



Sacred Heart UNIVERSITY

Sacred Heart University Institute for Public Policy



Report of Findings

March 9, 2019

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Sacred Heart UNIVERSITY



Our Story

Sacred Heart University (SHU) and GreatBlue Research are partnering through the Institute for Public Policy to analyze salient issues facing the State of Connecticut. This collaboration combines the academic excellence of a top-rated private University with the research design, analysis, and reporting expertise of GreatBlue Research.

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Areas of Investigation

The Sacred Heart University Institute for Public Policy leveraged quantitative research through a dual-methodology to address the following areas of investigation:

- Thoughts on the quality of life in Connecticut
- Challenges facing the State and State Legislature
- Opinions toward the implementation of electronic tolling or “e-tolling” in the State
- Perceptions of school safety issues in the State
- Opinions on e-cigarettes
- Perceptions of housing issues facing the State and affordable housing options
- Demographic profiles of respondents

Research Methodology Snapshot

Methodology	No. of Completes	No. of Questions	Sample
Dual mode (phone and digital survey)**	1,004	42*	Connecticut residents
Target	Margin of Error	Confidence Level	Research Dates
Connecticut residents	+/- 3.01%	95%	February 13 - March 4

* This represents the total possible number of questions; not all respondents will answer all questions based on skip patterns and other instrument bias.

** Supervisory personnel, in addition to computer-aided interviewing platforms, ensure the integrity of the data is accurate.

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SHU Institute for Public Policy - 1st Quarter 2019 Headlines

- ❖ In Q1 2019, 59.3% of Connecticut residents surveyed believe their quality of life in the State was either “excellent” (15.5%) or “good” (43.8%). However, a higher rate of residents (62.2%) believe it is “very difficult” (21.4%) or “somewhat difficult” (40.8%) to maintain their standard of living. Top reasons for this difficulty included “increase/high taxes (overall)” (57.3%) and “state tax increase” (56.6%).
- ❖ Regarding issues facing the State, Connecticut residents supported “increasing grants for school districts to implement school safety improvements” by a 61.7 percentage point margin, supported “raising the minimum age to purchase e-cigarettes from 18 to 21 years old” by a 59.8 percentage point margin, and “raising the minimum wage from \$10.10 to \$15.00 an hour” by a 44.8 percentage point margin.
 - Conversely, Connecticut residents opposed “implementing electronic tolling on major highways in the State” by a 24.3 percentage point margin and opposed “implementing a sales tax on groceries and medications” by a 80.3 percentage point margin.
- ❖ On the topic of electronic tolling or “e-tolling,” a majority of Connecticut residents (54.5%) reported they would attempt to travel on toll roads less should “e-tolling” be implemented on major highways in the State.
 - In addition, while 39.8% of residents believe the expected revenue of \$1 billion would be worth a \$100 million investment by the State to implement “e-tolling,” 38.5% did not believe “e-tolling” was worth such an investment.

SHU Institute for Public Policy - 1st Quarter 2019 Headlines

- ❖ A majority of Connecticut residents with a child or children in public schools reported to fear for their safety when they are in school (51.1%).
 - 87.0% of all Connecticut residents surveyed reported that improving the physical infrastructure of schools such as increasing cameras, metal detectors, etc. was an “effective” way to combat school shootings. However, less than one-half of residents (47.2%) felt that increasing the number of trained and armed teachers in schools was an “effective” way to combat school shootings.
- ❖ On the topic of e-cigarettes, 75.1% of Connecticut residents “supported” limiting the use of e-cigarettes indoors in public places and 70.8% “supported” raising the sales tax for purchasing e-cigarettes sold in the State.
- ❖ Regarding housing, among the 38.7% of Connecticut residents considering moving in the next five (5) years, the vast majority of these individuals are considering moving “outside of Connecticut” (71.7%).
 - 81.4% of Connecticut residents reported there are “too few” affordable housing options to rent or buy for individuals making minimum wage in the State and 70.0% of residents believe there are “too few” affordable housing options for first time home buyers in the State.
- ❖ Finally, 51.9% of Connecticut residents “supported” increasing funds for security along the southern border. However, a similar rate of residents “disagreed” that this funding should include funds for a border “wall” (53.0%).

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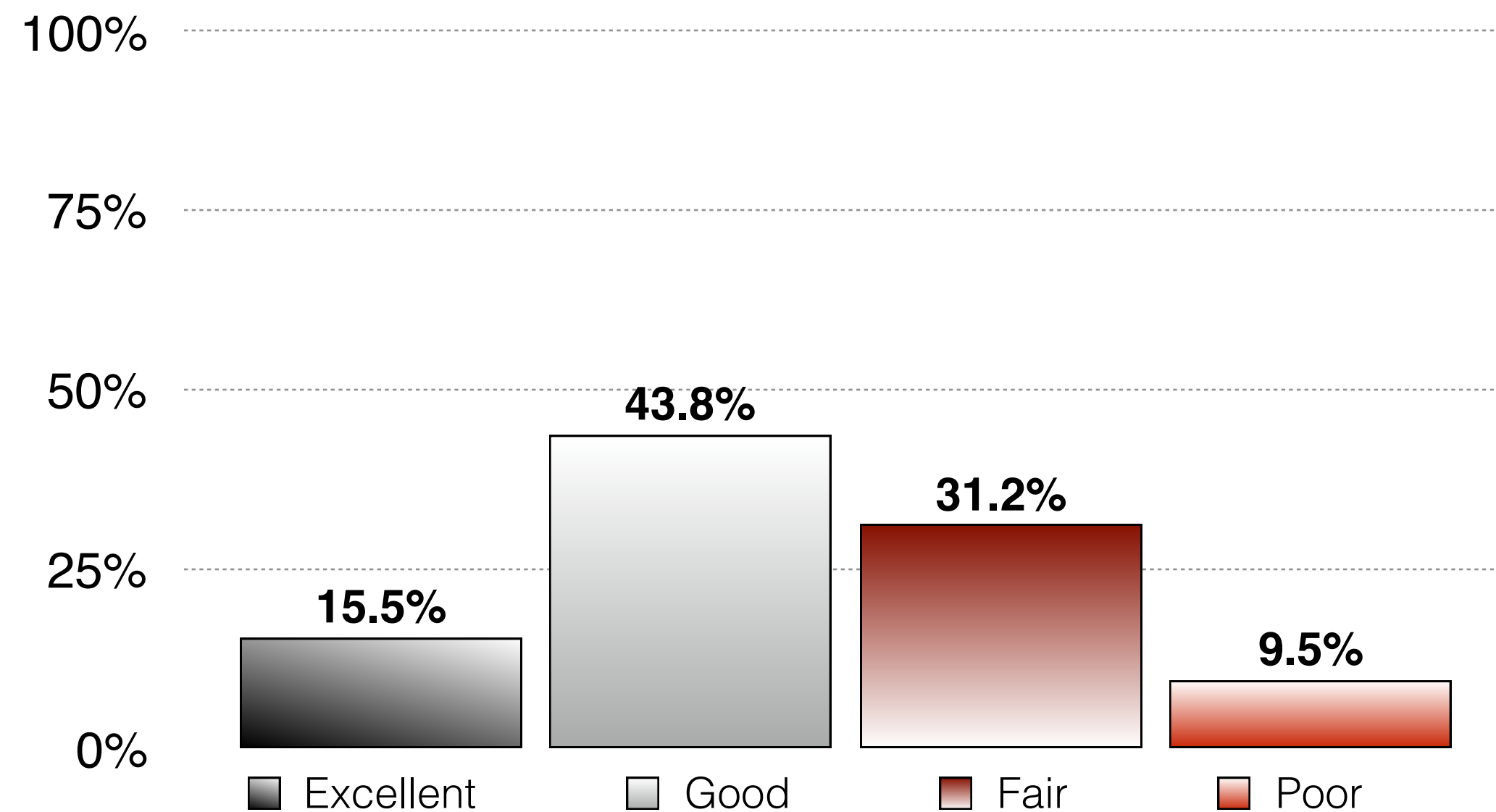
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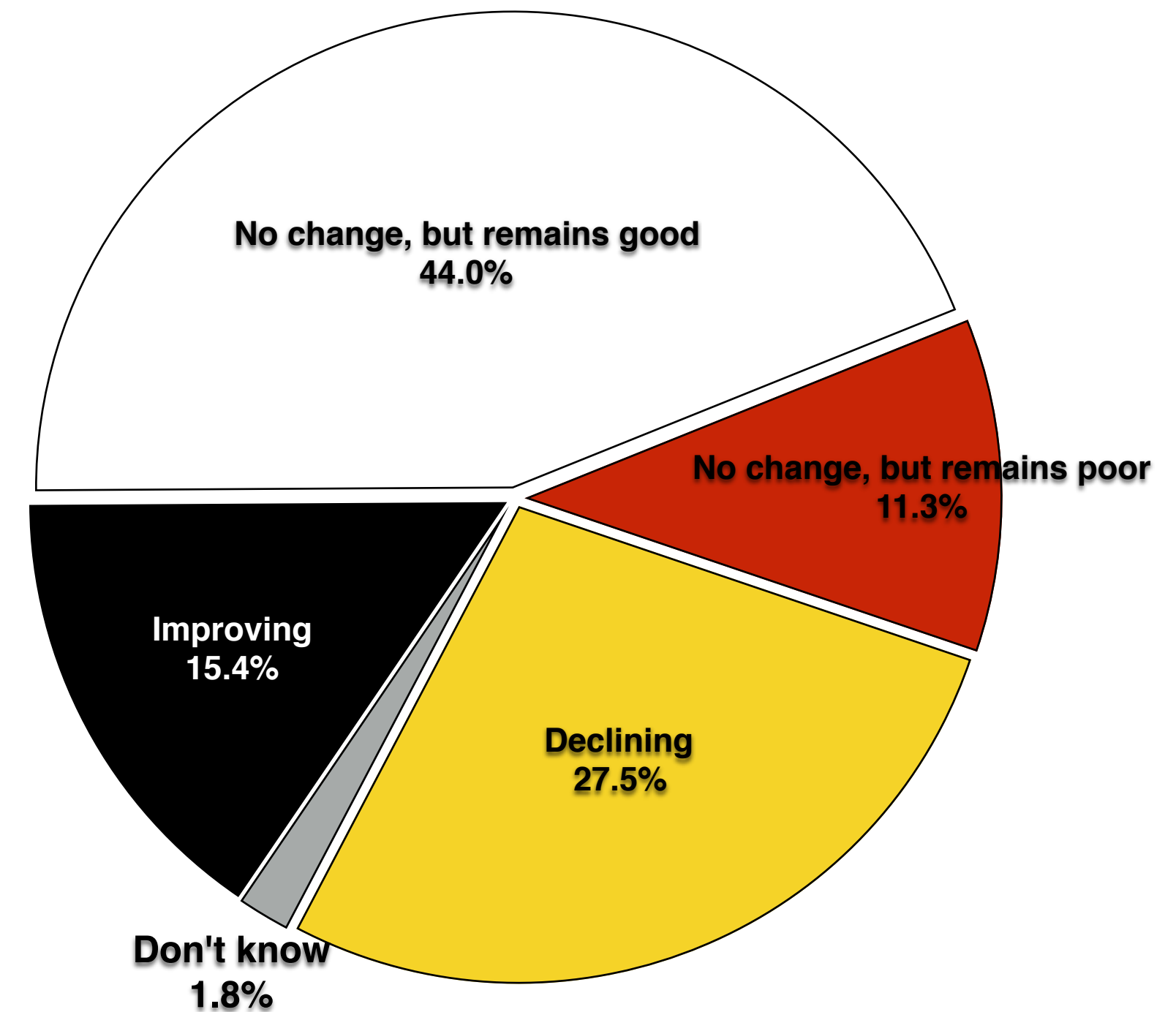
Quality of Life in Connecticut

The majority of Connecticut residents surveyed, 59.3%, report their quality of life in the State is either "excellent" (15.5%) or "good" (43.8%) in Q1 2019. However, more residents believe the quality of life in Connecticut is "declining" (27.5%) compared to those that believe the quality of life is "improving" (15.4%).

- ❖ 51.2% of residents earning \$50,000 or less report their quality of life is either "fair" (39.2%) or "poor" (12.0%) compared to only 26.9% of residents earning \$150,000 or more.



Q How would you rate your overall quality of life in Connecticut? Would you say...



Q Would you say, overall, your quality of life in Connecticut is...

