



Sacred Heart
UNIVERSITY

Institute for Public Policy
Statewide Poll - Q4 2019



Report of Findings

January 9, 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 implementation of a truck-only tolling system
- Perceptions of utility prices in Connecticut
- Opinions regarding an Economic Development Charge
- Perceptions of the strength of Connecticut's economy
- Awareness of and opinions with impeachment hearings
- Ranking of 2020 Presidential election candidates
- Demographic profiles of respondents

Research Methodology Snapshot

Methodology Dual mode (phone and digital survey)**	No. of Completes 1,000	No. of Questions 39*	Sample Connecticut residents
Target Connecticut residents	Margin of Error +/- 3.02%	Confidence Level 95%	Research Dates Dec. 16, 2019 - Jan. 2, 2020

* 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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71.5%

would still purchase
at an increased
price point

8.9%

5.4%

2.8%

0.0%

Negative Impact

Boomers

No Impact

Positive Impact

SHU Institute for Public Policy - December 2019 Headlines

- ❖ In December 2019, 60.6% of Connecticut surveyed residents reported their quality of life in the State to be either “excellent” (17.3%) or “good” (43.3%). However, more than half of residents surveyed, 54.2%, reported it is “very” (17.3%) or “somewhat” (36.9%) difficult to maintain their standard of living.
 - Top reported reasons for this difficulty included “tax increase - state” (56.1%), “increase/high taxes (overall)” (42.8%), and “price increase - general goods” (40.8%).

- ❖ Over two-fifths of Connecticut residents surveyed, 41.3%, reported they “disapprove” of the way Ned Lamont is handling his job as governor.
 - 69.2% disapproval among Republicans (13.6% unsure)
 - 43.8% disapproval among unaffiliated residents (35.8% unsure)
 - 21.3% disapproval among Democrats (33.9% unsure)

- ❖ The highest percentage of respondents reported they “approve” of the way Ned Lamont handles “public primary education” (30.1%), while the lowest number reported they “approve” of the way he is handling “taxes” (18.9%).
 - 29.3% reported they “approve” of the way Lamont is handling “healthcare.”
 - 25.0% reported they “approve” of the way Lamont is handling “tolls.”
 - 23.4% reported they “approve” of the way Lamont is “managing the state budget deficit.”

SHU Institute for Public Policy - December 2019 Headlines

- ❖ 64.7% of respondents reported to be “aware” of Governor Lamont’s new transportation proposal that involves tolling only on 12 of the 14 bridges across the state, and another 47.5% reported they would “support” a plan for a truck-only tolling system.
 - 62.1% of Democratic surveyed residents reported they would “support” a plan for a truck-only tolling system compared to only 38.8% of Republican residents surveyed.
- ❖ 56.6% of respondents reported they “oppose” an economic development charge added to their utility bill to attract new companies to move their business to Connecticut.
 - 67.2% of respondents reported that in their opinion, Connecticut should focus attention on both attracting and retaining businesses.
 - 39.1% of respondents ages 18-34 “support” an economic development charge added to their utility bill.
- ❖ More than one-half of respondents (53.7%) reported to believe Connecticut’s economy is “worse than surrounding states.”
- ❖ 32.7% of respondents reported to believe “business growth” in Connecticut has “worsened” over the past year.
- ❖ While 67.5% of respondents did not think the US Senate will vote in favor of impeachment and remove President Trump from office, 49.8% think there is enough evidence to support impeachment and remove President Trump from office.

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Negative Impact

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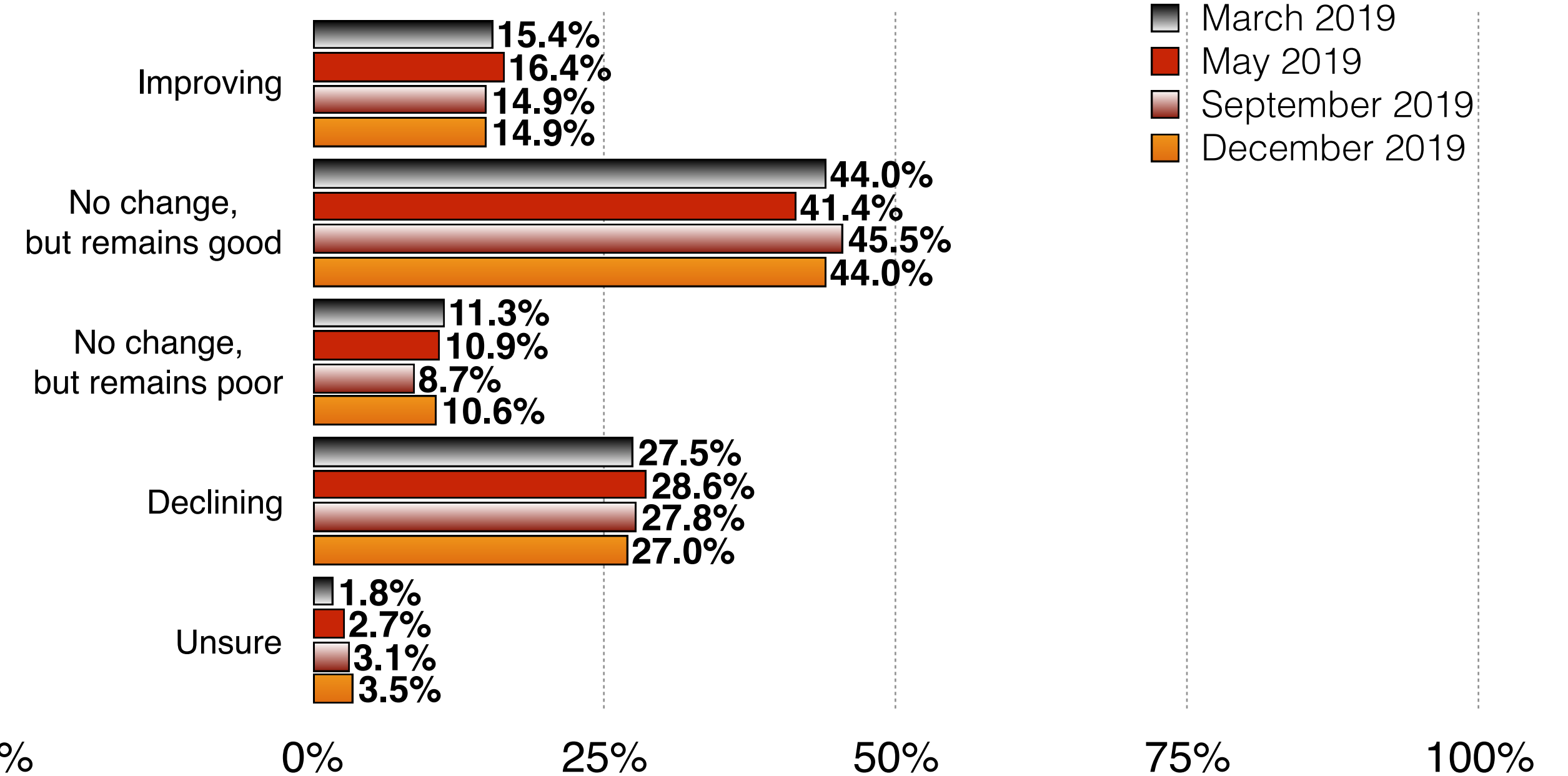
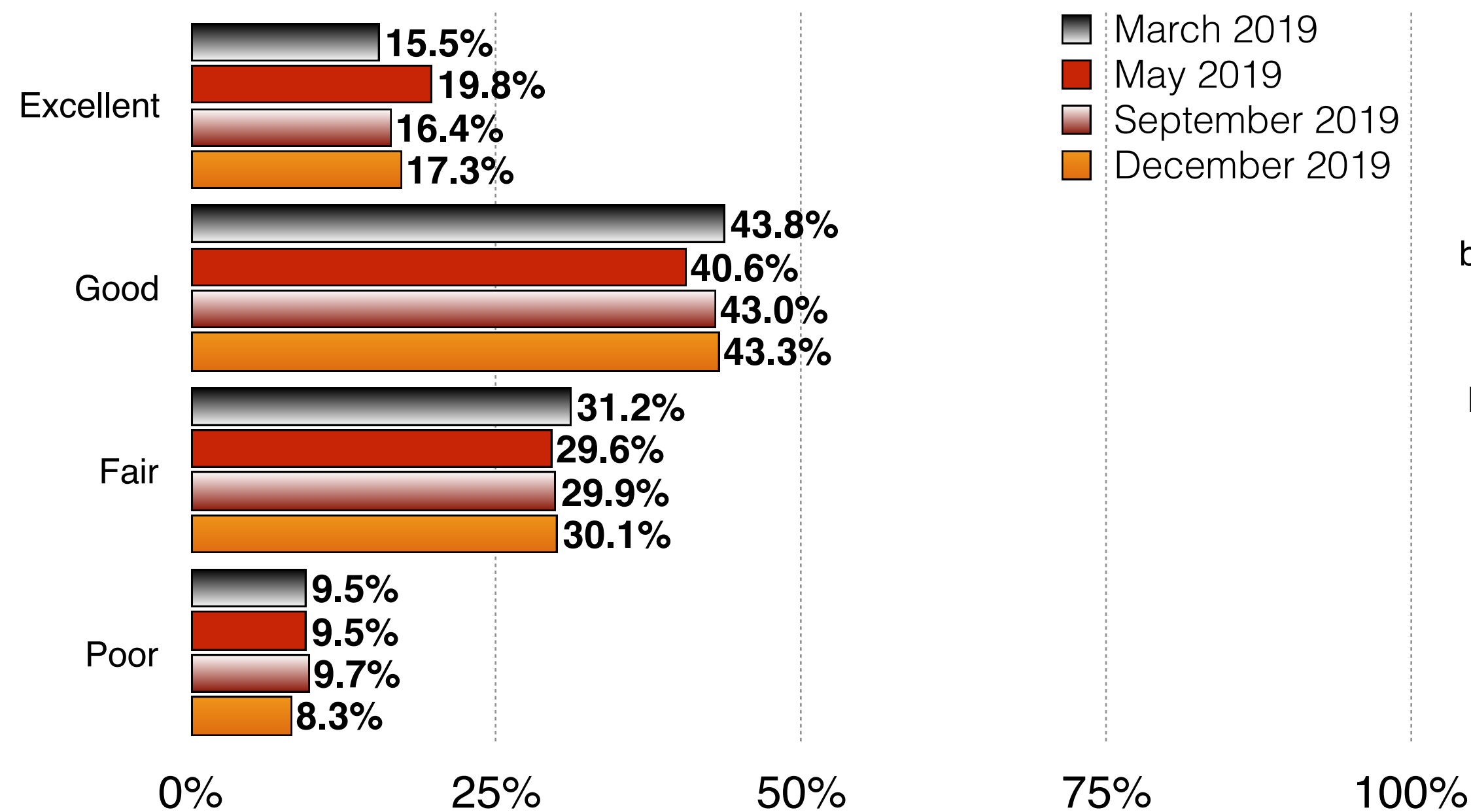
No Impact

Positive Impact

Quality of Life in Connecticut

The majority of Connecticut residents surveyed in December 2019, 60.6%, reported their quality of life in the State as being either “excellent” (17.3%) or “good” (43.3%), which remains consistent with the 59.4% who reported the same in September of 2019. Additionally, a higher rate of December 2019 respondents expressed belief that the quality of life in Connecticut is “declining” (27.0%), compared to the rate of those who expressed belief that the quality of life is “improving” (14.9%).

- ❖ 72.7% of respondents age 65 or older reported their quality of life in Connecticut as being either “excellent” (23.0%) or “good” (49.7%), compared to only 54.0% of respondents ages 18-34.
- ❖ 35.5% of respondents ages 45-64 reported their quality of life in Connecticut as “declining” when compared to only 15.7% of respondents ages 18-34.
- ❖ 18.3% of respondents earning less than \$50,000 annually reported their quality of life is “improving.”



