



PUBLIC OPINION
STRATEGIES

The Science Coalition

Key Findings from a National Survey of Registered Voters

December 4, 2018

Methodology:

Public Opinion Strategies conducted a national telephone survey among N=800 registered voters from November 10-14, 2018.

To ensure a representative population of registered voters nationally, quotas were set by region, gender, age, ethnicity, and education. We conducted 45% of the interviews among cell phone respondents, 55% of the interviews among landline respondents.

The margin of error for an N=800 sample size is $\pm 3.46\%$.

Key Findings



Key Findings:

- Eight in ten voters approve of the federal government using taxpayer funds to invest in scientific research.
 - There is strong support across party. Significant majorities of Republicans, Independents and Democrats say they approve of the federal government using taxpayer funds to invest in scientific research.
- A majority of voters support the federal government investing more in scientific research.
- Voters recognize that scientific research makes a number of contributions to society, but the most important continues to be developing new medicines and curing diseases and researching ways to improve people's health and prevent disease.
- Seven in ten voters believe that scientific research helps to grow the U.S. economy.
- Nearly all voters believe it is important for the U.S. to be the global leader in scientific research and technology.
 - Voters' perceptions about the importance of the U.S. being the global leader in scientific research and technology is on the rise with six in ten voters saying it is "very important" compared to less than half saying it is "very important" in 2015.

Federal Funding Priorities



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Federal Funding Priorities

From a list of federal funding priorities, voters say public education is the most important issue area for the federal government to invest in. Scientific research is viewed as being more important than unemployment benefits and transportation and just as important as the government investing in energy and agriculture.

<i>Ranked by First Choice</i>	First Choice	Combined 1 st and 2 nd Choice
Public Education	29%	53%
National Defense	20%	32%
Roads, bridges, and other infrastructure	18%	39%
Programs for low income families	15%	30%
Energy	4%	11%
Scientific Research	3%	9%
Agriculture	3%	9%
Unemployment Benefits	3%	6%
Transportation	1%	4%

“Thinking now about federal funding of different issue areas and programs...which ONE of the following do you think is the MOST important issue area or program for the federal government to invest in?”

Federal Funding Priorities

Top Combined 1st/2nd Choices - Federal Funding Priorities by Party:

<i>Ranked by All Voters Combined First and Second Choice</i>	All Voters	Republicans	Independents	Democrats
Public Education	53%	39%	52%	64%
Roads, bridges, and other infrastructure	39%	46%	34%	34%
National Defense	32%	60%	28%	8%
Programs for low income families	30%	15%	27%	43%
Energy	11%	10%	14%	11%
Scientific Research	9%	5%	15%	11%
Agriculture	9%	13%	10%	5%
Unemployment Benefits	6%	5%	4%	8%
Transportation	4%	4%	4%	4%

“Thinking now about federal funding of different issue areas and programs...which ONE of the following do you think is the MOST important issue area or program for the federal government to invest in?”

