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# California K-12 & Community Colleges Statewide School Bond Feasibility Issues Survey

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*Summary of Key Findings from a Survey of California Voters*

220-5362



OPINION  
RESEARCH  
& STRATEGY

# Methodology

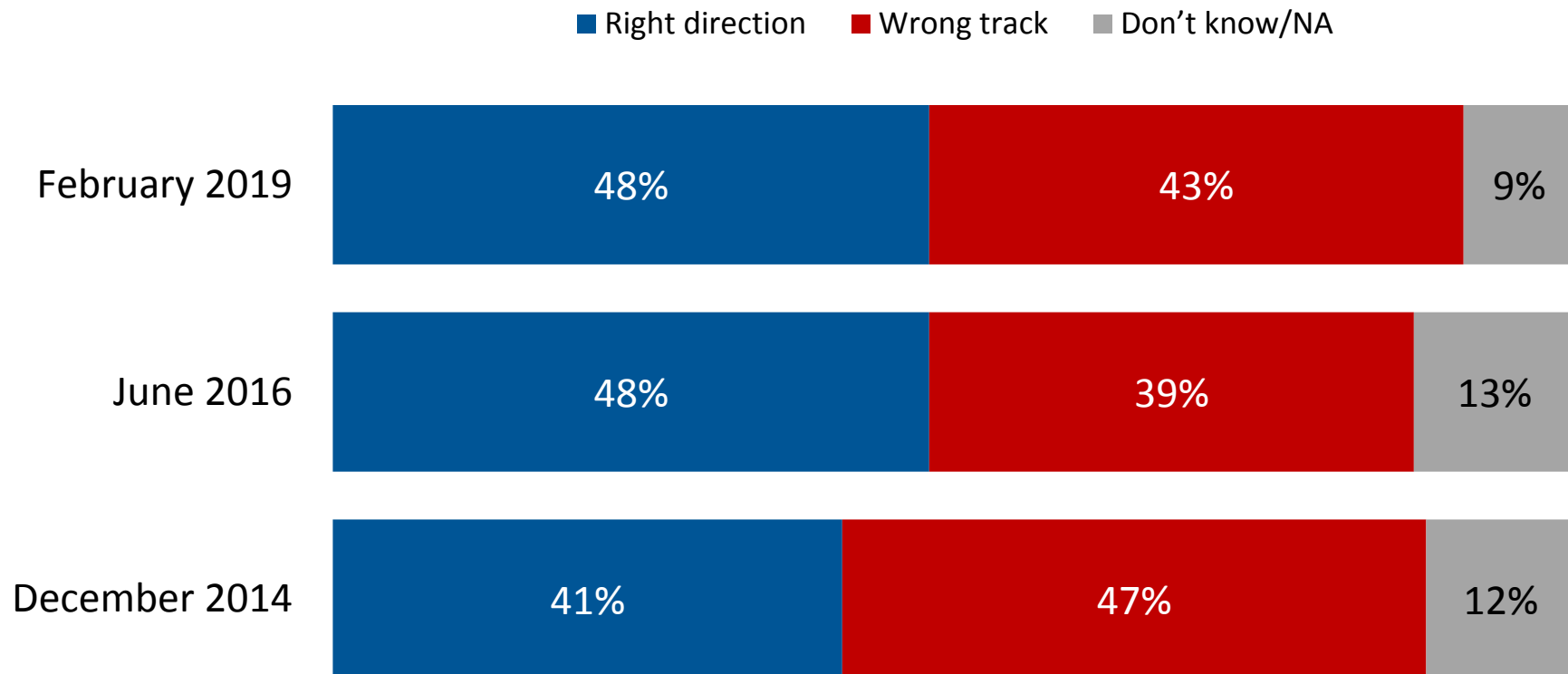
- 1,000 interviews conducted with likely November 2020 California voters
- The sample includes 600 voters likely to cast a ballot in the March 2020 Presidential primary election
- The full sample margin of sampling error at the 95% confidence interval is +/-3.1%
- The margin of sampling error for March 2020 voters is +/-4.0% at the 95% confidence interval
- Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish
- Interviews were conducted February 12-17, 2019
- The margin of error for population subgroups will be higher
- Some percentages do not sum to 100% due to rounding
- Results from prior statewide surveys shown for comparison purposes



# **Voter Mood & Issue Context**



# Nearly half of California voters continue to believe the state is headed in the right direction...



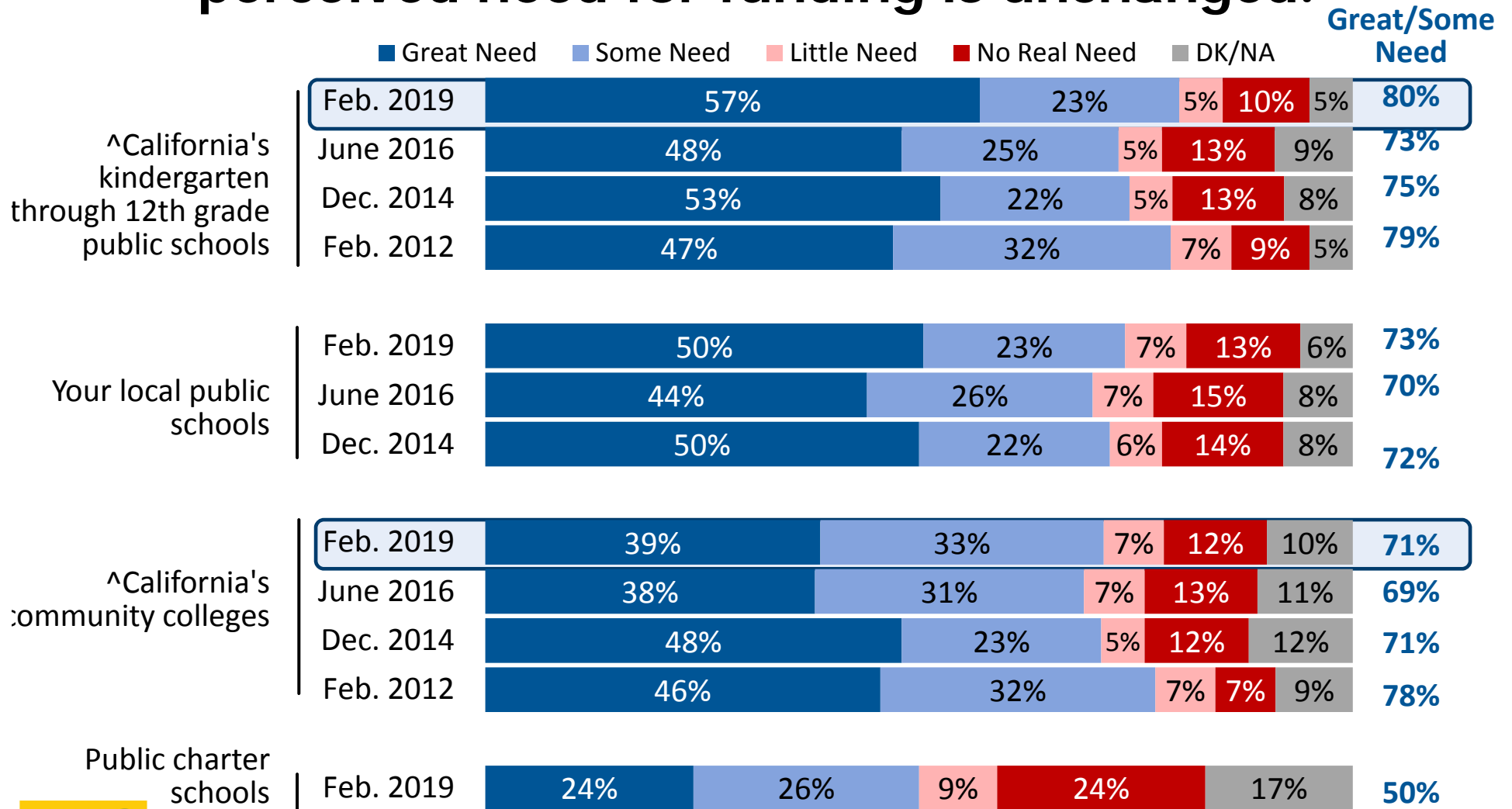
...but there are sharp differences across the electorate, especially by party and age.