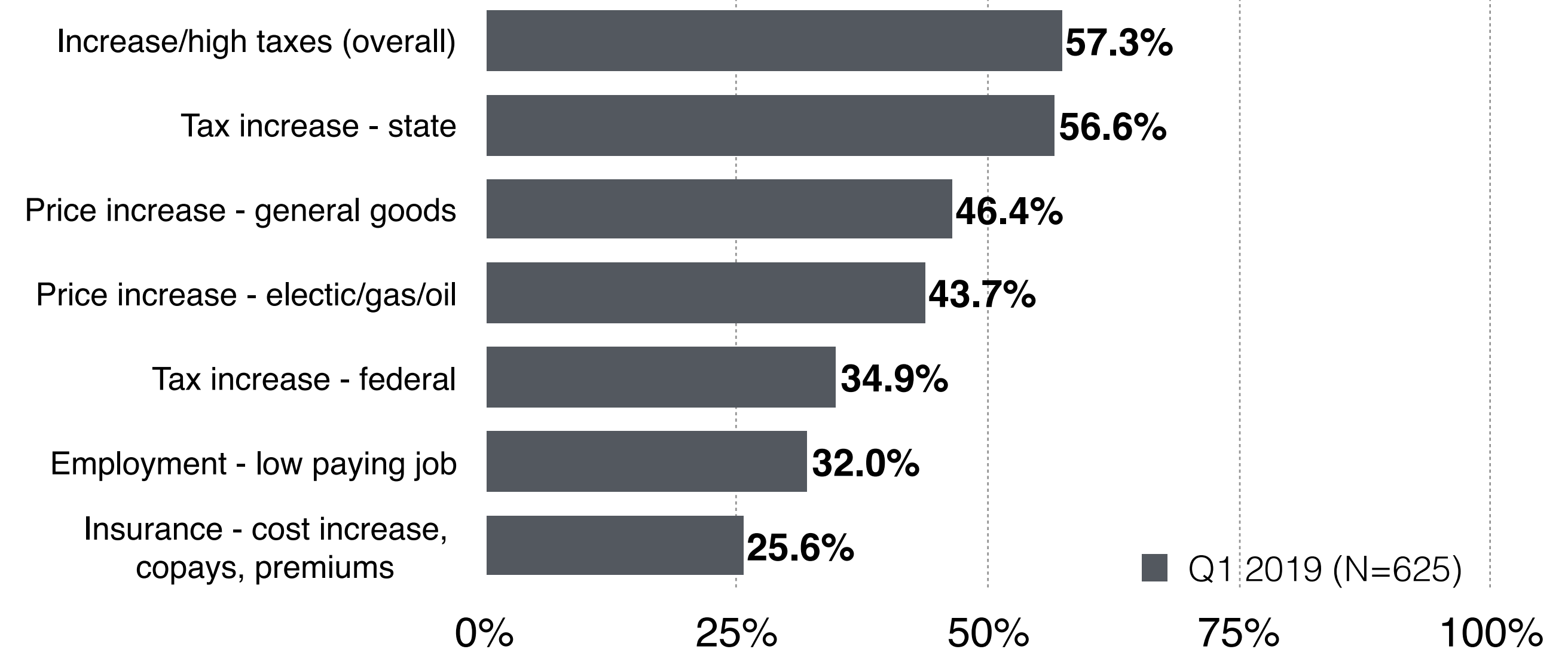
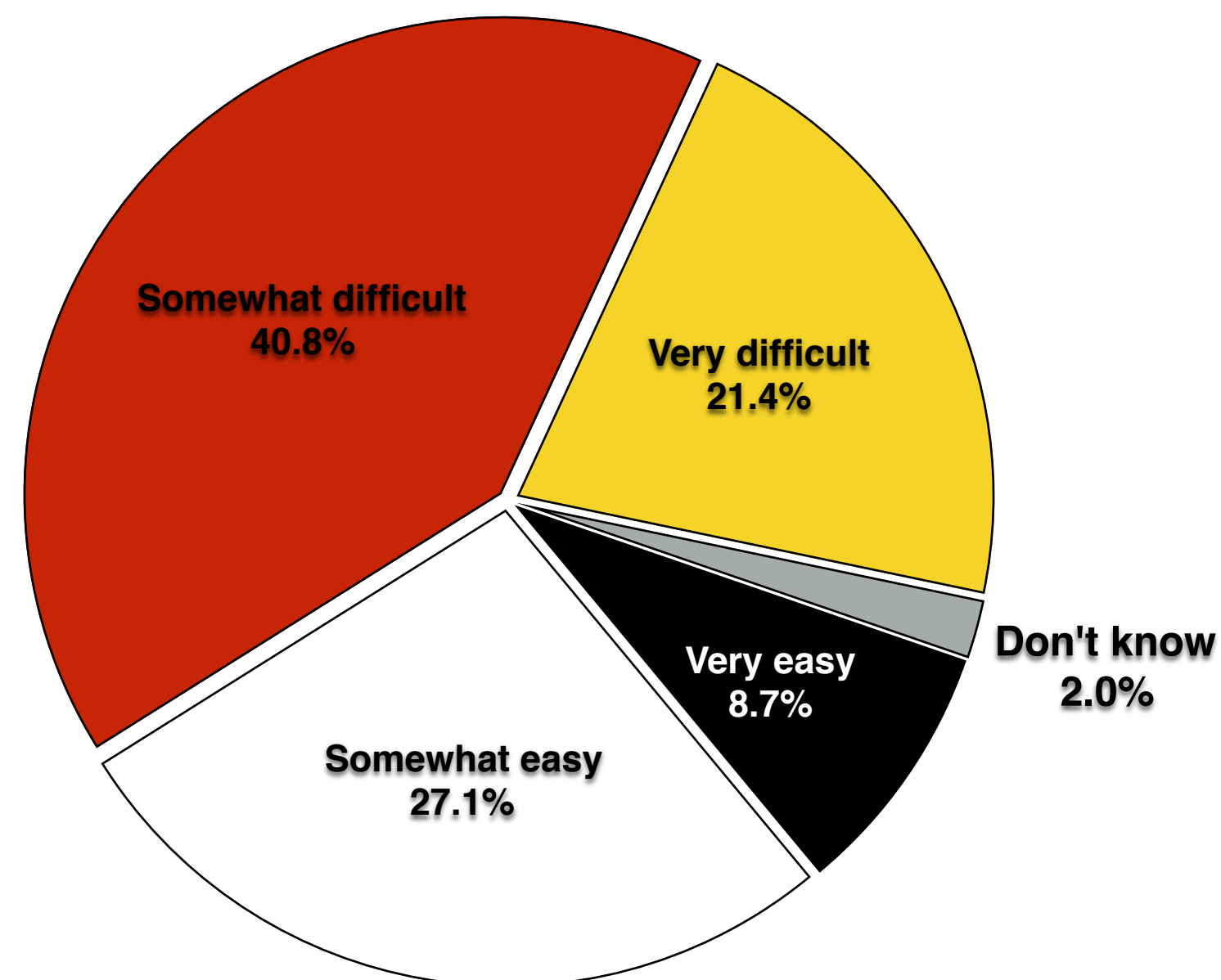
Quality of Life in Connecticut



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Only slightly more than one-third of CT residents, 35.8%, report it is either "very easy" (8.7%) or "somewhat easy" (27.1%) to maintain their standard of living out of their household income today, while 62.2% believe it is "difficult" to maintain their standard of living. Further, top reasons for one's difficulty to maintain their standard of living were typically due to high taxes in general, State tax increases, and/or increases in the cost of utilities or general goods.

- ❖ 57.5% of residents between the ages of 18-34 report it is "difficult" to maintain their standard of living, compared to 67.0% of residents between the ages of 35-44 and 70.4% of residents between the ages of 45-64 years old.
- ❖ 68.5% of residents earning \$50,000 or less, 61.4% of residents earning \$50,000 to \$100,000, and 60.2% of residents earning \$100,000 to \$150,000 report it is "difficult" to maintain their standard of living; compared to only 48.4% of residents earning \$150,000 or more.



Overall, how easy or difficult are you finding it to maintain your standard of living out of your total household income today. Would you say...

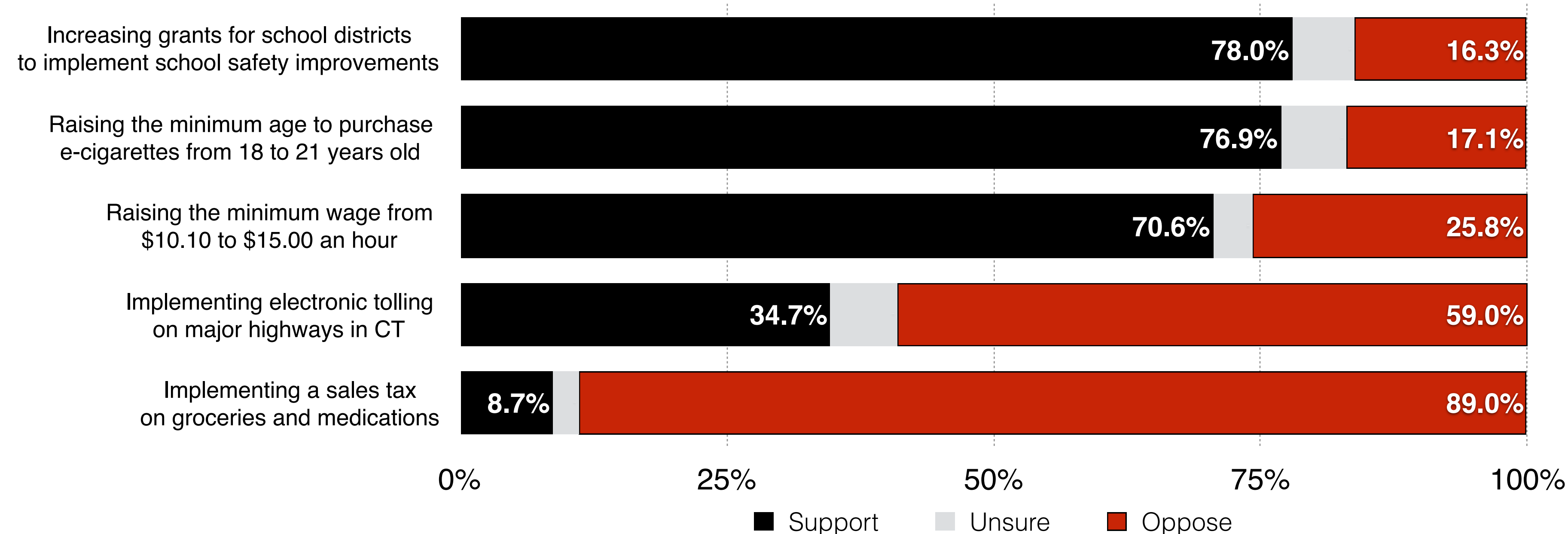


Please tell me why?

Challenges Facing Connecticut

When presented with a series of issues currently being considered or will be considered by the State Legislature in 2019, the highest levels of “support” existed for increasing grants for school districts to implement school safety improvements (78.0%) , raising the minimum age to purchase e-cigarettes from 18 to 21 years of age (76.9%), and raising the minimum wage from \$10.10 to \$15.00 an hour (70.6%).

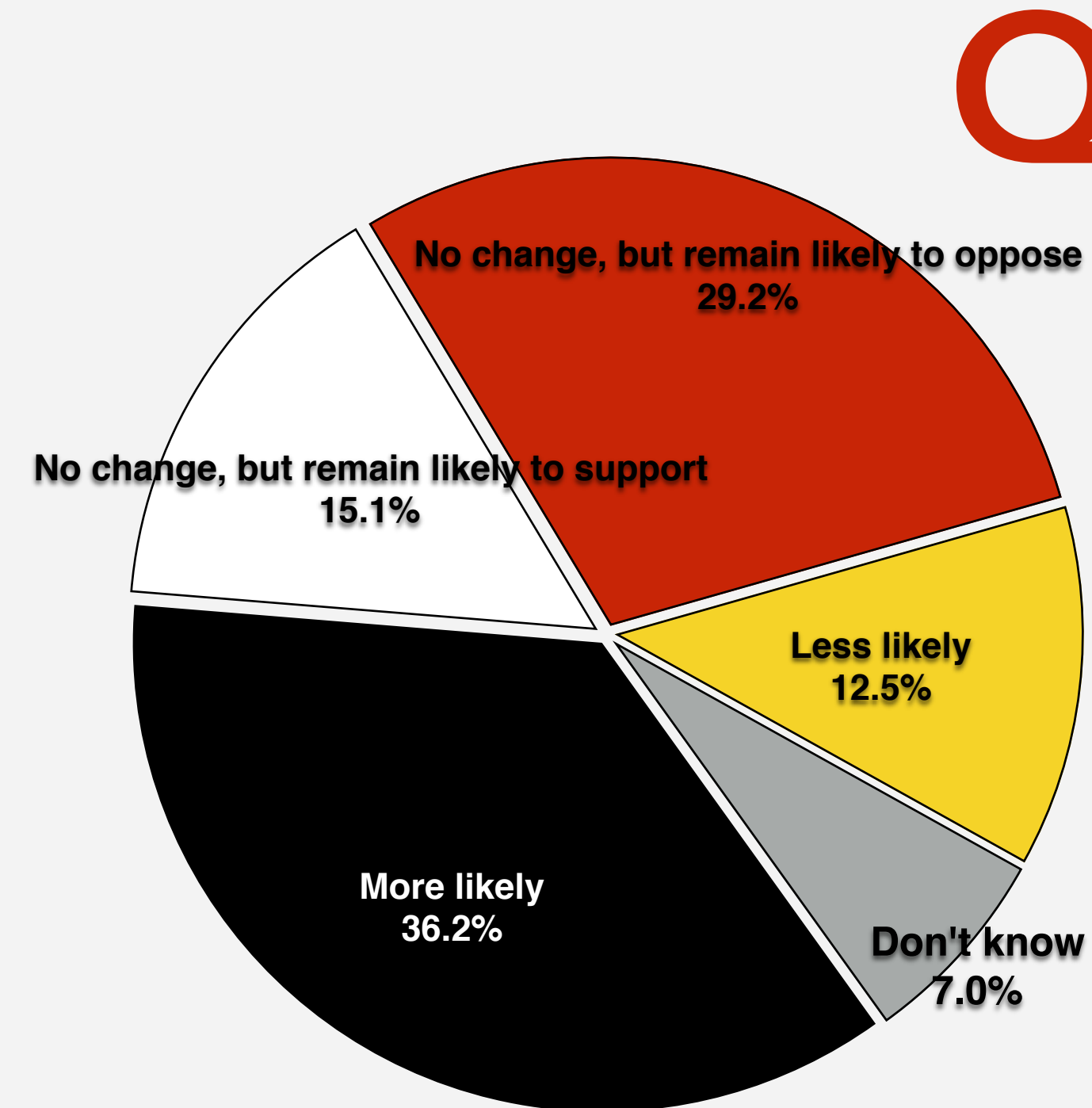
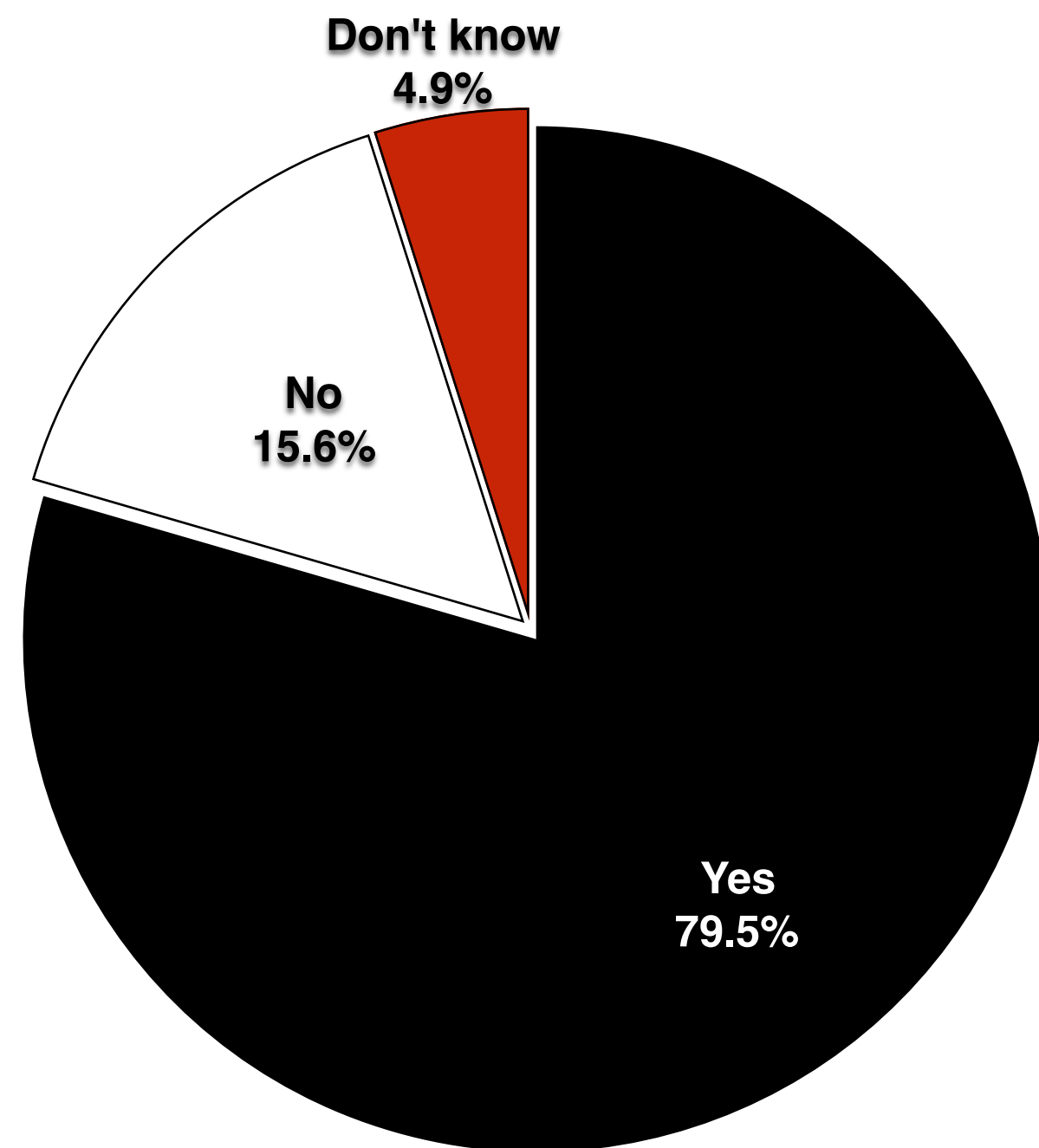
- ❖ While across the State, 59.0% of residents “opposed” implementing electronic tolling, opposition was strongest among residents between the ages of 35-44 (64.0%) and residents between the ages of 45-64 years old (65.1%). Strong opposition to “e-tolling” was also reported among those earning \$50,000 to \$100,000 (63.6%) and those earning \$50,000 or less (61.9%).
- ❖ Female residents (74.5%) “support” raising the minimum wage to \$15.00/hour at a higher rate than male residents (65.9%). In addition, residents with children in the household (74.1%) also support raising the minimum wage at a higher rate compared to those without children (69.4%).



