

re^osonate

First 2026 Election Cycle Outlook

The Issues Issue





The importance of the 2026 midterm elections cannot be overstated.

Will Donald Trump's second presidency come to a grinding halt after November if Democrats win control of Congress? Or will the Republican political machine continue its seemingly unstoppable race forward with Trump at the helm?

The stage is set for a fierce fight, at least for some candidates. At the end of 2025, the Democrats secured victories in the VA and NJ gubernatorial races and the NYC mayoral election that taught their opponents and more traditional Democrats some lessons about what today's voters want. To ensure you're not running a fly-by-night campaign based on flimsy, changeable headlines, you'll need data that gets at the heart of Americans' behaviors, sentiments, and motivations.

What's in this guide for you?

In addition to providing you with insights on where voters stand on critical issues like affordability, healthcare, tariffs, immigration, and the economy, this edition of the Voter Trends Report offers something extra.

You'll take a deep dive into four groups of swing voters who had a significant impact on the 2024 and 2025 elections and who may have an outsized effect in 2026 as well. These audiences are the Young Voters (under 34), Trump Moderates, Hispanic Voters, and Registered Non-Voters. You'll discover what they care about, what they value, and where to find them online.

This dataset is created by **rAI**, Resonate's proprietary system of AI models. rAI processes four sources of data to understand the past, know what's happening now, and predict what consumers will do next with a high degree of precision. No other data or syndicated research provider can provide such fresh data that tells you about consumers' thoughts, motivations, and behaviors right now. This gives you a big advantage over the competition, who may be limited to the Voter File or to using months-old political data.

These insights provide you with the opportunity to shape your 2026 election campaigns using high-performance data that lets you target evolving voters, refine your messaging, and activate campaigns across the right channels for success.

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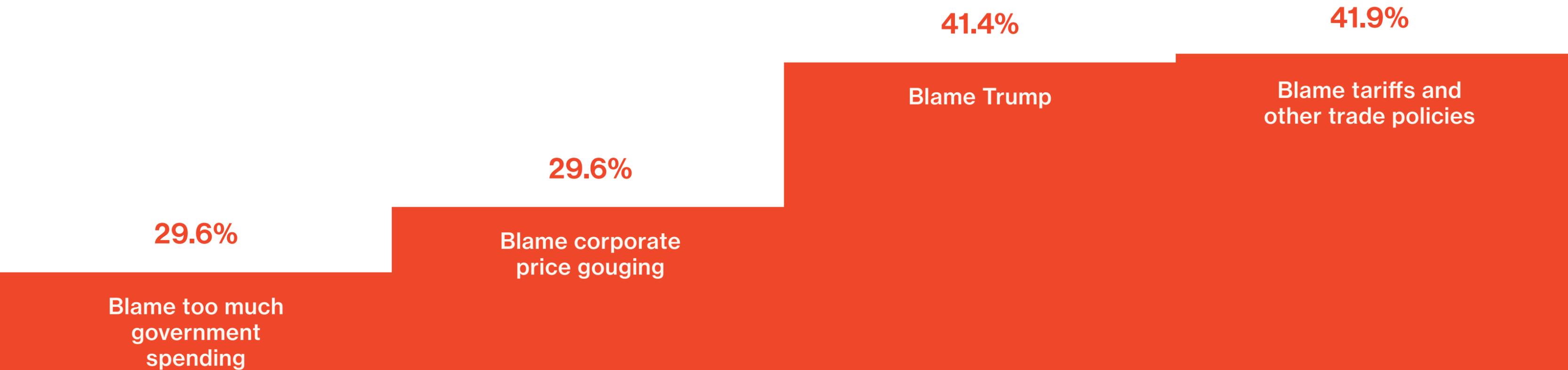
Overview

The State of the Nation



Voter attention is fixed on the federal government, and it isn't positive.

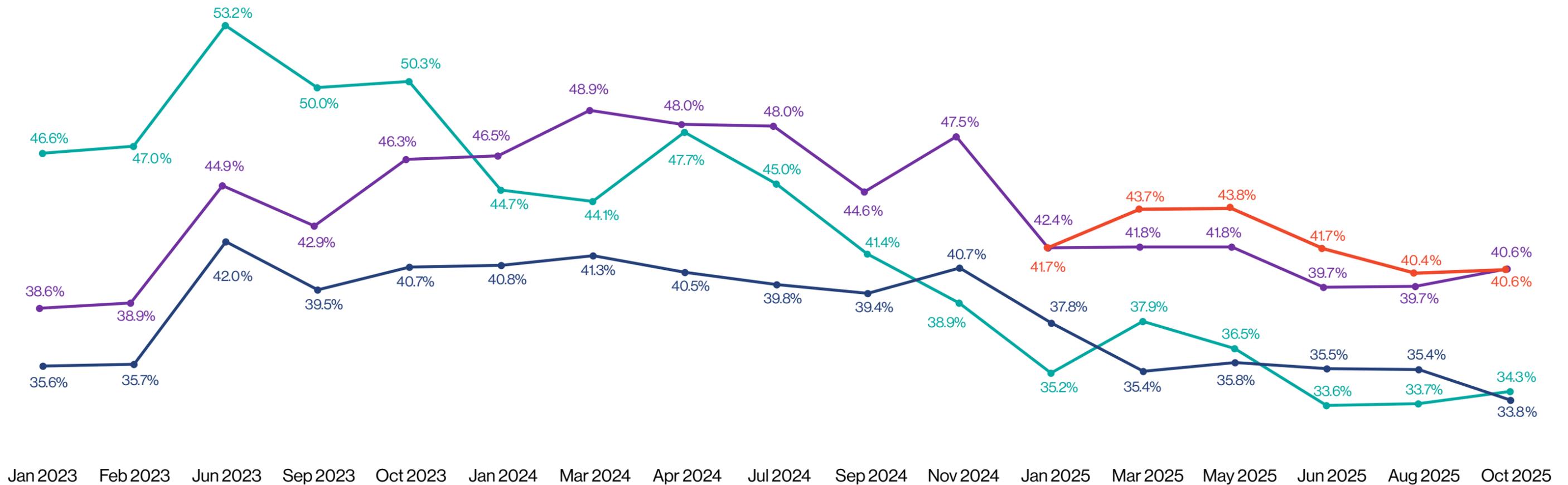
Three of the top four sources of voter blame for inflation currently involve the US government.



The recent election focused on affordability, but there are two other leading issues Americans are worried about.

Concerns about poor leadership in the US government and corruption in the federal government are both tied at the number one spot. Each is a worry for 40.6% of voters.

- Poor leadership in the US government ●
- Rising fuel/oil/energy prices ●
- Taxes increasing ●
- Corruption in the US government ●

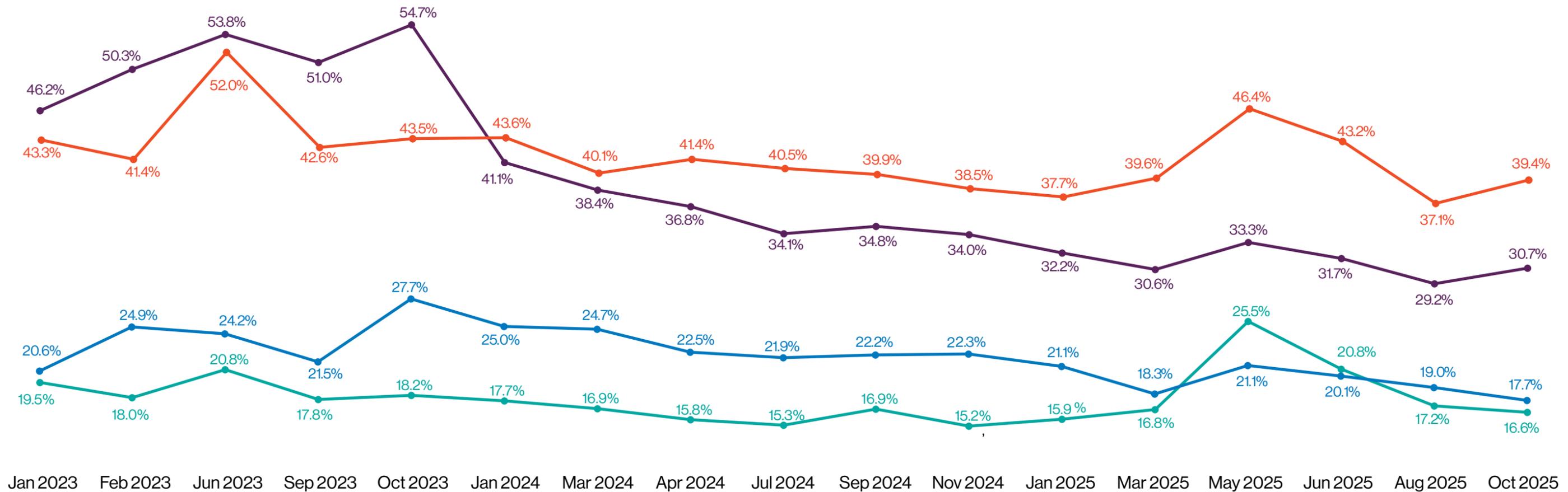


Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report

This doesn't mean the economy *isn't* a concern for voters.

As of October 2025, 39% of Americans were worried about an economic slowdown or recession, and nearly 31% were concerned about the affordability-related issue of wage increases not keeping up with the cost of living.

- Wage increase not keeping up with the cost of living ●
- Stock market crash ●
- Not being able to afford housing, or a housing market crash ●
- US economic slowdown or recession ●

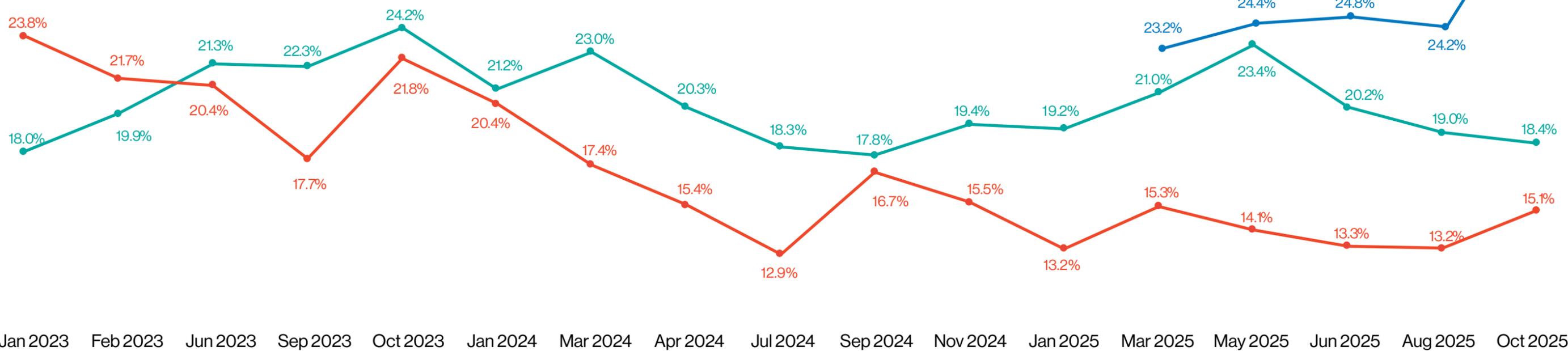
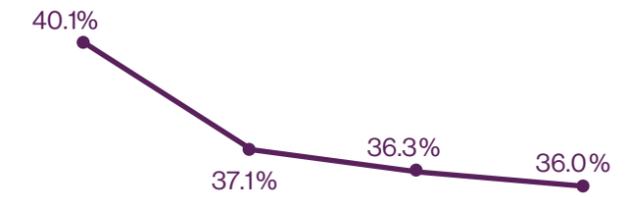


Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report

After a year punctuated by shocking political violence and an increase in the division that has been a hallmark of US politics over the last decade, it's not especially surprising that more voters are worried about violence caused by societal unrest.

Just 24% were concerned about this issue back in August 2025. As of October 2025, that number jumped to 32%, a massive 33% increase.

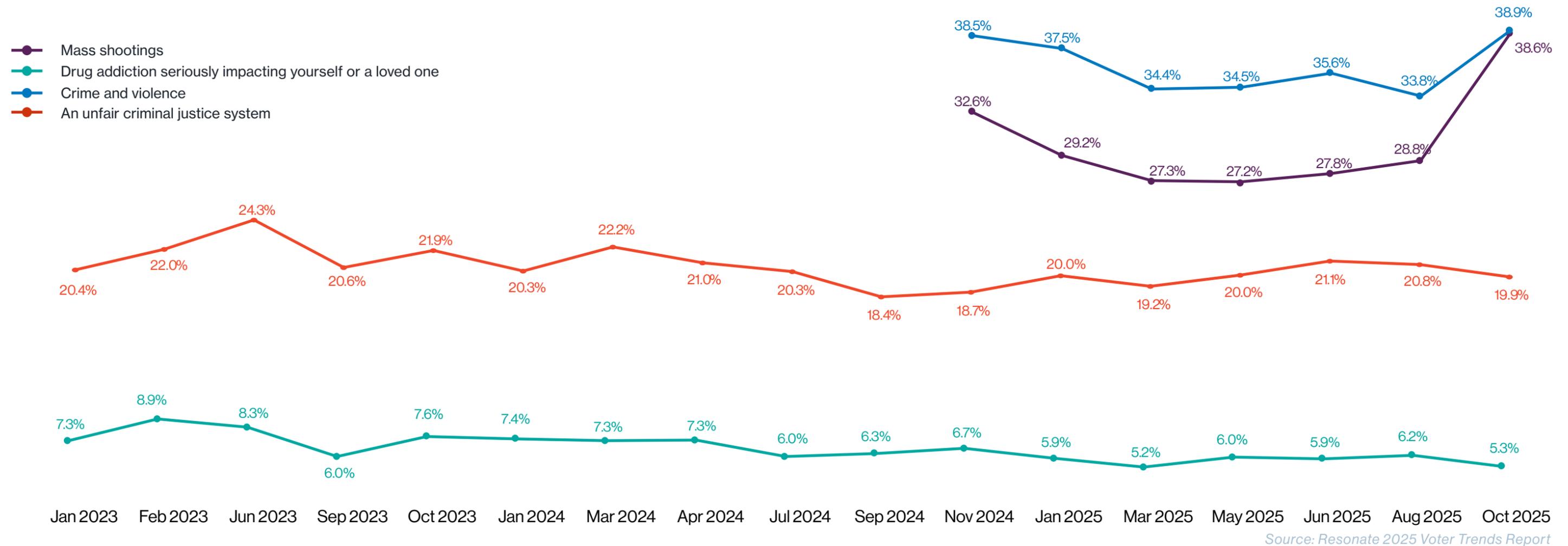
- The federal government cutting necessary services/funding
- Worsening education for grades K-12
- Violence caused by societal unrest
- COVID or other diseases



Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report

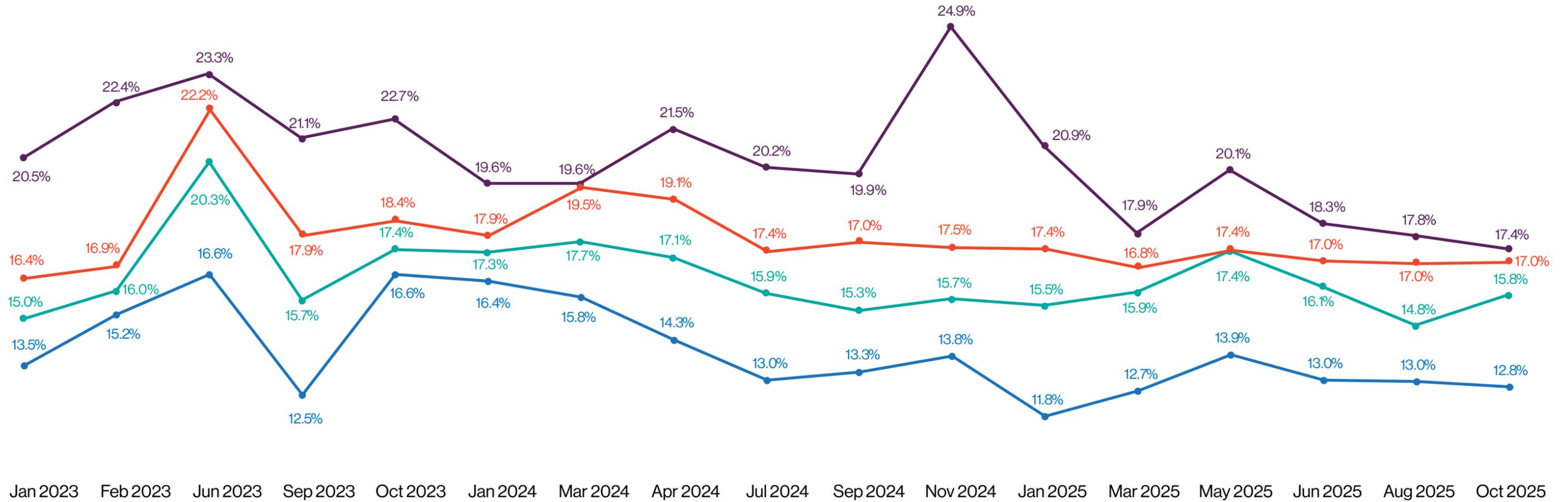
On a related note, voter concern about mass shootings also skyrocketed between August, when it was at 29%, and October, when it rose to 39%.

This nearly 35% increase demonstrates how heavily the events of 2025 are weighing on voters' minds. Similarly, general concern over crime and violence also increased from 34% to 39% in the same period.



Worries over job loss hovered just under 13% during the second half of 2025, further emphasizing Americans' concern over their ability to afford life in the United States.

- Loss of abortion rights ●
- Being discriminated against because of race, religion, age, health condition, sex, etc. ●
- Losing a job (either yourself or someone in your household) ●
- Loss of online privacy ●

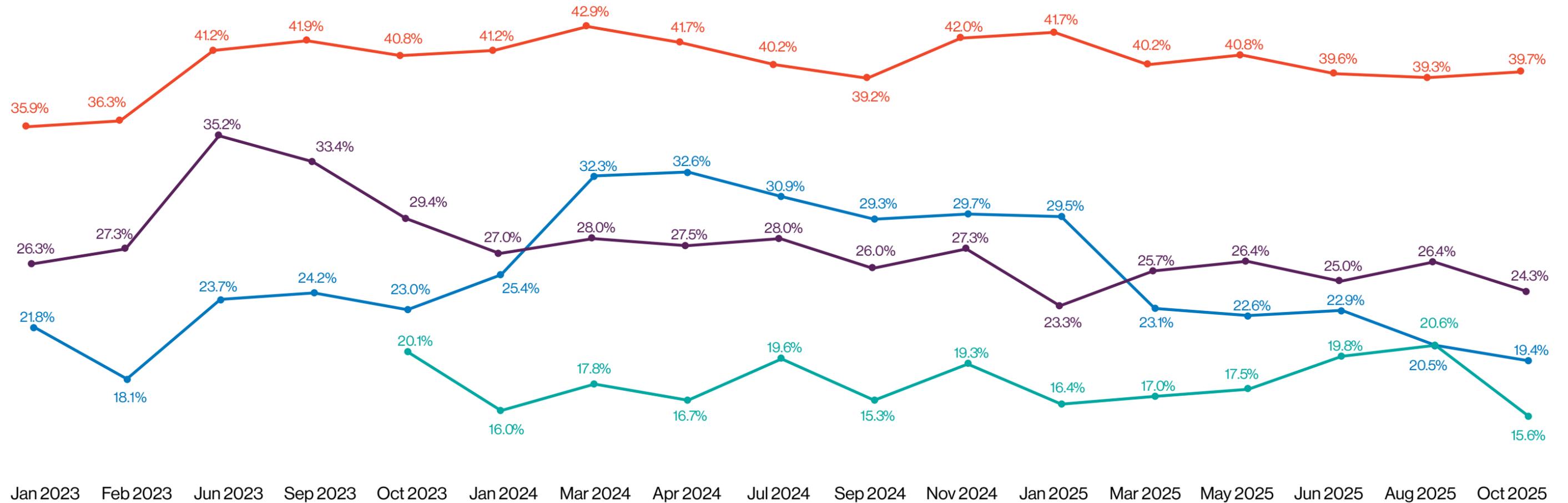


Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report

As Americans prepare for their health insurance premiums to rise in January, concern over healthcare costs and debt remains high.

39.7% of voters are worried about how they'll afford to be sick in the United States, a slight uptick from the end of the summer.

- Environment/climate change
- Being negatively impacted by extreme weather or natural disasters
- Illegal immigration
- Healthcare costs or debt

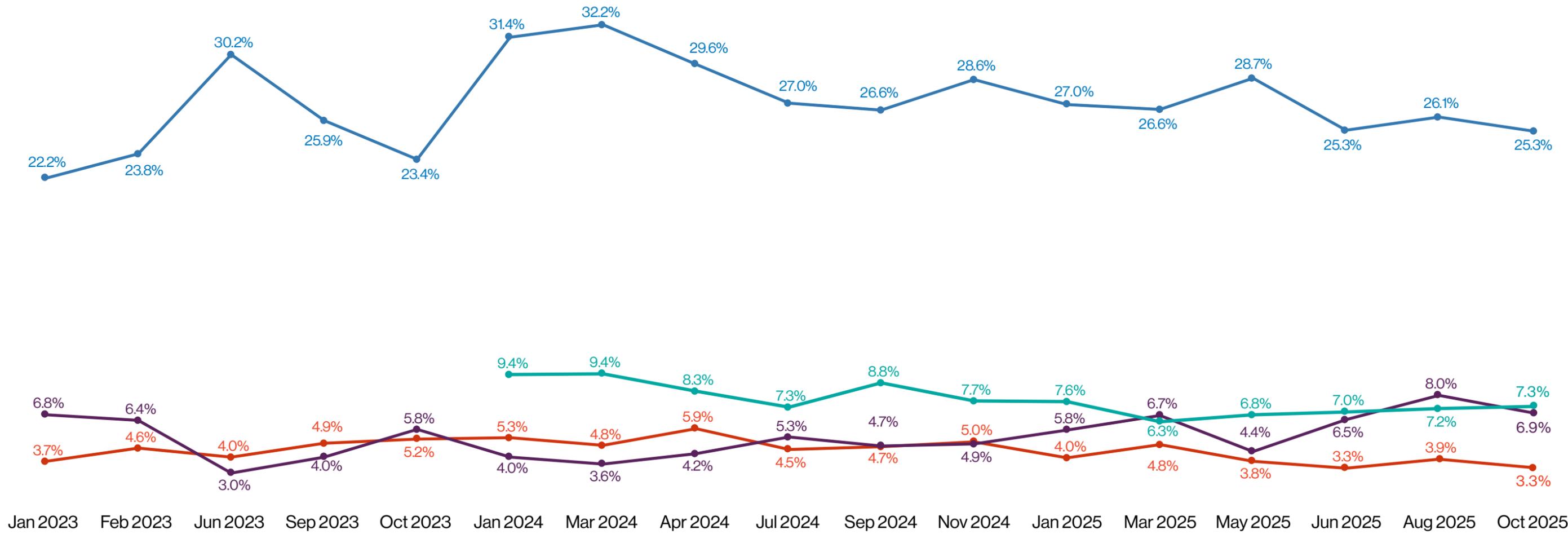


Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report

It's accurate to say that, overall, voters are worried as we head into the midterm election cycle.

Just 6.9% can say they don't have any concerns for the next six months, a decrease of nearly 14% since August.

- Do not have any worries about the next 6 months
- Being evicted from your home in the future
- Geopolitical concerns (e.g., terrorism, US involvement in wars, nuclear threats, etc.)
- Something else

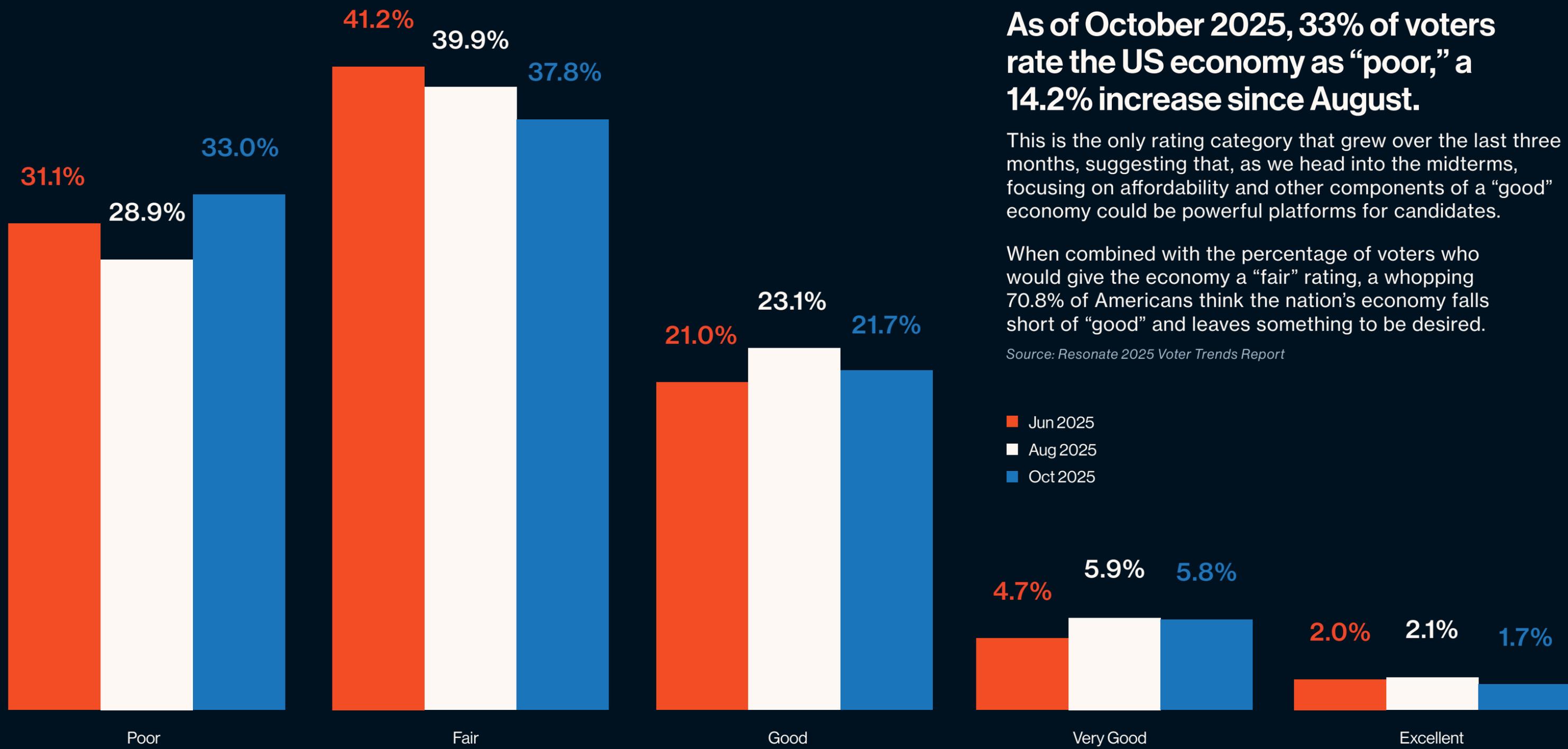


Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report

The Issues

Affordability and the Economy





As of October 2025, 33% of voters rate the US economy as “poor,” a 14.2% increase since August.

This is the only rating category that grew over the last three months, suggesting that, as we head into the midterms, focusing on affordability and other components of a “good” economy could be powerful platforms for candidates.

When combined with the percentage of voters who would give the economy a “fair” rating, a whopping 70.8% of Americans think the nation’s economy falls short of “good” and leaves something to be desired.

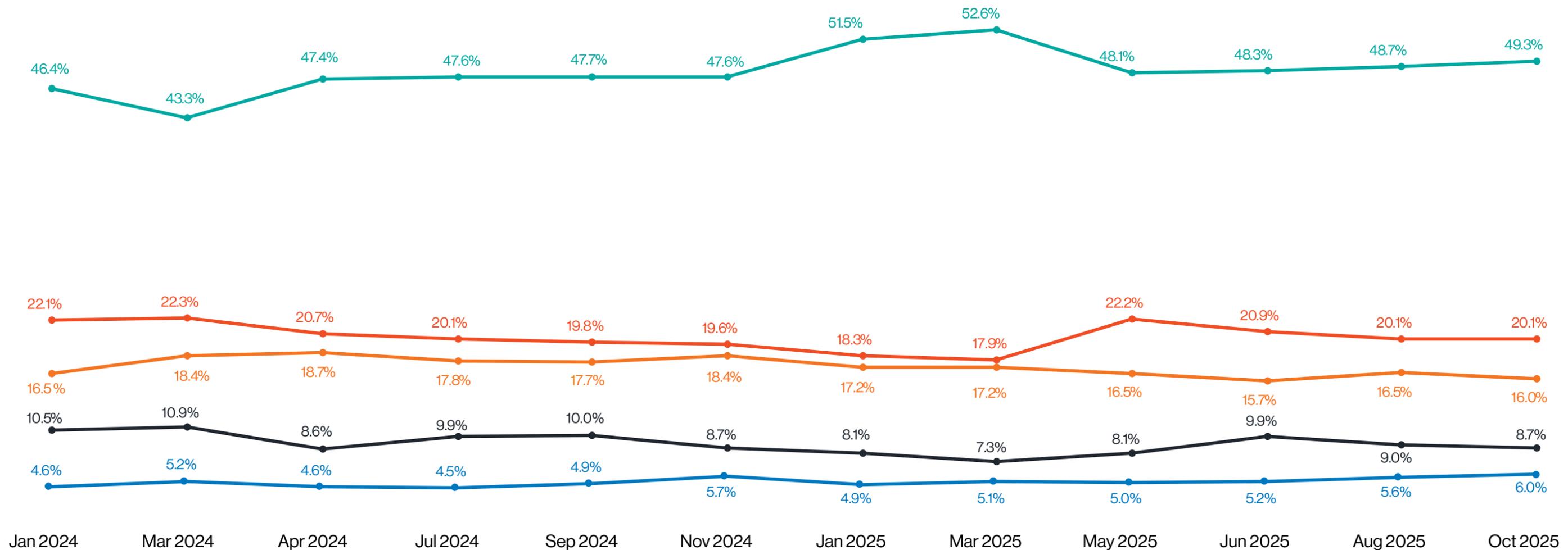
Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report

- Jun 2025
- Aug 2025
- Oct 2025

Americans are showing signs of being financially stuck.

Nearly 50% of voters now feel like their personal finances won't change in the next six months, a 1% increase between August and October. A combined 28.8% expect to be somewhat or significantly worse off, a less than 1% decrease in the same period. And approximately 22% of voters expect to be somewhat or significantly better off, a 5% decrease.

- Significantly better off ●
- Somewhat better off ●
- About the same ●
- Somewhat worse off ●
- Significantly worse off ●



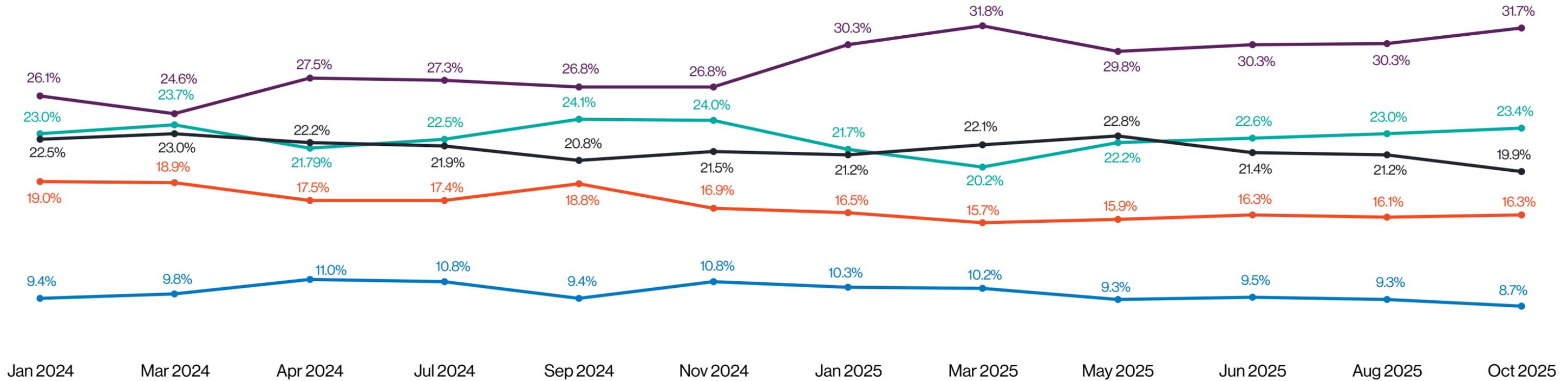
Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report

Most US adults are in debt.

Resonate data shows that “most adults” represents 68.4%, over two-thirds of the population. And this number isn’t new, either: When we first began collecting data on Americans’ debt situation in late 2023, nearly 74% of adults were in debt. Exorbitant student loans and healthcare costs, rising homeownership costs, the increase in the prices of new vehicles, and other factors have all contributed to a nation in which it is more common than not to be saddled with debt.

Here as well, the picture isn’t rosy: Of the 68.4% in debt, only 23.4% describe their money management situation as optimal.

- No debt: I don't have any debt ●
- Optimal: I have a clear strategy and am consistently reducing my debt ●
- Comfortable: I am generally in control, though may face occasional uncertainties ●
- Managing: I can meet my minimum payment requirements but don't have a plan to get entirely out of debt ●
- Struggling: I often struggle to meet my debt obligations ●



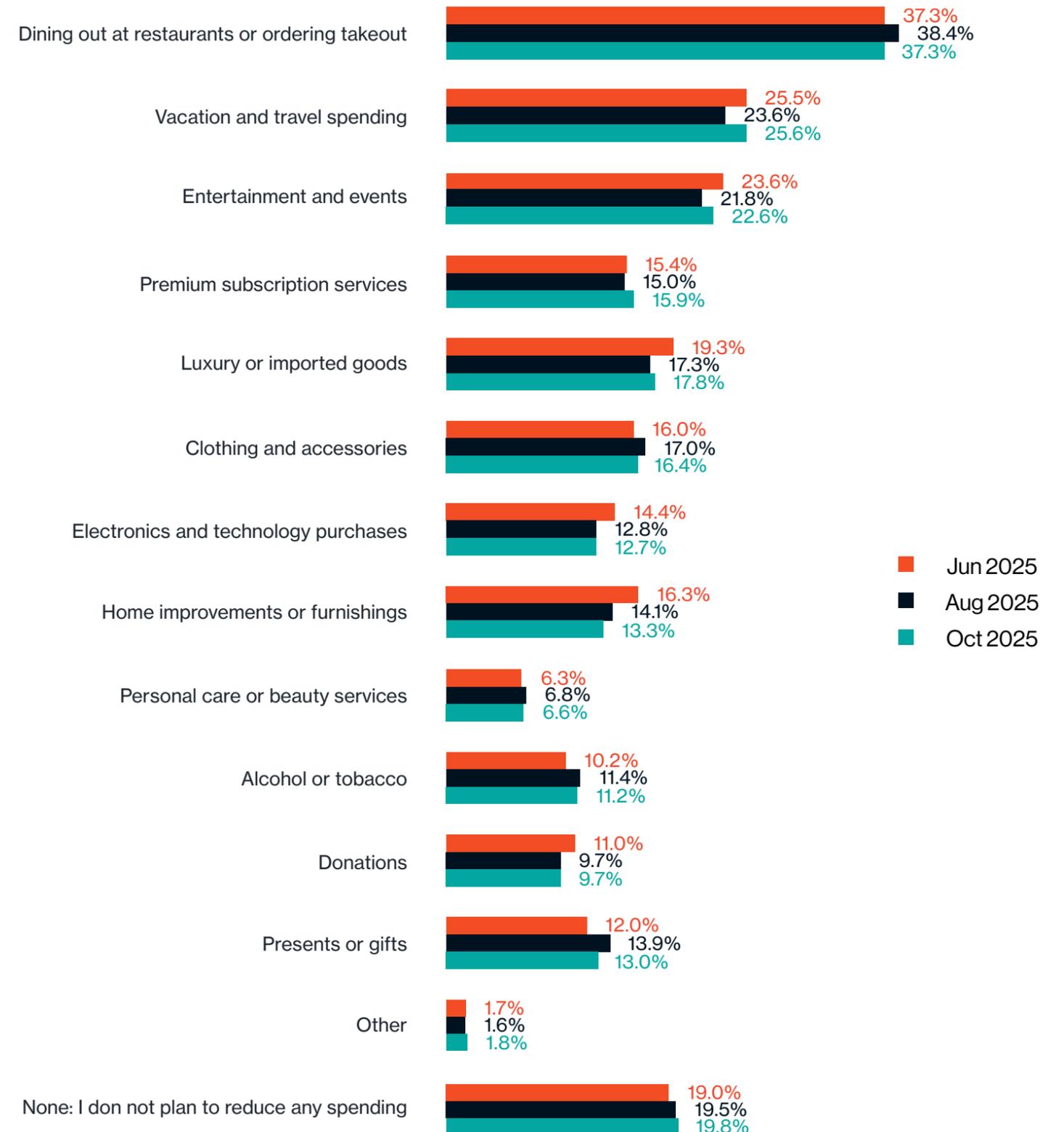
Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report

Voters are actively cutting down on their nonessential expenses to manage inflation, increased prices, and a high cost of living.

The first things to go have fallen squarely into the category of enjoyable activities people do to relax, including eating out at restaurants, taking vacations, and events like concerts and movies. In fact, only 19.8% of Americans say they haven't reduced or eliminated any nonessential expenses.

And there haven't been any major changes in any of the categories since Resonate began reporting the data in May 2025, demonstrating what could be the start of a longer-term trend of a debt-laden populace that cannot afford to have fun.

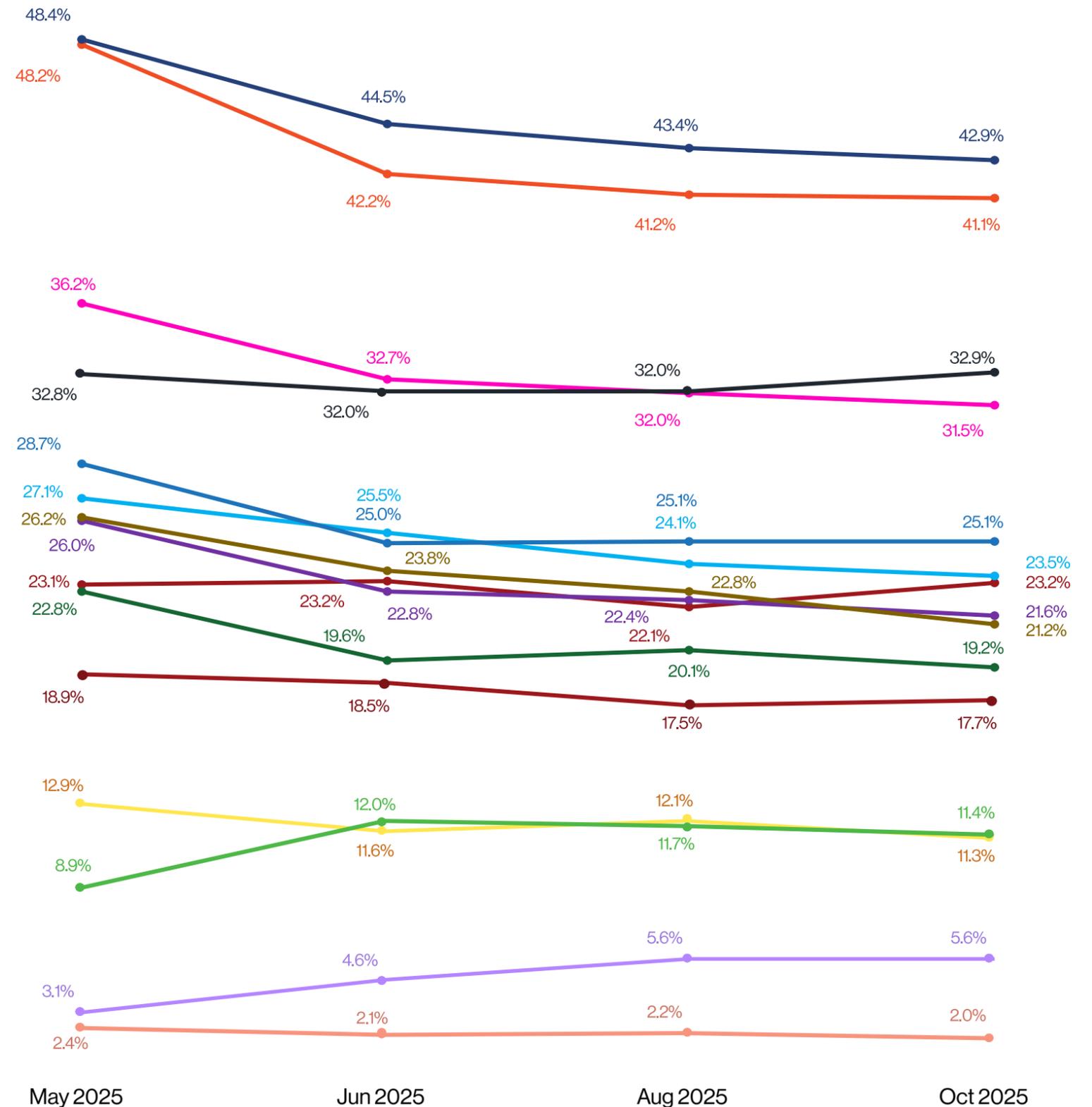
Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report



When it comes to their regular purchases and increased prices, voters have been in something of a holding pattern since May 2025.

As of October, for instance, 23.2% are buying items in bulk, and 41.1% are purchasing cheaper store or alternative brands. These are just two examples of money-saving behaviors that have stayed about the same for more than 6 months.

- Buying in bulk
- Delaying one or more large purchases
- Going into debt
- Buying cheaper/store or alternative brands
- Going out less
- Using coupons more
- Buying same products from different stores or online
- Rationing, using less products
- Other
- Cutting out some but not all nonessential purchases
- Buying fewer 'luxury' items
- Have made no changes to accommodate higher prices
- Cutting out all nonessential purchases
- Dipping into savings
- Have not experienced higher prices

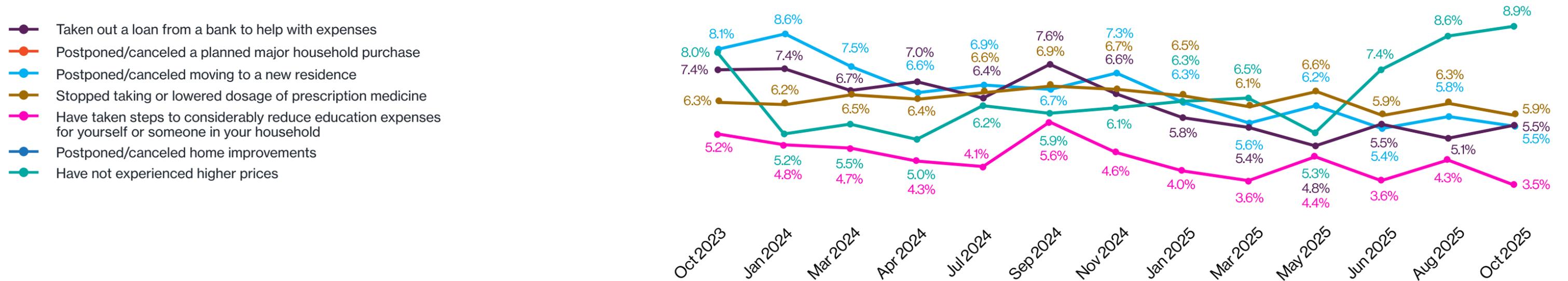
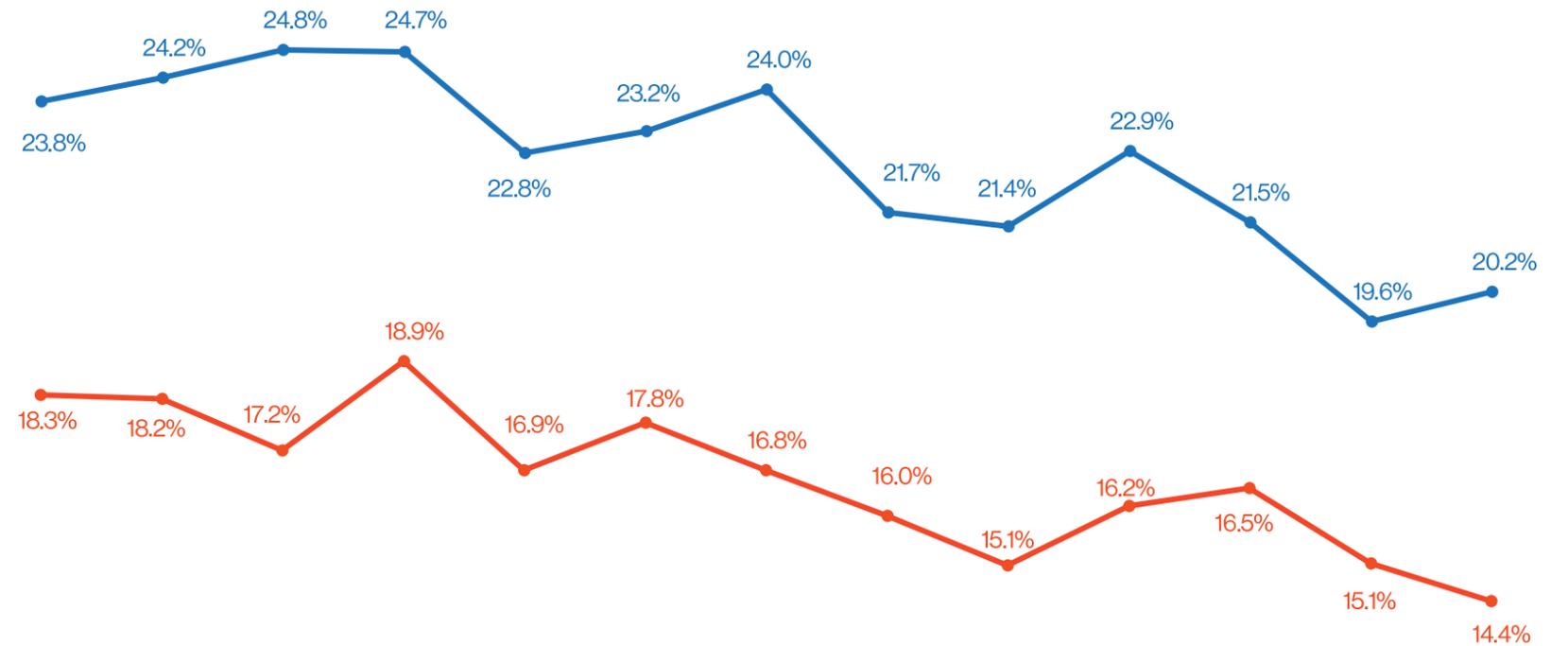


Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report

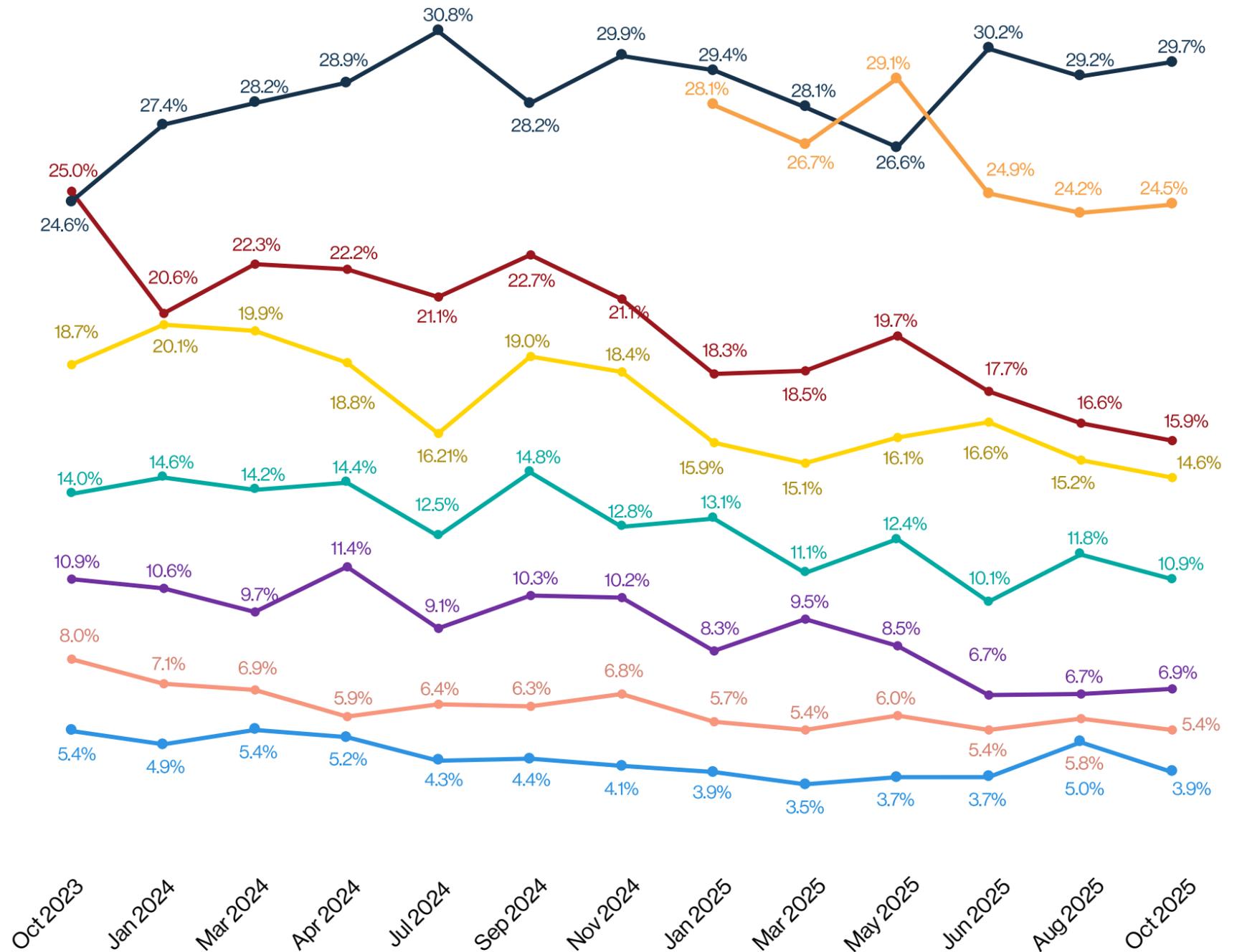
When it comes to bigger actions, like buying a new house or car or booking a vacation, nearly 30% of voters have made no changes, despite the rise in costs.

This lack of change in behavior could help to explain why over two-thirds of Americans remain in debt. Indeed, 5.5% have taken out bank loans in the last six months to help with increased prices.

It's possible to see the potential impact of tariffs and trade policies here, in data about what voters are changing in their daily lives. As of October 2025, 20.2% had postponed or canceled home improvements, many of which involve items like cabinets, vanities, and upholstered furniture, all of which are subject to 25% levies if they're imported.



Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report



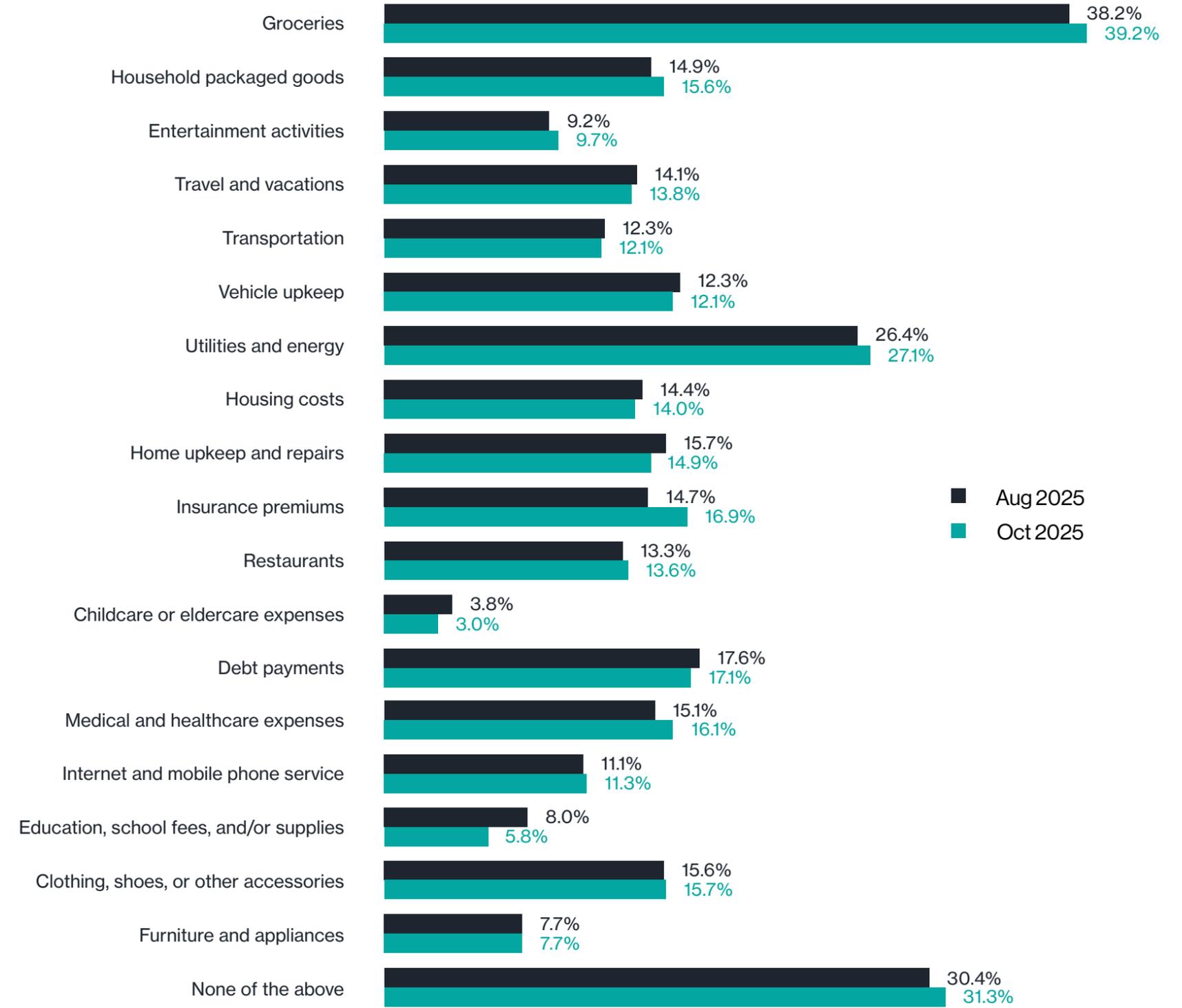
Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report

Out of everything that's experienced a price increase, groceries remain one of the most talked about among voters and politicians alike.

New York City Mayor-Elect Zohran Mamdani made headlines with his plan to open city-run grocery stores to lower costs, and in recent interviews, President Trump has touted his administration's impact on food prices.

Despite the promises of these and other politicians, however, over 39% of voters plan to increase their household spending on groceries in the next six months, a 2.6% increase since August.

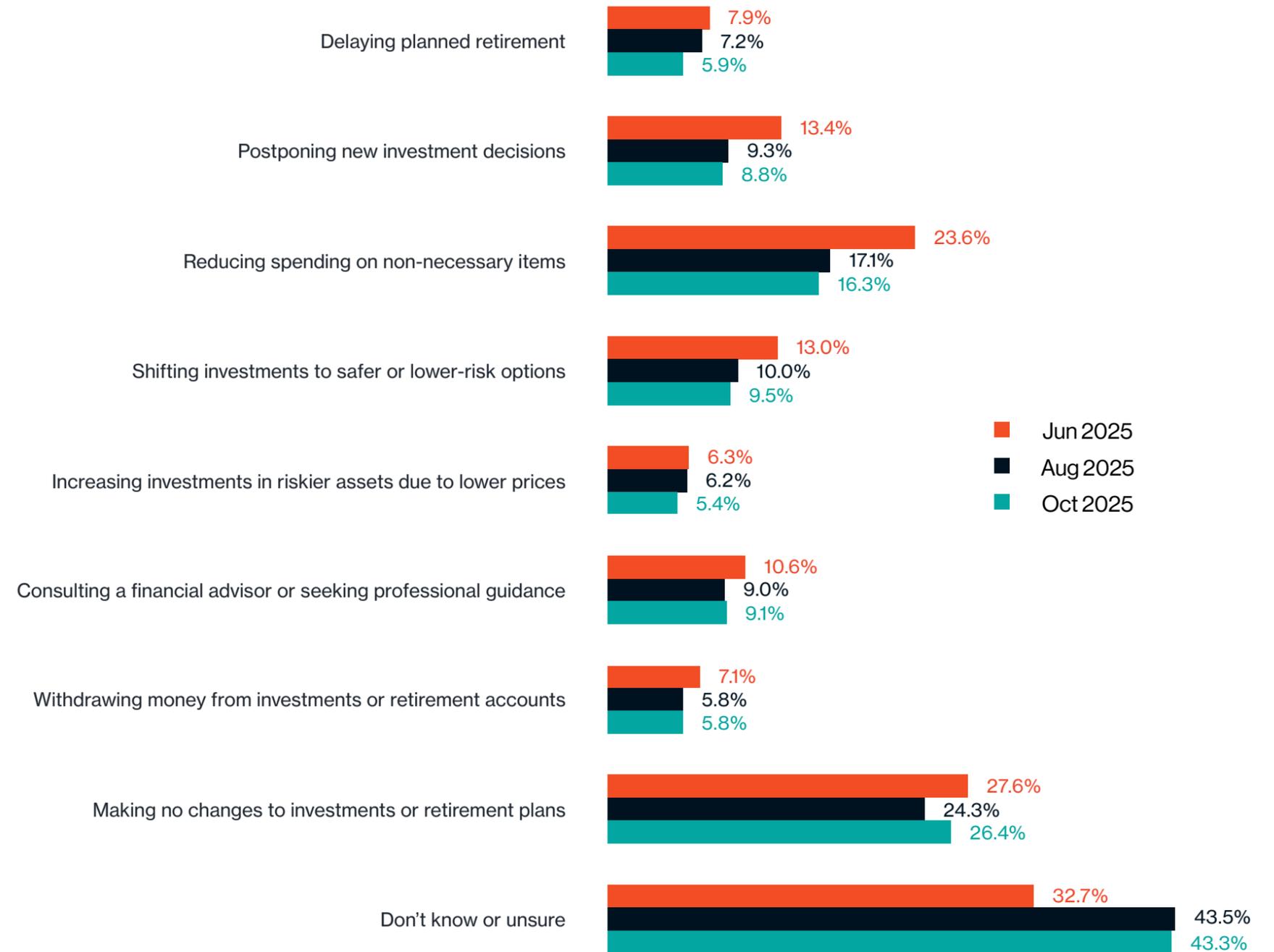
Another area where voters expect to see higher costs? Their utilities. 27.1% anticipate increasing the money they spend on utilities and energy bills in the next six months as well, a 2.7% increase since August. Both of these increases are small but significant, and could indicate a lack of trust in government promises to lower basic costs.



Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report

One effect of the tariffs has been large-scale uncertainty.

Initially, many voters worried about runaway costs and even a potential stock market crash. And indeed, back on April 2, when President Trump first introduced his new tariffs and trade policies, the stock market careened downward, resulting in global panic. It rebounded, but over the course of the year, volatility spikes continued, and by November, investors were showing signs of fatigue.



Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report



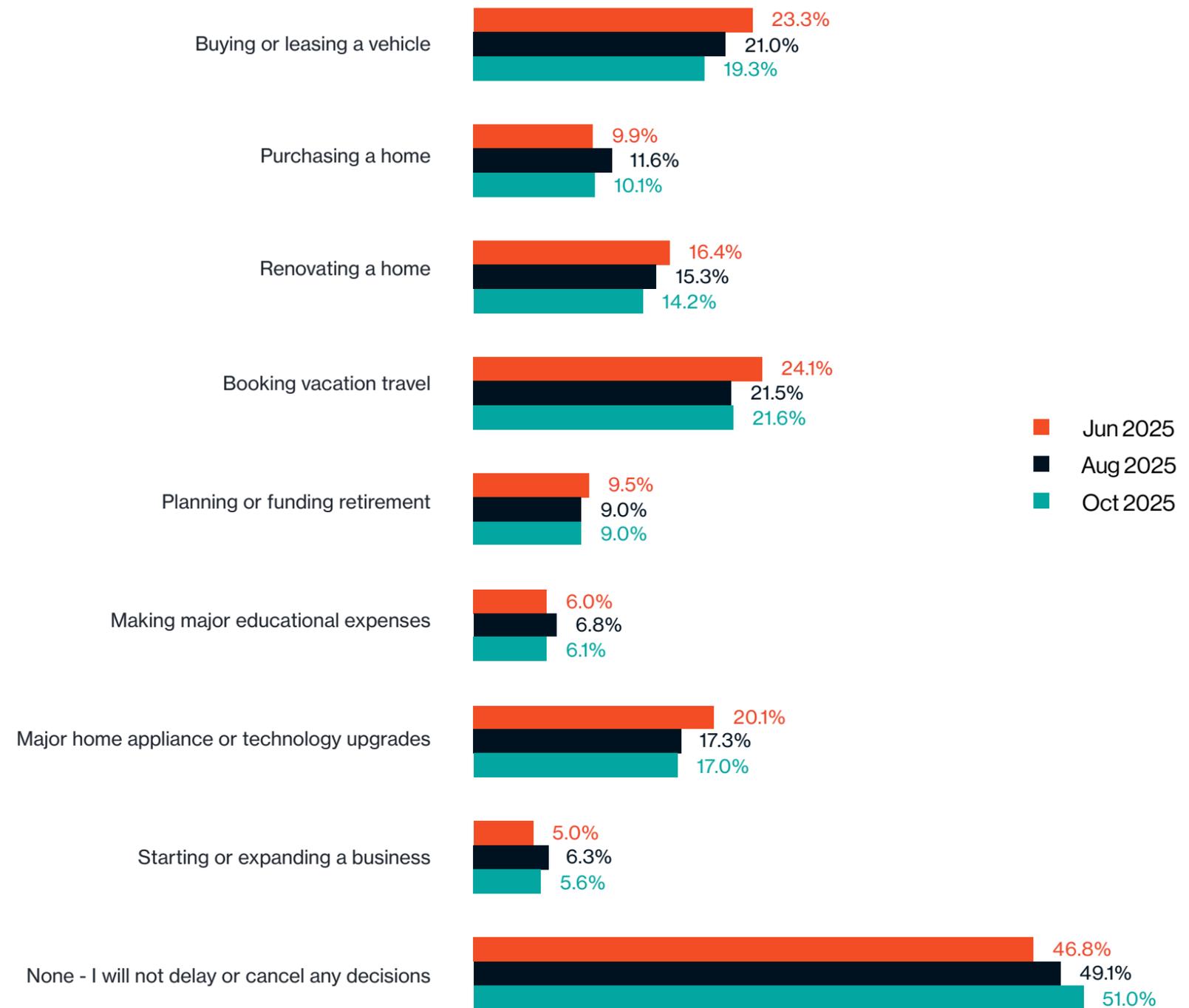
As of late November 2025, 32% of voters continue to be concerned about a stock market decline or crash as a result of tariffs, and 41% were unsure what effect the stock market volatility would have on their investments.

As you can see in the figure to the left, for each month Resonate collected data on this subject, voter uncertainty outweighed all other behaviors and sentiments.

Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report

When it comes to the effect economic volatility has on their large purchases, voters are split nearly down the middle.

51% are determined to continue living their lives regardless of what's going on with the US economy. The other slightly less than half, however, have made some tough choices. 21.6% anticipate postponing or canceling vacation plans, while 19.3% will delay or cancel a vehicle purchase. Some people are even altering their moving plans: 10.1% will opt out of purchasing a home due to economic volatility.



Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report

The Issues

Healthcare



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The fall federal shutdown largely centered around one thing: healthcare. Specifically, it focused on the ACA subsidies, which lowered costs for Americans and expire this year.

While the government reopened without a resolution on this issue, it's an extremely important one for Americans and political campaigners who want to win their midterm elections. Healthcare has proven to be a strong motivator behind voters' behaviors at the polls in the past: Back in 2018, Republicans lost control of the House after striving to repeal the Affordable Care Act the year before.

While President Trump has hinted that he has a plan in mind to lower costs for Americans, nothing has been revealed yet.

In the meantime, Resonate data shows that as of October 2025, 16.9% of voters planned to increase their household spending on insurance premiums, including health insurance, in the next six months. This is a 15% increase since August and demonstrates an interesting before-and-after picture of the effects of this year's federal shutdown.

39%
trust the Democratic party to
handle healthcare policy

28%
trust Donald Trump and
the Republican Party

Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report

The Issues

Immigration



44%

trust Donald Trump and
the Republican Party to
handle immigration policy

Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report

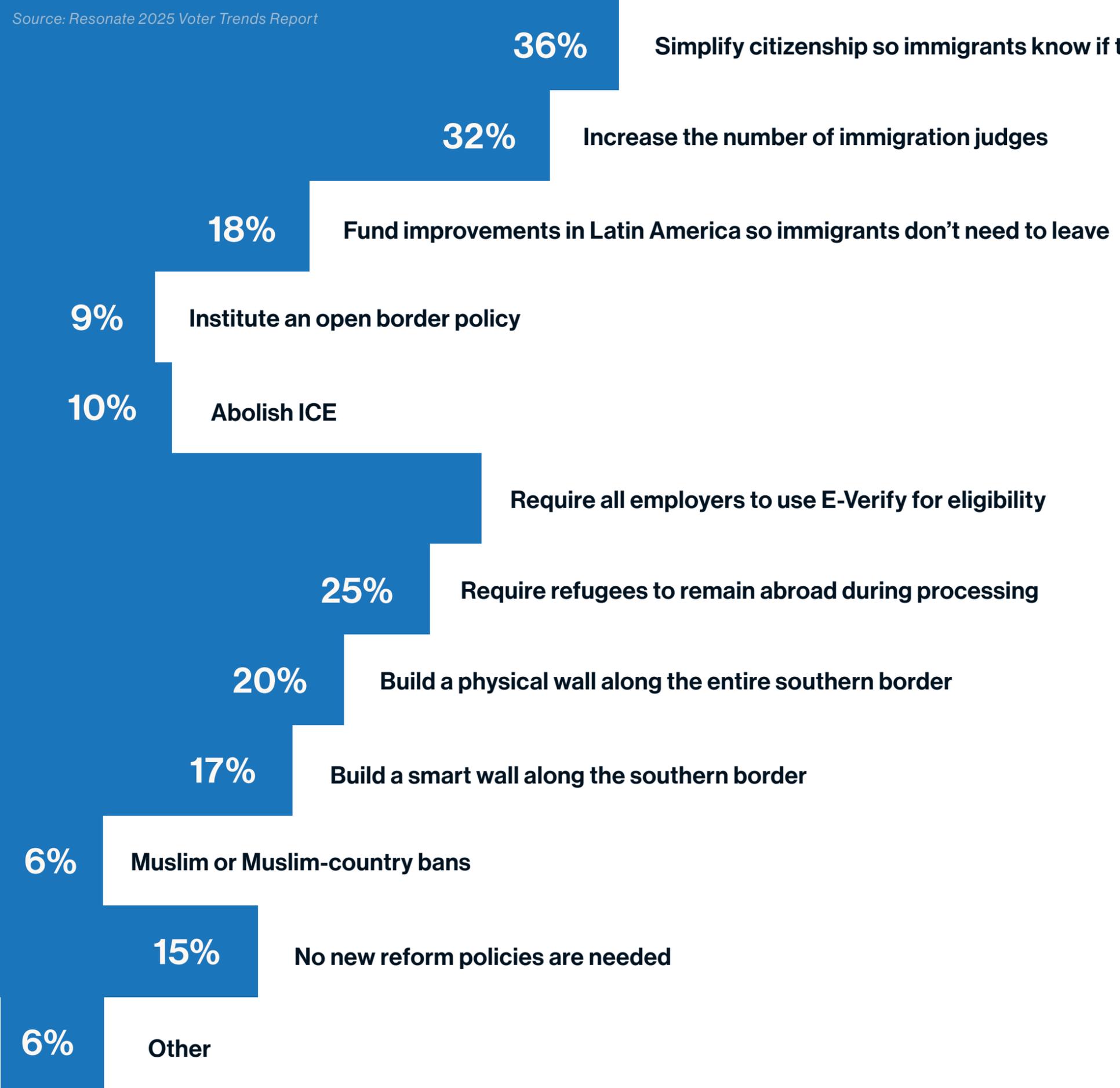
Despite controversy over the way in which the Department of Homeland Security has carried out its mission,

44% of Americans still trust Donald Trump and the Republican Party to handle immigration policy, compared to 27% who place their faith in the Democrats.

Immigration was one area that remained strong for Trump during his 2024 presidential campaign, and this data shows that he and the Republicans still hold the advantage over Democrats on this issue.

27%

trust the Democratic
Party to handle handle
immigration policy

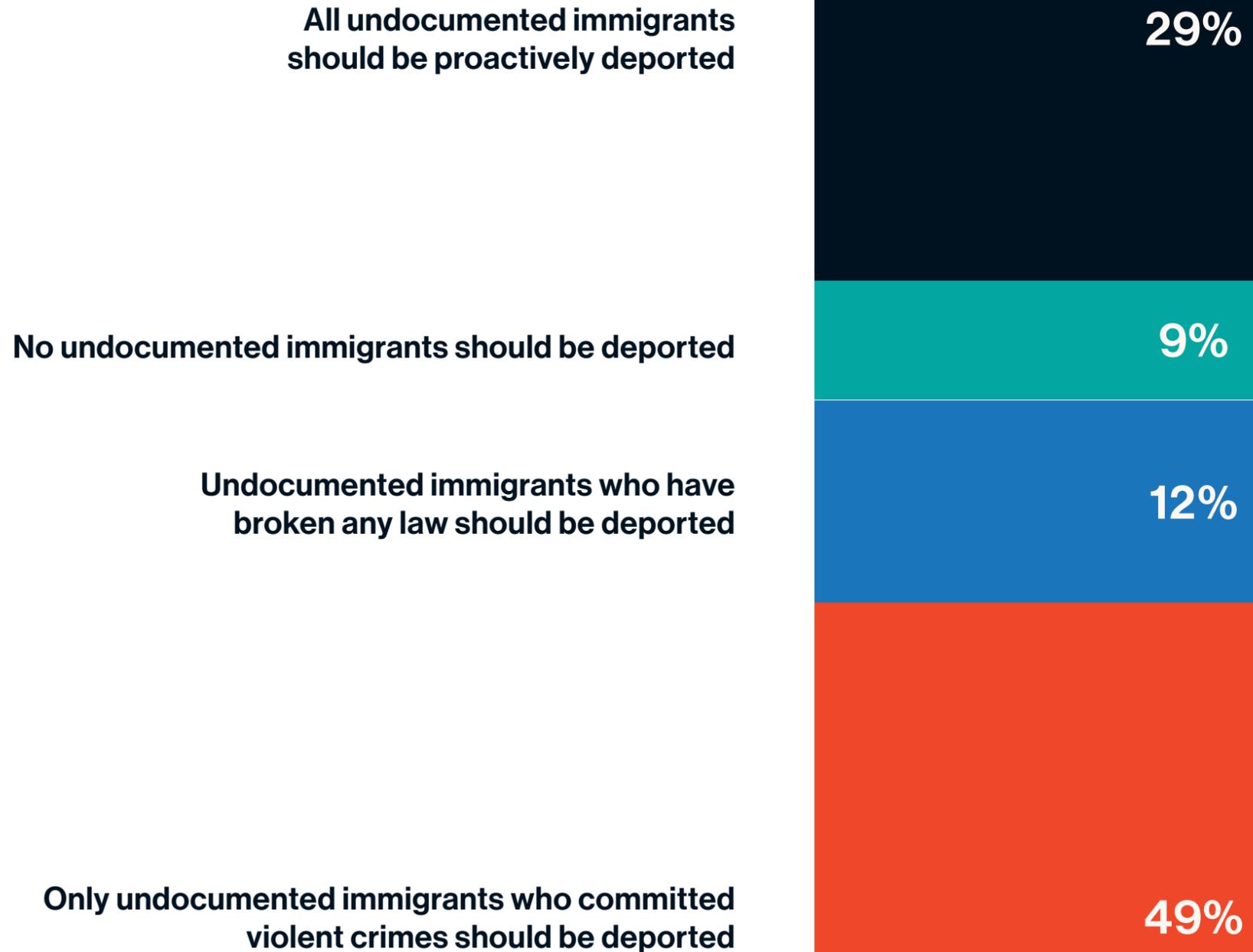


28%

According to Resonate data, when it comes to what immigration reform measures they think the nation should take, most voters don't agree with the direction the DHS has gone.

In fact, 36% of voters think the government should simplify citizenship so immigrants know if they're eligible.

Overall, here's where voters currently stand on how they think undocumented persons should be addressed:



The Issues

Gun Violence

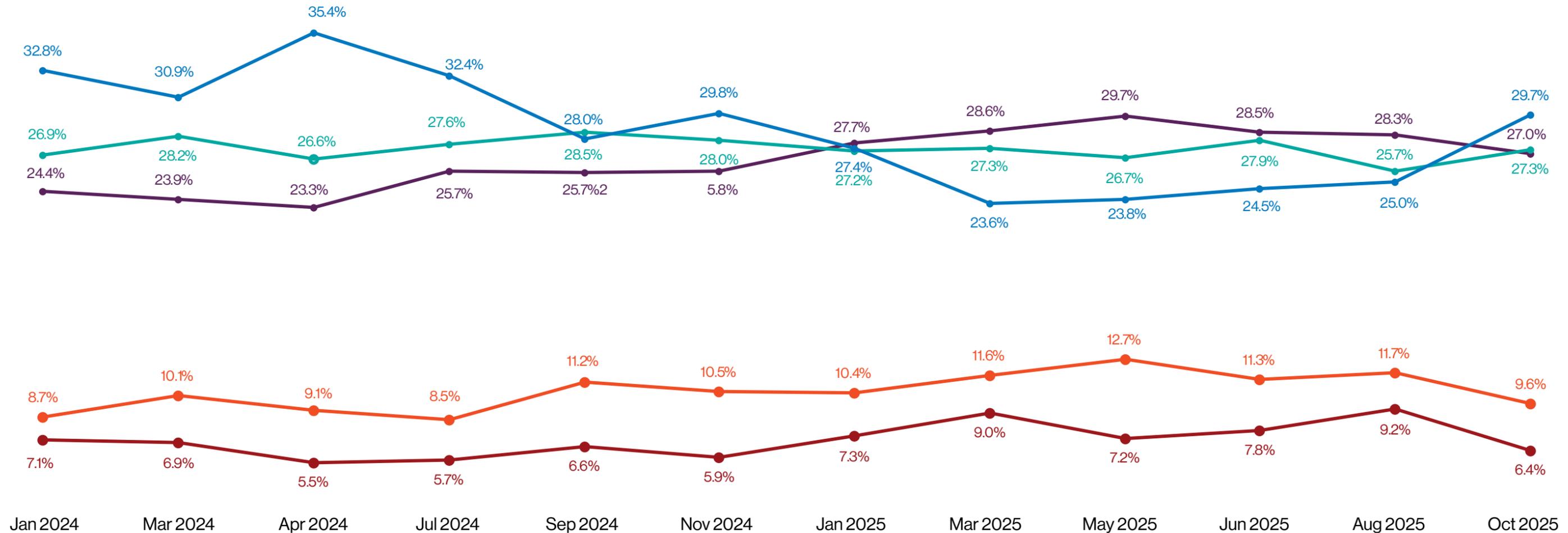


29.7% of voters are extremely concerned about gun violence right now.

In fact, Resonate data paints a picture of a nation that could accurately be described as on “high alert” after a year in which a number of shocking, unpredictable, and frightening acts of violence occurred.

Less than a quarter of Americans (16%) are not at all or not that concerned about gun violence. That leaves a massive 84% who are worried to some degree about this issue. This data suggests that this topic could play a role in the midterms and that figures who are seen as having the ability to calm others and keep people safe might rise to the top of voter esteem.

- Not at all concerned
- Not that concerned
- Somewhat concerned
- Very concerned
- Extremely concerned



Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report

The Issues

Tariffs



After another year of unpredictability, where do voters stand on tariffs?

Resonate data shows that tariffs are viewed in a negative light by half of Americans. Overall, the vast majority of voters don't want the tariffs to go any further. 62% either strongly or somewhat agree that they've gone too far, and 30% think the tariffs are right where they should be, with no changes necessary. Only 9% believe the president has not gone far enough.

Resonate also has insight into how voters believe the tariffs have impacted the economy.

Very good for economy

9%

Somewhat good

15%

Don't know yet

16%

Neither good nor bad

16%

Somewhat bad

15%

Very bad

35%

The Issues

Foreign Policy



31%

Trust the Democratic Party

30%

Trust Neither Party/Undecided

39%

Trust Donald Trump & the Republican Party

Early on in his second term, the president emphasized his “America First” approach to foreign policy

And enacted some policies that could represent a departure from the long-standing multilateralism that defined the US and world approach post-World War II. Throughout the year, President Trump has repeatedly expressed a desire to annex Greenland and Canada, engaged in trade wars with other nations, and, most recently, brokered a ceasefire deal between Israel and Palestine, with one for Russia and Ukraine currently in the works. The question is: What do voters think?

Heading into 2026, Donald Trump and the Republican Party have slightly more support from voters than the Democrats when it comes to foreign policy.

Resonate data also shows that 53% of voters think the US should enforce global order and liberty, while 47% think the nation should have limited involvement in foreign conflicts.

The Issues

Social Justice Causes

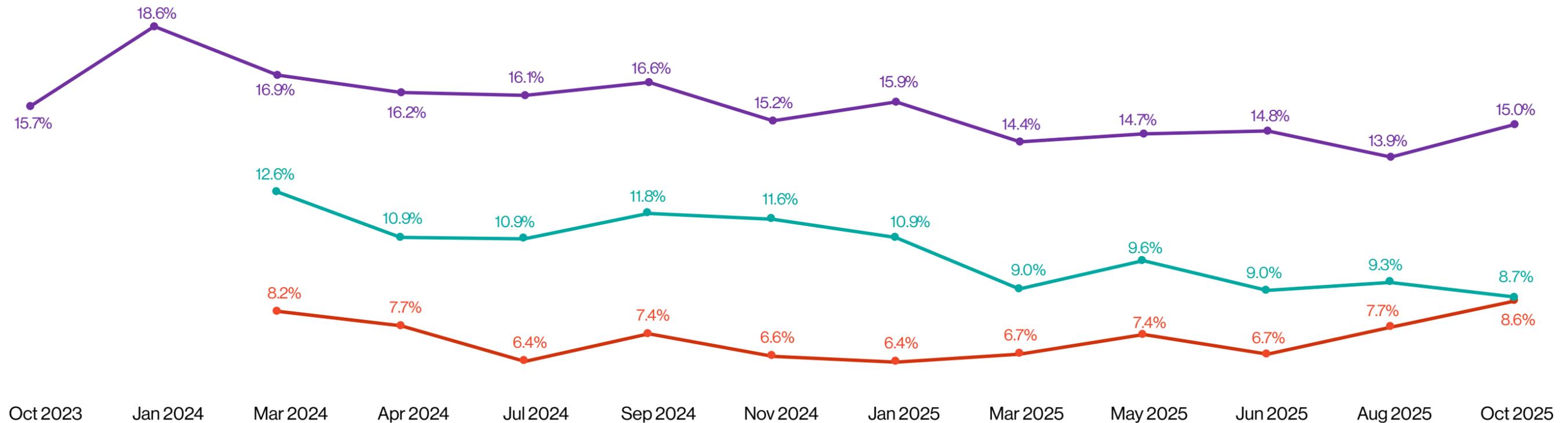


After decades of persistent lobbying, traditional Christian values have gained far more traction and visibility in US politics in recent years.

And this is one area some voters tend to feel strongly about: 15% indicated in October that they'd be more likely to take an action if a company advocated for these values, a nearly 9% increase since August.

Also of note is voter solidarity with Israel or Palestine: For the first time since Resonate began collecting this data, solidarity with either side in the Gaza conflict is on very nearly equal footing. 8.7% of voters would be more inclined to take an action if a company demonstrated solidarity with Israel, while 8.6% would do so if solidarity with Palestine was demonstrated.

- Solidarity with Palestine
- Solidarity with Israel
- Advocating for traditional Christian values

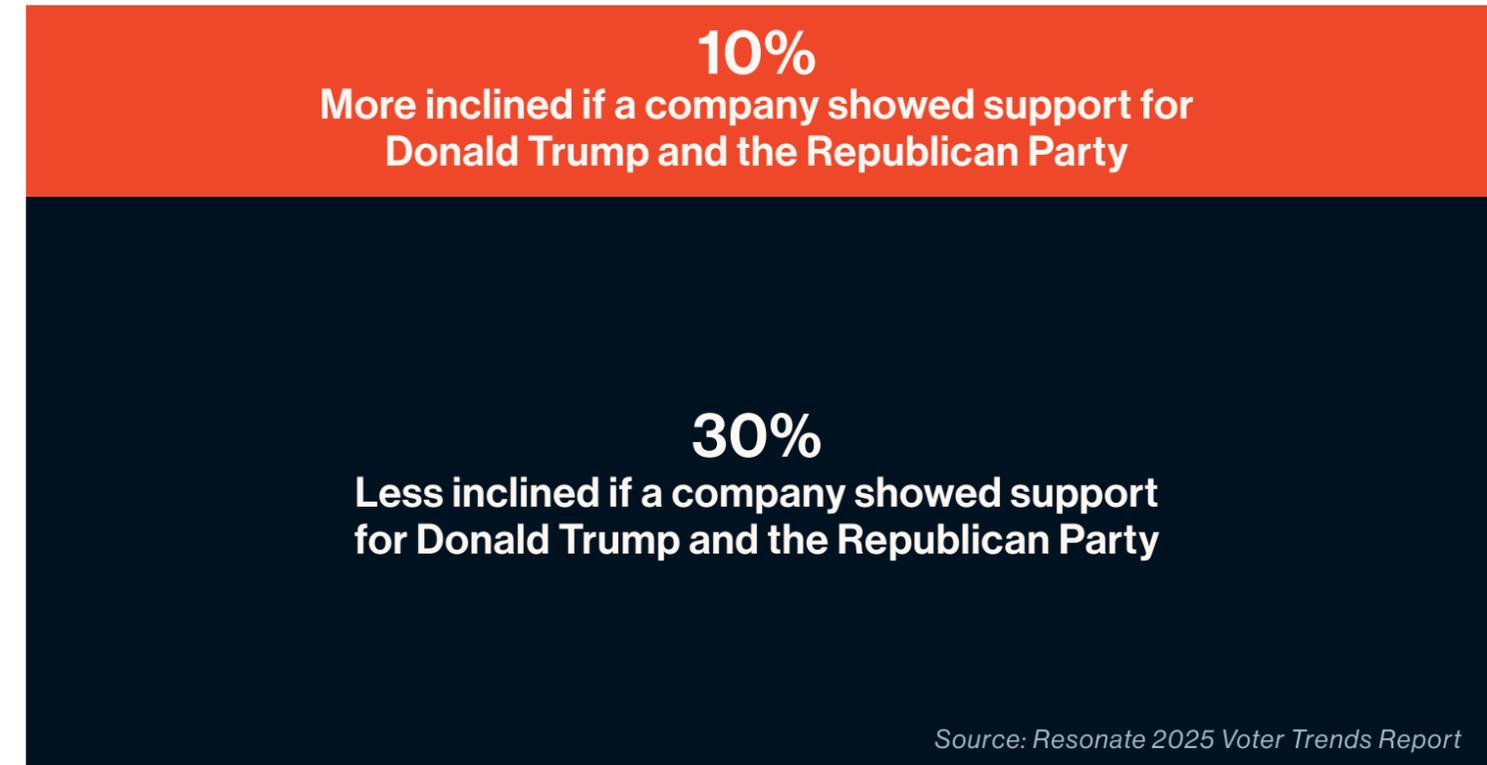


Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report

Demonstrating solidarity with Donald Trump and the Republican Party doesn't have much of an effect on making voters more inclined to do something. However, it does heavily impact whether they are *less* inclined to do something.

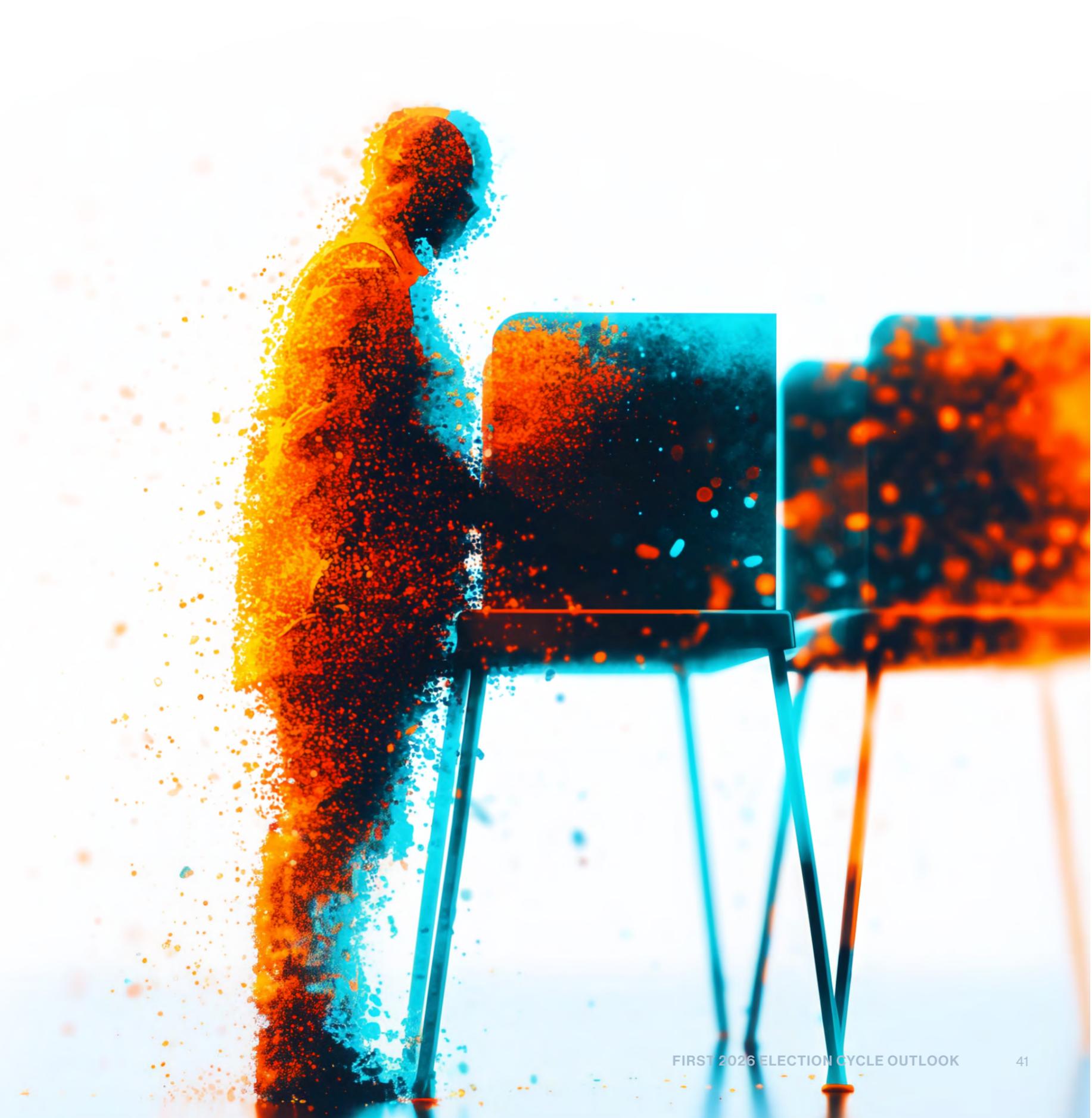
Just over 30% of voters would be less inclined to take an action if a company showed support for Donald Trump, the Republican Party, and/or a right-leaning cause or group, compared to just under 10% of voters who would be more inclined to act given the same situation.

Support for the Democratic Party or a left-leaning cause or group doesn't quite have the same effect. 15.3% of voters would be less likely to take an action if a company showed support, compared to the 13.6% of voters who would be more likely to take an action.



Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report

Swing Voters



- 43 Young Voters
- 45 Trump Moderates
- 47 Hispanic Voters
- 49 Registered Non-Voters

Where do these swing voters stand on **crucial issues?**

Let's analyze the personal values, media consumption habits, top issue areas and more

Driving the behaviors of four groups of swing voters whose support has been crucial in past elections and who stand to play important roles in 2026.

Young Voters

Resonate's Young Voters audience is made up of people who are registered to vote and are between the ages of 18 and 34.

They're often hard for political campaigners to motivate, but they recently showed up in force during the New York City mayoral race and helped to propel long-shot candidate Zohran Mamdani to victory. This suggests that they're not completely disengaged from politics, but that they're only willing to come out for the right candidate, and that their support is given to people who stand out from the status quo.

Voting Frequency in Non-Presidential Elections

- 13%** Vote less than half the time
- 22%** Vote half the time
- 24%** Don't vote
- 37%** Are frequent voters

Top Issue Areas

- Promoting gender and race equality**
- Human rights and war crimes**
- Supporting pro-choice issues**

Their Top 3 Personal Values

- Showing abilities and being admired**
- Acquiring wealth and influence**
- Living a life full of excitement, novelties, and challenges**

10%

Say increasing border security is a policy dealbreaker

12%

Believe the US would be much worse off if more Christian Americans were elected to public office

16%

Believe the US would be much better off if more LGBTQ+ Americans were elected to public office

24%

Say passing LGBTQ+ rights is a requirement for any candidate they vote for

Media Consumption Habits

23% Are online 40+ hours a week

24% Heavily engaged in streaming TV and Internet videos

17% Heavily engaged on social media

14% Heavily engaged in traditional TV

8% Heavily engaged with podcasts

Motivations for Political Action

35% Directly impacts self

30% Directly impacts friends/family

24% Feels a moral obligation to act

20% Feels urgent or like a crisis

20% Cares about what passing a particular law would say about our country

Trump Moderates

Resonate's audience is made up of people who are registered to vote, voted for Trump in the 2024 election, and who consider themselves moderate members of the Republican Party.

Although they support Trump, their views do not always closely align with those of the most hardline members of his base. This means they might take more notice of things like Trump's low job approval rating (historically a strong predictor of how the midterms will turn out) and could be persuaded to vote based on the issues rather than candidate loyalty.

Voting Frequency in Non-Presidential Elections

- 13%** Vote less than half the time
- 15%** Vote half the time
- 10%** Don't vote
- 61%** Are frequent voters

Top Issue Areas

Strengthening foreign policy and defense

Controlling illegal immigration

Toughening law enforcement and prosecution

Their Top 3 Personal Values

Acquiring wealth and influence

Maintaining a good public image

Living a life full of excitement, novelties, and challenges

14%

Are more likely to vote for a candidate who acts quickly

15%

Are less likely to vote for a candidate who has worked in politics for 15+ years

18%

Believe the US would be somewhat worse off if more Americans under 40 were elected to public office

20%

Are more likely to vote for a candidate with a history of maintaining policies consistently throughout their term

Media Consumption Habits

- 25% Spend 20 to 40 hours a week online
- 28% Are heavily engaged with traditional TV
- 12% Are frequent radio listeners
- 11% Heavily consume podcasts

Hispanic Voters

During his 2024 presidential campaign, Donald Trump made serious inroads with Hispanic voters, largely thanks to his promises concerning the economy.

While the majority still voted Democrat, in the end, it will be interesting to see who gets these voters' support considering far more voted Republican than expected. This year has also seen high inflation, skyrocketing prices, and a lot of controversial immigration policies, all of which will impact which way Hispanic voters lean in 2026. Resonate's audience is made up of registered voters who identify as Hispanic.

Voting Frequency in Non-Presidential Elections

- 11%** Vote less than half the time
- 22%** Vote half the time
- 18%** Don't vote
- 49%** Are frequent voters

Top Issue Areas

Reforming entitlements

Enacting gun control

Reducing climate change

Their Top 3 Personal Values

Maintaining traditions

Maintaining a good public image

Showing abilities and being admired

14%

Are more likely to vote for a candidate they find inspiring and motivational

20%

Believe the nation would be much better off if more veterans and national security experts from organizations like the CIA and FBI were elected

22%

Believe the US would be much worse off with more LGBTQ+ Americans in office

35%

Believe the US would be somewhat better off with more Christian Americans in office

Media Consumption Habits

- 47% Spend 10 to 40 hours a week online
- 23% Are heavily engaged with traditional TV
- 14% Frequently watch Internet videos
- 13% Are heavily engaged with social media

Registered Non-Voters

A lot of these voters sat out 2024 not because they didn't care, but because they were disillusioned with the choices in front of them.

Previously, they were known to vote Democrat, and to do so reliably. Resonate's audience is made up of people who are registered to vote and who vote in non-presidential elections half the time, or who don't vote in them at all.

Voting Frequency in Non-Presidential Elections

43% Vote less than half the time

57% Don't vote

Top Issue Areas

Human rights and war crimes

Protecting online/Internet privacy

Supporting pro-choice issues

Their Top 3 Personal Values

Acquiring wealth and influence

Having everyone be treated equally

Being humble

14%

Believe the US would be somewhat worse off with more Americans under 40 in office

19%

Require any candidate they vote for to cancel some or all student loans

30%

Believe the US would be somewhat better off with more women in office

54%

Don't think having more Christian Americans in office would make a difference

Media Consumption Habits

- 50% Spend 20 or more hours a week online
- 26% Are heavily engaged with streaming TV
- 20% Are heavily engaged with traditional TV
- 16% Are heavily engaged with Internet videos

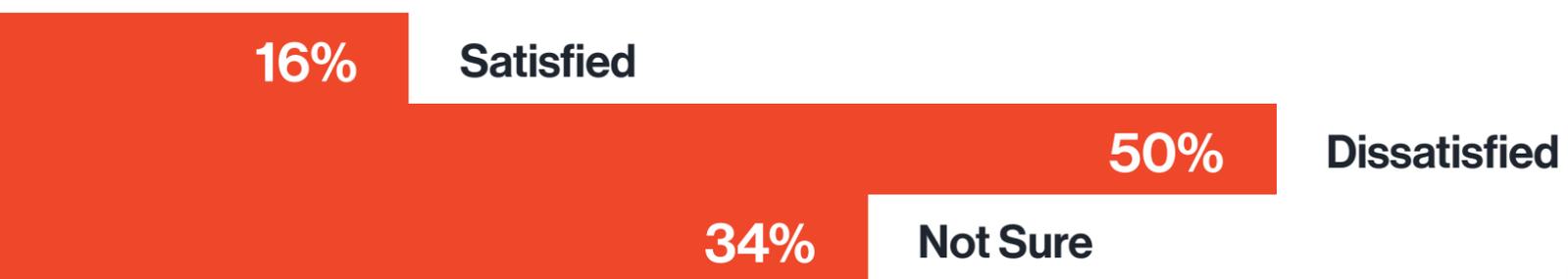
Who's In and Who's Out

Donald Trump

Political Policies



Personality & Behavior

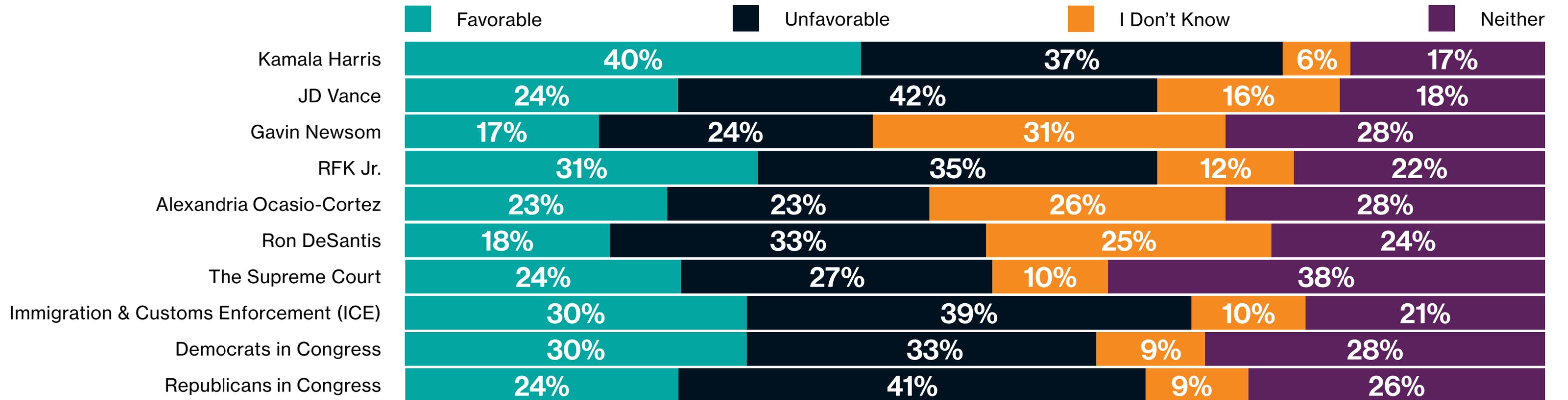


Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report.



Here's where important political figures stand in the eyes of voters after a year filled with controversy.

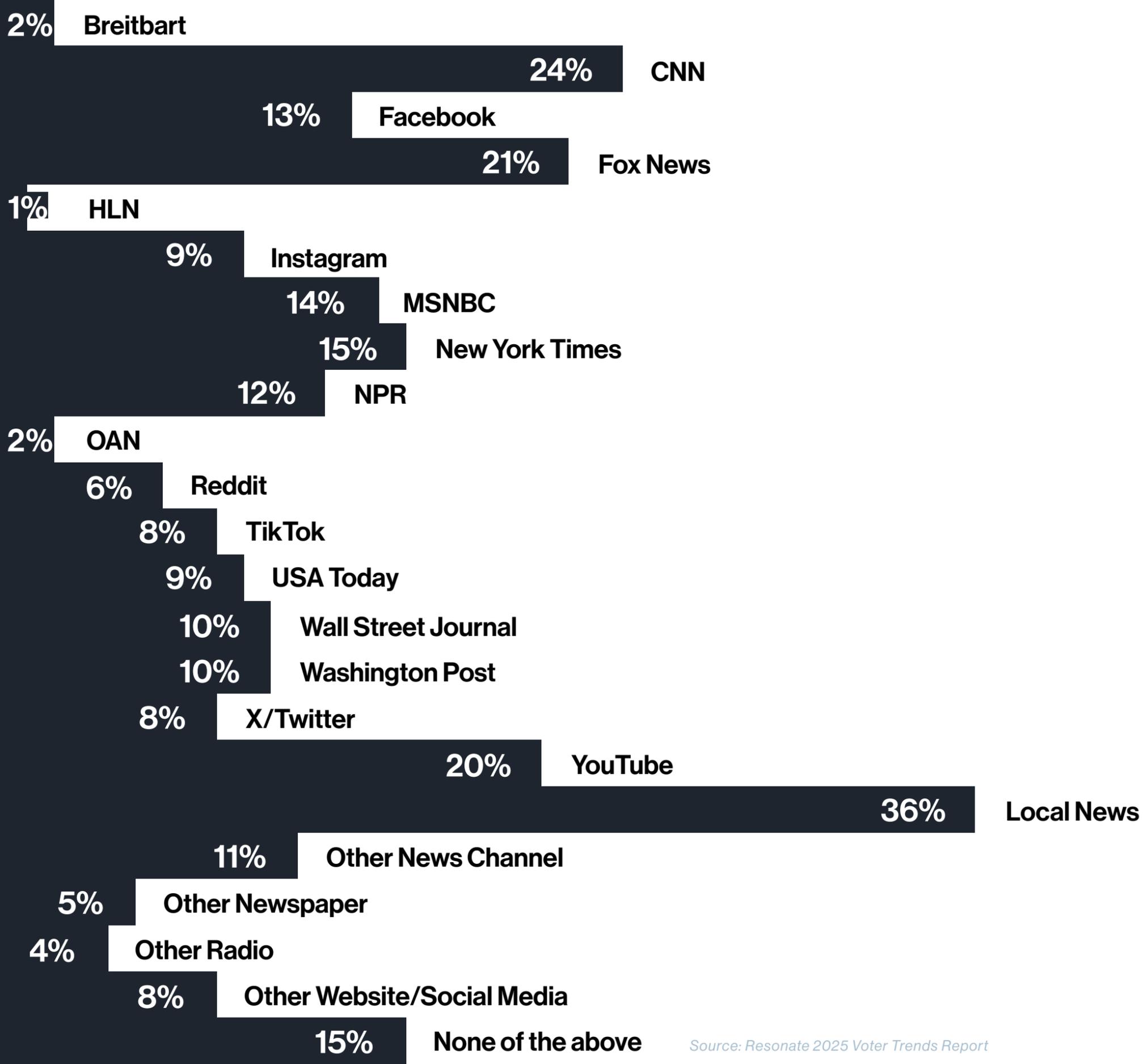
Resonate data also shows where voters stand on important federal institutions heading into the midterm elections.



Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report

Voter Media Consumption





As you start to deploy your campaigns,

it's crucial to know where you can find voters.

Resonate tracks Americans' most trusted source of news and offers data on the channels people currently place their trust in.



Source: Resonate 2025 Voter Trends Report

Winning in 2026 starts with Resonate voter data.

To be successful in the midterms next year, you need high-performance data that gives you insight into voters' sentiments, motivations, and behaviors right now. Only Resonate empowers you to build and activate custom audiences at scale and at a pace that keeps up with the rate things are changing in the US.

On a continuous basis, we ask voters how they feel about recent events to create this report. You can tap into Resonate to build, model, size, and analyze any audience in minutes.

[Talk to a Campaign Specialist](#)

About Resonate

Resonate AI-powered data has the most updated, comprehensive voter intelligence available today: 15,000+ attributes scaled to 250 million individual profiles, easily accessible in our Resonate Elements data sets.

Want to better understand the voters you already know, as well as the ones you don't? Enrich any data set by direct onboard or append. Either way, your data is smarter and your decisions are better, every day, no matter what comes your way.

Maximize the reach and influence of your political campaigns with AI-powered data