



Americans on Clean Power

A Survey of the Citizen Cabinet Conducted by



PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

July 2016

Citizen Cabinet Surveys

Not the same as a standard poll

Respondents go through a ‘policymaking simulation’

- Get a briefing
- Presented policy options with costs/benefits
- Evaluate pro and con arguments
- Finally make recommendations
- Content is vetted with Congressional staffers from both parties and outside groups across the spectrum

Methodology

Online Panel Recruited

- Primarily from Nielsen-Scarborough's Probability-Based Panel
- Additional panelists recruited by mail and phone:
Communications for Research, Inc.,
University of Virginia Survey Research Center

Field Dates: April 16, 2016 – June 10, 2016

Methodology

Total Sample: 5,975

National Sample: 3,826 Margin of Error: +/- 1.6%

State Samples:

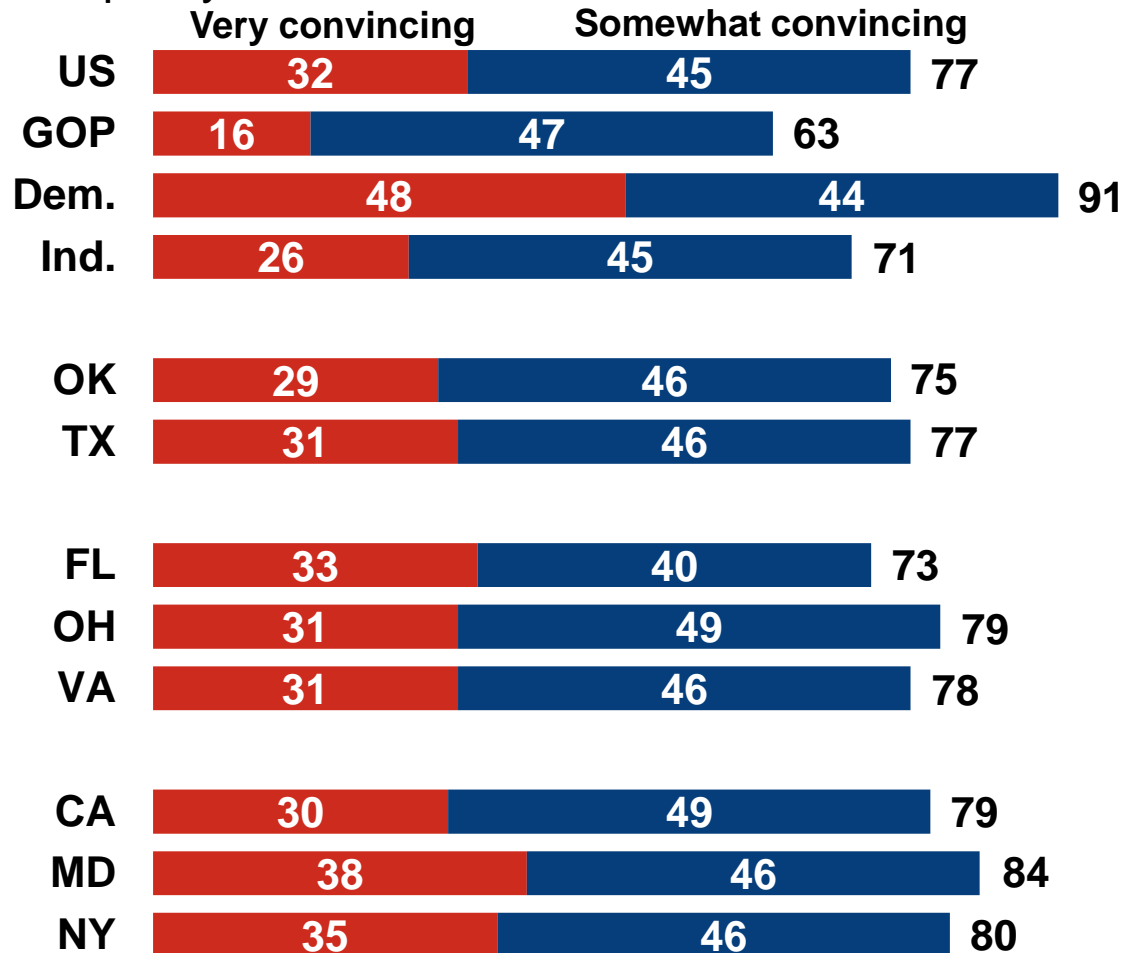
	Margin of error
*Oklahoma: 419	+/- 4.8%
*Texas: 419	+/- 4.8%
*Florida: 421	+/- 4.8%
*Ohio: 449	+/- 4.6%
Virginia: 441	+/- 4.7%
California: 523	+/- 4.3%
Maryland: 419	+/- 4.8%
New York : 414	+/- 4.8%

Subsequently weighted by age, income, gender, education and race

Air Pollution

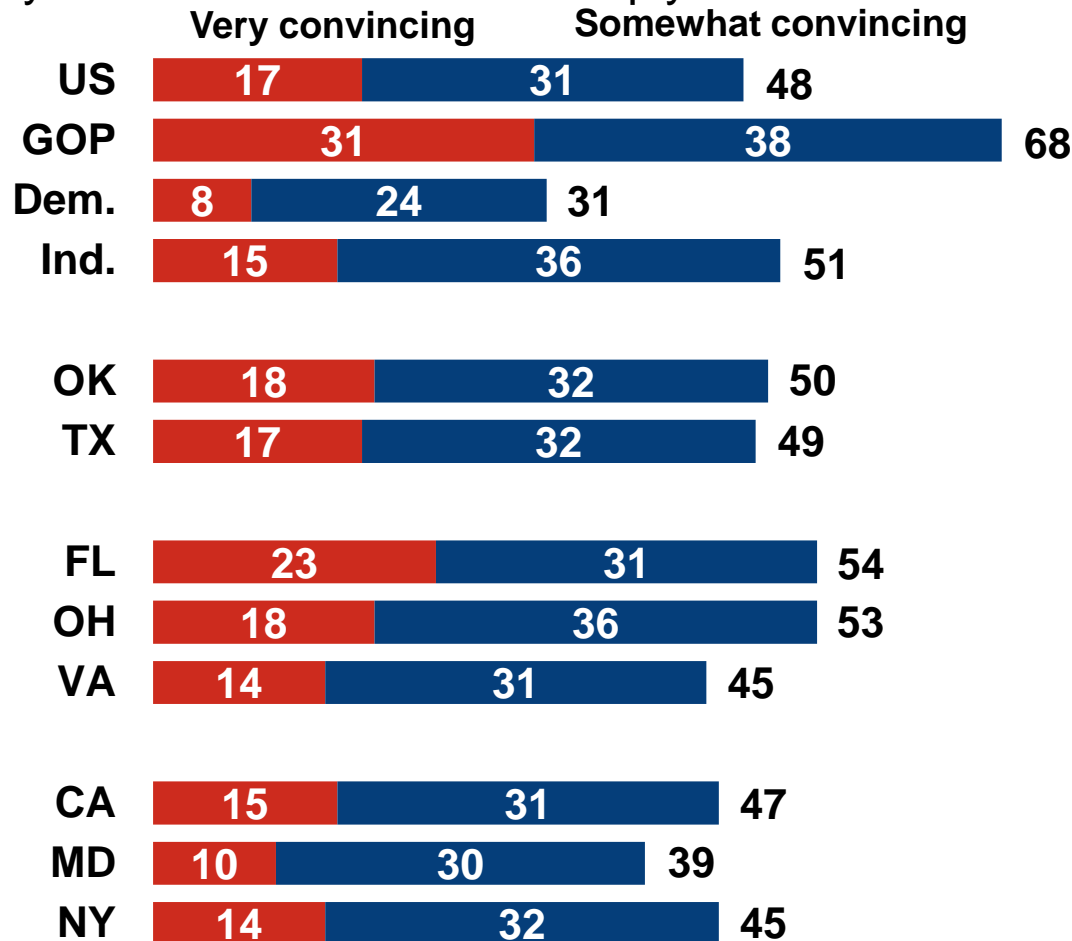
Argument: High Priority to Reduce Air Pollution

We have a responsibility to try to improve the conditions of thousands of people, especially the elderly and children, who are suffering from the health effects of poor air quality. The costs of improving air quality are not really all that high, especially when we consider that we are avoiding the economic costs of lower productivity and increased healthcare that result from these health effects. Furthermore, reducing smog improves the quality of life for all of us.



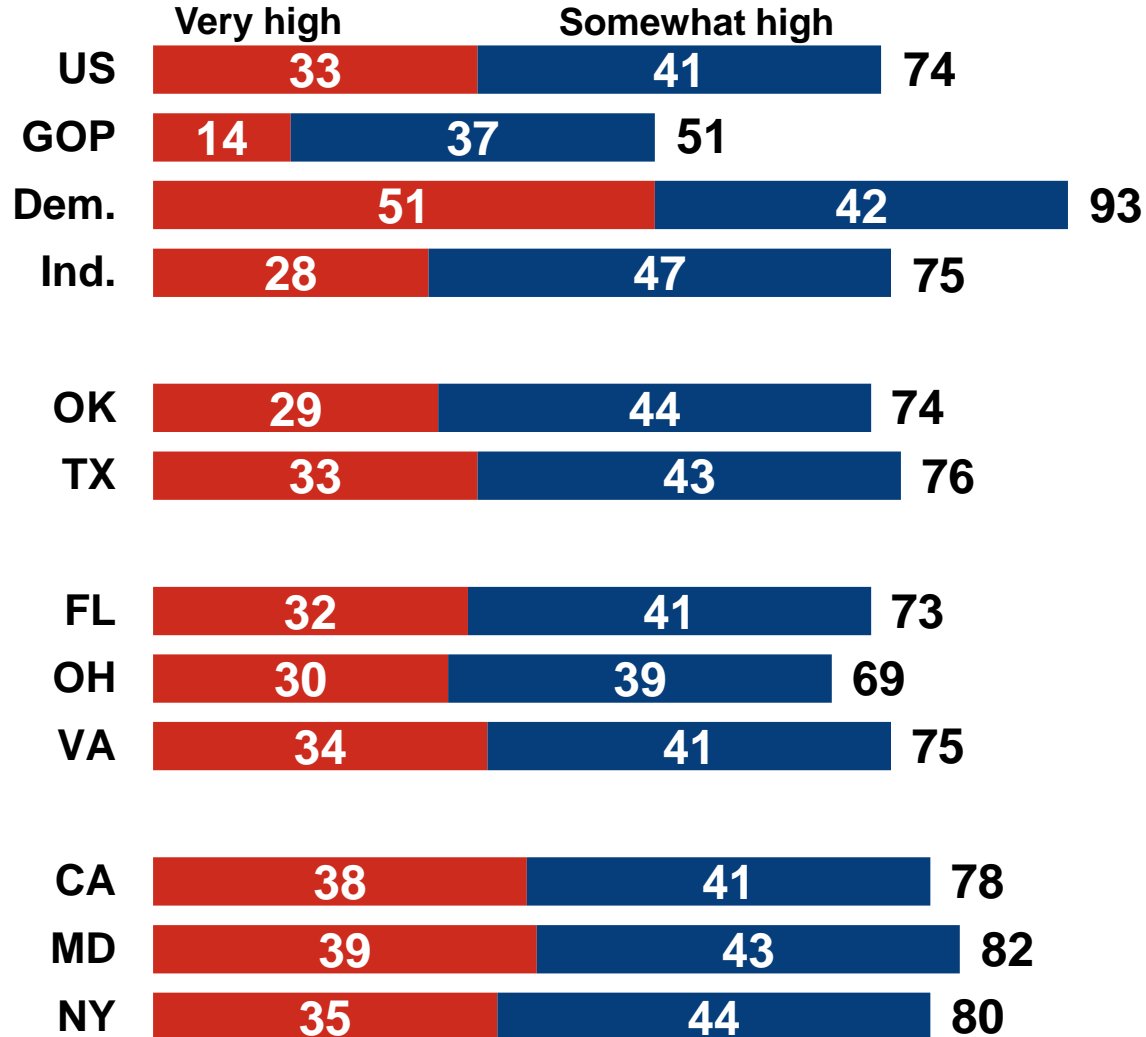
Argument: Low Priority to Reduce Air Pollution

There is already a lot of legislation in place that has improved air quality and will keep improving it for the next decade. Smog has been decreasing steadily: it is down 18 percent since 2000 and 33 percent since 1980. Meanwhile, government bureaucrats keep moving the goal posts and imposing new regulations. All this ends up costing a lot-- hurting the economy and costing jobs. Trying to reduce air pollution further would only produce very minor benefits and it is simply not worth the extra cost.



Assessing Priority: Reducing Air Pollution

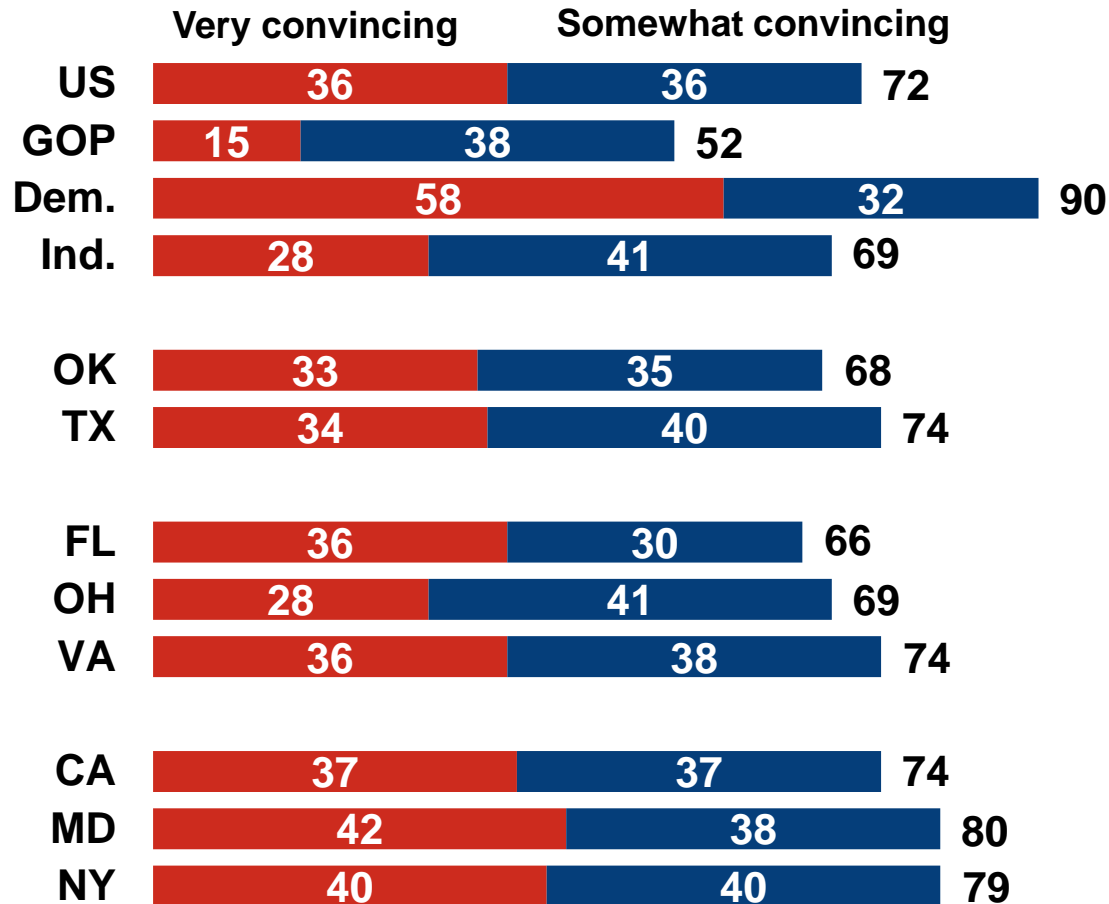
How high a priority is it for you to reduce air pollution from energy production that has negative public health effects?



