

# Georgia Statewide Issues Poll - December 2022

*Prepared for the* **State Innovation Exchange** *by* **TargetSmart**



# Survey Methodology



TargetSmart designed and administered this multi-modal survey. The survey reached 1,330 adults (1,000 weighted), age 18 or older, who indicated they were registered to vote in Georgia. The survey was conducted **December 14-20, 2022**, via live phones with trained operators, online via a link from a direct SMS, and online through Dynata's web panel and matched back to the voter file. The statewide sample was augmented by an oversample of 102 Black registered voters (81 weighted), 85 Latinx registered voters (26 weighted), and 113 rural registered voters (96 weighted).

The phone sample was randomly selected from TargetSmart's enhanced voter file. Sixty-one percent of respondents were reached on phones (67 percent weighted). Twenty-five percent of respondents completed the survey online and were reached via SMS (22 percent weighted). Fourteen percent of respondents were recruited from Dynata's web panel and matched to TargetSmart's voter file (11 percent weighted).

Quotas were assigned to reflect the demographic distribution of **registered voters in Georgia**. The data were weighted by gender, age, race on file, TargetSmart Partisan Score, TargetSmart Midterm General Turnout Score, TargetSmart High School Only Score, self-reported 2020 presidential vote, and region by urbanicity and media market to ensure an accurate reflection of the population.

Percentage totals may not add up precisely due to rounding. The credibility interval (the theoretical margin of error for a blended-methodology poll that relies partially on telephone-based probability sampling, and partially on non-probability based online panel sampling) is **+/- 3.1%**.



# Key Findings

- Georgia voters broadly support investing the state's budget surplus in a variety of social services such as health care, housing, infrastructure, and education, and by a wide margin they prefer these investments to more tax rebates.
- We measure strong support for expanding Medicaid coverage, legalizing marijuana, and increasing the minimum wage.
- Investing in education is a clear priority for Georgians. More public school funding and raising teacher pay receive overwhelming support.
- Voting reforms tend to be more polarizing than economic reforms, though increasing polling locations and immediate notification of ballot issues are both unifying and popular.



# Public Investment

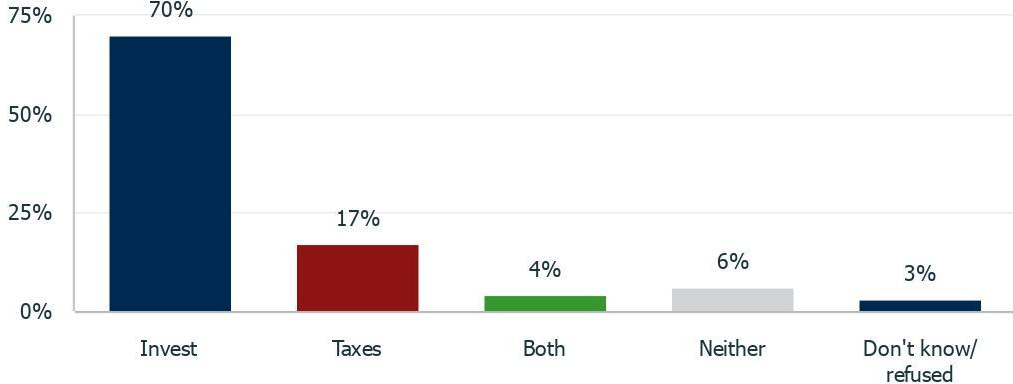
# Georgia voters reject austerity as state government's role

*INVEST: State government in Georgia should invest more in education, infrastructure, and health care for its people, even if that means the wealthy and large corporations have to contribute more in taxes.*

*TAXES: State government in Georgia should keep taxes low on the wealthy and large corporations, even if that means less funding for education, infrastructure, and health care for its people.*

Invest vs. keeping taxes low

Invest +53

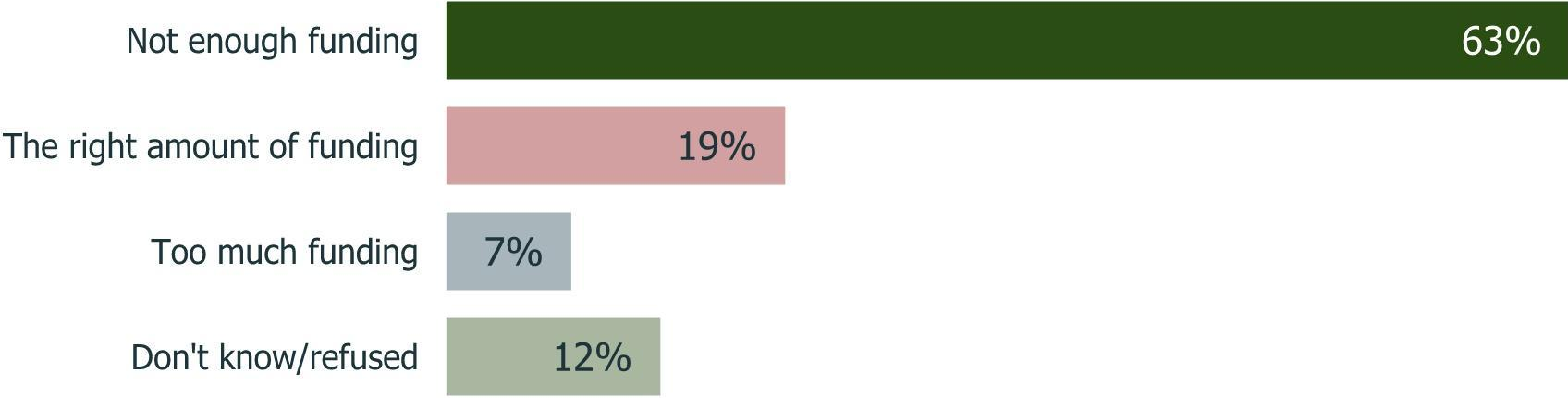


Q.9 Which of these statements comes closer to your own view, even if neither of them is exactly right?



