



Critical Insights on Maine™

*The **Voice** of Maine*



Introduction

Background and Methodology

Background

- Each spring and fall, Digital Research, Inc. conducts the *Critical Insights on Maine™* tracking survey, a comprehensive, statewide public opinion survey of registered voters in Maine that covers a variety of topics of interest to businesses, government, and the general public.
- *Critical Insights on Maine™* has been documenting the attitudes, perceptions, and preferences of Maine’s residents for more than 25 years, making it the longest-running consistently-administered tracking survey in the Northeast.
 - In addition to general-interest items (the results of which are being provided to the public in this report), the survey also includes a number of proprietary items for sponsoring entities, with results of those items released only to the sponsors of those specific questions.

Methodology

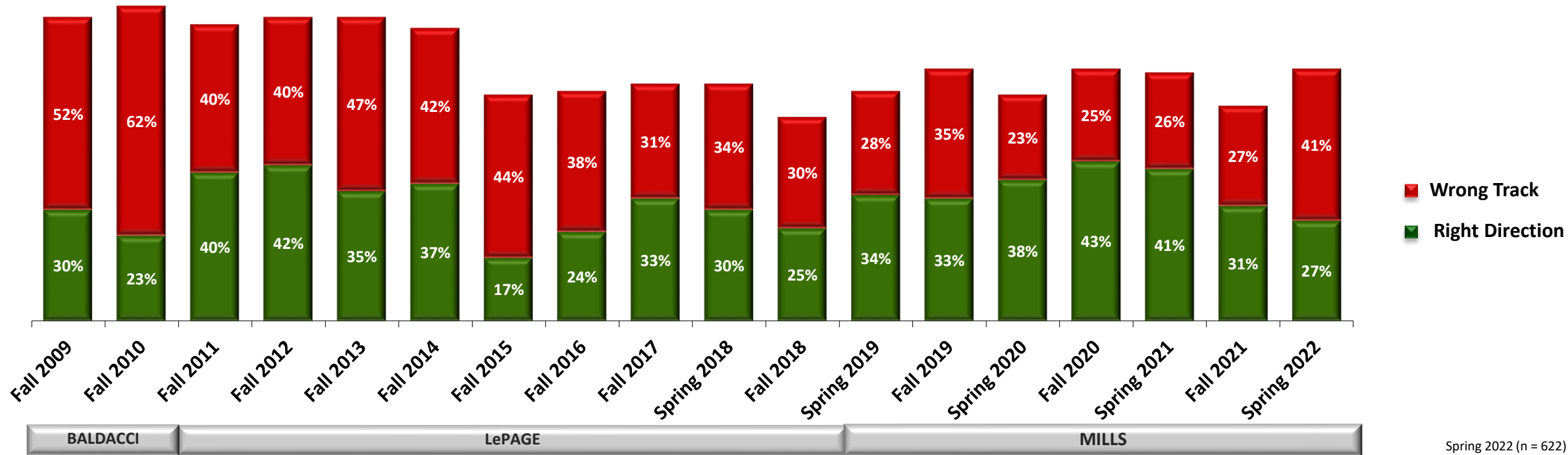
- This wave of the survey included a total of 622 respondents across the state who were surveyed by phone (312 respondents) or online (310 respondents) in March and April of 2022.
- All survey respondents were registered voters who live in Maine.
 - Final data reflect the demographics of the state’s population and were statistically weighted to ensure that those responding by phone or online had an equal impact on the overall results.
 - With a total sample of 622 respondents, results presented here have a margin of sampling error of +/- 3.9 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.
- The entire survey took the average respondent 24 minutes to complete – including both general-interest items and all proprietary subscriber items.

Views Towards the Direction of Maine and the Nation

Roughly three out of ten surveyed voters in Maine believe the state is headed in the *right direction*, while four out of ten believe the state is on the *wrong track*.

Direction of Maine

Democrats (51%) are much more likely than Republicans (8%) to feel the state is headed in the *right direction*.
 In fact, six out of ten Republicans feel the state is on the *wrong track* (62%), compared to only two out of ten Democrats (17%).



All in all, do you think things in Maine are generally headed in the right direction, or do you feel that things are off on the wrong track?

