

The background of the slide is a photograph of a large, crowded lecture hall. A speaker is visible at a podium on the stage, and the audience fills the foreground and middle ground. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal filter.

# Exploring the Challenges of Making Health Policy

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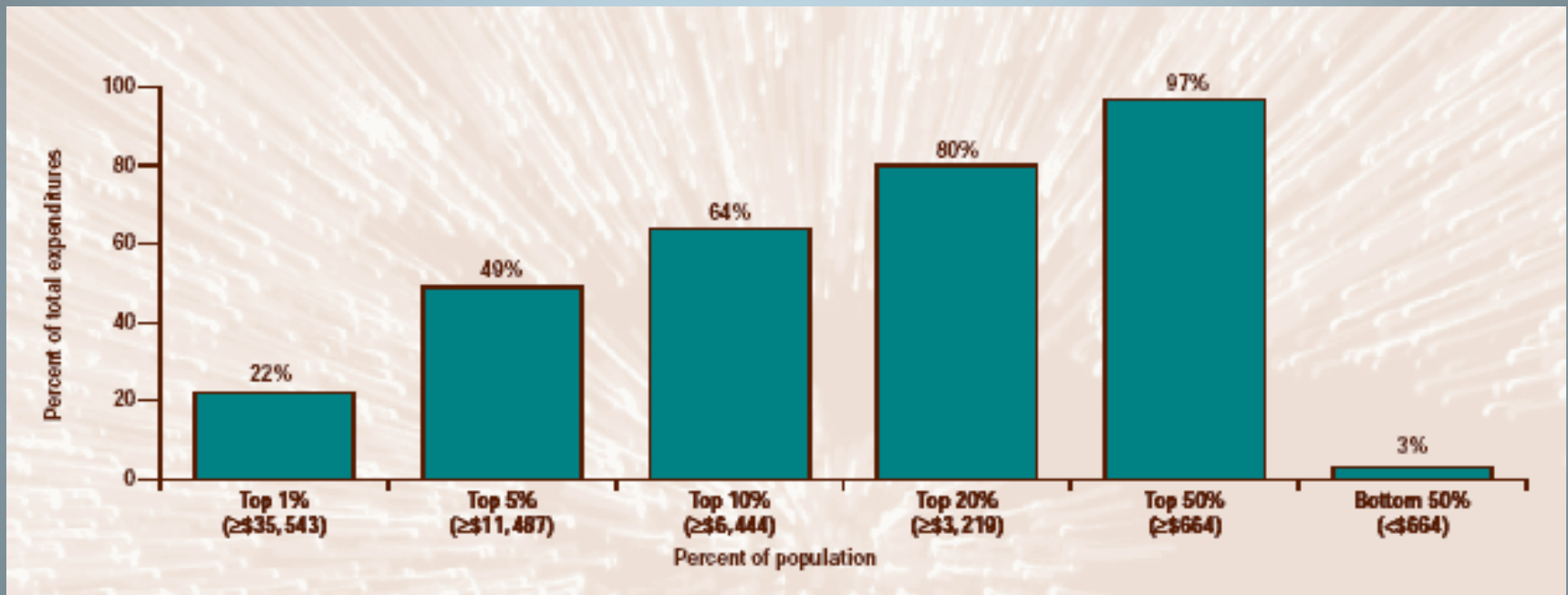
**Kansas Health Institute**

November 8, 2009

# **The Complexities of Health Policy**

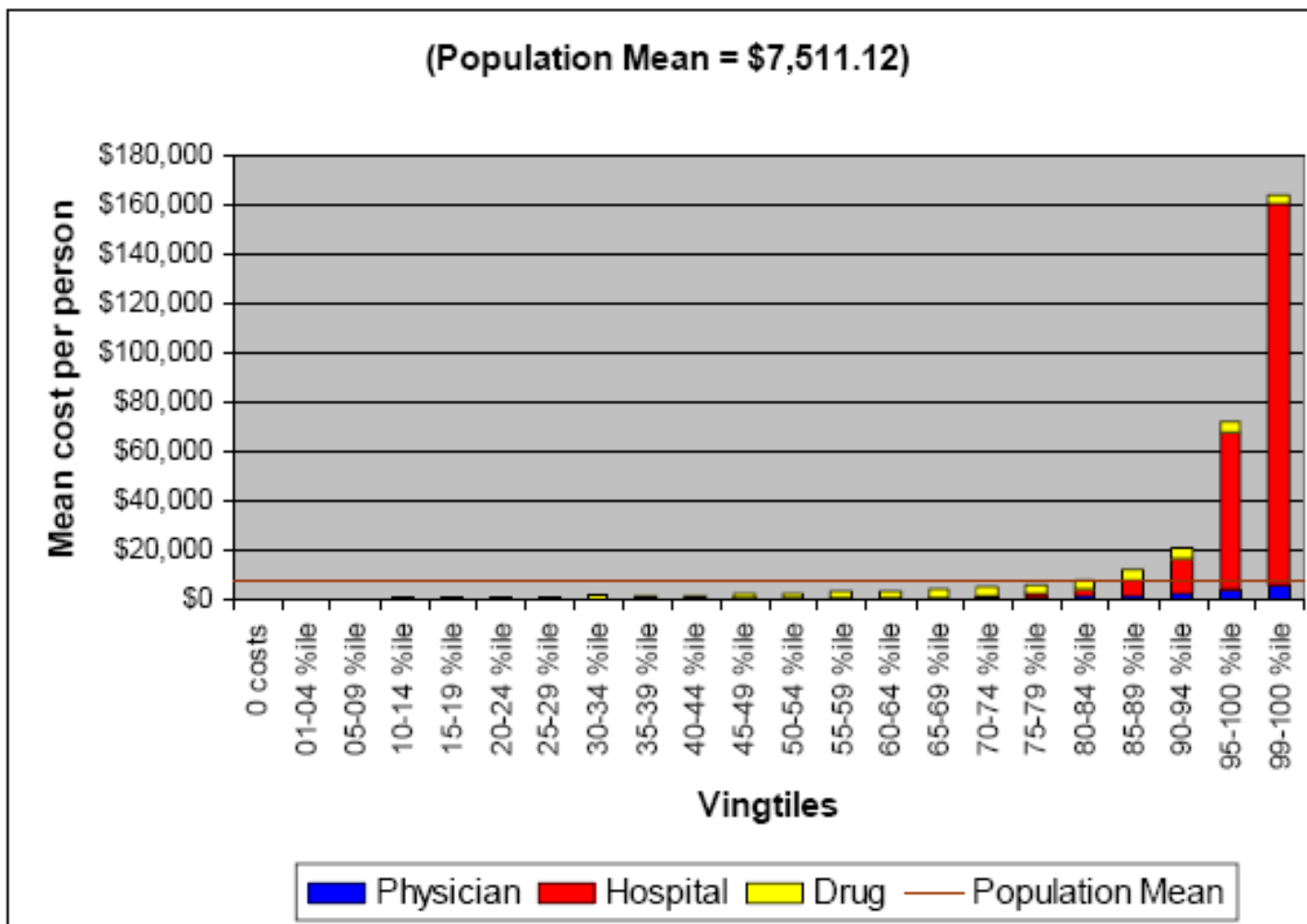
# The Fundamental Allocation Problem in Health Care

