

# Missouri Foundation for Health

Views of Missouri Voters on Issues  
Relating to Health Care Reform


January 2011

A decorative graphic at the bottom of the slide consists of a red curved band that follows the bottom edge of the page. Below this band is a grey area with a fine, diagonal hatched pattern.


# Views of Missouri Voters

The Missouri Foundation for Health commissioned Lake Research Partners, a survey research company specializing in public policy, to assess the attitudes of the state's residents on the health care issues related to the Patient Protection and Affordability Act. The survey reached a total of 800 likely General Election voters in Missouri. The survey was conducted November 15 through November 21, 2010. The margin of error for the sample is +/- 4.0%.

# Key Findings

- Missouri's voters (77%) show strong and broad public concern about the affordability of health care.
  - In the November 2010 election cycle, a majority of Missourians (54%) indicated that health care was important to their vote.
  - The gap between those who fear the system staying the same (25%) and those who fear the system changing too much (54%) increased since the election.
  - A majority of Missourians still oppose the law (50% oppose; 32% support) but opposition has softened since the summer (August 2010, 54% opposed).
  - Missourians perceive few groups as being positively affected by the law. The more dominant perception is that most groups will be adversely affected, including middle class families, seniors, the state, and the country.
- 

# Key Findings

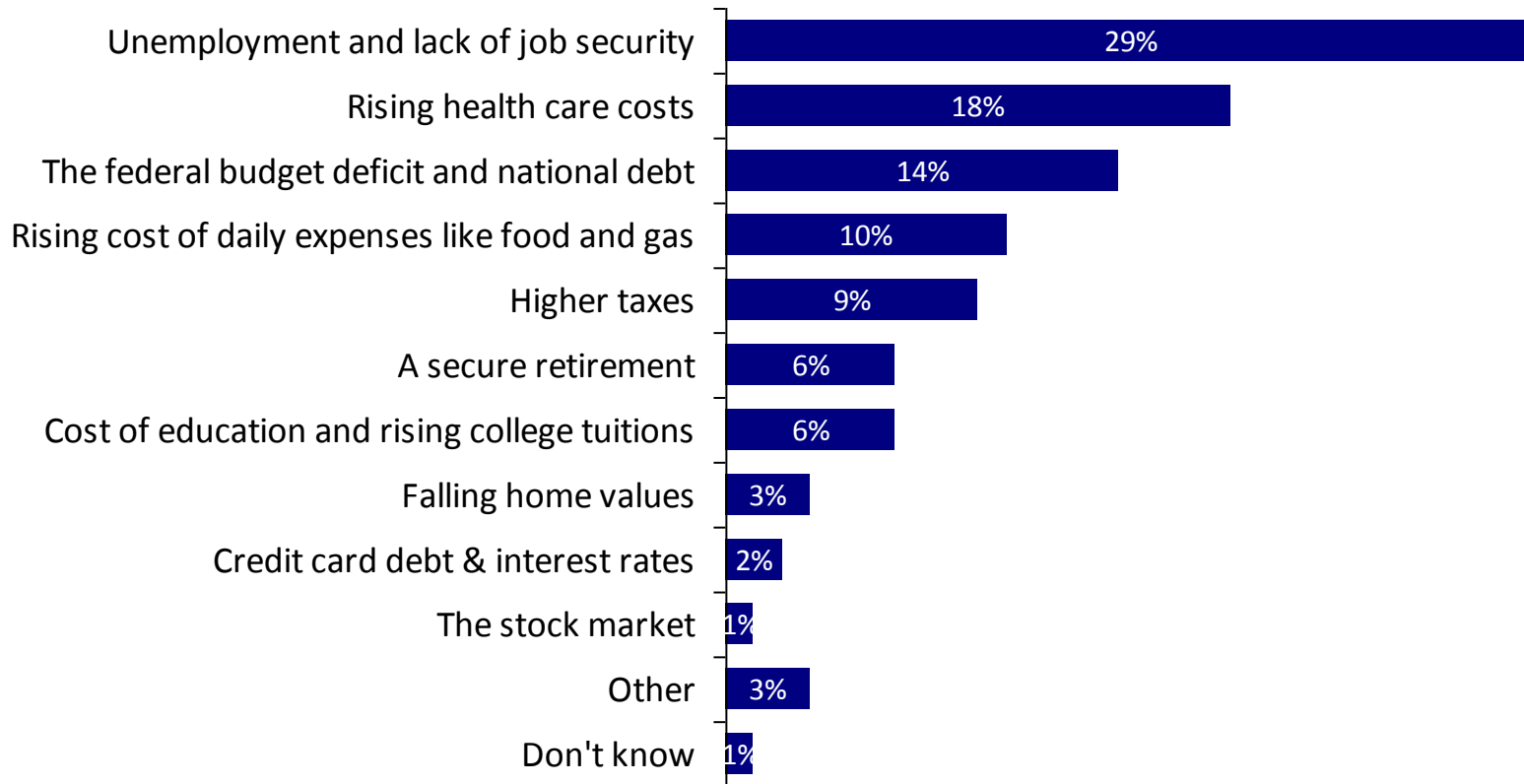
- Despite opposing the law overall, Missourians supported most of its individual components. The top reforms garner broad and intense support, regardless of gender, age, region, or party affiliation.
  - The most popular reforms deal with prohibiting caps on coverage, allowing individuals to keep their health care plans, providing small businesses tax credits, and removing co-pays from preventative care.
  - Fewer than one-in-four (22%) knew that all of those proposals were in the law.
  - After voters learn of the proposals contained in the health care law, the gap between opponents and supporters narrows: 43% supporting and 45% oppose.
- 

# **The Political Context for Health Care Reform in Missouri**

Health care remains a particularly important issue for Missourians, informing voters' behavior at the polls. While voters continue to be fearful of rising insurance costs, increasingly they are adverse to changes in the health care system.

# While concerns about unemployment and job security unsurprisingly top voters' issue agenda, rising health care costs are close behind

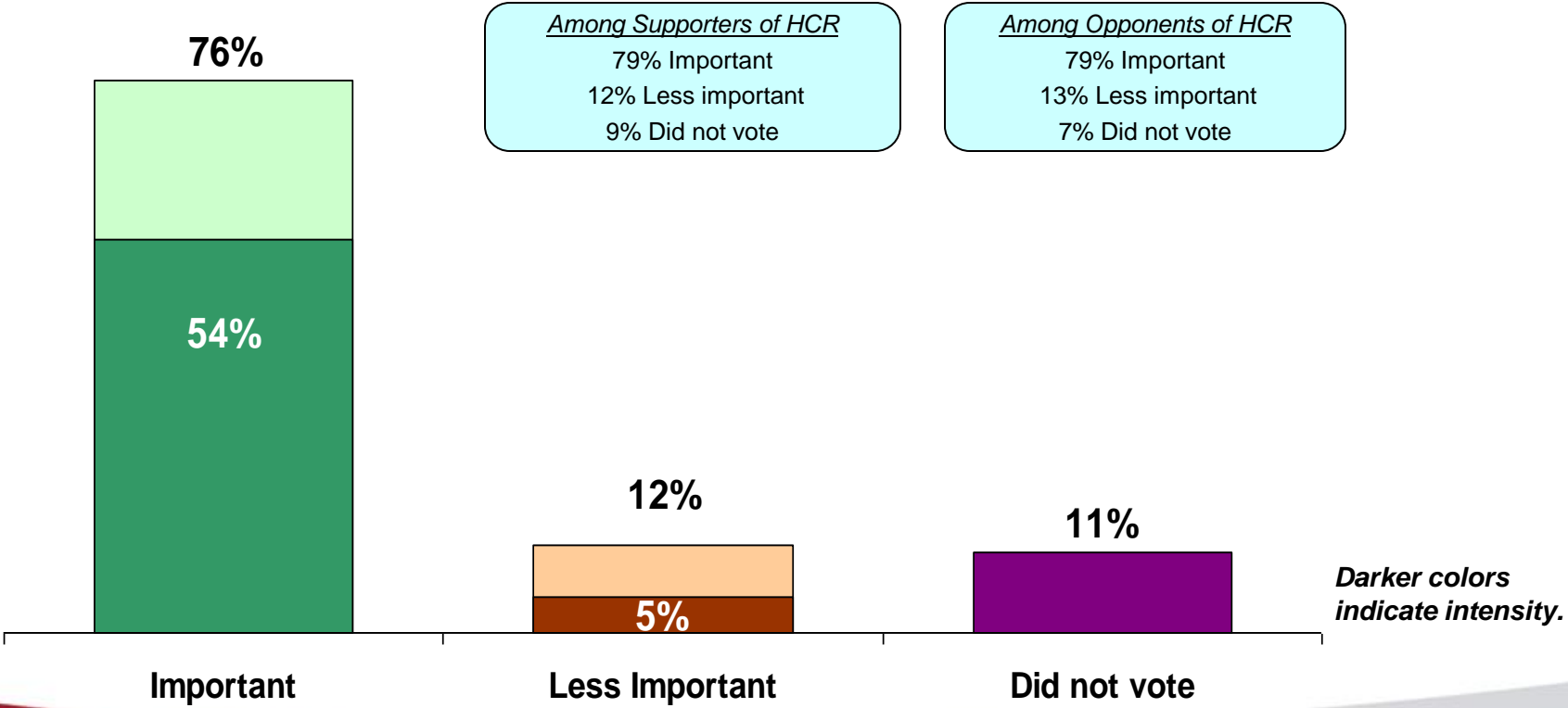
## Top Economic Concern



Now I am going to read you a list of economic concerns that some people have. Please tell me which one of these you personally are the MOST worried about

# Three-quarters of Missouri voters report that the candidates' Positions on health care were important to their vote this past election, including a majority who say it was very important.

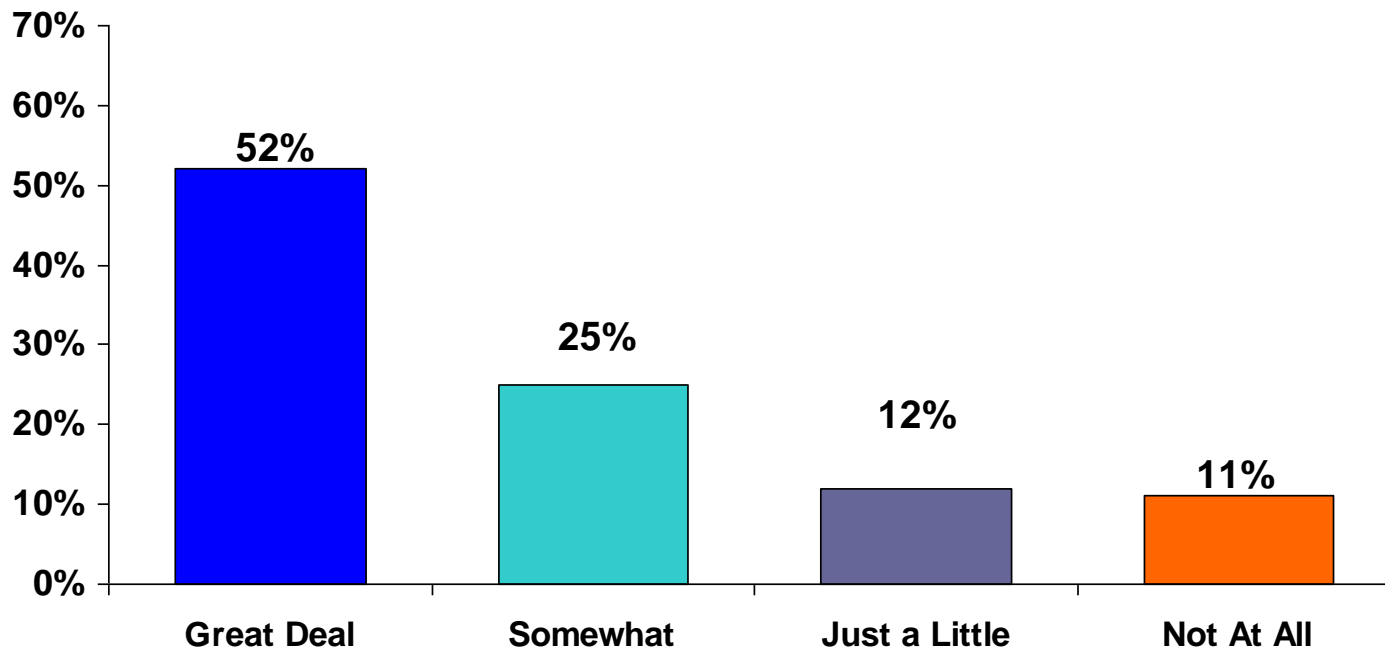
## How Important was Health Care to Your Vote for Congress?



