

# PPIC Statewide Survey: Californians and Higher Education

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*November 2011*



# Outline

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- **PPIC Statewide Surveys**
- **Current Conditions and the Future**
- **Overall Perceptions and Attitudes**
- **Conclusions**



# PPIC Statewide Survey Mission

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- Provide timely, relevant, nonpartisan data on political, social, and economic opinions
- Inform and improve state policymaking, raise awareness, encourage discussion
- Provide a voice for all Californians in important state policy debates
  - 256,000+ Californians since 1998
  - 120+ general, issue, and regional surveys



# Californians and Higher Education

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- Fifth survey in higher education series since 2007
  - Funded this year by The James Irvine Foundation
- Ratings of the system, funding concerns, ways to raise revenues, planning for the future
- Importance of college, affordability, access, community colleges, parents' views
- Telephone interviews, October 25–November 8
  - 2,503 adults; 1,161 likely voters; 1,059 parents of children 18 or younger
    - $\pm 3.1\%$  *margin of error for adults*
    - $\pm 3.6\%$  *for likely voters*
    - $\pm 5\%$  *for parents*



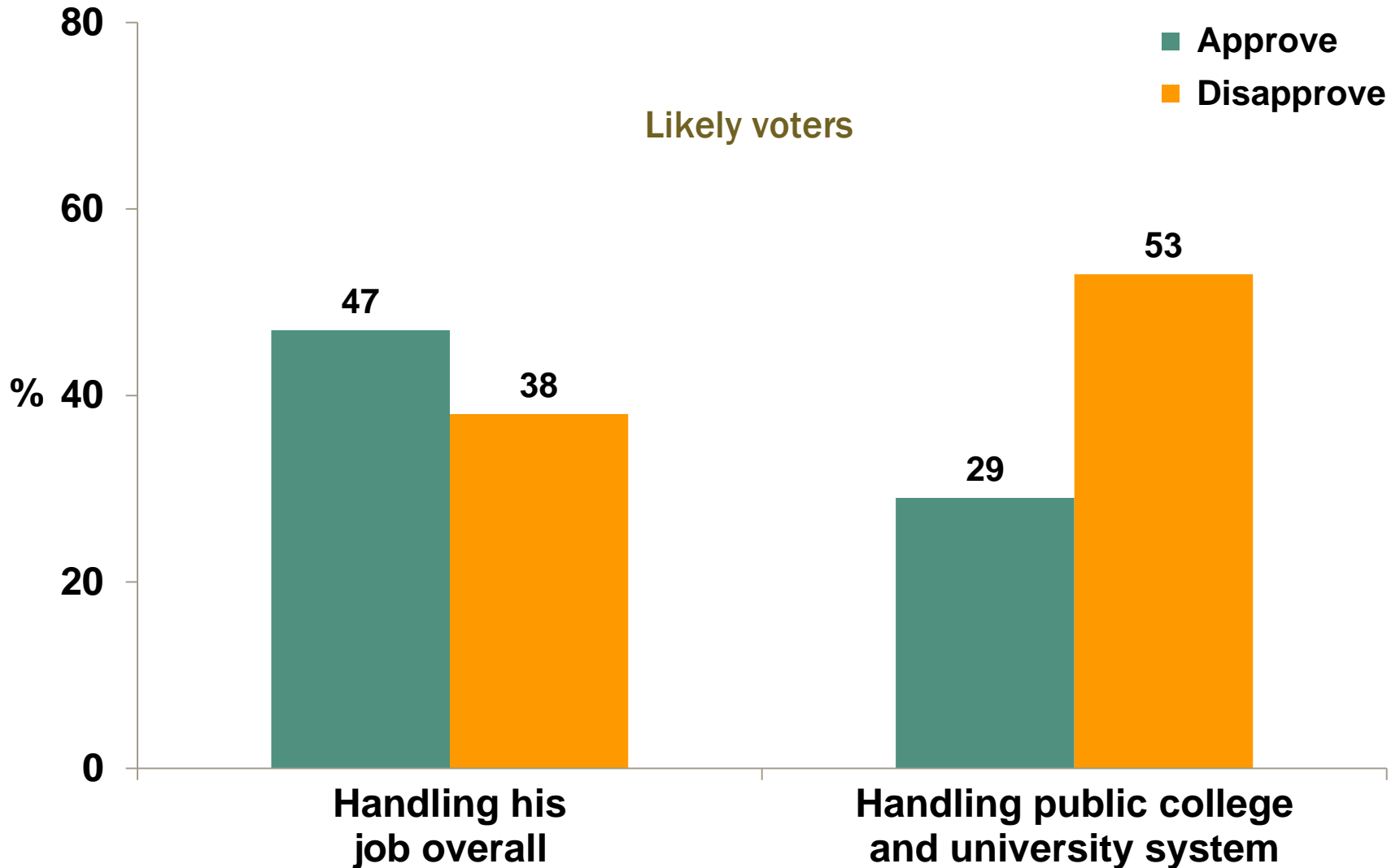
# Outline

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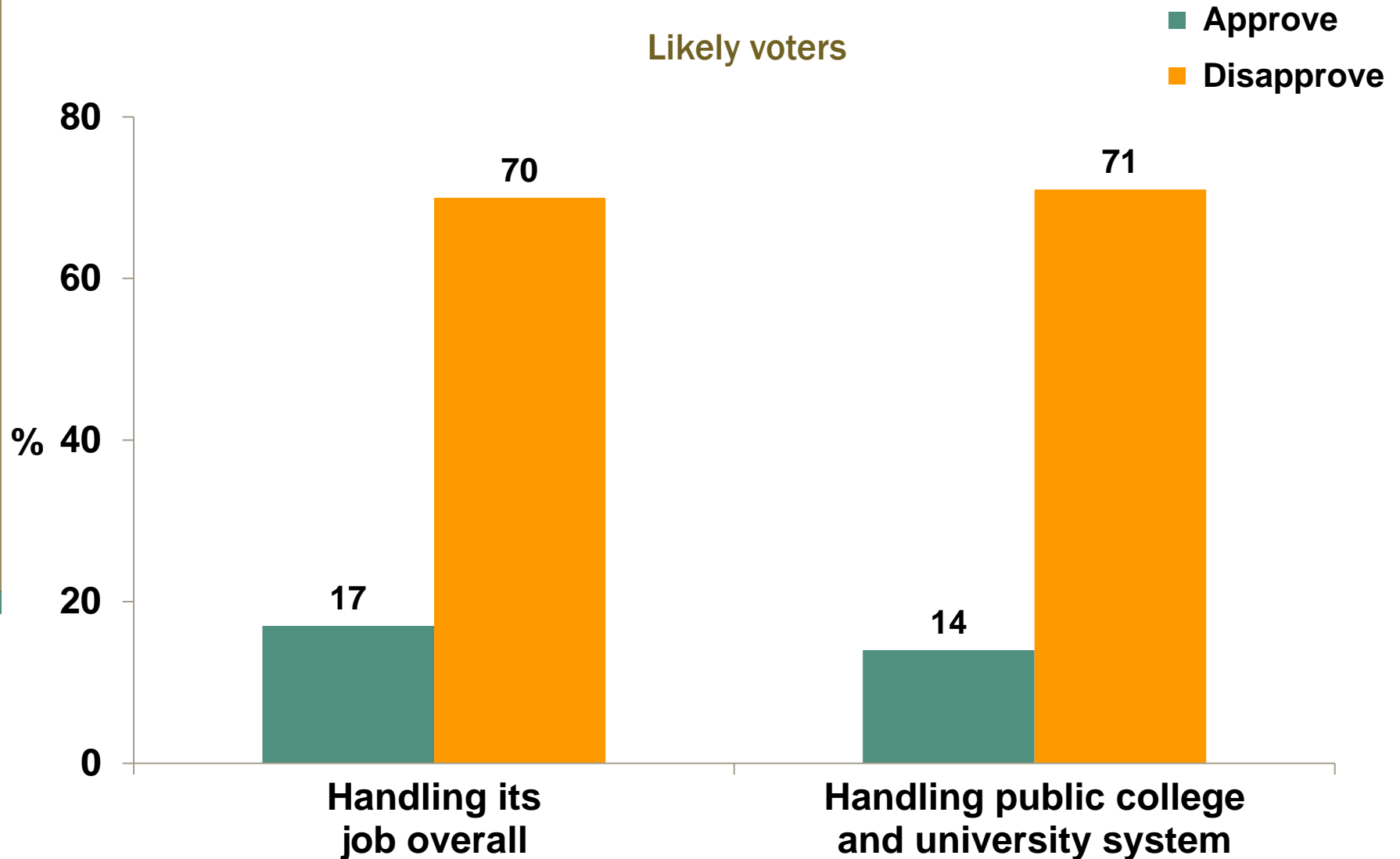
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# Approval Ratings: Governor Brown

