



## Public Support for Raising the Minimum Wage

Findings from a Survey of 805 Likely 2012 General Election Voters Nationwide

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# Methodology

- Lake Research Partners designed and administered this survey, which was conducted by telephone using professional interviewers. The survey reached a total of 805 likely General Election voters nationwide. The survey was conducted February 1st through February 6th, 2012. The margin of error for this poll is +/- 3.5%.
- Telephone numbers for the sample were generated from a file of registered voters. The sample was stratified geographically to reflect the expected turnout of voters in the 2012 General Election. The data were weighted slightly by age, race, and partisanship.
- In interpreting survey results, all sample surveys are subject to possible sampling error – that is, the results of a survey may differ from those that would be obtained if the entire population were interviewed. The size of the sampling error depends upon both the total number of respondents in the survey and the percentage distribution of responses to a particular question. For example, if a response to a given question which all respondents answered was 50%, we could be 95% confident that the true percentage would fall within plus or minus 3.5% of this percentage, or between 46.5% and 53.5%. Of course, the sampling error is greater for subgroups.

## Key Findings: Broad and Intense Support for \$10 Minimum Wage

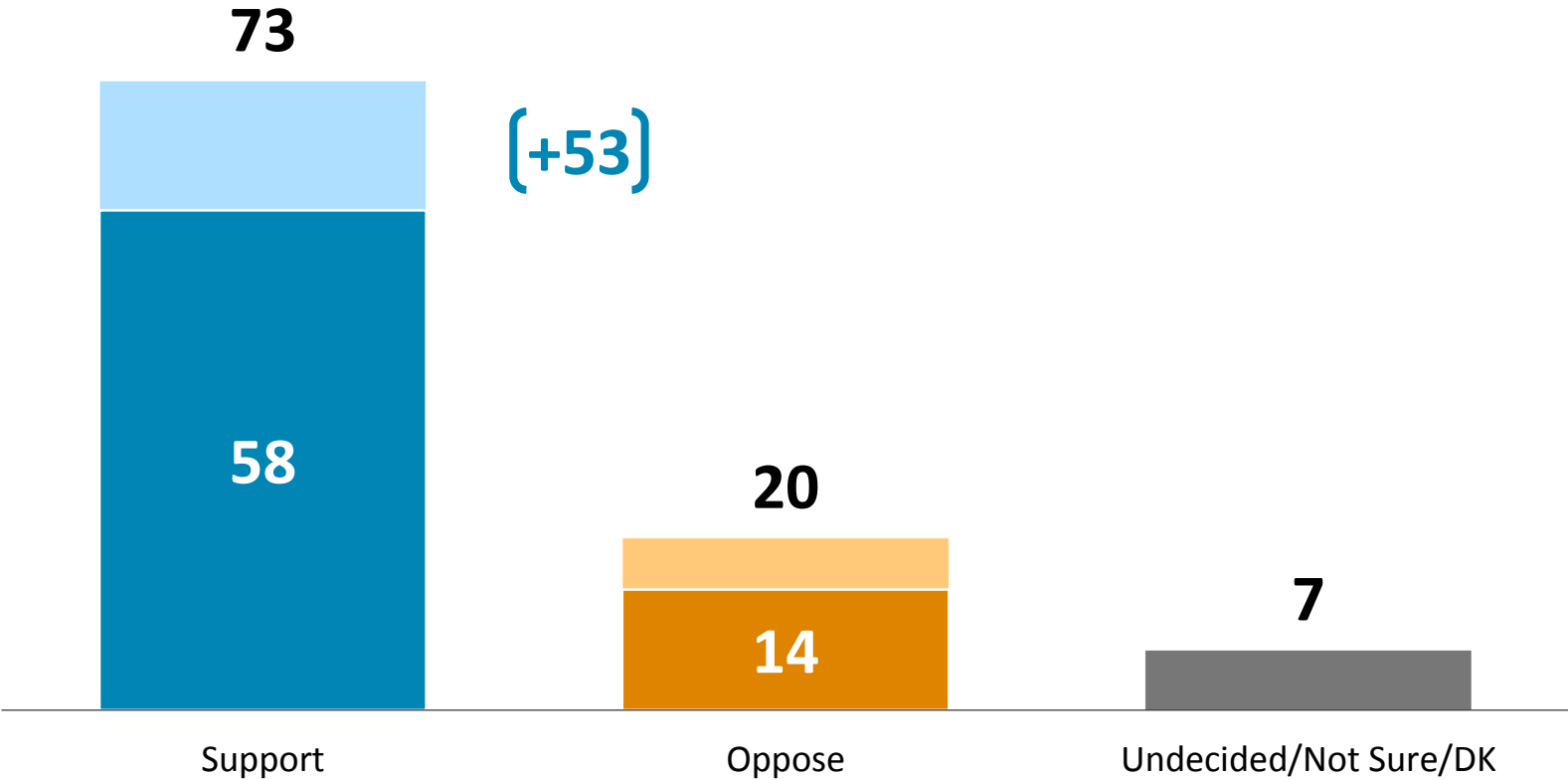
- **A proposal to raise the federal minimum wage garners striking support, in terms of both breadth and intensity.** Nearly three-quarters of likely voters support increasing the minimum wage to \$10 and indexing it to inflation (73% support, 20% oppose) in 2014, including a solid 58% majority who feels that way strongly.
- **This issue exhibits a rare ability to traverse demographic and regional divides—and by wide margins.** Voters support raising the minimum wage regardless of gender, age, education level, race, region, and partisanship.
- Stratospheric and intense support among Democrats (91% support overall and 79% strong support, 5% oppose) and independents (74% support overall and 55% strong support, 18% oppose) is complemented by robust support from Republicans (50% support, 41% oppose) as well.

