
GEEARS Voter Survey Results

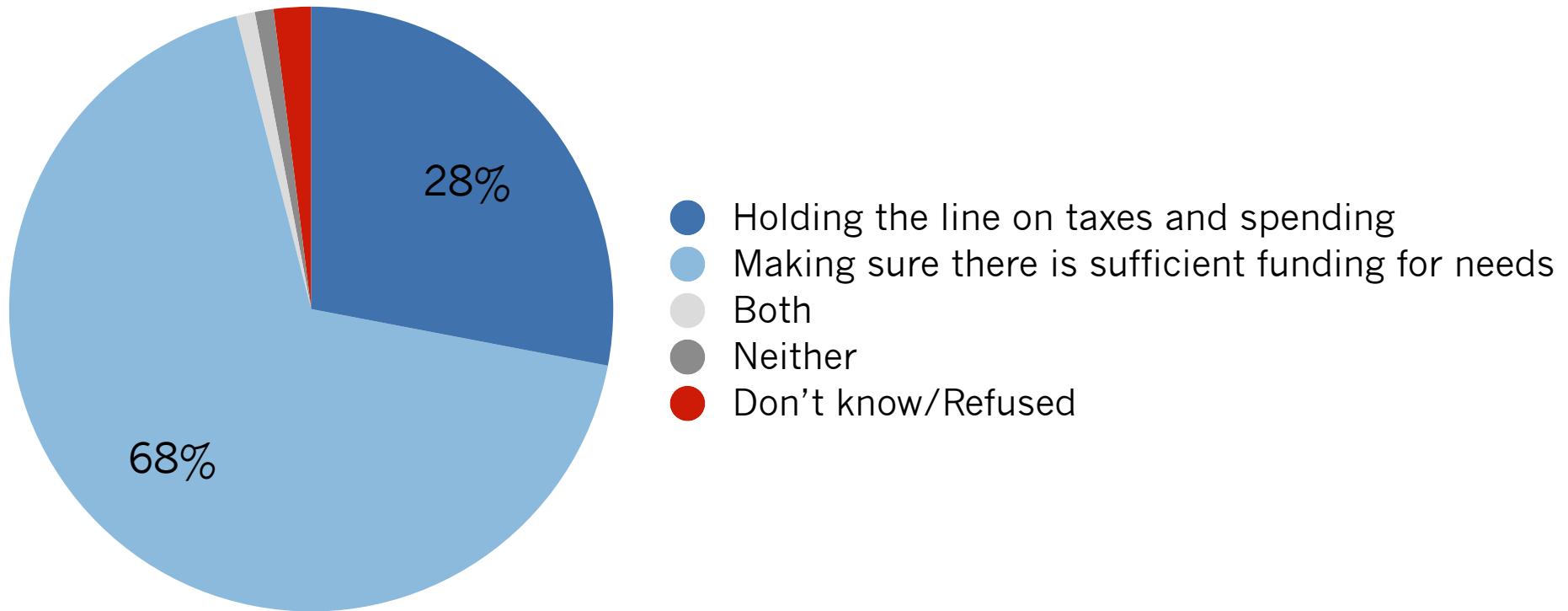
September 2014



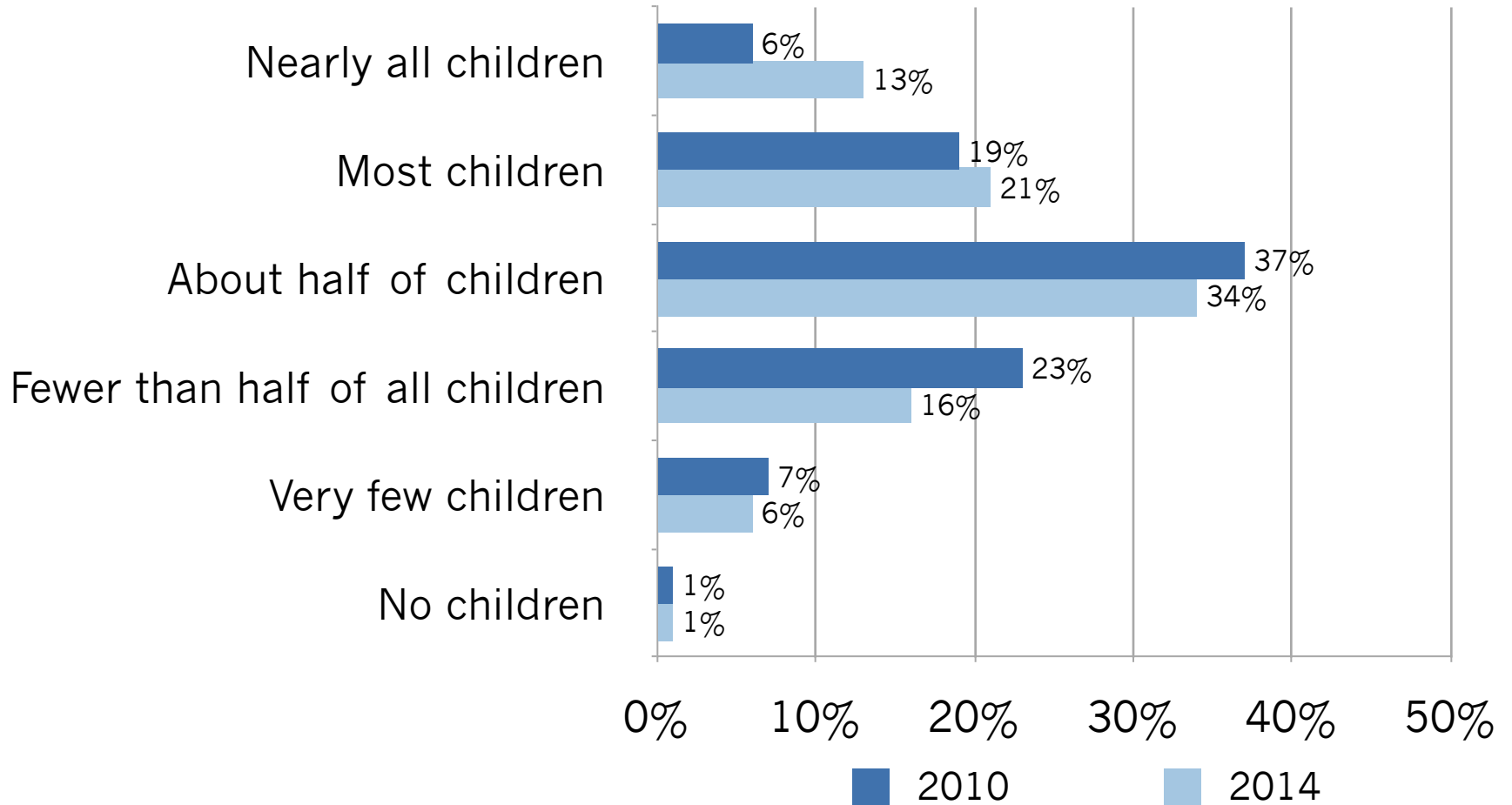
Methodology

- Survey of 400 likely Georgia voters
 - 280 completes on landlines
 - 120 completes on cell phones
 - Margin of sampling error = $\pm 4.9\%$
- Fielded August 2014
- Topics include:
 - Priorities for education in Georgia
 - Support for early education
 - Support for plan to provide states with grants for early education
- Several questions are identical or similar to a 2010 survey of registered Georgia voters. Results are compared over time when possible.

