



THE COLORADO COLLEGE
STATE OF THE ROCKIES PROJECT

Conservation in the West Poll

KEY FINDINGS

THE 2017 SURVEY OF THE ATTITUDES OF VOTERS IN SEVEN WESTERN STATES



JANUARY 2017



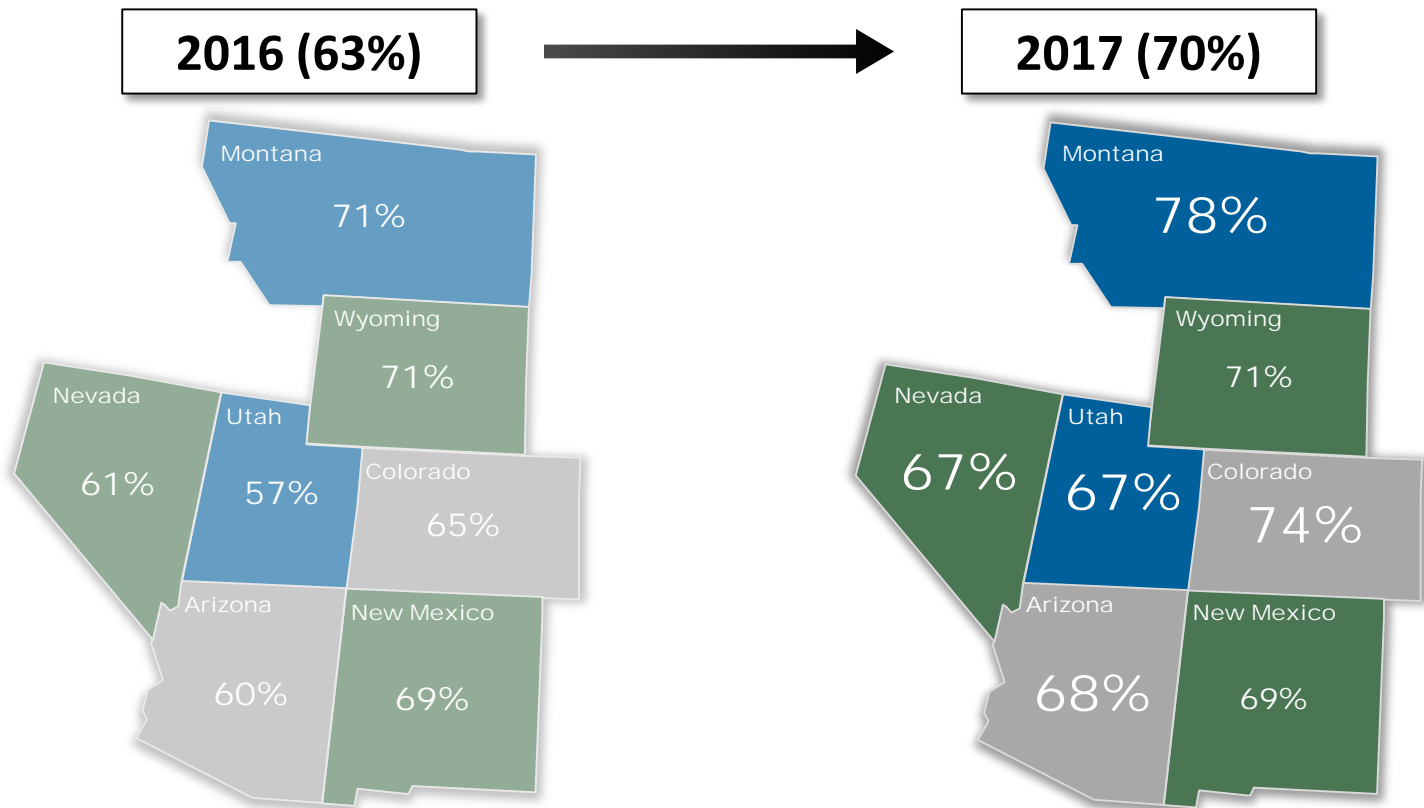
CONDUCTED BY: LORI WEIGEL / PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES
DAVE METZ / FAIRBANK, MASLIN, MAULLIN, METZ & ASSOCIATES

Methodology

- ❖ 2,800 telephone (cell and landline) interviews with 400 registered voters in seven states: Arizona, Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming, and Nevada.
- ❖ Interviews conducted December 20 and January 4-10, 2017, in Spanish and English.
- ❖ The margin of overall sampling error is + 2.74% at the 95% confidence interval for the total sample; and + 4.9% for each state.
- ❖ The total numbers have been statistically weighted to reflect the true geographic distribution of voters throughout the region. Interviews within each state were distributed proportionally by region and each sample is demographically representative of their electorate.
- ❖ Comparisons made to similarly conducted surveys in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 & 2016; any trend data is based on six states, rather than seven unless otherwise specified.
- ❖ Bi-partisan research team of Public Opinion Strategies (R) and Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (D).



Voters are more likely to identify as a conservationist today than last year; New Mexico and Wyoming unchanged.



Do you consider yourself to be a conservationist?

Western voters are most likely to point to something related to the outdoors as the thing they like most about living in the West.



Other than the weather, what do you like most about living in the Western United States?

By greater than a three-to-one margin, voters advocate for the Administration emphasizing conservation on national public lands.

