

# PPIC Statewide Survey: Californians and Their Government

Mark Baldassare, Dean Bonner,  
Sonja Petek, Nicole Willcoxon

*January 2011*



# Outline

---

- **PPIC Statewide Surveys**
- **State Political Context**
- **California State Budget**
- **Conclusions**



# PPIC Statewide Survey Mission

---

- 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
  - 240,000+ Californians since 1998
  - 100+ general, issue, and regional surveys



# Californians and Their Government

---

- General series funded by The Irvine Foundation
- State political context
  - Overall mood of residents; ratings of Governor Brown and legislature
  - State tax system; state and local realignment
- California state budget
  - Spending and taxation; structural reform
  - Governor's budget plan
- Telephone interviews, January 11–18
  - 2,004 adults / 987 likely voters
    - $\pm 3.5\%$  margin of error for adults
    - $\pm 4.2\%$  for likely voters



# Outline

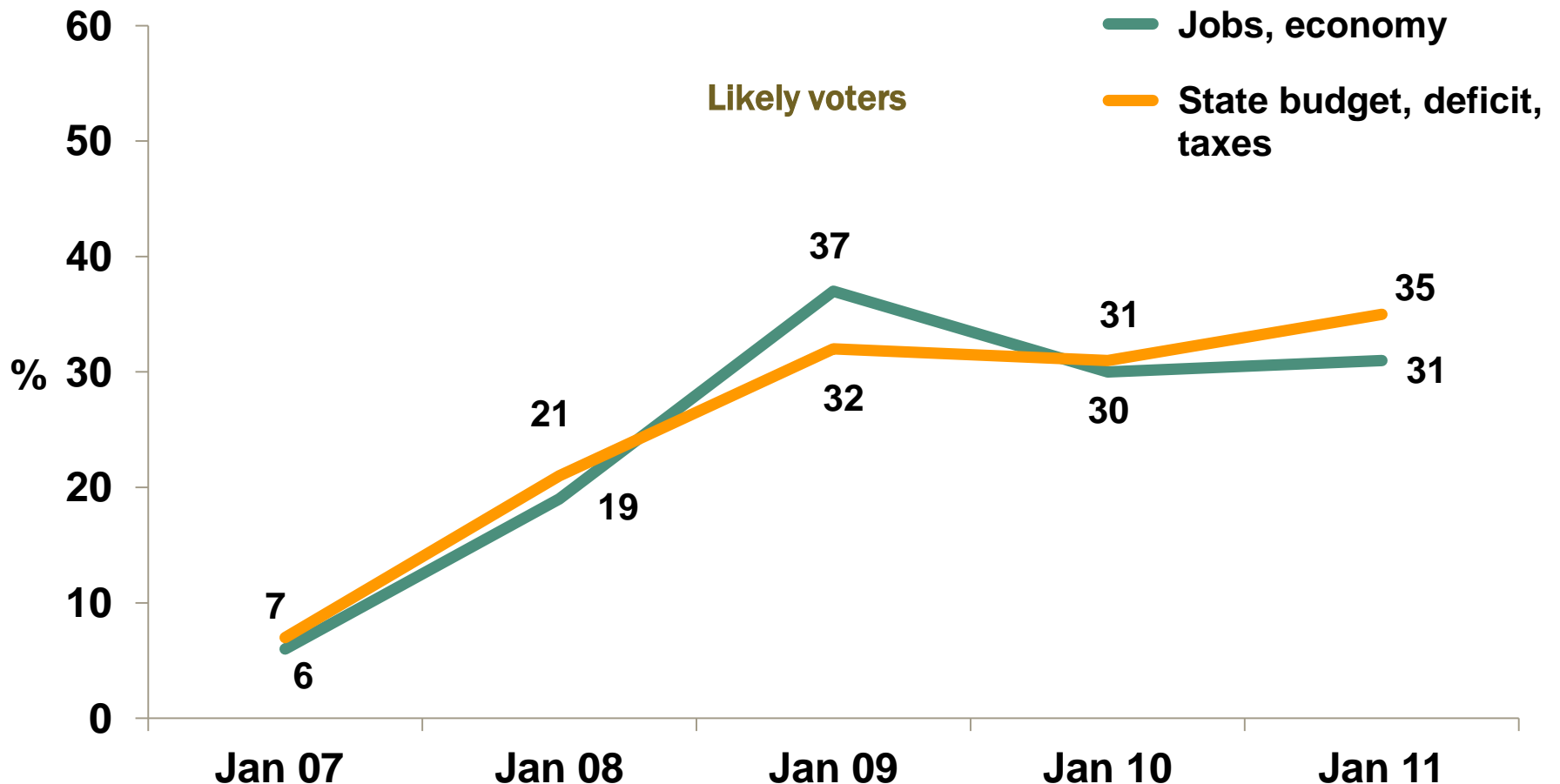
---

- PPIC Statewide Surveys
- State Political Context
- California State Budget
- Conclusions



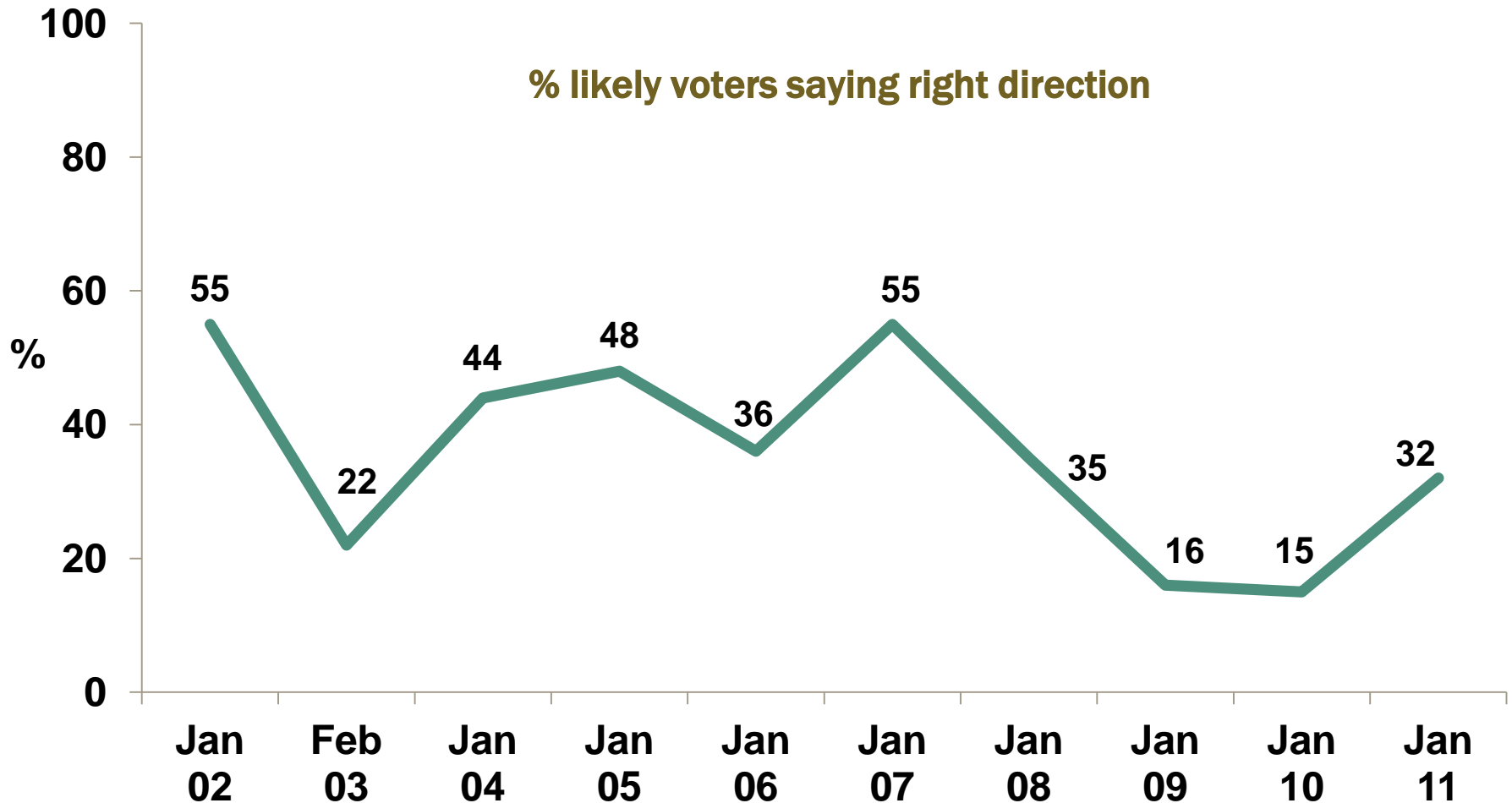
# Most Important Issue

Which one issue facing California today do you think is the most important for the governor and state legislature to work on...?



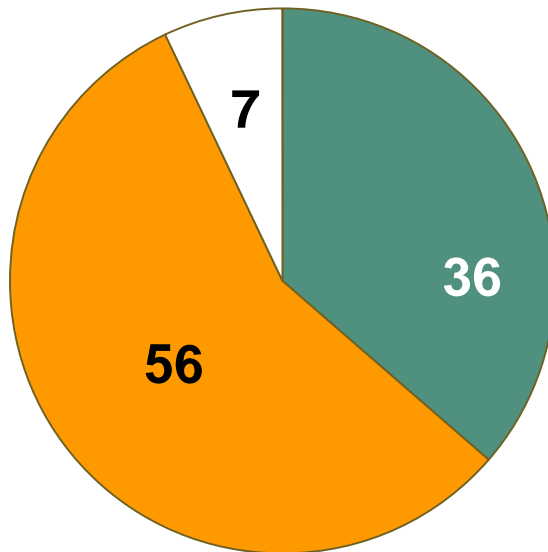
# Direction of the State

Do you think things in California are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?



# Economic Conditions

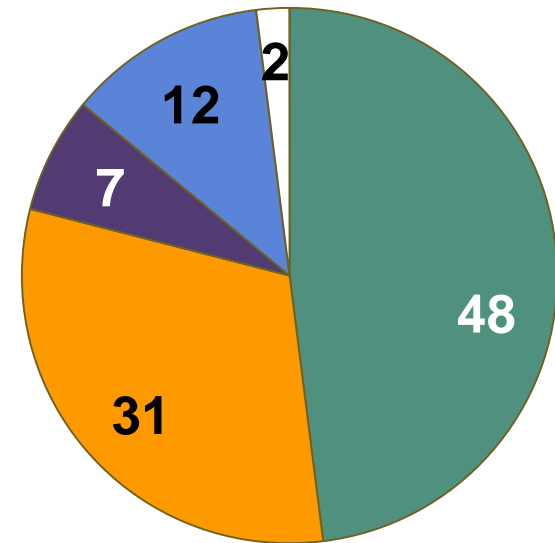
Turning to economic conditions in California, do you think that during the next 12 months we will have good times financially or bad times?