## Key Findings: Support Remains Overwhelming Even After Attack

- **Attacks on the proposal fail to gain traction.** In the context of an engaged debate, where the increase is attacked as a job-killer that will close small businesses, cost taxpayers, and hurt the people it is supposed to help, support holds strong.
  - An argument that positions the minimum wage increase as an economic boon (73% support, 21% oppose) performs slightly stronger than one that positions the increase in more populist terms (69% support, 22% oppose), but the differences are minor.
- **A 56% majority of voters believes that increasing the minimum wage would help the economy,** compared to just 21% who say it would hurt the economy. Another 16% say it would have no impact. This may explain why attacks against the minimum wage on economic grounds fail to resonate with voters.

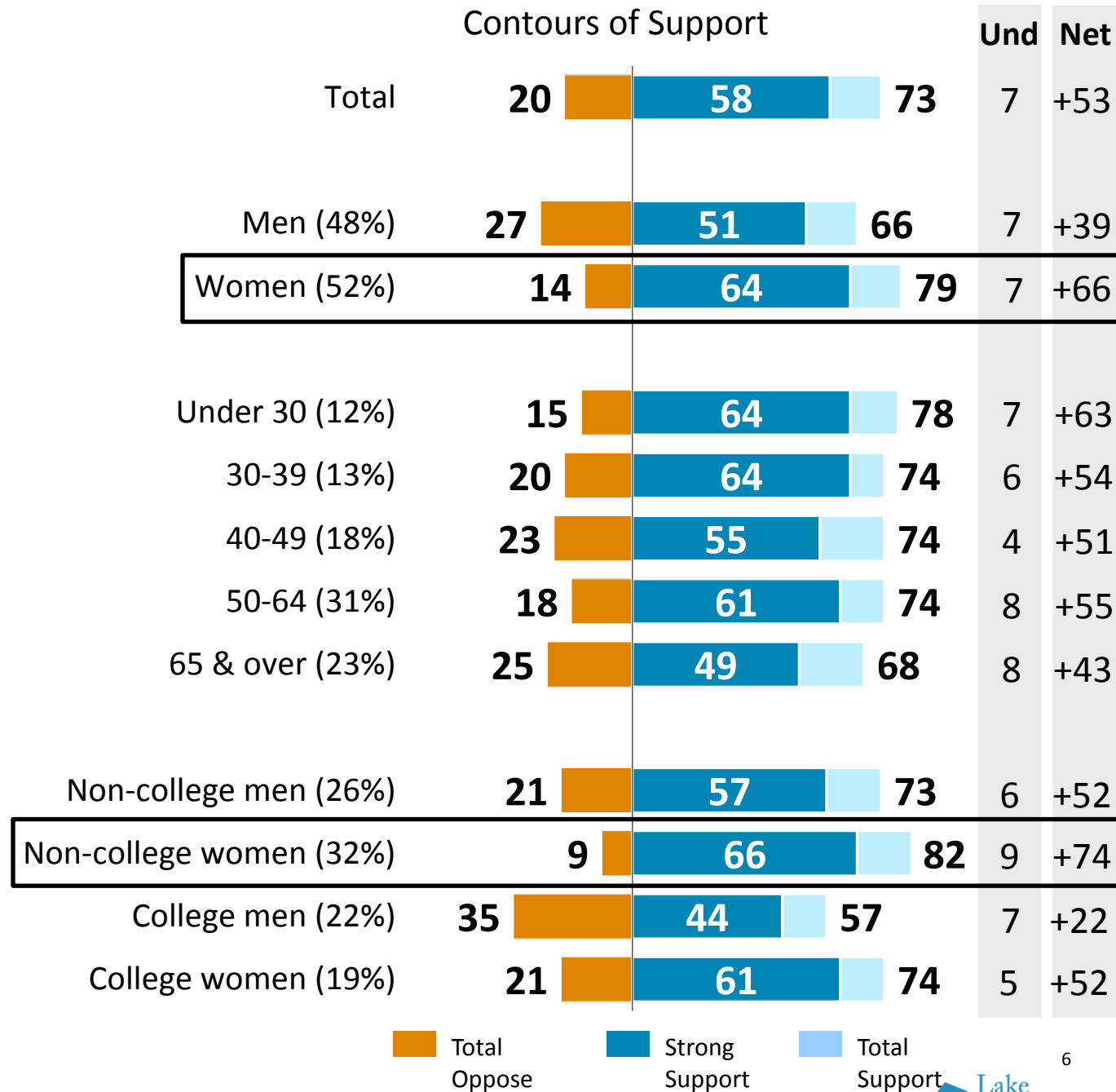
Nearly three quarters of Americans support increasing the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$10 in 2014 and adjusting it annually to the cost of living thereafter. A solid majority backs the proposal strongly, while just one in five oppose it.

