

2006 Multi-State TABOR Survey - Maine -

**TOPLINE REPORT
PRESENTED TO:**



June 2006



Alan Newman Research
MARKET RESEARCH CONSULTANTS

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Introduction / Methodology

In May 2006, AARP engaged Alan Newman Research to conduct a series of surveys in eight states regarding AARP members' awareness, knowledge, and opinions of proposed TABOR measures in their state. This report offers data and analysis for Maine.

- **Data Collection Mode:** Phone Survey
- **Field Period:** May 24 – May 31, 2006 (No dialing on Memorial Day – May 29)
- **Sample Size:** 600 Completed Interviews
- **Screening Criteria:** AARP Membership
- **Calling Procedures:** Unless otherwise requested by the respondent, calling was done between 5:00pm and 9:00pm Monday through Friday. Up to 10 call attempts were made per number at varying times of day as well as days of the week. Respondents who specifically request removal from our “list” are assigned a final disposition and are added to a cumulative “Do Not Call” database which automatically removes them from future research studies.
- **Margin of Error:** The maximum margin of error at the 95% confidence level for a sample of 600 respondents is $\pm 4.0\%$.
- **Response Rate (RR3):** 26%
- **Cooperation Rate (COOP3):** 40%
- **Refusal Rate (REF3):** 35%
- **Statistical Note:** Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Executive Summary

- **The majority of AARP Members believe too little money is being spent on state services.** Two out of five Members believe too little is being spent on services such as keeping people safe, providing health and long-term care, repairing roads, etc. In contrast, three out of ten believe just the right amount of money is being spent.
- **The majority of Members feel the amount of state and local taxes they pay is too high.** Two out of three believe what they have to pay is too high, while only one out of four believe they are paying about the right amount of state and local taxes.
- **More than one-half of AARP Members say they trust local and state government to use their tax money effectively and deliver quality services.** Two out of three trust their local government a fair amount or a great deal, while over one-half of Members indicated the same level of trust for their state government.
- **One-half of AARP Members suggest limiting taxes is a higher priority than improving state services. In addition, one-third indicate “reducing taxes” is among the one or two most important goals for state government.** Nearly as many consider “improving accountability” among the most important goals. Setting spending priorities is one of the most important goals for one-fourth of AARP Members.
- **Nearly one-half of AARP Members have seen or heard something about the Maine Taxpayer Bill of Rights in the past year.** Forty-six percent say they have seen or heard something compared to fifty-three percent who have not.
- **Police protection and K-12 public school education are the most highly valued services according to AARP Members.** Consequently, funding cuts to either police protection or K-12 public education would have a big impact on Members’ support of TABOR. However, more than one-half of Members also suggest they would be more likely to oppose TABOR if healthcare for low income families was cut.



Executive Summary (continued)

- **Overall, AARP Members appear generally unconvinced by any of the arguments either in support of or in opposition to the TABOR proposal.** Among the messages rated most convincing are those suggesting that TABOR would take power away from state politicians and that TABOR would control runaway government spending.
- **Two out of five AARP Members would be more likely to oppose the TABOR proposal if they knew AARP and other senior organizations also opposed it.** One out of three say opposition from AARP as well as that of other senior organizations would not make a difference in how they voted on the TABOR initiative.
- **One-half of AARP Members would be less likely to support TABOR if they knew the proposal would not let the government step in to help people get through tough times.** Only three out of ten say knowing this would not make a difference in their support for TABOR.
- **Initially, three-fifths of AARP Members claim they support the TABOR Proposal. However, when asked at the end of the survey, only two-fifths still indicate support for the measure.** Members were initially read a brief description of the TABOR ballot initiative. After hearing this, three-fifths of AARP Members (61%) said they would probably vote in favor of the proposal. Members were then presented a short series of arguments both for and against the initiative. When asked about supporting or opposing the initiative after hearing these arguments, only one-half of Members (51%) said they either strongly or somewhat support the TABOR proposal. Finally, at the end of the interview, Members were again asked how they would vote, and only two out of five Members (39%) continued to say they were at least leaning toward voting for the TABOR proposal. This 22% decline between the initial measure and the final measure is statistically significant at the 95 percent level of confidence.



DETAILED FINDINGS



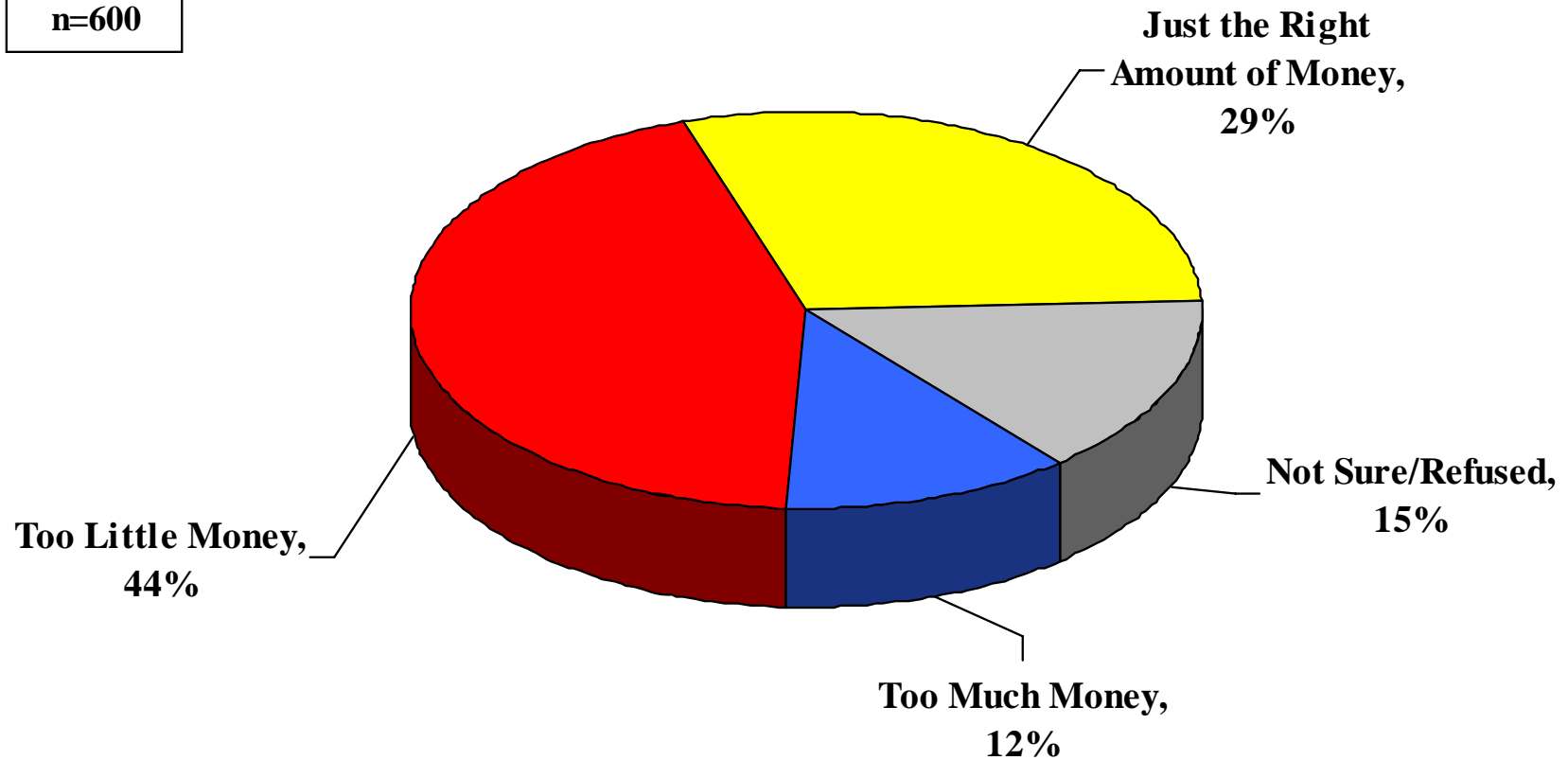
Univariate Analysis



Q1. Do you think that Maine is spending too much money, too little money, or just the right amount of money on state services such as keeping people safe, providing health and long-term care, repairing roads and highways, maintaining parks, and providing education?

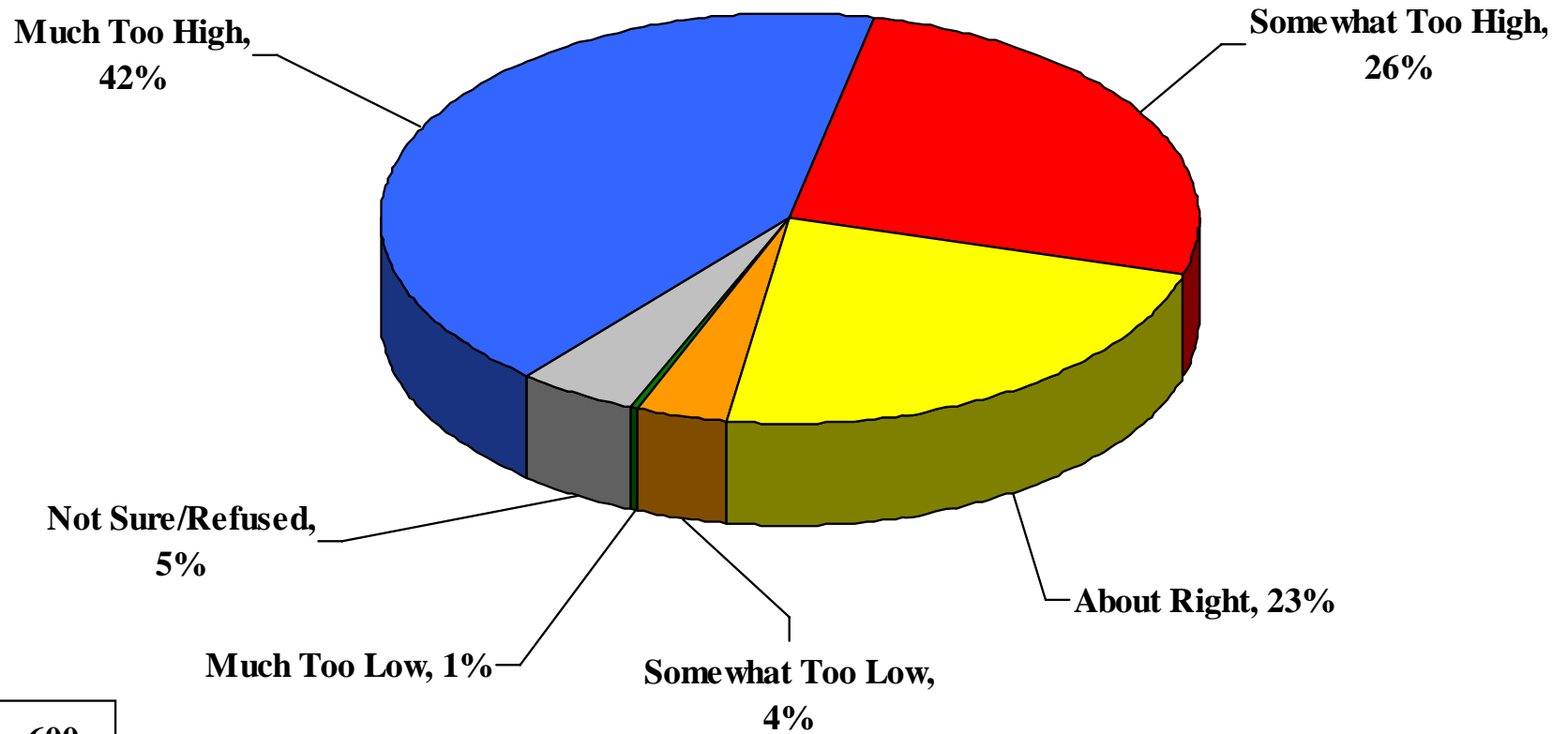
A majority of AARP Members in Maine believe the State is spending too little money on state services. Three out of ten believe Maine is spending the right amount of money on state services such as keeping people safe, providing health and long-term care, repairing roads and highways, maintaining parks, and providing education.

n=600



Q2. Thinking about the state and local taxes that you pay, not including federal taxes, do you think that taxes in Maine are too high, are about right, or are too low to support state services?

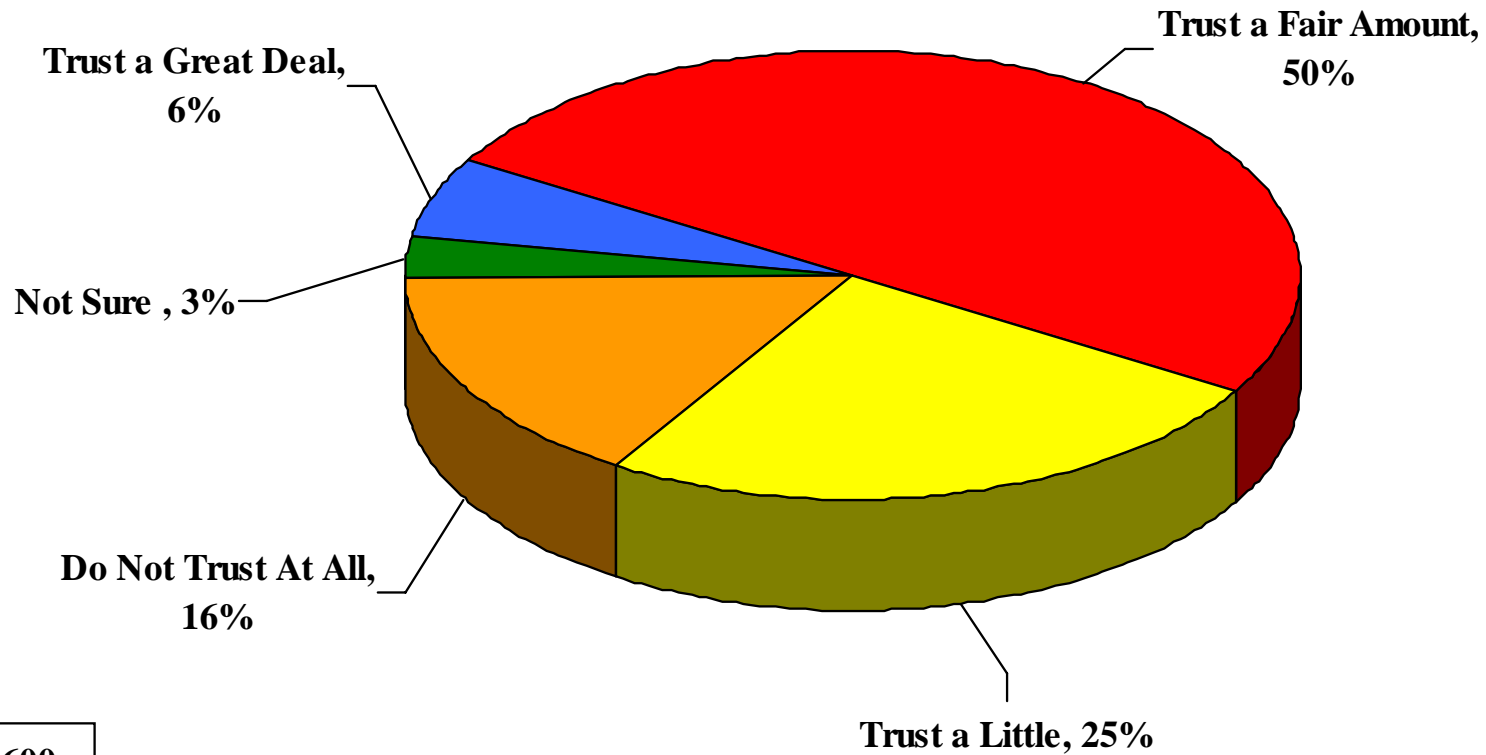
Two out of three AARP Members living in Maine think the level of state and local taxes they pay is too high. Only one out of four suggest the amount they pay is about right.



n=600

Q3a. How much do you trust your state government to use your tax money effectively and deliver quality state services?

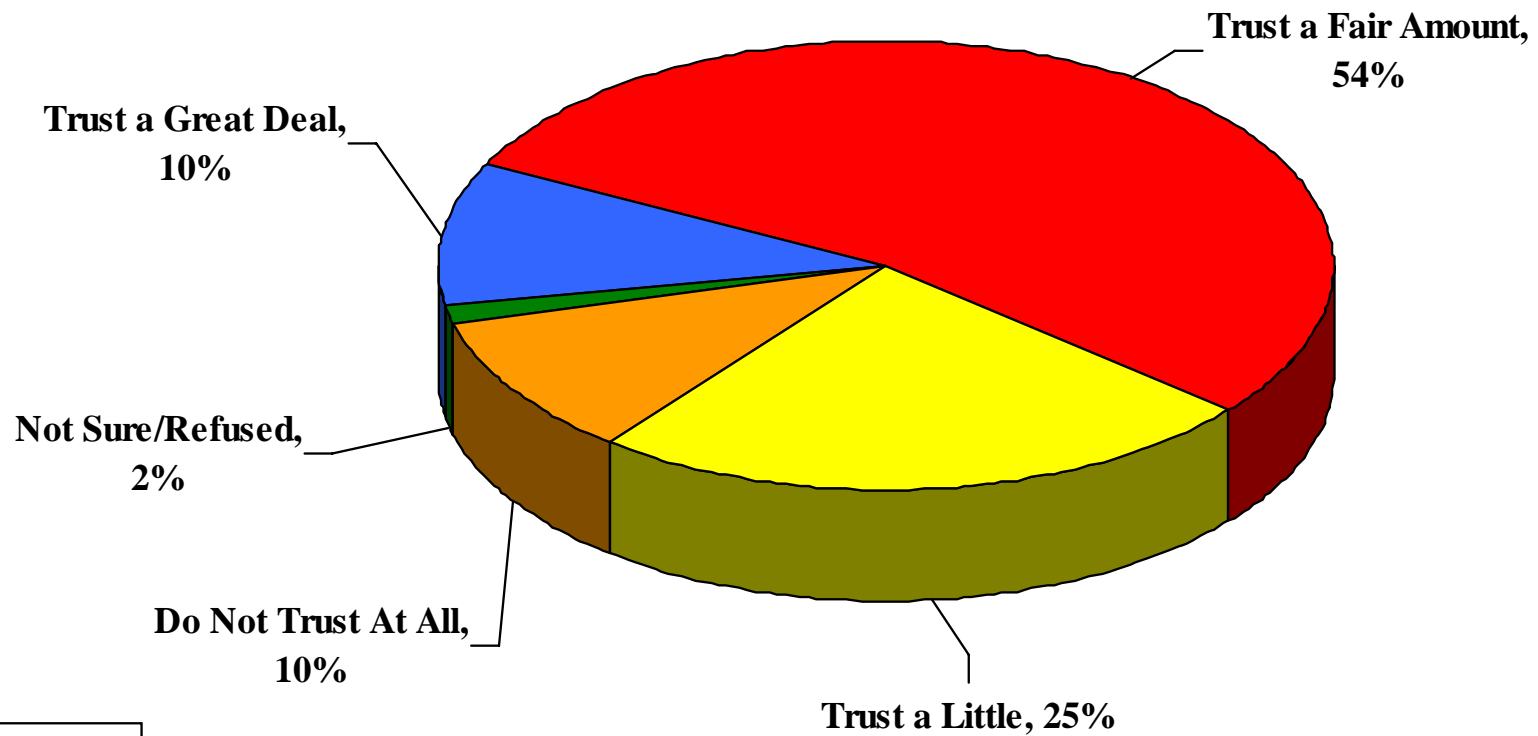
More than one-half of AARP Members living in Maine trust the State government either a fair amount or a great deal.



n=600

Q3b. How much do you trust your local government (includes Towns, Cities, and Counties) to use your tax money effectively and deliver quality state services?

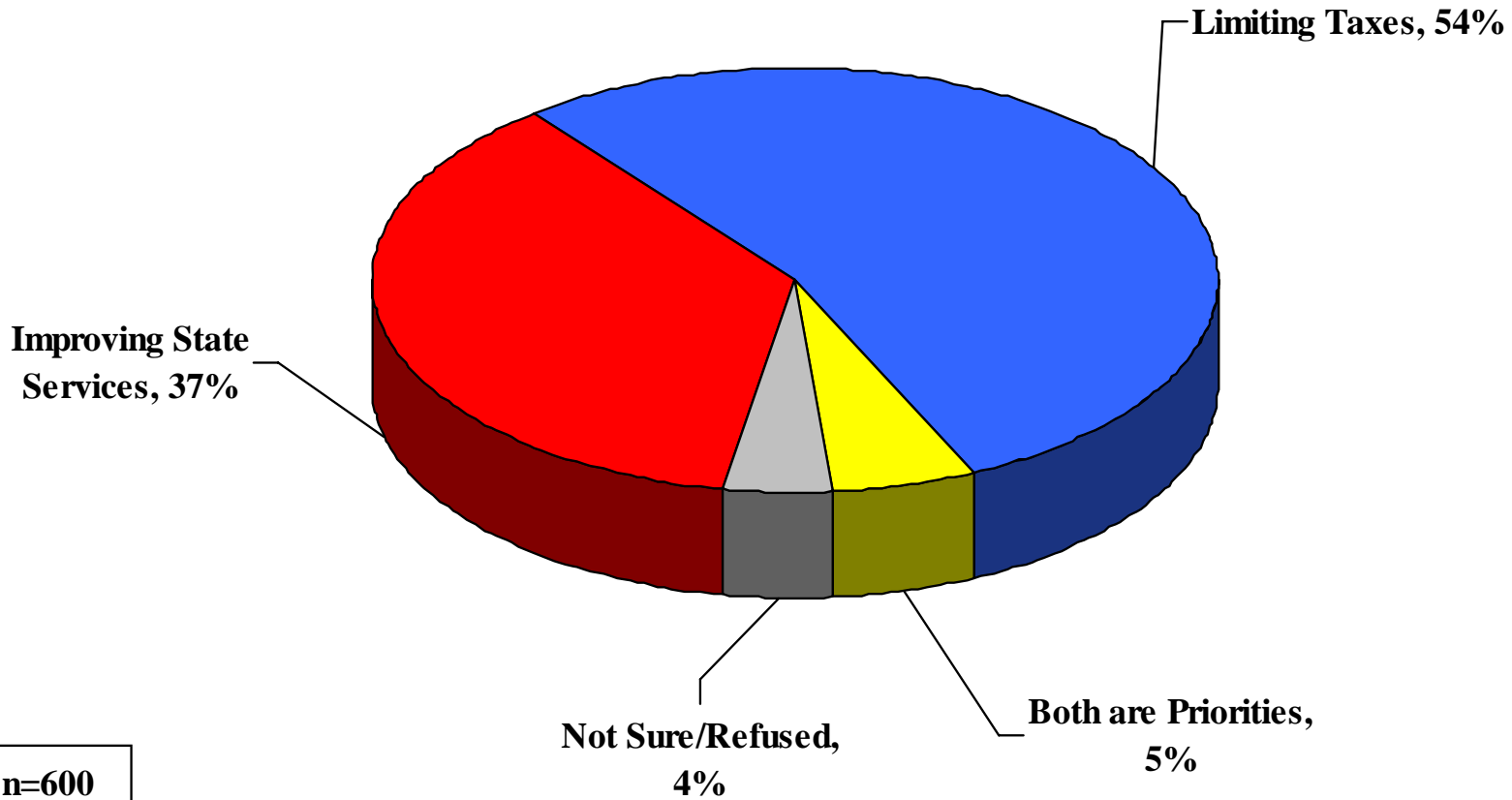
Two out of three AARP Members living in Maine trust the local government either a fair amount or a great deal.



n=600

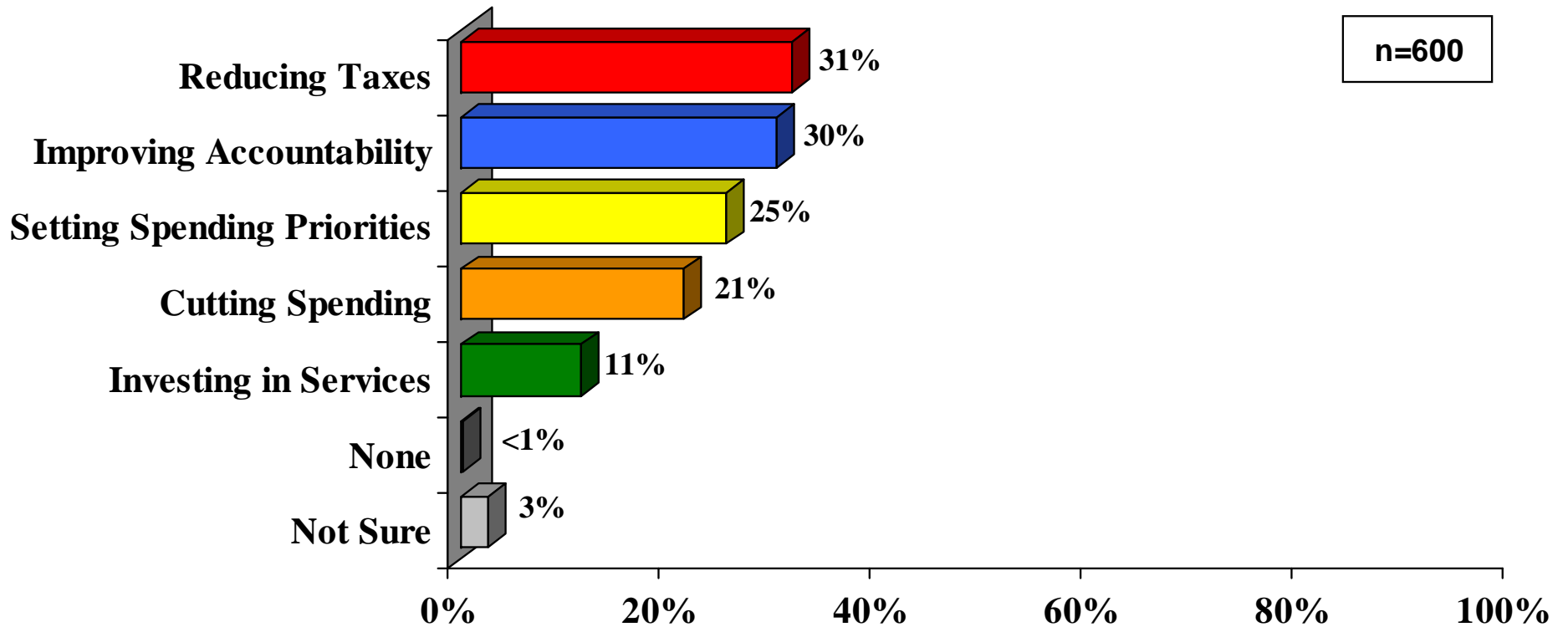
Q4. In Maine, which is a higher priority for you...?

More than one-half of AARP Members suggest limiting taxes is a higher priority than improving state services. However, a third of Maine Members assert the opposite. Only five percent indicate both of these goals are a priority.



Q5. Thinking about state government today in Maine, which one or two of the following goals are most important to you?

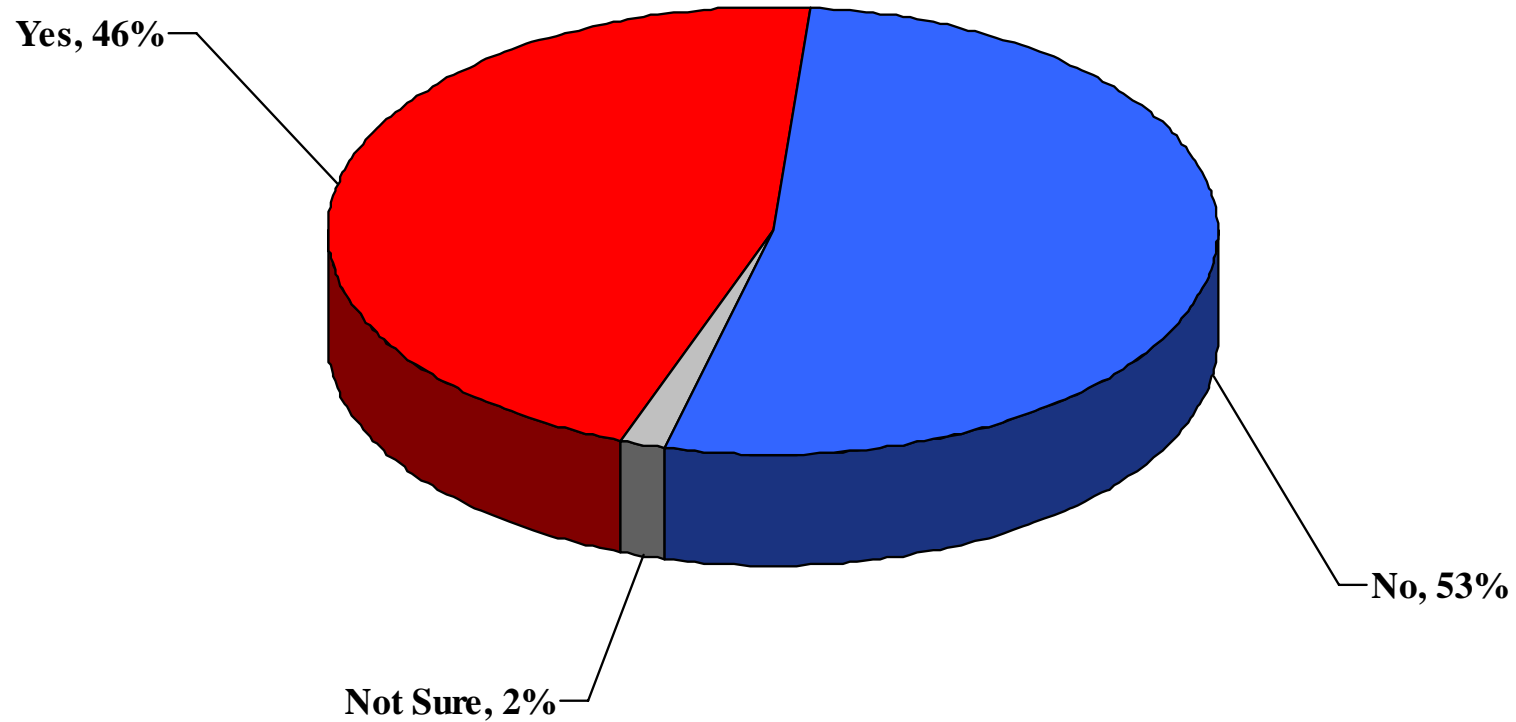
One-third of AARP Members living in Maine say “reducing taxes” is one of the most important goals to them. Another three out of ten claim “improving accountability” is one of the most important goals for state government. Setting spending priorities is considered among the most important goals by one out of four members.



Q6. Have you seen, read, or heard anything about the Maine Taxpayer Bill of Rights, or TABOR proposal in the last year?

Roughly one-half of AARP Members in Maine say they have seen or heard something about the TABOR proposal in the last year.

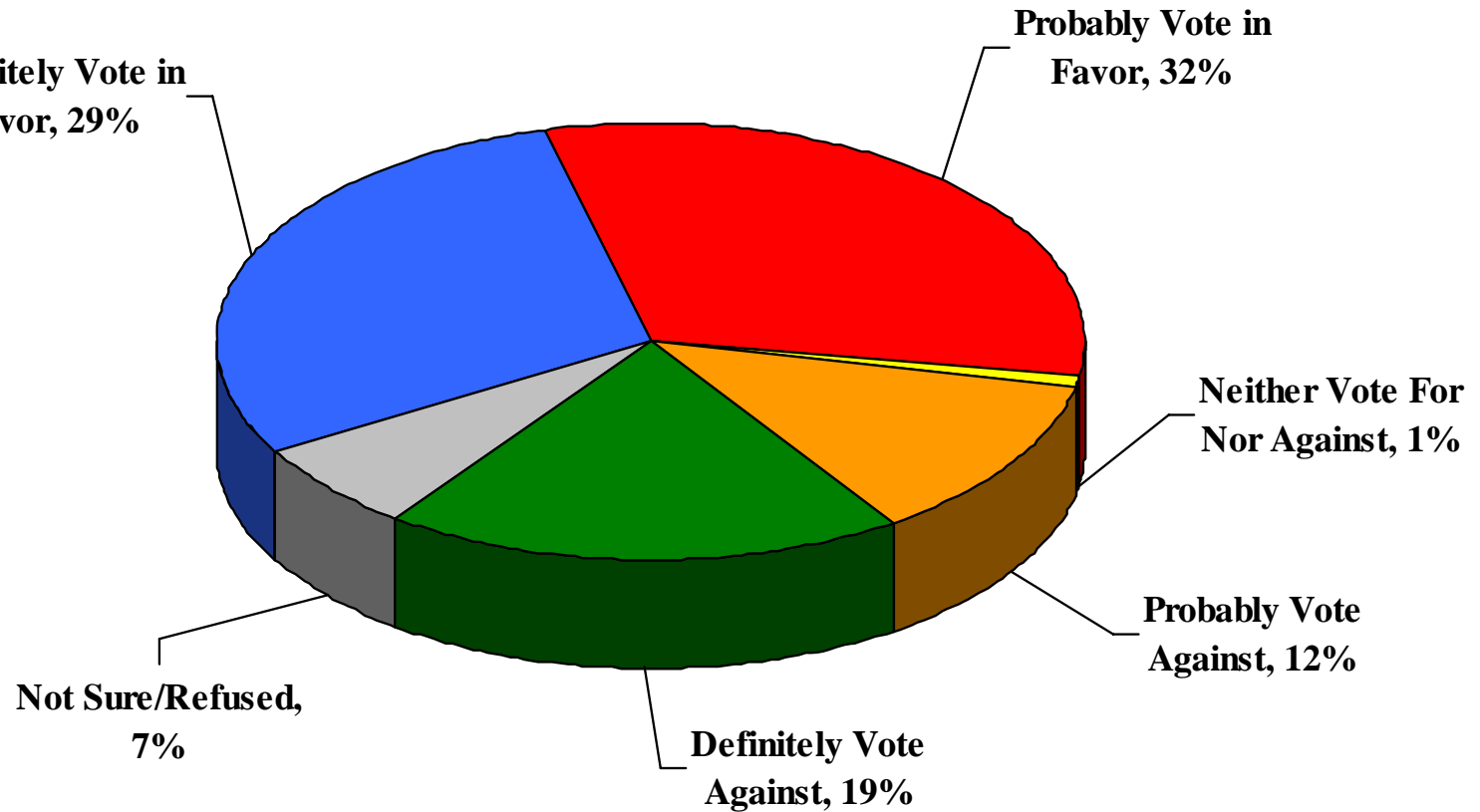
n=600



Q7. Given what you know about the proposal, if the election were held today, would you vote for or against the Maine TABOR Amendment?

