



Pennsylvania Statewide Survey: Key Findings Presentation

September 3, 2025



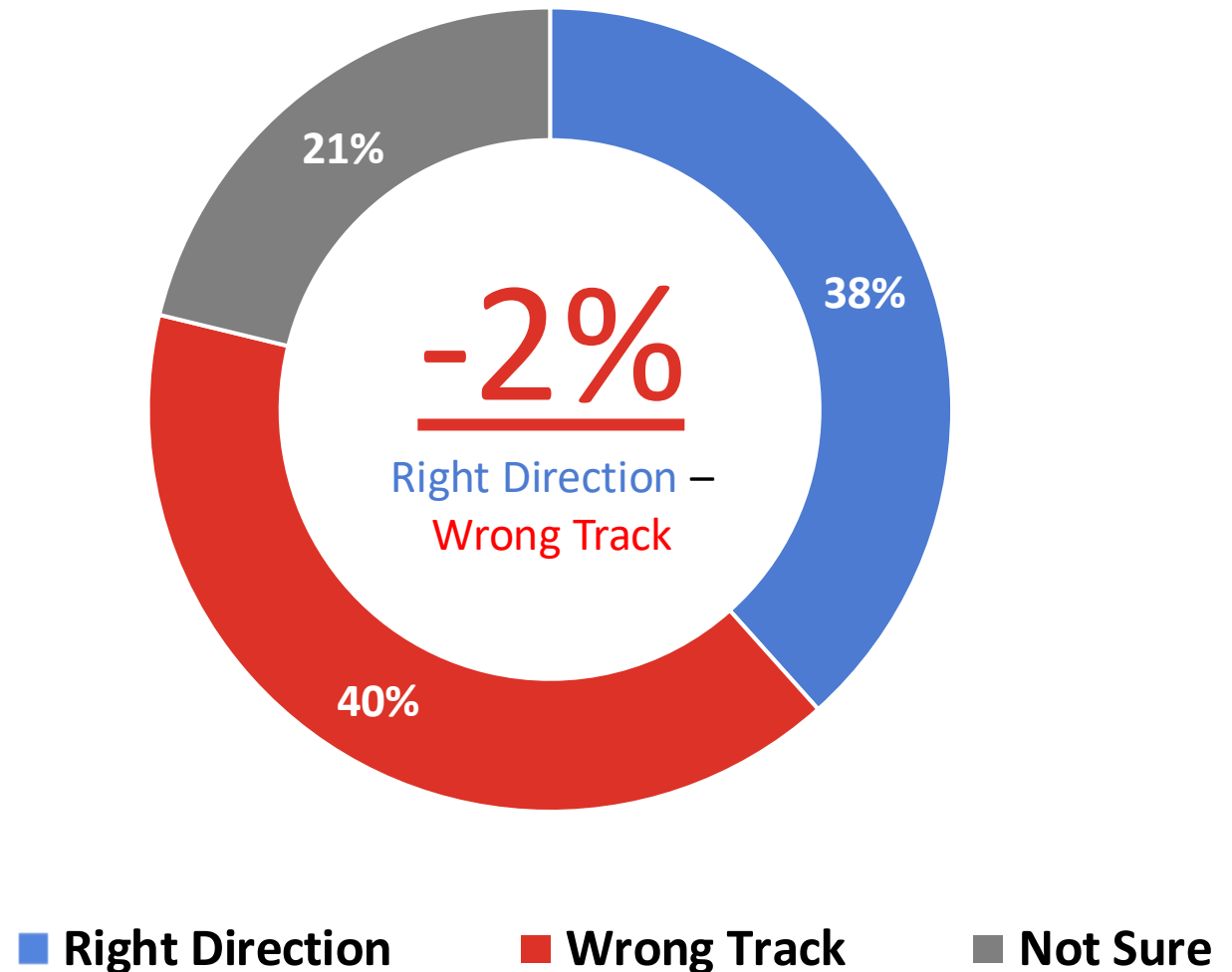


The Political & Policy Environment



Fewer than 4-in-10 Pennsylvania voters believe the state is on the right track.

And, would you say that things in Pennsylvania are going in the right direction, or have they pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?



Inflation and the cost of living are viewed as the most pressing issues facing both the country and Pennsylvania.

Which of the following would you say is the most important problem facing the COUNTRY/Pennsylvania today, that is, the issue that you're most concerned about?

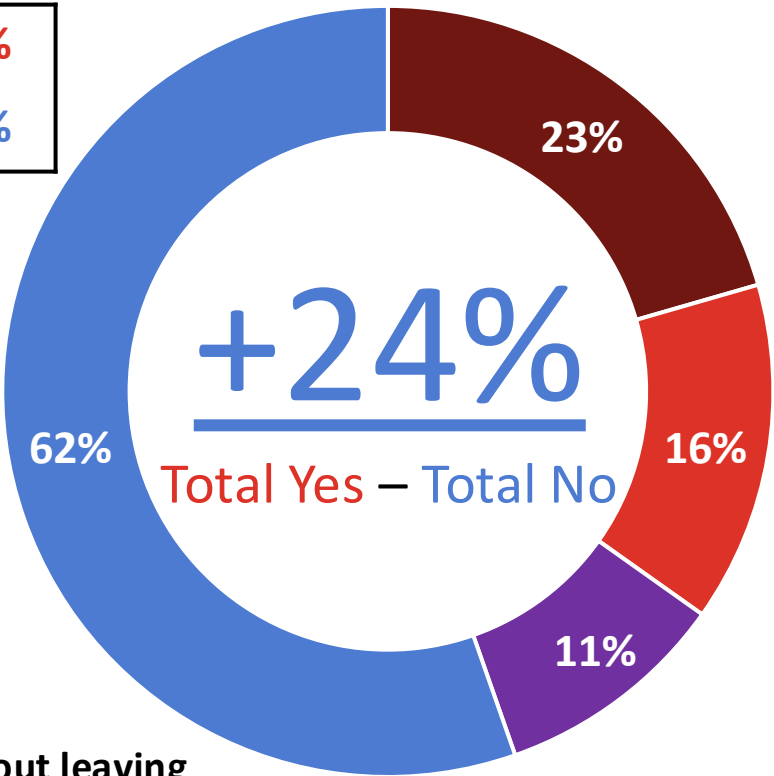
Ranked by % Combined Choice (Pennsylvania)

	Pennsylvania	Country
Inflation/Cost of Living	48%	48%
The U.S./Pennsylvania Economy (General)	28%	27%
Taxes	21%	9%
Crime/Rising Violence	21%	15%
Wages/Salary/Pay Inequality	19%	11%
Health Care	18%	16%
Poverty/Homelessness	16%	10%
Jobs/Unemployment	15%	9%
Lack of Money	11%	7%
Government/Lack of Leadership	10%	19%

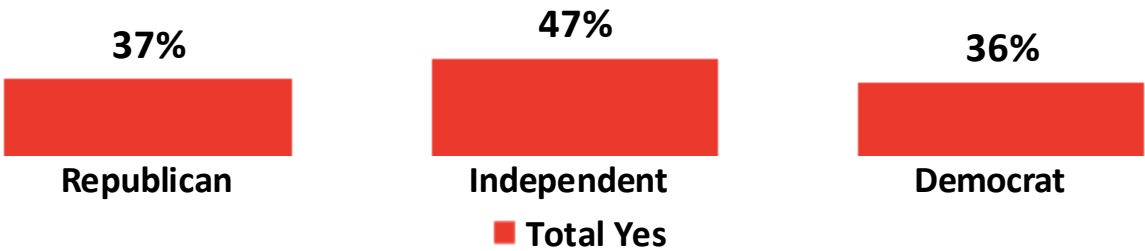
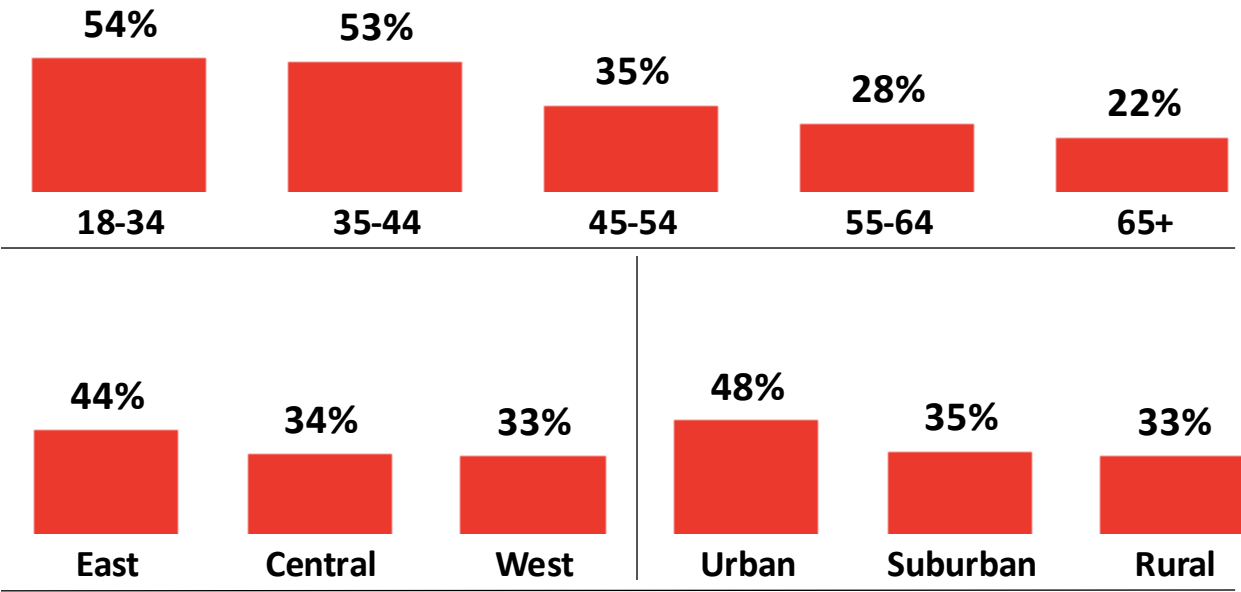
Nearly four-in-ten voters have considered leaving Pennsylvania or know someone who has thought about leaving or already left due to the state’s policies.

Have you or someone you know thought about leaving Pennsylvania for a different state due to Pennsylvania’s policies?

Total Yes 38%
Total No 62%

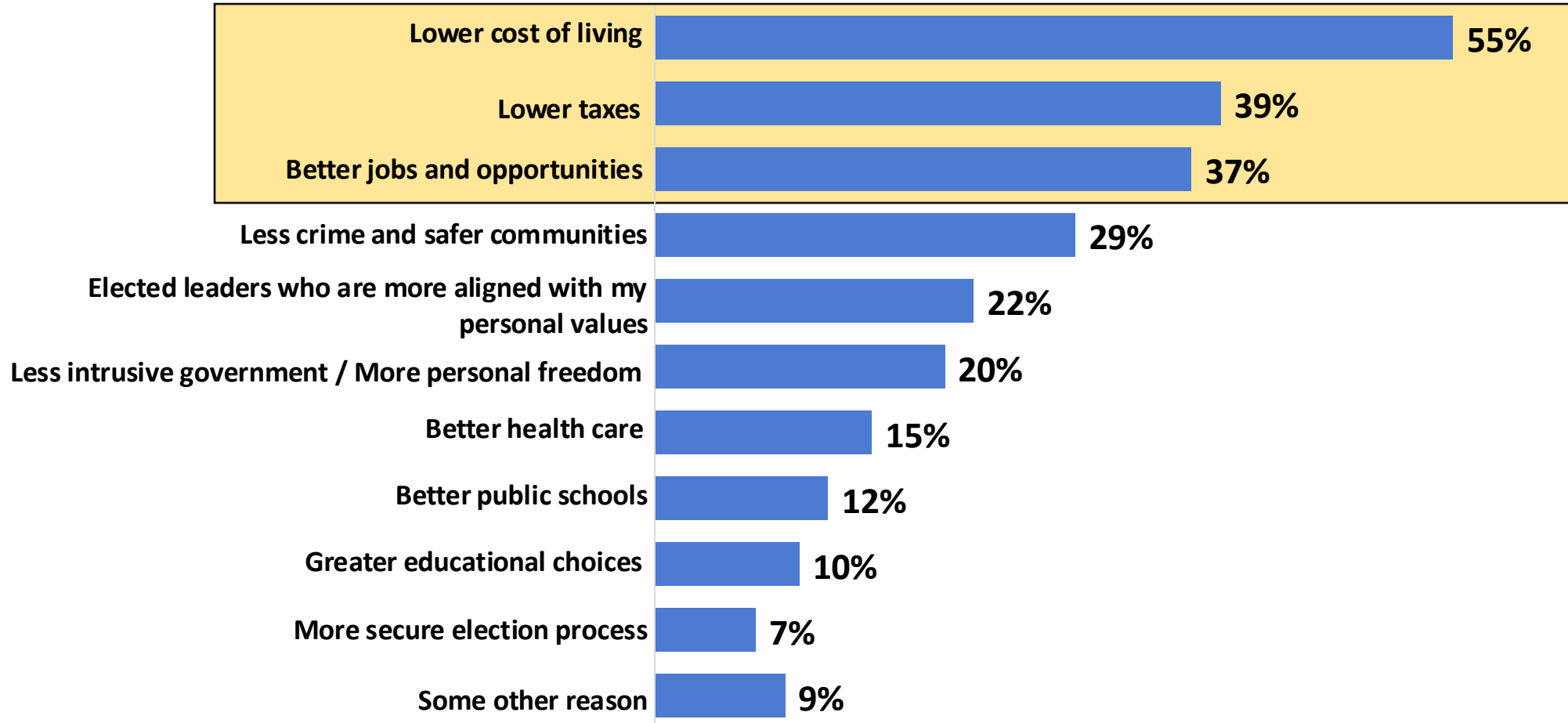


- Yes, I have thought about leaving
- Yes, someone I know has thought about leaving
- Yes, someone I know has left
- No