Q I am now going to read you a list of issues that are currently being considered or will be considered by the State Legislature in 2019. After I read each, please tell me how strongly you support or oppose each measure that the State will consider.

Electronic Tolling...

Overall 34.7% of residents supported the implementation of electronic tolling in Connecticut, another 36.2% of residents were “more likely” to support this initiative if the State guaranteed that funds would go into the transportation lockbox guaranteeing funds would only be spent on roads, bridges, and highways. Another 15.1% remained likely to support regardless of funds going into the State’s lockbox.



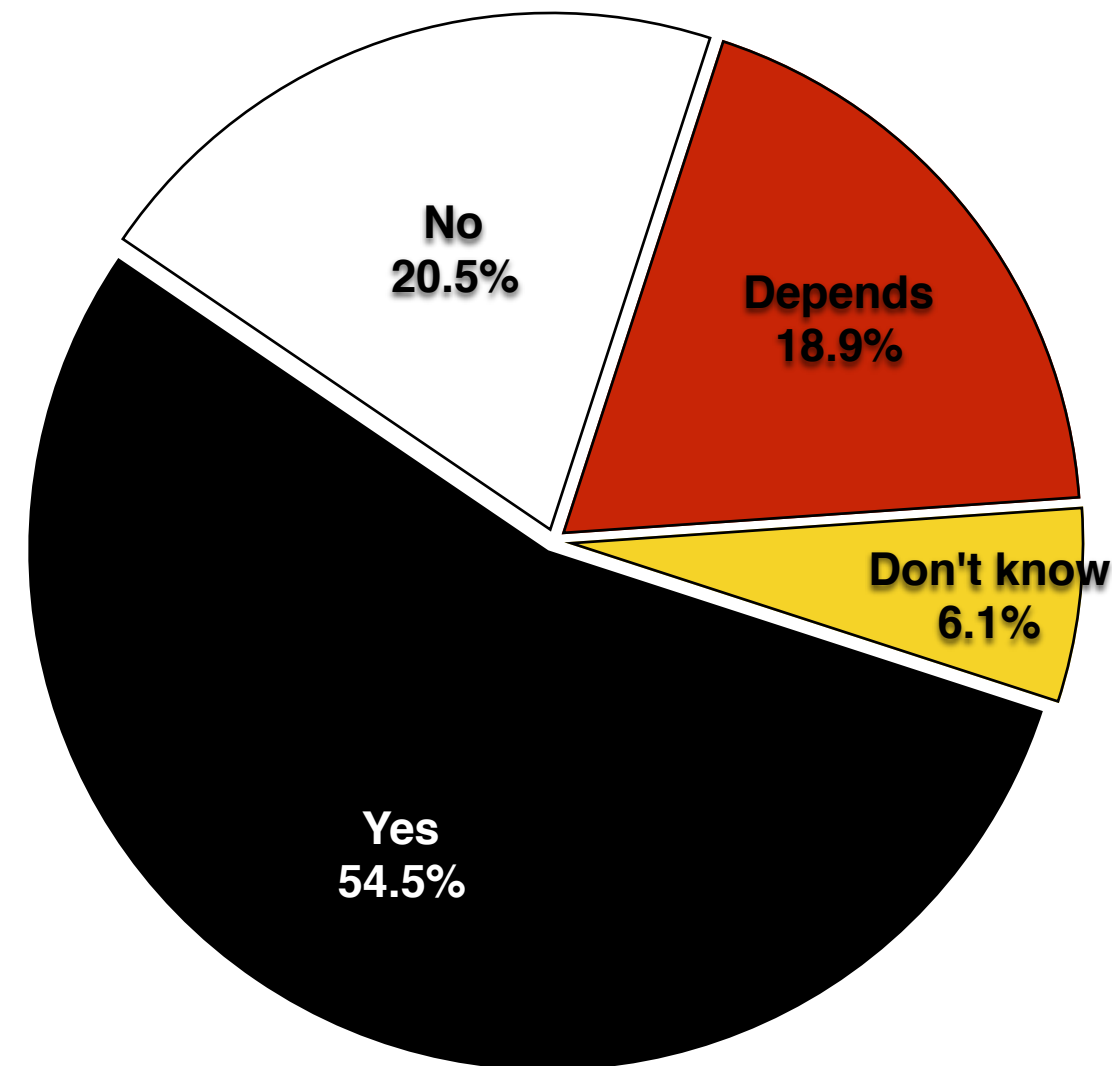
Q In 2018, Connecticut voters passed a referendum that ensured transportation funds are put in a “lockbox” and only spent on transportation needs. If it could be ensured that if Connecticut implements tolls, these funds would go into the transportation lockbox guaranteeing that they would only be spent on roads, bridges, and highways; would you be more or less likely to support “e-tolling” in Connecticut?

Q First, have you ever traveled in a state with electronic tolling (or “e-tolling”)?

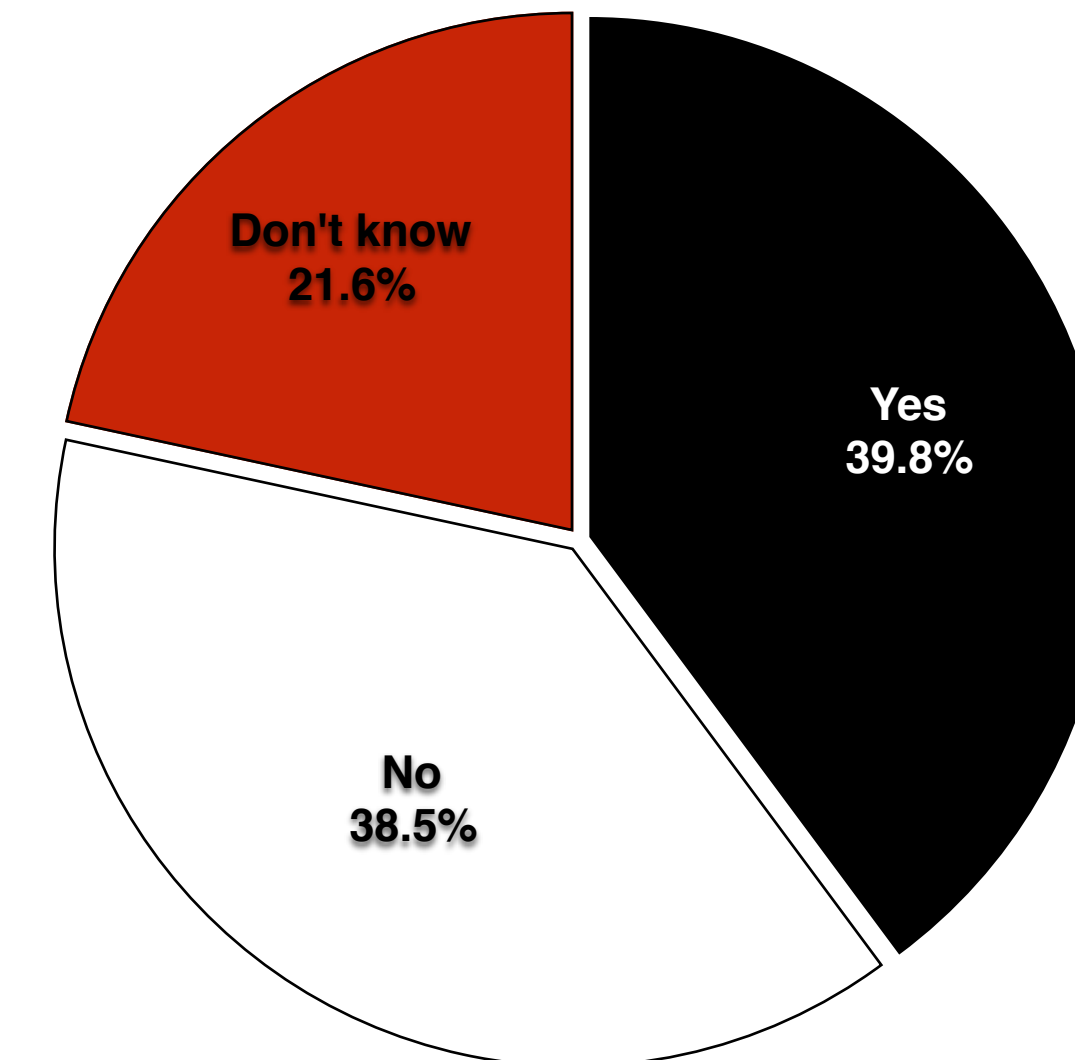
Electronic Tolling...

Over one-half of Connecticut residents, 54.5%, reported they would attempt to travel on toll roads less should “e-tolling” be implemented in the State. In addition, residents were split on whether the required monetary investment was worth the expected revenue the State could earn. While 39.8% of residents thought the expected \$1 billion in annual revenue was worth a \$100 million cost investment, 38.5% disagreed and did not believe the potential benefits outweighed the cost.

- ❖ 67.4% of Middlesex County residents and 57.9% of Fairfield County residents reported they would attempt to travel on toll roads less to avoid “e-tolling.”
- ❖ 61.1% of residents earning \$100,000-\$150,000 reported they would also attempt to travel on toll roads less.
- ❖ 48.7% of New London County residents and 48.6% of Litchfield County residents felt the cost to implement “e-tolling” was worth the potential benefits compared to only 35.2% of Fairfield County residents.



Q If Connecticut were to create “e-tolling,” which could increase the cost of your daily travel, would you attempt to travel on toll roads less?

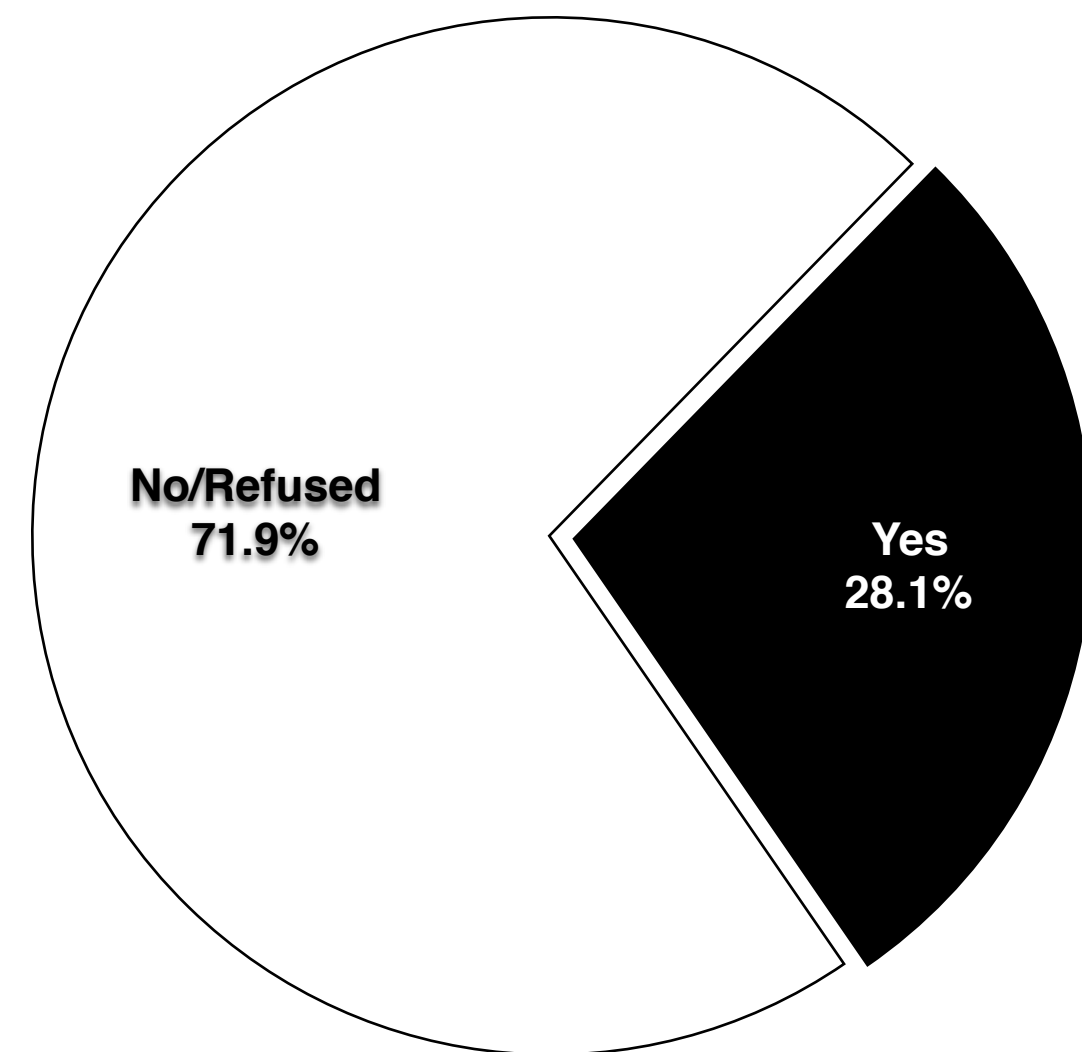


Q Current estimates expect the cost of creating “e-tolling” to be approximately \$100 million to the State. However, “e-tolling” is expected to bring in \$1 billion in annual revenue for the State. Do you think the benefits outweigh the costs?

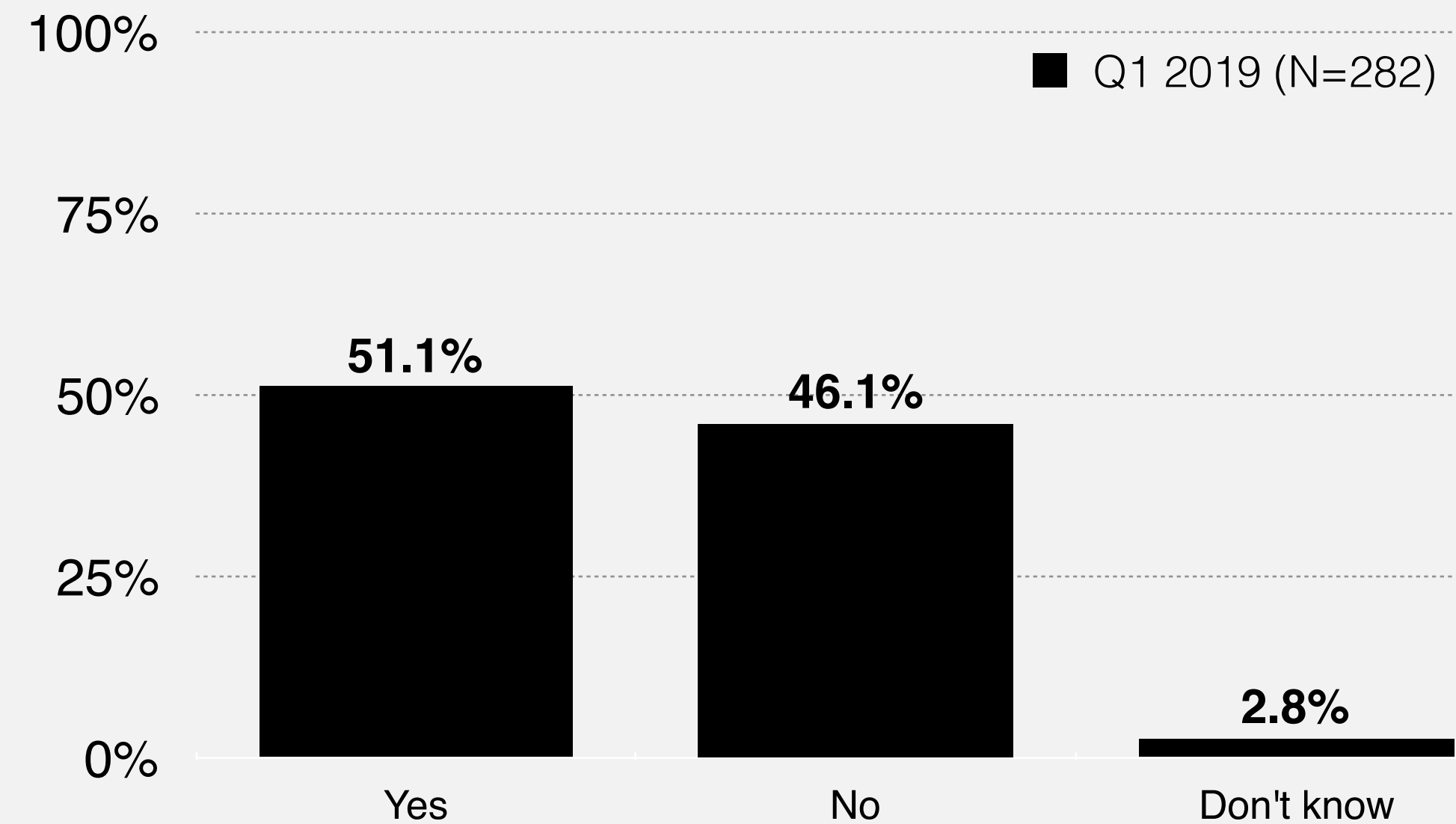
School safety

Over one-quarter of residents (28.1%) indicated currently having children in public schools in Connecticut. Among those 282 respondents, the majority reported they do fear for their child(ren)'s physical safety while in school.

