

Portland Voter Views of a Police Accountability Measure

*Key Findings from a Survey of Voters
Conducted August 25-30, 2020*



OPINION
RESEARCH
& STRATEGY

Methodology

- 435 interviews with Portland voters likely to participate in the November 2020 election
- Conducted August 25-30, 2020 online and via landline and cell phones
- Margin of sampling error of $\pm 4.9\%$ at the 95% confidence level
- Due to rounding, some percentages do not add up to 100%

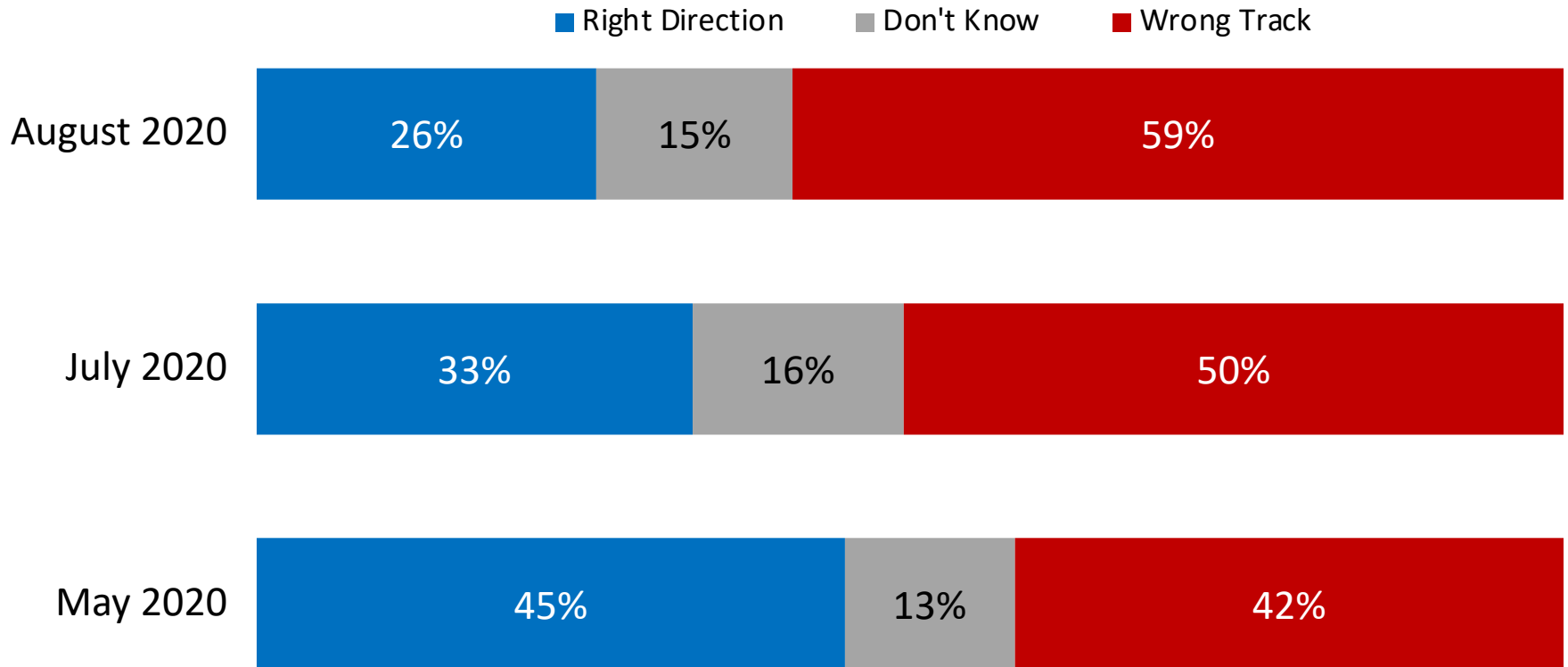




Election Context

Three in five Portland voters now believe the city is on the wrong track.

Would you say things in Portland are generally headed in the right direction, or do you feel that they are pretty seriously on the wrong track?



Nearly two-thirds have an unfavorable view of the Mayor.

*I would like to ask your impressions of some people and organizations in public life.
As I read each name, please tell me whether your impression of that person or organization is generally favorable or unfavorable.*

■ Very Fav. ■ Smwt. Fav. ■ Heard of/Can't Rate ■ Never Heard of/Don't Know ■ Smwt. Unfav. ■ Very Unfav.

Total Fav. 76%
Total Unfav. 22%



The Black Lives Matter movement



Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty



46%
29%



The Portland Police Bureau



45%
50%

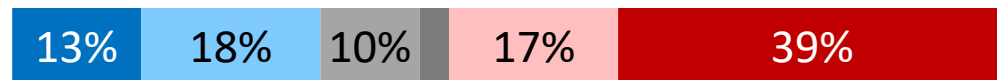


*The Portland Police Association



31%
48%

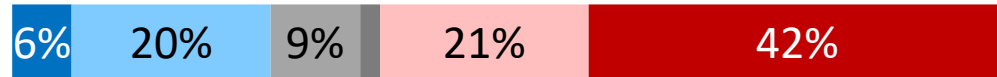
*The Portland police union



31%
56%

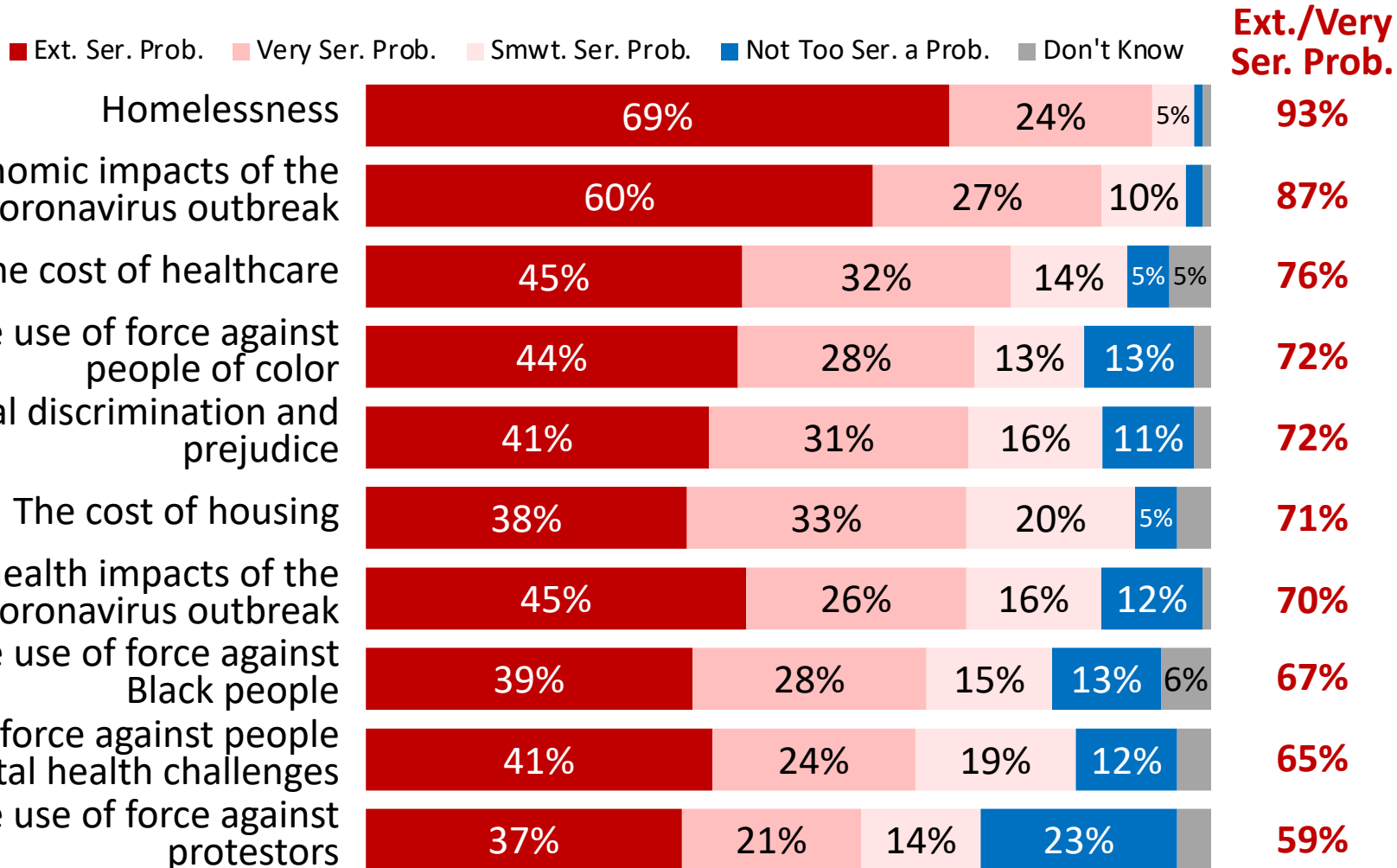


Mayor Ted Wheeler



26%
63%

Homelessness and the economy are top issues; police use of force is also a concern for most.