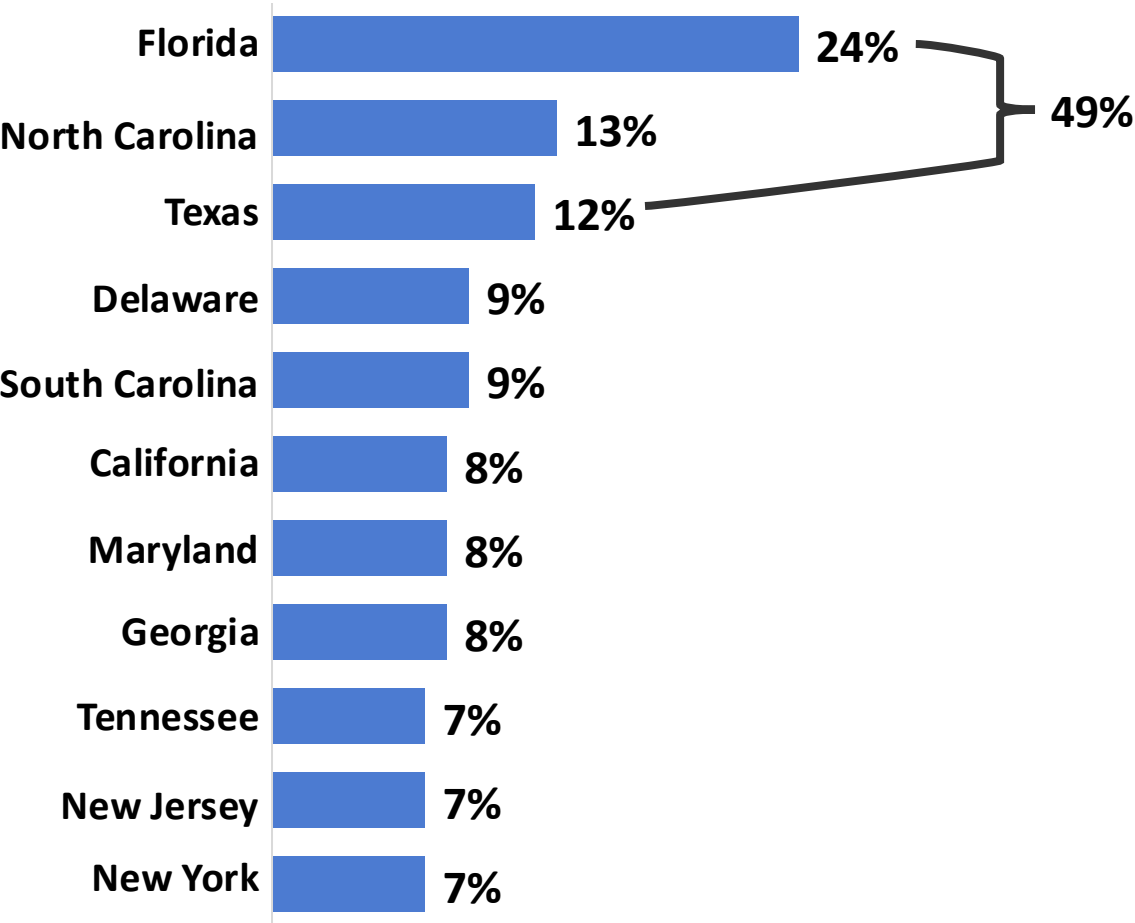
The main reasons for leaving Pennsylvania are all pocketbook issues, with cost of living, better job opportunities and lower taxes cited the most frequently.

*What was the primary reasons for thinking about moving from Pennsylvania to another state?
(Combined Choice)*



Locations considered “red states” topped the list of where Pennsylvanians are looking to relocate, including Florida (24%), North Carolina (13%), and Texas (12%).

If you could relocate, what other state(s) would you consider moving to? Please select up to three states.



There is strong majority support for recently enacted federal policies, including welfare work requirements, education tax credit scholarships, and the renewal of tax cuts.

Below is a series of different proposals that were recently enacted. After you read each one, please indicate if you support or oppose that proposal.

<i>Name of Policy</i>	<i>Ranked by %Strongly Support – All Voters</i>	Total Support	Strongly Support	Total Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Net Difference
WELFARE WORK REQUIREMENTS	Requiring healthy adults (excluding seniors, individuals with disabilities, and those with young children) who receive welfare benefits to work, seek work or job training, or volunteer in their communities to continue receiving benefits.	73%	43%	22%	11%	+51%
EDUCATION CHOICE FOR CHILDREN ACT	Establishment of a federal tax credit scholarship program to help low- and middle-income families access quality non-public schools, regardless of where they live.	72%	34%	19%	8%	+53%
TAX CUTS AND JOBS ACT RENEWAL	Renewal of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act to prevent tax increases in 2026, including higher income tax rates, a lower child tax credit, and the loss of full expensing for capital investments.	63%	32%	24%	11%	+39%



Pennsylvania State Budget



Pennsylvanians place the responsibility on the Governor for making sure the state budget gets finalized on time.

During his first year in office, Governor Shapiro and the state legislature did not agree on a budget in time to meet Pennsylvania's legal deadline of June 30, leading to a 5-month long impasse. Since then, Governor Shapiro has said it is up to the State House and Senate to find common ground.

With Pennsylvania experiencing another budget impasse this year, who do you think is ultimately responsible for making sure the state budget gets finalized on time?

Governor Josh Shapiro

36%

**Republicans in the State
Legislature**

22%

**Democrats in the State
Legislature**

16%

Other

5%

Not Sure

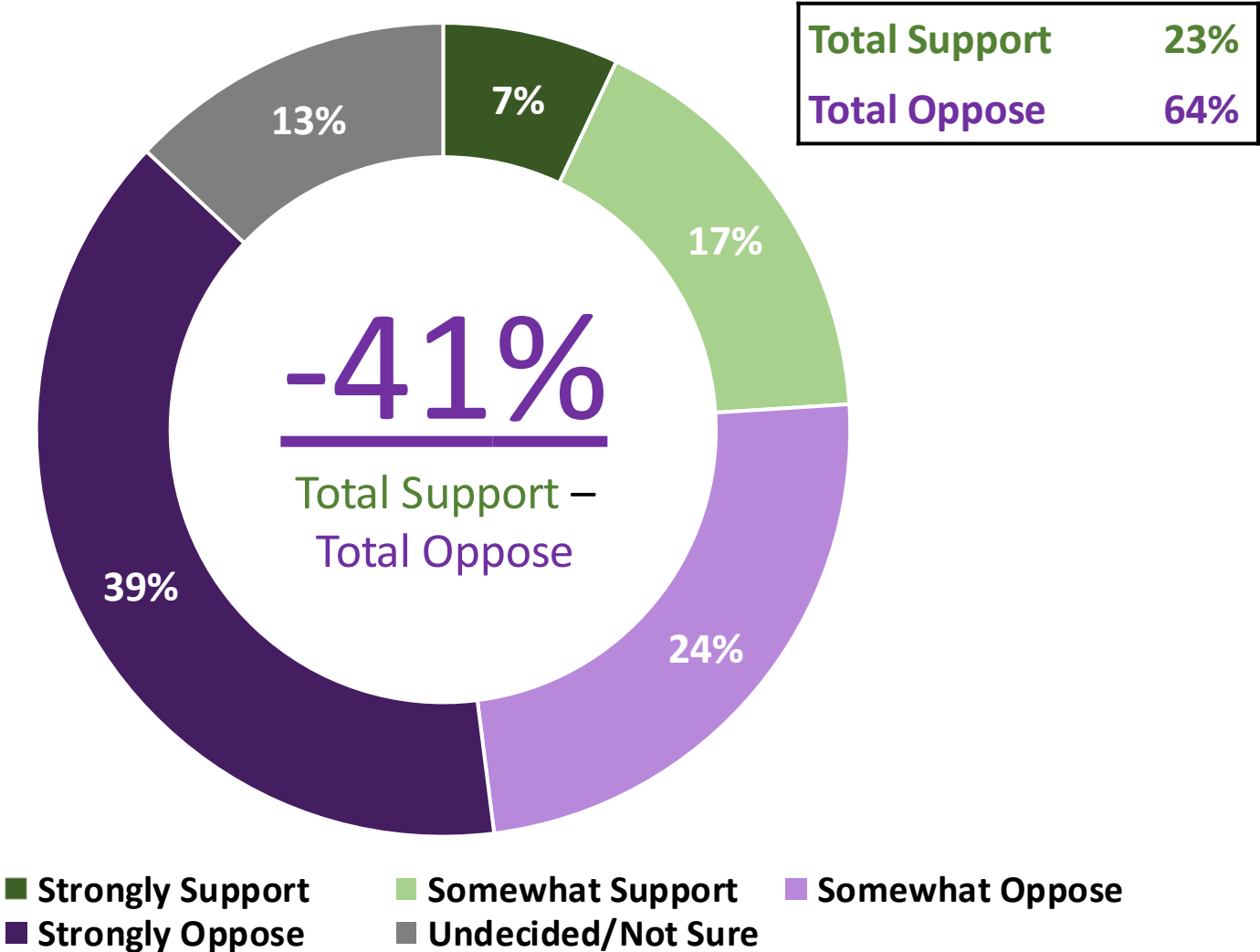
20%

More than six-in-ten voters oppose Governor Shapiro’s state budget proposal after learning details about the spending increase, projected deficit, and tax hikes on families.

Now, thinking about the Pennsylvania state budget...

As you may know, Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro has proposed a \$51.5 Billion General Fund budget for 2025-2026, which is an 8.1 percent spending increase compared to last year's ongoing general fund spending. The resulting \$6 billion deficit would necessitate a tax hike of nearly \$2,000 per family of four.

