

G B A O

Delaware Early Childhood Education Statewide Research

Conducted for Rodel & Partners

April 2022

n = 501 registered voters

Conducted March 20-23, 2022 via landline, cellphone, and text-to-web

Margin of error = +/- 4.9 percentage points

- Broad majority of Delawareans say finding quality, affordable child care or early childhood education is a serious problem in their community.
- Affordable, high-quality child care and early childhood education is a top priority for voters, ranking higher than many broadly popular public goods and programs.
- Voters overwhelmingly agree that high-quality care should be available for all children in Delaware, regardless of where they live, and affordable for all families in Delaware, regardless of income.
- Half of Delaware voters believe state or local government should bear primary responsibility for ensuring affordable, high-quality child care and early childhood education is available to all local residents.

- Nearly 3-in-4 voters support increased funding to ensure every child under five has access to affordable, high-quality child care or early childhood education
 - Majority support stretches across all three counties and across all demographic and partisan lines.
 - Half of all voters, and more than 2-in-3 parents, are more likely to vote for a legislator who votes to increase funding.
- Nearly two-thirds of voters, including majorities in all three counties, say they would be willing to personally pay more in taxes.
 - Increased taxes on the wealthy and corporations are most popular revenue-raisers.
- Broad majorities say funding for child care and early childhood education providers should be comparable to K-12 funding.