# Georgia voters overwhelmingly believe public schools do not receive enough funding

Public school funding



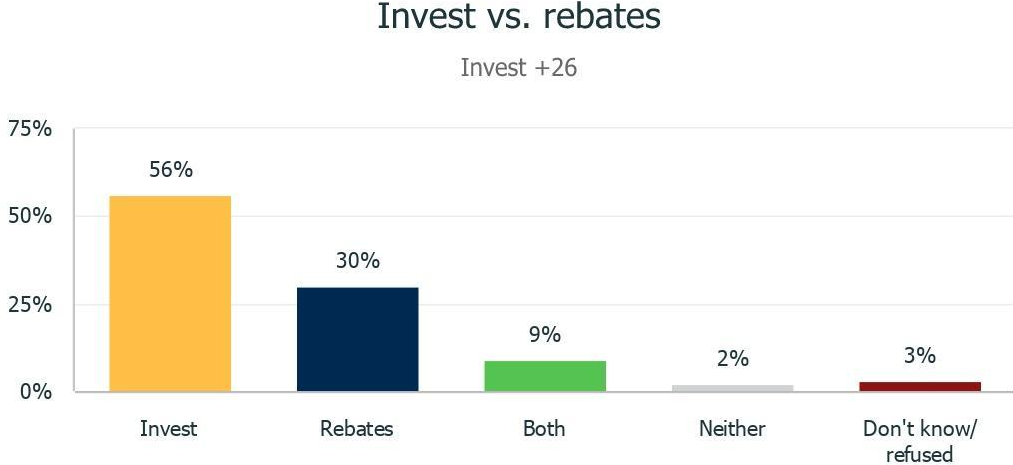
*Q.10 Generally speaking, do you believe Georgia public schools receive not enough funding, the right amount of funding, or too much funding?*



# Clear majority support investment of budget surplus over more tax rebates

**INVEST:** *State government in Georgia should invest the surplus in health care, housing, education, and job training.*

**REBATES:** *State government in Georgia should use the surplus to give tax rebates to families and businesses.*



Q.11 As you may know, the Georgia state government has a \$6.6 billion budget surplus, meaning in the last year it took in \$6.6 billion more than it spent. Which of these statements comes closer to your own view, even if neither of them is exactly right?





# Black voters, Hispanic voters, and White women all prefer investment of surplus over rebates

Budget surplus spending by race and race/gender

	Invest	Rebates	Both	Neither
All voters	56%	30%	9%	2%
White	47%	38%	9%	3%
Black	70%	18%	10%	0%
Hispanic	61%	26%	11%	2%
Voters of color	69%	20%	9%	1%
White men	41%	43%	10%	3%
White women	54%	33%	8%	3%
Men of color	71%	21%	6%	1%
Women of color	68%	19%	11%	0%





# Urban areas, including Atlanta, strongly favor investing the surplus

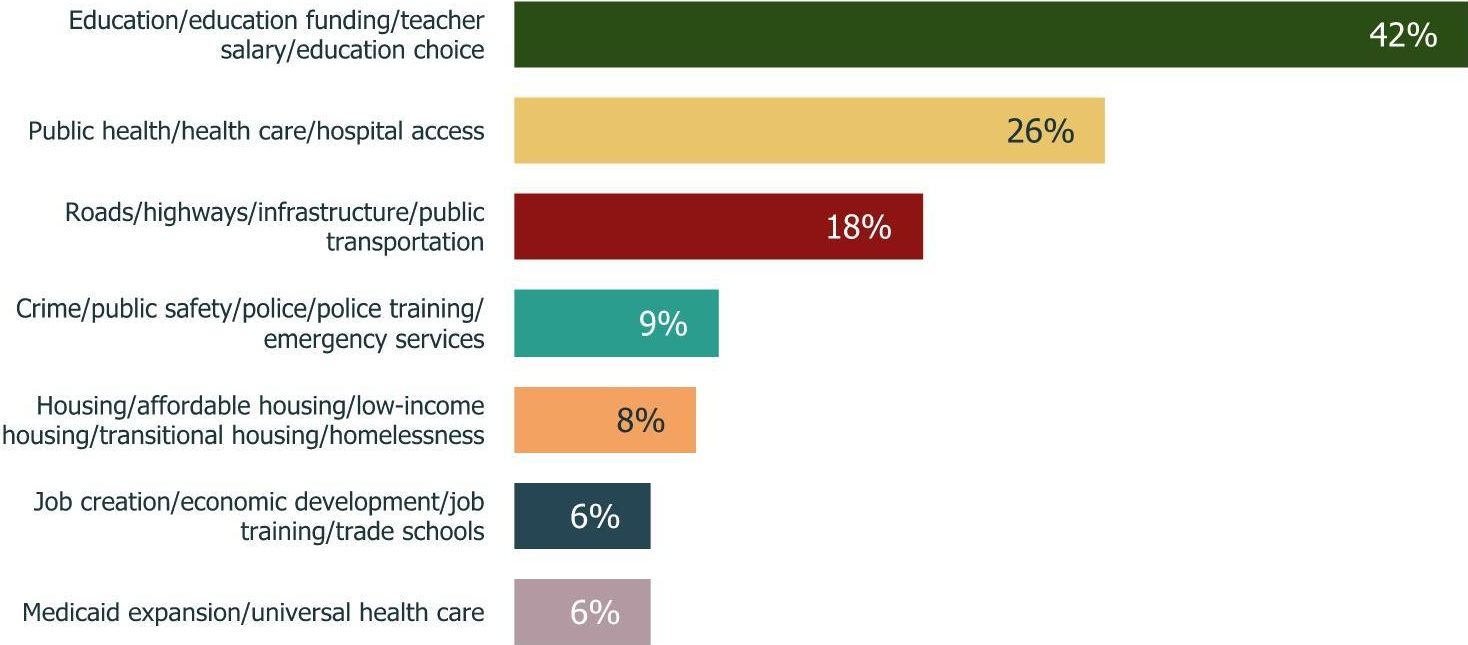
Budget surplus spending by region and urbanicity

	Invest	Rebates	Both	Neither
All voters	56%	30%	9%	2%
Suburban Atlanta	57%	29%	9%	3%
Urban Atlanta	70%	18%	8%	1%
Rural Atlanta/North GA	49%	38%	8%	3%
South GA	53%	33%	10%	1%
Rural	51%	37%	8%	2%
Suburban	56%	29%	10%	2%
Urban	70%	18%	8%	1%