**Chart 1. Percent of Total Health Care Expenses Incurred by Different Percentiles of U.S. Population: 2002**



**Source:** Conwell LJ, Cohen JW. Characteristics of people with high medical expenses in the U.S. civilian noninstitutionalized population, 2002. *Statistical Brief* #73. March 2005. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Rockville, MD. Web site: [http://www.meps.ahrq.gov/mepsweb/data\\_files/publications/st73/stat73.pdf](http://www.meps.ahrq.gov/mepsweb/data_files/publications/st73/stat73.pdf). Accessed April 7, 2006.

**Figure 4: Mean Total Expenditures for the Diabetic Population by Vingtiles in Manitoba, Fiscal 2005-2006**



Raisa Berlin Deber and Kenneth Cheak Kwan Lam, "Handling the High Spenders: Implications of the Distribution of Health Expenditures for Financing Health Care," Annual Meeting, American Political Science Association, Toronto, CA, September 2-6, 2009.

# Growing Multiple Challenges and the Weight of Inaction

	Costs					Coverage			Consequence		
	Int'l Measures	HC Inflation	Gov't Spend	Bus. Spend	Indiv'l Spend	Un-insured	Under-insured	Disparities	Quality/Outcomes	Int'l Rank	Pop Health
1912	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	-
FDR	0	0	0	0	--	-/0	0	0	0	0	0
Truman	0	0	0	0	-+?	-+	-+	0	0	0	0
Nixon/ Ford	0	-	-	-?	-+	-(+)	-	0	0	0	0
Carter	0?	--	--?	-?	-+	-(+)	-	0	0	0	0
Clinton	--	--	--	--	--	--	-	--	-	-	0
Now	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	-	--	-

0 = No evidence or limited perception of problem

-- = evidence of problem and getting worse

- = widely recognized evidence of problem

-+ = evidence of problem but getting better

# The Value/Ideological Divide

From: Harry P. Cain II, “Privatizing Medicare: A Battle of Values,”  
*Health Affairs* (March/April 1997)

“From the **publicizer** viewpoint, the basic problems with today’s health care system are that there are too many people left out, too many uninsured, and costs are too high, which is largely a function of private profiteering, fraud, and abuse....

For the **privatizer** the basic problem is that the market has been distorted by tax policy, by excessive regulation, and in some markets by risk selection.

Why do the two groups see the same environment so differently? In large part it is because they begin with **very different sets of values**.

The **publicizers** value equity, security, predictability, and control....

The **privatizers** value efficiency/effectiveness, flexibility, change, and freedom. These different values are played out in efforts to address all other questions.” (pp. 182-183)

