

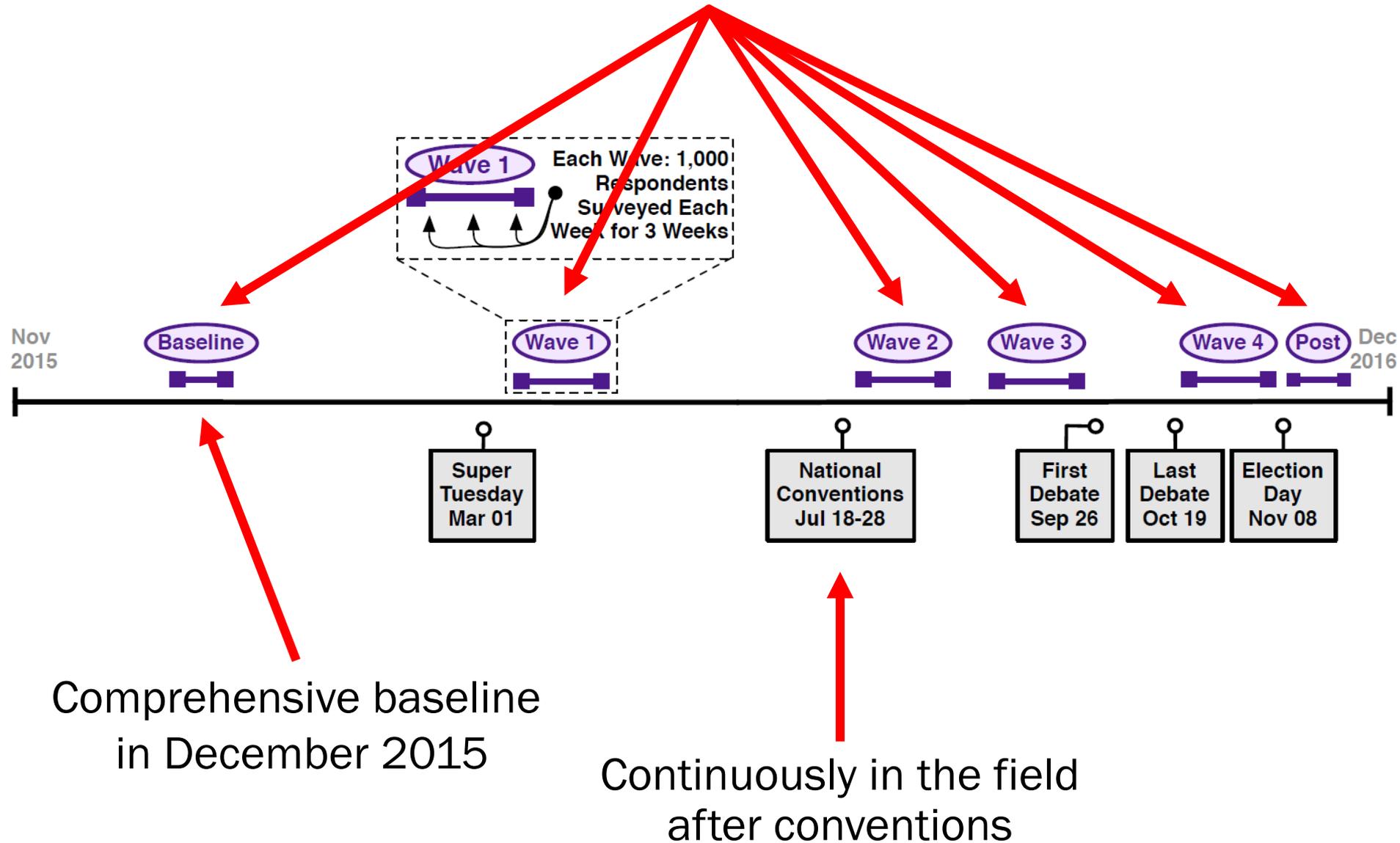
The RAND 2016 Presidential Election Panel Survey (PEPS)

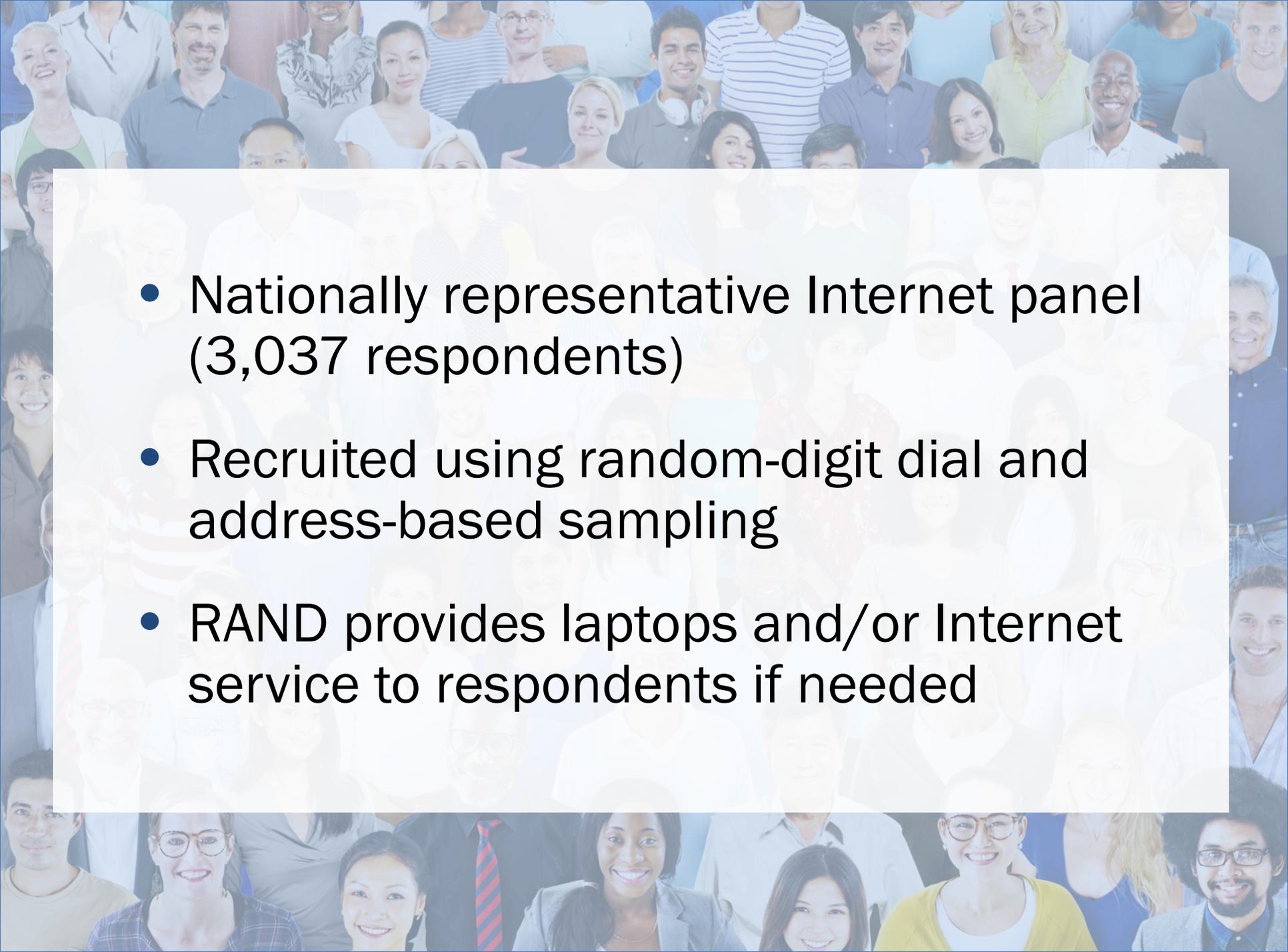
Michael Pollard, Joshua Mendelsohn, Alerk Amin

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May 14, 2016

Six surveys throughout election season



- 
- Nationally representative Internet panel (3,037 respondents)
 - Recruited using random-digit dial and address-based sampling
 - RAND provides laptops and/or Internet service to respondents if needed



Survey content developed in collaboration
with political scientists:

- John Sides of George Washington University
- Lynn Vavreck of UCLA
- Michael Tesler of UC Irvine



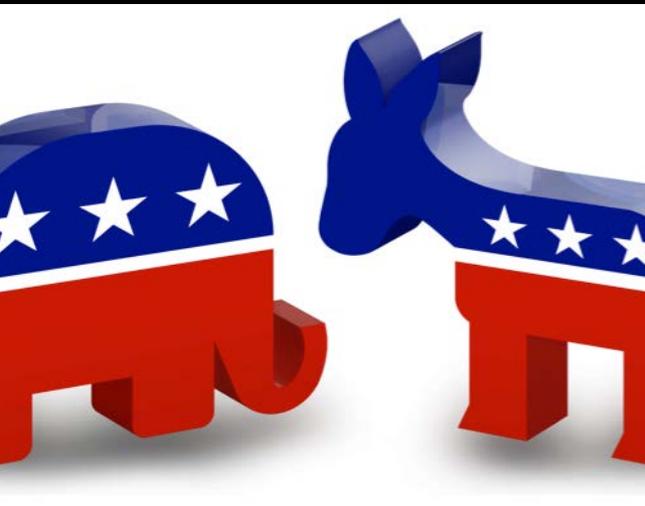
Opinions about political issues in the news



