



# North Carolina Statewide Survey

July 20-22, 2021

**PREPARED BY:**

Robert Blizzard, Partner



## METHODOLOGY

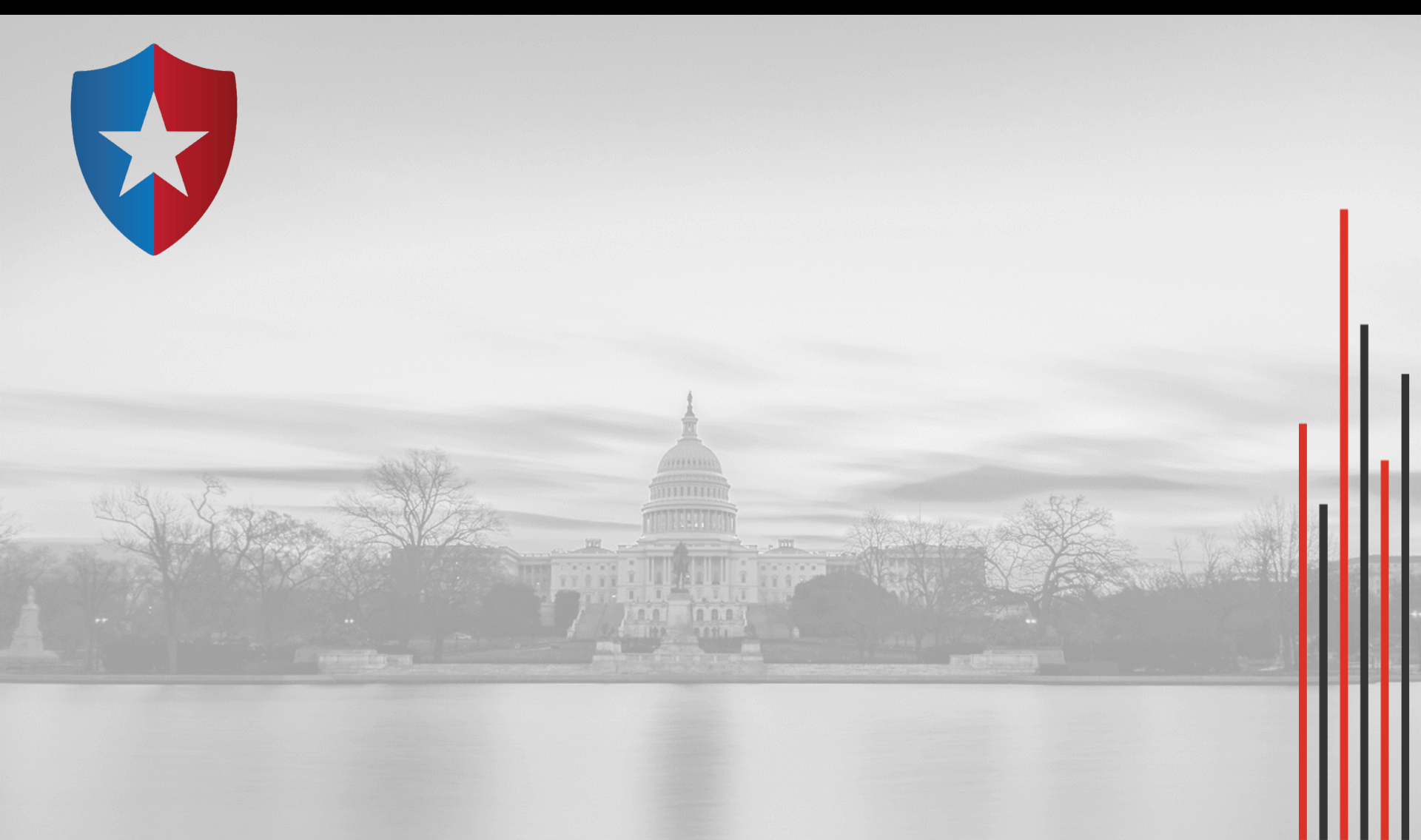
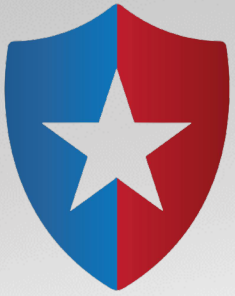
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- ✓ On behalf of the Justice Action Network, Public Opinion Strategies completed a survey of 500 registered voters in North Carolina.

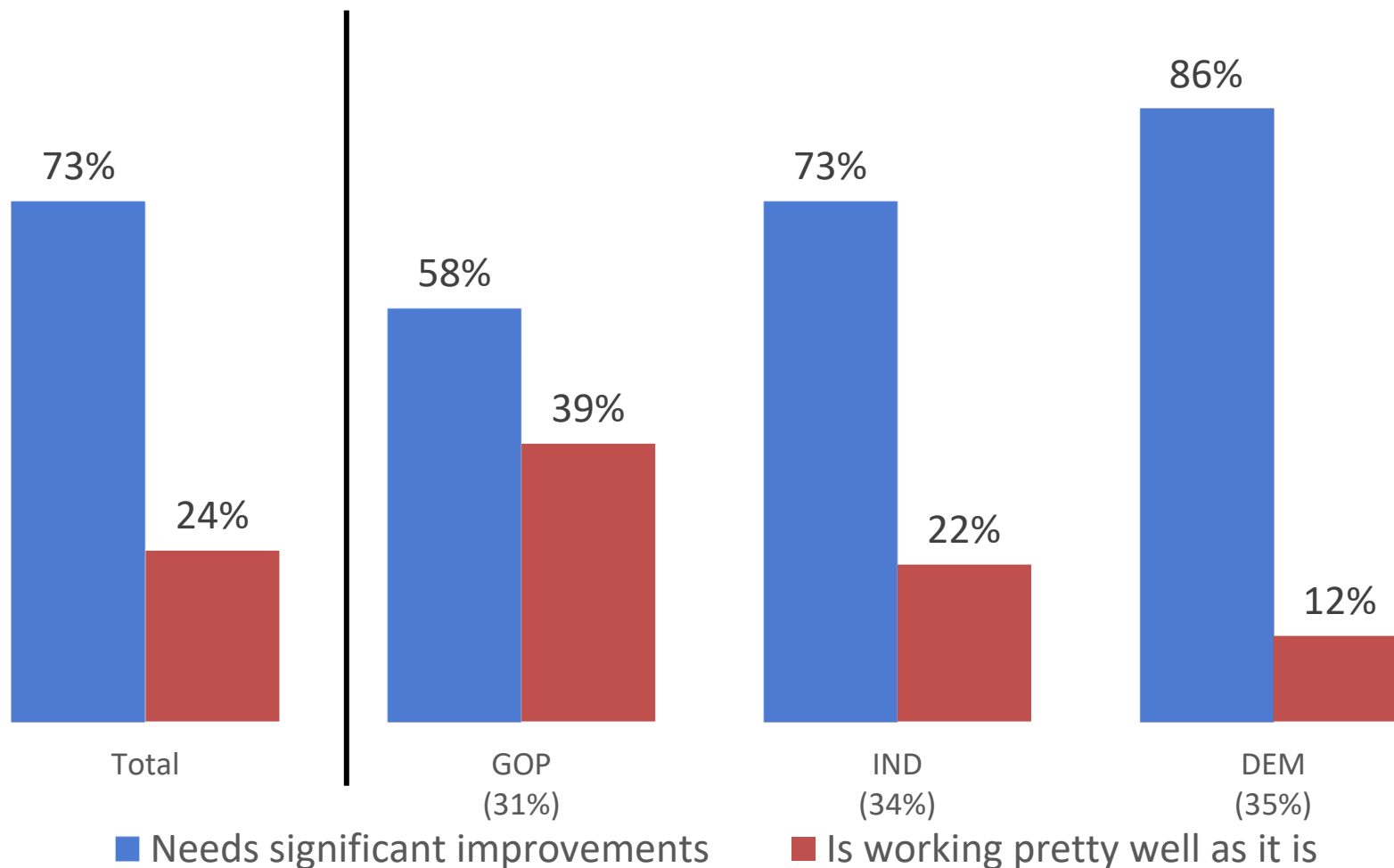
Two hundred and fifty respondents were contacted via landline and 250 via cell phone.