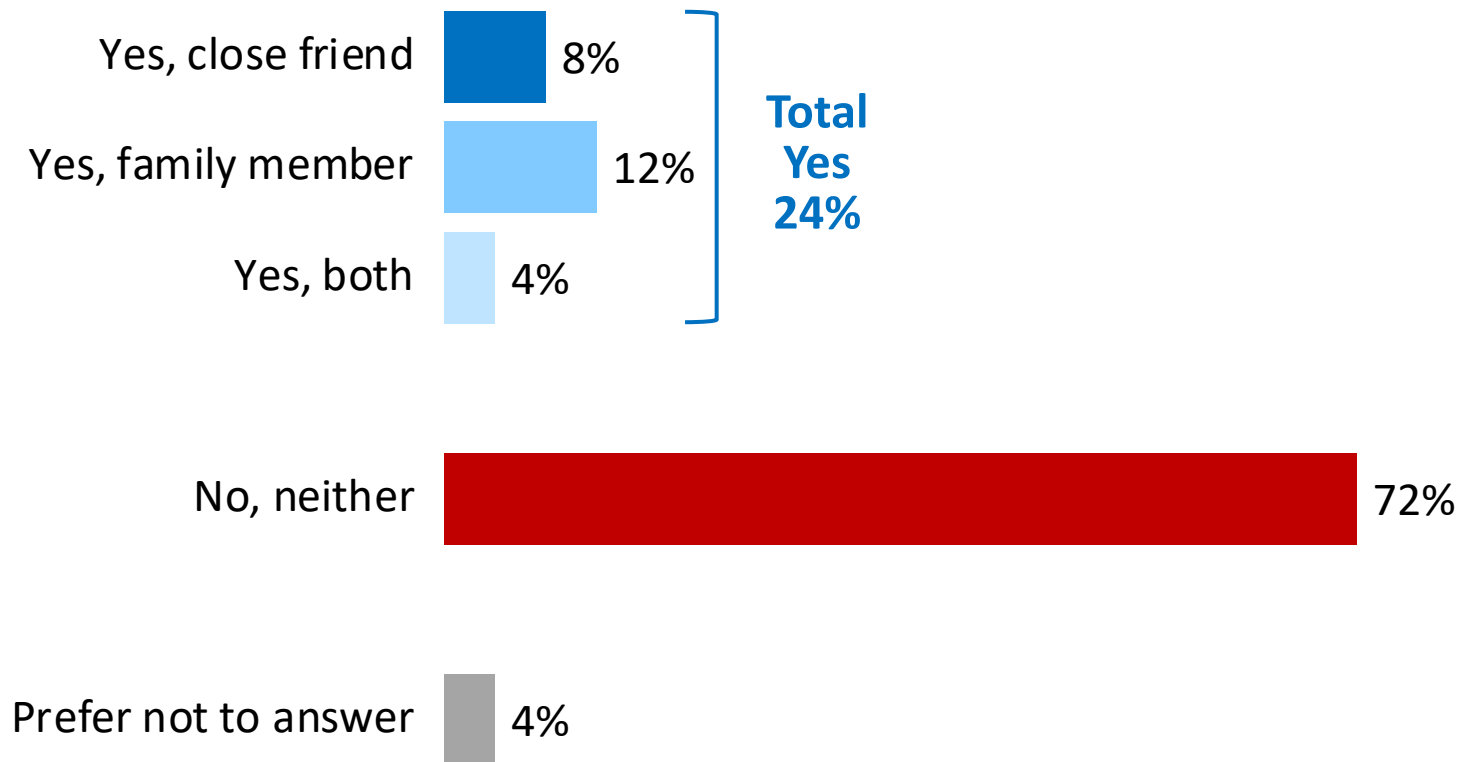




Views of Portland Police and Racial Justice

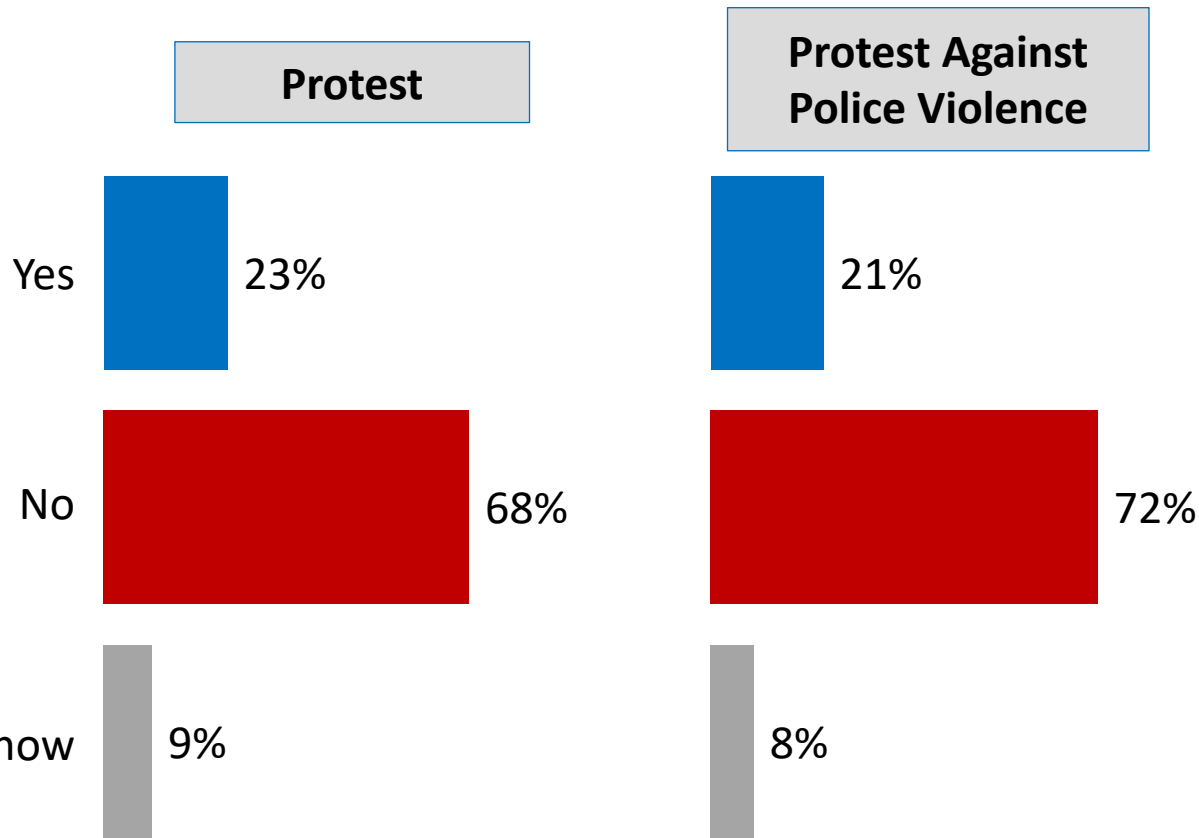
One-quarter have a close friend or family member who works in law enforcement.

Do you have a close friend or family member who works in law enforcement?



About one in five have participated in a protest in the last three months.

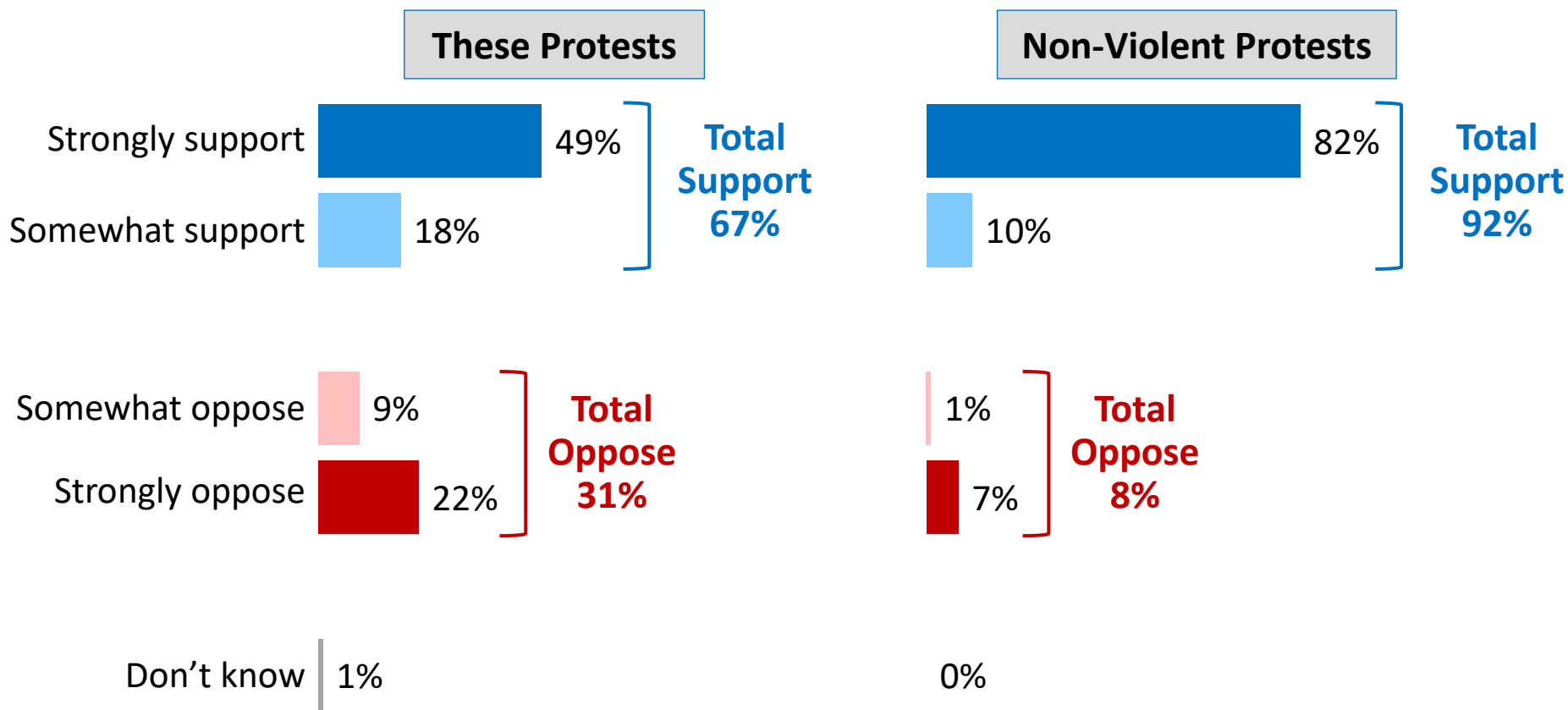
*Have you participated in a protest
(HALF SAMPLE: against police violence) in the last three months?*



Those who have protested are disproportionately progressives, men under 50, independent men, live East of 205, and – interestingly – have a family connection to someone in law enforcement.

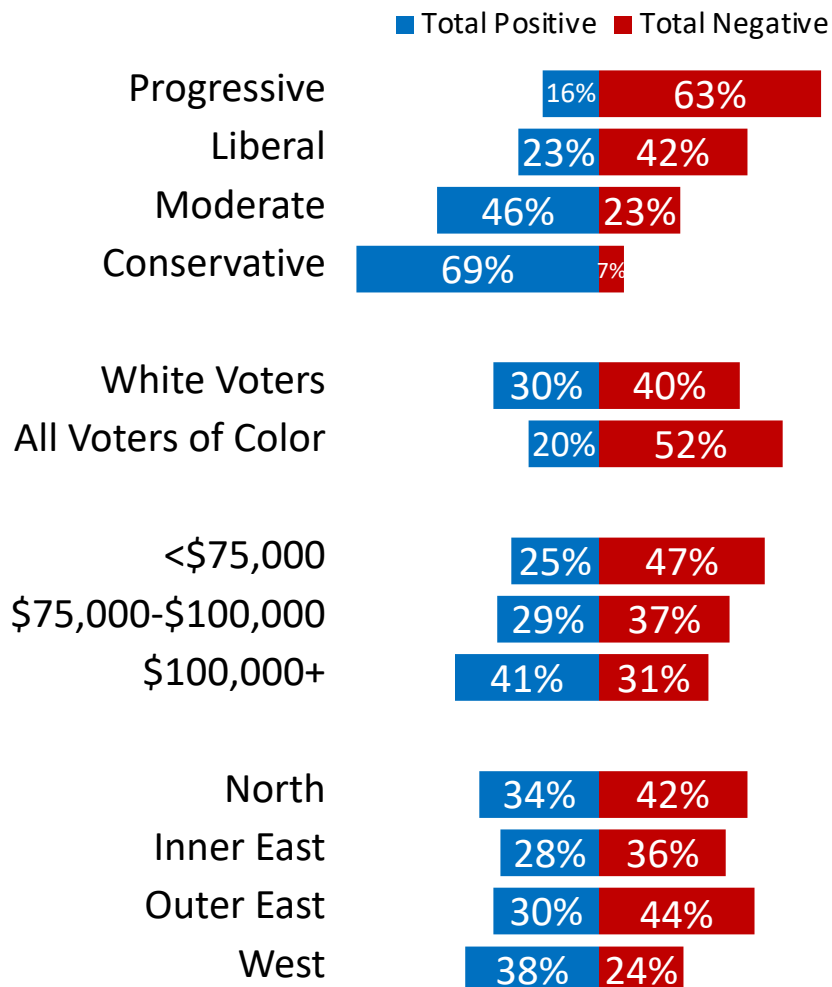
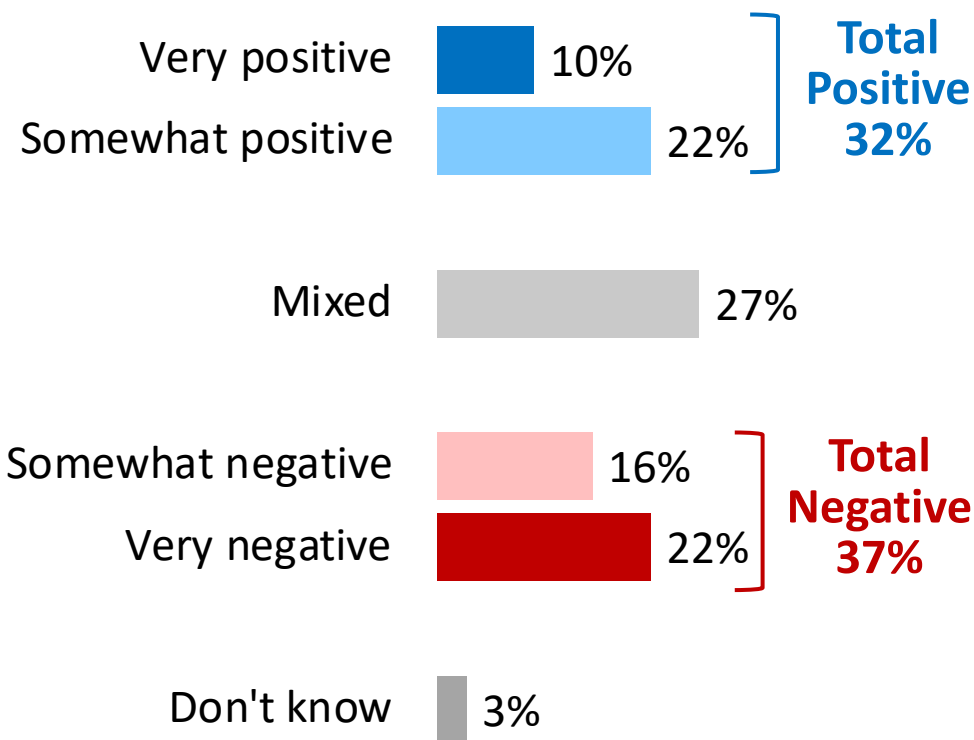
Majorities support the protests – and nearly all do when “non-violence” is stipulated.