Variety of attitudes toward potential candidates



Underlying attitudes toward a range of groups



Political affiliation and prior voting behavior



Perceived traits of candidates and the respondents themselves



Voting intentions and candidate preferences

Probabilistic Polling

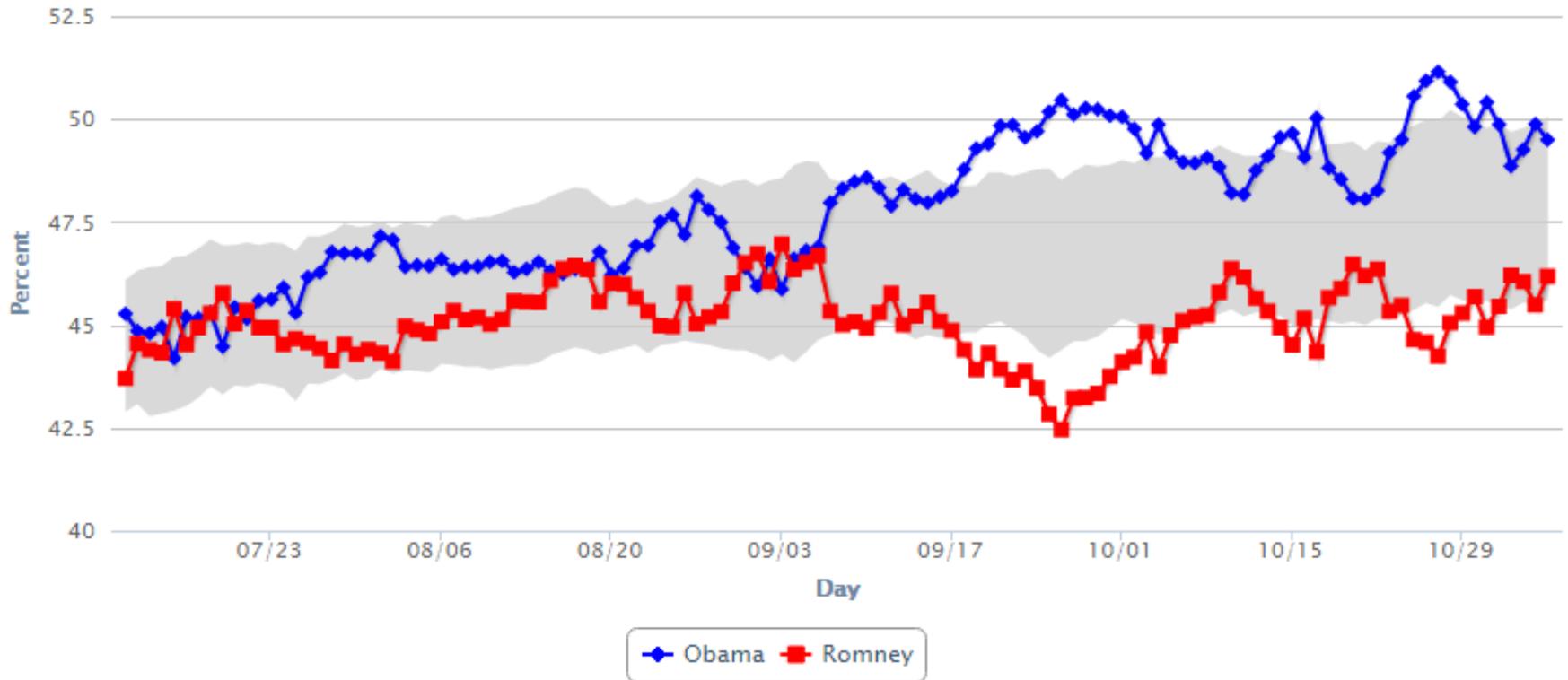
1. We'd like you to ask you to think about the upcoming Presidential election in 2016. What is the percent chance that you will vote in the Presidential election? _____%

2. If you do vote in the election, what is the percent chance that you will vote for a Democrat? And for a Republican? And for someone else? Please provide percent chances in the table below.

Democrat	_____%
Republican	_____%
Someone else	_____%
Total	_____%

2012 Presidential Election

Election Forecast



Difference in popular vote between Romney and Obama differed about one-half percentage point from final tally; one of the most accurate predictions.

Key Features

Tracks public opinion by surveying the same people over time

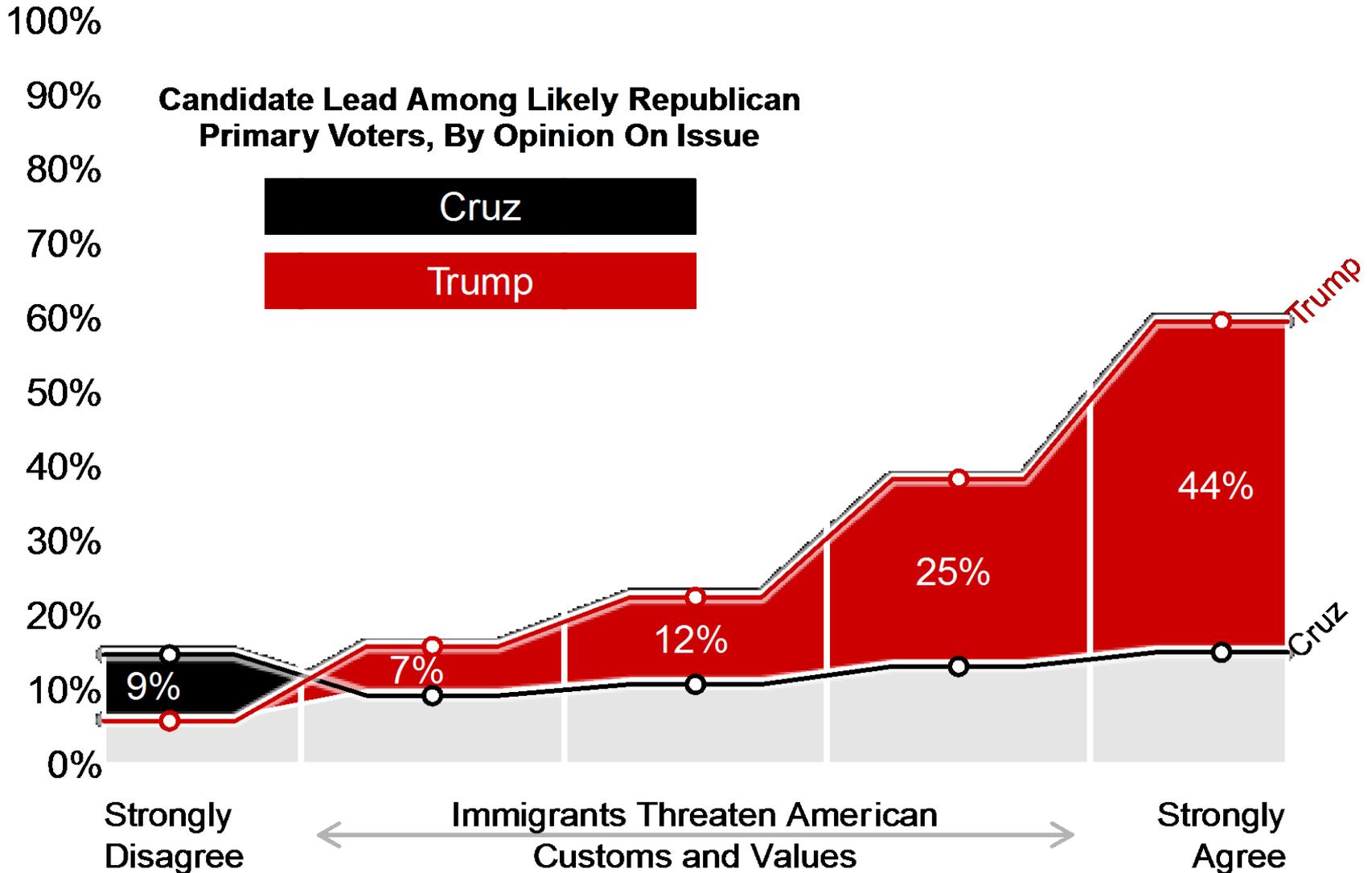
Otherwise, it is difficult to tell whether changes are the result of differences in who was surveyed

Many respondents have been surveyed since 2006, providing detailed profiles and behaviors

