

Poll of New York State Voters in Target State Senate Districts

September 2013

- Sample Size: n=600
- Eligibility: Voters in New York Senate Districts
- Area: Long Island, Southern Tier, Rochester, Mid-Hudson*
- Interview Method: Telephone
- Margin of Error: Plus or minus 3.5%
- Interview Dates: September 5-11, 2013
- Client: National Center for Victims of Crime

* Long Island: Senate Districts 2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9
Southern Tier: Senate Districts 52/57/58/59
Rochester: Senate Districts 54/56
Mid-Hudson: Senate Districts 39/40/42/51

Frederickpolls

TABLE 1: Opinion of Current Victim Abuse Laws -- Voters split in their opinions of current laws governing lawsuit access for child abuse victims with half (52%) saying they are “fair” and the other half saying they either “don’t know” enough to have an opinion (26%) or call them “unfair” (22%). Responses differ little by geographic region or political party. In a sign that knowledge of current law may be quite limited, a subset of just 16% call current laws “very fair.”

Current Law: In your opinion, how fair are New York’s current laws in allowing victims of child sexual abuse to directly sue their abusers or the organization where that abuse occurred -- very fair, somewhat fair, not too fair, or not at all fair?

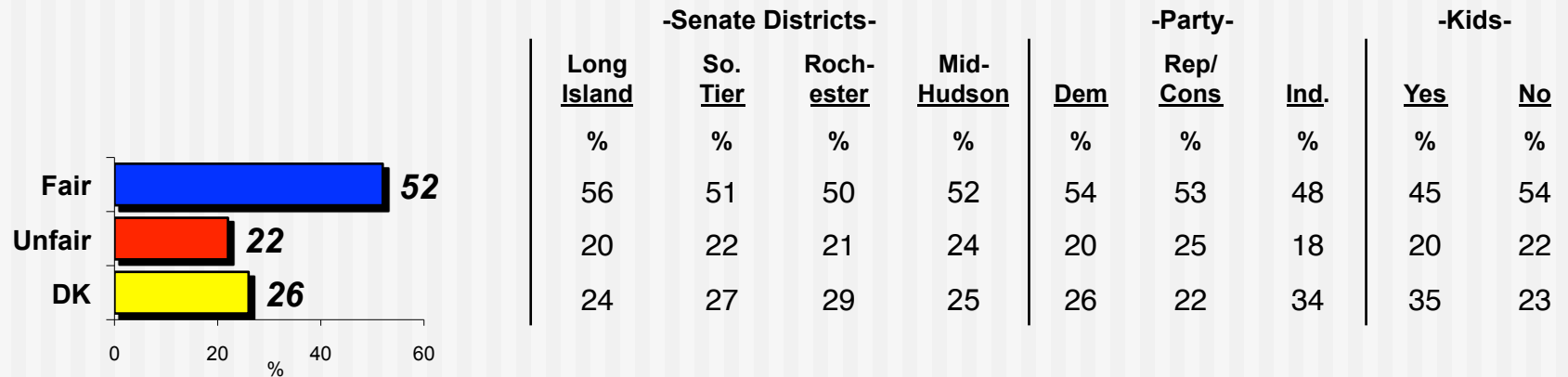


TABLE 2: Reform of Victim Abuse Lawsuit Policy -- A 57% majority of voters prefer it making it EASIER for child sexual abuse victims to sue: just half as many either want to maintain status quo (20%) or make it “harder” to sue (9%). Majority support for lawsuit access reform is consistent across regions, parties, and among parents and non-parents with majorities slightly higher among Long Island voters, Democrats, and even Catholics (62% “easier”).

Reform Abuse Victim Lawsuits: Generally speaking, in New York State, do you think it should be easier, harder or the same as it is now for victims of child sexual abuse to directly sue either their abusers or the organization where that abuse occurred?

