ImmigrationWorks USA
Message Testing Research

Final Report of Findings | June 25, 2015

What We Did

ImmigrationWorks USA partnered with Penn Schoen Berland (PSB) to assess the public's understanding of and openness towards immigration policy reform – specifically a visa program for immigrants working in physically demanding, year-round jobs that require minimal training – and develop relevant messaging constructs. This project occurred in two phases:

Phase 1: Focus Group Research

- Conducted January 27 – 28, 2015
- Four focus groups in Denver, CO. (2) and Dallas, TX. (2), with 10 participants each

Rationale:

- Heard firsthand how Americans describe economic and immigration issues in their own words in a free flowing discussion format
- Discussed potential strategic messages and examined what words, phrases, and tones were most compelling to participants to garner support for a visa program

Phase 2: Message Testing Research

- Project timeframe: April – May 2015
- Online survey with the U.S. General Population and National Elites

Rationale:

- Statistically validate hypotheses from focus group research across a large national sample
- Rigorously test messages developed through qualitative research and hone in on a winning messaging framework

This report contains findings from Phase 2 Message Testing Research, with supporting quotes from Phase 1 Focus Group Research

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What We Did

- PSB conducted an online message testing survey of 1,302 respondents
  - Audiences included 300 opinion-forming US Elites and 1,002 members of the General Population, some with college degrees and others without a college education
  - Survey conducted April 28-30, 2015

Key Audiences

Audience	US Elites	General Population (GP)
Sample Size	300	1,002
Definition	Well-educated (college degree or higher), well-read, and make at least $100K in personal income. Their views on key issues inform and shape the opinions of the General Population	Representative of the US population according to Census data. Quotas for gender and age to ensure a representative sample distribution
Margin of Error	+/- 5.66%	+/- 3.10%
Sub-groups		• **College Educated (n =444)** • **Non-College Educated (n=558)**
	• **Democrat (n=518)** • **Republican (n=372)** • **Independent (n=359)**	

Notes:
Demographic characteristics are highlighted throughout the presentation only when significant differences exist
Throughout the report, numbers reflect percentages unless otherwise noted

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What We Learned

- Americans have a strongly positive view of legal immigration, believing there is a need for legal immigrants, and thus strongly support a visa program for immigrants who do physically demanding work

78%: The percentage of respondents who hold a favorable view of legal immigration

58%: The percentage of respondents who believe the U.S. needs legal immigrants who do physically demanding work that requires little or no training

70%: The share of respondents who say they are likely to support a visa program enabling immigrants to enter the U.S. legally to work in physically demanding year-round jobs

Q28 - Do you think there is currently a need in the U.S. for legal immigrants who would do physically-demanding work?
Q23 - Granting visas to immigrants coming to do physically-demanding work would help the U.S. economy by doing jobs that some American workers don't want to do.
Q35 - How likely would you be to support a visa program that would enable immigrants to enter the U.S. legally to work in physically-demanding, year-round jobs?

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What We Learned

- **Significant majorities say a visa program would be beneficial and that legal immigrants would contribute to the U.S. economy**

61%: Think it would <u>help the economy</u> to grant visas to immigrants who do physically demanding work

86%: Believe legal immigrants make an <u>important contribution</u> to the U.S. economy

86%: Believe <u>issuing visas would be beneficial</u> by holding immigrants accountable for paying taxes

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Full Report of Findings

Executive Summary

Americans see the value and need for legal immigrants working in physically demanding, year-round jobs that require little or no training

- The majority of respondents have a favorable view towards legal immigrants, and nearly 6 in 10 respondents believe there is a need in the U.S. for legal immigrants who would do physically-demanding work

- Respondents are twice as likely to believe that legal immigrants performing physically-demanding, year-round jobs would take jobs that Americans <u>don't want to do</u>, rather than take jobs away from Americans

However, misinformation about legal immigration and the U.S. visa system poses a barrier to support

- A significant majority underestimate the share of immigrants who are in the country legally and believe a system is already in place for immigrants to come to the U.S. to work in physically demanding, year-round jobs

- Those who are better informed of the true scale of legal immigration pre-messaging are more favorable towards legal immigration

Executive Summary

The strongest messages focus on accountability – that a visa program will ensure legal immigrants are working on the books and paying taxes

- Specific ways of holding immigrants accountable through local, state, and federal taxation and social security are important proof points

- Phrases emphasizing the resulting economic benefits are most compelling across both the General Population and Elite audiences

Messaging improves favorability of and support for a visa program

- While messaging improves favorability towards and support for a visa program, the greatest "lift" is seen among General Population respondents

- Messaging educates and increases favorability among respondents who were initially less informed –at the end of the day, this group is on par with informed respondents' level of favorability

- After messaging, 3 out of 4 respondents would be likely to support a visa program that would enable immigrants to enter the U.S. legally to work in physically-demanding, year-round jobs

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Americans see the value and need for legal immigrants working in physically demanding, year-round jobs that require little or no training

Top of mind associations with legal immigrants center around the general idea that they are good workers and earn an honest living

- Top associations with legal immigrants are generally positive

What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of legal immigrant workers? *Open-ended response, showing %*	All	GP	US Elites
Good workers / Hard working / Earning an honest living	14	12	17
They are documented	11	11	10
Cheap labor/ Low wages	10	11	9
They have the right to be here / Did it the right way	10	11	5
General positives	9	9	10
"American Dream"	6	5	9
Highly skilled and educated	5	3	10
Hurting the U.S. economy	5	5	4

6 of the 8 top open-ended response categories are positive in nature

Table shows the percentage of each audience giving each response.
There was no significant difference in responses by political affiliation for this question.

Over 3 in 4 respondents hold a favorable view of legal immigration

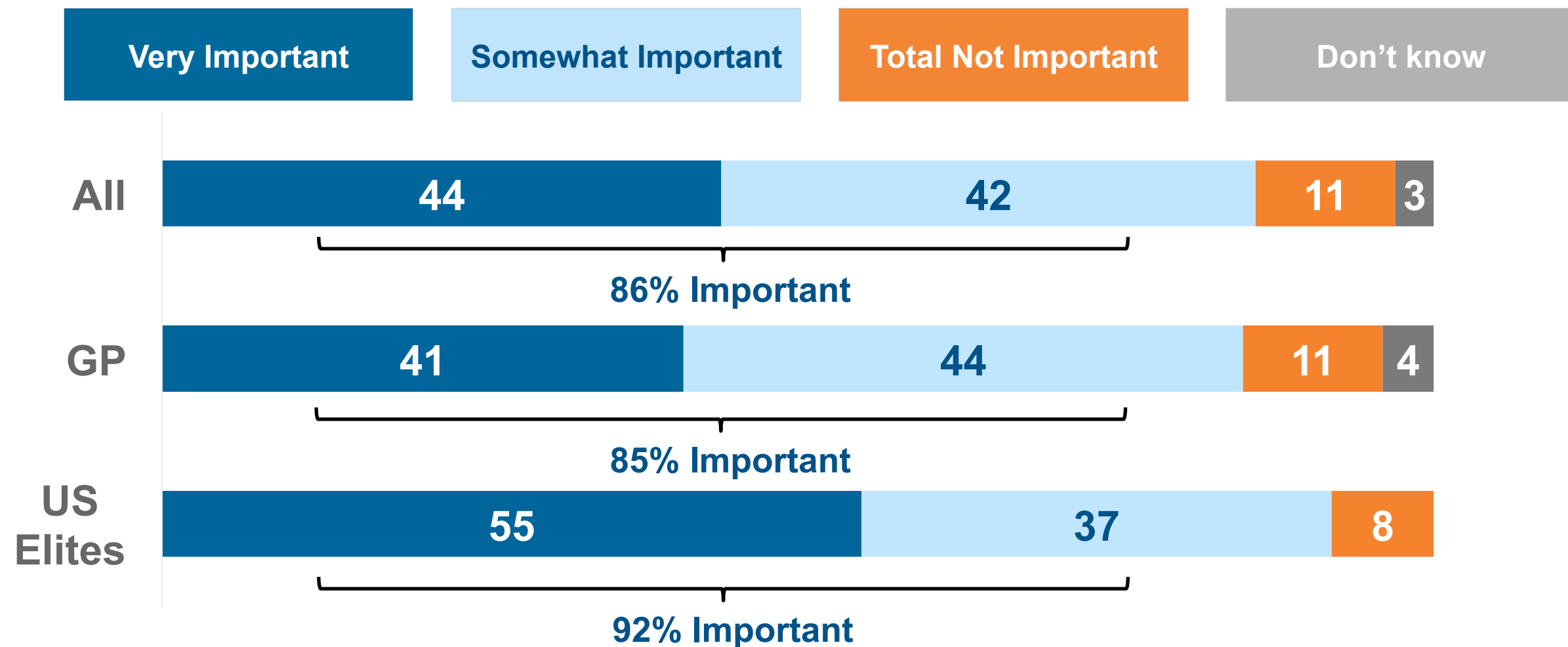- Over a third (35%) are <u>very favorable</u> of legal immigration

