



Johnson County, Kansas

Key Findings from a Telephone Survey of 800 Registered Voters in Johnson County and an Online Survey of 693 Johnson County Business Representatives

POS #12068



Neil Newhouse
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Methodology

On behalf of the Overland Park Chamber Foundation, Public Opinion Strategies conducted two surveys.

Registered Voter Survey

A countywide survey was conducted among 800 registered voters in Johnson County, Kansas, including 720 interviews among voters with a landline telephone and 80 interviews among cell phone only households. This survey was conducted January 22-24, 2012 and has a margin of error of $\pm 3.46\%$.

Business Representative Survey

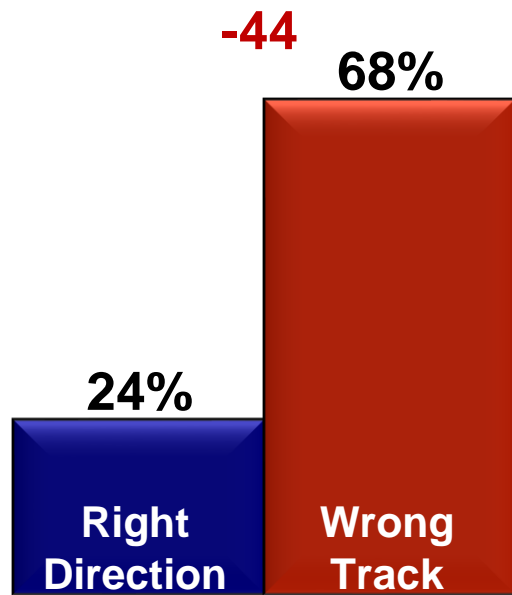
An online survey was conducted among 693 business representatives throughout Johnson County, Kansas, using the same questionnaire as the one used in the registered voter survey. This survey was conducted January 23-February 3, 2012 and has a margin of error of $\pm 3.72\%$.



Living and Working in Johnson County

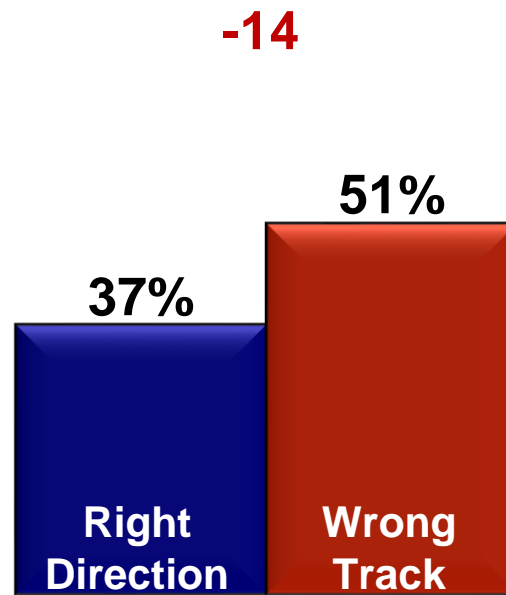
Voters are positive about the direction of Johnson County – certainly more so than their sense of either the state or the country.

First, generally speaking, would you say that things in the country are going in the right direction, or have they pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?



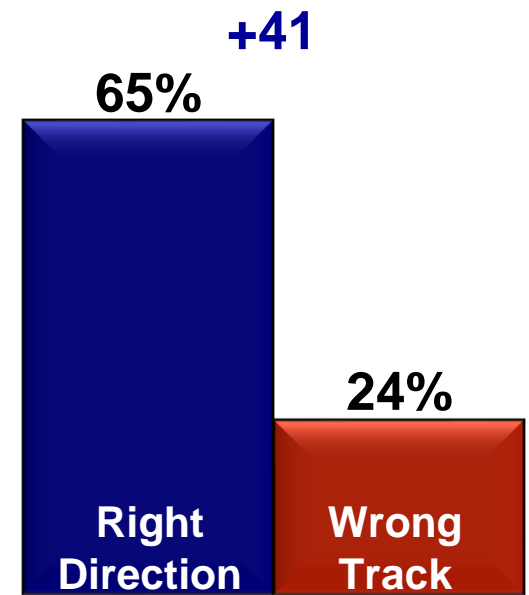
Voter Total

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



Voter Total

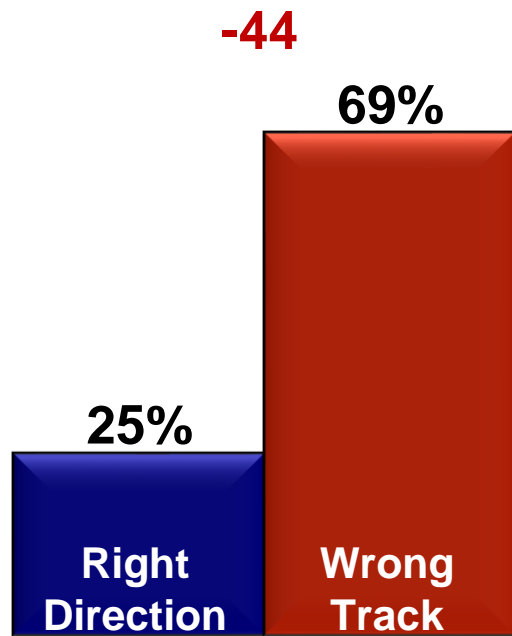
And, would you say that things in Johnson County are going in the right direction, or have they pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?



Voter Total

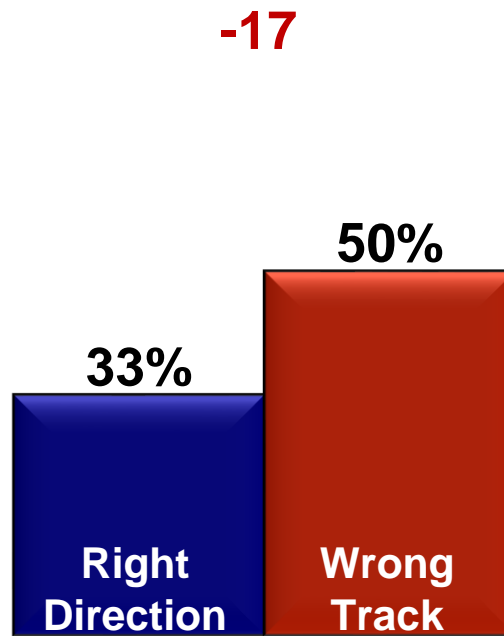
The same sentiment is reflected by business representatives from the county.

First, generally speaking, would you say that things in the country are going in the right direction, or have they pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?



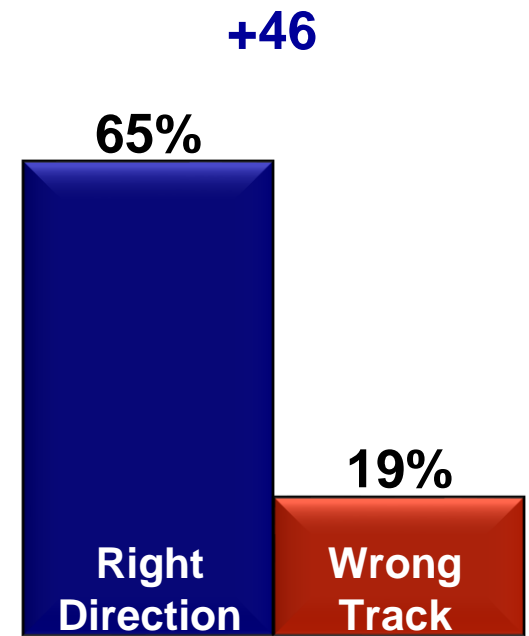
Business Total

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



Business Total

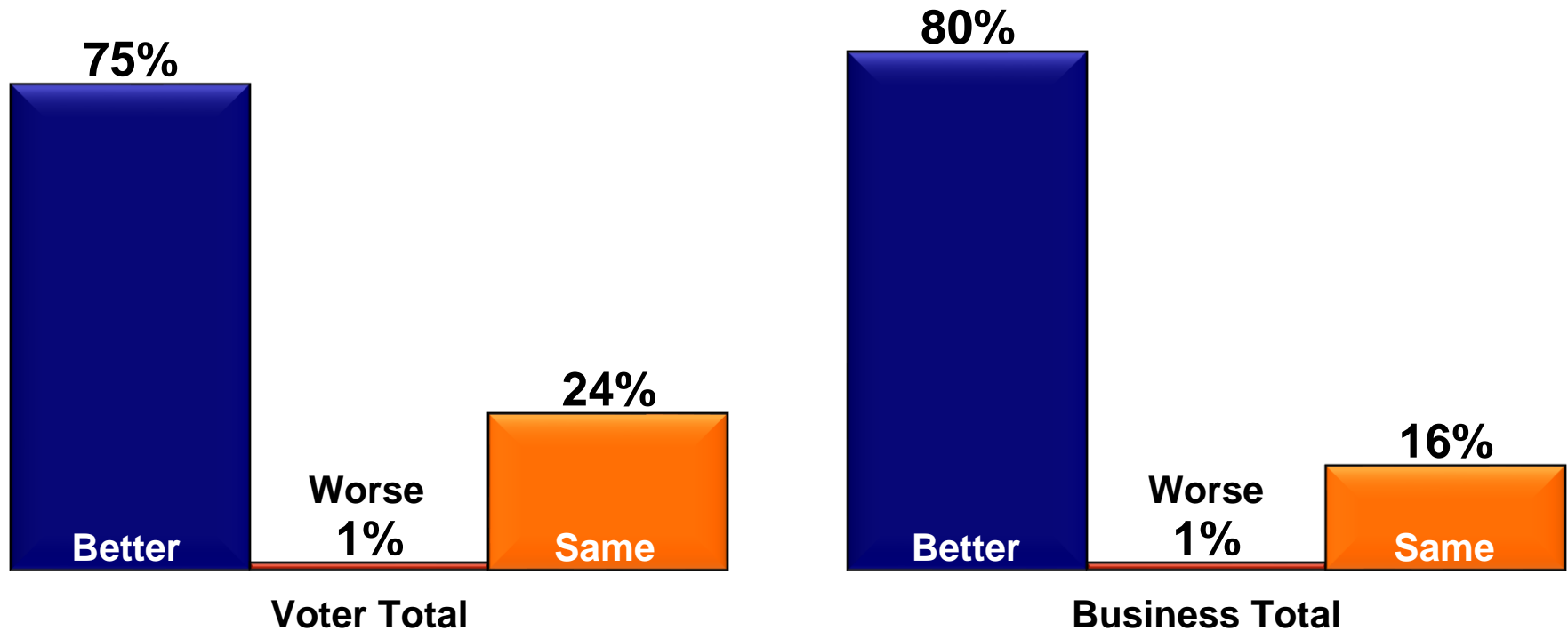
And, would you say that things in Johnson County are going in the right direction, or have they pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?



Business Total

One reason why: there's a strong sense that the county's economy is doing better than the national economy.

Compared to the rest of the country, do you believe Johnson County's economy is ... Better, Worse ...or... About the same as the national economy?





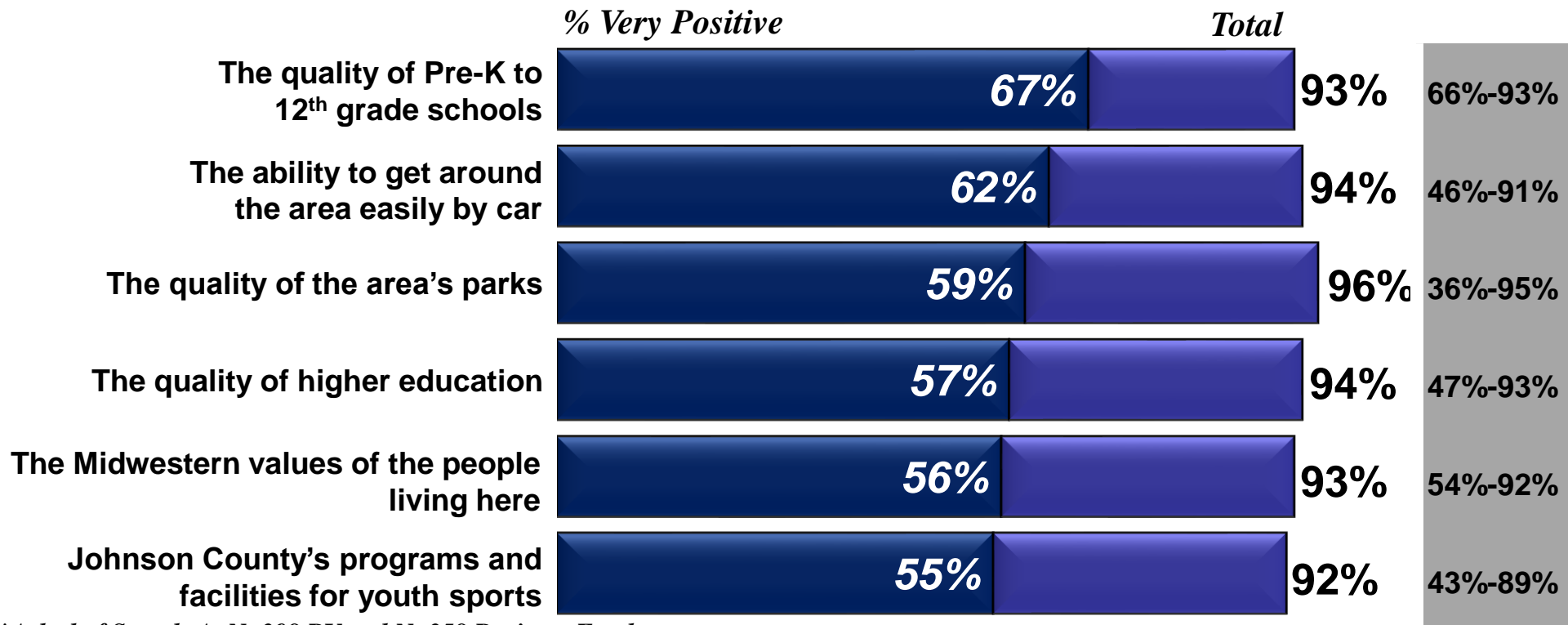
What Makes Johnson County a Good Place to Live

Now, I'd like to read you a list of things that some people say make Johnson County a good place to live, and please tell me whether each one is a very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative or very negative thing about Johnson County...

The quality of education, ability to get around by car, the area's parks, the values of the people, and the youth sports programs/facilities are the most positive things about living in Johnson County.

