

U.S. Voters' Perceptions of the Economic Impact of COVID-19

March 2020



OBJECTIVES

With the current coronavirus pandemic and economic downturn, Brunswick Group sought to understand the role government and corporations can play in helping the economy recover.

METHODOLOGY

Survey sponsor and conducting organization	Brunswick Group
Population surveyed	Registered U.S. voters, aged 18+
Sampling frame	U.S. adults aged 18 and over that are registered to vote, with U.S. Census quotas for age, gender, ethnicity, and region
How the survey was conducted	Online, opt-in
Total sample size	N=1,000
Survey dates	March 20-23, 2020
Margin of error	3.0%
Weighting	None

KEY FINDINGS

American voters expect that we're going to face a long, rocky road to recovery. They express shaky confidence in the federal government, yet they believe the government should play a major role in helping mitigate the financial impact of the coronavirus.

- Confidence in the federal government to deal with the economic crisis is *significantly* lower than local communities, state and local government, or businesses.
- A vast majority have heard about the federal government providing direct cash payments and believe it will be effective in helping people deal with the financial impact of the coronavirus.

Corporate actions, in general, are welcomed and viewed as effective. While awareness is high, respondents can't recall which companies are taking the actions.

- Voters believe "allowing consumers to skip monthly payments without incurring interest or paying late-fees," "agreeing to cover all paid sick leave for anyone who becomes ill with coronavirus," and "repurposing supply chains to help produce needed supplies and equipment" will be most effective.

Americans understand that layoffs are unavoidable for many companies, yet nearly half still say they'll spend less with companies who laid off or furloughed employees.

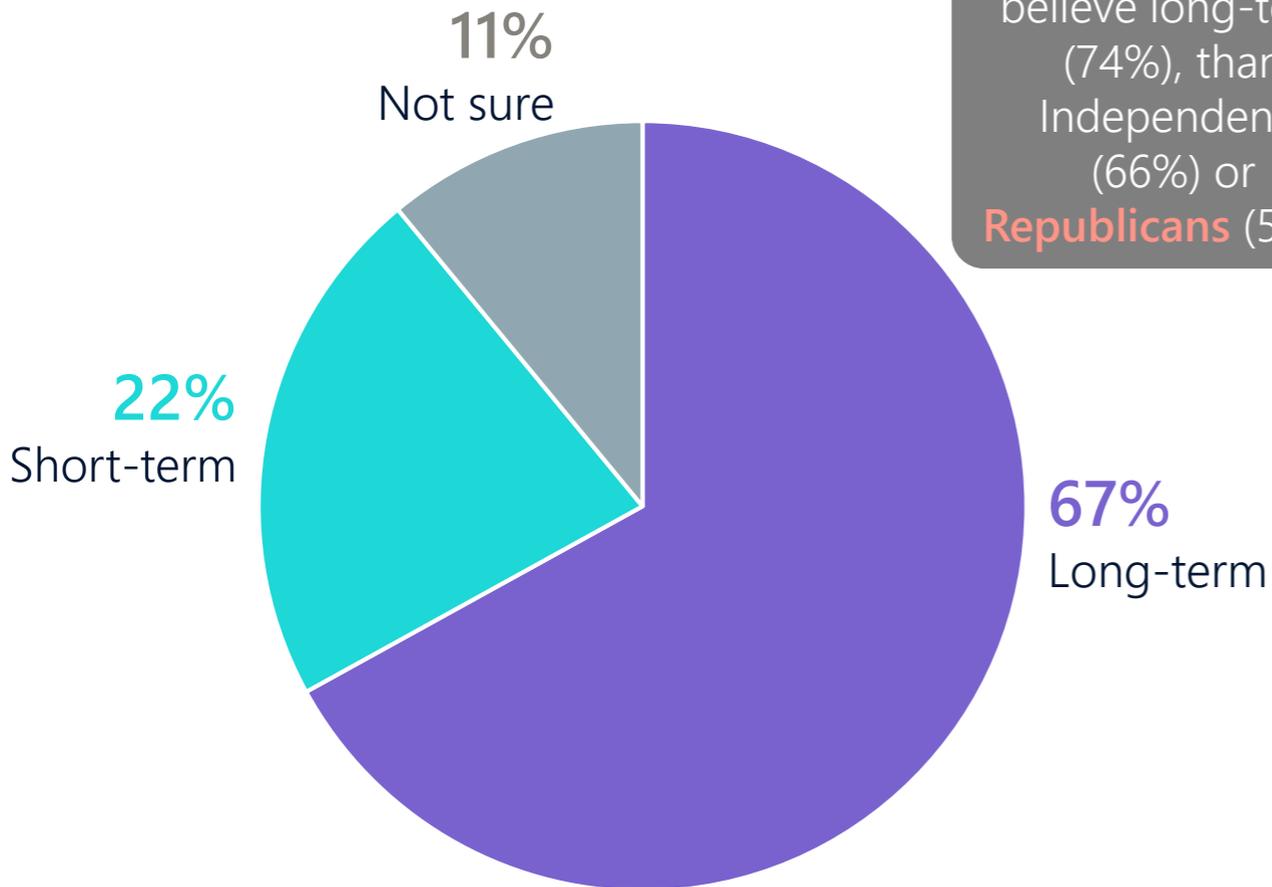
How do U.S. voters view
the economic impact of the
coronavirus pandemic?



