



HARVARD Kennedy School

INSTITUTE OF POLITICS

35TH SURVEY OF YOUNG AMERICANS' ATTITUDES TOWARD POLITICS AND PUBLIC SERVICE

PRESENTED BY:

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TEDDY LANDIS, '20, HPOP STUDENT CHAIR

7 THINGS EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT YOUNG AMERICANS IN 2018

18 APRIL 2018

N = 2,631
18- to 29-Year-Old Americans
March 8 - 25, 2018

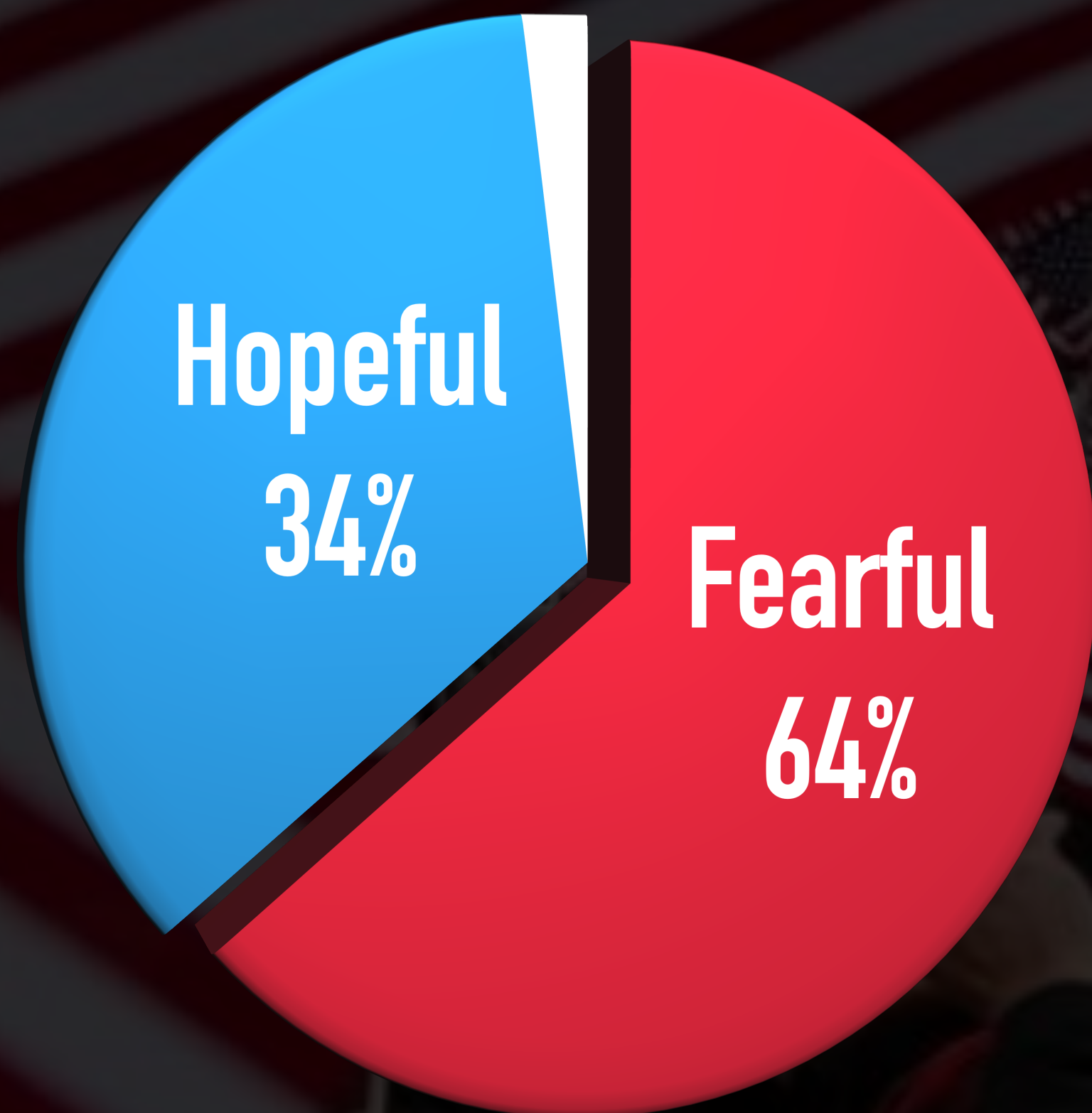
Young Americans are deeply concerned about the state of our **democracy and institutions**. They blame **politicians, big money and the media**. The **intensity** is real. And in November, they will take out their frustrations in voting booths from coast to coast.