### Raise the Federal Minimum Wage to \$10 in 2014?



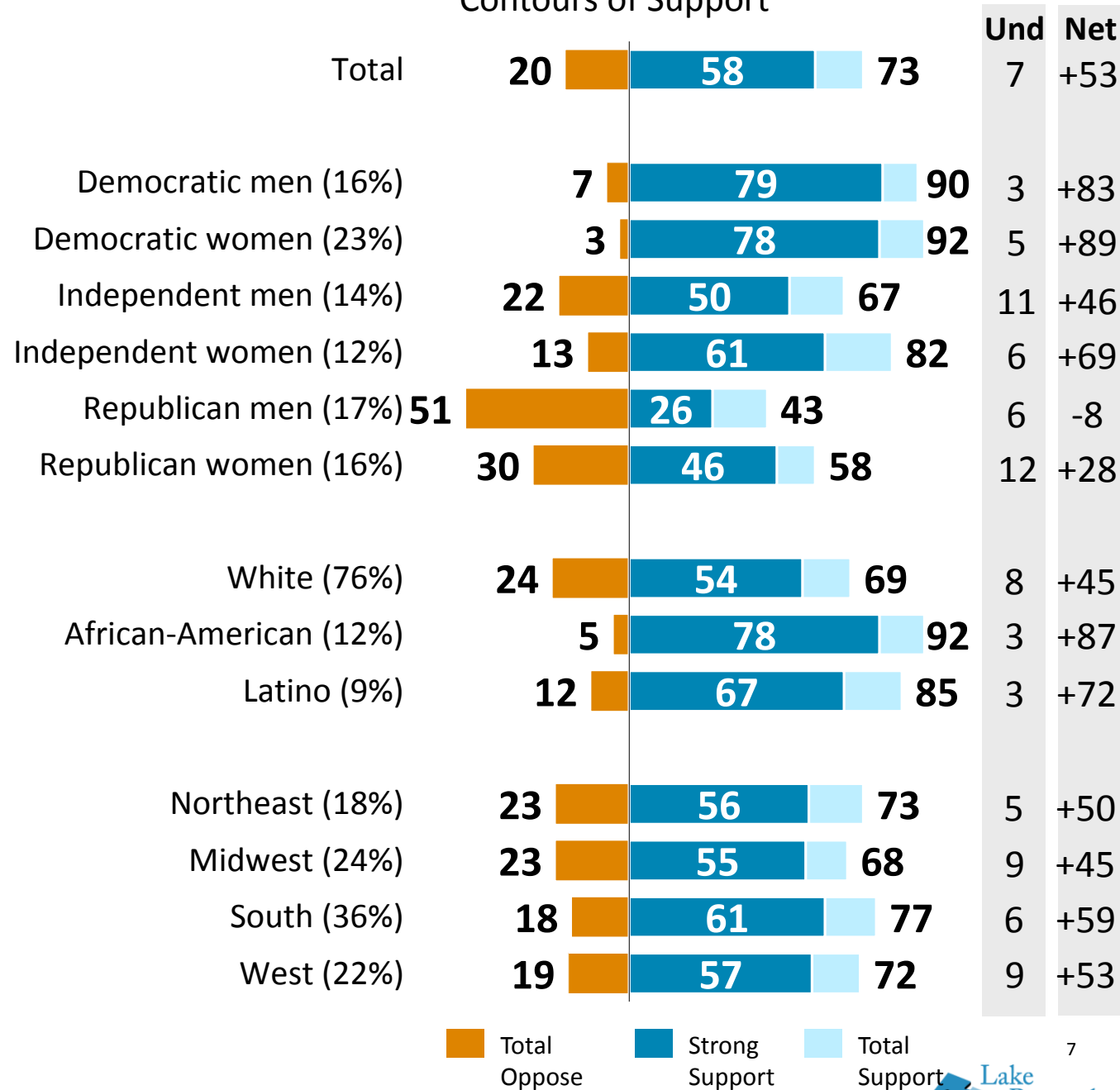
Now, let me tell you about a proposal that is being considered to raise the federal minimum wage. This initiative would raise the federal minimum wage by two-dollars-and-seventy-five-cents, from \$7.25 per hour to \$10 per hour in 2014, and then adjust the minimum wage each year to keep pace with the cost of living. Would you SUPPORT or OPPOSE this proposal, or are you undecided?

