

pre[k]now

# American Voters' Views on Pre-K and Federal Funding

Key findings from a nationwide survey among voters,  
conducted May 27 – June 1, 2008, by  
Peter D. Hart Research Associates & American Viewpoint

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## Key Findings

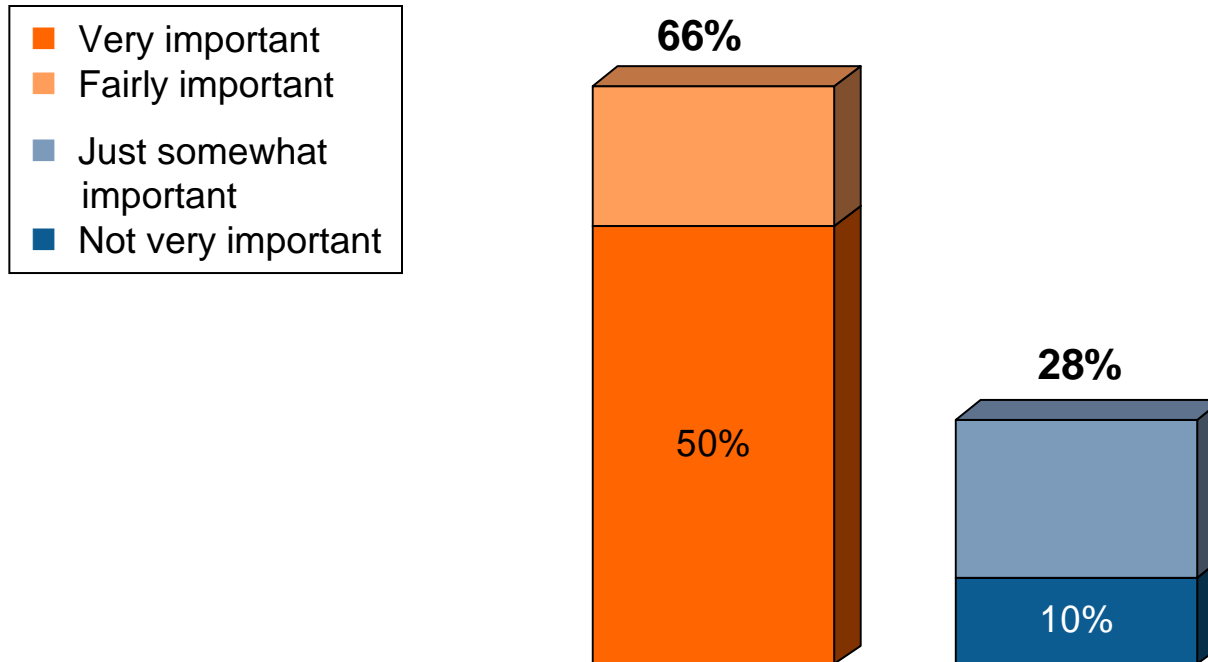
- Nearly 7 in 10 voters want a new federal grant for state pre-k.
- By a nearly 3-to-1 margin, voters say they will support candidates who favor greater investment in pre-k.
- Voters say that government is doing too little to ensure that parents have access to affordable pre-k programs.
- Voters see a great deal of value in pre-k programs.
- Large majorities say it would be a problem if there were not enough programs to go around or if these programs were not high quality.

# Methodology

- 802 interviews among voters nationwide, and an additional 201 “swing voters” (for a total of 487 swing voters)
- Interview dates: May 27 – June 1, 2008
- Respondents reached by telephone using a random digit dialing (RDD) method of sampling
- Results statistically representative of voters across the country

# Learning Programs Are Important for Four Year Olds

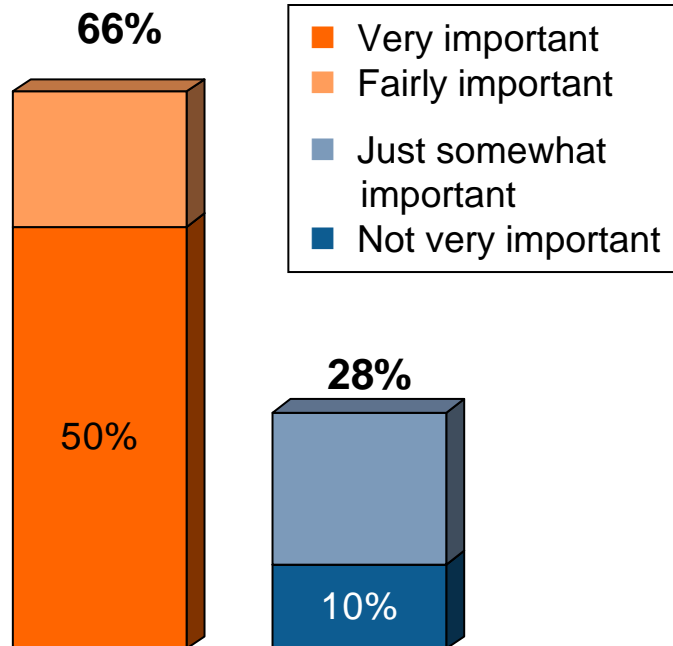
*How important is it for four-year-old children to spend time in a learning program outside the home?*