Demographic Group	Right Direction	Wrong Track	DK/NA
<b>Gender</b>			
Men	45%	47%	8%
Women	50%	39%	10%
<b>Party</b>			
Democrats	67%	24%	9%
Independents	44%	43%	13%
Republicans	18%	77%	6%
<b>Age</b>			
18-39	63%	28%	9%
40-59	41%	50%	9%
60+	41%	50%	9%
<b>Ethnicity</b>			
Latinos	49%	41%	40%
Whites	46%	46%	8%
All Voters of Color	50%	39%	11%
<b>Region</b>			
Los Angeles County	54%	33%	13%
Counties Surrounding Los Angeles	41%	51%	9%
Bay Area	53%	38%	9%
San Diego	42%	52%	5%
Sacramento/Rural North	43%	51%	6%
Central Valley/Central Coast	47%	44%	9%

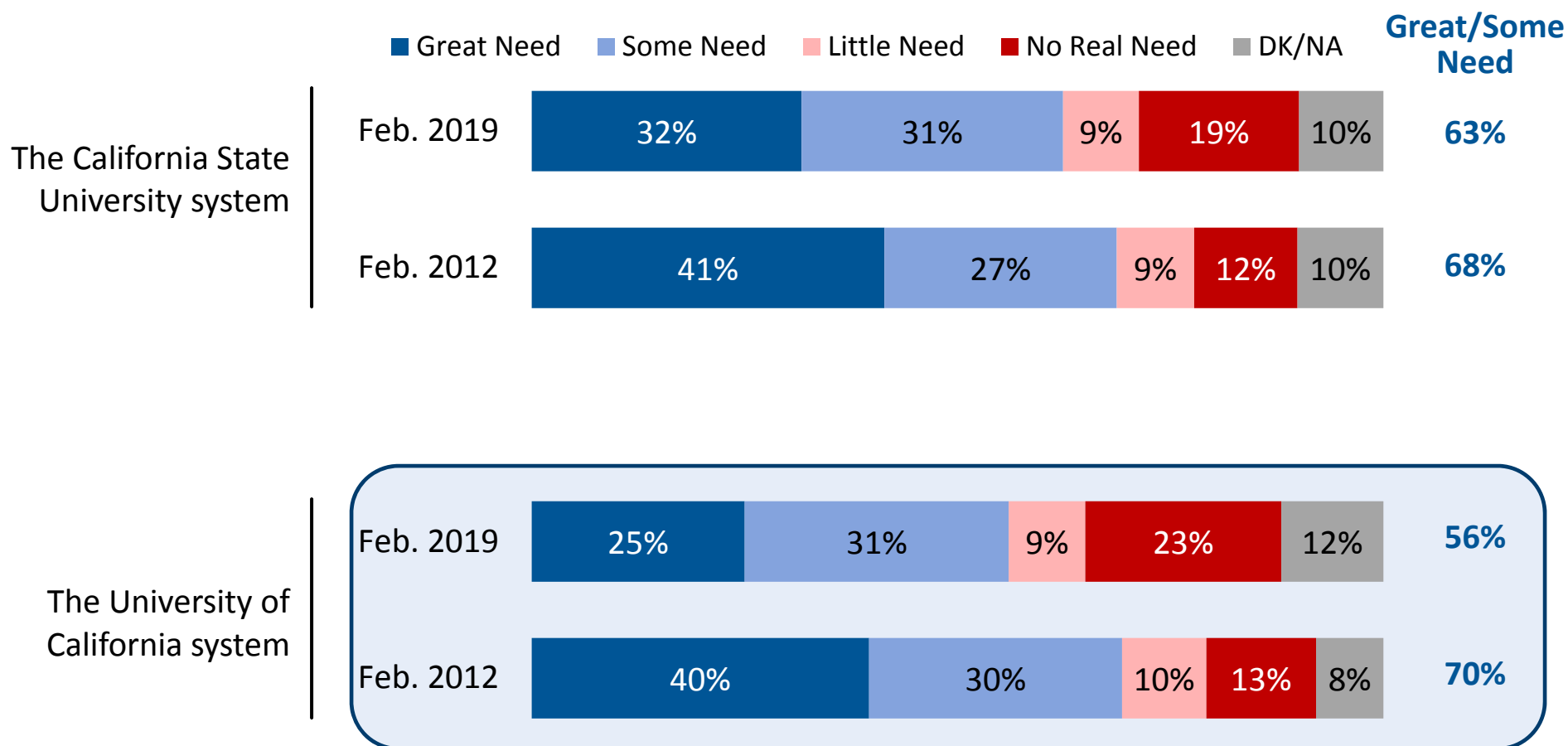
**FM3**

**RESEARCH** Q1. Would you say that things in the state of California are generally headed in the right direction or do you feel that things are off on the wrong track?

# Today, a solid majority thinks K-12 schools have a “great” need for funding, and community colleges’ perceived need for funding is unchanged.



# In comparison, fewer voters believe state universities have as significant funding needs, with a notable decline for the University of California.





# Initial Reaction to Statewide School Bond Measures





# K-12/Community College School Bond Measure Simulated Title and Summary Tested

**\$13 Billion**

**SCHOOL BONDS. FUNDING FOR K-12 SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACILITIES. INITIATIVE STATUTE.** Authorizes \$13 billion in general obligation bonds for new construction and modernization of K-12 public school facilities; charter schools and vocational education facilities; and California Community Colleges facilities. Fiscal Impact: State costs of about \$21 billion to pay off both the principal (\$13 billion) and interest (\$8 billion) on the bonds. Payments of about \$600 million per year for 35 years.

**\$9 Billion**

**SCHOOL BONDS. FUNDING FOR K-12 SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACILITIES. INITIATIVE STATUTE.** Authorizes \$9 billion in general obligation bonds for new construction and modernization of K-12 public school facilities; charter schools and vocational education facilities; and California Community Colleges facilities. Fiscal Impact: State costs of about \$15 billion to pay off both the principal (\$9 billion) and interest (\$6 billion) on the bonds. Payments of about \$430 million per year for 35 years.

