

PERRY



# Communicating to Voters on Crime-related Attacks

RESEARCH CONDUCTED FOR VERA ACTION  
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JUNE 2023

UNDEM



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# Goal.

Explore new, visionary ways to talk about accountability when it comes to public safety.



# Methods.

- 20-minute survey of  $n = 2,804$  registered voters, including oversamples for totals of:
  - $N = 400$  Black voters
  - $N = 400$  Latina/o/x voters
  - $N = 416$  AAPI voters
- Conducted April 20 – May 5, 2023
- Using YouGov’s online panel

Note: All polling has many sources of error. We recommend interpreting polling data as “evidence” of what may be rather than a precise reflection of reality.

Sample composition.

	Weighted %	N size (Unweighted)
Total	100	2,804
Women	53	1,529
Men	47	1,240
18 to 29	13	383
30 to 44	24	686
45 to 59	21	646
60+	41	1,089
Black	12	400
Latina/o/x	10	400
AAPI	5	416
White	71	1,427
< College	60	1,607
College +	40	1,197

	Weighted %	N size (Unweighted)
Democrats	39	1,195
Independents	30	876
Republicans	32	733
City	38	1,129
Suburb	32	955
Town	13	319
Rural area	17	401
Northeast	19	537
Midwest	21	454
South	37	1,020
West	23	793

**Key takeaways.**



## Key takeaways.

### HERE'S WHAT THE DATA SUGGEST.

Since last summer, there hasn't been much movement on prioritizing crime as a voting issue.

Crime continues to be salient, but not the top issue for most voters.

The Democratic base and moveable audiences are much more likely to prioritize “gun violence” over “crime.”

There are many openings for talking about accountability in new, more values-aligned ways:

The accountability message we tested (at right), rooted in restorative justice models, may be a major breakthrough. This message is broadly popular: 96% agree with and 73% agree strongly.

83% of respondents say they would've been interested in hearing Democratic candidates talk about this in the last election.

The message at right is correlated with several desired outcomes, such as:

- + Feeling positive about Democratic candidates
- + Feelings of ease / safety related to big cities if this were in place
- + Feeling safer in their own communities if this were in place



### **Accountability message**

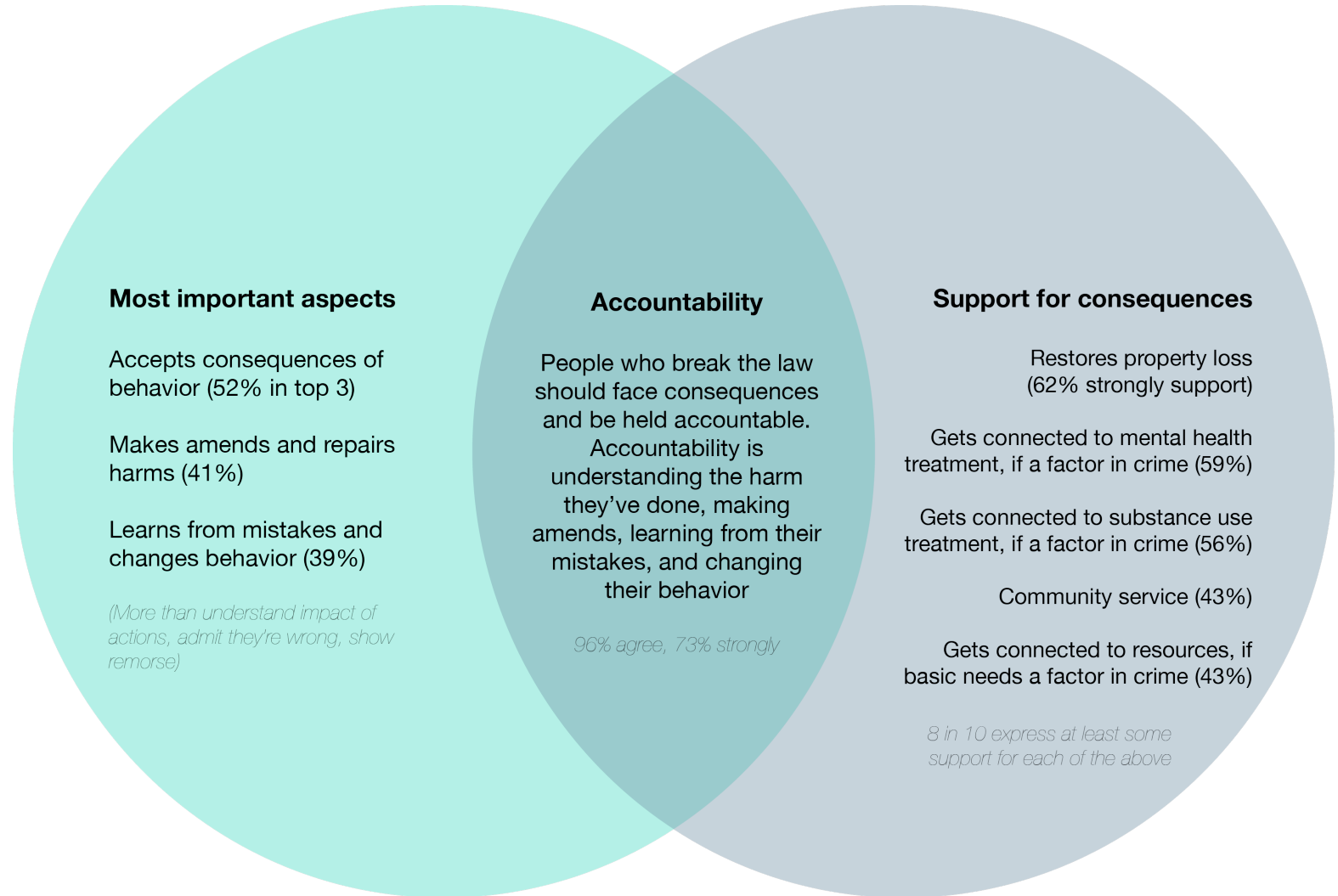
People who break the law should face consequences and be held accountable.

Accountability is understanding the harm they've done, making amends, learning from their mistakes, and changing their behavior.

*96% agree, 73% strongly*



Data also suggest there are openings for talking about and building support for non-carceral consequences.



By +24 points, respondents think an accountability approach to crime would be more effective than a punishment approach (62% v. 38%).

74% agree a prison system focused only on punishment creates more violence.

In a head-to-head matchup, the message at right outperforms a strong tough-on-crime attack by +14 points.

Data suggest that accountability messages might increase positive Democratic brand perceptions among independents and AAPI voters.

Beats opposition by +14 pts:

If we want safe communities, people who break the law must be held accountable. This means seeing the harm they've done, accepting the consequences, learning from mistakes, and changing their behavior. We already know that harsh punishments alone, without accountability, lead to more violence. Both Democrats and Republicans tried that in the 1990s and it failed. It's time to learn from new programs, with impressive track records of success, that are holding people accountable and preventing them from committing new crimes in the future.

Interest in hearing Democrats talk about these specific accountability concepts is correlated with feeling positive toward candidates in a post-measure.

## **MOST CORRELATED WITH FEELING POSITIVE TOWARD DEMS**

*Hearing Democrats talk about:*

- New ideas that focus on accountability and prevention, not just punishment
- How new programs are having impressive track records of success in holding people accountable, changing their behavior, and as a result, preventing future crime
- How we can hold people accountable when they break the law / including alternatives to jail and prison time
- How a prison system focused only on punishment creates more violence

*Also correlated:*

- How to eliminate systemic racism in our criminal justice system
- Being part of the solution, not just attacking the other side

# Communications guidance.

## On accountability.

CONSIDERATIONS	EXAMPLES
Start with safety values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We all deserve to be safe, no matter what we look like, where we come from, or how much money is in our wallets</li></ul>
Affirm belief in consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If we want safe communities, people who break the law must face consequences and be held accountable</li></ul>
Use RJ-rooted accountability message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accountability means understanding the harm they've done, making amends, learning from their mistakes, and changing their behavior</li><li>• Note: Include "accepting the consequences" for more moderate audiences / in campaigns</li></ul>
In expanded messaging, describe consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consequences can include incarceration, restitution to victims, community service, participation in treatment and programs, and other responsibilities</li><li>• Note: You can exclude "incarceration" when talking to Democratic audiences</li></ul>
End with a values-based call to action, vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• By joining together and demanding more, we can create safer, freer, happier communities for all of us</li></ul>

## On accountability (cont.).

CONSIDERATIONS	EXAMPLES	NOTABLE DIFFERENCES
<p>Use these top messages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let's include new ideas that focus on accountability and prevention, not just punishment</li> <li>• It's time to learn from new programs, with impressive track records of success, that are holding people accountable and preventing them from committing new crimes in the future</li> <li>• Alt: New programs are having impressive track records of success in holding people accountable, changing their behavior, and as a result, preventing future crime</li> <li>• We know that harsh punishments alone, without accountability, lead to more violence</li> <li>• Accountability needs to start with elected officials. That means being part of the solution, not just attacking the other side</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Democrats: Want to hear Dems talk about how to eliminate systemic racism</li> <li>• Black voters: RJ-rooted accountability message #1 by 10+ points; eliminate systemic racism also higher than others</li> <li>• Independent women: #1 want to hear Dems talk about how we can learn from mistakes both political parties have made</li> </ul>

## On accountability (cont.).

CONSIDERATIONS	EXAMPLES
<p>Consider these candidate responses to attack</p>	<p>For broad audiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If we want safe communities, people who break the law must be held accountable. This means seeing the harm they've done, accepting the consequences, learning from mistakes, and changing their behavior. We already know that harsh punishments alone, without accountability, lead to more violence. It's time to learn from new programs, with impressive track records of success, that are holding people accountable and preventing them from committing new crimes in the future. By joining together and demanding more, we can create safer, freer, happier communities for all of us.</li></ul> <p>For college-educated voters of color:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Most of us believe that when we know better, we should do better. The data are clear: harsh sentences – supported by Democrats and Republicans in the 1990s – don't deter crime. In fact, a prison system focused only on punishment creates more violence. We're learning more every day about how to hold people accountable when they break the law, prevent crime from happening in the first place, and create safer communities. I'm committed to doing better – because we know better.</li></ul>

## On accountability (cont.).

CONSIDERATIONS	EXAMPLES
If needed to describe opponents' motivations – would not spend much, if any, time here	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trying to stir up people's emotions, rile people up so they get votes</li><li>• Trying to scare people into voting for them</li></ul>
For advocates	<p>Your base / Democrats are very open to ways to hold people accountable with alternatives to jail / prison – now's the time to start the conversation (see next page)</p> <p>You can also start the conversation about an entire system that focuses on accountability v. punishment</p>