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

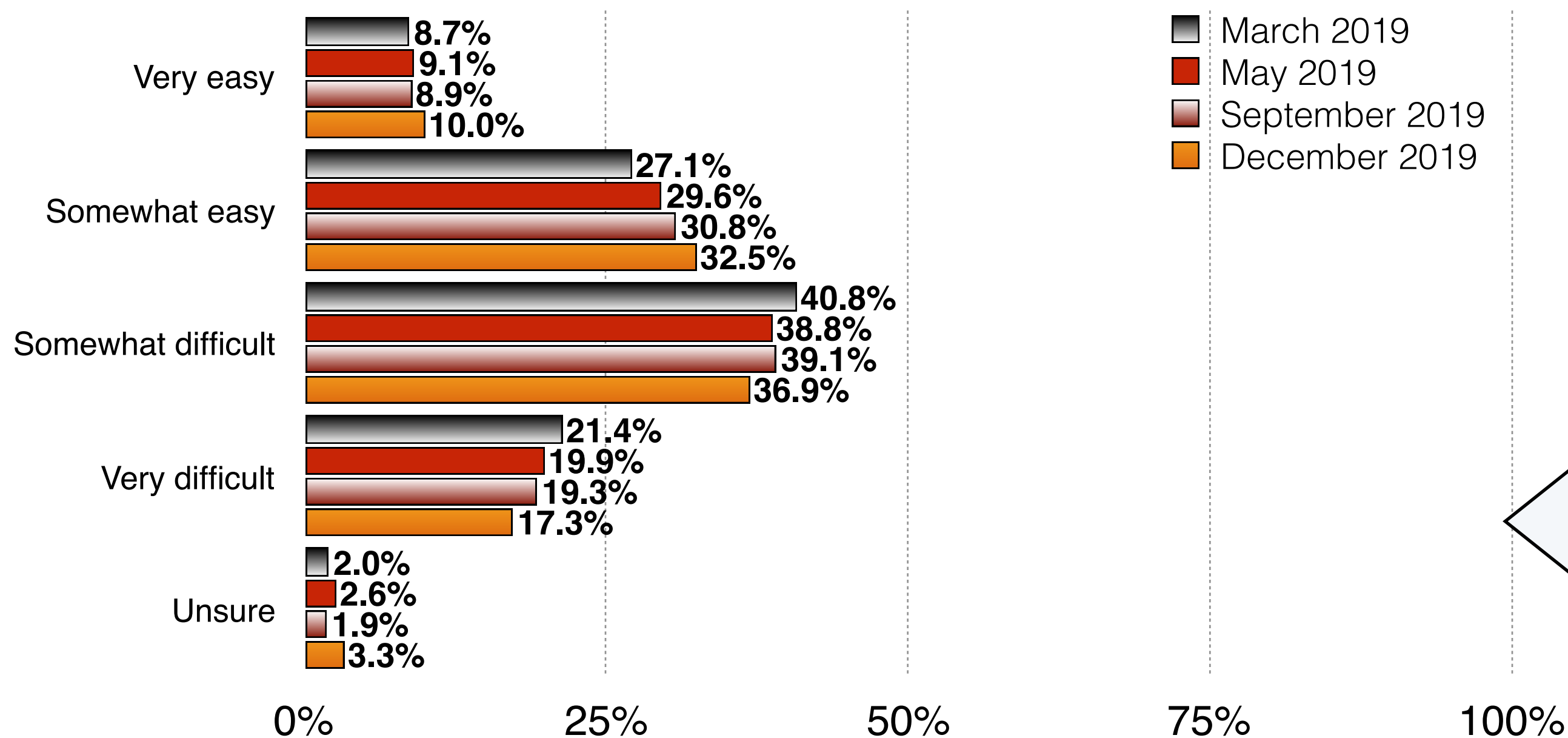
Q Would you say, overall, your quality of life in Connecticut is...



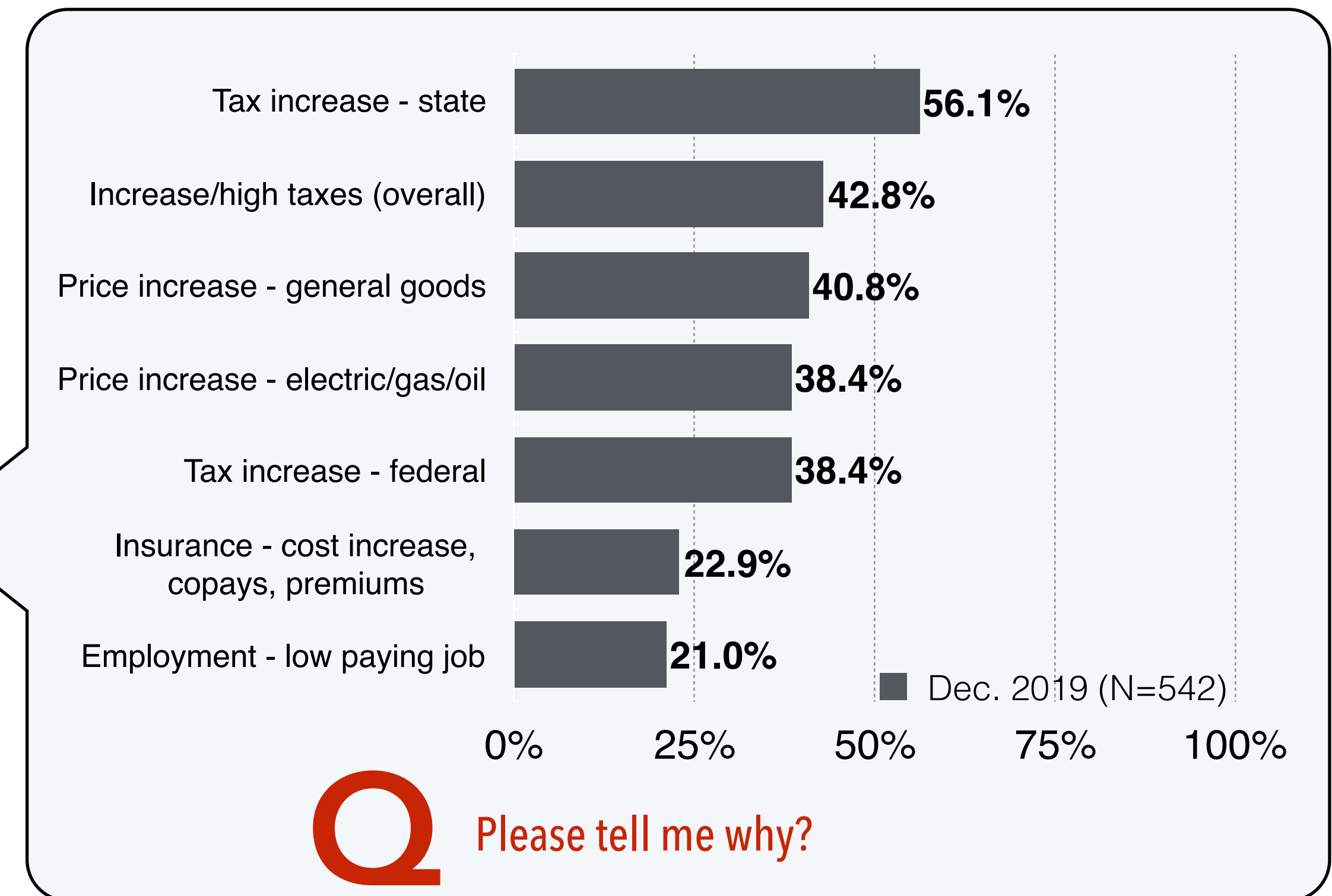
Quality of Life in Connecticut

42.5% of Connecticut residents surveyed in December 2019 reported it being either "very easy" (10.0%) or "somewhat easy" (32.5%) to maintain their standard of living out of their household income today, while 54.2% reported it being "difficult" to maintain their standard of living. Further, top reasons given for difficulty in maintaining their standard of living included: "tax increase - state" (56.1%), "increase/high taxes (overall)" (42.8%), and "price increase - general goods" (40.8%).

- ❖ 60.5% of respondents earning \$150,000 or more per year reported it being "easy" to maintain their standard of living, compared to 47.9% of respondents earning \$100,000 to less than \$150,000 per year, 40.9% of respondents earning \$50,000 to less than \$100,000 per year and 36.0% of respondents earning less than \$50,000 per year.
- ❖ 50.0% of respondents ages 18-34, 58.0% of respondents ages 35-44, 57.9% of respondents ages 45-64 and 50.2% of respondents age 65 or older 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...



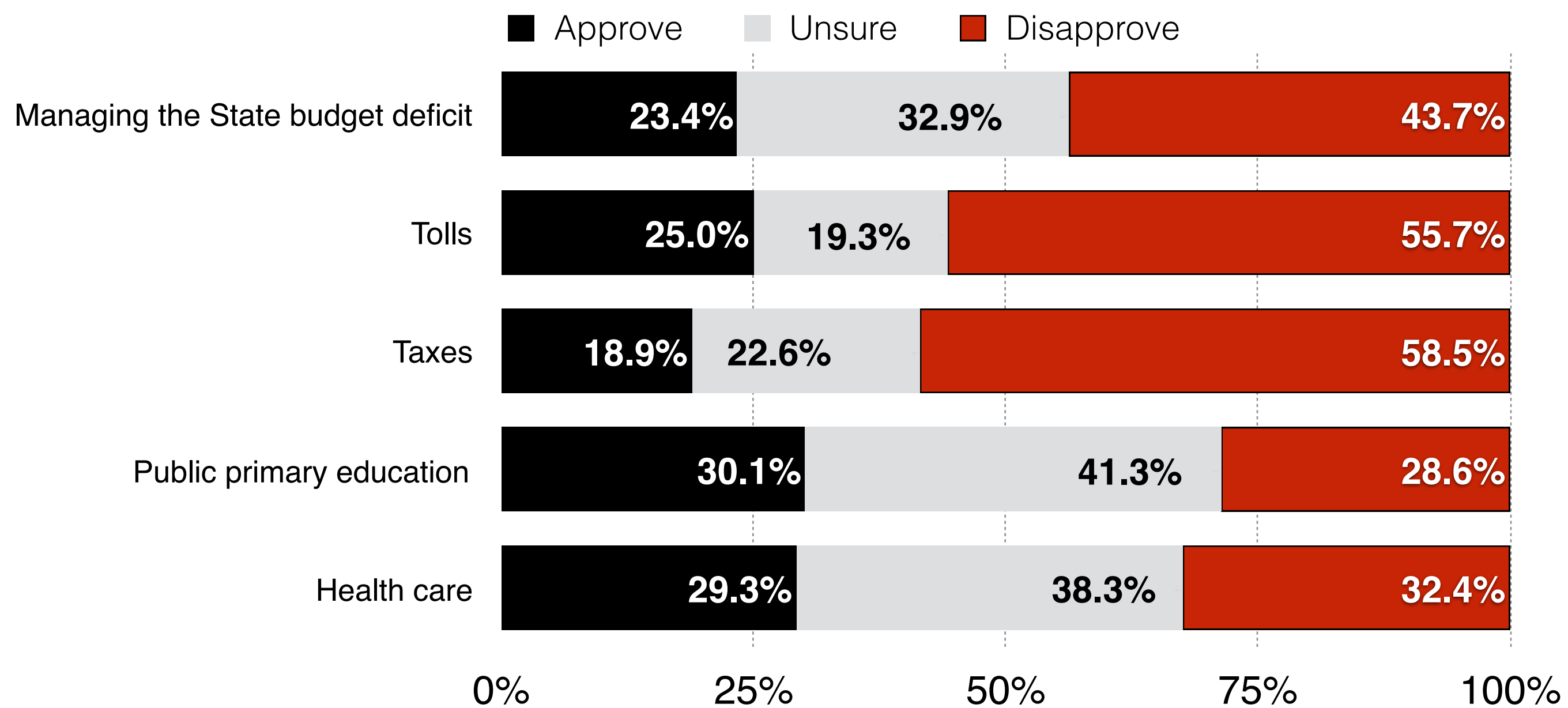
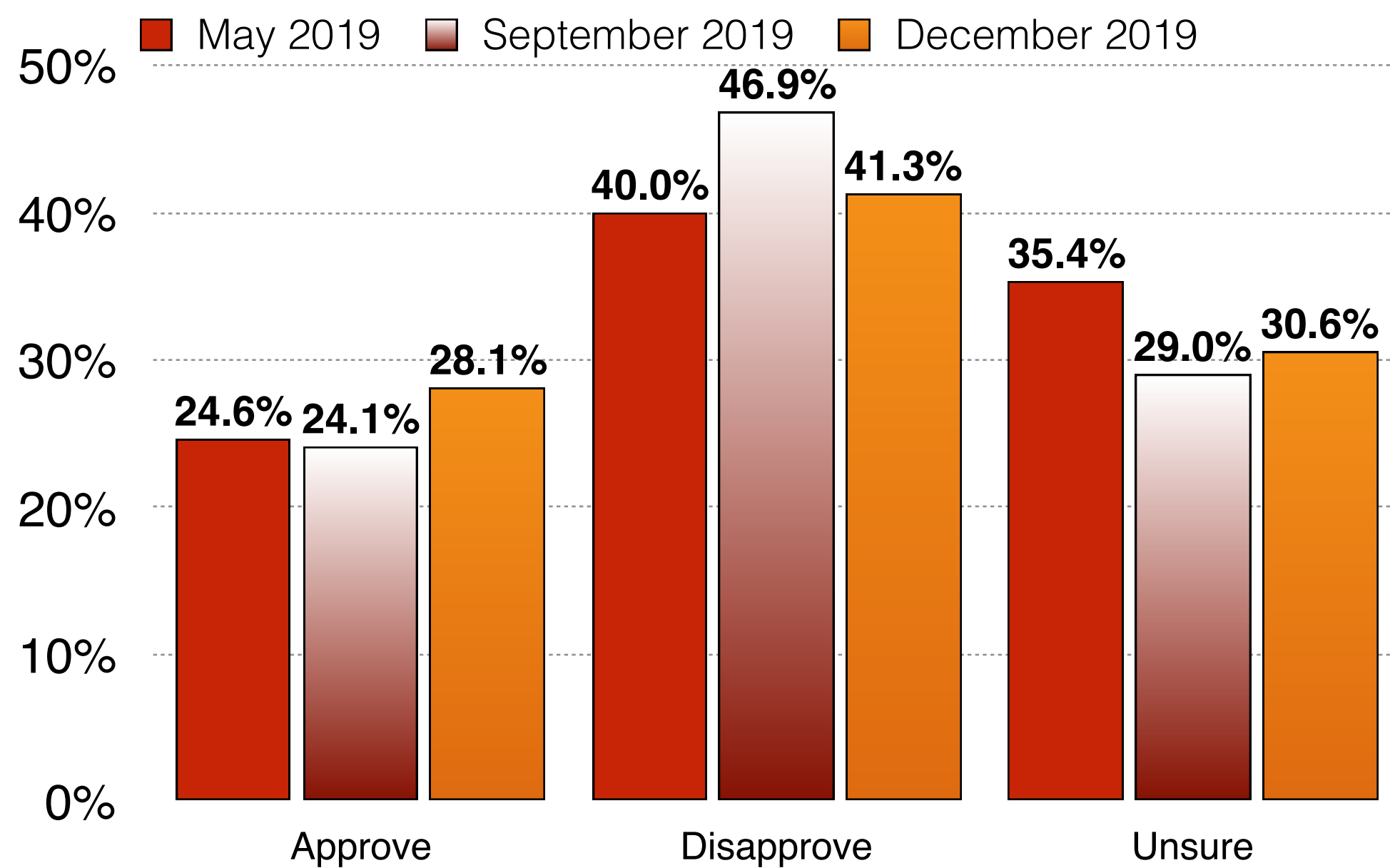
Q Please tell me why?