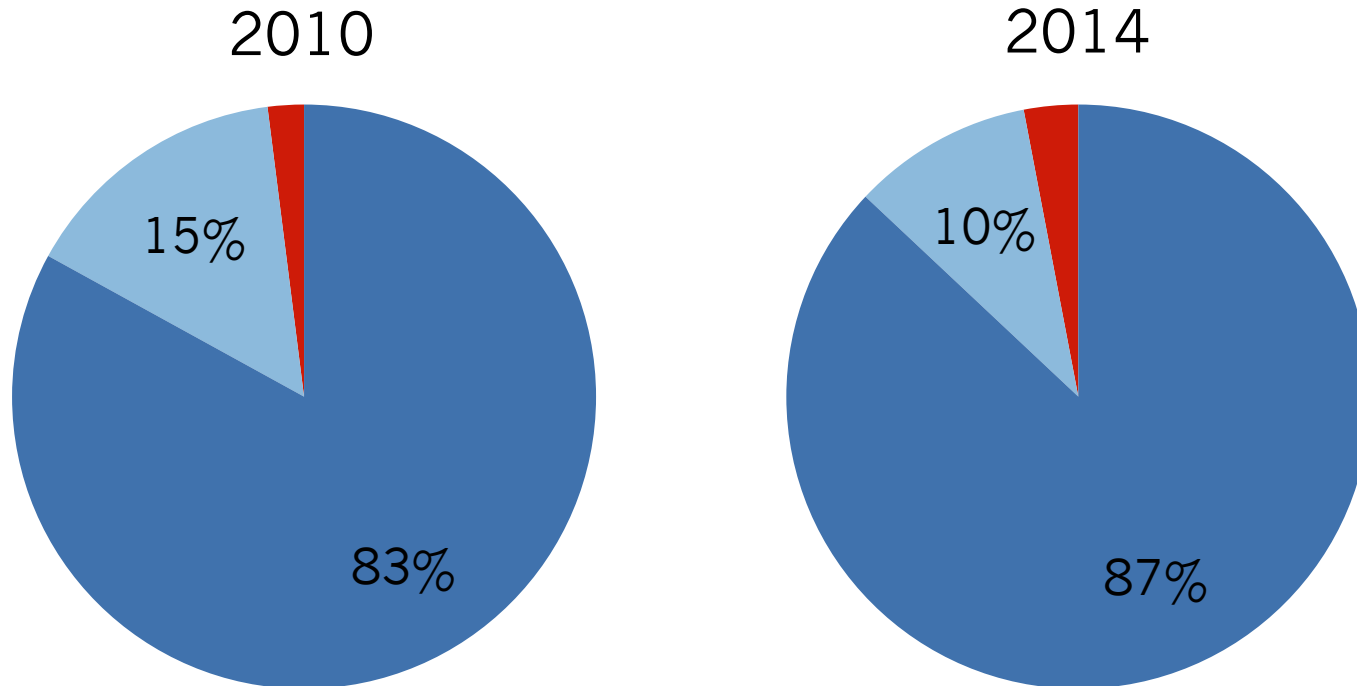
Which of the following do you think is a greater priority for the state of Georgia right now (ROTATE) – holding the line on taxes and spending, or making sure that there is sufficient funding for needs such as education?



Do you have a sense about what proportion of children in Georgia begin kindergarten with the knowledge and skills they need to do their best in school?