Voters anticipate a long, difficult road to economic recovery. Republicans, though, are more optimistic than Democrats.

Based on what you know, do you think the coronavirus will have a short-term or long-term impact on our economy?

Democrats are more likely to believe long-term (74%), than Independents (66%) or **Republicans** (59%).



And, do you think our economy's recovery from the coronavirus will be...?

72% expect a difficult road ahead

38% expect the economic recovery to be "slow and gradual, taking months to years" **U**

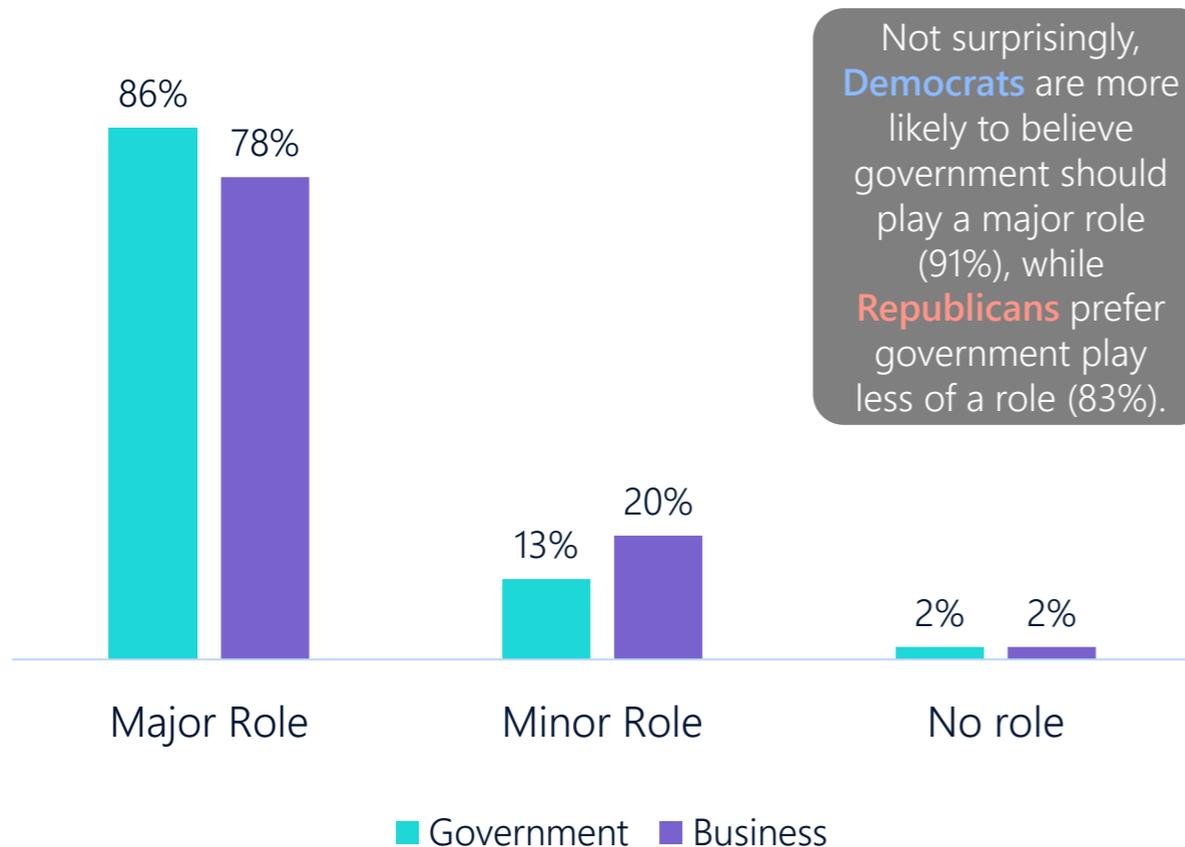
34% expect it to be "bumpy and unstable, with some promising ups and troubling downs" **W**

20% expect it to be "sharp and immediate, happening shortly after the emergency ends" **V**