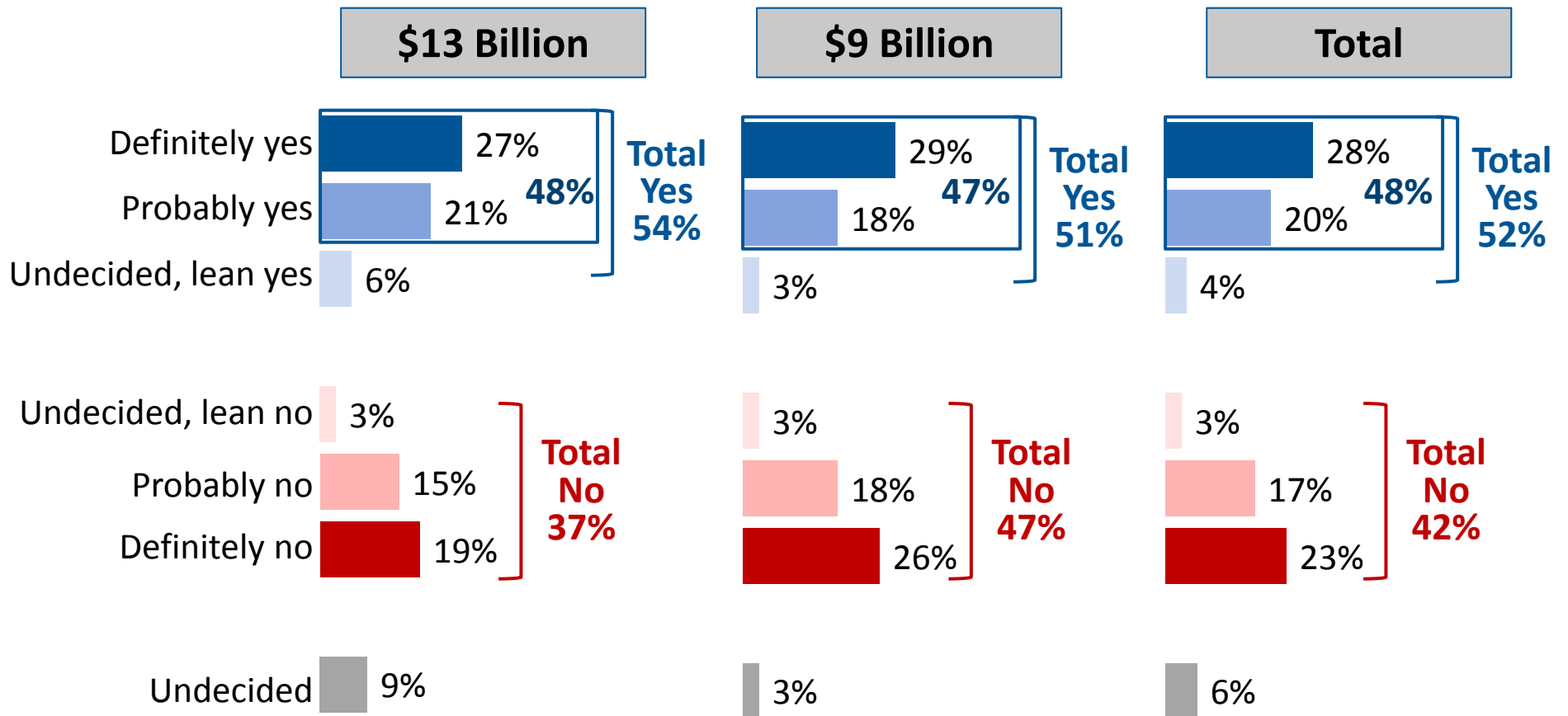
**FM3**

**RESEARCH**

Q3. If the election were today and this measure was on the ballot, would you vote yes in favor or no to oppose this measure? Split Sample

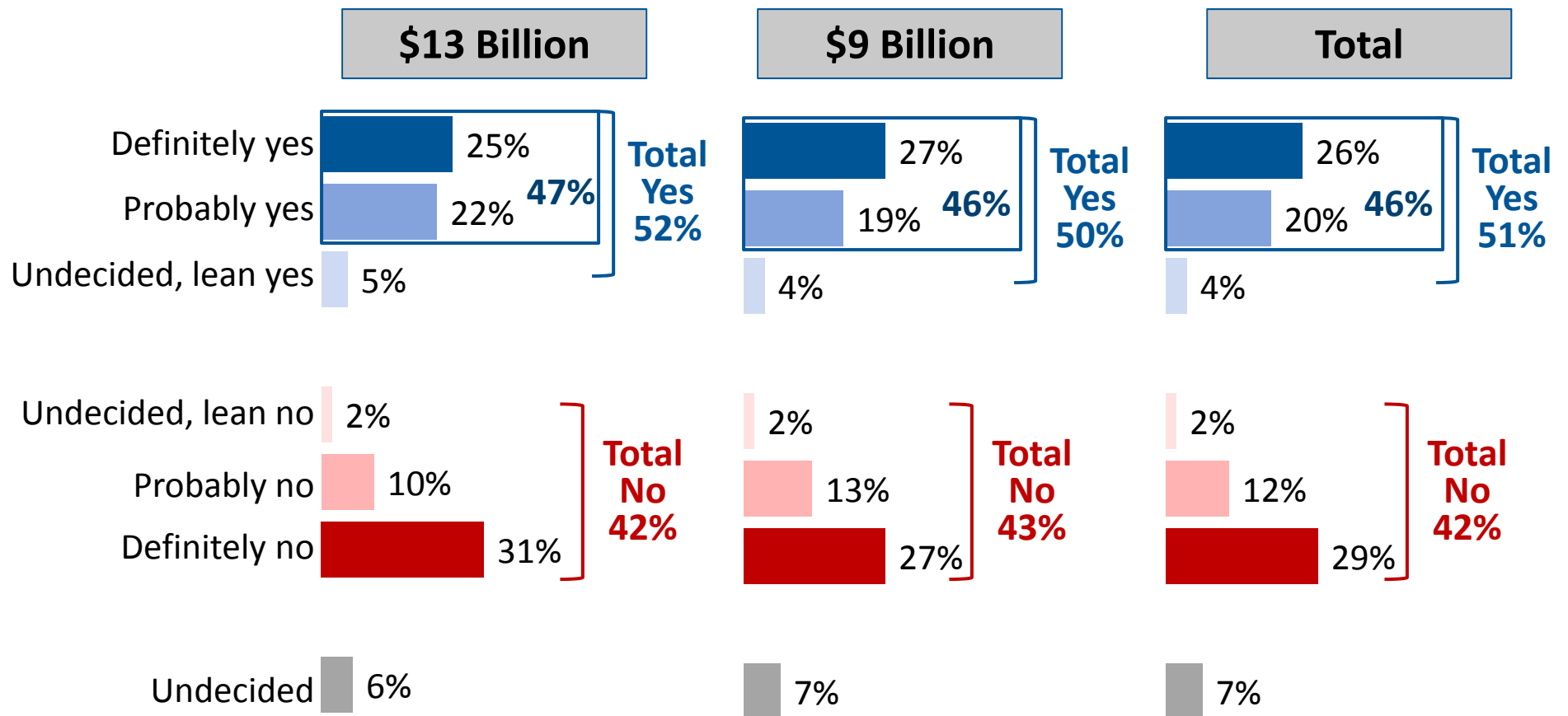
# A narrow majority of November general election voters would vote yes to approve a statewide K-12/community college bond.

Likely November General Election 2020 Voters



# Slightly more than half of primary voters also favor the K-12/community college bond after hearing the simulated ballot label summary.

