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# America's Voice: Immigration

*Presented by Pete Brodnitz, BSG*

*February 19, 2009*



**THE POWER TO WIN COMMON SENSE IMMIGRATION REFORM**

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# Swing District Survey Methodology

- **BSG conducted 402 interviews with 2008 general election voters in Swing Districts between November 6<sup>th</sup> and November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008.**
- **Congressional Districts included in this survey: VA-11, AZ-01, AZ-05, NM-01, WA-08, CO-04, IL-14, NV-03, PA-11**
  - **Party ID: 35% Democrat, 32% Republican, 29% Independent**
  - **2004 Election: 38% voted for Kerry and 45% for Bush**
  - **2008 Election: 52% voted for Obama and 43% McCain**
  - **Race: 80% white, 10% Latino, 1% African American**
- **The margin of error is  $\pm 4.89\%$  for the entire sample at the 95% confidence level.**



# Experience With The Issue of Immigration

- Typically not top of mind but something voters say they are concerned about so GOP strategy has been to try and raise its salience.
- However, the GOP overplays the issue. Most voters are concerned about the tax impact of immigration but also recognize that it's not practical or fair to try and deport all "illegal" residents.
  - Most people also recognize that the problem is complicated and does not lend itself to an easy solution.
- For this reason, Democrats who acknowledge that the issue is real (i.e. don't dismiss it as a wedge) and call for a solution that is fair to both taxpayers and undocumented residents have found that the issue does not work to their disadvantage.
  - And I've seen cases, such as Merkley and Ford, where going after the GOP candidate for hypocrisy on the issue underperforms in campaigns.
- In our current polling, it looks like candidates who offer solutions to this problem can find that is an advantage – not just despite the economy but because of the economy.