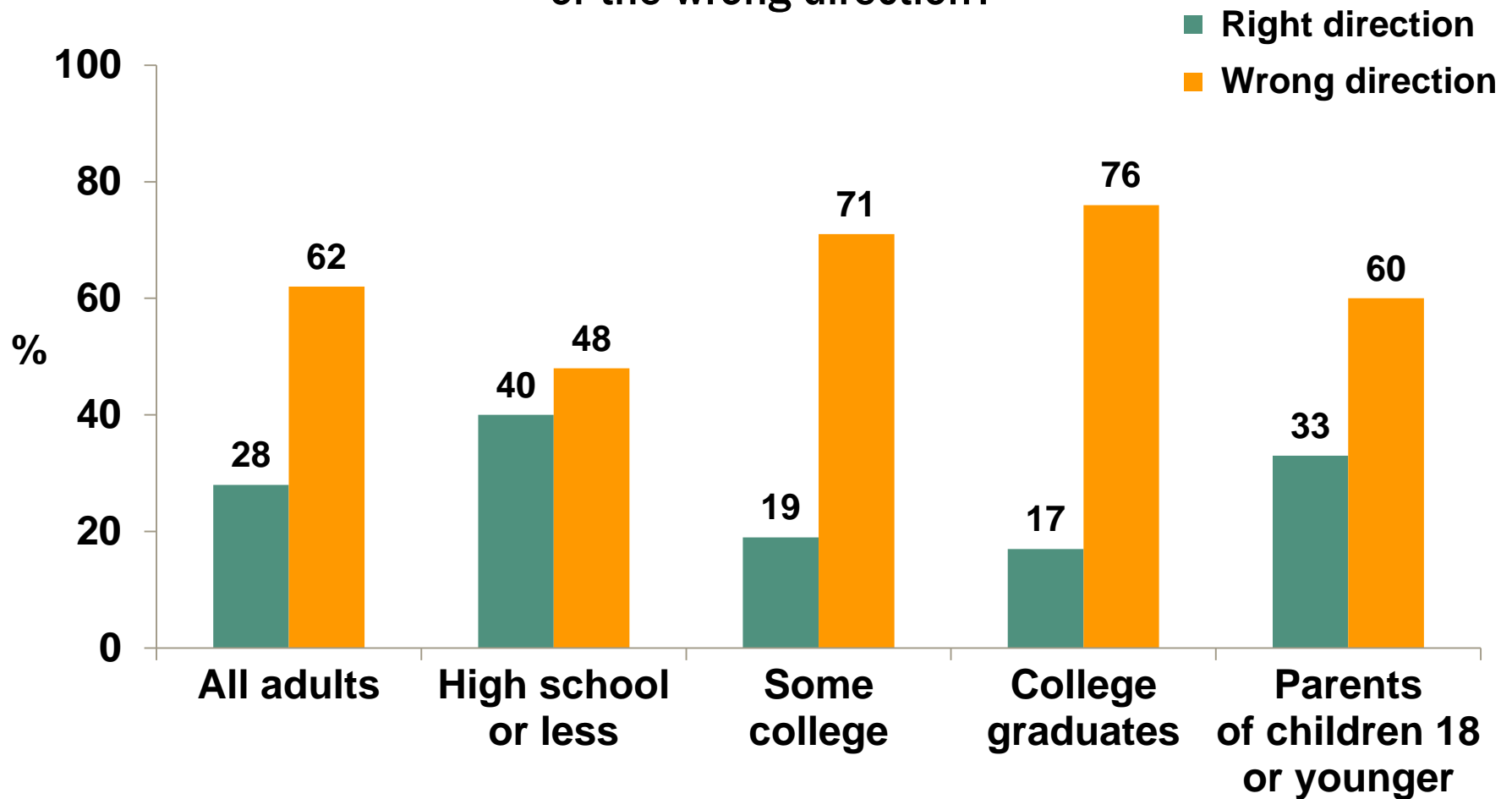


# Approval Ratings: California Legislature



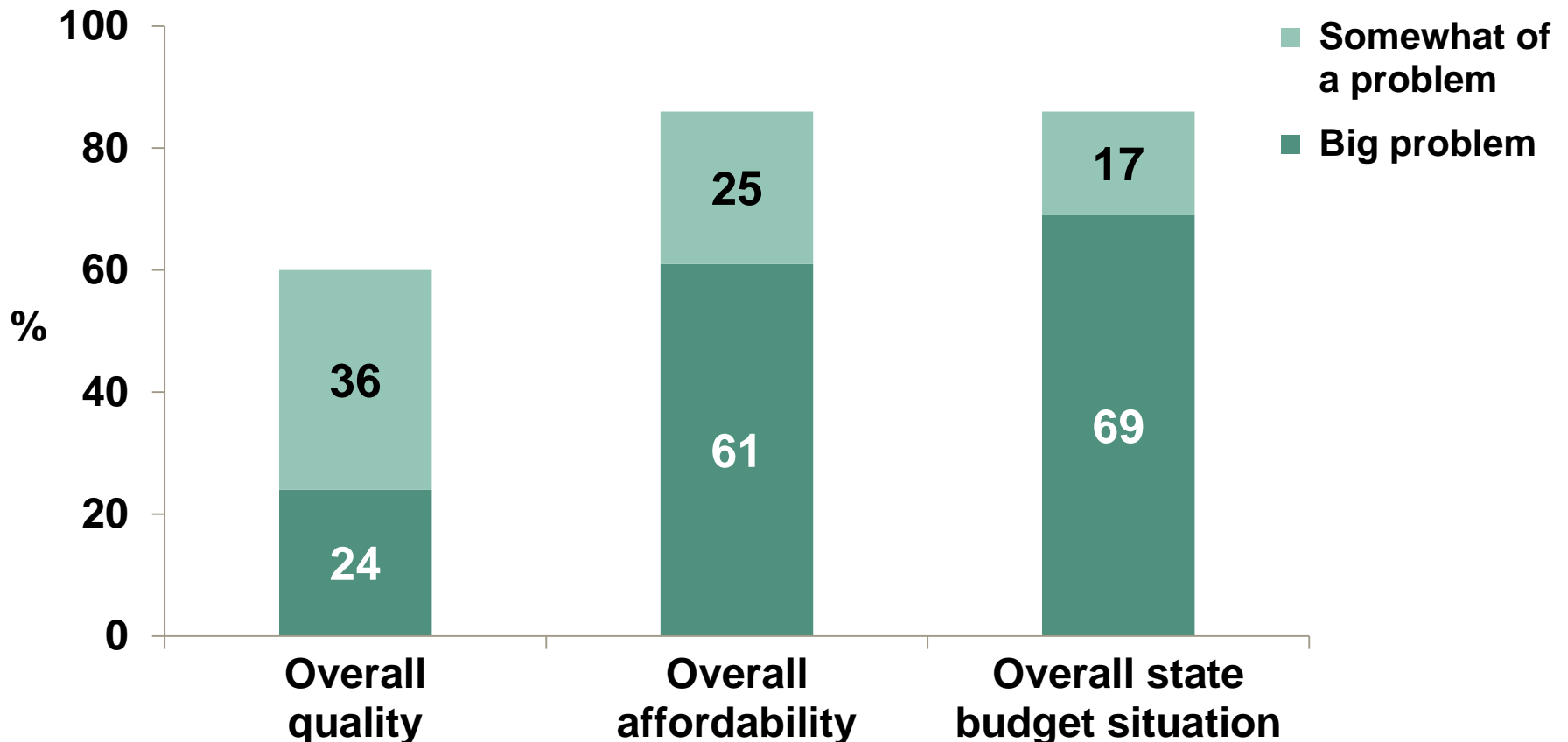
# Direction of Higher Education System

Thinking about the public higher education system overall in California today, do you think it is generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?



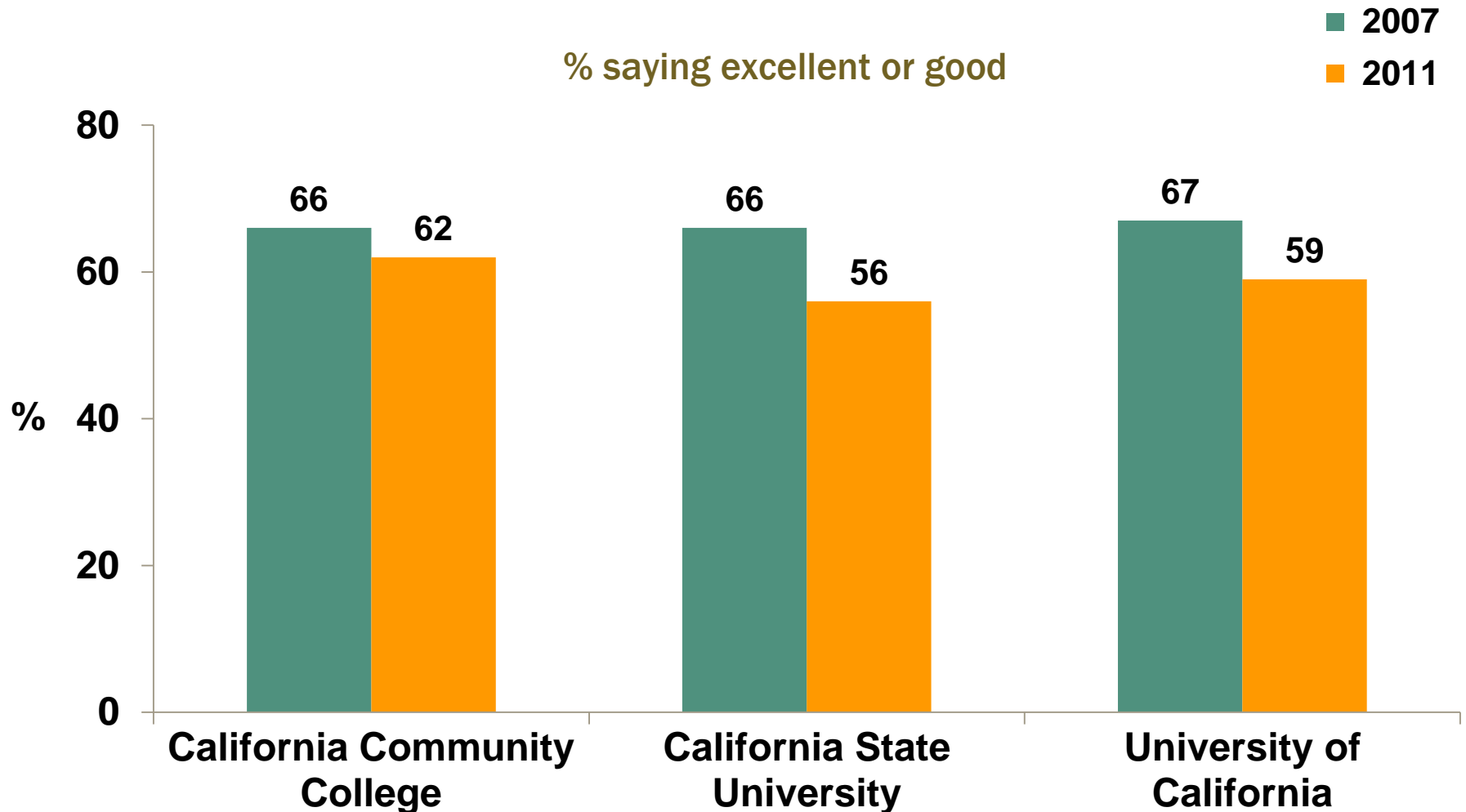
# Overall Conditions of Higher Education System

I'm going to read you a list of issues people have mentioned when talking about California's higher education system today. For each one, please tell me if you think it is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem.



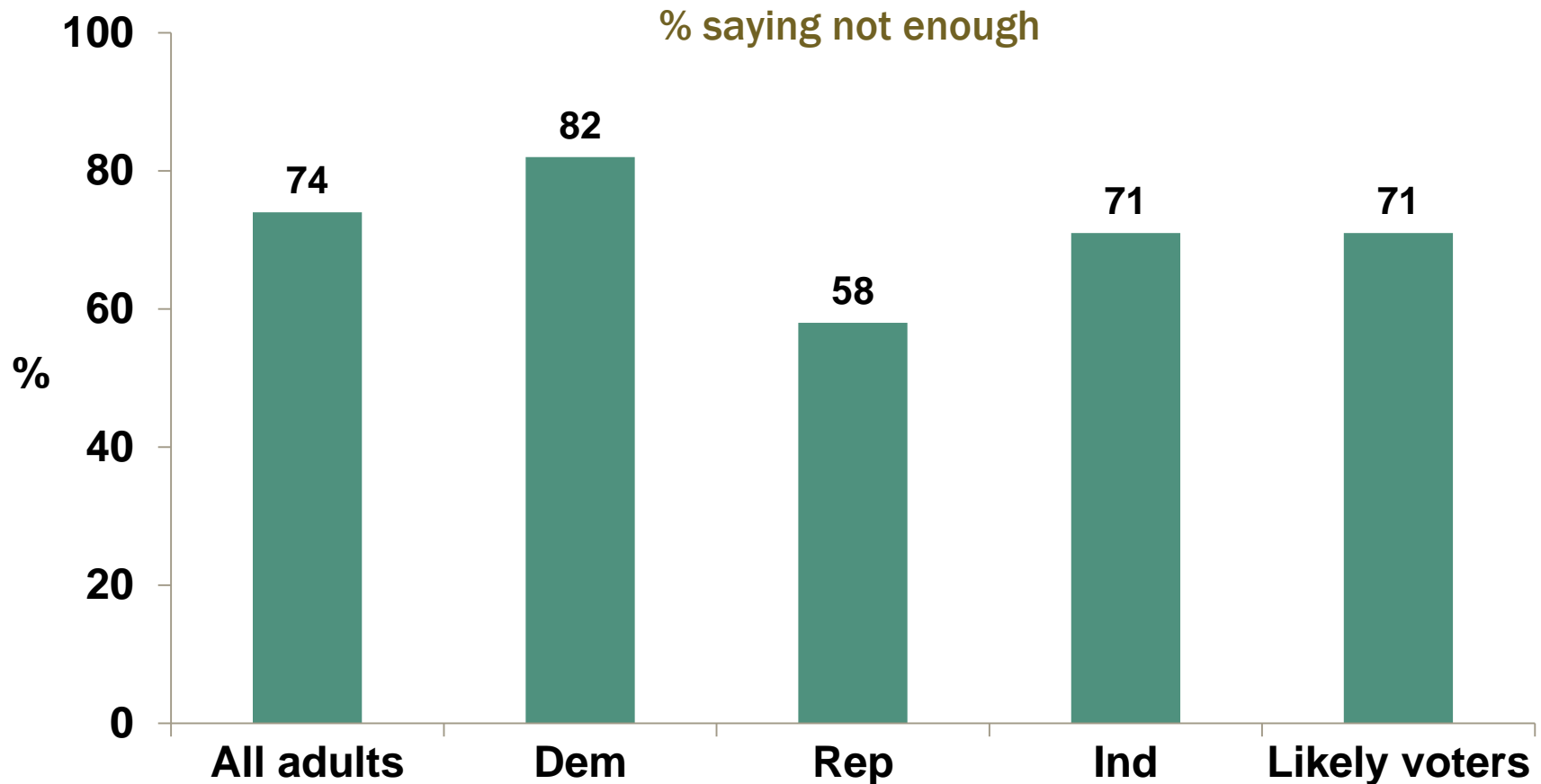
# Ratings of the Three Branches

Overall, is the ... system doing an excellent, good, not so good, or poor job?