Climate Change

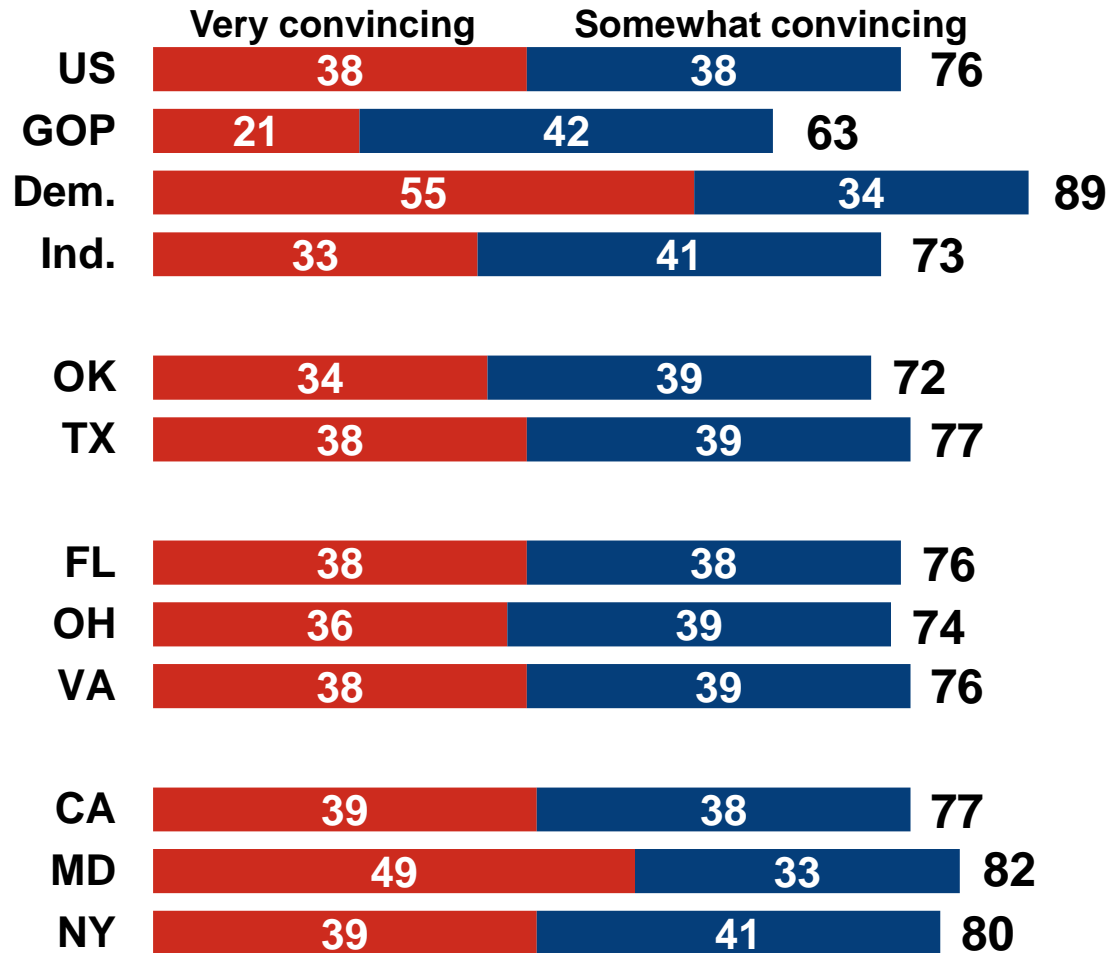
Argument: High Priority to Reduce Greenhouse Gases

The overwhelming majority of climate scientists agree greenhouse gases contribute to climate change and this poses major threats. Eventually, rising sea levels will flood coastal areas. Rising temperatures will hurt crops in major farming areas. Without action, government analysts predict these changes will cause the US economy to contract by several percent. On the other hand, taking action will benefit the economy by increasing energy efficiency. Clearly, we should put a high priority on limiting greenhouse gases to slow the process of climate change.



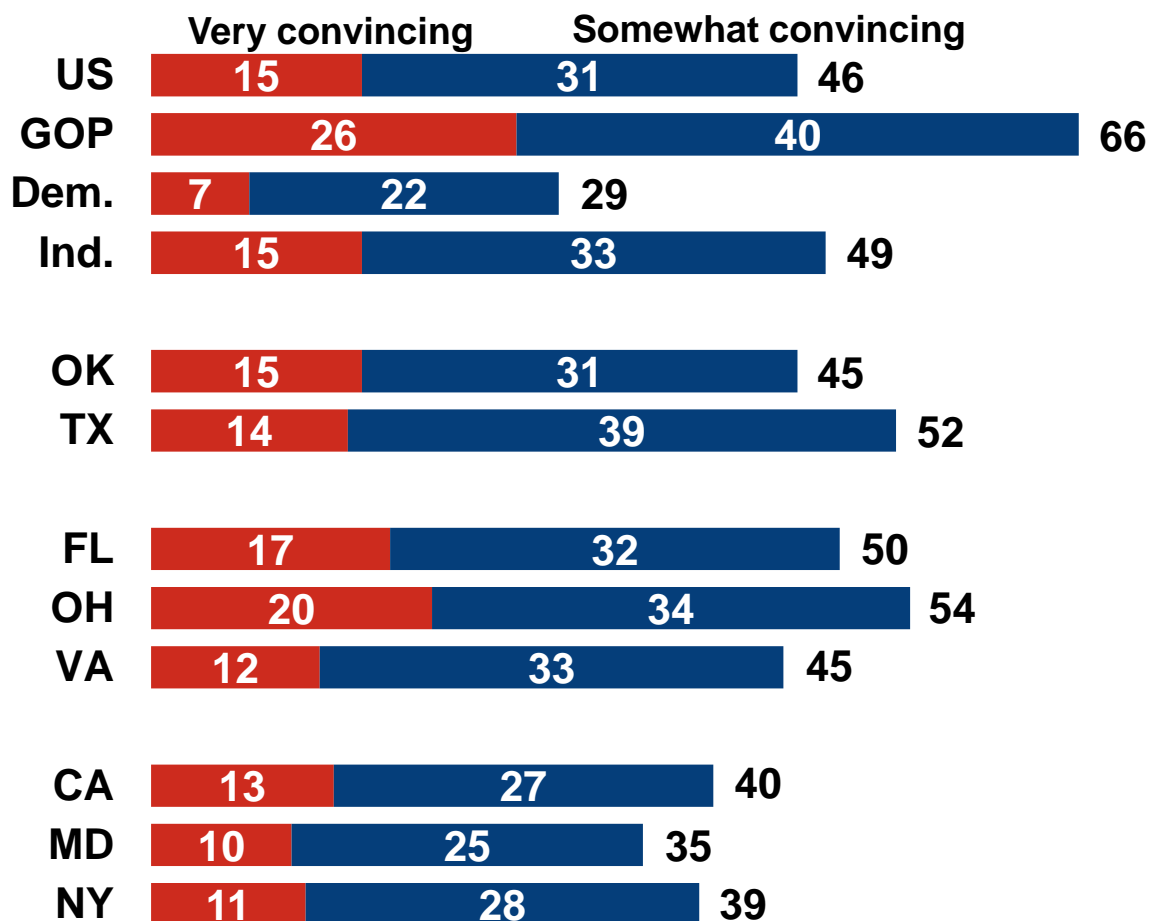
Argument: High Priority to Reduce Greenhouse Gases

Over and above the need to reduce greenhouse gases, there are many good reasons for the US to make a strategic investment in clean energy. Cleaner energy results in cleaner air, which is important for health and the quality of life. It brings down health costs. Other countries like China are investing twice as much as the US in green energy technologies and it is important for the US to stay competitive in what's clearly going to be a major industry in the future. The world is moving to greener energy and the US should be ahead of the curve, not dragging behind.



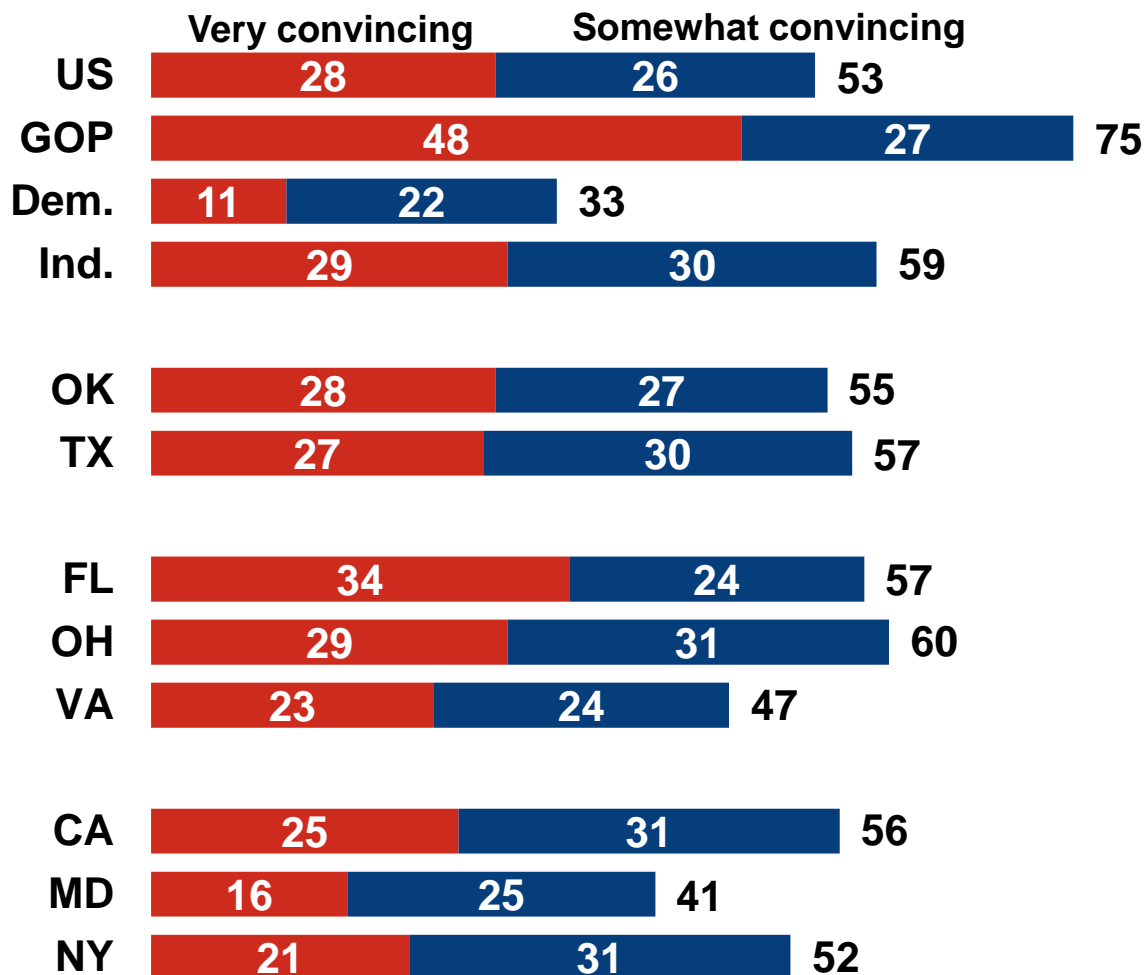
Argument: Low Priority to Reduce Greenhouse Gases

There are some scientists who question how much climate change is occurring, how much human energy production contributes to it and whether the risk is important enough to warrant major action. Therefore it would be premature to take economically costly steps to change the way we produce energy. US energy costs are relatively low and increasing the cost of energy would undermine an American competitive advantage, harm the economy and cost jobs. It would also hurt people in specific sectors, like the coal industry, much more than others, which would not be fair. Rather, we should continue to research the issue and at the most only take steps that are low in cost.



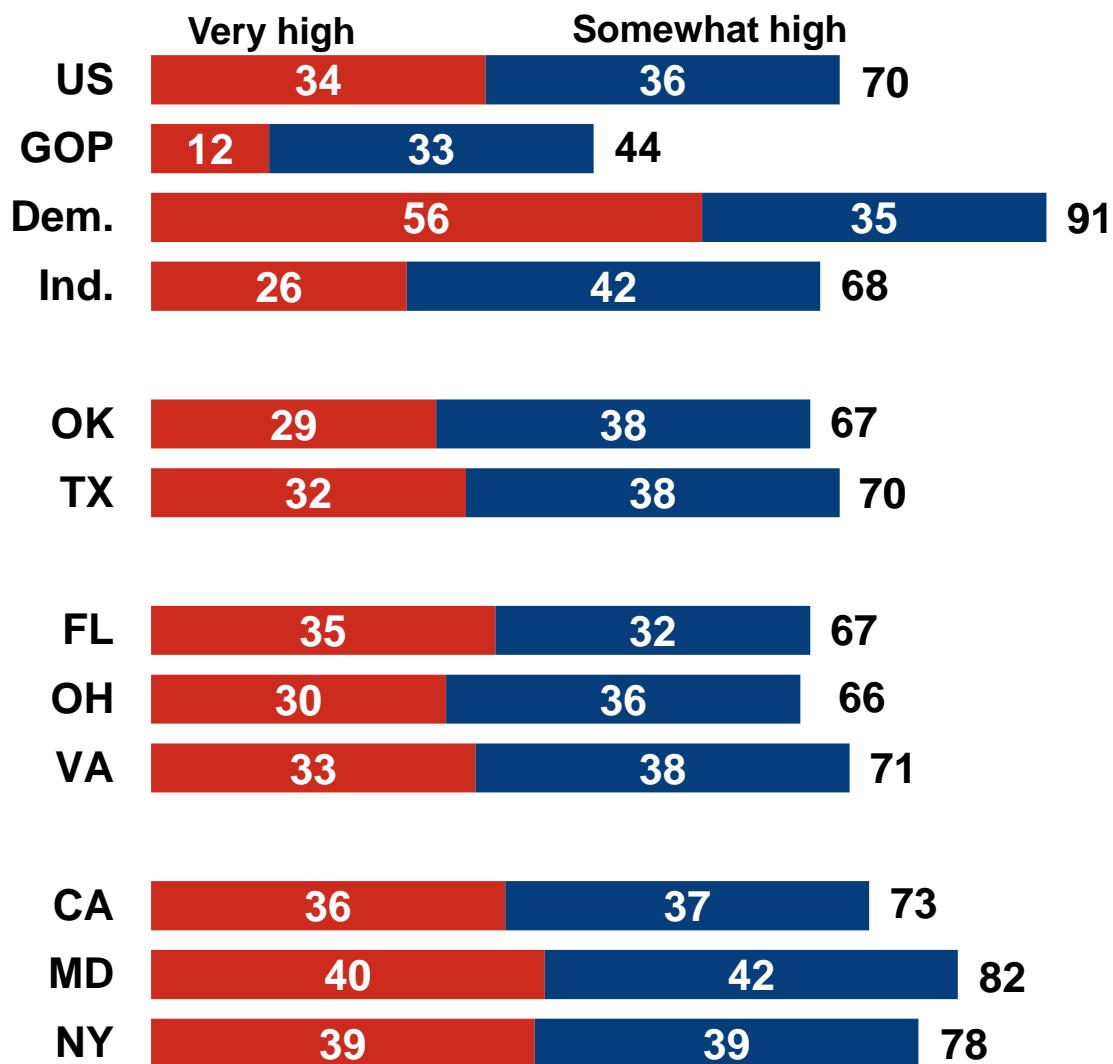
Argument: Low Priority to Reduce Greenhouse Gases

The whole effort to reduce carbon dioxide will result in an expanded role for government. There will be more government bureaucrats who will make new rules and insert themselves into every corner of the economy, telling large and small businesses what they can and cannot do. What is clearly driving this movement is a desire to make government bigger. We need to resist this effort.

