AMERICAN GOVERNMENT IN THE 21ST CENTURY

2023 EDITION

SPONSORED BY GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
AND THE SOCIETY OF PRESIDENTIAL POLLSTERS

PRESENTED BY MARK J. PENN

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

This survey was conducted online within the United States from September 8 – 11, 2023 among **2,001** registered voters by HarrisX.

The margin of error is +/- 2.2 percentage points.

Results were weighted for age, gender, region, race/ethnicity, income, education, political party, and political ideology where necessary to align them with their actual proportions in the population.

KEY FINDINGS



After several years of stagnation, confidence in the Presidency, Supreme Court, and Congress has dropped.



Concerns over presidential authority and improper use of executive power have increased under the Biden Administration.



Voters are passionate about free speech and want the government to strengthen this First Amendment right instead of cracking down on misinformation and implementing restrictions.



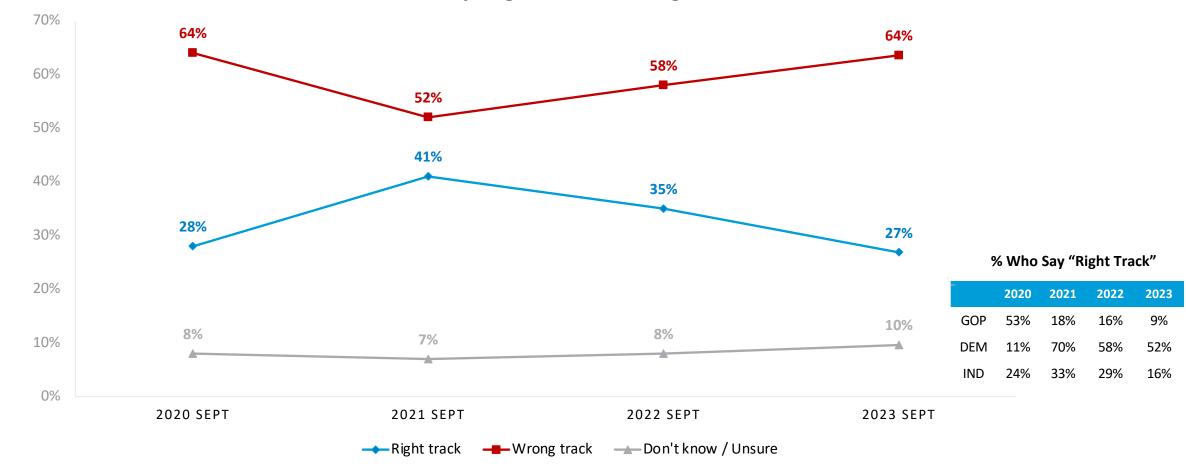
Most voters say that institutions are increasingly becoming politicized and that our nation's leaders prioritize party loyalty over the national interest.



The breakdown of bipartisanship in the U.S. political system is intensifying, and voters believe drawing the best ideas from both parties is critical to restoring balance.

THE DIRECTION OF THE COUNTRY HAS GONE FURTHER UNDERWATER SINCE LAST YEAR

Country: Right Track / Wrong Track

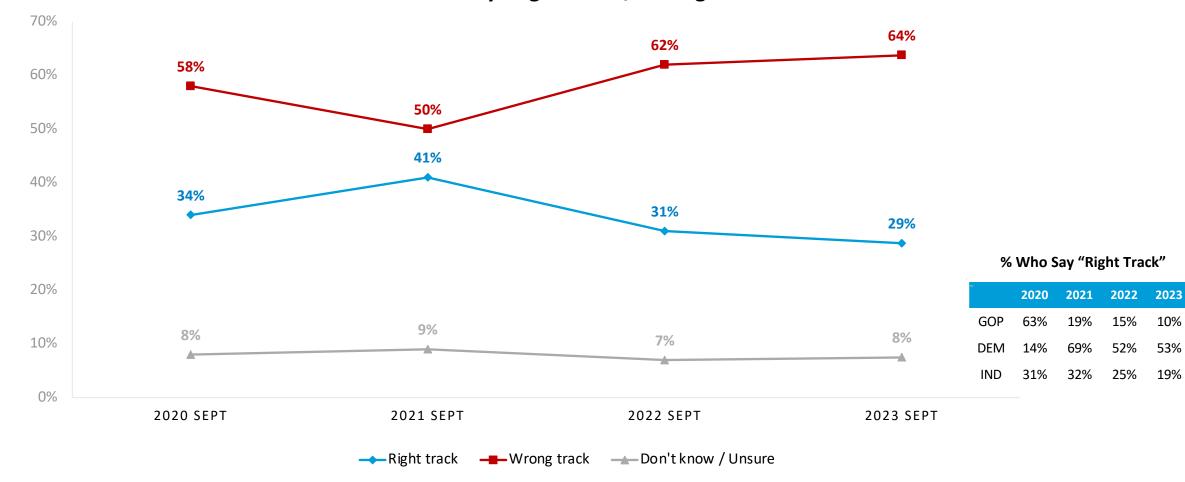


Base: Registered Voters (September 2020 n=1,907; September 2021 n=1,803; September 2022 n=1,851; September 2023 n=2,001)

M1: In general, do you think the country is on the right track or is it off on the wrong track?

THE DIRECTION OF THE ECONOMY HAS SUNK FURTHER UNDERWATER AS WELL

U.S. Economy: Right Track / Wrong Track



Base: Registered Voters (September 2020 n=1,907; September 2021 n=1,803; September 2022 n=1,851; September 2023 n=2,001) M2: In general, do you think the American economy is on the right track or is it off on the wrong track?

53%

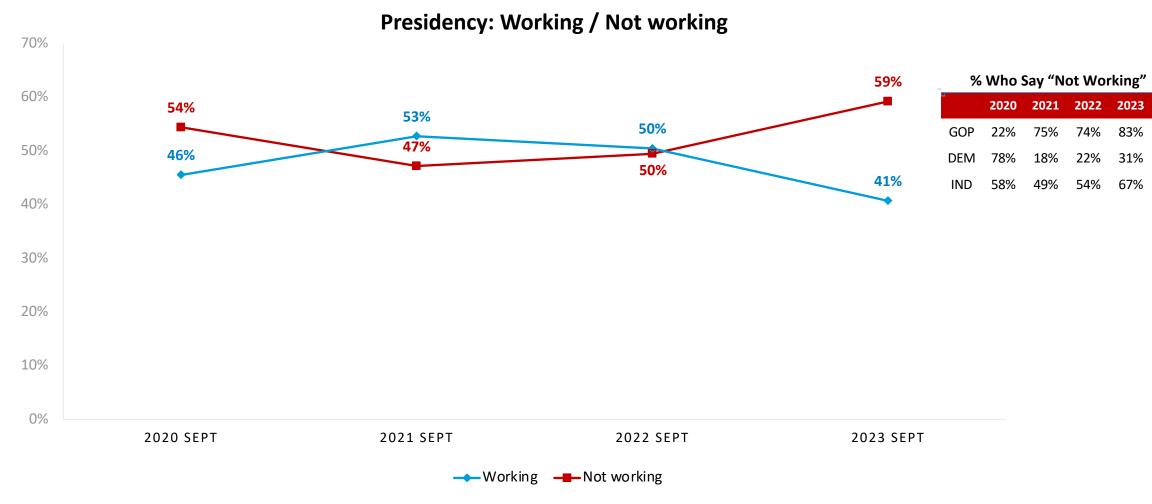
19%

15%

52%

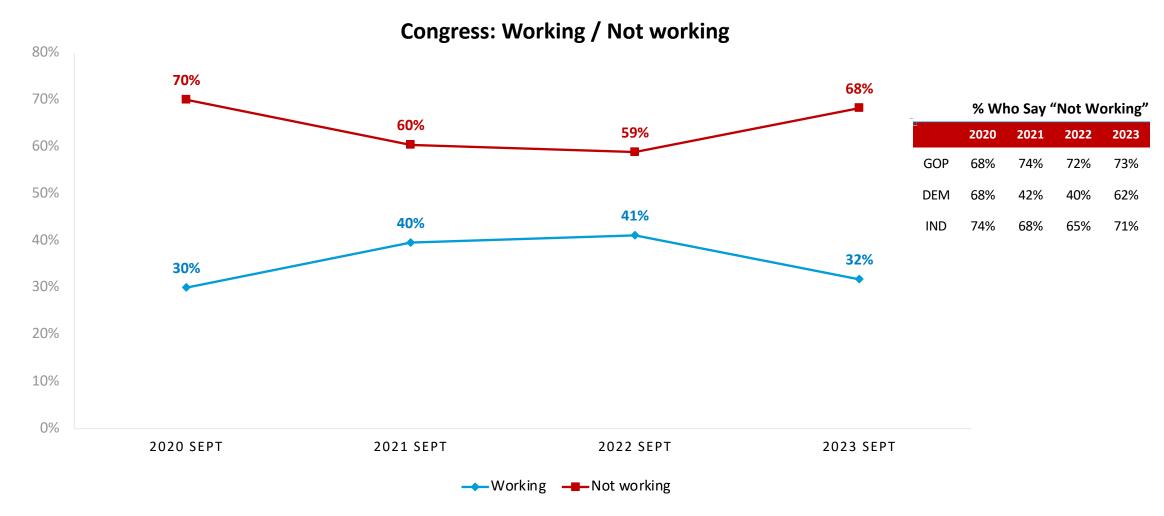
25%

CONFIDENCE IN HOW THE INSTITUTION OF THE PRESIDENCY IS WORKING HAS DROPPED DURING THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION





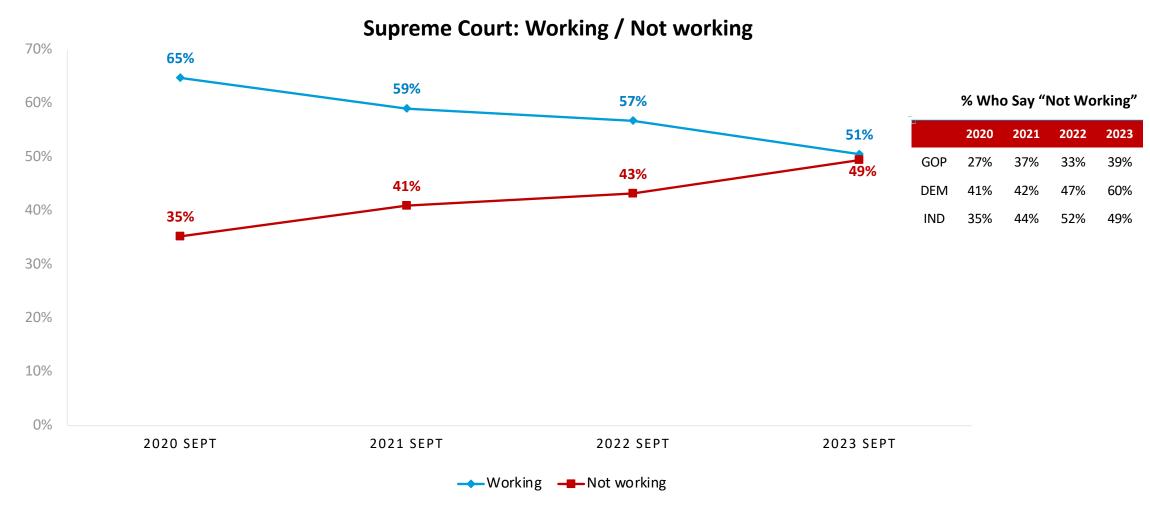
AFTER A COUPLE YEARS OF IMPROVEMENT, BELIEF THAT CONGRESS IS NOT WORKING HAS ALSO SURGED



<u>Base: Registered Voters (September 2020 n=1,907; September 2021 n=1,803; September 2022 n=1,851; September 2023 n=2,001)</u>

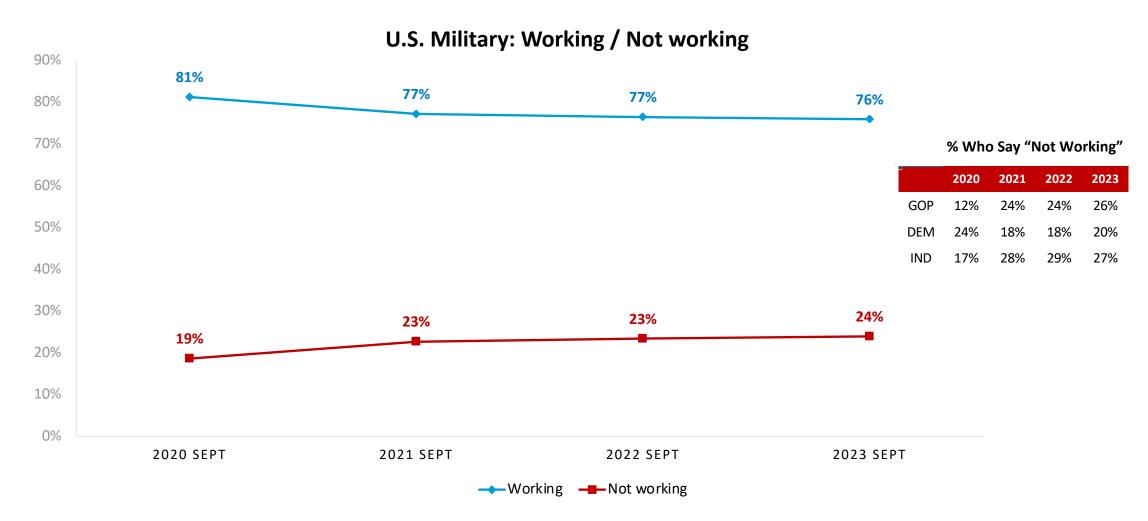


CONFIDENCE IN THE WORKINGS OF THE SUPREME COURT, AN INSTITUTION ONCE DEEMED RELIABLE, IS NOW BARELY ABOVE WATER



Base: Registered Voters (September 2020 n=1,907; September 2021 n=1,803; September 2022 n=1,851; September 2023 n=2,001)

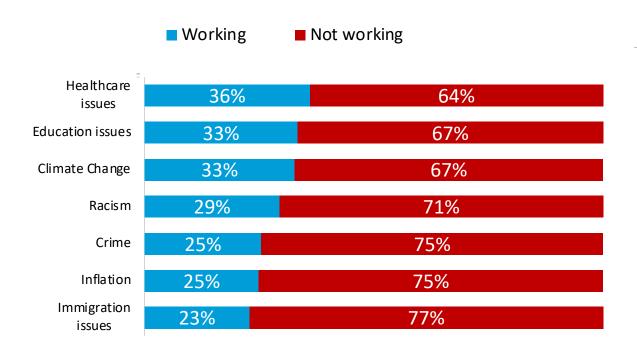
STRONG MAJORITIES OF VOTERS ACROSS ALL PARTY AFFILIATIONS STILL PRESERVE THEIR FAITH IN THE MILITARY AND ITS WORK



Base: Registered Voters (September 2020 n=1,907; September 2021 n=1,803; September 2022 n=1,851; September 2023 n=2,001)

VOTERS THINK THE POLITICAL SYSTEM IS FAILING TO RESOLVE KEY ISSUES THEY ARE FACING

Do you think our political system is working or not working to solve each of these problems?

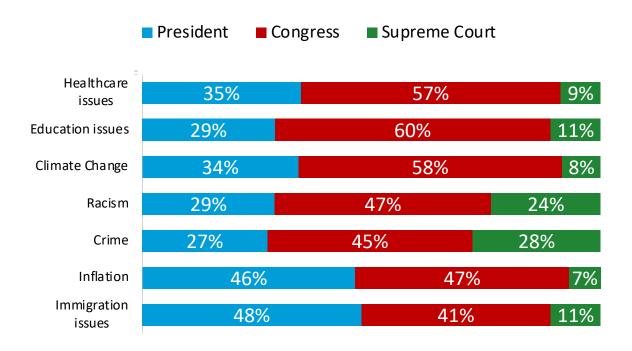


% Who Say "Not Working"

î.	GOP	DEM	IND
Healthcare issues	75%	48%	72%
Education issues	79%	50%	74%
Climate Change	72%	60%	70%
Racism	74%	67%	71%
Crime	85%	60%	80%
Inflation	89%	58%	80%
Immigration	88%	63%	83%

VOTERS BELIEVE CONGRESS SHOULD BE PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR RESOLVING MOST OF THESE KEY ISSUES; IMMIGRATION AND INFLATION ARE SEEN AS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PRESIDENT

Do you think each of these problems is mostly the responsibility of the President, Congress, or the Supreme Court to solve?

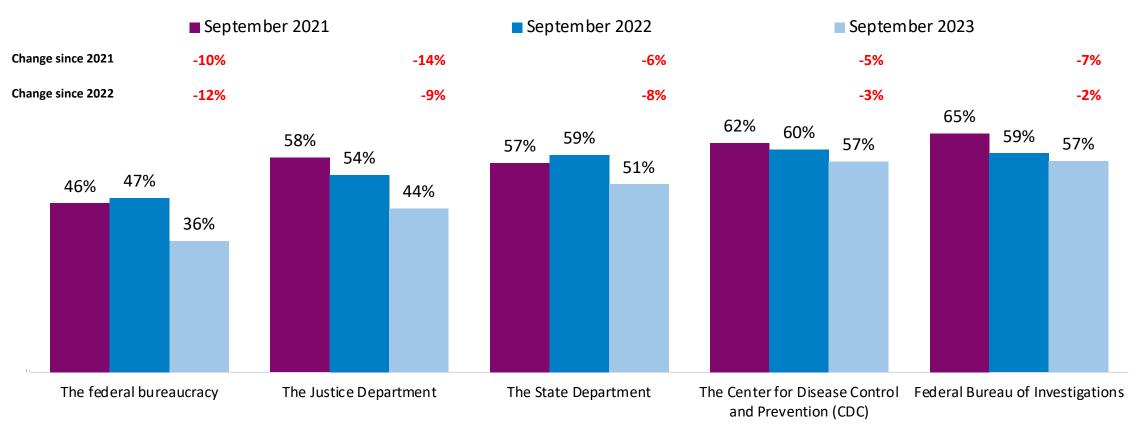


% Who Say "Congress"

	GOP	DEM	IND
Healthcare issues	54%	55%	62%
Education issues	56%	61%	64%
Climate Change	56%	57%	60%
Racism	44%	48%	51%
Crime	41%	46%	48%
Inflation	38%	52%	49%
Immigration issues	33%	45%	47%