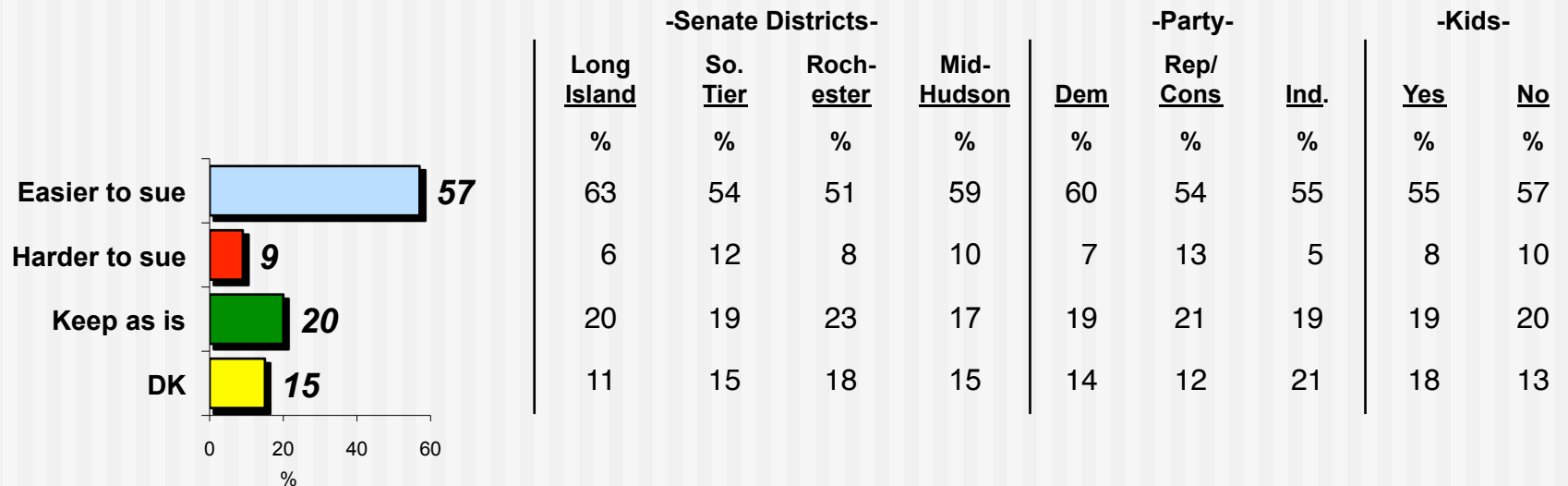


TABLE 3: Reform of Lawsuit Time Limit Concept – By 60% to 38% voters prefer a system where victims of child sexual abuse can sue their abusers “at any time” rather than having “some time limit” after abuse occurs. The no-time-limit policy has slightly broader support among Long Island area voters (62-35), Mid-Hudson area voters (65-32), Democrats (66-32), parents (64-34), women 55+ (68-30) and Catholics (61-36). In general, women (68%) are more in favor of “no time limits” on lawsuits for abuse victims than are men (51%) – a pattern that holds within each party as well.

Which comes closest to your own view about civil lawsuits regarding sexual abuse of a child in New York State?

- *Victims should be able to sue their abuser at any time.*

--OR--

- *There should be some time limit on how long after an abuse incident occurred that a victim can sue for damages.*

