



Sacred Heart
UNIVERSITY

Institute for Public Policy
Statewide Poll - Q1 2020



Report of Findings

March 17, 2020

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Sacred Heart
UNIVERSITY



Our Story

Sacred Heart University's Institute for Public Policy and the *Hartford Courant* are collaborating in partnership with GreatBlue Research to analyze salient issues facing the State of Connecticut. This collaboration combines the academic excellence of a top-rated private University, the integrity and professionalism of a national newspaper, and 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 a dual-methodology quantitative research approach to address the following areas of investigation:

- Thoughts on the quality of life in Connecticut
- Governor Ned Lamont's job approval ratings
- Awareness of Lamont's new transportation proposal
- Opinions toward the legalization of recreational marijuana in the State
- Awareness of and opinions with the proposed Clean Slate Legislation
- Ranking of 2020 Presidential election candidates
- Demographic profiles of respondents

Research Methodology Snapshot

<div>Methodology</div> <div>Dual mode (phone and digital survey)**</div>	<div>No. of Completes</div> <div>1,000</div>	<div>No. of Questions</div> <div>35*</div>	<div>Sample</div> <div>Connecticut residents</div>
<div>Target</div> <div>Connecticut residents</div>	<div>Margin of Error</div> <div>+/- 3.02%</div>	<div>Confidence Level</div> <div>95%</div>	<div>Research Dates</div> <div>Feb. 24, 2020 - March 12, 2020</div>

* 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.

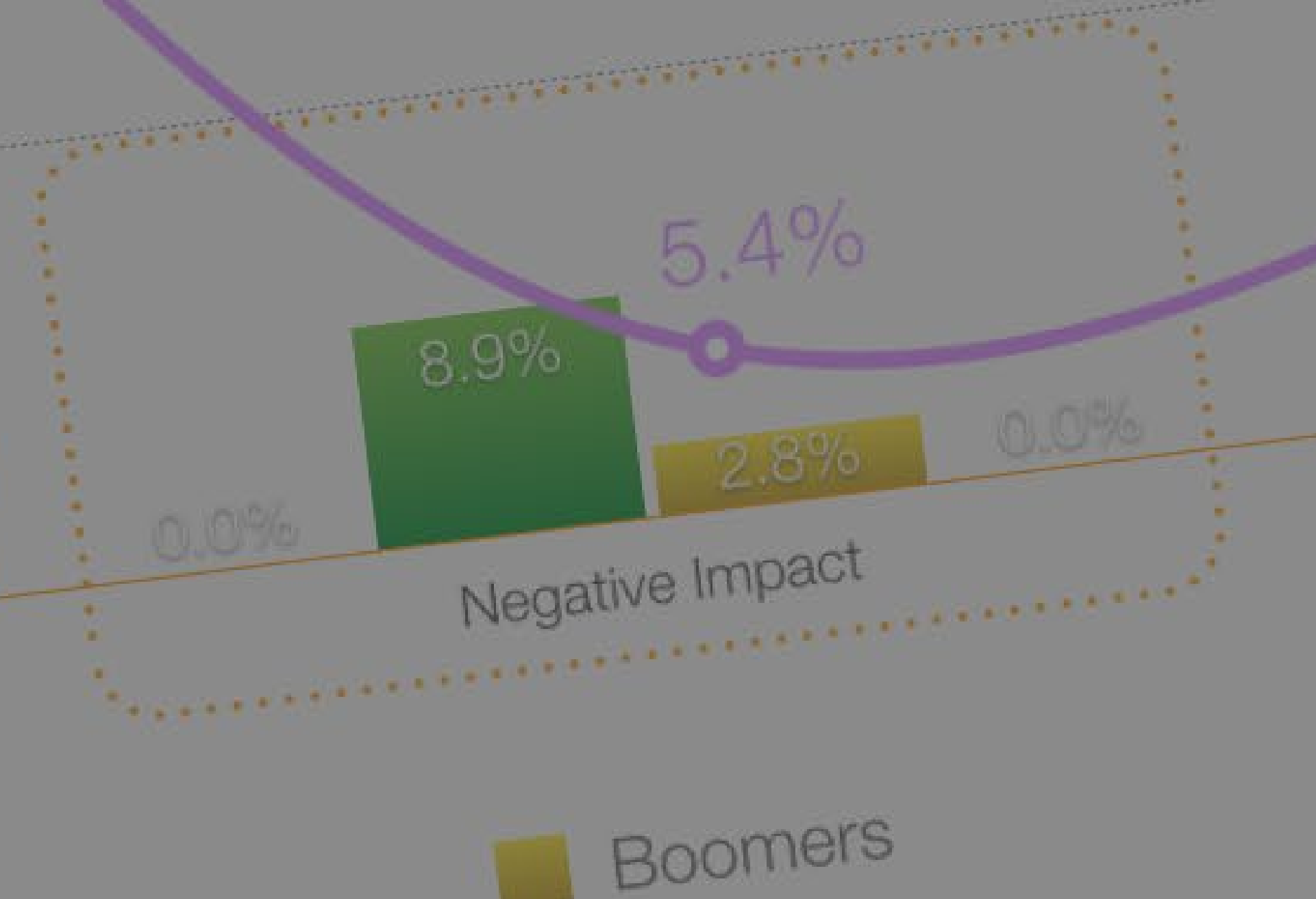
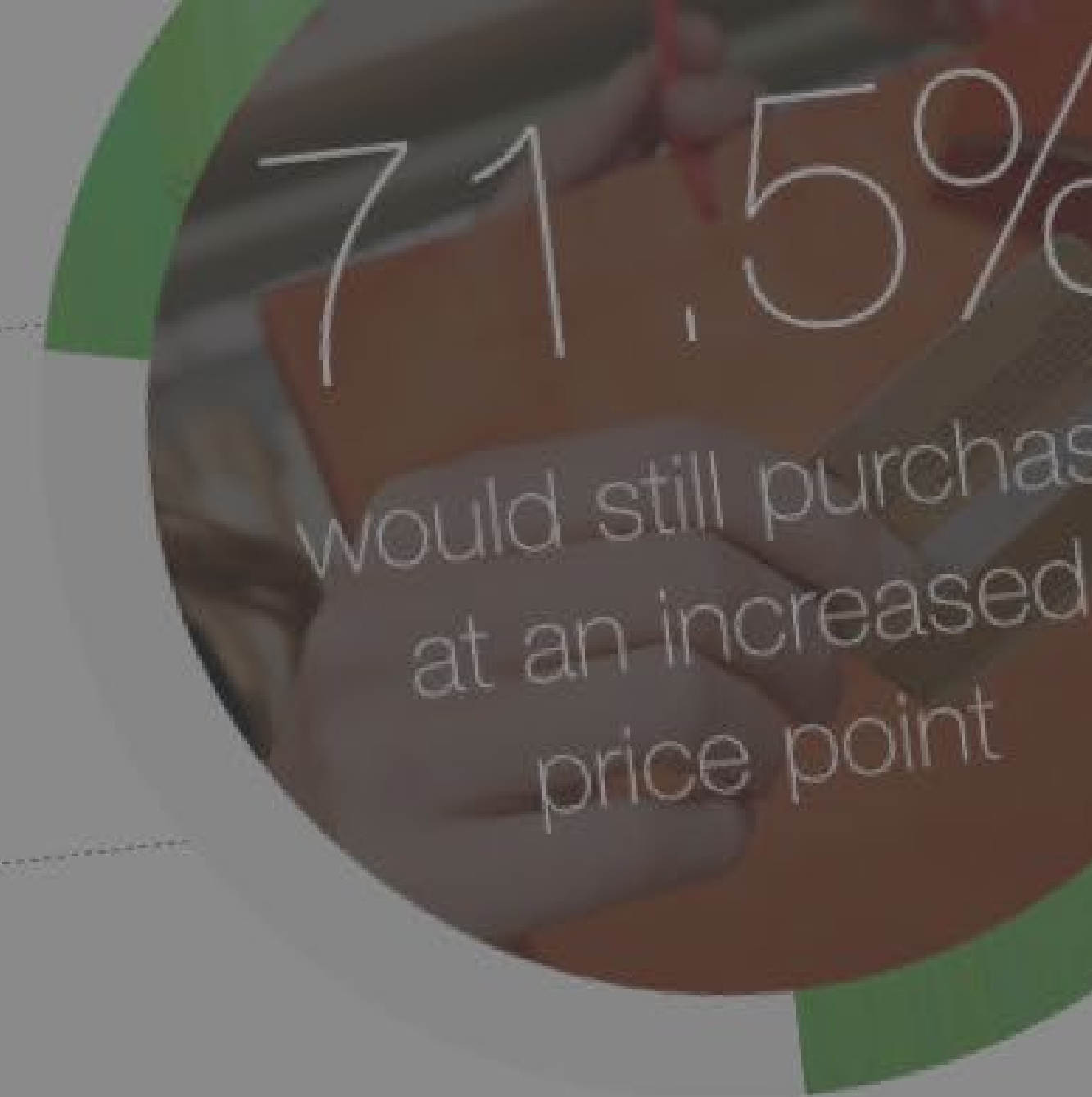
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SHU Institute for Public Policy - March 2020 Headlines

- ❖ In March 2020, 64.3%, reported their quality of life in the State as being either “excellent” (18.5%) or “good” (45.8%), which marks an increase over the 60.6% who reported the same in December of 2019.
 - Lower frequencies of March 2020 respondents expressed belief that the quality of life in Connecticut is “declining” (21.3%), compared to the rate of those who reported the same in December 2019 (27.0%).
- ❖ A higher rate of Connecticut residents surveyed in March 2020 (31.0%) reported to “approve” of how Ned Lamont is handling his job as governor, which marks an increase over the 28.1% who reported the same in December 2019, as well as 24.1% in September 2019.
 - 16.7% approval among Republicans (13.2% unsure)
 - 25.0% approval among unaffiliated residents (32.9% unsure)
 - 48.2% approval among Democrats (29.8% unsure)
- ❖ High frequencies of respondents reported to “disapprove” of the way Ned Lamont is handling “taxes” (57.5%) and “tolls” (56.8%).
 - 34.7% reported they “approve” of the way Lamont is “protecting the environment and providing green initiatives.”
 - 32.7% reported they “approve” of the way Lamont is handling “public and primary education.”
 - 30.2% reported they “approve” of the way Lamont is handling “health care.”

SHU Institute for Public Policy - March 2020 Headlines

- ❖ The majority of surveyed residents, 63.4%, reported they would “strongly” (34.4%) or “somewhat” (29.0%) support the legalization of recreational marijuana in Connecticut.
 - A higher frequency of respondents ages 18-34 (79.2%) reported they would “support” the legalization of recreational marijuana in the state when compared to respondents ages 35-44 (67.3%), 45-64 (61.5%), and 65 or older (40.4%) who reported the same.
- ❖ 62.5% of respondents reported they “strongly” (27.7%) or “somewhat” (34.8%) support the Clean Slate Legislation (described as...*This legislation proposes to automatically erase criminal records for specific misdemeanor crimes and decriminalized felony offenses seven years after the person’s most recent conviction. Such offenses include possession of less than four ounces of marijuana before October 1, 2015, third-degree criminal trespassing and operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license*).
 - A lower frequency of Republican residents surveyed (54.6%) reported they “support” the Clean Slate Legislation when compared to Democratic (72.7%) and unaffiliated residents (61.4%).
- ❖ The highest frequency of respondents reported they would vote for Joe Biden (51.9%) over Donald Trump (35.6%), while a slightly lower frequency reported they would vote for Bernie Sanders (49.6%) over Trump (38.0%).
 - 84.3% of surveyed Democratic residents, 49.4% of unaffiliated voters, and 14.7% of Republicans reported they would vote for Joe Biden if the race were between him and Donald Trump.
 - 80.2% of surveyed Democratic residents, 49.4% of unaffiliated voters, and 11.6% of Republicans reported they would vote for Bernie Sanders if the race were between him and Donald Trump.
- ❖ The majority of respondents who previously planned to vote for Pete Buttigieg reported they now plan to vote for Joe Biden (65.6%), while the majority of those who previously planned to vote for Elizabeth Warren reported they now plan to vote for Bernie Sanders (53.3%).