Incumbents beware.



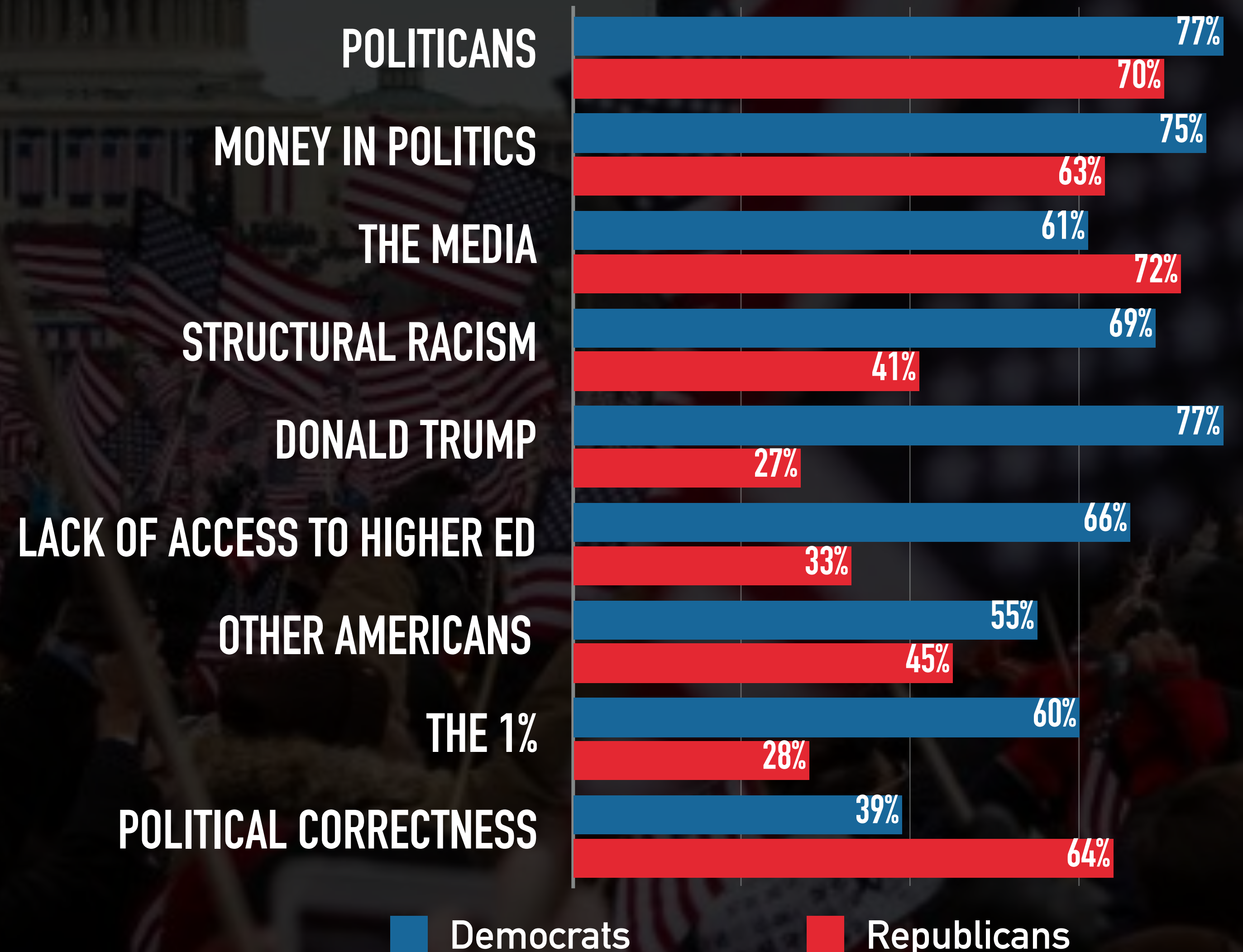
**Fear for America is real.
The cause is clear.**

AT THIS MOMENT, WOULD YOU SAY YOU ARE MORE HOPEFUL OR FEARFUL ABOUT THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY?



