

U.S. Public Opinion on DC Voting Rights

**Survey Conducted for DC Vote
by KRC Research
January 2005**

What's New

- **New Information:**
 - Support for DC voting rights over time (Oct. 1999, Jan. 2005)
 - Current level of support for DC budget autonomy
 - Compelling messages in support of DC Voting Rights
- **More Robust Measures**
 - More comprehensive measure of awareness (previous study only measured awareness among college graduate voters 21+)
 - Voting rights question wording test: half sample asked one version (trend question), the other asked a shorter version
 - More demographics: political party, individuals who have visited DC, who know someone who lives in or near DC, military families, religious families, registered voters, election year attentives, and “Influentials.”

Research Design

- Nationally representative random (RDD) sample of 1,007 U.S. adults, 18 years and older.
- Telephone interviews conducted January 14-16, 2005.
- Margin of error at 95% confidence level is ± 3 percentage points.

Definition: “Influentials are individuals who have done three or more of the following activities: attended a public meeting on town or school affairs, written or called any politician, served on a committee for a local organization, served as an officer for an organization, wrote a letter to the editor or called a live radio or TV show to express an opinion, been an active member of any group that tries to influence public policy or government.

Sample Characteristics

- **Gender:** 52% women, 48% men
- **Region:** 19% Northeast, 23% Midwest, 36% South, 23% West
- **Age:** 31% 18-34, 38% 35-54, 30% 55 and older
- **Education:** 72% not college graduates, 25% college graduates
- **Ethnic identity:** 68% Caucasian, 12% Black, 12% Latino, 2% Asian, 7% other or unreported
- **Political party:** 29% Republican, 34% Democrat, 23% Independent, 14% other or unreported
- **Registered voters:** 86%
- **Closely followed Presidential election:** 79%
- **Someone in family serves in military:** 51%
- **Attend religious services regularly:** 45%

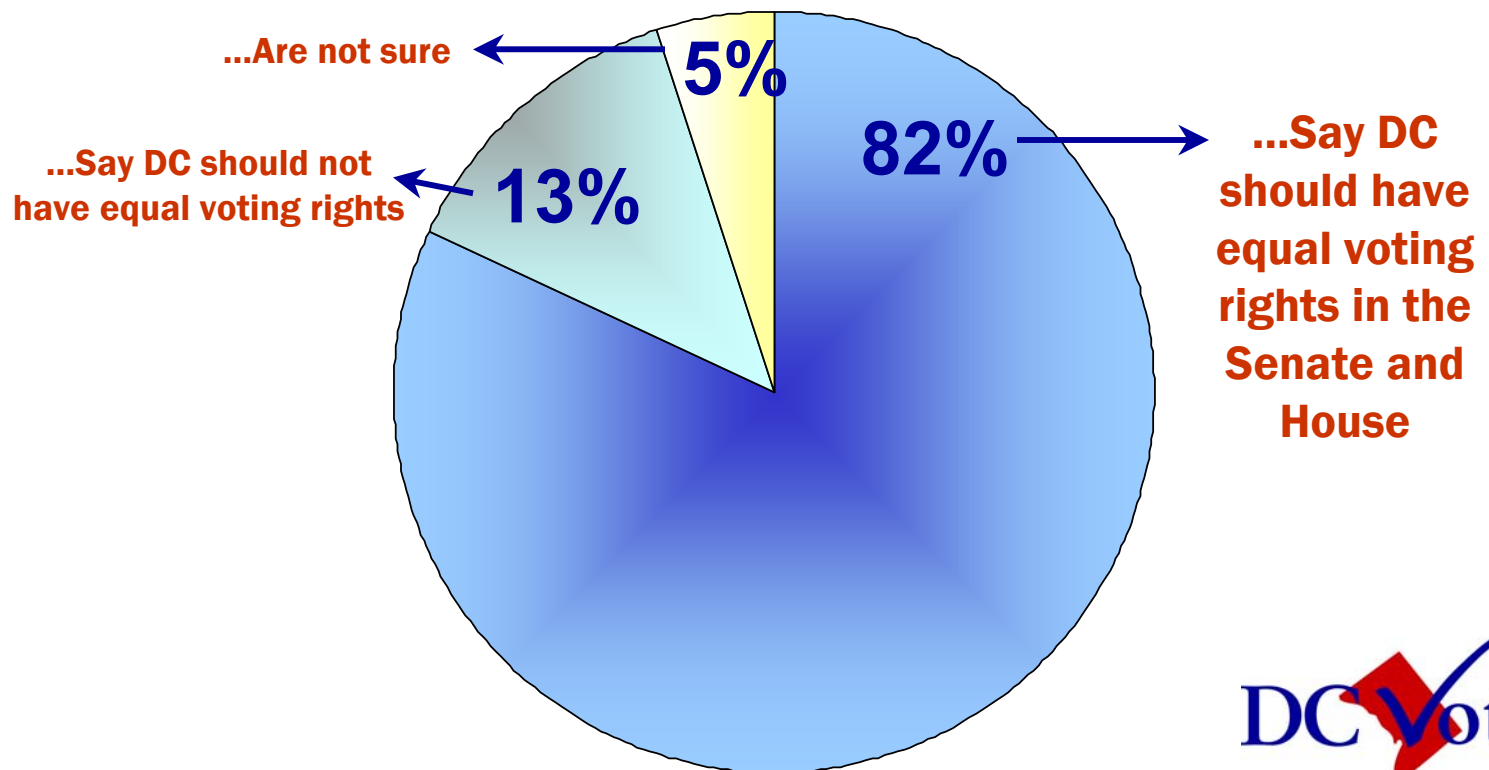
Key Findings

Support for DC Political Rights

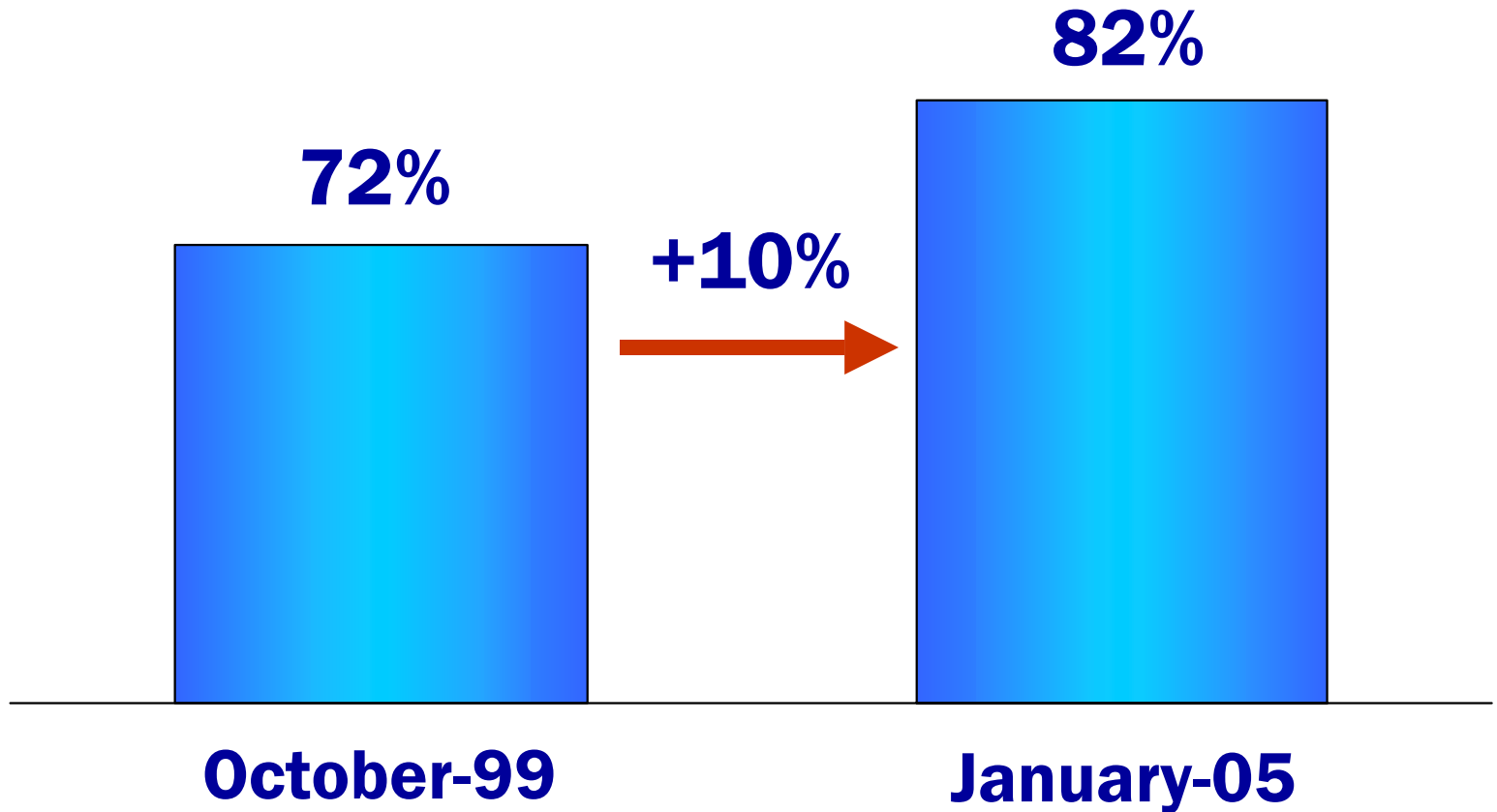
- Support for equal voting rights for DC citizens in the Senate and the House has increased ten percentage points in just over five years: (72% to 82%)
- Support crosses all groups – including political party lines