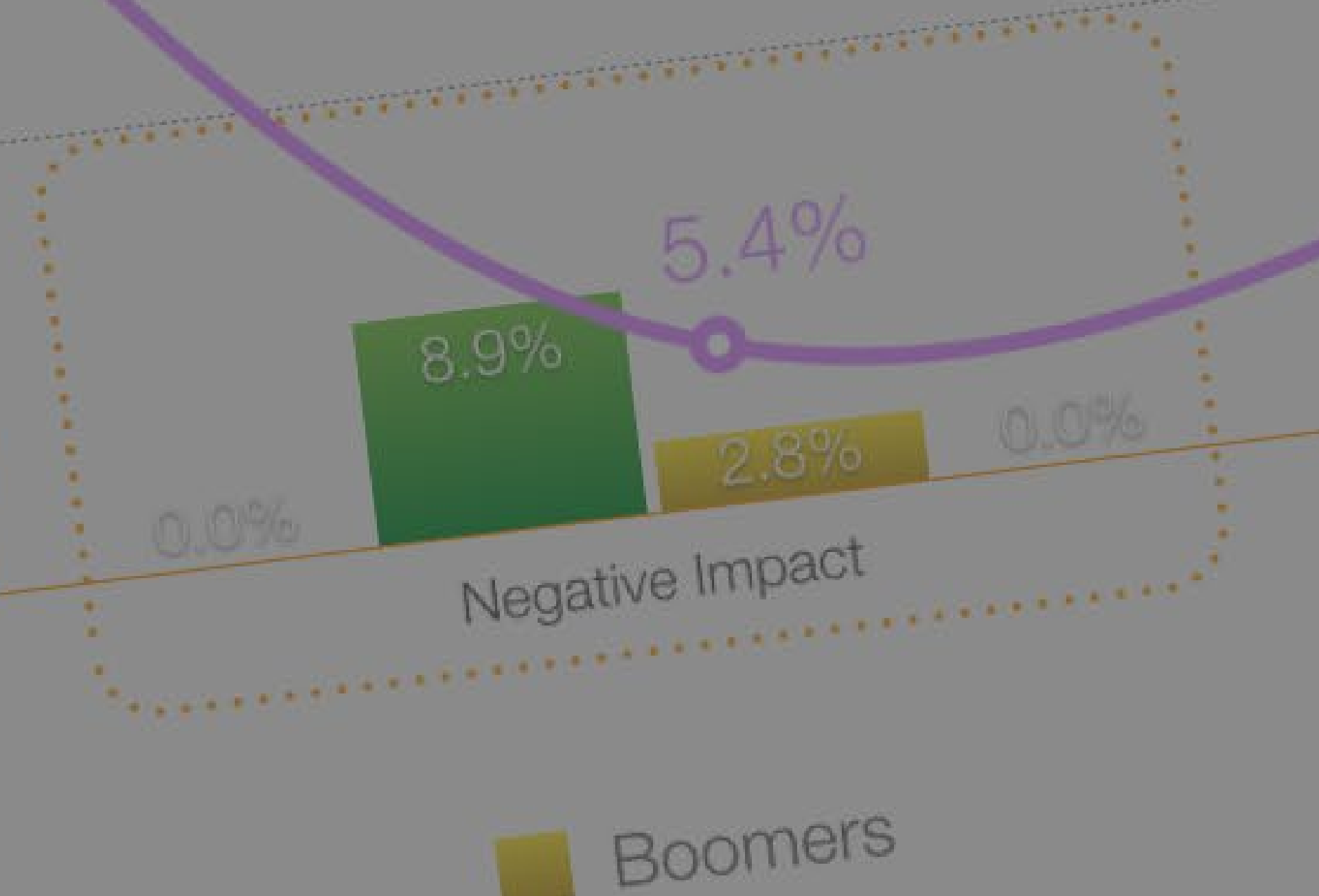
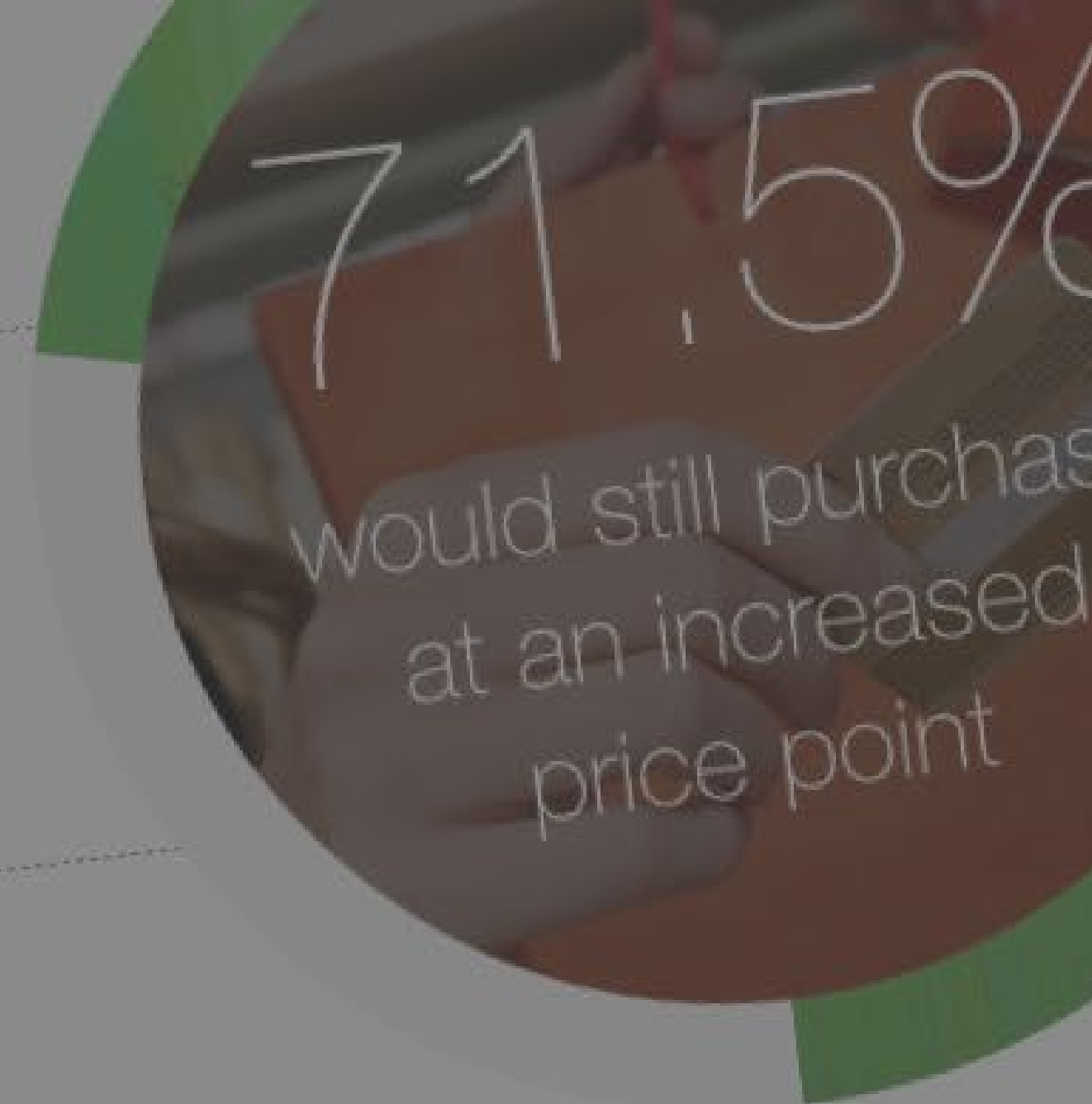
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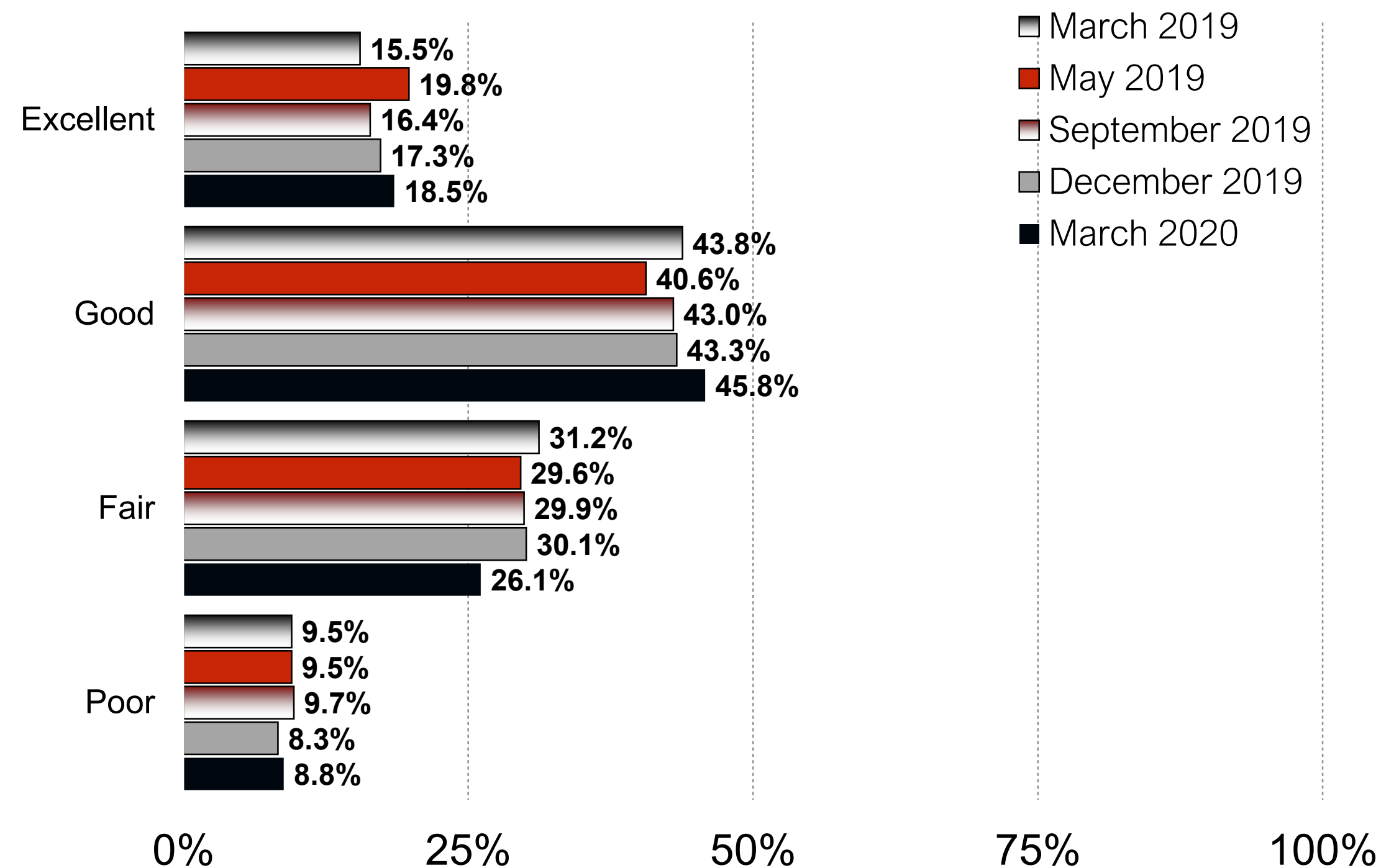
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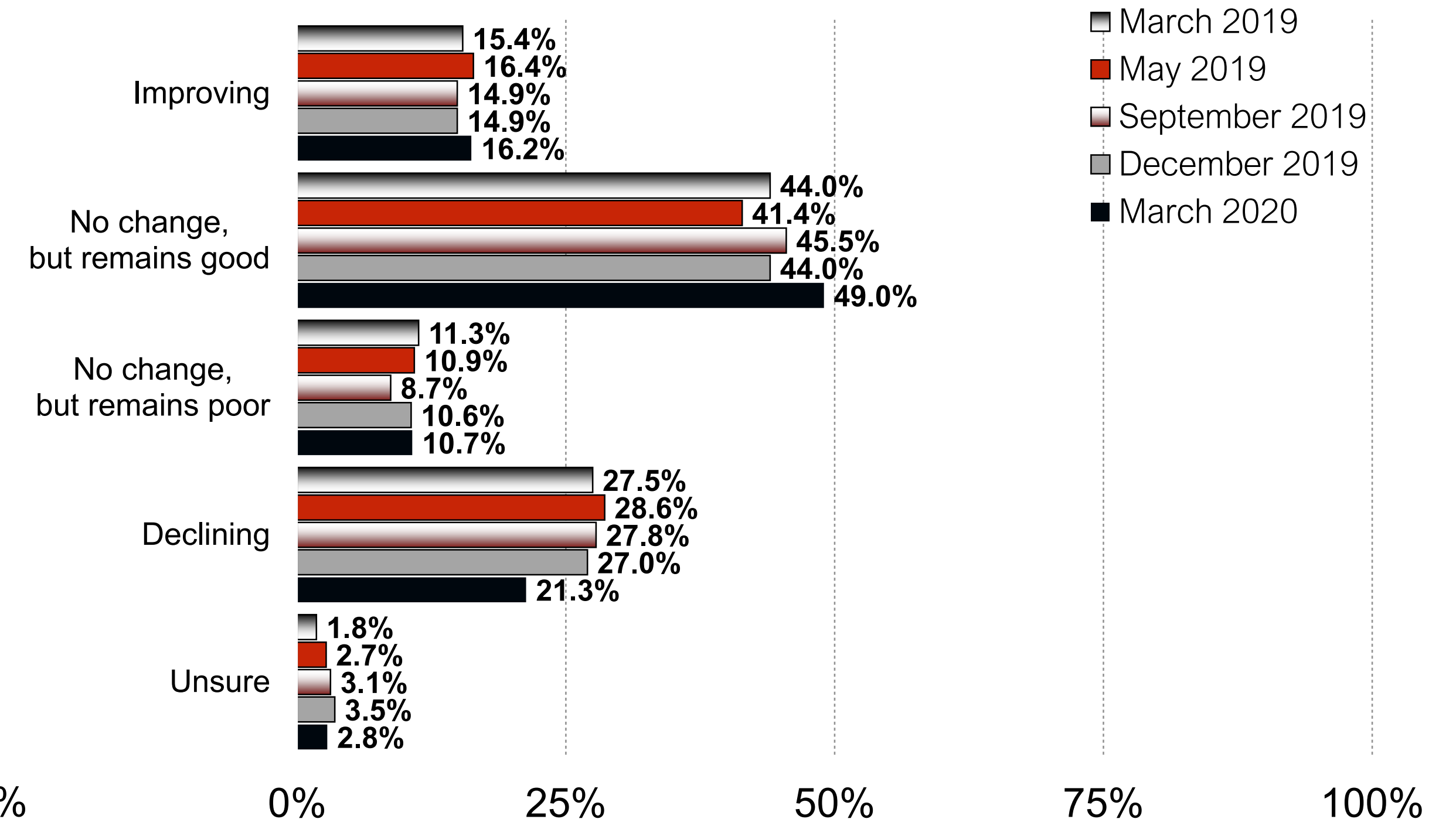
Quality of Life in Connecticut

The majority of Connecticut residents surveyed in March 2020, 64.3%, reported their quality of life in the State as being either “excellent” (18.5%) or “good” (45.8%), which marks an increase over the 60.6% who reported the same in December of 2019. Additionally, a lower frequency of March 2020 respondents expressed belief that the quality of life in Connecticut is “declining” (21.3%), compared to the rate of those who reported the same in December 2019 (27.0%).