- Good times
- Bad times
- Don't know

Would you say that California is in an economic recession, or not? (*if yes:* Do you think it is in a serious, moderate, or a mild recession)

All adults



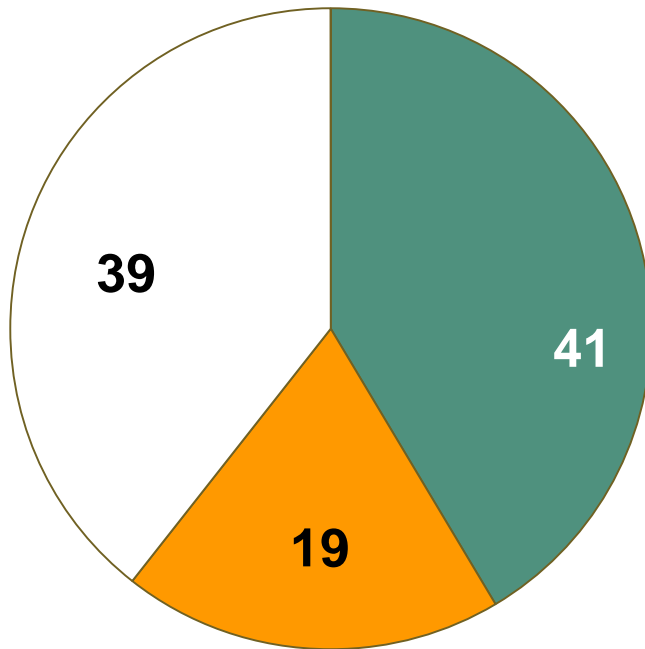
- Serious recession
- Moderate recession
- Mild recession
- Not in a recession
- Don't know





# Overall Approval Ratings

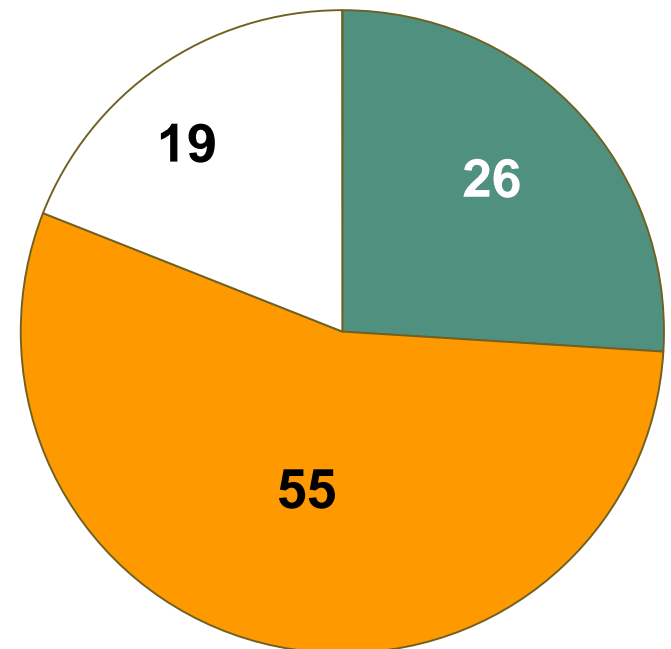
Governor Brown



- Approve
- Disapprove
- Don't know

State Legislature

All adults

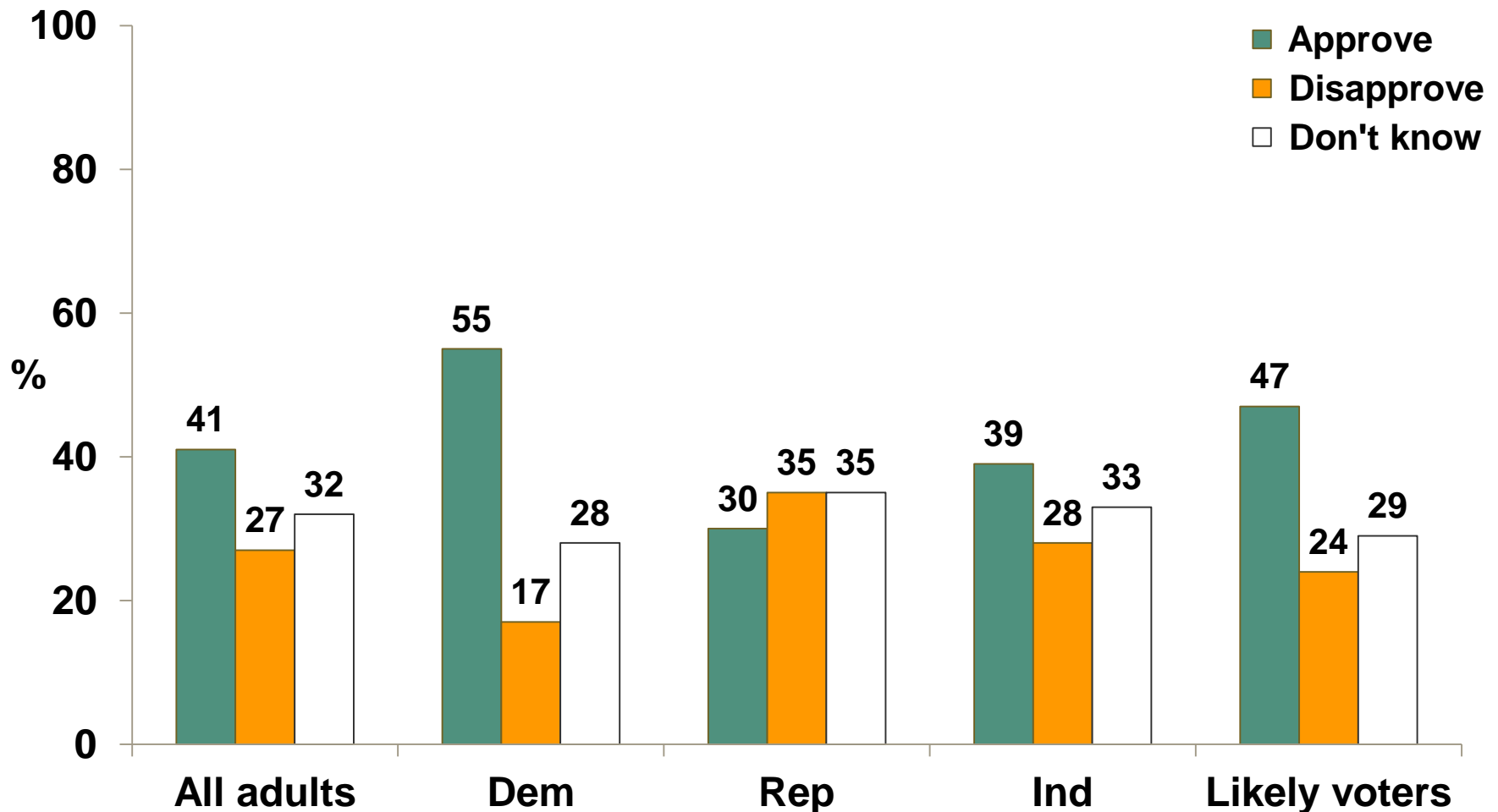


- Approve
- Disapprove
- Don't know



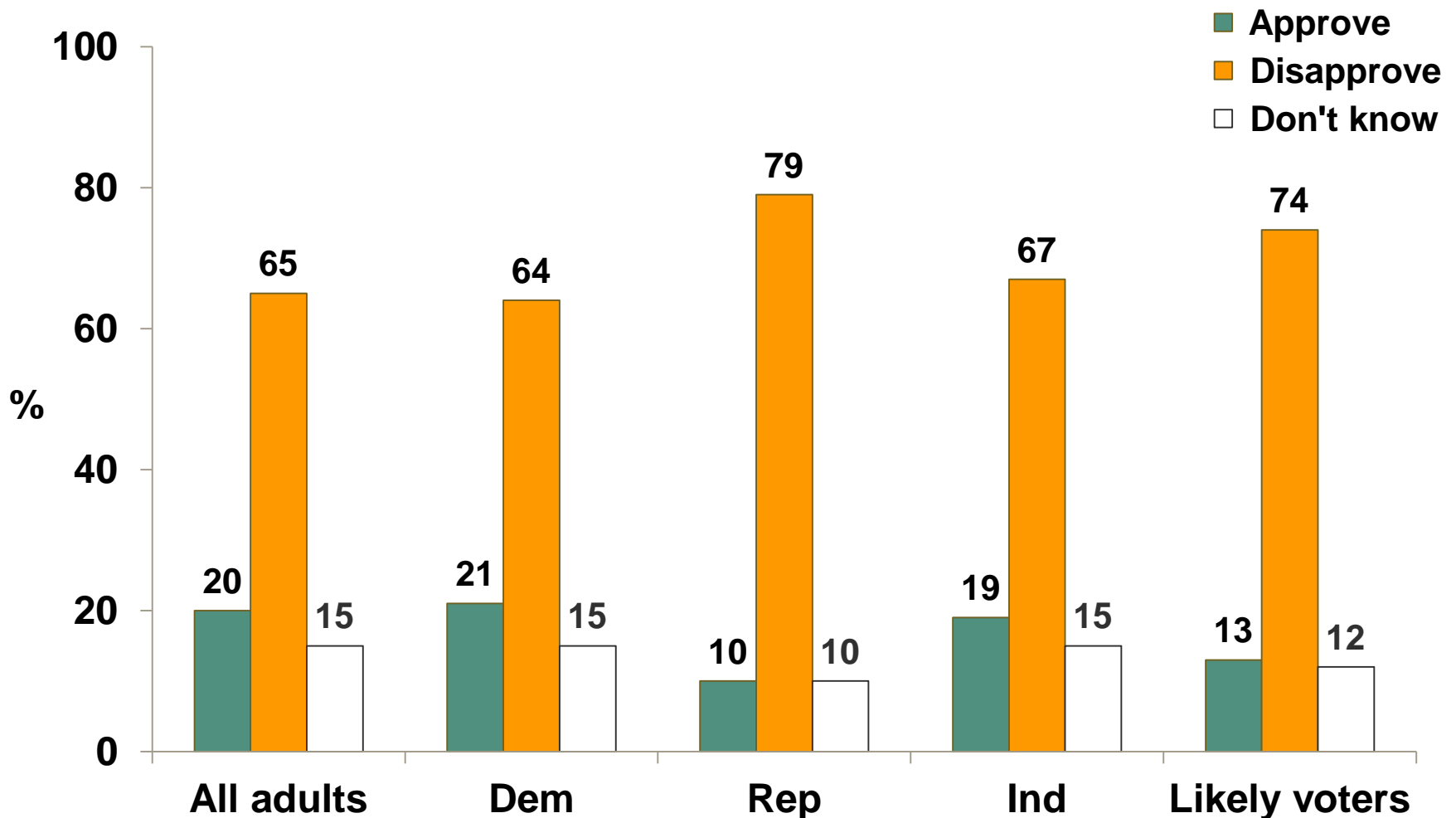
# Approval of the Governor on State Budget and Taxes

Overall, from what you know so far, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Governor Brown is handling the issue of the state budget and taxes?



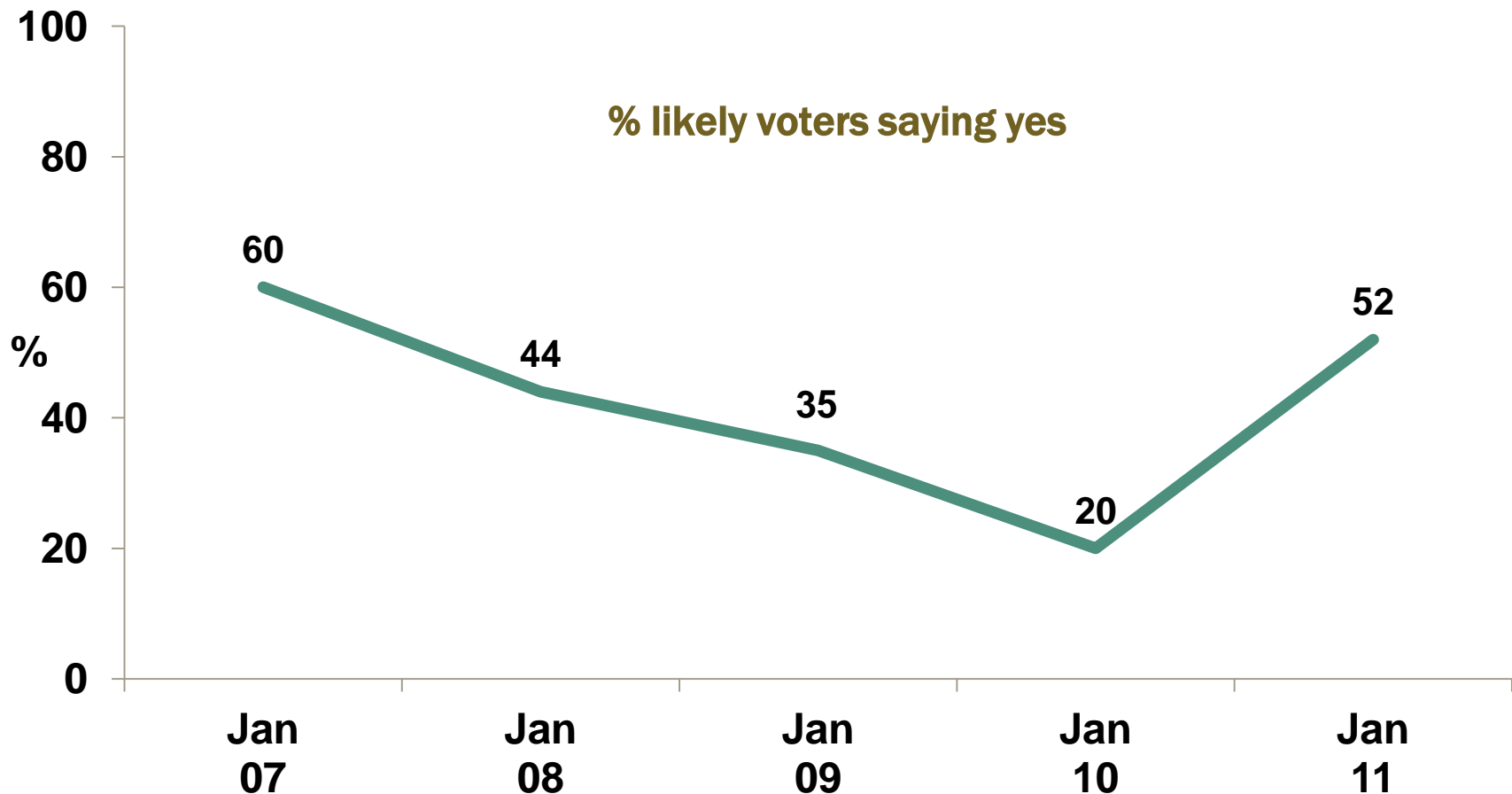
# Approval of the Legislature on State Budget and Taxes

Overall, from what you know so far, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California Legislature is handling the issue of the state budget and taxes?