Likely March Primary Election 2020 Voters

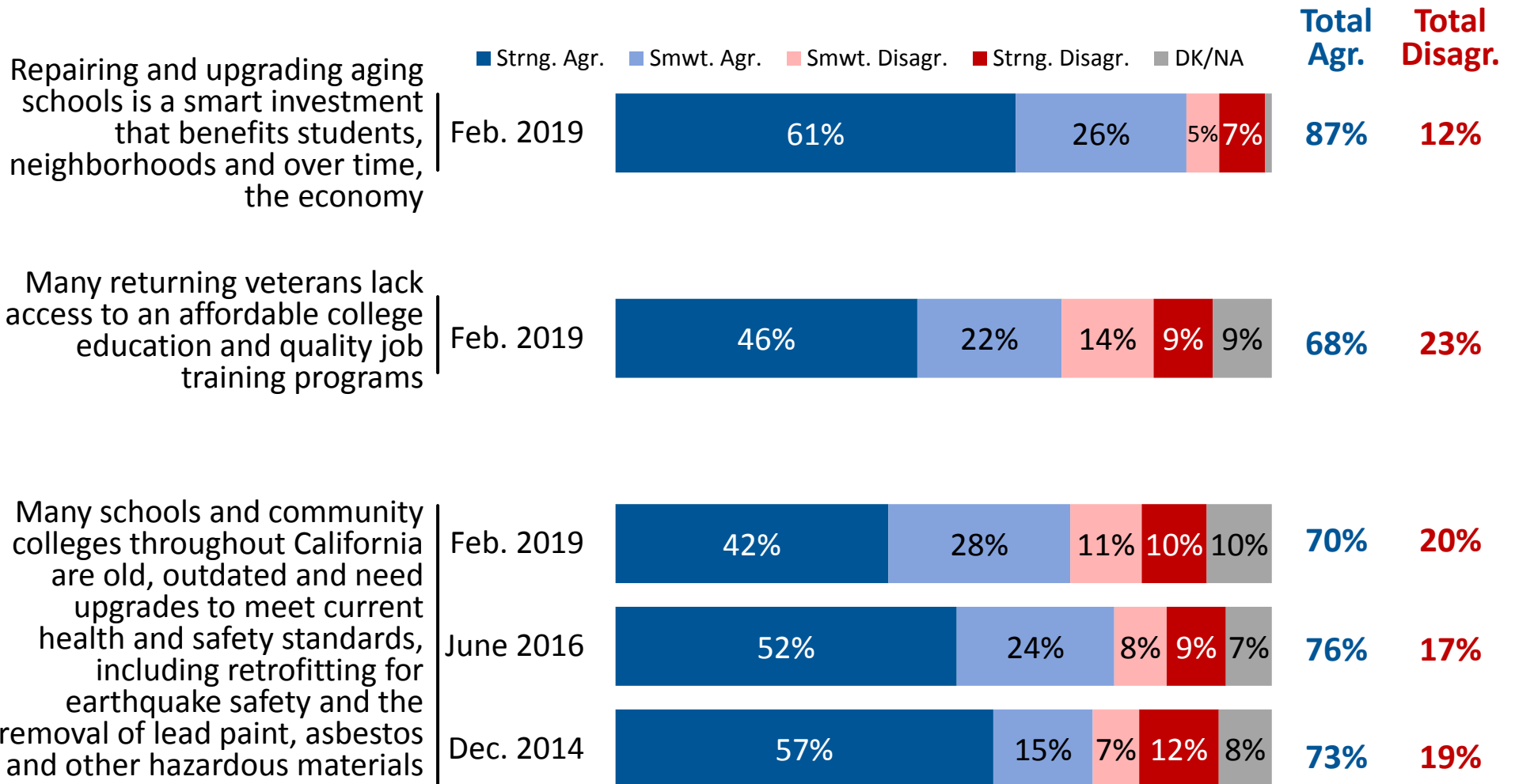




# **Voter Perceptions & Funding Priorities**

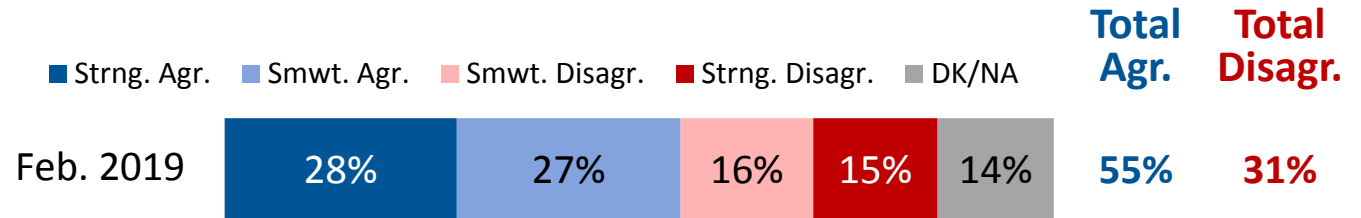


# Most agree that school improvement projects benefit students and communities, and seven in ten believe many schools need health and safety upgrades.

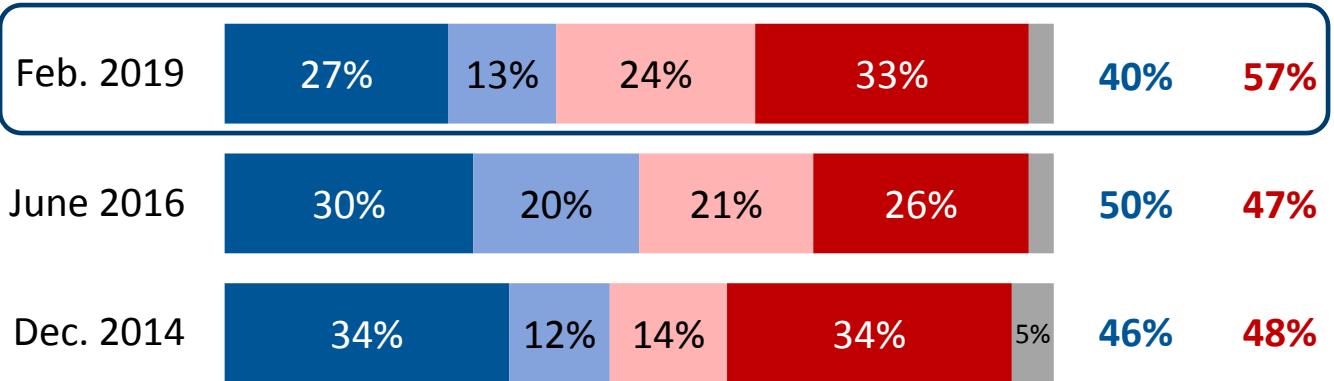


# Nearly six in ten voter disagree that funding measures that increase state debt must be rejected.

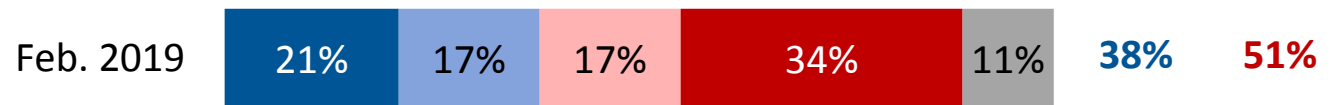
State universities throughout California are old, outdated and need upgrades to meet current health and safety standards, including retrofitting for earthquake safety and the removal of lead paint, asbestos and other hazardous materials



