



2022 Politics of Small Business Survey



Welcome

America's small businesses have lived through a difficult three years and looking to the future, things still aren't looking great: inflation continues to rise and fears over a forthcoming recession inhibit small-business owners' ability and willingness to grow. Exacerbating small-business owners' uneasy economic outlook is the growing lack of trust small businesses have in lawmakers' ability to do the business of the American people. Partisanship is at an all-time high—even among pragmatic small-business owners.

Every two years, prior to a national election, NSBA publishes its Politics of Small Business Survey. This year, as in past years, we found that small-business owners continue to be extremely engaged: 95 percent of small-business owners say they vote regularly in national contests, compared to just 62 percent voter turnout for the 2020 elections, which was exceptionally high.

Today 88 percent of small businesses say politics have become more partisan, whereas in 2016, 82 percent said the same. When it comes to how well each party represents their small business, there was a slight uptick among Democratic small-business owners who said the Democratic party best represents their small business (from 62 percent in 2020 to 65 percent today). Among Republicans, however, there was a decrease among those who said the Republican party best represents their small business (from 87 percent in 2020 to 78 percent today).

While slightly more small-business owners identify as Republican than Democratic (41 percent to 23 percent), 33 percent report being independent or having no party affiliations, up from 26 percent in 2020. No political party "owns" small business; they are roughly split in thirds among Republicans, Democrats and Independents. Ten percent of small-business respondents reported changing their political affiliation in the last five years, and a slightly higher proportion of those were Republicans. Overall, today, 23 percent said they've changed their party affiliation sometime in the last 10 years while in 2020, that number was just 17 percent.

New this year, NSBA asked about voting security and voting by mail. Just 23 percent of Republican small-business owners support voting by mail while 85 percent of Democrats do. Less than half overall believe voting security is a significant problem, however when broken down by party affiliation, 67 percent of Republicans believe it's a significant problem while just 30 percent of Democrats believe the same.

The issues small business care most about: economic and fiscal, followed by social issues and then foreign affairs. Small-business owners are very engaged with the political process: three-quarters say they've contacted an elected official on both small-business issues and issues not having to do with their business.

We hope the 2022 Politics of Small Business Survey is useful and informative. Please contact our public affairs department for more at press@nsba.biz.

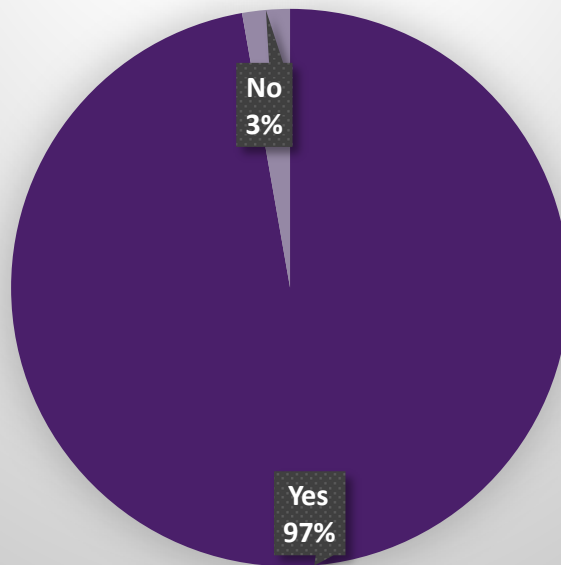
Sincerely,

Michael Stanek
NSBA Chair

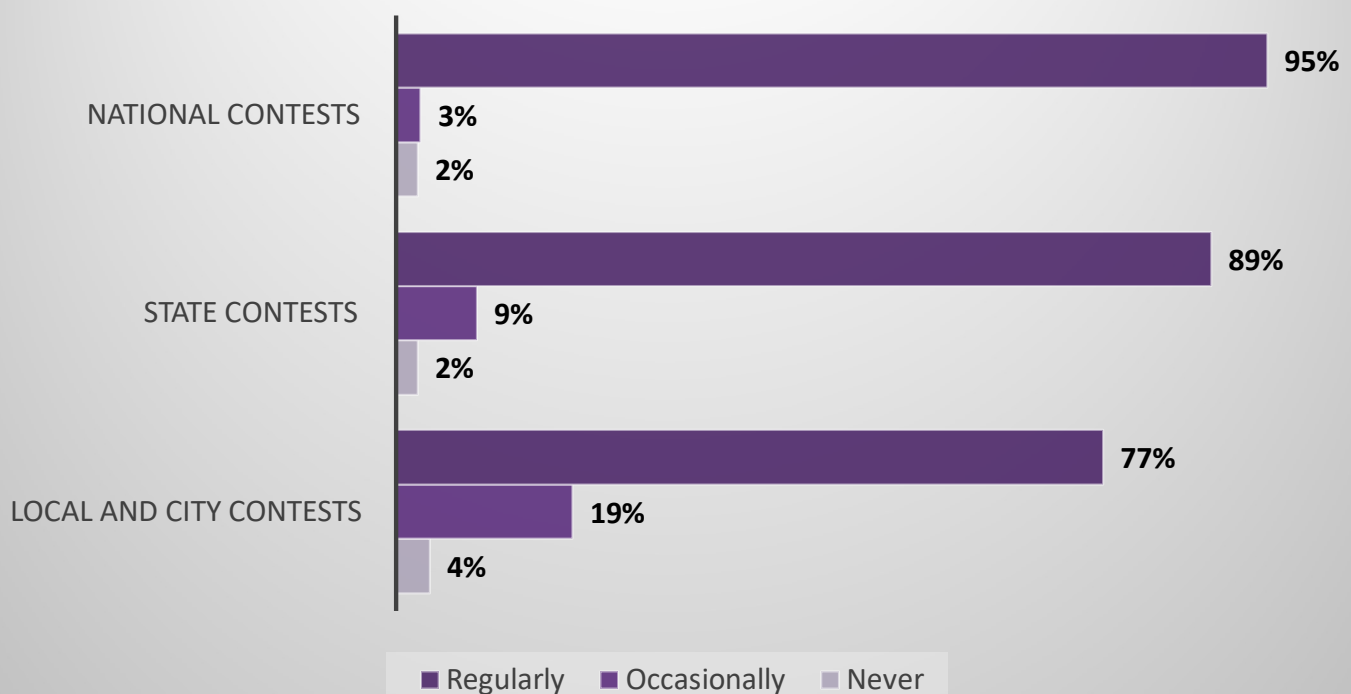
Todd McCracken
NSBA President and CEO

Voting Practices

Are you registered to vote?

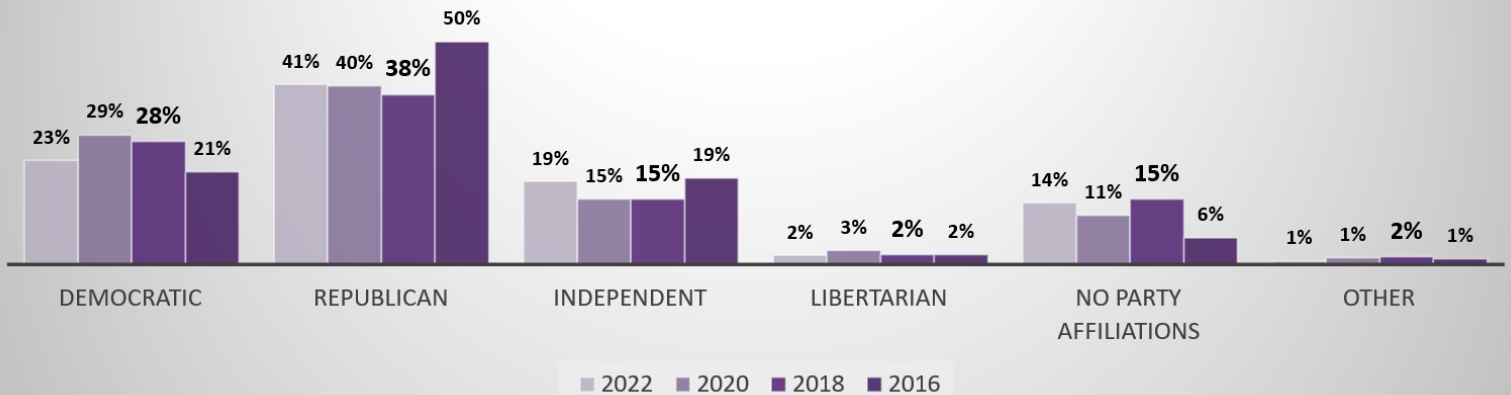


How regularly would you say you vote in the following elections/ballot initiatives?

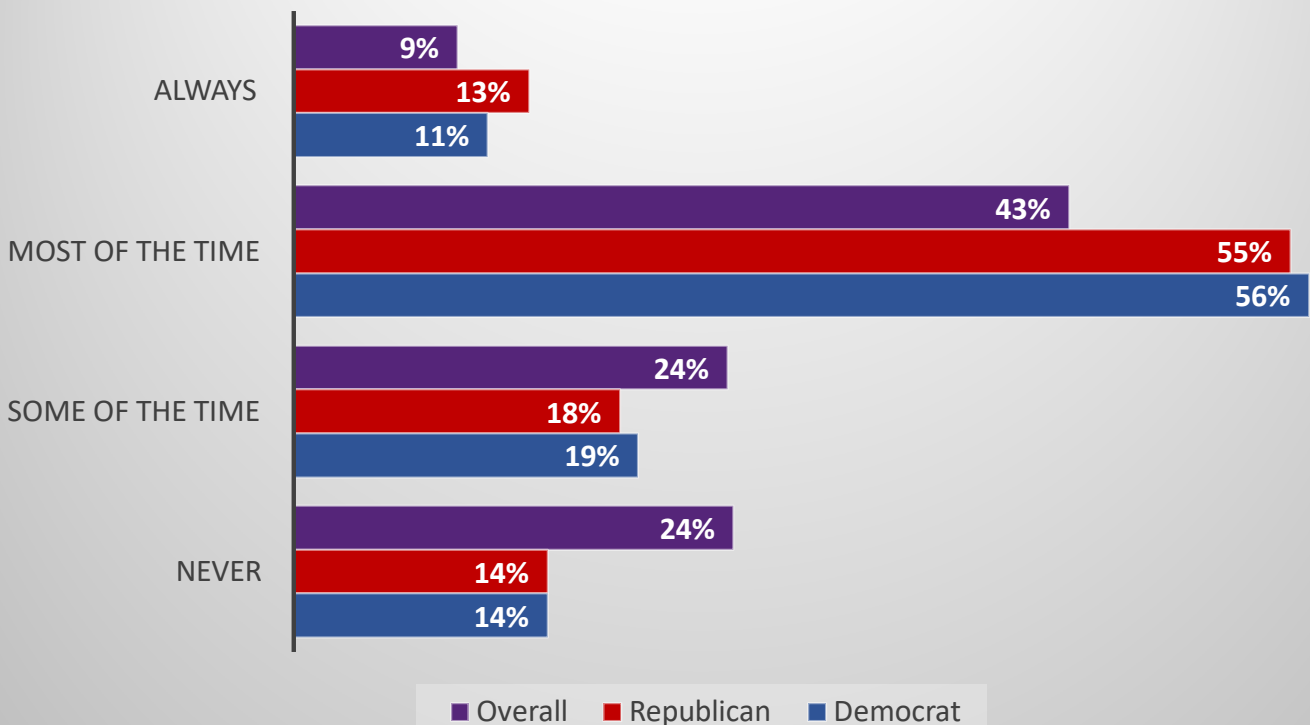


Political Affiliation

What is your political party affiliation?

