Public opinion toward abortion and reproductive health policy in 2025

Findings from a National Survey

January 2025

PERRY UNDEM

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Introduction

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The survey.

PerryUndem conducted a national survey of voters to explore views toward current policies, future policies, and the role of government in abortion and reproductive health.

We wanted to learn what voters expect as the new Trump administration and Congress take office and how they feel about a range of approaches to policy changes on the topic.

The goal.

The goal of the research is to provide a resource for the public, policymakers, and the media to better understand current attitudes toward abortion and reproductive health policy.

Who we are.

We are a public opinion research firm that specializes in understanding public opinion on issues related to public policy. We are a non-partisan firm that doesn't fit neatly under traditional labels.

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Methods.

PerryUndem conducted a national survey among n = 1,962 registered voters, including oversamples for totals of:

- 412 Black adults
- 418 Latino adults
- 410 Asian American / Pacific Islander adults

The survey was conducted December 10 through 19, 2024 using YouGov's online panel. If YouGov's panel were a probability-based panel, the margin of error would be ± 3 percentage points.

Note: All polling has many potential sources of error. We always recommend interpreting polling data as evidence of what may be rather than a precise reflection of reality.

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Here are the sample demographics.

	Weighted %	N size (Unweighted)
Total	100%	1,962
Women	53%	1,071
Men	47%	891
18 to 29	16%	351
30 to 44	23%	467
45 to 59	23%	455
60+	38%	689
Black	12%	412
Latino	11%	418
AAPI	5%	410
White	71%	722

	Weighted %	N size (Unweighted)
< College	60%	1,110
College +	40%	852
Republicans	35%	524
Independents	28%	551
Democrats	37%	887
Northeast	20%	403
Midwest	22%	305
South	36%	698
West	22%	556

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Key findings

Key findings.

A majority of the electorate continues to support abortion rights and access.

Data suggest their views have become more solidified over the two years since the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade.*

Majorities of voters say *Dobbs* and recent restrictions have made them think about many things, including the health and safety of their loved ones (69%) and Americans (73%), politicians having power and control over health care decisions (65%), and wanting the government to stay out of abortion decisions altogether (64%).

Throughout the data, it's clear that at the most fundamental level, voters want people and doctors making decisions about abortion, not politicians or the government.

Expectations regarding if and how the Trump administration and Congress may address abortion differ significantly by party affiliation.

Trump voters do not expect the Trump administration or Congress to work to restrict abortion. These voters heard Trump say that he wants to leave the issue up to the states – and 94% believe the president-elect follows through on his promises. Even anti-abortion Trump voters don't expect him or Congress to further restrict abortion.

Harris voters, on the other hand, expect both the Trump administration and Congress to try to restrict abortion. They, too, heard Trump say he wants abortion to be up to the states, but they don't believe he'll follow through on his promises. Unlike Trump voters, Harris voters think Trump supports Project 2025.

What do most want from incoming public officials?

Given that a majority support abortion rights and access, it's not a surprise that most respondents favor policies that improve access to abortion and oppose a number of policies that restrict it.

Generally, they tend to want abortion to be legal and they want officials to stay out of decisions.

On executive branch policies.

Respondents oppose a number of actions the Trump administration could take on abortion and reproductive health – from the FDA banning telehealth for medication abortion to expanding religious refusals to taking away Title X funds from Planned Parenthood. Opposition crosses party lines – with about four in ten Trump voters or more in opposition (including 63% who oppose taking away funds from Planned Parenthood).

When it comes to political appointees, most respondents do not want federal government officials creating new laws and regulations restricting abortion access. Instead, they want officials to leave abortion up to people and their doctors (71%, including 55% of Trump voters). Six in ten Trump voters (62%) support the new administration making sure that "federal government officials stay out of people's decisions and access to abortion."

If president-elect Trump has the opportunity to appoint a Supreme Court justice, 64% of respondents say they would not want him to pick someone who is anti-abortion.

On Congressional policies.

Most voters support policies in Congress that guarantee rights and access to abortion and oppose things like passing a national ban or taking away Planned Parenthood funding.

Interestingly, respondents are more supportive of making sure Medicaid covers abortion care than making sure it does not.

On using the legal and justice system for criminalization.

We explored opinion toward criminal justice policy and lawsuits that could emerge from anti-abortion officials or groups. These could include things like charging doctors with crimes if they mail abortion medication to patients in a state where abortion is banned or charging parents with crimes if they drive their daughter to another state to get an abortion.

Large majorities oppose all of the criminalization efforts we explored.

How the government can protect life.

In a new question, we explored people's general feelings for how the government can protect life – through criminalizing abortion or through improving conditions for people to have children. Nearly nine in ten respondents (87%) prefer improving conditions over criminalization.

We're curious about anti-abortion voters.

To date, we haven't seen much evidence that people who are anti-abortion are moving toward supporting abortion rights and access. (We've seen some evidence that some people are prioritizing the issue less.) That said, we were surprised by some findings from anti-abortion respondents* in this survey, such as:

- Most anti-abortion respondents who voted for Trump do not expect incoming public officials in Congress or the Trump administration to restrict abortion.

- Data suggest the *Dobbs* decision and subsequent bans and restrictions got many anti-abortion respondents thinking more broadly about abortion. While 81% say these policies made them think of the unborn lives saved, sizeable proportions also say the bans and restrictions triggered thoughts about:

    - The health and safety of people they love (50%);
    - Politicians having power and control over health care decisions (39%);
    - Wanting the government to stay out of abortion decisions altogether (31%); and
    - Politicians having control over people's bodies (31%).

Respondents who say they want abortion illegal in all or most cases.

- Nearly seven in ten (69%) lean toward protecting life through improving conditions for parenthood over banning and criminalizing abortion.

- One in three (34%) says access to abortion is a "very important" part of pregnancy care – another 26% say it is "somewhat important" (60% total important).

- Half say they'd support the Trump administration making sure "federal government officials stay out of people's decisions and access to abortion."

- A majority (57%) oppose taking away funds from Planned Parenthood that are used for birth control for people with low incomes (Title X).

- One in four (26%) feels unfavorable toward "anti-abortion groups," as do 39% of all respondents who say they voted for Trump in 2024.

This is just one survey and it carries with it all the errors that surveys can produce. But, it's something we're curious about keeping an eye on.

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Detailed findings

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Views toward abortion.

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A majority of voters continue to support abortion rights, including federally.

Which comes closest to your opinion on abortion? Abortion should be:

64%

Legal in all or most cases

37%

Illegal in all or most cases *(7% illegal in all cases)*

Which comes closest to your view:

60%

All Americans should have the right to abortion, no matter what state they live in

40%

Each state should decide if its residents have the right to abortion

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The issue isn't just a political stance – it's personal.

More than seven in ten respondents (73%) can imagine a situation in which an abortion might be the best option for a close friend or family member.

Nearly six in ten respondents of reproductive age (18 to 44) can imagine a situation in which an abortion might be the best option for them because they didn't want to be a parent or could not afford to be a parent at the time.

Can you imagine a situation in which an abortion might be the best option _____:

% Yes

73%

For a close friend or family member of yours

Trump voters: 59%

59%

For you or a partner because you didn't want to be a parent or couldn't afford to be a parent at the time (Base n = 819 respondents ages 18 to 44)

Trump voters 18 to 44: 40%

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If they had to guess, most respondents think a majority of Americans support abortion rights and access.

If you had to guess, do you think most Americans:

70%

Support abortion rights and access

30%

Oppose abortion rights and access

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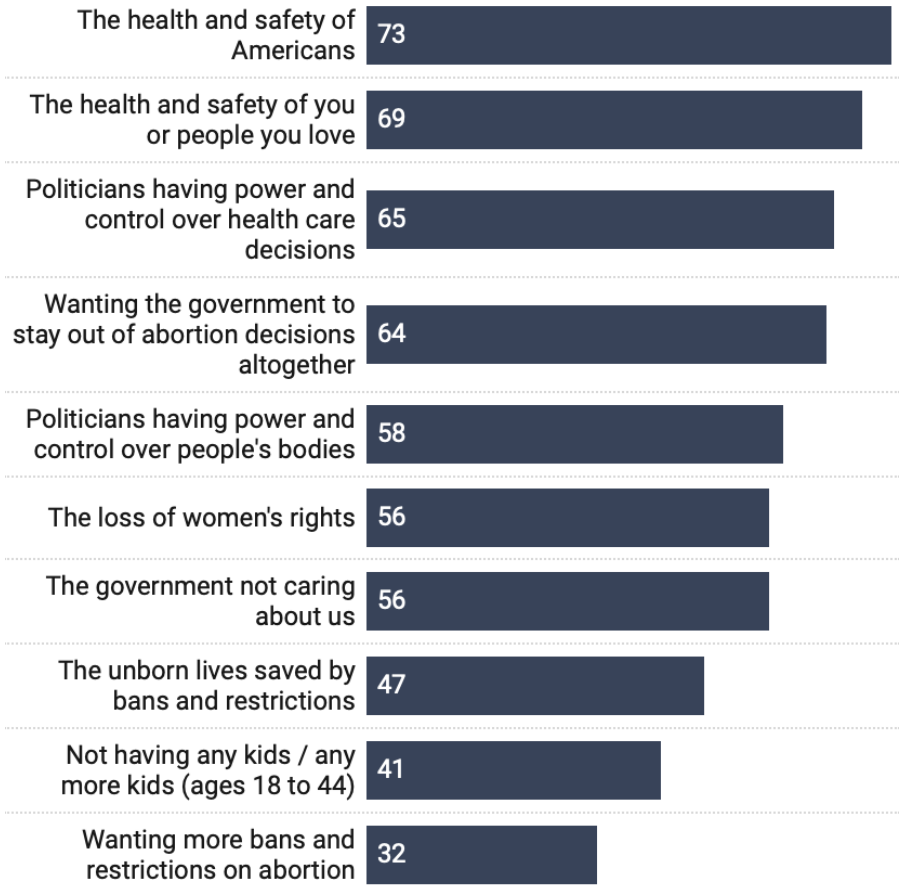
The *Dobbs* decision and recent abortion bans have triggered a lot of thinking – especially about health, safety, and power.

Majorities across many segments say they've thought about these things. See next two slides.