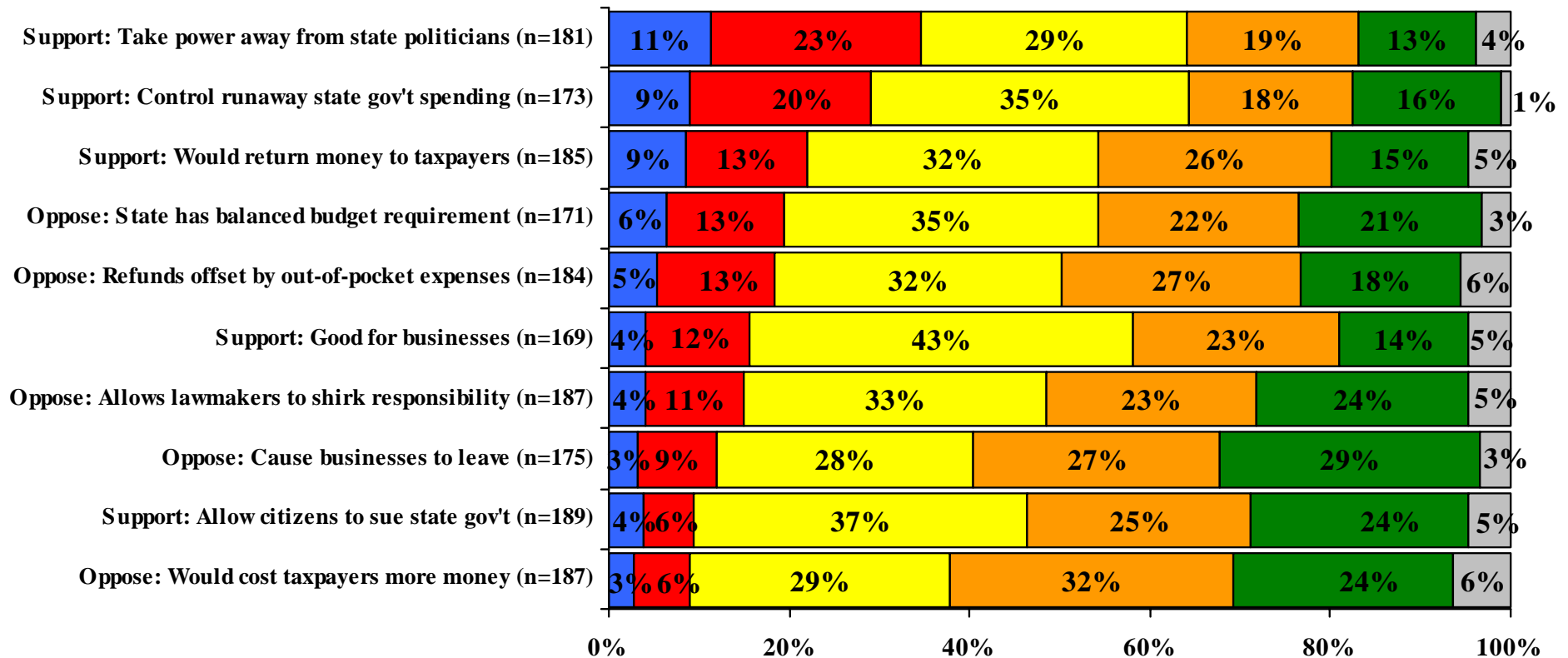
Three-fifths of AARP Members in Maine say they would either probably or definitely vote for the TABOR proposal if the election was held today.

n=600



Q8. Next I'm going to read you some of the things that supporters of Maine TABOR say about the proposal and some of the things opponents say....I'd like you to please tell me whether you find it an extremely convincing argument, very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or whether this particular argument is not at all convincing.

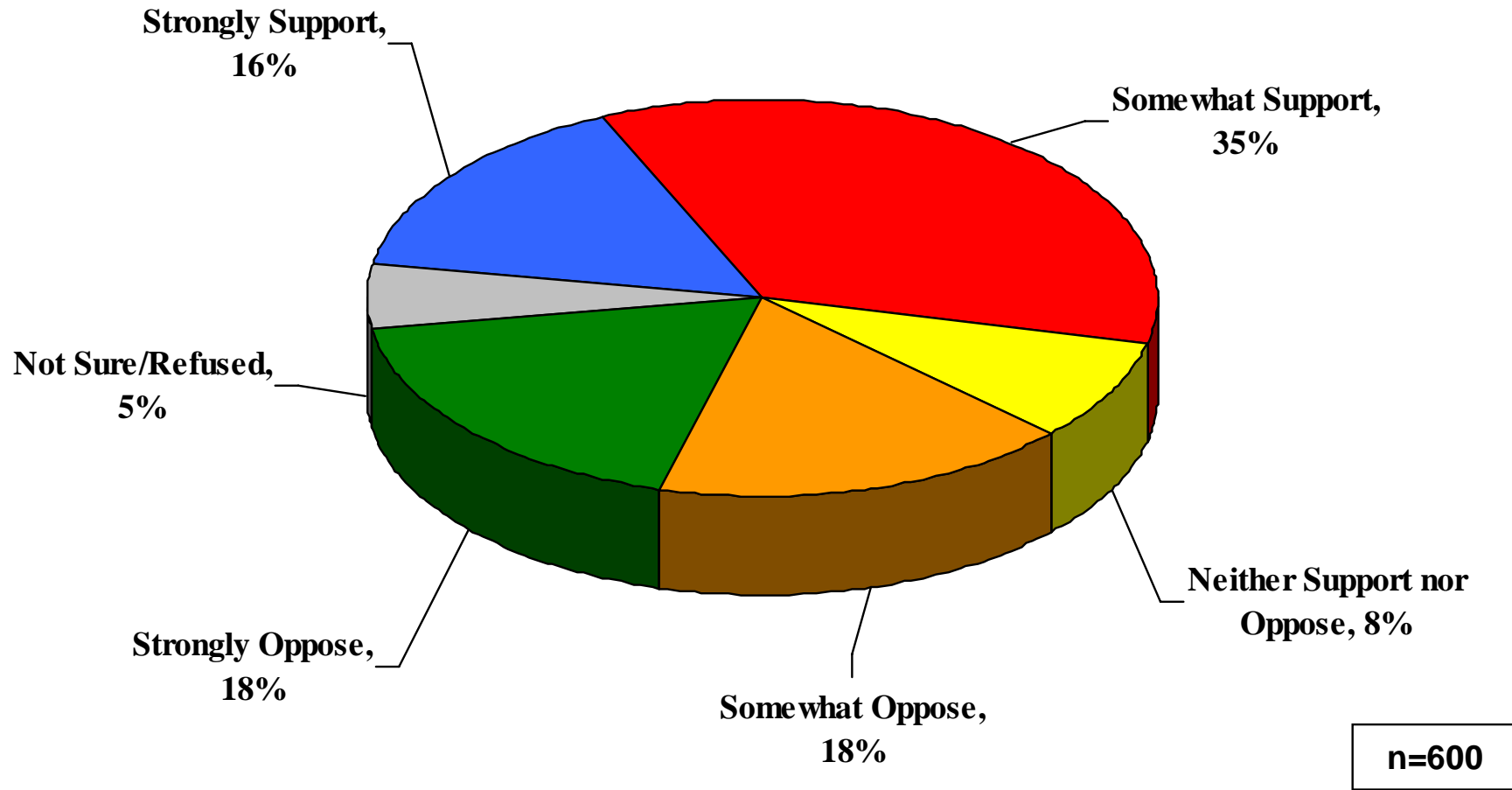
Although AARP Members find most of the arguments presented only somewhat convincing at best, they appear to be most persuaded by arguments that TABOR will take power away from state politicians and that it will control runaway state government spending.



■ Extremely convincing
 ■ Very Convincing
 ■ Somewhat Convincing
 ■ Not Very Convincing
 ■ Not At All Convincing
 ■ Not Sure / Refused

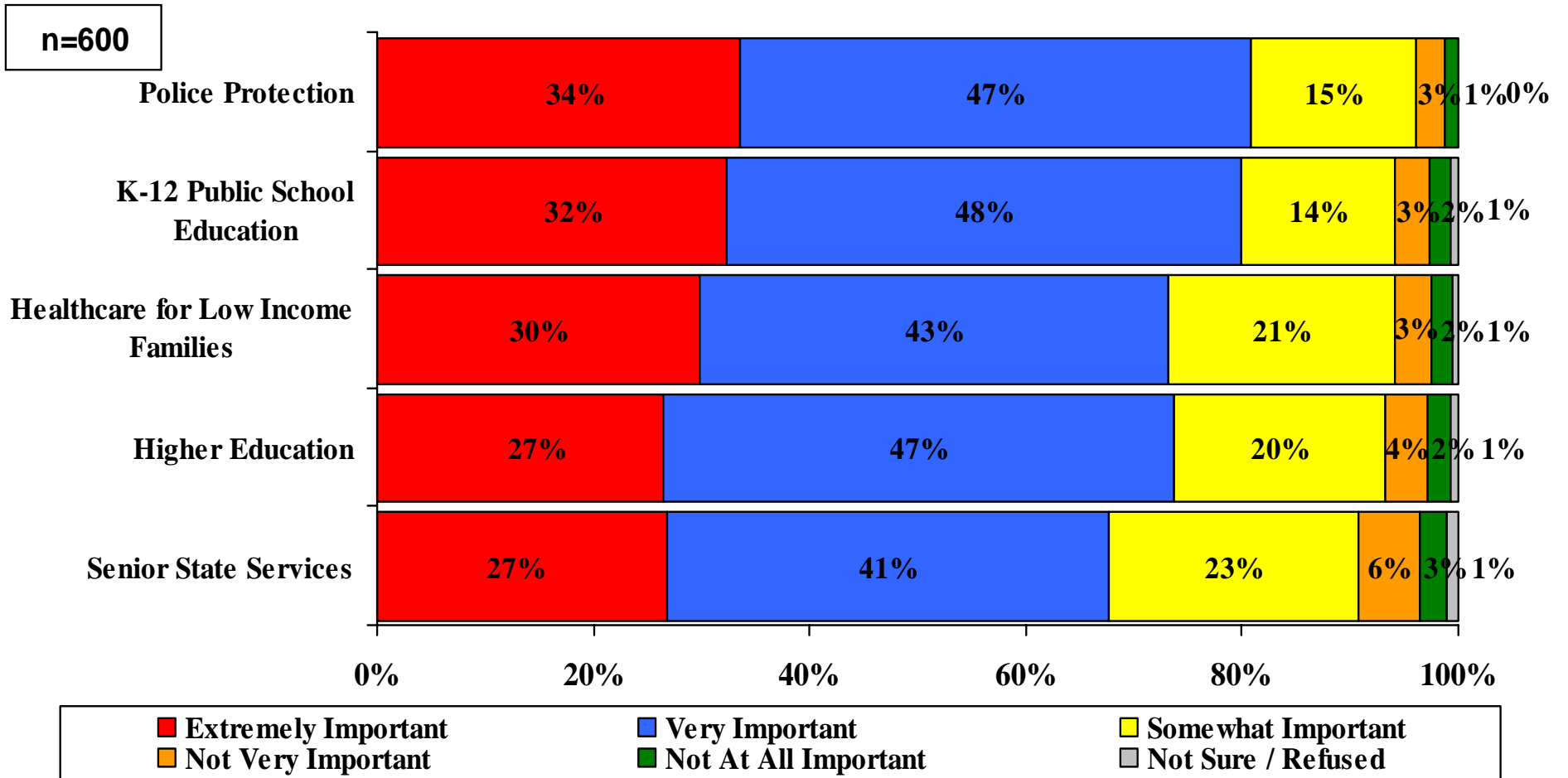
Q9. Having heard arguments both for and against TABOR, now how strongly do you support or oppose TABOR in Maine?

After hearing arguments both in support of and in opposition to the TABOR proposal, only one-half of AARP Members living in Maine say they support the proposal. In comparison, one-third of Members say they oppose TABOR.



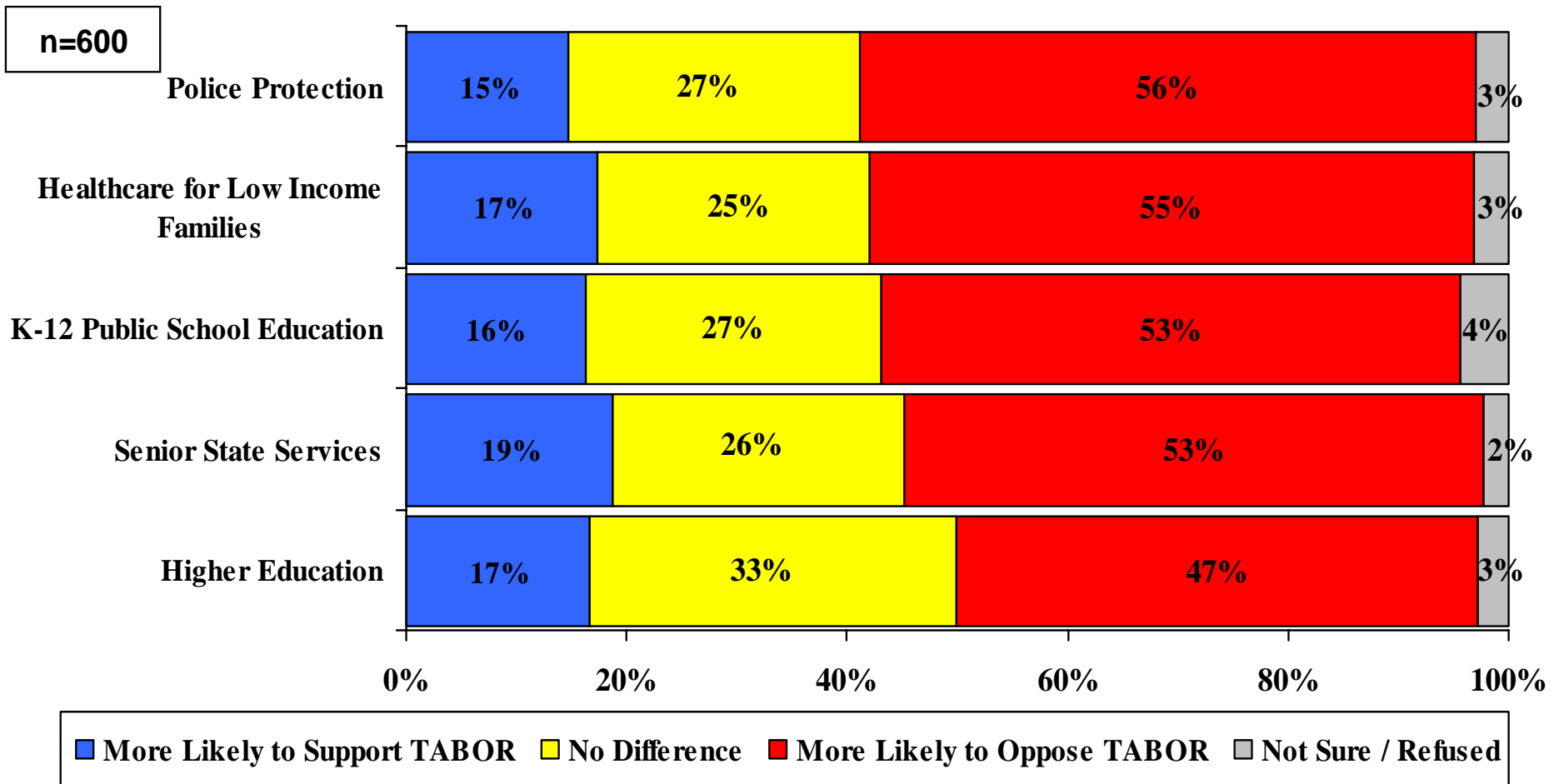
Q10. Now, I am going to ask you about state and local services Maine provides. How important is each of the following to you? Is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important?

AARP Members value police protection and K-12 public school education above all other state and local services presented. In fact, a third of Maine Members say these services are extremely important.



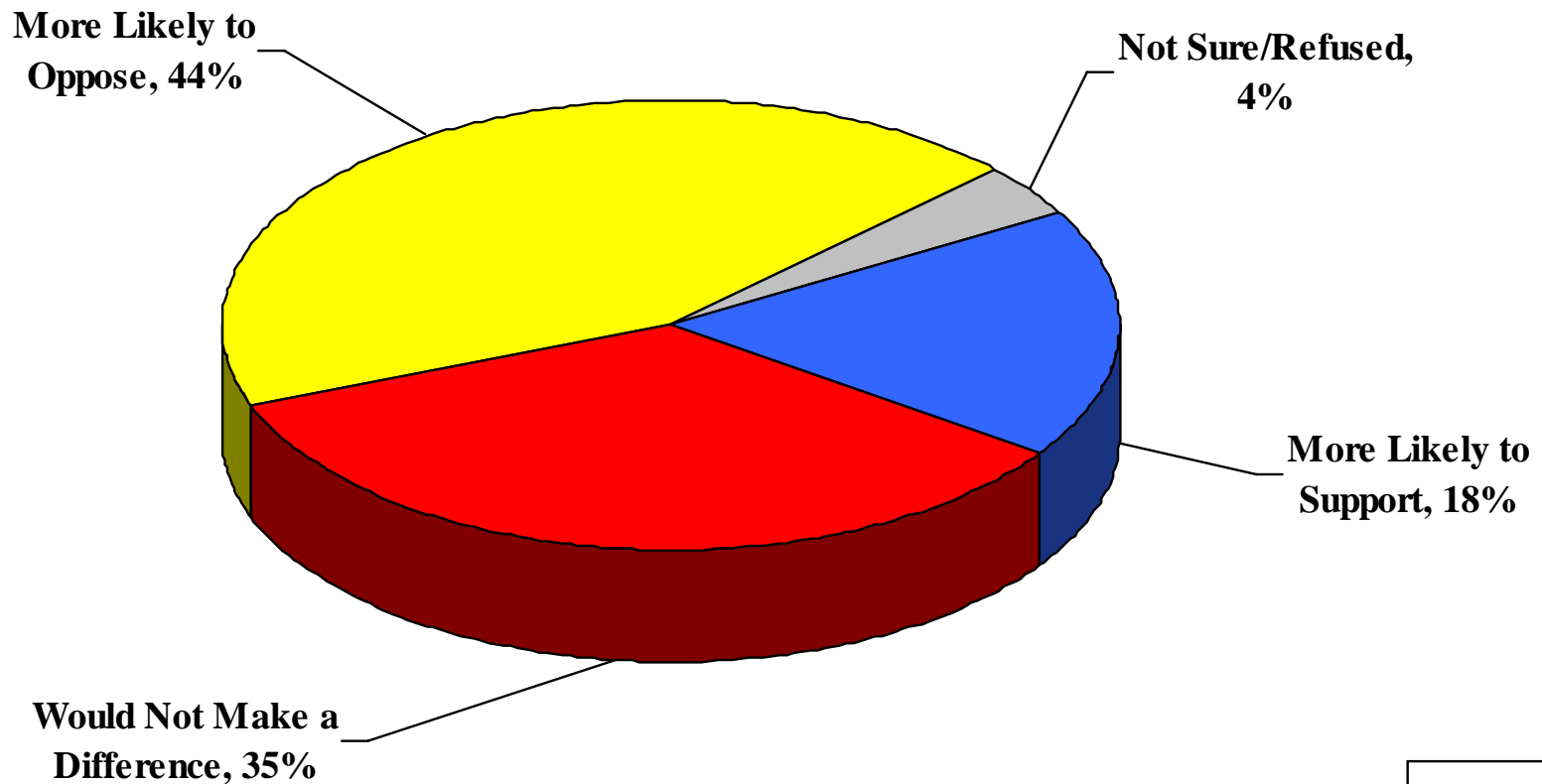
Q11. If Maine TABOR cut state funding for [each of the following services], would you be more likely to support TABOR, more likely to oppose TABOR, or would it not make a difference?

AARP Members would be more likely to oppose TABOR if the proposal cut funding for police protection or healthcare for low income families.



Q12. Suppose you learned that AARP and other senior organizations OPPOSED TABOR because they believe it would lead to significant cuts in important state services for Maine seniors. Would you be more likely to support TABOR, more likely to oppose TABOR, or would it not make a difference in how you voted for the Maine TABOR Amendment?

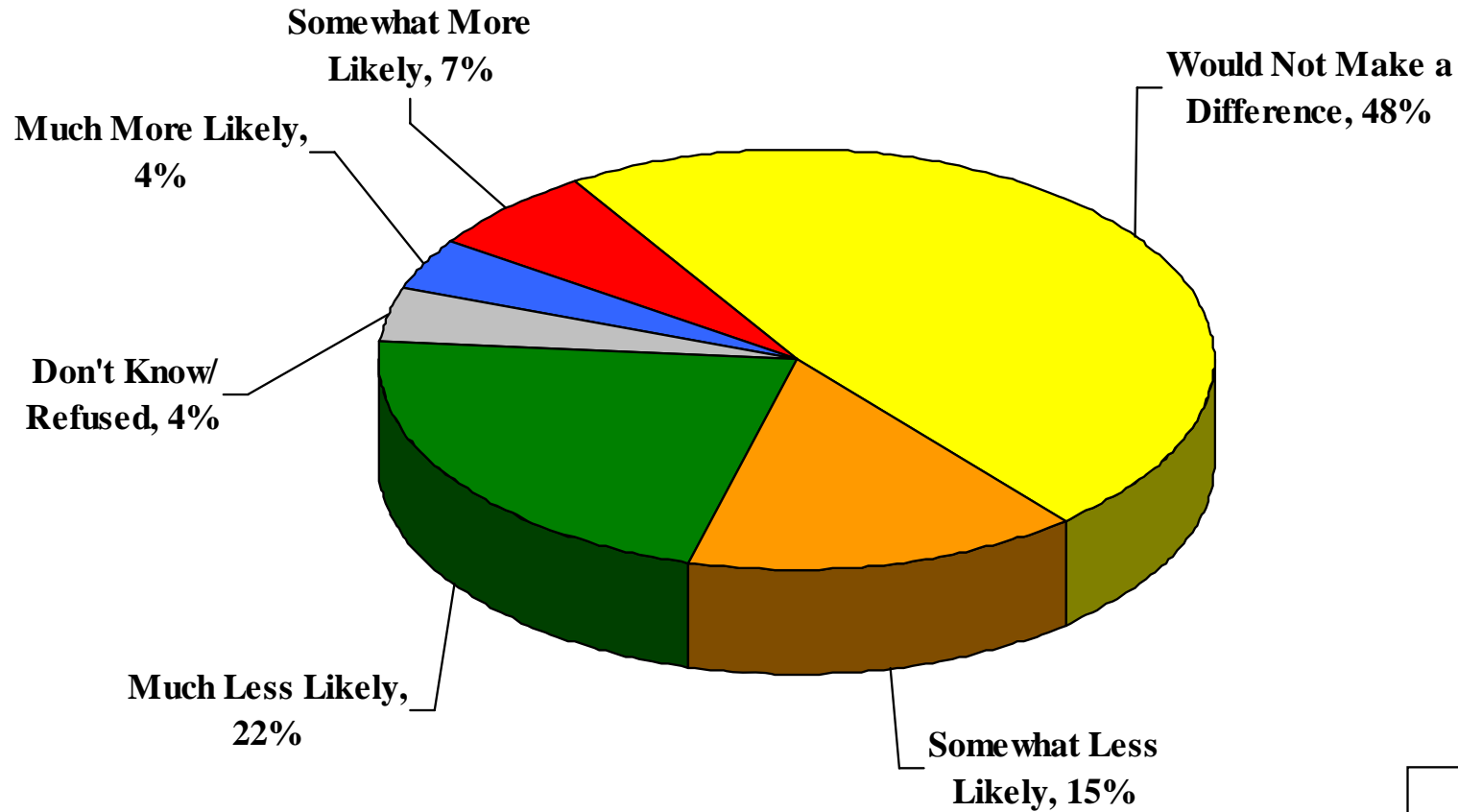
More than two-fifths of AARP Members say they would be more likely to oppose TABOR if they learned that AARP and other senior organizations opposed it as well.



n=600

Q20. If you knew that TABOR would not reduce property taxes, would this make you more or less likely to support the TABOR proposal, or would it not make a difference?

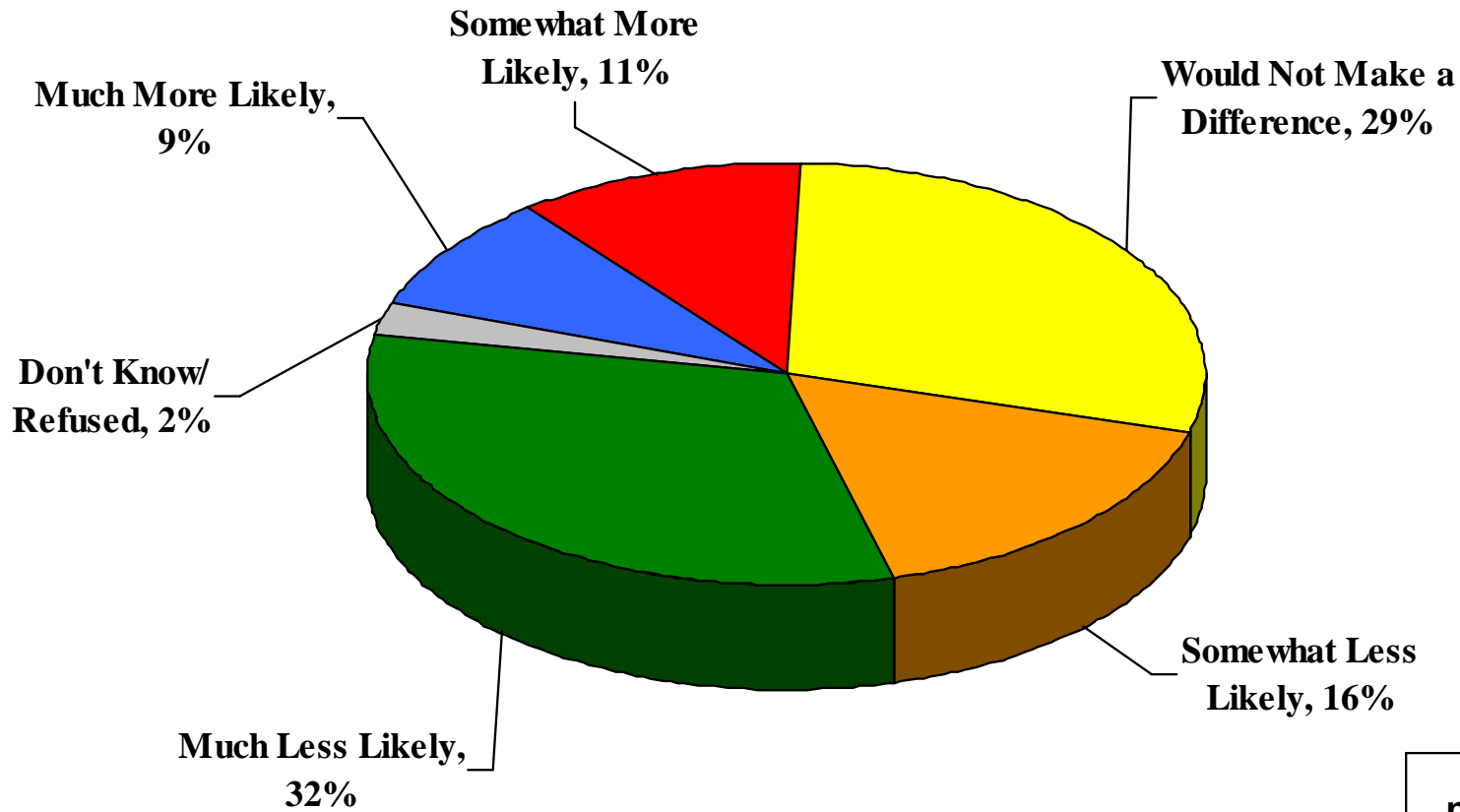
One-half of AARP Members living in Maine say their support of TABOR would not be affected if they knew TABOR would not reduce property taxes.



n=600

Q21. If you knew that TABOR would not let the government step in to help people get through tough times, like when Maine is hit by floods, ice storms, hurricanes, and other emergencies, such as high oil prices, would that make you more or less likely to support the proposal, or would it not make a difference.

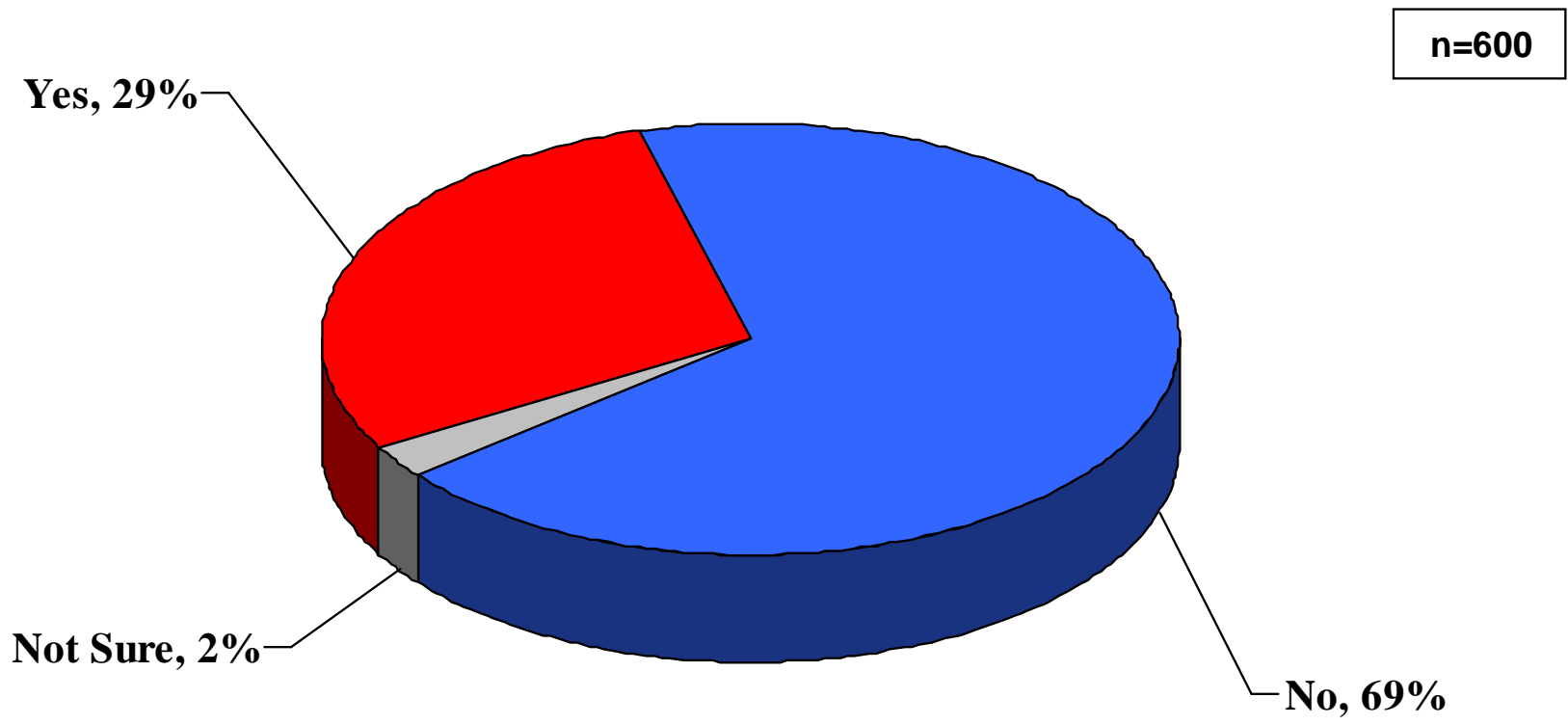
One-half of AARP Members living in Maine would be either much less or somewhat less likely to support TABOR of they knew that TABOR would not let the government step in to help people get through tough times.



n=600

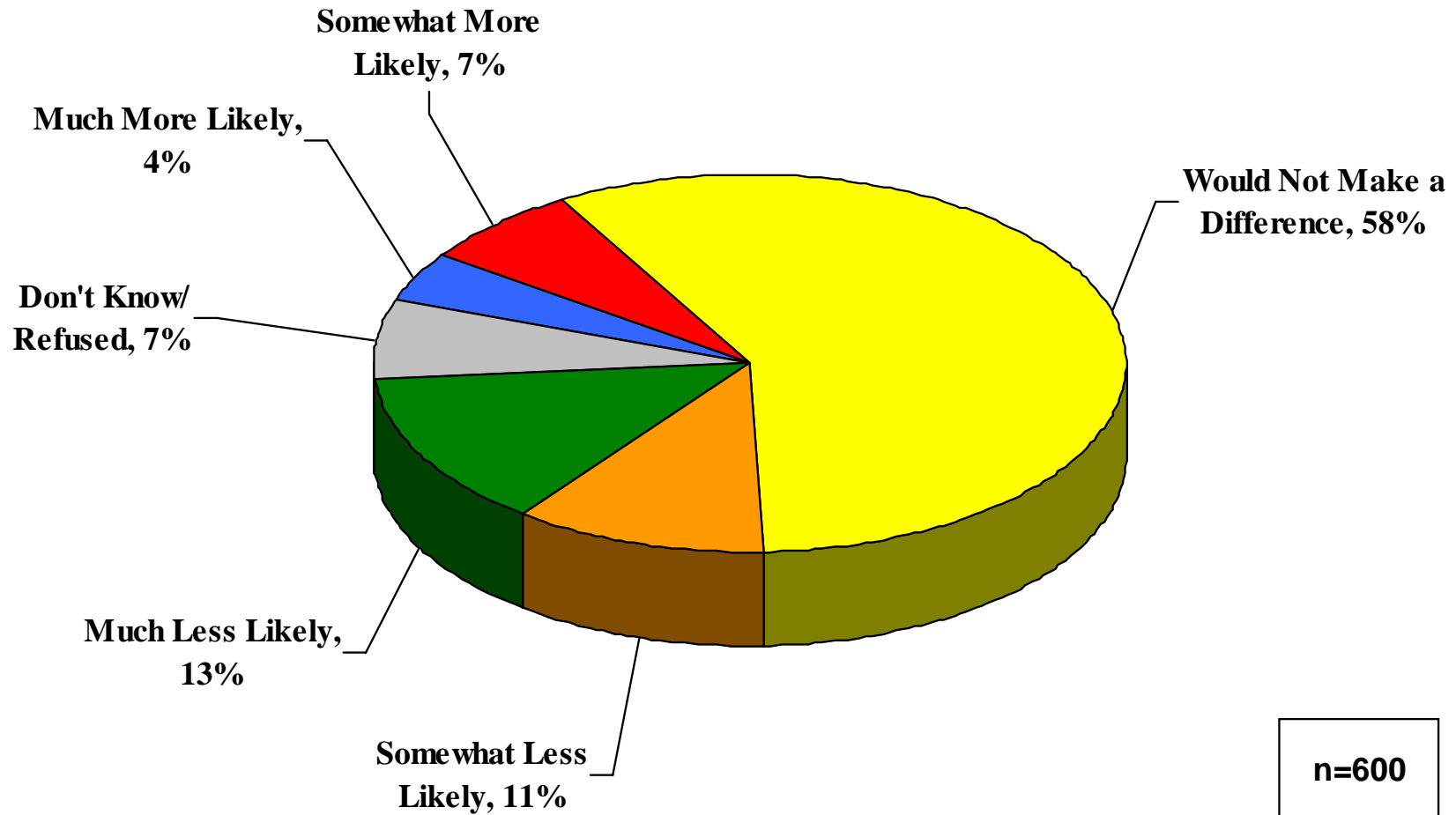
Q22. Are you aware of the existing Tax and Expenditure Limit in Maine, which is used to control state government spending and taxation?