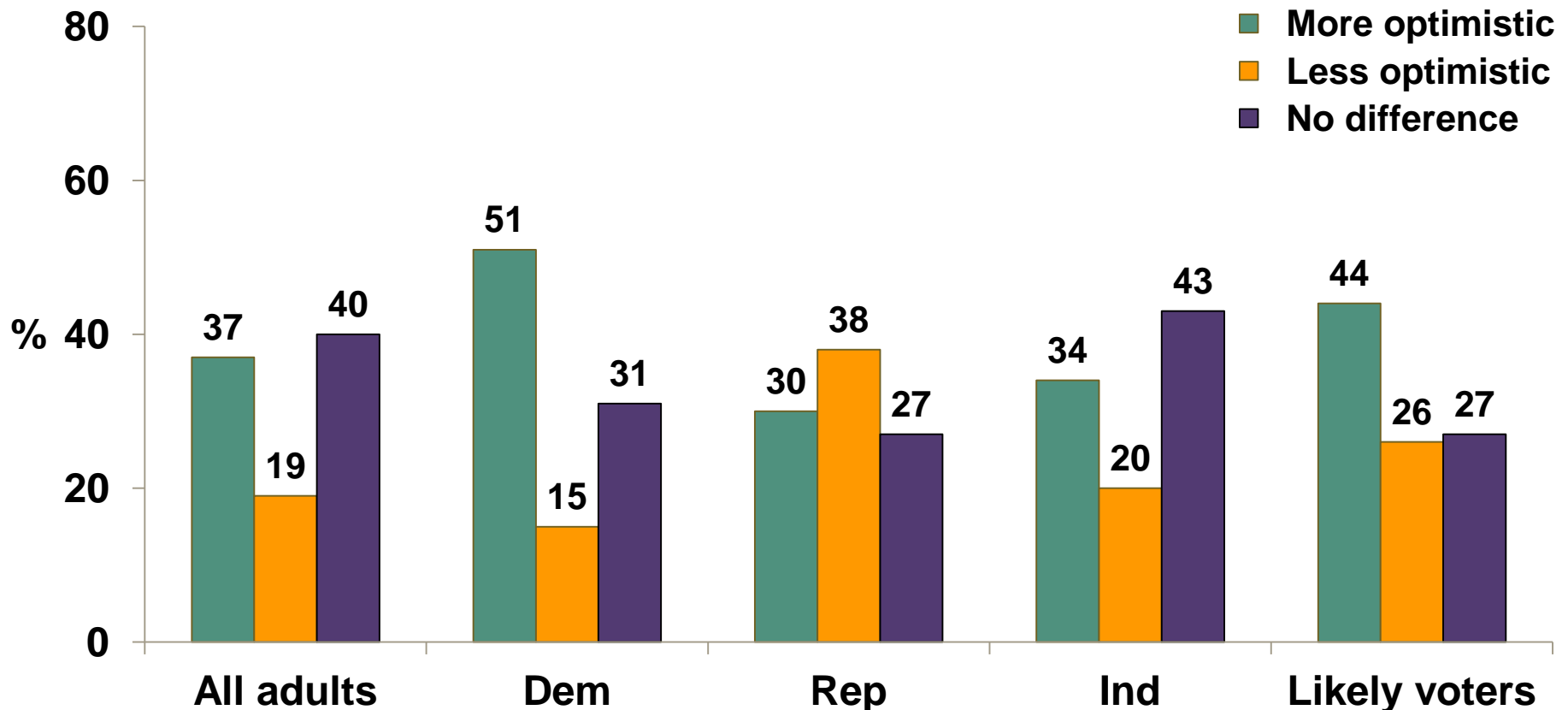
# Governor and Legislature Working Together

Do you think that Governor \_\_\_\_\_ and the state legislature will be able to work together and accomplish a lot in the next year, or not?



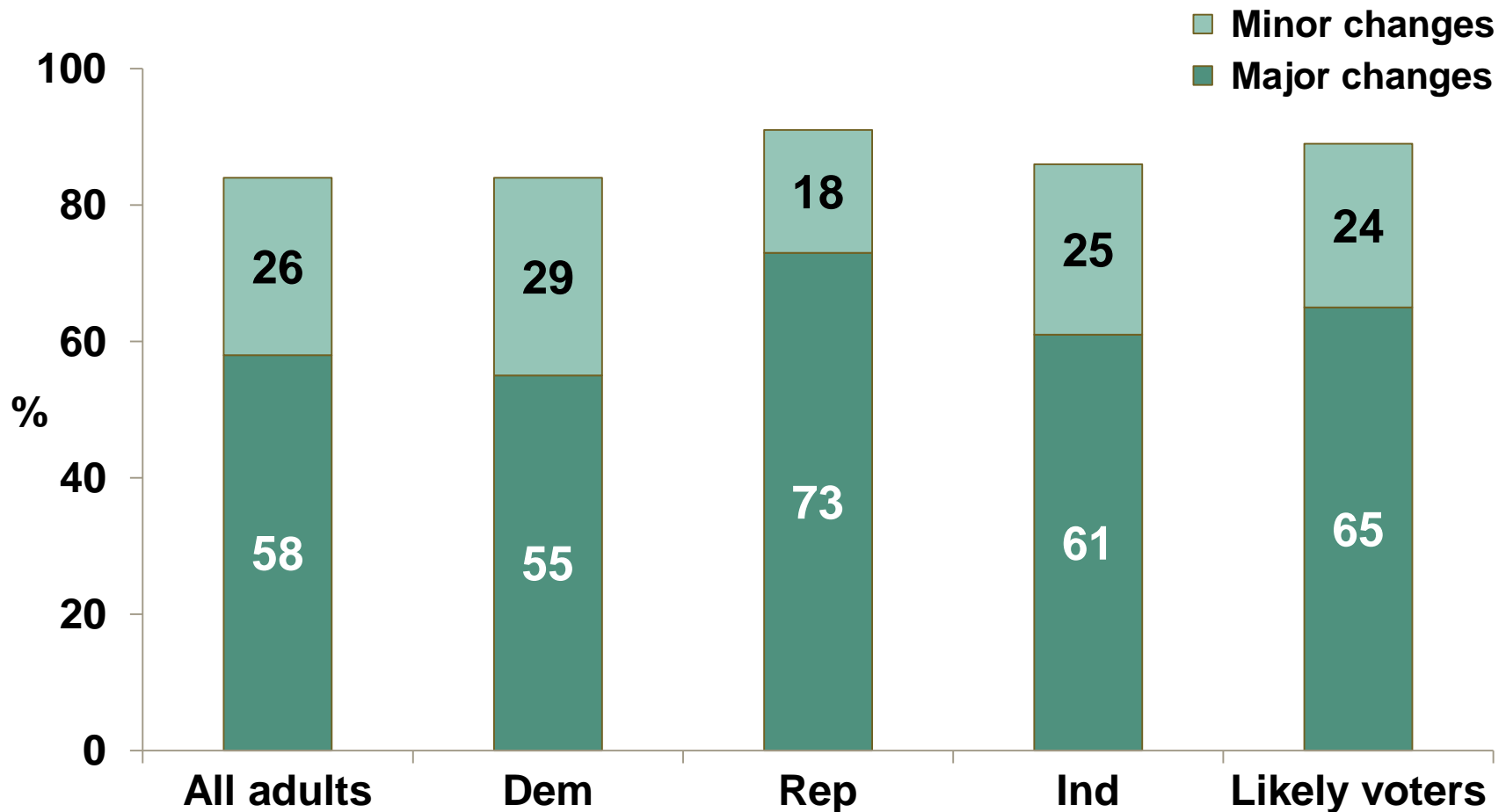
# Budget Situation With New Majority Voting Threshold

As you may know, voters recently passed Proposition 25, a constitutional amendment that reduces the legislative vote requirement to pass a state budget from a two-thirds vote to a simple majority, or 50 percent plus one. Does this new vote requirement make you ...?



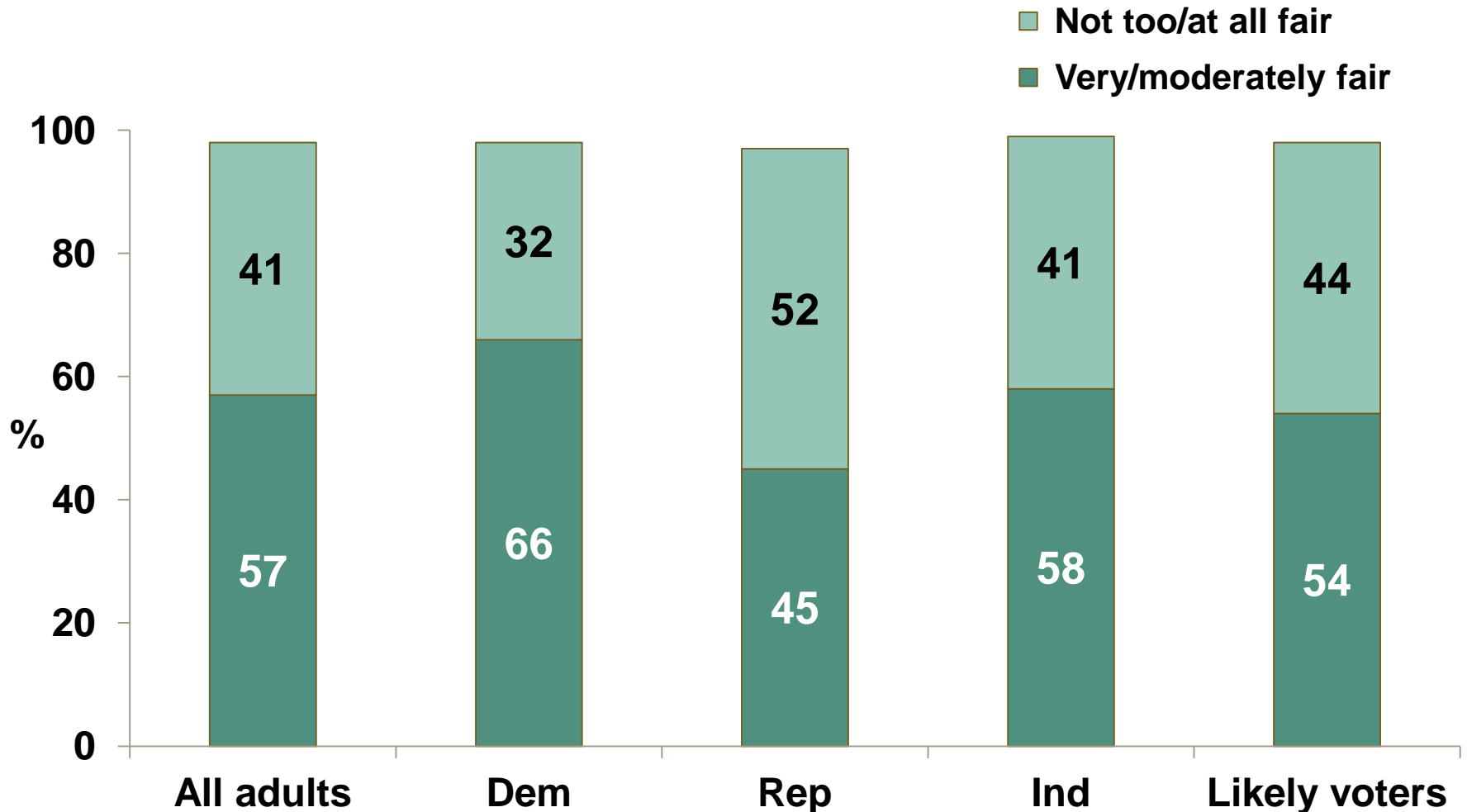
# Perceptions of State and Local Tax System

Overall, do you think the state and local tax system is in need of major changes, minor changes, or do you think it is fine the way it is?