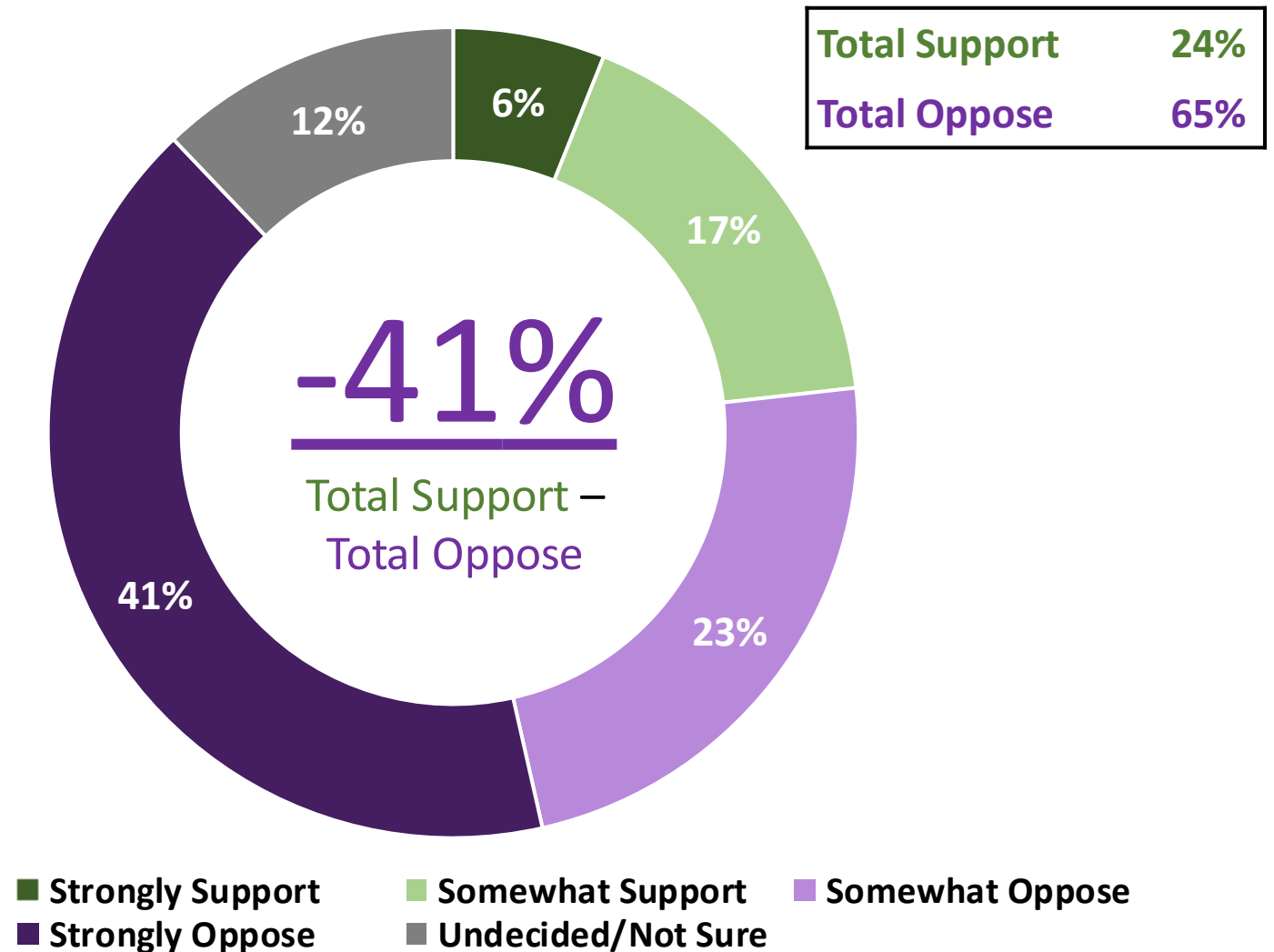
Knowing this, do you support or oppose Gov. Shapiro's budget proposal?



Nearly two-thirds of voters oppose Governor Shapiro's plan to use the Rainy Day Fund to cover his proposed spending increases.

Pennsylvania law requires the Rainy Day Fund to be used only for emergencies or unexpected revenue shortfalls. Governor Shapiro has proposed illegally using \$1.6 billion from this fund to cover his proposed spending increases. This would still not be adequate to cover Shapiro's proposed deficit spending necessitating tax increases.

Knowing this, do you support or oppose Gov. Shapiro spending plan?



A majority of Pennsylvanians (58%) believe current public school spending is less than half the actual per student cost.

How much money do you believe Pennsylvania spends annually per student in public schools? Please estimate to the nearest thousand dollars.

Below \$3,800

27%

Between \$3,800-\$7,599

16%

Between \$7,600-\$11,399

15%

Above \$11,400

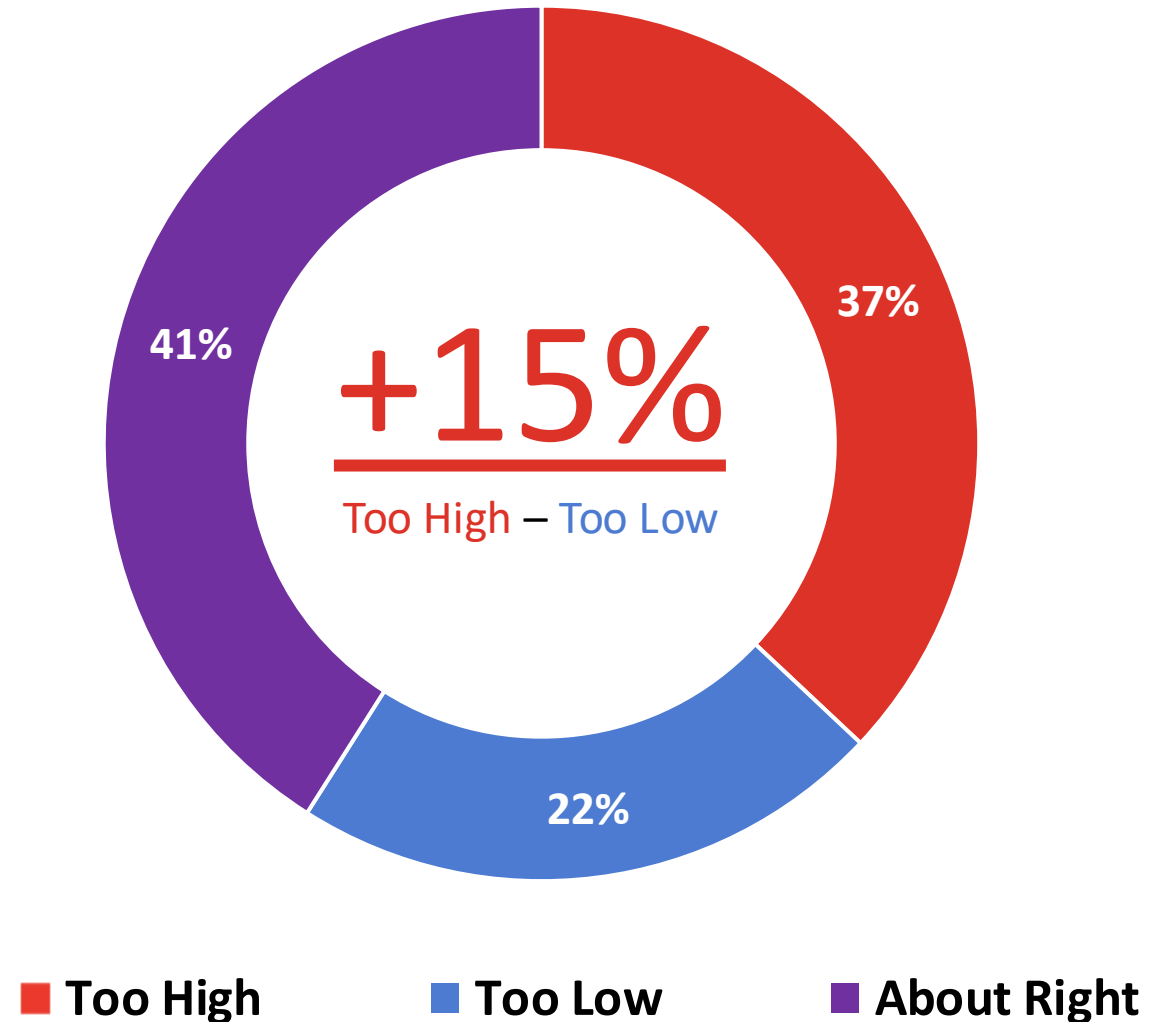
42%

Median

\$10,000

Nearly four-in-ten Pennsylvanians believe current \$23,000 per student spending is too high.

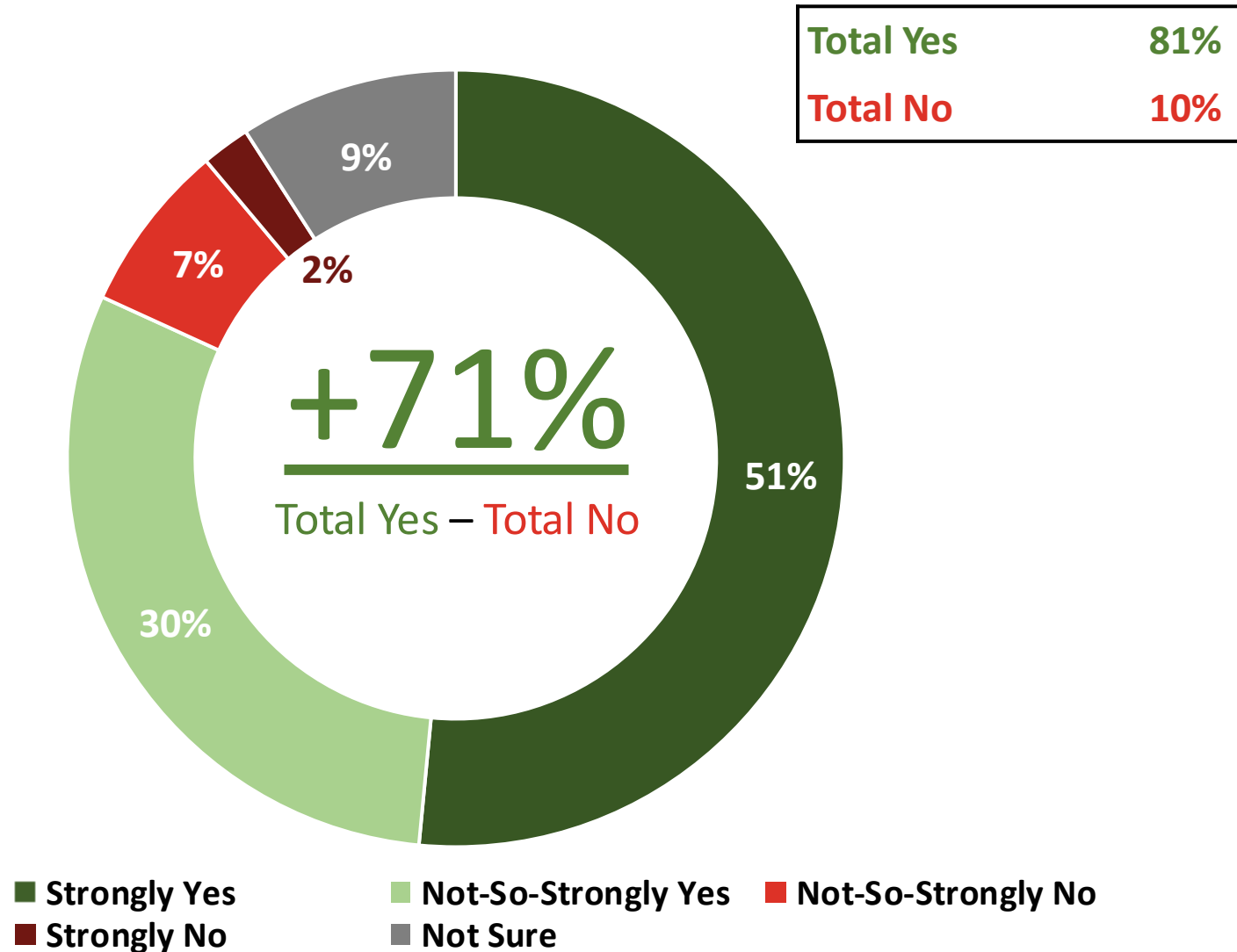
The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania spends \$23,000 annually per student on education. Do you believe that amount is...



An overwhelming majority of Pennsylvanians (81%) believe school districts should use excess funding reserves before raising taxes.

According to data from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, public school districts in Pennsylvania have more than \$7.4 Billion in reserve funds.

Should school districts be required to use excess reserves before raising taxes to increase spending?