- ❖ A lower frequency of respondents earning less than \$50,000 annually, 55.7%, reported their quality of life as either “excellent” (17.8%) or “good” (37.9%) when compared to those earning \$100,000 to less than \$150,000 per year (78.1%).
- ❖ A higher frequency of respondents 65 or older reported their quality of life as “declining” (26.2%) when compared to those ages 18-34 (14.2%).



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

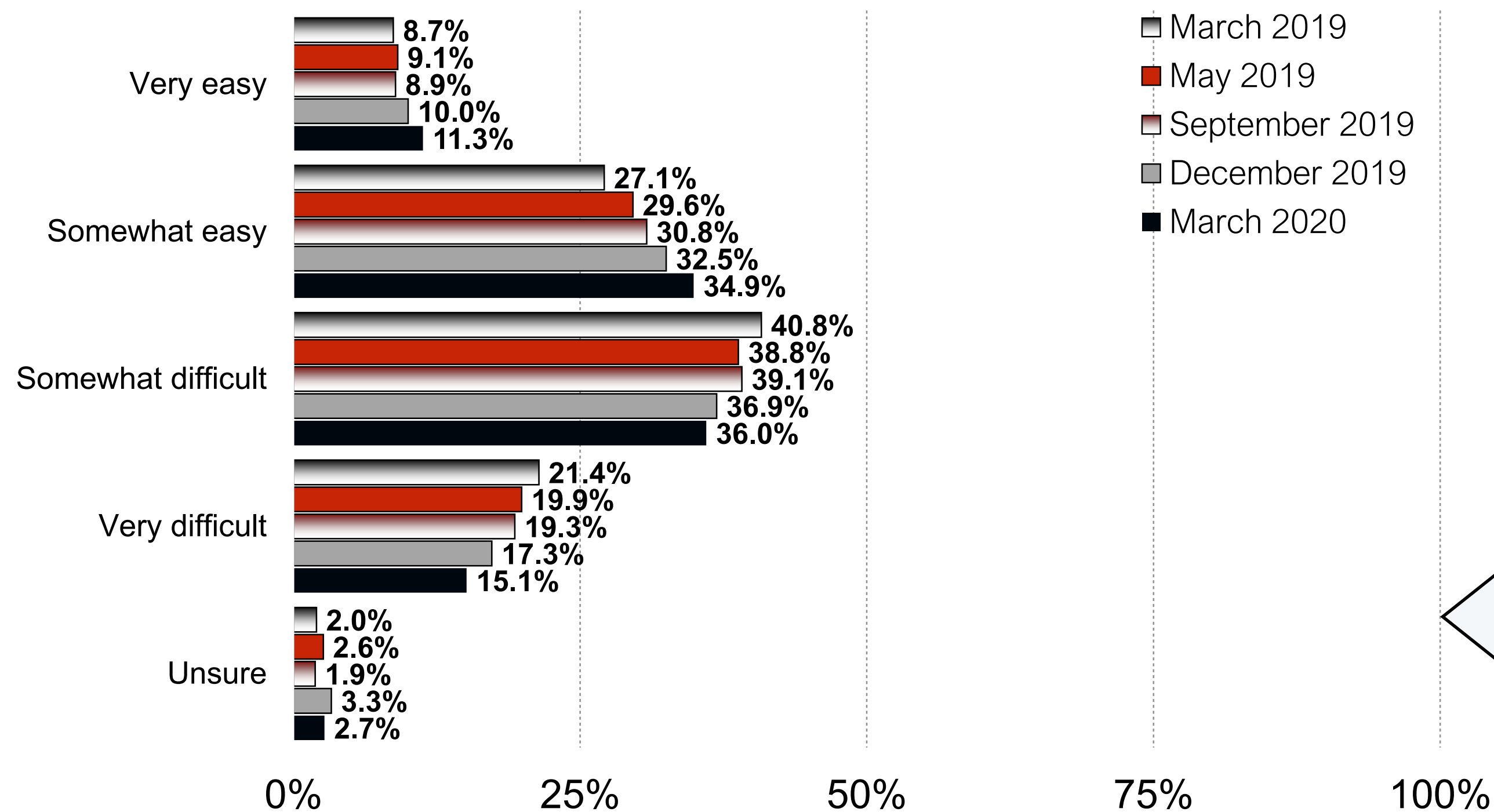


Q Would you say, overall, your quality of life in Connecticut is...

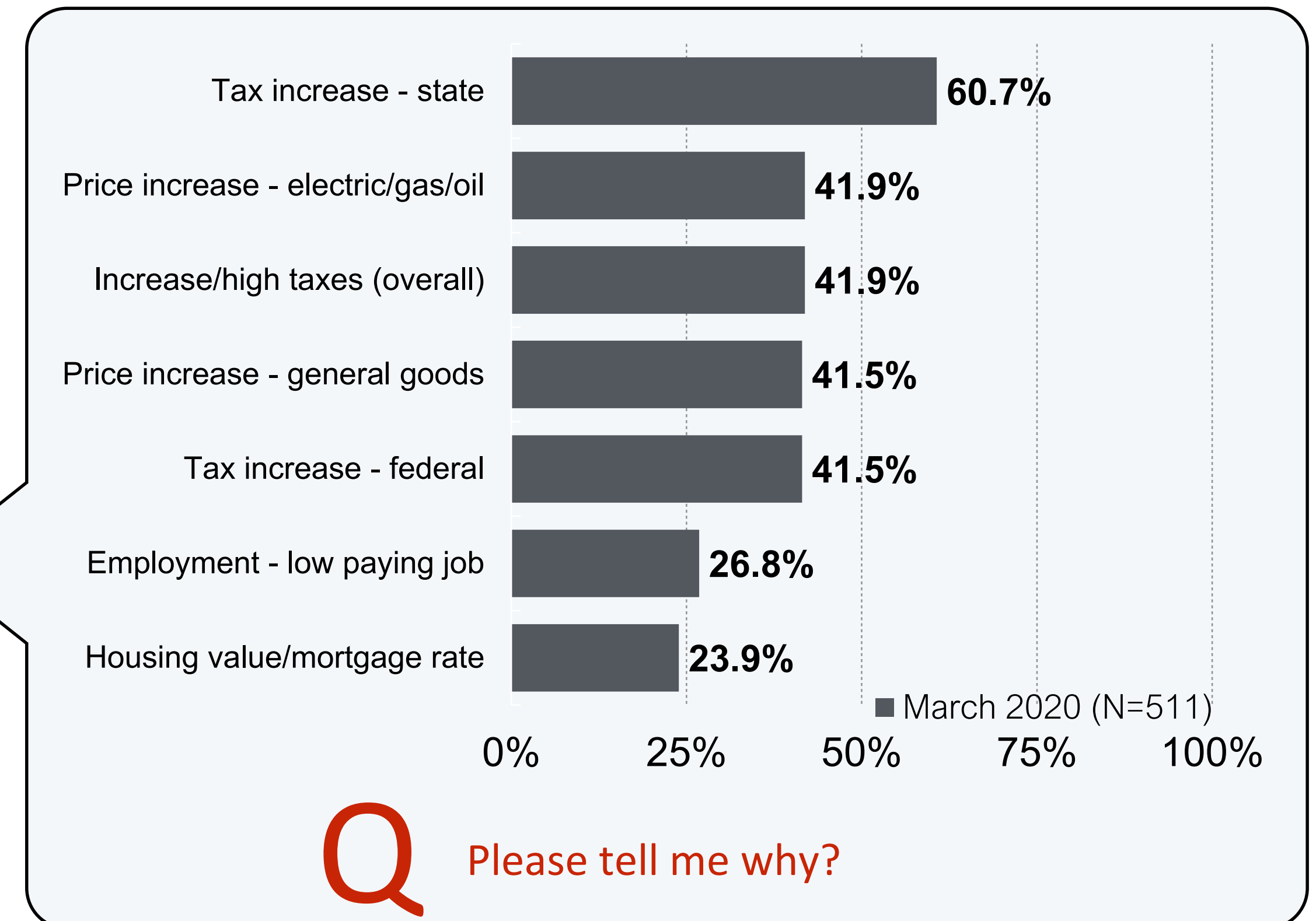
Quality of Life in Connecticut

In March 2020, 46.2% of surveyed residents (over 35.8% in December 2019) reported it being either “very easy” (11.3%) or “somewhat easy” (34.9%) to maintain their standard of living out of their household income today, while 51.1% (from 62.2% in December 2019) reported it being “difficult” to maintain their standard of living.

- ❖ Over one-half of respondents earning less than \$50,000 annually (58.0%) and \$50,000 to less than \$100,000 per year (55.6%) reported it being “difficult” to maintain their standard of living.
- ❖ The majority of respondents ages 35-44 (58.9%) reported it being “difficult” to maintain their standard of living.



Q 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...

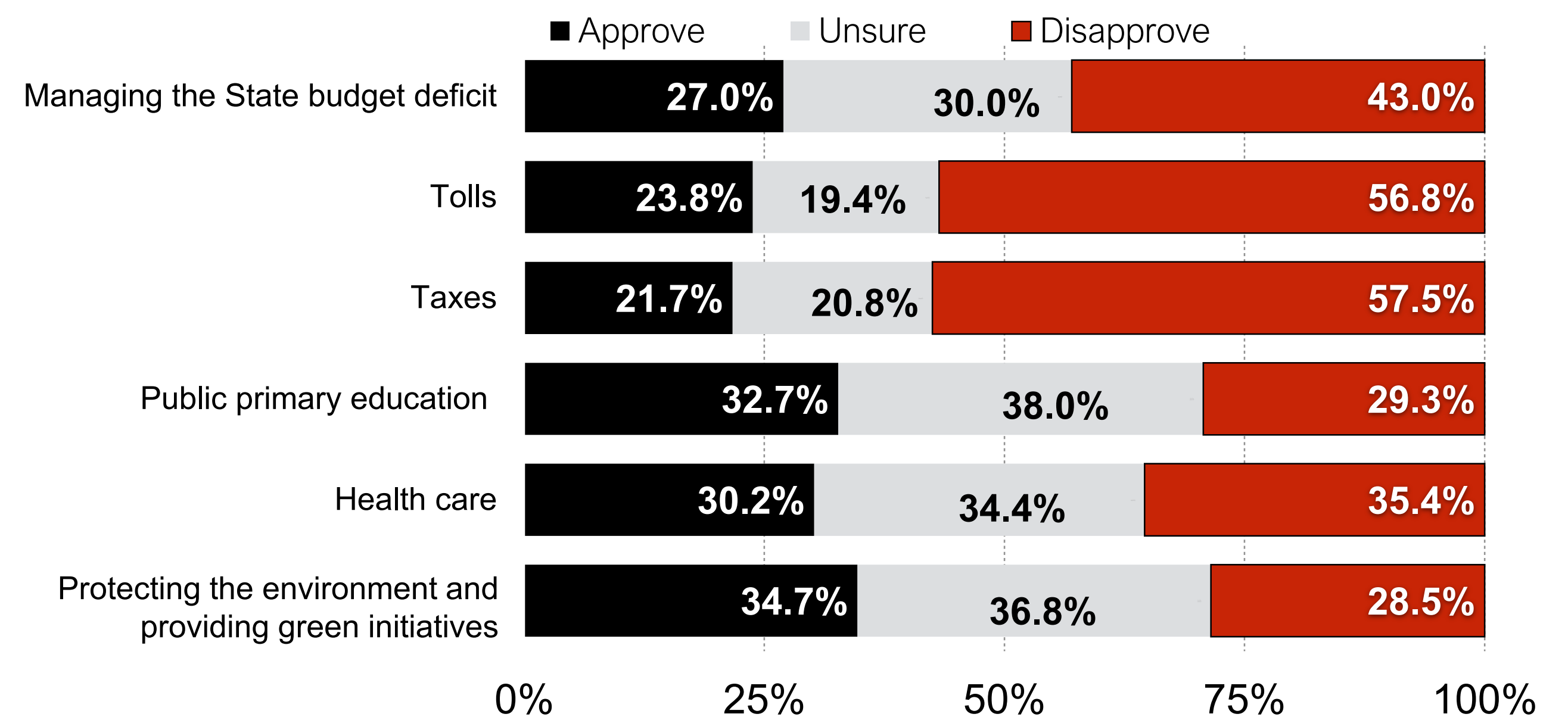
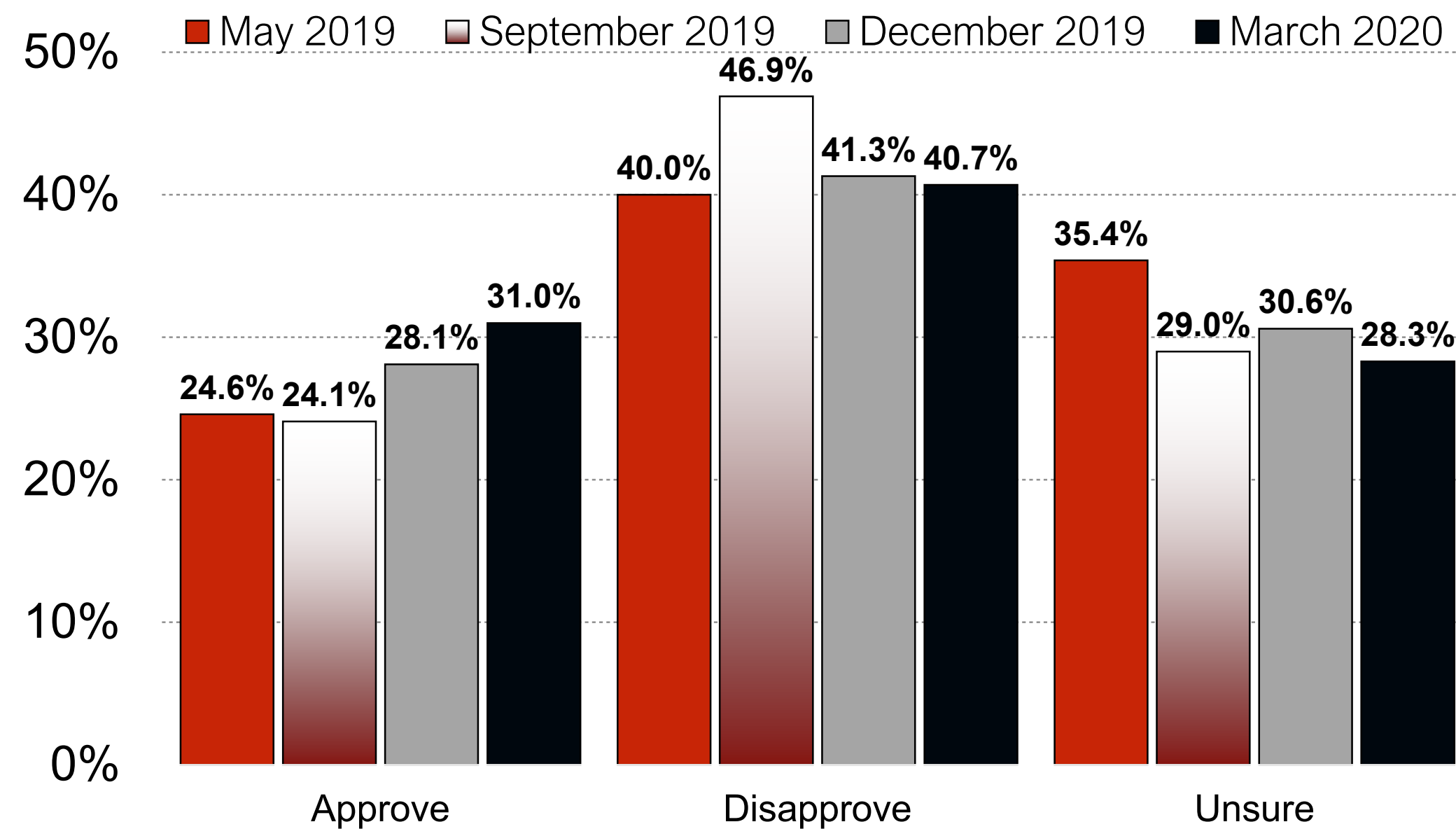