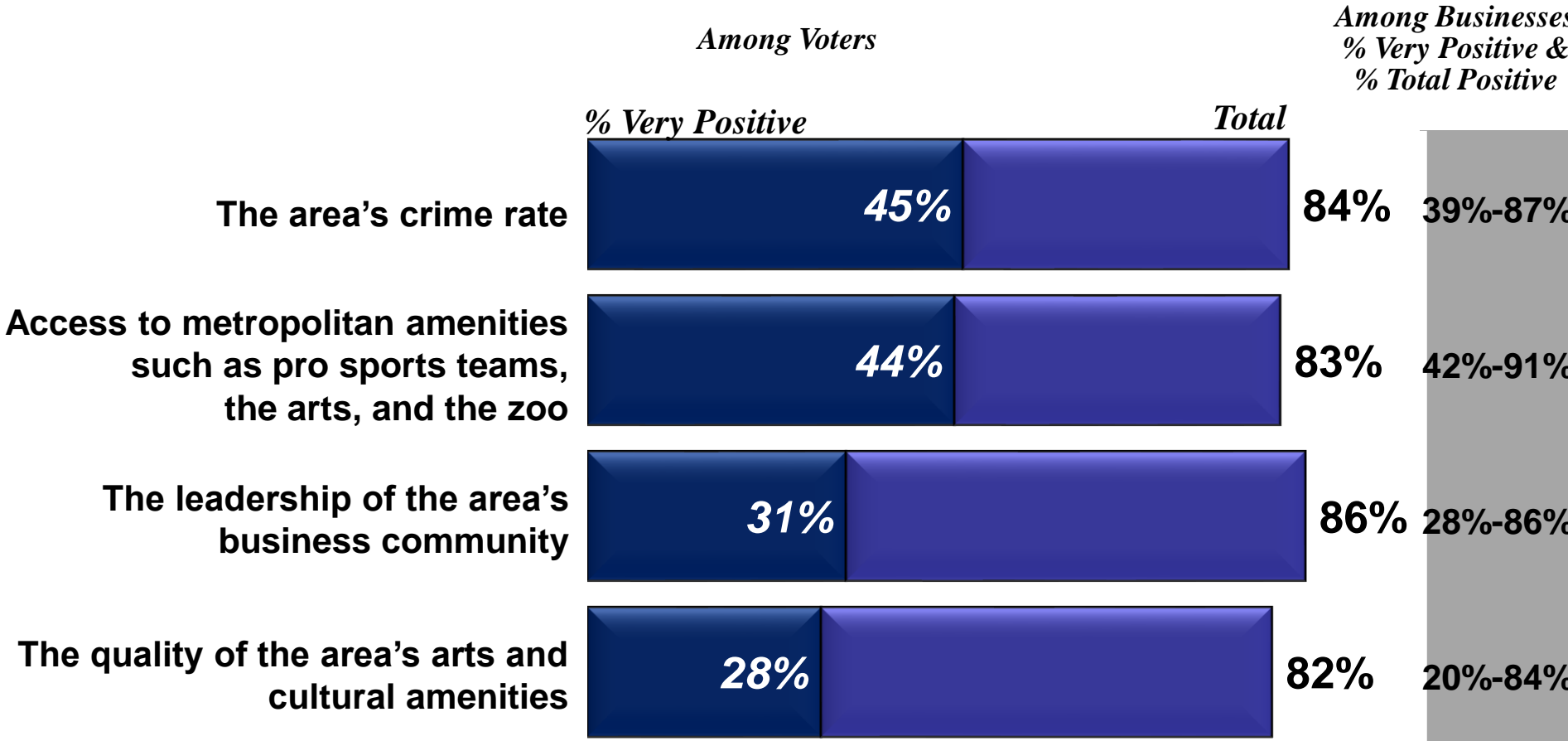
Among Voters

*Among Businesses
% Very Positive &
% Total Positive*



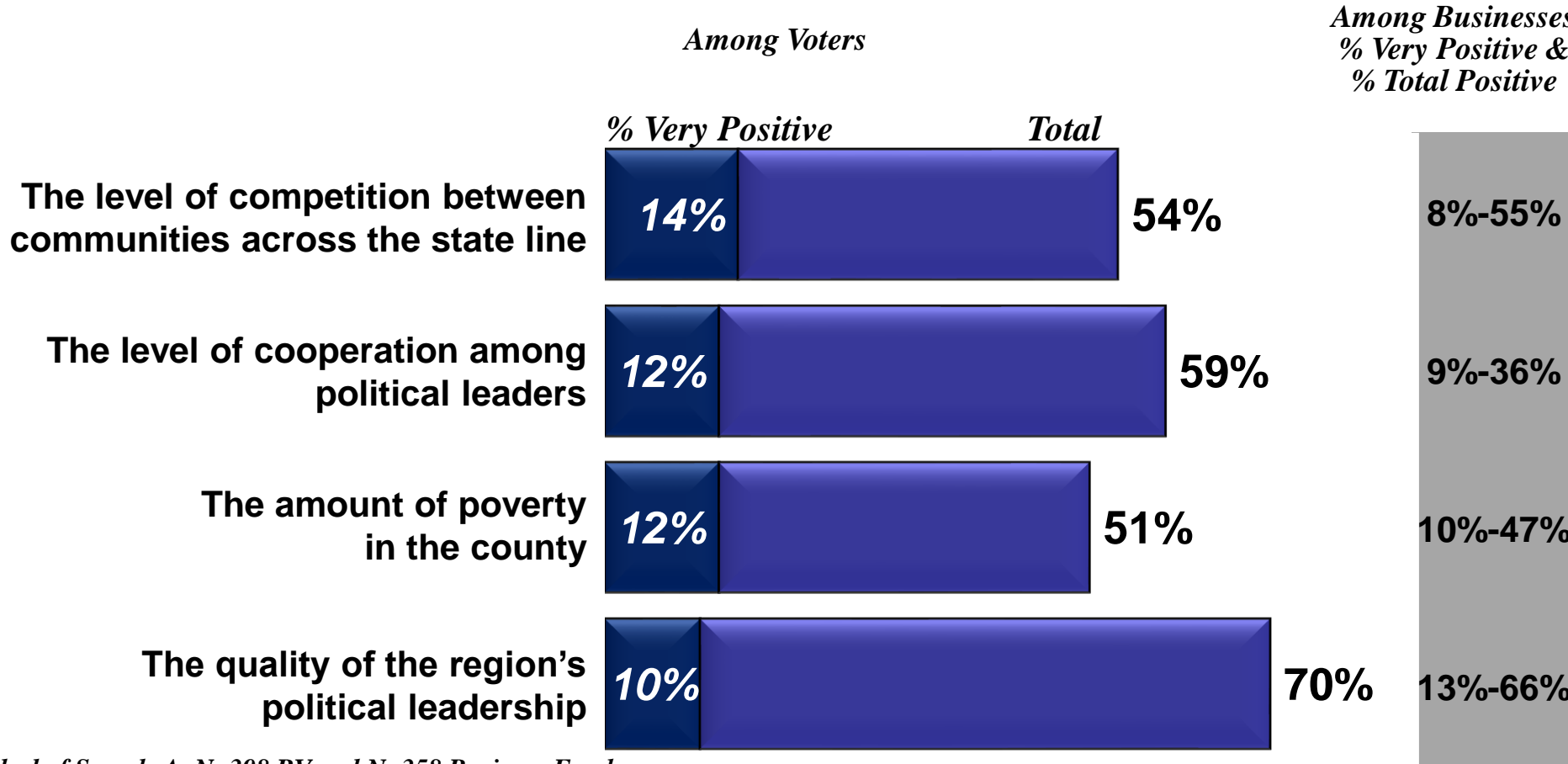
**Asked of Sample A, N=398 RV and N=358 Business Employees*

The area's crime rate, access to metro amenities, the leadership of the local business community, and the area's arts/cultural opportunities are also viewed as positives.



*Asked of Sample A, N=398 RV and N=358 Business Employees

The competition across the state line, the level of cooperation among political leaders, the amount of poverty and the region's political leadership are not as positive.



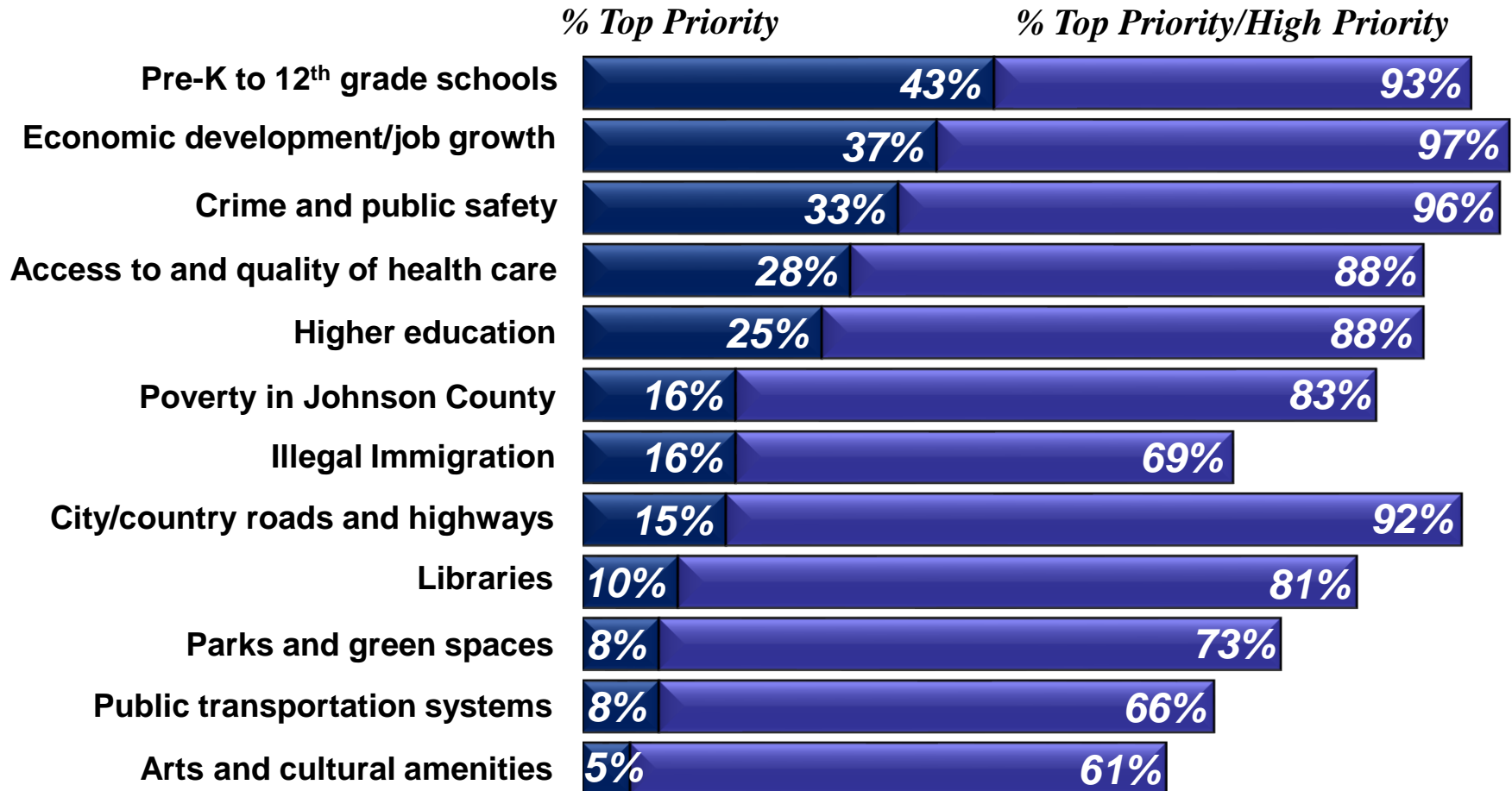
*Asked of Sample A, N=398 RV and N=358 Business Employees



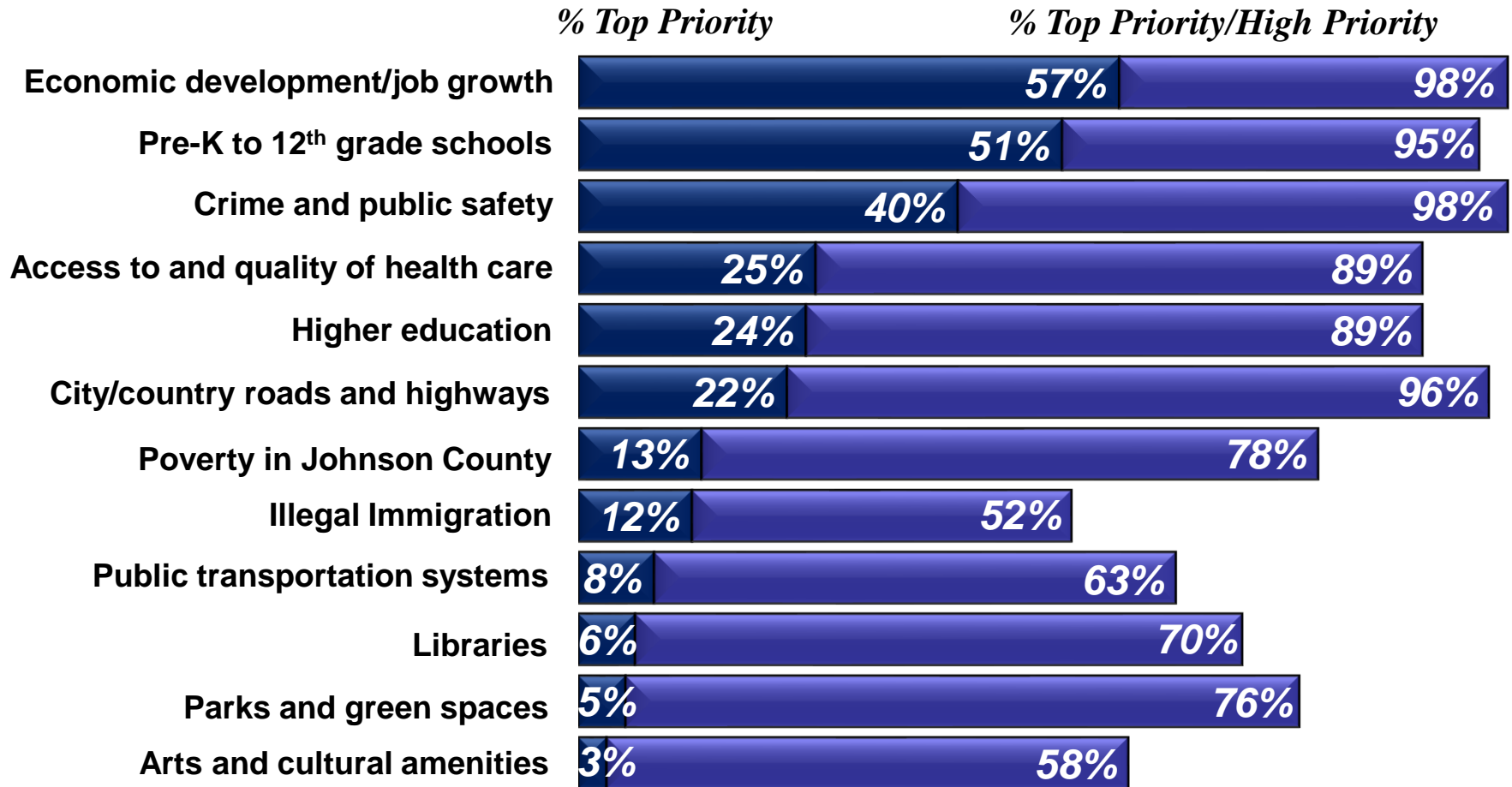
Priorities for Johnson County

Now, I'd like to read you a list of priorities that some people have suggested setting for Johnson County's elected officials. Now, given the need to prioritize limited taxpayer resources, please tell me whether you believe each one of these should be a top priority, very high priority, somewhat high priority, or not that high of a priority for Johnson County's elected officials...

Voters say public schools, economic development, and crime should be the top priorities for Johnson County's elected officials.



Business representatives generally agree, but believe economic development should be more of a top priority.





Johnson County Local Spending and Taxes

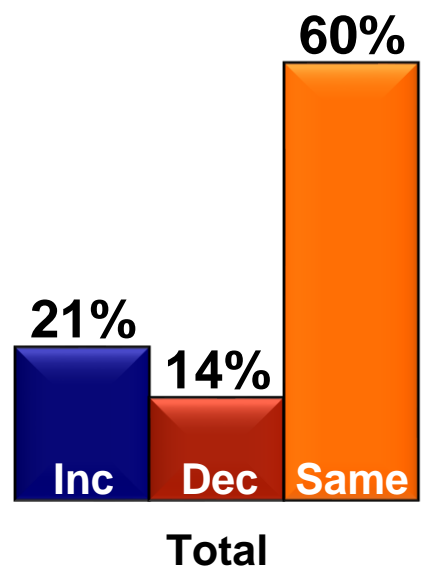
Most voters believe that local government spending in Johnson County should remain about the same.