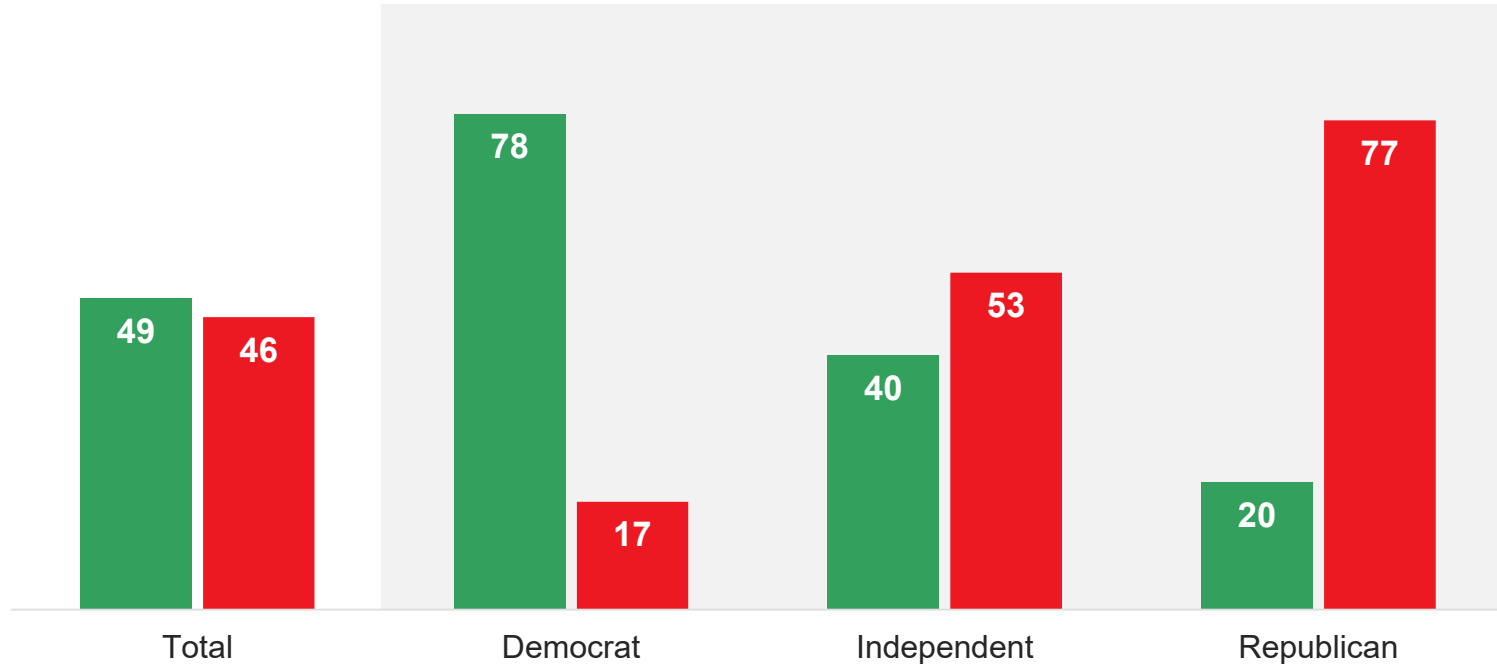
Political Landscape

Voters Split On State Direction; Much More Positive Than Elsewhere

Figure 5

Direction Of Delaware

● Right direction ● Wrong track



Early Childhood Education Ranks Among Voters' Top Priorities

Figure 6

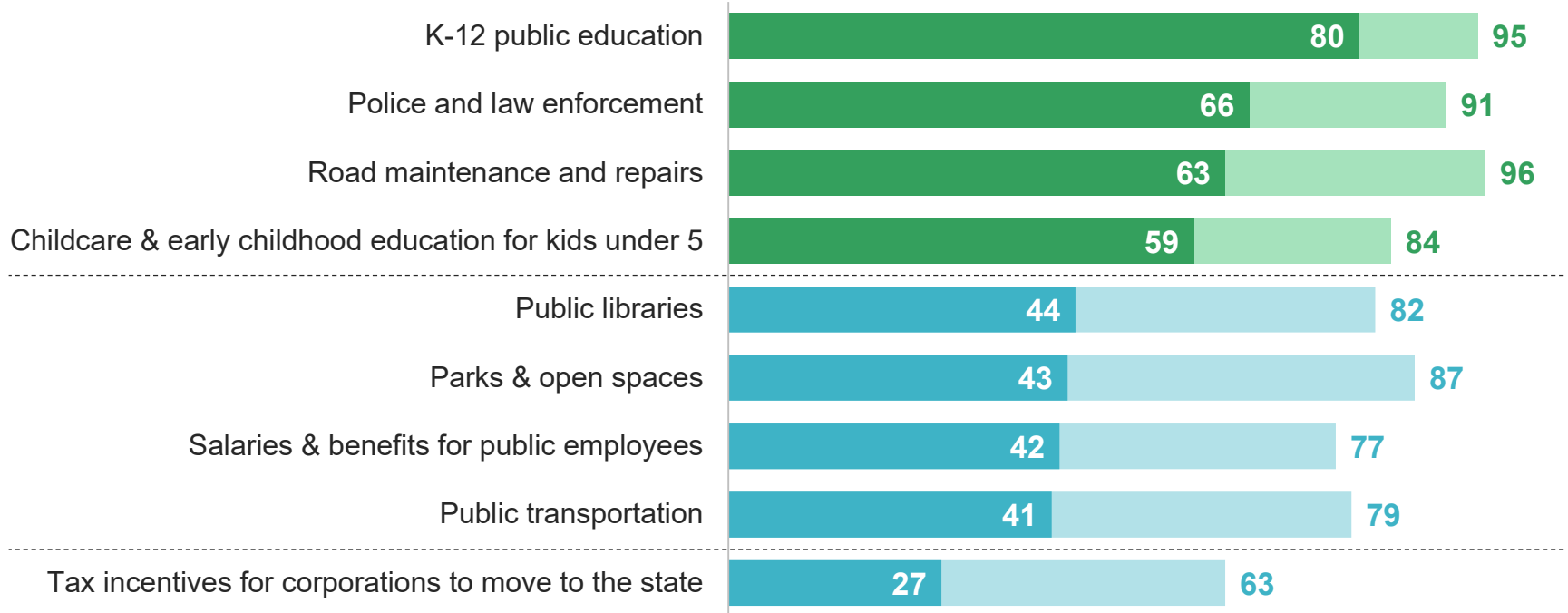
State Spending Priorities



Very important



Total important



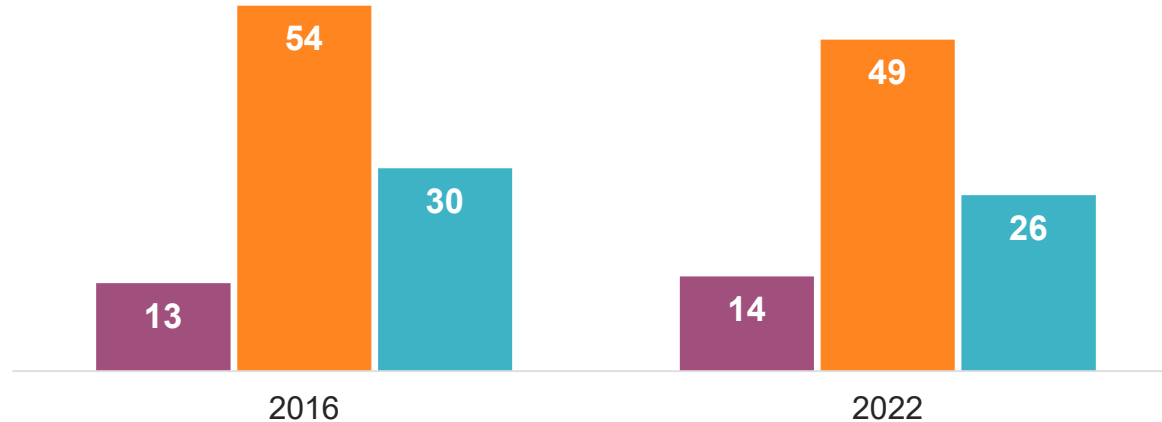
Voters Express Consistent Concern About Delaware's Investment In Public Education

Figure 7

Education Spending

*In your view, do you think we spend **too much**, **too little**, or **about the right amount** on public education in Delaware?*

● Too much ● Too little ● Right amount





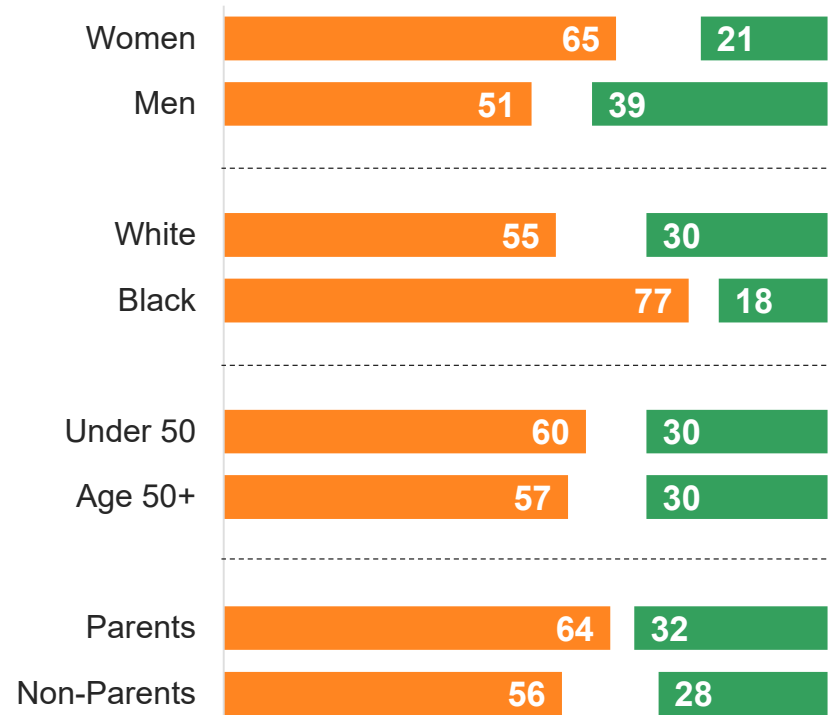
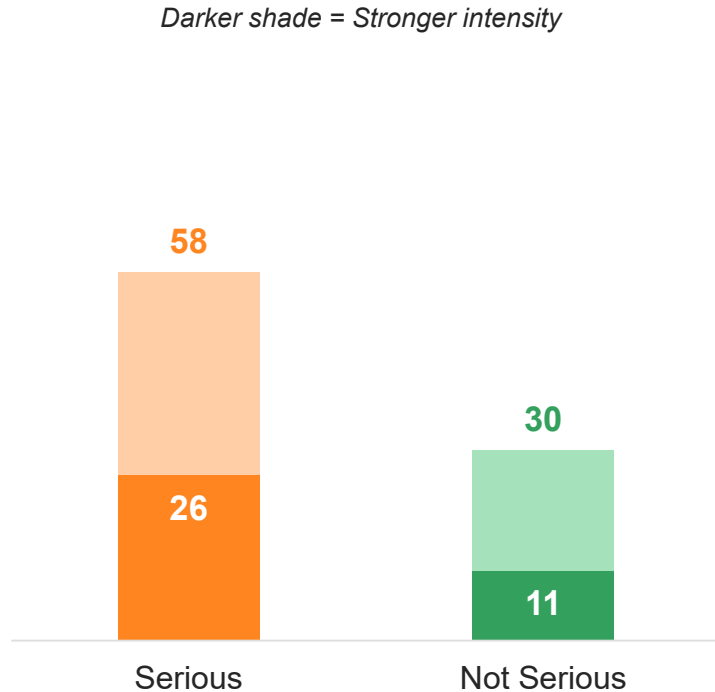
child care & Early Childhood Education

Majority Of Voters See Finding Quality, Affordable Care As A Problem; Large Gender, Racial Gaps

Figure 9

Difficulty Finding Care

How serious of a problem do you think finding quality, affordable child care or early childhood education providers is in your area?

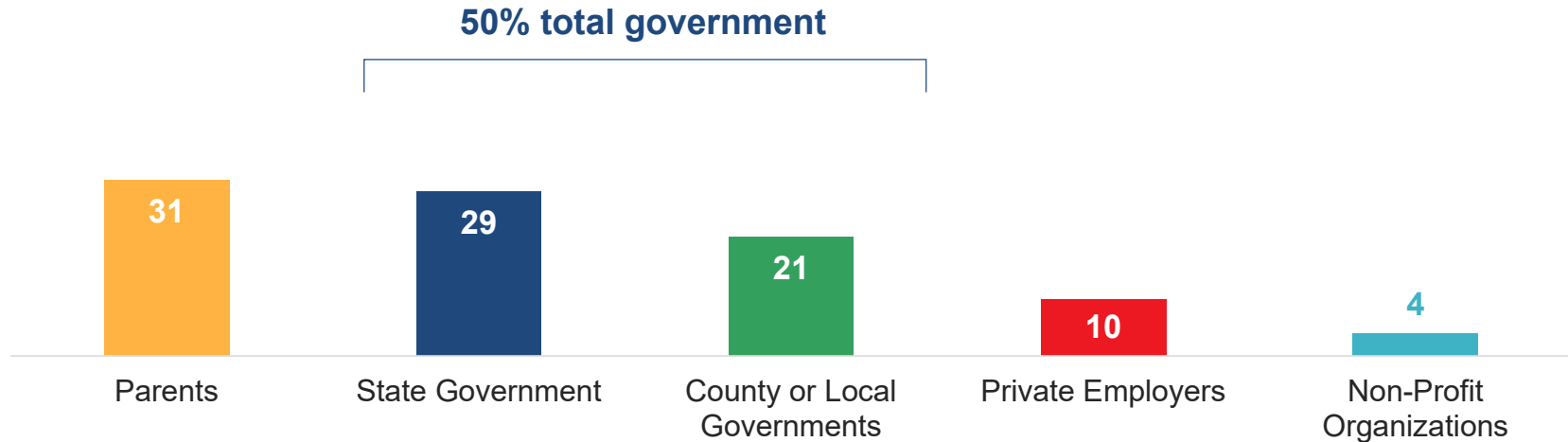


Government, Parents Seen As Most Responsible For Child Care

Figure 10

Responsibility

Of the following, who do you feel should be MOST responsible for ensuring there are adequate child care and early childhood education providers available in Delaware?