Only three out of ten AARP Members in Maine are aware of the existing Tax and Expenditure Limit in Maine.



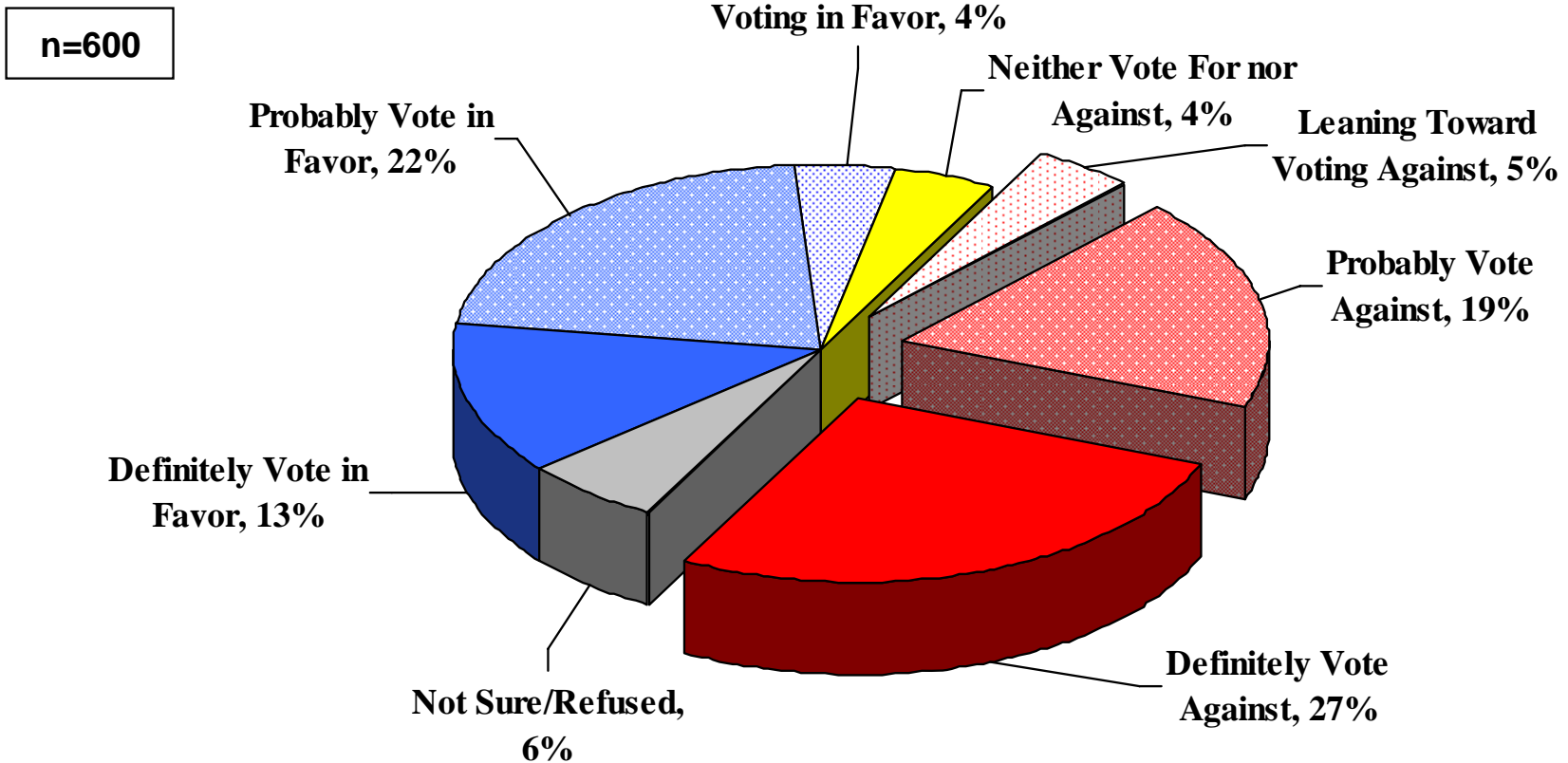
Q23. Does knowing that Maine already has a Tax and Expenditure Limit make you more or less likely to support the current TABOR proposal, or would it not make a difference?

Three out of five AARP Members in Maine say that knowing Maine already had a Tax and Expenditure Limit would not make a difference in their level of support for TABOR.



Q13 & Q14. Now thinking about all the information we have discussed about this proposal that may be on the ballot in November, if the election were held today, would you vote for or against this proposal? [IF INITIALLY UNDECIDED ASK: Well, if you had to decide right now, which way would you say you are leaning—toward voting in favor or toward voting against?"]

After being presented with additional information about the TABOR proposal, one-half of AARP Members are at least leaning toward voting against the proposal, though two-fifths of Members say they are at least leaning toward voting in favor of TABOR.

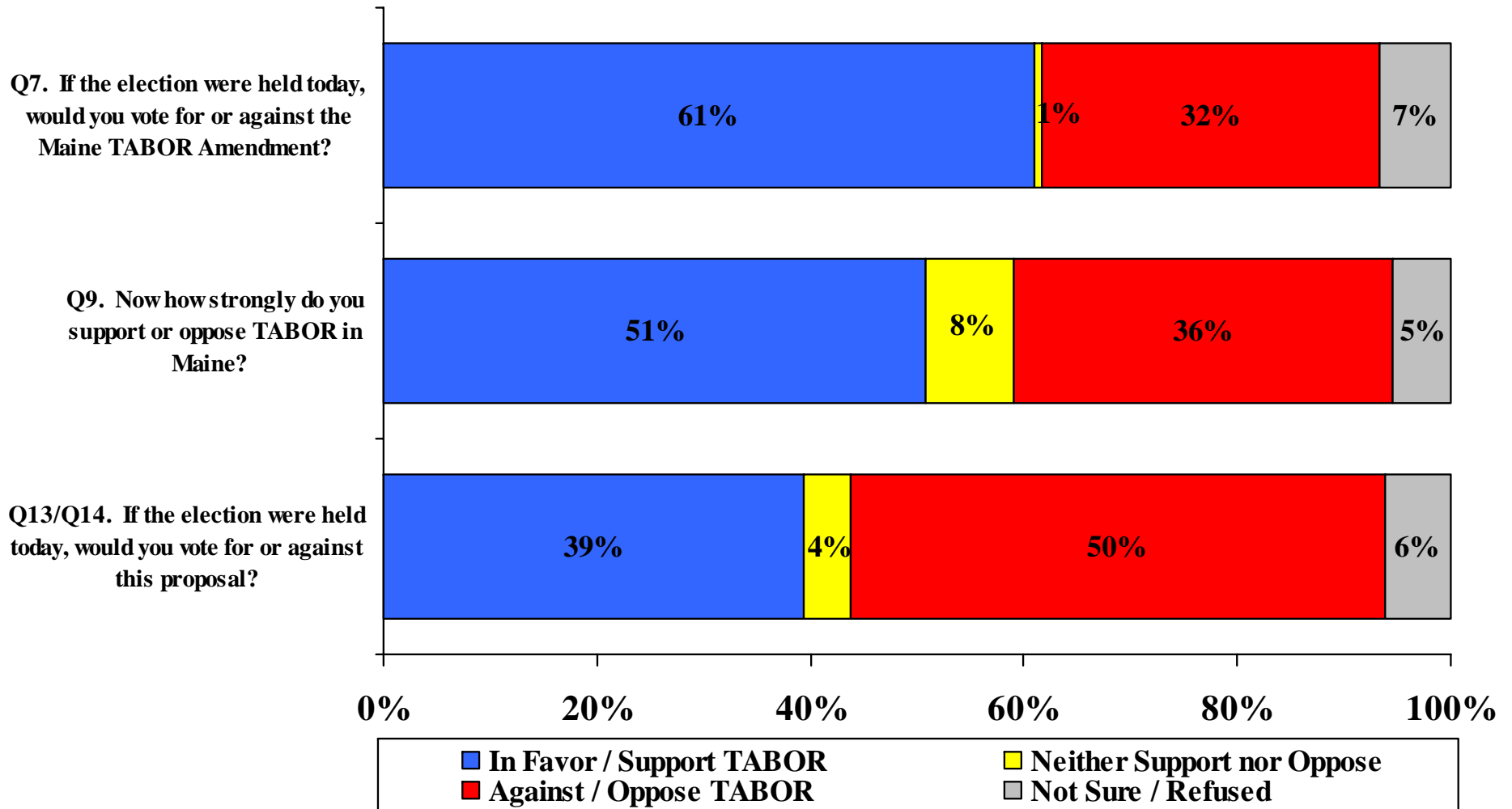


TABOR Support/Oppose Summary Chart



TABOR SUPPORT/OPPOSE THROUGHOUT SURVEY

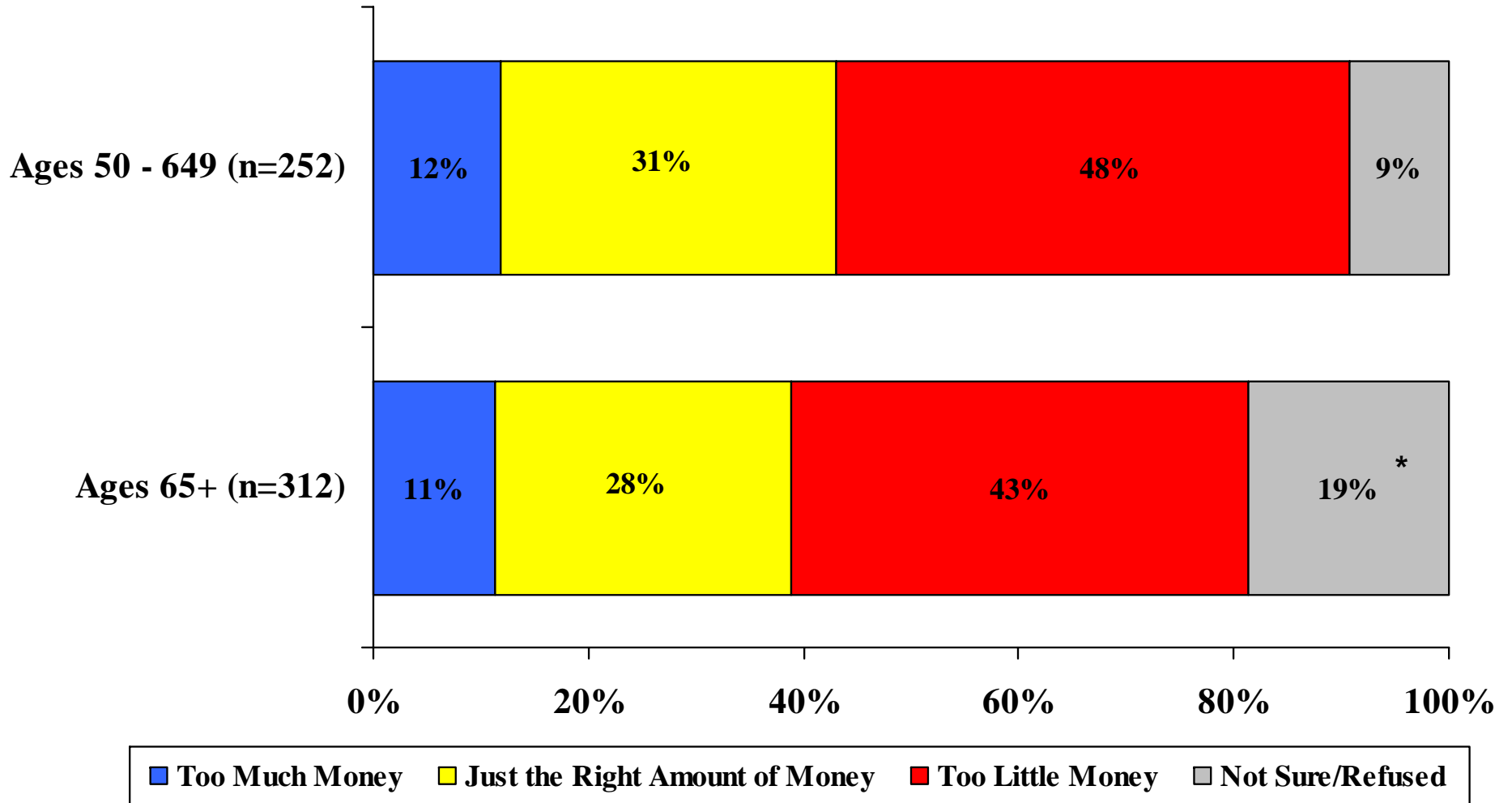
Comparison of the three questions asking about support for or against TABOR reveals a statistically significant decline in support for this proposal between the first measure in the survey and the last.



Subgroup Analysis: Survey Responses by Age

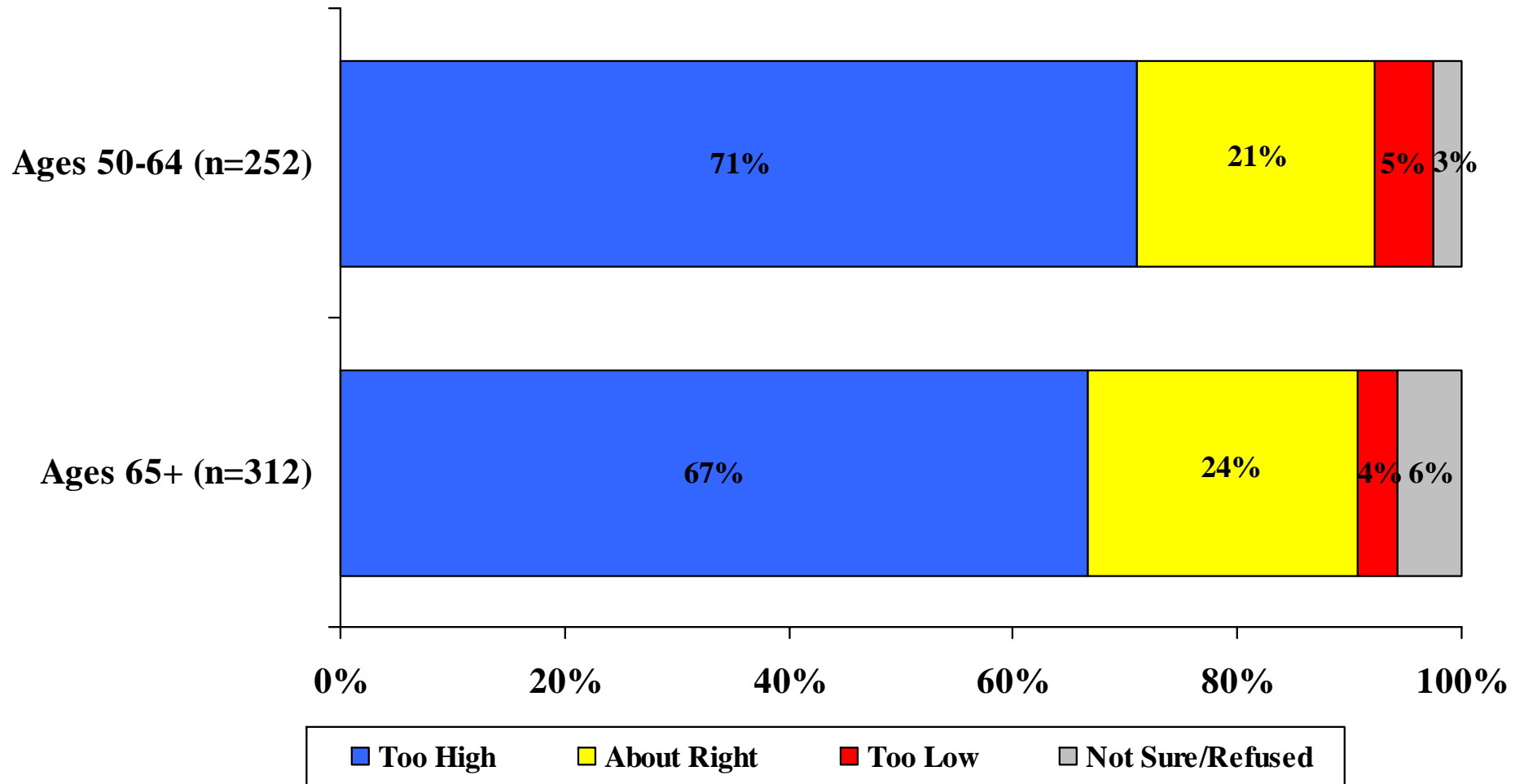


Q1. Do you think that Maine is spending too much money, too little money, or just the right amount of money on state services such as keeping people safe, providing health and long-term care, repairing roads and highways, maintaining parks, and providing education?



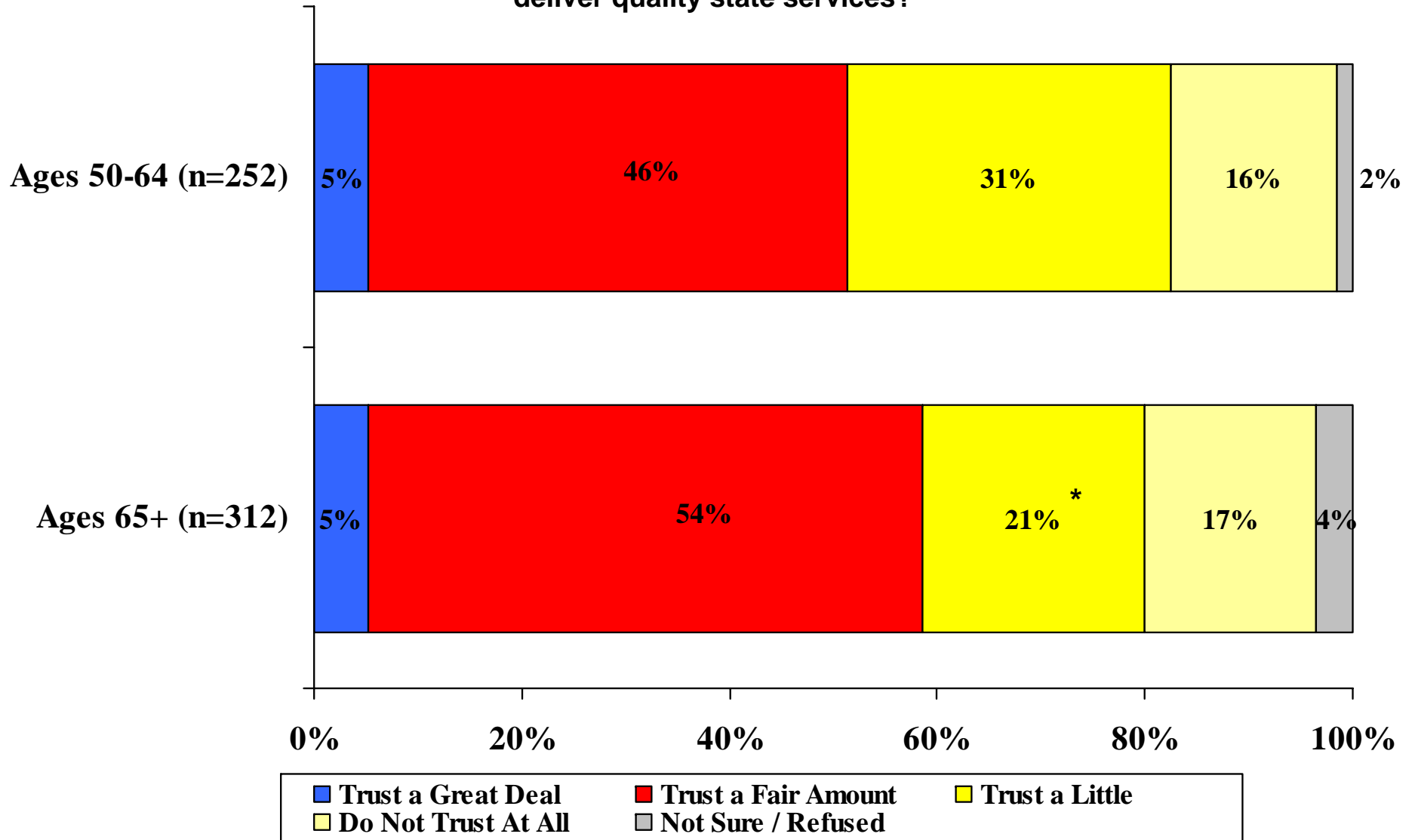
* Statistically significant difference from Members aged 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence.

Q2. Thinking about the state and local taxes that you pay, not including federal taxes, do you think that taxes in Maine are too high, are about right, or are too low to support state services?



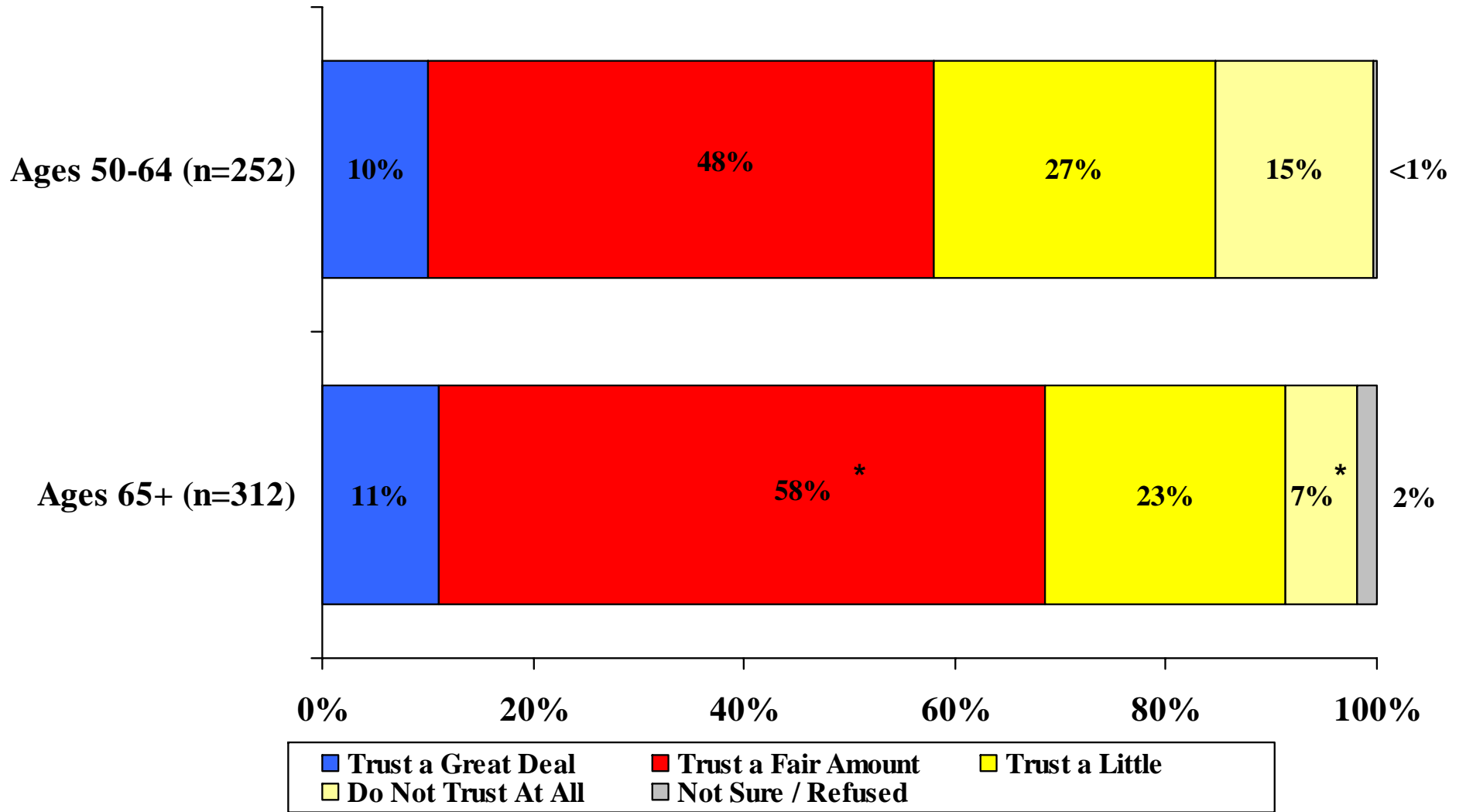
* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q3a. How much do you trust your state government to use your tax money effectively and deliver quality state services?

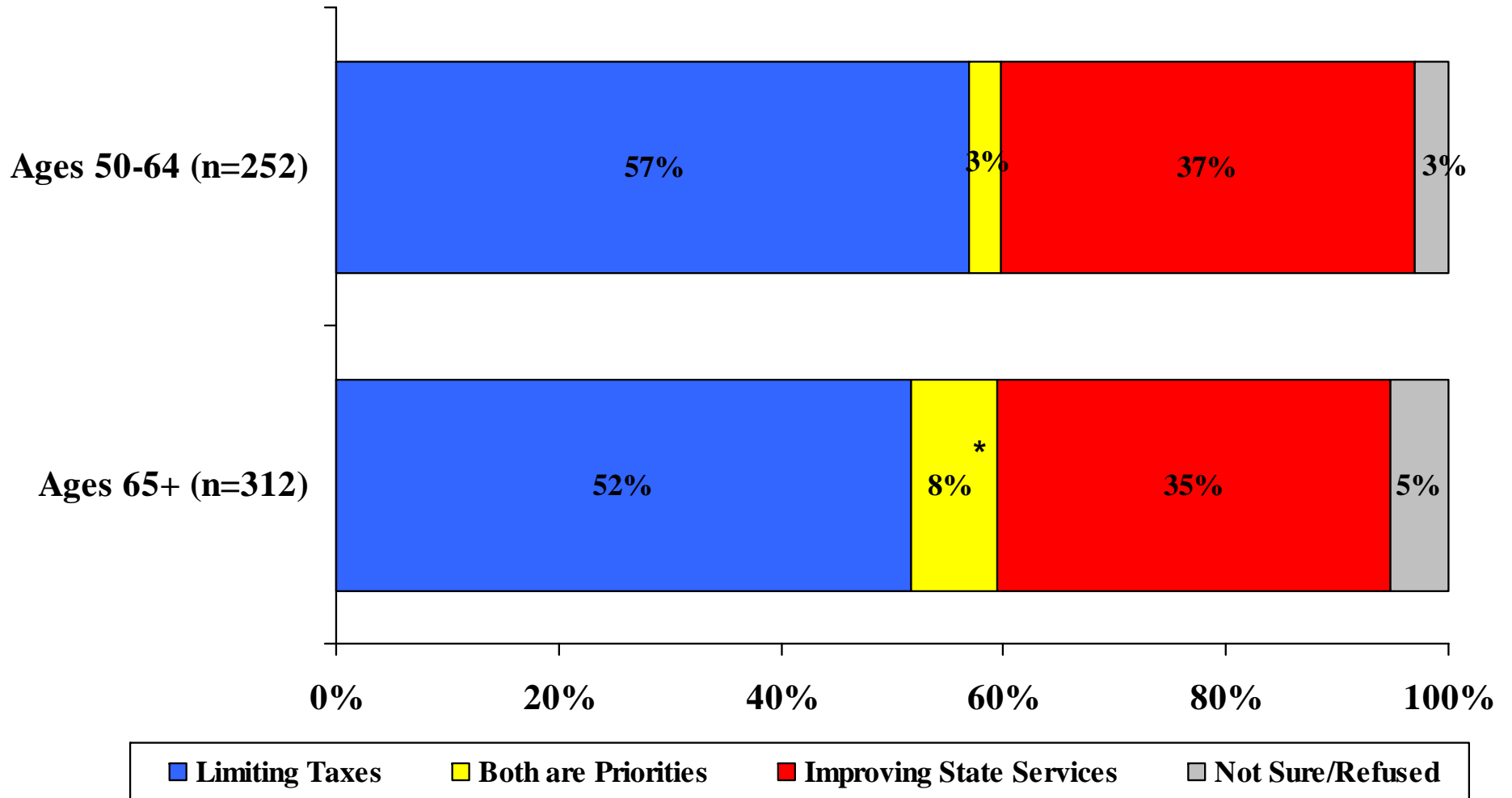


* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

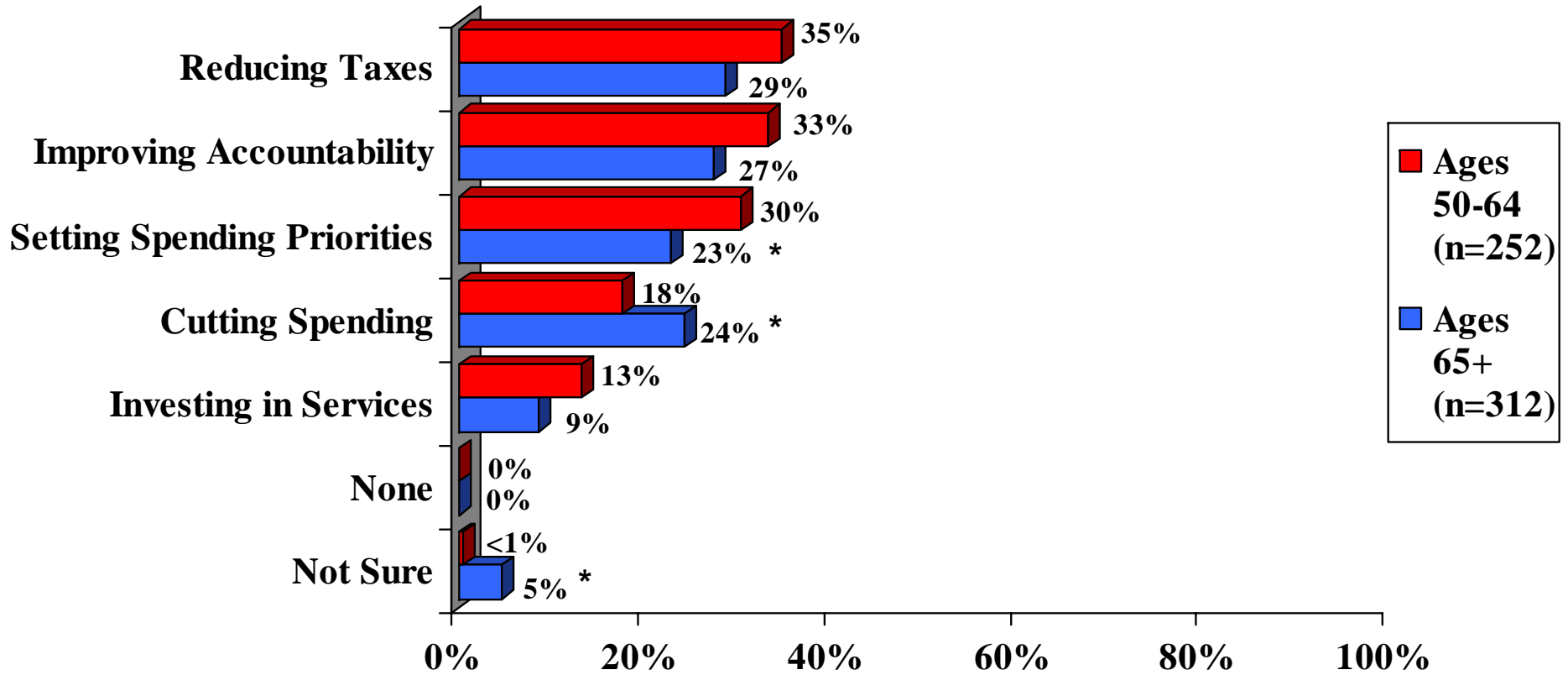
Q3b. How much do you trust your local government (includes Towns, Cities, and Counties) to use your tax money effectively and deliver quality state services?



Q4. In Maine, which is a higher priority for you...?