# **The Complexity of the Legislative Process**

# Structure of the House of Representatives During Four Periods of Reform Debates

**Decentralization**

**Centralization**

**Fragmentation**

**1940s (Truman)**

**Fragmentation**

**Centralization**

**Decentralization**

**1970s (Nixon/Ford/Carter)**

**Fragmentation**

**Centralization**

**Decentralization**

**1993-94 (Clinton)**

**Centralization**

**Decentralization**

**Fragmentation**

**Now (Obama)**

# Structure of the Senate

## During Four Periods of Reform Debates

**Decentralization**

**Fragmentation**

**Centralization**

**1940s (Truman)**

**Fragmentation**

**Decentralization**

**Centralization**

**1970s (Nixon/Ford/Carter)**

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**Centralization**

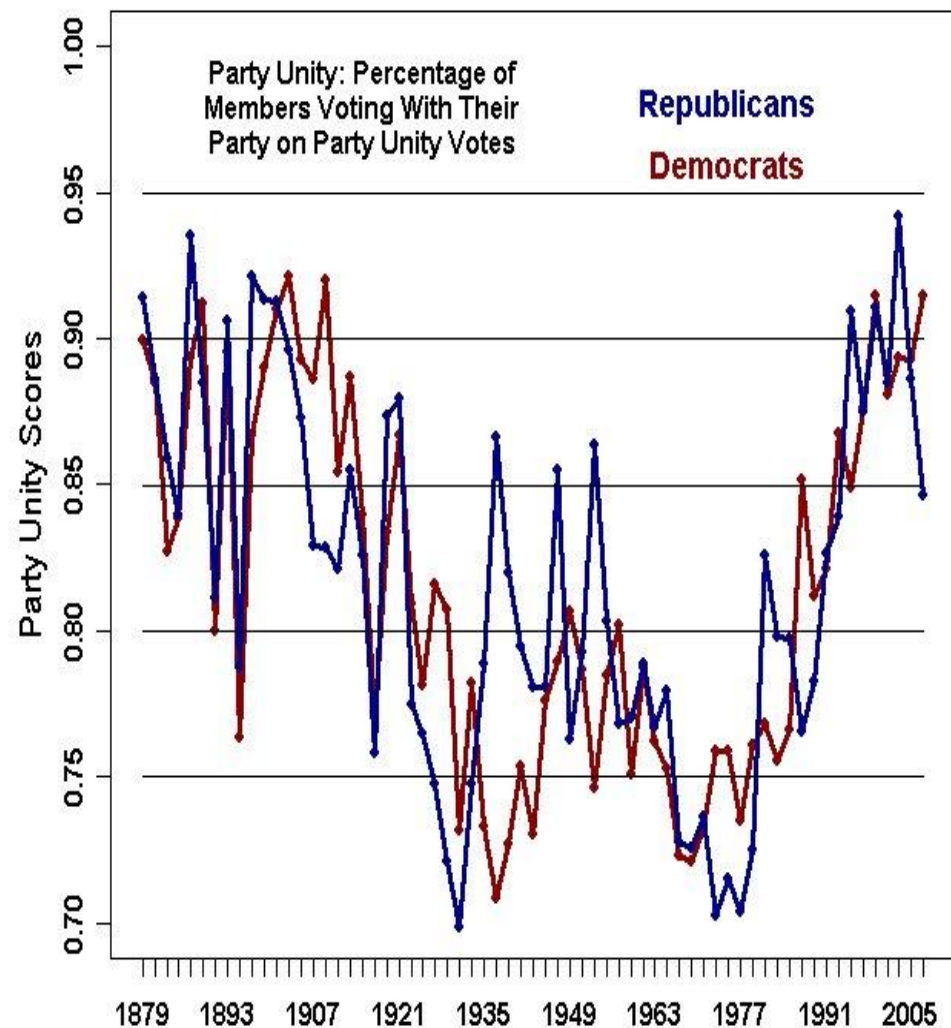
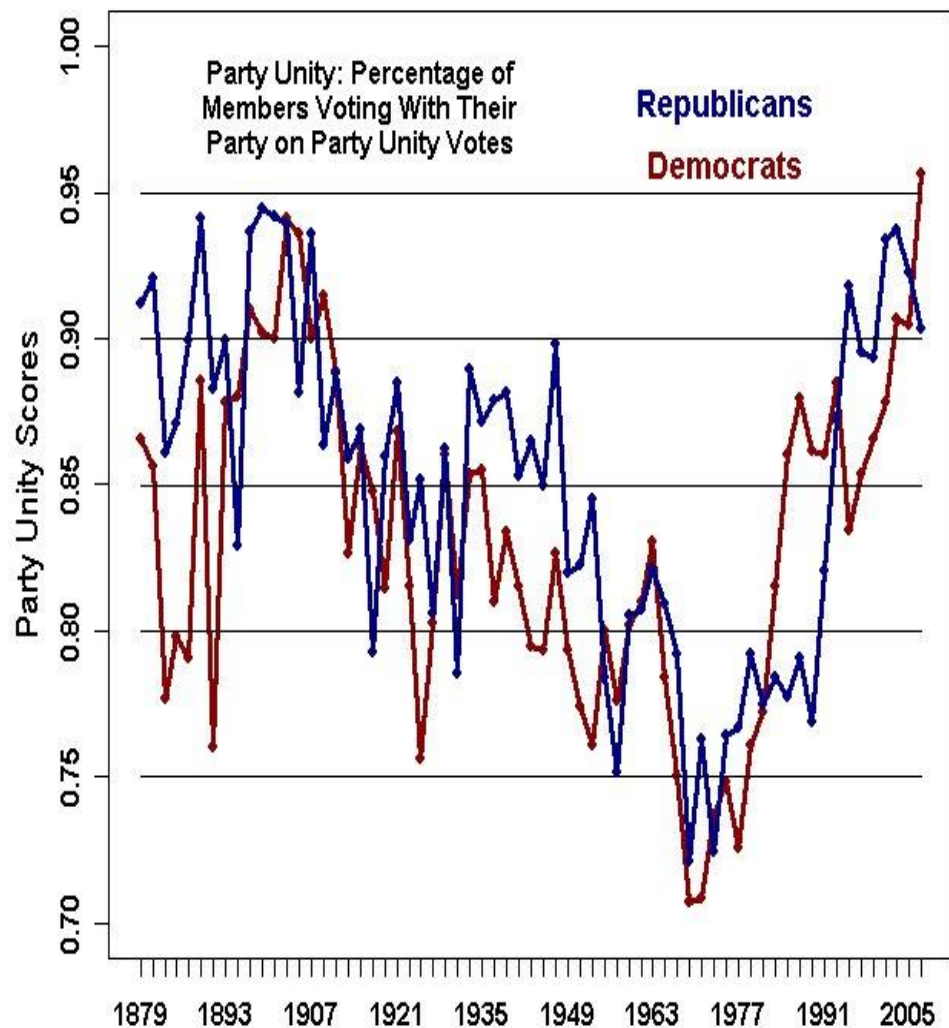
**Now (Obama)**

# Party Unity U.S. House and Senate

From Nolan McCarty, Keith T. Poole, and Howard Rosenthal, *Polarized America: The Dance of Ideology and Unequal Riches* (MIT 2006) [<http://polarizedamerica.com/>]