Ensuring we protect sources of clean water, our air quality and wildlife habitat while providing opportunities to visit and recreate on our national public lands

68%

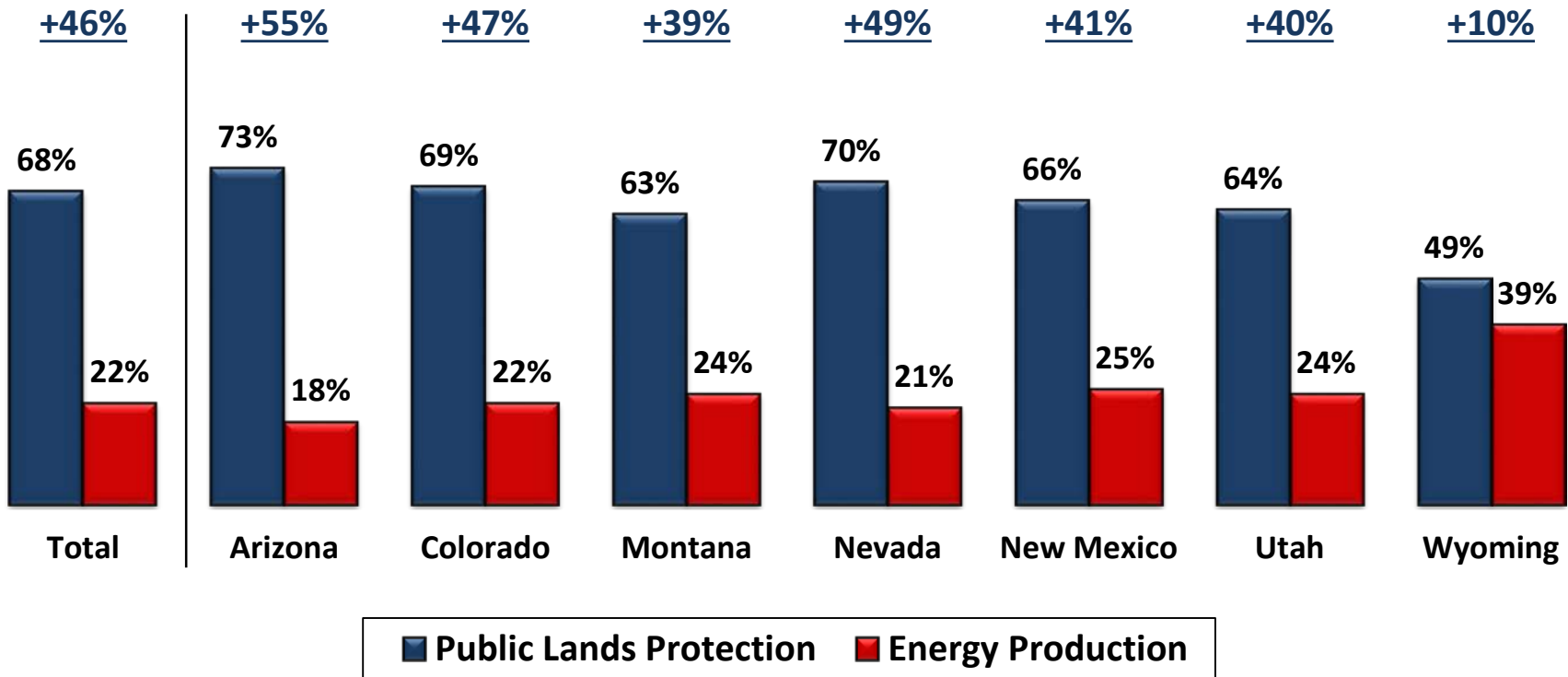
Ensuring we produce more domestic energy by increasing the amount of national public lands available for responsible oil and gas drilling and mining

22%

And in general, would you prefer the administration place more emphasis on -

In every Western state, voters advise placing a greater emphasis on protection over production.