The survey was conducted July 20-22, 2021 and has a margin of error of  $\pm 4.38\%$ .



# Criminal Justice Reform

# By a wide margin, voters in North Carolina believe the criminal justice system needs significant improvements.



When voters are given opposing viewpoints about the War on Drugs...

*And, which ONE of the following statements comes closer to your own opinion on this issue...*

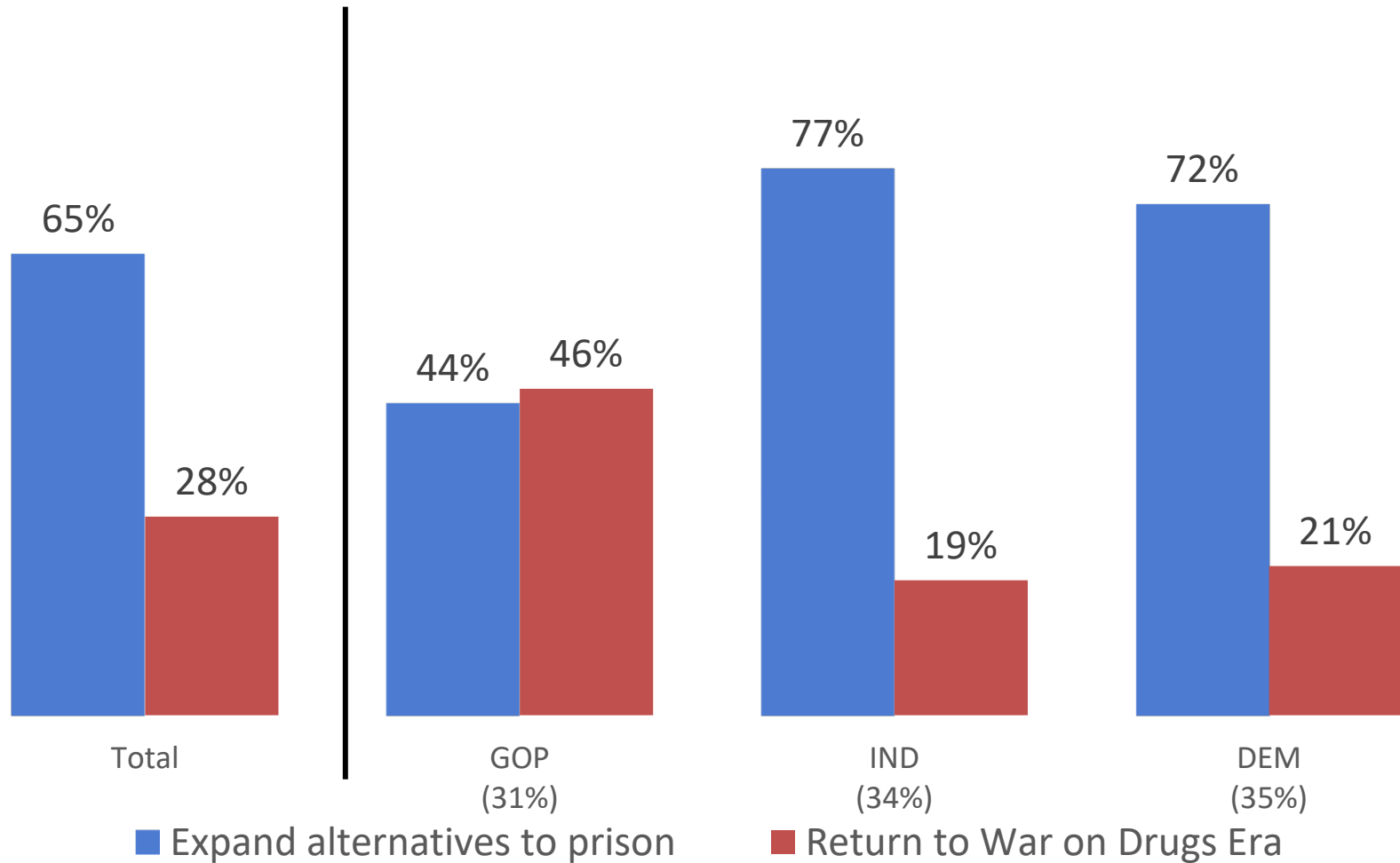
*Some people say that the War on Drugs resulted in too many low-level offenders in jails and prisons, and cost taxpayers too much money.*

*There are more effective, less expensive alternatives to prison for low-level offenders and expanding those alternatives is the best way to reduce the crime rate.*

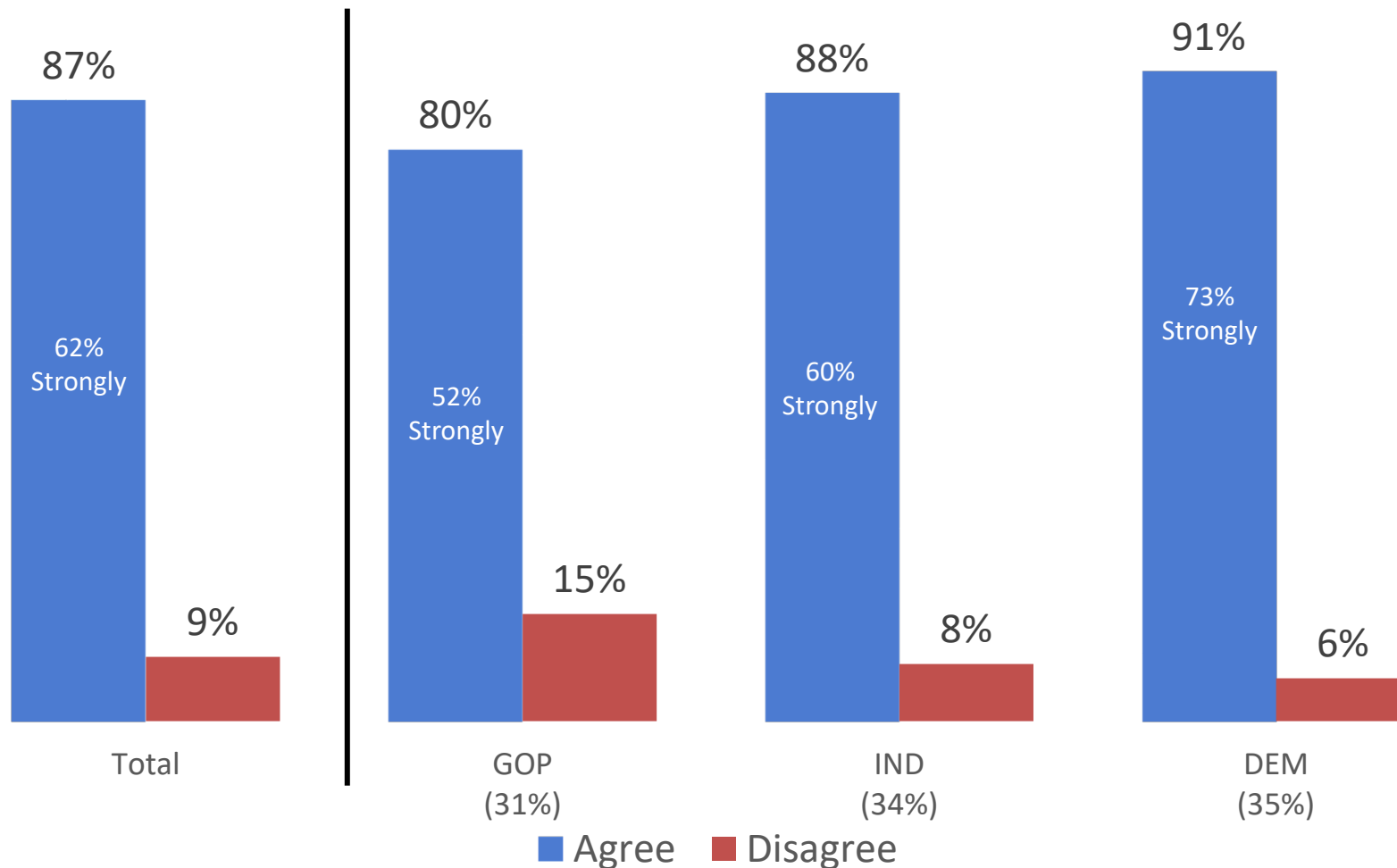
*...while...*

*Other people say that violent crime is rampant right now, especially in many urban areas across the country, so we should return to the War on Drugs era, and double down on locking up drug offenders, even for low-level offenses.*