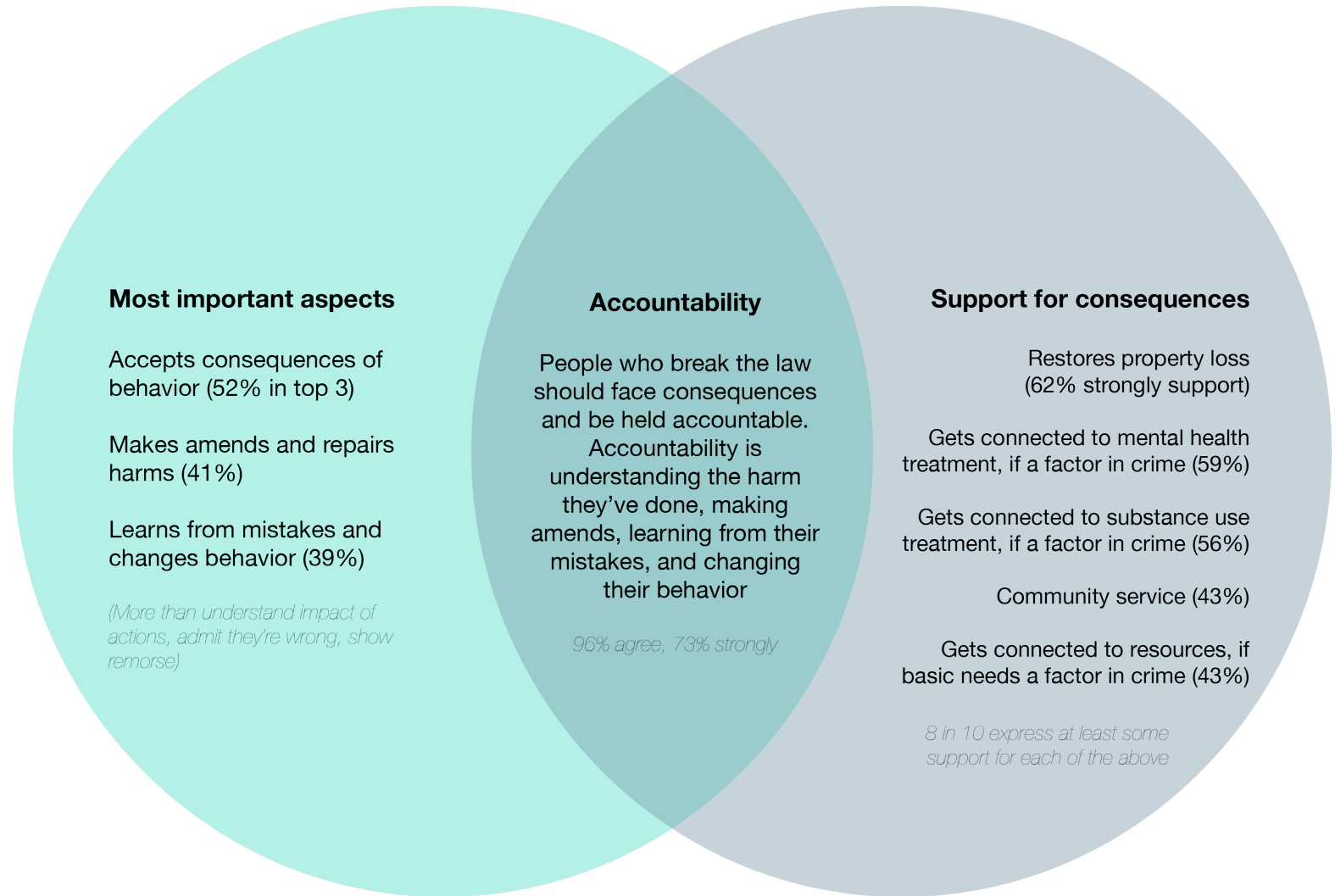


**Advocates:**

Consider these messages and concepts in your communications.

Use “gets connected to” and “if it was a factor in why they broke the law” as a starting place for treatment and resources.

Note that white Democrats are particularly primed and ready for this conversation.



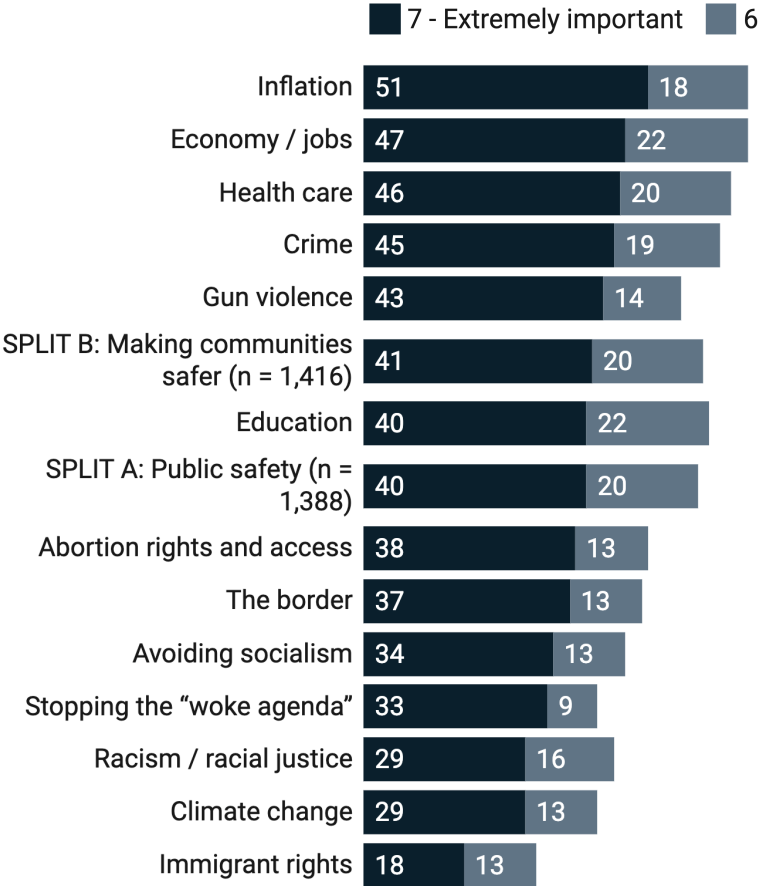
**Detailed findings.**

Crime as a voting issue.



Think about how you decide to vote for a candidate.  
How important is each of these issues to you  
personally when it comes to voting?  
1 to 7 not important to extremely important  
RANDOMIZED

**Crime is still on the list of  
voting priorities.**





**We don't see evidence of shifts in priority over the past year.**

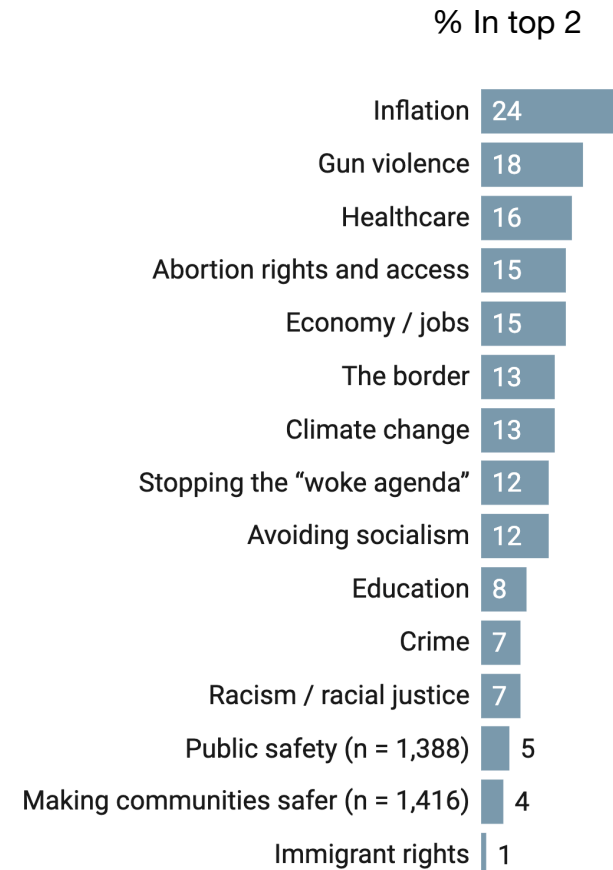
Think about how you decide to vote for a candidate.  
How important is each of these issues to you personally when it comes to [2022: voting this year? / 2023: voting?]  
1 to 7 not important to extremely important |  
RANDOMIZED



**When asked to choose their top priority, crime falls to the bottom – and gun violence is among the top.**

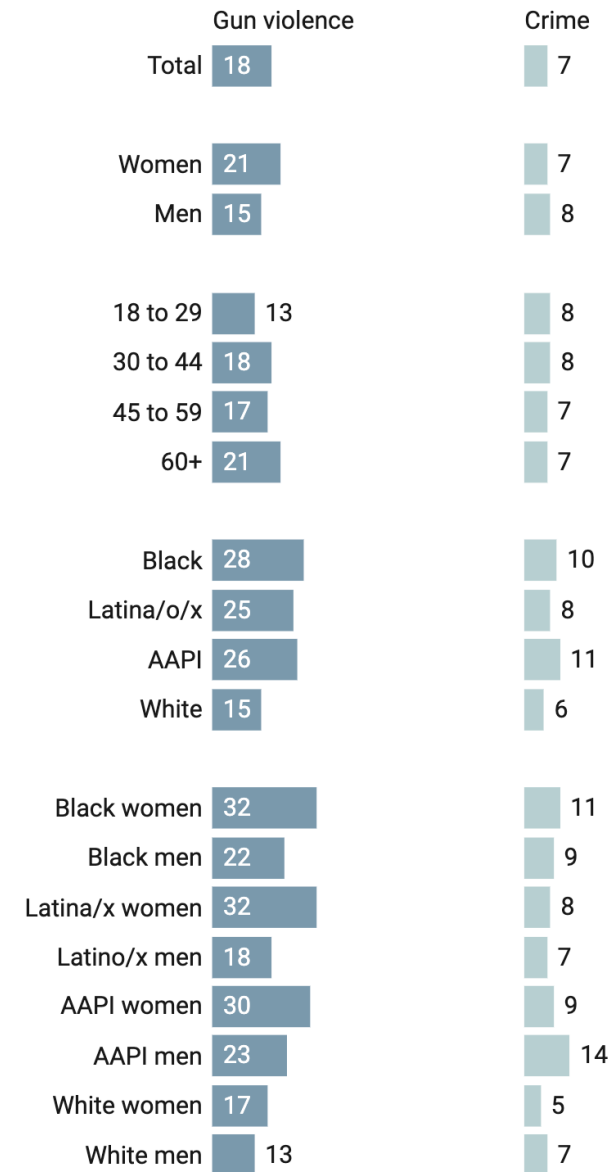
These results mirror what we saw in the post-election data, including from exit polls: Voters said they considered crime in their vote, but it wasn't the deciding factor.