# High Importance Across The Board

*How important is it for **four-year-old** children to spend time in a learning program outside the home?*

## All Voters

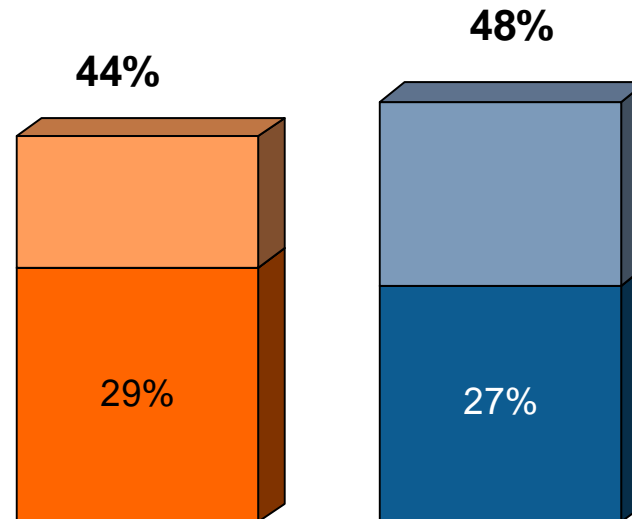
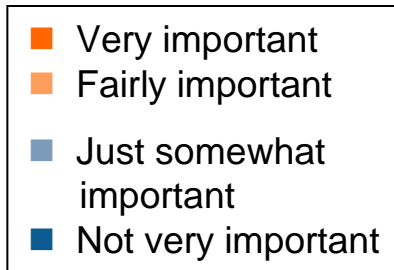


## Very/fairly important

Women	70%
Men	62%
Whites	61%
African Americans	94%
Latinos	72%
Age 18 to 34	79%
Age 35 to 49	70%
Age 50 to 64	61%
Age 65/over	56%
Parents	72%
Non-parents	63%
Democrats	75%
Republicans	51%
Swing voters	67%

# Currently Lower Perceived Importance of Pre-K For Three-Year-Olds

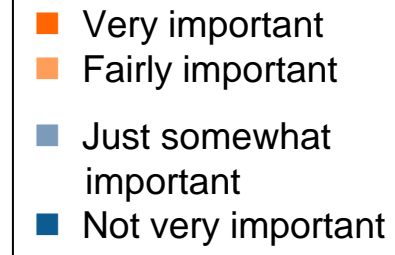
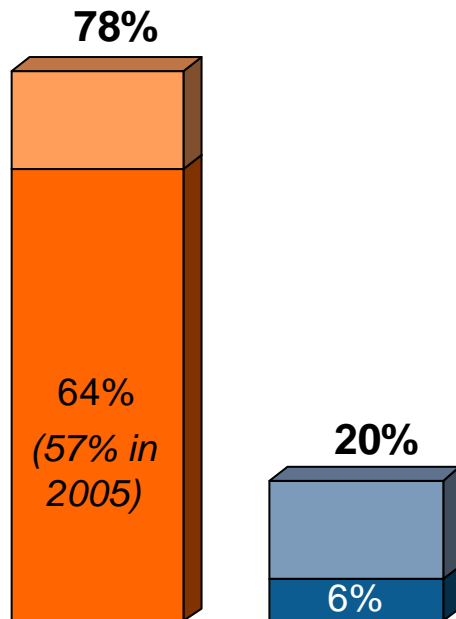
*How important is it for three-year-old children to spend time in a learning program outside the home?*



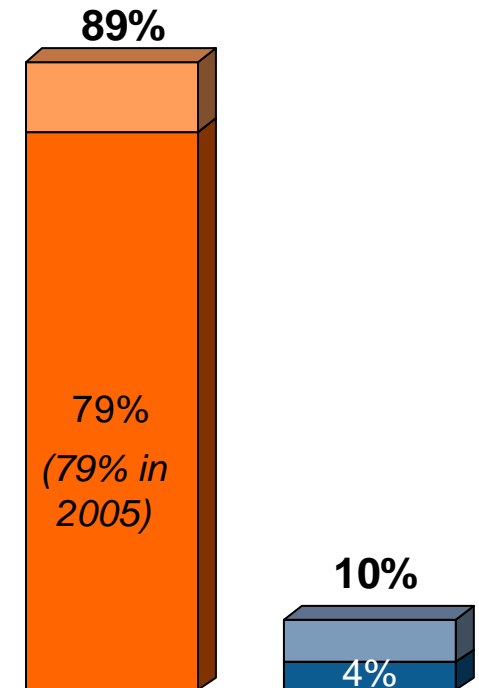
# Social and Learning Skills Are Both Seen as Important

*How important is it for pre-k programs to emphasize [early-learning skills/social skills]?*