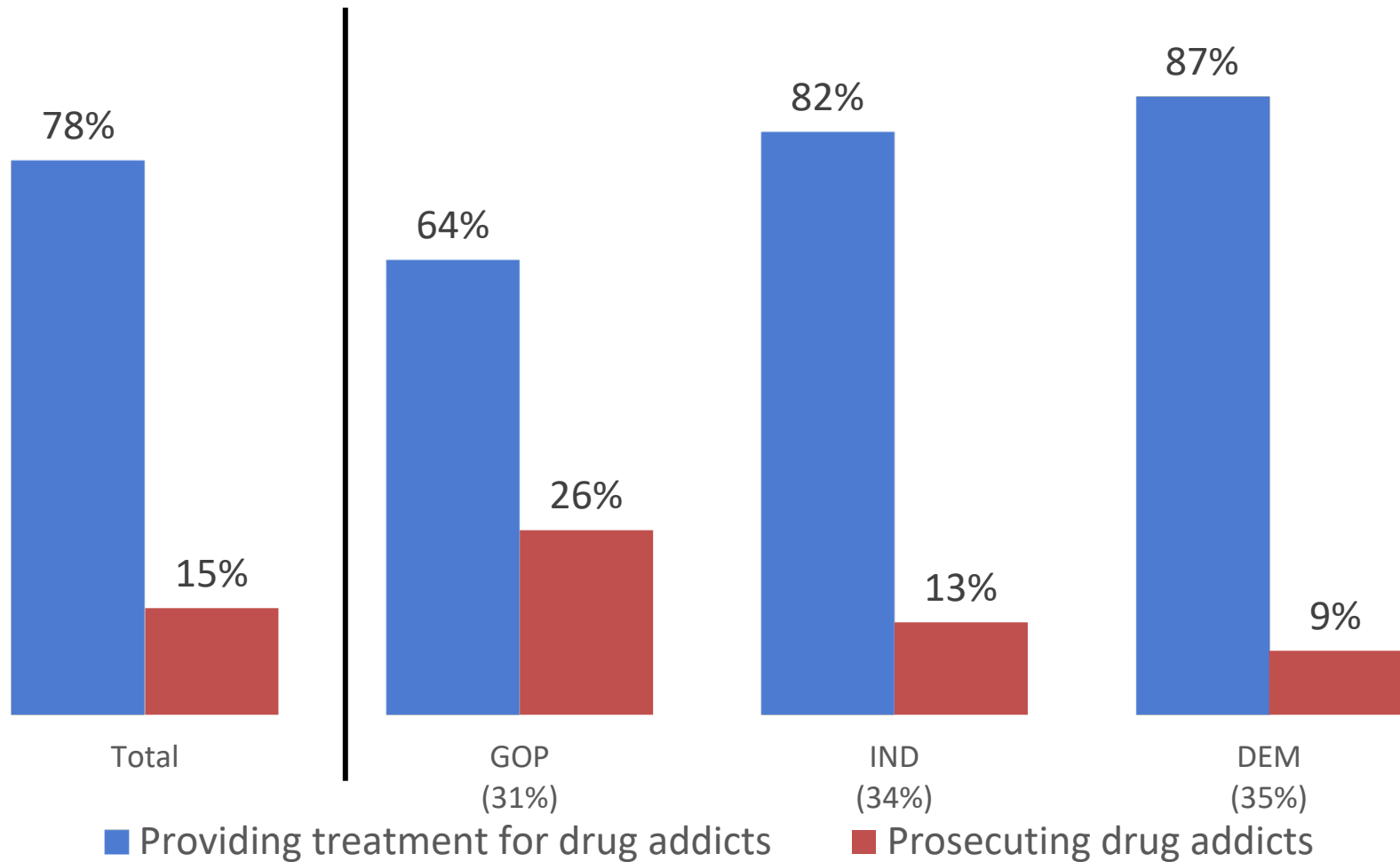
By more than two-to-one, voters in North Carolina say the War on Drugs resulted in too many low-level offenders in jails and prisons, and cost taxpayers too much money.



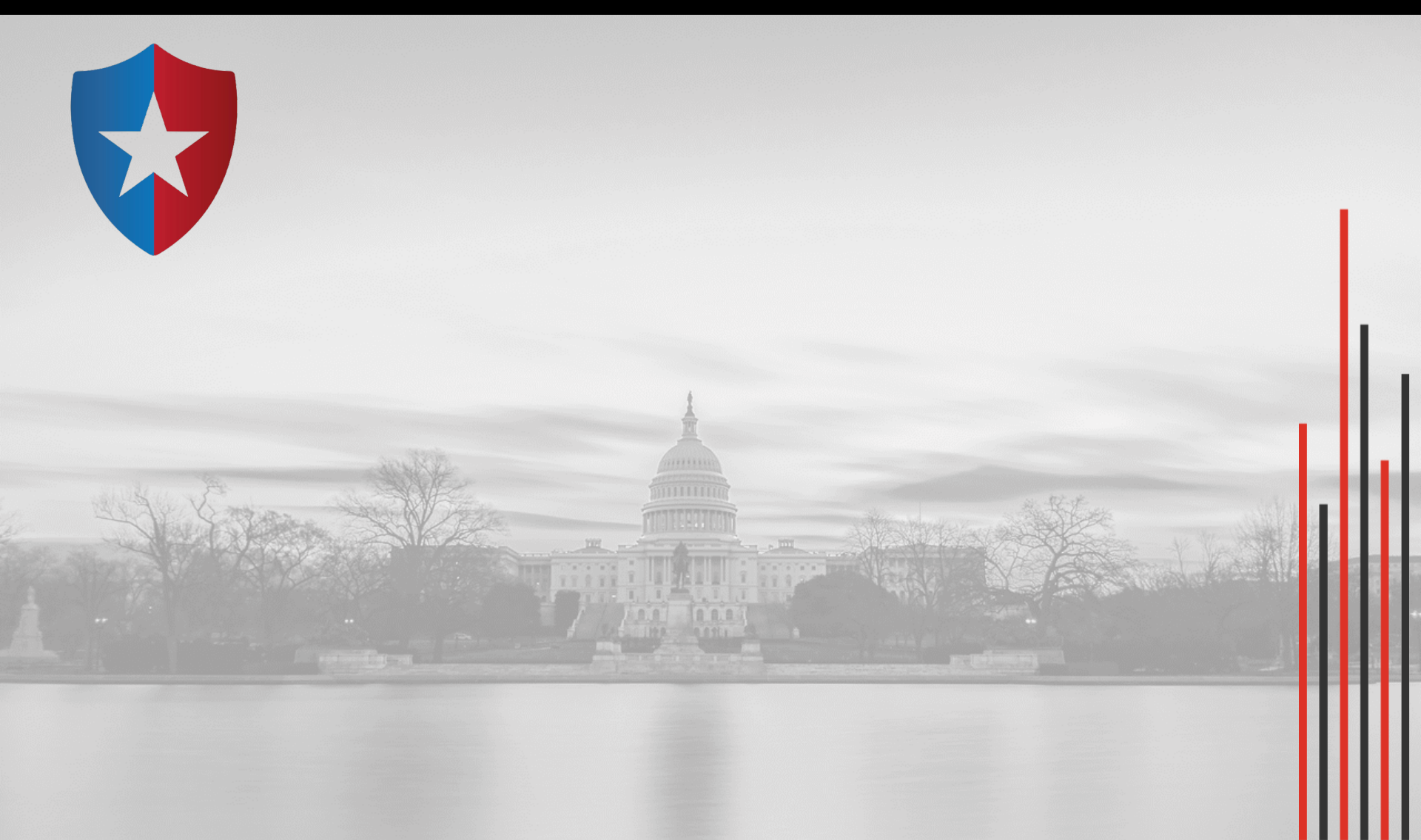
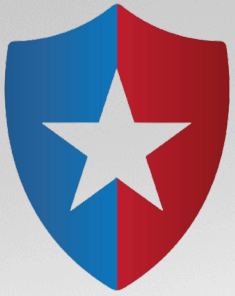
And, more than 80% of voters agree that the federal government should shift funding to other pressing public safety priorities like violent crime, expanded treatment, and funding for local law enforcement.