If you had to choose one or two, which is the most important voting issue for you personally?  
(Among issues they rated 6 or 7 in previous series)

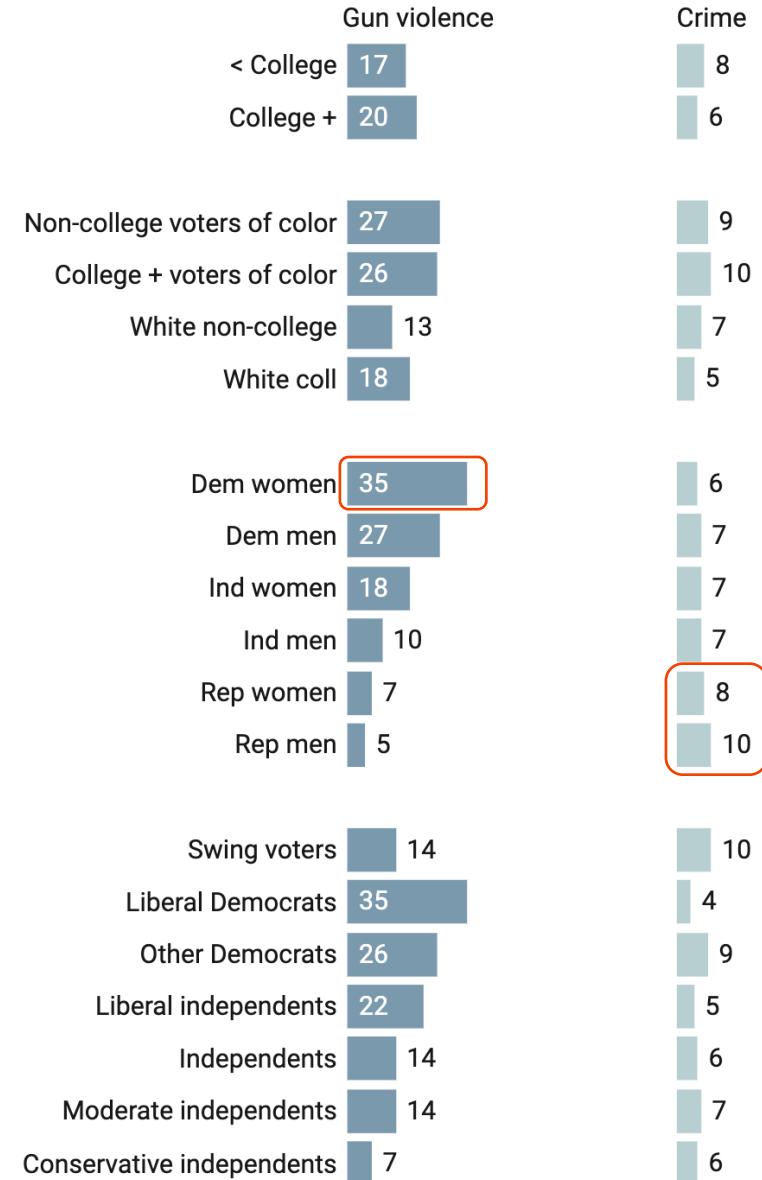


% In top 2

**Gun violence is a top issue for women of color.**



% In top 2

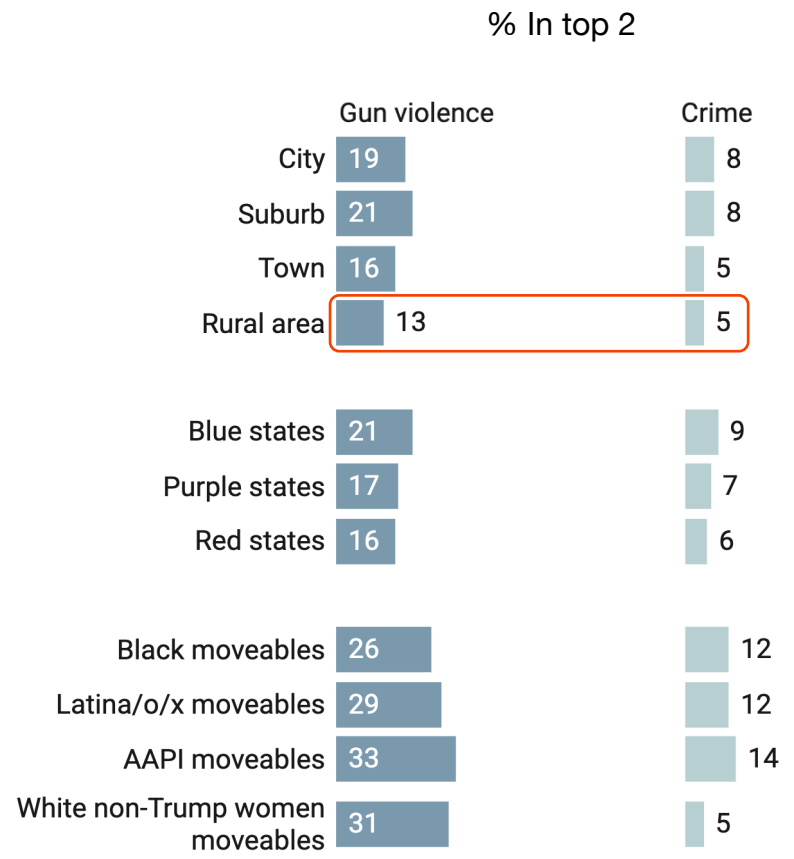


**At this point, crime is not a driving issue for any segment, including Republicans.**

For Republicans, inflation and the border rise to the top (31% and 27%).



**Even among rural respondents, gun violence is more likely than crime to be a top issue.**





Exploring accountability.

**Our core message on accountability (see right), rooted in restorative justice resonates strongly – and broadly.**

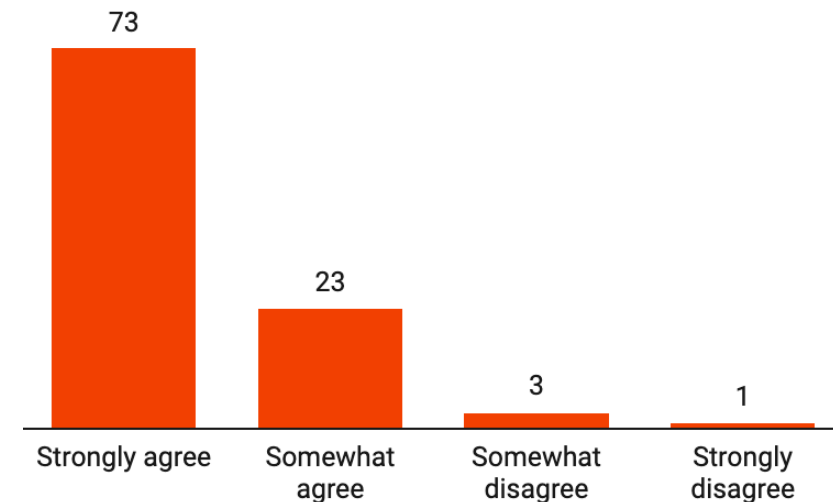
96% agree with the concept and 73% strongly agree.

Healthy majorities of every segment, including Republicans, agree strongly with the concept – see the next page.

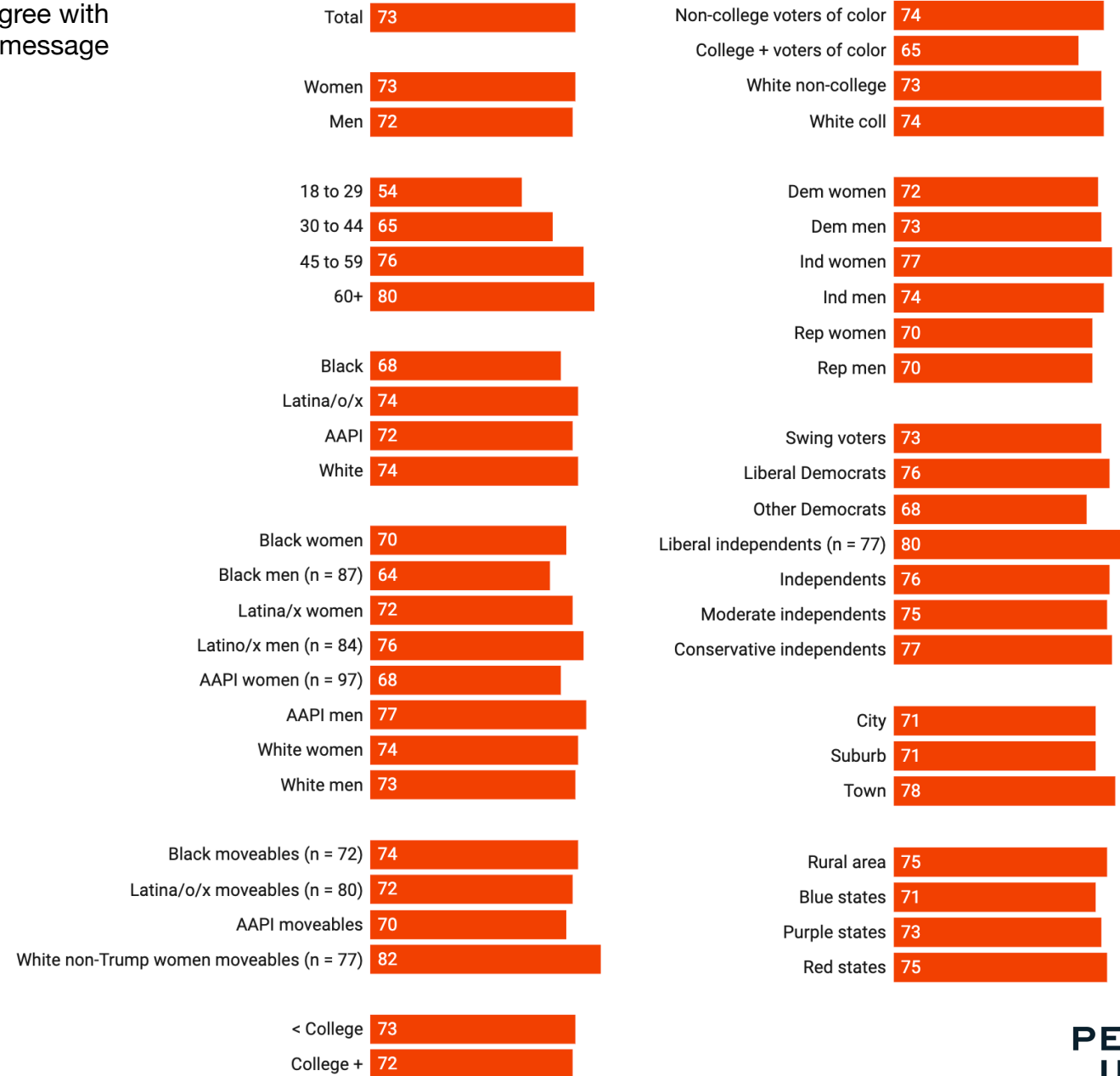
Do you agree or disagree:

People who break the law should face consequences and be held accountable. Accountability is understanding the harm they've done, making amends, learning from their mistakes, and changing their behavior.