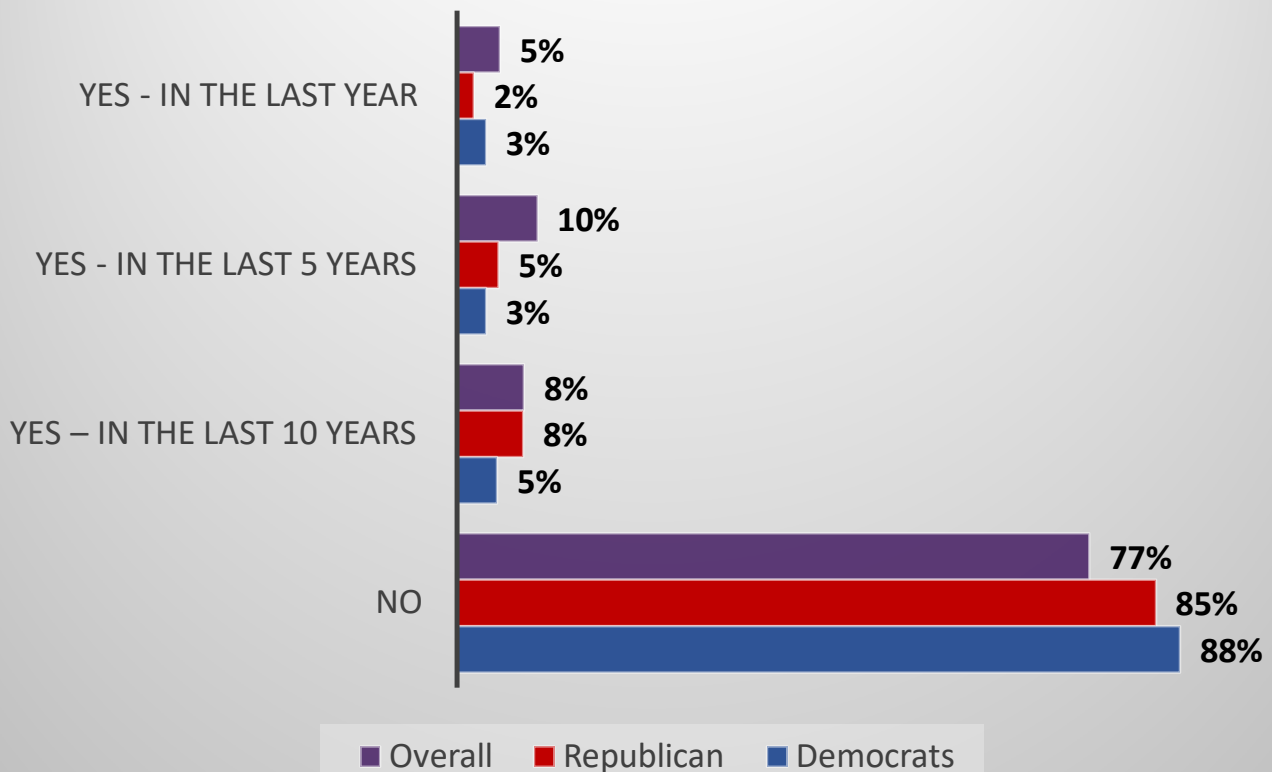


How regularly do you vote a straight party ticket?



Political Affiliation

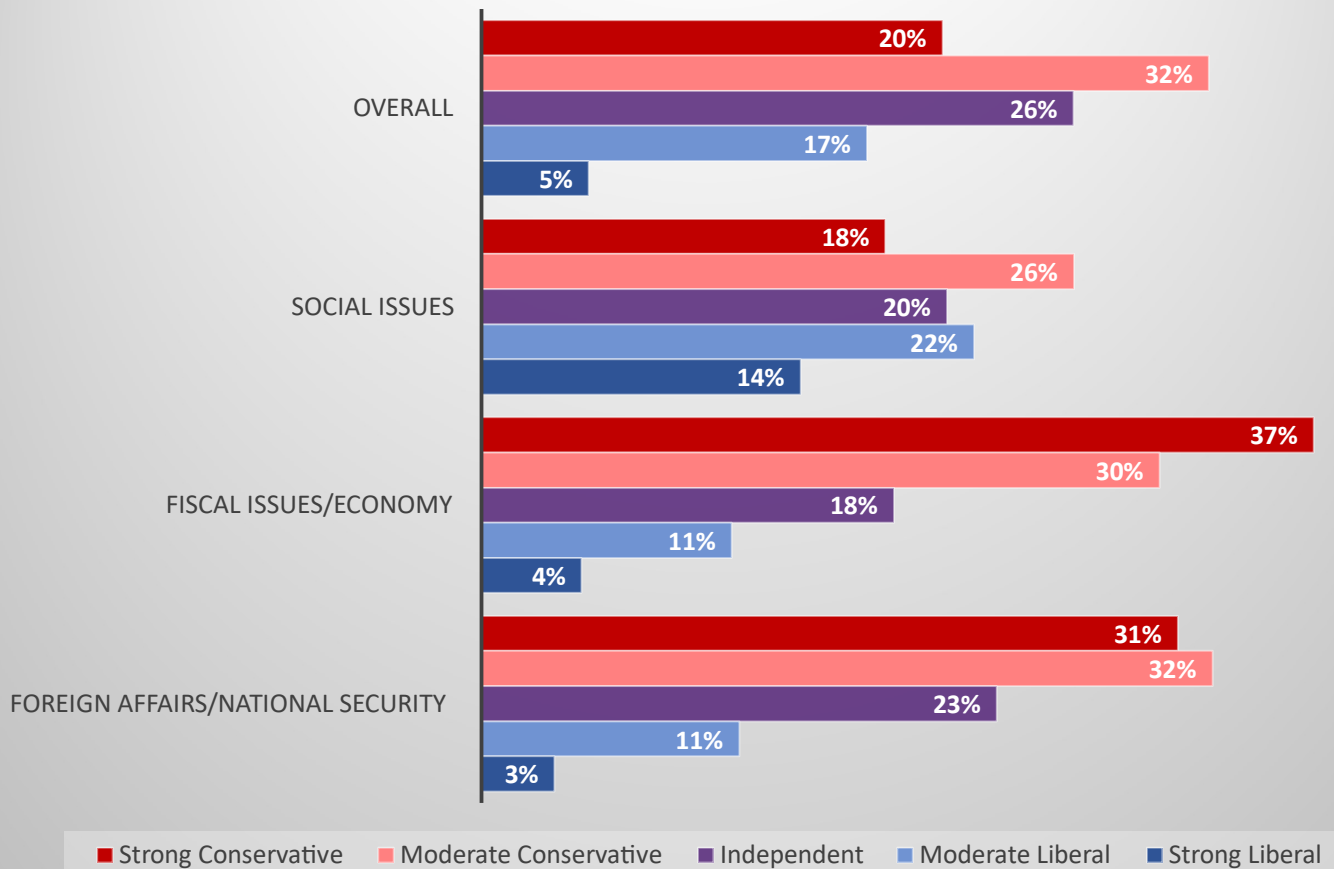
Has your political affiliation changed in recently?



Today, 23 percent of small-business owners said they've changed their party affiliation sometime in the last 10 years. 10 percent report changing their political affiliation in the last 5 years, and a slightly higher proportion of those were Republicans.

