Polarization Research Lab

America's Political Pulse

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1 About

We are a cross-university research lab (Dartmouth College, University of Pennsylvania and Stanford University). The lab exists to serve as a nexus for work on affective polarization, social trust, and political violence.

Our lab focuses on addressing the following critical questions:

- What are the principal causes of affective polarization and what can be done to treat it?
- When and where does affective polarization alter behavior? Why?
- How effective and durable are approaches to reducing affective polarization?

2 Affect

Question label: democrat_therm_1

Question text: "We'd like you to rate how you feel towards some groups on a scale of 0 to 100. Zero means very unfavorable and 100 means very favorable. Fifty means you do not feel favorable or unfavorable.

How would you rate your feeling toward Democrats?"

Responses Responses by Demographics

Question label: republican_therm_1

Question text: "We'd like you to rate how you feel towards some groups on a scale of 0 to 100. Zero means very unfavorable and 100 means very favorable. Fifty means you do not feel favorable or unfavorable.
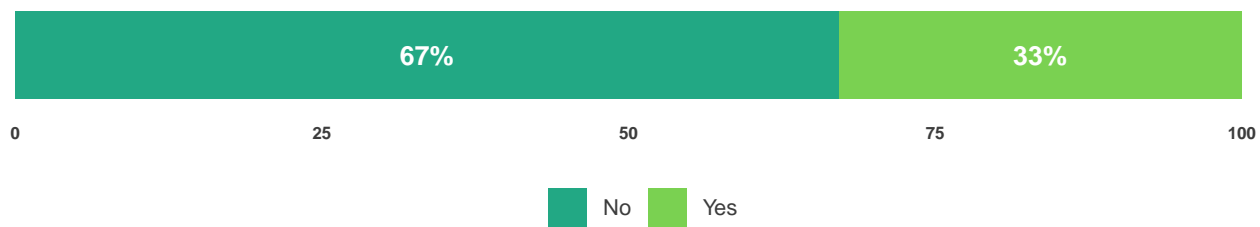
How would you rate your feeling toward Republicans?"

Responses Responses by Demographics

3   Trust and America

Question label: general_trust

Question text: "Do you think your wallet (or your valuables) would be returned to you if it were found by a stranger?"

67%	33%

0	25	50	75	100

■ No   ■ Yes

Responses Responses by Demographics
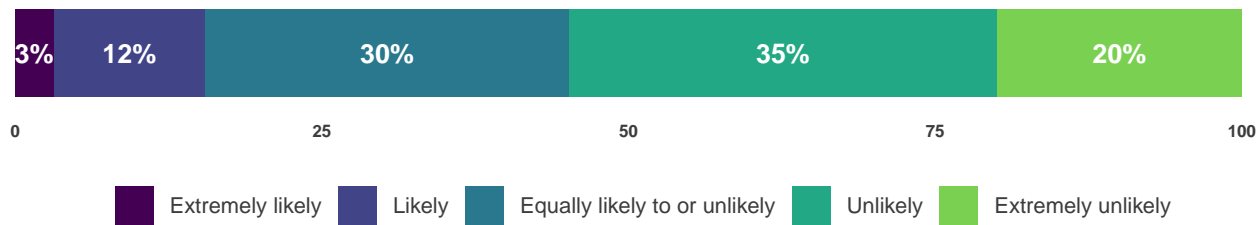
Question label: institutional_corruption

Question text: "If a member of Congress were offered a bribe to influence the awarding of a government contract, do you think that the member of Congress would accept or refuse the bribe?"

13%	28%	37%	17%	5%

0   25   50   75   100

■ Extremely likely to accept   ■ Likely to accept   ■ Equally likely to refuse or accept   ■ Likely to refuse   ■ Extremely likely to refu

Responses Responses by Demographics

Question label: institutional_response

Question text: "If you were to complain about the poor quality of a public service, how likely or unlikely is it that the problem would be easily resolved?"