FEWER VOTERS SAY THE FEDERAL BUREAUCRACY AND SEVERAL KEY DEPARTMENTS ARE WORKING COMPARED TO LAST YEAR

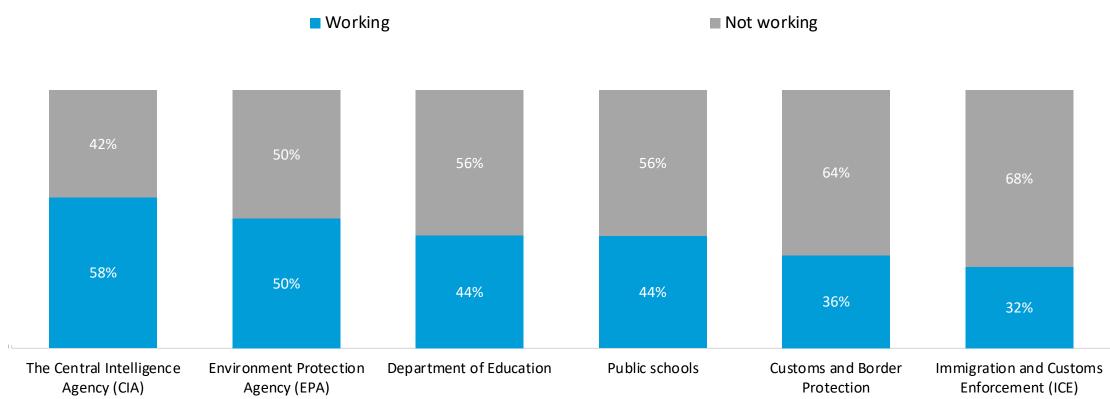
Regardless of whether you like the decisions made, do you believe that each of the following is working or not working as an institution? (by Working)



IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT (ICE) IS VIEWED AS THE LEAST FUNCTIONAL AGENCY; NEARLY 7 IN 10 SAY IT IS NOT WORKING

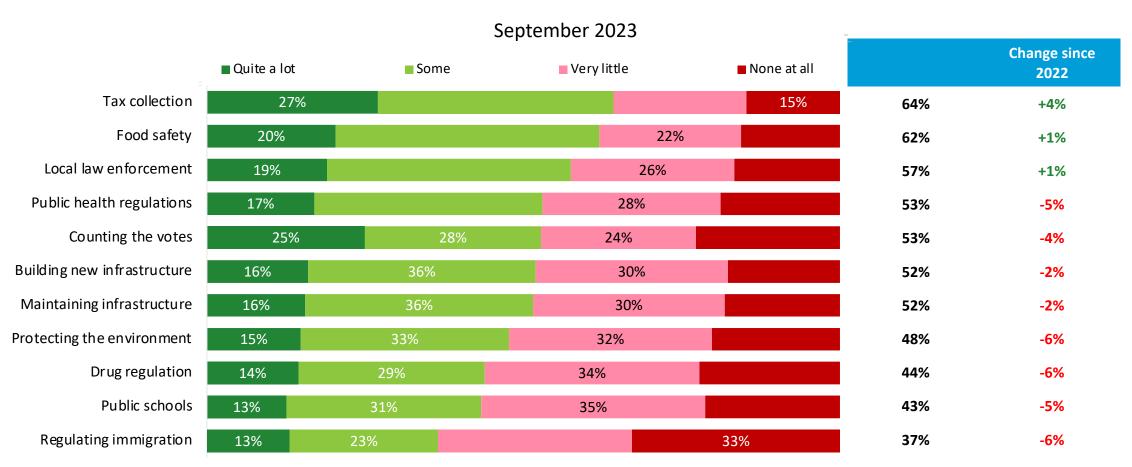
Regardless of whether you like the decisions or political ideology of each branch, do you believe that each of the following is working or not working as an institution?

September 2023

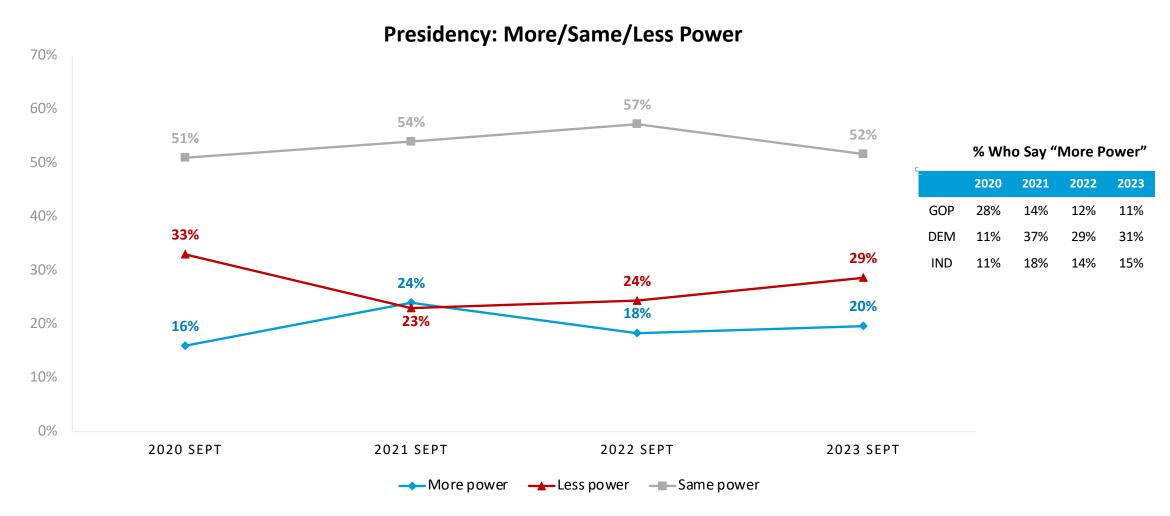


VOTERS HAVE LOW CONFIDENCE IN THE GOVERNMENT TO FULFILL ITS ROLE IN KEY AREAS SUCH AS THE ENVIRONMENT, DRUG REGULATION, SCHOOLING, AND IMMIGRATION

How much confidence do you have in the government to fulfill its role in the following areas?

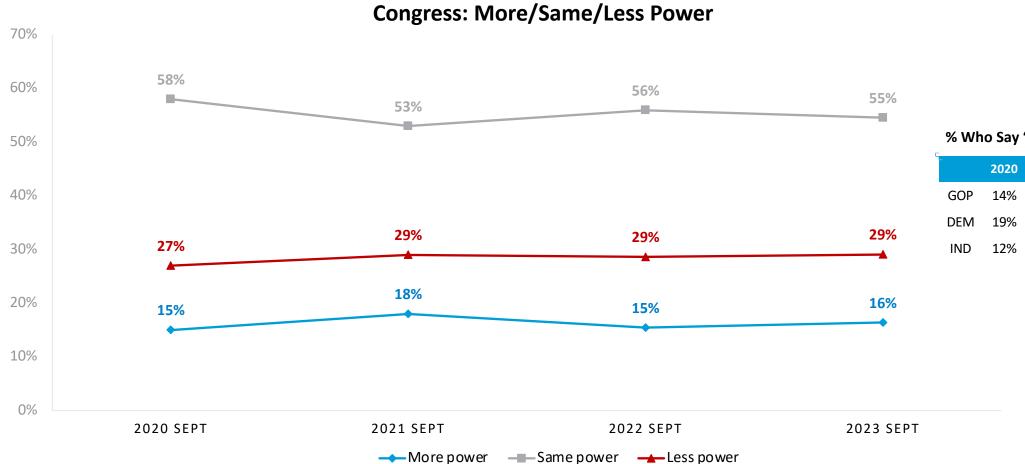


THOUGH MOST VOTERS STILL SAY THE PRESIDENCY HAS THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF POWER, THE SHARE OF VOTERS SAYING IT SHOULD HAVE LESS POWER HAS TICKED UP



Base: Registered Voters (September 2020 n=1,907; September 2021 n=1,803; September 2022 n=1,851; September 2023 n=2,001)

A MAJORITY WOULD KEEP THE POWER OF CONGRESS THE SAME

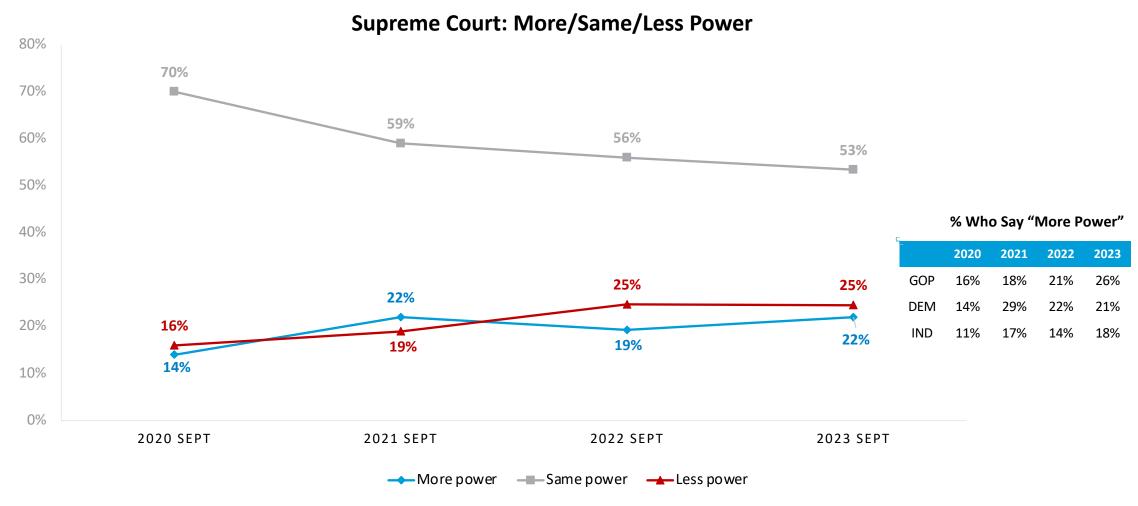


% Who Say "More Power"

	2020	2021	2022	2023
GOP	14%	12%	14%	15%
DEM	19%	27%	22%	19%
IND	12%	13%	10%	14%

Base: Registered Voters (September 2020 n=1,907; September 2021 n=1,803; September 2022 n=1,851; September 2023 n=2,001)

