

To: Interested Parties  
 Fr: Lake Research Partners and WPA Intelligence  
 Re: Partisan Redistricting – New Bipartisan National Poll  
 Date: September 11, 2017

---

Our recent national survey of 1,000 likely 2018 general election voters regarding partisan redistricting, commissioned by the Campaign Legal Center, reports that a significant majority of voters, across all partisan breaks, would like the Supreme Court to set new, clear rules to determine when partisan gerrymandering violates the U.S. Constitution. Support for this position is strong, even after hearing the opposition’s argument.<sup>1</sup>

Voters want to remove partisan bias from redistricting, even if it means their party might not win as many seats. People strongly prefer free and unbiased elections rather than what is best for their own party.

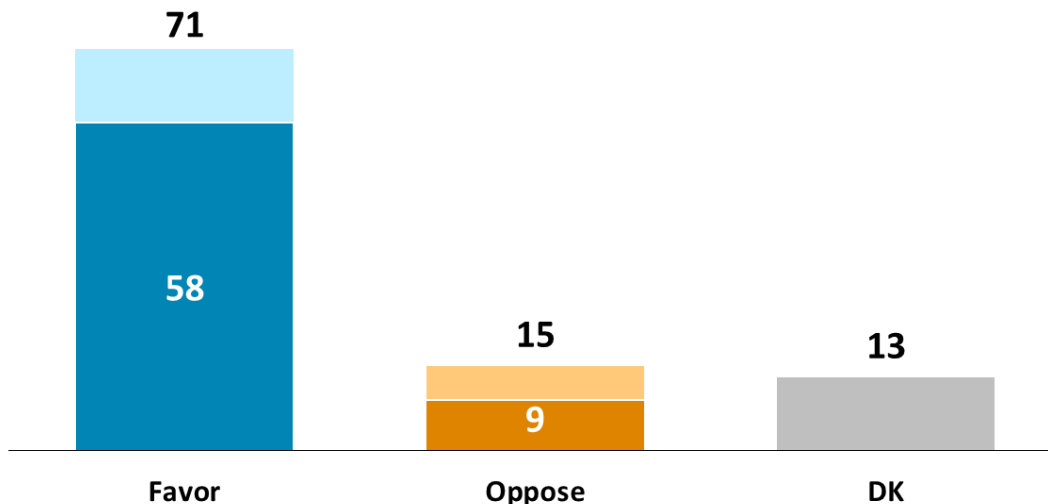
A strong majority of voters of all major parties say that they are less likely to vote for a politician who supports partisan gerrymandering.

Concerns about partisan redistricting are rooted in strong values and shared perspectives. The fundamental freedom to choose one’s own elected officials and the importance of political leaders working for the common good are especially important. Across the board, voters are very concerned that redistricting allows politicians to choose their voters, while putting partisan interests ahead of their constituents and solving important problems.

**Key Findings**

Americans want the Supreme Court to set rules to stop partisan gerrymandering.

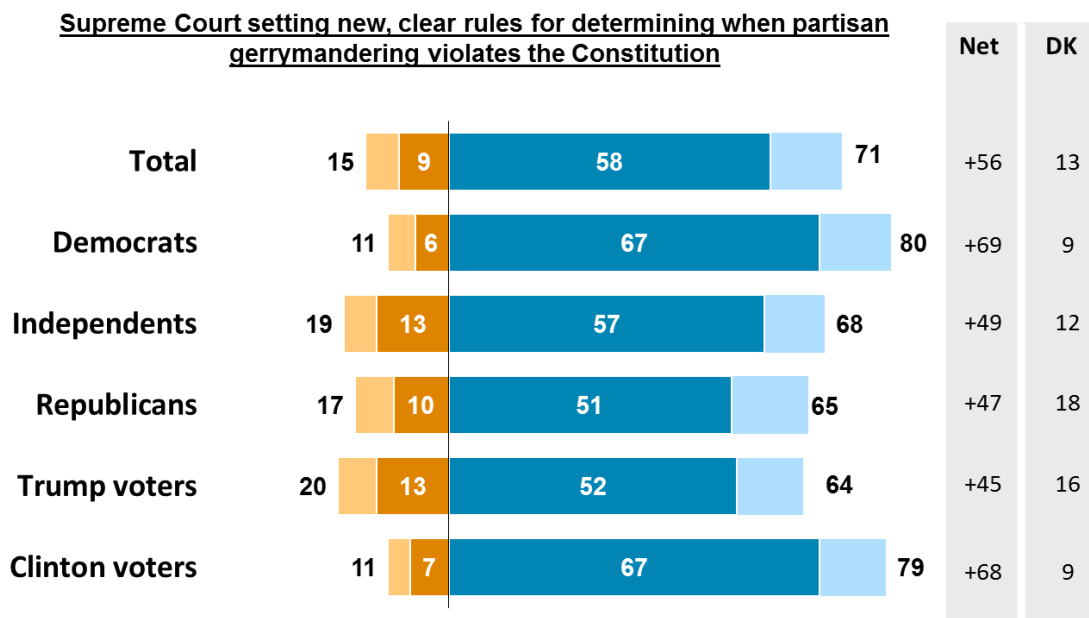
**Would you say you generally favor or oppose the Supreme Court setting new, clear rules for determining when partisan gerrymandering violates the Constitution?**



