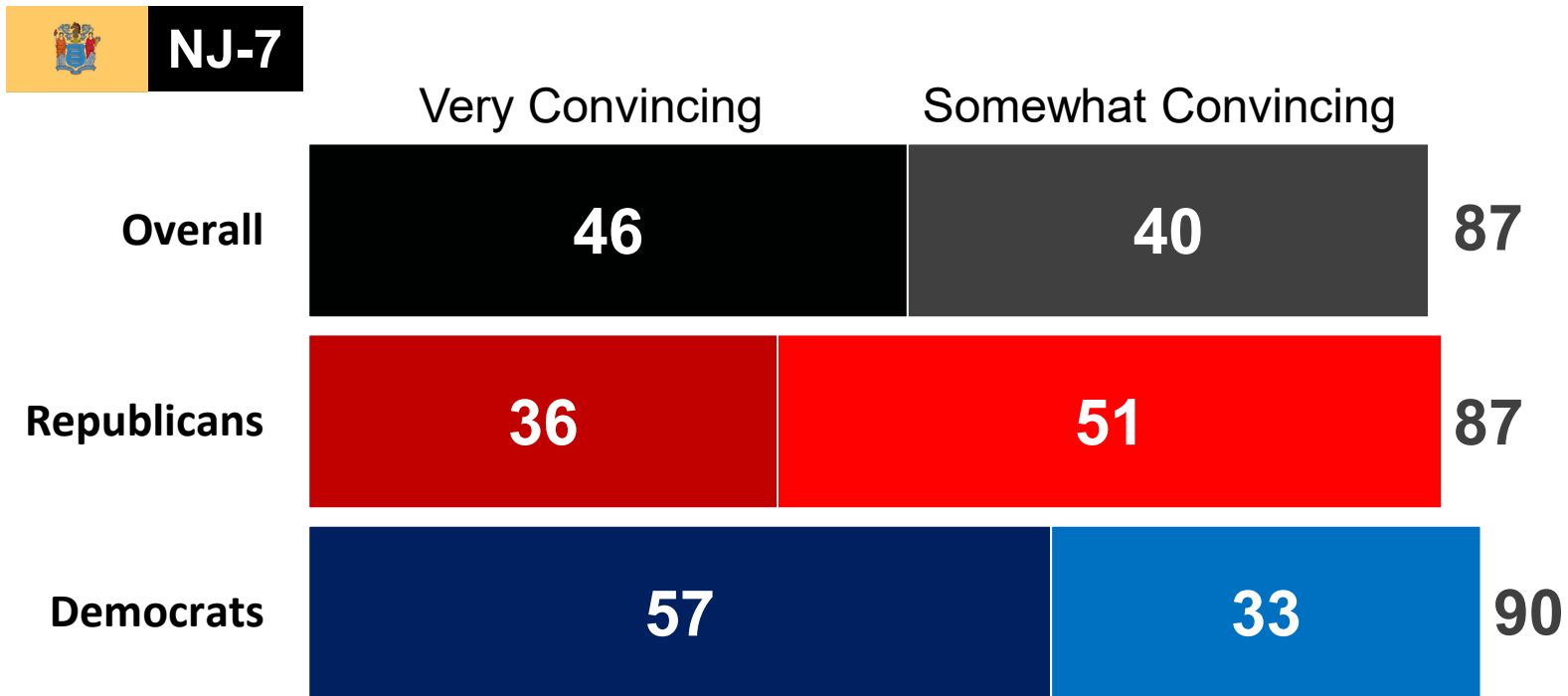


Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations

Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations
Voters can see candidates' potential allegiances
DISSENT IN MAJORITY
When judging a candidate, people have a right to know who is providing money in support of the candidate.
Voters can get a better sense of the allegiances that the candidate might have and the interests they might support.

Voters can see candidates' potential allegiances

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR #2

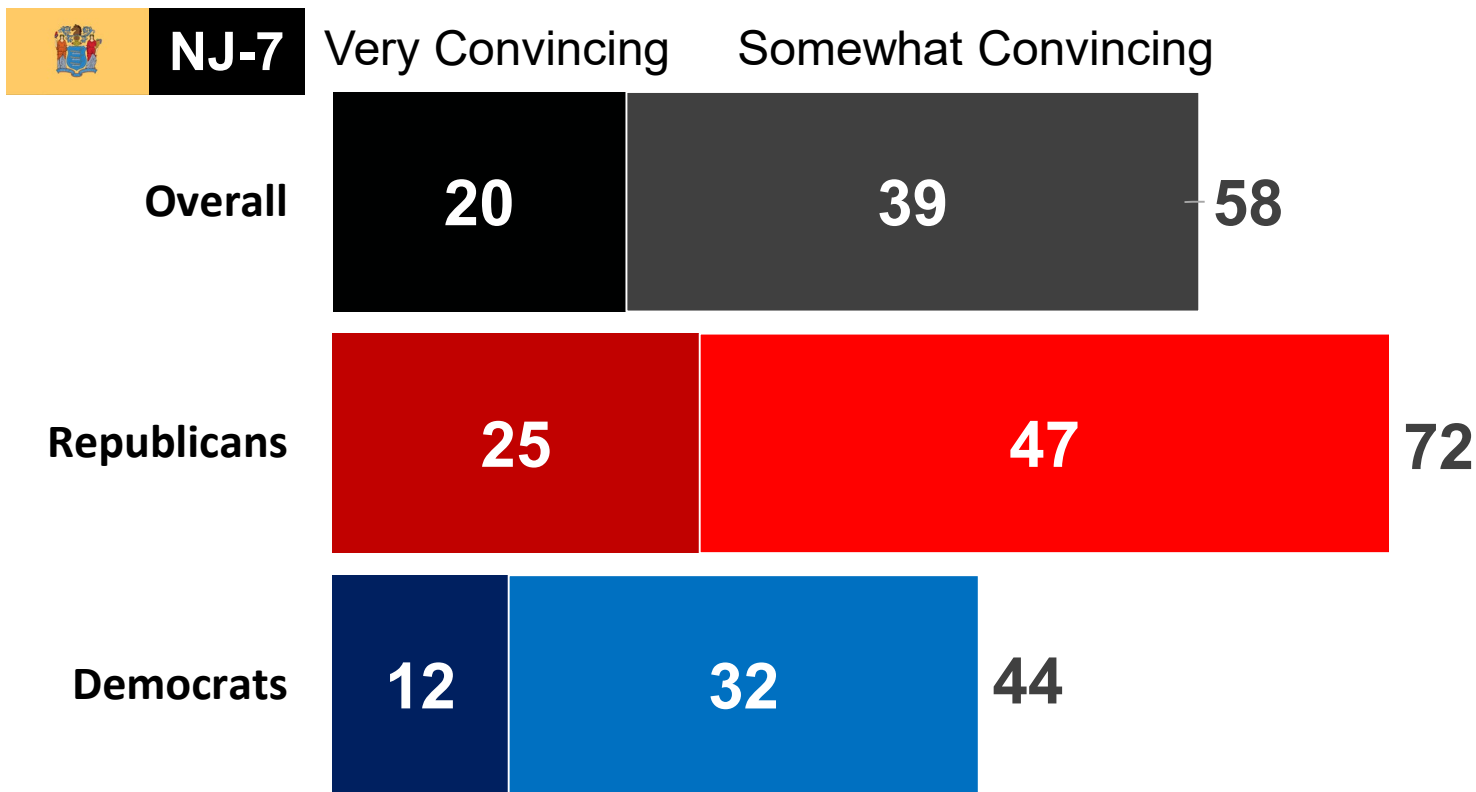


Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations

Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations
Disclosures as they stand, disclosure can lead to false accusations
ARGUMENT AGAINST #1
Making a campaign donation has been established by the U.S. Supreme Court as a basic right as part of the principle of free speech. If every donation is subject to public scrutiny, it can lead to claims that it was basically a bribe, when in fact it might not be at all.
People may also get harassed or threatened for making such donations. This will discourage people from making such donations, including completely legitimate ones.

Donations are free speech, disclosure can lead to false accusations

ARGUMENT AGAINST #1

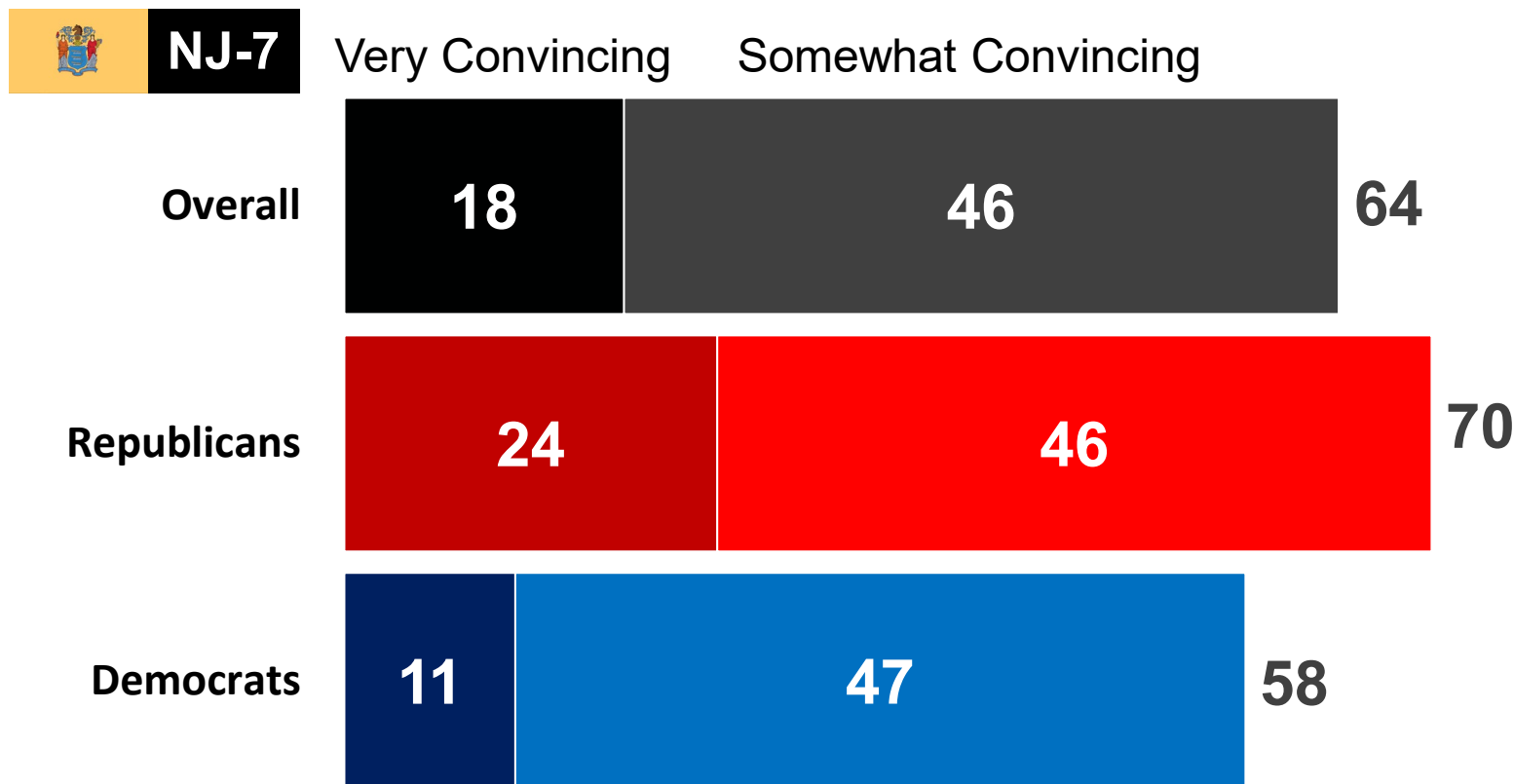


Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations

Requirements won't be effective, Member can deny influence

Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations
Requirements won't be effective, Member can deny influence
ARGUMENT AGAINST #1
Public disclosure is not going to prevent elected officials from doing favors in exchange for financial support. Even if elected officials are, in fact, taking a position to serve the interests of a donor (in exchange for support), the officials can simply say that they think the practice is the right one -- and there's no way to prove they don't think that.
Furthermore, in some cases the politician may genuinely support the position. Disclosure will not clarify what's really going on.

ARGUMENT AGAINST #2

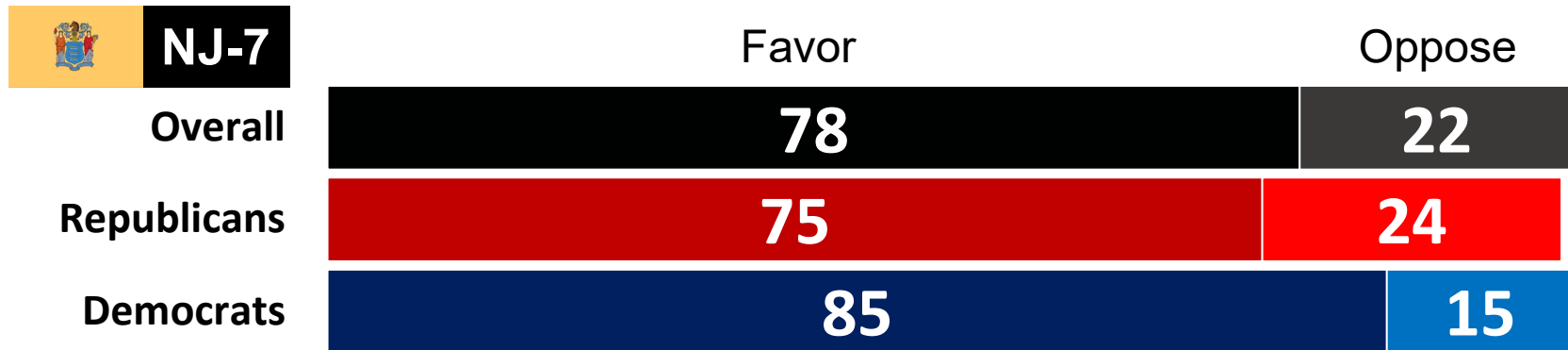


Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations

Reporting names of significant donations to campaigns

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Require that all individuals or organizations that donate or receive a total of \$10,000 or more for campaign-related activities promptly register with the FEC and have their name and the amount of the donations listed on the Commission's website.

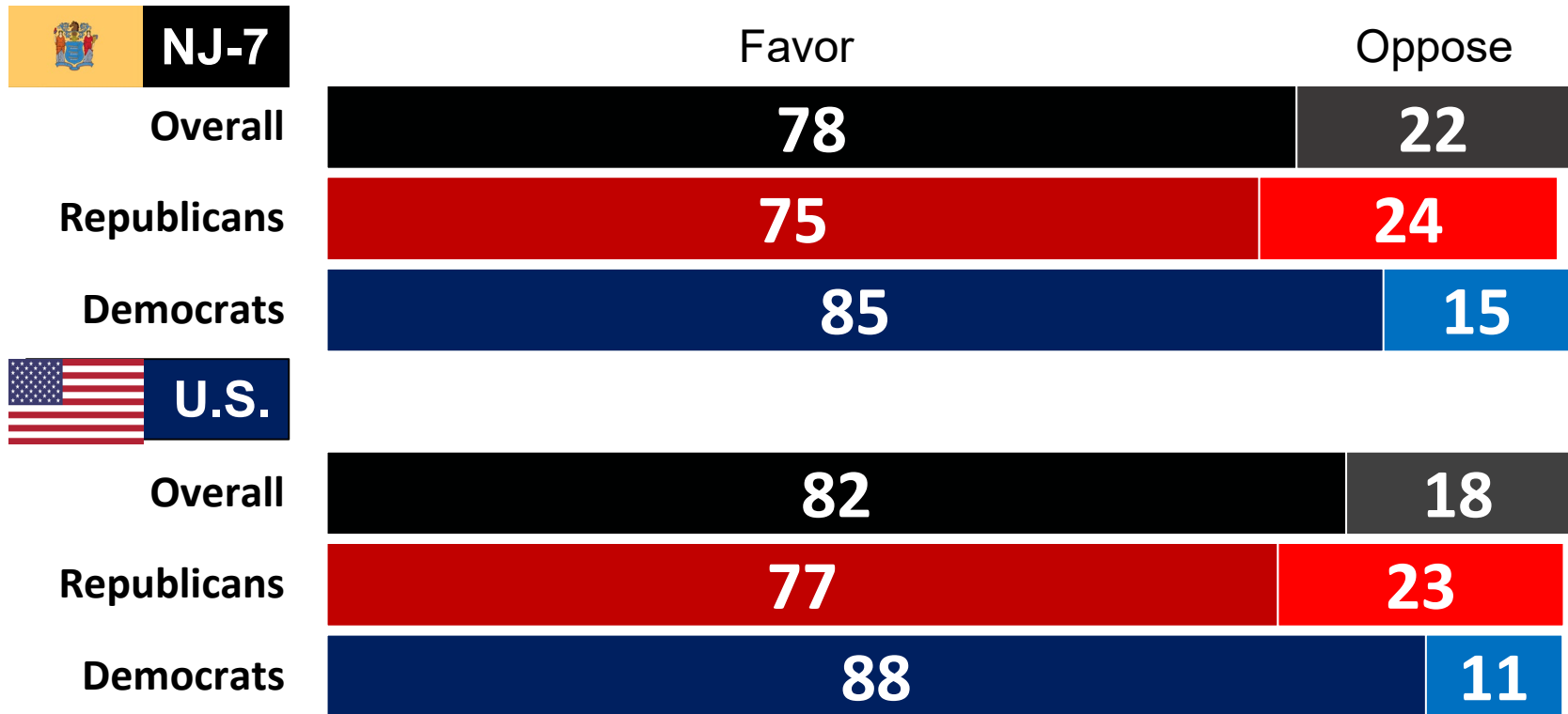


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Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations

Public disclosure & transparency to shareholders & members of organizations

Proposal 2

Currently, when corporations, unions, and other groups spend money on campaign-related activity, such as running a TV ad that is supportive of a candidate, they do not have to report it.