High Level of Support for Letting DC Vote

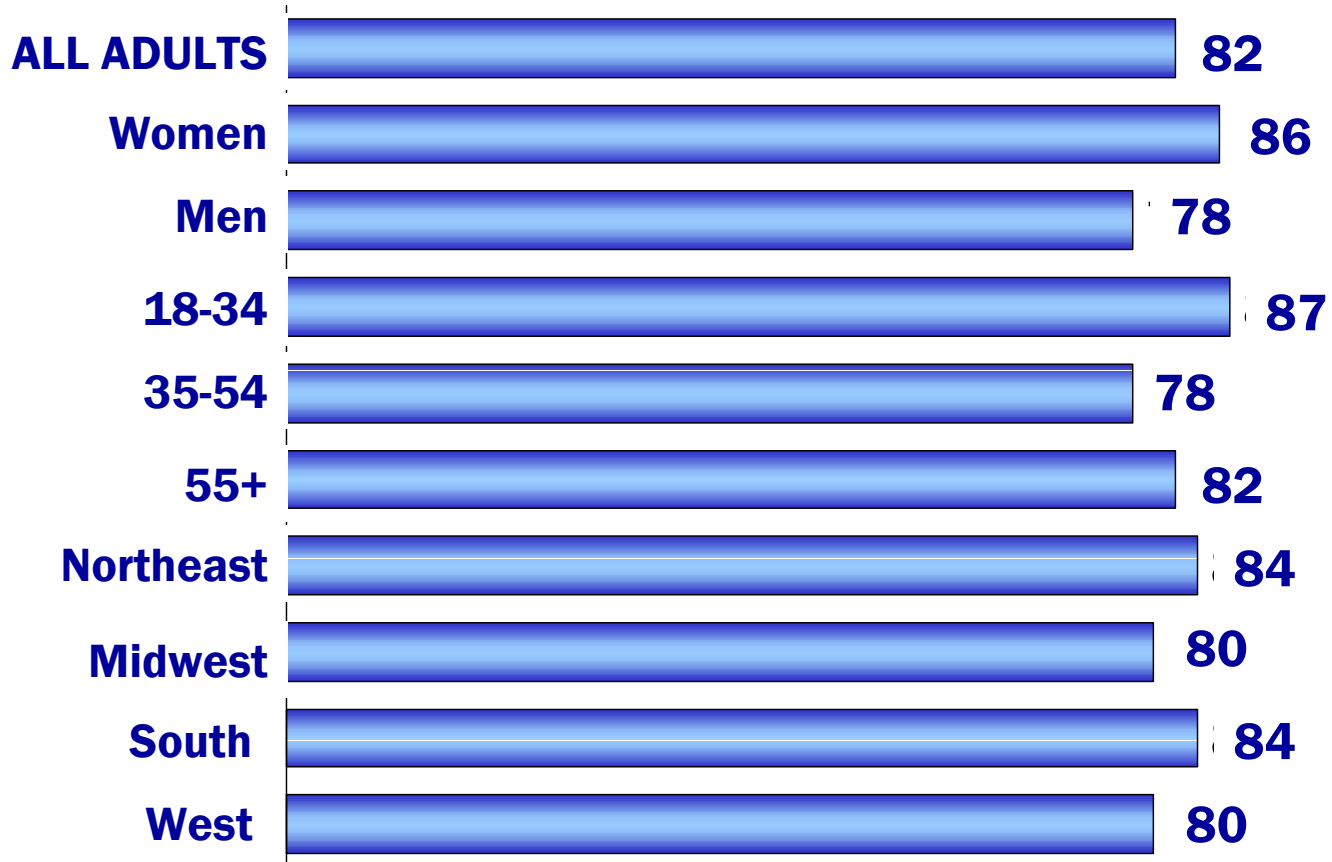
“Nearly six hundred thousand U.S. citizens live in Washington, DC. They pay full federal taxes and fight in every war. But, unlike citizens who live in the 50 states, they do not have voting representation in Congress—neither in the House of Representatives nor in the Senate. **In your opinion, should DC citizens have equal voting rights in the House and the Senate, or not?**”