## Early-Learning

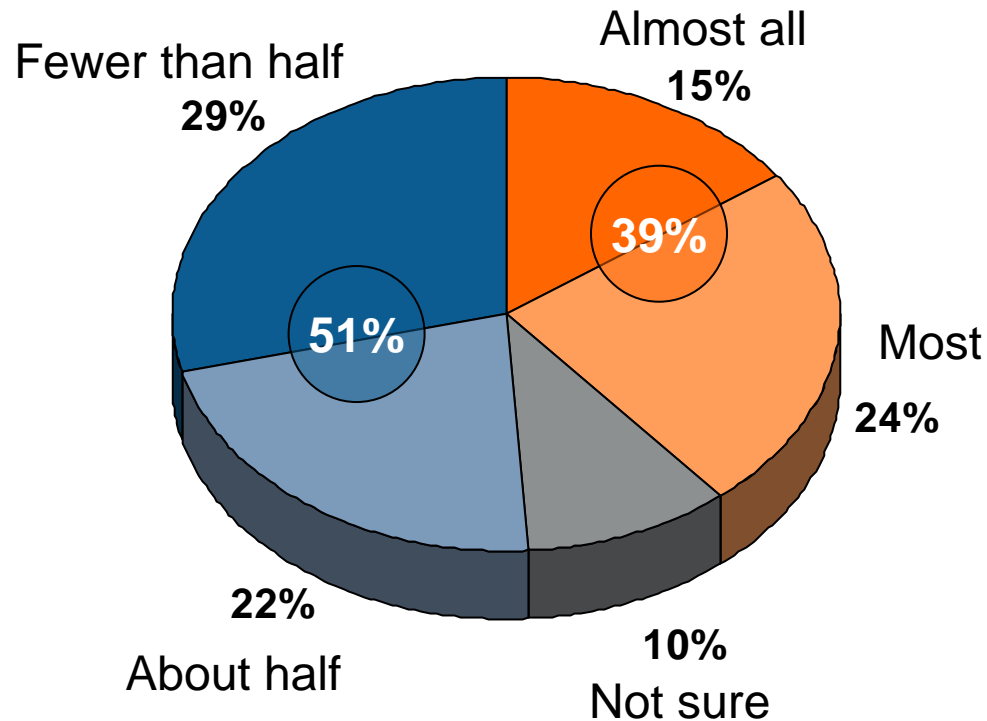


## Social



# Access Depends On Income

*How many families in **your neighborhood** do you think can find and afford a pre-k program (public or private) for their children?*