How favorable are you towards legal immigration of workers into the United States?	All	GP	US Elites
Total Favorable	**78**	**77**	**85**
Very favorable	35	33	44
Somewhat favorable	43	44	41
Total Unfavorable	**17**	**18**	**12**
Somewhat unfavorable	11	12	7
Very unfavorable	6	6	5
Don't know	**5**	**6**	**2**

- We defined legal immigration within the survey as:

> **From this point forward the topic of discussion will only be on <u>legal immigration</u> and immigrants who have come to the U.S. <u>legally</u> to work. This means that they arrived in this country with a visa issued by the U.S. State Department. Some are here on temporary work visas, others are now in the process of obtaining permanent residency or citizenship.**

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86% believe legal immigrants make an important contribution to the country's economy

How important is the contribution made by legal immigrants in this country to our economy?

| Very Important | Somewhat Important | Total Not Important | Don't know |

All
| 44 | 42 | 11 | 3 |

86% Important

GP
| 41 | 44 | 11 | 4 |

85% Important

US Elites
| 55 | 37 | 8 |

92% Important

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58% believe there is a need in the U.S. for legal immigrants who would do physically-demanding work
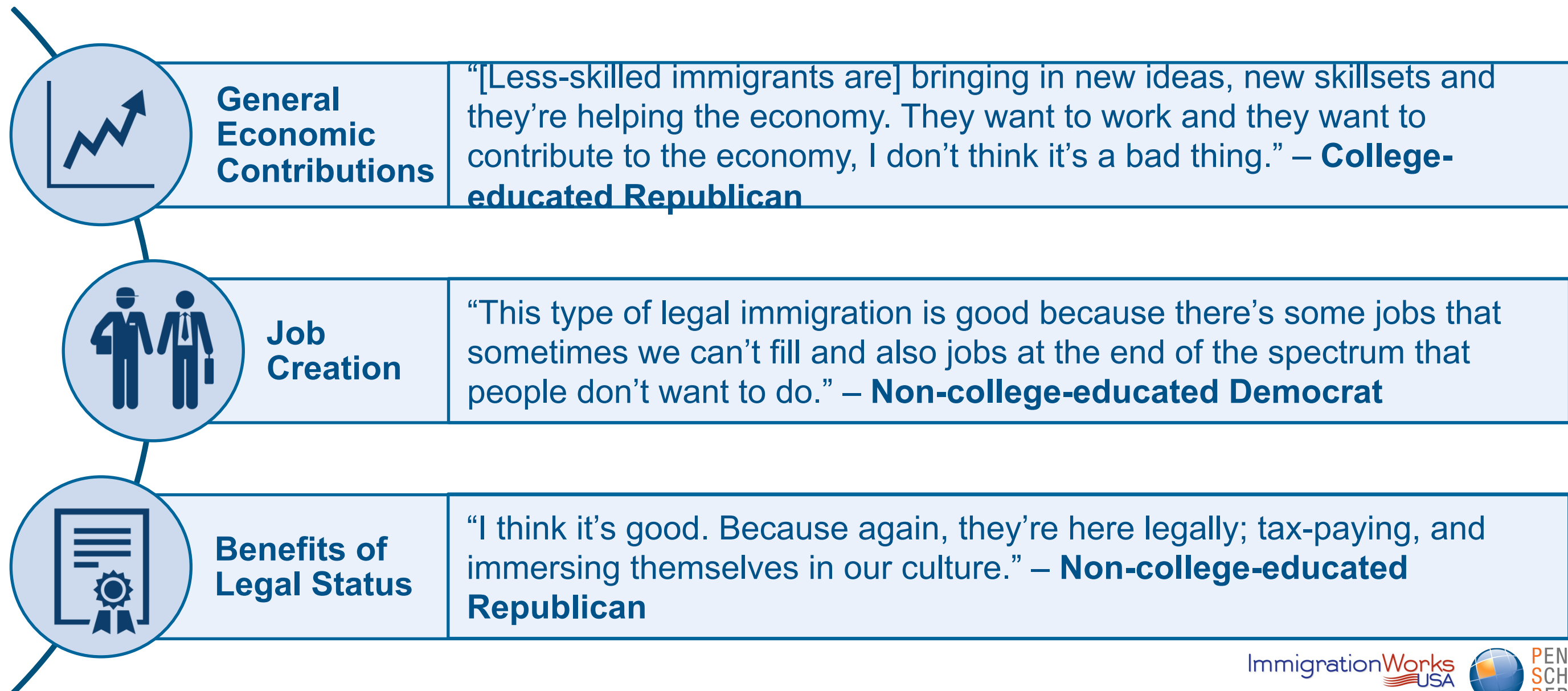
- Those with more education are more likely to believe there is a need for legal immigrants in the U.S.
    - For the General Population, 61% of those with a college education say there is a need for legal immigrants, while 48% without a college education say the same

Do you think there is currently a need in the U.S. for legal immigrants who would do physically-demanding work? *Showing % Yes*

58%	54%	72%
All	GP	US Elites

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13
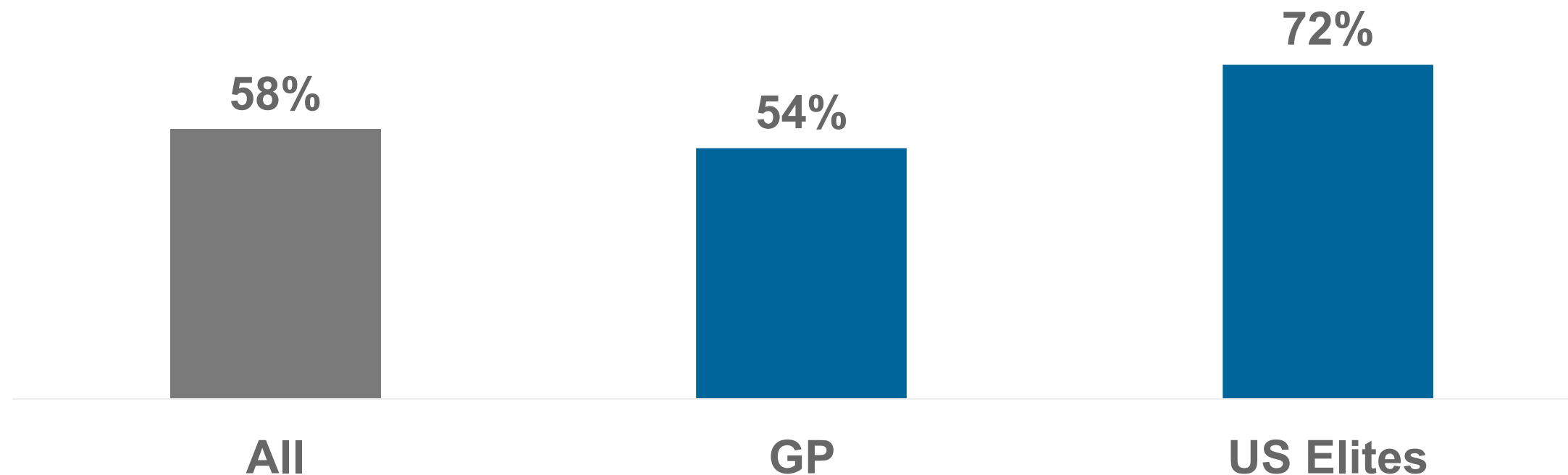
Findings on the need and value of legal immigrants in the U.S. are consistent with earlier focus group research

- In focus groups conducted before polling, participants shared their thoughts on the value of legal less-skilled immigrants in the U.S.

- Responses were **overwhelmingly positive**, and participants across the board felt legal immigrants would contribute economically and that their legal status would benefit local communities

	General Economic Contributions	"[Less-skilled immigrants are] bringing in new ideas, new skillsets and they're helping the economy. They want to work and they want to contribute to the economy, I don't think it's a bad thing." – **College-educated Republican**
	Job Creation	"This type of legal immigration is good because there's some jobs that sometimes we can't fill and also jobs at the end of the spectrum that people don't want to do." – **Non-college-educated Democrat**
	Benefits of Legal Status	"I think it's good. Because again, they're here legally; tax-paying, and immersing themselves in our culture." – **Non-college-educated Republican**

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Respondents are more than twice as likely to think legal immigrants take jobs Americans don't want, rather than taking jobs away from Americans

Do legal immigrants do the jobs that Americans don't want, or do they take jobs away from American workers?

