The Role of Suburban Voters in 2018 and (Perhaps?) 2020

Eran Ben-Porath, SSRS
Ashley Kirzinger, KFF

ssrs research. refined.

KFF HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

What We Mean When We Talk About 'Suburban Women Voters'

Suburban women break for Democrats on gun control

There's a suburban tsunami driving 2018

LA Times By STEVE PHILLIPS NOV 11, 2018 | 3:15 AM

Republicans Need a Suburban Agenda

These voters are leaving the Republican Party and we need to win them back.

Supporters of Harley Rouda shout for their candidate during a get out the vote rally at Main Beach in Laguna Beach, Calif. on Nov.

Suburbs hold key to GOP future

Tuesday, November 13, 2018

ELECTIONS 2018 RESULTS OUTLOOK ONPOLITICS ELECTION QUIZ

The suburbs turned on Republicans and Trump. The midterm election results prove it.

ssrs research.refined.

KFF HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

- Why Are We Focusing on Suburbia?
- How Do Surveys Define “Suburban”?
- The Role of Suburban Voters in 2016
- Outlook for 2020 Election

ssrs research. refined.

KFF HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

Why Focus on Suburbs?

ssrs research. refined.
KFF HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

Suburbs: The Growing Demographic

- Around 175 million Americans live in American suburbs and small metropolitan areas.
- American suburbs have experienced a 16% increase in population since 2000.
- This population increase is equally divided between domestic migration and international migration.
- Even using the most narrow of definitions, around half of voters live in suburban areas.

ssrs research. refined.

KFF HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

"SUBURBAN WOMEN REVOLT"
"We all know that 'suburban' means White, right?"

Demographic Profile of the Suburbs

56% are married

65% white
10% black
17% Hispanic

29% have college degree

$64,144 is the household median income

89% are covered by health insurance, 57% have ESI coverage and 8% have Medicaid

53% describe their health as either “excellent” or “very good”

13% are white evangelical Protestant

2010 U.S. Census, 2018 Pew Research Center, 2017 KFF/Washington Post Rural America

ssrs research. refined.

KFF HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

How do surveys define the “suburbs”?

ssrs research. refined.
KFF HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

The Nebulous Suburbia

- In 2017 KFF/Washington Post Survey of Rural America, 32% of those living in the suburbs said they considered the area where they live to be suburban (14% called it rural, 34% said it was small town, 19% called it urban).
- 41% of people living in urban areas called the area where they live suburban.
- Cities are easy to define for researchers…rural and suburbs are not.
- The Census Bureau's Geographic Areas Reference Manual contains zero references to American suburbs.

ssrs research. refined.

KFF HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

The Different Definitions of Suburban Voters

- Exit polls
- Kaiser Family Foundation(KFF)
- 2013 NCHS Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties
- Zip-code level population density

How do specifications of suburb affect survey outcomes?

- CBS 2016 October pre-election polls
- KFF Fall 2018 pre-election polls

ssrs research. refined.

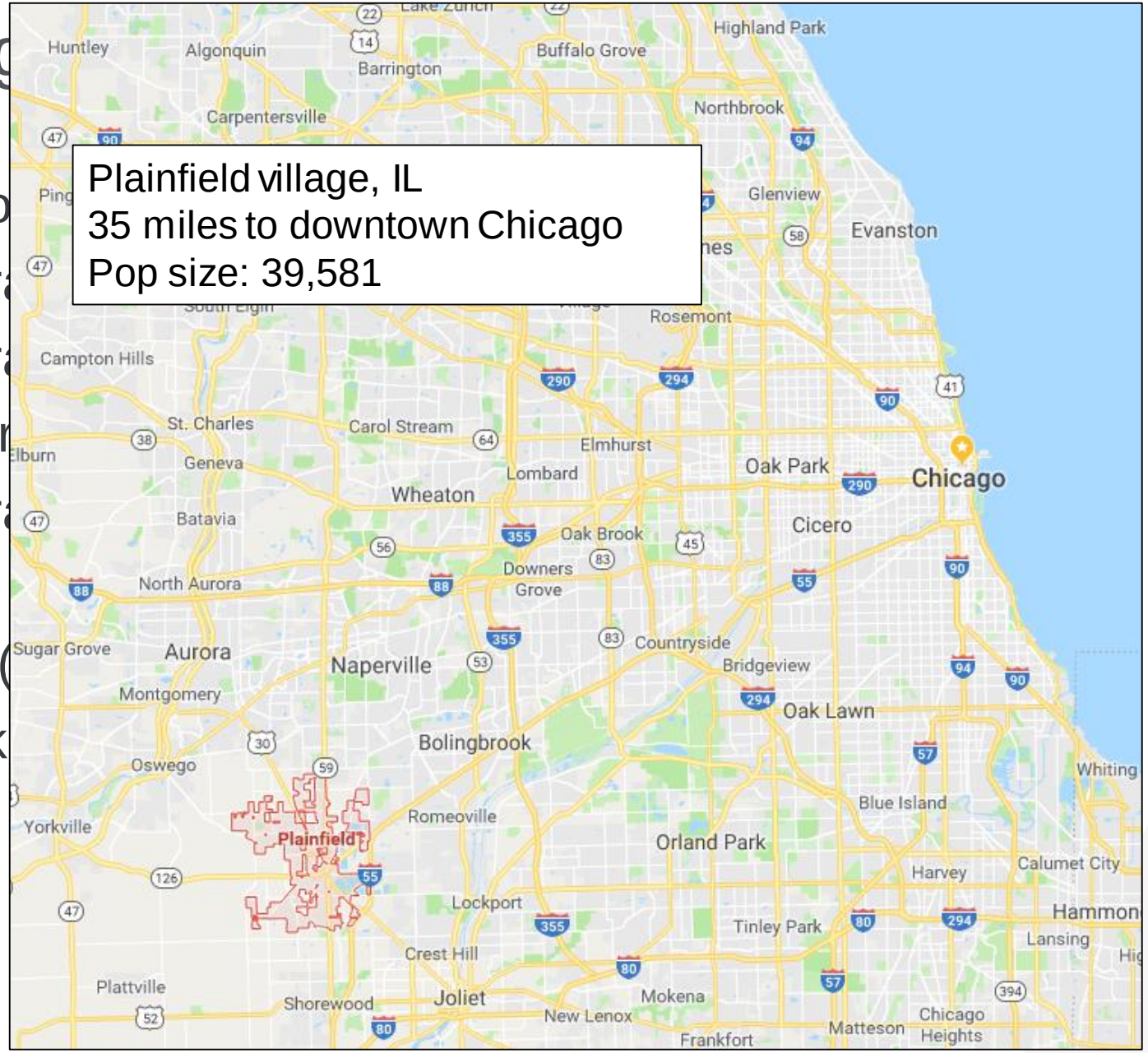
KFF HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