This proposal would require that, these groups:


- report this spending, within 24 hours, to their shareholders and members
- make this information available to the public on their websites
- report it to the FEC

Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations

Public disclosure & transparency to shareholders & members of organizations

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Require corporations, unions and other groups report campaign related donations within 24 hours, make the information available to the public on their websites, and report it to the FEC.

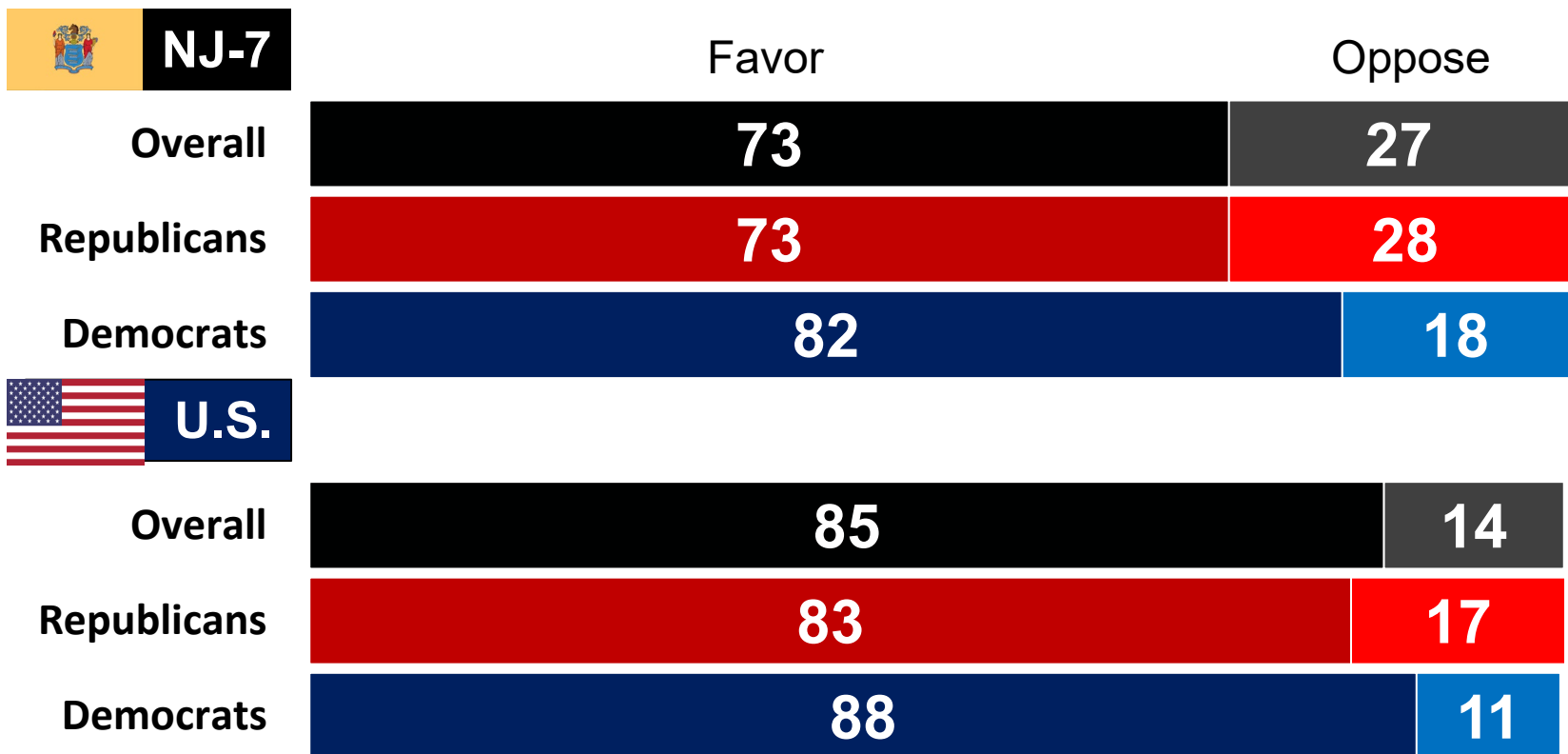
 NJ-7	Favor	Oppose
Overall	73	27
Republicans	73	28
Democrats	82	18

Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations

Public disclosure & transparency to shareholders & members of organizations

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Require corporations, unions and other groups report campaign related donations within 24 hours, make the information available to the public on their websites, and report it to the FEC.



Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations

Reporting names of significant donors when paying for radio or tv ads

Proposal 3

Currently, when significant donors spend money on campaign-related activity, such as running a TV ad that is supportive of a candidate, they do not have to report it.

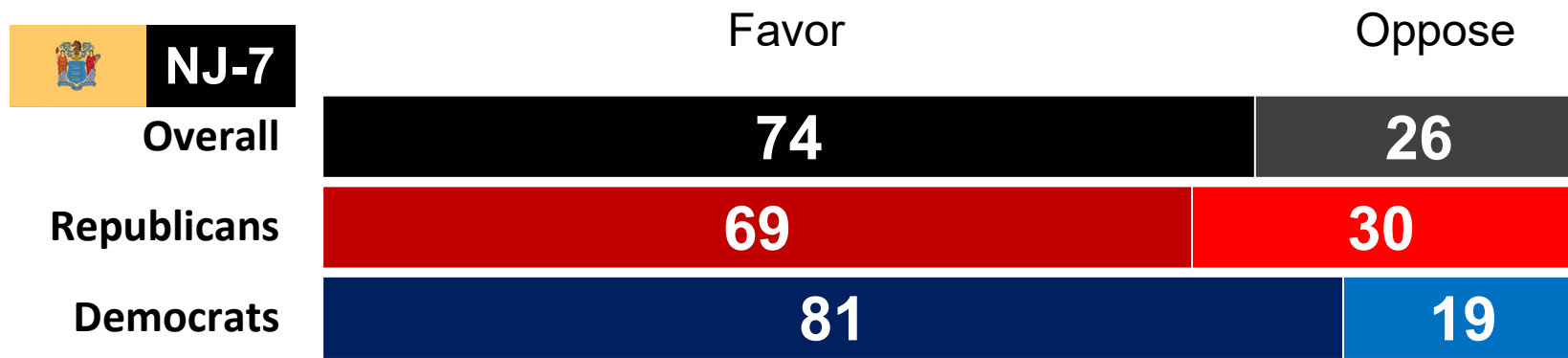
This proposal says that the Federal Communications Commission would require the public disclosure of the names of significant donors in paying for TV or radio ads in support of candidates or related to controversial public issues.

Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations

Reporting names of significant donors when paying for radio or tv ads

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

The Federal Communications Commission would require the public disclosure of the names of significant donors in paying for TV or radio ads in support of candidates or related to controversial public issues

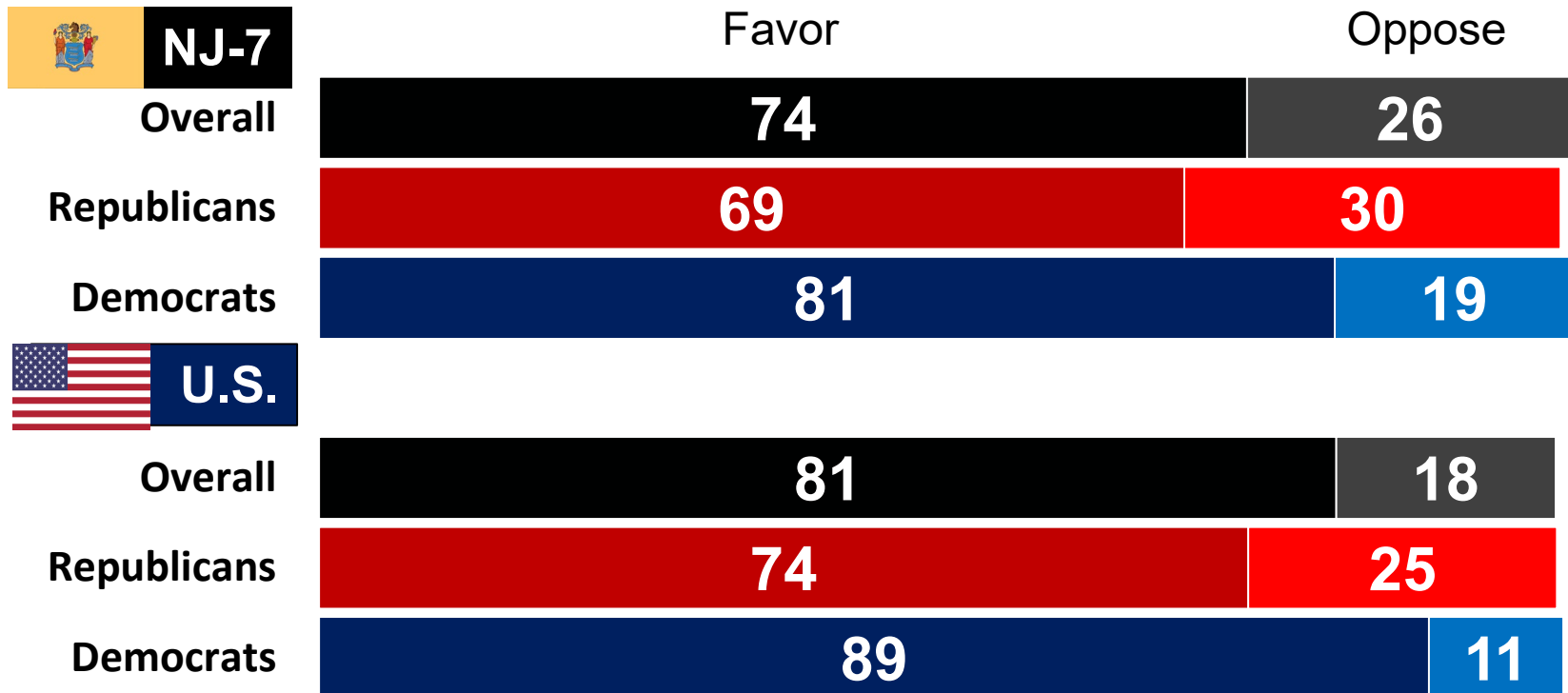


Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations

Reporting names of significant donors when paying for radio or tv ads

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

The Federal Communications Commission would require the public disclosure of the names of significant donors in paying for TV or radio ads in support of candidates or related to controversial public issues



Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations

Disclosure of Campaign Donations by Federal Contractors

Proposal 4

Let's suppose Congress does not pass the previous proposal. Here is an action that could be taken by the President to require greater disclosure.

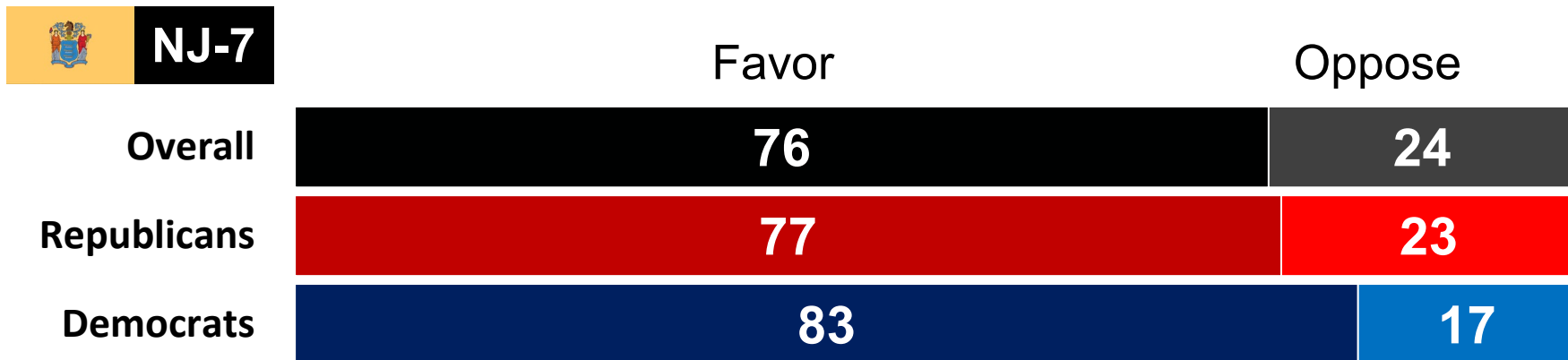
As you may know, some federal contractors are big campaign donors. The President could require federal contractors to publicly disclose their donations to groups that spend money on campaign-related activities.

Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations

Disclosure of Campaign Donations by Federal Contractors

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

The President could require federal contractors to publicly disclose donations to groups that spend money on campaign-related activities.

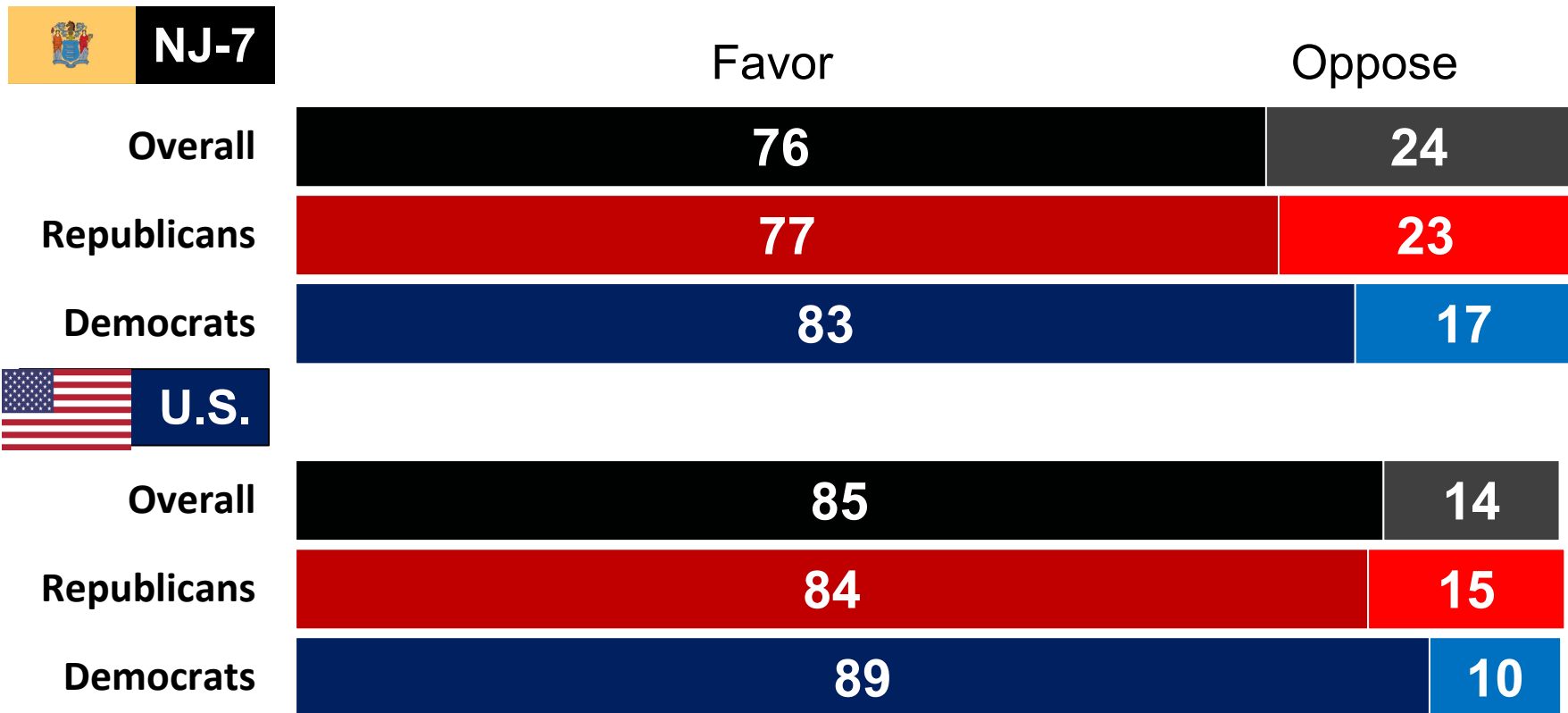


Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations

Disclosure of Campaign Donations by Federal Contractors

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

The President could require federal contractors to publicly disclose donations to groups that spend money on campaign-related activities.



