

What happened in the 2024 elections and what's next in the country and state

NC Commission on Aging
David B. McLennan, Ph.D.

Today

1. Discuss voter patterns in North Carolina and the United States.
2. Offer some analysis on the fundamentals of the 2024 campaign season, as well as some strategic issues that caused problems for Democrats.
3. Look at larger implications for elections of 2026 and beyond.
4. The policy implications of the elections

I would prefer not to engage in counterfactual discussions



What if Biden stayed in the race?

Or, what if Biden had not run for a second term?

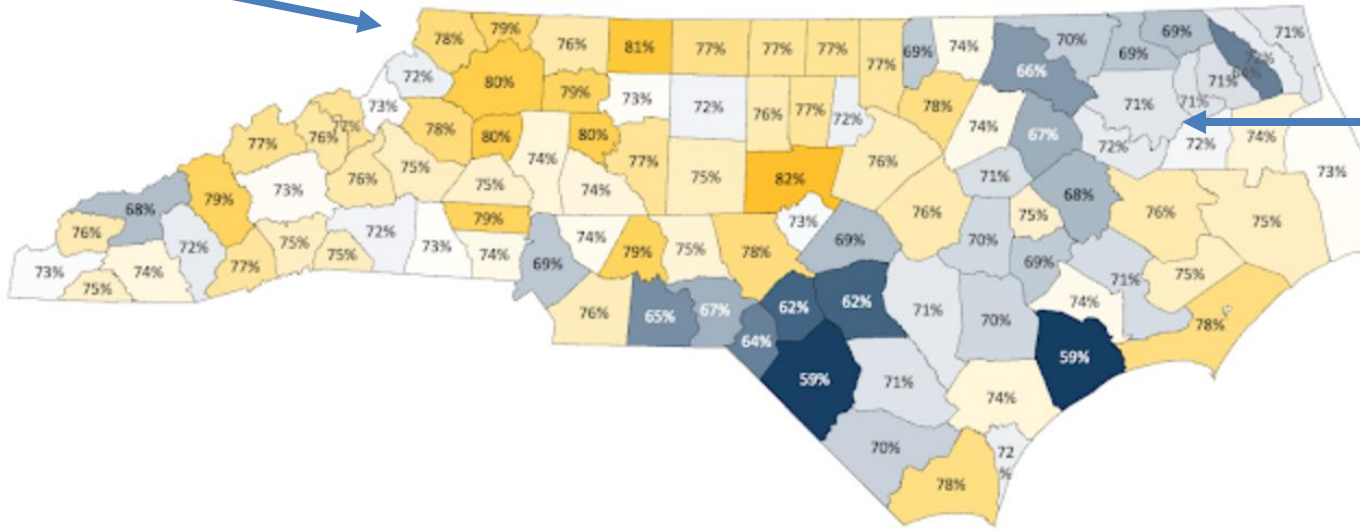


What if Harris had chosen Josh Shapiro?

Turnout by county*

Piedmont
and NW
mountains

North Carolina Registered Voter County Turnout Rates Compared to State Turnout of 73%



Coastal
Plain
region—
lowest
turnout, but
high
minority
population

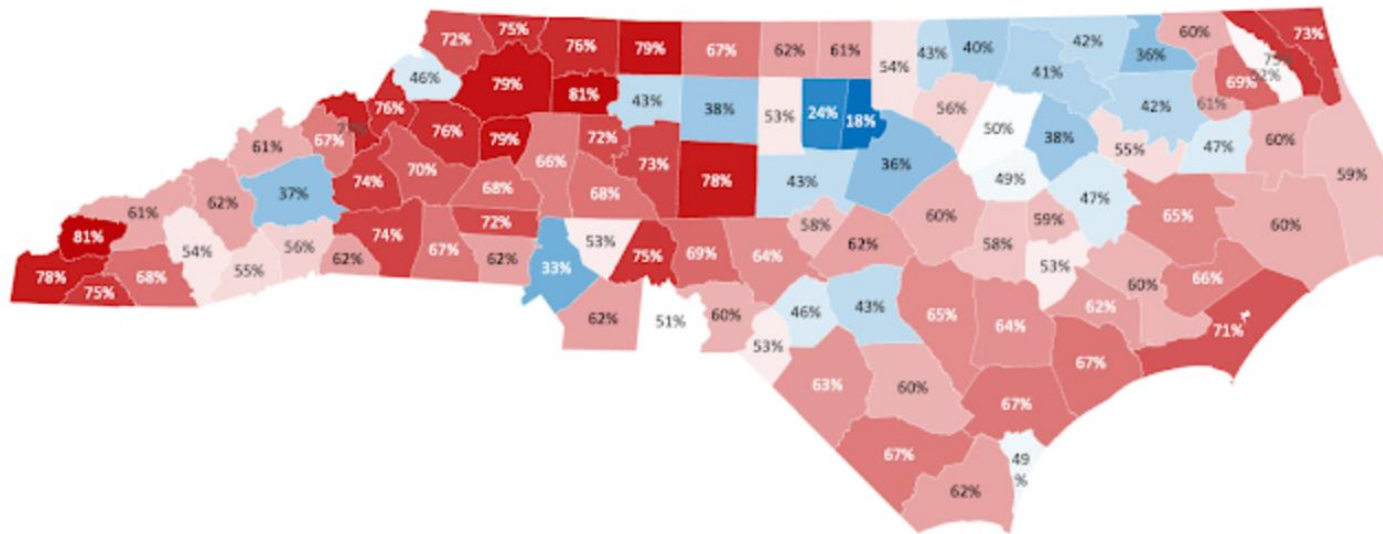
Unofficial results. Also, thanks to
Michael Bitzer

County Turnout 59% 73% 82%

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Looking at Trump's performance by county

North Carolina Trump County Performance Relative to His Statewide Performance (51%) of the Vote



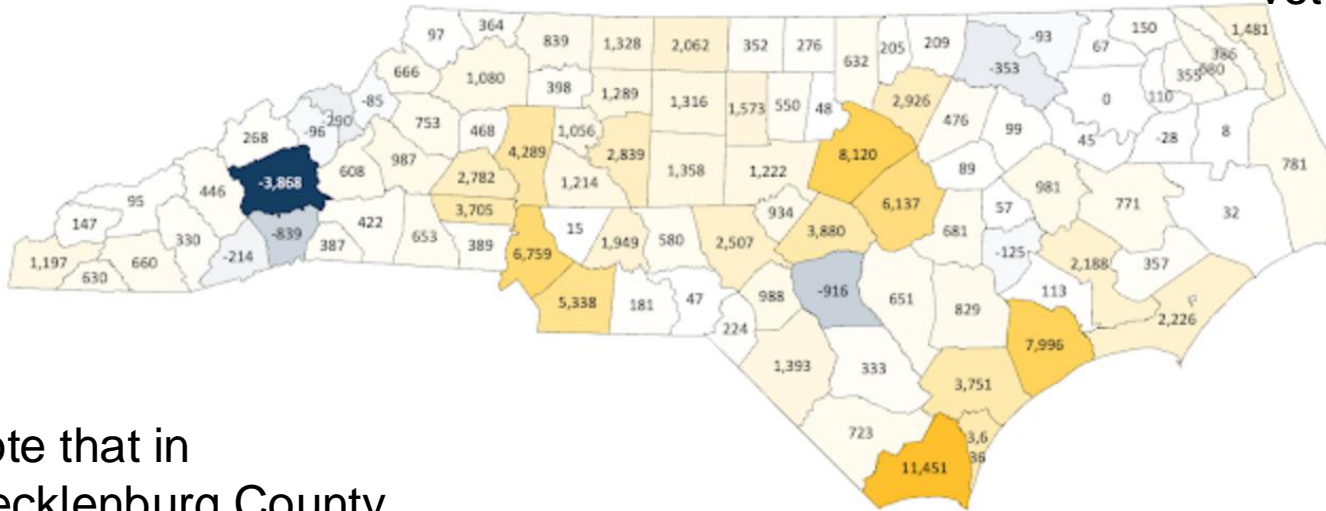
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Trump
18% 51% 81%

Change in Trump vote 2020 to 2024

Trump Raw Vote Change from 2020 to 2024 in North Carolina

Note in Wake County, Trump picked up 8600 votes)