*N = 1,396*

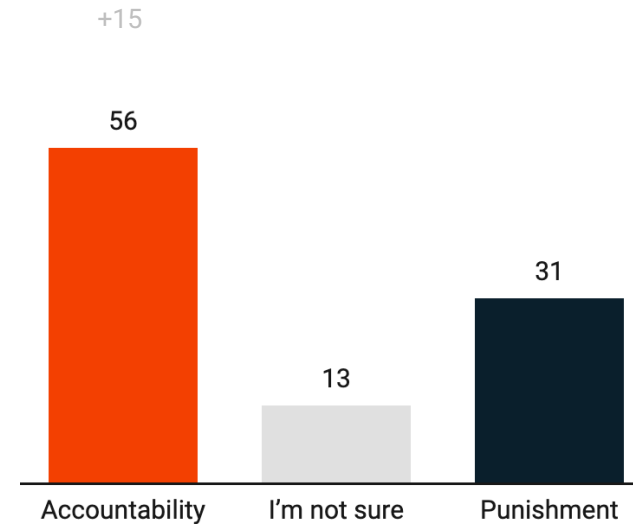


% Strongly agree with accountability message



People respond more to  
“accountability” v.  
“punishment” terminology in  
terms of approaches to crime.

In your view, which approach might be more  
effective at dealing with crime:  
“An approach focused on \_\_\_\_\_”  
*N = 1,396*



**Republican men are alone in favoring “punishment.”**

In your view, which approach might be more effective at dealing with crime:  
“An approach focused on \_\_\_\_\_”  
*N = 1,396*



**After a definition, a majority of respondents prefer an accountability approach (+24 pts).**

**62%**

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**38%**

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Here are more details about two approaches for dealing with crime. Which would you want to see in the U.S.?

*Split A: N = 700*

An accountability approach focuses on people taking full responsibility for their behavior. This includes understanding the harm they've done, making amends, learning from their mistakes, and changing their behavior. Consequences can include incarceration, restitution to victims, community service, participation in treatment and programs, or other responsibilities. The goals are to repair the harm that was caused, learn from mistakes, and change behavior

A punishment approach focuses on strict sentences and severe penalties for criminal behavior. This includes policies like mandatory minimum sentences and long prison sentences that keep criminals in prison. The goals are to punish those who break the law, to use the strict sentences to deter people from committing crime in the first place, and to keep people who are convicted of crimes in prison away from the community.

**The margin shrinks to +12 pts when “incarceration” is not in the list of consequences.**

Highlight / strike through is added for emphasis only.

However, these differences are mostly among independents and Republican women (see next page).

**56%**

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**44%**

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Here are more details about two approaches for dealing with crime. Which would you want to see in the U.S.?

*Split A: N = 700*

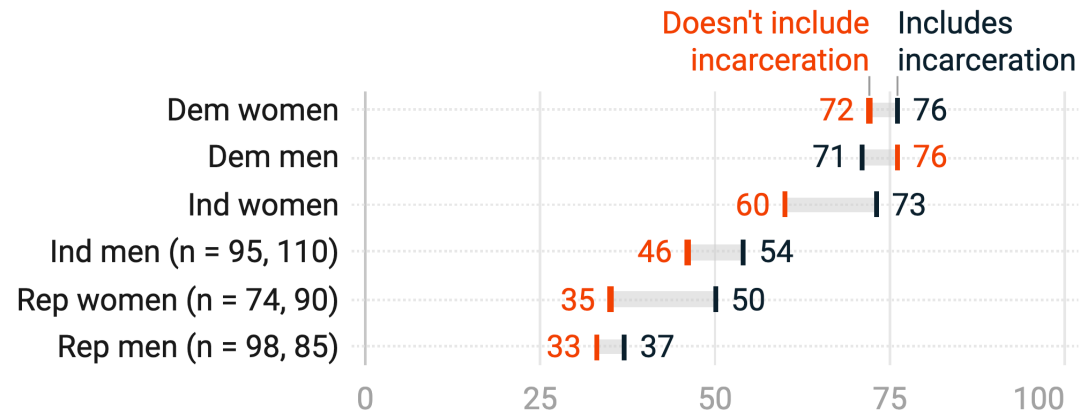
An accountability approach focuses on people taking full responsibility for their behavior. This includes understanding the harm they’ve done, making amends, learning from their mistakes, and changing their behavior. Consequences can include incarceration, restitution to victims, community service, participation in treatment and programs, or other responsibilities. The goals are to repair the harm that was caused, learn from mistakes, and change behavior

A punishment approach focuses on strict sentences and severe penalties for criminal behavior. This includes policies like mandatory minimum sentences and long prison sentences that keep criminals in prison. The goals are to punish those who break the law, to use the strict sentences to deter people from committing crime in the first place, and to keep people who are convicted of crimes in prison away from the community.



Which would you want to see in the U.S.?

% Accountability approach



Caution: Very large margins of sampling error for cell sizes under n = 100 (more than 10 pts)

## What's the most important response or action by someone who breaks the law?

Accepting the consequences tops the list we presented to respondents.

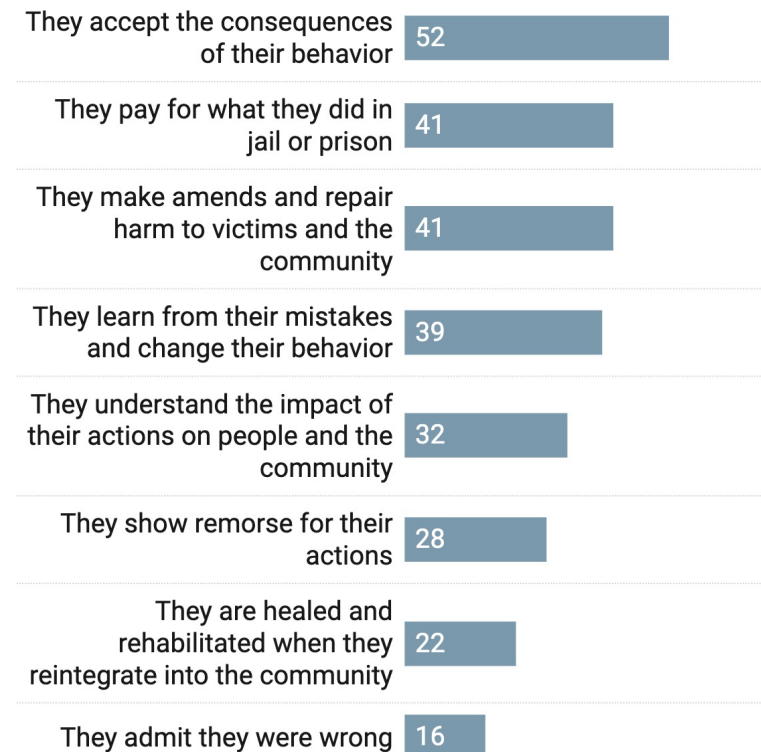
Note that in a later question, “serving jail or prison time no matter the crime” falls to the bottom of a list of consequences.

Accepting consequences and making amends / repairing harm are top across most segments (see next two pages).

Let's say someone breaks the law.  
Which of these is most important in your view?

Choose up to 3.

RANDOMIZED | N = 1,396



Let's say someone breaks the law. Which of these is most important in your view? Choose up to 3.

% In top 3

	They accept the consequences	They make amends and repair harm	Jail or prison	They learn from their mistakes	They understand the impact	They show remorse for their actions	They admit they were wrong
Total	52%	41%	41%				
Women	54%	41%		41%			
Men	50%	41%	45%				
18 to 29	51%			42%	42%		
30 to 44	41%	43%		46%			
45 to 59	52%		42%	41%			
60+	57%	41%	49%				
Black	46%			36%	34%		
Latina/o/x	46%		42%		38%		
AAPI	48%	53%			42%		
White	54%	42%	42%				
Black women	49%		41%	37%			
Black men (n = 87)	45%	38%				36%	
Latina/x women	45%	38%		40%	38%		
Latino/x men	47%	36%	53%		36%		
AAPI women	50%	59%			45%		
AAPI men	46%	46%		49%			
White women	56%	42%		43%			
White men	52%	41%	47%				
Black moveables (n = 72)	48%		40%	41%			
Latina/o/x moveables (n = 80)	46%	39%	42%	39%			
AAPI moveables	43%	47%		43%			
White wom. moveables (n = 77)	58%	44%		44%	44%		
< College	50%	37%	47%				
College +	54%	46%		44%			
Non-college voters of color	47%		41%		37%		
College + voters of color	46%	46%		40%			
White non-college	52%	38%	50%				
White coll	56%	46%		46%			

Let's say someone breaks the law. Which of these is most important in your view? Choose up to 3.

% In top 3

	They accept the consequences	They make amends and repair harm	Jail or prison	They learn from their mistakes	They understand the impact	They show remorse for their actions	They admit they were wrong
Democrats	46%	43%		45%			
Independents	53%	40%	42%	40%			
Republicans	58%	38%	62%				
Dem women	45%	45%		46%			
Dem men	48%	42%		43%			
Ind women	56%	40%		43%			
Ind men	50%	40%	53%				
Rep women	62%	36%	60%				
Rep men	53%	40%	64%				
Black Dems	48%		38%	35%			
Latina/o/x Dems (n = 91)	43%	45%		43%	44%		
Latina/o/x ind / Reps	48%		52%		33%		
AAPI Dems	46%	50%		46%	46%		
AAPI ind / Reps	49%	56%			39%		
White Dems	46%	47%		48%			
White inds	57%		45%	42%			
White Reps	58%	39%	64%				
Swing voters	55%	41%		42%			
Liberal Democrats	45%	51%		50%			
Other Democrats	46%			37%	40%		
Liberal independents (n = 77)	47%	56%		43%			
Independents	53%	40%	42%	40%			
Moderate independents	55%		42%	44%			
Conservative independents	54%	43%	61%				
City	45%	44%		40%			
Suburb	54%	43%		43%			
Town	57%	41%	53%				
Rural area	55%		44%	35%			
Blue states	50%	42%		40%			
Purple states	51%	40%	45%				
Red states	55%	41%	45%				

Here are some possible consequences for breaking the law. In general, would you support or oppose each of these?