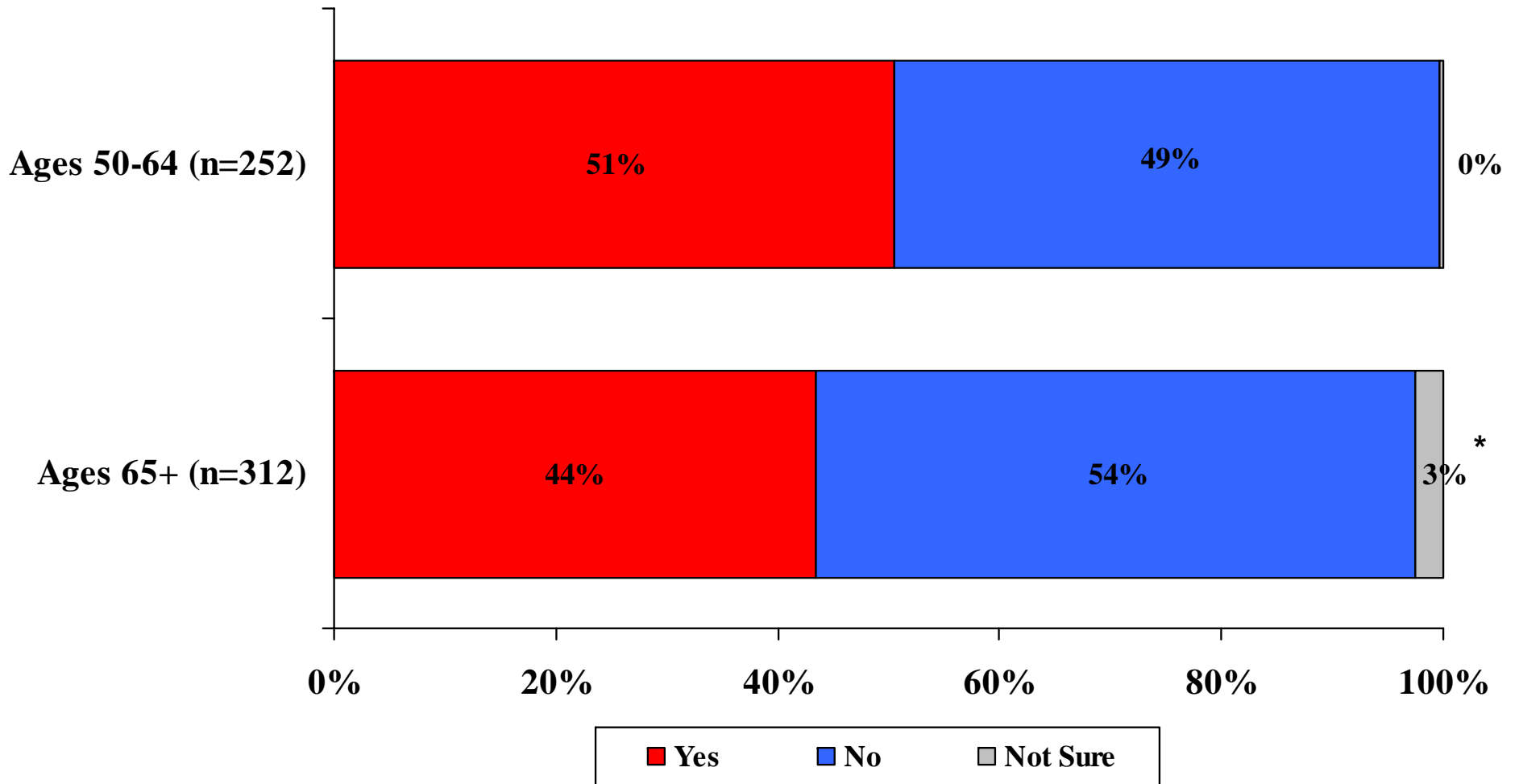


Q5. Thinking about state government today in Maine, which one or two of the following goals are most important to you?

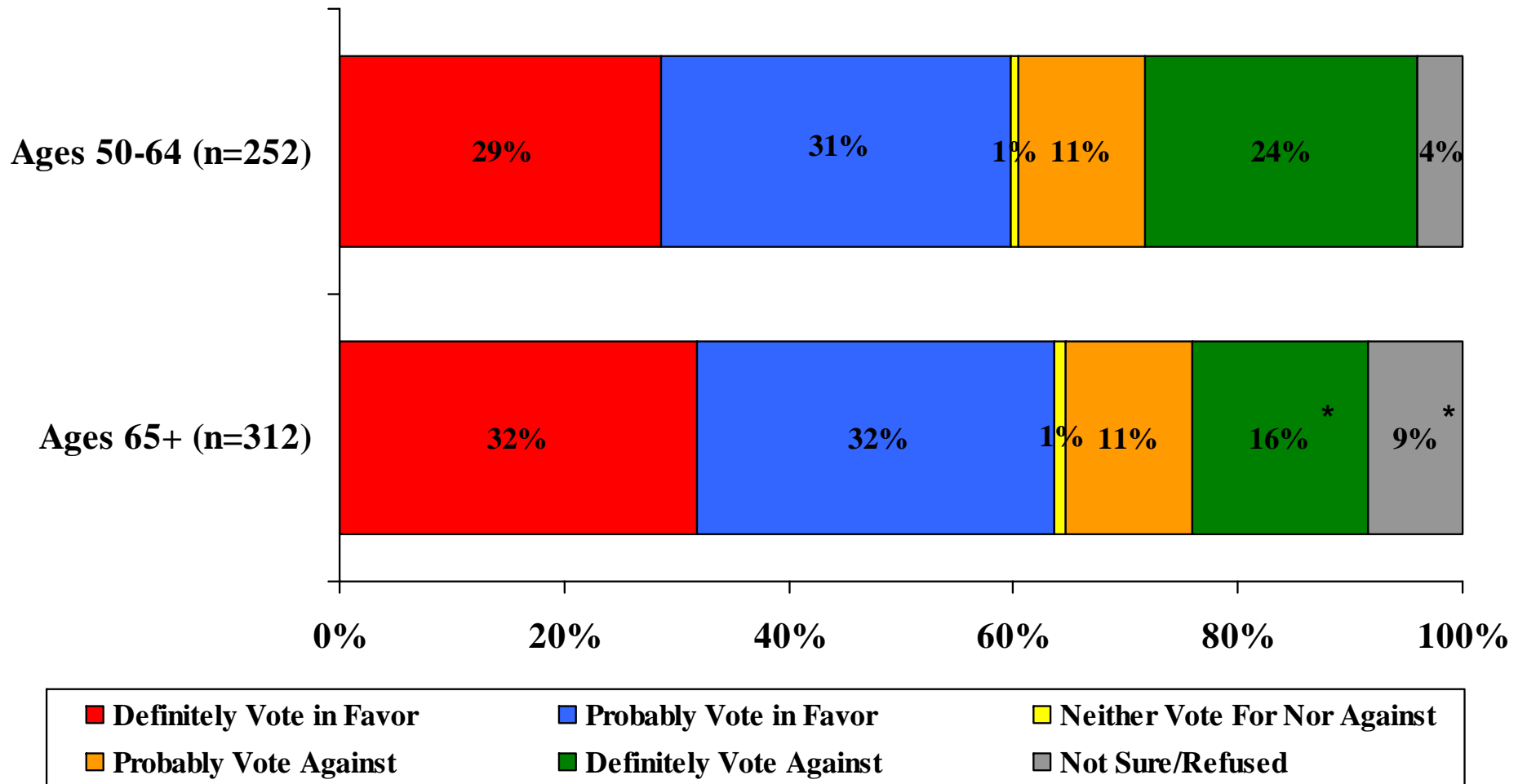


* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q6. Have you seen, read, or heard anything about the Maine Taxpayer Bill of Rights, or TABOR proposal in the last year?



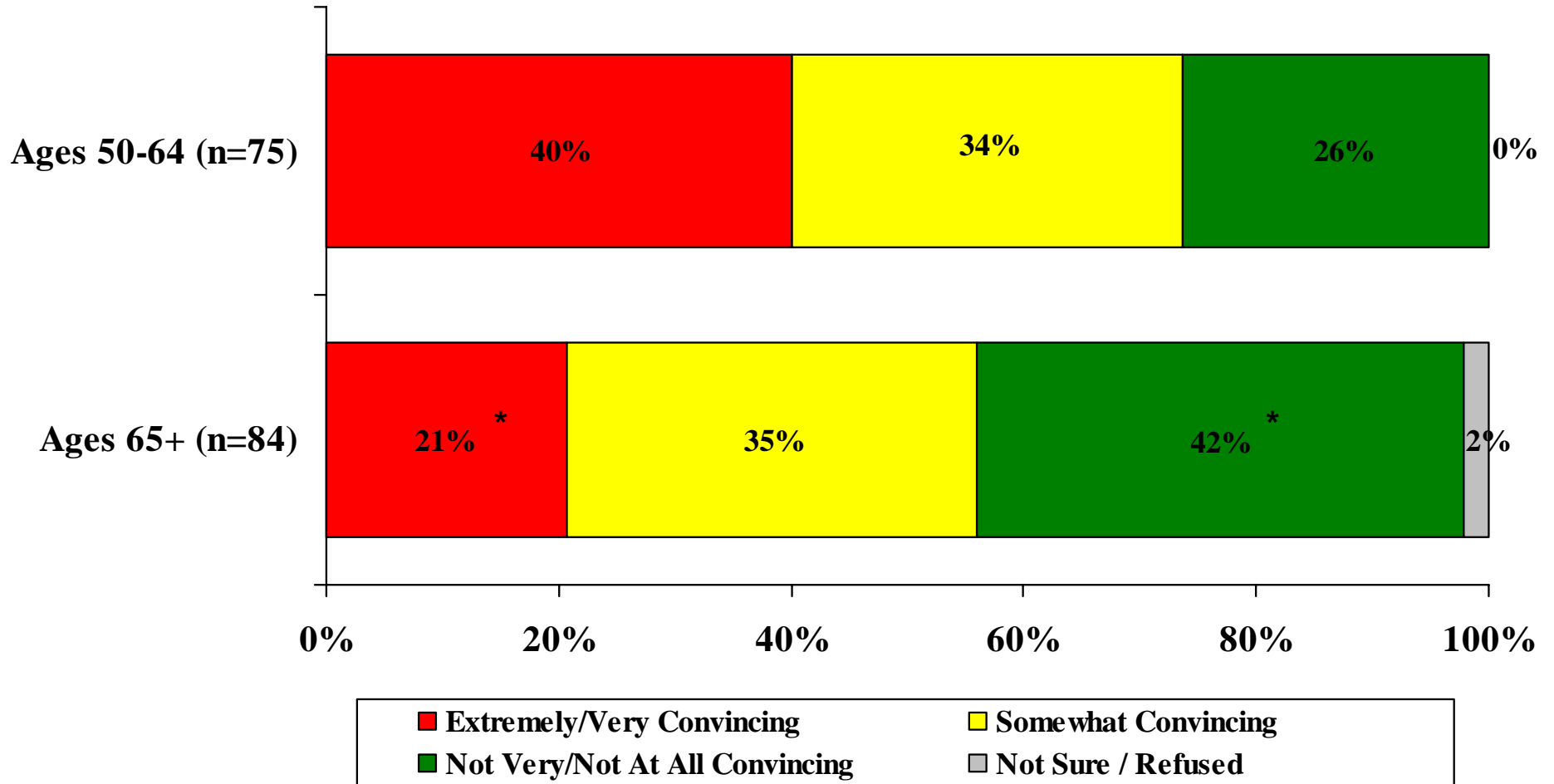
Q7. Given what you know about the proposal, if the election were held today, would you vote for or against the Maine TABOR Amendment?



* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

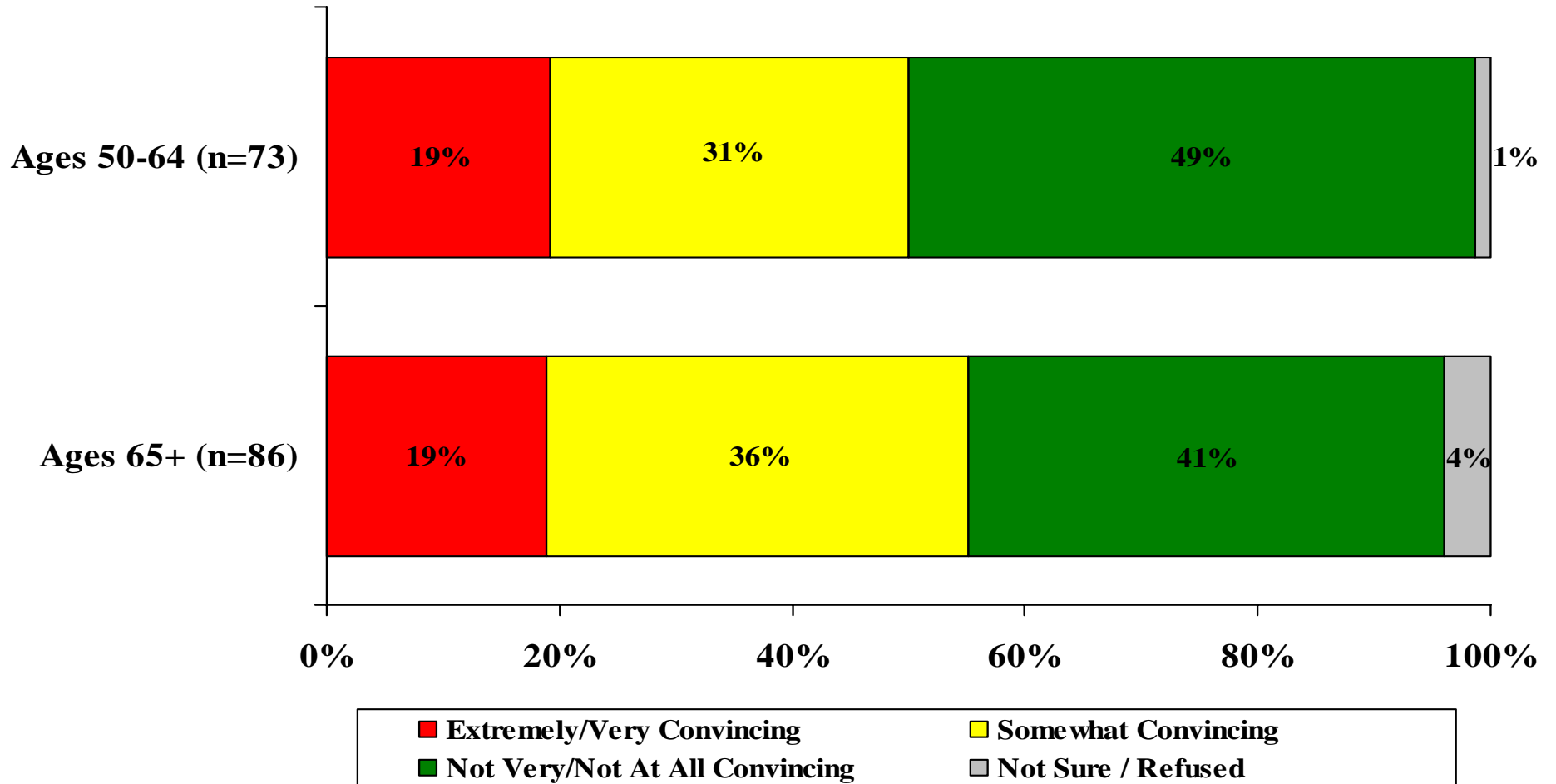
Q8a1. I'd like you to please tell me whether you find [this] an extremely convincing argument, very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or whether this particular argument is not at all convincing:

Supporters of TABOR say that it would control runaway state government spending and force the state government to operate more efficiently.



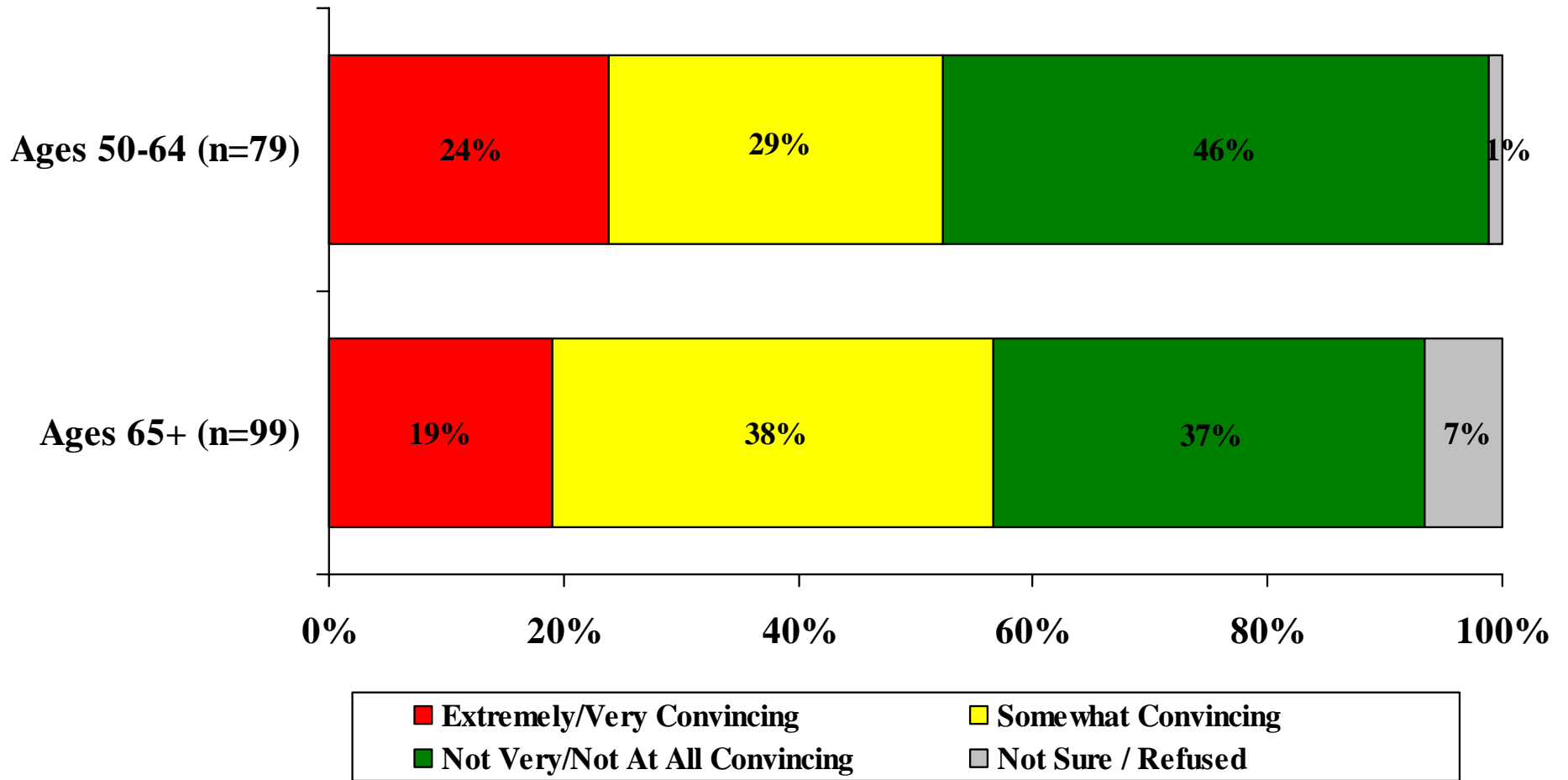
Q8a2. I'd like you to please tell me whether you find [this] an extremely convincing argument, very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or whether this particular argument is not at all convincing:

Opponents of TABOR say the state already has a balanced budget requirement, voters can already control state government actions at the ballot box, and that TABOR would decrease the quality of life in Maine, forcing major cuts in health, education, transportation, and public safety.



Q8b1. I'd like you to please tell me whether you find [this] an extremely convincing argument, very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or whether this particular argument is not at all convincing:

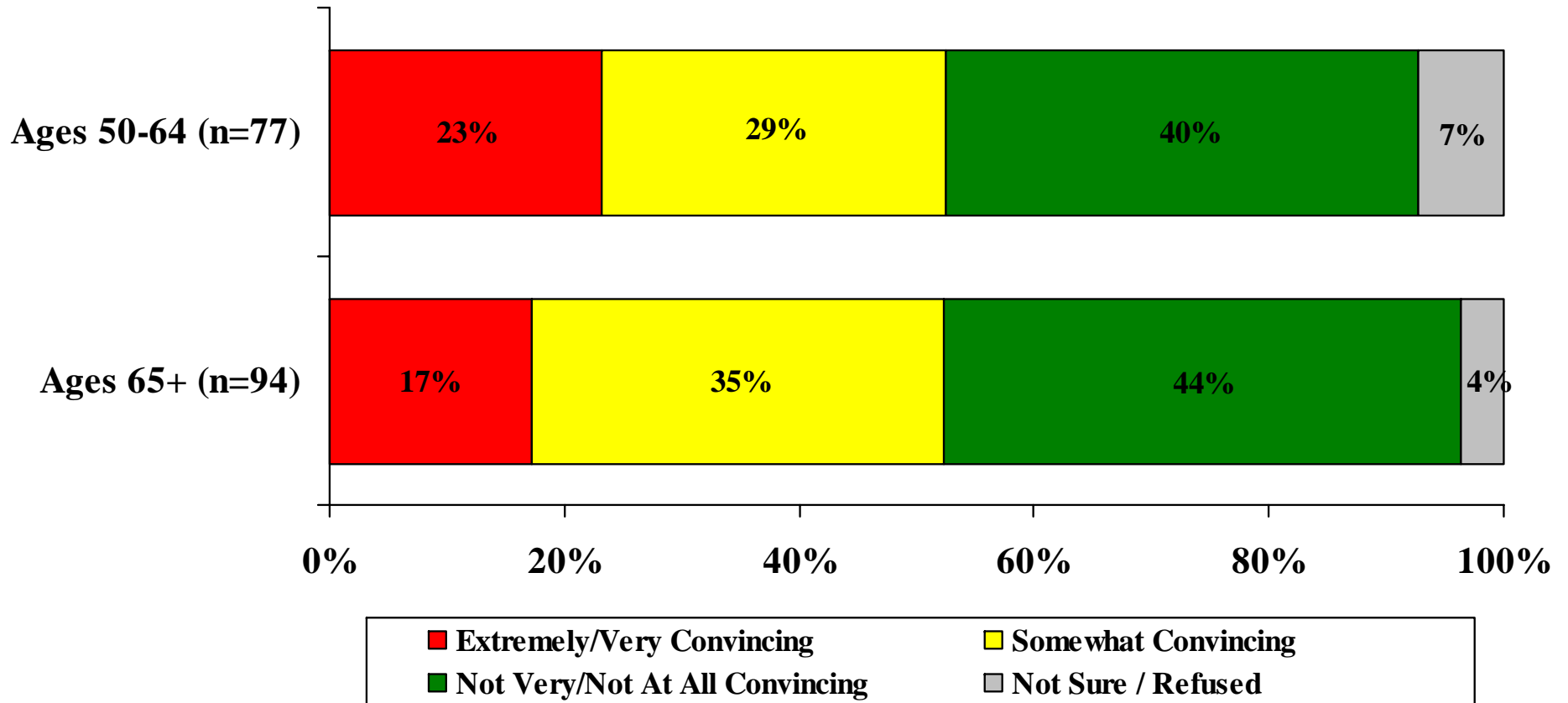
Supporters of TABOR say that it would help the Maine economy by returning money to taxpayers through tax rebates and tax cuts.



* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q8b2. I'd like you to please tell me whether you find [this] an extremely convincing argument, very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or whether this particular argument is not at all convincing:

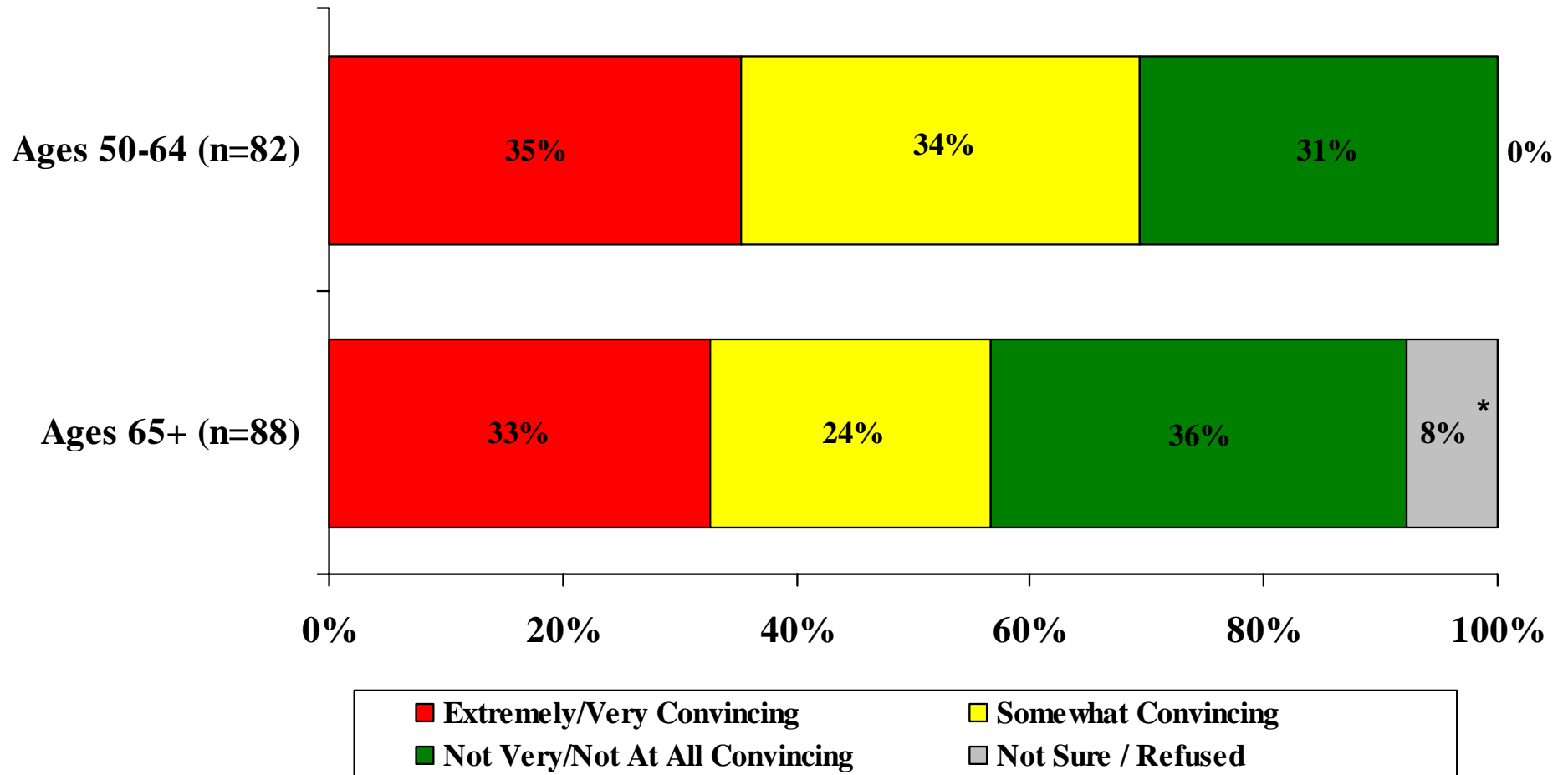
Opponents of TABOR say that any money refunded to tax payers would be more than offset by the increased out-of-pocket expense they would bear. In Colorado, the only state that has passed TABOR, fees have increased for licenses and park admissions. Also, families have had to pay for items that schools typically provided such as textbooks and basic school supplies, while children attended classes wearing coats because heat had been dramatically lowered.



* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q8c1. I'd like you to please tell me whether you find [this] an extremely convincing argument, very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or whether this particular argument is not at all convincing:

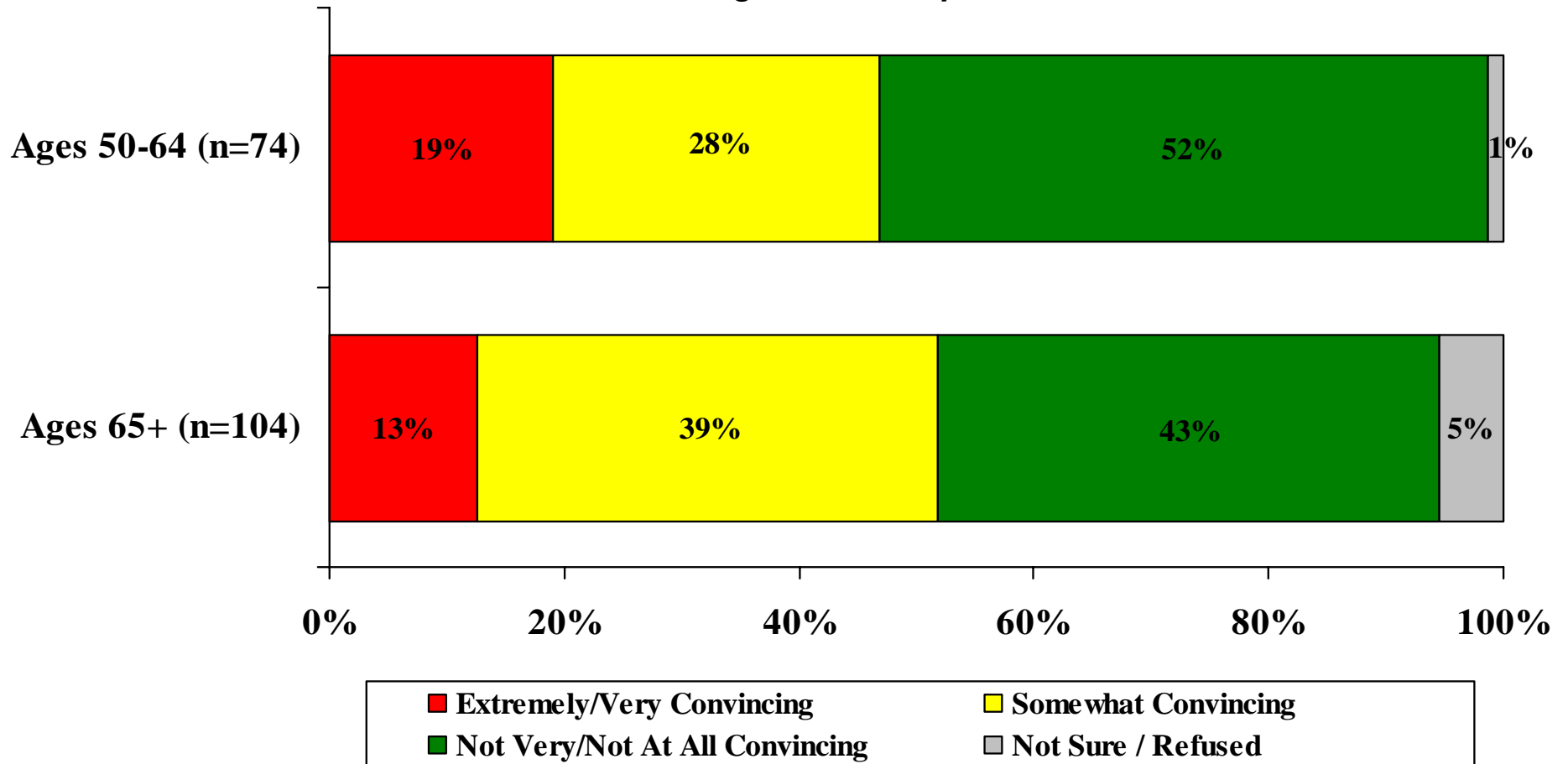
Supporters of TABOR say that it would take power away from state politicians and put it back in the hands of the people by requiring that any tax increase be approved by voters.



* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q8c2. I'd like you to please tell me whether you find [this] an extremely convincing argument, very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or whether this particular argument is not at all convincing:

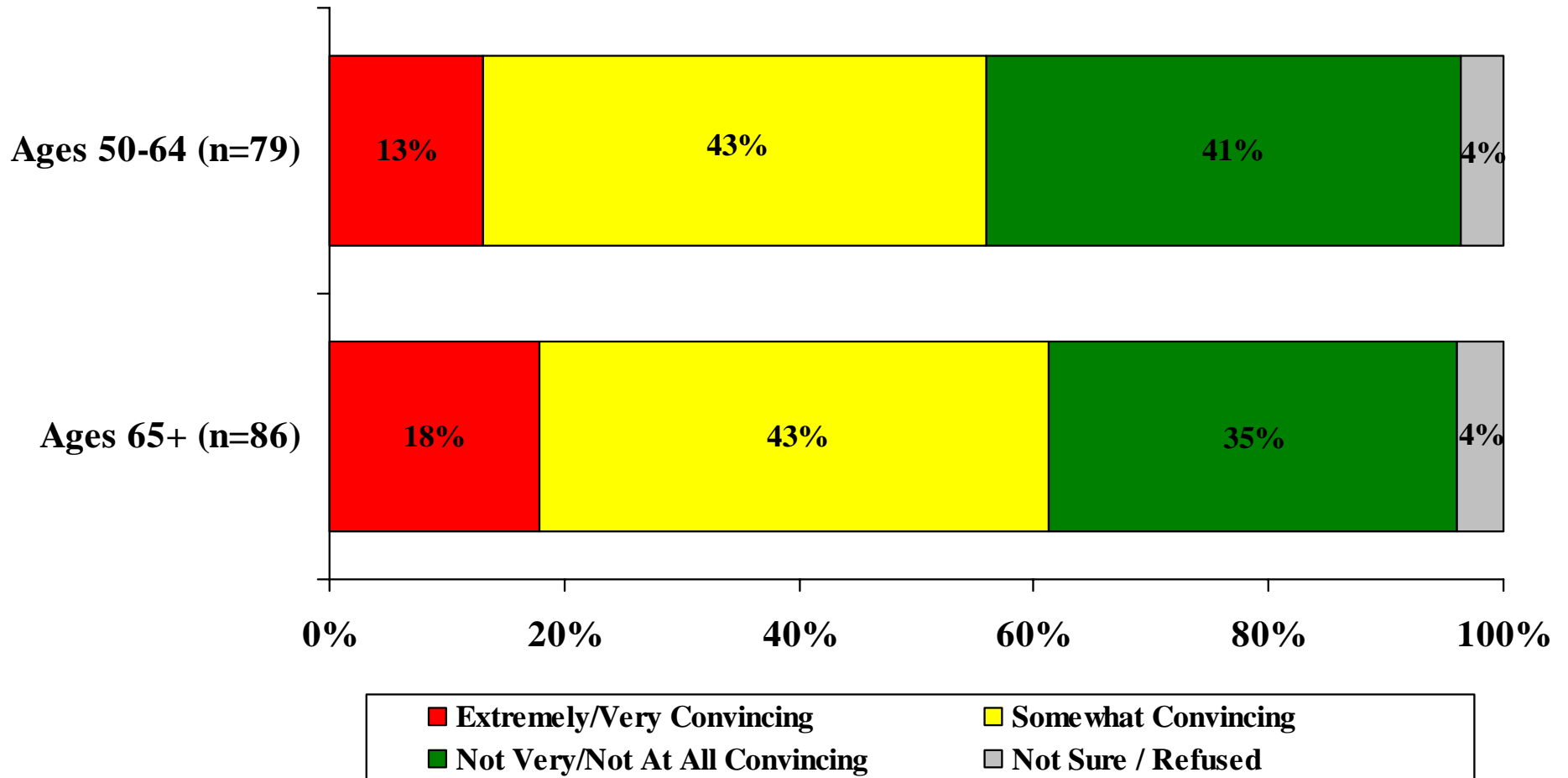
Opponents of TABOR say that it allows lawmakers to shirk their responsibility for managing the state budget, and, by making voters decide on every single tax increase that the state may need, ties up the budget process and creates gridlock, in addition to expecting taxpayers to become budget and tax experts.



* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q8d1. I'd like you to please tell me whether you find [this] an extremely convincing argument, very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or whether this particular argument is not at all convincing:

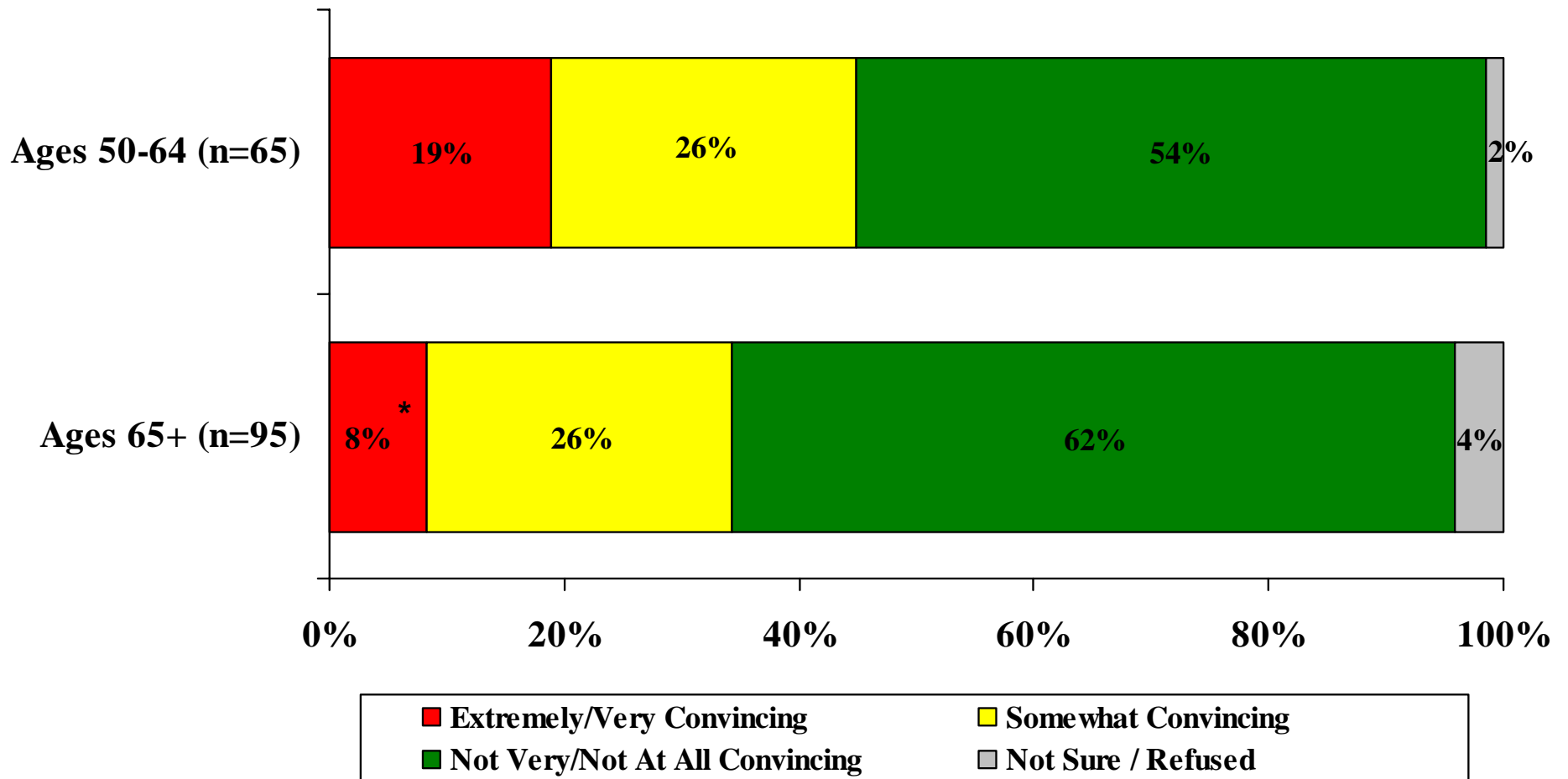
Supporters of TABOR say that it would be good for business because it would lower the taxes businesses have to pay to operate in the state.



* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

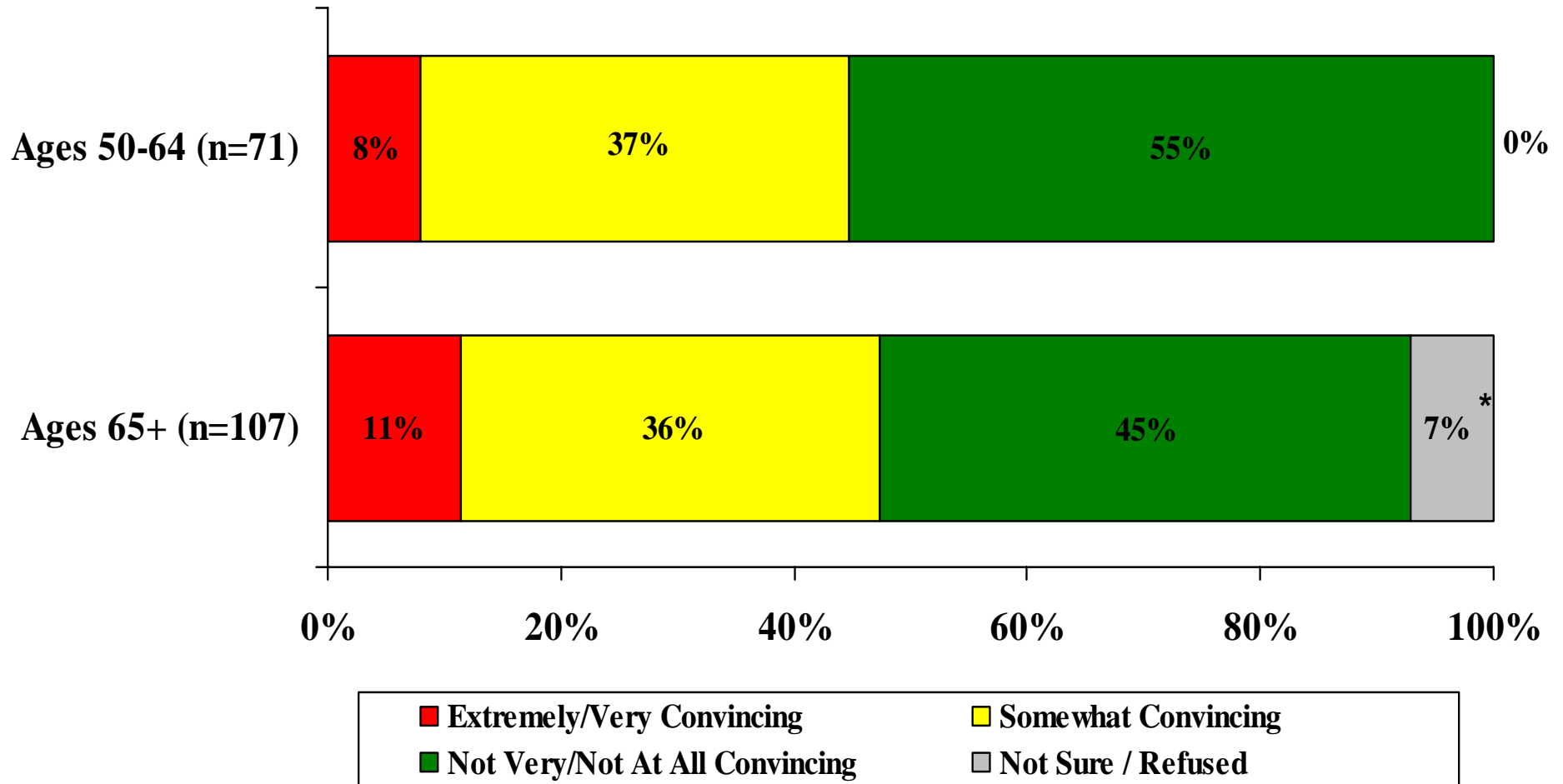
Q8d2. I'd like you to please tell me whether you find [this] an extremely convincing argument, very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or whether this particular argument is not at all convincing:

Opponents of TABOR say that it would cause businesses to leave or prevent them from relocating to Maine because the declining quality of life would drive desirable job applicants out of the state.



* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

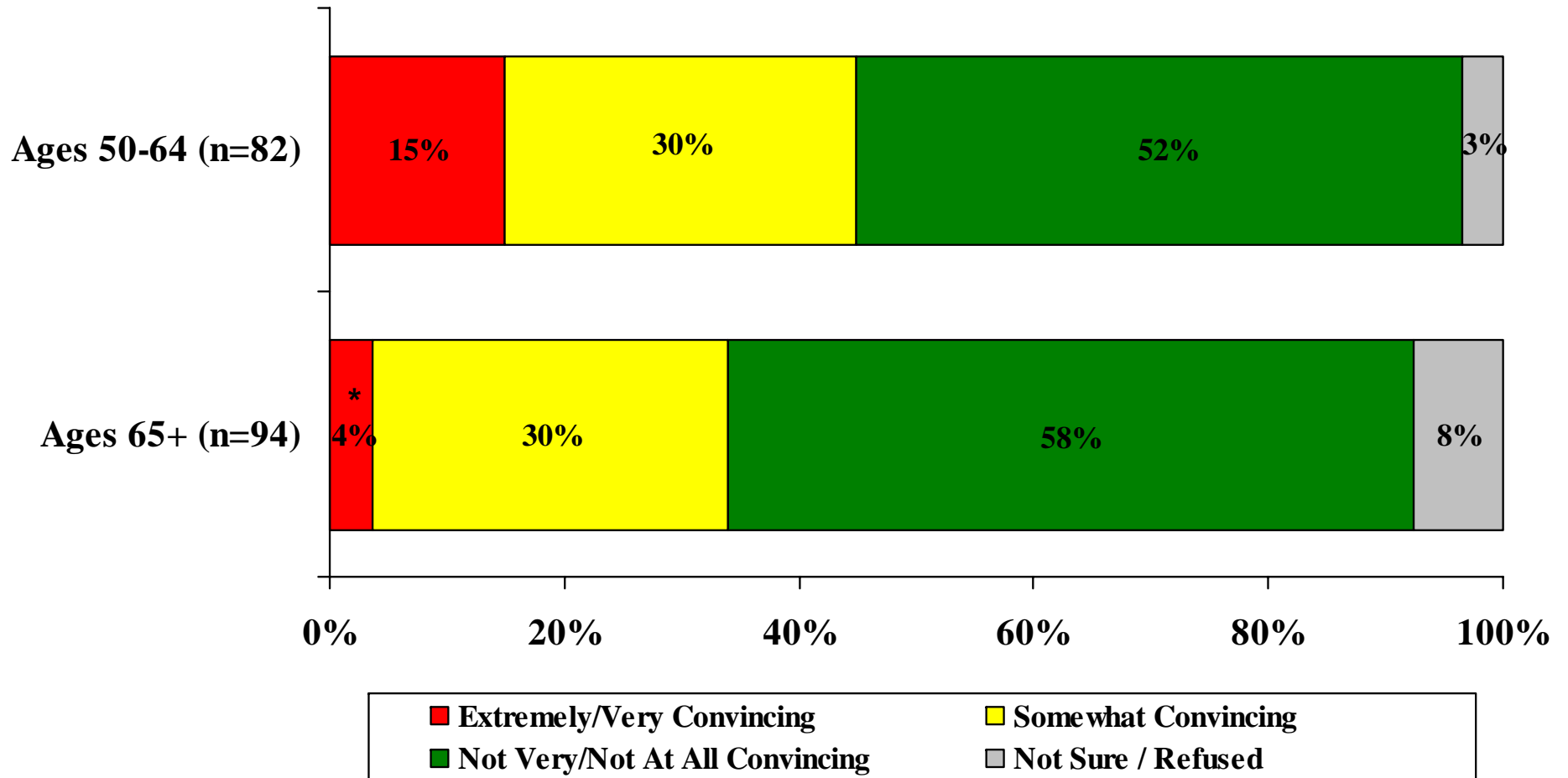
Q8e1. I'd like you to please tell me whether you find [this] an extremely convincing argument, very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or whether this particular argument is not at all convincing:
Supporters of TABOR say that it would allow citizens to sue state government if they believe TABOR limits are not being met.



* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

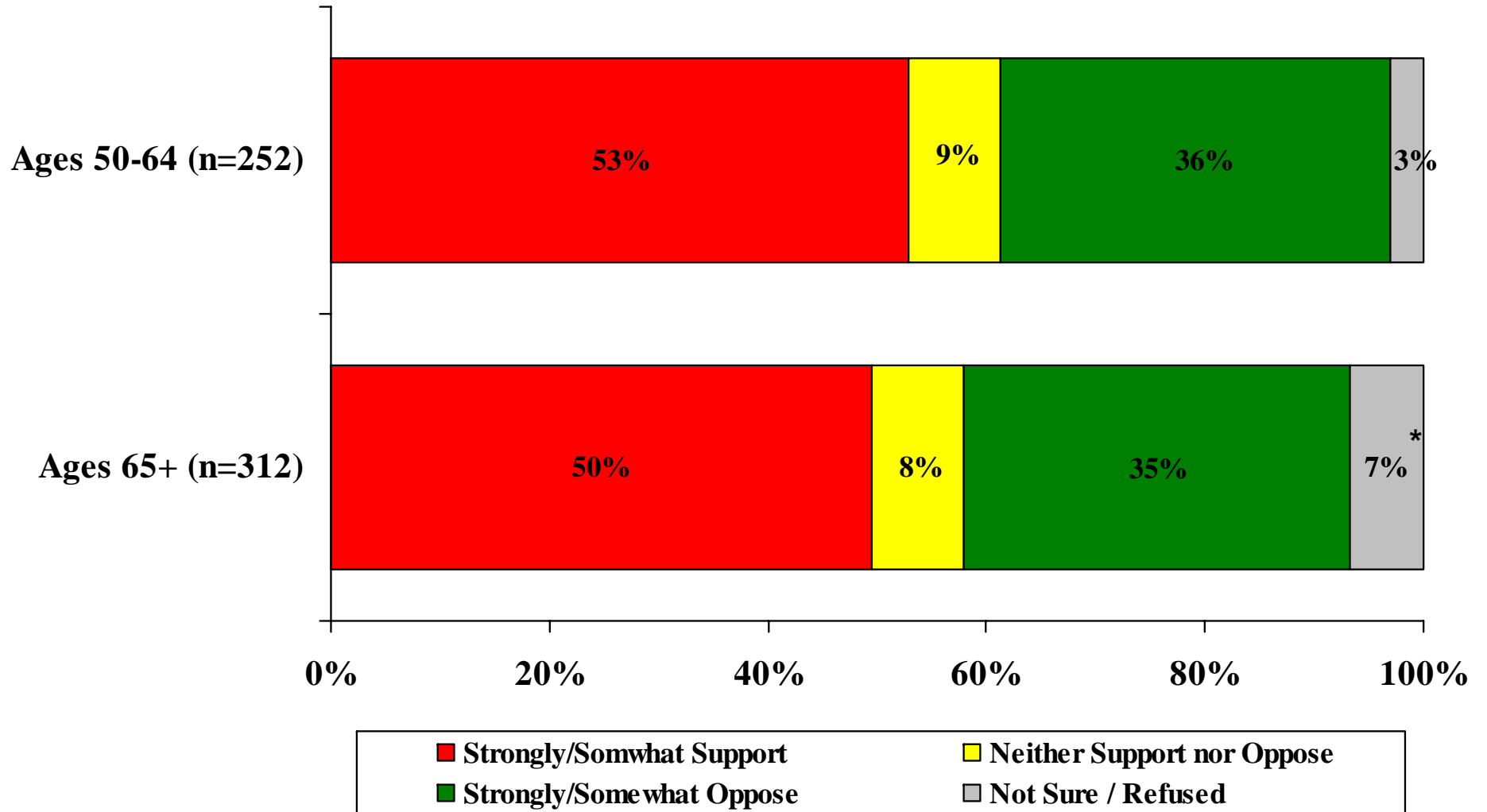
Q8e2. I'd like you to please tell me whether you find [this] an extremely convincing argument, very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or whether this particular argument is not at all convincing:

Opponents of TABOR say that it would cost taxpayers more money and would cause further strains on the state budget to pay court costs and attorney fees if citizens could sue for enforcement of TABOR limits.



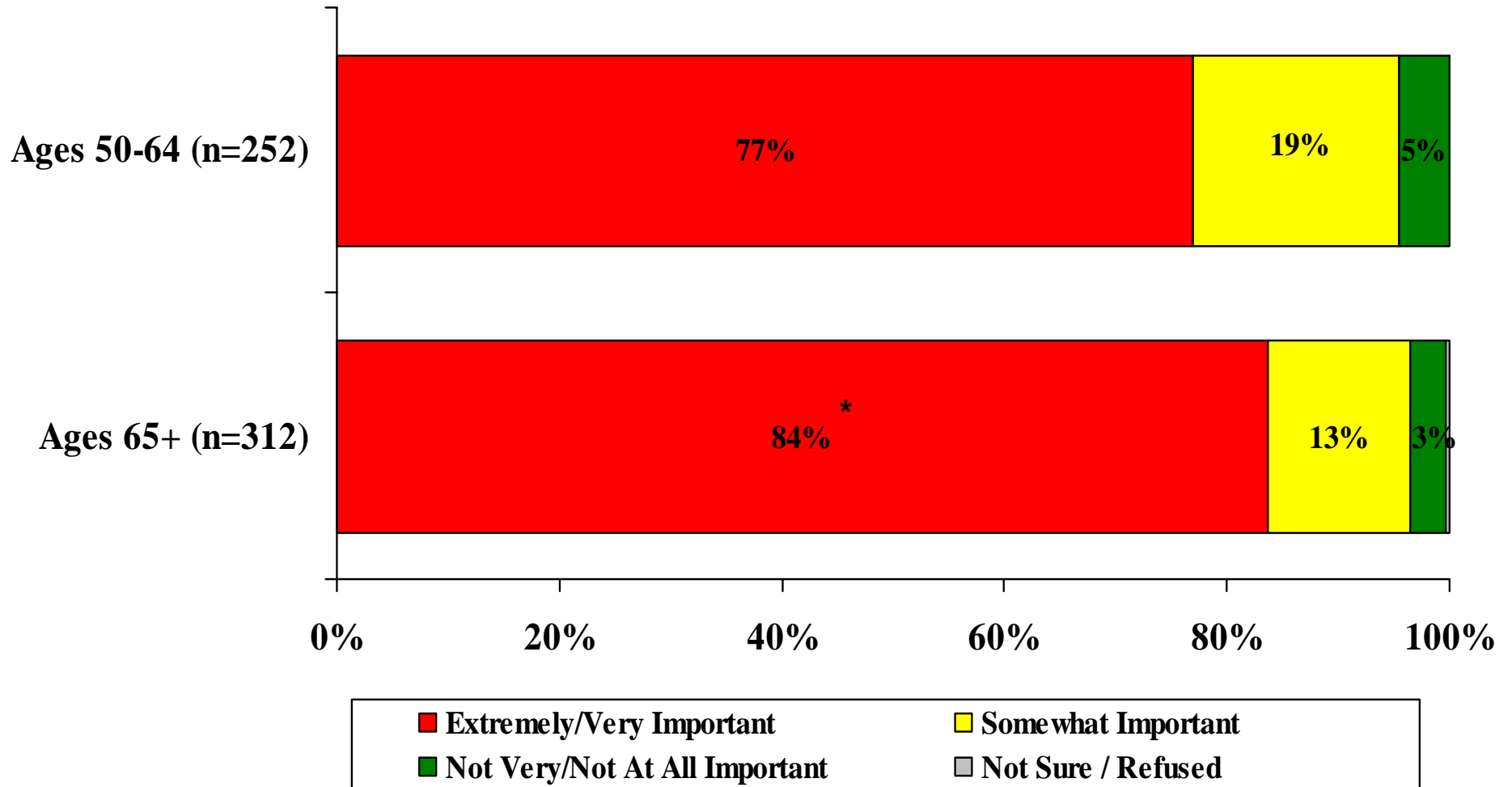
* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q9. Having heard arguments both for and against TABOR, now how strongly do you support or oppose TABOR in Maine?



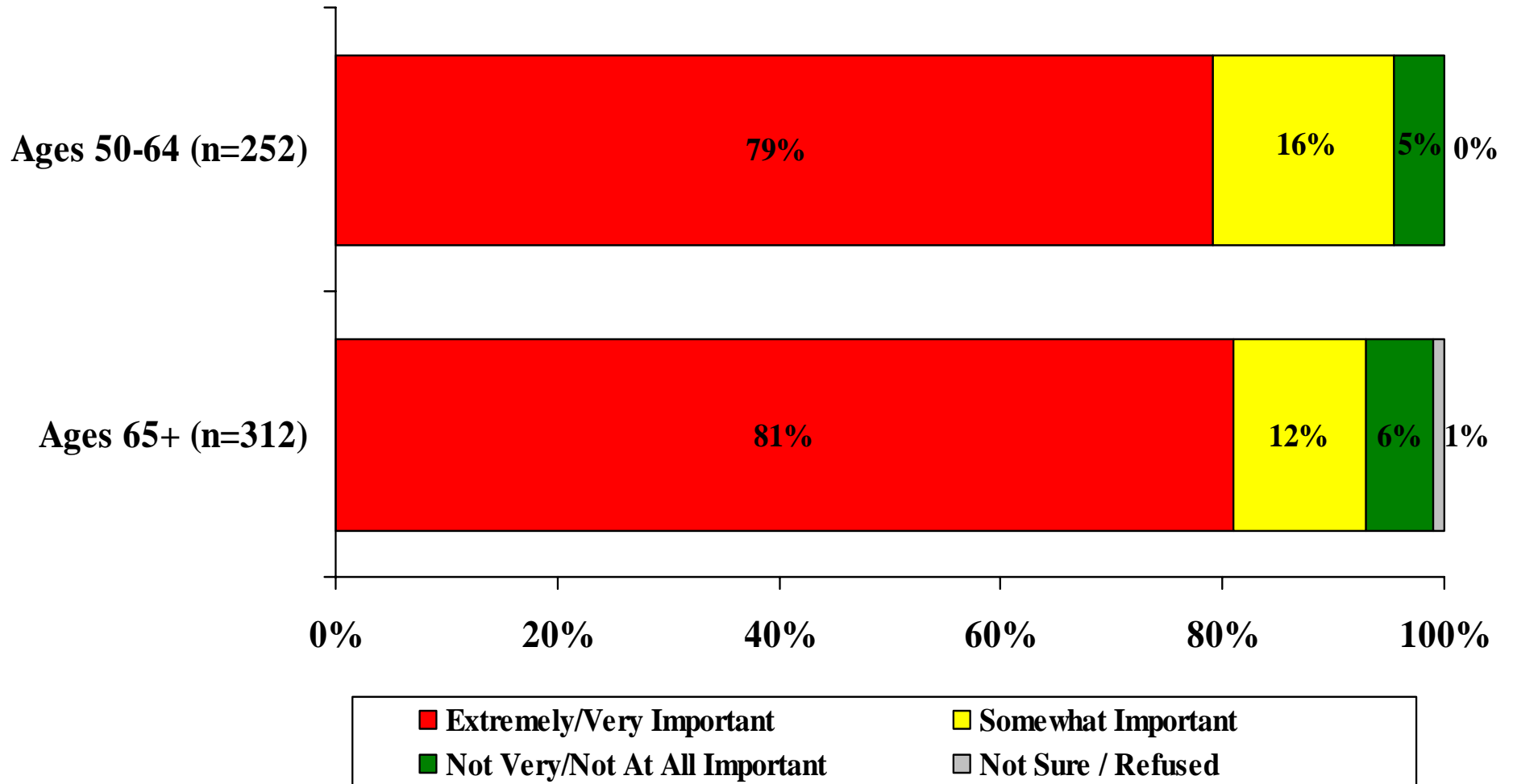
• Statistically significant difference from Members Age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q10b. Now, I am going to ask you about state and local services Maine provides. How important is police protection and public safety to you? Is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important?



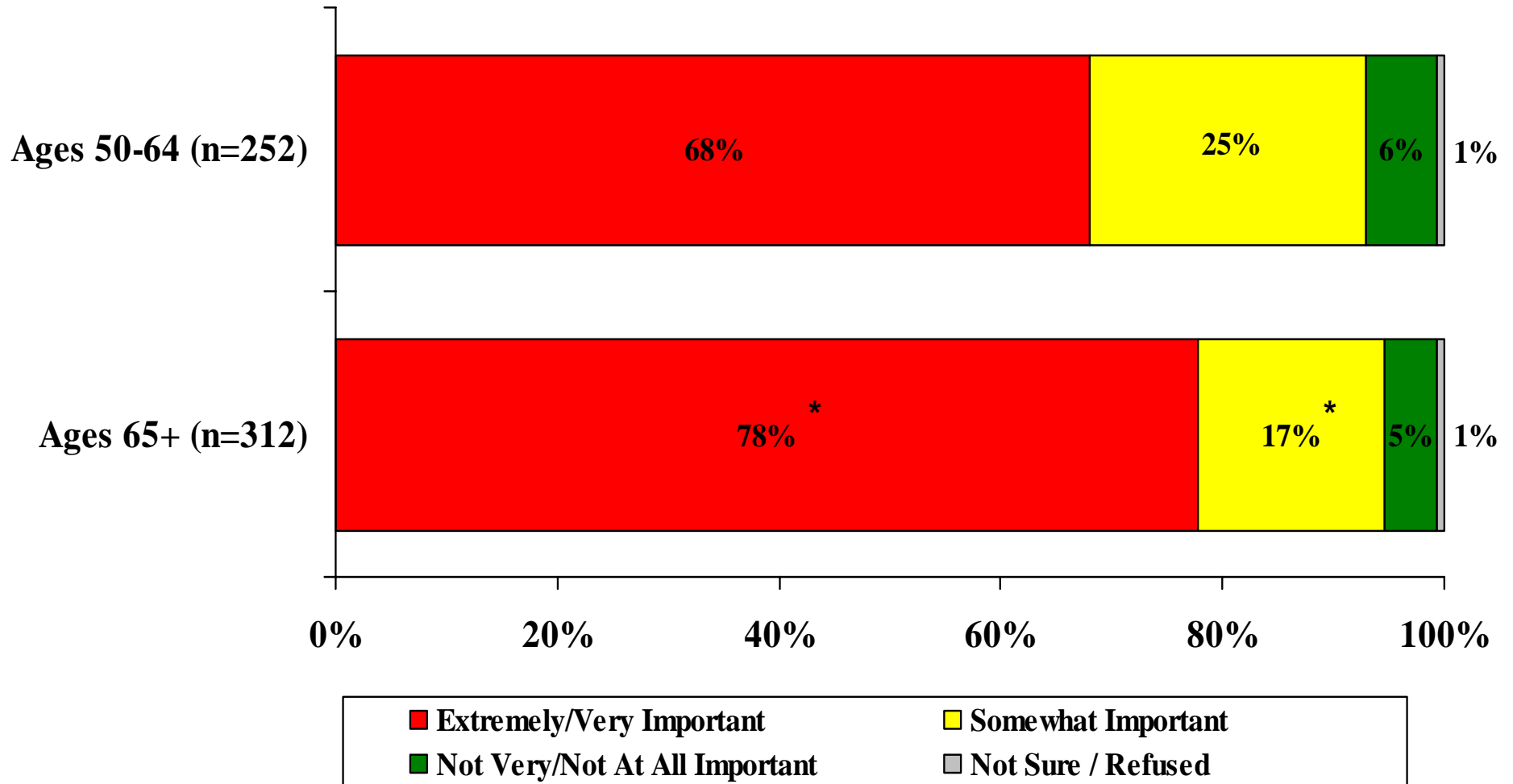
* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q10e. Now, I am going to ask you about state and local services Maine provides. How important is K-12 public school education to you? Is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important?



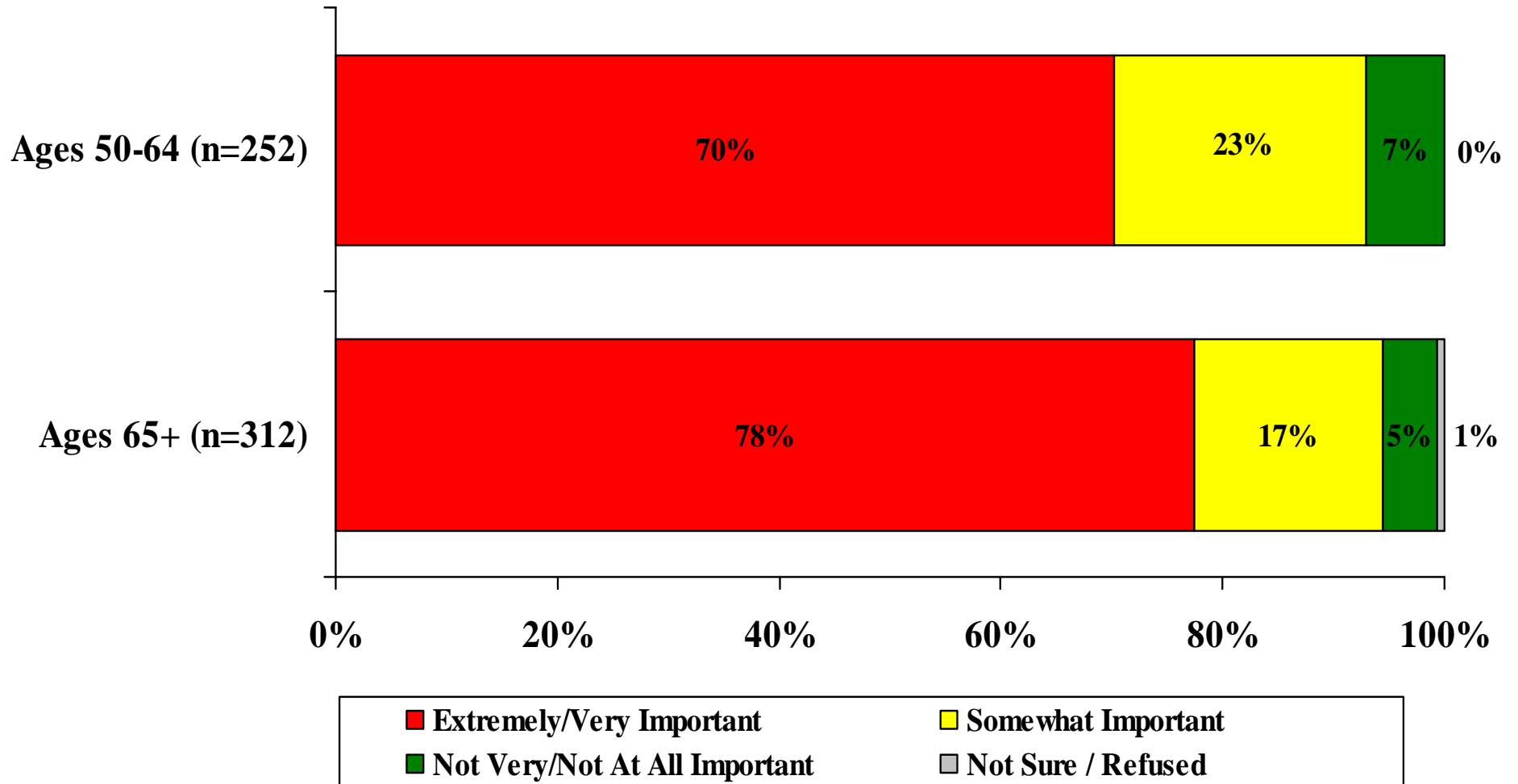
* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q10f. Now, I am going to ask you about state and local services Maine provides. How important is healthcare for low income families and their children to you? Is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important?