Federal Investment in Scientific Research



Importance of U.S. Global Leadership in Scientific Research and Technology

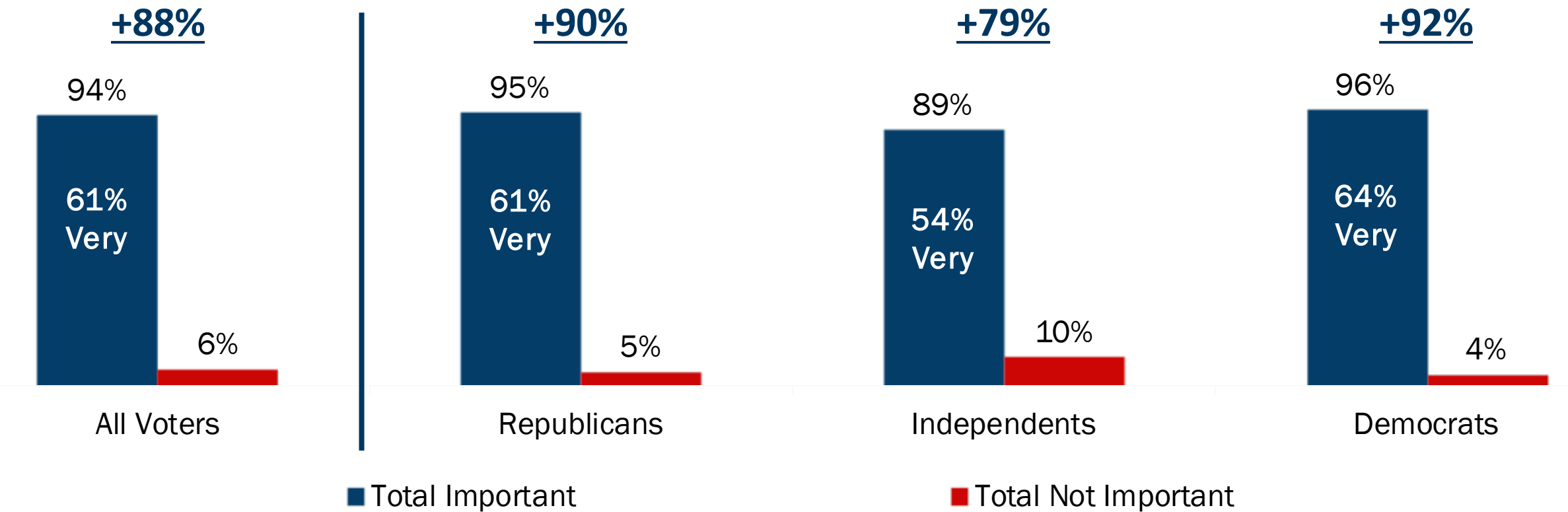
Nearly all voters believe it is important for the U.S. to be the global leader in scientific research and technology. Today, six in ten voters say it is “very important.” This has increased since our last track in 2015.

	2011	2015	2018
Very Important	54%	48%	61%
Somewhat Important	39%	41%	33%
Total Important	93%	89%	94%
Total Not Important	7%	11%	6%
Not Very Important	7%	10%	3%
Not At All Important	0%	1%	3%

“How important do you believe it is for the United States to be the global leader in scientific research and technology?”

Importance of U.S. Global Leadership in Scientific Research and Technology

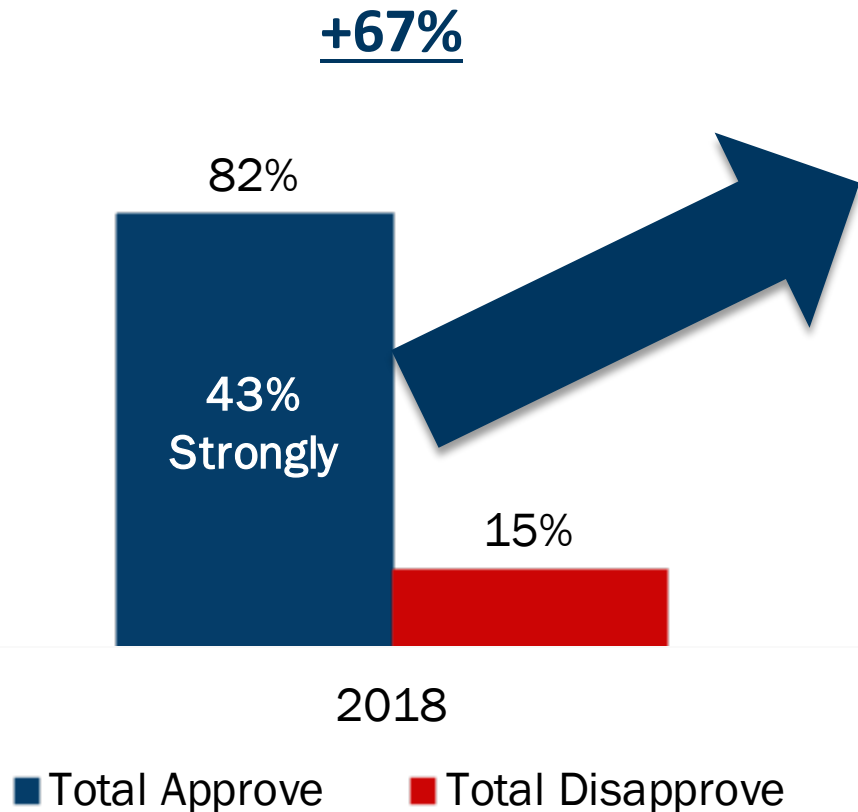
Republican, Democratic, and Independent voters all overwhelmingly agree about the importance of the U.S. being the global leader in scientific research and technology.



