



South Dakota Survey

Key Findings

April 2025

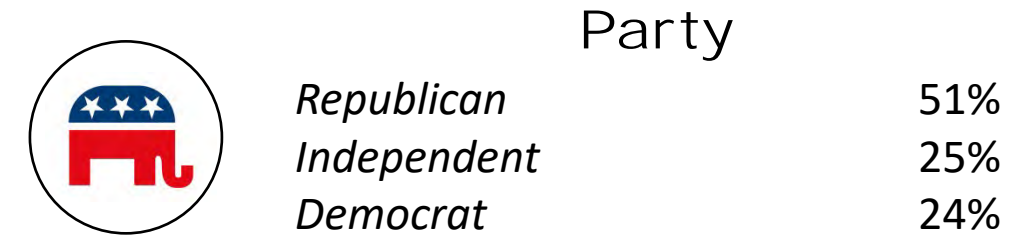
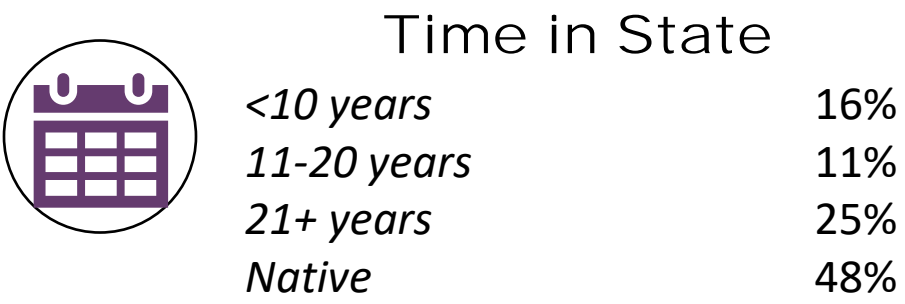
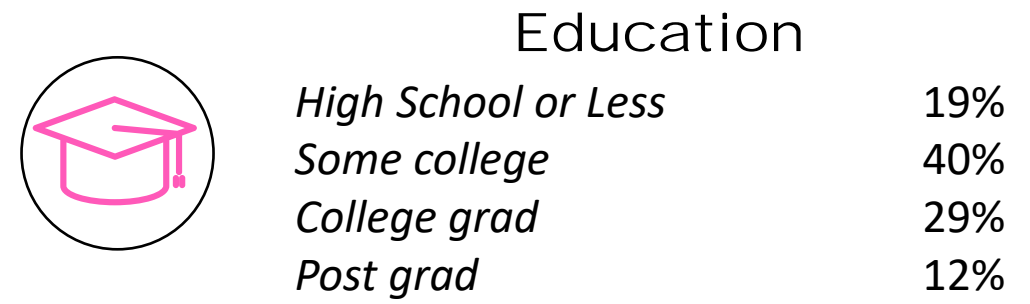
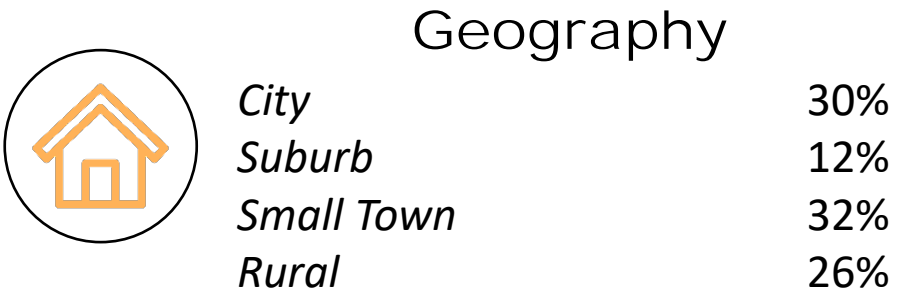
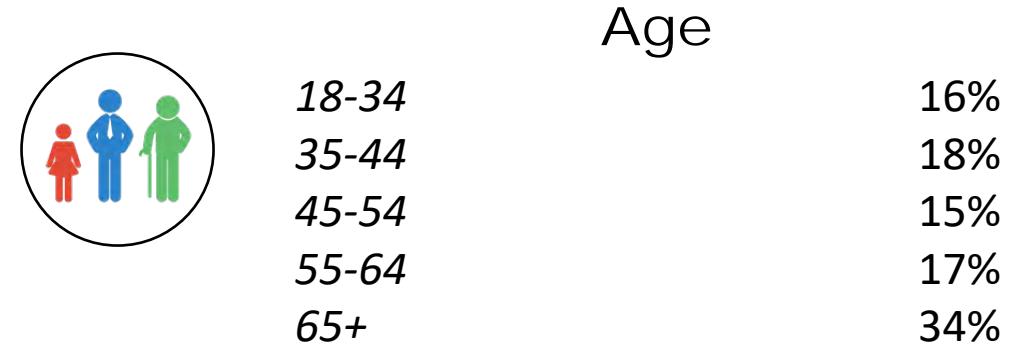
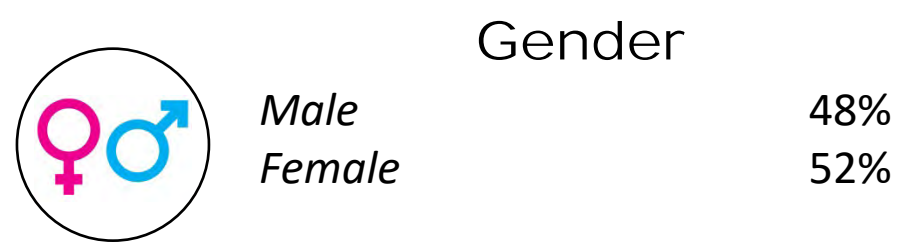
Methodology

New Bridge Strategy conducted a survey among N=400 registered voters throughout South Dakota from April 7 – April 10, 2025.

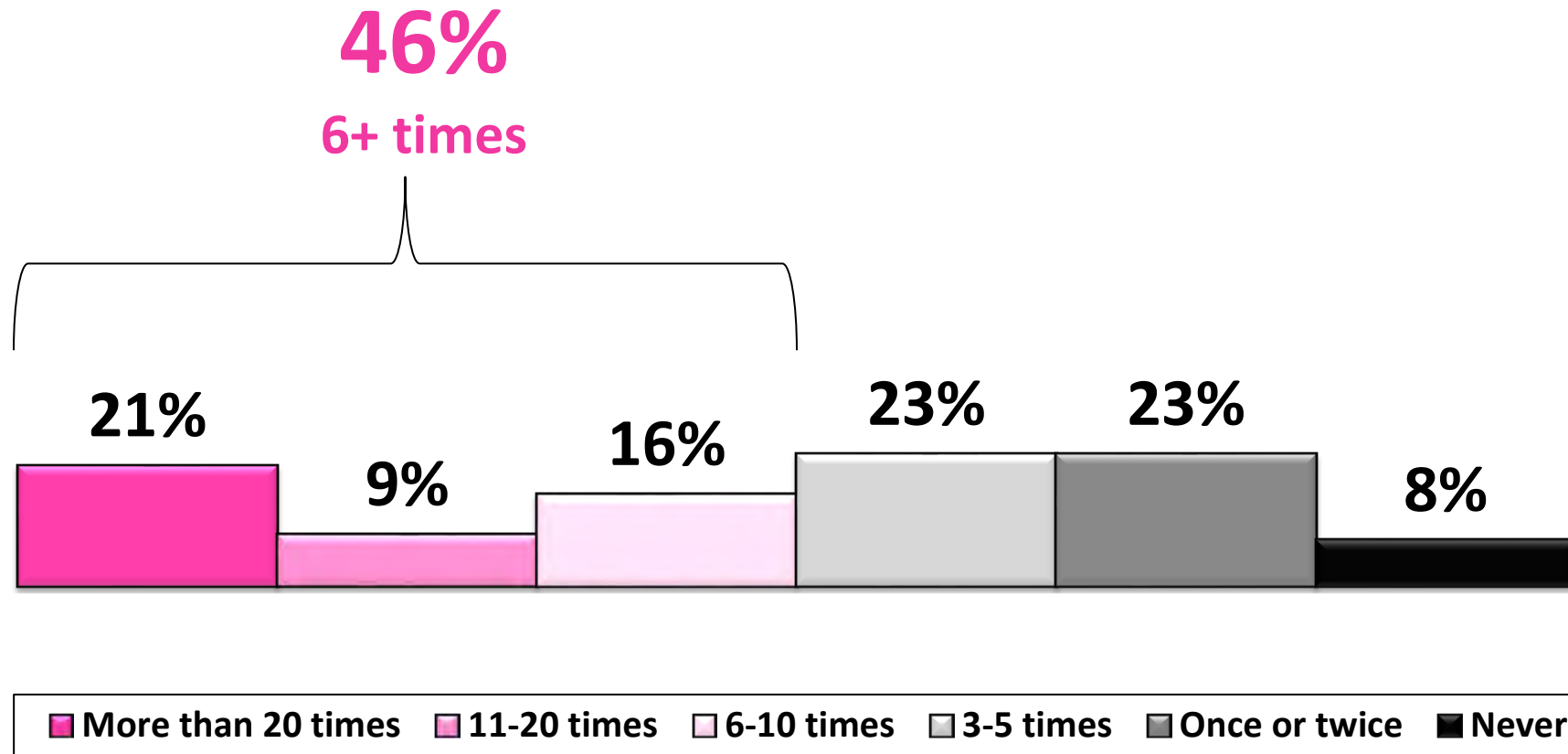
Interviews were conducted via live telephone interviews (both cell phones and landlines) and online via email invitation and text-to-web. Quotas were set for key demographic sub-groups, such as gender and age. Interviews were distributed proportionally throughout the state.

