

# 2022 Climate Metrics Survey of Southwest Florida



Strategy Precision Impact

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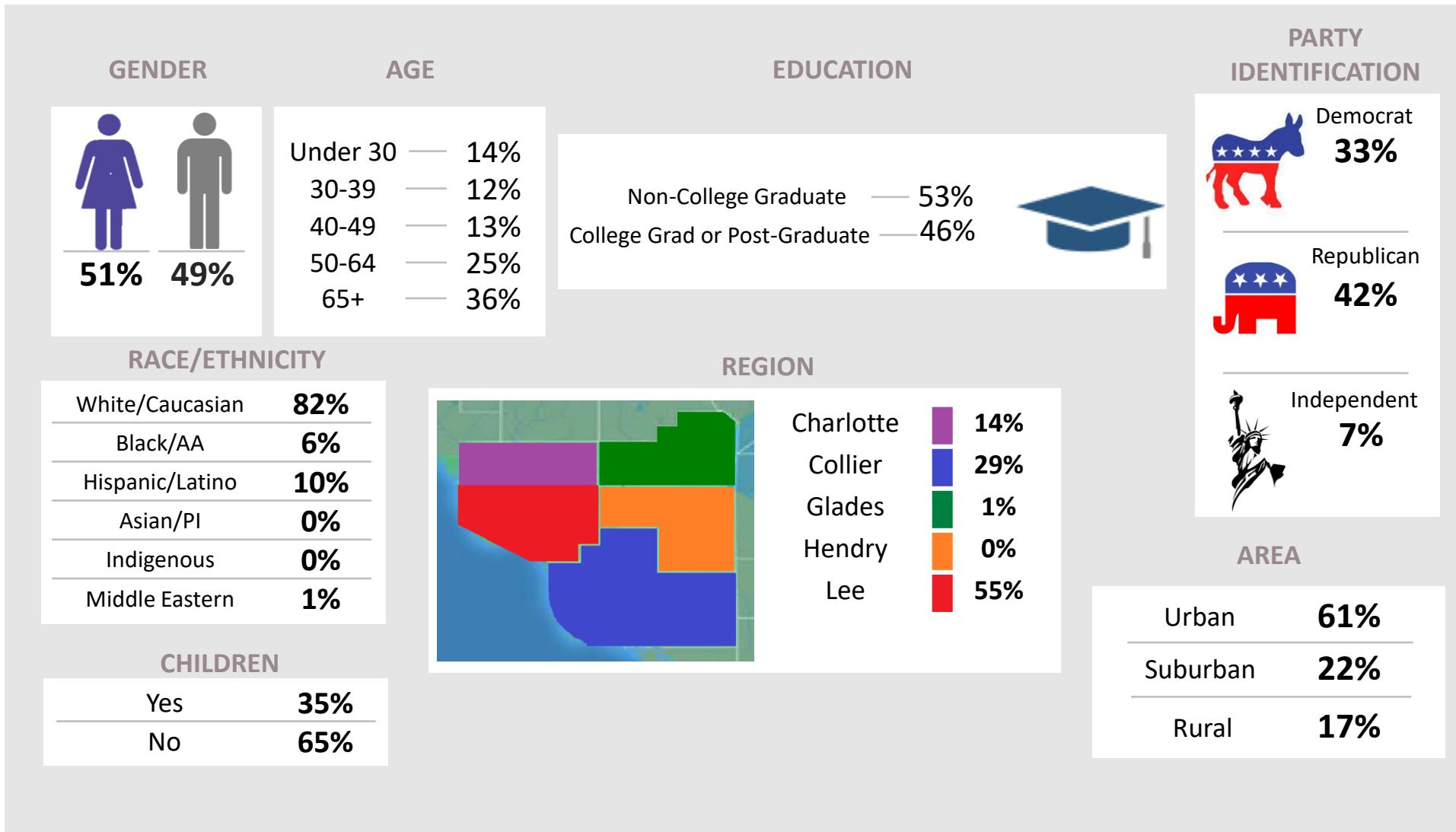

*Growing Climate Solutions*  
*Path to Positive*  
Southwest Florida

April 2022

# Methodology

- Lake Research Partners designed and administered this survey. It was conducted online via text-to-online from April 14 -April 18, 2022. The survey reached a total of 400 adults in the Fort Myers, Florida area, specifically in Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, and Lee counties. Telephone numbers for the sample were generated from a list of adults in the Fort Myers, Florida area. Respondents were sent a link via text which opened a website for them to take the survey.
- The sample was weighted slightly by gender, region, region by gender, age, race, and partisanship.
- The margin of error for the sample is +/- 4.9%. In interpreting survey results, all sample surveys are subject to possible sampling error; that is, the results of a survey may differ from those which would be obtained if the entire population were interviewed.

# Demographics of Adults



# Key Findings: Changes over Time

- There are two dynamics that are driving most of the change in views from 2018 to 2022, and one methodological note.
- First, Republicans, and to a lesser extent independents, have moved decisively from 2018. They are less concerned, less supportive of solutions, more cynical toward government, and more sensitive of economic cross pressures.
- Second, and very much relatedly, there have been substantial changes in partisan identity.
  - Younger men (those under 50), who stand out in many places for their changes in views since 2018 are more Republican today than in 2018 (50 percent identify as Republican today, up from 36 percent in 2018), and less Democratic (20 percent identify as Democratic today, down from 40 percent in 2018).
  - Though there is a small sample size for analysis, people under 30 went from 63 percent Democratic in 2018 to 15 percent today. While the percentage of people under 30 identifying as Republican increased from 20 to 39 percent, the percentage who identify as “something else” increased dramatically from 4 percent to 33 percent.
- Taken together, these changes present significant challenges. People who identify as Republicans are increasingly harder to engage with and persuade on issues of climate. Meanwhile, people who identify as Democrats continue to express significant concerns around climate change and support for solutions.
- Methodologically, we cannot discount the possibility that the time of year each survey was collected impacts the population surveyed given seasonal residency patterns. The 2018 survey was conducted in September and October of 2018, and this year’s survey was conducted in April of 2022. This year’s survey asked people if they live in their current residence year-round or seasonally, with 89 percent saying they live there seasonally. The 2018 survey did not ask this so there is no way to compare, but it remains a possibility that each survey sampled a different enough population that could inform some of these trends.

# Key Findings: Awareness, Concerns, Impacts

- People believe that climate change is happening and are personally concerned about it. A 68 percent majority believes climate change is happening and 53 percent are personally concerned about it.
  - A total of 87 percent of adults say that climate change is happening either due to human activities (26 percent), natural causes (24 percent), or a combination of both human activities and natural causes (37 percent).
  - However, here and throughout, views have changed dramatically since 2018. Then, 75 percent believed climate change was happening and 71 percent of people were personally concerned about it.
- People say the effects of climate change have already begun to happen and that it will harm future generations of people the most. A 54 percent majority believes that the effects of climate change have indeed already begun (down from 59 percent).
- A plurality of adults says taking action to prevent future climate change will harm the economy and harm them financially. Republicans are much more likely to hold these views.
- More than 3 in 4 say they are affected by the increased cost of energy, greater than any other climate impact. Fewer people today say they have been impacted by extreme weather, record heat waves, or flooding.

# Key Findings: Information and Trust

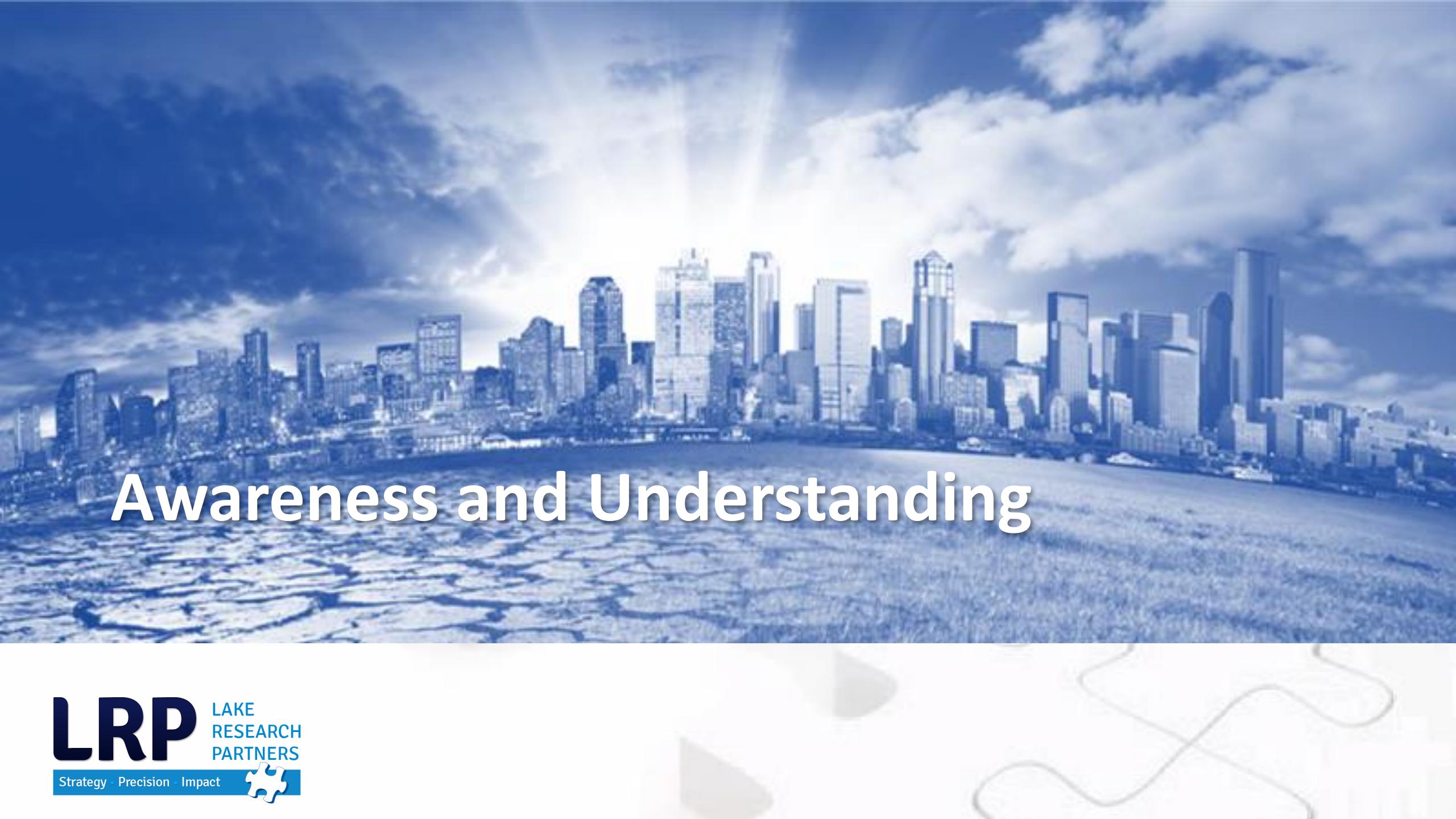
- Scientists are the most trusted source of information regarding climate change, while social media is the least trusted.
- There have been notable changes in trust that shed light on partisan trends in perceptions toward key institutions.
  - Not surprisingly, Democrats are now much more trusting of the President (79 percent) compared to 2018 (11 percent). Similarly, Republicans are less trusting (11 percent) compared to 2018 (44 percent).
  - Republicans are also notably less trusting toward scientists (36 percent today, down from 56 percent in 2018) and health professionals (24 percent today down from 43 percent in 2018).
- The partisan trends on trust toward scientists and health professionals likely stem from the experiences of the past two years during the pandemic.
- Encouragingly, trust for local community leaders increased since 2018 across party lines.