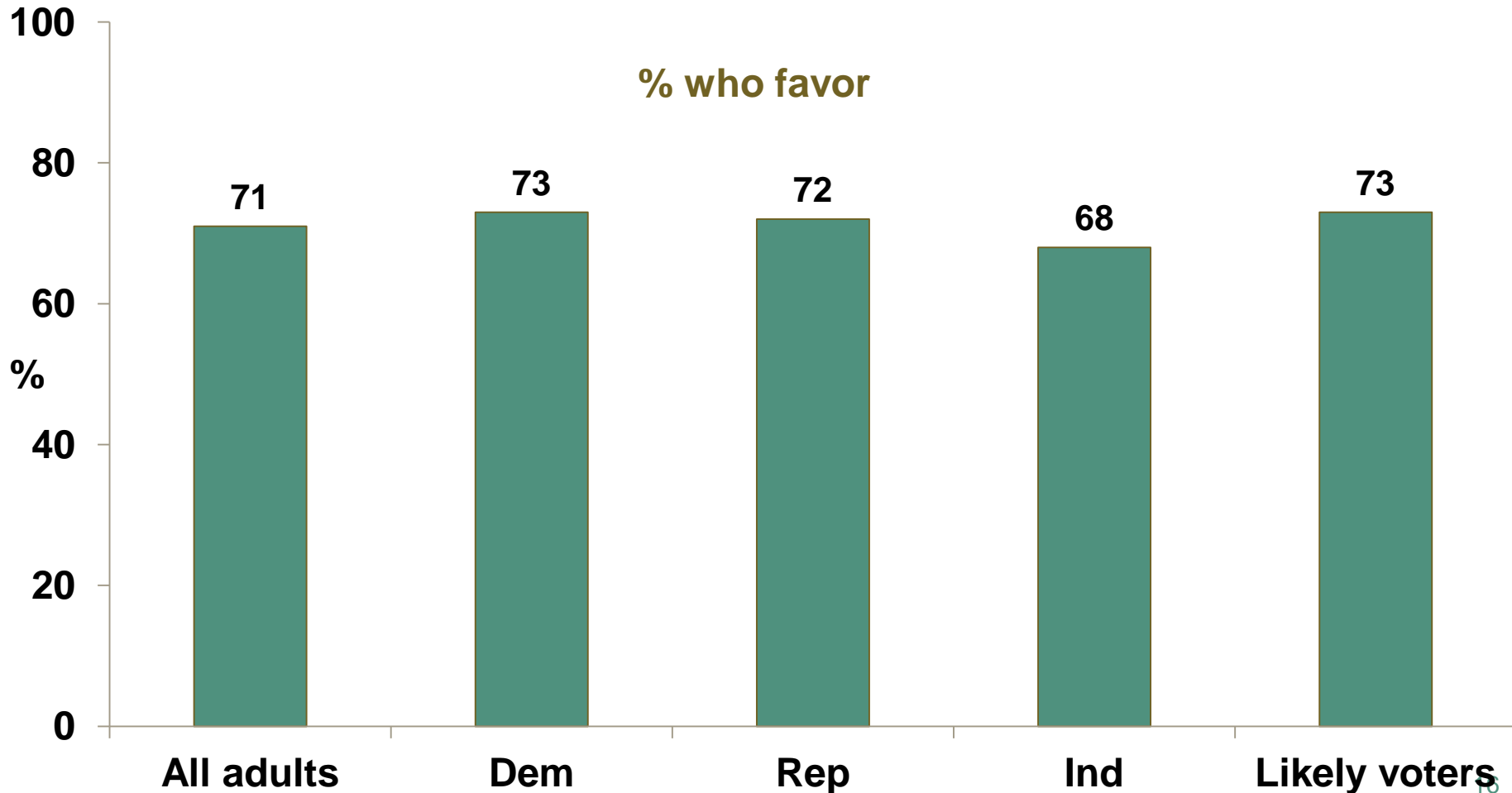
# Fairness of State and Local Tax System

Overall, how fair do you think our present state and local tax system is—would you say it is very fair, moderately fair, not too fair, or not at all fair?



# State and Local Realignment

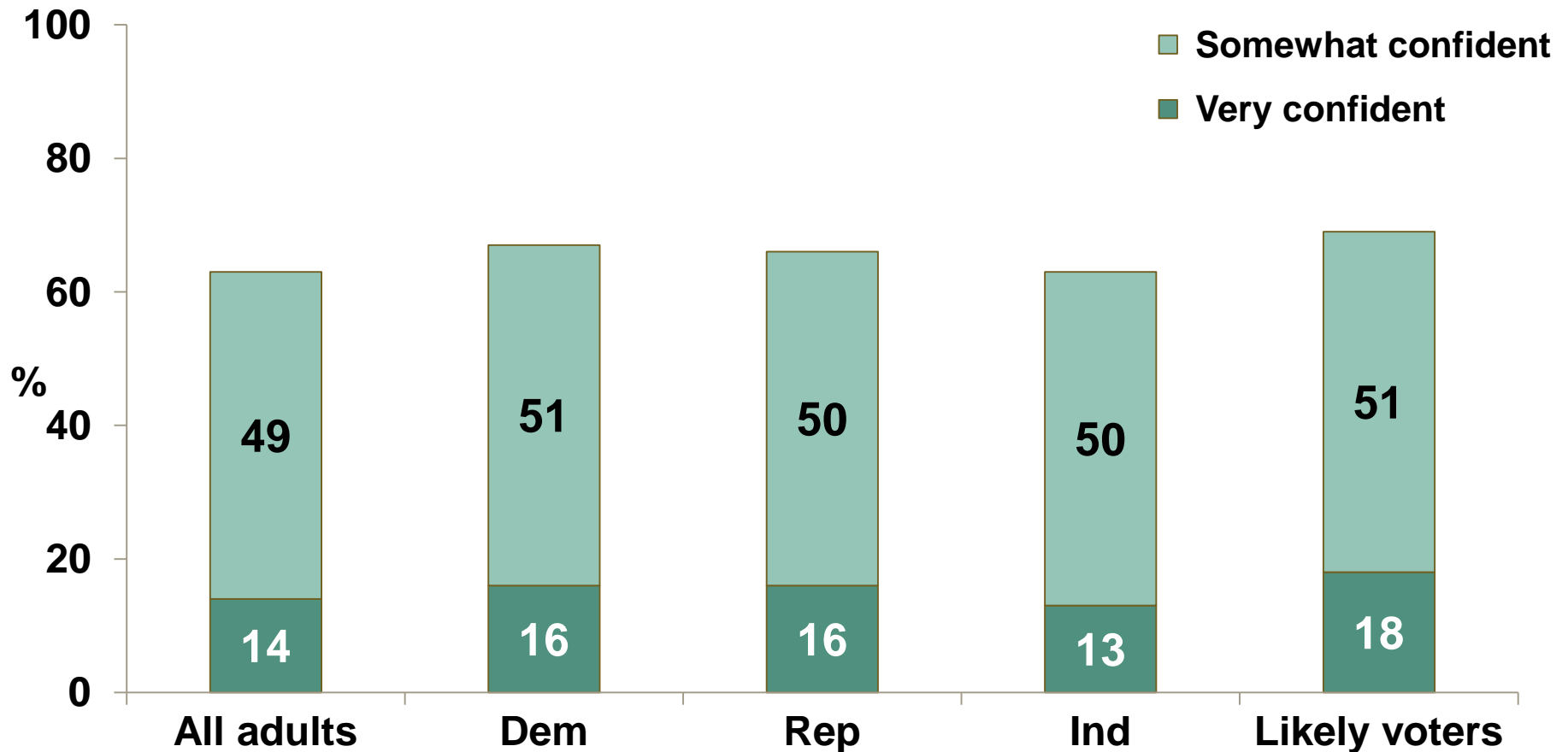
Would you favor or oppose a shift of some tax dollars and fees from the state government to local governments, in order for local governments to take on the responsibility of running certain programs currently run by the state?





# Realignment and Confidence in Local Government

If the state were to shift some tax dollars and fees to local governments, how confident are you that local governments would be able to take on the responsibilities of running certain programs currently run by the state?



# Outline

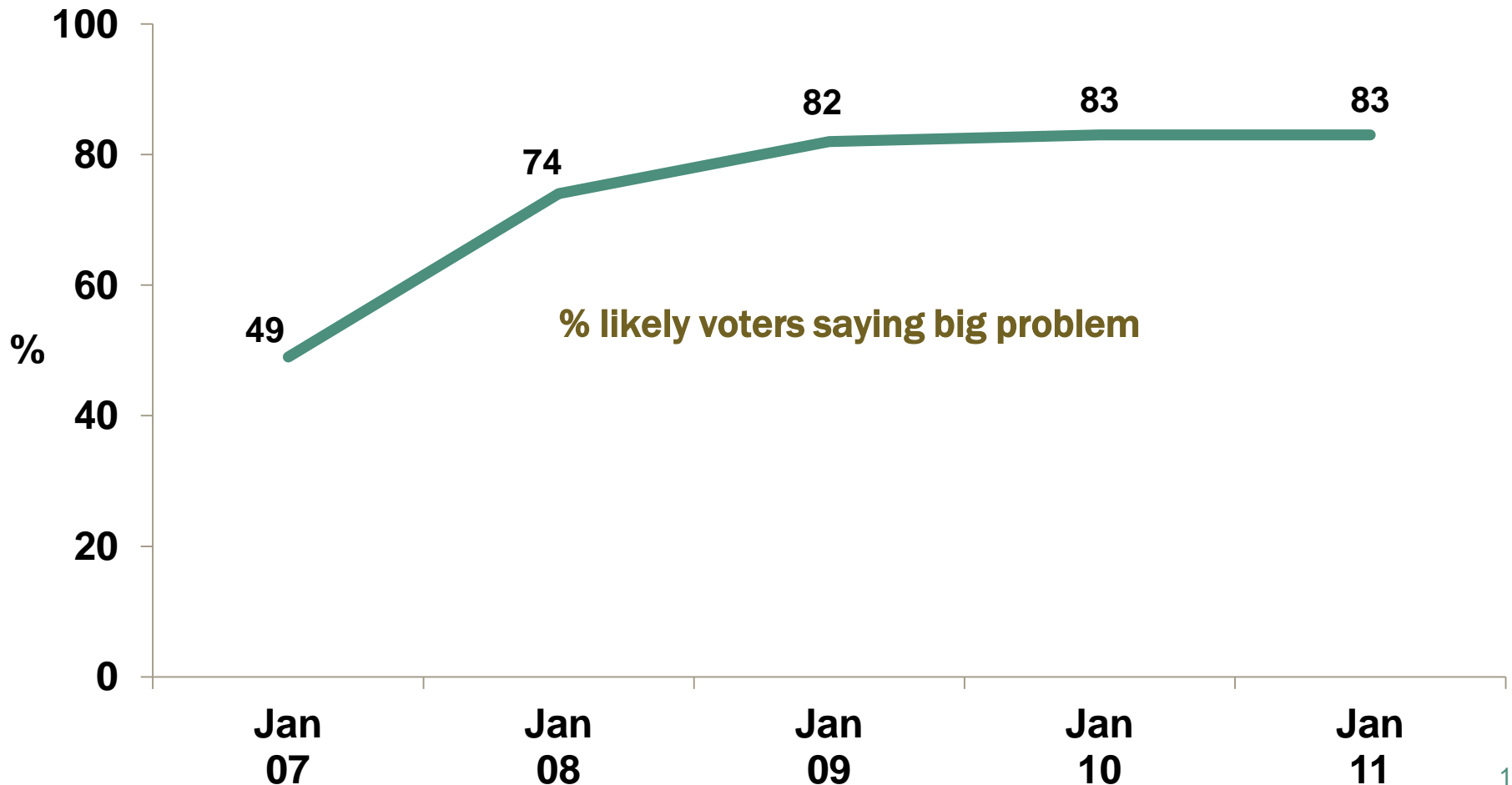
---

- PPIC Statewide Surveys
- State Political Context
- California State Budget
- Conclusions



