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George Mason University
Center for Climate Change Communication

Republican Perspectives on Climate & Energy

**Behavior, Energy & Climate Change Conference
Sacramento**

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Political Polarization on Climate Change

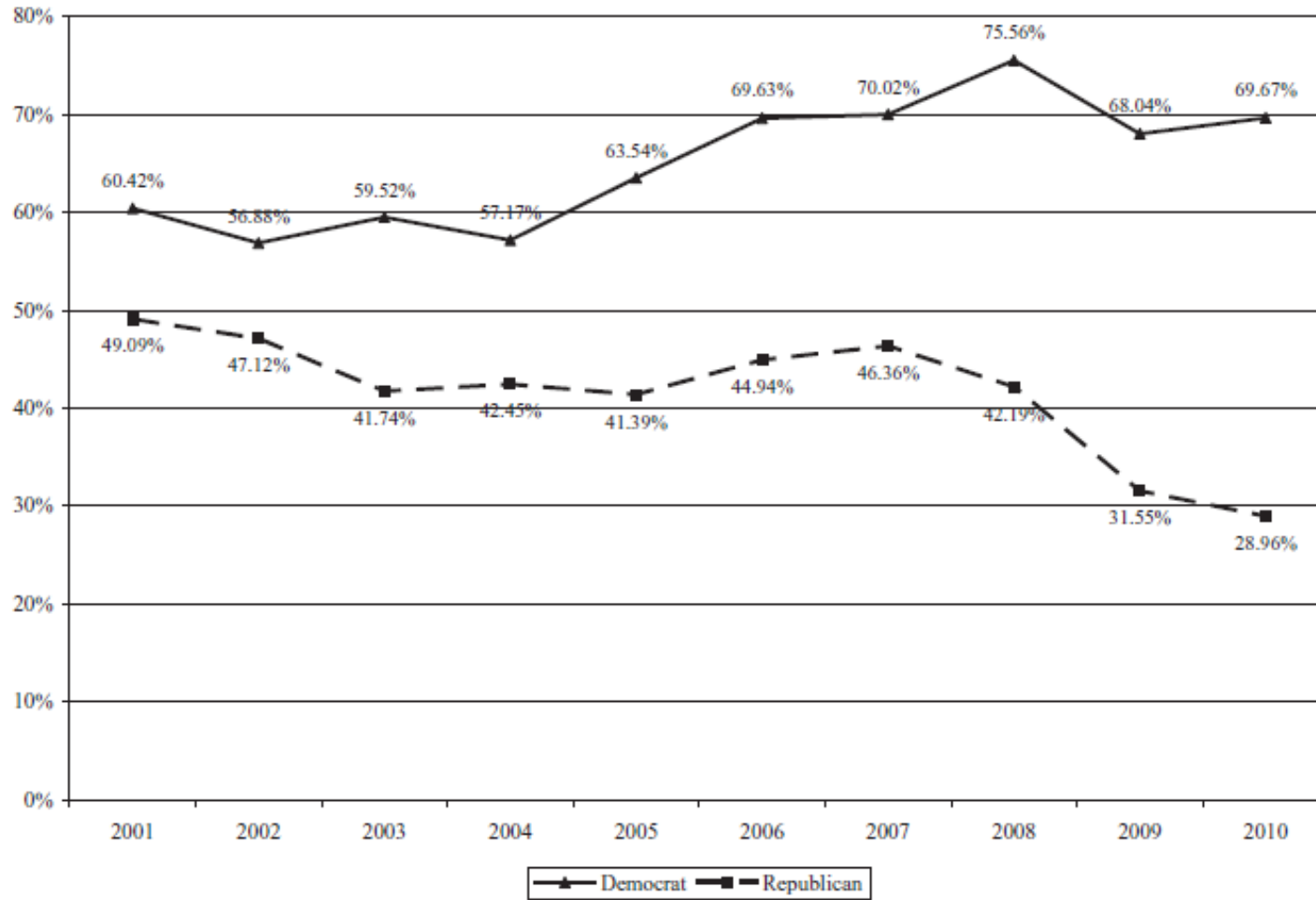
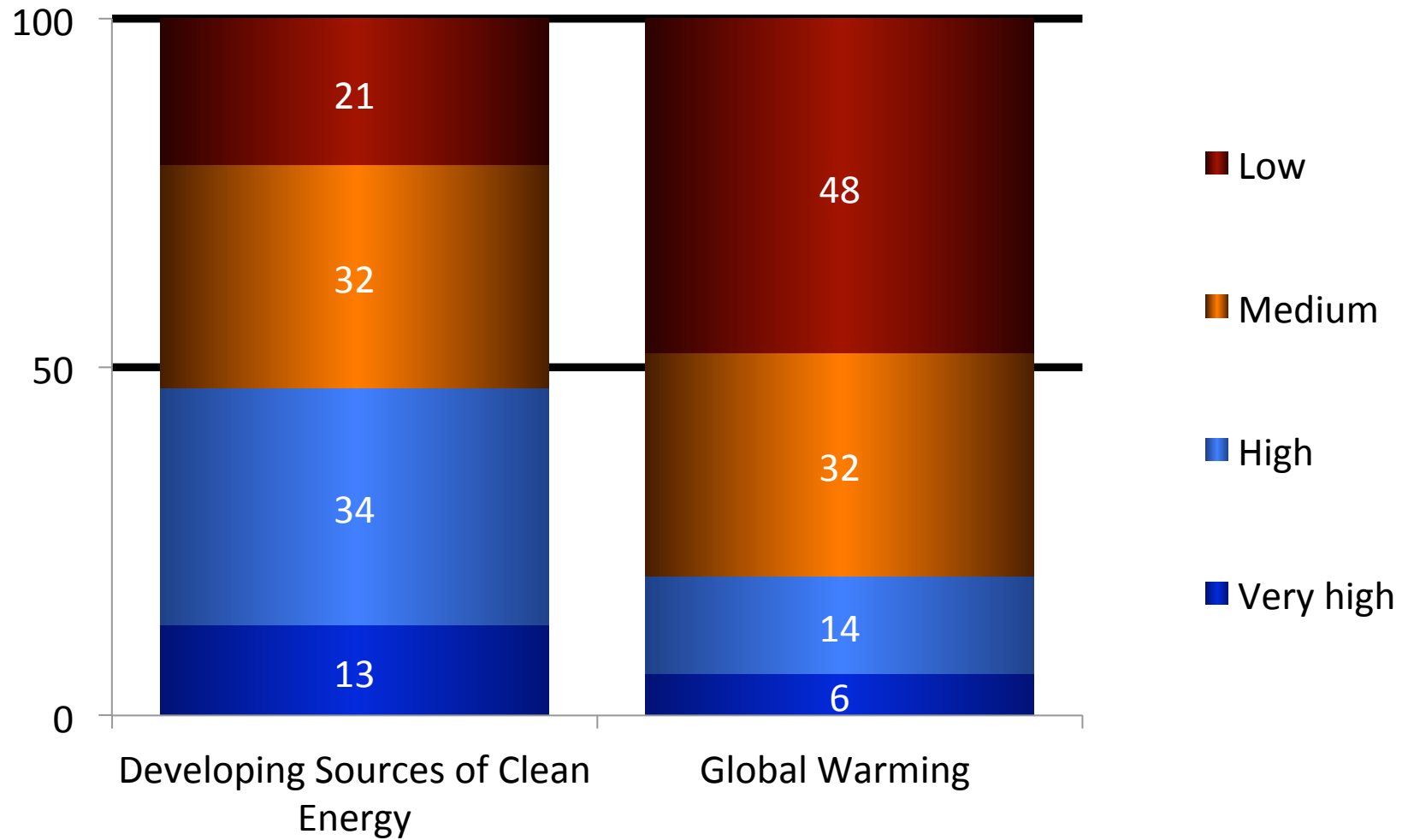


FIGURE 4. Percent of Americans Who Believe the Effects of Global Warming Have Already Begun to Happen from 2001–2010, by Political Ideology and Party Identification.

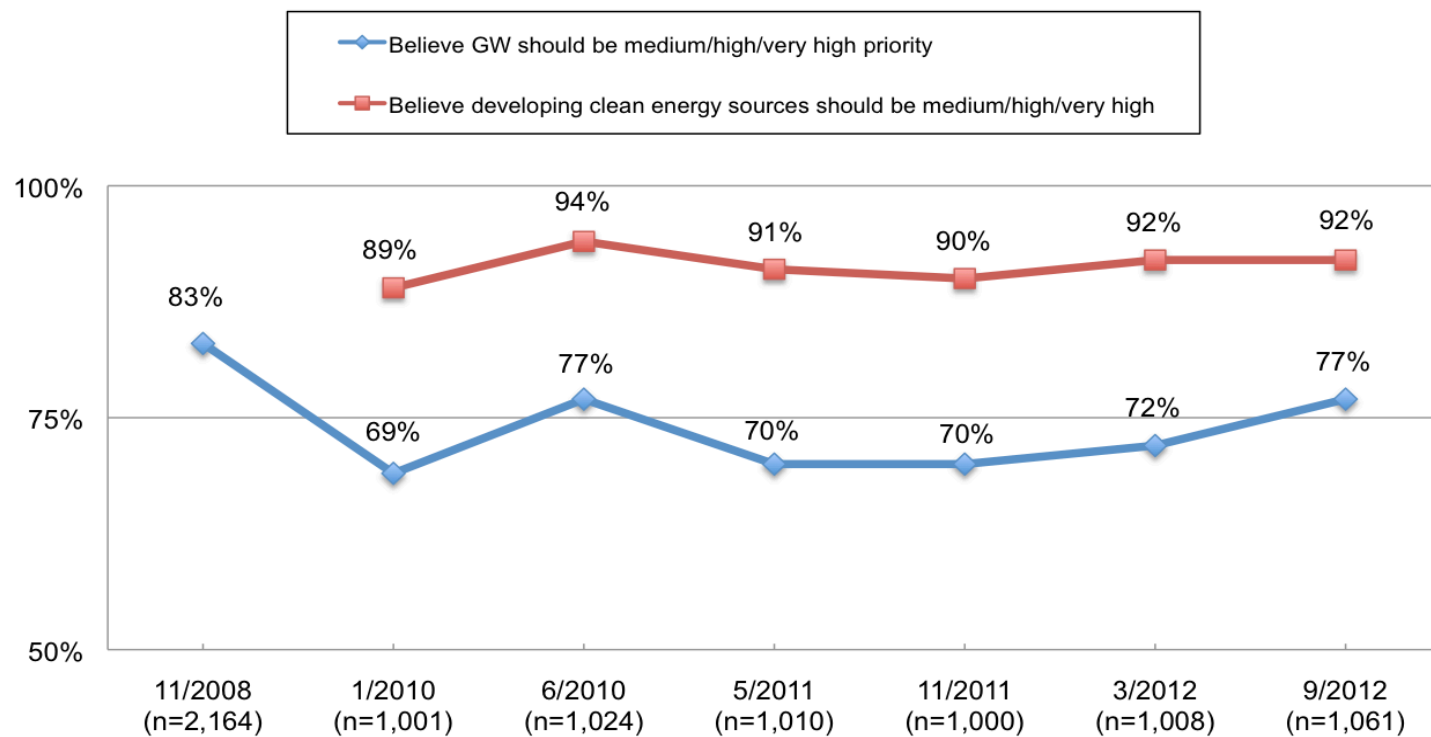
A grayscale satellite-style image of the Earth, showing the Americas and surrounding oceans. The image is centered on the Western Hemisphere, with North and South America visible. The text "Issue Priority" is overlaid in the center of the image.