The Issues

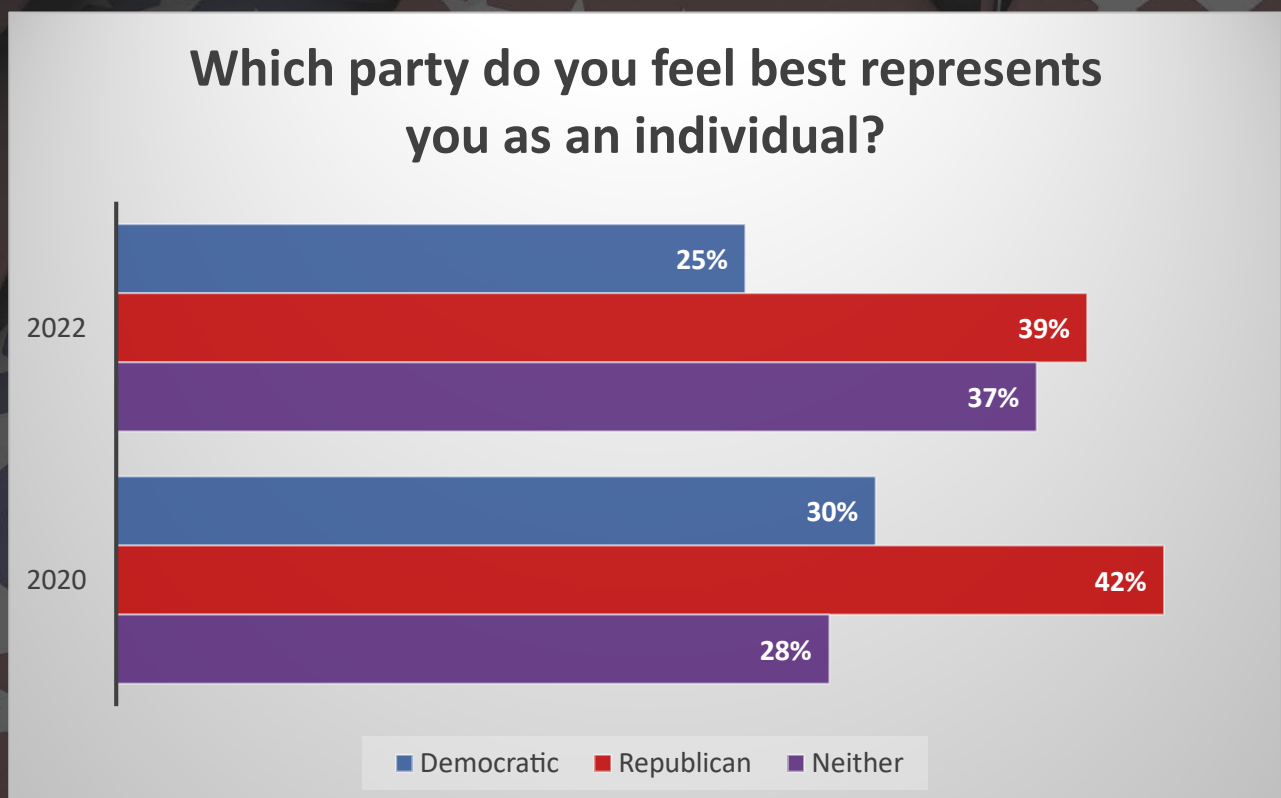
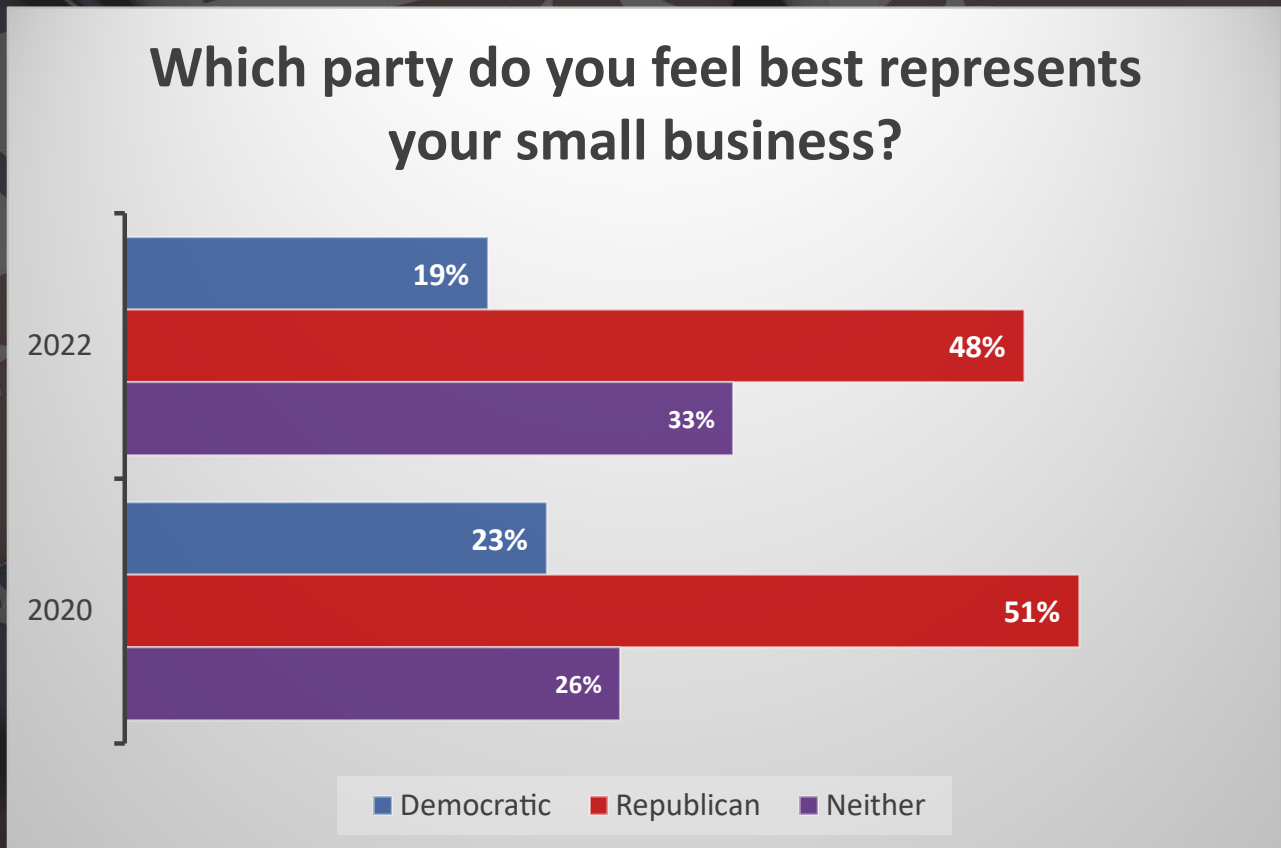
Please check where your political affiliations lie in the following categories.



Please rank 1 through 3, with 1 being the most important, how the following issue areas determine how you vote.

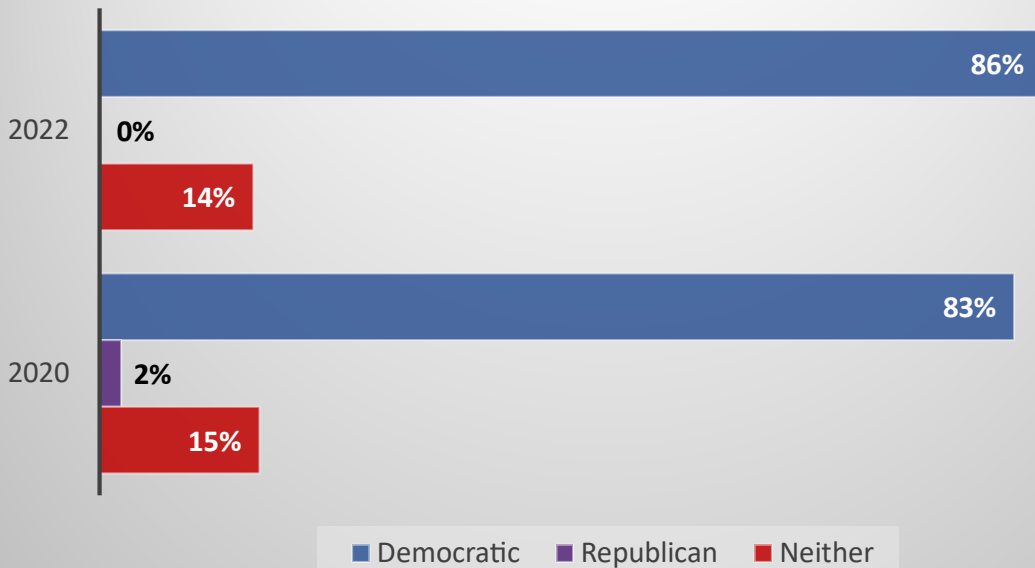
	Overall	Democrats	Republicans
Economic and fiscal issues	1	1	1
Social issues	2	2	3
Foreign affairs/national security	3	3	2

Political Representation

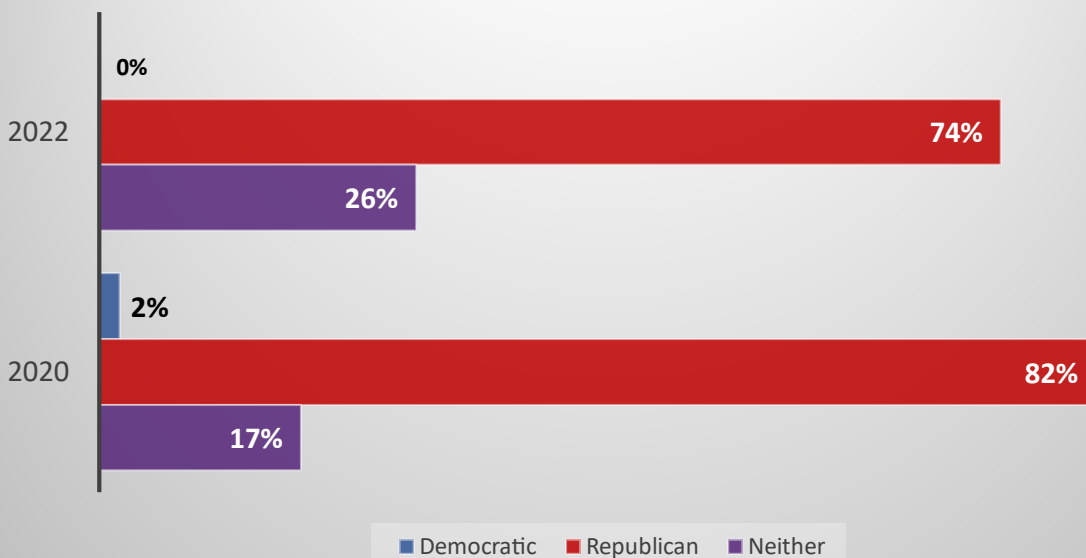


Political Representation by Party Affiliation

Among Democrats, which party do you feel best represents you as an individual?

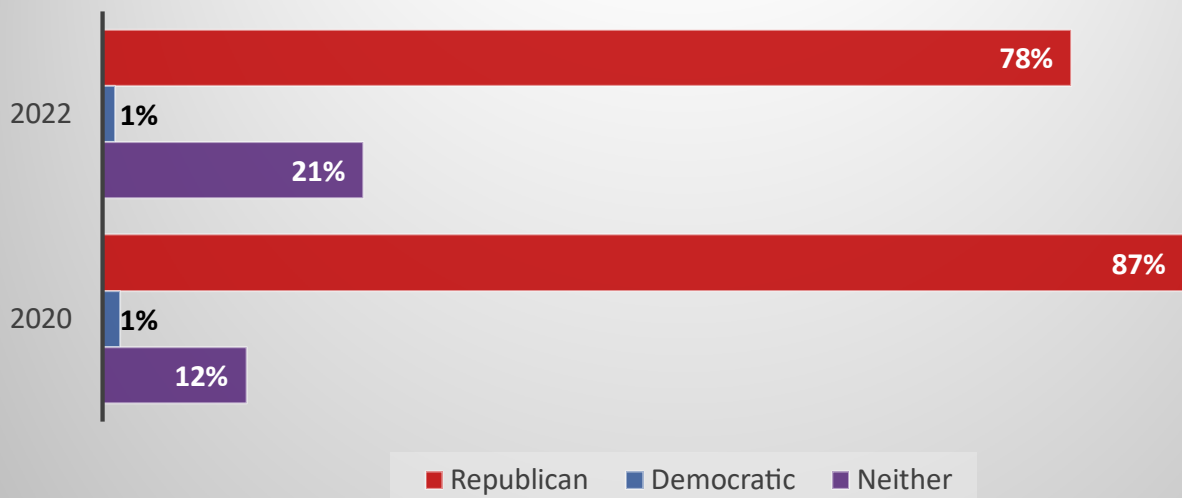


Among Republicans, which party do you feel best represents you as an individual?