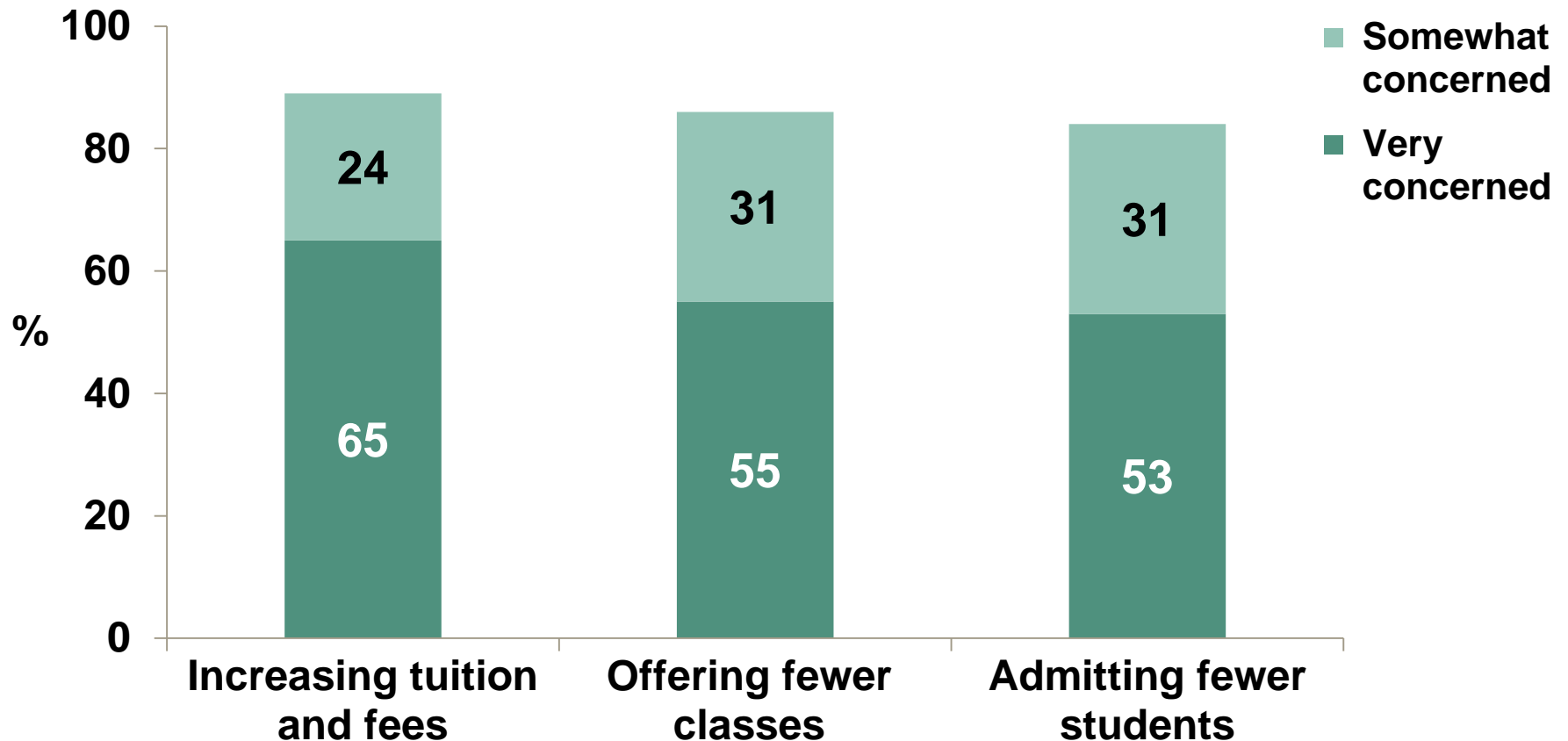
# Level of State Funding

Do you think the current level of state funding for California's public colleges and universities is more than enough, just enough, or not enough?



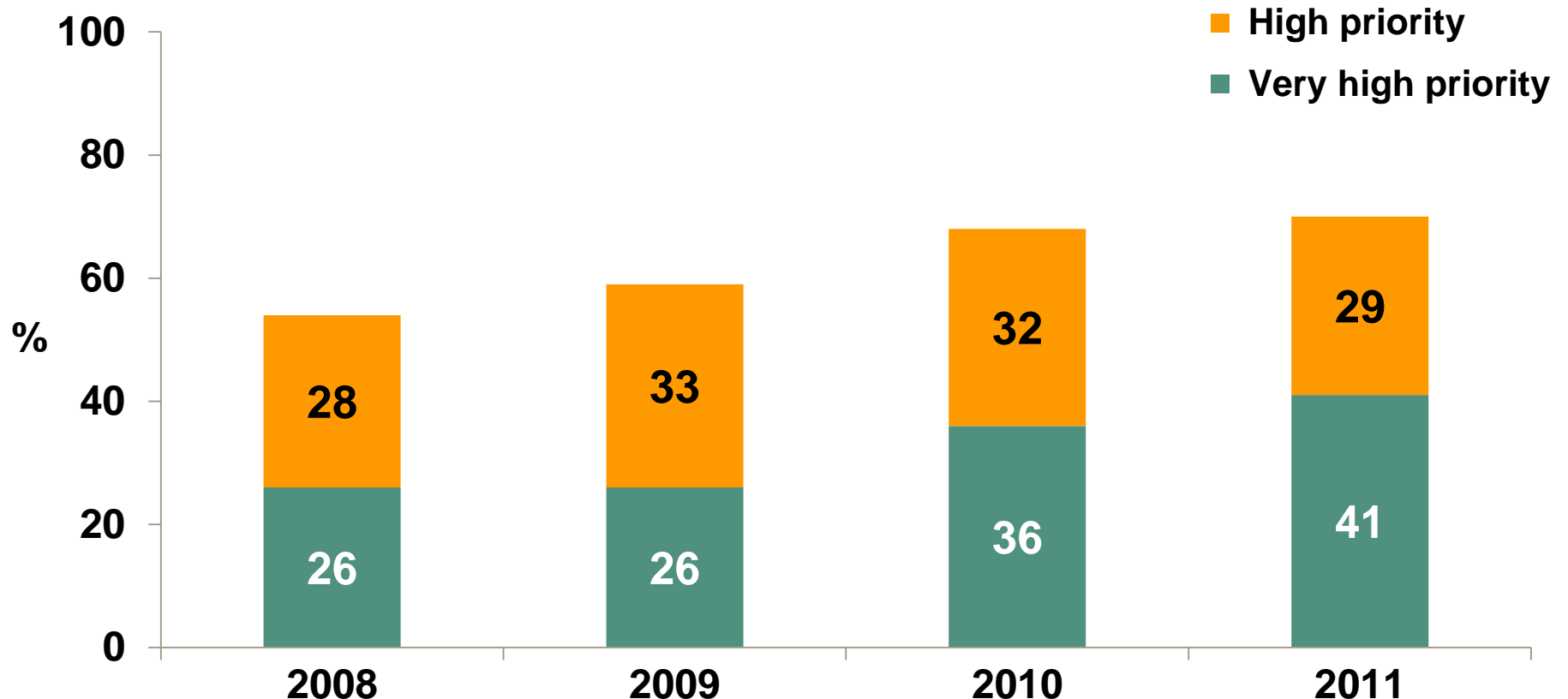
# Specific Concerns

There are a number of ways California's public colleges and universities have dealt with decreased funding. Please tell me if you are very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned about each of the following.



# Priority for Spending on Higher Education

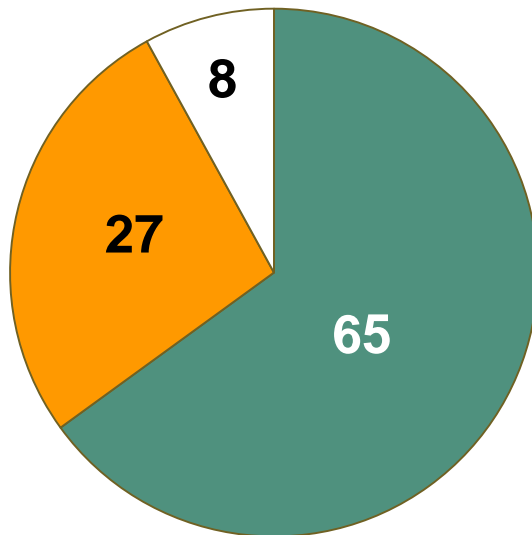
Given the state's current budget situation, on a scale of 1 to 5 — with 1 being a very low priority and 5 being a very high priority — what priority should be given to spending for California's public colleges and universities?



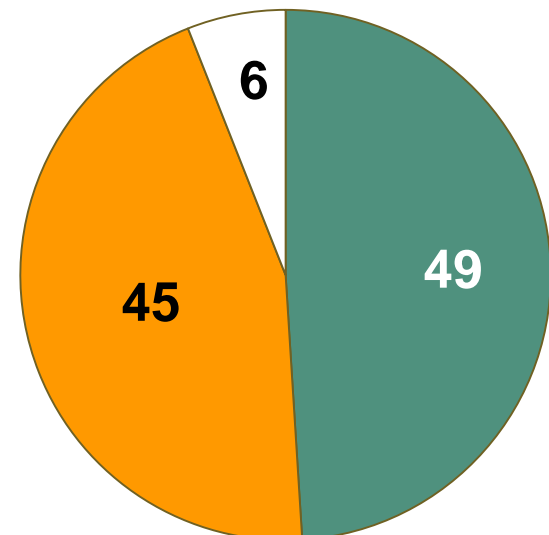
# State Budget Choices

Do you favor or oppose the state government spending more money on public colleges and universities, even if it means less money for other state programs?