- ❖ A higher rate of female residents (55.6%) reported fearing for their child(ren)'s safety compared to male residents (45.1%).
- ❖ In addition, 57.0% of residents between the ages of 18-34 fear for their child(ren)'s safety compared to 52.5% of residents between the ages of 35-44 and 46.4% of residents between the ages of 45-64.



Q Do you currently have children in your household enrolled in elementary or secondary public school?

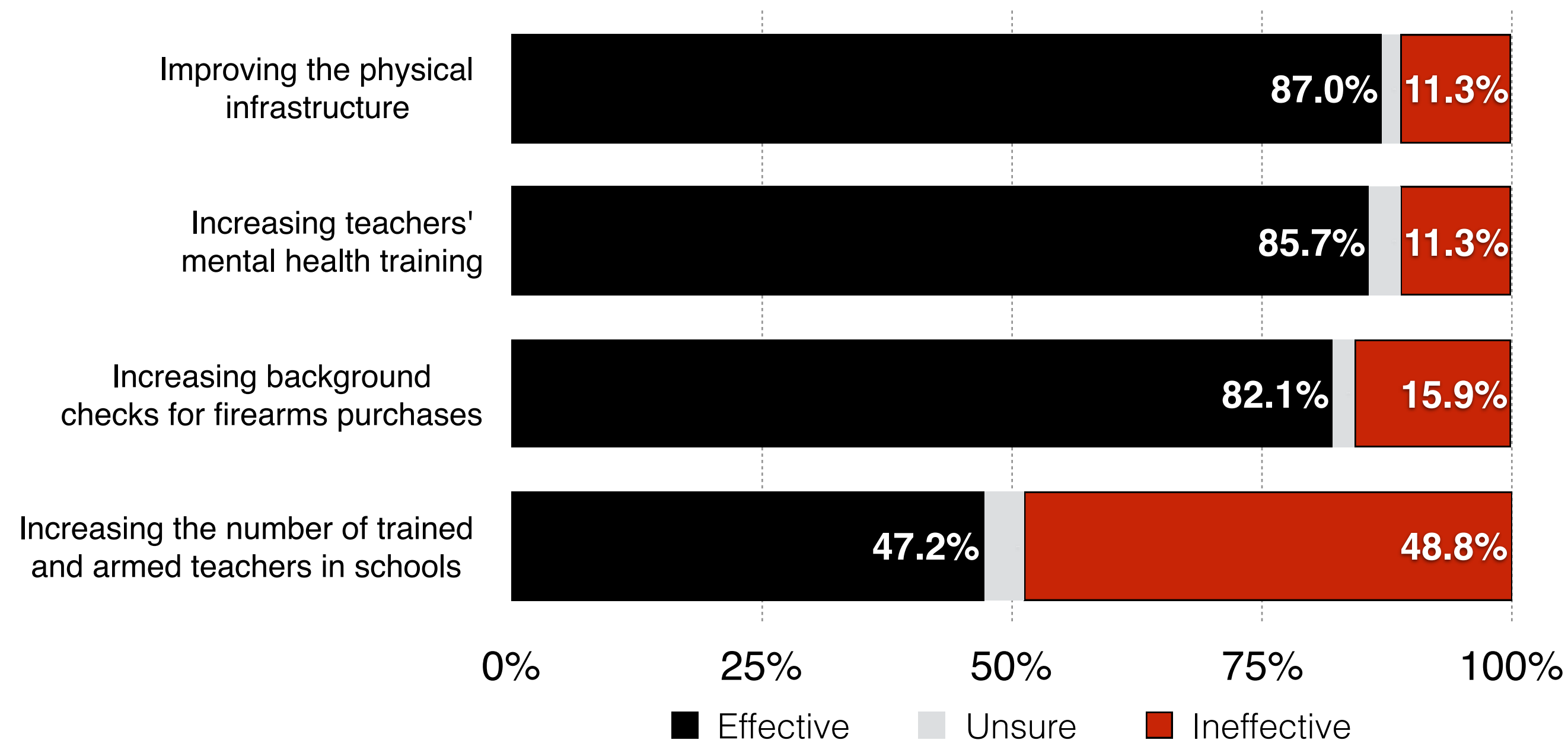


Q When your child(ren) are in school, do you have any fear for his or her physical safety?

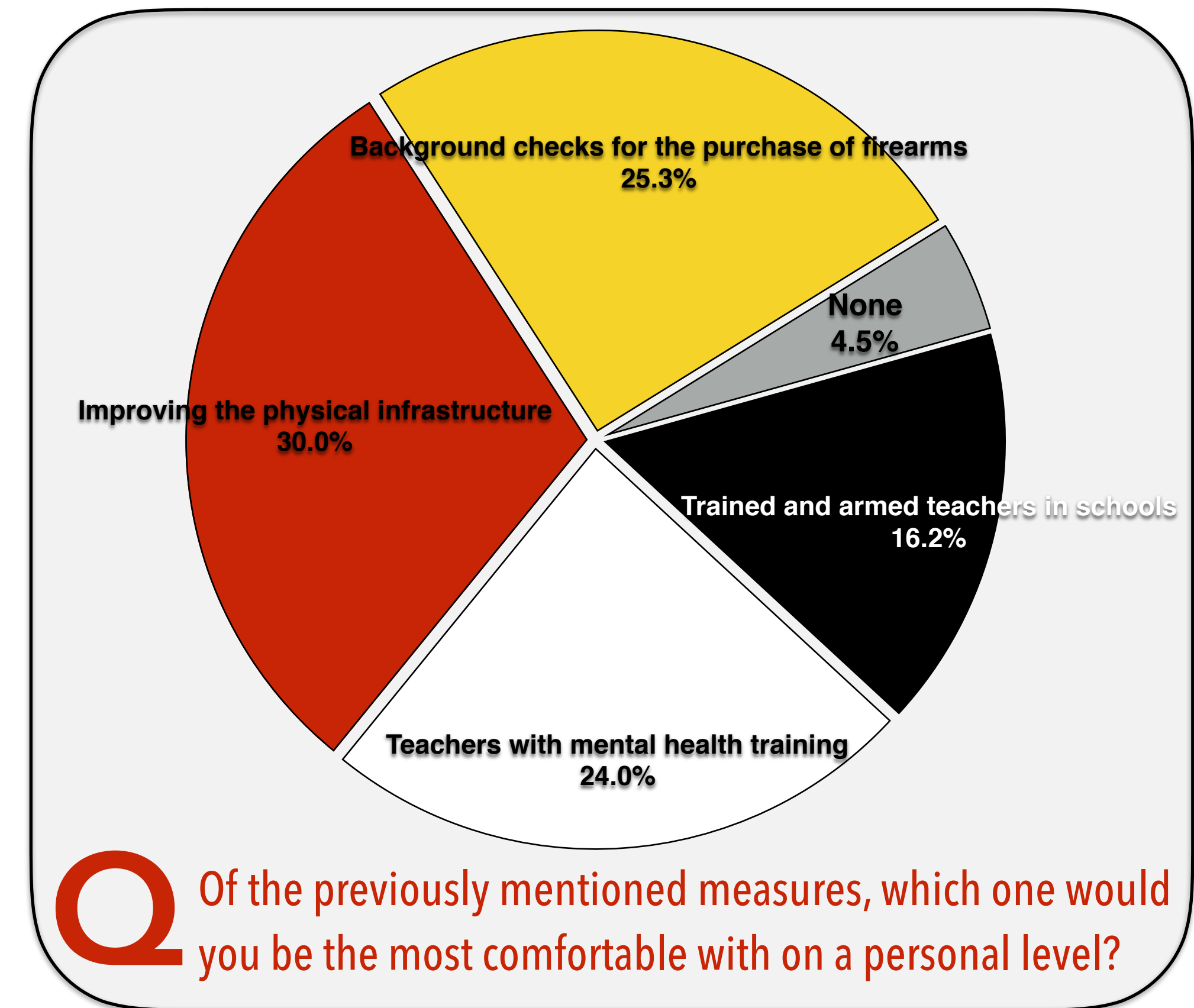
School Safety

When presented with a series of strategies to improve school safety and combat school shootings, residents felt the most “effective” measures would include improving physical infrastructure (of the school) (87.0%), increasing teachers’ mental health training (85.7%), and increasing background checks for firearm purchases (82.1%). Fewer than one-half of residents (47.2%) reported increasing the number of trained and armed teachers in schools would be “effective” and only 16.1% were comfortable with that measure on a personal level.

- ❖ 62.2% of residents between the ages of 18-34 reported increasing the number of trained and armed teachers in schools would be “effective” compared to only 43.8% of residents between the ages of 45-64.
- ❖ A higher rate of female residents (87.1%) reported increasing background checks for firearm purchases would be “effective” compared to male residents (76.3%).



Q Now, I am going to read you a list of measures that law makers and government officials are currently considering to combat school shootings. After each, please tell me how effective you believe these measures would be in increasing school safety.

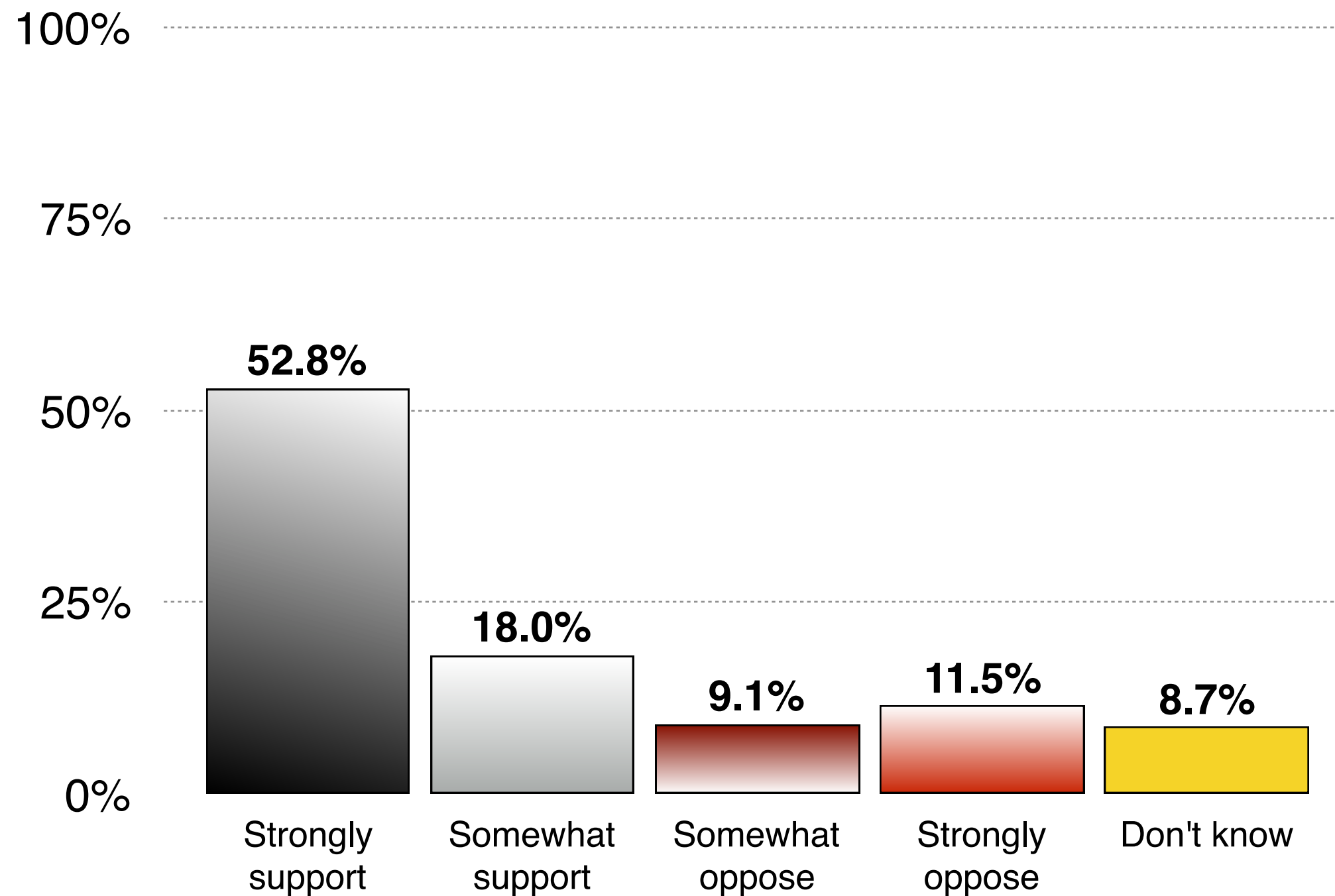


Q Of the previously mentioned measures, which one would you be the most comfortable with on a personal level?