Dem	GOP	Ind
42%	30%	45%
40%	29%	29%
10%	32%	18%

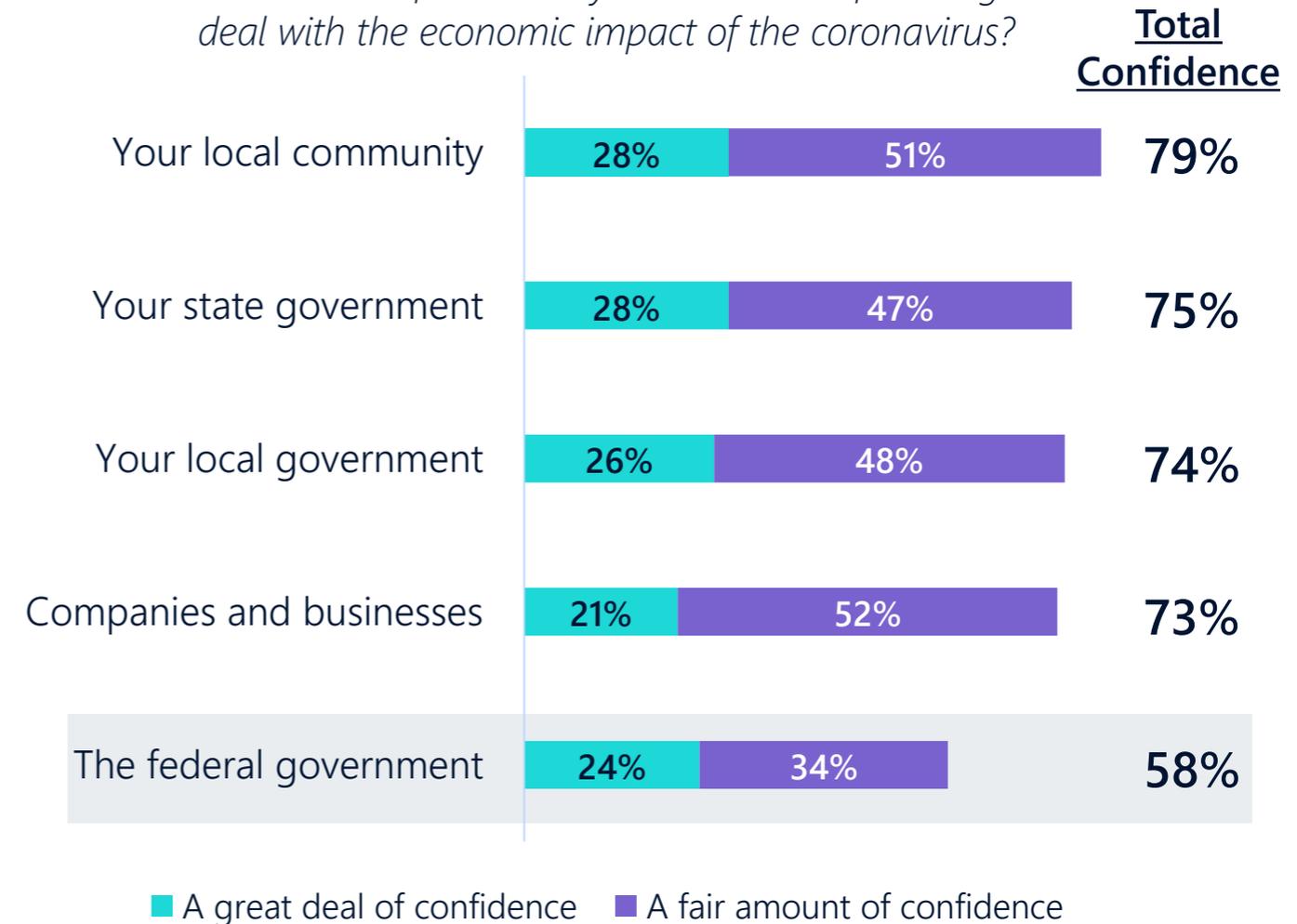
While voters believe the government should play a major role in helping to address the economic impact of the coronavirus, their confidence in the federal government is significantly lower than that of local communities, state or local government, or businesses.

*How big of a role do you believe **government/companies and businesses** should play in helping mitigate the economic impact of the coronavirus?*