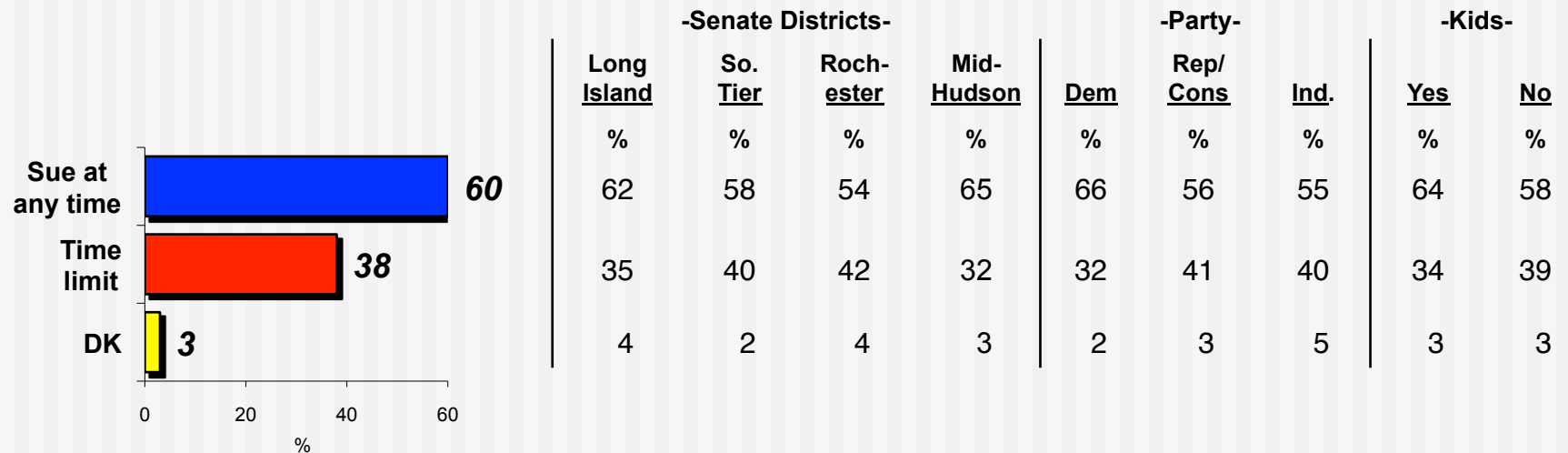


TABLE 4A: Support for Specific Lawsuit Reforms – When given information about age restrictions on lawsuits for child sexual abuse victims, clear majorities of voters support each of these proposals to eliminate those time limits. 67% support removing the time limit for victims suing abusers in civil cases. Over 70% support this civil lawsuit reform among Long Island voters, Mid-Hudson voters, Democrats and Catholics.

Next I will read you some information about the current New York State law regarding child sexual abuse cases. There are four parts:

1. In civil lawsuits, victims have until their 24th birthday directly sue their abusers to collect damages.
2. And, victims have until their 21st birthday or 3 years after abuse occurred – whichever is greater -- to directly sue the organization or institution where the child sexual abuse occurred.
3. In criminal cases, the state has until the victim's 23rd birthday to bring criminal charges against abusers in all felony sexual abuse cases less than first-degree cases.
4. But, There is no time limit on when the state can file criminal charges against an abuser in first-degree child sexual abuse cases.

Knowing these four parts of the current New York State law, tell me if you FAVOR or OPPOSE each of the following ideas to change the law.

Civil Lawsuits Against Abusers: Getting rid of the 21 and 24-year-old age limit for civil lawsuits going forward so any future victim of child sexual abuse can directly sue their abuser and the organization where it occurred with no time limit.

