

# 2006 Multi-State TABOR Survey - Oklahoma -

**TOPLINE REPORT  
PRESENTED TO:**



**June 2006**

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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 Oklahoma.**

- **Data Collection Mode:** Phone Survey
- **Field Period:** May 15 – May 22, 2006
- **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):** 21%
- **Cooperation Rate (COOP3):** 38%
- **Refusal Rate (REF3):** 29%
- **Statistical Note:** Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

## Executive Summary

- **Most AARP Members believe too little money is being spent on state services.** Nearly two-thirds believe Oklahoma is spending too little money on services such as keeping people safe, providing health and long-term care, repairing roads, etc.
- **The majority of Members feel the amount of state and local taxes they pay is about right.** Half of Members believe they are paying about the right amount of state and local taxes. More than a third suggest the amount they pay is too high.
- **The majority of AARP Members say they trust state and local government to use their tax money effectively and deliver quality services.** More than two out of five trust their state and local government a fair amount, while about a third trust their state and local government a little.
- **In addition to nearly three out of five AARP Members suggesting that improving state services is a higher priority than limiting taxes, Members also indicate improving accountability and setting spending priorities are the most important goals for state government.** Two out of five suggest “improving accountability” is most important, while one out of five believe the most important goal is setting spending priorities.
- **The majority of AARP Members have not seen or heard anything about the Oklahoma Taxpayer Bill of Rights.** Two out of three say they have not seen or heard anything, compared to one out of three who say they have.
- **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 the biggest impact on Members support of TABOR. Two-thirds of Members suggest that if the TABOR proposal cut these services, they would be more likely to oppose the measure.



## Executive Summary (continued)

- **Overall, AARP Members appear generally unconvinced by any 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, that TABOR would return money to taxpayers, and that TABOR would control runaway government spending.
- **More than 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 AARP's opposition as well as that of other senior organizations would not make a difference in how they voted on the TABOR initiative.
- **Initially, more than three-fifths of AARP Members claim they would vote for the TABOR Proposal. However, when asked at the end of the survey, only slightly more than a third still indicate they would vote for the measure.** Members were initially read a brief description of the TABOR ballot initiative. After hearing this, more than three-fifths of AARP Members (62%) said they would probably vote for the proposal. Members were then presented a short series of arguments both for and against the initiative. After this, less than one-half of Members (46%) said they either strongly or somewhat support the TABOR proposal. Finally, at the end of the interview, Members were asked to consider all the information that had been discussed during the survey. Only slightly more than a third of Members (35%) continued to say they were at least leaning toward voting for the TABOR proposal. This shift of nearly 27% between the initial measure and the final measure is statistically significant at the 95 percent level of confidence.



