

First Five Years Fund

Key findings from a statewide survey of 500 registered voters in Colorado conducted July 21-24, 2016.



LORI WEIGEL



JAY CAMPBELL

METHODOLOGY

- Statewide survey of 500 registered voters in Colorado conducted on both landlines and cell phones
- Interviewing completed July 21-24, 2016
- Overall margin of error of $\pm 4.38\%$
- Sample distributed proportionally throughout the state and is demographically representative of the electorate
- Bipartisan research team of Hart Research and Public Opinion Strategies

Colorado voters continue to prioritize ensuring there is sufficient funding for needs like education.

2014

2016

**Making sure that there is sufficient funding
for needs such as education**

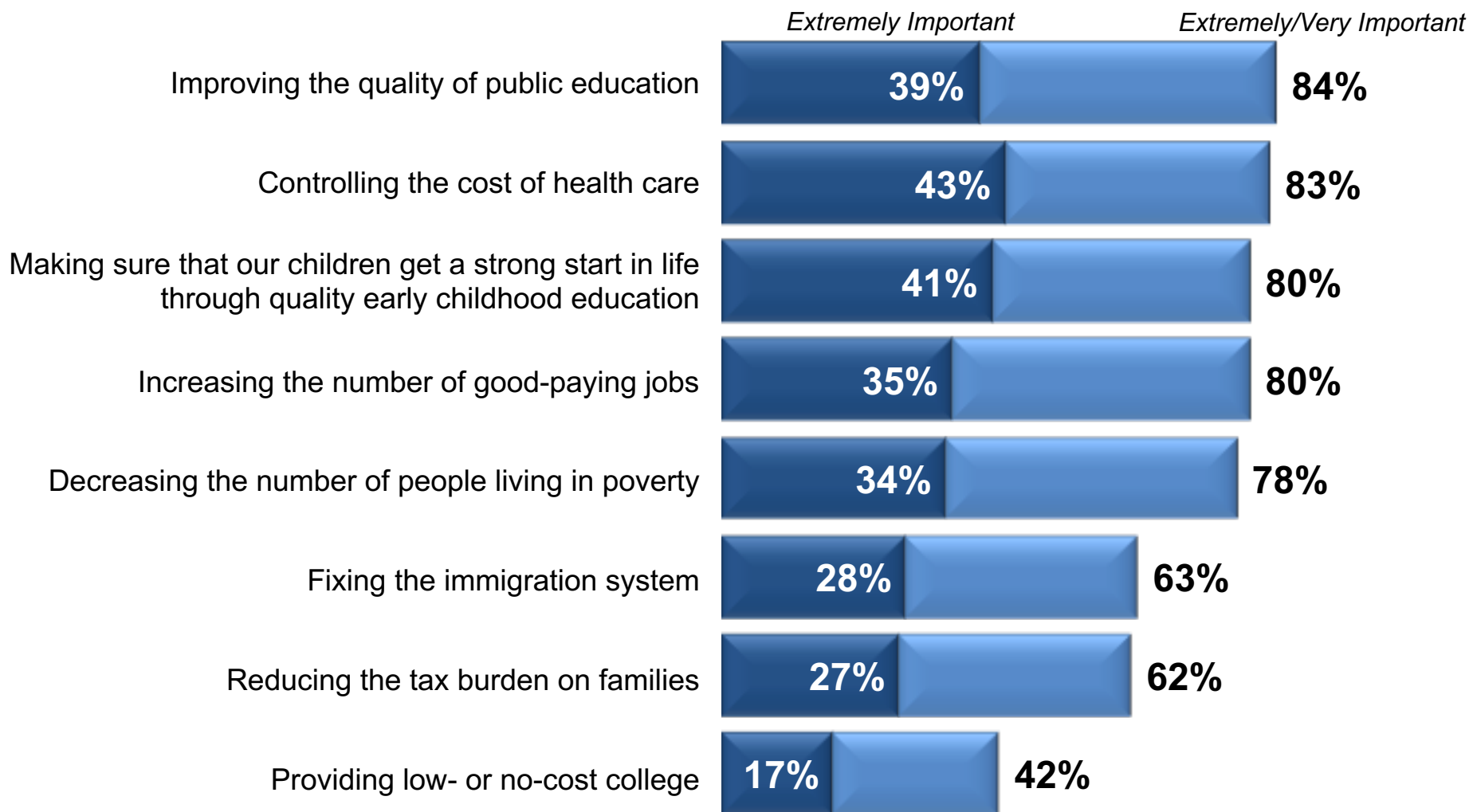
56% 55%

Holding the line on taxes and spending

36% 43%

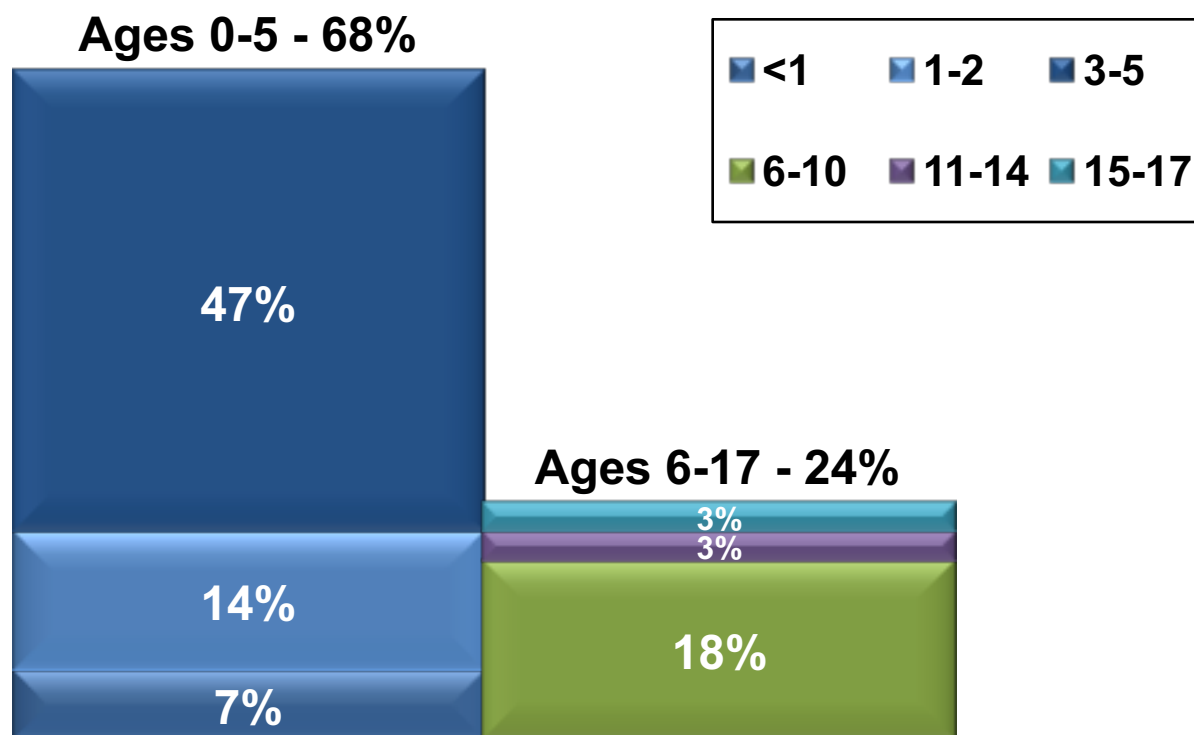
Which of the following do you think is a greater priority right now – holding the line on taxes and spending, or making sure that there is sufficient funding for needs such as education?

Early education ranks just behind health care costs as an important goal for the nation.