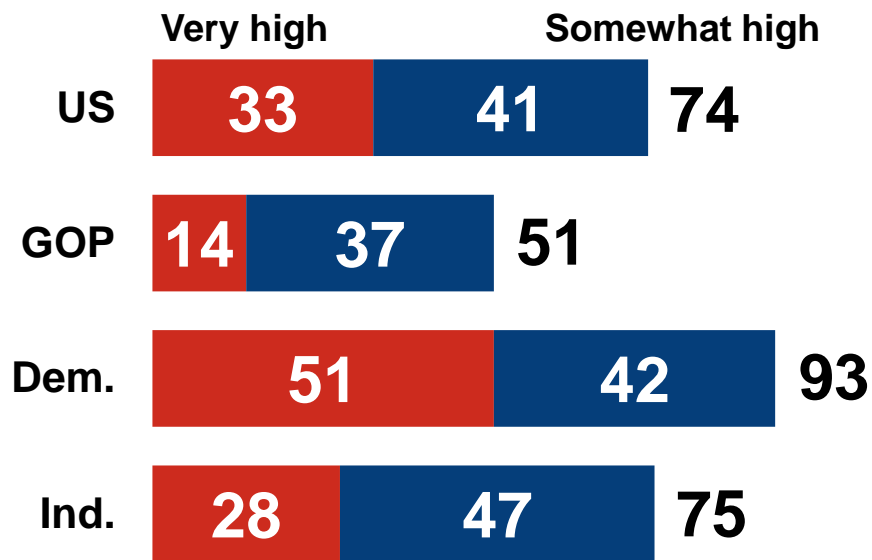


Assessing Priority: Reducing Greenhouse Gases

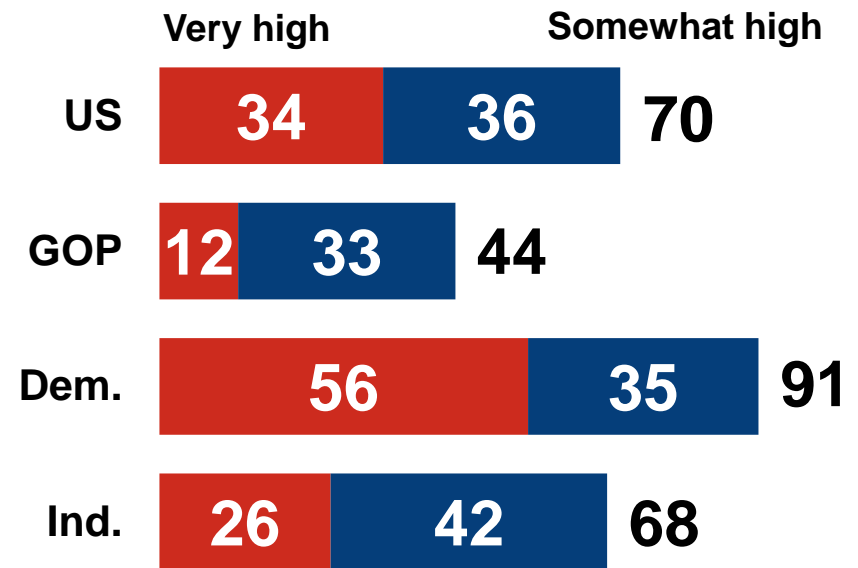
How high a priority is it for you to reduce greenhouse gases from energy production?



Assessing Priority: Reducing Air Pollution



Assessing Priority: Reducing Greenhouse Gases



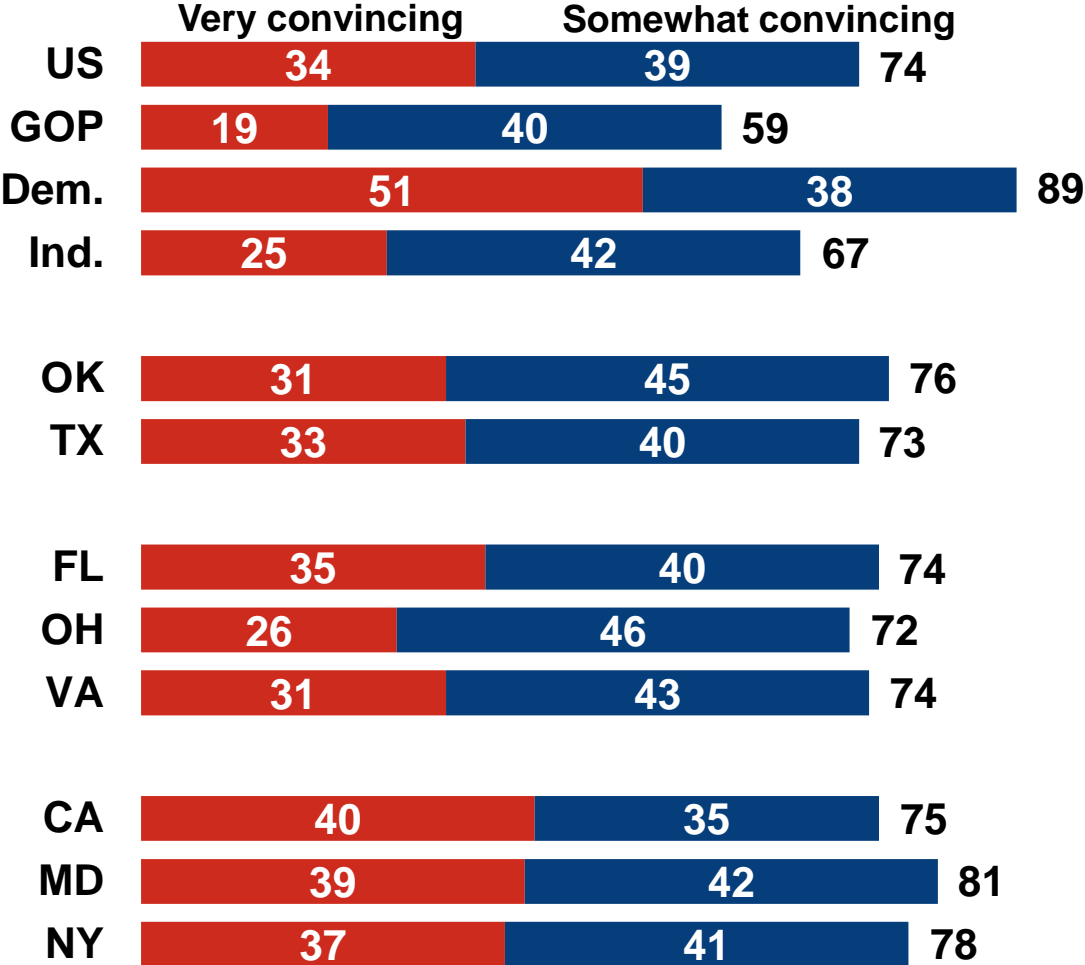
US Participation in Paris Climate Agreement

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**Adopt goal of reducing
greenhouse gases 2% each year**

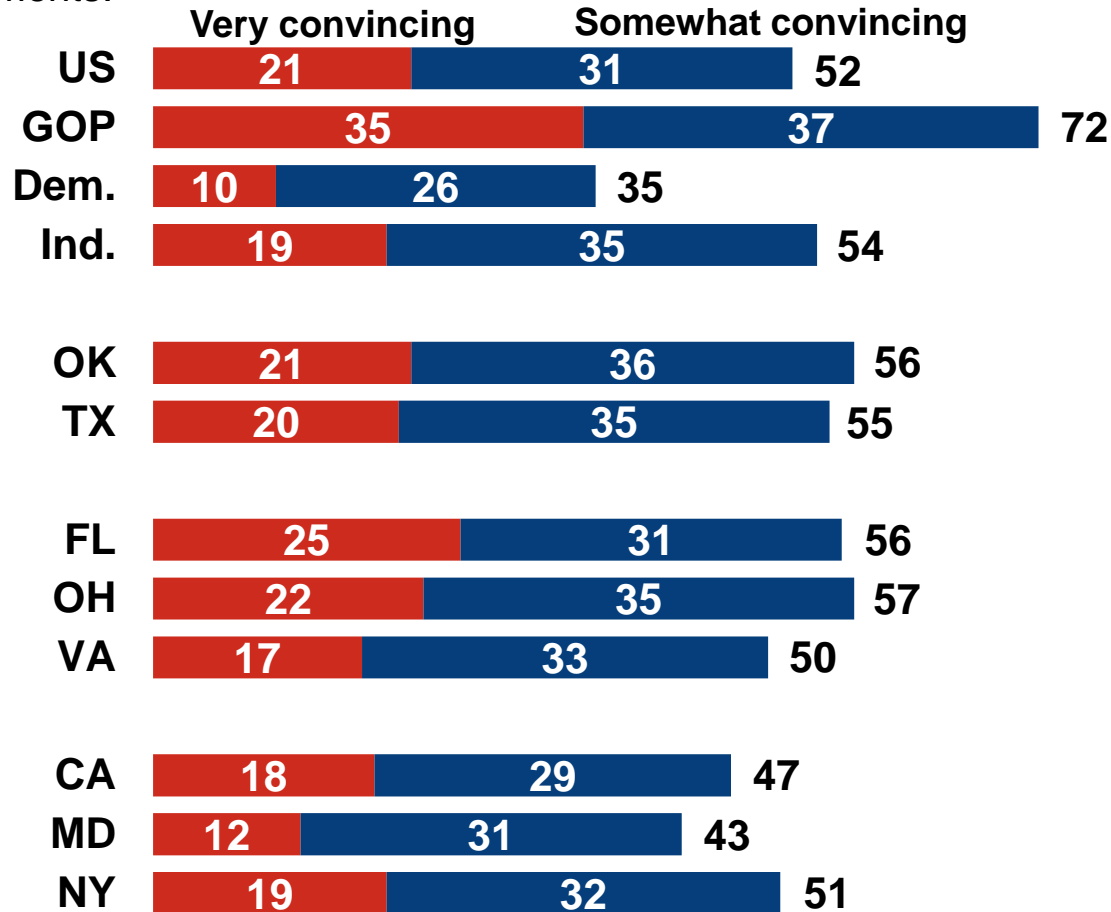
Argument: In Favor of US Participation in Paris Agreement

The problem of climate change is an international problem that requires an international solution. The December conference in Paris produced a breakthrough because developing countries, like China and India, for the first time agreed to a plan to limit and reduce their greenhouse gases. If the US does not take the lead and do its part, the other countries will not do theirs and the whole effort will fall apart. Through working together with other countries, our efforts will help leverage a global effort.



Argument: Against US Participation in Paris Agreement

While the agreement from Paris might look nice on paper, it has lots of problems and it won't reduce emissions very much. We cannot be sure that countries like China, India, and Russia will actually follow through on their plans. If they don't, this will give them a competitive advantage over countries like the US that will follow through. The US will end up with relatively higher energy costs, leading industries to leave the US, taking their jobs with them. Some analysts conclude that it could slow US economic growth by ½ to 1 percent. Furthermore, working through the UN is a bad idea: we should not have the other countries coming around and complaining if they somehow think the US is not fulfilling its commitments.



Clean Power Plan

Clean Power Plan-Briefing

The main focus of the Clean Power Plan is the reduction of carbon dioxide. However, as mentioned, the steps needed to reduce carbon dioxide will also result in the reduction of other pollutants that affect air quality, such as nitrogen oxide and sulfur dioxide.

The plan calls for each state in the US to reduce carbon dioxide from power plants by 2-3% a year.

It does not specify the exact method, but rather lets each state come up with its own plan, as different methods may be easier and less expensive in different states.

Costs of CPP

Source: US Energy Information Agency

Increased Price of Electricity

- Will initially increase by about 3%.
- After 5-10 years, price will go down to less than 1% higher than it would otherwise be.
- In some states, it will take longer for the price to come down.

Slowing of Economic Growth

- in 2020, the US economy (or GDP) would be one-third of one percent less than it would otherwise be
- in 2030 it would be one-sixth of one percent less

Effect on Jobs

- Significant number of jobs will be lost in certain sectors, such as the coal industry.
- On the other hand, jobs will be gained in new sectors that produce green energy.
- Net effect predicted to be quite small, though disruption for some individuals.

Health Benefits of CPP

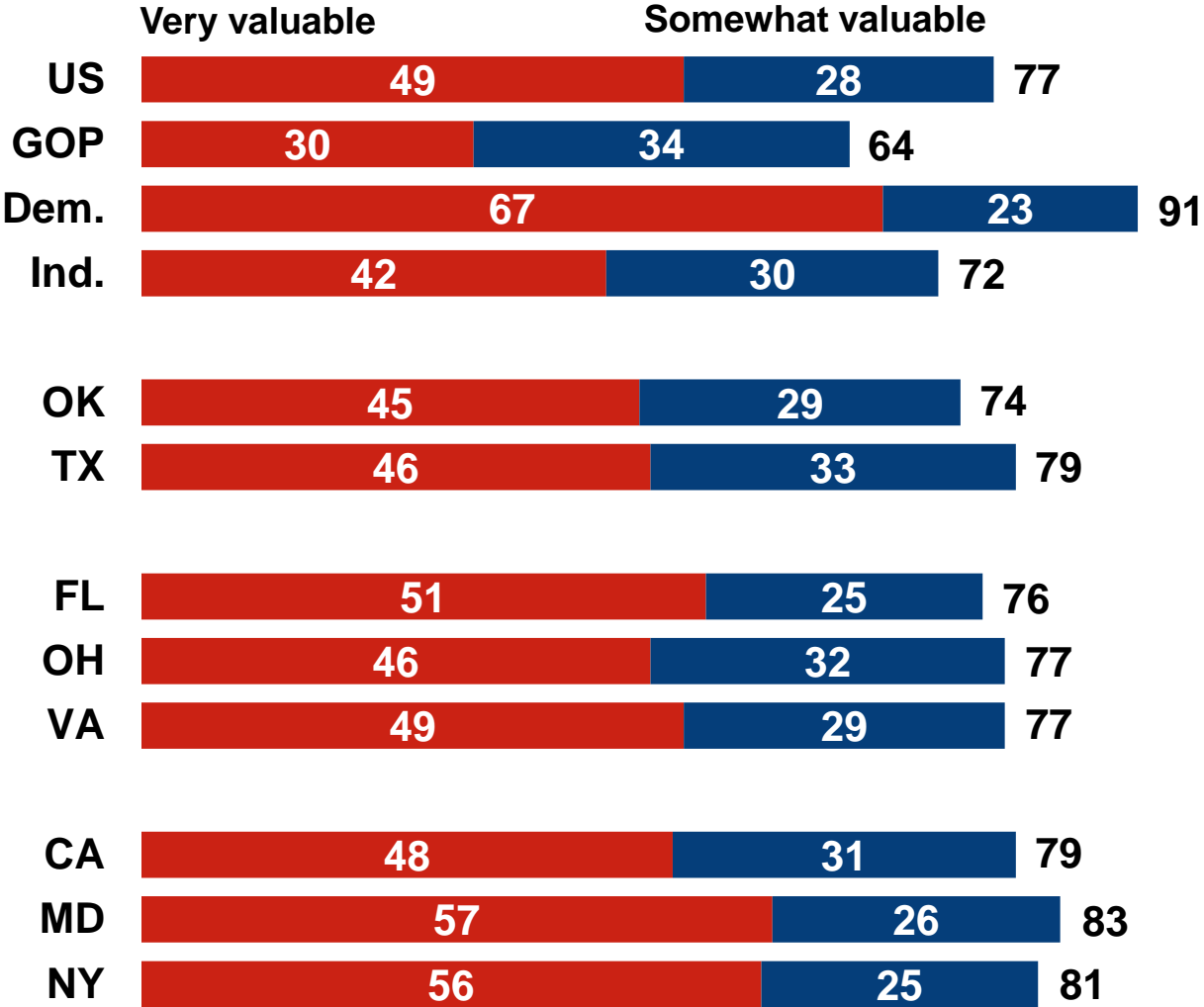
Source: US Energy Information Agency

Due to reduced soot and smog, by the year 2030 CPP will result in annual benefits of:

- 300,000 fewer missed work days and school days, due to a drop in pollution-related illnesses
- 90,000 fewer asthma attacks
- 1,700 fewer heart attacks
- 3,600 fewer premature deaths

From your perspective, how valuable is this benefit?