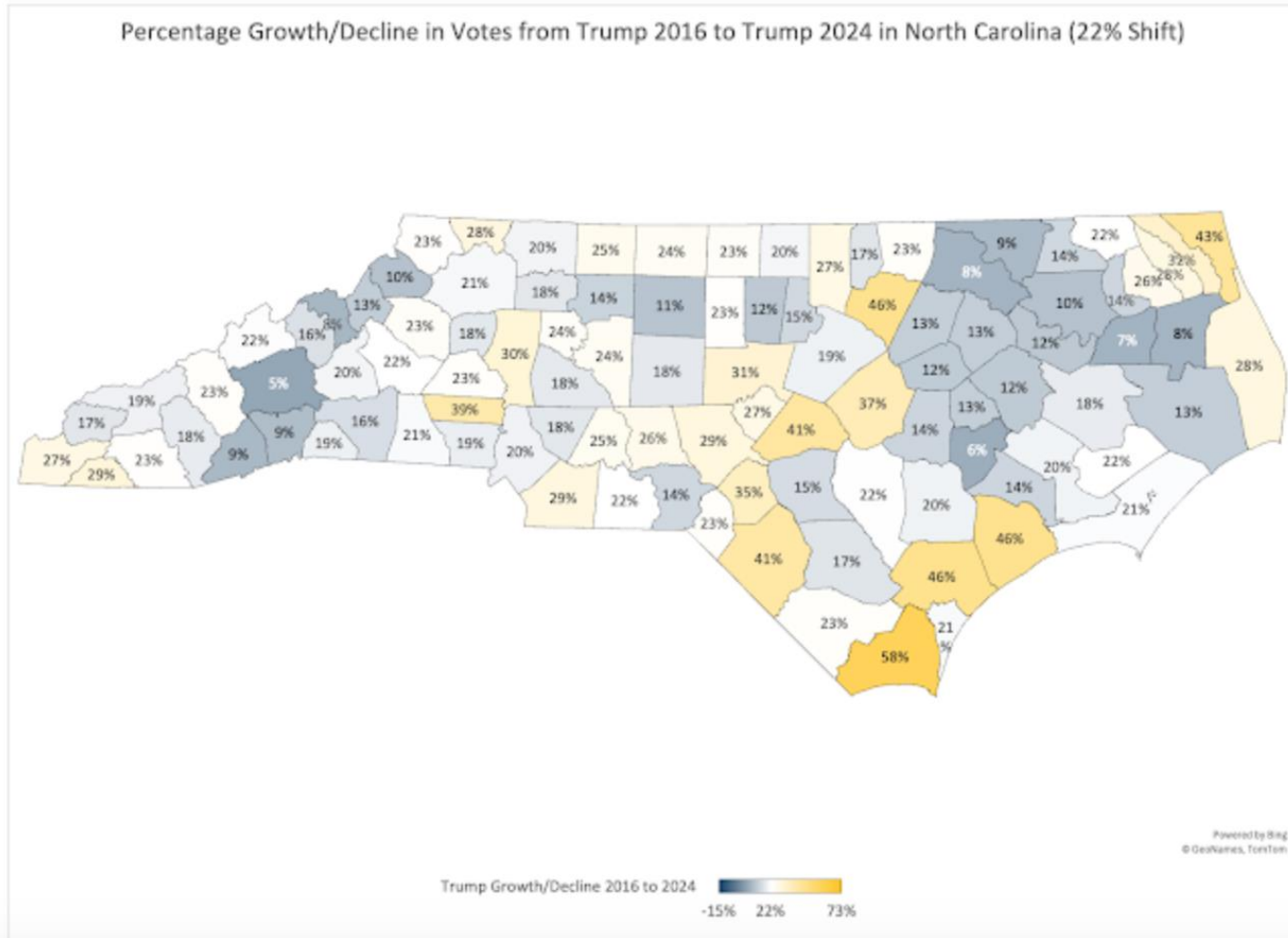


Note that in Mecklenburg County, Trump picked up 6100 votes.

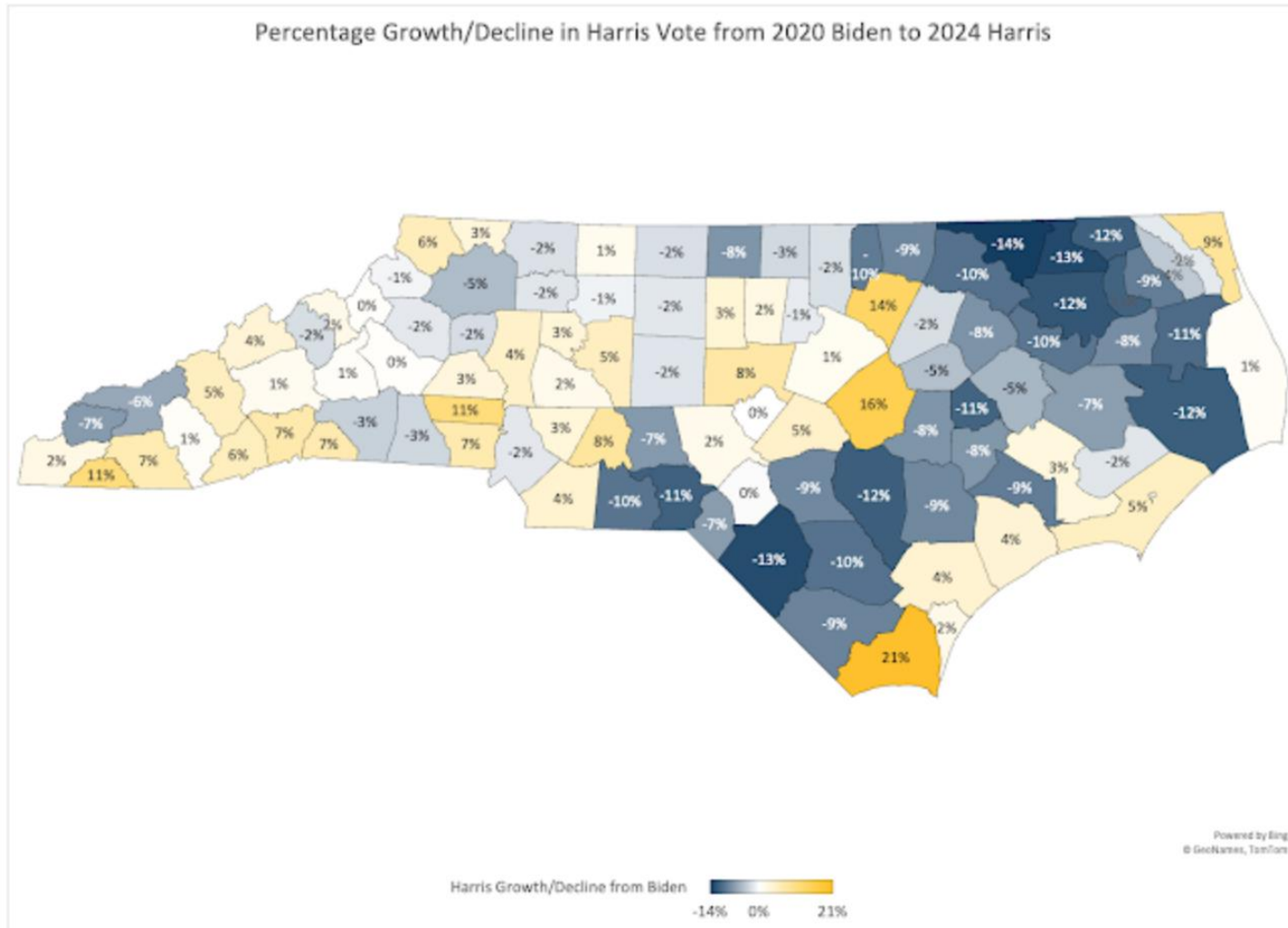
Trump Vote Change 2020 to 2024
-3,868 11,451

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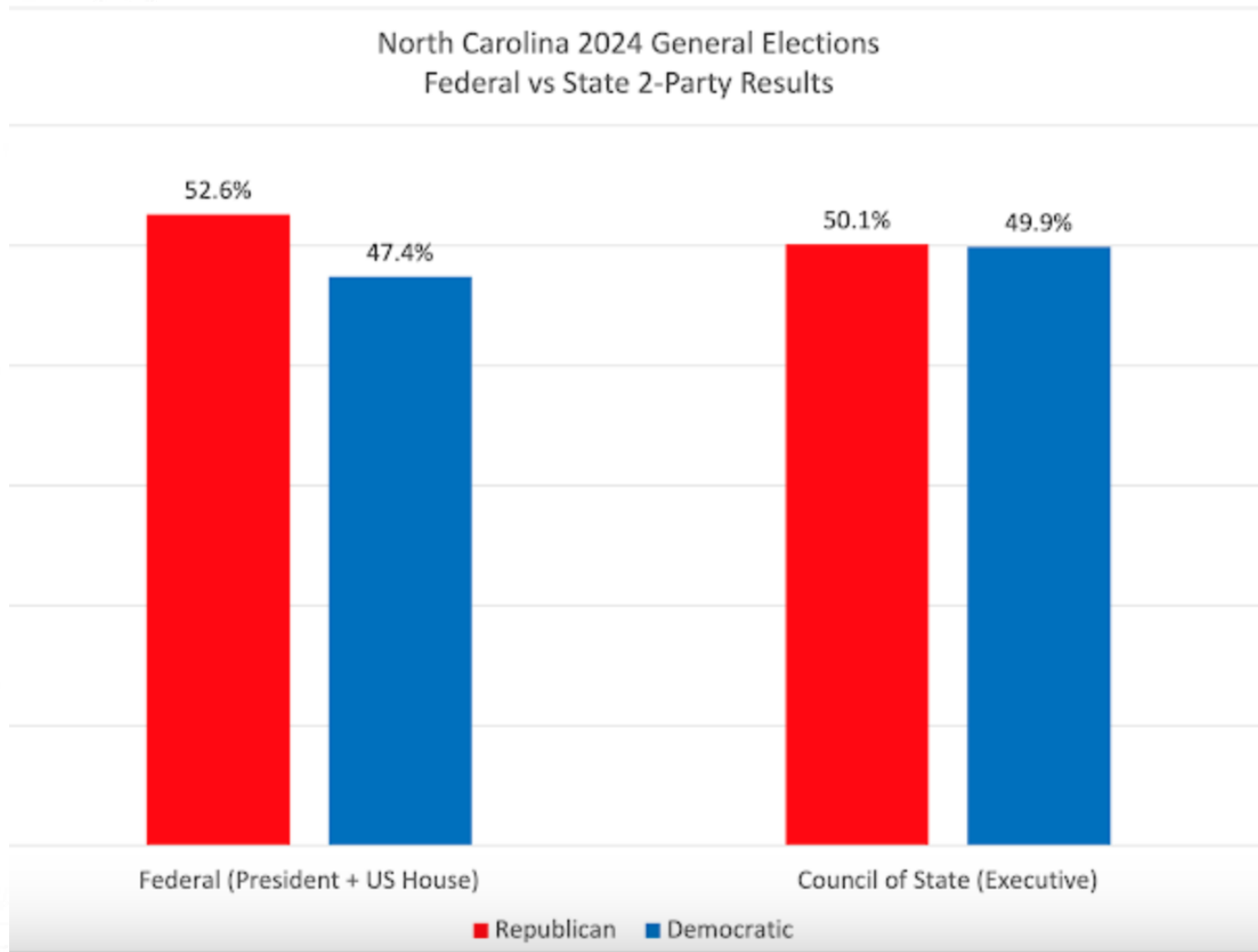
Comparing Trump vote 2016-2024