“How important do you believe it is for the United States to be the global leader in scientific research and technology?”

Federal Government Investment in Scientific Research

Eight in ten voters approve of the federal government using taxpayer funds to invest in scientific research.



Top Sub-Groups: % Strongly Agree (43%)			
Post Graduates	64%	Household Income \$100K+	52%
Men Income \$60K+	58%	Men	50%
Opinion Elites	57%	Urban Residents	49%
Household Income \$80K-\$100K	54%	College Graduates	49%
Democrats	53%	Employed	48%
Ages 35-44	52%	60+ Retired Men	47%

“As you may know, the federal government provides public funds to conduct scientific research... do you approve or disapprove of the federal government using taxpayer funds to invest in scientific research?”

Federal Government Investment in Scientific Research

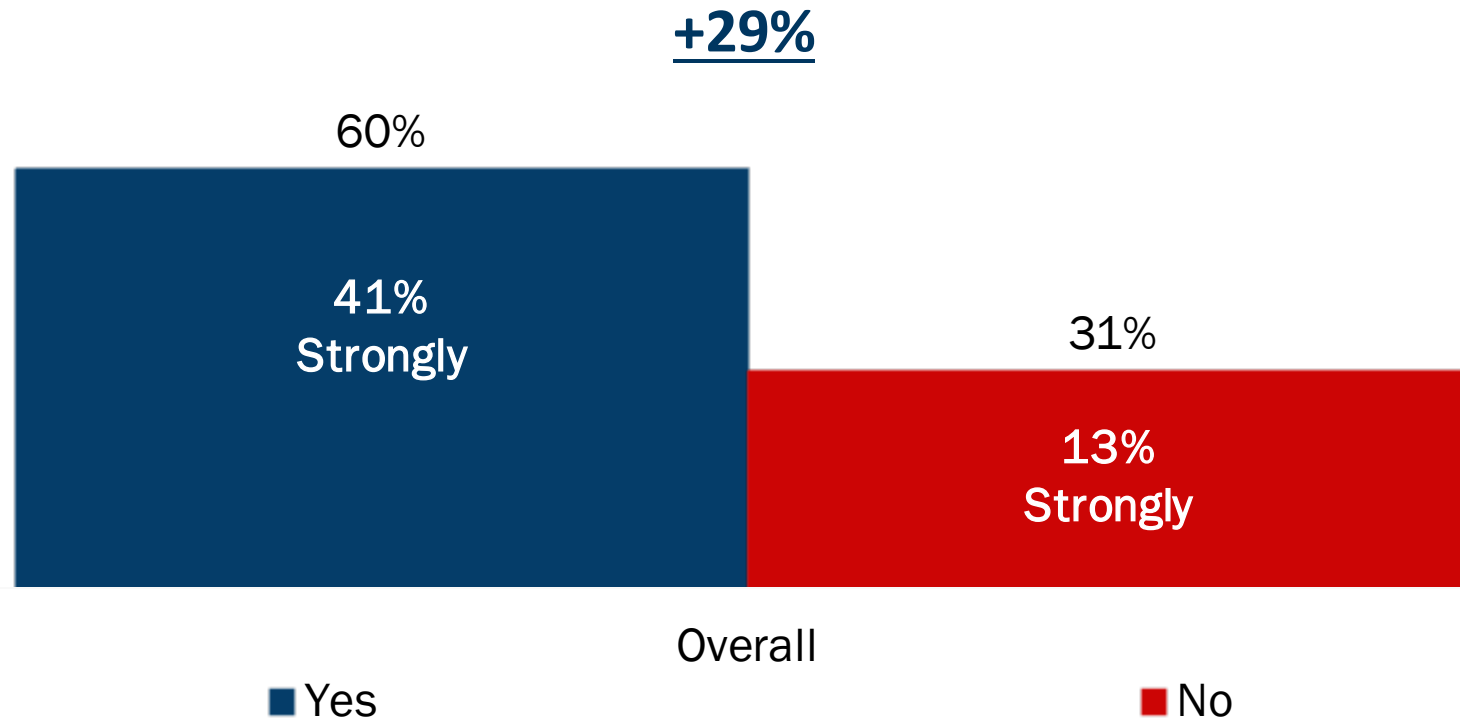
There is strong support across party with significant majorities of Republicans, Democrats and Independents saying they approve of the federal government using taxpayer funds to invest in scientific research.

