



TO: Interested Parties
 FR: Mark Riddle, Future Majority
 RE: Voter Opinions on the Debt Ceiling and Federal Government Spending Priorities
 DT: January 18, 2023

Future Majority commissioned Change Research to study voter attitudes on the looming debate in Congress over the debt ceiling and federal government spending priorities. Unless otherwise specified, the data in this memo is from a January 13-17, 2023 survey of 2,171 voters in competitive congressional districts.

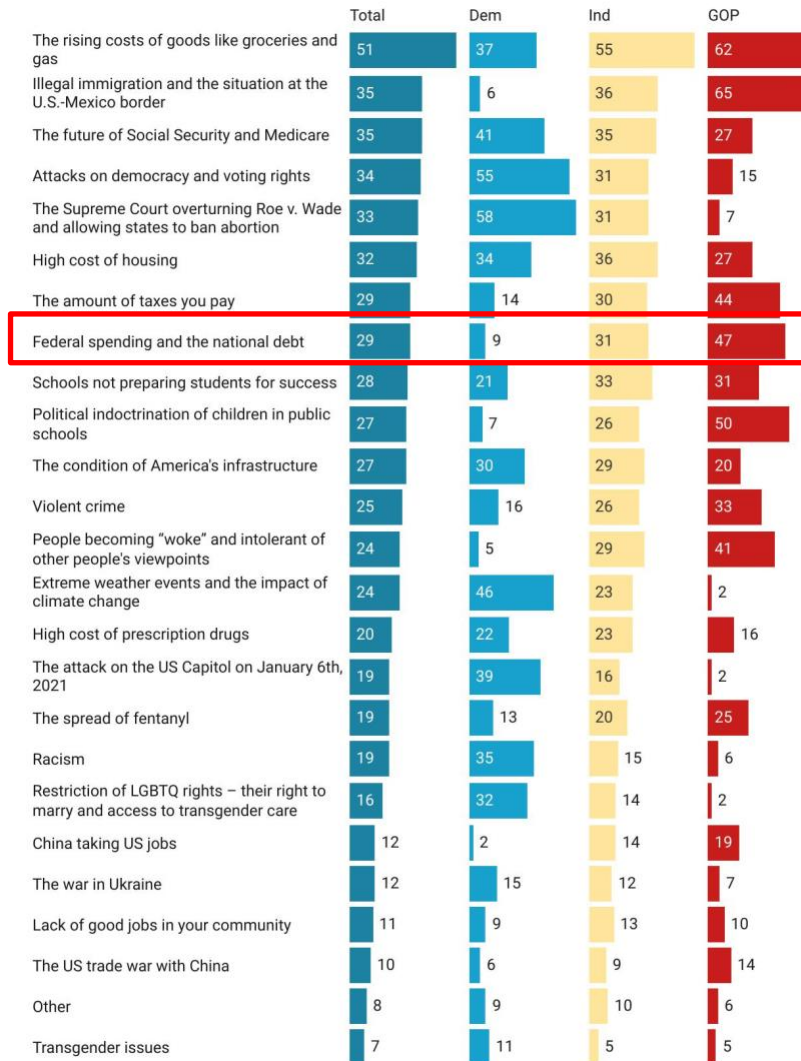
Message Recommendations

Message Frame:	Data Backup:
<p><i>Extreme MAGA Republicans – controlled by Donald Trump and his hand-picked Speaker, Kevin McCarthy – refuse to pay the bills they ran up. Their extreme agenda includes destroying Social Security and Medicare and making deep cuts into key investments in our children’s future.</i></p> <p>Note: Democrats need to make clear that this is about past spending and not future budgets. Republicans are conflating the two issues. Trump racked up nearly \$8T in debt – roughly 25% of all federal government debt.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 56% of voters have an unfavorable view of MAGA Republicans, including 49% who have a very unfavorable view. 25% view them favorably. 93% of Democrats and 58% of Independents have an unfavorable view of MAGA Republicans. • 59% of voters have an unfavorable view of Donald Trump, including 51% who have a very unfavorable view. 31% view Trump favorably. 96% of Democrats and 62% of Independents have an unfavorable view of Donald Trump. • Despite being know by only 88% of voters, 47% who have heard of Kevin McCarthy have an unfavorable view of him, including 35% who have a very unfavorable view. 18% view McCarthy favorably. 82% of Democrats and 45% of Independents have an unfavorable view of McCarthy. • 67% of voters say they are concerned that Republicans in Congress could force a default on the federal debt in order to cut Social Security and Medicare. 92% of Democrats and 66% of Independents are concerned about potential cuts. • 70% of voter say they are concerned that the government will decide to not invest in the next generation, leaving some children behind.