# Key Findings: Values

- People believe clean air and water are fundamental rights and remain hopeful that we can reduce the pollution that is causing climate change. A strong 78 percent majority strongly agree that clean water is a critical right for all people, and 68 percent strongly agree that clean air is a critical right for all people.
- People today are less hopeful, less likely to believe we need to take action now, and more likely to believe nothing we can do will stop climate change.
- A strong sense of government dysfunction likely informs this cynicism.
  - More than two-thirds of adults (68 percent) continue to agree that we could address climate change, but our government is broken and can't agree on how to do it.
  - Today just 26 percent agree that "America will reduce the pollution that is causing climate change," down from 51 percent in 2018.
- All adults show a growing cynicism and declining hope toward preventing climate change.
  - Agreement with the statement "I'm hopeful that we can reduce the pollution that is causing climate change" declined 10 points, from 76 percent to 66 percent.
  - Agreement with the statement "nothing we can do will stop climate change" increased 8 points, from 31 to 39.

# Key Findings: Solutions and Program

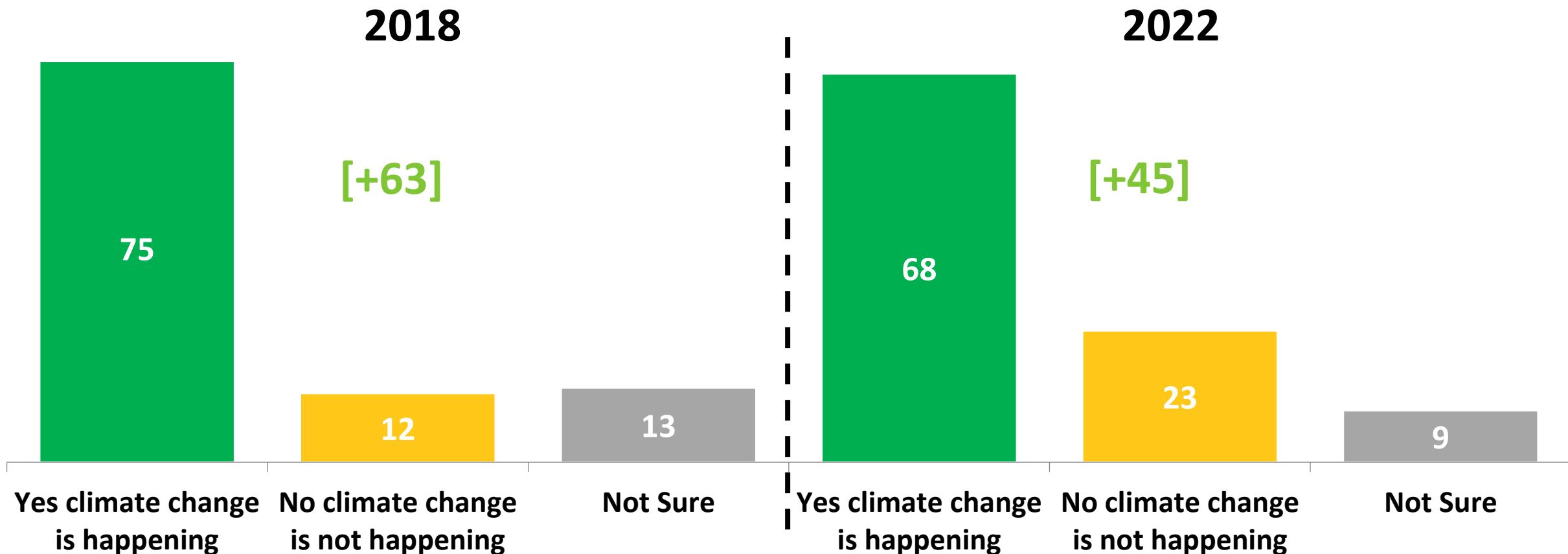
- Support for proposals to reduce climate change pollution remains strong, even with some declines. An 85 percent majority favors modernizing America's electric grid, and 74 percent favor charging corporate polluters a fee for the pollution they create.
  - Support for providing corporate tax credits to expand clean energy declined from 80 percent to 65 percent, and support for passing laws for more efficient buildings and cars declined from 75 to 62 percent. Republicans lead the erosion in support for each.
- **People want their city or town to prepare for the impacts of climate change.** A 56 percent majority say they want their city or town to prepare for the impacts of climate change, with developing clean energy like wind or solar, conserving energy, educating the public about climate change, and working to reduce climate impacts as the top actions they wish their city or town were taking. However, this is down from 74 percent in 2018.



# Awareness and Understanding

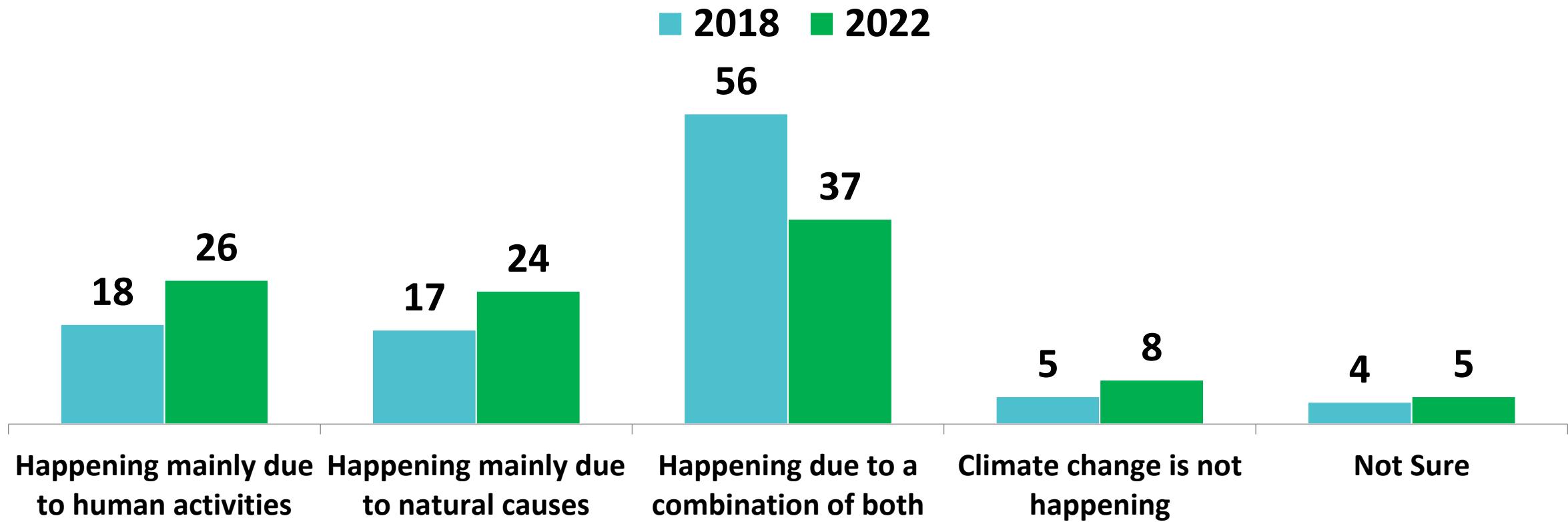
# More than two thirds of adults say that climate change is happening, but fewer hold this belief compared to 2018.

Climate change refers to the idea that the world's average temperature is increasing, may increase more in the future, and that the world's climate may change as a result. What do you think?



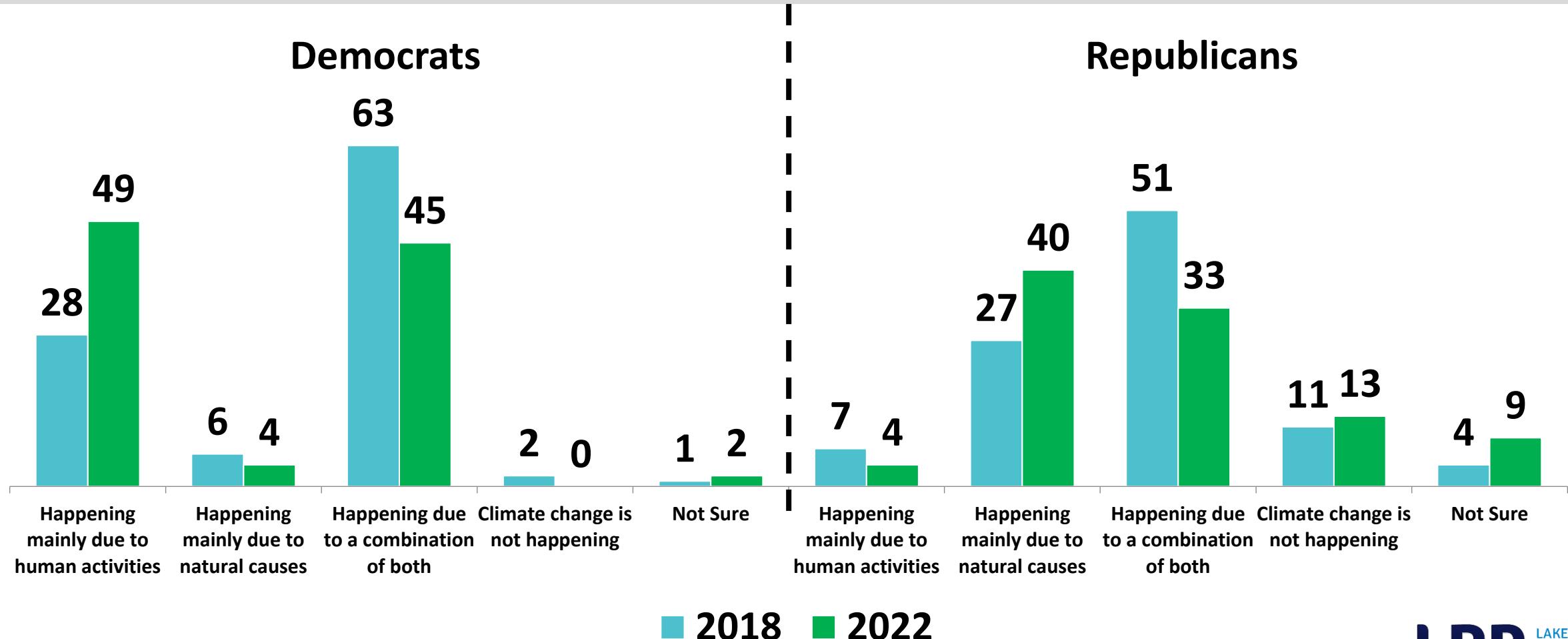
A plurality believe climate change is happening due to a combination of both human activities and natural causes. However, compared to 2018, fewer respondents believe climate change is due to both. There have been increases in the proportion who say it is happening due to human activities and due to natural causes.

When it comes to climate change, which of the following is closer to your opinion?