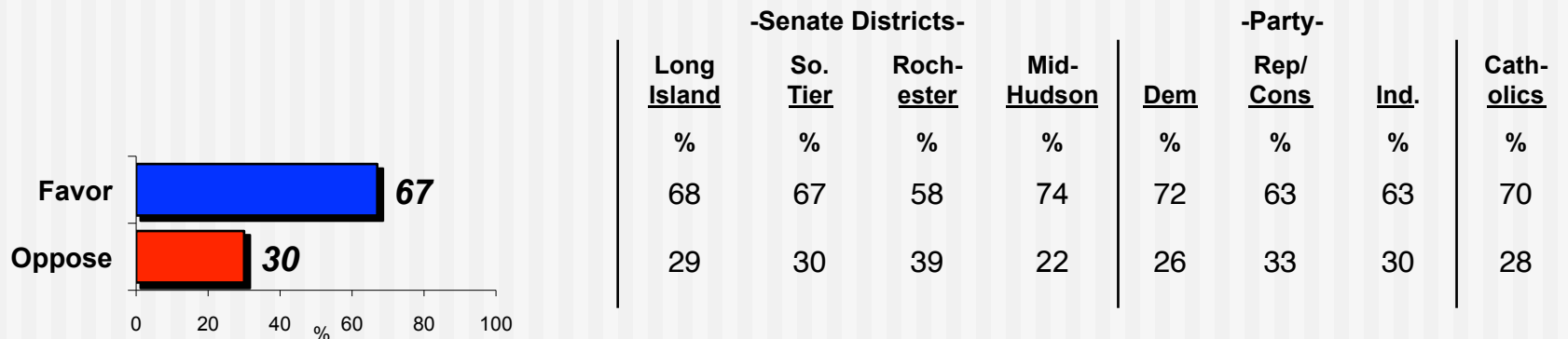
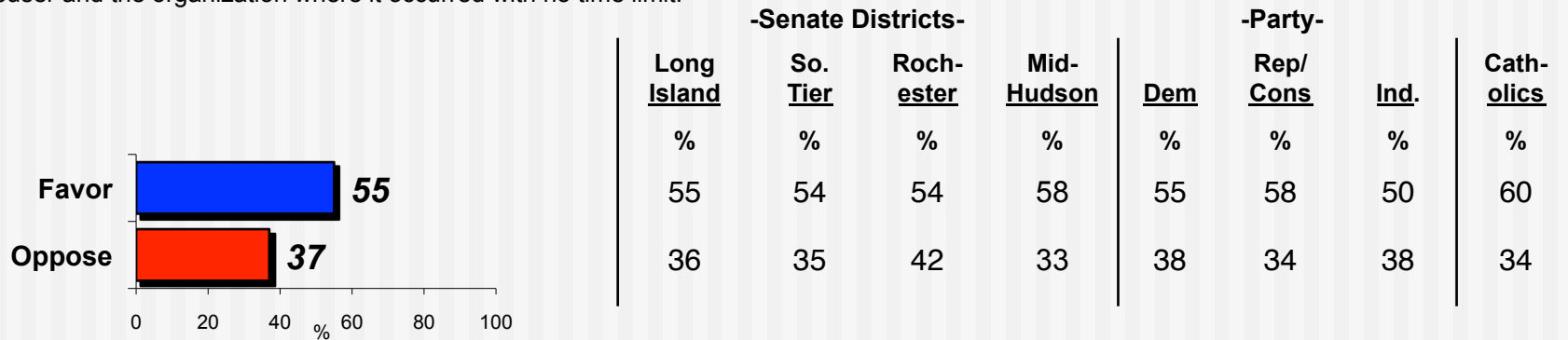


TABLE 4B: Support for Specific Lawsuit Reforms – A 55% majority support removing the civil lawsuit time restriction on suing organizations. This majority support is consistent across regions and parties and stands at 60% among Catholics. Highest support (73%) is given to reform of criminal lawsuit restrictions for 2nd and 3rd degree felonies.

Civil Lawsuits Against Organizations: For victims already past the 21 and 24-year-old age limit, allowing a one-time window of one year when past victims of child sexual abuse can directly sue their abusers or the organization where the abuse occurred directly sue their abuser and the organization where it occurred with no time limit.



Criminal Lawsuits for 2nd/3rd Degree Felonies: Getting rid of the 23-year-old victim age limit on criminal sexual abuse cases with second or third degree felony charges so accused abusers could be brought to trial at any point in a victim's adult life.