Q Please tell me why?

Governor's Approval Rating

31.0% of those Connecticut residents surveyed in March 2020 reported to “approve” of how Ned Lamont is handling his job as governor, which is higher than the 28.1% of respondents who reported the same in December 2019, and 24.1% in September 2019. However, over one-half of respondents reported to “disapprove” of the way Ned Lamont is handling “taxes” (57.5%) and “tolls” (56.8%).

- ❖ While 48.2% of Democrats surveyed currently “approve” of the way Lamont is handling his job as governor, only 16.7% of Republicans and 25.0% of unaffiliated voters surveyed reported the same.
- ❖ 80.2% of Republicans surveyed currently “disapprove” of the way Lamont is handling “taxes,” compared to only 41.6% of Democrats.
- ❖ 41.5% of respondents ages 18-34 currently “approve” of the way Lamont is handling “public primary education,” compared to 34.2% of those ages 35-44, 29.9% of those ages 45-64, and 26.8% of those ages 65 or older.



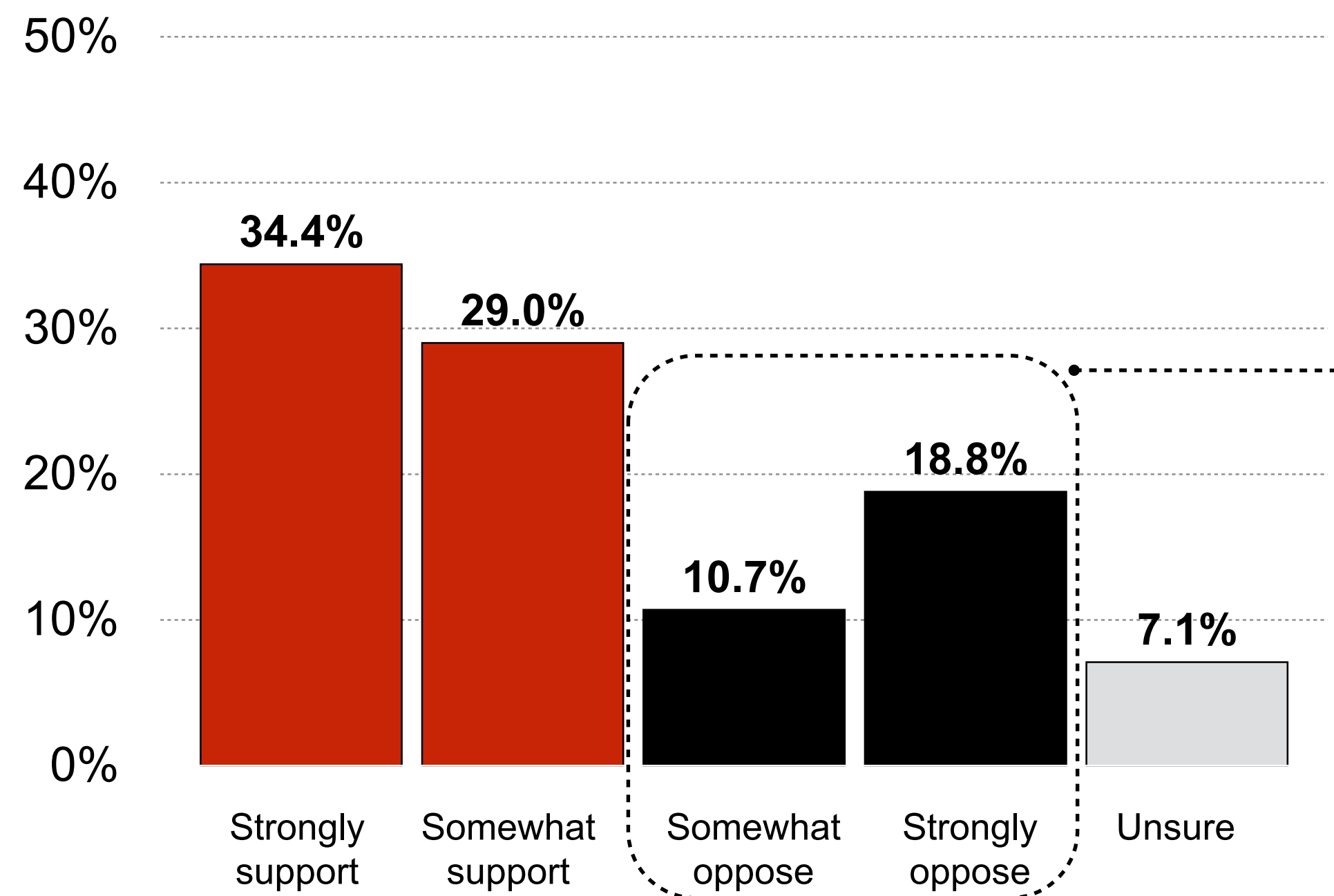
Q Since he took office in January, overall do you approve or disapprove of the way Ned Lamont is handling his job as governor?

Q And, would you say you approve or disapprove of Ned Lamont’s handling of the following issues...

Marijuana Legalization

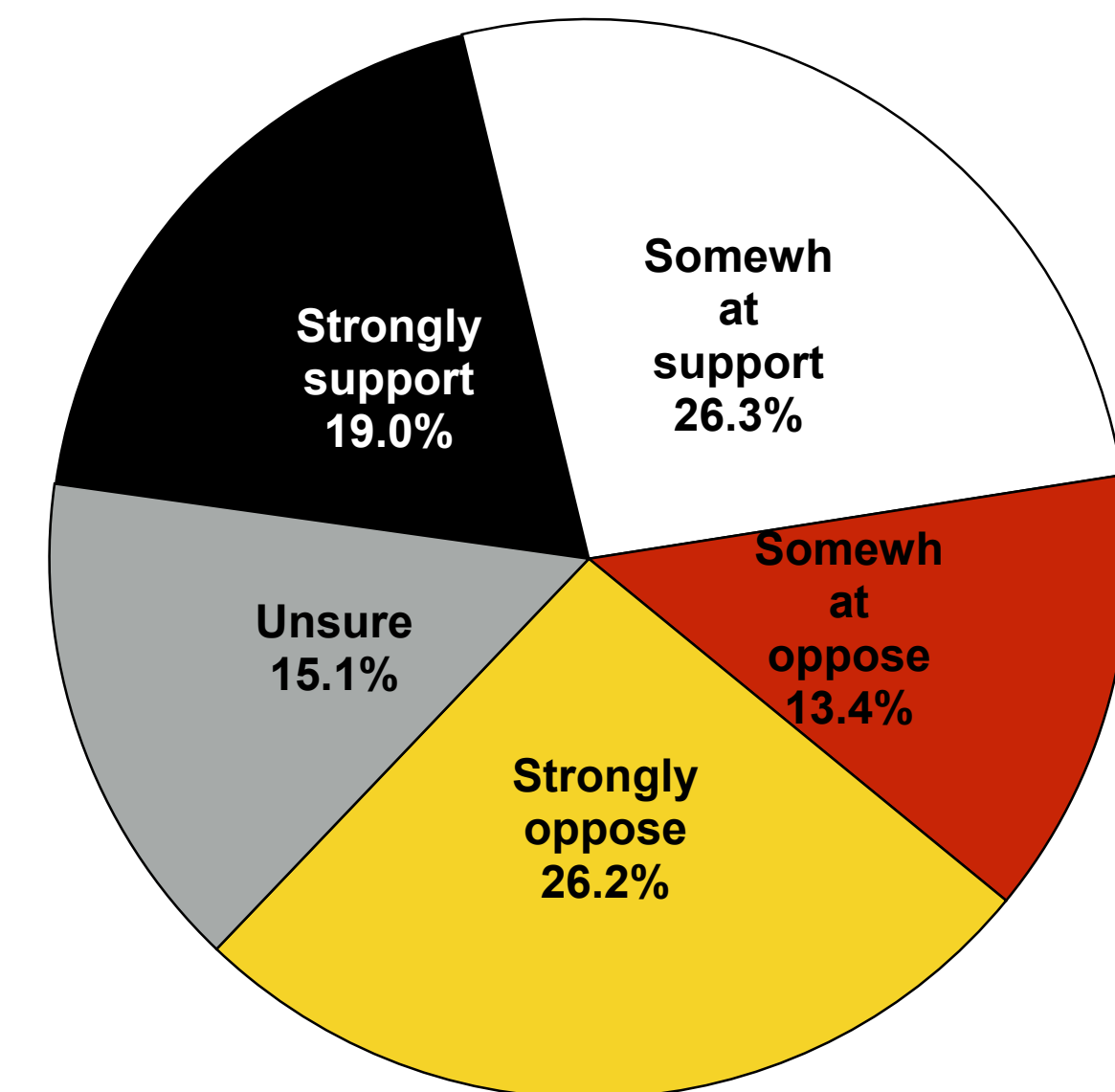
The majority of surveyed Connecticut residents, 63.4%, reported they would “strongly” (34.4%) or “somewhat” (29.0%) support the legalization of recreational marijuana in Connecticut. However, a lower frequency, 45.3%, reported they would “strongly” (19.0%) or “somewhat” (26.3%) support a measure the State legislature has proposed that a portion of sales taxes be allocated only to those towns that host a dispensary.

- ❖ While the majority of respondents ages 18-34 reported they “support” the legalization of recreational marijuana in the state (79.2%), a lower frequency of respondents ages 35-44 (67.3%), 45-64 (61.5%), and 65 or older (40.4%) reported the same.
- ❖ A higher frequency of Democratic residents surveyed reported they “support” the legalization of recreational marijuana in the state (73.0%) when compared to Republicans (52.7%) and unaffiliated voters surveyed (61.7%).