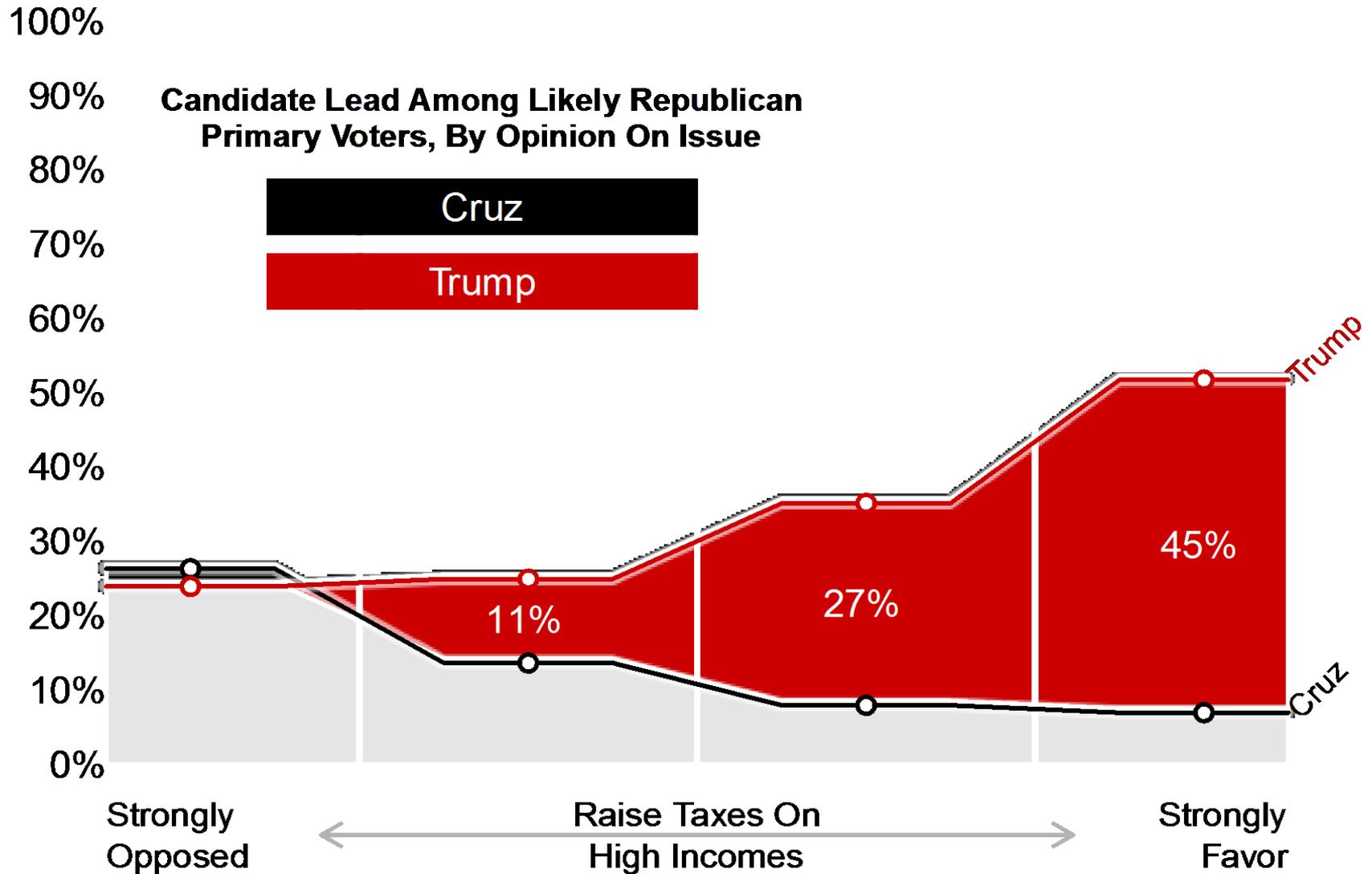


- Presidential and midterm elections
- Detailed financial and work history
- Retirement planning
- Insurance
- Health
- Savings
- Social Security
- Opinions on policy
- Quality of life