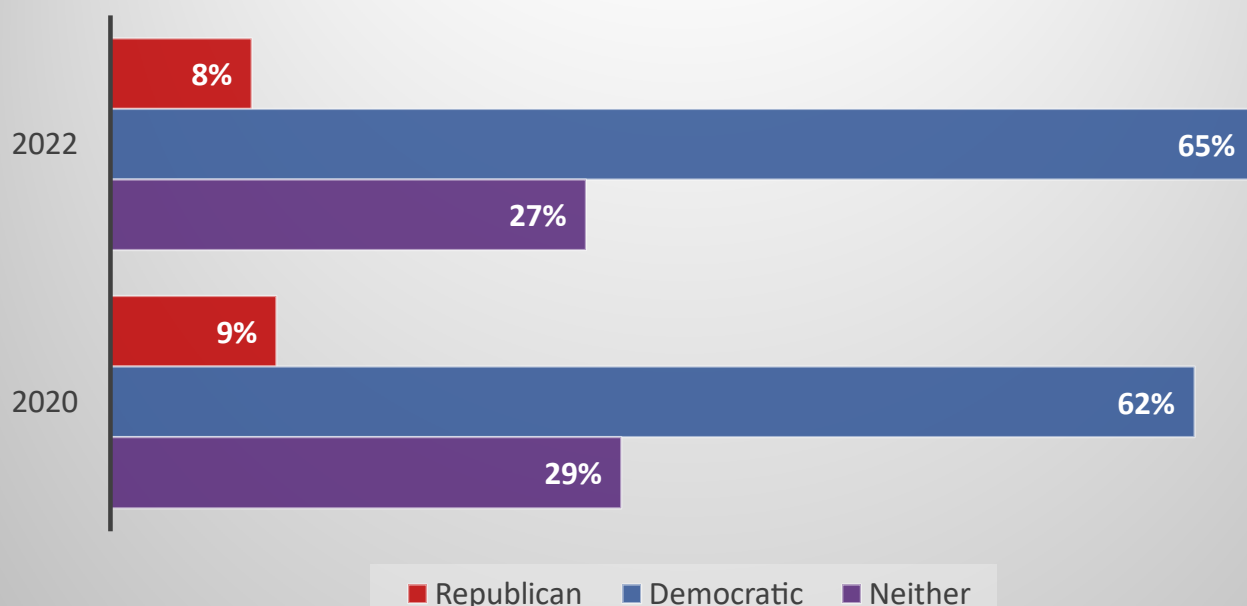


Political Representation by Party Affiliation

Among Republicans, which party do you feel best represents your small business?

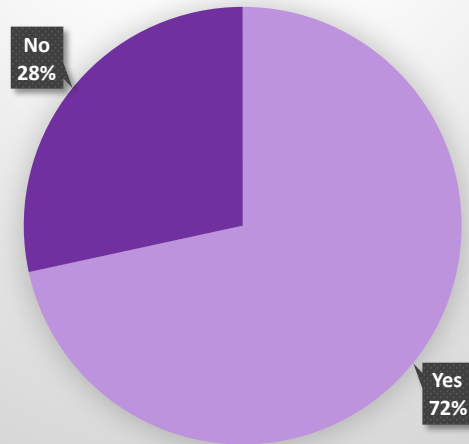


Among Democrats, which party do you feel best represents your small business?

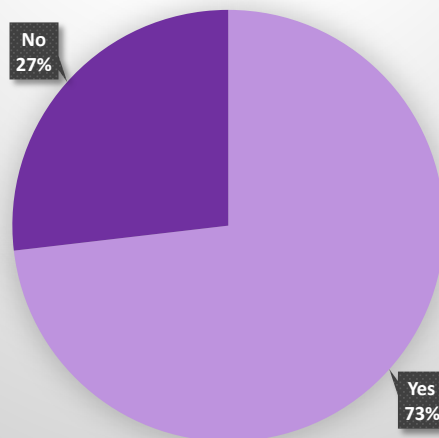


Political Engagement

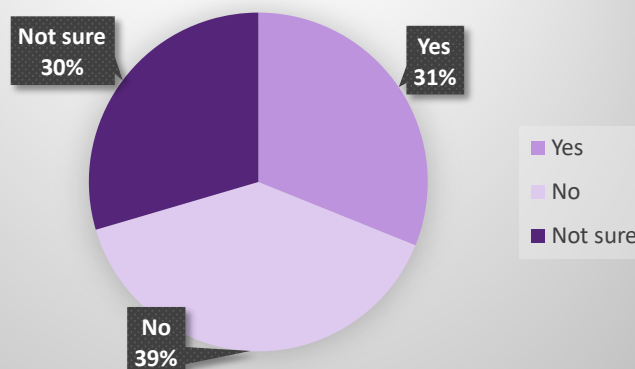
Have you ever contacted your elected officials on a small-business issue?



Have you ever contacted your elected officials on an issue NOT having to do with your small business?

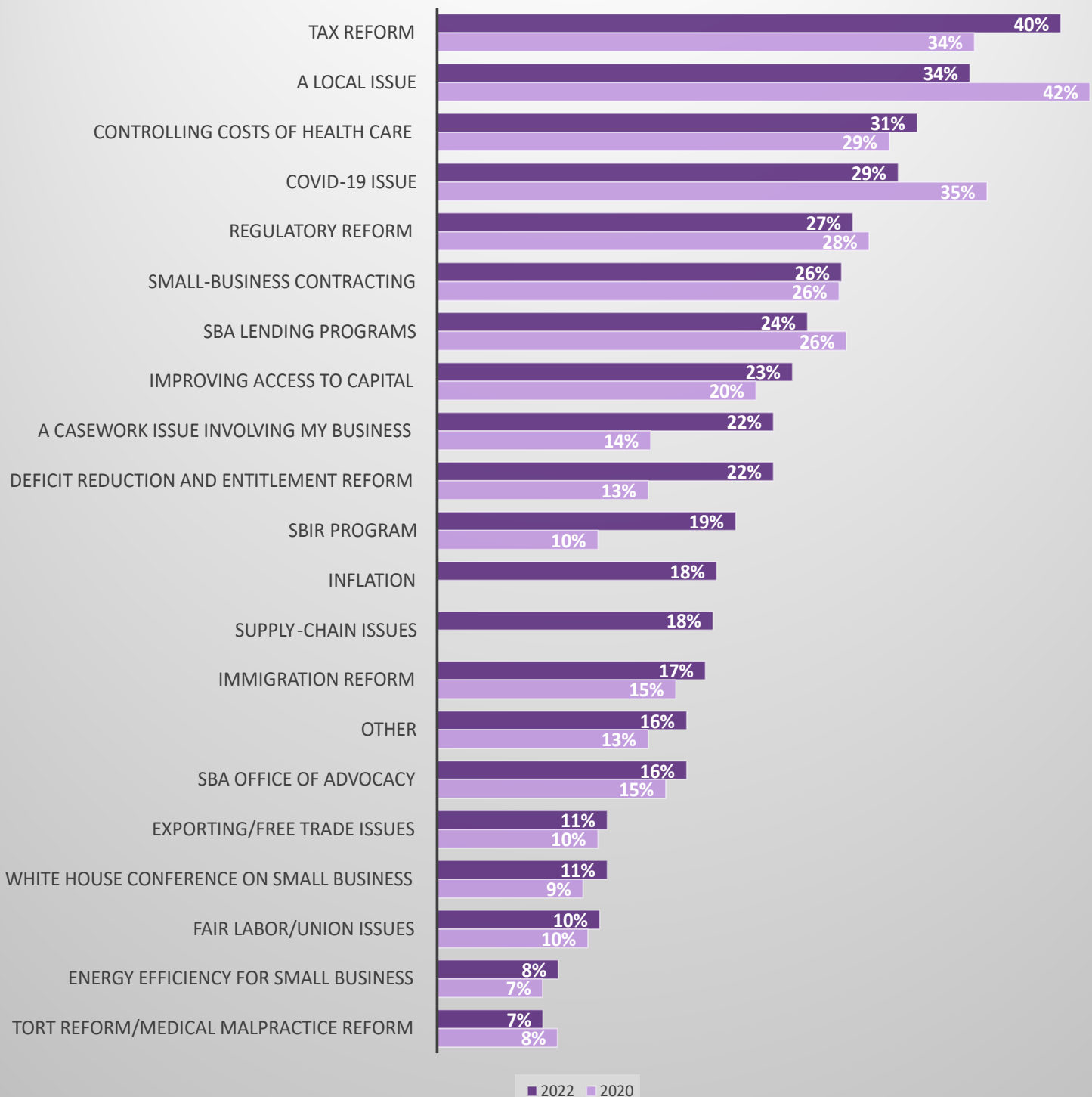


Does your elected official know who you are?



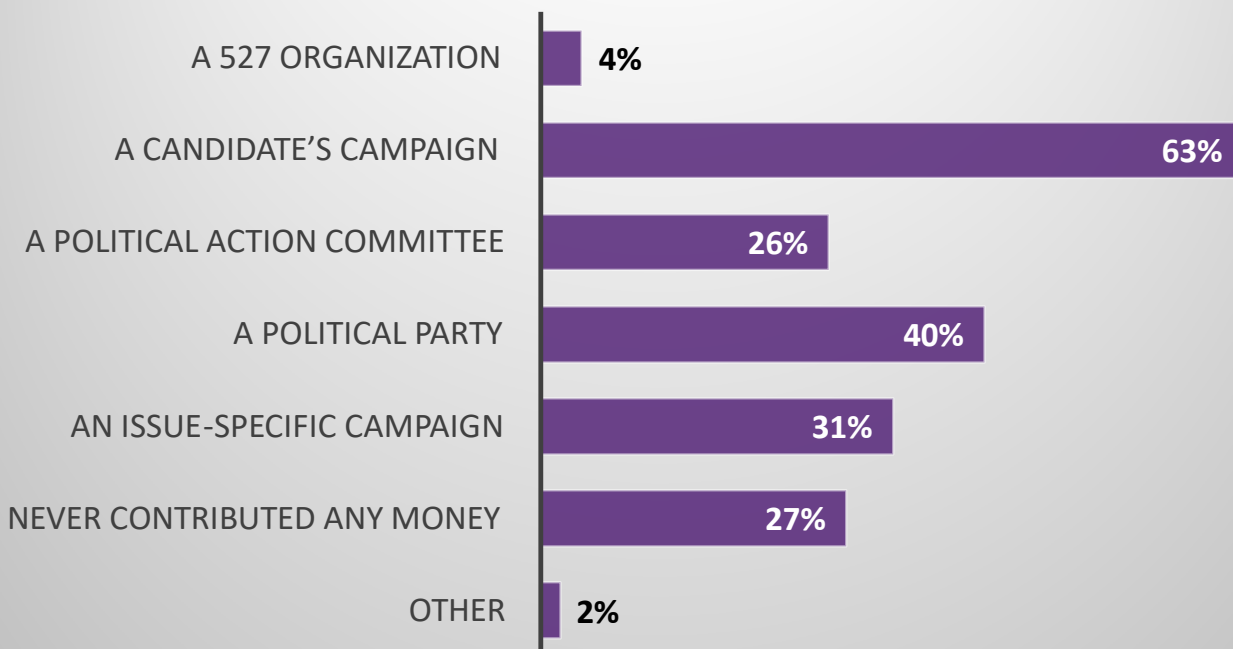
Political Engagement

If you have contacted your elected officials on a small-business issue, what were the issues? (Check all that apply)