OFFSETTING THE INFLUENCE OF BIG CAMPAIGN DONORS

**Constitutional Amendment
that Overturns
Citizens United**

PROPOSAL:

Constitutional Amendment that Overturns Citizens United

Some people think:

- these proposals for campaign finance reform are not adequate to counter the influence of big donors;
- Congress should directly limit all forms of campaign-related donations.

For Congress to do this, however, would require a new Constitutional amendment, which would override the Supreme Court's past decisions on this subject, including 'Citizens United'

Passing any Constitutional amendment is quite challenging. It requires ratification by two thirds of Congress and three quarters of all states.

Such an amendment has been proposed in both houses of Congress. It has two parts, which we will consider one at a time.

Constitutional Amendment that Overturns Citizens United

Part 1

Congress and the states may regulate and set reasonable limits on the raising and spending of money by candidates and others seeking to influence elections.

Constitutional Amendment

Congress May to Regulate Campaign Financing

Since Citizens United, flood of money drowning out ordinary voters

Constitutional Amendment
 1 Congress May to Regulate Campaign Financing
 Since Citizens United, flood of money drowning out ordinary voters

ARGUMENT MUST BE FRANK

Clearly, we cannot go on letting private and organizations use the cover of the First Amendment to allow what is essentially a lobby of Members of Congress. Since the recent Supreme Court decision to allow unlimited contributions, there has been a flood of money pouring into organizations seeking to influence elections. The rich should not have more influence just because they have more money. They are drowning out the voice of most ordinary voters.

The Founders would be horrified by the amount of money in elections and this is just the kind of problem that they established the Constitutional amendment process to address. Congress should be able to set reasonable limits on political spending.

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

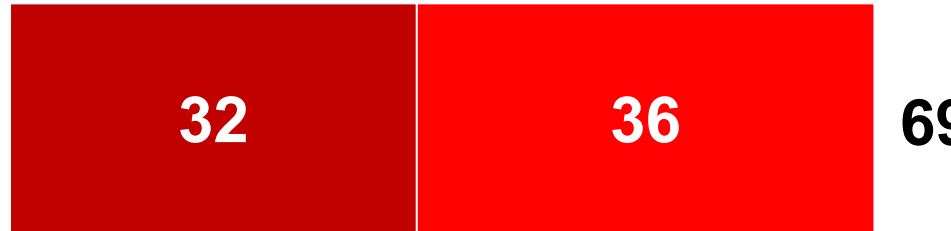


Very Convincing Somewhat Convincing

Overall



Republicans



Democrats



Constitutional Amendment

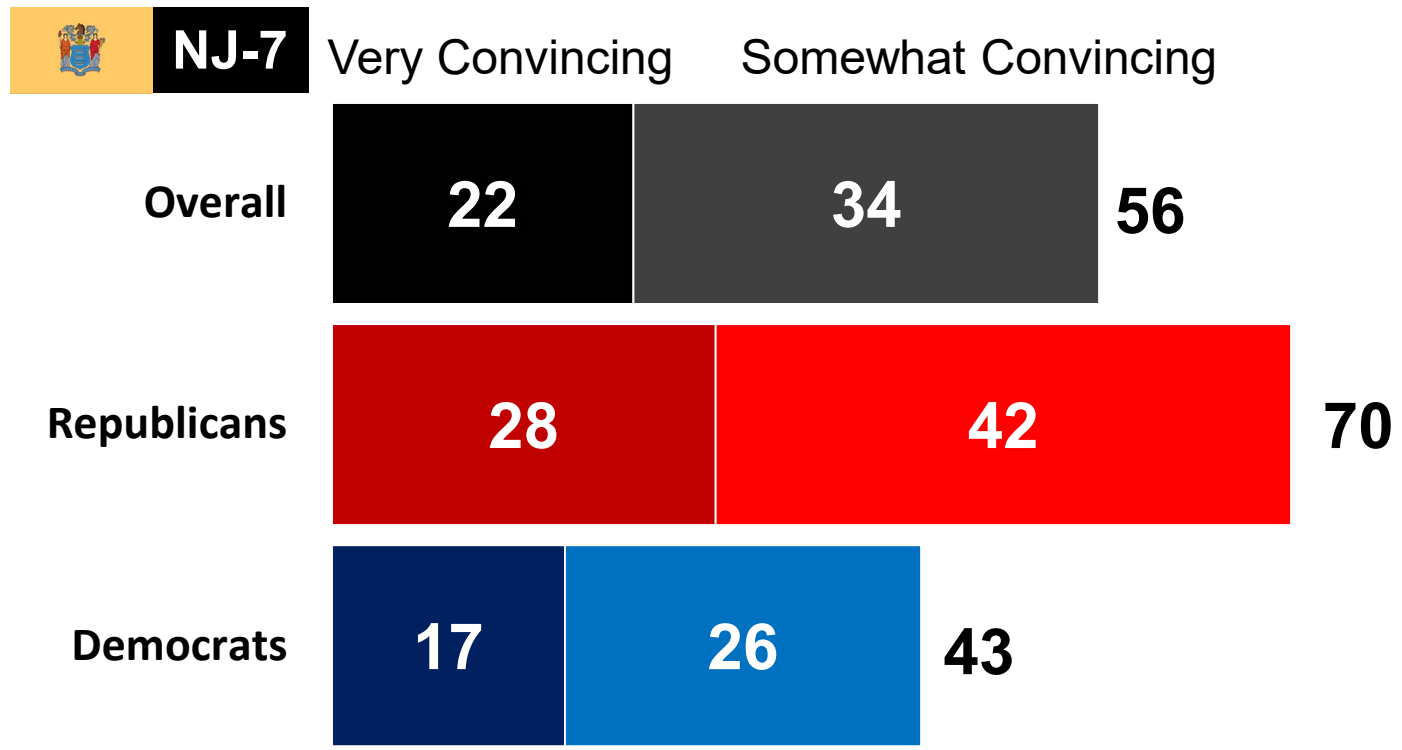
Congress May Regulate Campaign Financing

Should not limit speech or tamper with the Constitution

Constitutional Amendment
 Congress May Regulate Campaign Financing
 Should not limit speech or tamper with the Constitution
RESOLUTION AGAINST

This proposal is an amendment to the Constitution. It is primarily an attempt to repeal the First Amendment. If people want to spend money making their views heard about a candidate, the government should not have the right to stop them. Should we assume that the government knows what the right amount of the speech is? That freedom of speech is able to be controlled for non-ideology. You can't just pick and choose where you want it to apply. The answer is no. The Constitution is a risky idea. Once you start limiting some forms of speech it becomes a slippery slope toward more and more limits on our freedoms.

ARGUMENT AGAINST



NJ-7

Very Convincing

Somewhat Convincing

Overall

22

34

56

Republicans

28

42

70

Democrats

17

26

43

Constitutional Amendment that Overturns Citizens United

Part 2

In writing campaign finance laws, Congress would have the right to treat corporations and other organizations differently from ‘natural persons.’

This would allow Congress to restrict or even prohibit corporations and other organizations from spending money to influence elections.

Constitutional Amendment

Congress May Treat Corporations Differently

Constitution meant to protect individuals, not corporations

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT
 Congress May Treat Corporations Differently
ARGUMENT IN FAVOR
 A corporation should not have the same rights as a person. The idea that it is a group of people expressing their point of view is a fallacy. All of the people who are part of the corporation do not necessarily share a single point of view. A corporation is created to protect a function or to make money. It does not have the right to vote.
 Pursuing political influence through congressional decisions in the service of a corporation's goals is not something the Constitution was ever meant to protect. If the individuals associated with a corporation want to express a point of view or donate to a campaign, they are all free to do so.

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR



Very Convincing

Somewhat Convincing

Overall

41

35

77

Republicans

34

43

77

Democrats

55

32

87

Constitutional Amendment

Congress May Treat Corporations Differently

Citizens should have right to come together as a corporation and promote their views, like individuals

Constitutional Amendment

Congress May Treat Corporations Differently

Citizens should have right to come together as a corporation and promote their views, like individuals.

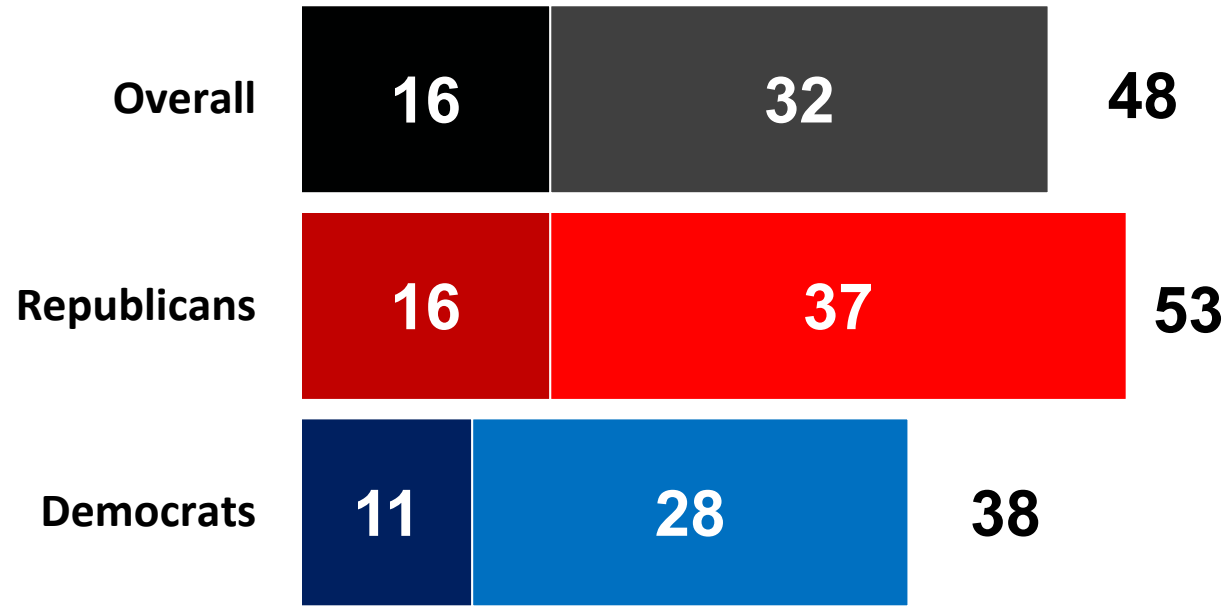
ARGUMENT AGAINST

People have the right to come together and become shareholders in a corporation. As shareholders they have a shared interest in the goals of the corporation. Thus, the corporation should have the same rights of free expression as do the individual shareholders. The fact that they are also seeking to make money should not make any difference. Making a Constitutional amendment that would restrict the freedom of shareholders to act together would violate the underlying principles of the Constitution. Furthermore, some of the corporations that would be limited by this law are nonprofit corporations that serve good causes and should not be prevented from making their voice heard.

ARGUMENT AGAINST



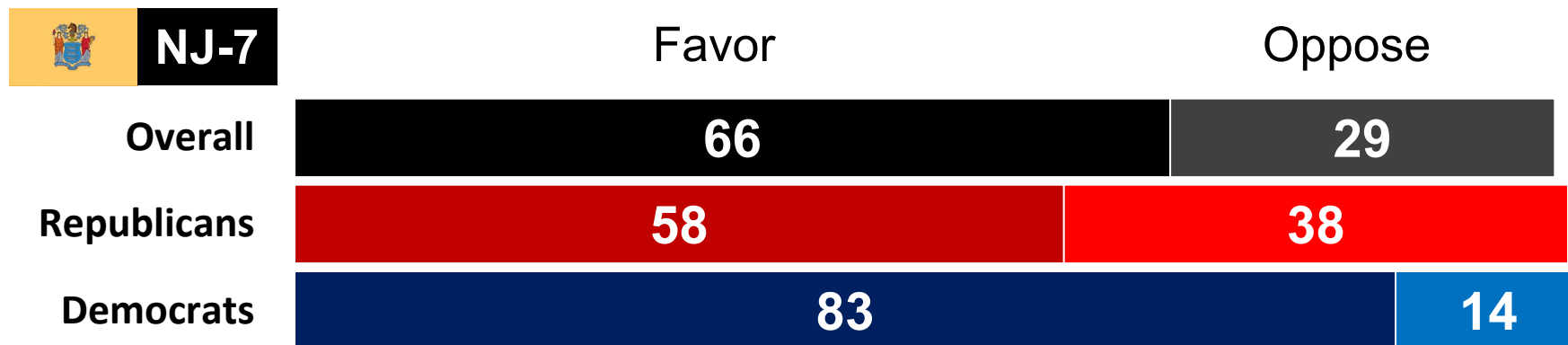
Very Convincing Somewhat Convincing



Constitutional Amendment that Overturns Citizens United

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

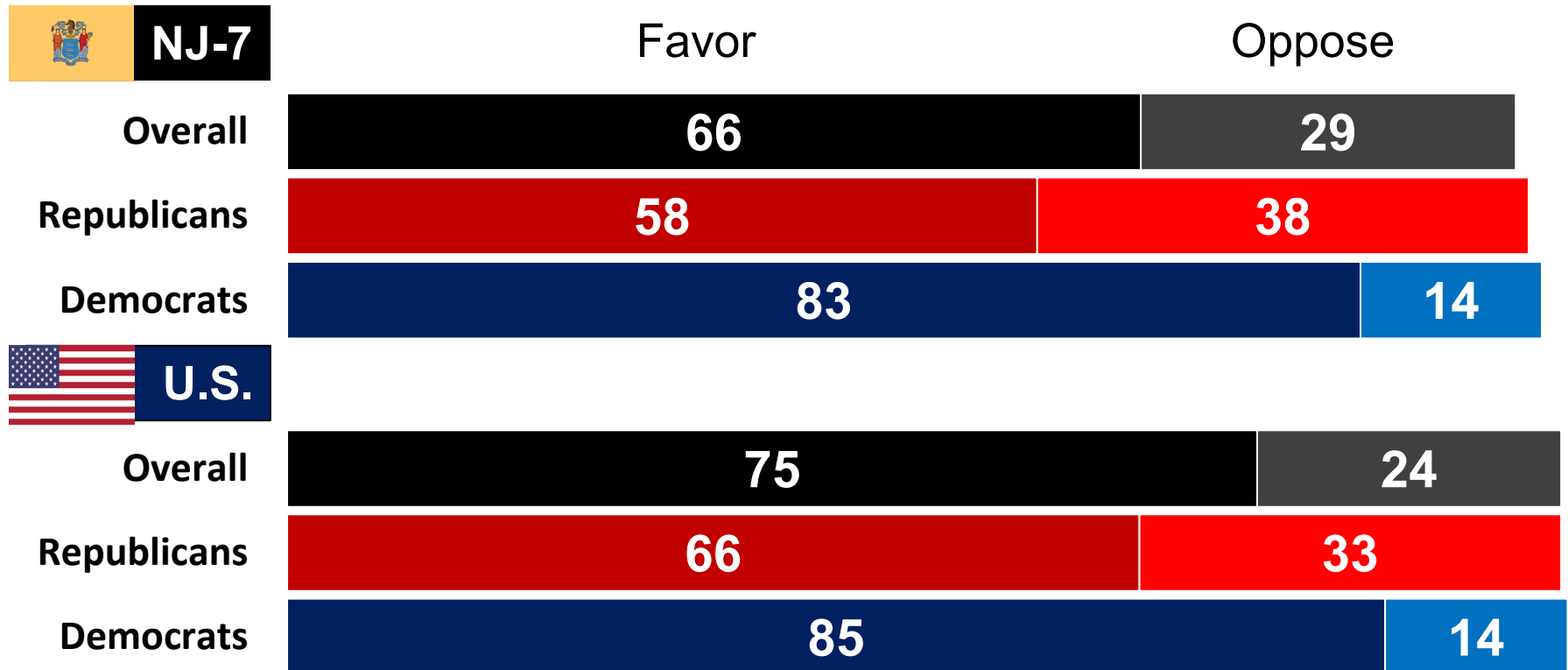
Would you recommend that your Members of Congress vote in favor of or against a Constitutional Amendment allowing Congress to directly regulate campaign financing and treat corporations differently than individuals?