How important was the candidates' for Congress and U.S. Senate stance on health care in determining your vote—was it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not important at all?

**Missourians do not feel secure with the current health insurance system. More than three-quarters of voters are concerned about access to affordable health insurance.**

**Concern About Affordable Health Insurance**

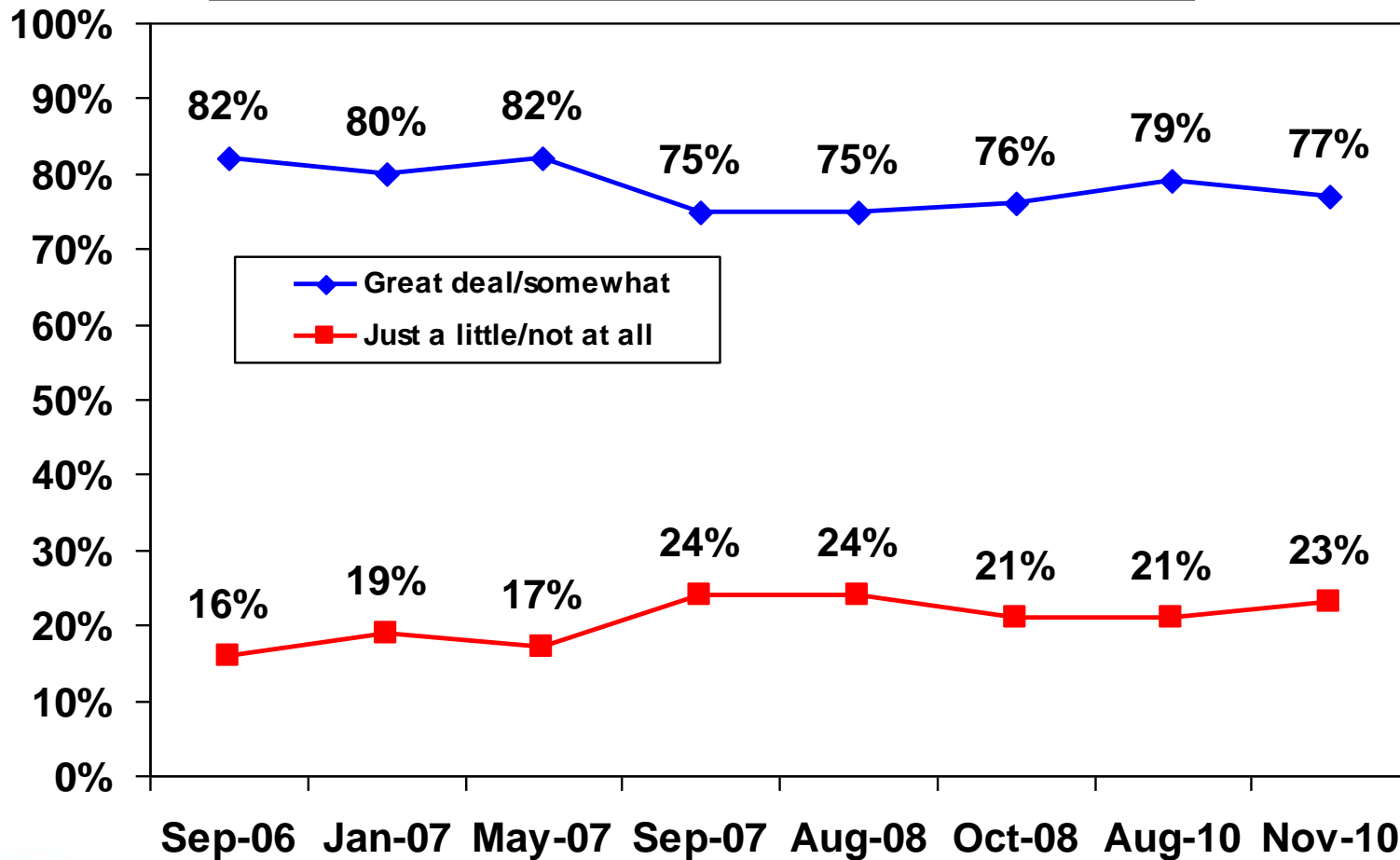


How concerned would you say you are about affordable health insurance for you and your family? Would you say you are concerned a great deal, somewhat, just a little, or not at all?



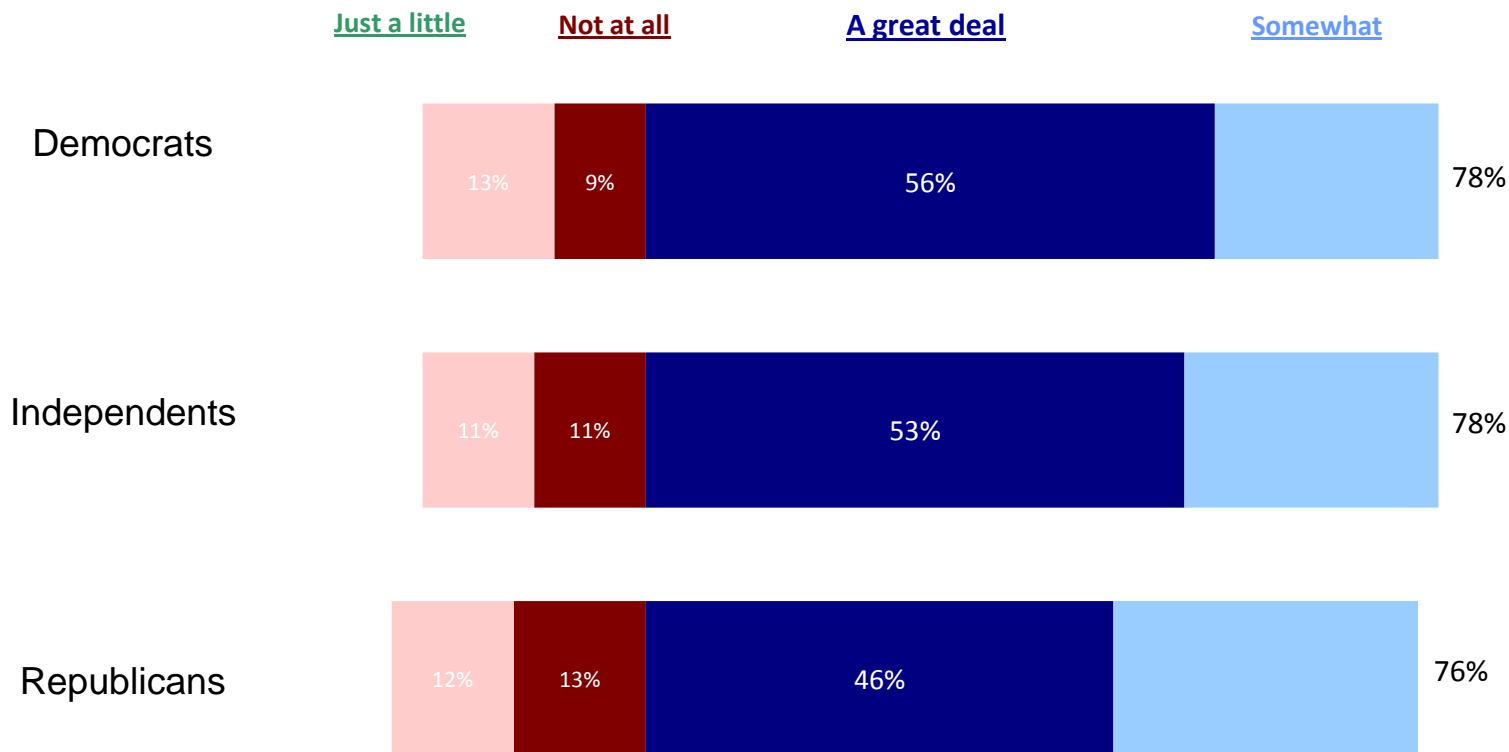
**Concerns over the affordability of health insurance have stayed elevated, and more or less constant, for the past several years.**

**Concern About Affordable Health Insurance**



Though voters across party lines are concerned about the affordability of health care, Democrats are the most likely to be concerned a great deal, while Republicans are the least.

### Concern about Health Care Affordability – Party Identification

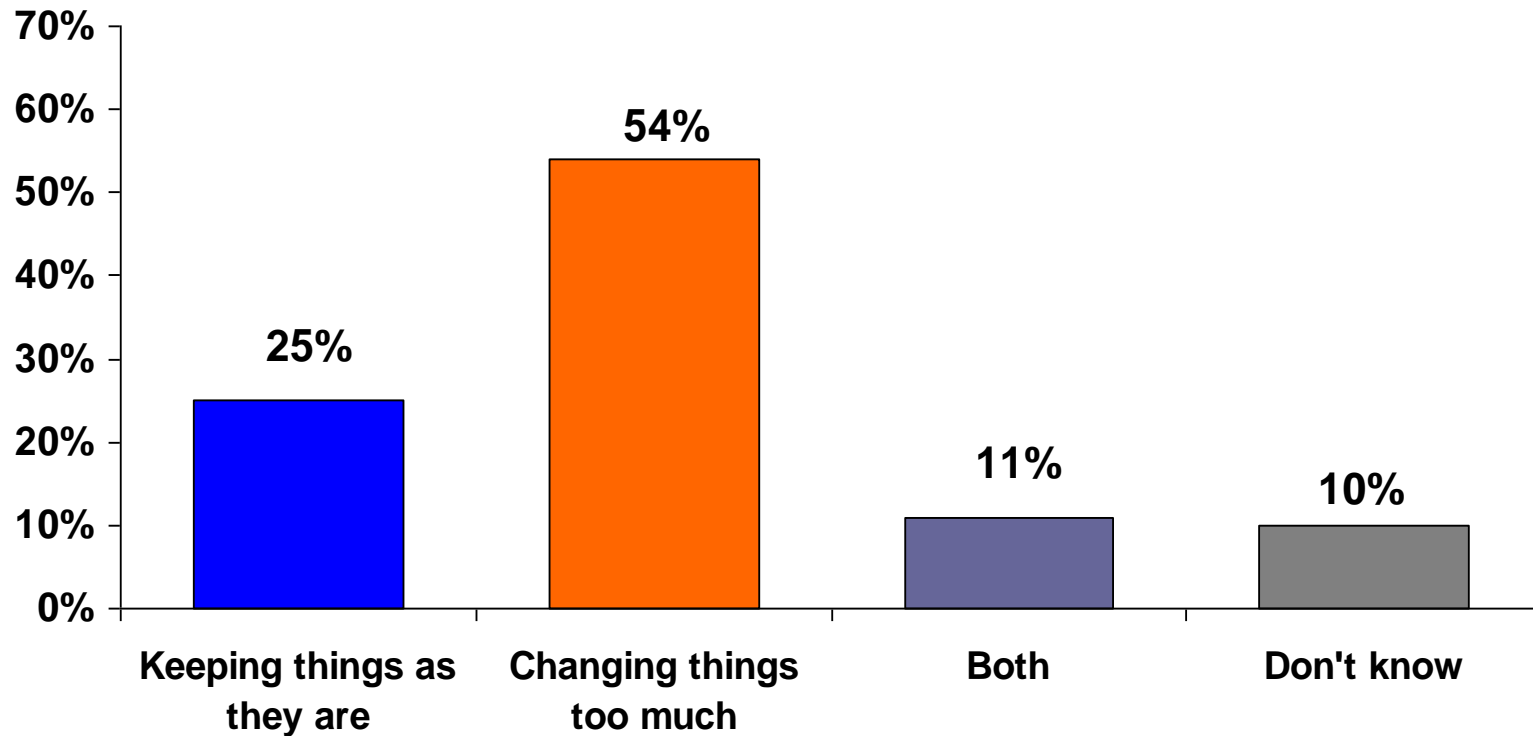


Darker Colors Indicate Intensity

How concerned would you say you are about affordable health insurance for you and your family? Would you say you are concerned a great deal, somewhat, just a little, or not at all?

# Despite frustration with the lack of access to affordable health care, Missourians are becoming increasingly averse to change.