Campaign Contributions

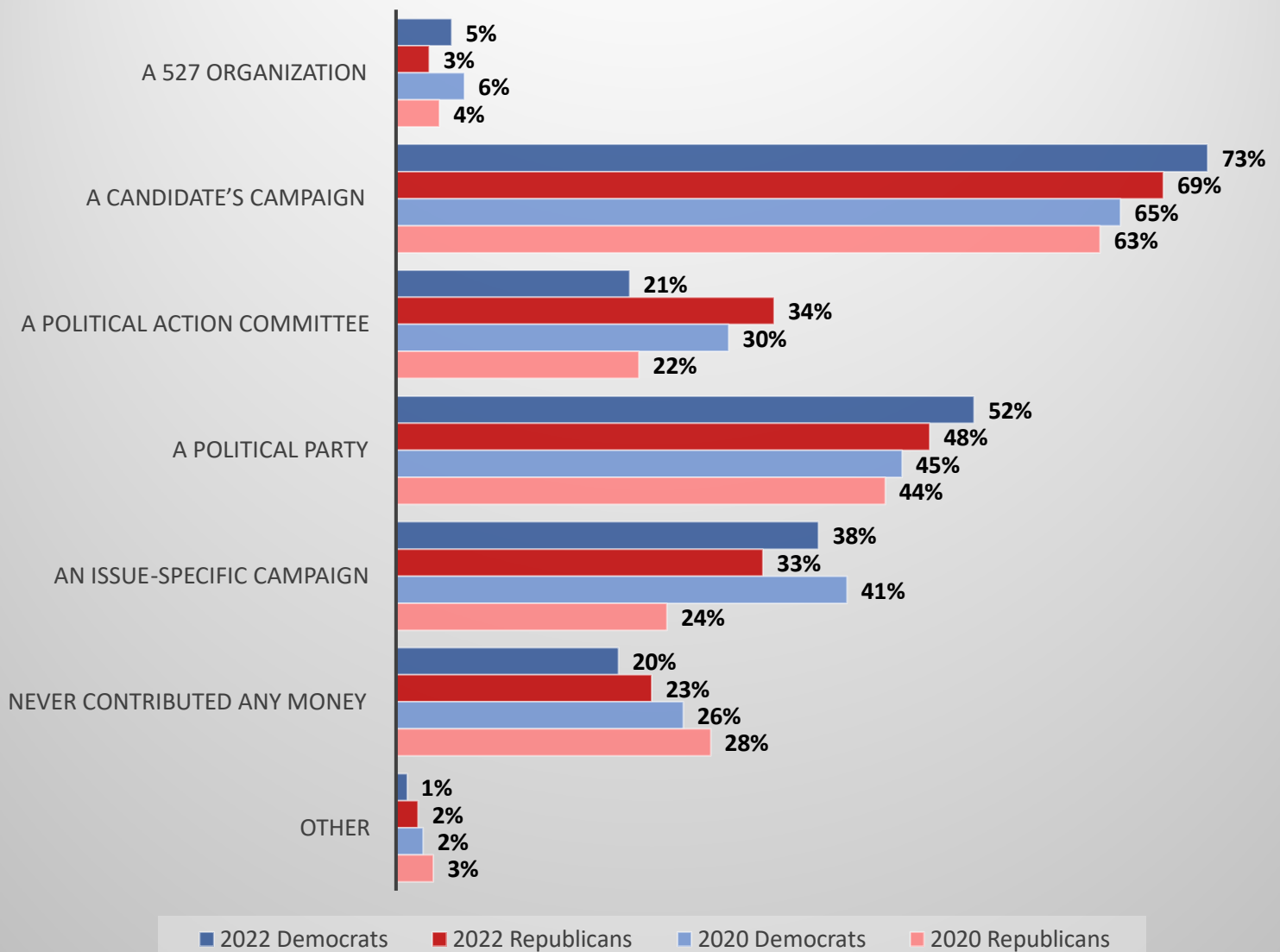
**Have you ever contributed money to...
(Check all that apply)**



The majority of both Republican and Democratic small-business owners have contributed to a candidate's campaign.

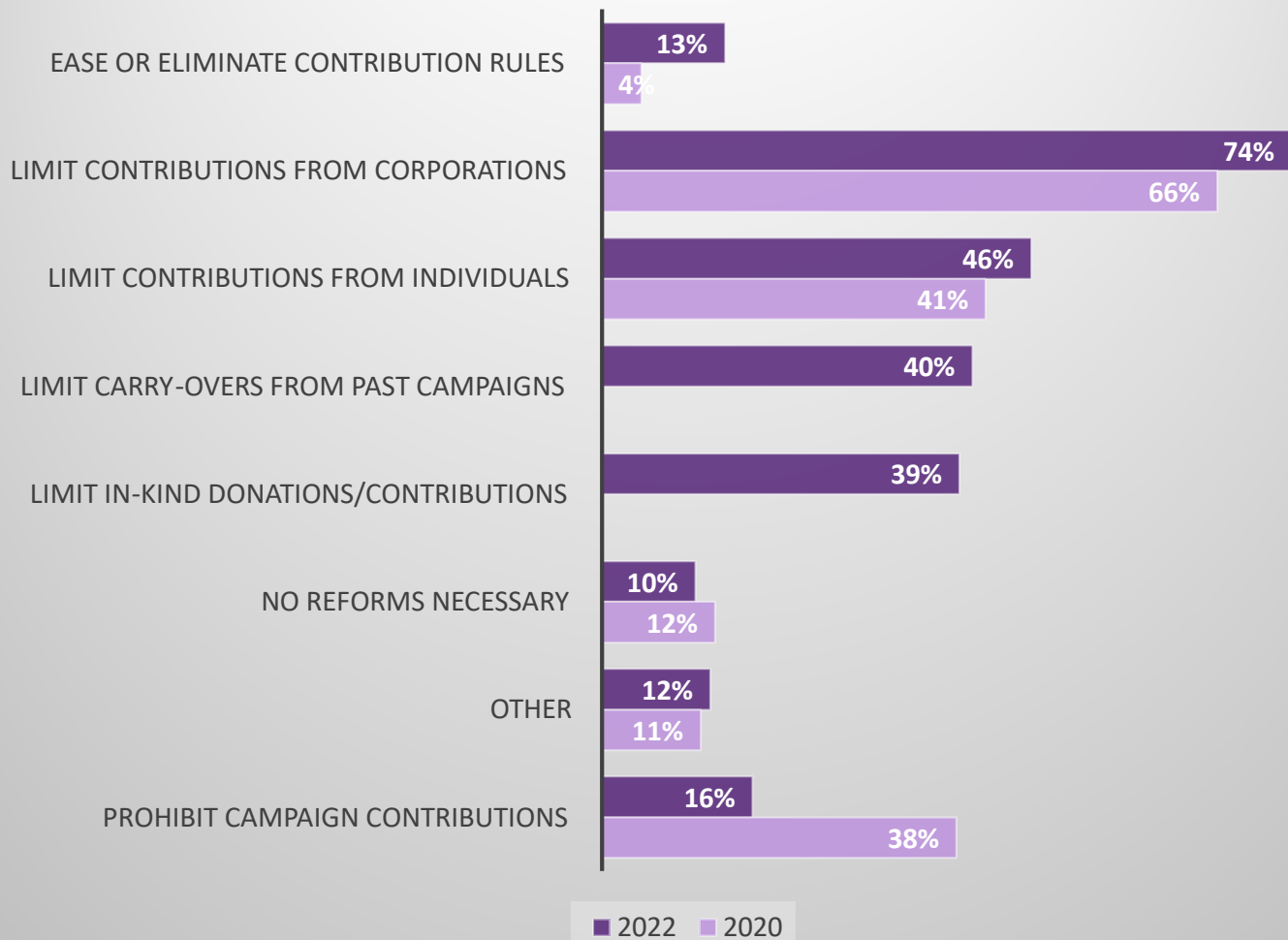
Campaign Contribution by Political Affiliation

Comparing Democrats and Republicans: Have you ever contributed money to... (Check all that apply)



Campaign Finance

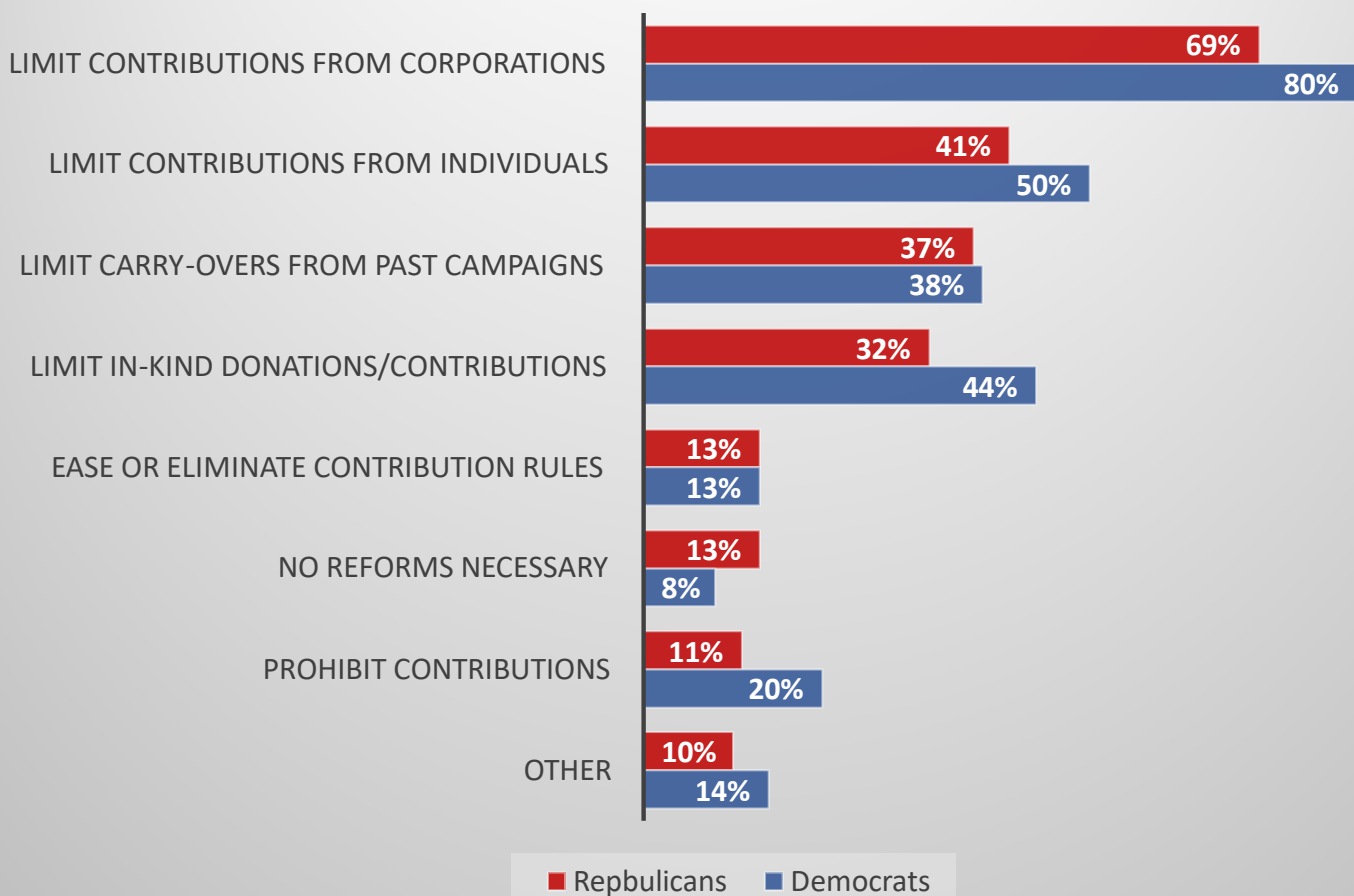
Which of the following campaign reform strategies do you support? (check all that apply)



There was a notable increase among small-business owners who support limiting campaign contributions from corporations from 66 percent in 2020 to 74 percent today.

