



# DEEP, DESTRUCTIVE AND DISTURBING:

## WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THE TODAY'S AMERICAN INSURRECTIONIST MOVEMENT

**Based on a CPOST (NORC) American Political Violence Survey**

*Nationally representative survey conducted June 9-17, 2021*



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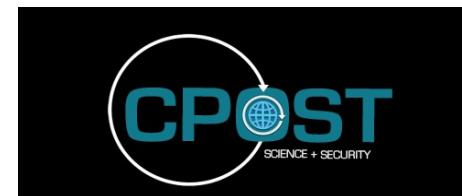


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- *Mark Zivin*
- *Ann Airy*

In July 2021, six months after the insurrectionist attack on the U.S. Capitol, Gen. Mark A. Milley in his testimony to the House Armed Services Committee asked...

# SUMMER 2021 RESEARCH TEAM



## Project Leadership



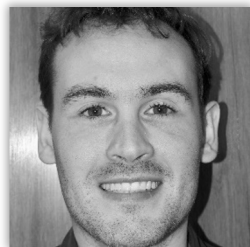
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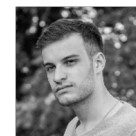
## Student Research Team



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**Ben Popp**



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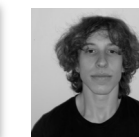
**Liberto de Pablo**



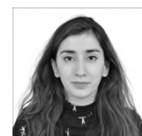
**Jack Howard**



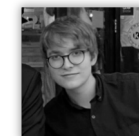
**Astrid Weinberg**



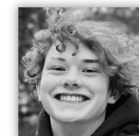
**Miles Dintzer**



**Siza Abassi**



**William Pitch**



**Callum McFarlane**



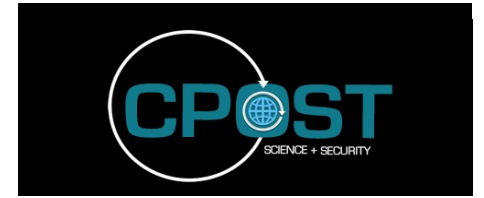
**Katie O'Connor**



**Robert Brown**



**Rod Cowan**  
Executive Director



“What is it that caused thousands of people to assault this building and try to overturn the Constitution of the United States of America? What caused that?”

Gen. Mark A. Milley





# WHY AMERICAN POLITICAL VIOLENCE MATTERS TODAY

To avoid a repeat of the January 6 assault on the Capitol and similar attacks, we need a fine-grained diagnosis of the scope and drivers of the insurrectionist movement to develop an effective risk assessment of political violence in the 2022 mid-term and 2024 US Presidential elections.



	DIAGNOSTIC	
	COVID	APV
Stage 1	CV19 >10x flu	Jan 6 = mainstream >fringe
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Timing	Summer-winter	Summer-winter 2021
Total cost	100s biillions	Several million





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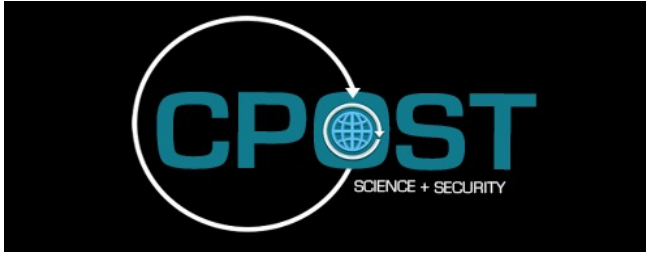


## GOALS CPOST JUNE 2021 AMERICAN POLITICAL VIOLENCE SURVEY

- **More pointed questions about election-related violence**
- **Widen aperture to search for additional risk factors**
- **Identify Impact of Social versus Traditional Media**
- **Identify who can influence the Movement**

## SOME KEY FINDINGS

- Insurrectionist movement is continuing, larger + more dangerous than previously assessed
- Driven by two distinct beliefs
  - Great Replacement of African-American and Hispanic rights exceeding those of whites
  - QANON claims of pedophile cult run government
- The insurrectionists are not necessarily who you think they are from where you would expect
- Surprising sources of potential influence



**SIZE + POTENTIAL**

# INSURRECTIONIST MOVEMENT

## Definition and Scope

### Insurrectionist Movement defined by

**Political grievances associated with force**



**Capacity to engage in organized violence**



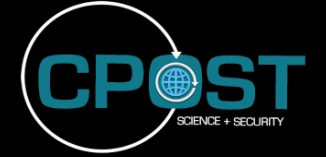
- Agree, “The 2020 election was stolen from Donald Trump and Joe Biden is an illegitimate president.”
- Agree, “The use of force is justified to restore Donald Trump to the presidency.”



- Own at least one gun
- Member or supporter of organized violent group (militia or extremist group)
- Military experience (veteran, active duty)



## POLITICAL GRIEVANCES RELATED TO VIOLENCE



9%

Use of force to restore former President Trump to the White House is justified

23,000,000  
Americans

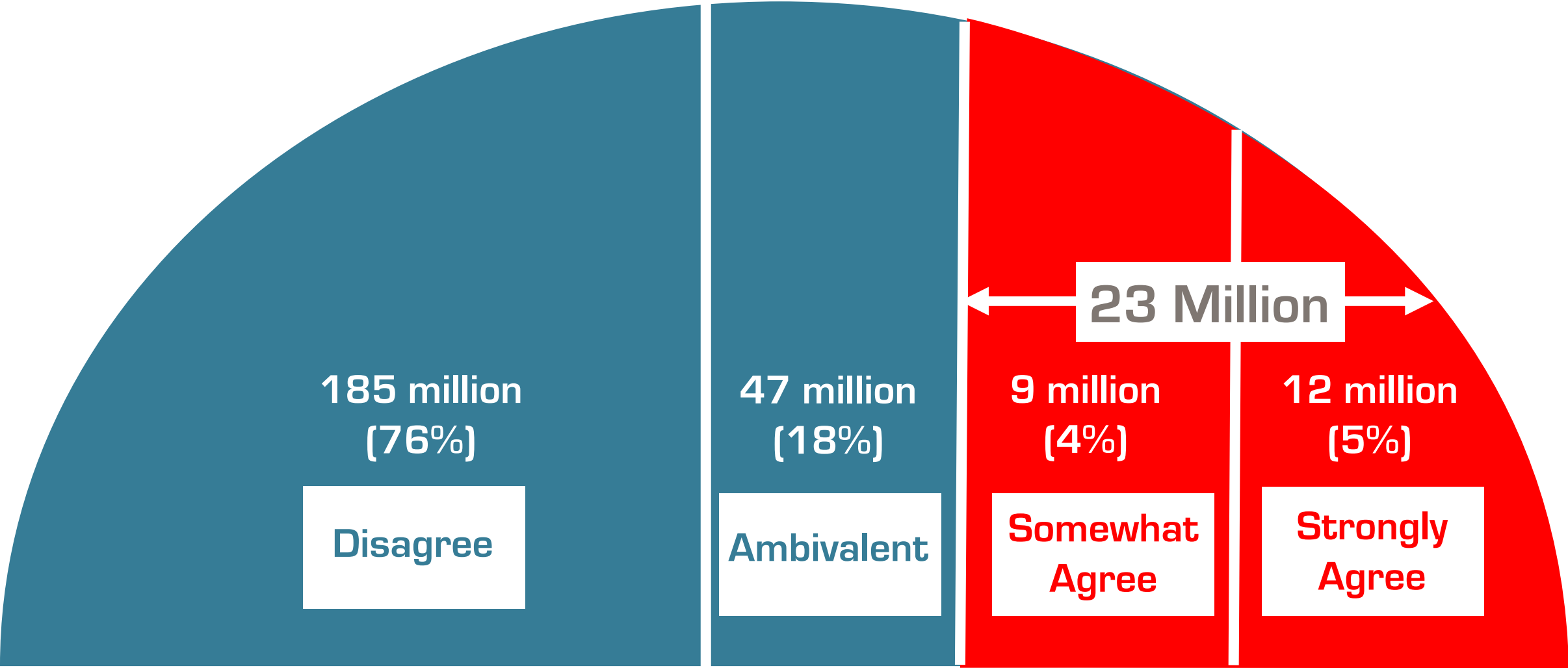
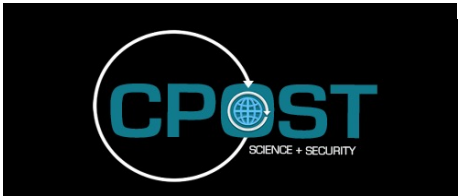
26%