# DETAILED FINDINGS



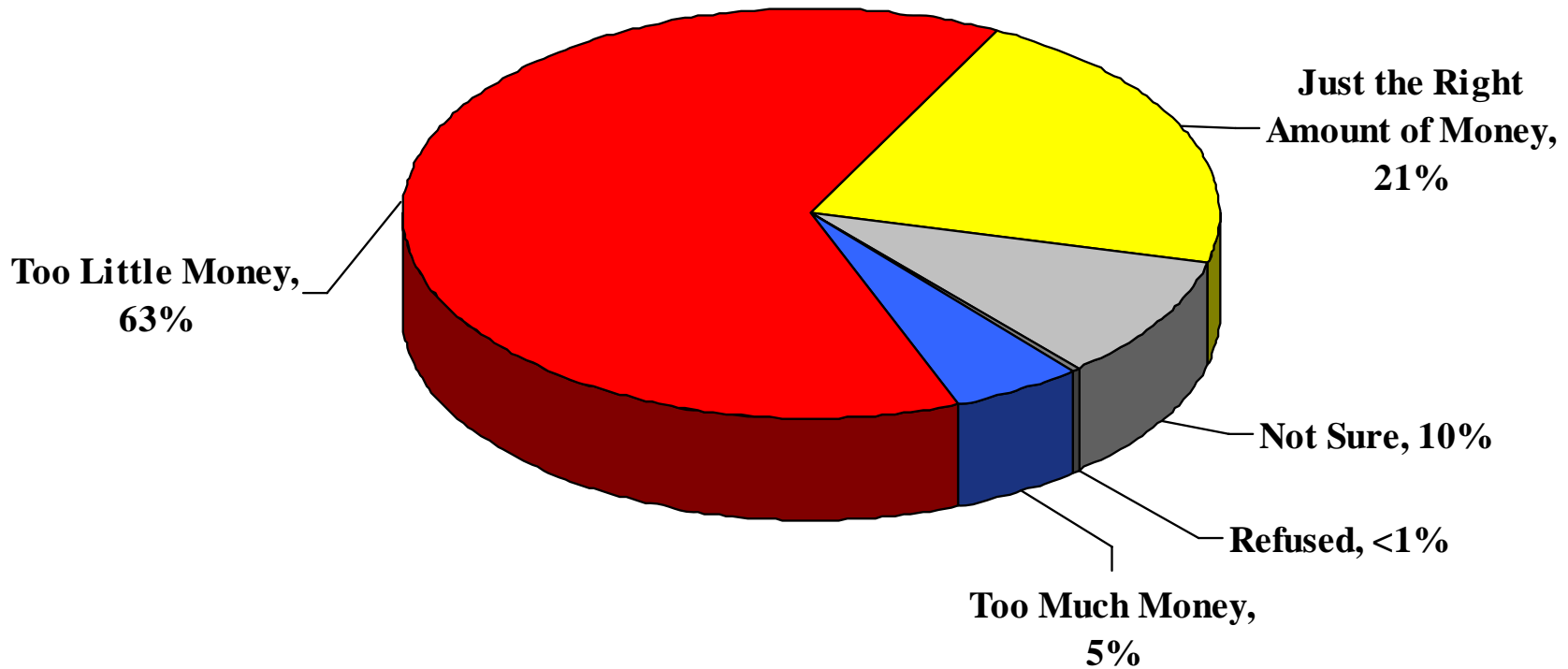
# Univariate Analysis



**Q1. Do you think that Oklahoma 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?**

*Just under two-thirds of AARP Members in Oklahoma believe the State is spending too little money on state services. One-fifth believe Oklahoma is spending the right amount of money. Only five percent of Members say they believe Oklahoma is spending too much money on state services.*