Campaign Finance by Political Affiliation

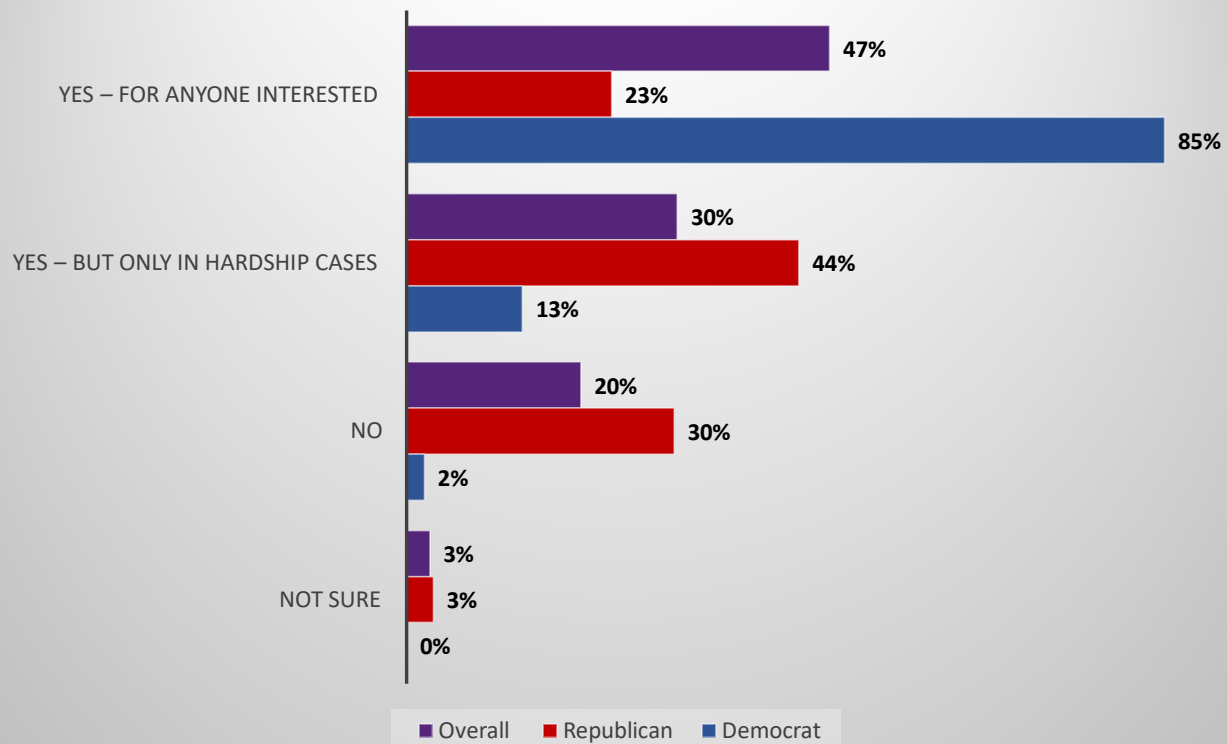
Comparing Republicans and Democrats: Which of the following campaign reform strategies do you support? (check all that apply)



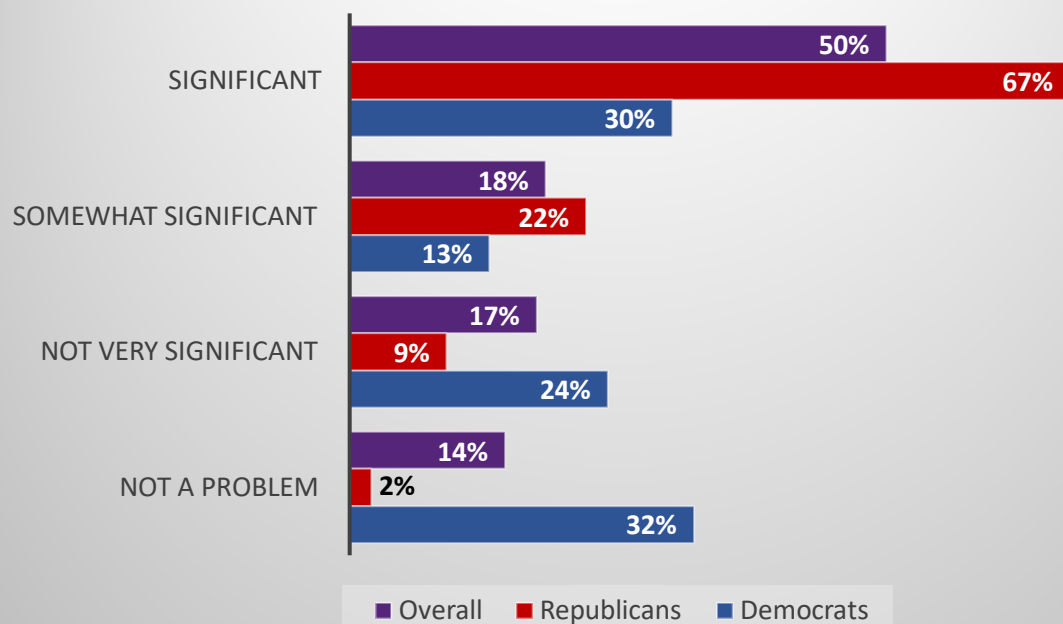
Democratic small-business owners more broadly support various campaign reform strategies.

Voting Security

Do you support voting by mail?

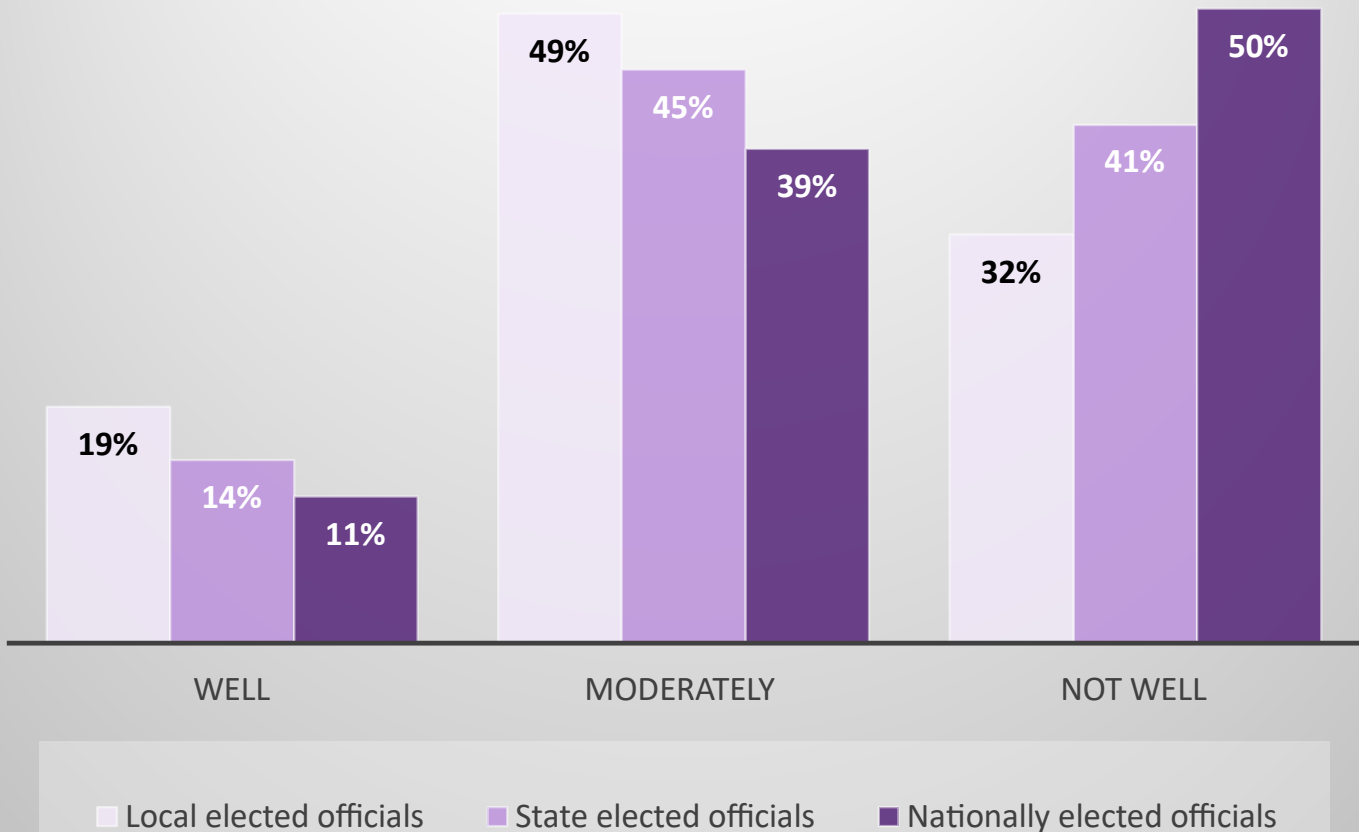


How significant a problem do you believe voting security is?