3%	12%	30%	35%	20%

0　　　　　　　　25　　　　　　　　50　　　　　　　　75　　　　　　　　100

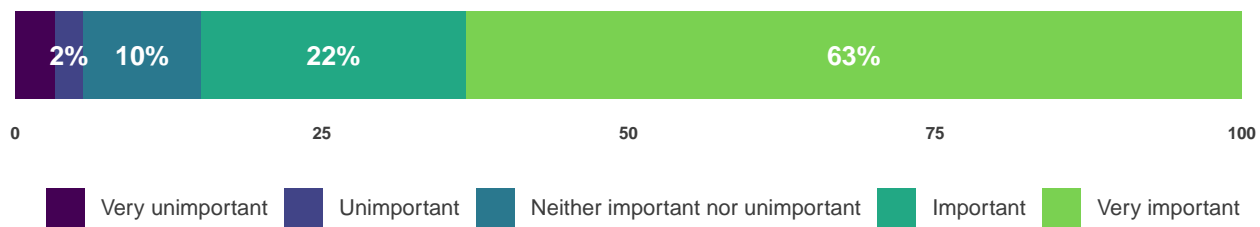■ Extremely likely　■ Likely　■ Equally likely to or unlikely　■ Unlikely　■ Extremely unlikely

Responses Responses by Demographics

Question label: vote_importance

Question text: "How important or unimportant is it to vote in every election?"

2%	10%	22%		63%

0 — 25 — 50 — 75 — 100

■ Very unimportant ■ Unimportant ■ Neither important nor unimportant ■ Important ■ Very important

Responses Responses by Demographics

Question label: pride

Question text: "How proud are you to be an American?"

8%	12%	20%	26%	34%

0   25   50   75   100

■ Not at all proud   ■ Only a little proud   ■ Moderately proud   ■ Very proud   ■ Extremely proud
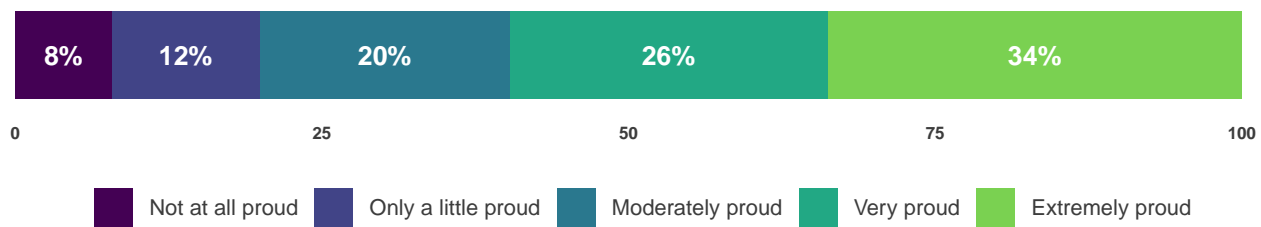
Responses Responses by Demographics

Question label: fair_treatment

Question text: "Do you agree or disagree that you can expect fair treatment from government authorities?"