	All Voters	Republicans	Independents	Democrats
Approve	82%	77%	79%	87%
Disapprove	15%	19%	16%	12%
Net Difference	+67%	+58%	+63%	+75%

“As you may know, the federal government provides public funds to conduct scientific research... do you approve or disapprove of the federal government using taxpayer funds to invest in scientific research?”

More Federal Investment in Scientific Research

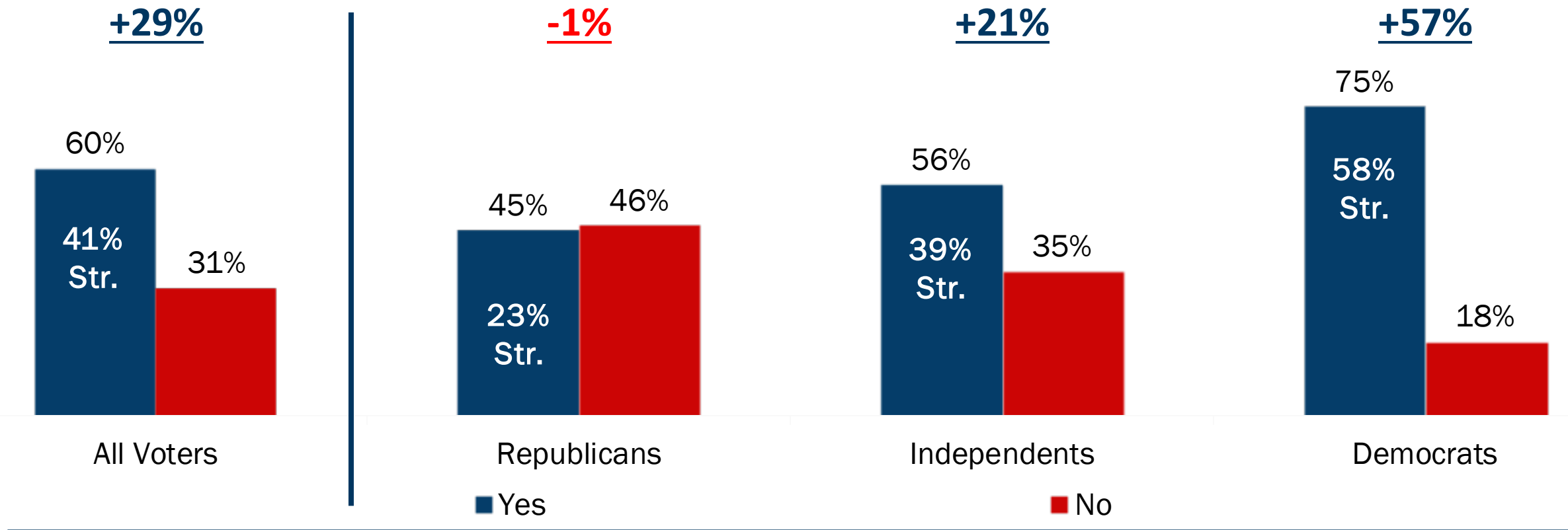
A majority of voters support the federal government investing more in scientific research.



“Do you think that the federal government should invest more in scientific research?”

More Federal Investment in Scientific Research

There are differences by party. Majorities of Independents and Democrats support more funding for scientific research, while Republicans are closely divided.



