



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

# Pennsylvania's 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District on Police Reform Proposals

## A Survey of Residents of PA-1

Sponsored by



August 2020

# Polycymaking Simulation

- Given **briefing** on an issue before Congress
- Presented a **policy option** under consideration
- Evaluate **arguments** for and against
- Make **recommendation**: for/against
- Evaluate how **acceptable** 0-10 scale

Content reviewed by experts across spectrum

# **Proposals Drawn From:**

**George Floyd Justice in Policing Act**  
(H.R. 7120)

**JUSTICE Act**  
(S. 3985)

# Proposals Considered

## **POLICIES REGARDING USE OF FORCE**

- Ban on Chokeholds and Neck Restraints
- De-escalation and Use of Force as a Last Resort
- Duty to Intervene
- Ban on No-knock Warrants

## **INCREASING ACCOUNTABILITY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS**

- Requiring Body Cameras
- National Registry of Police Misconduct
- Independent Prosecutors
- Amending Qualified Immunity

## **ADDRESSING IMPLICIT BIAS**

- Training in Implicit Bias

# Methodology

## PENNSYLVANIA'S 1<sup>st</sup> CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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**Sample Size:** 437 Residents of PA's 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District

**Field Dates:** July 24 - August 9, 2020

## NATIONAL

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**Sample Size:** 3,226 Registered Voters Nationwide

**Field Dates:** July 2-9, 2020

**POLICIES  
REGARDING  
USE OF FORCE**

# Ban on Chokeholds and Neck Restraints

## PROPOSAL

Require states to prohibit the use of chokeholds and other restraints that prevent breathing or block the flow of blood or oxygen to the brain.

There are means to restrain a struggling suspect without using dangerous methods that unnecessarily put the suspect's life in danger. Chokeholds by police have led to needless deaths of too many civilians as well as caused brain damage and strokes in others. Furthermore, when a suspect is being choked, they resist because they are trying to breathe, which is then used to justify using more force, including deadly force.

Many police departments already prohibit chokeholds because they know it is wrong. They should be banned everywhere.

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

# Ban Chokeholds and Neck Restraints

Chokeholds lead to unnecessary deaths, too dangerous. There are alternatives.

PA -1

Very Convincing

Somewhat Convincing

Overall

59

26

85

Republicans

51

31

82

Democrats

69

20

89



Officers are often dealing with violent out of control people and they need all the tools available to them. If they cannot use chokeholds and similar restraints, they will have to use alternatives, like firearms, which are even more dangerous. Officers should not be denied these options as they may be needed in some circumstances. For example, when a violent individual physically attacks a police officer, the officer must do all they can to prevent that person from getting ahead of the officer's firearm, and a chokehold may be the only way of restraining the attacker.

**ARGUMENT AGAINST**

# Ban Chokeholds and Neck Restraints

Officers should not be denied an option that may be key in dealing with a violent person

PA -1

Very Convincing      Somewhat Convincing

Overall



Republicans



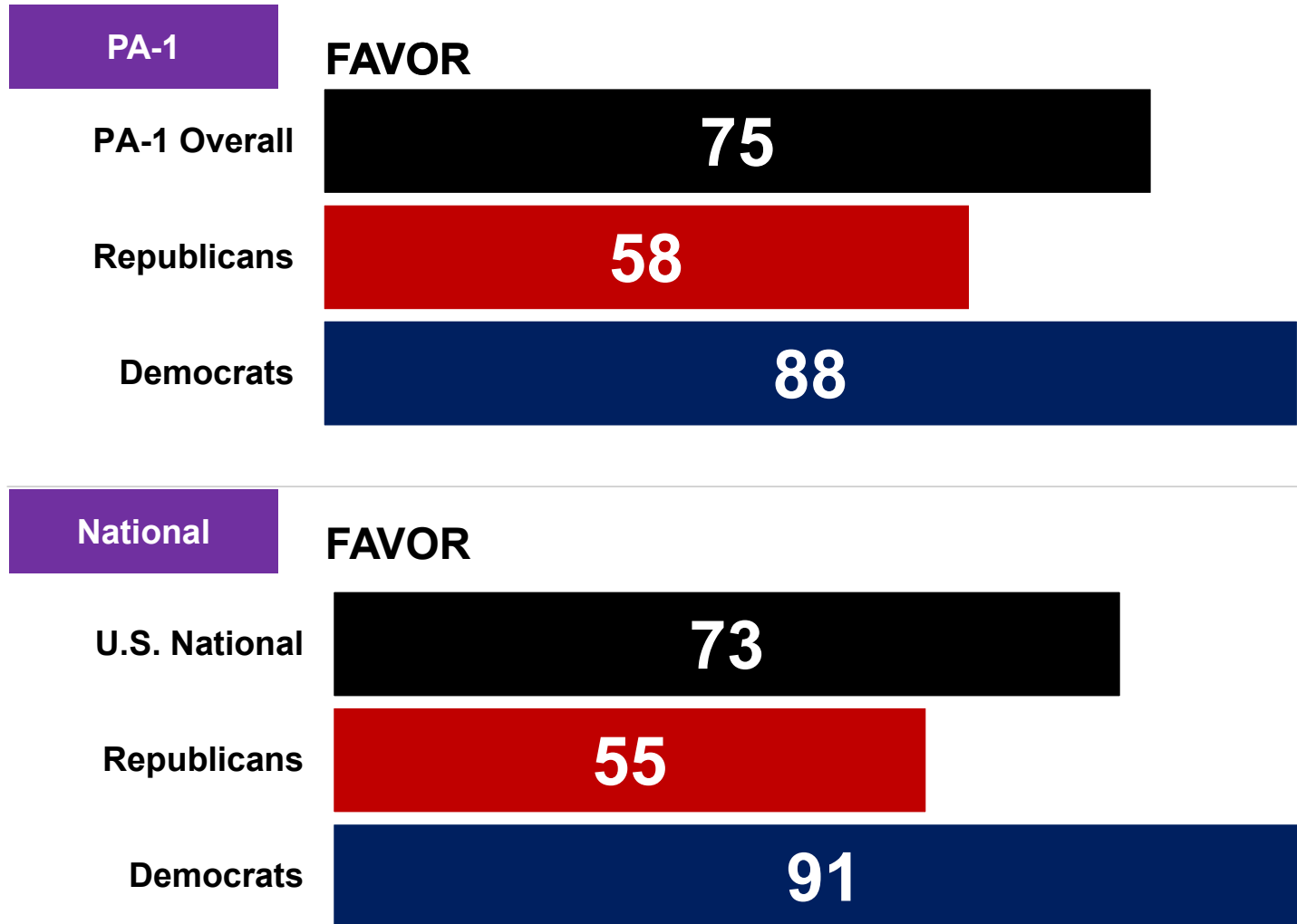
Democrats



# Ban on Chokeholds and Neck Restraints

## FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Do you favor or oppose this proposal?



# De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

## PROPOSAL

- Officers receive **training** in alternatives to the use of deadly force and de-escalation techniques.
- Officers justified in using deadly force ***only* as a last resort.**
- In criminal cases, Judge/jury must determine whether officer:
  - Exhausted **alternative tactics** and/or **de-escalation techniques**
  - Acted with **gross negligence**, contributing to need for deadly force

De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Every year around a thousand civilians—many of them unarmed—die from police shootings. Too many officers are quick to use deadly force, especially against Black Americans. Under existing law, when an officer kills a citizen—even an unarmed one—all they have to do is say that they believed that they were at risk of being severely injured or killed. In the case of Tamir Rice—a 12-year-old boy—he had a toy gun and the officers drove up to him and, without warning, shot him.

If they believed the gun was real, they should have kept their distance and, from a protected position, told him to put down the gun. We need to require that officers learn and use better tactics when they are sent to deals involving possible weapons. They should only use deadly force as a last resort and should be held accountable if they wrongly injure or kill people.

ARGUMENT  
IN FAVOR

# De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

Deadly force used too often, especially against Black Americans, little accountability.

PA-1

Very Convincing

Somewhat Convincing

Overall

42

43

85

Republicans

29

54

82

Democrats

58

35

92

De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

**ARGUMENT AGAINST**

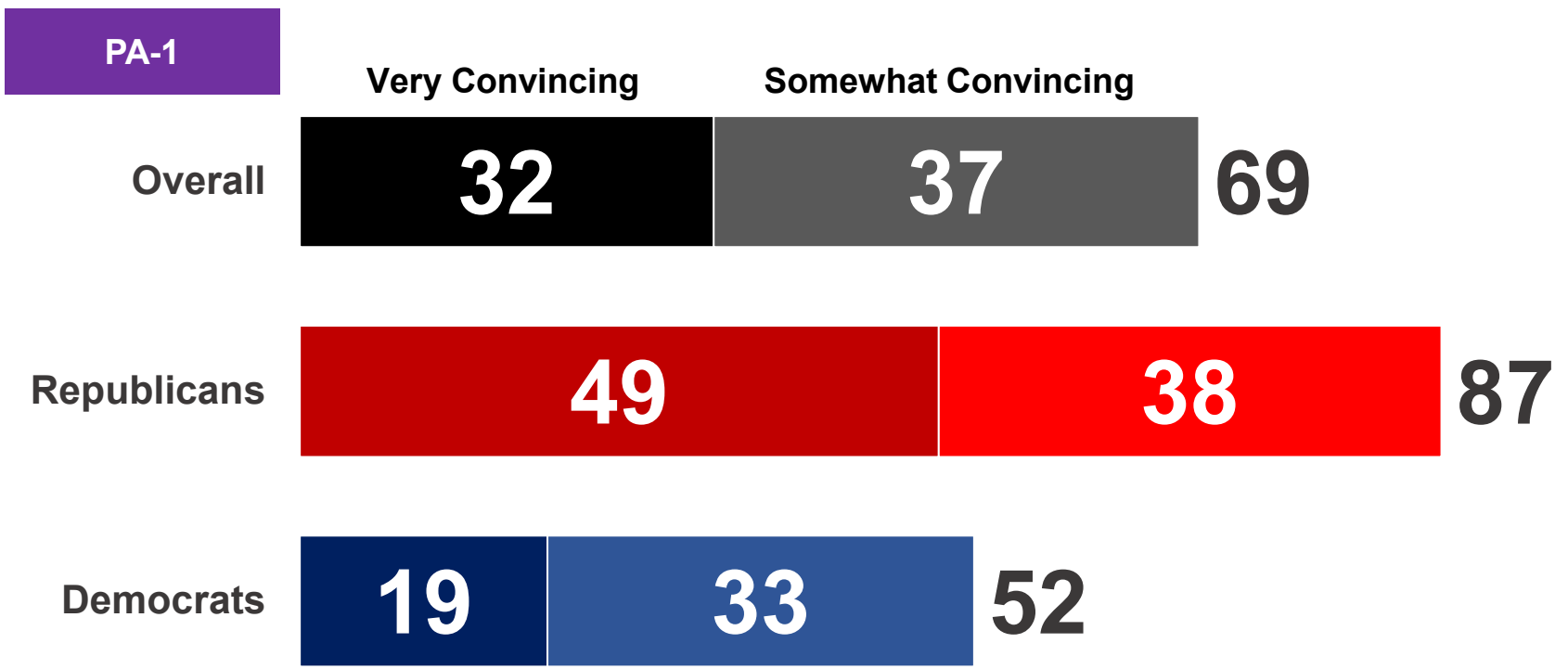
Police officers put their lives on the line every day to protect us all. On average, about 150 officers die in the line of duty each year; many more are wounded or assaulted. They often deal with dangerous situations and violent criminals who attack them or members of the public. This requires split-second decision making. Officers are trained to first try to talk down a person and get their cooperation, but requiring them to do so can result in the officer hesitating and getting harmed or killed.