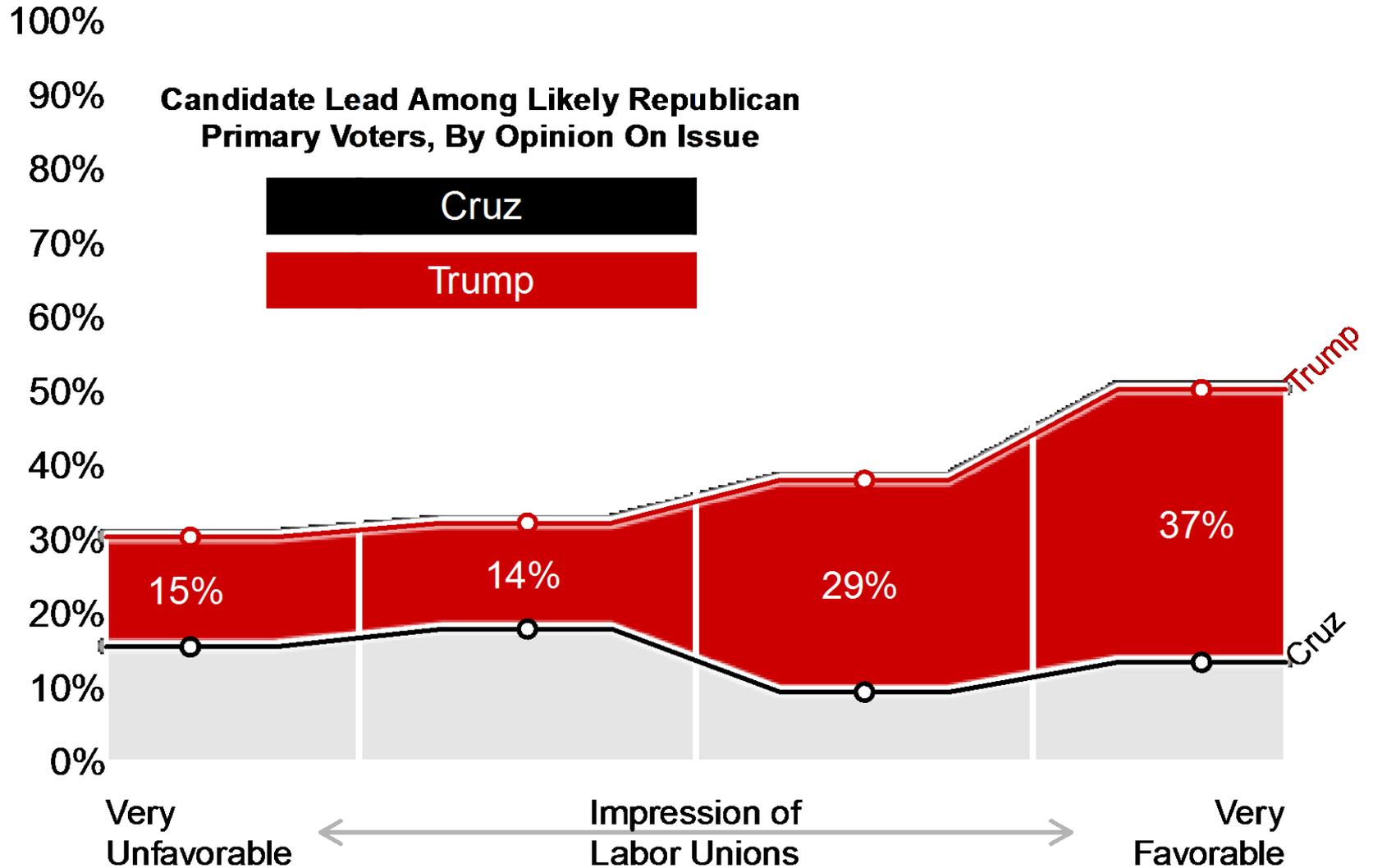
Trump Supporters: Immigration Concerns



Trump Supporters: Economically Progressive



Trump Supporters: Economically Progressive



Trump Supporters

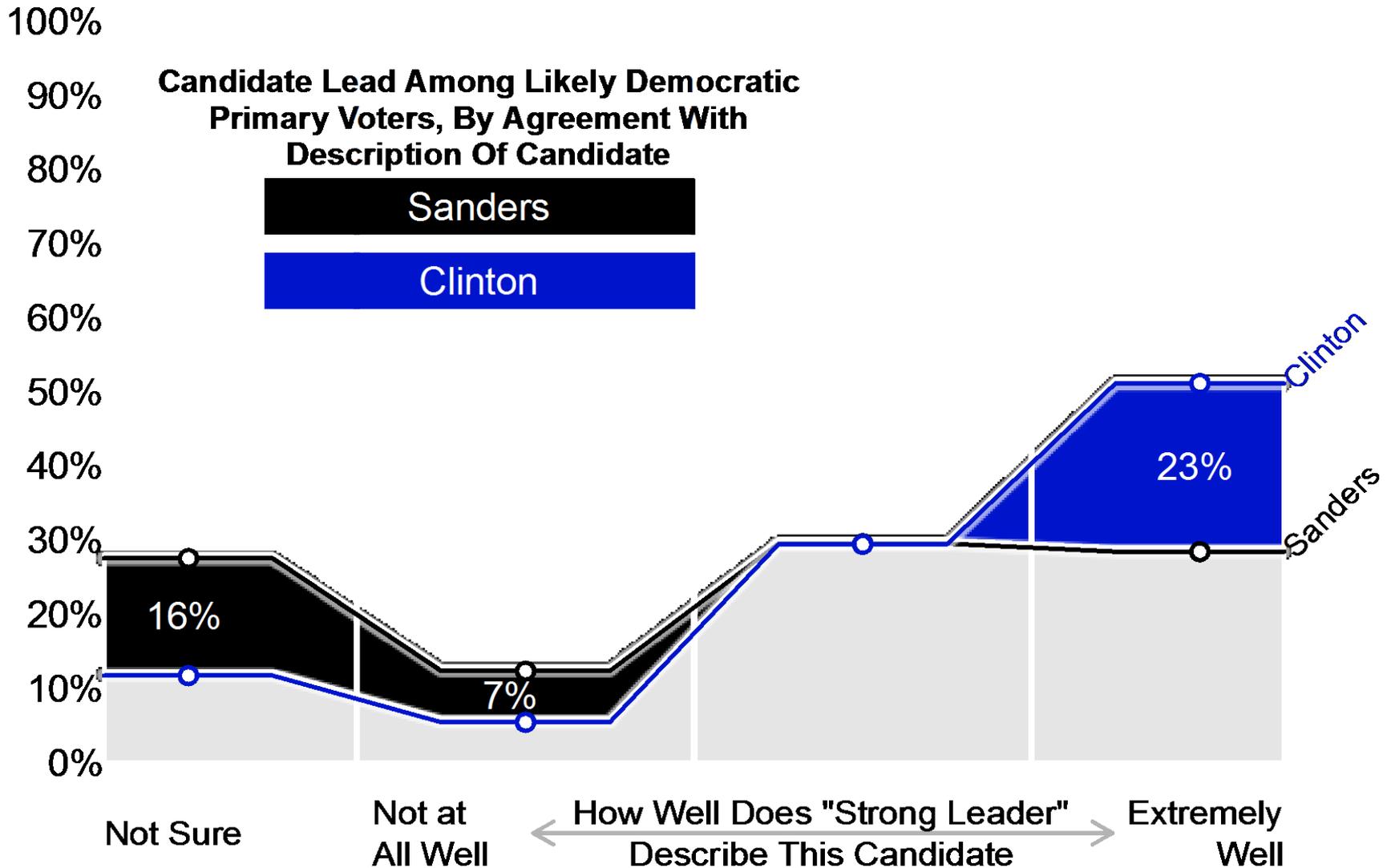
Form populist coalition uniting concern about immigrants and other groups with support for economically progressive policies

51% support tax increase

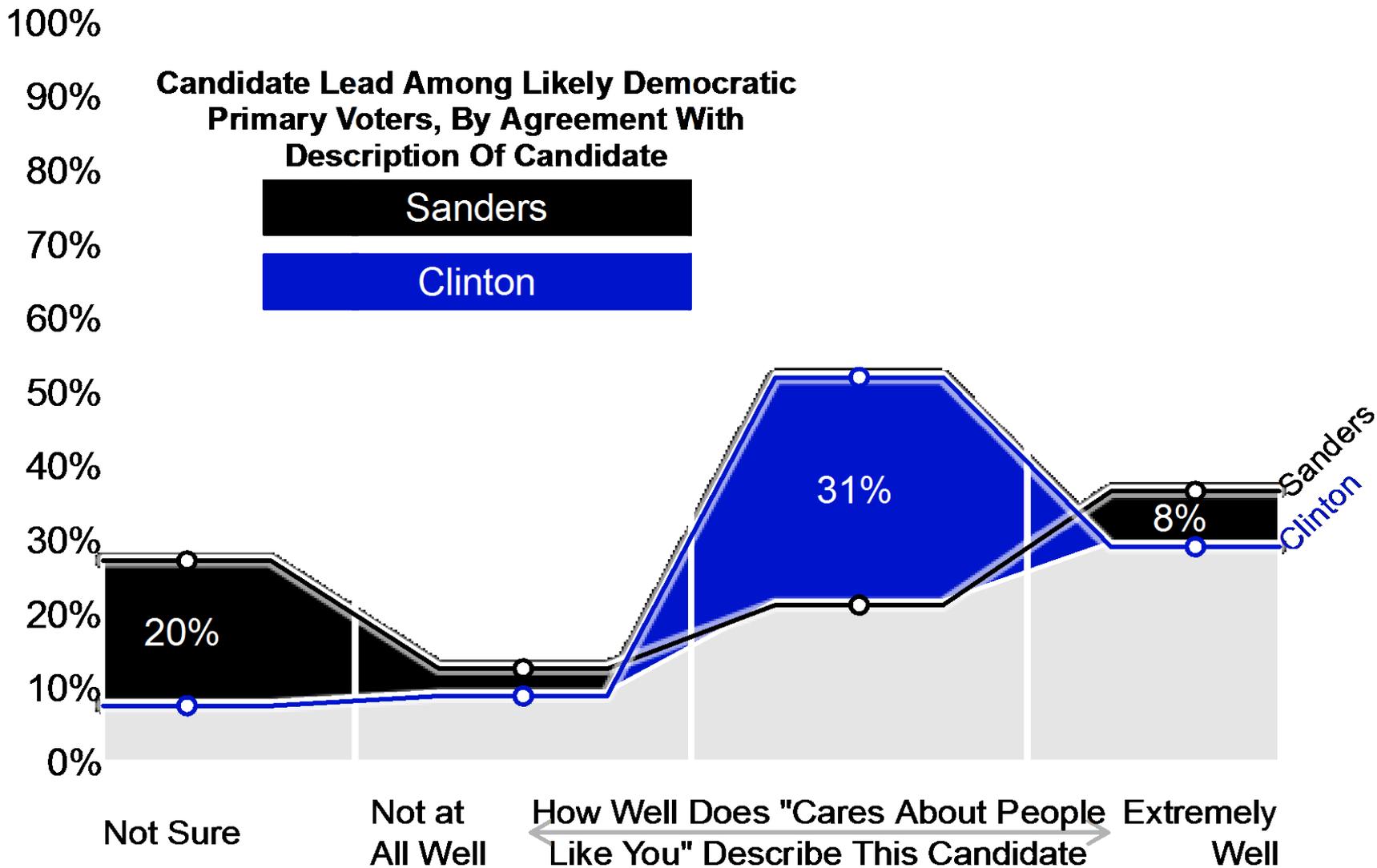
38% favor labor unions

86% more likely to prefer Trump if they agree that “people like me don’t have a say in government”

Uncertainty About Sanders: December



Uncertainty About Sanders: December



Uncertainty About Sanders Has Waned

In December, nearly 30% of Democrats “unsure” of Sanders’ characteristics, but only 10% were unsure of Clinton’s

By March the uncertainty gap had narrowed substantially, with Sanders rating higher on “cares about people like me.”

Trump vs. Clinton

Probabilistic Poll from March:

Democrat: 52.0% Republican: 40.1%

Statistically significant 12-point difference

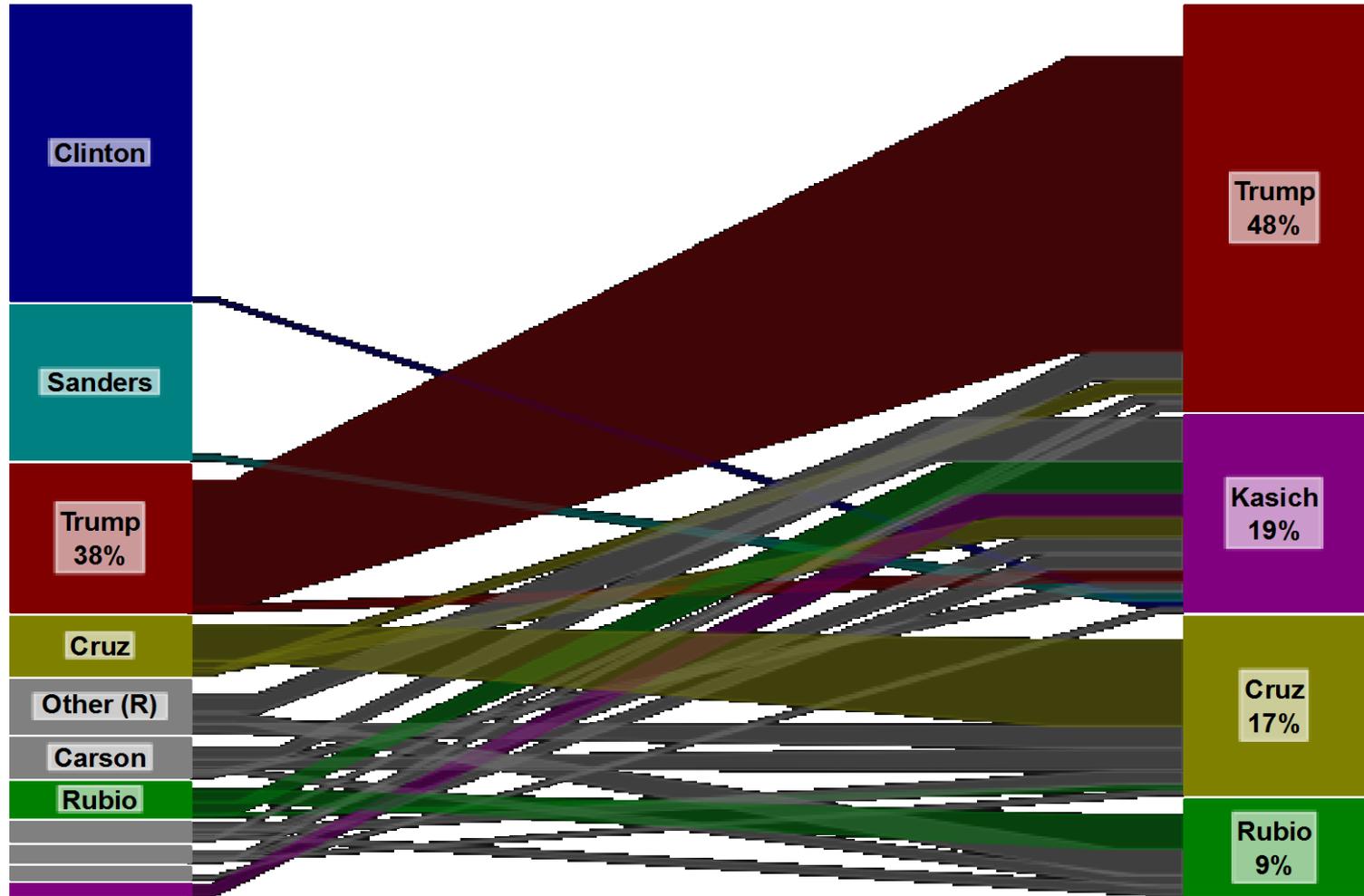
Clinton: 45.5% Trump 34.6%

Statistically significant 11-point difference.

Difference has grown since December:

Clinton: 43.2 Trump 38.6 (4.6 points)

Changes in Republican Candidate Support December 2015 to March 2016



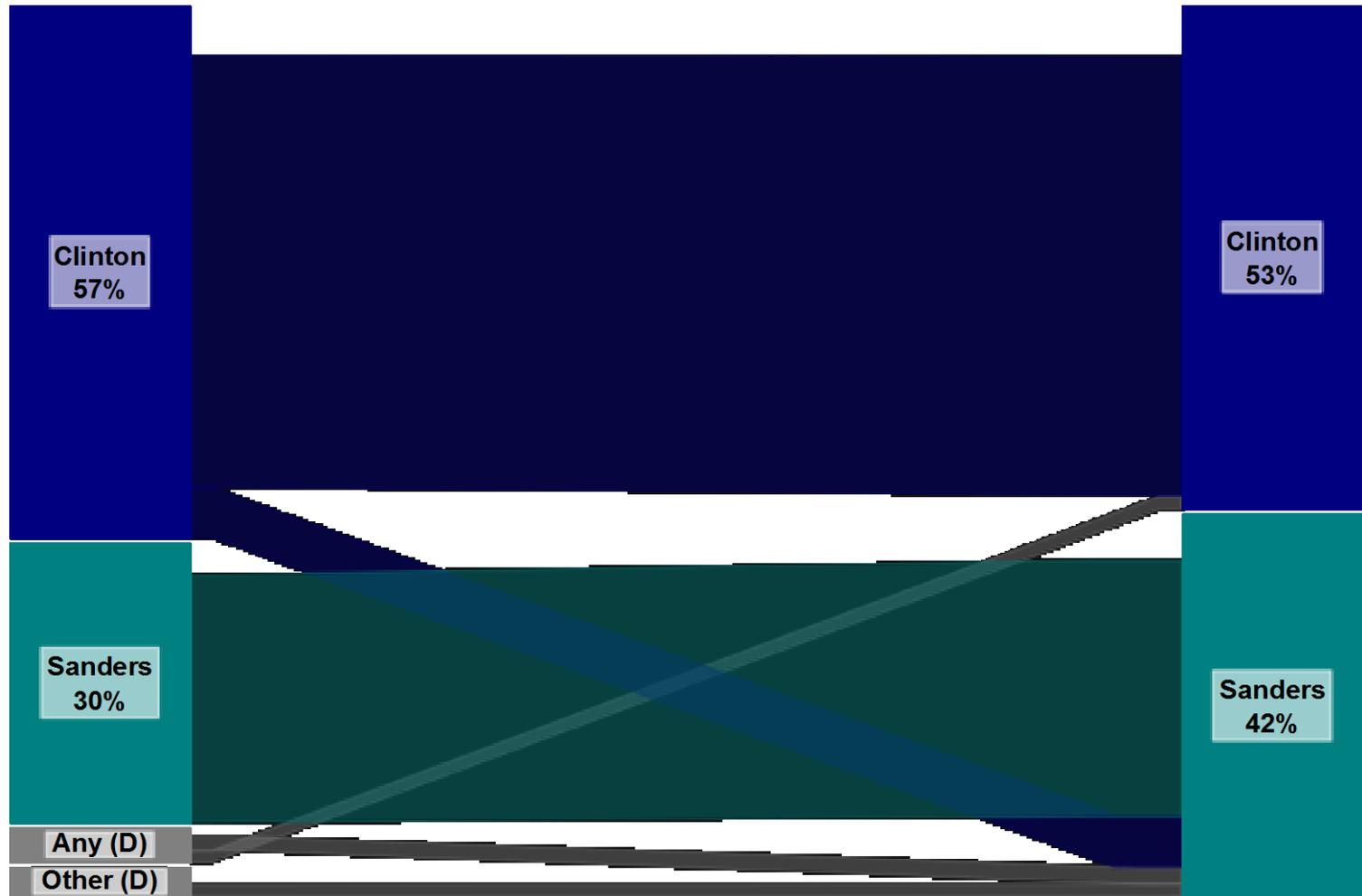
New Trump Supporters

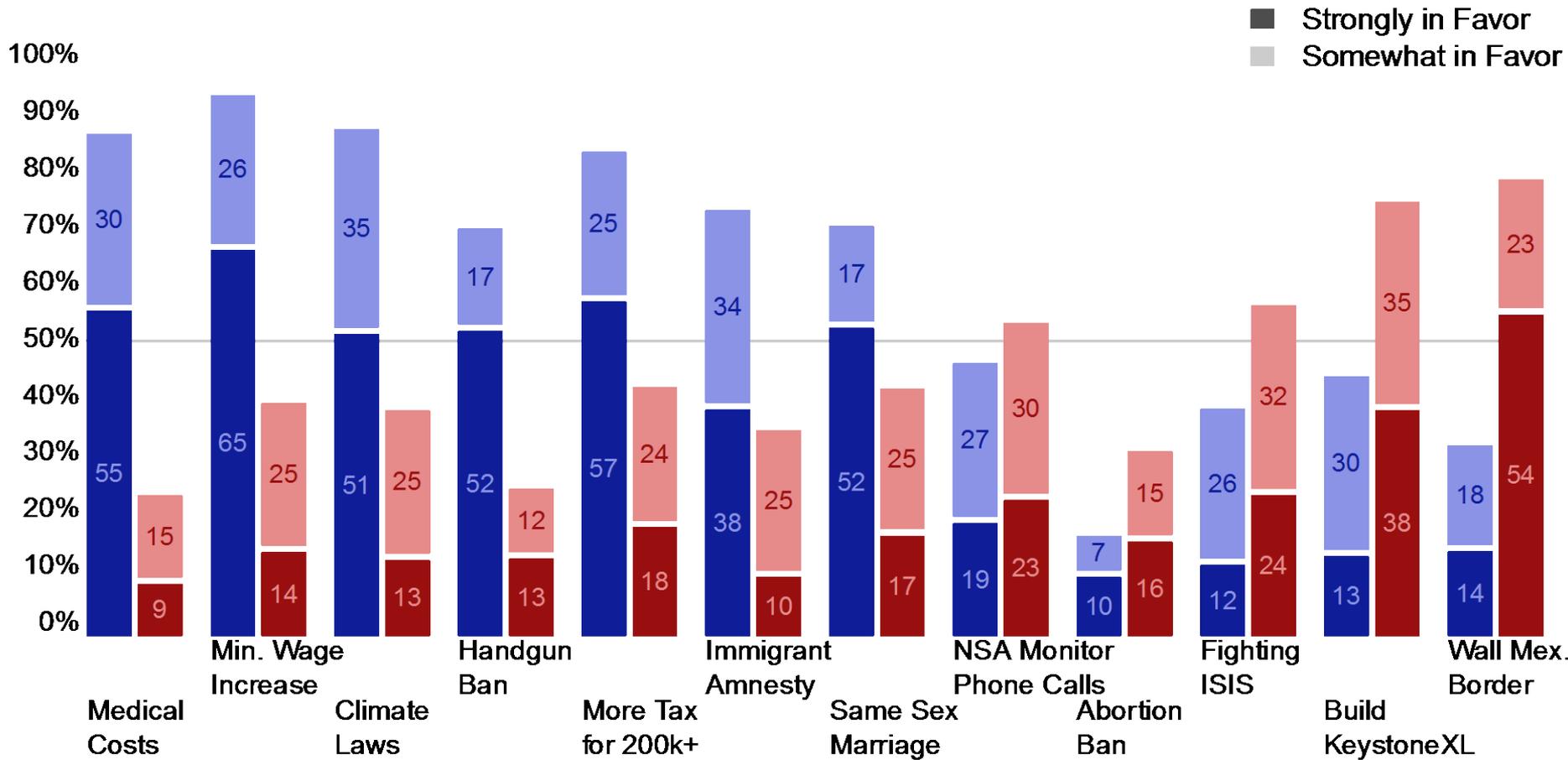
Didn't support Trump in December, but did in March

-Older, Employed, White, Born in U.S.