Do you believe that local government spending in Johnson County should be *increased*, *decreased*, or should it *remain about the same* to help fund those priorities?

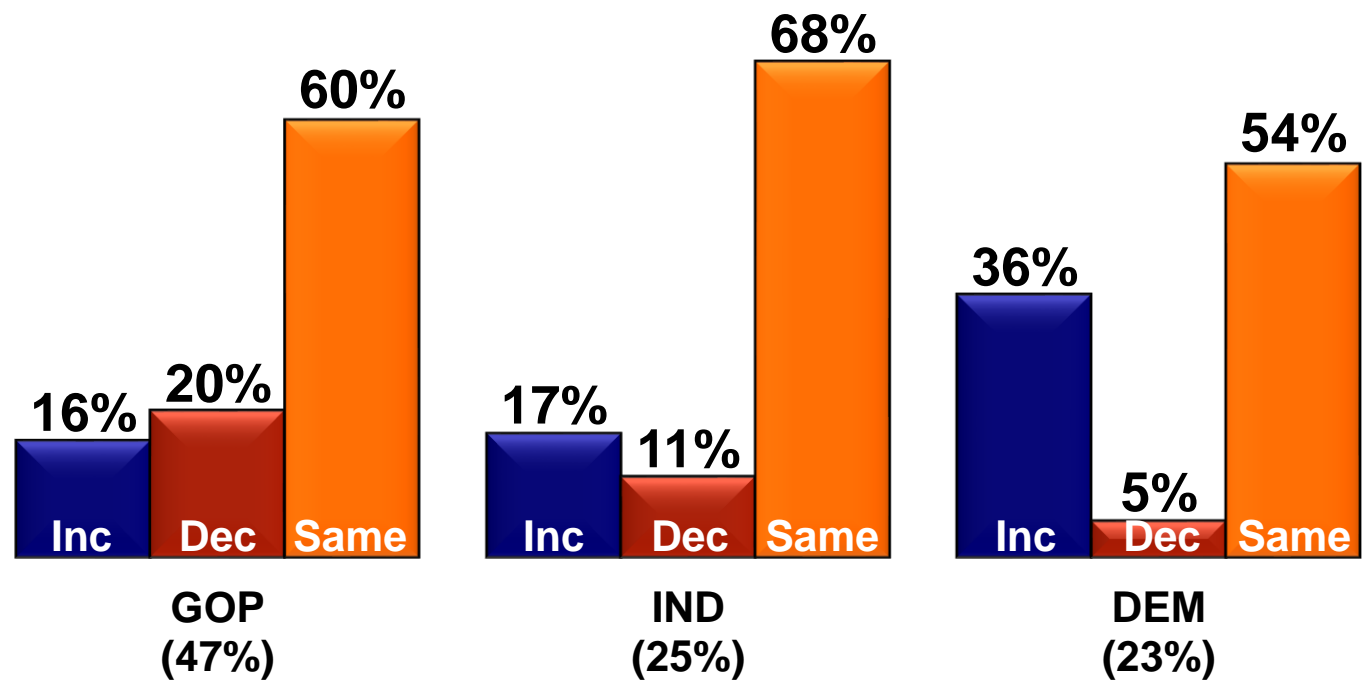
Businesses

Increase	14%
Decrease	20%
Same	52%

Voter Total

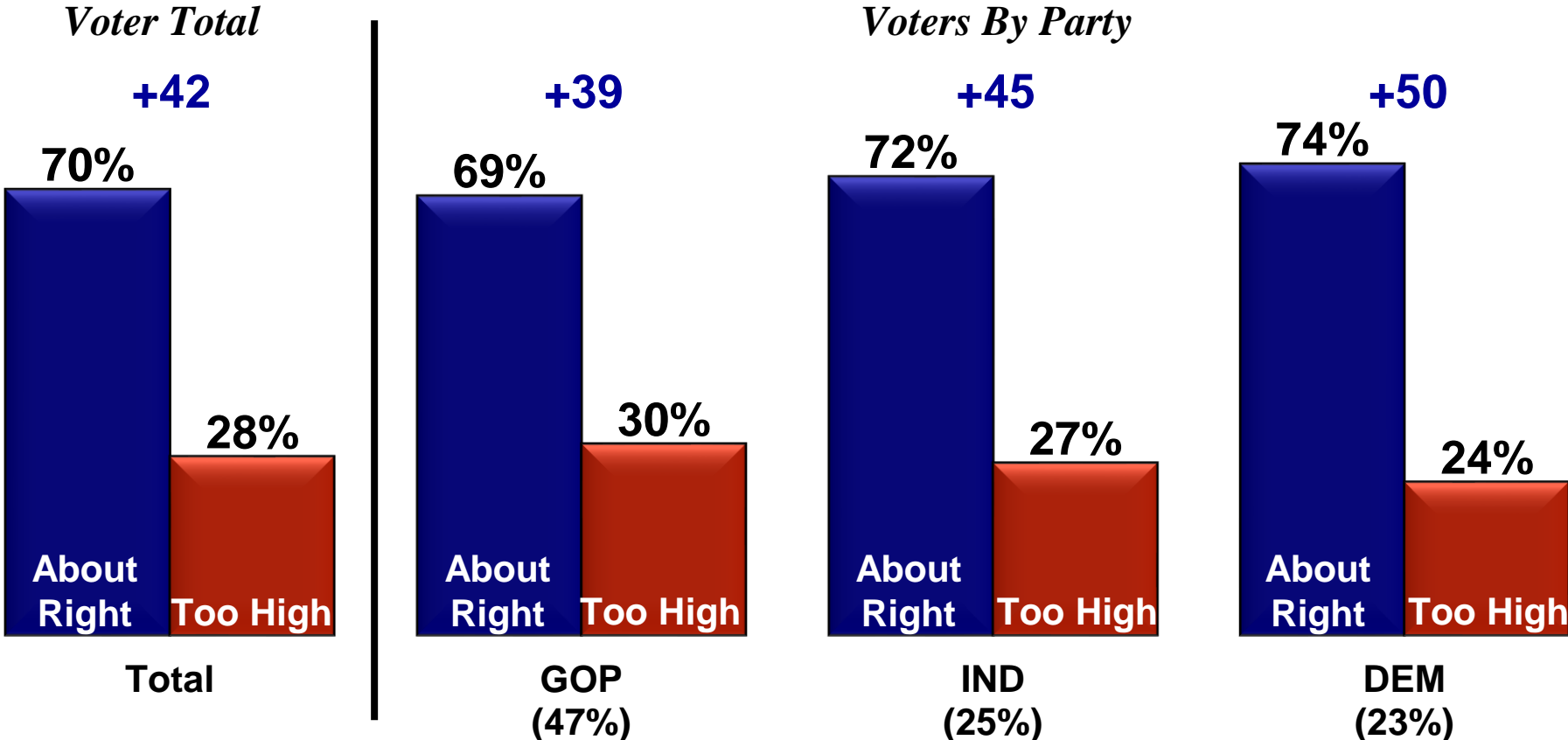


Voters By Party



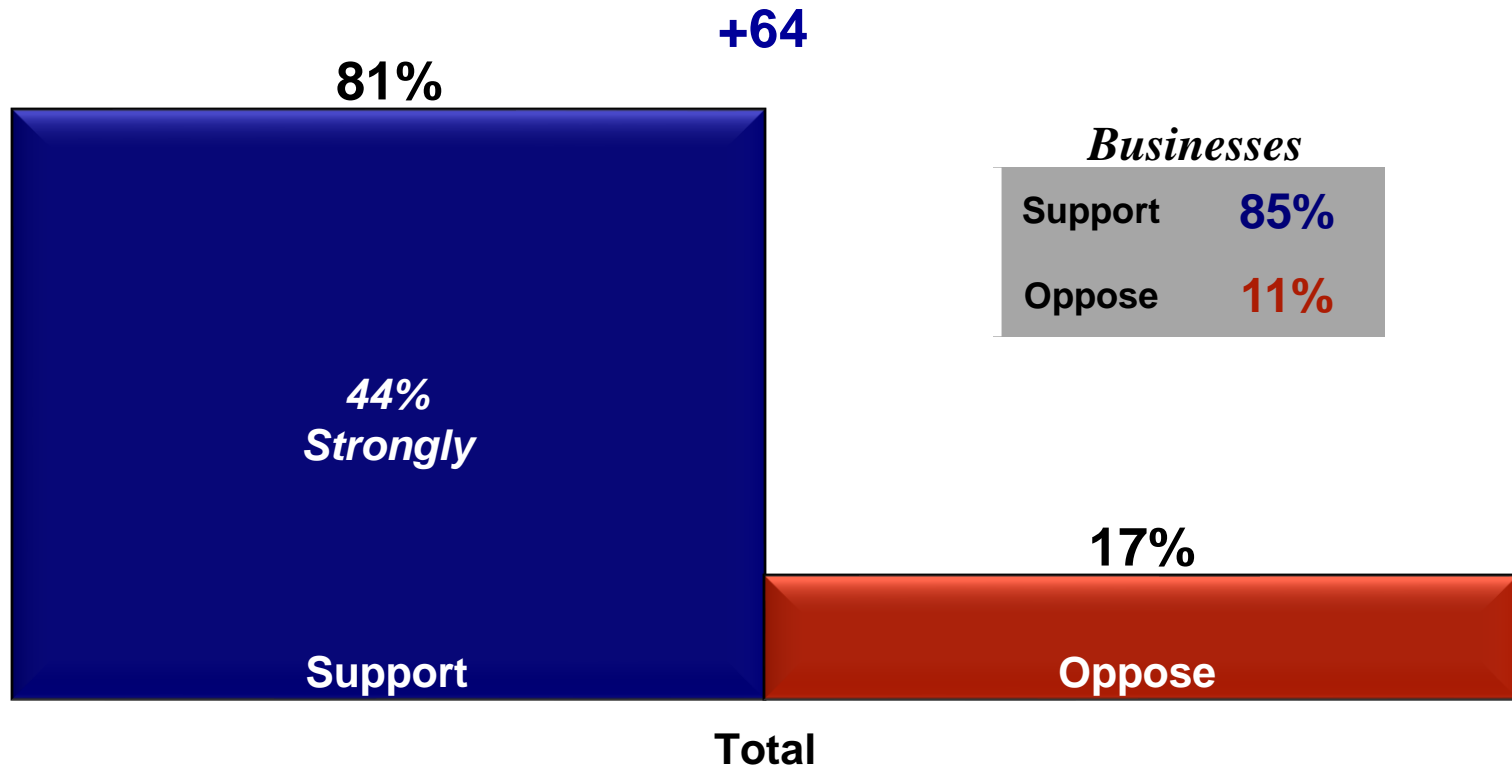
And, an overwhelming majority of Johnson County voters believe that the level of their local taxes is “about right.”

Do you believe that for the services you receive from your local city, school district, community college and Johnson County, are the taxes you pay too high or are they about right?



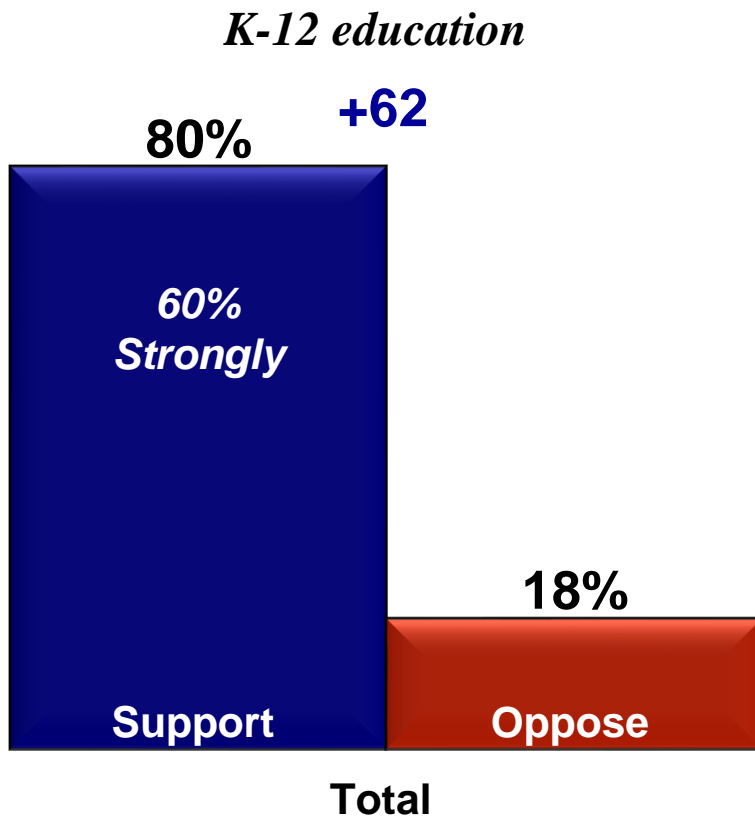
Fully 81% of voters support using Johnson County tax dollars to help support economic development projects that will lead to job creation.

Would you support or oppose the use of Johnson County tax dollars to help support economic development projects that will create jobs in the area?

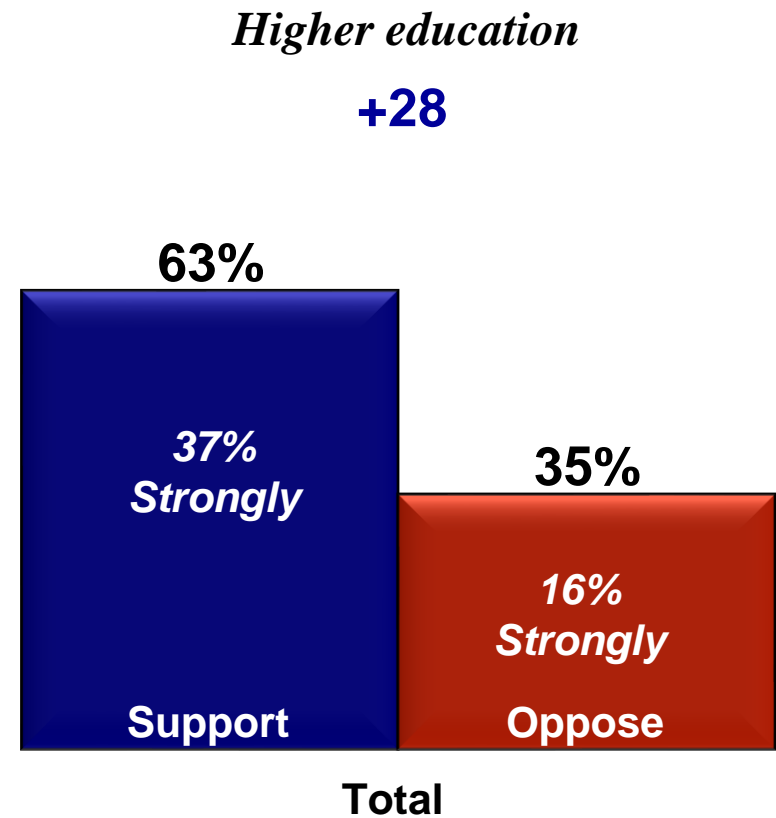


Voters overwhelmingly say they would support a tax increase dedicated to K-12 education, with somewhat less support for higher education.