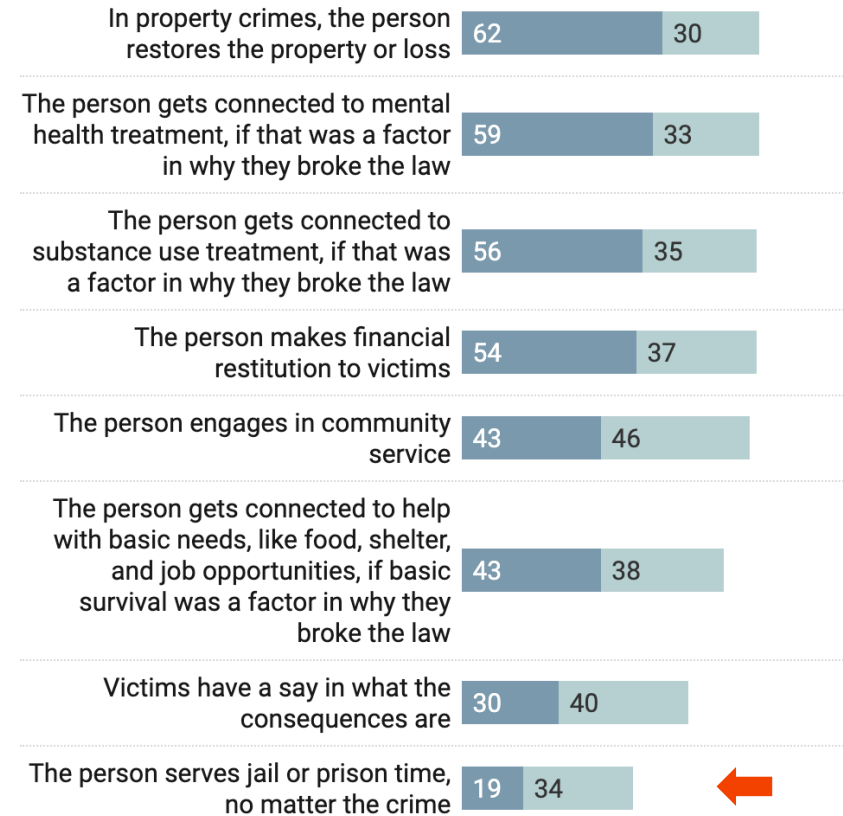
RANDOMIZED | N = 1,396

Strongly support    Somewhat support

## Majorities express support for several types of consequences, including access to treatment and resources.

Just one in five strongly supports jail or prison time “no matter the crime.”

Democrats, Black voters, and 18- to 29-year-olds are most supportive of connecting people to treatment and resources. Republicans are most supportive of restitution consequences. See next two pages.



Here are some possible consequences for breaking the law.  
 In general, would you support or oppose each of these?  
 % Strongly support (top 3)

	The person restores property / loss	Person gets connected to mental health treatment	Person gets connected to substance use	Person makes financial restitution	Person gets connected to help with basic needs
Total	62%	59%	56%		
Women	61%	63%	60%		
Men	64%	54%		56%	
18 to 29	41%	41%	44%		47%
30 to 44	53%	55%	52%		
45 to 59	70%	65%	64%		
60+	69%	62%		64%	
Black	56%	58%			54%
Latina/o/x	62%	61%	60%		
AAPI	60%	55%	52%	52%	
White	64%	59%	56%		
Black women	56%	60%			58%
Black men (n = 87)	57%	56%		57%	
Latina/x women	63%	65%	68%		
Latino/x men	61%	56%		56%	
AAPI women	58%	60%	55%		
AAPI men	62%	50%		56%	
White women	62%	64%	61%		
White men	65%	54%		56%	
Black moveables (n = 72)		63%	61%		66%
Latina/o/x moveables (n = 80)	52%	52%	54%	53%	
AAPI moveables	60%		48%	50%	
White wom. moveables (n = 77)	59%	74%	62%		
< College	63%	58%		55%	
College +	61%	61%	59%		
Non-college voters of color	58%	57%	54%		
College + voters of color	60%	62%	58%		
White non-college	65%	58%		56%	
White coll	62%	61%	60%		

Here are some possible consequences for breaking the law.  
 In general, would you support or oppose each of these?  
 % Strongly support (top 3)

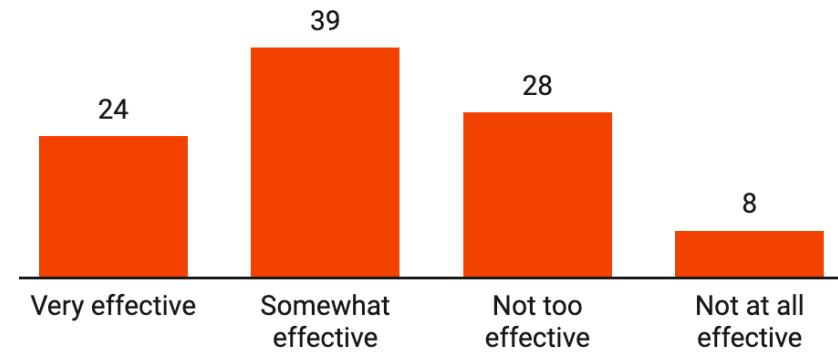
	The person restores property / loss	Person gets connected to mental health treatment	Person gets connected to substance use treatment	Person makes financial restitution	Person gets connected to help with basic needs
Democrats		70%	63%		60%
Independents	62%	57%	56%		
Republicans	69%	47%		63%	
Dem women		76%	67%		64%
Dem men		61%	57%		55%
Ind women	58%	61%	58%		
Ind men	66%	53%		56%	
Rep women	65%		52%	60%	
Rep men	72%	48%		66%	
Black Dems	56%	57%	53%		
Latina/o/x Dems (n = 91)	66%	68%	68%		
Latina/o/x ind / Reps	58%	56%	54%		
AAPI Dems	59%	63%	59%		
AAPI ind / Reps	61%	49%		57%	
White Dems	57%	76%	67%		66%
White inds	63%	57%	57%		
White Reps	70%	47%	47%	63%	
Swing voters	56%	61%	59%		
Liberal Democrats		79%	73%		69%
Other Democrats	57%	56%		52%	
Liberal independents (n = 77)		68%	69%		59%
Independents	62%	57%	56%		
Moderate independents	64%	65%	63%		
Conservative independents	73%	43%		58%	
City	57%	55%	56%		
Suburb	63%	60%	55%		
Town	64%	66%	60%		
Rural area	71%	60%		59%	
Blue states	57%	59%	58%		
Purple states	65%	60%	55%	55%	
Red states	67%	58%		56%	

**Respondents are mixed on the efficacy of tough sentences.**

Responses are most correlated with party ID. See next page.

In your view, how effective are strict sentences and harsh penalties for deterring or preventing crime?

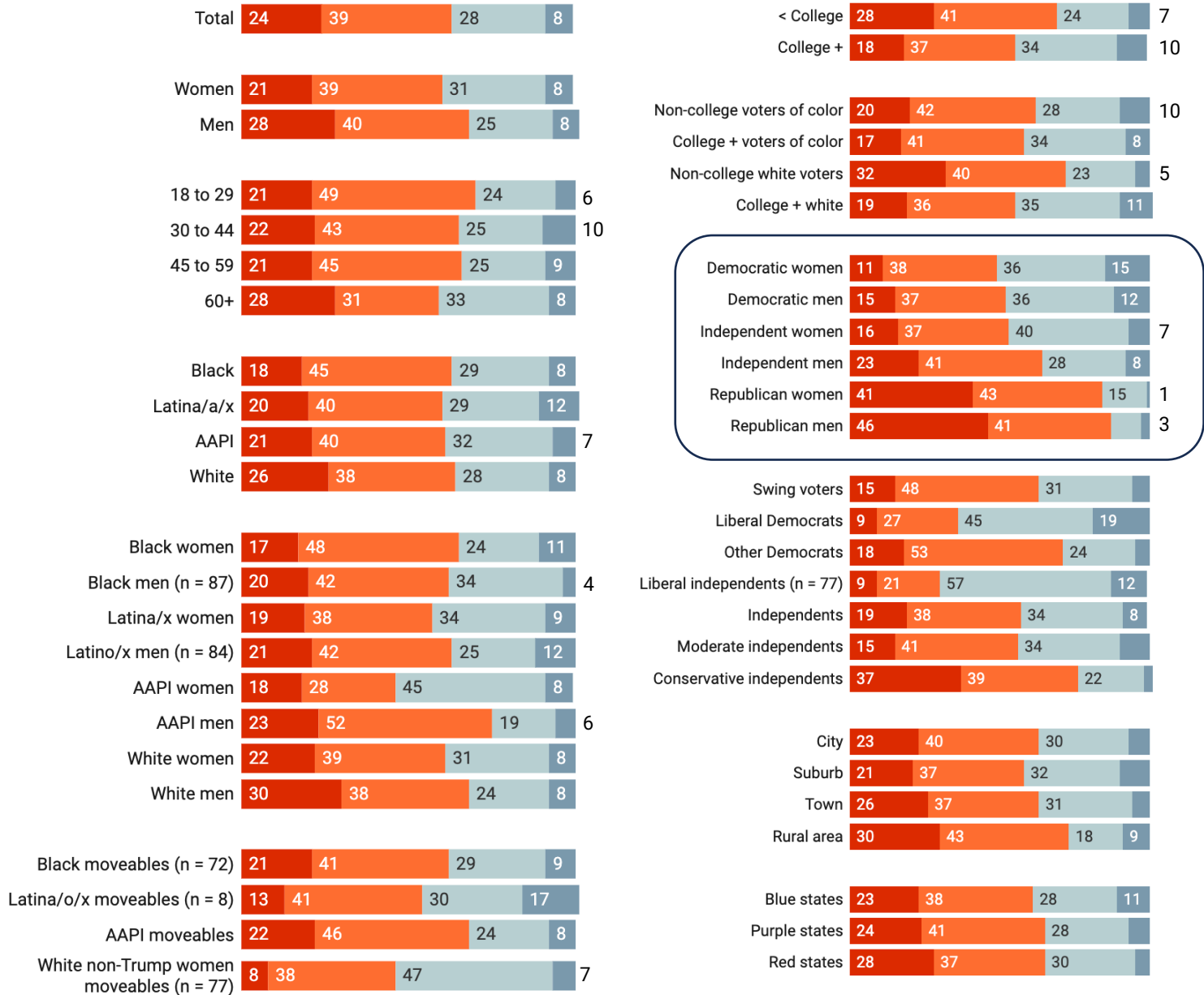
*N* = 1,396





Very effective   Somewhat effective   Not too effective   Not at all effective

In your view, how effective are strict sentences and harsh penalties for deterring or preventing crime?  
*N = 1,396*



## Most lean toward thinking a prison system focused on punishment creates more violence.

Adding an explanation doesn't shift responses overall.

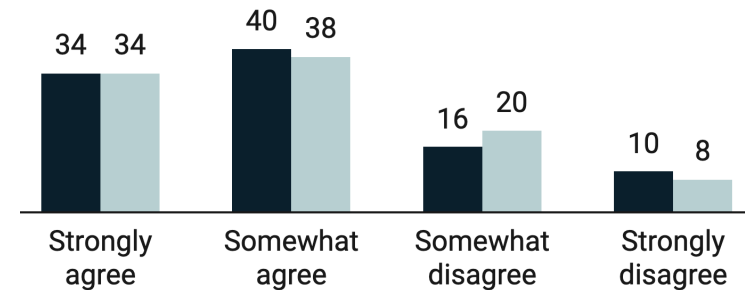
However, voters of color are more likely to agree when the explanation is included. White voters are more likely to agree without it. These differences are more pronounced among non-college-educated voters. See next page.