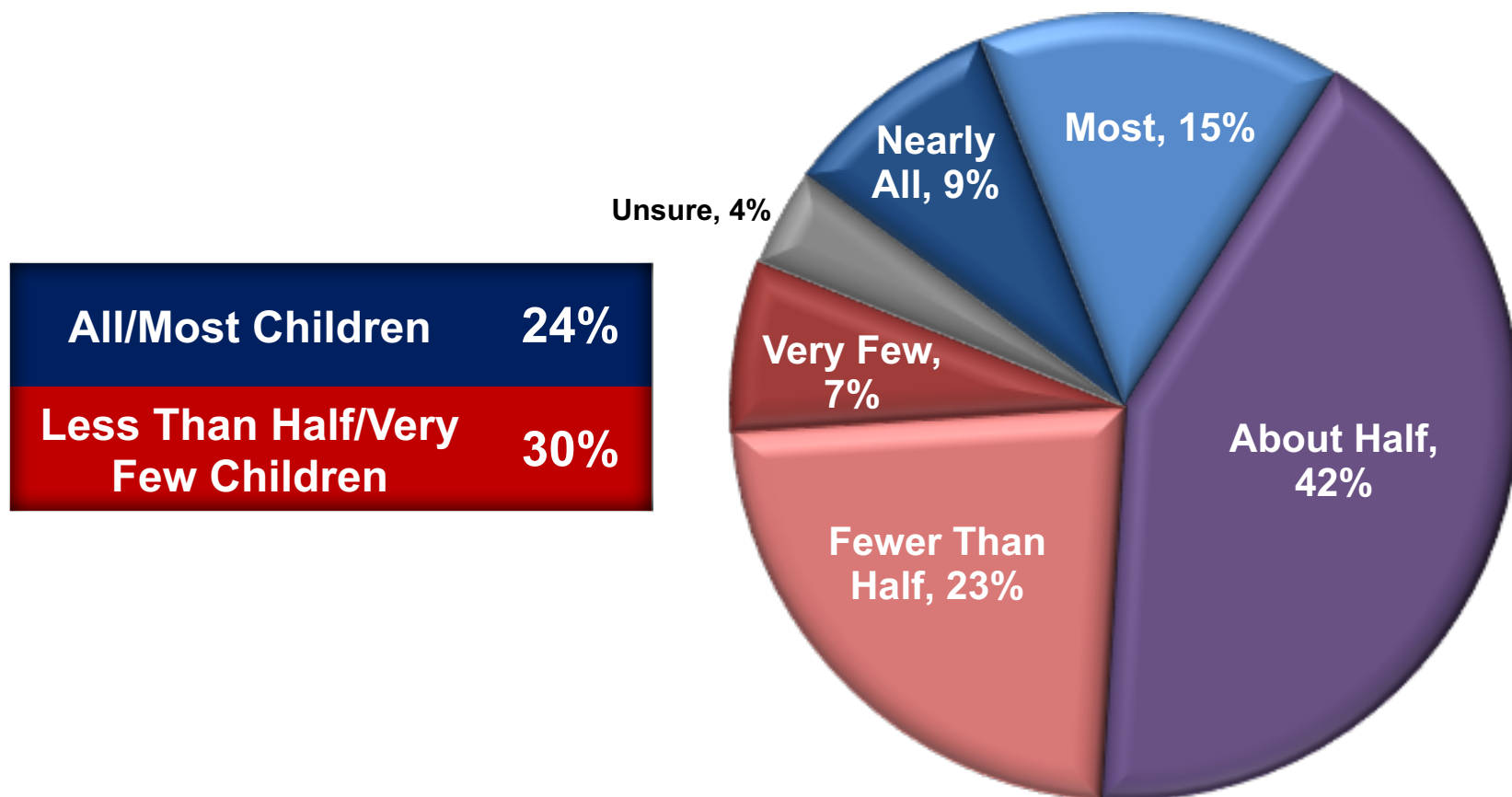
Now I'm going to read you some goals that people might have for our country right now, and I'd like you to rate how important you personally consider each goal to be – is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important or not that important to you.

Nearly seven-in-ten Coloradans feel children develop the most capacity to learn between ages zero to five.



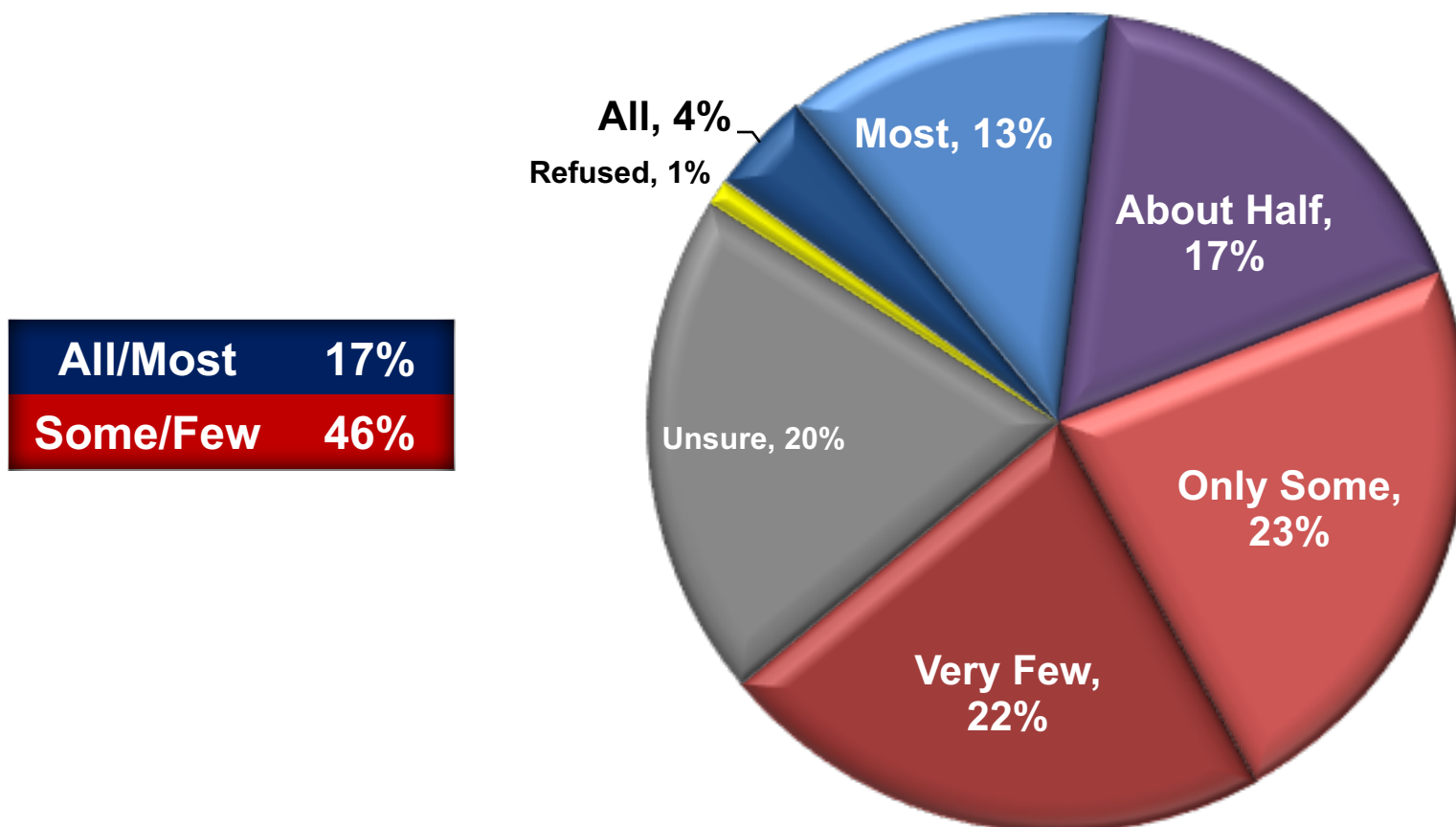
What do you think is the most important age for developing a child's capacity to learn? Is it...

