HART RESEARCH

NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY

Georgians' Views on Policies for Families with Young Children

Findings from a statewide survey of likely voters

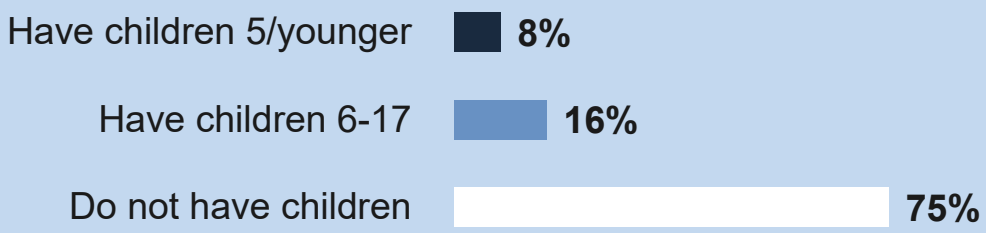
GEEARS
GEORGIA EARLY EDUCATION ALLIANCE FOR READY STUDENTS

Methodology

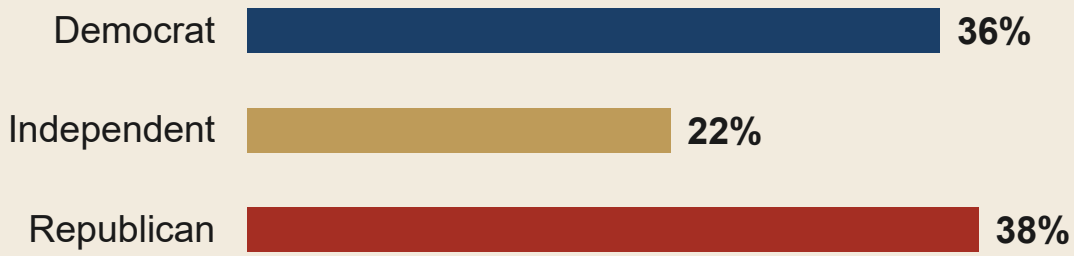
Telephone survey of 602 likely 2026 general election voters

Sample drawn from the voter file; representative of Georgia voters statewide

Parental status



Partisanship

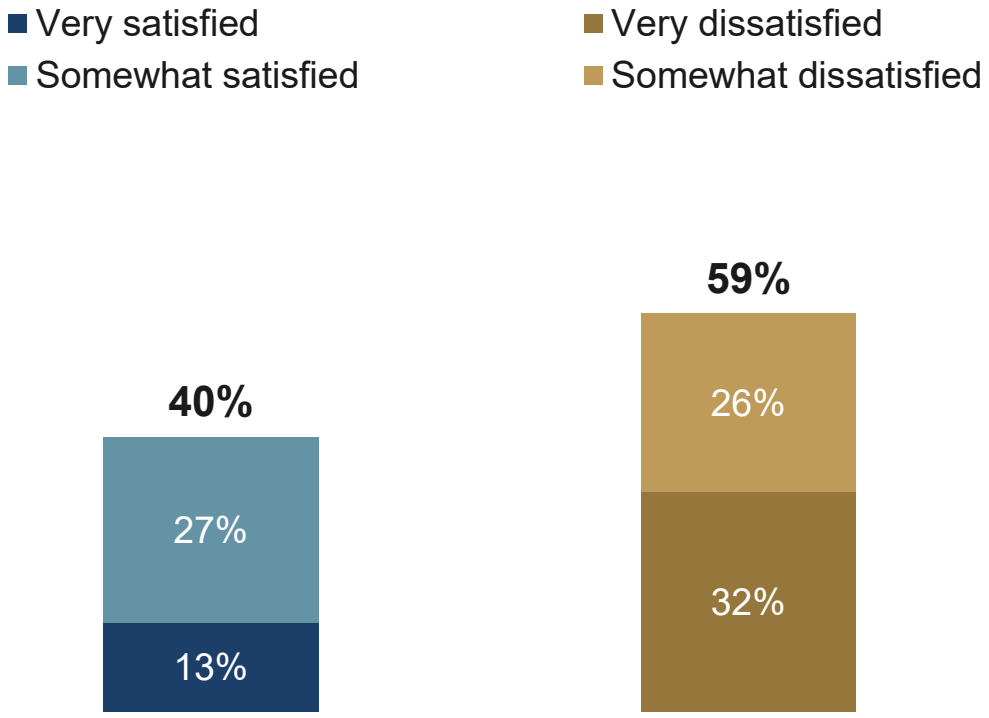


Live telephone interviews + text-to-web interviewing | Interviews conducted August 13-18, 2026 | Margin of error = ±4.5 percentage points for the full sample, higher for subgroups | Some numbers may not add up exactly due to rounding.