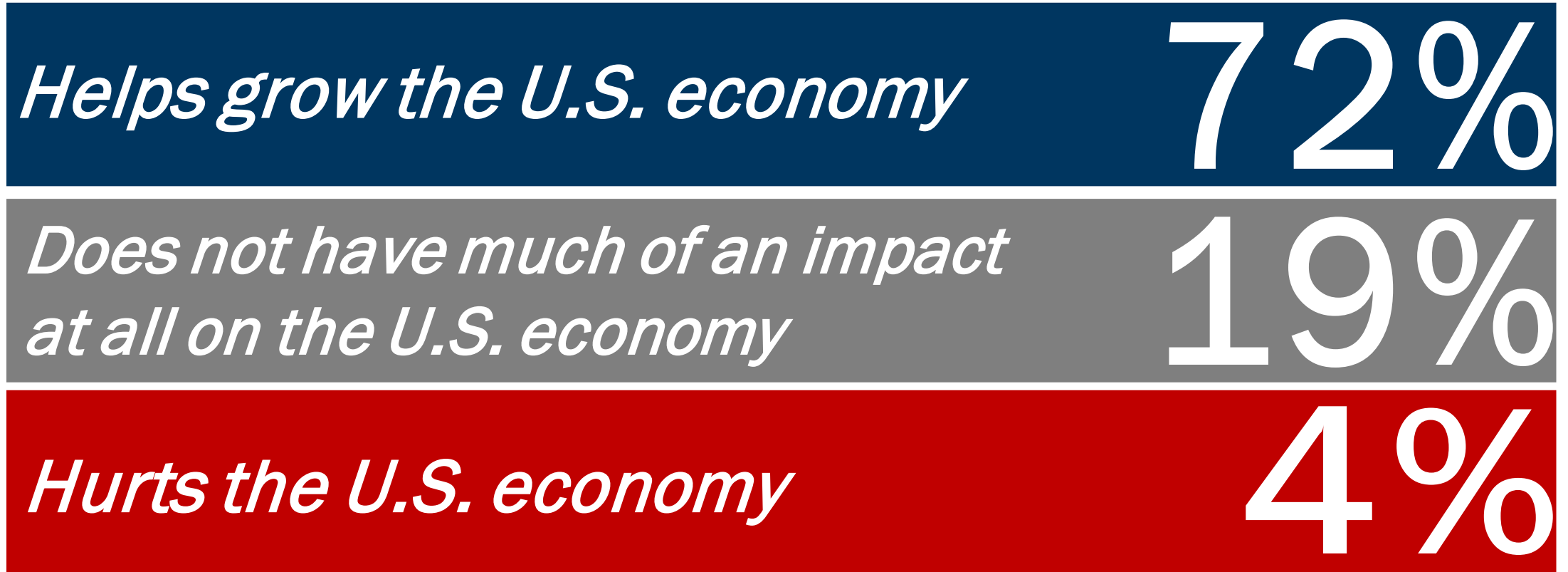
“Do you think that the federal government should invest more in scientific research?”

Scientific Research Contributions



Scientific Research and the U.S. Economy

Seven in ten voters believe that scientific research helps grow the U.S. economy.



“In your view, does scientific research...help grow the United States economy...hurt the United States economy...or does it not have much of an impact at all on the United States economy?”

Benefits of Scientific Research

The top contributions of scientific research are the health benefits and medical discoveries. The least important contributions are exploring the world we live in and exploring space.

<i>Ranked by First Choice</i>	First Choice	Combined 1 st and 2 nd
Developing new medicines and curing diseases/ Researching ways to improve people's health and prevent diseases	33%	58%
Identifying the best ways to protect our environment	16%	29%
Developing new energy technologies to make America more energy independent	15%	33%
Developing new national security technologies to keep America safe	12%	25%
Developing new technologies so business can grow and create jobs	9%	25%
Keeping America competitive in a global economy	8%	16%
Exploring and better understanding the world we live in	3%	5%
Exploring space to better understand the solar system and the broader universe	2%	5%

“Now, I am going to read you a list of contributions that science makes to the economy, society, and people like you. Please tell me which ONE of these you think is the most important...”



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