Governor's Approval Rating

41.3% of Connecticut residents surveyed in December 2019 reported to "disapprove" of how Ned Lamont is handling his job as governor, which is lower than the 46.9% of respondents who reported the same in September 2019. Further, 28.1% of December 2019 respondents reported to "approve" of his job performance since taking office in January, an improvement of 4.0 percentage points over September 2019 results.

- ❖ 50.3% of respondents ages 45-64 reported to "disapprove" of how Ned Lamont is handling his job as governor, compared to only 36.9% of respondents age 65 or older.
- ❖ 74.8% of Republican surveyed residents reported to "disapprove" of the how Ned Lamont is handling "tolls," compared to only 36.2% of Democratic residents surveyed.
- ❖ 79.6% of Republican surveyed residents reported to "disapprove" of how Ned Lamont is handling "taxes."



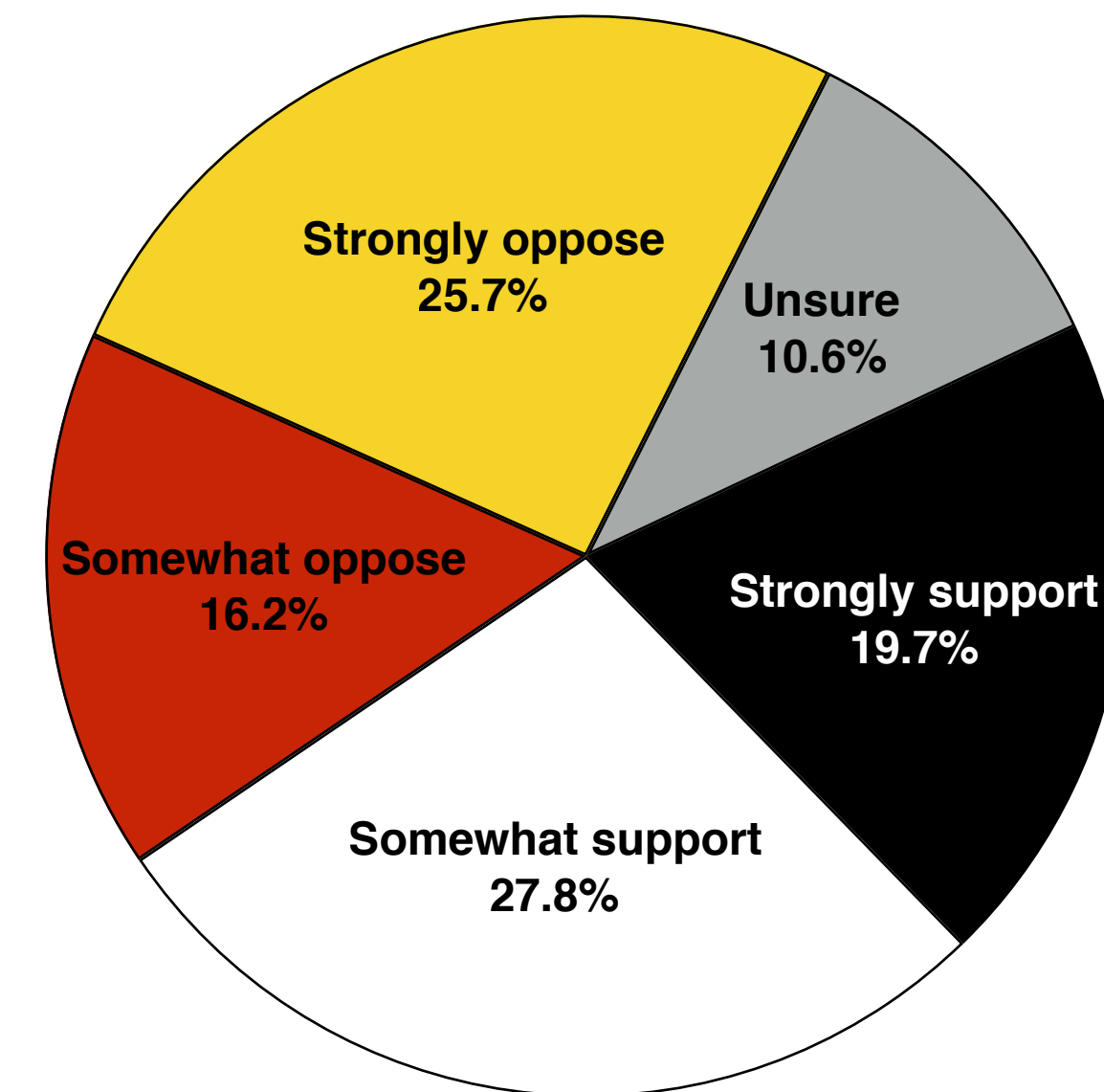
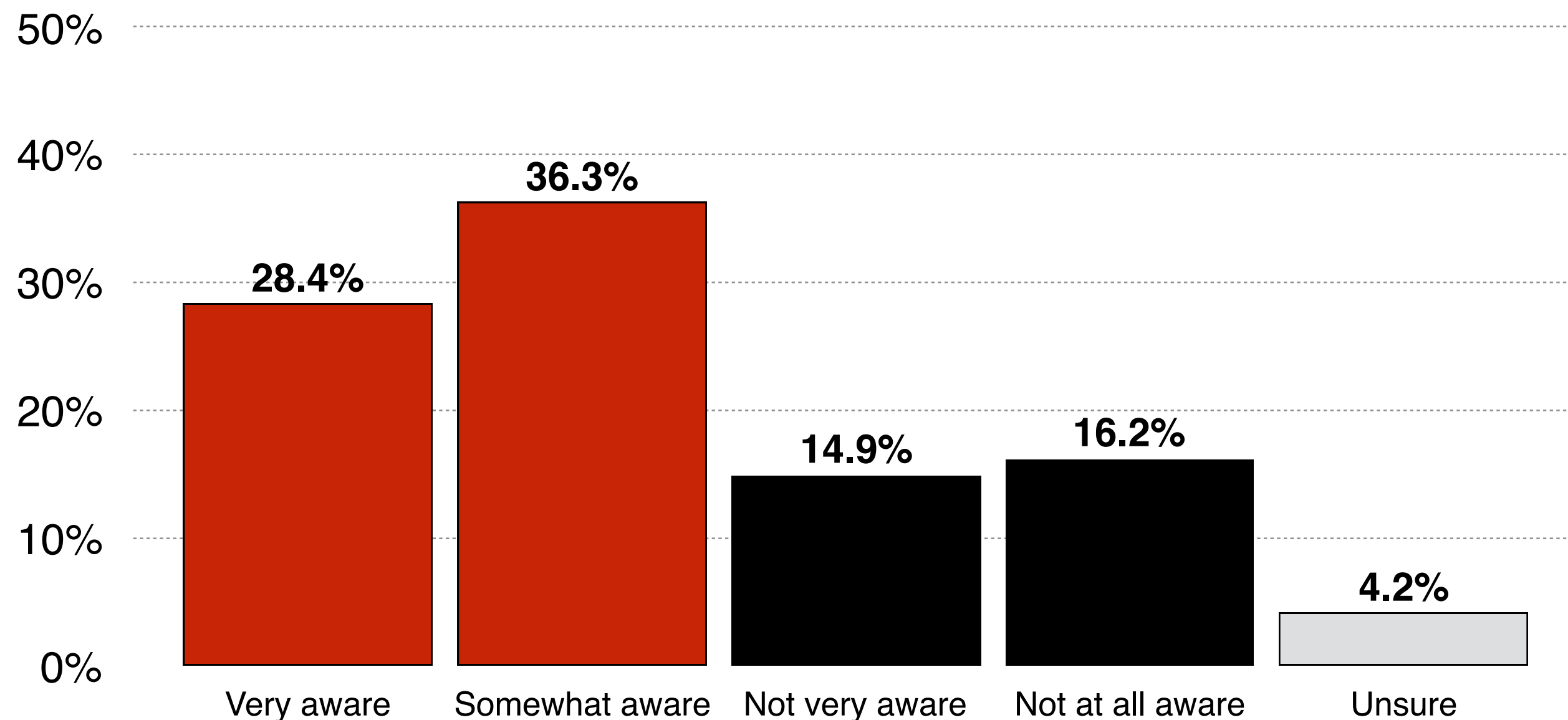
Q Since he took office in January, overall do you approve or disapprove of the way Ned Lamont is handling his job as governor?

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

Lamont's New Transportation Proposal

64.7% of Connecticut residents surveyed in December 2019 reported being "very" (28.4%) or "somewhat" (36.3%) aware of Governor Lamont's new transportation proposal that involves tolling only on 12 of the 14 bridges across the state. Further, 47.5% reported they would "strongly" (19.7%) or "somewhat" (27.8%) support a plan for a truck-only tolling system.

- ❖ 71.6% of respondents ages 45-64 reported being "very" (34.6%) or "somewhat" (37.0%) aware of Governor Lamont's new transportation proposal, and another 51.6% "strongly" (34.0%) or "somewhat" (17.2%) opposed a plan for a truck-only tolling system.
- ❖ 62.1% of Democratic residents surveyed "strongly" (30.5%) or "somewhat" (31.6%) support a plan for a truck-only tolling system compared to only 38.8% of Republican residents surveyed.



Q Prior to today's survey, please rate your level of awareness of Governor Lamont's new transportation proposal that involves tolling only on 12 of the 14 bridges across the state?

Q If a truck-only tolling system was put in place, how strongly would you support this plan?