# Education emerges as top budget priority for Georgians

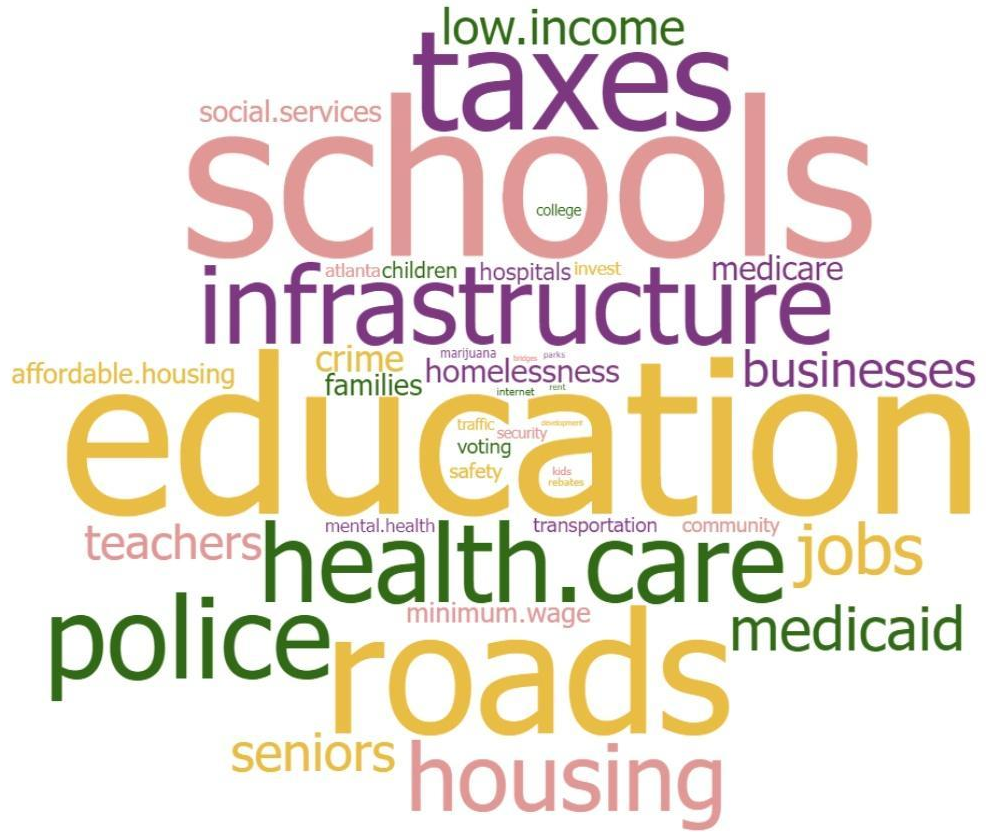
Biggest budget priorities over 5%



Q.18 Thinking about the Georgia state budget, what do you think legislators and the governor should prioritize funding in the state budget?



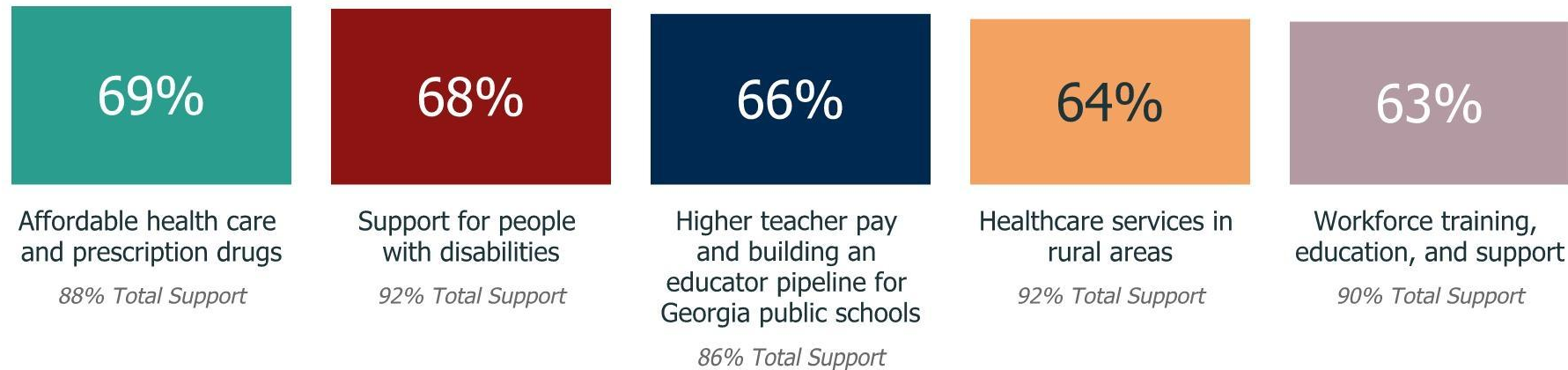
Education,  
health care,  
and roads  
pop in state  
budget  
word cloud



Q.18 Thinking about the Georgia state budget, what do you think legislators and the governor should prioritize funding in the state budget?

# Most agreement and intensity comes on spending surplus funds on health care, support for people with disabilities, education, and workforce training

Tier One - % strongly support ways to spend budget surplus

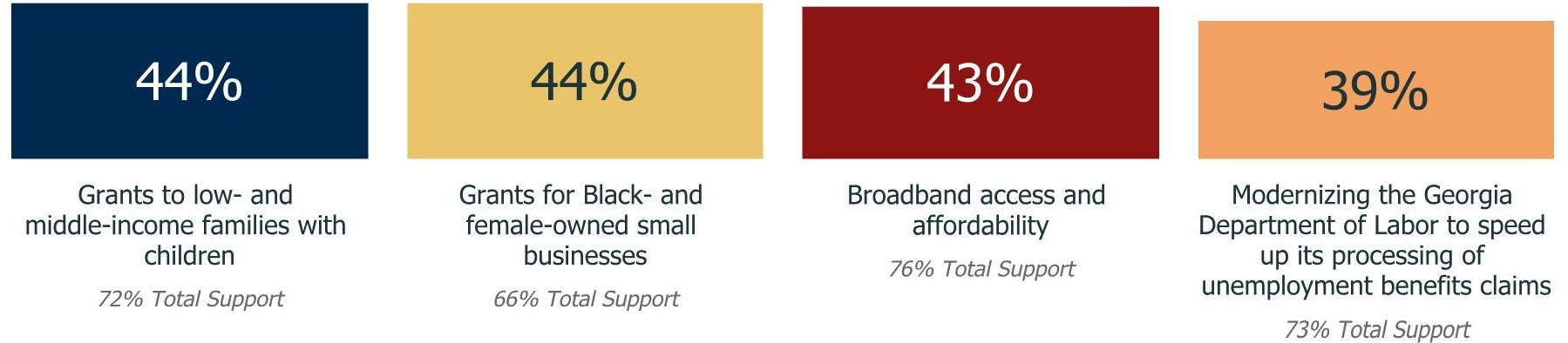


*Q.19 Now I am going to ask you about several ways the state of Georgia can use this \$6.6 billion surplus, and I want you to tell me whether you support or oppose each one.*