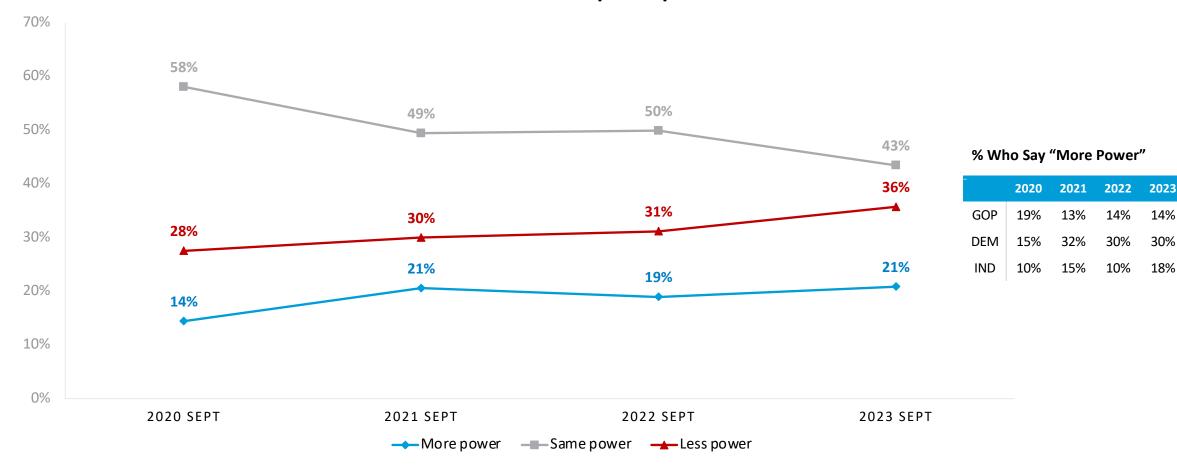
FEWER VOTERS SAY THE SUPREME COURT SHOULD KEEP THE SAME LEVEL OF POWER, WITH GOP VOTERS THE KEENEST FOR POWER GAIN (26%) AND DEMS FOR POWER DECLINE (34%)



Base: Registered Voters (September 2020 n=1,907; September 2021 n=1,803; September 2022 n=1,851; September 2023 n=2,001) Republican (n=605), Democrat (n=829), Independent/Other (n=567) (C2r3: Supreme Court – In general, do you think each of these institutions, regardless of who is leading them at any given moment, should have more power, less power, or the same power as now?

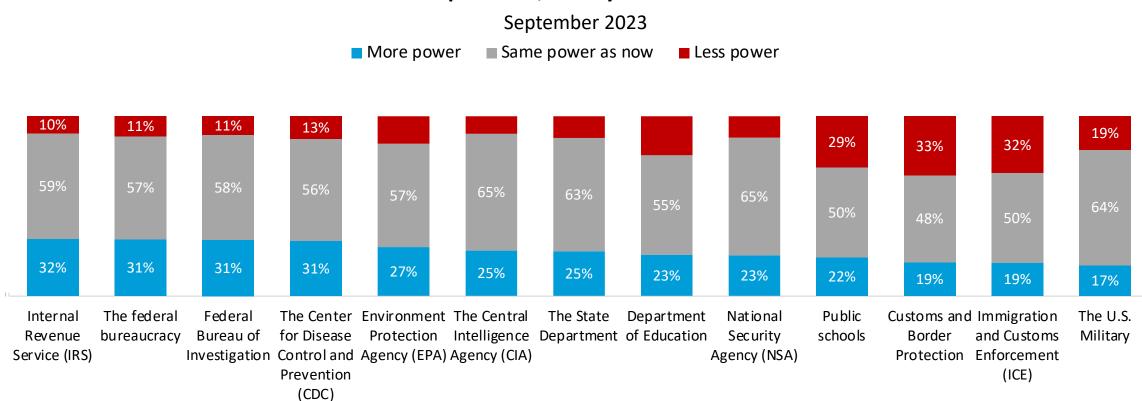
REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS HAVE MOVED IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS ON FEDERAL GOVERNMENT POWER SINCE THE 2020 ELECTION

Federal Government: More/Same/Less Power



ICE AND CUSTOMS PROTECTION ARE PERCEIVED AS LOSING POWER, WHILE THE FBI, CDC, IRS, AND FEDERAL BUREAUCRACY ARE SEEN AS HAVING GAINED IT

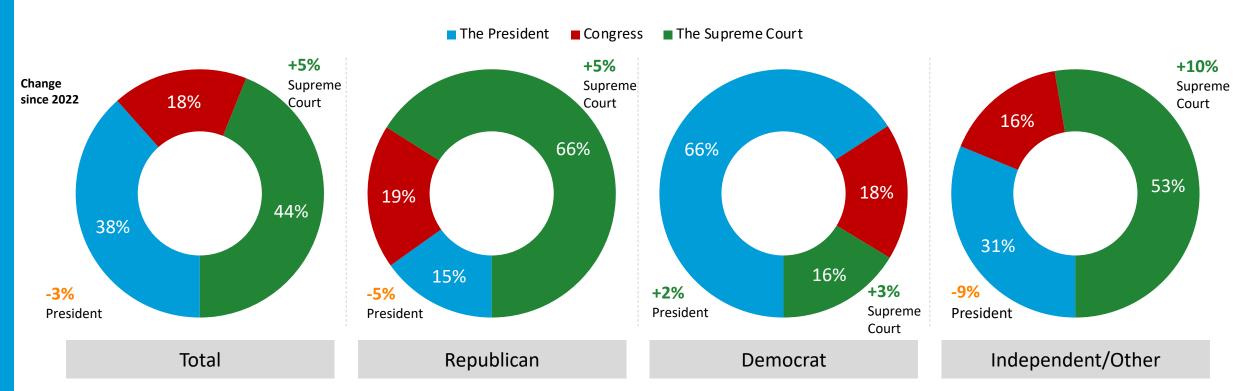
In the past 12 months, do you think each of these institutions has become more powerful, less powerful, or stayed the same?



REPUBLICANS AND INDEPENDENTS SAY THE SUPREME COURT IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE BRANCH OF THE GOVERNMENT, WHILE DEMOCRATS FAVOR THE PRESIDENCY

Which part of the federal government do you think is the most effective at doing their job, the President, Congress or the Supreme Court? (By Party)

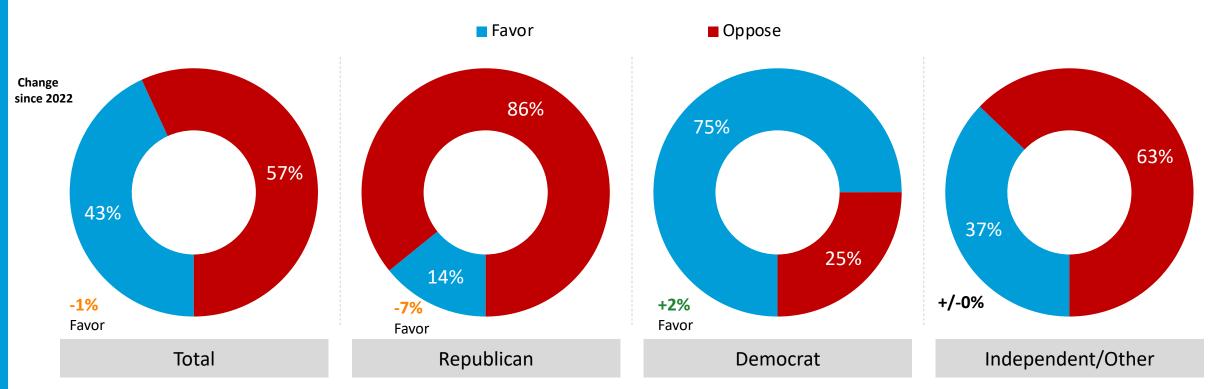
September 2023



VOTERS, REPUBLICANS, AND INDEPENDENTS OPPOSE ADDING NEW MEMBERS TO THE SUPREME COURT, WHILE DEMOCRATS ARE IN FAVOR

Do you favor or oppose a plan from some Democrats to add 4 new members to the Supreme Court and have them picked by the Biden administration? (By Party)

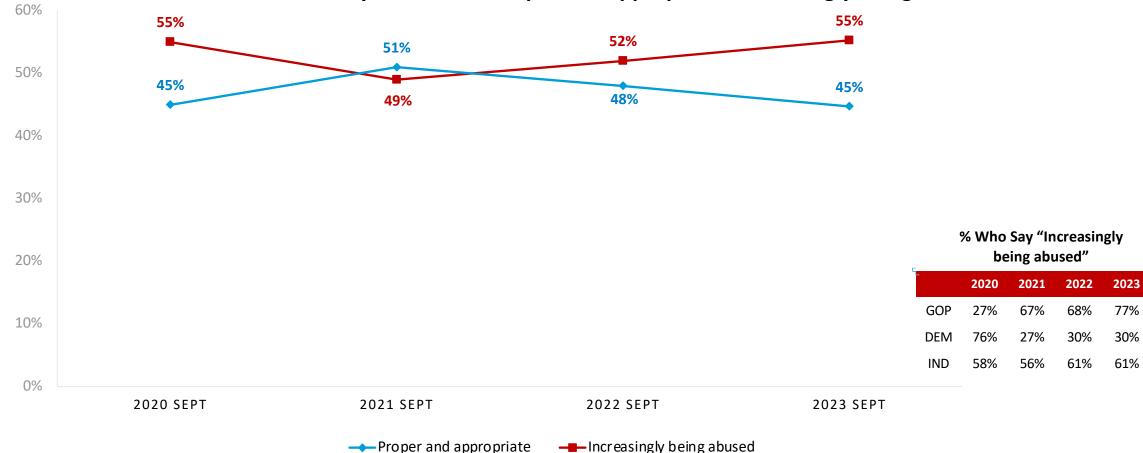
September 2023





OVER HALF OF VOTERS SAY EXECUTIVE ORDERS ARE INCREASINGLY BEING ABUSED

Use of Executive Orders by Presidents: Proper and appropriate/increasingly being abused