<p><i>Extreme MAGA Republicans are putting millions of Americans’ retirement at risk by the turmoil they will create in the stock market. By refusing to pay the bills, it will hurt every American – especially the elderly, veterans, and children. It is time for the nonsense to stop.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 85% of voters say that the elderly will be harmed if the U.S Government defaults on the debt. • 82% of voters say that middle-income Americans will be harmed. • 80% of voters say that “people like them” will be harmed. • 76% of voters say that their retirement savings will be harmed. • 86% of voters agree that “It is time for the nonsense in Washington to stop. We need to fund Medicare and Social Security...”
<p><i>Extreme MAGA Republicans’ stunts to court their FOX News base are dangerous. The debt limit has been raised 49 times under Republican presidents and 29 times under Democratic presidents. Democrats are committed to fiscal responsibility, and that means paying your bills. That’s why under Democrats’ leadership, America has dramatically cut the budget deficit by \$1.4 trillion, created 11+ million new jobs, and achieved the lowest unemployment rate in history.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 62% of voters think that Republicans in Congress will spend this year attacking Joe Biden and Democrats to help Republicans get elected in 2024. This includes 92% of Democrats and 64% of Independents. Just 26% say that Republicans will pass legislation to deal with important issues.

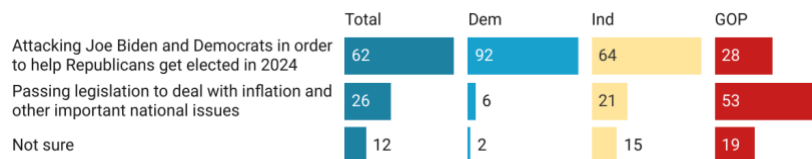
Voter Opinions and Key Findings

Voters are mixed on how they view the debt ceiling, and many say that they are unsure when asked about specifics related to the debt ceiling debate. However, while most voters are concerned about federal debt, they do not rate it as a top concern. This debate is primarily within Republican ranks as an effort to appeal to FOX News' ultra-conservative base voters. Even Republican voters, less than half of whom identify as a MAGA Republican, do not want spending cuts at the expense of programs like Social Security and Medicare.

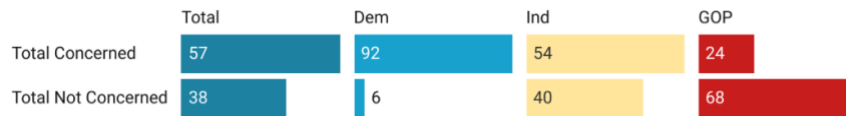
- Which of the following are you most concerned about? Please choose up to four.