If we put these limits on the officers, this will put their lives at even greater risk, which will make it harder to recruit new officers. Current officers may seek to avoid these dangerous situations that they are called to, which will weaken the effectiveness of the police in general. Furthermore, if criminals assume that officers have to be so cautious and strict, this will embolden the criminals to not comply with an officers' commands and to even resist arrest.

**ARGUMENT AGAINST**

# De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

These requirements will increase risks to police officers who put their lives on the line



De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Several states and cities have changed their policies to require that officers use de-escalation and other techniques to ensure that deadly force is only used as a last resort — and have seen great results. Comprehensive studies have found the amount of police violence went down sharply, increasing the safety for citizens, including bystanders.

Officers were found to be at less risk, and there was no evidence that they were less able or willing to use force when it was necessary to defend themselves. Police morale went up.

ARGUMENT  
IN FAVOR

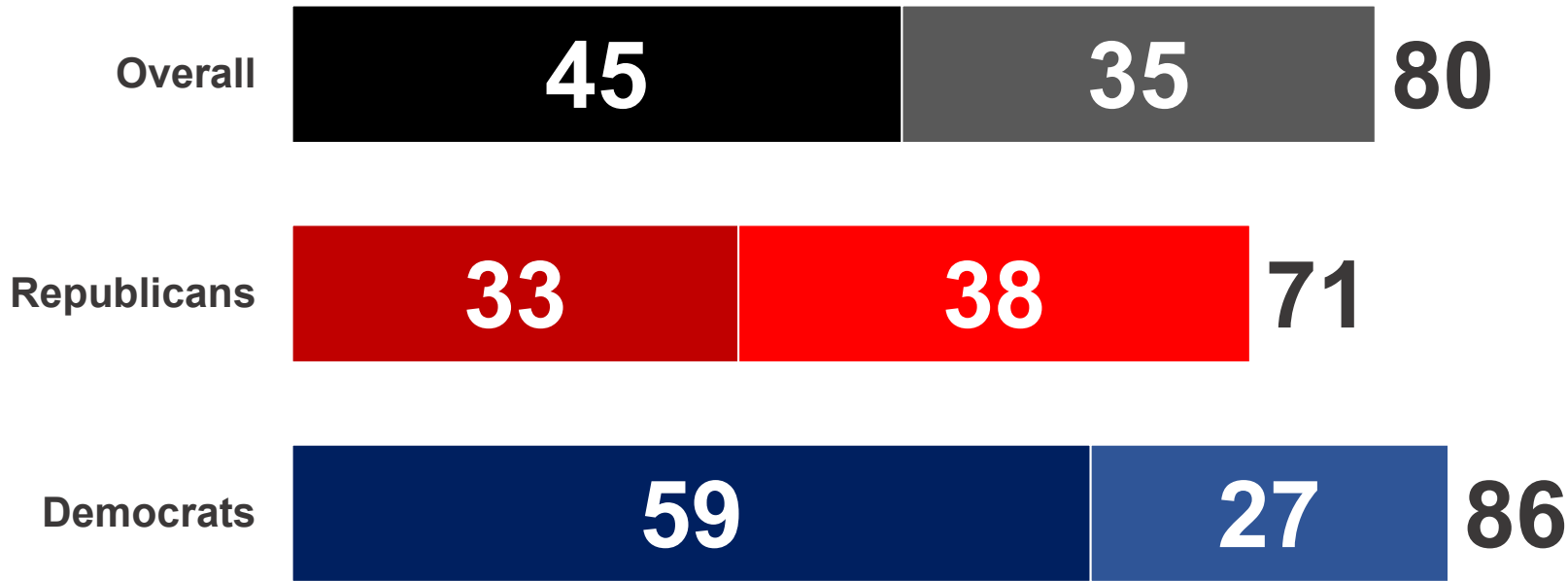
# De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

Requiring de-escalation, other techniques, lowers violence against police and citizens

PA-1

Very Convincing

Somewhat Convincing



De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

ARGUMENT AGAINST

If we are going to have officers risking their own lives and protecting us from our most dangerous criminals, they need to be able to act in ways they feel are necessary to protect themselves and others. Officers should not be punished for taking actions they believed were necessary and deserving of the law. Holding them criminally liable will entangle courts in endless second-guessing of police decisions made in split seconds under stress. The fear of getting charged will discourage officers from acting as needed to protect themselves or others, and from even becoming officers in the first place. We should do more to weed out bad actors, not further jeopardize the lives of all who wear the uniform.

**ARGUMENT AGAINST**

# De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

Should not punish officers for split-second decisions in dangerous situations

PA-1

Very Convincing

Somewhat Convincing

Overall

32

37

69

Republicans

53

30

83

Democrats

17

39

55

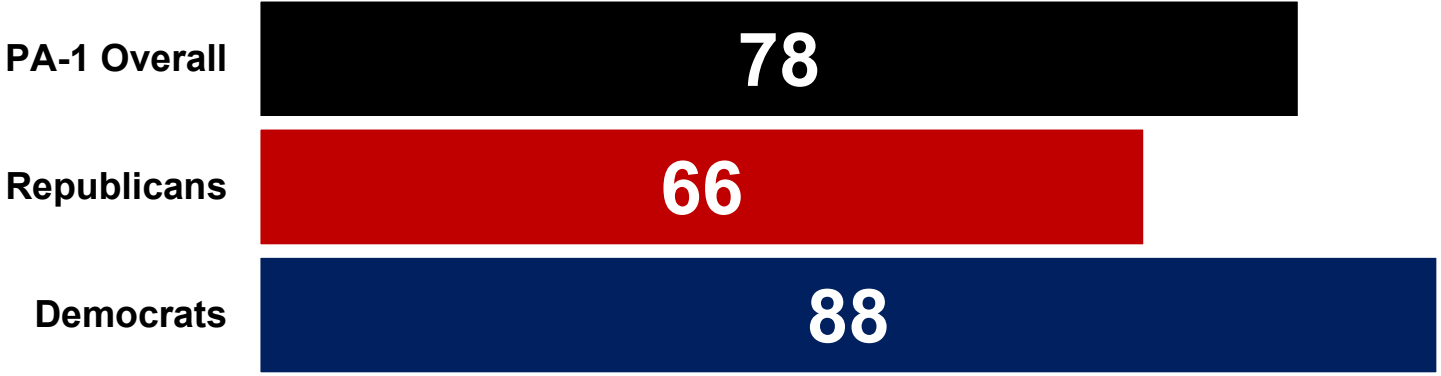
# De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

## FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Do you favor or oppose this proposal?

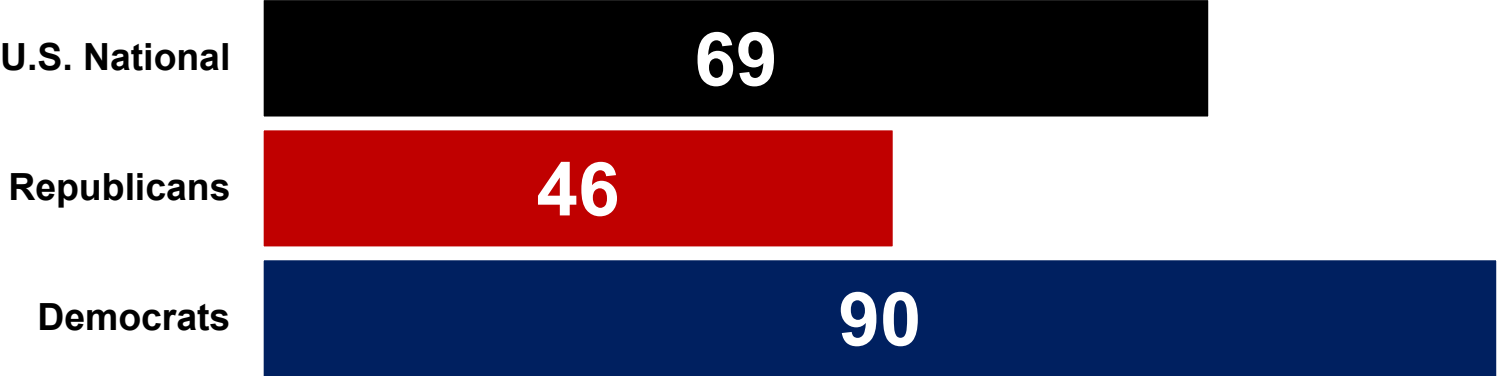
### PA-1

**FAVOR**



### National

**FAVOR**





# Duty to Intervene

## PROPOSAL

### Proposal:

- Require police departments to adopt a policy that makes it a duty for officers to intervene when they perceive another officer is using excessive force
- Provide officers with training for when and how to intervene

When law enforcement officers use excessive force, in many cases there is another officer present. If we want to make sure that excessive force is not being used, one of the most effective things we can do is to make it a duty for officers to intervene. Officers should be expected to abide by the law just like everybody else, and their colleagues should have the responsibility to ensure that they do.  
If any officer violates the rules, this undermines all officers in the eyes of society. If the public sees officers holding each other accountable this will increase confidence in the integrity of all police officers. Police officers should be responsible for enforcing the law against everyone — including their own.

ARGUMENT  
IN FAVOR

# Duty to Intervene

Officers should abide by the law and must hold each other accountable

PA-1

Very Convincing

Somewhat Convincing

Overall



Republicans



Democrats



When officers use force it is usually in dangerous and complex situations in which a suspect is violent or resists arrest. Another officer may come upon the scene where they don't know all the facts of the situation and cannot reliably determine whether the other officer is using appropriate force or not. It can make the situation more difficult and dangerous if they have to worry that another officer might suddenly intervene to stop them. Furthermore, officers frequently have to engage with bystanders or other suspects on the scene that may make it harder to determine whether another officer is using appropriate force. Officers should not be punished for failing to intervene when situations are so often murky.