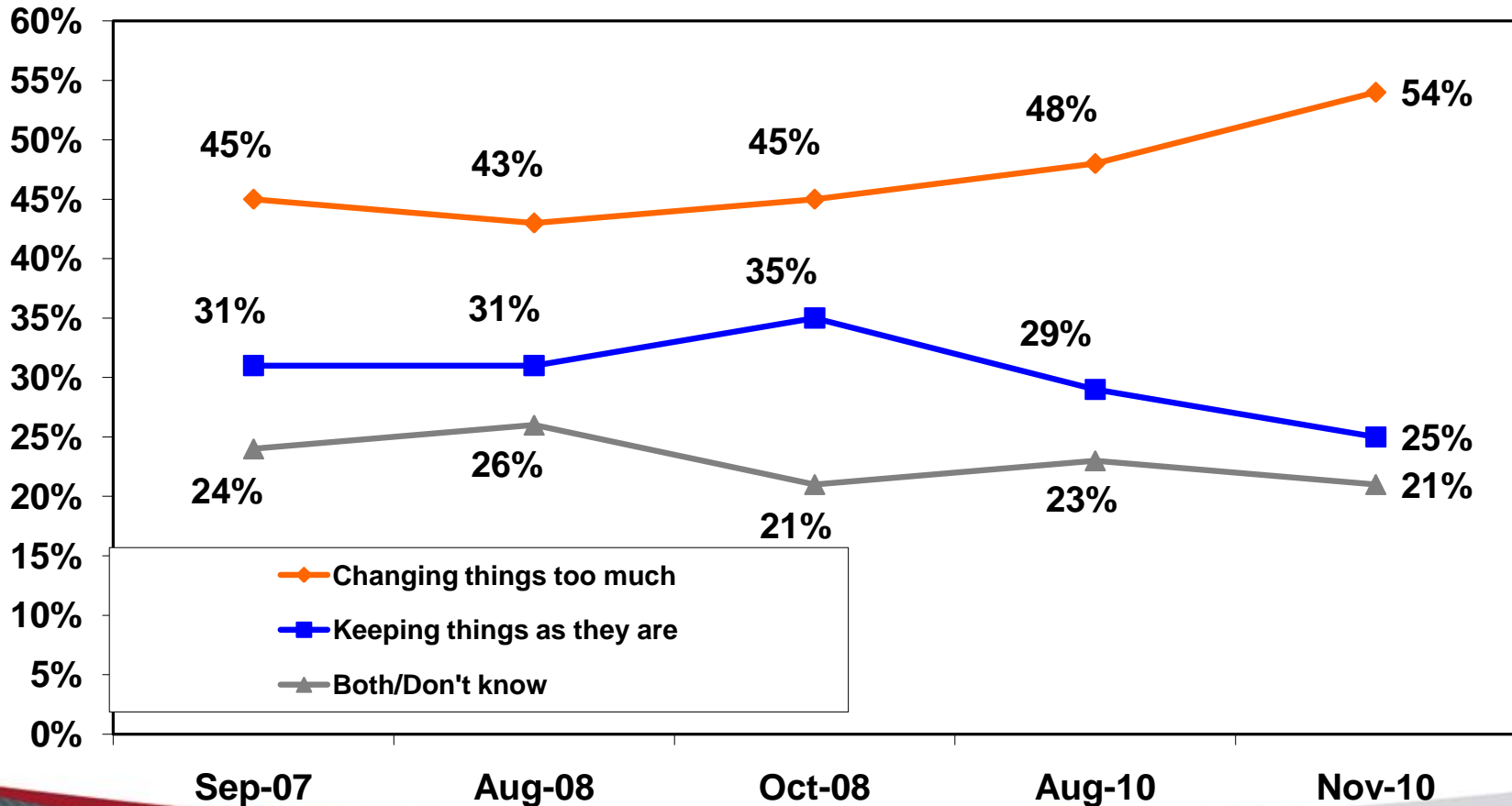
## Greater Health Care Concern: Change or Status Quo



Overall, when you think about health care in Missouri today, which are you more worried about, keeping things as they are or changing things too much?

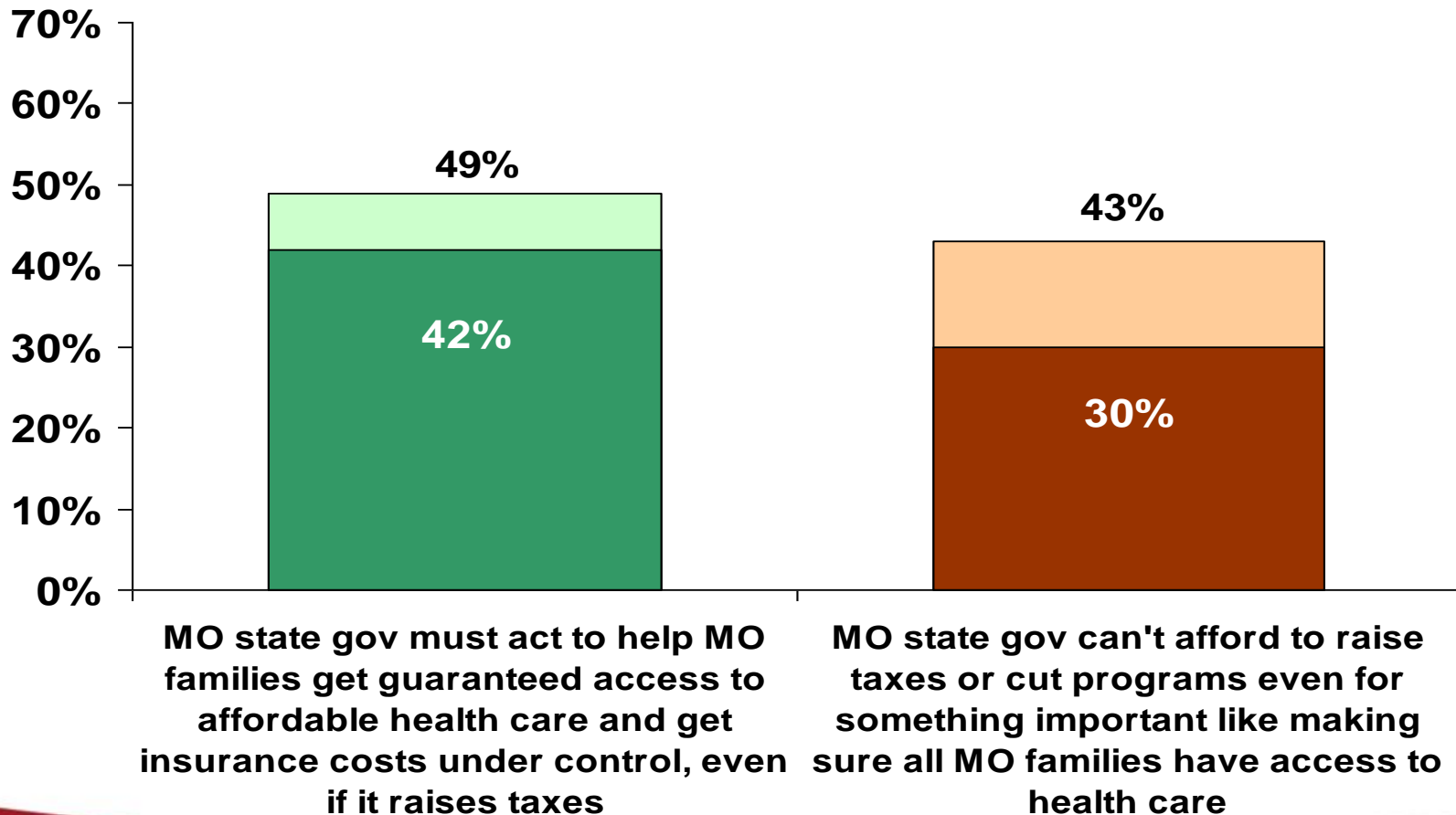
The gap between those who fear too much change and those who fear the status quo has widened significantly since the election.

### Change or Status Quo?



**A plurality of voters, including majorities of independents and Democrats, believes state government must act to guarantee access to affordable health care, even if this is accompanied by increased taxes.**

**Missouri State Government and Health Care**



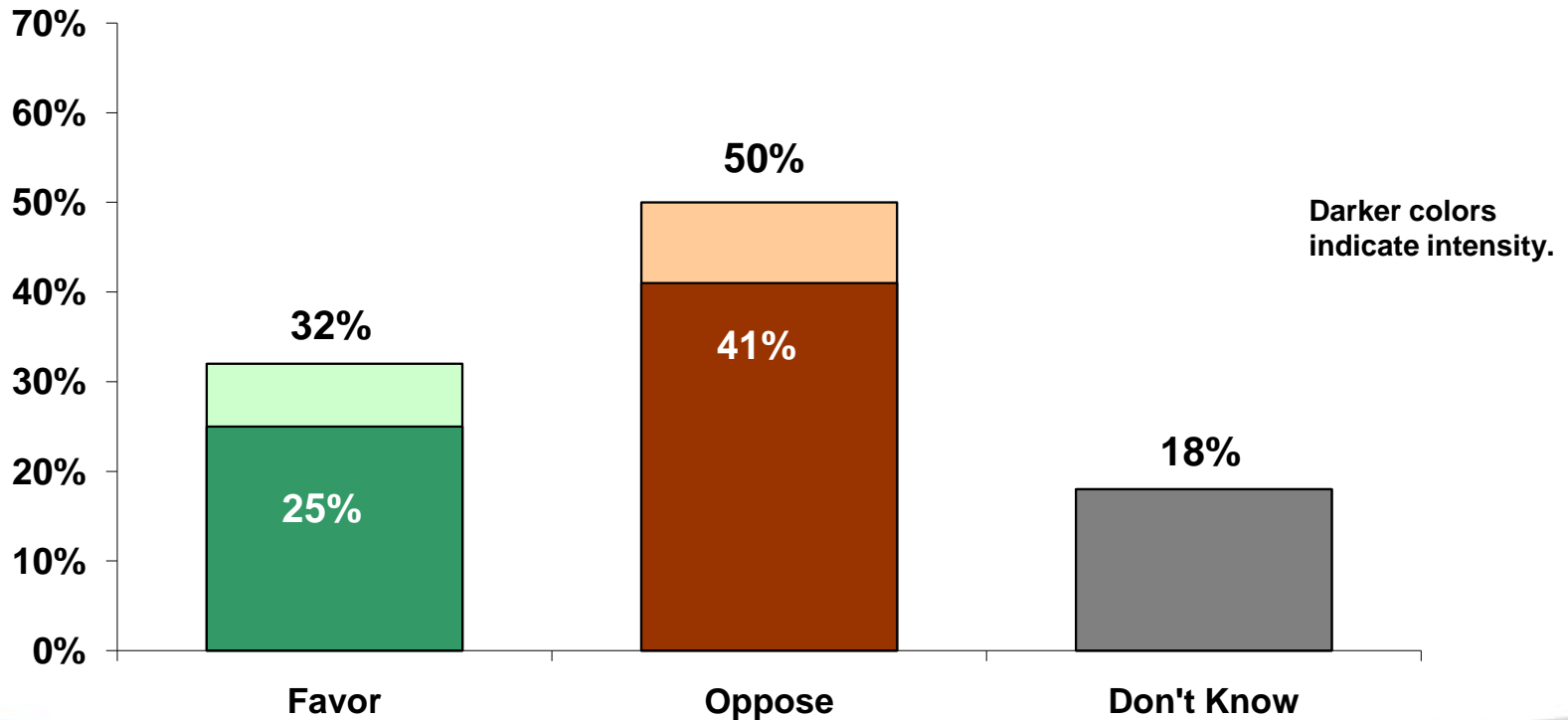
Now, thinking about the upcoming legislative session in Missouri state government, which of the following statements comes closest to your view? [IF CHOICE] And do you feel that way strongly or not-so-strongly?

# Contours of Support for Health Care Reform

Half of the Missouri electorate opposes the national health care reform law, while less than one-third supports it. This gap narrows somewhat after voters hear individual components, which they overwhelmingly favor. At no point in the survey does support outweigh opposition.