17%	24%	30%	24%	5%

0   25   50   75   100

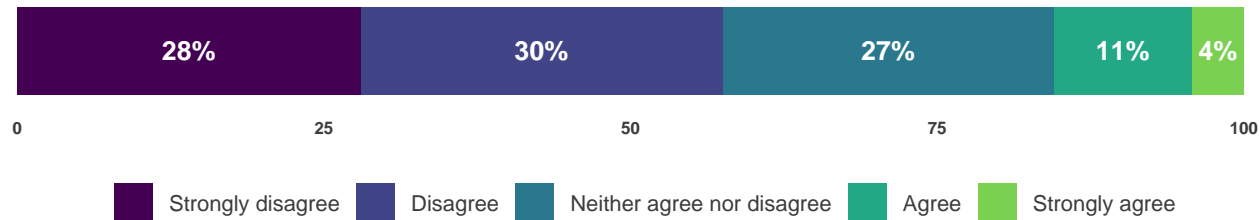■ Strongly disagree   ■ Disagree   ■ Neither agree nor disagree   ■ Agree   ■ Strongly agree
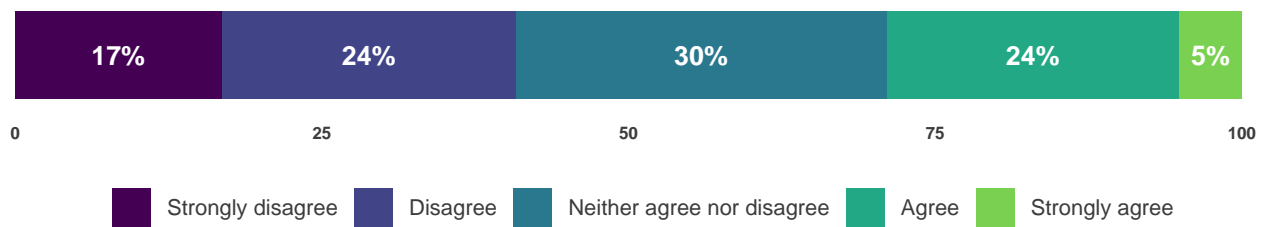
Responses Responses by Demographics

4   Democratic Norms

Question label: norm_judges

Question text: "Do you agree or disagree: {inparty: Democratic/Republican} elected officials should sometimes consider ignoring court decisions when the judges who issued those decisions were appointed by {outparty: Democratic/Republican} presidents."

28%	30%	27%	11%	4%

0   25   50   75   100

■ Strongly disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Agree ■ Strongly agree

Responses Responses by Demographics Notes: Respondents are randomized to complete a subset of three norms questions and their corresponding perception question.
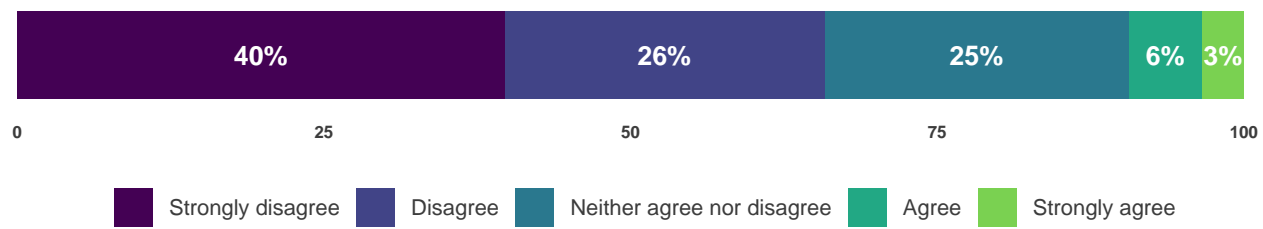
Question label: norm_judges_perception

Question text: "What percent of {outparty: Democratic/Republican} voters do you think agree with the following: {outparty: Democratic/Republican} elected officials should sometimes consider ignoring court decisions when the judges who issued those decisions were appointed by {inparty: Democratic/Republican} presidents."

Responses Responses by Demographics Notes: Respondents are randomized to complete a subset of three norms questions and their corresponding perception question.

Question label: norm_polling

Question text: "Do you agree or disagree: {inparty: Democrats/Republicans} should reduce the number of polling stations in areas that typically support {outparty: Democrats/Republicans}."