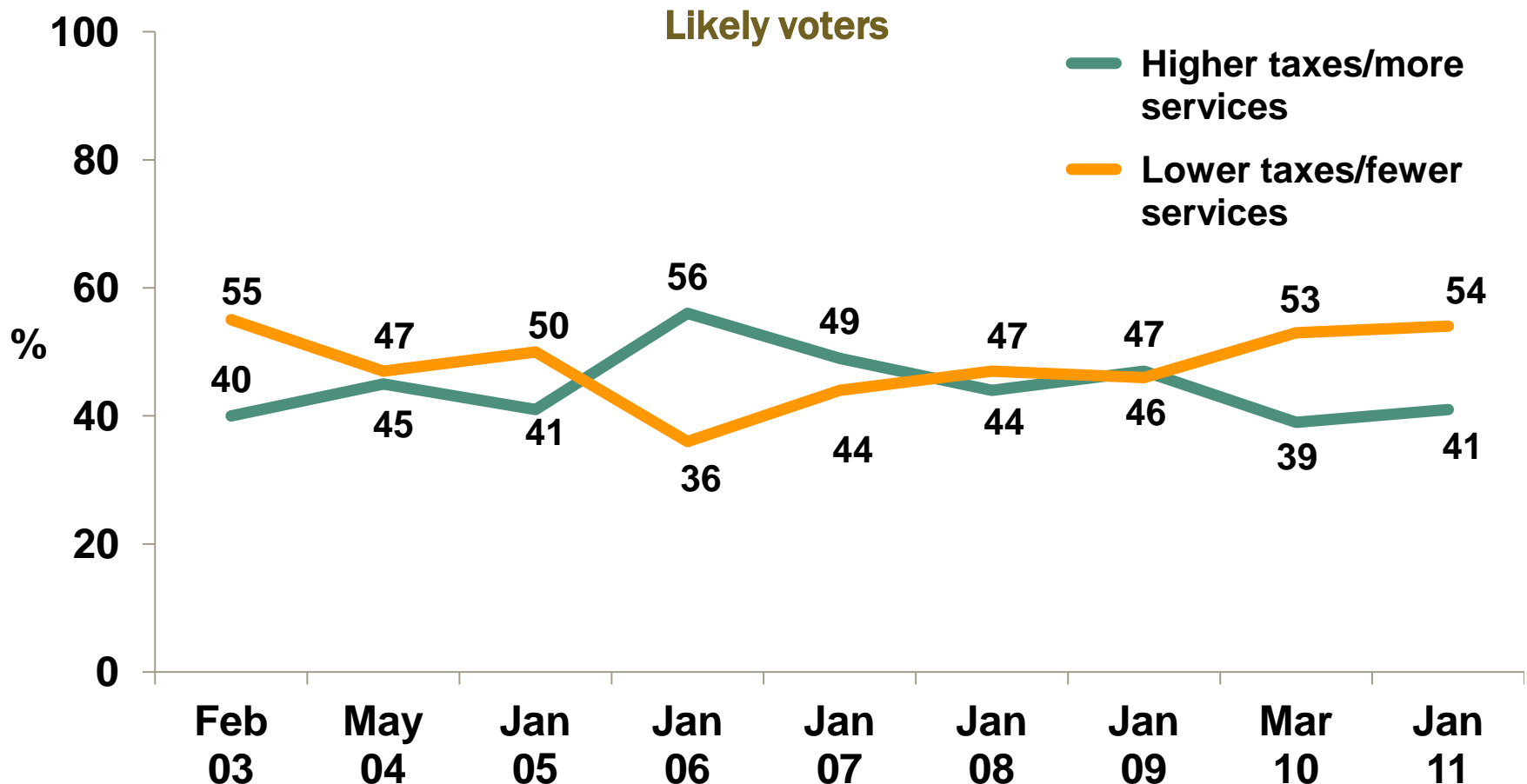
# Perceptions of the State Budget Situation

Do you think the state budget situation in California—that is, the balance between government spending and revenues—is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem for the people of California today?



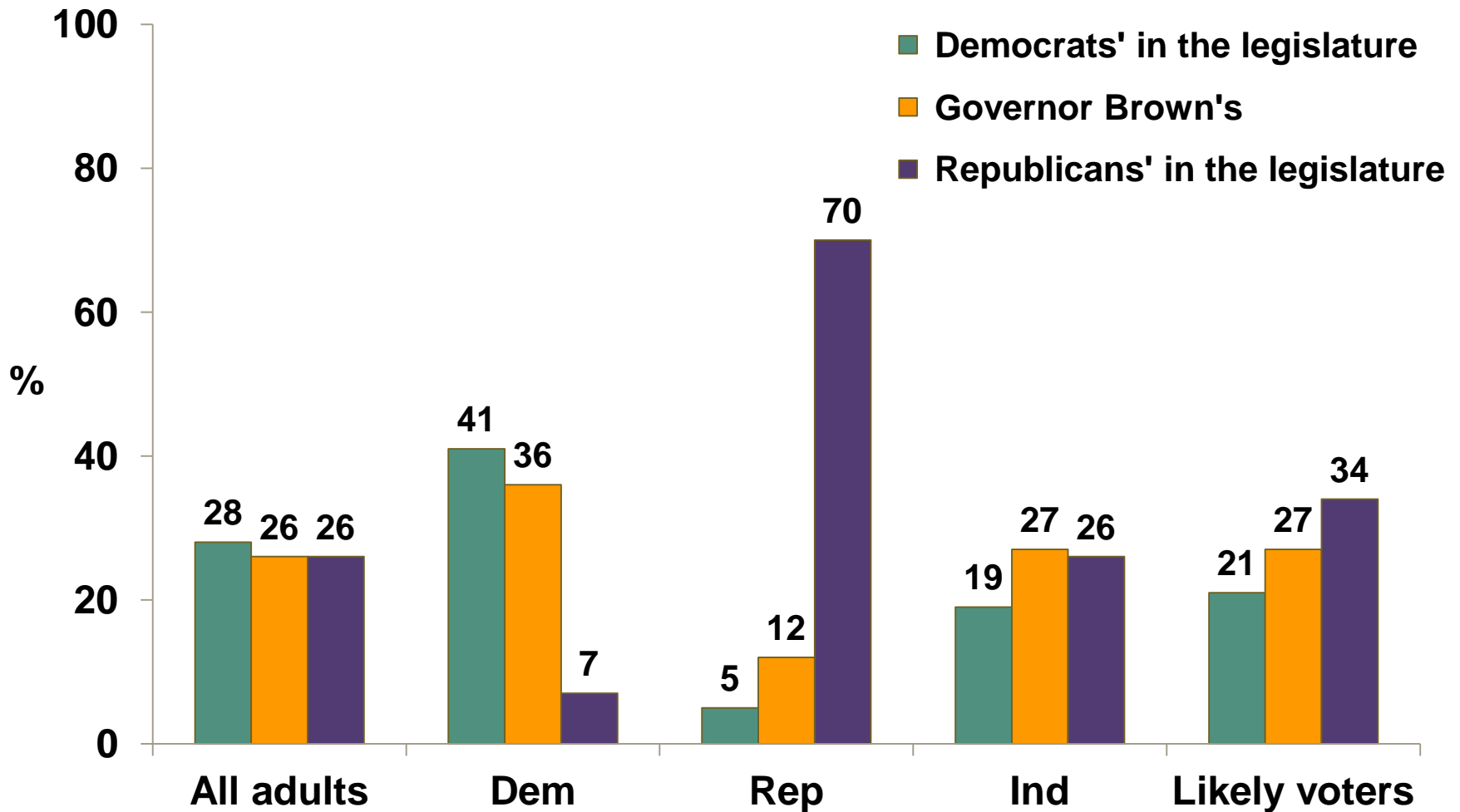
# Preference for Size of Government

In general, which of the following statements do you agree with more—I'd rather pay higher taxes and have a state government that provides more services, or I'd rather pay lower taxes and have a state government that provides fewer services?



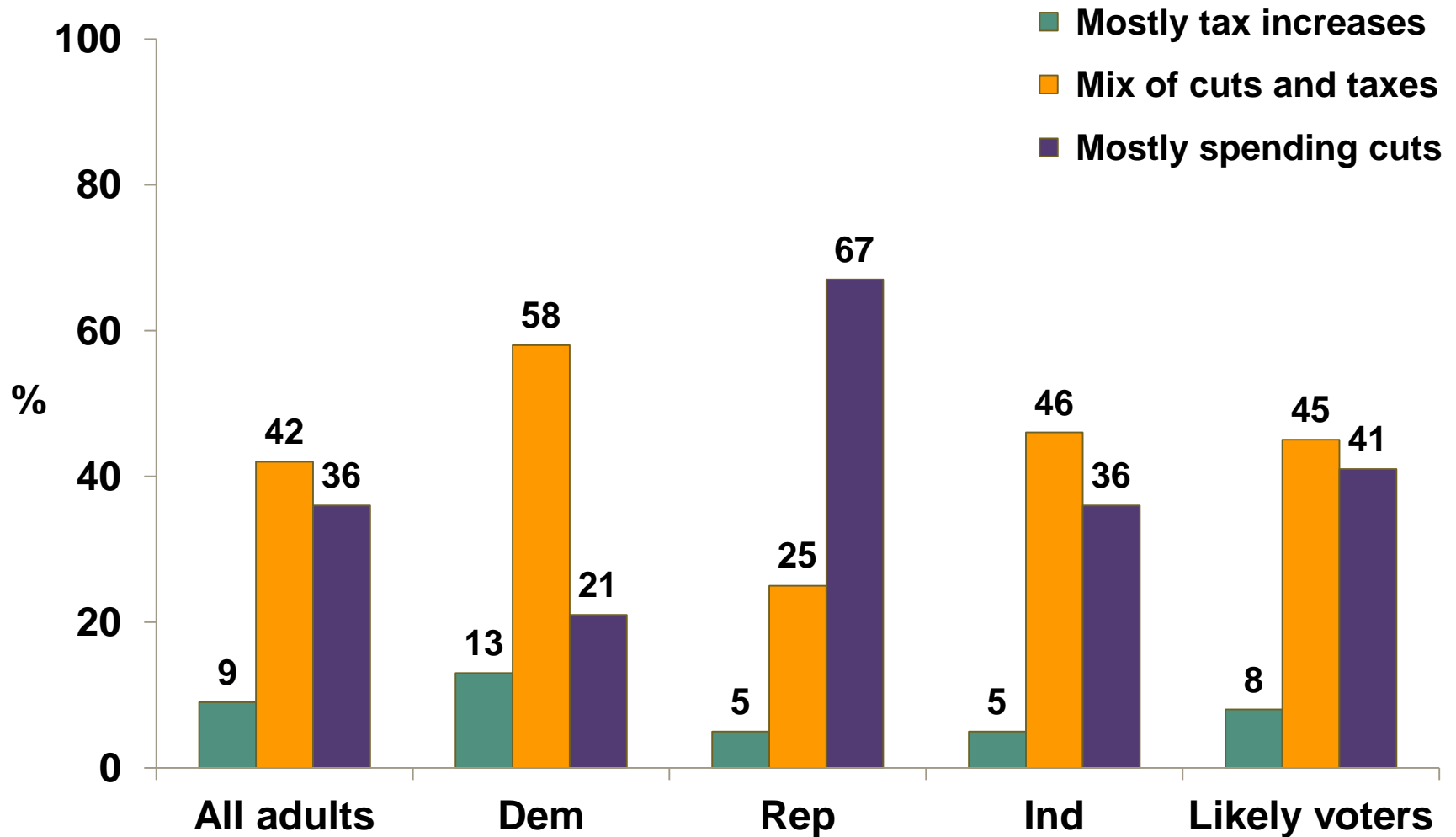
# Budget Approaches

When it comes to the tough choices involved in the state budget, both in deciding how much Californians should pay in taxes and how to fund state programs, whose approach do you most prefer?