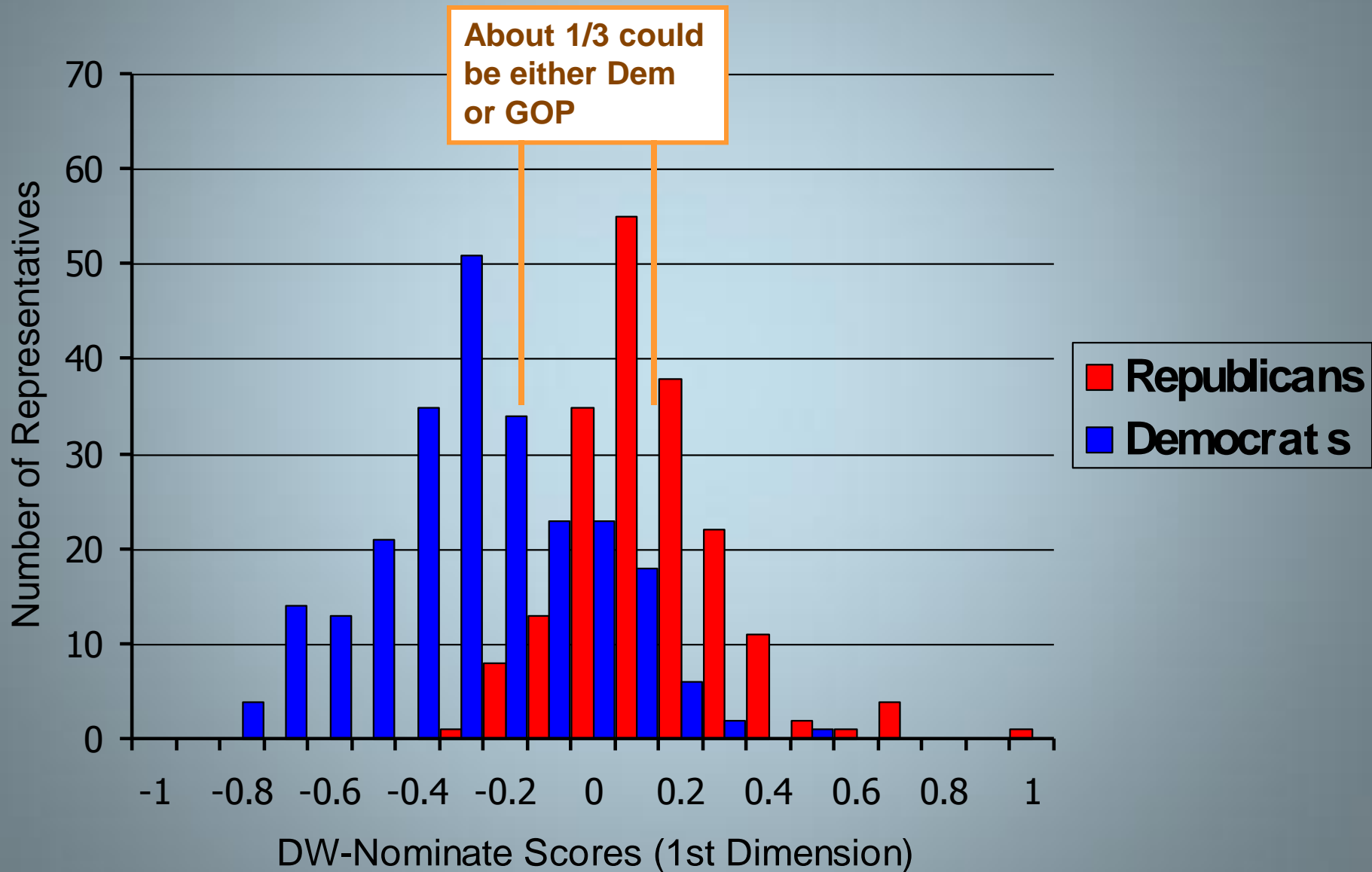
House 1879-2008  
Party Unity Votes

Senate 1879-2008  
Party Unity Votes



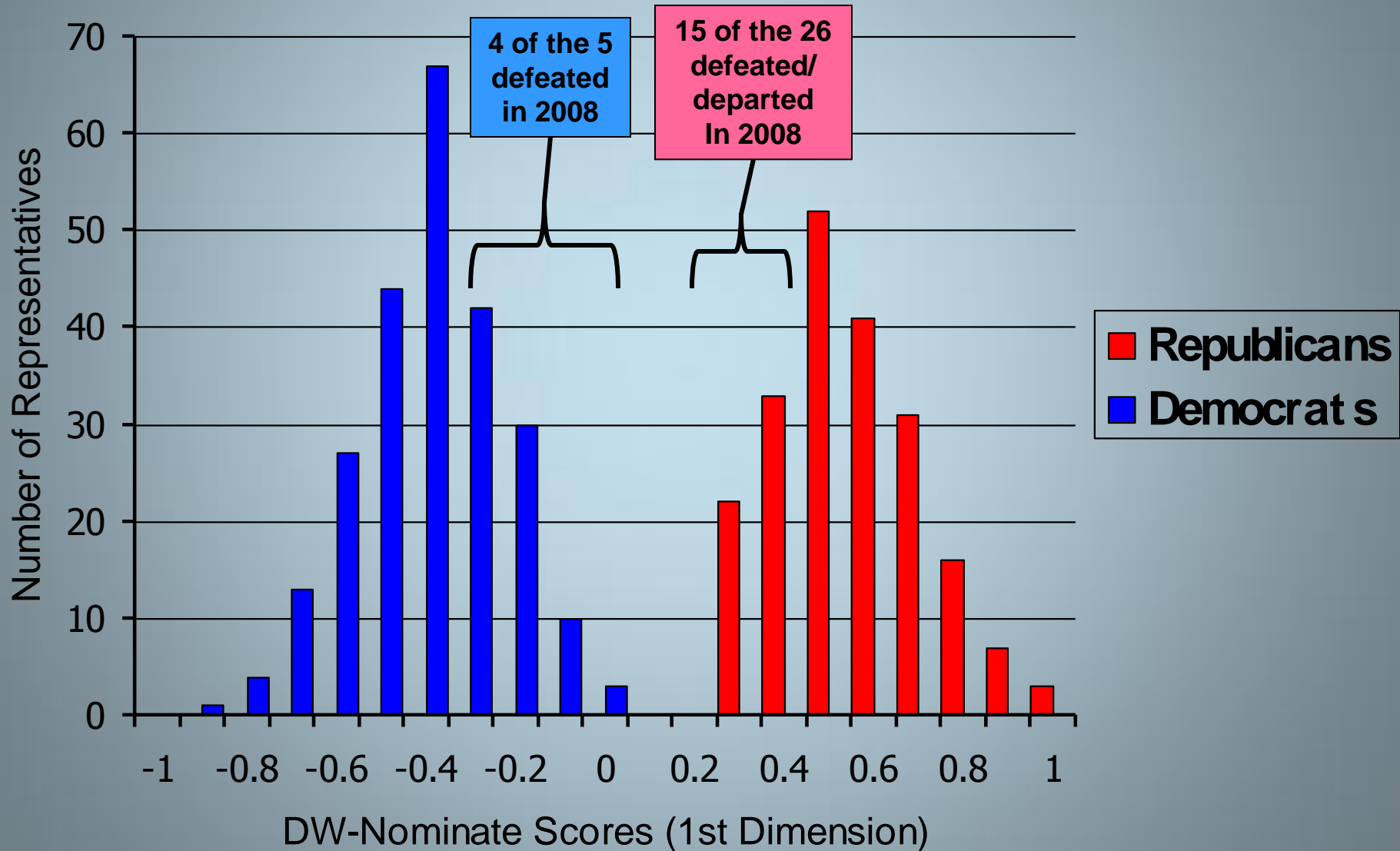
# Ideological Positions on House Roll Call Votes, 93rd Congress (1973-74)

Source: Gary Jacobson, "Public Opinion and the Impeachment of Bill Clinton," 1999.