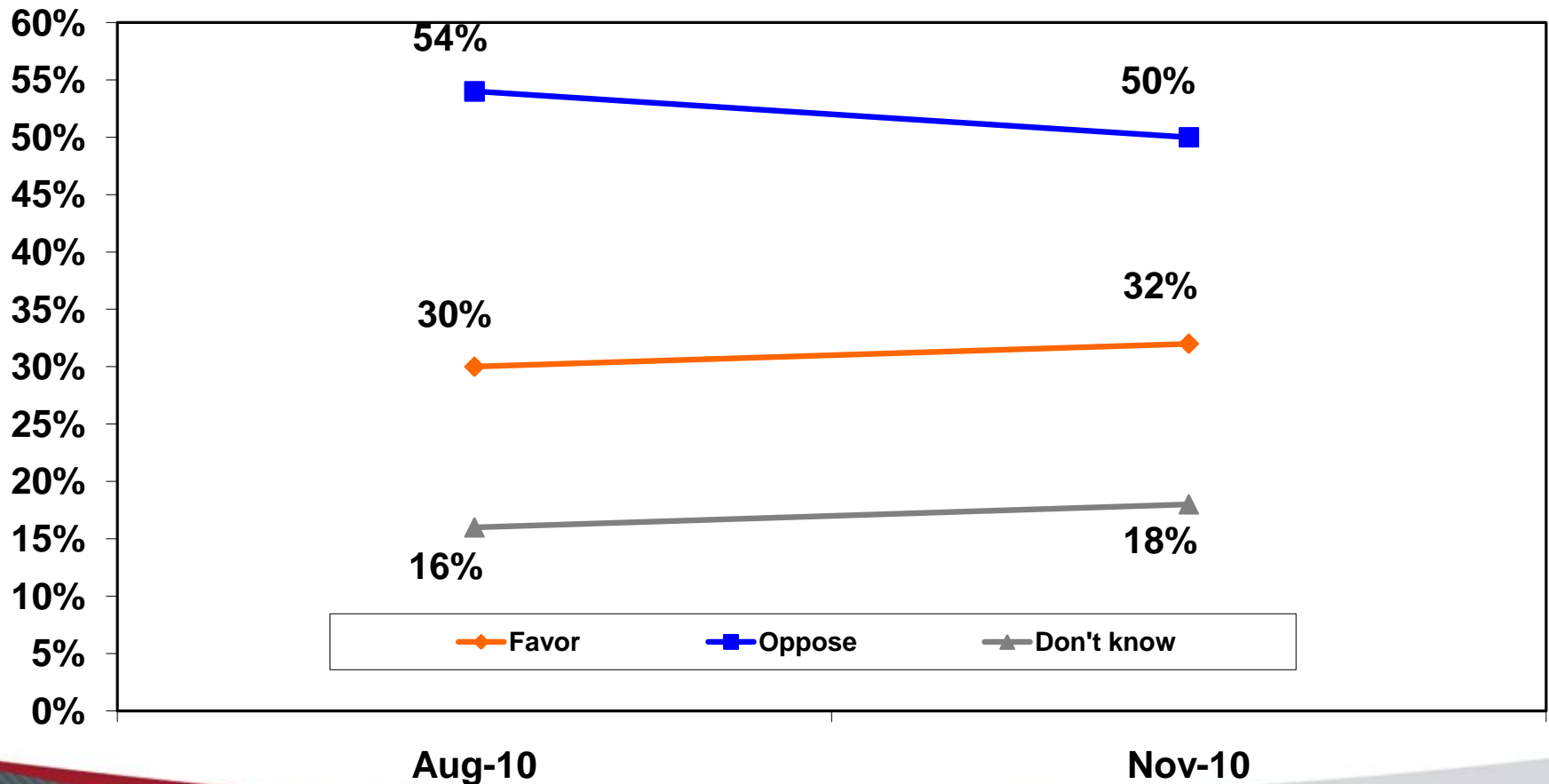
The national health care reform law has more strong opponents in Missouri today than it has total supporters.

**Initial Ask: Support for National Health Care Reform**



Since August, opposition for the law has waned slightly and support increased.

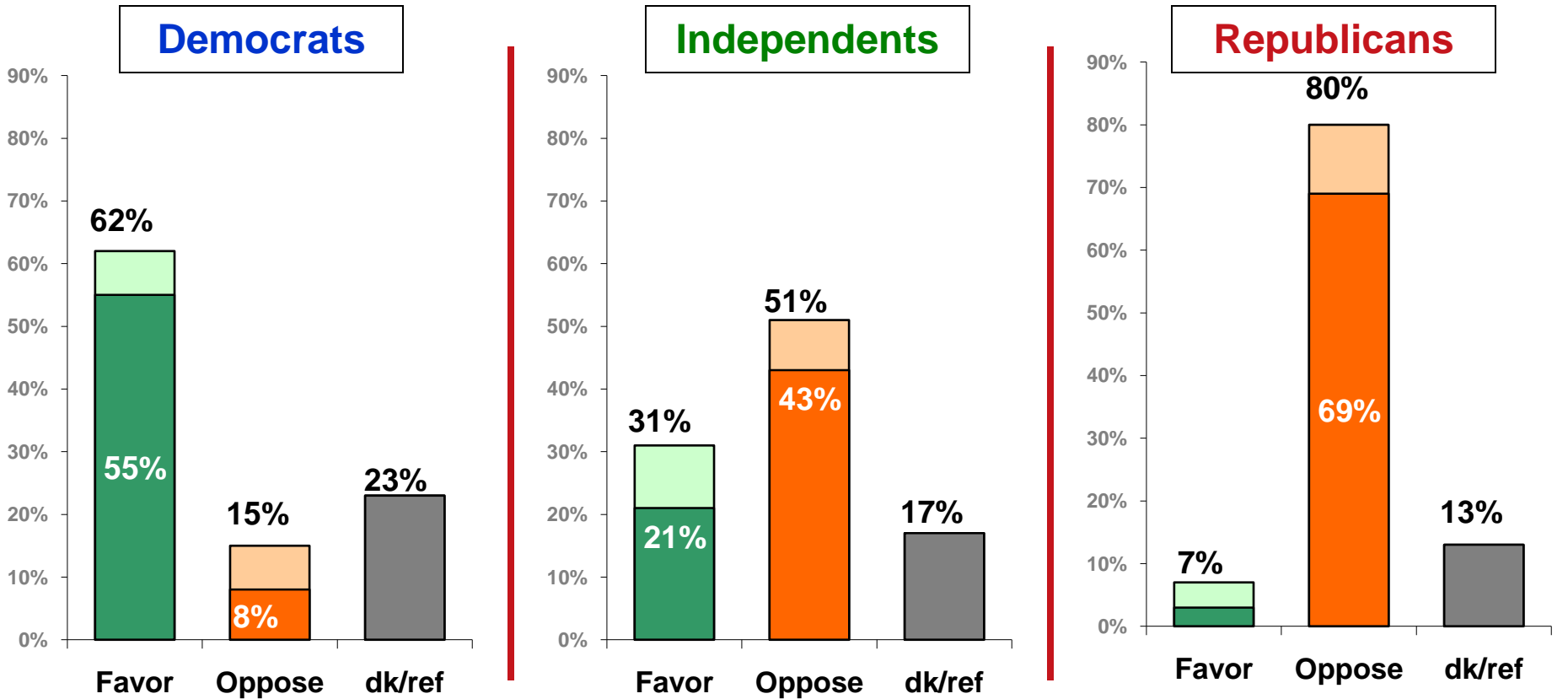
**Initial: Support for National Health Care Reform**





While Republicans are almost perfectly unified against the law, opposing it by 72 points, Democrats are much more ambivalent. Independents oppose the law by a 20-point margin.

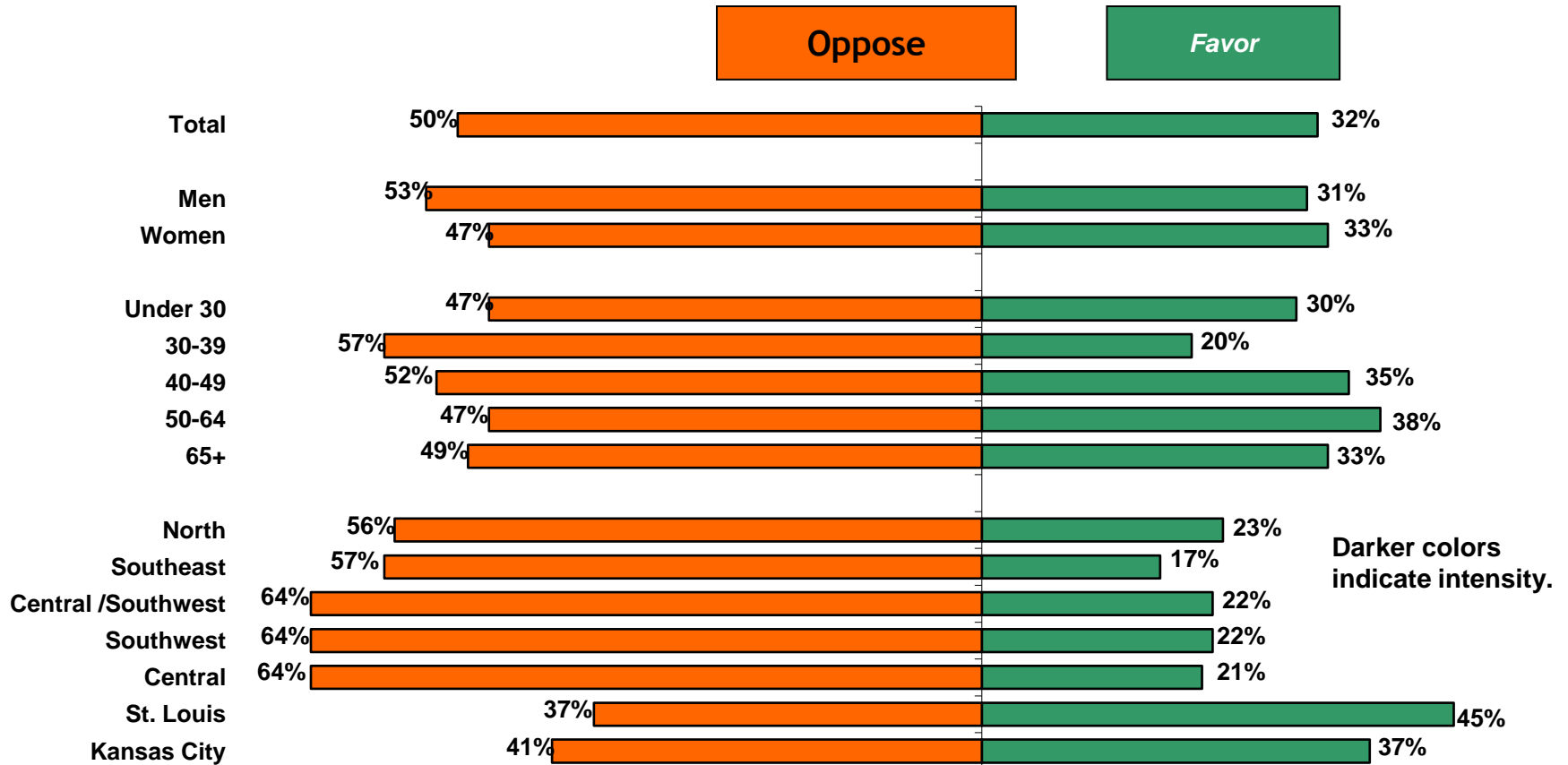
### Initial Ballot – Support for Health Care Reform Law



Darker colors indicate intensity.

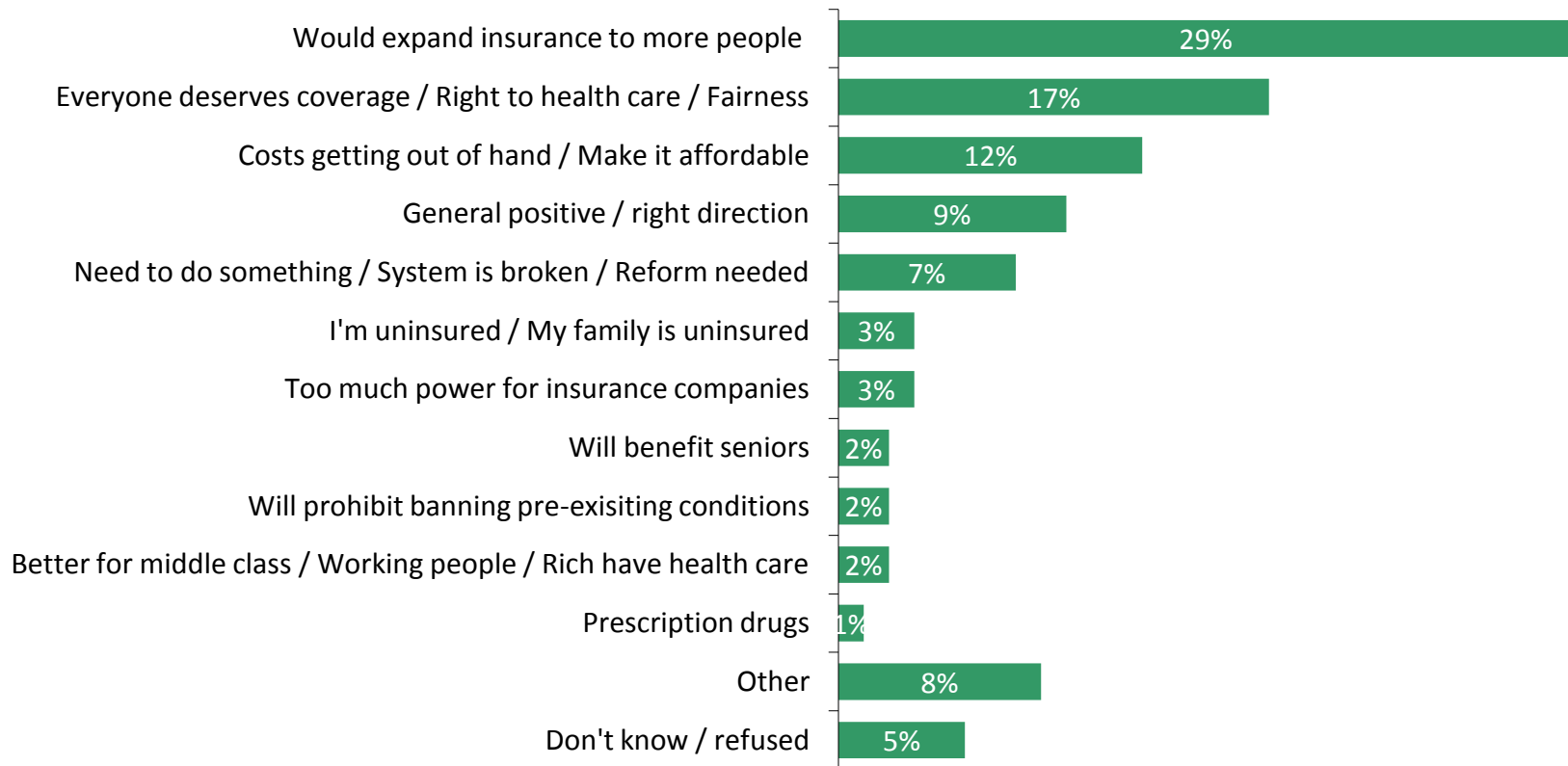
# Opposition spikes in Central and Southwest Missouri. St. Louis is the only region supportive of the law.