Constitutional Amendment that Overturns Citizens United

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Would you recommend that your Members of Congress vote in favor of or against a Constitutional Amendment allowing Congress to directly regulate campaign financing and treat corporations differently than individuals?



CHANGING THE WAY CONGRESS IS ELECTED

**Congressional
Redistricting By Citizen
Commission**

Congressional Redistricting

Another debate in Congress is about how the districts for the House of Representatives of the US Congress are designed.

- Usually redistricting is done by state legislatures.
- There are concerns that the dominant party in state legislatures try to design districts that favor their party i.e. gerrymandering.

PROPOSAL:

Congressional Redistricting By Citizen Commission

Have the shape of Congressional districts set by a commission of citizens within each state. The commissions would:

- commit to designing districts in a way that is **geographically natural and compact** without creating a favorable distribution for either party
- be comprised of **one third Republicans, one third Democrats, and one third independents**, and **reflect the balance of the state** according to **gender, race, ethnicity** and the **geographic areas** of the state.

Decisions on the shape of districts would be made by a majority of the commission members that includes at least one member from both parties and an independent.

Congressional Redistricting by Citizen Commission

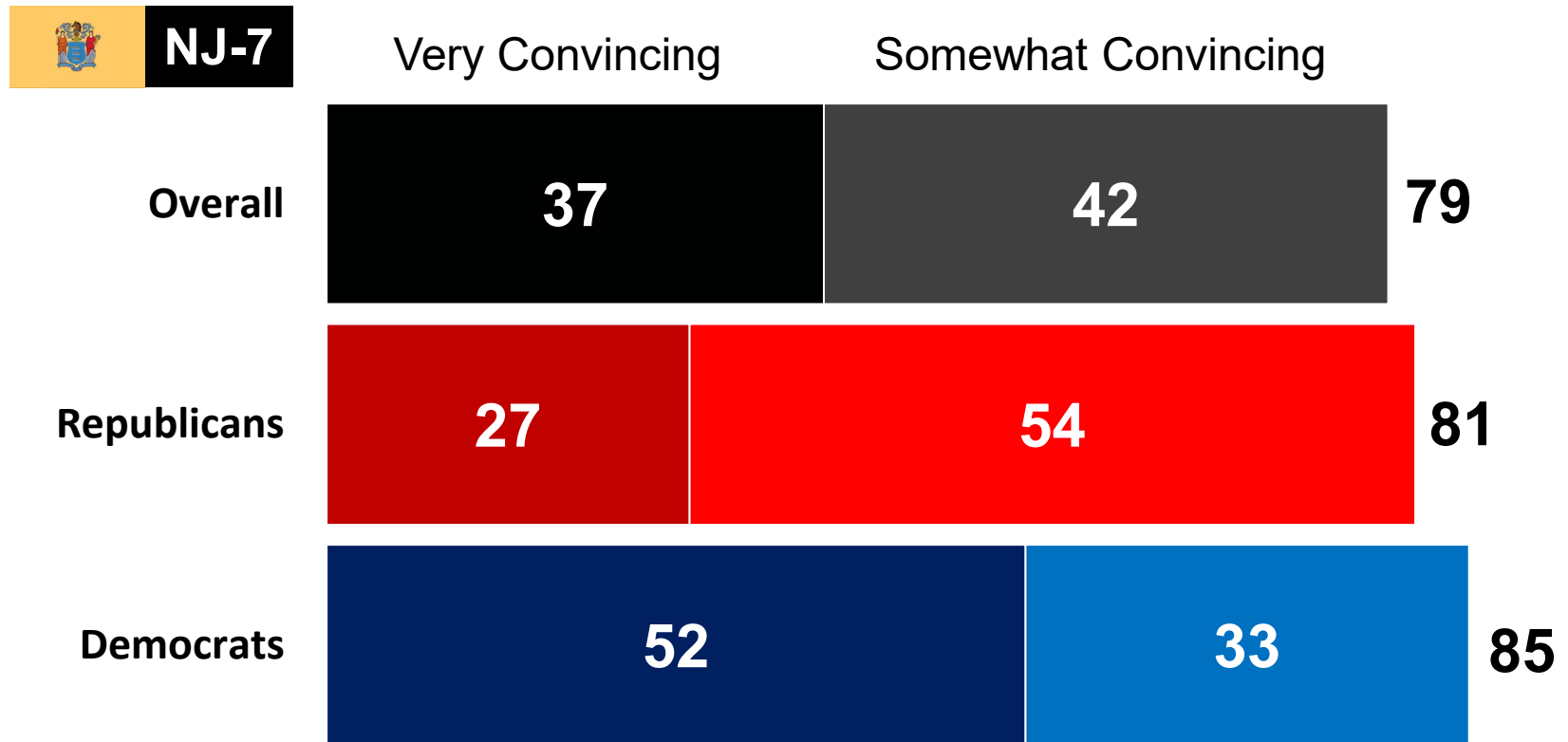
Congressional Redistricting by Citizen Commission
Districts don't reflect real partisan balance in state, unfair

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR #1

When one party has control of the redistricting process, they tend to make gerrymandered districts that favor their party over the other. This means that voters from the party not in control of the legislature get less representation in Congress, even though they may live in an area of the state where they are a majority.

Districts don't reflect real partisan balance in state, unfair

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR #1



Congressional Redistricting by Citizen Commission

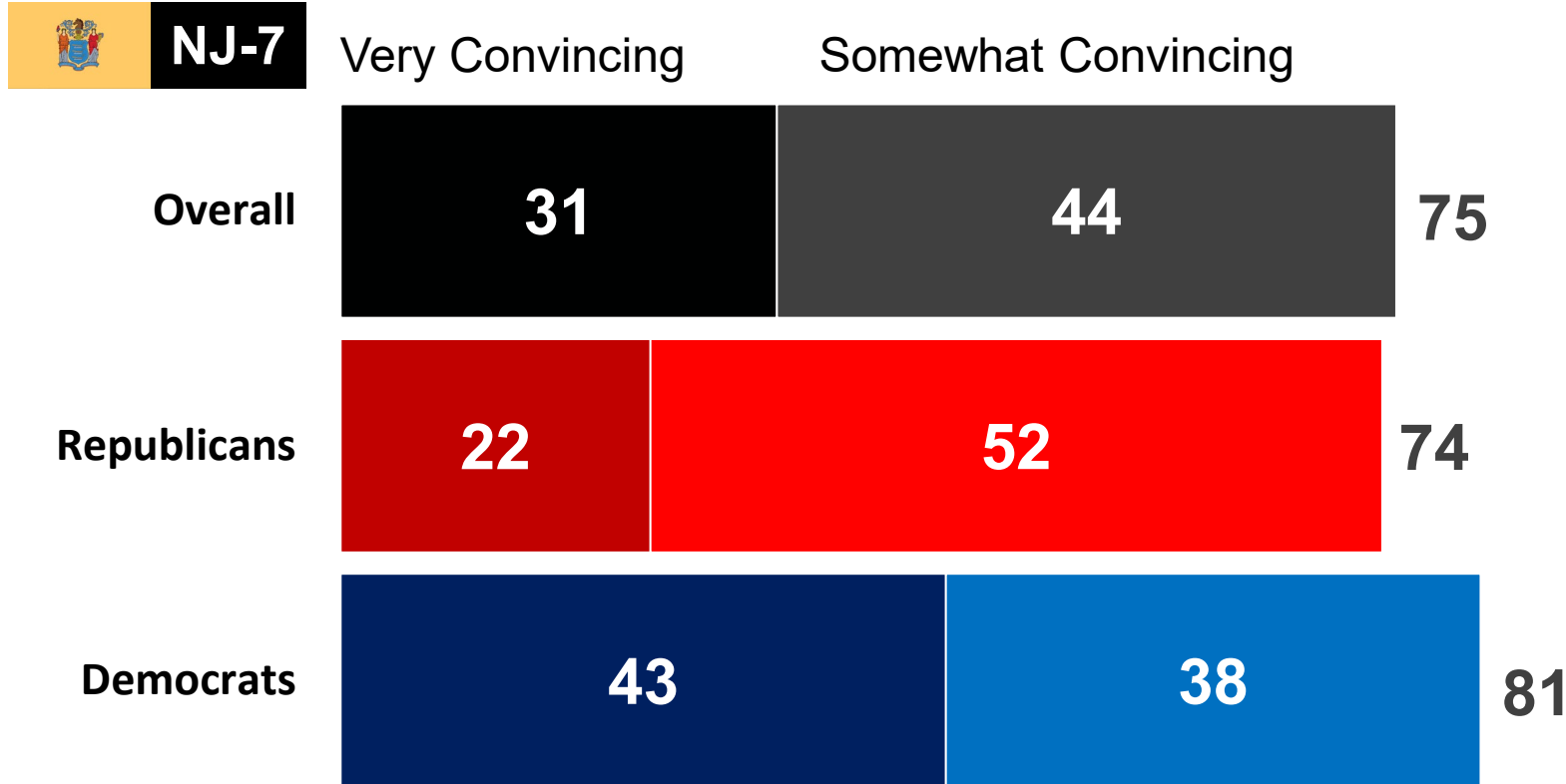
Congressional Redistricting by Citizen Commission
Citizen commissions more likely to design districts that reflect voters, produce less partisan Members

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR #2

When partisan politicians use gerrymandering to create safe districts for their party, the general election is not competitive, so the only really important election is the primary of the majority party in the district. Candidates who only need to appeal to the views of primary voters tend to be more ideologically extreme and, when in Congress, are less likely to find common ground with the other party. Unlike majority-party commissions of citizens design districts, the districts are more likely to be competitive between the parties, candidates are more likely to appeal to and be responsive to the whole district and are less partisan in Congress.

Citizen commissions more likely to design districts that reflect voters, produce less partisan Members

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR #2

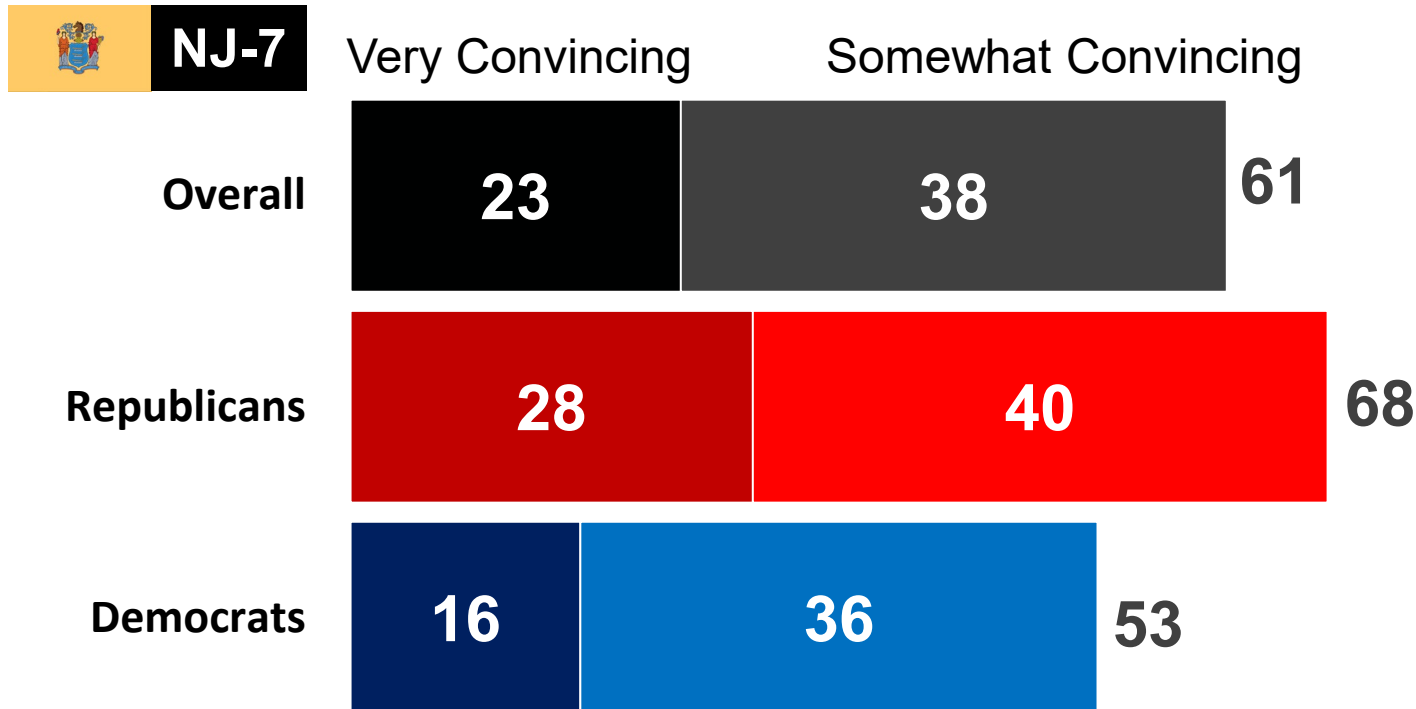


Congressional Redistricting by Citizen Commission

Congressional Redistricting by Citizen Commission
Violation of state rights to choose how they make districts
ARGUMENT AGAINST #1
The federal government should not step in and tell the states how to design their Congressional districts. Doing so overrides the state legislatures that have been elected by and are accountable to the people. Giving the authority to redistrict to unelected citizen commissioners actually takes power away from the people.