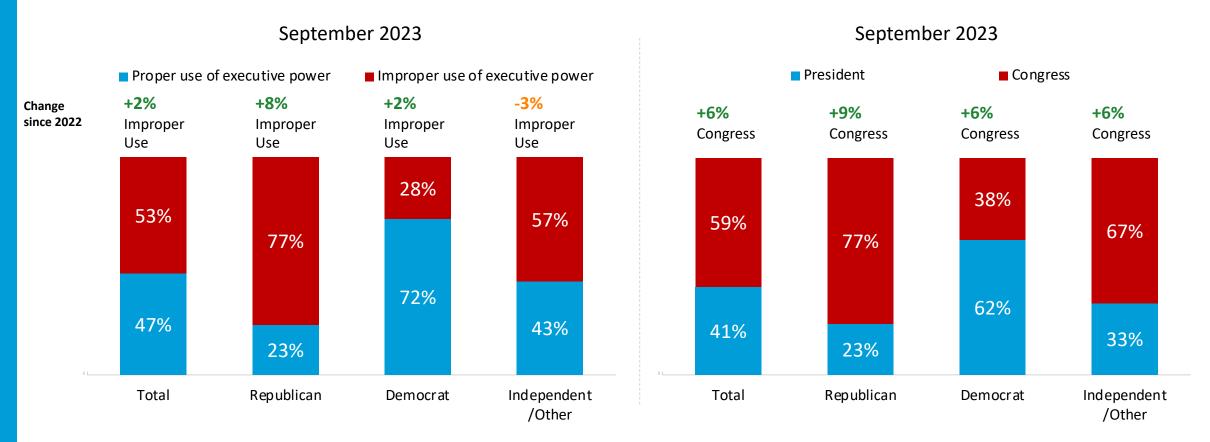
Base: Registered Voters (September 2020 n=1,907; September 2021 n=1,803; September 2022 n=1,851, September 2023 n=2,001)

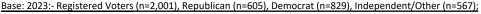
C9: Do you think that the use of executive orders by presidents is generally proper and appropriate or is increasingly being abused?

VOTERS ARE SPLIT ON ELIMINATING STUDENT DEBT; MOST REPUBLICANS AND INDEPENDENTS BELIEVE IT TO BE AN IMPROPER USE OF EXECUTIVE POWER, BUT 3 IN 4 DEMOCRATS DISAGREE

Was the executive order eliminating up to \$500 billion of student debt a proper or improper use of executive power? (By Party)

Should the power to excuse debt on a mass basis reside with the president or only by an act of Congress? (By Party)



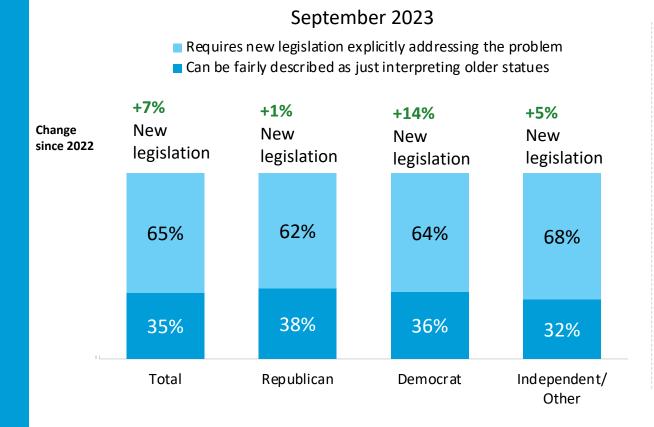


^{2022:-} Registered Voters (n=1,851), Republican (n=535), Democrat (n=832), Independent/Other (n=484);

A MAJORITY OF VOTERS BELIEVE REGULATING CARBON AND CLIMATE CHANGE REQUIRES NEW LEGISLATION

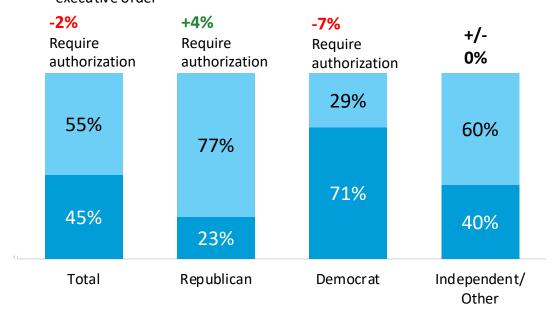
Is regulating carbon and climate change by the EPA just interpreting older statutes or is new legislation required to address the problem? (By Party)

Should the president be able to take actions that restrict drilling for mining/fossil fuels, or should it require congressional approval? (By Party)



September 2023

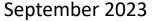
- Should require explicit congressional authorization
- President should be able to restrict drilling and permits for fossil fuels by executive order

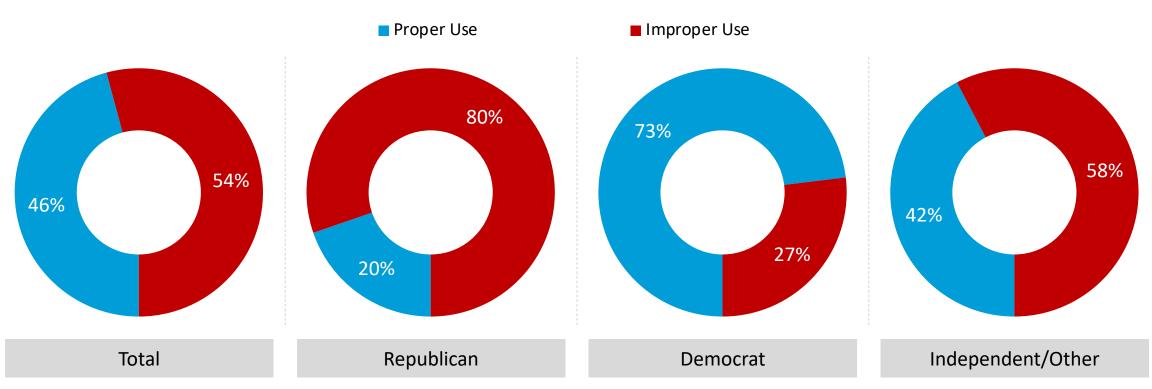


Base: 2023:- Registered Voters (n=2,001), Republican (n=605), Democrat (n=829), Independent/Other (n=567);

WE SEE STRONG PARTY SPLITS ON OIL & GAS DRILLING: 4 IN 5 REPUBLICANS BELIEVE BIDEN'S PROHIBITION WAS AN IMPROPER USE OF EXECUTIVE POWER, WHILE 3 IN 4 DEMS SAY THE OPPOSITE

Do you think the Biden Administration prohibiting oil drilling on 13 million acres of land in Alaska was a proper or improper use of executive power? (By Party)



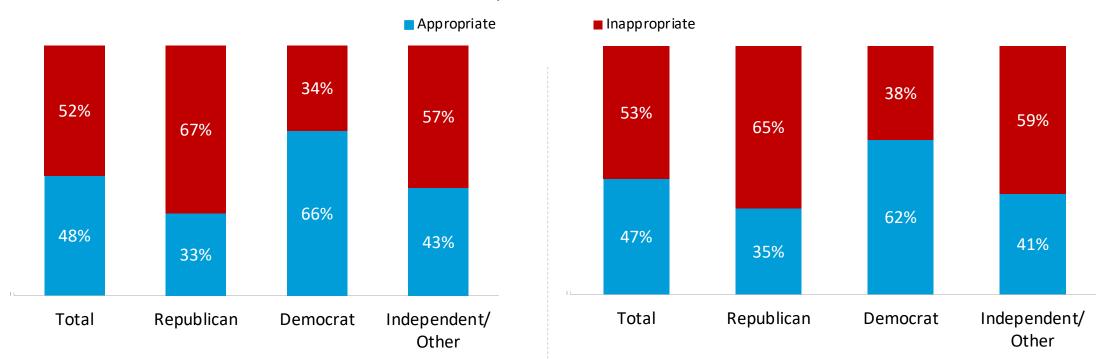


VOTERS LEAN SLIGHTLY TOWARDS THINKING GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE IN MEDIA ON MISINFORMATION IS INAPPROPRIATE

Is it appropriate for the government to tell <u>social media</u> companies what is and is not misinformation?

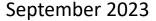
Is it appropriate for the government to tell <u>news media</u> organizations what is and is not misinformation?