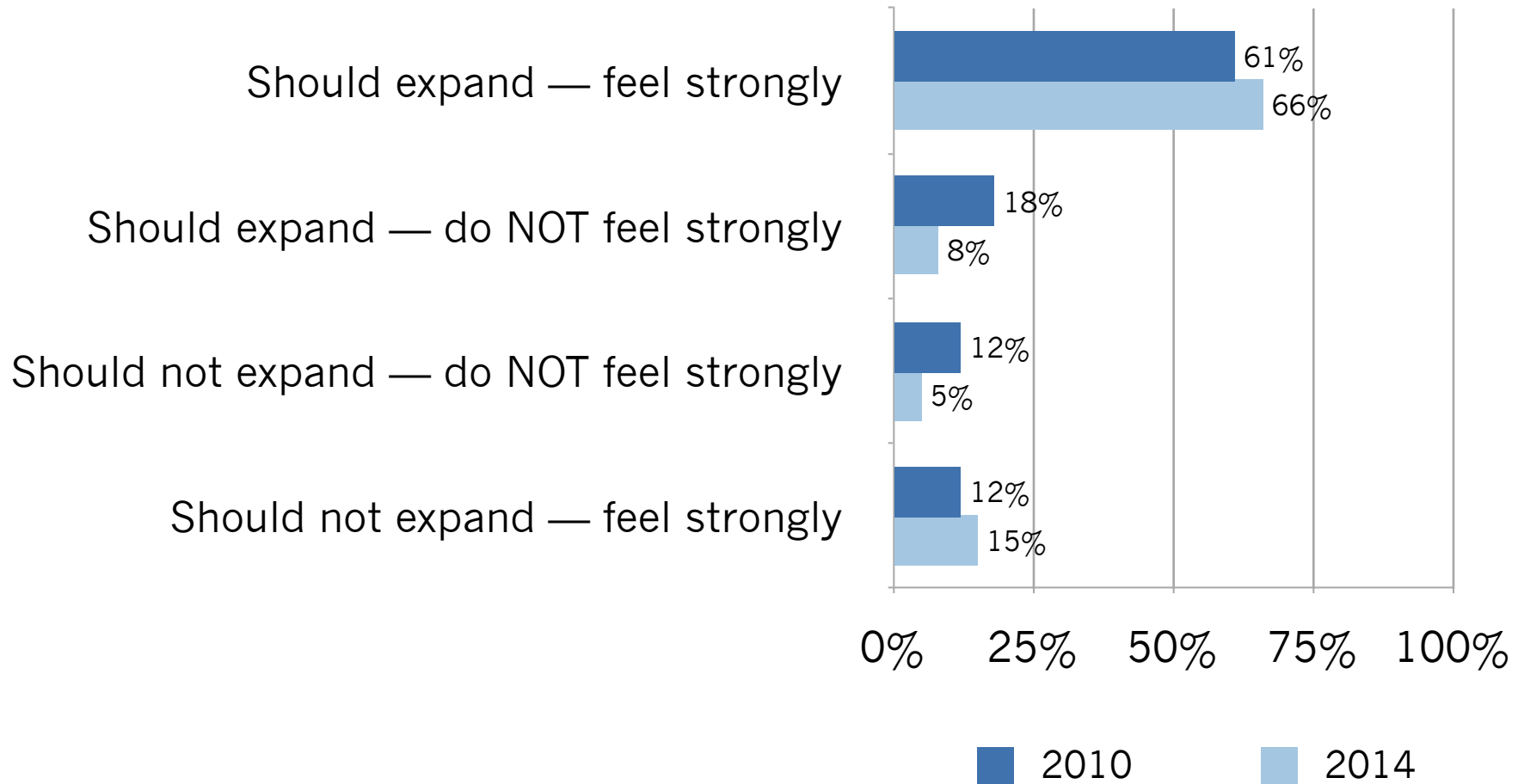


Do you support or oppose Georgia using a portion of lottery funds to provide voluntary pre-kindergarten programs for 4 year olds?

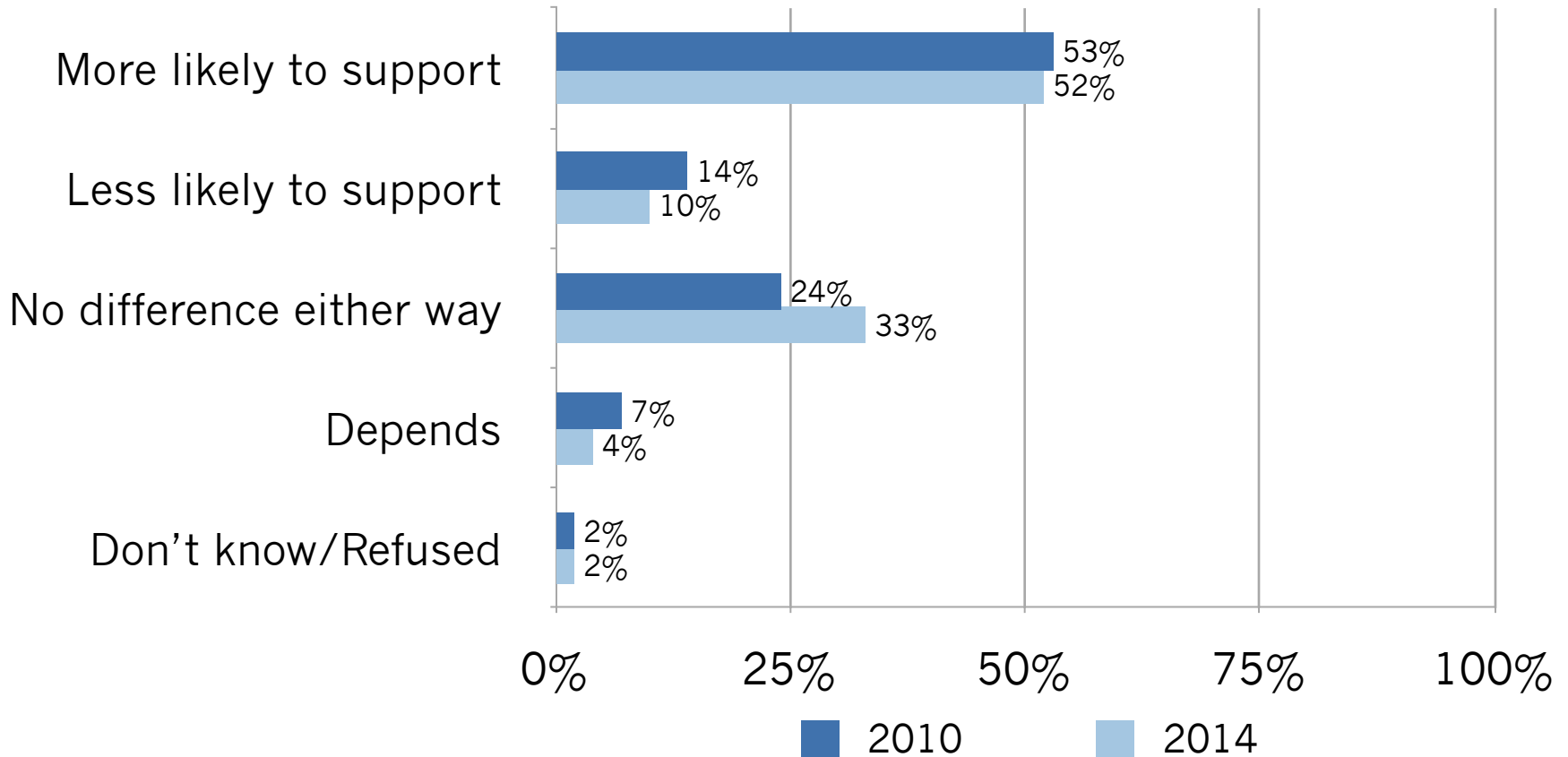


- Support
- Oppose
- Don't know/Refused

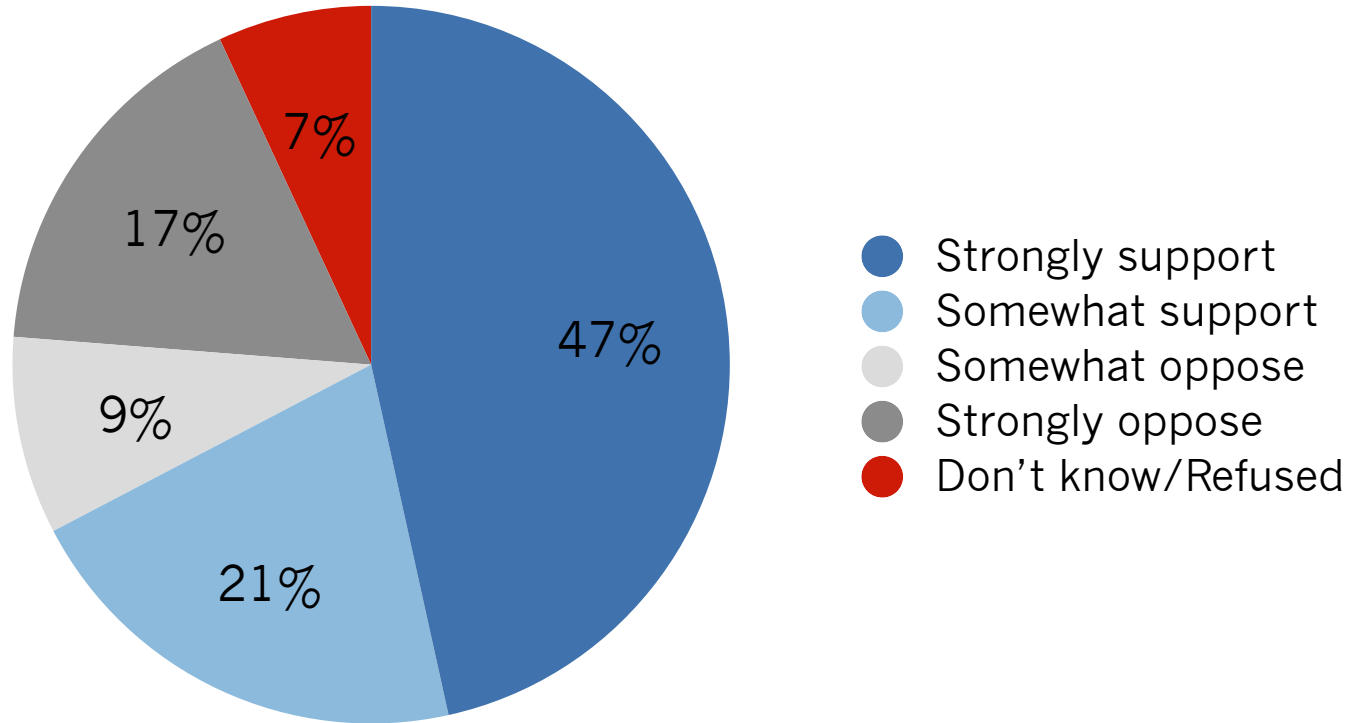
Do you think that the state government should or should not expand voluntary pre-kindergarten for all families who want to participate?