There's a strong sentiment that the federal government should focus more on treatment for drug addicts than prosecuting drug addicts.

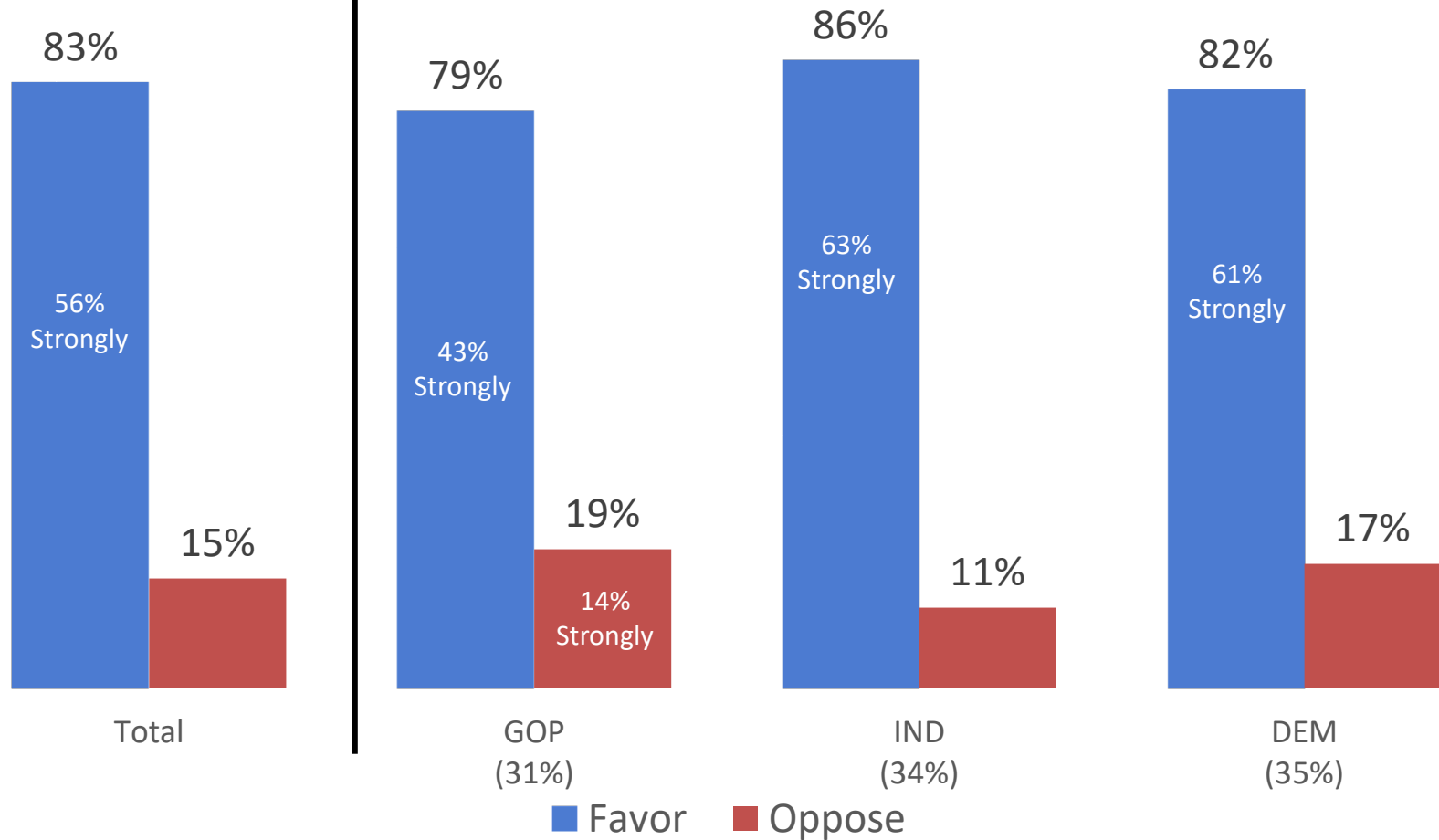


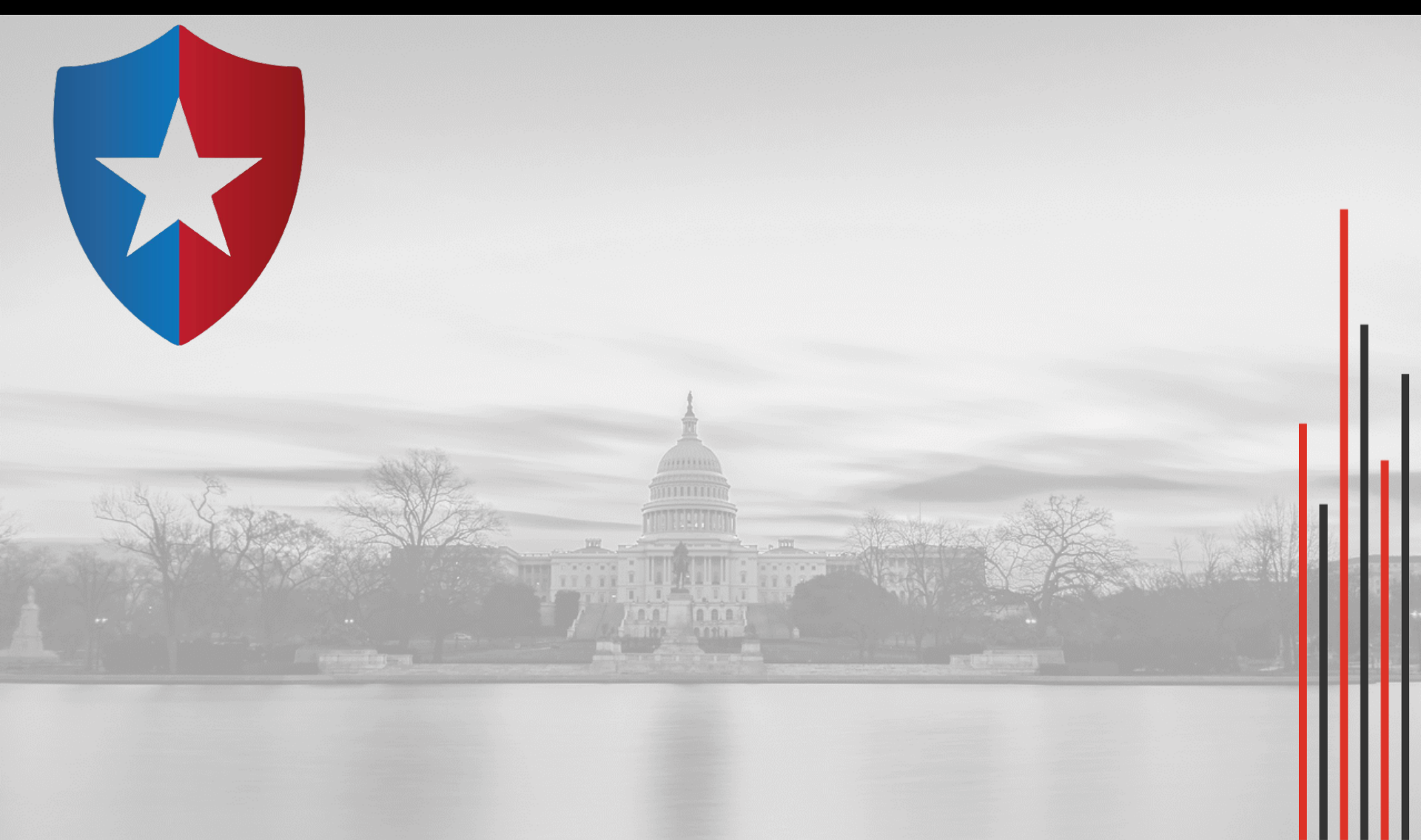
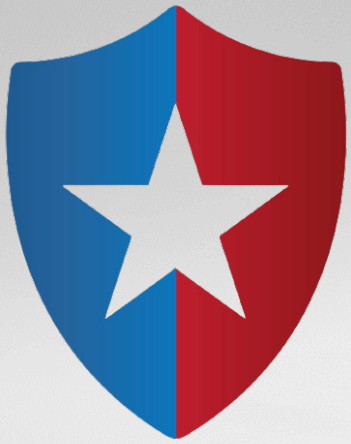




# Mandatory Minimums

# Voters in North Carolina overwhelmingly favor eliminating mandatory minimum prison sentences for low-level offenders so judges can make decisions on a case-by-case basis.