Q Please explain why you “strongly” or “somewhat” oppose? (N=295)

- #1 “It’s a drug/leads to other drugs” (18.4%)
- #2 “Affects driving/impaired driving/operating machinery, etc.” (12.6%)
- #3 “Reckless to legalize/don’t approve/against drug usage” (10.5%)



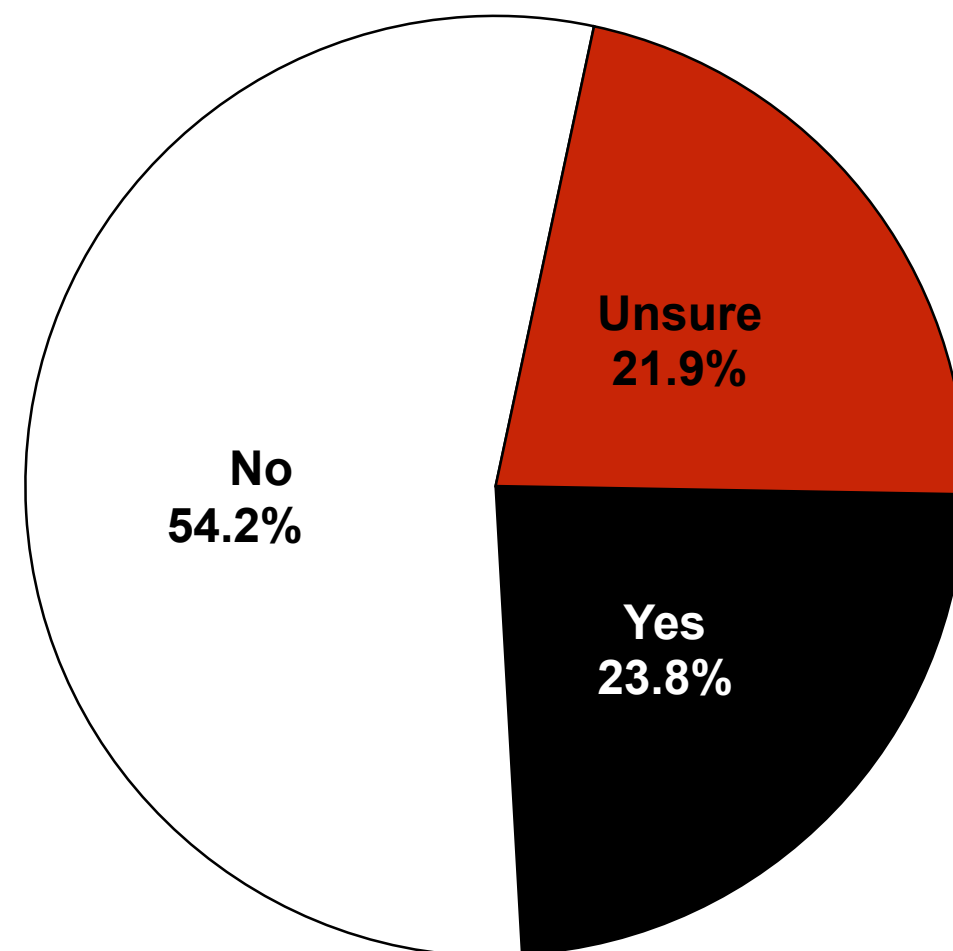
Q Please tell me how strongly you support or oppose the legalization of recreational marijuana in Connecticut?

Q In recent proposed bills for the legalization of recreational marijuana in Connecticut, the State legislature has proposed that a portion of sales taxes be allocated only to those towns that host a dispensary. Please tell me how strongly you support or oppose this measure.

Marijuana Legalization

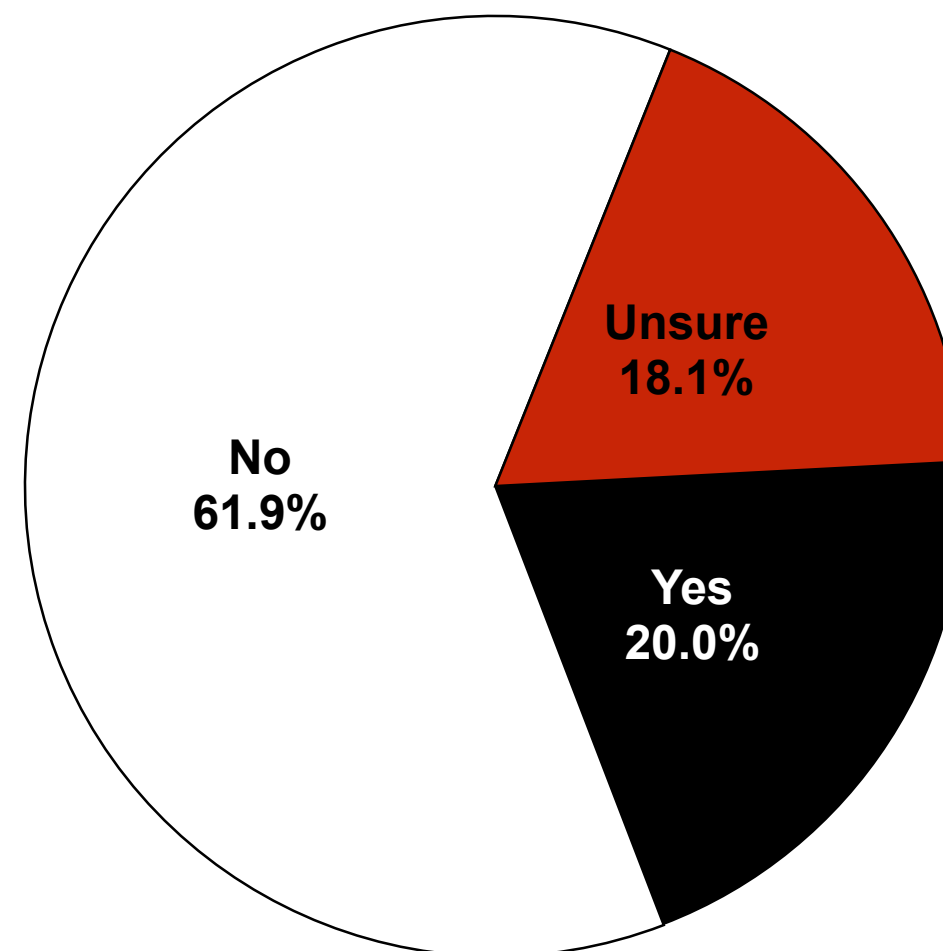
Of those respondents who reported they would “strongly” or “somewhat” oppose the legalization of recreational marijuana in Connecticut, less than one-quarter reported they would support the measure if it would lower crime and incarceration rates in Connecticut (23.8%). One-fifth of surveyed residents (20.0%) would support the legalization of recreational marijuana in the state to help with Connecticut’s fiscal situation and resolve the budget deficit. In addition, 27.9% would support the measure if the state adopted laws and regulations similar to those of alcohol laws and regulations.

Only asked to those who reported to “strongly” or “somewhat” oppose the legalization of recreational marijuana in Connecticut.



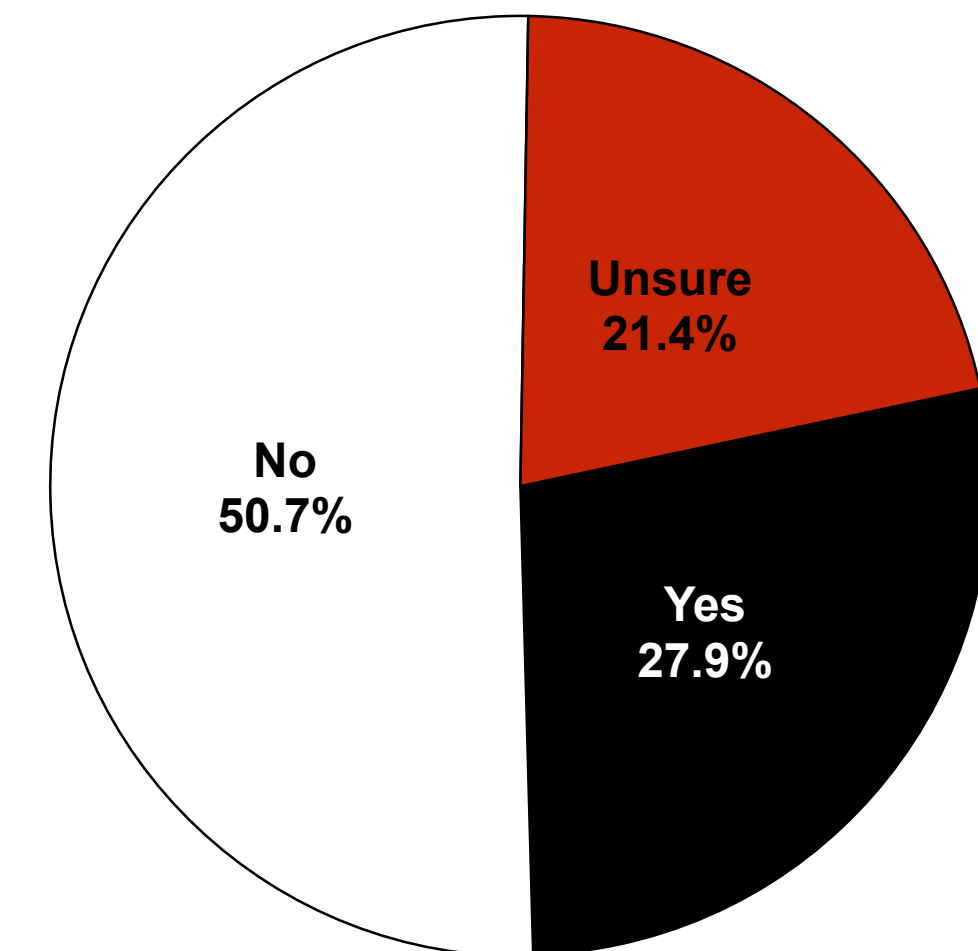
Q Data indicates that the legalization of recreational marijuana is associated with a decrease in incarceration rates by removing illegal drug markets and the charging of those involved as non-violent offenders.

Would you support the legalization of recreational marijuana if it would lower crime and incarceration rates in Connecticut? (N=366)



Q States that have legalized recreational marijuana have received additional dollars in the form of new tax revenue.

Would you support the legalization of recreational marijuana to help with Connecticut’s fiscal situation and resolve the budget deficit? (N=366)



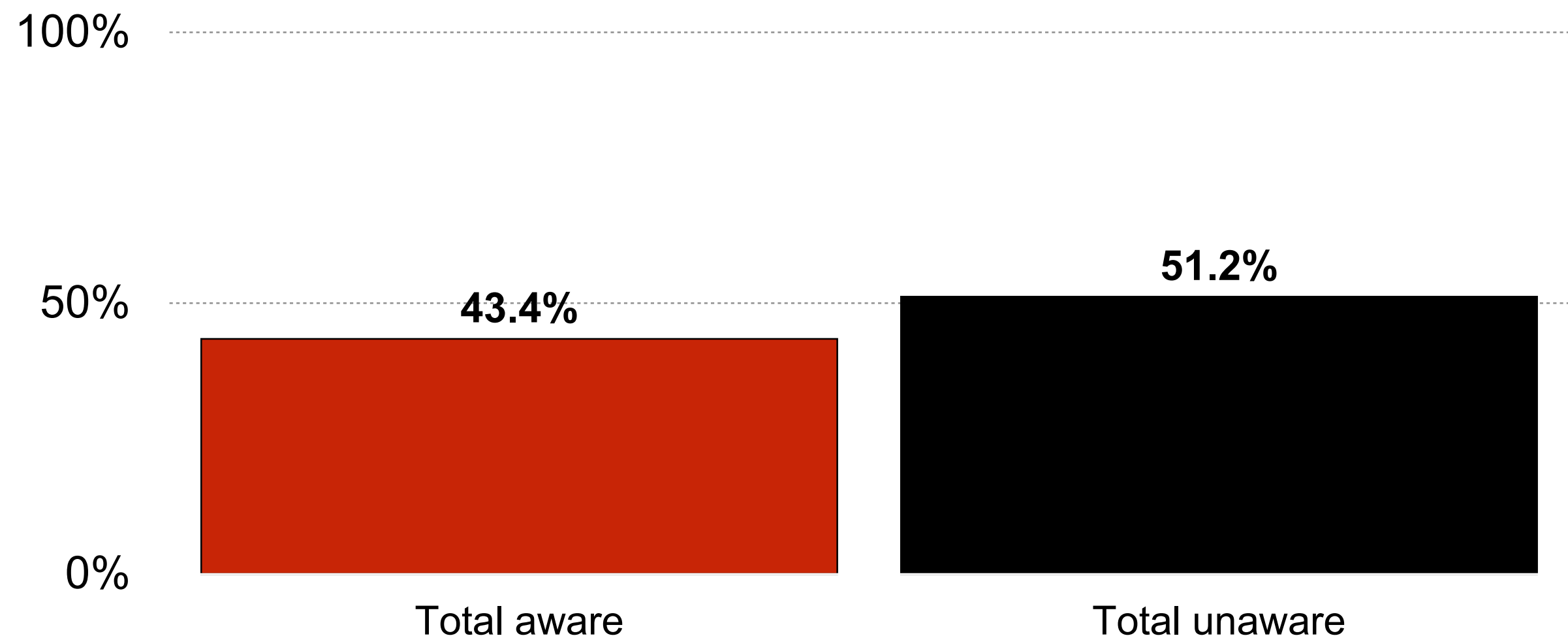
Q Every state that has legalized the use of recreational marijuana has created regulations and laws to restrict youth access and to prevent individuals from operating motor vehicles while under the influence.