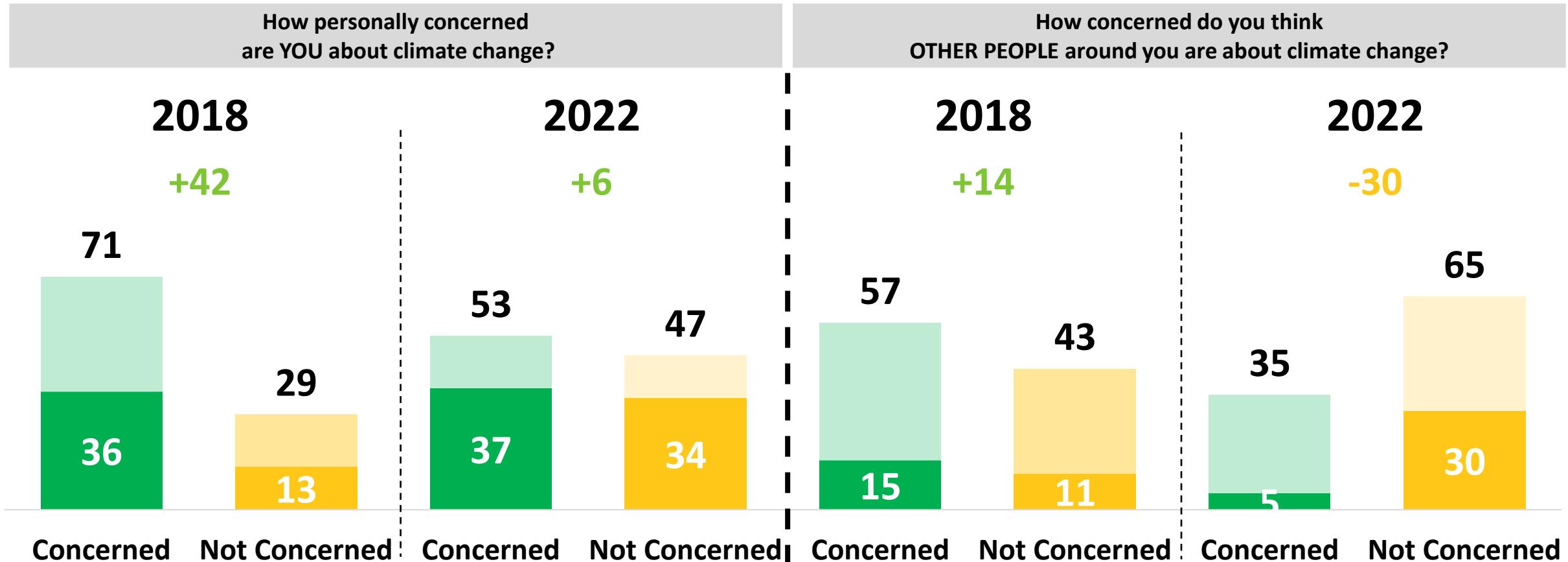
Democrats are more likely today to say climate change is happening mainly due to human activities while Republicans are more likely today to say that climate change is happening mainly due to natural causes.

When it comes to climate change, which of the following is closer to your opinion?



■ 2018 ■ 2022

# People express fewer concerns about climate change today compared to 2018 and believe other people around them are less concerned as well.



# Democrats remain concerned but among Republicans and younger men, there has been a significant decrease in concern around climate change.

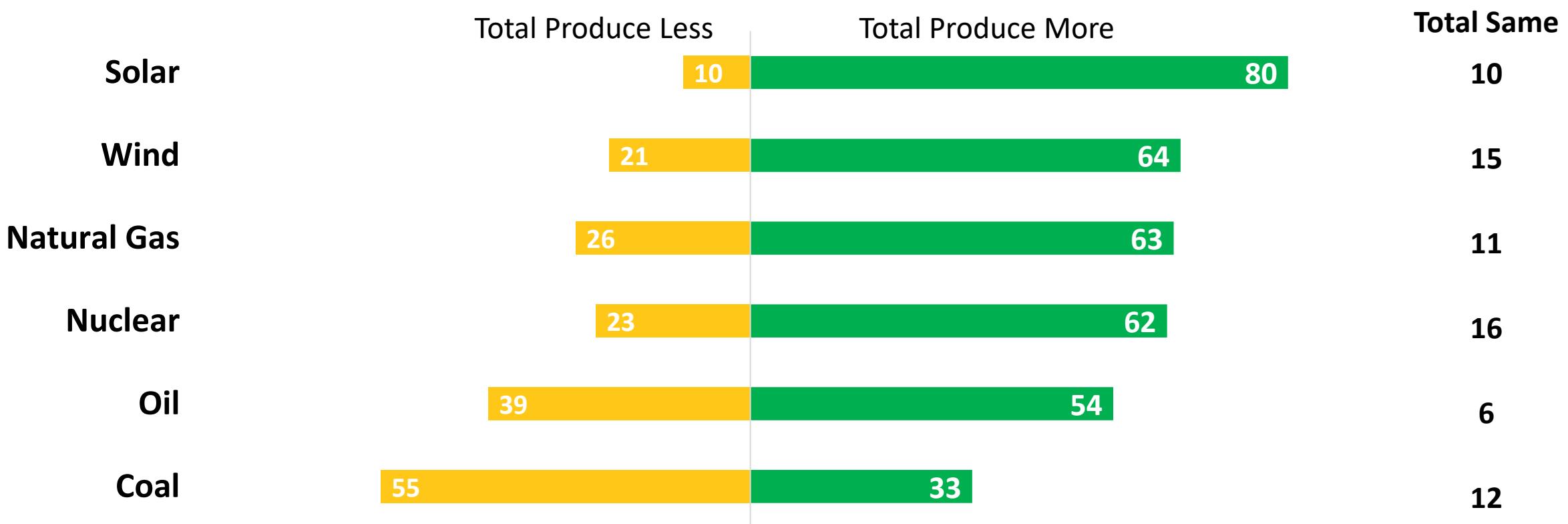
How personally concerned are YOU about climate change?				How concerned do you think OTHER PEOPLE around you are about climate change?			
	Total Concerned		Change		Total Concerned		Change
	2018	2022			2018	2022	
Men <50	79	39	-40		Men <50	59	22
Women <50	79	58	-21		Women <50	61	28
Men 50+	64	53	-11		Men 50+	53	42
Women 50+	68	58	-10		Women 50+	57	40
Democrats	96	93	-3		Democrats	66	51
Independents	79	62	-17		Independents	57	39
Republicans	47	21	-26		Republicans	48	21



# Energy Sources

**People believe that the U.S. should be producing more solar, wind, natural gas, and nuclear energy. A majority says we should produce less energy from coal, but views toward oil are more divided.**

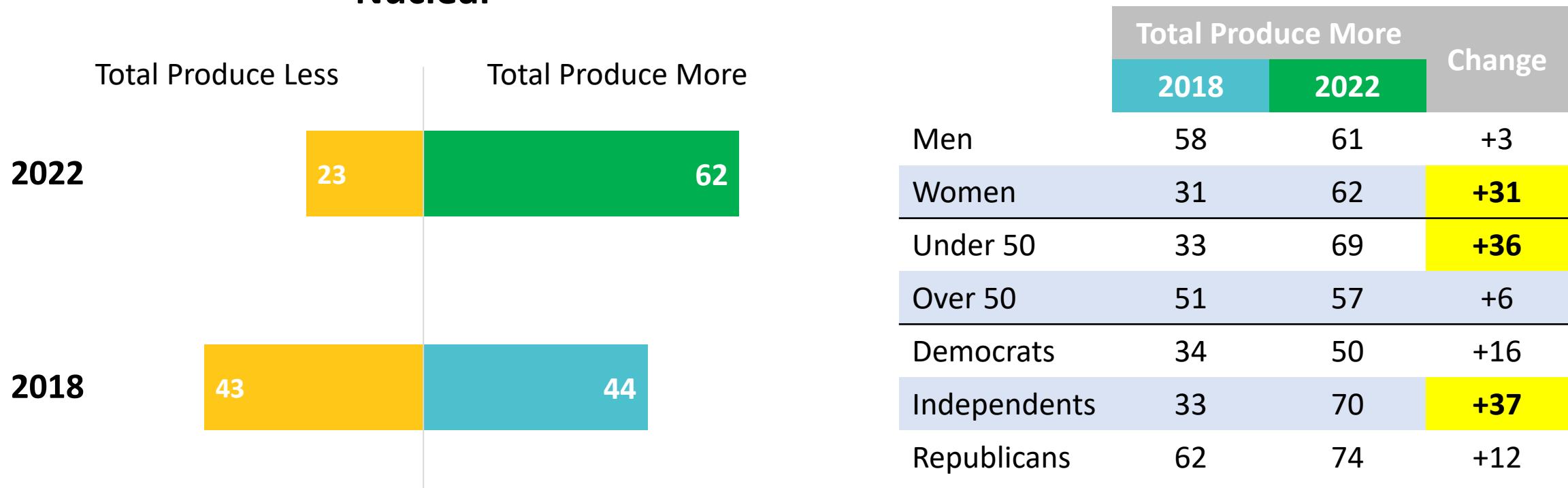
For each of the following, please indicate if you think the United States should be producing much more, somewhat more, somewhat less, much less, or the same amount of energy from each source as it is today.



**Women, people under 50, and independents are among those who have shifted the most on nuclear energy since 2018.**

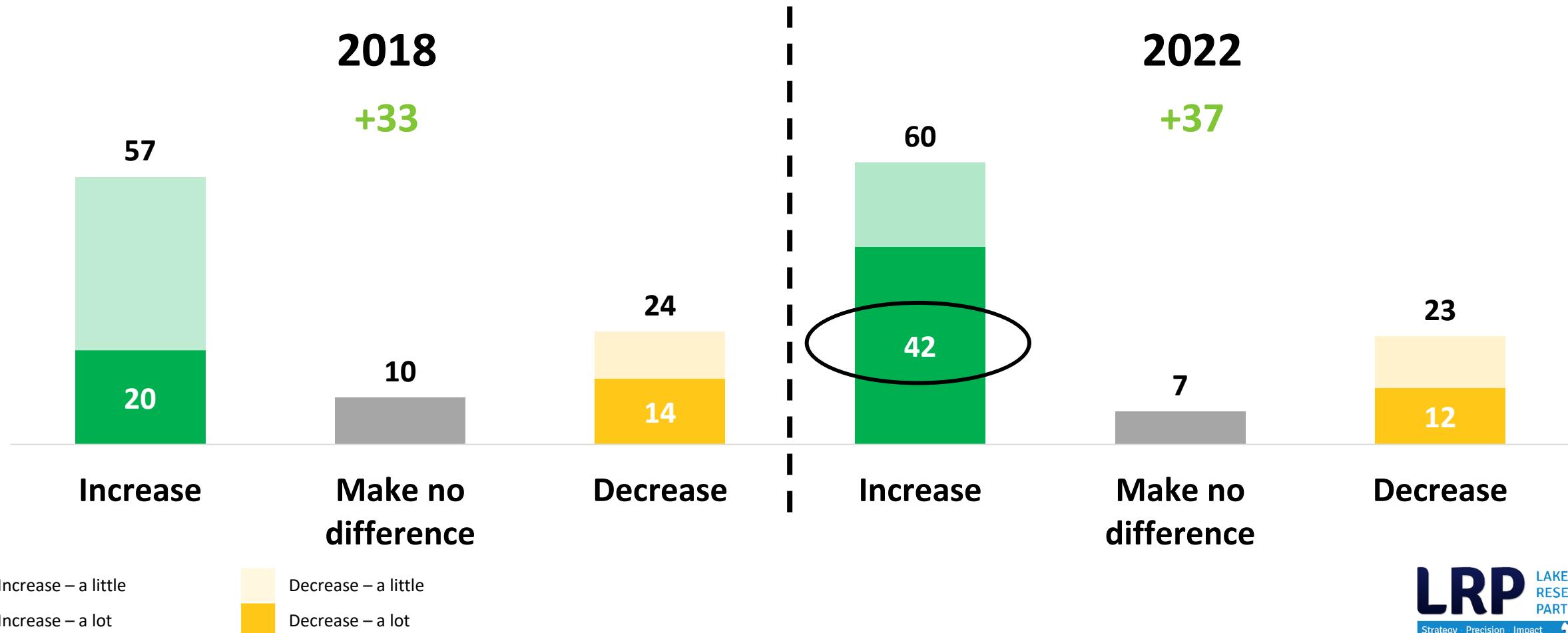
For each of the following, please indicate if you think the United States should be producing much more, somewhat more, somewhat less, much less, or the same amount of energy from each source as it is today.