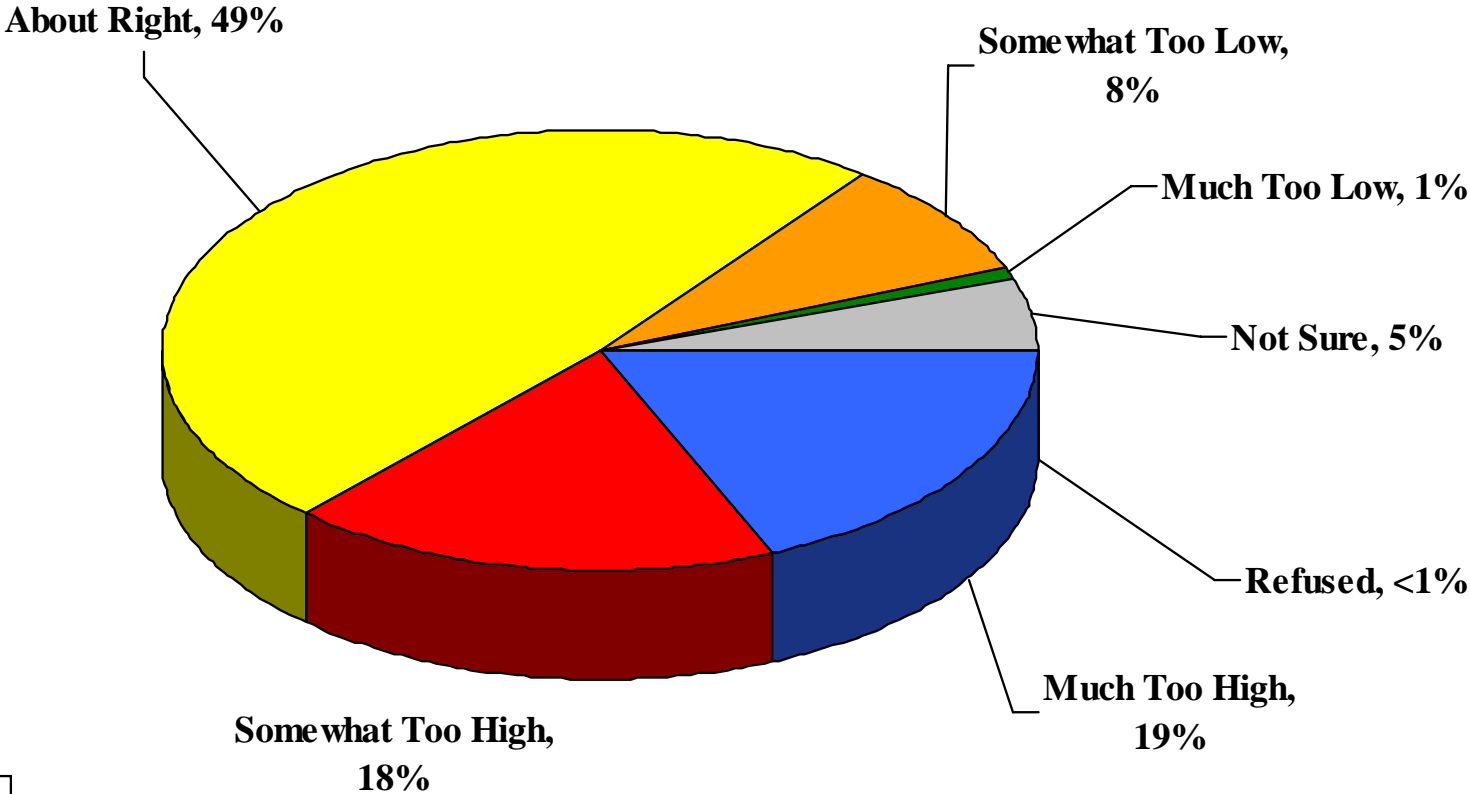
**n=600**





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

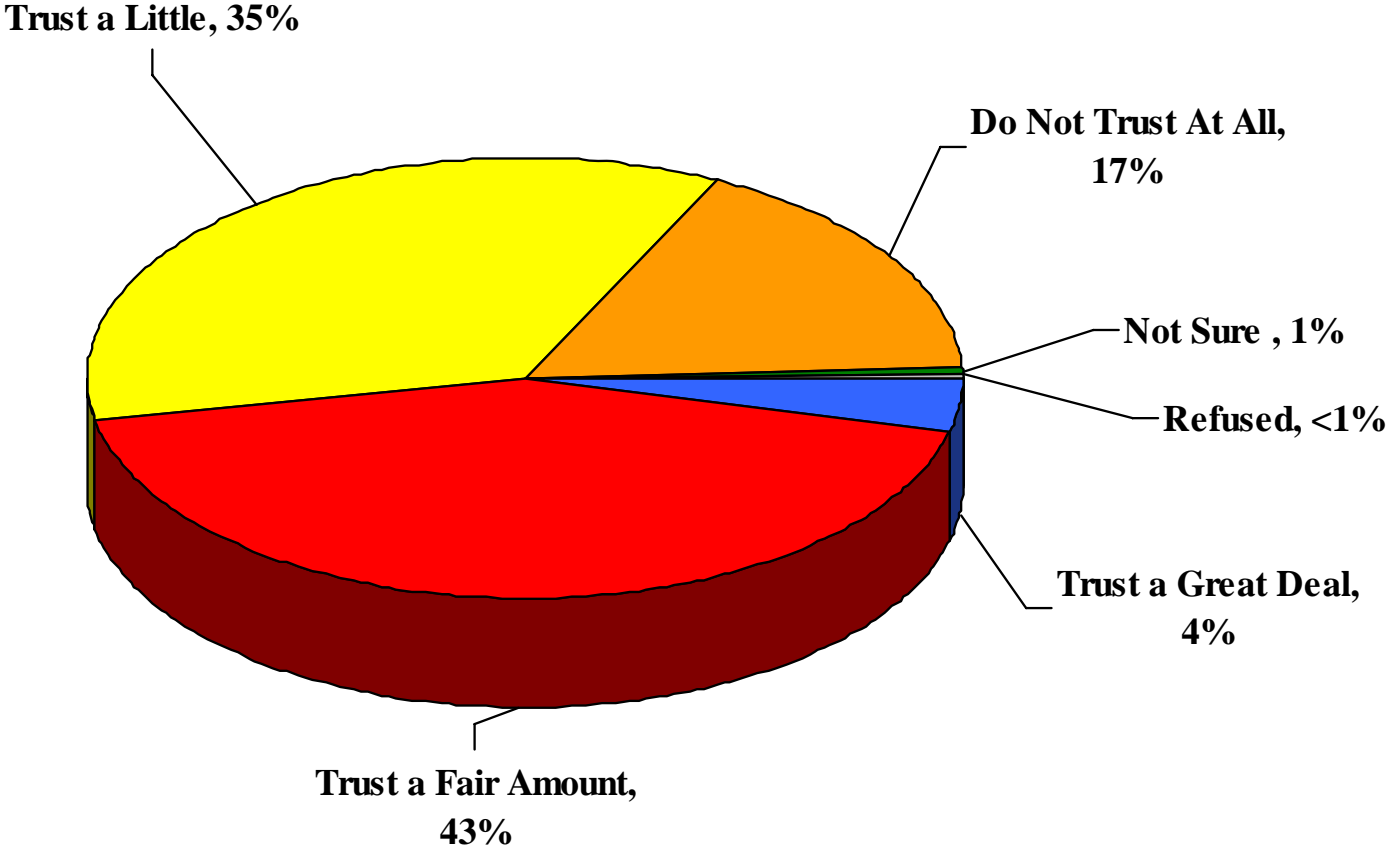
*Half of AARP Members living in Oklahoma think the level of state and local taxes they pay is about right. More than a third suggest the amount they pay is too high.*