The margin of error is $\pm 4.9\%$ for the overall sample. The margin of error will vary for sub-groups.

Key Demographics



Most South Dakotans have visited public lands in the last year. Nearly half have been more than 6 times.



Thinking about national public lands – Over the past year, how many times do you think you have visited public lands such as national parks, national forests, national monuments, national wildlife refuges, or other national public lands?

South Dakotans are engaged in a wide range of outdoor activities. Half say they are sportsmen.

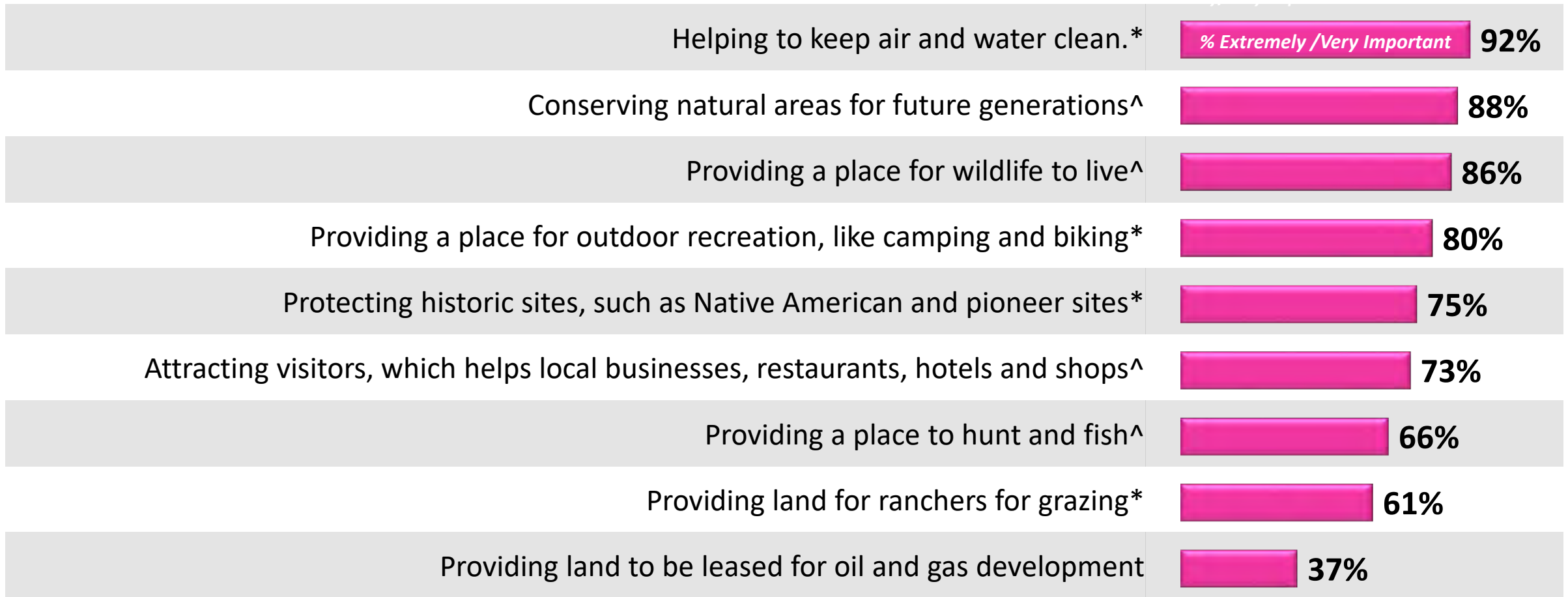
Hiking or trail running	60%
Camping	59%
Bird watching and viewing wildlife	50%
Kayaking, canoeing or boating	47%
Riding an off-road vehicle or snowmobile	27%
Snow shoeing, skiing or boarding	18%
Mountain biking	13%
None of these	12%

53%

Total Hunter/ Angler

*Do you consider yourself to be a hunter, an angler or both?
Which of the following types of outdoor activities do you participate in regularly?*

Majorities of South Dakota voters say all of these benefits of having national public lands are extremely or very important except oil and gas development.



The following are some attributes and potential benefits of having national public lands in the Western United States. For each one, please indicate how important that is to you personally as a benefit of national public lands: is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not important?