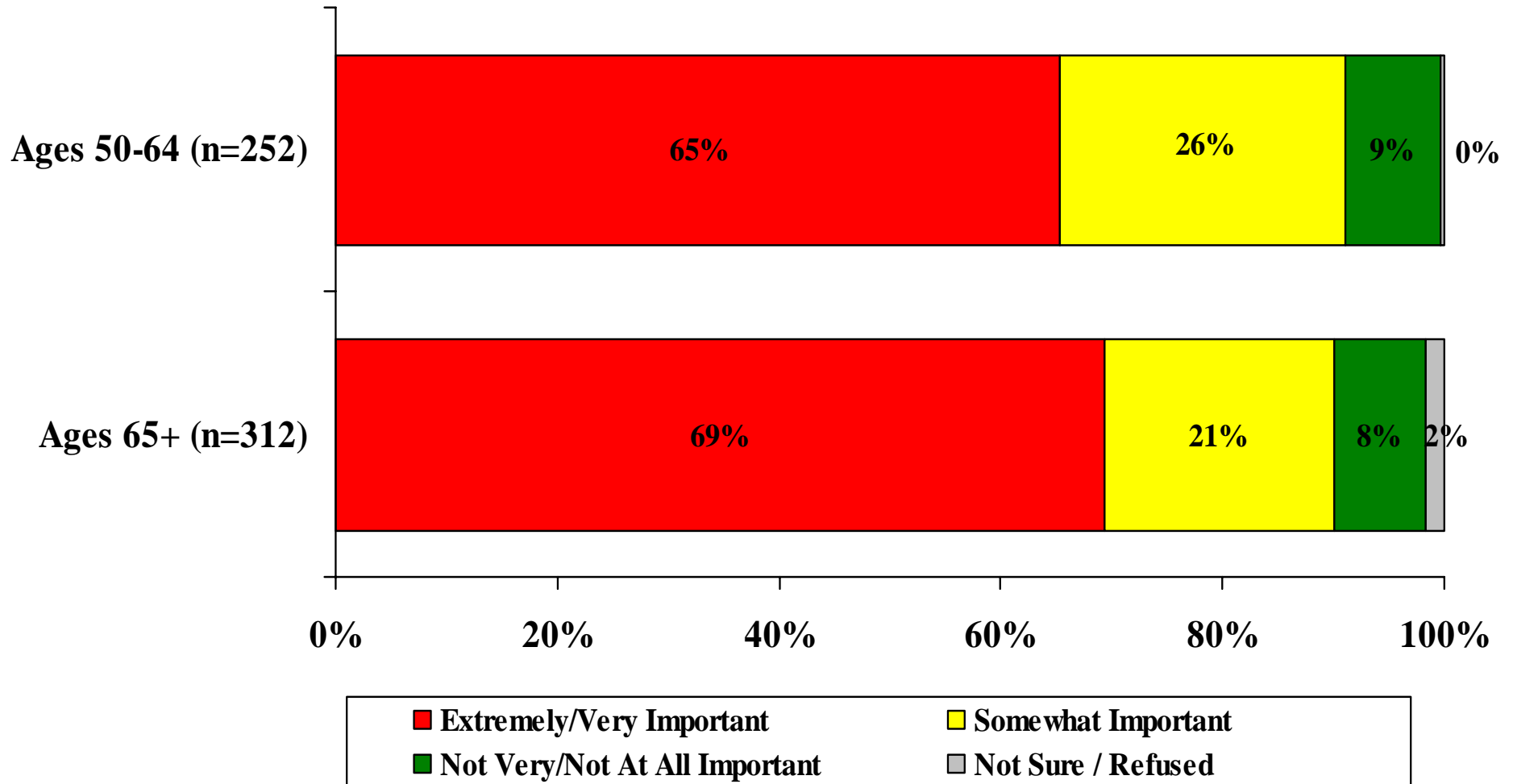
* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q10g. Now, I am going to ask you about state and local services Maine provides. How important is higher education (Universities, Colleges, & Technical Colleges) to you? Is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important?



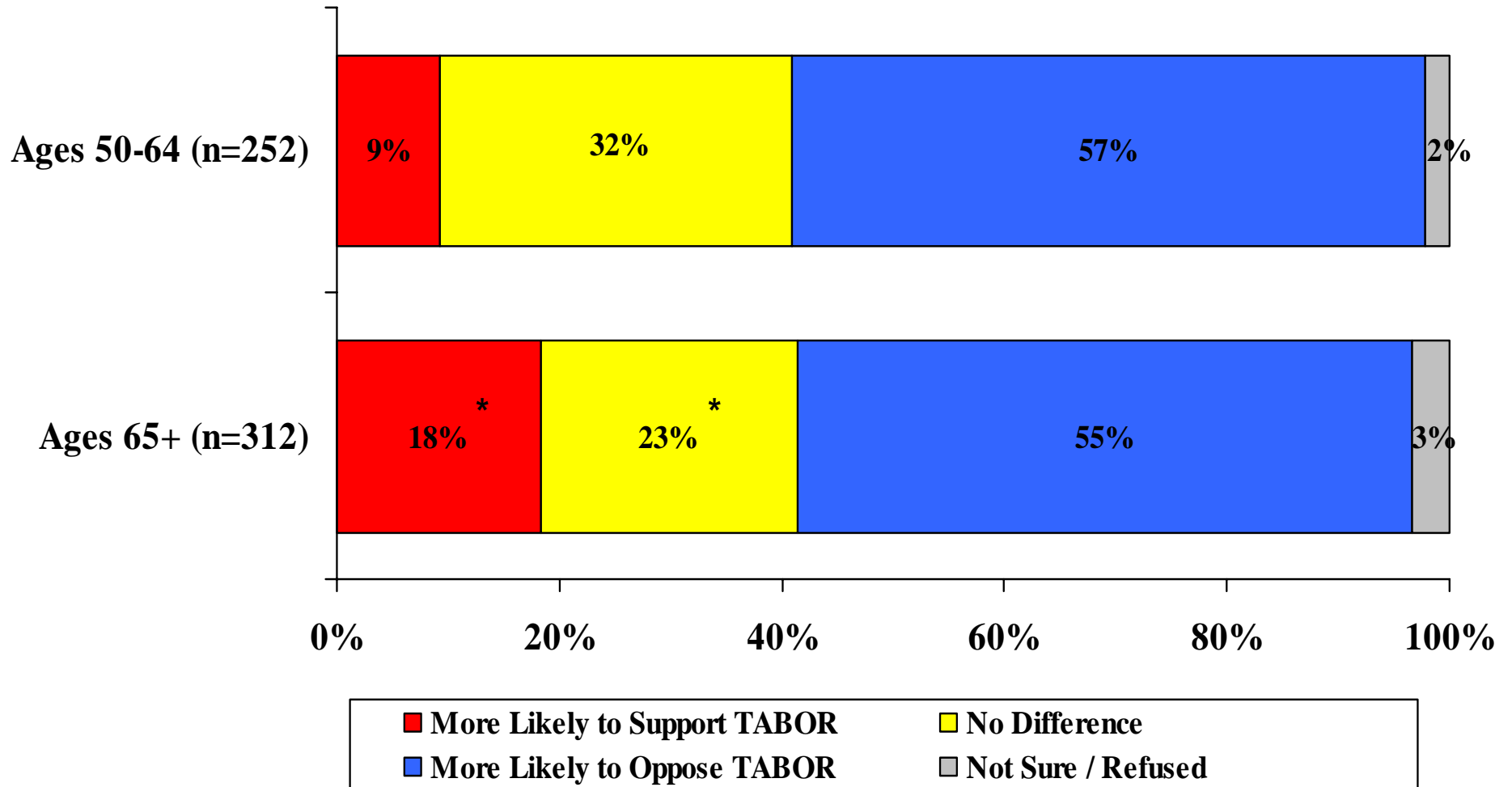
* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q10i. Now, I am going to ask you about state and local services Maine provides. How important are senior state services including home delivered meals, low-income energy assistance, & senior transportation to you? Are they extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important?



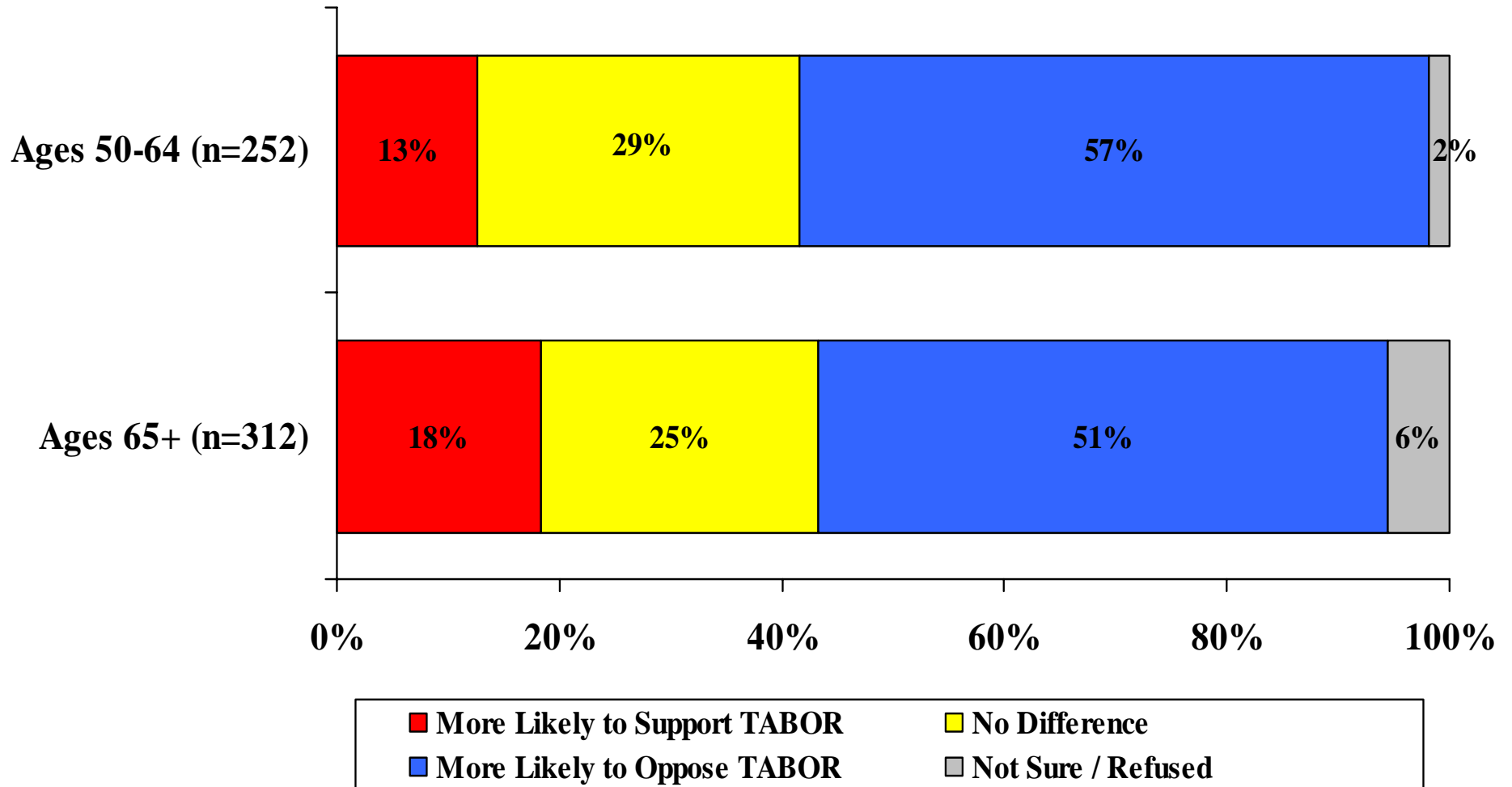
* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q11b. If Maine TABOR cut state funding for police protection and public safety, would you be more likely to support TABOR, more likely to oppose TABOR, or would it not make a difference?



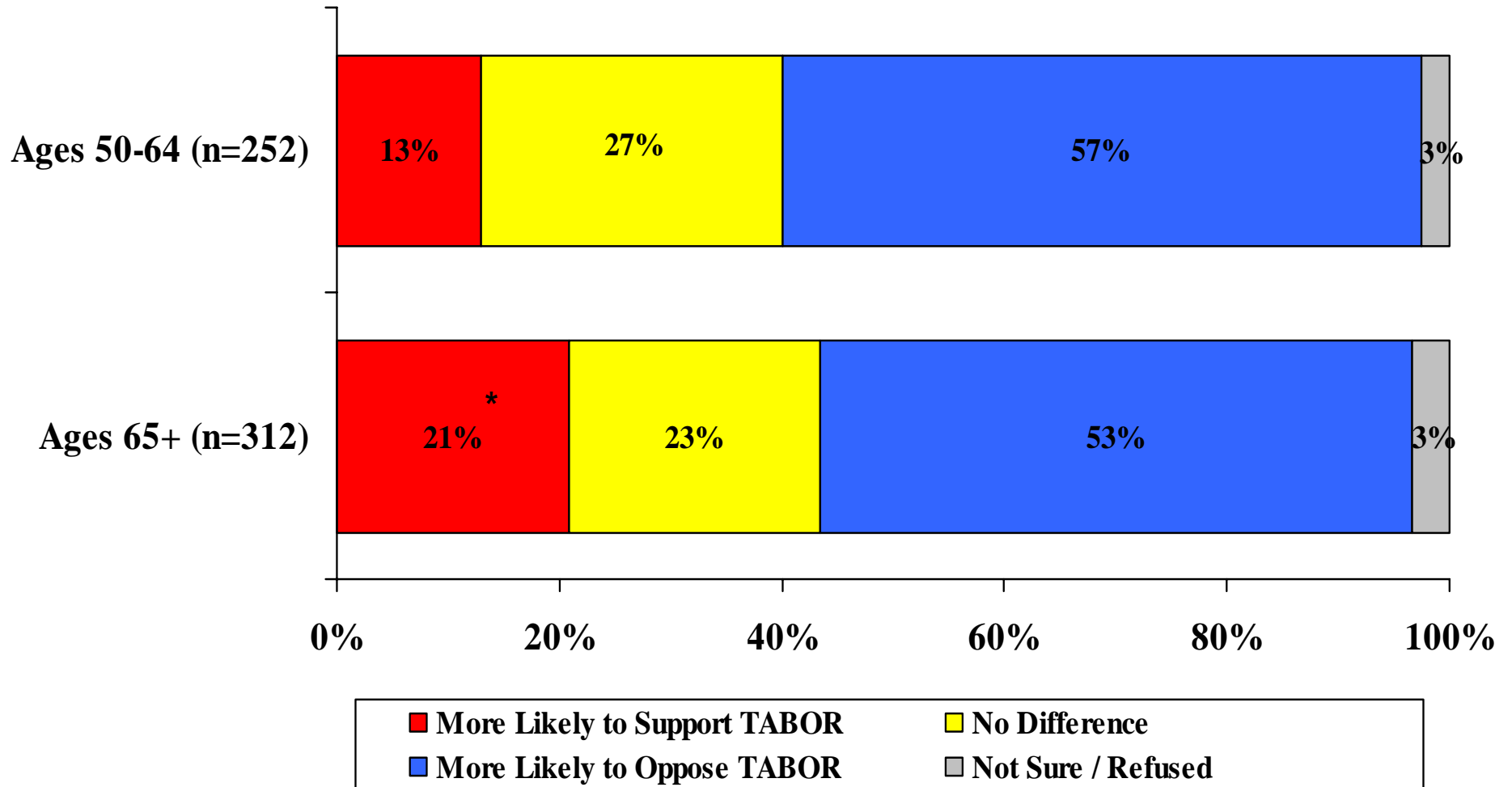
* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q11e. If Maine TABOR cut state funding for K-12 public school education, would you be more likely to support TABOR, more likely to oppose TABOR, or would it not make a difference?



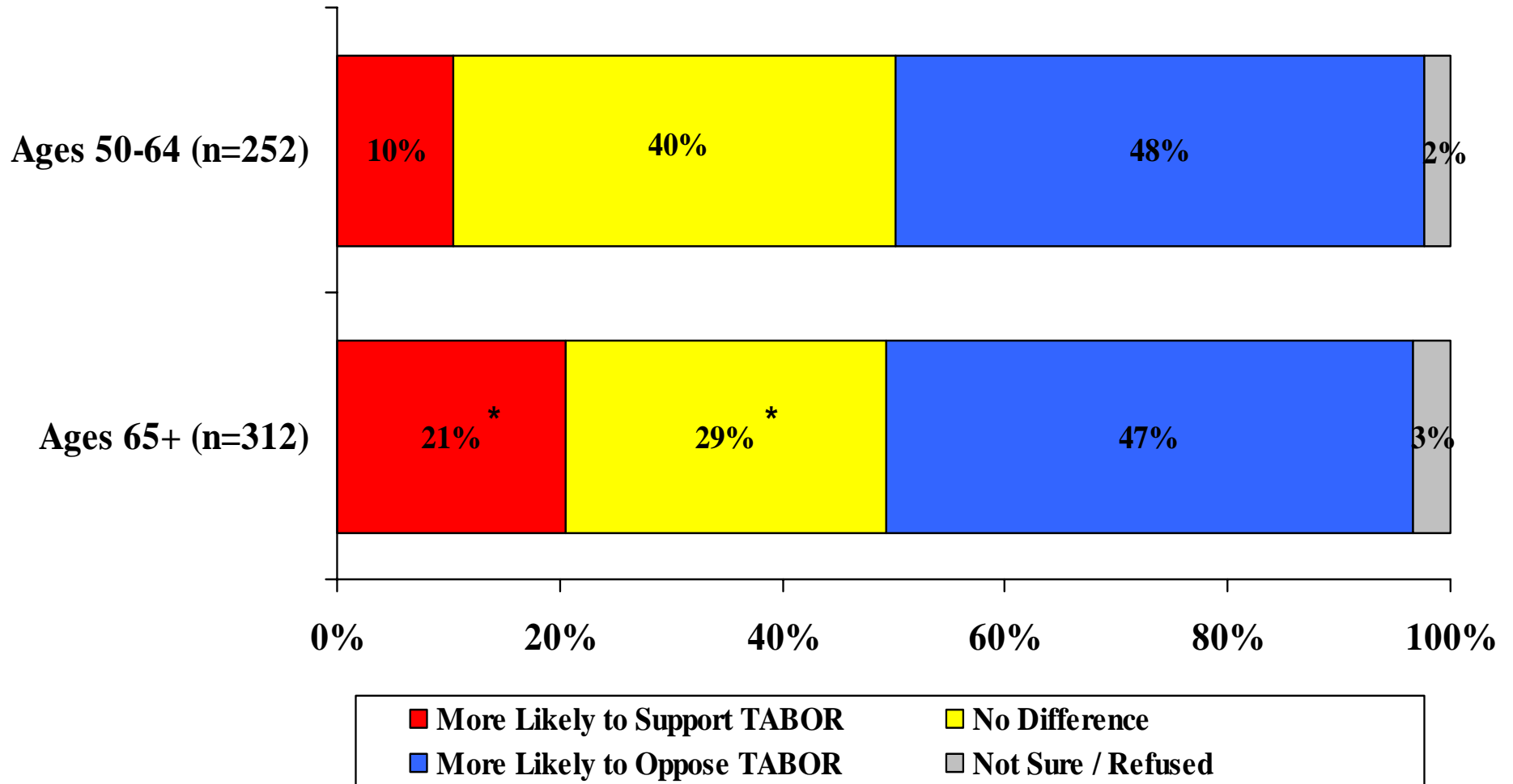
* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q11f. If Maine TABOR cut state funding for healthcare for low income families and their children, would you be more likely to support TABOR, more likely to oppose TABOR, or would it not make a difference?



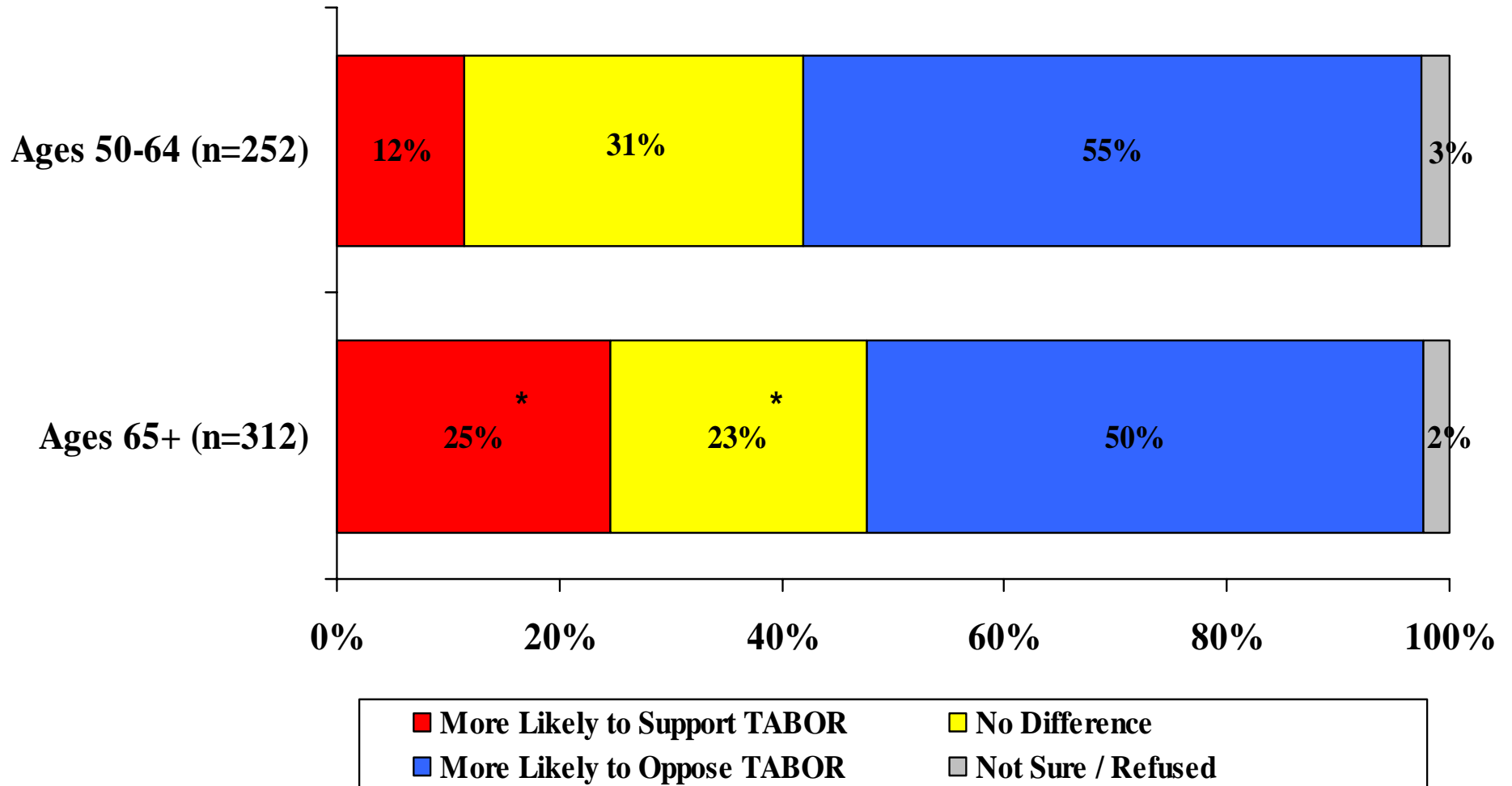
* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q11g. If Maine TABOR cut state funding for higher education (Universities, Colleges, & Technical Colleges), would you be more likely to support TABOR, more likely to oppose TABOR, or would it not make a difference?



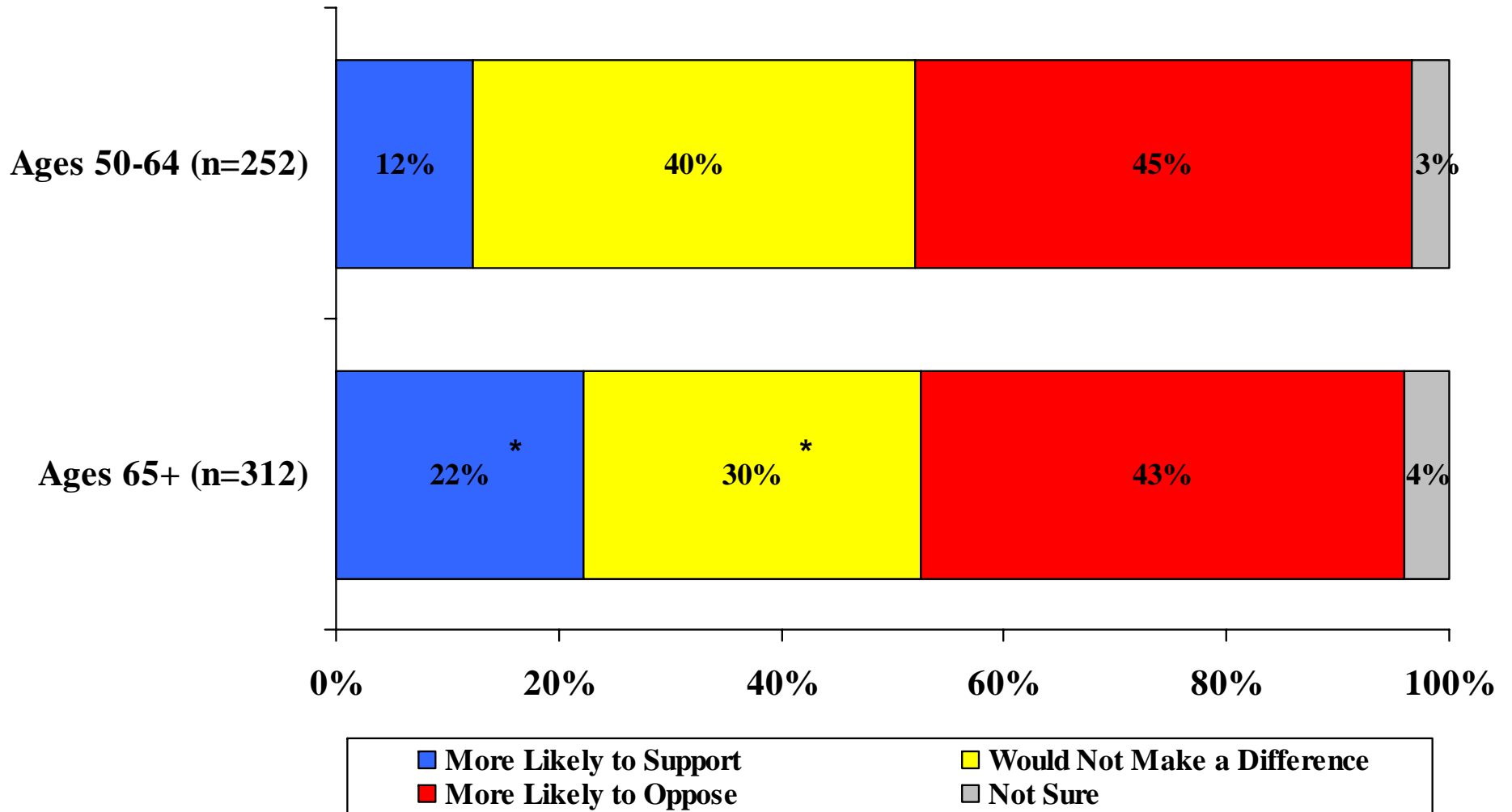
* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q11i. If Maine TABOR cut state funding for senior state services including home delivered meals, low-income energy assistance, & senior transportation, would you be more likely to support TABOR, more likely to oppose TABOR, or would it not make a difference?



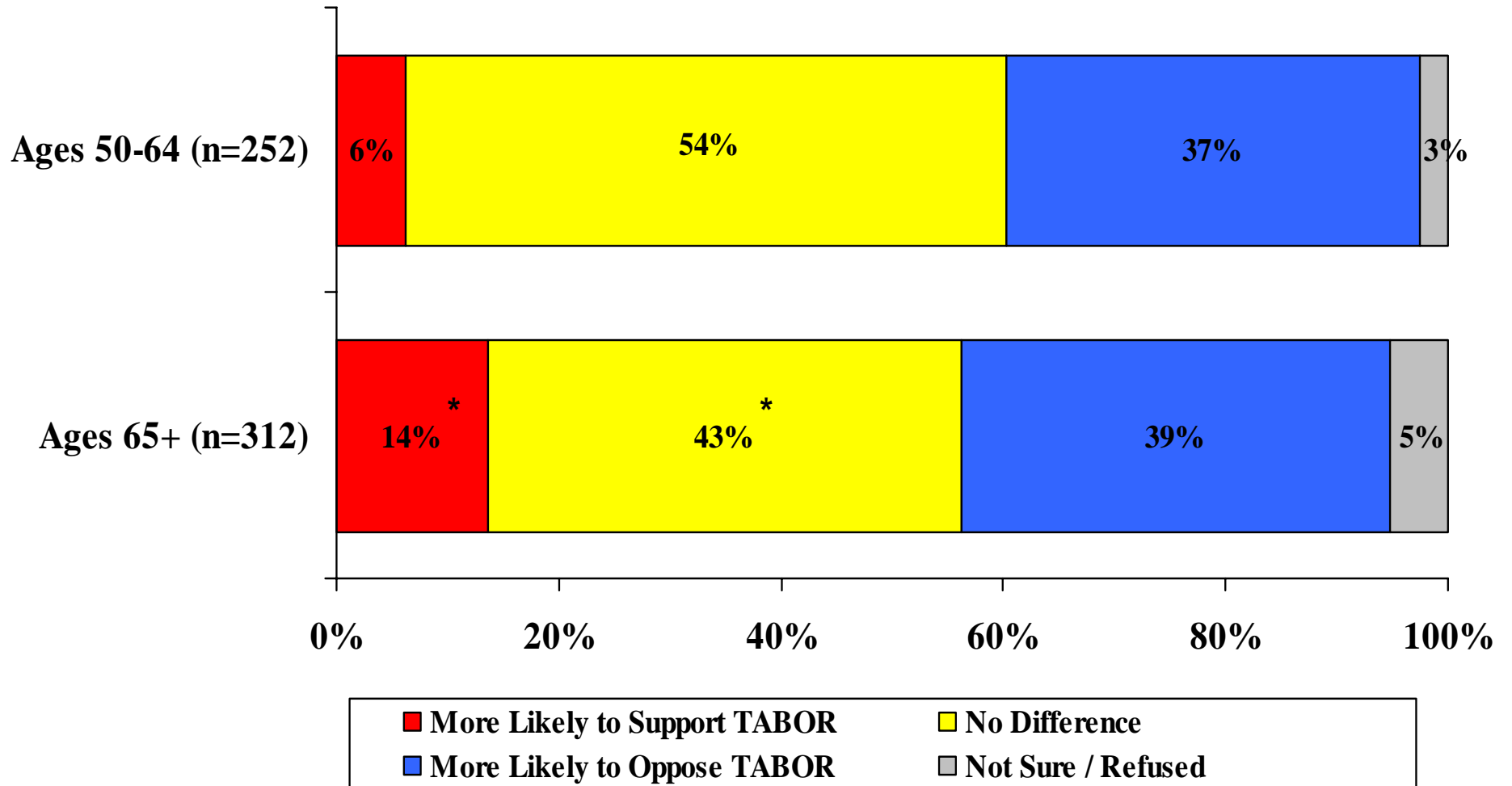
* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q12. Suppose you learned that AARP and other senior organizations OPPOSED TABOR because they believe it would lead to significant cuts in important state services for Maine seniors. Would you be more likely to support TABOR, more likely to oppose TABOR, or would it not make a difference in how you voted for the TABOR ballot initiative?



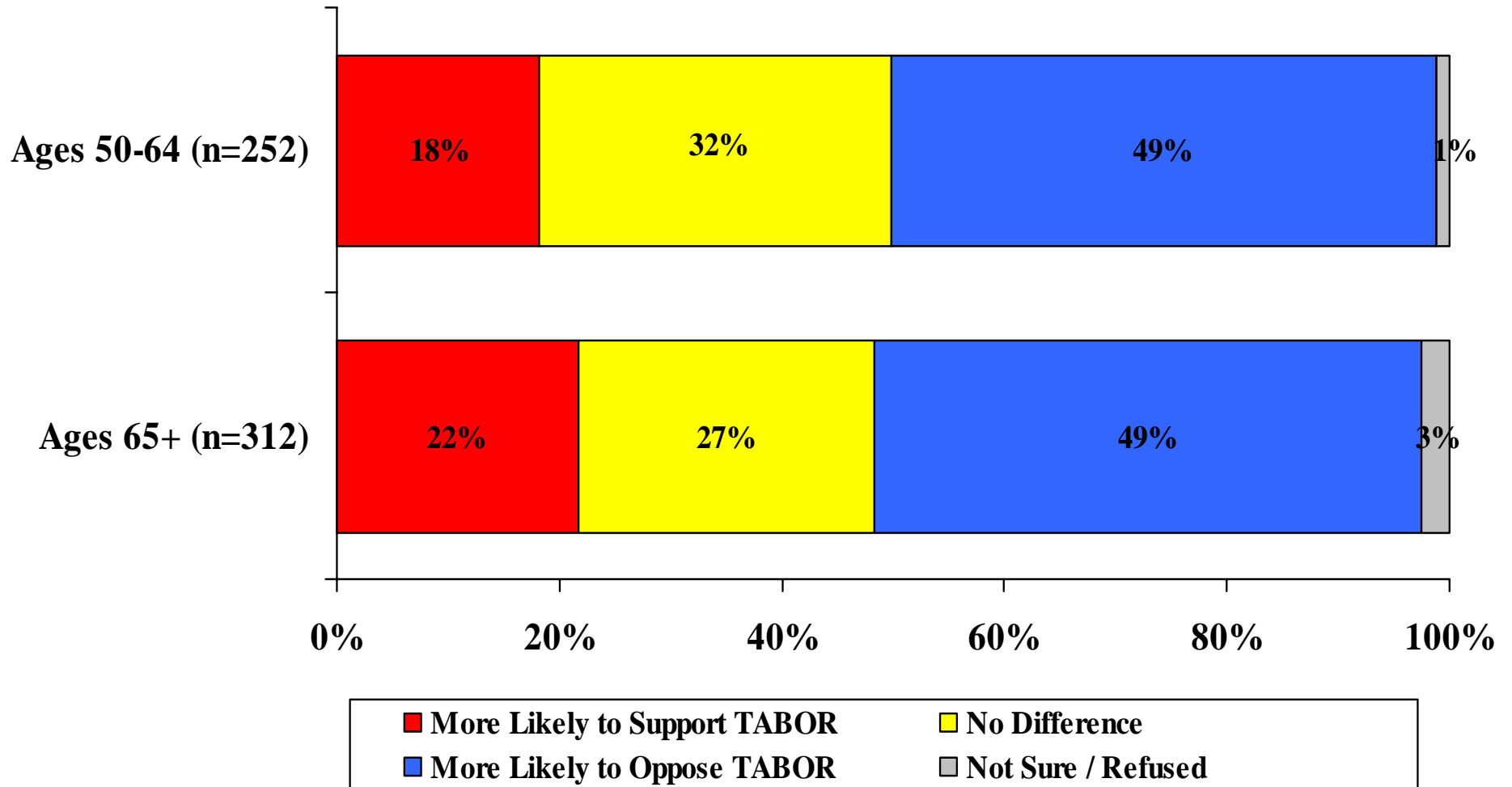
* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q20. If you knew that TABOR would not reduce property taxes, would this make you more or less likely to support the TABOR proposal, or would it not make a difference?



