National Security Action & Defend American Democracy Impeachment Poll in Key GOP Districts

Using its Dynamic Online Sampling Engine to accurately sample the electorate, Change Research polled 3,023 likely 2020 voters, including 1,024 in IL-13, 998 in MI-6, and 998 in NY-24 from November 26-December 1, 2019 (excluding Thanksgiving Day). Post-stratification was performed on age, gender, ethnicity, education and 2016 Presidential vote.

Key Findings:

On behalf of National Security Action and Defend American Democracy, Change Research polled likely voters in three Republican-held House battleground districts: Illinois 13 (Rodney Davis), Michigan 6 (Fred Upton), and New York 24 (John Katko).[1] The goals were to understand how closely voters were tracking Trump's Ukraine scandal, the House Intelligence Committee hearings, what evidence and arguments for or against impeachment are most resonant, whether voters recognize the seriousness Trump's actions, and how voters expect their member of Congress to hold Trump accountable.

These congressmen enter 2020 with exceptionally low favorability ratings and with majorities disapproving of their handling of the impeachment inquiry and their record when it comes to holding President Trump accountable. A majority of voters in these key Republican districts think what Trump did was wrong and, once they hear the facts, are less likely to support Members of Congress who oppose the impeachment inquiry.

Specifically, majorities express concern about facts established during the impeachment inquiry and believe that the primary grounds for impeachment have been established - including believing Trump abused the power of his office, withheld military funds to pressure a foreigncountry to investigate a political rival, and put his personal political interests before the good of the country. The survey also found that voters will not reward Republicans for their opposition to impeachment: just 38% say they are more likely to support a member of Congress who opposes impeachment at the end of the survey, while a 54% majority says they are *less likely* to support an impeachment opponent after hearing arguments on both sides.

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[1] Rodney Davis barely won re-election in IL-13 with 50.4 percent of the vote in 2018 (+0.8), Fred Upton was re-elected in MI-6 with 50.2 percent of the vote in 2018 (+4.5), and John Katko was re-elected in NY-24 with 53.6 percent of the vote in 2018 (+5.2).

The message is clear: voters in these districts believe their representatives should put politics aside during impeachment and do their job.

I.   Republican incumbents are unpopular and voters believe they are not doing enough to hold Trump accountable

The vulnerability of these Republican members of Congress is reflected in their favorability ratings, which start from a net negative position in each district. John Katko is 8 points net unfavorable and Rodney Davis is 10 points net unfavorable. Fred Upton, is a remarkable 40 points net unfavorable. In particular, majorities in these swing districts - districts where it still pays to appear independent - disapprove of the job their congressman is doing standing up to President Trump and holding President Trump accountable. Majorities also disapprove of their congressman's handling of the impeachment inquiry.
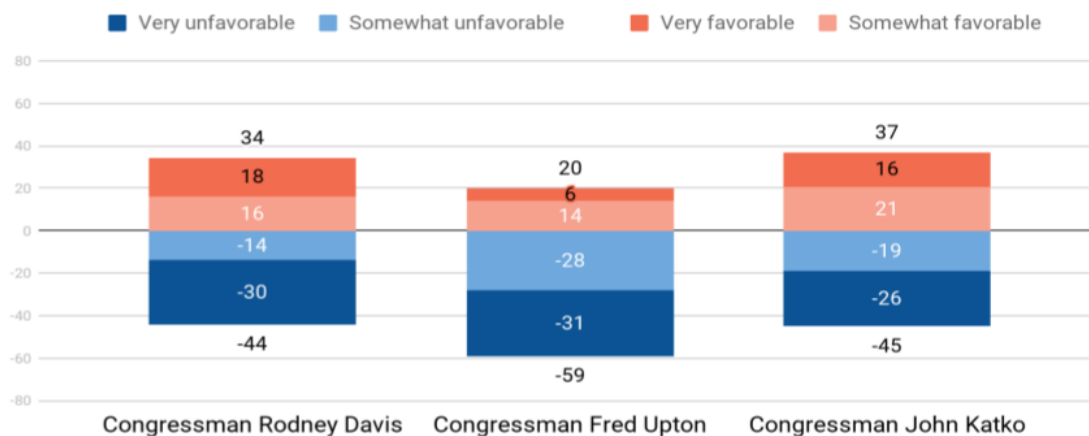
But if these Republicans are hoping to take on enough of Trump's water today to make it through their GOP primary, and rely on their approval ratings on the economy to survive another general election, they should take a look at their dismal approval ratings on voters' top priority, health care costs. Just 37% approve of Rodney Davis' handling on health care costs, just 32% approve of John Katko's handing, and a dismal 26% approve of Fred Upton's handling of health care costs.