Issue Priority

Issue Priority for President and Congress among Republicans



Growing Support For the President and Congress to Make Global Warming a Priority



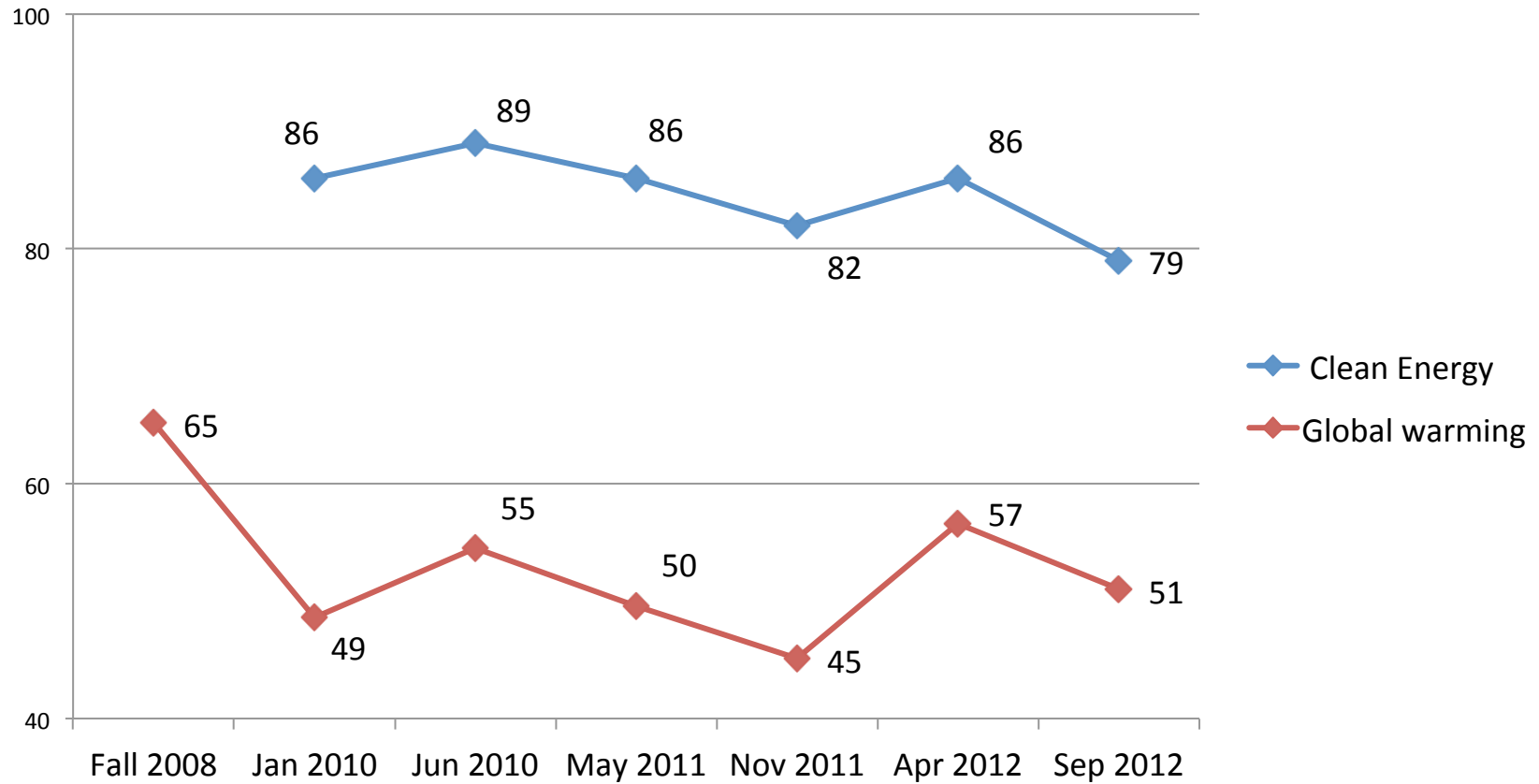
Do you think that global warming should be a low, medium, high, or very high priority for the president and Congress?
 Do you think that developing sources of clean energy should be a low, medium, high, or very high priority for the president and Congress?

Base: Americans 18+.

Source: Yale/George Mason



Republicans' Support for Prioritizing Clean Energy Development and Global Warming

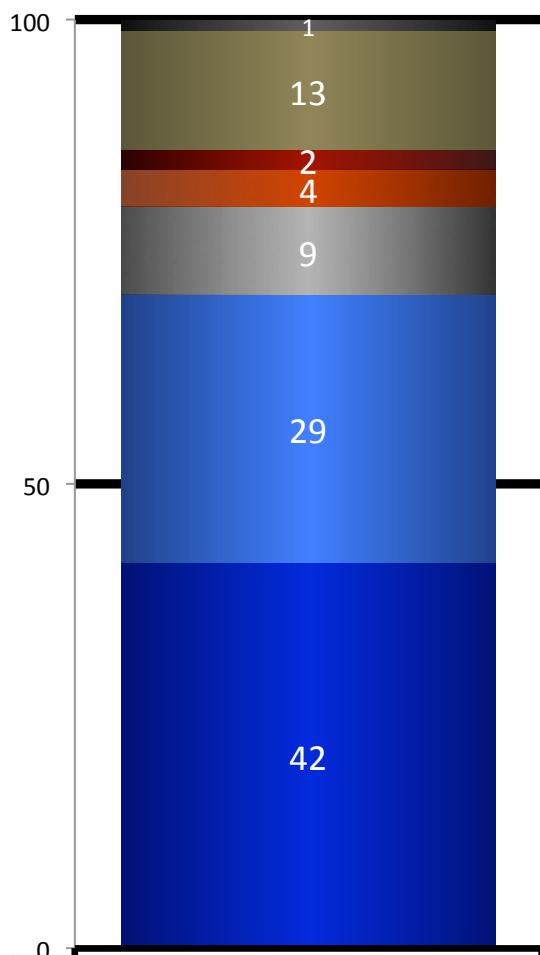


A grayscale satellite image of the Earth, showing the Americas and surrounding oceans. The image is centered on the Western Hemisphere, with North and South America visible. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

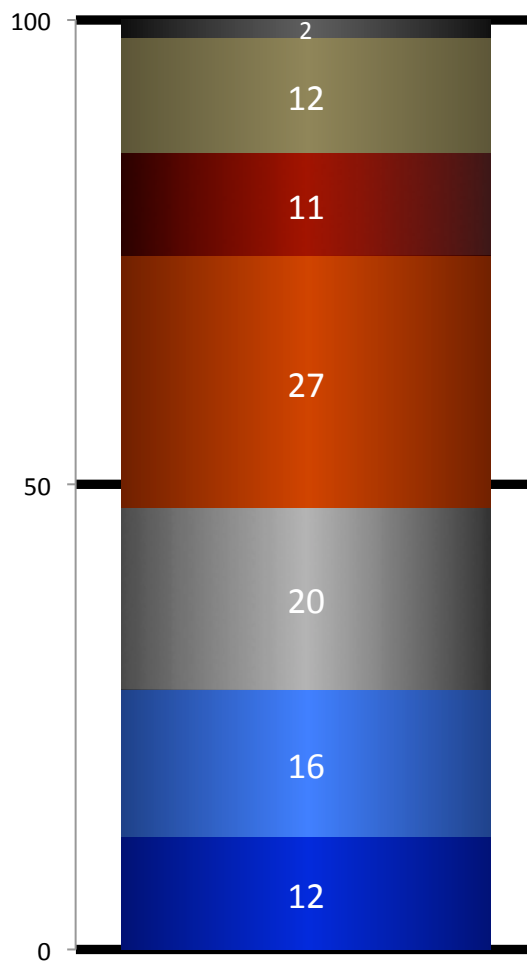
**Support for National Policies
On Energy and Climate**

In the future, do you think the United States should use...

...renewable energy sources
(solar, wind and geothermal)
less, more, or the same
amount as we do today?



...fossil fuels (coal, oil, and natural
gas) less, more, or the same
amount as we do today?

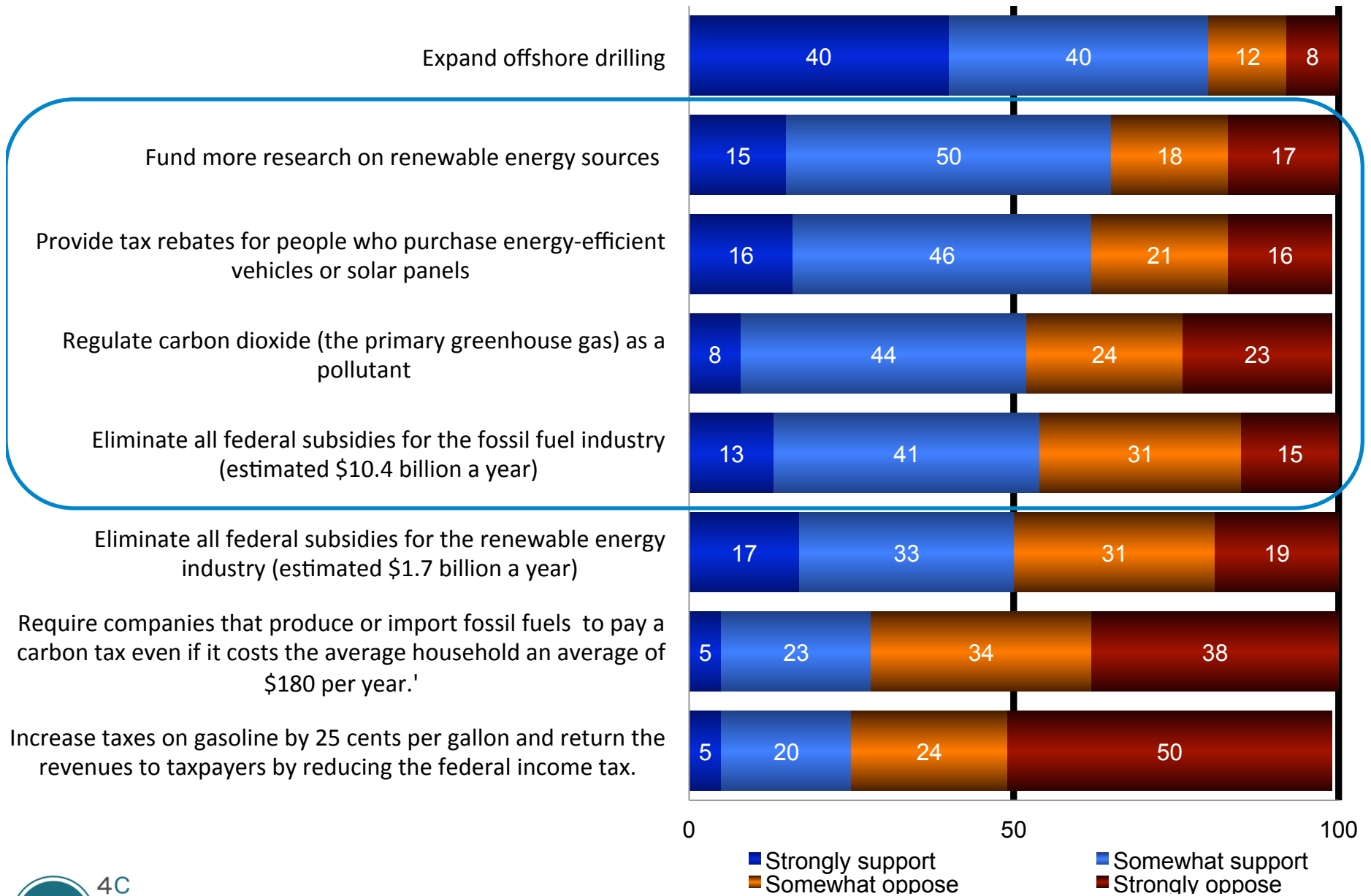


- Prefer not to answer
- Don't know
- Much less than today
- Somewhat less than today
- Same amount as today
- Somewhat more than today
- Much more than today