Support for DC Voting Rights is Up

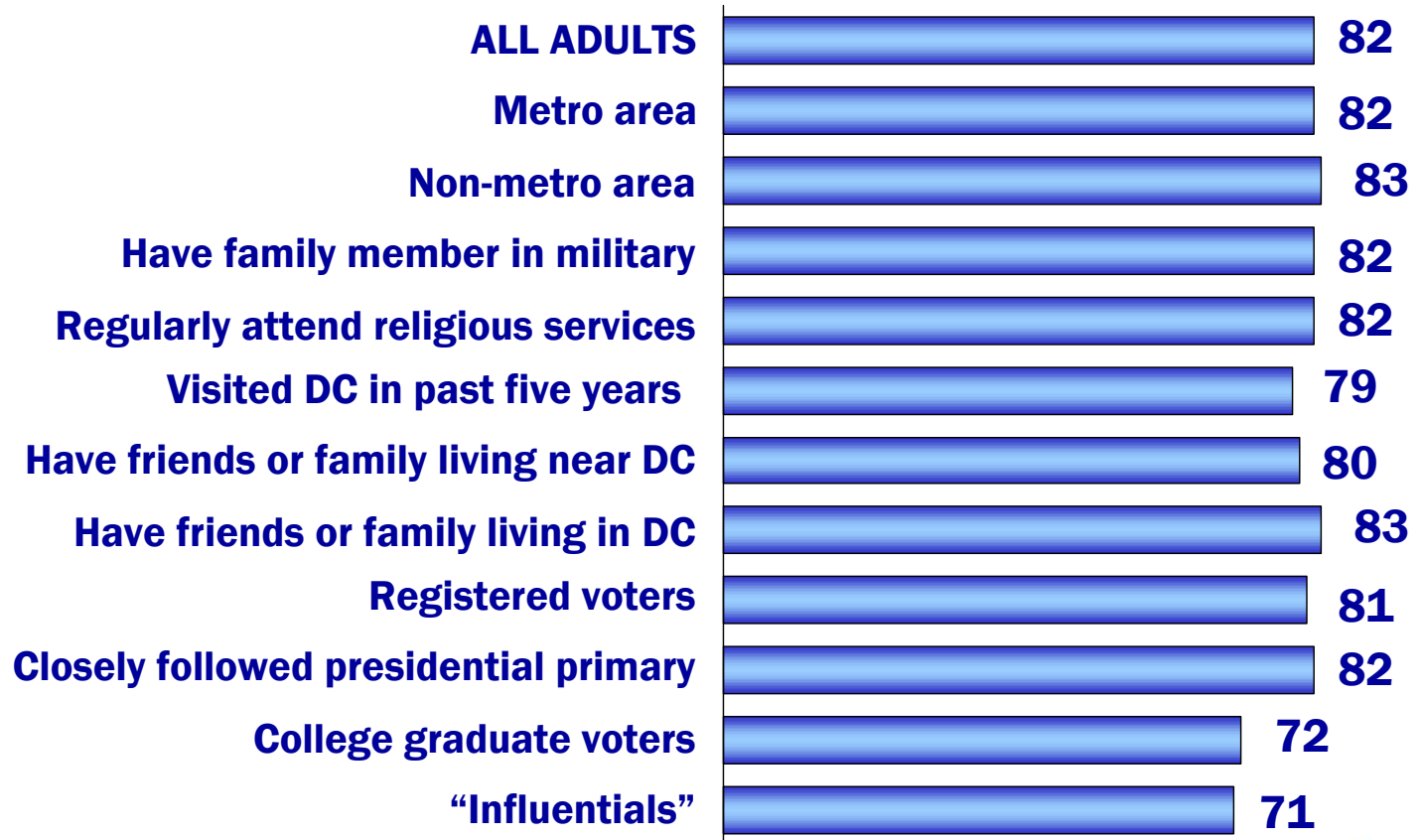


Support Crosses Demographic Groups



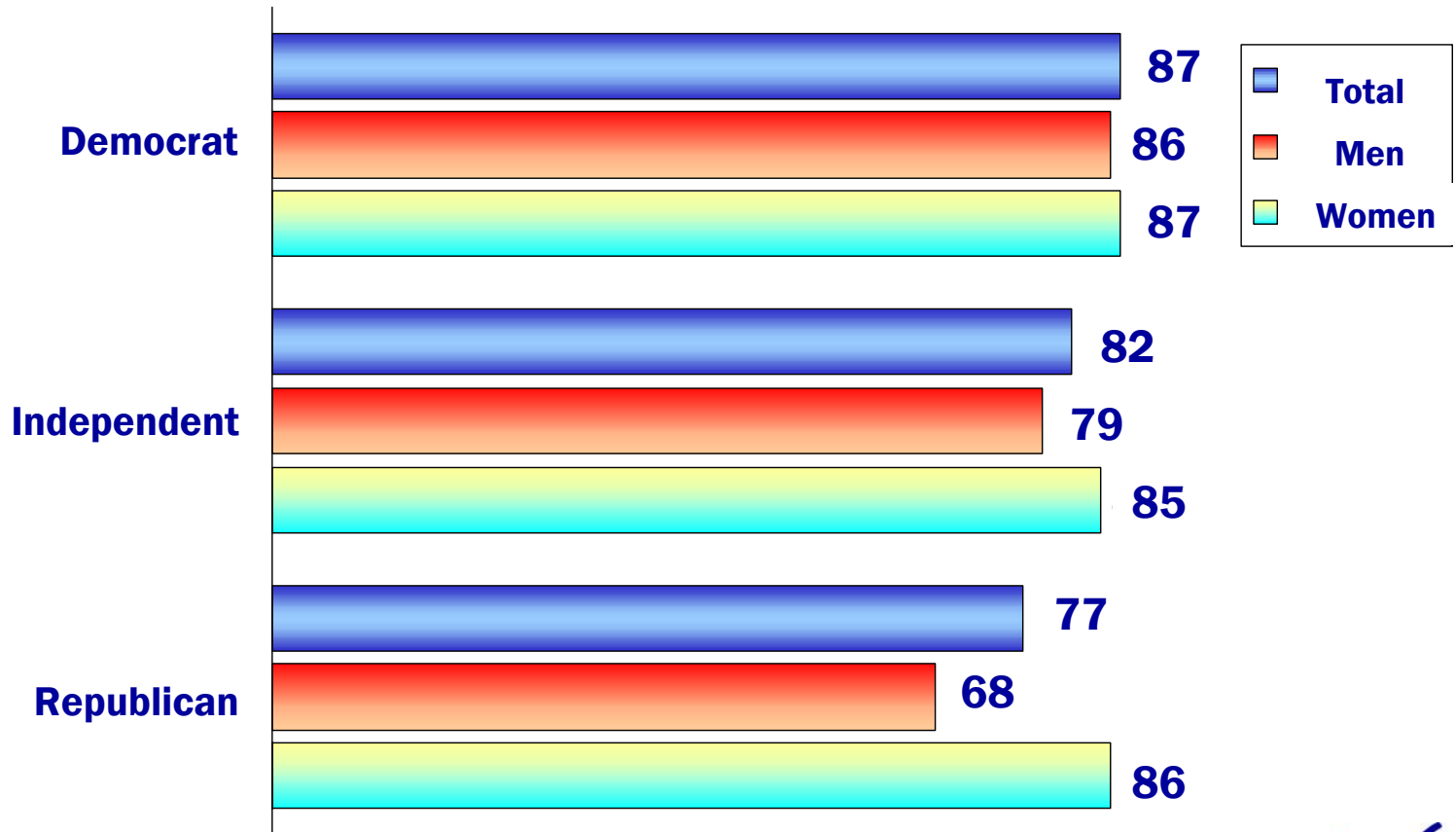
Percent Support Equal Voting Rights

Support Crosses Demographic Groups



Percent Support Equal Voting Rights

Support Crosses Party Lines

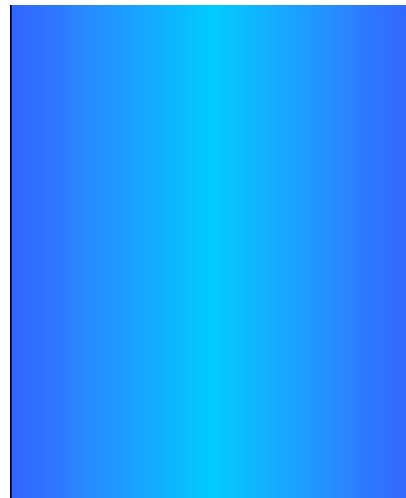


Percent Support Equal Voting Rights

Most Supportive

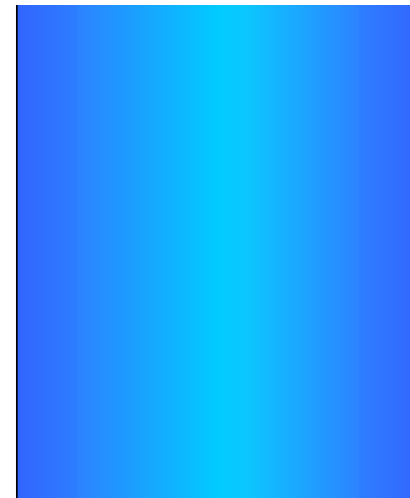
Percent Support Equal Voting Rights

89%



Democrats who closely followed the Presidential Primary

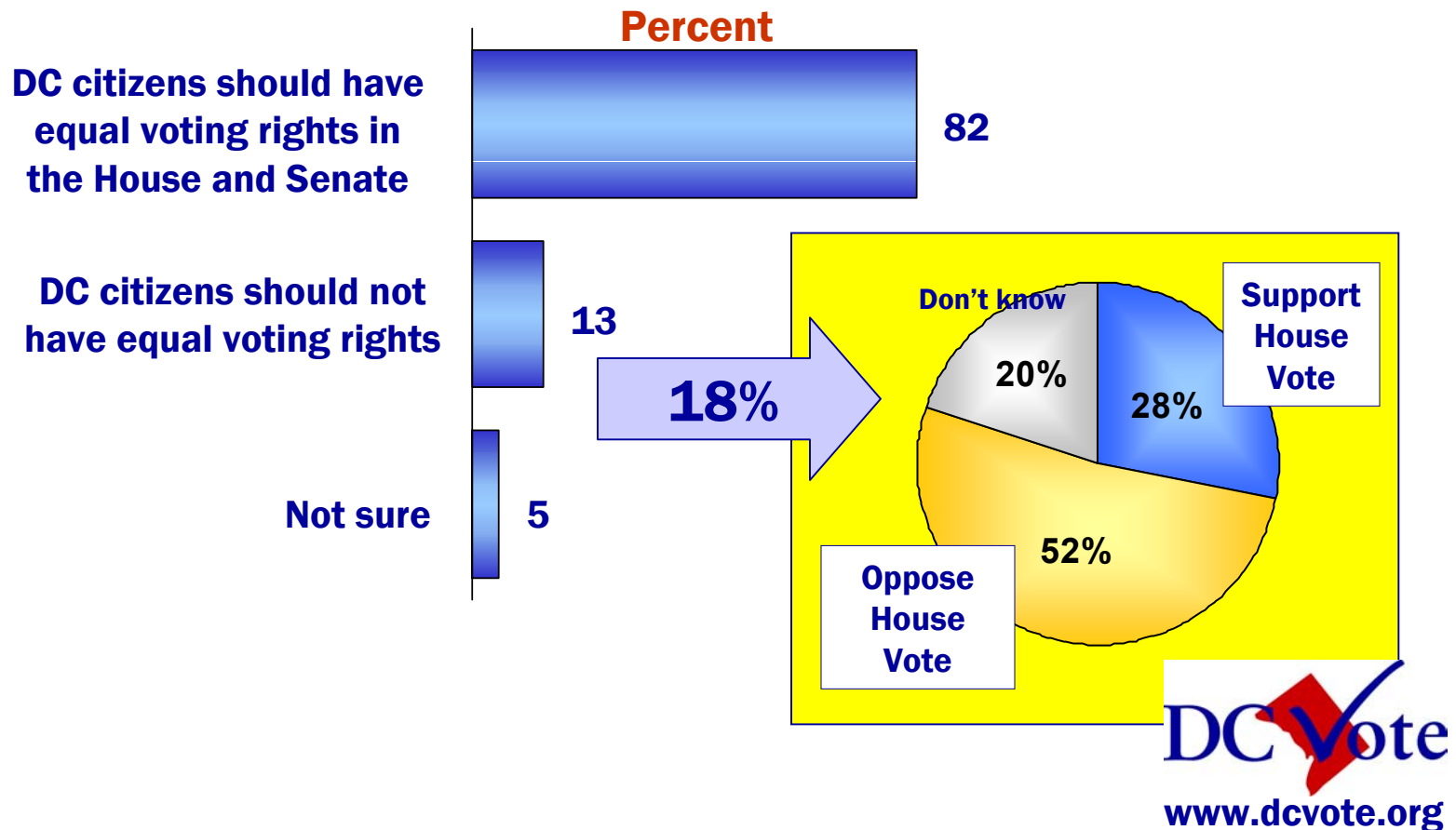
89%



Those aware of DC's license plate slogan

Little Gain for Vote in House Only

IF NO OR DON'T KNOW: "Would you support congressional voting rights for DC citizens in the House of Representatives only?"