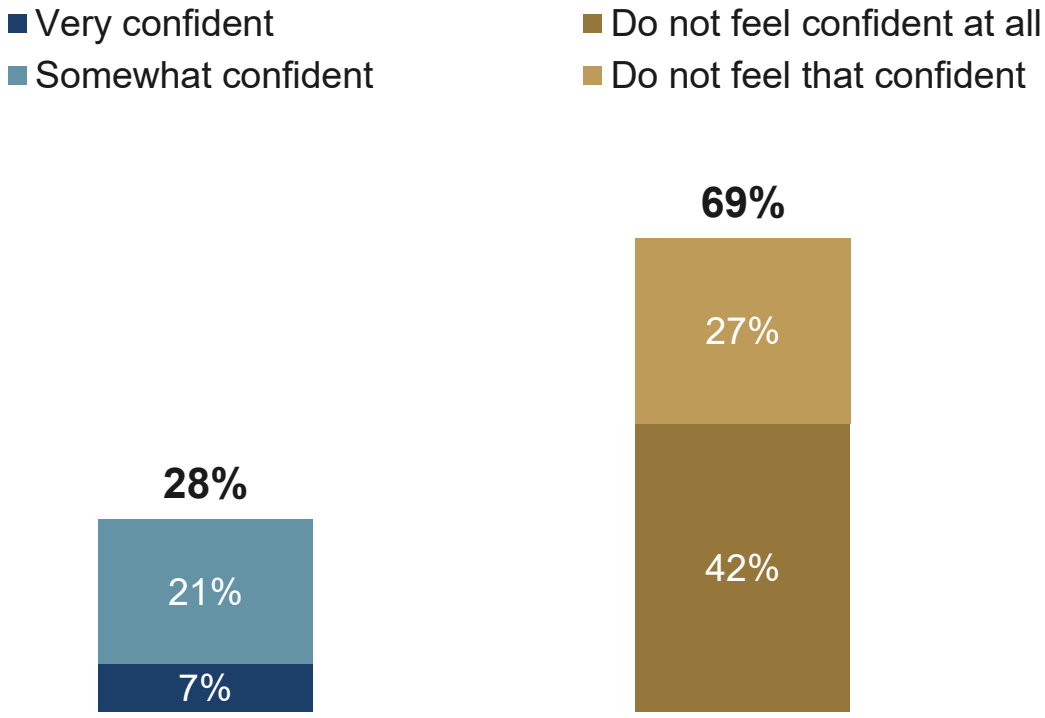
Outlook and Priorities of the Georgia Electorate

Georgians' mood: Unhappy with the economy and deeply pessimistic about children's futures.

Feelings about Georgia's economy



Confidence that life for our children's generation will be better than it has been for us



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Pessimism about children's futures is deep and broad—*seven in 10* are worried—with parents themselves among the most concerned.

Confidence that life for our children's generation will be better than it has been for us

	Confident	Not confident	Net
All voters	**28**	**69**	**-41**
Men	35	62	-26
Women	23	75	-52
White voters	31	66	-35
Black voters	20	79	-59
18-34	28	68	-39
35-49	21	77	-56
50-64	29	68	-39
65+	35	63	-29
Parents	20	78	-58
Non-parents	31	67	-36
Democrats	19	80	-61
Independents	22	75	-53
Republicans	42	56	-14

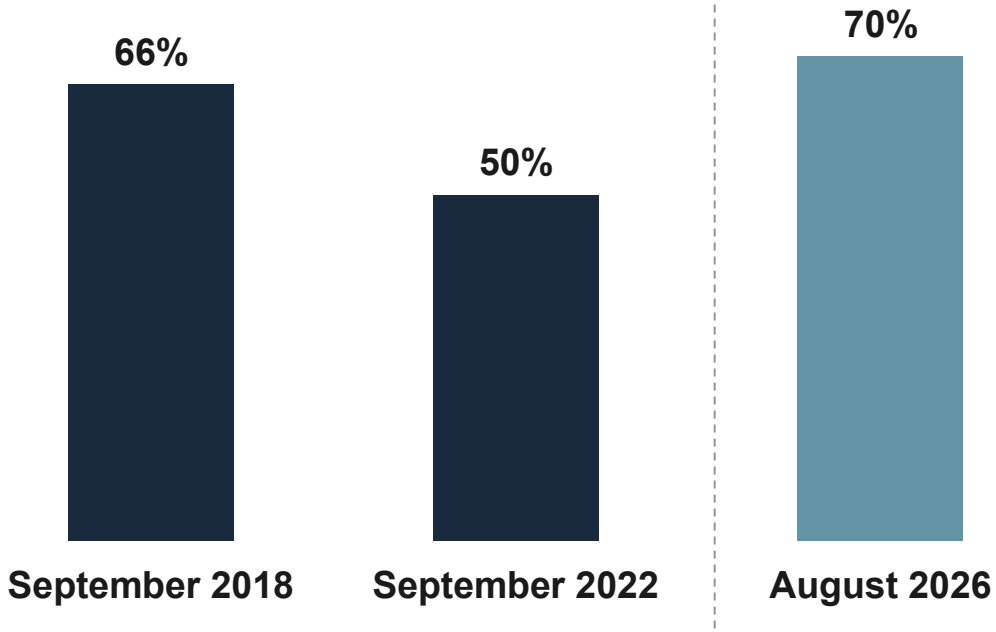
Child care and health care are on par with tax cuts in importance to voters.

% who say each issue facing Georgia is very important to them personally

**Asked of one-half the sample*

The importance of child care to voters is the highest GEEARS has measured.