Do you agree or disagree:

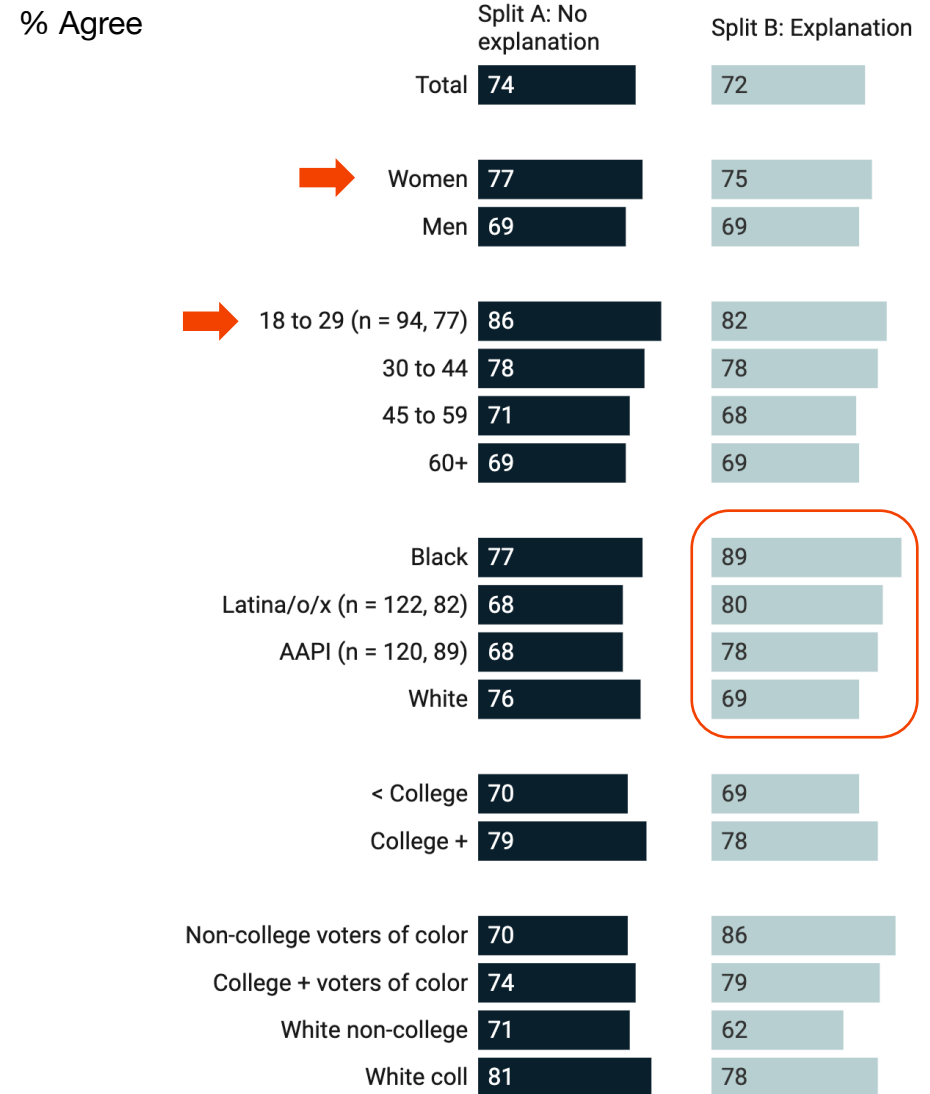
A prison system focused only on punishment creates more violence. [SPLIT B: Prisons are fraught with abuse, violence, and inhumane treatment. That breaks people – mentally, physically, and spiritually – resulting in more repeat offenses.]

*Split A: N = 704, Split B: N = 692*

■ Split A: No explanation ■ Split A: Explanation

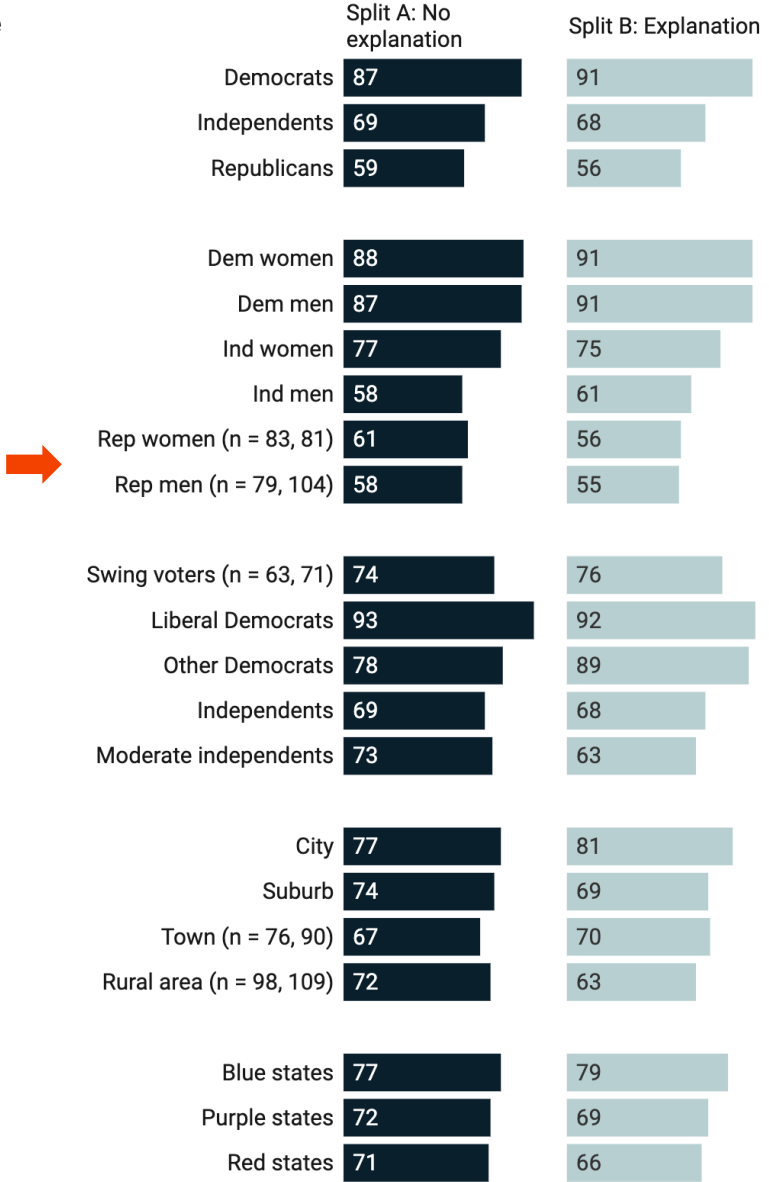


Younger voters and women are more likely than others to agree that punitive prison systems create more violence. The explanation elicits more agreement among respondents of color and less agreement among white respondents.



Even majorities of Republicans and independents agree that a prison system focused on punishment creates more violence.

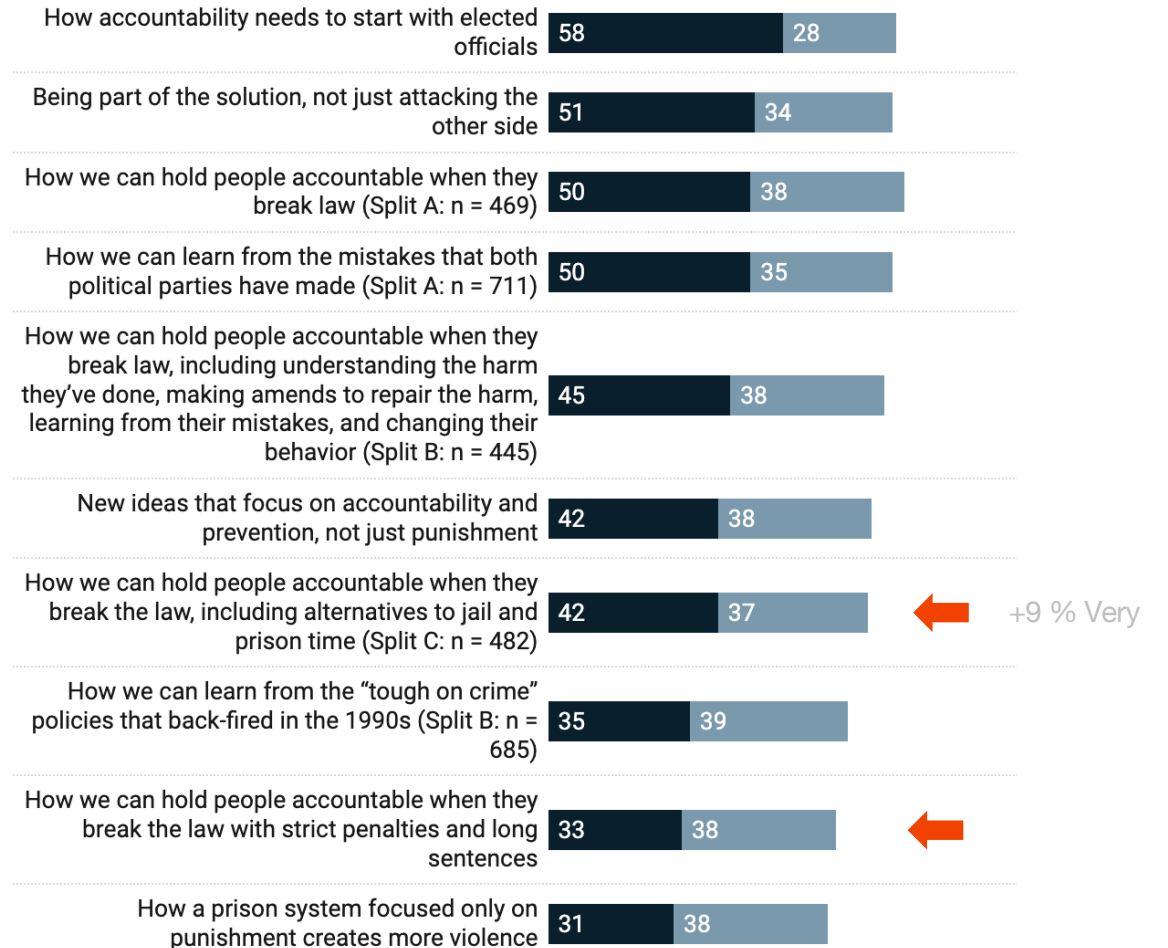
% Agree



In the midterm elections last fall, some Democrats weren't talking about crime, they were talking about other issues. How interested would you have been in hearing Democrats in your state talk about...