40%	26%	25%	6%	3%

0　　　　　　　25　　　　　　　50　　　　　　　75　　　　　　　100

■ Strongly disagree　■ Disagree　■ Neither agree nor disagree　■ Agree　■ Strongly agree

Responses Responses by Demographics Notes: Respondents are randomized to complete a subset of three norms questions and their corresponding perception question.
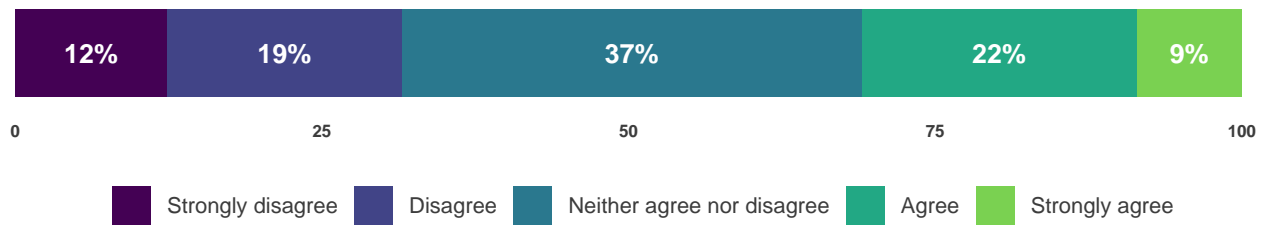
Question label: norm_polling_perception

Question text: "What percent of {outparty: Democratic/Republican} voters do you think agree with the following: {outparty: Democrats/Republicans} should reduce the number of polling stations in areas that typically support {inparty: Democrats/Republicans}."

Responses Responses by Demographics Notes: Respondents are randomized to complete a subset of three norms questions and their corresponding perception question.

Question label: norm_executive

Question text: "Do you agree or disagree: If a {inparty: Democratic/Republican} president can't get cooperation from {outparty: Democratic/Republican} members of congress to pass new laws, the {inparty: Democratic/Republican} president should circumvent Congress and issue executive orders on their own to accomplish their priorities."

12%	19%	37%	22%	9%

0   25   50   75   100

■ Strongly disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Agree ■ Strongly agree

Responses Responses by Demographics Notes: Respondents are randomized to complete a subset of three norms questions and their corresponding perception question.

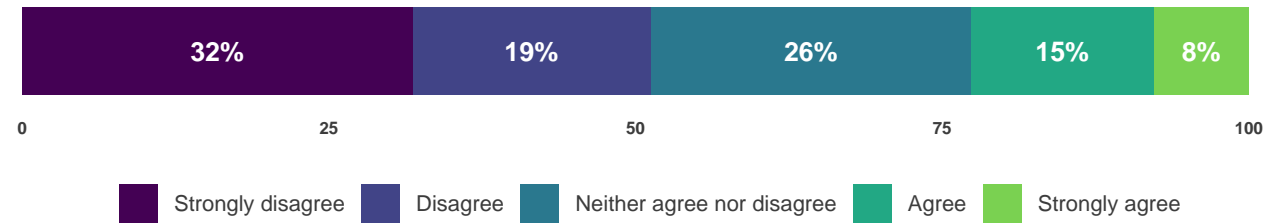**Question label:** norm_executive_perception

Question text: "What percent of {outparty: Democratic/Republican} voters do you think agree with the following: If a {outparty: Democratic/Republican} president can't get cooperation from {inparty: Democratic/Republican} members of congress to pass new laws, the {outparty: Democratic/Republican} president should issue executive orders on their own to accomplish their priorities."

Responses Responses by Demographics Notes: Respondents are randomized to complete a subset of three norms questions and their corresponding perception question.

Question label: norm_censorship

Question text: "Do you agree or disagree with the following: The government should be able to censor media sources that spend more time attacking {inparty: Democrats/Republicans} than {outparty: Democrats/Republicans}."

32%	19%	26%	15%	8%

0　　　　　　　　25　　　　　　　　50　　　　　　　　75　　　　　　　　100

■ Strongly disagree　■ Disagree　■ Neither agree nor disagree　■ Agree　■ Strongly agree