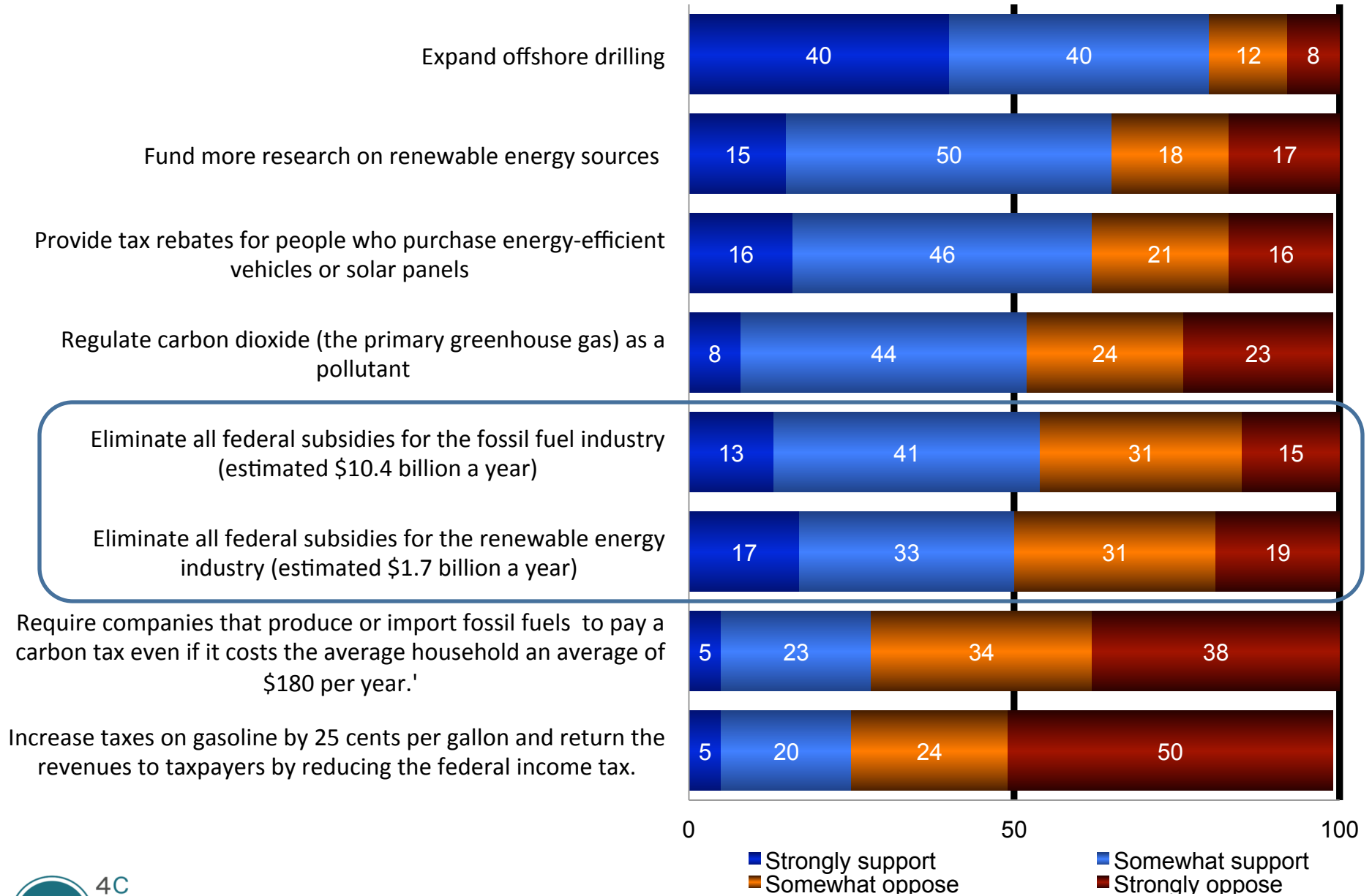


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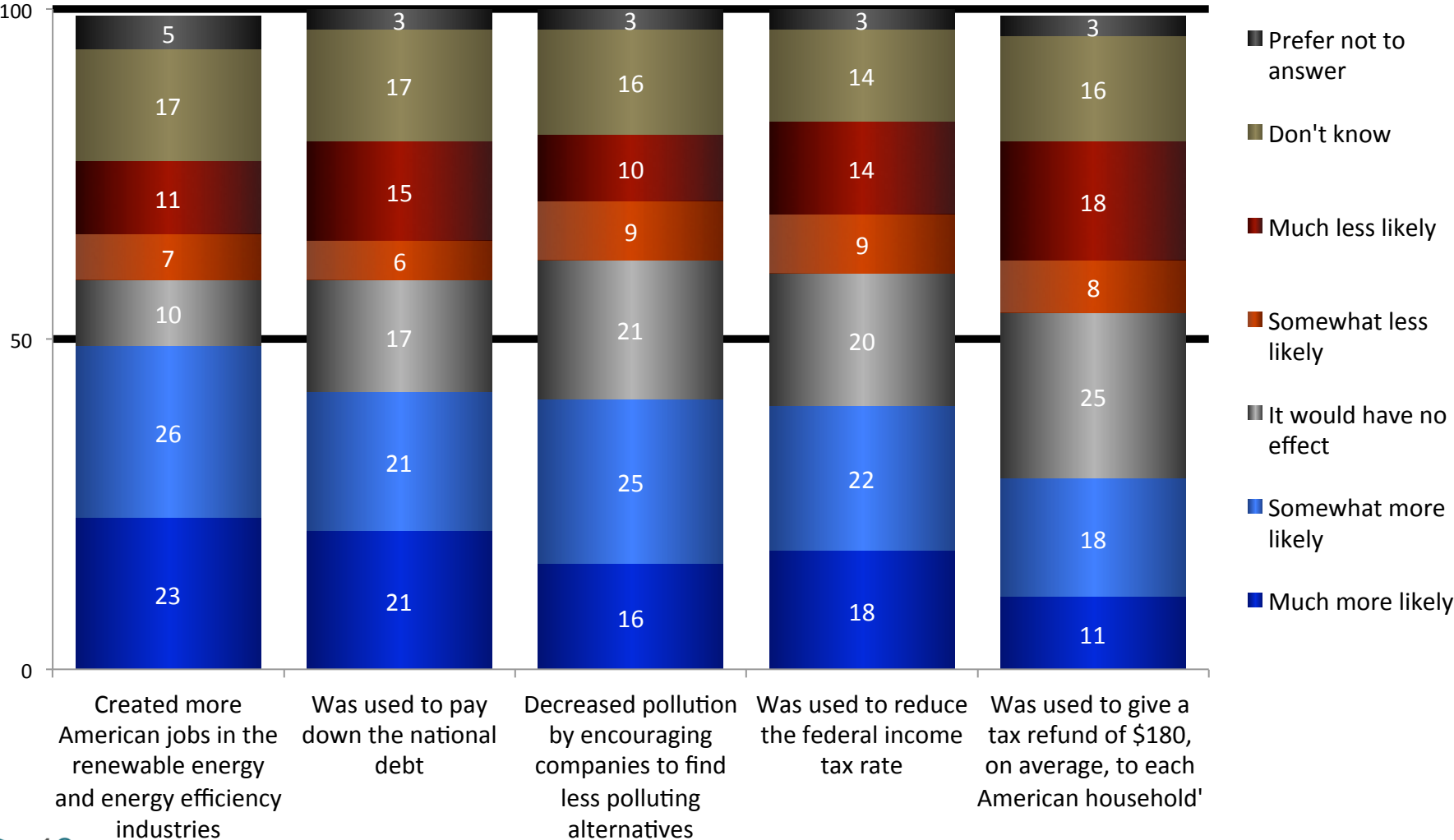
Republican Support for Climate & Energy Policies



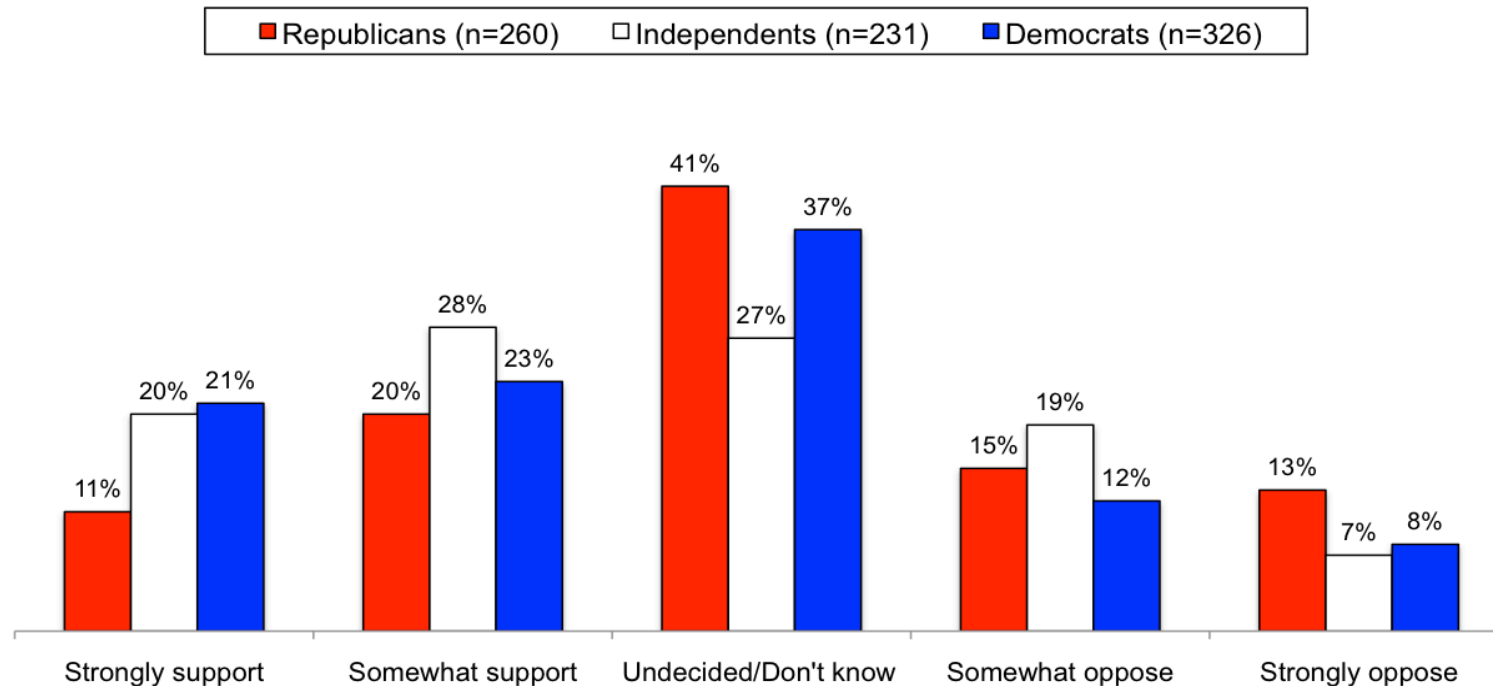
Republican Support for Climate & Energy Policies



Would you be more or less likely to vote for a candidate who supports legislation to increase taxes on coal, oil, and natural gas (a “carbon tax”) in a way that is “revenue neutral” (meaning the total amount of taxes collected by the government would stay the same), if the new carbon tax...