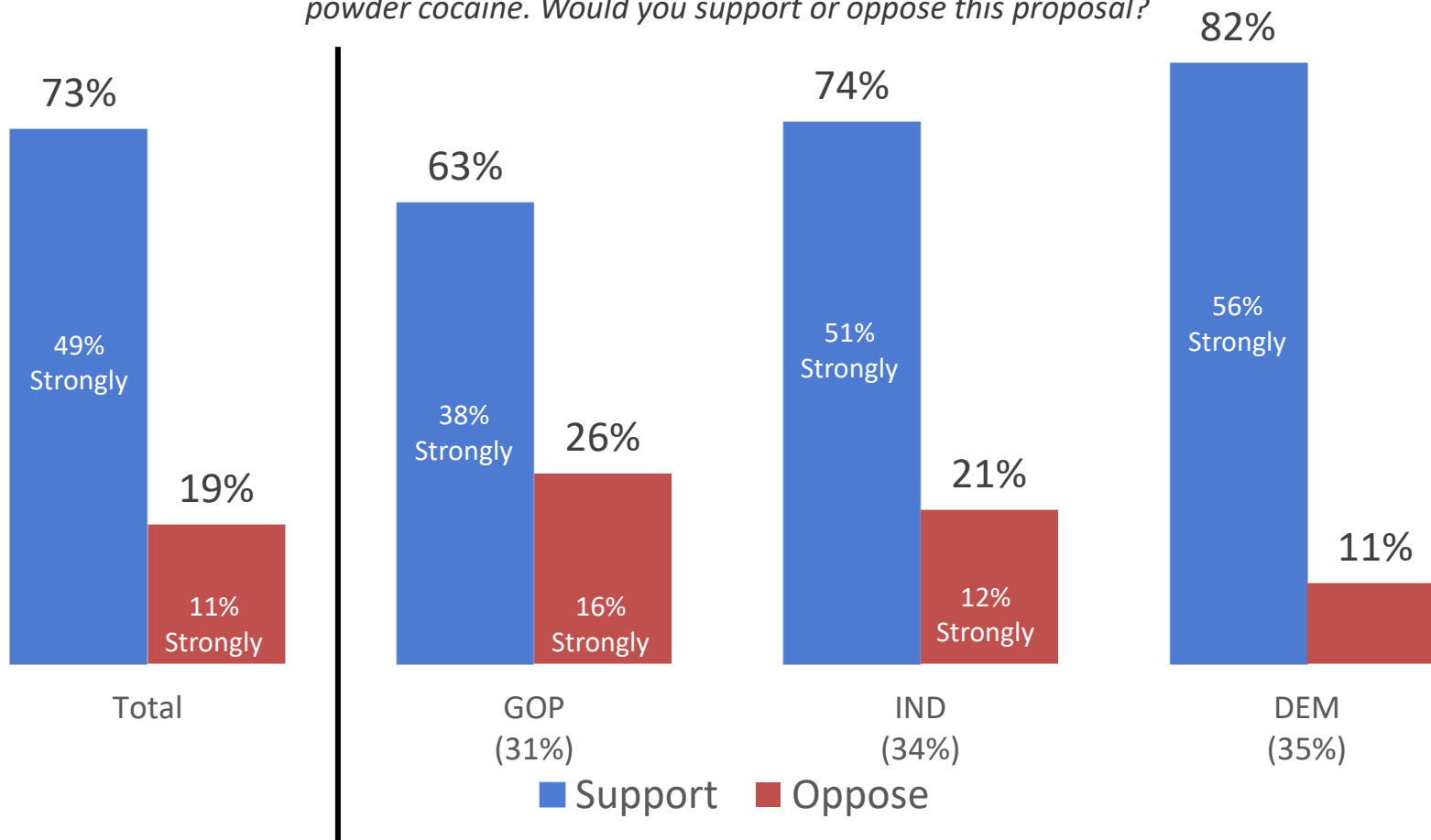




# The Equal Act

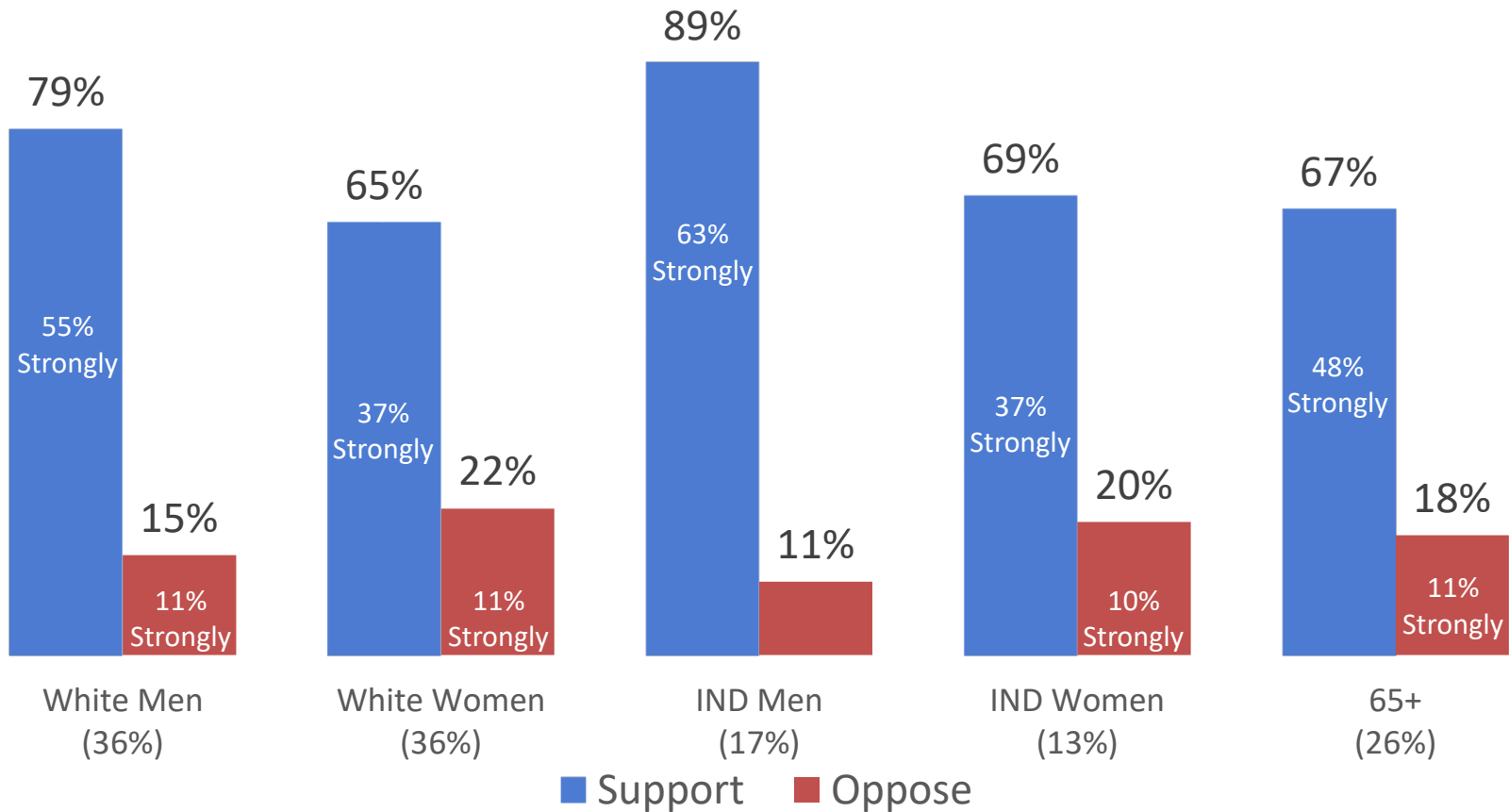
# Nearly three-quarters of voters in North Carolina support the Equal Act to treat crack cocaine the same as powder cocaine.