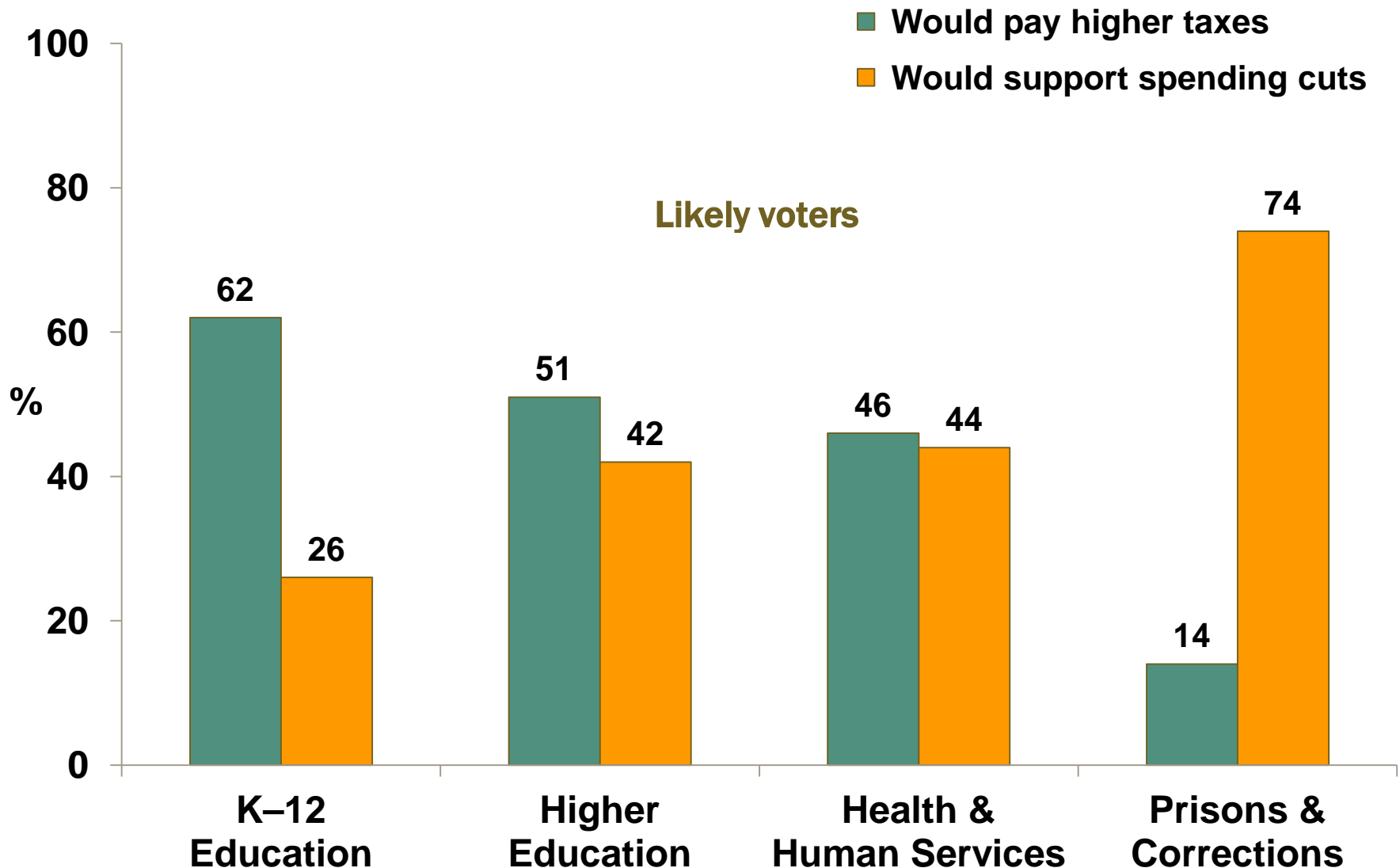


# Dealing With the Budget Gap

How would you prefer to deal with the state's budget gap?

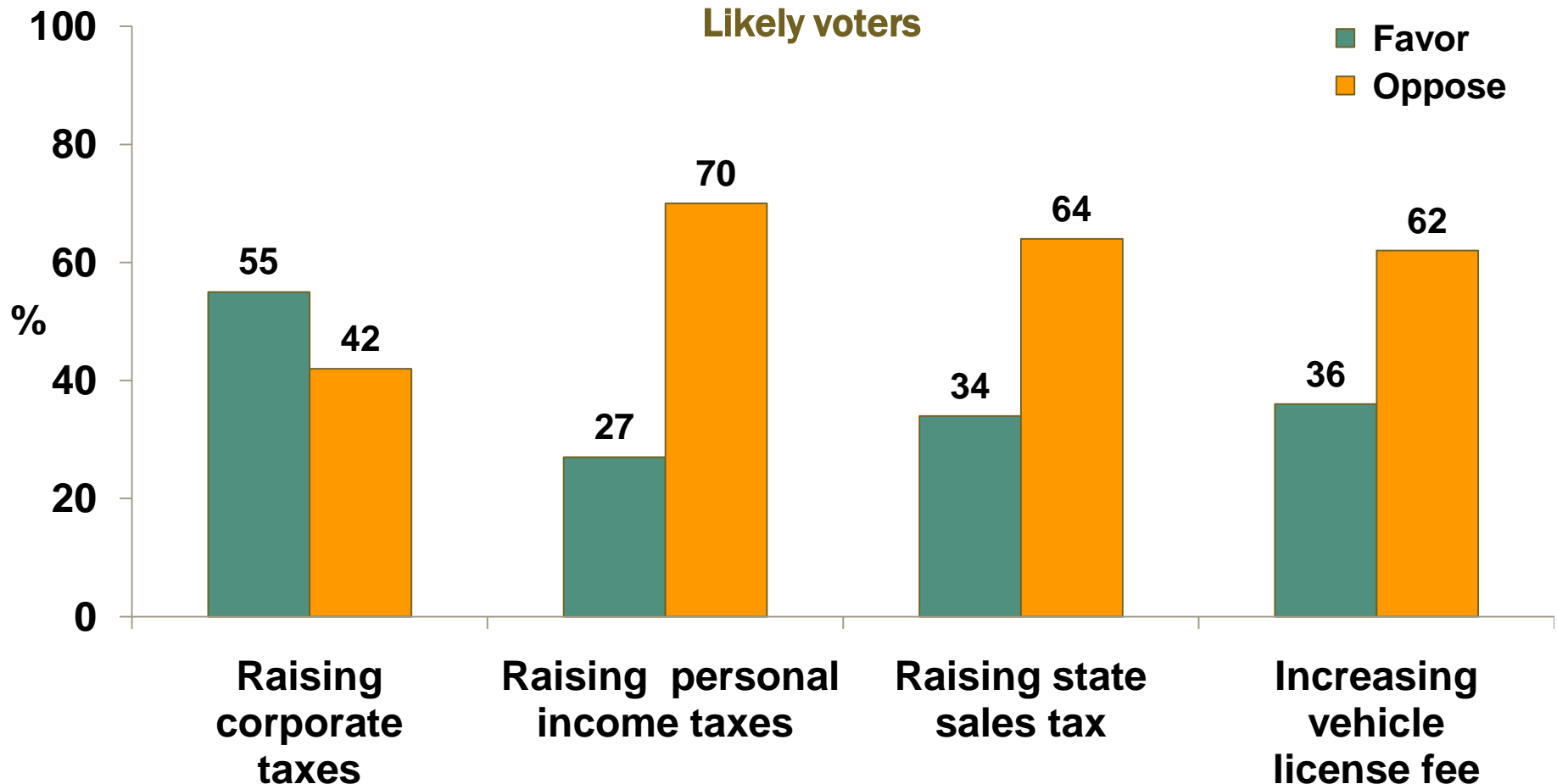


# Preferences for Major Budget Areas



# Revenue Sources

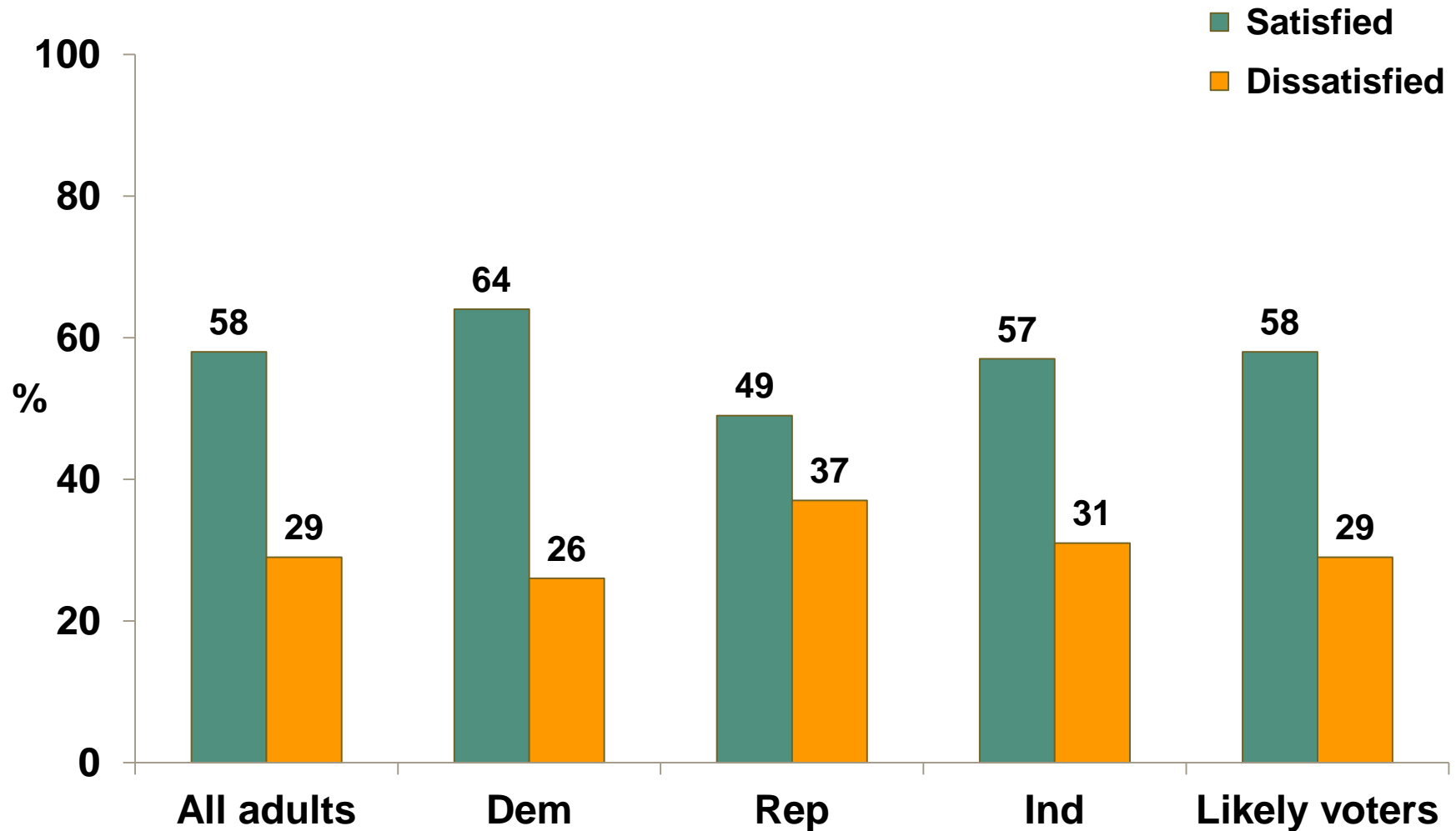
New revenue sources have been proposed to address the state budget deficit. For each of the following, please indicate whether you favor or oppose the proposal. How about...?





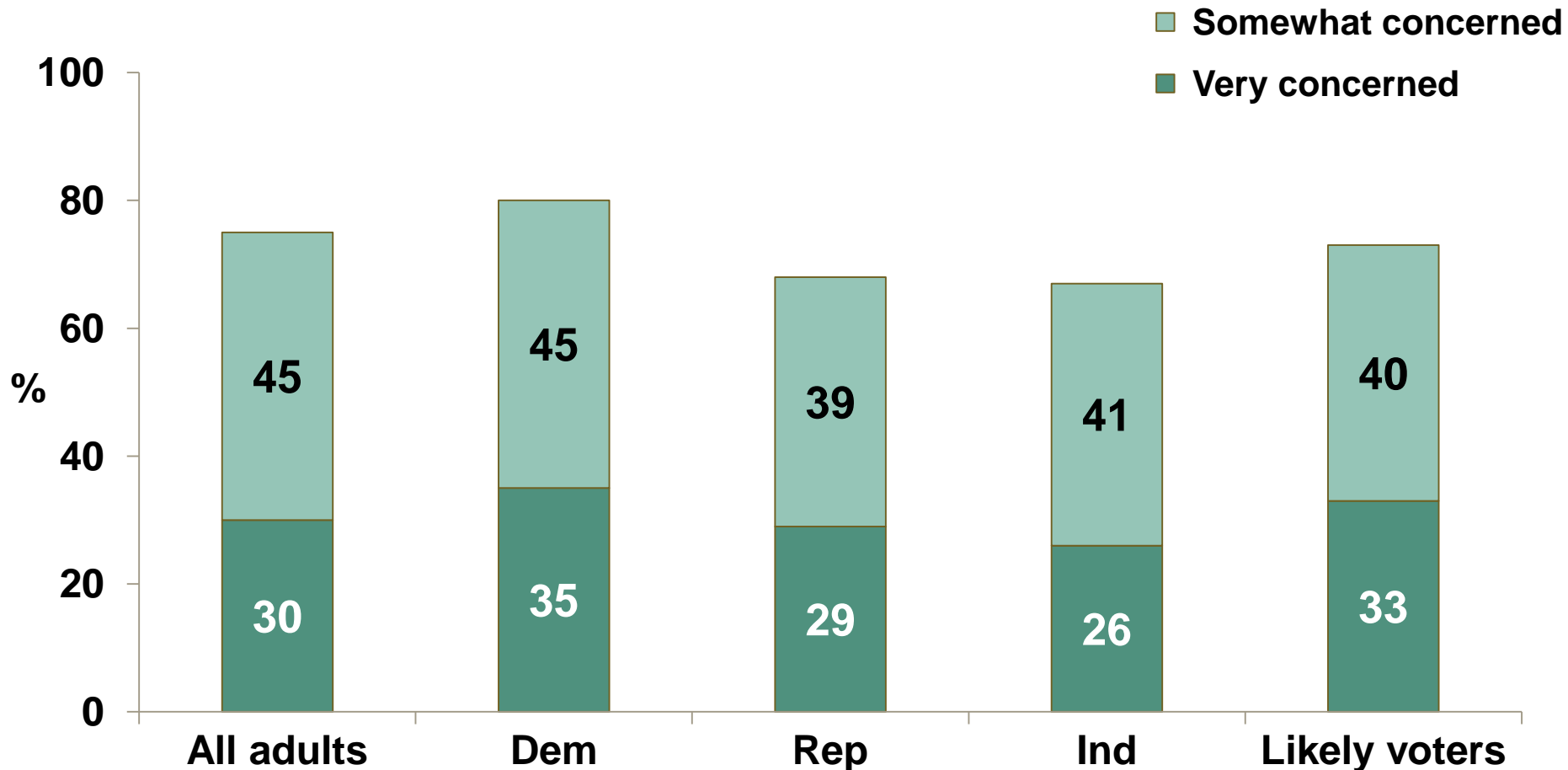
# Governor's Budget Plan

...In general, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the governor's budget plan?