Legal immigrants take the jobs that Americans don't want	Legal immigrants take jobs away from American workers	Both/Don't know

29%

13%

58%

All
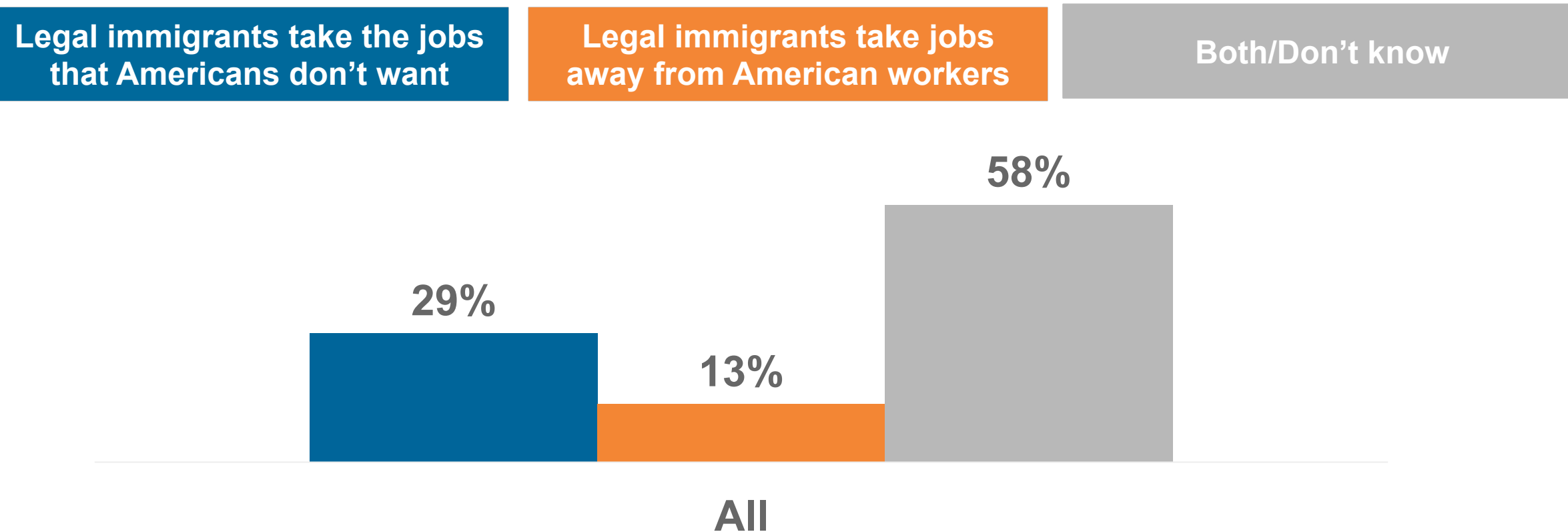
Those who say legal immigrants take jobs <u>Americans don't want</u> are:

- More likely to be a Democrat (49% are Democrats)
- More educated (63% have a college degree or higher)
- More likely to have a higher income (20% have an income of at least $125,000)
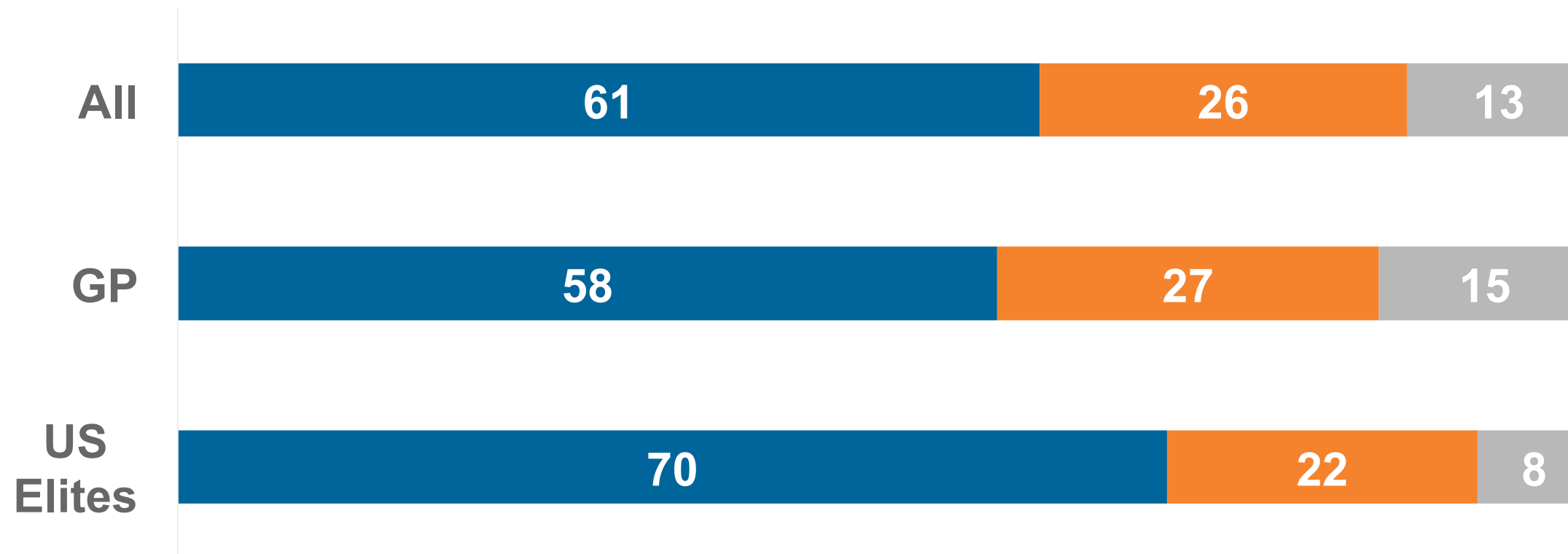- Less likely to live in a rural area (15% live in a rural area)

6 in 10 say it would help the economy to grant visas for immigrants to do physically-demanding work

Which of the following is closer to your view?

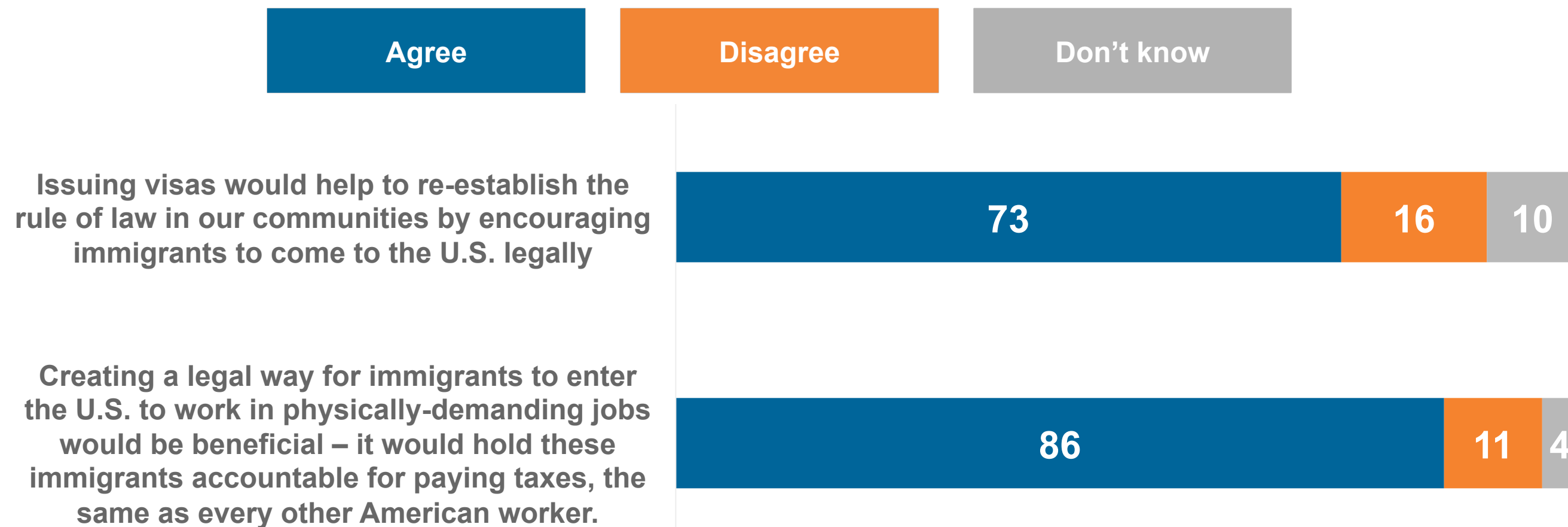| Granting visas to immigrants coming to do physically-demanding work would <u>help</u> the U.S. economy by doing jobs that some American workers don't want to do.	Granting visas to immigrants coming to do physically-demanding work would <u>hurt</u> the U.S. economy by taking jobs away from American workers.	Don't know

	Help	Hurt	Don't know
All	61	26	13
GP	58	27	15
US Elites	70	22	8

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Most see the value of legal immigration in re-establishing the rule of law and holding immigrants to the same standards as American workers

- At 86%, a strong majority believe issuing visas would be beneficial by holding immigrants accountable for paying taxes, while 73% agree that it would encourage immigrants to come to the U.S. legally