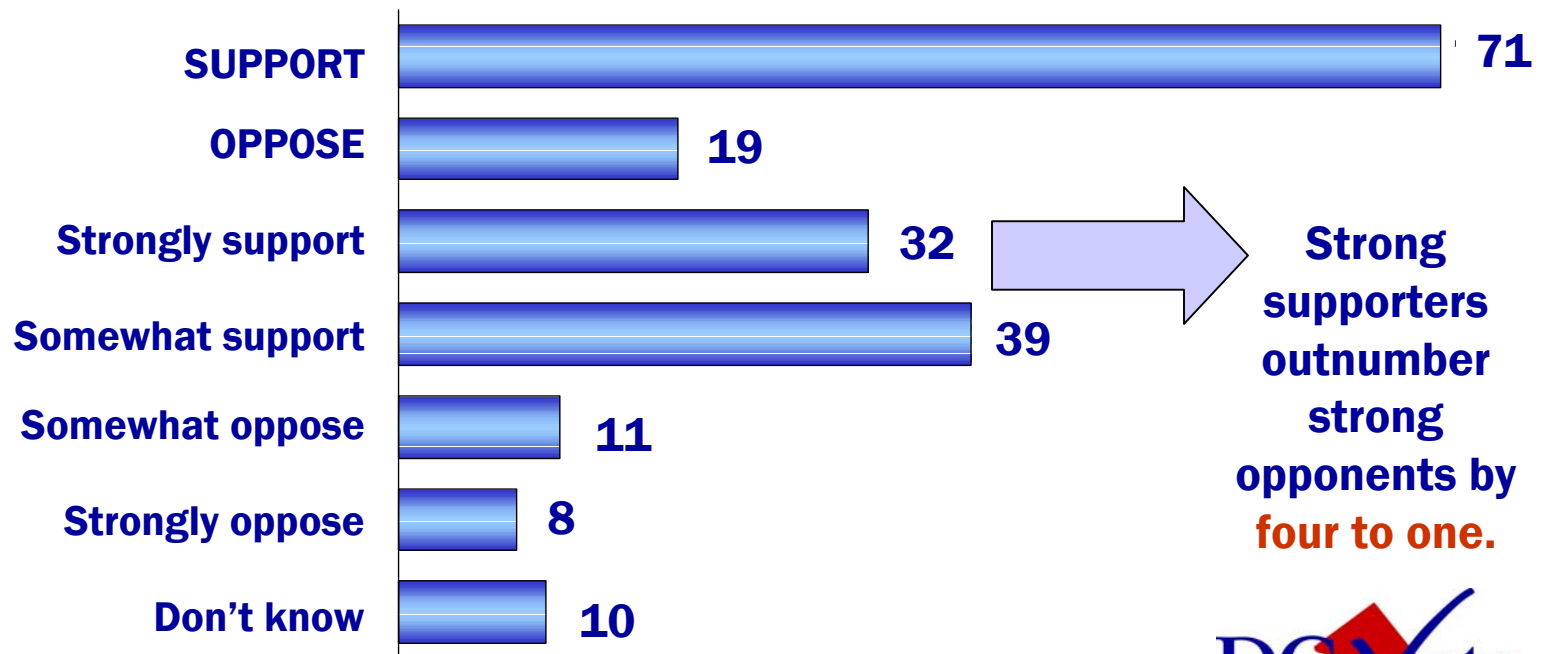


Support for Budget Autonomy

- **Seven in ten Americans** support giving the DC elected government the right to control the local DC budget
- Support for budget autonomy crosses all groups—
including political party lines

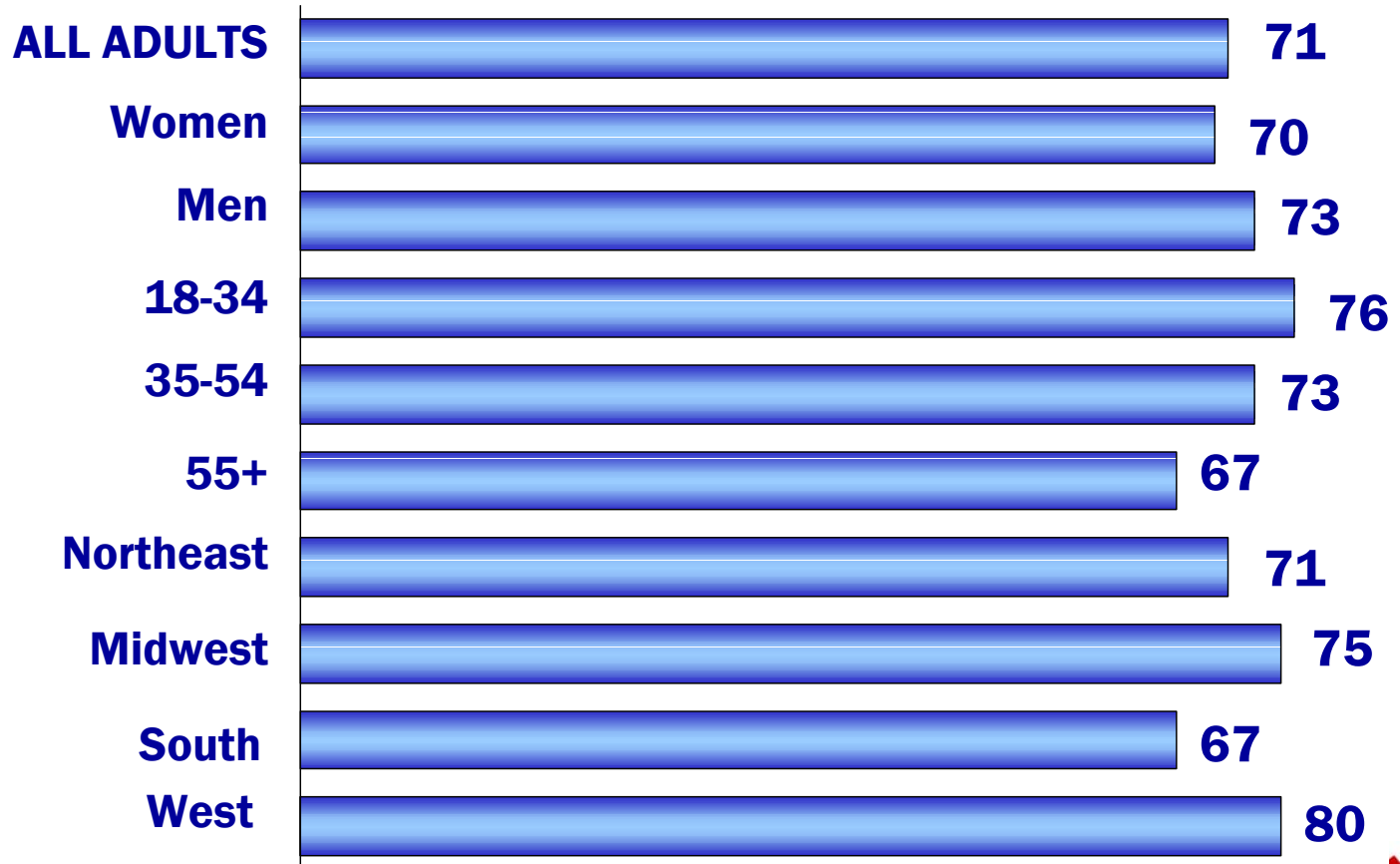
Support for DC Budgetary Control

“Currently DC residents pay for most of the costs of their local government. Unlike other cities and states, DC’s local government budget must be approved by the full Congress. Currently, Congress has final say on how the local DC budget is spent. There is a bill that would give the elected DC government the right to control its own local budget. **Would you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose this bill?**”