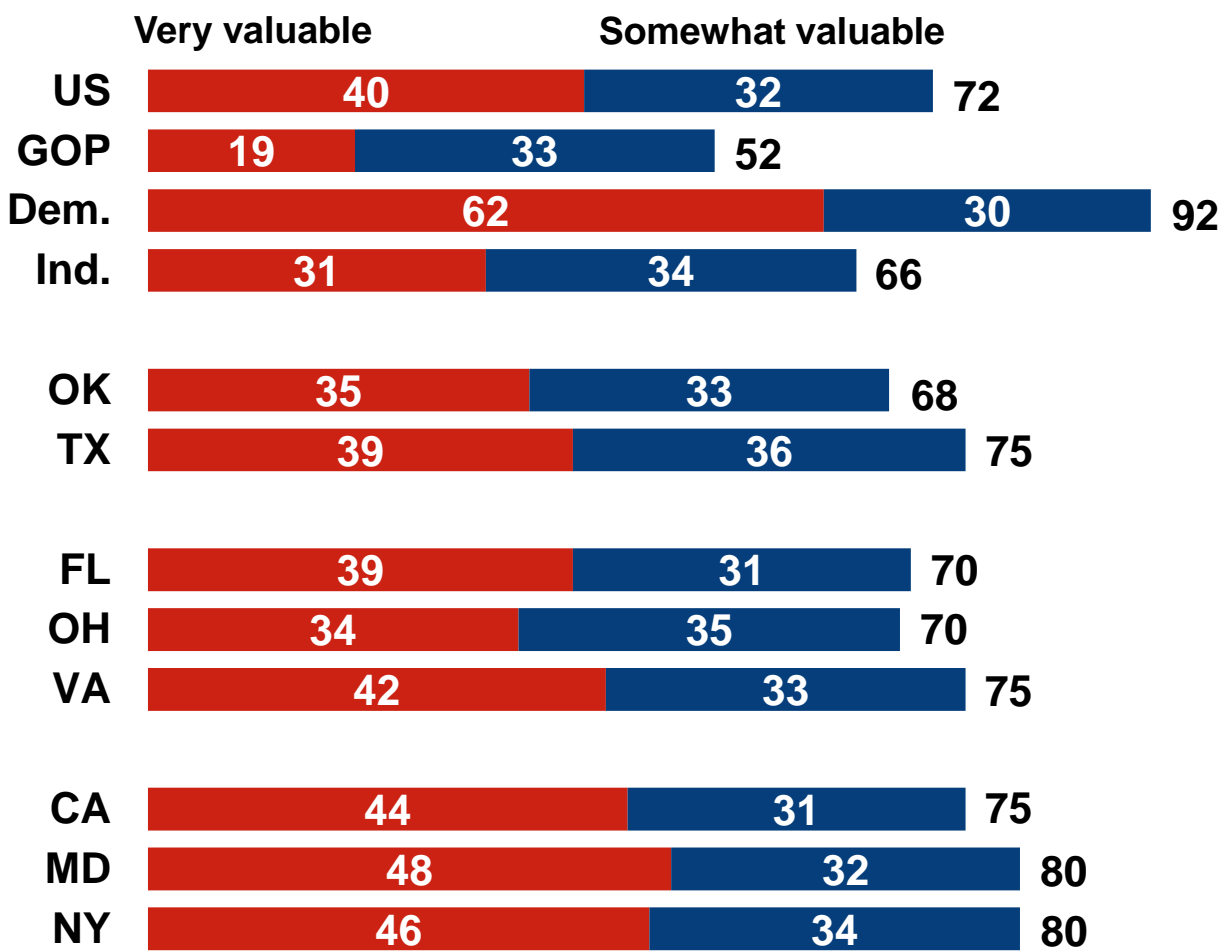
CPP: Perceived Value of Health Benefits



CPP: Perceived Value Reducing Greenhouse Gases

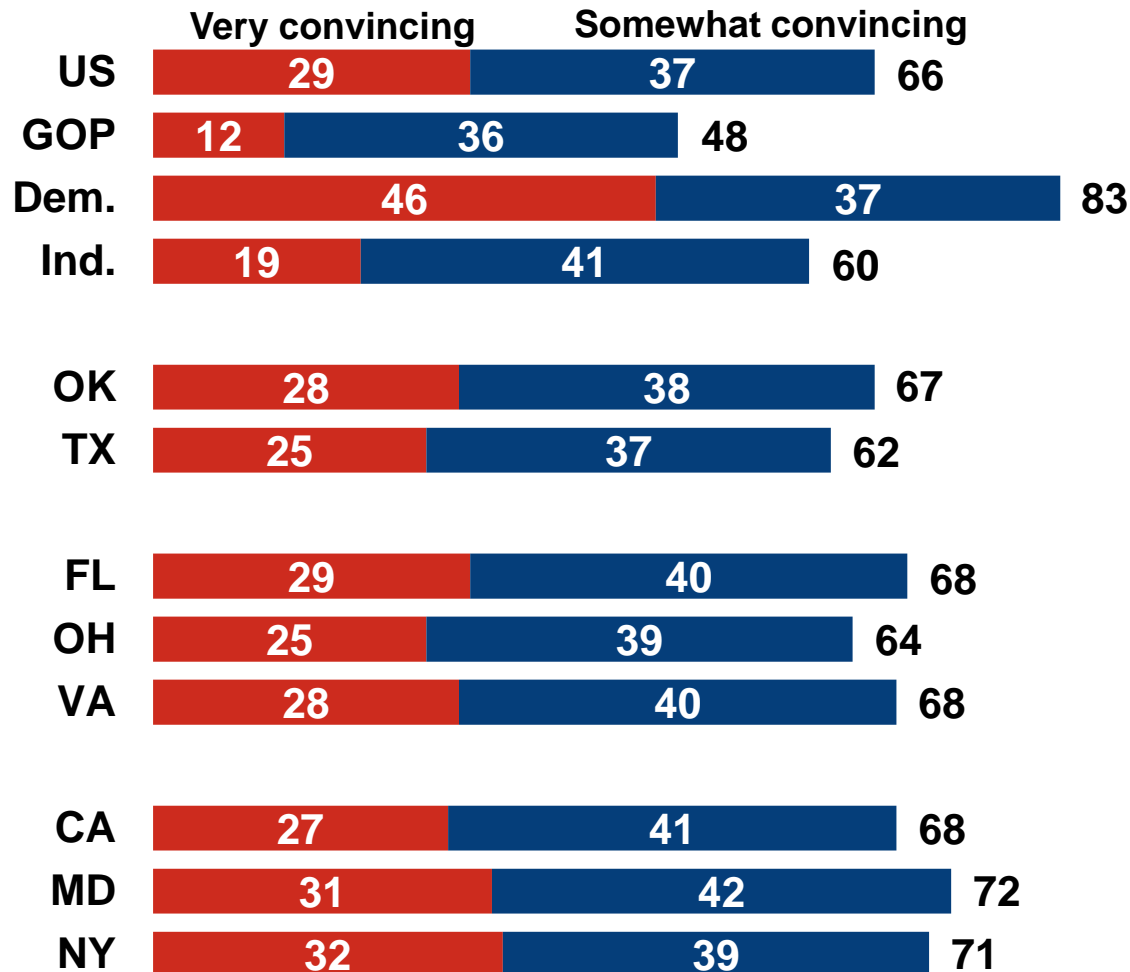
Another benefit from the Clean Power Plan is that it helps the US meet the goal... to reduce its greenhouse gases by about 2% a year in an effort to slow the process of climate change.

From your perspective, how valuable is this benefit?



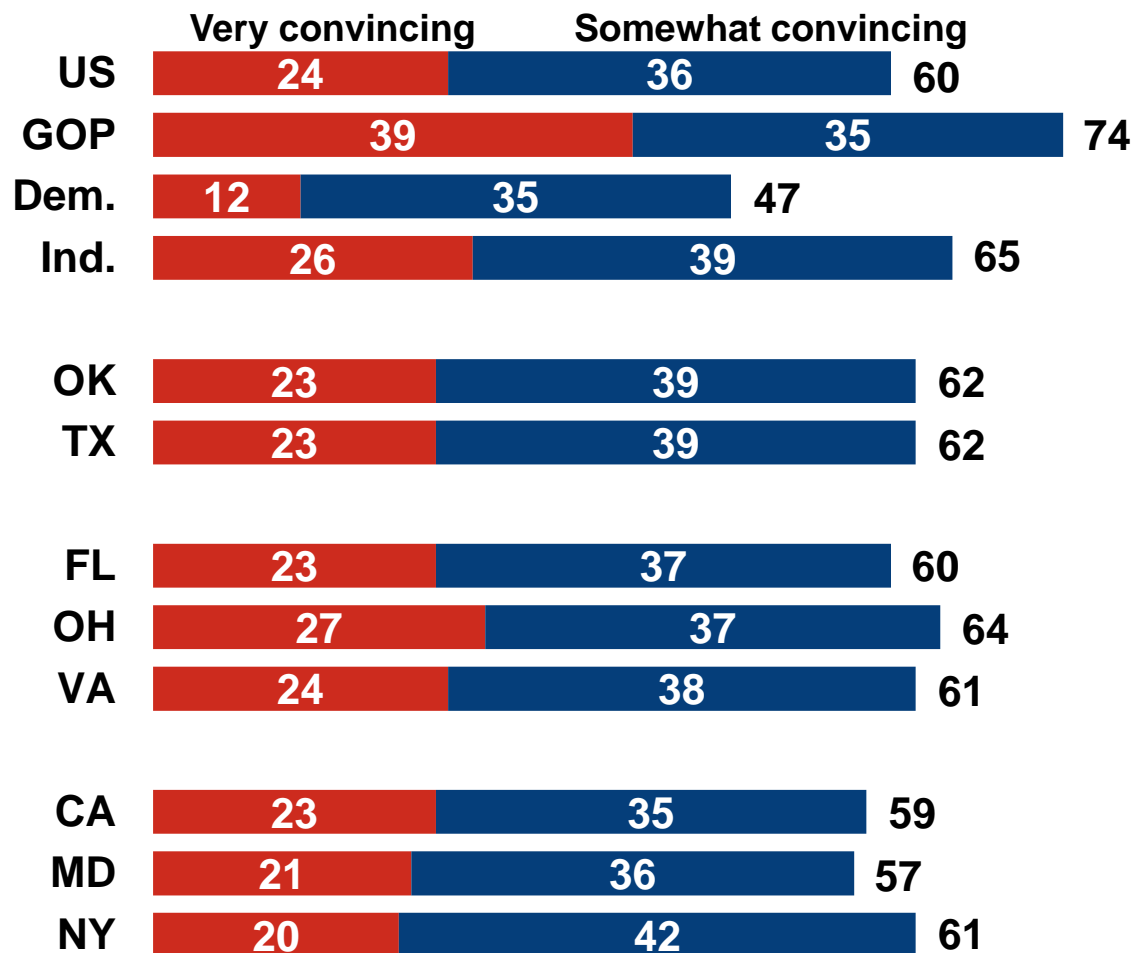
Argument: In Favor of Clean Power Plan

Given the importance of improving air quality and reducing greenhouse gases, it is worth it for us to accept a slight increase in electricity bills for a few years. These costs are minor compared to the effect of air pollution on people's health and the likely costs of rising sea levels, lost farmland, and more violent storms. Furthermore, this is a good investment because in the long run, more efficient methods and technologies will save us money.



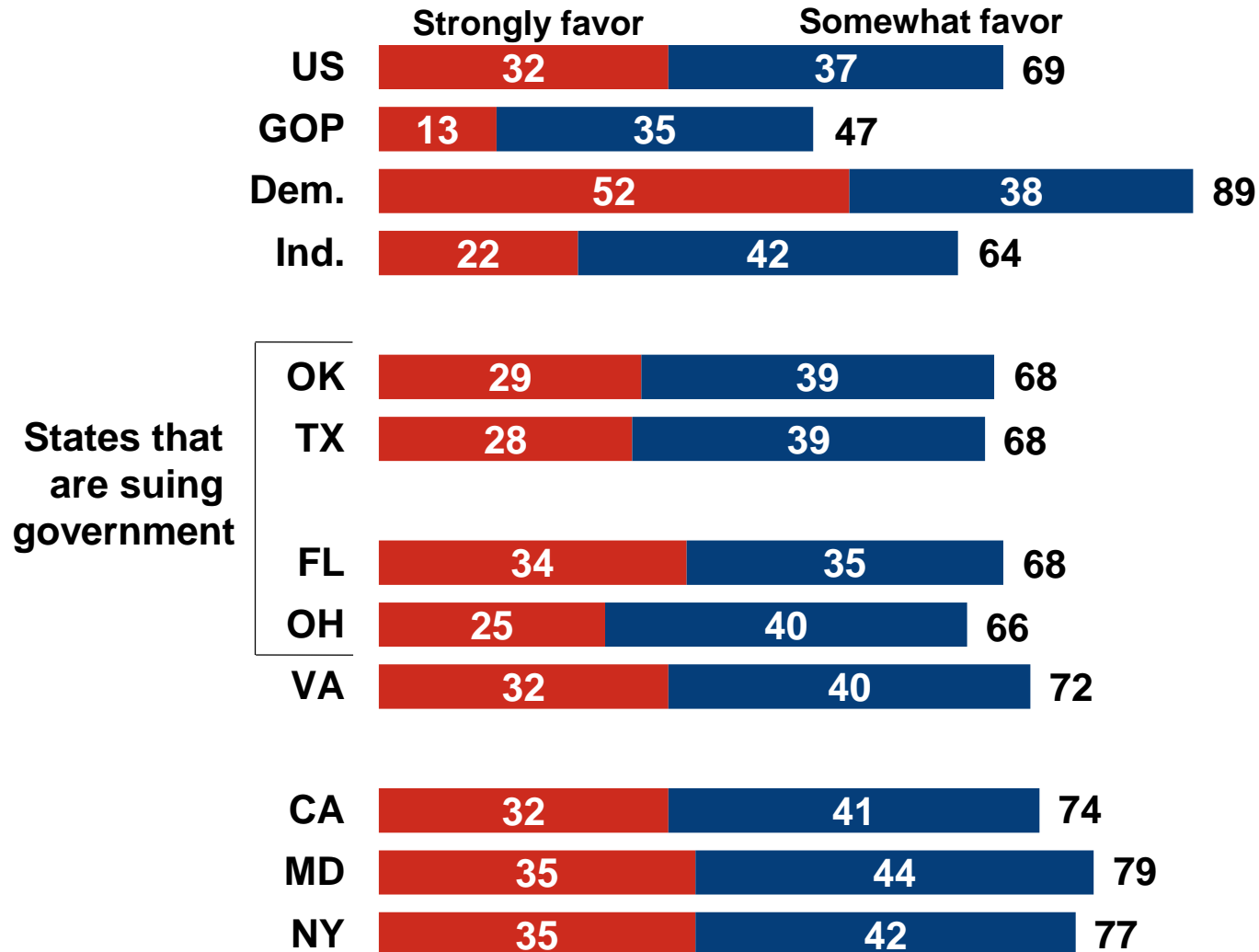
Argument: Against Clean Power Plan

It is easy for some people with good incomes to say that these increased energy costs are not very high. But it will have a big impact on low-income people, for whom energy costs are a big part of their expenses. And all these promises about the costs coming down in the future are just that—promises. It is really risky to assume these new methods and technologies are going to save money and, even if they do, whether the utility companies are going to really pass those savings on to consumers.