ARGUMENT AGAINST

# Duty to Intervene

Situations are often unclear, intervening could be dangerous, not right to punish

PA-1

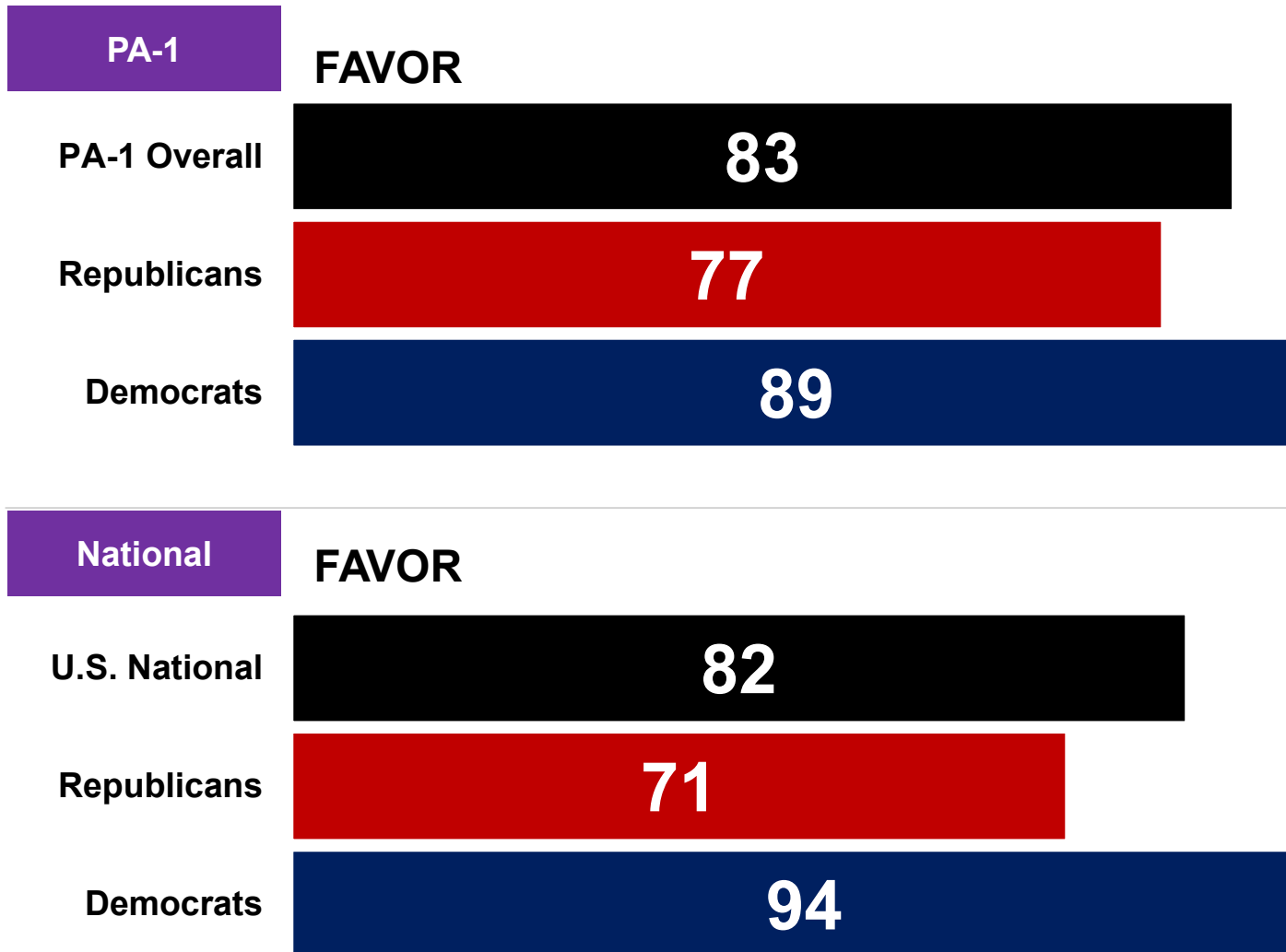
Very Convincing      Somewhat Convincing



# Duty to Intervene

## FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Do you favor or oppose this proposal?



# Ban on No-Knock Warrants

## PROPOSAL

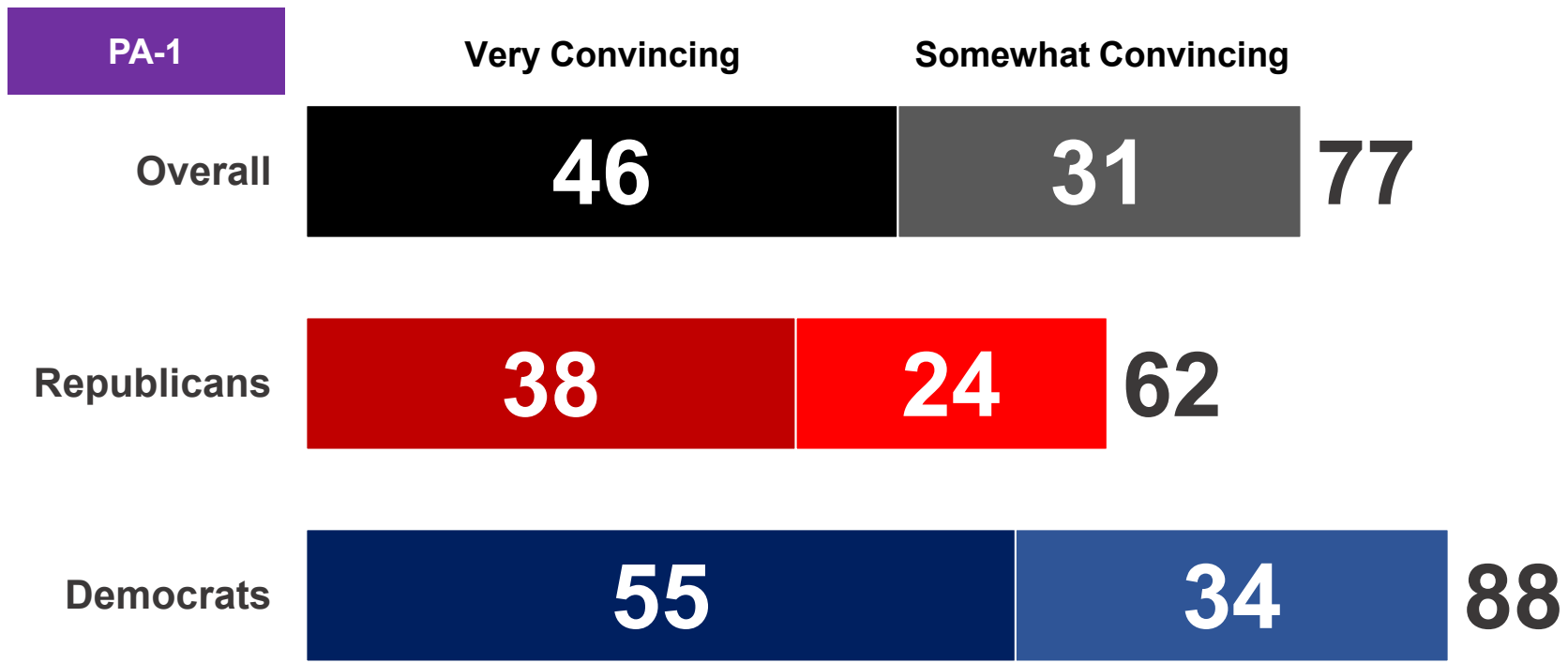
Require local and state governments to ban the use of no-knock warrants for drug cases.

No-knock warrants are highly dangerous. Too often they have resulted in innocent people being hurt or killed, and property destroyed. Officers have broken into the wrong house by accident. Innocents in the house, thinking there is a criminal breaking in, have used their 2nd amendment rights of self-defense. Officers have been killed. There are other means to appropriately investigate or apprehend suspects than breaking down their doors without warning.

ARGUMENT  
IN FAVOR

# Ban on No-Knock Warrants

Highly dangerous, for police and for innocent civilians.  
There are alternatives.

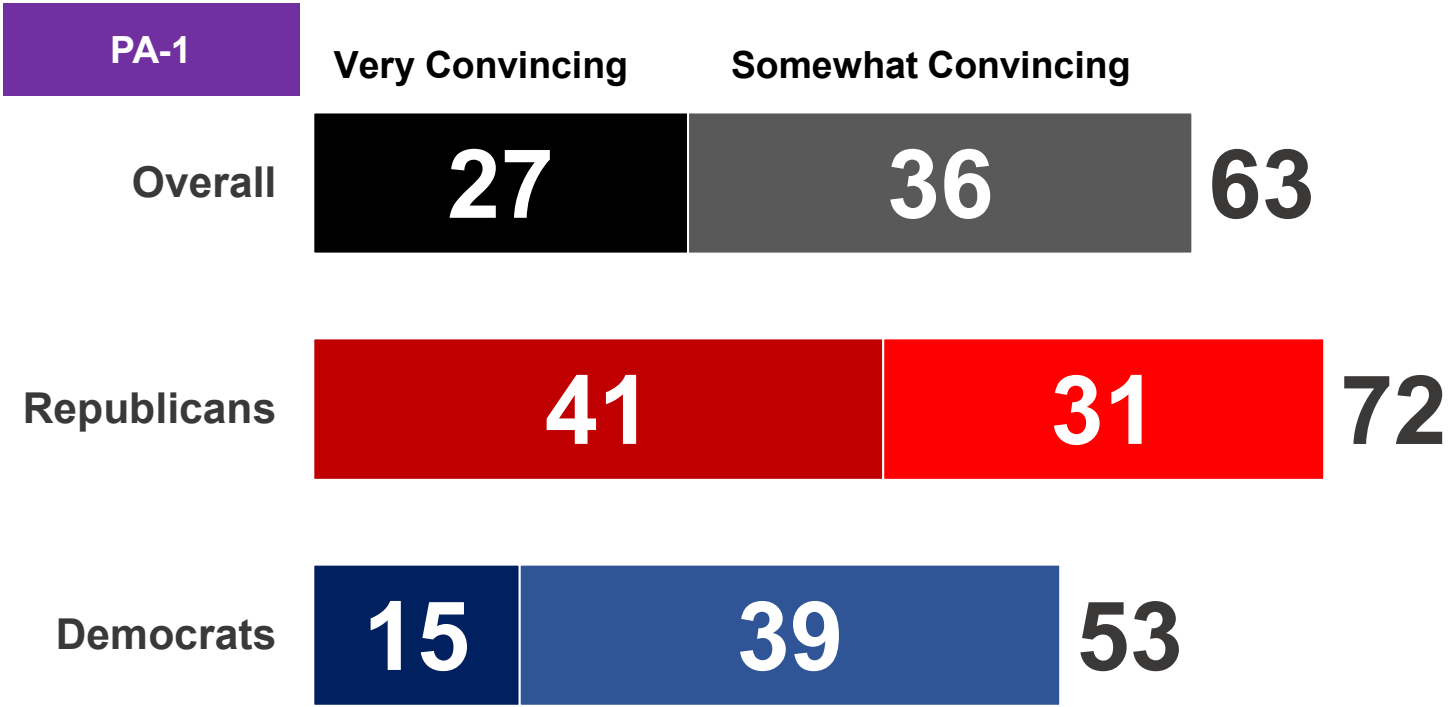


No-knock warrants can be used appropriately and effectively and should be allowed. Criminals use drugs and other evidence down a toilet or destroy computer evidence of a multi-million-dollar drug deal with a few quick keystrokes. If they know officers are at the door, it gives those dangerous criminals time to get guns to use or to set up triggered booby traps.  
We shouldn't hamstring officers' ability to protect themselves and/or to prevent destruction of essential evidence of a crime.