In 2022, the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, which had guaranteed the right to abortion. Since then, many states have banned or restricted abortion. Have recent abortion bans and restrictions made you think about: (Responses randomized)



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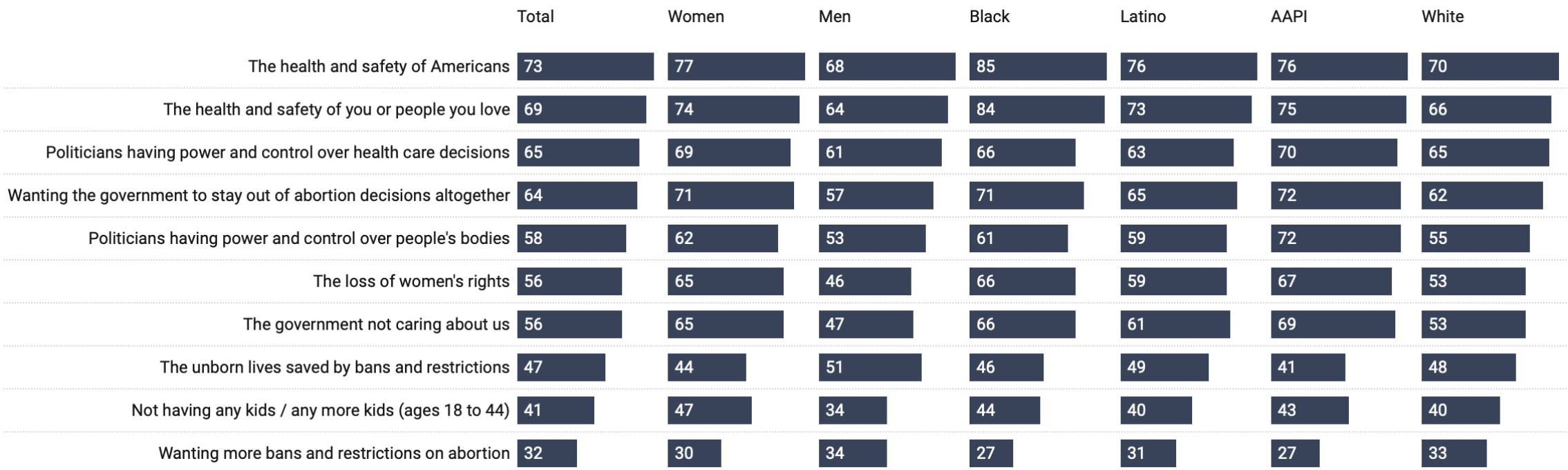
% Yes recent bans and restrictions made me think about



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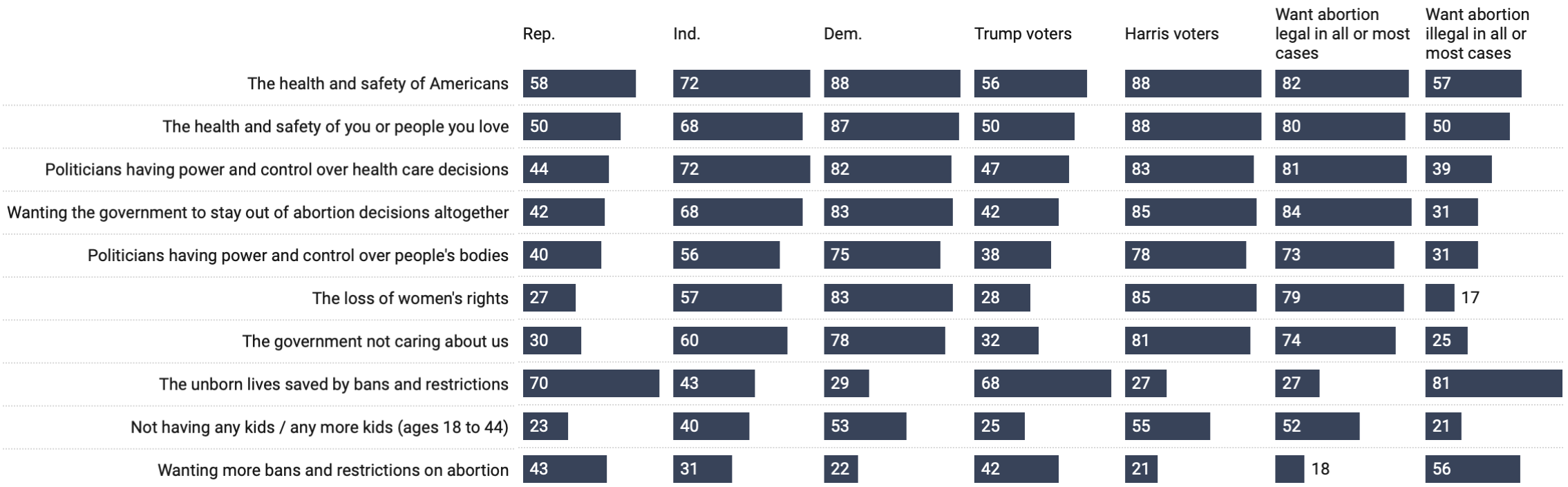
% Yes recent bans and restrictions made me think about



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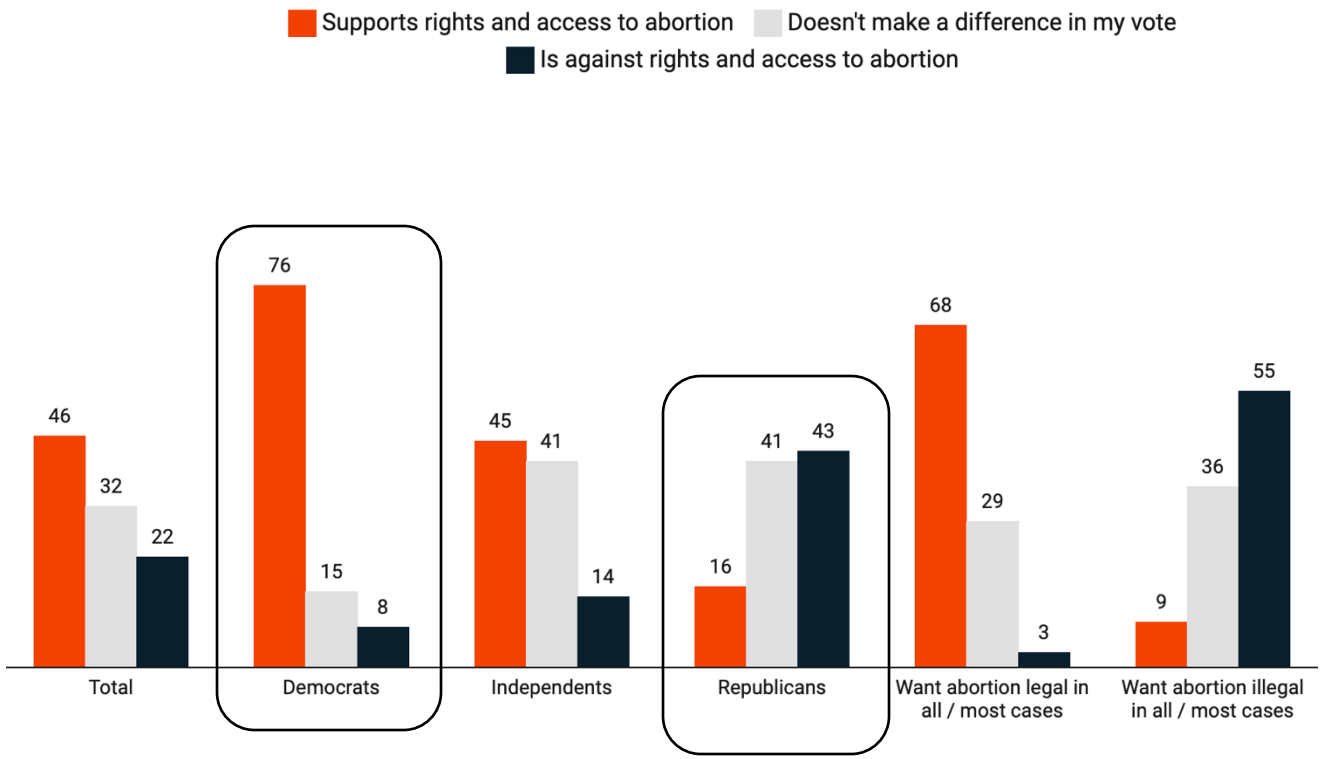
Respondents are twice as likely to say they'd vote for a pro-choice v. anti-abortion candidate.

We asked this question to explore the intensity of attitudes on the issue.

Democrats and pro-choice respondents have stronger views than their counterparts.

More than half of Republican respondents (57%) say the issue doesn't make a differencee in their vote (41%) or are more likely to vote for pro-choice candidates (16%).

In elections, are you more likely to vote for a candidate for political office who:



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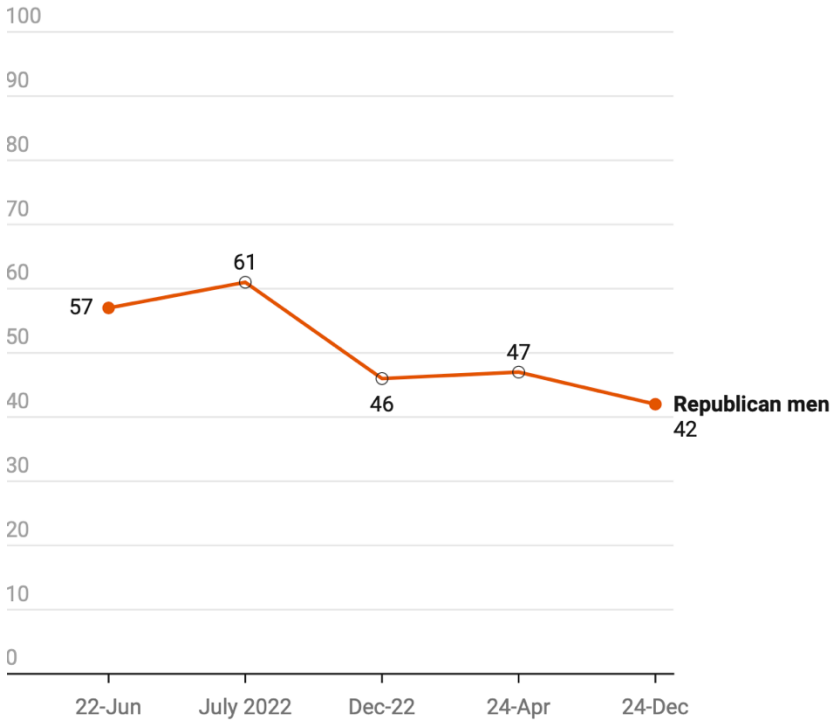
In our tracking data, we see evidence that Republican men have lower intensity on the issue in recent years.