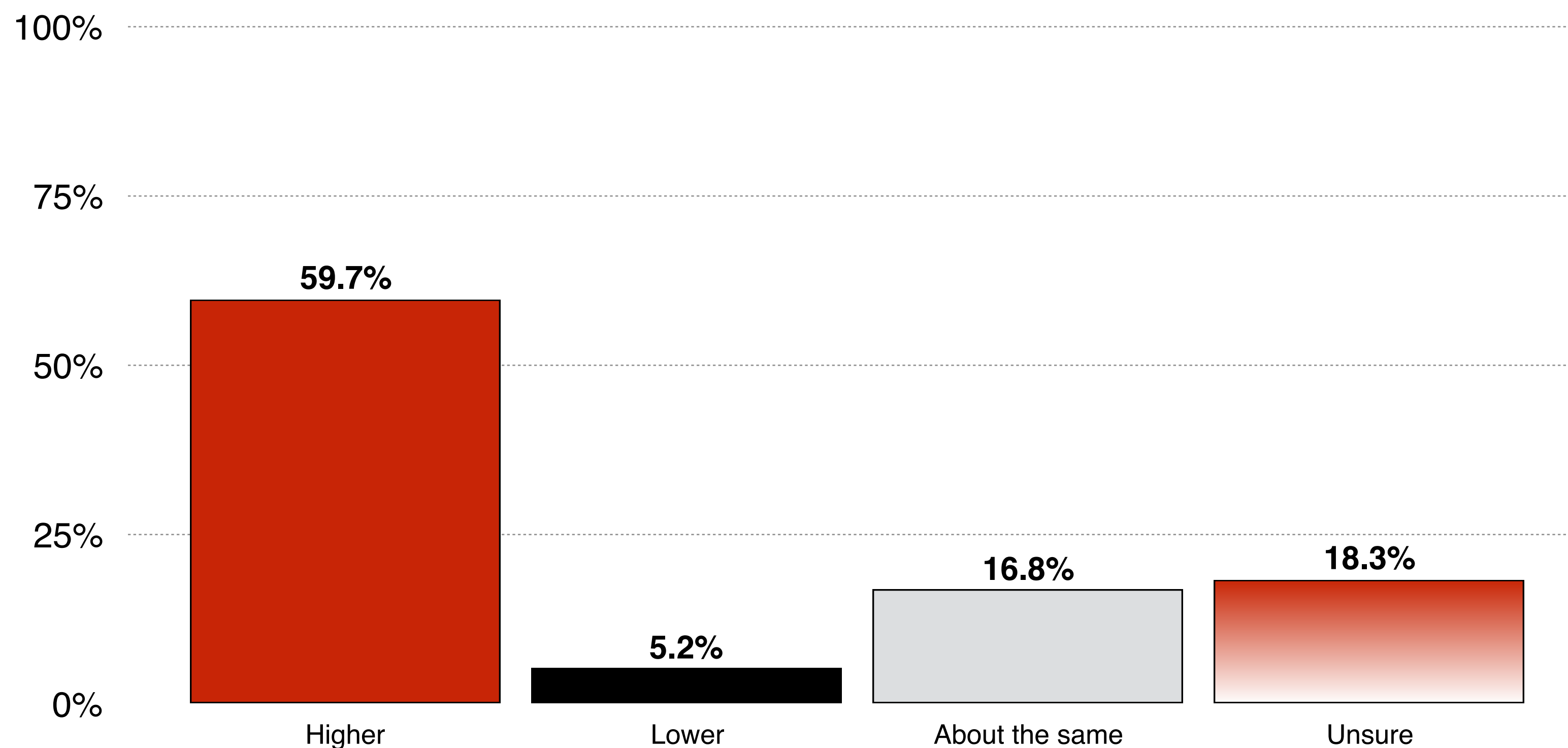


Utility Prices in Connecticut

Over one-half of Connecticut residents surveyed in December 2019 reported they believe the prices they pay for utilities in Connecticut are "higher" (59.7%) than other states. 16.8% reported belief that the prices they pay are "about the same," 18.3% were "unsure," and only 5.2% reported to believe the prices they pay for utilities in Connecticut are "lower" than surrounding states.

- ❖ 70.1% of respondents earning \$100,000 to less than \$150,000 per year reported believing the prices they pay for utilities in Connecticut are "higher than surrounding states," compared to only 57.4% of respondents earning less than \$50,000 annually.

Q Would you say the prices you pay for utilities in Connecticut are higher than surrounding states, lower than surrounding states or about the same?



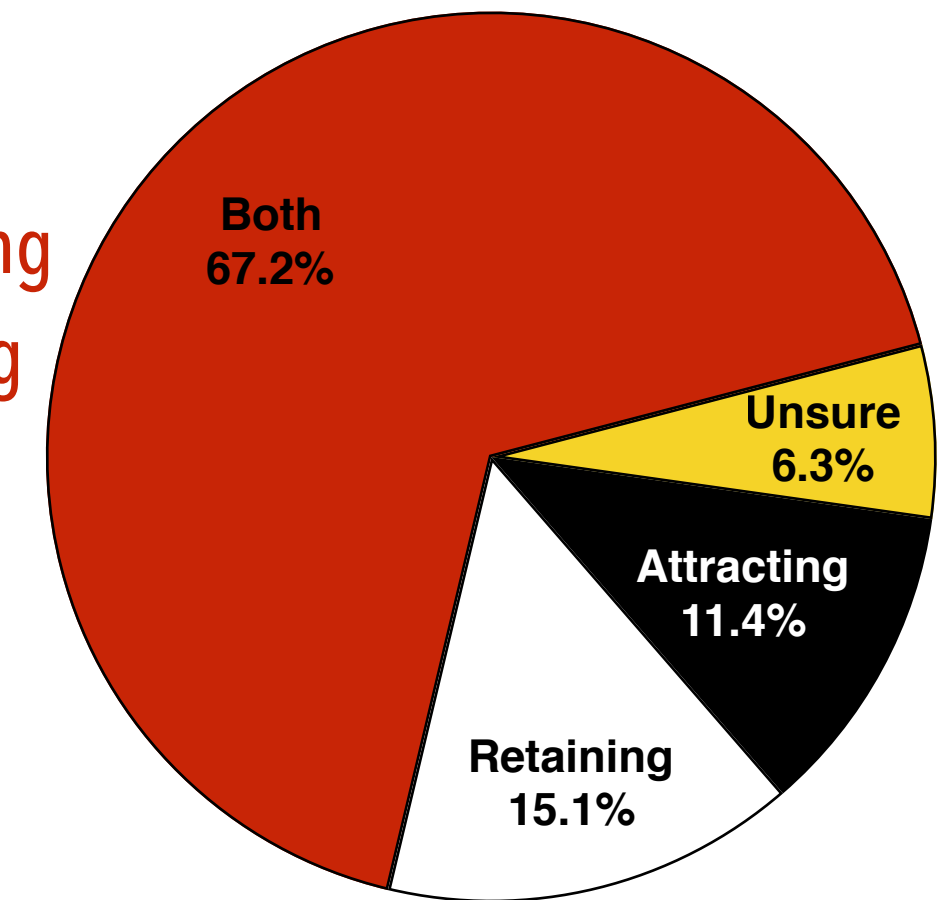


Economic Development Charges

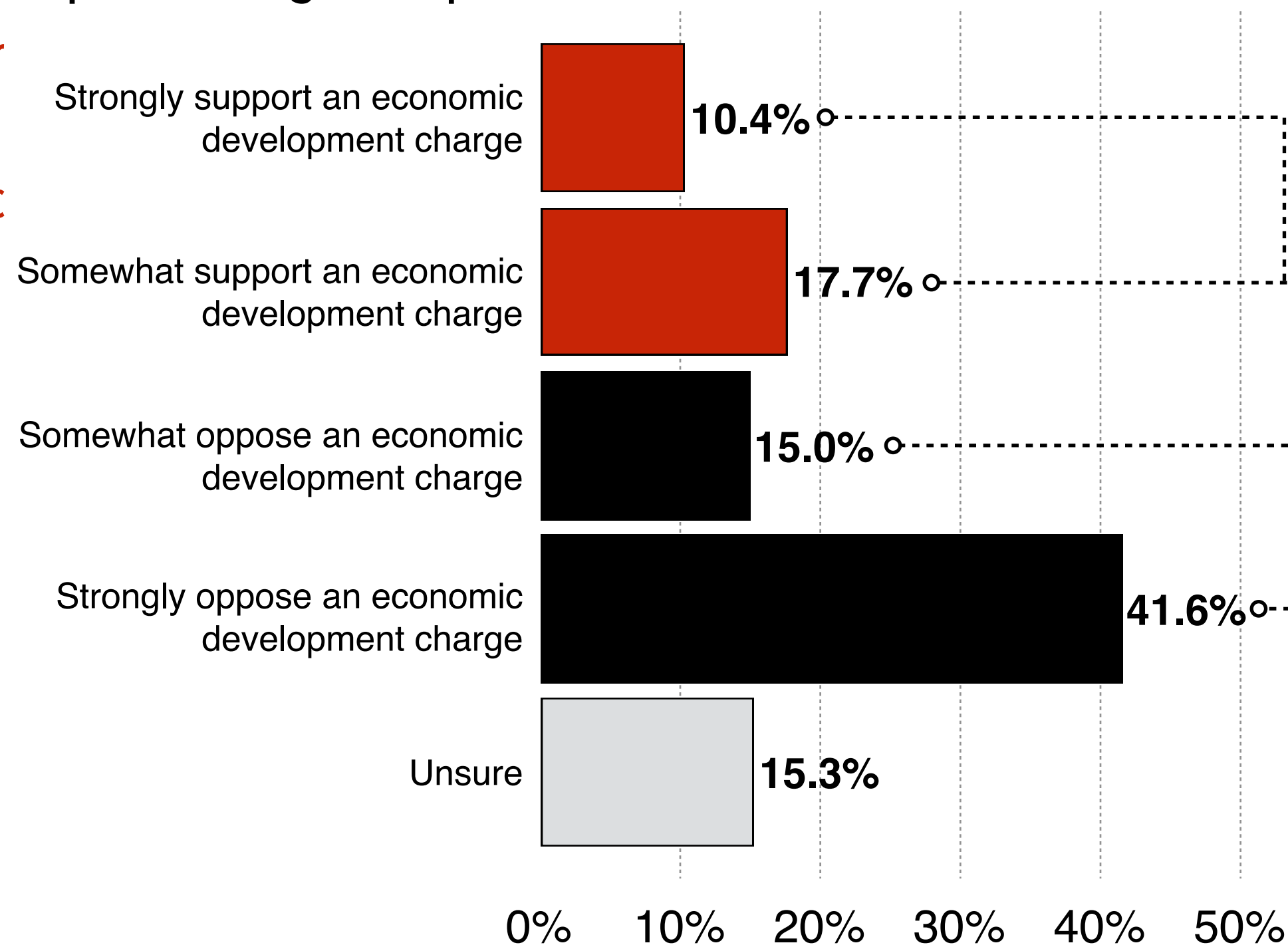
Over one-half, 56.6%, of Connecticut residents surveyed in December 2019 “strongly” (41.6%) or “somewhat” (15.0%) opposed an economic development charge added to their utility bill to attract new companies to move their business to Connecticut. Additionally, slightly more than two-thirds of residents surveyed (67.2%) reported in their opinion, Connecticut should focus the greatest attention on both attracting and retaining businesses.

- ❖ 39.1% of respondents ages 18-34 “strongly” (16.1%) or “somewhat” (23.0%) supported an economic development charge added to their utility bill, compared to 28.9% ages 35-44, 22.3% ages 45-64, and 21.9% age 65 or older.
- ❖ 63.6% of Republican residents surveyed “strongly” (50.4%) or “somewhat” (13.2%) opposed an economic development charge, compared to 49.2% of Democratic residents surveyed.

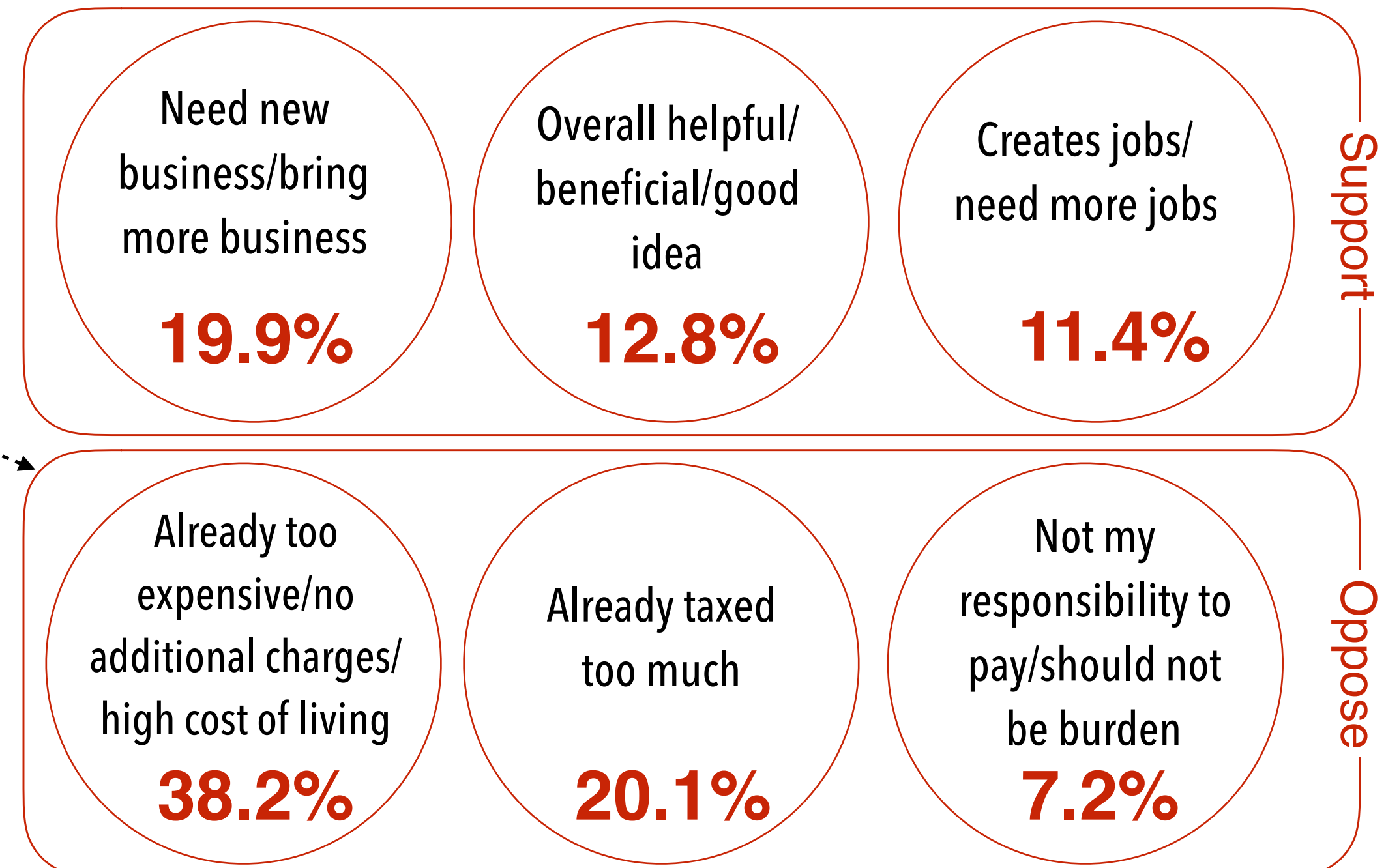
Q In your opinion, should Connecticut focus the greatest attention on attracting businesses, retaining businesses, or both?