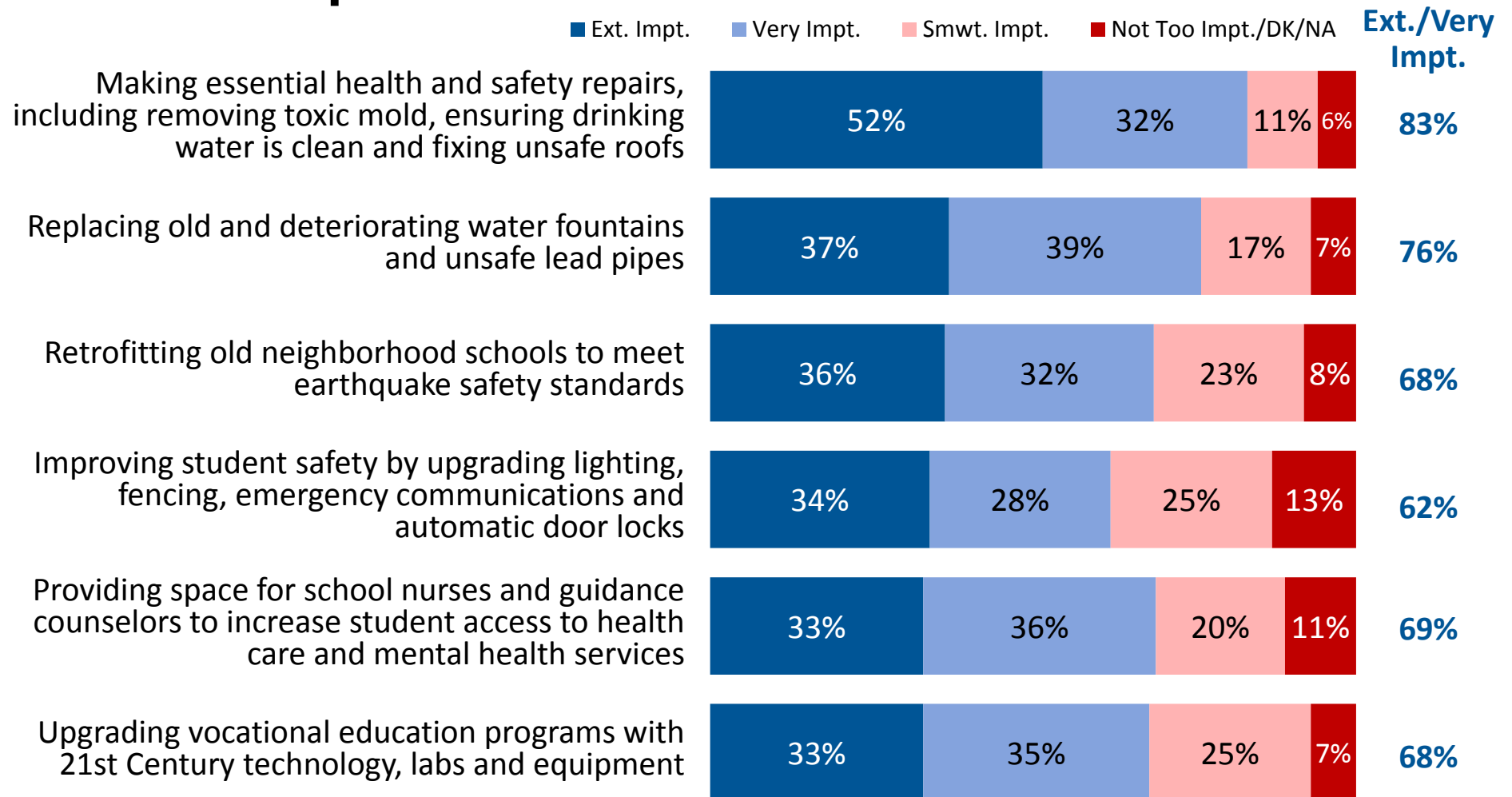
We should not approve any more ballot measures that put us further in debt, no matter how important the issue they are trying to address



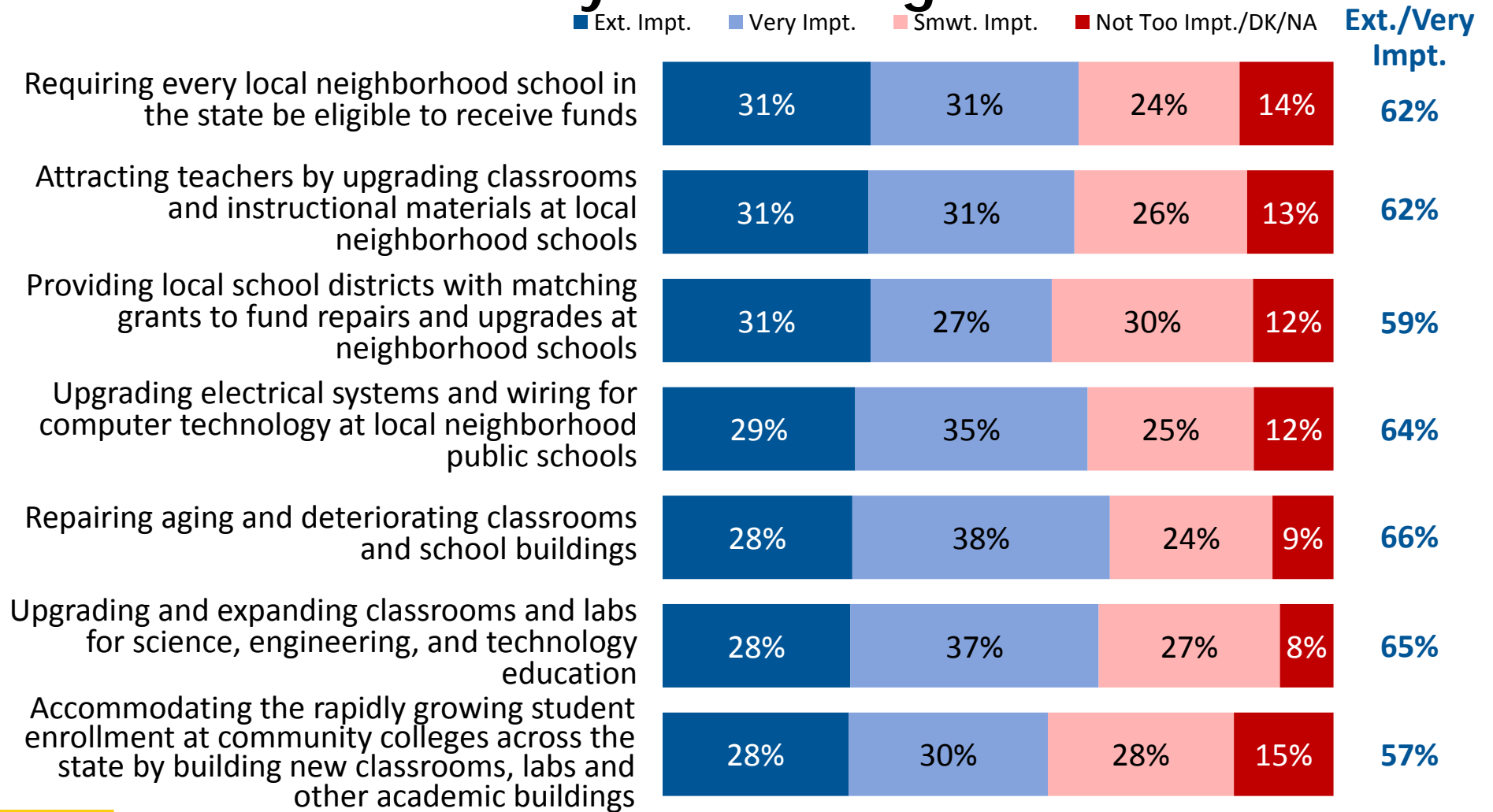
The federal government will likely cut funding for California's public schools



# Consistent with prior research, voters prioritize bond funds be used to make essential health and safety repairs to schools and classrooms.