The vast majority feel half of children or fewer are prepared for kindergarten.



What proportion of children do you think begin kindergarten with the knowledge and skills they need to do their best in school—nearly all children, most children, about half of all children, fewer than half of all children, or very few children?

Fewer than one-in-five feel early education programs in their area are high-quality and affordable.



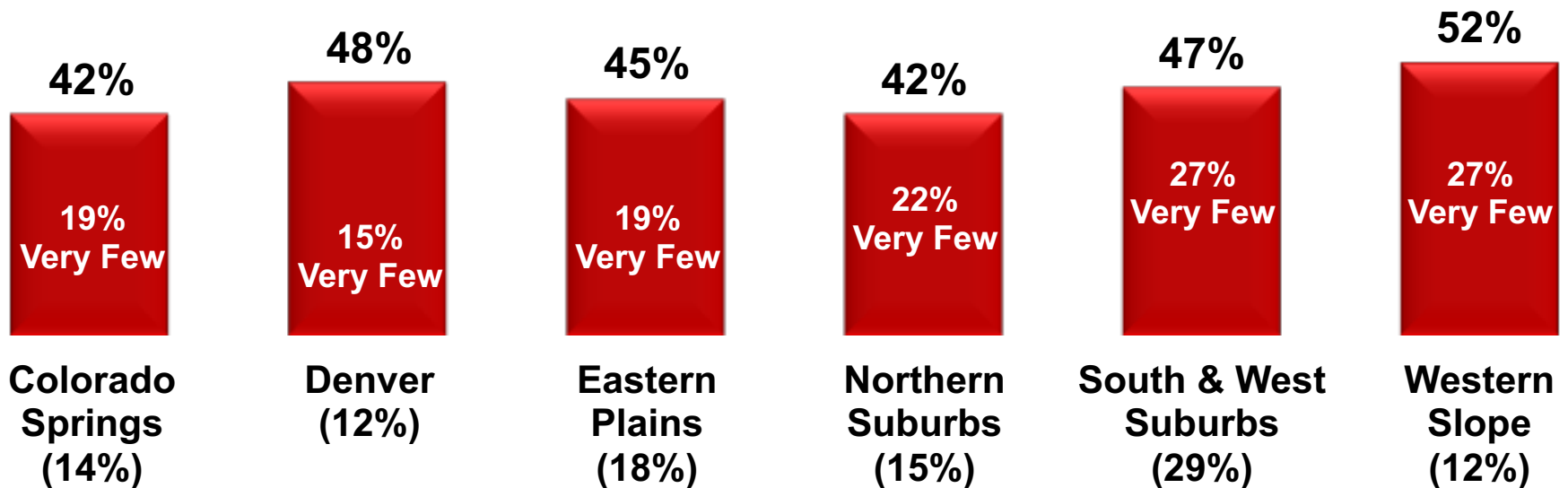
[^] Denotes Rounding

About how many of the early education programs in your area would you say are high-quality AND affordable for lower- and middle-income families?

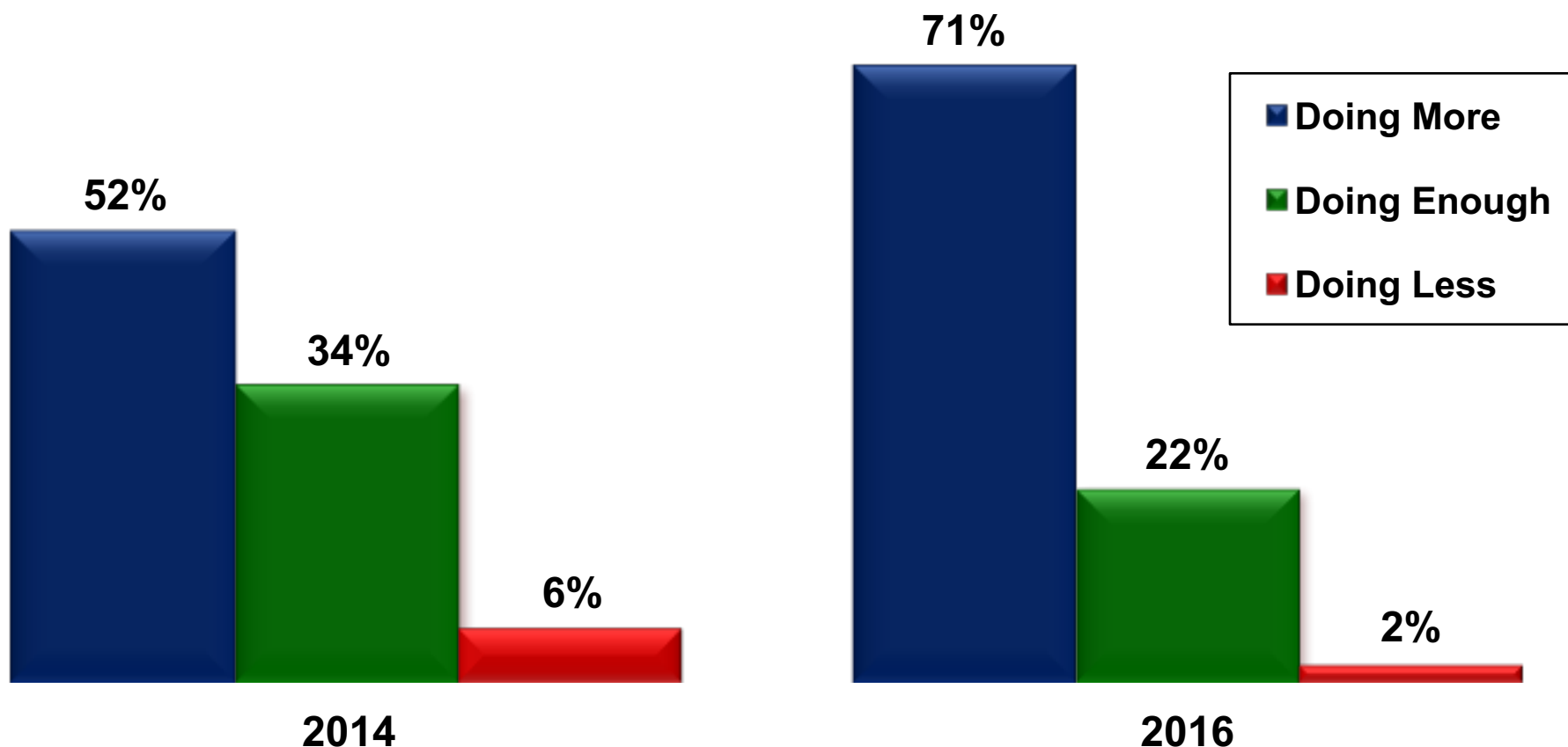
Voters in every region—and especially in the Western Slope—are pessimistic about access to affordable, quality early education programs.

Quality Affordable Early Education By Region

■ **Total Very Few/Only Some**



A significantly larger proportion of Colorado voters feel we should be doing more for young children's education.



And when it comes to ensuring that children here in Colorado begin kindergarten with the knowledge and skills they need to do their best in school, do you think we should be doing more, doing less, or are doing enough?

Significant increases in desire to take action on early childhood education were made across the board.