*In general, do you support or oppose (HALF SAMPLE: these protests)
(HALF SAMPLE: nonviolent protests)?*



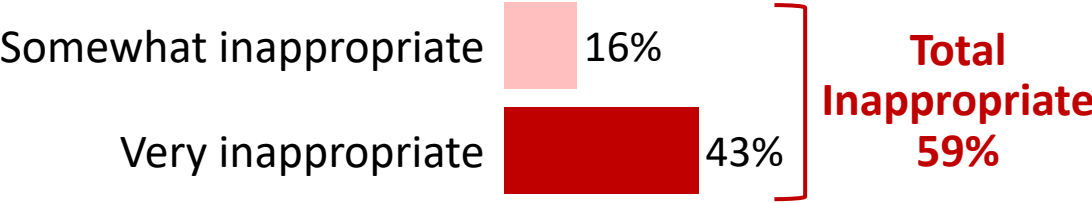
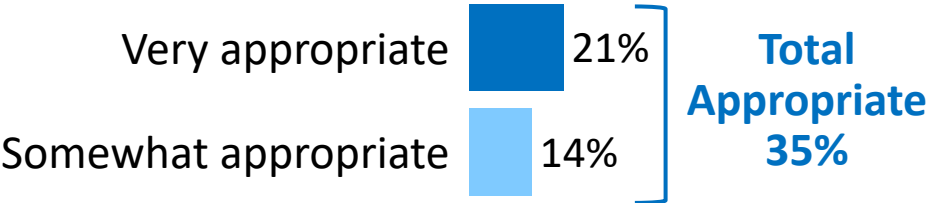
Voters overall are split on whether the police have a positive relationship with residents – with sharp differences by ideology.

Do you believe the relationship between the Portland Police Bureau and Portland residents generally is a positive or a negative one?



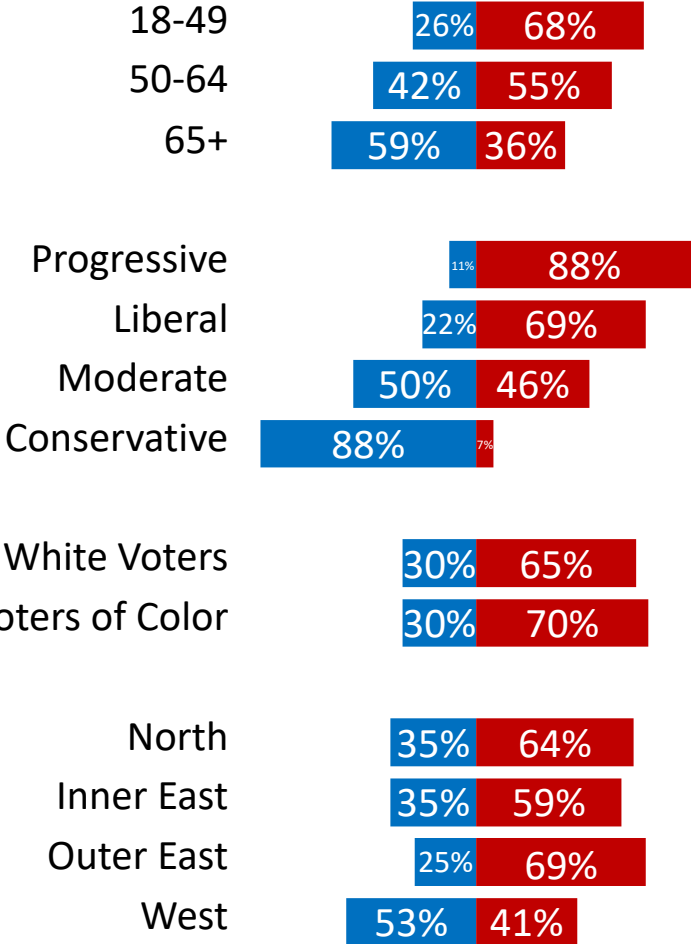
Three in five believe police use of force has been inappropriate – this is especially true for younger voters and progressives.

In general, do you think Portland police officers' use of force such as using tear gas, batons, and violence during the protests has been appropriate or inappropriate?



Don't know 5%

■ Total Appropriate ■ Total Inappropriate



Most Portland voters believe there is a systemic problem in policing.

I am going to read you a pair of statements about this issue. Please tell me which statement comes closer to your personal opinion:

There is an underlying, systemic problem in Portland's police system that leads to repeated police violence and mistreatment of Black Portlanders and people with mental illness

OR

Police violence against Black Portlanders and people with mental illness is the result of actions by a handful of bad cops, and there is no systemic racial bias in Portland's system of policing

Both/Neither/Don't know



56%



31%

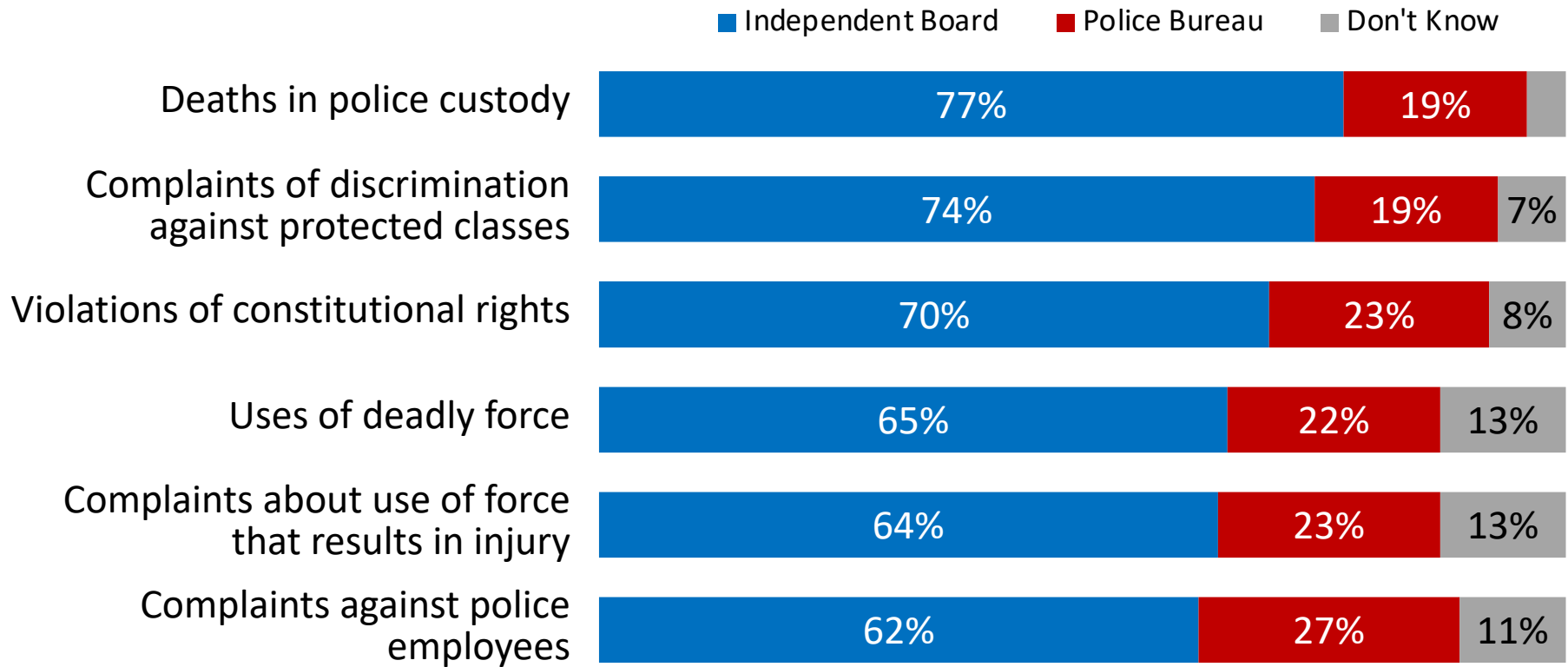


13%

Answers to this question diverge sharply by ideology: 91% of progressives see a systemic problem, and 81% of conservatives say it is a handful of bad cops.

Given the choice, broad majorities prefer an independent board to investigate a wide array of potential complaints or incidents.

I am going to ask you about several different kinds of potential complaints or incidents involving police and Portland residents. I'd like you to tell me which you would prefer to investigate it: the Police Bureau, or an independent board of Portland residents.