RANDOMIZED | N = 1,396

Very interested Somewhat interested



## We explored accountability message concepts in the context of Democratic candidates.

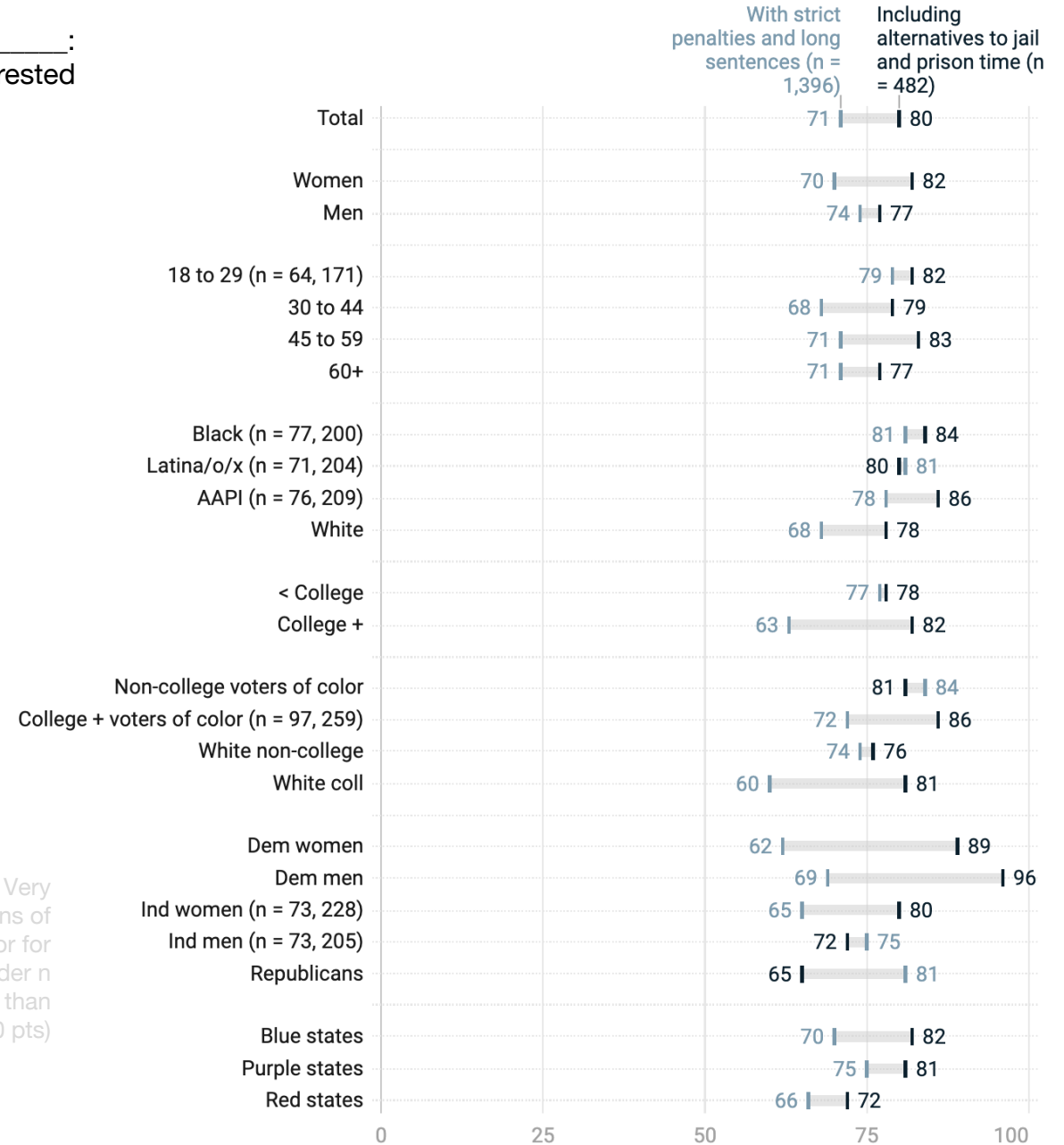
Majorities express interest in hearing Democrats talk about each of these things.

Respondents are +9 points more likely to be "very interested" in hearing about alternatives to jail and prison time v. strict penalties and long sentences.

How we can hold people accountable \_\_\_\_\_:  
% Interested

**Democrats and independent women are more likely to say they're interested in hearing about accountability + alternatives v. strict penalties and long sentences.**

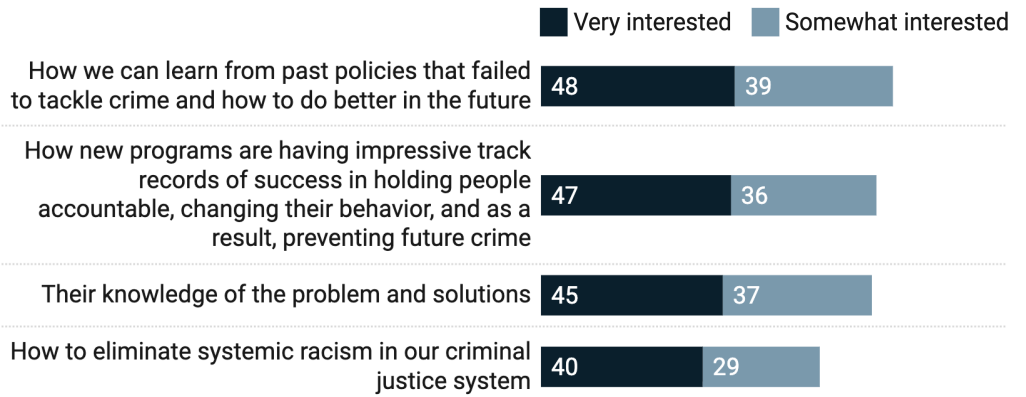
Caution: Very large margins of sampling error for cell sizes under n = 100 (more than 10 pts)






**Large majorities also express interest in hearing Democrats talk about solutions.**

In the midterm elections last fall, some Democrats weren't talking about crime, they were talking about other issues. How interested would you have been in hearing Democrats in your state talk about...  
RANDOMIZED | N = 1,396






**Here's what's most correlated with feeling more positive toward Democrats, had they talked about these things in the last election.**

**HEARING DEMS TALK ABOUT:**

- How new programs are having impressive track records of success in holding people accountable, changing their behavior, and as a result, preventing future crime
- New ideas that focus on accountability and prevention, not just punishment
- How to eliminate systemic racism in our criminal justice system
- How we can hold people accountable when they break the law, including alternatives to jail and prison time
- How a prison system focused only on punishment creates more violence
- Being part of the solution, not just attacking the other side



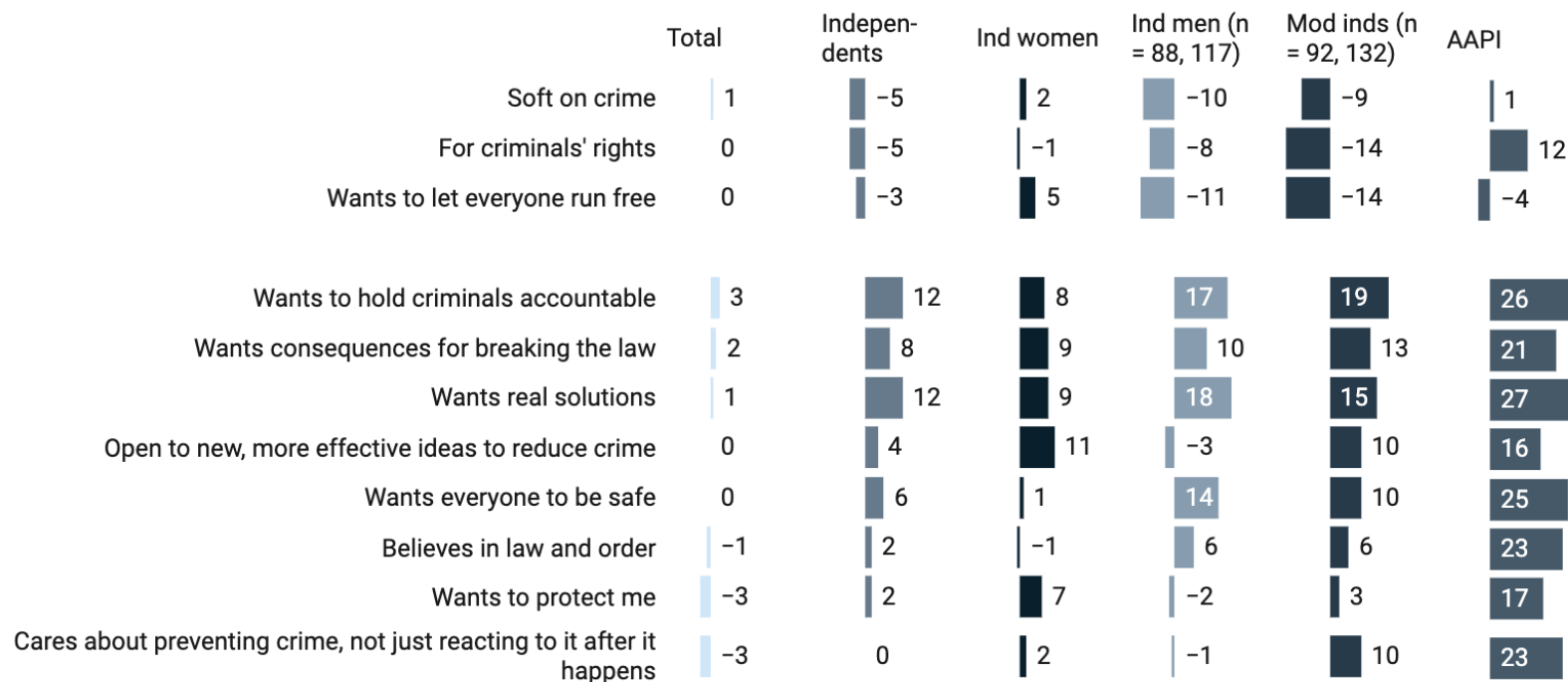


**Accountability messages may increase positive brand perceptions among independents and AAPI voters.**

Compared to a control (prior to any messaging), independent and AAPI respondents rate Democrats more favorability after hearing about various ways they could talk about accountability. See next page.

In your own view, does this describe Democrats  
when it comes to crime, violence, and safety?  
RANDOMIZED | (Pre-measure *n* = 747, Post-measure *n* = 649)

% Yes, describes Democrats / sometimes describes



Caution: Very large margins of sampling error for cell sizes under *n* = 100 (more than 10 pts)



**We tested three Democratic responses to a Republican tough on crime attack.**

Split A performs best. See next slide.

Split A: RJ-rooted accountability message

Split B: Enough attacks / need solutions

Split C: When we know better, we do better

Next are positions from two candidates. Who is more in line with your views?

**Republican message (“Candidate A”):**

The Left’s pro-criminal, soft-on-crime agenda is wrongheaded. They want a system where offenders — even violent offenders — are released back to the streets. Street crimes are going unpunished, which breeds a culture of permissiveness that makes us all unsafe. This needs to stop. We know how to get violent criminals off the streets — stricter sentences and penalties that keep them locked up and communities safe. When we’re tough on crime, we can prevent it too — people will think twice when they know there are real consequences.

**Democratic messages (“Candidate B”):**

SPLIT A (N = 476): If we want safe communities, people who break the law must be held accountable. This means seeing the harm they’ve done, accepting the consequences, learning from mistakes, and changing their behavior. We already know that harsh punishments alone, without accountability, lead to more violence. Both Democrats and Republicans tried that in the 1990s and it failed. It’s time to learn from new programs, with impressive track records of success, that are holding people accountable and preventing them from committing new crimes in the future.