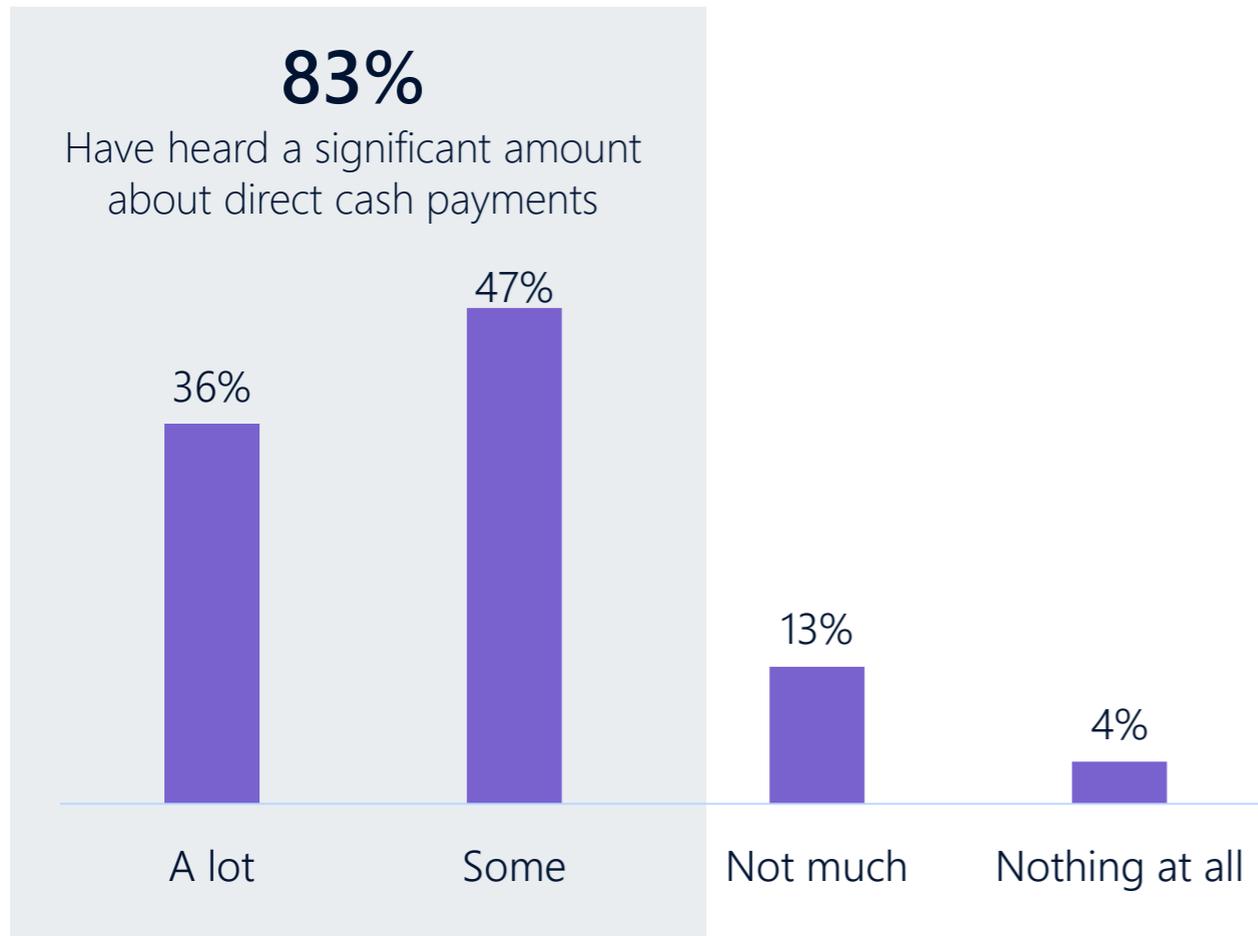
Not surprisingly, **Democrats** are more likely to believe government should play a major role (91%), while **Republicans** prefer government play less of a role (83%).

How much confidence do you have in the following to deal with the economic impact of the coronavirus?