- Agree: “The growing number of newcomers from other countries threatens traditional American customs and values.”
- Disagree: “Women often miss out on good jobs because of discrimination.”
- Agree: Raising the federal minimum wage.
- Among those new to Republican Primaries:
lower education, higher income.

Changes in Democratic Candidate Support December 2015 to March 2016





Strongly Divided Electorate



UNIVERSITY OF
GOTHENBURG

CROSS-NATIONAL COMPARISONS OF POLLING ACCURACY

Jacob Sohlberg and Mikael Gilljam



Introduction

- Elections provide an exceptional opportunity to examine survey quality
- Recent polling controversies with several international polling failures
 - Israel, UK, Greece
- Large variability in polling accuracy across elections
 - Some elections are seemingly easier to poll than others
- Why?



Determinants of polling accuracy

- Turnout
 - With higher turnout, pollsters are less reliant on complex and difficult likely voter models
- Civil society (social capital and trust)
 - A strong civil society is associated with higher social capital and trust, which should make people more likely to participate in surveys and give honest answers
- Electoral turnover
 - Polling is more challenging when electoral support is changing, partially because post-stratification becomes more difficult
- Fairness of elections
 - When votes are bought, polling estimates are more likely to be inaccurate



Method

- Jennings and Wlezien's (2016) data
 - Polls from multiple elections in multiple countries
- Merge with data from Varieties in Democracy (V-Dem) for country-level indicators
- Polling accuracy regressed on plausible factors (with clustering on countries)



The dependent variable: Polling accuracy

- Mean absolute error of polling estimates for the two largest parties

	Polling estimate	Election result	Absolute error	Mean absolute error
Party A	45	50	5	7.5
Party B	40	30	10	

Descriptives: $n = 262$, mean = 2.87, standard deviation = 2.45

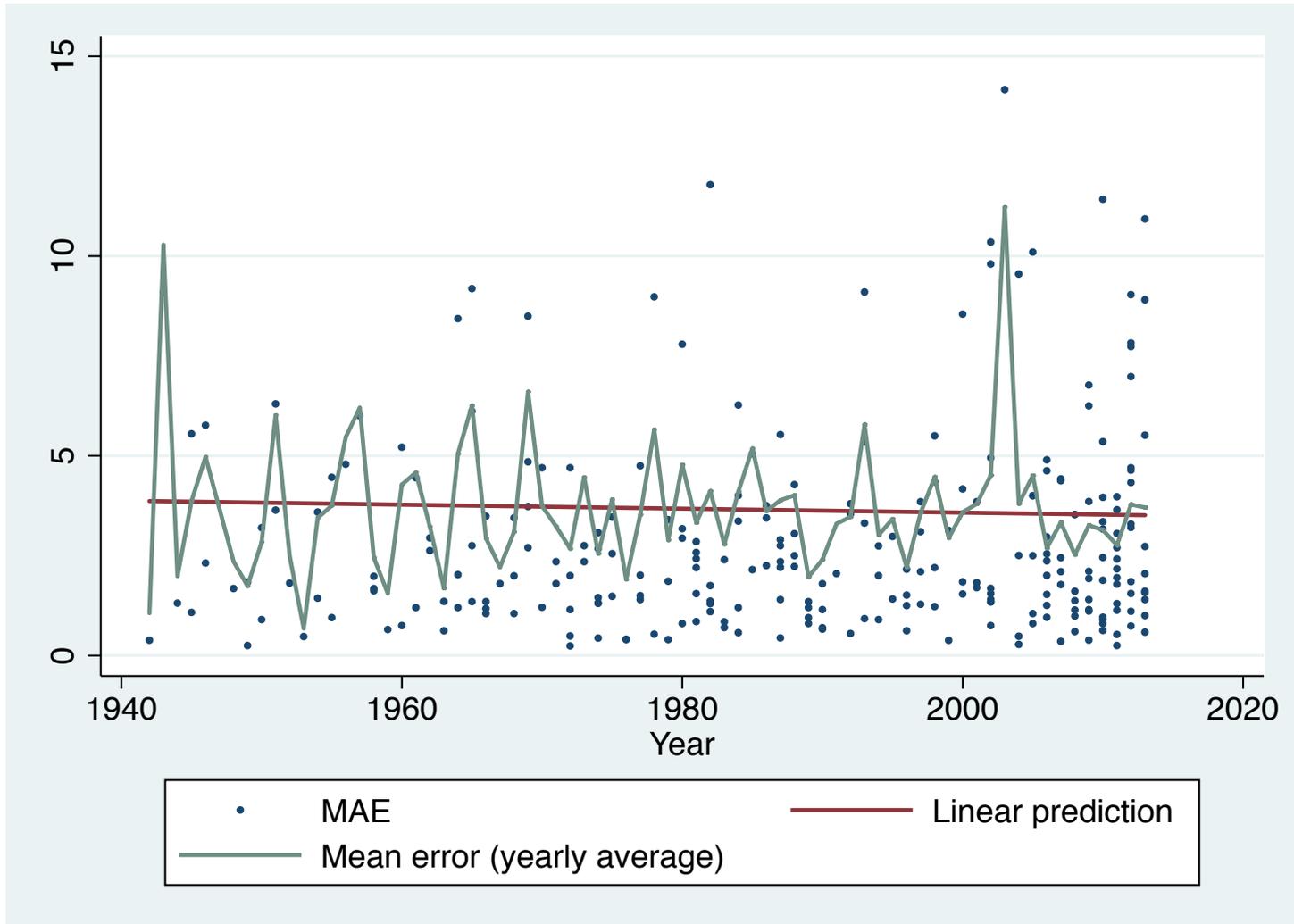


Determinants of polling accuracy

	1	2	3	4	5
Turnout	-.033 (.016)				-.010 (.012)
Civil society (social capital and trust)		-9.750 (4.08)			-4.698 (4.819)
Electoral turnover			.161 (.056)		.123 (.059)
Vote buying				-.639 (.181)	-.314 (.163)
R-squared	0.034	0.088	0.102	0.078	0.159
N	240	251	246	251	227
Countries	39	39	33	39	31



Change in accuracy over time? No evidence of this





Conclusion

- Results from bivariate regression suggest that it is easier to conduct accurate polling in elections where:
 - Turnout is high
 - Civil society is strong
 - Electoral stability is high
 - Vote buying is low
- Only the effect of electoral turmoil is statistically significant in the multivariate analysis
 - Pollsters should be more cautious in interpreting results when support for candidates and parties are in flux

RATIONAL GIVING?

MEASURING THE EFFECT OF
PUBLIC OPINION POLLS ON
CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

DAN CASSINO, FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON
UNIVERSITY'S PUBLICMIND

LARGE AND SMALL CONTRIBUTIONS

In the contributions reported to the FEC for 2012, there were more than 1.7 million contributions of less than \$250, totaling \$105 million. This was more than the total amount given in contributions of \$2,500 or more, which totaled \$103.3 million.

More than half a million Americans gave \$200 or more to one of the Presidential candidates

But this still is less than $\frac{1}{4}$ of 1 percent of the population, though a much more representative portion than in the past

In this cycle, Bernie Sanders has consistently outraised Hillary Clinton among small donors – but why?

WHY DO PEOPLE GIVE MONEY?

The main determinant of giving money is having money, though even the very wealthy don't give at high rates

Even interest in politics doesn't seem to matter

Contributions seem to form a distinct dimension of political behavior

Past research shows differential strategies by contributors (hesitancy vs. loyalty based), and by the candidate (frontrunners vs. back of the pack)

Also differences in the demand side of the contributions: big donors solicited personally, small donors through cold calls, mass emails or mailings, or, increasingly, not at all

MEDIA EFFECTS AND RATIONALITY

Dominance of horserace coverage

Different media sources provide ideological and non-ideological cues

Cues may also differ in what they reveal about electability

If large and small donors are responding to different cues, could lead to differences in influence.