Democrats



Republicans

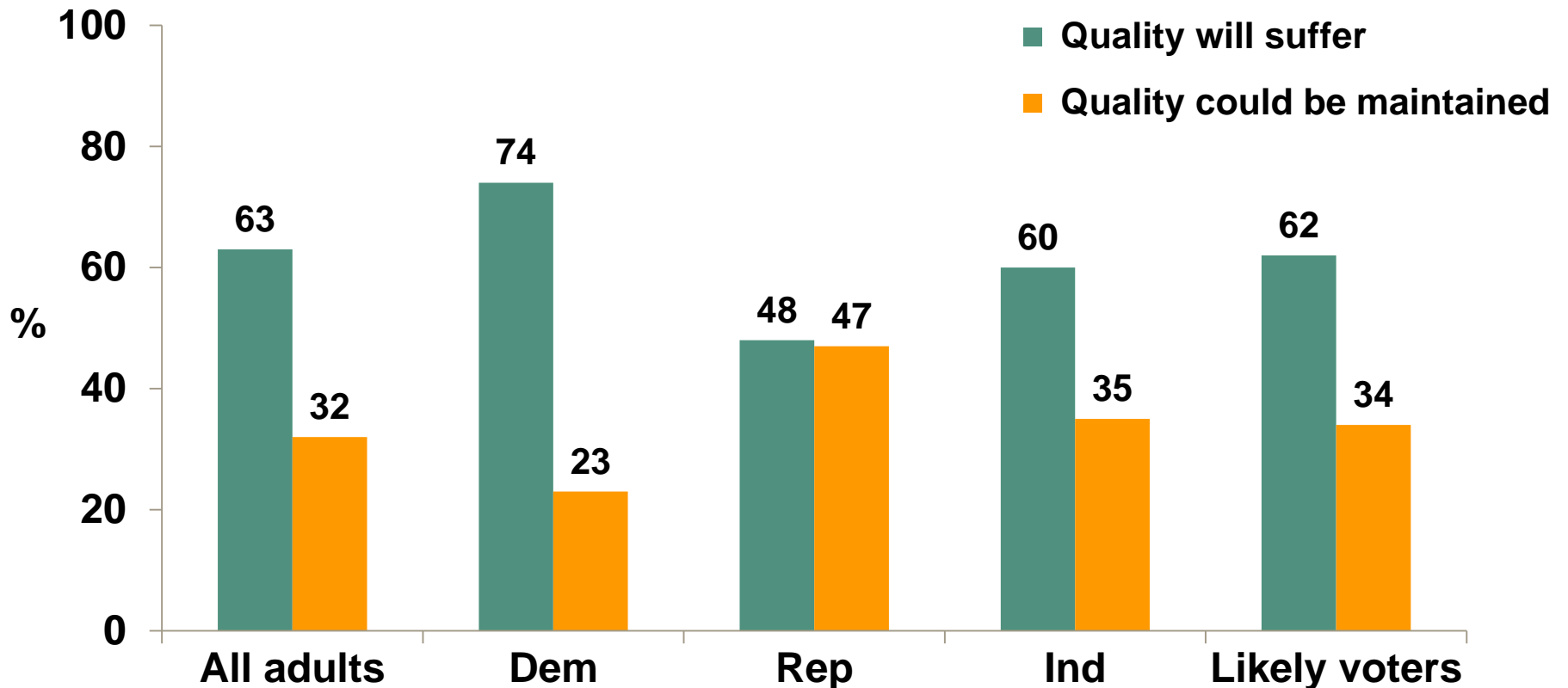


- Favor
- Oppose
- Don't know



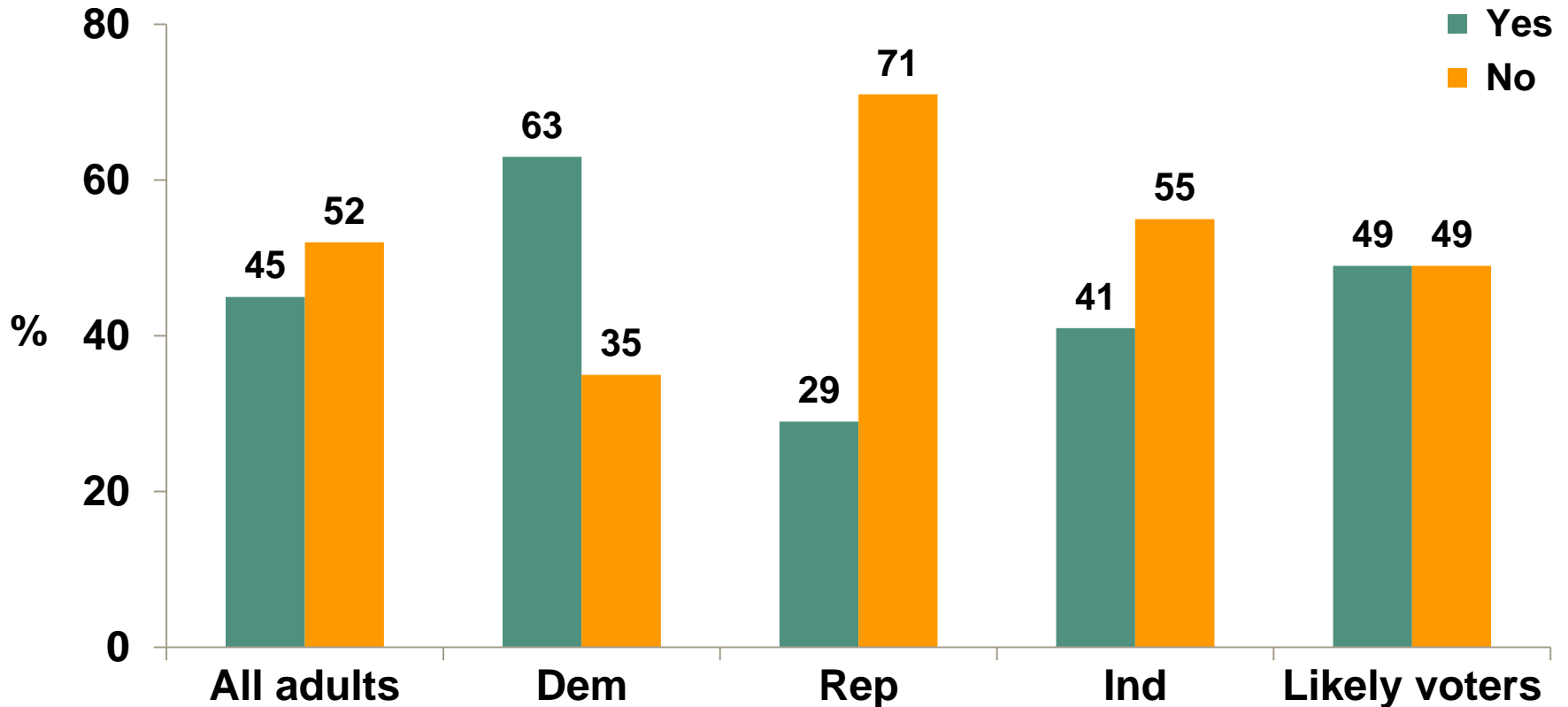
# Effects of Budget Cuts

Which comes closer to your view? If the state government makes budget cuts in higher education, the quality of education will suffer, or the state government could make budget cuts in higher education and still maintain a high quality of education.



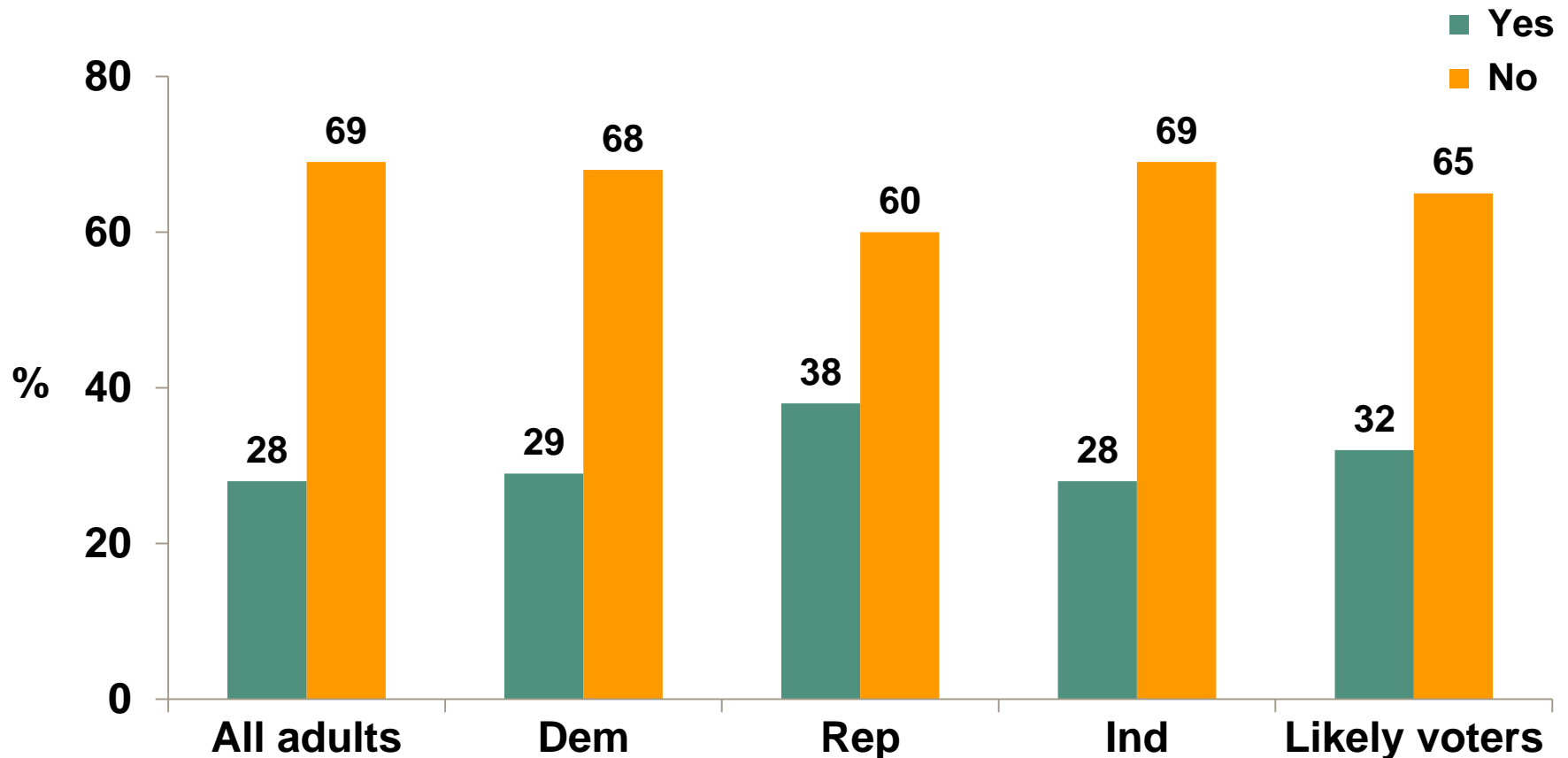
# Willingness to Raise Taxes

What if the state said it needed more money just to maintain current funding for public colleges and universities. Would you be willing to pay higher taxes for this purpose, or not?