Comparing Biden 2020 vote to Harris 2024

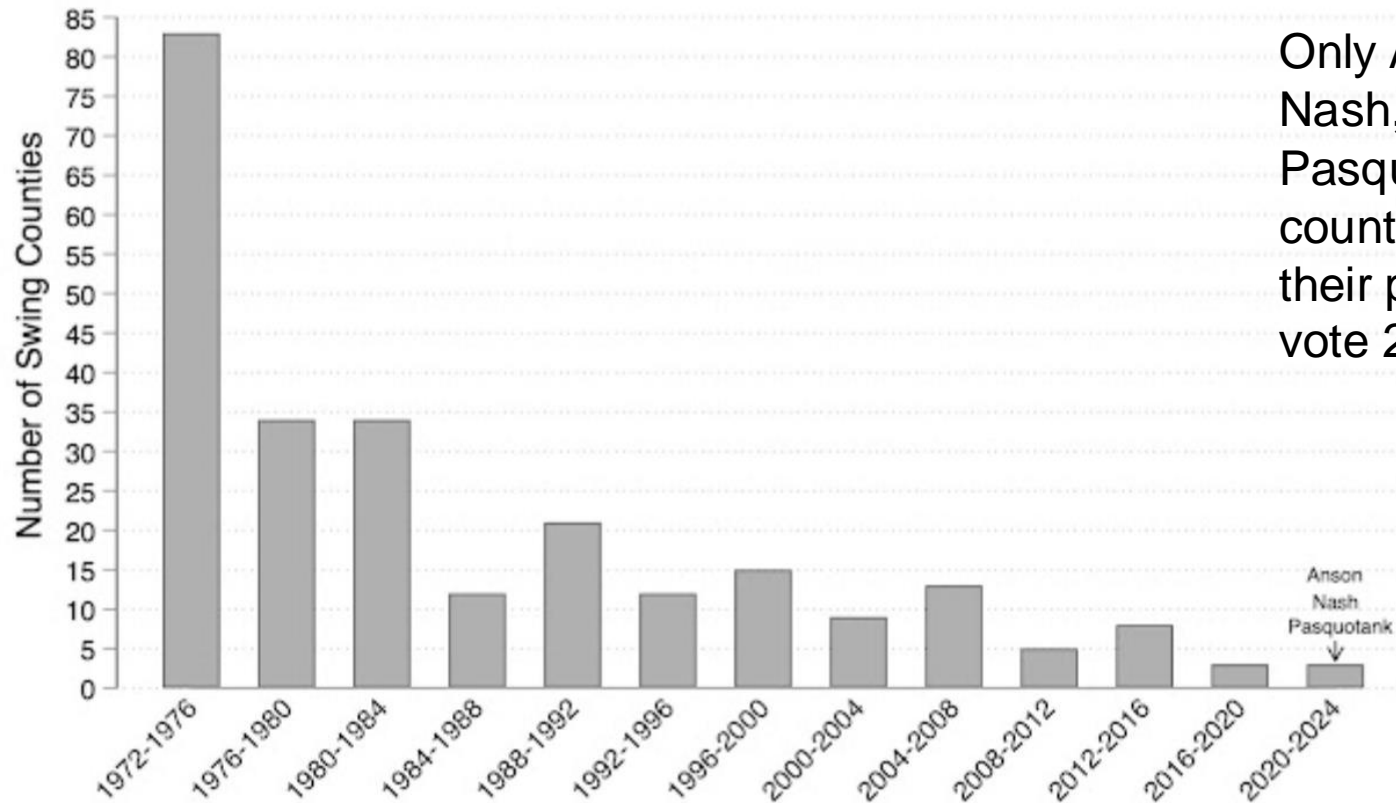


But, what about the Governor's race and other Council of State races?



Swing Counties in North Carolina

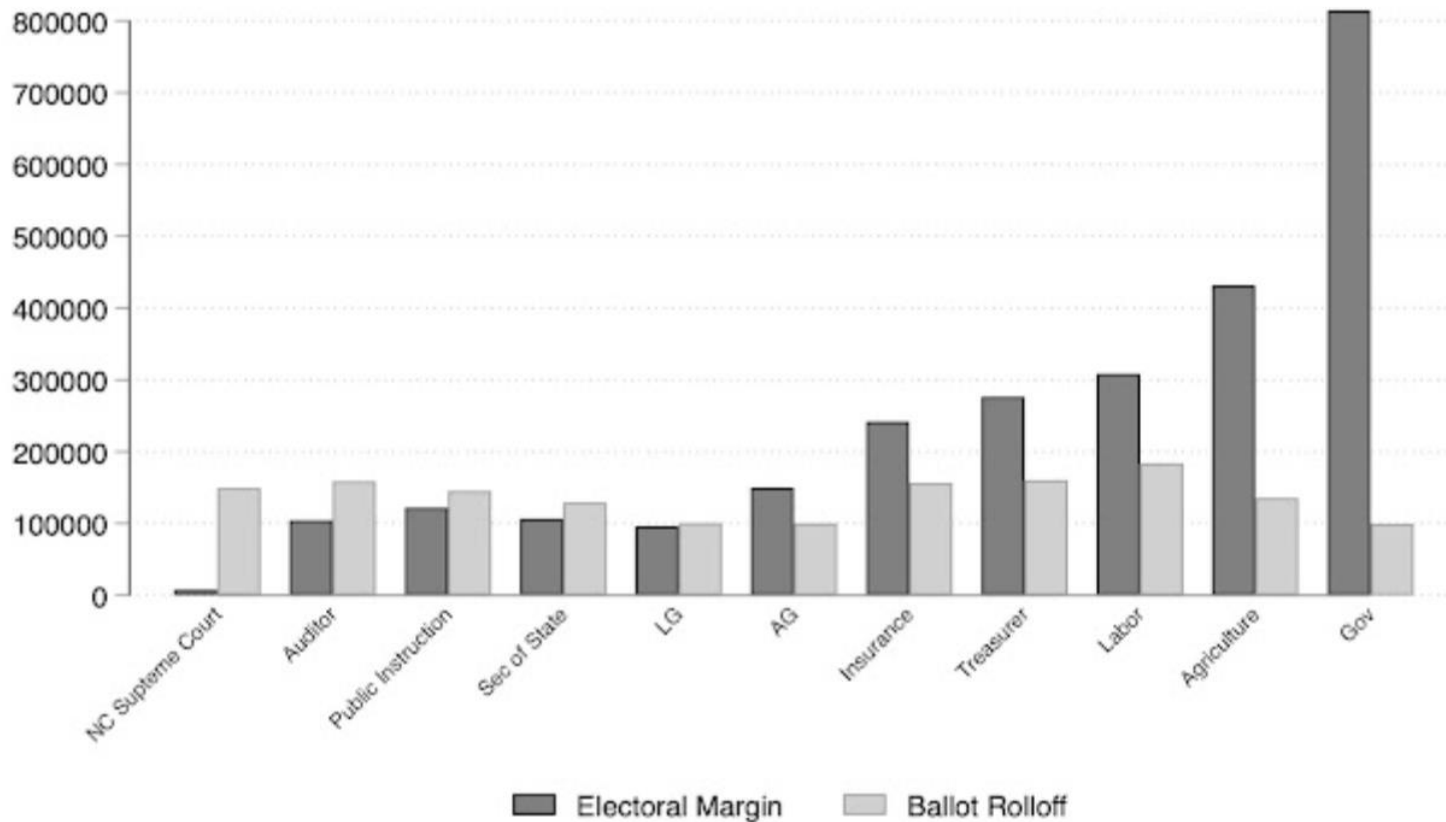
Swing Counties in North Carolina 1972-2024



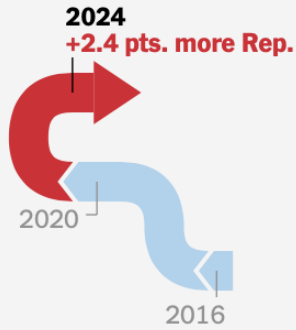
Only Anson, Nash, and Pasquotank counties shifted their presidential vote 2020-2024

How much did Mark Robinson affect other races?