Many Republicans and Democrats Don't Know Whether Fossil-Fuel Companies Should Be Held Responsible For the Hidden Costs of Their Products



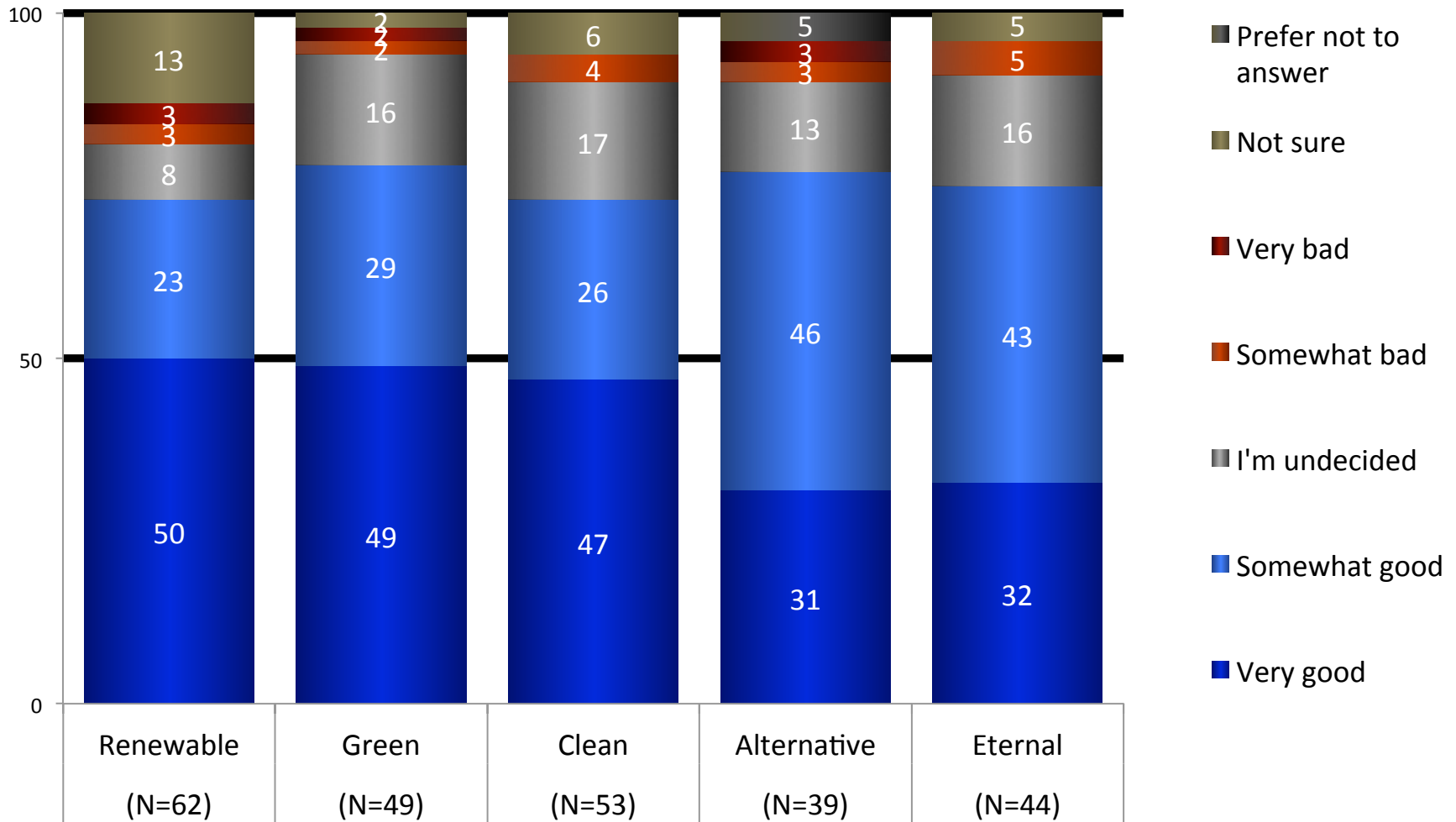
Some people say that burning fossil fuels seems cheap until you include all the “hidden costs” we pay for citizens who get sick from polluted air and water; military costs to maintain our access to foreign oil; and the environmental costs of spills and accidents. How much do you support or oppose holding the fossil-fuel industry (coal, oil, and natural gas) responsible for all the hidden costs of their products?

Base: Americans registered to vote 18+.

Source: Yale/George Mason



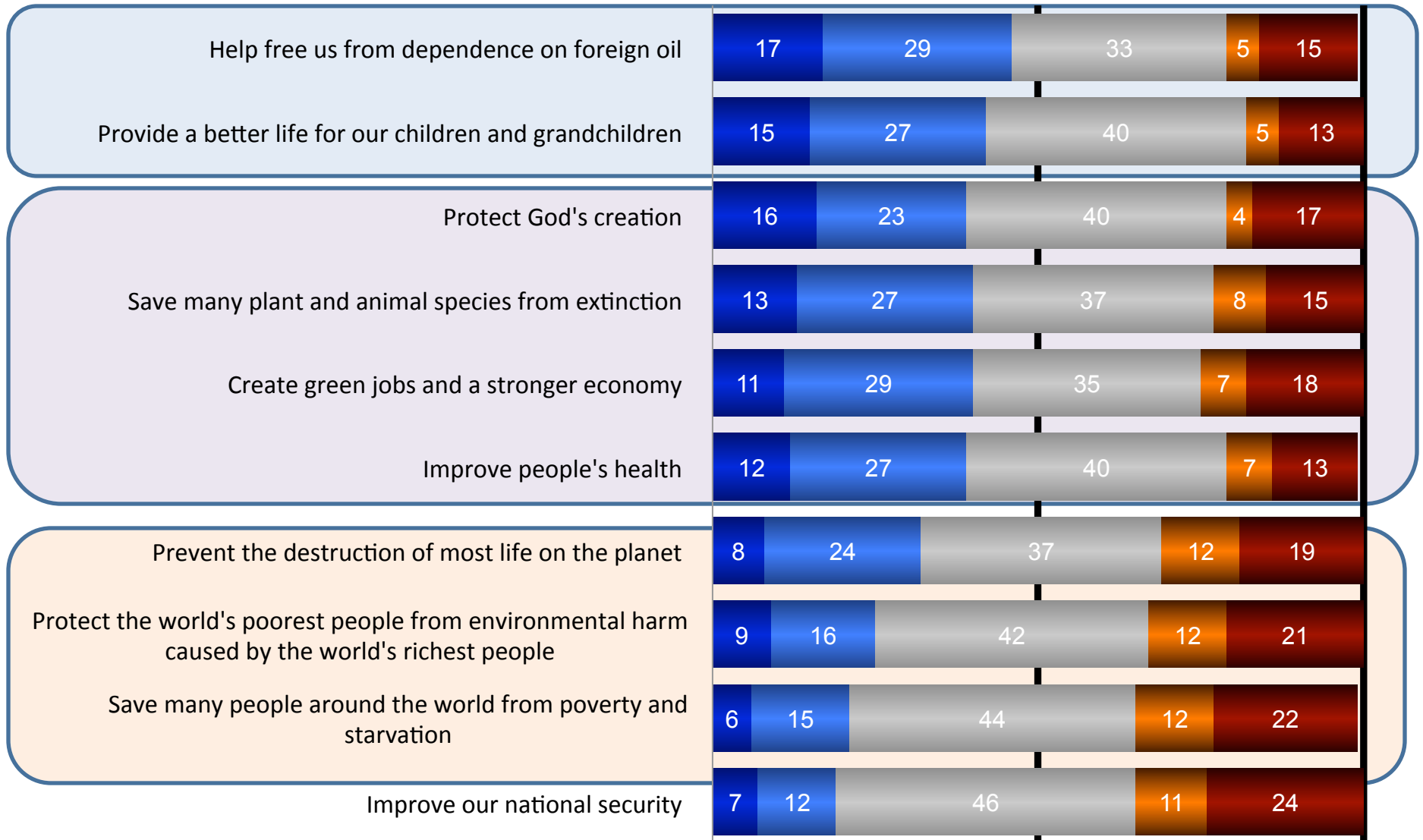
Generally speaking, do you think using ____ energy sources (such as solar, wind and geothermal) would be good or bad for America?





**Expected Outcomes of Action to Reduce
Global Warming & US Fossil Fuel Use**

Republicans' Perceptions of the Benefits of Action



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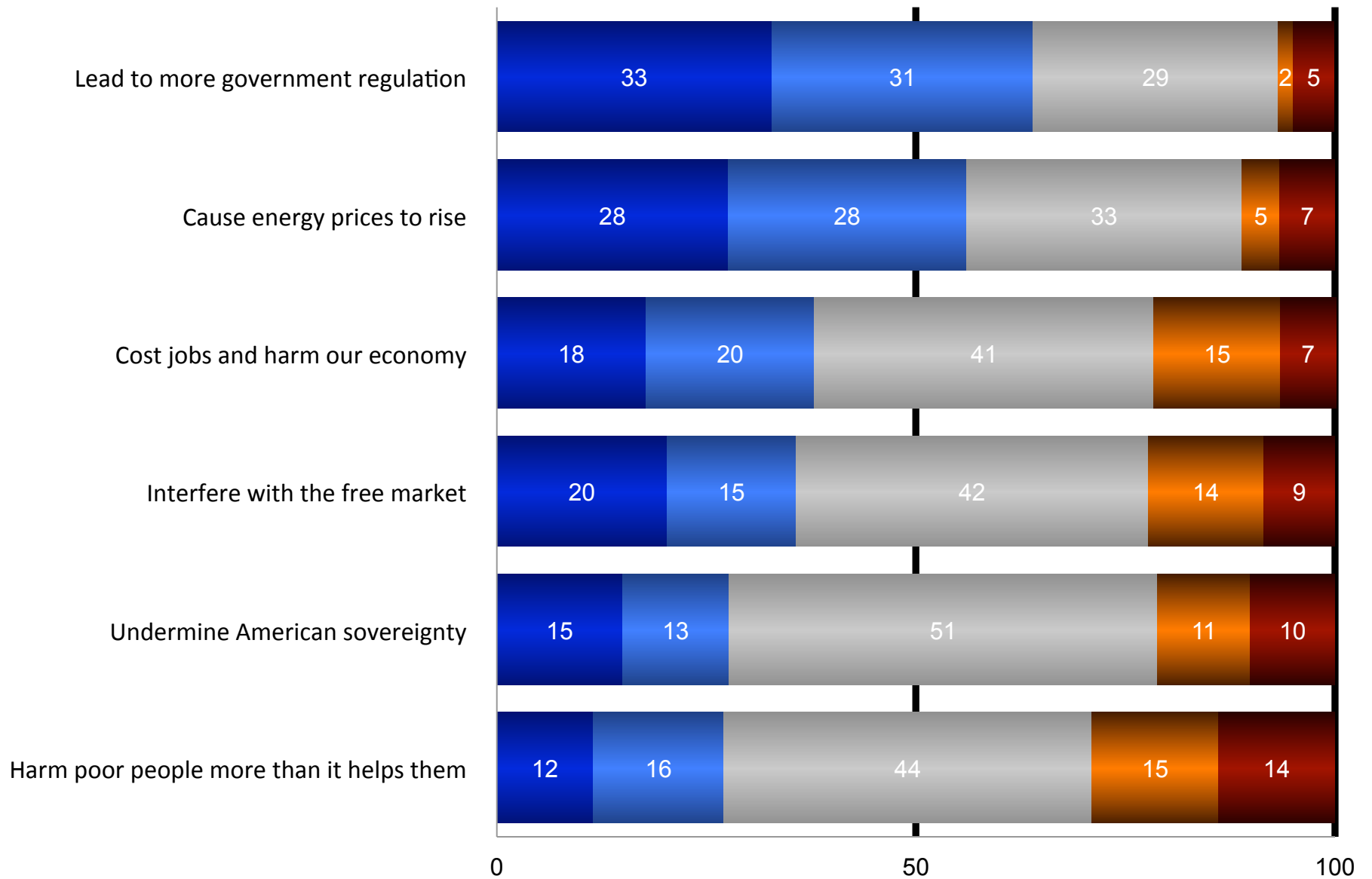
■ Strongly agree
 ■ Moderately agree
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree
 ■ Moderately disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree

0

50

100

Republicans' Perceptions of the Drawbacks of Action



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■ Strongly agree
 ■ Moderately agree
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree
 ■ Moderately disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree

A grayscale satellite image of Earth, showing the Americas and surrounding oceans. The image is centered on the Western Hemisphere, with North and South America visible. The text "Cultural Values" is overlaid in the center of the image.