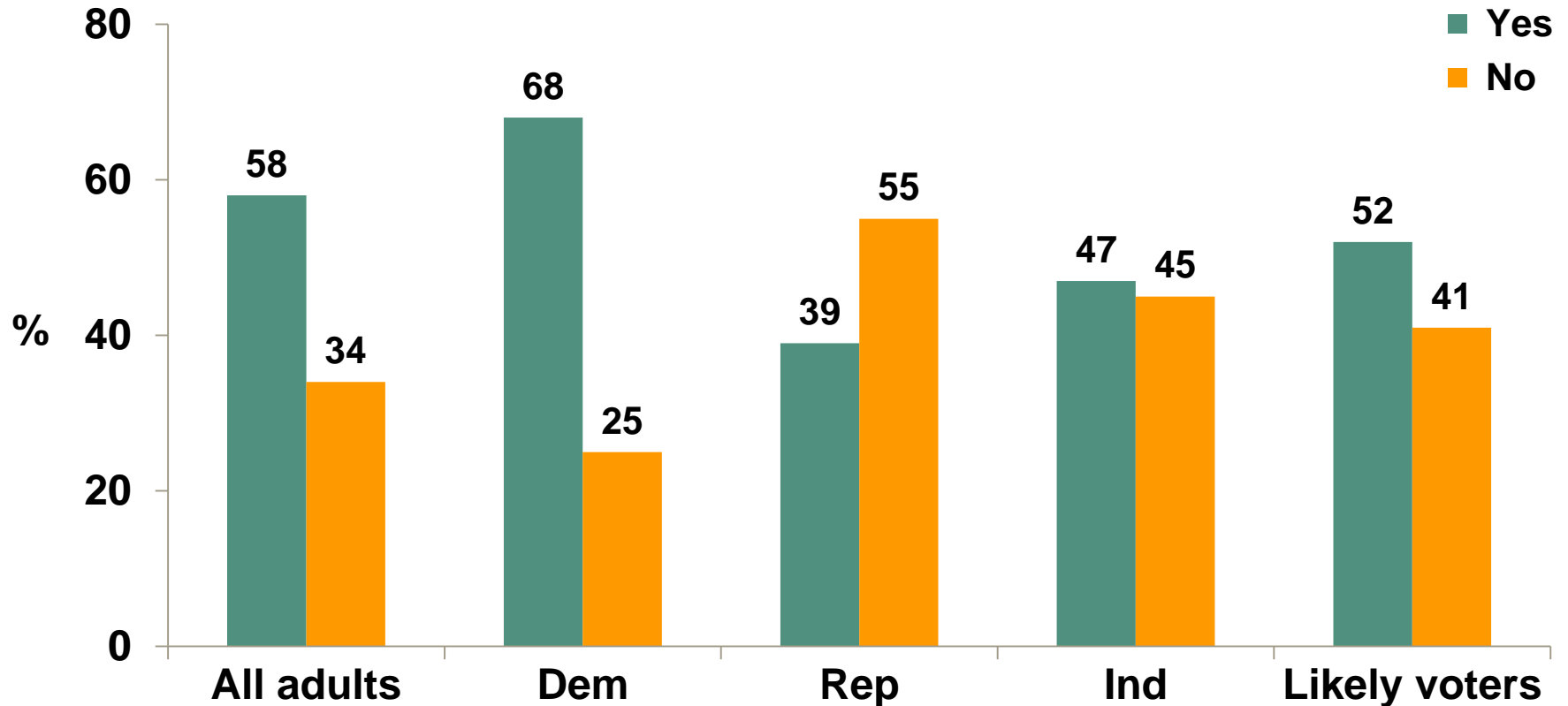
# Willingness to Increase Student Fees

What if the state said it needed more money just to maintain current funding for public colleges and universities. Would you be willing to increase student fees for this purpose, or not?



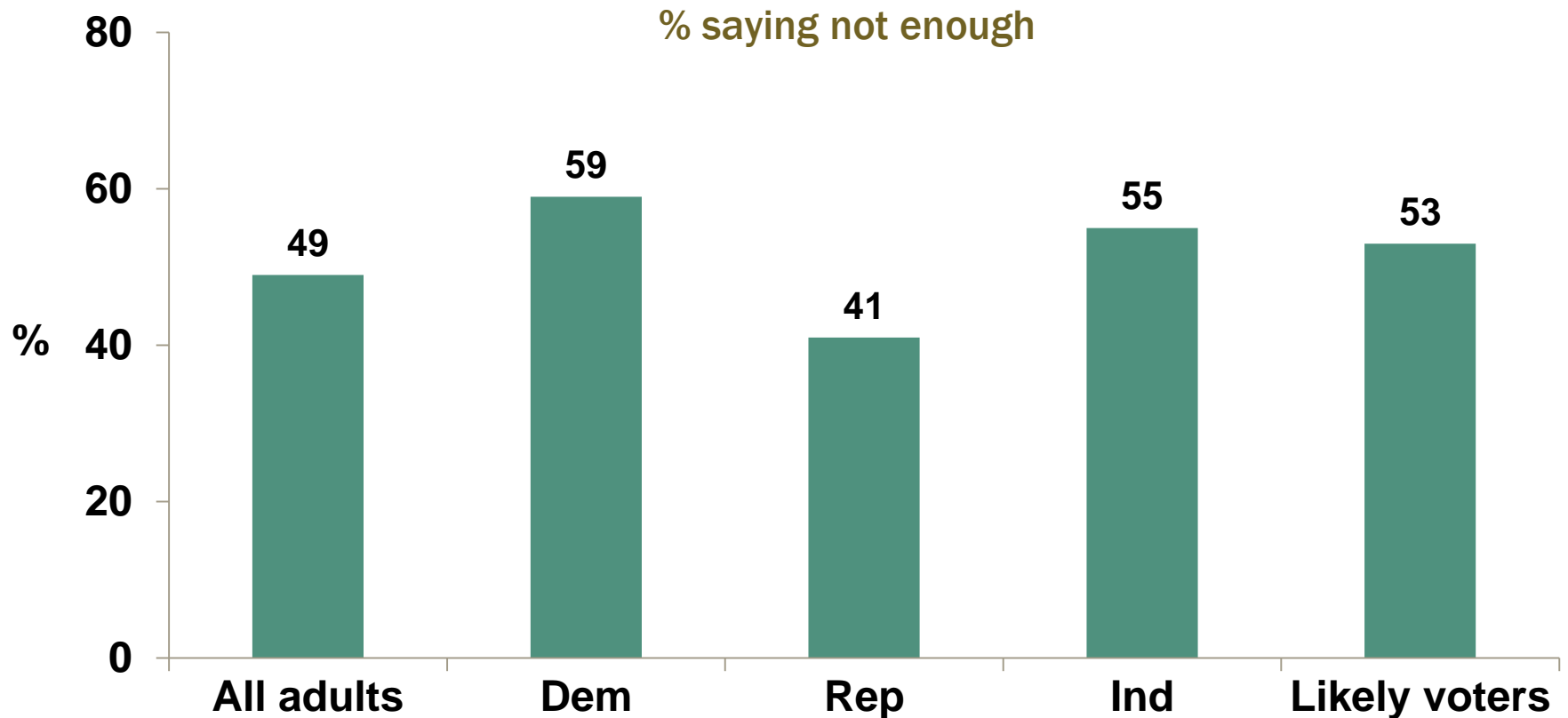
# Willingness to Pass a Bond Measure

If there was a bond measure on the state ballot in 2012 to pay for construction projects in California's higher education system, would you vote yes or no?



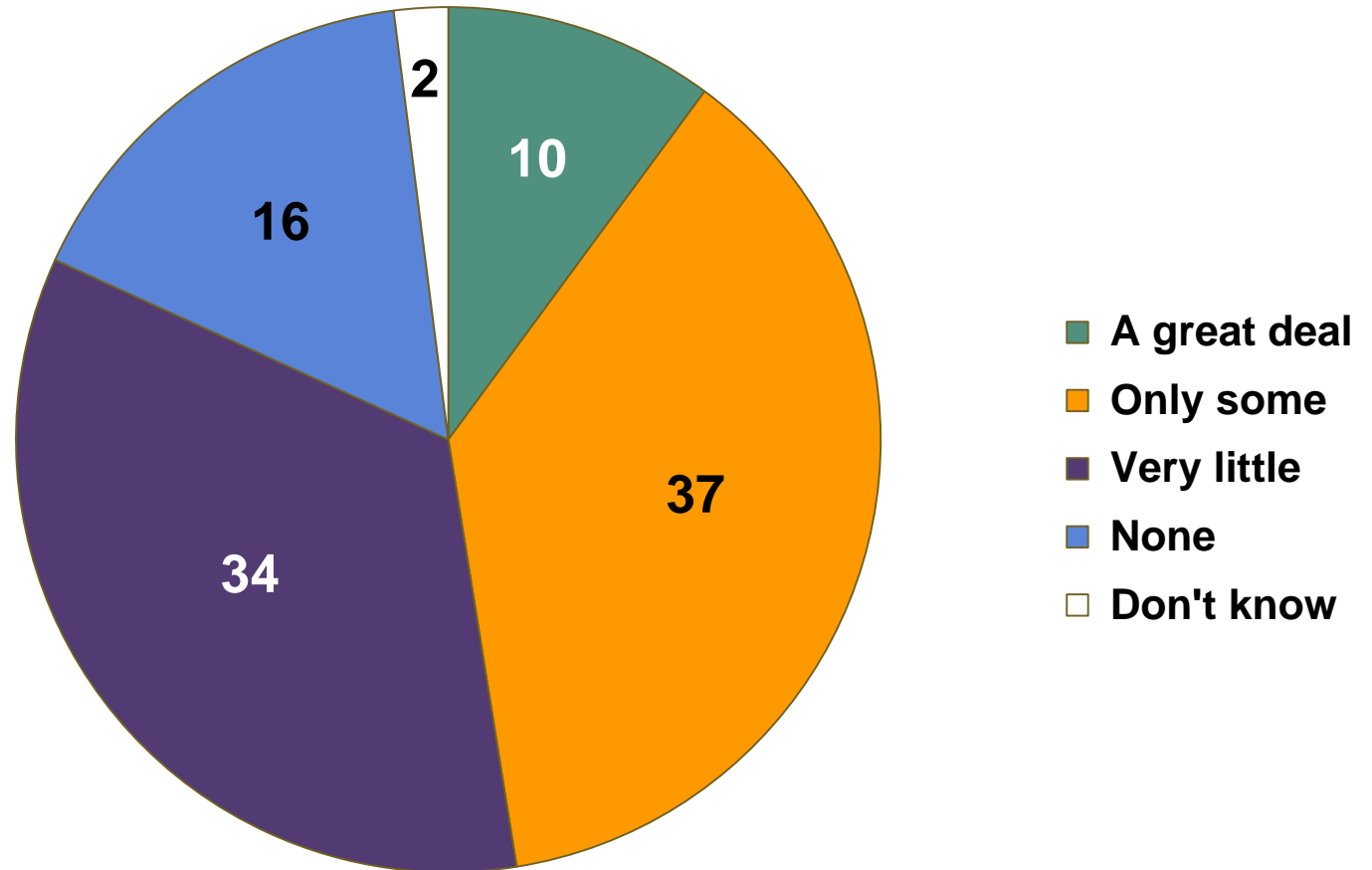
# Future Workforce

In thinking ahead 20 years, if current trends continue, do you think California will have more than enough, not enough, or just enough college educated residents needed for the jobs and skills likely to be in demand?



# Confidence in Future Planning

How much confidence do you have in the state government's ability to plan for the future of California's higher education system?