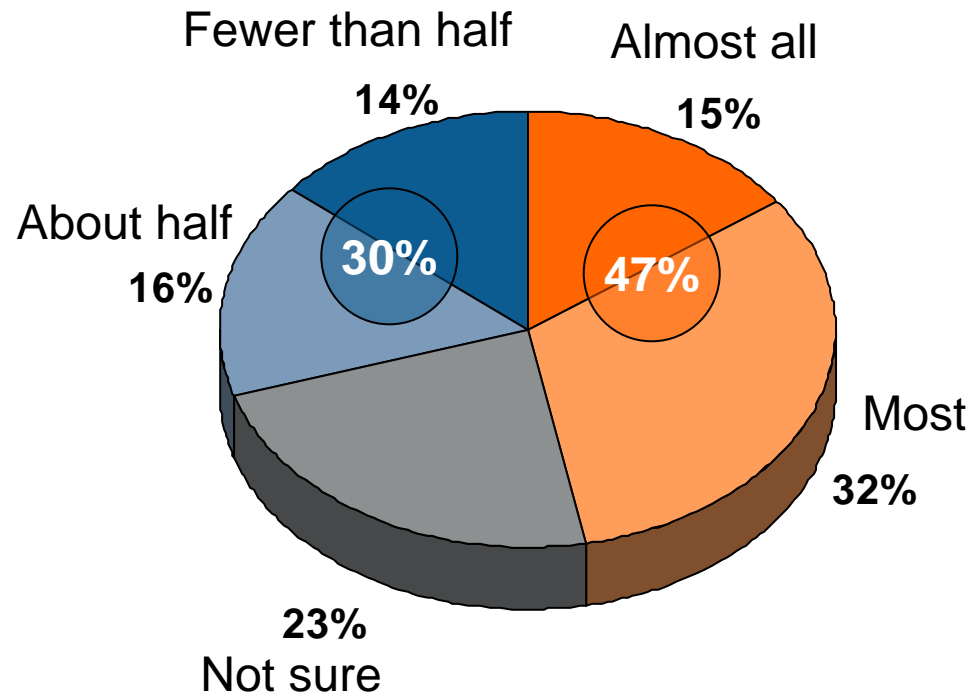


## Almost All/Most, by HH Income

Under	23%
\$30K-\$50K	35%
\$50K-\$75K	33%
Over \$75K	55%

# Voters Believe Quality Is Generally High

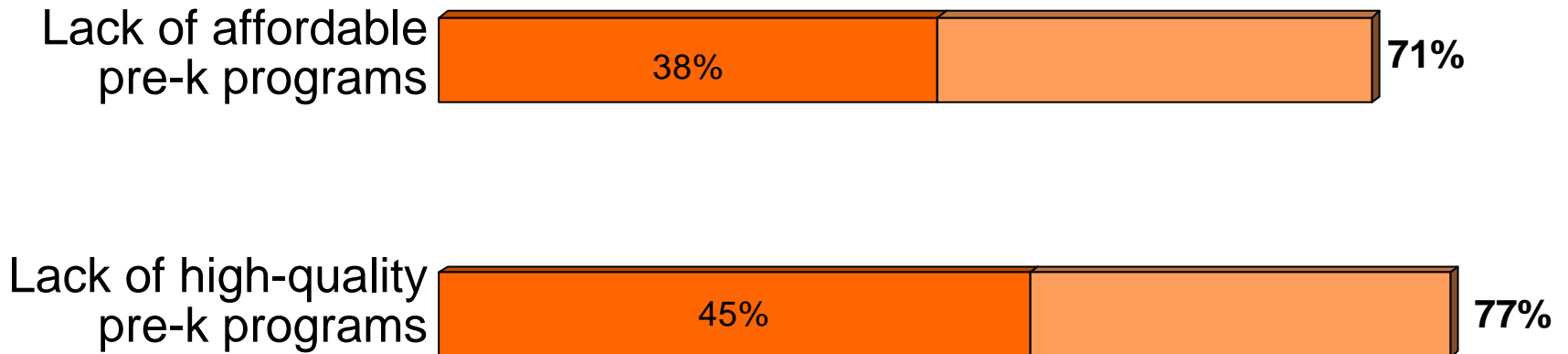
*In your community, how many pre-k programs are high quality, with highly trained teachers, positive learning environment, and do a good job at educating children?*



## Lack of Access/Quality Would Be a Problem

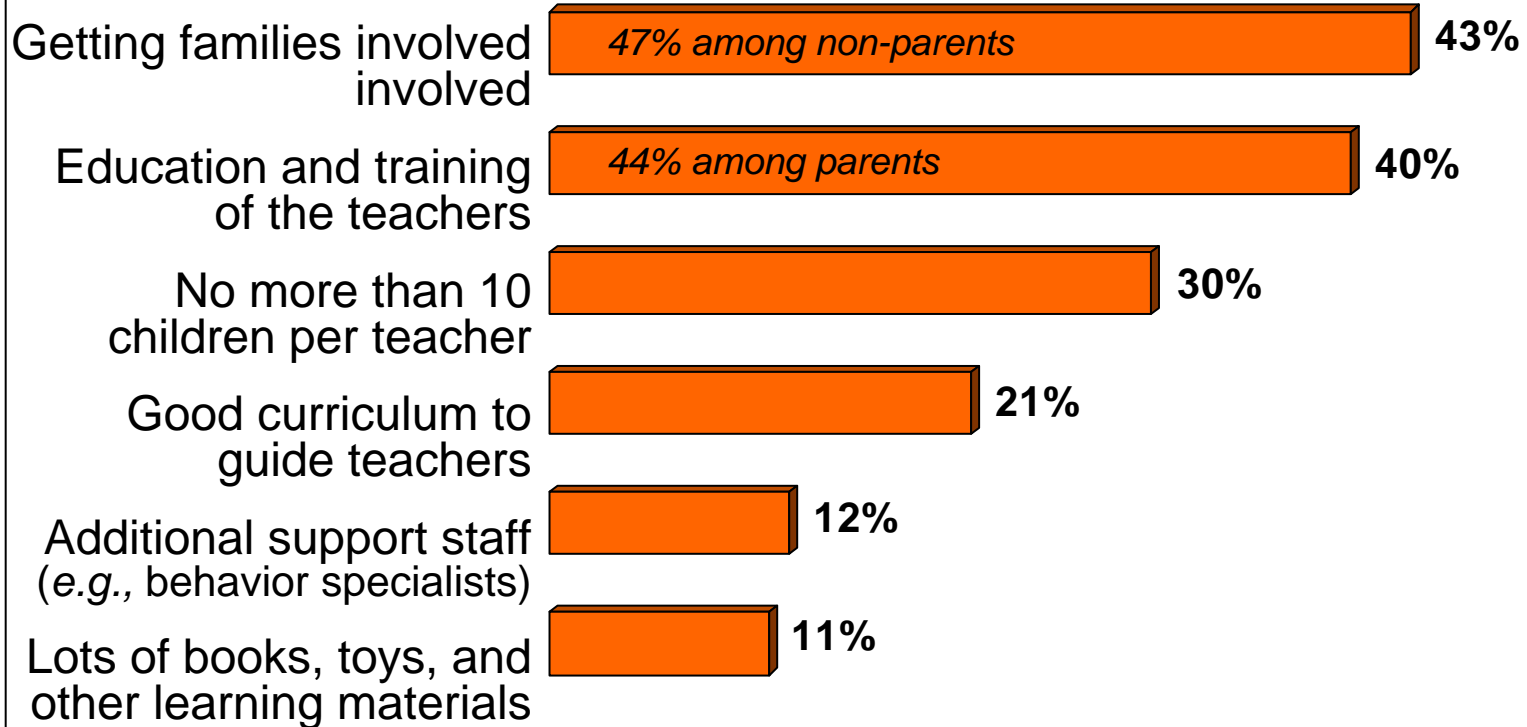
*If there were not enough [affordable/high quality] pre-k programs in your neighborhood, how significant a problem would that be?*