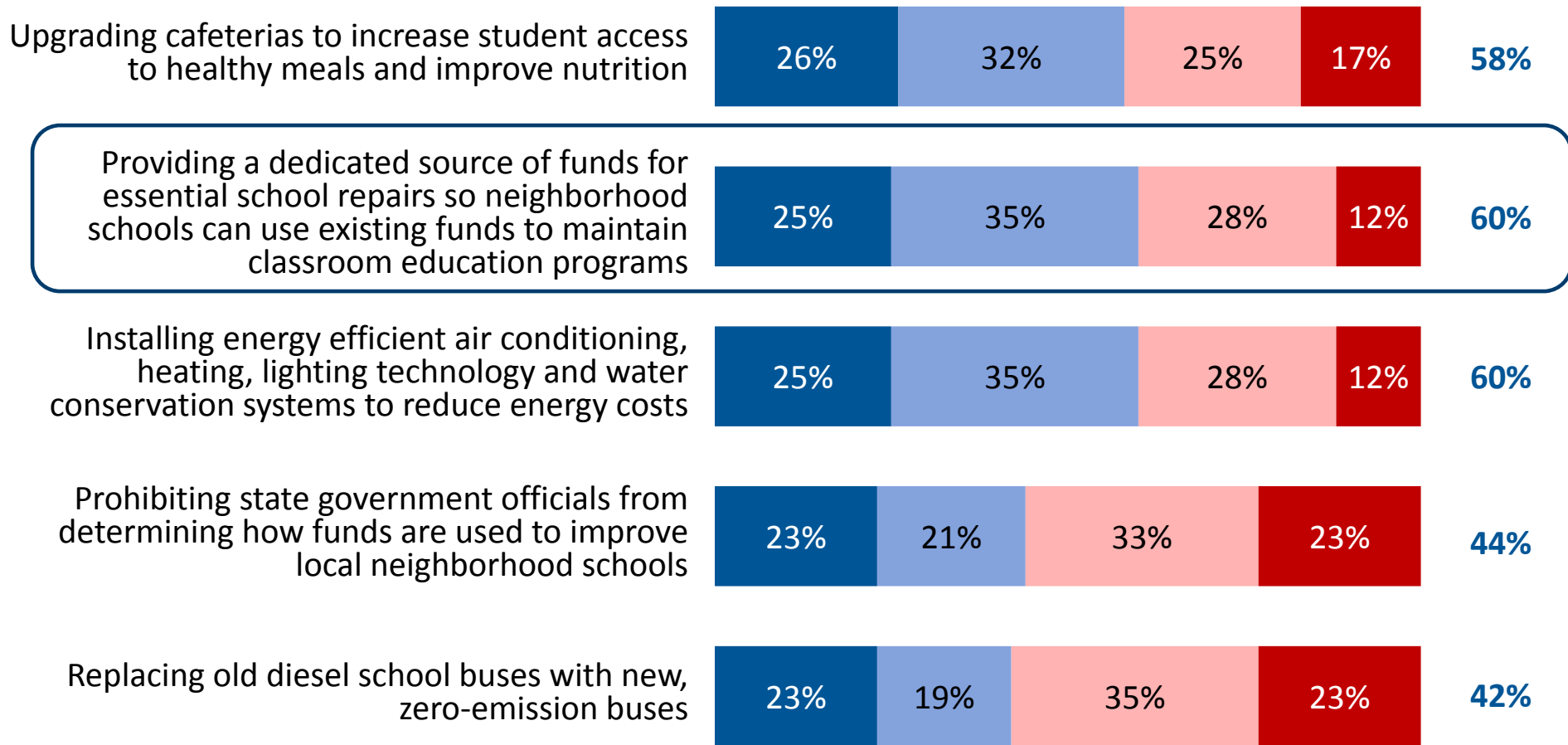
# Six in ten believe all school districts should be eligible for funding and that improving classroom resources is an effective way to attract good teachers.





# Voters think it is important to create a dedicated source of funding for repairs so that schools can use existing funds for classroom education.

■ Ext. Impt.   ■ Very Impt.   ■ Smwt. Impt.   ■ Not Too Impt./DK/NA   **Ext./Very Impt.**



Q9. I am going to read you different ways funds raised by this statewide bond measure may be used to improve K-thru-12 public schools and community colleges. Please tell me whether you consider it to be an extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not too important use of bond measure funds. Split Sample

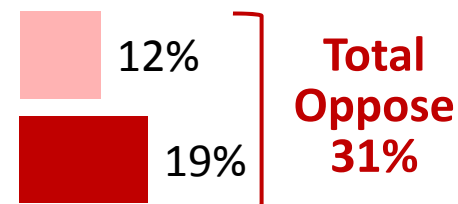
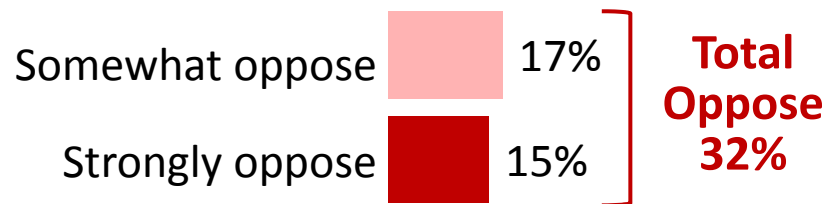
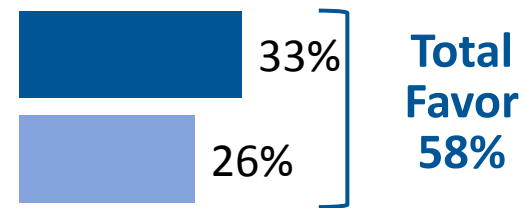
# Six in ten voters believe local school districts should be permitted to levy “full” impact fees on developers.

*Developers of new housing units are required to pay impact fees to the local school district where new housing is built. Currently, local school districts can only levy fees equal to half of the impact caused by new residential development. Would you favor or oppose changing this rule to allow local school districts to levy fees equal to the full impact caused by new residential development?*

**February 2012**



**February 2019**



Don't know/NA 10%

10%



**Arguments For & Against  
a Statewide K-12/  
Community College  
Bond Measure**



# Statements in Support of a Statewide K-12/Community College Bond Measure

**(VOC-ED)** Students who do not go to a four-year college need a vocational education that provides the job training, technical knowledge and specialized skills to compete for good-paying jobs. This bond measure will allow local high schools and community colleges to upgrade vocational education programs so students and returning veterans can train and learn the skills they need to get a job in a competitive global economy.

**(COLLEGE DEBT)** As the cost of four-year universities rise, more students and families are relying on community colleges to avoid taking out huge student loans and going into deep debt. Passing a statewide school bond measure will improve community colleges and allow them to serve more students, providing access to a quality college education, job training and professional development programs that are affordable for middle-class families.

**(TEHAMA)** A recent school shooting in Northern California was thwarted and no children were killed because the school was equipped with security cameras, an emergency communication system, door locks and fencing. This bond measure will provide funding for these essential safety upgrades to make sure K-12 schools are prepared for the worst.

**(VETERANS)** California's community colleges serve thousands of returning veterans, many who face challenges to complete their education and re-enter the civilian workforce. This measure will allow local community colleges to improve programs to make sure local veterans get the help they need to get a college degree or find stable, good-paying jobs.

**(WORKFORCE)** A well-educated and skilled workforce is essential to California's long-term economic security. This bond measure will fund upgrades to classroom technology, computer systems, science labs, libraries and career education programs so California produces the educated workers needed to retain and attract good companies, good-paying jobs and compete in the 21st Century global economy.