**ARGUMENT AGAINST**

# Ban on No-Knock Warrants

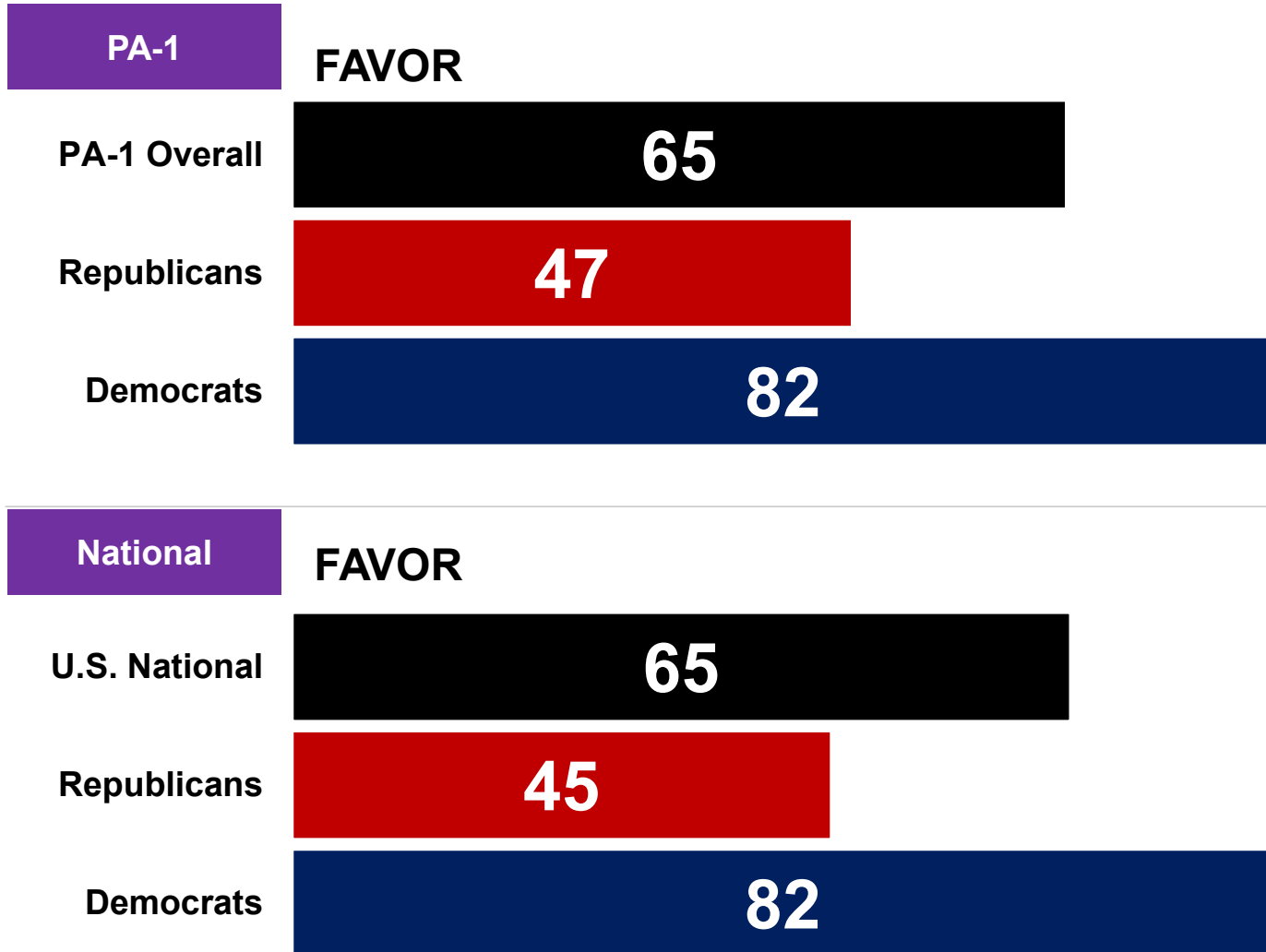
Shouldn't hamstring officers from technique that can protect them, preserve evidence



# Ban on No-Knock Warrants

## FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Do you favor or oppose this proposal?





# Ban on No-Knock Warrants

## ACCEPTABILITY

After evaluating the arguments, how acceptable do you find this proposal?

### PA-1

TOLERABLE

ACCEPTABLE

PA-1 Overall

14

54

68

Republicans

11

39

50

Democrats

17

67

85

### National

TOLERABLE

ACCEPTABLE

U.S. National

14

59

74

Republicans

16

42

58

Democrats

13

76

88

**INCREASING  
ACCOUNTABILITY OF  
LAW ENFORCEMENT  
OFFICERS**

# Body Cameras

## PROPOSAL

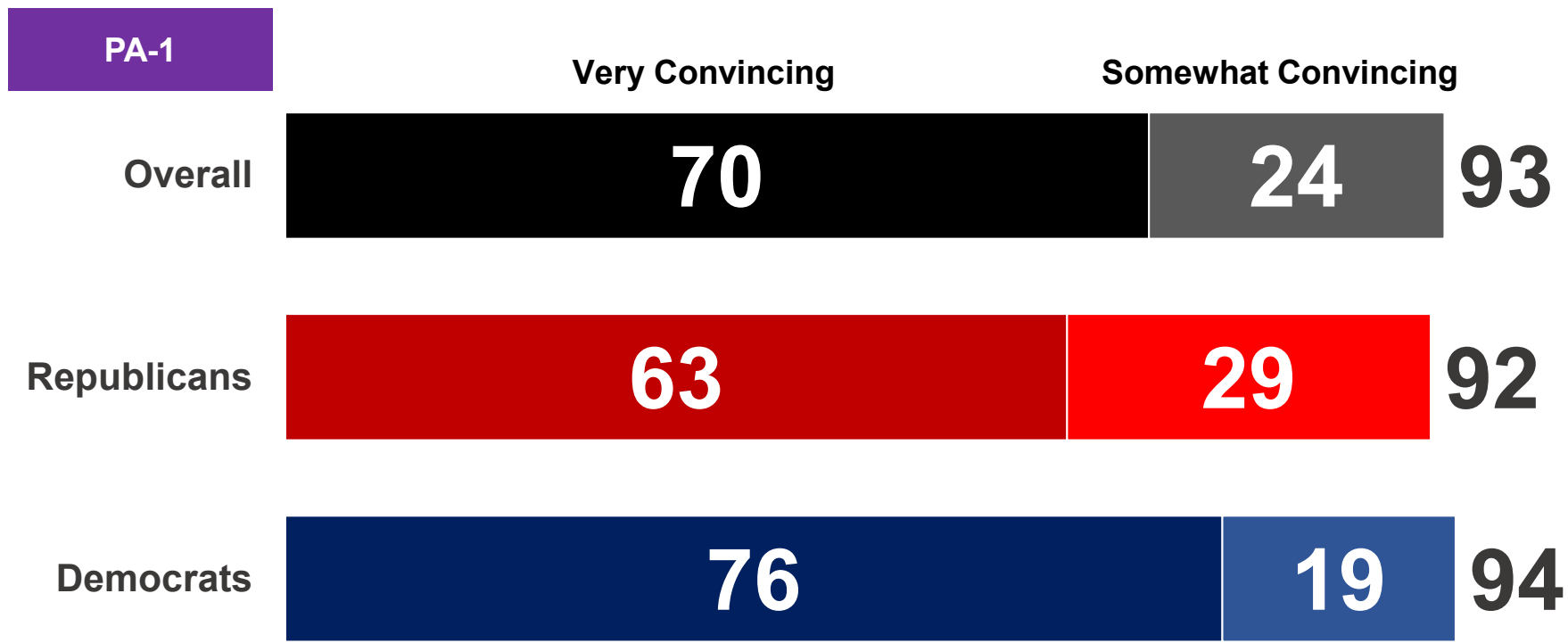
- Require all police departments to have **body cameras.**
- Require officers to **wear them** and **turn them on** when **responding to a call** or **interacting with a suspect.** Failure to do so would result in **disciplinary action.**

Requiring officers to use body cameras will make the process of law enforcement more transparent and will help hold police accountable. There is evidence this will result in a reduction in violence. Research shows use of body cameras have reduced both police and civilian violence by substantial amounts.  
People's memory is often influenced by the heat of the moment and cameras provide a neutral view of events as they happened. Body cameras have also provided police with visual evidence of crimes being committed in real time.

ARGUMENT  
IN FAVOR

# Body Cameras

Increased transparency benefits both civilians and officers, reduces violence



Body cameras cost a lot of money and studies show that they are not very effective. They create a false impression of objectivity; juries have interpreted them differently, based on how they were used by prosecutors and defense attorneys. In some cases, the body cameras haven't done well in capturing what actually happened, either because the footage was grainy, shaky, or only showed a limited view of the situation.

Having this footage around creates a pressure to release it publicly. It could be used to humiliate citizens who have been caught in a stressful situation and might have acted in an embarrassing manner.

**ARGUMENT AGAINST**

# Body Cameras

Too expensive, not effective, create false sense of "objectivity," can be misused