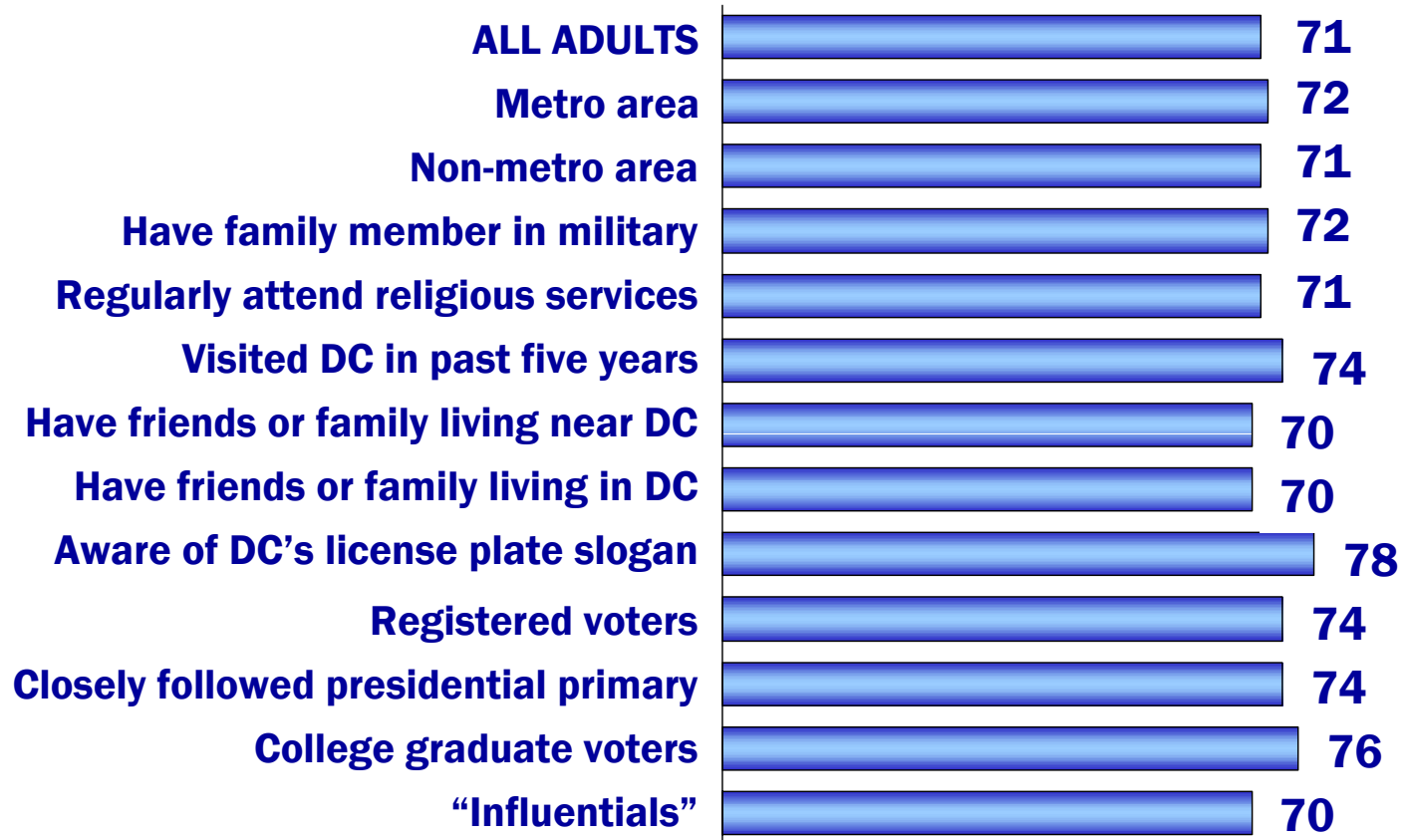
Percent Support Budget Autonomy

Support Crosses Demographic Groups



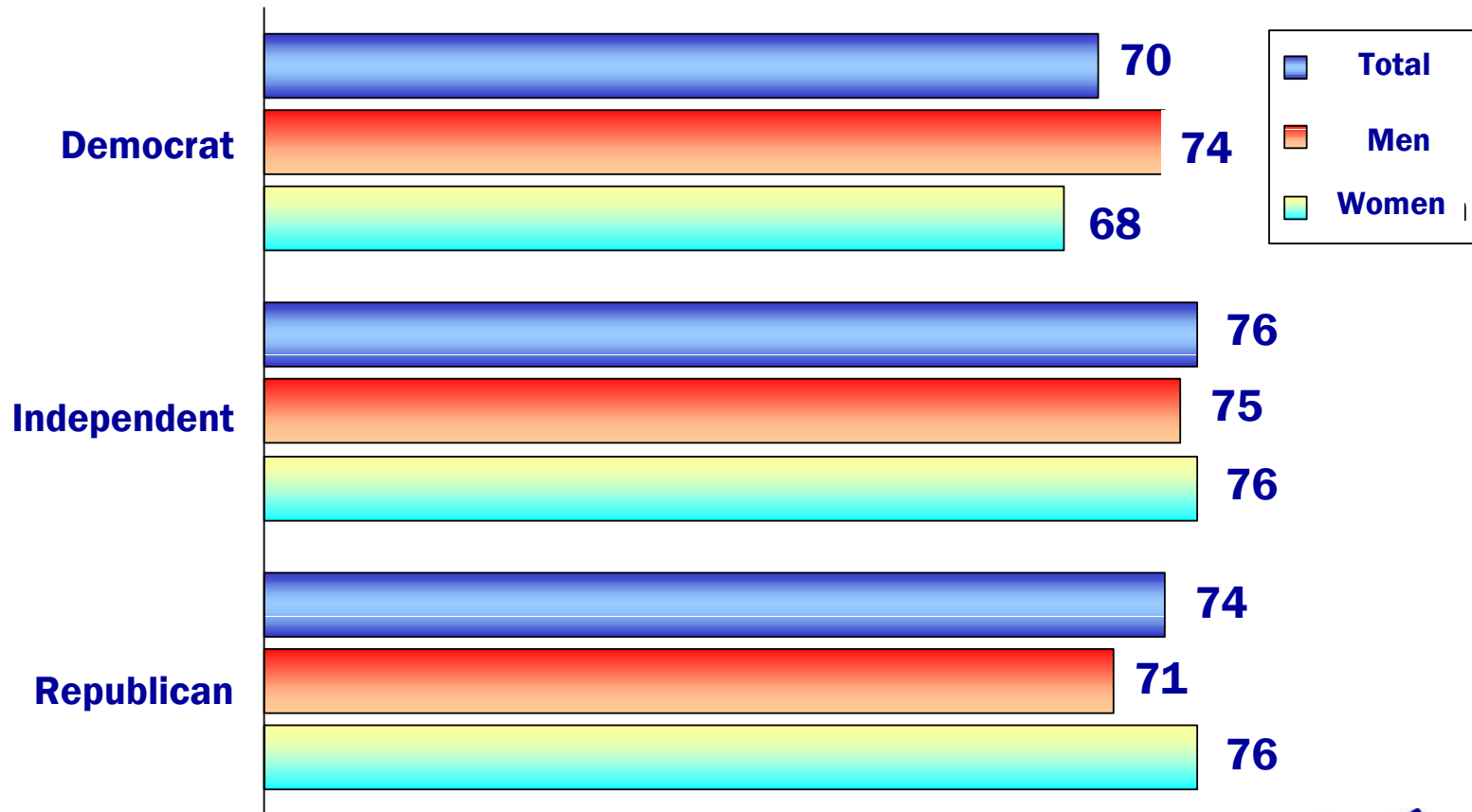
Percent Support Budget Autonomy

Support Crosses Demographic Groups



Percent Support Budget Autonomy

Support Crosses Party Lines



Percent Support Local Budgetary Control

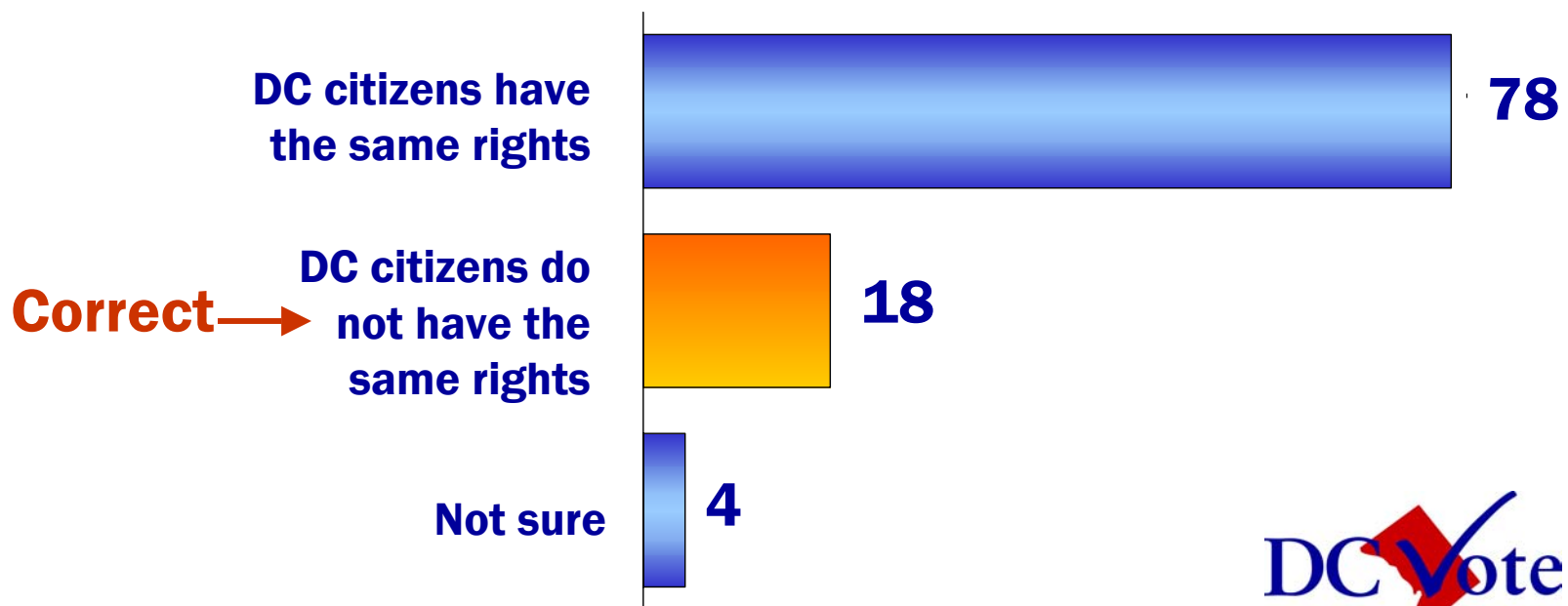
Low Awareness of the Problem

- Just over 80 percent of American adults are not aware that DC does not have equal Constitutional rights, including voting rights in Congress.