# Ideological Positions on House Roll Call Votes, 110th Congress (2007-08)

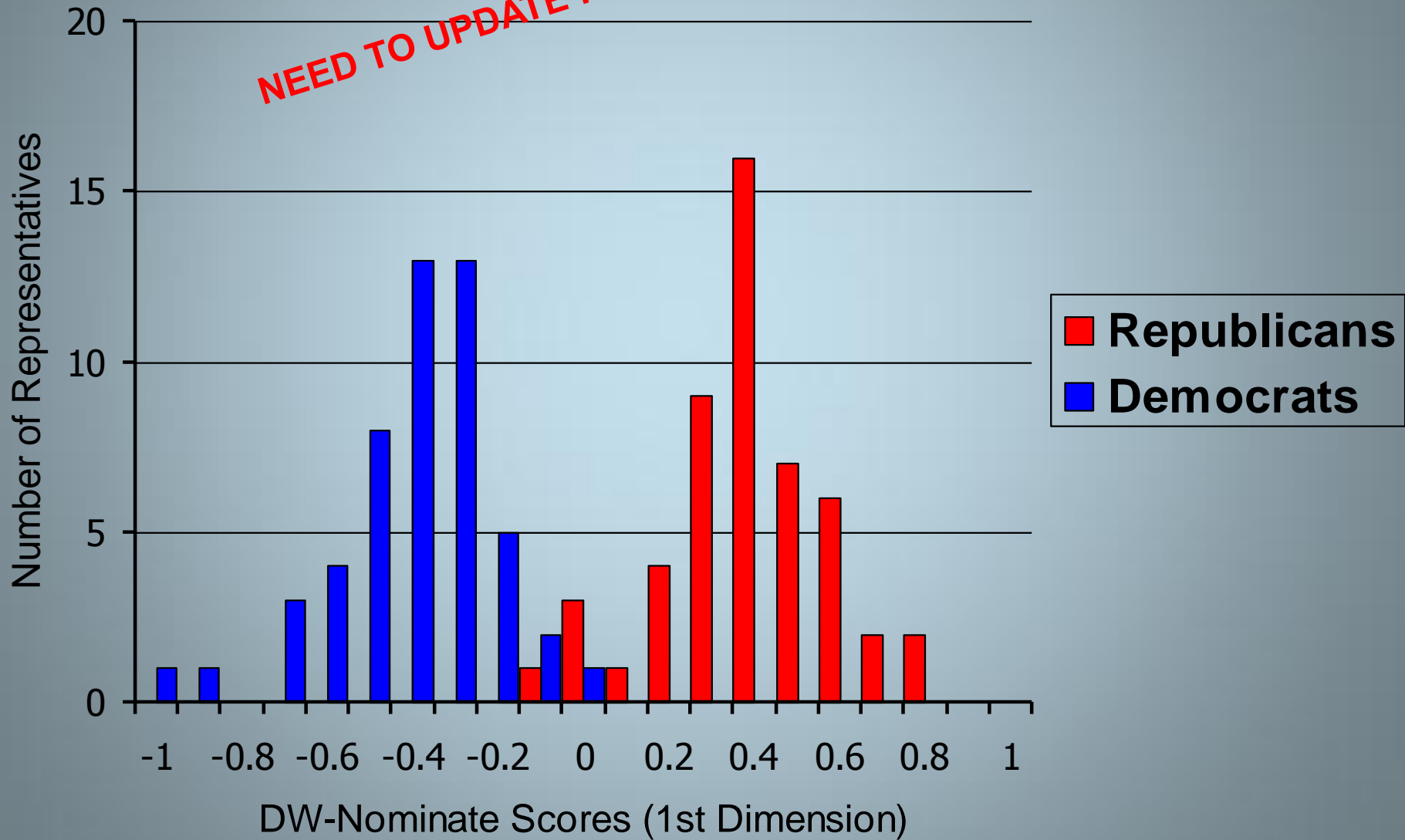
(Source: Poole and Rosenthal, <http://voteview.uh.edu/dwnomin.htm>)



# Ideological Positions on **Senate** Roll Call Votes, 107th Congress (2001-02)

(Source: Poole and Rosenthal, <http://voteview.berkeley.edu/dwnomin.htm>)

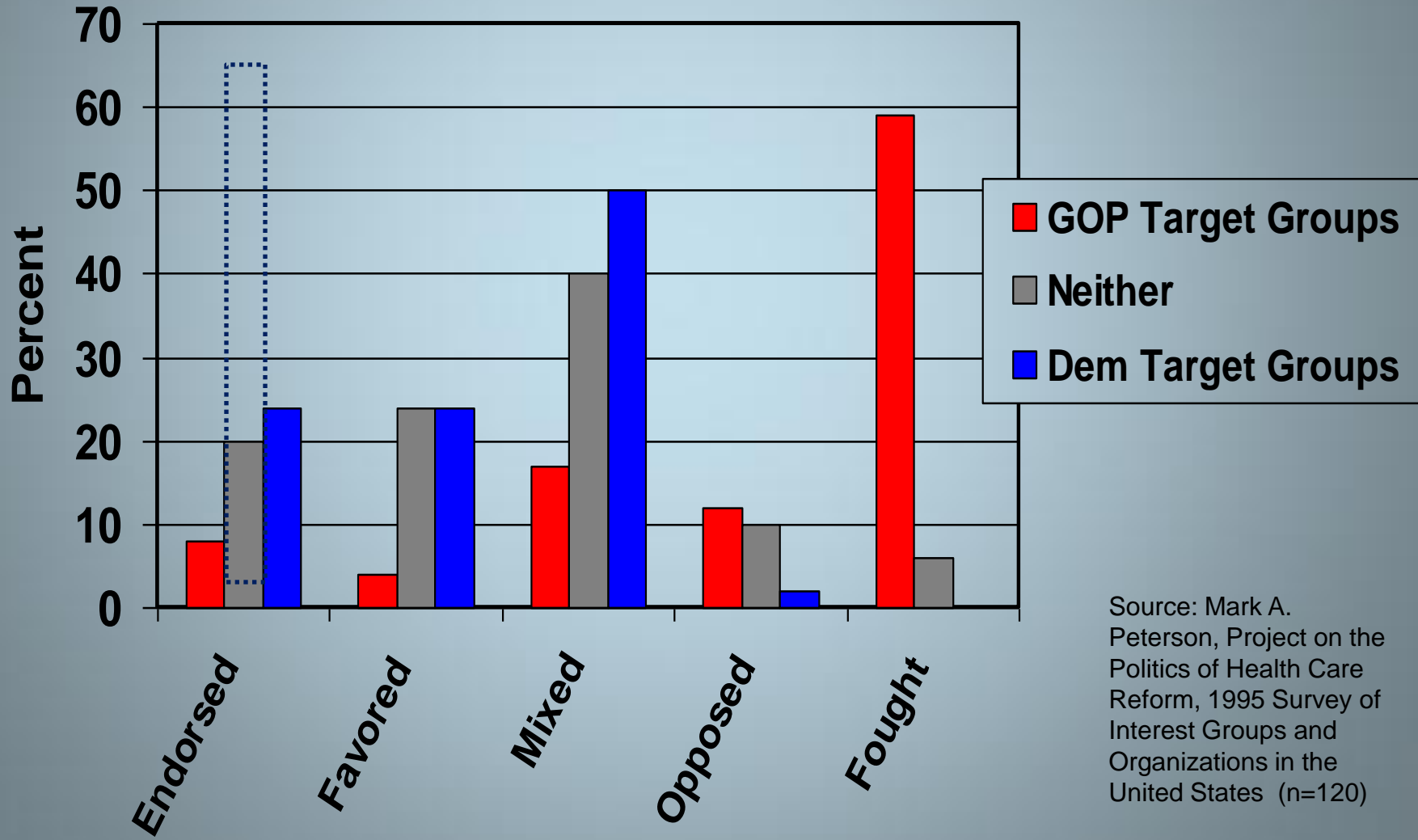
**NEED TO UPDATE FOR 110<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS**