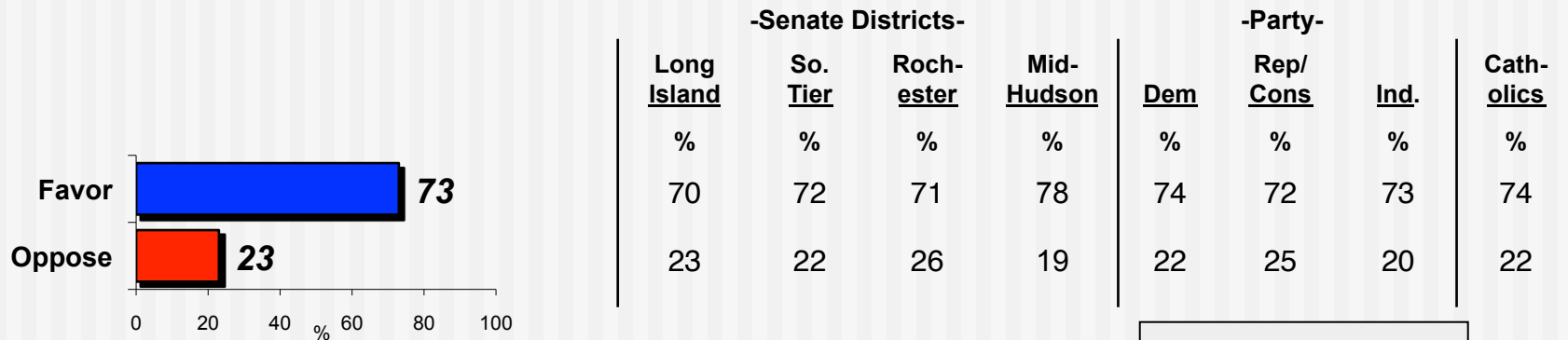


TABLE 5: Message Test: Pro-Lawsuit Reform Statements – The pro-reform message with strongest appeal gains 71% “strongly agree” reaction and 85% total agreement: “It is wrong to let a child sexual abuser get away with their abuse just because the victim reaches adulthood before taking legal action.” A similar 66% “strongly agree” (88% total agree) that “reforming victims right to sue would help identify and expose adults who may still be active (abusers).” Both statements focus on justice against the abusers. All three of the other test statements score well – with majorities “strongly agree” to each -- with the next highest focusing on victims’ inability to bring lawsuits before adulthood.