Majorities disapprove of their handling of impeachment and Trump

Do you approve of disapprove of the job that Congressman ____ is doing on the following issues?

■ Strongly disapprove ■ Somewhat disapprove ■ Strongly approve ■ Somewhat approve

	The impeachment inquiry into President Trump			Standing up to President Trump when it's right for people here			Holding President Trump accountable		
	Rodney Davis	Fred Upton	John Katko	Rodney Davis	Fred Upton	John Katko	Rodney Davis	Fred Upton	John Katko
Total approve	36	26	32	45	35	43	45	38	40
Strongly approve	21	9	17	23	12	21	22	15	18
Somewhat approve	15	17	15	22	23	22	23	23	22
Somewhat disapprove	-10	-22	-15	-15	-21	-18	-13	-19	-15
Strongly disapprove	-53	-52	-54	-40	-44	-40	-42	-44	-45
Total disapprove	-63	-74	-69	-55	-65	-58	-55	-63	-60

4

II.   Voters are closely tracking the impeachment inquiry

After the House Intelligence Committee's hearings, seven-in-ten voters have heard or seen a lot about the impeachment inquiry, and they are very concerned by what they have learned.

Intense concerns about facts established

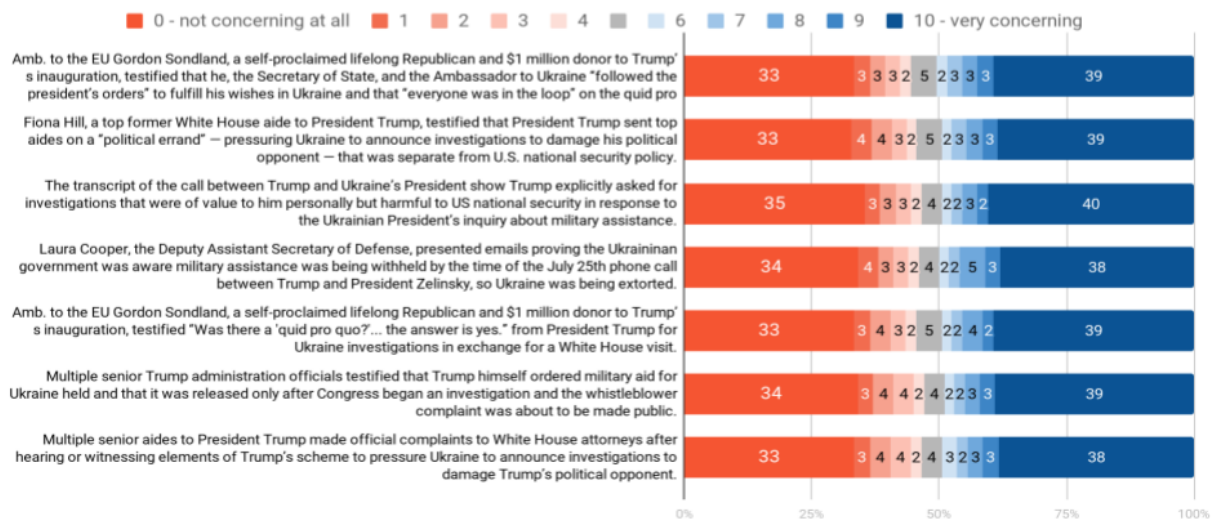These are some things that Trump Administration officials have testified under oath during the impeachment inquiry. How serious are the concerns about President Trump raised by each statement on a 0-10 scale, where 0 means it is not concerning at all and 10 means it is very concerning.