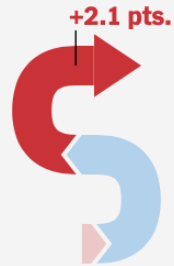
Electoral Margin and Ballot Roll Off for NC Statewide Elections 2024



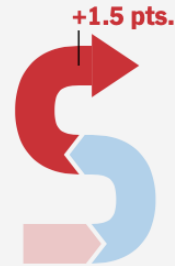
The Red Shift



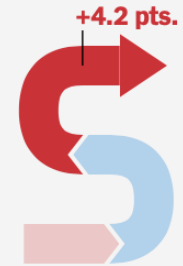
Georgia



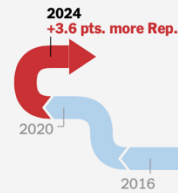
North Carolina



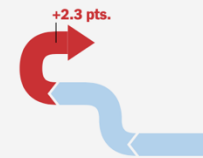
Wisconsin



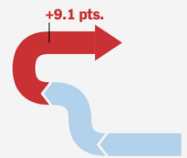
Michigan



Philadelphia suburbs
4 counties



Mecklenburg Co., N.C. (Charlotte)
1 county



Wayne Co., Mich. (Detroit)
1 county

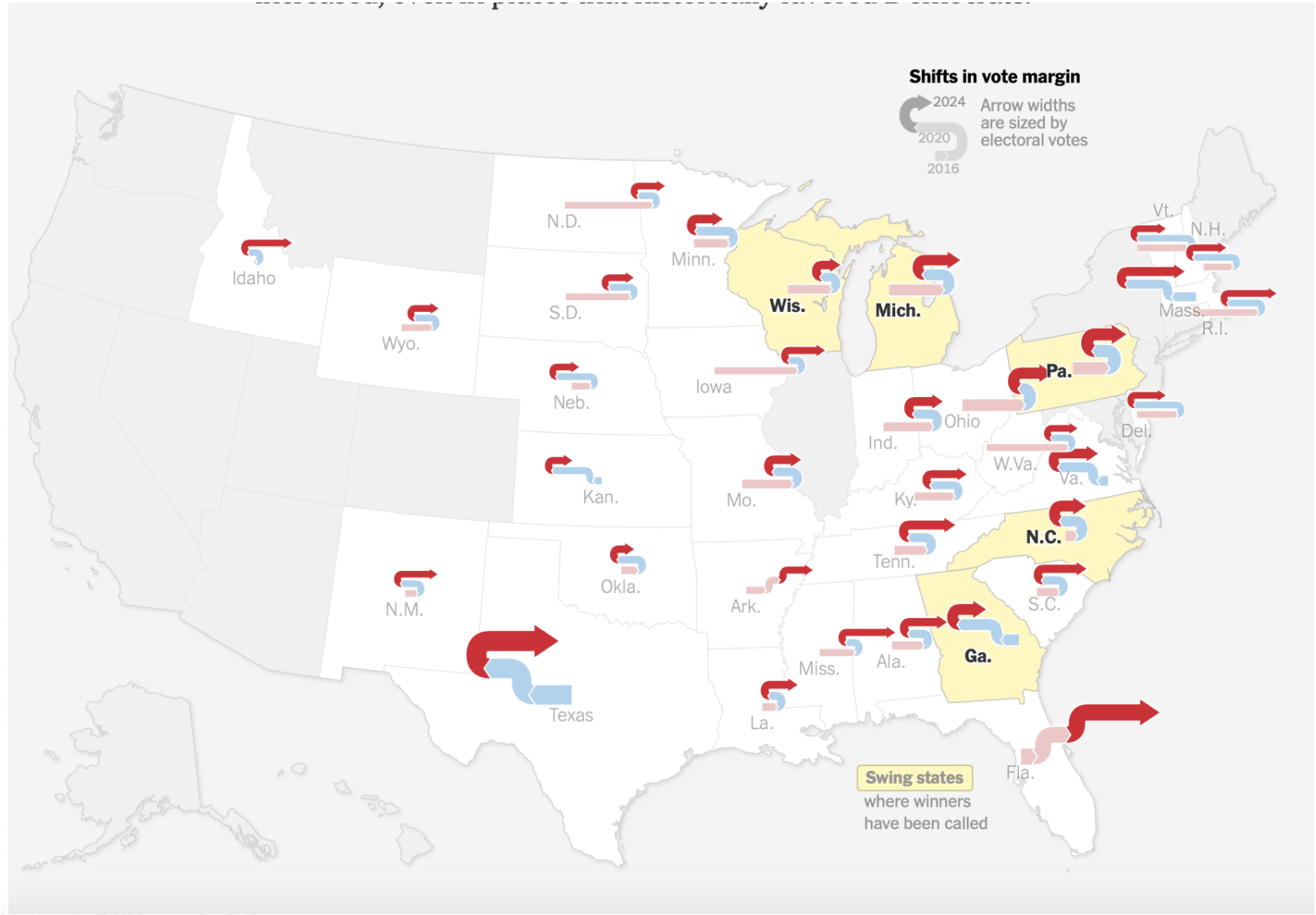


Detroit suburbs
5 counties



Atlanta and suburbs
16 counties

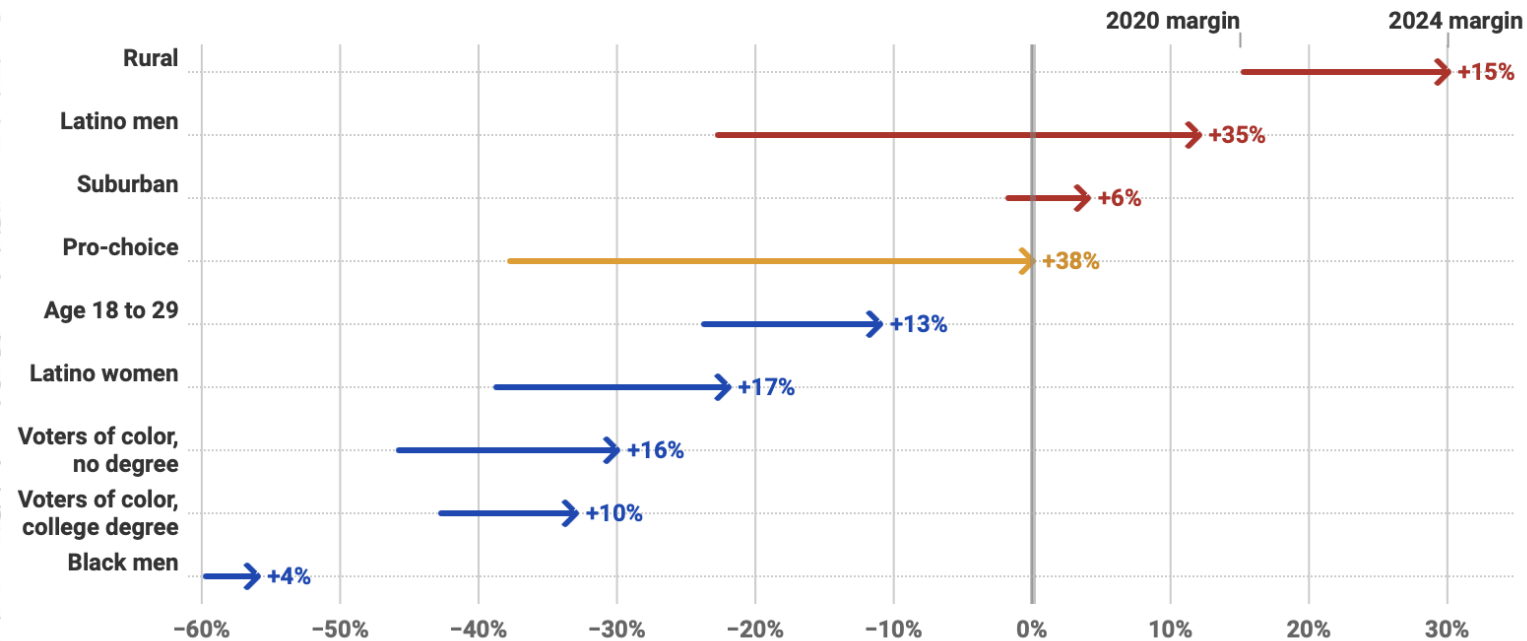
The Red Shift



The 2024 decline was almost universal

Trump Gained Ground Across Demographic Groups

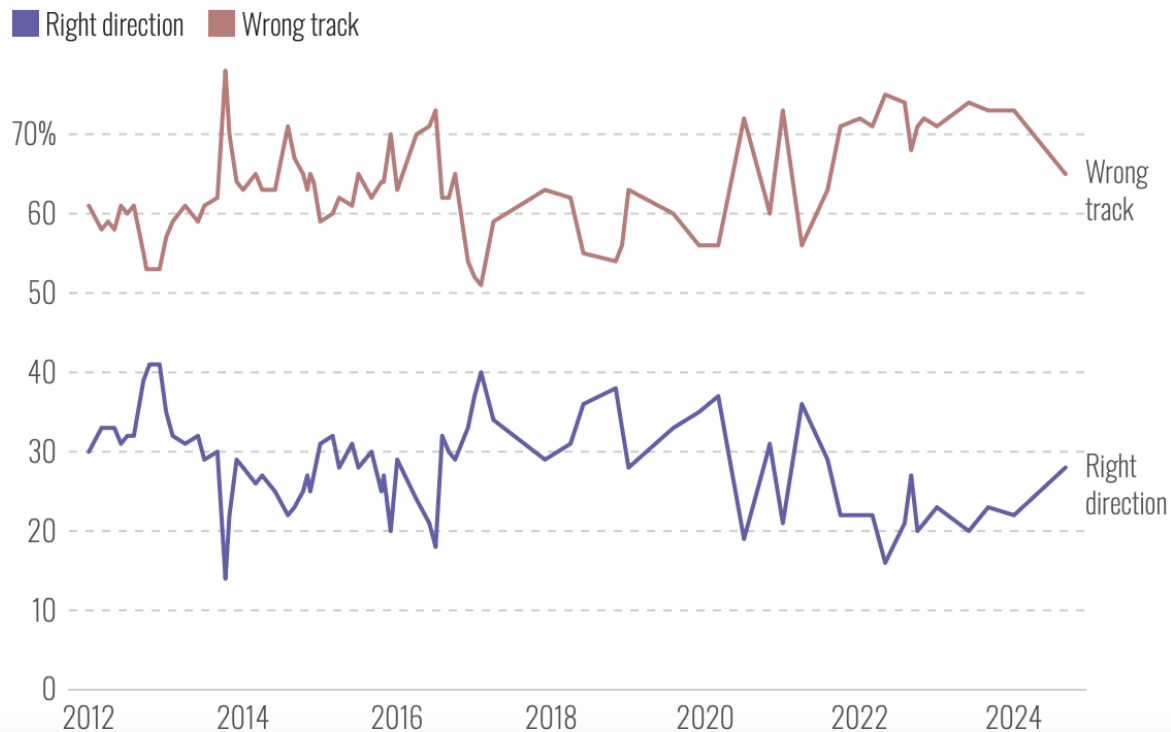
Trump shrank margins, flipped the suburbs and ran up the score in rural areas.