Cultural Values

Individualism

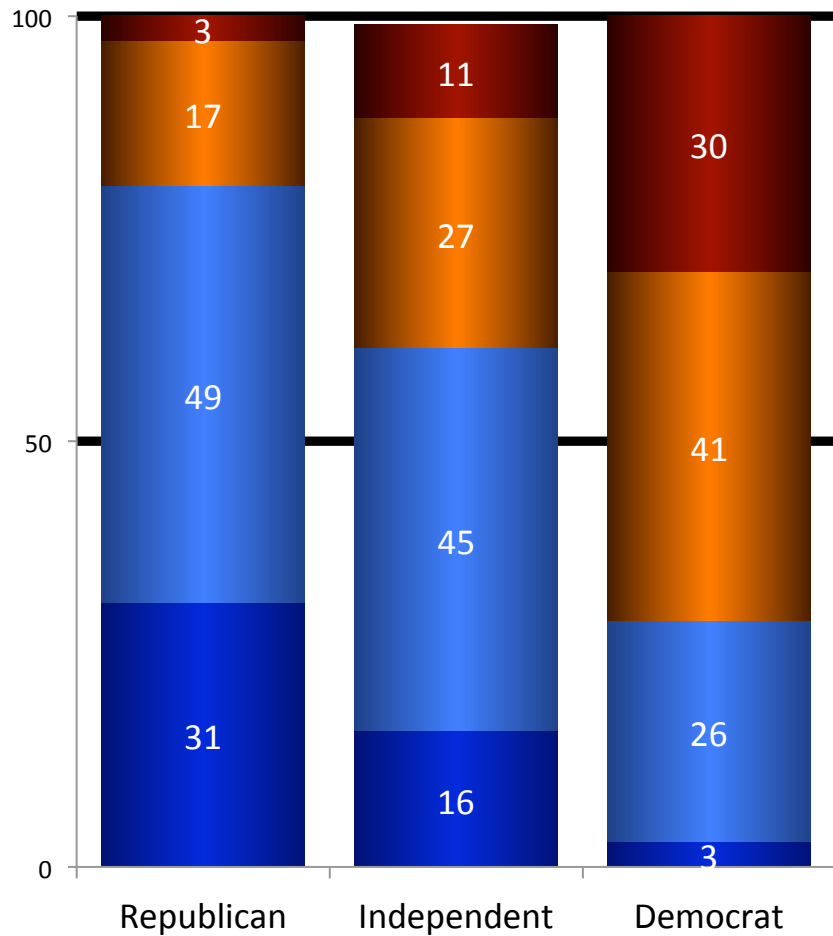
- If the government spent less time trying to fix everyone's problems, we'd all be a lot better off.
- Our government tries to do too many things for too many people. We should just let people take care of themselves.
- The government interferes too much in our everyday lives.
- Government regulation of business usually does more harm than good.

Egalitarianism

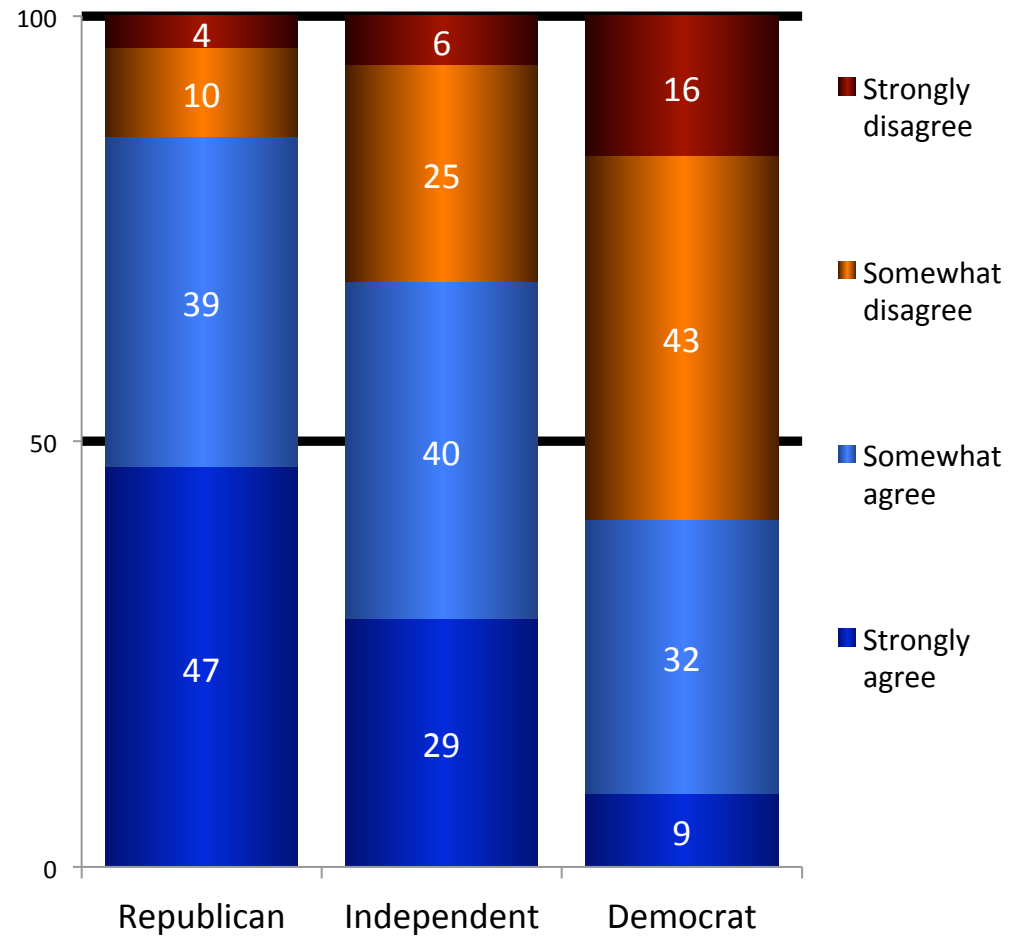
- The world would be a more peaceful place if its wealth were divided more equally among nations.
- In my ideal society, all basic needs (food, housing, health care, education) would be guaranteed by the government for everyone.
- I support government programs to get rid of poverty.
- Discrimination against minorities is still a very serious problem in our society.

Individualism

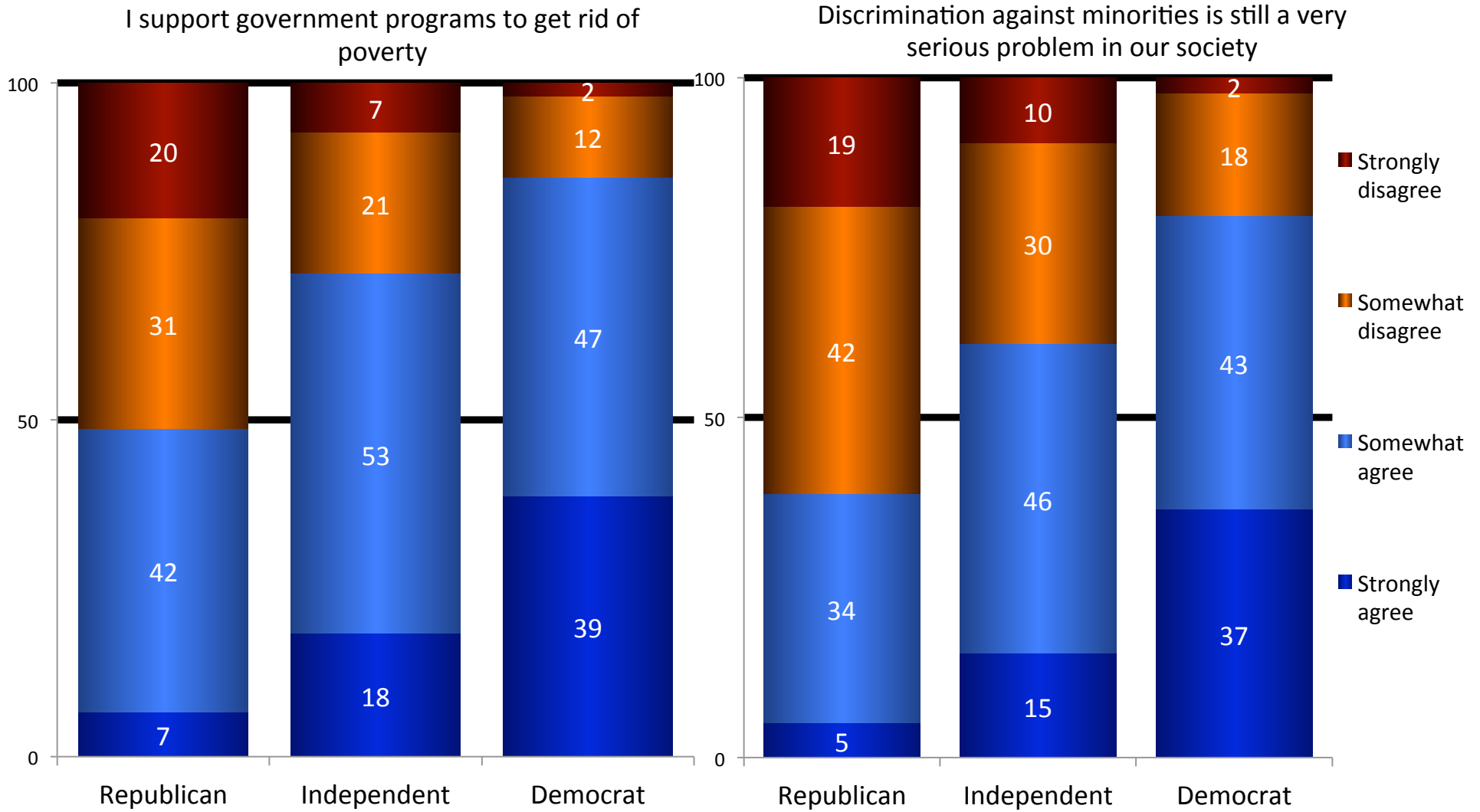
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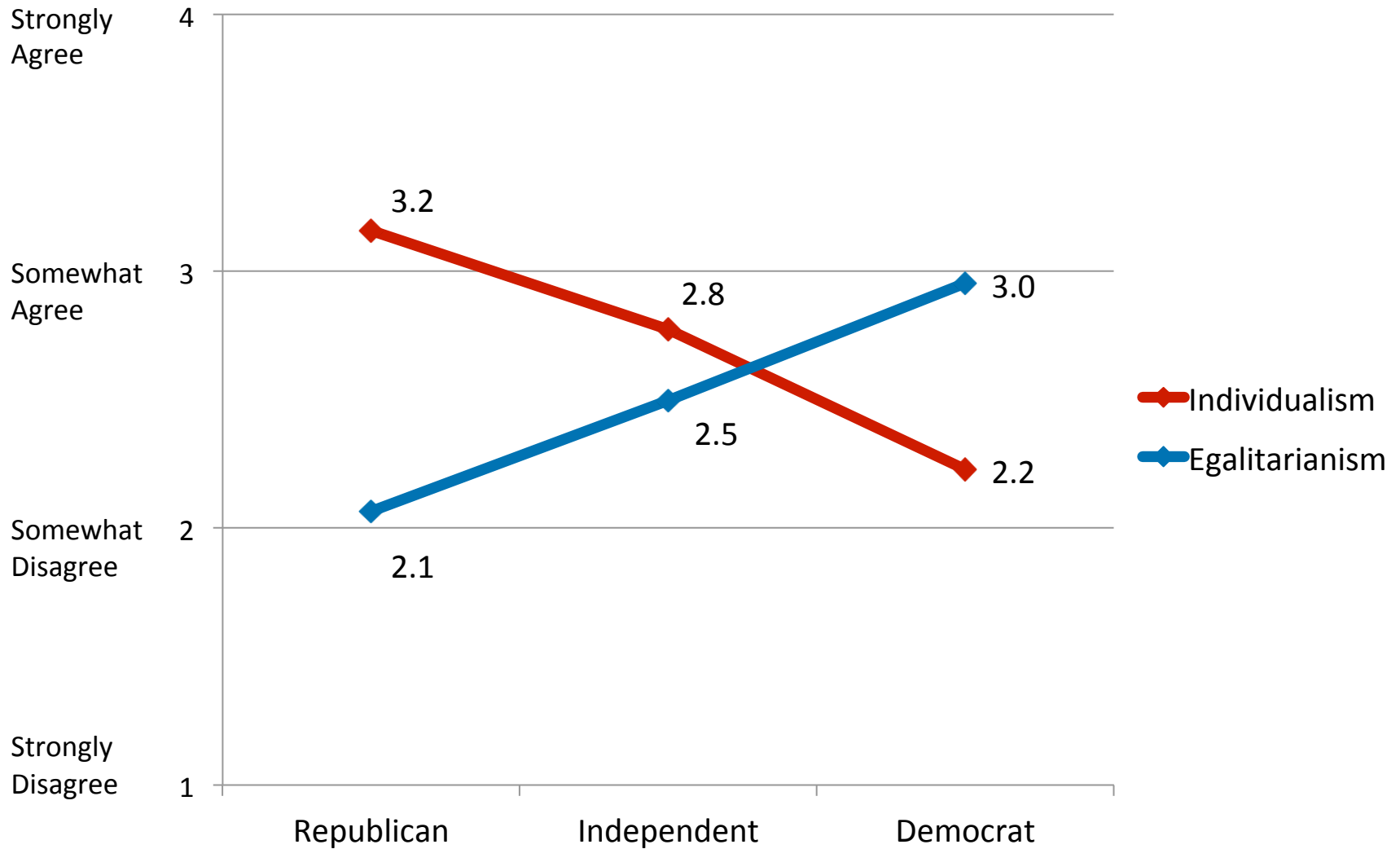
The government interferes too much in our everyday lives.