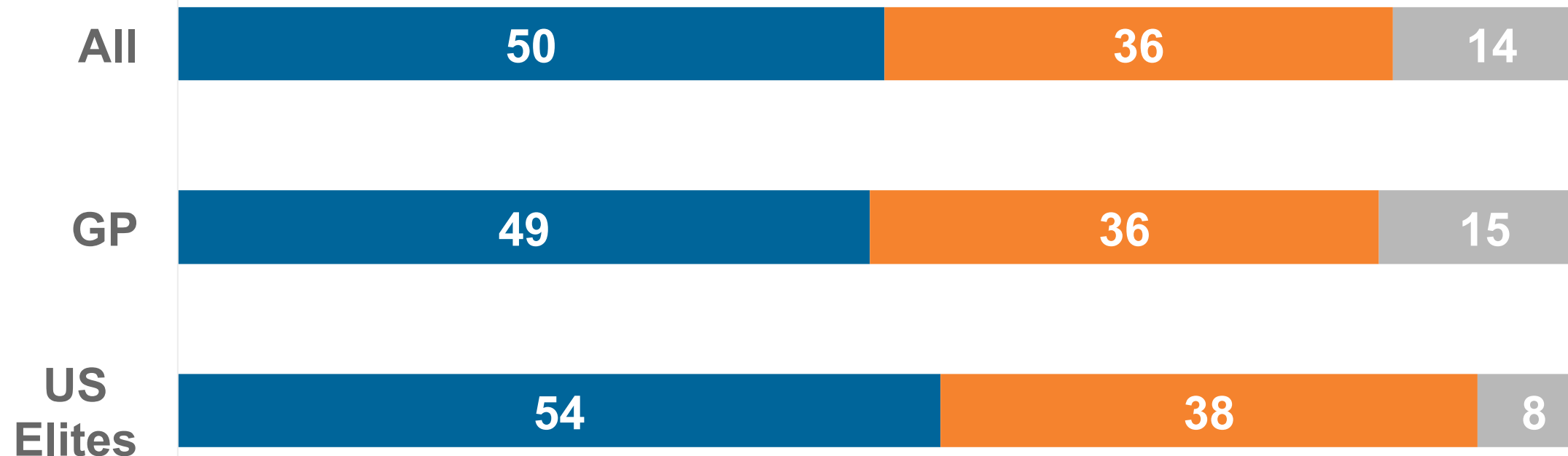**To what extent to you agree or disagree with the following statement?**
Showing % All

Agree	Disagree	Don't know

	Agree	Disagree	Don't know
Issuing visas would help to re-establish the rule of law in our communities by encouraging immigrants to come to the U.S. legally	73	16	10
Creating a legal way for immigrants to enter the U.S. to work in physically-demanding jobs would be beneficial – it would hold these immigrants accountable for paying taxes, the same as every other American worker.	86	11	4

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And half say a visa program could prevent future illegal immigration

Which of the following is closer to your view?

A visa program that provides a legal way for immigrants coming to do physically-demanding, year-round jobs would <u>help prevent</u> a next generation of unauthorized immigrants and avoid even more illegal immigration.	A visa program that provides a legal way for immigrants coming to do physically-demanding, year-round jobs would have <u>no effect</u> on illegal immigration – it will not deter any unauthorized immigrants.	Don't know

	Help prevent	No effect	Don't know
All	50	36	14
GP	49	36	15
US Elites	54	38	8

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Misinformation about legal immigration and the U.S. visa system poses a barrier to support

A significant majority underestimate the share of immigrants who are in the country legally

- **This presents an opportunity to emphasize the vast majority of immigrants who are here legally and contributing to economy in meaningful ways**

46%: On average, the percentage of immigrants that respondents <u>think</u> are currently in the United States legally

72%: The <u>actual</u> percentage of immigrants who are in the United States legally.

63% of the General Population and 52% of Elite respondents said this number was higher than they expected.

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Those who are better informed of the true scale of legal immigration in the U.S. are more favorable towards legal immigration

- People who think at least 70% of immigrants are legal are 14% more likely to be <u>very favorable</u> towards legal immigration

How favorable are you towards legal immigration of workers into the United States?	All	<70% of Immigrants are Legal	≥70% of Immigrants are Legal
	N=1302	N=963	N=339
Very favorable	35	32	46
Somewhat favorable	43	46	36
Somewhat unfavorable	11	11	9
Very unfavorable	6	5	7
Don't know	5	6	3

Data shown is the baseline favorability, asked before respondents were shown any messaging or pilot program details.

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Message Testing

Why Message Testing Research?

Message testing research provides an understanding of the messages developed during focus group research among a broad audience of the U.S. General Population and Opinion-Forming Elite audiences. We evaluate each message using a variety of metrics to assess which messages resonate and why they resonate.

Process

- Reviewing the words and phrases that respondents found particularly compelling provides insights on what pieces of the argument in favor of a visa program capture the most interest

- Aggregating key metrics into a single index score allows the messages to be ranked according to overall performance

Outcome

- The outcome provides a **message architecture framework** – an overall message narrative with key pillars, or themes, and specific proof points that resonate strongest and are most effective at telling our story

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Message Testing Key Findings

❖ The most persuasive messaging strategy focuses on keeping legal immigrants accountable for paying taxes and emphasizes the benefits that taxing legal immigrants has on the U.S. economy

❖ To reinforce the economic argument for a visa program, both audiences found wording explicitly stating that legal immigration will help or boost the U.S. economy very compelling

❖ There were some notable differences by key audience:

  ❖ Highlighting the visa program's ability to curb future illegal immigration proved most effective among General Population respondents, but Elites were not as convinced by such messages

  ❖ Elites were most convinced by the visa program's ability to "keep better track of" immigrants living and working in the U.S. Elites were also more receptive to the idea that a visa program would create opportunities for immigrants, despite it being a lower-performing message with General Population respondents

  ❖ Democrats were more motivated by the low supply/high demand argument in favor of legal immigrants; legal immigrants filling unfilled, physically-demanding jobs and the resulting boost to the U.S. economy

❖ Messages that say a visa program would provide legal immigrants with opportunities and rewards for entering legally do not perform well

Messaging Testing Methodology

- We tested 10 message, including 5 based on the focus group findings from Phase 1 research
- We evaluated each message on believability and whether respondents who heard it were more likely to support a visa program, then created a message score using the following formula:

Net Believability
Total believable – Total not believable

+

Likely to Support
2 Much more likely to support a visa program*
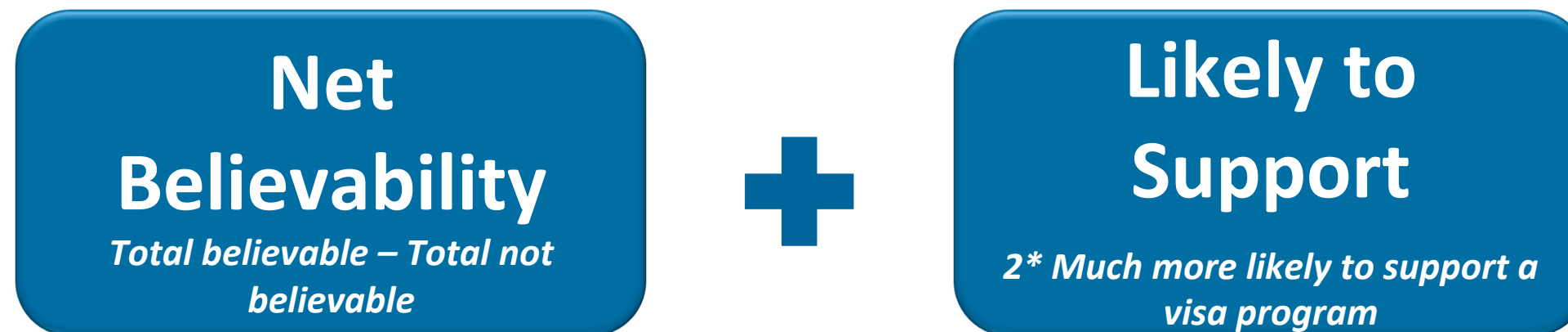
COLOR CODING LEGEND	
Top Scoring Message	
Top-Tier Messages	
Middle-Tier Messages	
Bottom-Tier Messages	

Top-scoring messages focus on accountability and the benefits that taxing legal immigrants has on the U.S. economy

Message Scores
A higher number means more respondents find the message believable and are likely to support a visa program

Message	All	GP	US Elites
##LEGAL PATHWAY## As long as there are unfilled jobs in the United States, immigrants will come to fill them. Our **economy benefits** when these jobs are filled, but not if these workers enter the U.S. illegally. We need immigrant workers to work on the books **and pay local, state, and federal taxes**, and that's only possible if there is a legal pathway – but no legal pathway currently exists. Creating a visa program for immigrant workers to do physically-demanding jobs would provide a pathway for immigrants who want to come to the U.S. the right way – legally.	134	129	151
##FUTURE IMPLICATIONS## If we don't create a worker visa program for those coming to do physically-demanding jobs that require little or no training, immigrants will continue to enter the U.S. illegally. This will guarantee that 20 years from now we'll face a new generation of millions of unauthorized immigrants and a new immigration crisis. **Unauthorized workers** put a **strain** on the **U.S**. in ways we cannot afford to continue.	133	129	147
##KEEPING TRACK## A visa program for those coming to do physically-demanding, year-round jobs would allow officials to **keep better track** of the immigrants living and working in this country. The program would ensure that immigrants participating in the visa program **pay** into the **system** and are held **accountable** for things that all American citizens are accountable for, like **taxes** and **social security**.	129	120	155

Note:
- **Bold** words are those respondents found most compelling based on text highlighting.
- Words that appear between "##" are the message titles and were not seen by respondents.
- Messages shown to all respondents one at a time in a random order.