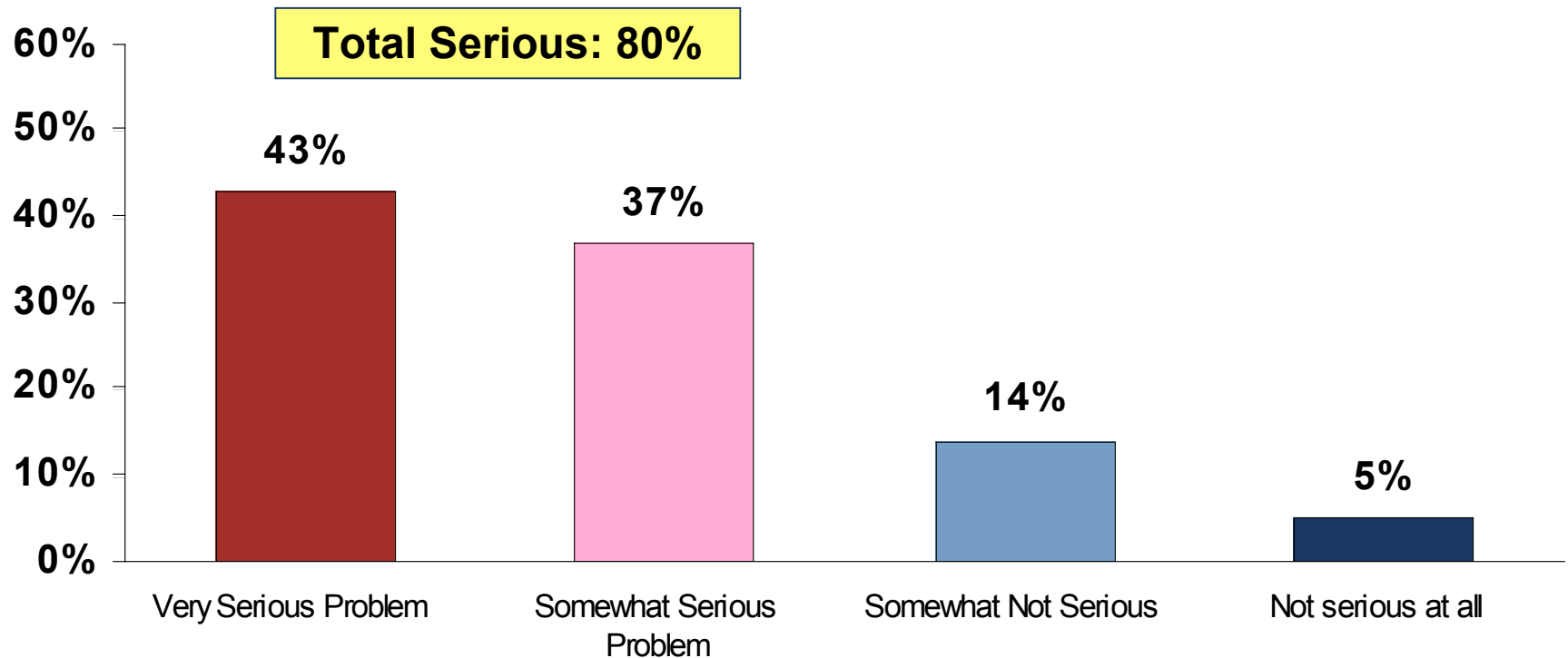


# Swing Districts: Key Points

- **The issue of immigration was a low priority relative to the economy, but battleground voters are looking for solutions to the issue, which they consider important, and they prefer a comprehensive solution over a more limited approach.**
- **Those who say the economic situation requires delaying immigration reform don't have the support of the public. Voters say the economy is the priority, but they also say comprehensive reform is consistent with helping the economy.**