- Those who have visited the District are more informed than others.
- A majority are aware that DC citizens pay federal and state income taxes.

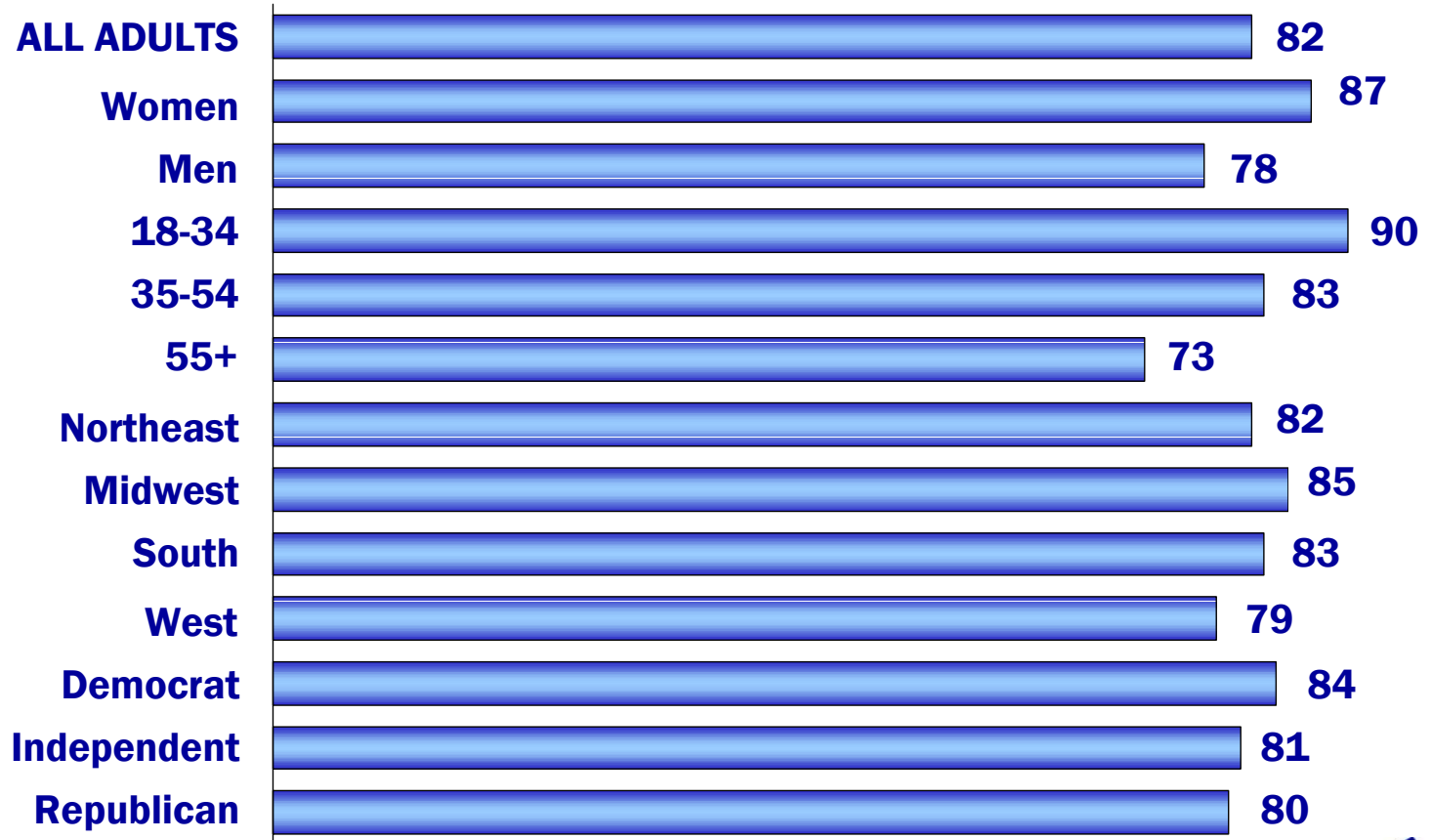
Americans Remain Uninformed about DC's Political Status

“As far as you know, please tell me if each of the following statements is true or false... **Citizens who live in Washington, DC have the same constitutional rights as other U.S. citizens, including equal voting rights in Congress?**”