*% who say **ensuring working parents can find quality, affordable child care** is very important to them personally*



% Very Important	
Men	64
Women	75
White voters	62
Black voters	88
18-34	87
35-49	80
50-64	61
65+	58
All parents	74
Parents with kids 0-5	82
Non-parents	69
Democrats	84
Independents	72
Republicans	55

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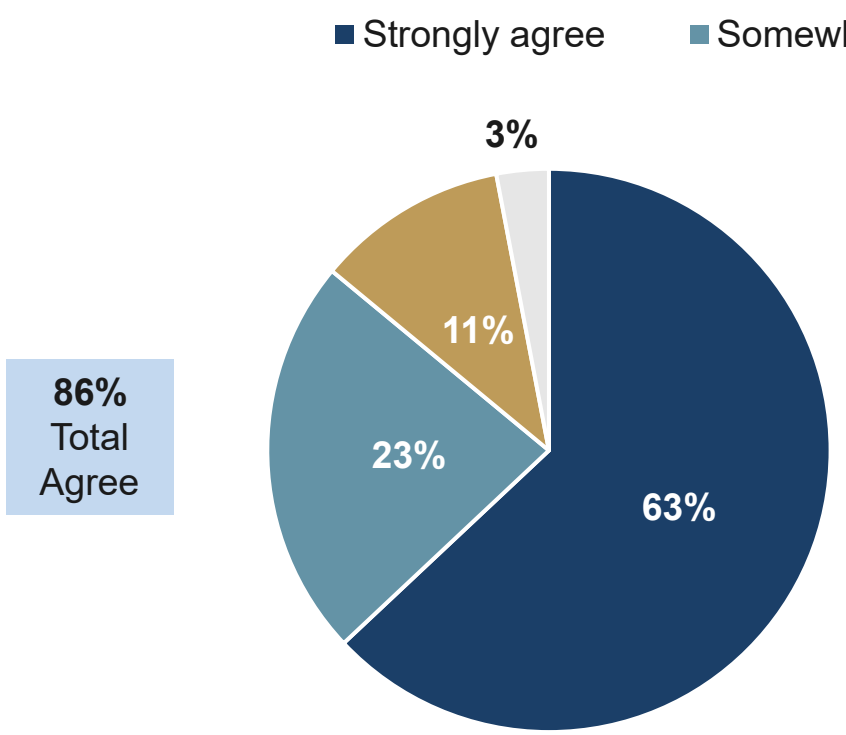
Georgia voters understand that there is a broader economic benefit to agree expanding access to high-quality child care.

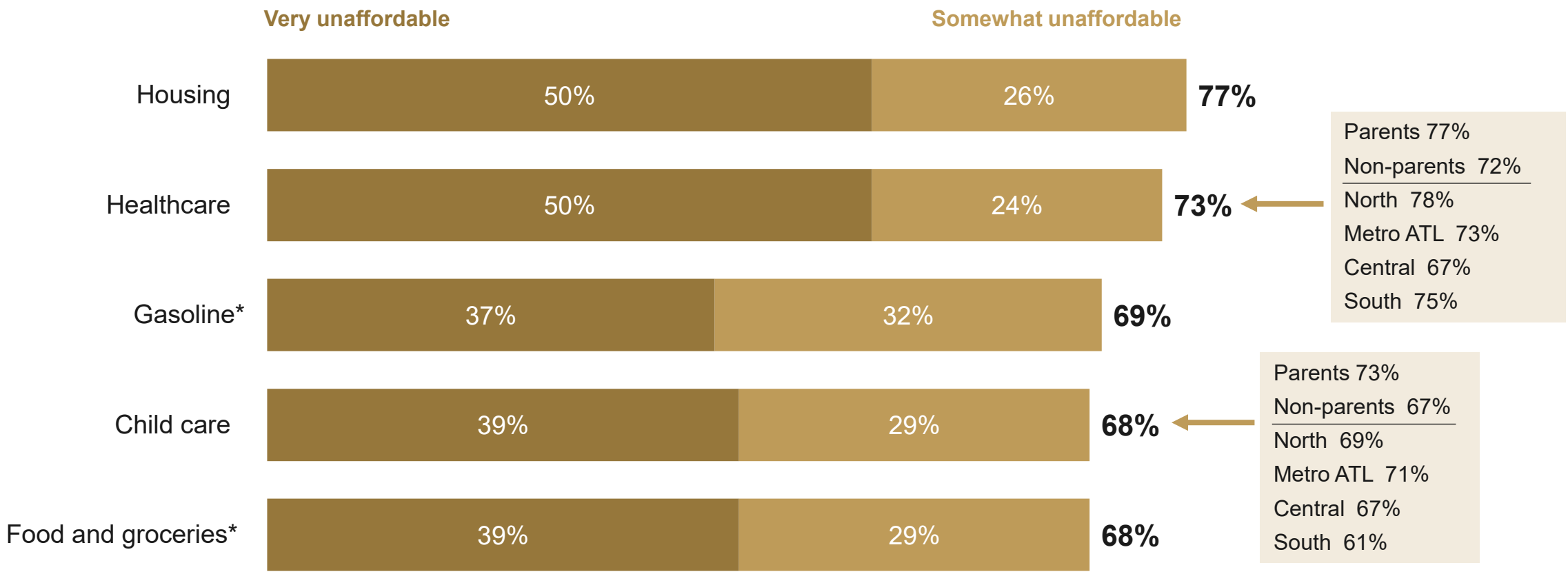
Expanding access to high-quality child care gives parents the opportunity to participate in the workforce, which is good for Georgia's economy



% Total Agree	
Democrats	99
Independents	80
Republicans	77
North	77
Atlanta Metro	90
Central	91
South	85

Georgians see a wide-ranging affordability crisis, including in healthcare and child care.