PA-1

Very Convincing    Somewhat Convincing

Overall



Republicans



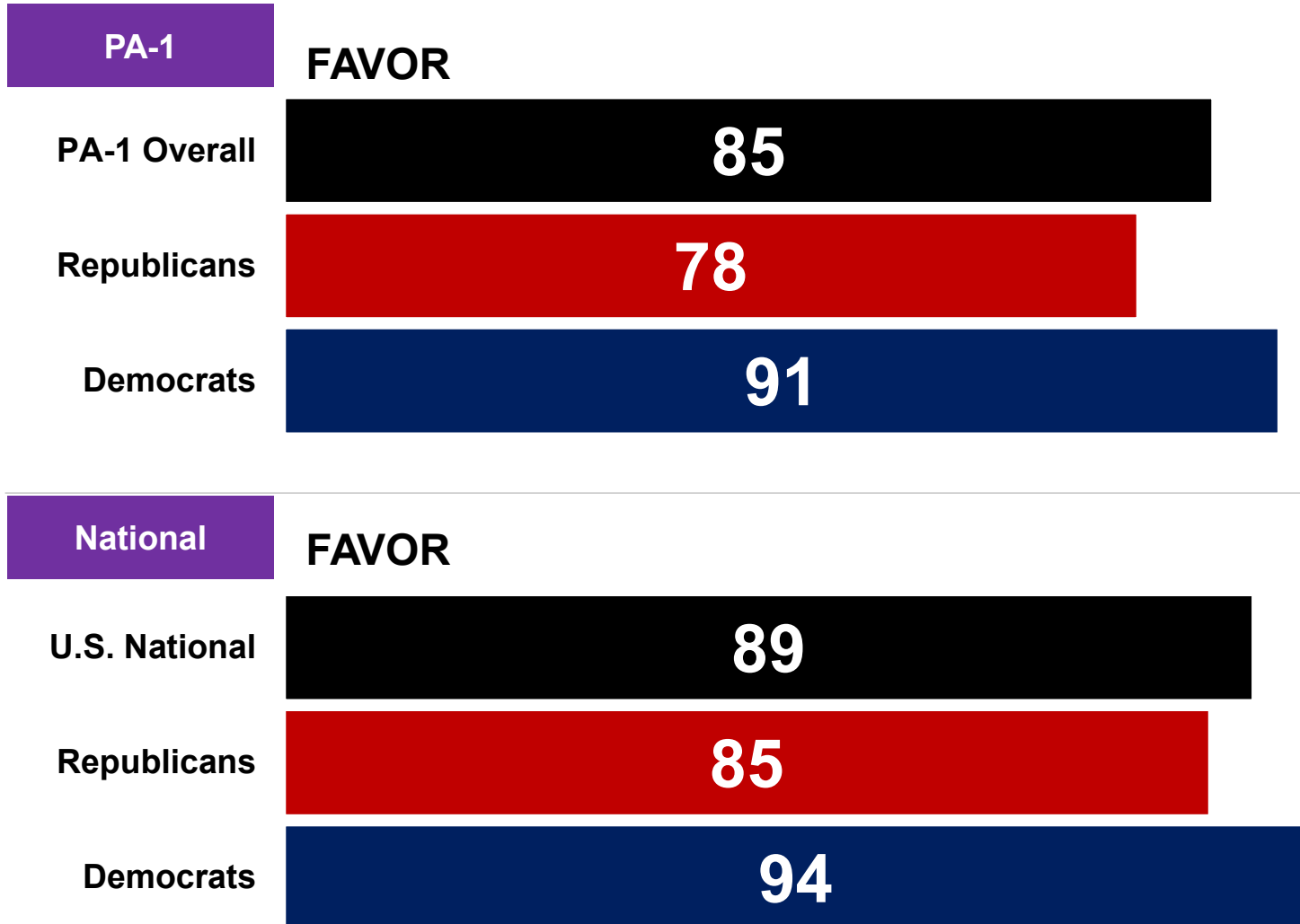
Democrats



# Body Cameras

## FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Do you favor or oppose this proposal?



# National Registry of Police Misconduct

## PROPOSAL

- Create a national database of police misconduct and require all law enforcement agencies to submit information about officer misconduct.
- Database would be available to all law enforcement agencies, other government agencies and the public.

Any effort to increase transparency and accountability starts with knowing who the bad cops are. Police departments have a right to know the history of the people they hire and empower with deadly force. Without some way of ensuring that police departments can know the history of the officers they hire, bad cops can just go from city to city, acting abusively without consequence. Finally, this information is very useful in court cases when a judge or jury is trying to decide if an officer's misconduct was a one-time event, or if they have a history of unlawful behavior.

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

# National Registry of Police Misconduct

Bad cops can just go from city to city, police depts have a right to know background

PA-1

Very Convincing

Somewhat Convincing

Overall

64

25

88

Republicans

58

24

82

Democrats

72

21

93



Officers get unjustified complaints filed against them all the time. Officers get negative reports from people who are trying to come up with an excuse for the behavior that prompted their arrest by the officer, or they may have a personal grudge against the officer. A small mistake or wrongfully filed complaints, can result in getting blacklisted and difficulty in getting another job in law enforcement or elsewhere, which is unfair.  
This proposal singles out the police; no other government employee or official has a database of complaints or mistakes. It is also a violation of their privacy as this will be a public database. Officers just trying to protect our communities already have a lot of pressures on them and this will only add more.

**ARGUMENT AGAINST**

# National Registry of Police Misconduct

**Unjustified or minor complaints can lead to officers being blacklisted, violates privacy**

**PA-1**

**Very Convincing    Somewhat Convincing**

**Overall**



**Republicans**



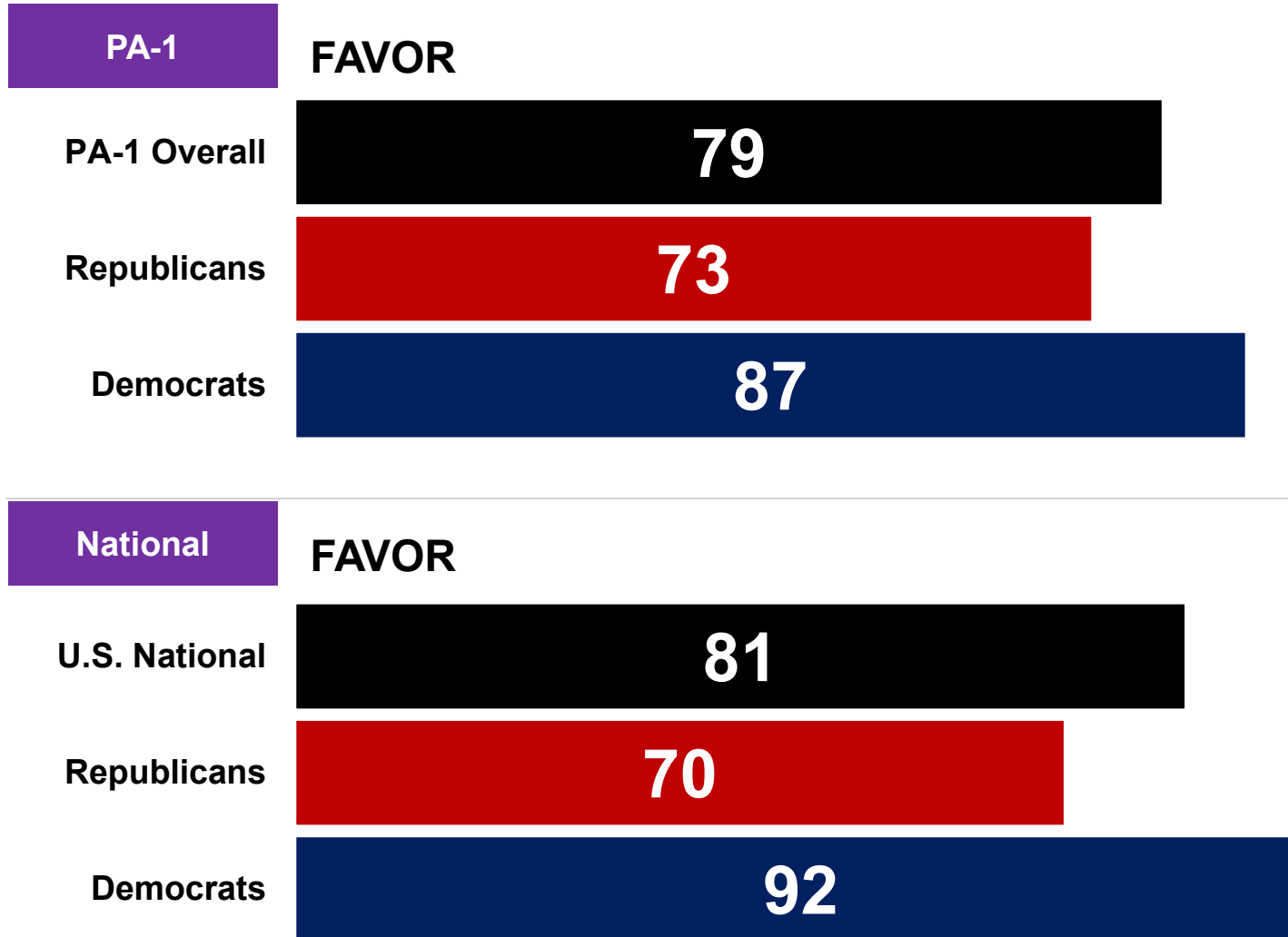
**Democrats**



# National Registry of Police Misconduct

## FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Do you favor or oppose this proposal?



# Independent Prosecutors

## PROPOSAL

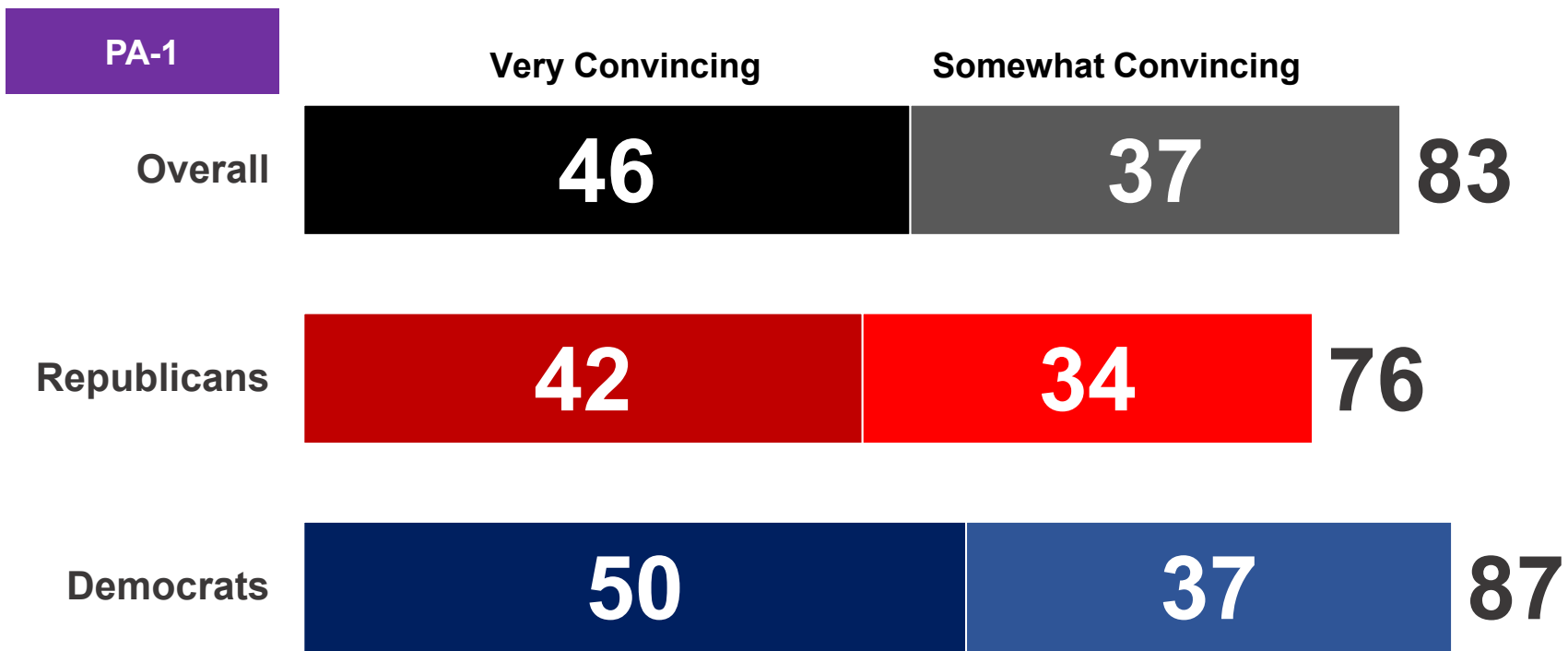
- Offer states **federal funding to hire an independent prosecutor** when investigating or charging a law enforcement officer for using deadly force.
- To get funding, state must have policy **requiring use of an independent prosecutor** in *all* such cases.

Because regular prosecutors often need to keep up a good relationship with the police departments they work with to prosecute ordinary cases, they often do not pursue charges against officers as aggressively as they do against other people. Many county prosecutors or District Attorneys are elected officials, who may choose to avoid prosecuting a police officer due to relationships or for political reasons. As a result, many officers who have allegedly unjustly injured or killed a person do not get charged with a crime.  
It is only fair that these cases be conducted by independent prosecutors, so there is no conflict of interest. This will result in more justice, and more confidence in the justice system.