2012 REPUBLICAN PRIMARY

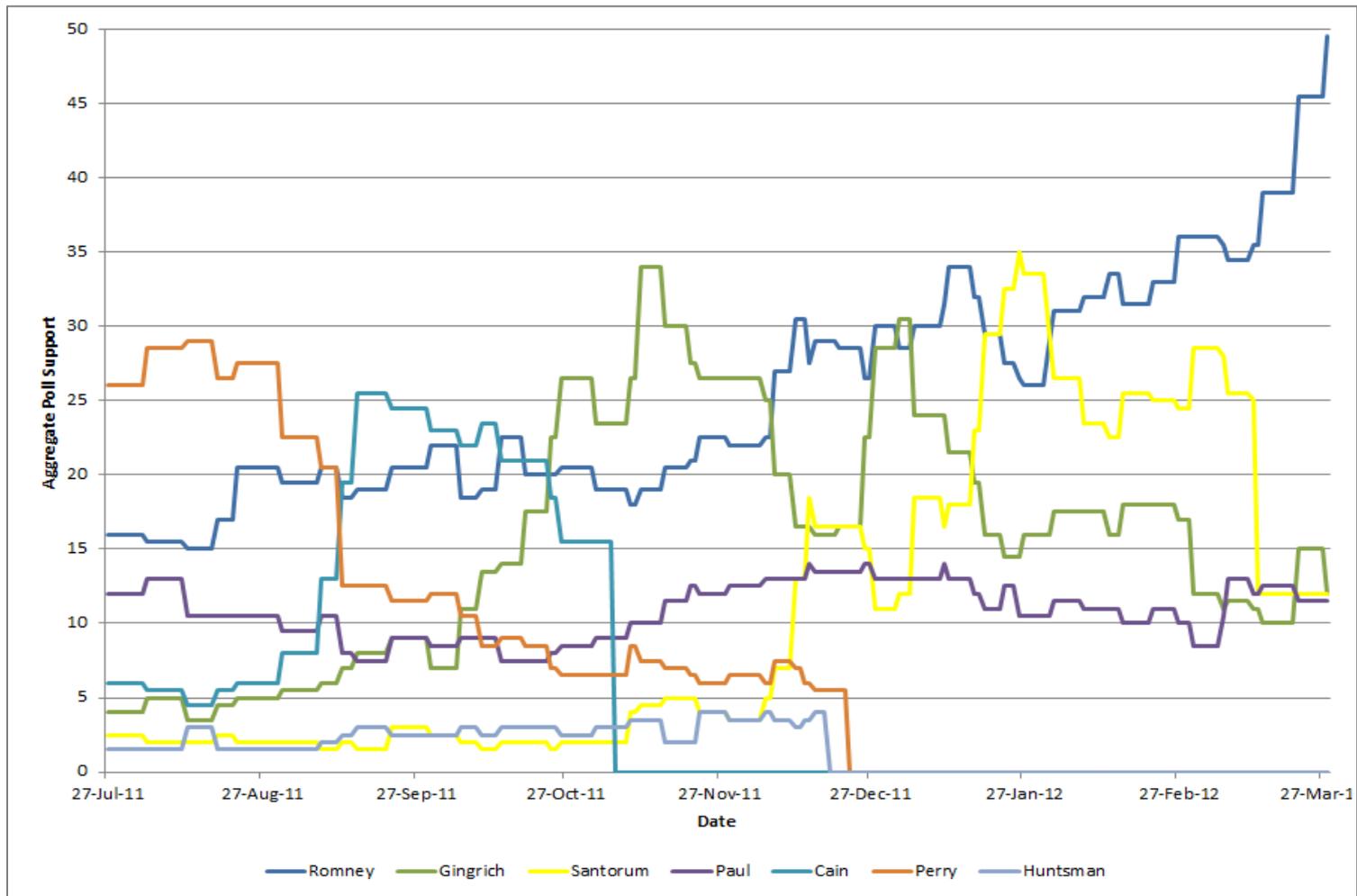
Lots of public opinion data – up to 5 national polls in a single day, with an average of 1.2 polls per day

8 major candidates, 5 of whom (Romney, Perry, Cain, Gingrich and Santorum) led at some point during the race (this paper doesn't include Bachmann, does include Huntsman and Paul).

Analysis pools the non-Romney candidates

Even outside of the top two candidates at any point during the primary, the other candidates totaled an average of 25 percent support

UNUSUALLY DYNAMIC RACE



DATA USED HERE

For Media Coverage: Media Tenor human coded content analysis of Evening News Broadcasts on ABC, CBS and NBC, as well as Fox News' Special Report, nightly, from August 5, 2011 until April 25, 2012

For Candidate Support: Averaged Gallup and YouGov results

For Campaign Finance: 3.2 million contributions to the 2012 Presidential Candidates from FEC data (divided into four categories based on size of contribution)

HYPOTHESES

- 1. Large contributions to Romney should increase when he is threatened in the polls.**
- 2. Small contributions to candidates should increase in response to positive coverage on Fox News.**
- 3. Large contributions to non-Romney candidates should increase in response to positive coverage in the non-ideological media.**
- 4. Among non-Romney candidates, contributions from large donors should increase in response to increases in poll numbers.**

ANALYSIS DETAILS

Pooled non-Romney candidates, corrected for artificially large sample size

Tobit regression, so some assumptions necessary

Time series element: doesn't show any significant deviation from stationarity, nor signs of fractional integration

Includes 1 week trend in polling results as a measure of candidate momentum

Coverage pooled for three days

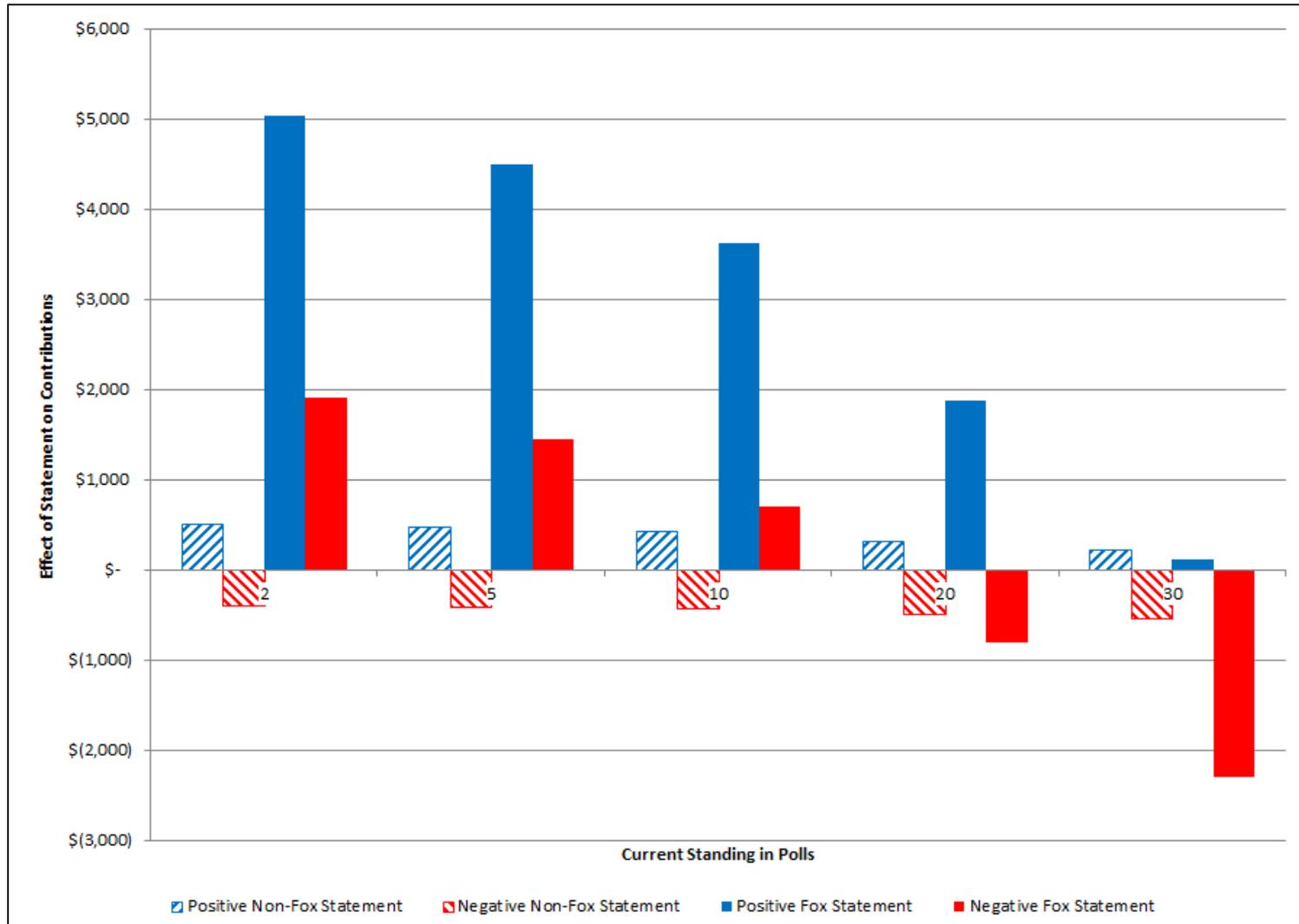
Also includes interaction of media coverage with standing in polls