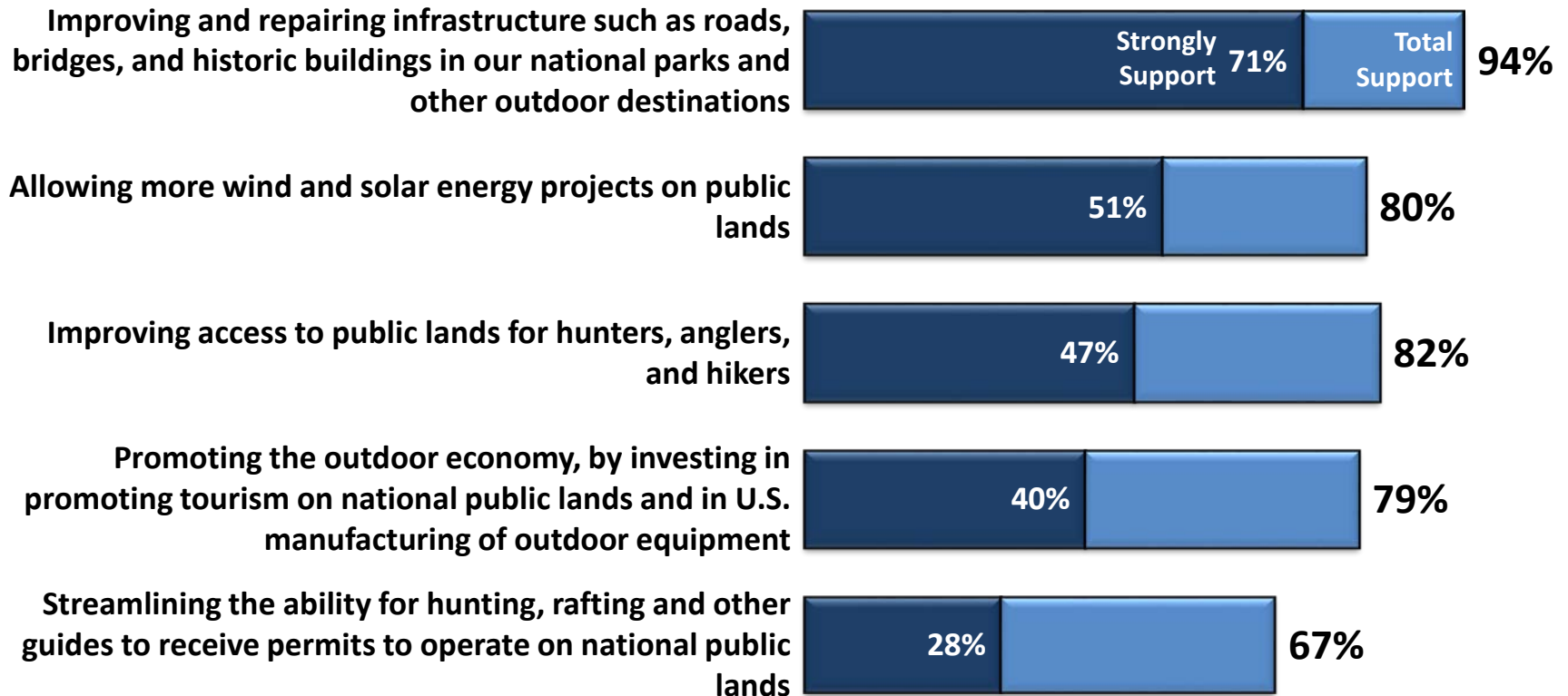
Preferred Focus of Administration



And in general, would you prefer the administration place more emphasis on -

Two-thirds or more approve of pro-conservation policy initiatives the next Administration could undertake.

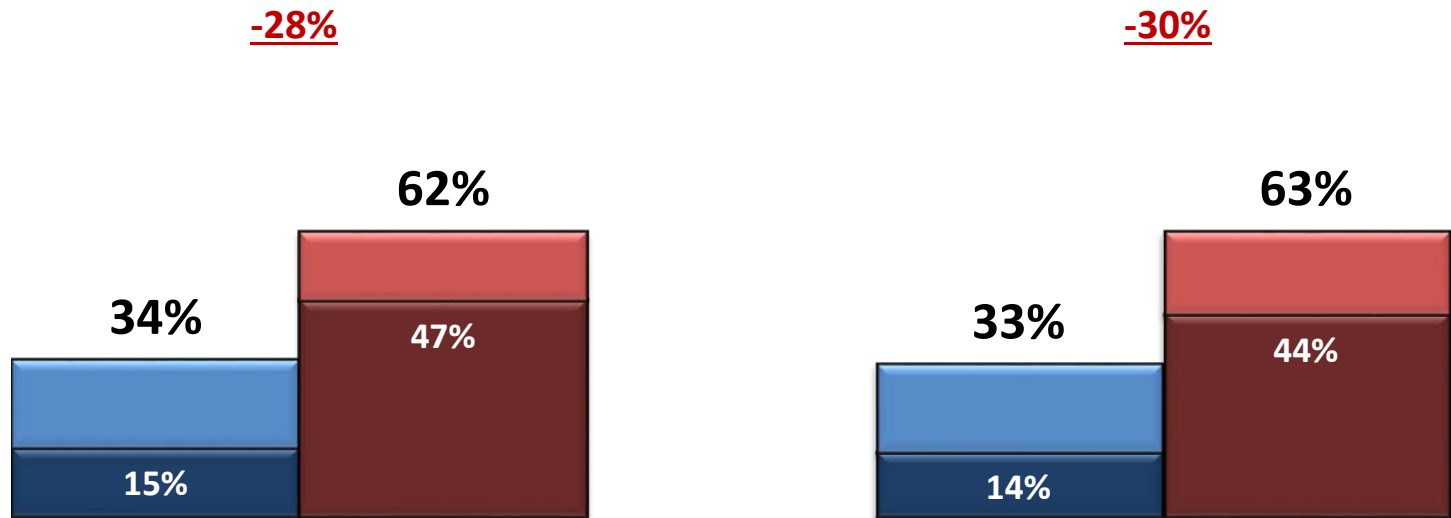
Trump Administration Actions Ranked by % Strongly Support



Thinking now about our national public lands, such as U.S. forests and national monuments -- There are a number of actions which the Trump administration may consider taking. For each one, please indicate if you would support or oppose that action.

But three-in-five Western voters oppose more energy production on public lands.

Trump Administration Actions - Oil Drilling and Coal Mining



Allowing oil and gas companies to purchase the right to drill in new areas of national public lands

Allowing more coal mining on public lands

■ Strongly Support ■ Total Support ■ Strongly Oppose ■ Total Oppose

Thinking now about our national public lands, such as U.S. forests and national monuments -- There are a number of actions which the Trump administration may consider taking. For each one, please indicate if you would support or oppose that action.

The most frequently offered advice to the new Administration is to protect resources.



What are the things that you would most like the Trump administration and the Congress to do that relate to natural resources, such as forests, water and minerals in the West? What advice would you offer as they consider how to address these issues over the next four years?

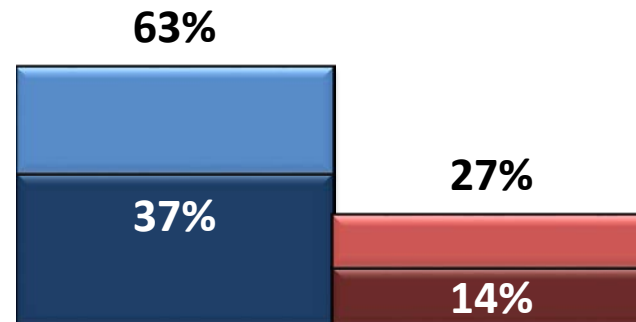
Three-in-five voters say they approve of Trump's stated approach to public lands.

Donald Trump has said that he will follow in the footsteps of President Theodore Roosevelt, the President who created the first national parks and national monuments. Trump says he opposes transferring those lands to state governments because "We have to be great stewards of this land."

Having heard that, would you say you approve or disapprove of the President-Elect's stated approach to federal management of national public lands?