Responses Responses by Demographics Notes: Respondents are randomized to complete a subset of three norms questions and their corresponding perception question.
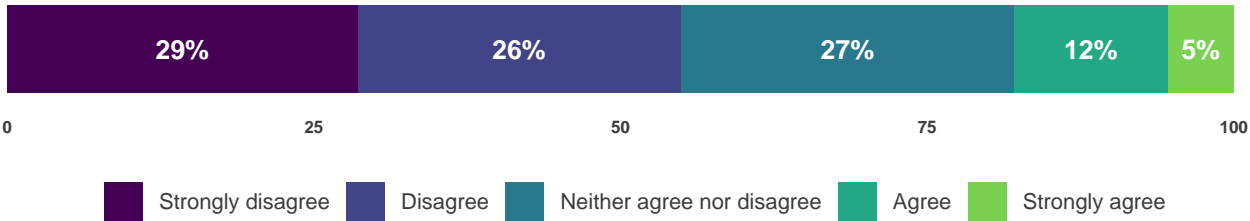
Question label: norm_censorship_perception

Question text: "What percent of {outparty: Democratic/Republican} voters do you think agree with the following: The government should be able to censor media sources that spend more time attacking {outparty: Democrats/Republicans} than {inparty: Democrats/Republicans}."

Responses Responses by Demographics Notes: Respondents are randomized to complete a subset of three norms questions and their corresponding perception question.

Question label: norm_loyalty

Question text: "Do you agree or disagree with the following: When a {inparty: Democratic/Republican} candidate questions the outcome of an election other {inparty: Democrats/Republicans} should be more loyal to the {inparty: Democratic/Republican} party than to election rules and the constitution."

29%	26%	27%	12%	5%

0　　　　　　　　　25　　　　　　　　　50　　　　　　　　　75　　　　　　　　　100

■ Strongly disagree　■ Disagree　■ Neither agree nor disagree　■ Agree　■ Strongly agree

Responses Responses by Demographics Notes: Respondents are randomized to complete a subset of three norms questions and their corresponding perception question.

Question label: norm_loyalty_perception

Question text: "What percent of {outparty: Democratic/Republican} voters do you think agree with the following: When a {outparty: Democratic/Republican} questions the outcome of an election other {outparty: Democrats/Republicans} should be more loyal to the {outparty: Democratic/Republican} party than to election rules and the constitution."

Responses Responses by Demographics Notes: Respondents are randomized to complete a subset of three norms questions and their corresponding perception question.
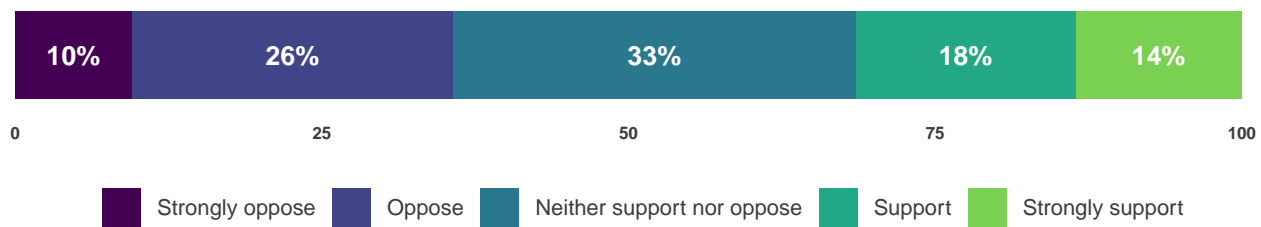
5 Political Violence

Question label: violence1

Question text: "{name 1} was convicted of protesting without a permit.

He was arrested by police after leading a protest against {outparty: Democrats/Republicans} on the grounds of the county courthouse. He made no effort to acquire the necessary permit for the protest and refused to leave when asked by police.
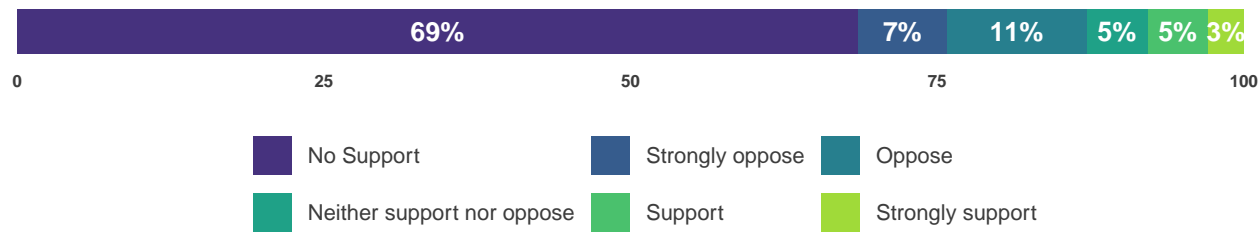
Do you support or oppose {name 1}s actions?"