All adults



# Outline

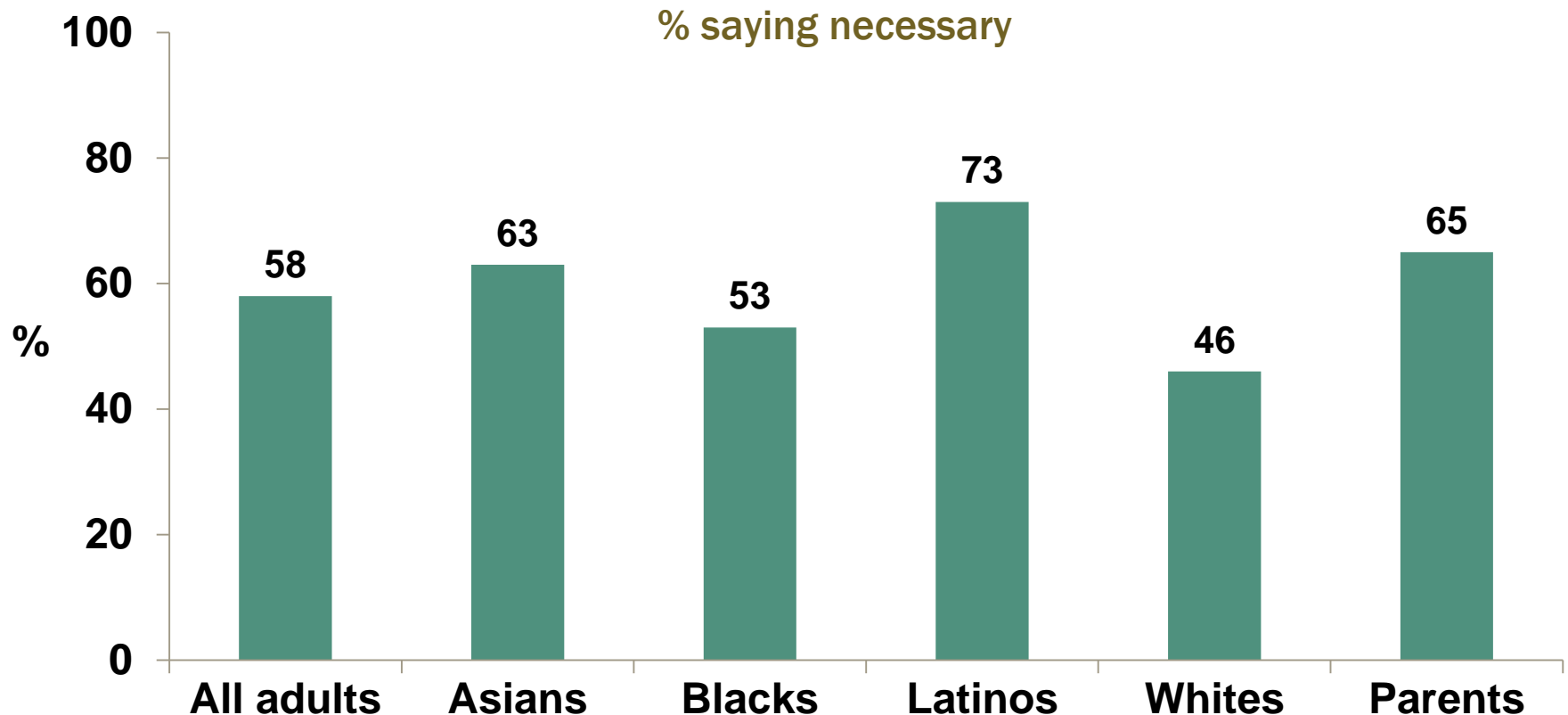
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# Importance of College

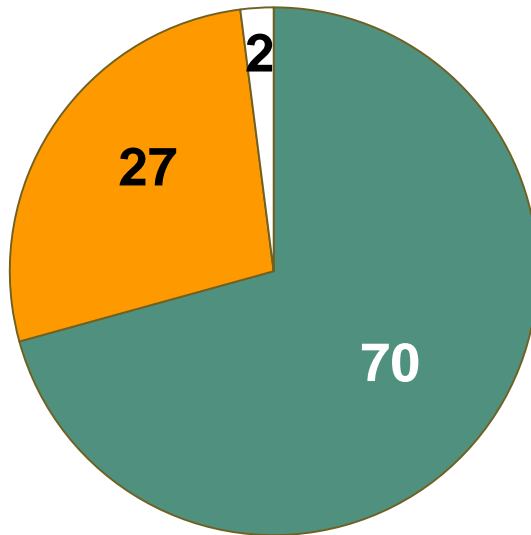
Do you think that a college education is necessary for a person to be successful in today's work world, or do you think that there are many ways to succeed in today's work world without a college education?



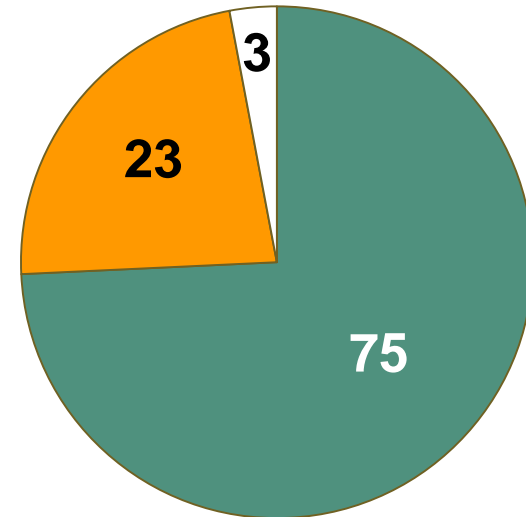
# Student Affordability

The price of a college education keeps students who are qualified and motivated to go to college from doing so.

Students have to borrow too much money to pay for their college education.



All adults

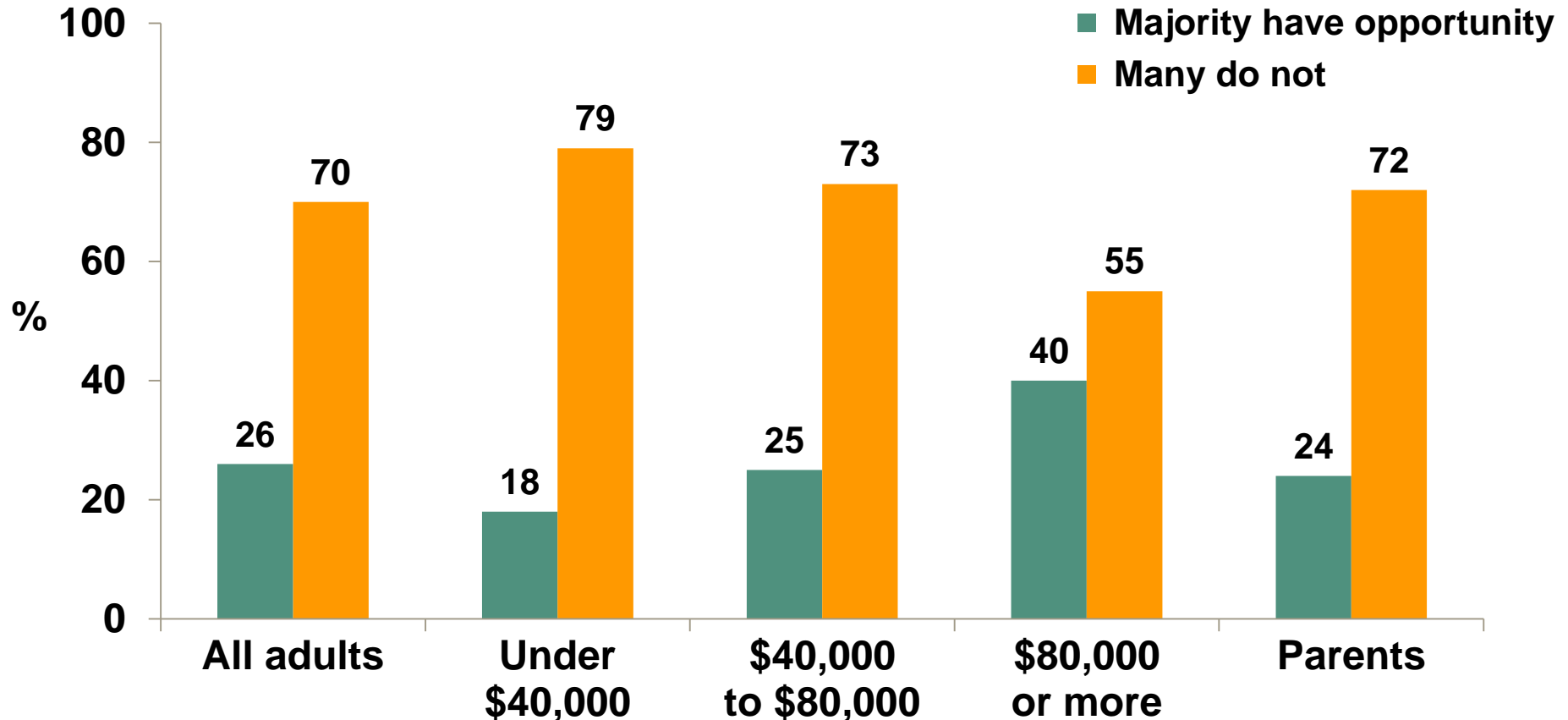


- Agree
- Disagree
- Don't know



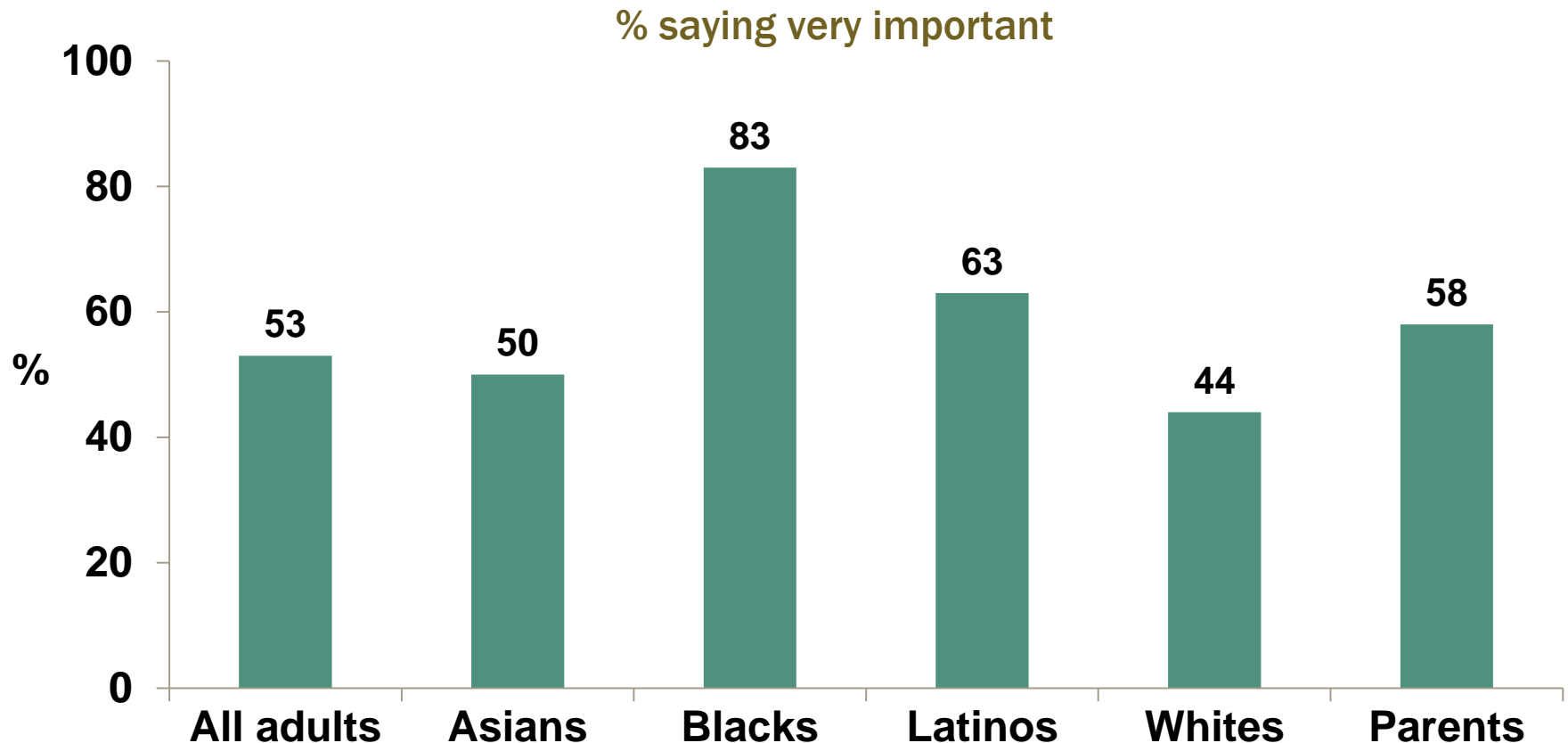
# Student Access

Do you think that currently, the vast majority of people who are qualified to go to college have the opportunity to do so, or do you think there are many people who are qualified to go but don't have the opportunity to do so?