Fundamental #1: Right Track-Wrong Track

Two-thirds of voters say the U.S. is on the wrong track

It's the lowest share in three years of NBC News polling, but it's also very close to voters' verdict when they decided to change the party in the White House in 2016 and 2020.



Source: NBC News national polls

Right Direction/Wrong Track

The right direction/wrong track poll question is a great predictor of whether a party retains or loses the White House

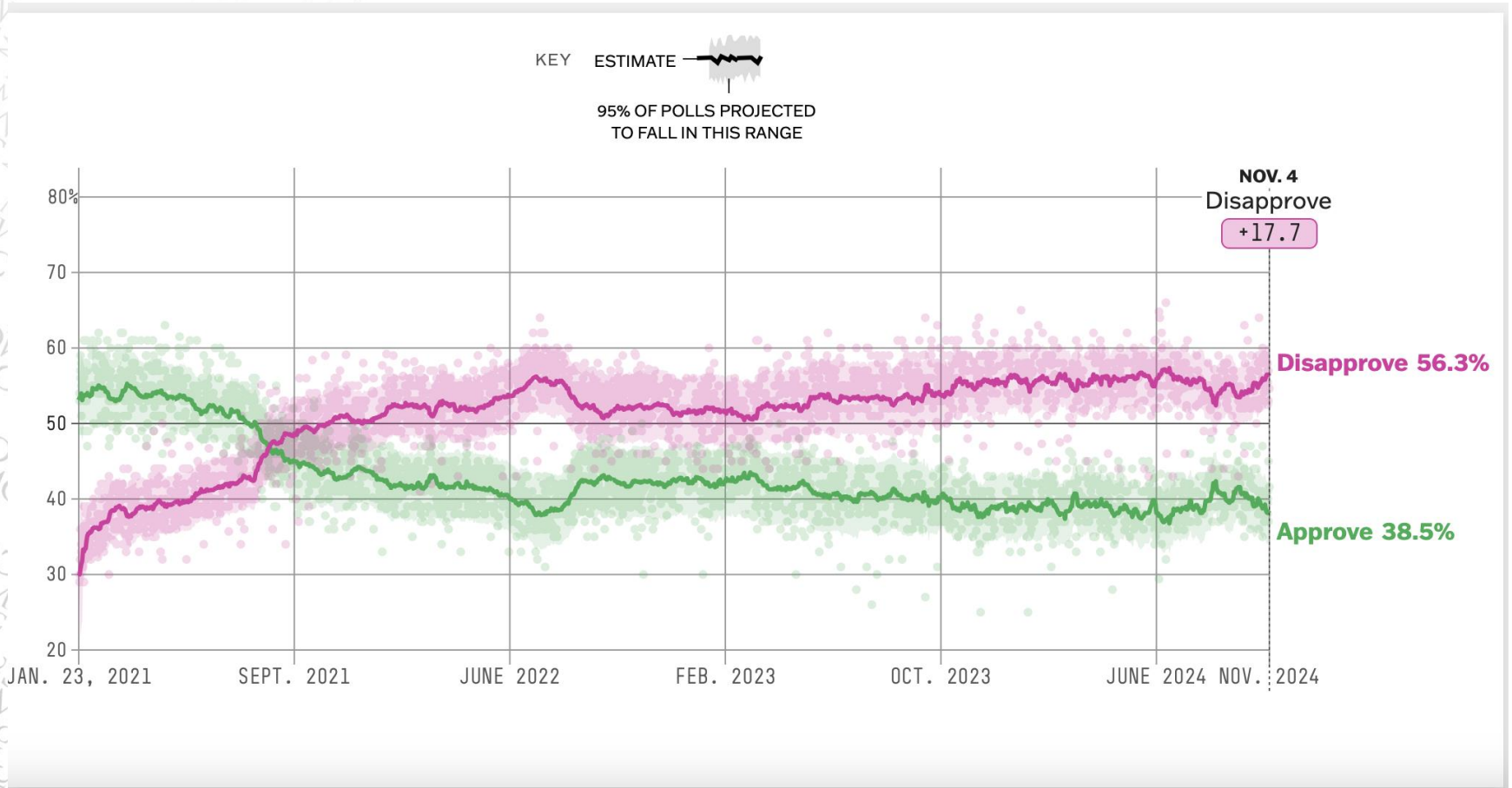
Years Presidency Flipped	Right Direction	Wrong Track	Net	Years Incumbent Party Held	Right Dir	Wrong Track	Net
1980	20%	79%	-59	1984	47%	48%	- 1
1992	17%	75%	-58	1988	41%	54%	-13
2000	39%	57%	-18	1996	39%	44%	- 5
2008	11%	76%	-65	2004	41%	47%	- 6
2016	31%	62%	-31	2012	42%	53%	-11
Average	24%	70%	-46		42%	49%	- 8