2020 election stolen and Biden presidency illegitimate

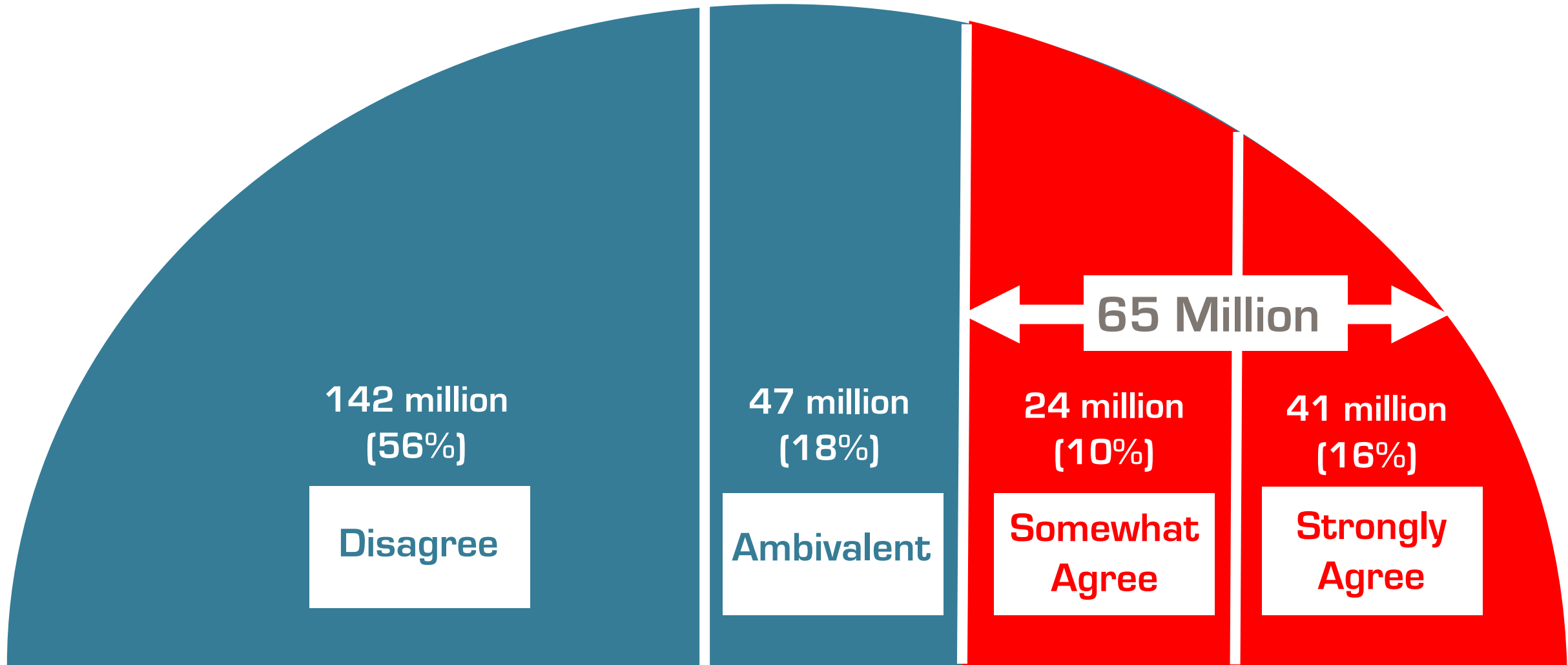
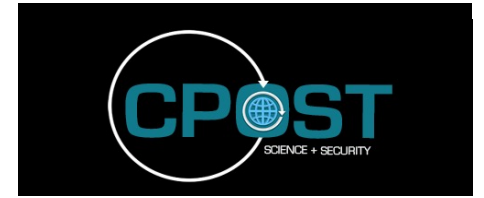
65,000,000