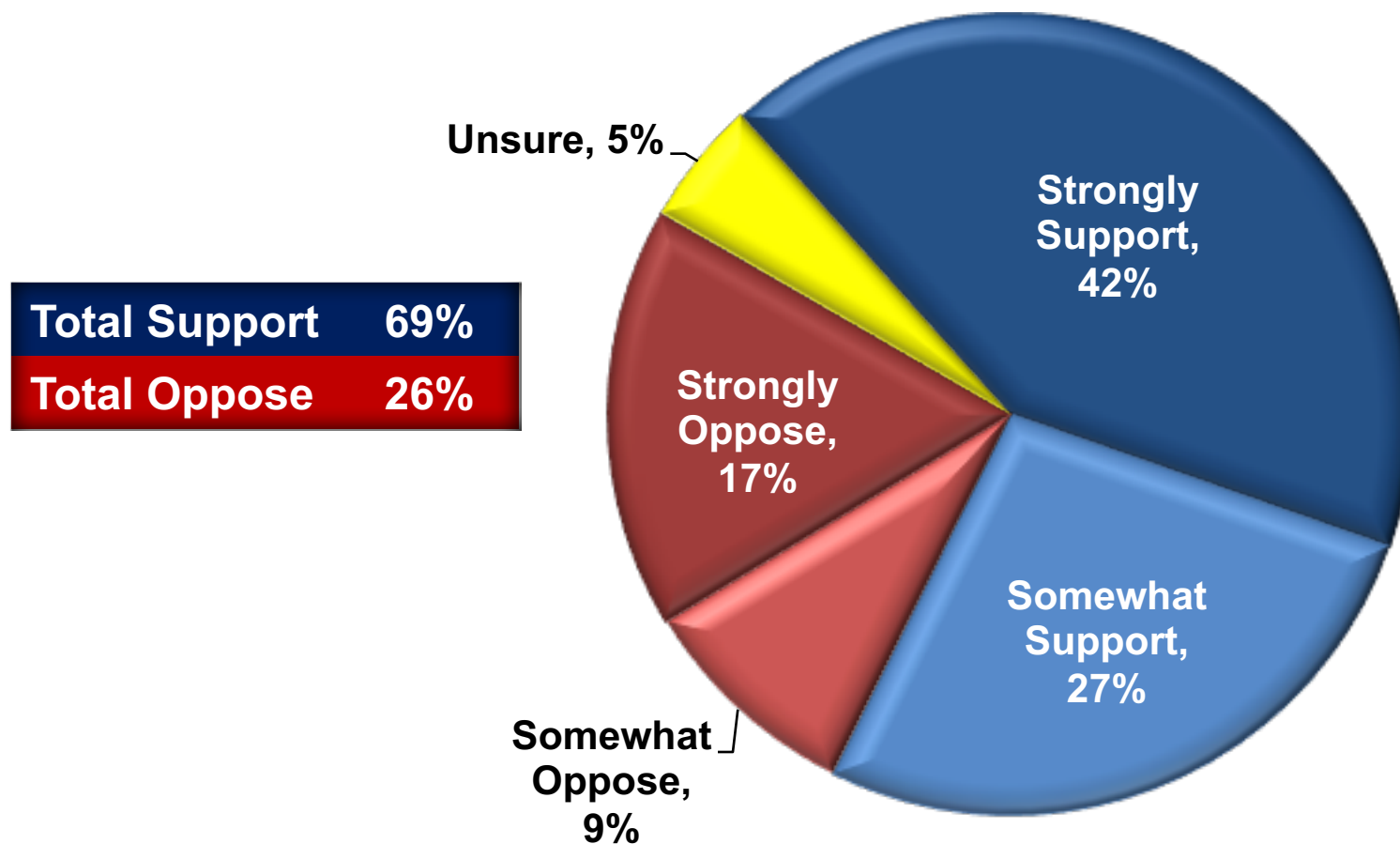
<i>Increase in Doing More (+19% Overall)</i>	2014	2016	Net Increase
Party			
Republicans	39%	51%	+12%
Independents	47%	79%	+32%
Democrats	70%	84%	+14%
Gender/Age			
Men Ages 18-44	50%	69%	+19%
Men Ages 45+	39%	63%	+24%
Women Ages 18-44	68%	87%	+19%
Women Ages 45+	53%	70%	+17%
Parents			
Dads	47%	55%	+8%
Moms	56%	80%	+24%
Men Without Kids	40%	70%	+30%
Women Without Kids	61%	74%	+13%

And when it comes to ensuring that children here in Colorado begin kindergarten with the knowledge and skills they need to do their best in school, do you think we should be doing more, doing less, or are doing enough?

FEDERAL INVESTMENT PROPOSAL

“Now, thinking about one potential national proposal—Congress could consider a plan that helps states and local communities provide better early childhood education programs to low- and moderate-income parents of children from birth to age five. The plan will make available ten billion dollars per year, for ten years, in grants to states in order to provide voluntary access to high-quality early childhood education through child care for infants and toddlers, preschool programs, home visiting and parent education.”

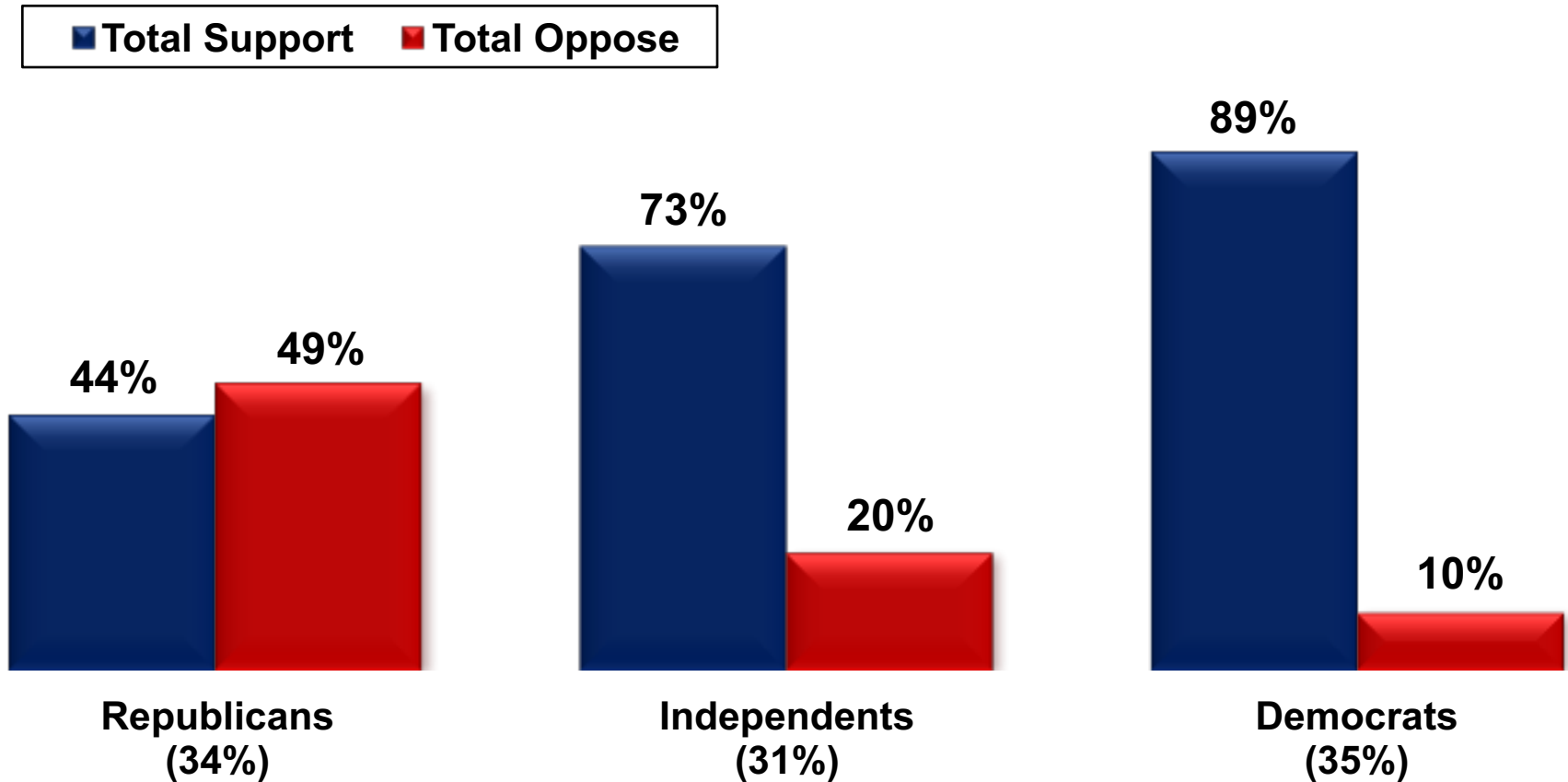
More than two-thirds support this significant investment by the federal government in early childhood education.