If your state legislator voted in favor of expanding pre-kindergarten programs to make them available to all families in Georgia who want to send their children, would you be more likely or less likely to support your legislator for reelection?



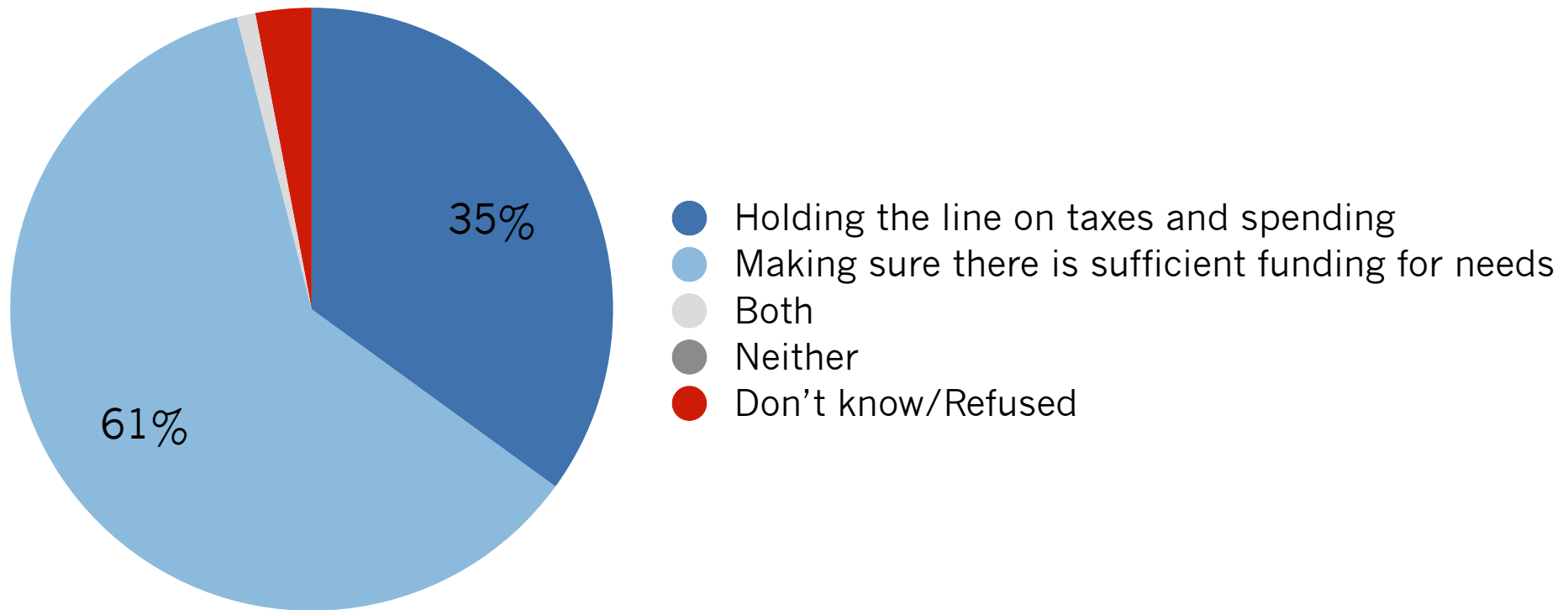
Do you support or oppose expanding the amount of state funding for child care subsidies for low income working parents?



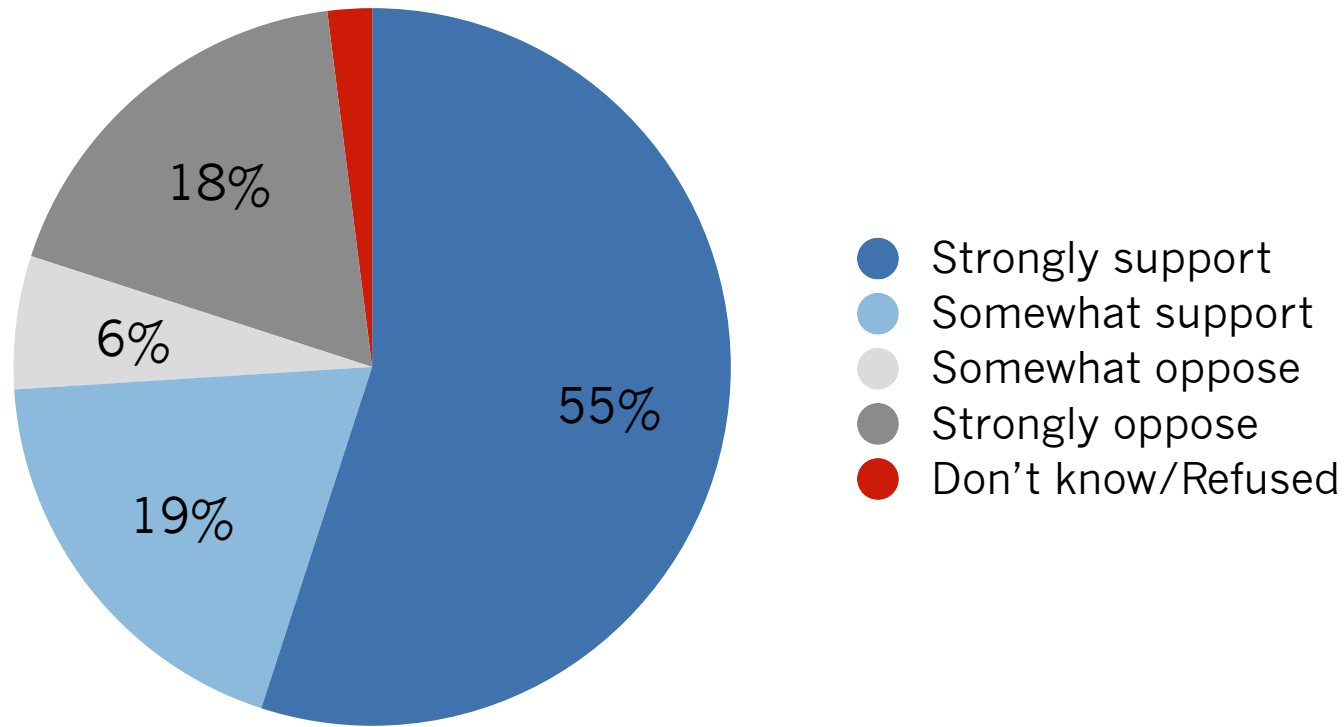
State-level Policy: Demographic Analysis