**n=600**

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

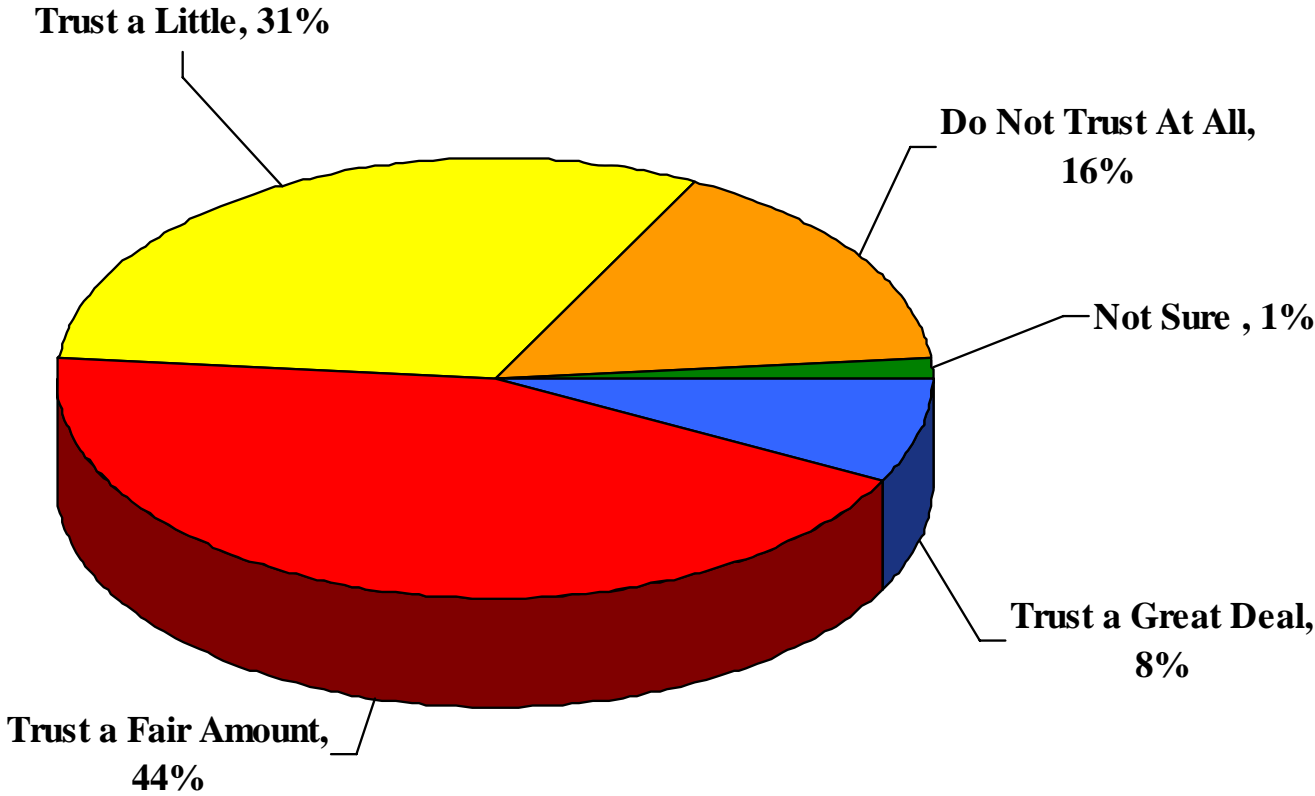
*More than two-fifths of AARP Members living in Oklahoma trust the State government a fair amount, while one third trust the State government a little. Nearly one out of five suggest they do not trust the State government at all.*



**n=600**

**Q3a. How much do you trust your local government (includes Towns, Cities, and Counties) to use your tax money effectively and deliver quality state services?**

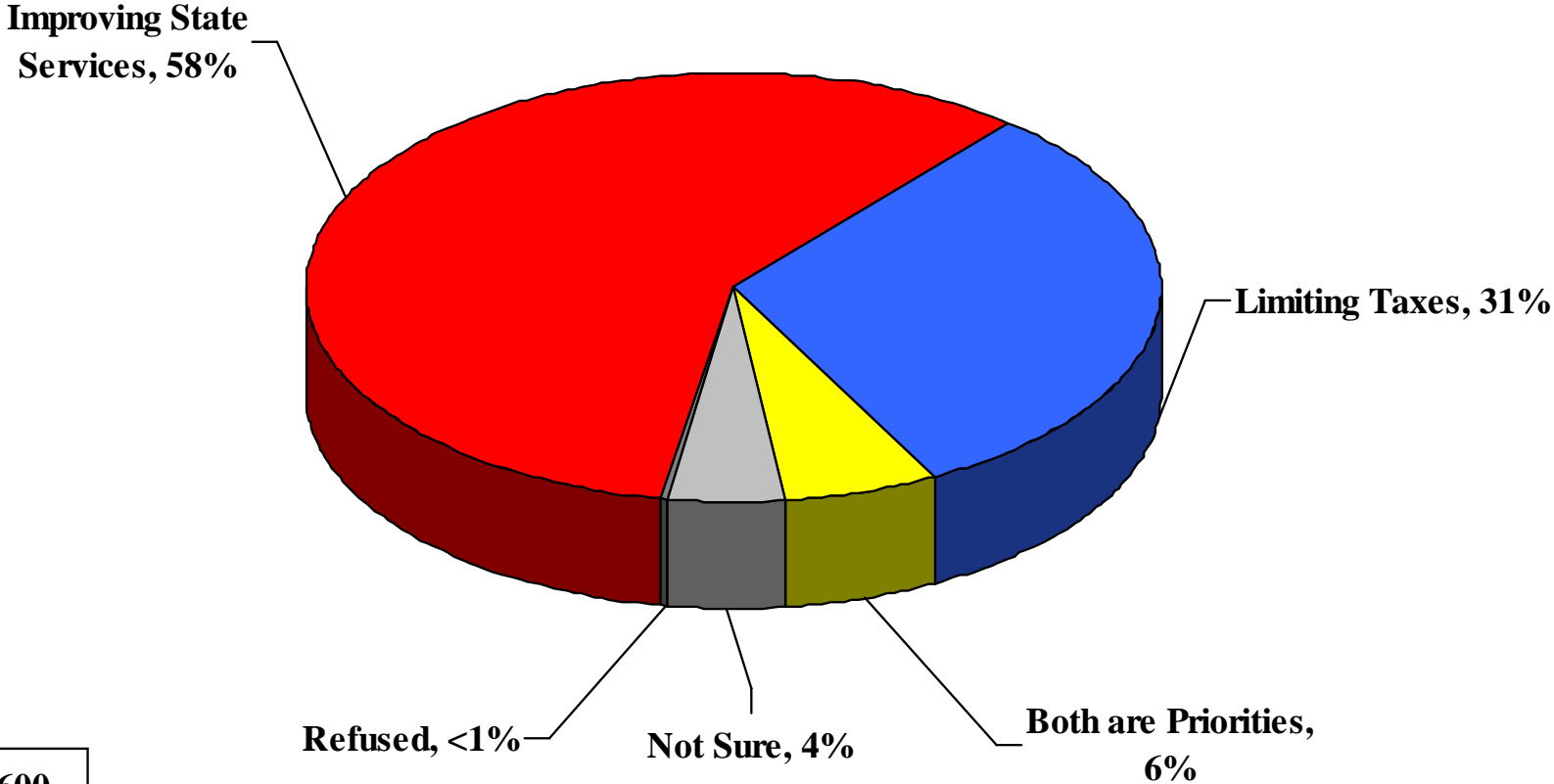
*More than two out of five AARP Members living in Oklahoma trust the local government a fair amount. Nearly a third trust the local government a little. One out of six don't trust the local government at all.*