- Do you think Republicans in Congress will spend this year focusing on:

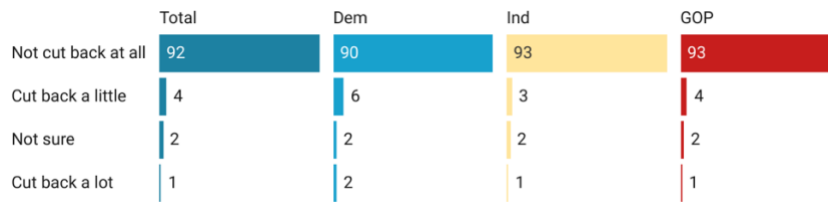


- **How concerned are you that 11 of the 17 Republican House Committee Chairs in the new Congress voted to not certify the results of the 2020 presidential election?**

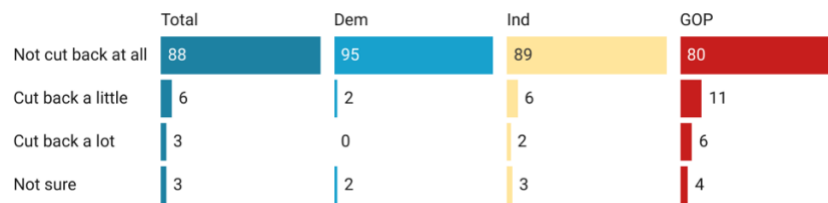


- **For each of the following federal programs, in order to help reduce the deficit, please indicate whether you think it should be cut back a lot, cut back a little, or not cut back at all?**