# Also overwhelming support for investing surplus funds in grants, broadband, and modernizing the GA Department of Labor

Tier Two - % strongly support ways to spend budget surplus

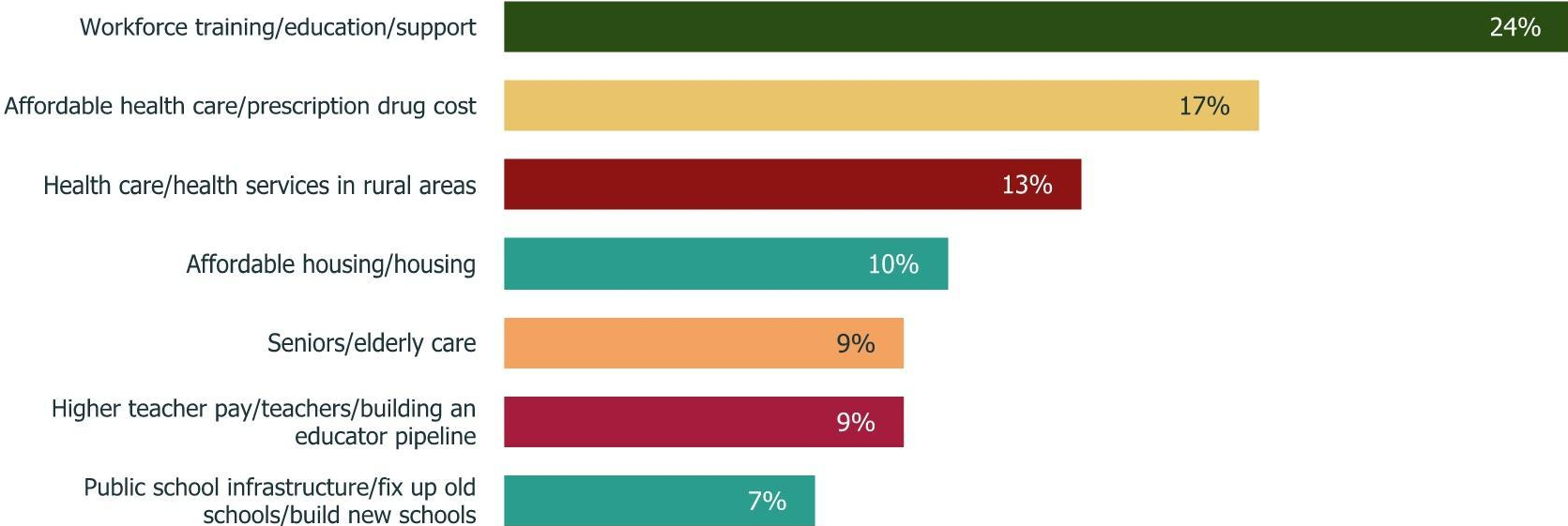


*Q.19 Now I am going to ask you about several ways the state of Georgia can use this \$6.6 billion surplus, and I want you to tell me whether you support or oppose each one.*



# Workforce training/education and affordable health care are most popular budget proposals

Highest priority budget proposals over 6%

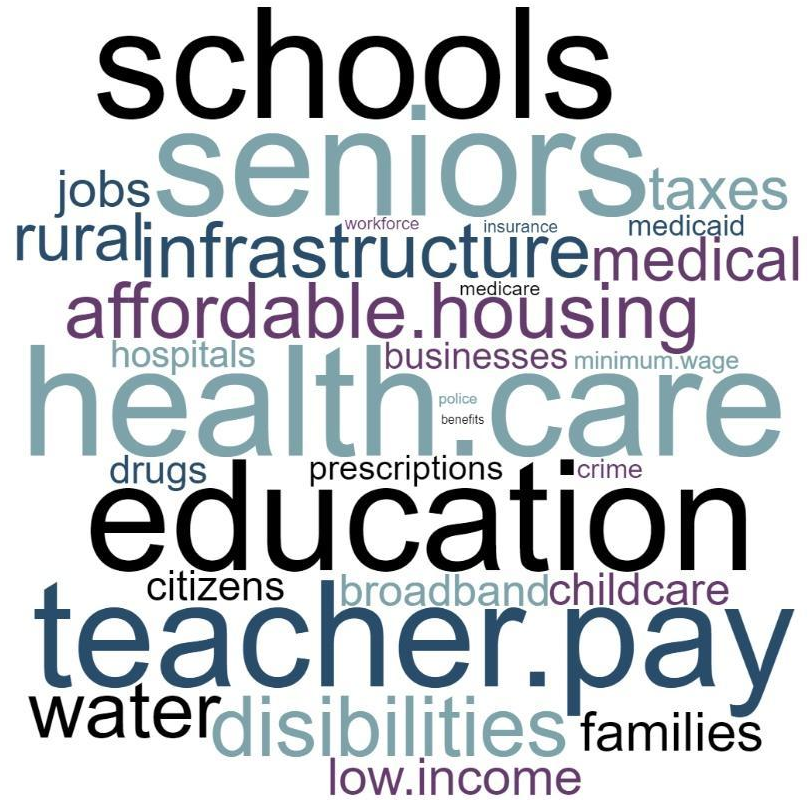


Q.20 And of all of the proposals you just heard about for using available funding in Georgia's state budget, which do you think should be highest priority?





Health care,  
education,  
and seniors  
pop in  
budget  
priorities  
word cloud

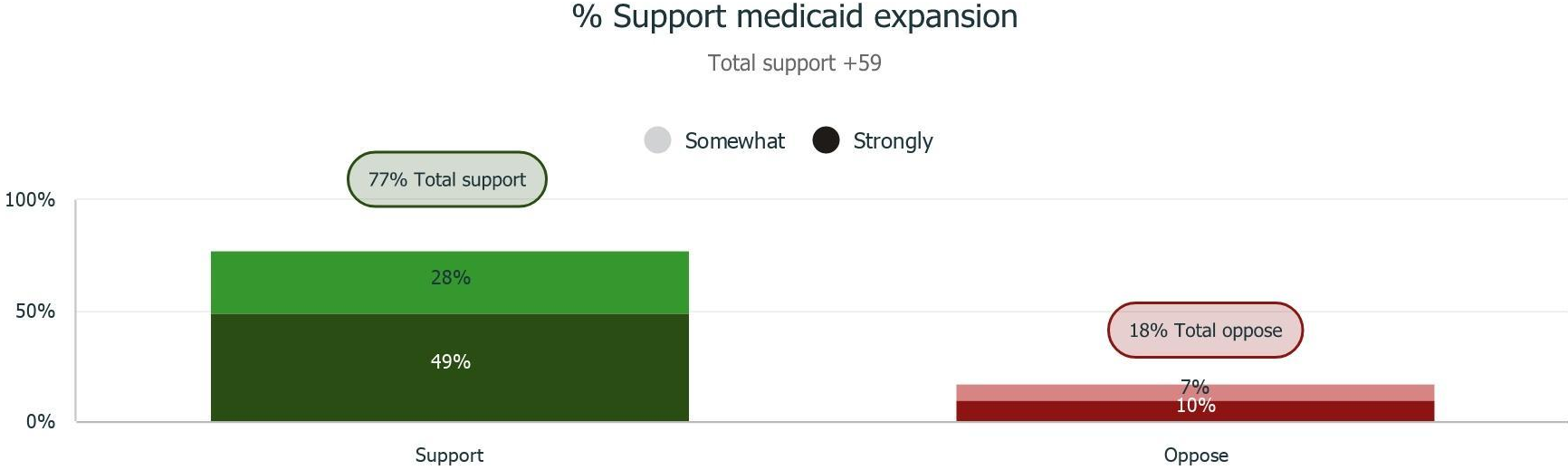


*Q.20 And of all of the proposals you just heard about for using available funding in Georgia's state budget, which do you think should be highest priority?*



# Medicaid Expansion, Abortion, and Marijuana

# Nearly 8-in-10 Georgia voters support a state budget that expands Medicaid coverage to more Georgians who need it



Q.12 Do you support or oppose a state budget that expands Medicaid coverage to more Georgians who need it?