ARGUMENT  
IN FAVOR

# Independent Prosecutors

Regular prosecutors too close to cops,  
have too many conflicts of interest



When bringing in an outside prosecutor, there is a risk that whoever chooses the prosecutor might have a political agenda to look tough or to punish officers unfairly. Also, they may not be part of that community, and thus would not be familiar with the police officers and the situation of the community they serve and protect.  
We should not assume that local prosecutors are biased in favor of police just because some people do not like the outcomes of the case.

**ARGUMENT AGAINST**

# Independent Prosecutors

Can be driven by political agenda to look tough, outsiders don't understand community

**PA-1**

**Very Convincing    Somewhat Convincing**

Overall



Republicans



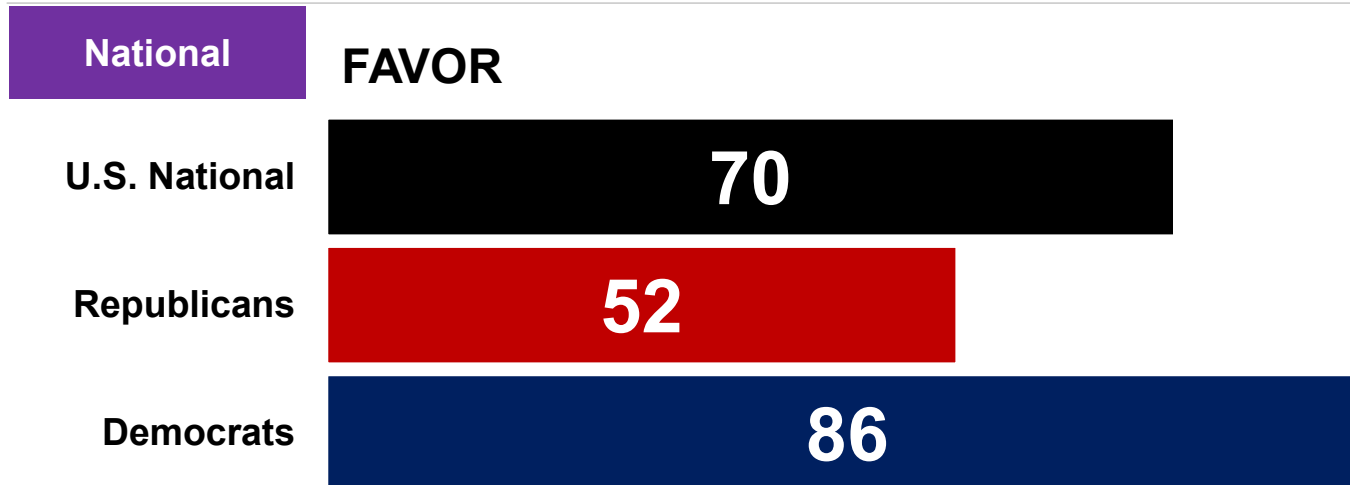
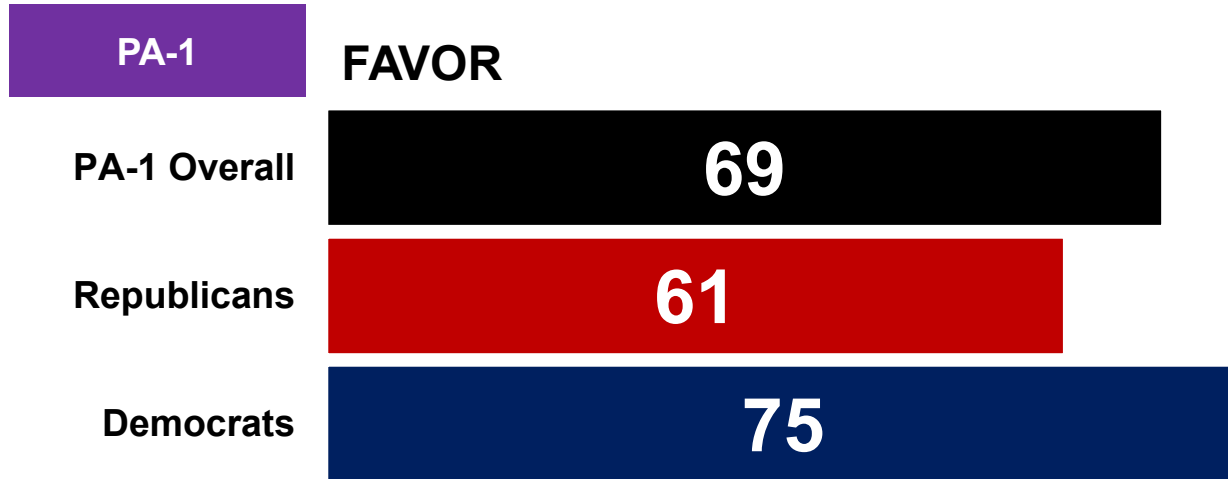
Democrats



# Independent Prosecutors

## FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Do you favor or oppose this proposal?



# Amend Qualified Immunity

## PROPOSAL

- Stop giving officers immunity solely **on basis that officer says** they were acting in good faith and ***believed*** their actions were lawful.
- No longer allow officers to be granted immunity because there haven't been previous cases holding other officers liable for the same conduct in very similar circumstances.

There have been an extraordinary number of cases in which officers have not been held accountable after using excessive violence against citizens, simply because the officer could say they didn't think they were violating the law or because there wasn't a previous case holding an officer liable under virtually the same circumstances. Not understanding the law should not be an excuse for violating it — especially for a police officer. No other person would ever be able to use that defense in court. Without any consequences, officers will continue to commit heinous acts against citizens. This is wrong and its causing people to lose faith in our system of justice.

ARGUMENT  
IN FAVOR

# Amend Qualified Immunity

Police saying they don't know law or no exact precedent no excuse, must be accountable

PA-1

Very Convincing

Somewhat Convincing

Overall

45

38

83

Republicans

36

38

73

Democrats

57

35

92



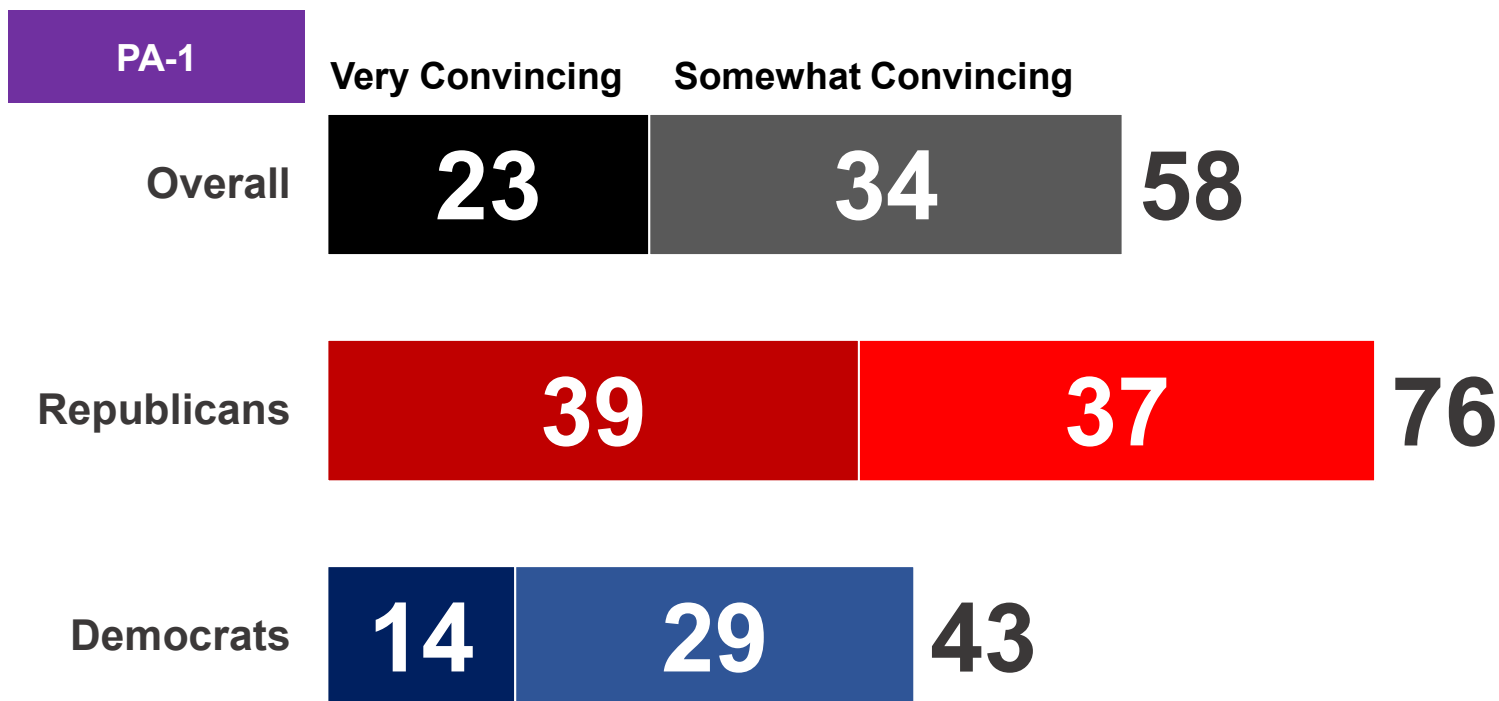
Police officers often have to make split-second decisions in dangerous situations. Qualified immunity is necessary to give officers the ability to make reasonable, even if mistakes, decisions without constantly worrying about getting sued. Without qualified immunity, police officers will become too timid and fail to take the appropriate action. They may use too much caution, and let a criminal get away, or worse, they may fail to use necessary force against a violent person that poses a risk to the officer or a bystander.

When on the job, police officers should only have to consider how best to stop criminals and make their community safer, and not whether their actions will result in a long trial and bad publicity. Changing these laws will make our communities less safe and make it harder to recruit and retain good officers.