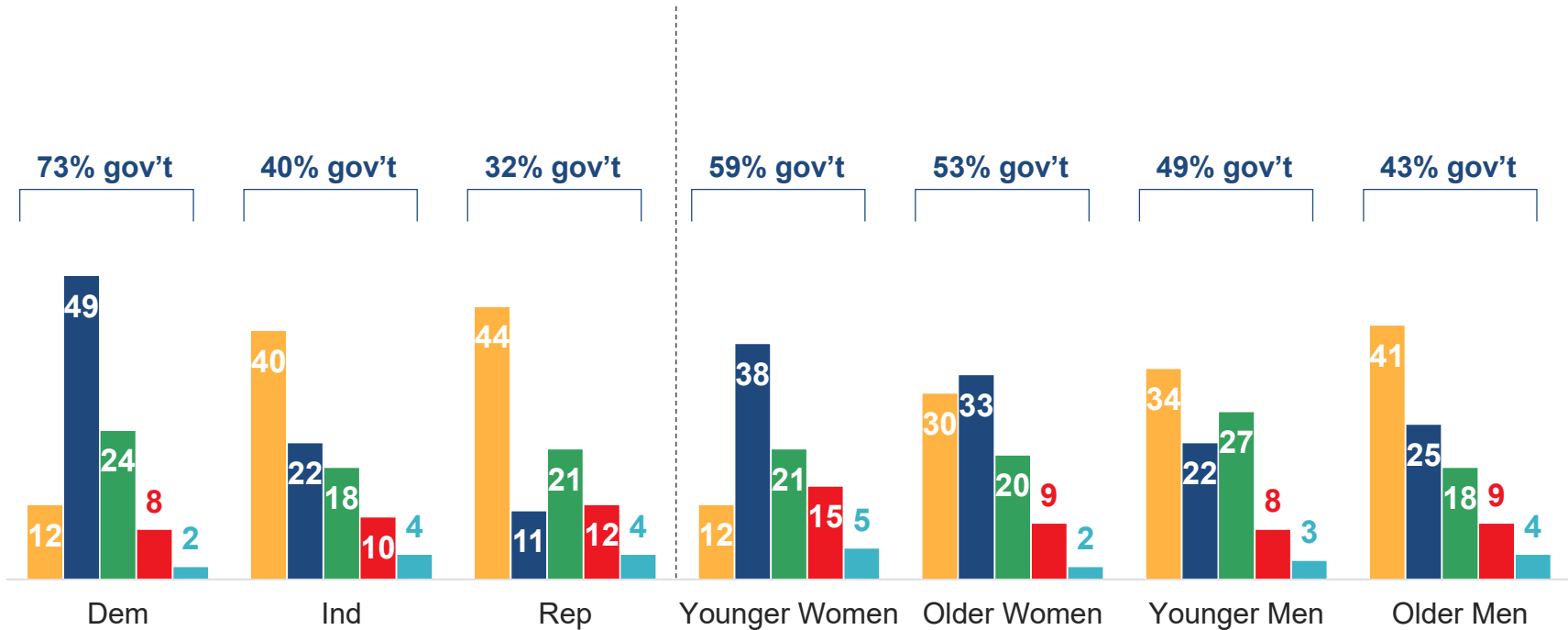


Dems, Younger Women Most Likely To See State Government As Responsible For Child Care Providers

Figure 11

Responsibility

- Parents
- State government
- County or local governments
- Private employers
- Non-profit organizations



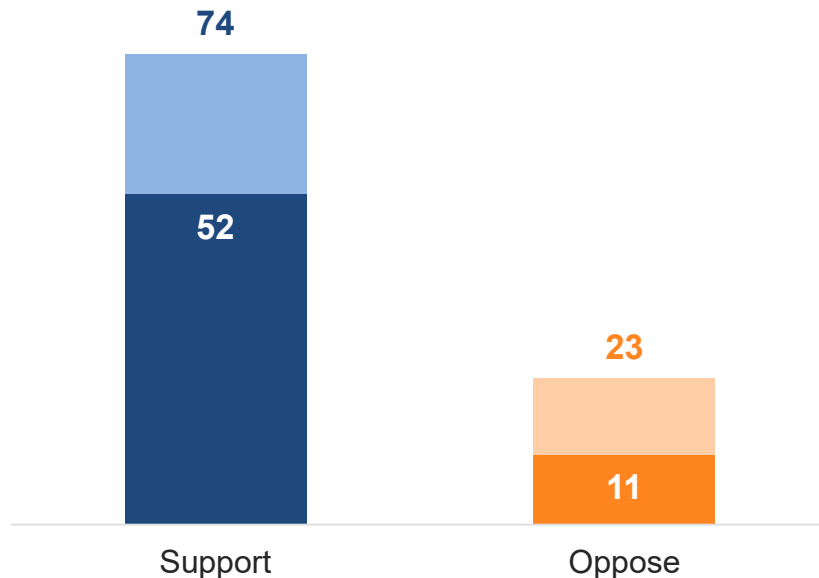
Majority Of Voters Support Increasing Funding So Every Child Under Five Has Access To Affordable, High-Quality Early Childhood Education

Figure 12

Proposal Support

Darker shade = Stronger intensity

Would you support or oppose proposed legislation in the state legislature to increase funding for child care assistance and early childhood education in Delaware so that every child under the age of 5 across the state has access to affordable, high-quality early childhood education?