# **The Challenge of Interest Groups**

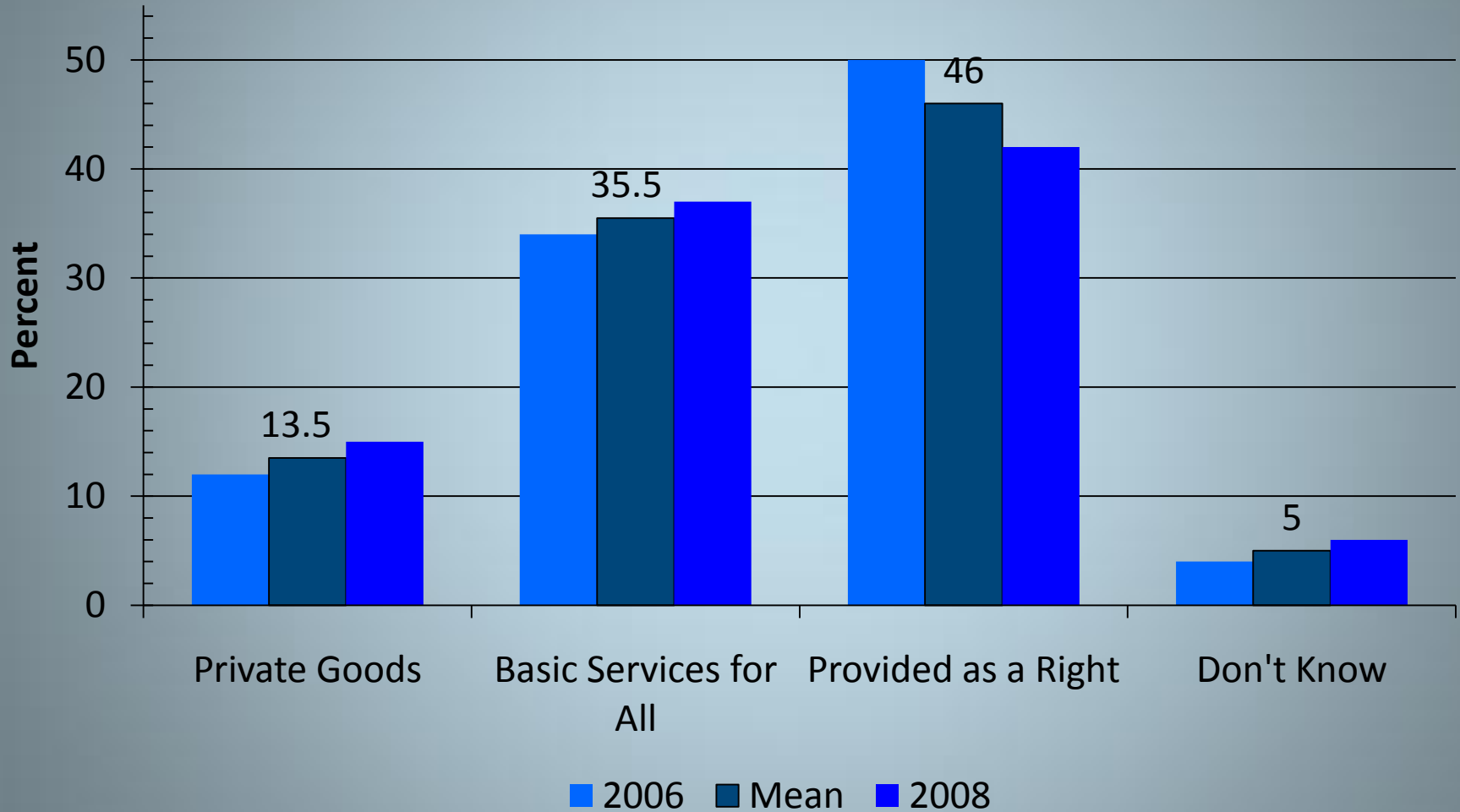
# Attempting a “Left-Right Synthesis”