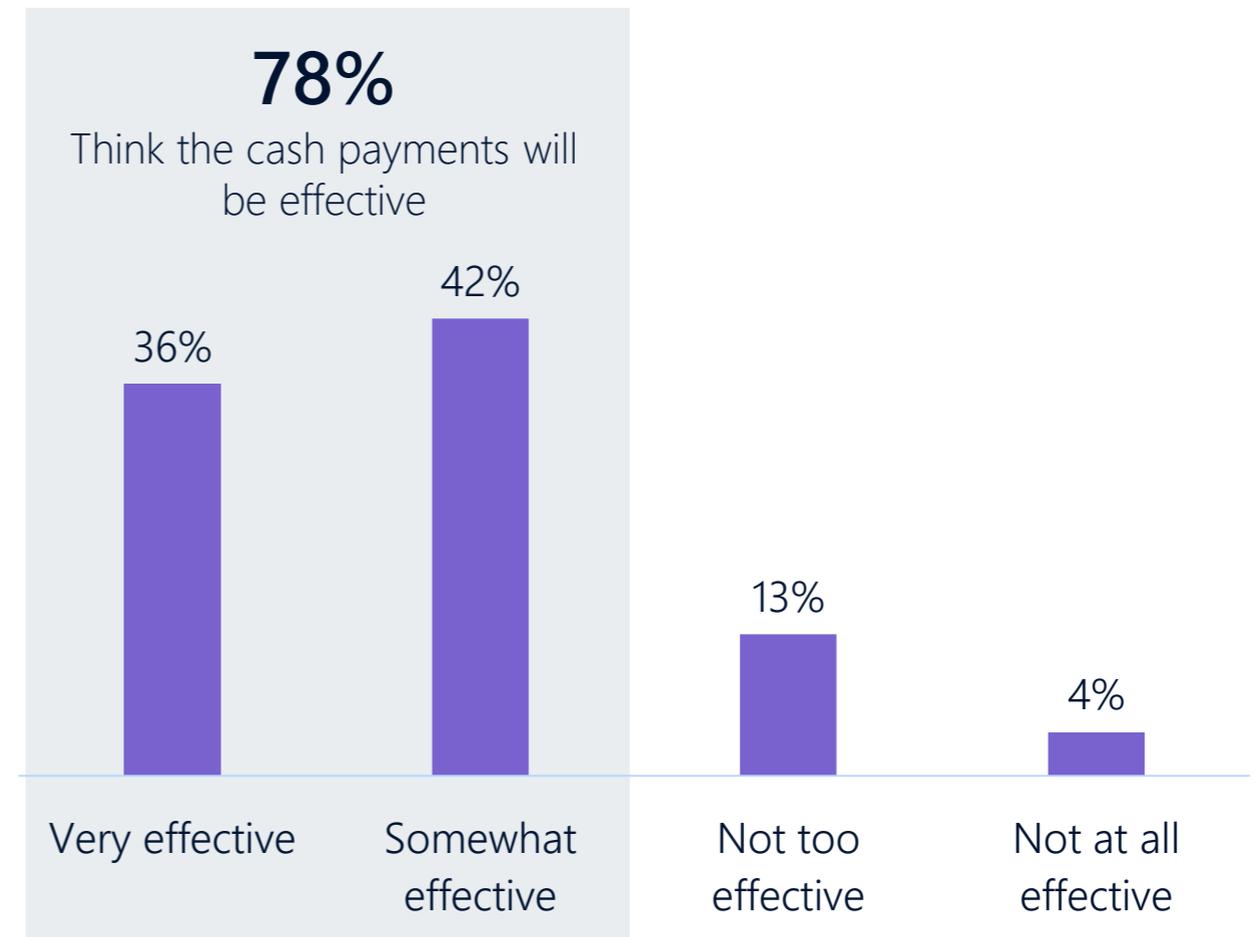


Perhaps unsurprisingly, voters are very aware of the federal government plan to provide direct cash payments and overwhelmingly think it will be effective.

How much have you seen, read, or heard about the federal government providing direct cash payments to Americans to help people deal with the financial impact of the coronavirus?



How effective do you think the federal government providing direct cash payments to Americans would be in helping people deal with the financial impact of the coronavirus?



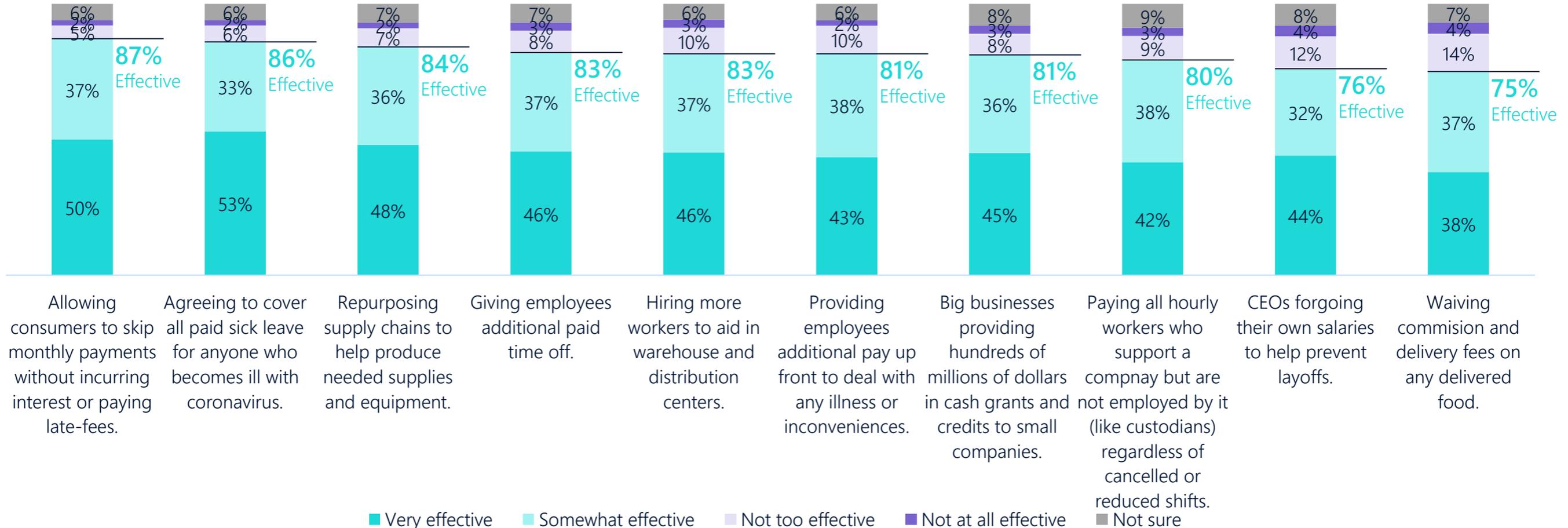
Which corporate actions
are viewed as effective?

Can people recall which
companies are taking the
actions?