*Under the current criminal justice system, crack cocaine has a mandatory minimum prison sentence penalty that is 18 times stronger than the penalty for powder cocaine. A proposal being debated in Washington would reform the criminal justice system to treat crack cocaine the same as powder cocaine. Would you support or oppose this proposal?*



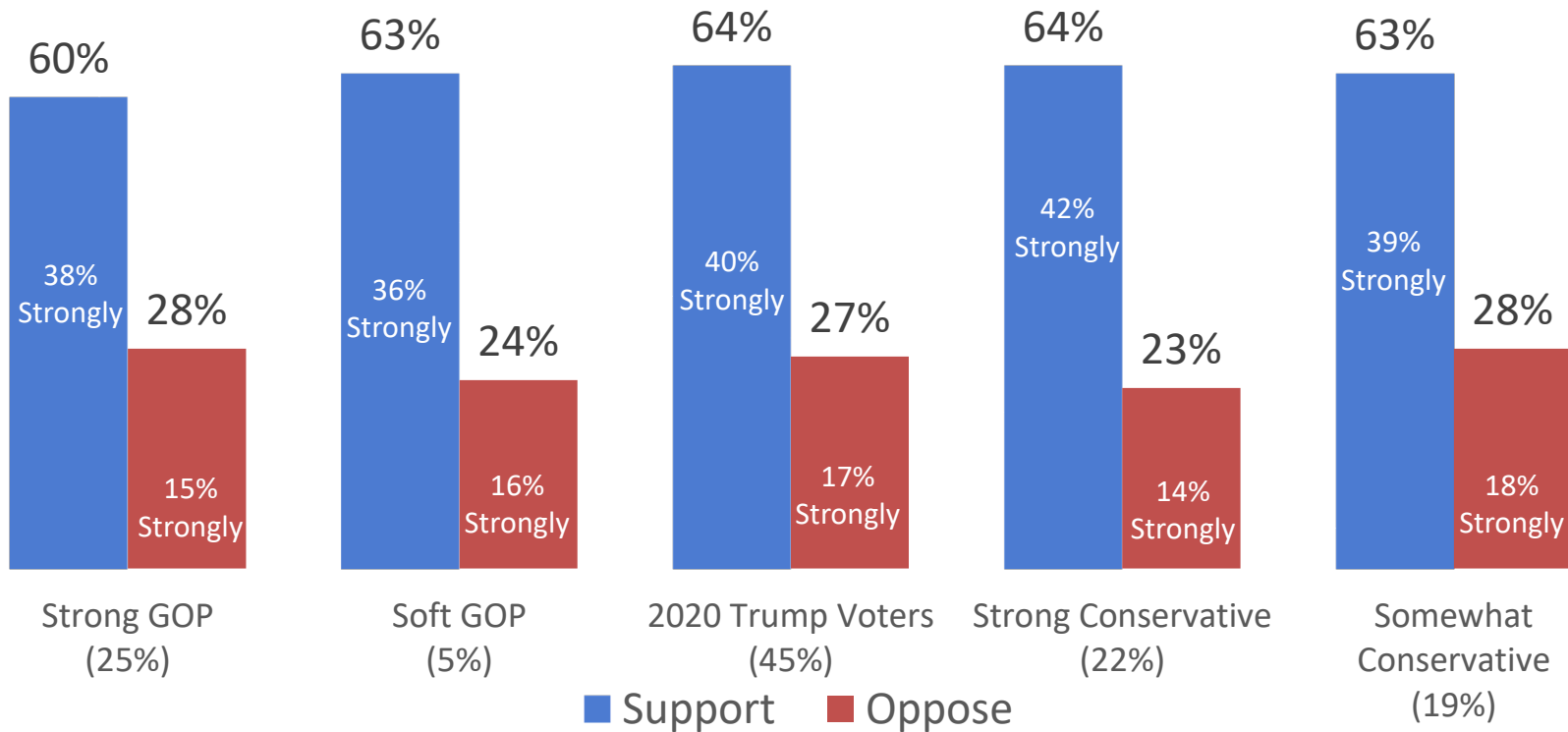
# Note how support extends across these key groups:

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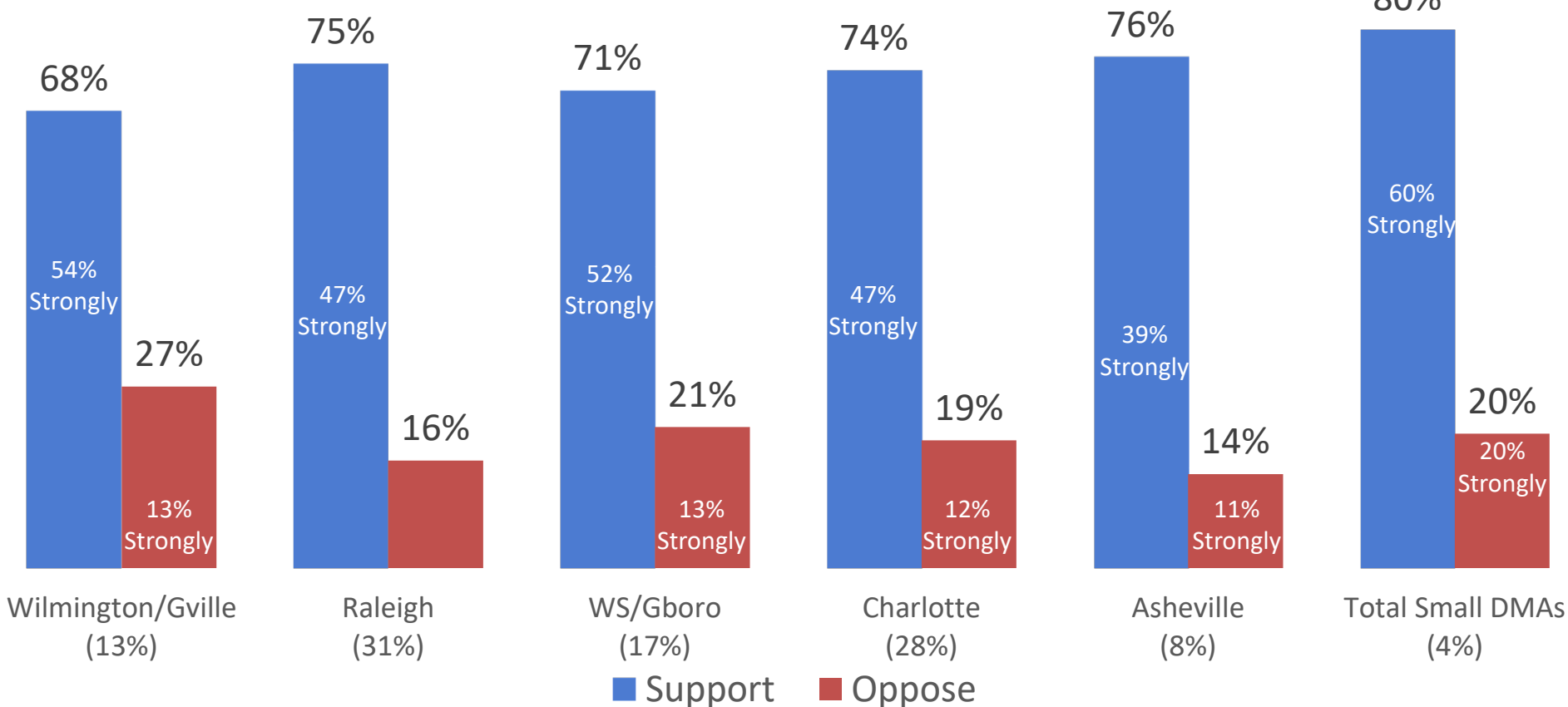
# Key GOP constituencies are supportive:

*Under the current criminal justice system, crack cocaine has a mandatory minimum prison sentence penalty that is 18 times stronger than the penalty for powder cocaine. A proposal being debated in Washington would reform the criminal justice system to treat crack cocaine the same as powder cocaine. Would you support or oppose this proposal?*