Specifying

1. Populatio
   - 1 – Centra
   - 2 – Centra
   - 3 – Subur
   - 4 – Centra
   - 5 – Rural

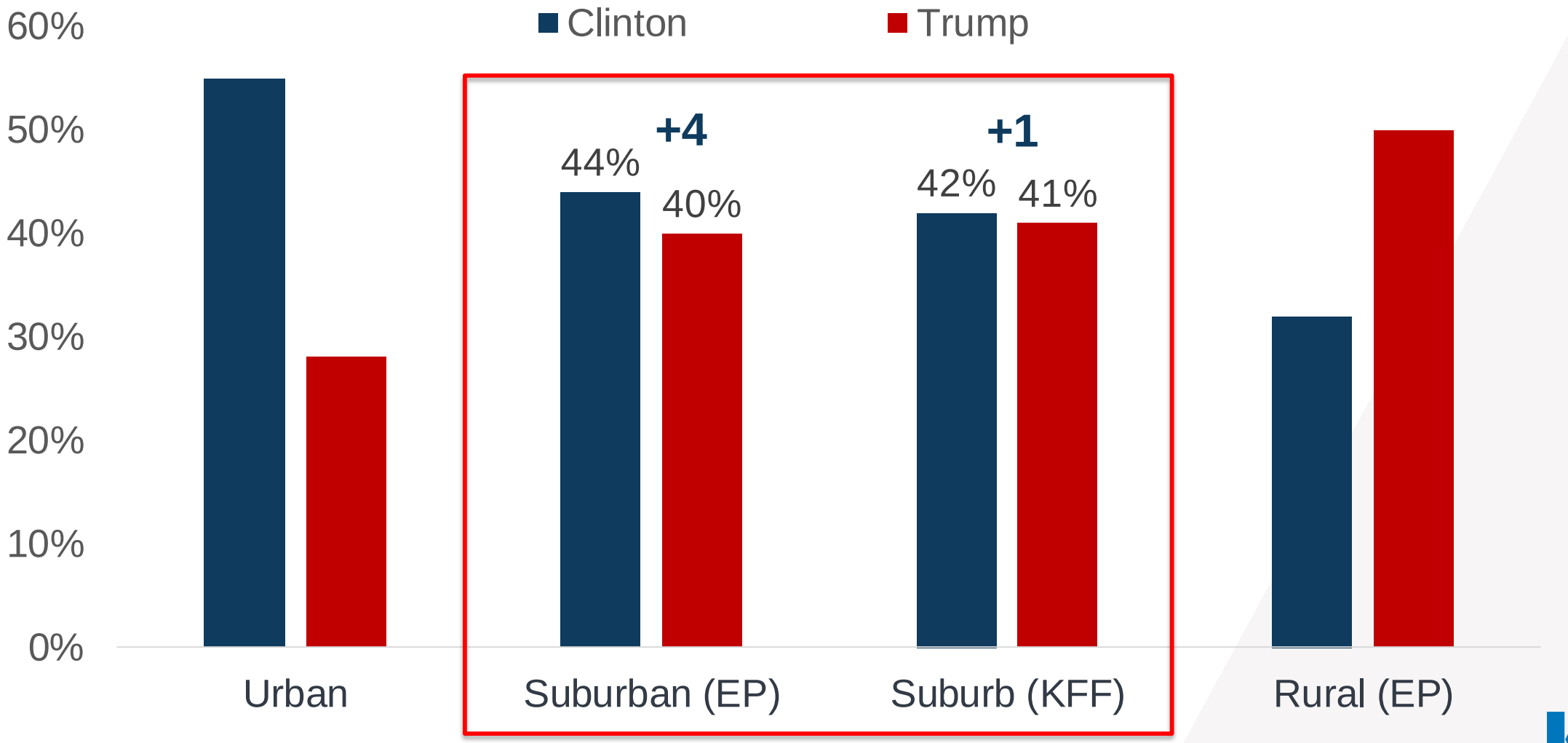
➔Exit Polls (

➔KFF Track



KFF
HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

2016 Election Preference (RVs)



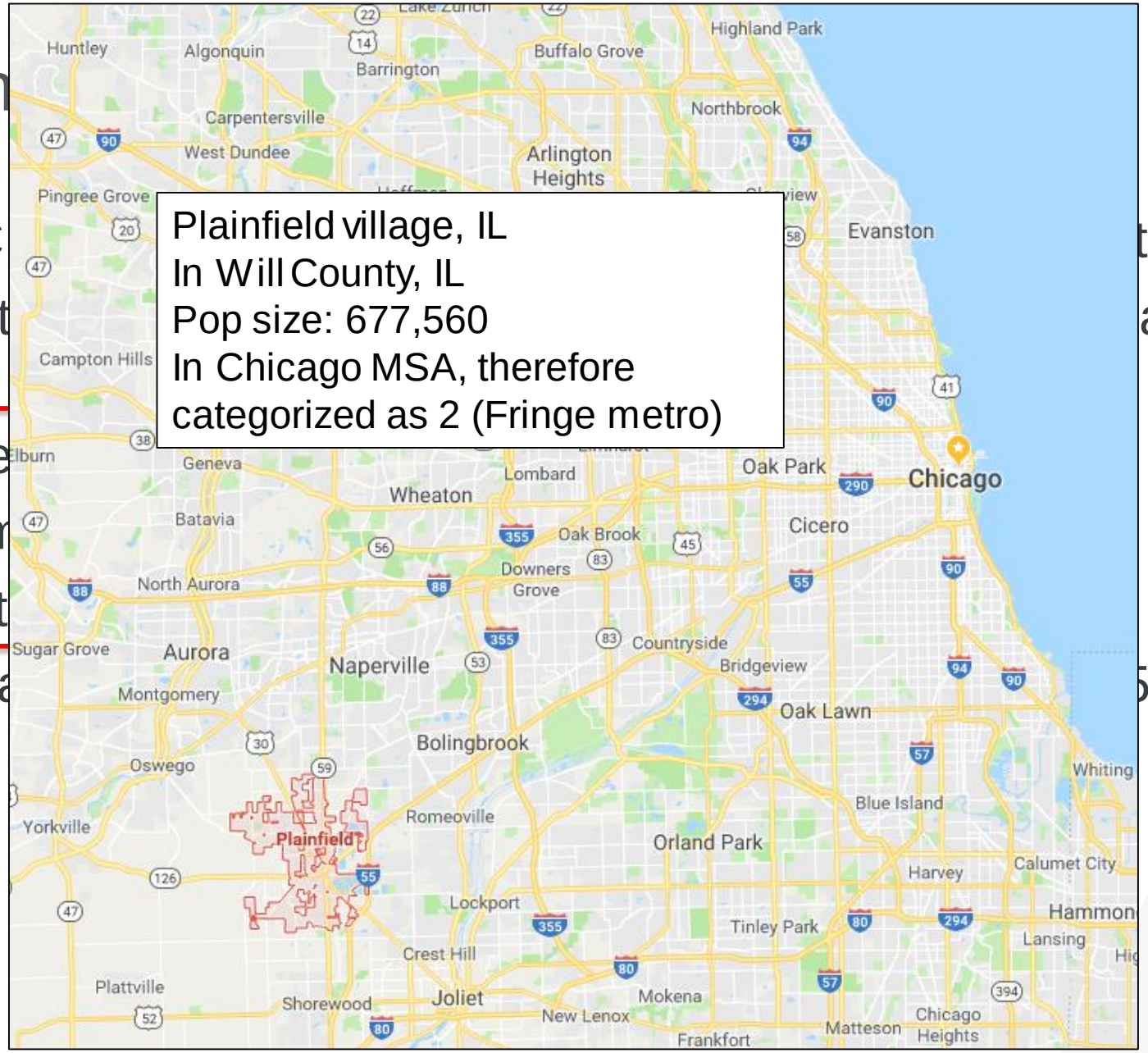
SOURCE: CBS 2016 Election Poll

KFF
HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

Specifyin

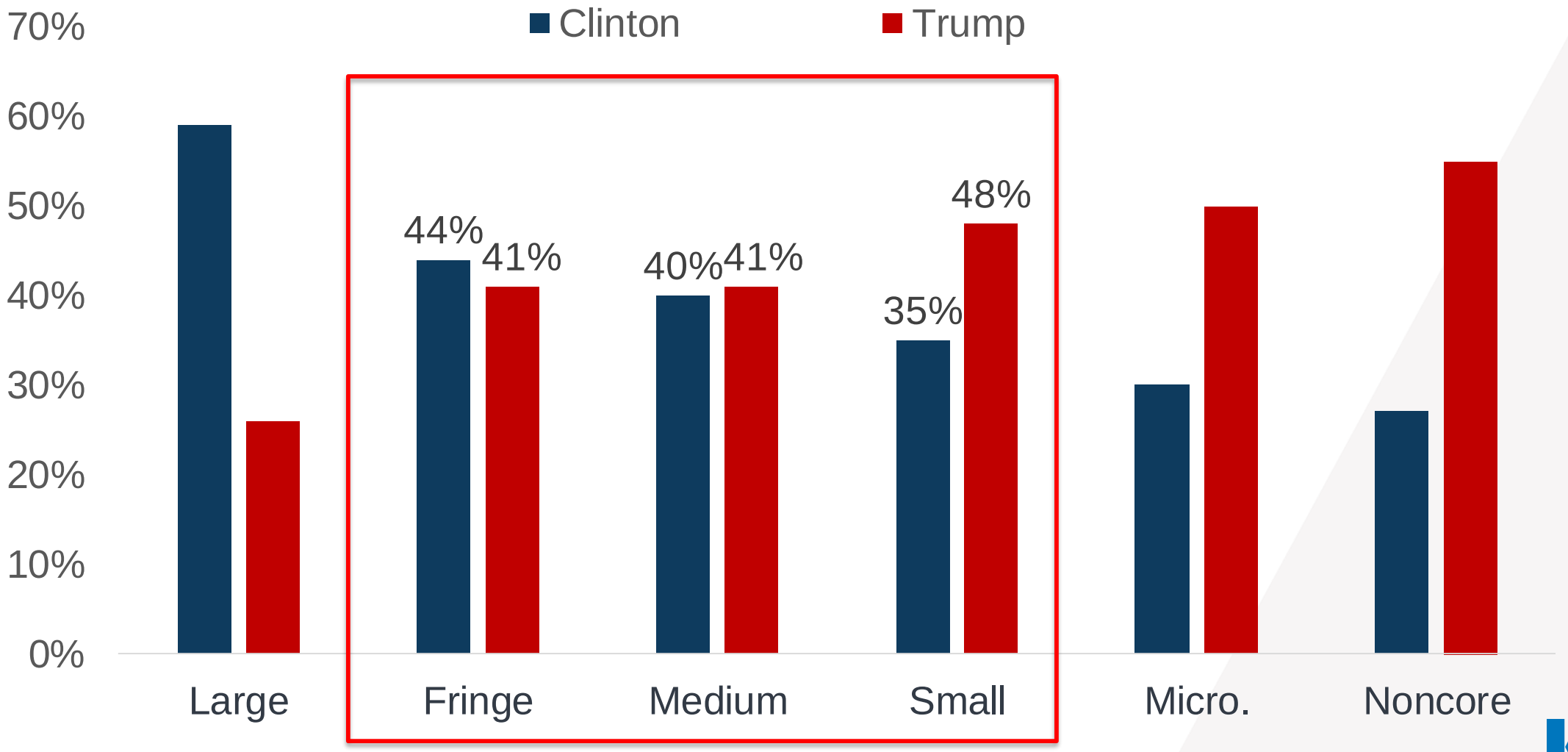
2. 2013 NC ties

- Large met ained by CC; or
- Fringe me
- Medium m
- Small met
- Micropolita 50k
- Noncore



KFF
HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

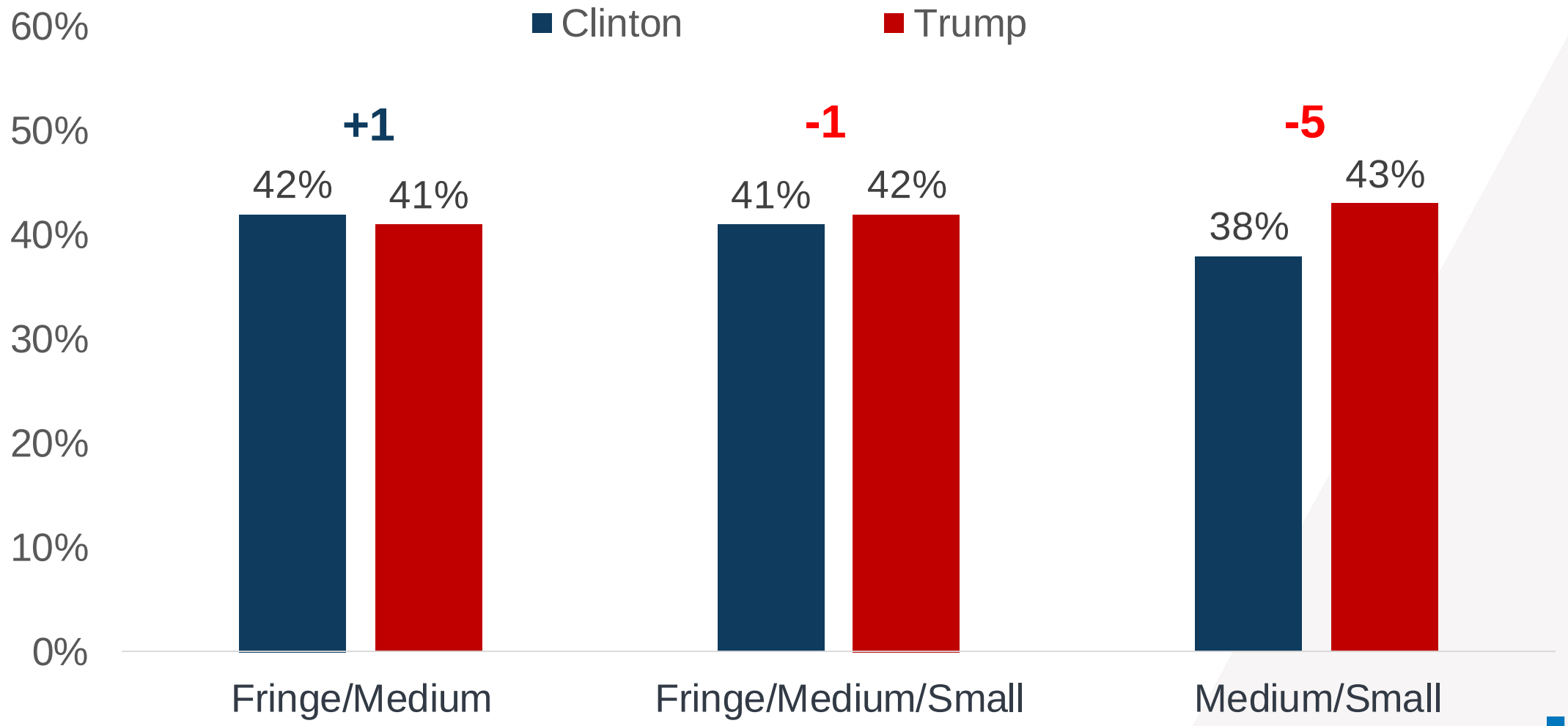
2016 Election Preference (RVs)