Governor Shapiro's Performance

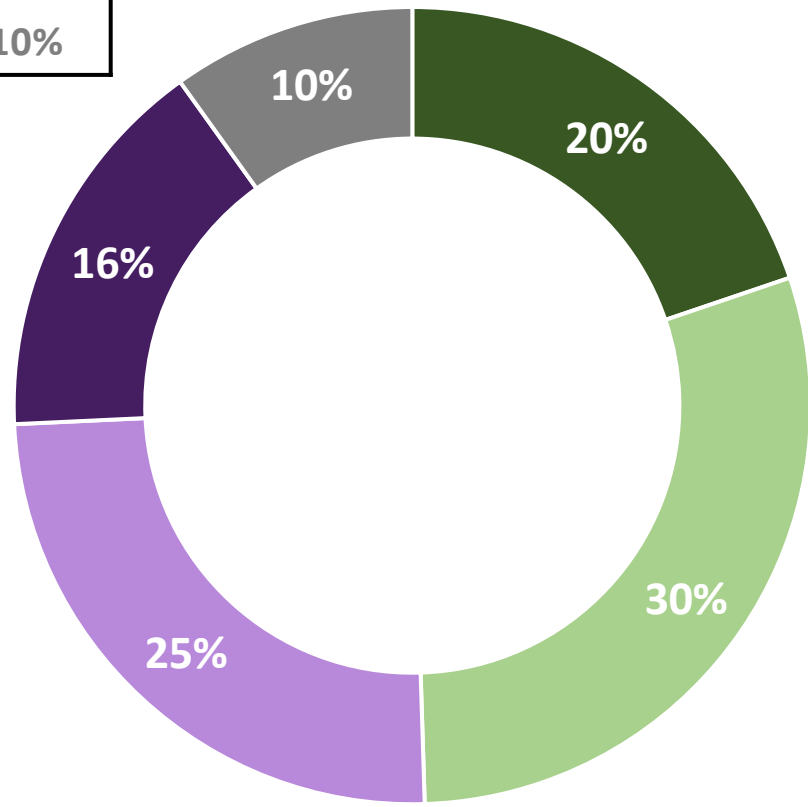


Pennsylvanians are divided over whether Shapiro has delivered accomplishments; among those believing he has, few can name anything specific.

Do you feel Governor Shapiro has delivered major accomplishments during his term in office?

Total Yes	50%
Total No	40%
Not Sure	10%

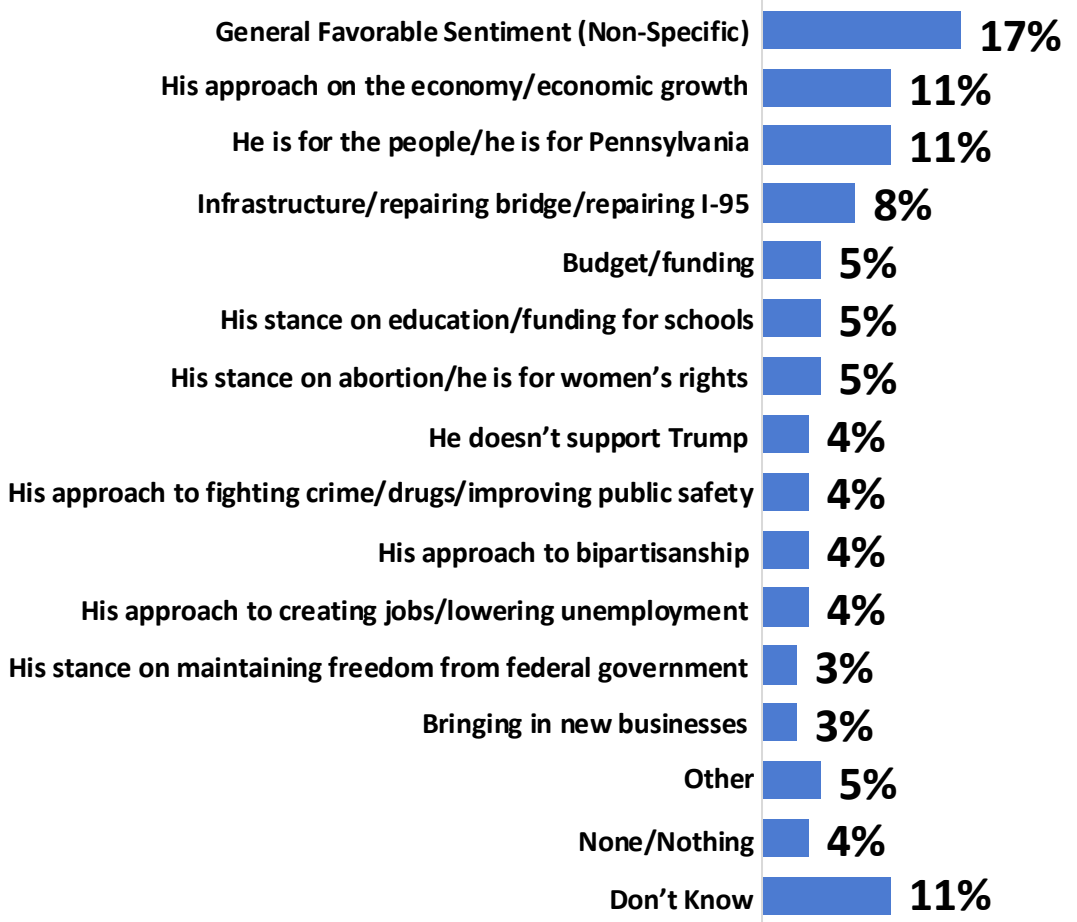
All Voters



- Yes, Definitely
- Yes, Somewhat
- No, Not Really
- No, Definitely Not
- Not Sure

So far in Governor Shapiro's term, what do you regard as his greatest accomplishment?

Among The 50% of Voters Who Said Yes, Shapiro Has Delivered Major Accomplishments

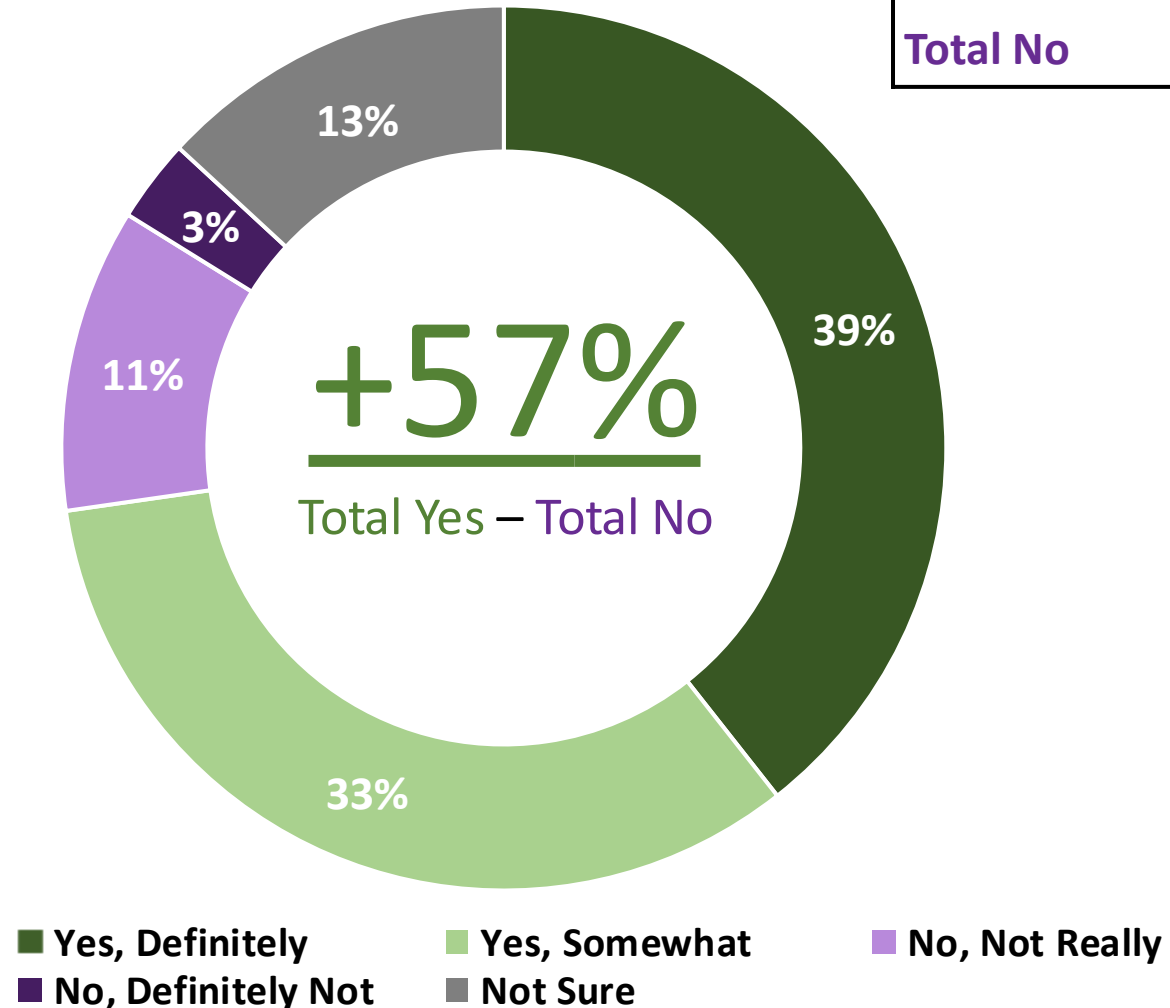


A large majority of voters believe Governor Shapiro should place greater focus on working with the state legislature to deliver bipartisan policy reforms.

As a candidate, Governor Shapiro pledged to work across the aisle with legislators and enact bipartisan policies. During his first two-and-a-half years in office, Shapiro's record of legislative accomplishment has proven to be the least productive of any Pennsylvania gubernatorial term in at least 50 years.

Shapiro has said he remains focused on his job as governor, while others have questioned the extent of his out-of-state travel for political events and national media appearances.

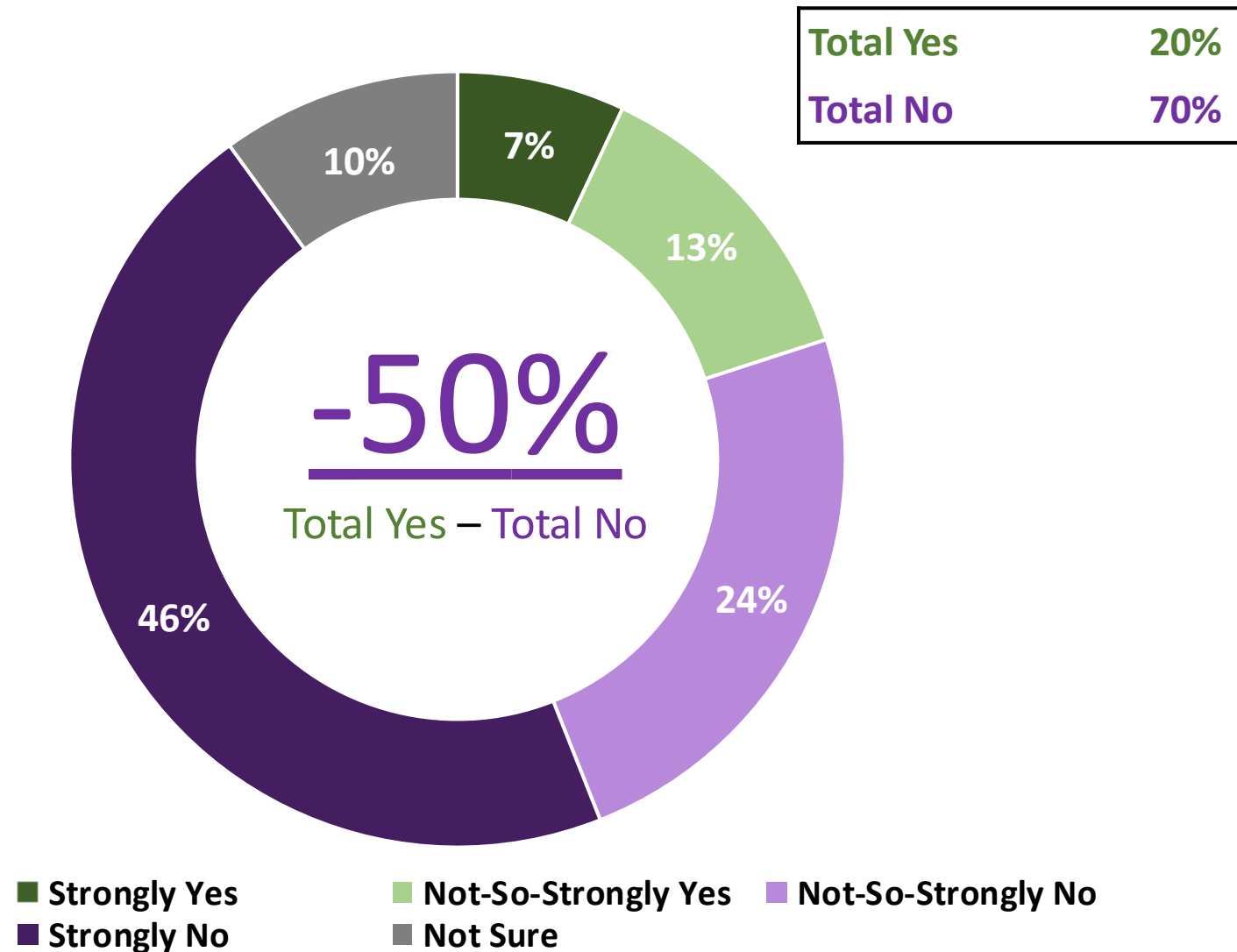
Generally speaking, do you believe Governor Shapiro should focus more on working with the legislature to deliver bipartisan policy reforms?