*Asked of Sample A, N=215 ^Asked of Sample B, N=185



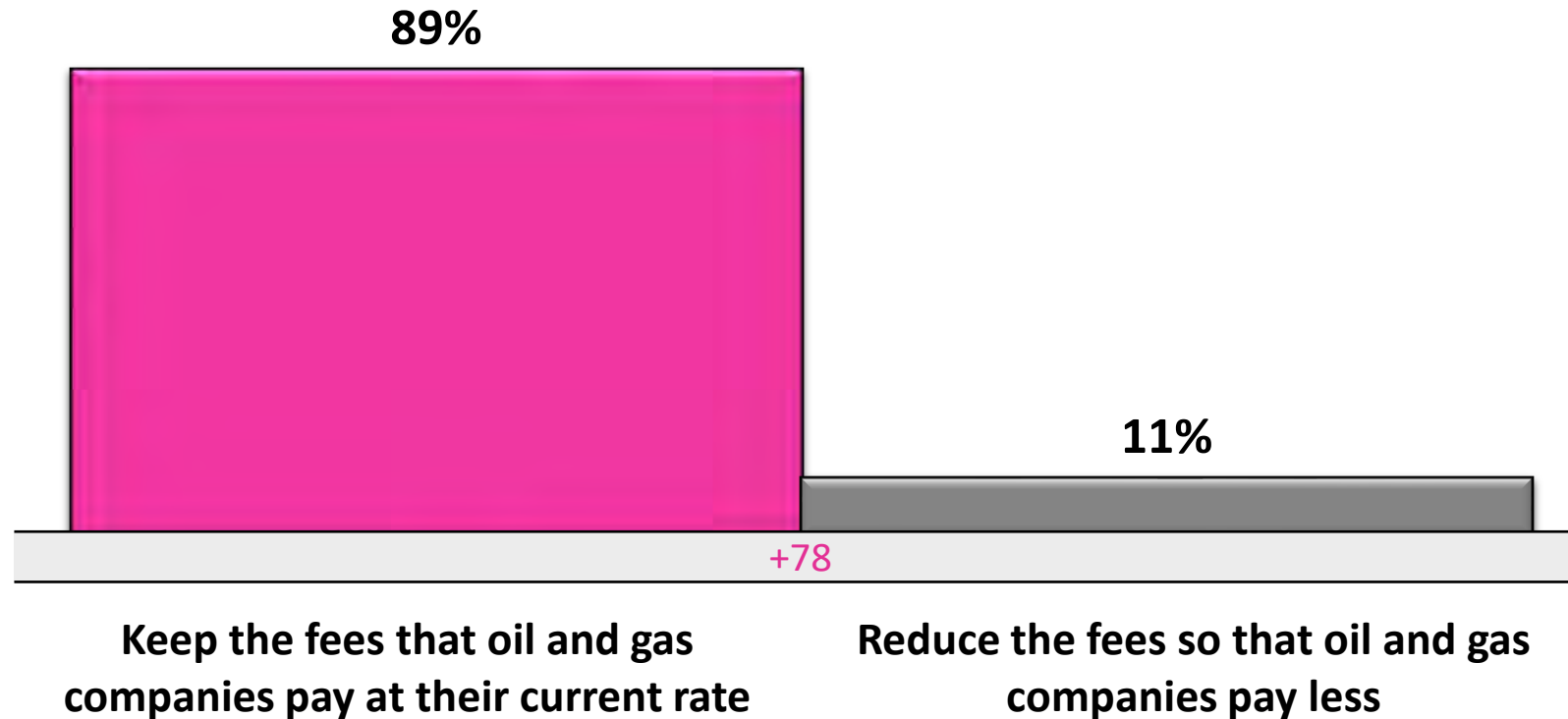
Policies affecting oil and gas development on national public lands

We provided the following information to respondents:

Oil and gas companies pay landowners in order to develop on their land. In the case of national public lands, they pay certain fees and a percentage of the value of the oil and gas they produce on national public lands to the Department of Interior and the affected state. Congress and the Bureau of Land Management recently increased some of these fees to help cover land management costs and provide funding to state governments.

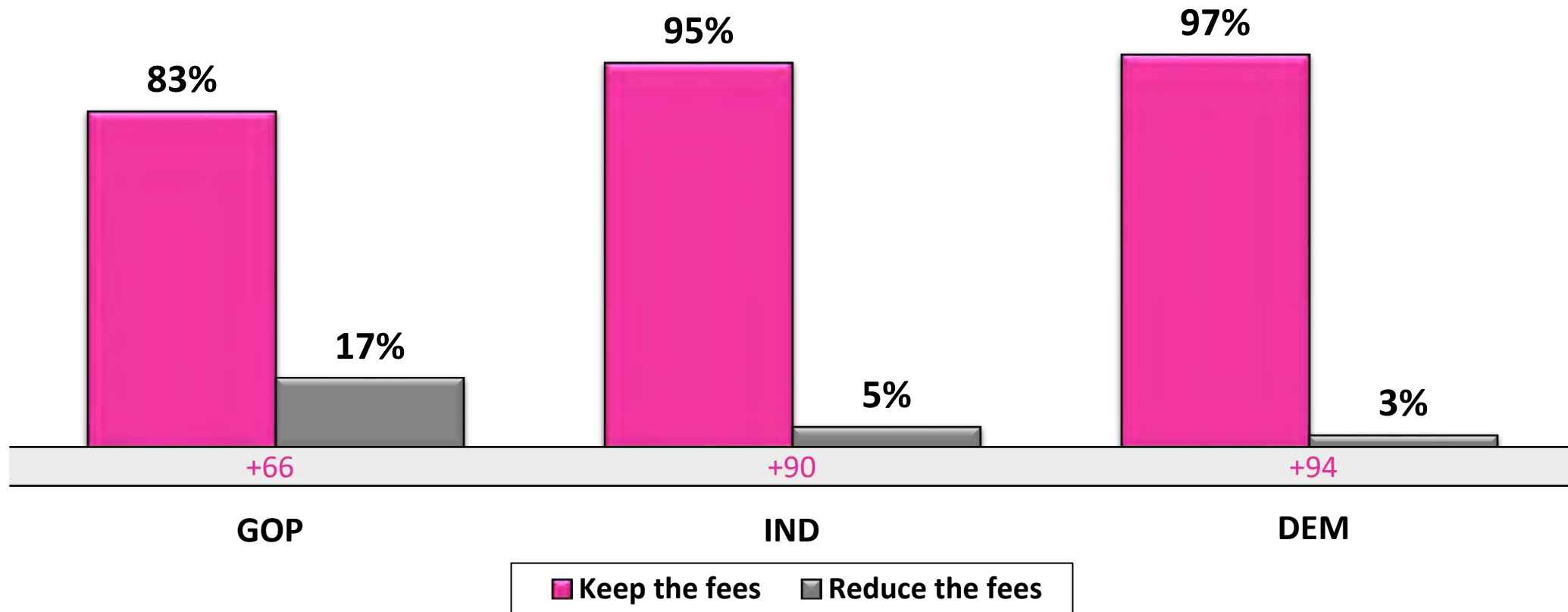
Nearly nine-in-ten South Dakotans say we should keep the fees that oil and gas companies pay at their current rate.

Some people have suggested that these fees related to oil and gas development on national public lands should be reduced. Do you think we should -



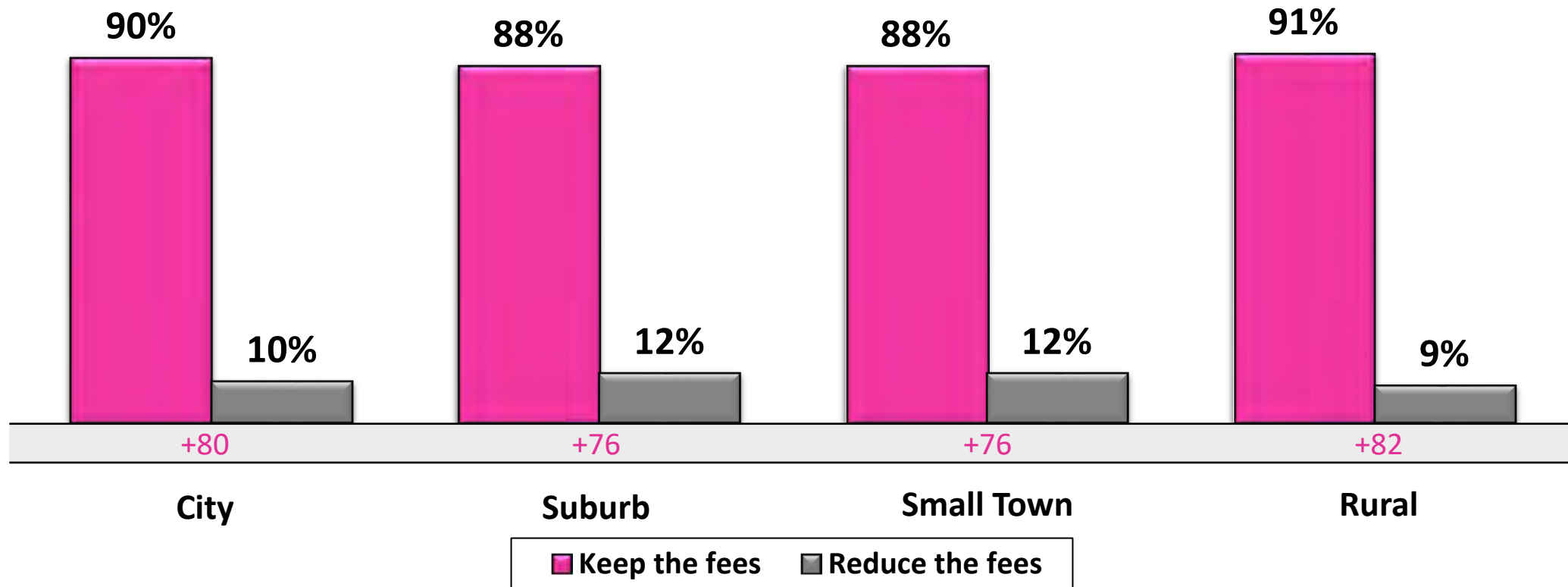
Support for keeping the fees at their current rate is strong across partisan lines.