Approval of Trump's Management of National Public Lands

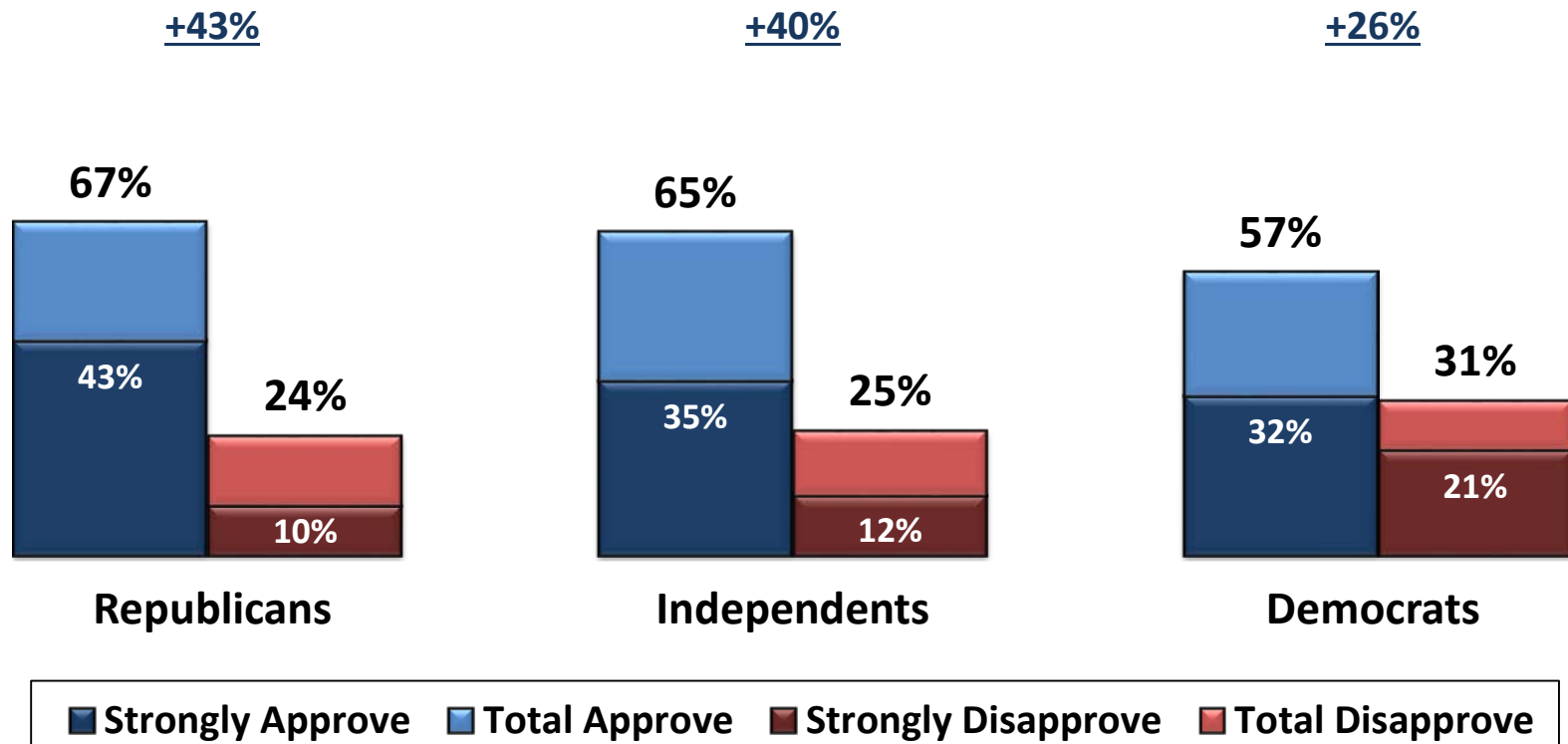
+26%



■ Strongly Approve ■ Total Approve
■ Strongly Disapprove ■ Total Disapprove

Having heard that, would you say you approve or disapprove of the President-Elect's stated approach to federal management of national public lands?

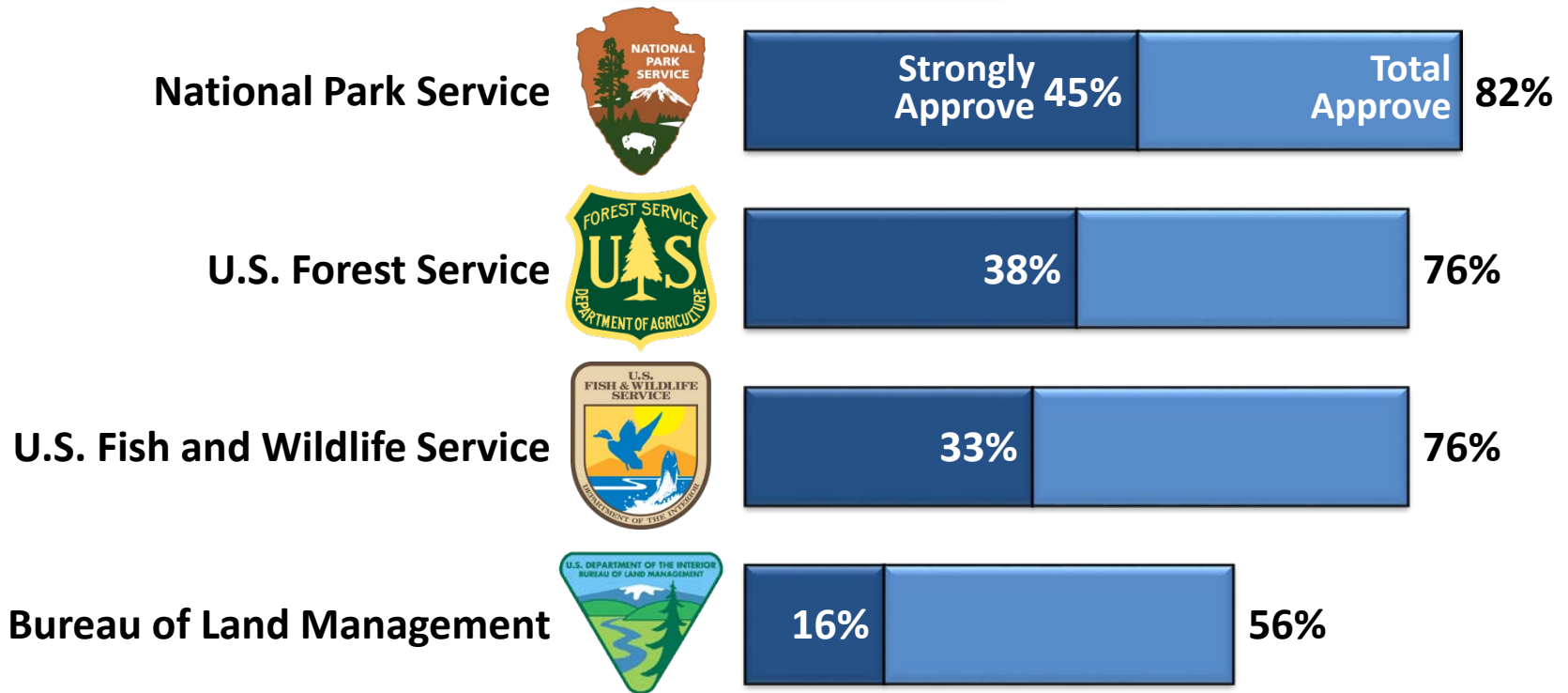
Trump's opposition to transferring national public lands to the states is viewed positively across partisan lines.