Source for above data: Roper Center

New NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll, July 2020

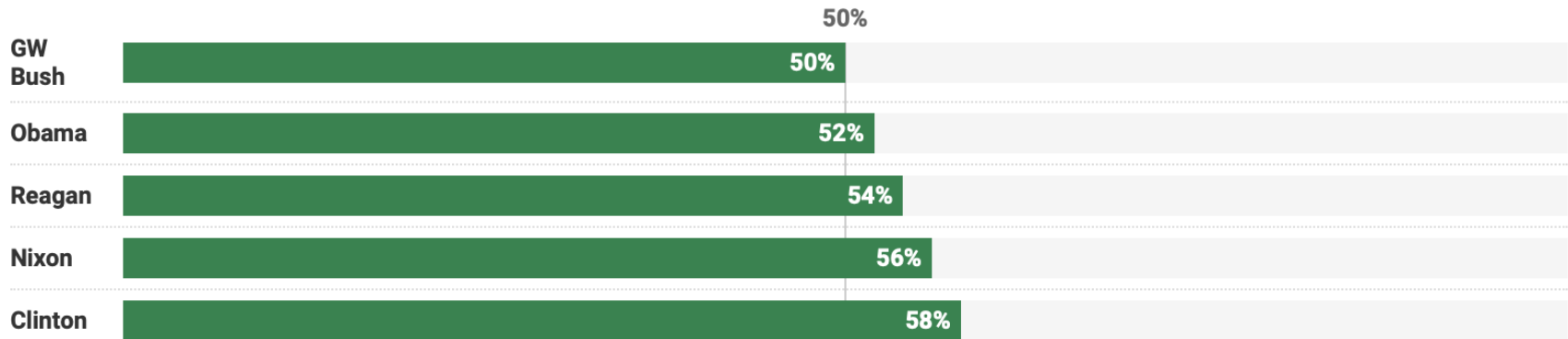
19% 72% -53

Fundamental #2: Biden Approval

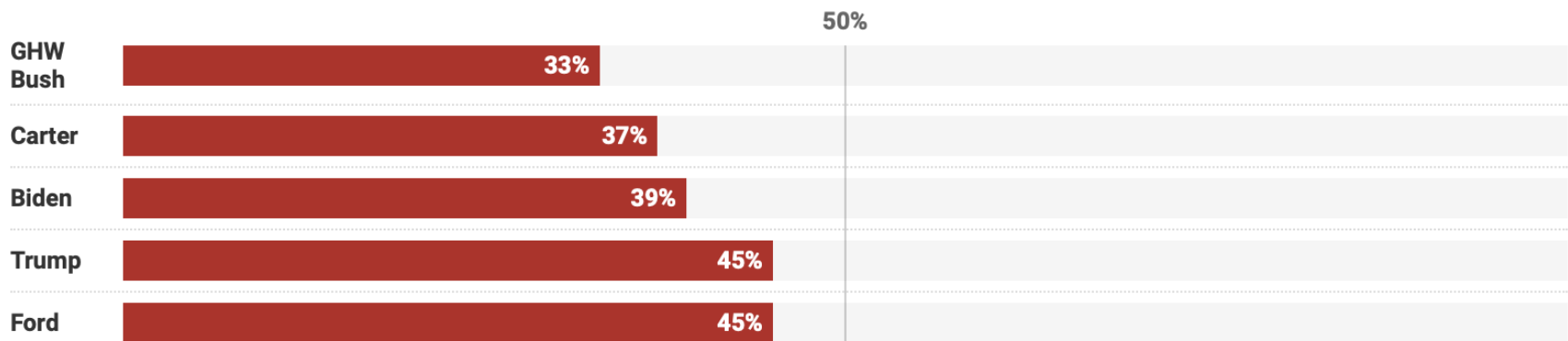


Presidential Approval and Elections

Re-elected



Voted out

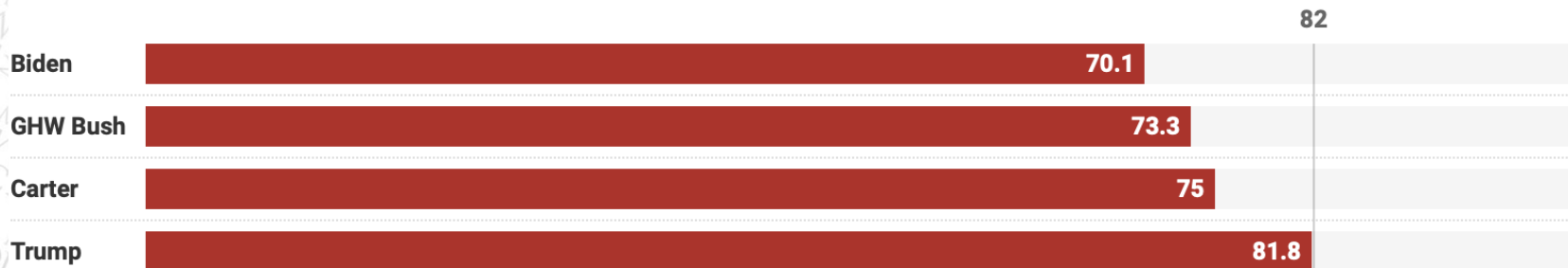


Fundamental #3: It's always the economy, stupid

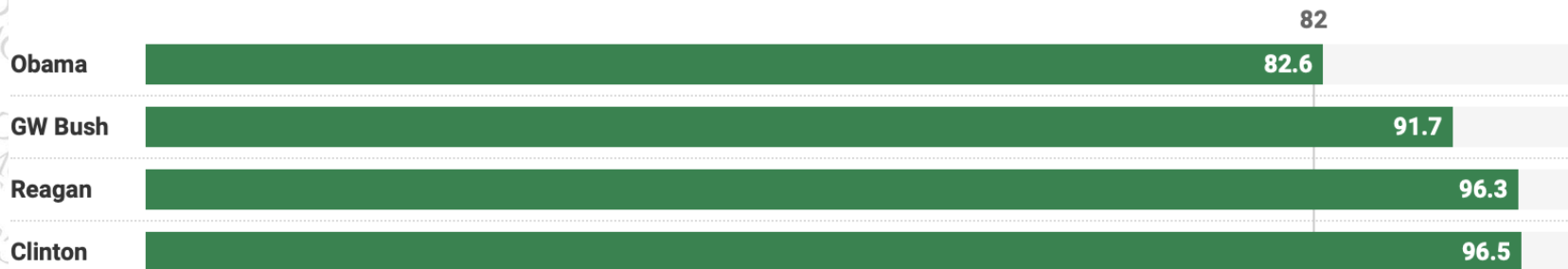
Happy Consumers Lead to Two-Term Presidents

Since Carter, every president with a University of Michigan Consumer Sentiment Index rating above 82 has won a second term. Biden was at 70.1.

Voted out



Re-elected

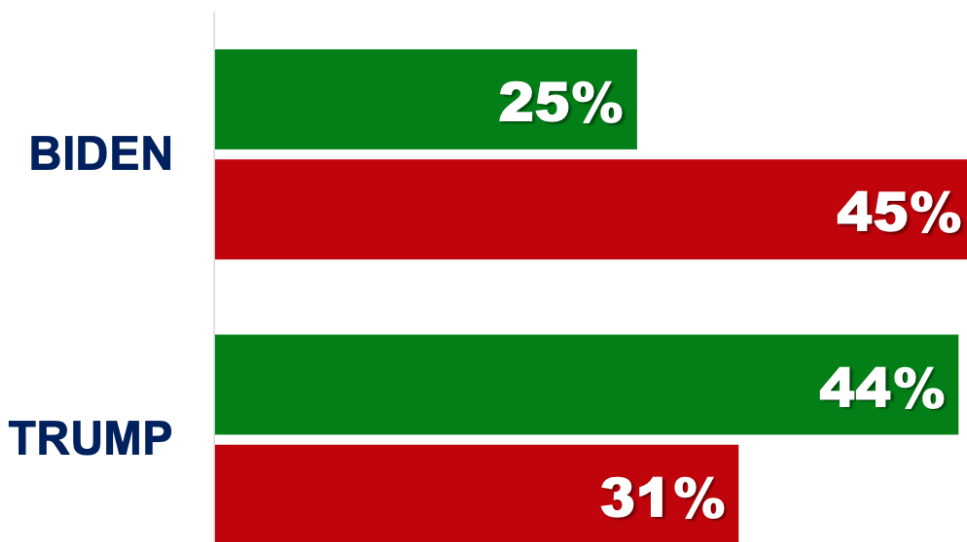


We suffer from recency bias

Voters Remember the Trump Years as Better than Biden's

Poll Before the Election (Oct.)

Did the Administration's policies **help** or **hurt** you & your family?

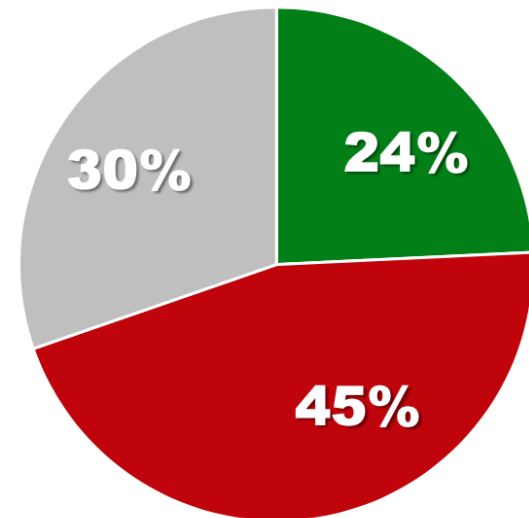


Source: NBC News poll, Oct. 2024

Exit Poll 2024

Family's Financial Situation Today

■ Better ■ Worse ■ About same



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Fundamental #4: Terrible time for incumbents

Incumbents Losing Around the World Post-Pandemic



Democrats lost Presidency & Senate



Ruling Tories ousted from UK government after 14 years



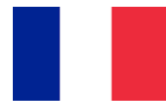
Governing LDP suffered its 2nd-worst result in history, losing lower house



Ruling conservatives landslide loss in parliament to liberal opposition



ANC lost parliamentary majority for 1st time since apartheid ended



Macron's centrist alliance failed to secure majority, new coalition TBD



Modi reelected but his BJP lost outright majority in parliament for 1st time in a decade



DPP held Presidency but legislative Yuan control flipped to Kuomintang

The Strategic (Issue) Problem for Democrats

POLITICS

GOP ads on transgender rights are dominating airwaves in the election's closing days

OCTOBER 19, 2024 · 5:00 AM ET

Americans' Views on Transgender Athletes, Based on Familiarity With a Transgender Person, 2021 vs. 2023

Do you think transgender athletes should be able to play on sports teams that match their current gender identity or should only be allowed to play on sports teams that match their birth gender?

■ % Able to play on teams that match identity ■ % Only on teams that match birth gender ■ % No opinion