Data suggest Republican women may also be shifting. In our early June 2022 survey, 53% of Republican women said they were more likely to vote for anti-abortion candidates v. 45% in this December 2024 (shifts are within margins of error).

% More likely to vote for anti-abortion candidate



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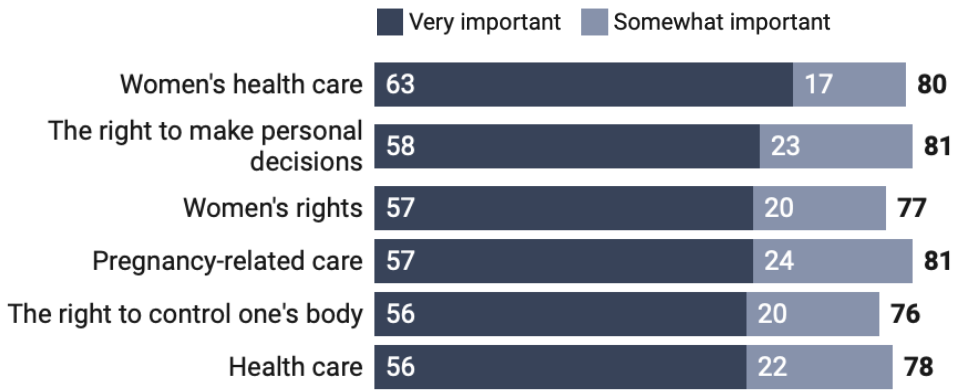
Majorities say abortion access is an important part of health care and rights.

One in three anti-abortion respondents say abortion access is a very important part of “pregnancy-related care” and another 26% say it’s somewhat important.

In your own view, is access to abortion an important part of….
(Randomized)



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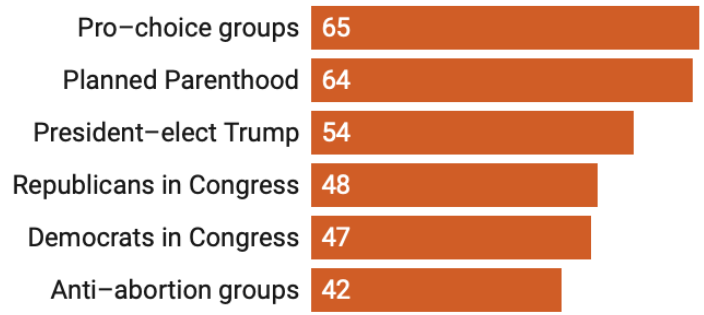
We explored views toward “pro-choice” groups and “anti-abortion” groups.

Respondents are +23 points more favorable toward pro-choice than anti-abortion groups.

Roughly four in ten Trump voters (39%) feel unfavorably toward anti-abortion groups, as do about one in four anti-abortion respondents (26%).

The popularity of pro-choice groups and Planned Parenthood surpasses either party in Congress or president-elect Trump.

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable view of: (Randomized)



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What voters expect from the new Trump administration.

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Expectations differ significantly by party affiliation.

Most respondents who voted for President-elect Trump do not expect him or his administration to work to restrict abortion access. A majority of his voters heard Trump say that he "would leave abortion up to the states" – and 94% believe Trump follows through on his promises. These voters also don't believe Trump supports Project 2025. Nearly four in ten don't think Trump himself is pro-life. Interestingly, anti-abortion Trump voters also don't expect more abortion restrictions.

Harris voters, on the other hand, expect the opposite: they think President-elect Trump, his administration, and Congress will try to restrict abortion access. While most heard Trump say he'd leave abortion up to the states – Harris voters don't believe him. They also think Trump supports 2025.

Here are more details....

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Trump voters' expectations.

Among n = 697 Trump voters

63%

Do not think the Trump administration will try to restrict abortion (37% say yes)

78%

Do not think the Trump administration will use Comstock to ban abortions (22% yes)

69%

Do not think Congress will try to restrict abortion (31% will)

72%

Do not think Trump will try to pass a law restricting access to abortion nationwide (28% will)

72%

Say they heard President-elect Trump say in the past year that he would leave abortion up to the states

94%

Say President-elect Trump follows through on his promises v. "says things just to get elected"

60%

Of Trump voters who have heard of Project 2025 say Trump does not support it (17% think he does at 24% are unsure)

39%

Think Trump is personally pro-choice (16%) or doesn't care either way (23%)

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Anti-abortion Trump voters' expectations.

Among n = 426 Trump voters who want abortion illegal in all or most cases

59%

Do not think the Trump administration will try to restrict abortion (40% say yes)

78%

Do not think the Trump administration will use Comstock to ban abortions (22% yes)

71%

Do not think Congress will try to restrict abortion (29% will)

69%

Do not think Trump will try to pass a law restricting access to abortion nationwide (31% will)

75%

Say they heard President-elect Trump say in the past year that he would leave abortion up to the states

97%

Say President-elect Trump follows through on his promises v. "says things just to get elected"

62%

Who have heard of Project 2025 say Trump does not support it (15% think he does at 23% are unsure)

25%

Think Trump is personally pro-choice (10%) or doesn't care either way (16%)

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Harris voters' expectations.

Among n = 1,094 Harris voters

10%

Do not think the Trump administration will try to restrict abortion (90% say yes)

17%

Do not think the Trump administration will use Comstock to ban abortions (83% yes)

18%

Do not think Congress will try to restrict abortion (82% will)

17%

Do not think Trump will try to pass a law restricting access to abortion nationwide (83% will)

67%

Say they heard President-elect Trump say in the past year that he would leave abortion up to the states

14%

Say President-elect Trump follows through on his promises v. "says things just to get elected"

4%

Of Harris voters who have heard of Project 2025 say Trump does not support it (86% think he does at 11% are unsure)

75%

Think Trump is personally pro-choice (9%) or doesn't care either way (66%)

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Totals among all voters.

37%

Do not think the Trump administration will try to restrict abortion (63% yes)

47%

Do not think the Trump administration will use Comstock to ban abortions (53% yes)

43%

Do not think Congress will try to restrict abortion (57% will)

44%

Do not think Trump will try to pass a law restricting access to abortion nationwide (56% will)

68%

Say they heard President-elect Trump say in the past year that he would leave abortion up to the states

55%

Say President-elect Trump follows through on his promises v. “says things just to get elected”

29%

Of voters who have heard of Project 2025 say Trump does not support it (53% think he does at 18% are unsure)

57%

Think Trump is personally pro-choice (12%) or doesn’t care either way (45%)

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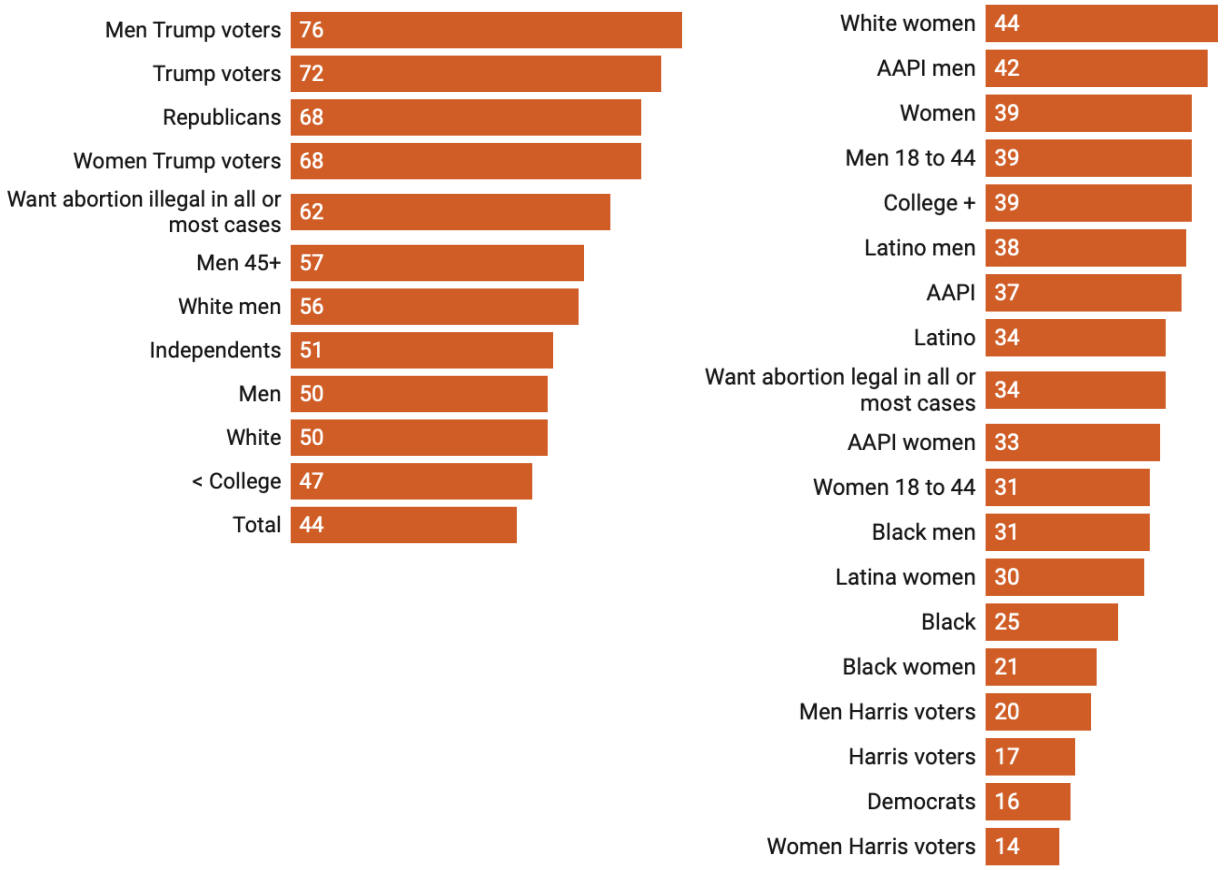
Men, white voters, and those with less than a college degree are among the most likely to think Trump will not work to restrict abortion.

Percent who say Trump will not try to pass a law restricting access



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Policy preferences.

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General preferences.

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We explored views toward their preferred role of government in abortion and a range of current and future policy approaches.

We explored:

1
Views toward the role of government

2
Potential policy approaches from the Trump administration / executive branch

3
Congressional policy

4
Criminal justice system / lawsuits

Here are more details….