% saying each of the following is <u>unaffordable</u> in Georgia right now

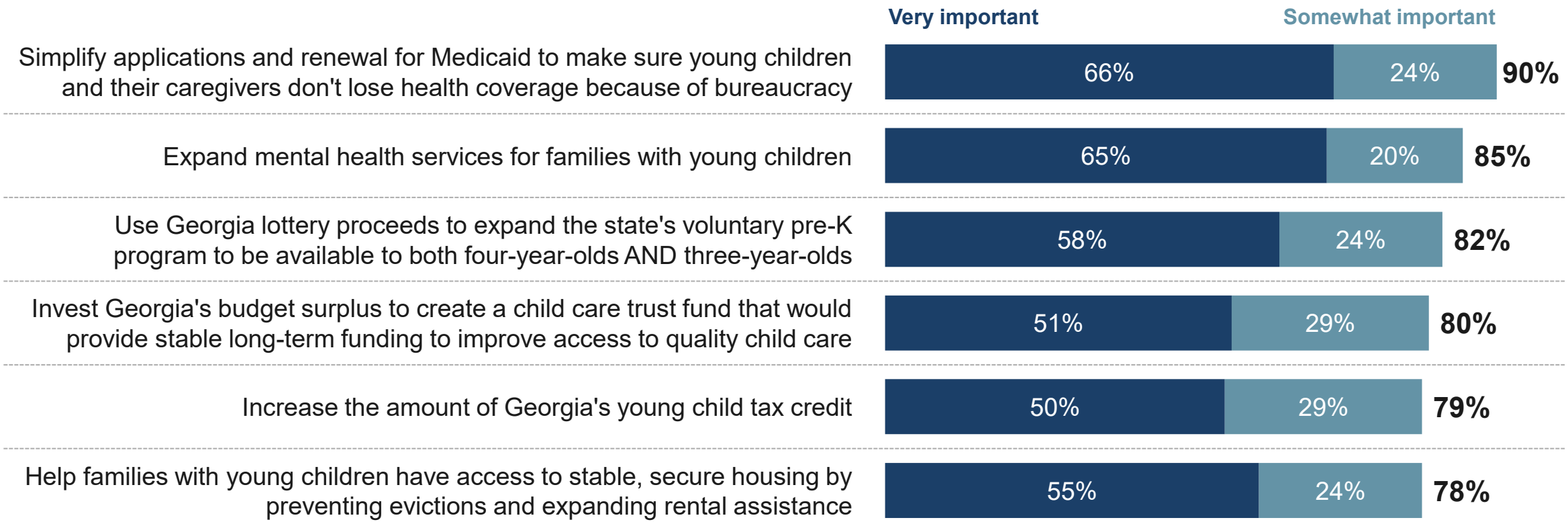


*Asked of one-half the sample

Reactions to a Policy Agenda Aimed at Supporting Families with Young Children

A range of policies focused on supporting young children and their families poll very strongly—all are seen as important.

% who say each of the following things are <u>important for Georgia to do</u>



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The importance of these family-focused policies crosses partisan lines.

% who say each of the following things are important for Georgia to do

	Democrats %	Independents %	Republicans %
Simplify applications and renewal for Medicaid to make sure young children and their caregivers don't lose health coverage because of bureaucracy	98	90	83
Expand mental health services for families with young children	96	87	71
Use Georgia lottery proceeds to expand the state's voluntary pre-K program to be available to both four-year-olds AND three-year-olds	95	82	69
Invest Georgia's budget surplus to create a child care trust fund that would provide stable long-term funding to improve access to quality child care	94	79	65
Increase the amount of Georgia's young child tax credit	87	85	66
Help families with young children have access to stable, secure housing by preventing evictions and expanding rental assistance	93	81	62

Importance also crosses generational lines, but some policies have literal unanimous support from young voters.

% who say each of the following things are <u>important for Georgia to do</u>

	18-34-year-olds %
Simplify applications and renewal for Medicaid to make sure young children and their caregivers don't lose health coverage because of bureaucracy	**100**
Expand mental health services for families with young children	**100**
Use Georgia lottery proceeds to expand the state's voluntary pre-K program to be available to both four-year-olds AND three-year-olds	95
Invest Georgia's budget surplus to create a child care trust fund that would provide stable long-term funding to improve access to quality child care	96
Increase the amount of Georgia's young child tax credit	84
Help families with young children have access to stable, secure housing by preventing evictions and expanding rental assistance	93

Between **70%** and **90%** of voters in every other age group say <u>each</u> of these policies is important.