Know transgender person



Do not know transgender person

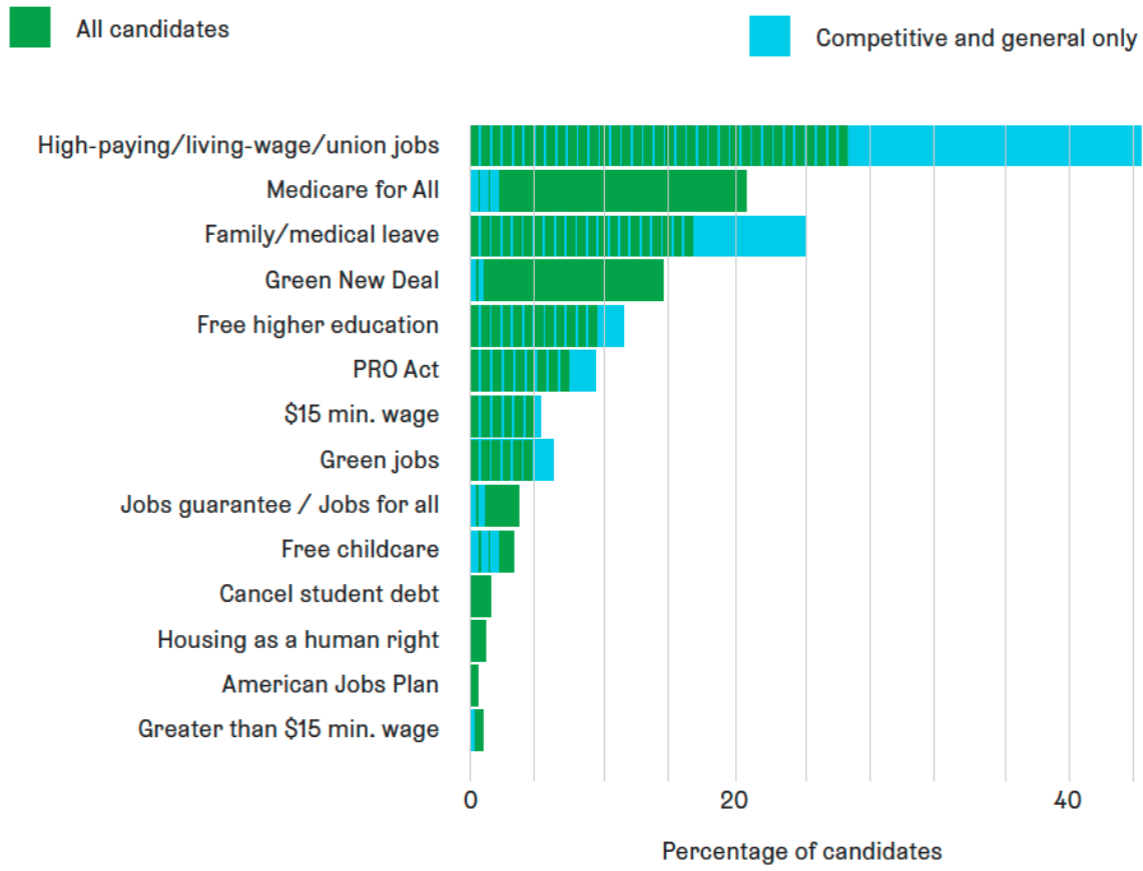


GALLUP

Strategic Issue for Dems

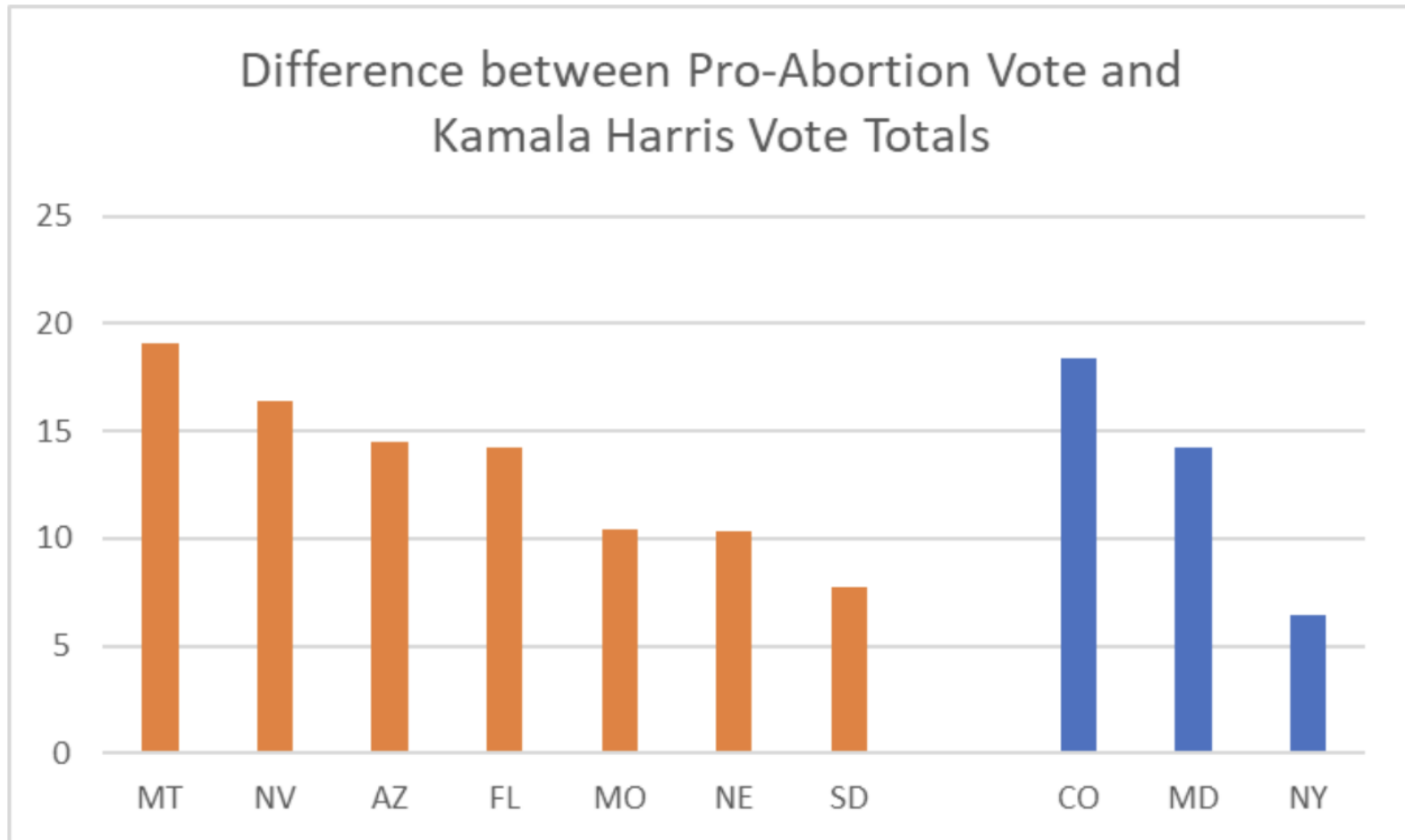


Dems losing working class because they are not talking working class issues



NOTE: Bars indicate the percentage of candidates who mention each item at least once.

Abortion did not help Ds as much as some thought



Republicans, fear 2026

Change in Control of House, Senate and/or White House

<u>1960's</u>	<u>1970's</u>	<u>1980's</u>	<u>1990's</u>	<u>2000's</u>	<u>2010's</u>	<u>2020's</u>
1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
1962	1972	1982	1992	2002	2012	2022
1964	1974	1984	1994	2004	2014	2024
1966	1976	1986	1996	2006	2016	2026
1968	1978	1988	1998	2008	2018	2028

CONSULTING

Federal change; state stability

226

Kamala Harris

74,936,918 votes (48.43%)

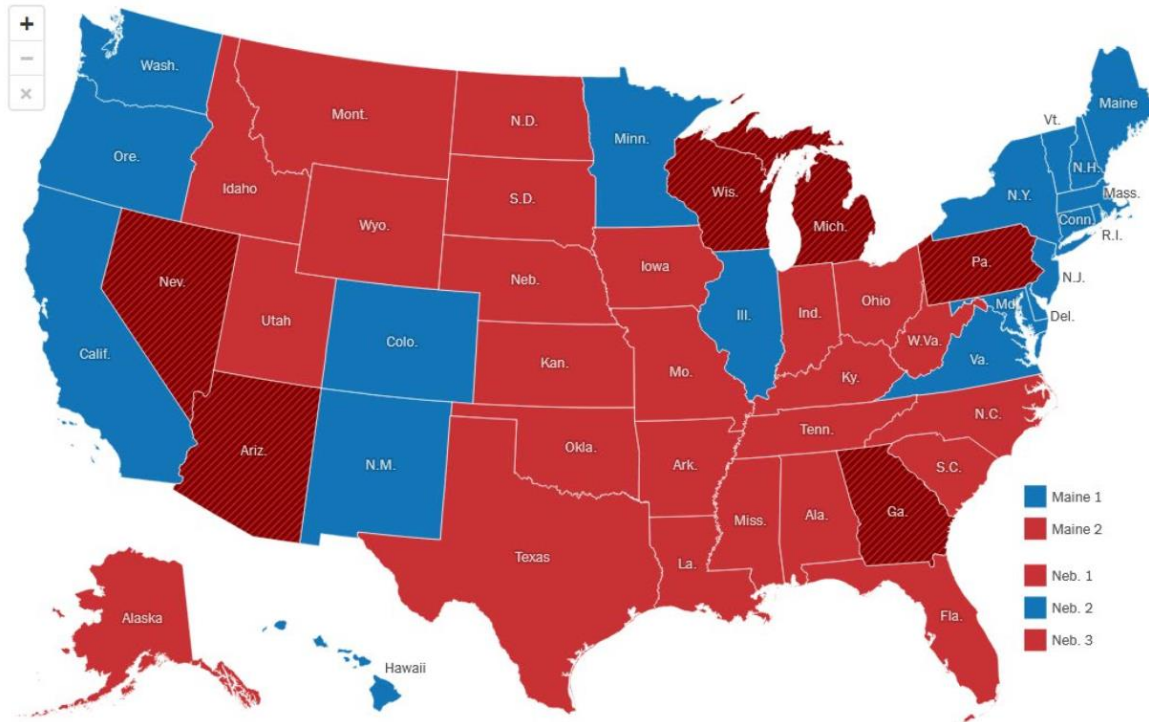
270
TO WIN

312

Donald J. Trump

154.7 million votes so far (Estimated >99% counted)

77,234,090 votes (49.91%)



Senate: R+4

	2024	2025
GOP	49	53
DEM	51	47

House: D+2

	2024	2025
GOP	222	220
DEM	213	215

Governors: No change

	2024	2025
GOP	27	27
DEM	23	23

Source: [NYT](#) (12/5 9am)