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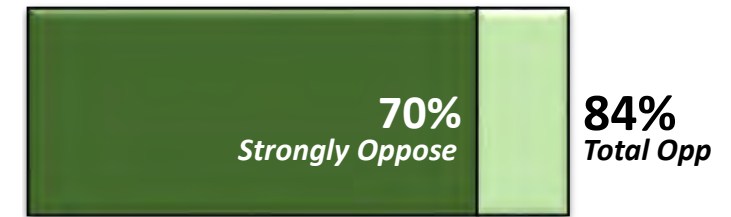
There is little difference in opinion based on where voters live in the state.

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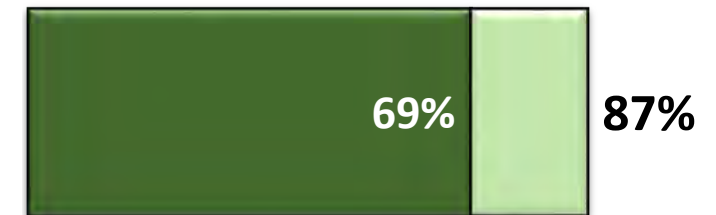


Fully 85% or more reject changing policies that facilitate and expand oil and gas development to more areas of public lands.

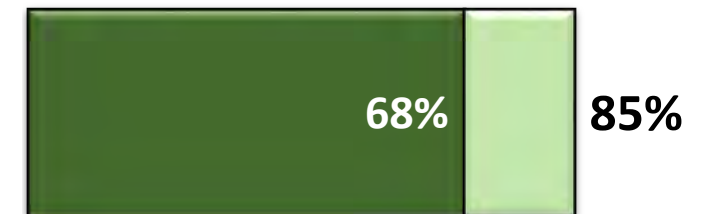
(Eminent Domain) One proposal would increase the use of eminent domain, where the federal government takes a portion of privately owned property, including portions of family farms and ranches, for the purpose of building oil and gas pipelines that move oil and gas from where it is produced on national public lands to where it can be refined or used.



(High likelihood) One proposal would allow oil and gas companies to expand drilling to nearly all areas of national public lands, even areas where there is unlikely to be much oil and gas.



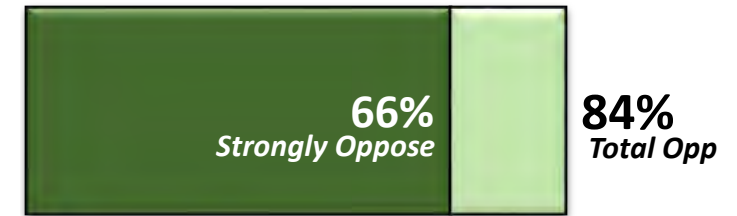
(No flexibility) One proposal would require that government agencies allow oil and gas companies access to lands they can develop, even if local community members, hunters or anglers, nearby farmers and ranchers, and others raise concerns about impacts on wildlife, water and other resources



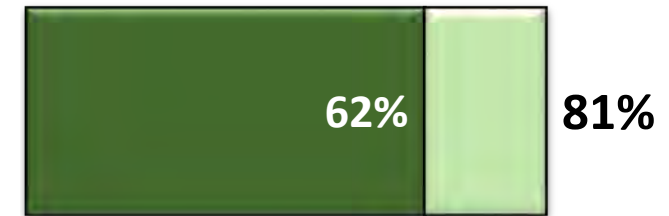
Some people have made proposals that would set standards for how oil and gas companies operate on national public lands. For each one of these, please indicate whether that sounds like something you would strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose.

Three-quarters oppose these changes in policies affecting oil and gas development on public lands.

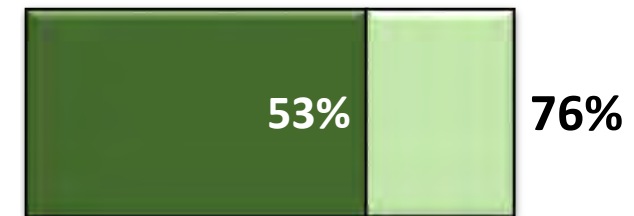
(Nomination fee) One proposal would get rid of the \$5 per acre fee paid by oil and gas companies that helps cover the cost to review whether lands that oil and gas companies want to drill on are appropriate for development or whether they should be prioritized for wildlife habitat, outdoor recreation or other uses.



(Reduce Public Input) One proposal would reduce the review process and opportunities for nearby communities and local residents to give input regarding decisions about what takes place on national public lands, and which were agreed upon after local community input.



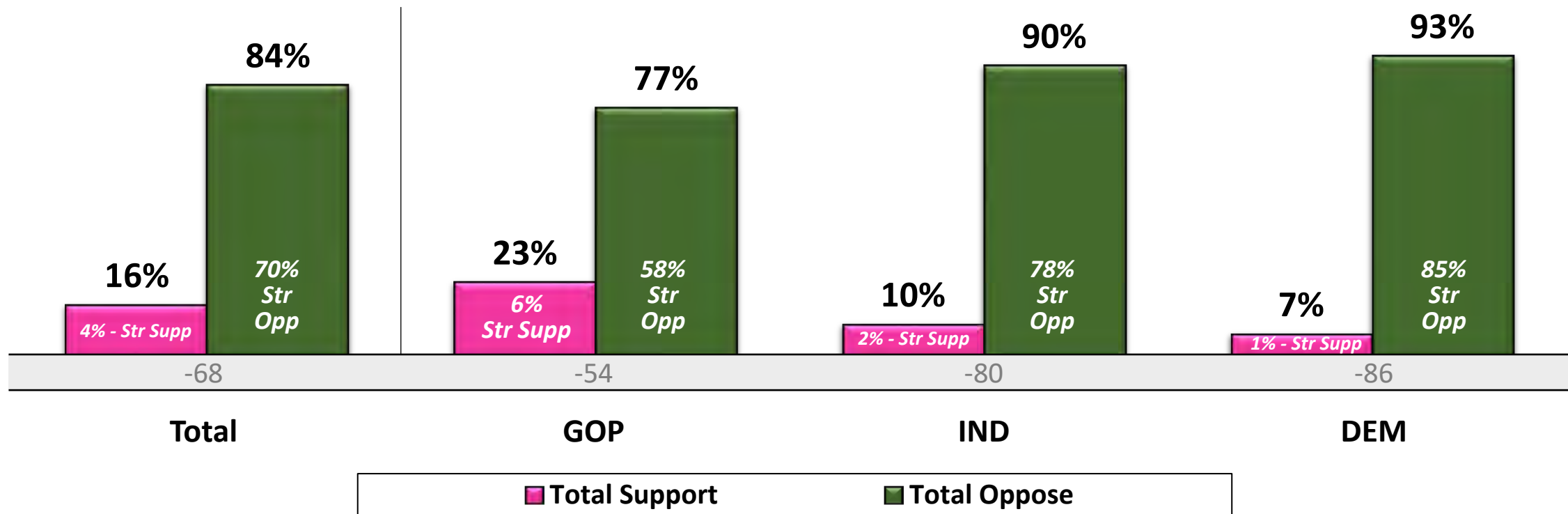
(Remove management plans) One proposal from Congress would get rid of some of the existing management plans that govern what is allowed in areas of national forests, wildlife refuges, Bureau of Land Management and other national public lands, and which were agreed upon after local community input.