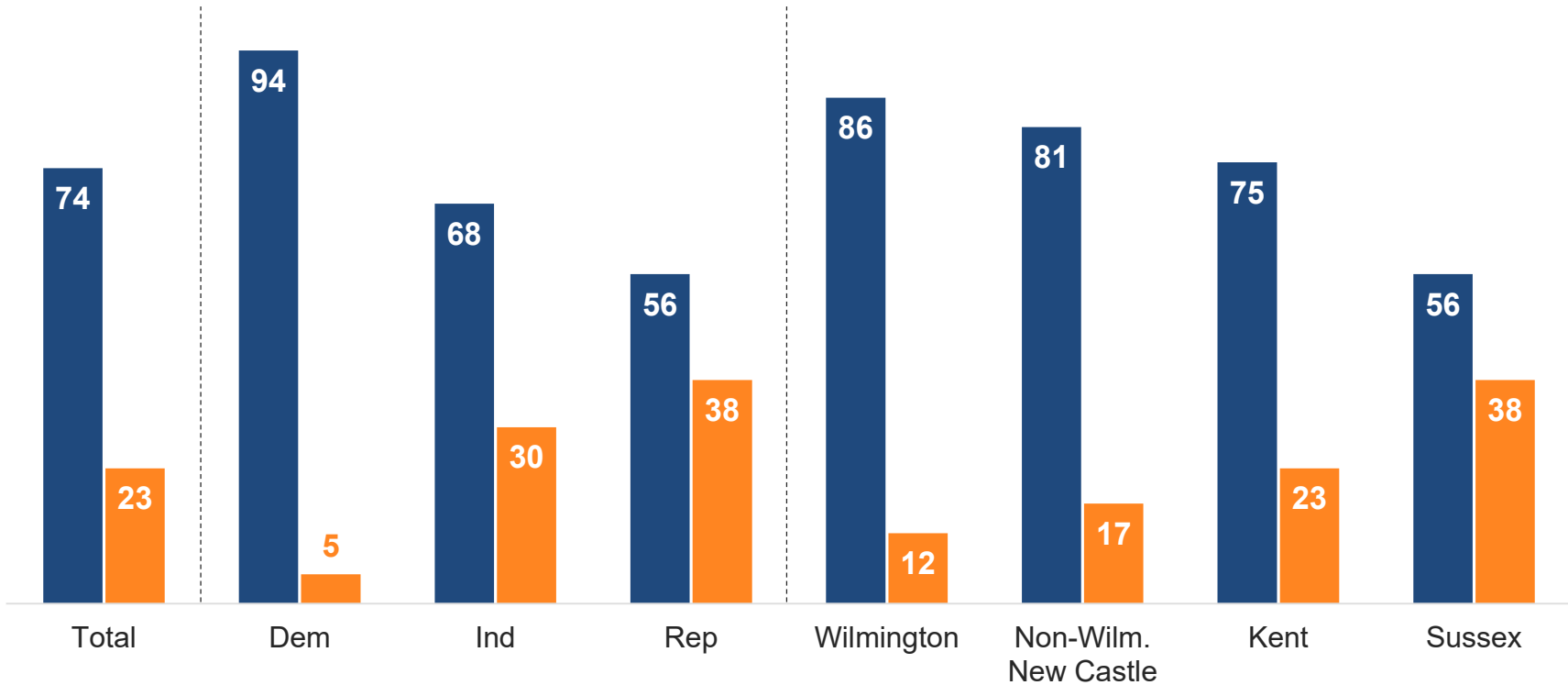


Majorities Across Party, Geography Support Funding Increase

Figure 13

Proposal Support

● Support ● Oppose

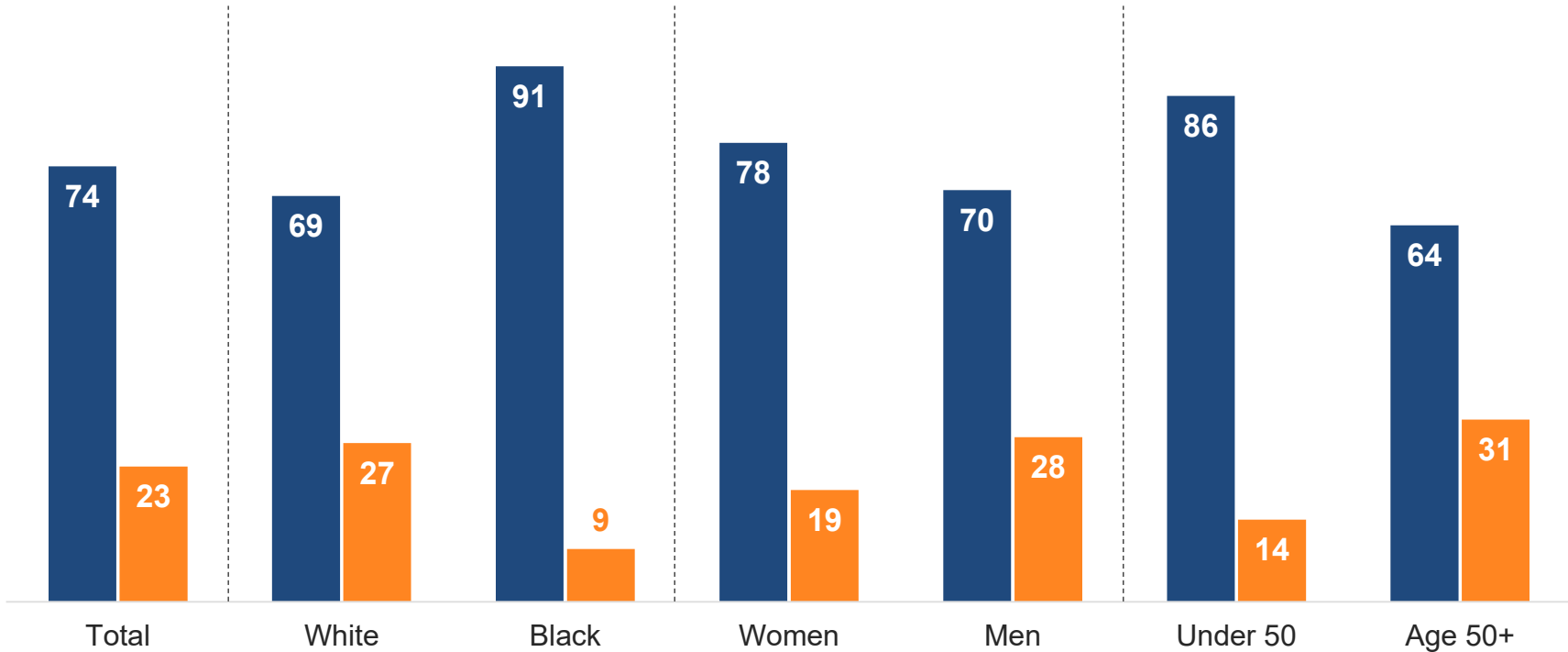


Majorities Across Demographic Groups Support This Proposal

Figure 14

Proposal Support

● Support ● Oppose



Cost Biggest Reason To Support, But Partisan Differences On Secondary Reasons To Support

Figure 15

Reasons To Support

(If support) Which TWO of the following do you feel are the biggest reasons to support efforts to increase funding for child care assistance and early childhood education in Delaware?

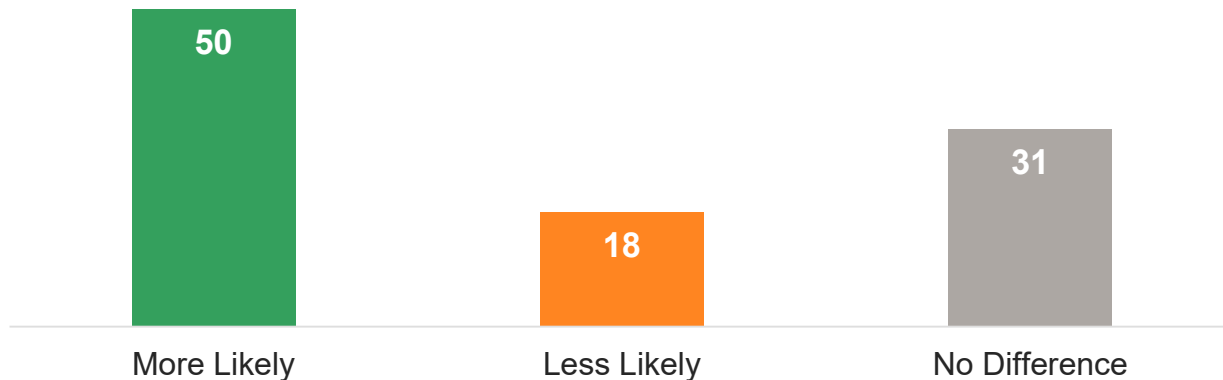
		Dem	Ind	Rep
Quality child care is too expensive for most low-income and middle-class families	46	54	44	36
It would help spur economic growth by allowing more people to go back to work	32	27	39	32
The lack of quality child care holds women back in the workplace and reinforces unequal pay	32	43	29	10
It would help kids show up ready for kindergarten and on track to read by third grade	31	30	32	33
It is too hard for parents to find safe, reliable child care that meets their needs	23	21	18	34
It would create more jobs and increase wages in the child care workforce	15	11	17	21

Half Of Voters Say They Would Be More Likely To Vote For A State Legislator Supporting This Proposal

Figure 16

Electoral Impact

*If your state legislator supported this proposal to increase funding to ensure every child under the age of five in Delaware has access to affordable, high-quality early childhood education, would you be **more** or **less** likely to vote for that person, or would it **not make a difference** in your vote?*