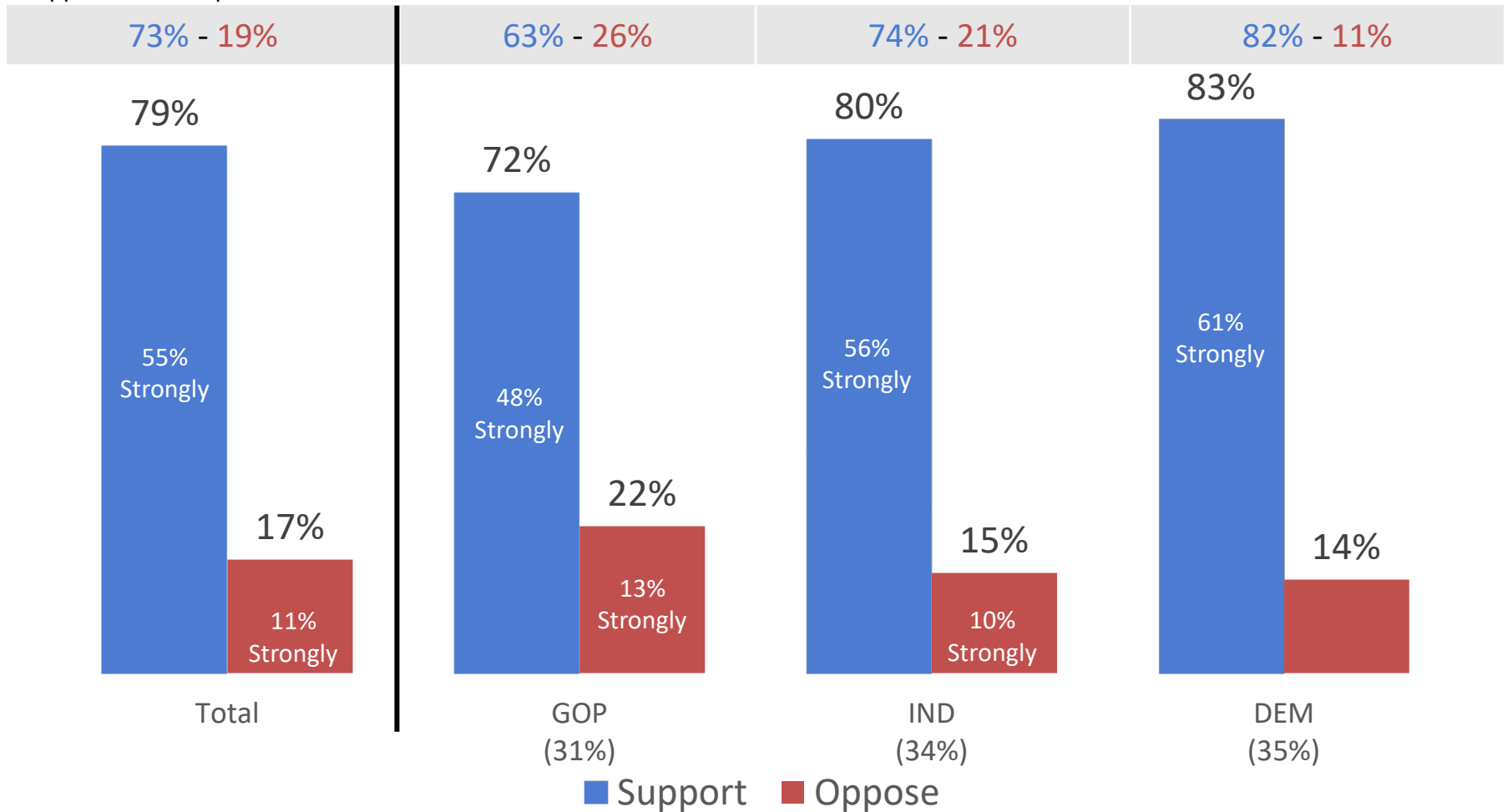
# Voters from across the state support the Equal Act.

*Under the current criminal justice system, crack cocaine has a mandatory minimum prison sentence penalty that is 18 times stronger than the penalty for powder cocaine. A proposal being debated in Washington would reform the criminal justice system to treat crack cocaine the same as powder cocaine. Would you support or oppose this proposal?*



# Learning that the AMA says there is no chemical difference between crack cocaine and powder cocaine only strengthens support for the Equal Act across party lines.