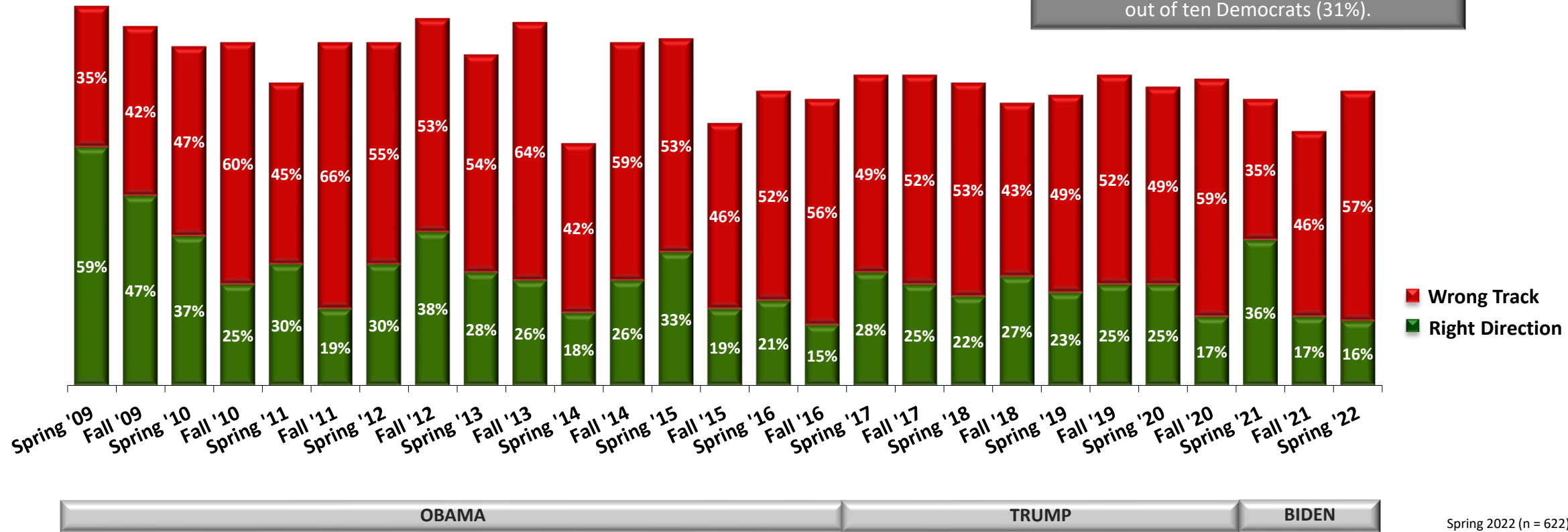
Spring 2022 (n = 622)

Just 16% of Mainers believe the nation as a whole is heading in the *right direction* – among the lowest levels tested in more than a decade.

Almost four times as many – 57% overall – believe the nation is on the *wrong track*.

Direction of the Nation

Democrats (30%) are much more likely than Republicans (7%) to feel the nation is headed in the *right direction*.
 Eight out of ten Republicans feel the nation is on the *wrong track* (78%), compared to three out of ten Democrats (31%).

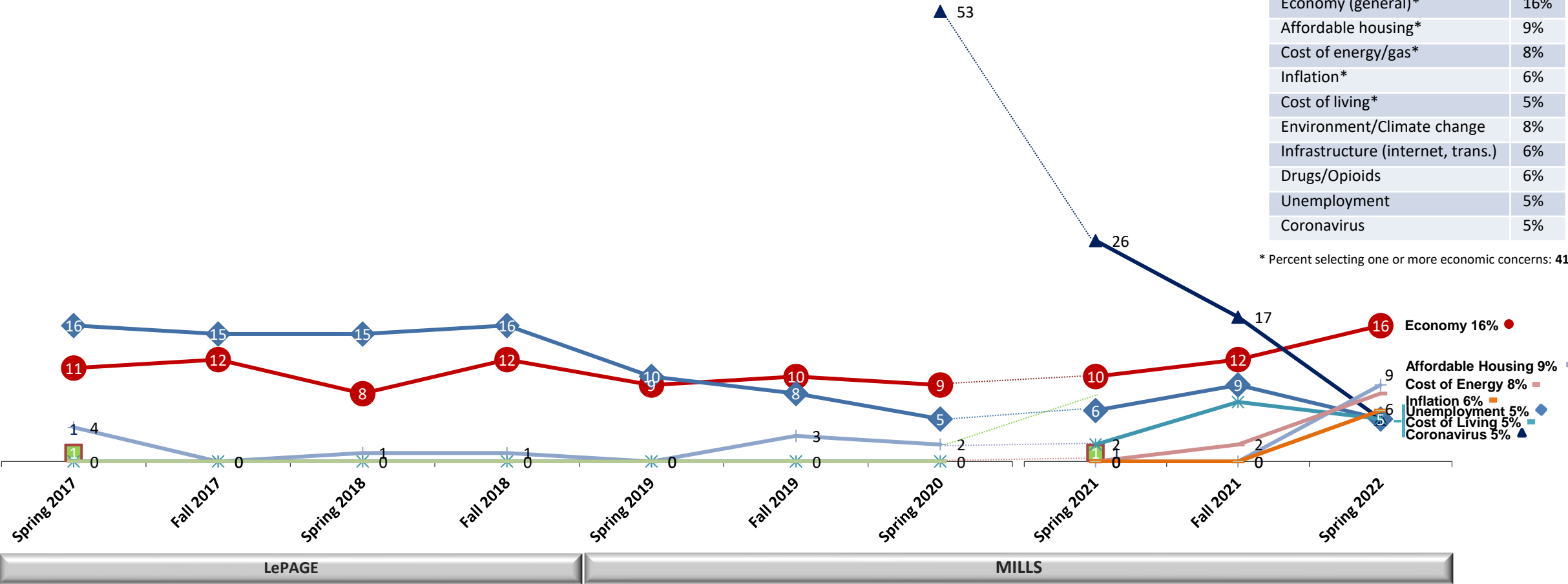


Spring 2022 (n = 622)

Financial issues are now, by far, the most prominent concerns for Mainers overall. No non-economic concern – including the coronavirus – is top-of-mind for more than a handful of voters.