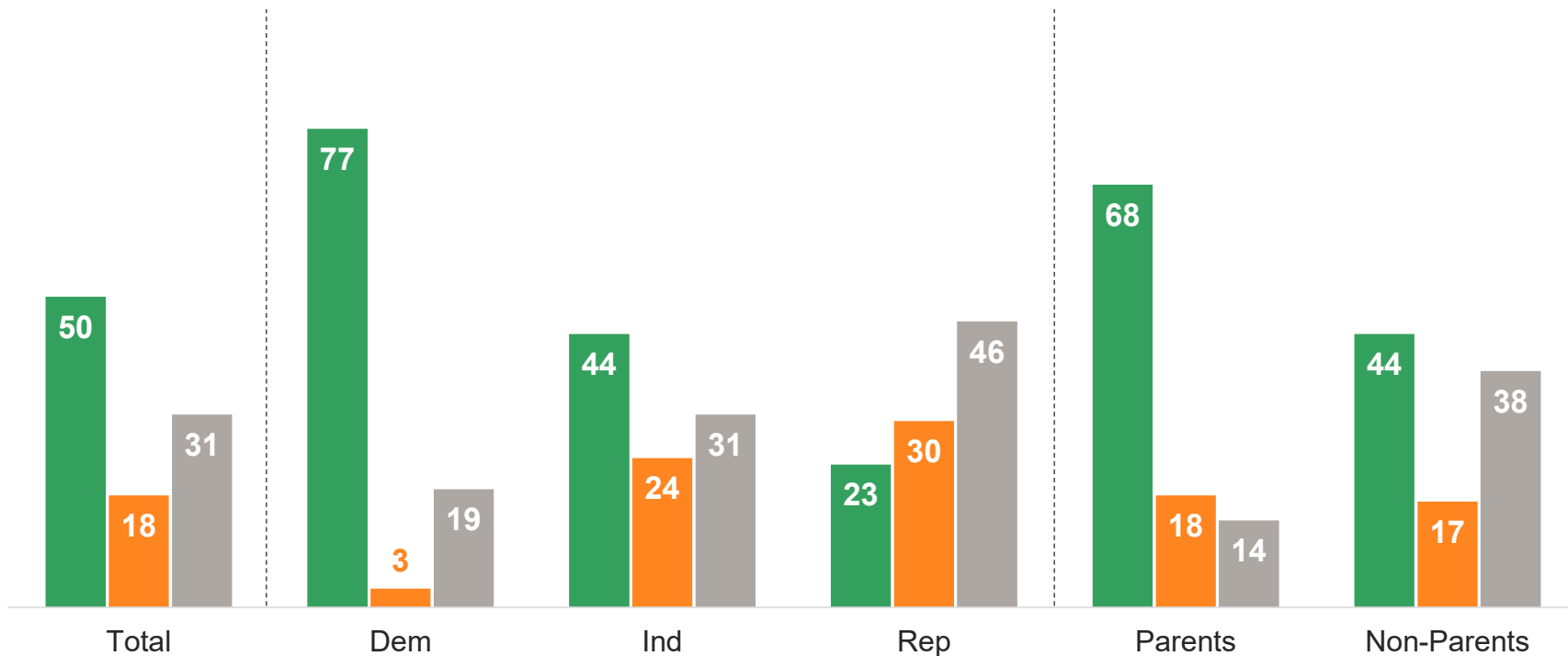


Large Majority Of Parents More Likely To Vote For Legislators Who Support Proposal

Figure 17

Electoral Impact

● More likely ● Less likely ● No difference

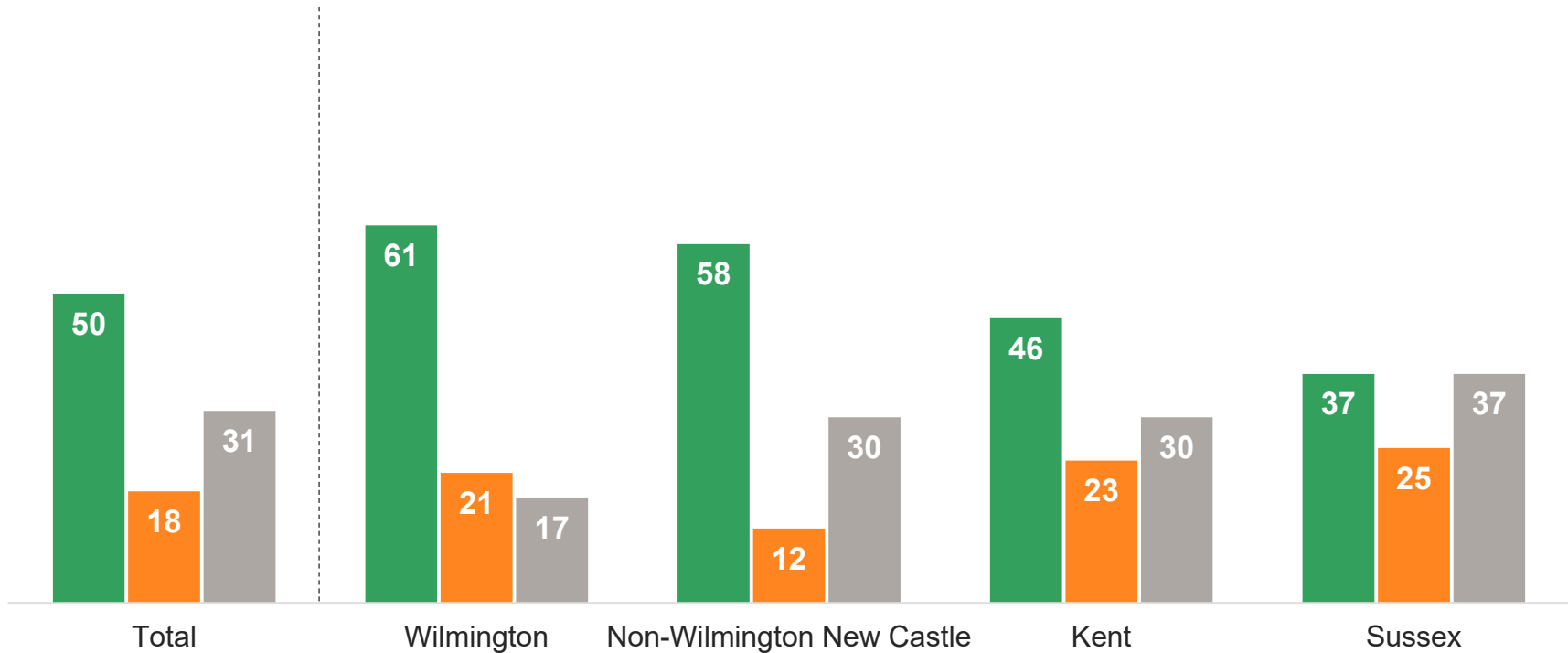


Voters In All Counties More Likely To Support Legislator Who Votes For Increased Funding for Child Care And Early Childhood Education

Figure 18

Electoral Impact

● More likely ● Less likely ● No difference

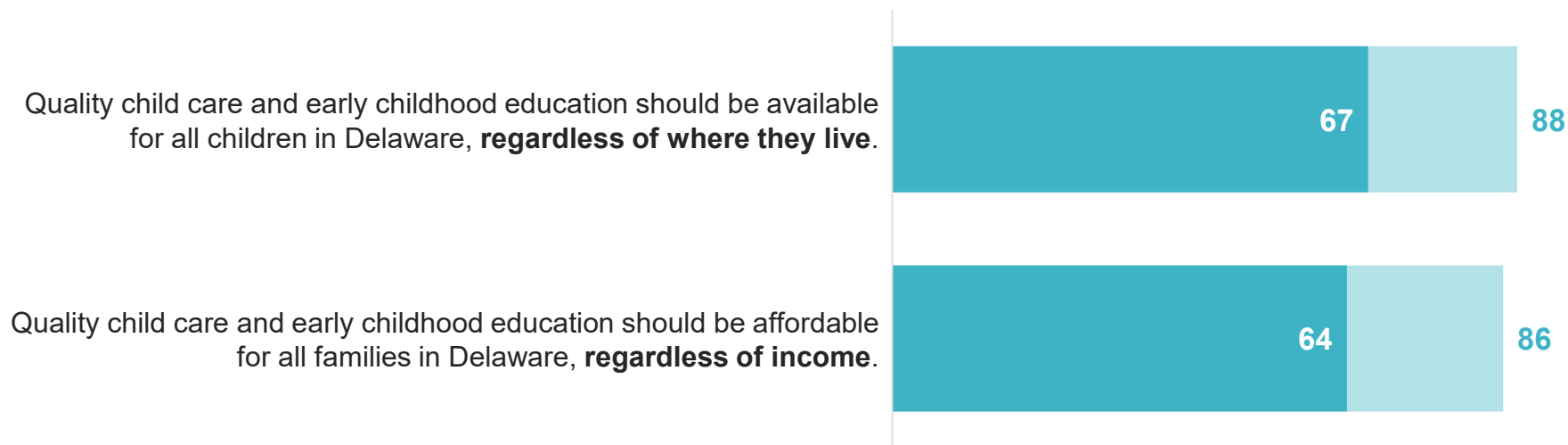


Broad Majorities Strongly Agree That Quality Child Care & Early Childhood Education Should Be Available To All