Some people have made proposals that would set standards for how oil and gas companies operate on national public lands. For each one of these, please indicate whether that sounds like something you would strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose.

More than three-quarters of South Dakota voters are opposed to increasing the use of eminent domain to facilitate pipelines from national public lands.

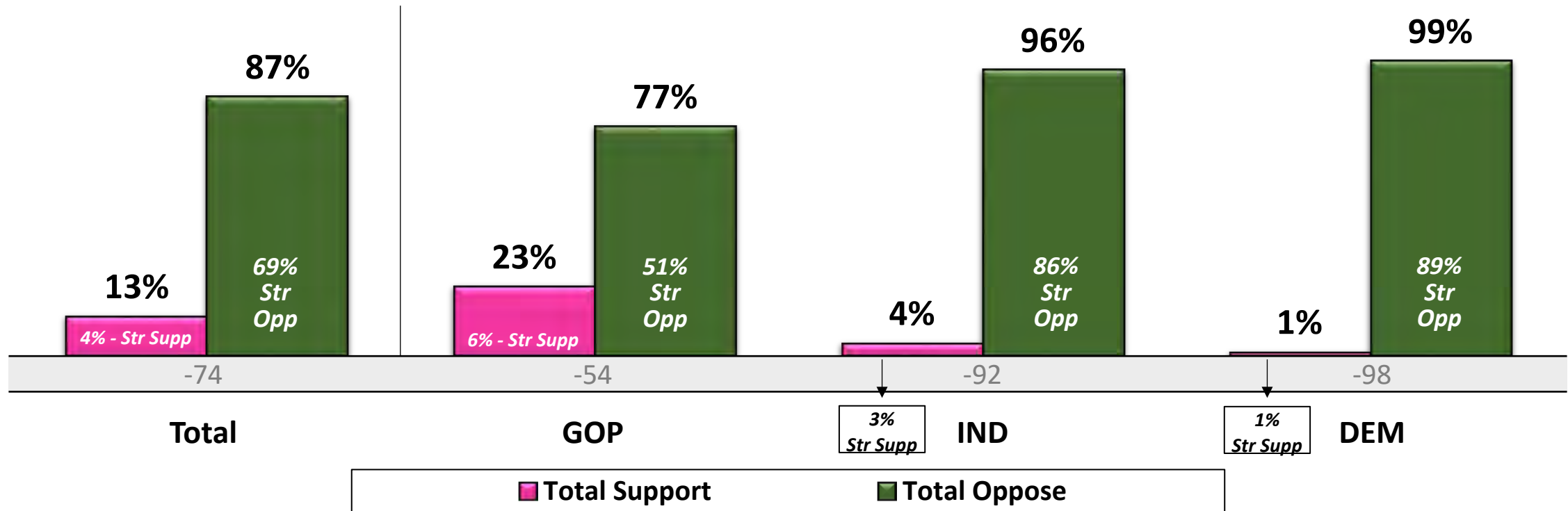
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Strong majorities of voters across party lines are opposed to expanding drilling areas.

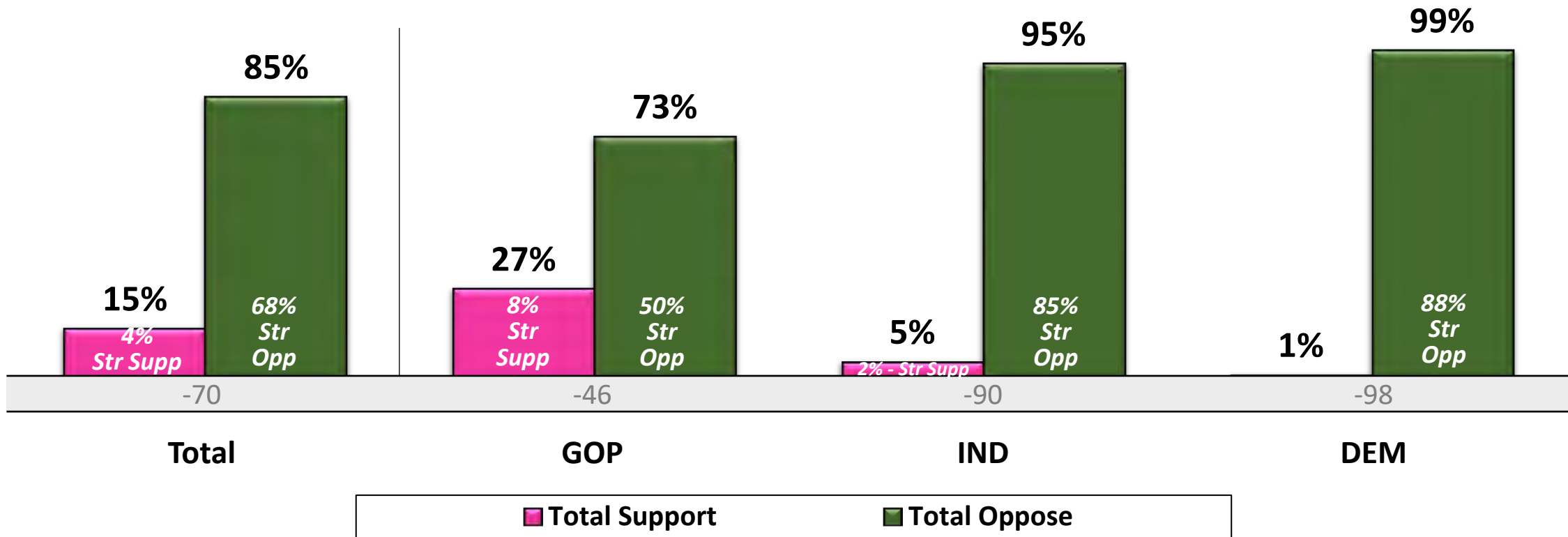
(High likelihood) One proposal would allow oil and gas companies to expand drilling to nearly all areas of national public lands, even areas where there is unlikely to be much oil or gas.



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The vast majority of South Dakotans oppose limiting flexibility for agencies to adjust based on community input, including nearly three-in-four Republicans.