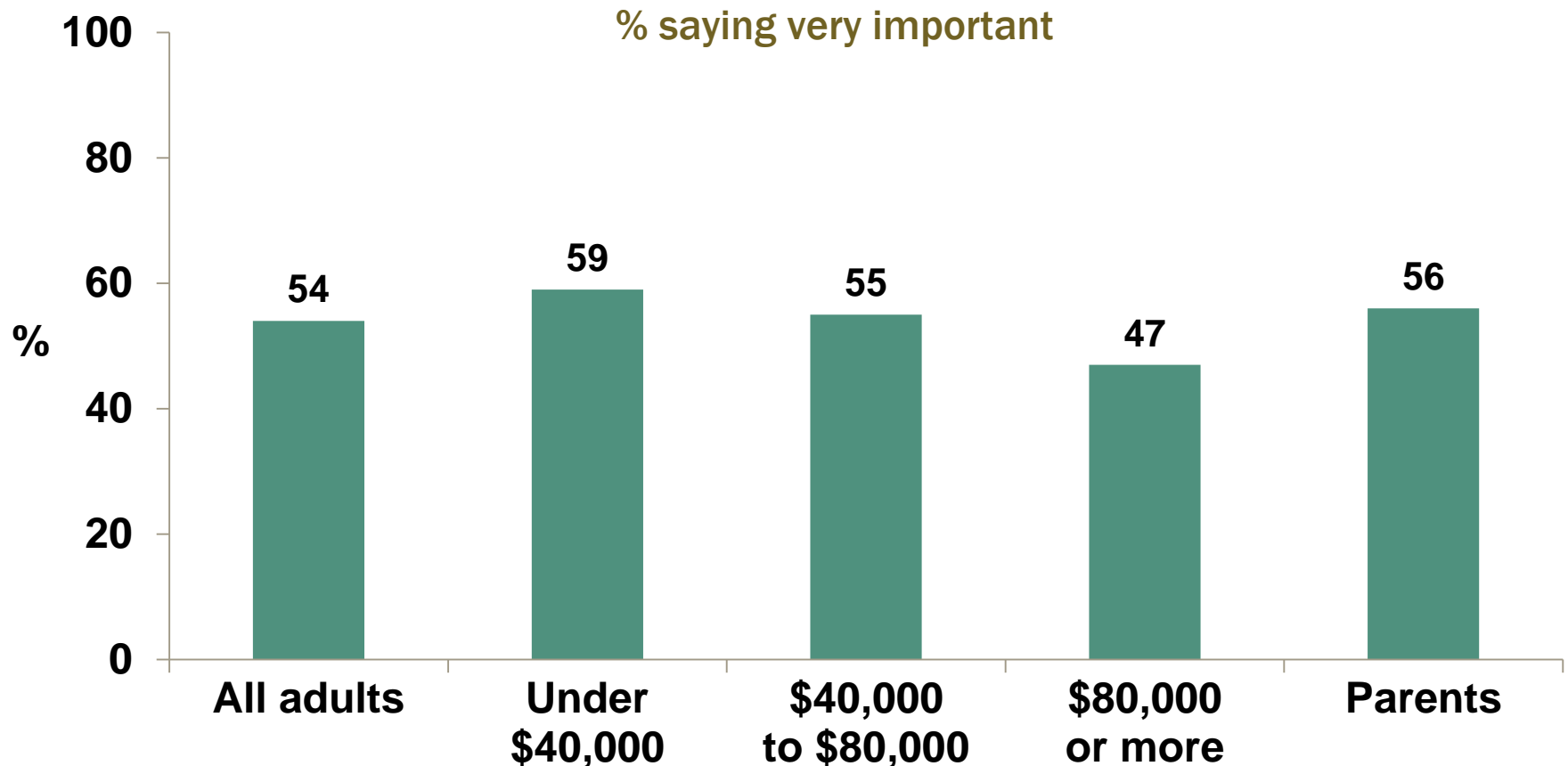
# Importance of Racial Diversity

How important do you think it is for public colleges and universities to have a racially diverse student body — that is, a mix of blacks, whites, Asians, Hispanics, and other minorities?



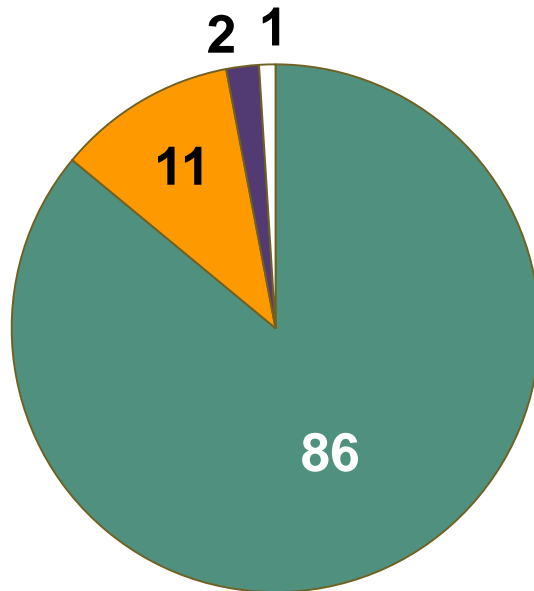
# Importance of Economic Diversity

How important do you think it is for public colleges and universities to have an economically diverse student body — that is, a mix of students from lower, middle, and upper-income backgrounds?



# Role of K-12 Public Schools

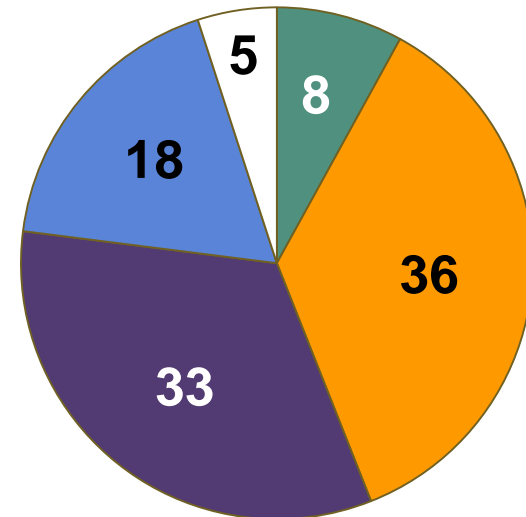
How important to you is it that California's K-12 public schools prepare students for college?



- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not too important
- Don't know

And are California's K-12 public schools doing an excellent, good, not so good, or poor job in preparing students for college?