Would you support the legalization of recreational marijuana if the state of Connecticut adopted laws and regulations similar to those of alcohol laws and regulations? (N=366)

Clean Slate Legislation

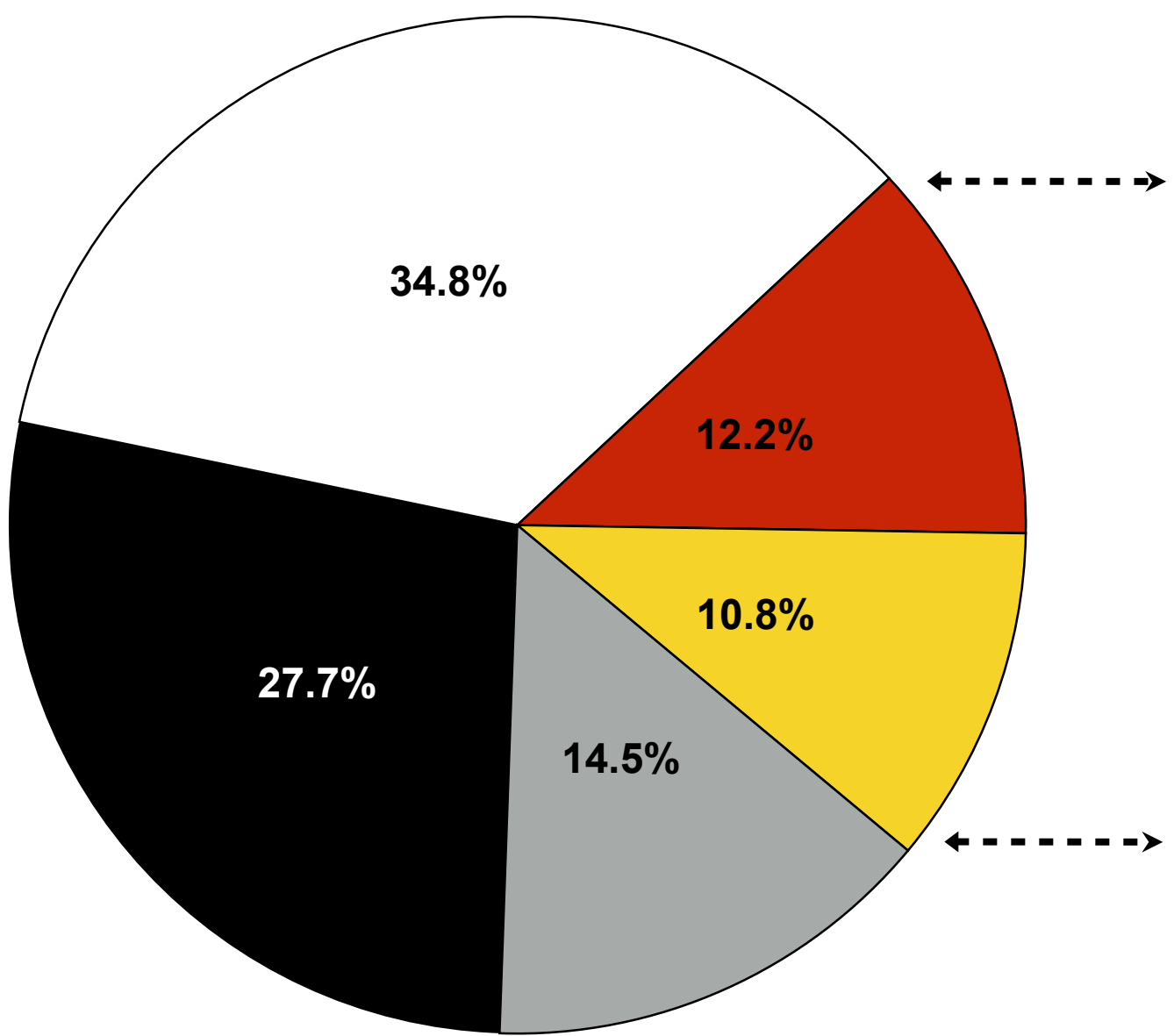
Slightly over one-half of surveyed residents, 51.2%, reported being “not very” (18.7%) or “not at all” (32.5%) aware of the proposed Clean Slate Legislation. However, after hearing the description of the proposed legislation, the majority, 62.5%, reported they “strongly” (27.7%) or “somewhat” (34.8%) support the Clean Slate Legislation.

- ❖ A lower frequency of Republican residents surveyed (54.6%) reported they “support” the Clean Slate Legislation when compared to Democratic (72.7%) and unaffiliated voters surveyed (61.4%).
- ❖ 31.2% of respondents ages 65 or older reported they “oppose” the Clean Slate Legislation, compared to only 11.5% of respondents ages 18-34.



Q The Connecticut State Legislature is currently considering Clean Slate legislation. This legislation proposes to automatically erase criminal records for specific misdemeanor crimes and decriminalized felony offenses seven years after the person’s most recent conviction. Such offenses include possession of less than four ounces of marijuana before October 1, 2015, third-degree criminal trespassing and operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license.

Prior to today’s survey, how aware were you of the proposed Clean Slate Legislation?



- Strongly support the Clean Slate Legislation
- Somewhat support the Clean Slate Legislation
- Somewhat oppose the Clean Slate Legislation
- Strongly oppose the Clean Slate Legislation
- Unsure

Q Please explain why you “strongly” or “somewhat” oppose?
(N=230)

- #1 “Broke the law/pay the price” (25.7%)
- #2 “Should not erase records/information should be available” (12.6%)
- #3 “Need more information/don’t know much about it” (9.1%)

Clean Slate Legislation

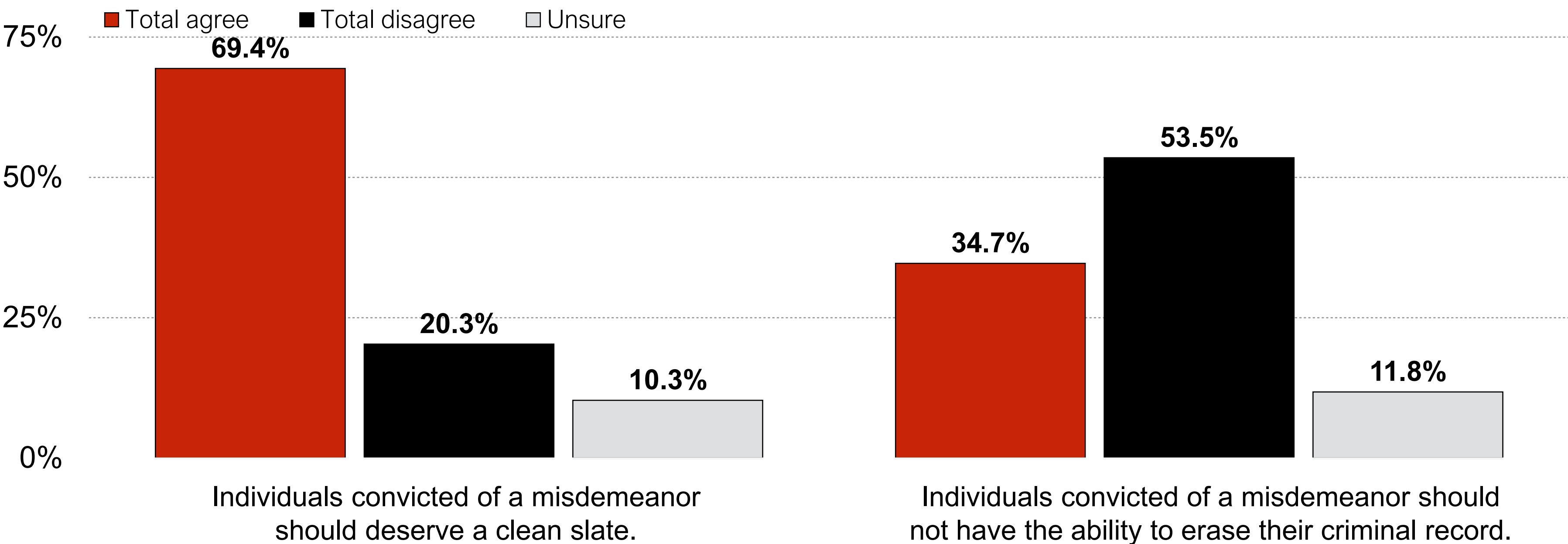
Over two-thirds of surveyed residents, 69.4%, reported to “strongly” (33.0%) or “somewhat” (36.4%) agree that individuals convicted of a misdemeanor should deserve a clean slate.

- ❖ Nearly one-quarter of respondents age 65 or older (24.5%) reported to “disagree” that individuals convicted of a misdemeanor should deserve a clean slate.
- ❖ 31.0% of Republican residents surveyed reported to “disagree” that individuals convicted of a misdemeanor should deserve a clean slate, compared to only 11.5% of Democrats surveyed.

Further, 53.5% reported to “disagree” that individuals convicted of a misdemeanor should not have the ability to erase their criminal record.

- ❖ A higher frequency of surveyed Republican residents (43.0%) reported to “agree” that individuals convicted of a misdemeanor should not have the ability to erase their criminal record when compared to Democrats (34.7%) and unaffiliated voters surveyed (29.5%).

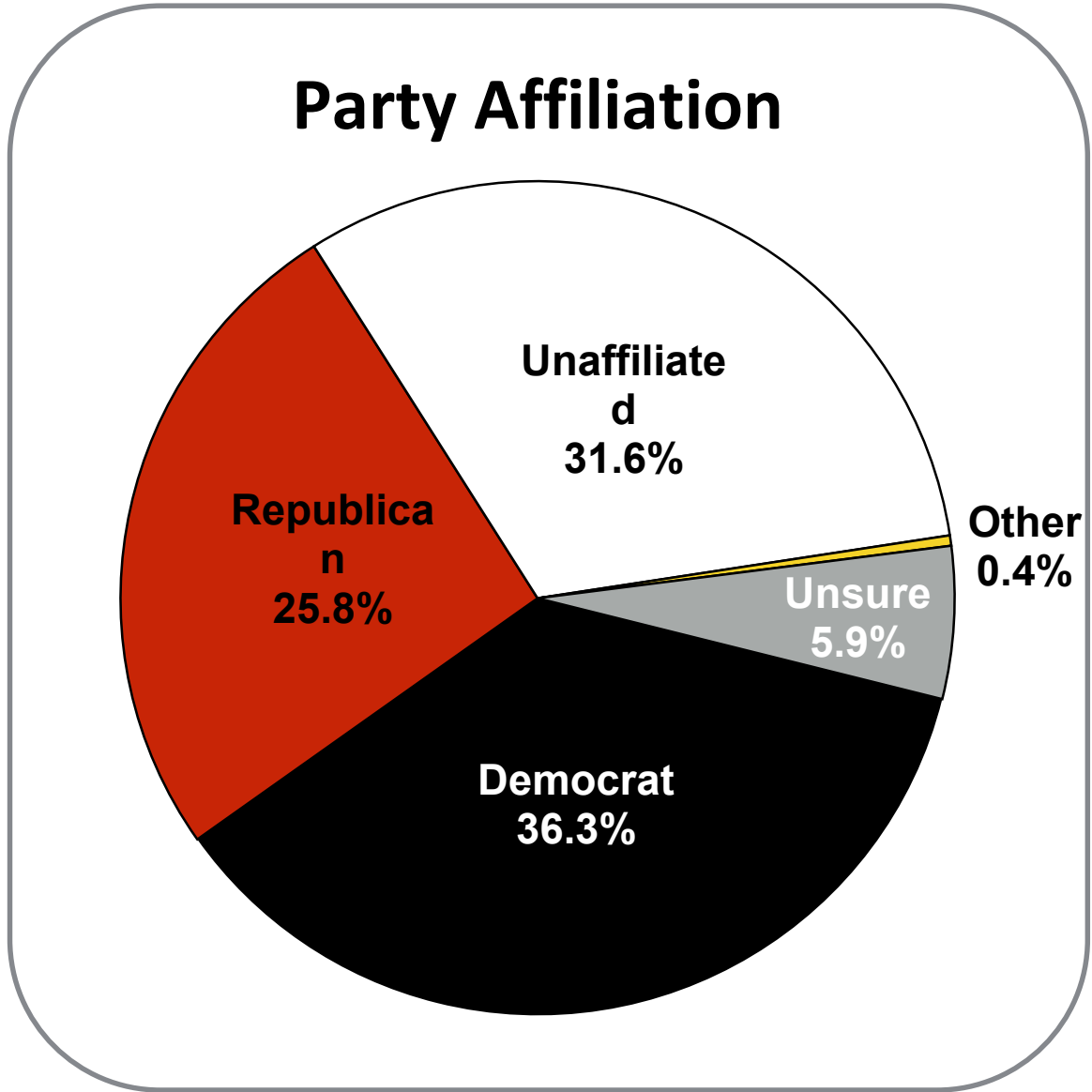
Q Please state your agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding the Clean State legislation.



Election 2020

In March 2020, when registered Democratic respondents were given the names of the candidates of the Democratic Party, the highest rate of respondents reported they would vote for Joe Biden (42.1%), compared to 24.5% who reported they would vote for Bernie Sanders. When all respondents were asked who they would vote for if the presidential race in 2020 was between each of those candidates and Donald Trump, 51.9% chose Joe Biden over Donald Trump (35.6%), while a slightly lower frequency of respondents reported they would chose Bernie Sanders (49.6%) over Donald Trump (38.0%).

- ❖ When compared to female respondents, a higher frequency of male respondents reported they would vote for Donald Trump if the race were between him and Joe Biden (44.9% over 27.5%) or if it were between Trump and Bernie Sanders (47.7% over 29.4%).
- ❖ 84.3% of surveyed Democratic residents, 49.4% of unaffiliated voters, and 14.7% of Republicans reported they would vote for Joe Biden if the race were between him and Donald Trump.
- ❖ 80.2% of surveyed Democratic residents, 49.4% of unaffiliated voters, and 11.6% of Republicans reported they would vote for Bernie Sanders if the race were between him and Donald Trump.