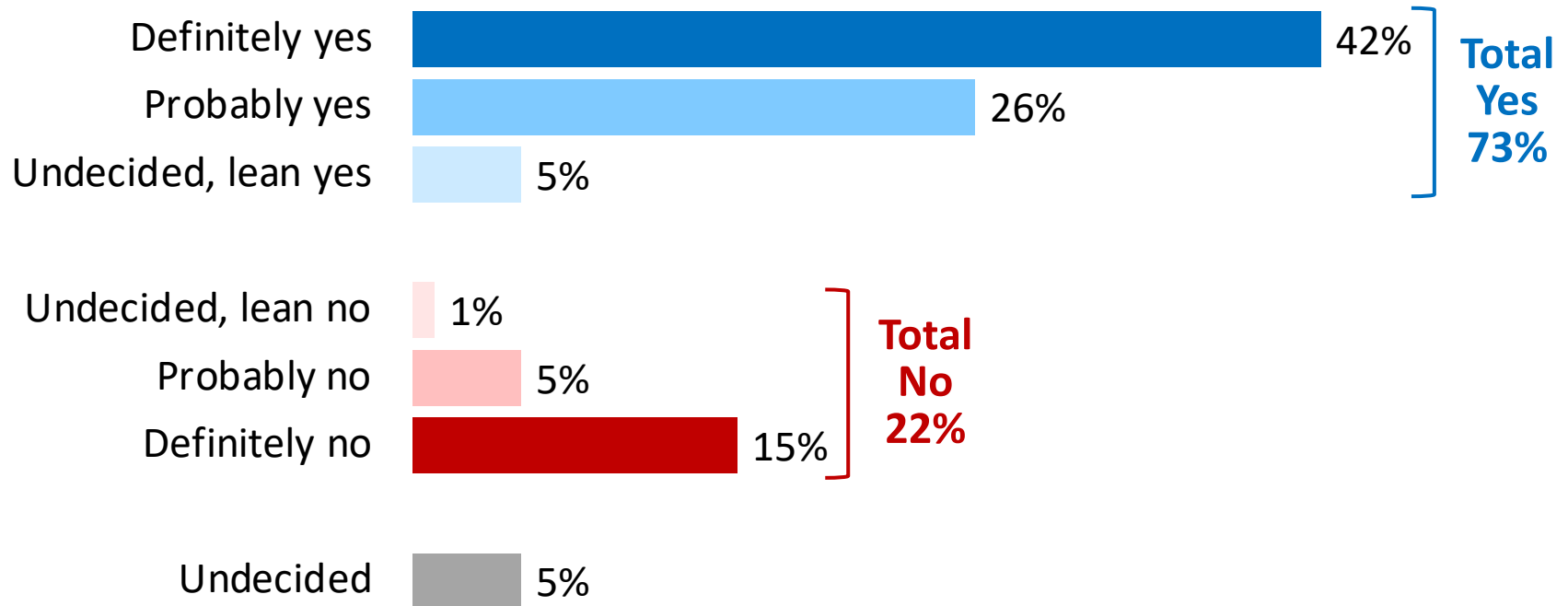




Views of the Measure

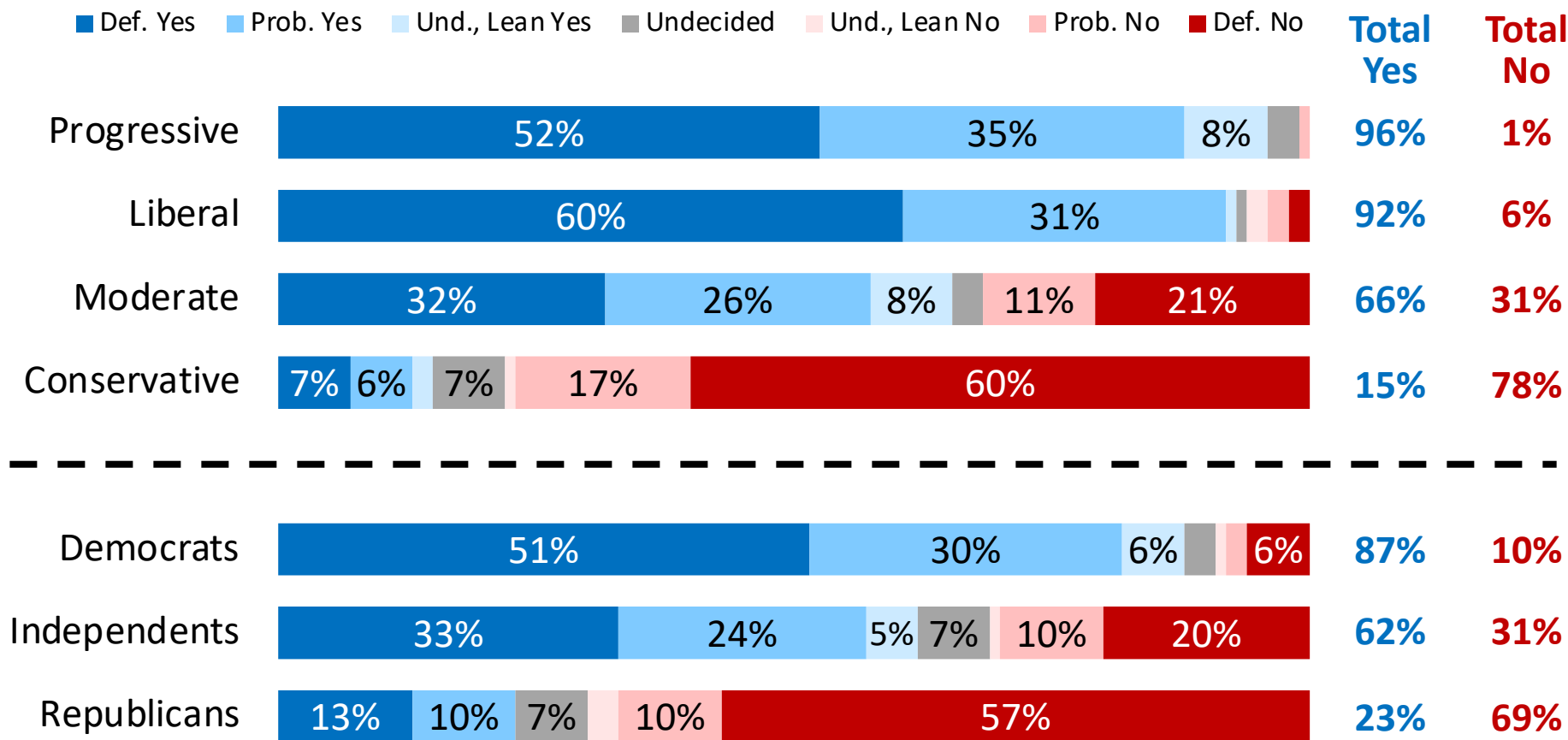
Given measure language alone, more than seven in ten voters back reform – and two in five would “definitely” vote yes.

Amends Charter: Authorizes new, independent community police oversight board.
Shall Charter be amended to authorize new, independent community police oversight board to investigate complaints against Portland Police, impose discipline?



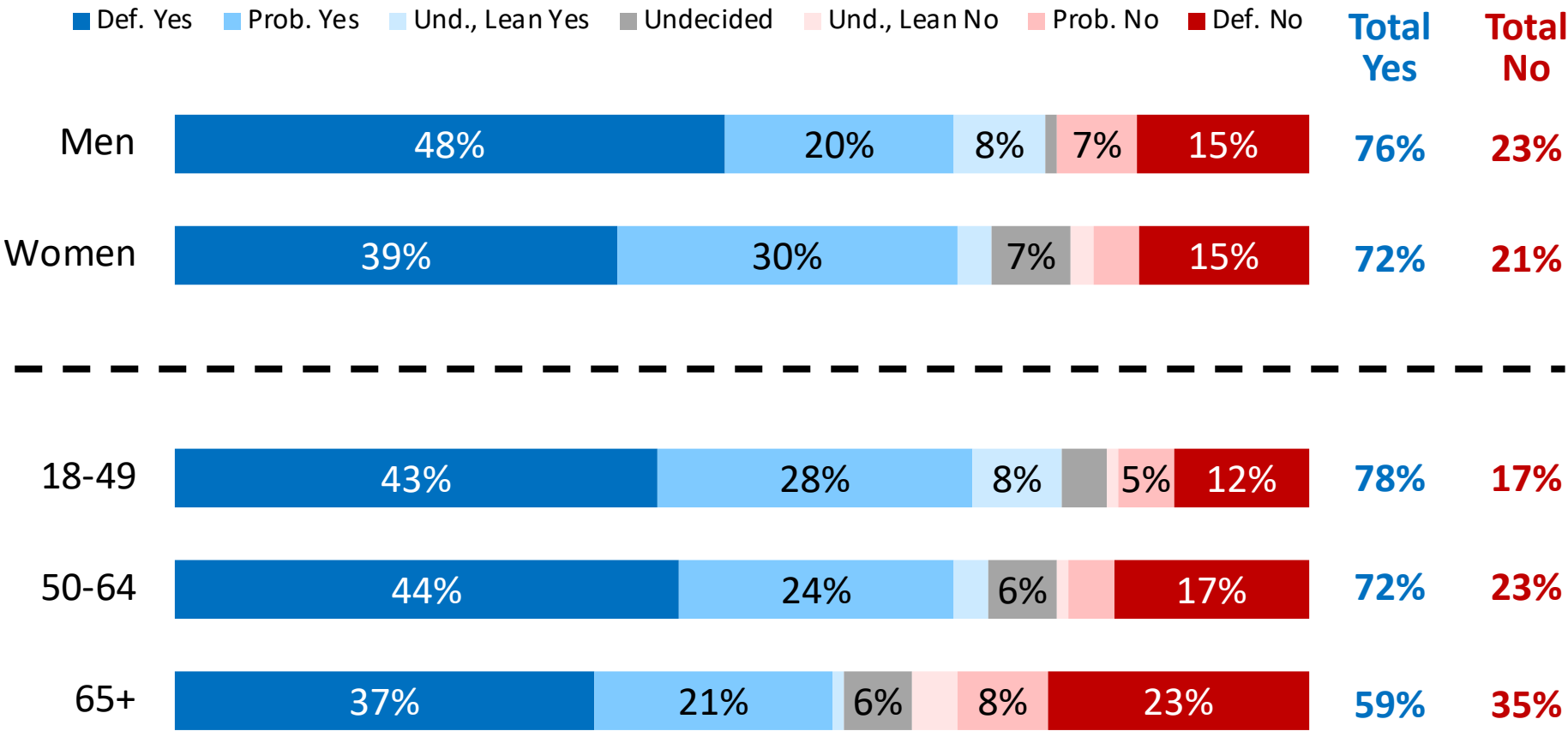
Nine in ten progressives and liberals support the measure, as do two-thirds of moderates.

Support for the Measure by Ideology & Party



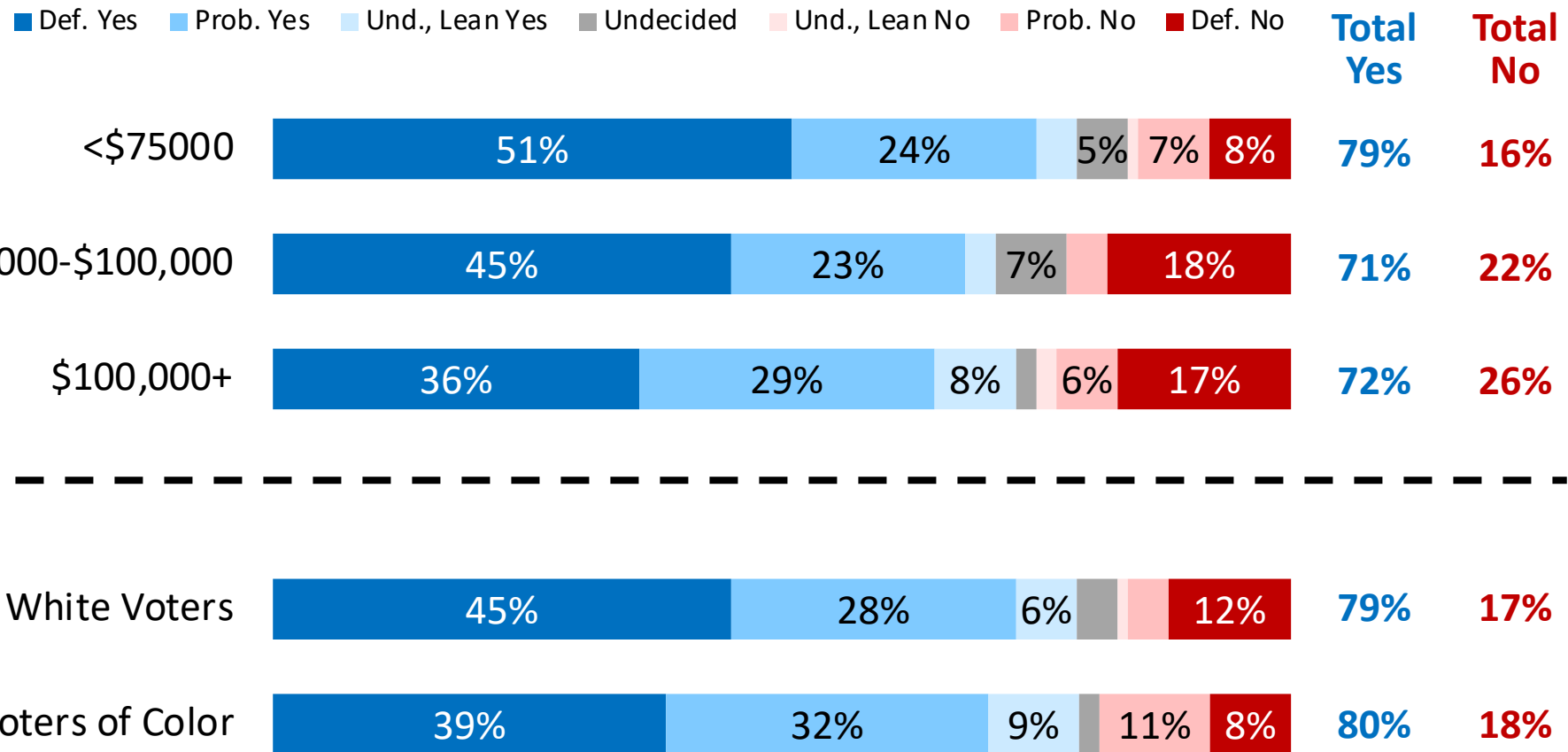
Support is broad across lines of gender and age, though slightly muted among voters 65+.