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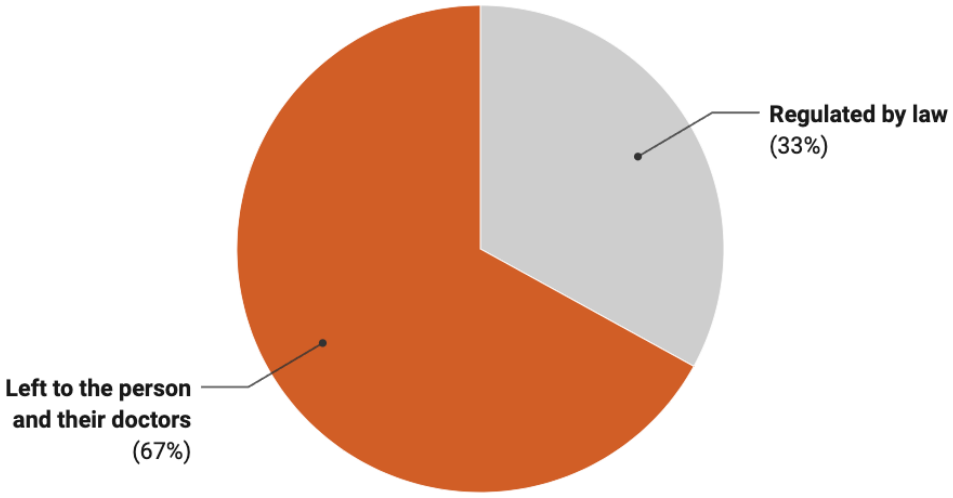
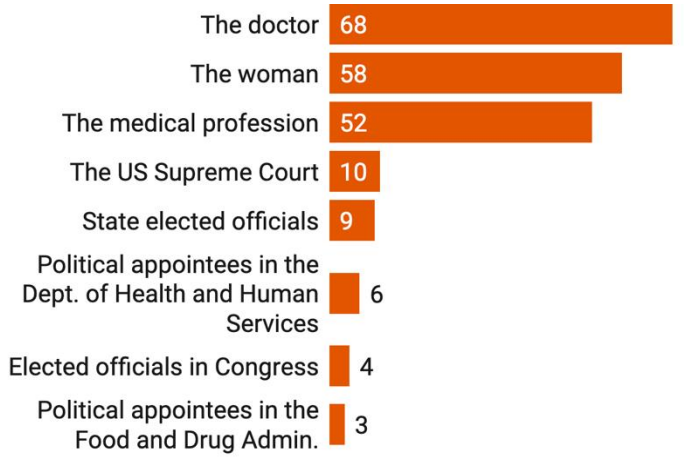
Most want decisions in the hands of people v. the government.

Overall, do you think the decision whether or not someone can have an abortion should be:



Who should decide what procedures or methods are used for abortion? Select any that apply. (Responses randomized)



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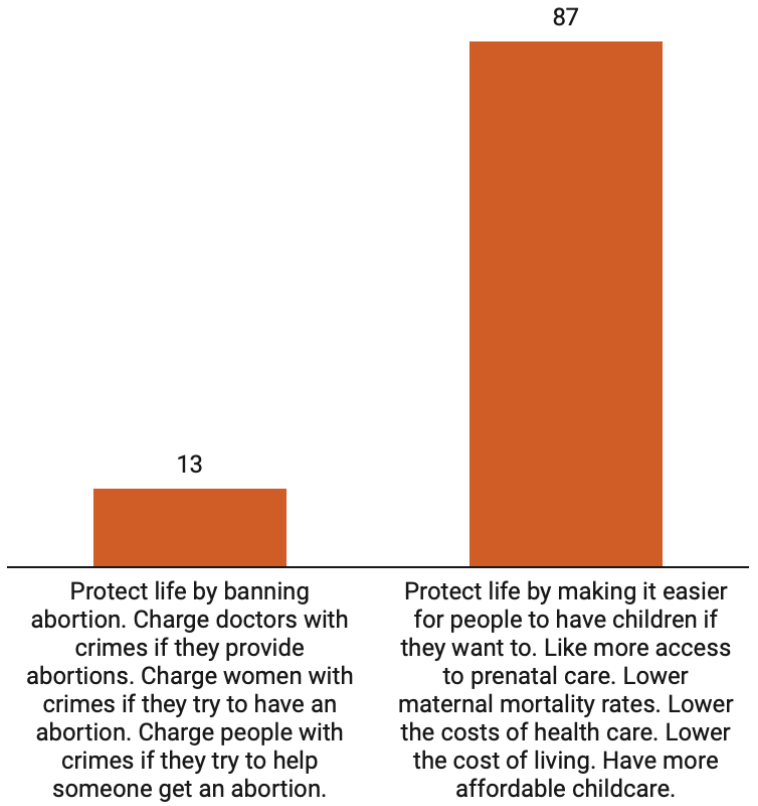
In a new question, we presented two broad approaches for how the government might protect life: criminalizing abortion or improving conditions to have children.

A large majority leans toward protecting life by improving conditions, including 69% of respondents who say they want abortion illegal in all or most cases.

Here are two ways the government could protect life. Which do you prefer:
(Rotated)



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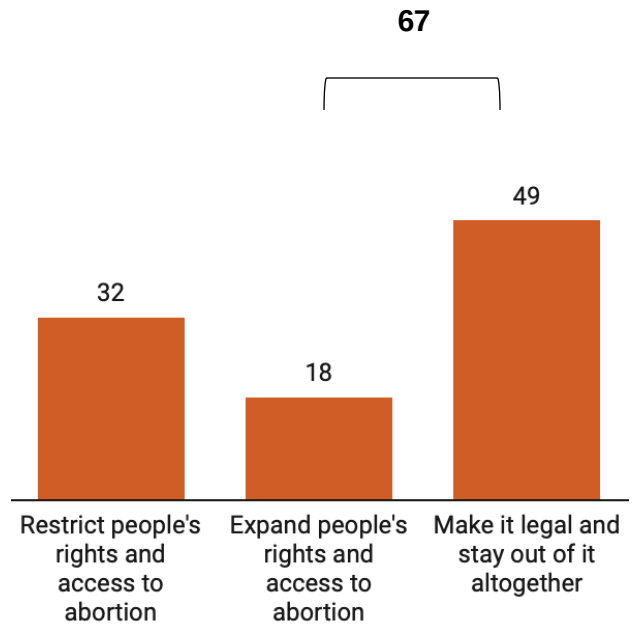
In general, a majority of respondents (67%) want incoming public officials to either make abortion legal and stay out of it or expand rights and access.

Would you want the new Trump administration and Congress to:



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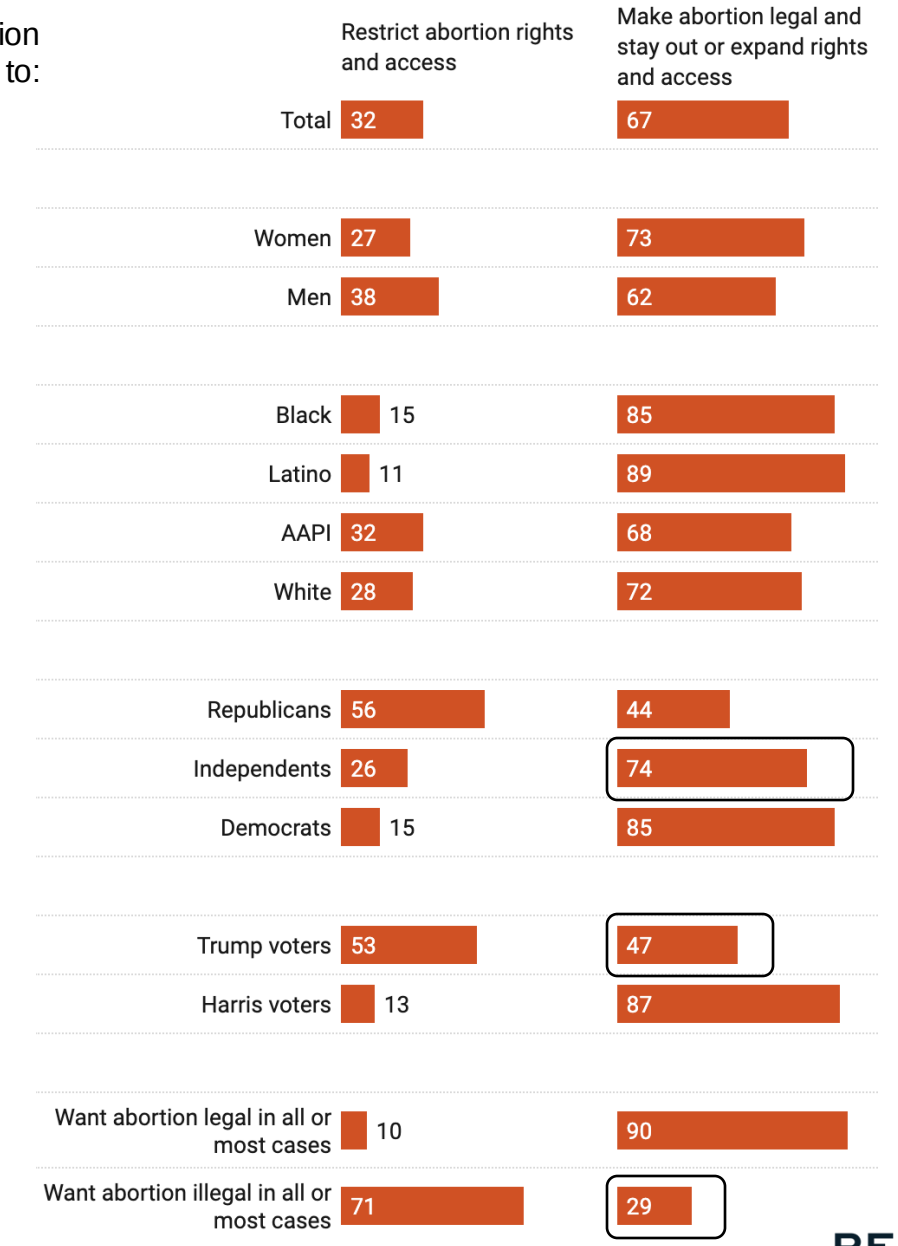
Would you want the new Trump administration and Congress to:



Close to half of Trump voters and 74% of independents want incoming public officials to make abortion legal and stay out of the issue or expand rights and access.