Percent Not Aware DC Does Not Have Equal Rights

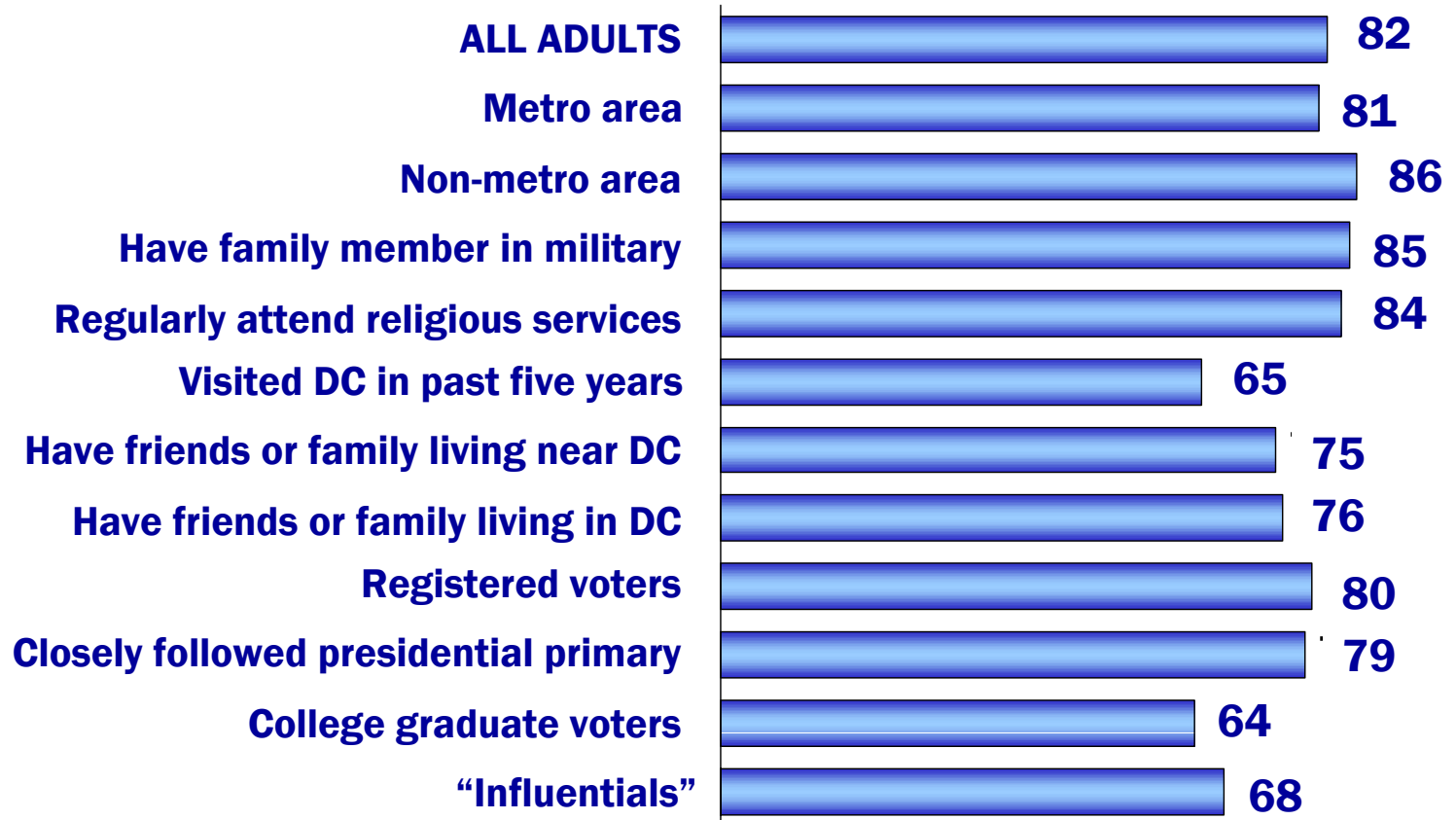


Majority of All Groups are Uninformed



Percent Not Aware DC Does Not Have Equal Rights

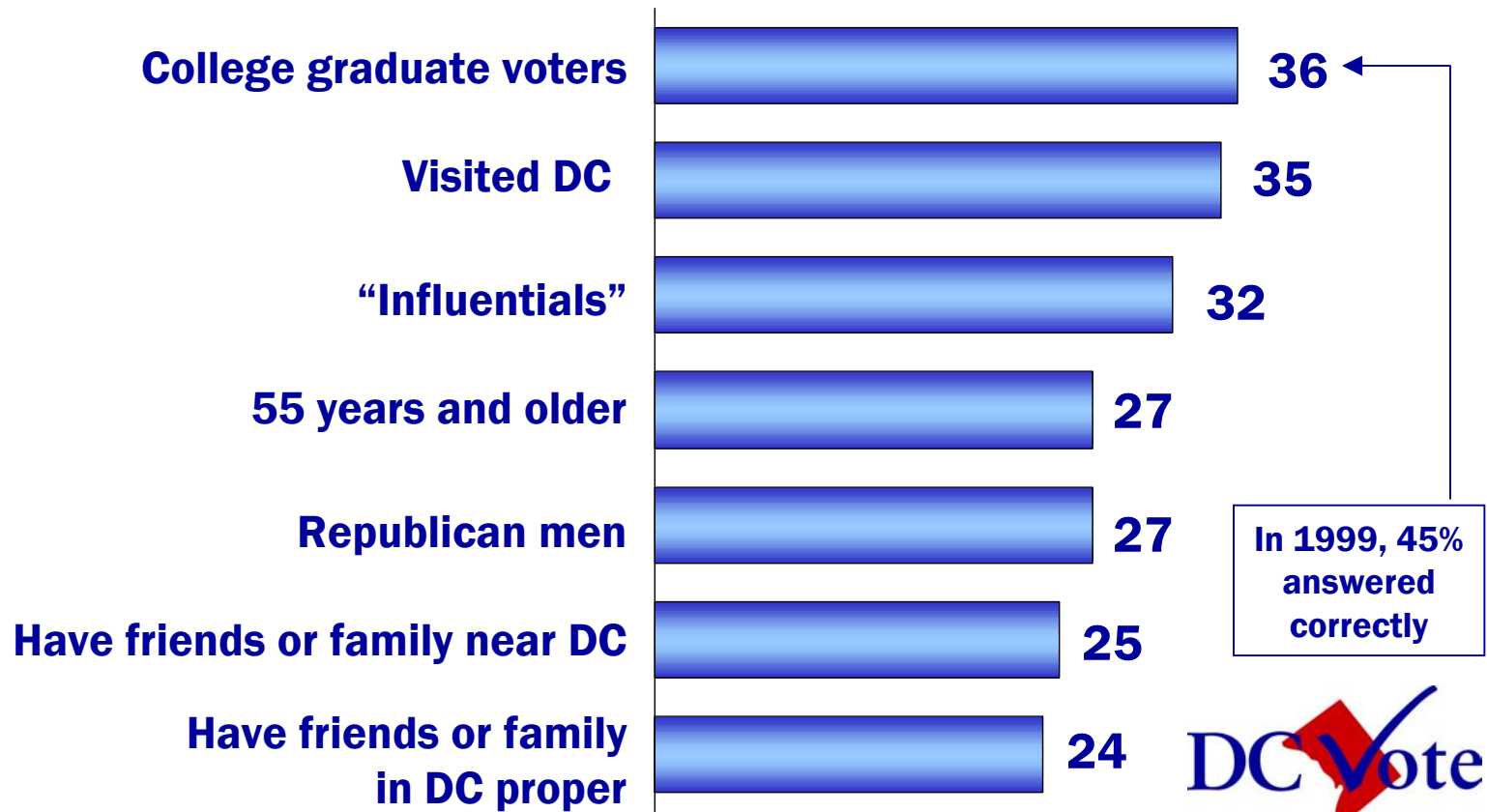
Majority of All Groups are Uninformed



Percent Not Aware DC Does Not Have Equal Rights

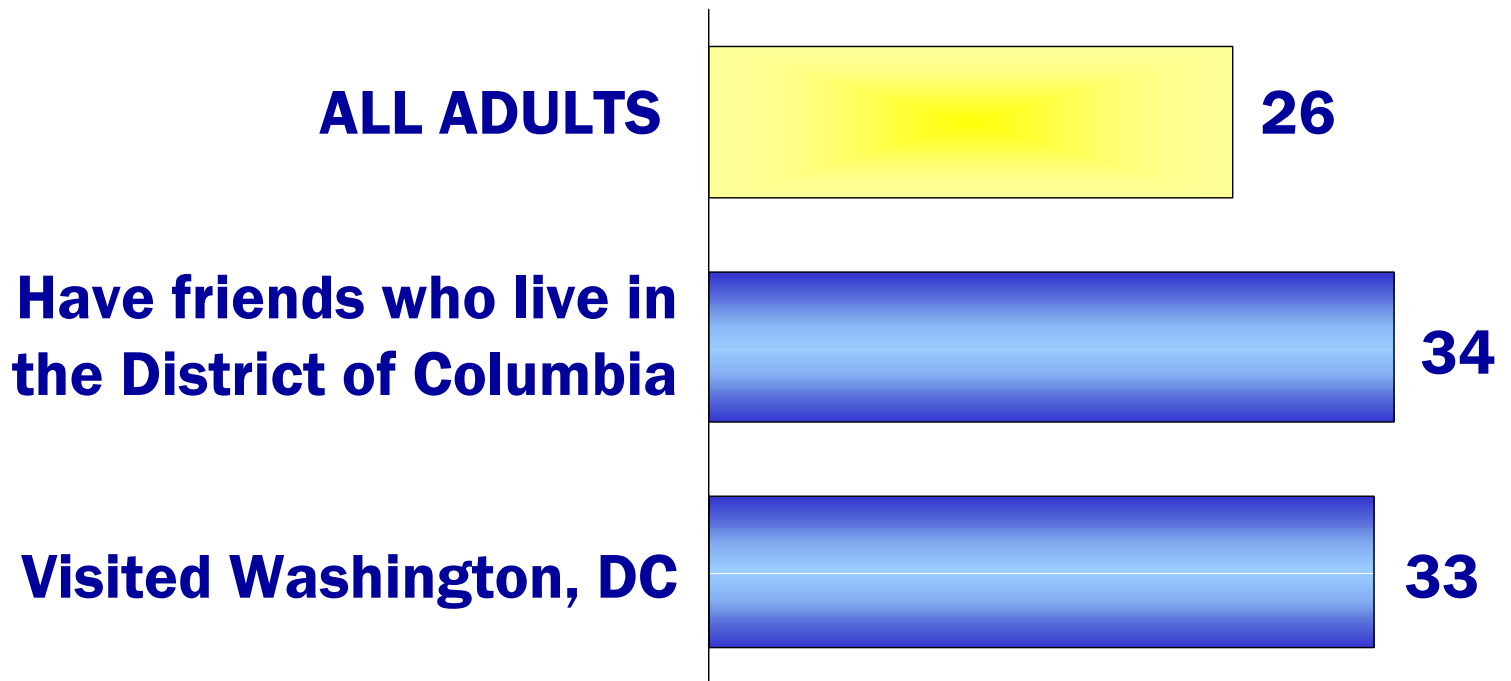
Most Informed Groups

Percent Saying DC Does Not Have Equal Voting Rights in Congress



“Taxation without Representation” license plate

“As far as you know, please tell me if each of the following statements is true or false...**The citizens of Washington, DC changed their license plate motto to ‘Taxation without Representation’ to protest not having Congressional voting rights.**”



Percent Aware

Most Americans Assume DC Pays Federal and State Income taxes

“As far as you know, please tell me if each of the following statements is true or false...”