Violation of state rights to choose how they make districts

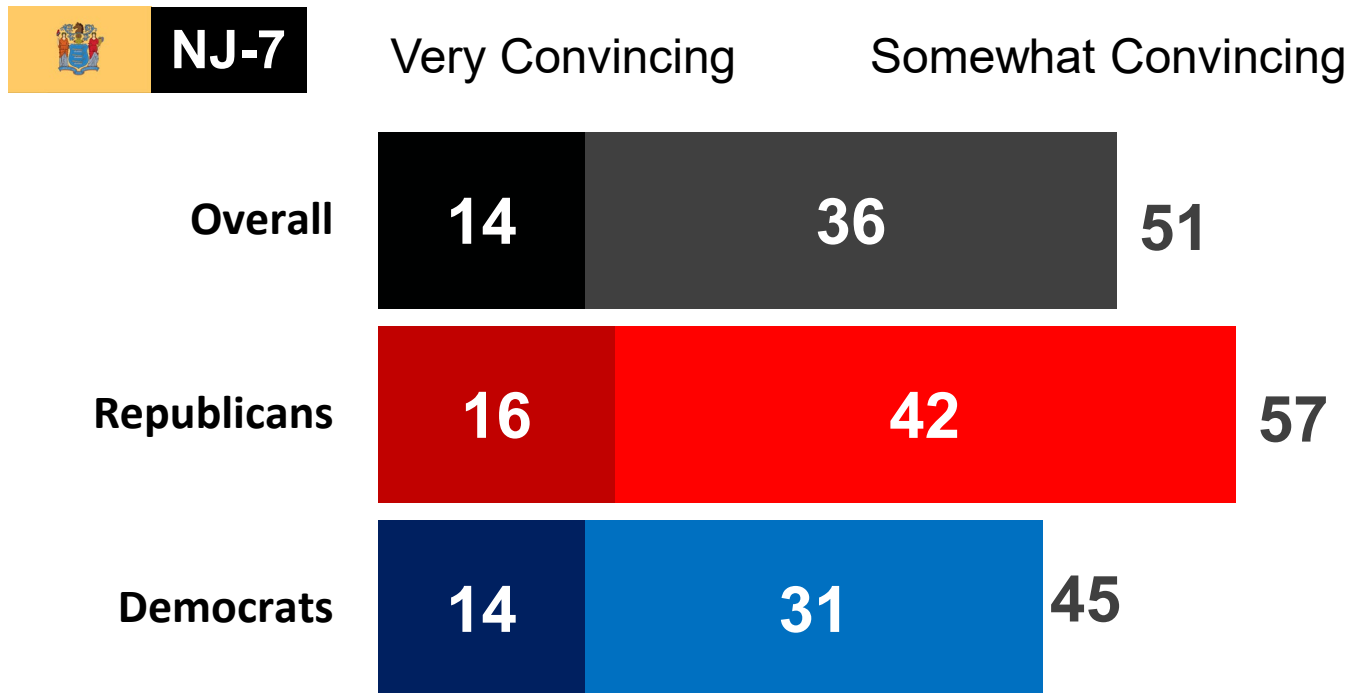
ARGUMENT AGAINST #1



Congressional Redistricting by Citizen Commission

A lot of effort for little or no gain

ARGUMENT AGAINST #2

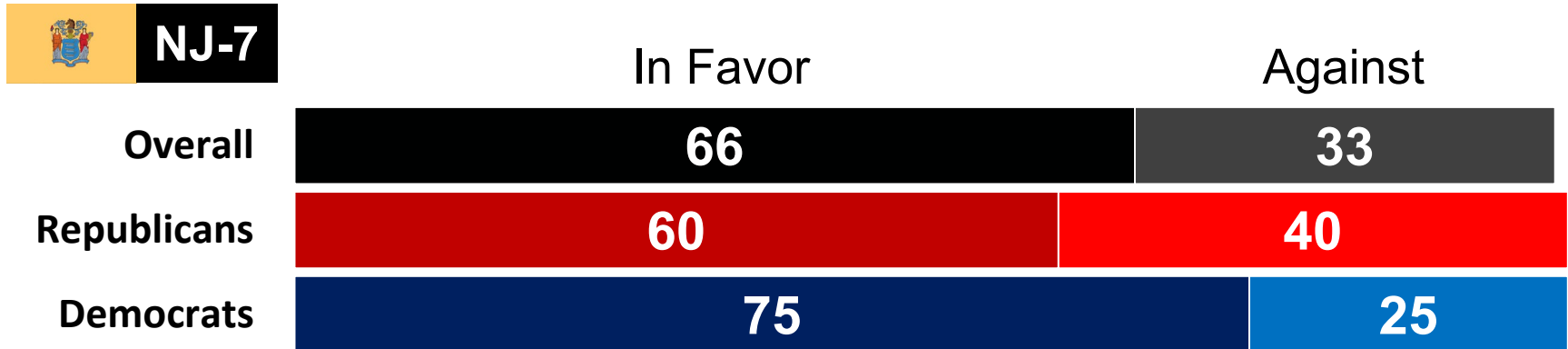


Congressional Redistricting by Citizen Commission

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Would you recommend that your Members of Congress vote:

- in favor of the proposal for having such a citizen commission set the shape of Congressional districts; or
- against the proposal, thus preserving the current situation in which state legislatures mostly set the shape of Congressional districts?

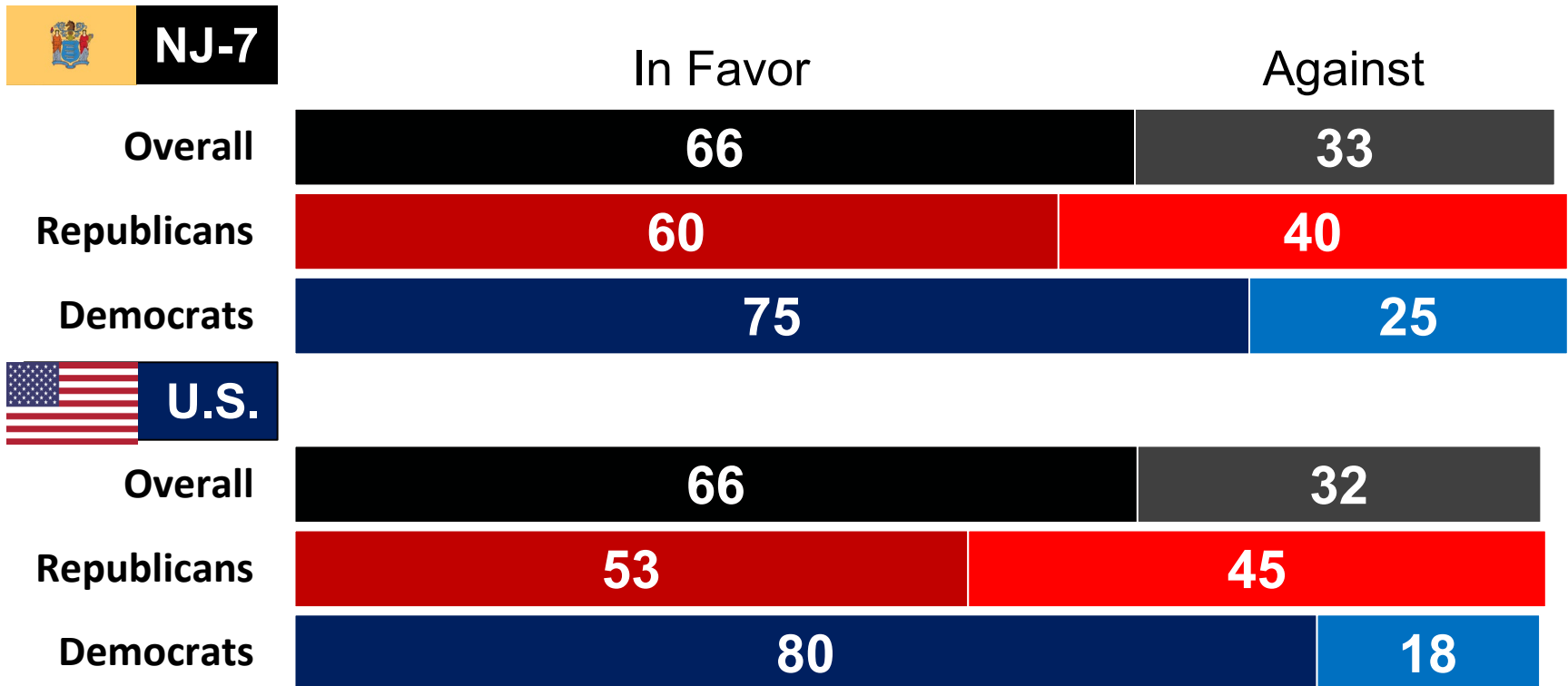


Congressional Redistricting by Citizen Commission

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

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TIGHTENING LOBBYING RESTRICTIONS

**Extending Waiting Period
Before Lobbying Congress**

Extending Waiting Period Before Lobbying Congress

Because former Members of Congress and Executive Branch officials (such as those in the Department of Defense or the US Treasury) are very familiar with how government works and have strong personal connections throughout government, they can often work as lobbyists after they leave office. Currently, there are some limits on how soon a former government official can lobby the government after leaving office.

A set of proposed bills in Congress extends the period former Members of Congress and Executive Branch officials must wait after they leave office before they can work as lobbyists.

Under current law, before they can lobby Congress:

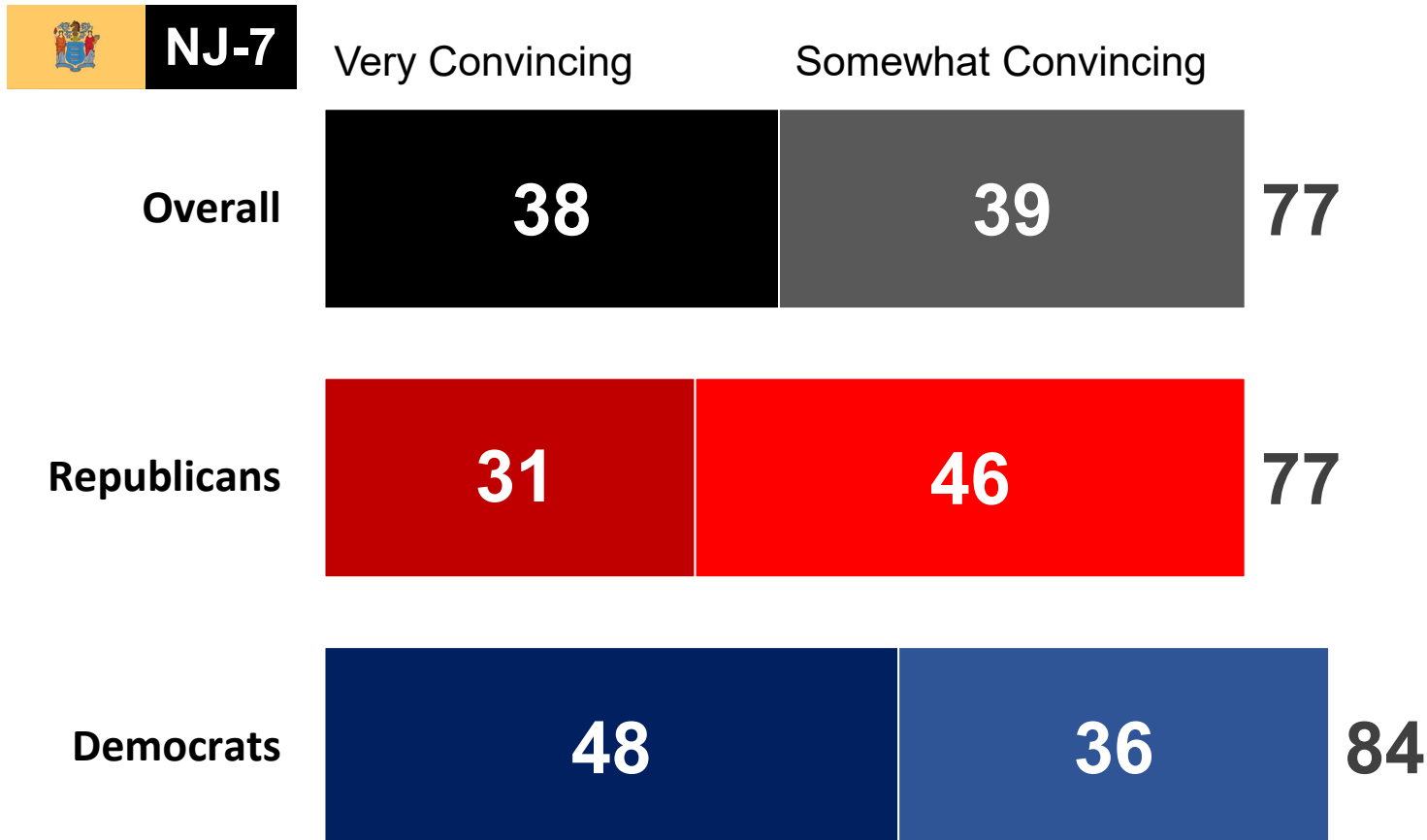
- former **House members** must wait **one year**
- former **Senators** must wait **two years**
- senior **Congressional staffers** in both houses must wait **one year**

In addition, senior **Executive Branch officials** are prohibited from lobbying the agency they were part of for **1-2 years**, depending on how senior they were.

Extending Waiting Period Before Lobbying Congress

Extending Waiting Period Before Lobbying Congress
ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF IT
Members of Congress and senior staff who have recently left have unique personal relationships, access and insider knowledge, so the special interests that hire them get an unfair advantage in working the system. It is fine for special interests to communicate their views to Congress and the administration, just like regular citizens, but they should not be able to buy greater influence by hiring what are essentially super-lobbyists.

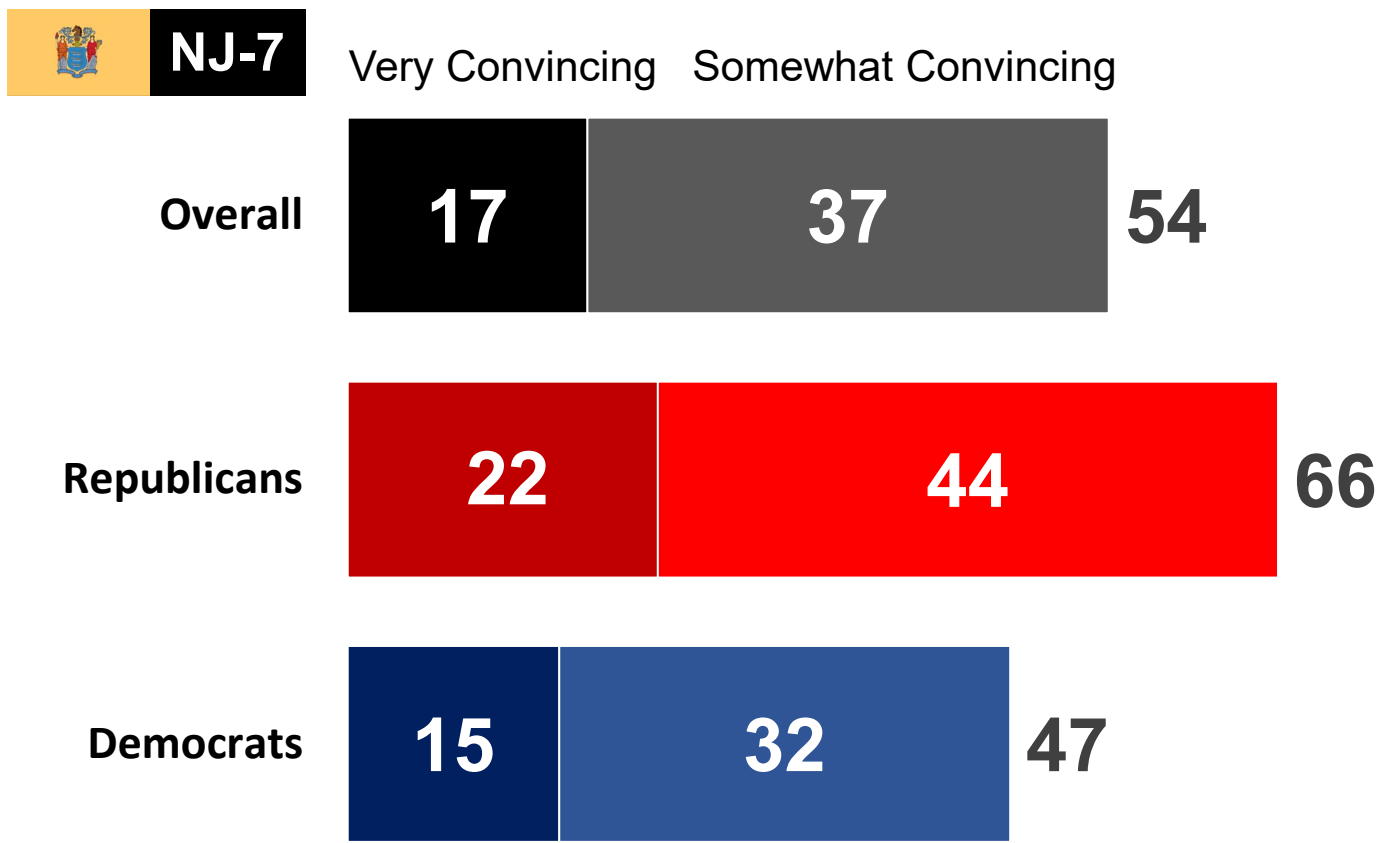
FIRST ARGUMENT IN FAVOR



Extending Waiting Period Before Lobbying Congress

Extending Waiting Period Before Lobbying Congress
ARGUMENT AGAINST #1
Telling former officials they cannot lobby in favor of a cause they believe in violates their First Amendment rights to freedom of speech. They should have the right to speak with current government officials and share their views or explain their stance. A rule that restricts their speech also restricts the freedom of expression for people who want to hire a former official to help get their views heard in government. We should enhance the people's ability to petition their government, not put greater limits on it.