Having heard that, would you say you approve or disapprove of the President-Elect's stated approach to federal management of national public lands?

Voters are happy with current management; majority approve of the job that national public lands and wildlife agencies are doing in their state.

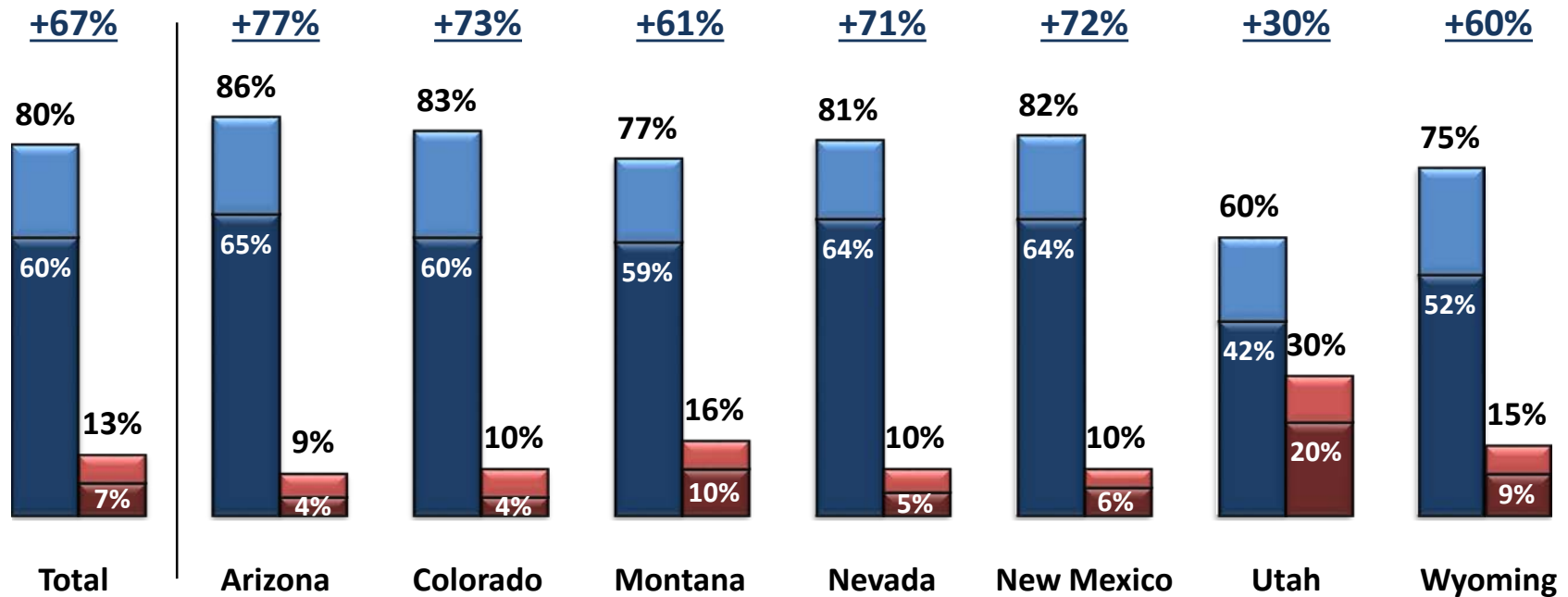
Approval of Agencies



I'd like to read you some different agencies which deal with issues in your state. For each one, please indicate whether you approve or disapprove of the job they are doing at this time.

Strong majorities in every state want to maintain designations of public land as National Monuments.

Keep Existing National Monument Designations



■ Definitely Keep In Place
 ■ Total Keep In Place
 ■ Definitely Remove
 ■ Total Remove

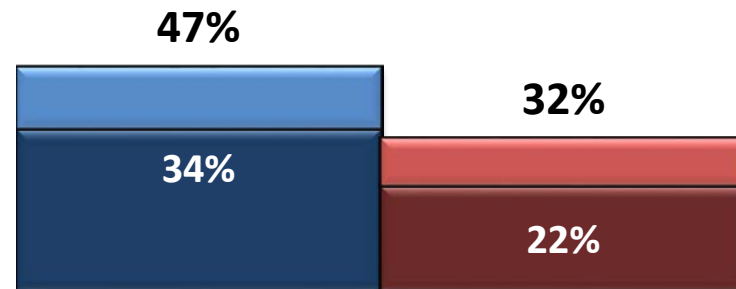
And, do you think that existing national monument designations for some public lands protected over the last decade should be kept in place or should they be removed?