## Nuclear



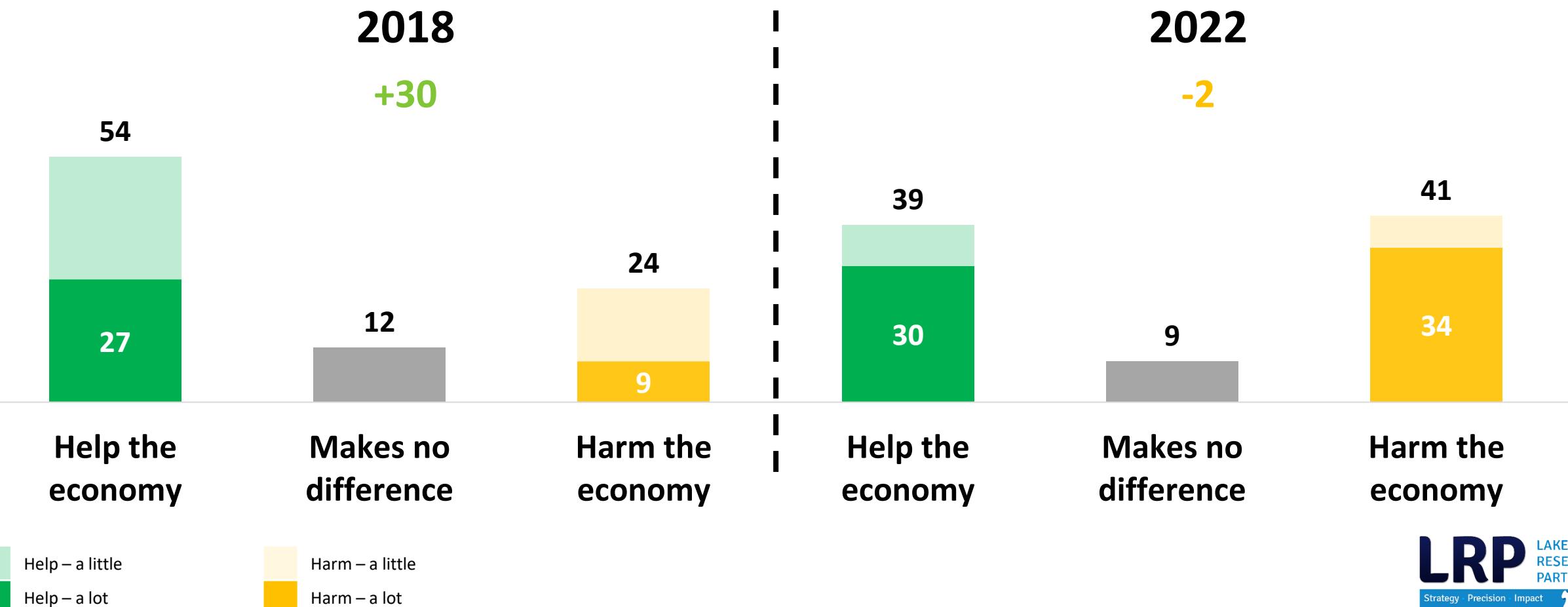
**Majorities of adults continue to believe that taking steps to prevent future climate change would increase the cost of energy for consumers, however the percentage who say it would increase “a lot” doubled.**

If the United States took steps to help prevent future climate change, how would it affect the cost of energy for consumers?



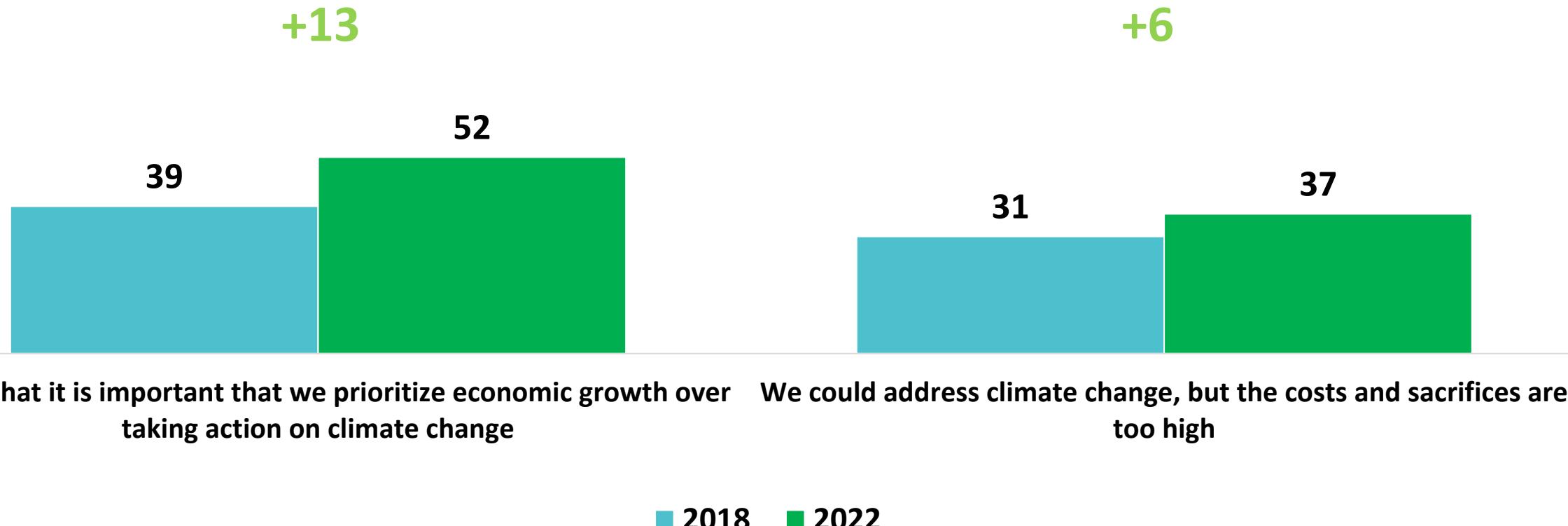
The total percentage of adults who believe that helping to prevent future climate change would harm the economy has risen tremendously. Likewise, the total amount of respondents who say this would help the economy has decreased by 15%.

If the United States took steps to help prevent future climate change, how would it affect the economy?



# Compared to 2018, more respondents say economic growth should be prioritized over taking action on climate change.

Now you are going to see a series of statements. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with each one. [% Total Agree]



I think that it is important that we prioritize economic growth over taking action on climate change

We could address climate change, but the costs and sacrifices are too high

■ 2018 ■ 2022

# Older men and Republicans are more likely to prioritize the economy over climate change compared to 2018.

Now you are going to see a series of statements. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with each one. [% Total Agree]

I think that it is more important that we prioritize economic growth over taking action on climate change

	2018	2022	Change
All adults	39	52	+13
Men under 50	50	55	+5
Women under 50	37	50	+13
Men over 50	32	52	+20
Women over 50	41	51	+10
Democrat	31	19	-12
Independent	36	46	+10
Republican	51	79	+28

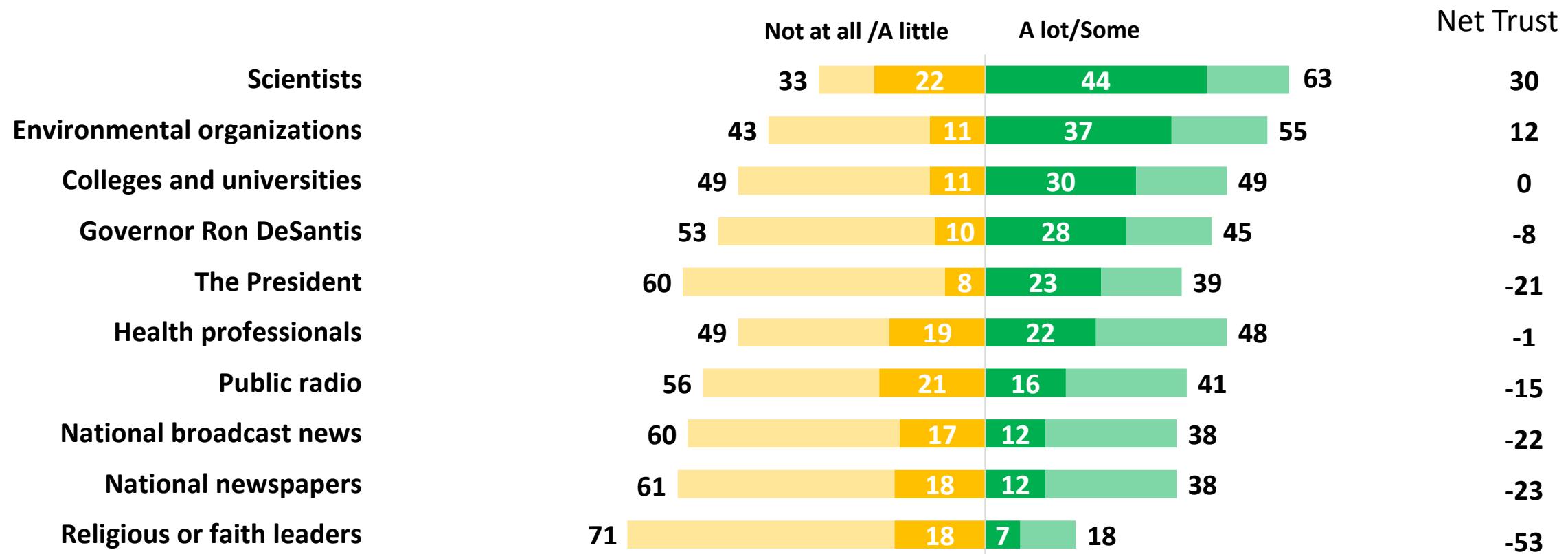
We could address climate change, but the costs and sacrifices are too high

	2018	2022	Change
All adults	31	37	+6
Men under 50	34	33	-1
Women under 50	31	27	-4
Men over 50	27	40	+13
Women over 50	35	43	+8
Democrat	21	21	0
Independent	34	32	-2
Republican	38	56	+18

# Information and Trust

# People trust Scientists the most as a source of information about climate change, followed by environmental organizations and colleges and universities.