*21 million (32%) of whom want Trump restored by force*

23 MILLION AMERICANS SUPPORT  
TRUMP TO PRESIDENCY BY FORCE

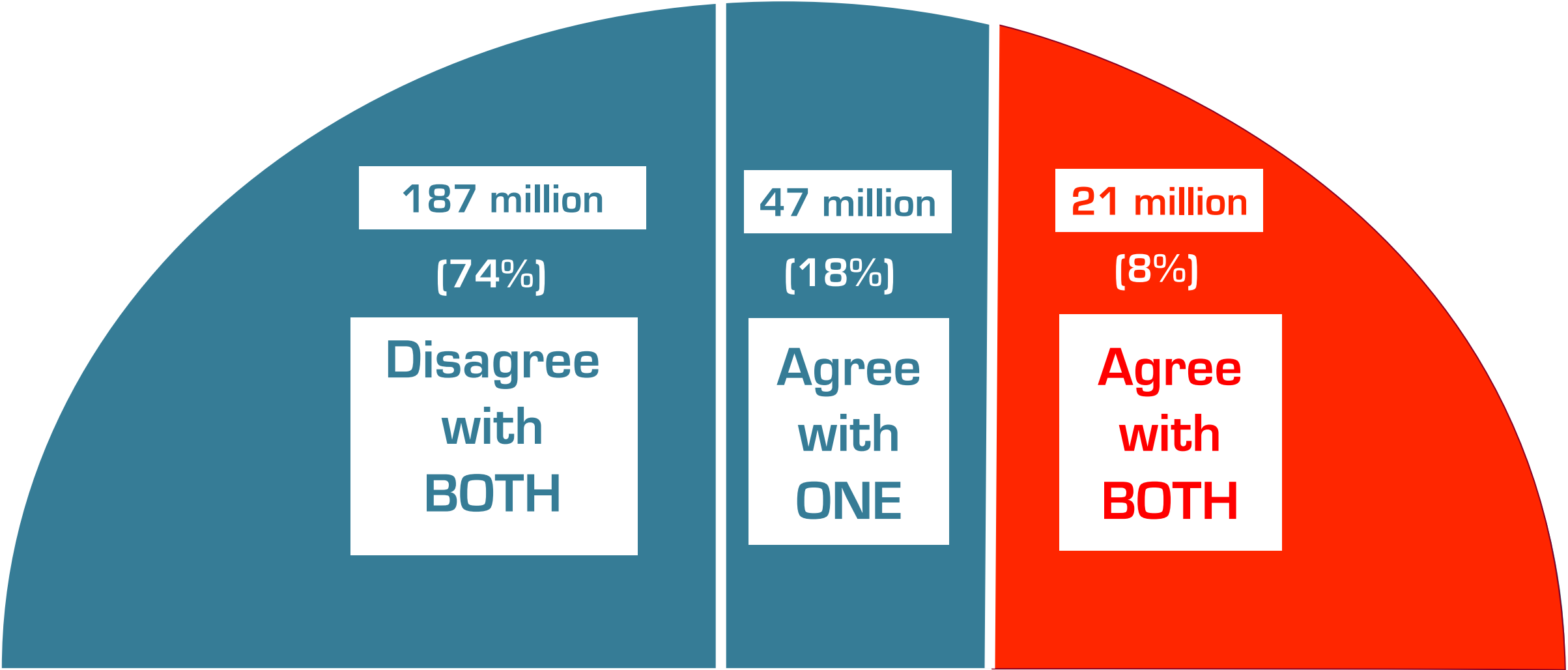
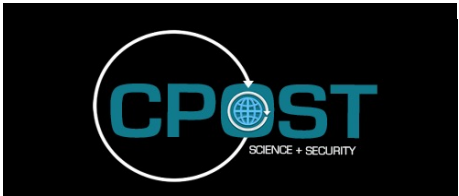


## 65 MILLION AMERICANS BELIEVE



21 MILLION AMERICANS BELIEVE BOTH:

+





# WHY CPOST (NORC) CAN BE TRUSTED



High degree of stable responses across categories

- Of those who agree force is justified to restore Trump to Presidency:
  - 90% think Biden is an **Illegitimate president**
  - 69% think **force is needed** to preserve America's traditional way of life
- These highly “adamant”\* insurrectionists equal **15 million American adults**
- *\*Believe force justified to restore Trump and hold at least one other radical belief. 14.5 million = lower bound.*

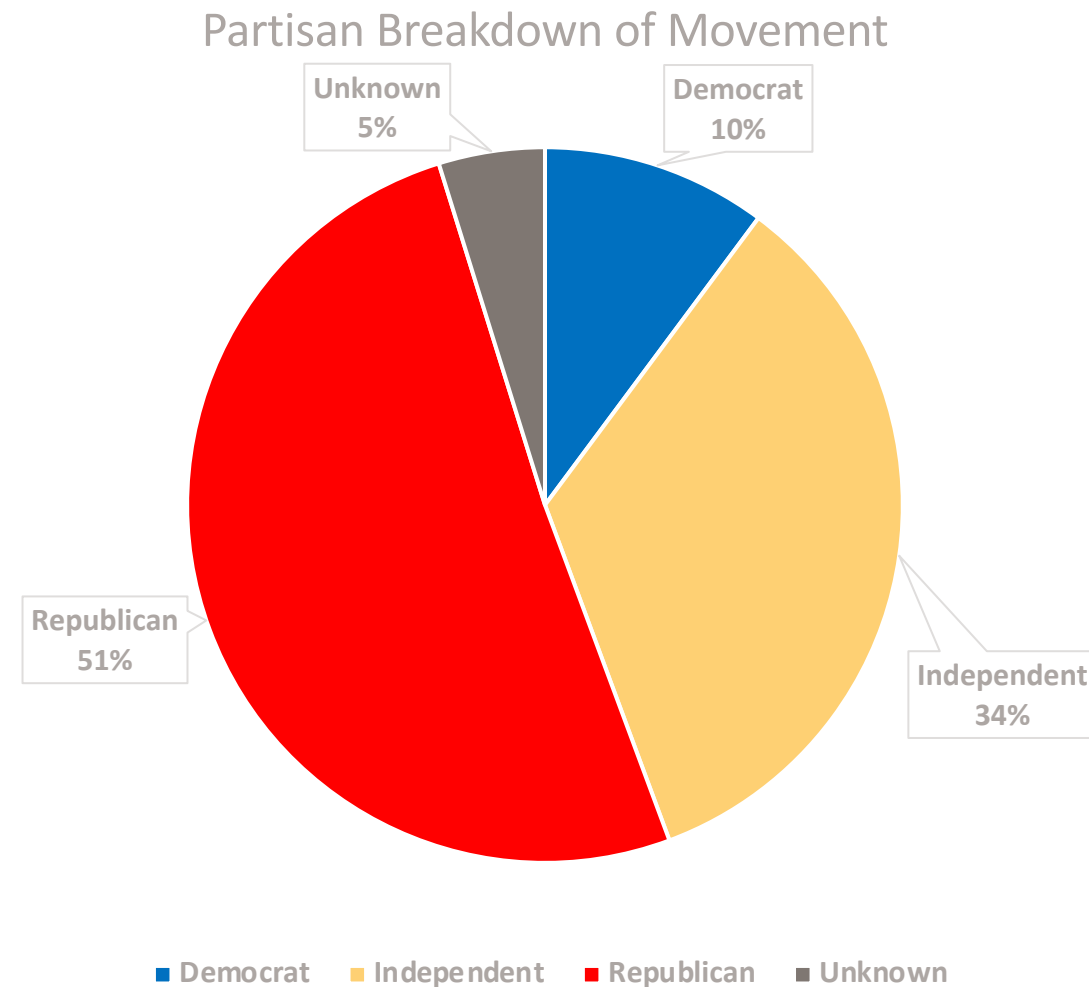
# MOVEMENT MAINLY URBAN

	Metro Area	Rural Area
Restore Trump by Force	71%	29%
Biden illegitimate	77%	23%

# 21 MILLION ARE NOT ONLY REPUBLICAN

- Restore Trump by Force and Biden Illegitimate:

- 51% Republican
- 34% Independent
- 10% Democratic



## MANY SEE GOVERNMENT AS “ENEMY”

47%

Federal government is their “enemy”  
(10 million people)

24%

Police are their “enemy”  
(5 million people)

Not unique to movement  
therefore  
not considered a driver



# THE 21 MILLION ARE DANGEROUS

Significant capacity for violent organizational growth

4% of the Movement are either militia members or personally know a militia member (1 million people).