■ Significant problem   ■ Somewhat of a problem



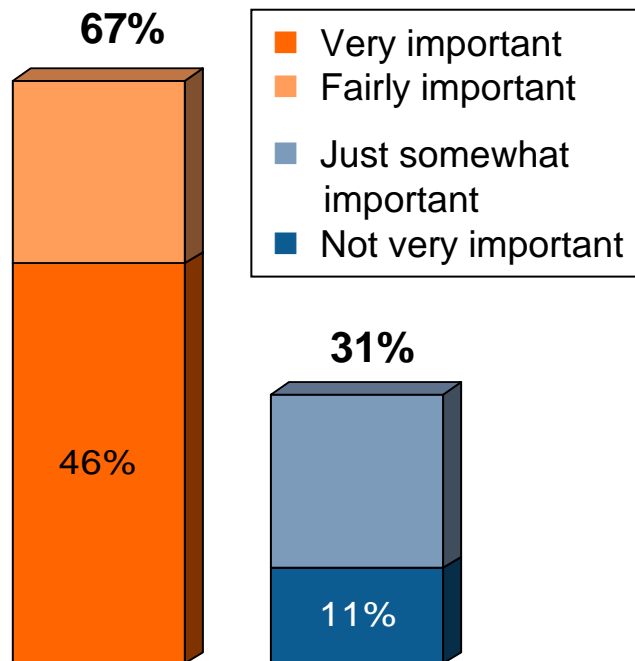
# Perceptions of What Defines “High Quality”

One/Two Most Important Factors in Deciding  
Whether a Pre-K Program Is High Quality



# Voters Say College Degree Important; Also Value Experience

*How important is it for pre-k teachers to have a four-year college degree?*



**47%** **It is very important** for pre-k teachers to have four-year college degrees. Children's most important brain development occurs before age five, and highly educated teachers are best equipped to encourage this and make sure that children are developing basic learning and socialization skills in the best possible way.

**50%** **It is not that important** for pre-k teachers to have four-year college degrees. As long as teachers are loving, caring people who have experience working with children they are capable of helping children develop basic learning socialization skills.

# Voters Acknowledge Long-Term Benefits

Children who attend pre-k are better off throughout school and life:  
pre-k teaches important basic skills and builds confidence



By third or fourth grade, most children are on the same level whether they attended pre-k or not



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Over the long term, having more children attend pre-k would make the U.S. more competitive in the global economy

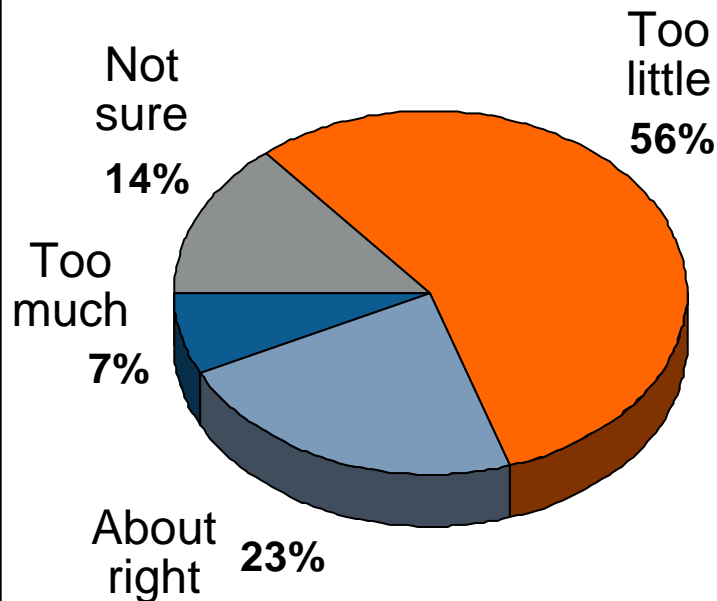


Over the long term, having more children attend pre-k would not really have an impact on U.S. economic competitiveness