Support for the Measure by Gender & Age



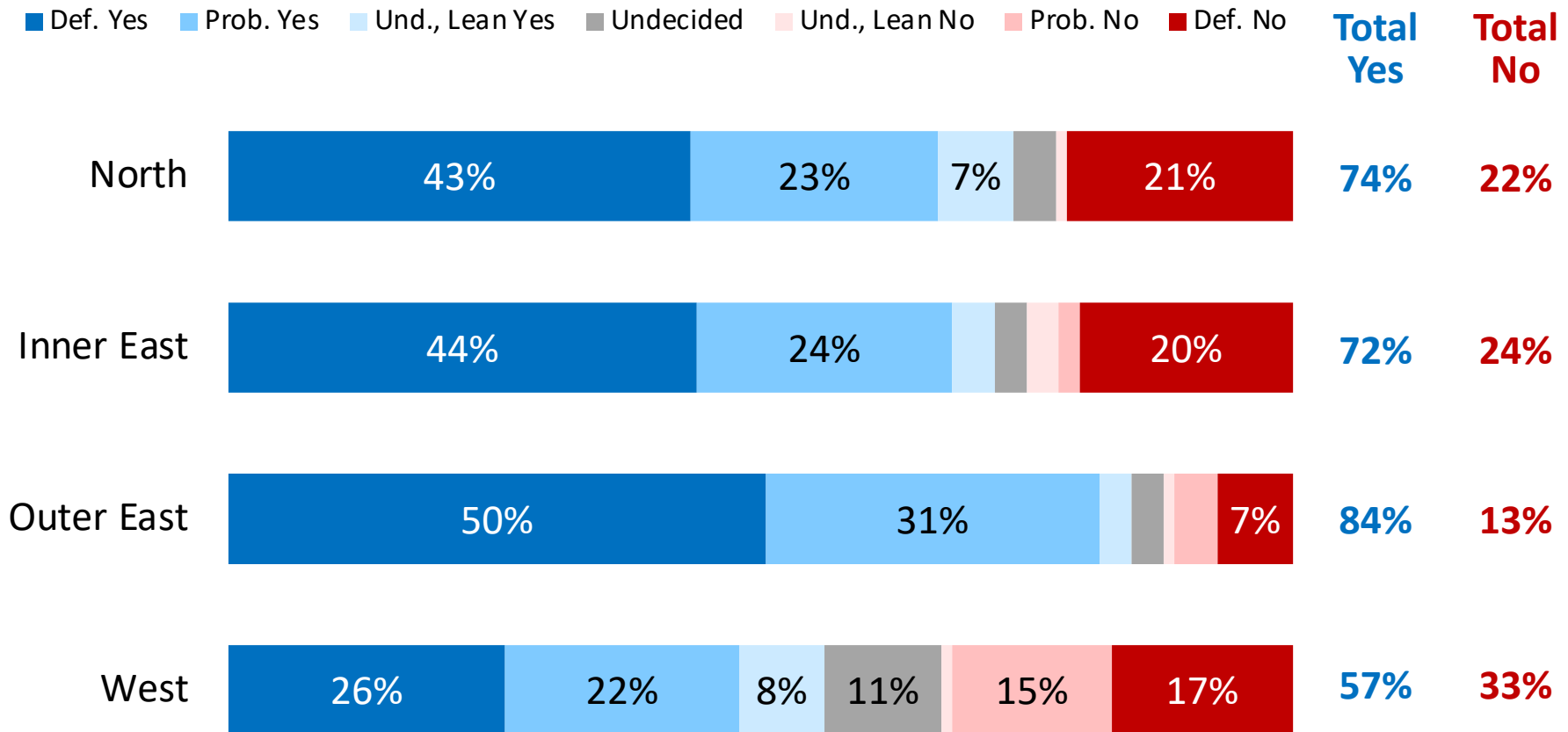
Voters with lower household incomes are slightly more supportive; white voters and voters of color are equally supportive.

Support for the Measure by Household Income & Race/Ethnicity



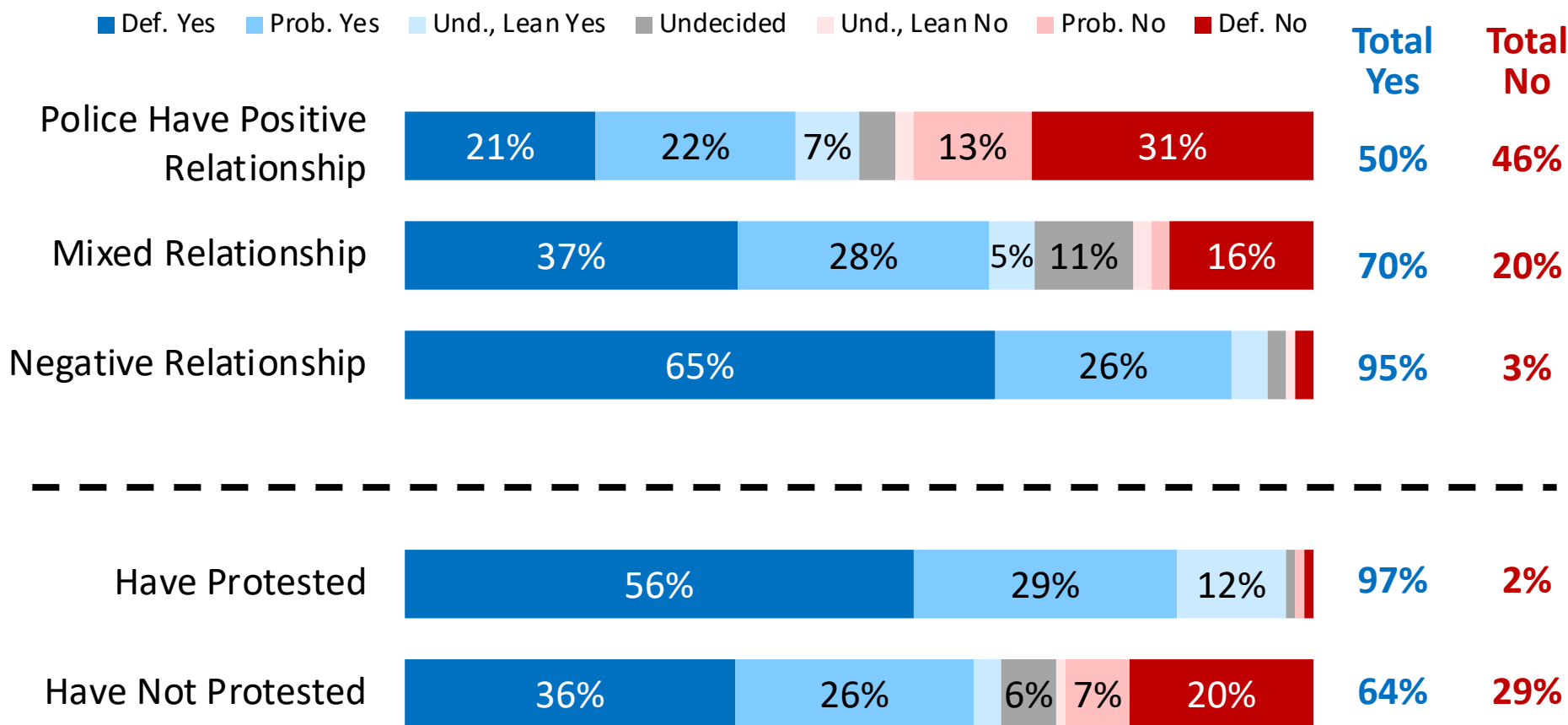
Voters in Outer East Portland are most supportive, with half saying they would “definitely” vote “yes.”

Support for the Measure by Region



Nearly everyone who has protested says they would vote "yes" on the measure, as would two-thirds of those who haven't.

Support for the Measure by Relationship with Police & Protested



Voters strongly support key elements of the measure.

*I am going to read you some specific provisions included in the measure.
Please tell me whether you support or oppose that provision.*

■ Strng. Supp. ■ Smwt. Supp. ■ Don't Know ■ Smwt. Opp. ■ Strng. Opp.

**Total
Supp.** **Total
Opp.**

The Board will be staffed by a Director and experienced staff, including professional investigators



79% **14%**

Board membership will include representation from diverse communities, including those who have experienced systemic racism and historic over-policing



78% **19%**

The Board will have the power to subpoena documents, access police records, and compel witness statements, including from police officers



77% **19%**

Creates an independent Board of local residents to oversee Portland police



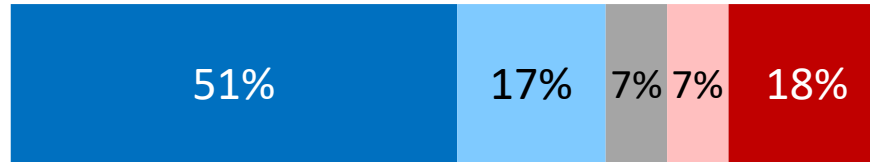
74% **22%**

There is slightly less enthusiasm for the funding and appointment provisions.

■ Strng. Supp. ■ Smwt. Supp. ■ Don't Know ■ Smwt. Opp. ■ Strng. Opp.

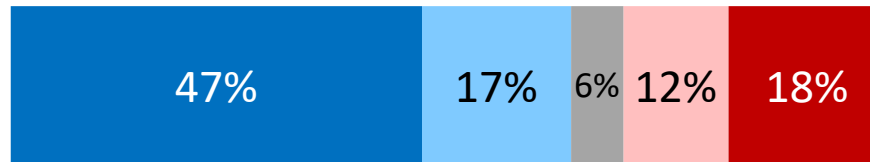
**Total
Supp.** **Total
Opp.**

Authorizes an independent body to impose discipline on officers, including firing



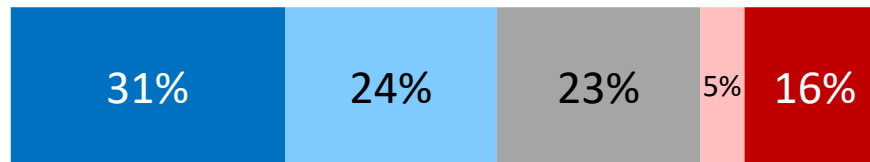
68% **25%**

Current and former employees of law enforcement agencies and their immediate family members may not serve on the Board



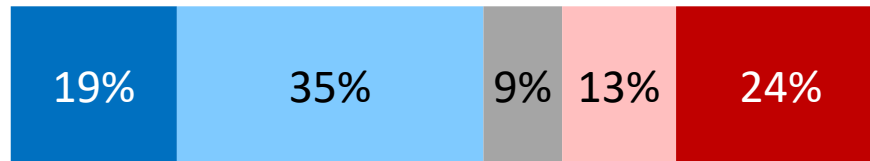
64% **30%**

Board funding will be no less than 5% of the Police Bureau's annual budget



55% **22%**

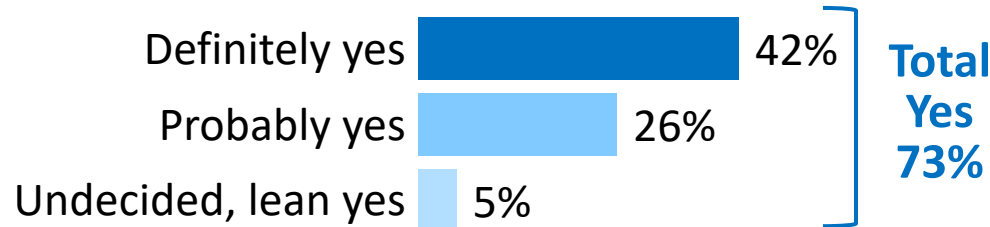
Board members would be appointed by approval of City Council