## Initial Ballot – Support for Health Care Reform Law



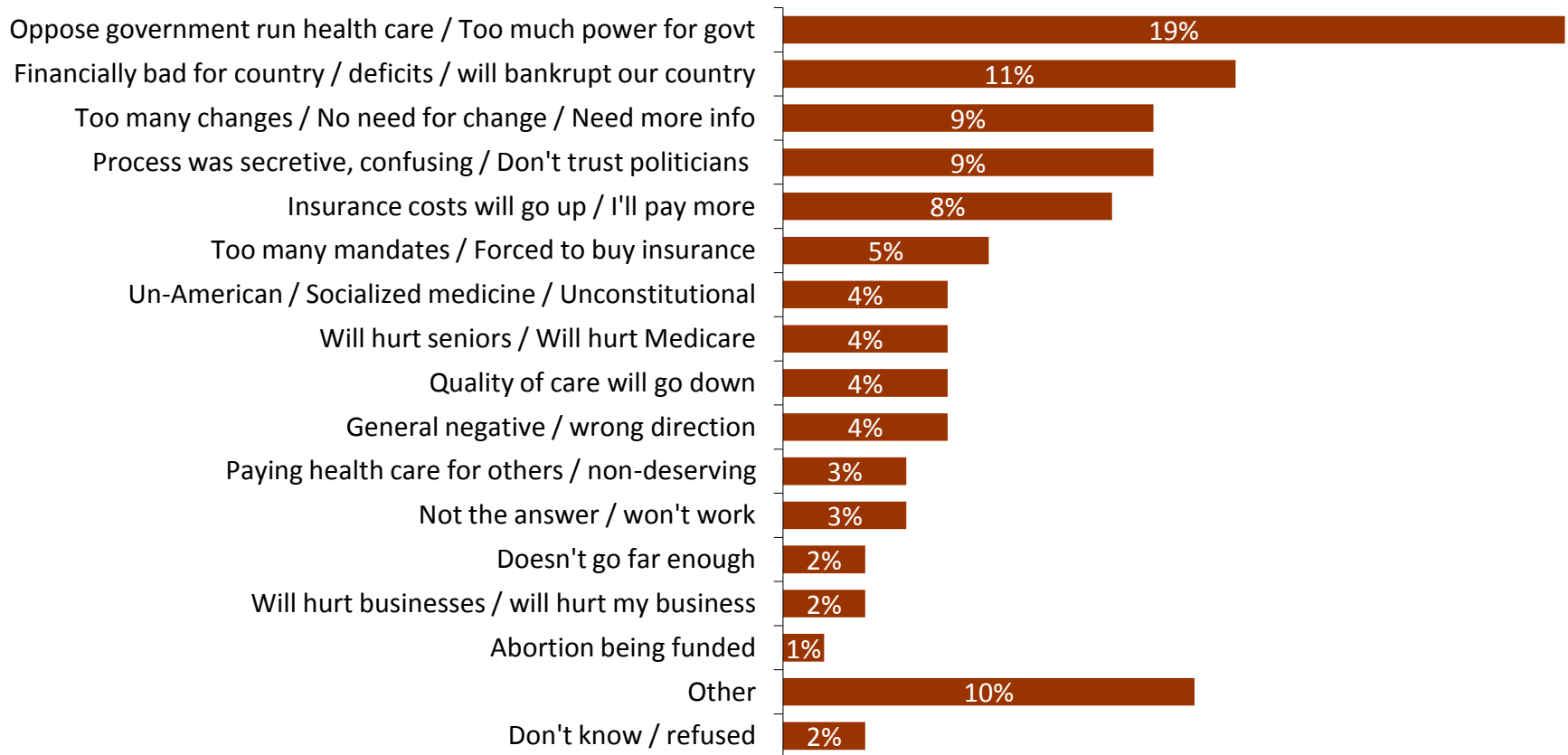
**When proponents of the law are asked why they support it, most cite the basic moral principle of ensuring all Americans have health care. A much smaller number point to improving affordability as the central factor.**

### Why Do You Favor Health Care Reform



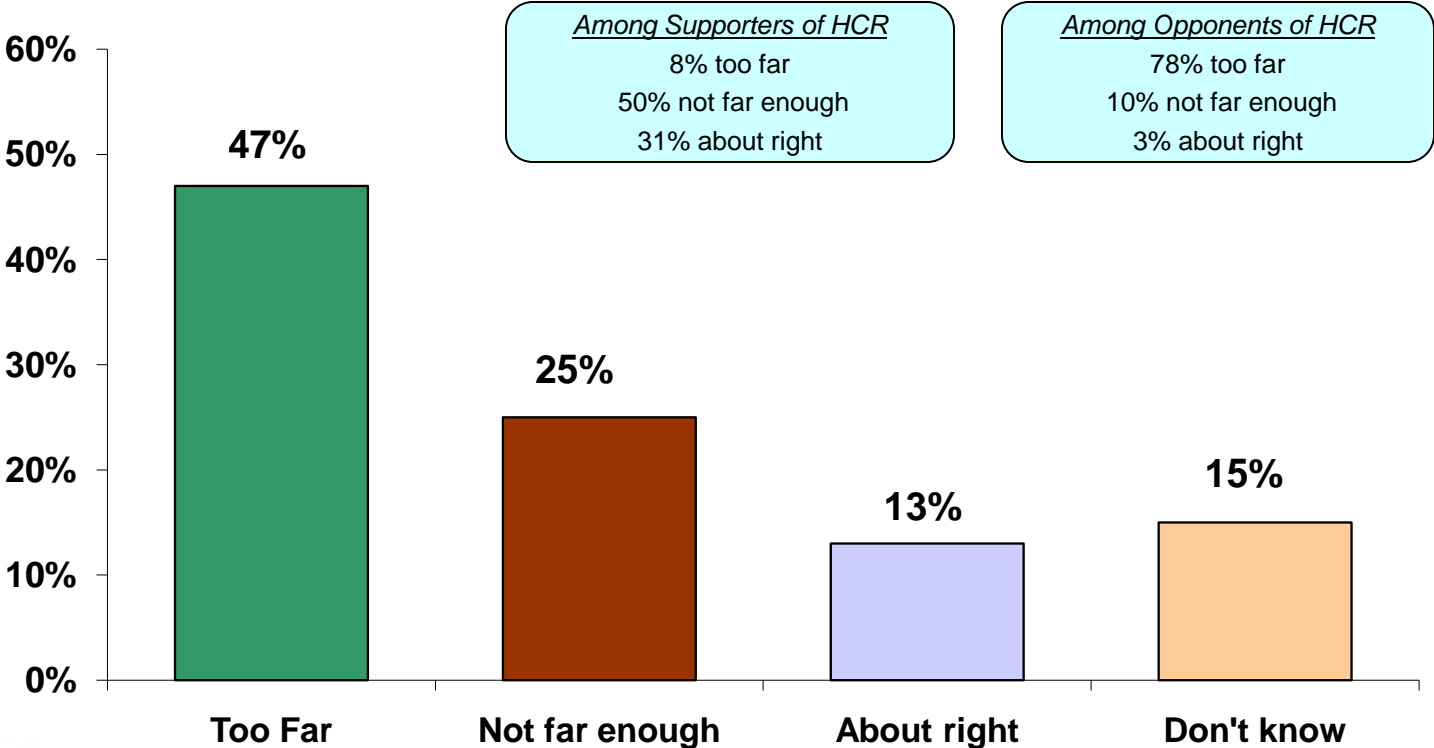
# Those who oppose health care reform cite fears of the government gaining too much power and concerns over the federal deficit.

## Why Do You Oppose Health Care Reform



A plurality believes the health care reform law went too far, though one-in-four contend that the law did not go far enough.

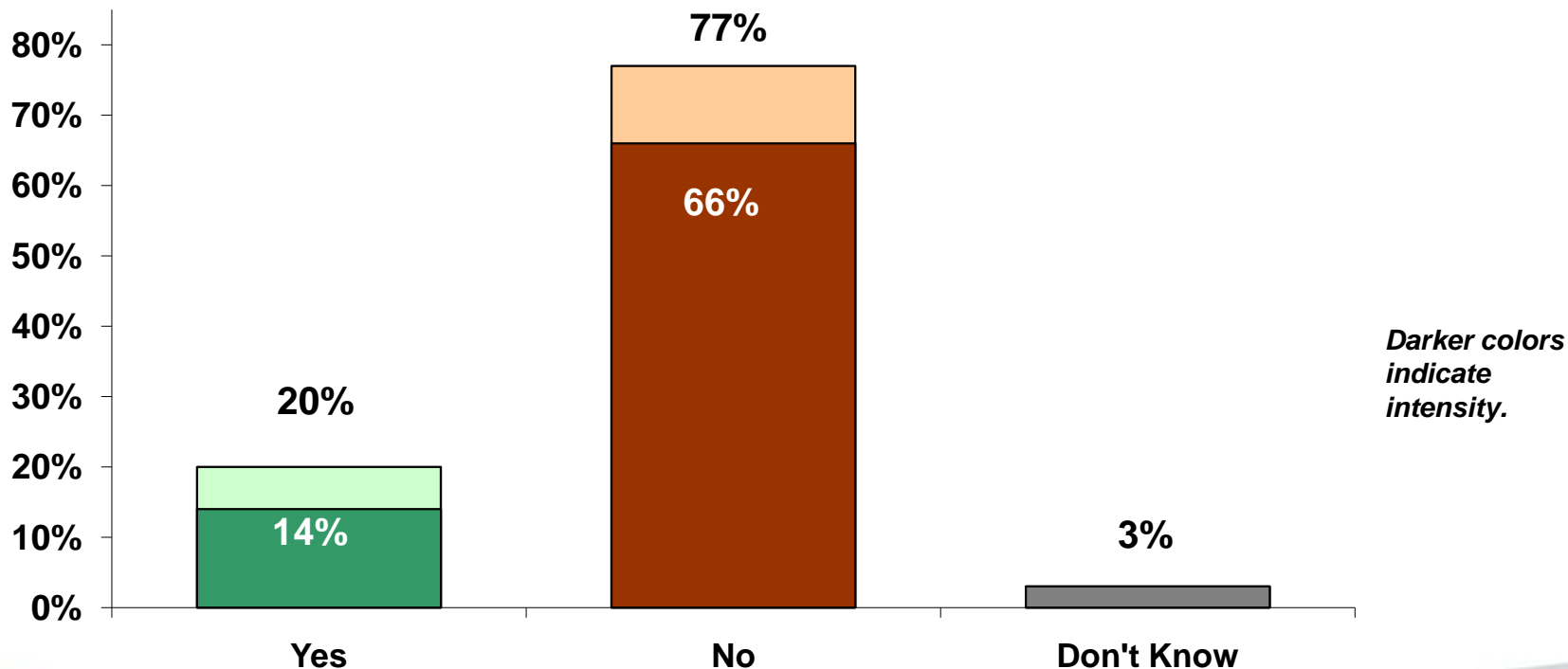
**Did Health Care Go Too Far or Not Far Enough?**



Do you think the national health care reform law went too far, that it didn't go far enough, or that it was about right?