**DC citizens pay
no federal
income taxes**

76

**DC citizens
pay no state
or local
income taxes**

63

Percent Saying “False”

Messages for Communicating About DC Political Rights

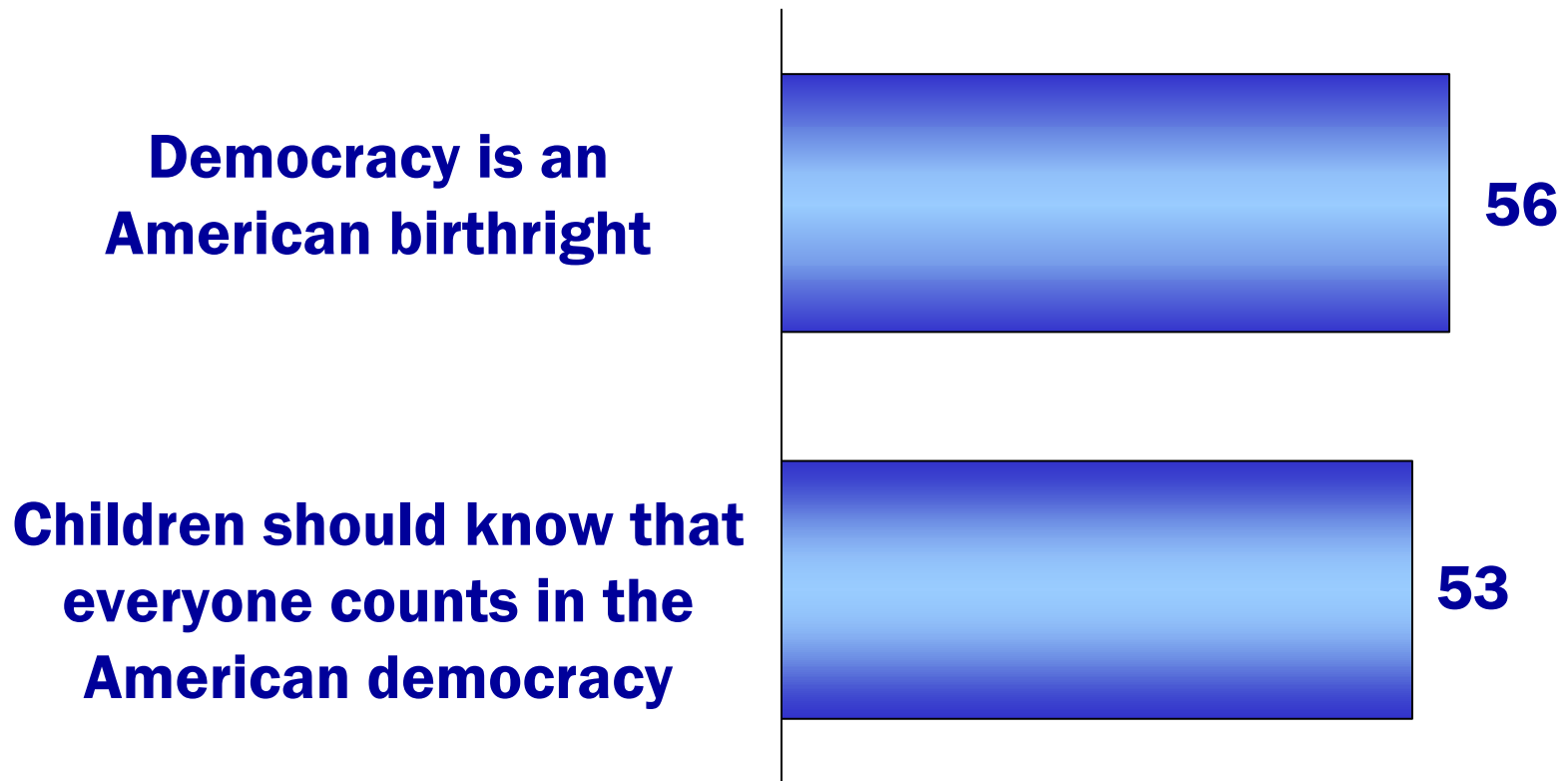
- There are compelling reasons for supporting equal Congressional voting rights for DC.

Good Reasons for Supporting Equal DC Voting Rights



Percent Saying "Good" or "Excellent" reason to Support Equal DC Voting Rights

Excellent Reasons for Supporting Equal DC Voting Rights



Percent Saying “Excellent” reason to Support Equal DC Voting Rights

Questionnaire

Questionnaire

Now I'm going to ask you a few questions about U.S. citizens who live in Washington, DC.

As far as you know, please tell me if each of the following statements is true or false:

	True %	False %	Not Sure %
1. Citizens who live in Washington, DC have the same constitutional rights as other U.S. citizens, including equal voting rights in Congress.	78	18	4
2. Washington, DC citizens pay no federal income taxes.	12	76	12
3. Washington, DC citizens pay no state or local income taxes.	19	63	17

Questionnaire

- 4a. **SPLIT SAMPLE A:** Nearly six hundred thousand U.S. citizens live in Washington, DC. Under the U.S. Constitution, Congress has exclusive legislative authority over the District government. Since 1961, DC citizens have had the right to vote in presidential elections. And since 1974 they have elected a limited home rule government paid for mostly by local taxes. DC citizens also pay full federal taxes and fight in every war. But, unlike citizens who live in the 50 states, they do not have voting representation in Congress—neither in the House of Representatives nor in the Senate. In your opinion, should DC citizens have equal voting rights in the House and the Senate, or not?
- 4b. **SPLIT SAMPLE B:** Nearly six hundred thousand U.S. citizens live in Washington, DC. They pay full federal taxes and fight in every war. But, unlike citizens who live in the 50 states, they do not have voting representation in Congress—neither in the House of Representatives nor in the Senate. In your opinion, should DC citizens have equal voting rights in the House and the Senate, or not?

	Combined (1,007)	Version A (515)	Version B (492)
Yes, DC residents should have equal voting rights	82	82	83
No, DC residents should NOT have equal voting rights	13	13	13
Don't know	5	5	4

IF NO OR DON'T KNOW: Would you support Congressional voting rights for DC citizens in the House of Representatives only?

Support voting rights in the House only	28
Do not support voting rights in the House	52
Don't know	20

Questionnaire

I'm going to read you some statements. For each one, please tell me if that statement is an excellent, a good, a fair, or a poor reason for why American citizens living in Washington, DC should have equal voting rights in the Senate and the House of Representatives. First... (ROTATE LIST)

	Excellent or Good %	Excellent %	Good %	Fair %	Poor %	Don't know %
5. Democracy is an American birthright—all American citizens should have the right to vote in their national legislature.	86	56	30	7	4	3
6. Washington, DC citizens should be able to teach their children that everyone counts in American democracy.	83	53	30	9	5	3
7. Everyone who pays federal taxes should have voting representatives in Congress, where the decisions are made on taxes and spending.	79	49	30	11	6	4
8. Washington, DC citizens have fought and died proudly for the United States in every war, and they are fighting in Iraq today.	77	47	30	11	8	4

Questionnaire

	Excellent or Good %	Excellent %	Good %	Fair %	Poor %	Don't know %
9. The U.S. is promoting democracy in places like Iraq—it should promote democracy here at home in its national capital.	73	43	30	12	10	5
10. Even though I don't live in Washington DC, when one citizen's vote is taken away, American democracy suffers and it affects us all.	70	41	28	14	11	5
11. Washington, DC should be a positive example of American democracy in the world, not the only national capital in the world that has taxation without representation.	70	38	32	15	9	5

Questionnaire

12. Currently DC residents pay for most of the costs of their local government. Unlike other cities and states, DC's local government budget must be approved by the full Congress. Currently, Congress has final say on how the local DC budget is spent. There is a bill that would give the elected DC government the right to control its own local budget. Would you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose this bill?

	%
SUPPORT	71
Strongly support	32
Somewhat support	39
OPPOSE	19
Somewhat oppose	11
Strongly oppose	8
Don't know	10

Questionnaire

As far as you know, please tell me if each of the following statements is true or false:

	True %	False %	Don't know %
13. The citizens of Washington, DC changed their license plate motto to "Taxation without Representation" to protest not having Congressional voting rights	26	45	29
14. You have visited Washington, DC in the past five years	22	77	1
15. You have friends or family who live <u>near</u> Washington, DC	37	61	1
16. You have friends or family who live <u>in</u> Washington, DC itself	12	87	1
17. You closely followed the Presidential election during 2004	79	19	1
18. You or someone in your family serves in the U.S. military	47	51	1
19. You attend religious services regularly	54	45	1
20. You are registered to vote	86	13	1

About KRC Research

- KRC Research is a full service, non-partisan, worldwide opinion research firm with offices in the District of Columbia, New York, Boston, and London. For over 25 years KRC has conducted a full range of custom qualitative and quantitative research projects for Fortune 500 companies, trade associations, governments, non-profit organizations, advertising and public relations agencies.
- KRC Research has worked in most industry and economic sectors including aerospace, agriculture, aviation, banking, biotechnology, development and facility siting, education, energy, entertainment, environment, financial services, government, health care, insurance, litigation support, marketing, regulatory, retail, and sports.

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