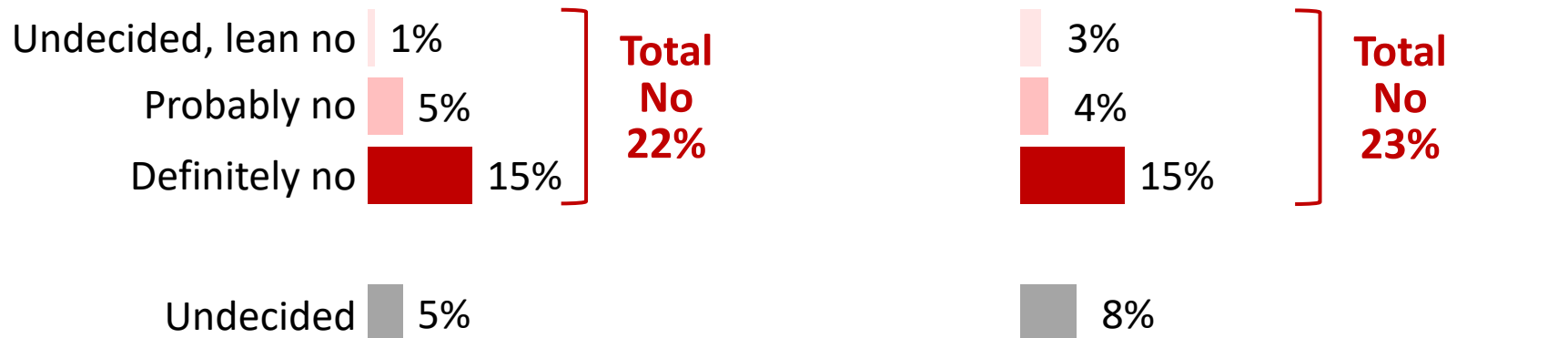
54% **36%**

After learning about measure elements, there is no overall change in support for the measure.

Initial Vote



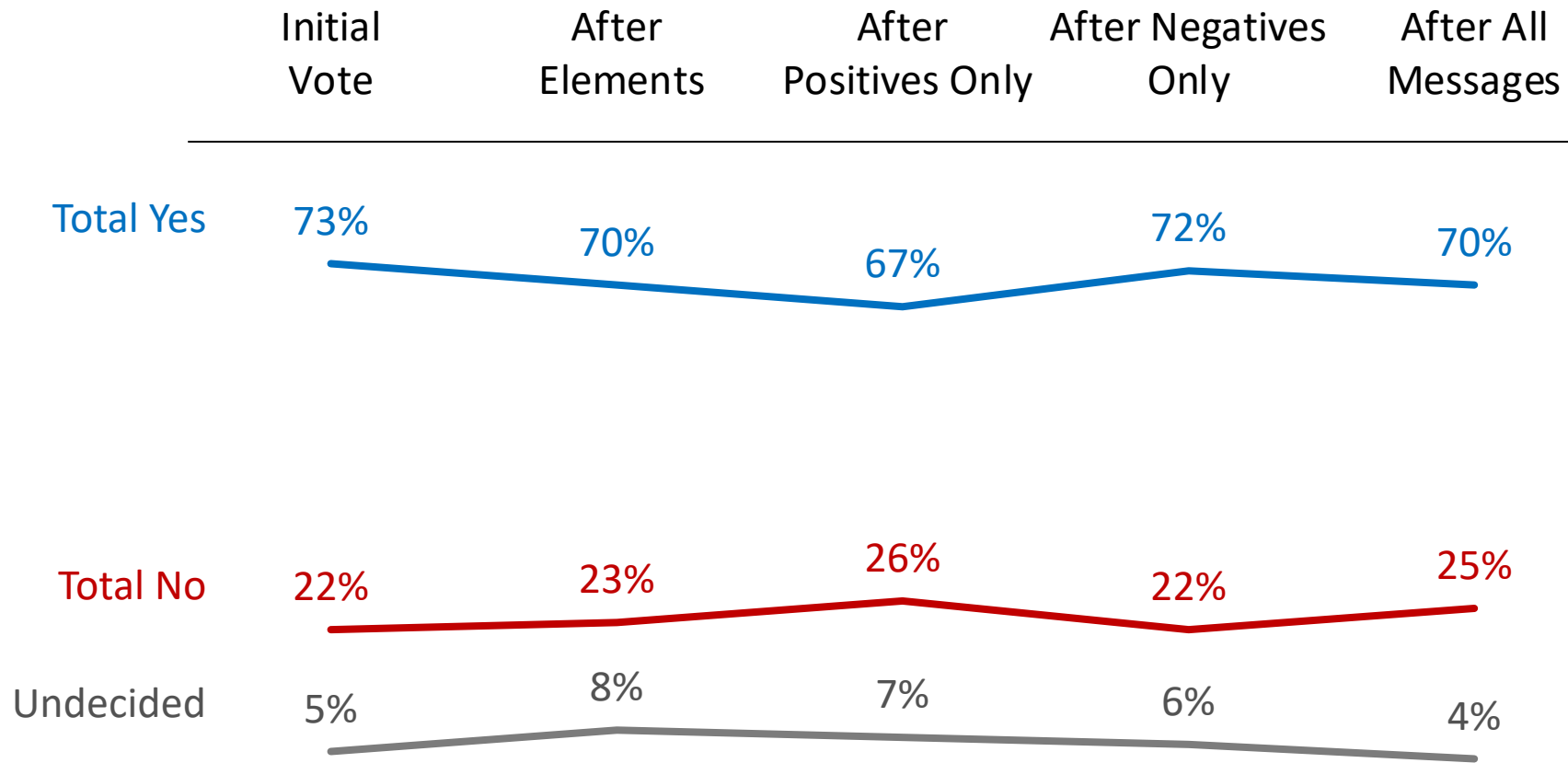
After Elements



The slide features a blue header and footer. The main content area is white. On the left side, there are several diagonal stripes: a light blue stripe in the top left, a red stripe below it, and another blue stripe further down. In the bottom left corner, there are two more diagonal stripes, one red and one blue, overlapping each other.

Messaging

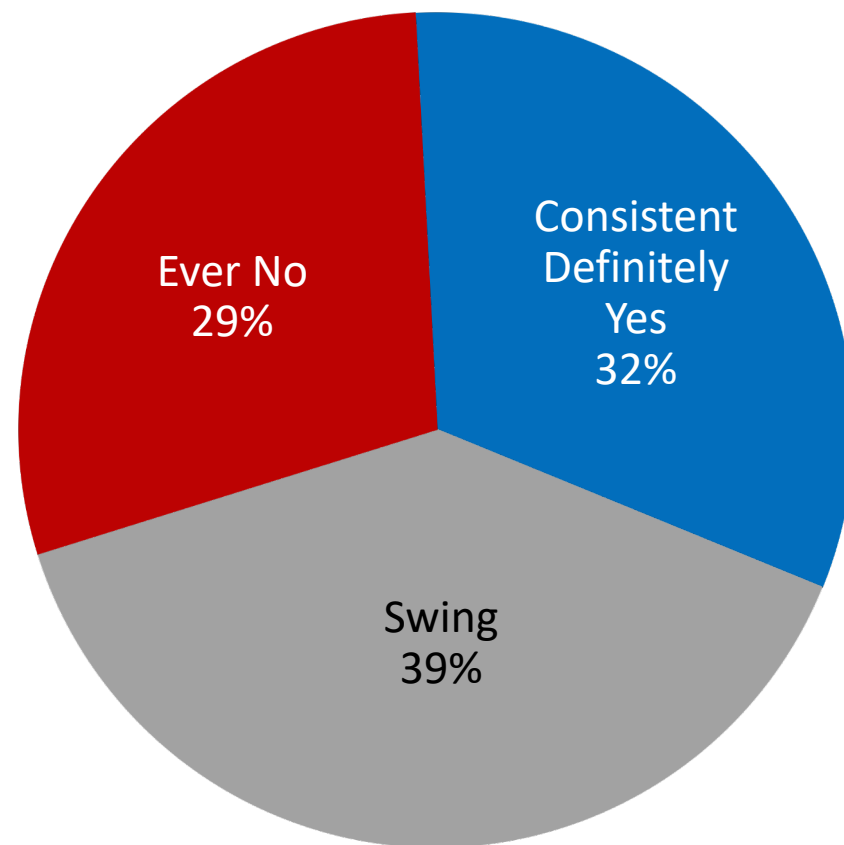
Support for the measure remains consistently at or above two-thirds as voters learn more.



Segmenting the Electorate by Intensity of Support

- ❖ **Consistent Definitely Yes:** Voters who consistently indicated they would definitely vote yes on the measure.
- ❖ **Ever No:** Voters who indicated they at any time that they would vote no on the measure.
- ❖ **Swing:** Voters who do not fall into any of the other categories – remaining consistently undecided or switching positions.

The following slide shows demographic groups that *disproportionately* fall into one category or the other.



Demographic Profile of the Segments

Consistent Definitely Yes	Swing	Ever No
32% of the Electorate	39% of the Electorate	29% of the Electorate
Liberal Democrats	High School Educated	Republicans Ages 18-49
Democrats Ages 18-49	Ages 18-29	Republican Men
Liberals	Progressive/Liberal Independents	Conservatives
Democratic Men	Democratic Women	Republicans
Progressive	Progressive	Conservative Republicans
Progressive Democrats	Progressive Democrats	Republicans Ages 50+
Some College Education	All Voters of Color	Moderate/Conservative Independents
Dads	Ages 75+	Republican Women
Democrats	Post-Graduate Educated	Progressive/Liberal/Moderate Republicans
Portland Region Outer East	Women with No Children	Portland Region West
Ages 30-39	Moderate/Conservative Democrats	Independent Women
Ages 40-49	Non-College Educated Women	Independents Ages 18-49
Four-year College Graduates	Mode of Interview Phone	Independents
Democratic Women	Democrats Ages 18-49	Ages 65-74
Have Children at Home	Women Ages 18-49	Moderates

Messaging in Support of a Measure

(Ranked in Order of Effectiveness)

***(TIME)** Leaders in Portland's Black community have been asking for this change for more than 30 years. The time is now: we need to hold police accountable to the people they serve.

(STATS) An Oregonian review of 40 fatal Portland police shootings found those killed were disproportionately Black, and that half suffered from mental illness. None of the 65 officers who pulled a trigger were indicted by a grand jury, and none were ultimately disciplined. It's time for oversight and accountability.

***(STATUS QUO)** The status quo is simply unacceptable. Portland Police investigate themselves – it's no surprise that they never find wrongdoing. It's time for the people who protect and serve to be accountable to the people, with citizen oversight and consequences for bad actors.

(PUBLIC) This measure would require annual, public reporting of police complaints and how they are handled to a professional committee. By bringing these incidents to light, we can see trends and propose effective reforms.