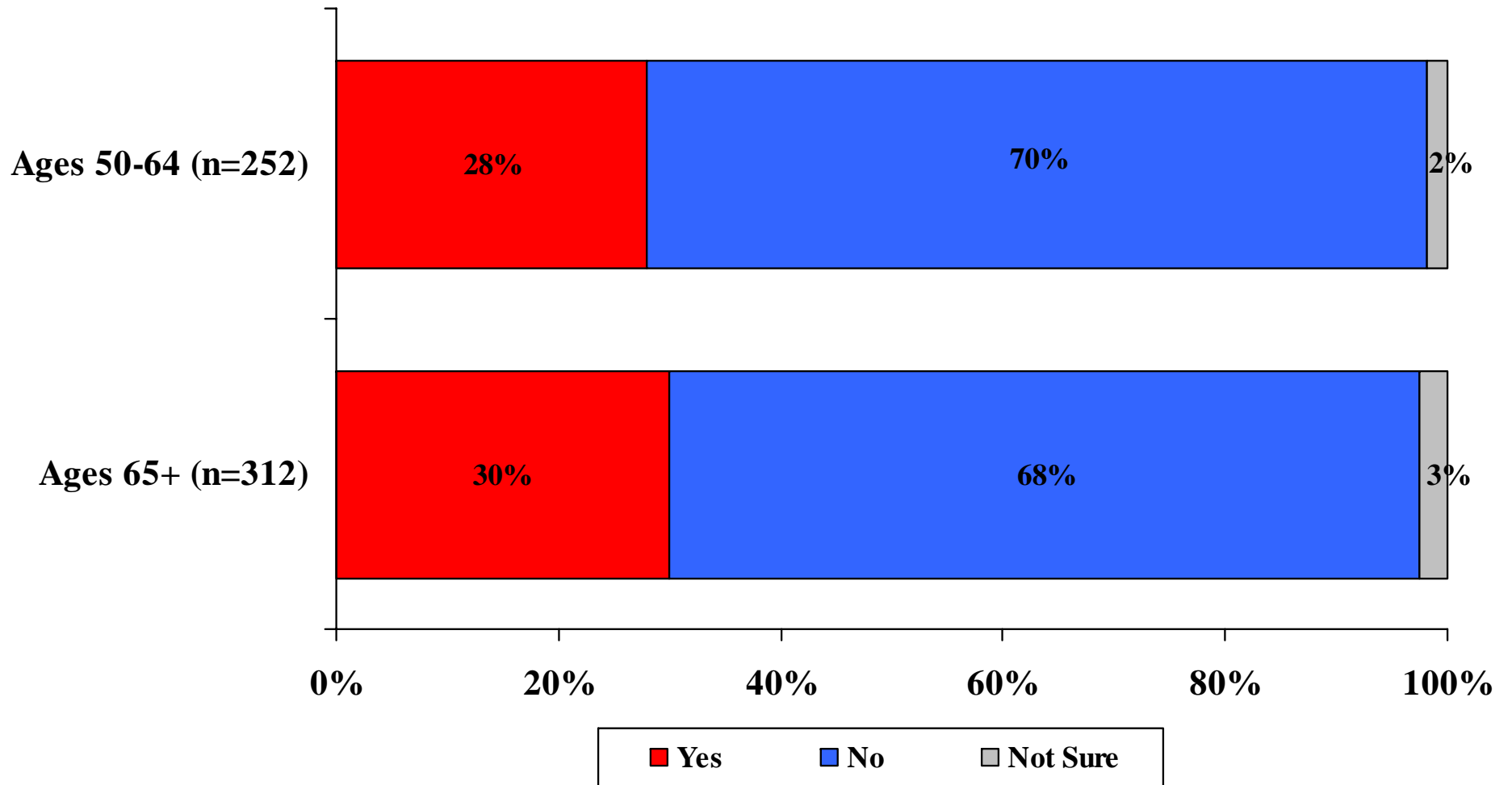
* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q21. If you knew that TABOR would not let the government step in to help people get through tough times, like when Maine is hit by floods, ice storms, hurricanes, and other emergencies, such as high oil prices, would that make you more or less likely to support the proposal, or would it not make a difference?

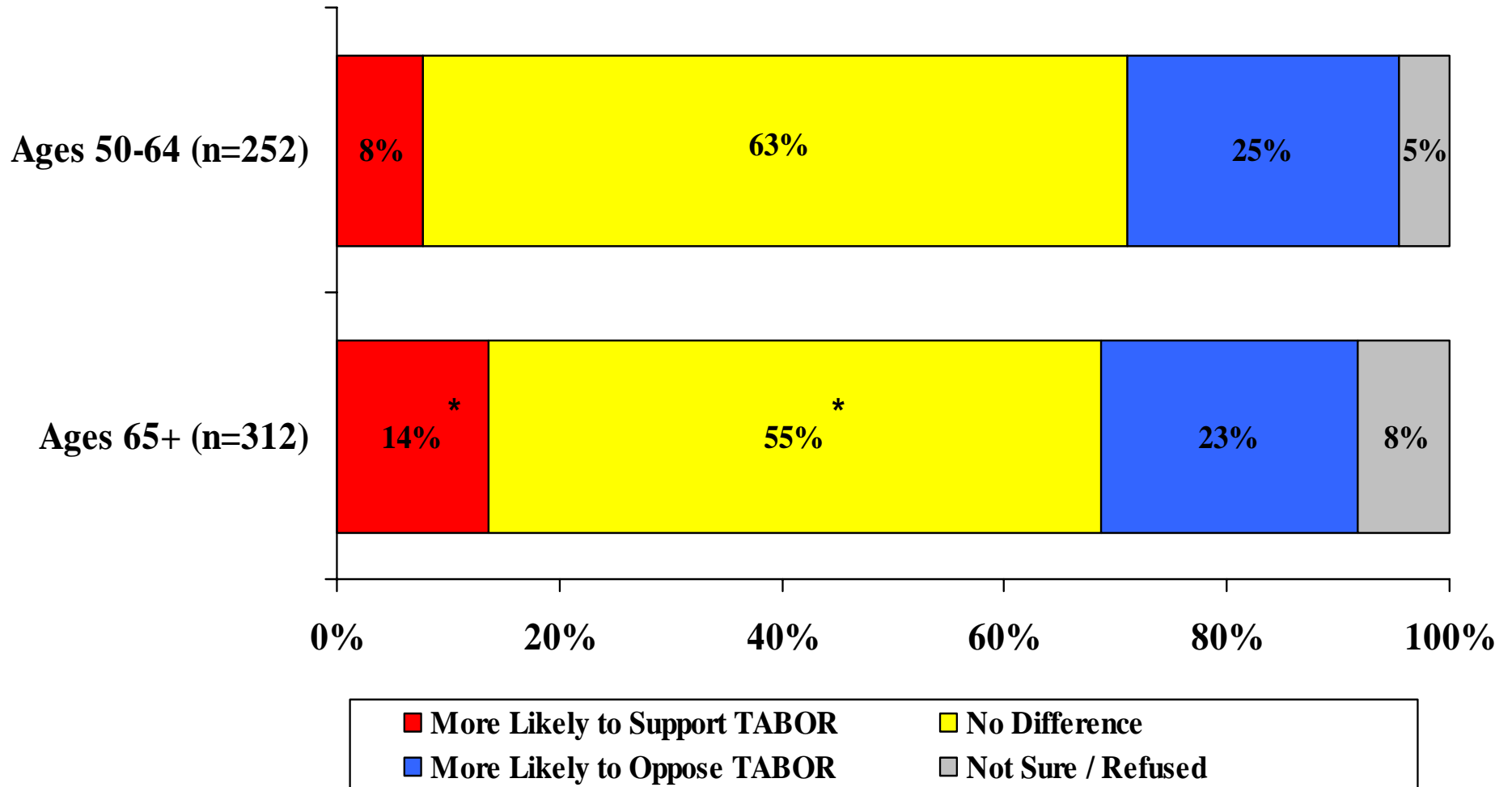


* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q22. Are you aware of the existing Tax and Expenditure Limit in Maine, which is used to control state government spending and taxation?

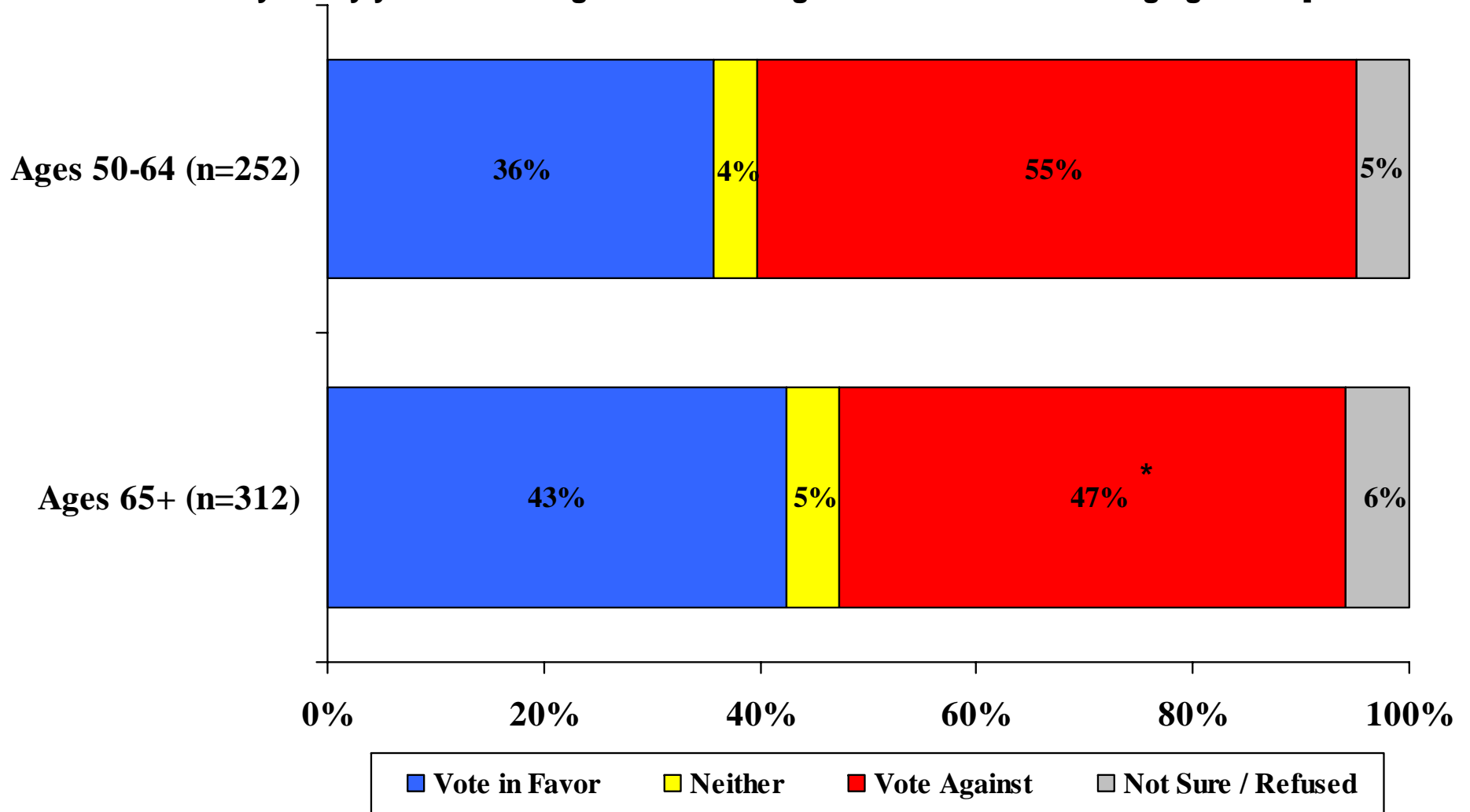


Q23. Does knowing that Maine already has a Tax and Expenditure Limit make you more or less likely to support the current TABOR proposal, or would it not make a difference?



* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

Q13 & Q14. Now thinking about all the information we have discussed about this proposal that may be on the ballot in November, if the election were held today, would you vote for or against this proposal? [IF INITIALLY UNDECIDED ASK: Well, if you had to decide right now, which way would you say you are leaning—toward voting in favor or toward voting against?"]

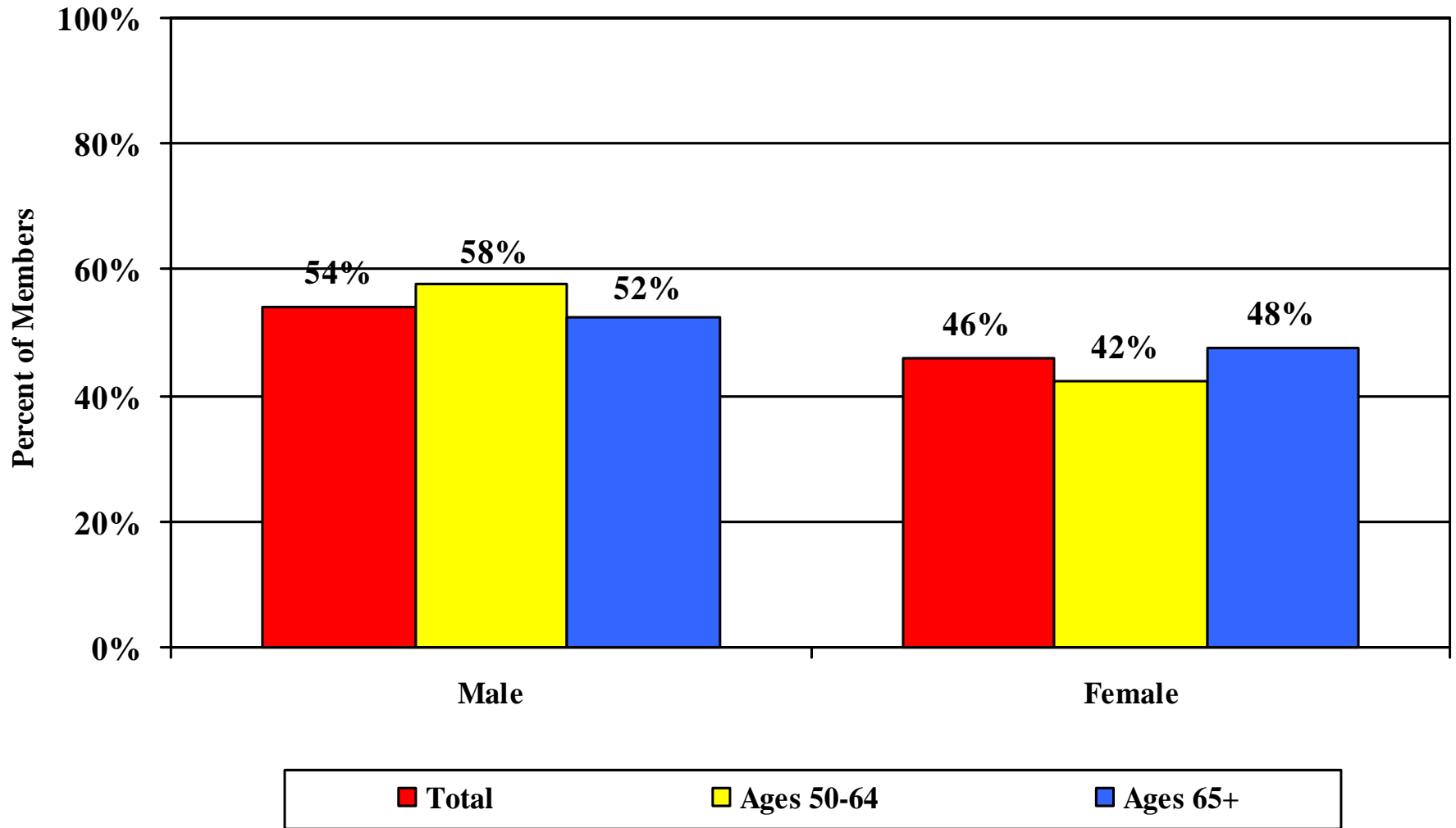


* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

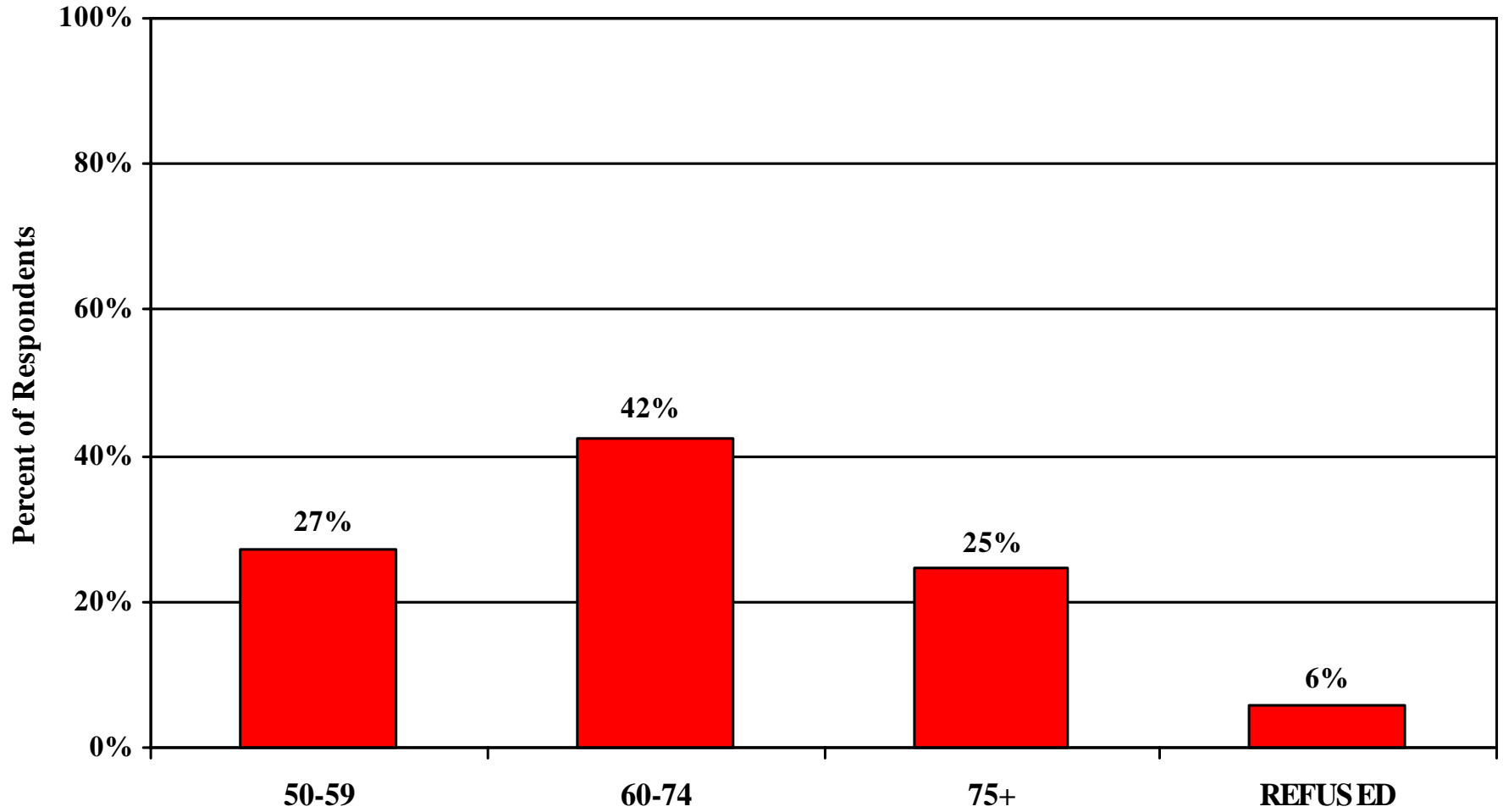
RESPONDENT PROFILE



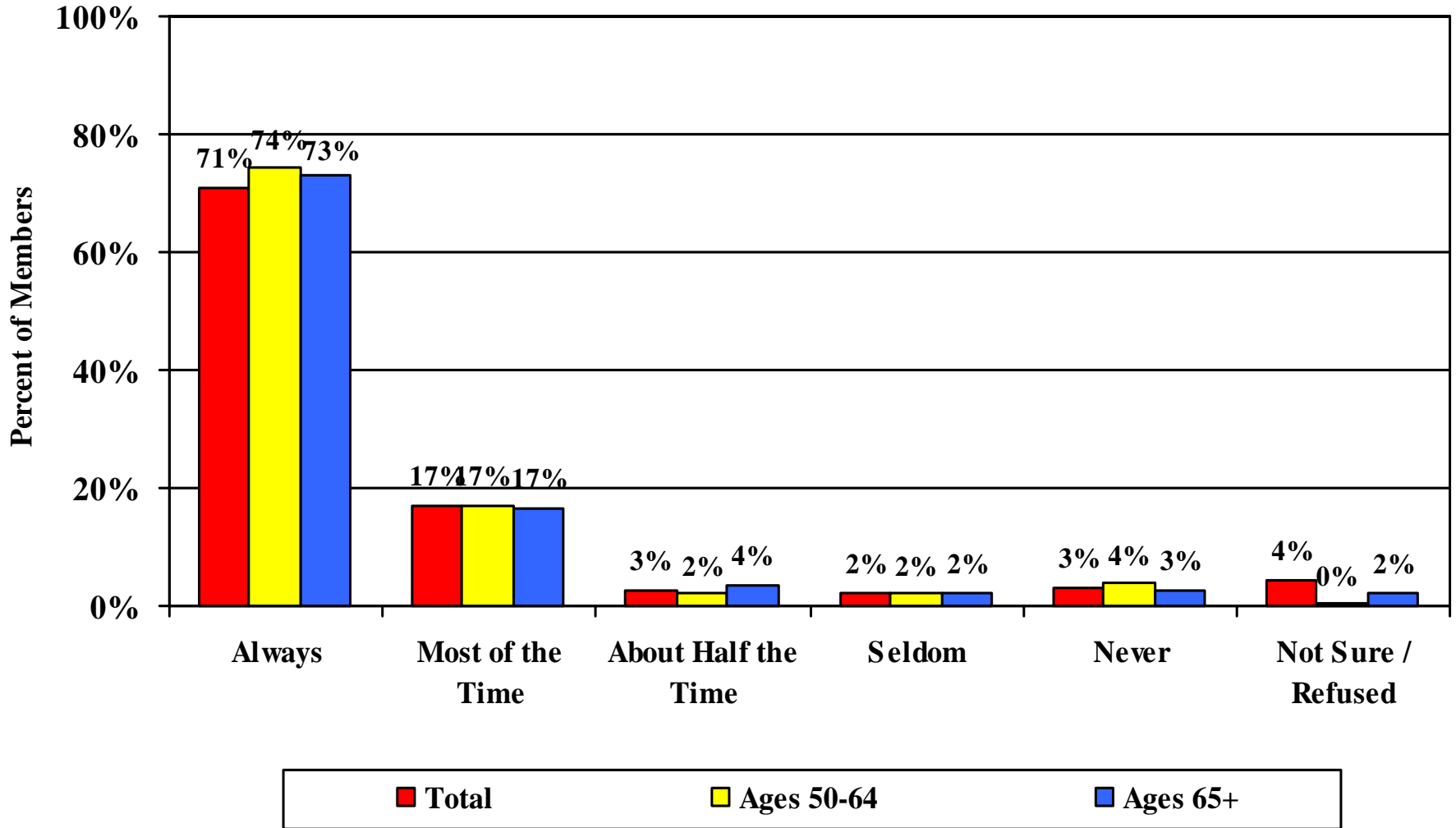
GENDER



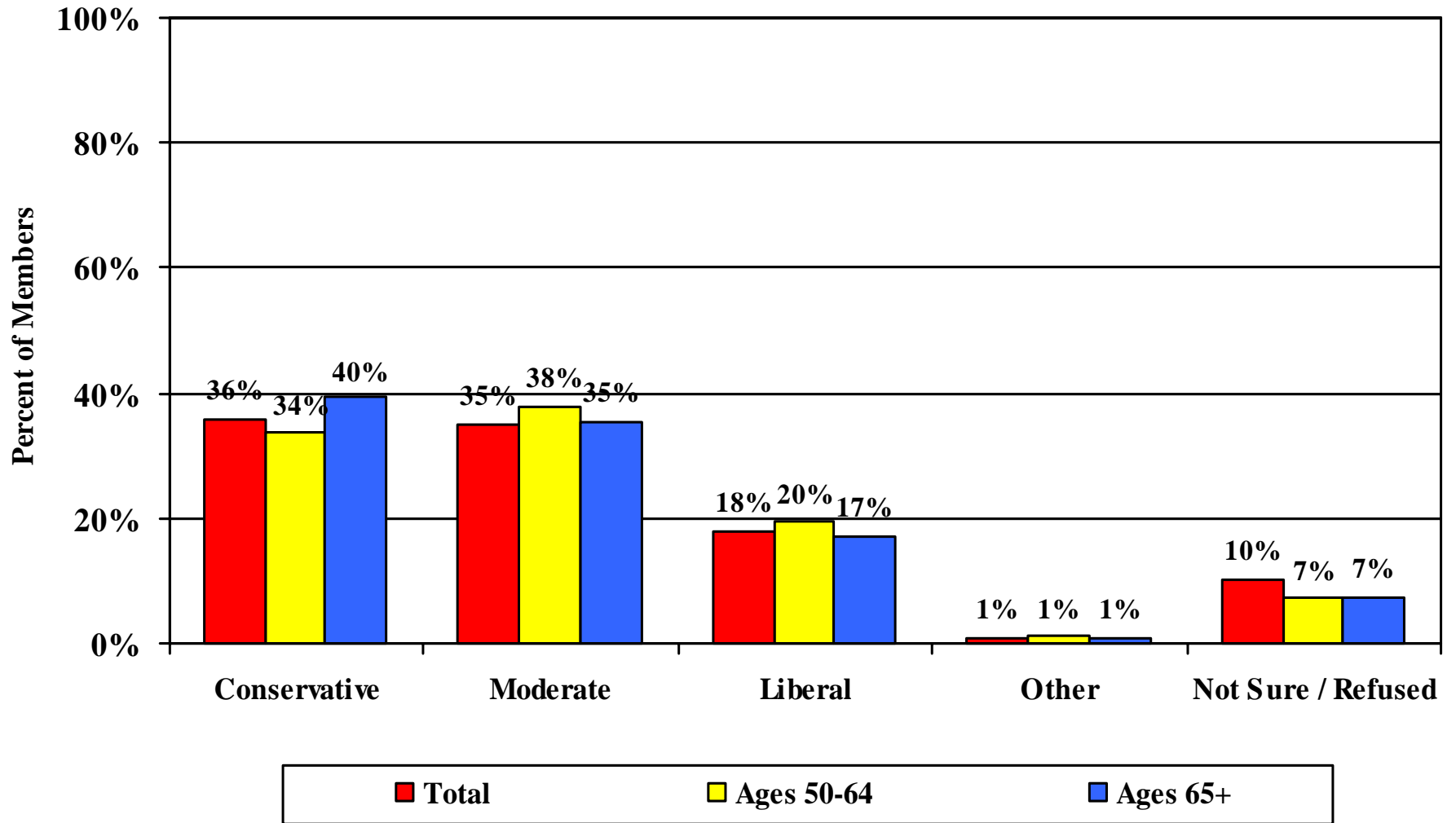
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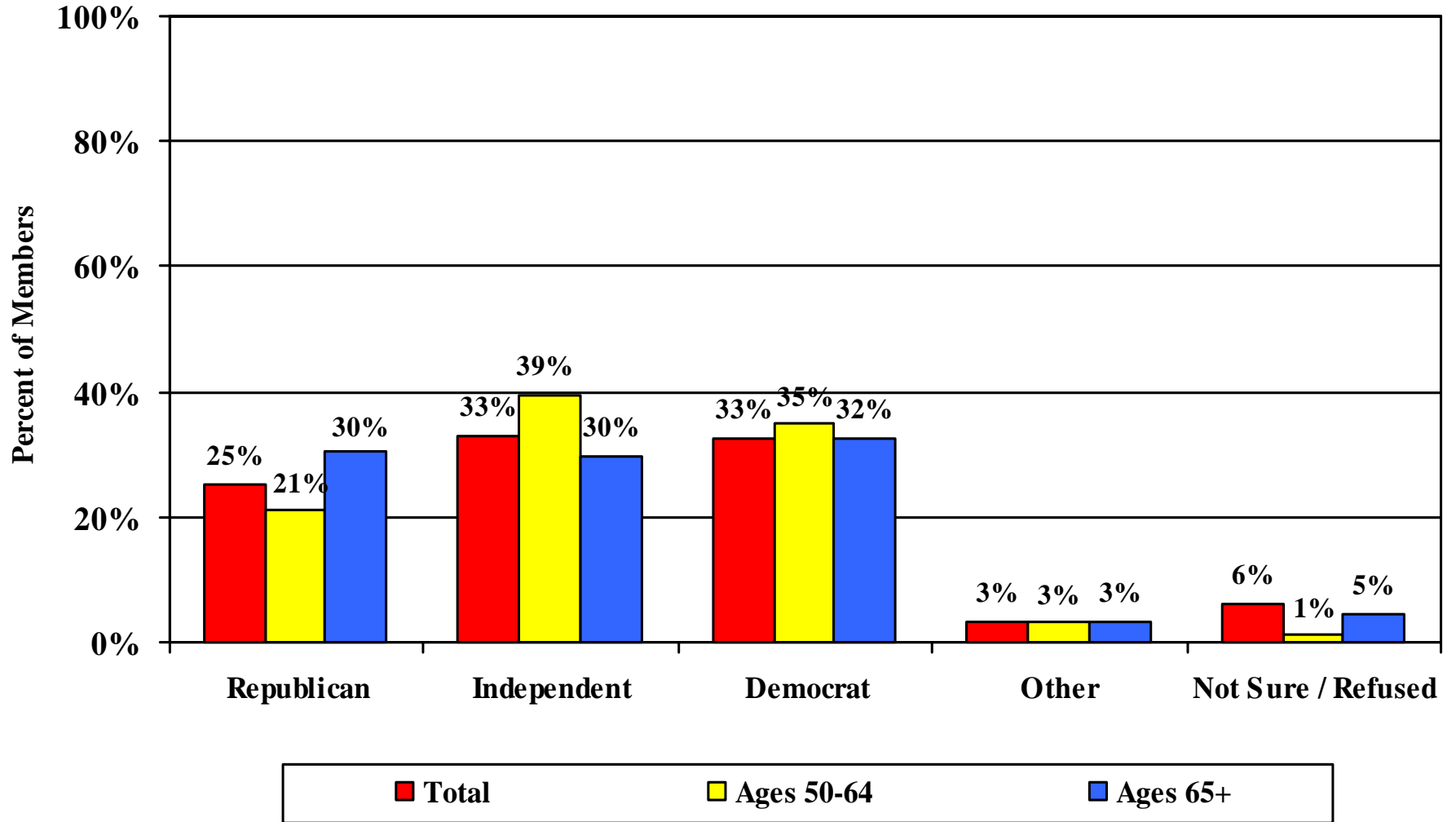
FREQUENCY OF VOTING