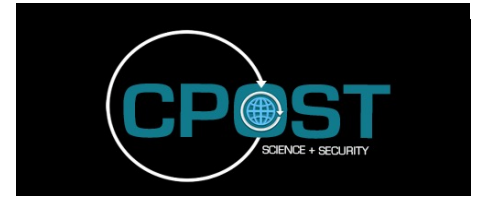
Real potential for additional, potentially violent mobilization:

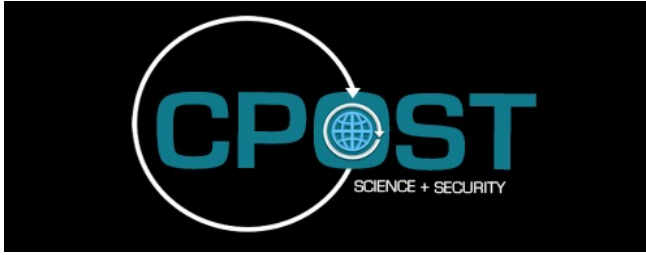
27% of the 21 million *supports* militias like the Oath Keepers and extremist groups like the Proud Boys (6 million people).

32% (at least) of the 21 million guns (7 million people).

15% have prior US military service (3 million people)

All have easy access to internet tools for rapid organization





# BELIEFS + SOURCES

## TWO MAJOR BELIEFS WITHIN MOVEMENT

63%

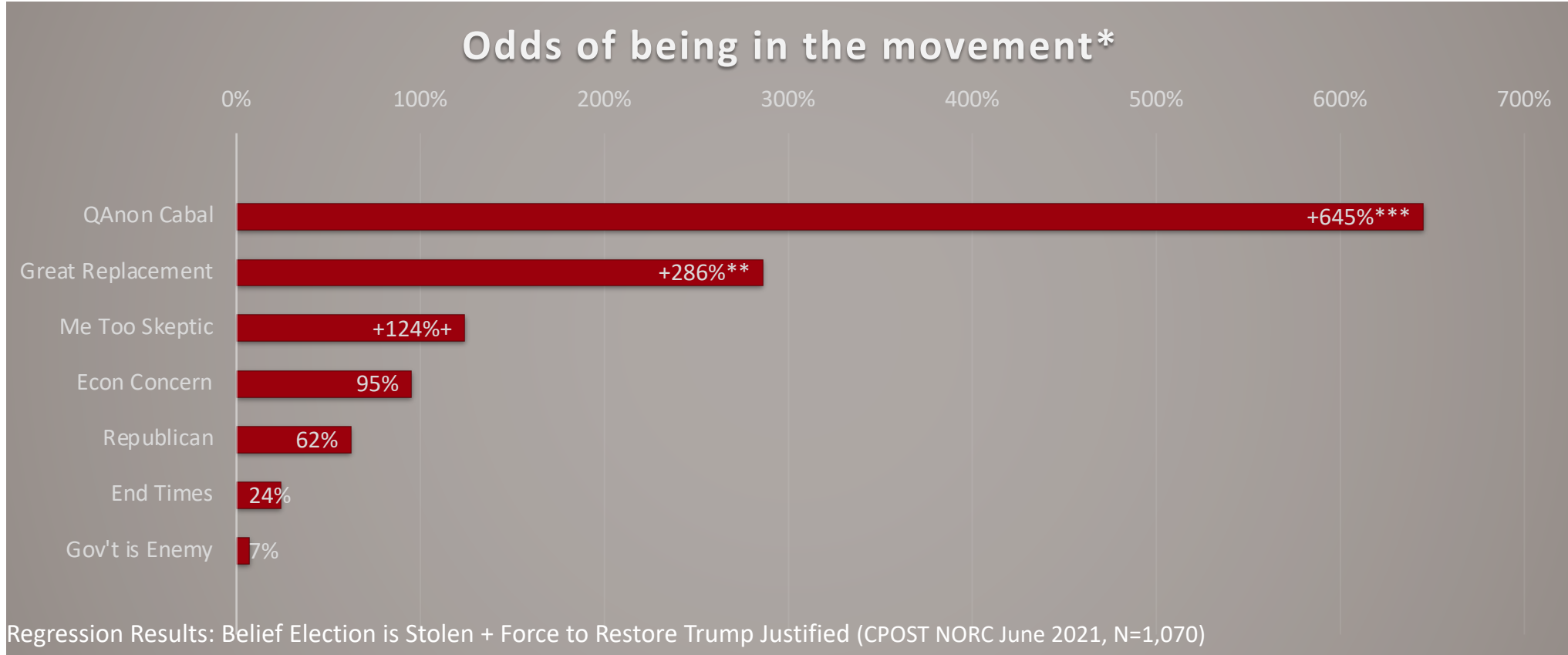
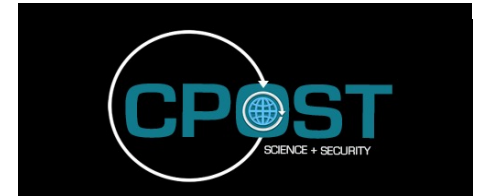
**Great Replacement:** “African American people or Hispanic people in our country will eventually have more rights than whites”