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Phrases emphasizing how keeping immigrants accountable for paying taxes will benefit the economy are compelling

Top Two Messages

LEGAL PATHWAY

As long as there are unfilled jobs in the United States, immigrants will come to fill them. Our economy benefits when these jobs are filled, but not if these workers enter the U.S. illegally. We need immigrant workers to work on the books and pay local, state, and federal taxes, and that's only possible if there is a legal pathway – but no legal pathway currently exists. Creating a visa program for immigrant workers to do physically-demanding jobs would provide a pathway for immigrants who want to come to the U.S. the right way – legally.

KEEPING TRACK

A visa program for those coming to do physically-demanding, year-round jobs would allow officials to keep better track of the immigrants living and working in this country. The program would ensure that immigrants participating in the visa program pay into the system and are held accountable for things that all American citizens are accountable for, like taxes and social security.

Respondents were asked to highlight up to five words from the messages that they found most compelling. As font size grows larger and more blue, it indicates that the phrase was selected by more respondents.

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Messages focused on using the visa program to curb illegal immigration scored well with the General Population, but not with Elites

Message Scores
A higher number means more respondents find the message believable and are likely to support a visa program

Message	All	GP	US Elites
##US BORDER## If offered a legal way to enter the U.S., most immigrant workers would rather come on a bus or a plane with a visa, than make the dangerous journey illegally across our borders. **Encouraging legal immigration** will help to stem the flow of illegal immigrants and increase the number of immigrants who are here legally, **paying taxes, contributing** to our **economy** and getting involved in our communities.	**120**	**114**	**138**
##STATUS QUO## A visa program for immigrants coming to the U.S. to do physically-demanding, year-round jobs would be an **improvement** over the status quo. Thanks to the political gridlock in Washington, immigrants continue to enter the country illegally. To get a handle on the illegal immigration and restore the rule of law, the government should **pilot a worker visa program** that creates a **legal** way for immigrants to enter the country and do jobs for which employers can't find enough American workers.	**118**	**110**	**135**
##UNFILLED JOBS## Despite falling unemployment rates, thousands of jobs **remain unfilled** in the U.S. today. Industries like landscaping and housekeeping face labor shortages because not enough Americans apply to fill these positions. The high demand in these sectors and the low supply of available American workers indicates a need for immigrant workers to fill the gaps. When American businesses can't find enough American workers to meet their labor demands, **legal immigrants** can **boost the U.S. economy** by filling unfilled physically demanding, difficult jobs.	**116**	**108**	**139**
##CHANGING U.S. WORKFORCE## The American way of life has changed dramatically over the past 50 years, and one example of this is that American workers are **better educated** than in the past. For instance, in 1950 more than half of all American workers were high school dropouts who earned a living doing physically-demanding work. Today, less than 10 percent of American workers fit this description. More educated Americans have other options and are less likely to be interested in labor-intensive jobs that require little or no training. **Legal immigrants help the U.S. economy** by **filling jobs** when Americans have other options.	**114**	**106**	**141**

This economic message scored well with Democrats, but not with Republicans or Independents.

Note:
- *Bold words are those respondents found most compelling based on text highlighting.*
- *Words that appear between "##" are the message titles and were not seen by respondents.*
- *Messages shown to all respondents one at a time in a random order.*

Though not in the top scoring messages, phrases explicitly stating that legal immigration will help the economy were compelling to audiences

Economic – Themed Messages

UNFILLED JOBS

Despite falling unemployment rates, thousands of jobs remain unfilled in the U.S. today. Industries like landscaping and housekeeping face labor shortages because not enough Americans apply to fill these positions. The high demand in these sectors and the low supply of available American workers indicates a need for immigrant workers to fill the gaps. When American businesses can't find enough American workers to meet their labor demands, legal immigrants can boost the U.S. economy by filling unfilled physically demanding, difficult jobs.

CHANGING U.S. WORKFORCE

The American way of life has changed dramatically over the past 50 years, and one example of this is that American workers are better educated than in the past. For instance, in 1950 more than half of all American workers were high school dropouts who earned a living doing physically-demanding work. Today, less than 10 percent of American workers fit this description. More educated Americans have other options and are less likely to be interested in labor-intensive jobs that require little or no training. Legal immigrants help the U.S. economy by filling jobs when Americans have other options.

Respondents were asked to highlight up to five words from the messages that they found most compelling. As font size grows larger and more blue, it indicates that the phrase was selected by more respondents.

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Messages that emphasize providing legal immigrants with opportunities and rewards for entering legally did not score well

- Elites were more receptive than the General Public to the idea that a visa program would create opportunities for immigrants

Message Scores
A higher number means more respondents find the message believable and are likely to support a visa program

Message	All	GP	US Elites
##NO VISAS## There is currently no way for immigrant workers coming to do physically-demanding jobs that require little or no training to enter the U.S. legally for year-round employment. Current law provides visas for highly skilled foreigners, temporary or seasonal workers and immigrants with family members already living legally in the United States. Creating a new **visa program** for immigrant workers to do these types of positions will help **prevent illegal immigration**.	114	104	140
##OPPORTUNITY## America has always been a **land** of **opportunity** for **immigrants** seeking a better way of life. But today there is no legal way for most people in the world to come to work in the U.S. – there is no visa program for those without special skills or family living legally in the United States. We need to continue to **create opportunities** for immigrants with a new visa program for people who want to come to the U.S. to work in physically demanding year-round jobs for which employers can't find enough American workers – jobs in construction, hospitality and food processing, for example.	114	107	143
##WAITING THEIR TURN## Establishing a visa program for immigrants coming to do physically-demanding jobs would **reward** those who have **waited** their turn to cross the border legally. As is, many decide to cross illegally, but millions more wait their turn at home to qualify for family visas – a wait that can last a decade or more. The program would **incentivize** holding out for a visa because those issued visas would have year-round jobs waiting from them, and it would help **deter immigrant**s from **entering** the country **illegally**.	108	101	130

Note:
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- *Words that appear between "##" are the message titles and were not seen by respondents.*
- *Messages shown to all respondents one at a time in a random order.*

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"Legal Pathway" and "Future Implication" messages resonate strongly across audiences, regardless of political affiliation, education, or initial knowledge of legal immigration

	GP	US Elites	Political Affiliation		Education Level		Initial Knowledge of Immigration	
			Democrats	Republicans	GP College-Educated	GP Non-College Educated	<70% of Immigrants are Legal	≥70% of Immigrants are Legal
Top-scoring Message	Legal Pathway	Keeping Track	Legal Pathway	Future Implication	Legal Pathway	Future Implication	Future Implication	Legal Pathway
Second-scoring message	Future Implication	Legal Pathway	Keeping Track	Legal Pathway	Future Implication	Legal Pathway	Legal Pathway	US Border

Note:
- *Message titles and were not seen by respondents.*
- *Messages shown to all respondents one at a time in a random order.*

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Messaging enhances favorability of and support for a visa program

Pilot Visa Program Prompt

There is talk among lawmakers about creating a pilot visa program for immigrant workers coming to do physically-demanding work to enter the U.S. legally on a short-term, renewable basis to do year-round jobs for which employers can't find enough American workers.

The pilot program would be tested only in cities and counties where unemployment is 5% or less, a level at which economists say unemployment is essentially negligible. This program would mirror economic trends, growing in size when the economy is strong and adding jobs, and shrinking in bad economic times. To protect American workers, the program would require employers who participate to prove that they had exhausted all avenues in trying to hire American workers before being allowed to hire immigrant workers.

Messaging improves favorability towards a visa program, especially among the General Population

- Favorability remains high after hearing about a possible pilot program and at the conclusion of the survey

How <u>favorable</u> would you be towards a visa program that would enable immigrants coming to do physically-demanding jobs to work legally year-round in the U.S.?
Showing % Favorable