SOURCE: CBS 2016 Election Poll

KFF
HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

2016 Election Preference (RVs)



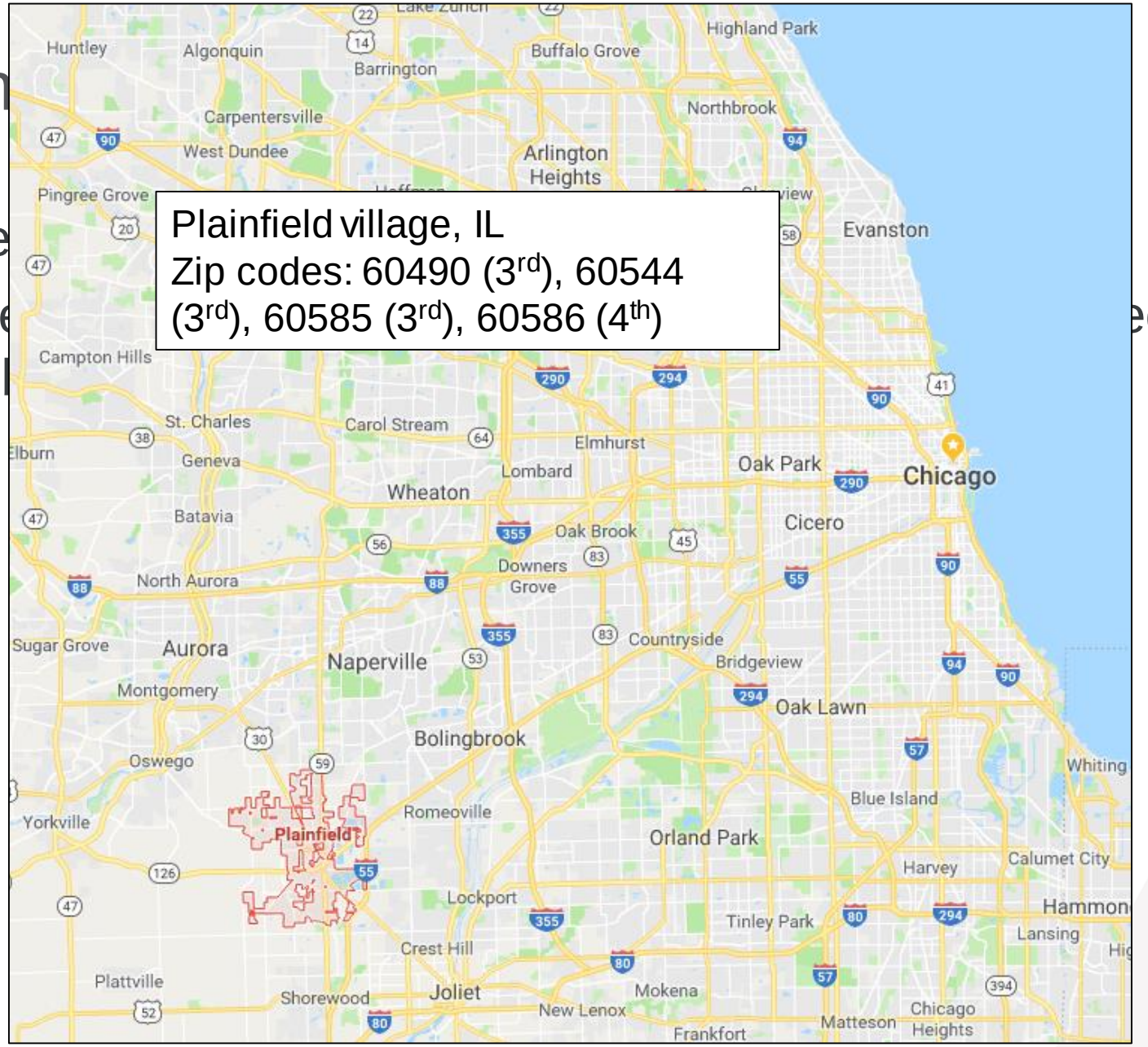
SOURCE: CBS 2016 Election Poll

KFF
HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

Specifyin

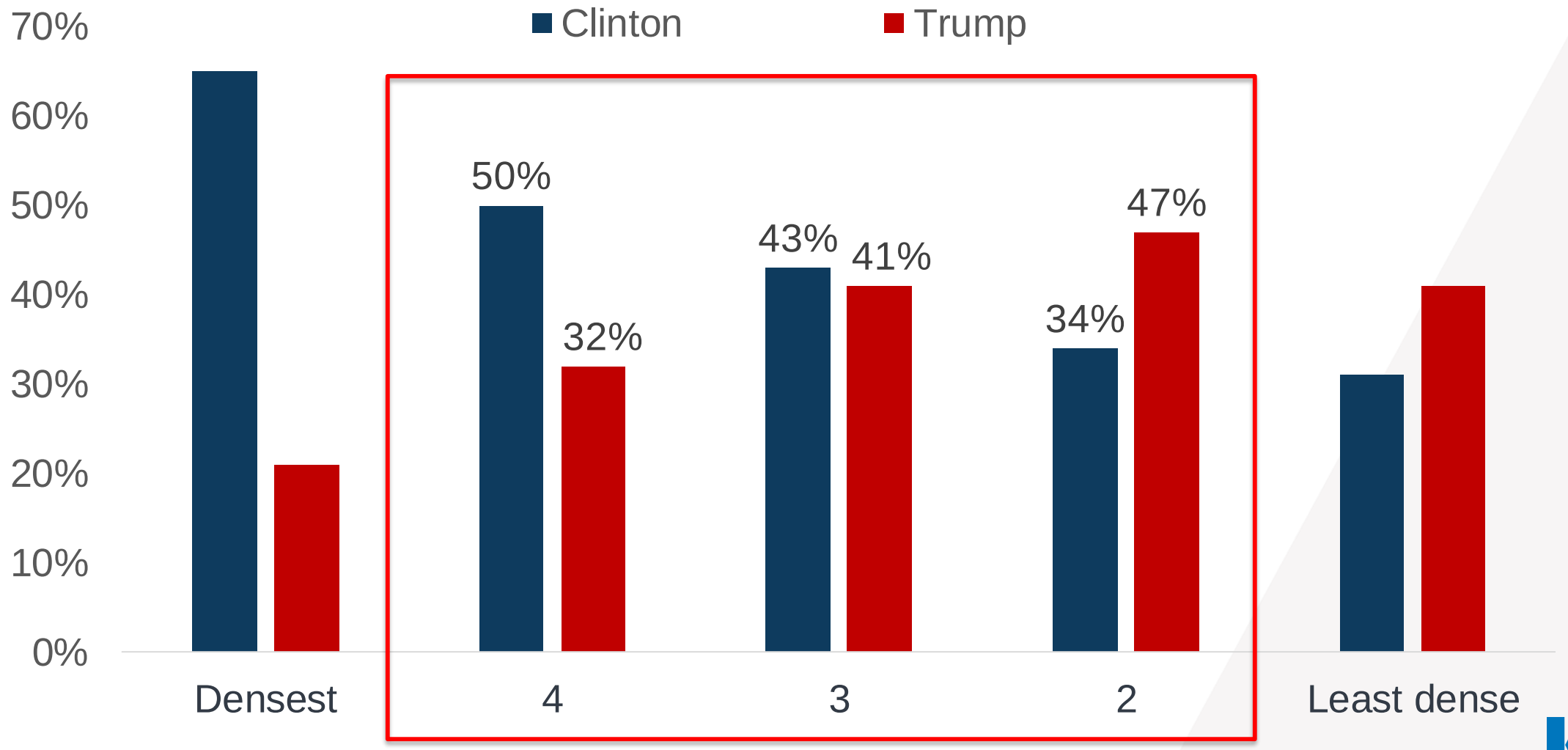
3. Zip-code