*Darker colors indicate intensity throughout the report*

<sup>1</sup> Lake Research Partners and WPA Intelligence designed and administered this survey that was conducted by live telephone interviews between August 26-31, 2017. The survey reached 1,000 likely 2018 General Election voters. The margin of error for this poll is +/- 3.1%, and higher among subgroups.

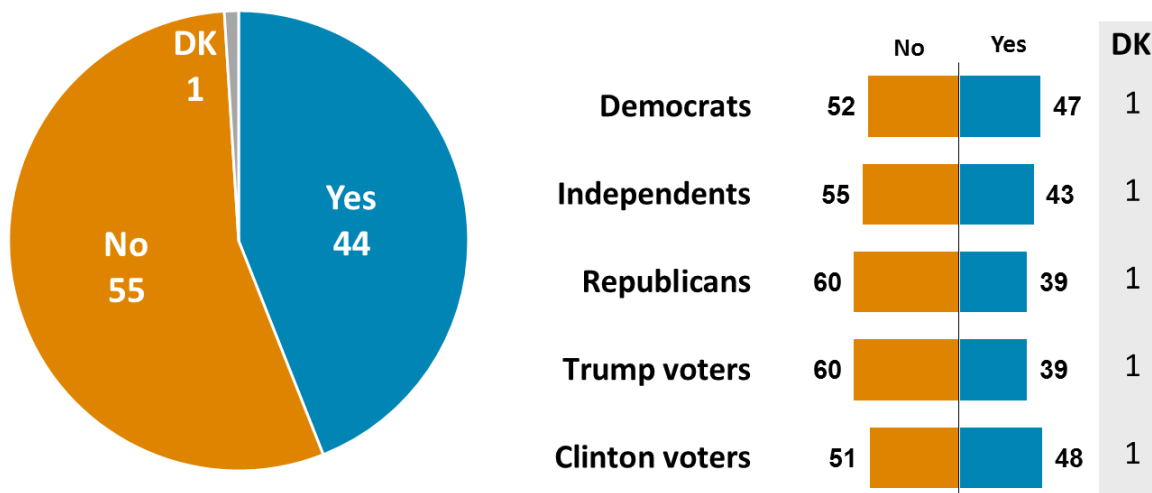
Voters of all major parties are strongly in favor of the Supreme Court setting rules to limit partisan gerrymandering, as are both Trump voters and Clinton voters. There is a significant intensity driving those who would like to see the Supreme Court set new, clear rules when it comes to partisan gerrymandering, with majorities strongly in favor across all major party breaks, and among those who supported either Secretary Clinton or President Trump in the 2016 general election.