Seven-in-ten voters believe the Governor's expansion of his communications staff is an inappropriate use of taxpayer dollars.

Governor Josh Shapiro has nearly doubled the size of the governor's communications staff compared to previous administrations, while making frequent national media appearances. His office now employs 21 full-time staffers dedicated to publicity, social media, and influencer outreach. Their combined salaries cost taxpayers nearly \$3 million annually, including 12 state employees making six-figure salaries, with some as high as \$190,000 per year.

Do you believe this is an appropriate use of taxpayer money?





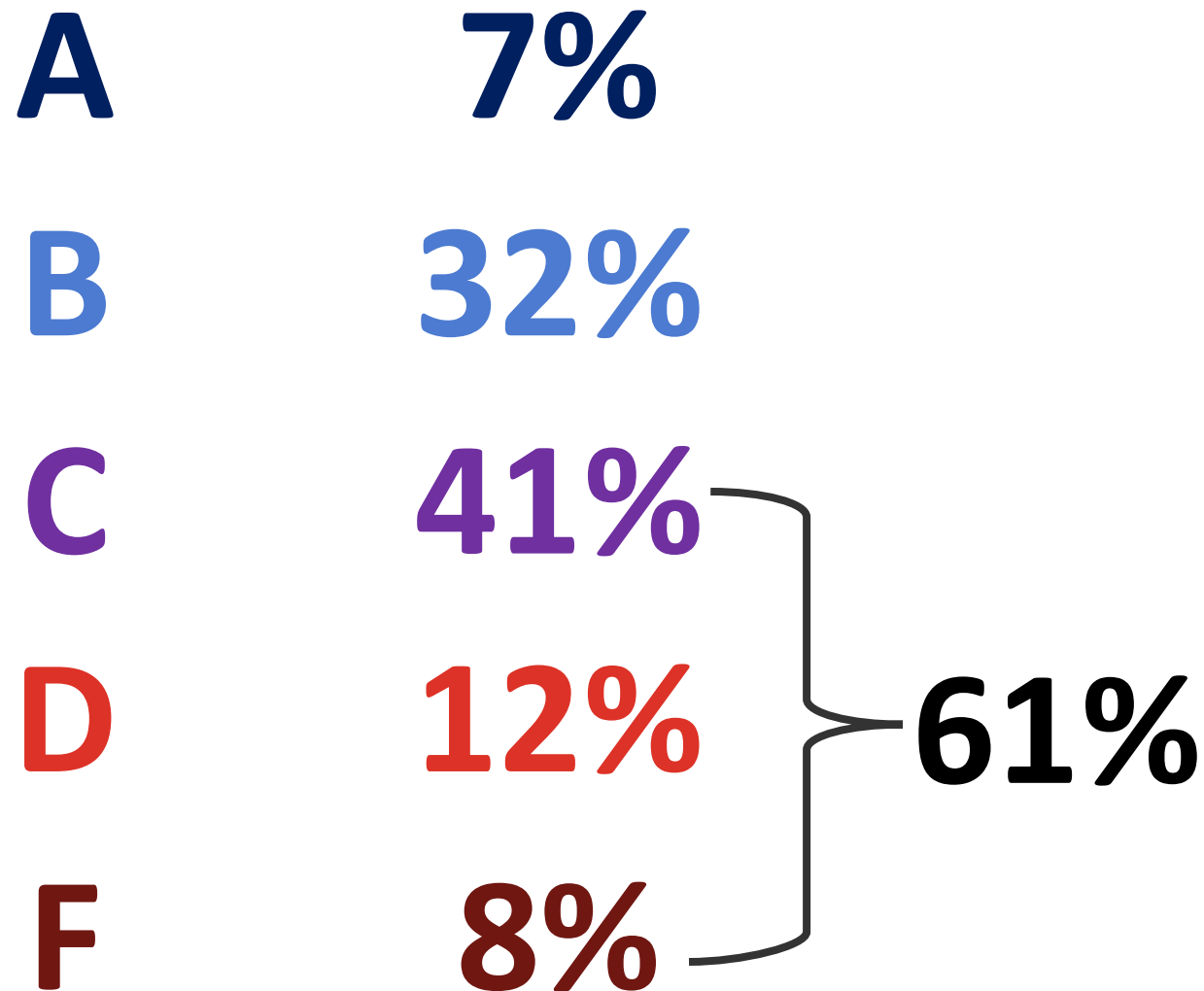
Education in Pennsylvania



More than six-in-ten voters give Pennsylvania's K-12 schools a grade of C, D, or F.

*Now, thinking a moment about
the educational systems in
Pennsylvania...*

*How would you grade the
quality of Pennsylvania's K-12
school system?*



Voters dissatisfied with Pennsylvania's K-12 schools point to students not learning essential life skills and a lack of focus on teaching the basics.

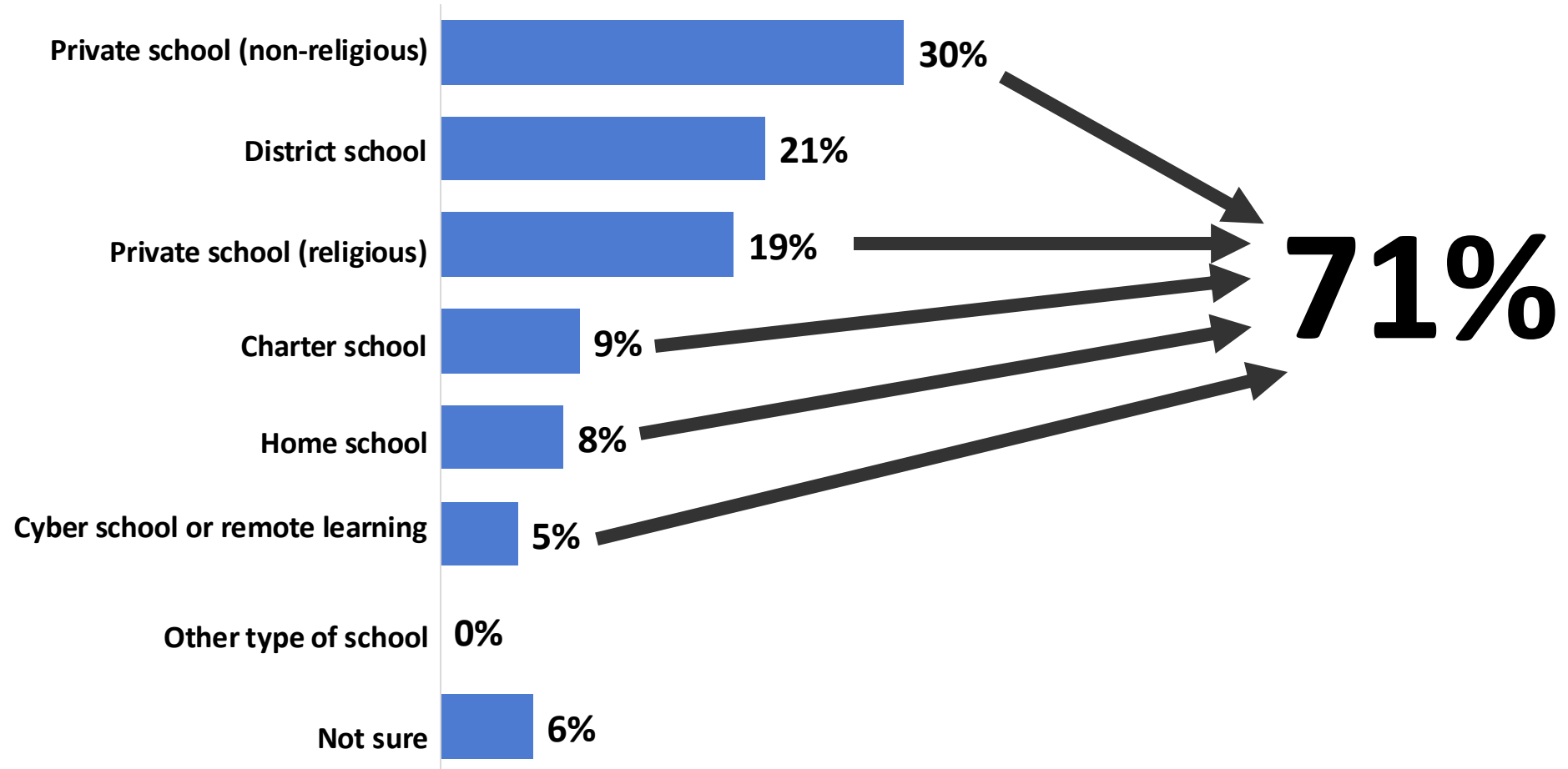
What, if any, would you say are reasons you are dissatisfied with the quality of education that students in Pennsylvania receive?

Ranked by %Total – Voters who rated PA Schools with a C, D, or F

	Total
Not learning life skills	47%
Lack of Teaching Basics / Reading / Writing / Arithmetic	41%
Lack of Resources, or Resources Not Being Effectively Administered	35%
Quality of Education Is Poor / Outranked by Other States	35%
Political Agendas Being Taught	32%
Poor Administration	31%
Too Much Emphasis on Standardized Testing / Grades	28%
Too Much Government Interference	25%
Not up to Competitive Standards	25%
Student Safety Concerns	23%
Poor / Outdated Curriculum	23%
Unequal Access / Opportunities for Low-Income Students	22%
More Involvement or Input Needed from Parents	22%
Outdated Approach / Lack of Innovation	19%
Parents Lack Educational Options for Children	18%
Learning loss from Covid Shutdown	18%
I Am Not Dissatisfied with the Quality of Education Students in Pennsylvania Receive	2%
Not Sure	4%

If cost were no concern, an overwhelming majority of Pennsylvanians (71%) would choose an option other than their local district school.