**n=600**

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

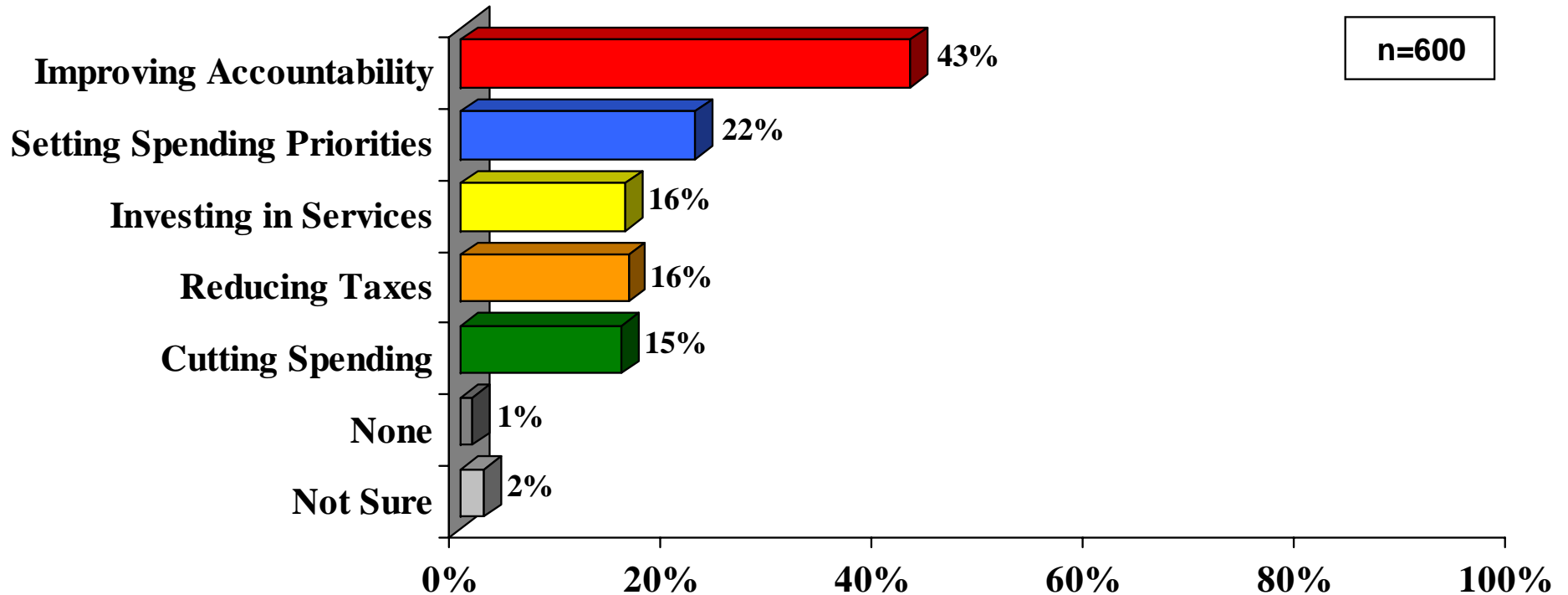
*More than one-half of AARP Members suggest improving state services is a higher priority than limiting taxes. However, nearly a third of Oklahoma Members assert the opposite. Only six percent indicate both of these goals are a priority.*