*Darker colors indicate intensity throughout the report*

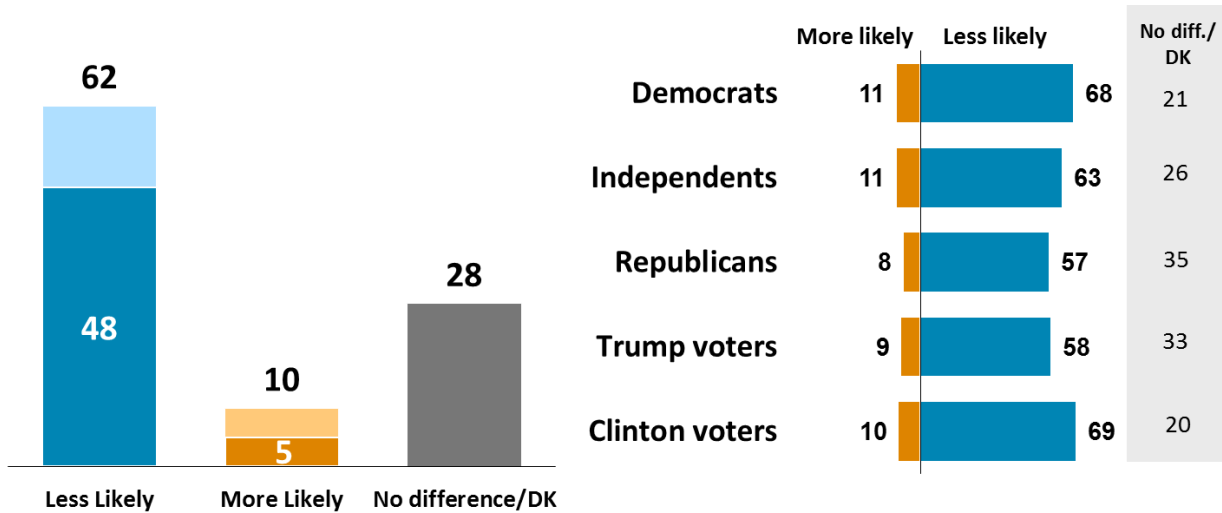
These numbers are strong, despite the fact that less than half of voters have heard about redistricting recently. Slightly more Democrats and Clinton voters have heard about redistricting recently than independent voters, Republicans, or Trump voters.

**Have you heard anything recently about redistricting or the redrawing of district lines?**



Gerrymandering is an important enough issue to voters that a candidate’s stance on the issue will influence people’s votes. Voters across major political parties are much less likely to support a candidate who supports partisan gerrymandering.

**Likelihood of Voting for a Candidate Who Supports Partisan Gerrymandering**



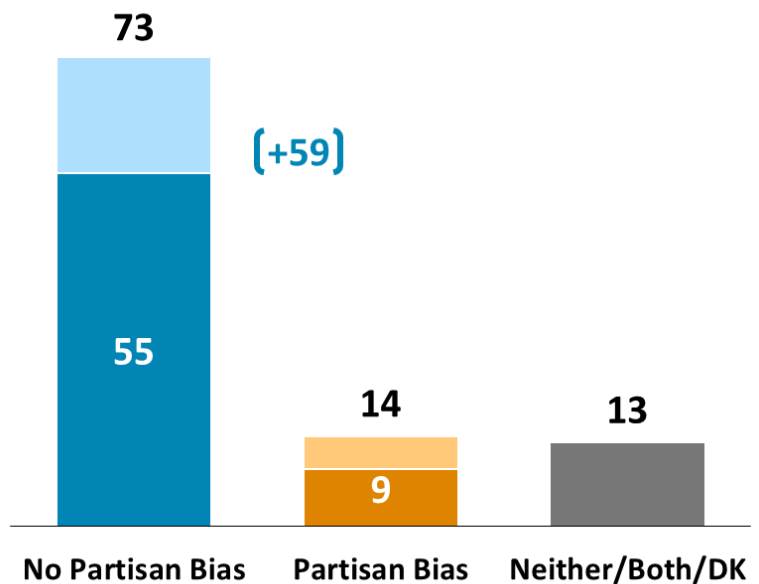
*Darker colors indicate intensity throughout the report*

When presented both sides, voters overwhelmingly say “no” to partisan bias in drawing districts, even if that bias would help their party win more seats.