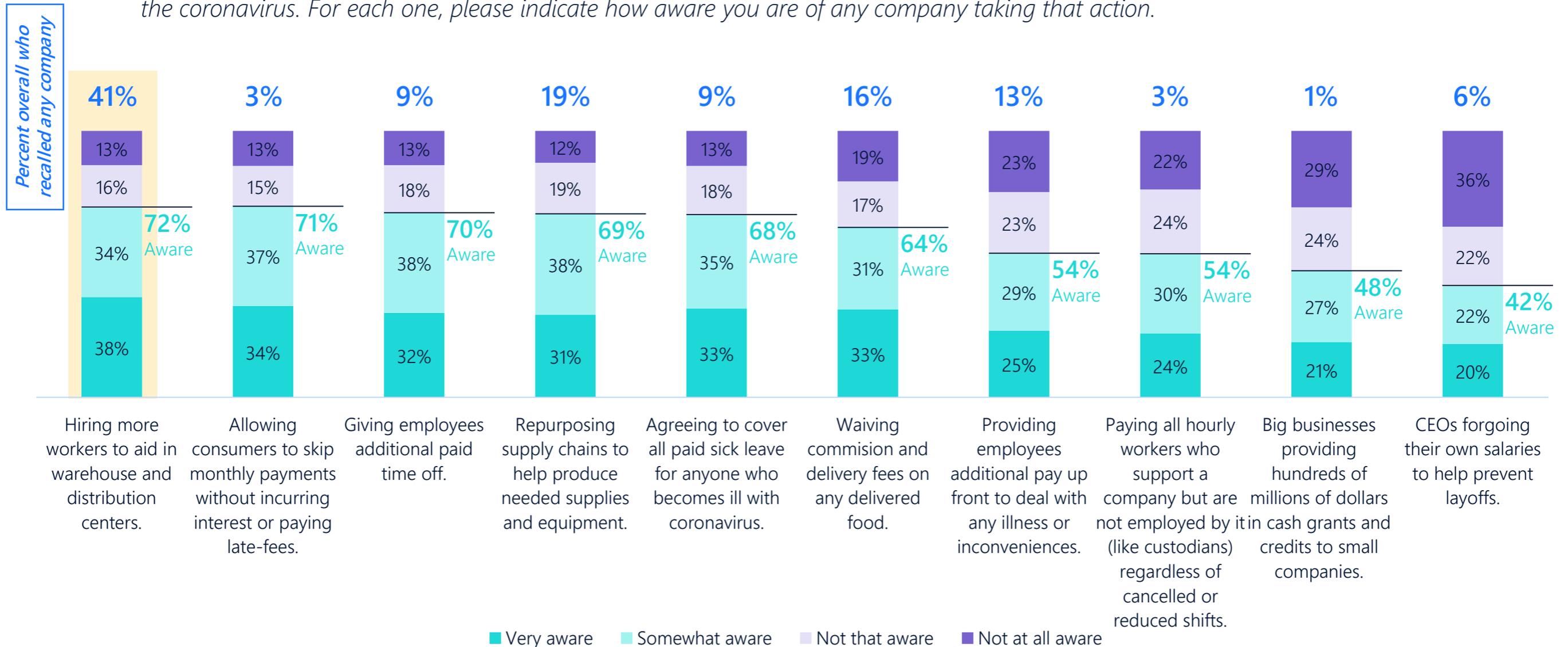
All the corporate actions tested are viewed as effective, but majorities of voters believe allowing consumers to skip payments without incurring fees and companies covering all sick leave for anyone ill are *very* effective actions.

Now, regardless of your awareness, how effective do you think each action is or will be in helping people deal with the economic impact of the coronavirus?



Nevertheless, *specific* company recall is low. Other than recalling that Amazon is hiring more workers to aid with shipping, voter recall of specific companies was insignificant.

The following are several actions companies and businesses are taking to try and help people deal with the economic impact of the coronavirus. For each one, please indicate how aware you are of any company taking that action.