September 2023



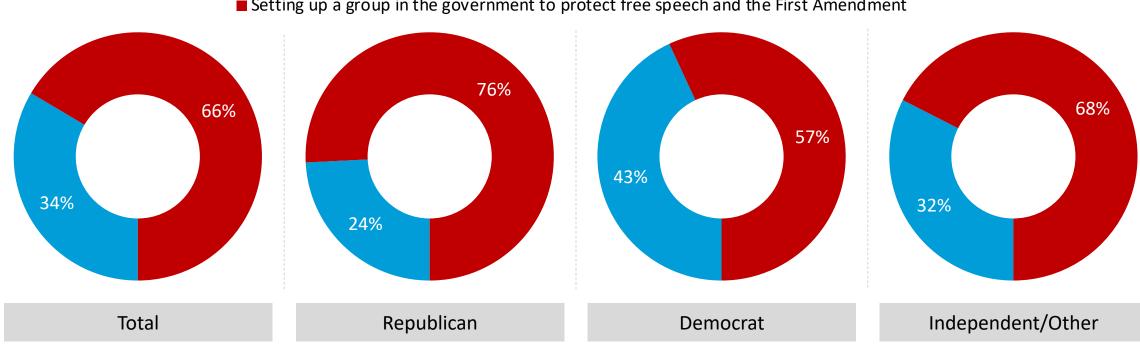
OVERALL, THE MAJORITY OF EACH PARTY THINKS IT'S MORE IMPORTANT FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO SET UP A GROUP PROTECT FREE SPEECH THAN COMBAT **MISINFORMATION**

Which is more important: Setting up a group in the government to fight misinformation or to protect free speech and the first amendment? (By Party)







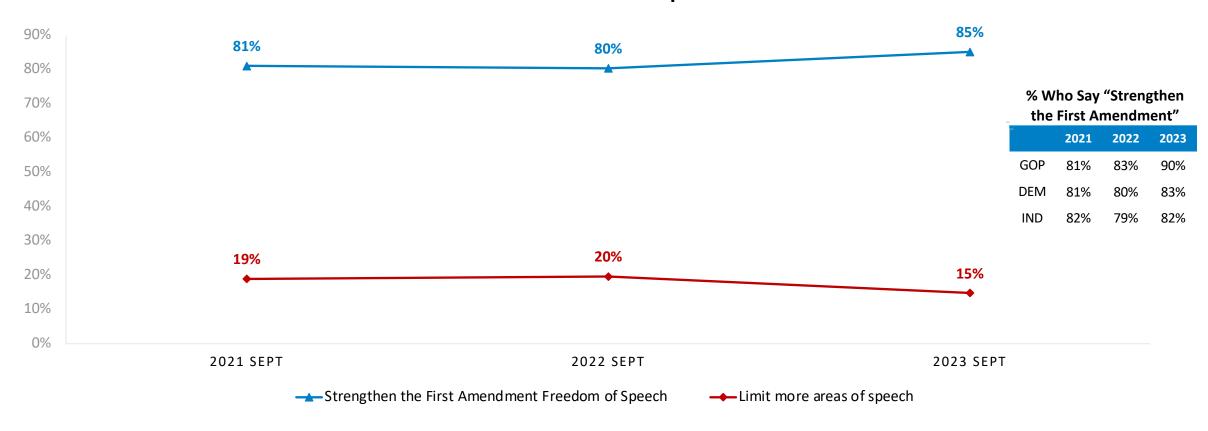


Base: Registered Voters (n=2,001), Republican (n=605), Democrat (n=829), Independent/Other (n=567)

MQ1New: Which is more important?

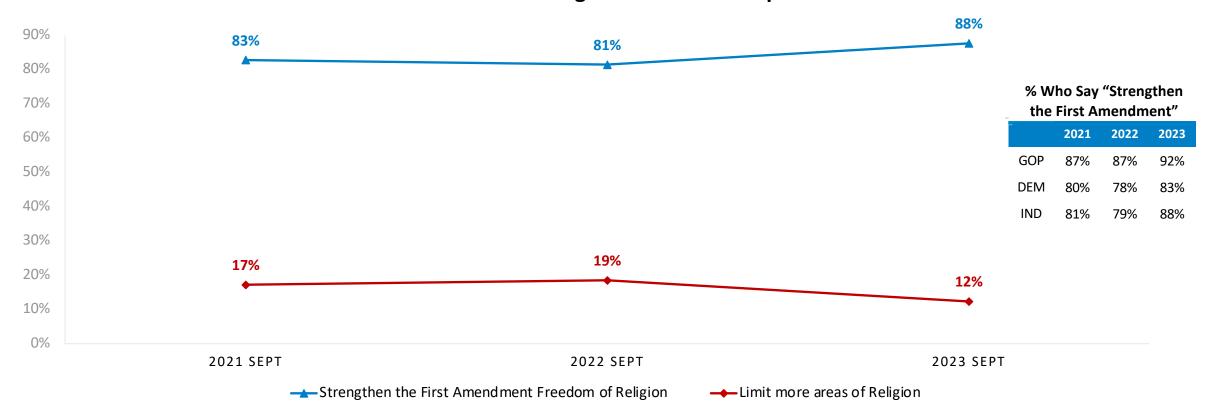
MOST VOTERS SAY THAT WE NEED TO STRENGTHEN THE FIRST AMENDMENT'S PROVISION FOR FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Do you think we need to strengthen these First Amendment freedoms, or should we be limiting more areas of speech?



VOTERS ALSO SAY THAT THE COUNTRY NEEDS TO STRENGTHEN THE FIRST AMENDMENT'S PROVISION FOR FREEDOM OF RELIGION

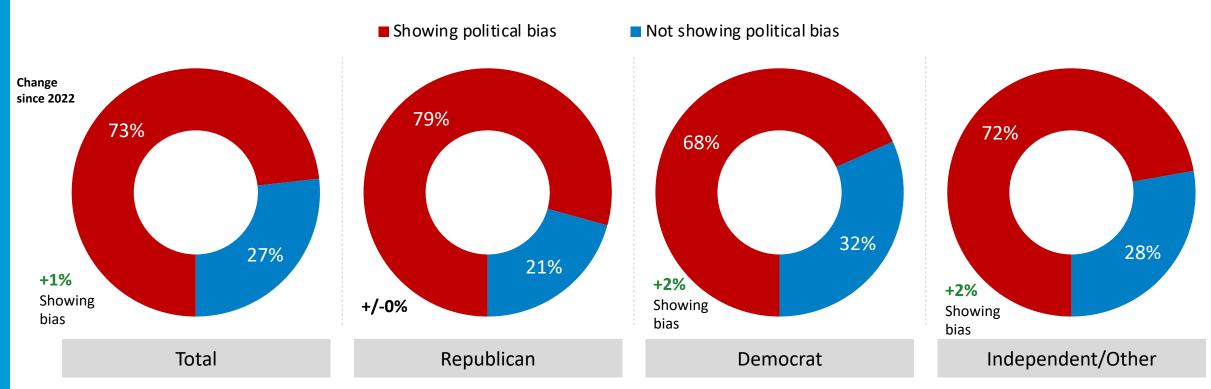
Do you think we need to strengthen this set of First Amendment freedoms, or should we be limiting more areas of religious freedom and practice?



STRONG MAJORITIES ACROSS THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM THINK BIG TECH COMPANIES ARE SHOWING POLITICAL BIAS IN THEIR ACTIONS

Do you think the Big Tech companies are showing political bias in their actions or not showing political bias in their actions? (By Party)

September 2023

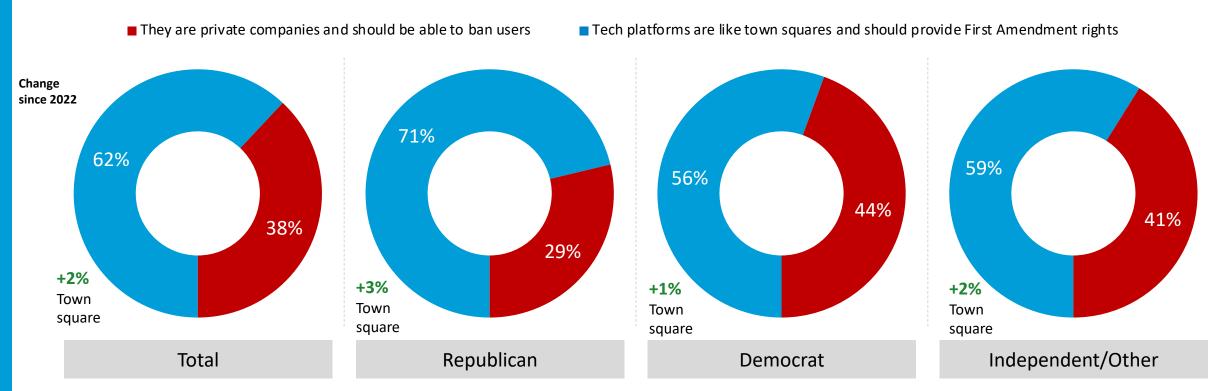


MQ10. Do you think the Big Tech companies are showing political bias in their actions or not showing political bias in their actions?

AROUND 3 IN 5 VOTERS THINK BIG TECH PLATFORMS SHOULD PROVIDE POSTERS WITH FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS, SIMILAR TO A TOWN SQUARE

Do you think that Big Tech platforms should provide posters with the rights of the First Amendment or are those platforms private companies that should be able to ban users at will? (By Party)

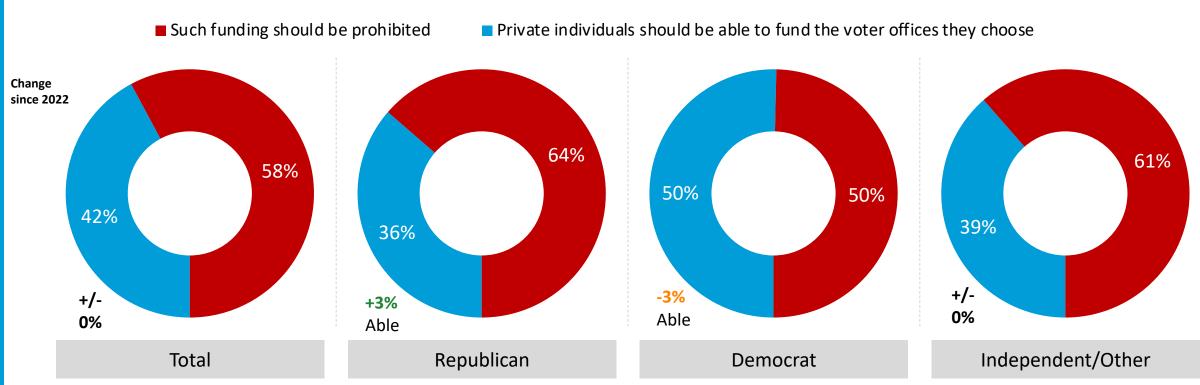
September 2023



A MAJORITY OF VOTERS, INCLUDING TWO THIRDS OF REPUBLICANS AND ALMOST AS MANY INDEPENDENTS, SAY PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS SHOULD NOT BE ABLE TO FUND THE **VOTER OFFICES THEY CHOOSE**