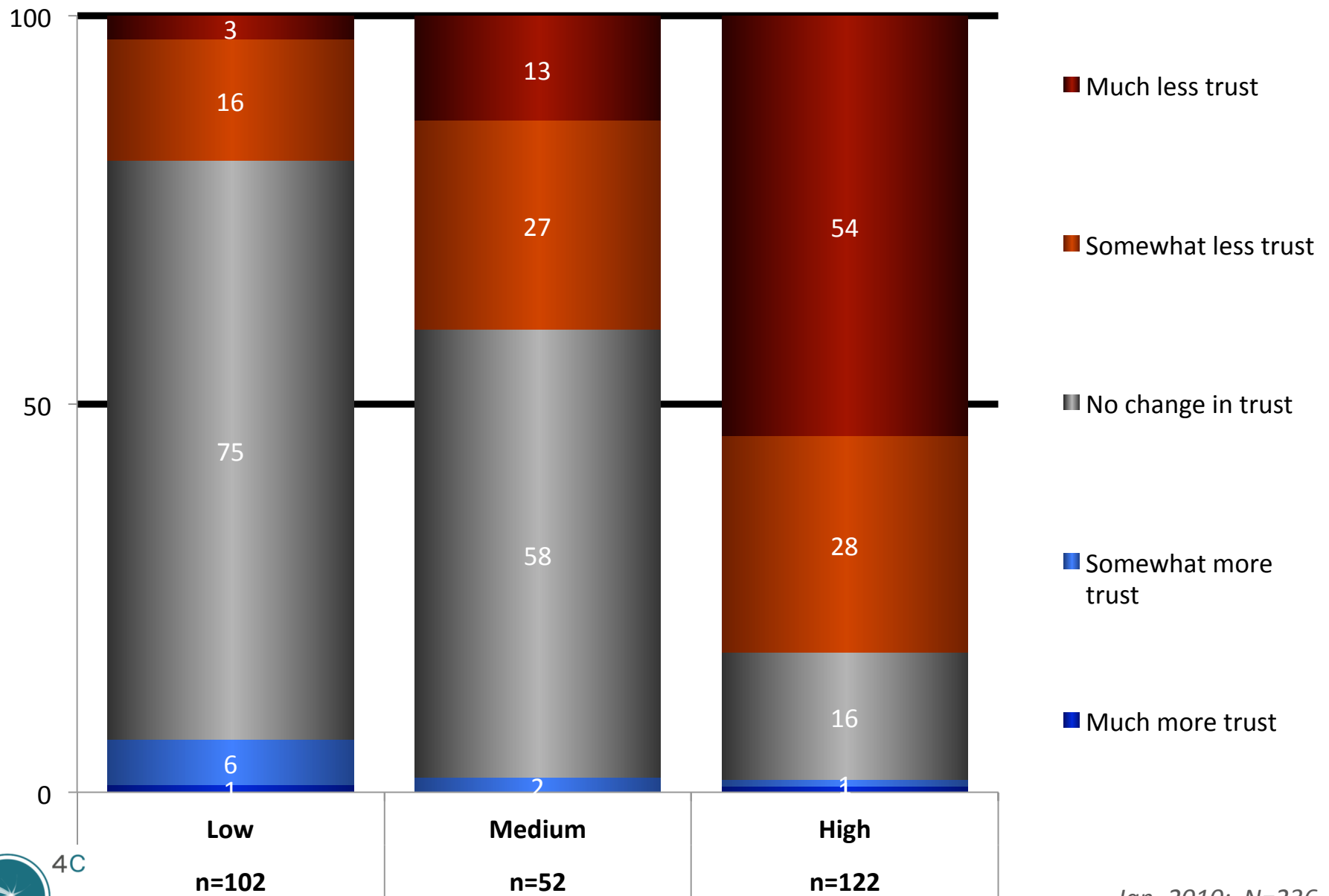
Egalitarianism



Mean Individualism & Egalitarianism by Party Identification



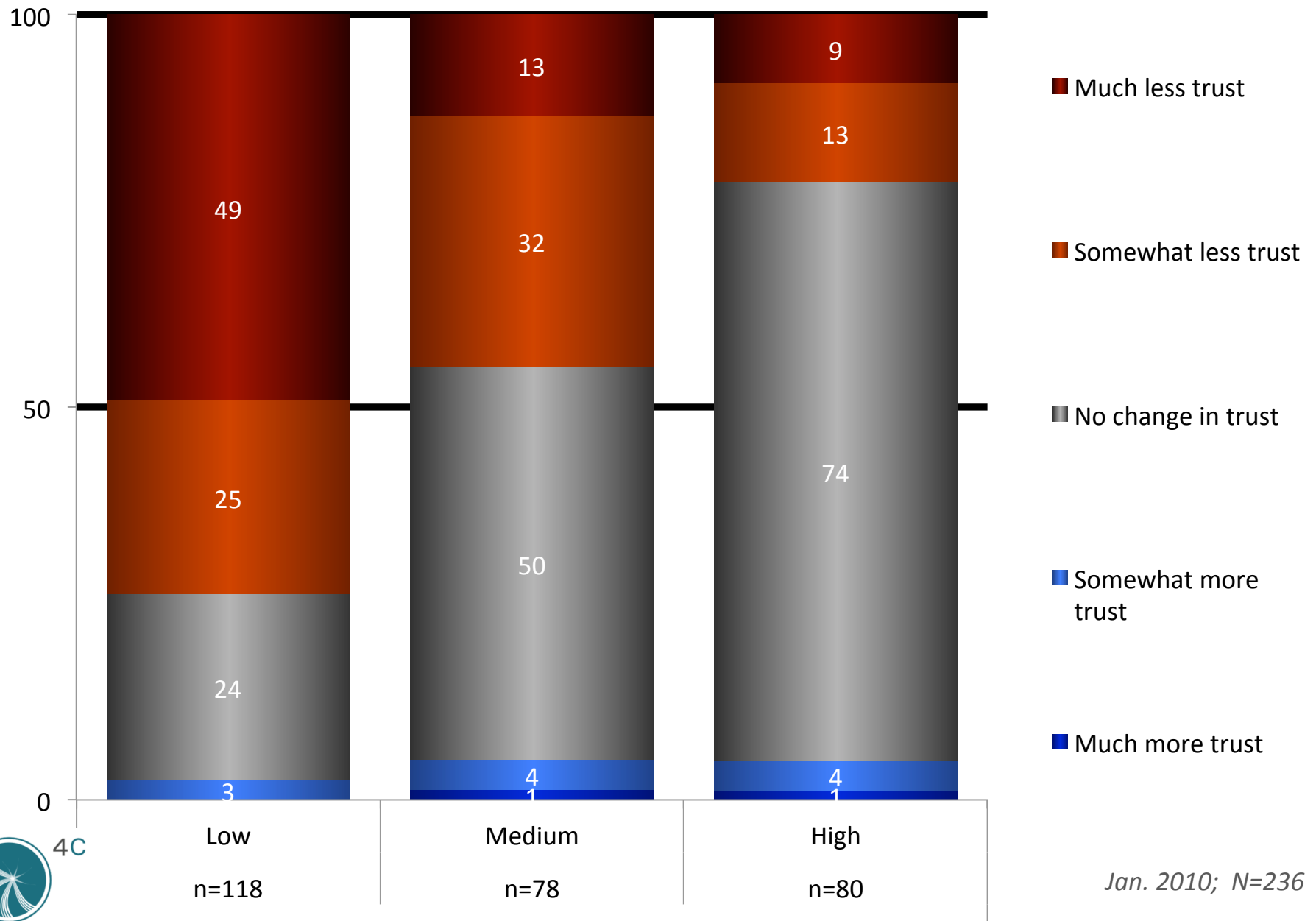
Changes in Trust in Scientists in Response to Climategate, by Individualism



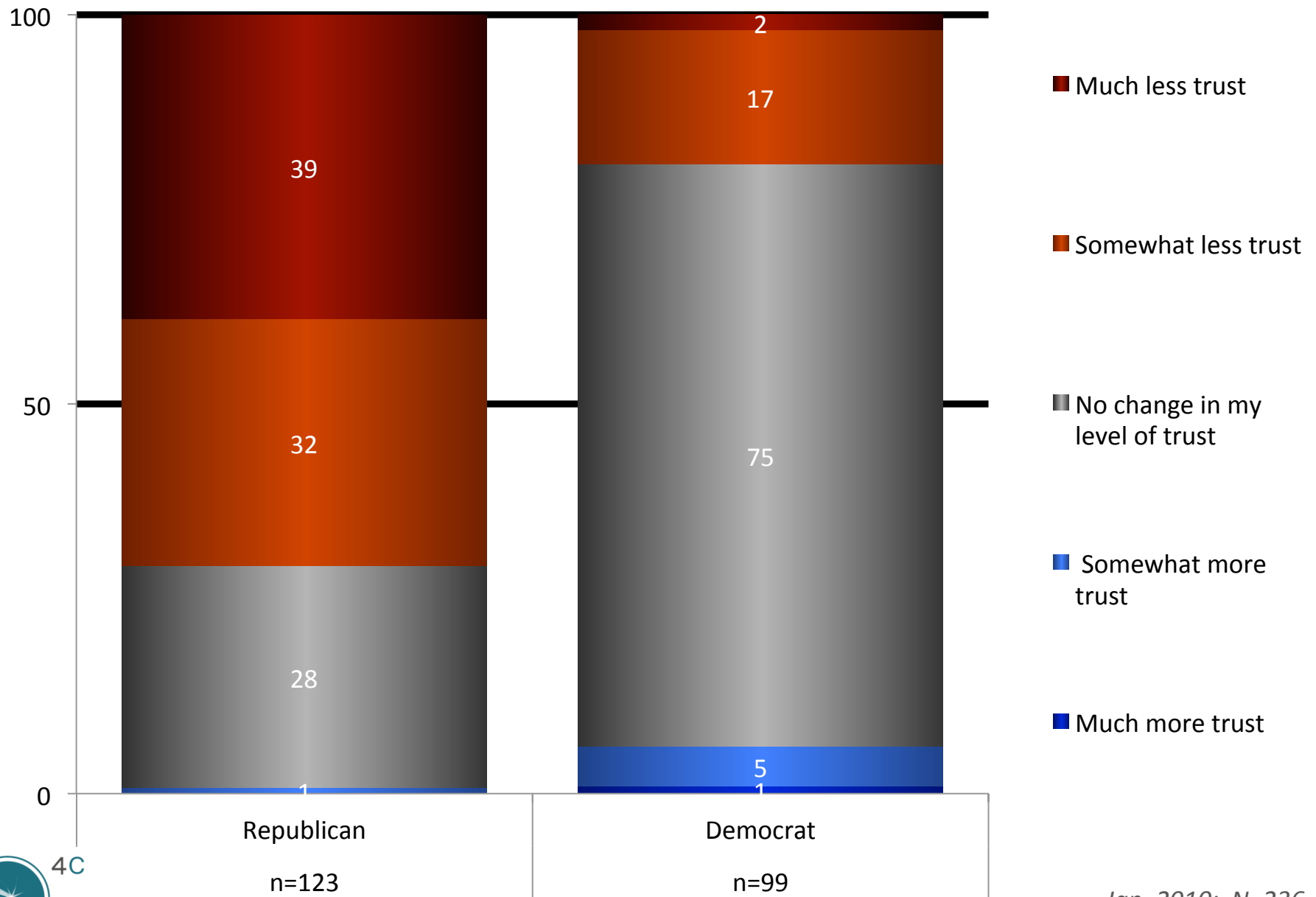
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Jan. 2010; N=236