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

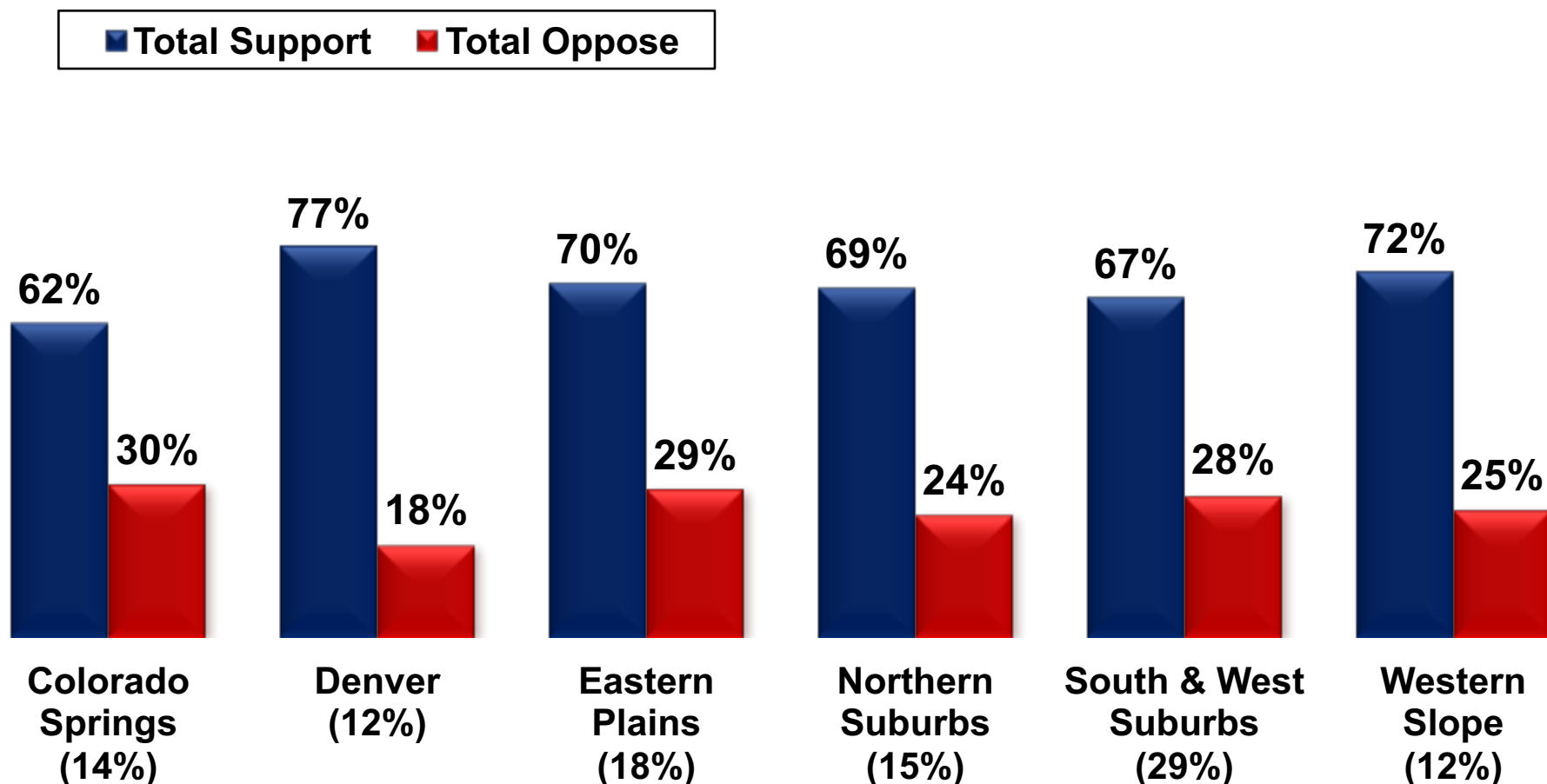
Democrats and Independents form the base of support while GOP is more divided.

Early Education Proposal By Party



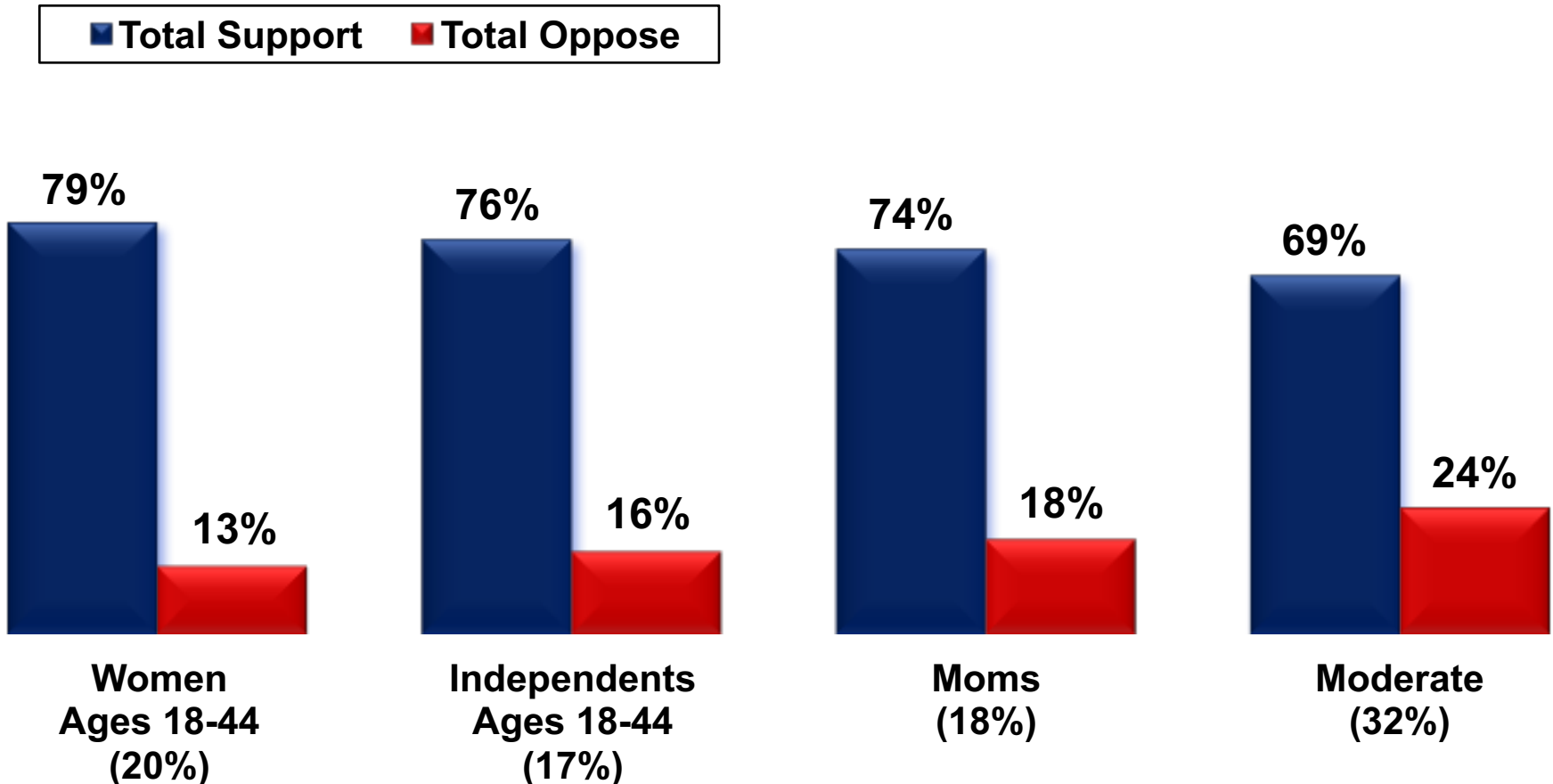
A majority in every region of the state back a federal investment.