29% of anti-abortion respondents lean toward wanting officials to “keep abortion legal and stay out of it” or expand rights and access.

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Trump administration / executive branch policy.

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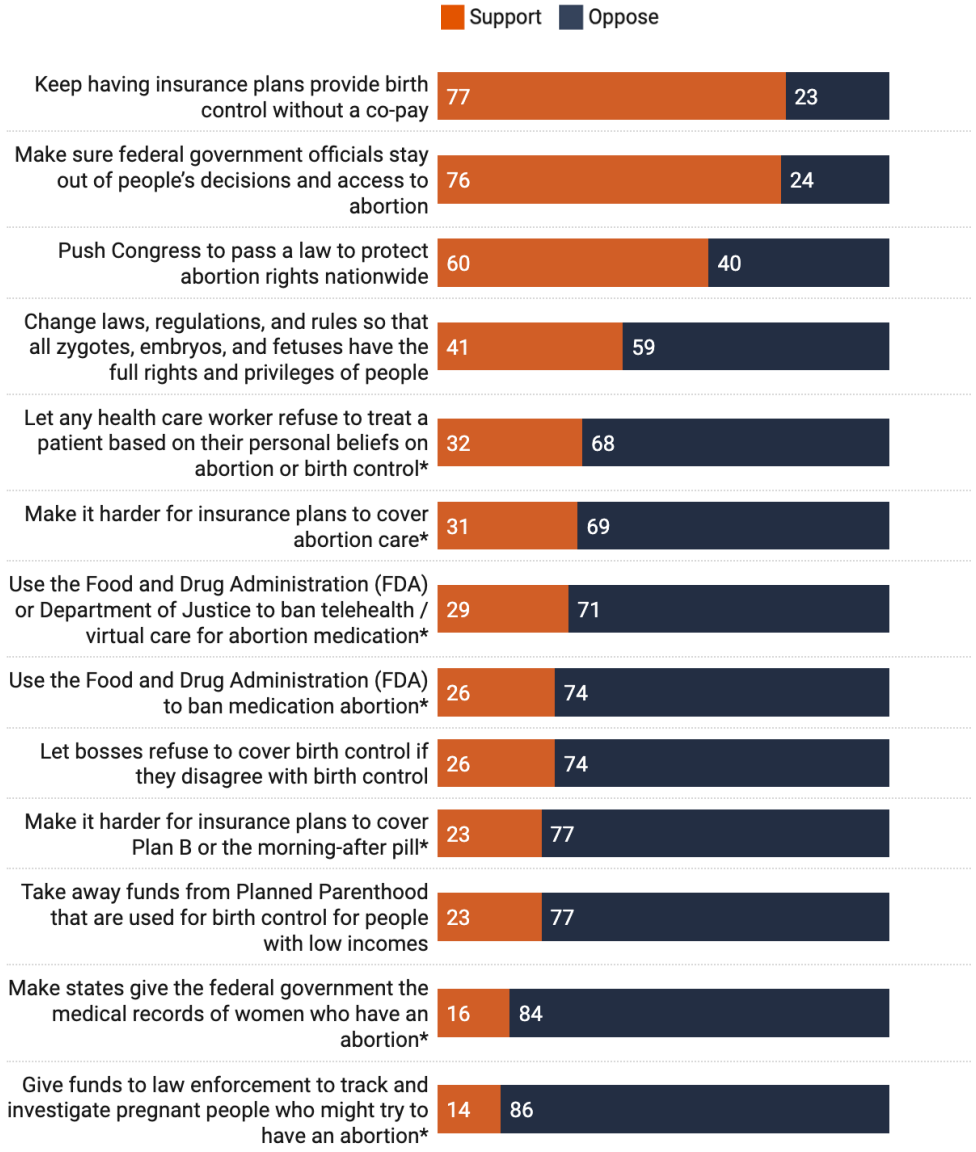
A majority of respondents oppose the new Trump administration working on restrictive policies.

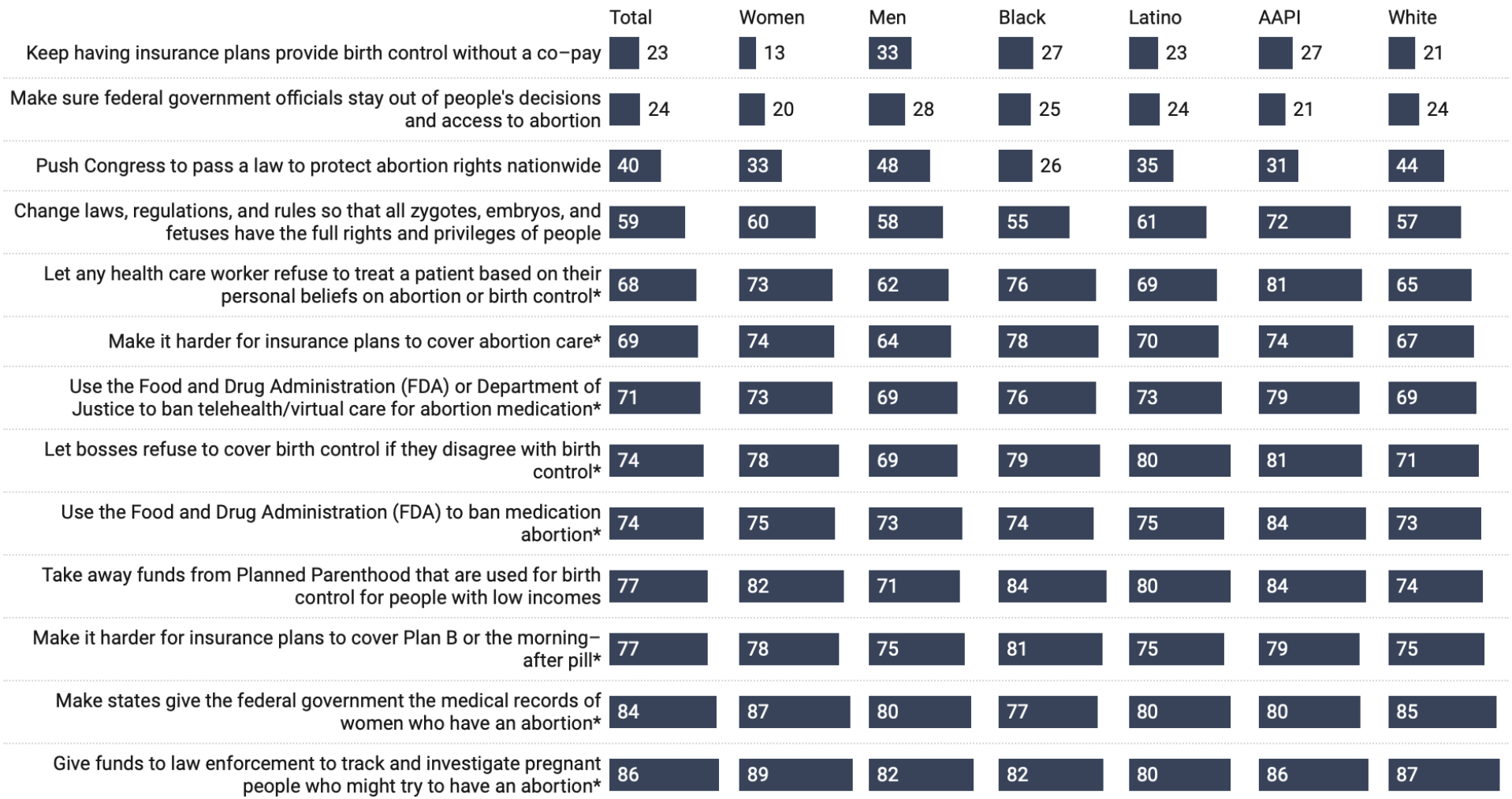
Majorities across demographics and party affiliation oppose many of these policies (see next two pages).

Here are things the new Trump administration could do. Do you support or oppose this idea: (Randomized)



** These questions were split sampled for time – half of the sample received each*

% Oppose



** These questions were split sampled for time – half of the sample received each*

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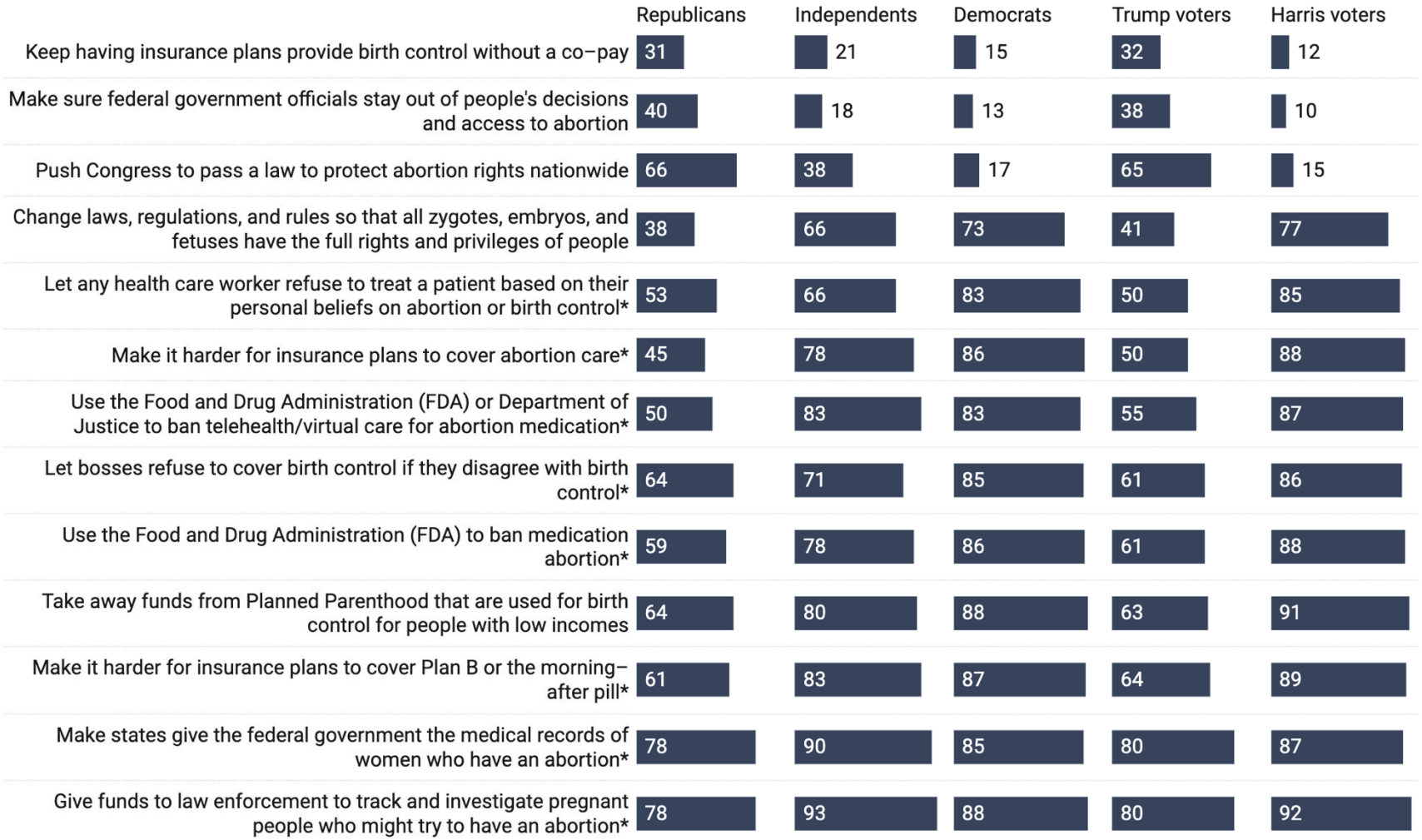
% Oppose