Now, please tell me whether you'd support or oppose a tax increase if you knew the revenue generated would be used on the following...



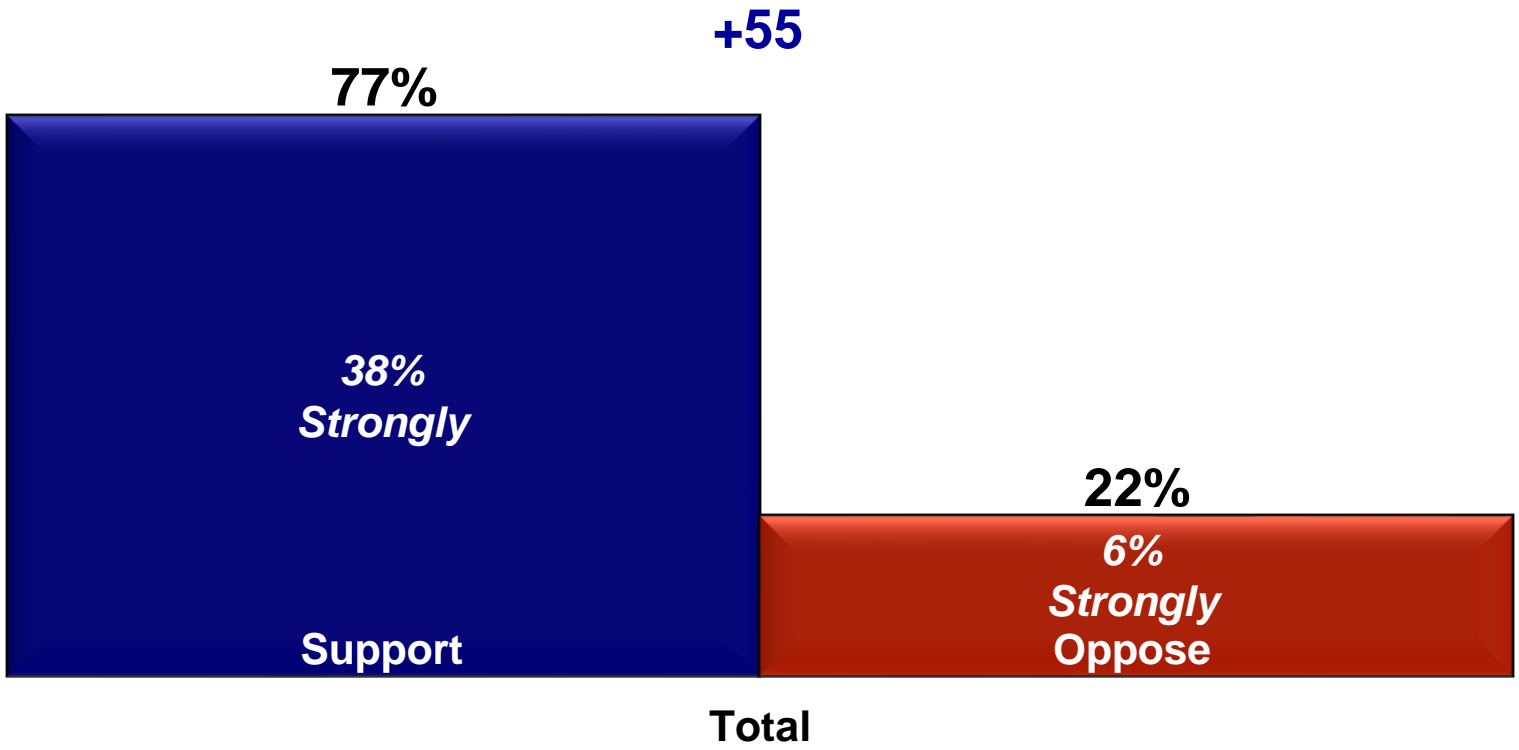
**Asked of Sample A, N=398 RV*



**Asked of Sample B, N=402 RV*

There is also support for a tax increase dedicated specifically to social services, such as Senior Citizen and disability services.

Now, please tell me whether you'd support or oppose a tax increase if you knew the revenue generated would be used on the following... Social services, such as Senior Citizen and disability services

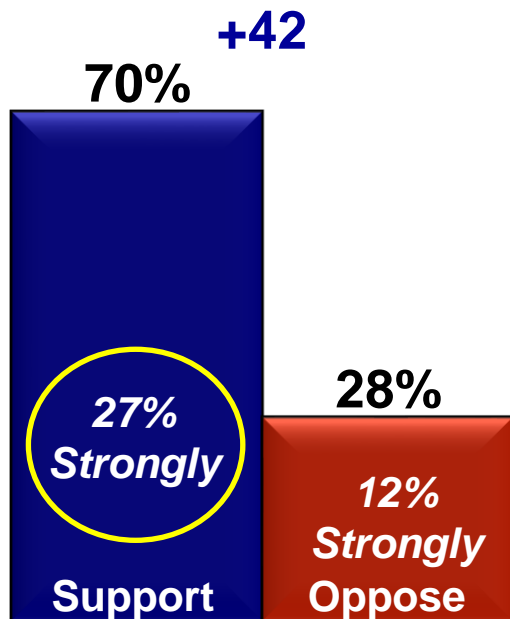


*Asked of Sample A, N=398 RV

There is support for tax increases related to infrastructure and youth sport programs (but, there's less intensity).

Now, please tell me whether you'd support or oppose a tax increase if you knew the revenue generated would be used on the following...

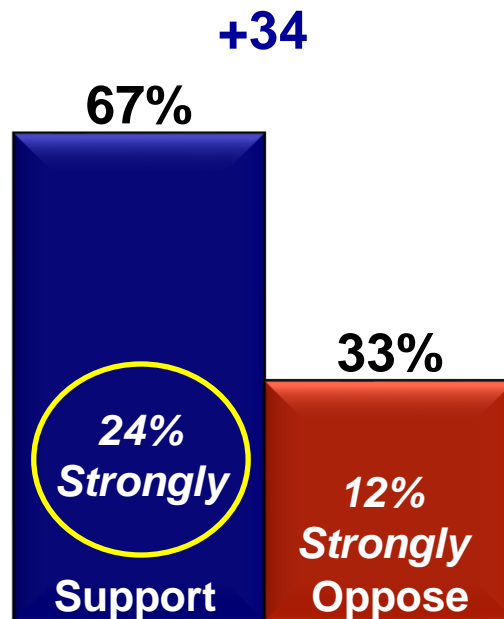
Aging sewer and storm water infrastructure



Total

*Asked of Sample B, N=402 RV

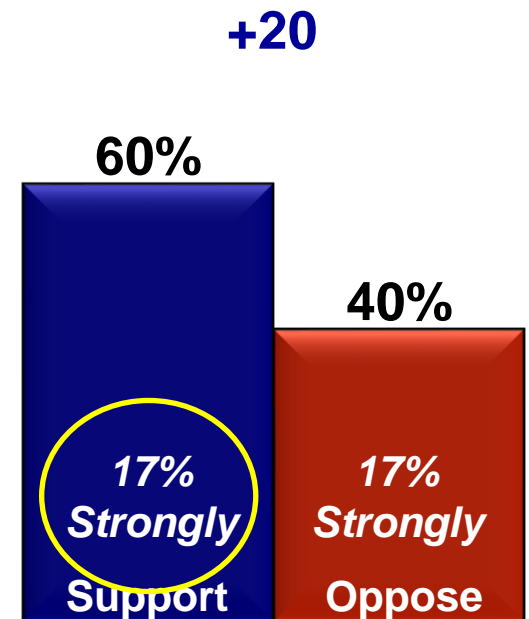
Roads and highways



Total

*Asked of Sample B, N=402 RV

Youth Sport Programs

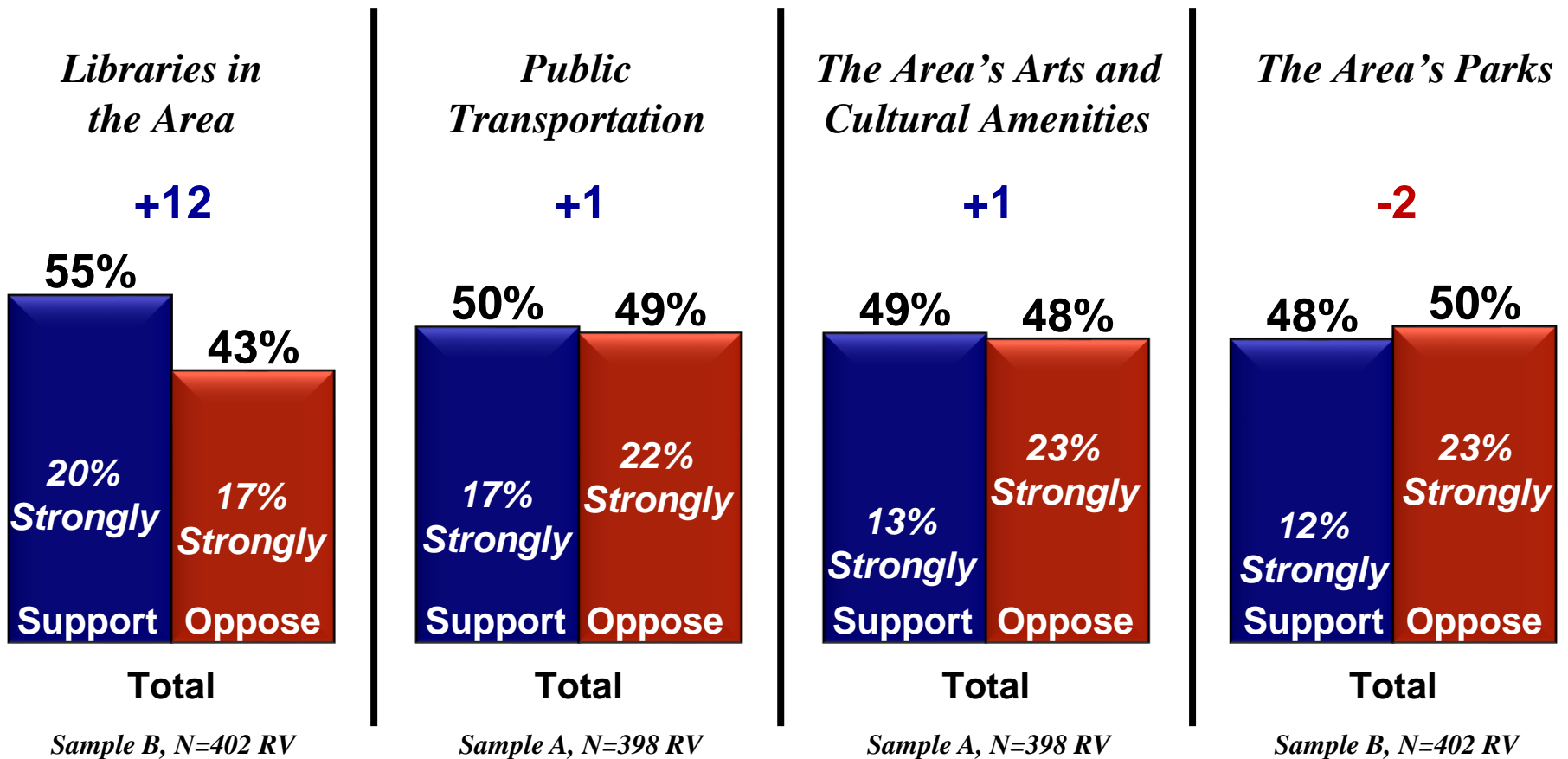


Total

*Asked of Sample A, N=398 RV

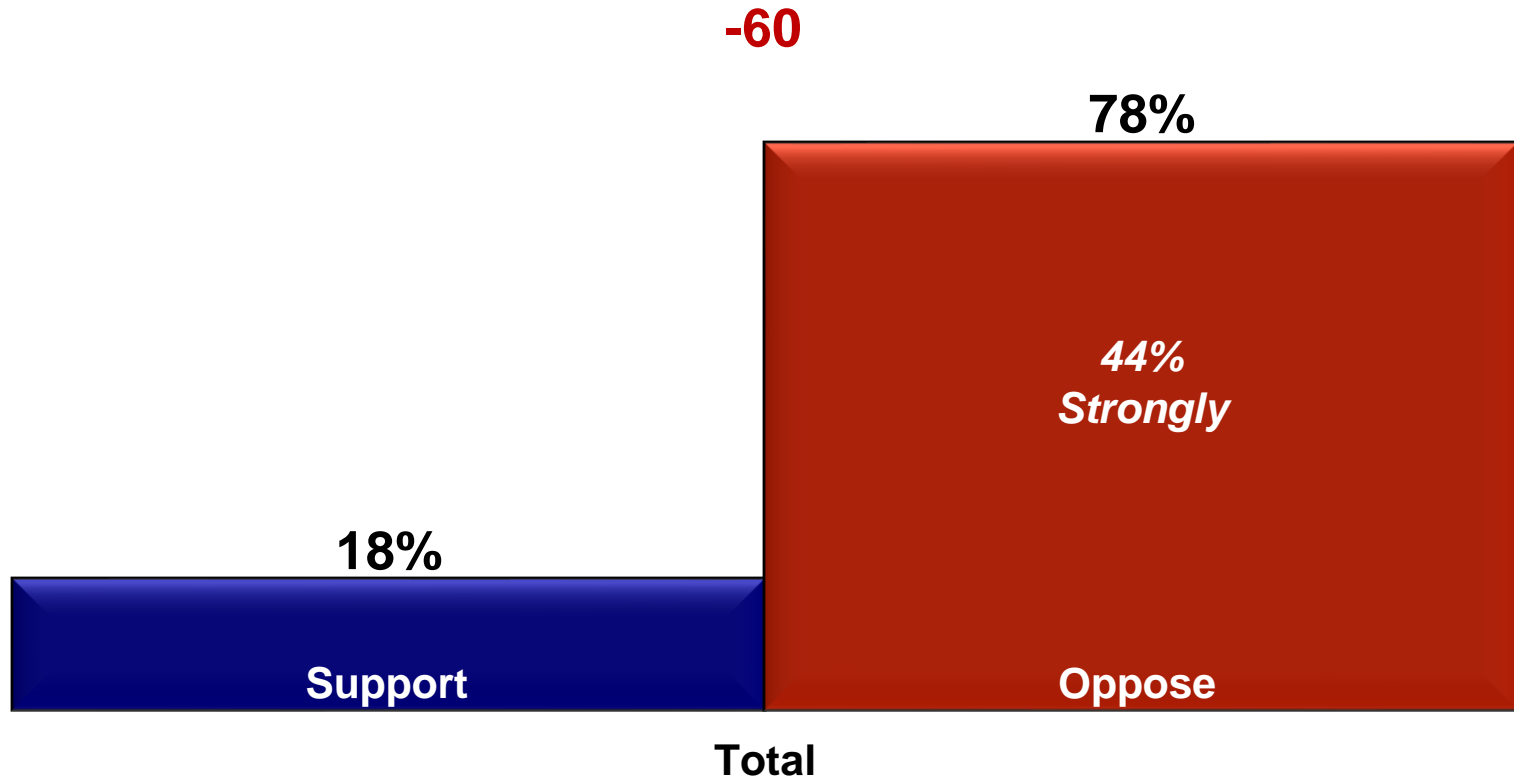
And, voters are divided about raising taxes to pay for libraries, public transportation, arts/cultural amenities, and area parks.

Now, please tell me whether you'd support or oppose a tax increase if you knew the revenue generated would be used on the following...