n=600

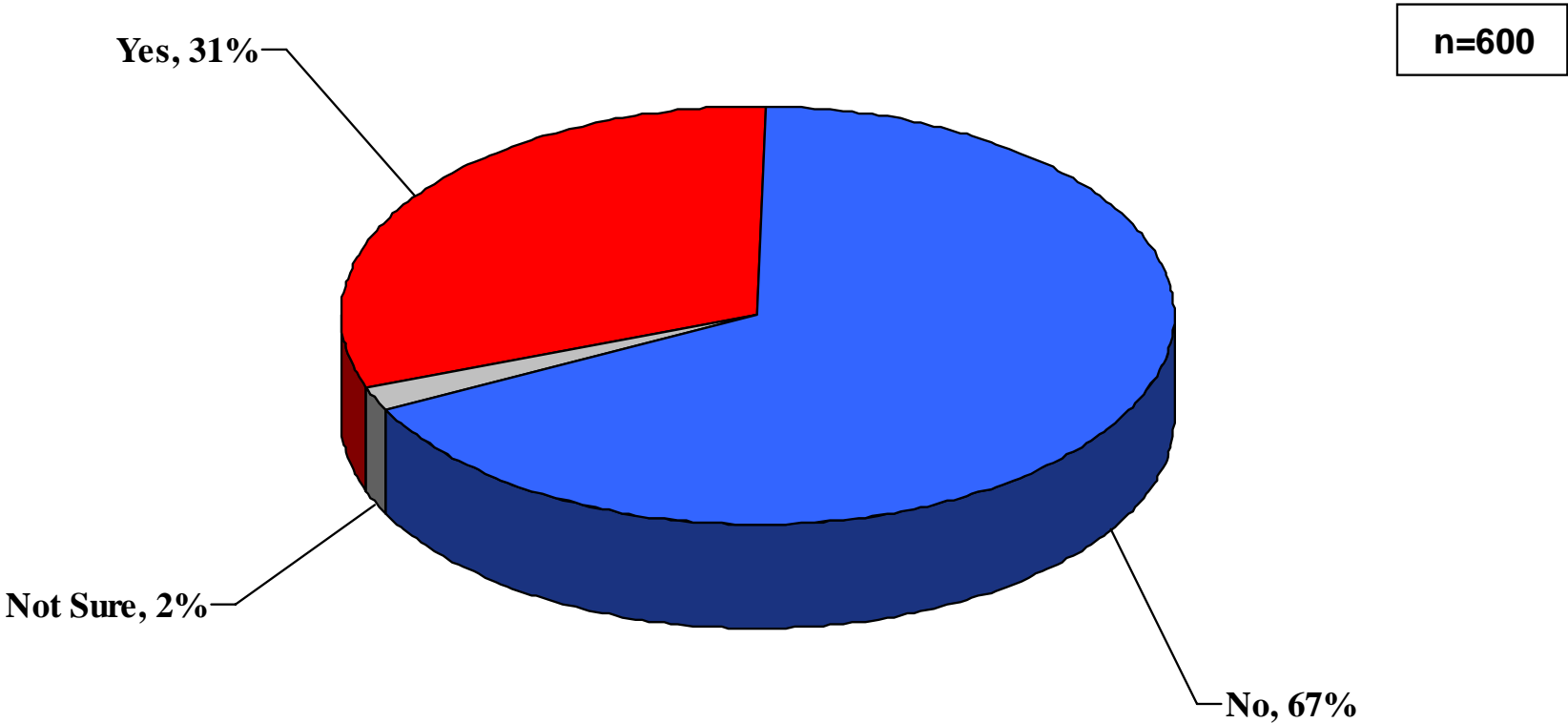
**Q5. Thinking about state government today in Oklahoma, which one or two of the following goals are most important to you?**

*Two-fifths of AARP Members living in Oklahoma say “improving accountability” is the most important goal to them. Cutting spending, reducing taxes, and investing in services are viewed as most important by fewer than one out of five members.*