## Interest Group Positions on Clinton’s Health Security Act

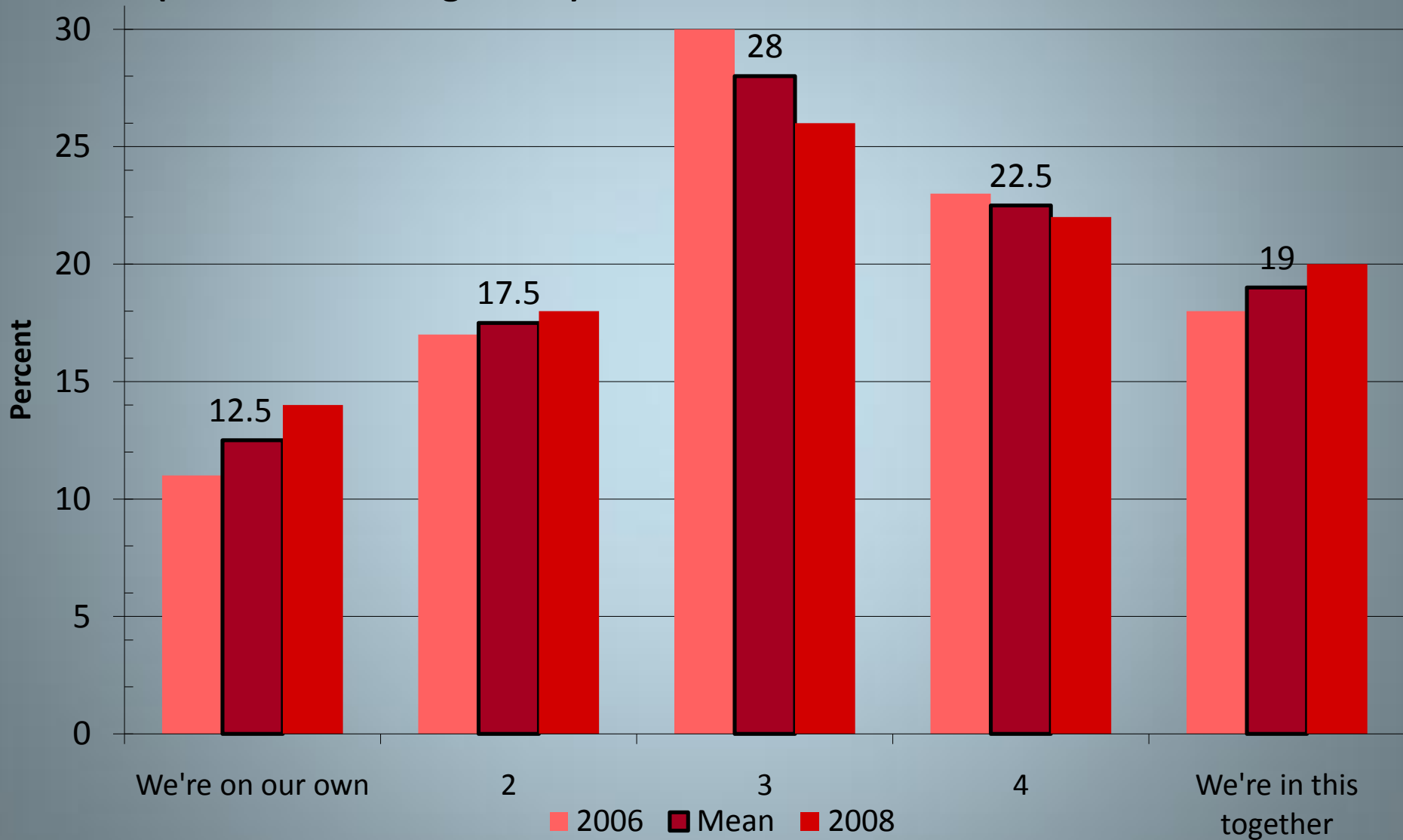


# **The Challenges of Public Opinion**

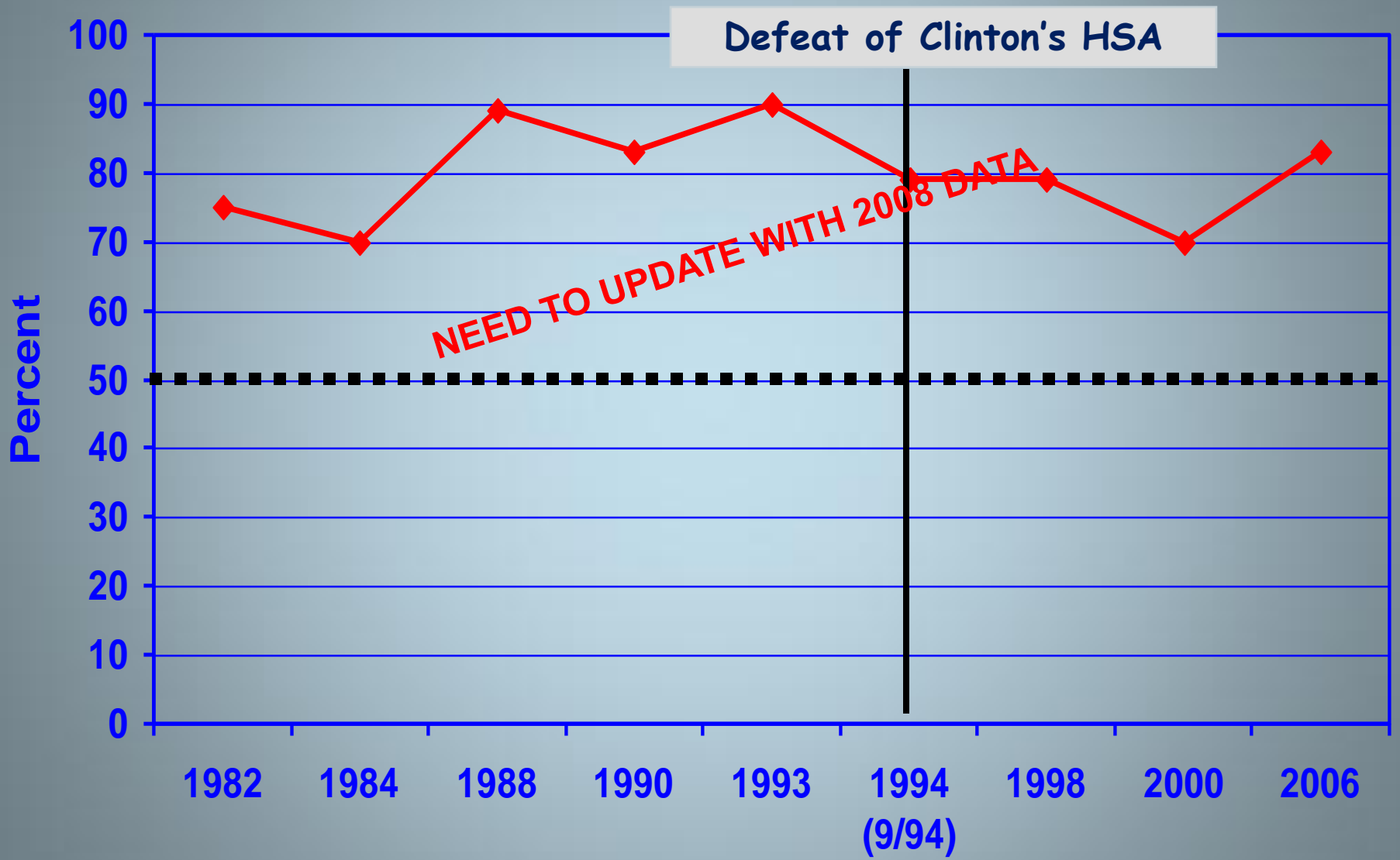
# The Public's Views about the Nature of Health Care Services



# Views about What Affects Individual and Family Health, Ranging from an Individual Matter (“We’re on our own”) to a Community Matter (“We’re in this Together”)



# Public Support for Major Health Care System Change



# The Individual Cognitive Process

- **Duality of Individuals' Information Processing**

(Drew Westen, *The Political Brain*)

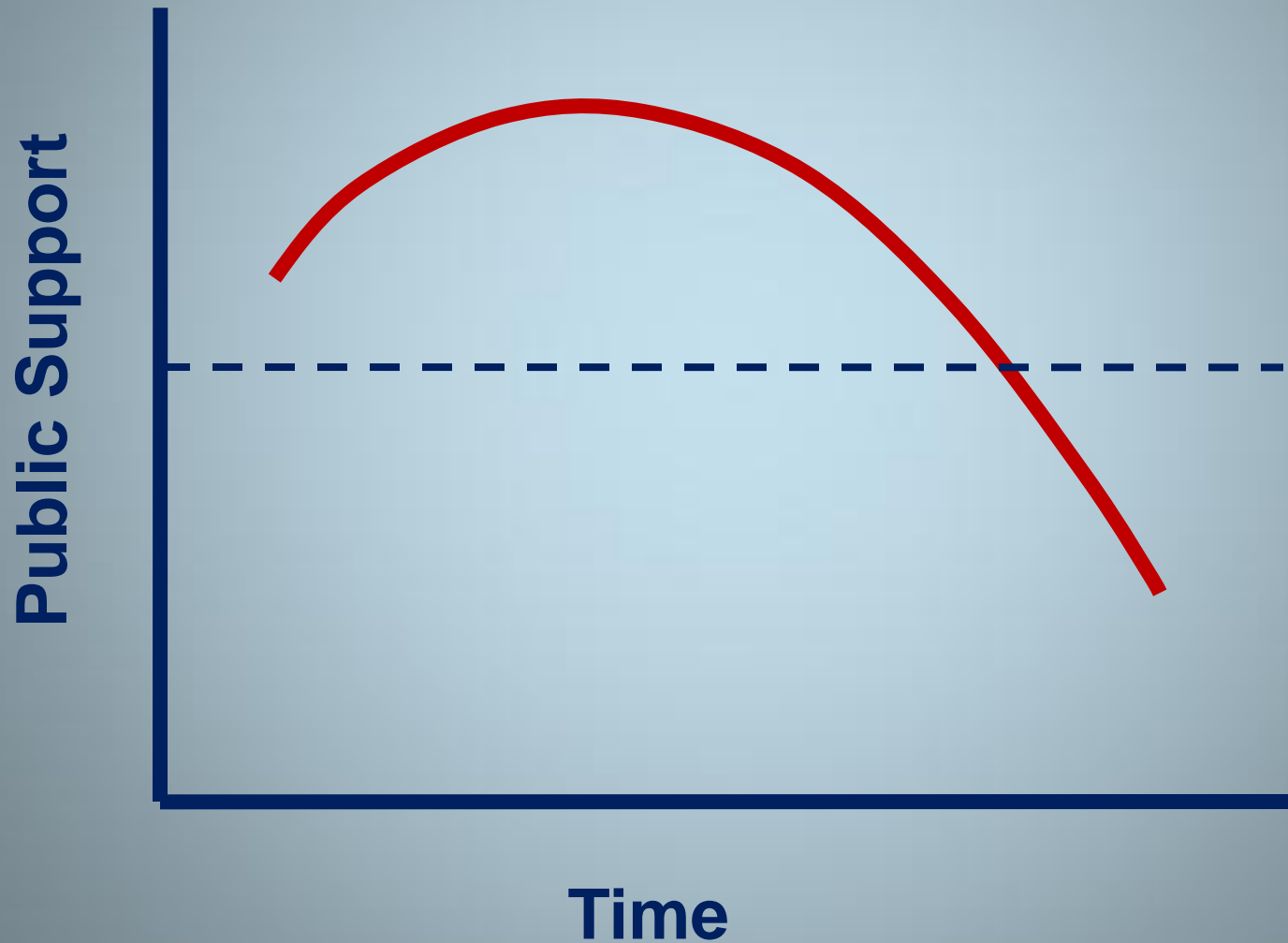
- “Rational”