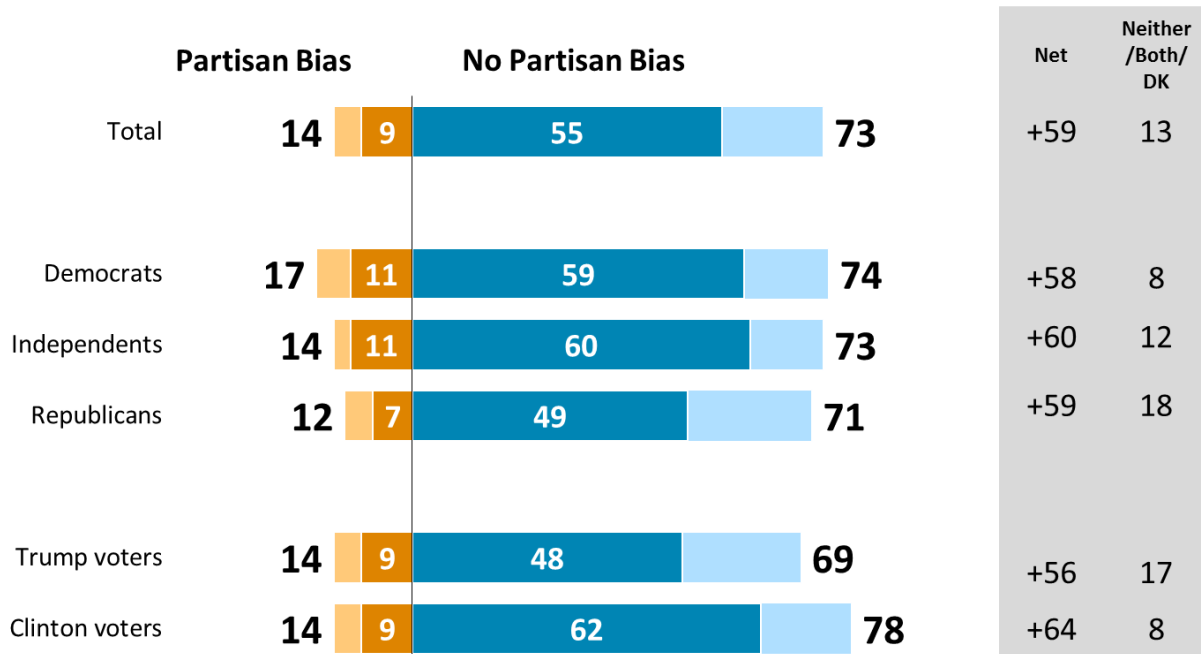
**Of the two, which would you prefer?**

**[NO PARTISAN BIAS]**  
Congressional districts that are drawn with no partisan bias whatsoever, even if that means that your own preferred party would not win as many seats.

**[PARTISAN BIAS]**  
Congressional districts that are drawn with a partisan bias, but knowing that your preferred party would likely win more seats.

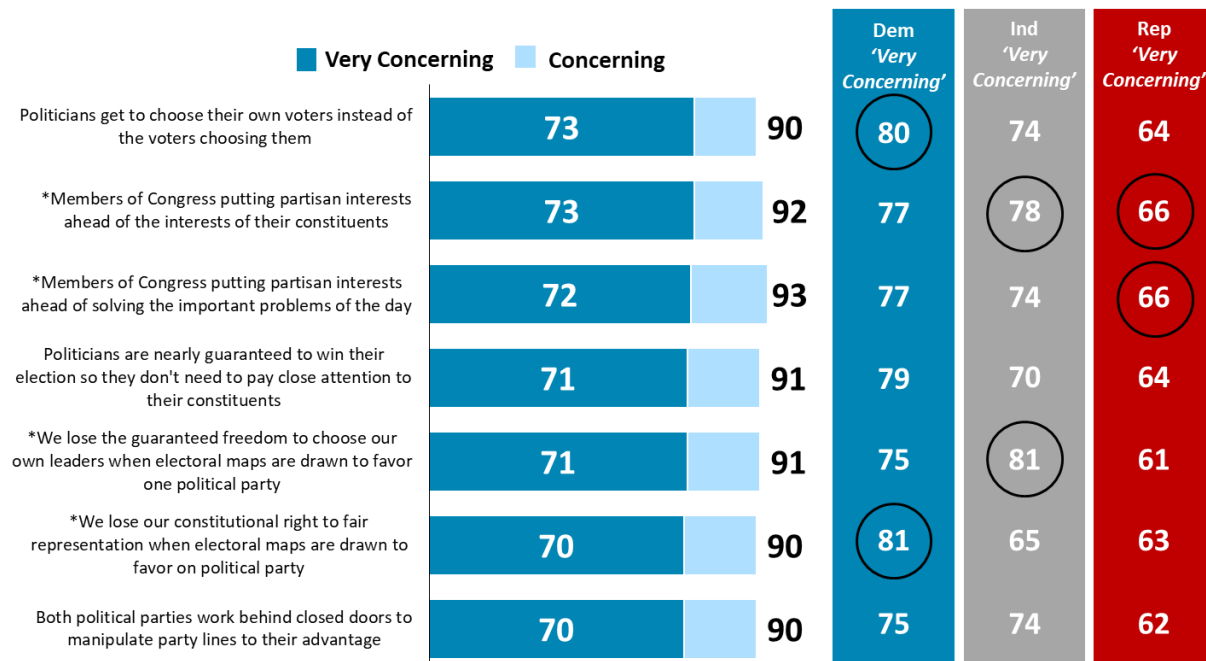


Voters across the board say “no” to partisan bias, especially Clinton voters, Democrats, and noticeably independent voters with real intensity. In addition, nearly half of Republicans (49%) say “no” strongly to partisan bias.