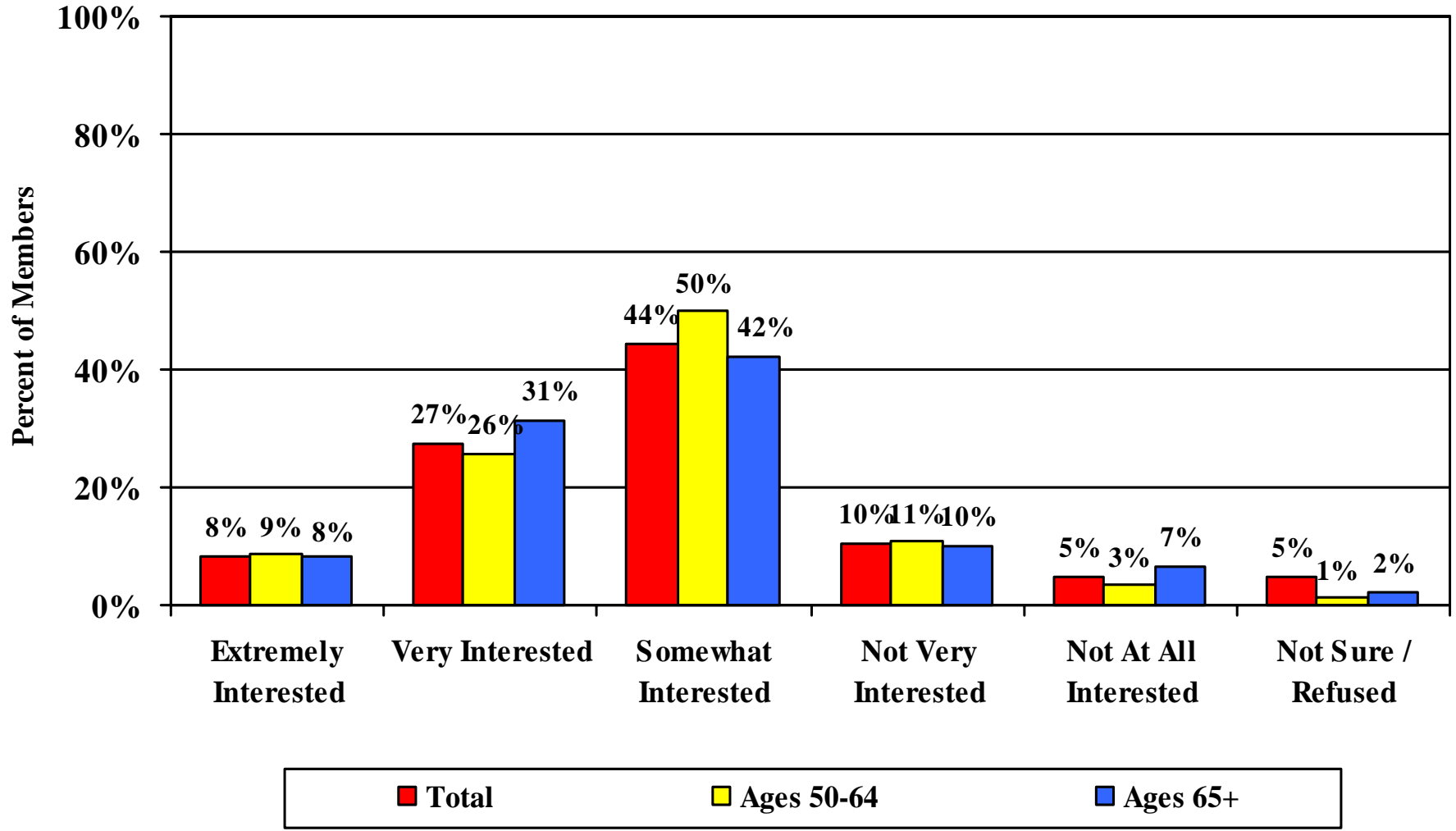
POLITICAL VIEWS



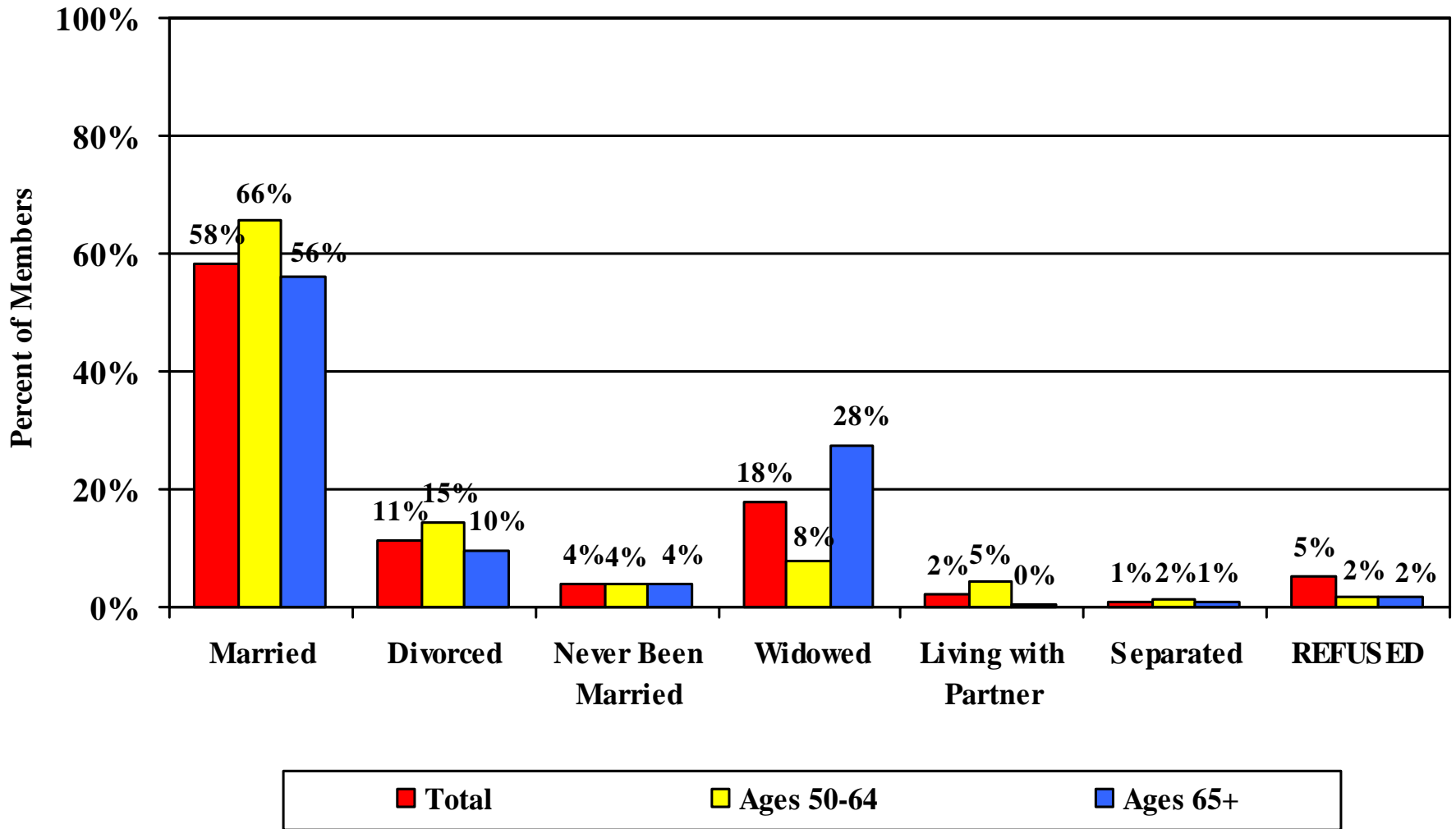
PARTY IDENTIFICATION



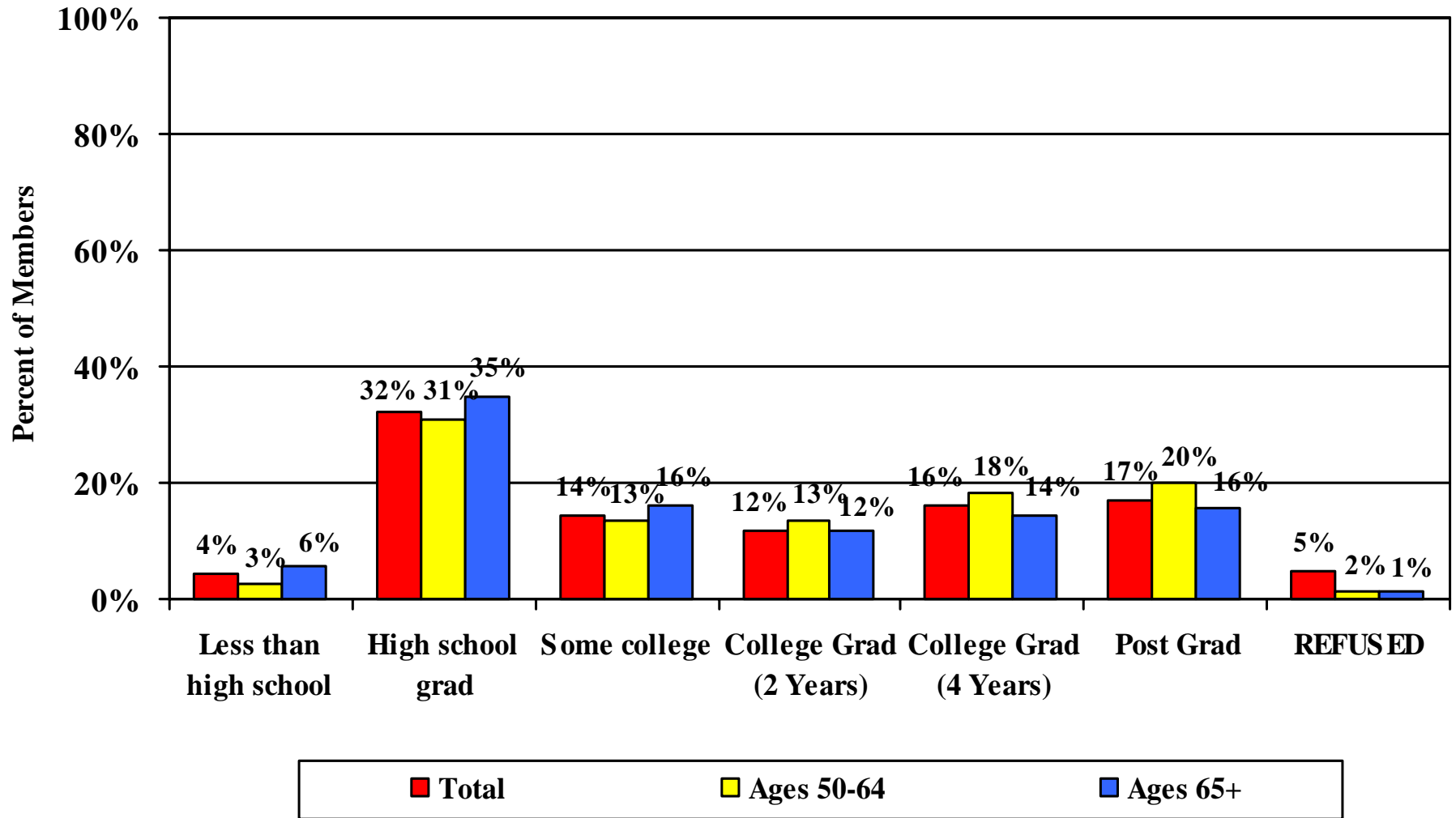
INTEREST IN MAINE'S STATE GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES



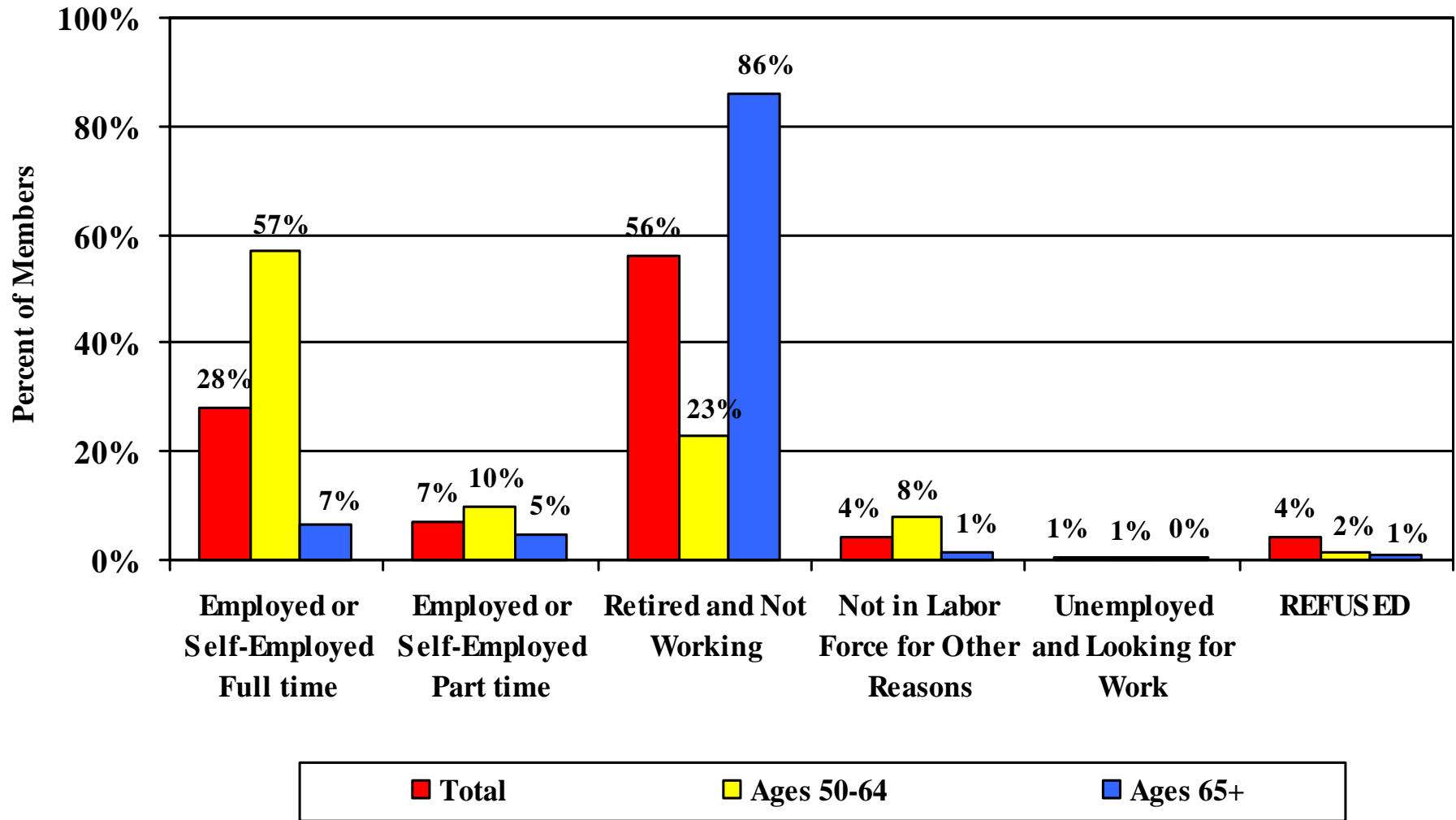
CURRENT MARITAL STATUS



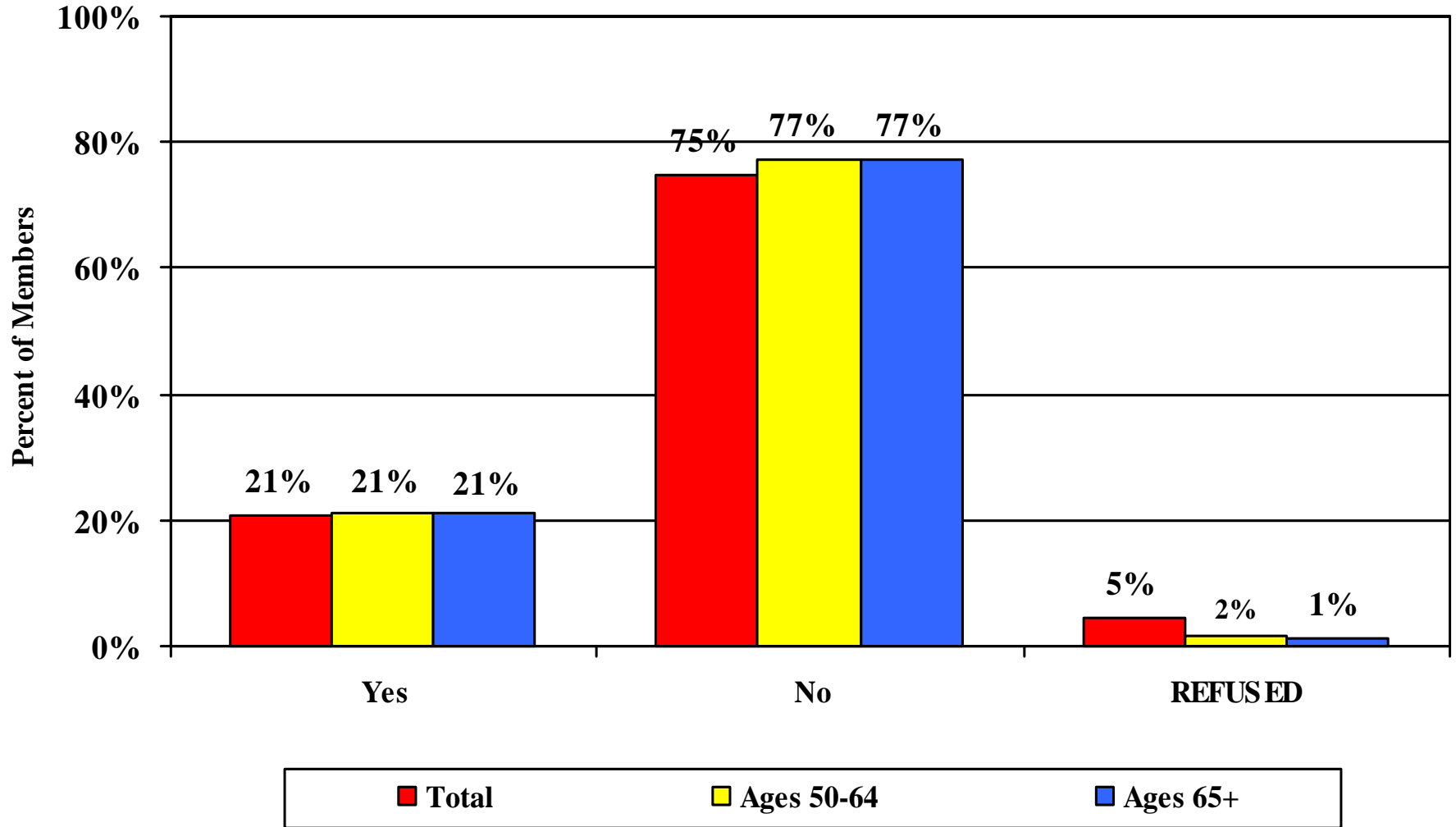
EDUCATION



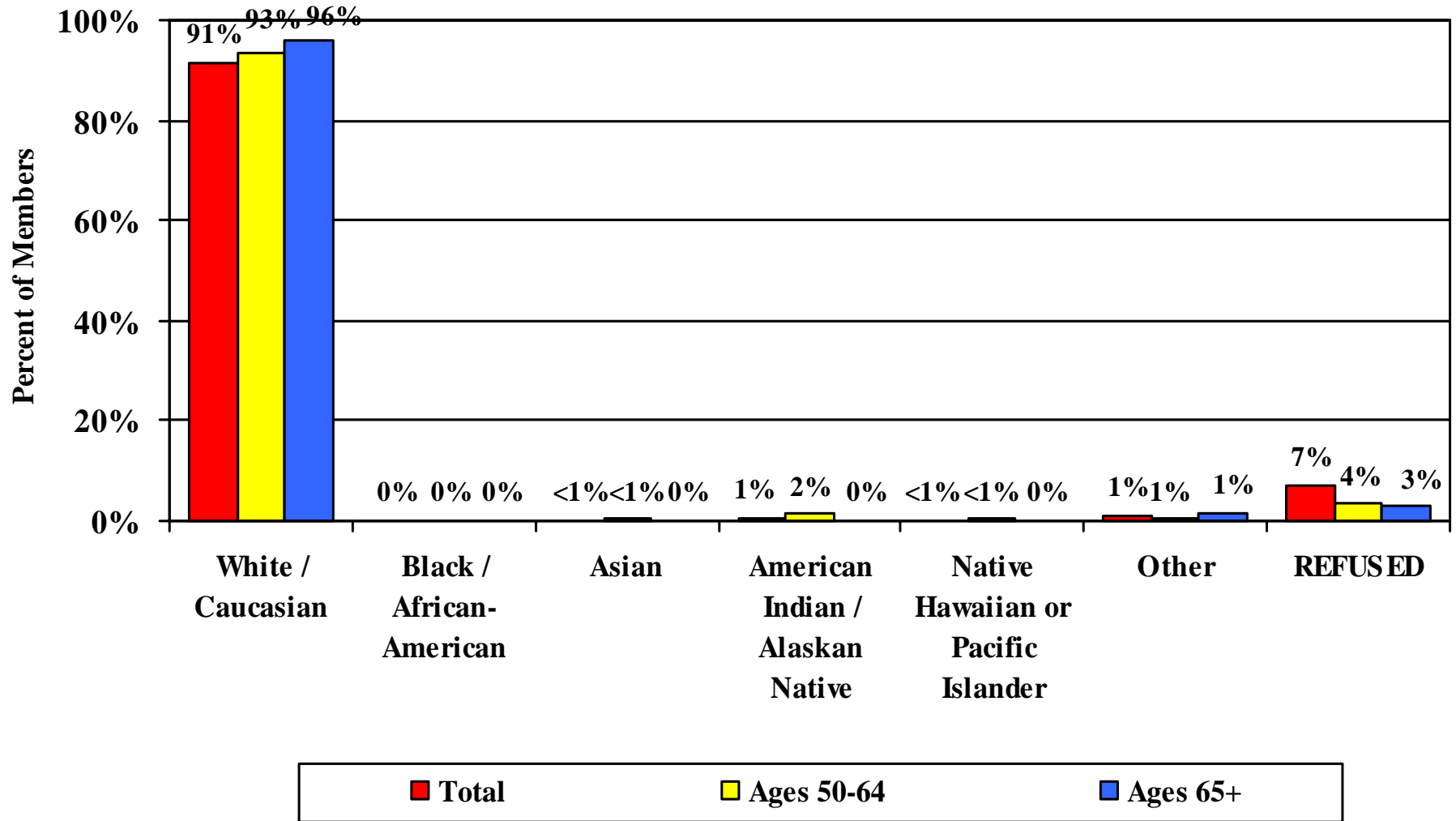
CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS



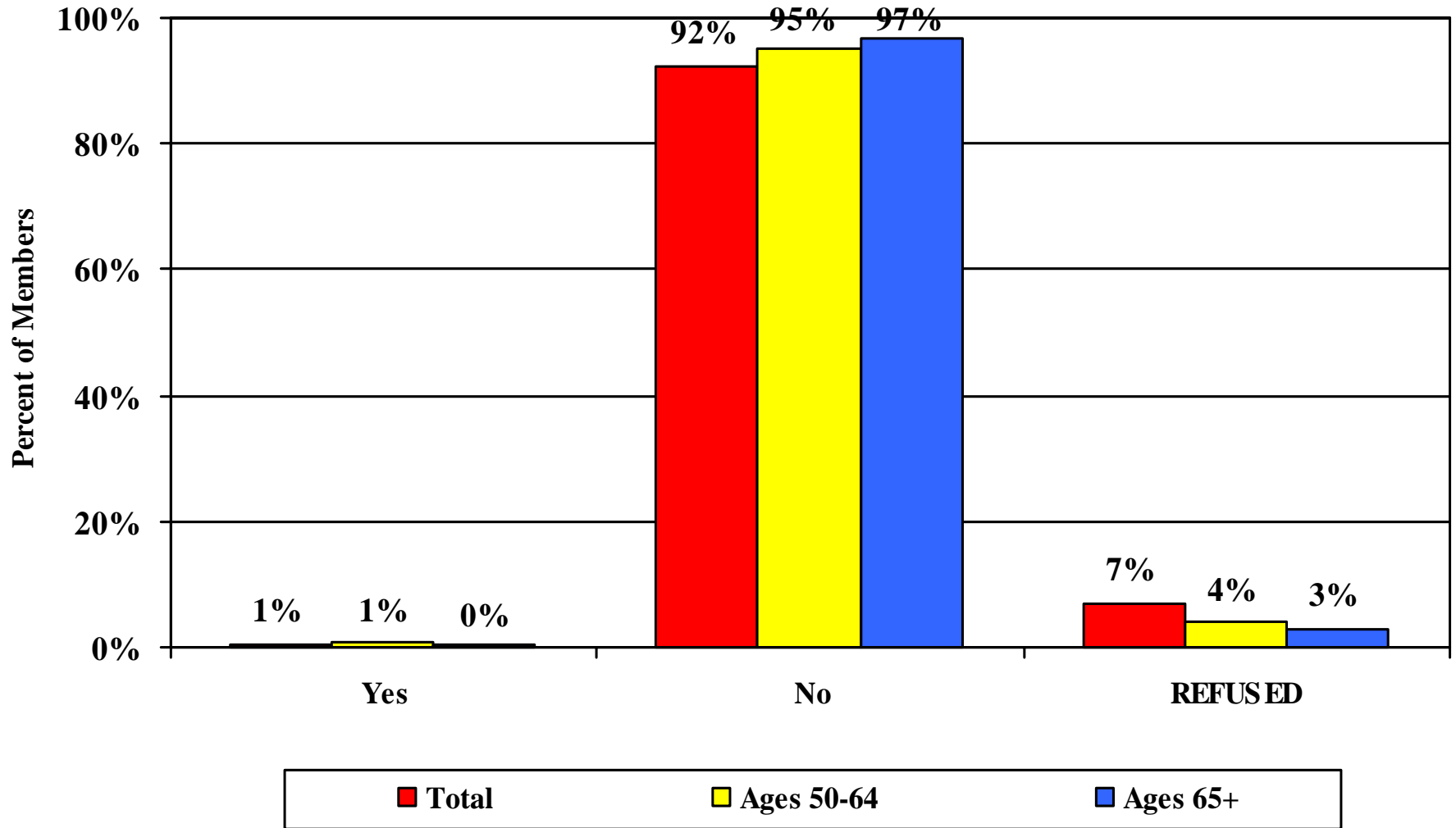
EVER BEEN STATE OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE



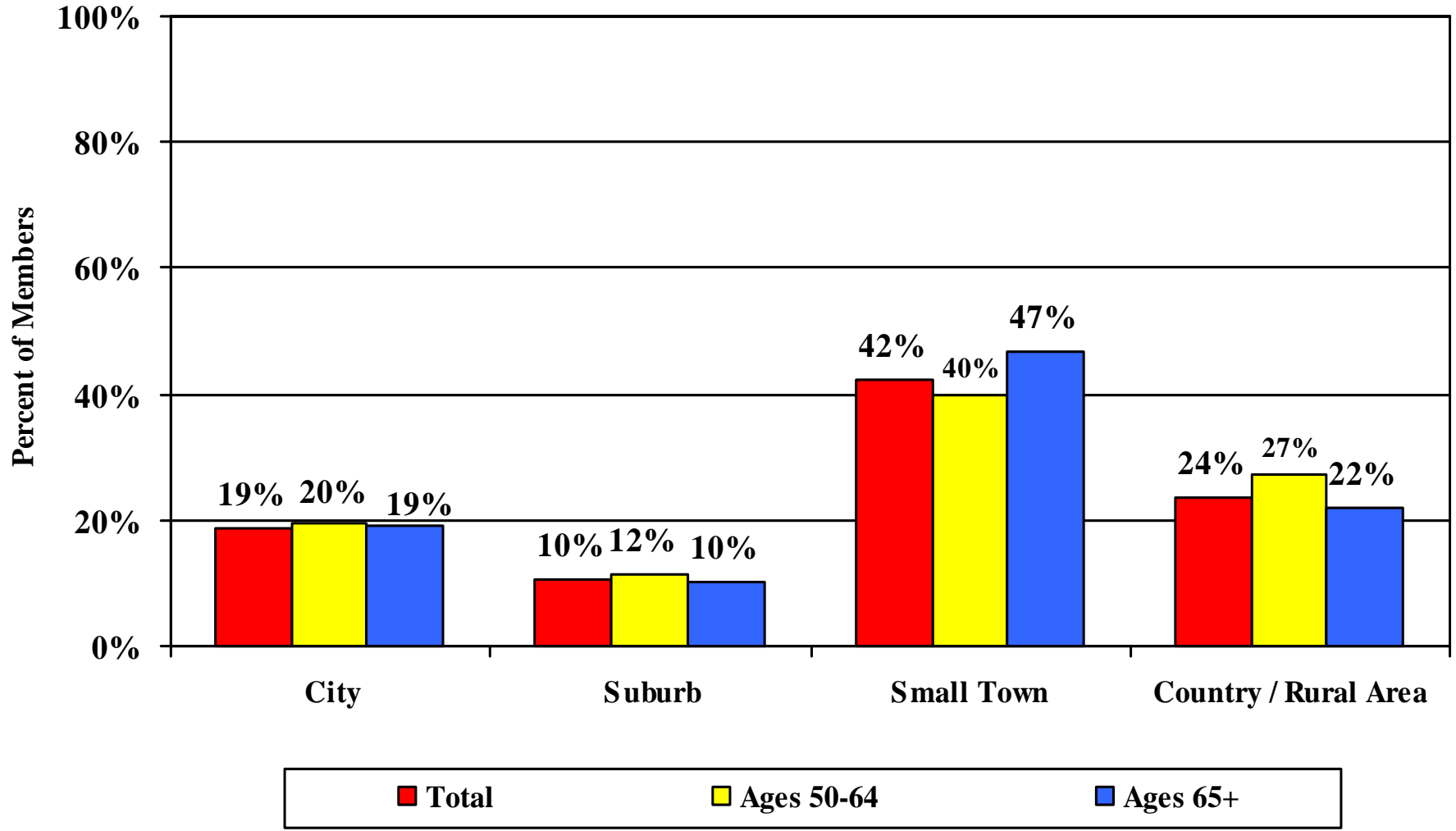
RACE / ETHNICITY



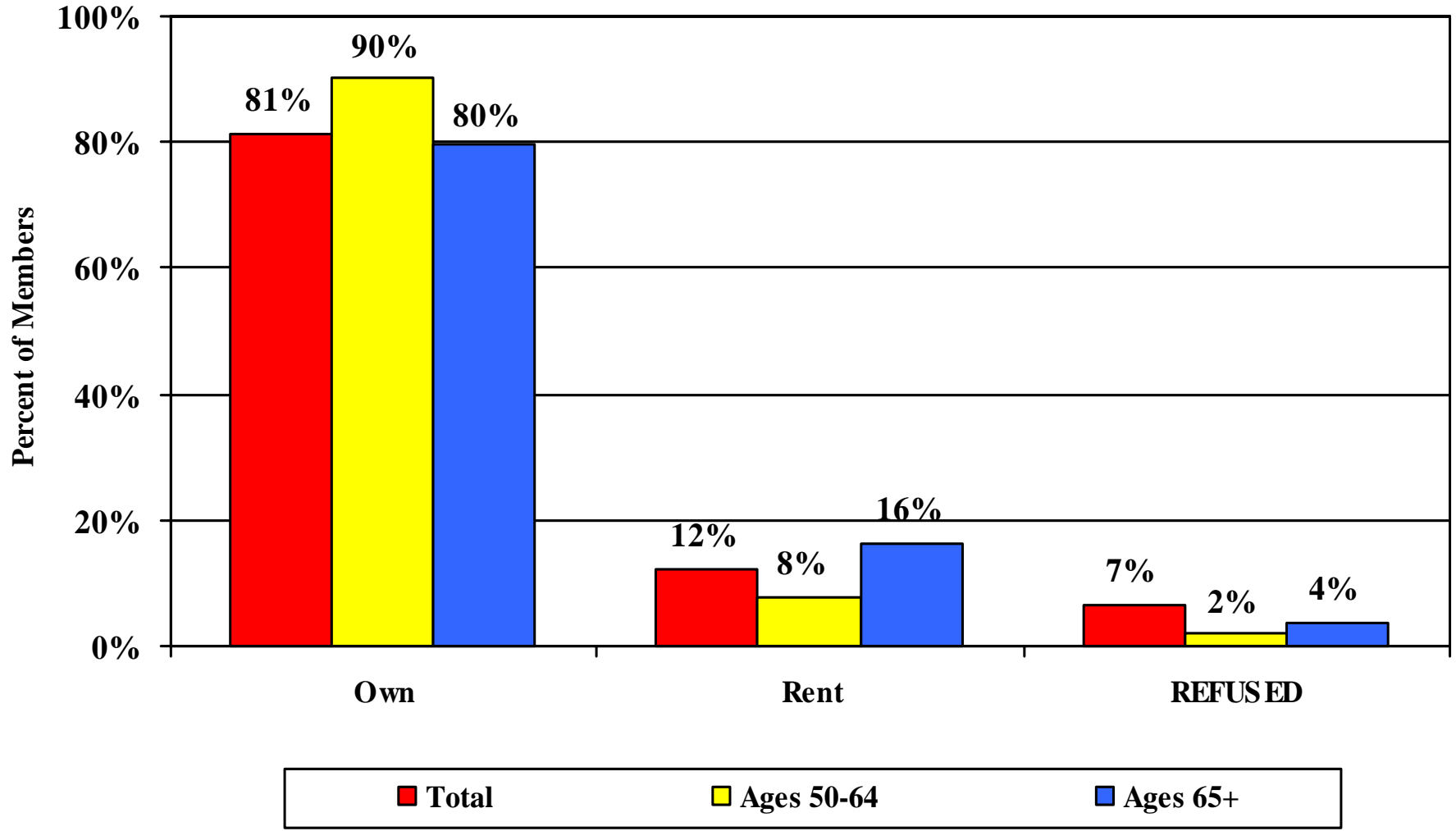
SPANISH, HISPANIC, OR LATINO ORIGIN



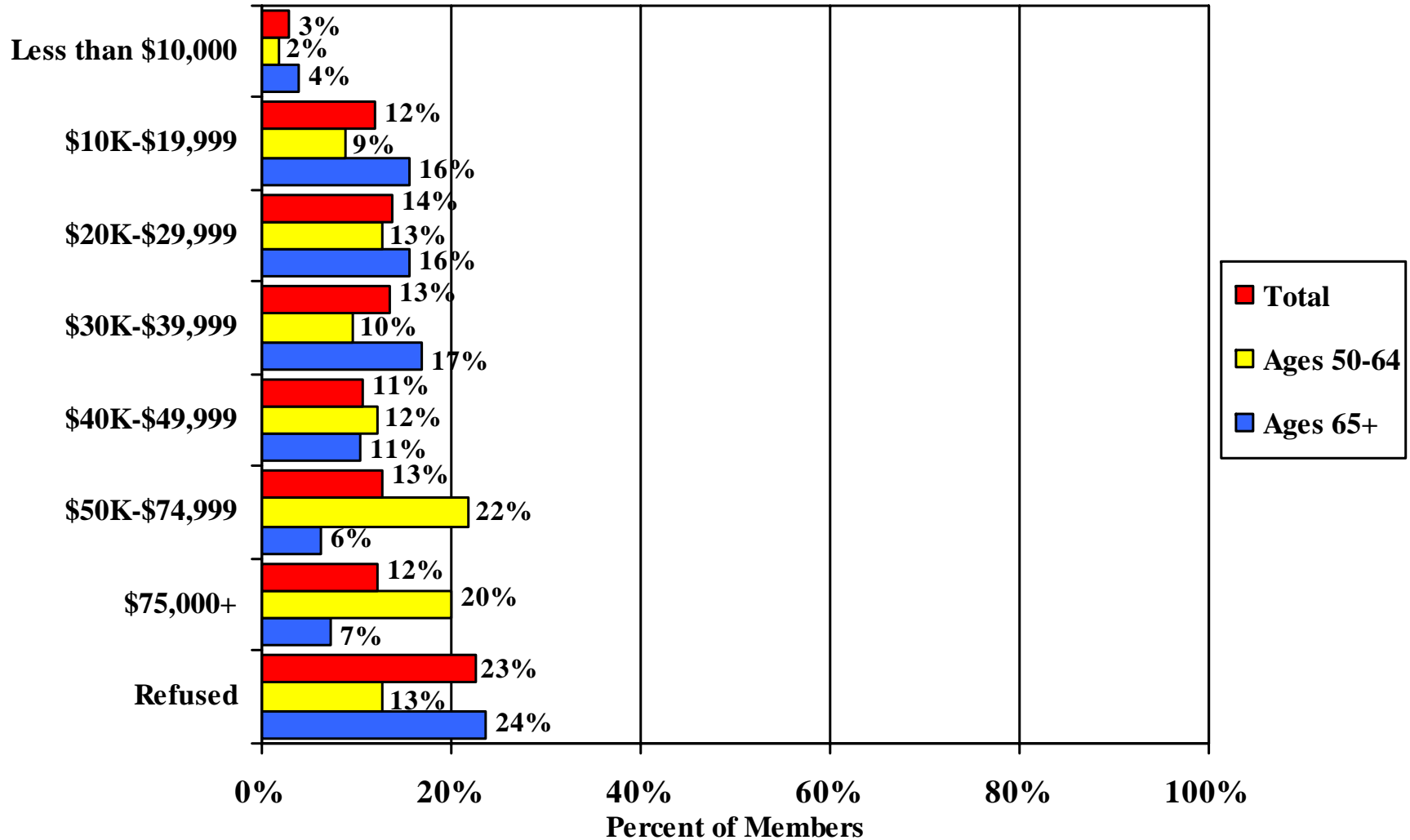
PLACE OF RESIDENCE



HOME OWNERSHIP



HOUSEHOLD INCOME



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