** These questions were split sampled for time – half of the sample received each*

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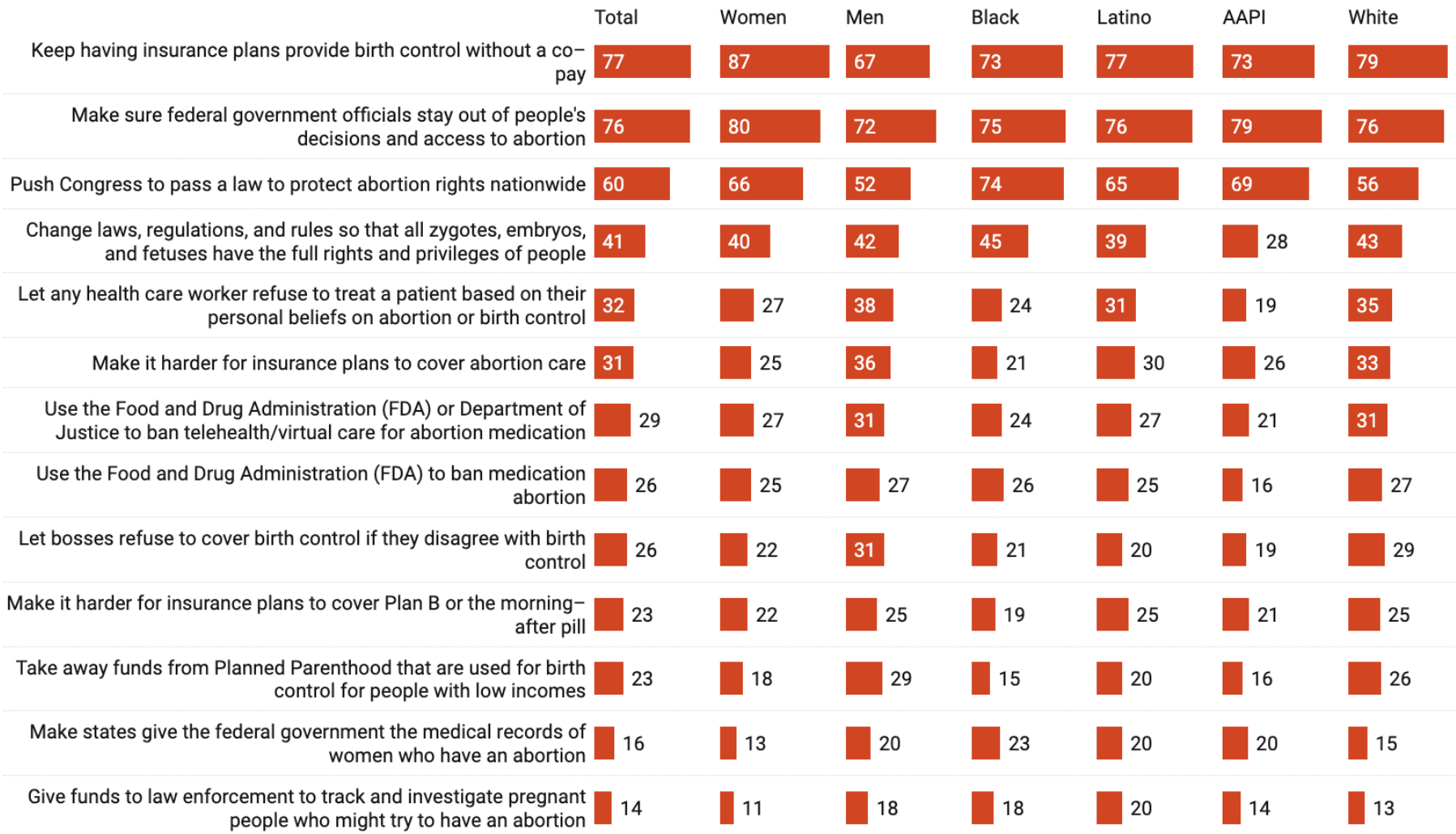
% Support



** These questions were split sampled for time – half of the sample received each*

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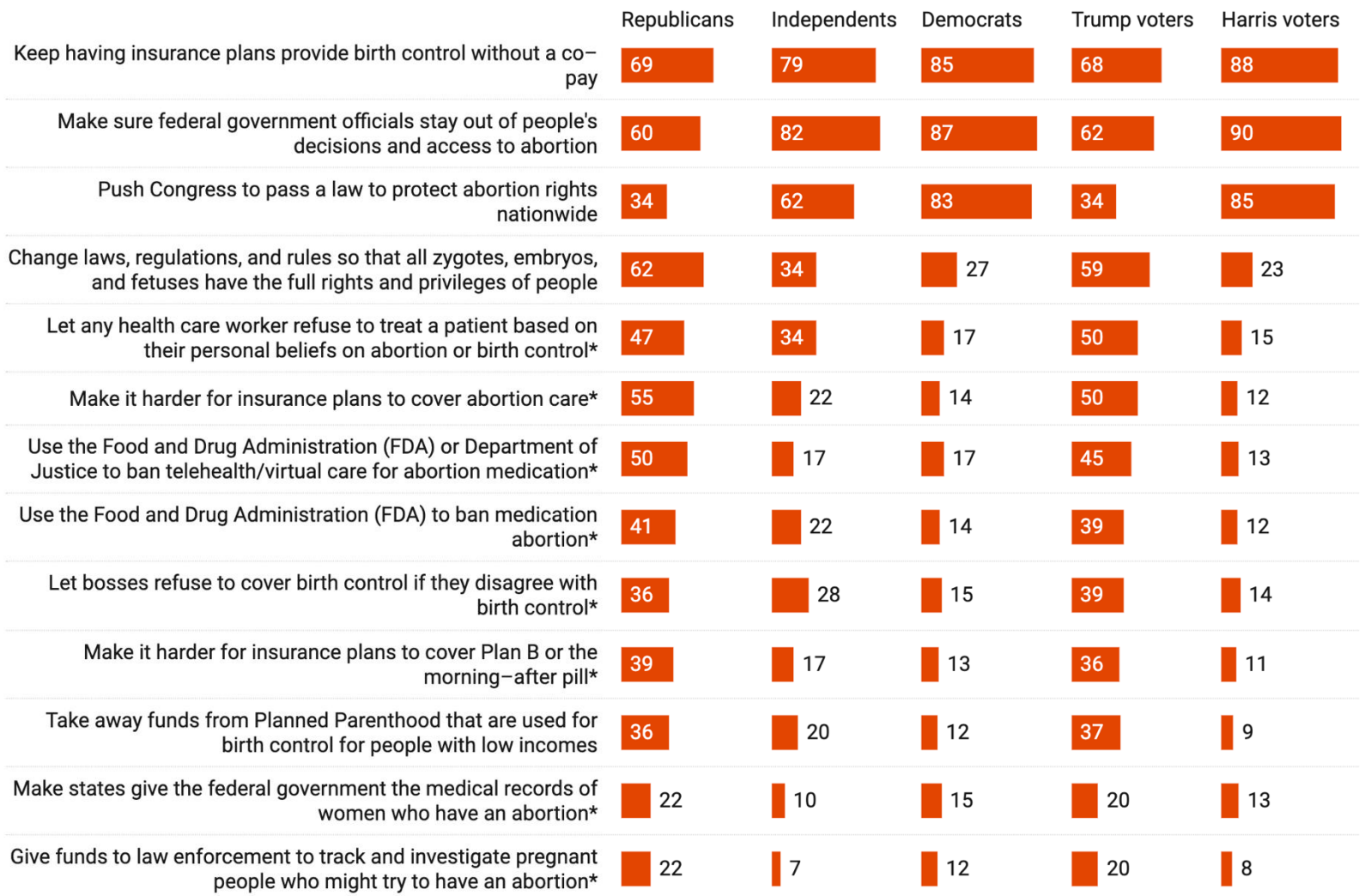
% Support



** These questions were split sampled for time – half of the sample received each*

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We tried to measure views toward the potential use of the Comstock Act.

The use of Comstock is a difficult policy to measure because it takes quite a bit of explanation.

We presented respondents with the description at right, then asked follow-up questions.

Presented to respondents

The Comstock Act is a law from 1873. The law made it illegal to mail, transport, or receive things that the government said were “indecent” or “immoral.” At the time, this included some things related to abortion.

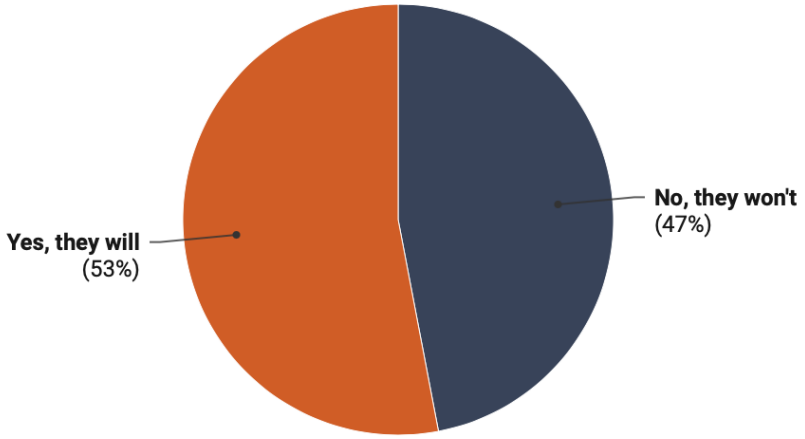
Since the 1880s, the courts have ruled that the law applies to some, but not all, items related to abortion.