As a source of information about climate change, how much do you trust each of the following?

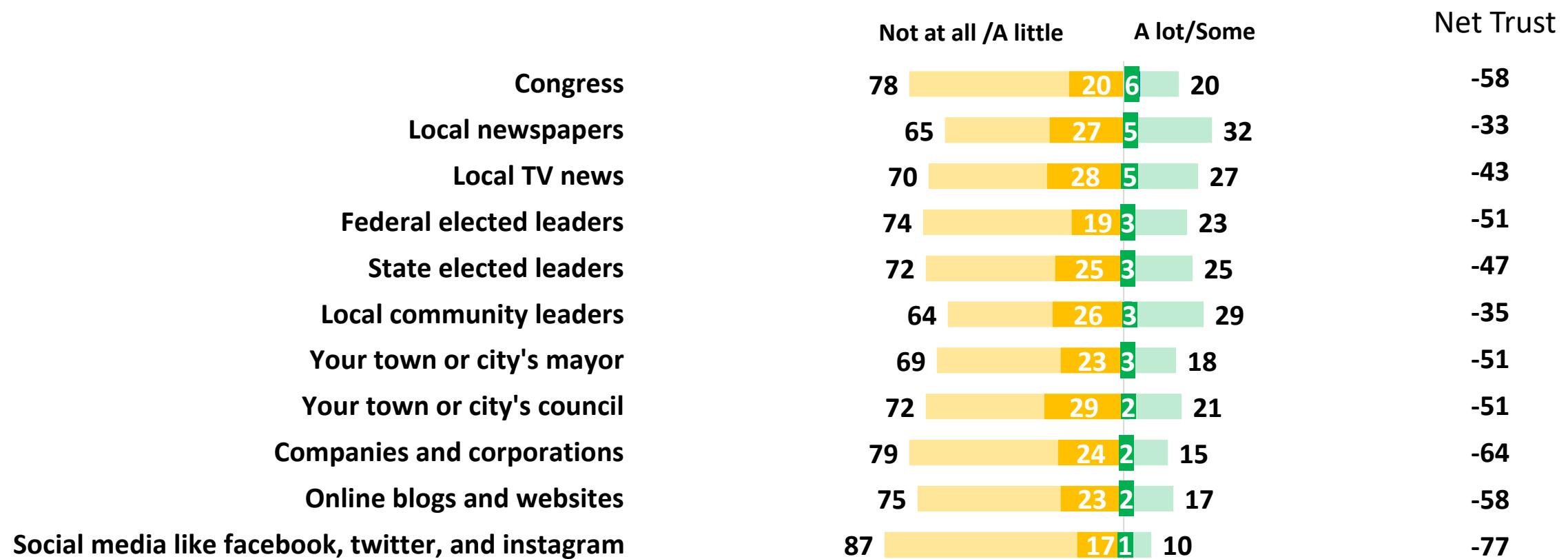


Some  
A lot

Not at all  
A little

# People have low levels of trust for elected leaders, government, and media.

As a source of information about climate change, how much do you trust each of the following?

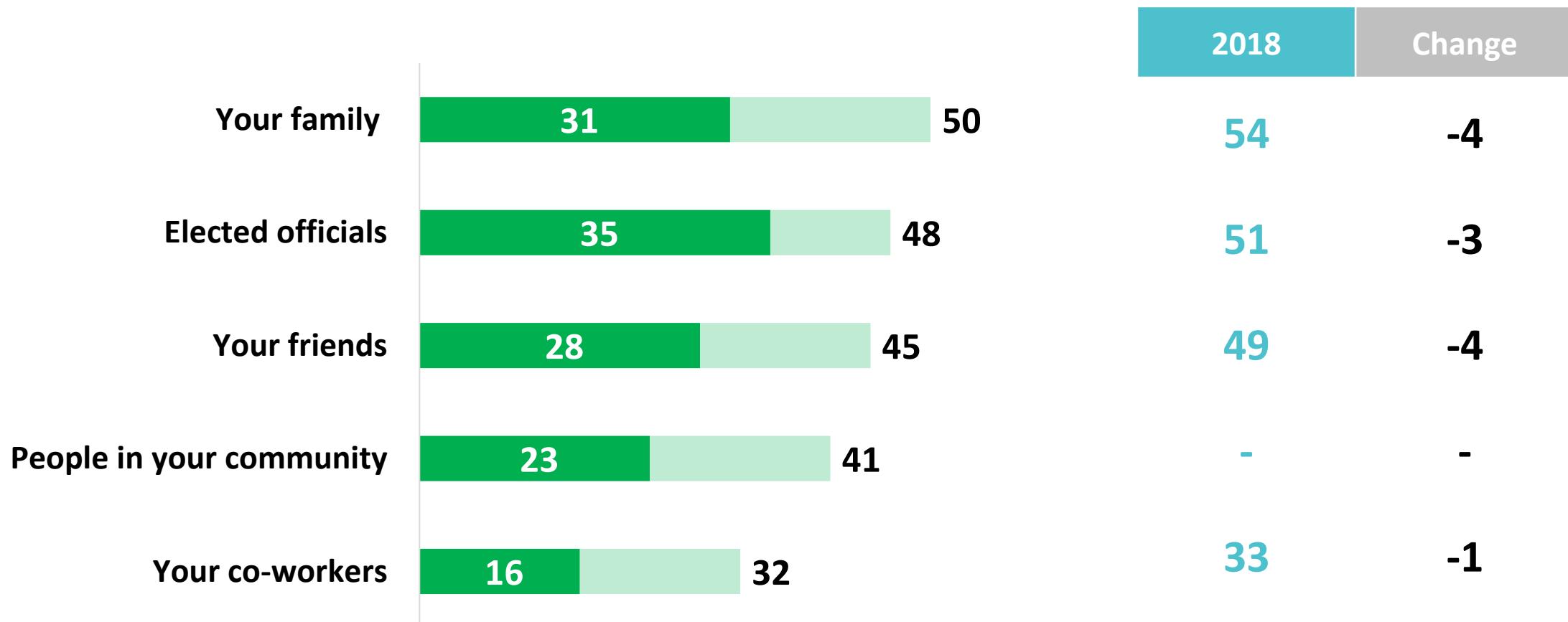


**Partisanship informs changes in trust toward the President from Trump to Biden. Declining trust toward health professionals and scientists, particularly among Republicans, likely stems from polarization during the pandemic. In one bright spot, people across party lines have higher levels of trust toward local community leaders.**

As a source of information about climate change, how much do you trust each of the following? [Change in Total Trust]							
The President	2018	2022	Change	Health professionals	2018	2022	Change
All adults	26	39	+13		All adults	61	48
Democrats	11	79	+68	Health professionals	77	81	+4
Independents	17	47	+30		Independents	72	53
Republicans	44	11	-33	Health professionals	43	24	-19
Local community leaders			Change		2018	2022	Change
All adults	23	29	+6	Scientists	74	63	-11
Democrats	27	33	+6		Democrats	92	96
Independents	18	31	+13	Scientists	85	74	-11
Republicans	18	24	+6		Republicans	56	36

# Participants chose elected officials and their families as the top groups of people to speak out to about climate change.

How important is it to you to personally speak out to each of the following about climate change?

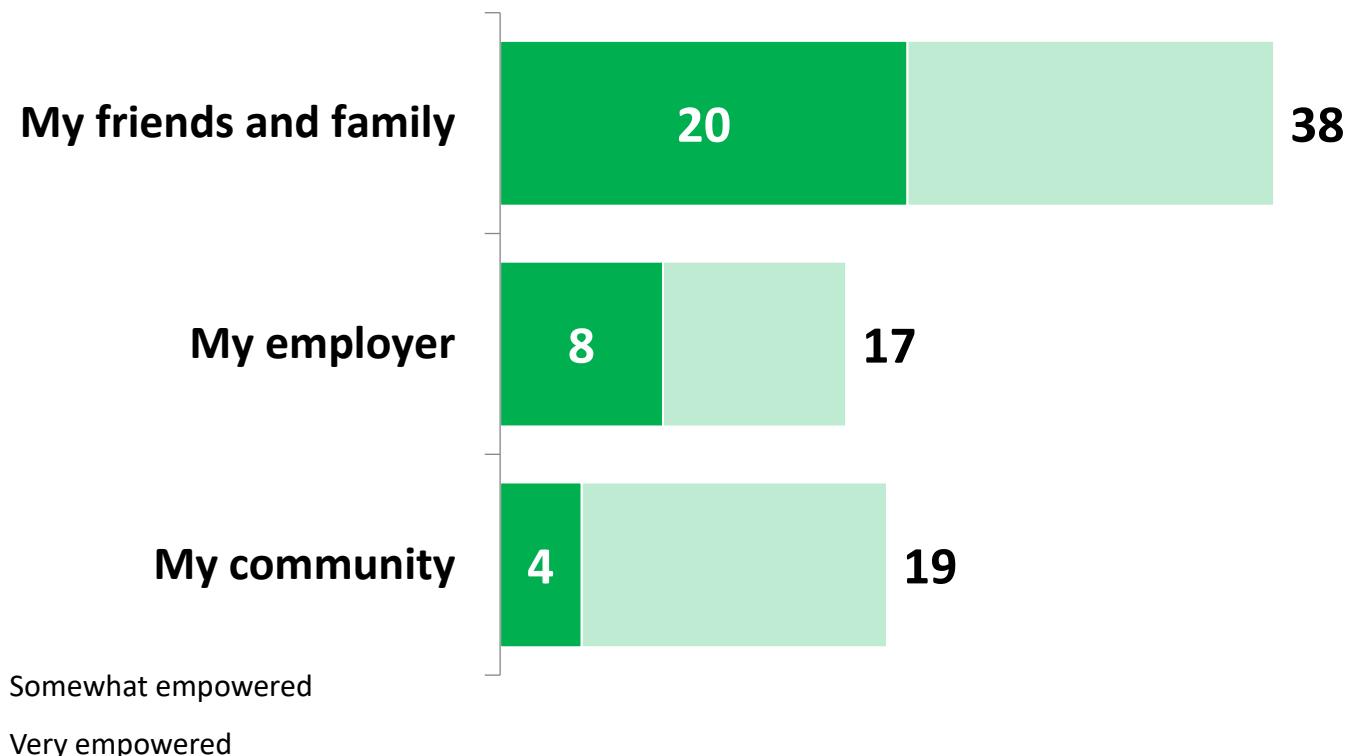


Somewhat important

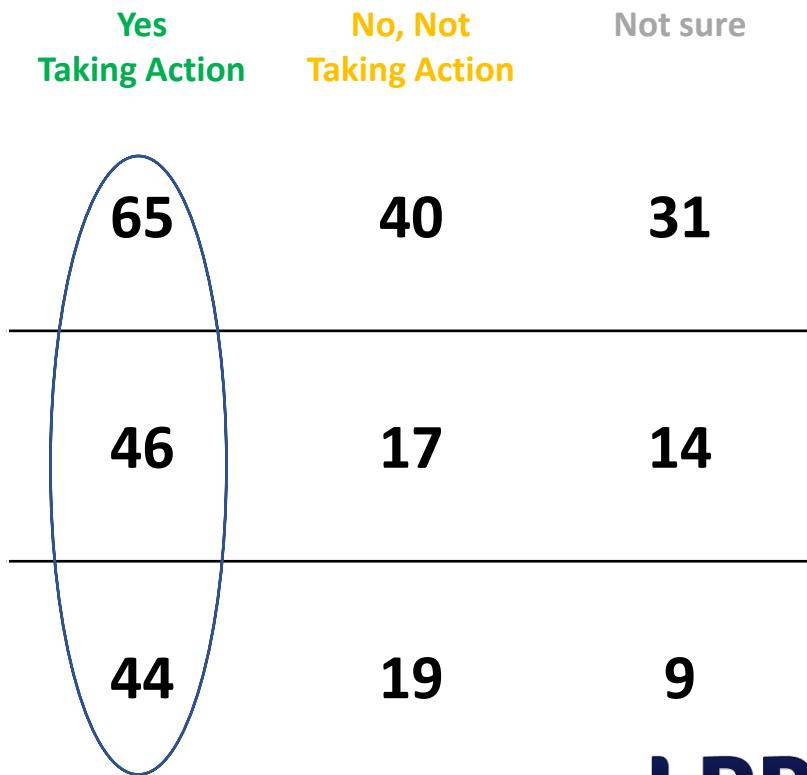
Very important

**People feel more empowered within their friends and family than their communities or employers. People who say their town or city is taking action to prepare for the impacts of climate change are more likely than others to feel empowered.**

How empowered do you feel to help advance solutions to climate change within each of the following?