Support for increasing the minimum wage is impressive in its breadth and intensity, drawing overwhelming majorities of men and women, older and younger voters, and voters of all educational backgrounds. Women, particularly blue-collar women—often a key electoral target—are disproportionately supportive.



The measure engenders crushing support across Party lines, including stratospheric margins among Democrats and independents, and even winning a majority of GOP women voters. Independent women—the key group who will decide the election—favor it by 82% (61% strongly). Support for the minimum wage easily traverses racial and regional divides as well.

## Contours of Support



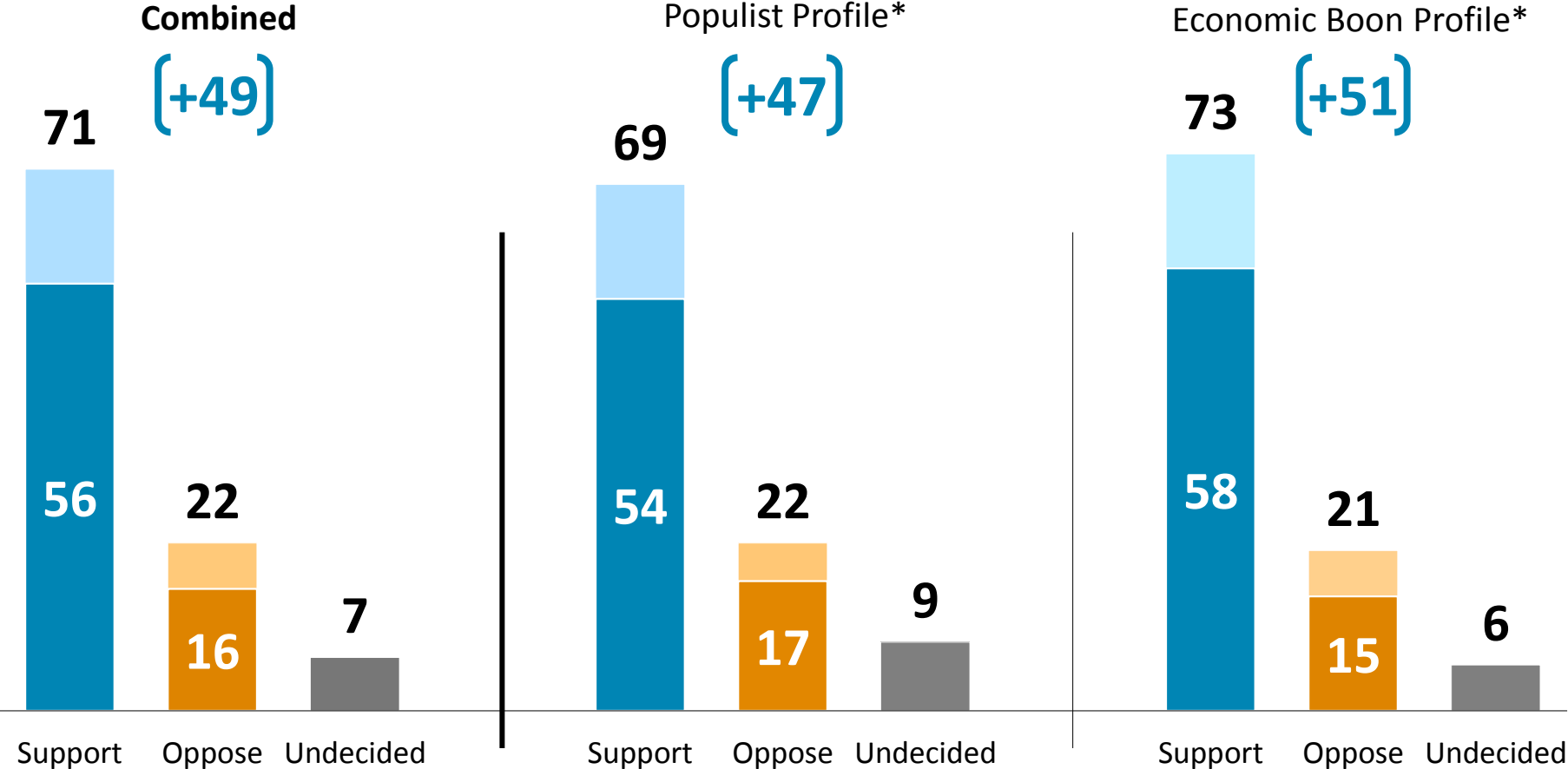
African-Americans, Latinos, and younger and women voters in the South join Democrats in backing the measure with rare intensity.

Disproportionate Minimum Wage Supporters	% Strong Support	% Total Support
<b>Strong Democrats</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>Democrats under 50</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>African-American women</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>Democrats</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>African-Americans</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>Progressive/liberal</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>Latinos under 50</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Latinos</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>South women</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>South under 50</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>73</b>