Most Important Issues Facing Maine

Percentage naming selected economic issues**



All Top Responses (Spring 2022)**

Economy (general)*	16%
Affordable housing*	9%
Cost of energy/gas*	8%
Inflation*	6%
Cost of living*	5%
Environment/Climate change	8%
Infrastructure (internet, trans.)	6%
Drugs/Opioids	6%
Unemployment	5%
Coronavirus	5%

* Percent selecting one or more economic concerns: 41%

**Chart shows selected top responses
Table shows all issues mentioned by 5% of respondents or more in the spring of 2022

Spring 2022 (n = 622)



In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing Maine today?
Asked without prompts.

This question was not asked in the fall of 2020. The gap is indicated by dashed lines.

The high – and rising – cost of living is, by far, the most prominent economic concern for Maine voters.

Top Economic/Financial Concerns

Percentage naming each issue

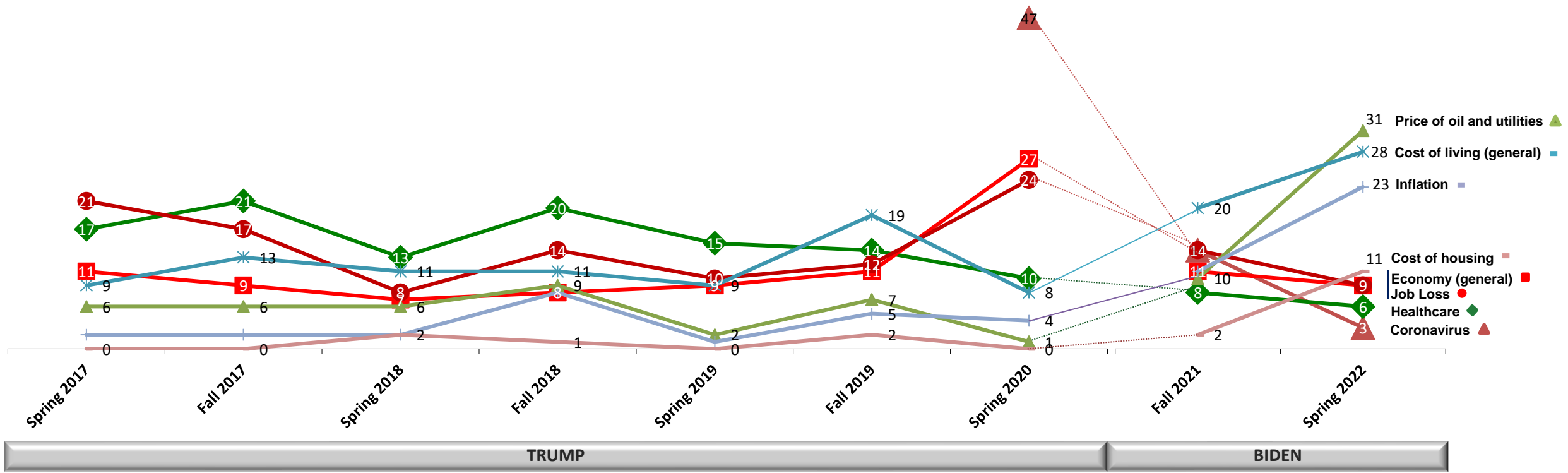


Chart shows issues mentioned by more than 5% of respondents in the spring of 2022 (along with the coronavirus, which is included for comparison)

Spring 2022 (n = 622)



As you think about the next 6 months, what economic or financial situations concern you the MOST?
 Asked without prompts.

This question was not asked in the fall of 2020 or the spring of 2021. The gap is indicated by dashed lines.

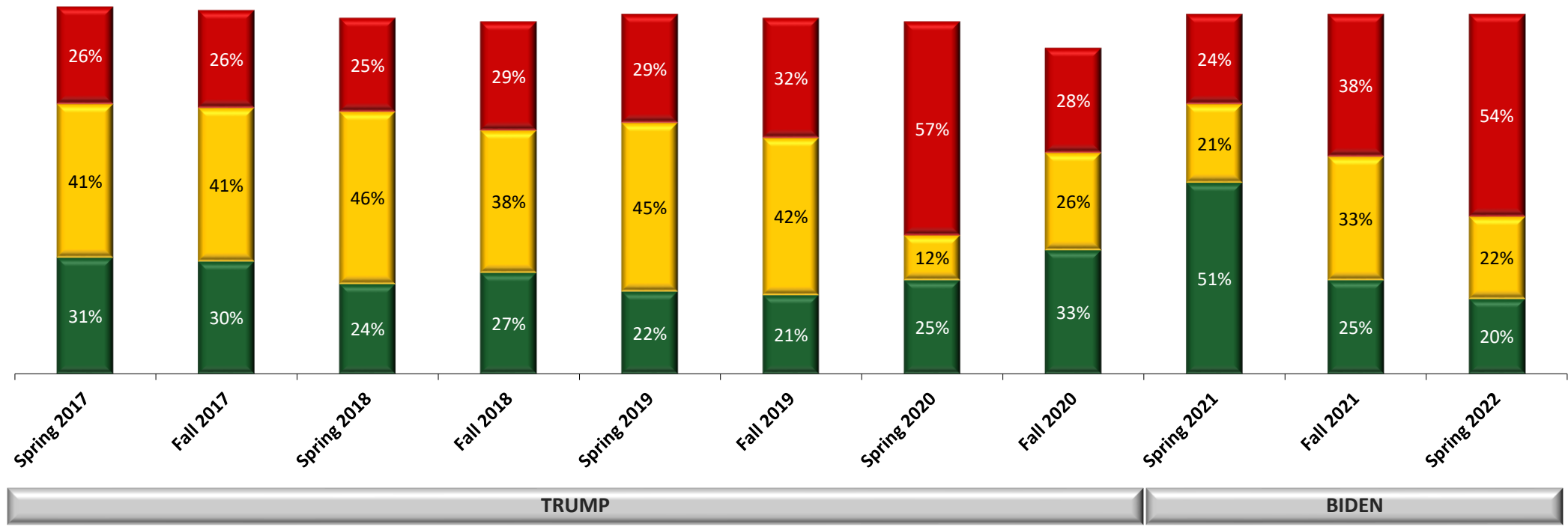
Fully half of voters in Maine believe the economy will get *worse* over the next year, and just two out of ten believe it will improve. Only in the spring of 2020 – at the onset of the coronavirus pandemic – have so many voters been pessimistic about the future of the economy.