10%	26%	33%	18%	14%

0   25   50   75   100

■ Strongly oppose ■ Oppose ■ Neither support nor oppose ■ Support ■ Strongly support

Responses Responses by Demographics

Question label: violence2

Question text: "{name 2} was convicted of vandalism.

He was arrested by police after he vandalized several large signs expressing support for candidates of the {outparty: Democratic/Republican} party.

Do you support or oppose {name 2}s actions?"

69%	7%	11%	5%	5%	3%

0　　　　　　　　25　　　　　　　　50　　　　　　　　75　　　　　　　　100

- No Support
- Strongly oppose
- Oppose
- Neither support nor oppose
- Support
- Strongly support

Responses Responses by Demographics Notes: This is an adaptive scale. Respondents are only shown this crime if they indicate support for the last crime.

Question label: violence3

Question text: "{name 3} was convicted of assault.

He was arrested by police for throwing rocks at peaceful {outparty: Democratic/Republican} protesters. Although no one was seriously injured, paramedics bandaged a man with a head wound.

Do you support or oppose {name 3}s actions?"
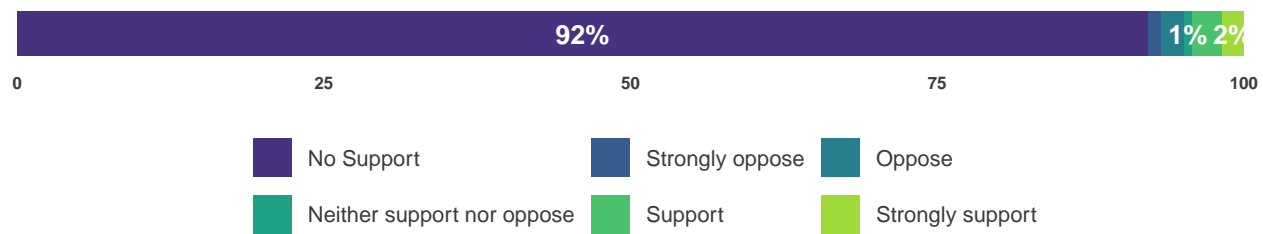
No Support	Strongly oppose	Oppose
Neither support nor oppose	Support	Strongly support

Responses Responses by Demographics Notes: This is an adaptive scale. Respondents are only shown this crime if they indicate support for the last crime.
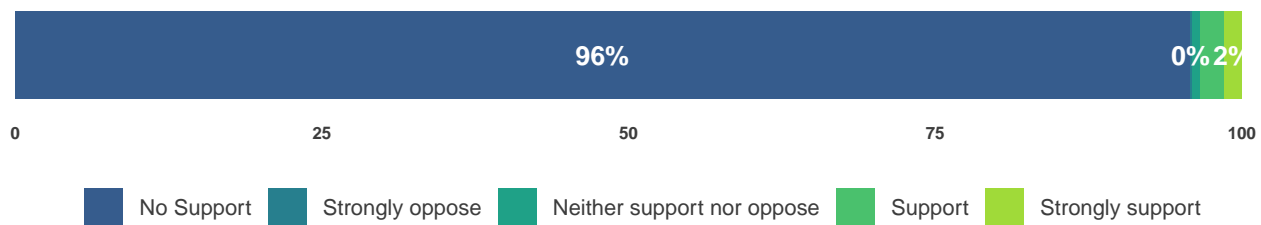
Question label: violence4

Question text: "{name 4} was convicted of arson.