Support remains overwhelming even after an argument on behalf of the increase is met with a harsh attack that characterizes the proposal as a burdensome regulation on small business that will kill jobs and stall economic competitiveness. Packaging the increase in terms of helping working families and propping up the economy performs slightly better than comparing the minimum wage to CEO salaries, but the differences are fairly minor.

Profile Ballots: Increasing the Federal Minimum Wage



\*Asked of half the sample

Sometimes in a survey like this, people change their minds. Would you SUPPORT or OPPOSE this proposal to raise the federal minimum wage by two-dollars-and-seventy-five-cents, from \$7.25 per hour to \$10 per hour in 2014, and then adjust the minimum wage each year to keep pace with the cost of living, or are you undecided?

## Populist Profile\*

[Some/other] people say Americans are working harder and wages are falling behind. Today the average CEO makes 263 times more than the average American worker. It's wrong for Americans who work hard and play by the rules to earn a wage that forces them and their families to live below the poverty level. Raising the minimum wage shows we value hard work in America.

## Economic Boon Profile\*

[Some/other] people say the minimum wage would be more than \$10.00 an hour today if it had kept pace with the rising cost of living. Instead it's just \$290 a week for full-time work, well below poverty for a family of four. And raising the minimum wage helps the economy and increases demand for goods and services, putting more money in the pockets of people who will spend it.