# Top arguments for Medicaid expansion

Most persuasive Medicaid expansion arguments: % Strongly Support

53%

## Atlanta Medical closing

When the Atlanta Medical Center closed last month, it was the 6th hospital closure in Georgia in the past 4 years and leaves North Georgia with just a single Level 1 trauma center. Expanding Medicaid would help keep Georgia hospitals open.

73% Total Support

49%

## New jobs

This proposal will create 64,000 new high-paying jobs in the healthcare field.

73% Total Support

49%

## Increase access

Expanding Medicaid would increase access to health care for 240,000 low-income Georgians who currently lack affordable options for health insurance.

73% Total Support

*Q.13 Please tell me whether each of the following arguments makes you more or less likely to support the proposal to expand the Medicaid program in Georgia.*



# AMC closing top message among soft supporters of Medicaid expansion while soft opponents most drawn to message about jobs

Persuasive arguments to expand Medicaid to respondents who only somewhat support Medicaid expansion

	Atlanta Medical closing		New jobs		Increase access		\$1.4 billion federal funding	
	<i>Much more likely</i>	<i>Total More likely</i>	<i>Much more likely</i>	<i>Total More likely</i>	<i>Much more likely</i>	<i>Total More likely</i>	<i>Much more likely</i>	<i>Total More likely</i>
All voters	53%	73%	49%	73%	49%	73%	43%	69%
Somewhat support	46%	74%	36%	77%	36%	78%	30%	66%
Somewhat oppose	8%	48%	15%	52%	6%	41%	7%	32%



# Risk to physicians and women are top concerns on abortion ban

Abortion ban concerns: % Very concerning

64%

Physicians could be prosecuted and jailed for providing life-saving medical care.

73% Very/Somewhat Concerning

63%

Women's lives will be put at risk if doctors fear legal repercussions for administering life-saving care to pregnant women.

73% Very/Somewhat Concerning

62%

Physicians could lose their medical license for providing care to miscarriage patients.

73% Very/Somewhat Concerning

62%

Under this law, women who miscarry are put at risk of legal investigation.

71% Very/Somewhat Concerning

*Q.21 As you may know, a ban on abortion after 6 weeks went into effect in Georgia this year. Now I am going to read you a list of concerns people have about the abortion ban. After each, please tell me if you think that is very concerning, somewhat concerning, a little concerning, or not at all concerning.*

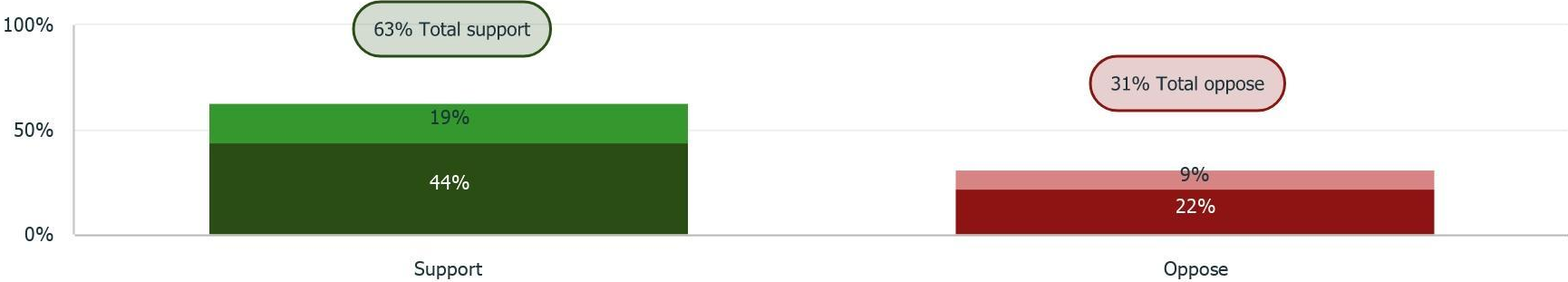


# Majority of GA voters support legalizing adult use marijuana

## % Support for marijuana legalization

Total support +32

● Somewhat ● Strongly



Q.14 Do you support or oppose legalizing marijuana for adult use in Georgia?



# Some racial division on marijuana, but majority of White voters are supportive

Marijuana legalization support by race and race/gender

	Support strongly	Total Support	Oppose strongly	Total Oppose
All voters	44%	63%	22%	31%
White	37%	55%	27%	39%
Black	52%	78%	10%	15%
Latino	54%	71%	19%	25%
Voters of color	53%	75%	14%	19%
White men	37%	55%	27%	40%
White women	40%	57%	27%	36%
Men of color	56%	76%	17%	20%
Women of color	48%	73%	12%	19%





# Marijuana legalization receives majority support from all regions, most intense support in Urban areas

Marijuana legalization support by urbanicity and region

	Support strongly	Total Support	Oppose strongly	Total Oppose
All voters	44%	63%	22%	31%
Suburban Atlanta	43%	66%	18%	29%
Urban Atlanta	58%	78%	10%	17%
Rural Atlanta/ North GA	42%	61%	27%	35%
South GA	38%	53%	28%	37%
Rural	40%	55%	29%	38%
Suburban	42%	65%	19%	30%
Urban	58%	78%	10%	17%