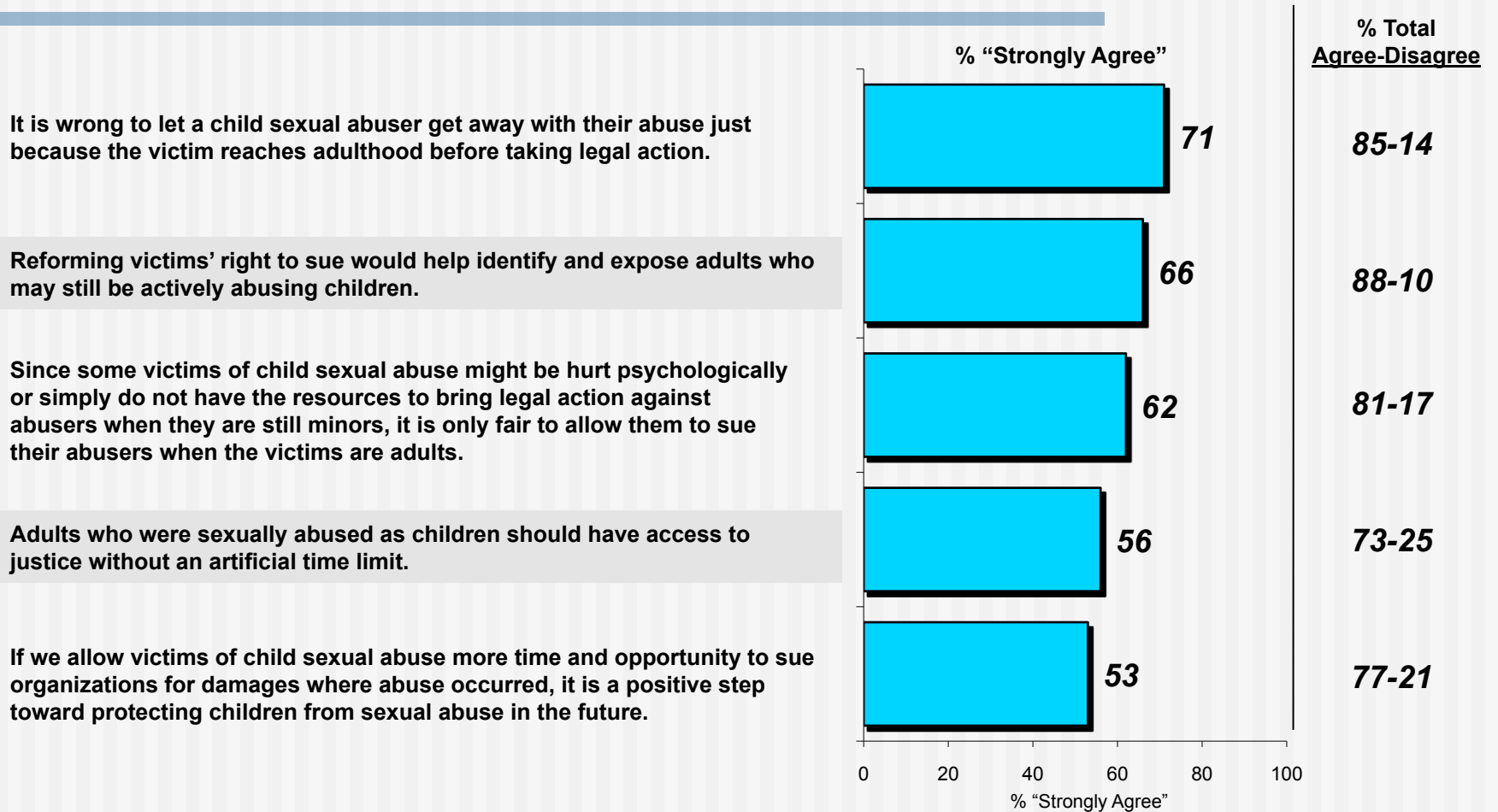


TABLE 6: Impact of Lawsuit Reform on Vote for State Legislature – By a 2:1 margin, voters say they’d be more likely to support a Legislator in favor of child sexual abuse victim lawsuit reform (65%), than not be impacted positively by this issue (33%). Voters across all parties are 60% or higher “more likely” to vote for incumbents supporting lawsuit reform. By area, pro-reform voting is strong and consistent in Long Island, Southern Tier, and Mid-Hudson but drops to 56% “most likely” in Rochester.

*If your State Legislator or State Senator supported these reforms to expand rights of victims of child sexual abuse...
Would this make you much more likely to vote for them, somewhat more likely, less likely, or not impact your vote decision?*