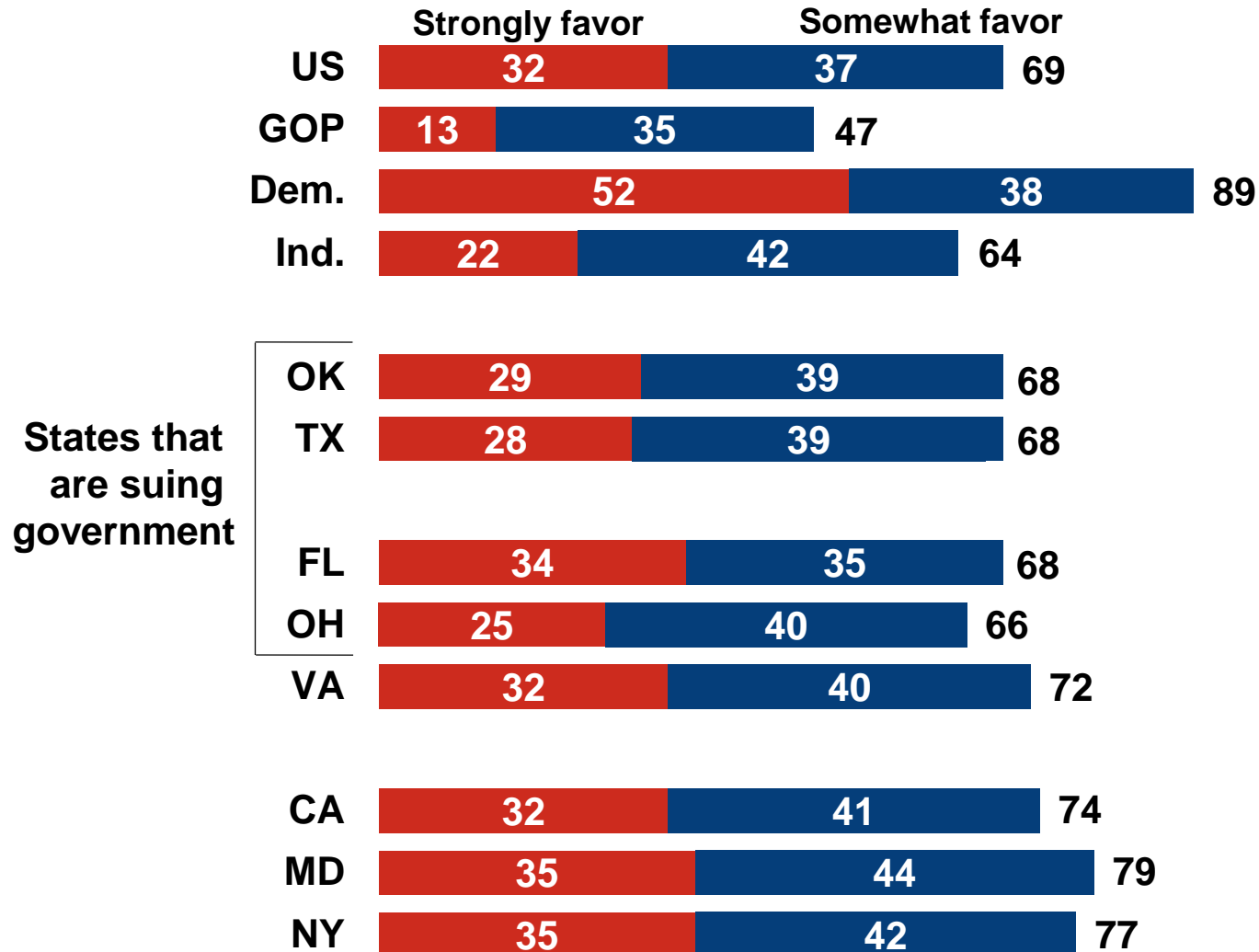
Final Recommendation: Clean Power Plan

Now that you have considered these different perspectives, do you favor or oppose the Clean Power Plan?

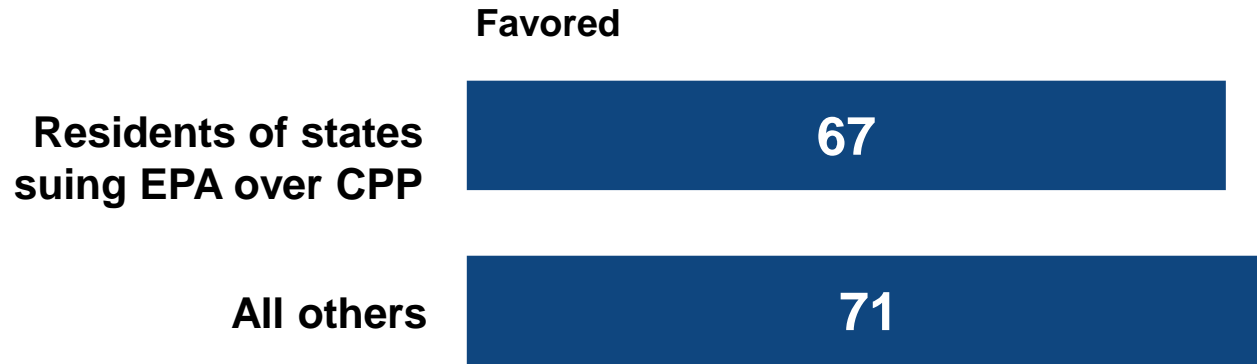


Final Recommendation: Clean Power Plan

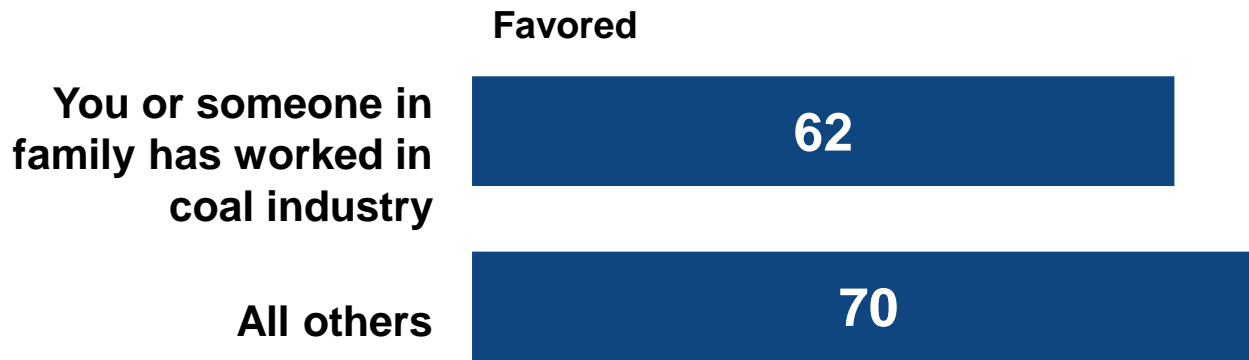
Now that you have considered these different perspectives, do you favor or oppose the Clean Power Plan?



Support for Clean Power Plan in 24 States Suing Government



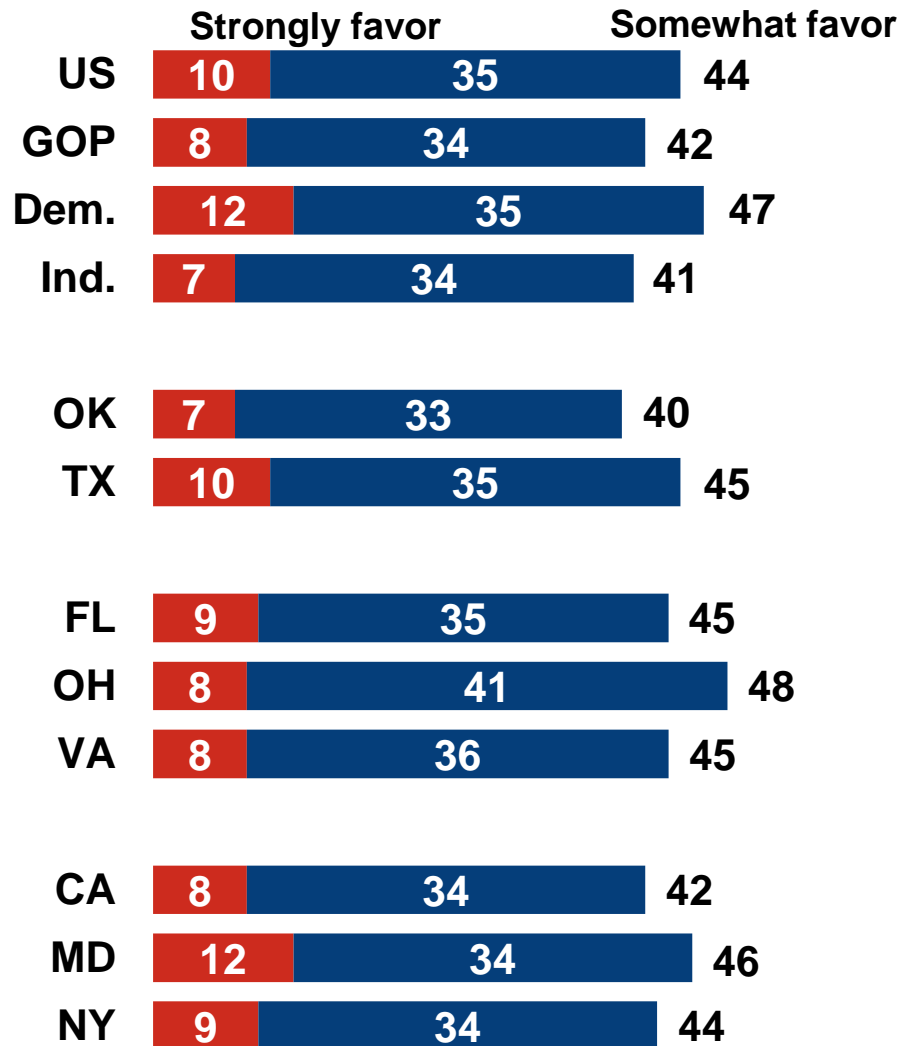
Support for Clean Power Plan Among Those in Coal Industry



Mitigating Effects of CPP on Coal Industry and Workers

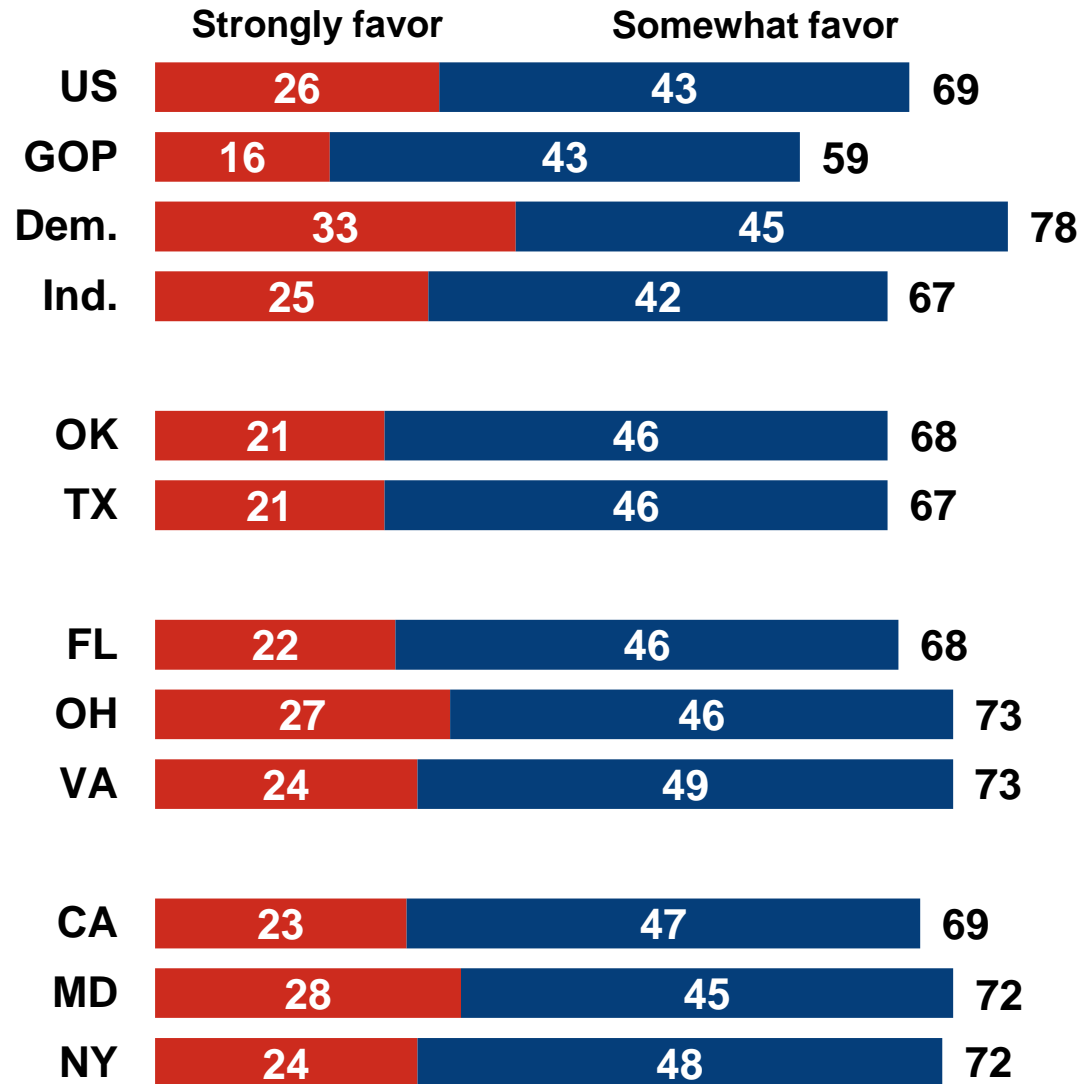
Carbon Sequestration

Do you favor or oppose the federal government providing subsidies for developing and building new technologies to capture and store carbon dioxide from coal plants?



Adjustment Assistance to Coal Industry Workers

Do you favor or oppose government assistance to help coal workers who lose their jobs?