# Statements in Support of a Statewide K-12/Community College Bond Measure, Continued

**(LOCAL CONTROL)** This measure is written to ensure local control by giving parents, teachers and principals greater say in determining how school bond funds are used, not state officials. In addition, not one dollar can be taken by the state, which means all funds raised will go toward improving local neighborhood schools and community colleges.

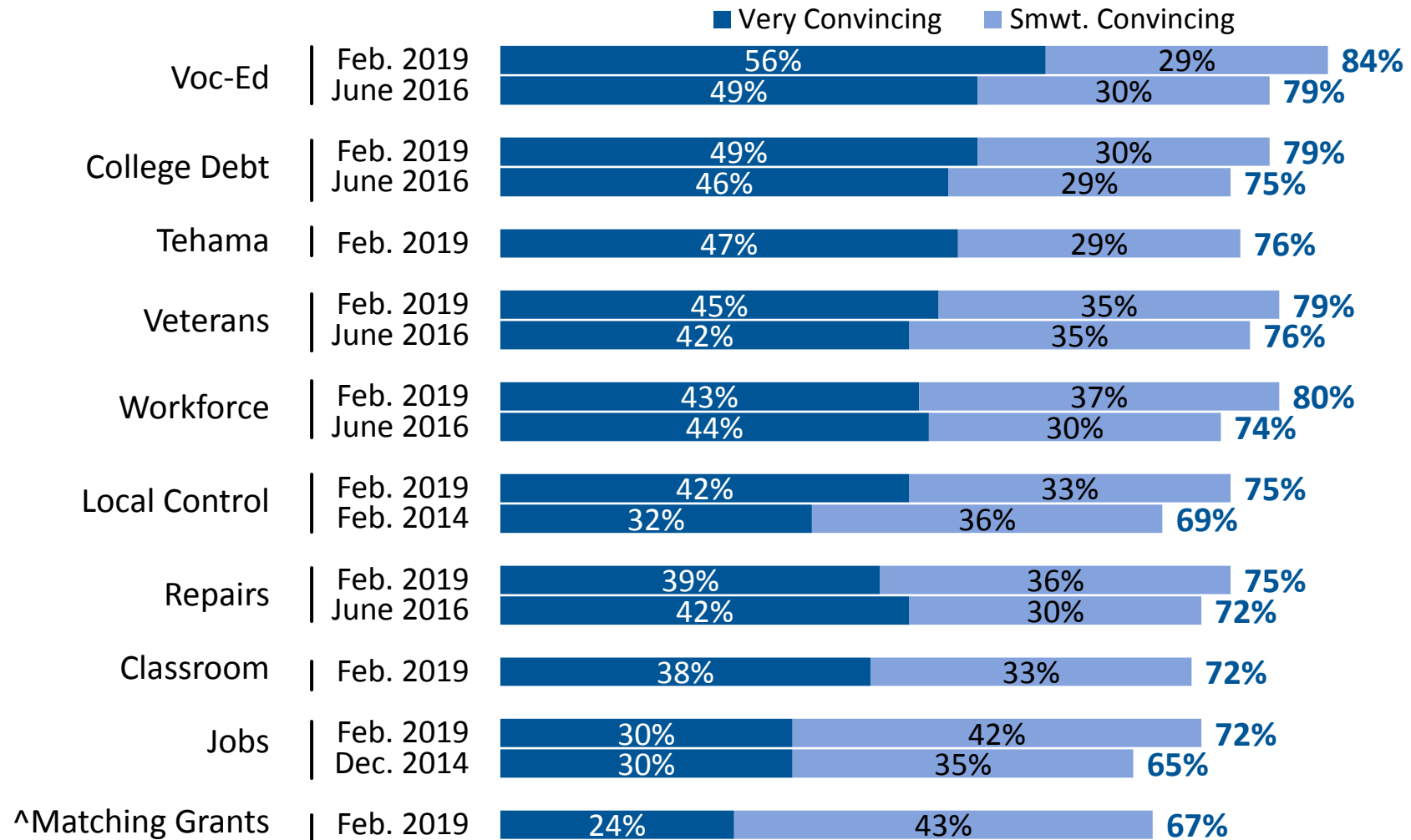
**(REPAIRS)** Neighborhood schools and community colleges across the state will need more than seven billion dollars to fund a backlog of critical repairs, like leaky roofs, bathrooms that do not work, wiring that is old and potentially hazardous, outdated smoke and fire alarms, and the buildings are not retrofitted for earthquakes. A statewide school bond measure will provide local matching grant funds to make vital repairs to aging and deteriorating classrooms and schools.

**(CLASSROOM)** Too many K-12 school districts are forced to take funds away from classroom education to fix leaky roofs, old plumbing and make other health and safety repairs. Passing a statewide bond measure will provide a source of funding to repair school buildings, which will make sure that local taxpayer dollars are used in the classroom to educate students and attract and retain quality teachers.

**(JOBS)** By funding local school repair and improvement projects, this statewide school bond measure is estimated to create and support about 13,000 good-paying jobs for years to come. This investment would have a major ripple effect throughout the state-strengthening our economy, helping small business grow, and good schools will improve our home values.

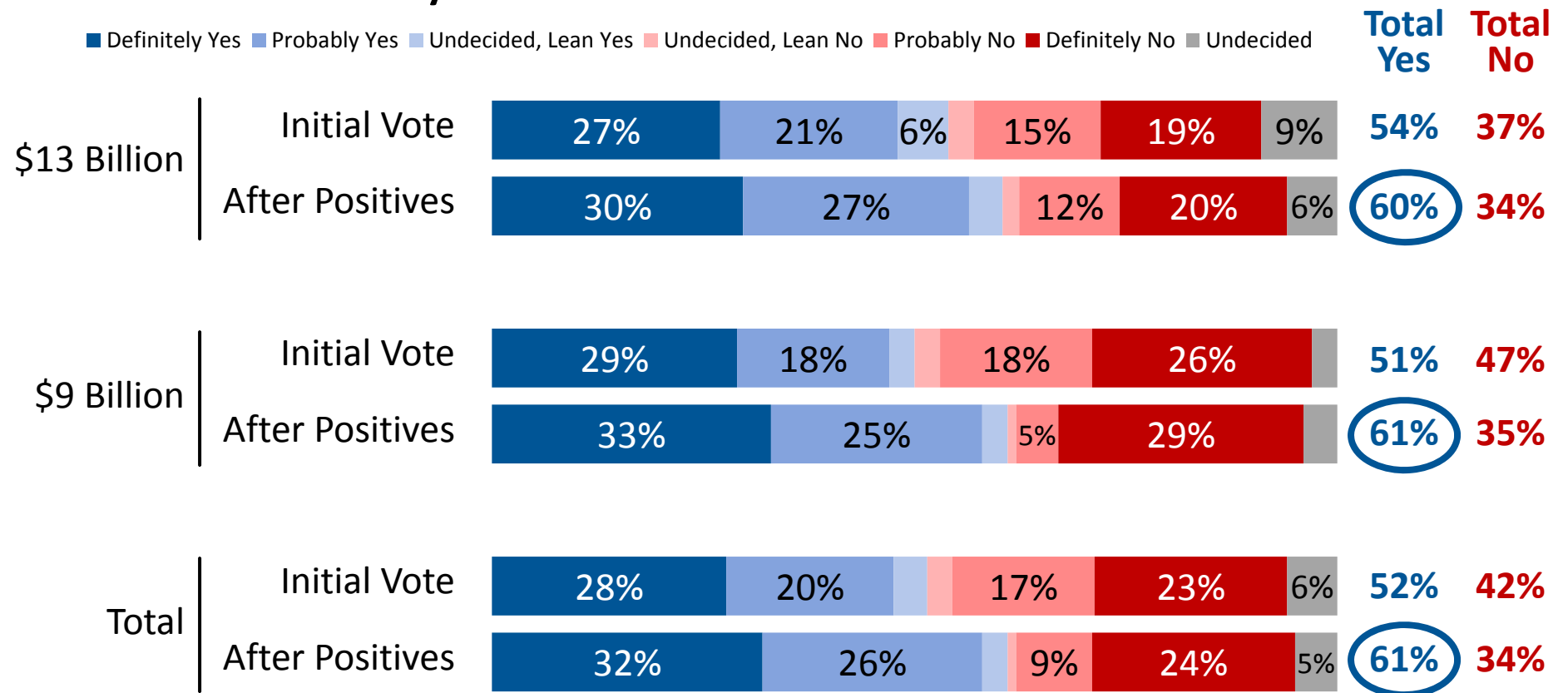
**^(MATCHING GRANTS)** Passing this statewide bond measure increases local school districts' access to statewide matching grants, providing our neighborhood schools and community colleges with an essential source of funding. Also, making state matching grants available to local school districts reduces the need to raise local property taxes to fund school construction projects.