Eight separate models: one each for four categories of contributions, Romney and non-Romney

OBLIGATORY REGRESSION TABLE I

Predictor	<i>Contributions of \$250 or less</i>				<i>Contributions of \$251-\$1749</i>			
	Beta	Std Error	t	P	Beta	Std Error	t	P
7 Day Trend in Polls	40.55	159.02	0.25	0.40	492.08	320.49	1.54	0.06
Aggregate Poll Standing	1379.69	239.29	5.77	0.00	2006.81	223.56	8.98	0.00
Non-Fox Positive Statements	541.49	541.49	0.59	0.28	1174.39	1041.55	1.13	0.13
Non-Fox Negative Statements	-374.49	567.66	-0.66	0.26	1017.31	759.10	1.34	0.09
Fox Positive Statements	5384.58	2560.94	2.10	0.02	5391.49	2556.62	2.11	0.02
Fox Negative Statements	2203.94	1034.65	2.13	0.02	-726.01	1402.05	-0.52	0.30
<i>Interactions with Aggregate Standing in Polls</i>								
Non-Fox Positive Statements	-10.68	34.12	-0.31	0.38	-23.71	46.58	-0.51	0.31
Non-Fox Negative Statements	-5.39	25.55	-0.21	0.42	-80.35	43.90	-1.83	0.03
Fox Positive Statements	-175.59	94.04	-1.87	0.03	-167.74	109.54	-1.53	0.06
Fox Negative Statements	-150.28	46.93	-3.20	0.00	67.84	93.65	0.72	0.23
Constant	-13629.71	3399.05	-4.01	0.00	-16066.57	2876.51	-5.59	0.00

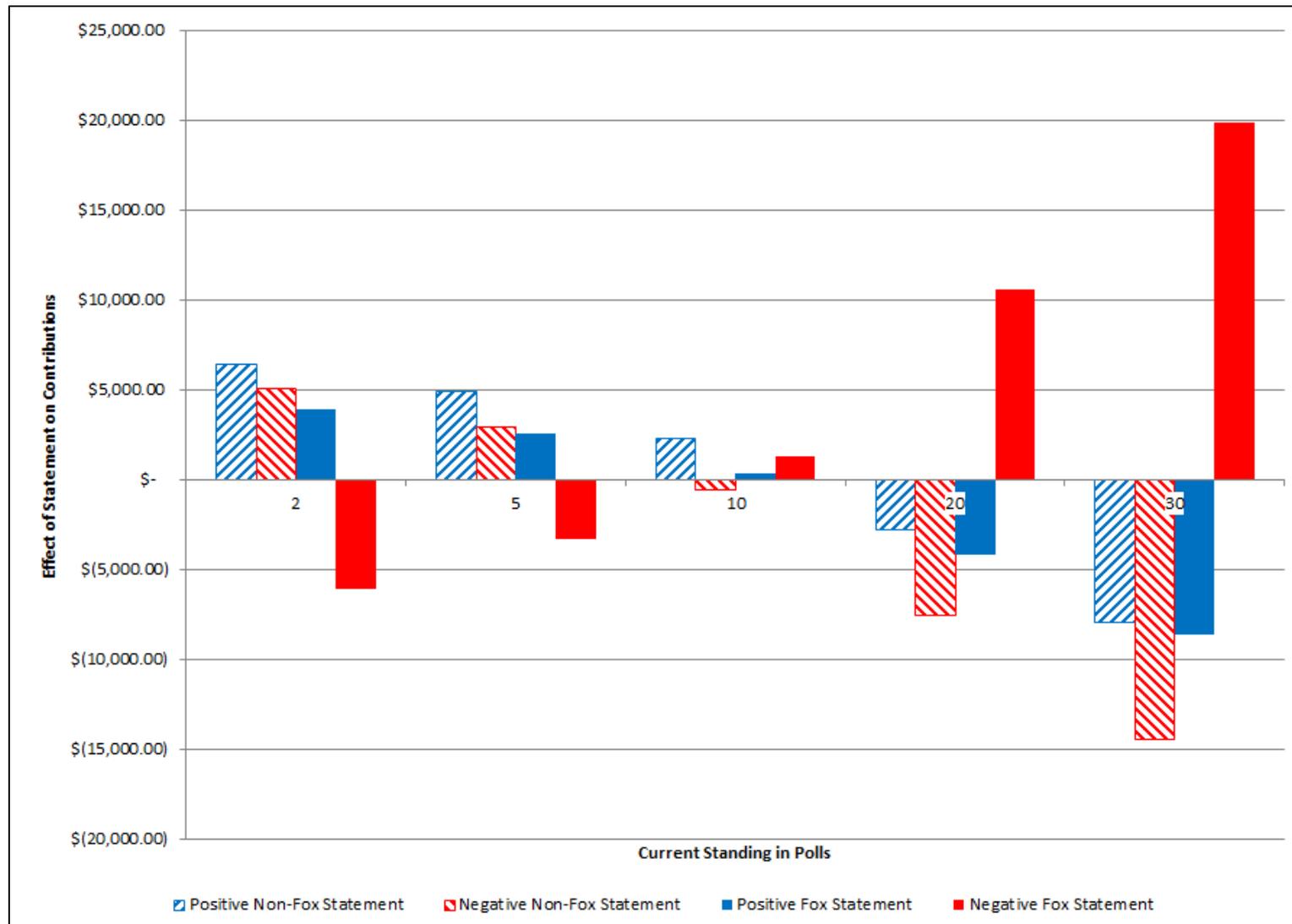
EFFECTS OF MEDIA STATEMENTS ON SMALL CONTRIBUTIONS, NON-ROMNEY



OBLIGATORY REGRESSION TABLE II

Predictor	<i>Contributions of \$1750-\$2499</i>				<i>Contributions of \$2500 or more</i>			
	Beta	Std Error	t	P	Beta	Std Error	t	P
7 Day Trend in Polls	-39.13	92.53	-0.42	0.67	2266.83	1711.02	1.32	0.09
Aggregate Poll Standing	493.21	48.02	10.27	0.00	8218.21	1643.90	5.00	0.00
Non-Fox Positive Statements	92.80	204.54	0.45	0.65	7516.66	2697.71	2.79	0.00
Non-Fox Negative Statements	794.75	278.87	2.85	0.00	6468.83	3527.78	1.83	0.03
Fox Positive Statements	1134.12	416.28	2.72	0.01	4860.98	4275.89	1.14	0.13
Fox Negative Statements	-1219.97	556.33	-2.19	0.03	-7942.27	6534.70	-1.22	0.11
<i>Interactions with Aggregate Standing in Polls</i>								
Non-Fox Positive Statements	-3.34	9.87	-0.34	0.74	-515.15	177.56	-2.90	0.00
Non-Fox Negative Statements	-46.60	14.81	-3.15	0.00	-697.55	261.69	-2.67	0.00
Fox Positive Statements	-49.69	18.79	-2.64	0.01	-450.67	232.12	-1.94	0.03
Fox Negative Statements	64.86	30.36	2.14	0.03	927.49	494.93	1.87	0.03
Constant	-10316.68	1053.48	-9.79	0.00	-117150.70	25881.54	-4.53	0.00

EFFECTS OF MEDIA STATEMENTS ON LARGE CONTRIBUTIONS, NON-ROMNEY



WHAT'S GOING ON?

For Trailing Candidates

If a candidate is at 2 percent in the polls, a positive statement on Fox is worth a bit more than \$5,000 extra in small donations, and even a negative statement is worth about \$1,900 dollars in small donations.

Large donations increase for candidates polling at 2 percent increase if they're at all mentioned on the non-Fox broadcasts, to the tune of about \$6,500 in large donations for a positive mention and \$5,100 for a negative mention

Fox coverage has the expected impact on large donations to these candidates, increasing with positive mentions (by about \$4,000 per day), and declining by about \$6,000 for a negative mention

WHAT'S GOING ON?

For Leading Candidates

For a candidate polling at 20 percent, a negative statement on Fox reduces expected small donations by about \$800 a day for three days; for a candidate at 30 percent, the same negative statement costs about \$2,300 per day

Positive coverage on Fox doesn't help these candidates nearly as much: a positive statement on Fox is worth half as much to a candidate at 20 percent as it is to a candidate at 10 percent, and is worth almost nothing if the candidate is at 30 percent.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

For Romney

The better Romney was doing in the polls, the more money he brought in, especially from large donors, and declines in those numbers led large donors to give even more: a three point drop over the course of a week led big contributors to chip in an extra \$16,000 a day in contributions, while not impacting small donor behavior at all.

IMPLICATIONS

Small donors paying more attention to ideological (Fox) media

Small donors pay attention to standing in the polls – but not the vector of support

Large donors not terribly responsive to coverage on Fox

Large donors responsive to support and vector of support

**Large donors exhibit loyalty-based contributions –
Republican invisible primary?**