Optimism About the Economy

Percentage predicting the economy will be:

- Worse
- The Same
- Better

Democrats (30%) are twice as likely as Republicans (14%) to feel optimistic about the future of the economy.



TRUMP

BIDEN

Spring 2022 (n = 622)

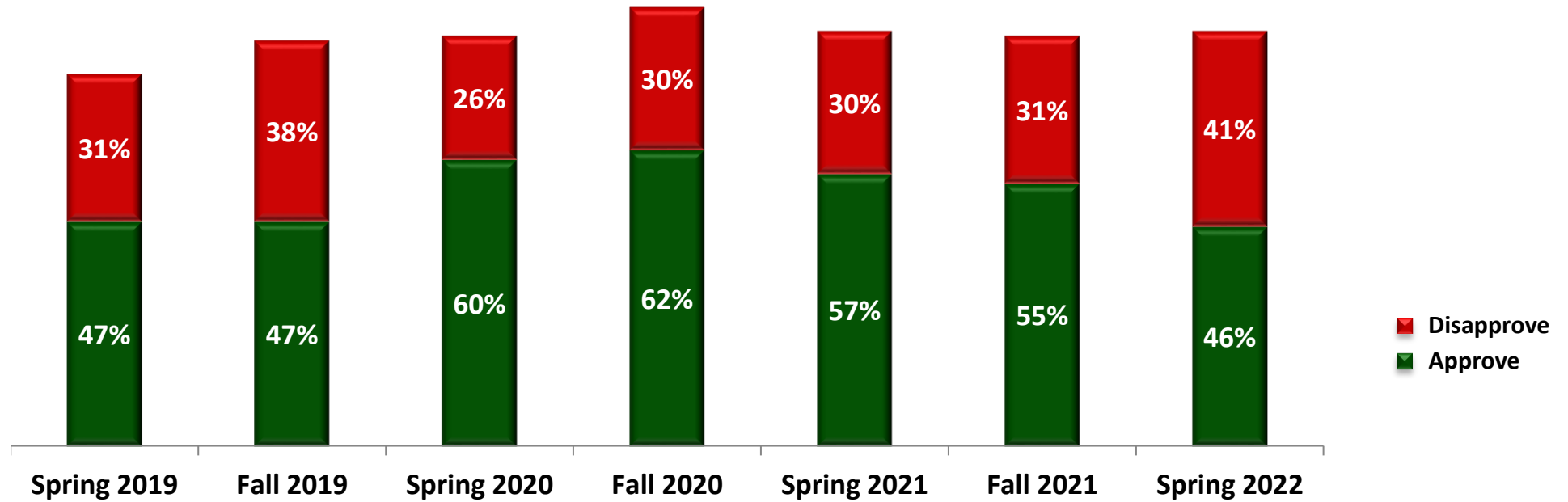
Now please think about the future of the economy. In the next 12 months, do you think the economy will be...?

Opinions of Politicians

Roughly half of voters approve of Governor Mills's performance, returning to her pre-pandemic average.

Approval of Janet Mills

More than seven out of ten Democrats approve of the governor's performance (75%) compared to just two out of ten Republicans (19%).



Spring 2022 (n=622)

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Janet Mills has been doing her job as governor?