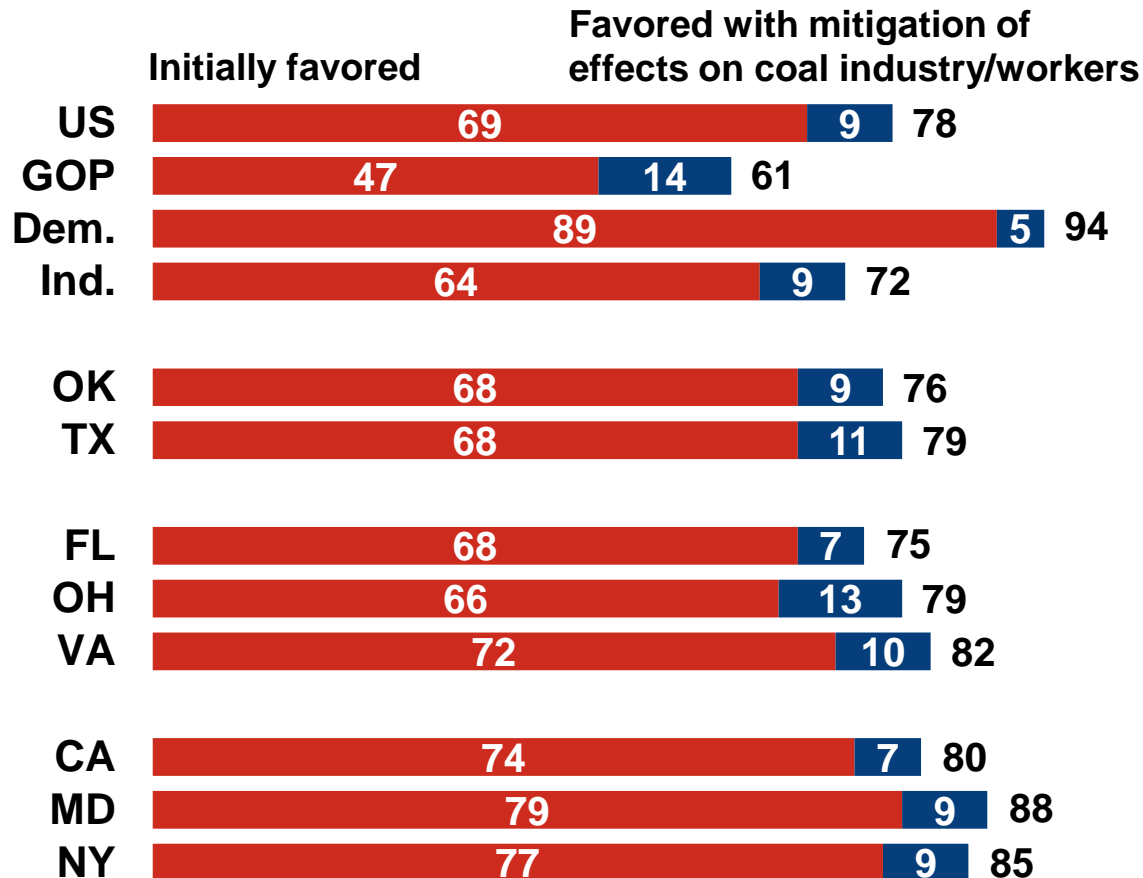


Views of CPP with Mitigation Efforts

(To those who did not initially favor CPP) Suppose the government were to:

- provide support to the coal industry to enable it to sequester carbon dioxide and/or
- provide assistance to coal industry workers who lose their jobs.

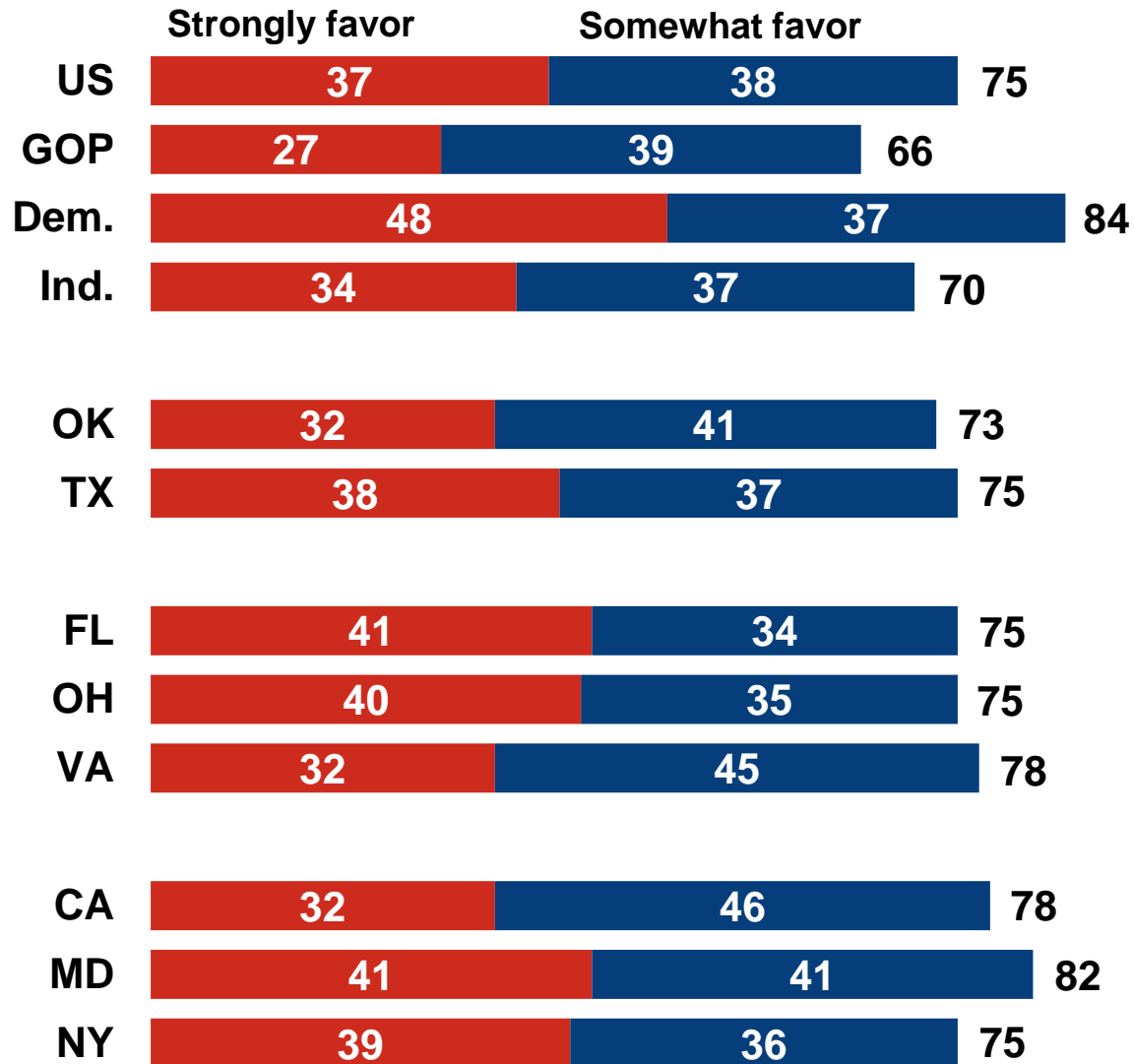
How would you then feel about the Clean Power Plan?



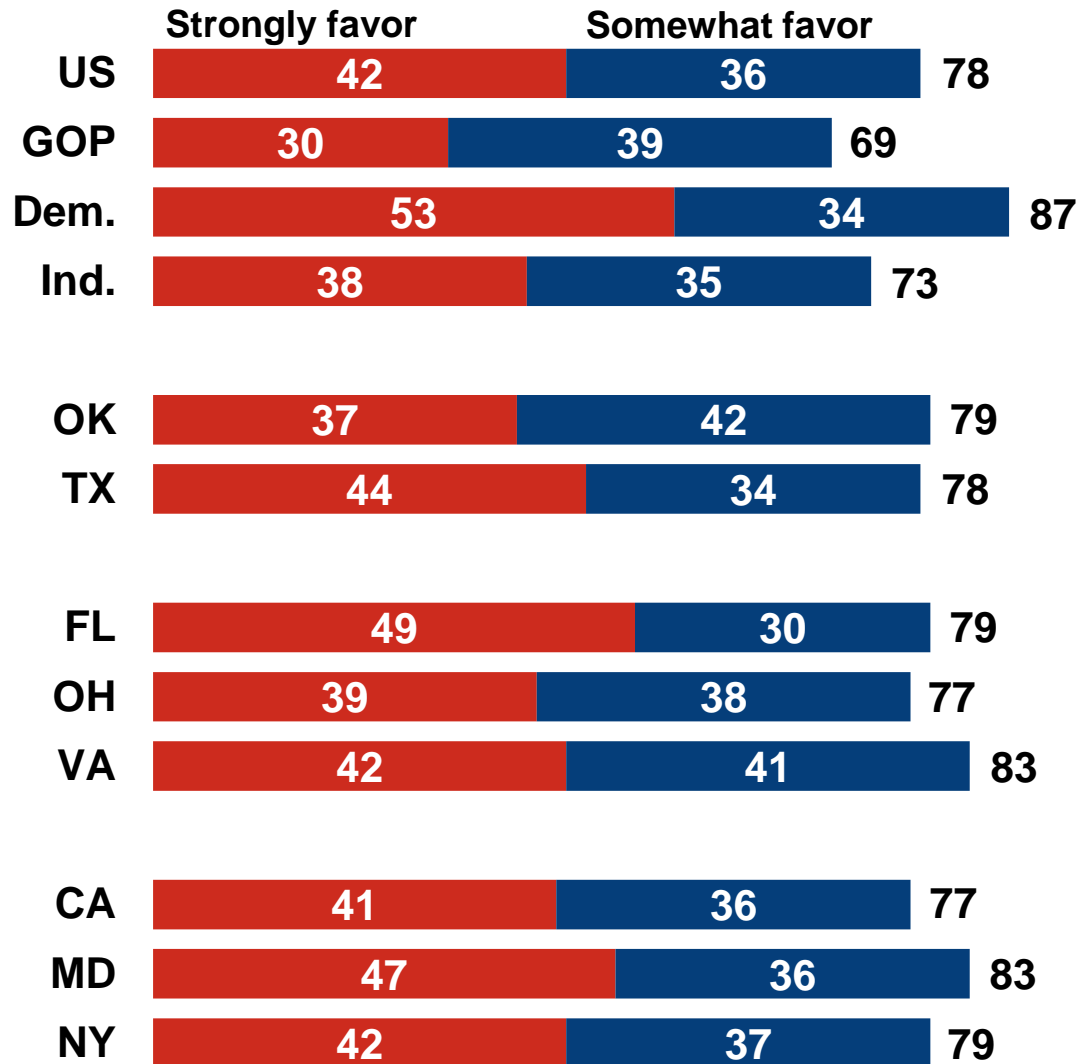
Assessing Methods for Reducing Carbon Dioxide and Other Pollutants

Tax Incentives

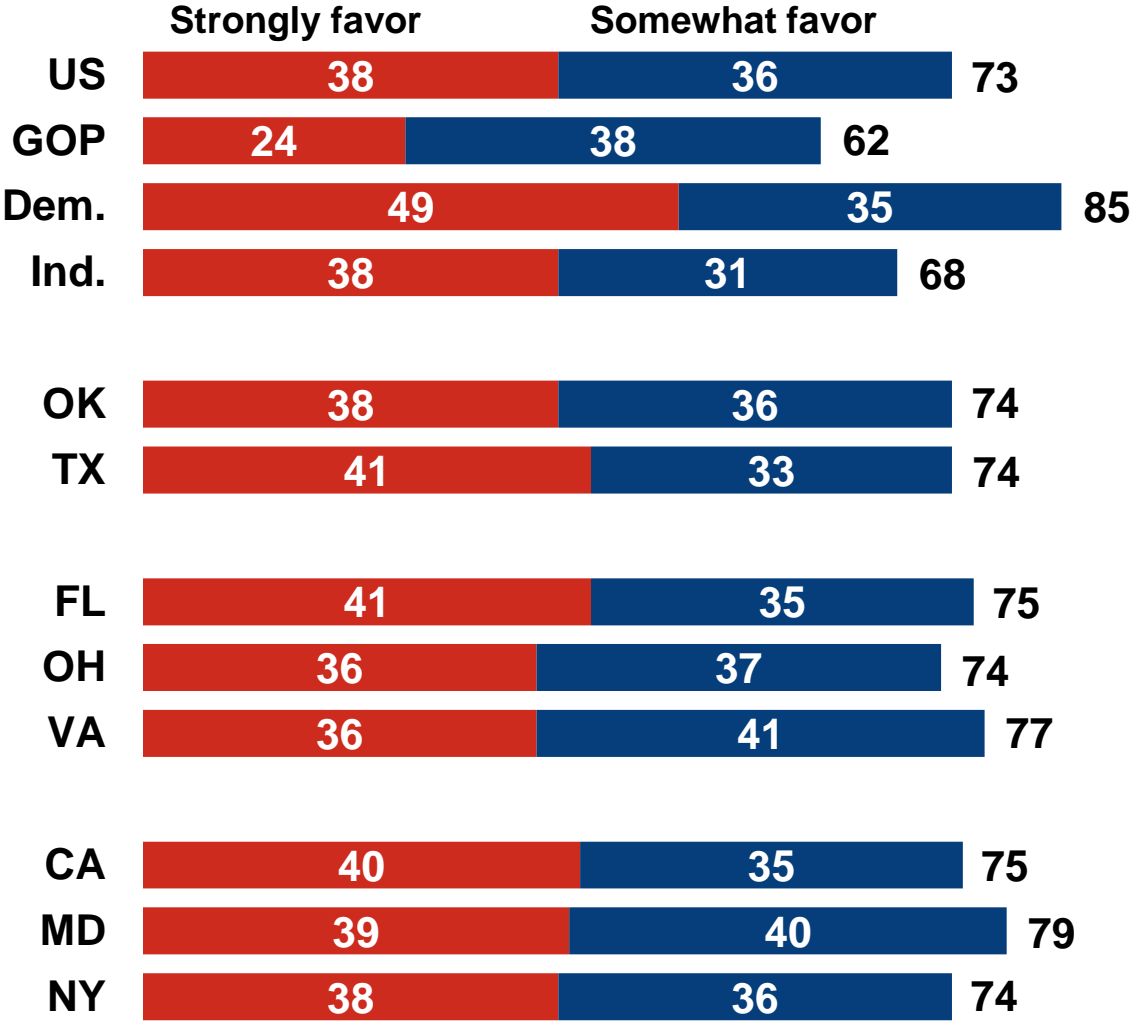
Tax Credits for Upgrading Energy Efficiency of Homes and Businesses