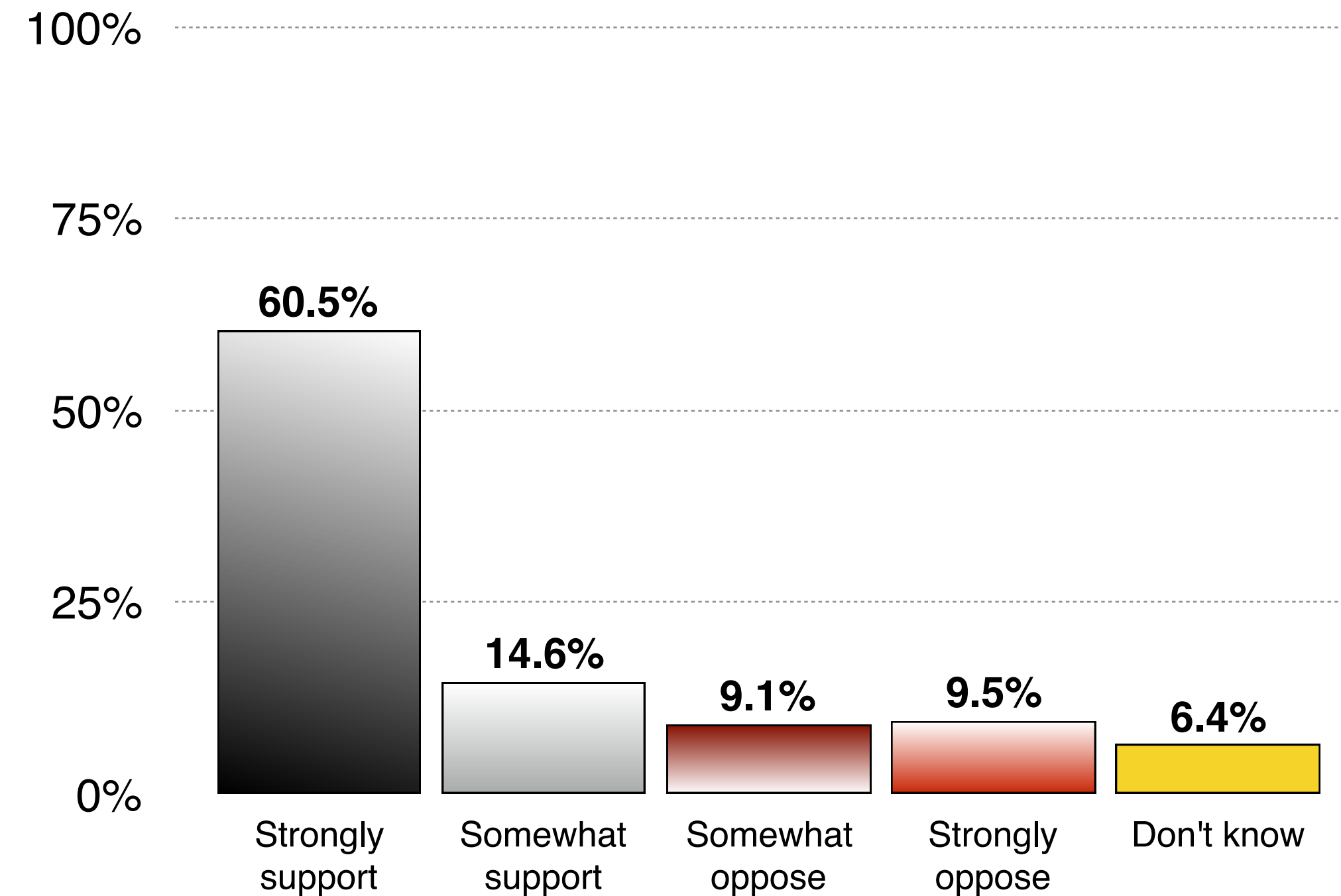
E-Cigarettes

Three-quarters of Connecticut residents, 75.1%, either “strongly” (60.5%) or “somewhat support” (14.6%) limiting the use of e-cigarettes indoors in public places and over two-thirds, 70.8%, reported to either “strongly” (52.8%) or “somewhat support” (18.0%) raising the sales tax for purchasing e-cigarettes sold in the State.

- ❖ While only 62.1% of residents earning \$50,000 or less “supported” raising the sales tax on e-cigarettes, a higher rate of support was recorded among residents earning \$50,000-\$100,000 (70.1%), residents earning \$100,000-\$150,000 (85.1%), and residents earning \$150,000 or more (83.9%).
- ❖ Support for limiting e-cigarette use indoors in public places was consistent among residents with children (75.0%) and those without children (75.2%).
- ❖ Finally, use of e-cigarettes was higher among residents between the ages of 18-34 (14.6%) and residents between the ages of 35-44 (14.0%) compared to those residents between the ages of 45-64 (4.6%) and residents ages 65 or older (0.5%).



Q How strongly do you support or oppose the State of Connecticut raising the sales tax for purchasing e-cigarettes in the State? Would you say...

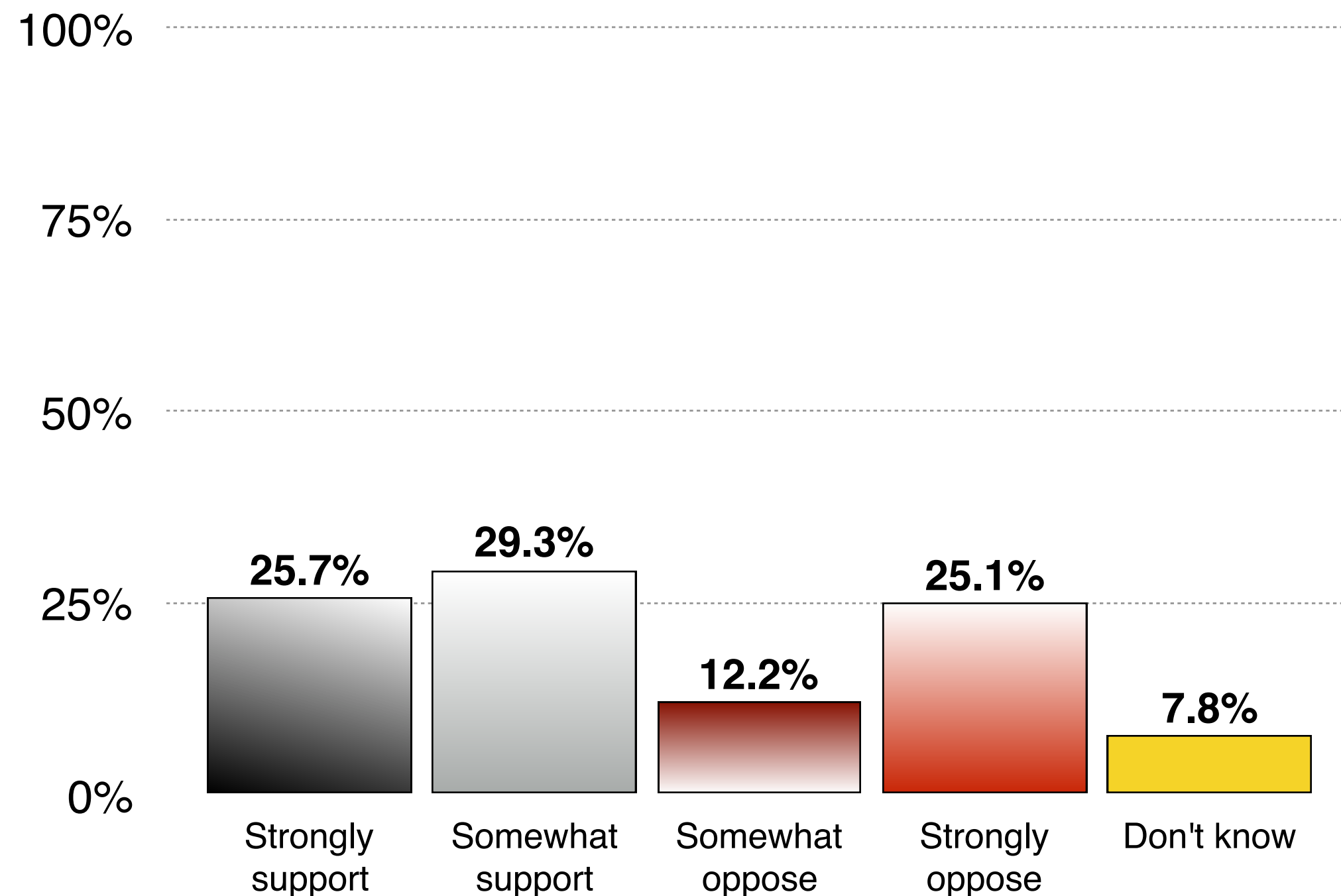


Q How strongly do you support or oppose the State of Connecticut limiting the use of e-cigarettes indoors in public places? Would you say...

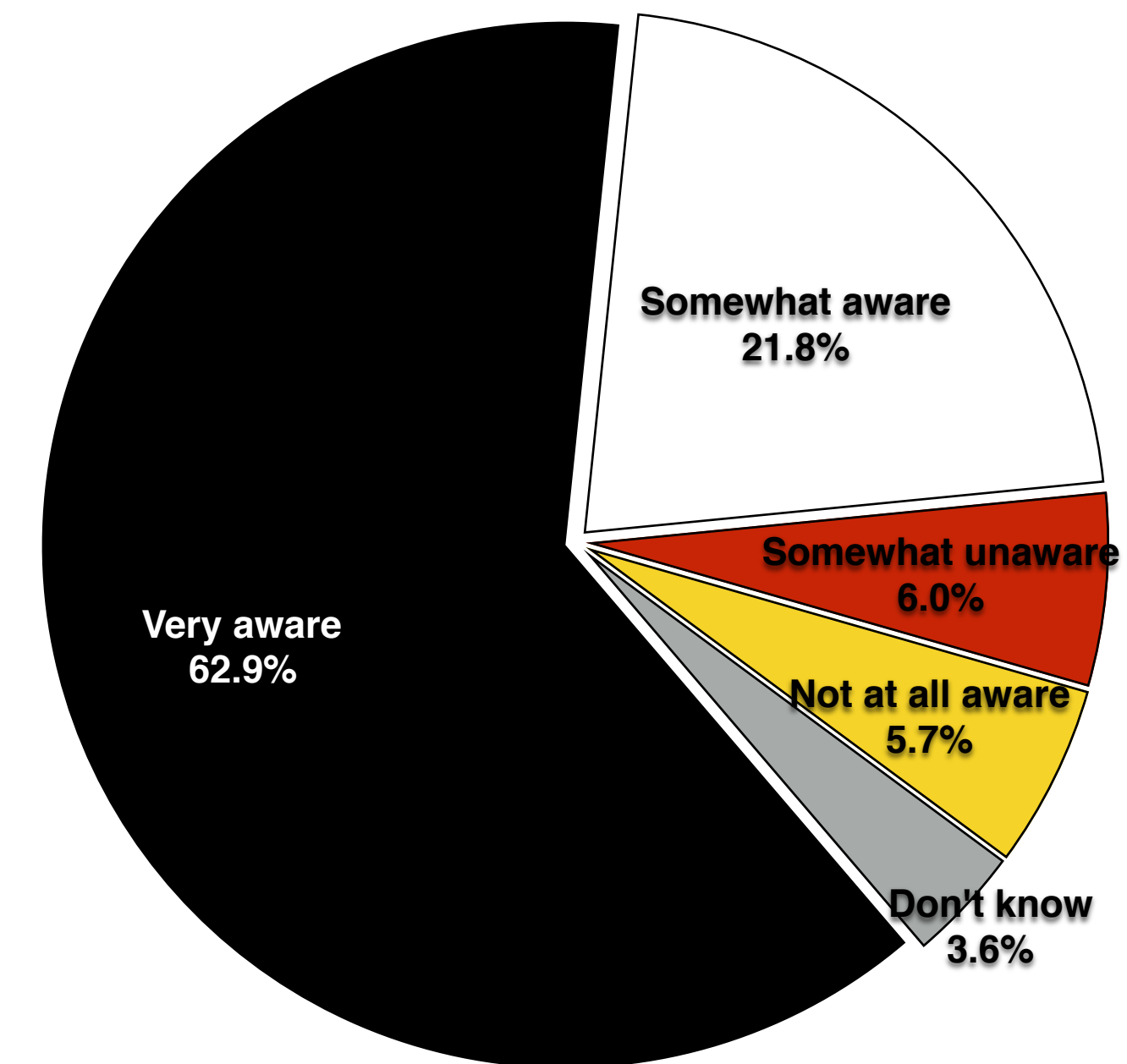
E-Cigarettes

A vast majority of Connecticut residents, 84.7%, reported to be "very" (62.9%) or "somewhat aware" (21.8%) of the health effects of e-cigarettes and a majority of residents also supported increasing funding to research the effects of e-cigarette vapor on users and potential effects of second-hand smoke (55.0%).

- ❖ Despite having the highest rate of e-cigarette usage, 87.4% of residents between the ages of 18-34 were "aware" of the health effects of e-cigarettes.
- ❖ Support for increasing funding to research the effects of e-cigarette vapor was slightly higher among residents with children (58.8%) compared to those residents without children (53.0%).



Q How strongly do you support or oppose the increased funding by the state of Connecticut to conduct research into the effects of e-cigarette vapor on users and potential effects of second-hand smoke?



Q Are you aware of the health effects of e-cigarettes, which may cause addiction and breathing difficulties? Would you say...

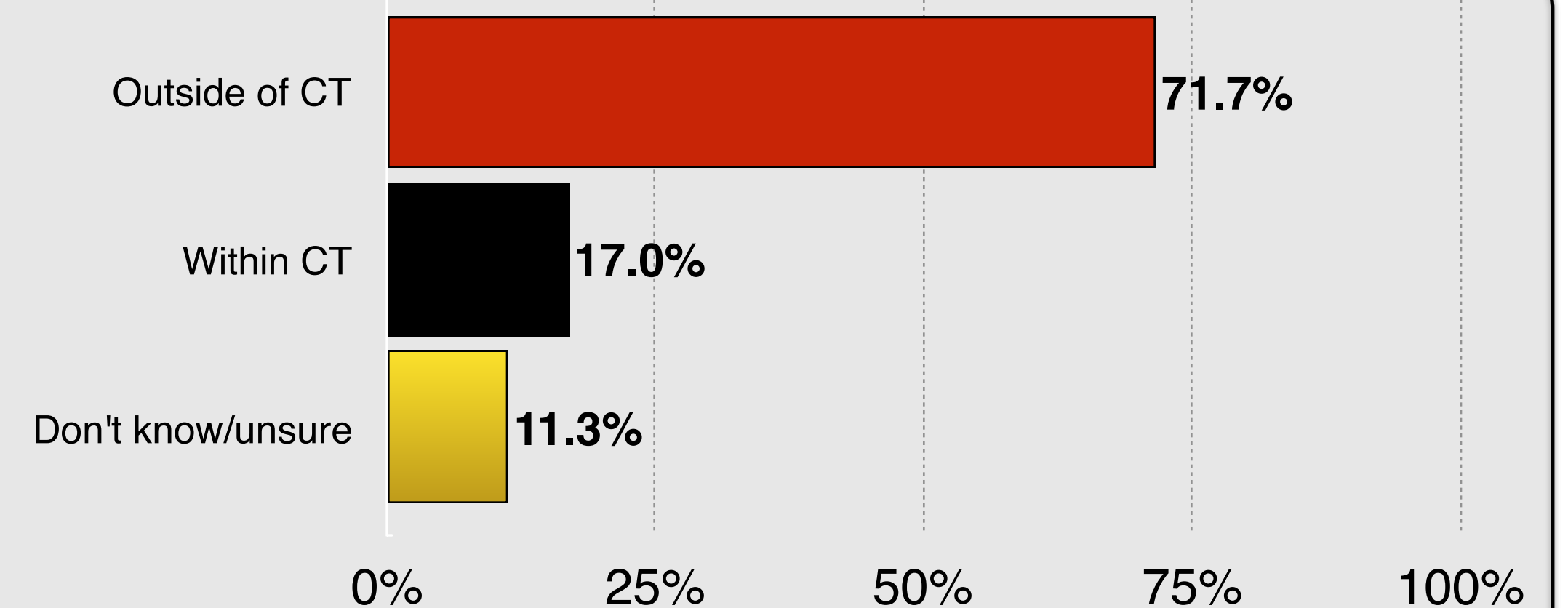
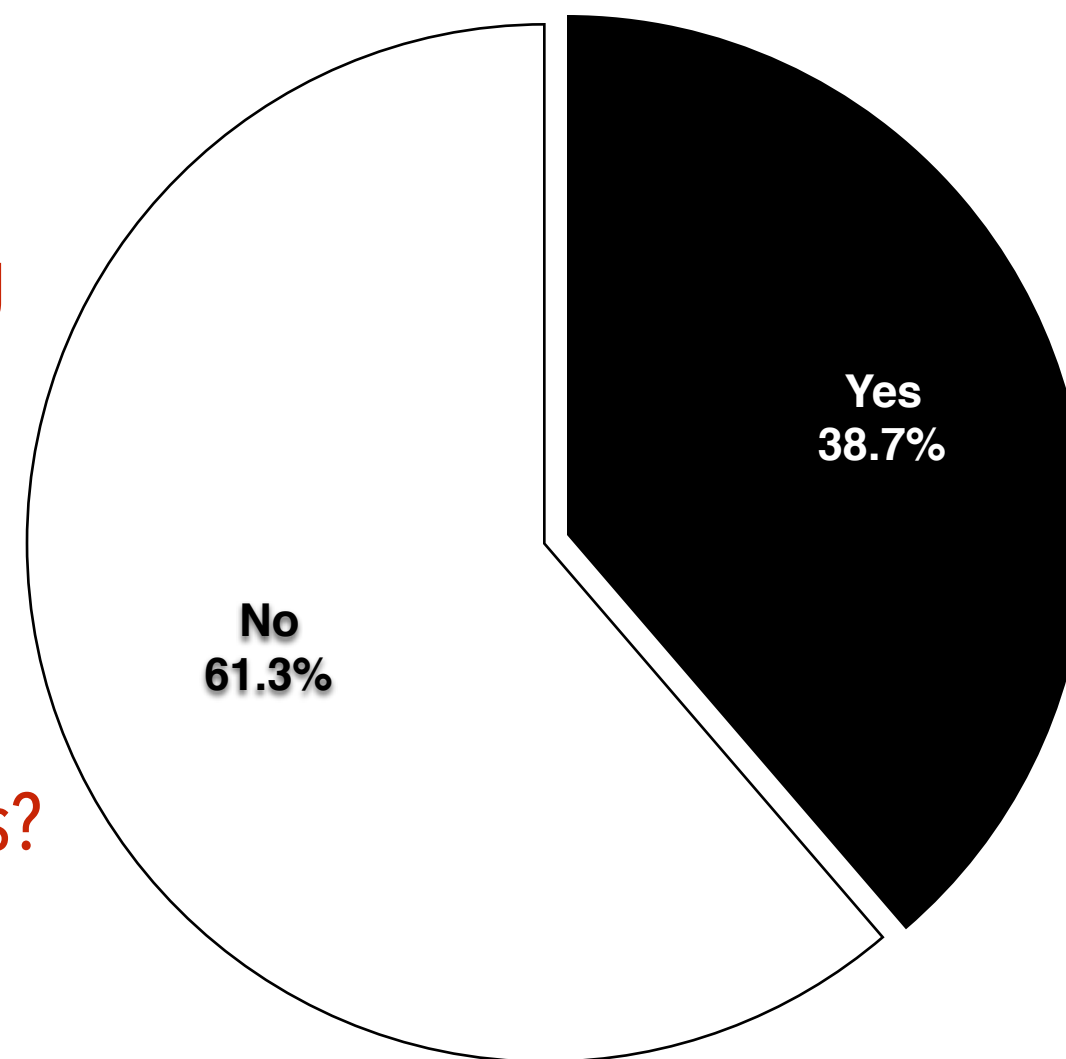
Housing