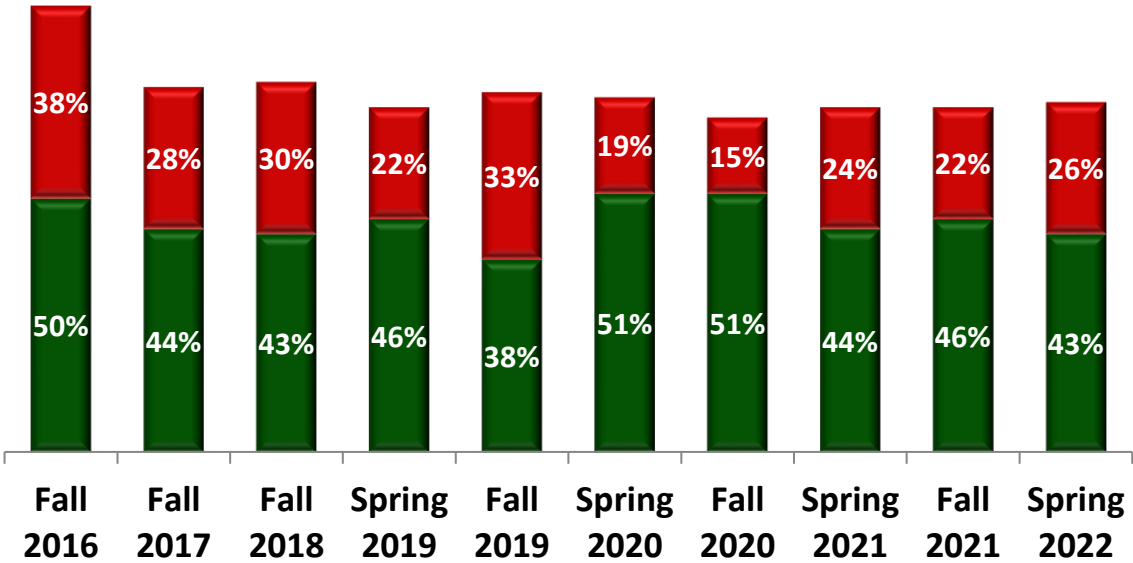
Four out of ten constituents of Chellie Pingree approve of her performance, maintaining her historical average despite a large split between Democrats and Republicans.

Four out of ten constituents of Jared Golden approve of his performance, in-line with his historical average.

Approval of Congressional Representatives

(Among those in the respective districts)

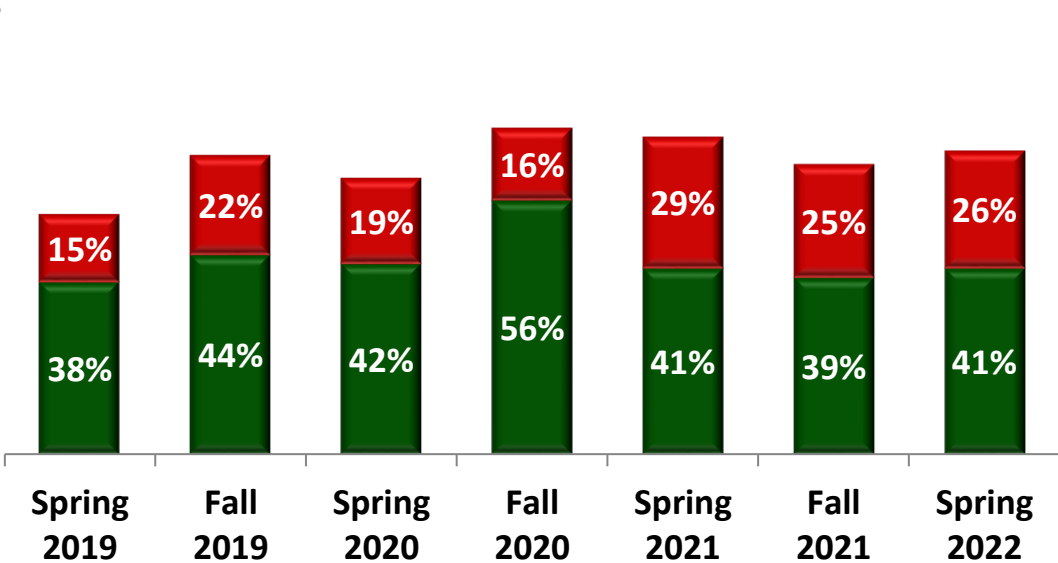
Chellie Pingree



Two out of three Democrats in the first congressional district approve of Chellie Pingree’s performance (67%), compared to just 5% of Republicans.

Spring 2022 (n=311)

Jared Golden



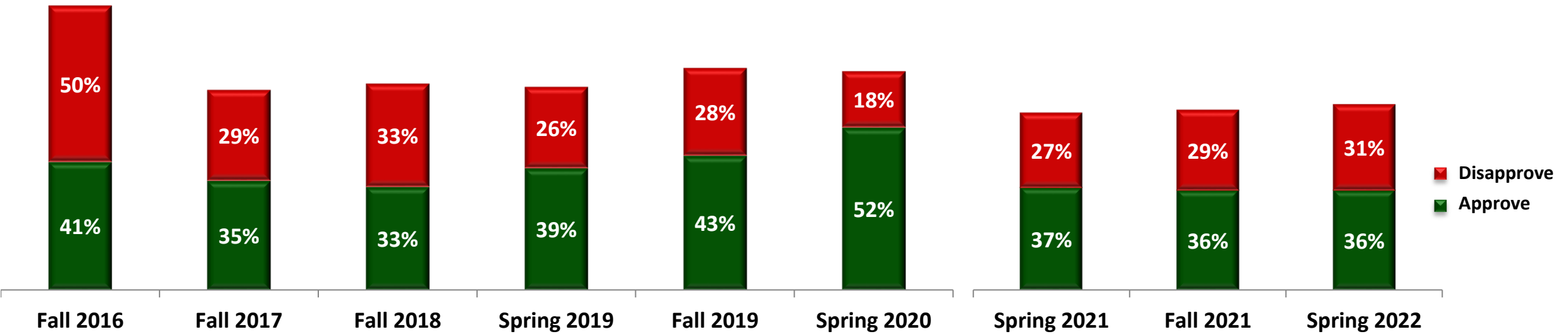
Half of Democrats (53%) and one-third of Republicans (36%) approve of Golden’s performance in office.