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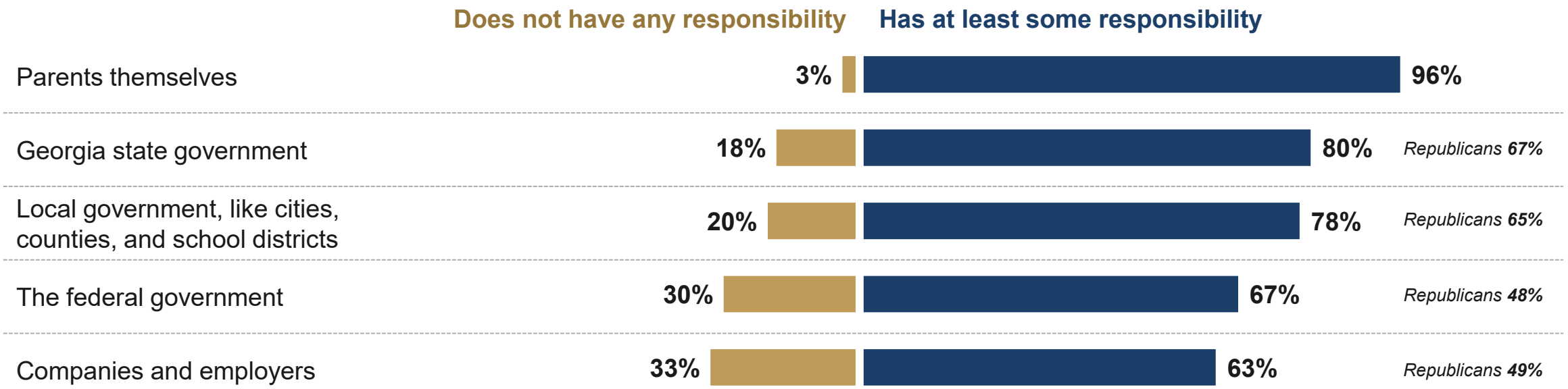
Deeper Dive on Child Care and Early Education

Voters see government at all levels and private businesses sharing responsibility with parents for child care.

Do you think each group below has at least some responsibility or has no responsibility for making sure that Georgia parents who need to work have access to quality child care for young children?



45% of voters—including 57% of voters under age 35—say that every one of these entities has some responsibility for child care.

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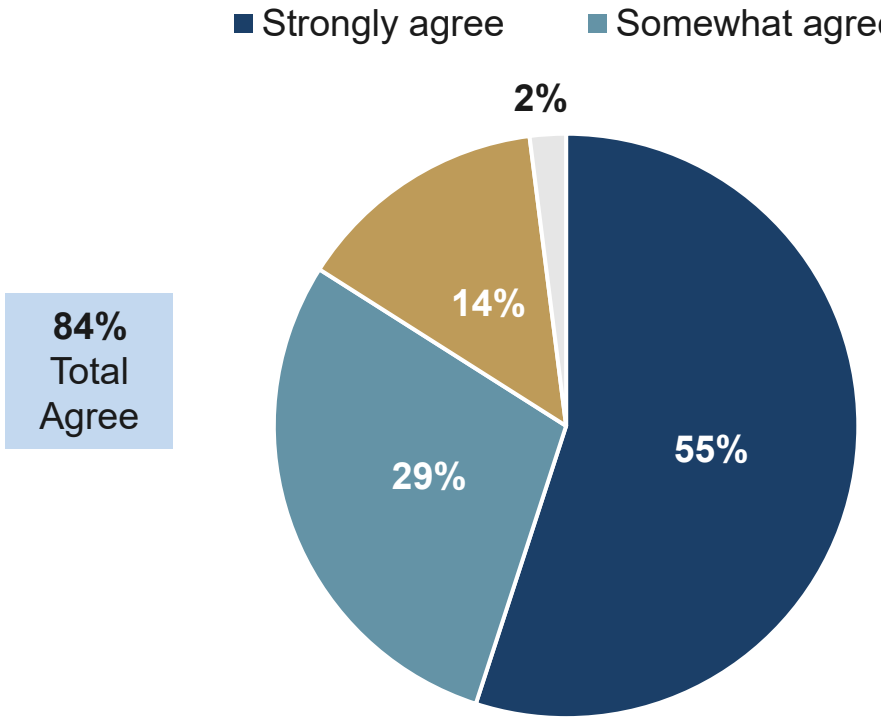
There is broad agreement that trained and experienced early education teachers should receive compensation comparable to elementary school teachers.

*If caregivers and teachers who work in early education have similar training and experience as elementary grade teachers, they should receive similar pay as well***



% Total Agree	
Democrats	92
Independents	84
Republicans	77
North	76
Atlanta Metro	89
Central	67
South	94