—— GP   —— US Elites

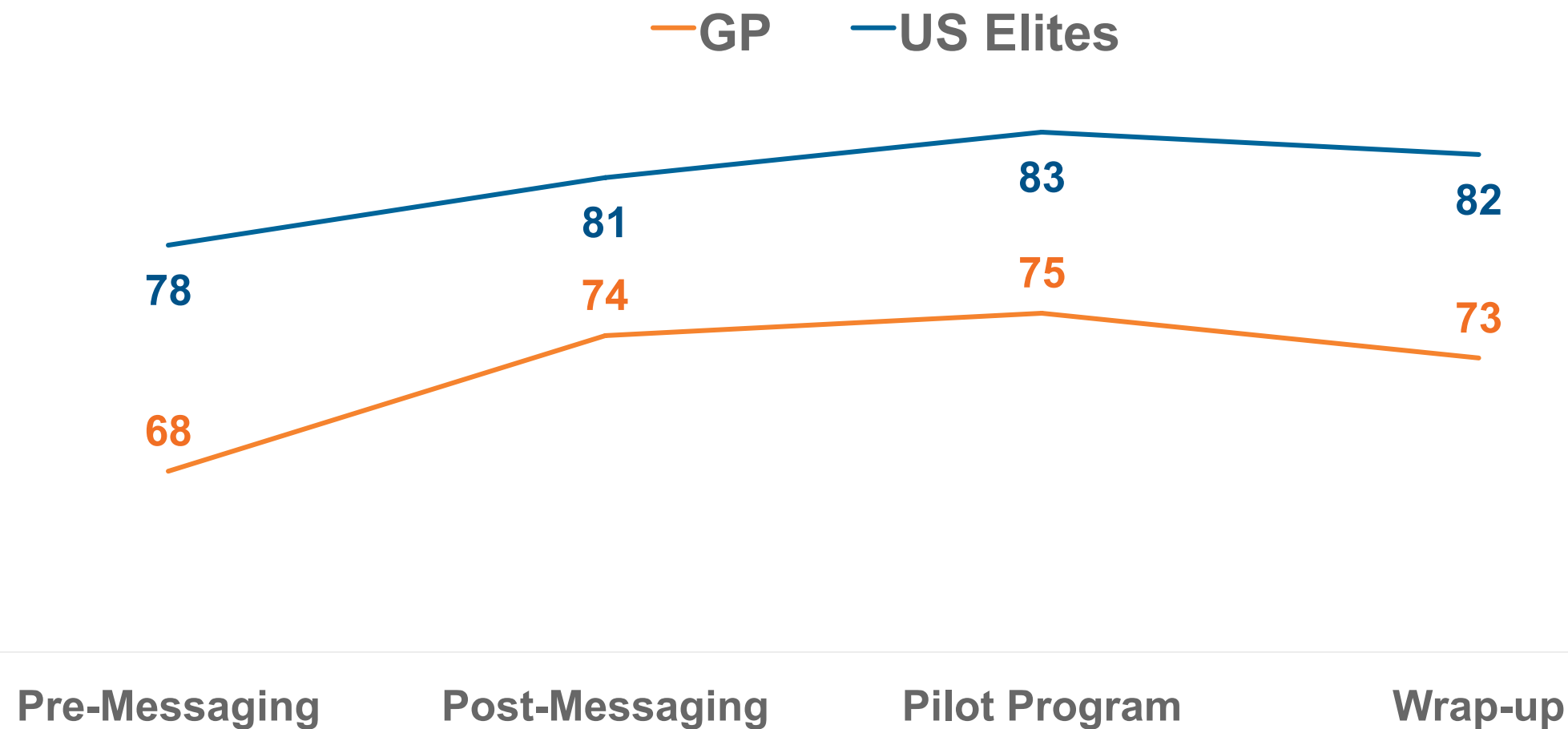|	Pre-Messaging	Post-Messaging	Pilot Program	Wrap-up
US Elites	77	82	82	79
GP	65	76	75	72
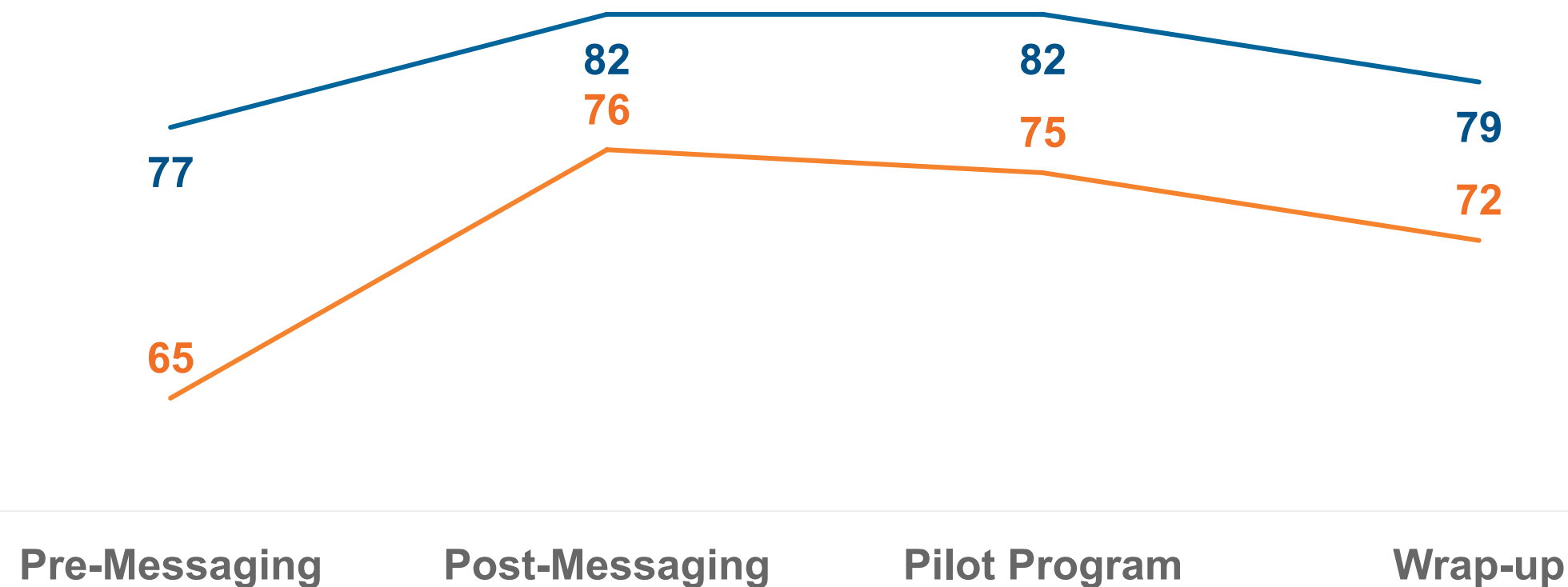
Messaging also boosts explicit support for a visa program

- 3 in 4 respondents say they are likely to support a visa program, after exposure to messages and the explanation of a possible pilot program

How likely would you be to <u>support a visa program</u> that would enable immigrants to enter the U.S. legally to work in physically-demanding, year-round jobs?
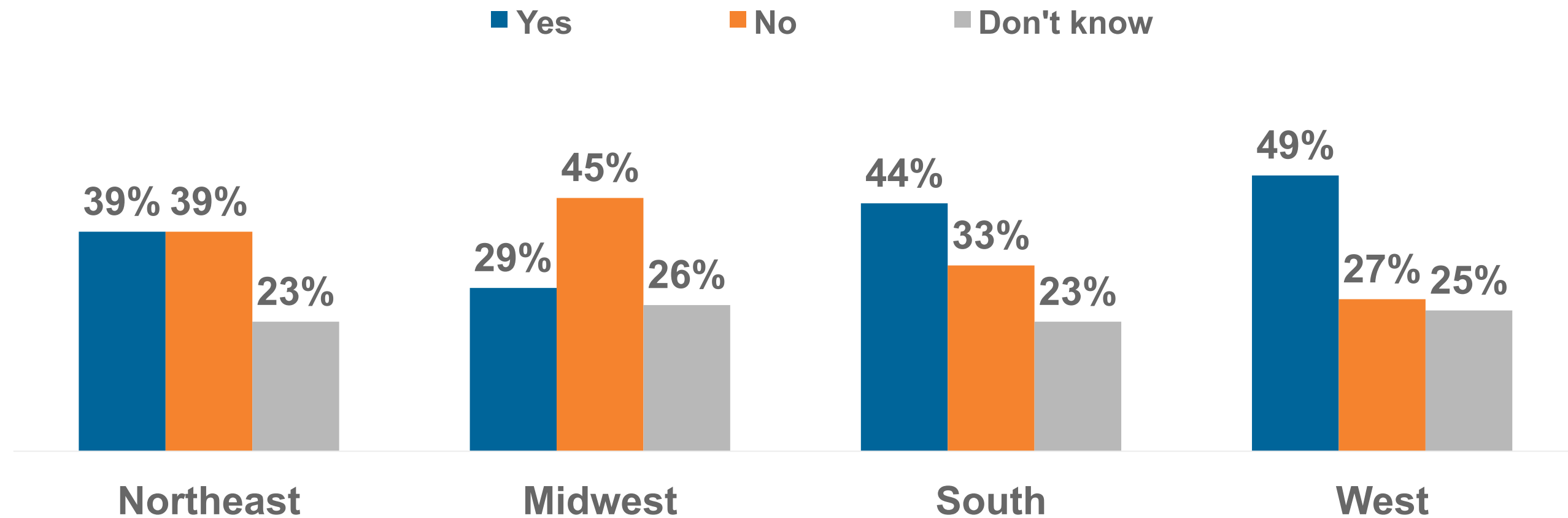*Showing % Likely*

—GP   —US Elites

| Pre-Messaging | Post-Messaging | Pilot Program | Wrap-up |

GP: 68, 74, 75, 73
US Elites: 78, 81, 83, 82

41% think their city would be a good fit for a pilot visa program

Do you think your city would be a fit for a pilot visa program like this?