Do you think that private individuals like Mark Zuckerberg should be allowed to fund selected government voter offices in selected areas where one party dominates, or should such funding be prohibited? (By Party)

September 2023

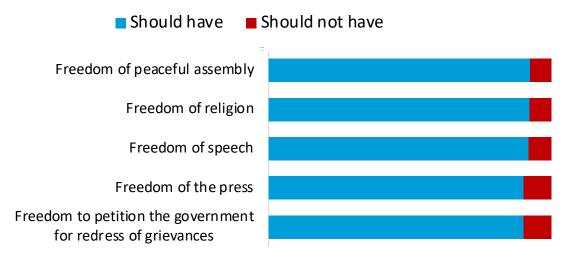




WHILE VOTERS OVERWHELMINGLY THINK AMERICANS SHOULD HAVE FIRST AMENDMENT FREEDOMS, THEY ARE SPLIT ON WHETHER THESE FREEDOMS ARE UNDER ASSAULT

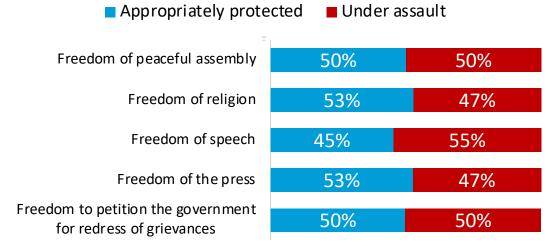
For each of the following freedoms under the First Amendment, do you believe Americans should or should not have this freedom?

For each of the following freedoms under the First Amendment, do you believe it is appropriately protected today or is it under assault?



% Who Say "Should have"

	GOP	DEM	IND
Freedom of peaceful assembly	92%	92%	93%
Freedom of religion	91%	92%	94%
Freedom of speech	91%	92%	93%
Freedom of the press	92%	88%	91%
Freedom to petition the government for redress of grievances	90%	89%	92%



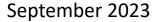
% Who Say "Under assault"

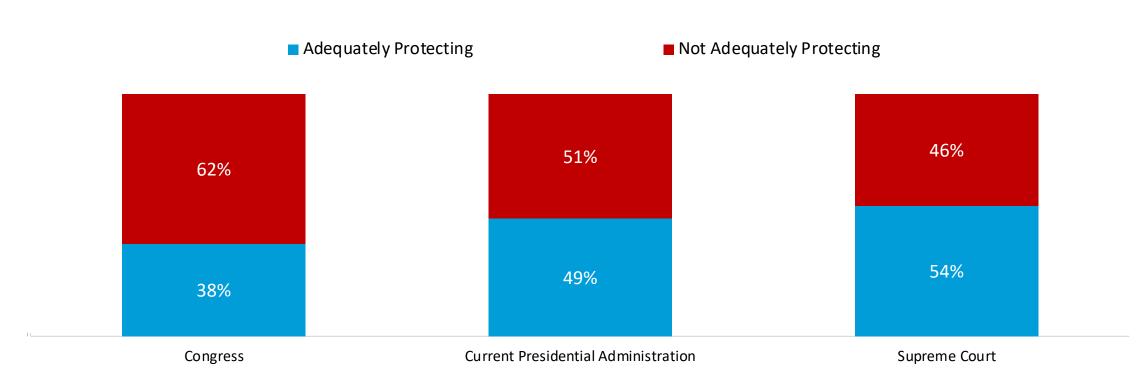
	GOP	DEM	IND
Freedom of peaceful assembly	60%	39%	53%
Freedom of religion	61%	34%	48%
Freedom of speech	69%	38%	59%
Freedom of the press	58%	37%	48%
Freedom to petition the government for redress of grievances	61%	35%	57%

Base: Registered Voters (n=2,001)

ACCORDING TO VOTERS, CONGRESS IS THE LEAST ADEQUATE PROTECTOR OF THE FIRST **AMENDMENT**

Do you think ... is adequately protecting the First Amendment or not?

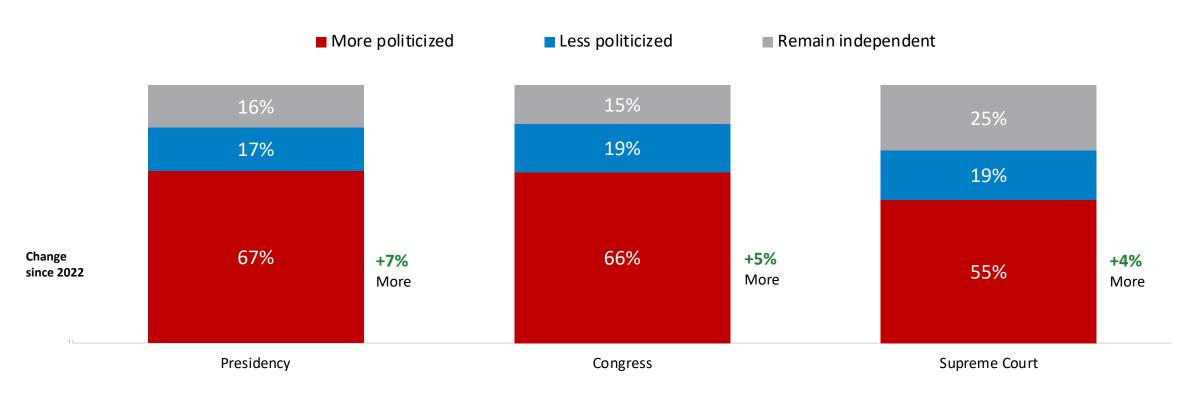




MAJORITIES SAY THE PRESIDENCY, CONGRESS, AND SUPREME COURT ARE BECOMING MORE POLITICIZED

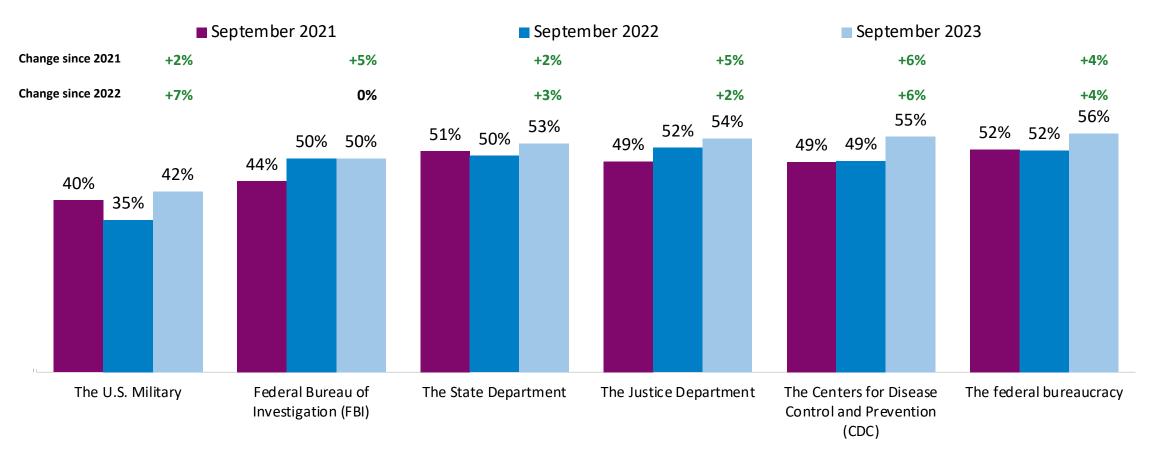
Do you think that each of these institutions are becoming more politicized or less politicized, or do they remain independent?