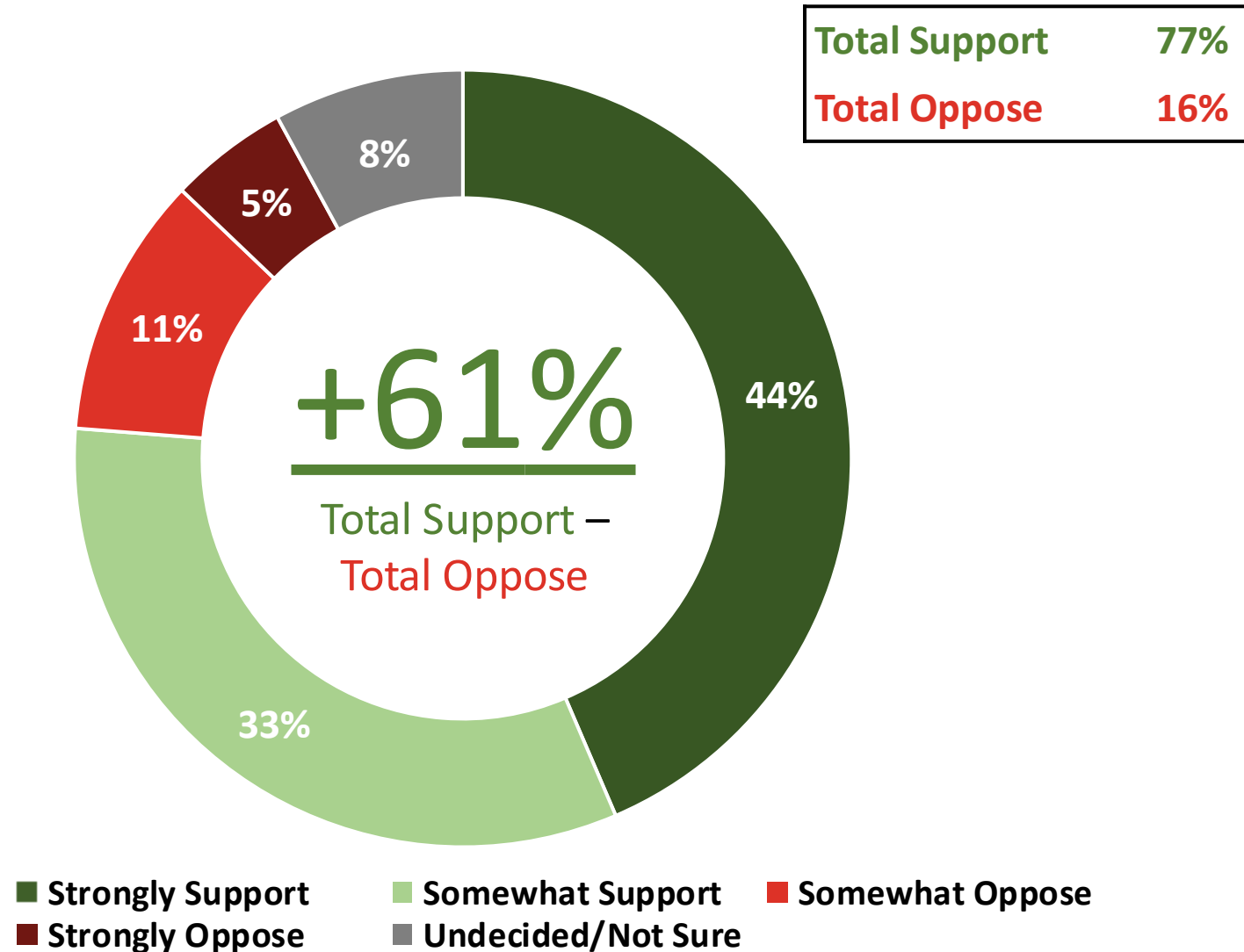
Imagine you were choosing a school for a child. If financial costs were not a concern, what type of school would you select to provide the best education?



More than three-quarters of voters support allowing Pennsylvania families to choose the public school that best meets their children's needs.

As you may know, children throughout the country are assigned a public school based on their home address, and most are not allowed to choose a different school.

Thinking about this... Would you support or oppose giving every child in Pennsylvania the ability to attend the public school that best meets their needs?



Pennsylvanians express overwhelming bipartisan support for the expanding educational choice programs. Proposed cuts to cyber charters are unpopular.

Thinking still about K-12 education in Pennsylvania... Below is a series of different ideas and proposals people are talking about in Pennsylvania. After you read each one, please indicate if you support or oppose that proposal.

Ranked by %Strongly Support – All Voters	Total Support	Strongly Support	Total Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Net Difference
Expanding tax credit scholarships, which allow businesses to donate money to nonprofit organizations that provide scholarships to low-income and middle-income children in Pennsylvania to attend pre-kindergarten or K-12 private school.	79%	36%	11%	5%	+68%
Providing a refundable tax credit that gives money to families to spend on the direct needs of their child, including private tuition, online education programs, tutoring, curriculum, and therapies. Low income families would be eligible for up front relief.	71%	31%	19%	7%	+52%
Creating education opportunity accounts, a government-funded account that parents can use for restricted educational expenses, including tuition, tutoring, online education programs, and therapies for students with special needs.	72%	30%	17%	6%	+55%
Establishing scholarships for low-income students in Pennsylvania's worst performing (bottom 15%) schools that would help pay for tuition to another k-12 school.	67%	30%	21%	7%	+46%
Cutting state funding for cyber charter schools by 50% per student.	38%	12%	46%	23%	-8%



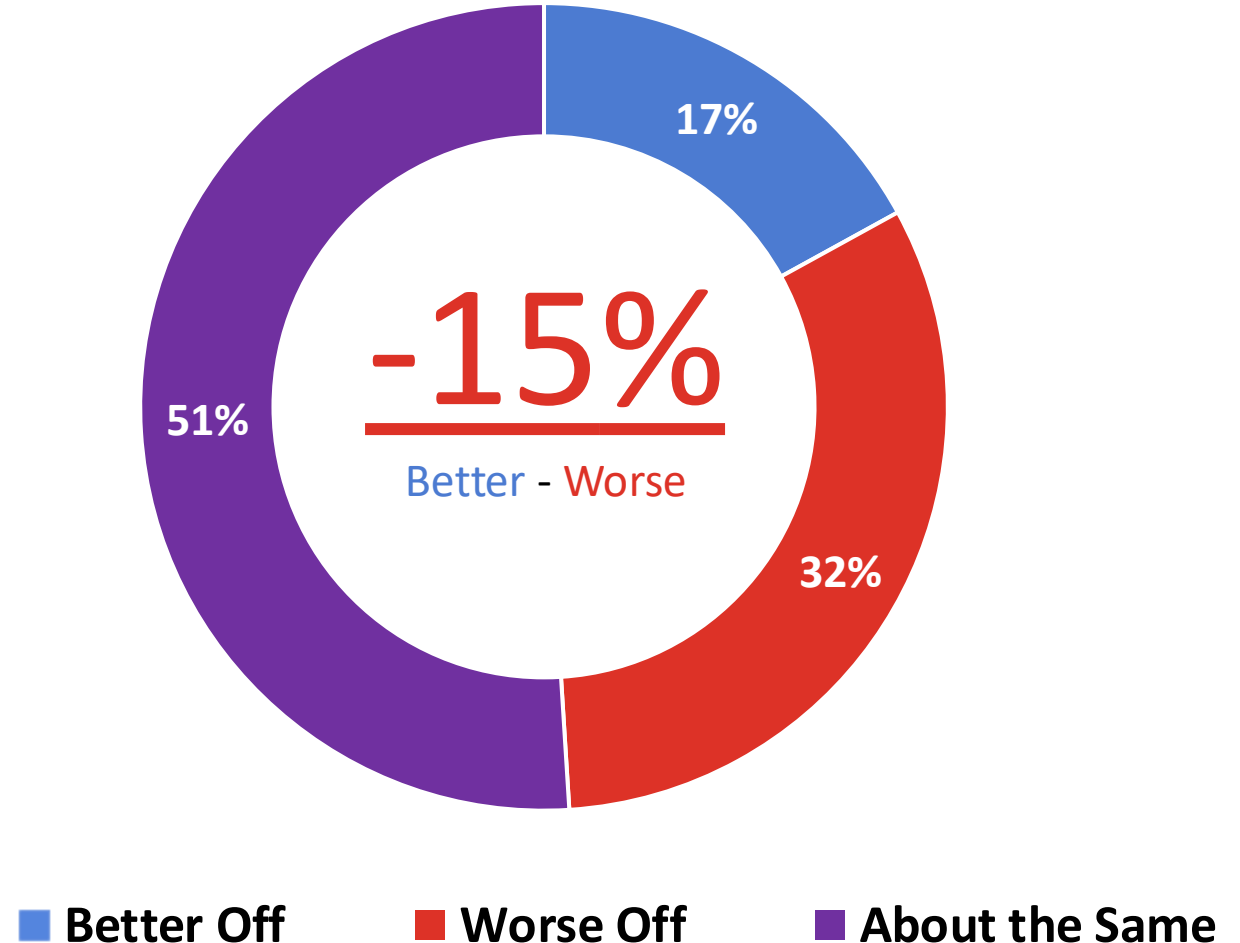
Economic Issues in Pennsylvania



Nearly one-third of voters believe their families are financially worse off than they were two years ago.

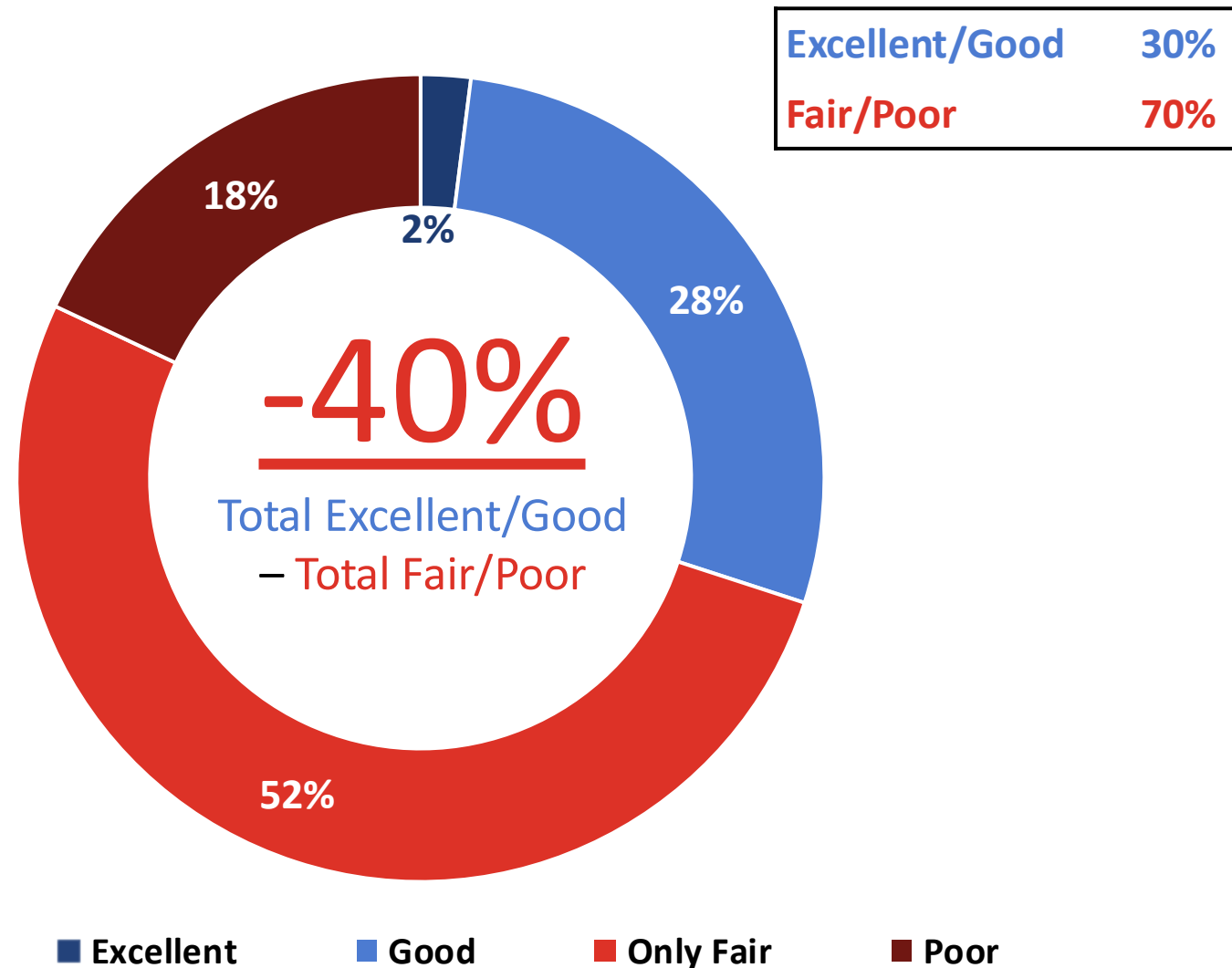
Changing topics...

Would you say that you and your family are financially better off, about the same, or worse off than you were two years ago?



Fewer than one-third of voters rate Pennsylvania's economic conditions as excellent or good.