By a 15 point margin, Utah voters more inclined to say the Bears Ears' designation is a good thing.

As you may know, a proposal by five Native American tribes asking the federal government to increase protections for existing public lands in southeastern Utah known as the Bears Ears area was granted at the end of last year. This resulted in a new national monument in Utah with protections for natural areas and water similar to those in national parks. The public can go there to view wildlife, camp, fish, hike, hunt, or ride ATVs. It would not allow new mining or oil and gas development.

Evaluation of Bears Ears Protection - Utah Only -

+15%



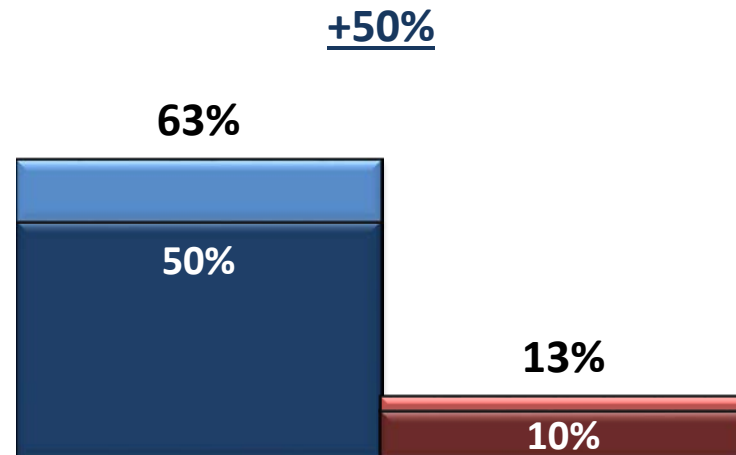
■ Strongly Good Thing ■ Total Good Thing
■ Strongly Bad Thing ■ Total Bad Thing

Do you think this is more of a good thing for the state, more of a bad thing for the state, or do you not have an opinion one way or the other?

Nevadans are even more supportive of Gold Butte, with three-in-five saying designation was a good thing.

As you may know, a proposal to protect existing public lands of Gold Butte just south of Lake Mead was granted at the end of last year, resulting in a new national monument in Nevada with protections for natural areas and water similar to those in national parks. The public can go there to view wildlife and American Indian artifacts, camp, hike, hunt, or ride ATVs. It would not allow new mining or oil and gas development.

Evaluation of Gold Butte Protection - Nevada Only -



■ Strongly Good Thing ■ Total Good Thing
■ Strongly Bad Thing ■ Total Bad Thing

Do you think this is more of a good thing for the state, more of a bad thing for the state, or do you not have an opinion one way or the other?

Voters want a centrist approach to energy production on public lands.

[View on Public Land Drilling](#)

Oil and gas drilling on public lands should be strictly limited.

35%

Some public lands should be drilled, while environmentally sensitive places should be permanently protected.

50%

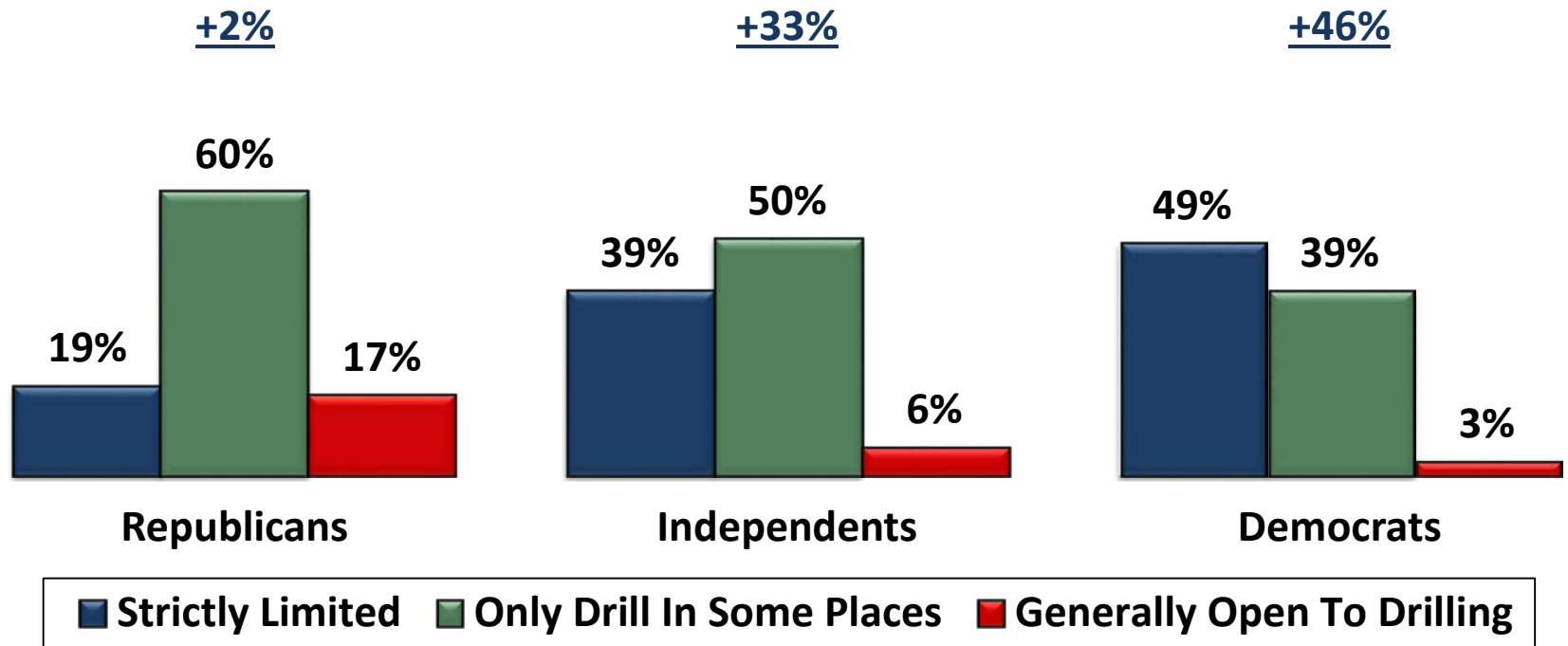
Public lands should generally be open to oil and gas drilling.