Part of voters' reluctance to support health care reform stems from their insistence that government has not provided enough information about it. Three quarters say the government hasn't provided enough information, including two-thirds who feel this way strongly.

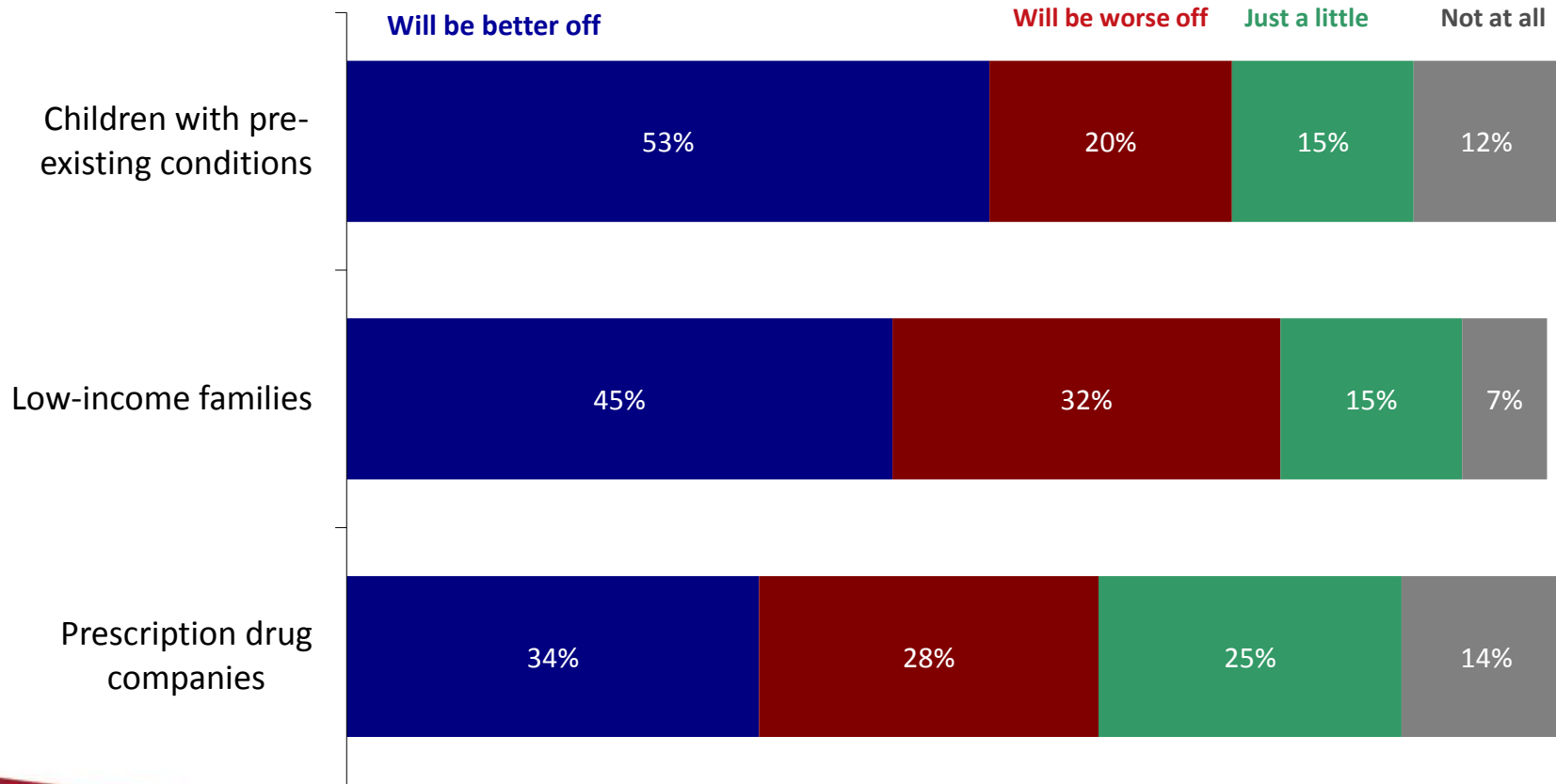
## Has Government Provided Enough Info?



Do you believe the government has provided enough information about the new health reform law for citizens to make an informed decision about the merits of the new law? [IF YES OR NO]  
And do you feel that way strongly or not-so-strongly

**Missourians see relatively few groups as being positively affected by the law. They believe children with pre-existing conditions, low-income families, and prescription drug companies will be better off under the law.**

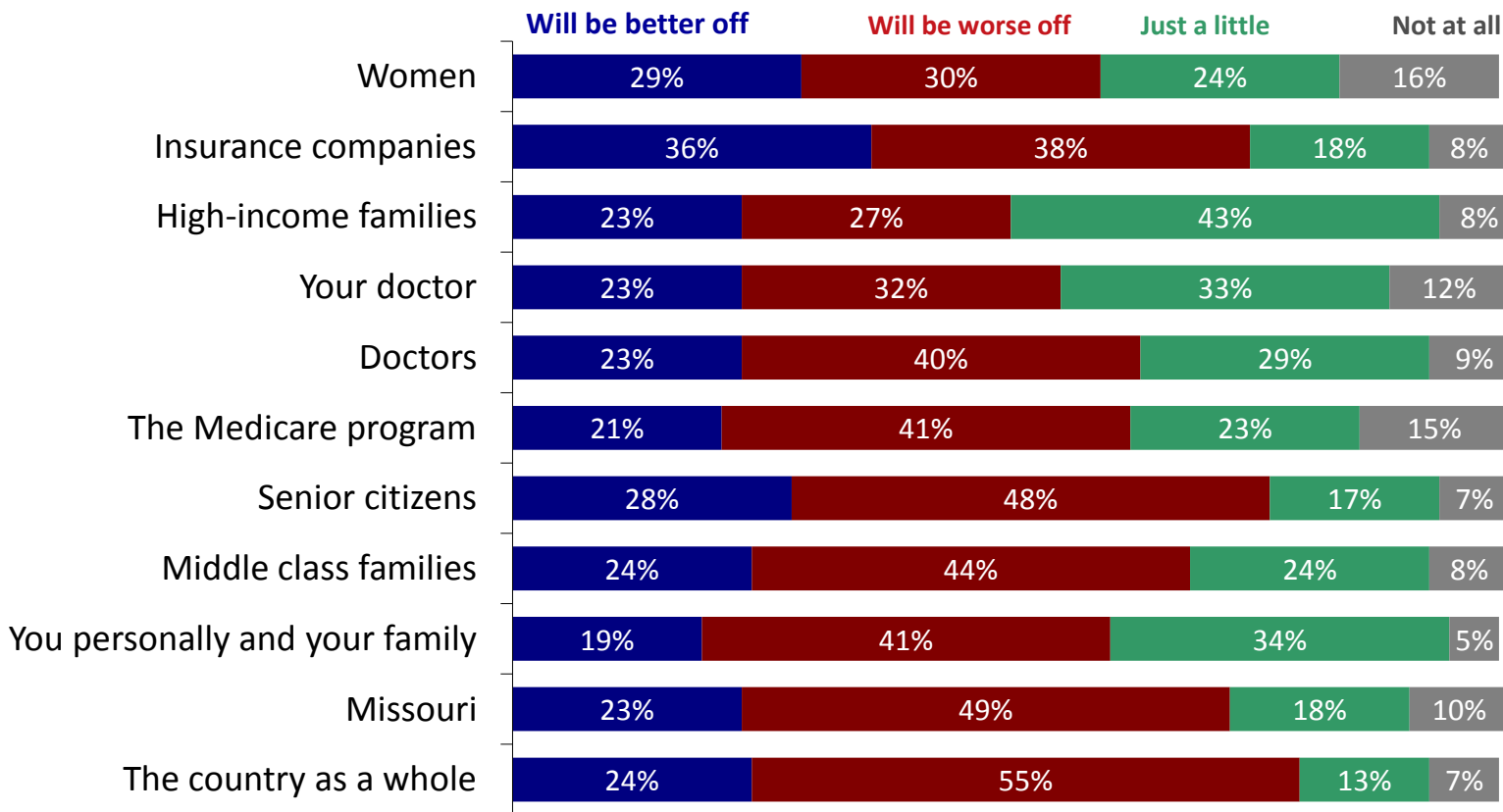
**Groups Missourians Think Will Be *BETTER* Off**



Now, I'm going to read you a list of people or programs that may be affected by the health care law. Regardless of whether or not you support the health care law, please tell me whether you think that group or program will be better off, worse off, or about the same with the new health care law.

**The more dominant perception is that most groups will be adversely affected by the law. Respondents also believe Medicare participants will be impacted negatively.**

**Groups Missourians Think Will Be *WORSE* Off**

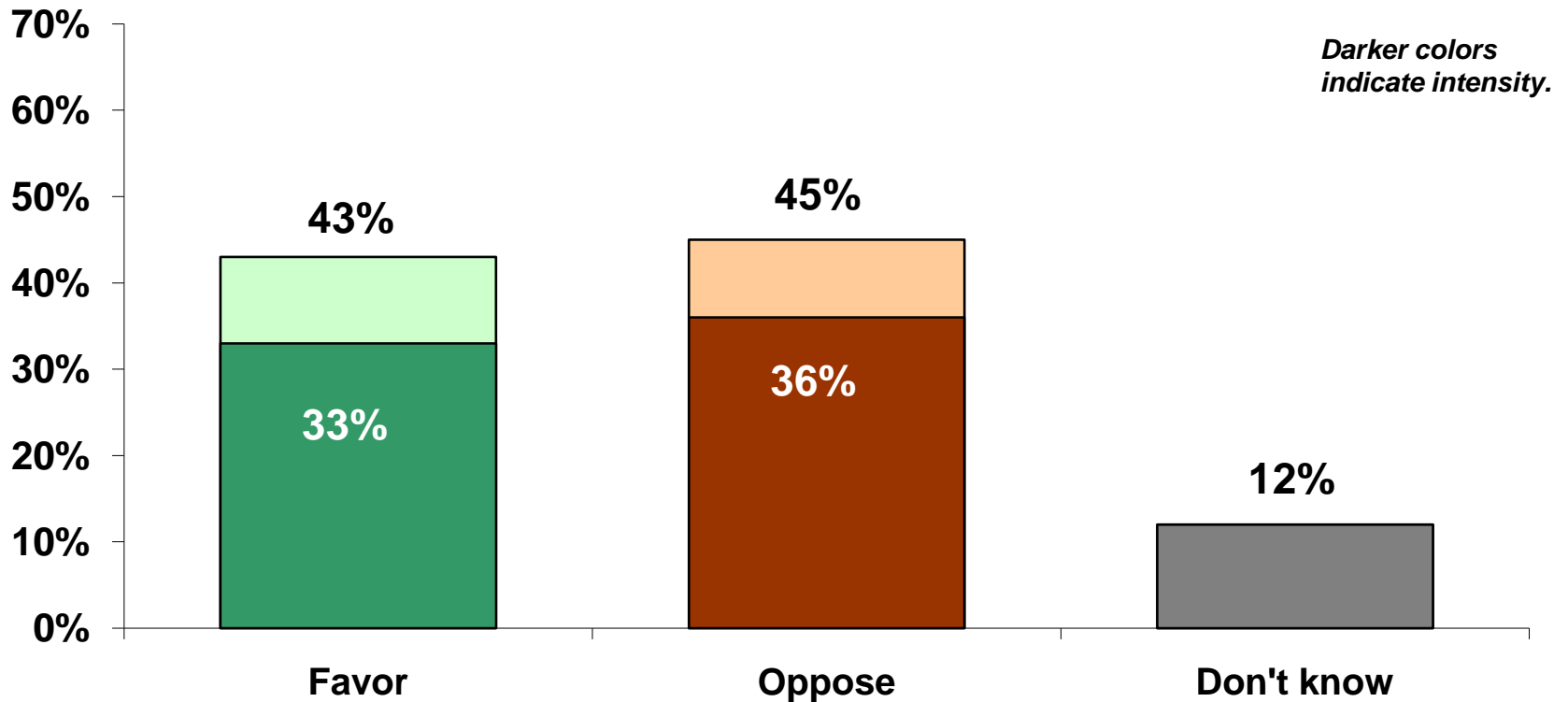


Now, I'm going to read you a list of people or programs that may be affected by the health care law. Regardless of whether or not you support the health care law, please tell me whether you think that group or program will be better off, worse off, or about the same with the new health care law.