Spring 2022 (n=311)

Roughly one-third of voters in Maine approve of the state legislature's performance, holding close to the historical average.

Approval of the State Legislature

Six out of ten Democrats in Maine now approve of the legislature's performance (58%), compared to just two out of ten Republicans (19%).



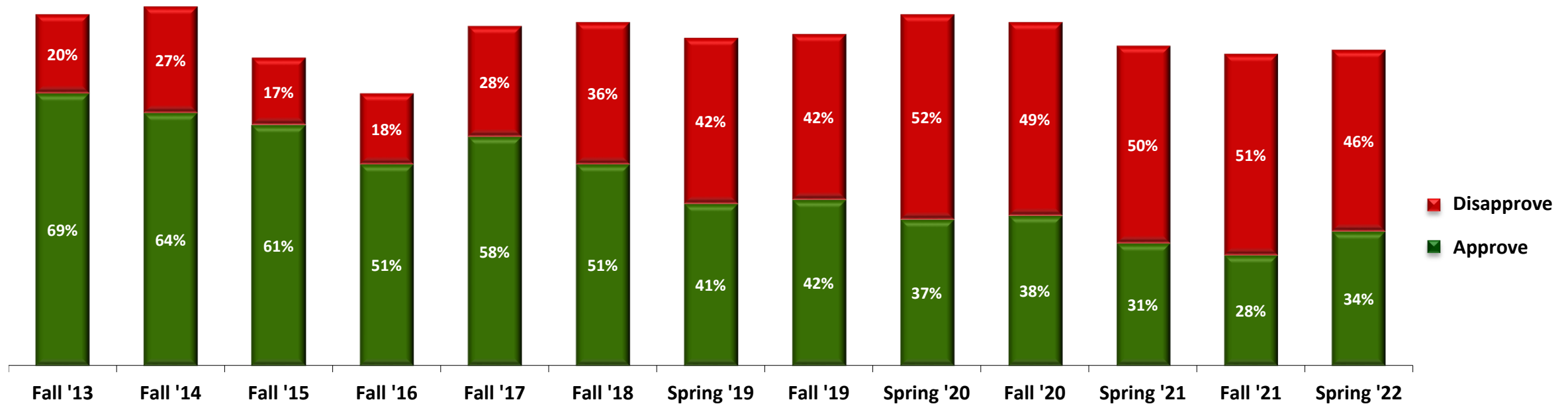
Spring 2022 (n=622)

Do you approve or disapprove of the way the current Maine state legislature is doing its job?

In the fall 2016 wave of the survey, we measured "approval" on a five-point scale. The net approval ratings reflect an adjustment for the use of this scale.

One-third of voters currently approve of the way Susan Collins is handling her job as U.S. Senator – holding relatively steady since the spring of 2020.

Approval of Senator Susan Collins



Spring 2022 (n=622)

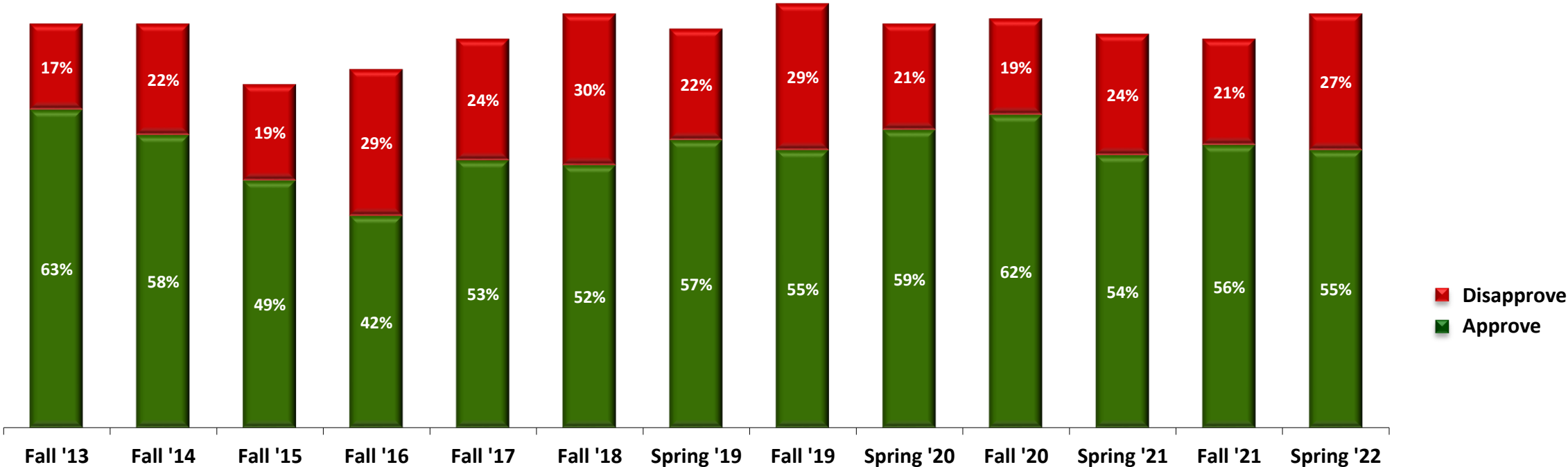
Do you approve or disapprove of the way Susan Collins is handling her job as U.S. Senator?