- GA fiscal policy
 - Majority of every group believes priority should be sufficient funding for needs.
- Lottery funds for voluntary pre-k
 - Majority of every group *strongly* supports.
- Expand voluntary pre-k
 - *Strong* support from majority of every group except Republicans, though almost half of Republicans *strongly* support expansion.
- Legislator who votes to expand pre-k
 - No group stands out as being less likely to support that legislator.
- Expand state funding for child care subsidies
 - Though support is stronger among Democrats, almost half of Republicans support expansion.

Which of the following do you think is a greater priority for the US right now (ROTATE) – holding the line on taxes and spending, or making sure that there is sufficient funding for needs such as education?



Would you support or oppose this plan to help states and local communities provide better early childhood education?*



* Full question text: Congress is considering a plan to help states and local communities provide better early childhood education programs to parents of young children. This ten-year program would provide states with ten billion dollars in grants each year for providing voluntary access to high quality preschool programs to all low and moderate income families with four-year-old children. It would also make available voluntary child care for infants and toddlers, as well as parenting skills education. Would you support or oppose this plan to help states and local communities provide better early childhood education?

There are a few different parts to this plan. Please tell me if you think each of the following is very important, somewhat important, not that important, or not important at all.

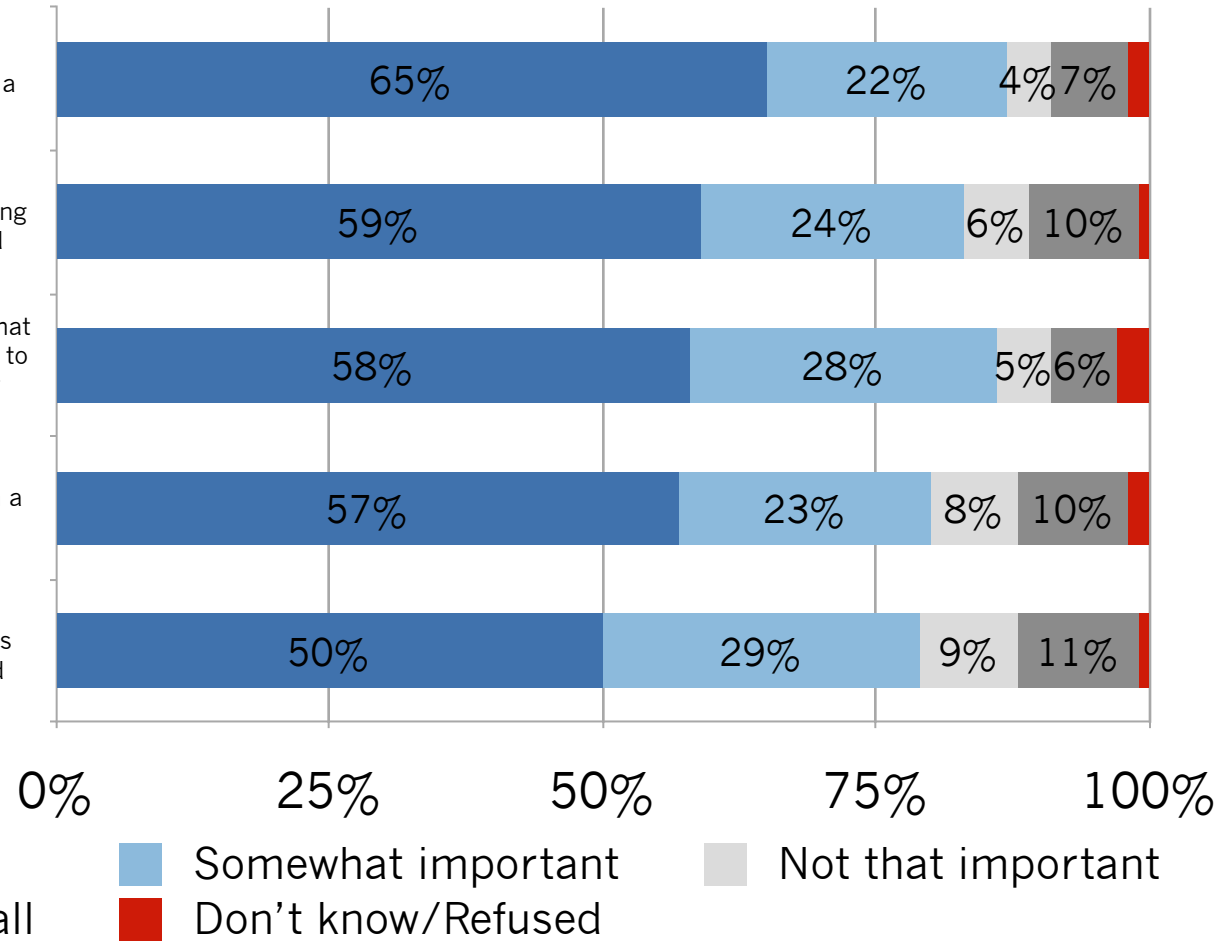
Making early education and child care more affordable for working families to give children a strong start.

Helping states and local communities build better preschool services for parents and making them more accessible to children from low and middle income families.

Funding would only be provided to programs that meet specific standards that have been proven to work for educating young children and keeping them healthy.

Making available high quality early learning programs for infants and toddlers to give them a strong start on developing school ready knowledge and social skills.

Providing voluntary home visiting and parent education programs that help first-time parents support their child's early learning, health, and emotional development.