# Minimum Wage

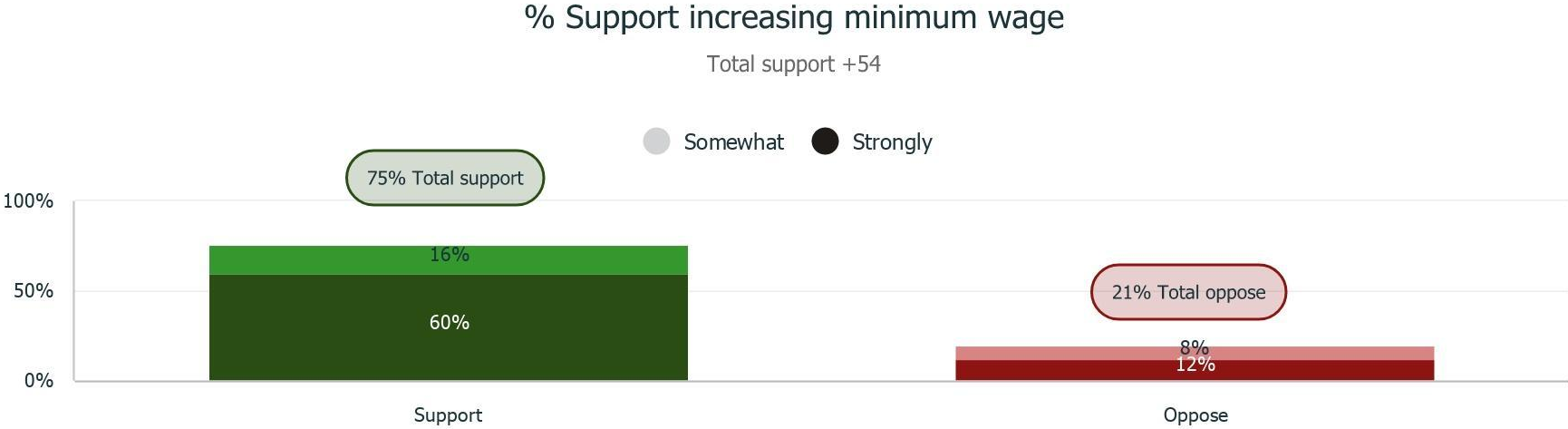
# GA voters overwhelmingly support increasing minimum wage from \$5.15/hr to \$15/hr



Q.15 Do you support or oppose a proposal to increase Georgia's current \$5.15 an hour minimum wage to \$15 an hour? (SPLIT - Effective Base 500)



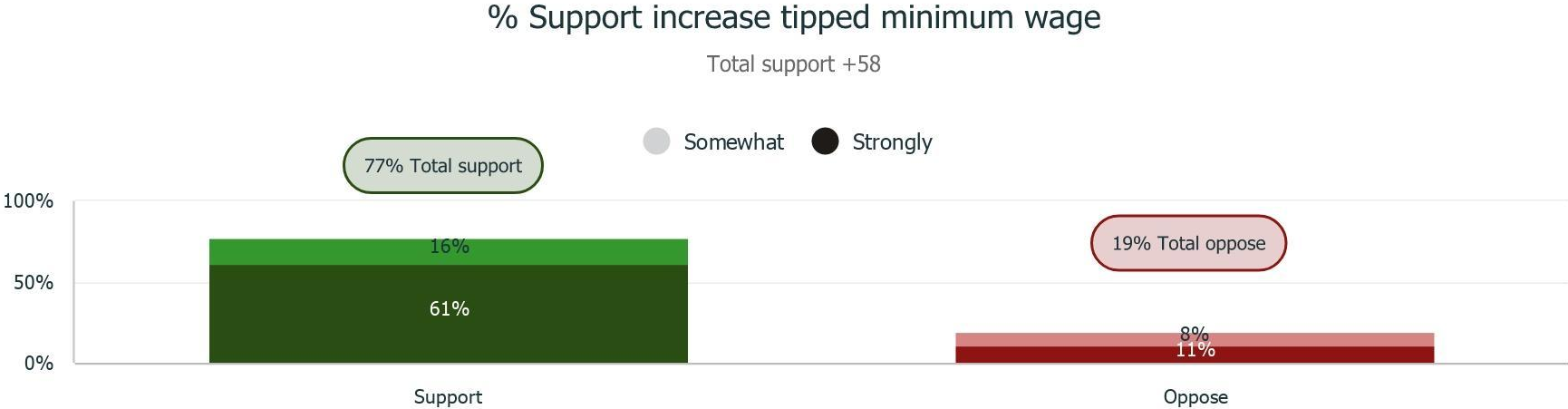
# Even more consolidated support behind increasing the minimum wage from \$5.15



Q.16 Do you support or oppose a proposal to increase Georgia's current \$5.15 an hour minimum wage?  
(SPLIT - Effective Base 500)



# Eliminating the tipped minimum wage of \$2.13/hour is also very popular

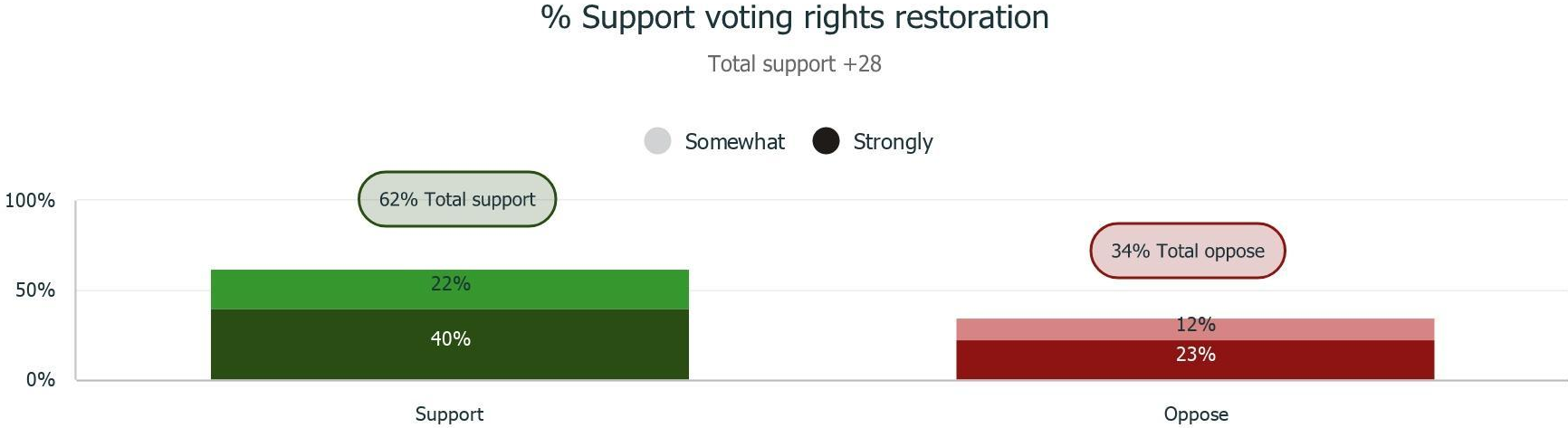


Q.17 Some employers are allowed to pay workers, like restaurant employees who may receive tips for service, less than a standard minimum wage. In Georgia, the minimum wage for workers who may receive tips is \$2.13 an hour. There is a proposal to eliminate this tipped minimum wage and require all workers to make at least the standard minimum wage. Do you support or oppose this proposal to eliminate Georgia's tipped minimum wage of \$2.13 an hour?