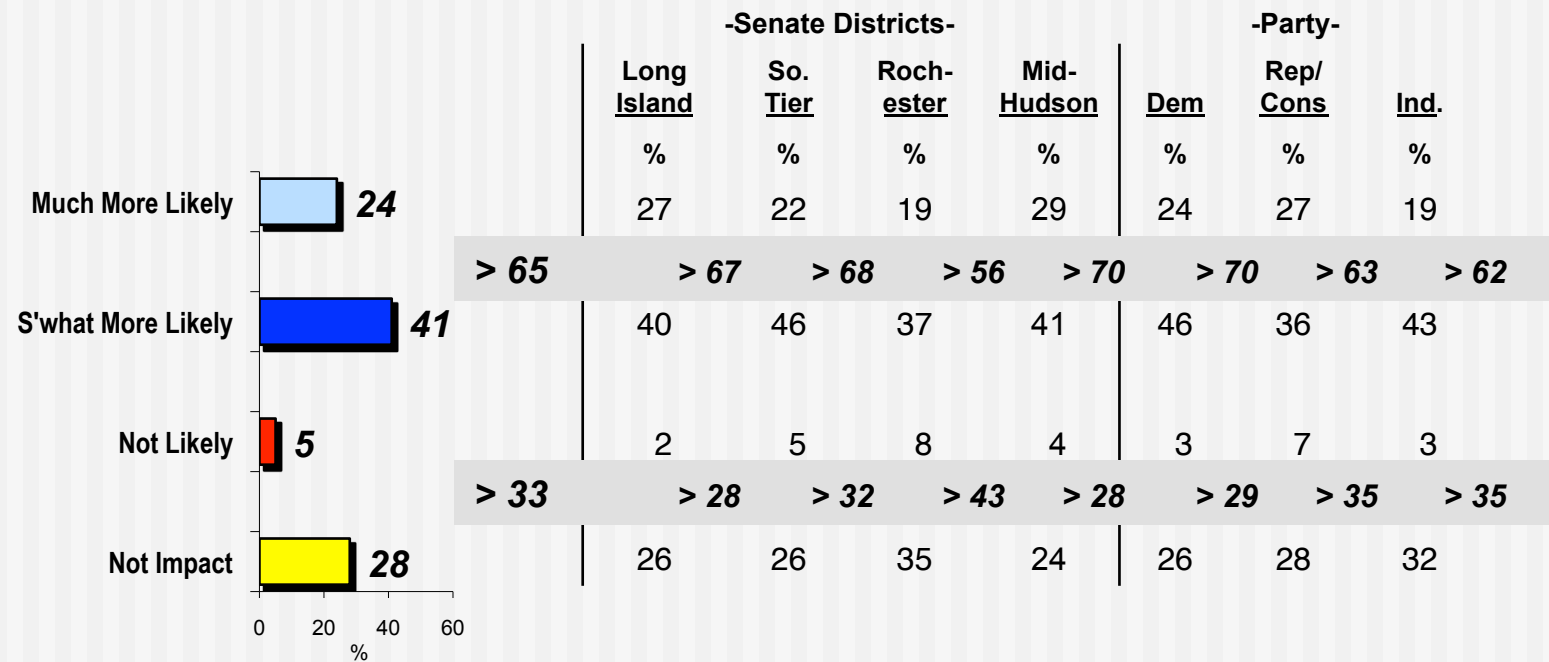
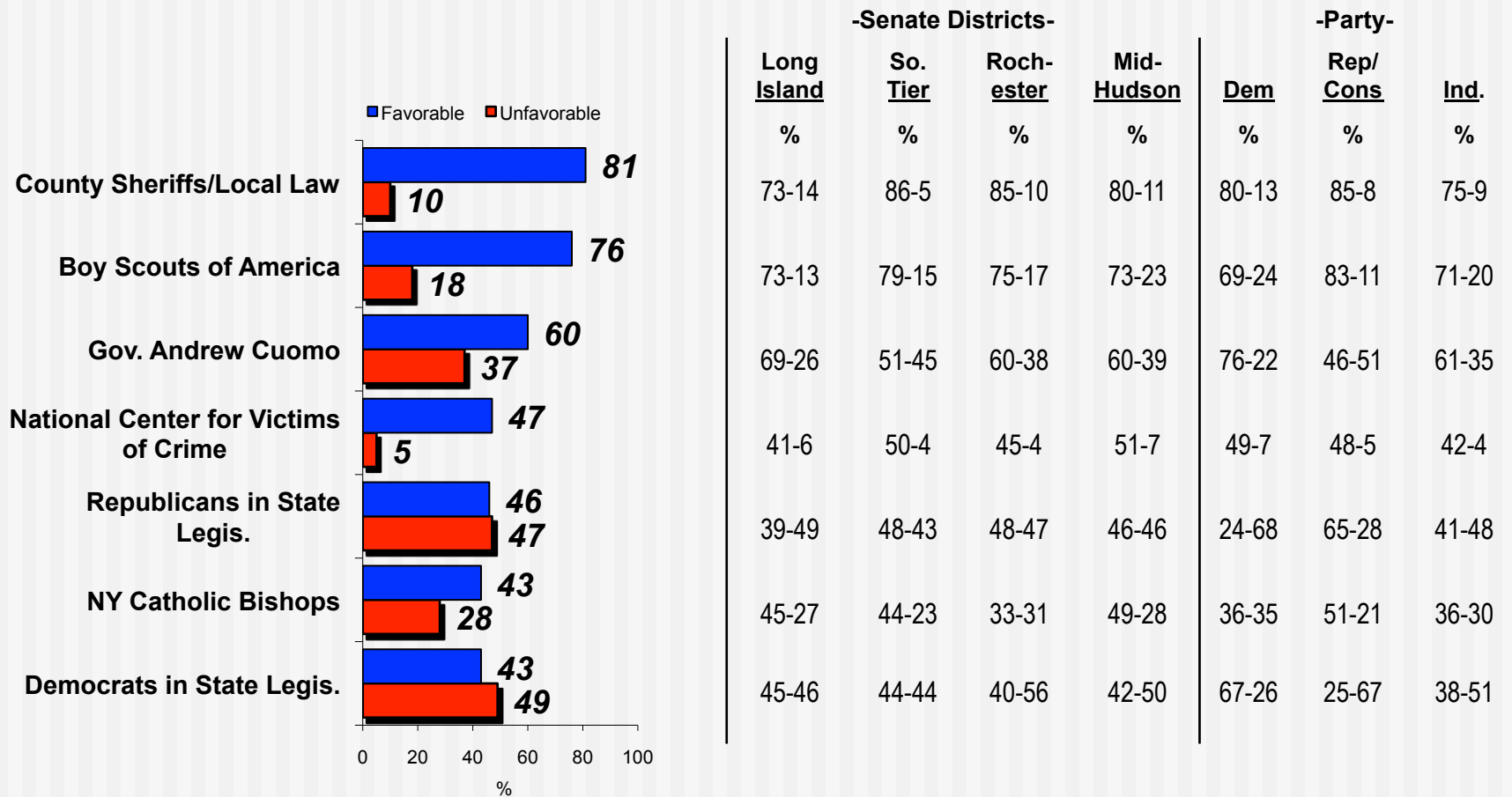