■ 0 - not concerning at all ■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10 - very concerning

Statement	0										10
Amb. to the EU Gordon Sondland, a self-proclaimed lifelong Republican and $1 million donor to Trump's inauguration, testified that he, the Secretary of State, and the Ambassador to Ukraine "followed the president's orders" to fulfill his wishes in Ukraine and that "everyone was in the loop" on the quid pro	33	3	3	3	2	5	2	3	3	3	39
Fiona Hill, a top former White House aide to President Trump, testified that President Trump sent top aides on a "political errand" — pressuring Ukraine to announce investigations to damage his political opponent — that was separate from U.S. national security policy.	33	4	4	3	2	5	2	3	3	3	39
The transcript of the call between Trump and Ukraine's President show Trump explicitly asked for investigations that were of value to him personally but harmful to US national security in response to the Ukrainian President's inquiry about military assistance.	35	3	3	3	2	4	2	2	3	2	40
Laura Cooper, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, presented emails proving the Ukraininan government was aware military assistance was being withheld by the time of the July 25th phone call between Trump and President Zelinsky, so Ukraine was being extorted.	34	4	3	3	2	4	2	2	5	3	38
Amb. to the EU Gordon Sondland, a self-proclaimed lifelong Republican and $1 million donor to Trump's inauguration, testified "Was there a 'quid pro quo?'... the answer is yes." from President Trump for Ukraine investigations in exchange for a White House visit.	33	3	4	3	2	5	2	2	4	2	39
Multiple senior Trump administration officials testified that Trump himself ordered military aid for Ukraine held and that it was released only after Congress began an investigation and the whistleblower complaint was about to be made public.	34	3	4	4	2	4	2	2	3	3	39
Multiple senior aides to President Trump made official complaints to White House attorneys after hearing or witnessing elements of Trump's scheme to pressure Ukraine to announce investigations to damage Trump's political opponent.	33	3	4	4	2	4	3	2	3	3	38

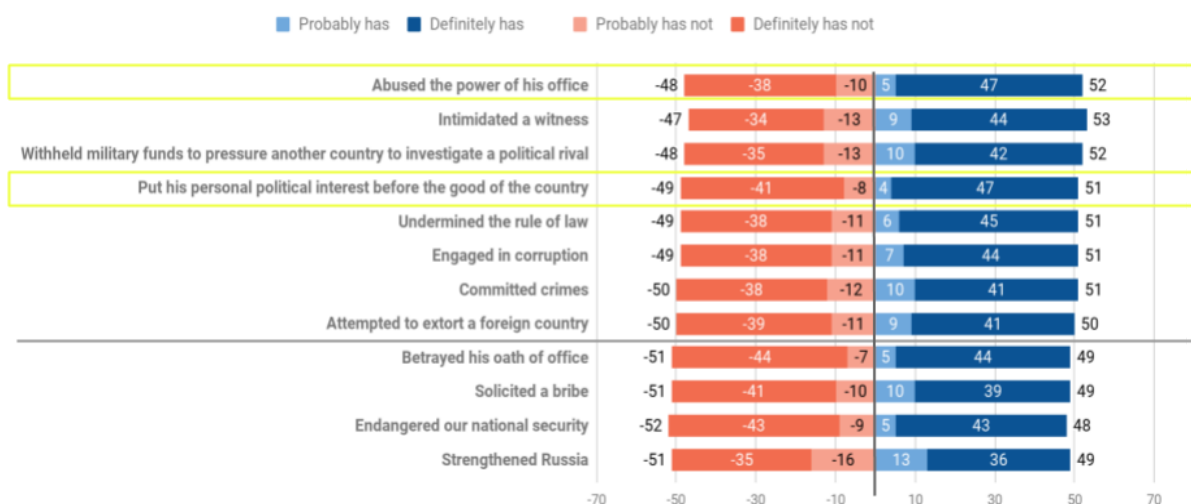0%   25%   50%   75%   100%

There was very little variation in the responses to key inquiry findings: majorities express strong concerns about the facts established during the impeachment investigation so far - assigning a level of concern higher than 5 on a 0-to-10 scale (where 0 means it raises no concerns and 10 means it is very concerning). Indeed, *roughly 4-in-10 voters assign the maximum '10' level of concern for each key finding*. It is worth noting that the transcript of the phone call between Trump and the President of Ukraine remains a compelling evidence, despite the GOP efforts to turn "read the transcript" into a defense