Tax Credits for New Energy-Efficient Homes

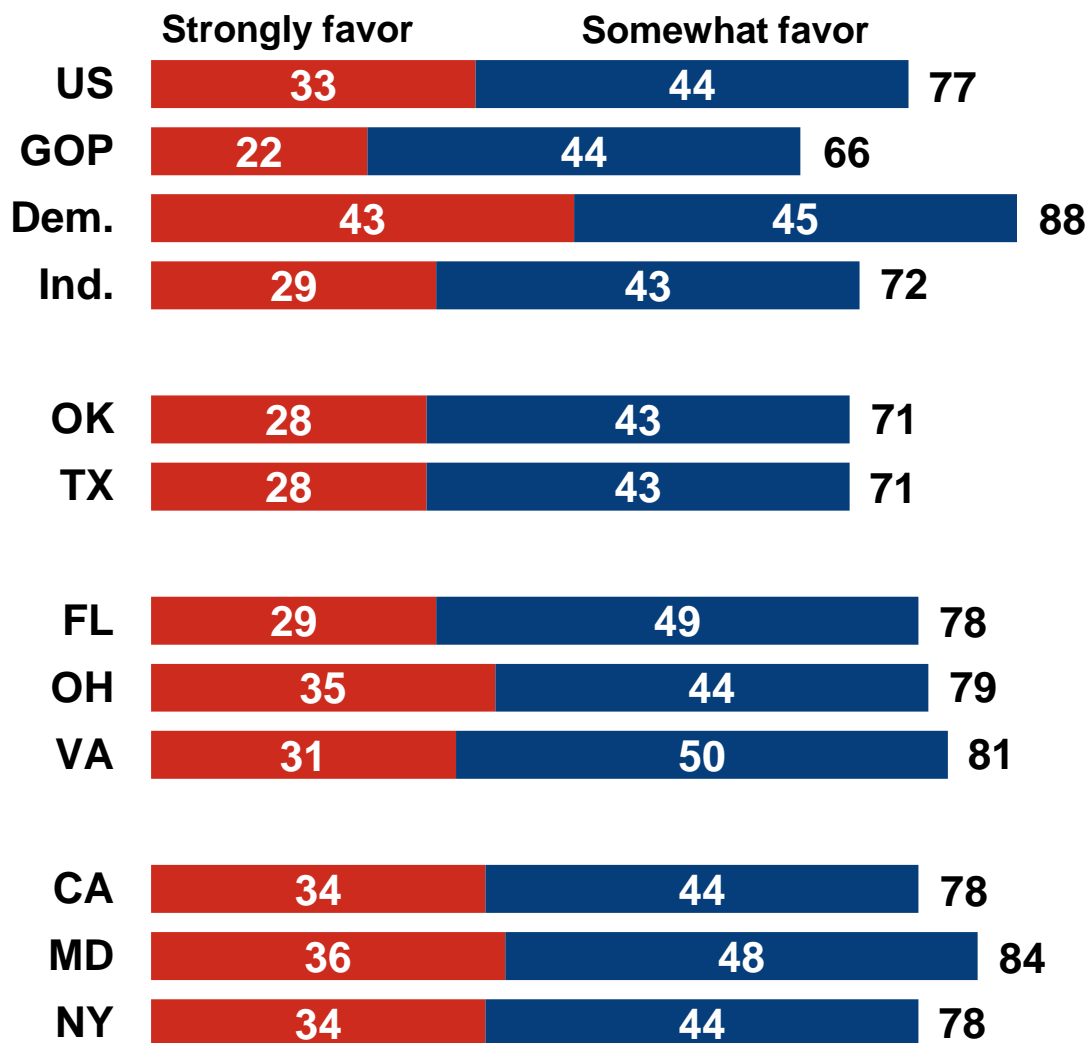


Tax Credits for Wind and Fuel Cell Micro-turbines



Tax Credit for Biogas Facilities

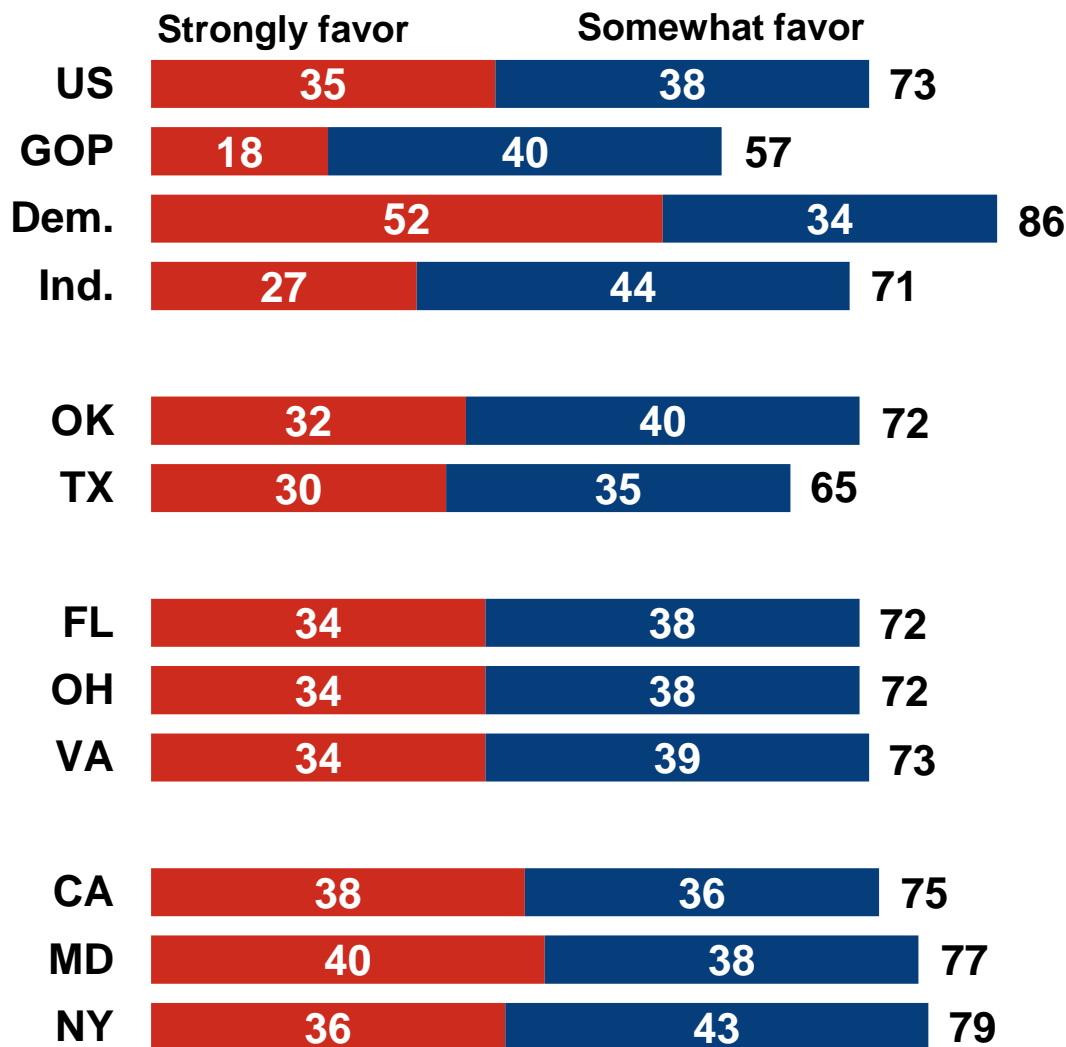
Do you favor or oppose the government offering a 30% tax credit to farmers to help them build biogas facilities on their farms?



Regulations

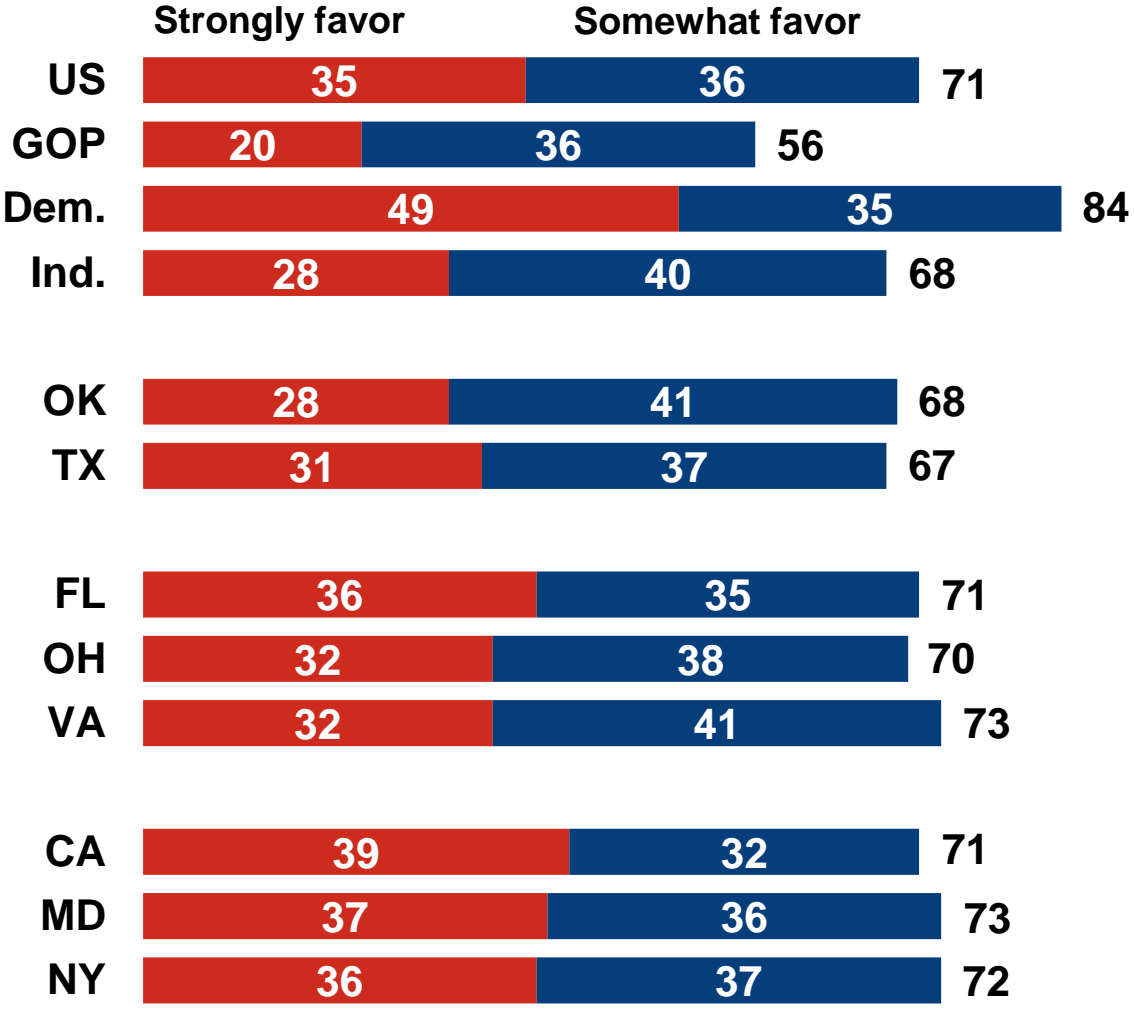
Raising Efficiency Standards for Cars and Light Trucks

Do you favor or oppose gradually raising the fuel efficiency of light cars and trucks, starting in 2017 and continuing through 2025?



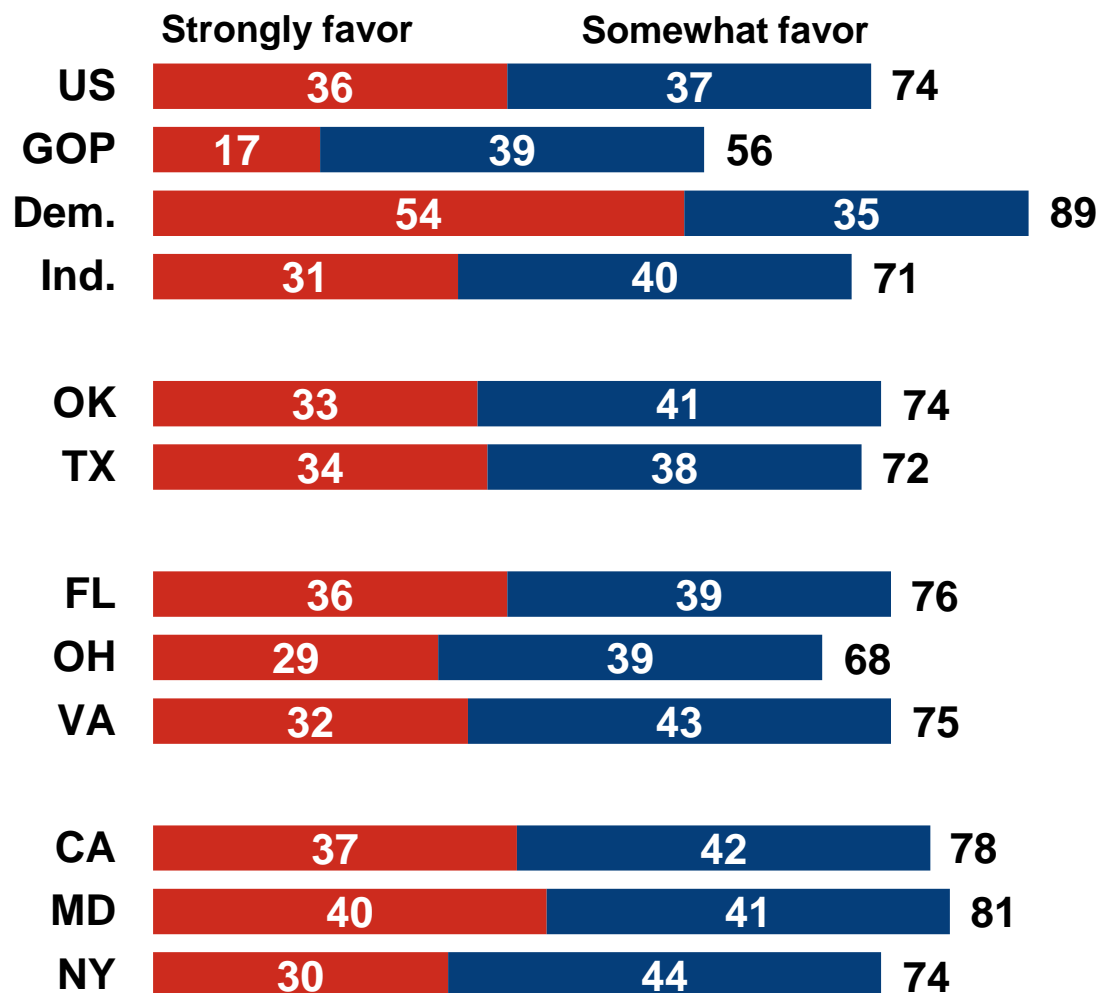
Higher Efficiency Standards for Heavy-Duty Vehicles

Do you favor or oppose a higher fuel efficiency standard on heavy-duty vehicles?



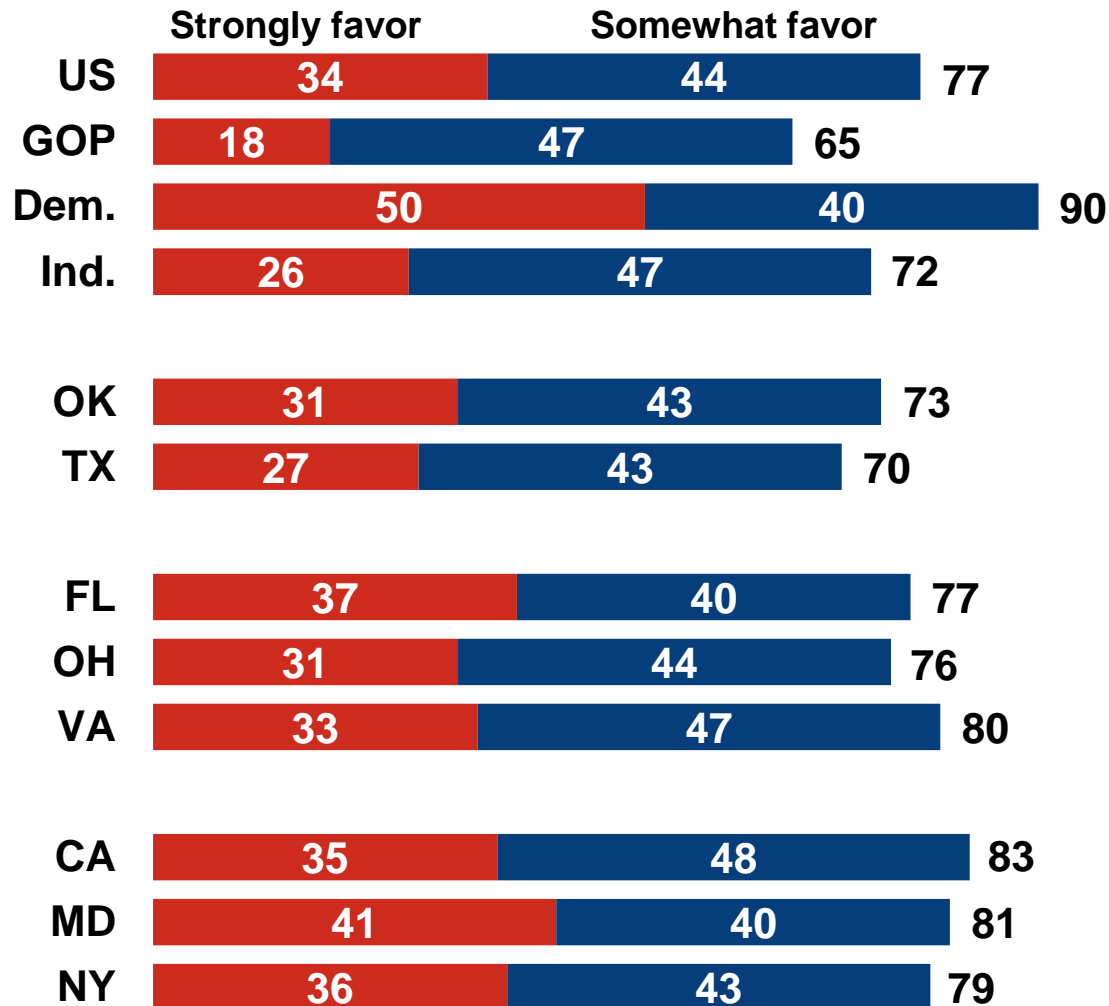
Requiring Power Companies to Use Renewables

Do you favor or oppose your own state requiring that electric companies have a minimum portion of their electricity come from renewable sources such as solar, wind or bio-gas?