**Voters are misinformed about the law's specific reforms. Their opposition diminishes after being presented with a battery of (highly popular) individual reforms contained in the law.**

**Informed: Support for National Health Care Reform**



*Darker colors indicate intensity.*

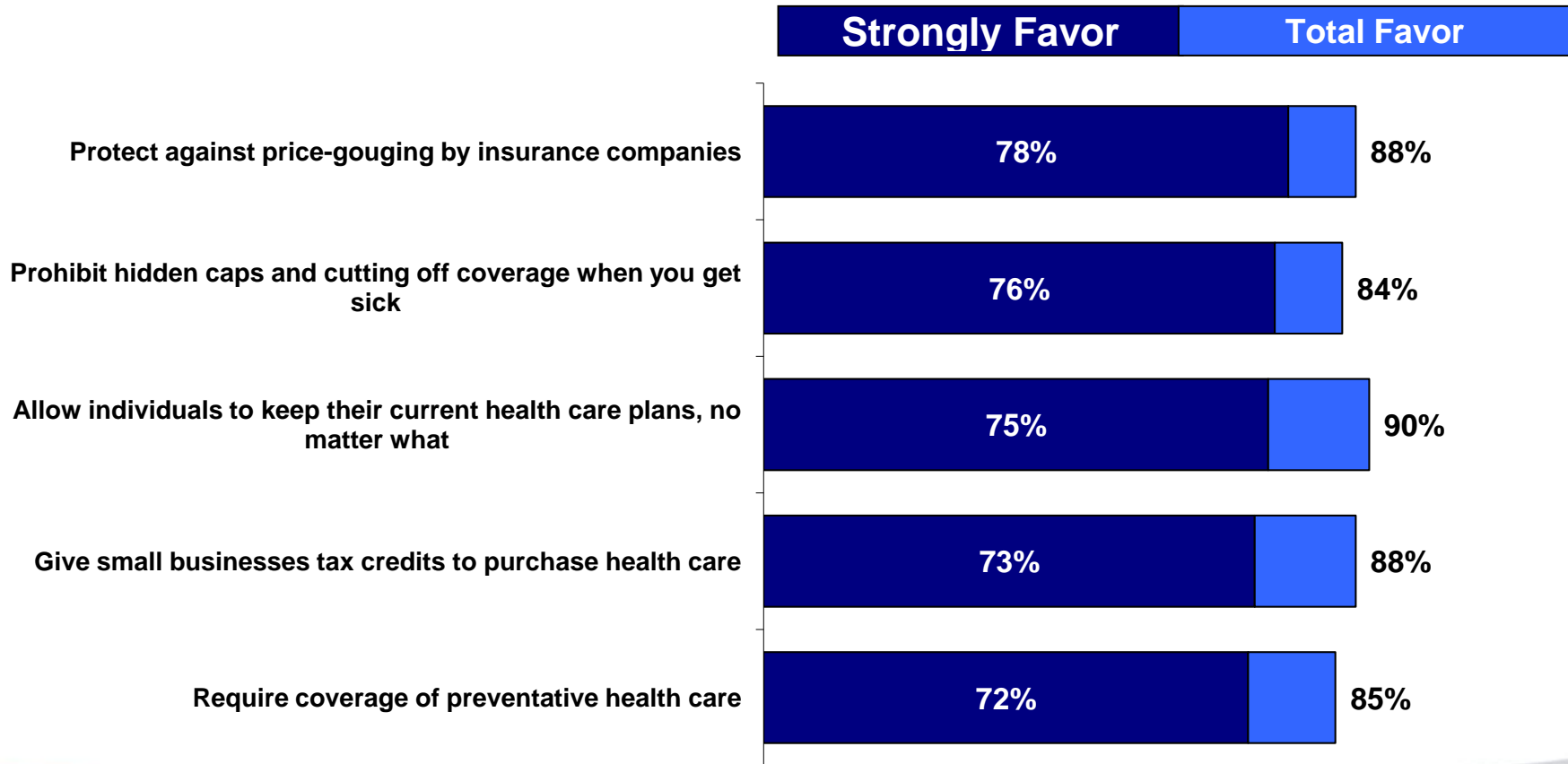
In fact, all of those reforms I just read you are included in the national health care reform law. Sometimes over the course of a survey like this, people change their minds. Knowing this, do you favor or oppose the national health care reform law, or aren't you sure?

# Individual Reforms and Health Care Funding Mechanisms

While voters tend to oppose the law overall, they support many of its individual components. This finding constitutes one of the greatest paradoxes to emerge from the data.

# Voters are supportive of individual reforms.

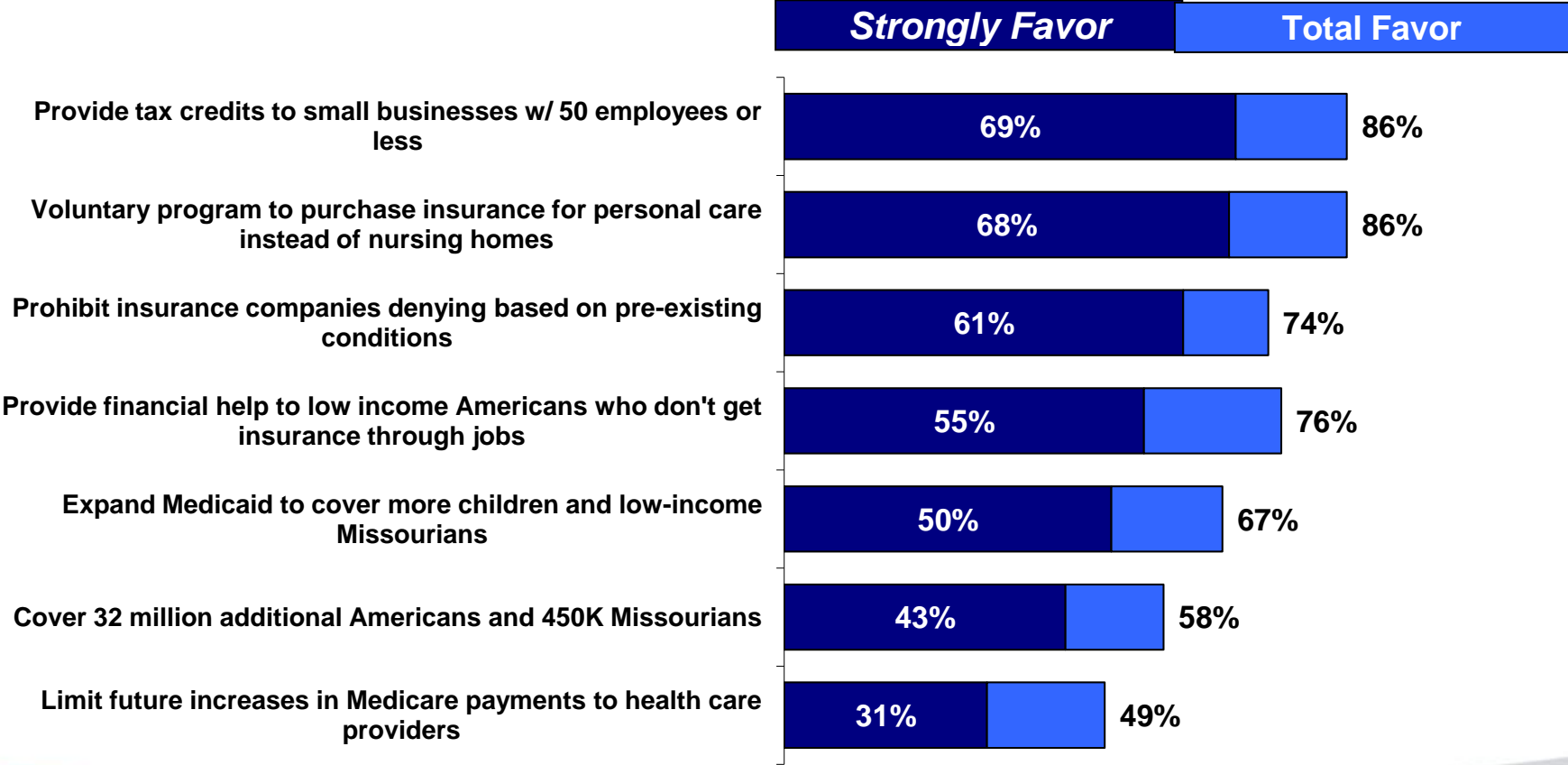
## TOP TIER Specific Reforms – All Voters



Now, I'm going to read you some reforms that have been proposed surrounding health care. Regardless of whether or not you support the health care law, please tell me whether you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose the following suggested reforms. Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose, a reform that will . . .

# Even lower tier proposals are highly popular, including helping low-income Americans, prohibiting denial of coverage for pre-existing conditions, and expanding Medicaid.

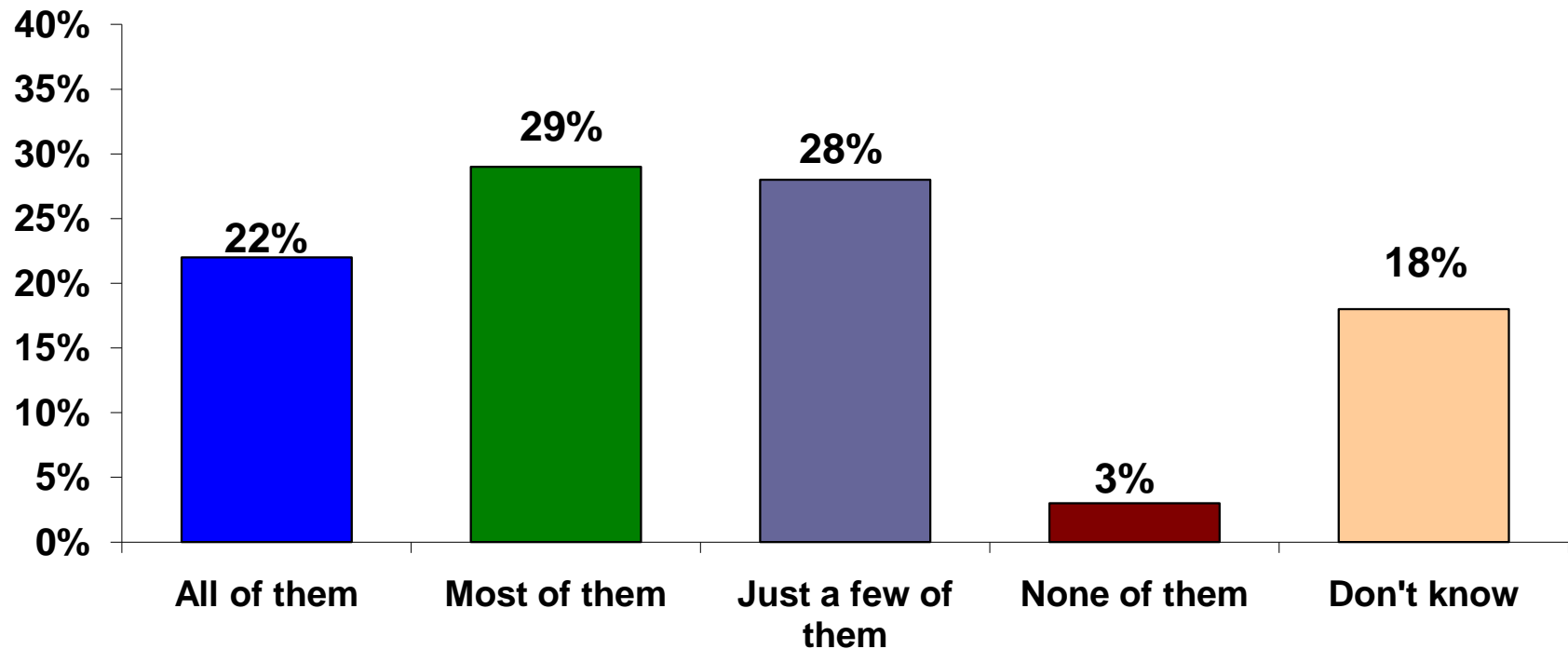
## BOTTOM TIER Specific Reforms – All Voters



Now, I'm going to read you some reforms that have been proposed surrounding health care. Regardless of whether or not you support the health care law, please tell me whether you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose the following suggested reforms. Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose, a reform that will . . .