It is clear that voters, even in these more conservative-leaning districts, believe that the President's conduct is wildly inappropriate and worthy of the investigation underway. Regardless of their feelings about impeachment, majorities in these districts believe that Trump has engaged in conduct that will ultimately provide the basis for impeachment articles - including abusing the power of his office (52%, 47% strongly), withholding military funds to pressure another country to investigate a political rival (52%), putting his personal political interests before the good of the country (51%, 47% strongly), and engaging in corruption (51%). Majorities also believe he has intimidated a witness (53%), undermined the rule of law (51%), and even committed crimes (51%).

Majorities say Trump engaged in alleged conduct

Regardless of how you feel about impeachment, do you think that President Trump has:

■ Probably has ■ Definitely has ■ Probably has not ■ Definitely has not

	Probably has not	Definitely has not	Probably has	Definitely has	
Abused the power of his office	-48	-38	-10	5	47	52
Intimidated a witness	-47	-34	-13	9	44	53
Withheld military funds to pressure another country to investigate a political rival	-48	-35	-13	10	42	52
Put his personal political interest before the good of the country	-49	-41	-8	4	47	51
Undermined the rule of law	-49	-38	-11	6	45	51
Engaged in corruption	-49	-38	-11	7	44	51
Committed crimes	-50	-38	-12	10	41	51
Attempted to extort a foreign country	-50	-39	-11	9	41	50
Betrayed his oath of office	-51	-44	-7	5	44	49
Solicited a bribe	-51	-41	-10	10	39	49
Endangered our national security	-52	-43	-9	5	43	48
Strengthened Russia	-51	-35	-16	13	36	49

-70   -50   -30   -10   10   30   50   70

III.   GOP arguments are less effective than those of impeachment supporters at moving 'impeachment persuadables'

About half of voters in these GOP-held districts already support impeachment without reservation, while just three-in-ten voters oppose impeachment and think Trump did nothing wrong. This leaves over one-in-five who are still impressionable on the impeachment question. These impeachment persuadables include:

- the 14% who currently oppose impeachment because they "haven't seen enough evidence to know if his conduct was wrong",
- the 6% who believe "his conduct was wrong, but it is not impeachable",
- the 1% who think "his conduct was impeachable, but impeachment will divide the country and the public should vote to remove him in the next election", and
- the 2% who are undecided on impeachment.

Just 3-in-10 say Trump shouldn't be impeached because did nothing wrong

Do you support or oppose the House of Representatives' impeachment inquiry into President Trump?
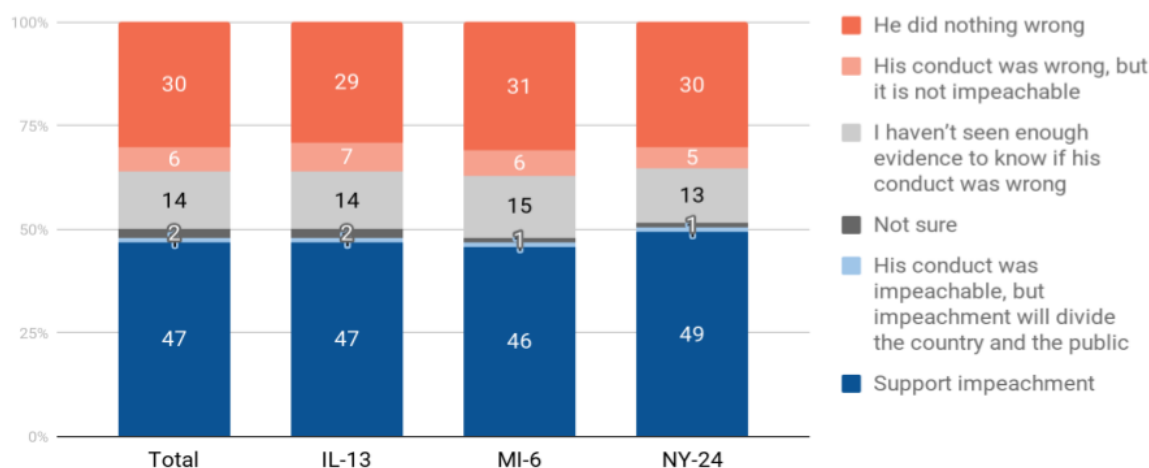
As the impeachment proceedings progress, these Republican members of Congress have few convincing arguments in their arsenal. The argument that "Donald Trump's actions are very troubling, but with an election coming next year, Congress should not overturn 63 million votes by impeaching the President now" was 'not convincing at all' to a stunning 55% majority of voters, including 36% of Republicans. A similar argument that says "Donald Trump may have engaged in wrongdoing, but it is not worthy of impeachment, which will divide our country and stop progress on critical issues like health care and trade deals" was 'not convincing at all' to 52% of voters, including 30% of Republicans.