% saying they feel empowered, show by if city or town is taking action to prepare for impacts of climate change

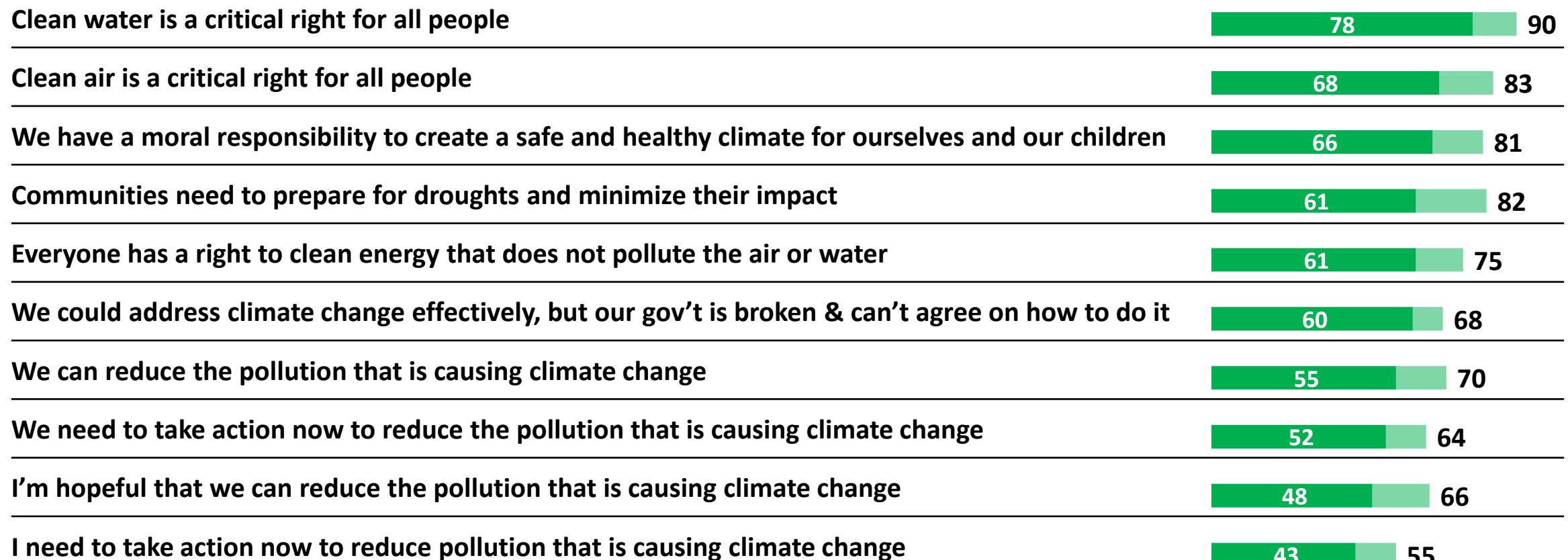




# Values

**Clean water and clean air are foundational values. People also strongly believe we have a moral responsibility to our children and that communities need to prepare for droughts and minimize their impact.**

Now you are going to see a series of statements. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with each one.

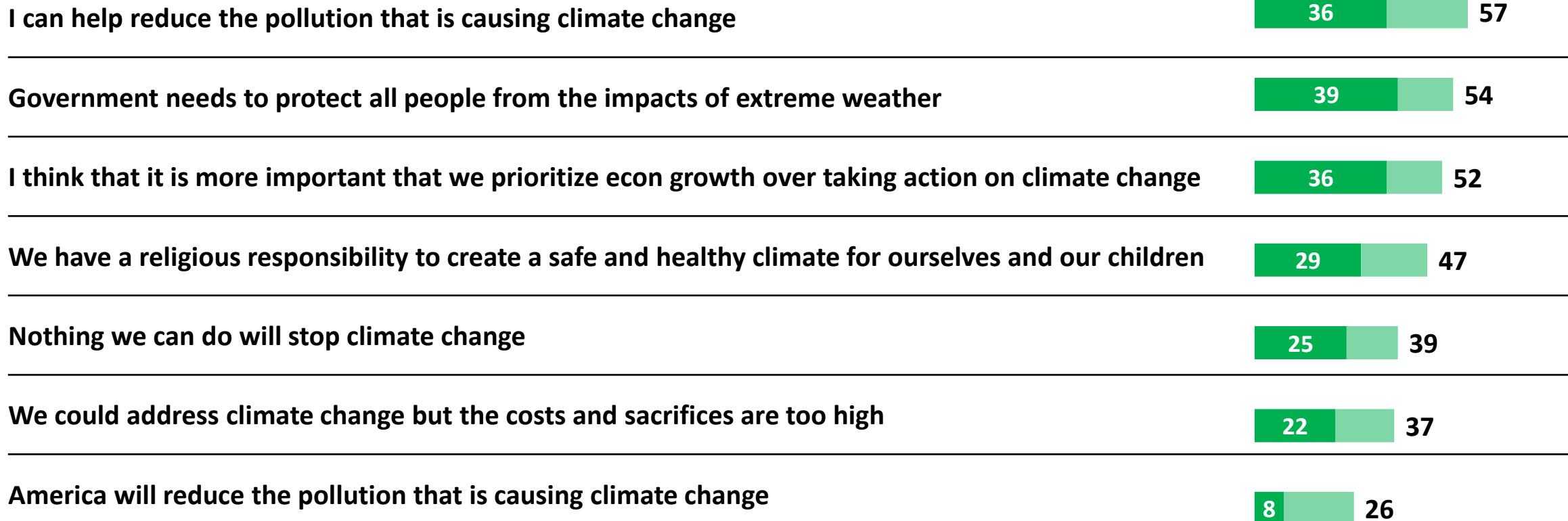


Not so strongly agree

Strongly agree

**People are not optimistic that America will reduce the pollution that is causing climate change, despite a majority who believe government needs to protect people from the impacts of extreme weather.**

Now you are going to see a series of statements. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with each one.



Not so strongly agree

Strongly agree

**All adults show a growing cynicism towards positive thinking around climate change. Apart from Democrats in both 2022 and 2018, all other demographics have become less hopeful, particularly men under 50.**

Now you are going to see a series of statements. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with each one. [% Total Agree]

I'm hopeful that we can reduce the pollution that is causing climate change

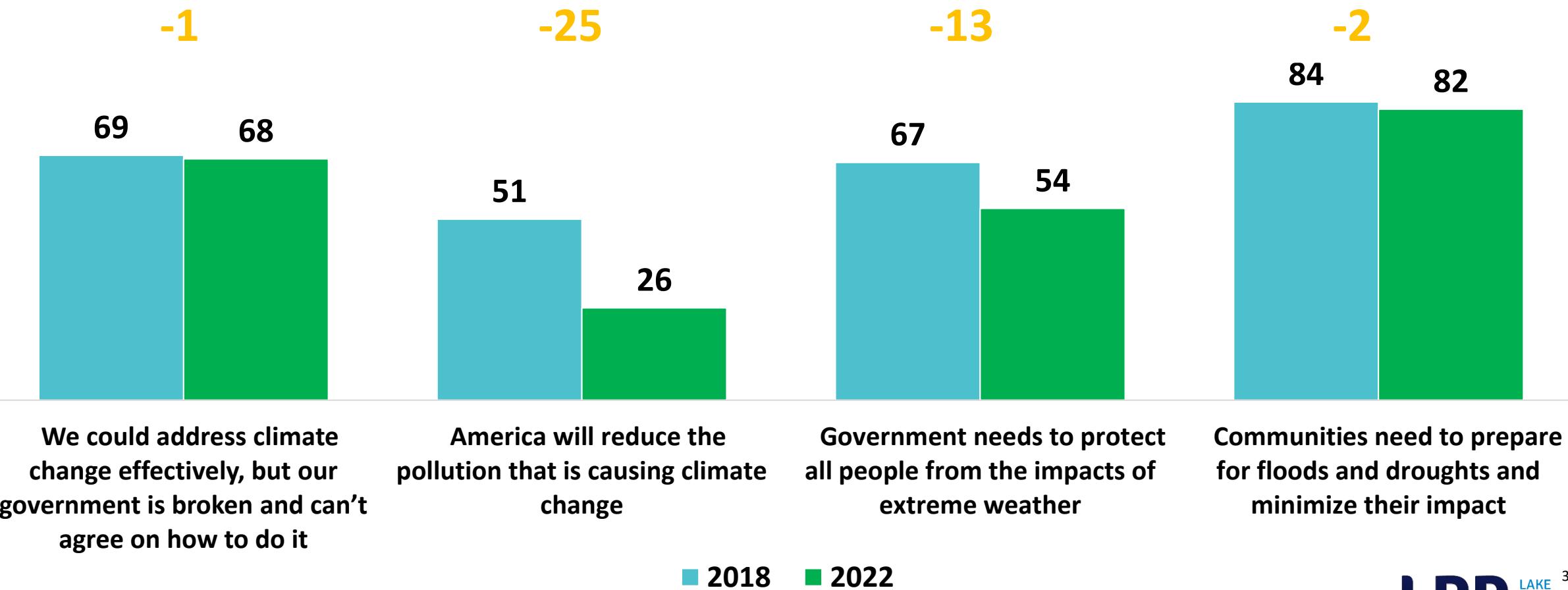
	2018	2022	Change
All adults	76	66	-10
Men under 50	80	54	-26
Women under 50	81	71	-10
Men over 50	73	67	-6
Women over 50	74	68	-6
Democrat	91	91	0
Independent	80	75	-5
Republican	61	50	-11

Nothing we can do will stop climate change

	2018	2022	Change
All adults	31	39	+8
Men under 50	34	47	+13
Women under 50	20	30	+10
Men over 50	38	42	+4
Women over 50	29	36	+7
Democrat	22	10	-12
Independent	30	35	+5
Republican	41	61	+20