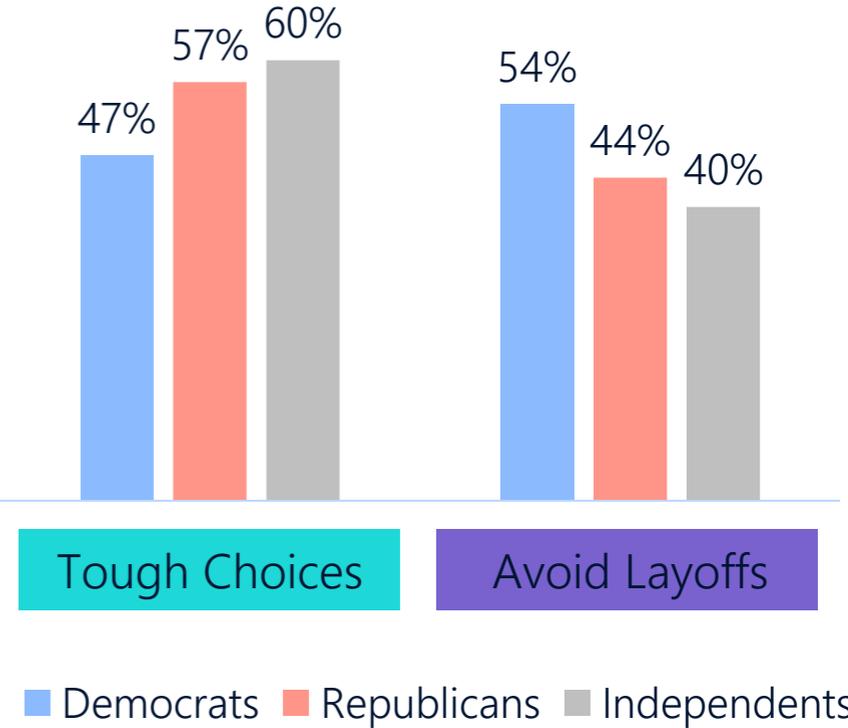
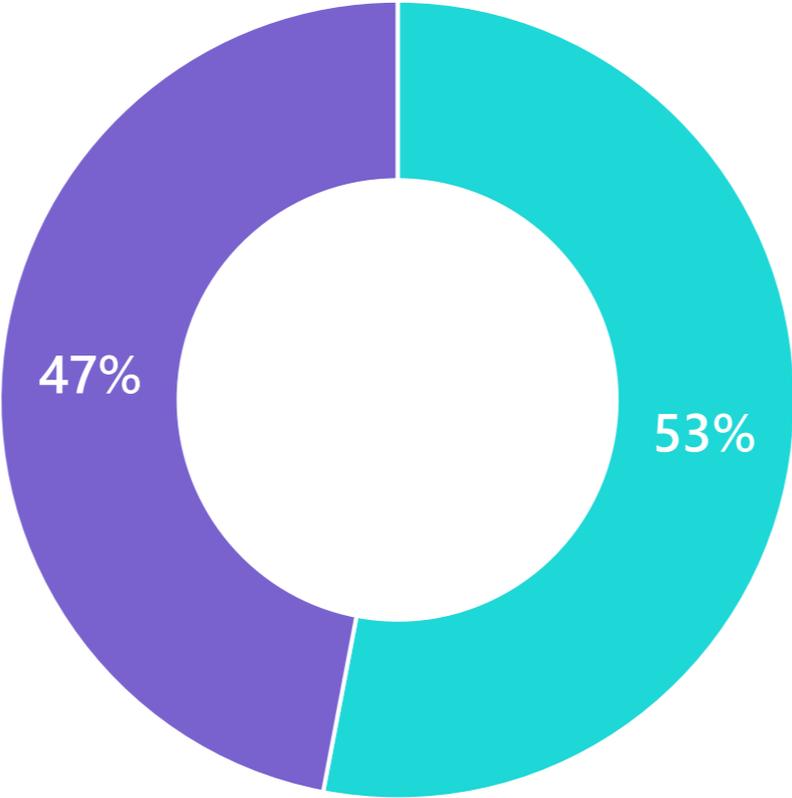
What are the expectations for layoffs and furloughs?



American voters understand layoffs are unavoidable for numerous companies and accept tough choices may be necessary for long-term survival. Majorities of Republicans and Independents business's futures are paramount, while Democrats believes companies should do everything they can to avoid layoffs.