Rating Elected Officials

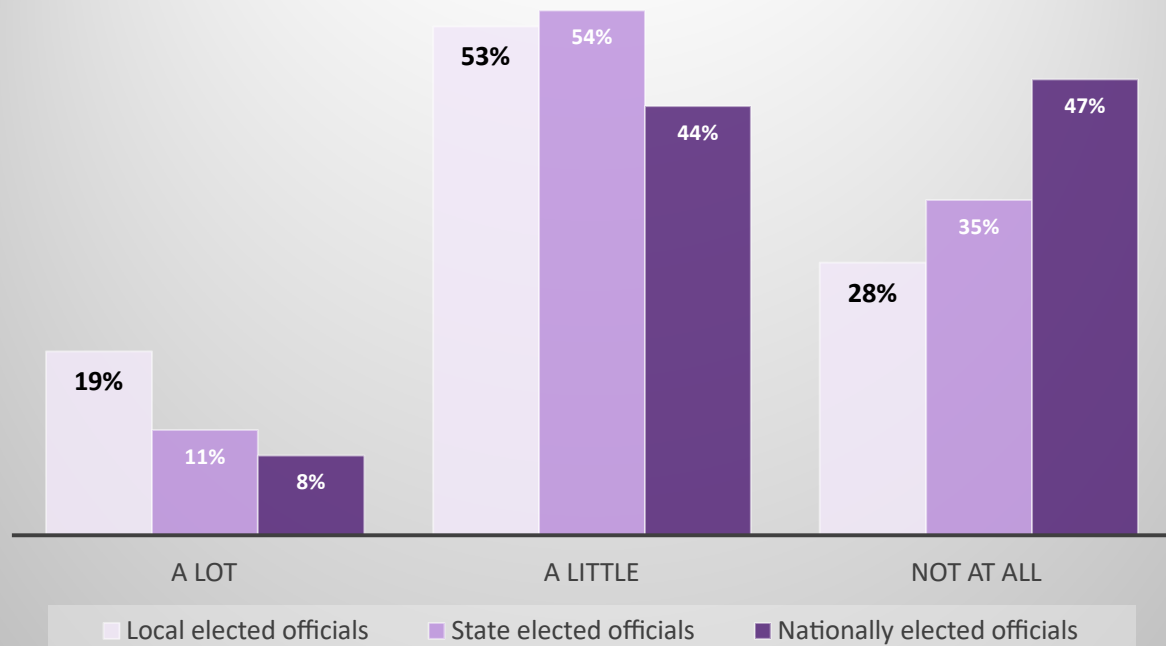
How well do you think your elected officials represent you?



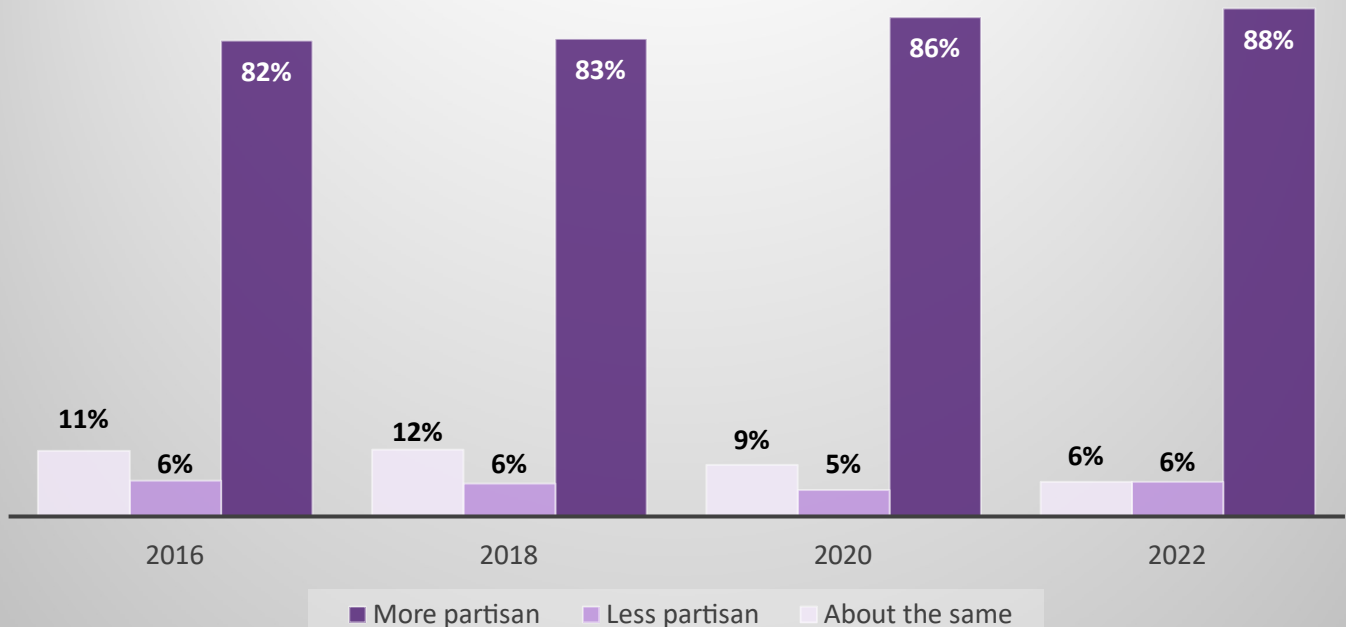
The overwhelming majority of small businesses think politics have become more partisan in the last 10 years—that's increased steadily from 2016 (82%) to today (88%)

Rating Elected Officials

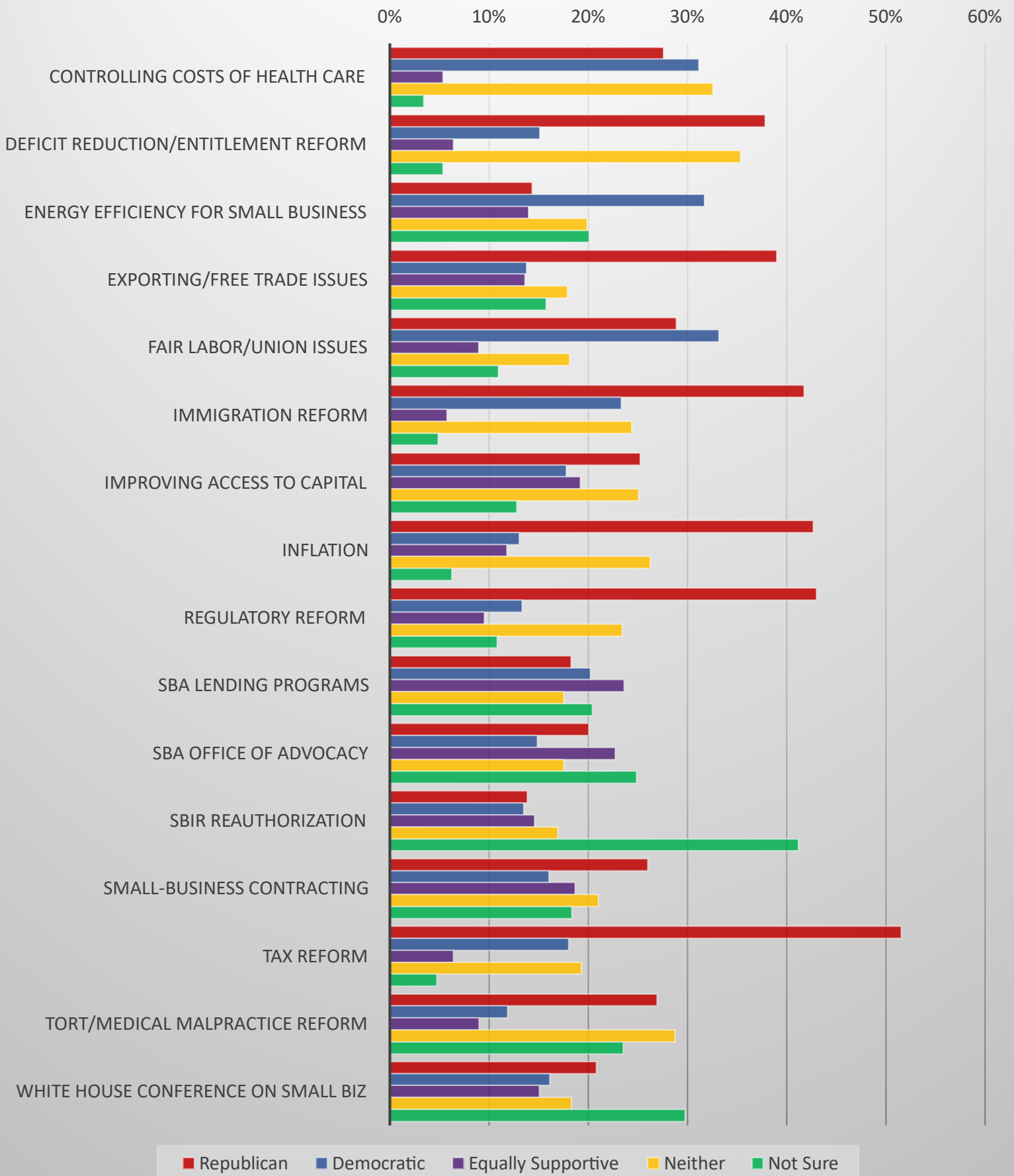
How much do you trust all elected officials?



In the last 10 years, do you think politics have become...

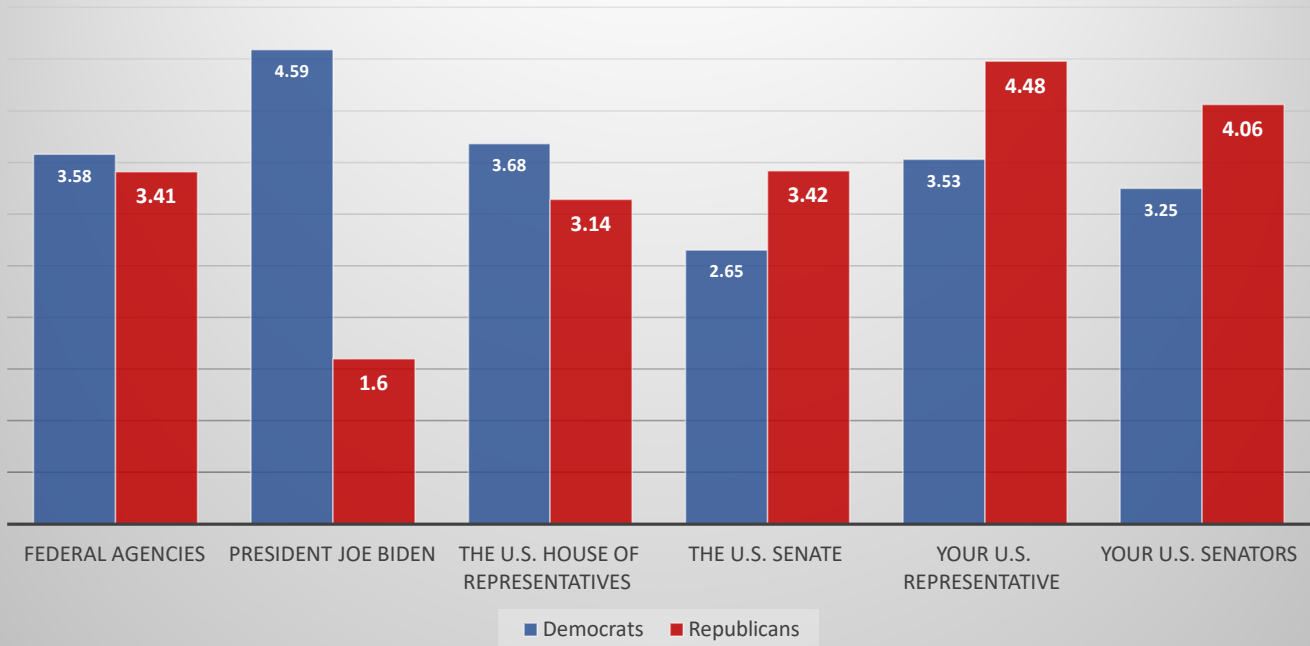


Please check which party you think is more supportive of small business on the following issues.