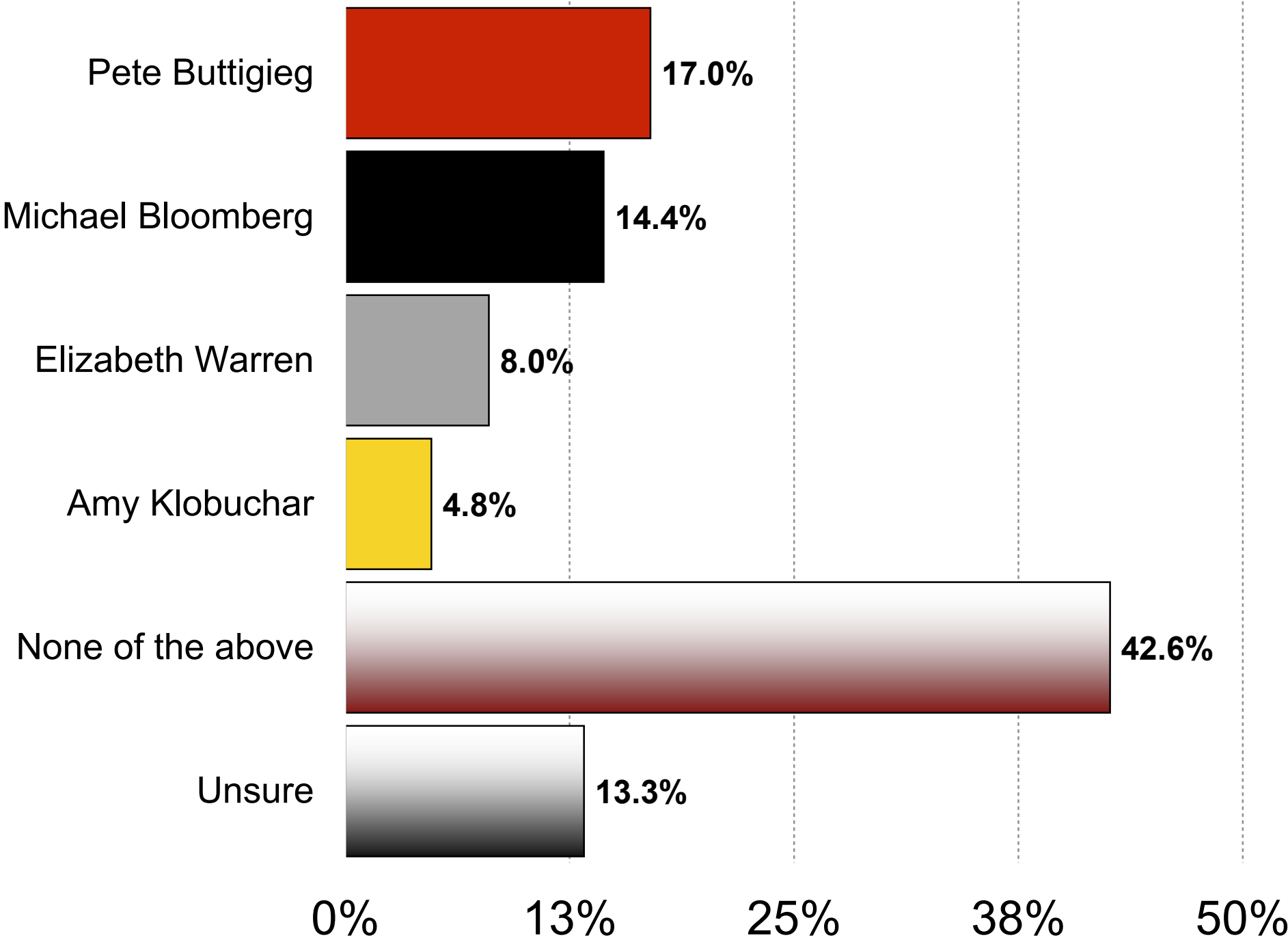


Q Right now the candidates for the Democratic Party are Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders. If the Democratic primary in Connecticut were held tomorrow, who do you plan to vote for?

Horse Race <small>(Asked to registered Democrats only)</small>	March 2020
Joe Biden	42.1%
Bernie Sanders	24.5%
Other	19.5%
Unsure	13.8%

Head-to-head	vs...	Donald Trump
Joe Biden	51.9%	35.6%
Bernie Sanders	49.6%	38.0%

The highest frequency of respondents who previously planned to vote for Pete Buttigieg reported they now plan to vote for Joe Biden (65.6%), while the highest frequency of those who previously planned to vote for Elizabeth Warren reported they now plan to vote for Bernie Sanders (53.3%). Further, of those who reported they previously planned to vote for Michael Bloomberg, 48.1% reported they now plan to vote for Joe Biden, while 37.0% reported they now plan to vote for Bernie Sanders. The strong majority of those who reported they previously planned to vote for Amy Klobuchar reported they now plan to vote for Joe Biden (77.8% or 7 respondents).



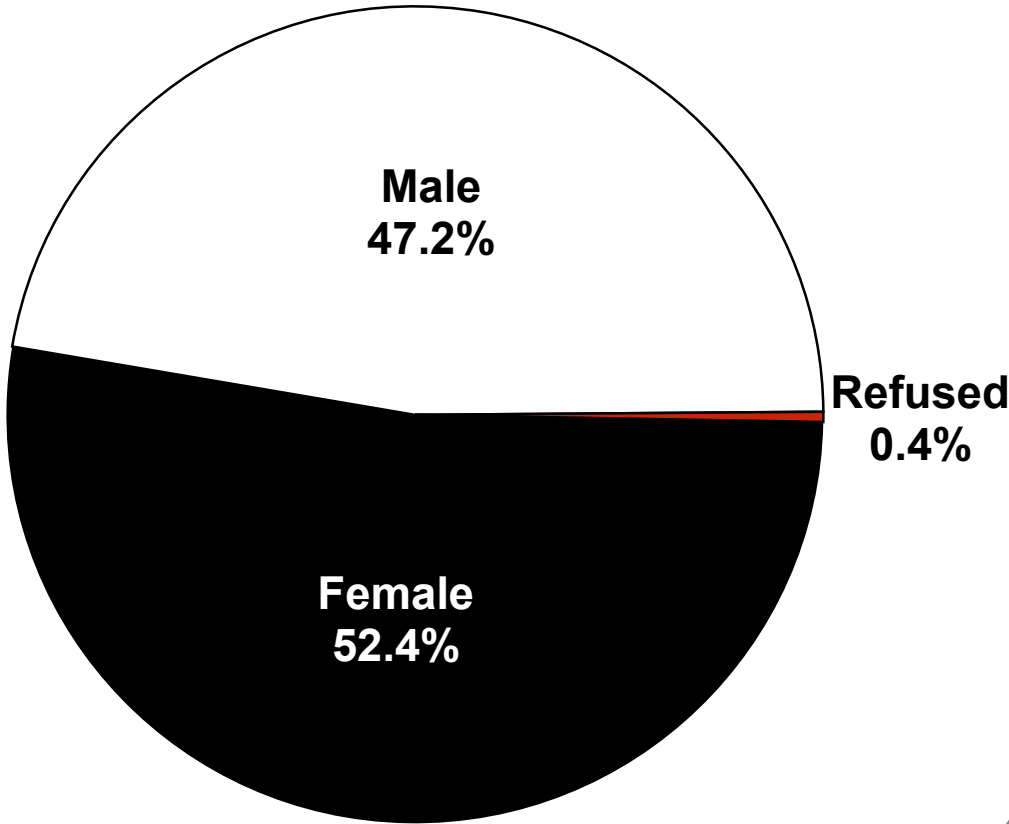
Q Pete Buttigieg, Amy Klobuchar, Michael Bloomberg, and Elizabeth Warren have all recently ended their presidential campaigns. Were you previously planning to vote for any of these candidates?

Horse Race (Asked to registered Democrats only)				
	Previously planned to vote for Pete Buttigieg (N=32)	Previously planned to vote for Michael Bloomberg (N=27)	Previously planned to vote for Elizabeth Warren (N=15)	Previously planned to vote for Amy Klobuchar (N=9)
Joe Biden	65.6%	48.1%	20.0%	77.8%
Bernie Sanders	25.0%	37.0%	53.3%	0.0%
Other	0.0%	7.4%	0.0%	22.2%
Unsure	3.1%	7.4%	0.0%	0.0%

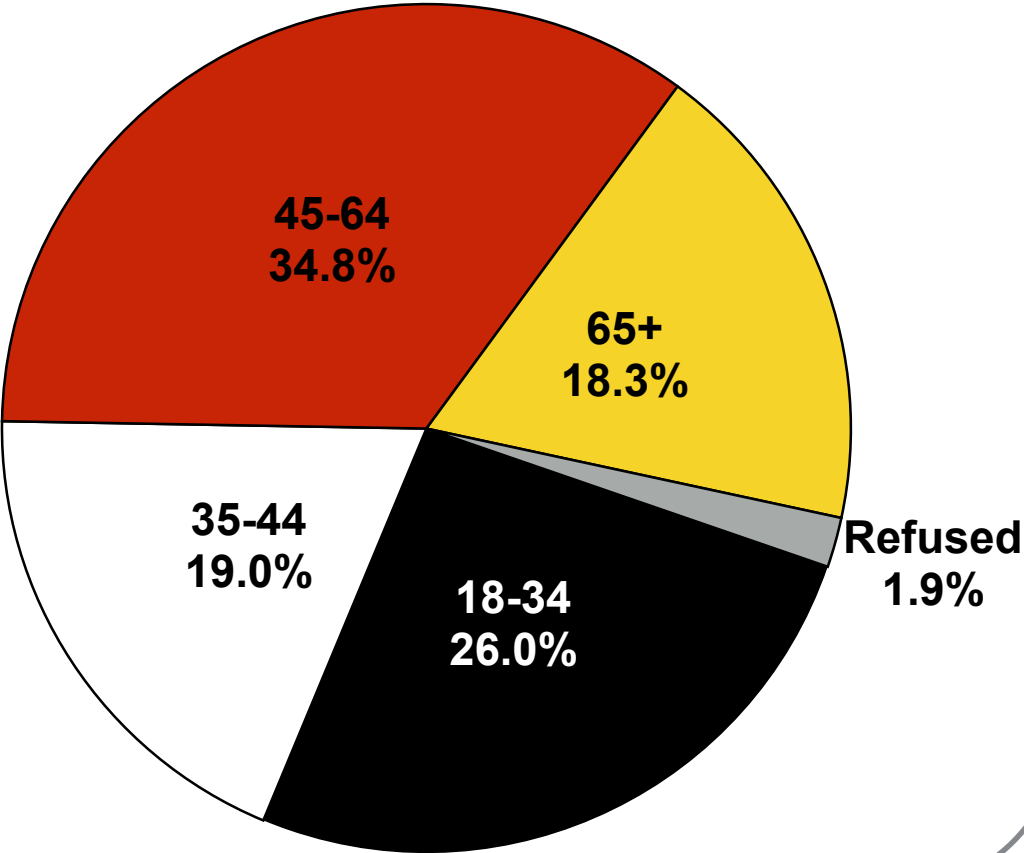
Q Right now, the front runners for the Democratic Party are believed by many to be Joe Biden, Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, and Pete Buttigieg. If the Democratic primary in Connecticut were held tomorrow, who do you plan to vote for?