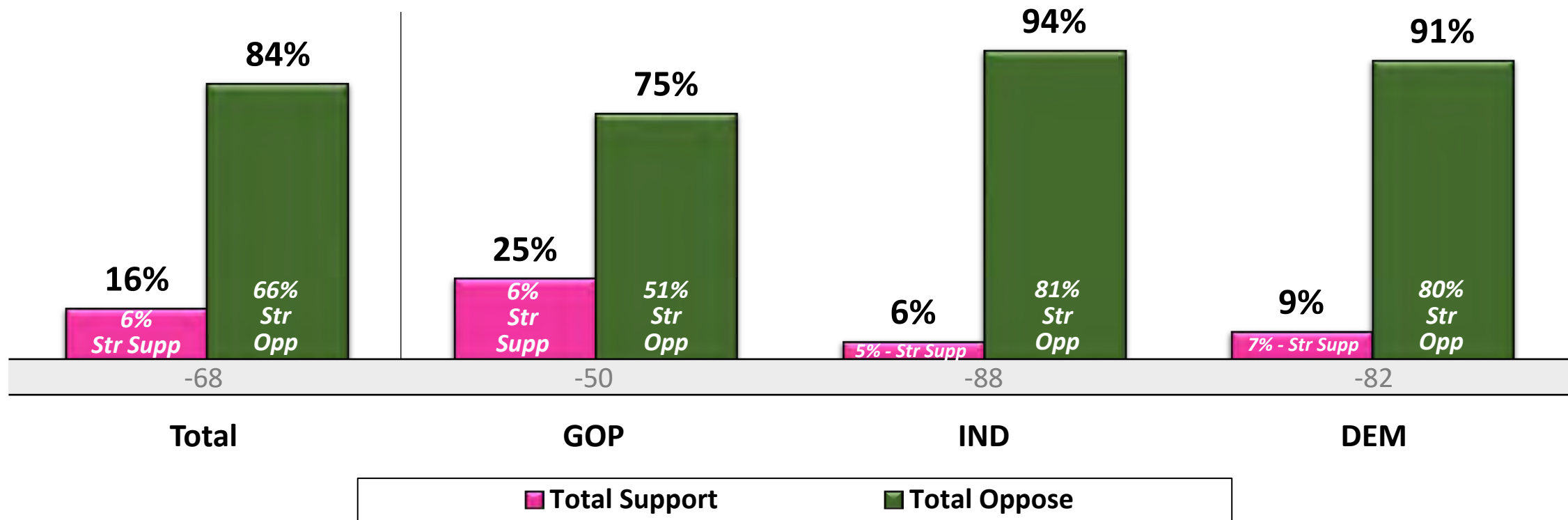
(No flexibility) One proposal would require that government agencies allow oil and gas companies access to lands they can develop, even if local community members, hunters or anglers, nearby farmers and ranchers, and others raise concerns about impacts on wildlife, water and other resources



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At least three-in-four South Dakota voters across party lines oppose eliminating the nomination fee for oil and gas companies.

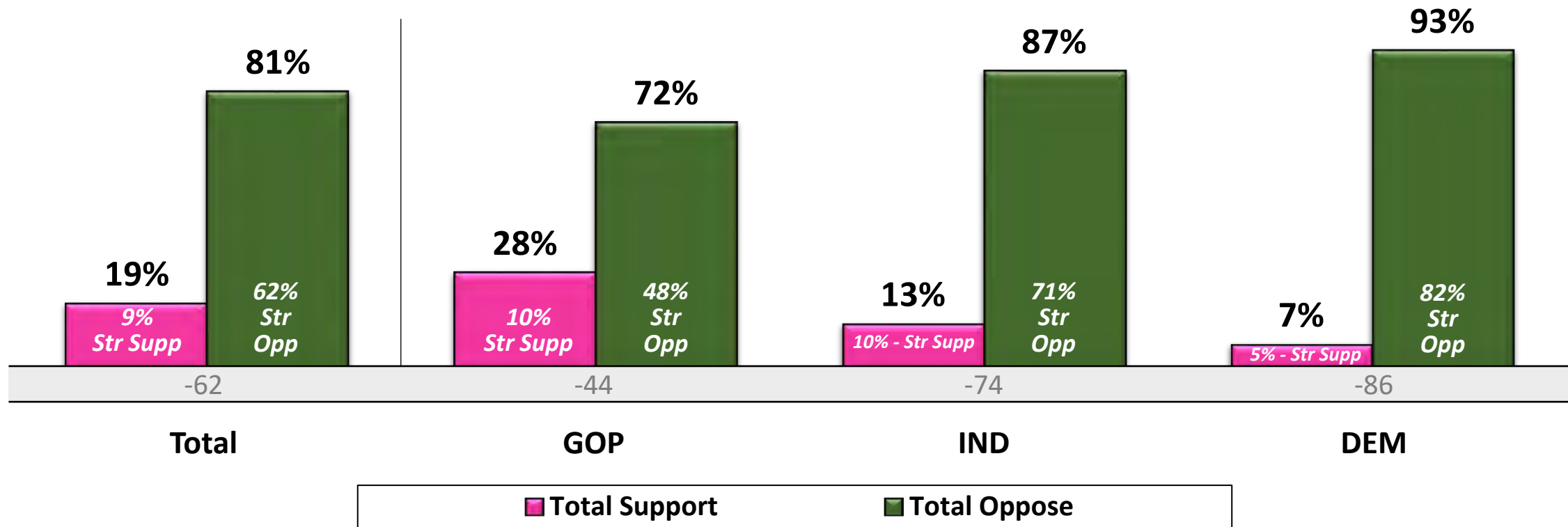
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Some people have made proposals that would set standards for how oil and gas companies operate on national public lands. For each one of these, please indicate whether that sounds like something you would strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose.

Majorities across party lines are opposed to a proposal that would reduce public input on decisions about what takes place on national public lands.

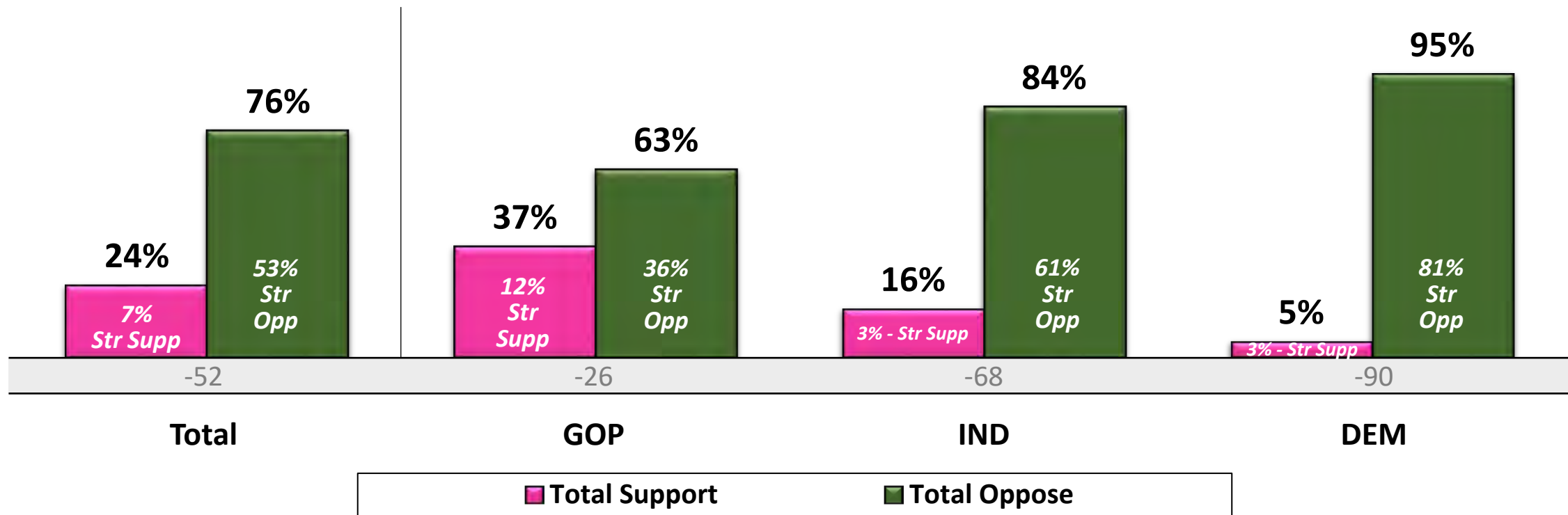
(Reduce Public Input) One proposal would reduce the review process and opportunities for nearby communities and local residents to give input regarding decisions about what takes place on national public lands, including potential oil and gas development



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There is also significant opposition to eliminating the existing management plans on some public lands that are now in place.