In the fall 2016 wave of the survey, we measured “approval” on a five-point scale. The net approval ratings reflect an adjustment for the use of this scale.

More than half of voters approve of the job Angus King is doing as U.S. Senator, on par with the historical average.

Approval of Senator Angus King

Senator King's approval rating continues to be highest among Democrats (85%, vs. 32% of Republicans), with a balance that has held very steady over time.



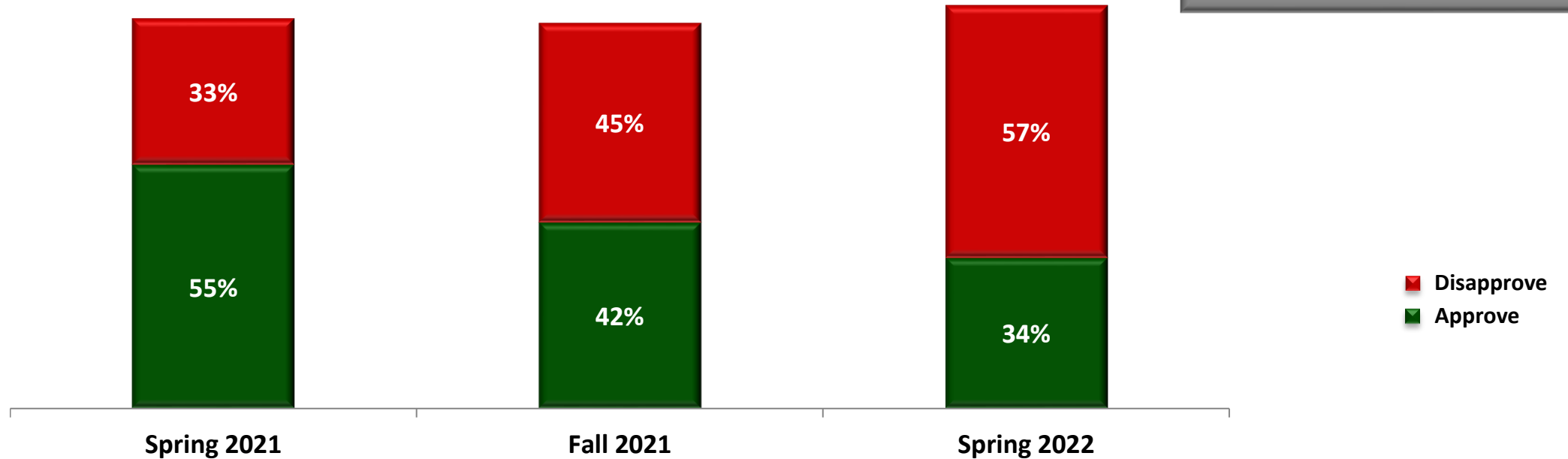
Spring 2022 (n=622)

One out of three voters in Maine approve of Joe Biden's performance as president, representing continued decline since his election.

For comparison, over the course of his final two years in office, 38% of Maine voters approved of Donald Trump's performance.

Approval of Joe Biden

Just 7% of Republicans in Maine approve of Joe Biden's performance, compared to 69% of Democrats.



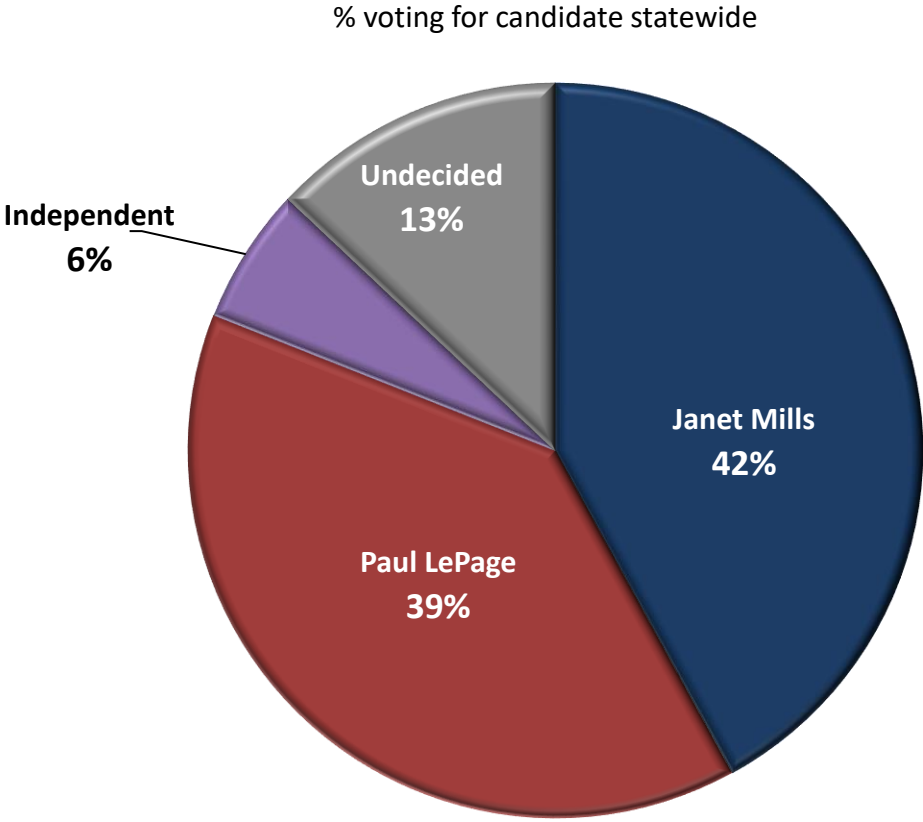
Spring 2022 (n=622)

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Joe Biden is handling his job as president?