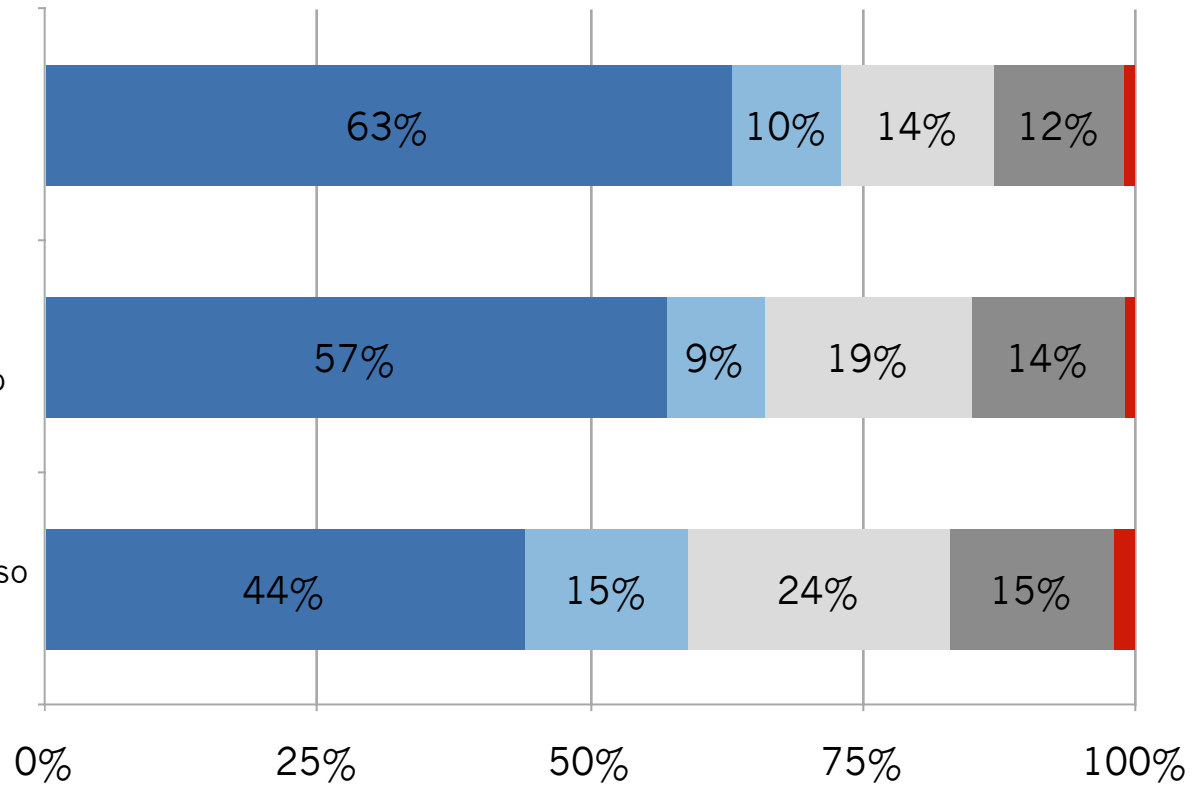


I'm going to read you reasons that some people have given in FAVOR of the early childhood education plan. For each one, please tell me whether you think this is a very convincing, fairly convincing, just somewhat convincing, or not at all convincing reason for supporting this plan.

Investing in our children is investing in our future.

We must do more to make sure our children begin kindergarten with the knowledge and skills they need to do their best in school.

This proposal will help states expand early childhood education programs so that children who need them can participate.



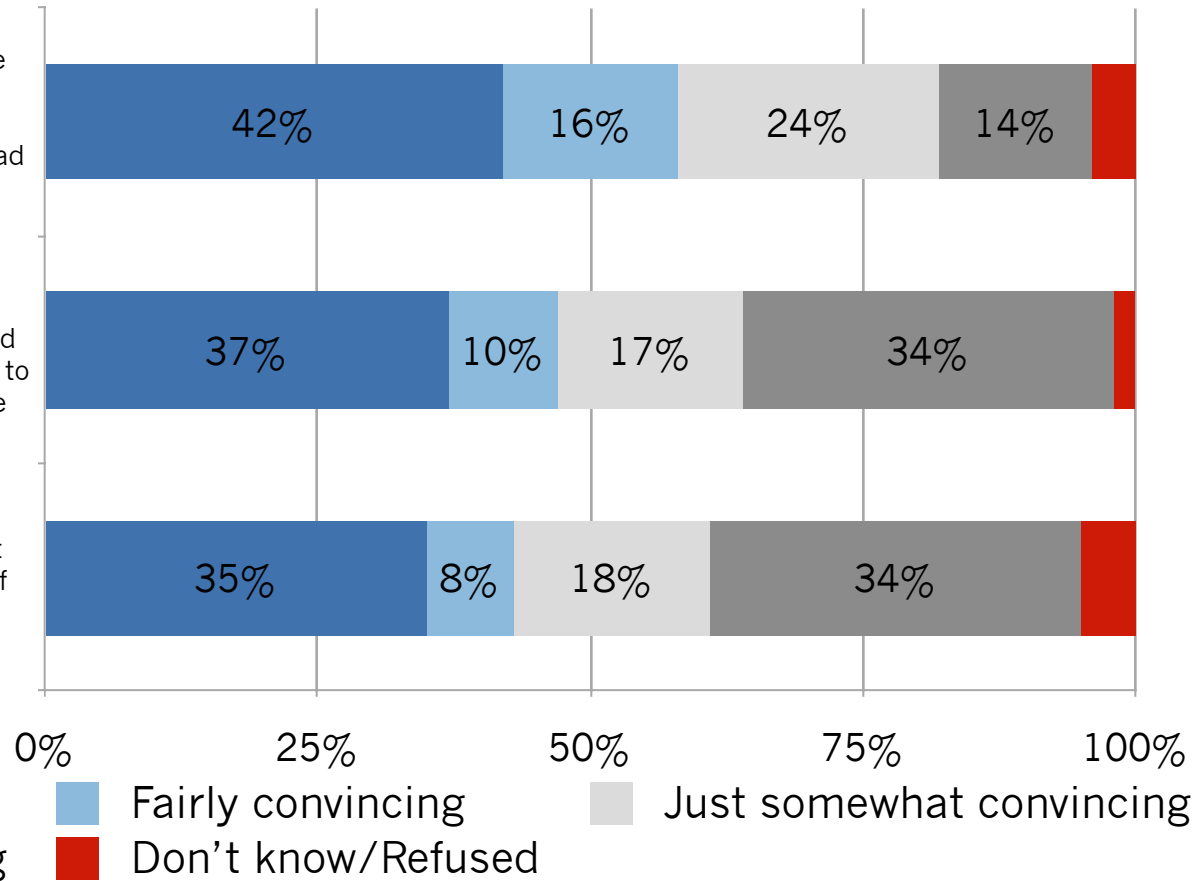
Very convincing
 Fairly convincing
 Just somewhat convincing
 Not at all convincing
 Don't know/Refused

Now I'm going to read you reasons that some people have given to OPPOSE this early childhood education plan. For each one, please tell me whether you think this is a very convincing, fairly convincing, just somewhat convincing, or not at all convincing reason for opposing this plan.