# Preparing students for jobs, access to affordable college education and student safety resonate strongly with voters as reasons to vote in favor.



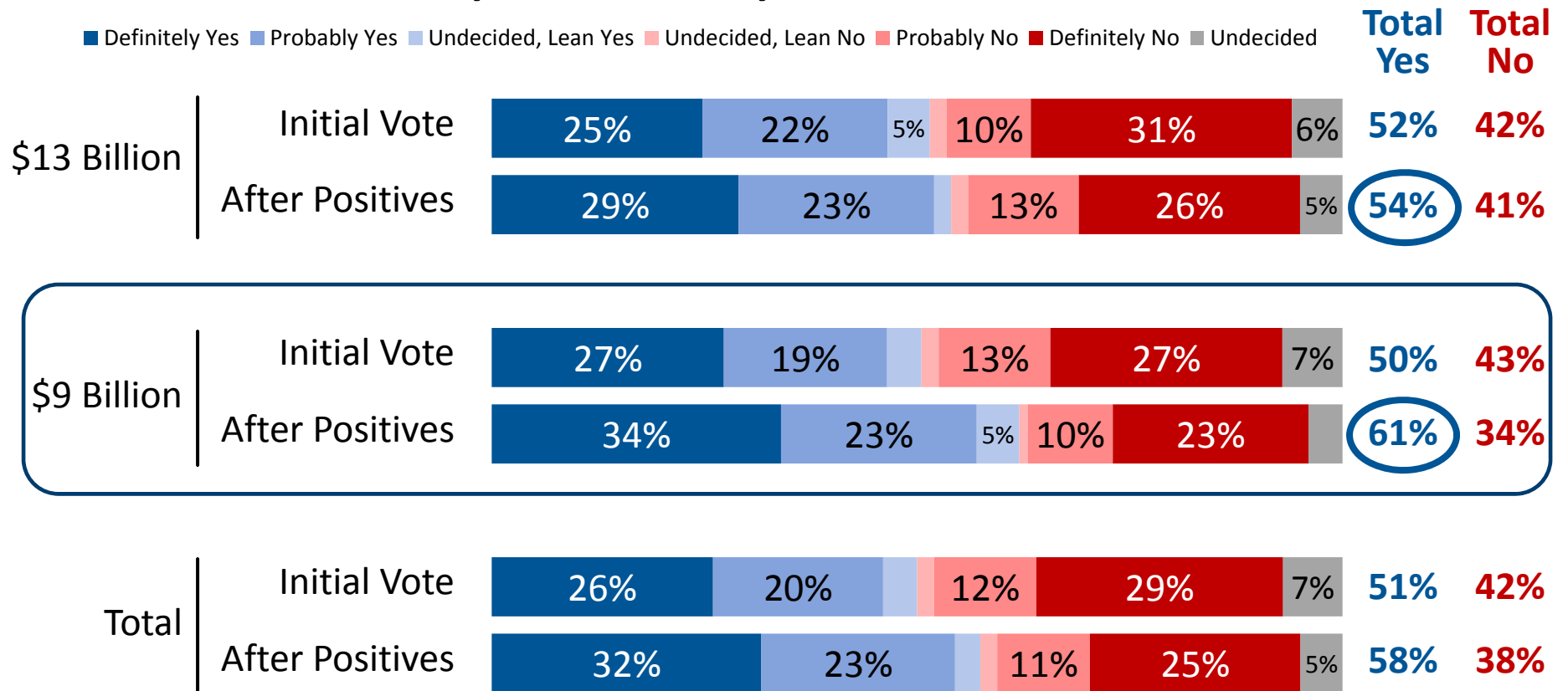
# Support for the bond measure increases to six in ten after these messages, including a third who vote “definitely” yes.

## Likely November General Election 2020 Voters



# Among primary voters, more voters were willing to support a \$9 billion bond after the positive messages.

## Likely March Primary Election 2020 Voters



RESEARCH

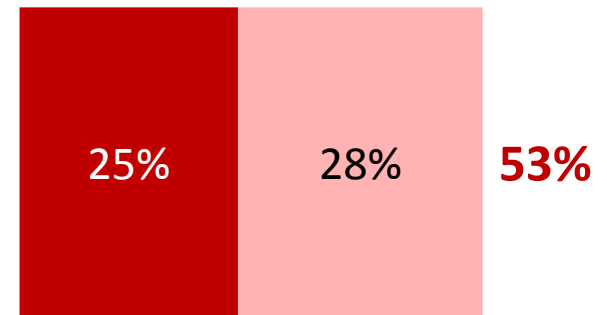
Q3 & Q11. If the election were today and this measure was on the ballot, would you vote yes in favor or no to oppose this measure?



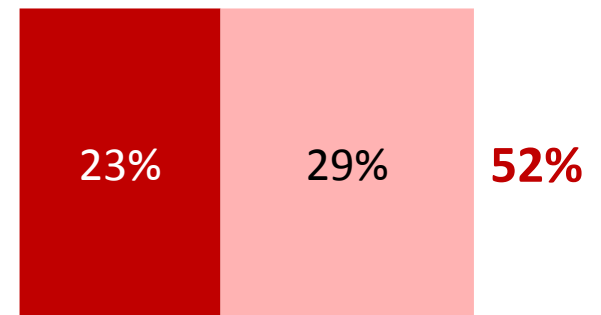
# While this survey did not simulate funded opposition, respondents heard one of the following statements against the bond measure.

■ Very Convincing ■ Somewhat Convincing

**(TAX/WASTE/PENSION)** Statewide bonds are tax increases in disguise by creating debt that requires the public to pay billions in interest for the next 35 years. Instead, the state needs to eliminate wasteful spending and implement a serious public employee pension reform plan—that is the most effective way to fund quality public schools.



**(PROP 51/PROP 98)** There is plenty of money for schools and public education. In 2016 voters approved Prop 51, a \$9 billion statewide school bond measure to fund the exact same projects. On top of that, the law requires half of the state budget be used for public education, and the Governor has proposed nearly \$60 billion for California's K-12 public schools, the most in state history.



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