Figure 19

Policy Goals

● Strongly agree ● Total agree

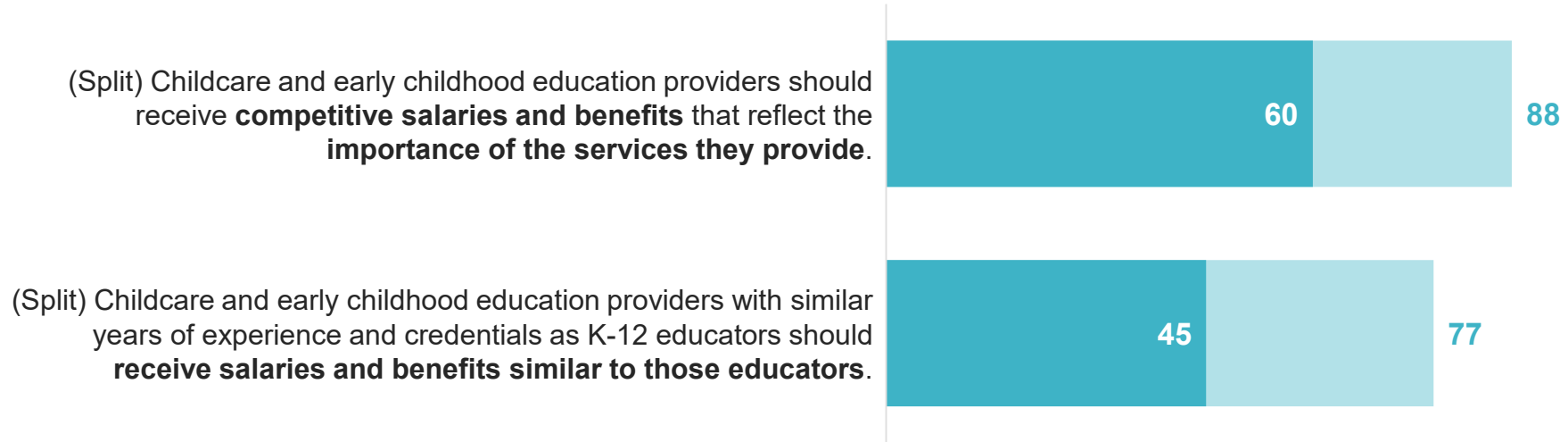


Large Majorities Believe Child Care And Early Childhood Education Providers Should Be Paid More, Similar to K-12 Educators

Figure 20

Policy Goals

● Strongly agree ● Total agree



Majorities Also Agree That All Children Should Be Covered, Expanded Hours Are Necessary, And The State Has An Obligation To Fund

Figure 21

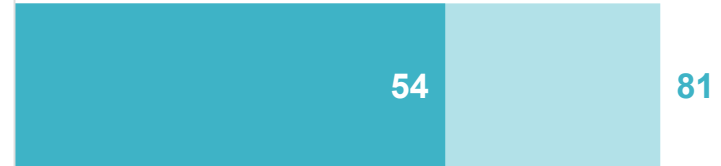
Policy Goals

● Strongly agree ● Total agree

Delaware should provide quality child care and early childhood education services for **all children**, including those with unique needs such as low-income children, kids with disabilities, or those learning English as a second language.



Quality child care and early childhood education should be **available during all working hours**, not just half days or during school hours.



State government has an **obligation** to fund quality, affordable child care and early childhood education for children under five, just as it has an obligation to fund quality public schools for kids in grades K-12.