TABLE 7: Opinion of Various Groups and Individuals – County sheriffs and local law enforcement score very high popularity (81%), followed by a 76% positive rating for the Boy Scouts. Only in the Mid-Hudson region (73-23) and with Democrats (69-24) are the BSA negatives above 20%. Governor Cuomo drives a partisan split with Independents (60-36) siding positive with Democrats. NCVC is rated by 52% with a nearly universal positive among those offering an opinion of the group (47% favorable, 5% unfavorable). Catholic Bishops are rated a lackluster 43-28 with Catholic voters giving them a 70% positive rating.



DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF POLL SAMPLE (N=600)

- Party:
 - 36% Democrat
 - 44% Republican/Cons.
 - 20% Independence/
Independent
- Follow Politics:
 - 29% Very Closely
 - 56% S'what Closely
 - 14% Not Much At All
- Gender:
 - 47% Male
 - 53% Female
- Age:
 - 12% 18-39
 - 25% 40-54
 - 29% 55-64
 - 34% 65+
- Know Sexual Abuse Victim:
 - 44% Yes
 - 56% No/DK
- Kids Under 18:
 - 23% Yes
 - 77% No
- Religious Preference:
 - 25% Protestant
 - 37% Catholic
 - 6% Jewish
 - 33% Other/DK/Ref.
- Attend Religious Svc:
 - 33% Frequent
 - 36% Moderate
 - 28% Not
- Race:
 - 89% White
 - 2% Black
 - 1% Hispanic
 - 2% Asian
 - 6% Other/DK/Ref.