FIRST ARGUMENT AGAINST

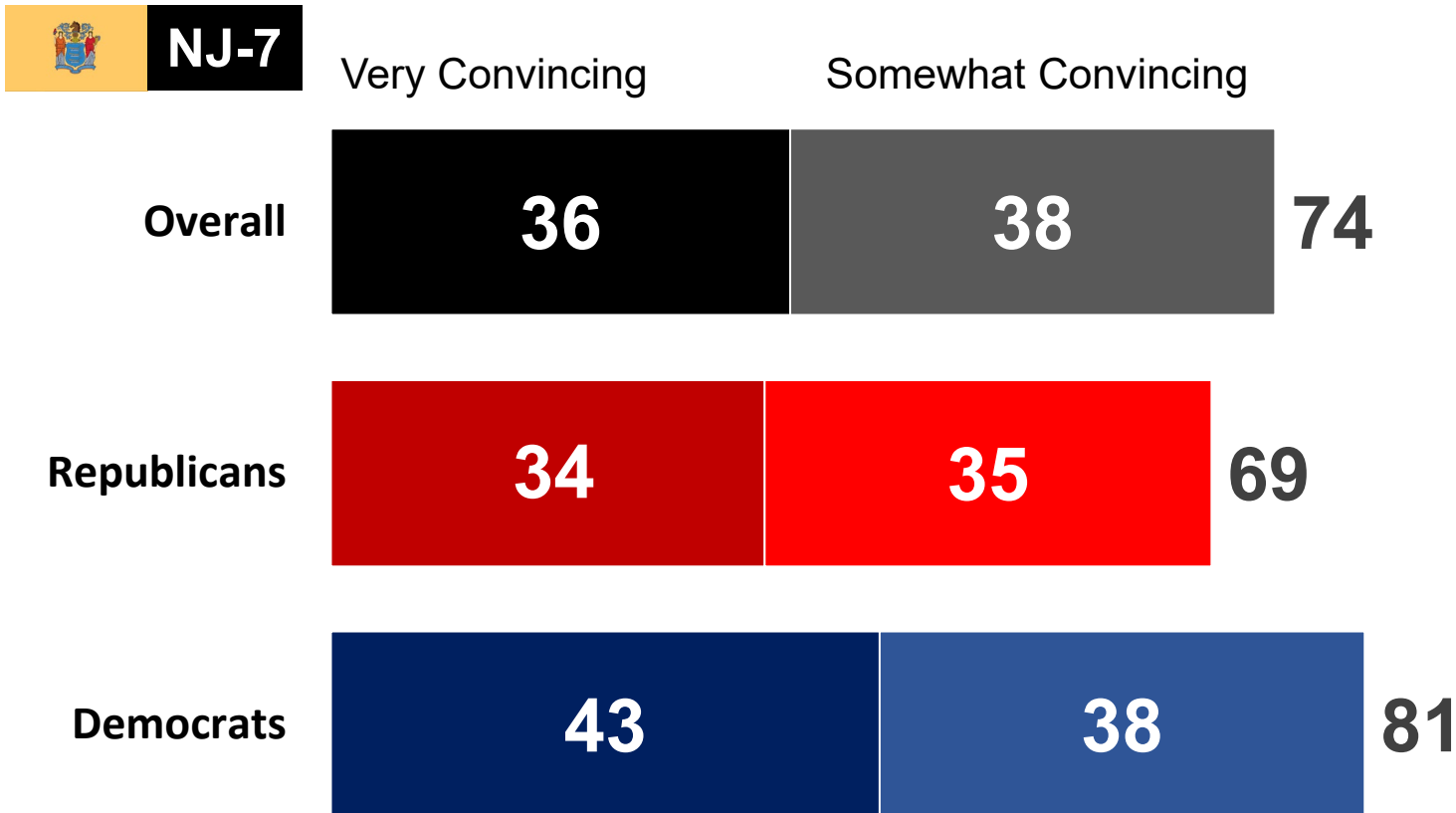


Extending Waiting Period Before Lobbying Congress

Extending Waiting Period Before Lobbying Congress
ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Working for the government should be something that people do as public service, not as a stepping stone to getting a high-paying job. It is also not right if all people who have just come out of government get an unfair advantage over others. Furthermore, when people in government are enticed to high-paying lobbying jobs it creates constant turnover and an ongoing brain drain.

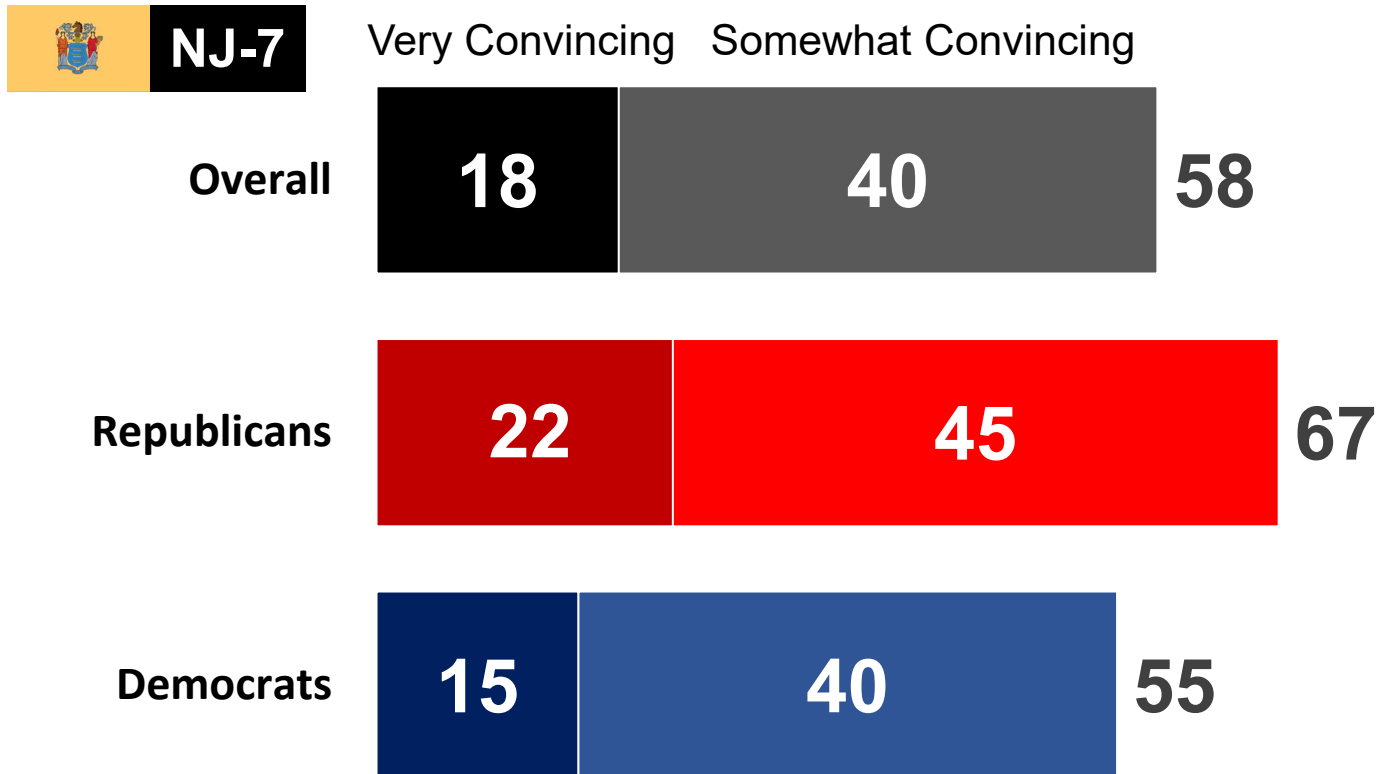
SECOND ARGUMENT IN FAVOR



Extending Waiting Period Before Lobbying Congress

Extending Waiting Period Before Lobbying Congress
ARGUMENT AGAINST IT
Should it a former government official wants to lobby in support of legislation to help their children or to seek a cure for cancer? They may be unethically knowledgeable or passionate about a particular issue. Should they be prohibited from helping further good causes? Knowing they would be prohibited from this kind of advocacy, perhaps reluctantly, could also have a chilling effect on talented people wishing to government to the first place.

SECOND ARGUMENT AGAINST



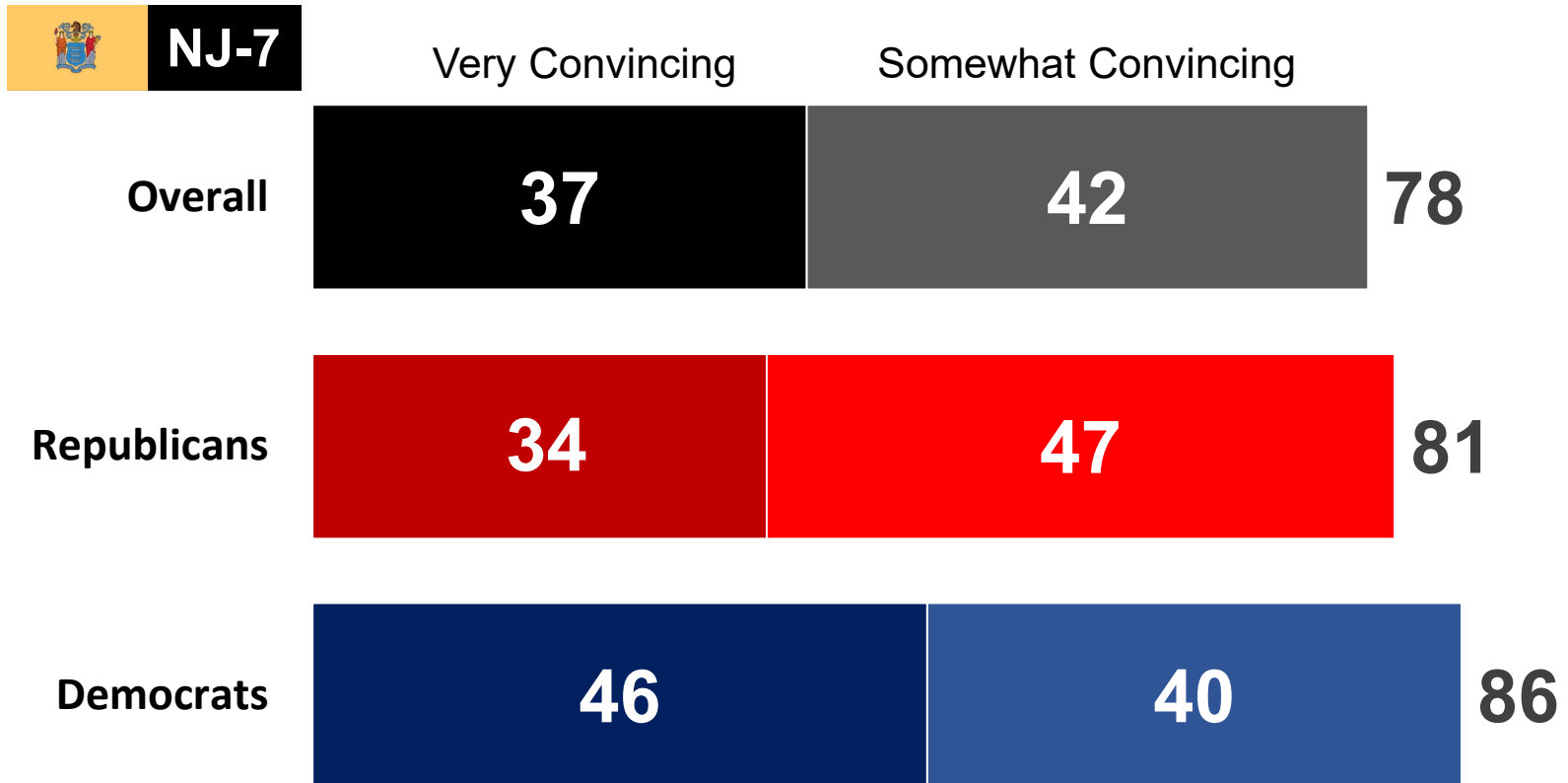
Extending Waiting Period Before Lobbying Congress

Extending Waiting Period Before Lobbying Congress
ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

When people who work in government are thinking about leaving government or are concerned they might be voted out of office, they sometimes start thinking about the possibility of becoming a lobbyist because it can pay very well. This can lead them to use their remaining time in office to do things beneficial to the interests that might help them in the future.

By removing the abuse of high-paying lobbying jobs shortly after government officials will not be accepted to do favors for future employers.