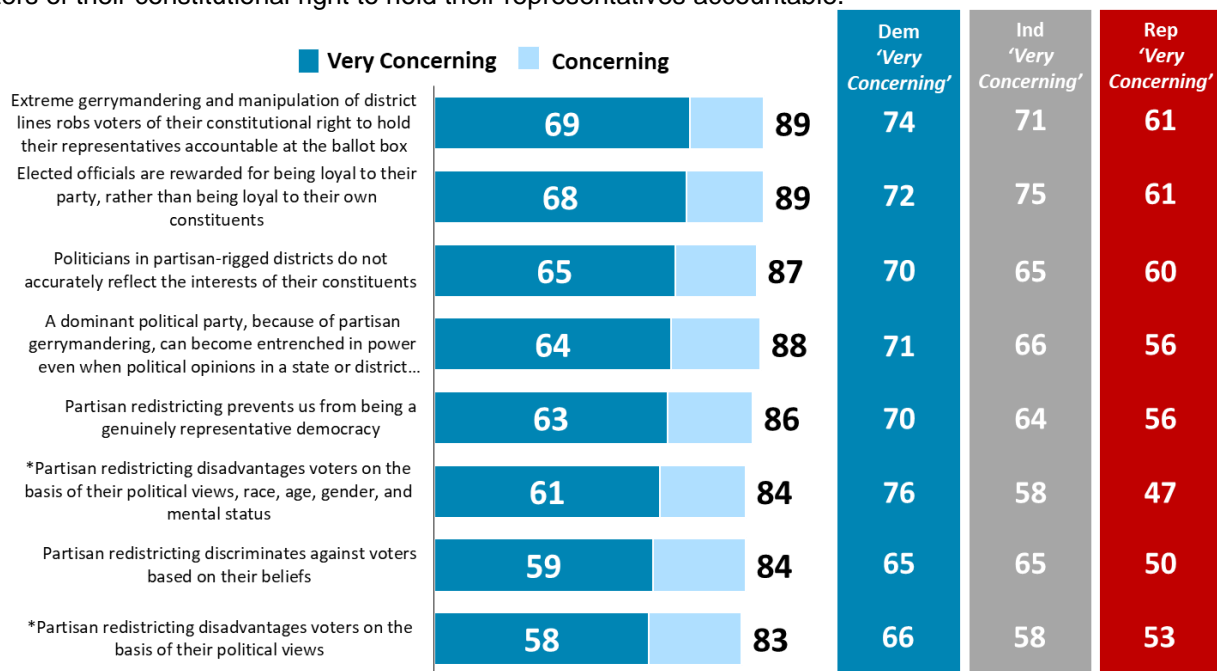


*Darker colors indicate intensity throughout the report*

Support is strong because it rests on a platform of deeply-held values and shared perspectives. The fundamental freedom to choose one’s own elected officials and the importance of political leaders working for the common good are especially important. Voters are most concerned about politicians choosing their own voters, members of Congress putting partisan interests ahead of the interests of constituents or solving important problems, and losing the freedom to choose their own leaders.



In the next tier of concerns, over two thirds of voters are very concerned about gerrymandering robbing voters of their constitutional right to hold their representatives accountable.



*Darker colors indicate intensity throughout the report*

### Engaged Debate: Head-to-Head Arguments

After hearing arguments on both sides, a solid majority of voters still agree with the Supreme Court setting rules to stop partisan redistricting. An argument for setting new rules that is based on principles of equal representation and the right to have a voice performs slightly better than one based on outcomes of partisan gerrymandering.

#### Principles\*

Our electoral system is founded on the principle that every American has the right to equal representation and is guaranteed the freedom to choose their own elected officials. Politicians who manipulate district lines to keep their own political party in power do not just hurt those from opposing political parties. These politicians hurt all voters by taking away voters' ability to choose their own leaders and challenge politicians' grip on power. Our democracy loses when we allow extreme partisan redistricting to continue. We need the Supreme Court to set clear rules to stop politicians from rigging the system and safeguard the fundamental right of all citizens to have a voice in our elections.