Voters are strongly opposed to raising taxes to pay for a new Johnson County Courthouse.

Now, please tell me whether you'd support or oppose a tax increase if you knew the revenue generated would be used on the following... A new Johnson County Courthouse



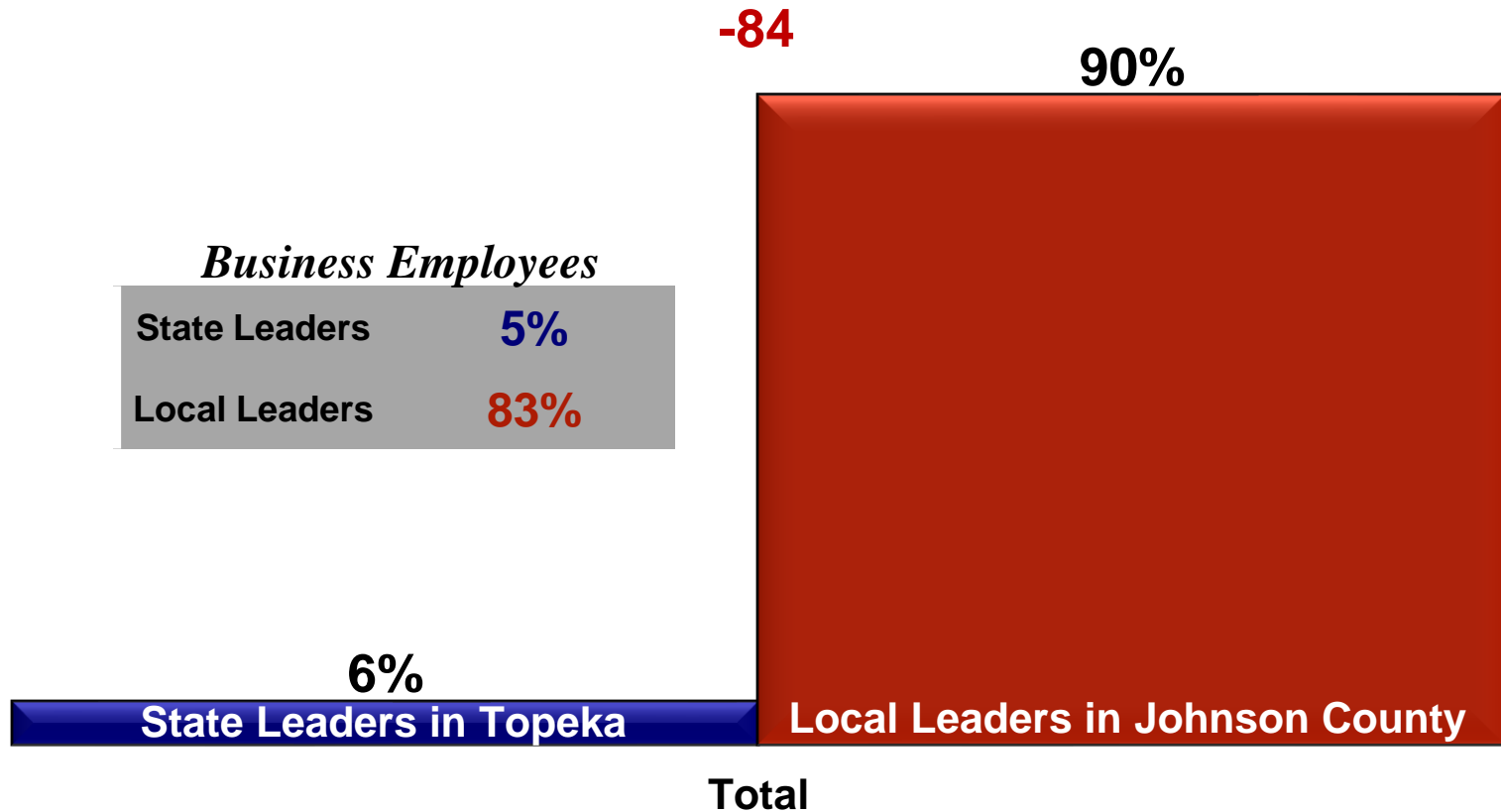
**Asked of Sample A, N=398 RV*



Johnson County Local Education Issues

There's a very strong sentiment that local leaders in Johnson County should have more control over public education decisions than Topeka.

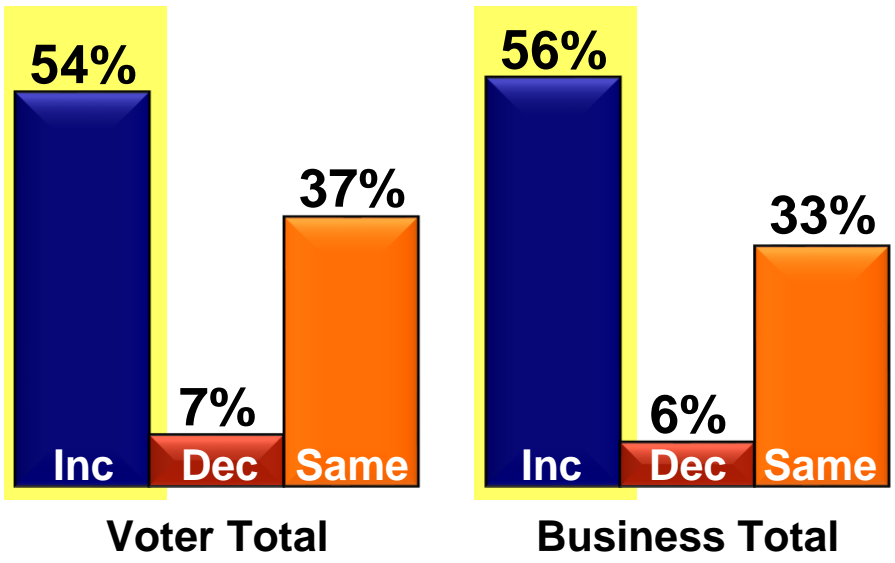
Who should have more control over public education decisions... state leaders in Topeka or local leaders here in Johnson County?



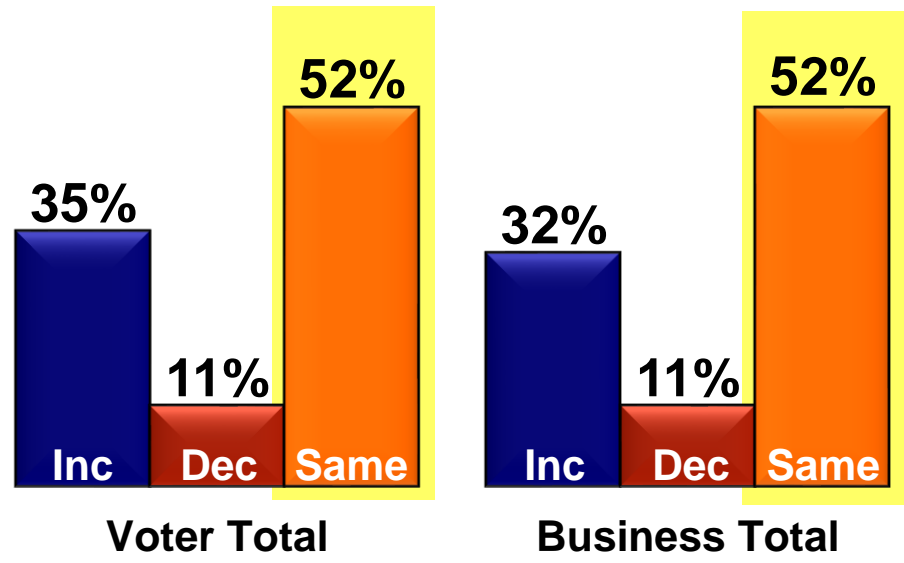
While most believe that government funding should be increased for K-12 education, a majority say it should remain the same for higher education.

Please tell me whether you believe government funding should be increased, decreased or if it should stay about the same for each...

K-12 education

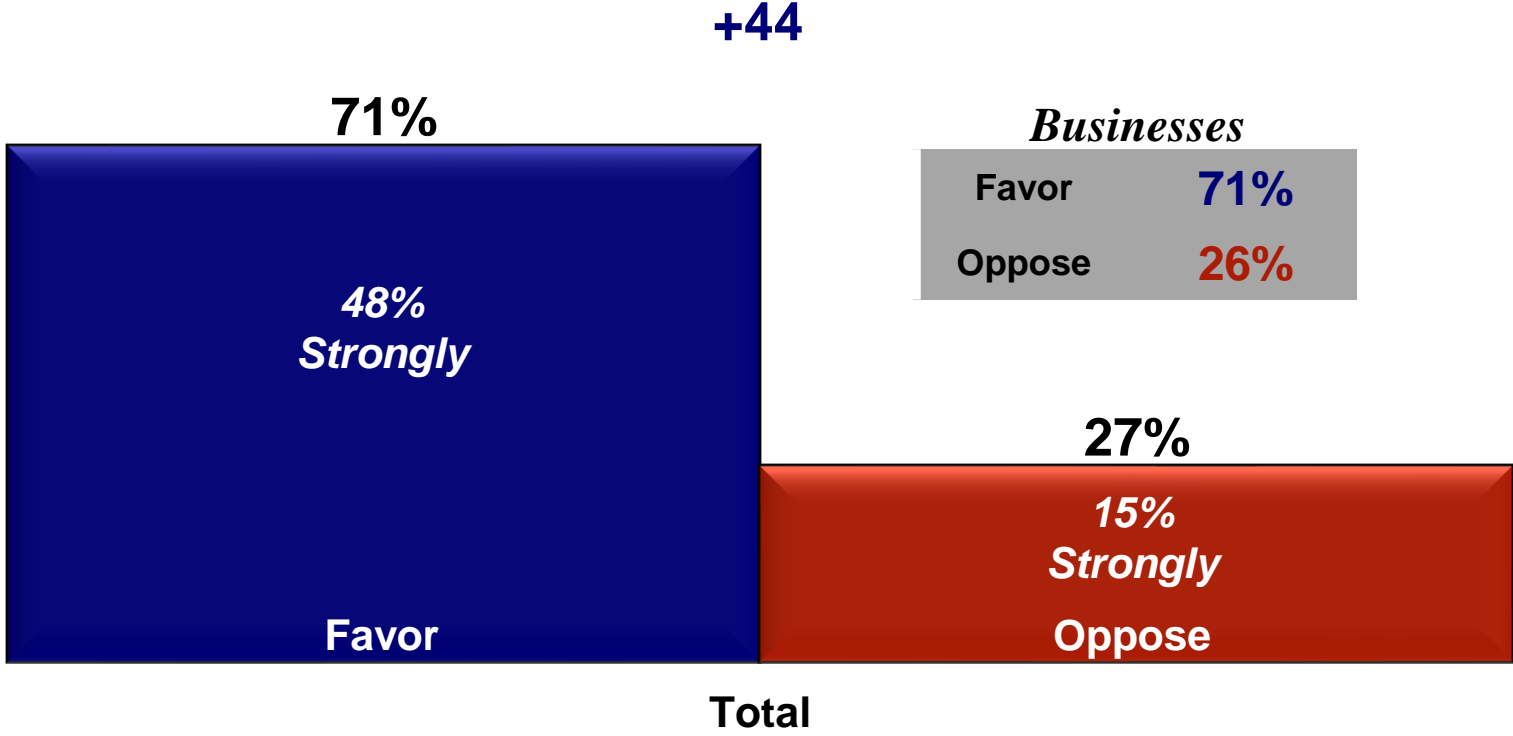


Higher education



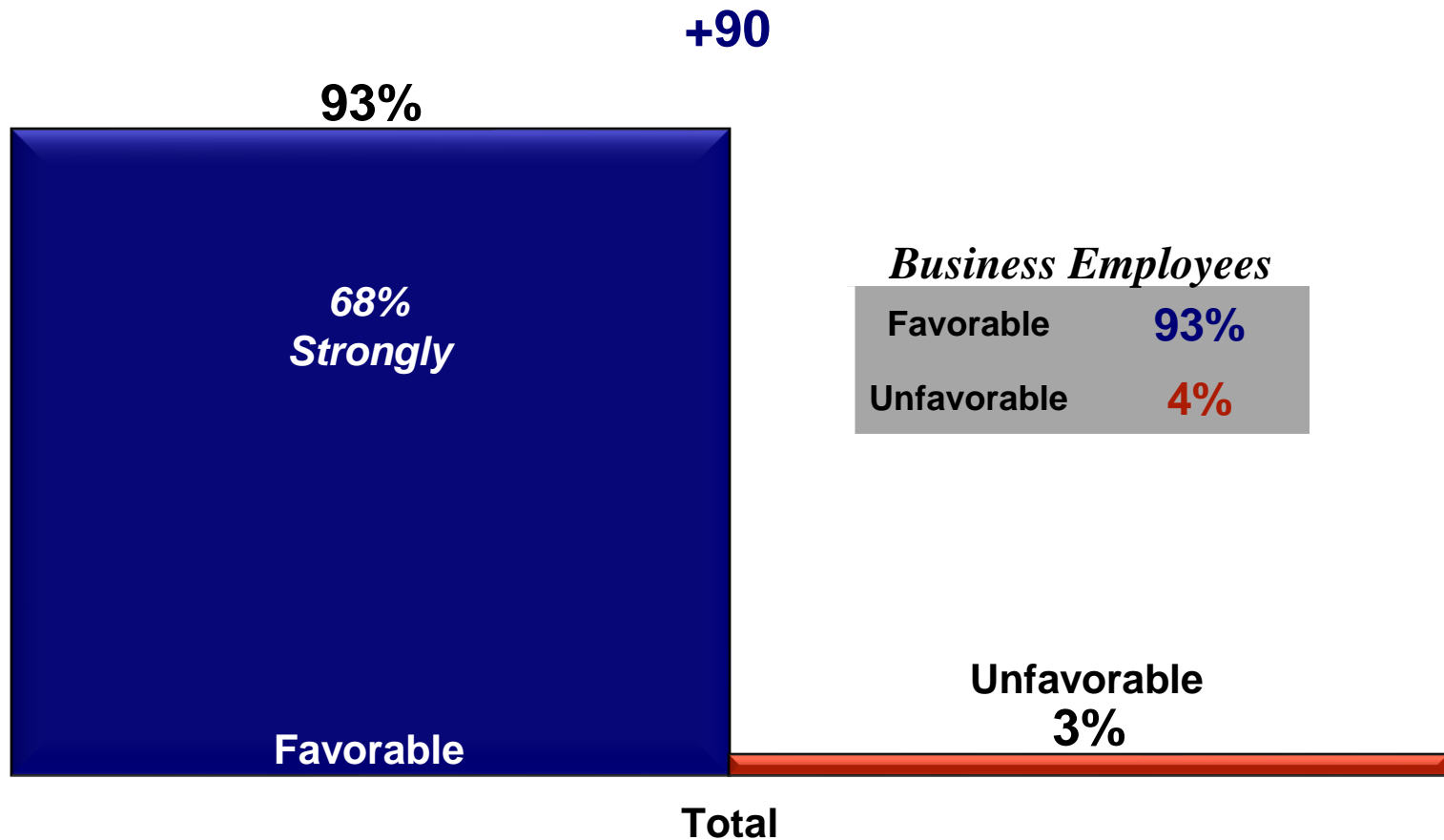
Nearly three-fourths of county voters indicate they would support raising taxes to fund public school classroom enhancements.

Would you favor or oppose a proposal to raise taxes in order to provide funding for classroom enhancements such as smaller class sizes, increased technology in classrooms, all day kindergarten, and higher salaries for teachers in Johnson County’s public schools?