September 2023

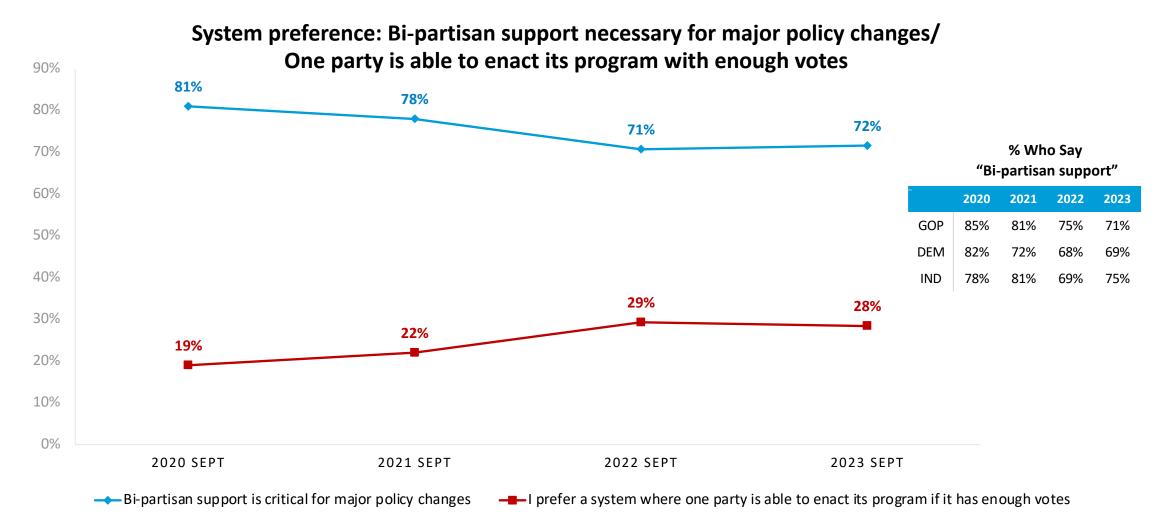


PLURALITIES BELIEVE THE FEDERAL BUREAUCRACY AND EACH DEPARTMENT IS BECOMING MORE POLITICIZED

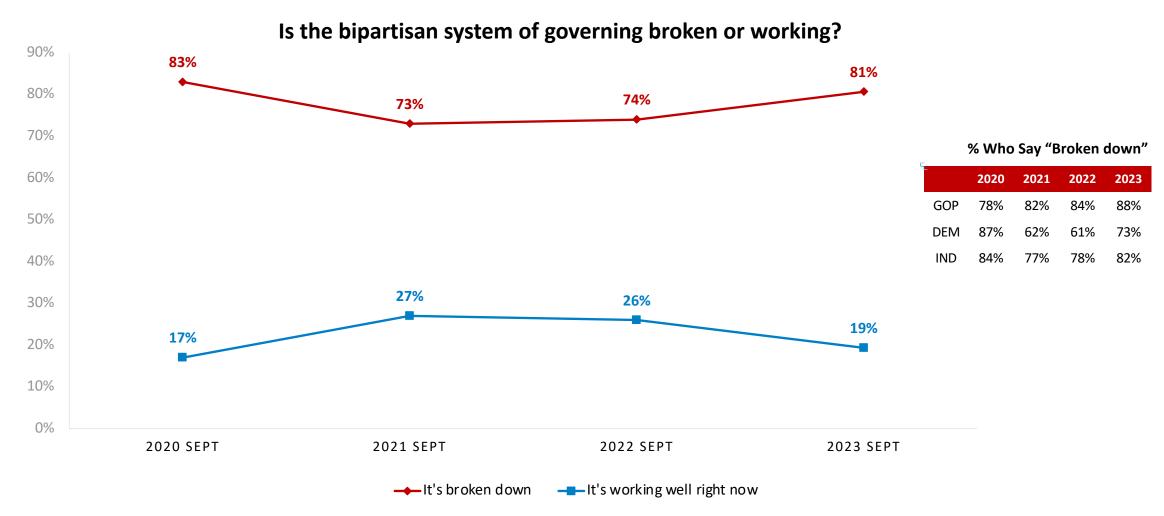
Do you think that each of these institutions are becoming more politicized or less politicized, or do they remain independent? (by More politicized)



MAJORITIES OF VOTERS ACROSS PARTIES STILL PREFER BIPARTISANSHIP



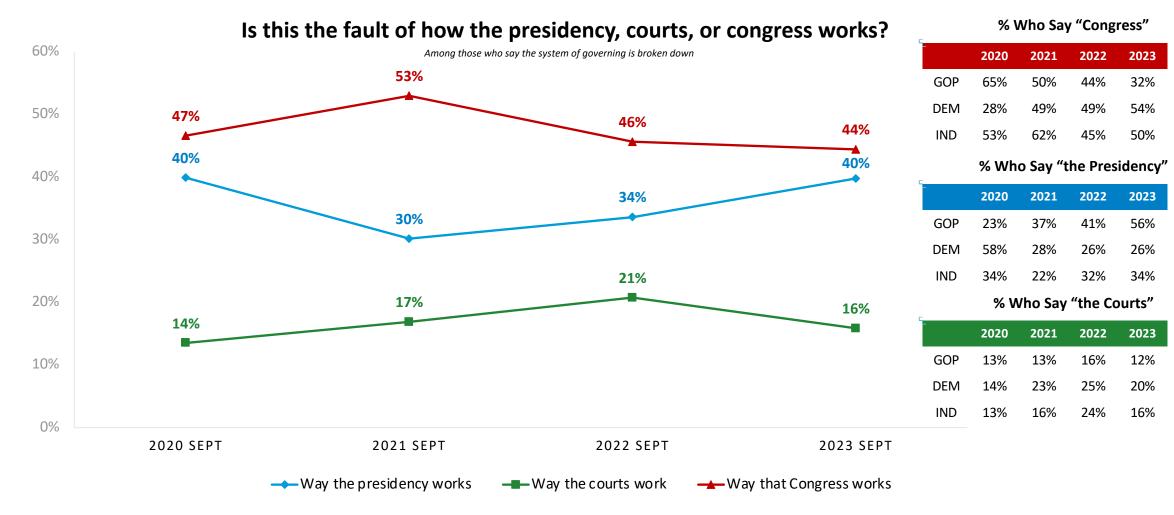
AFTER A COUPLE YEARS OF IMPROVEMENT, BELIEFS THAT THE BIPARTISAN SYSTEM OF GOVERNING IS BROKEN HAVE SURGED BACK TO PANDEMIC LEVELS



Base: Registered Voters (September 2020 n=1,907; September 2021 n=1,803; September 2022 n=1,851; September 2023 n=2,001)

C5: Do you think the bipartisan system of governing has broken down or is working well right now?

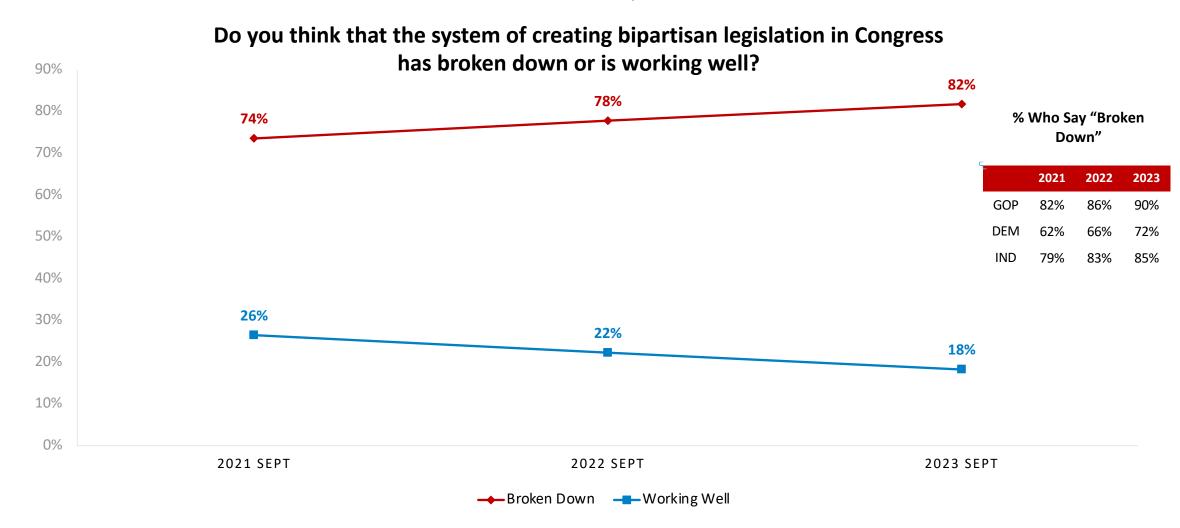
VOTERS ARE INCREASINGLY BLAMING THE PRESIDENCY, NOT THE COURTS, FOR THE BROKEN SYSTEM



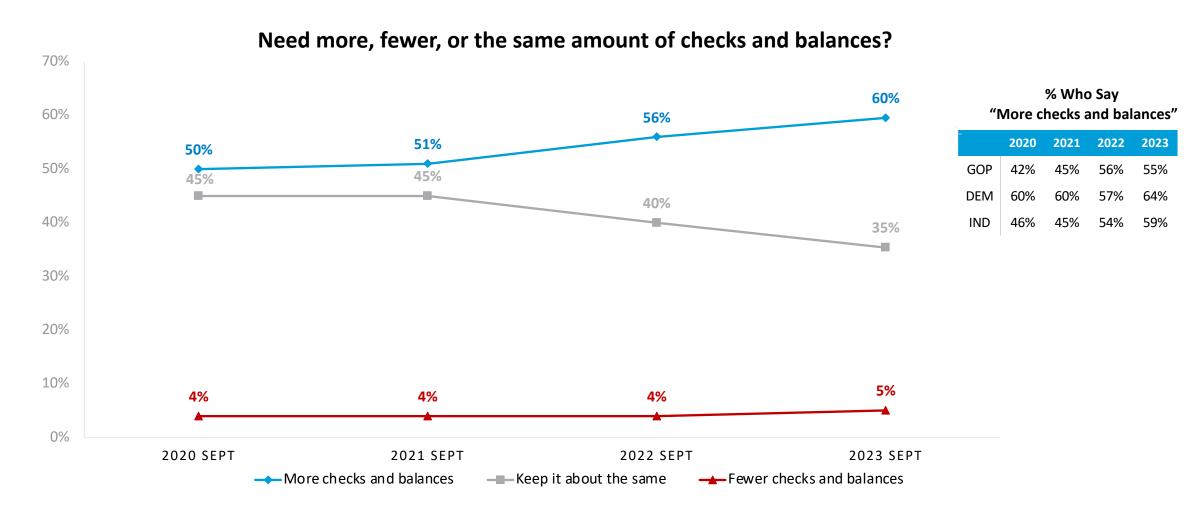
Base: Registered Voters who say the system of governing is broken down (September 2020 n=1,601; September 2021 n=1,355; September 2022 n=1,326; September 2023 n=1,582)

C6: Do you think that is primarily the result of problems with the way the presidency works, the way the courts work, or the way that Congress works?

A GROWING MAJORITY (OVER 8 IN 10) SAY THAT THE SYSTEM OF CREATING BIPARTISAN LEGISLATION IN CONGRESS HAS BROKEN DOWN, AS WELL



IN 2022 AND 2023, OVER HALF OF VOTERS ACROSS THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM WANT MORE CHECKS AND BALANCES



THANK YOU