FOR EACH OF THE FOLLOWING, PLEASE RANK HOW MUCH YOU SEE THEM AS RESPONSIBLE FOR EXISTING PROBLEMS IN AMERICAN POLITICS AND SOCIETY TODAY:

[% VERY OR SOMEWHAT RESPONSIBLE]

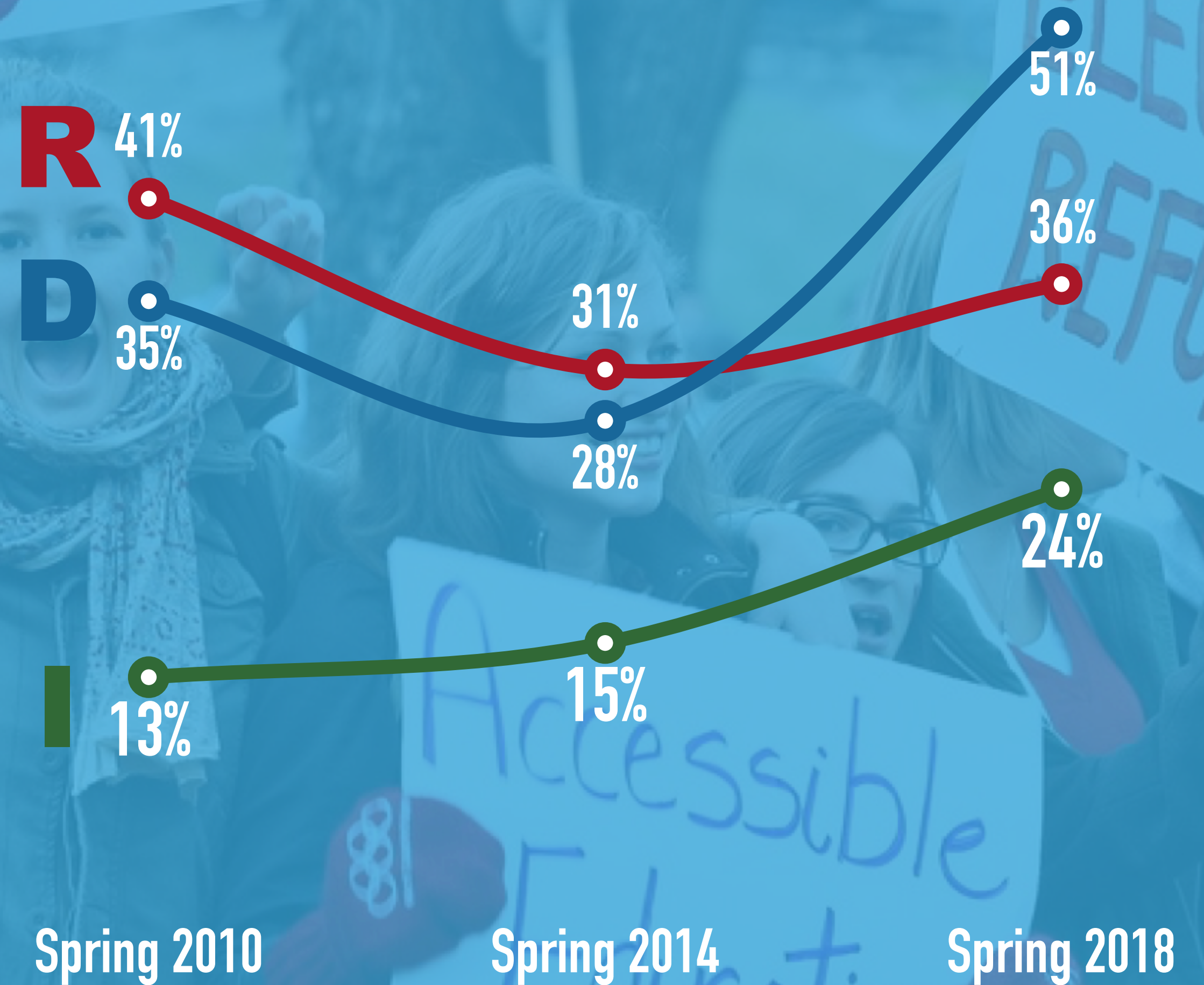


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**Youth vote will play a
much more significant
role in 2018 midterms.**

Interest in **voting** in the upcoming midterms outpacing 2014 and the 2010 wave.