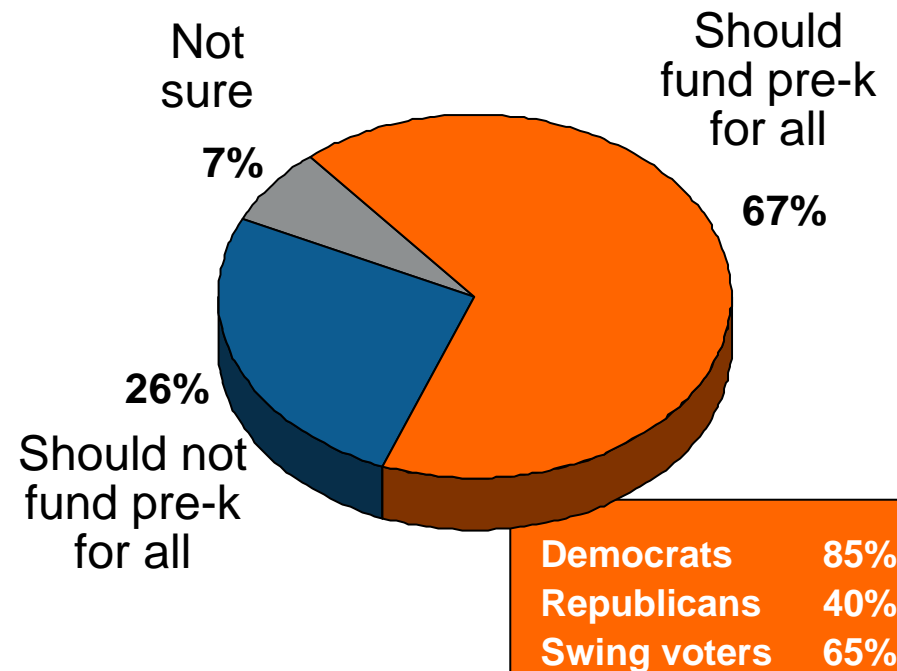


# Voters Want More From State and Local Government

Existing efforts to ensure all parents have access to affordable pre-k

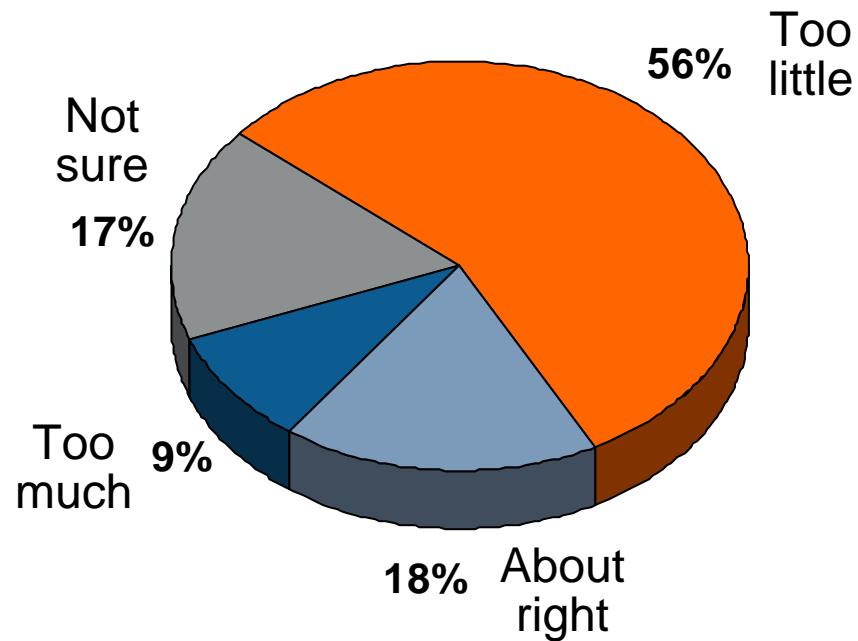


State/local government funding for voluntary pre-k



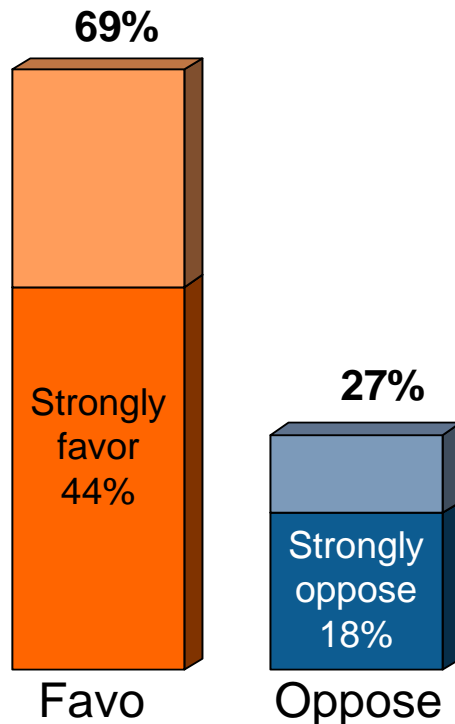
# Federal Government Also Seen As Doing Too Little

Existing efforts to ensure all parents have access to affordable pre-k



# Nearly 7 in 10 Support Federal Funding

## All Voters

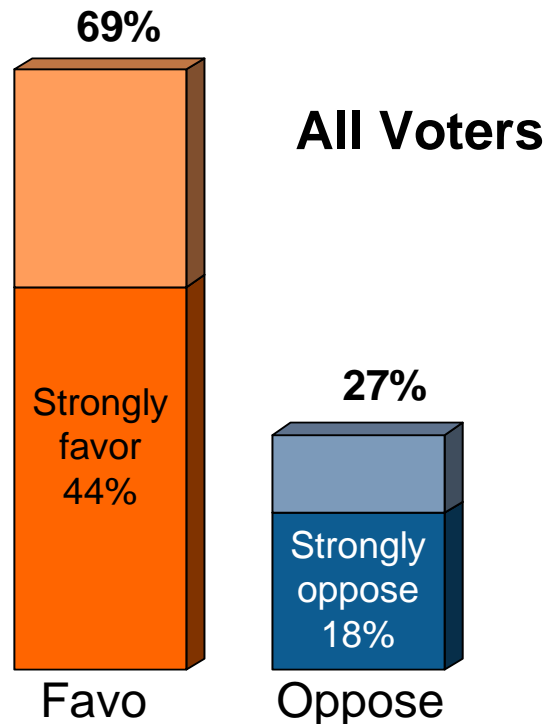


*There currently is a proposal to have the federal government provide additional funding to what state and local governments already put into pre-kindergarten programs, to increase the quality and availability of these programs. The federal government would not run these programs, but to receive federal funding states would have to meet certain standards for their pre-k programs.*

*Would you favor or oppose the federal government adding funding to what state and local governments put into pre-k programs?*

# Broad Support Across the Electorate for Federal Funding

*Would you favor or oppose the federal government adding funding to what state and local governments put into pre-k programs?*