54%

**QAnon cabal:** “A secret group of Satan-worshipping pedophiles is ruling the US government”

# BELIEFS PREDICT THE 21 MILLION

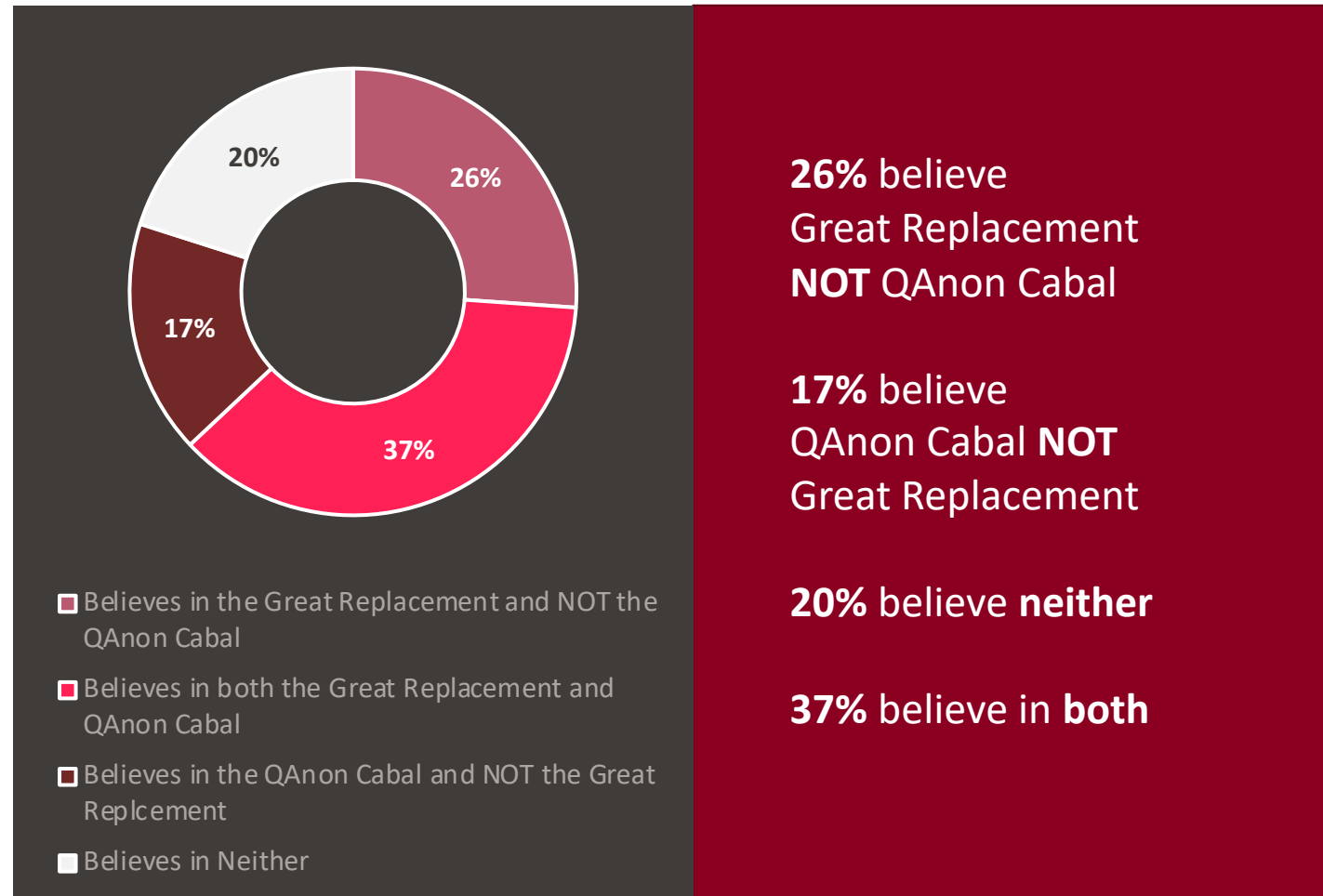
## Great Replacement & Qanon, strongest predictors



*Logistic regression, controlling for age < 35, male, white, low income, low education, military service, social media (any), traditional media (any). Results presented as percent change in odds of being in Movement due to presence of factor, all else equal.*