## Opposition Profile

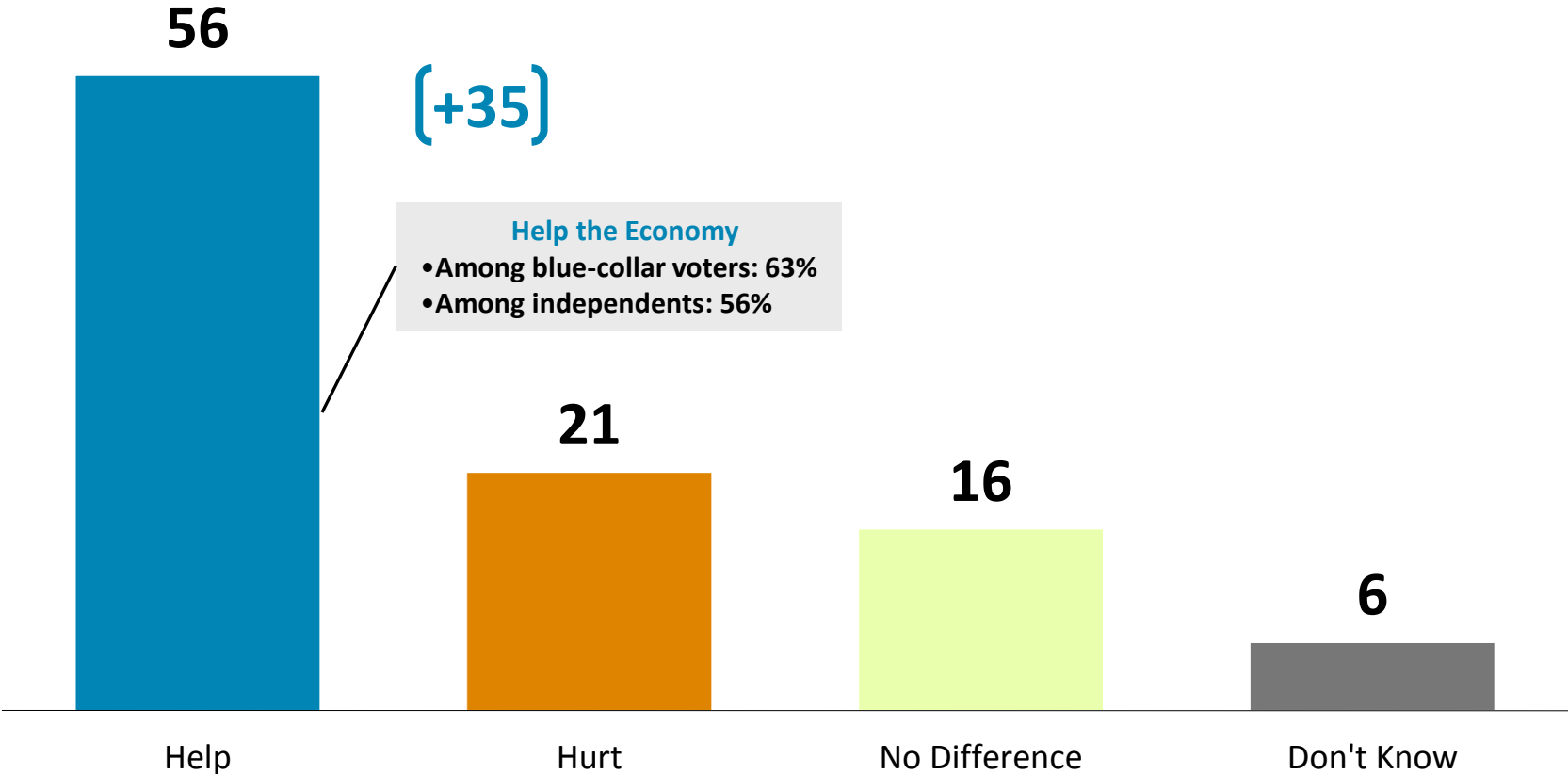
[Some/other] people say that we cannot afford to force a 38% increase in minimum wage costs on job creators. It will hurt our ability to compete economically and the added labor costs will be passed on to the rest of us. The last thing we need is more government regulations on small business. It will only slow job growth and hurt the people it's supposed to help.

While support for the “Populist” and “Economic Boon” profiles differs little overall, subgroup analysis shows surprising distinctions among certain voters. Key groups prefer our economic framework, including southern voters, GOP men, and especially independent men. Conversely, partisan women find the populist frame more compelling.

% Strong Support on Each Profile Ballot				
	Populist	Net Support	Economic Boon	Net Support
Democratic men	75	+83	81	+83
Democratic women	77	+87	74	+79
Independent w/weak men	37	+26	56	+62
Independent w/weak women	51	+55	58	+56
Republican men	27	-13	29	+5
Republican women	47	+29	39	+14
Northeast	49	+46	55	+48
Midwest	48	+38	62	+43
South	59	+49	57	+58
West	57	+54	57	+52

More than seven-in-ten voters believe raising the minimum wage would either help the economy (56%) or have no impact on the economy (16%).