Early Education Proposal By Region

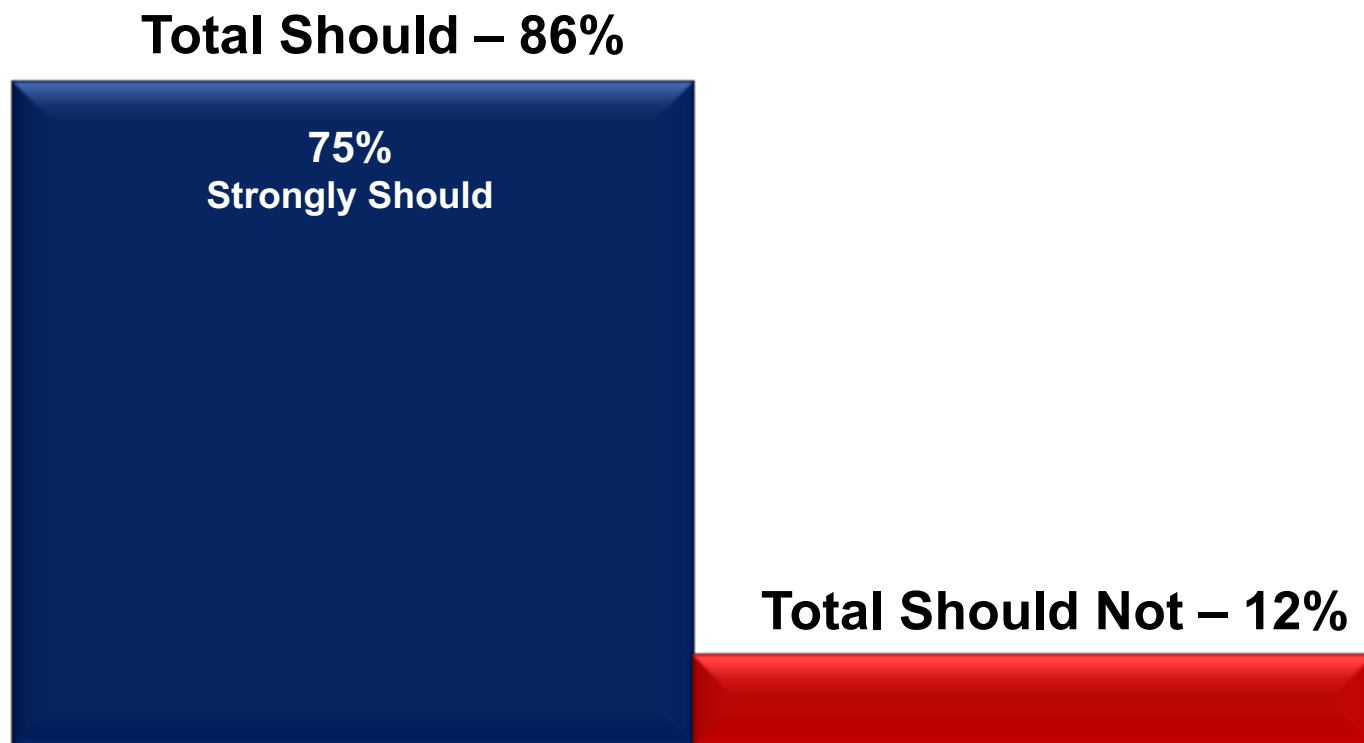


Critical swing voter sub-groups are some of the most enthusiastic about funding quality early education.

Federal Investment Proposal By Key Sub-groups

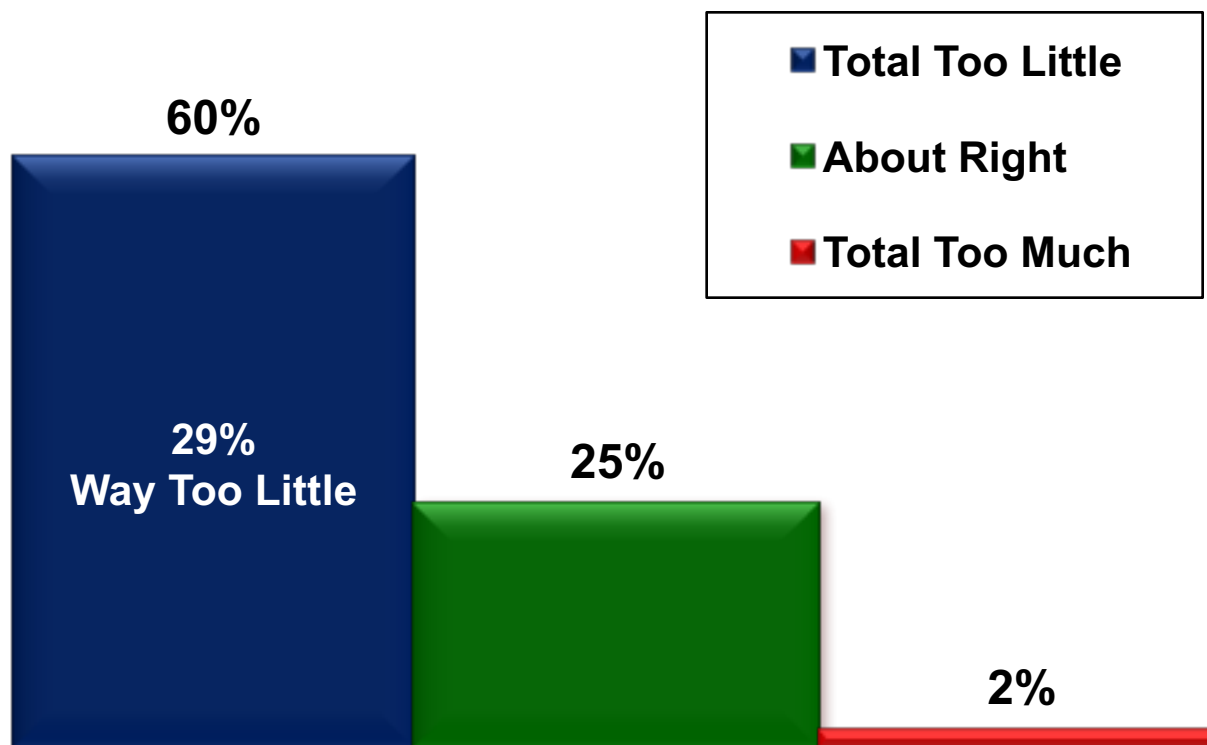


Nearly nine-in-ten Coloradans feel Congress should work together with the next president to improve access to early education.