Q Please rate your level of support for an economic development charge added to your utility bill to attract new companies to move their business to Connecticut.



Q Please explain why?

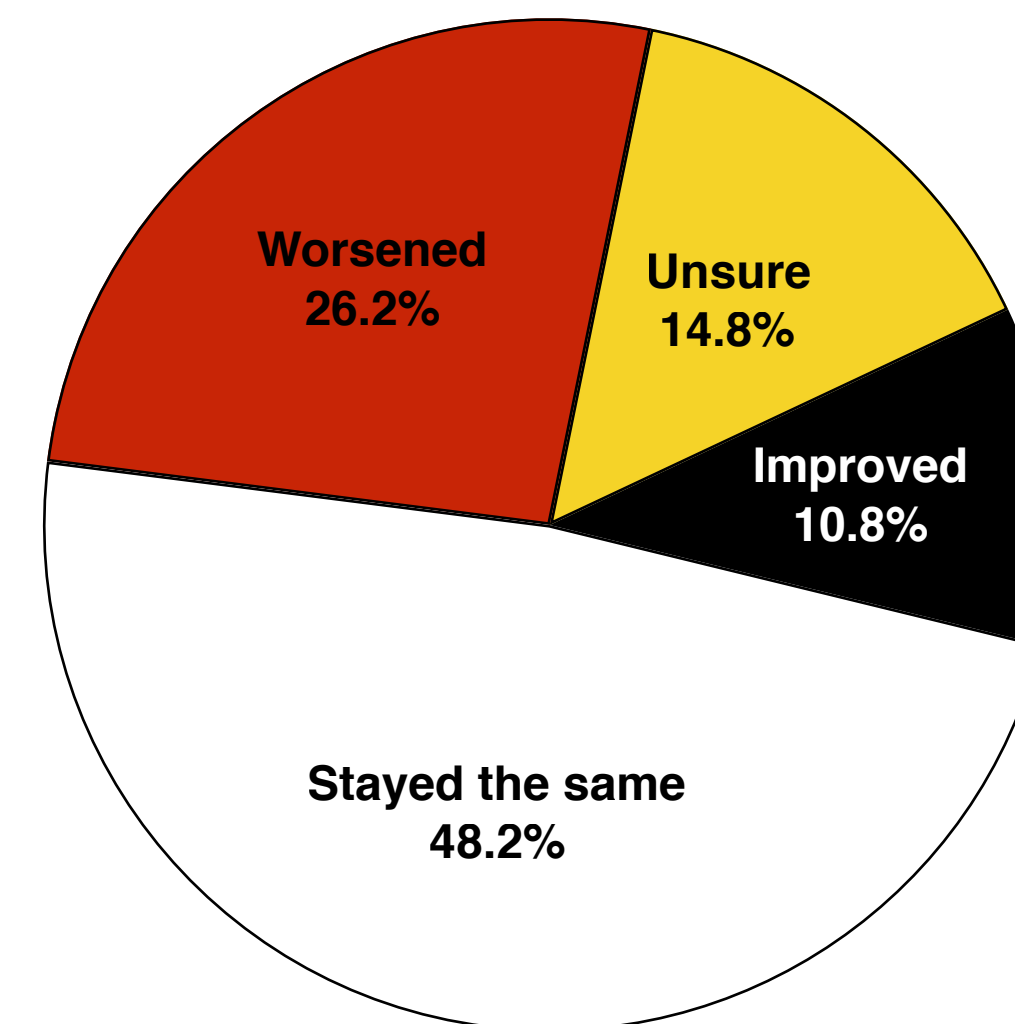
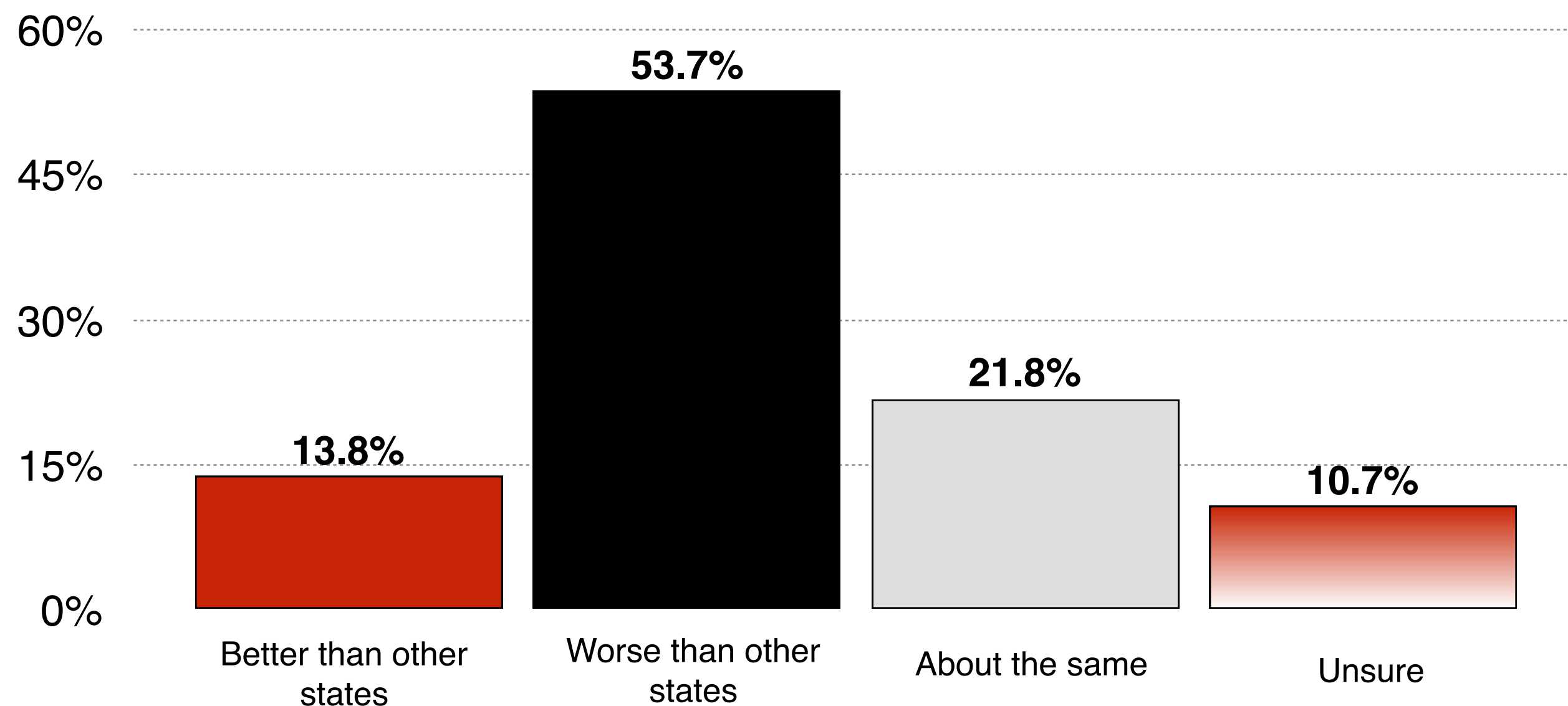




Strength of the Economy

The majority of December 2019 respondents (53.7%) reported they believe Connecticut's economy is "worse than other states," compared to 13.8% who reported they believe Connecticut's economy is "better than surrounding states." Further, 48.2% reported believing Connecticut's economy has "stayed the same" since Governor Lamont took office, and another 26.2% believed the economy has "worsened."

- ❖ 47.4% of respondents earning less than \$50,000 per year, 54.8% earning \$50,000 to less than \$100,000 per year, 59.0% earning \$100,000 to less than \$150,000 per year, and 63.3% of respondents earning \$150,000 or more per year believed Connecticut's economy is "worse than surrounding states."
- ❖ 16.6% of respondents earning less than \$50,000 per year believed Connecticut's overall economy has "improved" since Governor Lamont took office, compared to only 6.0% of respondents earning \$100,000 to less than \$150,000 per year.
- ❖ 44.4% of Republican residents surveyed believed Connecticut's overall economy has "worsened" since Governor Lamont took office, compared to only 11.5% of Democratic residents surveyed.



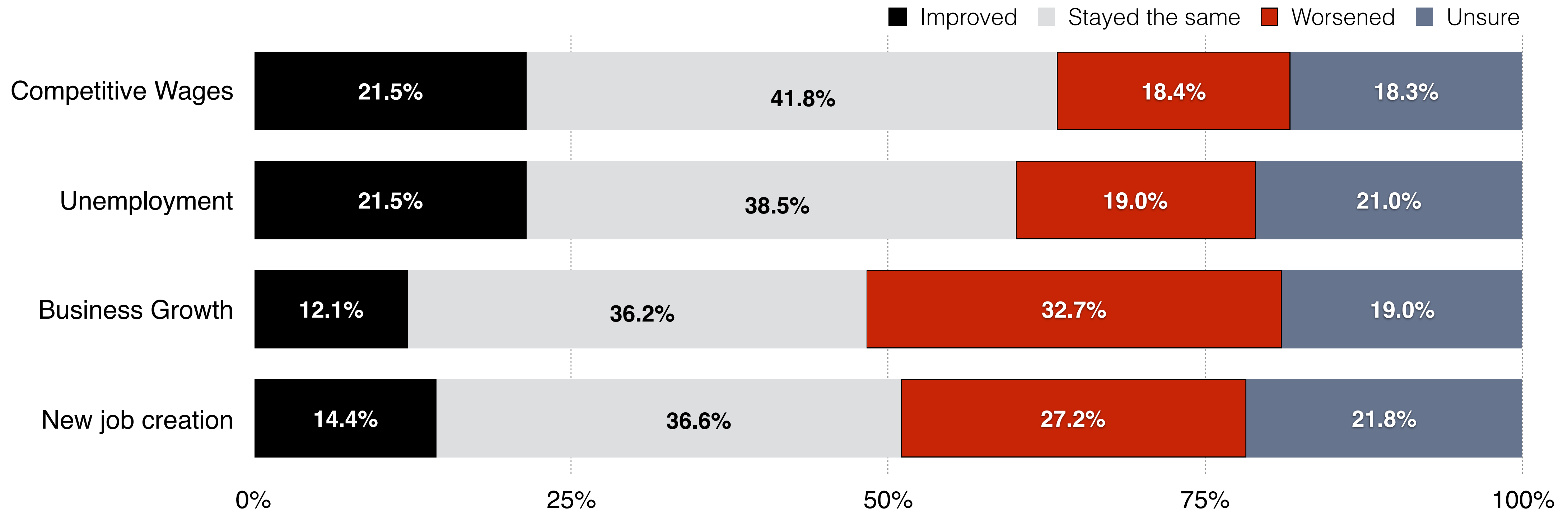
Q Do you believe Connecticut's economy is better or worse than other states?

Q In your opinion, since Governor Lamont took office, do you believe Connecticut's overall economy has improved, stayed the same, or worsened?

Is CT on the Right Track?

In December 2019, Connecticut residents were presented with four (4) topics related to the State of Connecticut and asked if, in their opinion, it has improved, stayed the same, or worsened over the past year. 21.5% of residents surveyed reported believing "competitive wages" have "improved" over the past year compared to 18.4% who reported believing they have "worsened." Similarly, 21.5% reported believing "unemployment" has "improved" compared to 19.0% who reported believing "unemployment" has "worsened." However, over one-quarter of respondents believed "business growth" (32.7%) and "new job creation" (27.2%) have "worsened" over the past year.