   - Responde ed quintiles



KFF
HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

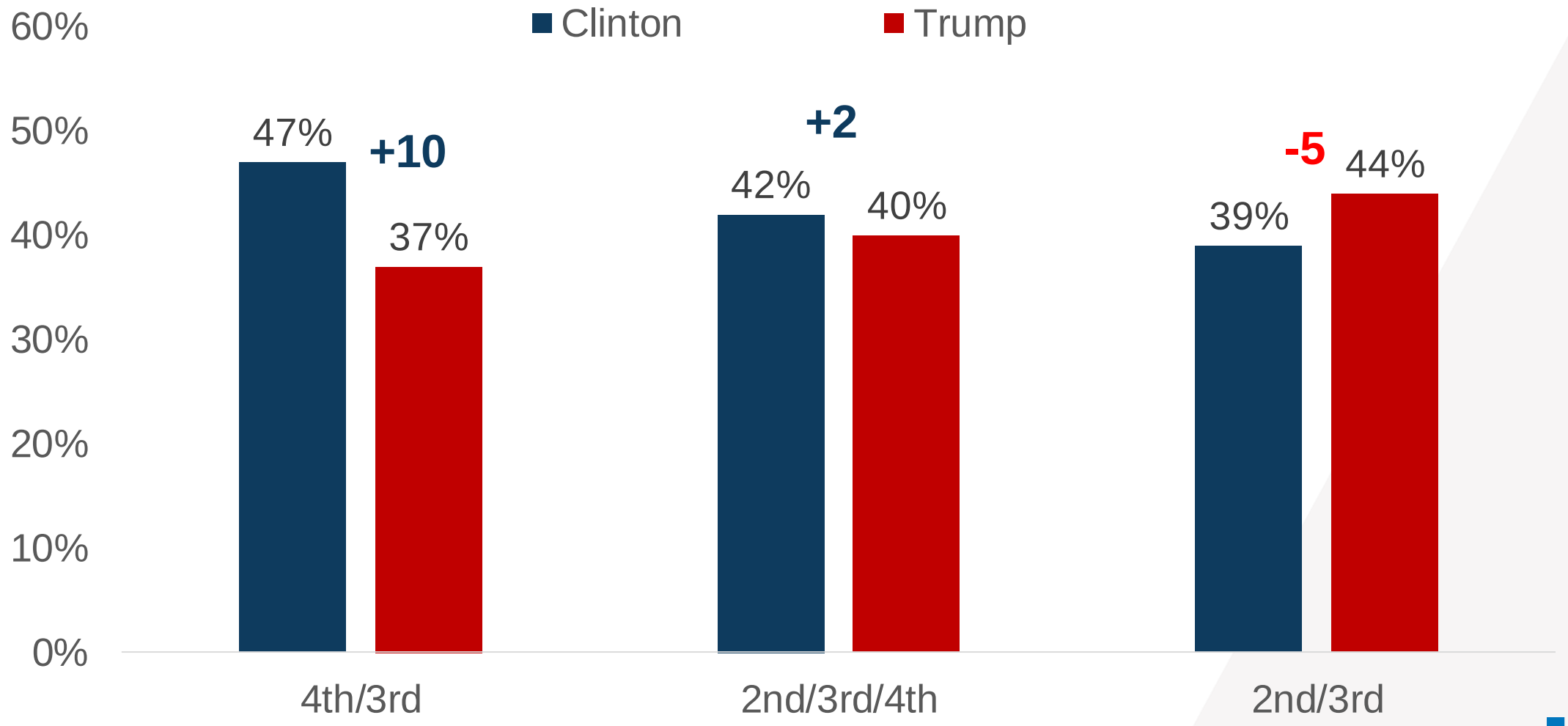
2016 Election Preference (RVs)



SOURCE: CBS 2016 Election Poll

KFF
HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

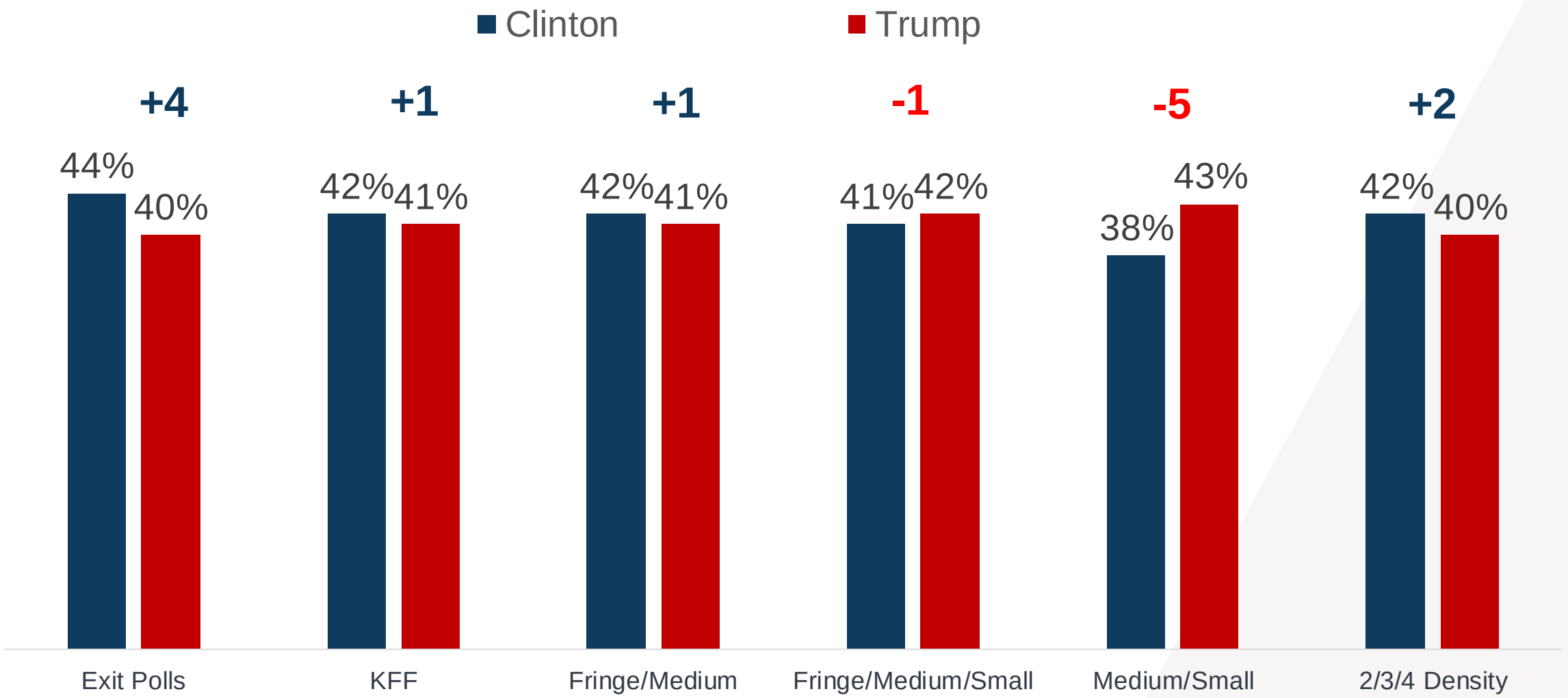
2016 Election Preference (RVs)