But also...

- “Emotional”

- Kahneman and Tversky: “Prospect Theory”

### Political Hurdle #3: The Fear Arc



# **“Critical Junctures” and the Incentives They Produce**

# Political Game Changers and Critical Junctures

## Evidence of a Signal Political Moment:

President won a clear majority of the popular vote

President's party has close to a 60% House majority or more

President's party has close to a 60% Senate majority or more

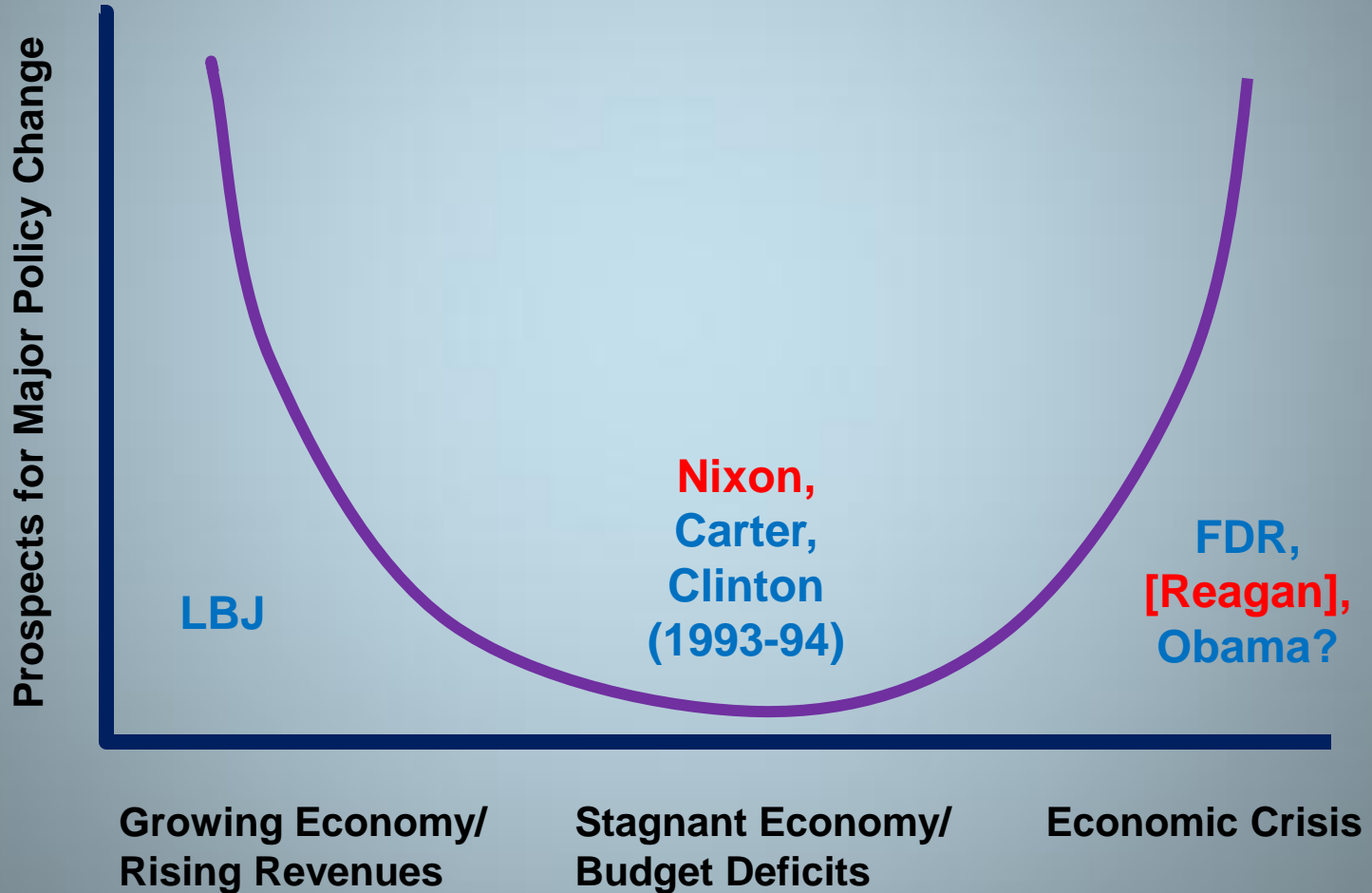
Strong electoral signal:

President's party gained 20+ seats in the House in last two elections

President's party gained 5+ seats in the House in last two elections

- Franklyn Roosevelt                      1932                      Break from past
- Lyndon Johnson                            1964                      Continuation
- Almost:  
    Ronald Reagan                            1980                      Break from past
- Barack Obama                                2008                      Break from past

# Economic Resources and the Politics of Policy Change



# **The Costs of Stalemate and Finding a Way Forward**

# Checks and Balances: The Dynamics of Opportunities, Gambles, and Miscalculations