Johnson County Community College has an extraordinary image.

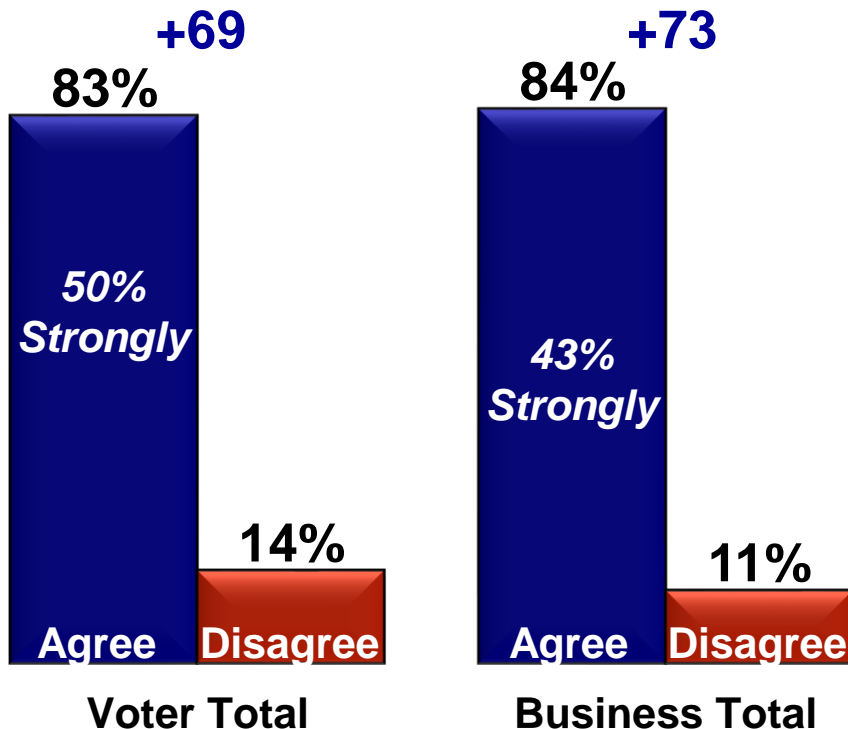
Do you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of Johnson County Community College?



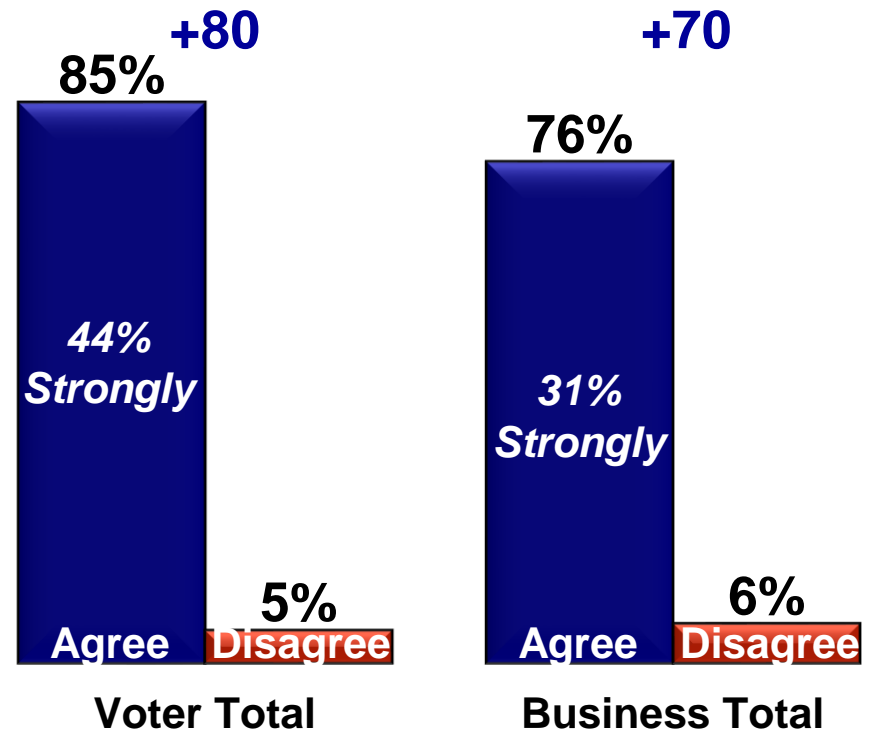
And, there is strong agreement that higher ed at JCCC is critical for economic development and is preparing a ready workforce.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

Higher education at Johnson County Community College is critical for economic development.



Johnson County Community College is preparing a workforce that is ready for the jobs and careers of today and in the future.



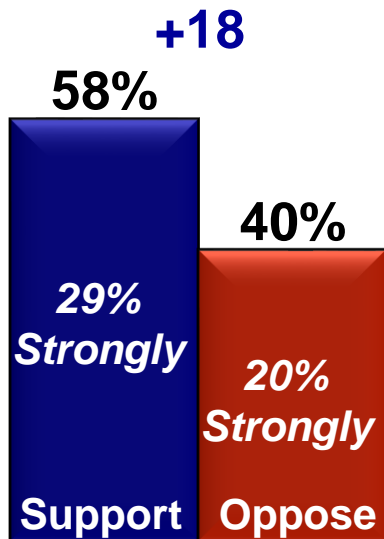
There is some support for raising taxes to expand higher education offerings in Johnson County.

Would you support or oppose raising taxes in order to expand higher education offerings in Johnson County to provide more certification, bachelor's, master's and PhD programs?

Business Employees

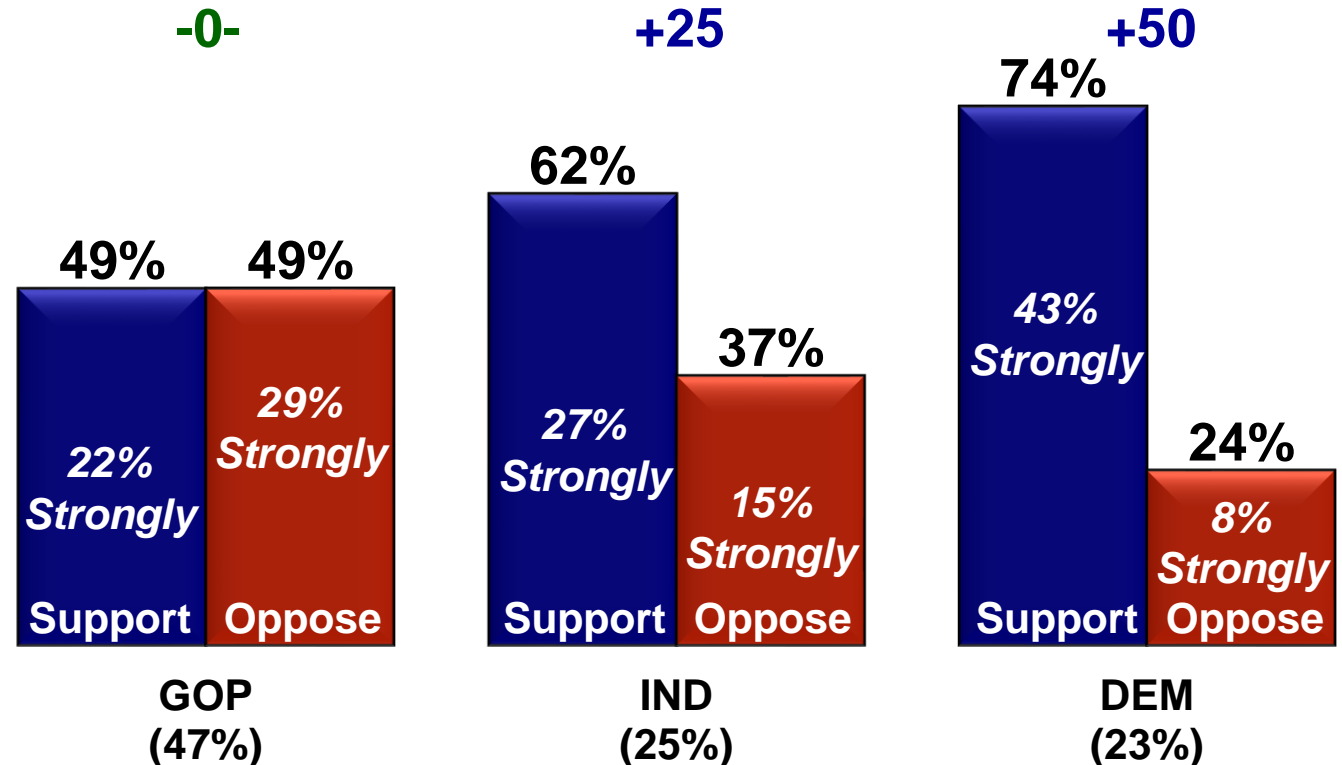
Support	61%
Oppose	32%

Total



Total

By Party





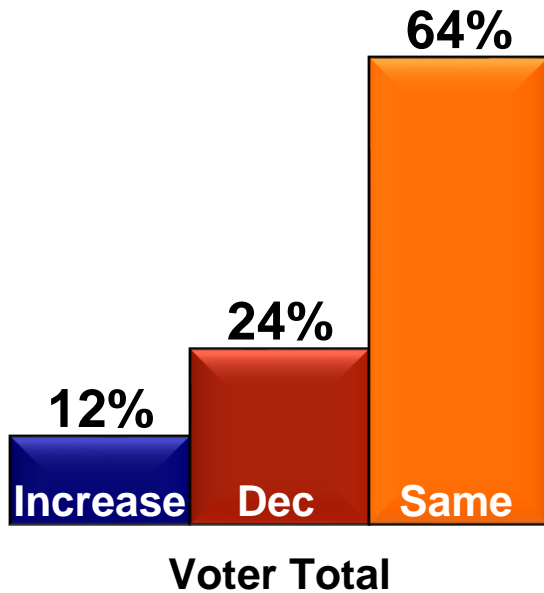
State Tax Issues

Voters believe state tax levels should remain “about the same.”

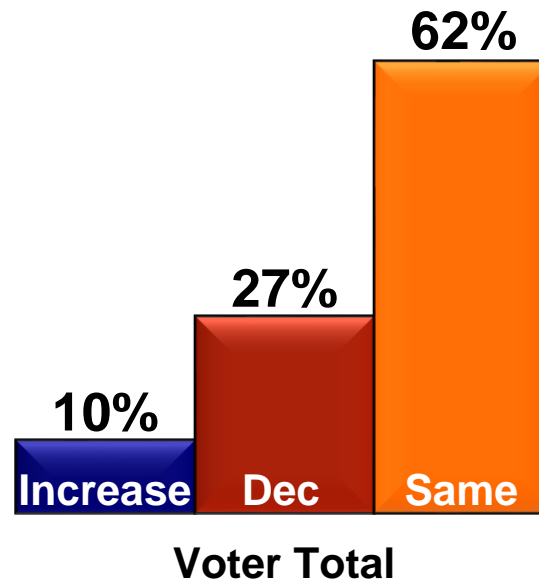
Now, as you may know, the Kansas state government is funded by three primary revenue sources: the state’s income tax, sales tax and property tax.

Thinking about the state’s budget, do you believe that each of the following taxes should be increased, decreased, or remain about the same...

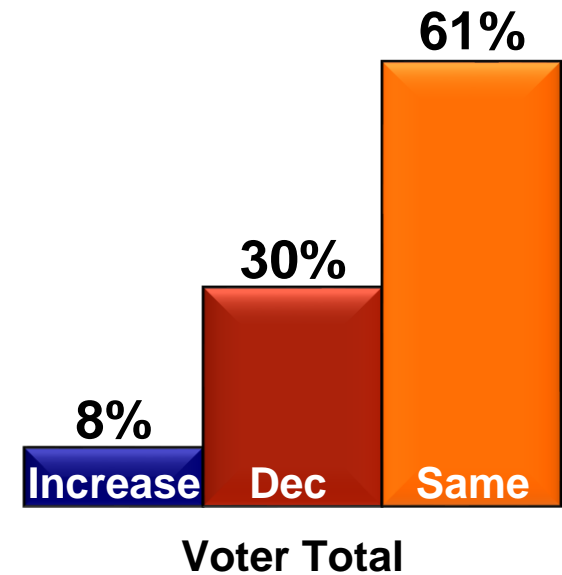
Sales Taxes



Income Taxes



Property Taxes

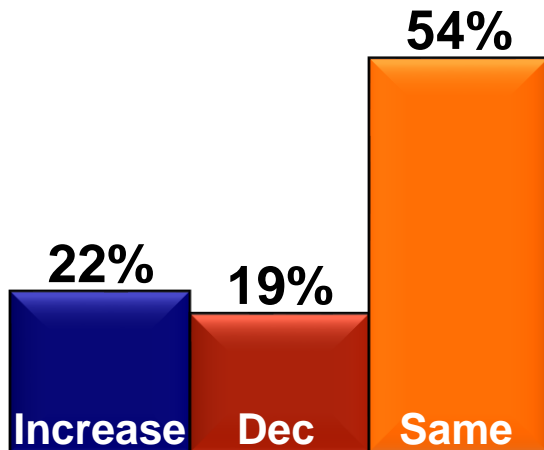


And, the same is true of the business community.

Now, as you may know, the Kansas state government is funded by three primary revenue sources: the state's income tax, sales tax and property tax.

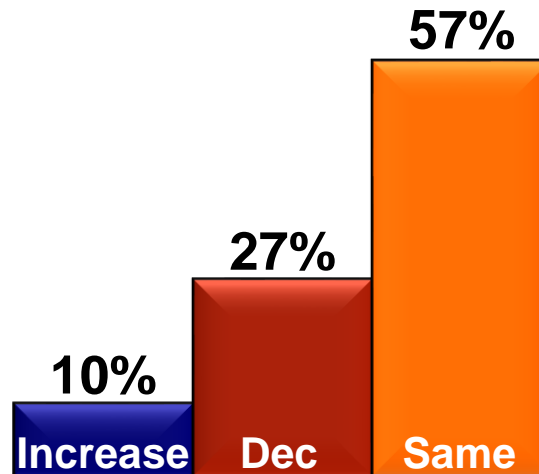
Thinking about the state's budget, do you believe that each of the following taxes should be increased, decreased, or remain about the same...