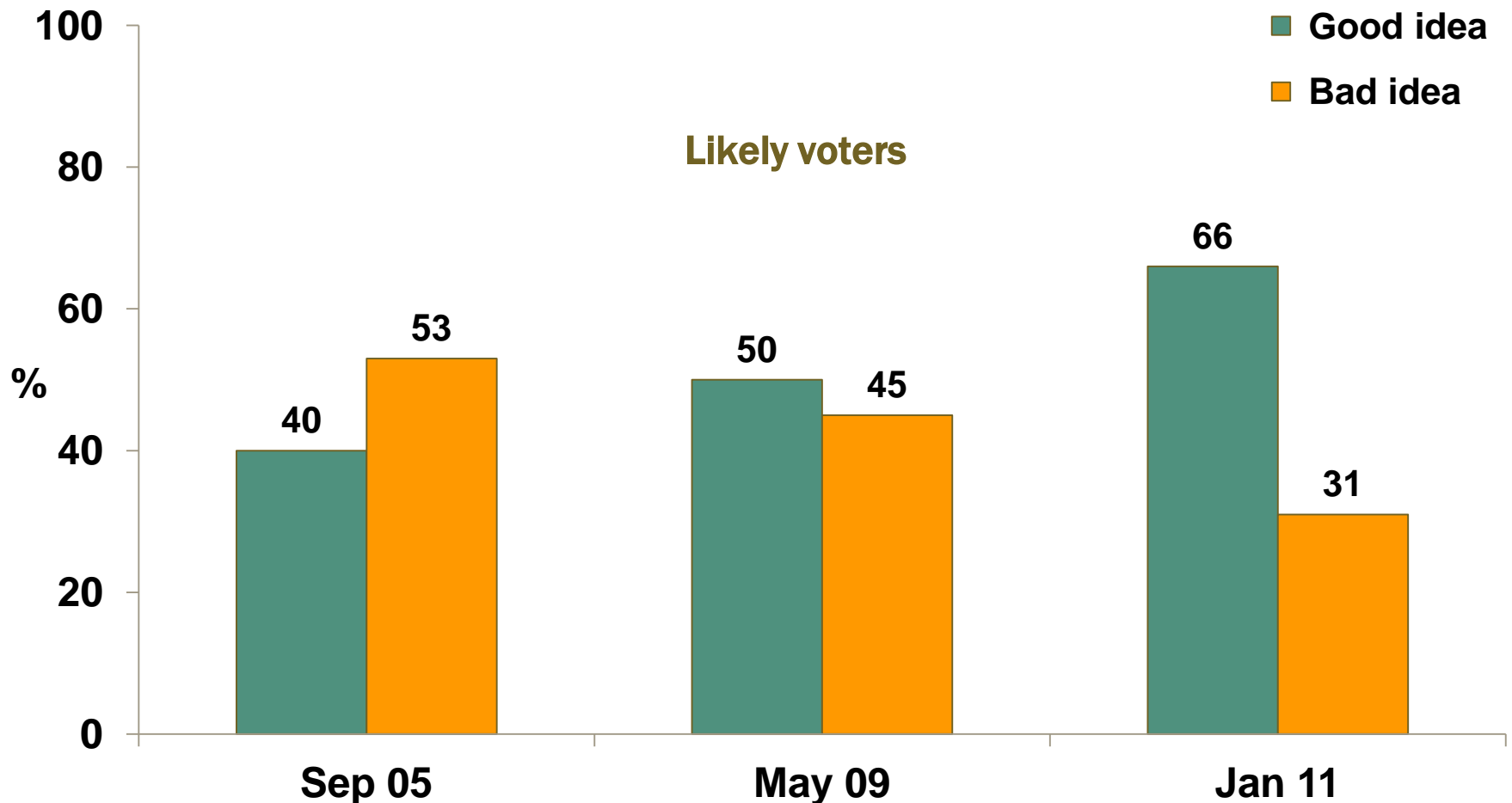
# Concern About Cuts in Governor's Budget

Overall, how concerned are you about the effects of the spending reductions in the governor's budget plan?



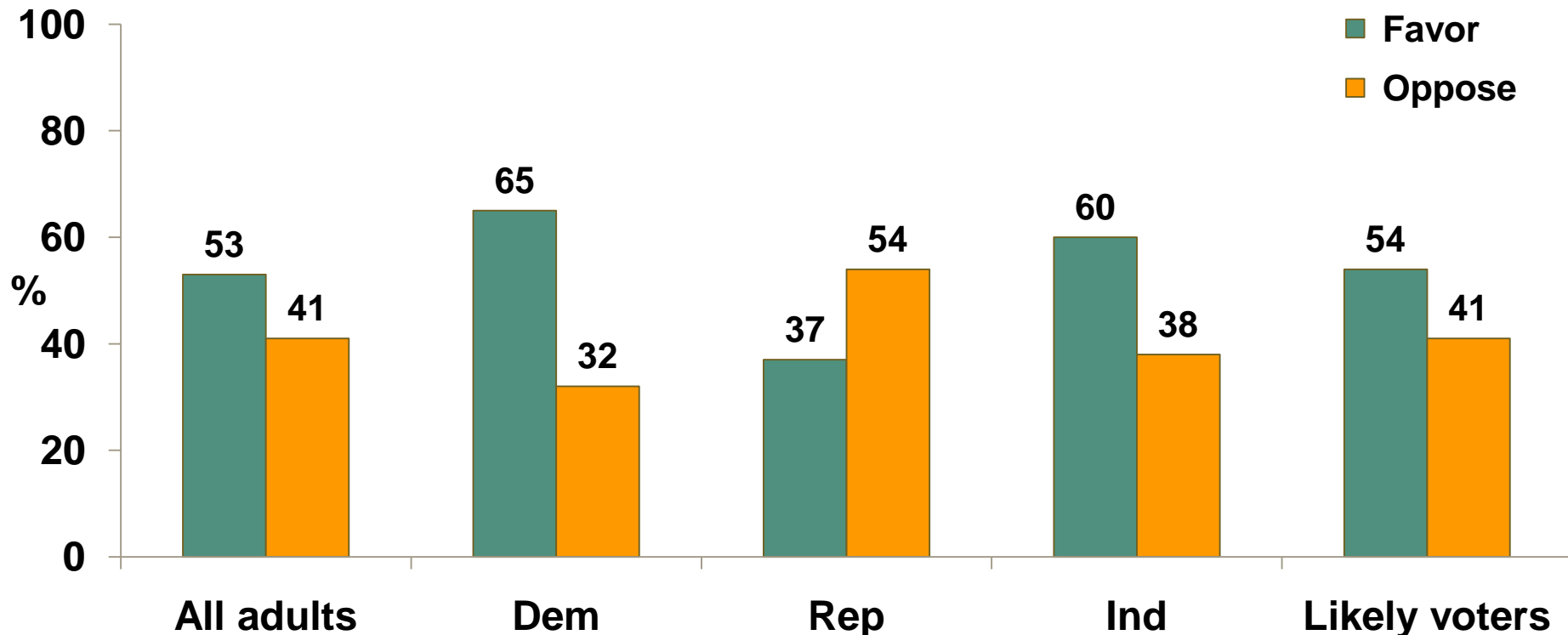
# Attitudes Toward Recent Special Elections

In general, do you think the special election is a good idea or bad idea?



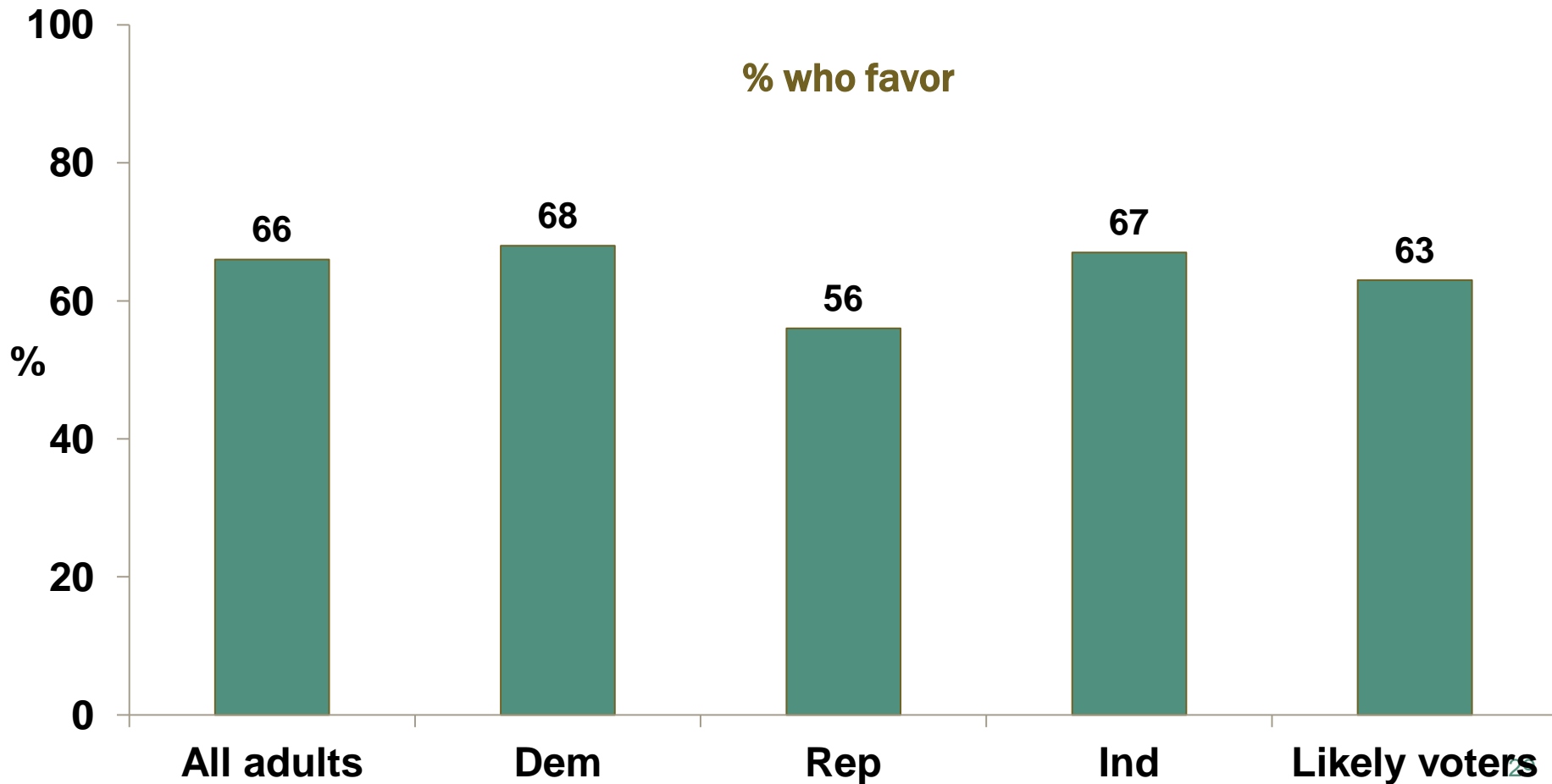
# Governor's Special Election Proposal

In a special election, voters would be asked to extend—for five years—temporary increases in state personal income taxes, the state sales tax, and vehicle license fee that went into effect in 2009. Some revenues would be diverted to local governments for schools, public safety, and other services. If voters reject the proposal, additional cuts to services would be made. Do you favor or oppose this proposal?