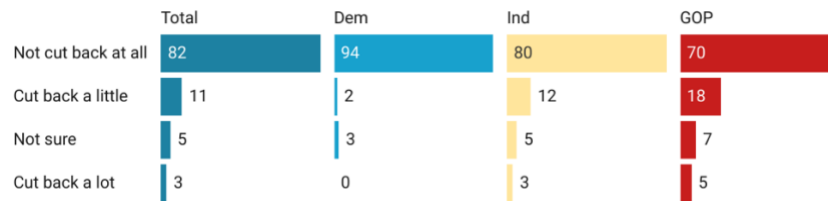
Veterans Benefits



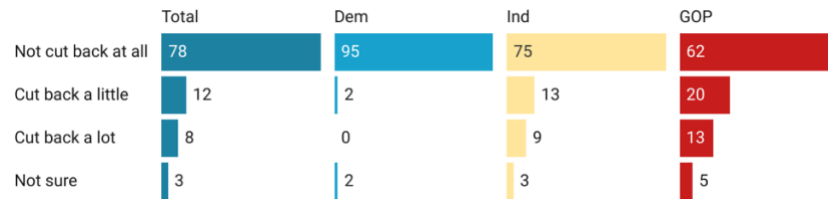
Social Security



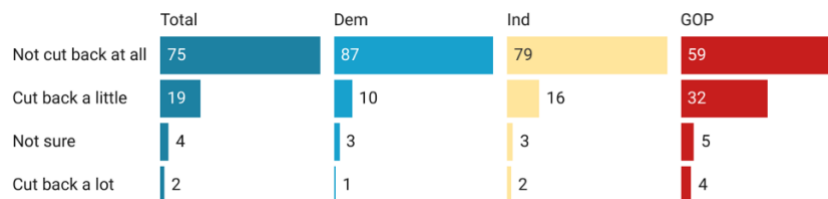
Medicare



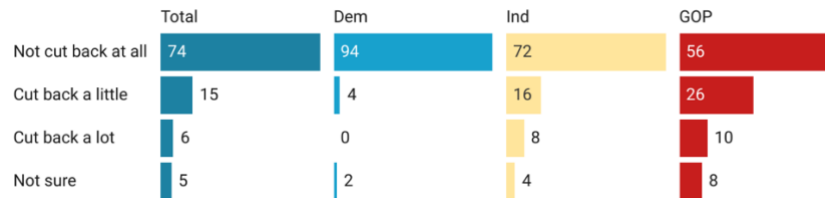
Education



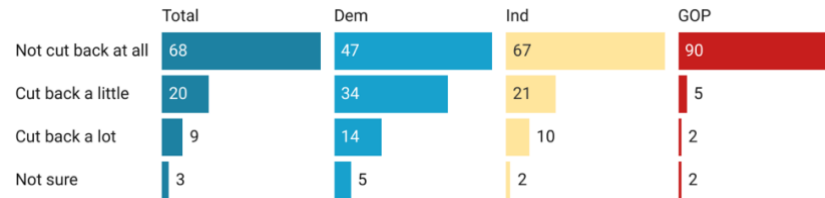
Highways, Bridges, and Roads



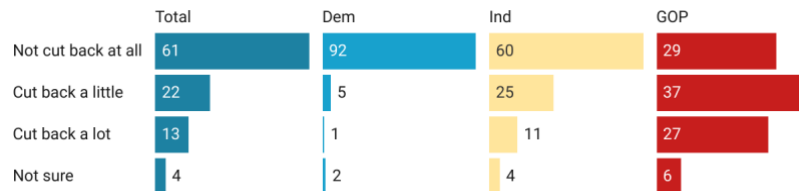
Healthcare



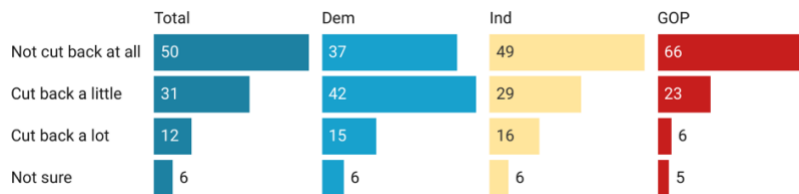
Law Enforcement



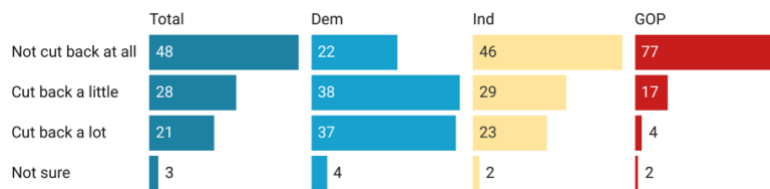
Clean Air and Water Protection



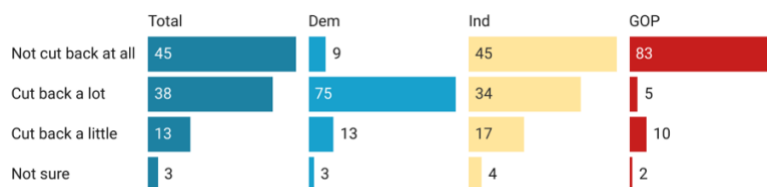
Homeland Security



Military Defense



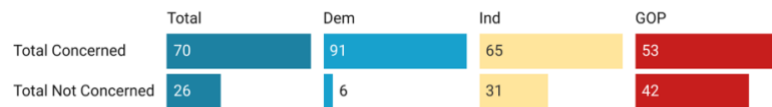
The Border Wall



- Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “It’s time for the nonsense in Washington to stop. We need to fund Medicare and Social Security. We need to invest in the health, education, and safety of children. We need a sensible energy policy that balances the need for energy today with the protection of our planet. We need an immigration policy that strengthens the border and treats people humanely. We can do these things if Republicans and Democrats stop playing games and do the real work needed to solve our problems”?



- How concerned are you that the government will decide to not invest in the next generation, leaving some children behind?



- How familiar are you with the “debt ceiling” that limits the total amount the federal government can borrow?



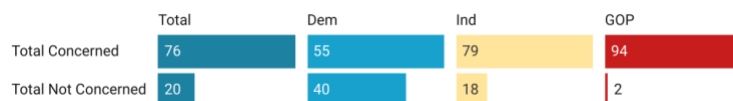
- Do you support or oppose raising the debt ceiling, a device Congress has to authorize to pay for past spending, so that the United States doesn't face a debt default this year?