Demographic Profile - March 2020

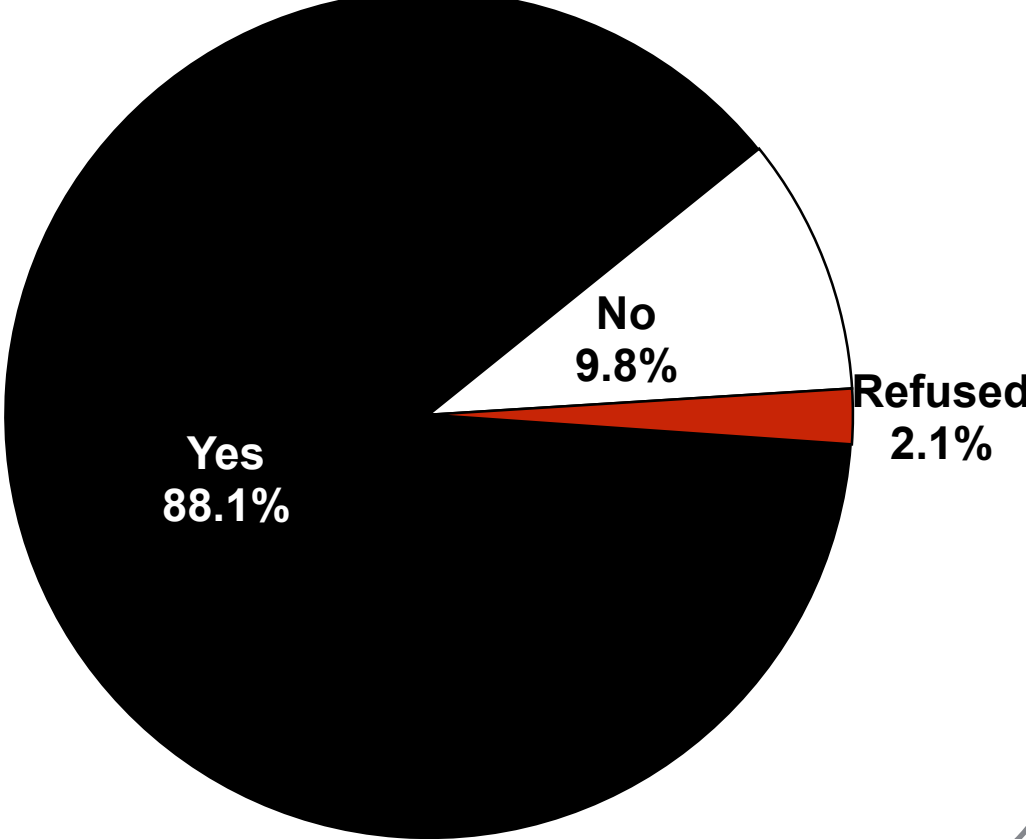
Gender



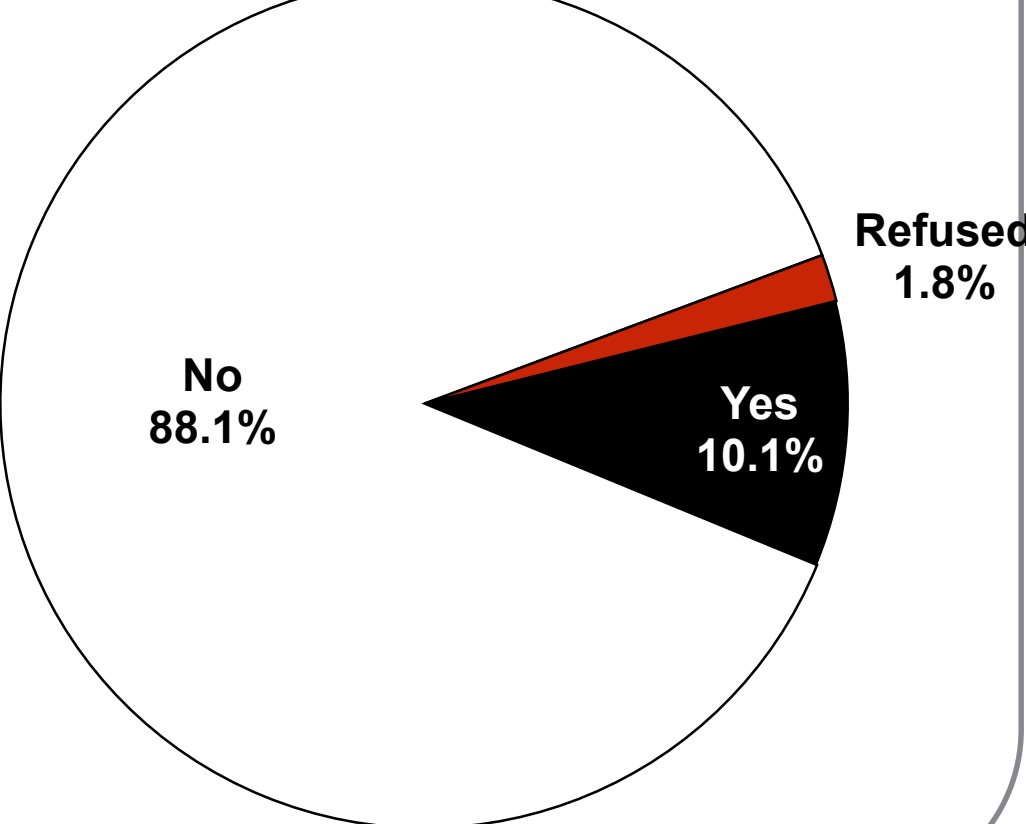
Age



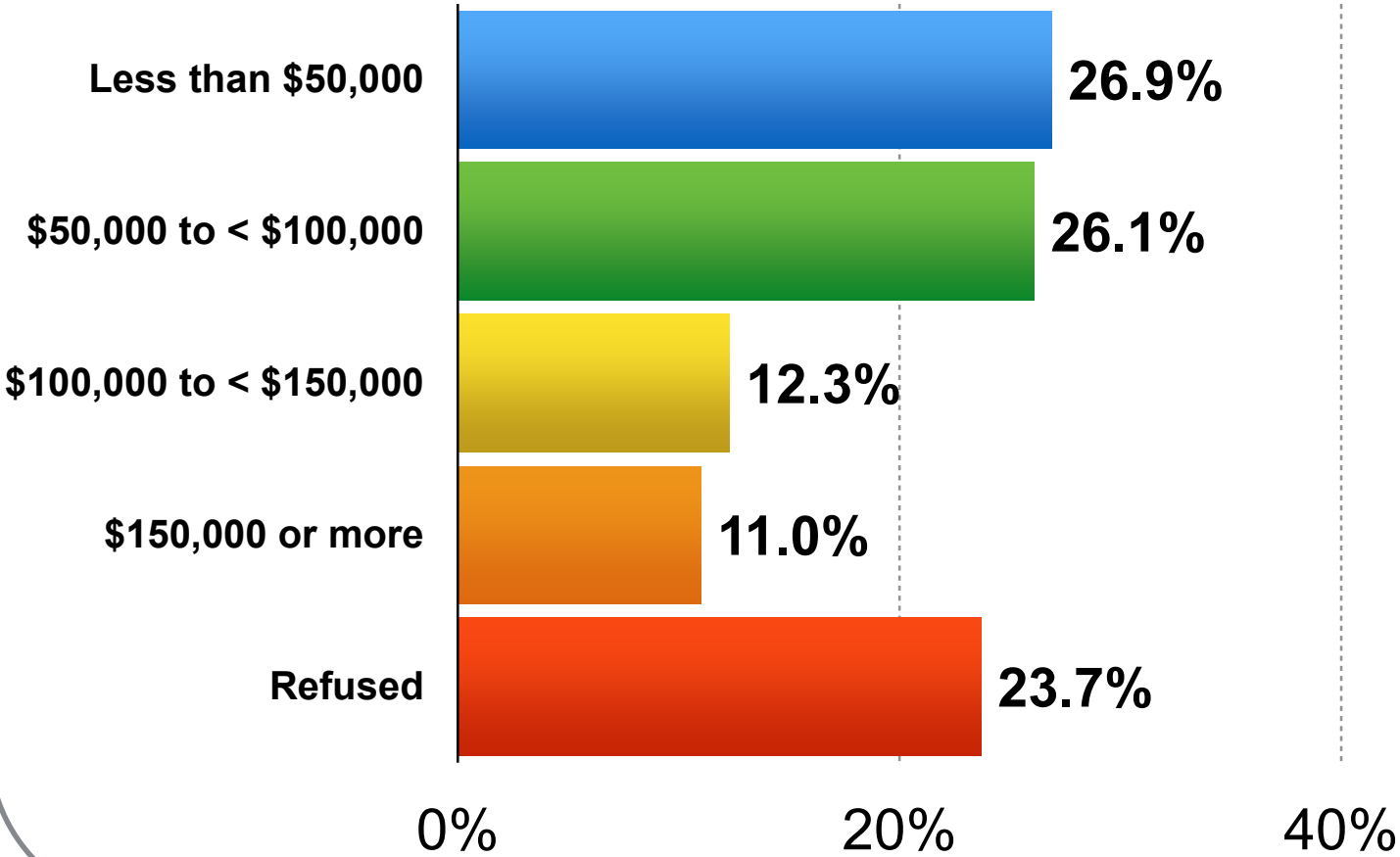
Registered to vote?



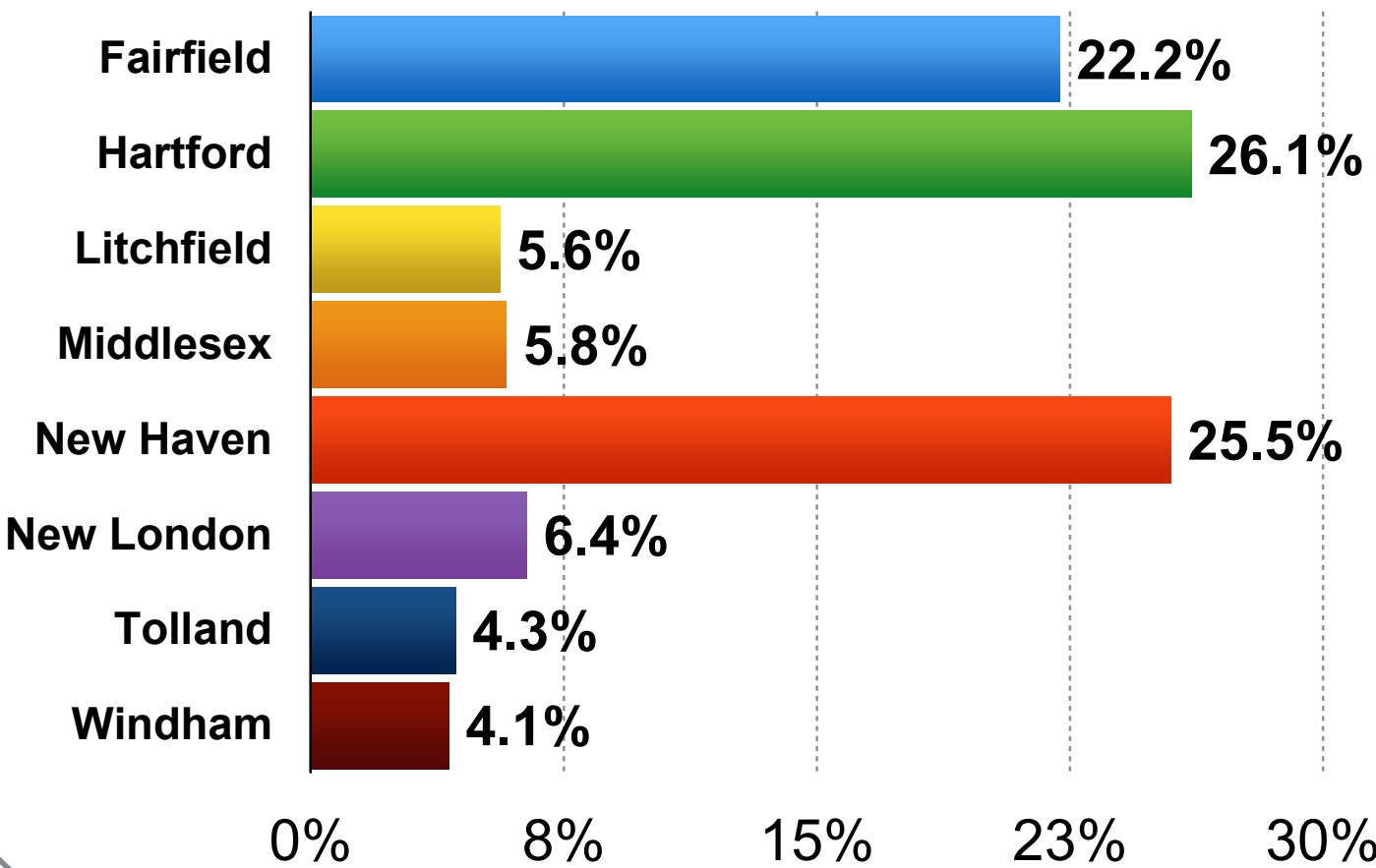
Hispanic/Latin Origin?



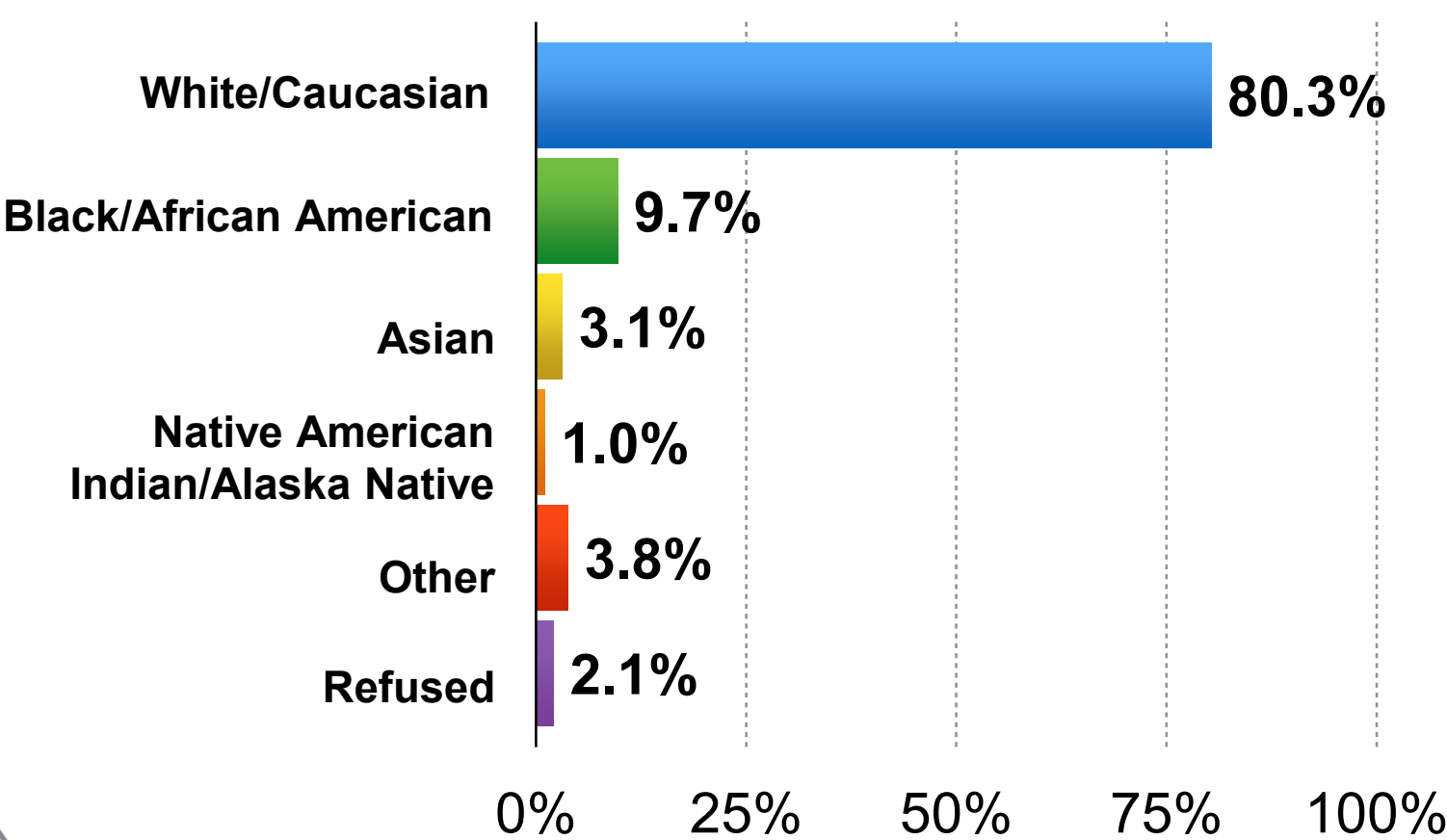
Income



County of Residence



Ethnicity





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