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

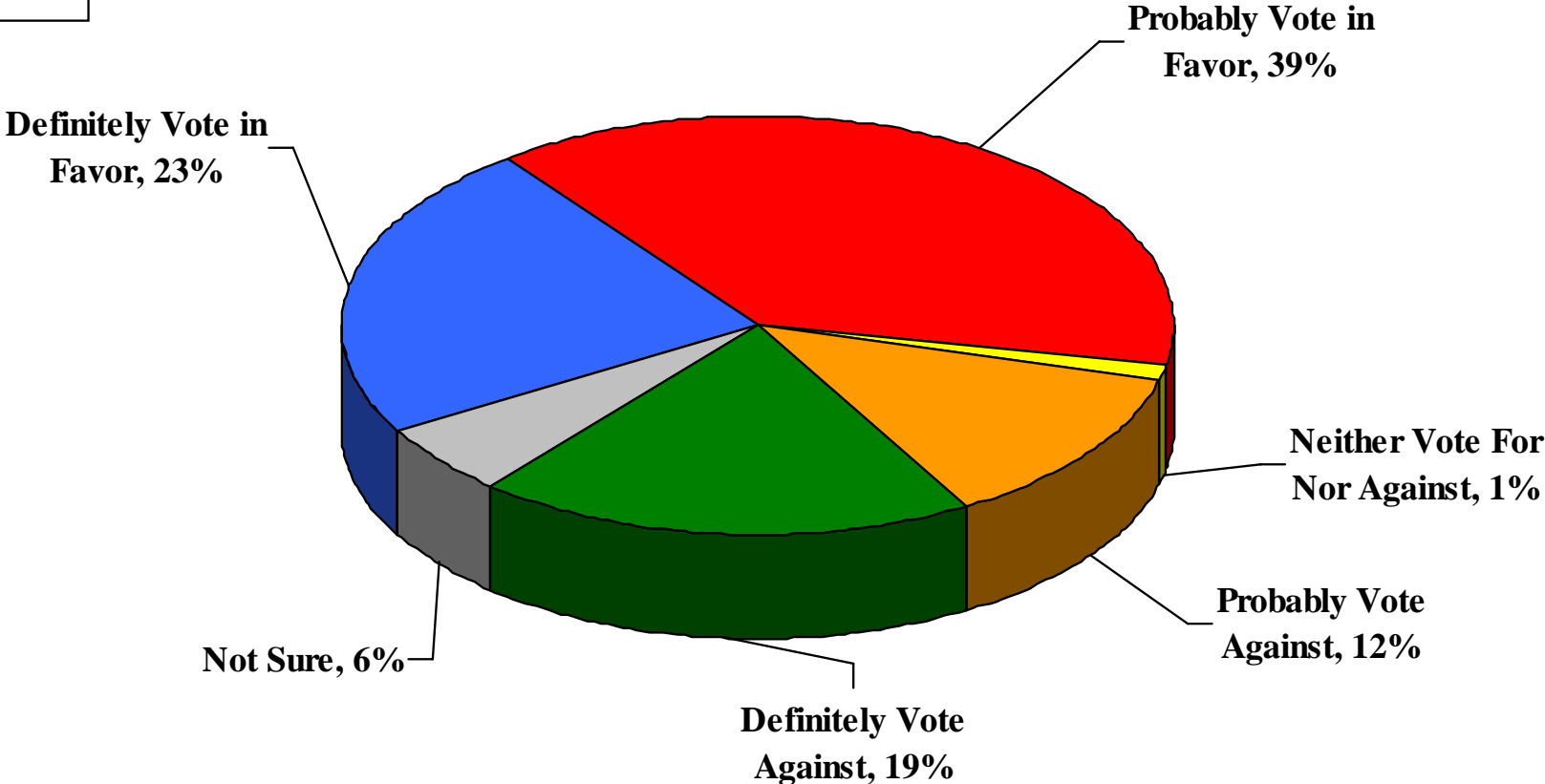
*Only about thirty percent of AARP Members in Oklahoma say they have seen or heard something about the TABOR proposal in the last year.*



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

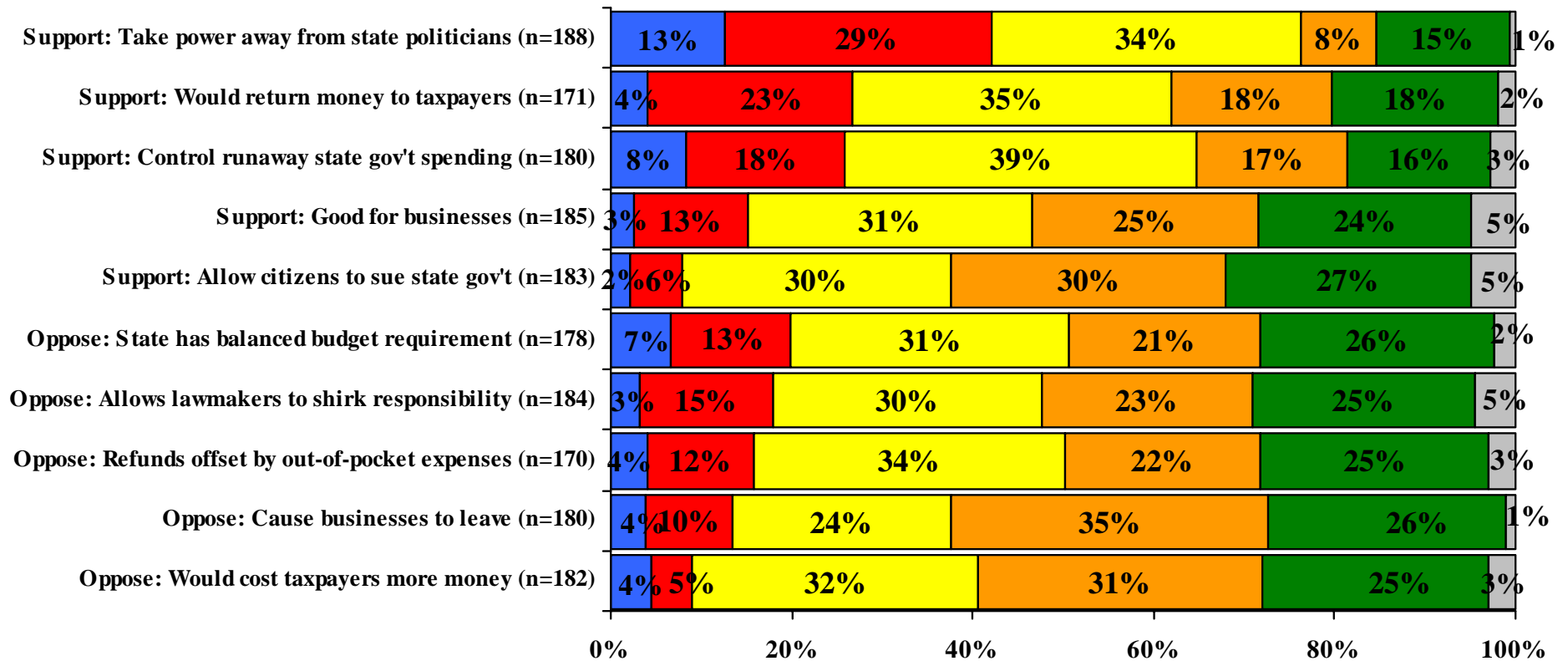
*More than three-fifths of AARP Members in Oklahoma say they would either probably or definitely vote for the TABOR proposal if the election was held today.*