■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know

41%

35%

24%

All
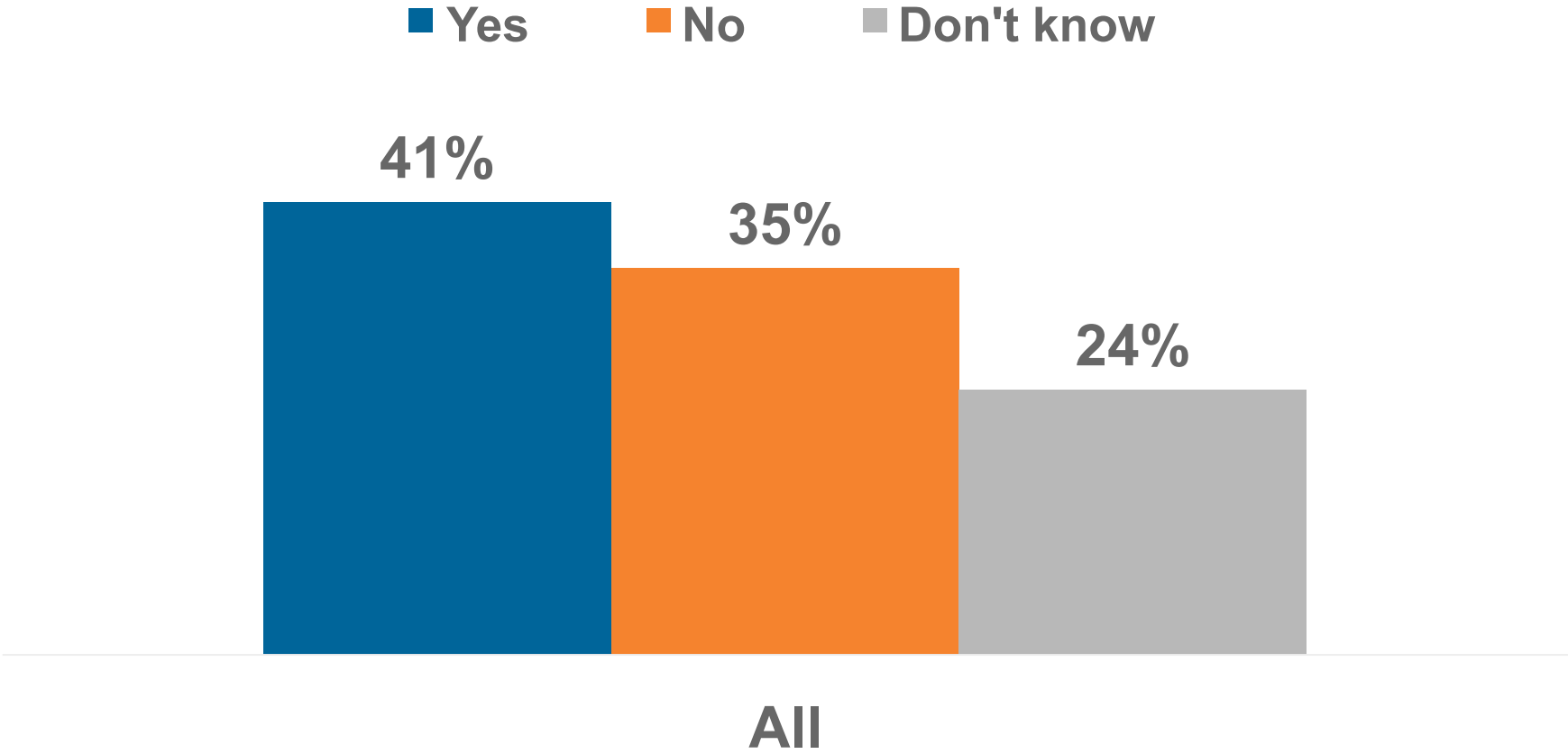
Respondents from the South and West are most likely to say their own city would be a good fit

Do you think your city would be a fit for a pilot visa program like this?

■ Yes   ■ No   ■ Don't know

	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Yes	39%	29%	44%	49%
No	39%	45%	33%	27%
Don't know	23%	26%	23%	25%

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Over 1 in 3 cannot identify any groups who may be hurt by a pilot visa program

- However, there is some belief a pilot program would hurt Americans, in particular American workers

Which group or groups would you say are likely to be hurt by a pilot visa program like this?	All	GP	US Elites
American workers	32	32	34
The American people	16	16	15
American businesses	9	8	13
Other	6	5	8
Don't know	36	38	30

This supports focus group findings indicating a need to provide further specifics on how a visa program would work

- In earlier focus group research, there was universal demand for more details about the implementation, financing, and monitoring of a visa program

- Participants cited economic benefits, protections for American workers, and the careful approach to a major change in the country's current visa policies as key advantages

  - *"I thought what was positive was that [a pilot program] focused on the economy and certain regions. Also that the program would grow if the economy was booming and if it was on the down side then it would shrink. I think that could prove to be dynamic in that respect." – College-educated Republican*

  - *"I applaud that [the government is] trying to find a pathway. If you don't have a pathway, then everybody is illegal and no one can follow the law if there is no law." – Non-college-educated Republican*

  - *The fact that they're going to try a pilot program, that's the best part of it, because it's not permanent just yet." – Non-college-educated Democrat*

About half believe the creation of a visa program would have no impact on American wages

Do you think the creation of a visa program for immigrants coming to the U.S. to work in physically demanding, year-round jobs is more likely to increase, decrease or have no impact on Americans wages?	All	GP	US Elites
Likely to <u>improve</u> American wages	23	22	24
Likely to have no impact on American wages	45	46	44
Likely to <u>decrease</u> American wages	32	32	32

Those who say a visa program would **improve** American wages are:

- More likely to be younger (46% are Millennials)
- More educated (61% have a college degree or higher)
- Less likely to be White (63% are White)
- More likely to be a Democrat (52% are Democrats)

Message Architecture and Conclusion

Optimal message creation brings ideas together to showcase *how* a visa program can deliver on key benefits

Optimal Message

Umbrella Message / Narrative

A visa program for legal immigrants would boost the U.S. economy by filling unfilled jobs and creating incentives for immigrants to come to this country legally. Unfilled physically demanding, year-round jobs that require little or no training would be filled by legal rather than illegal immigrants. And because they entered the U.S. legally, workers could be be tracked by officials, who would ensure they contribute to the U.S. economy by paying local, state, and federal taxes.

Pillars / Themes

Accountability	Economic Benefits	Better than Status Quo
A visa program would keep **track of** legal immigrants and hold them **accountable** by having them **contribute** to our **economy** through **local, state, and federal taxes** and **social security** payments.	A visa program can **boost the U.S. economy** by **filling jobs** that currently remain unfilled Legal immigrants **pay local, state, and federal taxes** and **social security** that benefits U.S. businesses and the economy.	A visa program is an **improvement** over our current system. It **creates opportunities** and **incentivizes** immigrants to come to the U.S. the **legal way.** For the **General Population**: if nothing is done, **unauthorized workers** put **a strain** on the U.S.

Specific Proof Points

Tone   *Inclusive, Optimistic*

Conclusion

1. *There is a foundation of support for a visa program that would allow legal immigrants to do physically-demanding, year-round work in the U.S.*

   - General Population respondents were most moved by the messages tested, showing the greatest increases in post-message favorability for a visa program

2. *Misinformation is a surmountable barrier to increased favorability and support for a visa program*

   - It is critical to inform General Population and Elite audiences of the definition of legal immigration and also to make clear that no visa program currently exists for legal immigrants to come to the U.S. to do physically demanding, year-long work requiring little or no training

   - Once informed, people are more favorable and supportive of the messages communicating that immigrants who come to this country legally will contribute to the economy in meaningful ways

3. *A messaging framework articulating a visa program's ability to hold legal immigrants accountable and highlighting how legal immigrants benefit the U.S. economy – namely through taxation and paying into social security – generates the strongest support*

   - Filling jobs and the resulting benefits to the U.S. economy is a compelling argument. Two other ideas that resonate with the General Population: that a visa program is an improvement over the current system, and that this program will prevent future illegal immigration.

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Appendix

Respondents are most likely to say employment issues, such as jobs and wages, are the most important issues facing their communities

What would you say is the most important issue facing your community? *Open-ended response*	All	GP	US Elites
Employment issues	27	27	25
Government fiscal policy	10	10	11
Economy	9	9	11
Crime	8	8	7
Immigration	6	6	7
Education	4	4	6
Fossil fuels	3	3	5
Healthcare	3	2	4
Cost of living	2	2	1
Poverty	2	2	2
Infrastructure	2	3	1
Housing	2	2	2
Race relations	1	1	1
Police relations	1	1	1
Population density	1	1	2
Terrorism	1	1	2
General negatives	1	1	1
None	3	3	2
Others	9	9	6
Don't Know / No Response	4	4	2

Respondents have mixed feelings about the economy – roughly equal numbers say it is 'on the right track' and 'heading in the wrong direction'

- At 52%, a majority say their local job market is stagnant, neither growing nor declining
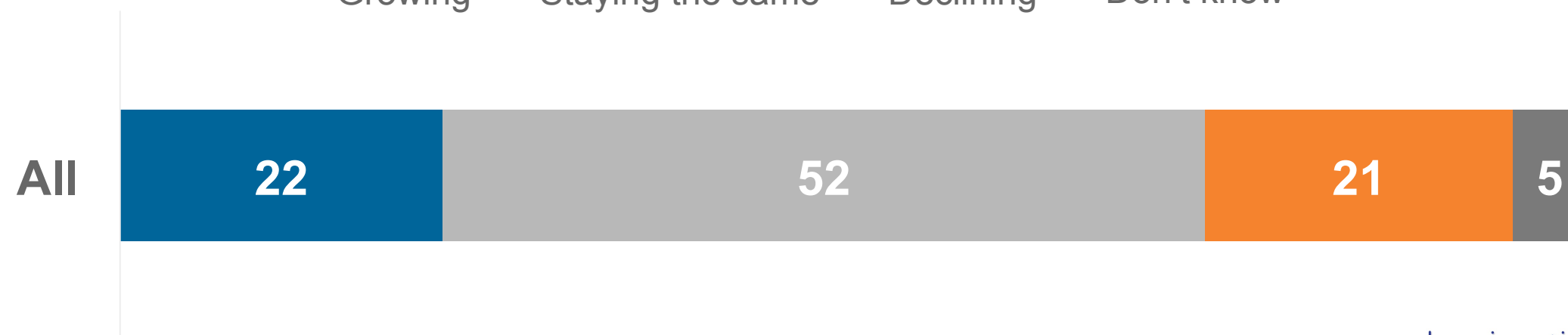
Do you think the local economy is on the right track or heading in the wrong direction?