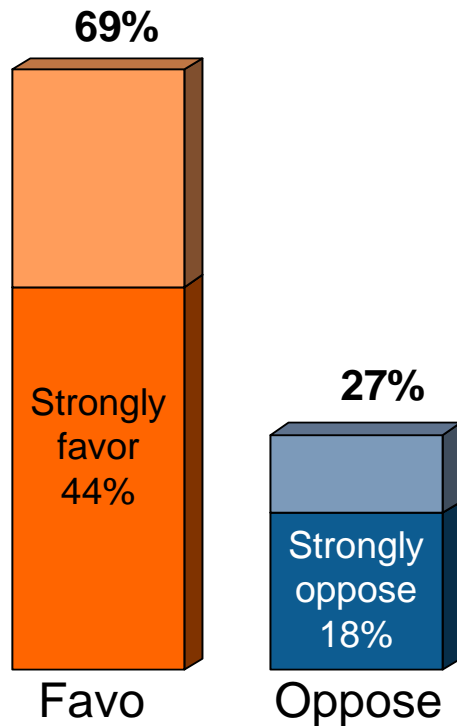


	Total <u>favo</u>	Total <u>favo</u>
Women	72%	Northeast 70%
Men	63%	South 71%
Whites	63%	Midwest 69%
African Americans	90%	West 62%
Latinos	89%	Democrats 83%
Age 18 to 34	76%	Republicans 46%
Age 35 to 49	74%	Swing voters 69%
Age 50 to 64	67%	
Age 65/over	56%	
Parents	73%	
Non-parents	66%	

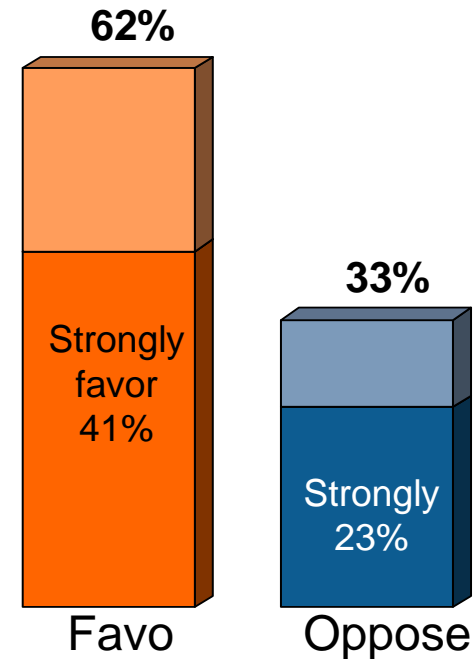
# Little Drop-off with Tax Increase

*Would you favor or oppose the federal government adding funding to what state and local governments put into pre-k programs?*