How would you rate the economic conditions in Pennsylvania today?



Nearly two-thirds of Pennsylvania voters believe economic conditions are getting worse for them personally.

Currently, do you think economic conditions in Pennsylvania are getting better or worse for you personally?

Better

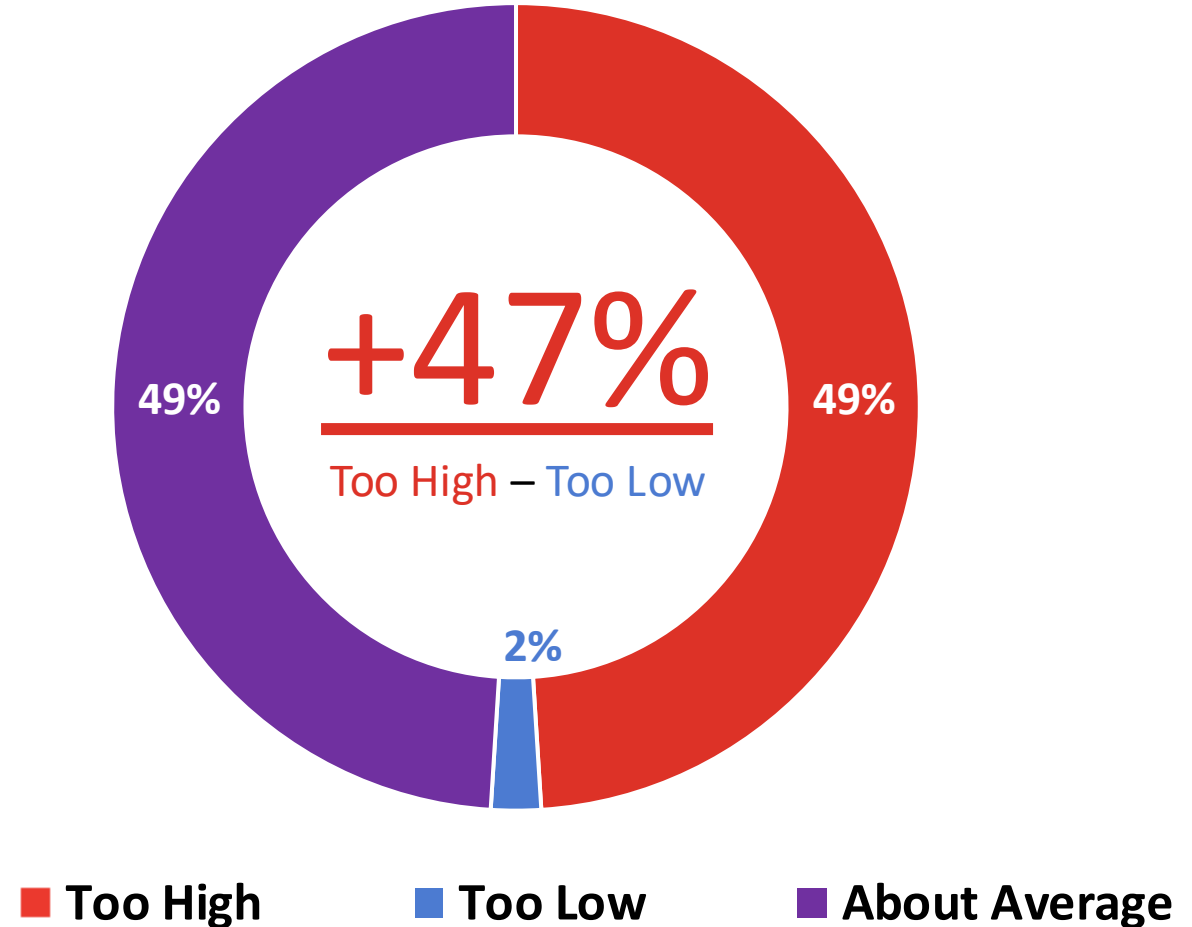
36%

Worse

64%

Voters evenly feel that, compared to other states, Pennsylvania's taxes are either average or too high.

Would you say that compared to other states, Pennsylvania taxes are...



A majority of Pennsylvanians believe it is a bad time to find a job in the state.

Thinking about the job situation in Pennsylvania today, would you say that it is now a good time or a bad time to find a quality job?

A good time

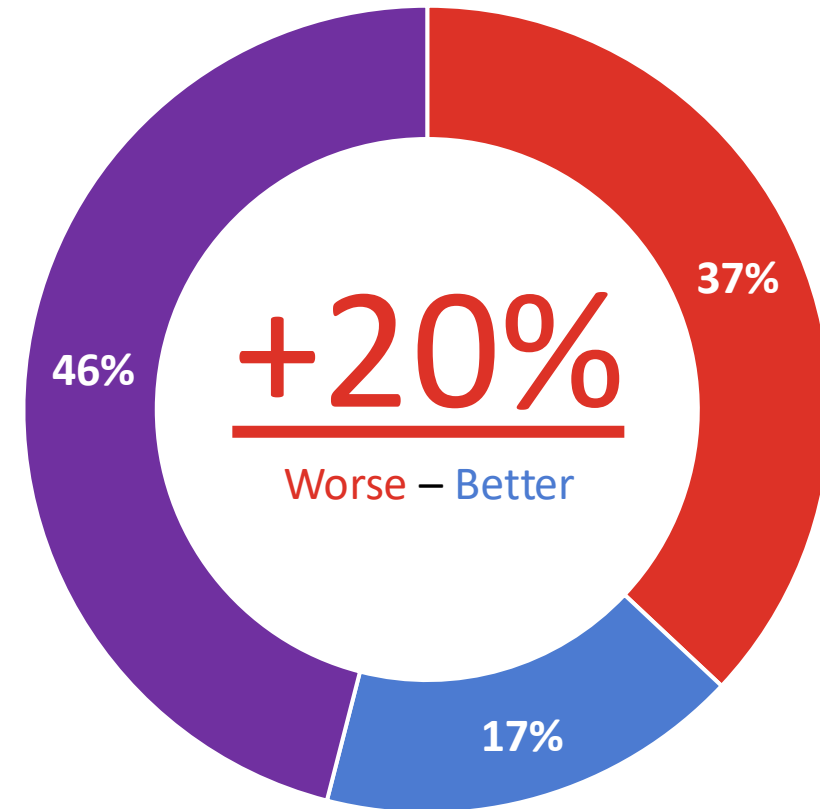
46%

A bad time

54%

Fewer than one-in-five Pennsylvanians believe the state is better for businesses than it was a decade ago.

*Do you think the
state of
Pennsylvania is...*



- Worse for businesses than it was 10 years ago
- Better for businesses than it was 10 years ago
- About the same for businesses than it was 10 years ago

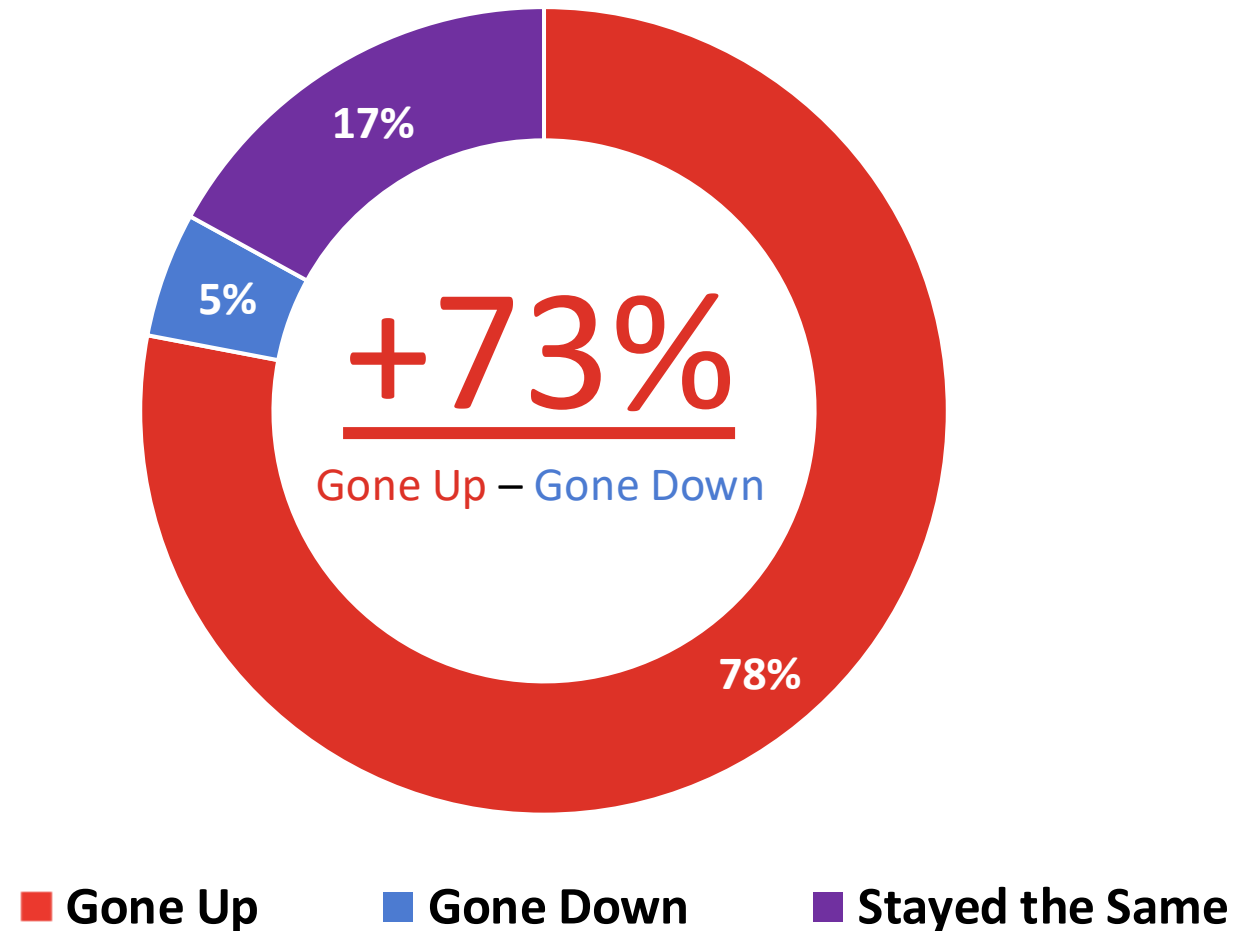


Energy in Pennsylvania



Nearly eight-in-ten Pennsylvanians believe their electric bills have increased over the past year.