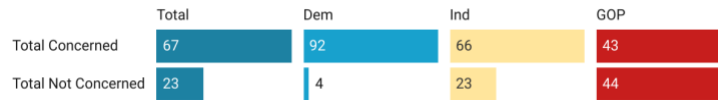
- Some have argued that the debt ceiling is an unnecessary political obstacle that unnecessarily risks the full faith and credit of the United States and our economy since politicians can use it as leverage to force through their agenda. Do you support or oppose eliminating the debt ceiling altogether?



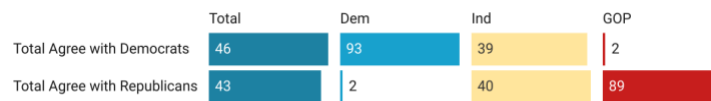
- How concerned are you about the United States's \$32 trillion dollar debt?



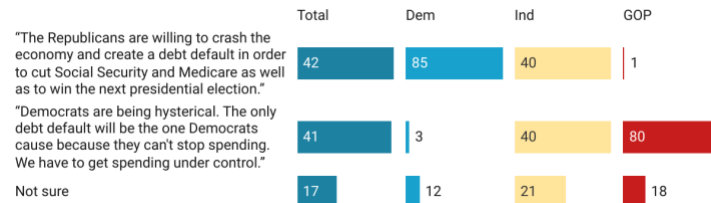
- How concerned are you that Republicans in Congress could force a default on the federal debt in order to pass cuts to Social Security and Medicare?



- Democrats argue that when Republicans were in charge under Trump, they cut taxes for millionaires, billionaires, and corporations and spent freely on things like Trump's border wall. The least they can do is pay the bills they ran up. Republicans argue that spending and debt are out of control and the debt ceiling should be raised only with deep spending cuts. Which side do you agree more with?



- Which statement do you agree with more:



- For each of the following, please indicate how much they would be harmed if the U.S. government defaults on the debt this year and the economy declines.

The Elderly



Small businesses



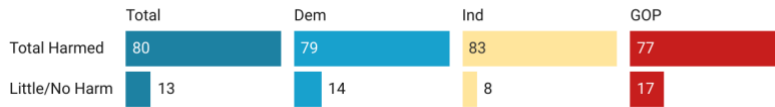
Middle-income Americans



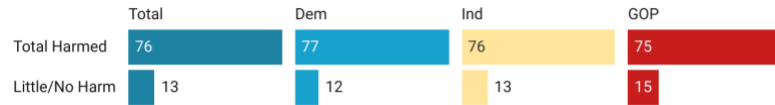
Low-income Americans



People Like You



Your retirement savings



Children

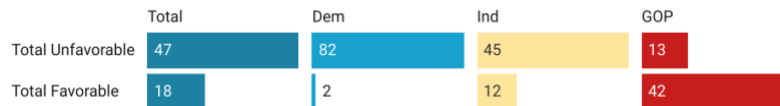


The stock market

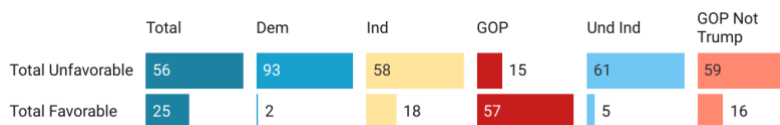


- How favorable are your feelings about each of the following public figures and groups? If you haven't heard of them, please indicate it.

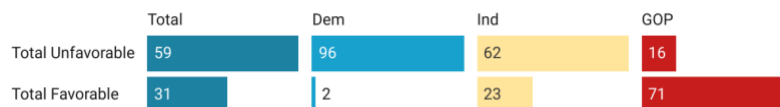
Kevin McCarthy



MAGA Republicans



Donald Trump



The congressional districts surveyed include: AZ-01, AZ-06, CA-13, CA-22, CA-27, CA-40, CA-41, CA-45, CO-03, IA-03, MI-10, MT-01, NE-02, NJ-07, NY-01, NY-03, NY-04, NY-17, NY-19, NY-22, OR-05, PA-01, VA-02, and WI-03.