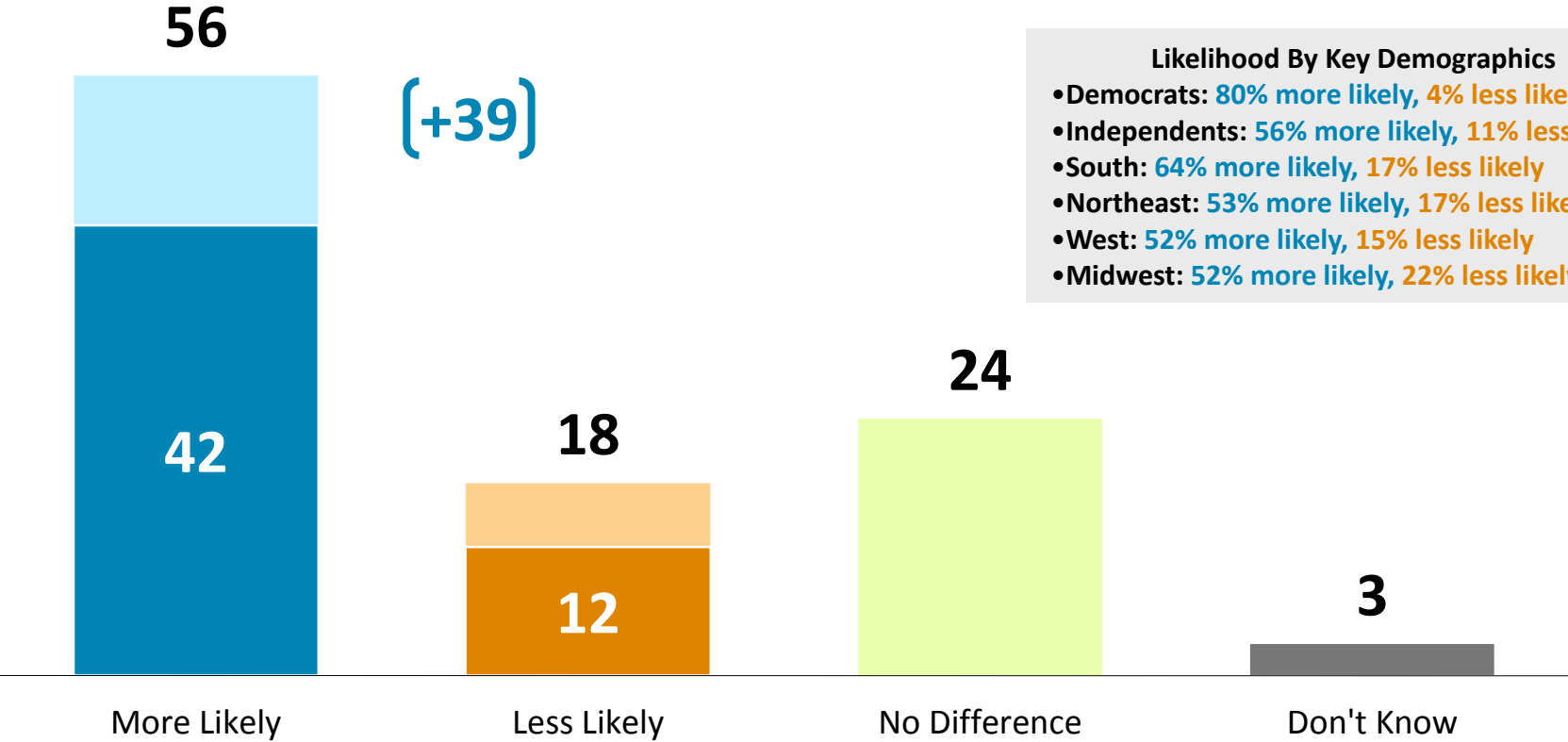
### Impact on the Economy



And all things considered, do you think that increasing the minimum wage would help the economy, hurt the economy, or not have much impact on the economy either way?