Also unconvincing is an argument that "President Trump was right to ask his lawyer to investigate corruption in Ukraine. Ukraine has had it out for Trump since the 2016 election," which was 'not convincing at all' to nearly half of voters. This conspiracy theory seems to have some traction, however, with the Republican base. While 83% of Democrats and 46% of independents give this a 0 on a 1-10 scale (where 0 means it is not convincing at all and 10 means it is very convincing), 47% of Republicans say it is a 'very convincing' argument against impeachment.
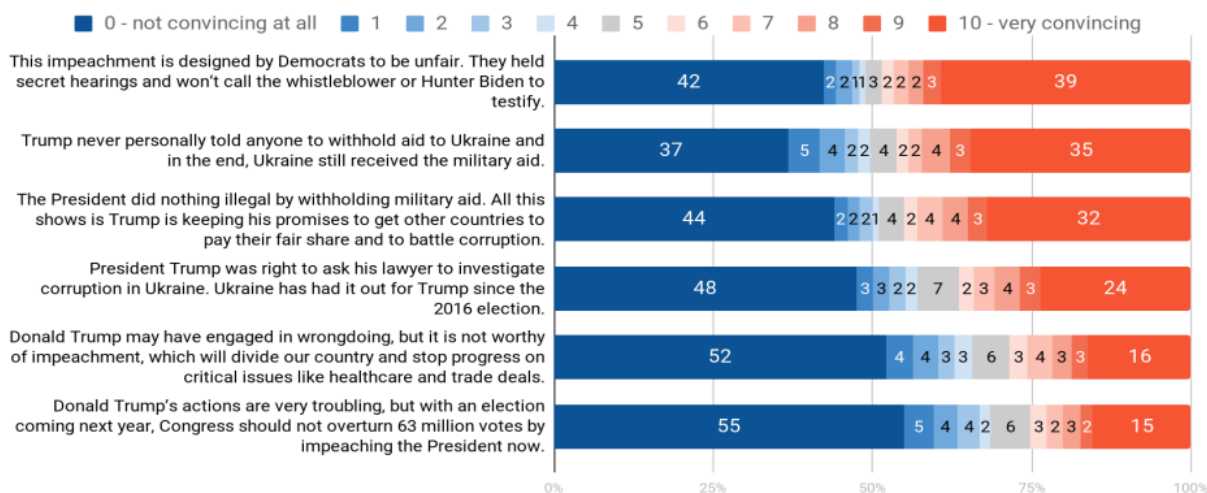
The most convincing argument against impeachment attacks the process as secretive, partisan, and unfair, the argument that most of the GOP is making right now: "This impeachment is designed by Democrats to be unfair. They held secret hearings and won't call the whistleblower

or Hunter Biden to testify." This was 'very convincing' to 39% of voters, and a majority ranked it a 5 or higher on a 0-10 scale. Voters in these swing districts do not like either political party (60% disapprove of the Democrats in Congress, 56% disapprove of the Republicans in Congress), so it's not surprising they endorse a "both sides" argument. It is also unsurprising that voters would react to language that suggests a lack of transparency; voters believe too many deals in Washington happen behind closed doors where they are corrupted by politics and special interests.

Anti-impeachment arguments are unconvincing

These are some statements from people who oppose impeaching Donald Trump. How convincing are these statements on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means it is not convincing at all and 10 means it is a very convincing reason to oppose impeachment.