Sales Taxes



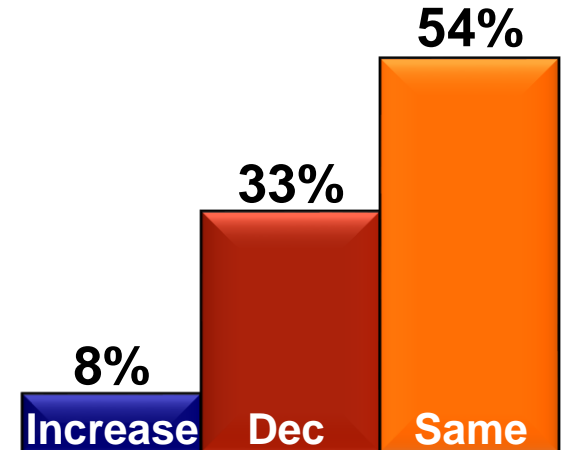
Business Total

Property Taxes



Business Total

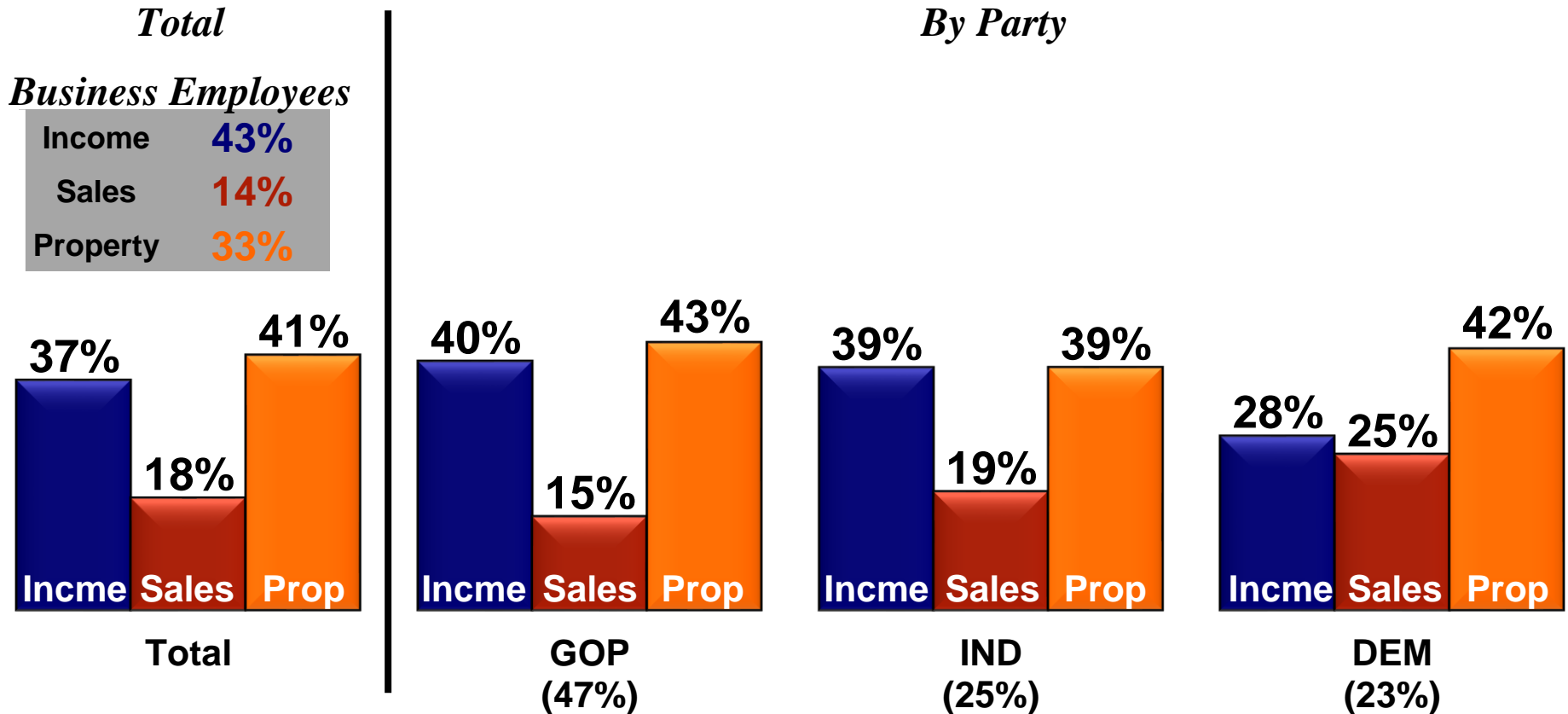
Income Taxes



Business Total

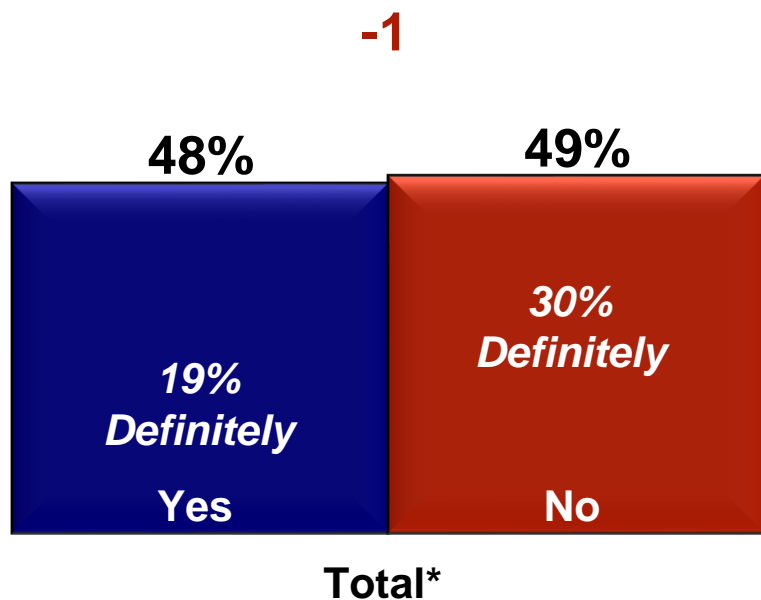
Voters' "least favorite taxes" are property taxes and income taxes.

And, of these three taxes which fund state government – income taxes, sales taxes and property taxes, which of the following do you like paying the least?

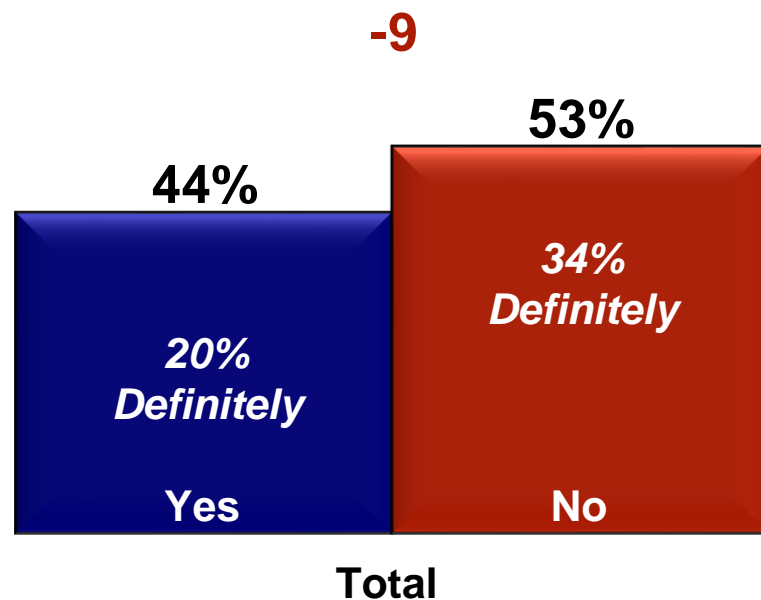


Voters are divided on a proposal to pay higher sales taxes in exchange for either lower income or property taxes.

Would you be willing to pay a higher sales tax on items you purchase in order to reduce your income tax rate?



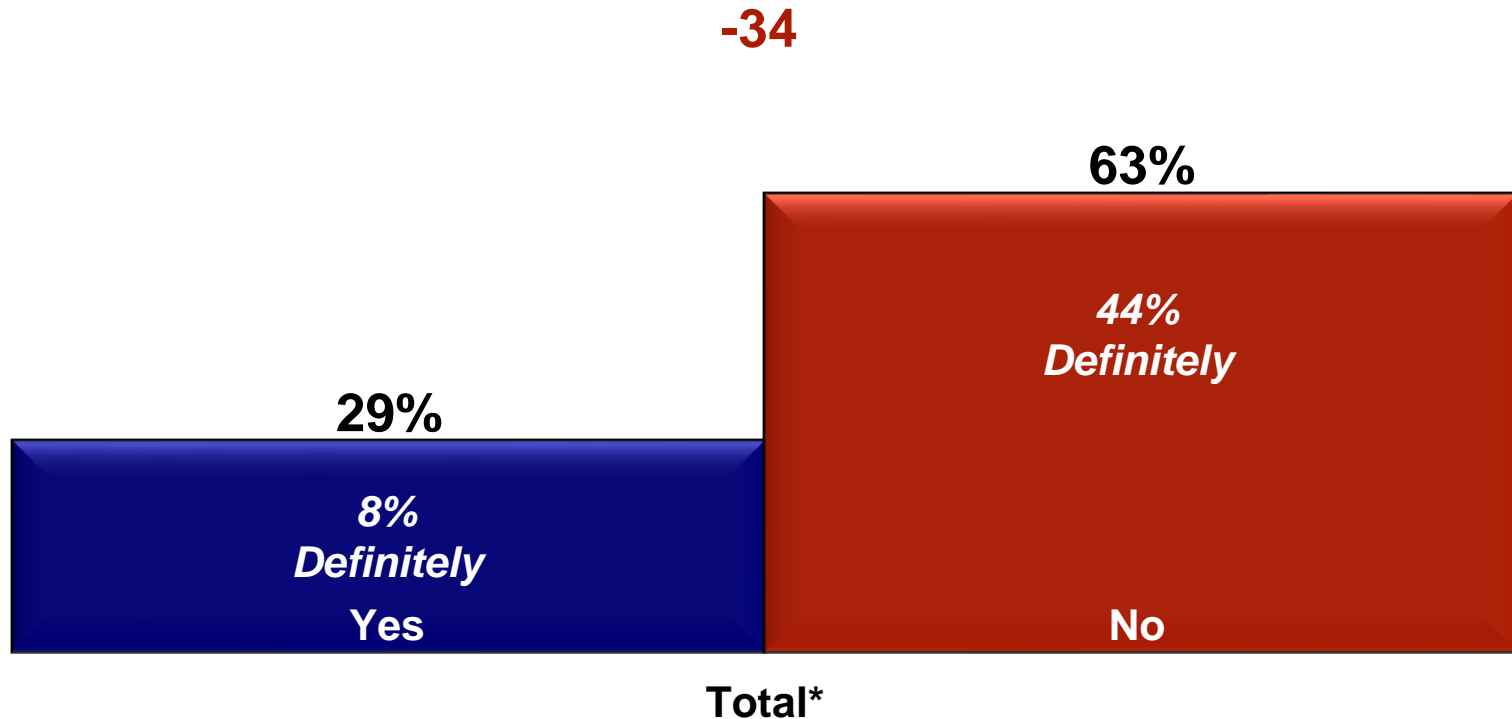
Would you be willing to pay more sales tax on purchases in order to reduce your property tax rate?



*Asked of Sample A, N=398 RV

And, voters strongly oppose paying higher property taxes in order to reduce their income tax rate.

Would you be willing to pay higher property taxes in order to reduce your income tax rate?



**Asked of Sample B, N=402 RV*

On corporate/personal income taxes, we asked voters about the impact of tax cuts on core state services...

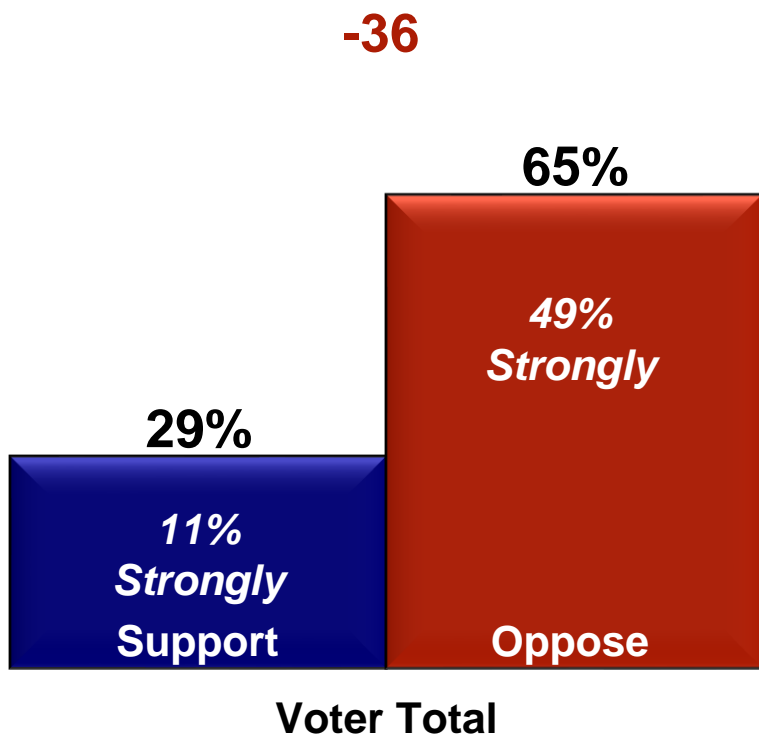
Would you support or oppose eliminating corporate or personal income taxes if it would result in reductions to core state services such as education, public safety, transportation and social services?

...or...

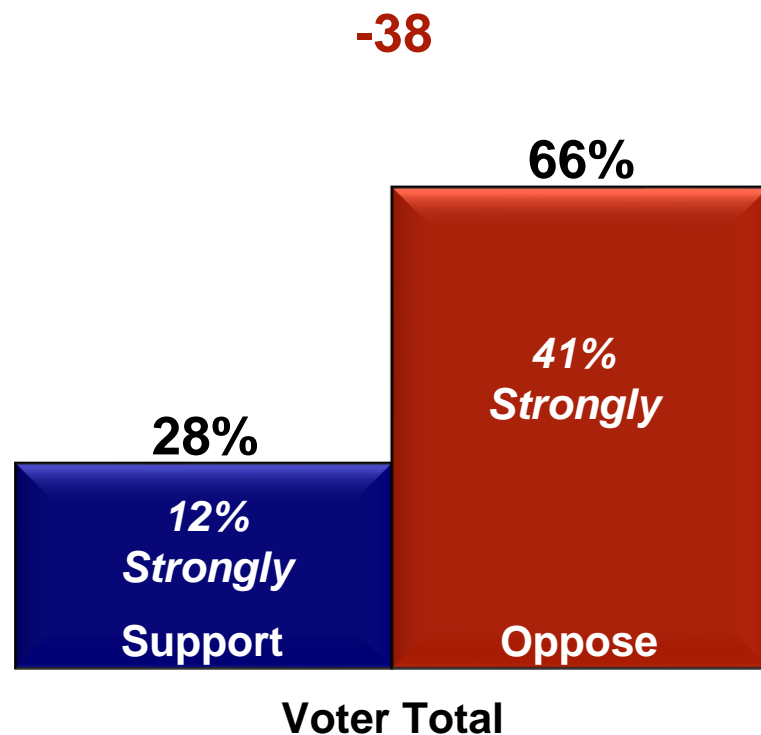
Would you support or oppose reducing corporate or personal income taxes if it would result in reductions to core state services such as education, public safety, transportation and social services?

On the issue of corporate/personal income taxes, voters indicate they aren't willing to trade lower taxes for reduced state services.