9%

The federal government allows oil and gas drilling to take place on public lands, like some national parks and forest land. Which of the following comes closest to your point of view -

Voters across the political spectrum side with limiting drilling on public lands in some way; just 17% of GOP want more drilling.

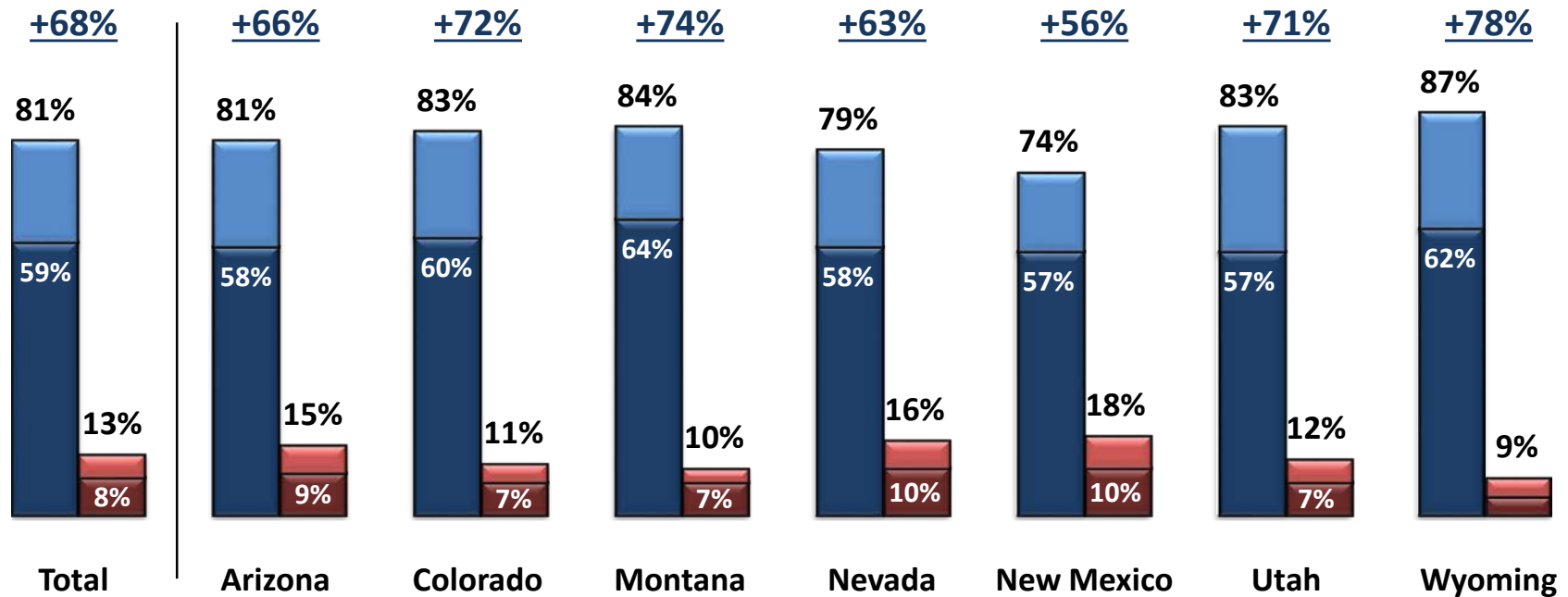
View on Public Land Drilling by Party



The federal government allows oil and gas drilling to take place on public lands, like some national parks and forest land. Which of the following comes closest to your point of view -

The vast majority of voters in every state support continuing the methane rule on public lands.