Now, the Trump administration could use the law as a loophole to ban abortions. They could go against the past court rulings. They could say the law makes it illegal to transport all medication and medical supplies used for abortion care.

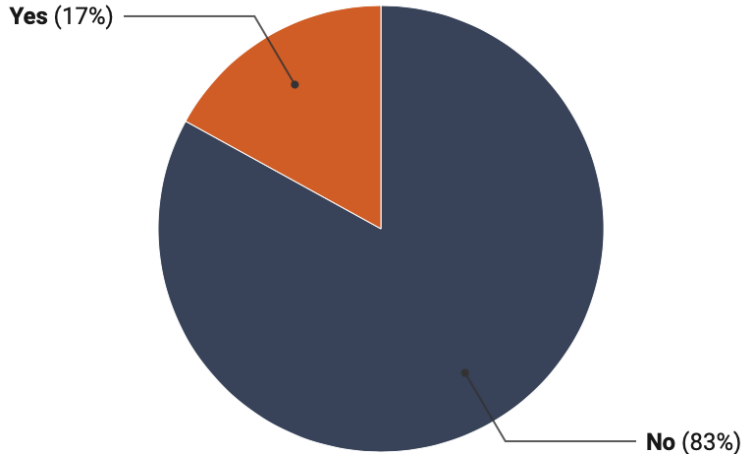
Right now, all supplies are transported from factories to doctors’ offices and pharmacies. If the Trump administration made it illegal, there would be no real way for doctors or patients to get medication or medical supplies. This is how the loophole could basically ban abortion nationwide without any new laws.

Respondents are split on whether the Trump administration will use the Comstock Act. They are unified in opposition to it.

Do you think the Trump administration will use this law as a way to ban abortions nationwide?



Would you <u>want</u> the Trump administration to use this law to ban abortions nationwide?



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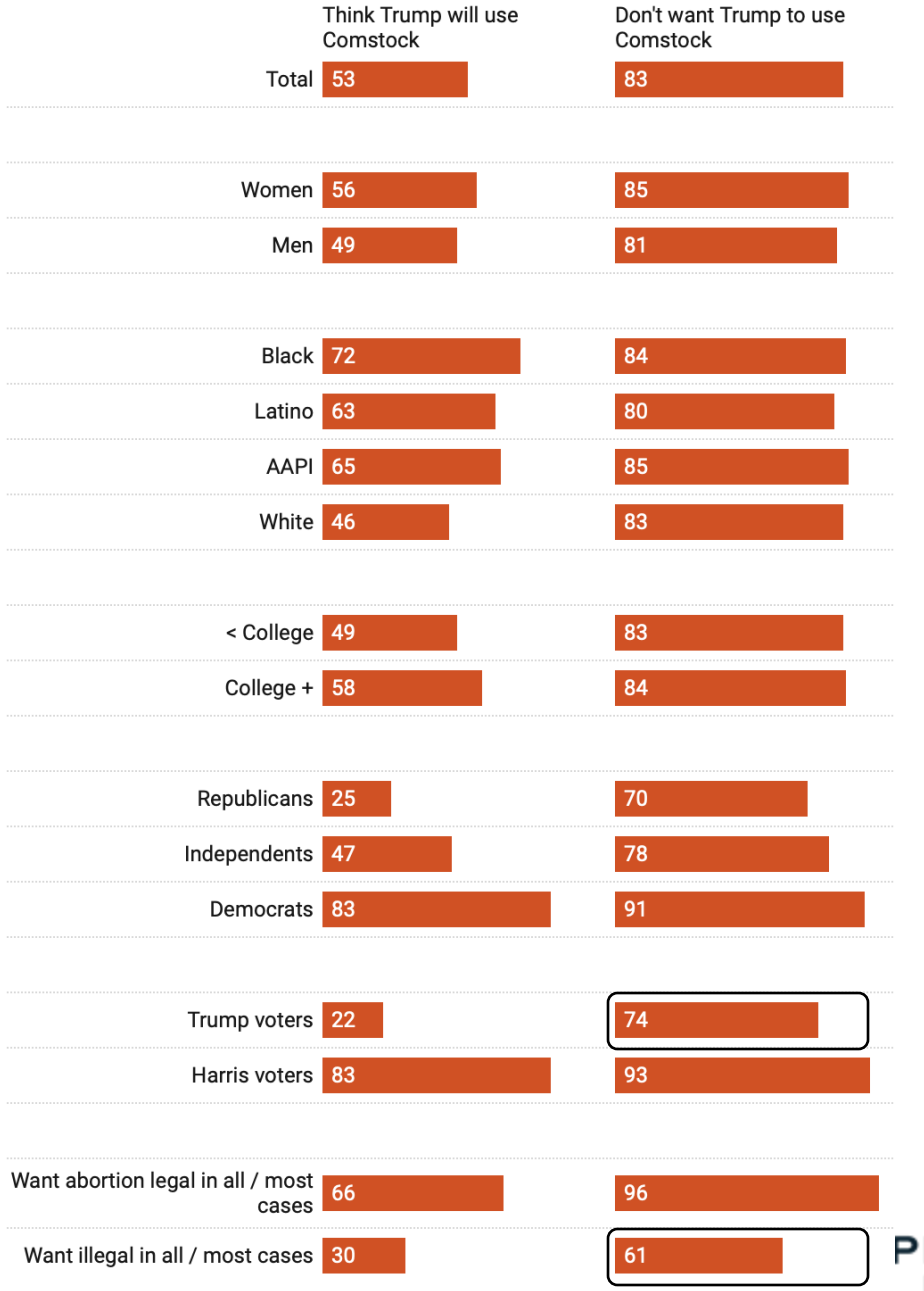
Trump voters do not think Trump will use Comstock to ban abortions – nor do they want him to.

A majority of anti-abortion respondents also don't want the Trump administration to use Comstock to ban abortions nationwide.



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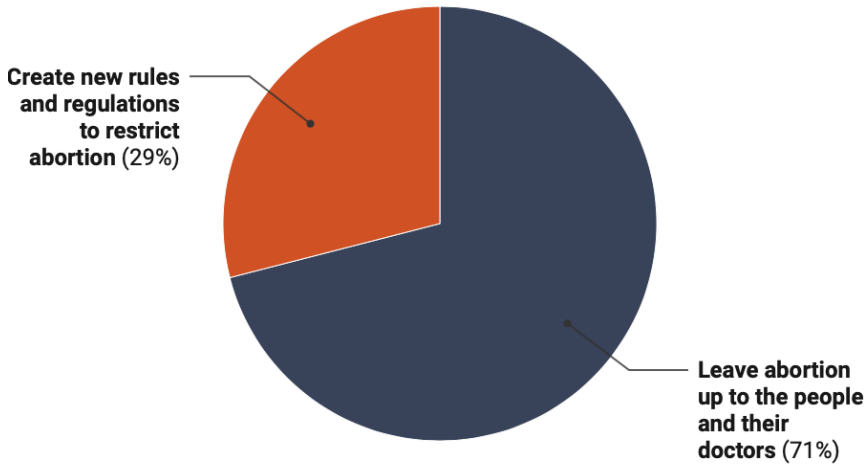
Most lean against political appointees creating new rules and regulations to restrict abortion.

President-elect Trump has picked people to run government agencies. On abortion, do you want these leaders to: (Rotated)



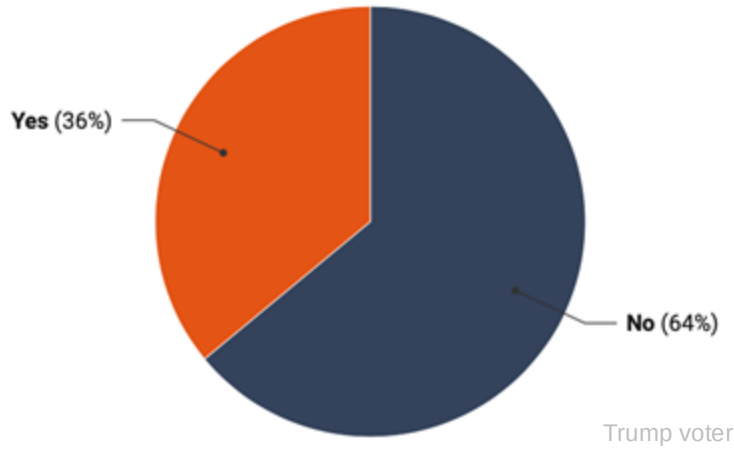
Trump voters: 55%
Harris voters: 86%

Republicans: 51%
Independents: 78%
Democrats: 84%

PERRY UNDEM

Most respondents don't want Trump to pick an anti-abortion Supreme Court justice.

Let's say a Supreme Court justice retires. Do you want President-elect Trump to pick a justice who is anti-abortion?



Trump voters: 41%
Harris voters: 87%

Republicans: 36%
Independents: 73%
Democrats: 85%

PERRY UNDEM

Congressional policy.

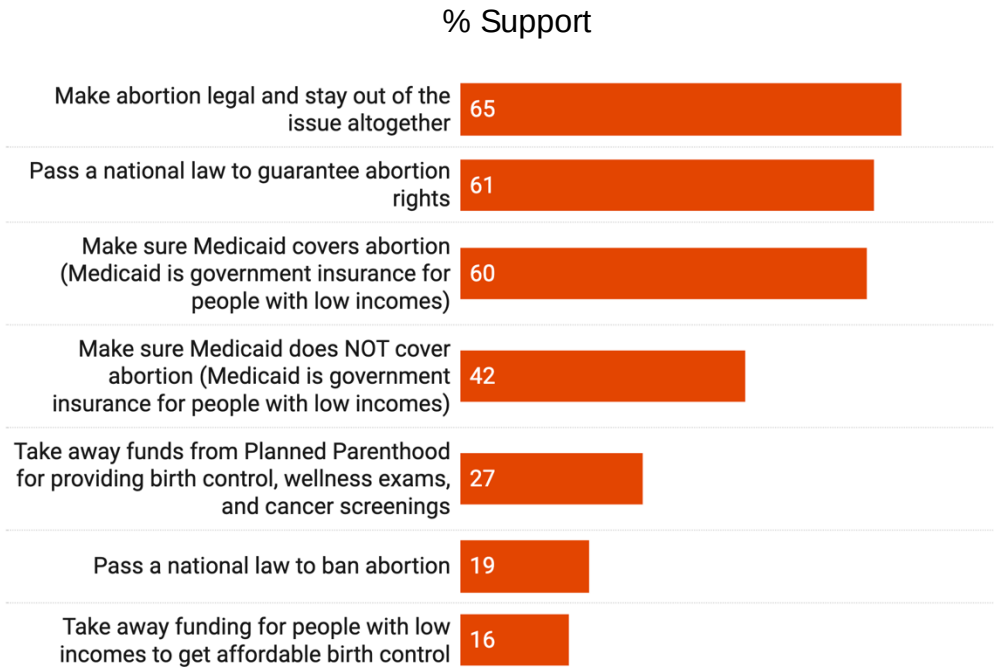
PERRY UNDEM

Not surprisingly, most voters support policies that help ensure access to abortion and reproductive health care.