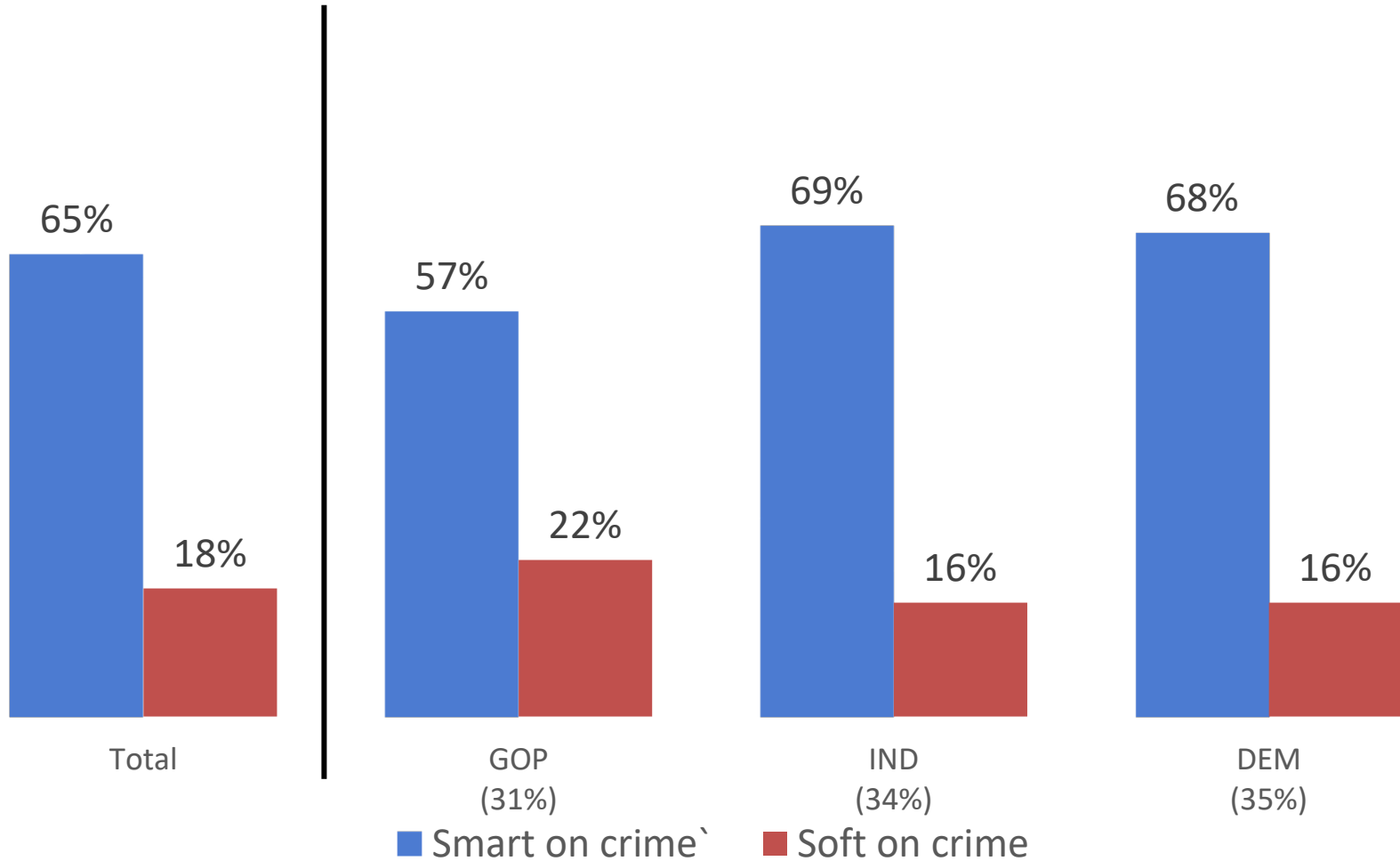
Support for the Equal Act

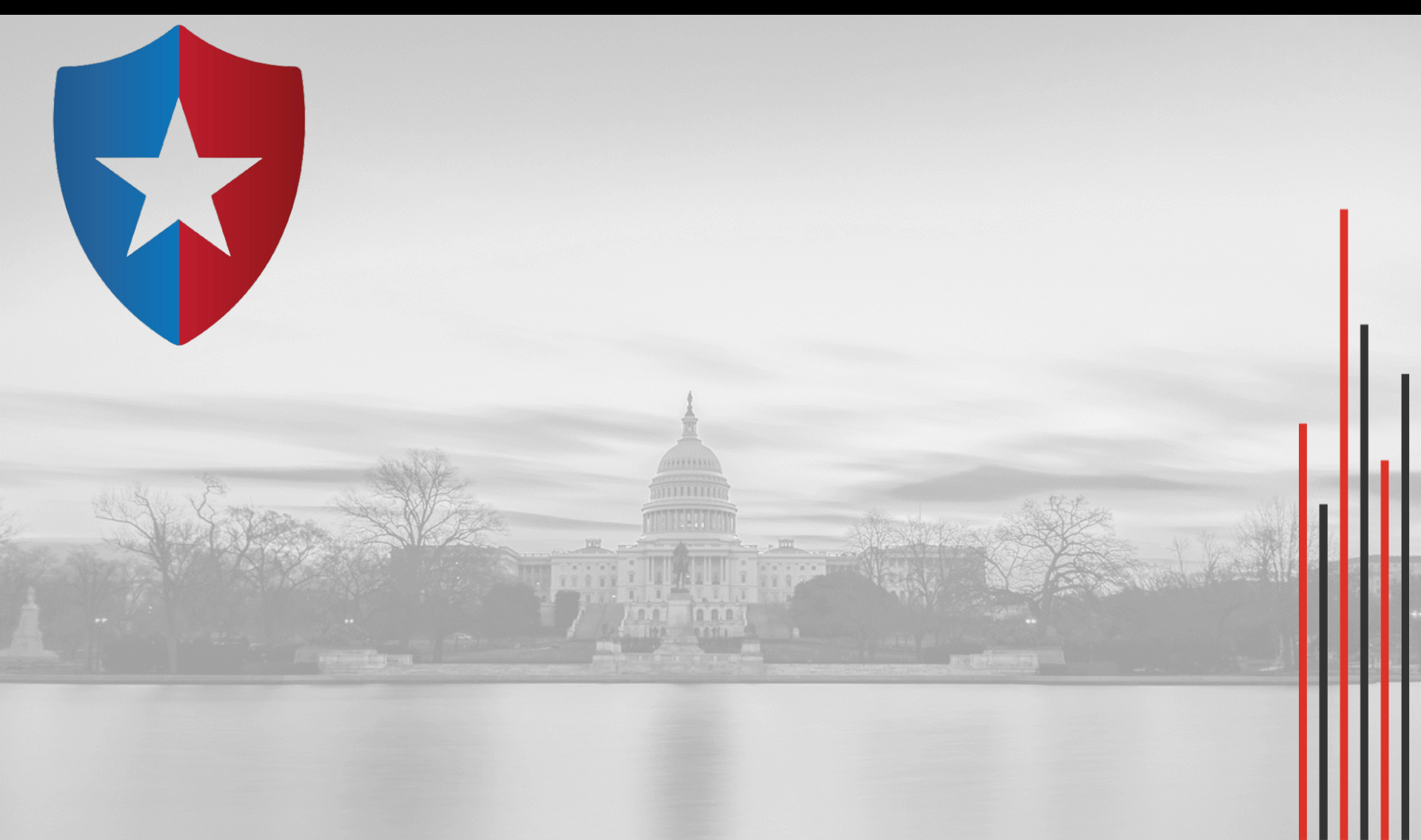


And, if you learned that the American Medical Association says there is no chemical difference between crack cocaine and powder cocaine, would you support or oppose treating them the same under the law?



# Supporting the Equal Act would lead voters to believe Senator Tillis is “smart on crime” rather than “soft on crime.”





# Clemency

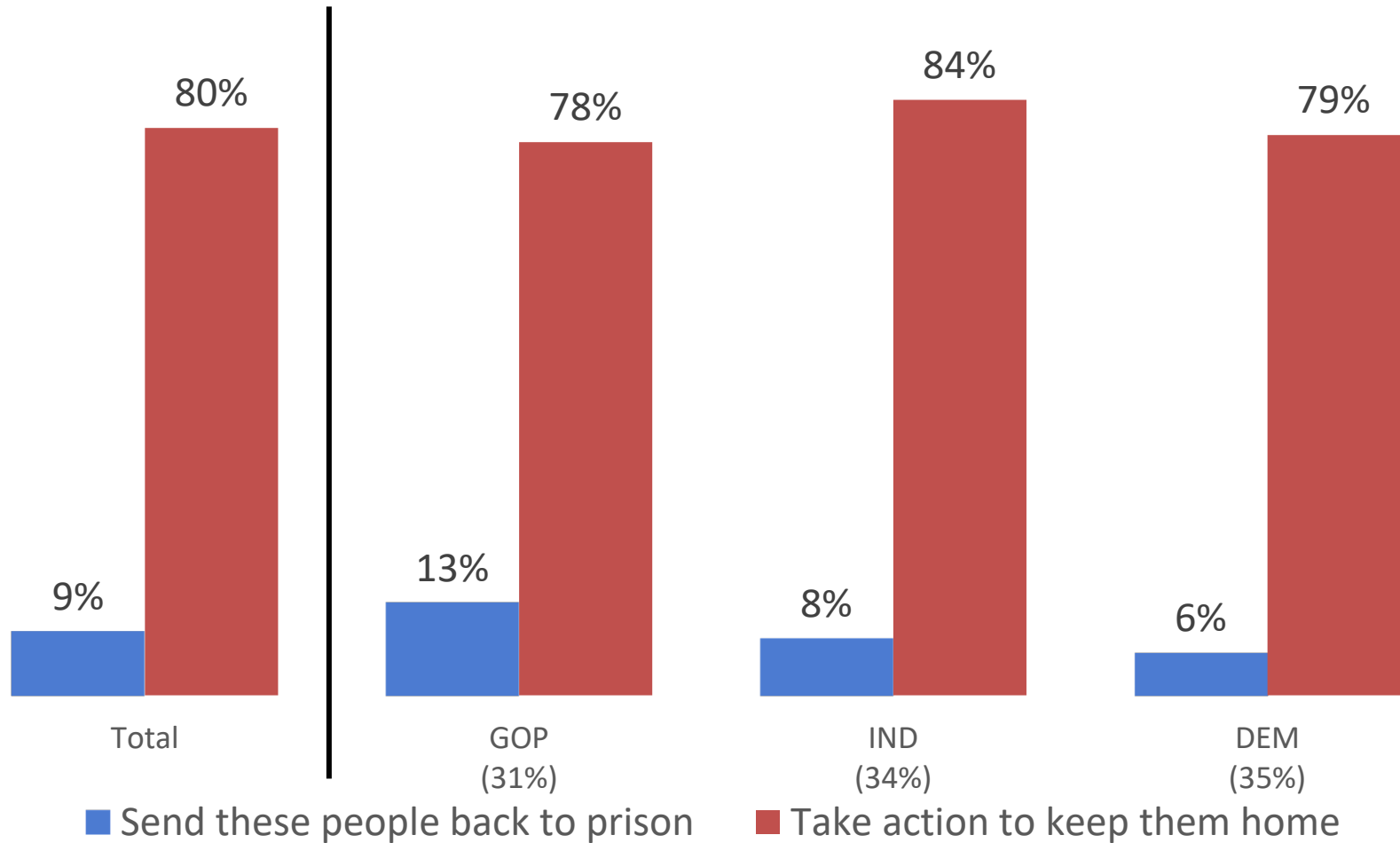
After voters are given some background about an issue related to clemency for low-level prisoners...

*And, on a different topic, the Trump Administration transferred several thousand low-level prisoners to home confinement during the pandemic. Many of these people have reconnected with their families, secured jobs, and are moving on with their lives. Due to a bureaucratic technicality, they may all have to return to prison if President Biden does not act to keep them home.*

*Should President Biden send these people back to prison to serve out the rest of their sentences*

*OR take action, including clemency, to keep them home?*

Voters overwhelmingly believe that Biden should take action, including clemency, to keep them home rather than send them back to prison.





# PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES

turning questions into answers

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