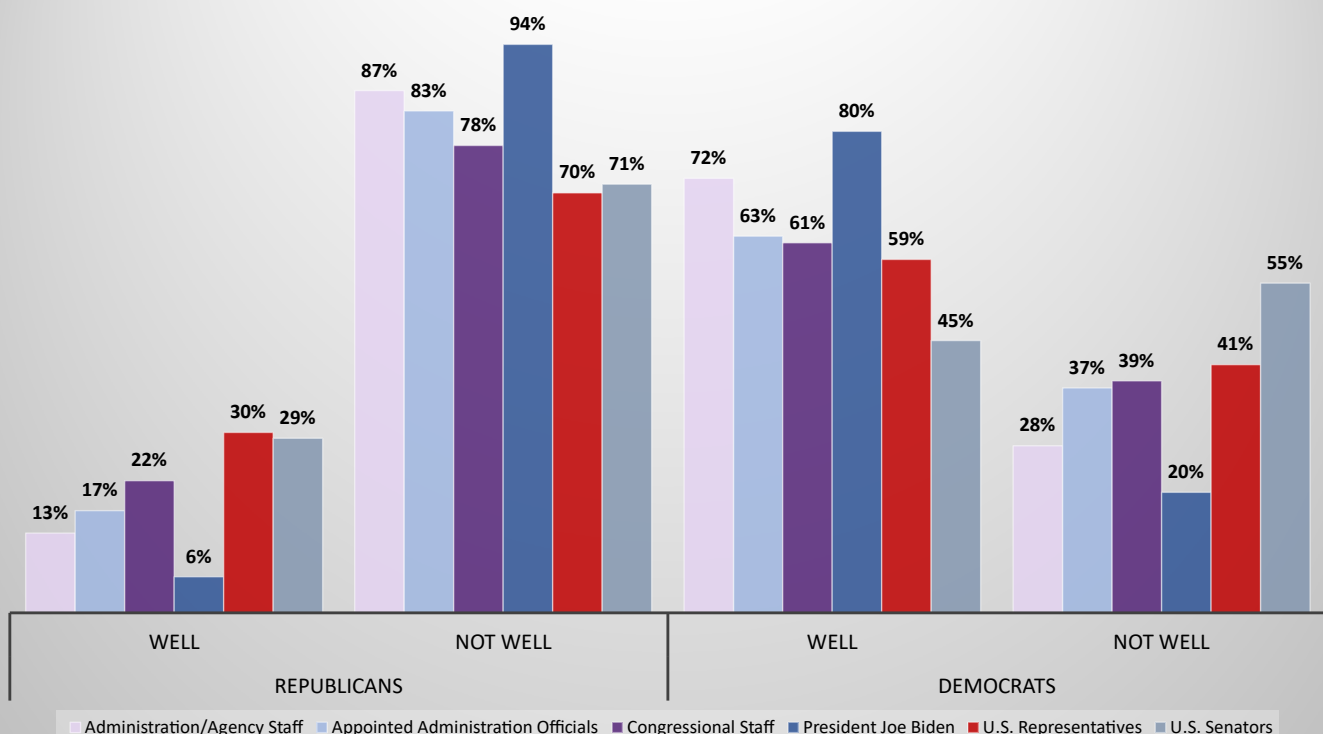


Rating Elected Officials

Please rate 1 to 5 (with 5 being the best) how well the following elected officials are supporting small-business issues.

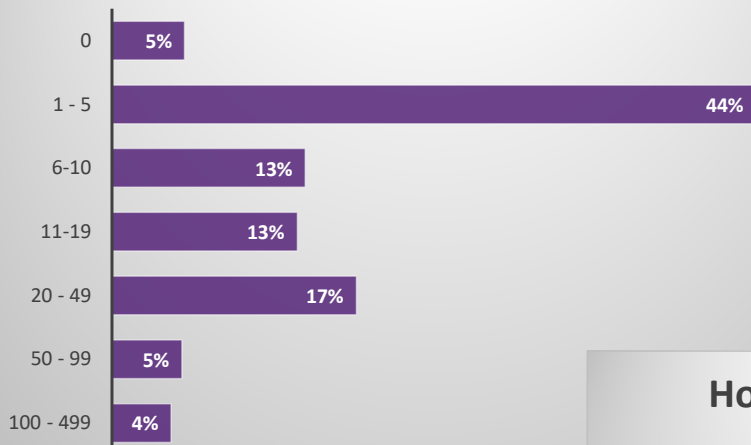


How well would you say the following groups/people understand small-business issues?

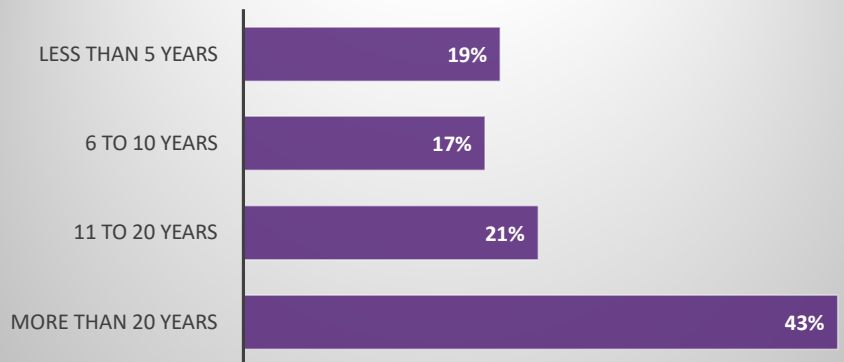


Demographics

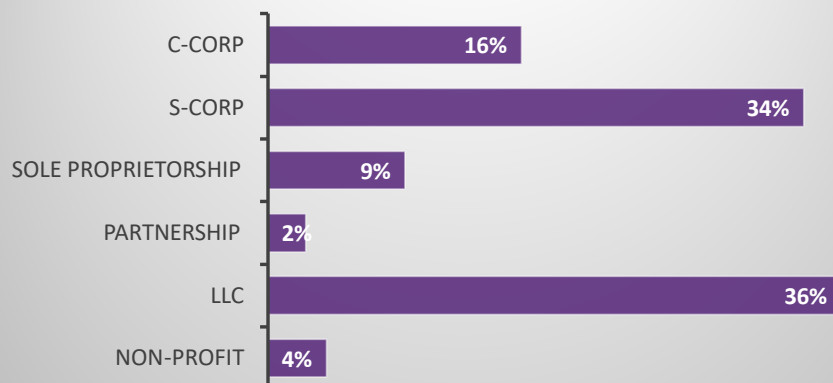
How many total full-time personnel are currently employed by your business?



How long have you been in business?

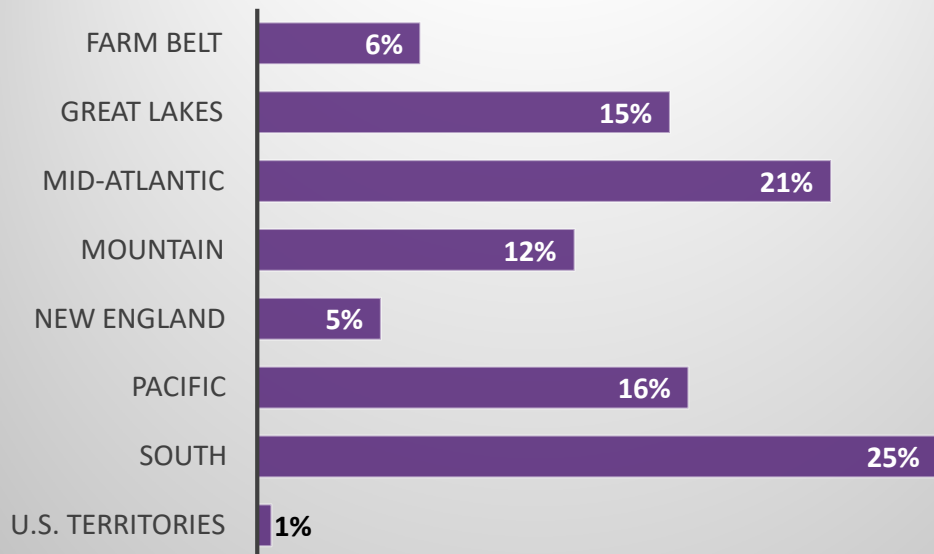


Which of the following best describes the structure of your business?

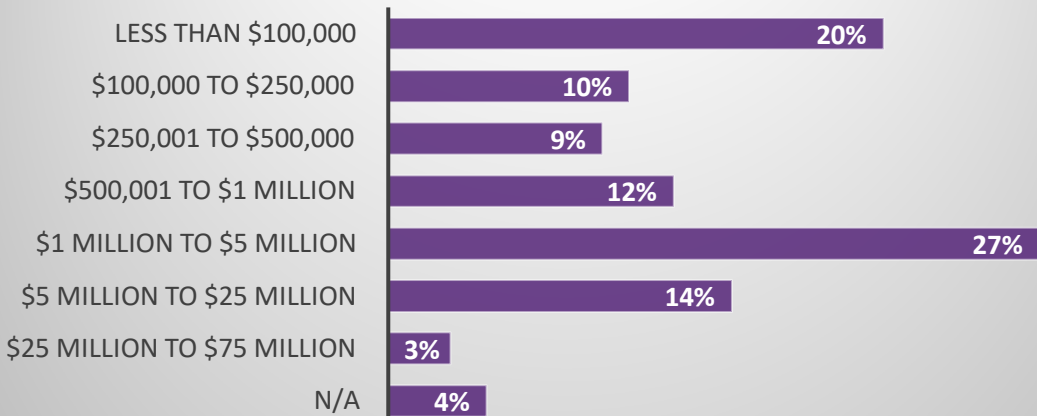


Demographics

In what state is your business located?



What were your gross sales or revenues for your most recent fiscal year?



Demographics

Which of the following best describes the industry or sector in which your business operates?



Methodology

The 2022 Politics of Small Business Survey was conducted online among 650 small-business owners from Aug. 22 through Sept. 12, 2022.