# Voting Reforms

# Broad majority support voting rights restoration regardless of court fees owed



*Q.22 Do you support or oppose a policy that would restore voting rights to all Georgians after incarceration, regardless of whether or not they still owe court fees when they are released?*





# Rights restoration broadly popular among voters of color; splits White voters

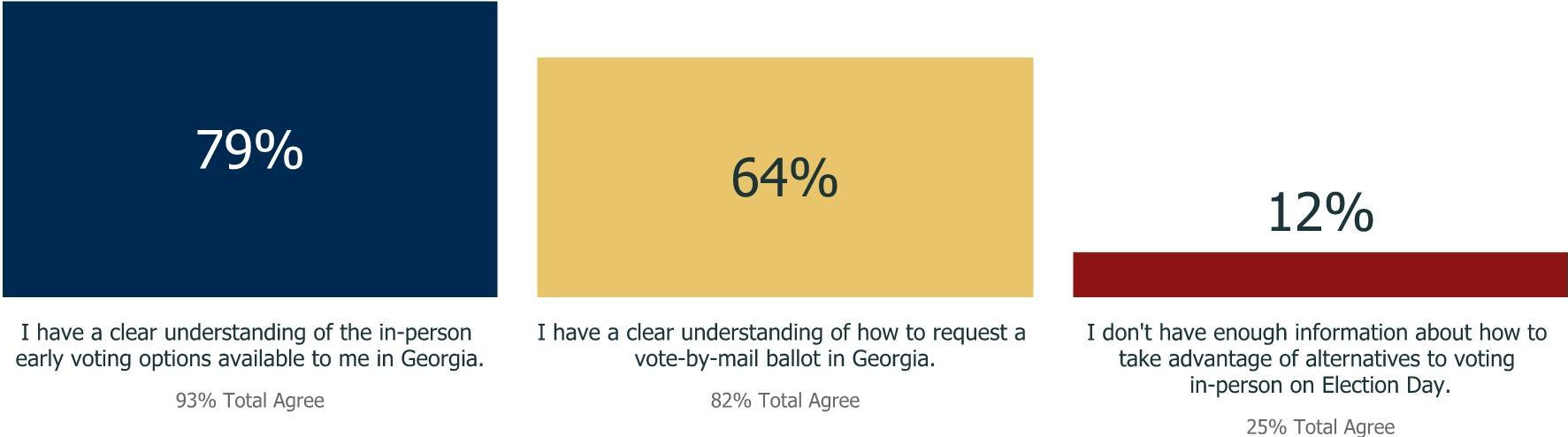
Voter rights for previously incarcerated people support by race and race/gender

	Support strongly	Total Support	Oppose strongly	Total Oppose
All voters	40%	62%	23%	34%
White	26%	48%	32%	48%
Black	66%	86%	5%	9%
Latino	41%	62%	22%	34%
Voters of color	58%	80%	10%	16%
White men	21%	42%	38%	56%
White women	30%	54%	27%	41%
Men of color	59%	77%	12%	20%
Women of color	58%	84%	6%	11%



# Information on how to vote early has reached most Georgia voters

Early voting statements: % Strongly agree



*Q.23 Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about voting.*

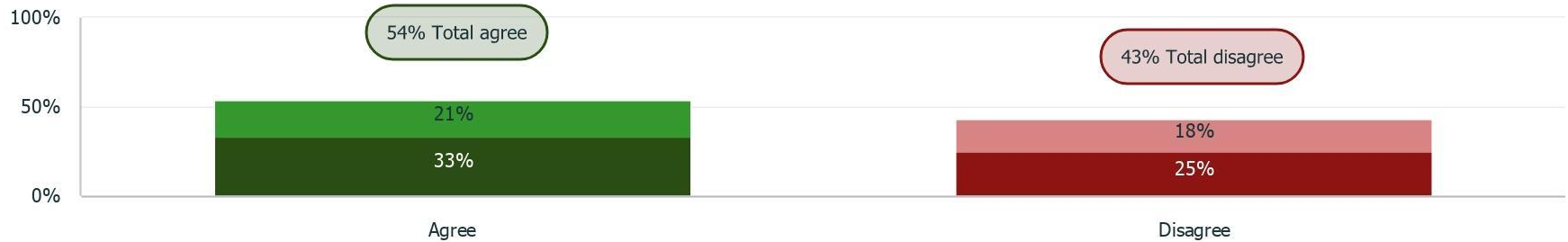


# Just over half of Georgia voters are concerned about VBM reliability

## Vote by mail concern agreement

Total agree +11

● Somewhat ● Strongly



*Q.23D Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about voting. I am concerned that the mail system in my state cannot be relied upon to get vote-by-mail ballots to election officials in time for them to be counted.*



# Women of color most likely to report concern that Georgia's mail system cannot be relied upon

Vote by mail concern by race and race/gender

	Strongly agree	Total Agree	Strongly disagree	Total Disagree
All voters	33%	54%	25%	43%
White	30%	49%	30%	49%
Black	37%	59%	20%	37%
Hispanic	35%	53%	27%	43%
Voters of color	36%	59%	20%	37%
White men	26%	46%	33%	52%
White women	33%	53%	25%	45%
Men of color	30%	51%	27%	46%
Women of color	42%	66%	14%	31%

Q.23 D. Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about voting. *I am concerned that the mail system in my state cannot be relied upon to get vote-by-mail ballots to election officials in time for them to be counted.*

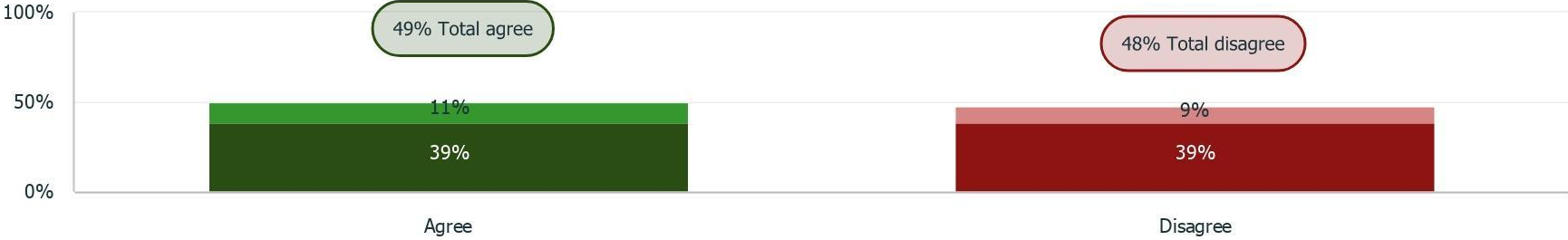


# Voters split on if systemic racism prevents full democratic participation

## Systemic racism prevents voter participation agreement

Total agree +1

● Somewhat ● Strongly



*Q.23E Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about voting. Systemic racism has prevented Black people and other people of color from being able to fully participate in our democracy.*