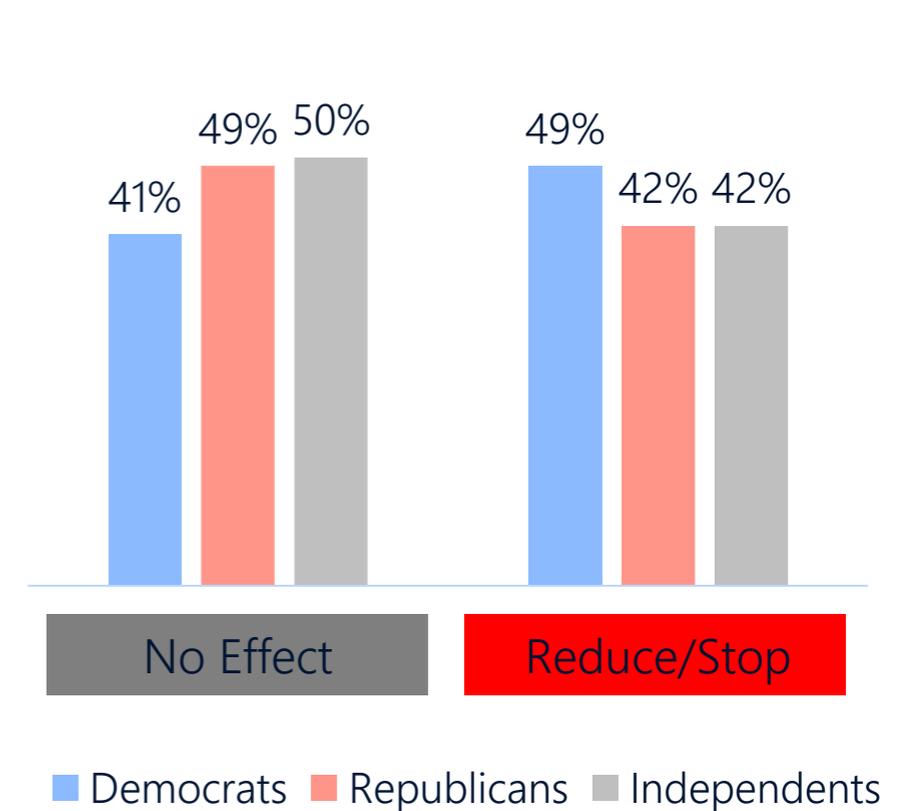
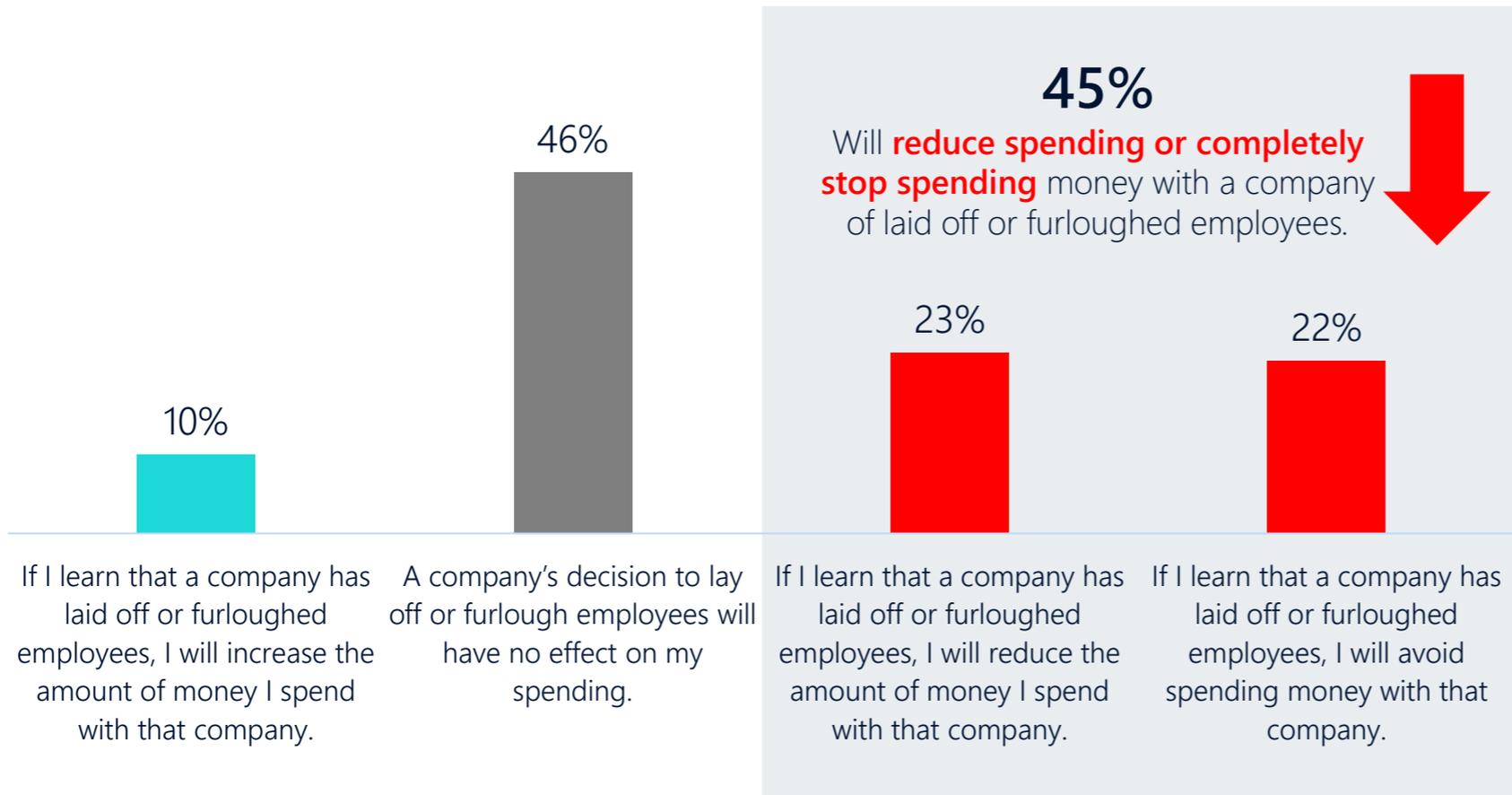
As you may be aware, many companies have announced they either currently are laying off or will be laying off employees in order to stay in business. Knowing this, which of the following statements comes closer to what you believe?

- For businesses to survive, they may need to make tough choices including laying off or furloughing some employees.
- Businesses should do everything in their power to avoid layoffs, even if that means the company has to go in debt or its future is jeopardized.



However, nearly half of all voters still say they'll spend less with a company that has laid off or furloughed employees. Democratic voters are more likely to reduce or stop their spending.

As some companies begin reducing hours and jobs due to the coronavirus, how do you think it will affect your spending?



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