SOURCE: CBS 2016 Election Poll

KFF
HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

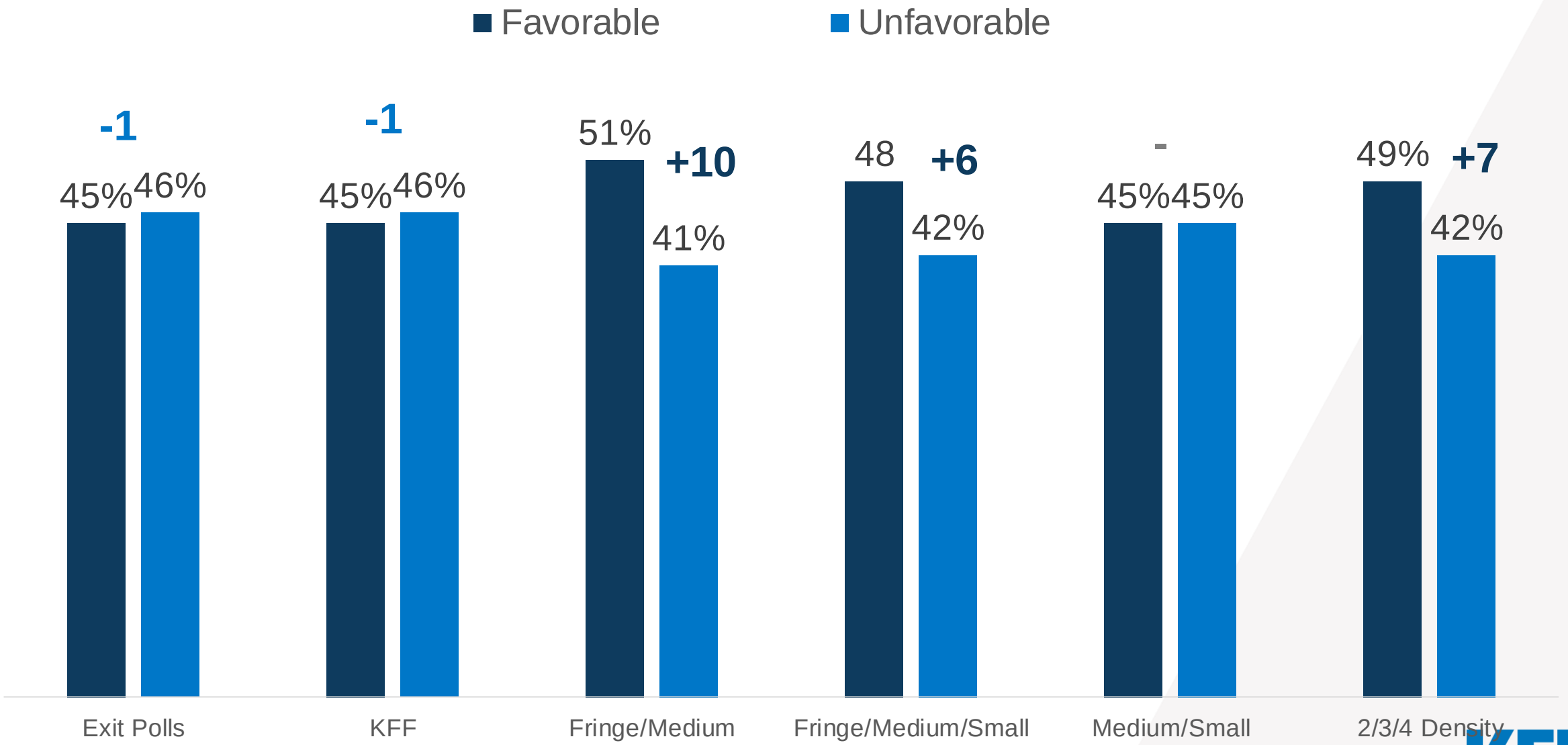
2016 Election Preference (RVs)



SOURCE: CBS 2016 Election Poll

KFF
HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

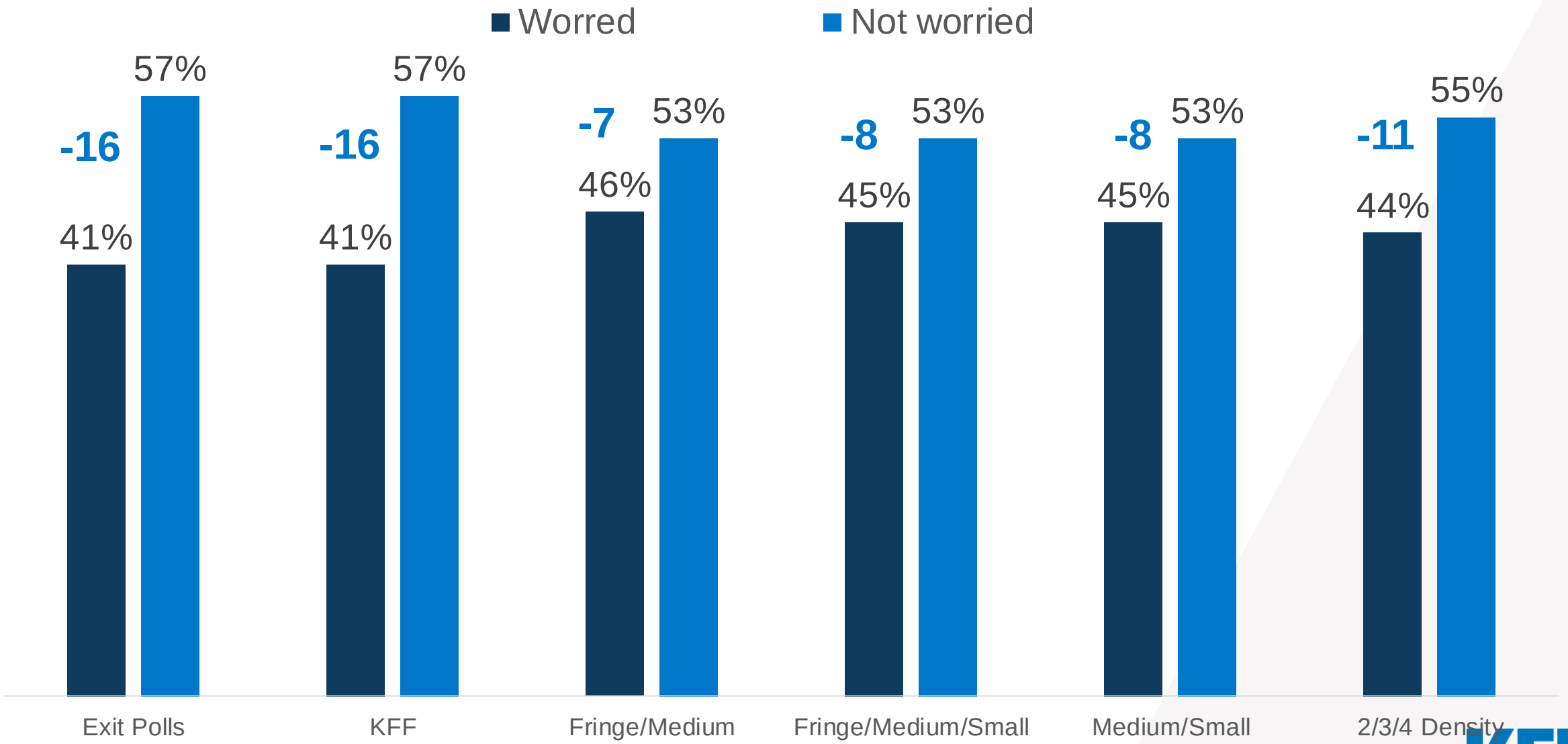
2018 ACA Favorability



SOURCE: KFF 2018 Election Health Tracking Poll

KFF
HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

Worries About Affording Prescription Drug Costs



SOURCE: KFF August 2018 Health Tracking Poll

KFF
HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

The role of suburbia in 2018

ssrs research. refined.
KFF HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