THIRD ARGUMENT IN FAVOR



Extending Waiting Period Before Lobbying Congress

THIRD ARGUMENT AGAINST



Very Convincing Somewhat Convincing

Overall

13

32

45

Republicans

13

34

46

Democrats

13

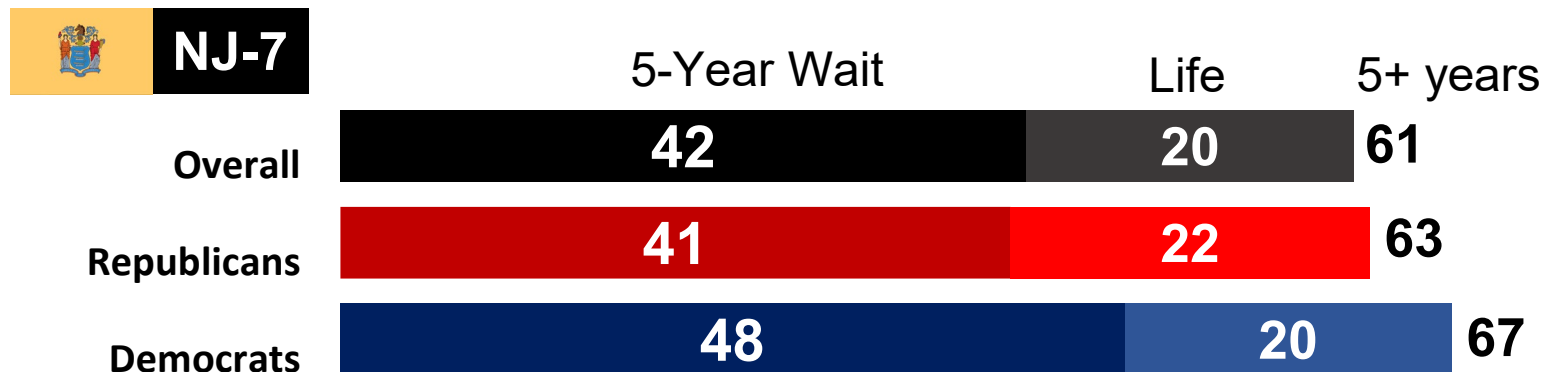
29

43

Extending Waiting Period Before Lobbying Congress

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

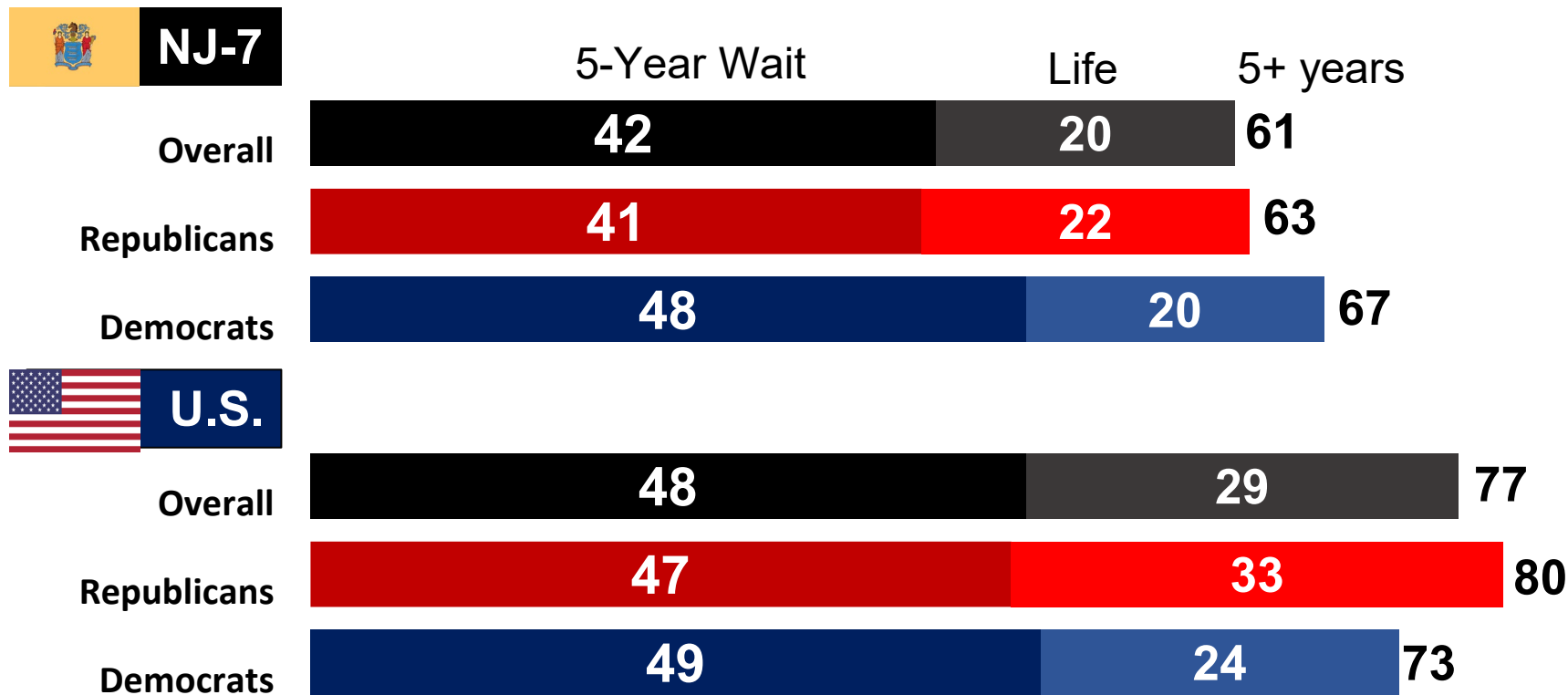
Which would you recommend the most when it comes to former **Members of Congress** working as a lobbyist:



Extending Waiting Period Before Lobbying Congress

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

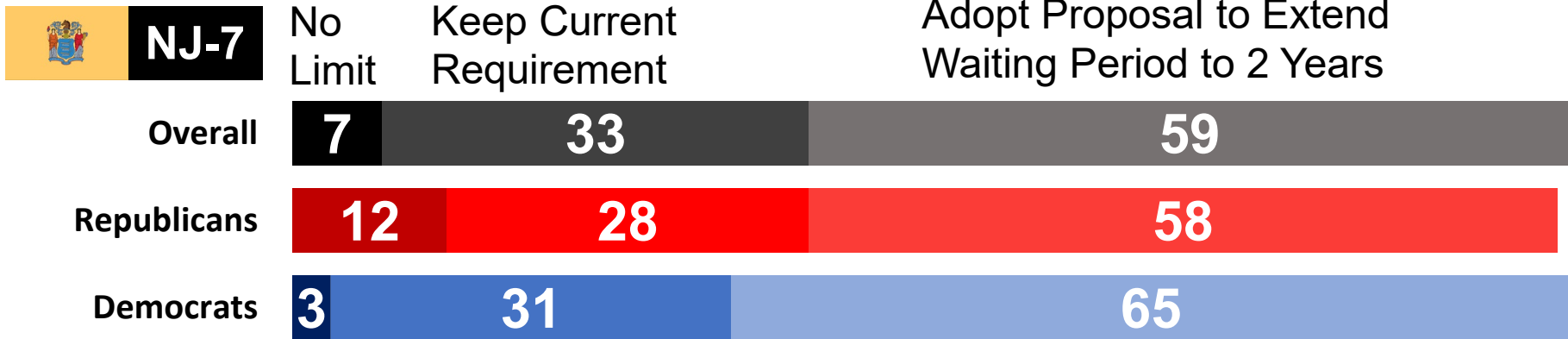
Which would you recommend the most when it comes to former **Members of Congress** working as a lobbyist:



Extending Waiting Period for Senior Congressional Staffers

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

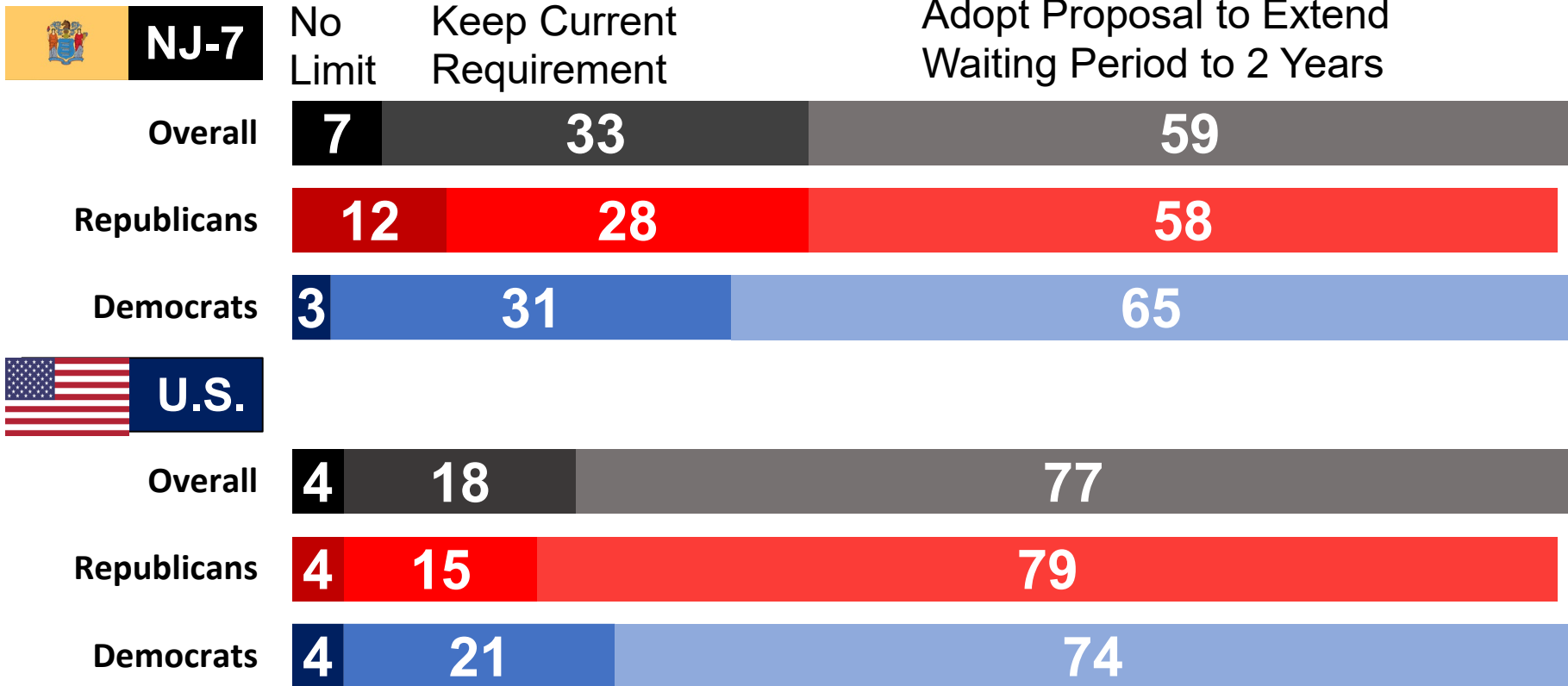
Which would you recommend the most when it comes to **former senior Congressional staffers** on working as a lobbyist?



Extending Waiting Period for Senior Congressional Staffers

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

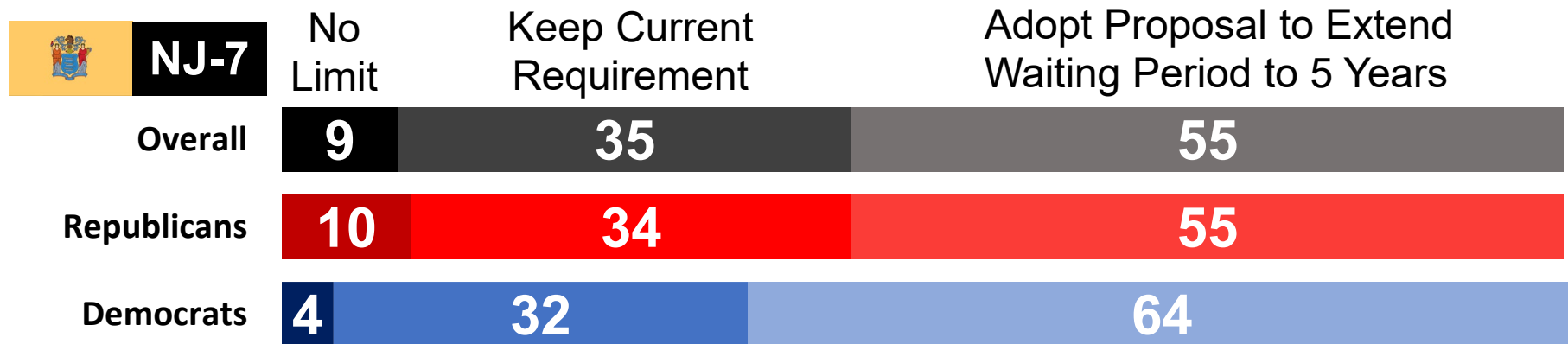
Which would you recommend the most when it comes to **former senior Congressional staffers** on working as a lobbyist?



Extending Waiting Period for Senior Executive Branch Officials

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

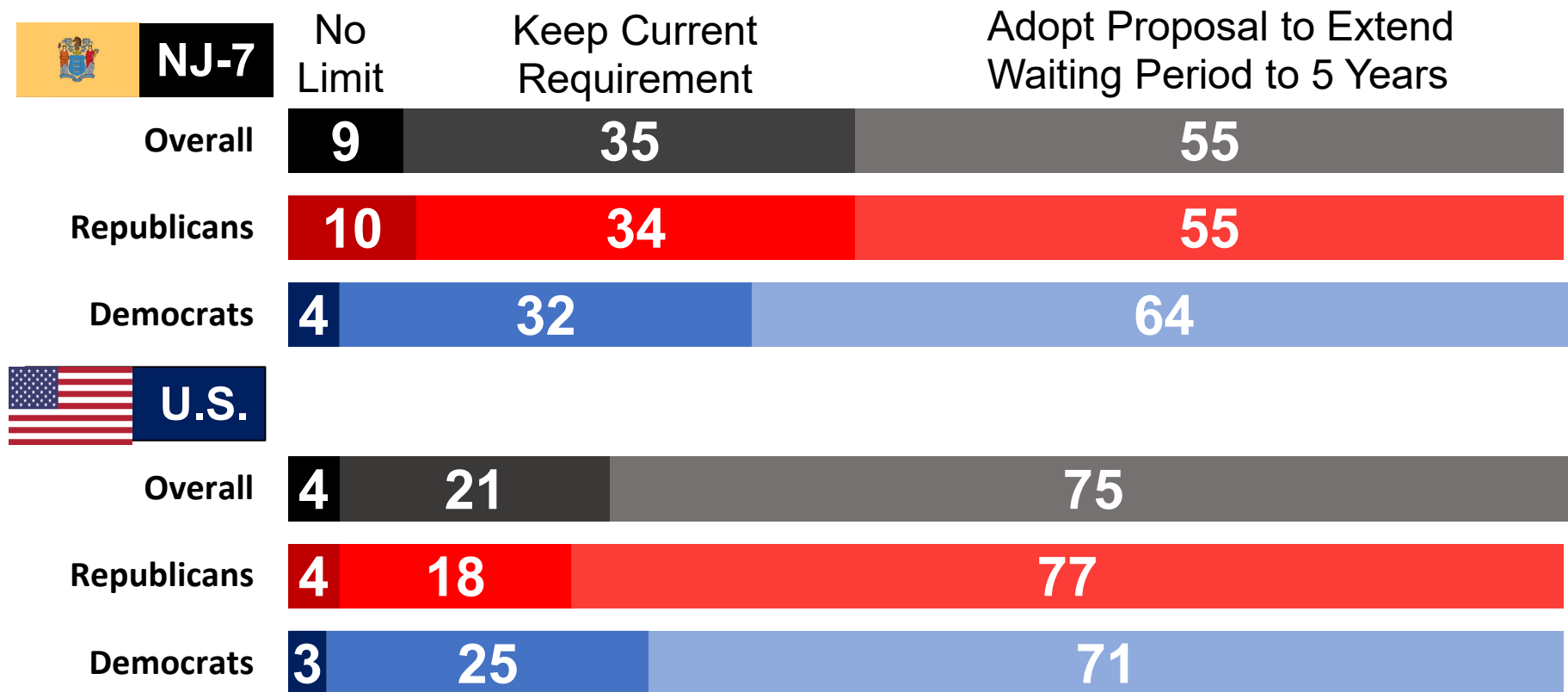
Which would you recommend the most when it comes to former **Executive Branch officials** lobbying the agency they worked for?



Extending Waiting Period for Senior Executive Branch Officials

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Which would you recommend the most when it comes to former **Executive Branch officials** lobbying the agency they worked for?



Lifetime Ban on Lobbying for Senior Executive Branch Officials

Lifetime Ban on Lobbying for Senior Executive Branch Officials
ARGUMENT IN FAVOR
Foreign governments should not be allowed to hire former senior Executive Branch officials who have unique knowledge, connections and influence to advance the interests of the foreign power. Those foreign entities may have interests that are at odds with the interests of the US government and they should not have inside access.

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

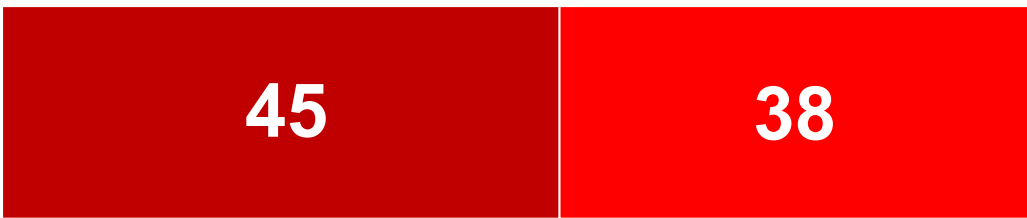


Overall



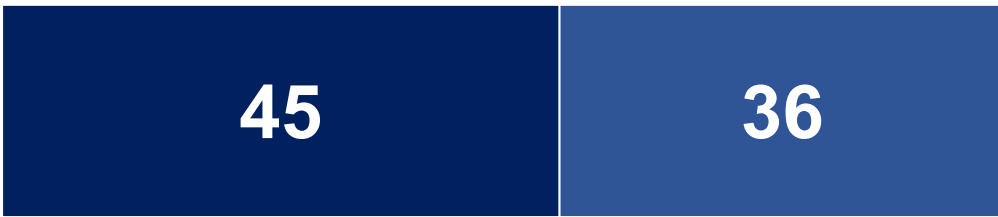
79

Republicans



84

Democrats



81

Lifetime Ban on Lobbying for Senior Executive Branch Officials

Lifetime Ban on Lobbying for Senior Executive Branch Officials
ARGUMENT AGAINST
Singling out and permanently prohibiting former senior Executive Branch officials from lobbying for foreign governments is discriminatory and violates the principles of free speech. It won't protect against a foreign government's bad intentions because it can always hire another lobbyist. And it is also not necessary or government is not going to do something that is contrary to our interests because a former Executive Branch official makes a case.