% who say they will “definitely” vote in 2018 midterms



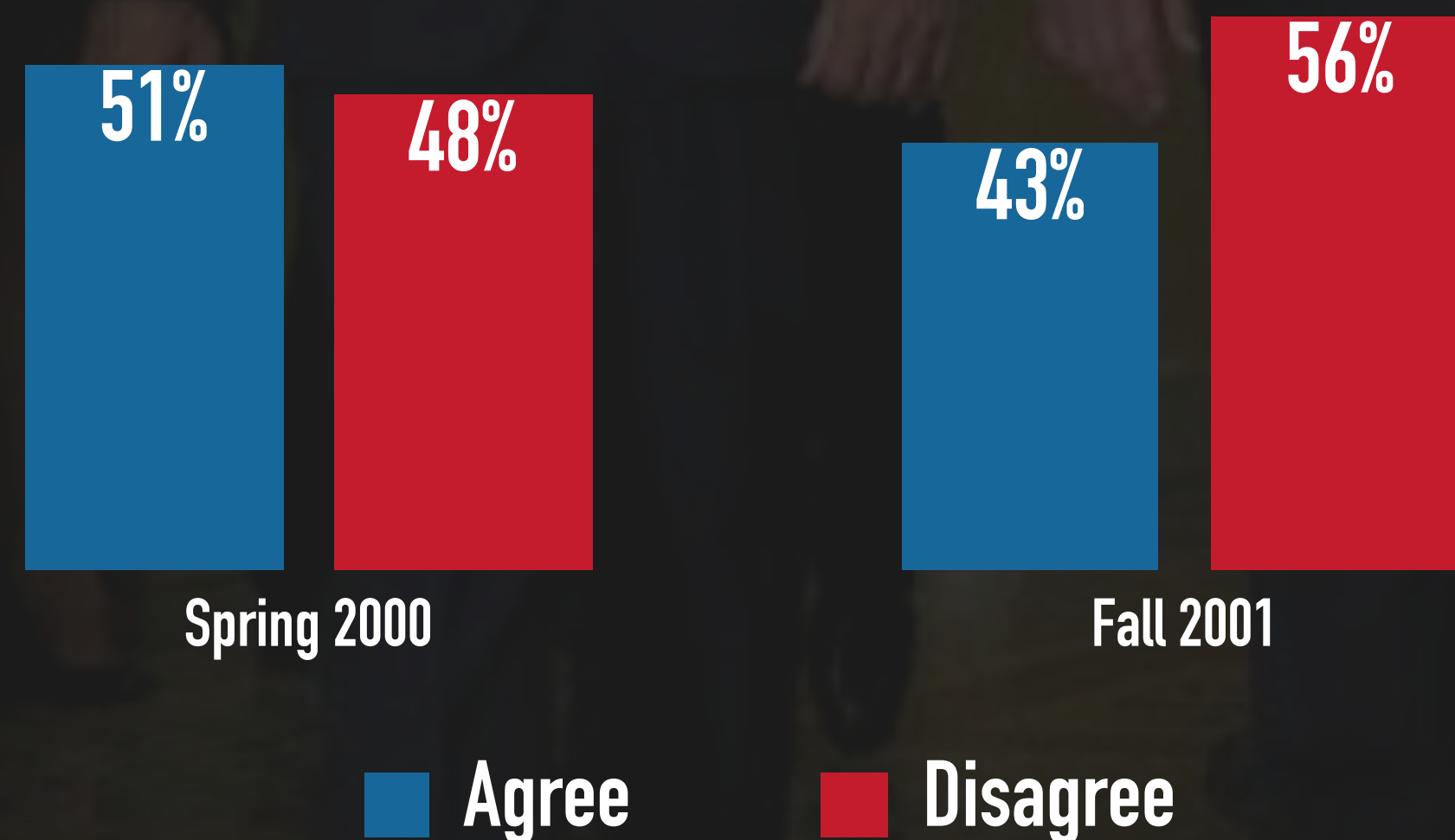
3

**Once in a generation
attitudinal shifts about
efficacy of political
engagement now
underway.**

Young Americans vote when they believe their efforts have tangible results.