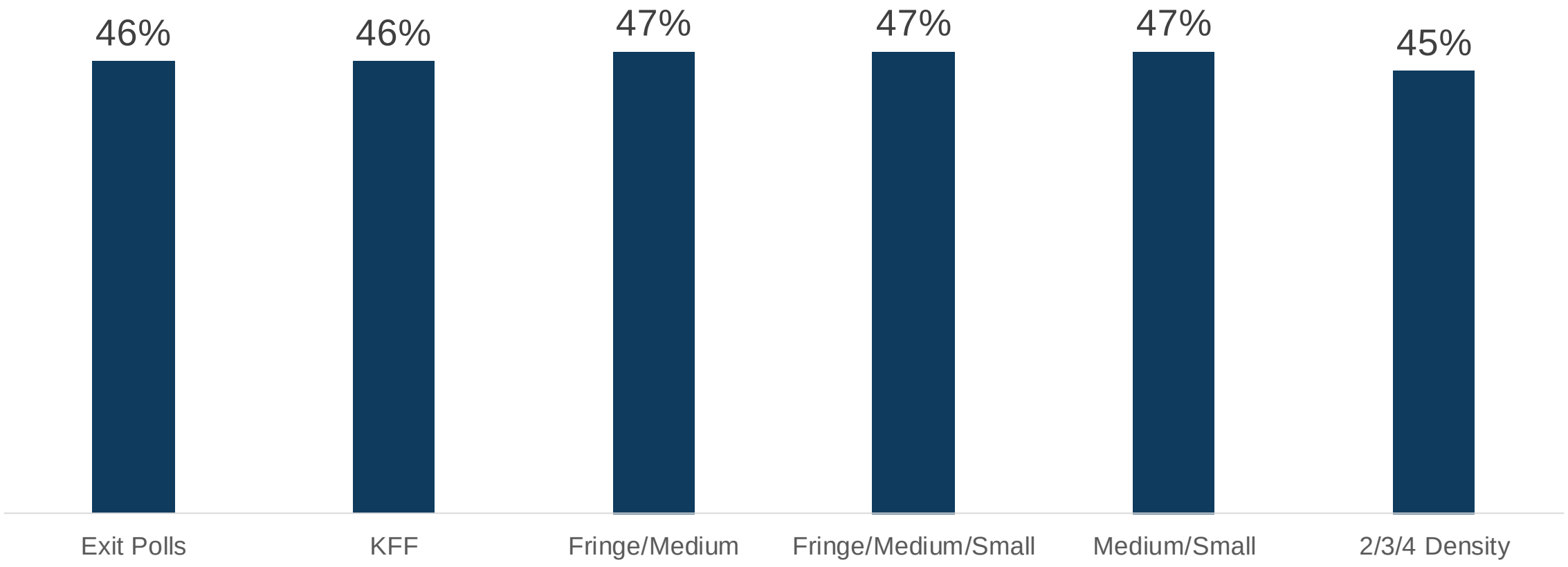
The Narratives of the 2018 Election

- Health care was the most important issue in the election. This was largely driven by Democrats and independents, not by Republicans.
- The suburbs largely supported Democratic candidates running in their districts.
- Suburbs supported President Trump in 2016, but flipped and supported Democrats in 2018.

ssrs research. refined.

KFF HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

2018 Election Data (RVs)- Share Who Say Health Care Is Very Important to Vote

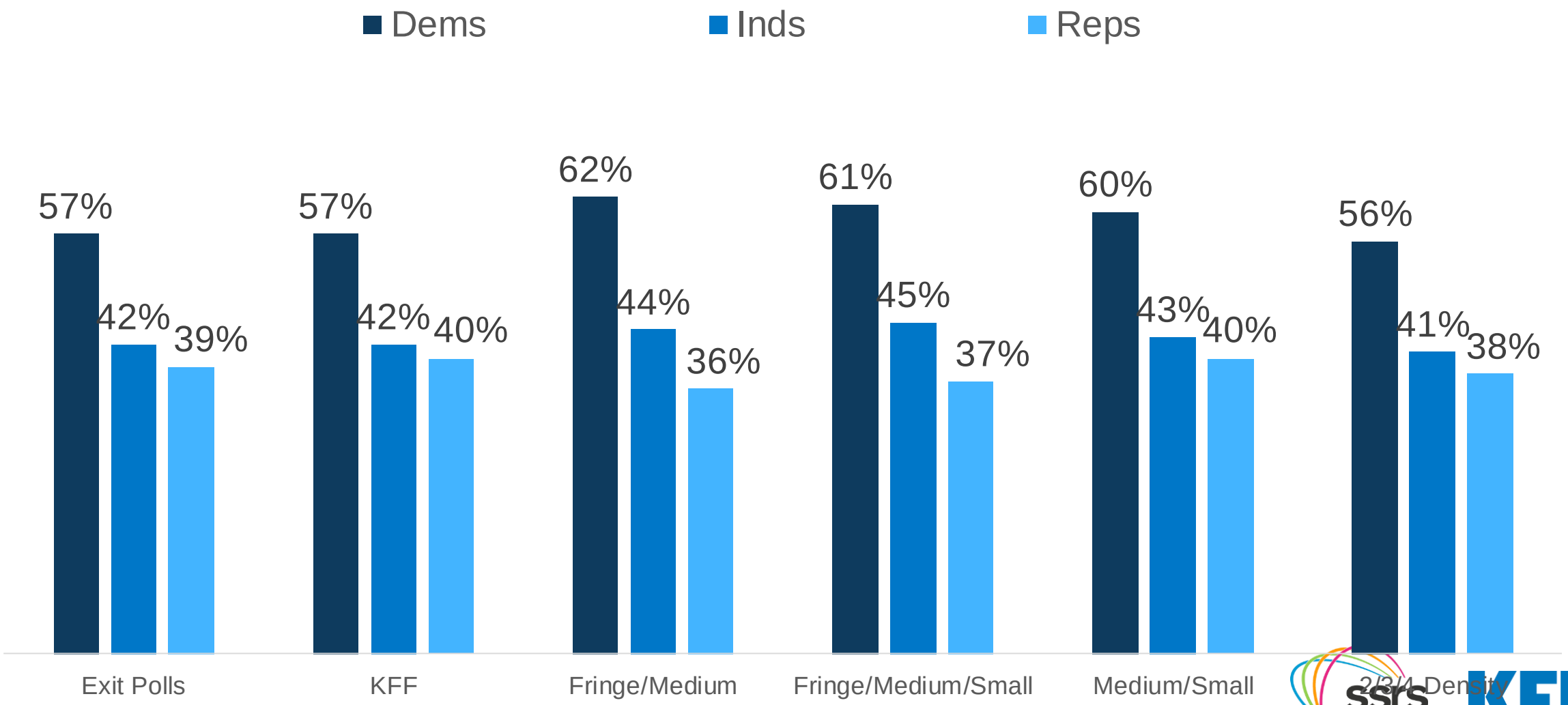


SOURCE: KFF 2018 Election Health Tracking Poll

ssrs research. refined.