ARGUMENT AGAINST



Very Convincing Somewhat Convincing

Overall



Republicans



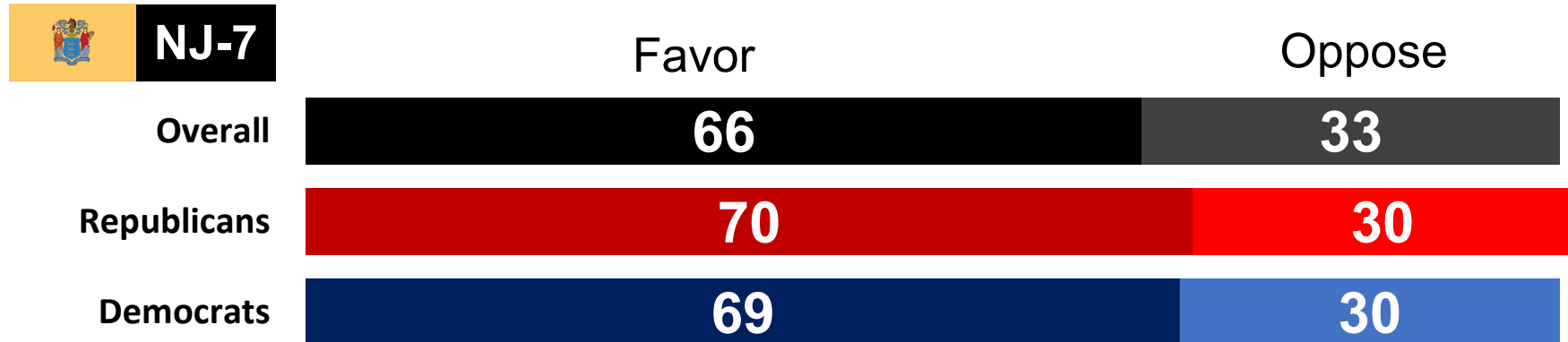
Democrats



Lifetime Ban on Lobbying for Senior Executive Branch Officials

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

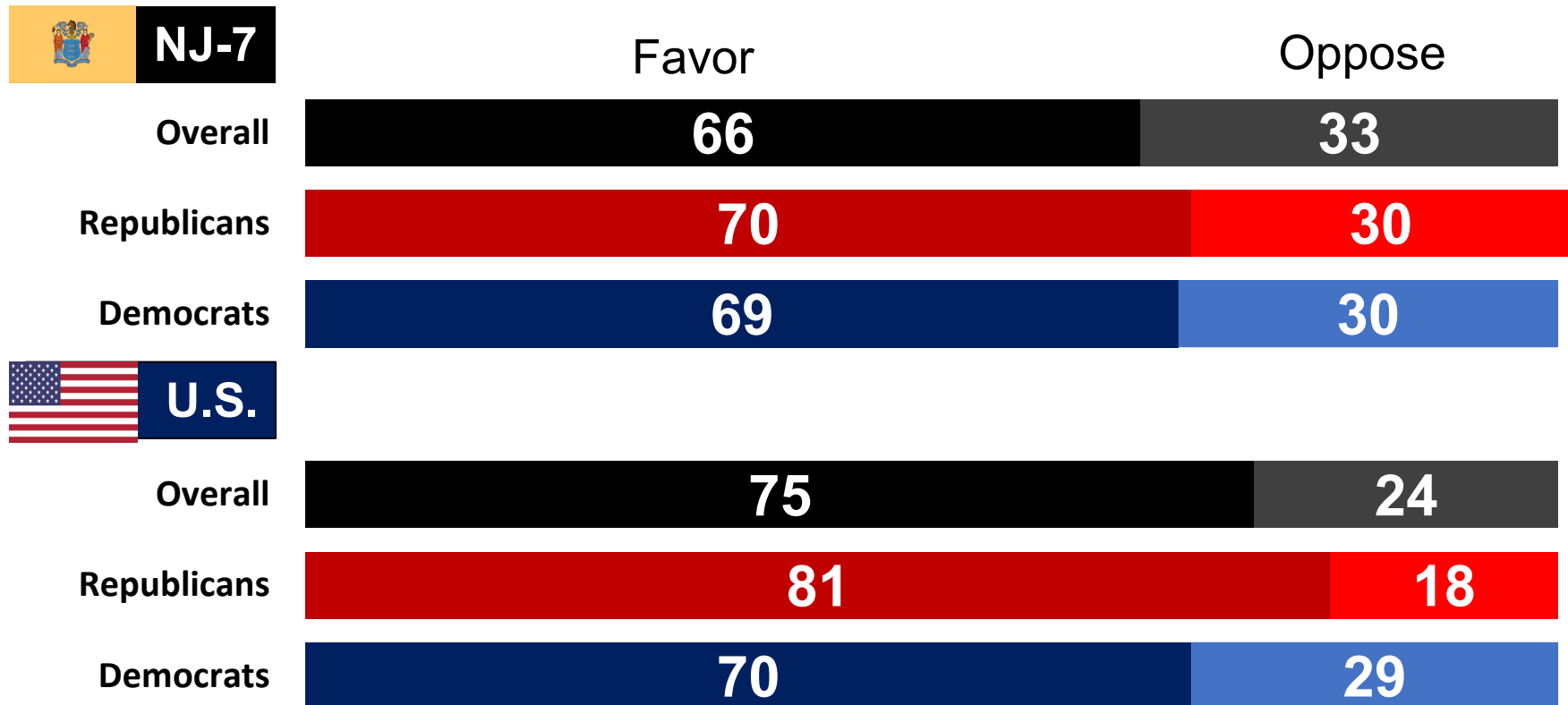
Adopt proposal to ban all **senior Executive Branch officials** from **lobbying on behalf of a foreign government** for the rest of their life



Lifetime Ban on Lobbying for Senior Executive Branch Officials

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Adopt proposal to ban all **senior Executive Branch officials** from **lobbying on behalf of a foreign government** for the rest of their life



ARGUMENTS

Tax Credit for Small Donors

More small donors will reduce influence of large donors

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Campaigns cost money. If we encourage many small donors and increase the portion of money coming from small donations, this can free candidates from reliance on a few large donors and make them less influential.

Congress will then be responsible to voters, not well-financed special interests. Candidates who do not want to be beholden to big donors will be more able to run for office and succeed.

Tax Credit for Small Donors

Don't spend taxpayers' money, big donors will still have more influence

ARGUMENT AGAINST

Giving away tax credits to increase the amount of money from small donors effectively spends government funds on election campaigns. This is not a good use of taxpayer money. Furthermore, it is not clear that it will even work.

Big donors will still have a lot more influence than small donors, even if the small donors are more numerous or are able to give a little bit more than they are now.

Online Credit Card Donations

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

We need to ensure that foreigners are not influencing our Federal election process by making illegal contributions.

If online credit card donors are required to provide the billing address and the CVV code of the credit cards they are using, it will be harder for foreign sources to make campaign donations.

If a foreign source gives a false U.S. address, the CVV code would help identify this misinformation.

Online Credit Card Donations

ARGUMENT AGAINST

This bill is a solution without a problem. The Federal Election Commission has not reported any significant problem of online credit cards being used by foreign sources to make illegal contributions.

The bill would create a new limitation on Americans living abroad by requiring that they be currently registered to vote and have a US address—something that people living abroad may not be able to do.

Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations

Makes it harder to use donation to get influence

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR #1

When campaign-related donations are fully disclosed, it makes it more difficult for elected officials to do favors, taking actions that serve the interests of the donor, rather than the common good. If the donation is disclosed, the public, the media, and watchdog groups can question whether an action was a favor in exchange for a donation.

This will create political costs for the elected official, as well as discourage donors from seeking favors through donations.

Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations

Voters can see candidates' potential allegiances

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR #2

When judging a candidate, people have a right to know who is providing money in support of the candidate.

Voters can get a better sense of the allegiances that the candidate might have and the interests they might support.

Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations

Donations are free speech, disclosure can lead to false accusations

ARGUMENT AGAINST #1

Making a campaign donation has been established by the U.S. Supreme Court as a basic right as part of the principle of free speech. If every donation is subject to public scrutiny, it can lead to claims that it was basically a bribe, when in fact it might not be at all.

People may also get harassed or threatened for making donations. This will discourage people from making such donations, including completely legitimate ones.

Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations

Requirements won't be effective, Member can deny influence

ARGUMENT AGAINST #2

Public disclosure is not going to prevent elected officials from doing favors in exchange for financial support. Even if elected officials are, in fact, taking a position to serve the interests of a donor (in exchange for support), the officials can simply say that they think the position is the right one – and there's no way to prove they don't think that.

Furthermore, in some cases the politician may genuinely support the position. Disclosure will not clarify what's really going on.

Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations

Makes it harder to use donation to get influence

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Voters can see candidates' potential allegiances

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR #2

When judging a candidate, people have a right to know who is providing money in support of the candidate.

Voters can get a better sense of the allegiances that the candidate might have and the interests they might support.

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Greater Public Disclosure of Campaign-Related Donations

Requirements won't be effective, Member can deny influence

ARGUMENT AGAINST #2

Public disclosure is not going to prevent elected officials from doing favors in exchange for financial support. Even if elected officials are, in fact, taking a position to serve the interests of a donor (in exchange for support), the officials can simply say that they think the position is the right one – and there's no way to prove they don't think that.

Furthermore, in some cases the politician may genuinely support the position. Disclosure will not clarify what's really going on.

Constitutional Amendment

1. Congress May to Regulate Campaign Financing

Since Citizens United, flood of money drowning out ordinary voters

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Clearly, we cannot go on letting people and organizations use the cover of the First Amendment to allow what is essentially bribery of Members of Congress. Since the recent Supreme Court decision to allow unlimited contributions, there has been a flood of money pouring into organizations seeking to influence elections. The rich should not have more influence just because they have more money. They are drowning out the voice of most ordinary voters.

The Founders would be horrified by the amount of money in elections and this is just the kind of problem that they established the Constitutional amendment process to address. Congress should be able to set reasonable limits on political spending.

Constitutional Amendment

Congress May Regulate Campaign Financing

Should not limit speech or tamper with the Constitution

ARGUMENT AGAINST

This proposal is an end run around Constitutional principles — practically an attempt to repeal the First Amendment. If people want to spend money making their views heard about a candidate, the government should not have the right to stop them. Should we assume that the government knows what the right amount of free speech is? Real freedom of speech is often inconvenient for somebody. You can't just pick and choose where you want it to apply. Tampering with the Constitution is a risky idea. Once you start limiting some forms of speech it becomes a slippery slope toward more and more limits on our freedoms.

Constitutional Amendment

Congress May Treat Corporations Differently

Constitution meant to protect individuals, not corporations

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

A corporation should not have the same rights as a person. The idea that it is a group of people expressing their point of view is a fallacy. All of the people who are part of the corporation do not necessarily share a single point of view. A corporation is created to perform a function or to make money. It does not have the right to vote.

Pursuing political influence through campaign-related donations in the service of a corporation's goals is not something the Constitution was ever meant to protect. If the individuals associated with a corporation want to express a point of view or donate to a campaign, they are still free to do so.

Constitutional Amendment

Congress May Treat Corporations Differently

Citizens should have right to come together as a corporation and promote their views, like individuals

ARGUMENT AGAINST

People have the right to come together and become shareholders in a corporation. As shareholders they have a shared interest in the goals of the corporation. Thus, the corporation should have the same rights of free expression as do the individual shareholders. The fact that they are also seeking to make money should not make any difference. Making a Constitutional amendment that would restrict the freedom of shareholders to act together would subvert the underlying principles of the Constitution. Furthermore, some of the corporations that would be limited by this law are nonprofit corporations that serve good causes and should not be prevented from making their voice heard.

Congressional Redistricting by Citizen Commission

Districts don't reflect real partisan balance in state, unfair

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR #1

When one party has control of the redistricting process, they tend to make great efforts to ensure that their party wins more districts, often creating weirdly shaped districts. The representatives from a particular state can be completely or almost completely from one party, though this does not reflect the real partisan balance in the state. This means that voters from the party not in control of the legislature get less representation in Congress, even though they may live in an area of the state where they are a majority.

Congressional Redistricting by Citizen Commission

Citizen commissions more likely to design districts that reflect voters, produce less partisan Members

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR #2

When partisan politicians use gerrymandering to create safe districts for their party, the general election is not competitive, so the only really important election is the primary of the majority party in the district. Candidates who only need to appeal to the views of primary voters tend to be more ideologically extreme and, when in Congress, are less likely to find common ground with the other party. When nonpartisan commissions of citizens design districts, the districts are more likely to be competitive between the parties; candidates are more likely to appeal to and be responsive to the whole district and are less partisan in Congress.

Congressional Redistricting by Citizen Commission

Violation of state rights to choose how they make districts

ARGUMENT AGAINST #1

The federal government should not step in and tell the states how to design their Congressional districts. Doing so overrides the state legislatures that have been elected by and are accountable to the people. Giving the authority to redistrict to unelected citizen commissioners actually takes power away from the people.

Congressional Redistricting by Citizen Commission

A lot of effort for little or no gain

ARGUMENT AGAINST #2

The way citizen commissions draw the lines will not necessarily lead to more competitive districts. People increasingly cluster in areas with others who are of the same party. So, whatever the citizen commission does, the districts are still likely to be dominated by one party. This will all be a lot of effort with no real gain.

Extending Waiting Period Before Lobbying Congress

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR #1

Members of Congress and senior staff who have recently left have unique personal relationships, access and insider knowledge, so the special interests that hire them get an unfair advantage in working the system. It is fine for special interests to communicate their views to Congress and the administration, just like regular citizens, but they should not be able to buy greater influence by hiring what are essentially super-lobbyists.

Extending Waiting Period Before Lobbying Congress

ARGUMENT AGAINST #1

Telling former officials they cannot lobby in favor of a cause they believe in violates their First Amendment rights to freedom of speech. They should have the right to speak with current government officials and share their views or expertise that sheds light on various policy options. This rule also limits the freedom of expression for people who want to hire a former official to help get their voice heard in government. We should enhance the people's ability to petition their government, not put greater limits on it.

Extending Waiting Period Before Lobbying Congress

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR #2

Working for the government should be something that people do as public service, not as a stepping stone for getting a high-paying job. It is also not right that people who have just come out of government get an unfair advantage over others. Furthermore, when people in government are enticed by high-paying lobbying jobs it creates constant turnover and an ongoing brain drain.

Extending Waiting Period Before Lobbying Congress

ARGUMENT AGAINST #2

What if a former government official wants to lobby in support of legislation to help poor children or to seek a cure for cancer? They may be uniquely knowledgeable or passionate about a particular issue. Should they be prohibited from helping further good causes? Knowing they would be prohibited from this kind of advocacy, perhaps indefinitely, could also have a chilling effect on talented people serving in government in the first place.

Extending Waiting Period Before Lobbying Congress

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR #3

When people who work in government are thinking about leaving government or are concerned they might be voted out of office, they sometimes start thinking about the possibility of becoming a lobbyist because it can pay very well. This can lead them to use their remaining time in office to do things beneficial to the interests that might hire them in the future.

By removing the allure of high-paying lobbying jobs shortly after, government officials will not be tempted to do favors for future employers.

Extending Waiting Period Before Lobbying Congress

ARGUMENT AGAINST #3

Working for the government is risky. An elected official may be voted out of office, or, in the case of a staffer, the elected official they work for may be voted out. There is nothing wrong with former government officials having lobbying as a fallback career option. If we cut off this option, it will discourage people from going into government for fear they may end up with highly limited career options.

Lifetime Ban on Lobbying for Senior Executive Branch Officials

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Foreign governments should not be allowed to hire former senior Executive Branch officials who have unique knowledge, connections and influence to advance the interests of the foreign power. Those foreign entities may have interests that are at odds with the interests of the US government and they should not have inside access.

Lifetime Ban on Lobbying for Senior Executive Branch Officials

ARGUMENT AGAINST

Singling out and permanently prohibiting former senior Executive Branch officials from lobbying for foreign governments is discriminatory and violates the principles of free speech. It won't protect against a foreign government's bad intentions because it can always hire another lobbyist. And it is also not necessary: our government is not going to do something that is contrary to our interests because a former Executive Branch official makes a case.



PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

SURVEY ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

**New Jersey's 7th
Congressional District**

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2020

SUPPORTED BY