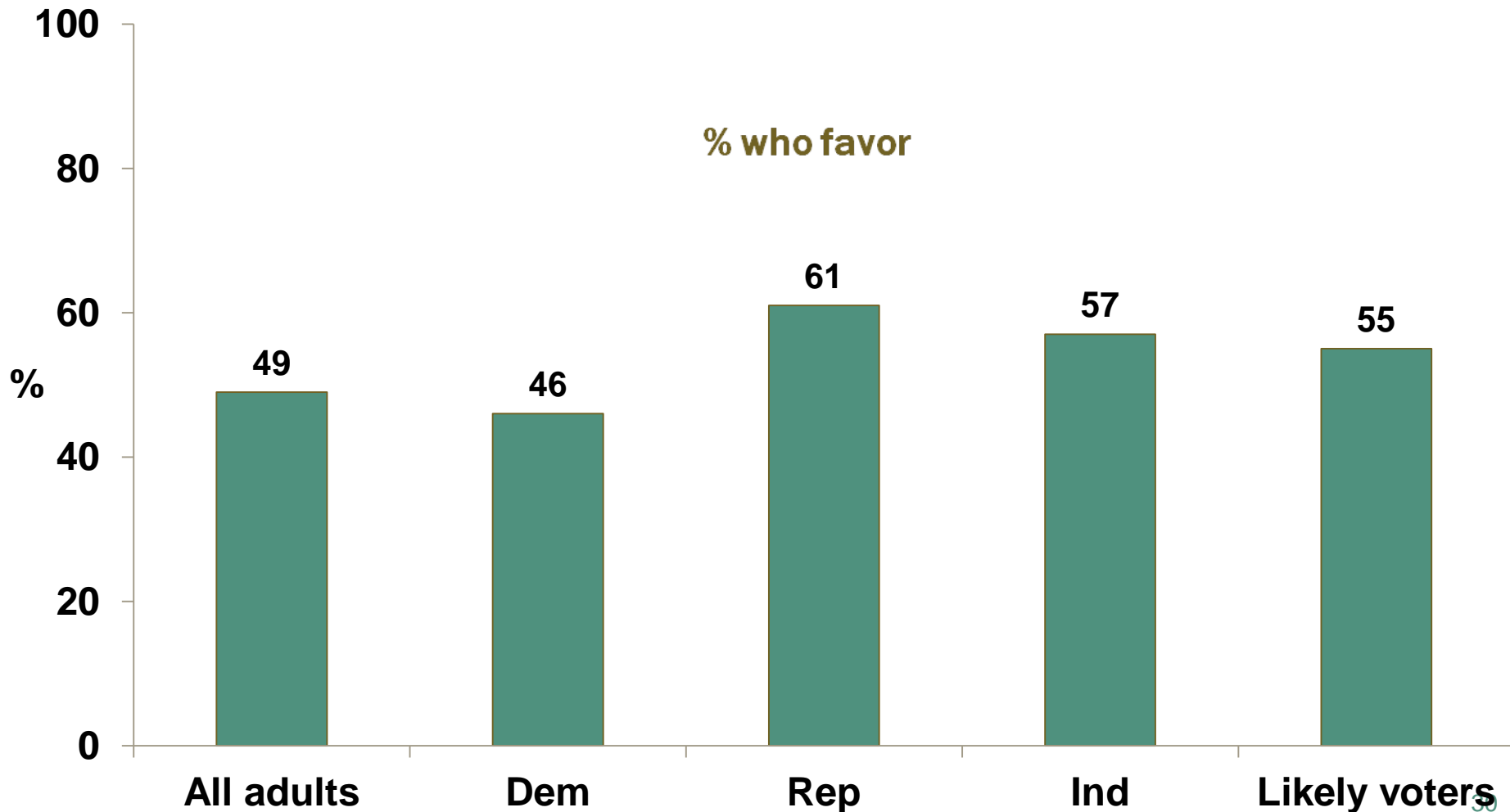
# Redirecting Tax Revenue

Do you favor or oppose phasing out funding for local redevelopment agencies, and eliminating state tax benefits for enterprise zones, in order to redirect that tax revenue to local governments for schools and other local services?



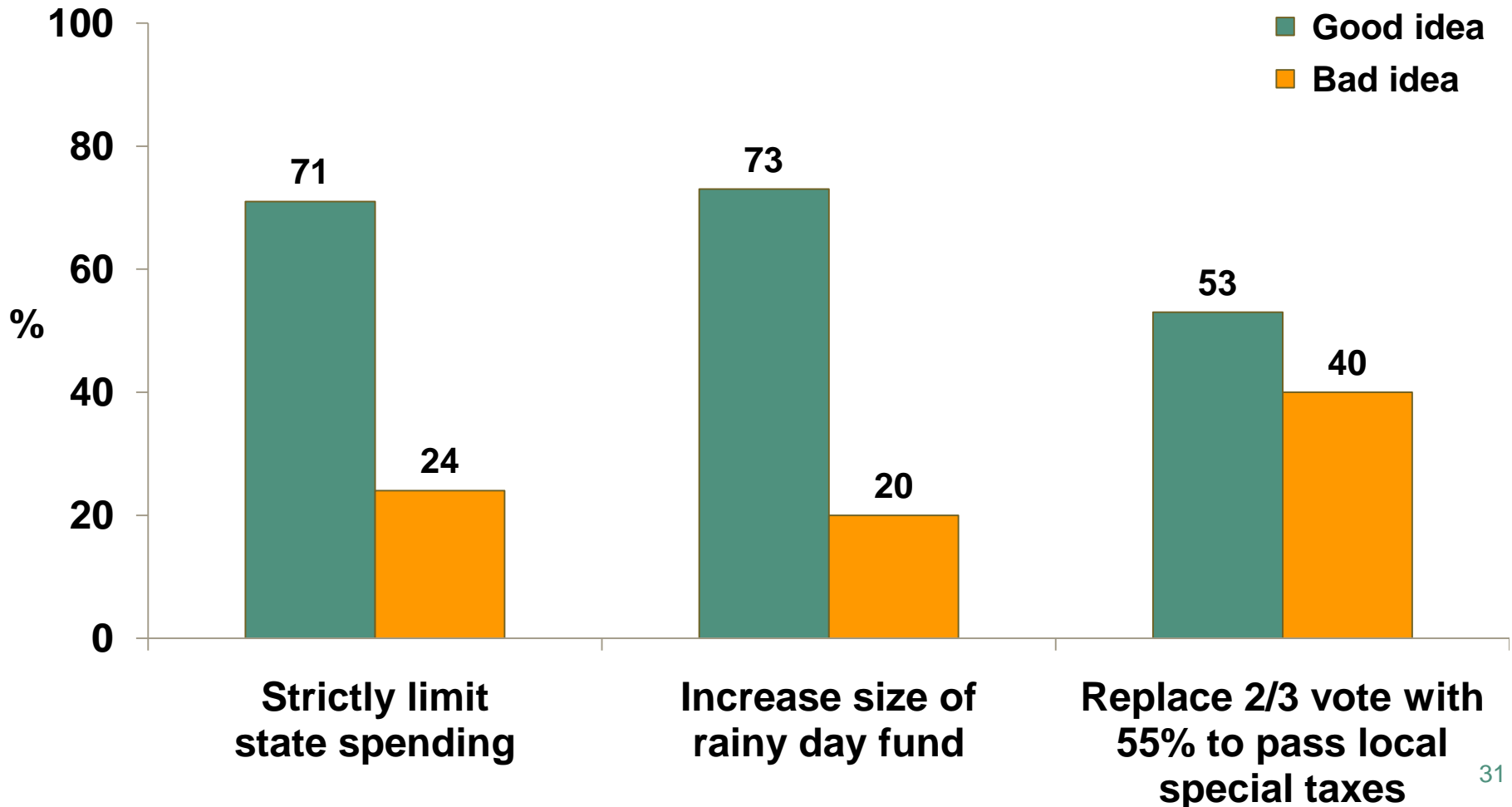
# Cutting State Worker Pay

Do you favor or oppose cutting state worker pay by about 10 percent for those who are not currently covered under collective bargaining agreements?



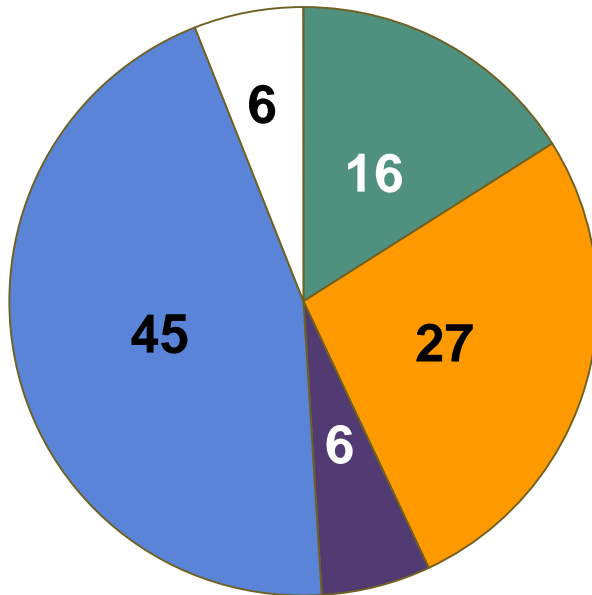
# Fiscal Reform Proposals

Spending and tax reforms have been proposed to address the structural issues in the state budget. For each of the following, please say whether you think the proposal is a good idea or a bad idea.



# The Knowledge Gap

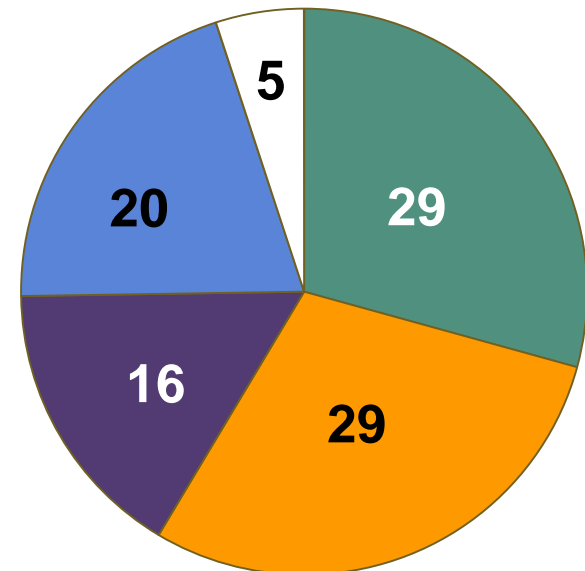
I'm going to name some of the largest areas for state spending. Please tell me the one that represents the most spending in the state budget.



- K-12 public education\*
- Health and human services
- Higher education
- Prisons and corrections
- Don't know

I'm going to name some of the largest areas for state revenues. Please tell me the one that represents the most revenue for the state budget.

All adults



- Personal income tax\*
- Sales tax
- Corporate tax
- Motor vehicle tax
- Don't know

\*Correct answer



# Outline

---

- PPIC Statewide Surveys
- November 2010 Election
- State and National Issues
- Conclusions



# Conclusions

---

- Optimism up with new state leadership
- Budget situation seen as a big problem; slight preference for mix of cuts and taxes to fix it
- Strong support for realignment; confidence local governments could carry it out
- Likely voters oppose cuts to K-12 education, health and human services, higher education; would pay higher taxes for K-12/higher education
- General satisfaction with governor's budget plan and support for special election
- Majorities support proposed fiscal reforms
- Knowledge gap on budget spending and revenues



# Upcoming PPIC Statewide Surveys

---

- February
  - *Californians and Healthy Communities*
- March
  - *Californians and Their Government*
- April
  - *Californians and Education*
- May
  - *Californians and Their Government*



# Notes on the use of these slides

---

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 Nicole Willcoxon:  
[surveys@ppic.org](mailto:surveys@ppic.org)

Thank you for your interest in this work.

January 2011



# PPIC Statewide Survey: Californians and Their Government

Mark Baldassare, Dean Bonner,  
Sonja Petek, Nicole Willcoxon

*January 2011*