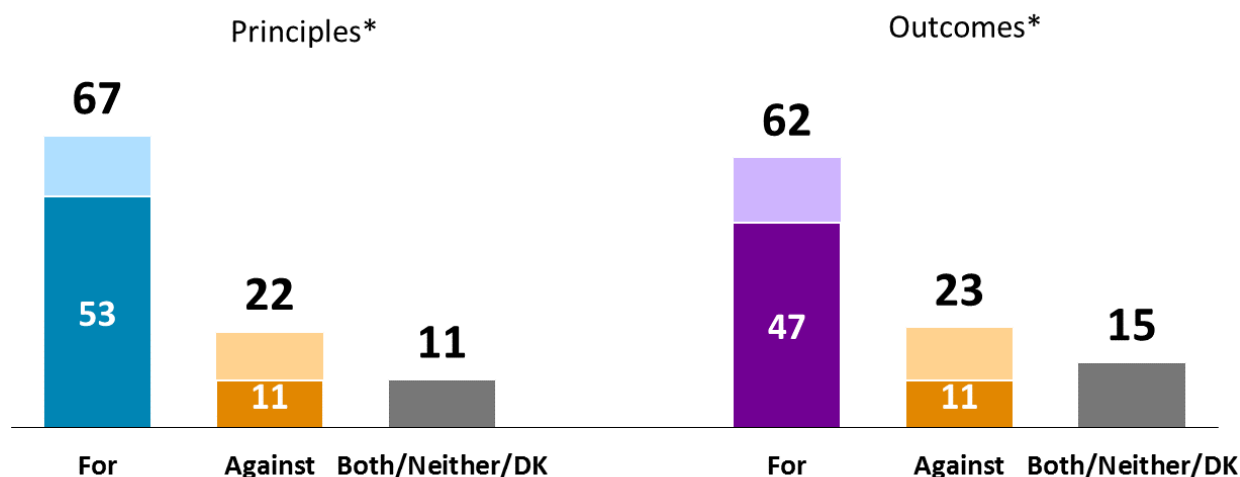
#### Outcomes\*

Extreme partisan redistricting is practiced by both political parties. In Maryland, the Republican governor proposed a plan that was fair to both parties, but the Democrats kept defeating it so they could keep in place the partisan maps they drew behind closed doors. In North Carolina, there are more registered Democrats than Republicans, but Republicans drew the maps so they control over 75 percent of the Congressional districts. Partisan gerrymandering severely limits the voices of all voters. That's why we need the Supreme Court to set clear rules to put a stop to this unfair manipulation that both parties engage in.

#### Opposition

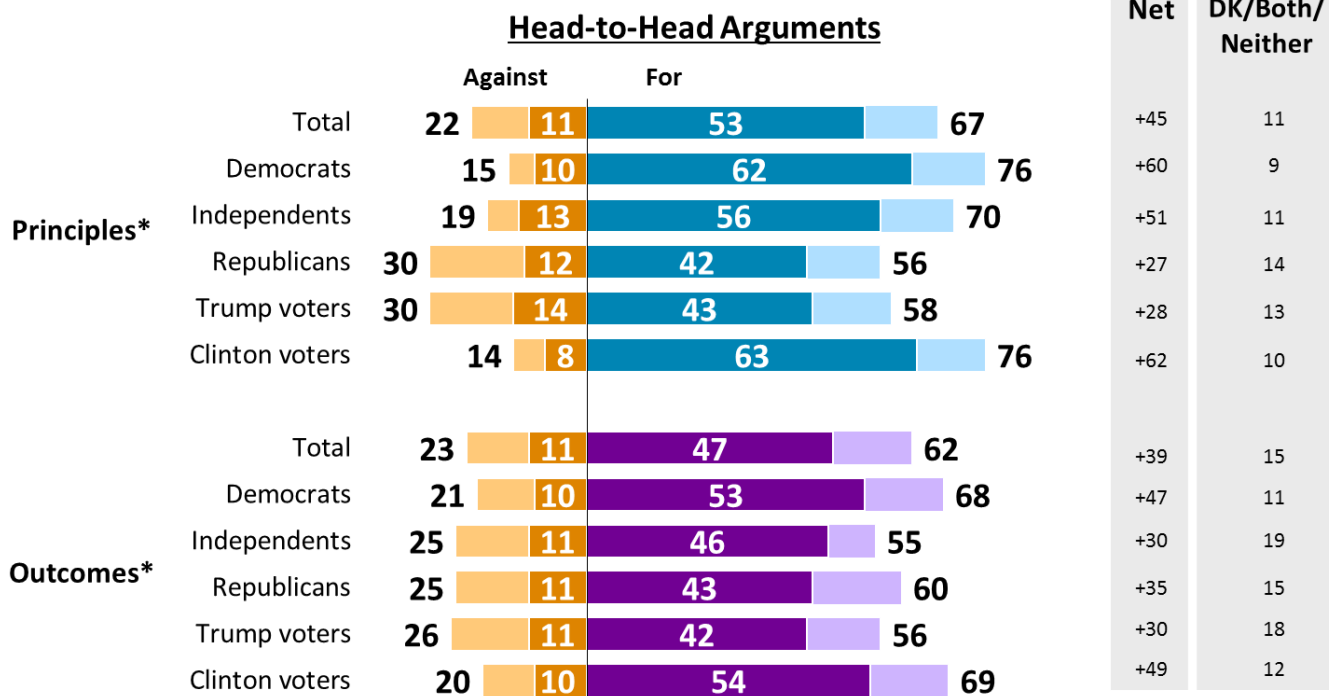
We already have redistricting rules that have guided the redistricting process for decades, but now partisan lawyers are trying to get unelected judges to change the rules because they don't like the election results. Redistricting is a political issue that is best left to the elected representatives of the people, not the courts. When activist judges weigh in on redistricting issues, they become partisan and prevent elected officials from doing the job they were elected to do. They also open our state governments to endless expensive lawsuits, unnecessary bureaucracy, and tilt the playing field to reward candidates and parties who can't win on their own.