**There is a feeling of cynicism towards the government and its role in helping reduce the causes of climate change, but an expectation that the government will help manage the impacts.**

Now you are going to see a series of statements. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with each one. [% Total Agree]

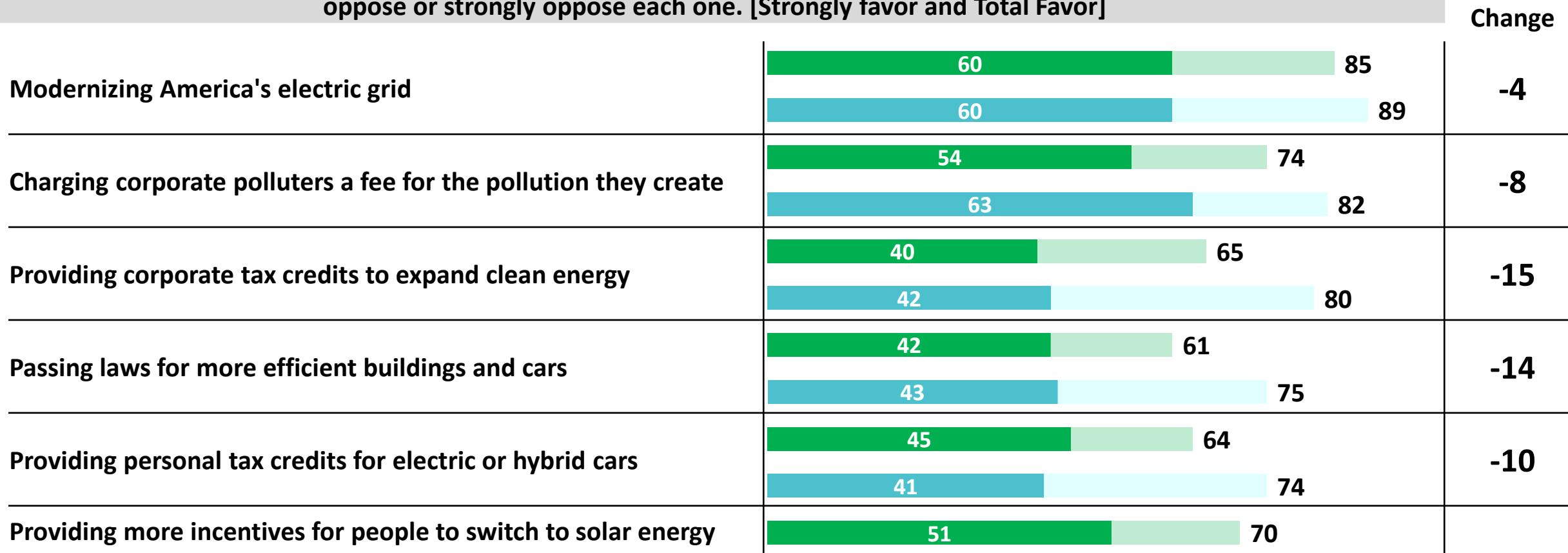


A wide-angle, slightly hazy photograph of a forested hillside. The foreground is dominated by dark, silhouetted trees. A bright, light-colored path or stream bed cuts through the center of the image, leading the eye towards the horizon. The background is filled with more hills and mist, creating a sense of depth and tranquility.

# Solutions

**People strongly favor modernizing America's electric grid and charging corporate polluters a fee for the pollution they create. Support for each policy proposal decreased since 2018, most notably for corporate tax credits to expand clean energy and laws for more efficient buildings and cars.**

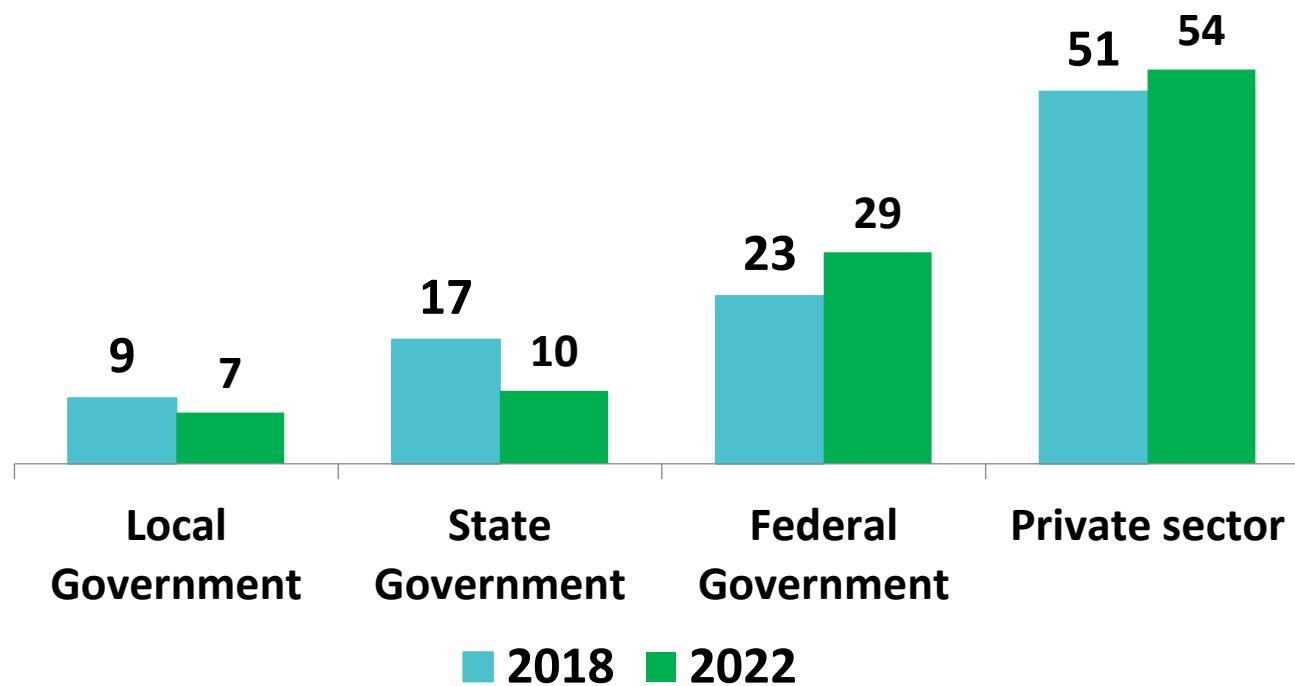
Below are proposals to reduce climate change pollution. Please indicate if you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose each one. [Strongly favor and Total Favor]



2022 2018

# People continue to believe the private sector is most likely to advance solutions on climate change.

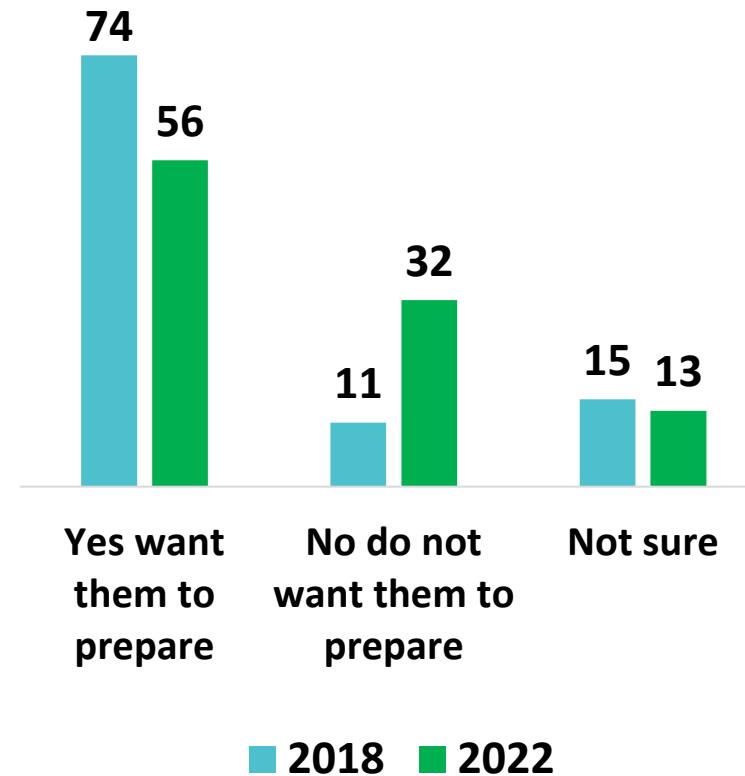
Which of the following do you think is most likely to advance solutions on climate change?



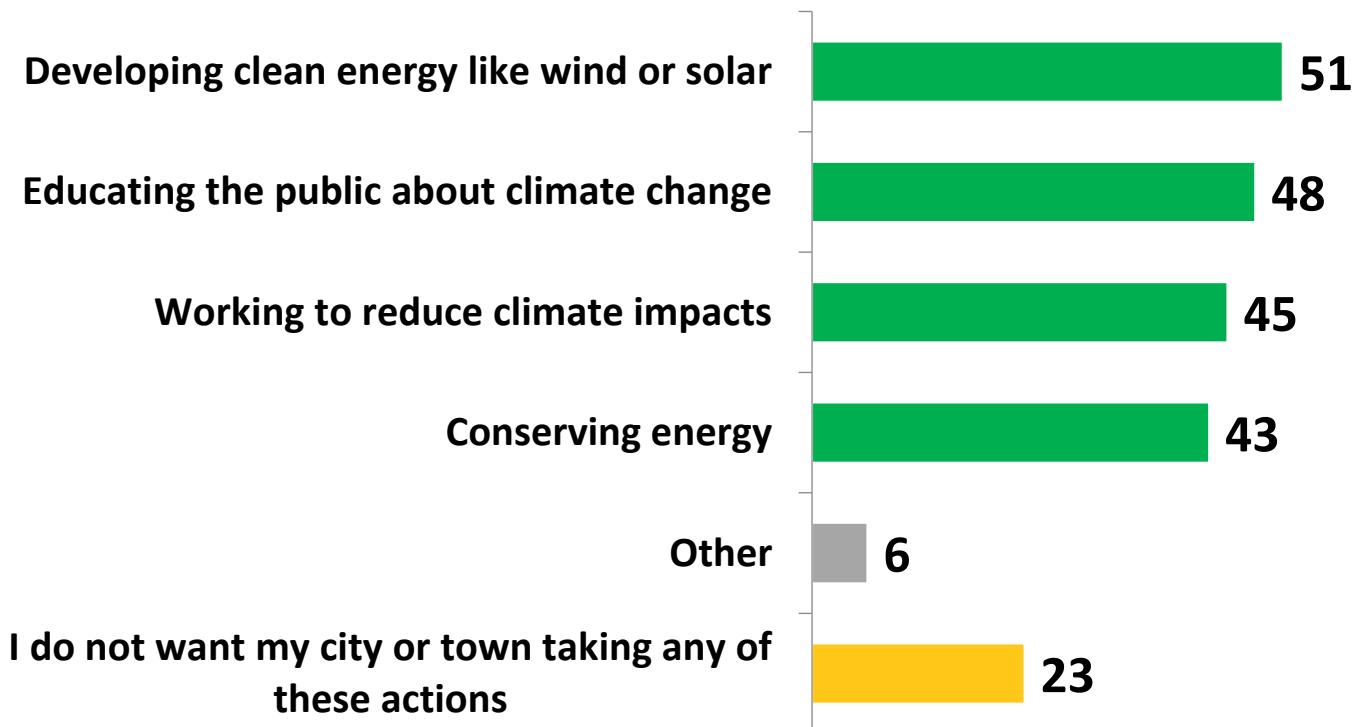
2022	Local Gov	State Gov	Fed. Gov	Priv. Sec
Charlotte	11	14	17	58
Collier	9	8	29	54
Lee	6	9	31	54
Democrat	9	4	55	33
Independent/DK	12	9	31	49
Republican	7	16	10	67

When it comes to participants wanting their town or city to take action, 56% say yes, a notable decline from 2018. More specifically, developing clean energy, educating the public about climate change, working to reduce climate impacts, and conserving energy are the top actions they wish to see.