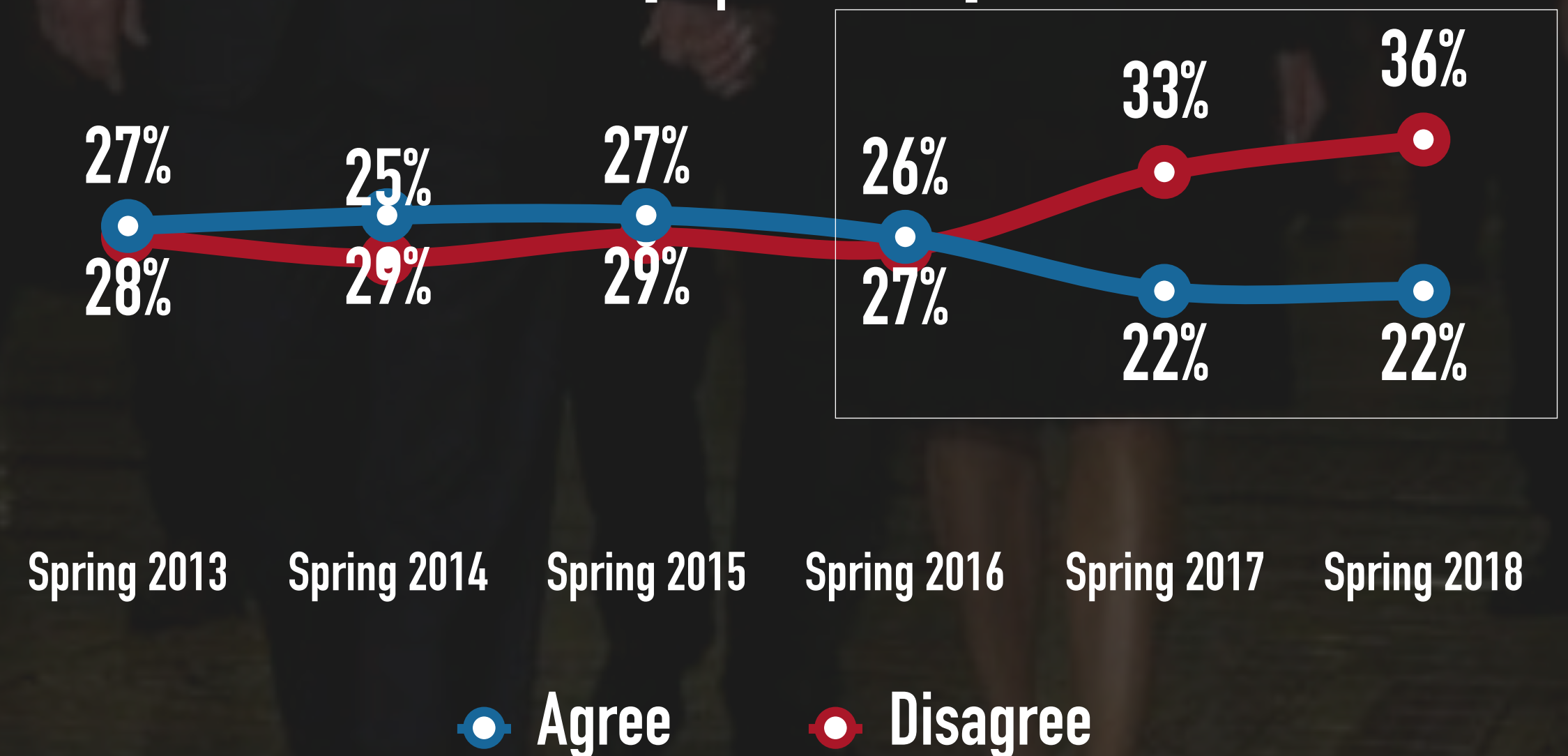
Engagement after 9/11, which eventually led to the nomination and election of President Obama, was driven largely by this change in attitude.