Interestingly, respondents are more supportive of making sure Medicaid covers abortion care than making sure it does not.

Majorities across gender, race, and ethnicity support policies that ensure access. Trump voters are more likely to support a policy in which public officials "make abortion legal and stay out of it altogether" than one that bans abortion nationwide.

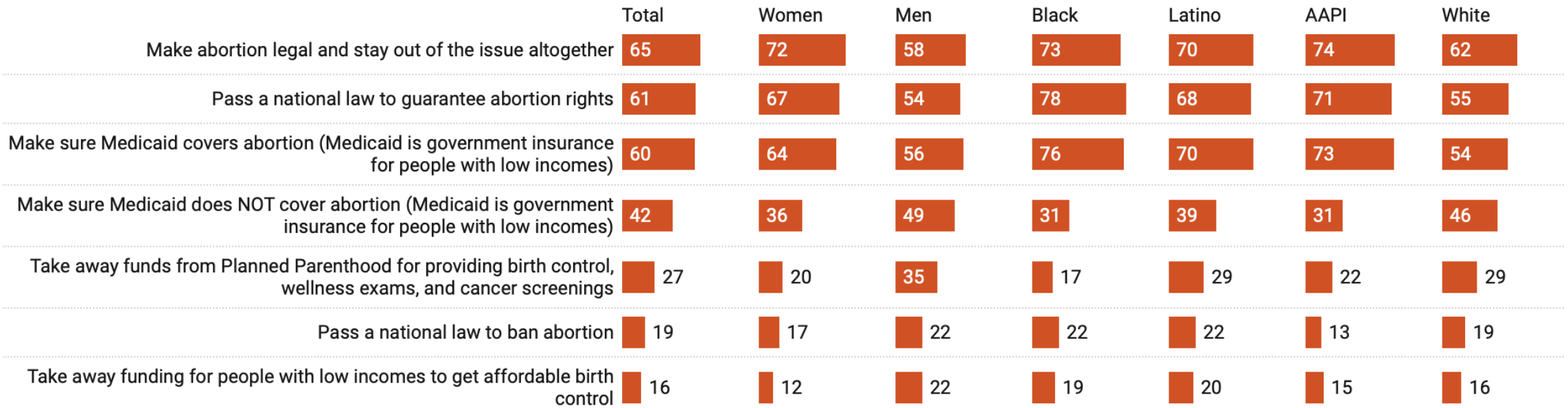
Here are things Congress could do on reproductive health care. Do you support or oppose this idea: (Randomized)



PERRY UNDEM

Here are things Congress could do on reproductive health care.
Do you support or oppose this idea:
(Randomized)

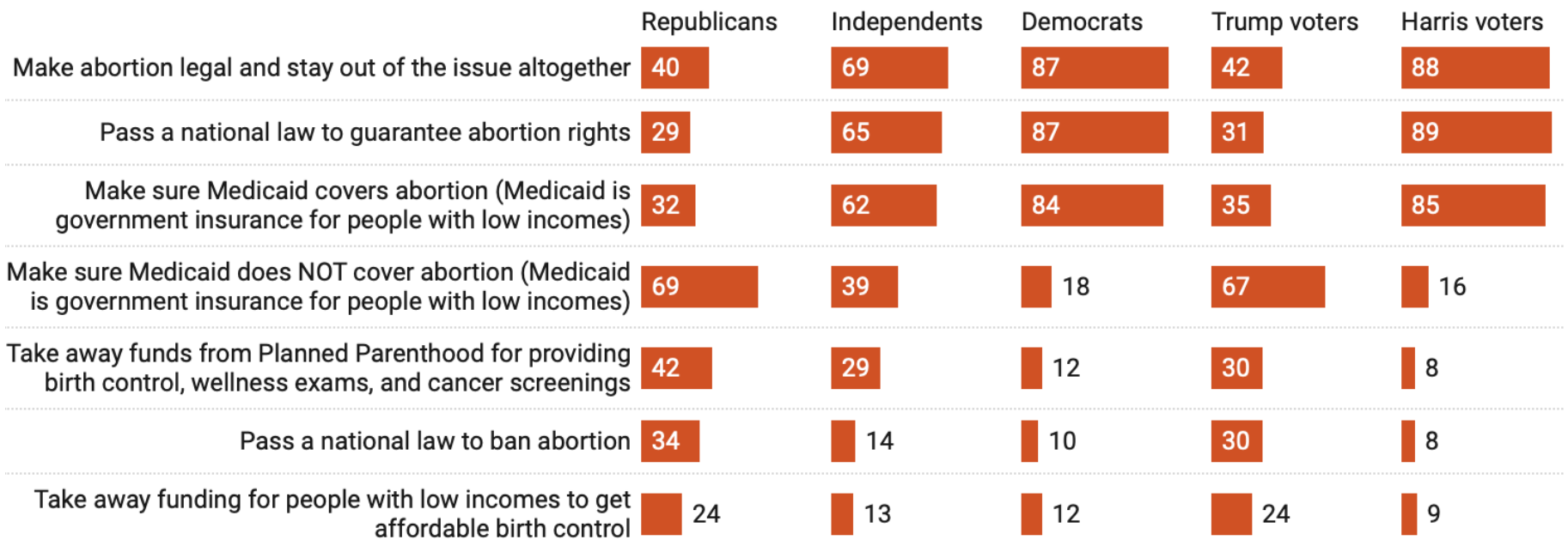
% Support



PERRY UNDEM

Here are things Congress could do on reproductive health care.
Do you support or oppose this idea:
(Randomized)

% Support



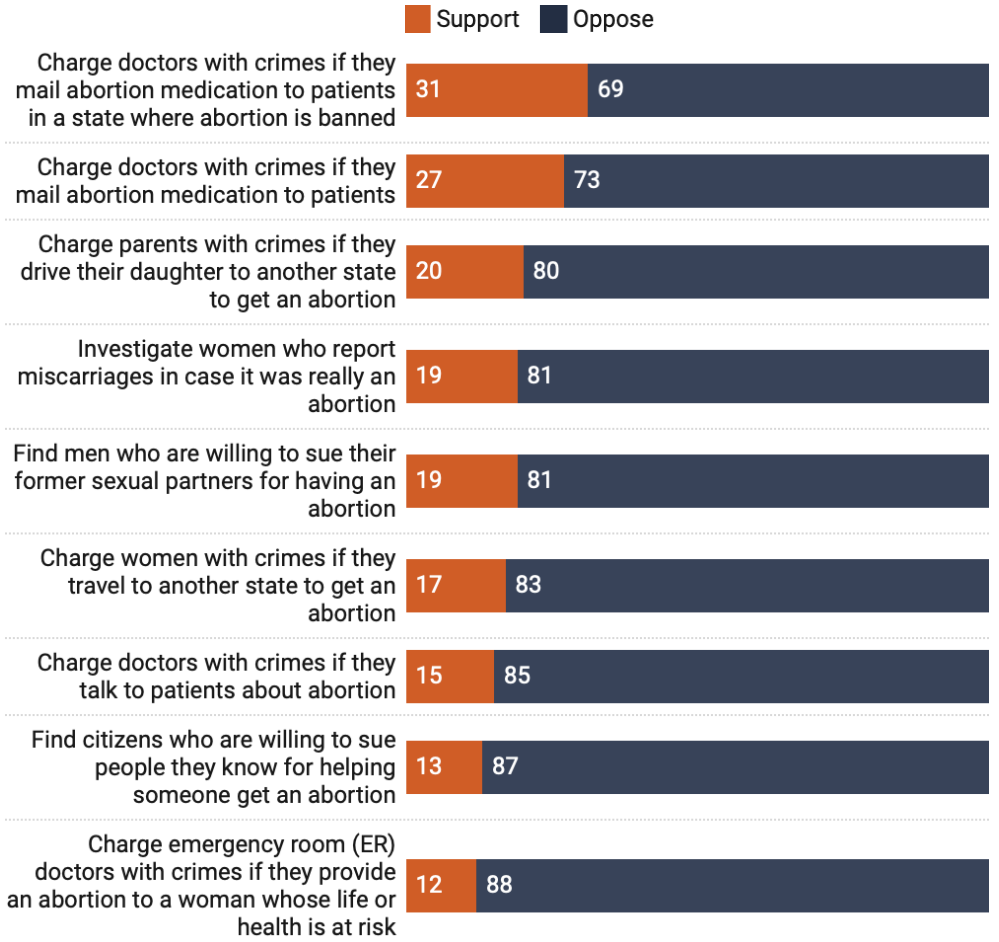
PERRY UNDEM

Criminal justice system / lawsuits.

PERRY UNDEM

Majorities across the board oppose lawsuits criminalizing abortion.

Finally, here are things that could happen in the criminal and legal court system over the next few years. These are lawsuits that could be filed by anti-abortion elected officials or anti-abortion activists. Do you support or oppose this idea: (Randomized)



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Views on why public officials might restrict abortion.

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We asked why they thought public officials might try to restrict abortion.

Here's what they said.

Respondents who want abortion legal in all or most cases are less likely to think values around the unborn are driving restrictions.

Why do you think politicians in Congress or the Trump administration might try to restrict or ban abortion? Is this a reason or not?

32%

It's what the majority of the public wants

22% of those who want abortion legal in all or most cases

58%

They want to protect the unborn

41%

53%

They get campaign money from anti-abortion lobbyists

70%

48%

They want power and control over women

68%

48%

They do not understand women's reproductive health care

65%

PERRY UNDEM

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UNDEM