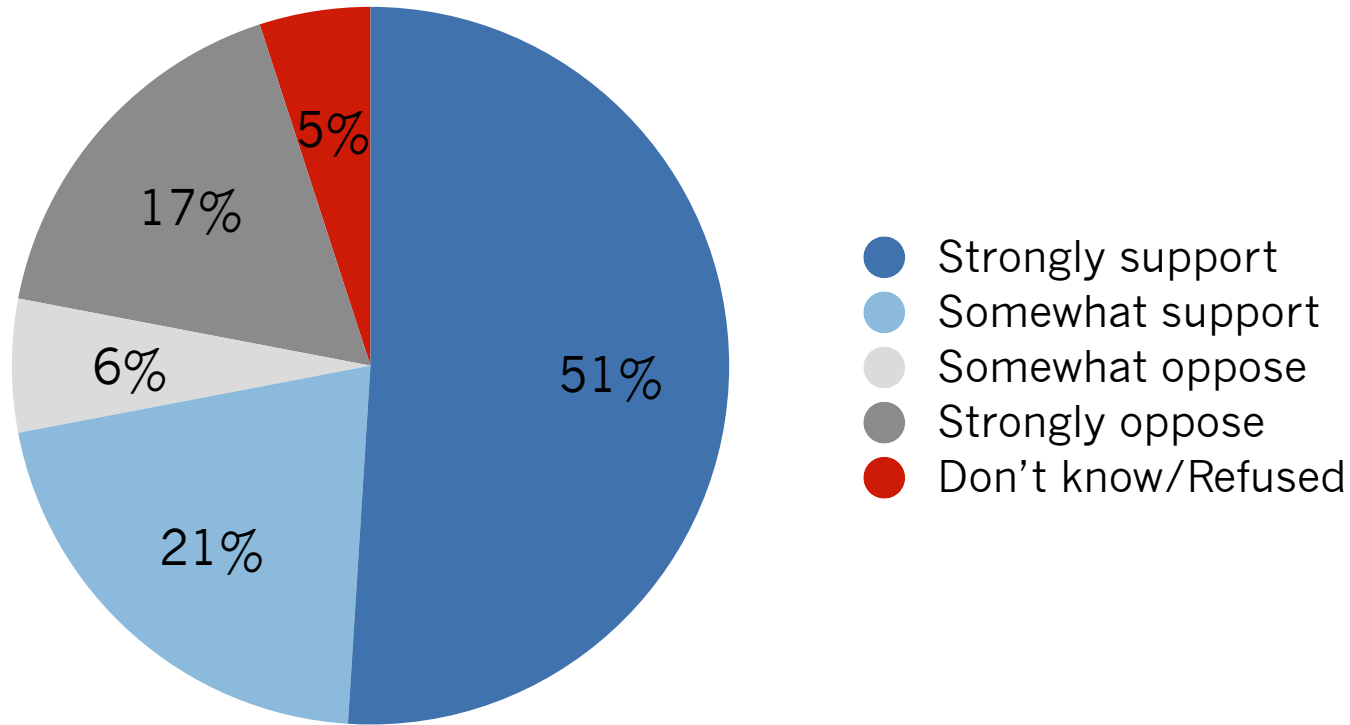
If we want to do more to help low income children have access to quality early learning opportunities, we should be working within existing programs like Head Start.

Educating children before they reach kindergarten age is primarily the responsibility of parents and families, and government should not spend tax dollars to do the job parents and families should be expected to do.

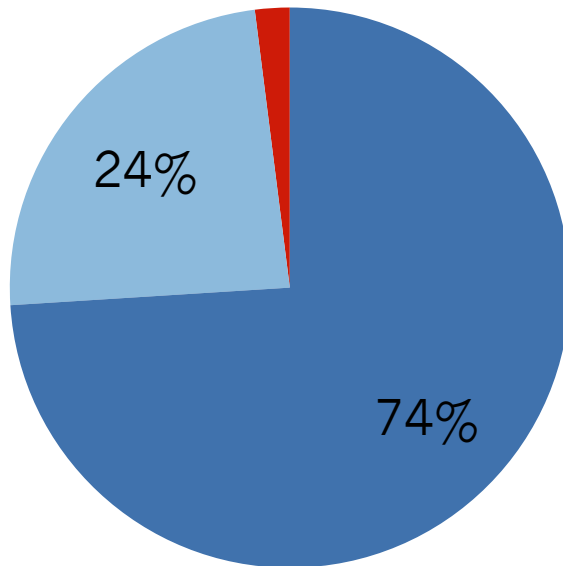
We can't afford another huge government entitlement program that costs billions of dollars.



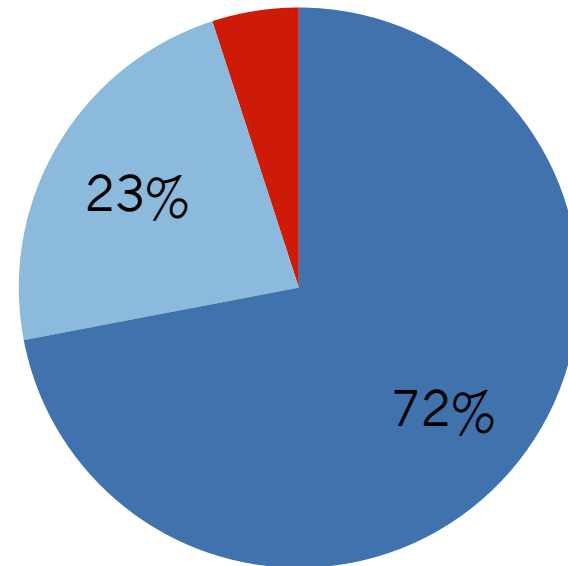
Thinking again about this plan to help states and local communities provide better early childhood education, would you support or oppose it?