Even if they are from different political parties, do you think the next president and Congress should or should not work together to improve access to quality early childhood education?

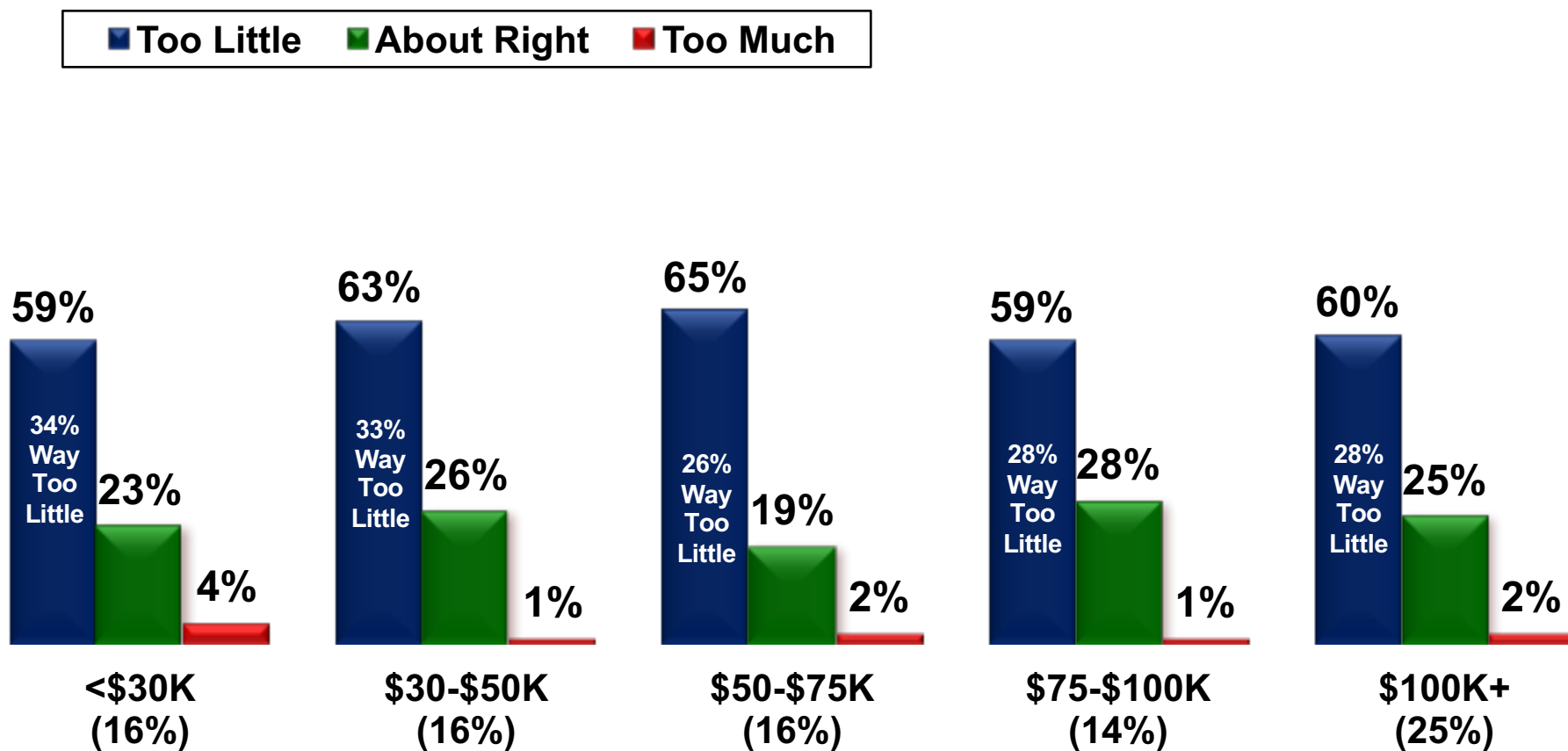
Voters also perceive pay for early educators as an issue in need of addressing: three-in-five say early childhood educators are underpaid.



Thinking of the early childhood educators who serve children in your community in the years before they enter kindergarten, do you think they are paid—too little, too much – or about right?

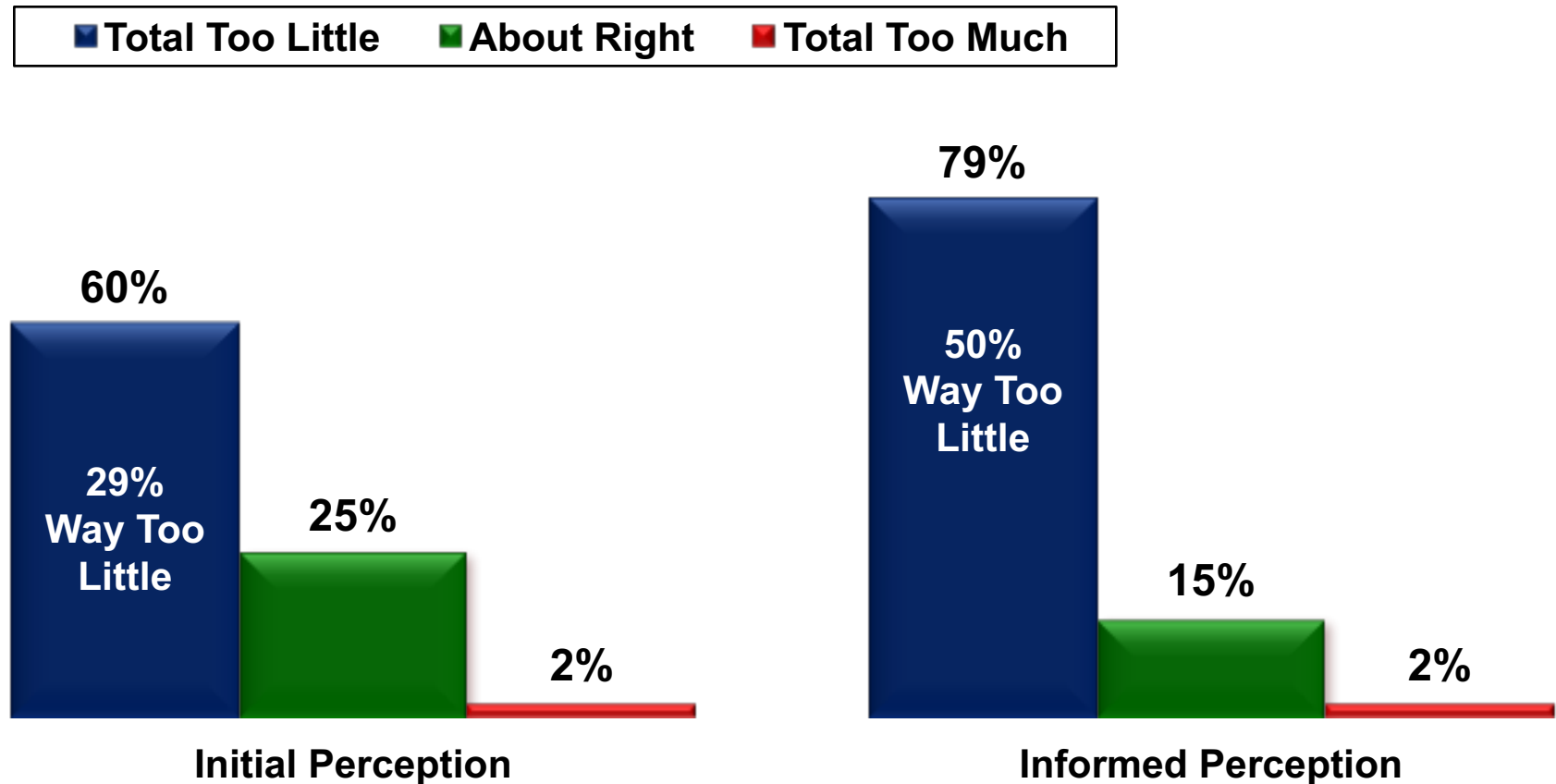
A majority of voters in every income category say that early childhood educators are underpaid.