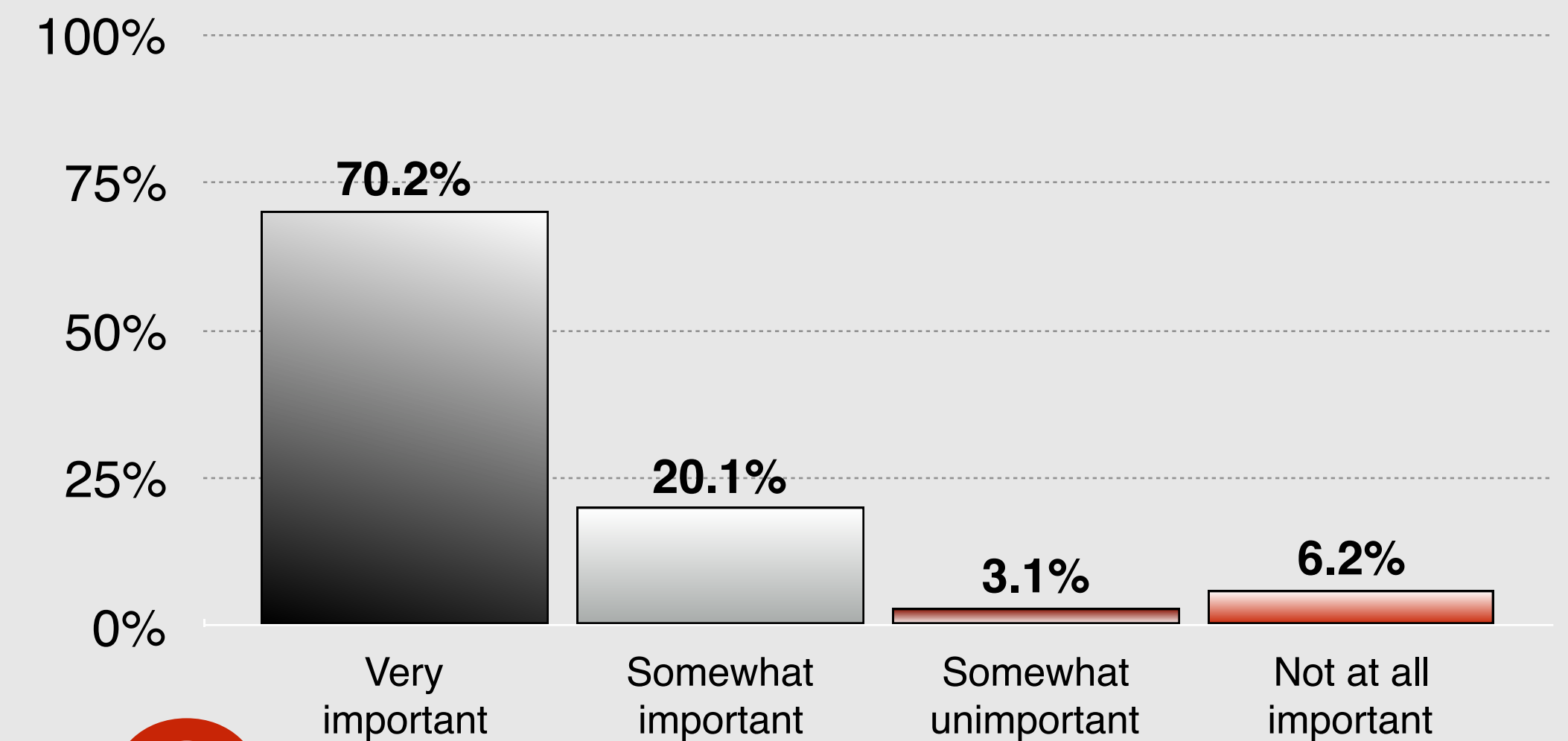
Over one-third of Connecticut residents surveyed (38.7%) reported to be considering changing their residency in the next five (5) years and 71.7% of those 389 residents reported they were considering moving "outside of Connecticut."

- ❖ 44.1% of residents between the ages of 45-64 reported considering changing residency in the next five (5) years and 81.7% of those respondents were considering leaving Connecticut.
- ❖ 44.1% of residents between the ages of 18-34 reported considering changing residency in the next five (5) years and 67.0% of those respondents were considering leaving Connecticut.

Q Are you considering changing your residence within the next 5 years?



Q Are you considering relocating outside of Connecticut or relocating within Connecticut?



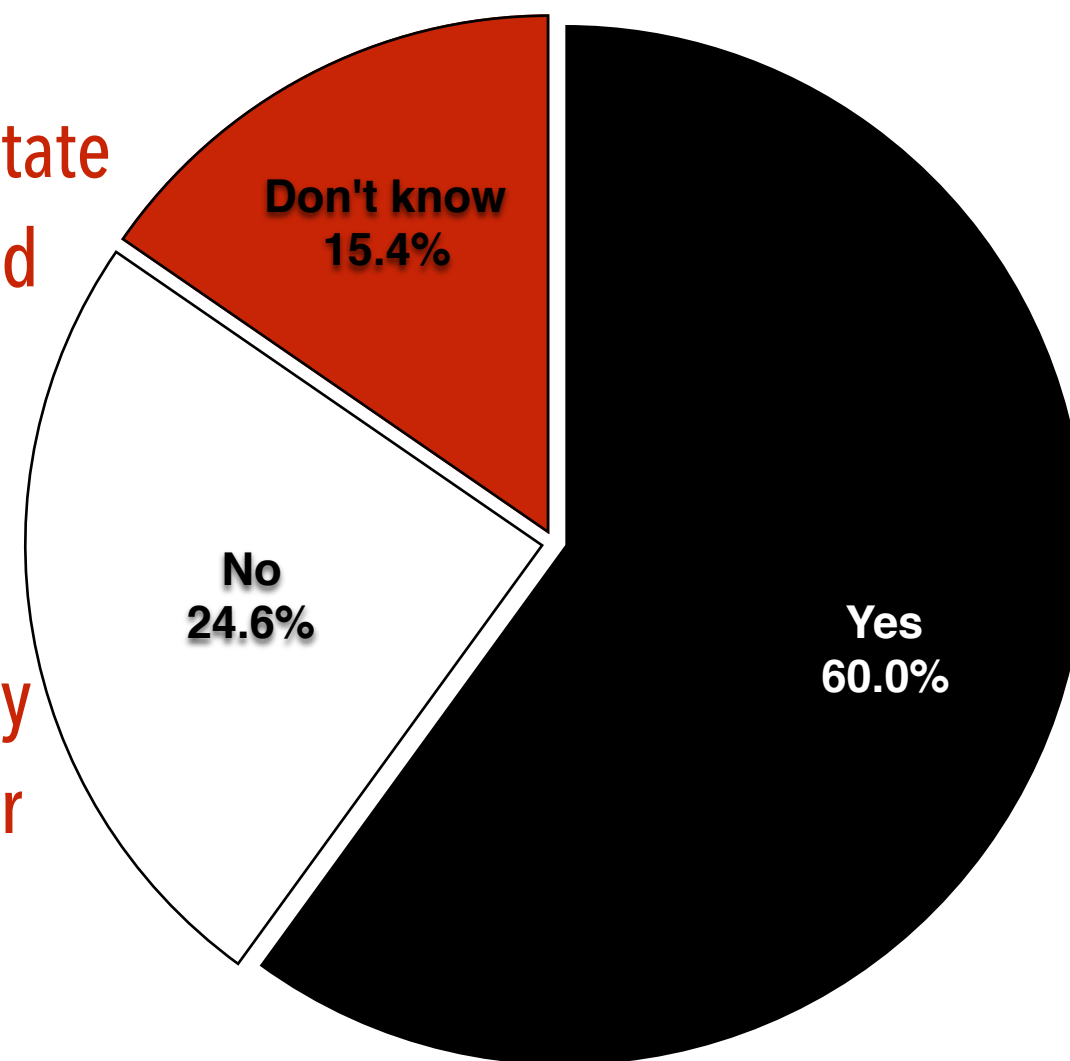
Q How important are housing costs in your decision to move?

Housing

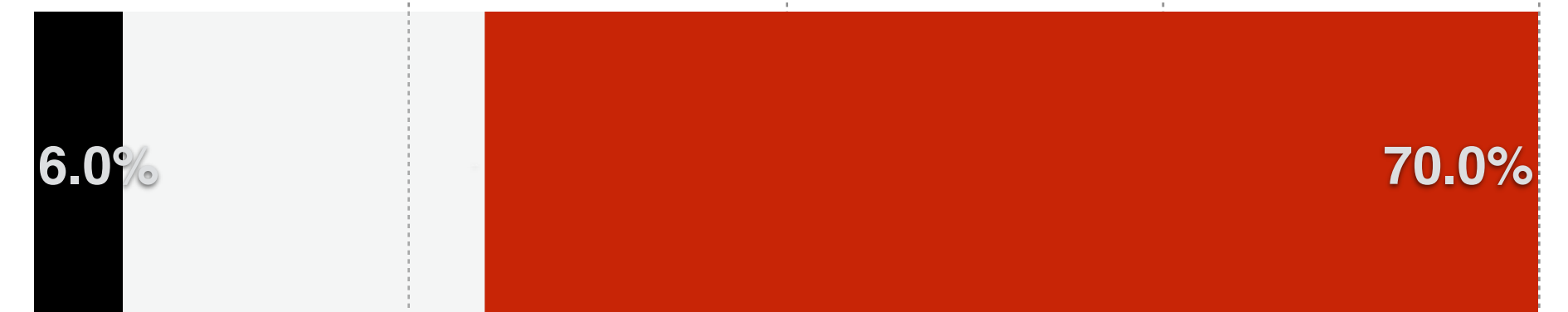
81.4% of Connecticut residents surveyed believe there are “too few” affordable housing options to rent or buy for individuals making minimum wage in the State, 70.0% of residents surveyed believe there are “too few” affordable housing options for first time home buyers in the State, and 60.0% of residents surveyed believe Connecticut should pass laws to help guarantee that affordable housing options to rent or buy exist in every town or city in the state.

- ❖ 82.4% of residents earning \$50,000 or less reported there are “too few” affordable housing options for individuals making minimum wage in Connecticut.
- ❖ 77.4% of residents earning \$50,000 or less reported there are “too few” affordable housing options for first time home buyers in Connecticut.
- ❖ 66.2% of New Haven County residents and 70.0% of Windham County residents reported Connecticut should pass laws to help guarantee that affordable housing options to rent or buy exist.
- ❖ 67.0% of residents between the ages of 35-44 reported Connecticut should pass laws to help guarantee that affordable housing options to rent or buy exist.

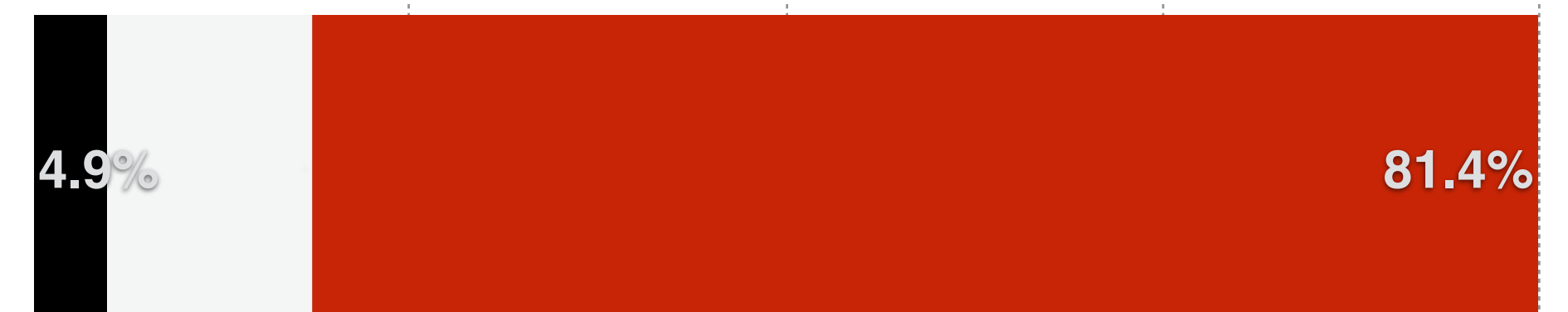
Q Do you believe the State of Connecticut should pass laws to help guarantee that affordable housing options to rent or buy exist in every town or city in the state?