Legend: 0 - not convincing at all | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 - very convincing

Statement	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
This impeachment is designed by Democrats to be unfair. They held secret hearings and won't call the whistleblower or Hunter Biden to testify.	42	2	2	1	1	3	2	2	2	3	39
Trump never personally told anyone to withhold aid to Ukraine and in the end, Ukraine still received the military aid.	37	5	4	2	2	4	2	2	4	3	35
The President did nothing illegal by withholding military aid. All this shows is Trump is keeping his promises to get other countries to pay their fair share and to battle corruption.	44	2	2	2	1	4	2	4	4	3	32
President Trump was right to ask his lawyer to investigate corruption in Ukraine. Ukraine has had it out for Trump since the 2016 election.	48	3	3	2	2	7	2	3	4	3	24
Donald Trump may have engaged in wrongdoing, but it is not worthy of impeachment, which will divide our country and stop progress on critical issues like healthcare and trade deals.	52	4	4	3	3	6	3	4	3	3	16
Donald Trump's actions are very troubling, but with an election coming next year, Congress should not overturn 63 million votes by impeaching the President now.	55	5	4	4	2	6	3	2	3	2	15

The good news for impeachment supporters is that their arguments for impeachment are stronger by comparison. The strongest arguments say that the evidence demonstrates that Trump's conduct has reached an established bar for impeachment - which is what the Judiciary Committee was attempting to demonstrate to the public in last week's hearings.
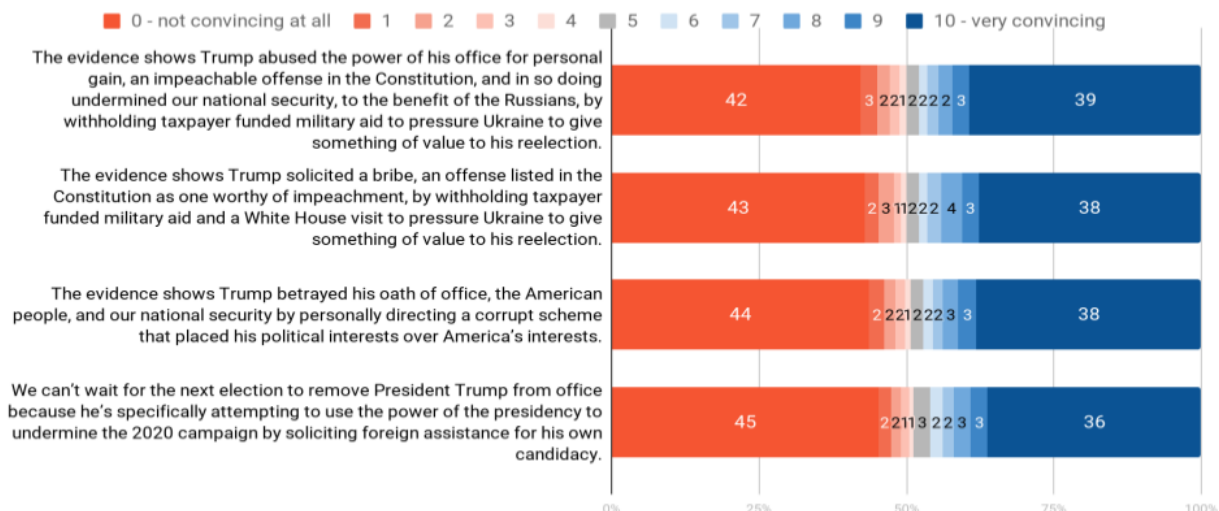
An argument that the evidence shows "Trump abused the power of this office for personal gain, an impeachable offense in the Constitution, and in so doing undermined our national security, to the benefit of the Russians, by withholding taxpayer funded military aid to Ukraine" was a 'very convincing' justification for impeachment for nearly 4-in-10 voters. As convincing was an argument that the evidence establishes Trump "solicited a bribe, an offense listed in the Constitution as one worthy of impeachment, by withholding taxpayer-funded military aid and a White House visit to pressure Ukraine to give something of value to his re-election."

A majority of these voters acknowledge that Trump has abused the power of his office, withheld military aid to pressure an ally to investigate a political rival, put his personal political interests above the good of the country, and more. Majorities find the evidence established in the investigation concerning, and majorities disapprove of the way these Republican congressmen are handling the inquiry and their approach to Trump.