- ❖ 46.0% of Republican residents surveyed believed "business growth" has "worsened," compared to only 22.1% of Democratic residents surveyed.
- ❖ 23.9% of respondents earning less than \$50,000 per year believed "competitive wages" have "improved," compared to only 15.6% of respondents earning \$150,000 or more per year.

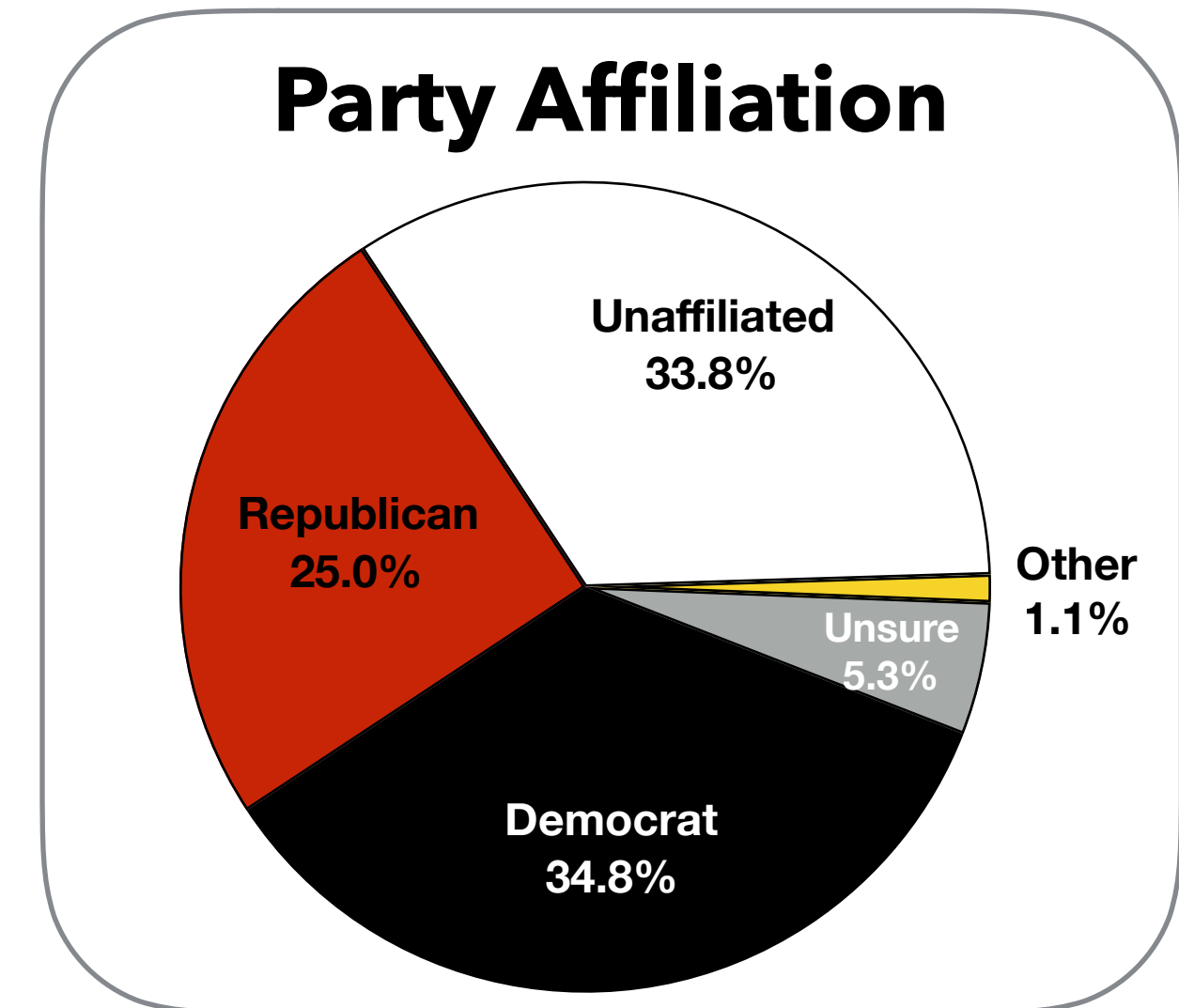




Election 2020

In December 2019, when registered Democratic respondents were given the names of the front runners of the Democratic Party, the highest rate of respondents (33.0%) reported they would vote for Joe Biden, followed by Bernie Sanders (19.3%), Elizabeth Warren (17.8%), and Pete Buttigieg (11.2%). 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, the highest rate of respondents chose Bernie Sanders (52.3%) over Donald Trump (35.2%), followed by Joe Biden (51.7% over 32.3% Donald Trump), Elizabeth Warren (48.8% over 35.7% Donald Trump), and Pete Buttigieg (46.9% over 33.4% Donald Trump).

- ❖ 19.2% of Republican residents surveyed reported if the Presidential race was between Donald Trump and Joe Biden, they would vote for Joe Biden.
- ❖ 41.6% of respondents ages 45-64 reported if the Presidential race was between Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders, they would vote for Donald Trump, when compared to only 29.2% of respondents ages 18-34.



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?

Horse Race <small>(Asked to registered Democrats only)</small>	
Joe Biden	33.0%
Bernie Sanders	19.3%
Elizabeth Warren	17.8%
Pete Buttigieg	11.2%
Other	3.4%
Unsure	15.2%

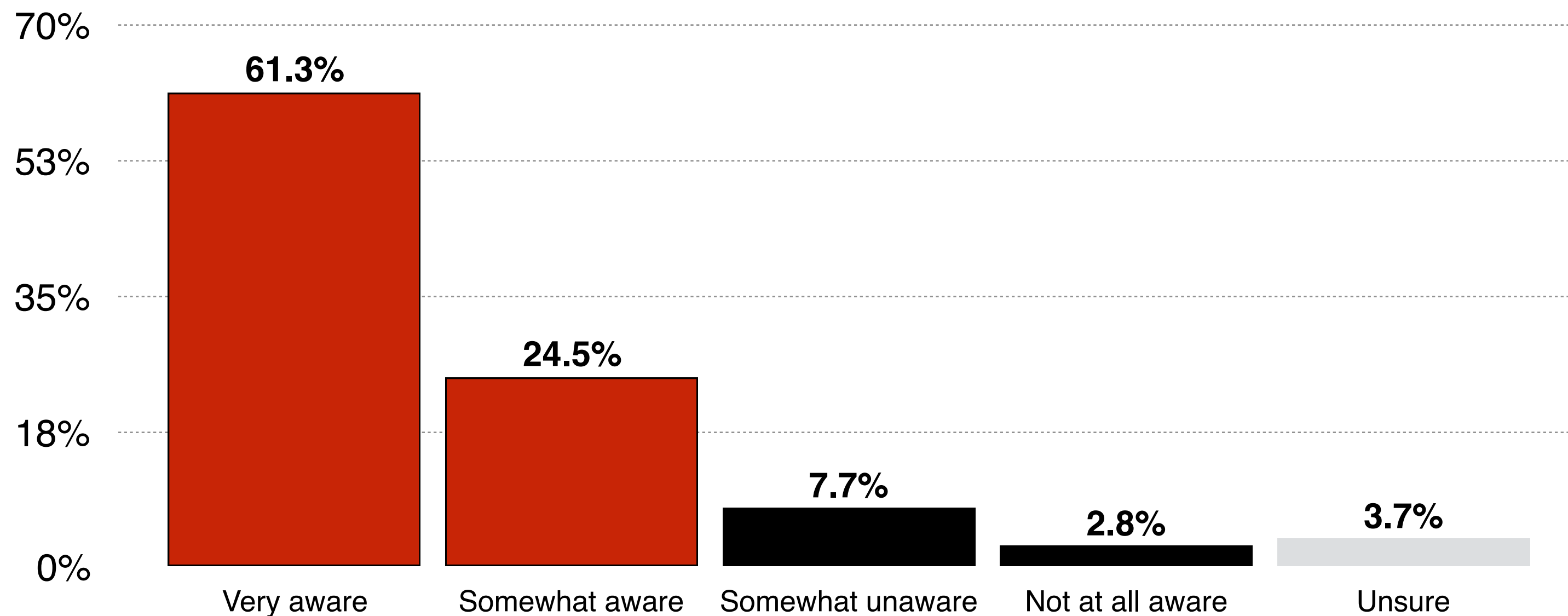
Head-to-head	vs...	Donald Trump
Bernie Sanders	52.3%	35.2%
Joe Biden	51.7%	32.3%
Elizabeth Warren	48.8%	35.7%
Pete Buttigieg	46.9%	33.4%



Impeachment

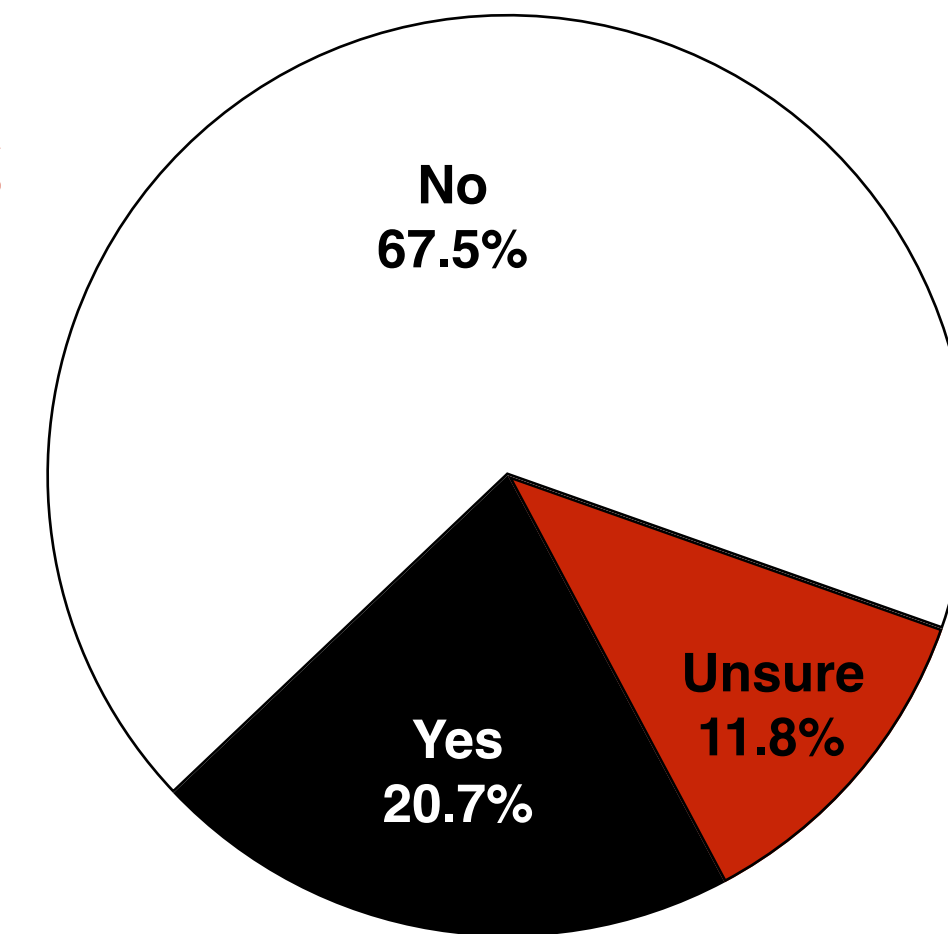
The strong majority of December 2019 respondents, 85.8%, reported being "very" (61.3%) or "somewhat" (24.5%) aware of the impeachment hearings currently in progress. Further, while slightly more than two-thirds of respondents (67.5%) do not think the US senate will vote in favor of impeachment and remove President Trump from office, 49.8% think there is enough evidence to support impeachment and remove President Trump from office.

- ❖ 80.0% of Republican residents surveyed, 66.6% of unaffiliated residents surveyed, and 65.5% of Democratic residents surveyed did not think the Senate will vote in favor of impeachment and remove President Trump from office.
- ❖ 80.5% of Democratic residents surveyed think there is enough evidence to support impeachment and remove President Trump from office, compared to only 22.0% of Republican residents surveyed.