SPLIT B (N = 485): Enough attacks. We need accountability for our leaders. Accountability means being part of the solution, not just attacking the other side. It means telling the truth about the problem. We already know that harsh punishments alone, without accountability, lead to more violence. Both Democrats and Republicans tried that in the 1990s and it failed. I will tune out the political noise and get to work on implementing solutions with proven track records of success to prevent crime instead of just reacting after it happens.

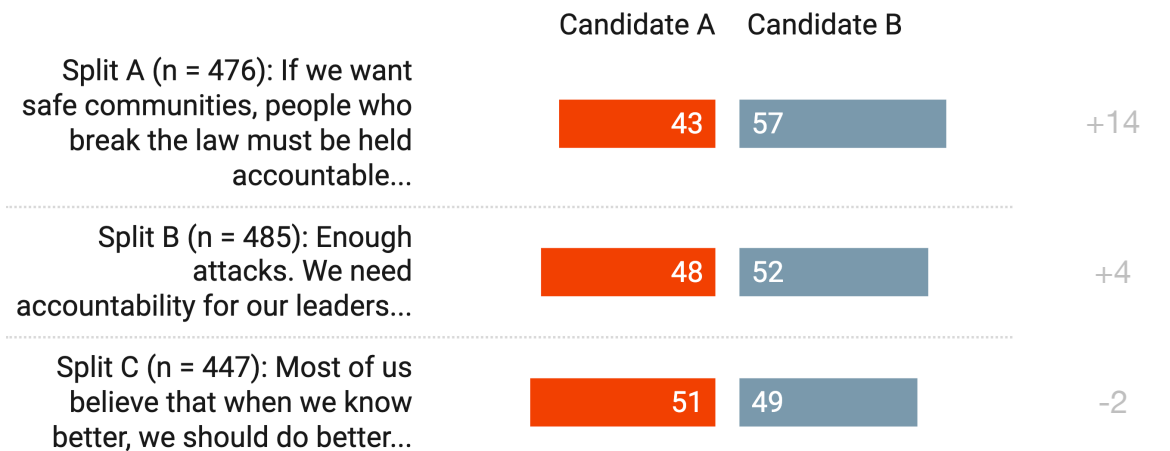
SPLIT C (N = 447): Most of us believe that when we know better, we should do better. The data are clear: harsh sentences — supported by Democrats and Republicans in the 1990s — don’t deter crime. In fact, a prison system focused only on punishment creates more violence. We’re learning more every day about how to hold people accountable when they break the law, prevent crime from happening in the first place, and create safer communities. I’m committed to doing better — because we know better.

## The new accountability message outperforms the attack by +14 points.

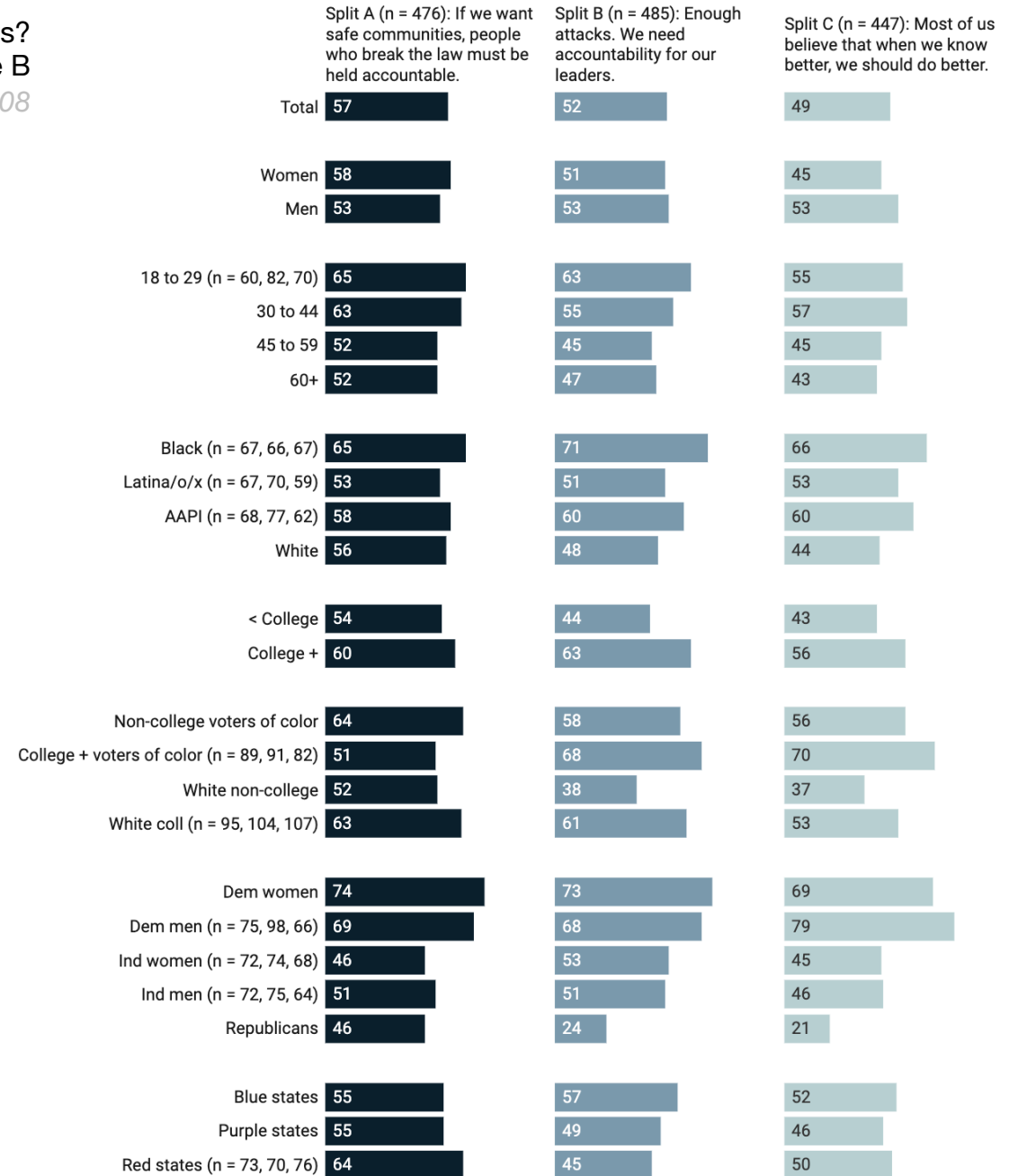
The others fail to beat the attack (within sampling errors).

White respondents are driving the differences. All three Democratic responses perform fairly equally among voters of color. See next page.

Next are positions from two candidates.  
Who is more in line with your views?  
ROTATE A / B | N = 1,408



Who is more in line with your views?  
 % Candidate B  
 ROTATE A / B | N = 1,408



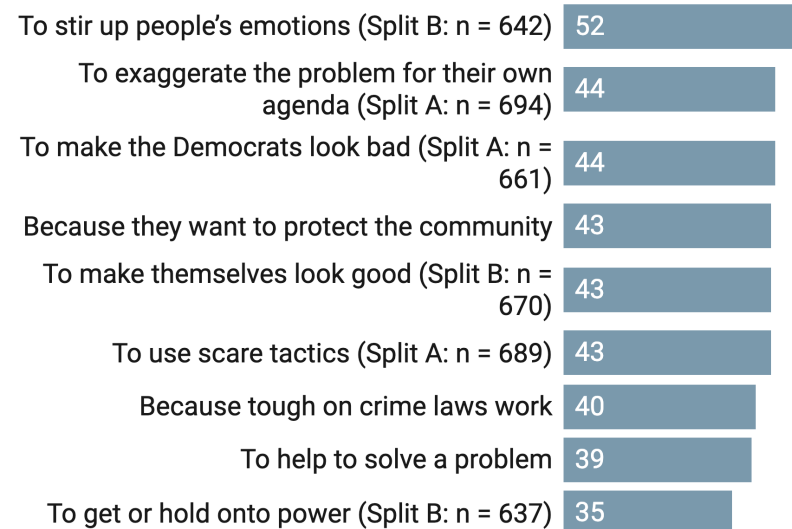
Caution: Very large margins of sampling error for cell sizes under n = 100 (more than 10 pts)

## We explored perceived motivations behind the Republican attack.

Stirring up people's emotions tops the list in a closed-ended question. Responses vary slightly by segment. See next slide.

Why do you think the candidate is saying this?  
Choose up to 3.

RANDOMIZE | N = 1,336



Why do you think the candidate is saying this?  
 Choose up to 3.  
 % In top 3

	To stir up people's emotions	To exaggerate the problem for their own agenda	To make the Democrats look bad	Because they want to protect the community	To make themselves look good	To use scare tactics	Because tough on crime laws work	To help to solve a problem	To get or hold onto power
Total	52%	44%	44%						
Black	60%				56%	56%			
Latina/o/x	44%	45%			46%				44%
AAPI	60%		50%		51%				
White	52%	45%		46%					
Dem women	70%	65%	63%						
Dem men	74%	65%	65%						
Ind women	63%				54%	50%			
Ind men				48%	48%		49%		
Rep women				72%			63%	65%	
Rep men				68%			71%	65%	
Moveables	49%			46%		46%			



**In an open-ended question,  
many say the candidate is  
stoking fear.**

Why do you think the candidate is saying this?

(N = 64)

- Trying to scare people into voting for him / put forth the fear factor / scare people / incite fear
- To win the election / disparage political opponents / speak to base
- To respond to poor action from Democrats / because they want crime to stop / genuinely believe what they're saying (among Republicans and conservatives)
- Stoke racism in voters / use racist dog whistles
- Blame others / divert attention away / point finger
- Ignores root causes / doesn't address real issues

In their own words.



To instill fear into people to vote for him/her. They ignore the statistics that indicate crime overall is declining. – *White woman, Democrat*

To incite fear in voters and paint Democrats as weak. – *White man, independent*

The candidate... is only interested in stoking fear. He is not interested in rehabilitation but revenge. – *White man, Democrat*

The candidate is trying to invoke fear and is trying to point fingers at the other party. – *AAPI man, Democrat*

The candidate wants to spread fear among his constituents. – *Black woman, Democrat*

They are trying to appeal to their base by saying what they think they want to hear. – *Black woman, Democrat*

To disparage political opponents and draw attention from white collar crimes of their sometimes donors. – *Latino/x man, Democrat*

This is a brutal, careless, and dull approach to crime which does not resolve the root cause of why crime occurs or prevent them from happening further. – *AAPI man, Democrat*

They won't talk about guns being the leading cause, because they don't believe it, so they need to blame the Democrats. – *White woman, Democrat*

They are promoting racism with trigger words to connect with their racist base. They are fear mongering to keep people distrustful of one another to gain control over them. – *AAPI woman, Democrat*

We all know by the facts that minority individuals are charged more often than their white counterparts. If all things were equal, I would have no problem with the statement above. So that being said, it's about the color of your skin. – *Black woman, independent*

—

PERRY  
UNDEM