Teacher Pay by Income



After hearing more about educator pay, four-in-five now say those educators are being paid to little.

Still thinking about wages for early childhood educators—Bureau of Labor Statistics data show that average wages for child care workers are just over ten dollars per hour—barely over those of fast food cooks and half that of kindergarten teachers. Having heard that, do you think they are paid too little, too much or about right?



Coloradans express strong support for a range of specific changes in early education.

Proposals Ranked by % Total Support

	Total Support	Total Oppose
<i>Providing voluntary coaching and education for new parents to help them improve their child's health and help ensure they are ready to succeed in school.</i>	86%	11%
<i>Expanding Colorado's ability to provide more young children with the opportunity to participate in voluntary, early learning classes throughout the state, instead of limiting access to fewer than one-in-four children today.</i>	83%	14%
<i>Providing tax incentives so that schools and child care centers can increase wages for early childhood educators in order to recruit and retain more highly qualified teachers.</i>	81%	18%
<i>Helping working families afford the high cost of child care and preschool by providing grants to local communities, so they can assist parents in ways that work best in that community.</i>	77%	20%

Please tell me if you support or oppose each of the following...

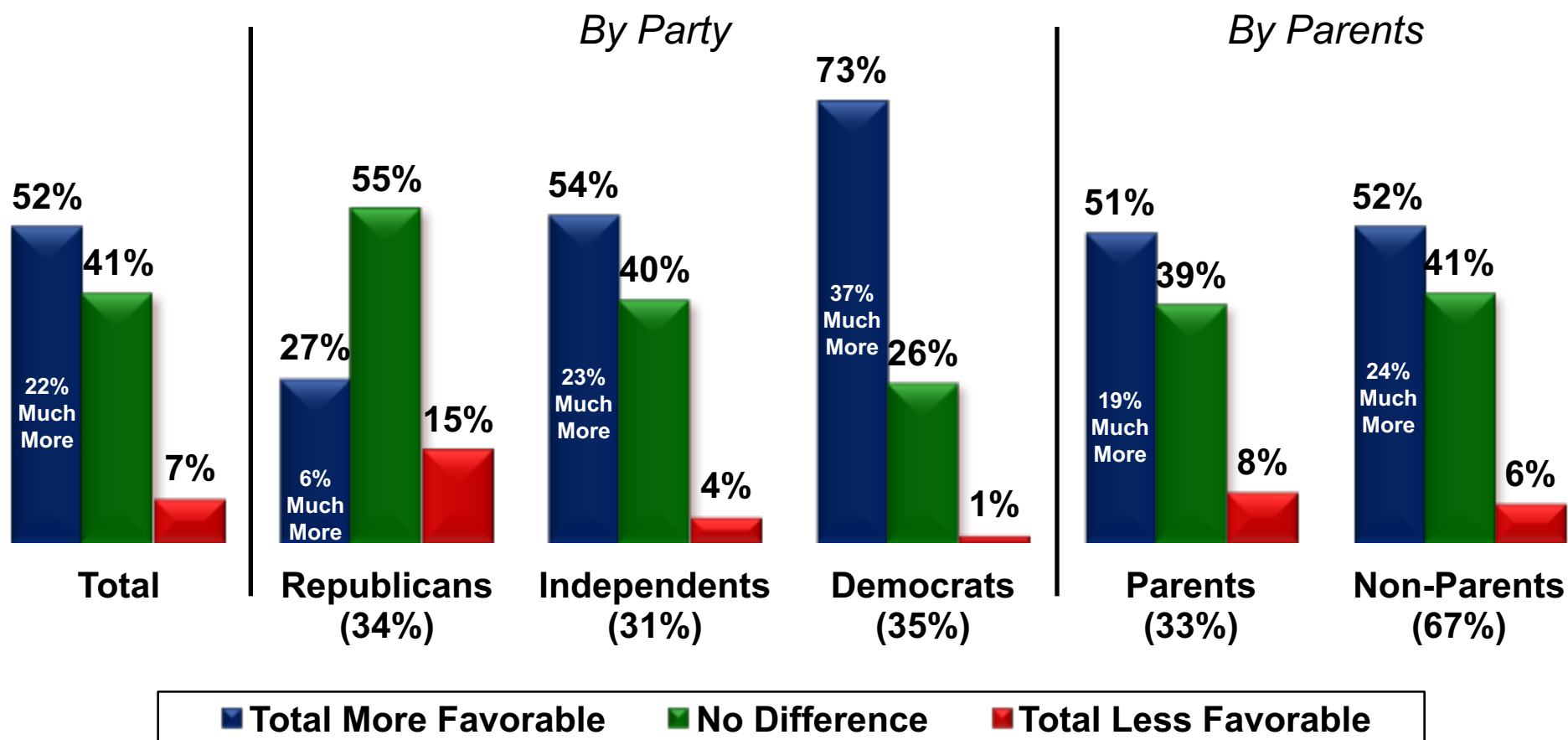
Moreover, there is a near majority intensely supportive of each one.

Proposals Ranked by % Strongly Support

	Strongly Support	Total Support
<i>Providing tax incentives so that schools and child care centers can increase wages for early childhood educators in order to recruit and retain more highly qualified teachers.</i>	52%	81%
<i>Providing voluntary coaching and education for new parents to help them improve their child's health and help ensure they are ready to succeed in school.</i>	51%	86%
<i>Expanding Colorado's ability to provide more young children with the opportunity to participate in voluntary, early learning classes throughout the state, instead of limiting access to fewer than one-in-four children today.</i>	51%	83%
<i>Helping working families afford the high cost of child care and preschool by providing grants to local communities, so they can assist parents in ways that work best in that community.</i>	47%	77%

Please tell me if you support or oppose each of the following...

A candidate's support for early education is seen as a positive for more than half of respondents overall. The more positive reaction extends across key sub-groups.



And if a candidate for elected office here in Colorado supported investing in early childhood education, would you have a more favorable impression of him or her, less favorable impression or would it not affect your opinion much one way or the other?

THE BOTTOM LINE

- An overwhelming majority of Colorado voters want the state to invest more in providing new parent “coaching” programs, and ensuring greater access to quality pre-school and child care in Colorado communities.
- They also believe that early childhood educators are underpaid—especially after hearing a few key facts about educator pay. Four-in-five support tax incentives so that child care centers can pay their educators more.
- The state’s electorate also expresses support for federal investments that would help states meet the need in this area, and rates this as a top-tier goal for the nation at this time.
- This solid and consistent support for investments and policies that help families find affordable, quality early childhood education programs is grounded in a strong sense that a need exists, and that early childhood is when children have the greatest capacity to learn.

THANK YOU



Lori Weigel
PARTNER
lori@pos.org



Jay Campbell
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT
jcampbell@hartresearch.com