■ On the right track ■ Heading in the wrong direction ■ Don't Know

All	44	45	11

In general, how would you describe the current state of your local job market?

■ Growing ■ Staying the same ■ Declining ■ Don't know

All	22	52	21	5

Most respondents associate immigrants with landscaping, construction, and agriculture industries

Within your community, what types of jobs do immigrants most commonly hold (open ended response)?
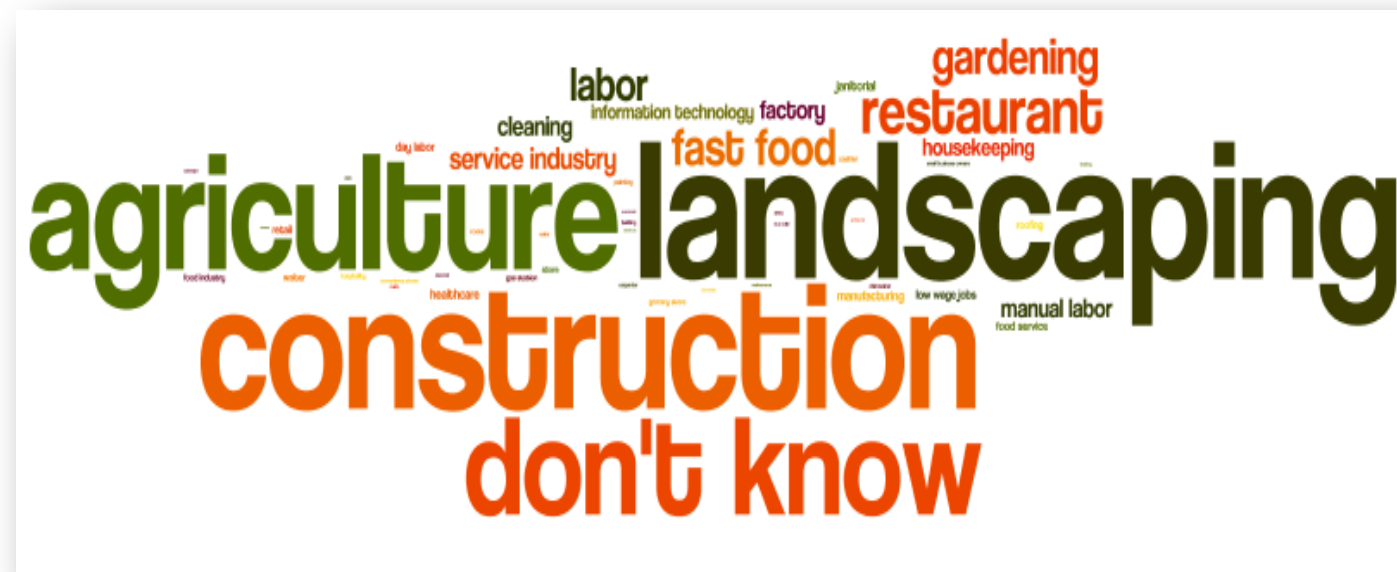
In your opinion, which of the following industries employ immigrants? *(Aided. Multiple responses permitted).*	All
Cleaning Services	82
Landscaping	80
Construction	74
Food Service	70
Agriculture	67
Hotel and Hospitality	63
Food Processing	53
IT	17
Financial Services	11
Don't know	3

Respondents most expect industries such as agriculture, construction, and landscaping to benefit from employing legal immigrants

In your opinion, which of the following industries, if given the opportunity, would benefit from employing legal immigrants who would do physically-demanding work? *Multiple responses permitted.*	All
Agriculture	79
Construction	77
Landscaping	76
Cleaning Services	73
Food Processing	59
Food Service	58
Hotel and Hospitality	57

Few members of the General Population say they interact with immigrants on a regular basis

- About one-third (32%) of the General Population interacts with immigrants in their communities on a regular basis, while over half (54%) of Elites do

How often do you interact with immigrants in your community?	All	GP	US Elites
Always	10	9	14
Often	27	23	40
Sometimes	29	29	29
Rarely	21	23	13
Never	10	12	3
Don't know	4	5	1

75% of Americans would be likely to support a visa program, with Elites expressing the strongest support

- One-third (33%) of the General Population and 41% of Elites are "very likely" to support a visa program

| How likely would you be to support a visa program that would enable immigrants to enter the U.S. legally to work in physically-demanding, year-round jobs? *Showing survey wrap-up*	All	GP	US Elites
Total likely to support	75	73	82
Very likely to support	35	33	41
Somewhat likely to support	40	40	41
Total less likely to support	18	18	15
Somewhat less likely to support	8	8	7
Much less likely to support	10	10	8
Don't know	7	9	3

A majority believe American businesses will benefit from a pilot visa program for immigrant workers doing physically-demanding work

Other than immigrant workers, which group or groups would you say are likely to **benefit** from a pilot visa program like this?	All	GP	US Elites
American businesses	51	50	54
The American people	24	23	27
American workers	9	9	9
Other	4	5	2
Don't know	12	13	9

Thinking beyond their own city, 2 in 3 respondents say there would be another good fit for a pilot program

- Top cities respondents thought would benefit include: Los Angeles, Miami, San Diego, and several cities in Texas

Do you think there are cities other than yours that would be a good fit for a pilot visa program like this?

■ Yes   ■ No   ■ Don't know

	All	GP	US Elites
Yes	67%	64%	76%
No	14%	15%	12%
Don't know	19%	21%	16%
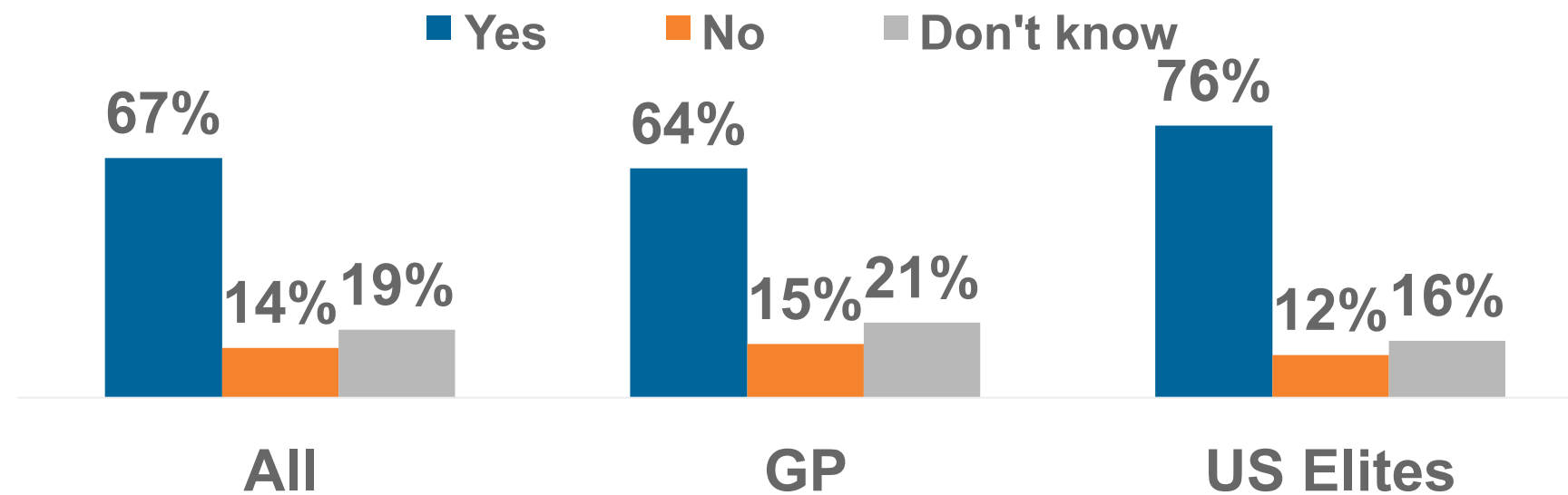
What are some other cities that would benefit from a pilot visa program like this?

"San Diego, Los Angeles, Houston, Dallas"
-GP Respondent

"New York, Los Angeles, Miami,"
-US Elite

"San Diego, Los Angeles, Miami"
-GP Respondent

"Houston, Dallas, Phoenix, San Antonio, Miami"
-US Elite

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