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What to expect

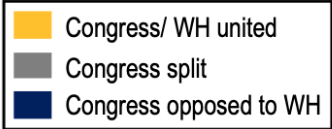


Congress faces a huge lift

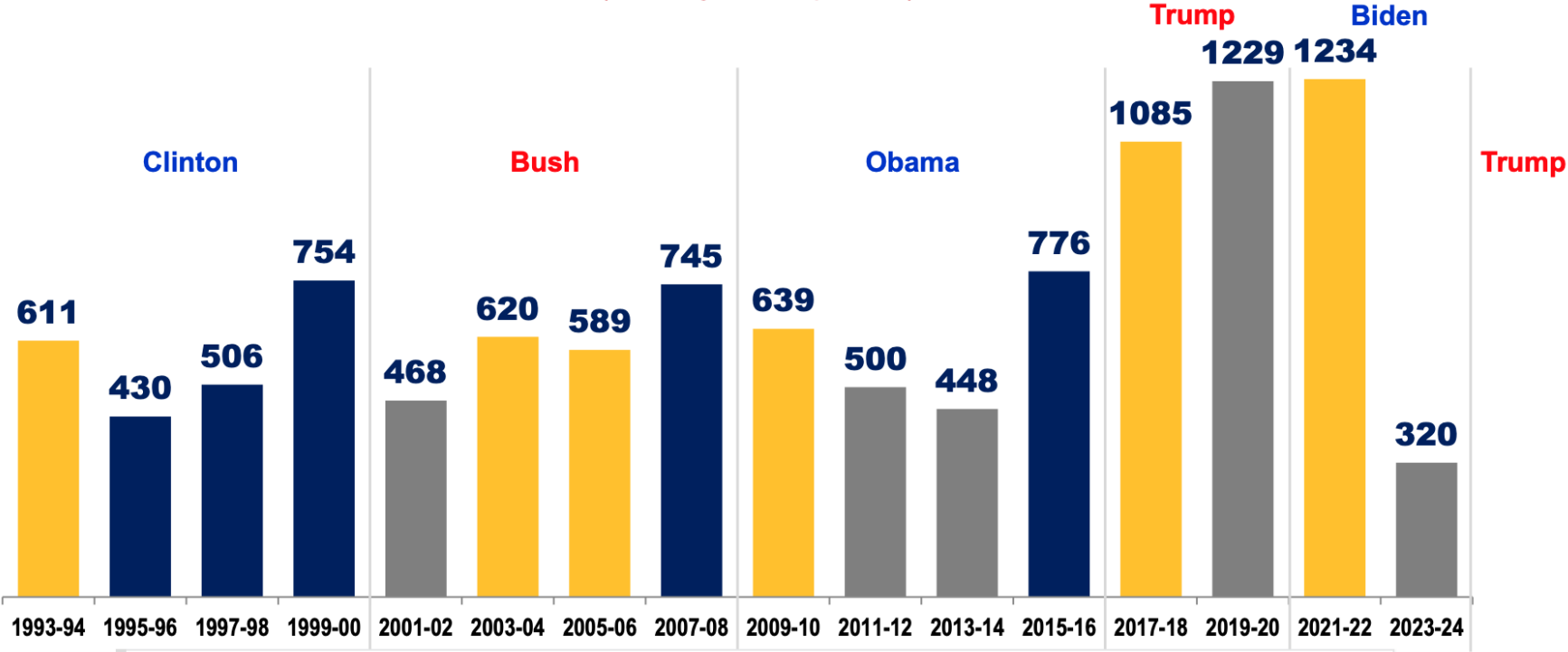
A Huge Agenda Awaits the 119th Congress



We should see more from Washington



Enacted Legislation *(including via incorporation)*

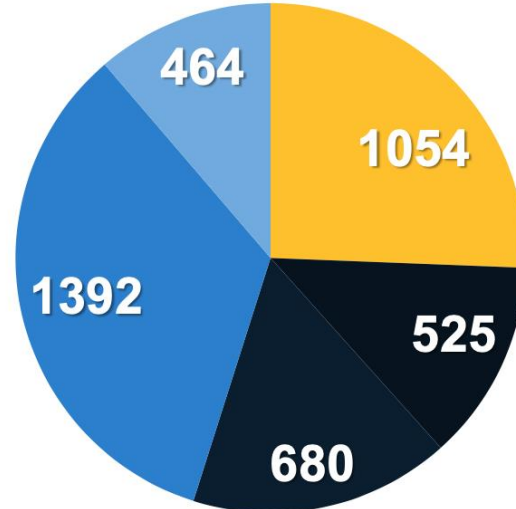


The first 100 days

Overhaul Team, Set New Direction, Engage Leaders



Over 4,000 Hires Needed



- President-Appointed, Senate-Confirmed
- President-Appointed, No Confirmation
- Non-career Executive Service
- Confidential or policy-determining role
- Non-competitive positions by law



Trump 2.0 \neq Trump 1.0

shutterstock.com 2015499543

More Similar to Trump 1.0



- 1. Experience**
(It's Year 5, not Year 1 again)
- 2. People**
(vetted, loyal & ready)
- 3. State of World**
(no longer peaceful & disinflationary)

Most Different from the Last Time



2025-26 v. 27-28



**Crime Bill; Brady Bill;
Assault Weapons Ban;
100,000 cops**

NAFTA; GATT

**Deficit Reduction Bill
(tax hike)**

AmeriCorps

Family & Medical Leave

**Reinventing Gov't
Initiative**

No Child Left Behind

2001 Tax Cuts

Patriot Act; DHS Bill

**US-Russia Nuclear
Arms deal**

**FTAs launched /
concluded: Singapore,
Chile, Australia,
Morocco, CAFTA**

**\$787B Stimulus
package**

Affordable Care Act

Dodd-Frank

2010 Tax Deal

**Lilly Ledbetter Fair
Pay Act**

Tax Cuts & Jobs Act

**First Step Act
(Criminal Justice Reform)**

**16 CRAs (blocking
Obama regs)**

VA Mission Act

**No Surprises Act
(surprise medical billing)**

**American Rescue Plan
(\$1.9T)**

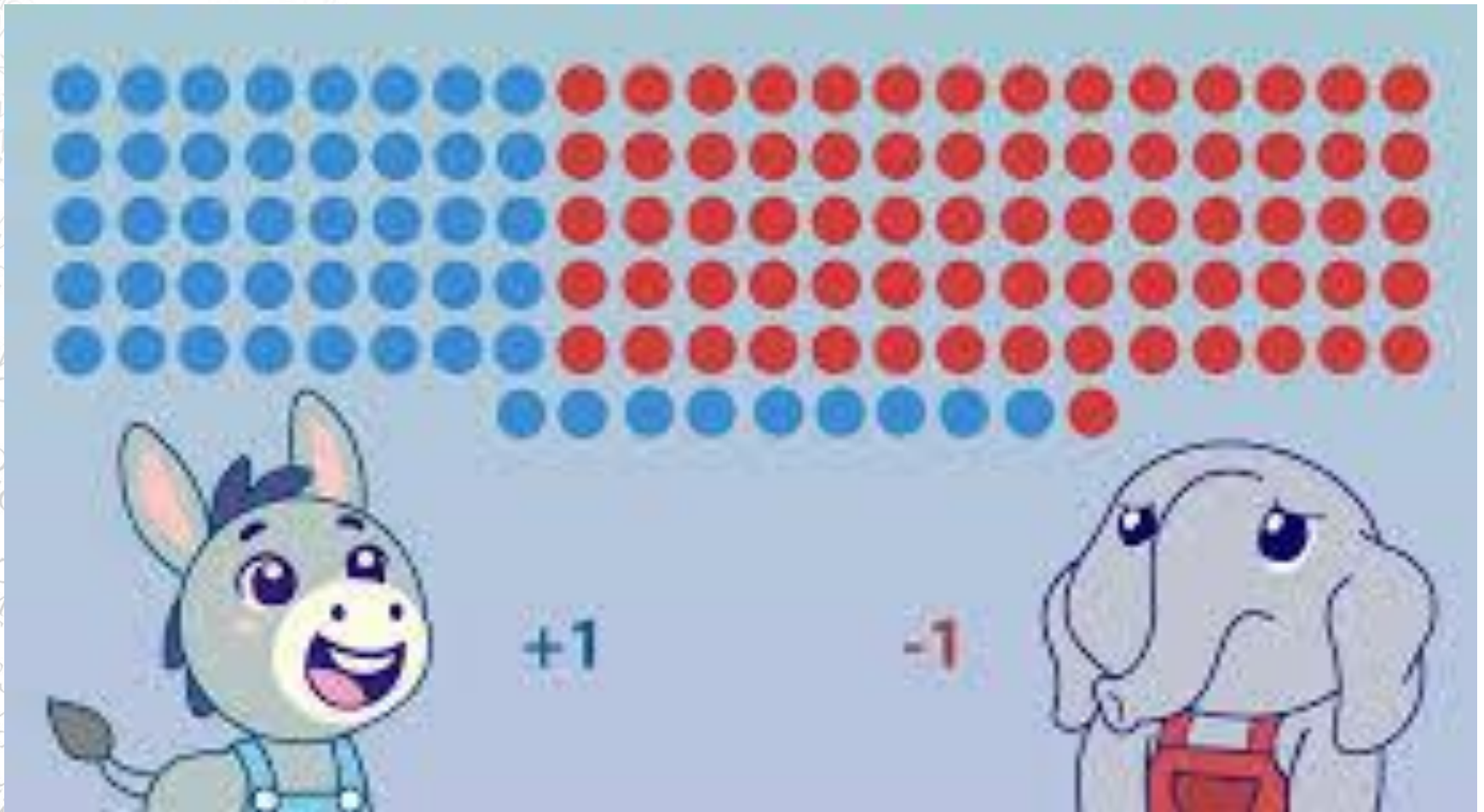
**Infrastructure Investment
& Jobs Act (\$1.2T)**

Inflation Reduction Act

CHIPS & Science Act

**Bipartisan Safer
Communities Act**

What about North Carolina?



Now, it's



Your turn