Clear Opinions About How To Raise Revenue

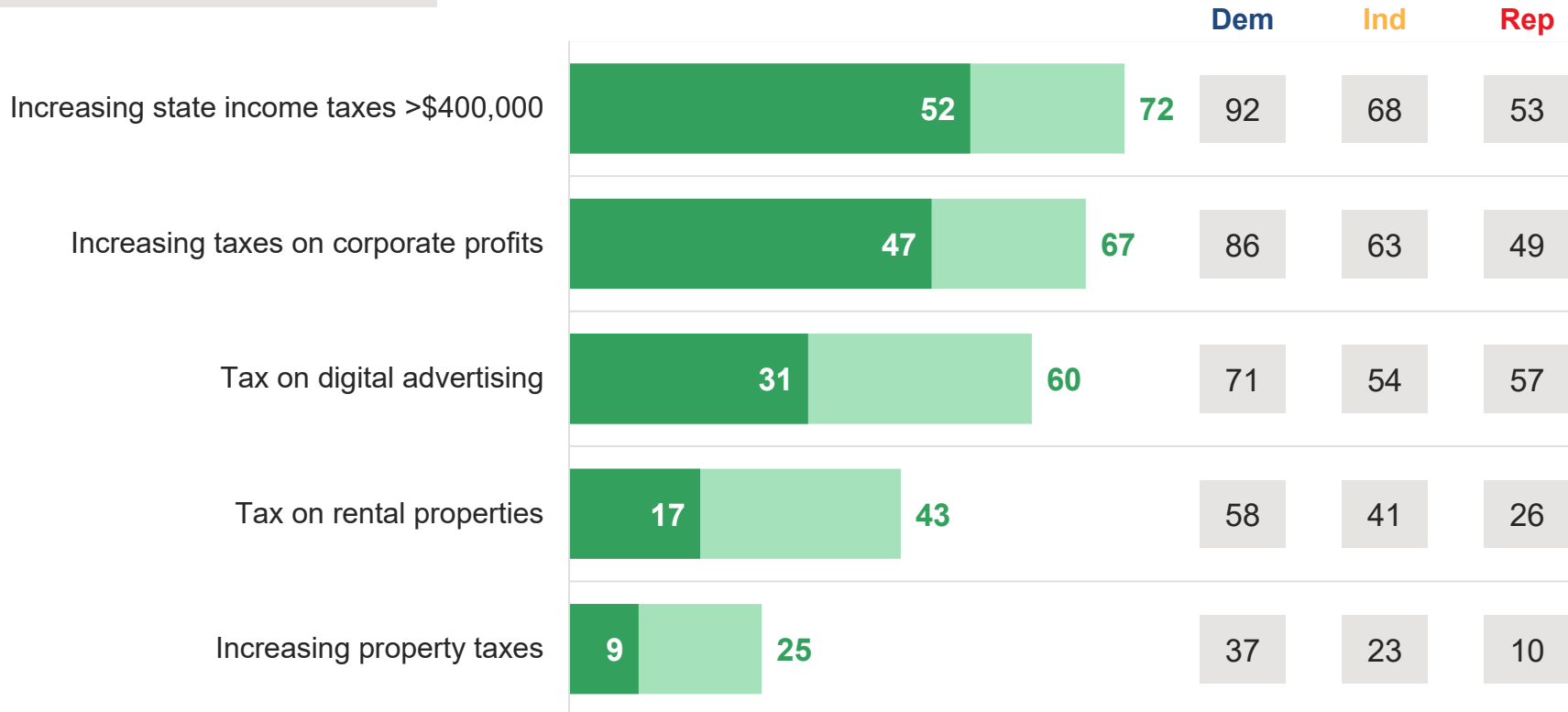
Figure 22

Revenue Options

● Strongly favor

● Total favor

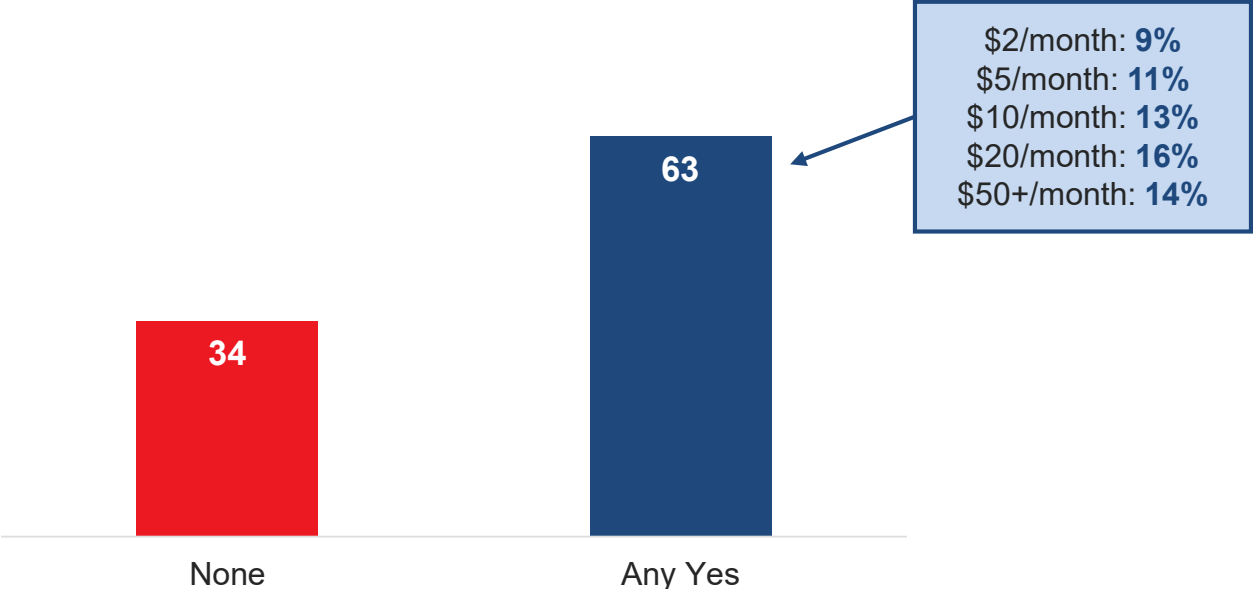
% Total favor



Almost Two-Thirds Willing To Pay More In Taxes To Fund

Tax Willingness

How much money, per month, would you personally be willing to pay in increased taxes to fund child care, preschool, and other early childhood education programs?

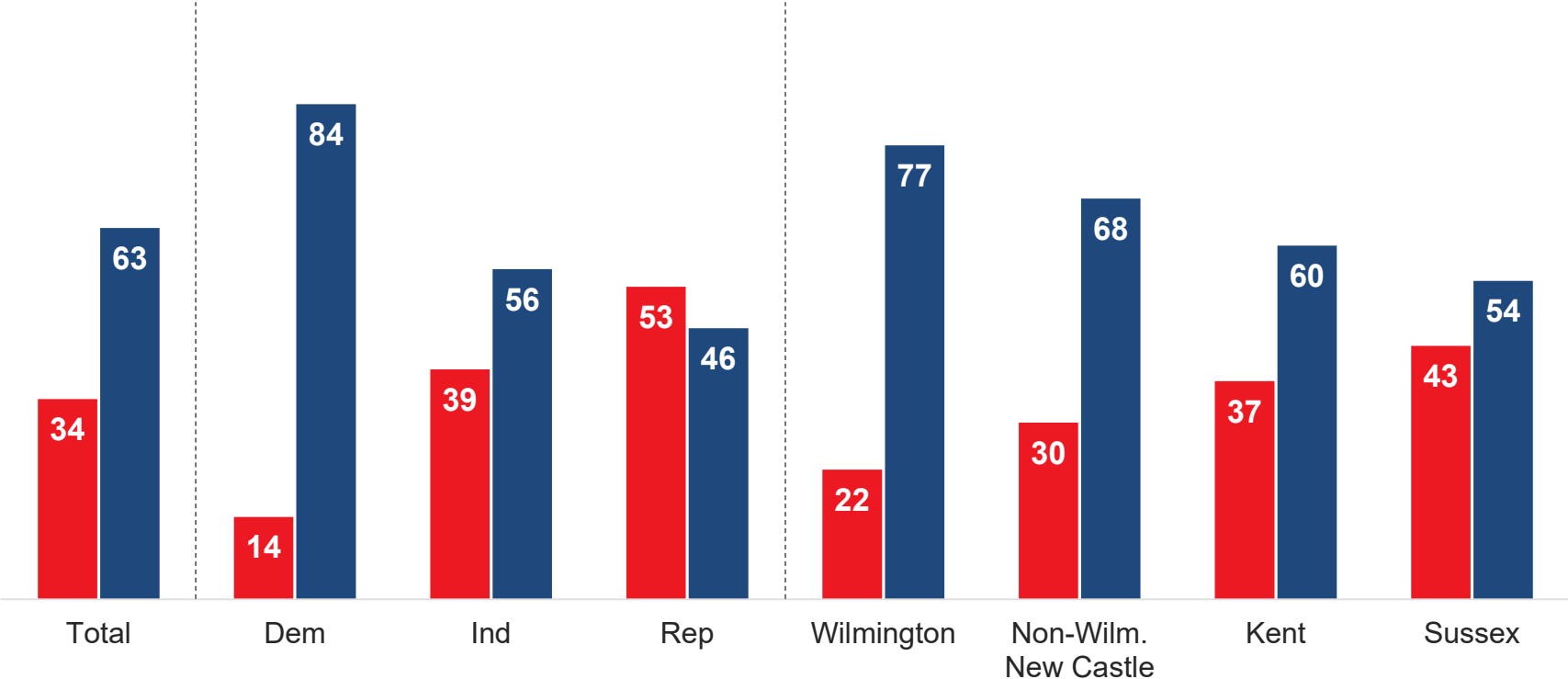


Majorities In All Three Counties Willing To Pay More To Fund Childcare And Early Childhood Education