Messaging in Support of a Measure; Continued

(Ranked in Order of Effectiveness)

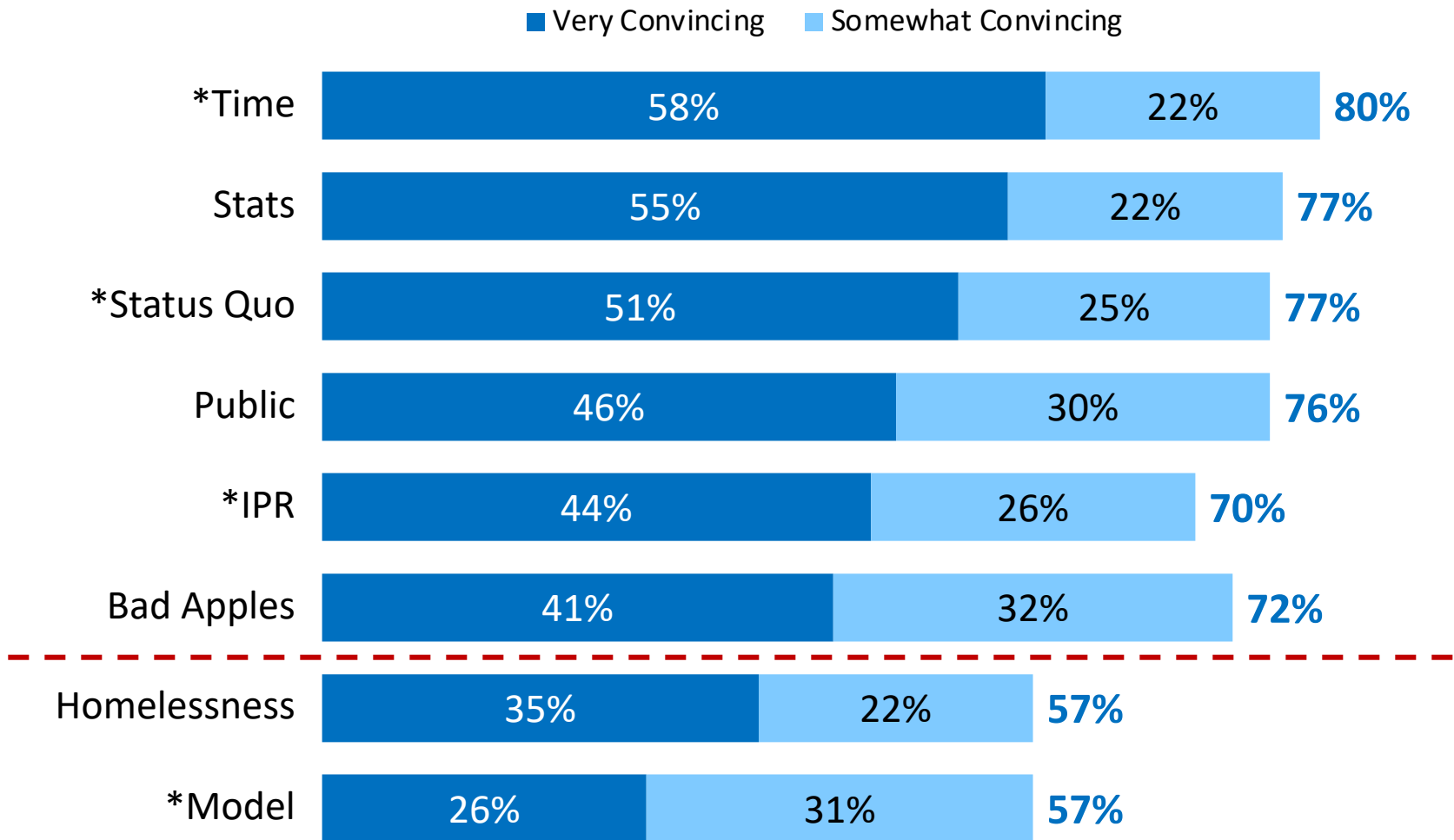
***(IPR)** Currently, police investigations are handled by the Independent Police Review. IPR investigators are not allowed to talk directly to police officers under investigation. Until the federal government intervened, IPR threw out almost 60% of the complaints they received. They continue to refuse complaints of racial bias, or from people experiencing homelessness. This measure will give us a better system.

(BAD APPLES) For too long, bad cops have gotten away with misconduct and tarnished the reputation of police officers doing their jobs. By identifying misconduct and holding those responsible accountable, it will prevent good cops from being hurt by their colleagues' actions.

(HOMELESSNESS) People experiencing homelessness represent a small fraction of Portlanders, yet one in every two arrests made by the Portland Police Bureau are of homeless people. The vast majority of the arrests, 86%, are for non-violent crimes. Arresting so many homeless people only adds to the city's homeless crisis, because it's harder for people with criminal histories to find housing. This measure would help to change that.

***(MODEL)** These reforms would make Portland the national model for other cities looking to keep their police accountable to their communities.

Among a set of highly persuasive messages, those focused on the long-standing demand for change and status quo stats are compelling.



Moderates are most persuaded by knowing that Black communities have demanded this change for 30 years.

(Very Convincing)

Statement	All Voters	Target			Ideology			
		Consistent Definitely Yes	Swing	Ever No	Progressive	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
*Time	58%	90%	72%	8%	81%	76%	55%	10%
Stats	55%	86%	66%	6%	81%	74%	40%	5%
*Status Quo	51%	85%	56%	6%	85%	53%	35%	4%
Public	46%	74%	51%	7%	71%	62%	32%	7%
*IPR	44%	69%	56%	4%	65%	60%	27%	8%
Bad Apples	41%	55%	44%	20%	41%	51%	40%	32%
Homelessness	35%	57%	40%	5%	65%	37%	18%	2%
*Model	26%	48%	26%	0%	38%	42%	13%	2%

The relative ranking of messages in support is similar across age groups.

(Very Convincing)

Statement	All Voters	Age			Region			
		18-49	50-64	65+	North	Inner East	Outer East	West
*Time	58%	57%	65%	54%	59%	50%	75%	43%
Stats	55%	61%	51%	41%	57%	52%	70%	34%
*Status Quo	51%	61%	40%	33%	59%	45%	67%	23%
Public	46%	47%	50%	37%	57%	36%	57%	30%
*IPR	44%	46%	56%	25%	48%	39%	67%	17%
Bad Apples	41%	38%	49%	39%	49%	35%	44%	35%
Homelessness	35%	38%	37%	24%	40%	28%	47%	21%
*Model	26%	34%	16%	11%	35%	25%	28%	15%

Messaging Opposing the Measure

(Ranked in Order of Effectiveness)

(RUSHED) This measure is well-intentioned, but it was drafted hastily – in just a few weeks – with no time for public comment or review. We need to take the time to make sure police accountability reforms are effective – not just act because it’s the cause of the moment.

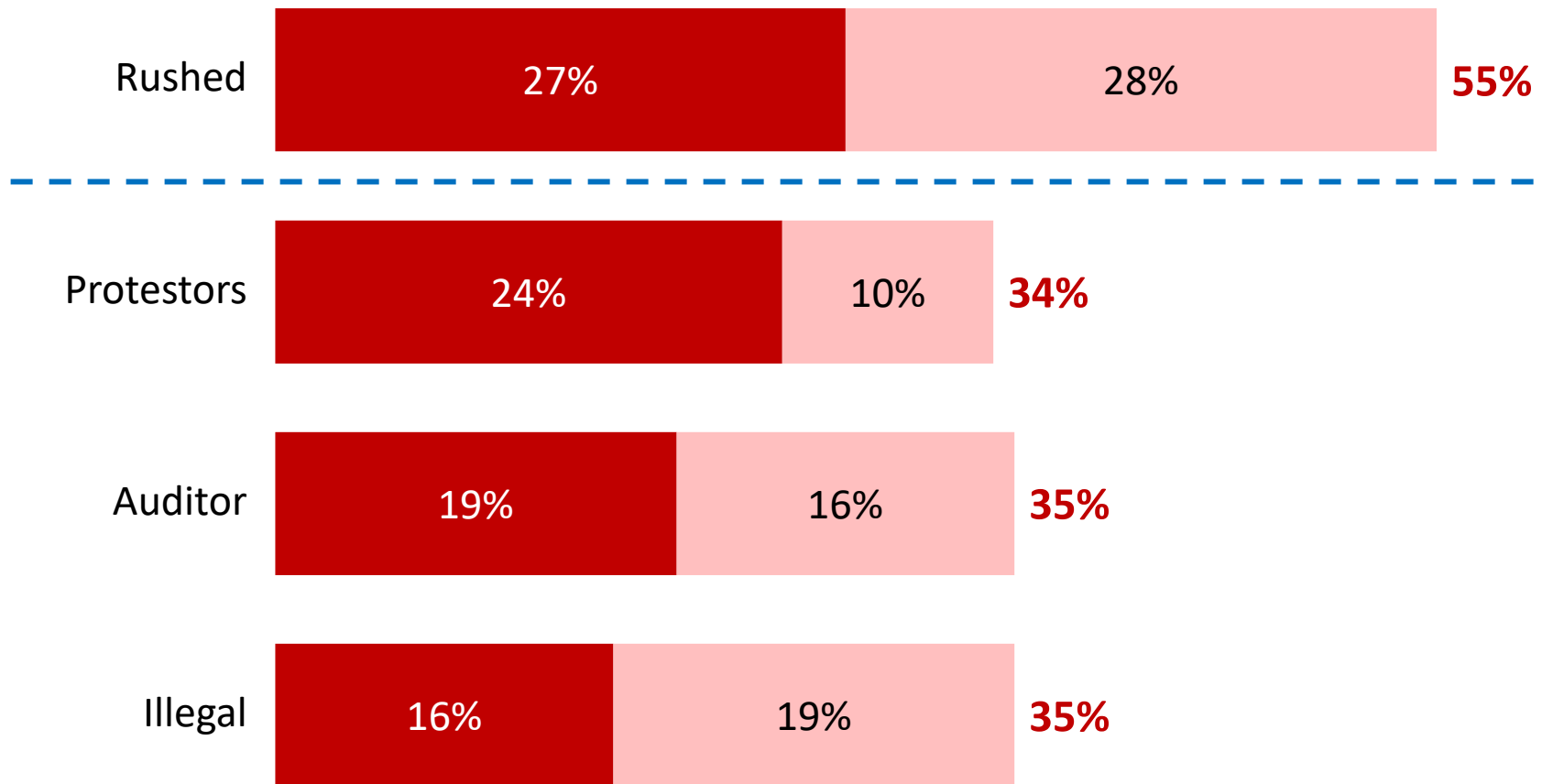
(PROTESTORS) We should not meet the demands of the violent protestors who have taken to the streets for months now to cause disorder, looting and rioting. These are the same people who pulled a man from his truck and beat him unconscious.

(AUDITOR) The City Auditor has said we already have robust systems to hold police accountable. We simply need to fund those properly – not create new bureaucracy and paperwork.

(ILLEGAL) What this measure proposes is illegal – even if it passes, it will be tied up in courts for years, costing the City millions in legal fees with no change to police policies.

Opposition messages are less-persuasive overall, though asserting the measure was rushed is somewhat convincing.

■ Very Convincing ■ Somewhat Convincing



Negative messages resonate most with conservatives; a message critiquing protestors has some purchase with moderates.

(Very Convincing)

Statement	All Voters	Target			Ideology			
		Consistent Definitely Yes	Swing	Ever No	Progressive	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Rushed	27%	18%	14%	56%	15%	27%	25%	53%
Protestors	24%	6%	13%	61%	5%	13%	33%	70%
Auditor	19%	1%	7%	55%	4%	7%	17%	67%
Illegal	16%	10%	3%	40%	5%	10%	15%	45%

Negative messaging resonates more in West Portland, where voters are more skeptical of the measure to begin with.