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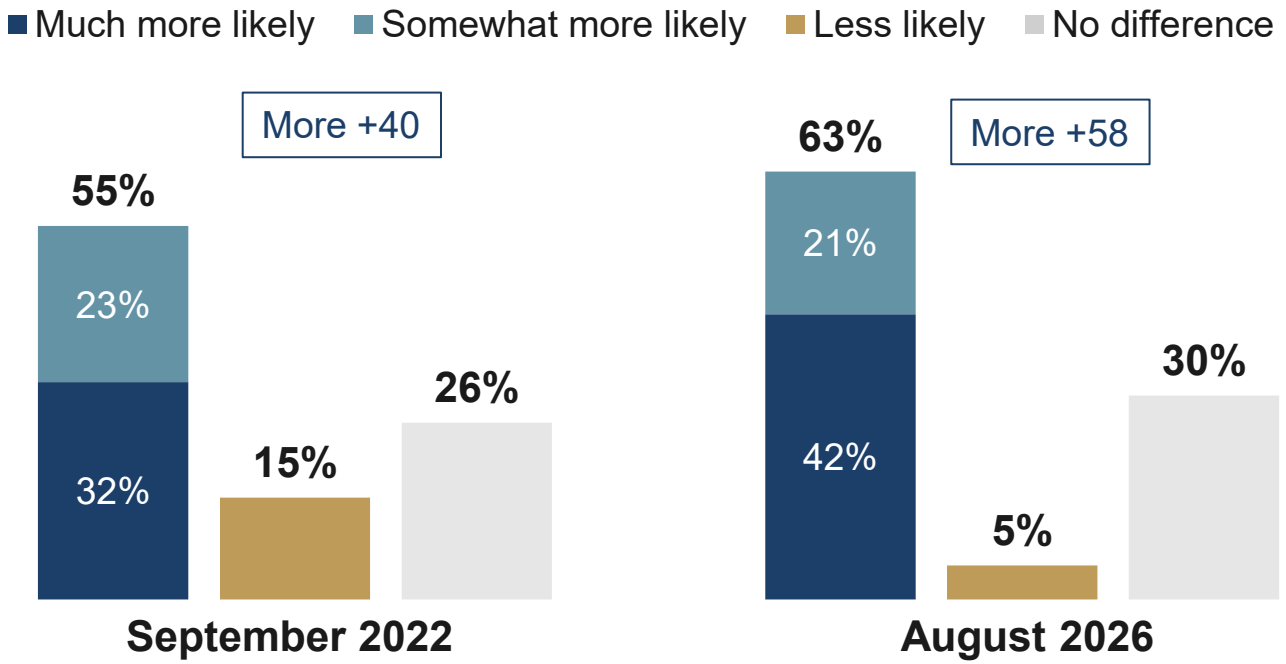
** *Asked of half-sample*

Being a pro-early education candidate is a much stronger proposition now than it was four years ago.

Would you be more likely or less likely to vote for a candidate for political office who supports policies that give more families access to quality child care and preschool?

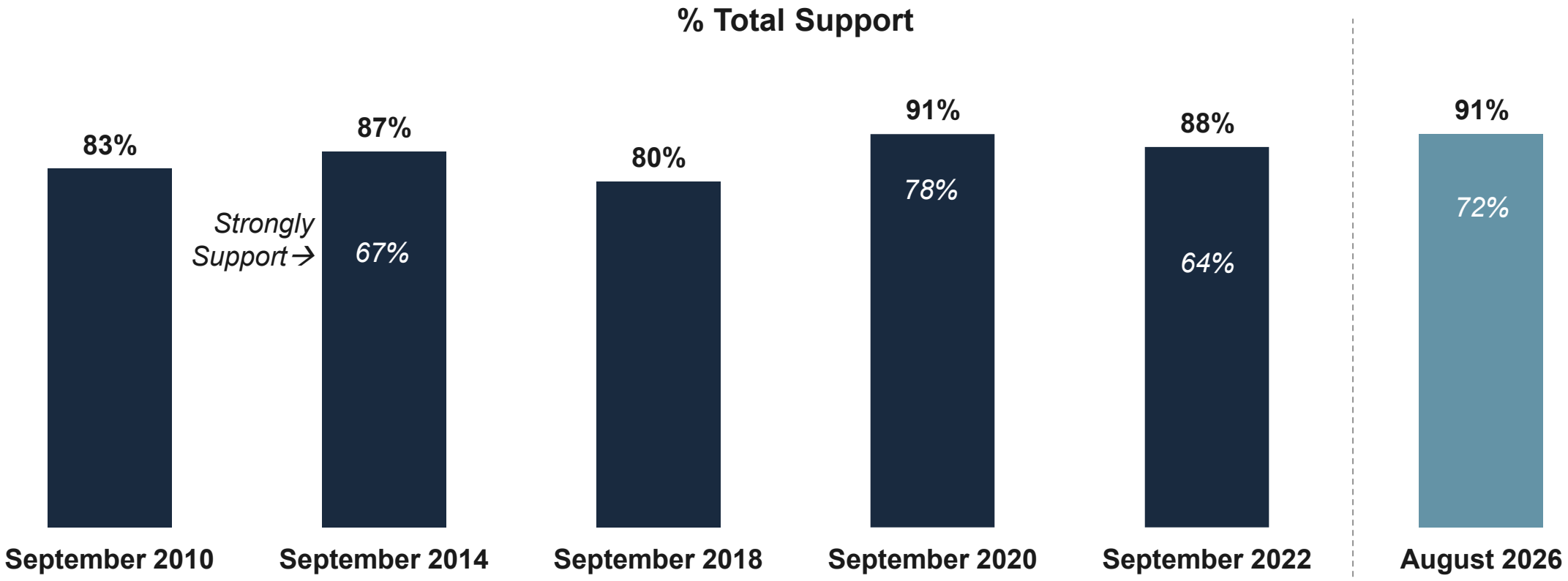


	% More likely	% Less likely
Democrats	86	1
Independents	67	7
Republicans	38	10
18-34	77	5
35-49	71	4
50-64	52	7
65+	56	6
White voters	51	7
Black voters	87	3
North	56	5
Atlanta Metro	68	6
Central	57	3
South	63	6