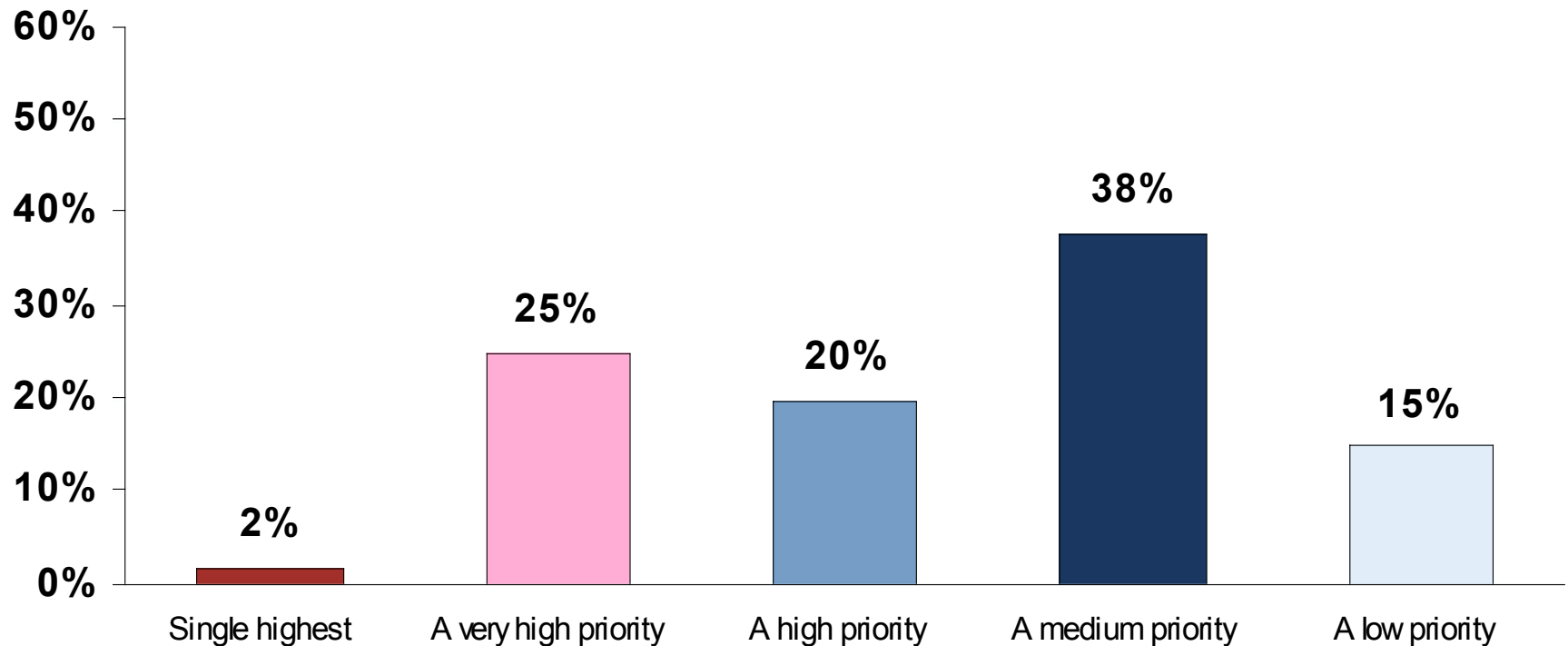


# 8 in 10 Swing District Voters Say Illegal Immigration is a Serious Problem



*In your view, is illegal immigration a (READ CHOICES) problem facing the country?*