### Head-to-Head Arguments: Supreme Court Should Set Rules About Partisan Redistricting

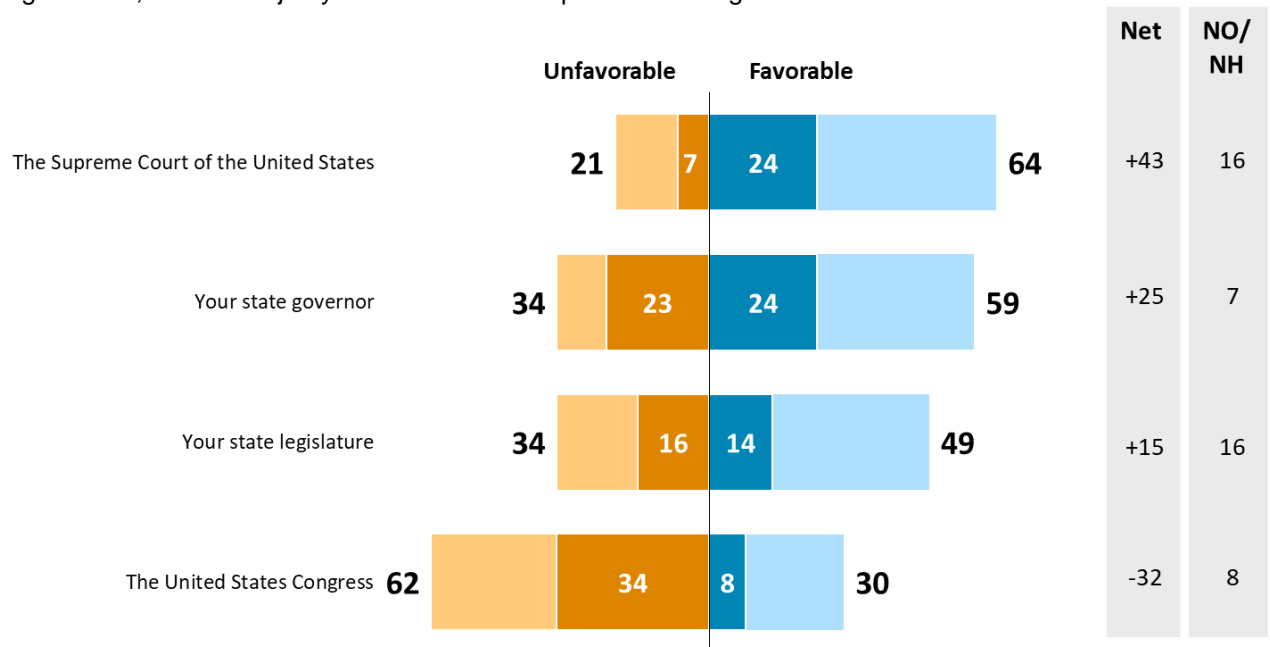


*Darker colors indicate intensity throughout the report*

Voters across the political spectrum side with non-partisan redistricting. Voters are generally more responsive to an argument based on principles rather than outcomes. Democrats, independent voters, and Clinton voters are driving support for “Principles.” However, a majority of Republicans and those who supported President Trump are also in favor of the “Principles” messaging.