Affordable housing options for first time home buyers in Connecticut



Affordable housing options to rent or buy for individuals making minimum wage in Connecticut



0% 25% 50% 75% 100%

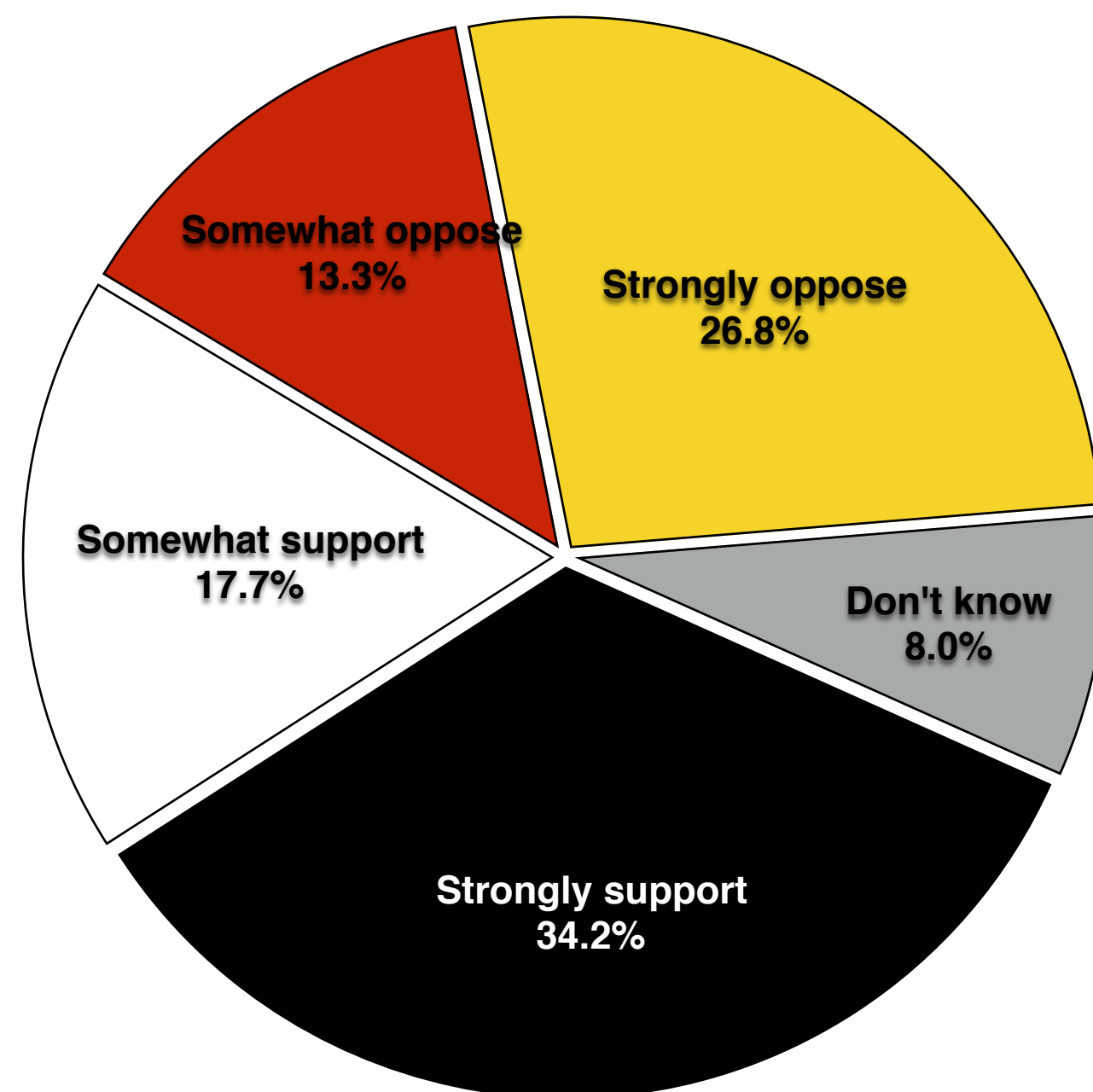
■ Too many ■ About Right ■ Too few

National Issue :: Border Security

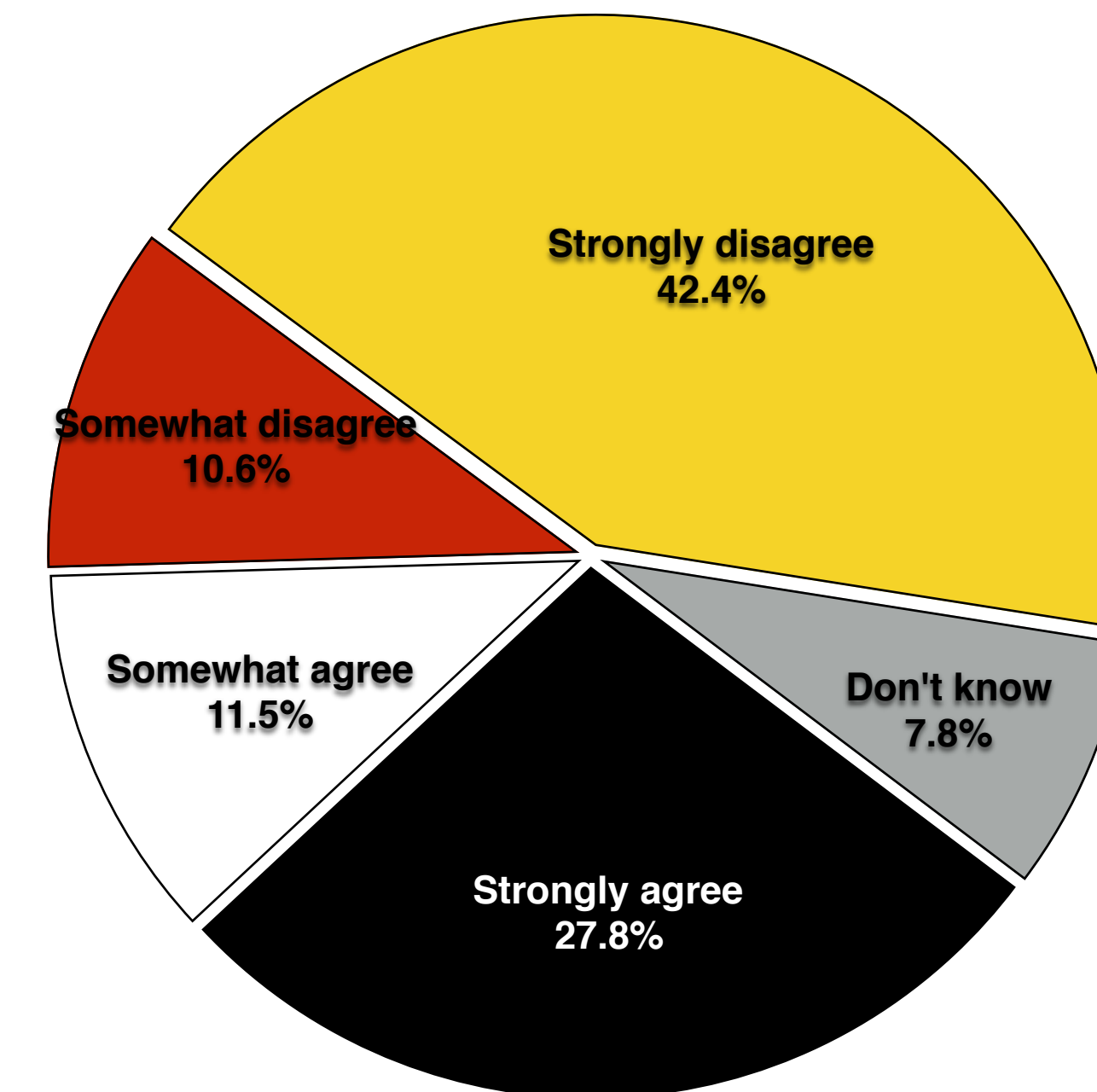


A majority of Connecticut residents surveyed, 51.9%, reported to “strongly” (34.2%) or “somewhat support” (17.7%) the US Congress allocating additional funds in the federal budget for security along the southern border. However, only 39.3% of residents surveyed “agreed” these funds should include a physical barrier or border “wall.”

- ❖ A higher rate of male residents (56.9%) compared to female residents (47.4%) in the State reported to “support” increasing funds for border security, and a higher rate of males (46.8%) compared to females (32.7%) “agreed” these funds should include a “wall.”
- ❖ A slightly lower rate of residents with children (48.7%) compared to those without children (53.8%) “supported” increasing funds for border security.



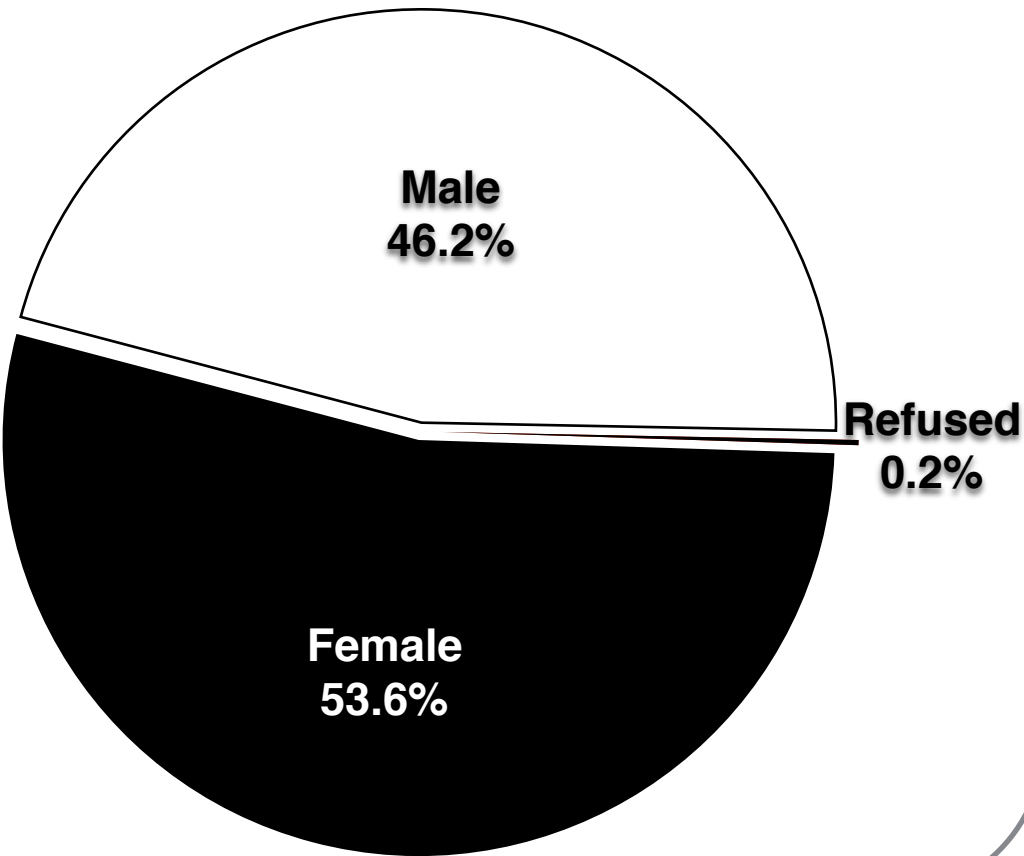
Q Overall, how strongly do you support or oppose the US Congress allocating additional funds in the federal budget for security along the southern border? Would you say...



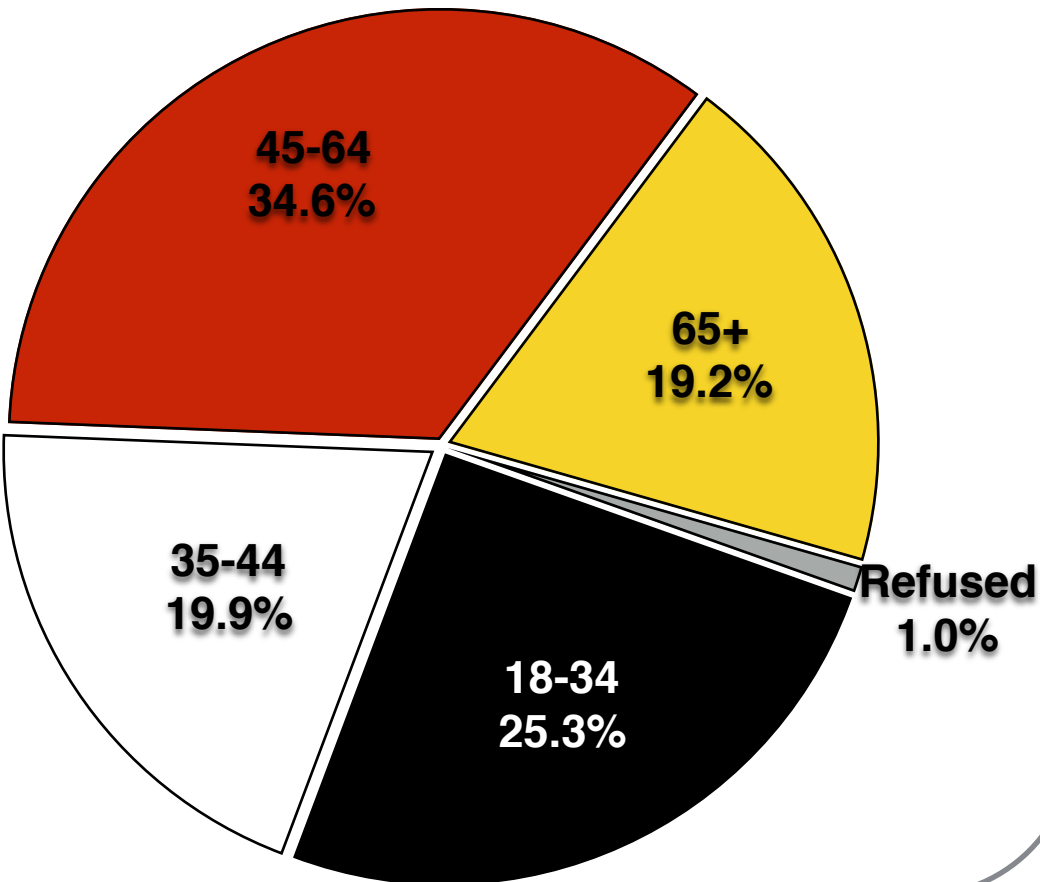
Q And, how strongly do you agree or disagree that this border security should include money for a physical barrier or “wall” along the southern border? Would you say...