Continue Methane Rule

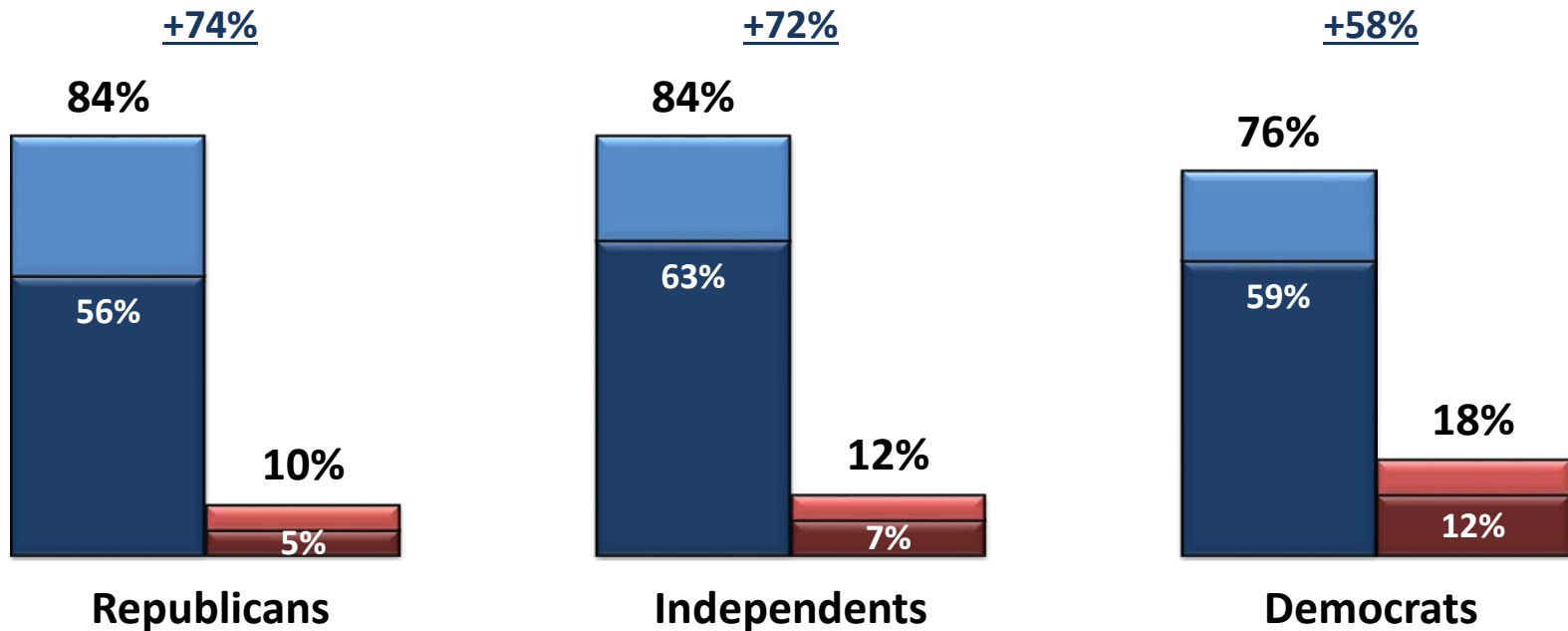


■ Definitely Continue
 ■ Total Continue
 ■ Definitely Not Continue
 ■ Total Not Continue

Thinking about one existing policy, would you continue or not continue to require oil and gas producers who operate on national public lands to use updated equipment and technology to prevent leaks of methane gas during the extraction process and reduce the need to burn off excess natural gas into the air?

There is significant and intense support for the methane rule across the political spectrum.

Continue Methane Rule by Party

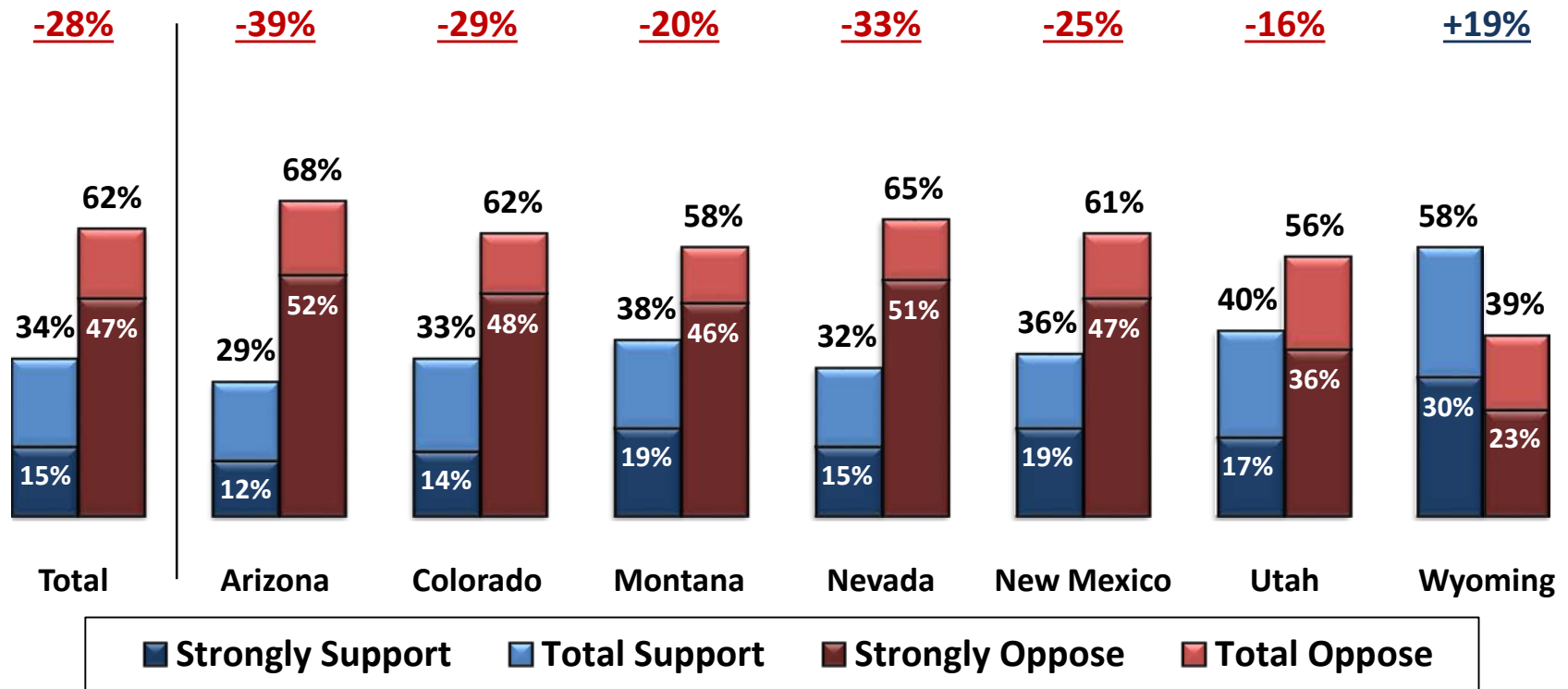


■ Definitely Continue ■ Total Continue ■ Definitely Not Continue ■ Total Not Continue

Thinking about one existing policy, would you continue or not continue to require oil and gas producers who operate on national public lands to use updated equipment and technology to prevent leaks of methane gas during the extraction process and reduce the need to burn off excess natural gas into the air?

A majority in every state except Wyoming oppose expanding oil and gas leasing on public lands.

Allowing oil and gas companies to purchase the right to drill in new areas of national public lands



Thinking now about our national public lands, such as U.S. forests and national monuments -- There are a number of actions which the Trump administration may consider taking. For each one, please indicate if you would support or oppose that action.

Questions?





**PUBLIC OPINION
STRATEGIES**

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