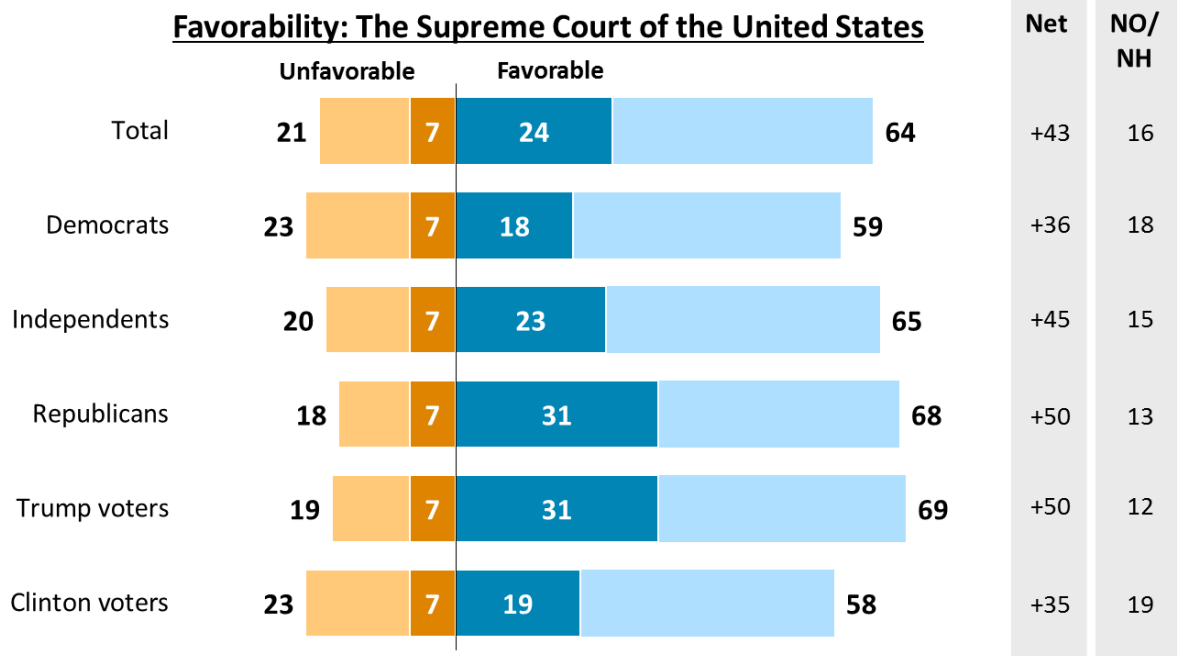


The Supreme Court of the United States has a strong favorability rating and is the most popular institution tested. Congress' favorability rating is upside down, with a 2-1 negative ratio. The public is divided on state legislatures, while a majority have a favorable opinion of their governors.



*Darker colors indicate intensity throughout the report*

Voters of all major parties, as well as Trump and Clinton voters, have strongly favorable opinions of the Supreme Court of the United States. It is viewed more positively than both Congress and state legislatures by voters of all major parties.



## **Conclusion**

In summary, voters strongly believe in the importance of removing partisan bias from redistricting and overwhelmingly support the Supreme Court of the United States setting new rules to determine when partisan gerrymandering violates the U.S. Constitution. Voters fundamentally believe in their right to freely choose their elected officials, and they support measures that protect this right. Even after voters hear arguments on both sides, they are still strongly in favor of the Supreme Court setting clear rules. Thanks to the Supreme Court's high favorability and strong public support for setting clear rules on this issue, a Supreme Court decision addressing partisan redistricting will likely be very well-received by the American electorate, including voters from all sides of the political spectrum.

\*\*\*\*

For more information on this survey, please contact Lake Research Partners' Celinda Lake ([clake@lakeresearch.com](mailto:clake@lakeresearch.com)) or David Mermin ([dmermin@lakeresearch.com](mailto:dmermin@lakeresearch.com)) at 202-776-9066; or WPA Intelligence's Ashlee Rich Stephenson ([ashlee@wpaintel.com](mailto:ashlee@wpaintel.com)) at (202) 470-6300.