KFF HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

2018 Election Data (RVs)- Share Who Say Health Care Is Very Important to Vote by Party Identification

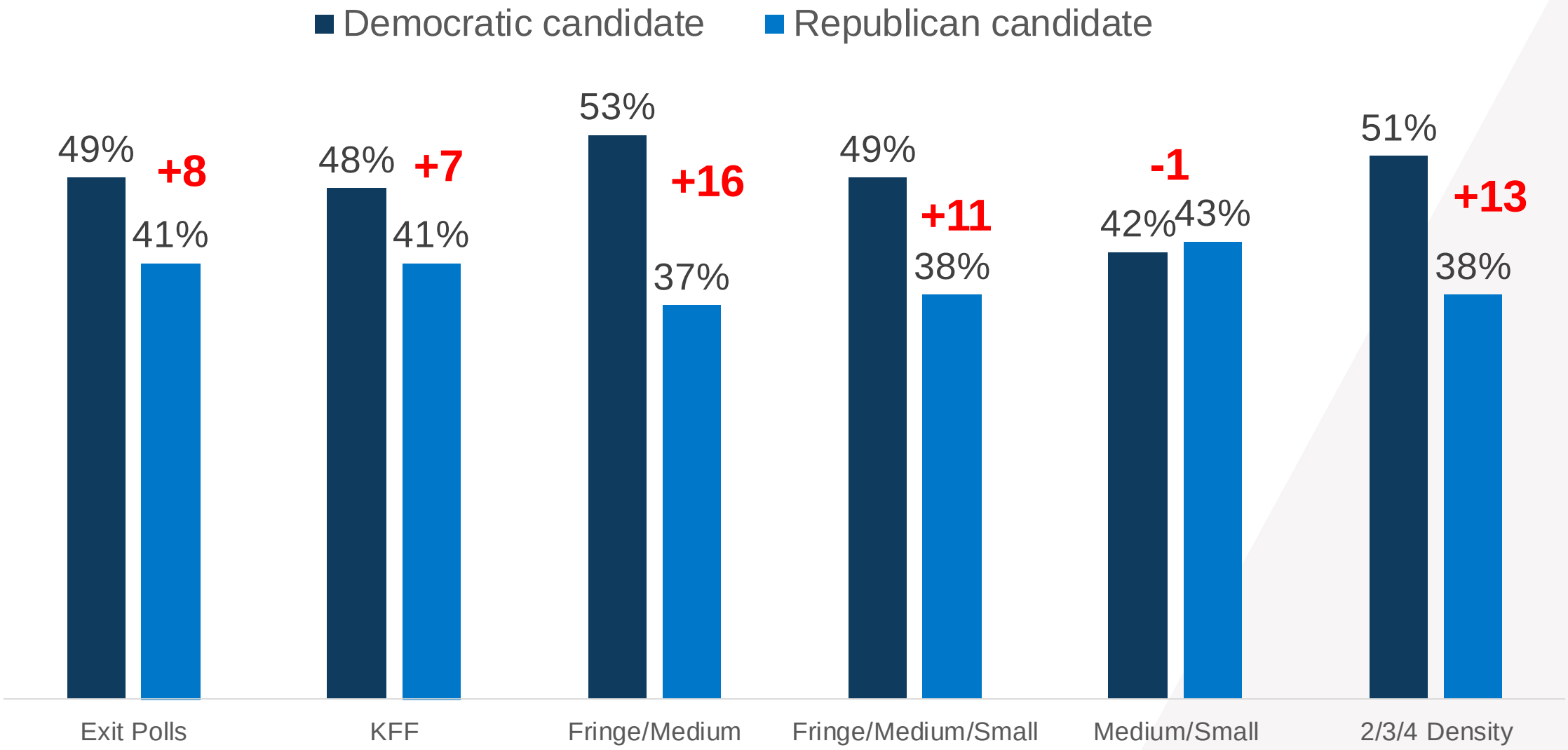


SOURCE: KFF 2018 Election Health Tracking Poll

ssrs research. refined.

KFF HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

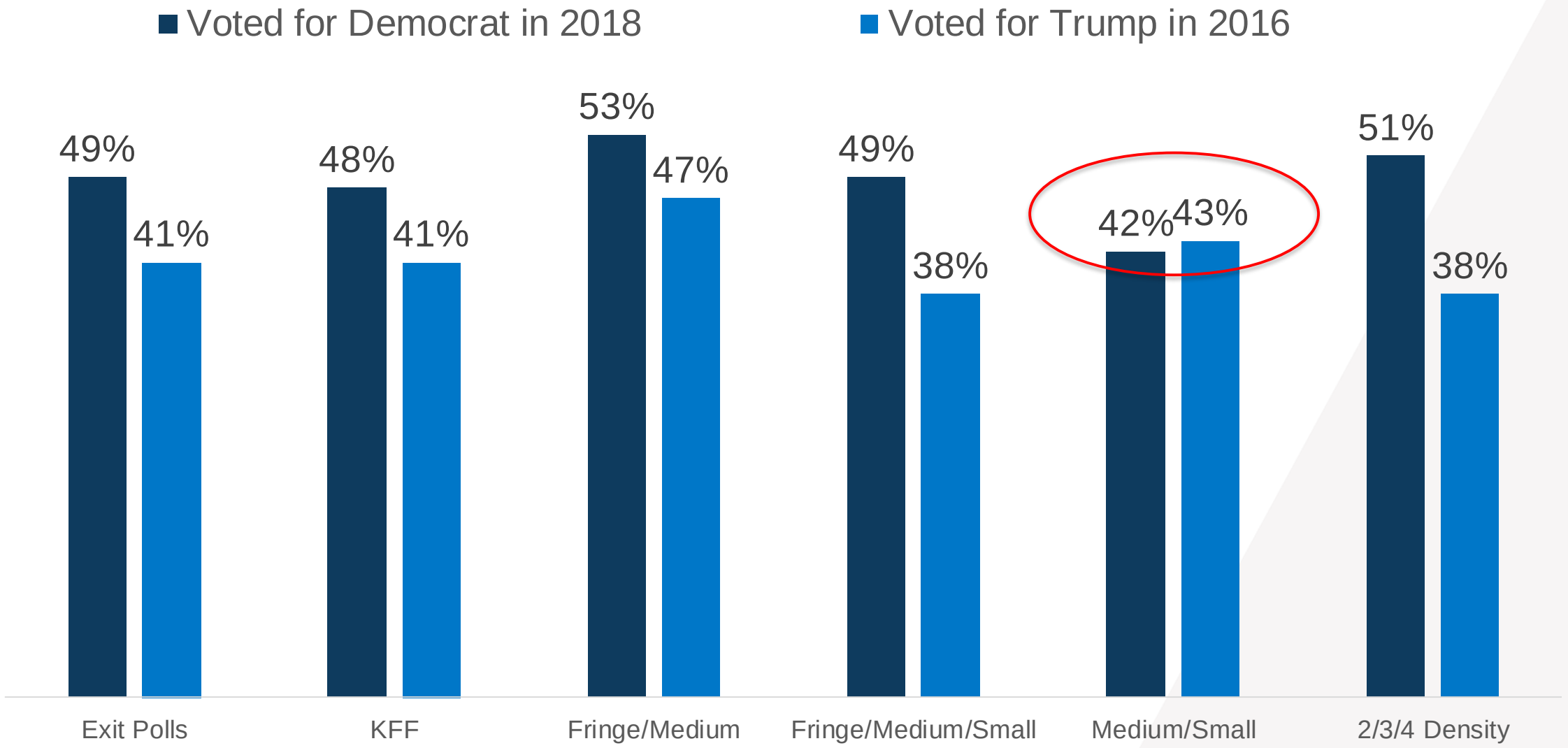
2018 Election Preference (RVs)



SOURCE: KFF 2018 Election Health Tracking Poll

KFF
HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

2016 and 2018 Election Preference (RVs)



SOURCE: KFF 2018 Election Health Tracking Poll, CBS 2016 Election Poll

KFF
HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

The role of suburbia in 2020?

ssrs research. refined.

KFF HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION

Important Things to Watch for 2020

- Election outcomes are strongly connected to population density with rural areas now reliably Republican and urban areas are overwhelmingly Democratic.

- The decisions made by researchers when deciding whom to categorize into USR groups have direct implications for the narrative.

- Always asking the question - What do pollsters, campaign surrogates, and the media mean when they talk about the “suburbs”?

ssrs research. refined.

KFF HENRY J KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION