



HOW SHOULD THE GOVERNMENT ADDRESS SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER?

A Public Consultation Forum with
Residents of Maryland's 6th Congressional District

Co-Hosted by:



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Survey Methodology

Sample Size: 747 Adult Residents of Maryland's 6th Congressional District

Field Dates: July 24 – August 19, 2023

Confidence Interval: +/- 3.6%

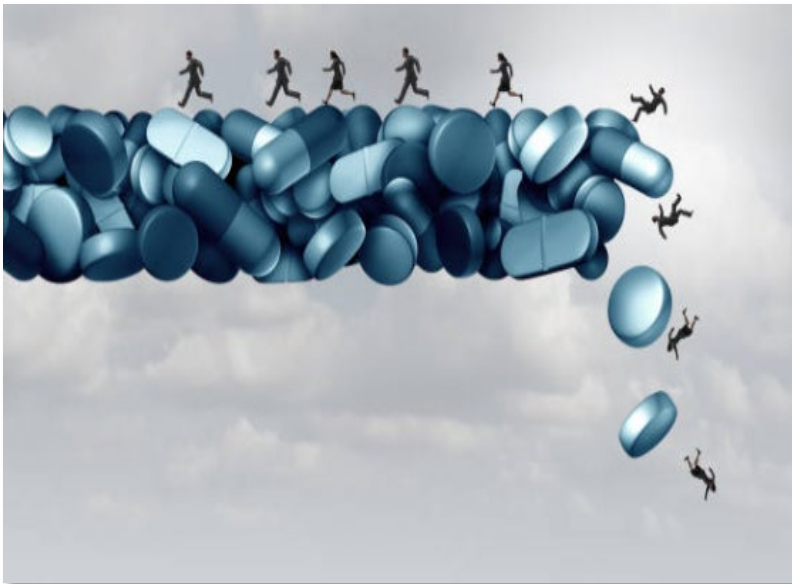
Fielded by: Precision Sample

The **representative sample** was weighted by age, race, gender, and education consistent with the Census' 2023 American Community Survey (ACS), as well as for partisan affiliation using the most recent State of Maryland Board of Elections voter registration data for Maryland's 6th Congressional District.

What is a Substance Use Disorder?

A person has a substance use disorder if they meet some of the following criteria:

- ▶ Use causes physical or psychological harm
- ▶ Negative symptoms from stopping use (i.e. withdrawal)

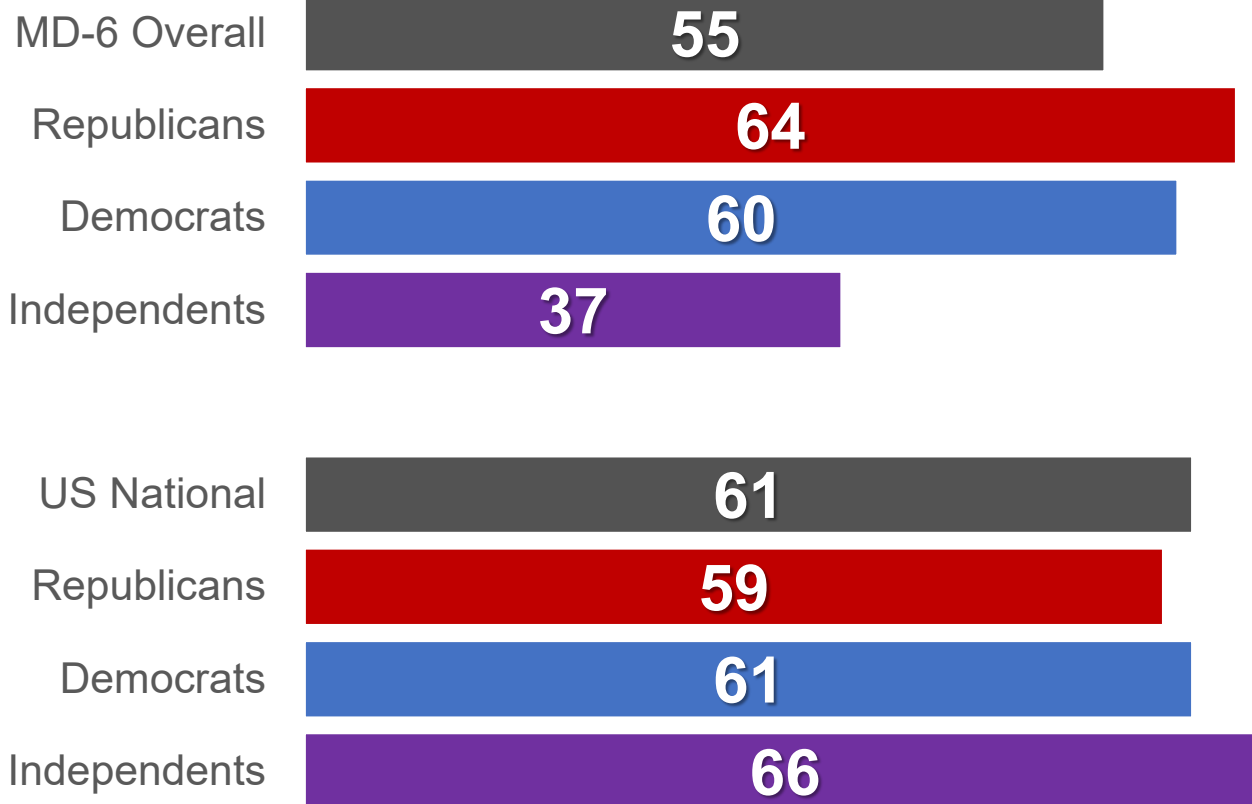


- ▶ Larger amounts needed to get intended feeling / prevent withdrawal
- ▶ The person wants to stop using but has not succeeded

Substance Use Disorders

Do you know anyone who misuses drugs or alcohol, whether or not they have been officially diagnosed?

YES



Health Effects

Damage to **vital organs**, which can be fatal

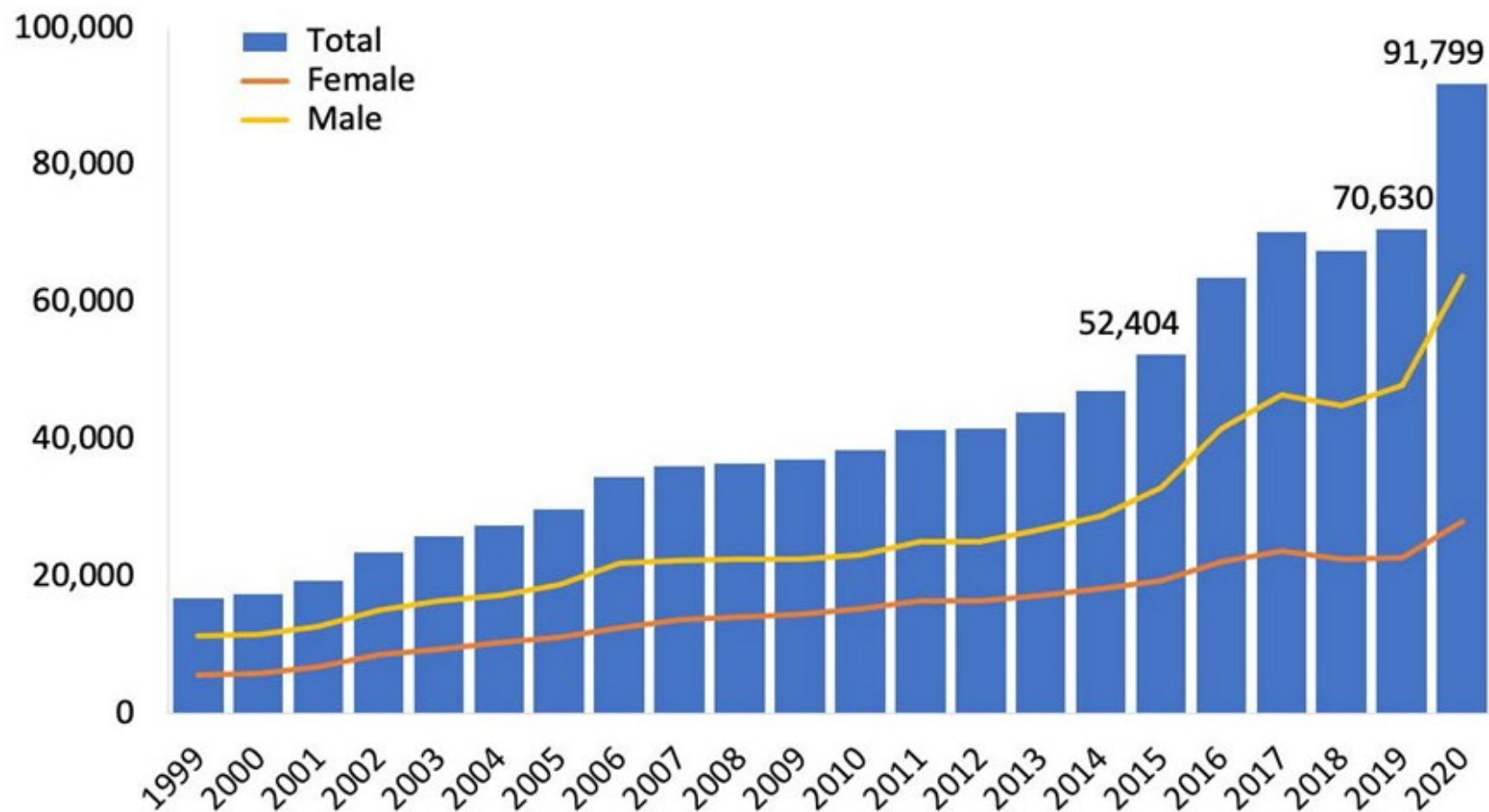
Lifelong diseases, such as HIV and Hepatitis

Overdose, which can result in death.

Increase in Overdose Deaths

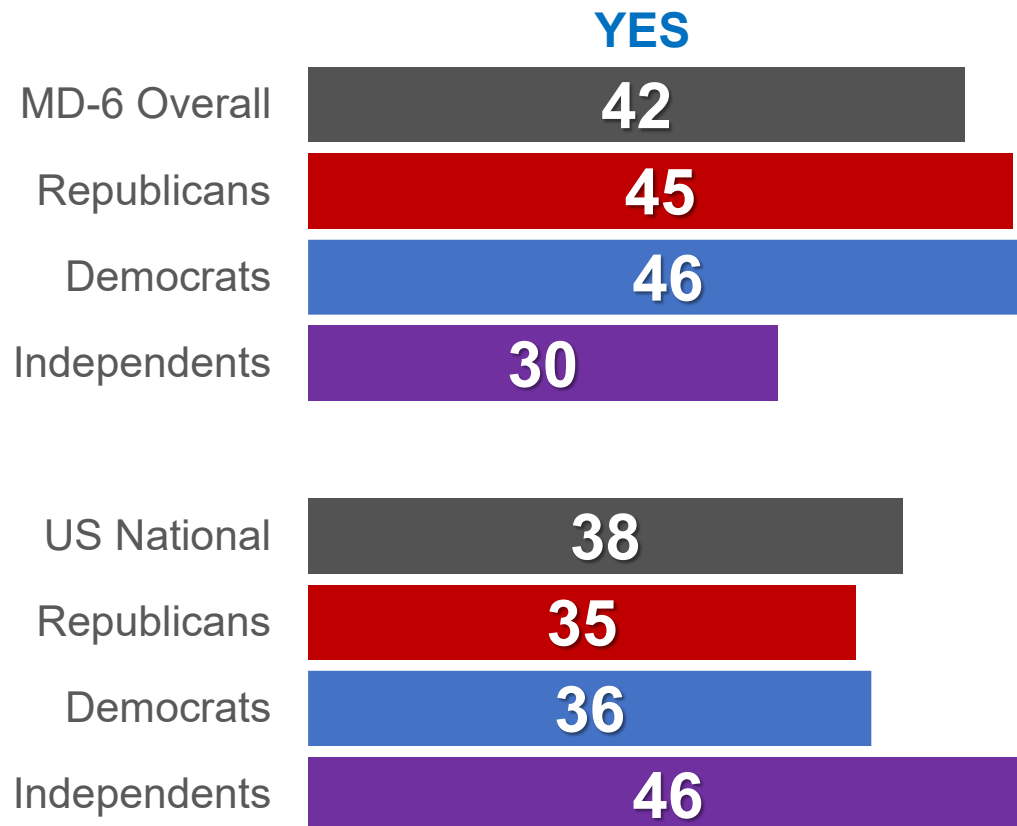
National Drug-Involved Overdose Deaths*

Among All Ages, by Gender, 1999 - 2020

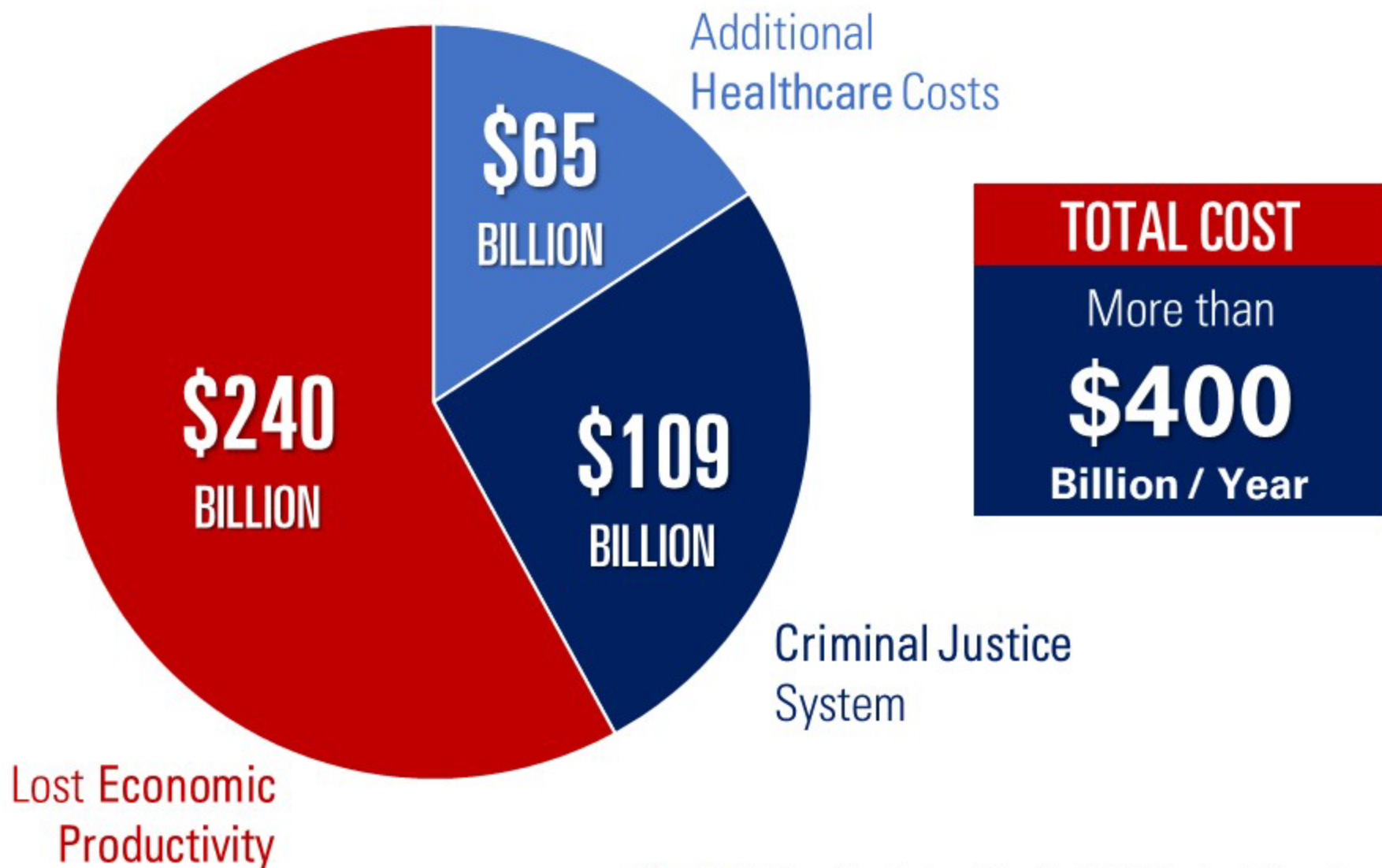


Knowing Someone Who Died

Have you personally known someone who died from a drug overdose?



Substance Abuse | Financial Costs



Source: National Institute of Health (NIH): Costs of Drug Abuse

What can be done?

Treatment

Treatment can involve **counseling**, **medication**, or staying in a **rehabilitation center**.

Success Rate:

Most do reduce or stop abusing.

About half relapse, so treatment is ongoing.

Cost-Effectiveness:

The National Institute of Health (**NIH**) estimates that for every dollar spent on treatment, there are \$7 in savings.

The Treatment Gap

The federal government currently spends **\$20 billion** to provide treatment and train healthcare workers.

There are still about **one million** people who:

- **need treatment**

and

- **want treatment** or **want more treatment**

but are **not** getting it.

Debate on Spending

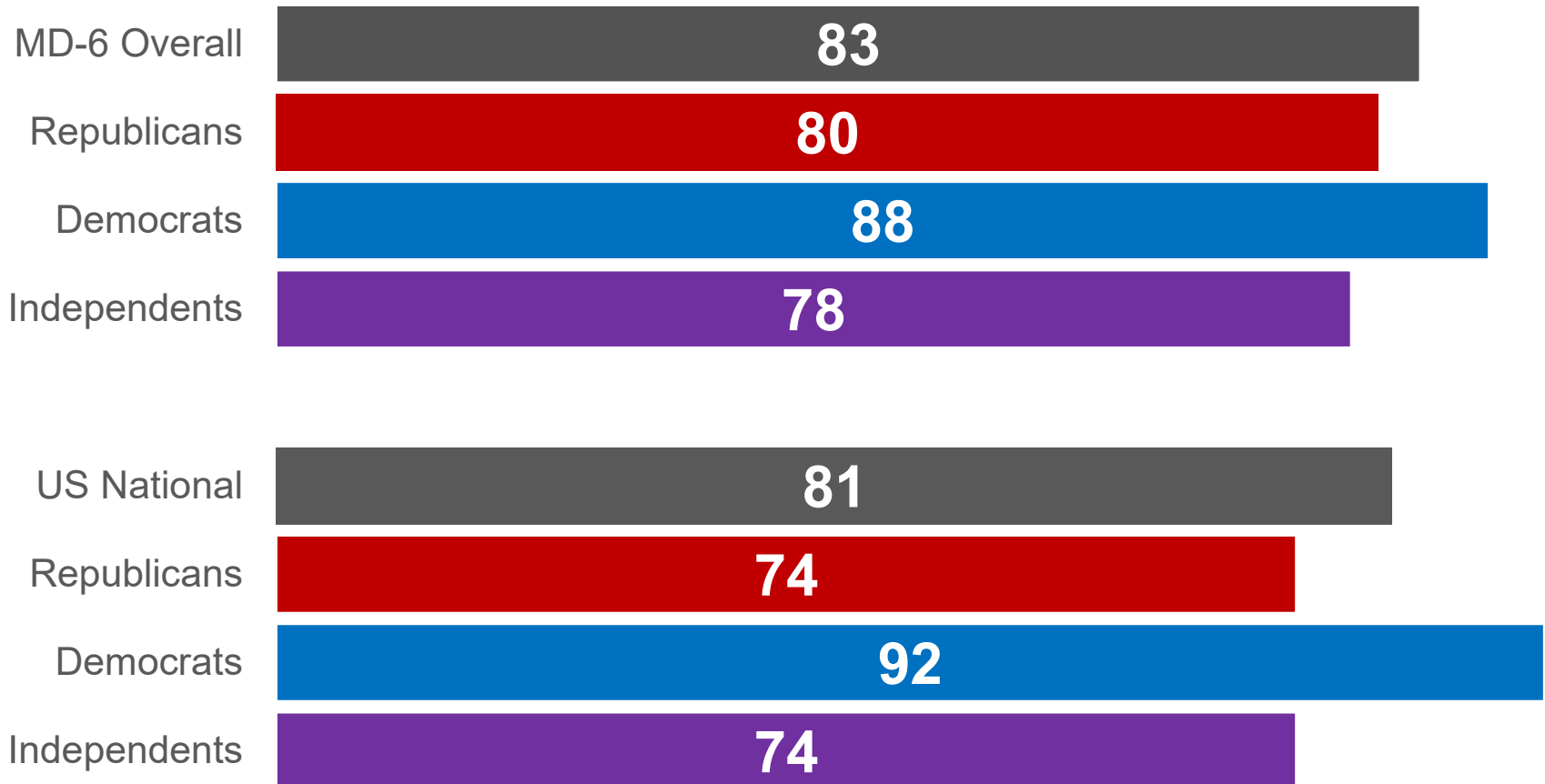
Currently, there is a debate about whether federal spending on treatment should be increased, **so that all people who need and want treatment or more treatment can get it.**

Closing the Treatment Gap

FIRST ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Treatment is effective, relatively inexpensive, cost-effective

CONVINCING

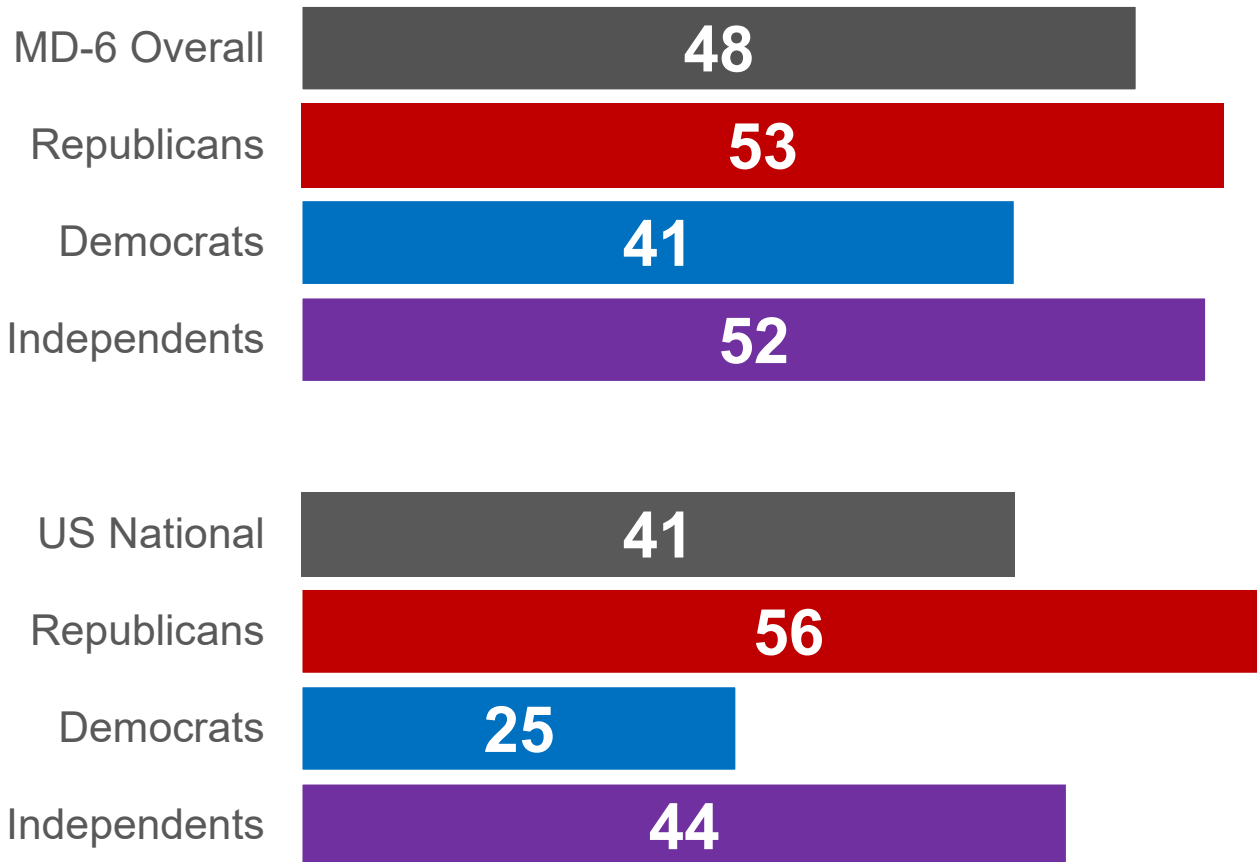


Closing the Treatment Gap

FIRST ARGUMENT AGAINST

Not responsibility of taxpayers

CONVINCING

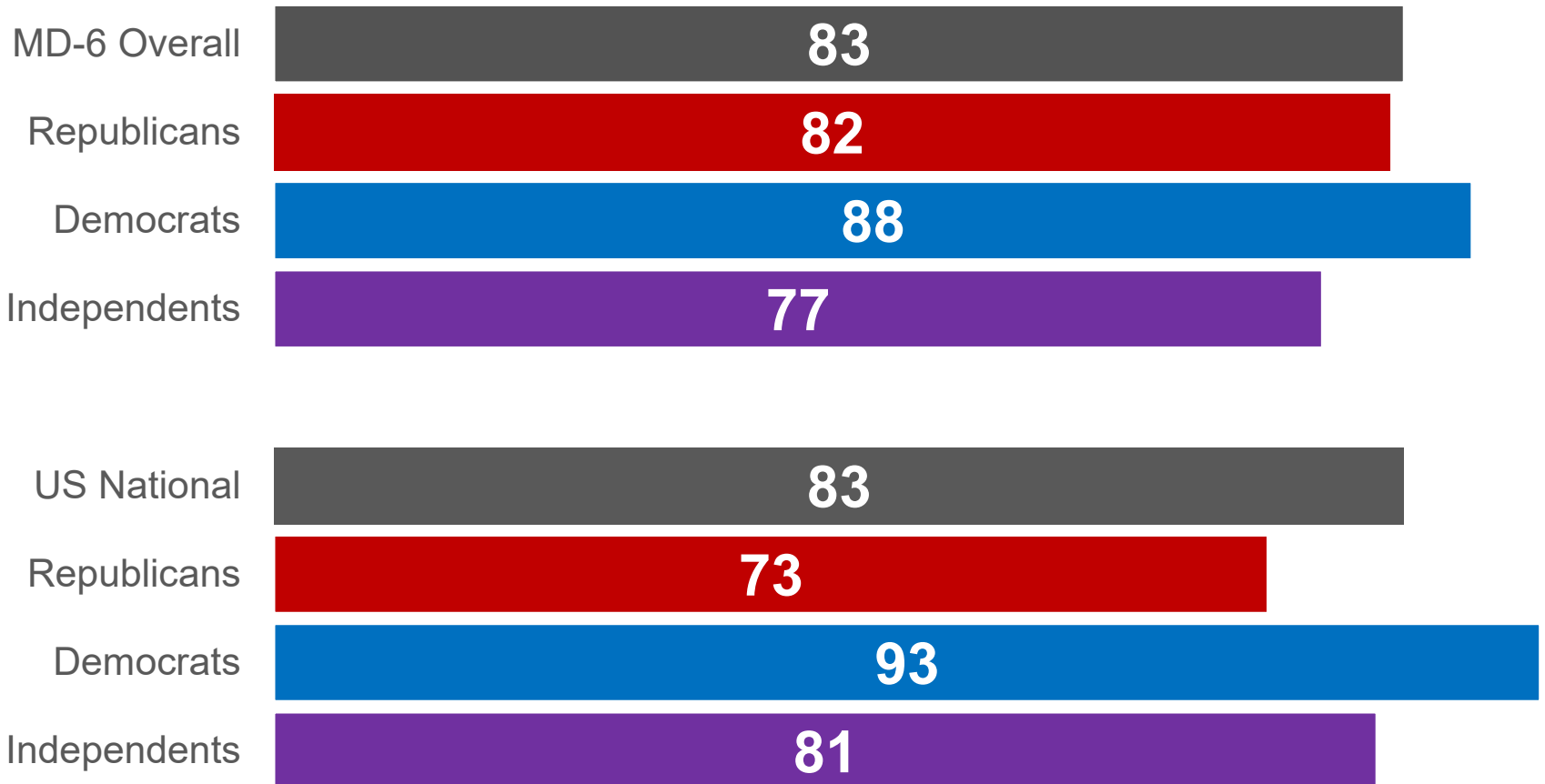


Closing the Treatment Gap

SECOND ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Many seeking professional help can't get it

CONVINCING

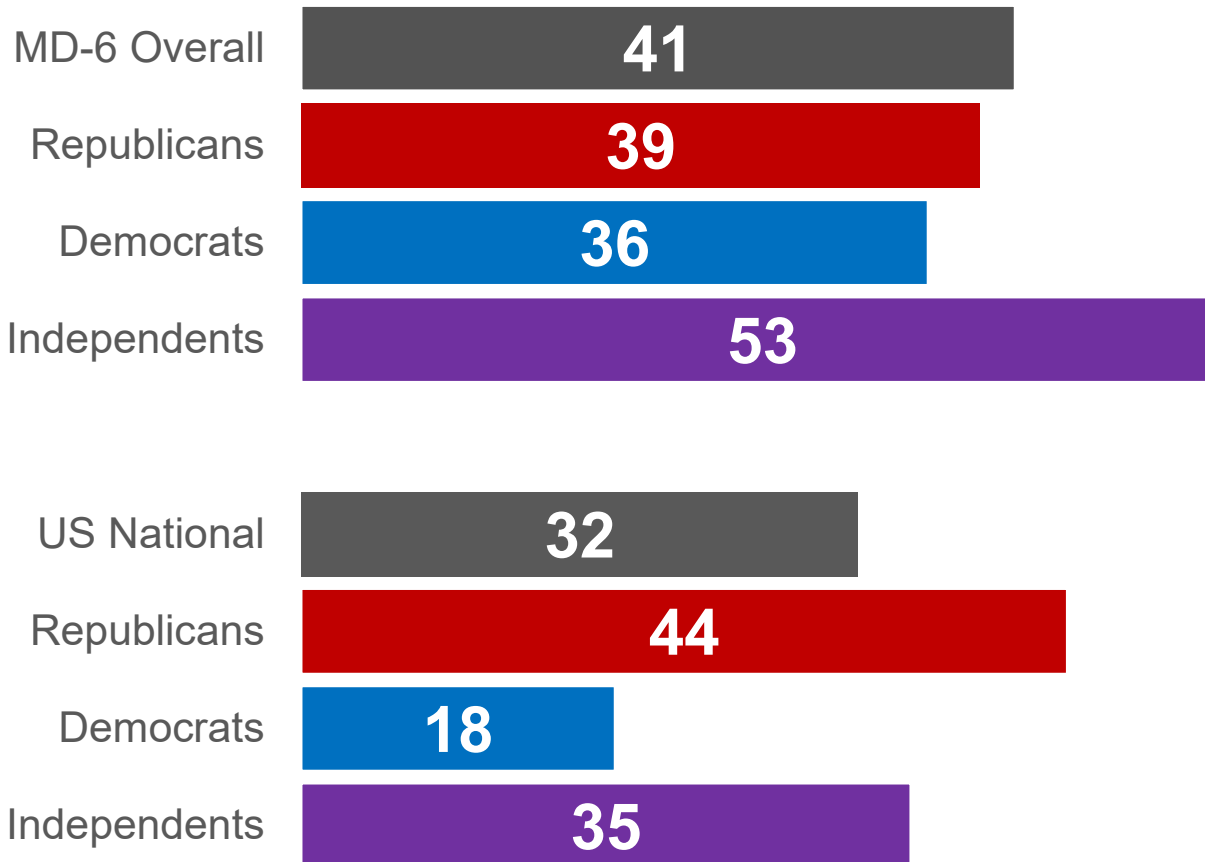


Closing the Treatment Gap

SECOND ARGUMENT AGAINST

Moral weakness is the source of addiction; should be solved by religious and charitable orgs, not government

CONVINCING

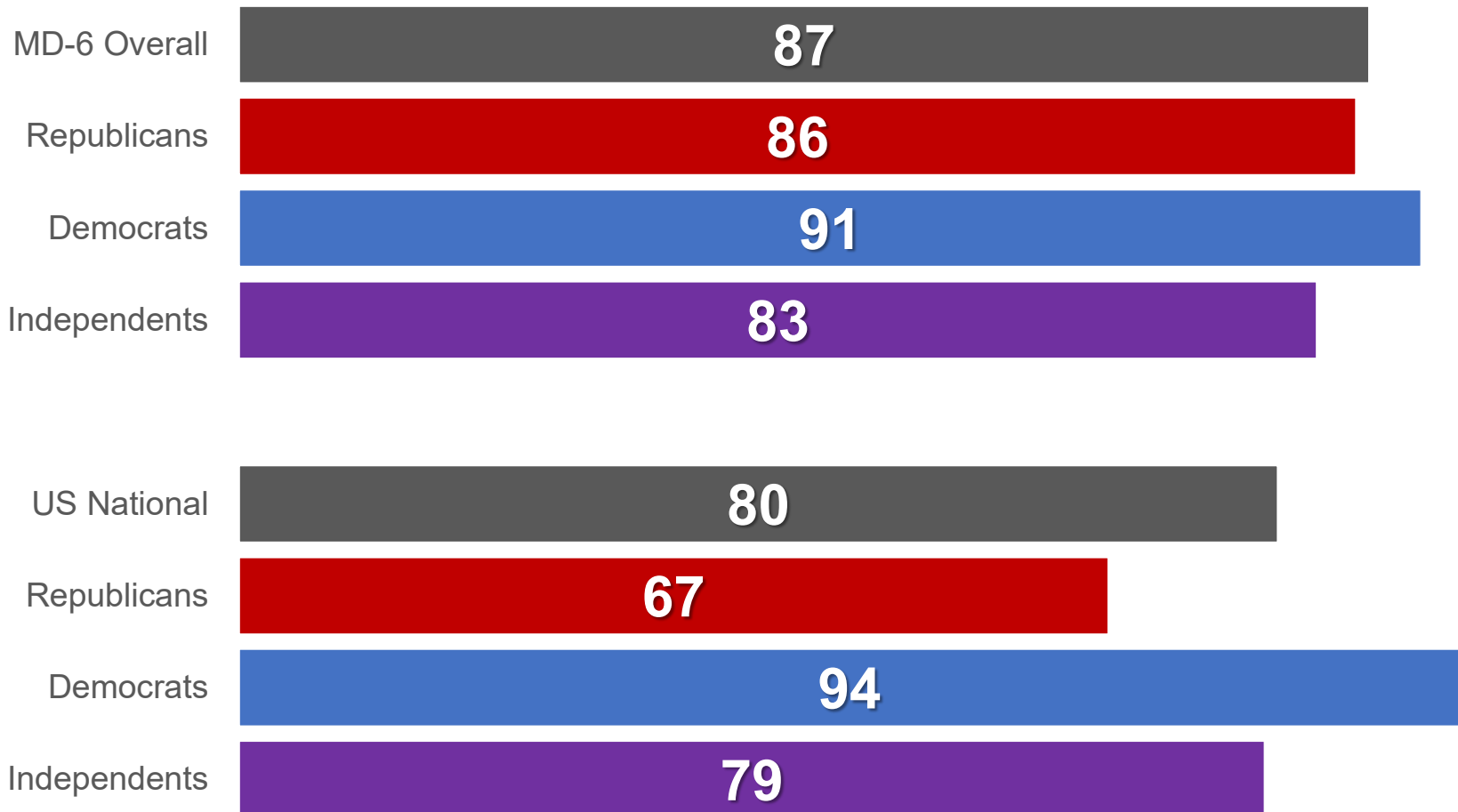


Closing the Treatment Gap

PRIORITY

How high a priority should it be for Congress to increase federal spending on treatment for substance use disorders?

Very / Somewhat High Priority



Proposal for Increasing Spending on Treatment

\$8 billion a year to local and state governments

- increase the number of openings & reduce waiting lists
- offer treatment for people who cannot afford it

\$2 billion a year to research substance use disorders and train healthcare professionals.

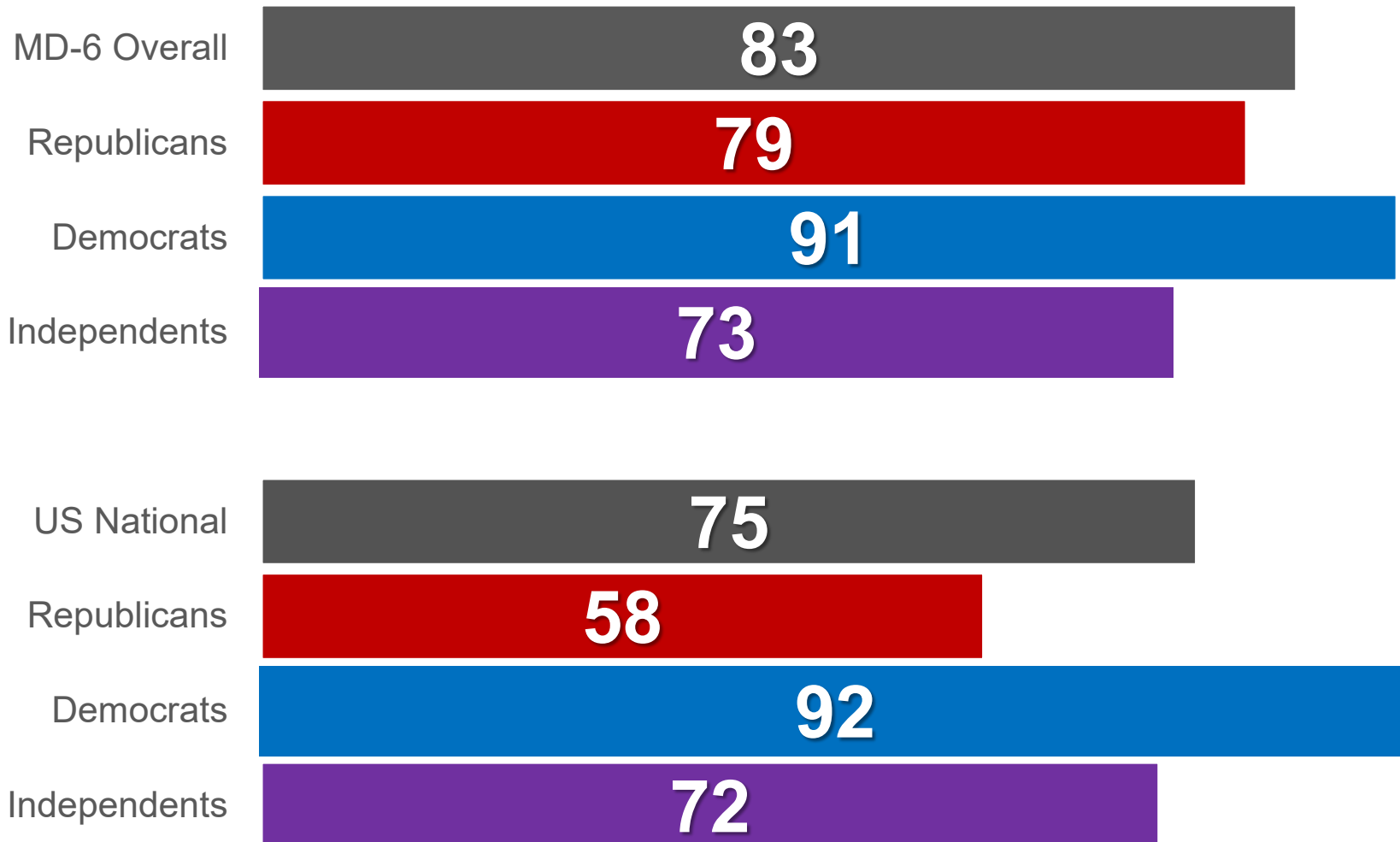
Experts estimate this would **enable nearly all people who need and want treatment to get it.**

Increasing Spending on Treatment

**FINAL
RECOMMENDATION**

Do you favor or oppose this proposal?

FAVOR



Treatment Available to People in Prison

Around 2/3 of all prisoners have substance use disorders.

For many of these people, they:

- violated drug laws;
- committed crimes under the influence of drugs or alcohol; or
- committed crimes to cover the cost of their substance use.

About one-in-ten people in prison who have a substance use disorder have received treatment.

Increasing Funding for Treatment for People in Prison

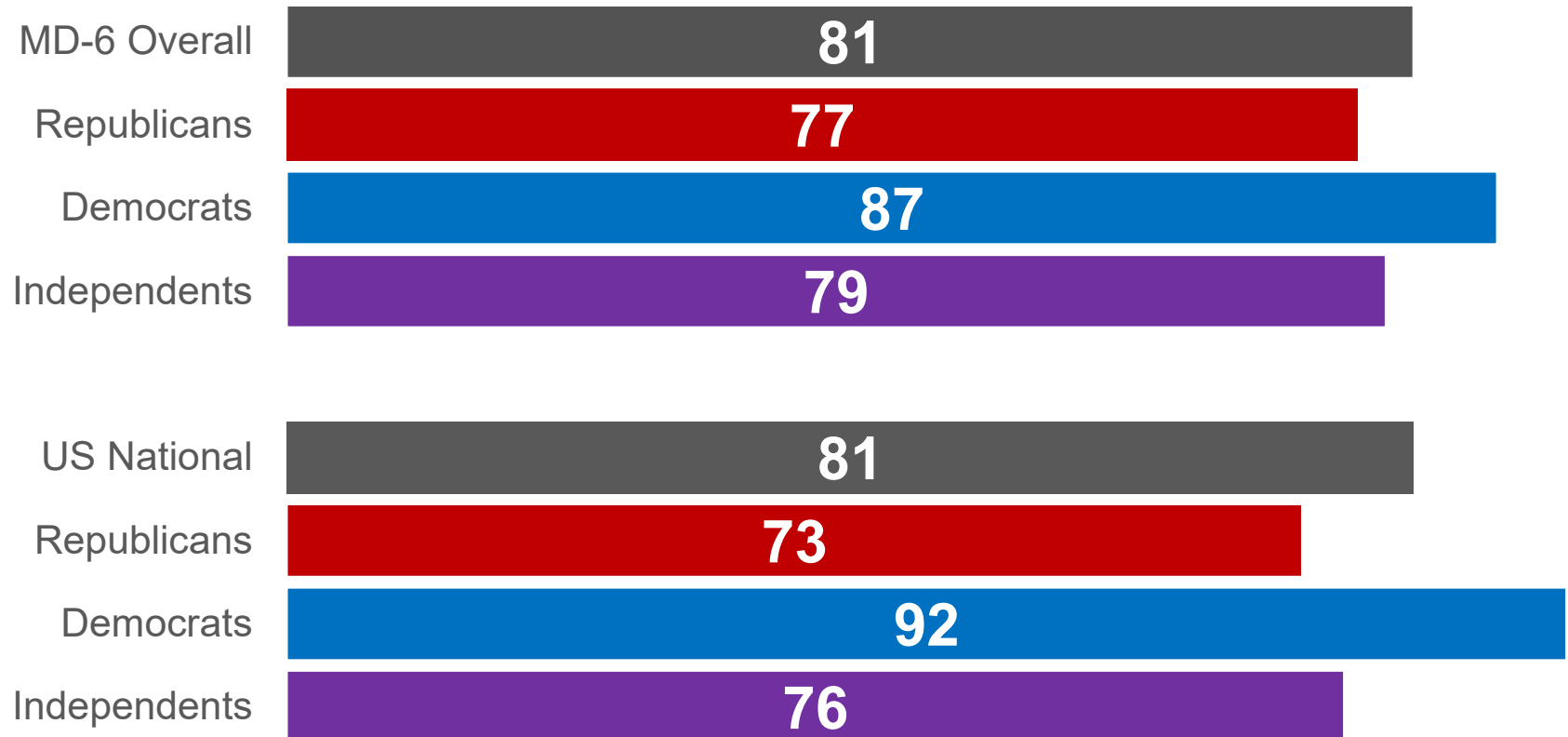
A proposal has been put forward in Congress to provide additional funds to cities and states that want to expand and improve the substance use disorder treatment programs in their prisons.

Increasing Funding for Treatment for People in Prison

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Better for everyone, because it reduces the likelihood that they will commit a crime again once they leave prison.

CONVINCING



Increasing Funding for Treatment for People in Prison

ARGUMENT AGAINST

Prison is for punishment, not therapy. Being away from drugs while in prison should be enough.

CONVINCING

MD-6 Overall 39

Republicans 43

Democrats 34

Independents 41

US National 32

Republicans 45

Democrats 19

Independents 32

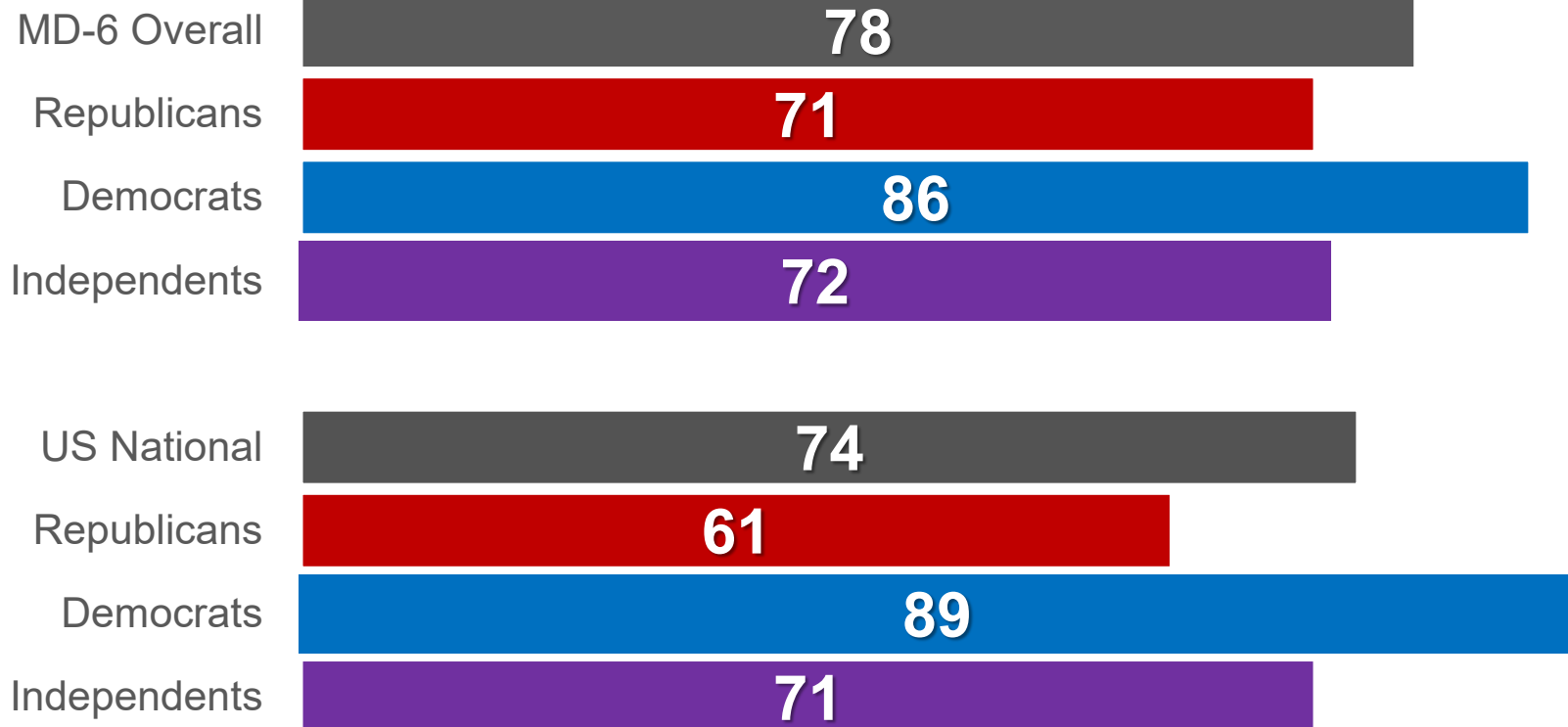
Increasing Funding for Treatment for People in Prison

**FINAL
RECOMMENDATION**

Provide additional funds to cities and states that want to expand and improve the substance use disorder treatment programs in their prisons.

Do you favor or oppose this proposal?

FAVOR



Funding for Law Enforcement

In some places, when law enforcement encounters someone with a substance use disorder committing a minor, non-violent crime, rather than charging them with a crime, they can:

- **require them to enter a treatment program** and
- **give them information about available programs.**

If the person refuses, they may be charged.

Funding for Law Enforcement

PROPOSAL

Provide funds to allow cities and states to set up or expand programs that would:

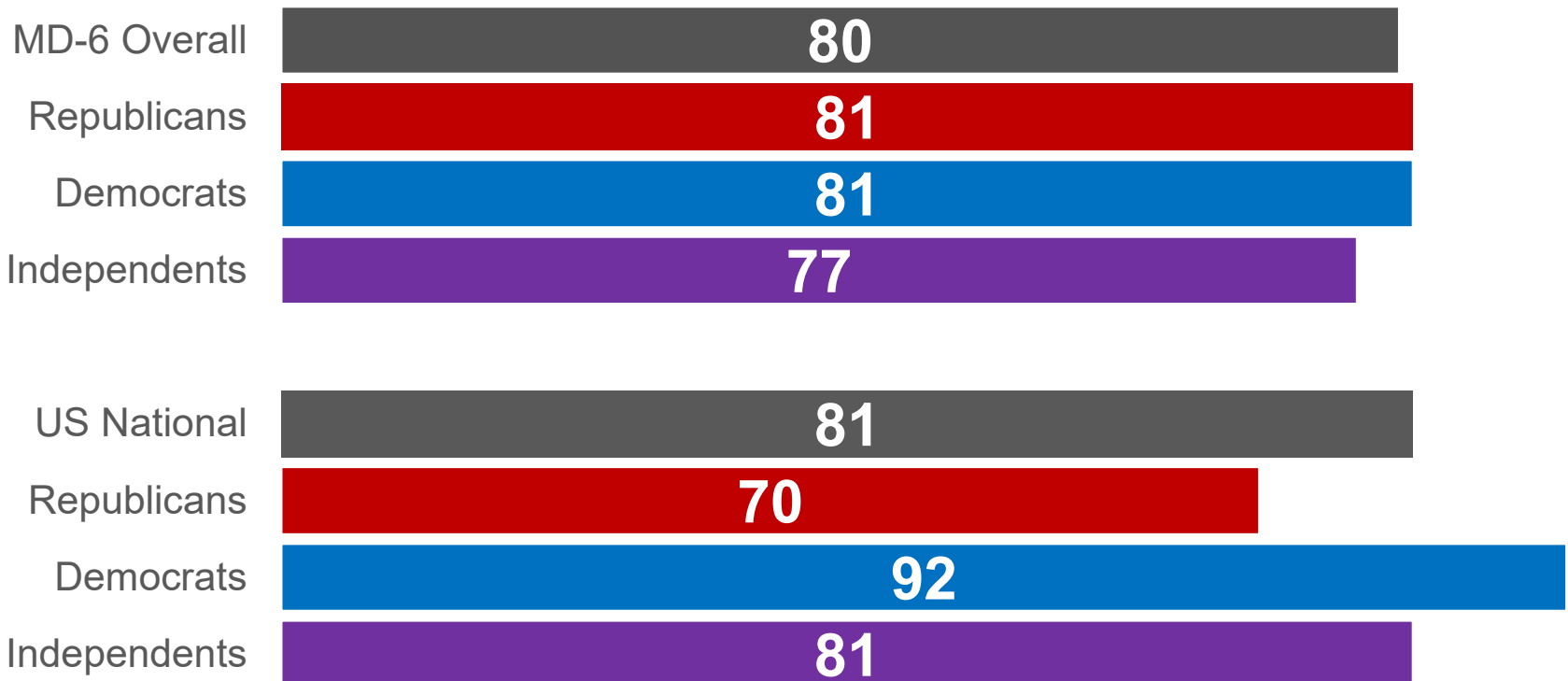
- **train officers to recognize when a person has a substance use disorder**, and how to interact with them
- **give officers the tools to require them to enter a treatment program** and give them information about available programs.

Funding for Law Enforcement

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR

Better to address the underlying cause, prison will only worsen the problem. Police are well-positioned to help.

CONVINCING

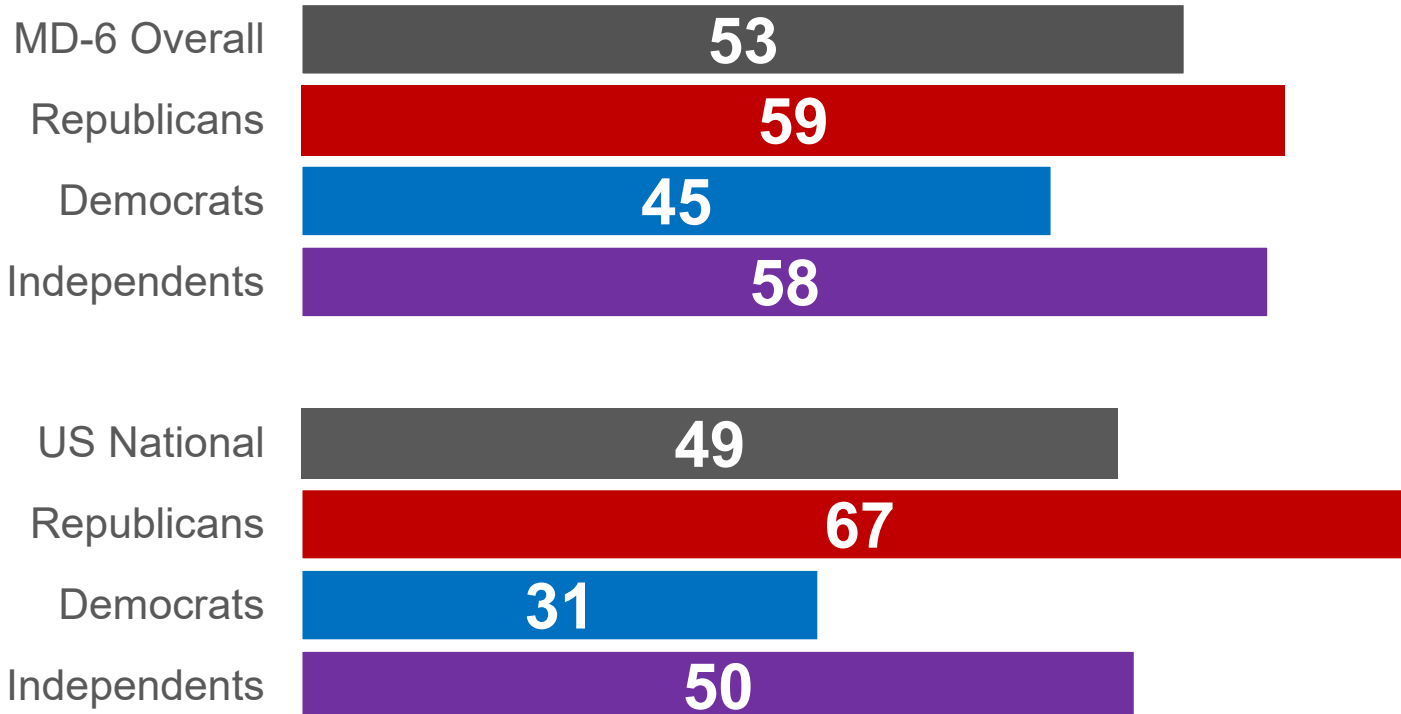


Funding for Law Enforcement

ARGUMENT AGAINST

Decision should be left to the courts. Not the job of the police to determine whether someone needs treatment.

CONVINCING



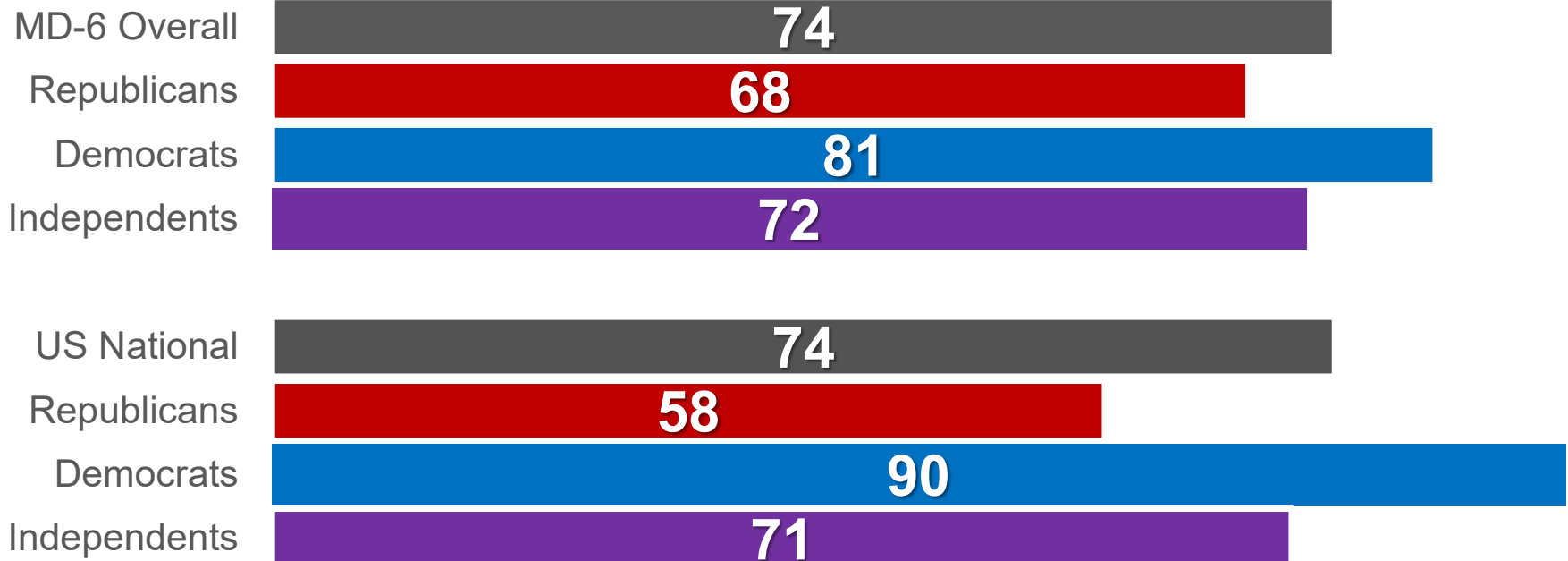
Funding for Law Enforcement

**FINAL
RECOMMENDATION**

Provide federal funds to cities and states that want to set up or expand programs that:

- train officers to recognize when a person has a substance use disorder
- give officers the tools to require them to enter a treatment program

FAVOR





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