**Voters are largely unaware of the fact that these reforms—all of which they support individually—are in the health care law.**

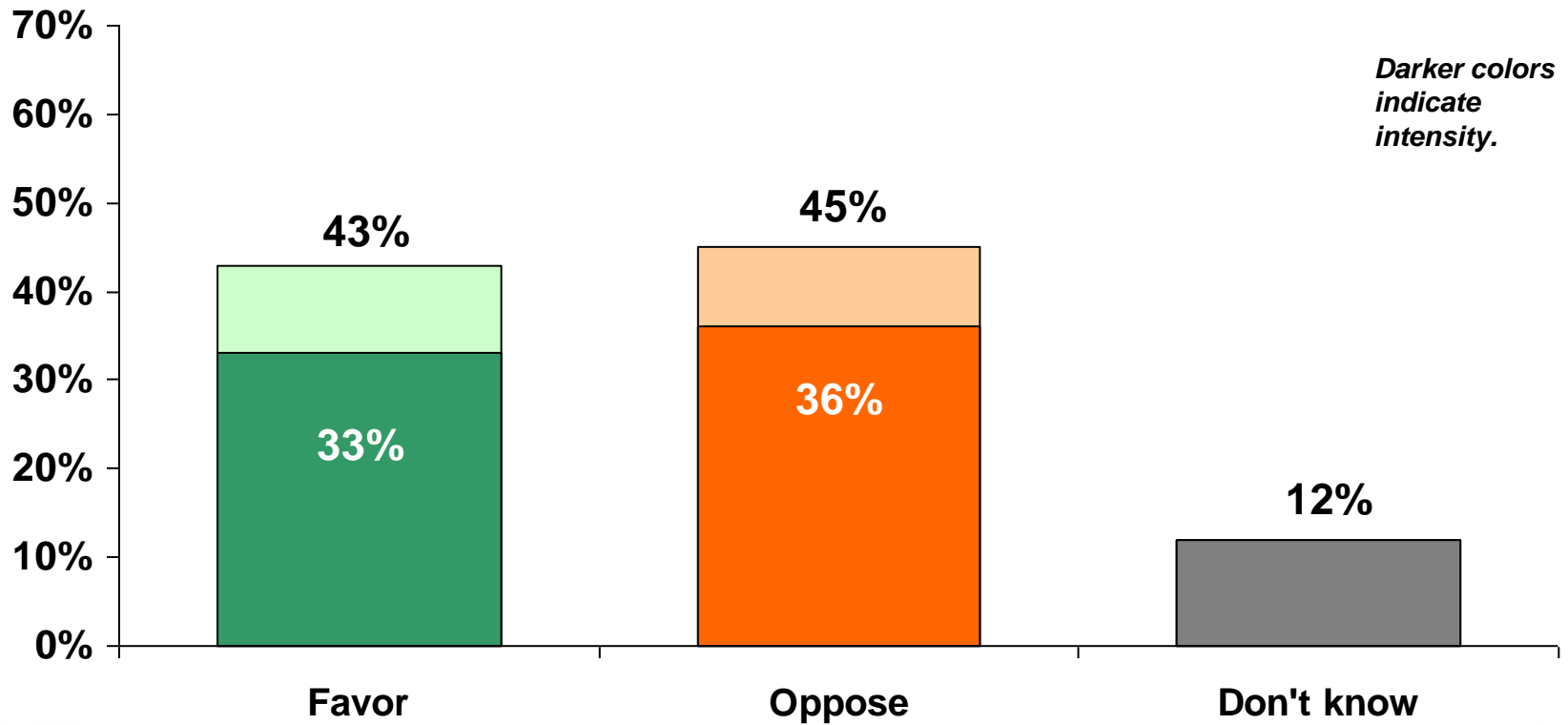
**How Many Reforms Do You Think Are in the Law**



And if you had to say, how many of the reforms I just read are included in the national health care reform law – ALL of them, MOST of them, just a FEW of them, or none of them?

After learning that the proposals are included in the health care law, voter support and opposition reach near-parity.

**Informed: Support for National Health Care Reform**

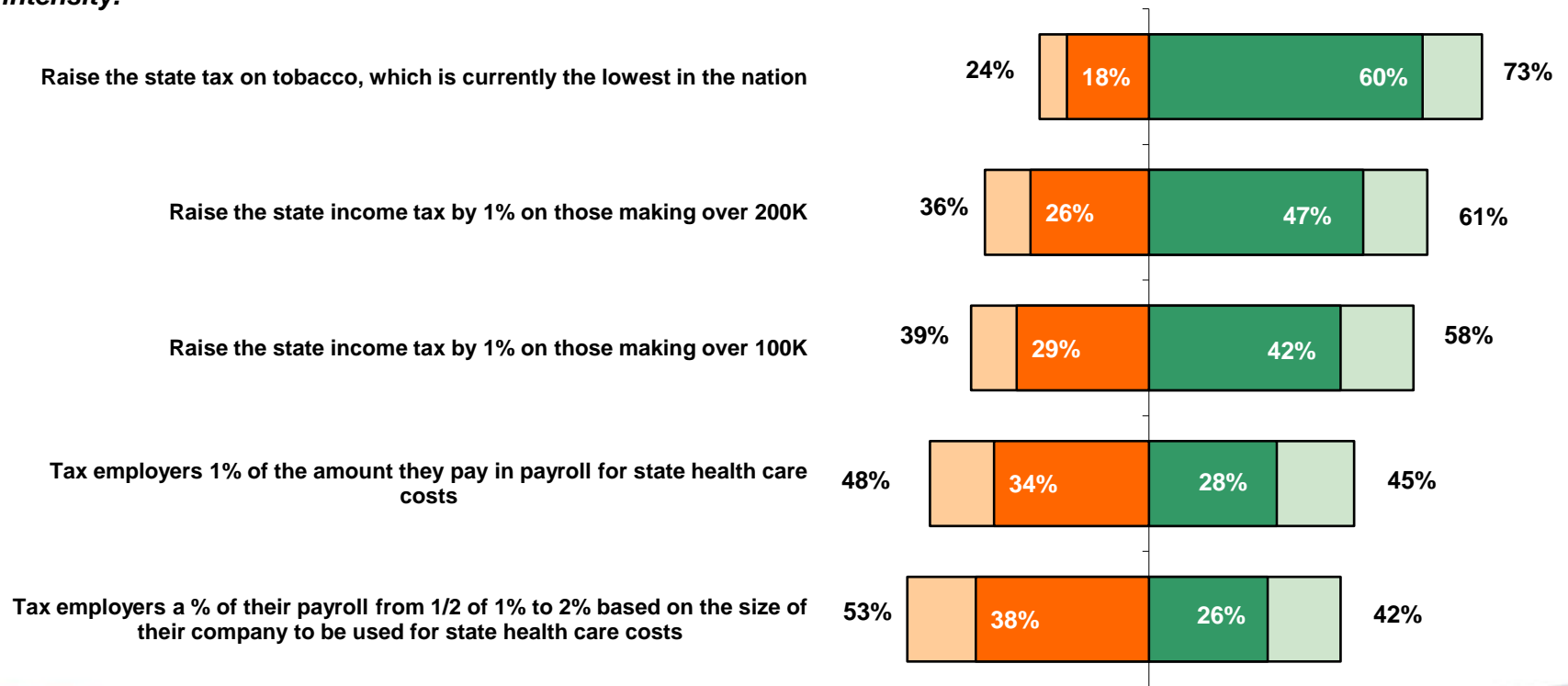


In fact, all of those reforms I just read you are included in the national health care reform law. Sometimes over the course of a survey like this, people change their minds. Knowing this, do you favor or oppose the national health care reform law, or aren't you sure?

# When it comes to potential revenue streams for increasing access to health care for children and seniors in the state, voters are most supportive of raising the tobacco tax and income taxes on the highest income earners.

## Funding Mechanisms for State Health Care

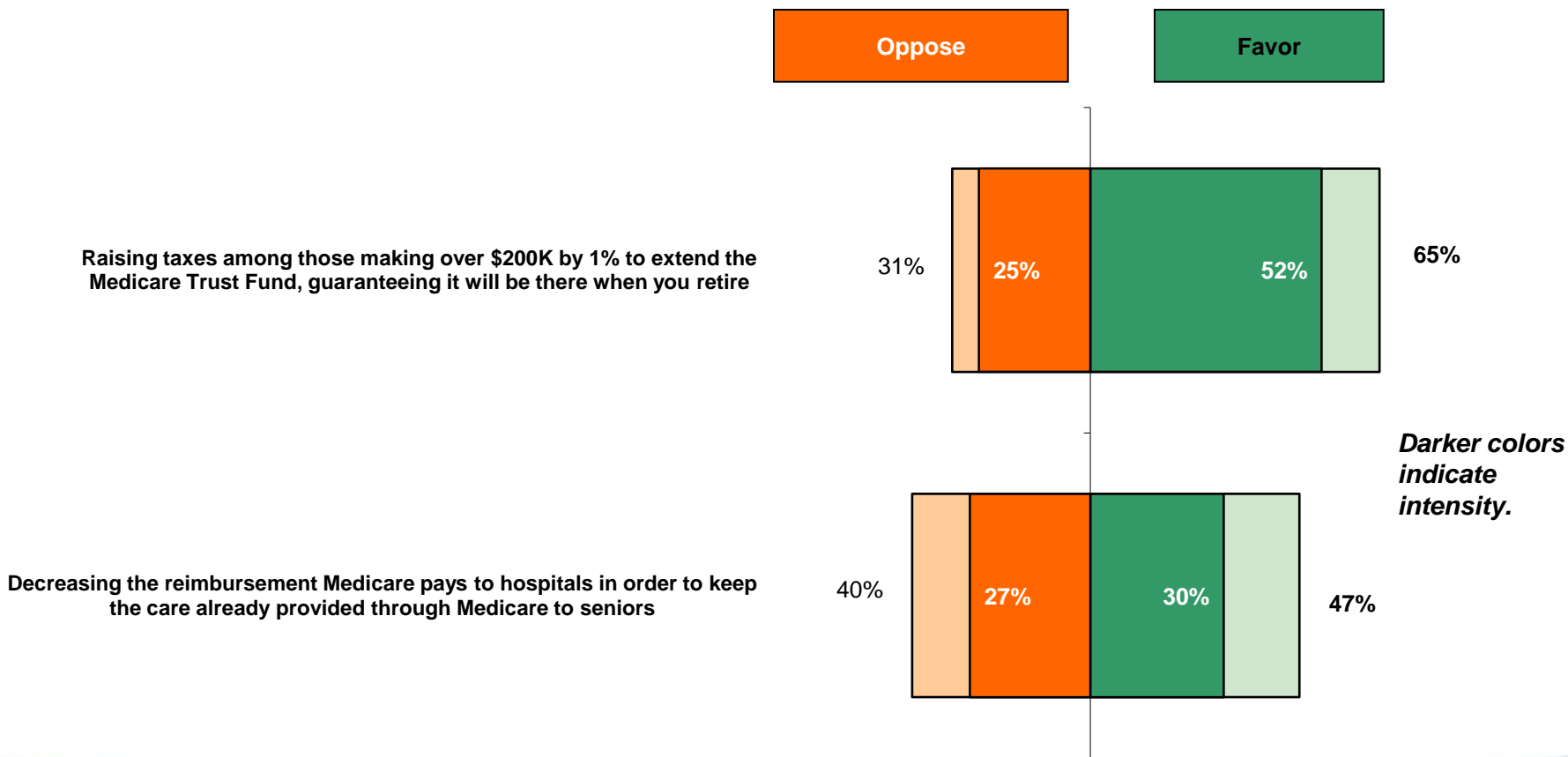
*Darker colors indicate intensity.*



Now, for something a little different, I am going to read some specific proposals that are being considered to fund increased access to health care for children and seniors in the state of Missouri. Please tell me whether you would favor or oppose each one.

**Voters also express strong support for raising taxes on those who make over \$200,000 a year in order to ensure the solvency of the Medicare Trust Fund. They are less likely to support decreasing the reimbursement which Medicare pays to hospitals.**

### Funding Mechanisms for Medicare



Now, thinking specifically about reforms to help pay for Medicare, please tell me whether you would favor or oppose each the following.



# Survey Methods

- Lake Research Partners, jointly with the Tarrance Group, designed and administered this survey, which was conducted by telephone using professional interviewers. The survey reached a total of 800 likely 2012 General Election voters in Missouri, including oversamples of 100 voters in North Missouri and 100 voters in Southeast Missouri. The survey was conducted November 15 through November 21, 2010.
  - Telephone numbers for the sample were generated from a file of registered voters. The sample was stratified geographically to reflect the expected turnout of voters in the 2010 General Election. The data were weighted slightly by age, education, gender, race, and party identification.
  - The margin of error for the full sample is +/- 4.0%.
- 