# Solving the Issue of Immigration 47% Consider it a High Priority

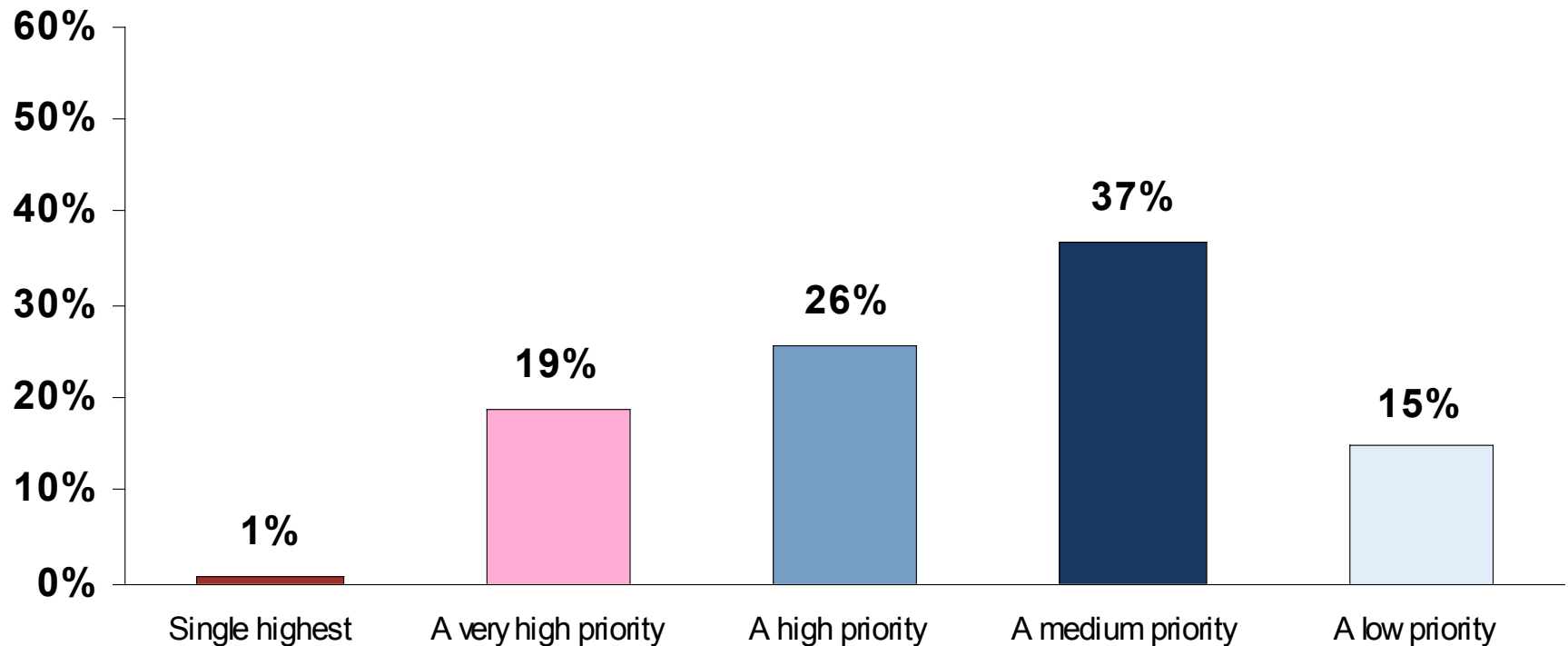


*Now thinking about all the issues that will face the NEW Congress after this election, how high a priority should solving the issue of illegal immigration be, compared to all the other issues - should it be the single highest priority, a very high priority, a high priority, a medium priority, or a low priority for the NEW Congress?*



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# Enacting Immigration Reform 46% Consider it a High Priority

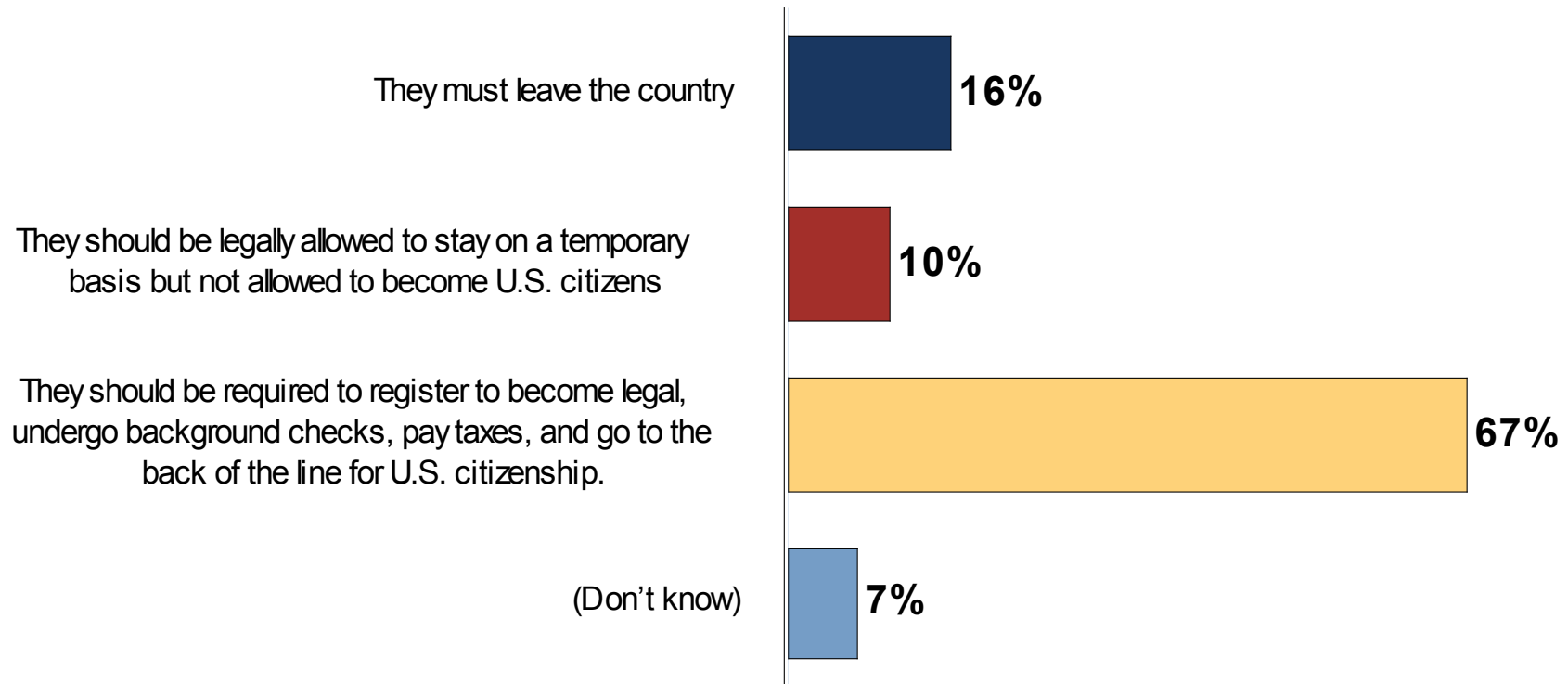


*Now thinking about all the issues that will face the NEW Congress after this election, how high a priority should enacting immigration reform be compared to all the other issues - should it be the single highest priority, a very high priority, a high priority, a medium priority, or a low priority for the NEW Congress?*



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# 12 million remaining after initial steps should...



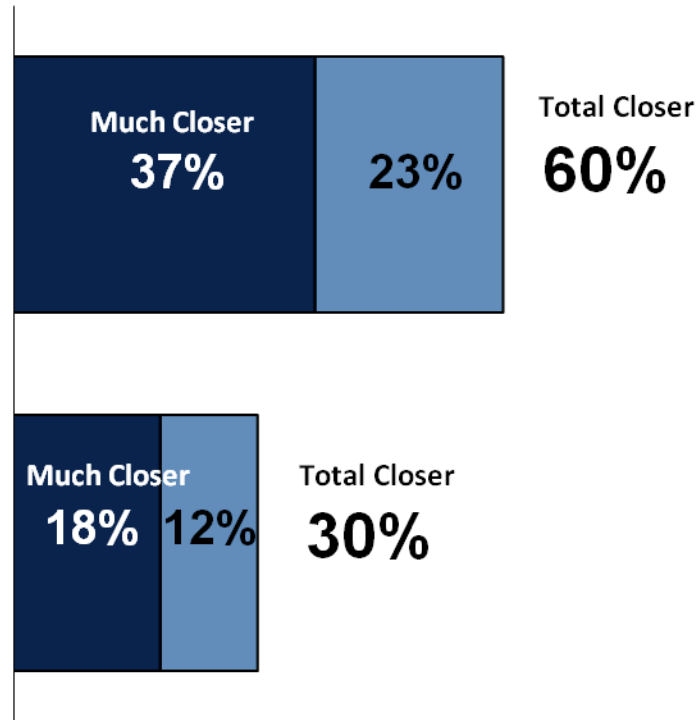
*Most government officials believe that to deal with the problem of illegal immigration, we need to make our borders secure, crack down on employers who knowingly hire illegal immigrants, and deport illegal immigrants who commit crimes. In addition to these steps, what should be done about the 12 million illegal immigrants here in the United States?*



# Comprehensive Vs. Forced to Leave

We need a comprehensive approach that secures the border, cracks down on employers who hire illegal immigrants, and requires all illegal immigrants to register and meet certain requirements to become legal, including working, paying taxes and learning English.

We need to secure our border, stop giving taxpayer funded benefits to illegal immigrants, and make sure that those who broke our laws by entering this country illegally are forced to leave.