Demographic Profile - Q1 2019

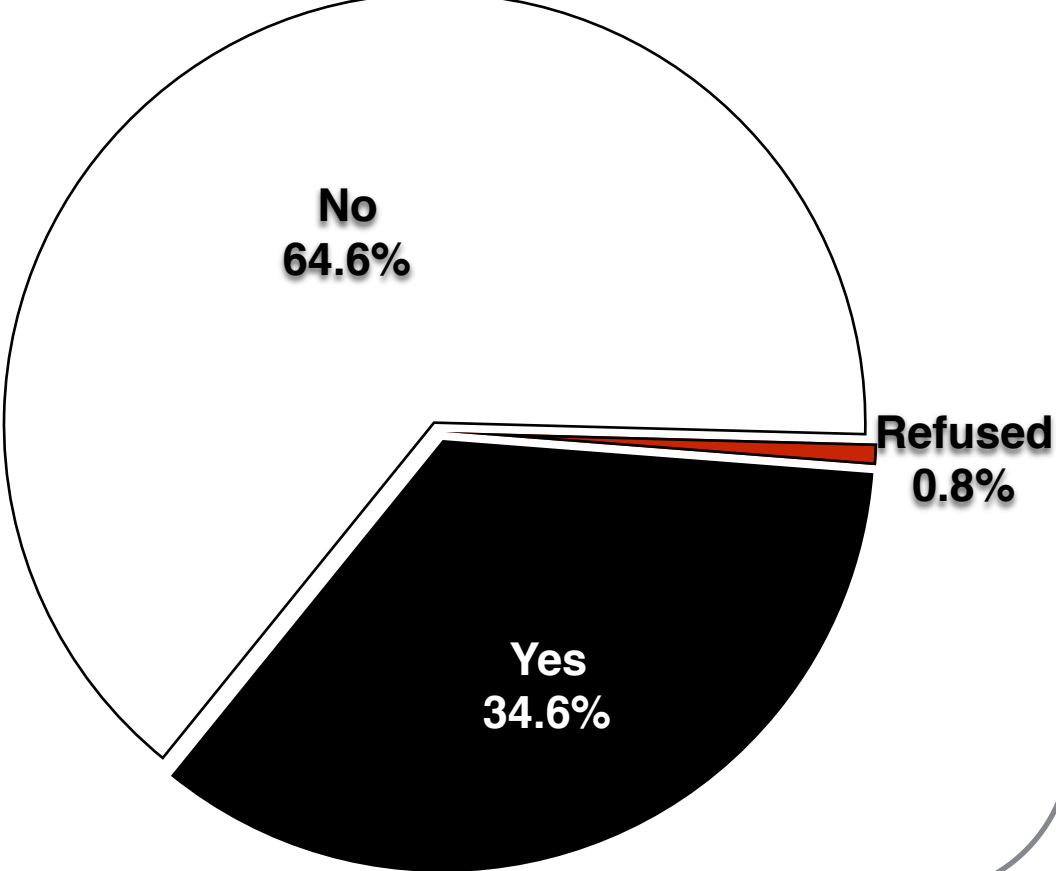
Gender



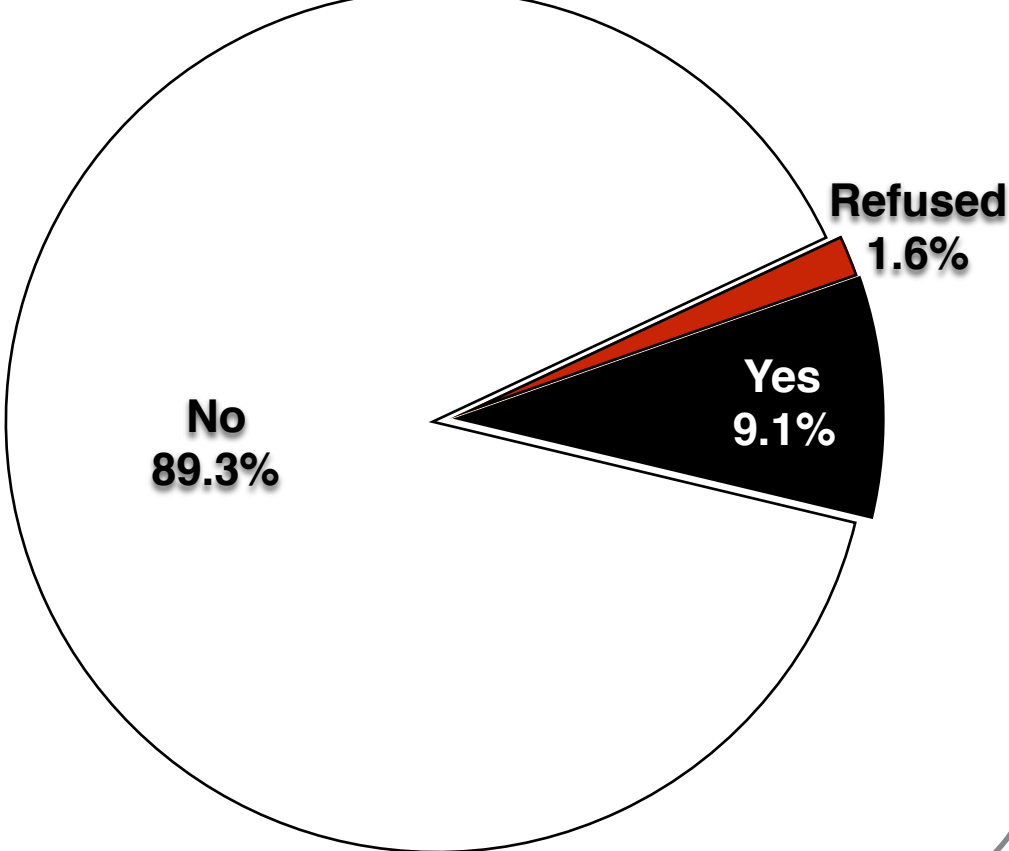
Age



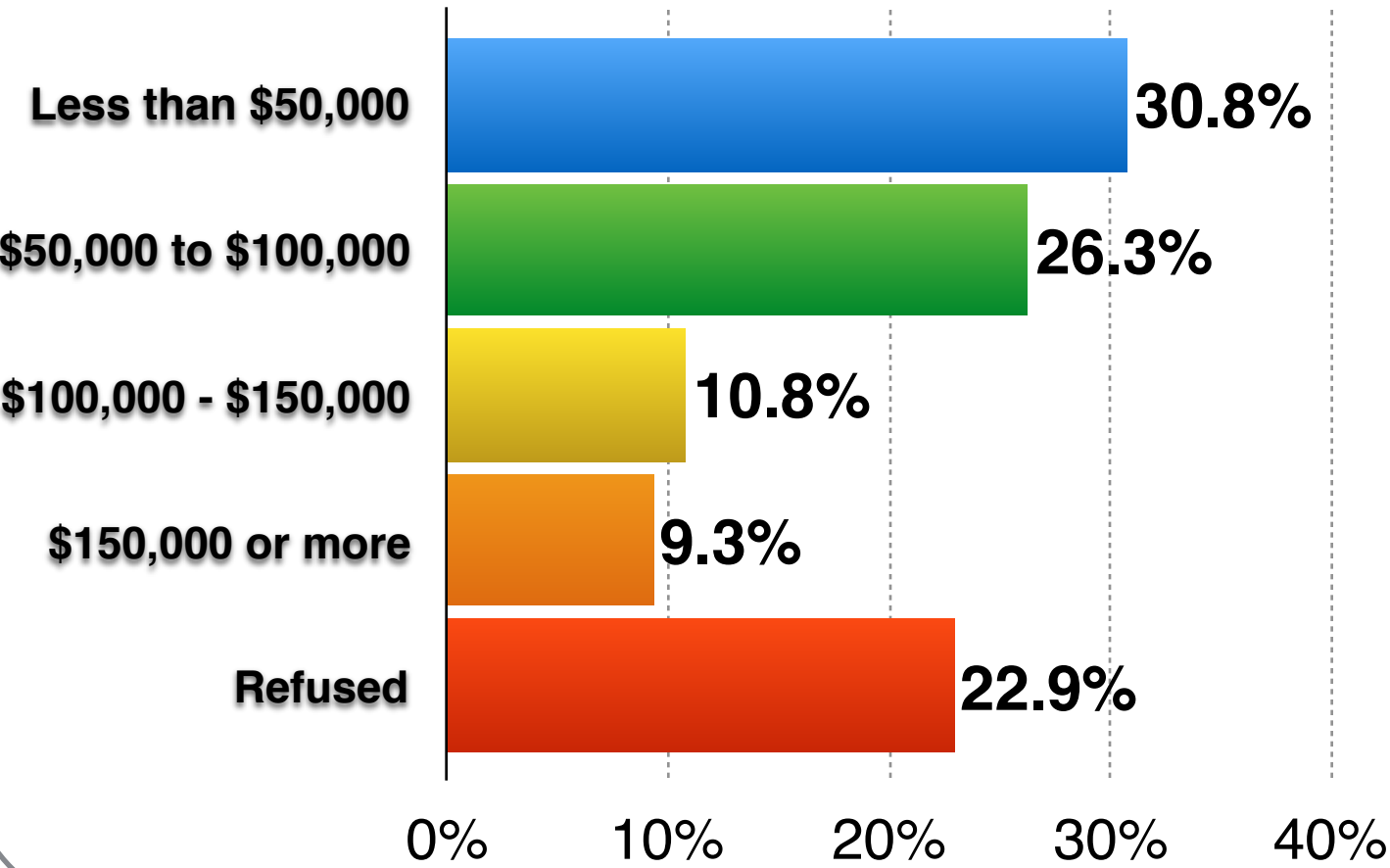
Children?



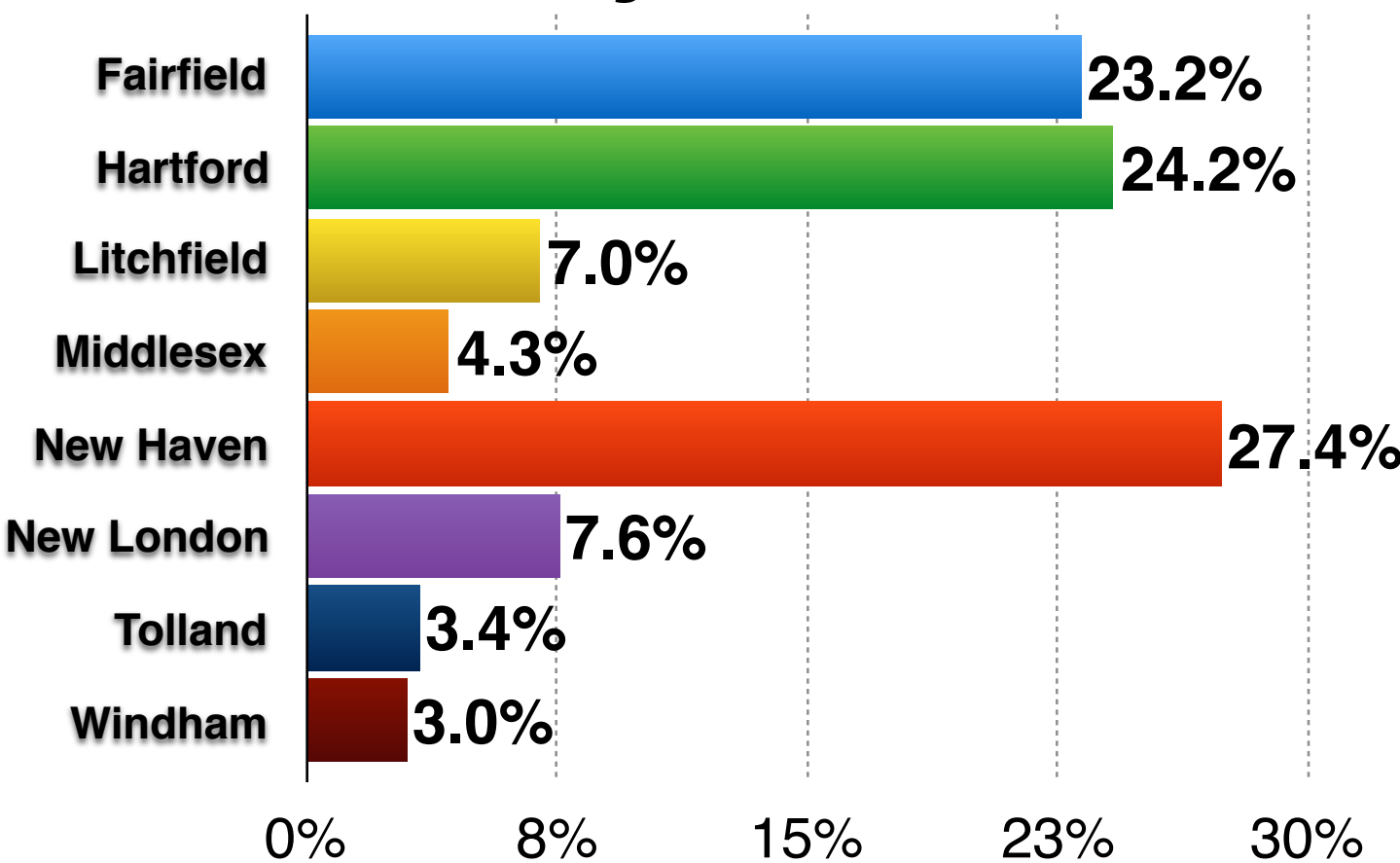
Hispanic/Latin Origin?



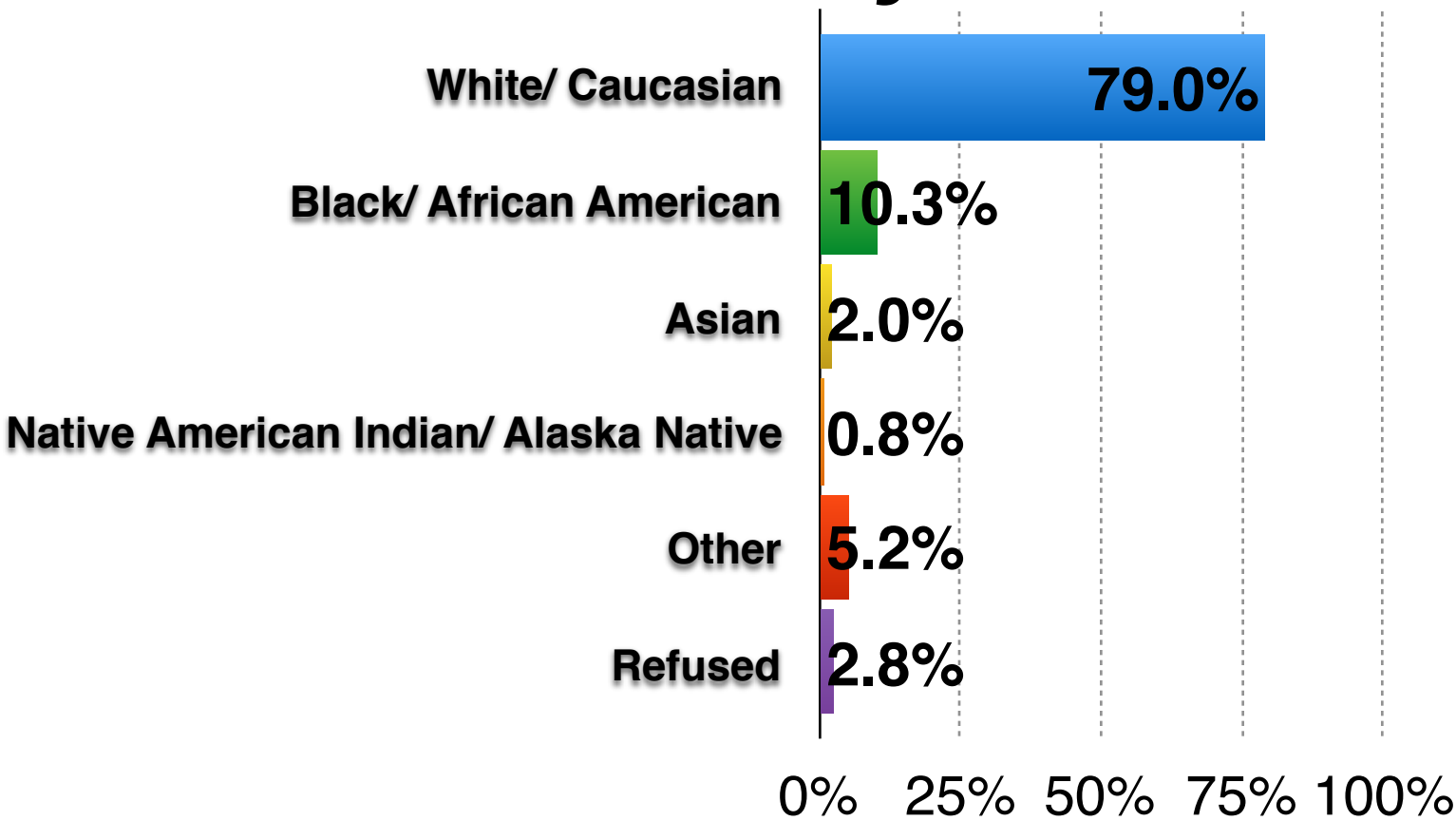
Income



County of Residence



Ethnicity



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