Pro-impeachment arguments much stronger

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These are some statements from people who support impeaching Donald Trump. How convincing are these statements on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means it is not convincing at all and 10 means it is a very convincing reason to support impeachment?

■ 0 - not convincing at all ■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10 - very convincing

The evidence shows Trump abused the power of his office for personal gain, an impeachable offense in the Constitution, and in so doing undermined our national security, to the benefit of the Russians, by withholding taxpayer funded military aid to pressure Ukraine to give something of value to his reelection.	42 3 2212222 3	39
The evidence shows Trump solicited a bribe, an offense listed in the Constitution as one worthy of impeachment, by withholding taxpayer funded military aid and a White House visit to pressure Ukraine to give something of value to his reelection.	43 2 3 11222 4 3	38
The evidence shows Trump betrayed his oath of office, the American people, and our national security by personally directing a corrupt scheme that placed his political interests over America's interests.	44 2 2212223 3	38
We can't wait for the next election to remove President Trump from office because he's specifically attempting to use the power of the presidency to undermine the 2020 campaign by soliciting foreign assistance for his own candidacy.	45 2 2113 223 3	36

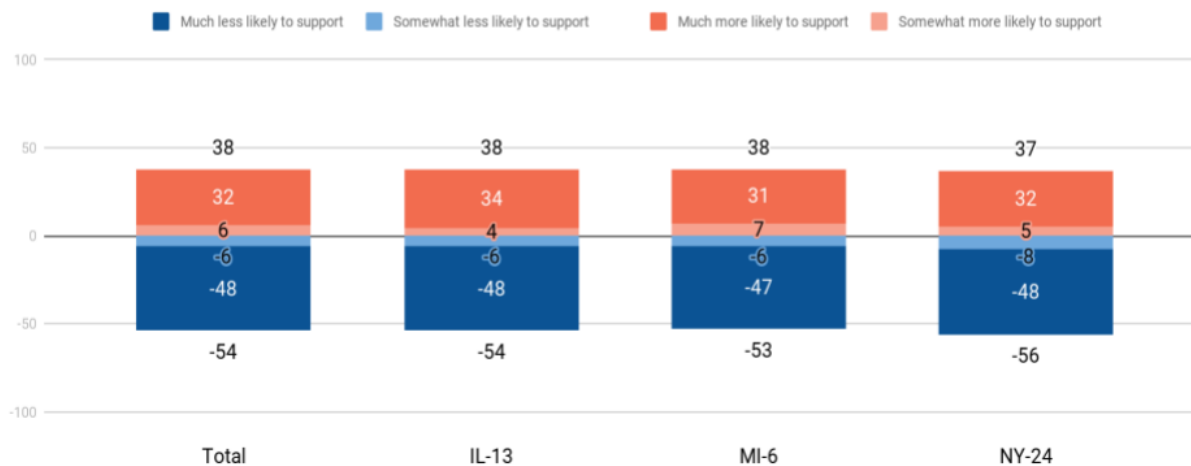0%   25%   50%   75%   100%

After hearing from both sides on impeachment, a majority of voters in these GOP-leaning districts are now willing to punish these GOP members for their unwillingness to participate in the impeachment inquiry, with 54% saying they are *less likely* to support a member of Congress that opposes the impeachment inquiry. That includes 54% of voters in IL-13, 53% of voters in MI-6, and 56% of voters in NY-24.

Voters less likely to support impeachment opponent

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Are you more or less likely to support a Member of Congress who OPPOSES impeachment?

■ Much less likely to support ■ Somewhat less likely to support ■ Much more likely to support ■ Somewhat more likely to support

	Total	IL-13	MI-6	NY-24
	38	38	38	37
	32	34	31	32
	6	4	7	5
	-6	-6	-6	-8
	-48	-48	-47	-48
	-54	-54	-53	-56

IV.   Conclusion

A majority of voters in these key districts think what Trump did was wrong and, once they hear the facts, are less likely to support Members of Congress who are opposed to the impeachment inquiry. The message is clear: these representatives should put politics aside during impeachment and do their job.

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