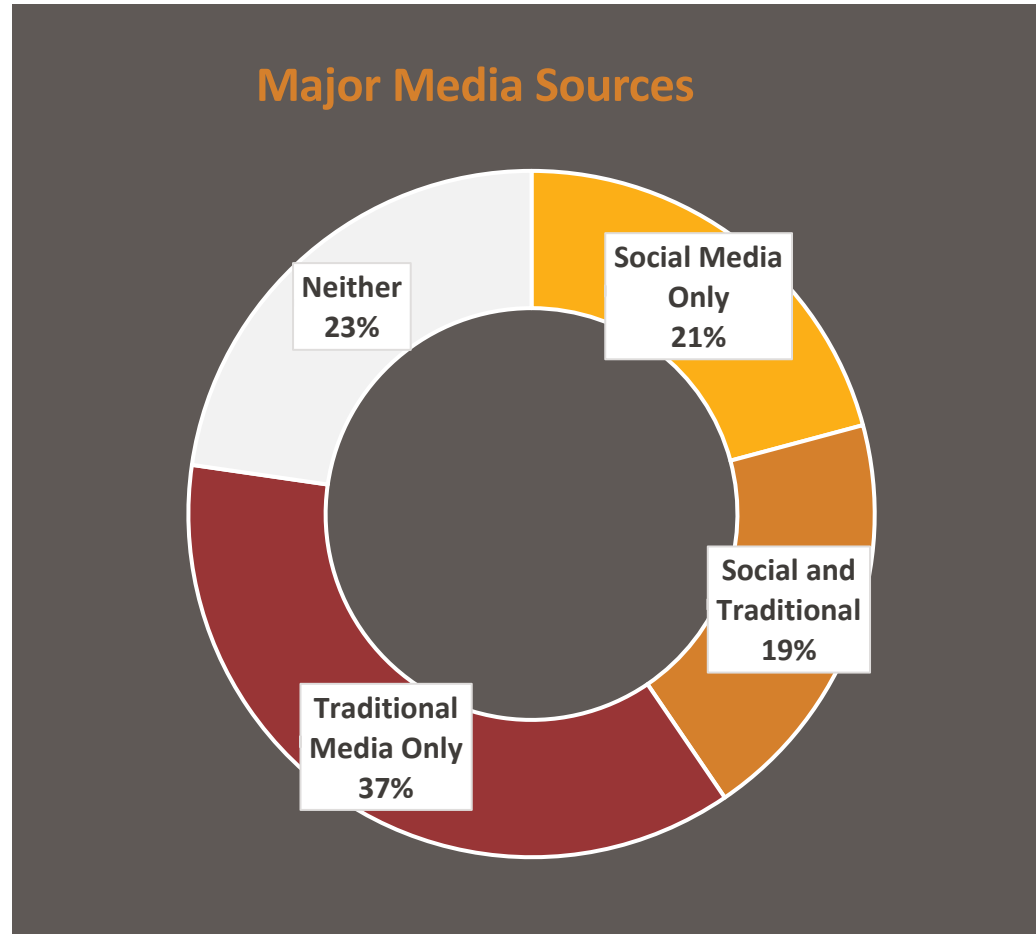
# MAJOR BELIEFS DO NOT FULLY OVERLAP

## MULTIPLE PATHWAYS INTO THE MOVEMENT



# NEWS CONSUMPTION AMONG THE 21 MILLION

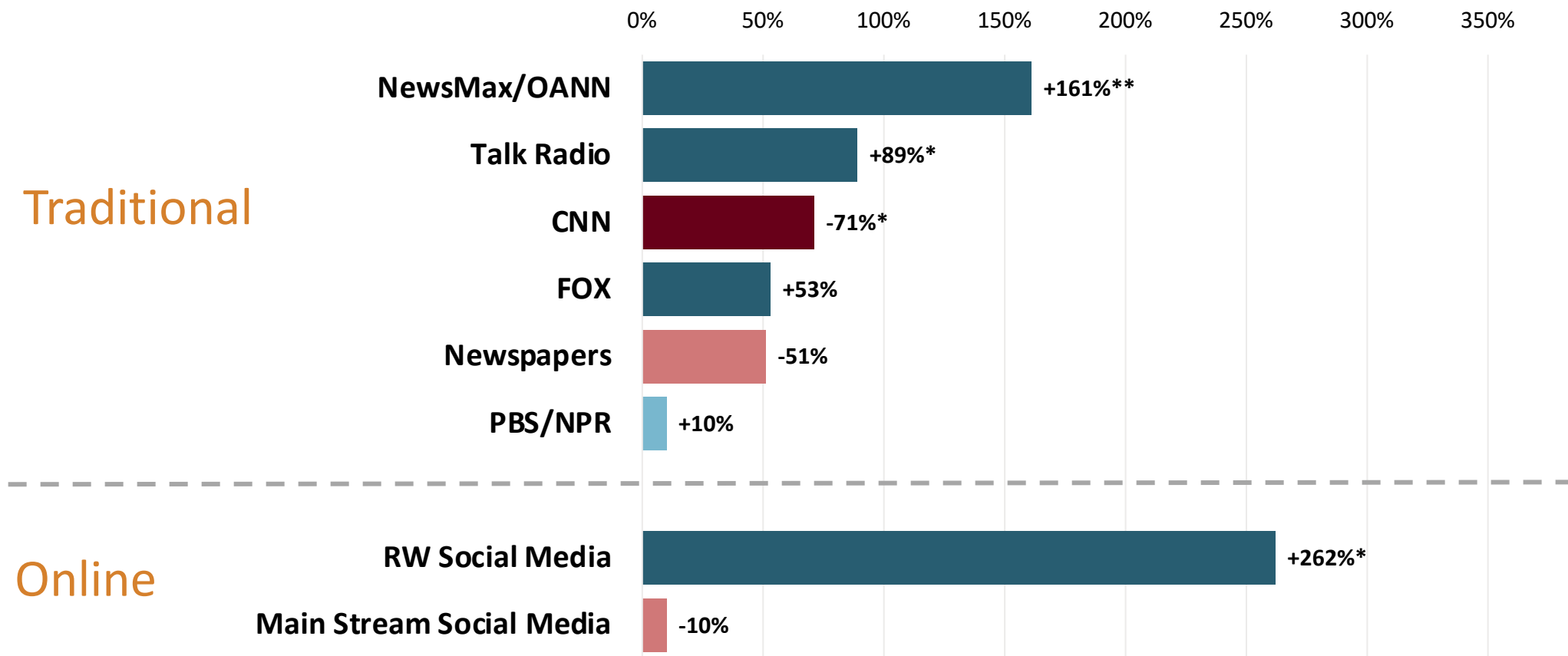
Mainstream more popular than social media



- **56%** of movement use at least one **mainstream** outlet (e.g. CNN, Fox, NPR, etc.)
- **40%** of movement use at least one **social media** platform (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Parler, etc.)
- **21%** of movement use **only social media**

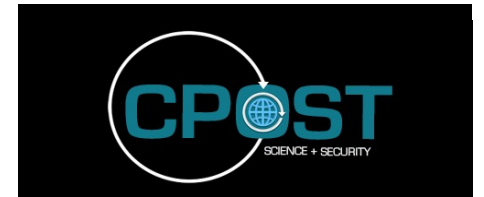
# ODDS OF BEING IN THE 21 MILLION IF YOU WATCH...

RW Media news sources = strongest odds (but not Fox)

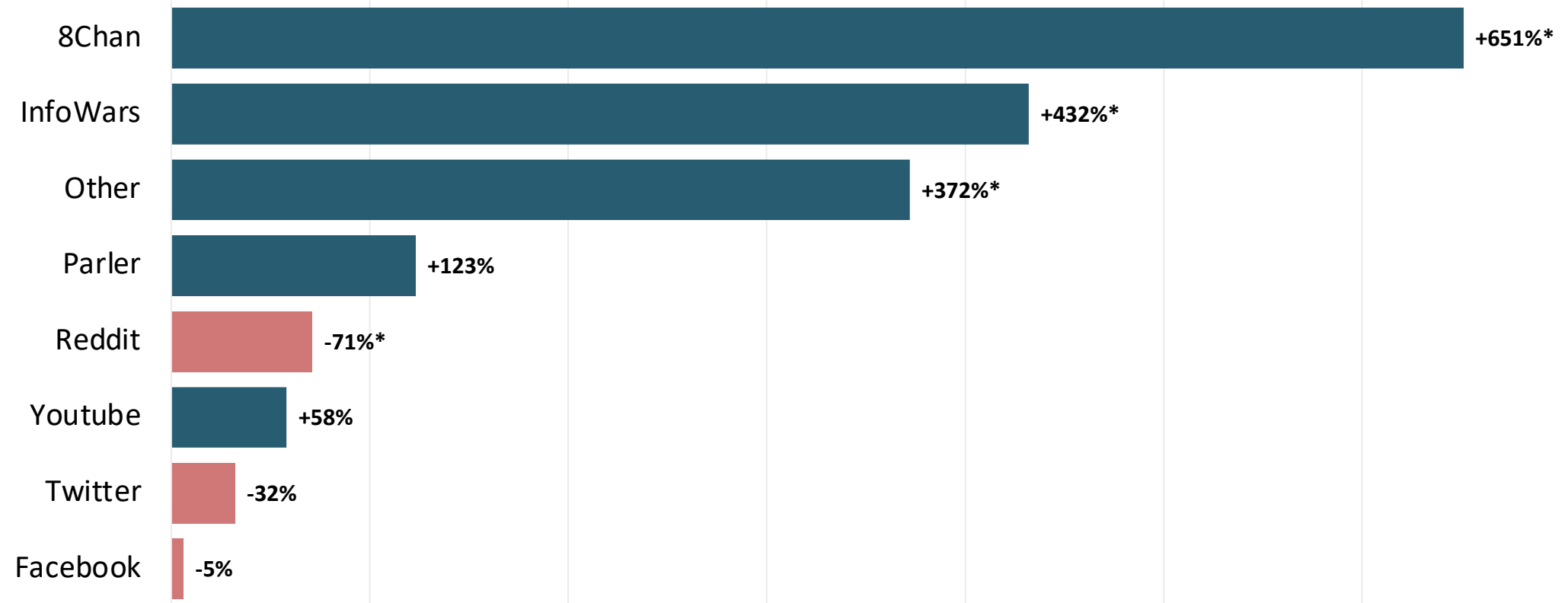


Regression Results: Belief Election is Stolen + Force to Restore Trump Justified (CPOST NORC June 2021, N=1,070)