**ARGUMENT  
AGAINST**

# Amend Qualified Immunity

Will lead officers to be too timid for fear of being sued;  
make communities less safe



# Amend Qualified Immunity

## FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Do you favor or oppose this proposal?

PA-1

**FAVOR**

PA-1 Overall

**63**

Republicans

**50**

Democrats

**75**

National

**FAVOR**

U.S. National

**63**

Republicans

**41**

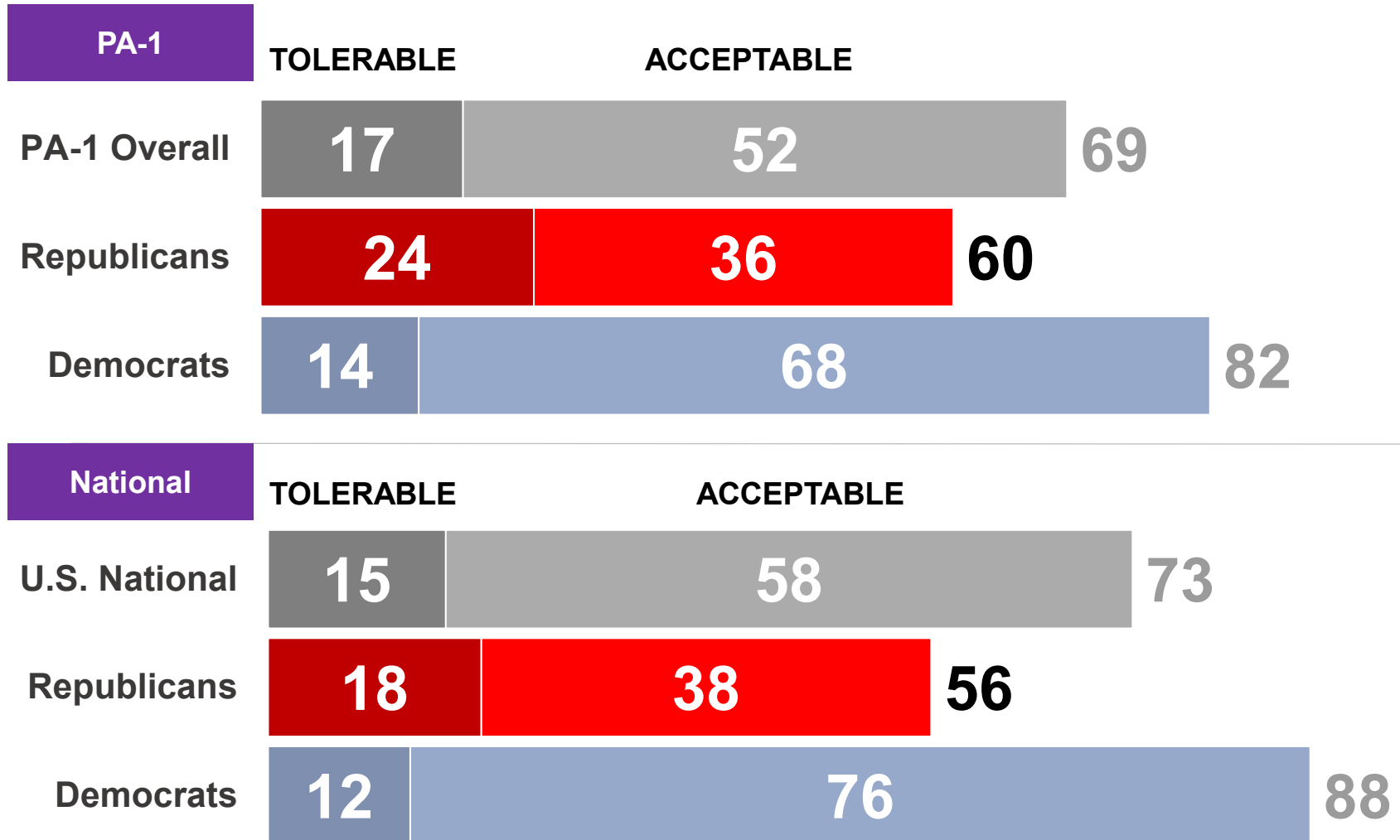
Democrats

**84**

# Amend Qualified Immunity

## ACCEPTABILITY

After evaluating the arguments, how acceptable do you find this proposal?



# **ADDRESSING IMPLICIT BIAS**

# Training in Implicit Bias

## PROPOSAL

Studies have found:

- officers use excessive force against minorities more than they do against white civilians.
- problem is not primarily that most officers have conscious negative attitudes toward minorities, but rather that many officers – like most people – have what is called an “implicit bias.”

Training methods have been developed to help people understand better how implicit bias may be affecting them and to consciously work to counter its effects.

### **Proposal:**

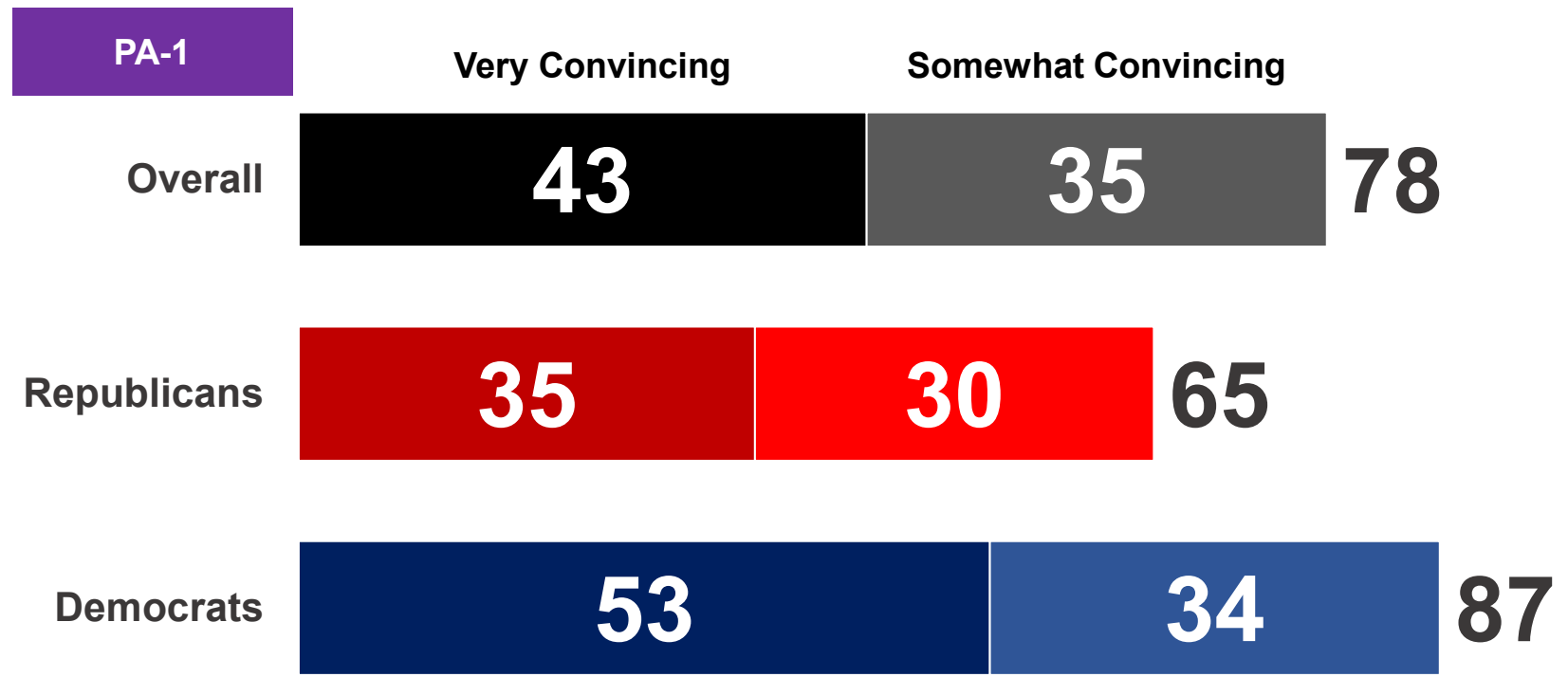
- Require police departments to provide their officers training on implicit bias.

Studies show that nearly everybody has some implicit bias, whether they are white, black, men, women, liberal or conservative. In the justice system, everybody is supposed to get equal treatment. But evidence shows that police officers are more likely to use excessive force against people of color with potentially deadly consequences. Implicit bias training has been shown to be effective in a significant number of cases and with more experience it can become even more effective. Reducing bias in law enforcement is the right thing to do and will help renew confidence in the legal system.

ARGUMENT  
IN FAVOR

# Training in Implicit Bias

Unequal treatment of people of color is wrong;  
need to reduce bias

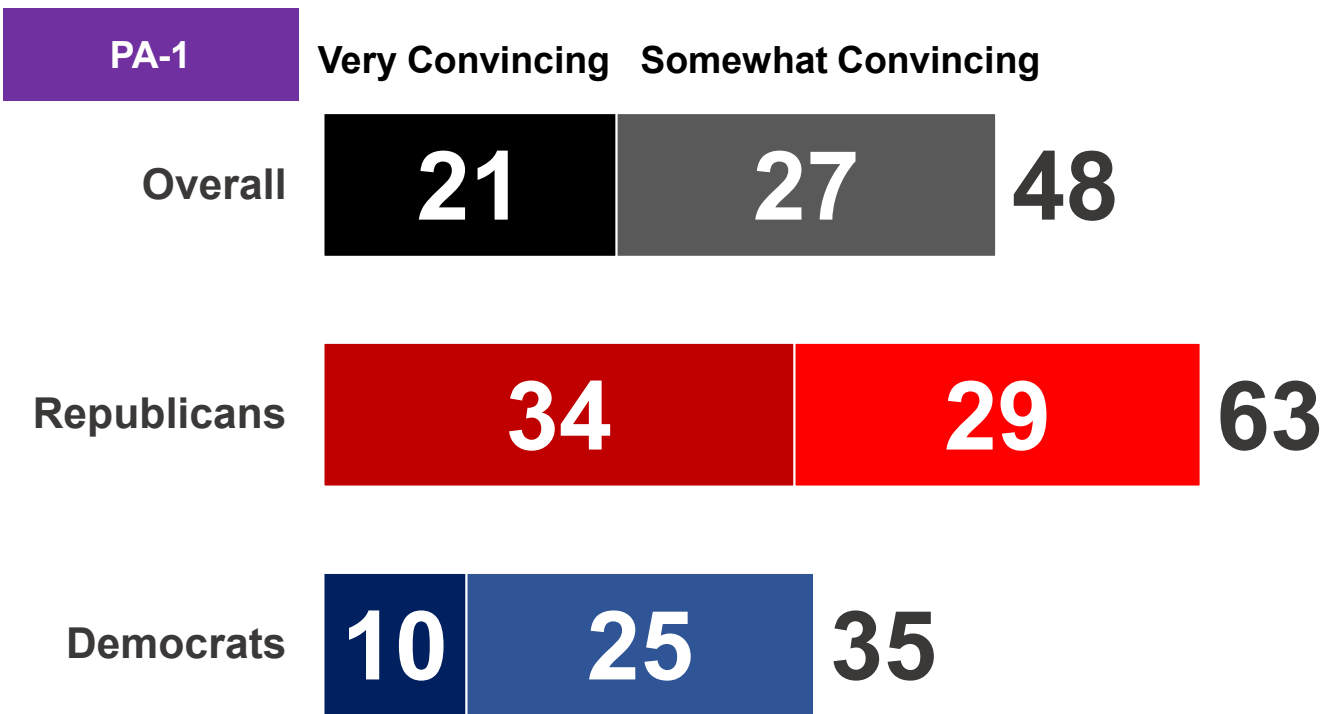


The implicit bias training costs public money and has not been proven to be consistently effective. We should not be taking time away from officers' real work of keeping communities safe. It is unfair to implicitly suggest that they are racist and cannot be trusted. Furthermore, if cops become uncertain about whether they should trust their own judgment, it may make them hesitate to take decisive action in the midst of a crisis situation, putting them and others present at greater risk.

**ARGUMENT AGAINST**

# Training in Implicit Bias

Training costs money, not proven to be effective, takes time, undermines confidence



# Training in Implicit Bias

## FINAL RECOMMENDATION

Do you favor or oppose this proposal?