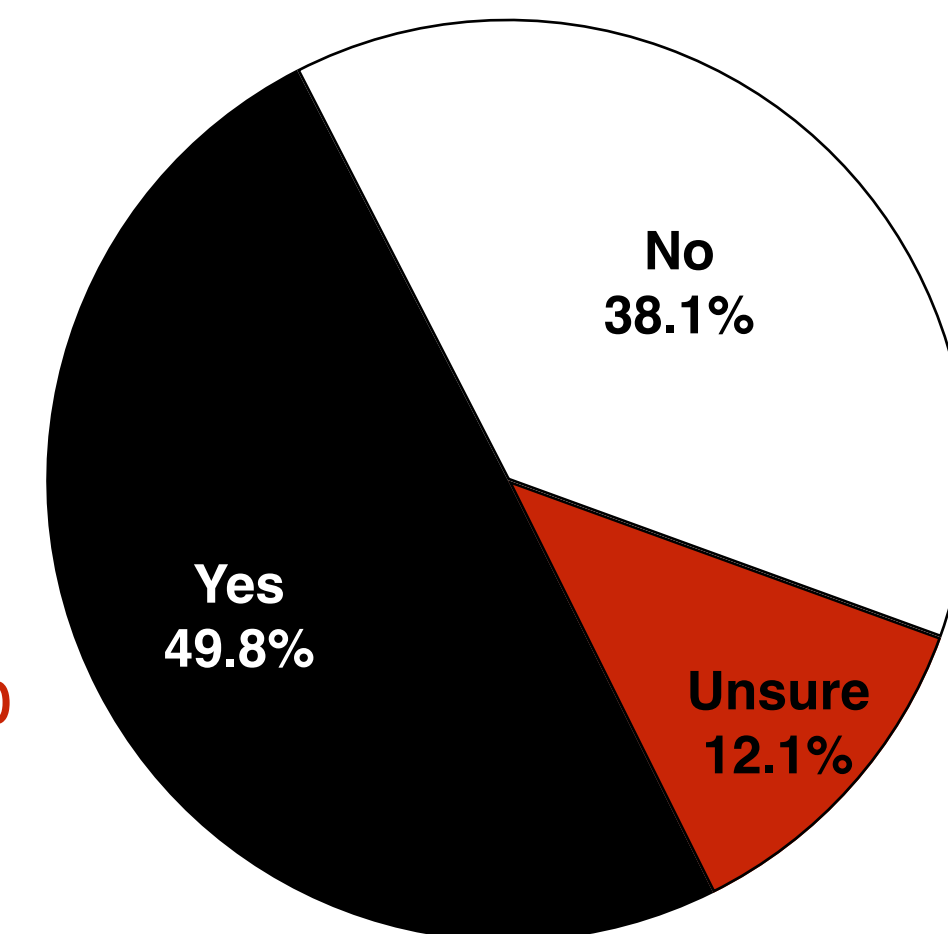


Q Please rate your level of awareness of the impeachment hearings currently in progress.

Q Regardless of your views, do you think the US Senate will vote in favor of impeachment and remove President Trump from office?

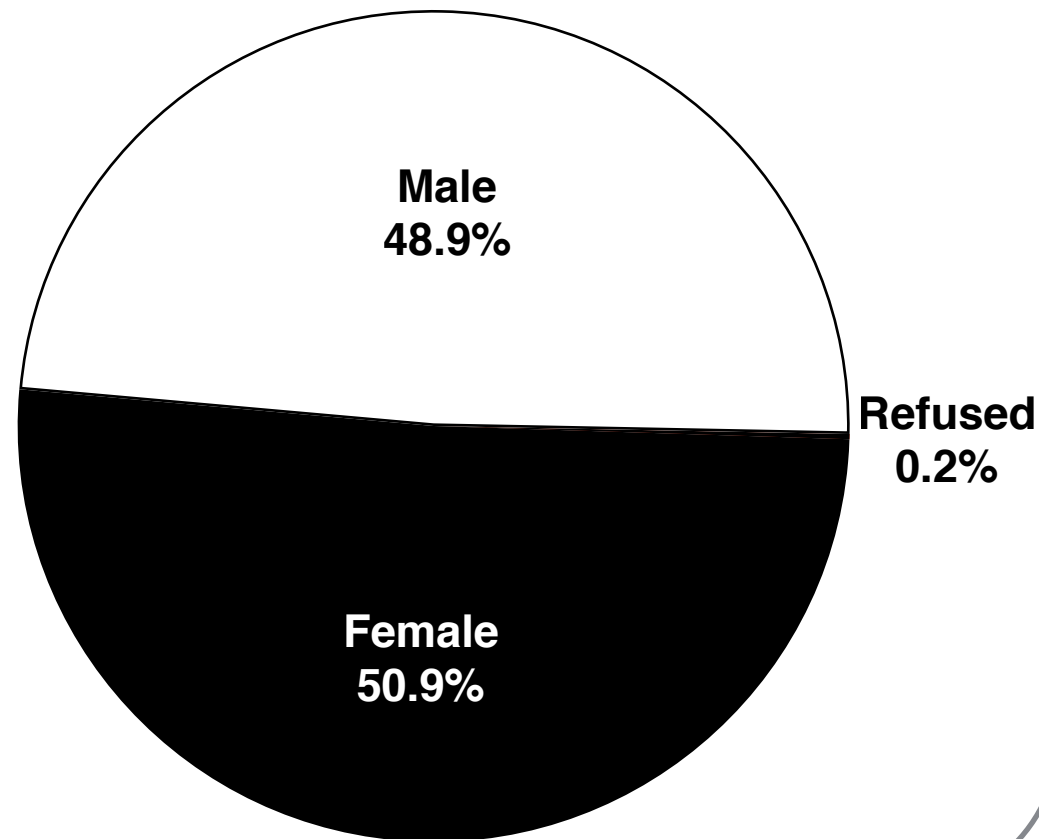


Q Do you think there is enough evidence to support impeachment and remove President Trump from office?