Replace and Regulate Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs)

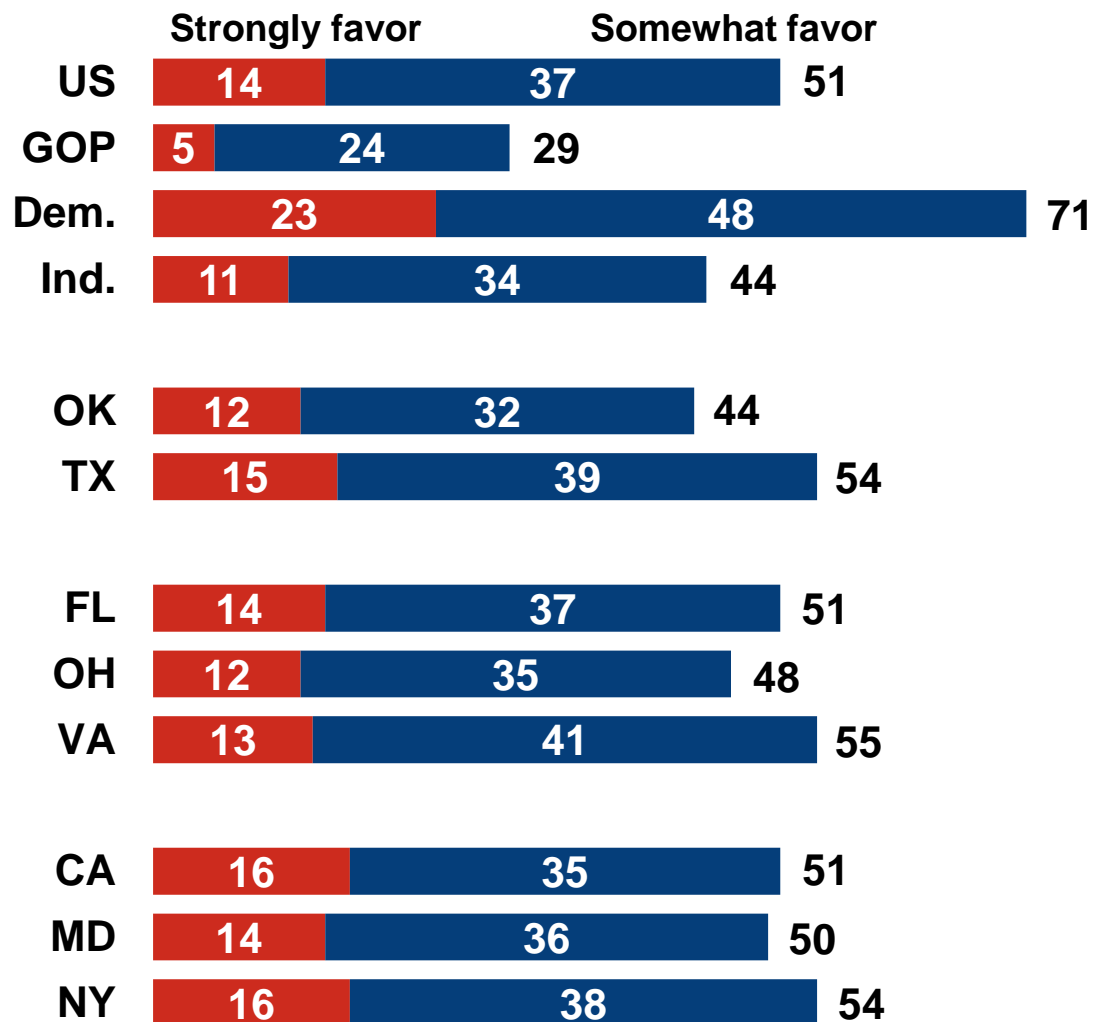
Would you favor or oppose the proposal requiring businesses to gradually replace HFCs with alternatives, and to meet standards for the use and disposal of HFCs?



Carbon Tax

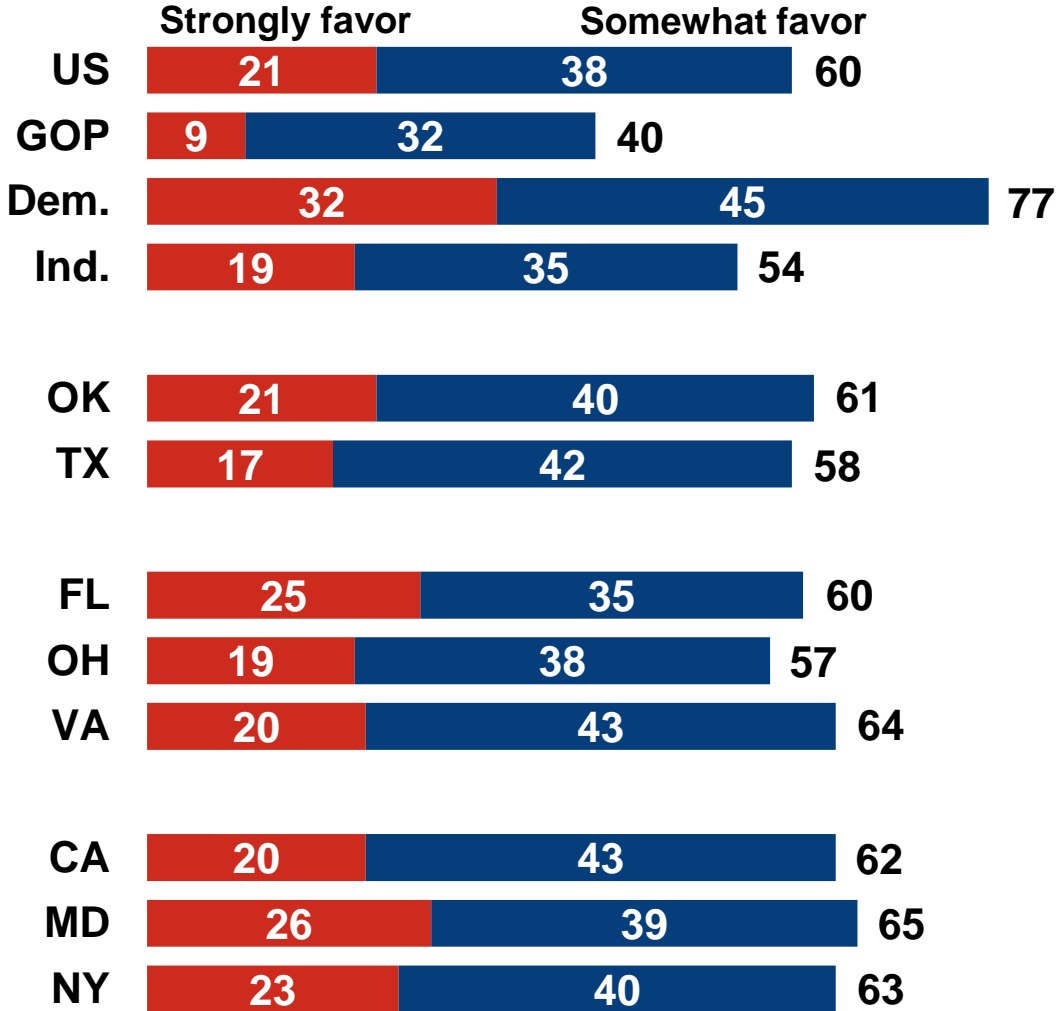
Carbon Tax: Initial Response

Do you favor or oppose having a carbon tax as a means of encouraging the reduction of carbon dioxide?



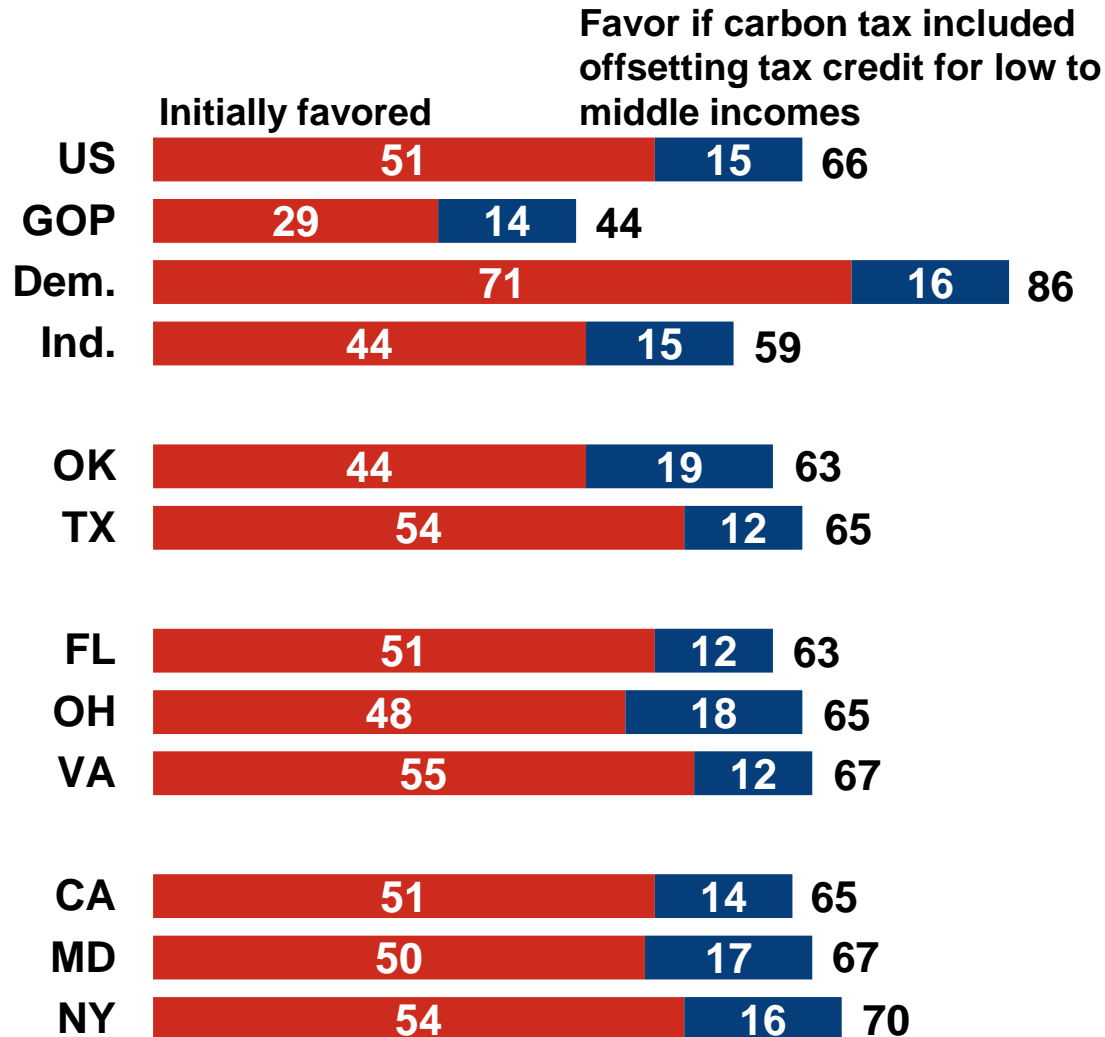
Carbon Tax: Offsetting Tax Credit for Low Income

One of the concerns about a carbon tax is that it disproportionately affects people with low to middle incomes. One proposal is to use the income generated by a carbon tax to give people in those income groups an offsetting tax credit. Do you favor or oppose this idea?



Carbon Tax with Offsetting Tax Credit

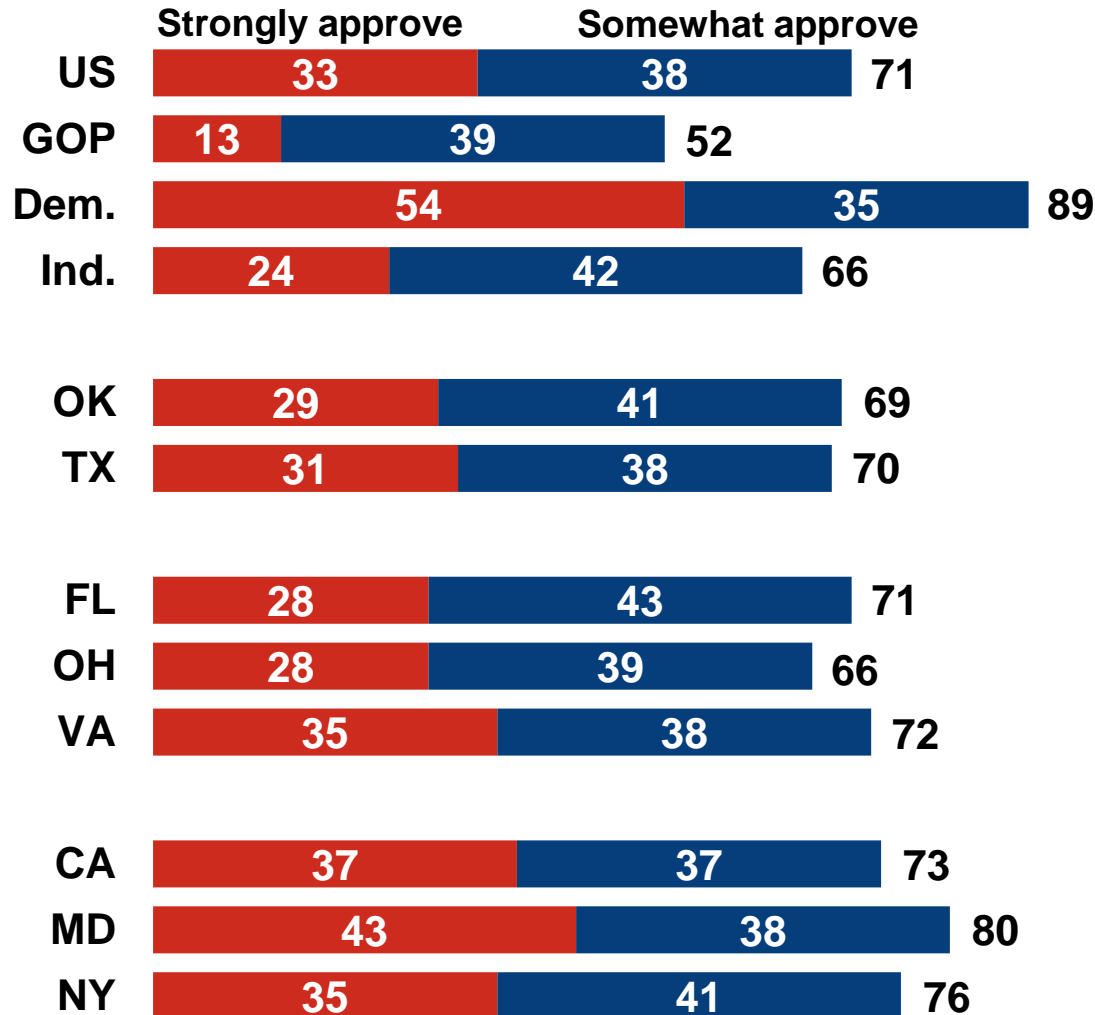
Assuming that a carbon tax would include an offsetting tax credit for people with low to middle incomes, would you favor or oppose having a carbon tax as a means of encouraging the reduction of carbon dioxide?



**Final Recommendation
on US Commitments
Under Paris Agreement**

Final Recommendation: Adopting Paris Goal of 2% a Year Reductions

In conclusion, as part of the international agreement reached in Paris, do you approve or disapprove of the US setting the goal of reducing its greenhouse gases by about 2% each year?



**Full report
Questionnaire
Policymaking Simulation**

**can be found at
www.VOP.org**