Changes in Trust in Scientists in Response to Climategate, by Egalitarianism



Changes in Trust in Scientists in Response to Climategate, by Party ID



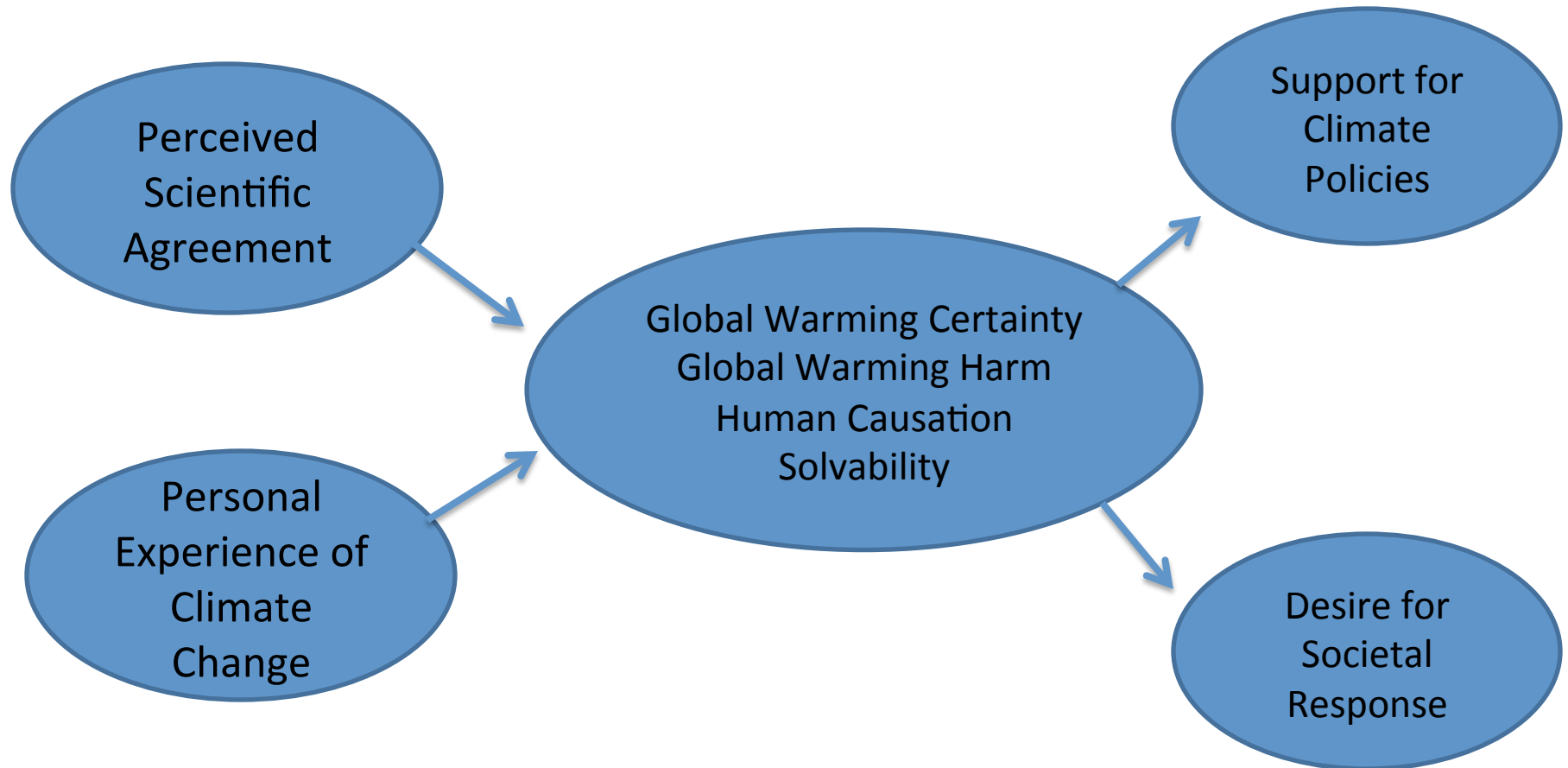
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Jan. 2010; N=236

A grayscale satellite image of Earth, showing the Western Hemisphere. The image is centered on the Americas, with North America at the top and South America at the bottom. The text "Key Beliefs about Climate Change" is overlaid in the center of the image in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

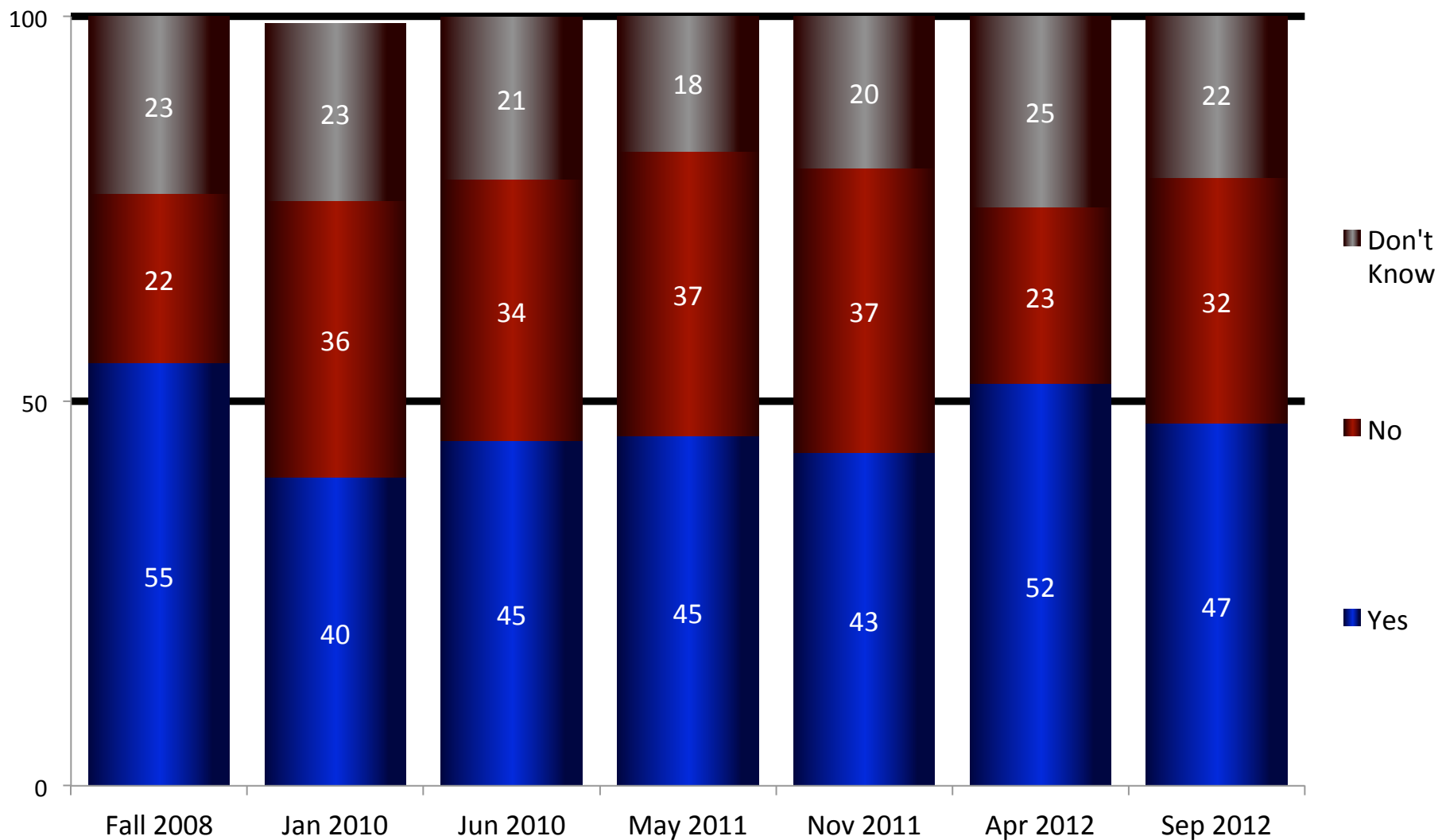
Key Beliefs about Climate Change

Perceptions of the Scientific Agreement Influences People's Key Beliefs about Climate Change, Which Influence Support for Mitigation Action



Ding-Ding *et al.*, 2012
Myers *et al.*; 2012
Roser-Renouf *et al.*, 2011
Krosnick *et al.*, 2006

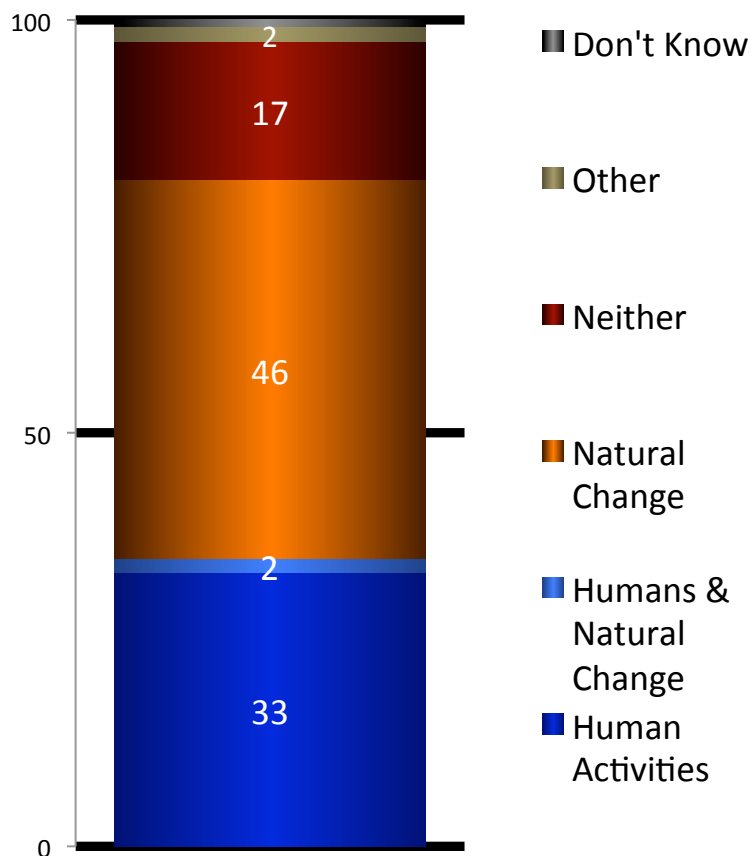
Is Global Warming Occurring?