# ODDS OF BEING IN THE 21 MILLION IF YOU VIEW...



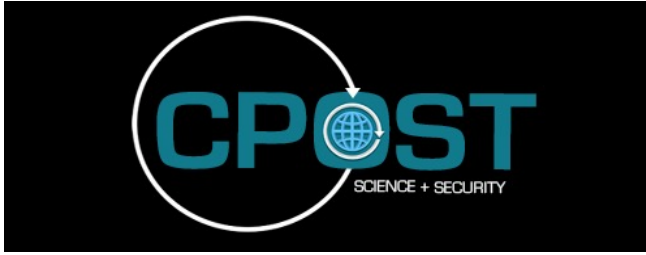
8chan & InfoWars major source of news = strongest predictors



**Regression Results: Belief Election is Stolen + Force to Restore Trump Justified (CPOST NORC June 2021, N=1,070)**

Logistic regression, No controls. Results presented as percent change in odds of being in Movement due to presence of factor, all else equal.



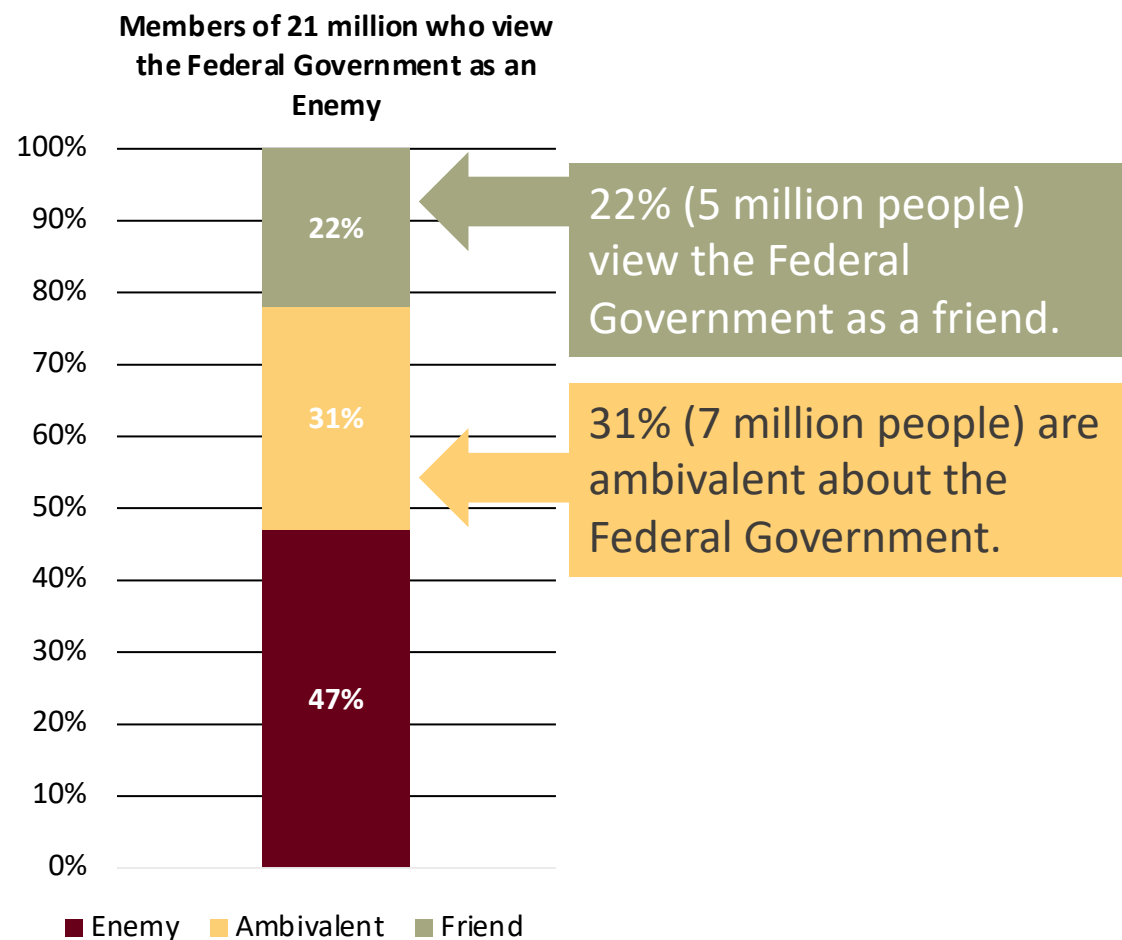


# INFLUENCE + MESSAGING

# NOT ALL SEE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AS “ENEMY”

Significant fraction of people say force justified to restore Trump to presidency