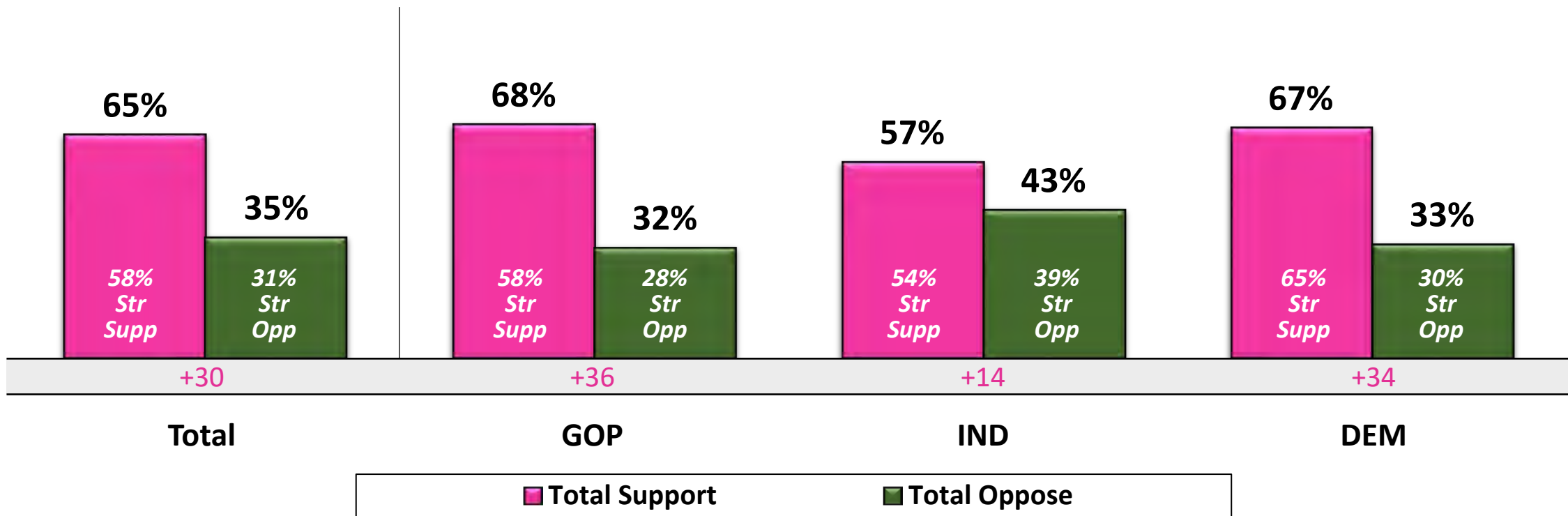
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Republicans and Democrats concur on keeping the bonding requirements for oil and gas development in place.

(Bonding) One proposal is to keep the requirement that oil and gas companies, rather than taxpayers, pay for all of the clean-up and land restoration costs after drilling is finished.



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*Asked of N=197

Moreover, more than seven-in-ten South Dakotans express concern over the loss of federal employees who help manage national public lands.

	Very Concerned	Total Concerned
Having fewer employees who monitor and oversee oil and gas sites and other industry activities on national public lands.	52%	74%
Having fewer scientists and wildlife biologists to monitor and care for fish and wildlife on national public lands.	52%	73%
Having fewer park rangers and other employees who provide visitor services and maintain national public lands.	52%	72%

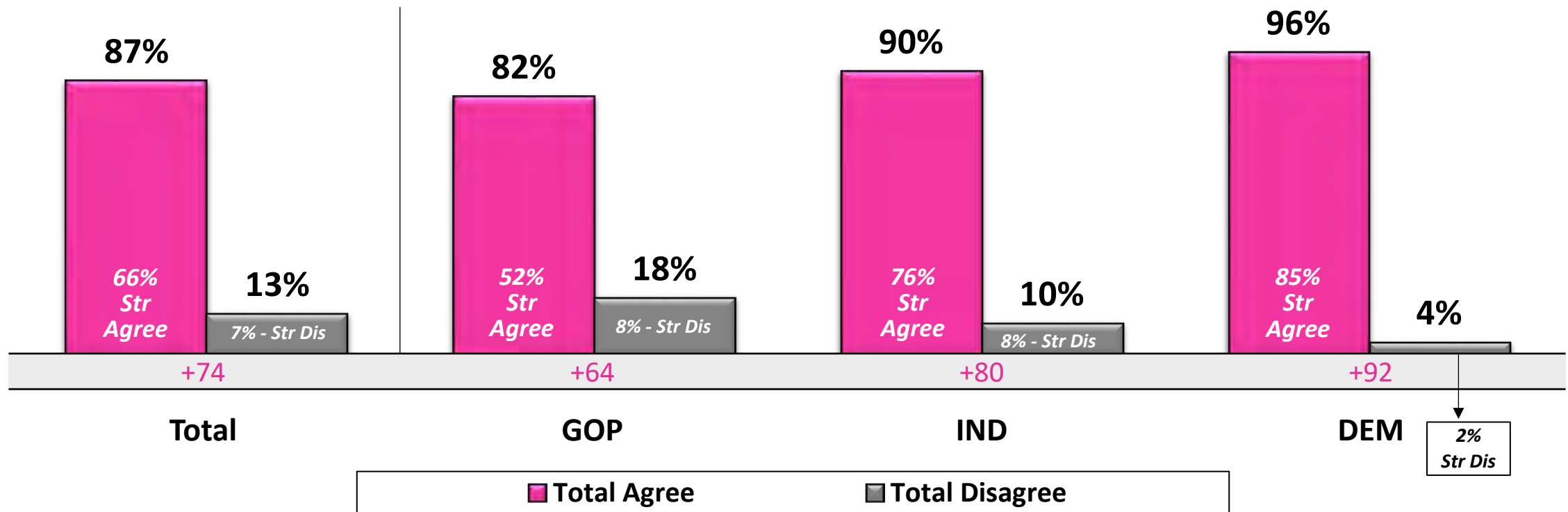
Switching topics – As you may know, some employees of government agencies which oversee national public lands like the ones we have been discussing have been fired in recent weeks. How concerned are you about each of the following – very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned, not at all concerned.



Strong agreement on core values related to national public lands policies

More than four-in-five South Dakotans across party lines agree that we should ensure broader public interest in all decisions about how national public lands are used.

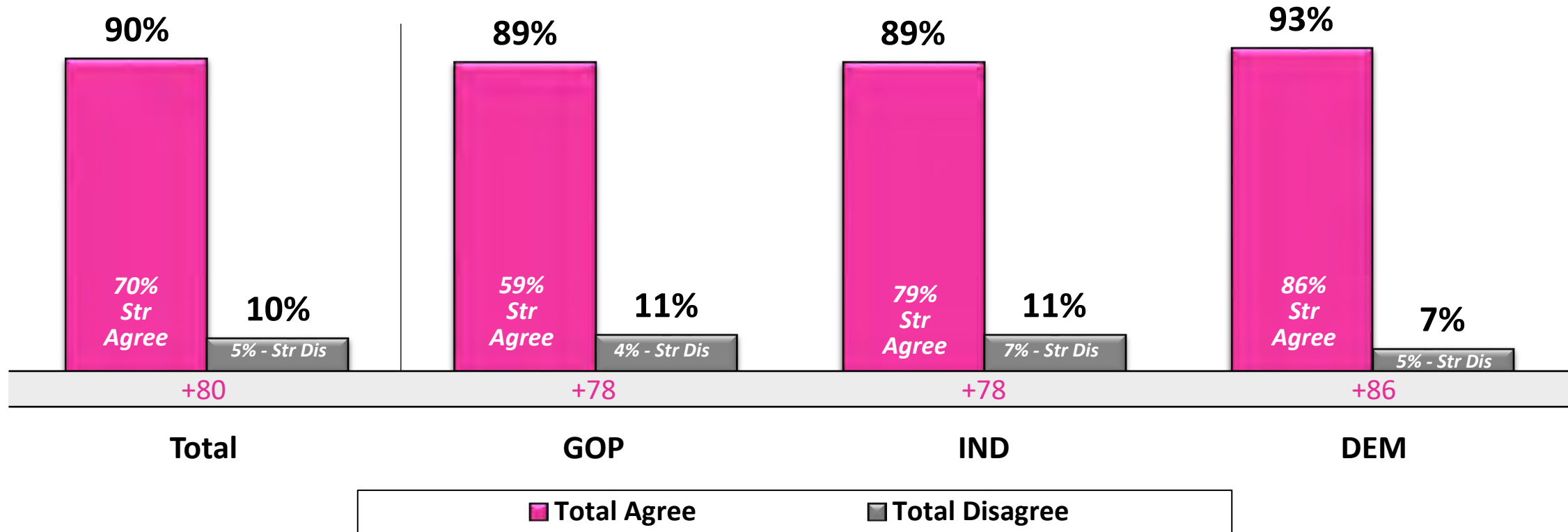
When land is leased to oil and gas companies it can limit other uses of that land, including hunting, fishing, viewing wildlife, riding ATV's and other recreation. We need to ensure the broader public interest is represented in all decisions about how national public lands are used so that future generations of Americans can enjoy them as we do today.