All adults

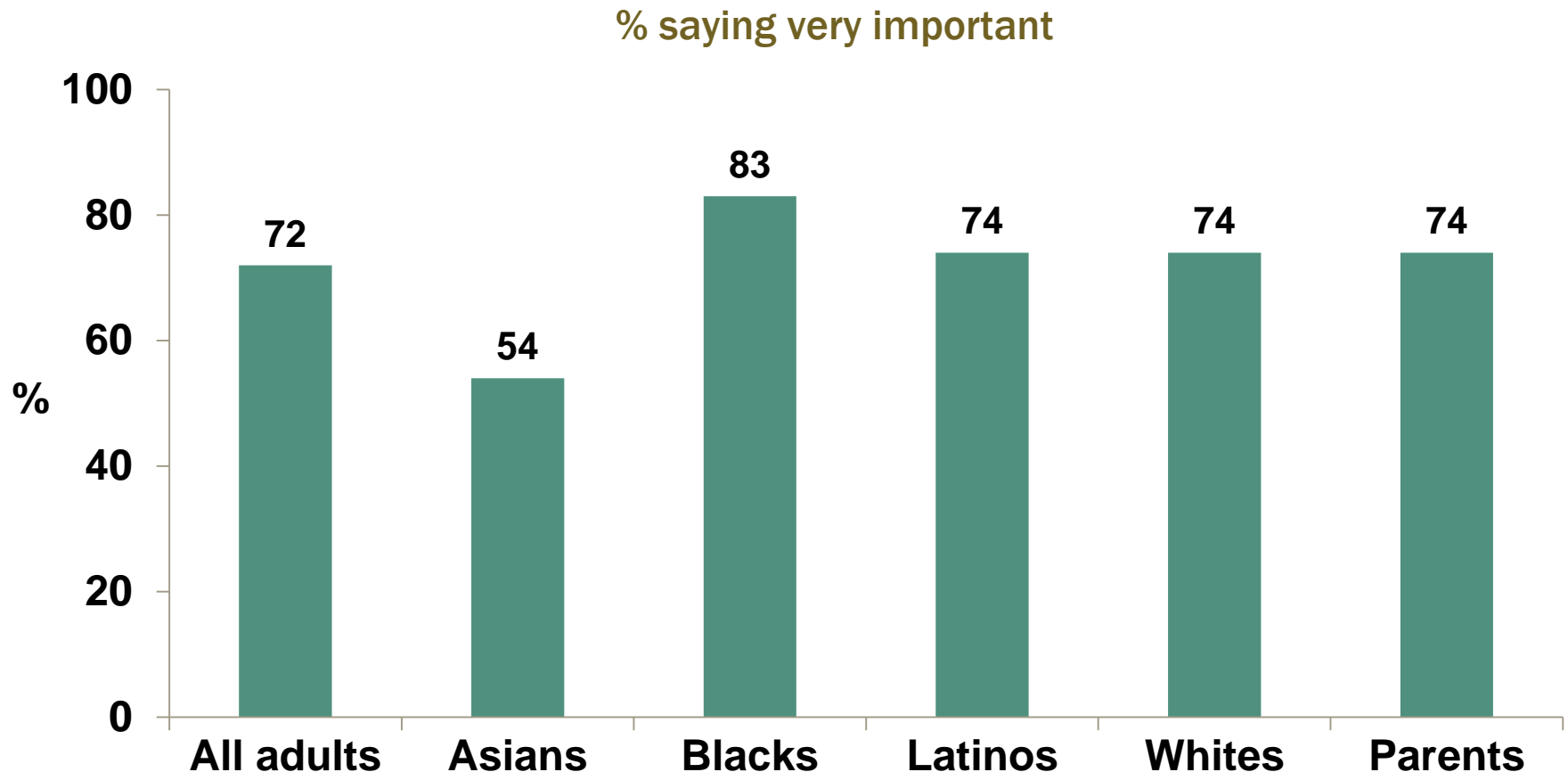


- Excellent
- Good
- Not so good
- Poor
- Don't know



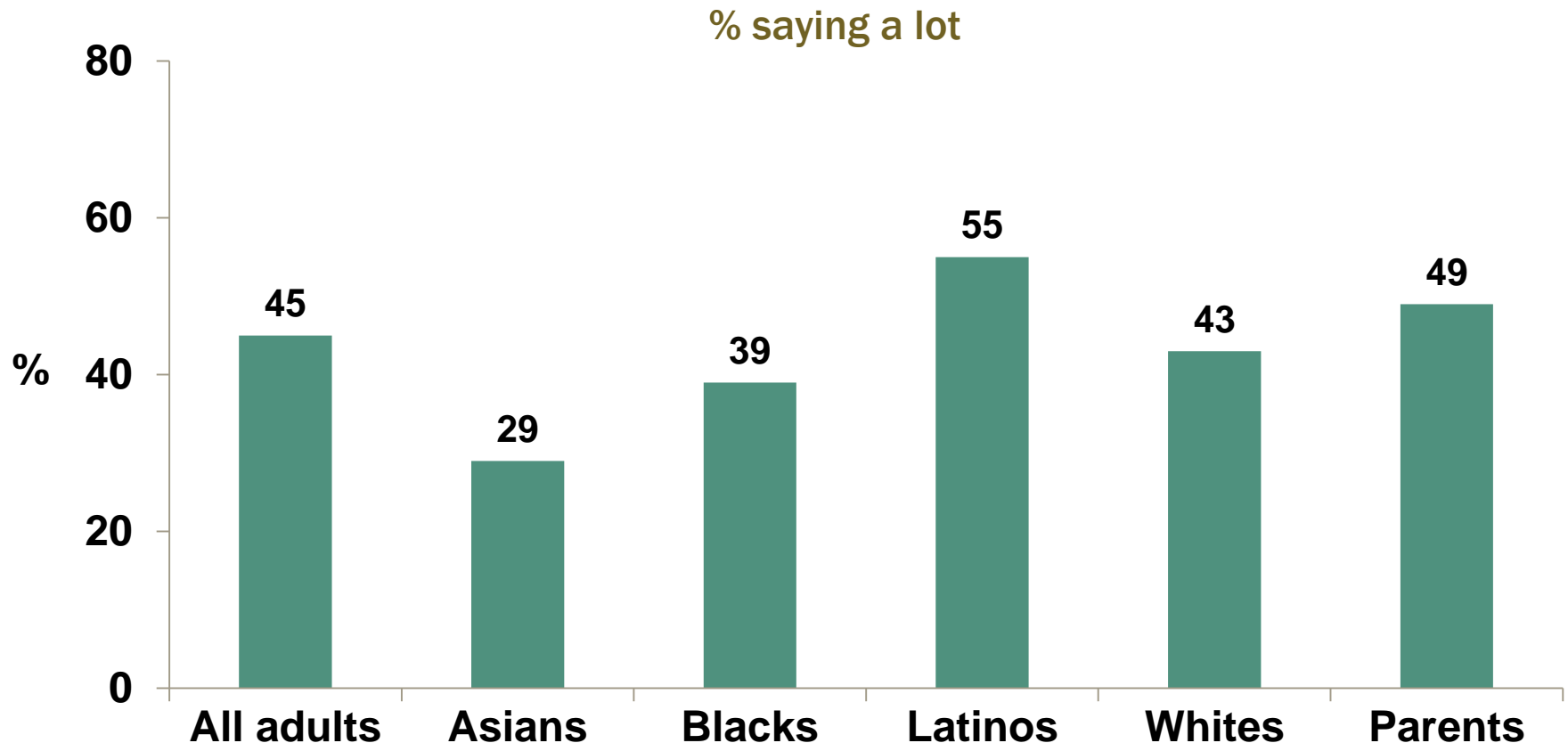
# Career Technical Education

How important to you is it that community colleges include career technical or vocational education?



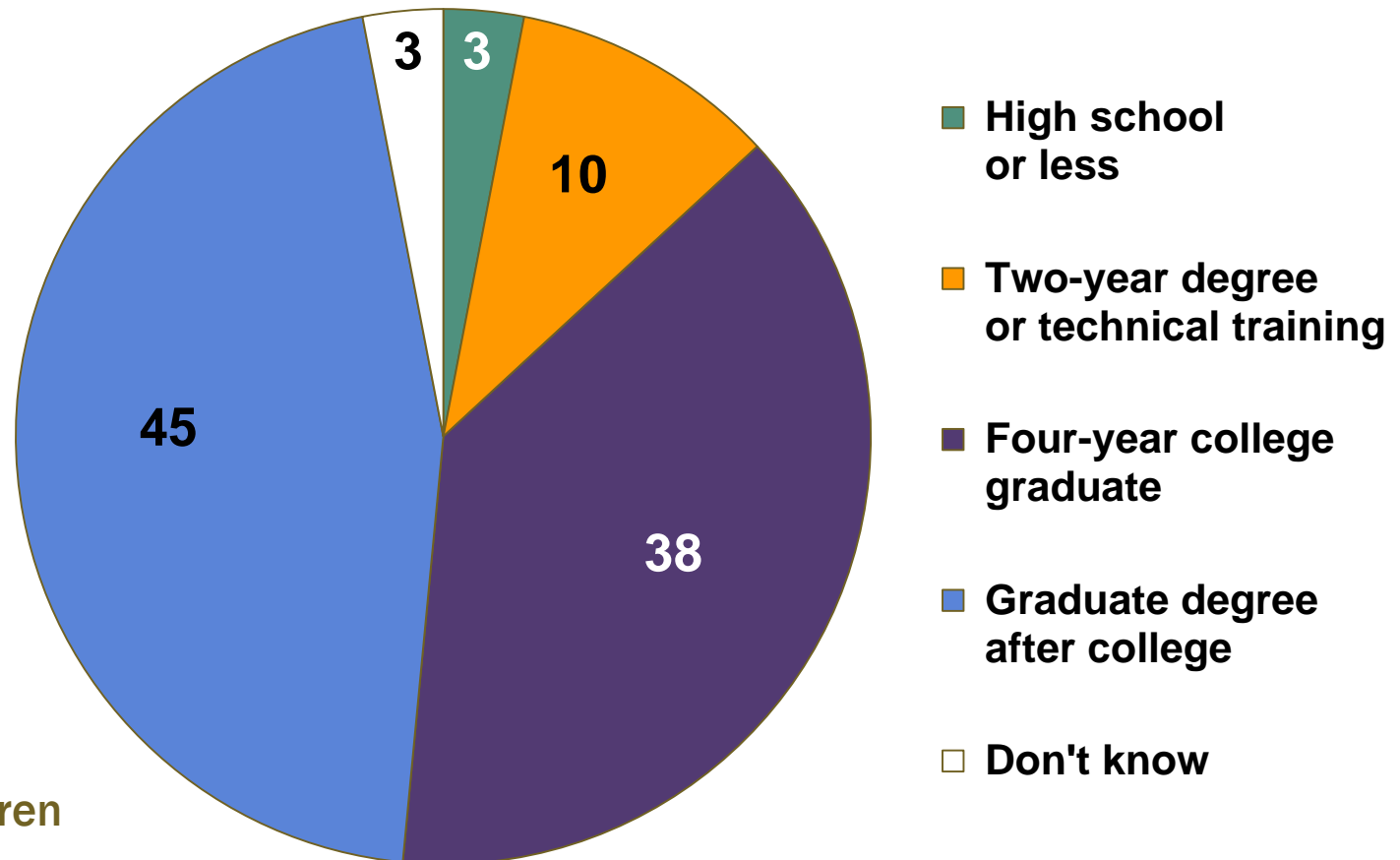
# Two-Year Degrees

How much does a two-year community college degree or technical training help a person to be successful in today's work world?



# Parents' Educational Hopes

What do you hope will be the highest grade level that your youngest child will achieve?

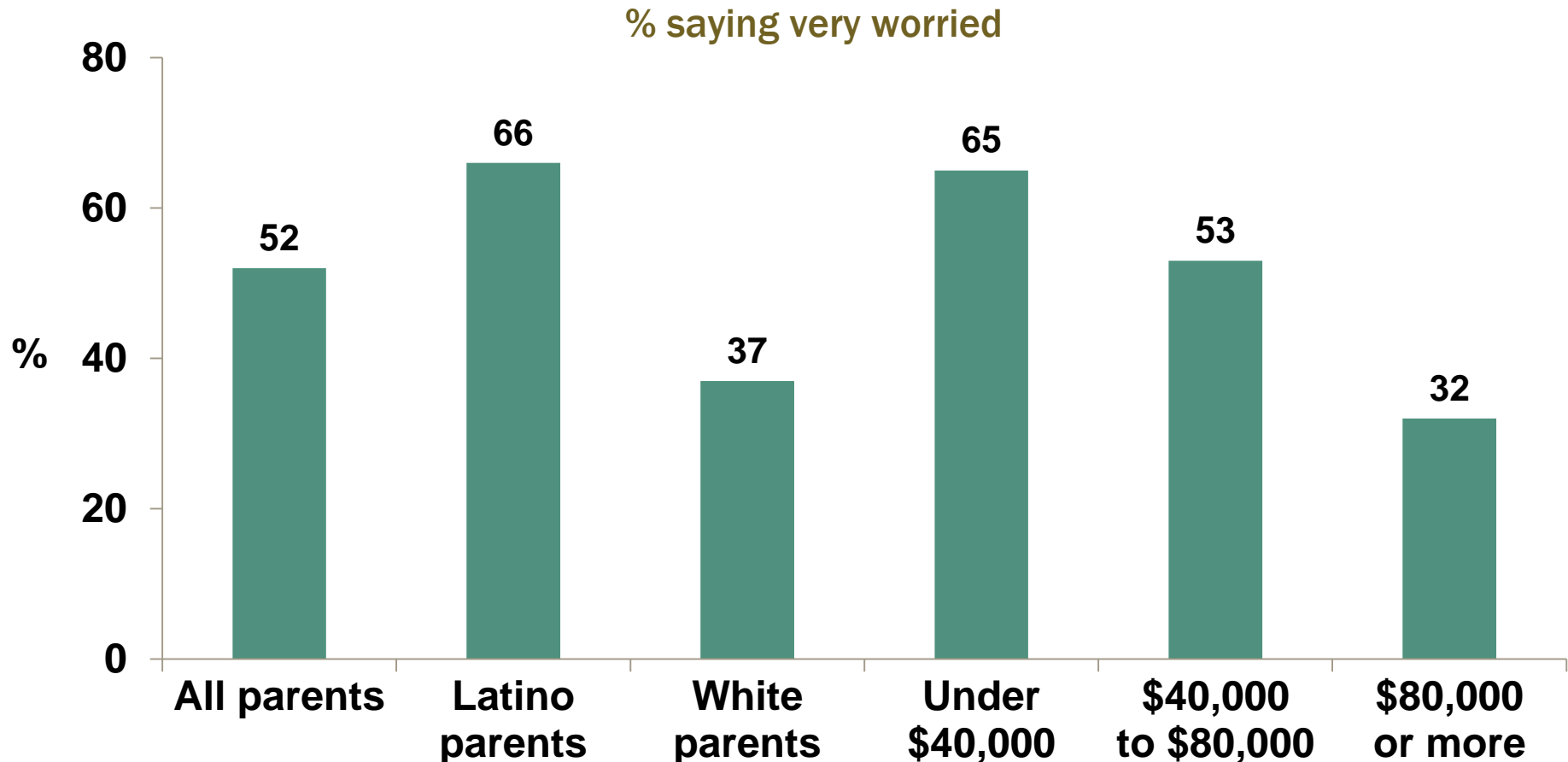


Parents of children  
18 or younger



# Parents' Worries about Paying for College

How worried are you about being able to afford a college education for your youngest child?



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# Conclusions

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- Amid concerns about budget cuts, most say higher education system heading in wrong direction
- Californians more critical of governor's handling of higher ed than of his job overall
- Positive ratings for three branches, but showing declines since 2007
- Higher ed a high priority, but voters split on paying higher taxes, oppose raising fees
- College viewed as necessary; many believe qualified candidates lack opportunity to go
- Most parents want children to get college or postgraduate degree, but worry about affording it



# Upcoming PPIC Statewide Surveys

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- December
  - *Californians and Their Government*
- January
  - *Californians and Their Government (state budget focus)*
- March
  - *Californians and Their Government*



# Notes on the use of these slides

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These slides were created to accompany a presentation. They do not include full documentation of sources, data samples, methods, and interpretations. To avoid misinterpretations, please contact:

Mark Baldassare or Sonja Petek:  
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Thank you for your interest in this work.

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