November 2022 Elections

The upcoming race for governor between Janet Mills and Paul LePage is a dead heat (42% vs. 39%); Mills has a strong lead in the first congressional district (52% vs. 32%), but LePage has an equal lead in the second congressional district (49% vs. 29%).

Likely Vote for Governor in November 2022



% voting for candidate by congressional district

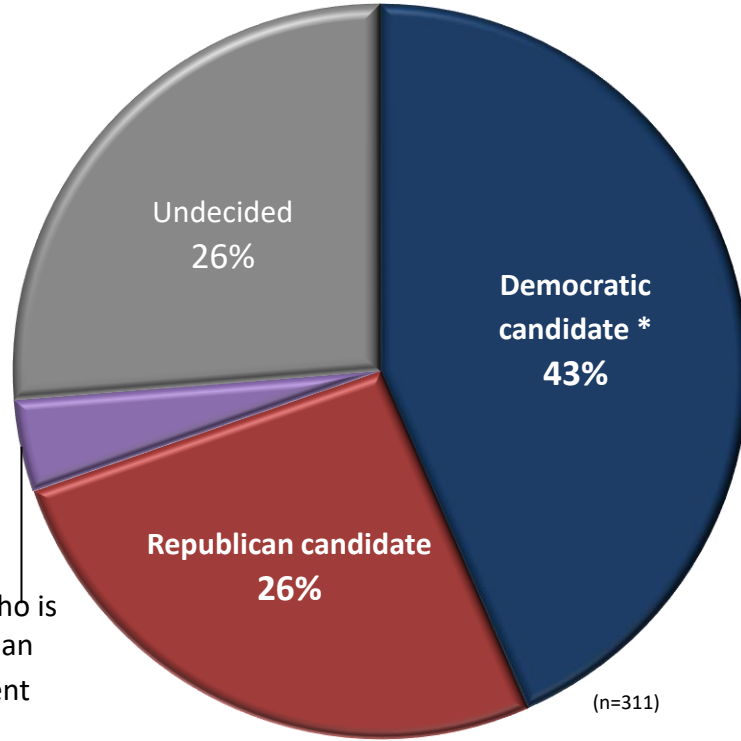
	CD1 (n=311)	CD2 (n=311)
Janet Mills	52%*	32%
Paul LePage	29%	49%*
Independent	7%	5%
Undecided	12%	14%

(n=622)

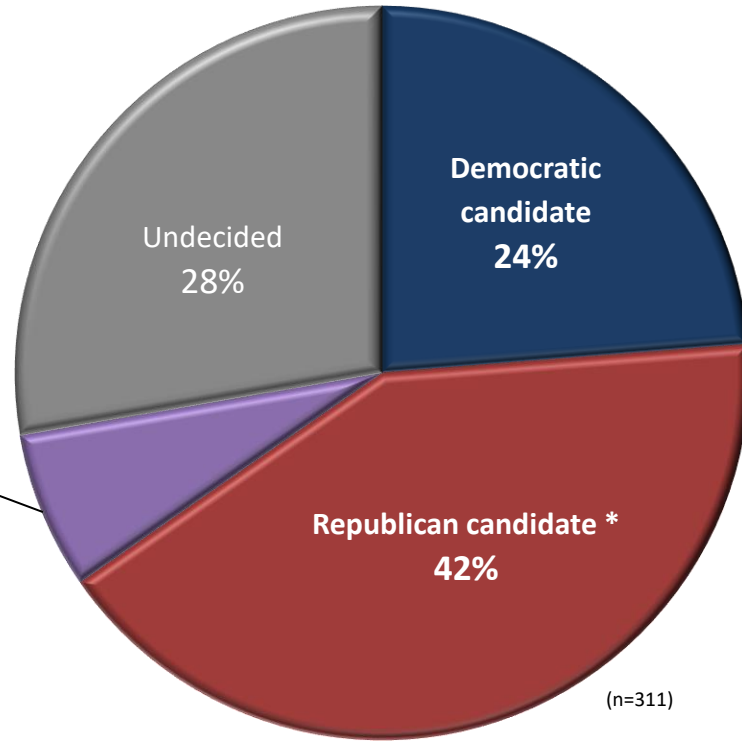
When voters are asked which *party* they will vote for in the upcoming election for the U.S. House of Representatives, a Republican candidate is much more popular in the second congressional district (42% vs. 24%), and a Democratic candidate has an equal margin in the first congressional district (43% vs. 26%). Still, many in each district are undecided who they will vote for.

Vote for Congressional Representative in November 2022
(Generic Ballot)

Congressional District 1



Congressional District 2



STATEWIDE (n=622)	
Democratic candidate	33%
Republican candidate	34%
Independent candidate	5%
Undecided	27%

Thinking again about the upcoming election, if the elections for U.S. Congress were being held today, would you vote for the Republican Party's candidate or the Democratic Party's candidate for Congress in your district?

Undecided also includes those who "prefer not to answer"

* Indicates a statistically significant difference between congressional districts



To learn more about this survey and its findings, contact:

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