(Very Convincing)

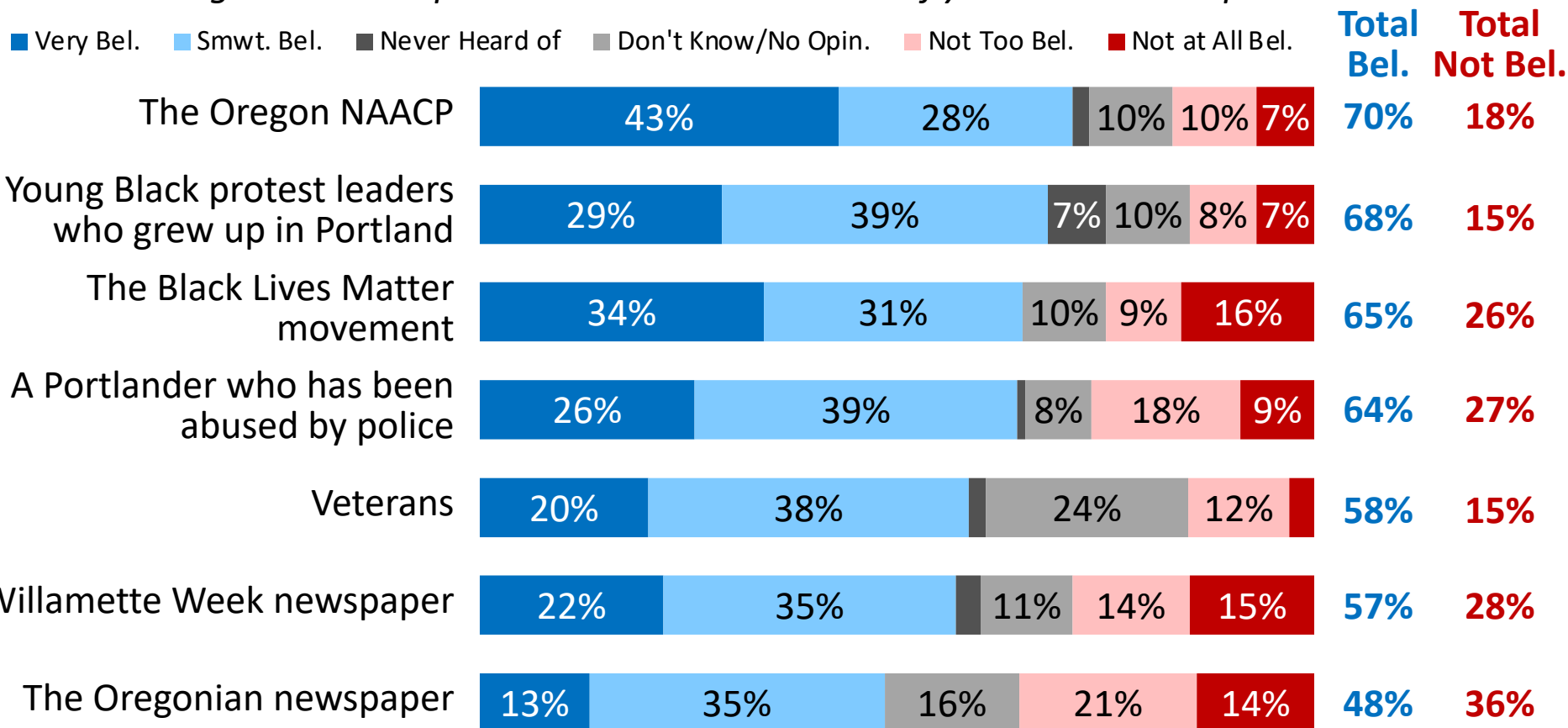
Statement	All Voters	Age			Region			
		18-49	50-64	65+	North	Inner East	Outer East	West
Rushed	27%	26%	23%	36%	29%	27%	18%	41%
Protestors	24%	21%	29%	30%	25%	24%	11%	45%
Auditor	19%	17%	18%	27%	18%	20%	10%	32%
Illegal	16%	15%	14%	21%	9%	23%	9%	25%

The slide features a blue header and footer. The left side is decorated with diagonal stripes in light blue, red, and dark blue. The word "Messengers" is centered in the white space.

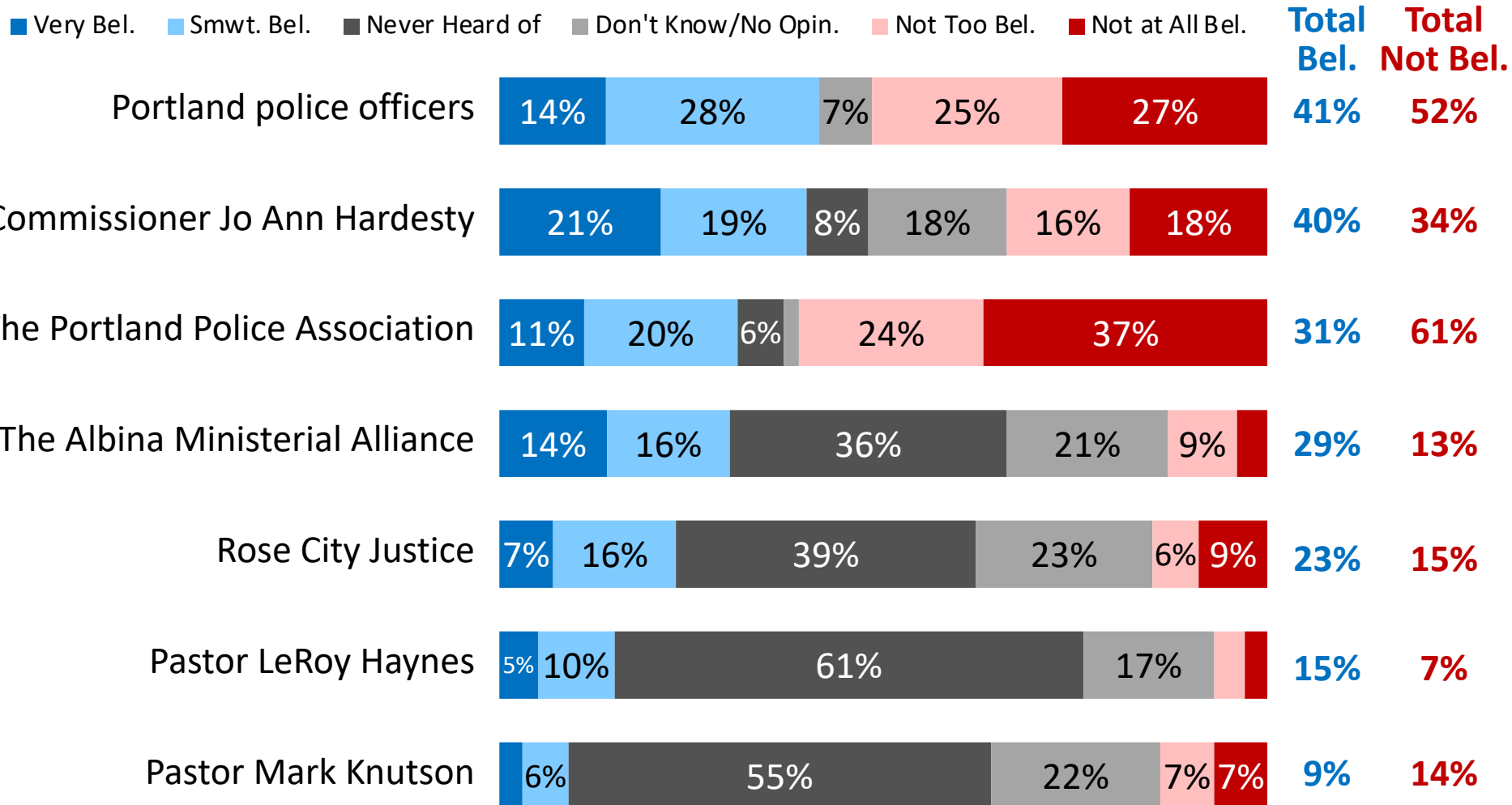
Messengers

Voters find Black spokespeople believable on this measure, along with veterans and people with experience of police abuse.

Here is a list of organizations that may take a position on the ballot measure we have been discussing. Please indicate whether you would trust each person or organization's opinion about this measure or if you would be suspicious.



They are largely unfamiliar with local faith groups and Rose City Justice.



Swing voters' most-trusted spokespeople are the same as those trusted by voters overall.

(Total Believable)

Statement	All Voters	Target		
		Consistent Definitely Yes	Swing	Ever No
The Oregon NAACP	70%	95%	78%	35%
Young Black protest leaders who grew up in Portland	68%	97%	71%	34%
The Black Lives Matter movement	65%	91%	80%	10%
A Portlander who has been abused by police	64%	91%	69%	30%
Veterans	58%	57%	59%	58%
<i>Willamette Week</i> newspaper	57%	86%	64%	18%
The <i>Oregonian</i> newspaper	48%	57%	55%	28%
Portland police officers	41%	14%	38%	75%
Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty	40%	72%	37%	8%
The Portland Police Association	31%	6%	18%	72%
The Albina Ministerial Alliance	29%	41%	32%	11%
Rose City Justice	23%	22%	38%	2%
Pastor LeRoy Haynes	15%	10%	16%	19%
Pastor Mark Knutson	9%	11%	10%	6%

Along with other Black leaders, progressives especially trust Commissioner Hardesty.

(Total Believable)

Statement	All Voters	Ideology			
		Progressive	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
The Oregon NAACP	70%	89%	83%	84%	23%
Young Black protest leaders who grew up in Portland	68%	94%	79%	58%	39%
The Black Lives Matter movement	65%	92%	87%	44%	9%
A Portlander who has been abused by police	64%	84%	81%	63%	13%
Veterans	58%	70%	60%	56%	67%
<i>Willamette Week</i> newspaper	57%	74%	73%	67%	26%
The <i>Oregonian</i> newspaper	48%	49%	73%	58%	16%
Portland police officers	41%	20%	35%	64%	95%
Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty	40%	65%	47%	25%	11%
The Portland Police Association	31%	8%	20%	48%	82%
The Albina Ministerial Alliance	29%	38%	38%	32%	16%
Rose City Justice	23%	39%	28%	19%	6%
Pastor LeRoy Haynes	15%	16%	9%	9%	34%
Pastor Mark Knutson	9%	7%	9%	12%	12%

Younger voters assign more trust to the BLM movement.

(Total Believable)

Statement	All Voters	Age		
		18-49	50-64	65+
The Oregon NAACP	70%	68%	79%	67%
Young Black protest leaders who grew up in Portland	68%	68%	71%	67%
The Black Lives Matter movement	65%	71%	57%	54%
A Portlander who has been abused by police	64%	65%	77%	50%
Veterans	58%	53%	77%	52%
<i>Willamette Week</i> newspaper	57%	49%	80%	60%
<i>The Oregonian</i> newspaper	48%	51%	41%	48%
Portland police officers	41%	32%	46%	64%
Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty	40%	43%	48%	23%
The Portland Police Association	31%	28%	27%	44%
The Albina Ministerial Alliance	29%	27%	37%	30%
Rose City Justice	23%	29%	17%	12%
Pastor LeRoy Haynes	15%	9%	18%	29%
Pastor Mark Knutson	9%	8%	19%	3%

Residents of Outer East Portland are especially likely to trust Black leaders on these issues.

(Total Believable)

Statement	All Voters	Region			
		North	Inner East	Outer East	West
The Oregon NAACP	70%	59%	66%	82%	66%
Young Black protest leaders who grew up in Portland	68%	79%	67%	80%	47%
The Black Lives Matter movement	65%	78%	62%	76%	35%
A Portlander who has been abused by police	64%	60%	53%	77%	61%
Veterans	58%	54%	53%	63%	58%
<i>Willamette Week</i> newspaper	57%	54%	57%	74%	38%
The <i>Oregonian</i> newspaper	48%	52%	46%	59%	27%
Portland police officers	41%	51%	39%	31%	51%
Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty	40%	44%	43%	48%	19%
The Portland Police Association	31%	47%	28%	19%	40%
The Albina Ministerial Alliance	29%	43%	25%	34%	15%
Rose City Justice	23%	36%	21%	23%	16%
Pastor LeRoy Haynes	15%	17%	17%	19%	6%
Pastor Mark Knutson	9%	18%	10%	7%	5%



Conclusions

Conclusions

- ✓ The Portland Police Bureau accountability measure is well-positioned to pass in November 2020.
 - It begins with broad majority support, which remains consistent throughout an exchange of pro and con messaging.
 - This support is substantial across demographic groups -- with the exception of more-skeptical conservatives and West Portland voters.
 - Voters broadly support each policy component of the measure.
 - They believe a variety of incidents and complaints should be investigated by an independent board – not the Police Bureau.
- ✓ The most compelling messages lay out statistics about police bias and point out that Black leaders have been demanding this change for 30 year.
- ✓ The latter may be an effective counter to the opponents' only relatively persuasive critique, that the measure has been rushed.
- ✓ Black leaders, veterans, people with direct experience of police violence, and local newspapers are trusted messengers.

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