Before messages

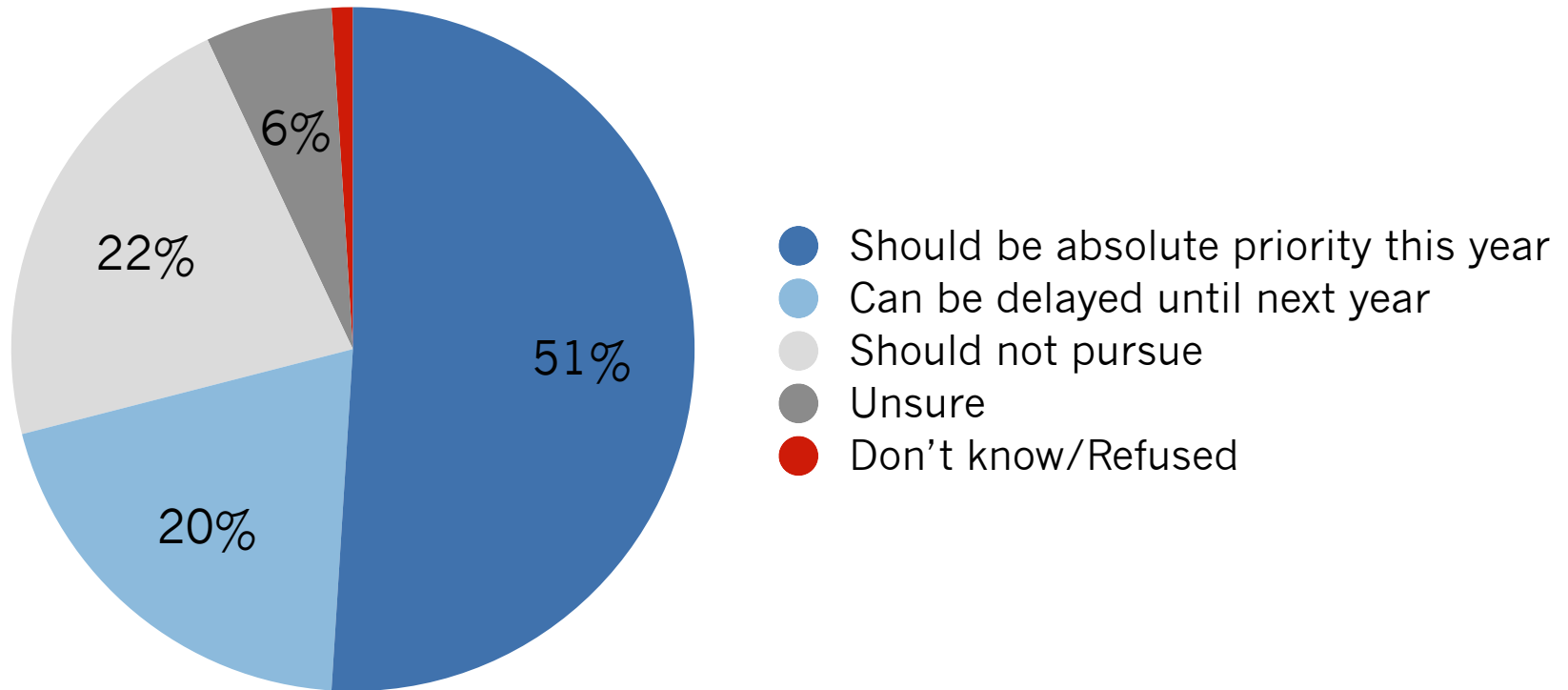


After messages



- Support
- Oppose
- Don't know/Refused

Obviously, there are many important issues facing the country, but not every single one can be a top priority for the President and Congress. So in thinking about this early childhood education proposal, do you think...



National Policy: Demographic Analysis

- US fiscal policy
 - While the desire to hold the line on taxes and spending is higher among Republicans than Democrats, close to half of conservatives join the majorities of moderates and liberals who support sufficient funding for these needs.
- Early childhood education plan
 - Majorities of all groups support the plan.
- Reaction to different parts of the plan
 - The most important factor, regardless of party affiliation, is that the plan would make early education and child care more affordable for working families.

National Policy: Demographic Analysis

- Reasons to favor the plan
 - All groups of voters agree that investing in our children is investing in our future.
- Reasons to oppose the plan
 - Black voters are the most likely to find the need to work within existing programs to be very convincing, and they are the only voter group that stands out in this regard.
 - Republicans and conservatives respond the most strongly to the argument that we cannot afford another government entitlement program, with just over half of each group finding that a *very* convincing reason to oppose the plan. Just over half of each group is also likely to be *very* convinced that educating children before they reach kindergarten is the family's responsibility.

National Policy: Demographic Analysis

- Early childhood plan after new information
 - There were not many observable changes in support levels. The pattern among most subgroups mirrored the overall findings; to the extent there were changes, they showed up in slight decreases in intensity of support. This was most evident among Democrats, though they remained strongly supportive overall. Support levels among Republicans and independents did not change noticeably.
- Priority of the early childhood education plan
 - Those most supportive of action this year are blacks, Democrats, liberals, moderates, voters with kids under 18, younger voters, and lower income voters. Women are also more likely than men to favor this as a 2014 priority.
 - Independents, conservatives, and Republicans are far less interested in proceeding this year, as only around one-third of each group is anxious for the President and Congress to act on this issue now.

Summary

- Georgia's likely voters are predisposed toward supporting the State's early childhood education programs, with this support crossing party lines.
- Voters are willing to back up that support with State funding, particularly when it comes to using lottery funds to provide voluntary pre-kindergarten programs for 4 year olds.
- The most evident partisan division is on the question of expanded state funding for child care subsidies for working families. Though almost half of Republicans support expansion, they are not as supportive as Democrats on this issue.
- Likely voters express solid support for the national plan under consideration by Congress, with majorities of all demographic subgroups expressing support for this plan. After voters learn new information about and hear reasons to favor and oppose the plan, they remain solidly supportive of this proposal.

Strategic Recommendations

- Stress the fact that support exists *across the ideological spectrum* for Georgia's early childhood education programs and the proposed national plan.
- Discuss *state-level* early childhood education in the context of providing sufficient funding for these kinds of programs.
- Move forward confidently on the issue of lottery funds for pre-kindergarten, as that enjoys *strong* support from every demographic group.
- Expect some resistance from Republicans on attempts to expand voluntary pre-k programs and even more from them on expanding state subsidies for child care.
- When discussing the national proposal currently under consideration, focus on the fact that the plan would make early childhood education and child care more affordable for working families.

Strategic Recommendations

- Make the case for the national plan that investing in our children is investing in our future. Not only is this the most resonant argument for the plan, but it also may help counter the negative that we cannot afford another government entitlement program.
- Be prepared to make the case as to why this new program is needed when we already have existing programs ostensibly meeting the same need.

Demographics

White	64%	Urban	20%
Black	27%	Suburban	44%
Other	1%	Rural	33%
Democrat	42%	Conservative	50%
Republican	39%	Moderate	20%
Independent	15%	Liberal	23%
Male	45%	Kids under 18: Yes	32%
Female	55%	Kids under 18: No	66%
18-39	23%	<\$40,000	34%
40-59	44%	\$40,000 – \$75,000	24%
60+	32%	>\$75,000	25%
North GA	23%		
Metro Atlanta	37%		
Middle GA	19%		
South GA	20%		