Taking a step back for a moment – For each one, please indicate whether you generally agree or disagree.

State voters are unanimous in asserting the importance of exercising caution when developing oil and gas on national public lands.

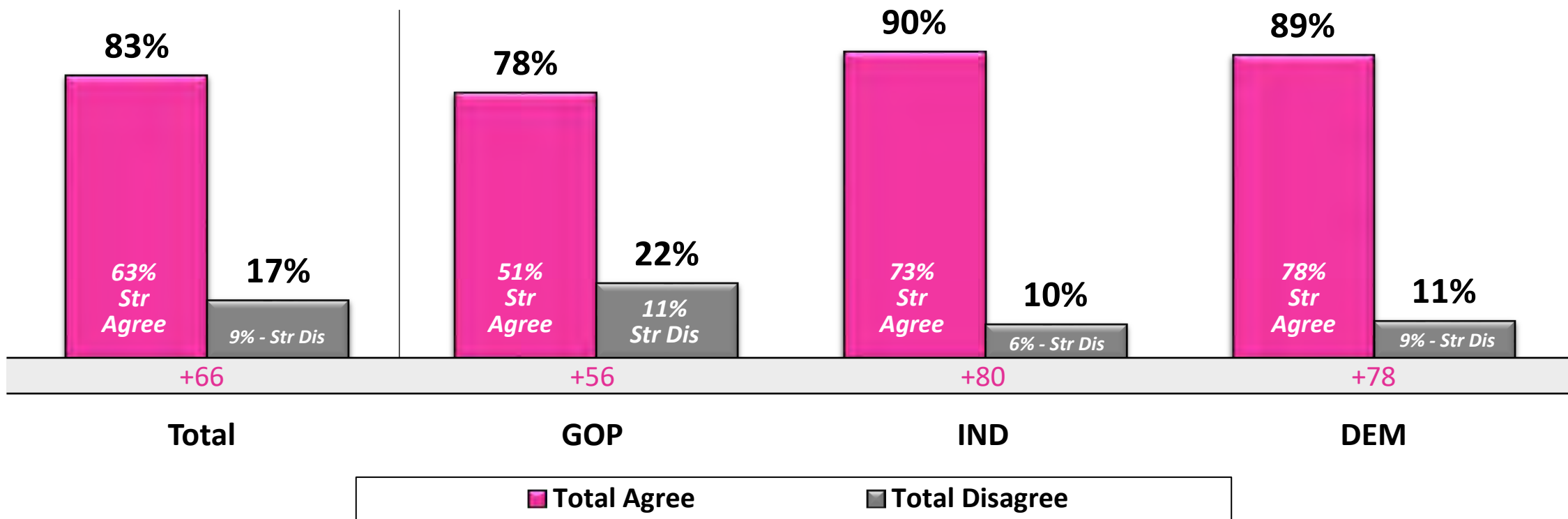
Oil and gas development can take place in some areas of national public lands responsibly, but some areas close to rivers and streams or where threatened wildlife migrate are too important to risk. We need to be cautious, allow adequate public input, and not risk potentially impacting sources of drinking water and wildlife habitat.



Taking a step back for a moment – For each one, please indicate whether you generally agree or disagree.

Nearly four-in-five voters across partisan lines agree we need to protect both our national public lands and private landowners' rights as well.

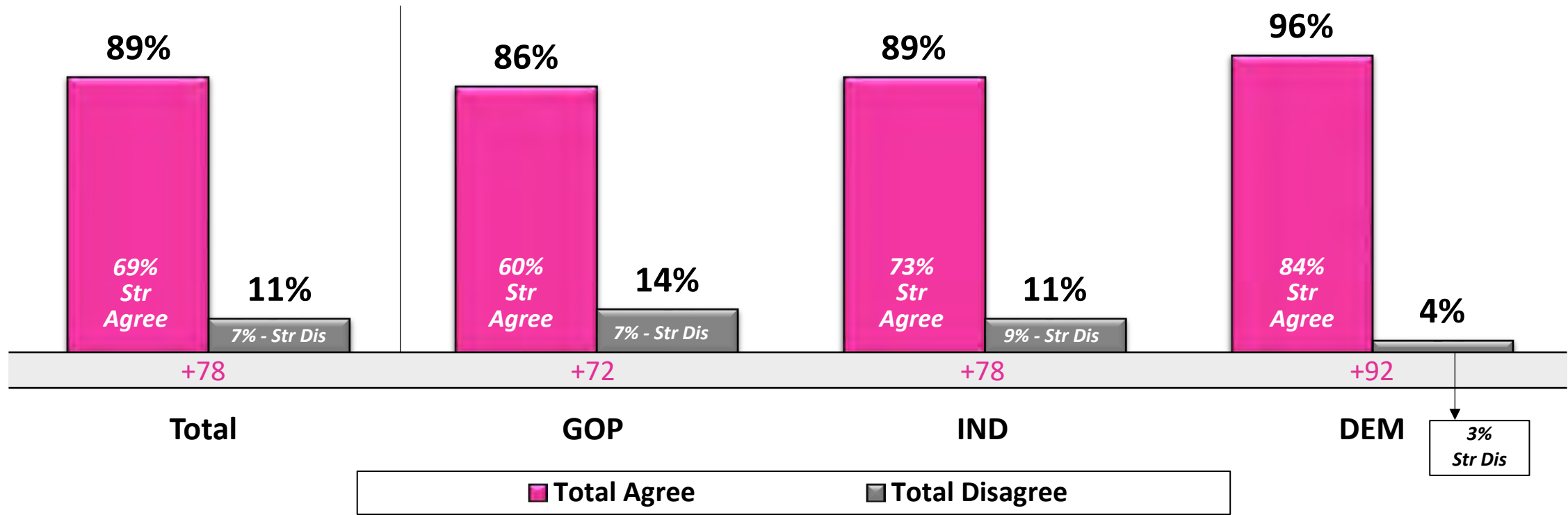
Increasing oil and gas development will not just affect national public lands, but also farms, ranches and nearby communities. The government has indicated that they may take private land through eminent domain to complete oil and gas pipelines. We need to not only protect our national public lands, but private landowners' rights as well.



Taking a step back for a moment – For each one, please indicate whether you generally agree or disagree.

More than four-in-five voters across party lines agree with ensuring taxpayers are not left with the bill after oil and gas development on national public lands.

Taxpayers have lost out on billions of dollars in revenue from the oil and gas industry's development on our national public lands and sometimes been stuck with the bill for cleaning up abandoned wells. We should keep those updated rates in place to protect taxpayers.



Taking a step back for a moment – For each one, please indicate whether you generally agree or disagree.



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