Do you want the town or city where you live to do anything to prepare for the impacts of climate change or not?

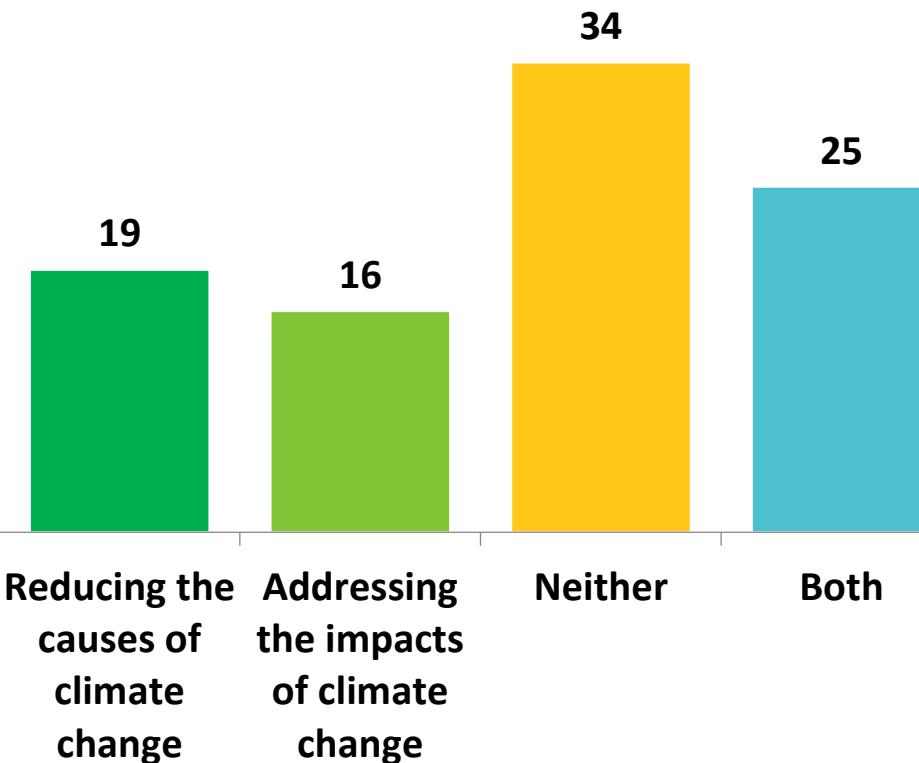


What actions do you wish your city or town were taking on climate change?

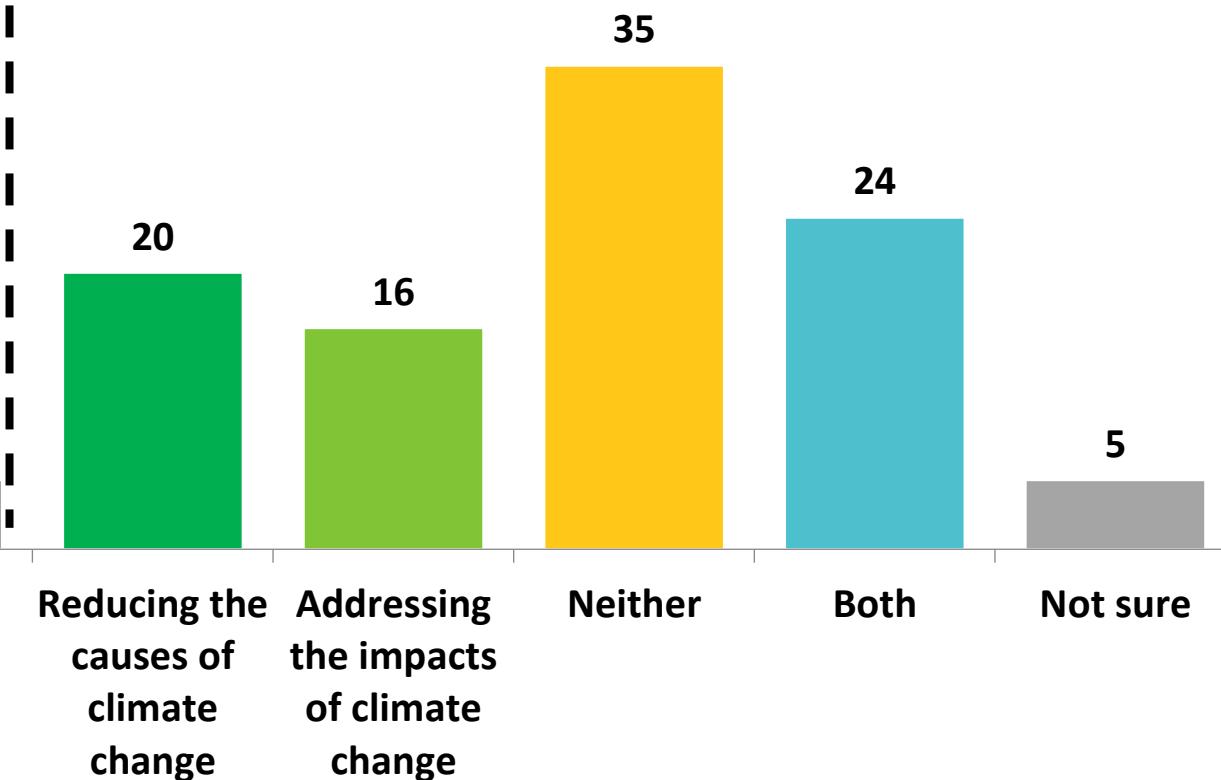


**Preferences for government approach on climate change do not differ between local and federal government. Of those who choose an option, slightly more prefer reducing the causes of climate change.**

Which of the following approaches to climate change do you prefer your LOCAL government take?

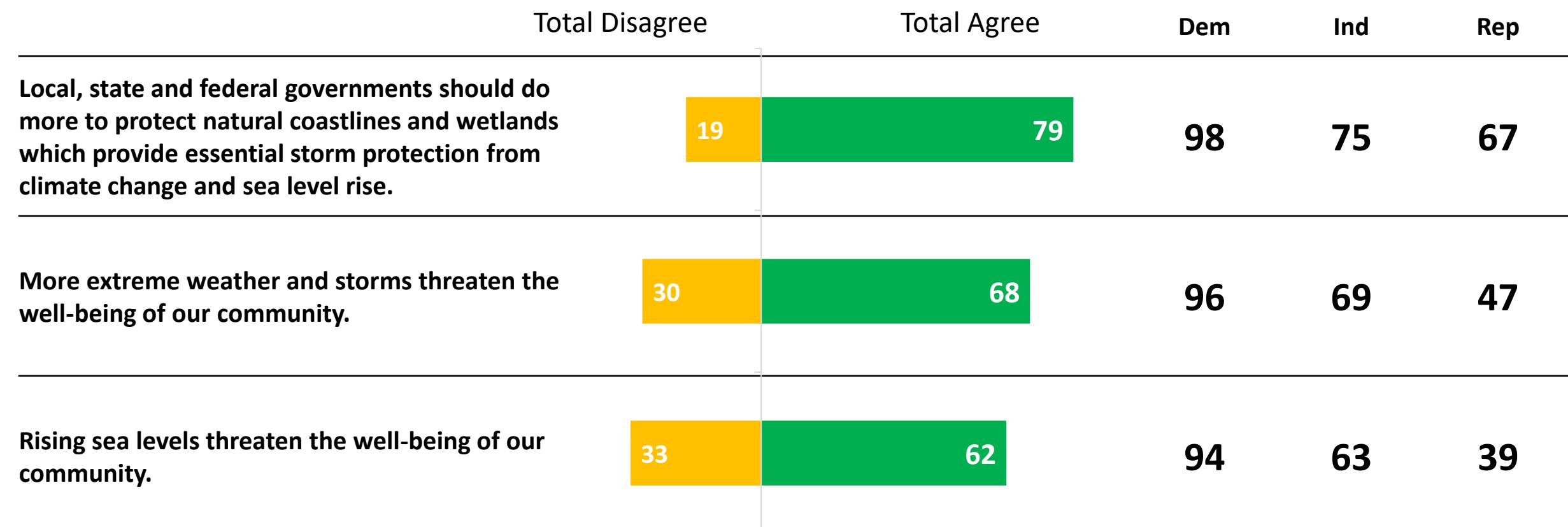


Which of the following approaches to climate change do you prefer our FEDERAL government take?



**Majorities want government to do more to protect coastlines and say extreme weather and rising sea levels threaten the well being of their community. Republicans are much less likely to say extreme weather or rising sea levels pose a threat.**

**Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement:**



People under 50 and Republicans are less likely to agree government needs to protect people from the impacts of extreme weather. Across demographics, people are less likely to believe America will reduce pollution. There were notable declines among independents and Republicans, but Democrats also show signs of cynicism.

Now you are going to see a series of statements. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with each one. [% Total Agree]

America will reduce the pollution that is causing climate change			Government needs to protect all people from the impacts of extreme weather				
	2018	2022	Change		2018	2022	Change
All adults	51	26	-25	All adults	67	54	-13
Men under 50	54	29	-25	Men under 50	72	40	<b>-32</b>
Women under 50	56	28	-28	Women under 50	85	62	<b>-23</b>
Men over 50	44	25	-19	Men over 50	64	54	-10
Women over 50	51	25	-26	Women over 50	55	59	+4
Democrat	48	35	-13	Democrat	93	91	-2
Independent	55	22	<b>-33</b>	Independent	70	63	-7
Republican	50	20	<b>-30</b>	Republican	46	28	<b>-18</b>

Compared to 2018, people under 50 are less likely to agree with the efficacy of individual and collective action, although the collective action is still viewed as more effective. Republicans are less likely to believe they can help reduce pollution, but just as likely to agree that “we” can reduce pollution.

Now you are going to see a series of statements. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with each one. [% Total Agree]

I can help reduce the pollution that is causing climate change

	2018	2022	Change
All adults	67	57	-10
Men under 50	67	51	<b>-16</b>
Women under 50	81	62	<b>-19</b>
Men over 50	64	56	-8
Women over 50	62	60	-2
Democrat	89	89	0
Independent	71	64	-7
Republican	50	35	<b>-15</b>

We can reduce the pollution that is causing climate change

	2018	2022	Change
All adults	78	70	-8
Men under 50	86	62	<b>-24</b>
Women under 50	82	64	<b>-18</b>
Men over 50	85	74	-11
Women over 50	64	76	+12
Democrat	91	93	+2
Independent	87	74	-13
Republican	62	61	-1



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