# Lots of racial polarization around the idea that systemic racism has prevented people of color from fully participating in our democracy

Systemic racism preventing democratic participation by race and race/gender

	Strongly agree	Total Agree	Strongly disagree	Total Disagree
All voters	39%	49%	39%	48%
White	21%	29%	57%	68%
Black	69%	84%	8%	14%
Latino	45%	62%	32%	37%
Voters of color	62%	76%	15%	22%
White men	19%	26%	63%	73%
White women	24%	33%	49%	63%
Men of color	51%	65%	23%	33%
Women of color	72%	87%	8%	11%

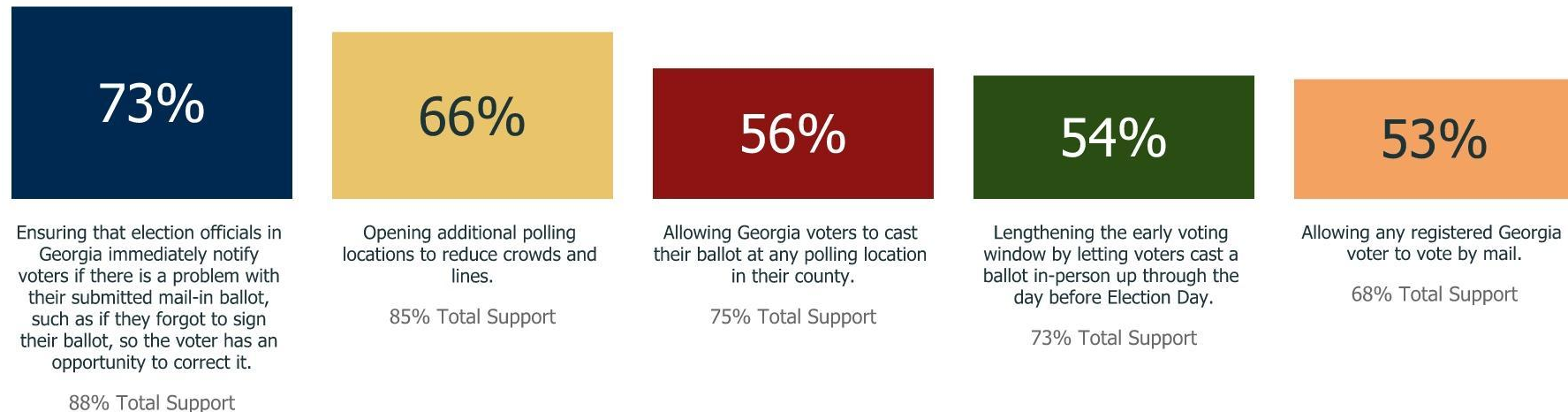
*Q.23E Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about voting. Systemic racism has prevented Black people and other people of color from being able to fully participate in our democracy.*





# Georgia voters strongly support a variety of voting reforms

Voter reforms: % Support strongly

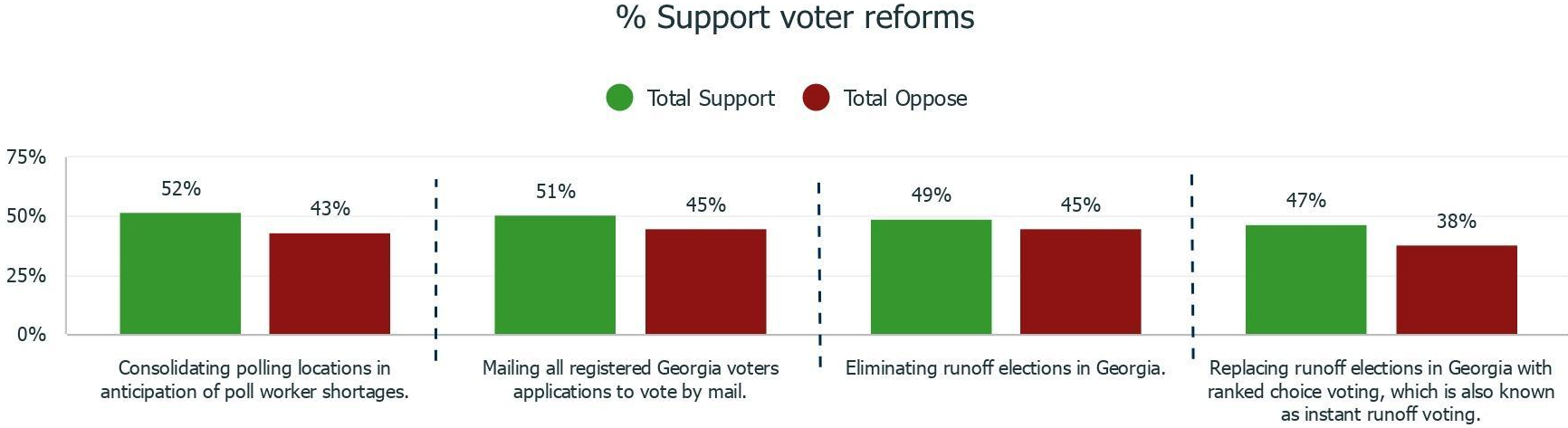


*Q.24 Now I am going to ask you about several reforms related to voting in Georgia, and I want you to tell me whether you support or oppose each one.*





# Opinion is split on mailing VBM applications, consolidating polling locations, and runoff reform



*Q.24 Now I am going to ask you about several reforms related to voting in Georgia, and I want you to tell me whether you support or oppose each one.*



# Voters of color overwhelmingly support mailing all registered GA voters VBM applications, White voters oppose; Latino voters most open to ranked choice

Voting reforms support by race

	Consolidating polling places		Mail everyone vbm applications		Eliminating runoffs		Ranked choice	
	Total Support	Total Oppose	Total Support	Total Oppose	Total Support	Total Oppose	Total Support	Total Oppose
All voters	52%	43%	51%	45%	49%	45%	47%	38%
White	46%	50%	38%	59%	44%	49%	41%	45%
Black	61%	32%	72%	23%	56%	39%	56%	28%
Latino	66%	29%	66%	29%	46%	48%	71%	17%
Voters of color	60%	34%	68%	27%	55%	41%	56%	29%

*Q.24 Now I am going to ask you about several reforms related to voting in Georgia, and I want you to tell me whether you support or oppose each one.*



# Questions?



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