*Now I'd like to read you a pair of statements. Of the two, please tell me which statement is closer to your own views.*

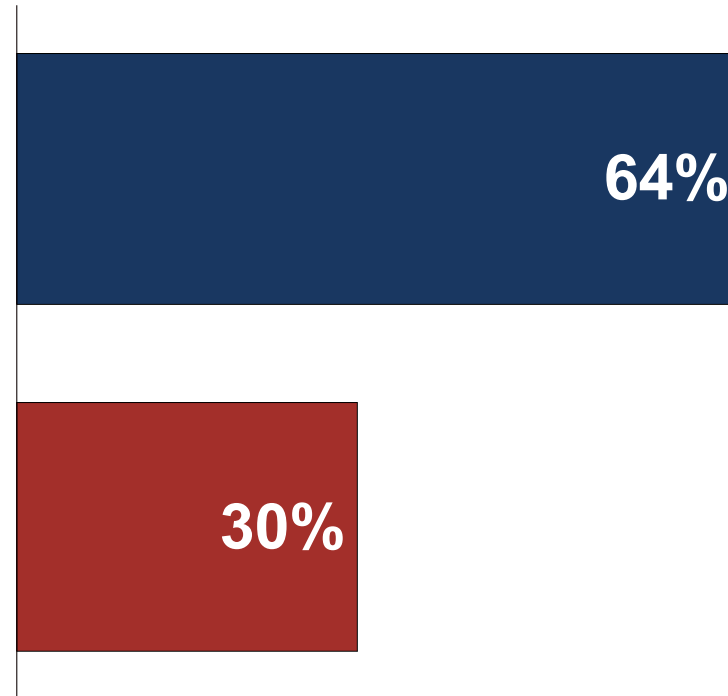
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# Comprehensive Vs. Enforcement

**Comprehensive:** Congress should pass comprehensive reform that includes tighter border security, employer enforcement, and requires people who are now in the country illegally to apply for citizenship.

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**No Amnesty:** Congress should not pass amnesty of any kind. Instead, they should act to secure the border and enforce the laws currently on the books.



*The Congress may address immigration reform in the next session of Congress. Here are two statements about what Congress could do to address immigration. Please tell me which you agree with more:*



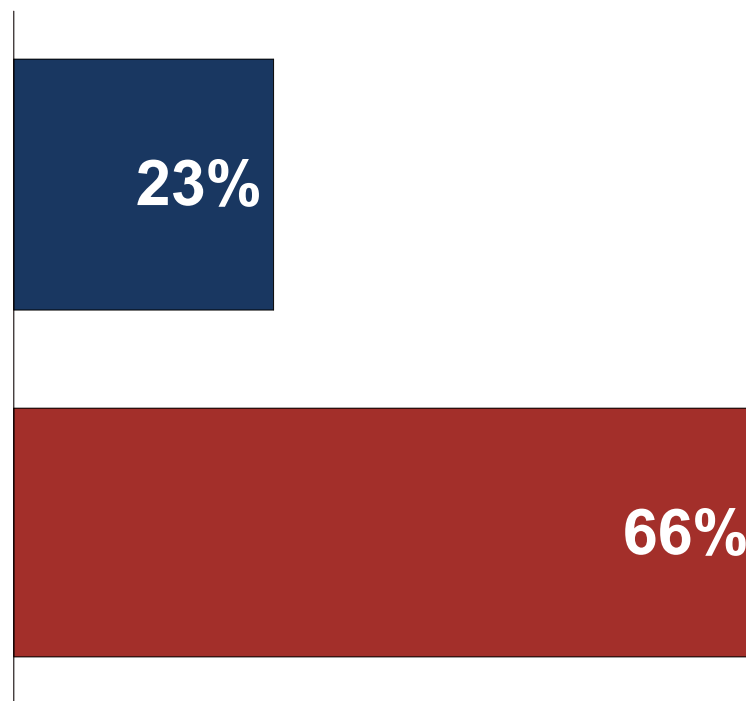
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# Economic Impact - Two Thirds Want Them to Become Taxpayers and Pay Their Fair Share

We would be better off if people who are in the United States illegally left the country because they are taking away jobs that Americans need.

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We would be better off if people who are in the United States illegally became legal taxpayers so they pay their fair share.



*Which is closer to how you think about the issue of immigration and this economy?*