Figure 24

Tax Willingness

● None ● Any Yes

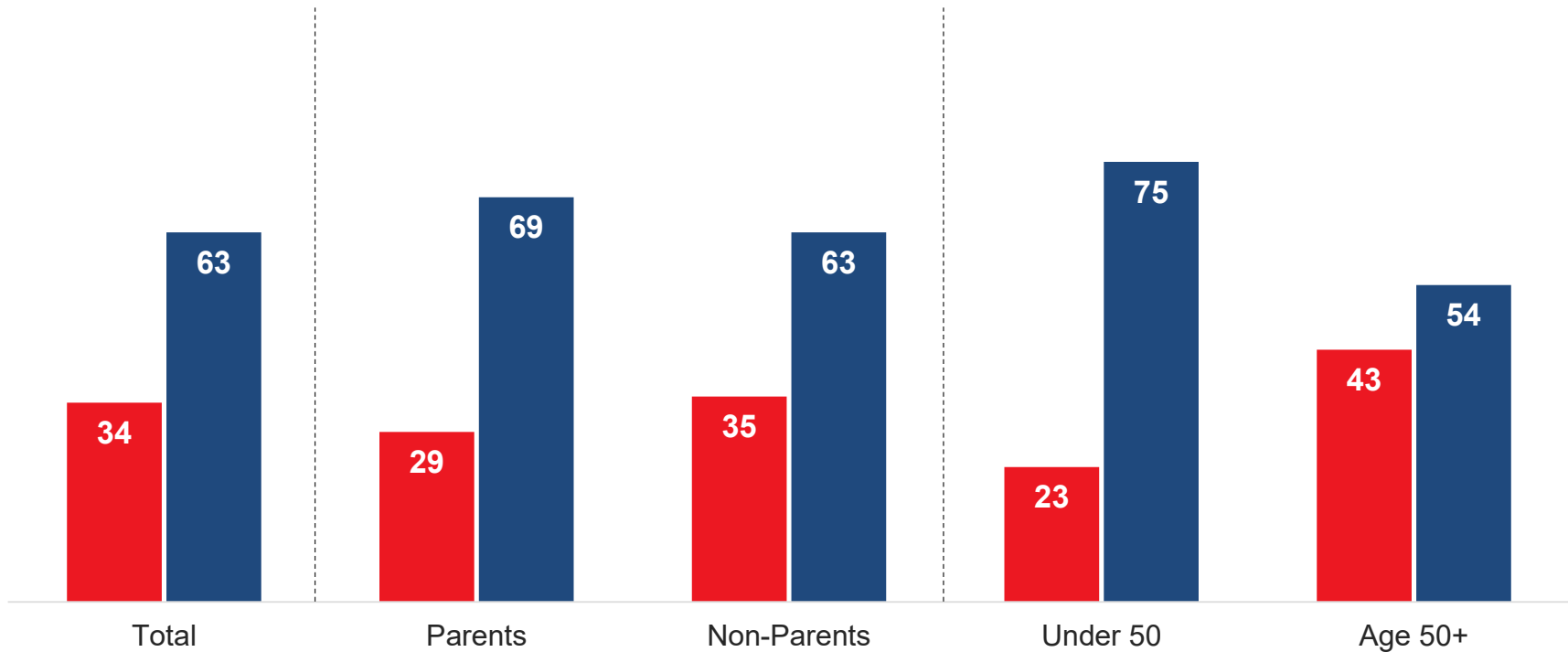


Younger Voters More Willing To Pay More

Figure 25

Tax Willingness

● None ● Any Yes



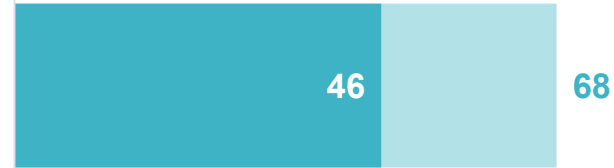
Child Development Message Makes Strongest Case For Increased Investment

Figure 26

Messages

● Very convincing ● Total convincing

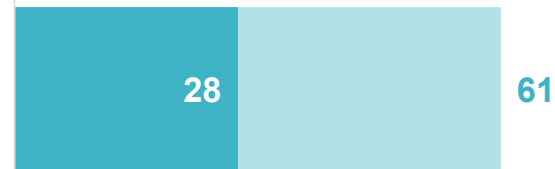
The **first five years of a child's life are critical** to their ability to learn social and emotional skills, and for becoming good students later in life. Just as we make K-12 education available to all families, we should be investing in early childhood programs to make them available to all children and to ensure that every child has the opportunity to succeed.



A major investment in child care and early learning would **put more Delawareans to work, increase wages, and help families make ends meet** while providing children with safe and stable learning environments. It would create thousands of new jobs and help predominantly low-income parents return to the workforce.



Delaware now ranks below neighboring states in terms of investment in child care and early childhood education, but it doesn't have to be that way. As a small state, **we can become a national leader** by making targeted investments and working with existing community organizations to support our youngest children and their families.

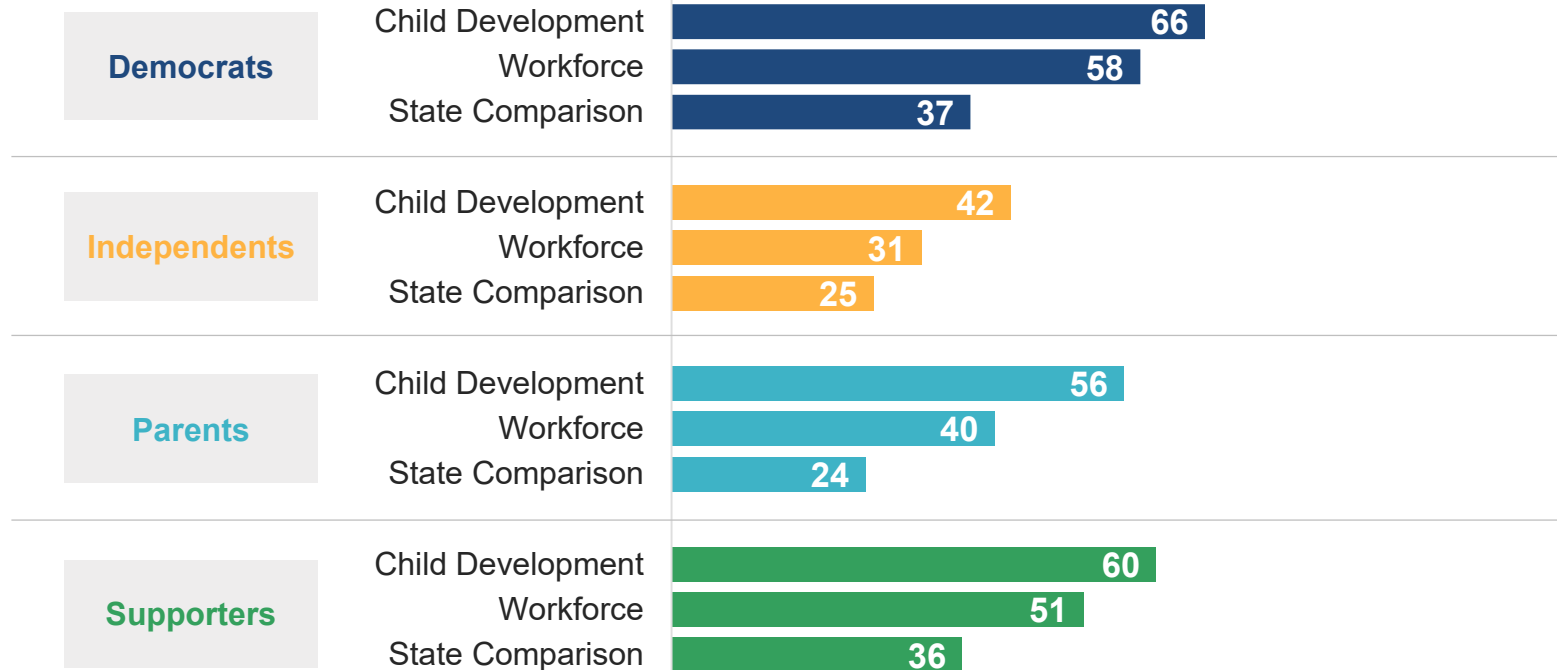


Child Development Message Also Strongest Among Key Groups

Figure 27

Top Messages

% Very convincing



Voters Prefer A Universal Approach, But Partisan And Regional Differences Emerge

Figure 28

Universal vs. Targeted

Which of the following statements do you agree with more about efforts to increase funding for child care assistance and expand access to early childhood education in Delaware, even if neither is exactly right?

Policies and funding to increase child care assistance and expand access to early childhood education should be **targeted to those parents and families most in need** of assistance.

Childcare assistance and expanded access to early childhood education should be **universal** so that all families can benefit from these critical programs.

38

Total

53

35

Dem

64

38

Ind

50

42

Rep

41

33

Wilmington

65

34

Non-W NC

59

45

Kent

41

45

Sussex

45

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