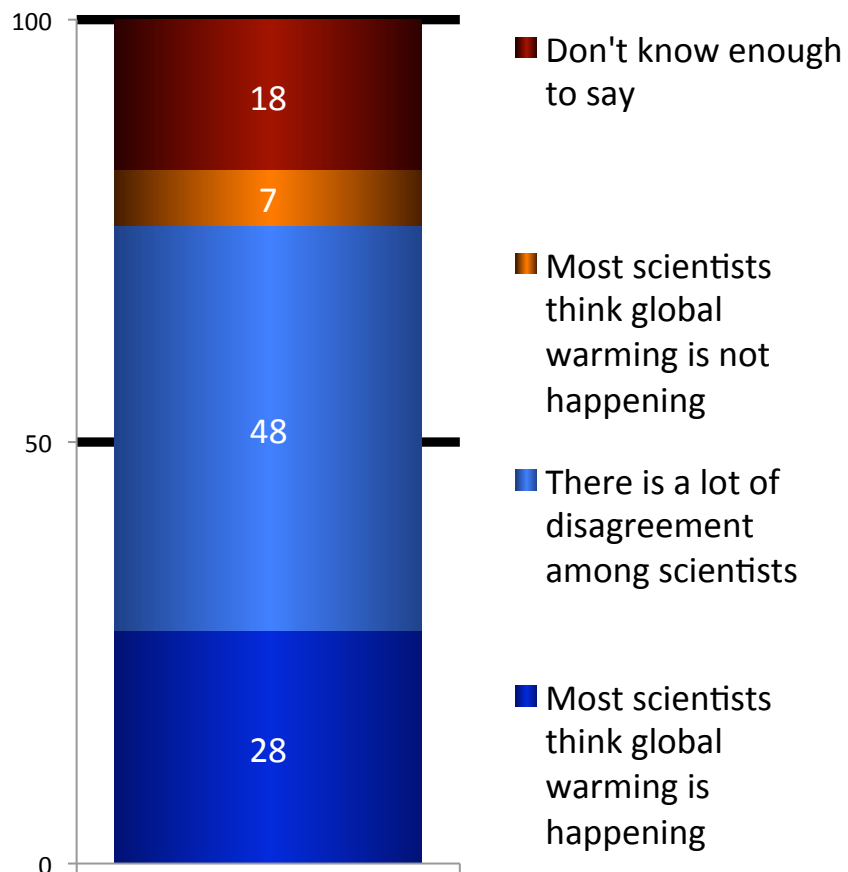
Sept. 2012; N=249

Beliefs about Global Warming

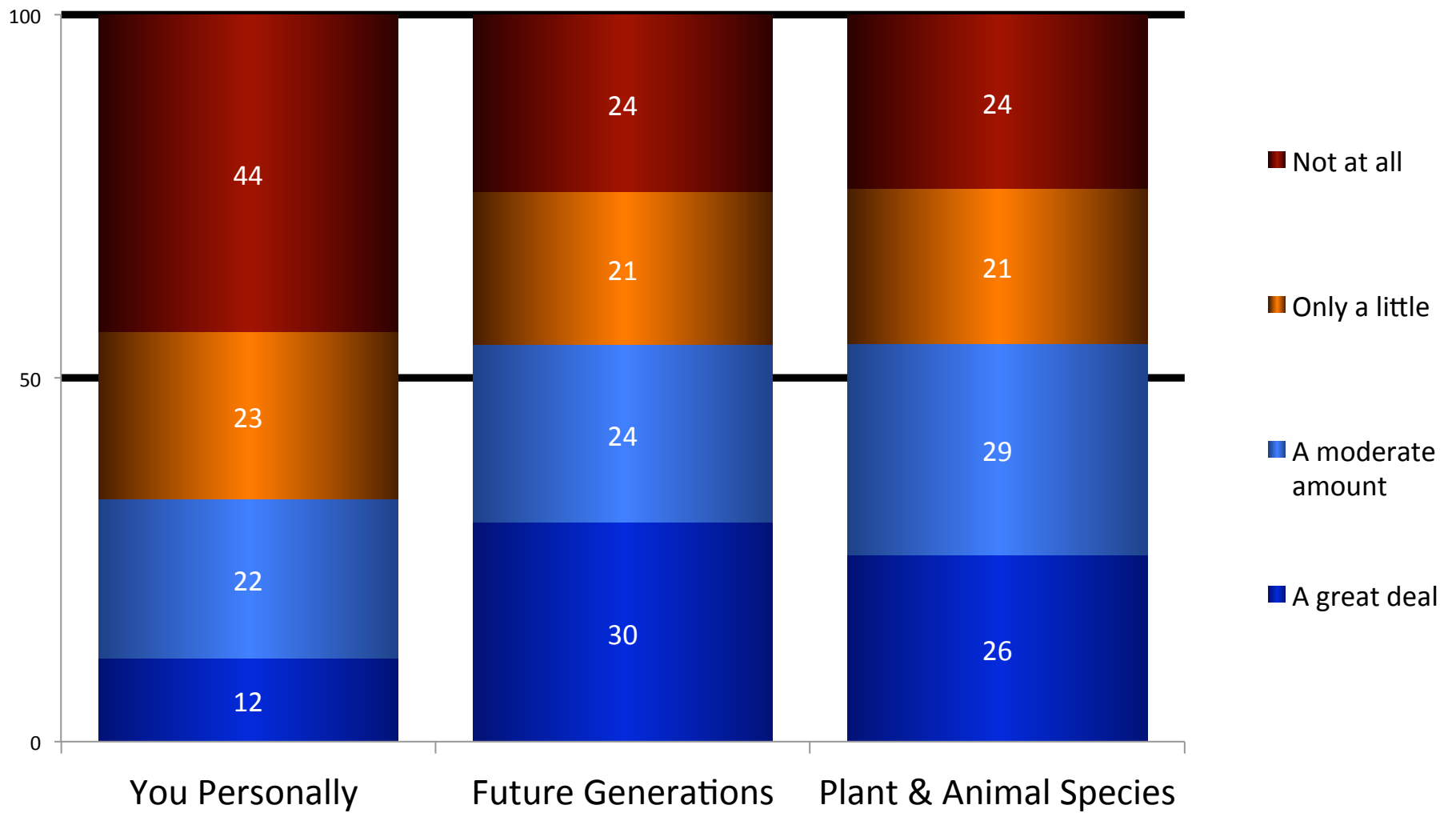
Cause of Global Warming



Perceptions of Scientific Agreement

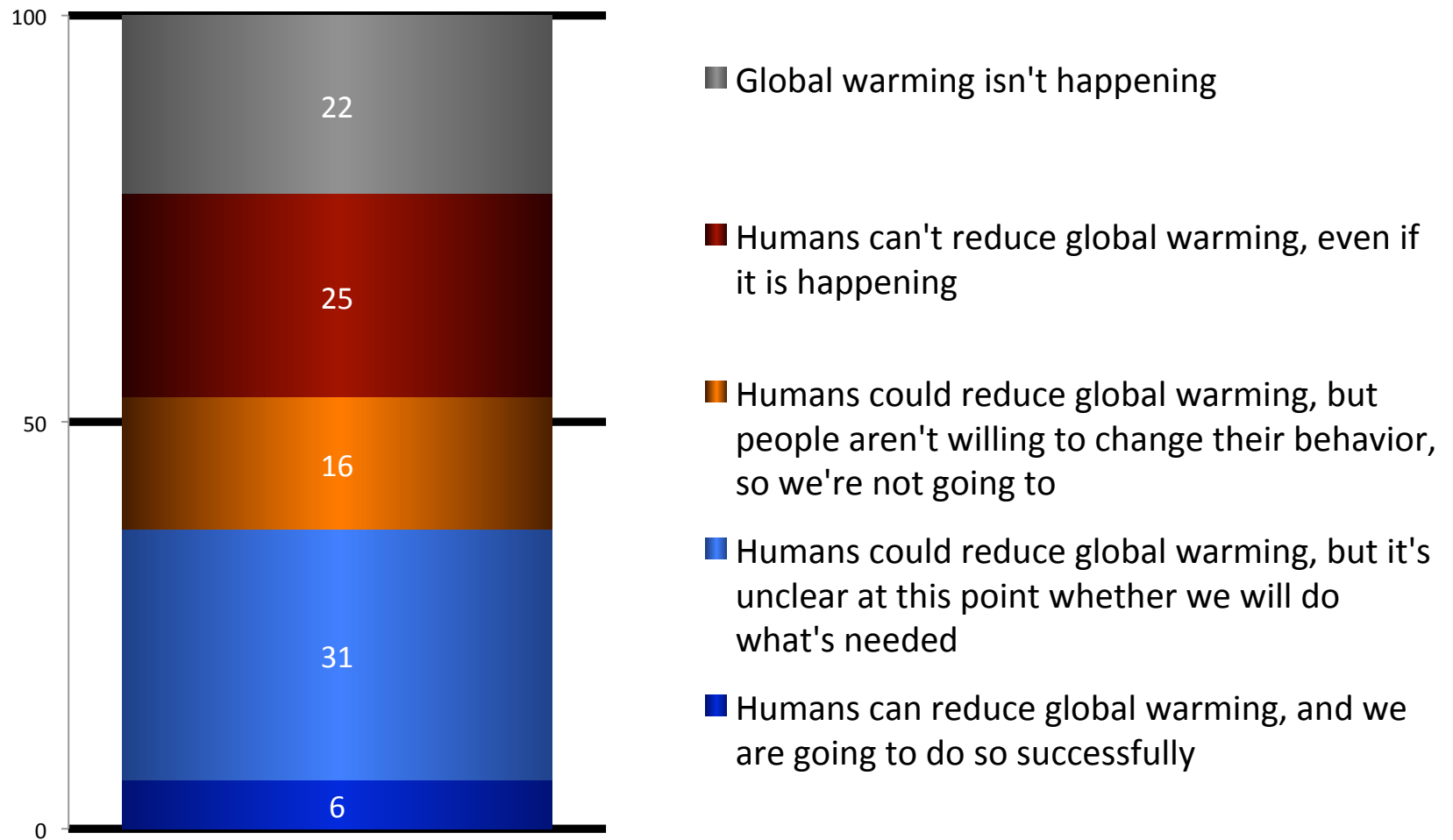


How Much Global Warming Will Harm...



Sept. 2012; N=249

Beliefs about Solvability of Global Warming



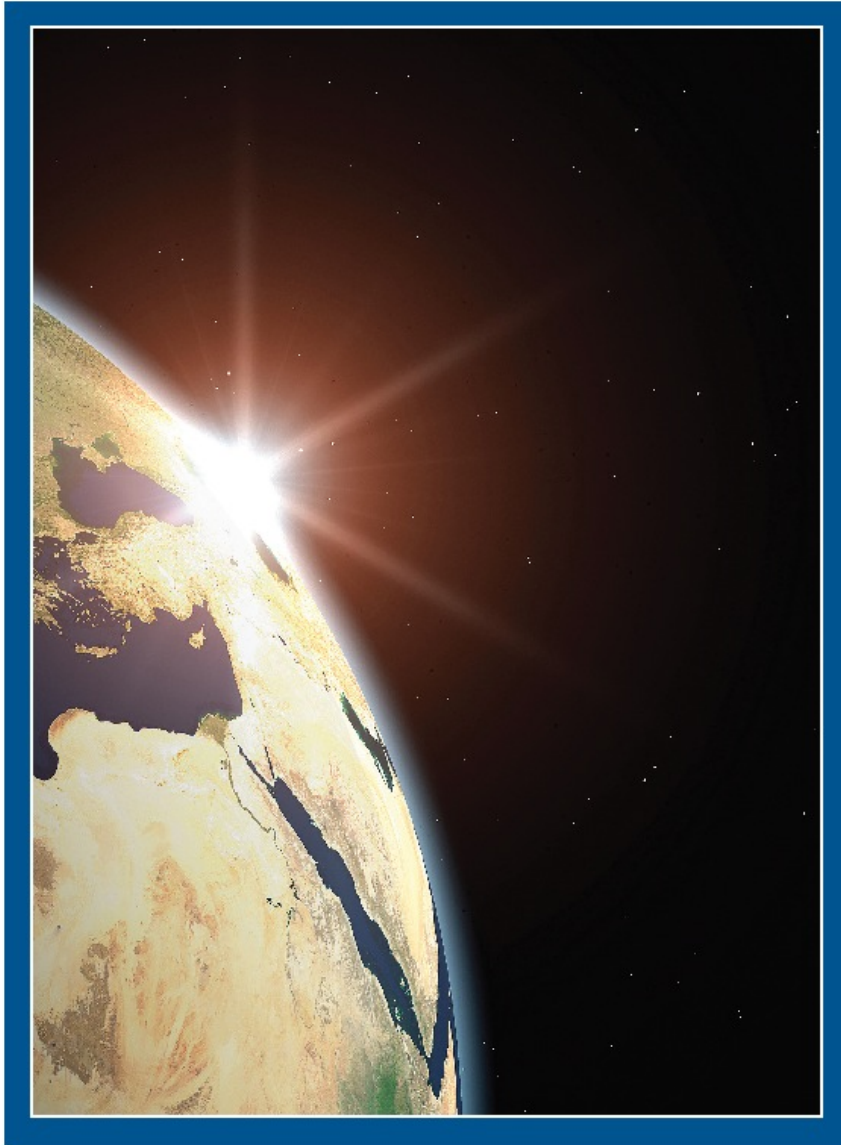
Bringing Republicans Onboard: Two-Dimensions

The right policies:

- Results suggest that Republicans favor a move to a clean energy economy, but their support is contingent on the development of policies that are consistent with their core values.

The right messages:

- While speaking to clean energy alone -- without discussing climate change -- may be associated with clean energy policy support, this support could be strengthened by communicating the key beliefs:
 - Climate change is real
 - It's harmful
 - It's caused by human activities
 - The scientific community is in broad agreement about the reality, dangers and causes of climate change
 - Human actions can reduce climate change.



<http://climatechange.gmu.edu>

<http://research.yale.edu/environment/climate>

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