Eliminate Corporate/Personal Income Taxes



Reduce Corporate/Personal Income Taxes



*Asked of Sample A, N=398 RV

*Asked of Sample B, N=402 RV



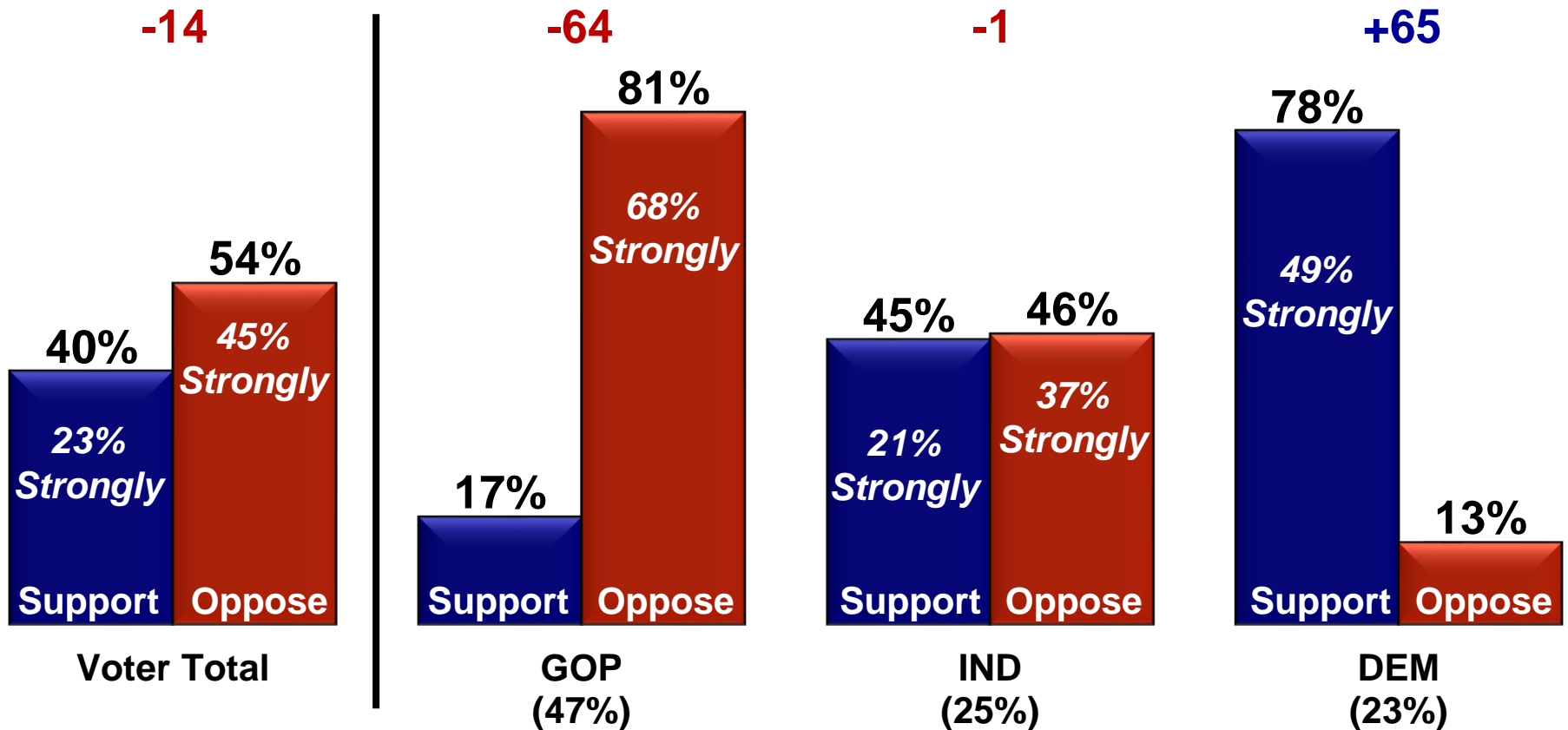
Other Local Johnson County Issues

Johnson County voters are opposed to “Obamacare.”

Do you support or oppose the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, commonly referred to as President Obama’s health care reform plan or “Obamacare”?

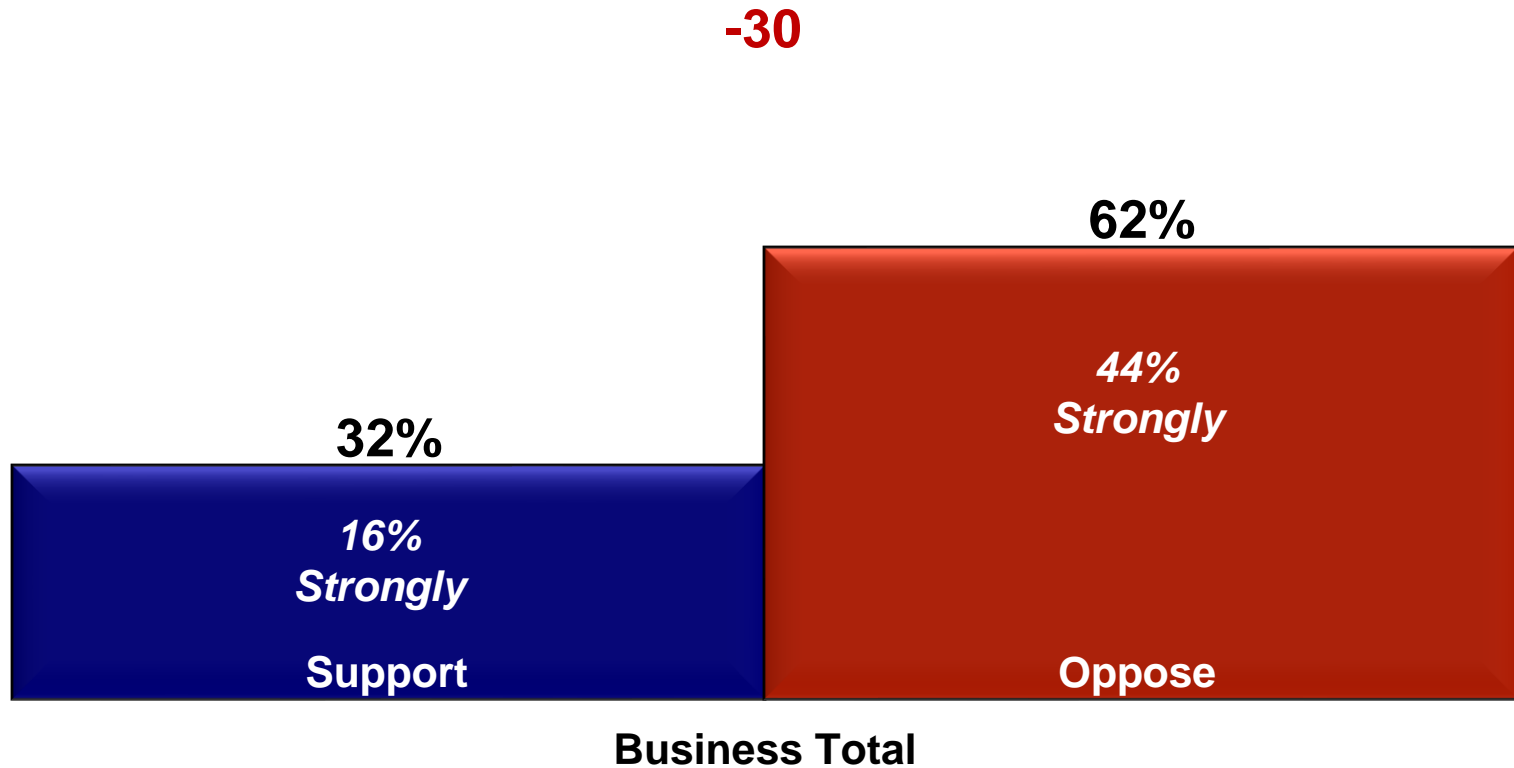
Total

By Party



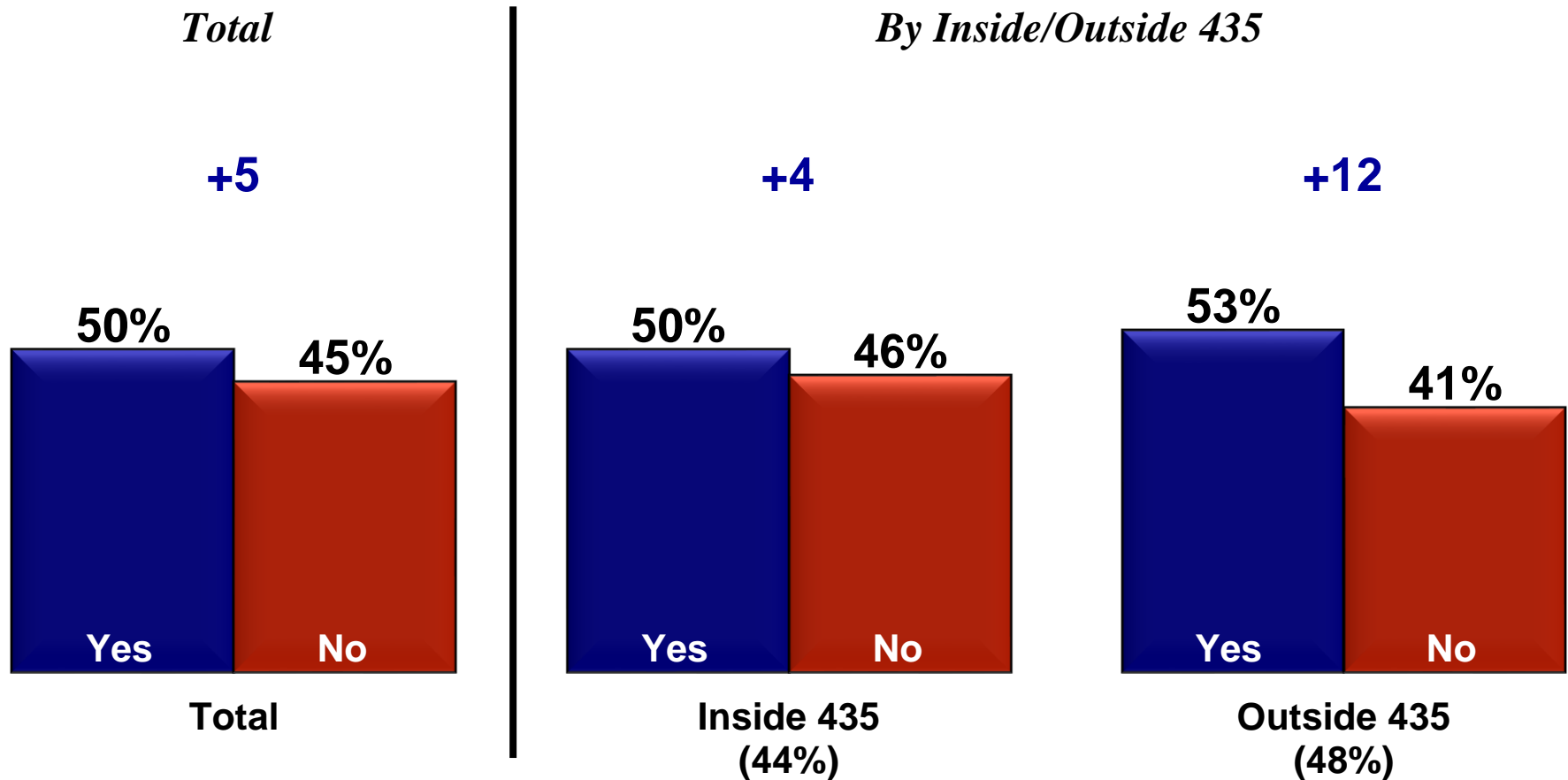
And, nearly two-thirds of business representatives oppose “Obamacare.”

Do you support or oppose the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, commonly referred to as President Obama’s health care reform plan or “Obamacare”?



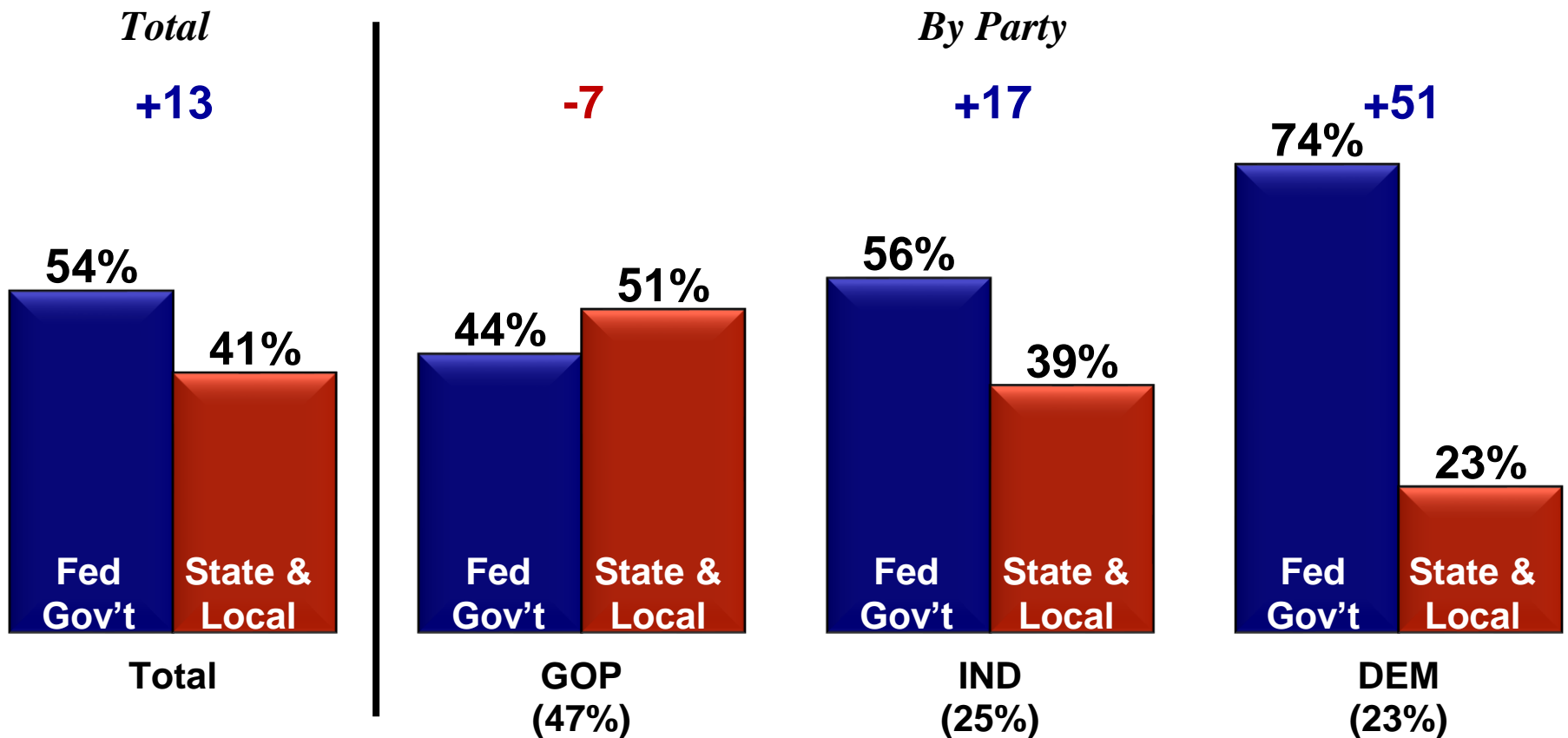
Half of voters believe illegal immigration is a problem in Johnson County.

Do you believe illegal immigration is a problem here in Johnson County?



And, a majority of voters believe illegal immigration is an issue best handled by the federal government.

Do you believe illegal immigration is an issue that should be handled by the federal government or by state and local elected officials?





Take-Aways

TAKE-AWAYS

- ✓ Voters and business representatives are pretty positive about the direction of Johnson County. And, they believe the county's economy is in stronger shape than the national economy.
- ✓ The most positive aspects of living and working in Johnson County are the area's quality of education, ability to get around by car, parks, people's values, and the youth sports programs and facilities.
- ✓ Voters and business representatives indicate that public schools, economic development, and crime/public safety should be the top priorities for local elected officials.
- ✓ On taxes and spending, there's not much of an appetite for change. Generally speaking, survey respondents want government spending and tax levels to remain the same.
- ✓ However, given the high priority of public education, it stands alone as the one thing that voters are very willing to pay higher taxes for.

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