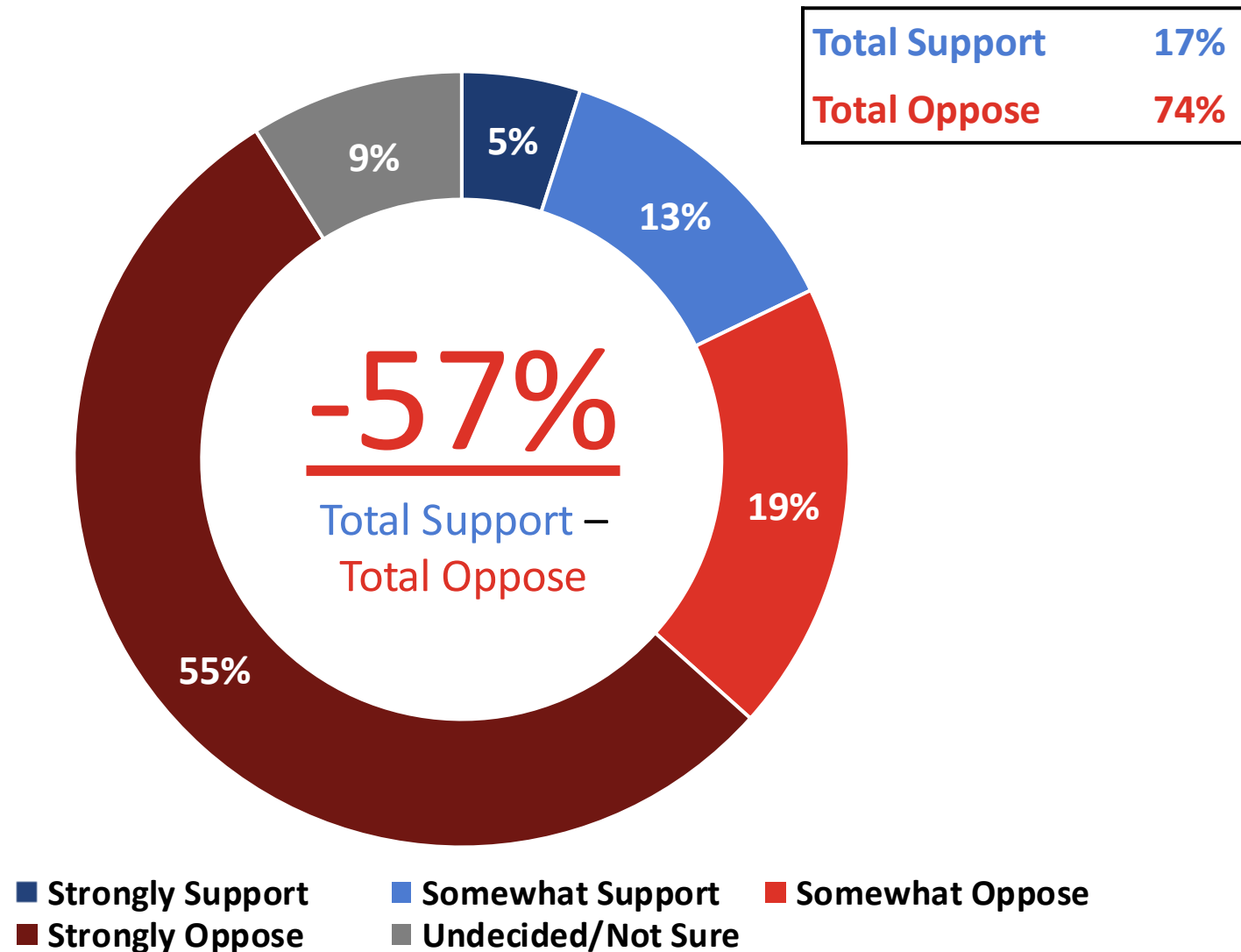
Over the past year, would you say that your household electric bill has...



Nearly three-quarters of Pennsylvanians oppose the PACER and PRESS programs.

Elected officials in Harrisburg are considering proposals to combat climate change - known as PACER and PRESS - that will increase consumers' monthly electricity bill. It is estimated that these programs would cost average households an additional \$1,754 per year.

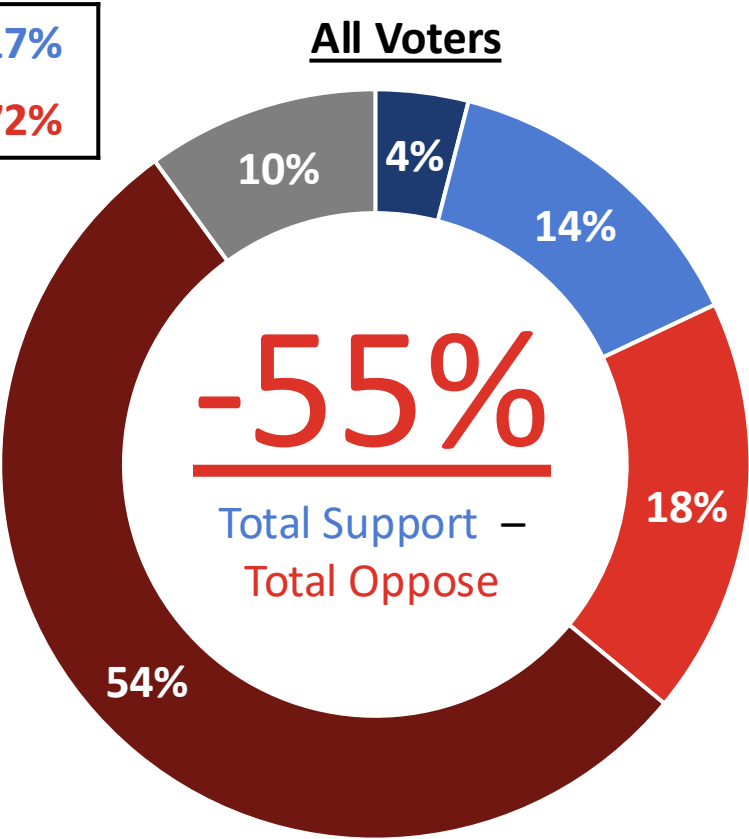
Do you support or oppose these proposals?



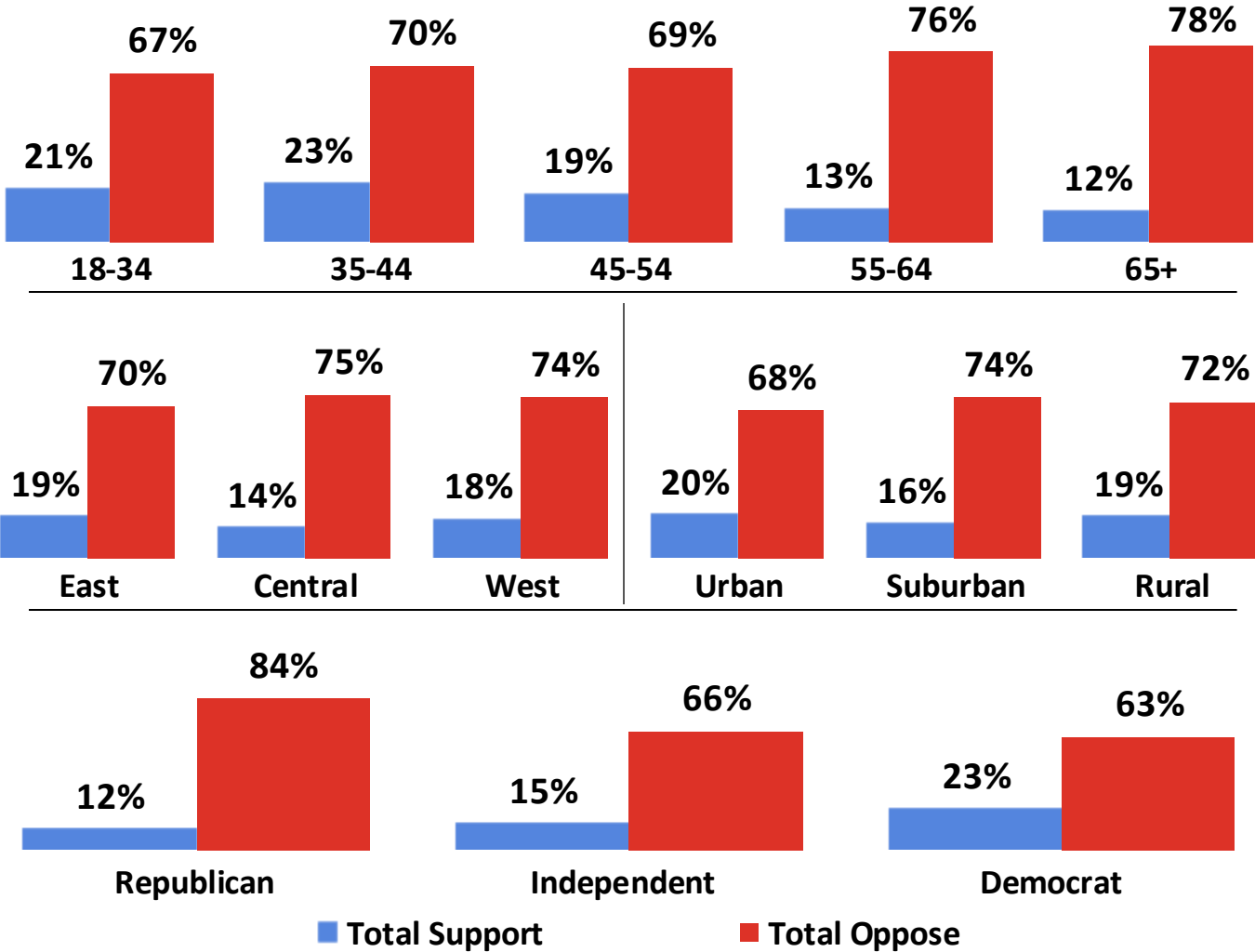
More than seven-in-ten Pennsylvanians oppose the state's participation in the RGGI initiative.

Do you support or oppose Pennsylvania's participation in an initiative - known as RGGI - aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, that would impose an estimated 30% increase in your electricity rates and could lead to Pennsylvania losing as many as 22,000 jobs?

Total Support 17%
Total Oppose 72%



Strongly Support **Somewhat Support** **Somewhat Oppose**
Strongly Oppose **Undecided/Not Sure**



Demographic Overview



Gender	% of Sample
Men	48%
Women	52%



Age	% of Sample
18-44	40%
45-64	33%
65+	27%



Party	% of Sample
Republicans	43%
Independents/Lean	12%
Democrats	45%



Education	% of Sample
Less than College	58%
College+	42%



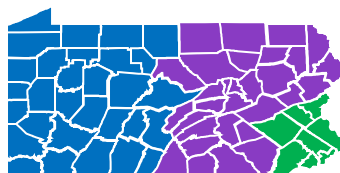
Ethnicity	% of Sample
White Voters	80%
Voters of Color	20%



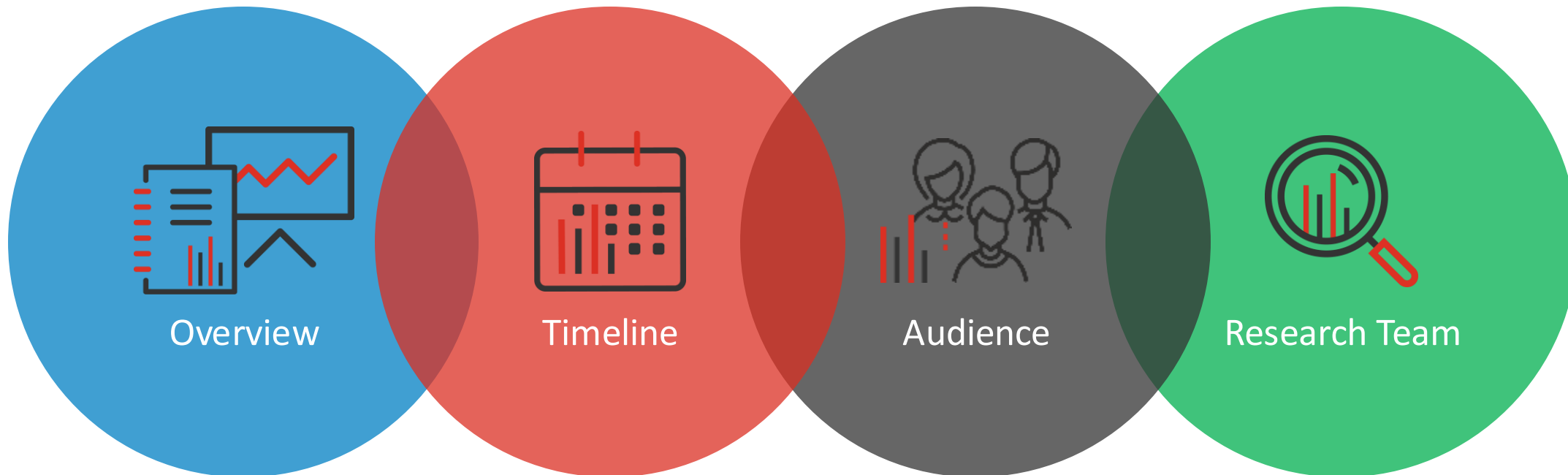
Ideology	% of Sample
Conservatives	36%
Moderates	35%
Liberals	29%



Geography	% of Sample
Urban	24%
Suburban	62%
Rural	14%



Region	% of Sample
East	42%
Central	28%
West	31%



Public Opinion Strategies conducted a statewide survey in Pennsylvania on behalf of the Commonwealth Foundation.

The survey was conducted August 22-28, 2025

The survey was conducted among N=800 registered voters in Pennsylvania.

The credibility interval for a survey of N=800 is $\pm 3.95\%$.

Jarrett Lewis was the principal researcher on this project. Luke Jackson was the research director and Zachary Cooper provided analytical support.



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