He was arrested by police as he attempted to run from a fire he started at the local {outparty: Democratic/Republican} headquarters. Although he waited for the building to close for the night, several adjacent buildings were still occupied.

Do you support or oppose {name 4}s actions?"

■ No Support	■ Strongly oppose	■ Neither support nor oppose	■ Support	■ Strongly support

Responses Responses by Demographics Notes: This is an adaptive scale. Respondents are only shown this crime if they indicate support for the last crime.

Question label: violence5

Question text: "{name 5} was convicted of assault with a deadly weapon.

He was arrested by police after driving his car into a crowd of {outparty: Democratic/Republican} protesters. Although no one was killed, several individuals were seriously injured and one spent a month in the hospital.
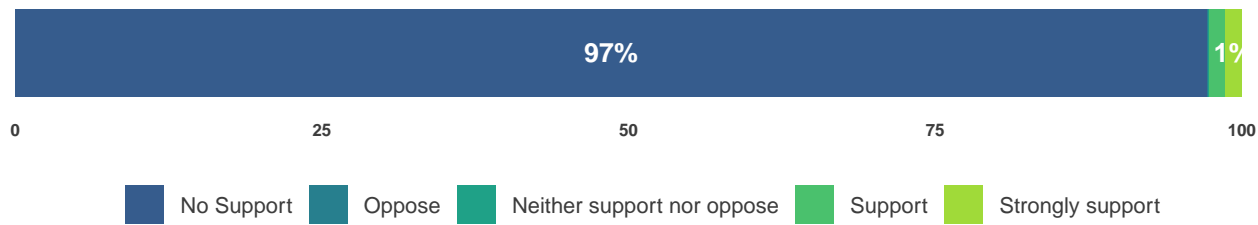
Do you support or oppose {name 5}s actions?"
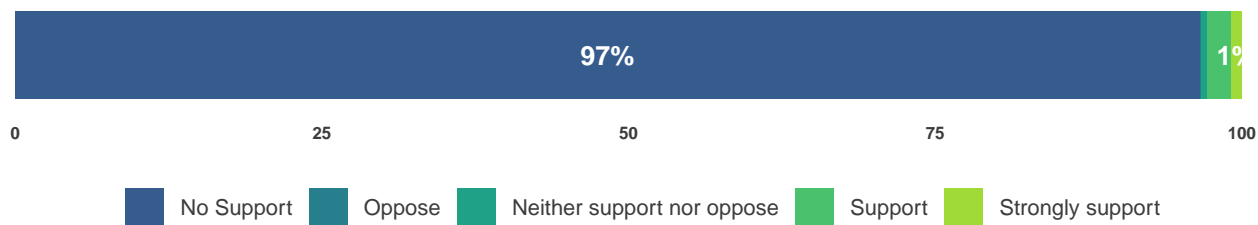
Responses Responses by Demographics Notes: This is an adaptive scale. Respondents are only shown this crime if they indicate support for the last crime.

Question label: violence6

Question text: "{name 6} was convicted of murder.

He was arrested by police after surveillance footage was found showing him stabbing a prominent {outparty: Democratic/Republican} to death. {name 6} targeted the victim because he believed the victim had prevented him from voting in the last election as part of a conspiracy to stop {inparty: Democrats/Republicans} voters.

Do you support or oppose {name 6}s actions?"

No Support	Oppose	Neither support nor oppose	Support	Strongly support

Responses Responses by Demographics Notes: This is an adaptive scale. Respondents are only shown this crime if they indicate support for the last crime.

6   Demographics

Partisanship Sex Race Highest level of education Age 2020 Vote Choice Born again

7   Methods

Data were collected from a nationally representative sample of 1,000 American adults via YouGov. Data were collected between May. 26-Jun. 1 2022. All results are weighted. The survey margin of error is +/- 3.1%.