Funding for Programs that Support Families with Young Children

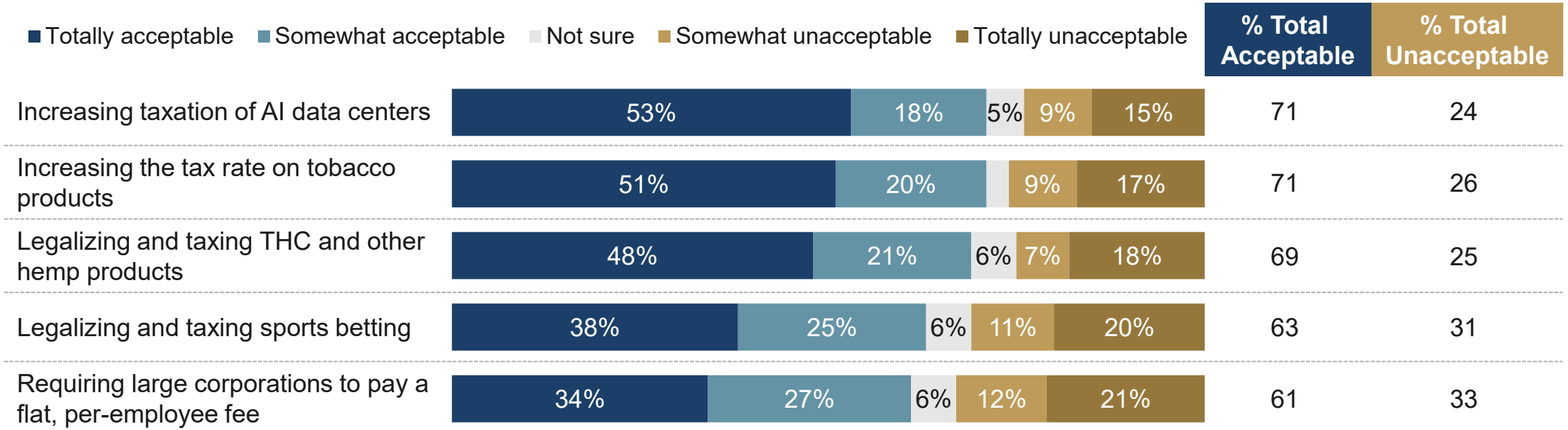
Support for using lottery revenue to fund pre-K is as high as it has been in 16 years.

As you may know, Georgia currently offers a free, lottery-funded voluntary pre-kindergarten program for four-year-olds in the state. Do you support or oppose continuing to use a portion of lottery funds to provide voluntary pre-kindergarten programs for four-year-olds?



Georgians are open to new revenue streams to support young children, with new taxes on data centers and tobacco the most broadly acceptable.

Some states have adopted new funding sources for programs that support the health and education of young children. Would each of these kinds of funding for children's programs be acceptable or unacceptable to you?



	Totally acceptable	Somewhat acceptable	Not sure	Somewhat unacceptable	Totally unacceptable	% Total Acceptable	% Total Unacceptable
Increasing taxation of AI data centers	53%	18%	5%	9%	15%	71	24
Increasing the tax rate on tobacco products	51%	20%		9%	17%	71	26
Legalizing and taxing THC and other hemp products	48%	21%	6%	7%	18%	69	25
Legalizing and taxing sports betting	38%	25%	6%	11%	20%	63	31
Requiring large corporations to pay a flat, per-employee fee	34%	27%	6%	12%	21%	61	33

Two thirds or more of Democrats, independents, and Republicans say increasing data center and tobacco taxes are acceptable.

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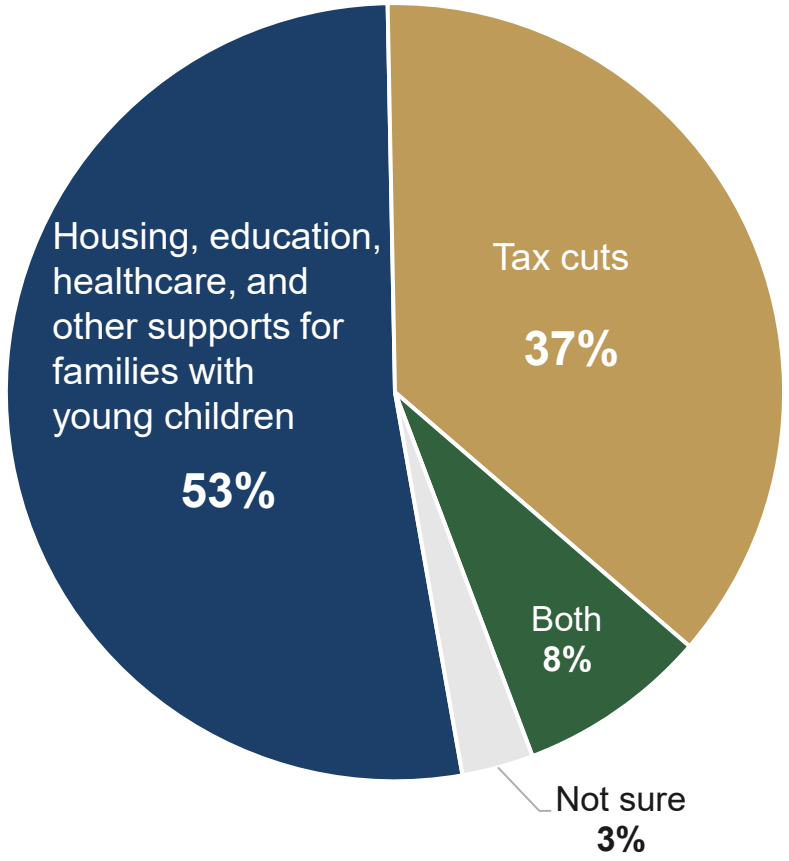
Nearly all of these new revenue streams are popular across the political spectrum.