Political involvement rarely has any tangible results.
[4-point scale]



After the Obama election, recession and gridlock, young Americans began again to question the efficacy of political involvement. 2016 was a game-changer. Politics matters again.

Political involvement rarely has any tangible results.
[5-point scale]



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**Democratic control now
preferred by +41.
Margin was +32 in our
Fall poll.**



Job Approval 25%

Highest:


Economy, 34%

Tax reform, 31%

Lowest:

Gun violence, 24%

Race relations, 21%



DEMOCRATIC CONTROL

of Congress preferred 69%-28%.

(but Democrats should not celebrate too soon, despite alignment on many issues, in our Fall poll only 1/3 believed the party cared about “people like them”)

5

**College
administrators and
the military top list
of most trusted
institutions.**

A close-up photograph of Mark Zuckerberg, founder of Facebook, speaking into a microphone. He is wearing a dark blue suit, a white shirt, and a dark blue tie. His mouth is open as if he is in the middle of speaking. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a formal setting with wood paneling.

Before
Cambridge
Analytica
news broke,
**26% trusted
Facebook** to
do the right
thing all or
most of the
time.

Top 5 (of 22) most
trusted: Your college
administration (61%),
the military, Amazon,
Google and SCOTUS.

Bottom 5: POTUS (22%),
Federal government,
Congress, media, Wall
Street.

In the post-Parkland reality, the gun debate symbolizes many of the ills plaguing Washington. Current signs point to it further accelerating youth activism and voting.

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SPRING 2013 POLL / POST-NEWTOWN



49% SUPPORT STRICTER GUN LAWS
41% SUPPORT ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN
38% FAVORABLE – 38% UNFAV. OF NRA

SPRING 2018 POLL/ POST-PARKLAND



64% SUPPORT STRICTER GUN LAWS
58% SUPPORT ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN
31% FAVORABLE – 53% UNFAV. OF NRA

77% OF LV'S CONSIDER GUNS MOST/IMPORTANT
47% SUPPORT AMENDING 2ND AMENDMENT



A majority believe that military conflict across multiple fronts, on the ground and in cyberspace, is likely in the next five years.

64% see U.S. military
engaging directly
with **North Korea**,
61% with **cyber-**
terrorists, 54% with
Iran, 43% with **Russia**
in the next 5 years.

10% say there's a good chance they'd join
the military under these conditions.

HPOP SPRING 2018

Teddy Landis, Student Chair	2020	New York, NY
Amal Abdi	2020	Columbus, OH
Dustin Chiang	2019	Fremont, CA
Erik Fliegauf	2019	Hopkinton, MA
Myer Johnson-Potter	2020	San Francisco, CA
Katherine Liu	2021	Lincolnshire, IL
Christopher MacMaster	2019	El Cerrito, CA
Will Matheson	2021	Salt Lake City, UT
Olivia McGinnis	2020	Phoenixville, PA
Dhruv Mohnot	2021	Wilmington, DE
Rachel Nadboy	2020	Brooklyn, NY
Sewon Park	2021	Hong Kong
Trey Sexton	2019	Glen Rose, TX
Isabel Slavinsky	2020	Columbia, MD
Claire Sukumar	2020	Ossining, NY
Laura Thorsett	2018	Salem, OR
Miguel Undurraga	2019	Camarillo, CA
Chris Vassallo	2020	New York, NY
Anna Vaynrub	2020	Old Bethpage, NY
Samuel Zwickel	2021	Chippewa Falls, WI
Francisco Cernada	2020	Houston, TX
Sofia Corzo	2021	Guatemala City
Iris Feldman	2020	San Francisco, CA
Hayden Davis	2021	Lake Stevens, WA
Michelle Gao	2021	New York, NY
Kaitlyn Greta	2020	Los Angeles, CA
Richard Sweeney	2021	Glenmont, NY
Amariah Jones	2021	Columbia, SC