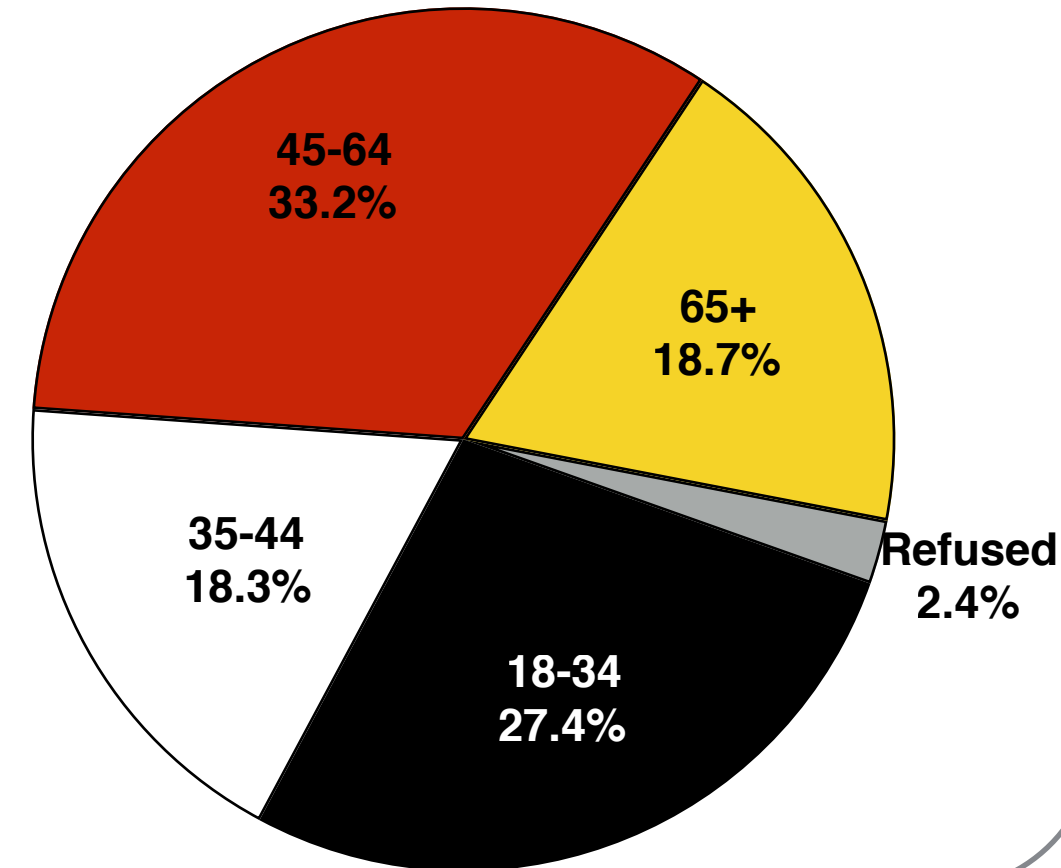


Demographic Profile - December 2019

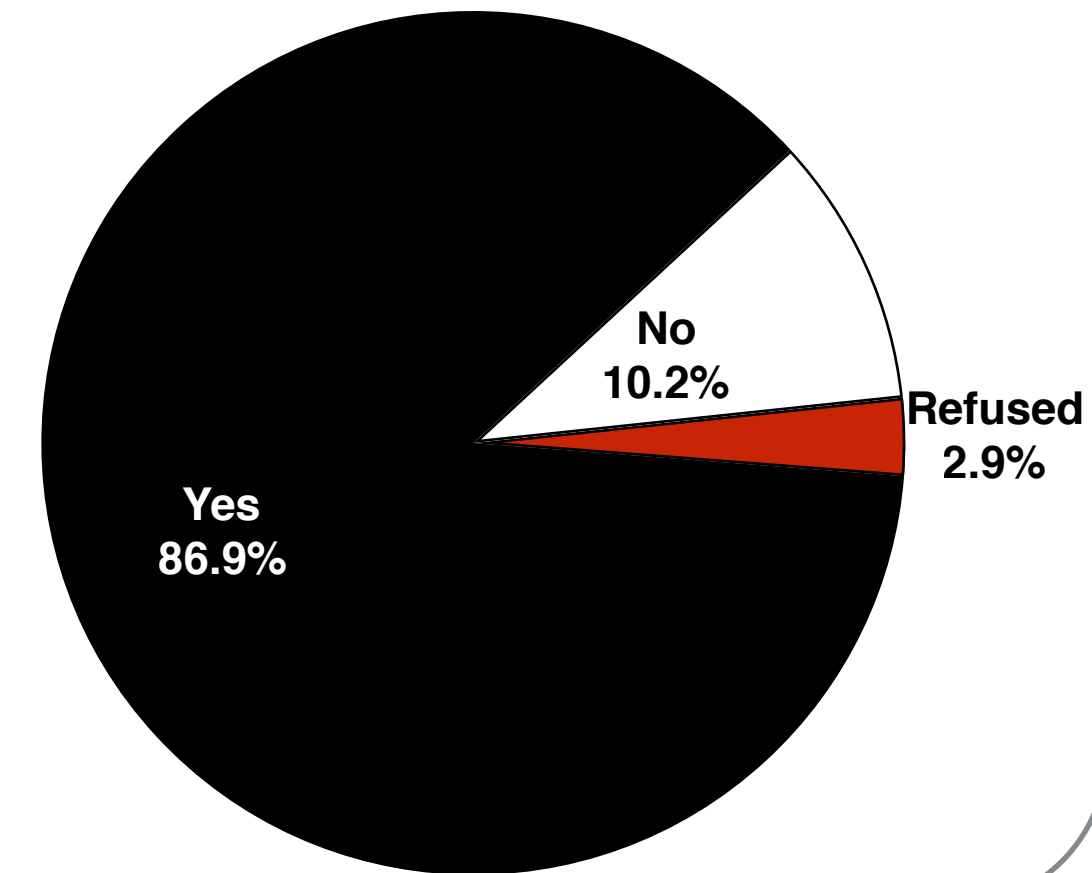
Gender



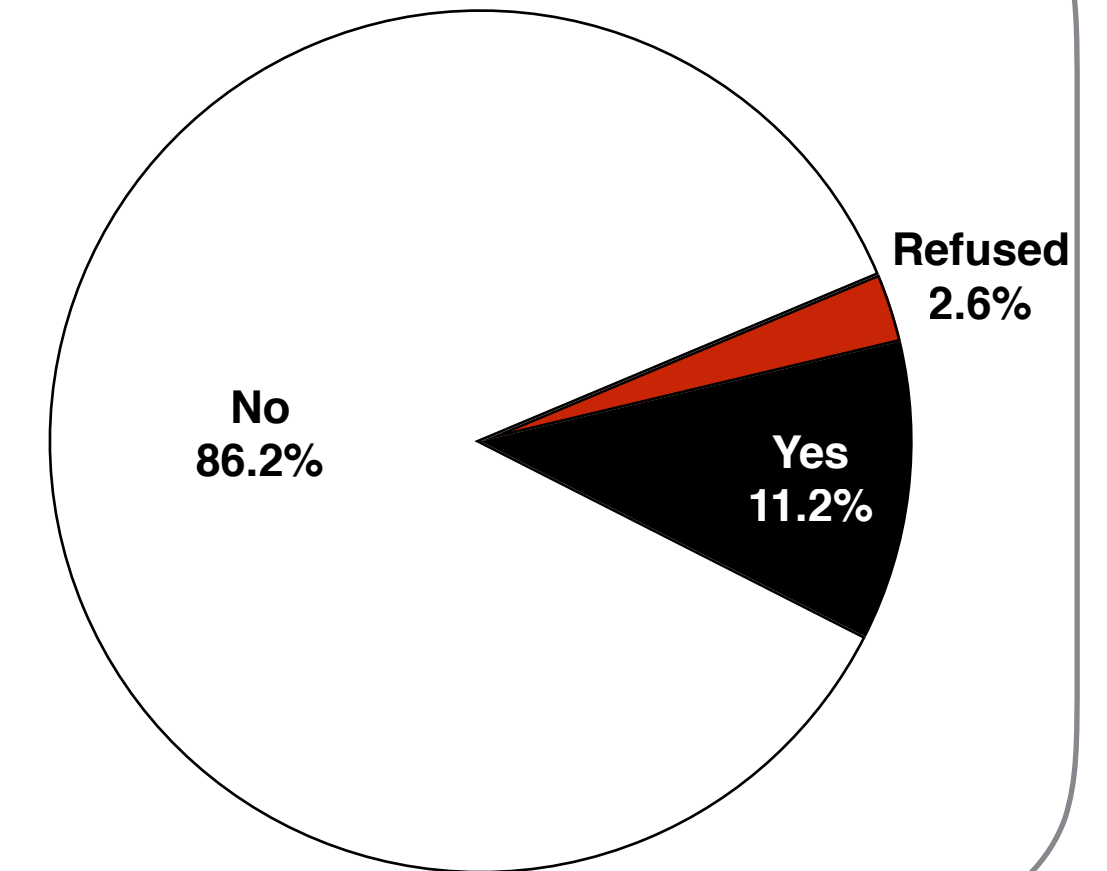
Age



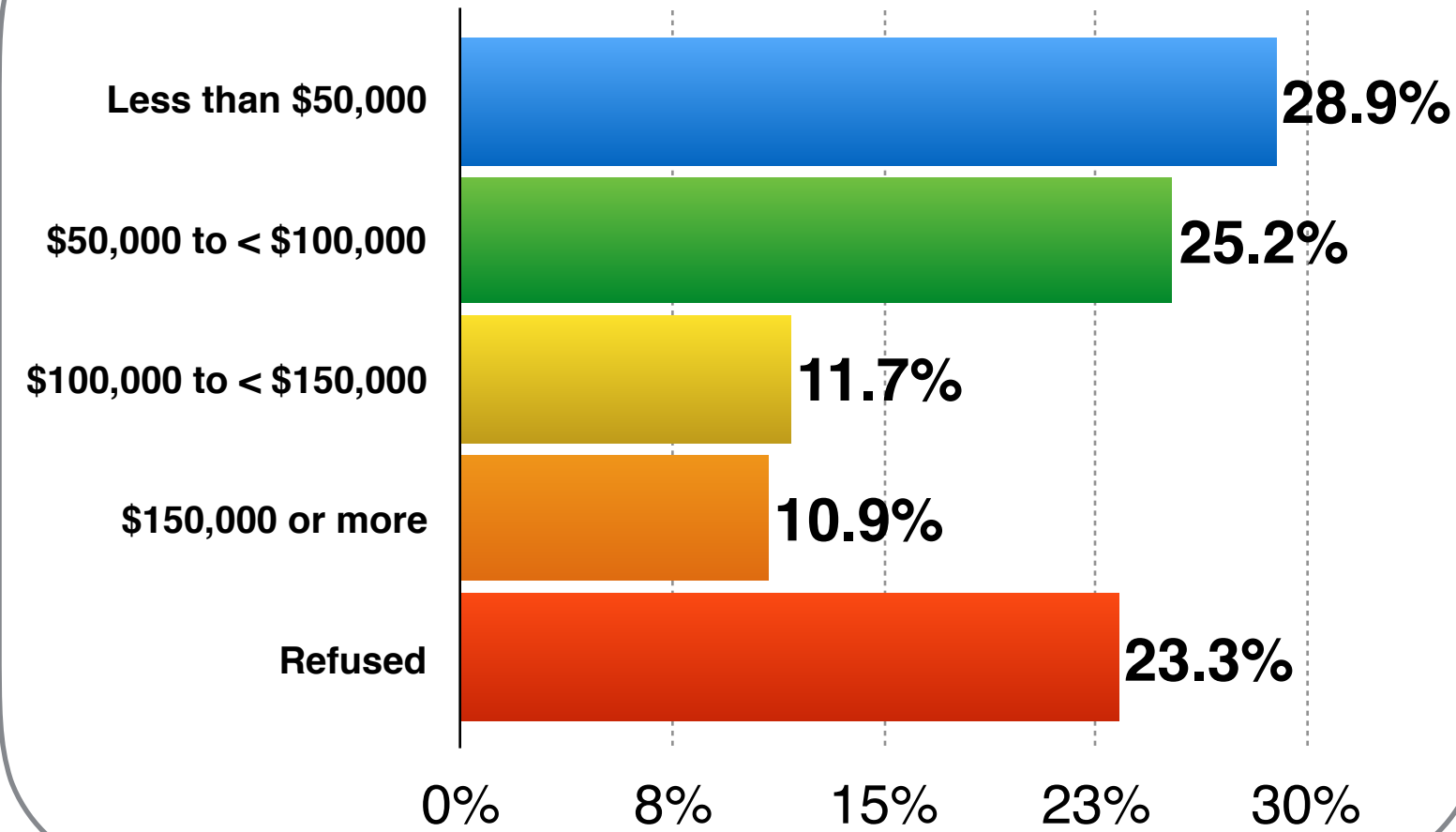
Registered to vote?



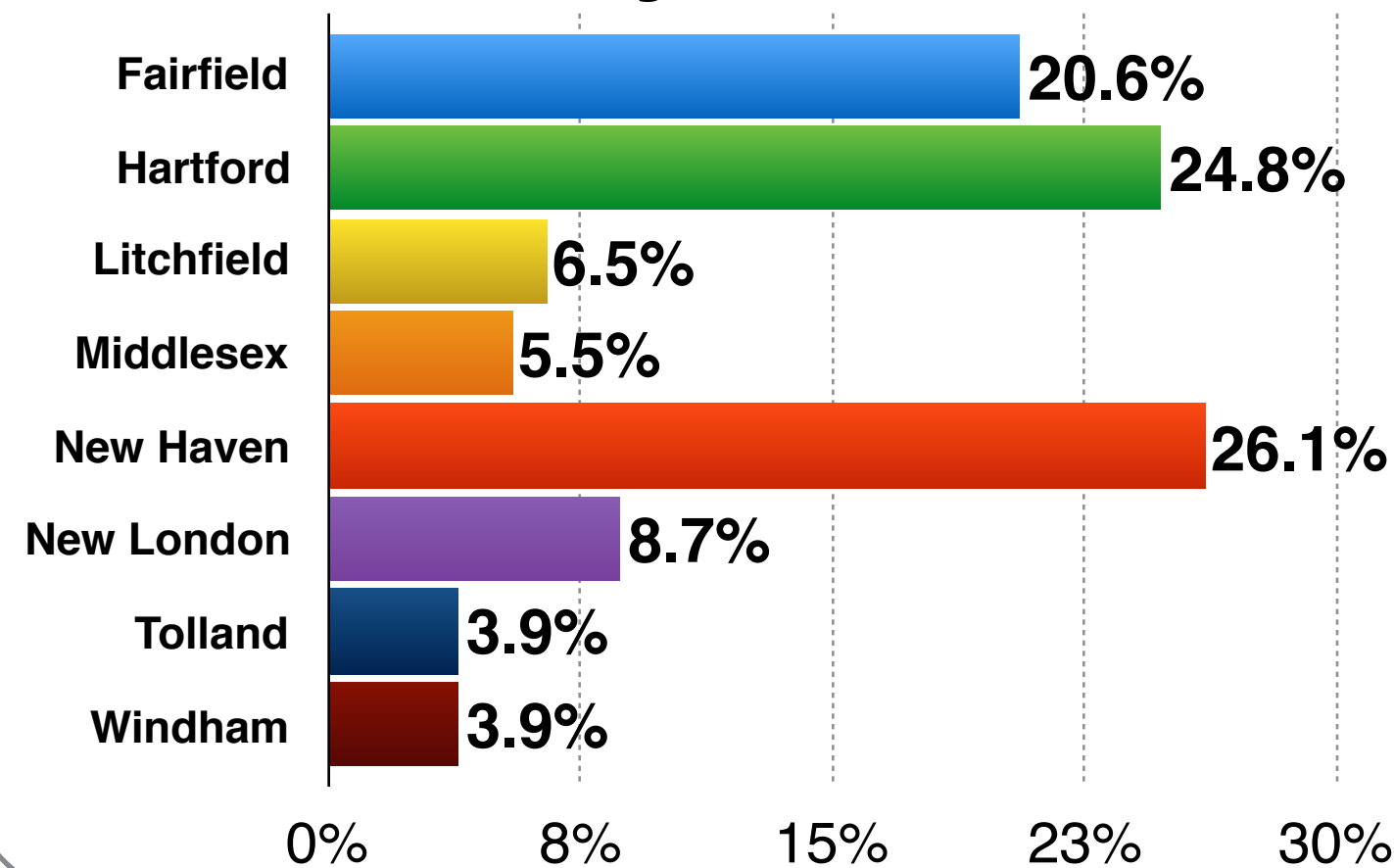
Hispanic/Latin Origin?



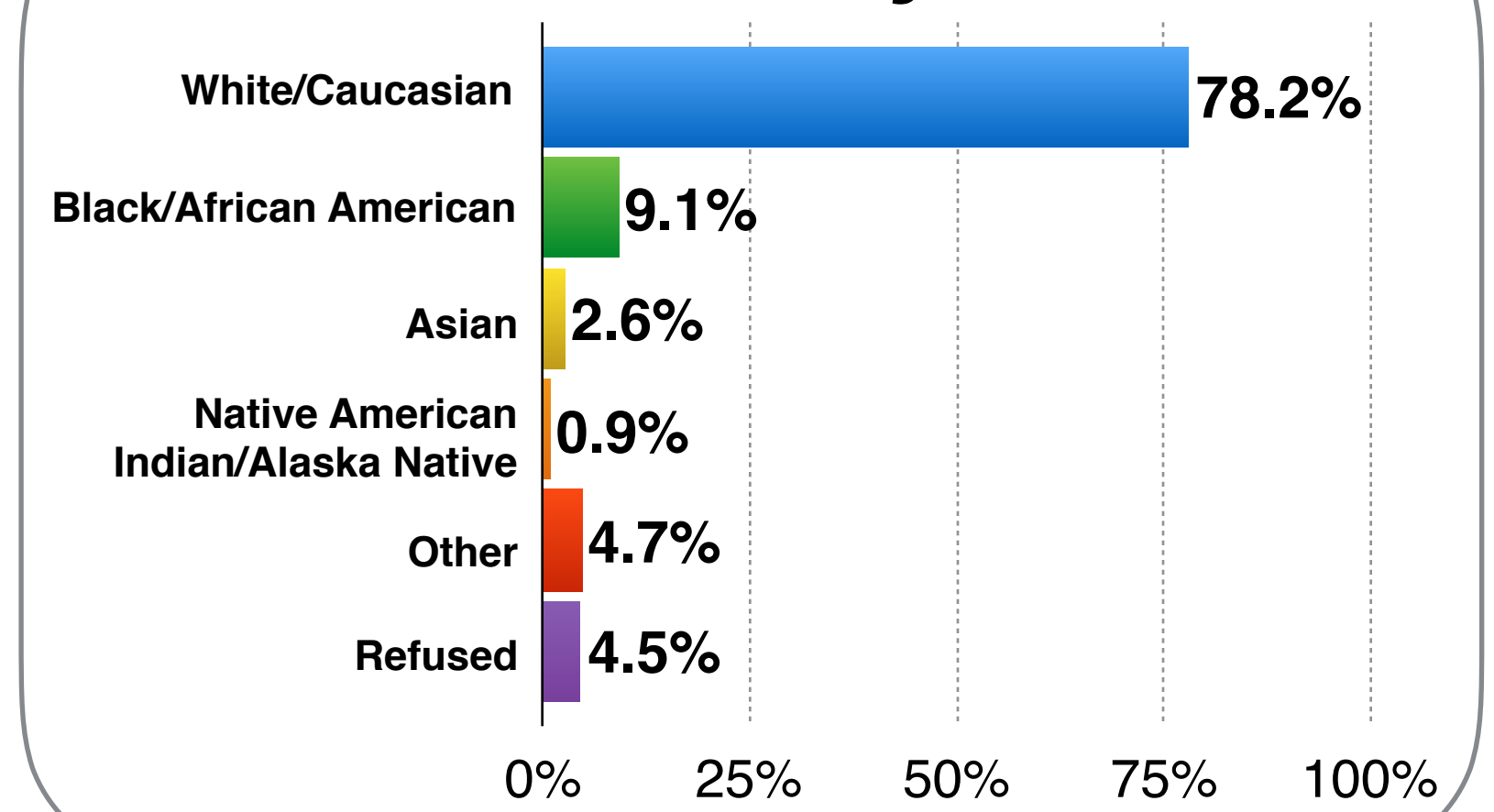
Income




County of Residence



Ethnicity





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