## Initial Support

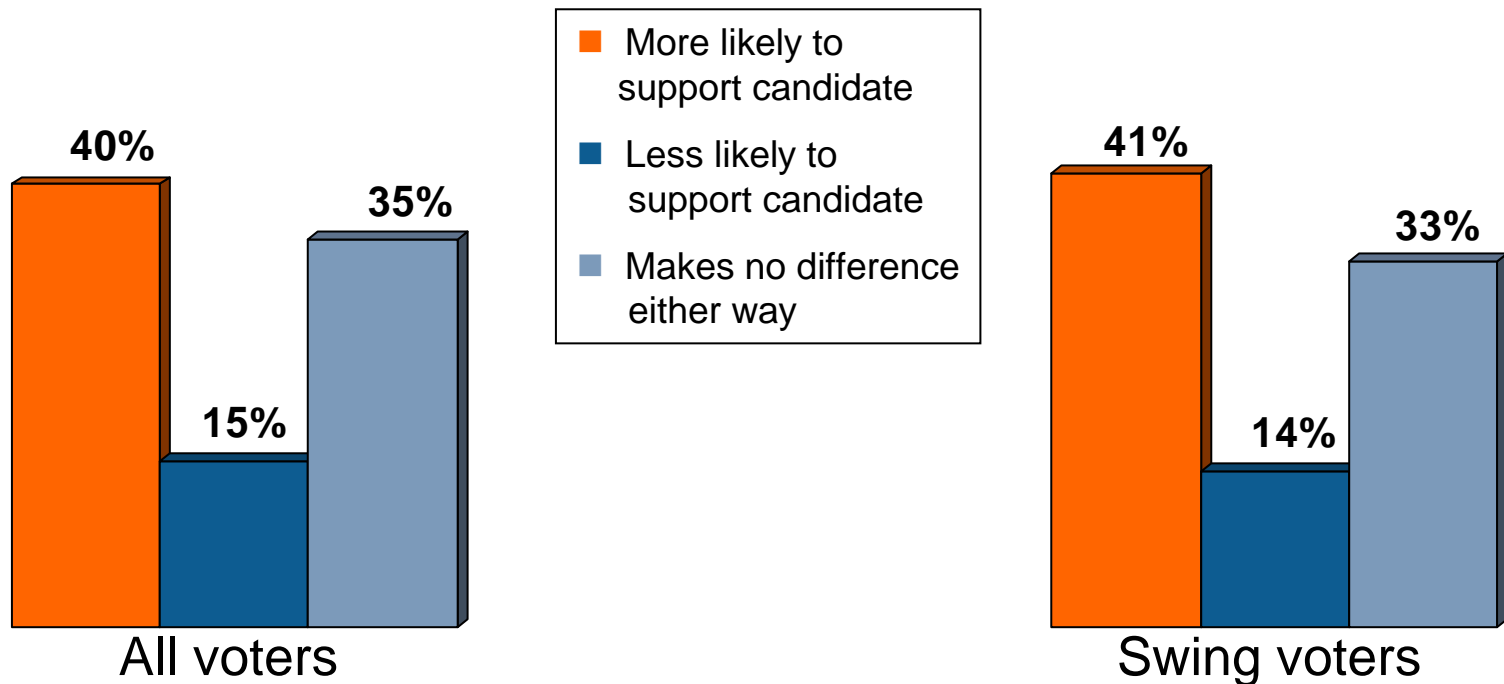


## Support if it Costs \$45/Taxpayer



# Voters Endorse Candidates Who Support Increased Pre-K Funding

*If a candidate for Congress in your district supported increasing funding for pre-k, how would that affect you?*

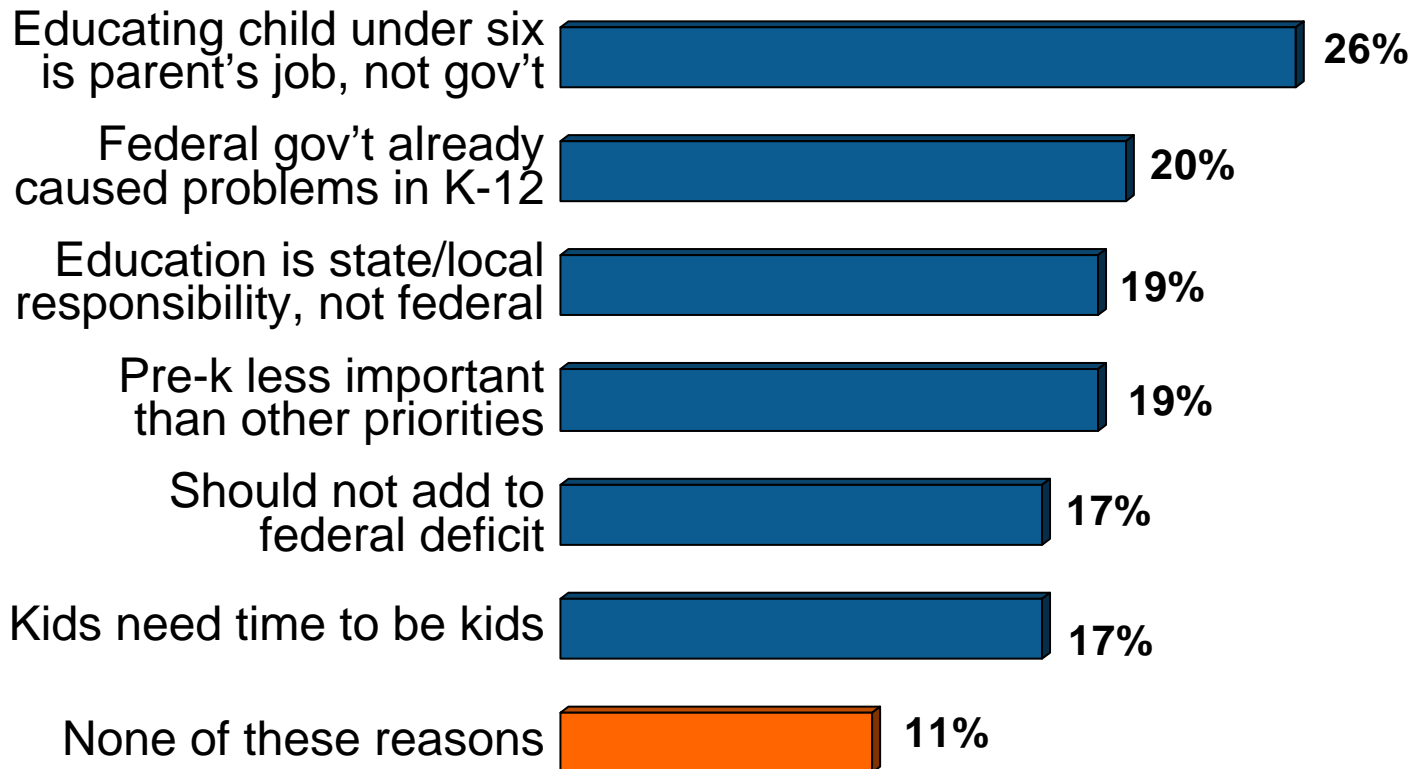


## Supporters Outnumber Opponents Three to One

- 37% of voters favor more federal funding for pre-k and are more likely to support a candidate who favors it.
- 12% of voters oppose more federal funding for pre-k and are less likely to support a candidate who favors it.

# Arguments Against Increased Funding

One/Two Greatest Concerns For Why the Federal Government Should NOT Increase Funding for Pre-Kindergarten



# Arguments For Increased Funding

- Very convincing reason federal government should help states pay for pre-k
- Fairly convincing reason federal government should help states pay for pre-k