% Acceptable for each of these kinds of funding for children's programs

	Democrats %	Independents %	Republicans %
Increasing taxation of AI data centers	80	69	64
Increasing the tax rate on tobacco products	77	67	67
Legalizing and taxing THC and other hemp products	79	69	60
Legalizing and taxing sports betting	66	63	63
Requiring large corporations to pay a flat, per-employee fee	80	64	40

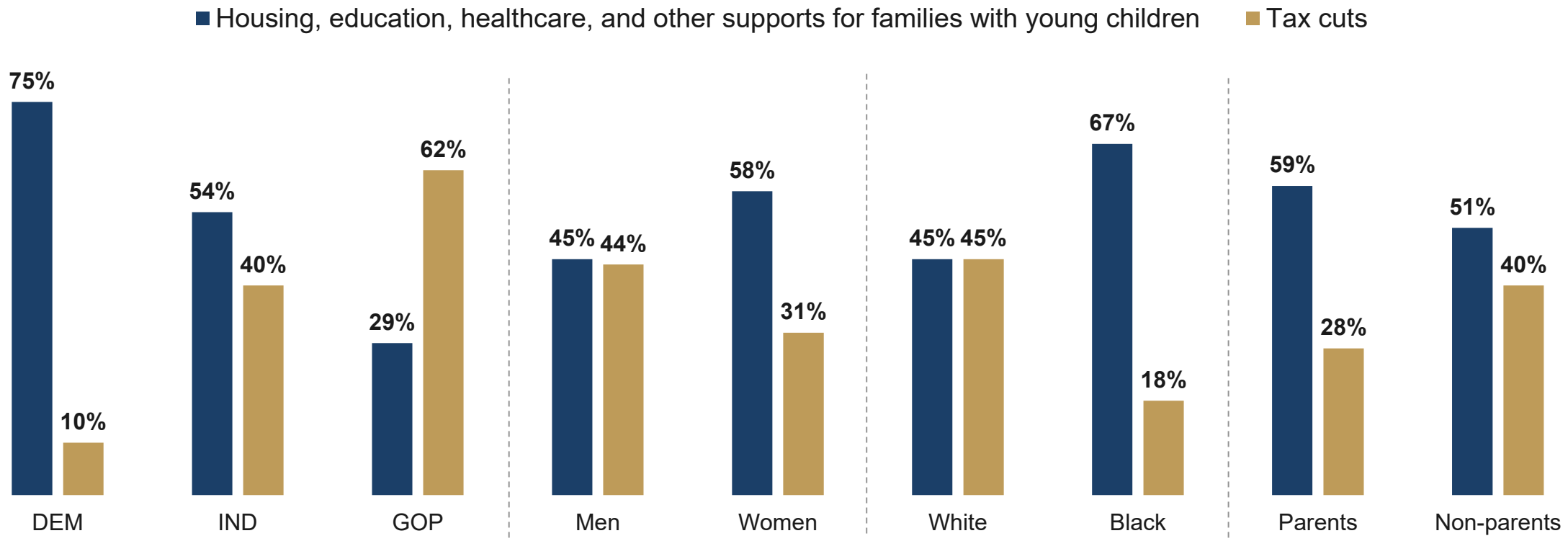
At the end of the day, a majority of voters prioritize family supports over tax cuts.

Georgia's state government has a large budget surplus.
*Do you think it is **more important to use that budget surplus to pay for**...?*



Parents and non-parents prioritize family supports, though there is a partisan split.

Georgia's state government has a large budget surplus.
Do you think it is more important to use that budget surplus to pay for...?



Key Takeaways

1. **The cost of living is a central concern** of Georgia's voters; it drives their discontent with the state of the economy.

2. **Expenses that impact families are a big part of the affordability crisis.** Large majorities of voters cite the unaffordability of housing, food, healthcare, and child care. And improving healthcare and child care affordability and accessibility are widely seen as very important.

3. Support is wide and deep for a **package of policy goals aimed at supporting families with young children** in health, education, care, and housing.

4. **These attitudes are *not* partisan**—voters across the political spectrum see a need for, and endorse, greater supports for families.

5. Part of that endorsement is **amenability to a range of potential new revenue streams** in order to fund these supports, with new taxes on data centers and tobacco topping the list.

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