PA-1

**FAVOR**

PA-1 Overall

74

Republicans

64

Democrats

81

National

**FAVOR**

U.S. National

72

Republicans

53

Democrats

89



**POLICE REFORM  
PROPOSALS  
SUPPORTED BY PA-1**

Support for Police Reform Proposals	U.S.	PA-1		
	Natl	Overall	GOP	DEM
<b>LARGEST BIPARTISAN MAJORITY SUPPORT</b>				
Require Body Cameras	89	85	78	91
Duty to Intervene	82	83	77	89
National Registry of Police Misconduct	81	79	73	87
De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort	69	78	66	88
<b>BIPARTISAN MAJORITY SUPPORT</b>				
Ban on Chokeholds and Neck Restraints	73	75	58	88
Implicit Bias Training	72	74	64	81
Independent Prosecutors	70	69	61	75
<b>MAJORITY SUPPORT IN PA-1 OVERALL; PARTIES MIXED</b>				
Ban on No-knock Warrants	65	65	47 (50)	82
Amend Qualified Immunity	63	63	50 (60)	75

# **PRO AND CON ARGUMENTS**

# De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

## ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Every year around a thousand civilians—many of them unarmed — die from police shootings. Too many officers are quick to use deadly force, especially against Black Americans. Under existing law, when an officer kills a citizen — even an unarmed one--all they have to do is say that they **believed** that they were at risk of being severely injured or killed. In the case of Tamir Rice — a 12-year-old boy — he had a toy gun and the officers drove up to him and, without warning, shot him.

If they believed the gun was real, they should have kept their distance and, from a protected position, told him to put down the “gun.” We need to require that officers learn and use better tactics when they are sent to calls involving possible weapons. They should only use deadly force as a last resort and should be held accountable if they wrongly injure or kill people.

# De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

## ARGUMENT AGAINST

Police officers put their lives on the line every day to protect us all. On average, about 150 officers die in the line of duty each year; many more are wounded or assaulted. They often deal with dangerous situations and violent criminals who attack them or members of the public. This requires split-second decision making. Officers are trained to first try to talk down a person and get their cooperation. But requiring them to do it can result in the officer hesitating and getting harmed or killed.

If we put these limits on the officers, this will put their lives at even greater risk, which will make it harder to recruit new officers. Current officers may seek to avoid these dangerous situations that they are called to, which will weaken the effectiveness of the police in general. Furthermore, if criminals assume that officers have to be so cautious and timid, this will embolden the criminals to not comply with an officers' commands and to even resist arrest.

# De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

## ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Several states and cities have changed their policies to require that officers use de-escalation and other techniques to ensure that deadly force is only used as a last resort — and have seen great results. Comprehensive studies have found the amount of police violence went down sharply, increasing the safety for citizens, including bystanders.

Officers were found to be at less risk, and there was no evidence that they were less able or willing to use force when it was necessary to defend themselves. Police morale went up.

# De-escalation and Use of Force as Last Resort

## ARGUMENT AGAINST

If we are going to have officers risking their own lives and protecting us from our most dangerous criminals, they need to be able to act in ways they feel are necessary to protect themselves and others. Officers should not be punished for taking actions they believed were necessary and lifesaving at the time. Holding them criminally liable will entangle courts in endless second-guessing of police decisions made in split seconds under stress.

The fear of getting charged will discourage officers from acting as needed to protect themselves or others, and from even becoming officers in the first place. We should do more to weed out bad actors, not further jeopardize the lives of all who wear the uniform.

# Duty to Intervene

## ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

When law enforcement officers use excessive force, in many cases there is another officer present. If we want to make sure that excessive force is not being used, one of the most effective things we can do is to make it a duty for officers to intervene. Officers should be expected to abide by the law just like everybody else, and their colleagues should have the responsibility to ensure that they do.

If any officer violates the rules, this undermines all officers in the eyes of society. If the public sees officers holding each other accountable this will increase confidence in the integrity of all police officers. Police officers should be responsible for enforcing the law against everyone — including their own.



# Duty to Intervene

## ARGUMENT AGAINST

When officers use force it is usually in dangerous and complex situations in which a suspect is violent or resists arrest. Another officer may come upon the scene where they don't know all the facts of the situation and cannot reliably determine whether the other officer is using appropriate force or not. It can make the situation more difficult and dangerous if they have to worry that another officer might suddenly intervene to stop them.

Furthermore, officers frequently have to engage with bystanders or other suspects on the scene that may make it harder to determine whether another officer is using appropriate force. Officers should not be punished for failing to intervene when situations are so often murky.

# Ban on Chokeholds and Neck Restraints

## ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

There are means to restrain a struggling suspect without using dangerous methods that unnecessarily put the suspect's life in danger. Chokeholds by police have led to needless deaths of too many civilians as well as caused brain damage and strokes in others. Furthermore, when a suspect is being choked, they resist because they are trying to breathe, which is then used to justify using more force, including deadly force.

Many police departments already prohibit chokeholds because they know it is wrong. They should be banned everywhere.

# Ban on Chokeholds and Neck Restraints

## ARGUMENT AGAINST

Officers are often dealing with violent out of control people and they need all the tools available to them. If they cannot use chokeholds and similar restraints, they will have to use alternatives, like firearms, which are even more dangerous. Officers should not be denied these options as they may be needed in some circumstances. For example, when a violent individual physically attacks a police officer, the officer must do all they can to prevent that person from getting ahold of the officer's firearm, and a chokehold may be the only way of restraining the attacker.

# Ban on No-Knock Warrants

## ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

No-knock warrants are highly dangerous. Too often they have resulted in innocent people being hurt or killed, and property destroyed. Officers have broken into the wrong house by accident. Innocents in the house, thinking there is a criminal breaking in, have used their 2nd amendment rights of self-defense. Officers have been killed. There are other means to appropriately investigate or apprehend suspects than breaking down their doors without warning.

# Ban on No-Knock Warrants

## ARGUMENT AGAINST

No-knock warrants can be used appropriately and effectively and should be allowed. Criminals can flush drugs and other evidence down a toilet or destroy computer evidence of a multi-million-dollar drug deal with a few quick keystrokes. If they know officers are at the door, it gives these dangerous criminals time to get guns to use or to set up triggered booby traps.

We shouldn't hamstring officers' ability to protect themselves and/or to prevent destruction of essential evidence of a crime.

# Amend Qualified Immunity

## ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

There have been an extraordinary number of cases in which officers have not been held accountable after using excessive violence against civilians, simply because the officer could say they didn't think they were violating the law or because there wasn't a previous case holding an officer liable under virtually the same circumstances. Not understanding the law should not be an excuse for violating it — especially for a police officer. No other person would ever be able to use that defense in court. Without any consequences, officers will continue to commit heinous acts against citizens. This is wrong and its causing people to lose faith in our system of justice.

# Amend Qualified Immunity

## ARGUMENT AGAINST

Police officers often have to make split-second decisions in dangerous situations. Qualified immunity is necessary to give officers the ability to make reasonable, even if mistaken decisions without constantly worrying about getting sued. Without qualified immunity, police officers will become too timid and fail to take the appropriate action. They may use too much caution, and let a criminal get away, or worse, they may fail to use necessary force against a violent person that poses a risk to the officer or a bystander.

When on the job, police officers should only have to consider how best to stop criminals and make their community safer, and not whether their actions will result in a long trial and bad publicity. Changing these laws will make our communities less safe and make it harder to recruit and retain good officers.

# National Registry of Police Misconduct

## ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Any effort to increase transparency and accountability starts with knowing who the bad cops are. Police departments have a right to know the history of the people they hire and empower with deadly force. Without some way of ensuring that police departments can know the history of the officers they hire, bad cops can just go from city to city, acting abusively without consequence. Finally, this information is very useful in court cases when a judge or jury is trying to decide if an officer's misconduct was a one-time event, or if they have a history of unlawful behavior.



# National Registry of Police Misconduct

## ARGUMENT AGAINST

Officers get unjustified complaints filed against them all the time. Officers get negative reports from people who are trying to come up with an excuse for the behavior that prompted their arrest by the officer, or they may have a personal grudge against the officer. A small mistake or wrongfully filed complaints, can result in getting blacklisted and difficulty in getting another job in law enforcement or elsewhere, which is unfair.

This proposal singles out the police: no other government employee or official has a database of complaints or mistakes. It is also a violation of their privacy as this will be a public database. Officers just trying to protect our communities already have a lot of pressures on them and this will only add more.

# Independent Prosecutors

## ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Because regular prosecutors often need to keep up a good relationship with the police departments they work with to prosecute ordinary cases, they often do not pursue charges against officers as aggressively as they do against other people. Many county prosecutors or District Attorneys are elected officials, who may choose to avoid prosecuting a police officer due to relationships or for political reasons. As a result, many officers who have allegedly unjustly injured or killed a person do not get charged with a crime.

It is only fair that these cases be conducted by independent prosecutors, so there is no conflict of interest. This will result in more justice, and more confidence in the justice system.

# Independent Prosecutors

## ARGUMENT AGAINST

When bringing in an outside prosecutor, there is a risk that whoever chooses the prosecutor might have a political agenda to look tough or to punish officers unfairly. Also, they may not be part of that community, and thus would not be familiar with the police officers and the situation of the community they serve and protect.

We should not assume that local prosecutors are biased in favor of police just because some people do not like the outcomes of the case.

# Body Cameras

## ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Requiring officers to use body cameras will make the process of law enforcement more transparent and will help hold police accountable. There is evidence this will result in a reduction in violence: research shows use of body cameras have reduced both police and civilian violence by substantial amounts.

People's memory is often influenced by the heat of the moment and cameras provide a neutral view of events as they happened. Body cameras have also provided police with visual evidence of crimes being committed in real time.

# Body Cameras

## ARGUMENT AGAINST

Body cameras cost a lot of money and studies show that they are not very effective. They create a false impression of objectivity: juries have interpreted them differently, based on how they were used by prosecutors and defense attorneys. In some cases, the body cameras haven't done well in capturing what actually happened, either because the footage was grainy, shaky, or only showed a limited view of the situation.

Having this footage around creates a pressure to release it publicly; it could be used to humiliate citizens who have been caught in a stressful situation and might have acted in an embarrassing manner.

# Training in Implicit Bias

## ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Studies show that nearly everybody has some implicit bias, whether they are white, black, men, women, liberal or conservative. In the justice system, everybody is supposed to get equal treatment. But evidence shows that police officers are more likely to use excessive force against people of color with potentially deadly consequences.

Implicit bias training has been shown to be effective in a significant number of cases and with more experience it can become even more effective. Reducing bias in law enforcement is the right thing to do and will help renew confidence in the legal system.

# Training in Implicit Bias

## ARGUMENT AGAINST

This implicit bias training costs public money and has not been proven to be consistently effective. We should not be taking time away from officers' real work of keeping communities safe. It is unfair to implicitly suggest that they are racists and cannot be trusted. Furthermore, if cops become uncertain about whether they should trust their own judgment, it may make them hesitate to take decisive action in the midst of a crisis situation, putting them and others present at greater risk.



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