**BUT**

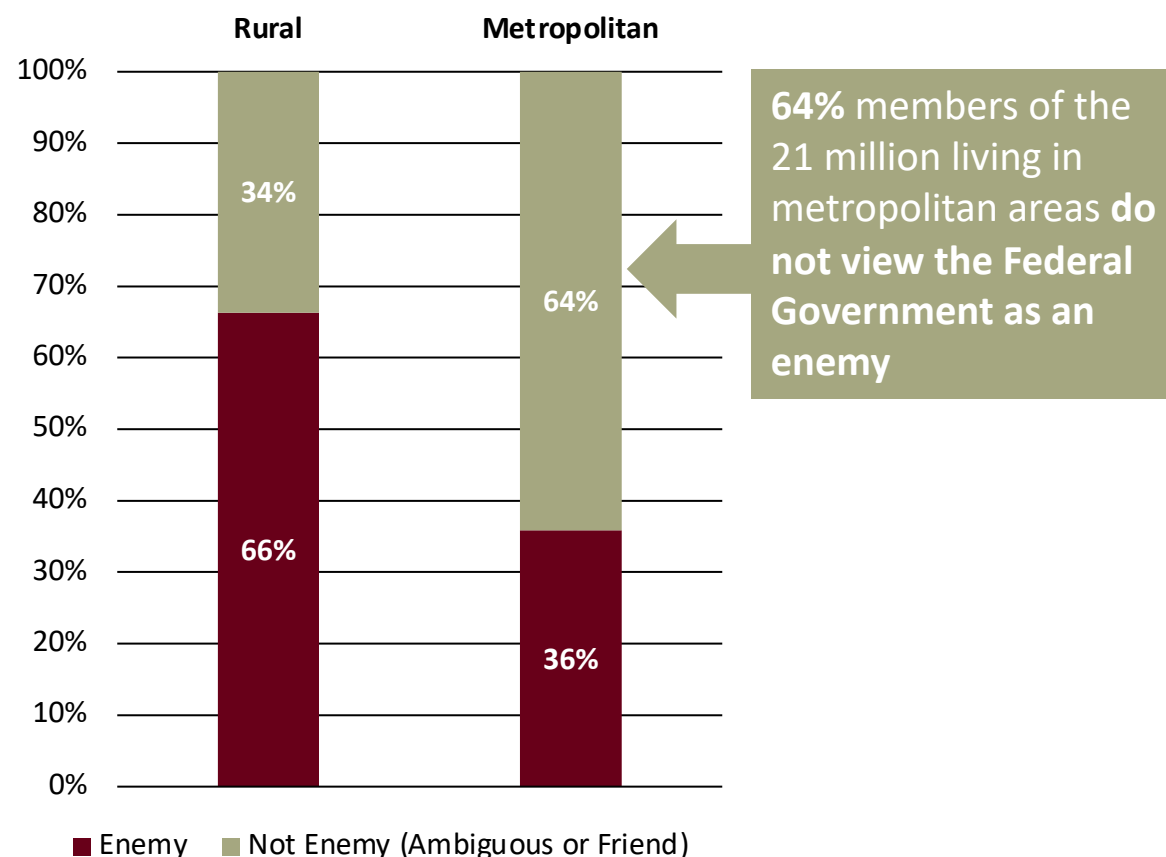


**53%**

# URBAN AREAS LESS ANTI-GOVERNMENT

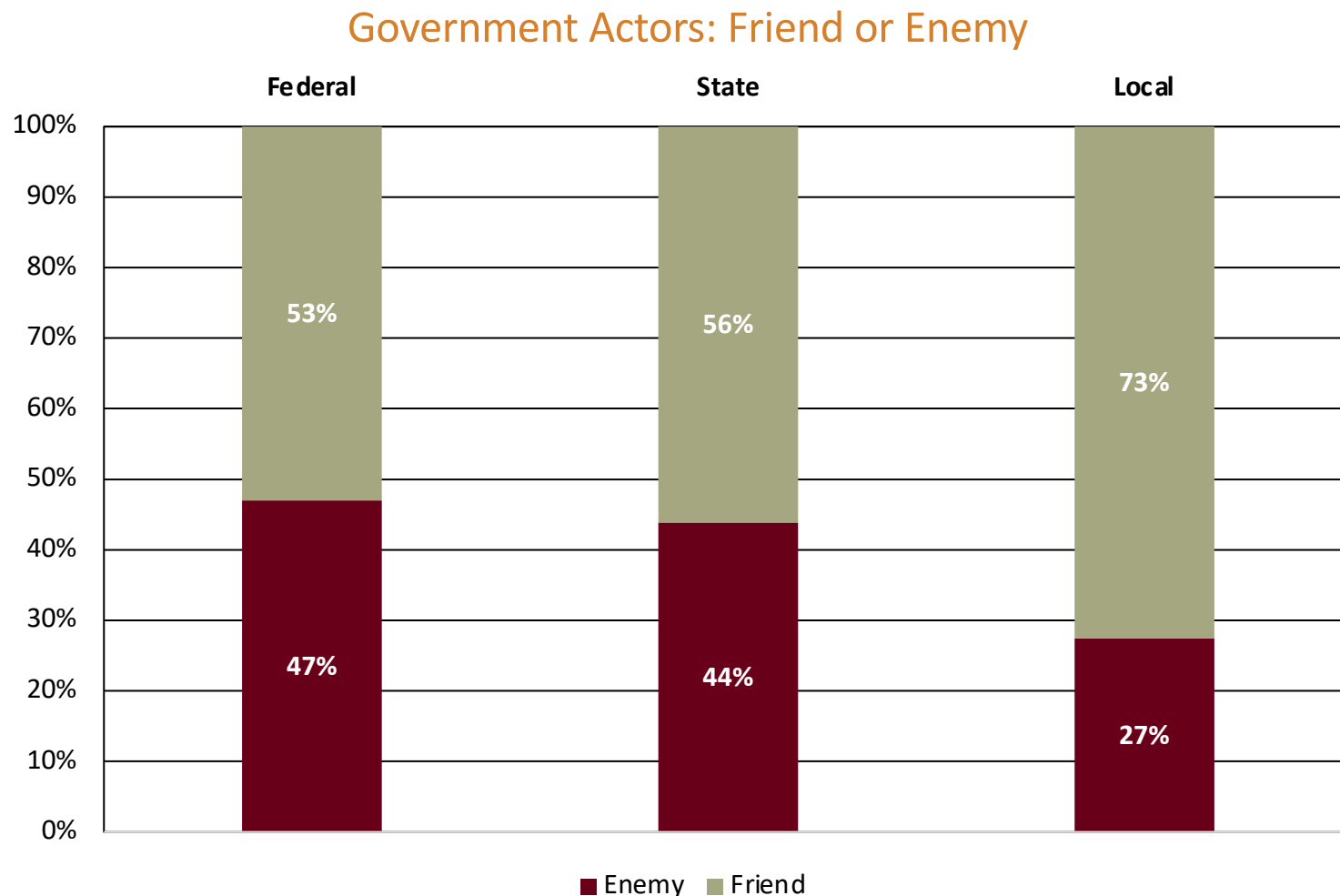
- Metropolitan members of the 21 million are much less likely to view the Federal Government as an Enemy
  - 64% in metro areas do NOT see government as an enemy
  - 66% in rural areas DO see government as enemy

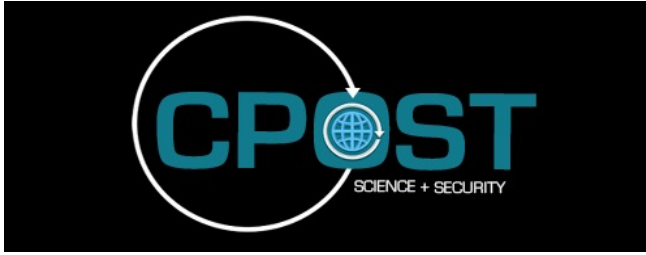
## Government as “enemy”



# LOCAL GOVERNMENTS MOST TRUSTED

- Federal Government not the only actor trusted by some members of the movement
- State governments, local governments, **not typically seen as enemy actors** by members of the movement
- Local governments are most trusted sources
  - Three quarters of the movement view local governments and the police as non-enemy actors
  - **Mayors can have potentially outsized influence over the movement**





**TO HOLD THE LINE FOR  
AMERICAN DEMOCRACY WE NEED TO  
MOVE THE LINE ON RESEARCH & ANALYSIS**



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# PATHWAY TO STAGE IV

## Urgently needed:

- Monthly and expanded nationally representative surveys thru November 2022
- Surveys of the vulnerability of the military to recruitment by militia groups
- Network of independent experts to build findings into viable policies
- Test policy initiatives to demonstrate effectiveness
- Whitehouse commitment to accelerate understanding and response

**Flashpoint:** The 2022 Election season is coming