Support for a proposal to raise the federal minimum wage only enhances voters' willingness to vote for a congressional candidate. This includes majorities of voters in every region of the country who say they would be more likely to support such a candidate.

Likelihood to Vote for a Candidate for Congress if They Supported Raising the Minimum Wage\*



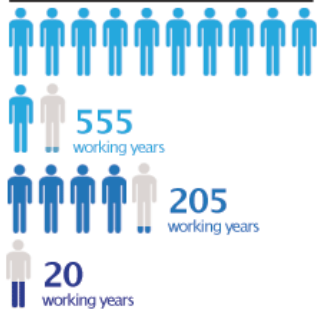
\*Asked of half the sample

And if a candidate for Congress supported raising the minimum wage, would that make you more or less likely to vote for that candidate, or wouldn't it make any difference?

# How long would you have to work to earn as much as a top CEO?

**\$8,371,057**

CEO of Walmart



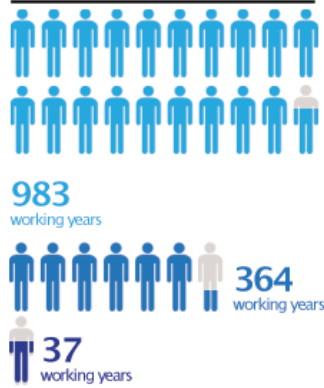
**\$9,280,935**

CEO of General Electric



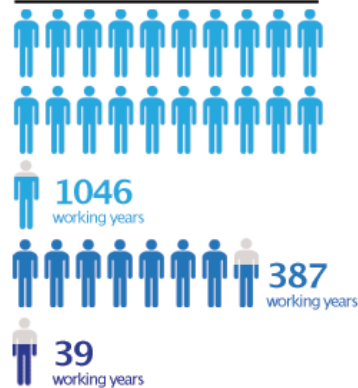
**\$14,837,528**

CEO of Chevron



**\$15,784,831**

CEO of AT&T



-  50 Years as a **Minimum Wage Worker**  
Earning \$15,080 a year
-  50 Years as an **Average Worker**  
Earning \$40,690 a year
-  50 Years as the **President**  
Earning \$400,000 a year

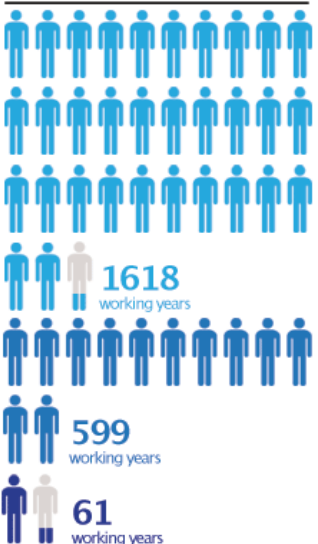
**\$17,688,241**

CEO of Ford Motors



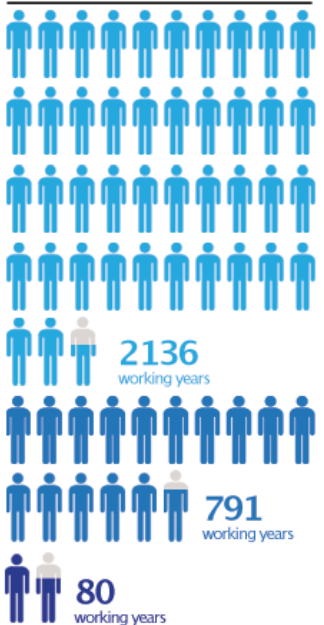
**\$24,402,520**

CEO of Conoco Phillips



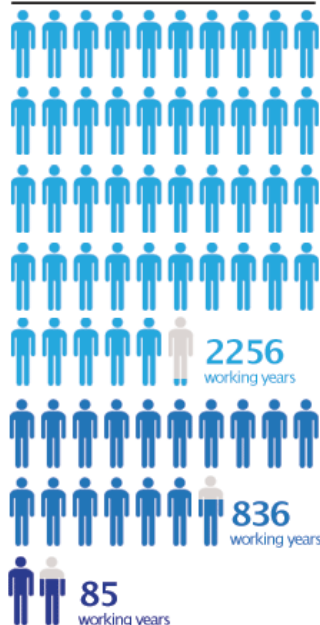
**\$32,211,079**

CEO of Exxon



**\$34,031,021**

CEO of Hewlett-Packard





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