**n=600**



**Q8. Next I'm going to read you some of the things that supporters of Oklahoma 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 politicians, that it will control runaway state government spending, and that it would return money to taxpayers.*

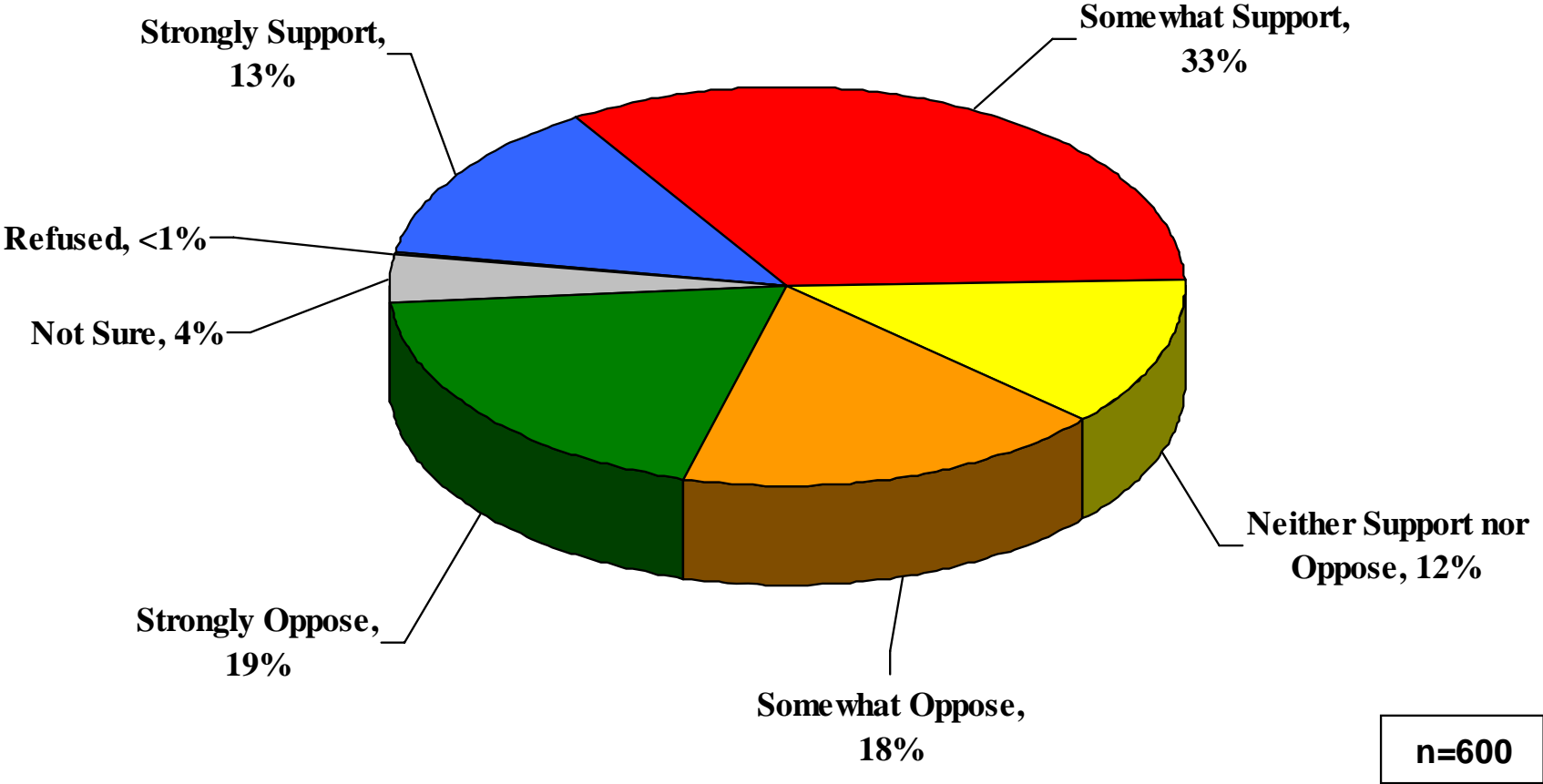


■ Extremely Convincing 
 ■ Very Convincing 
 ■ Somewhat Convincing 
 ■ Not Very Convincing 
 ■ Not At All Convincing 
 ■ Not Sure / Refused



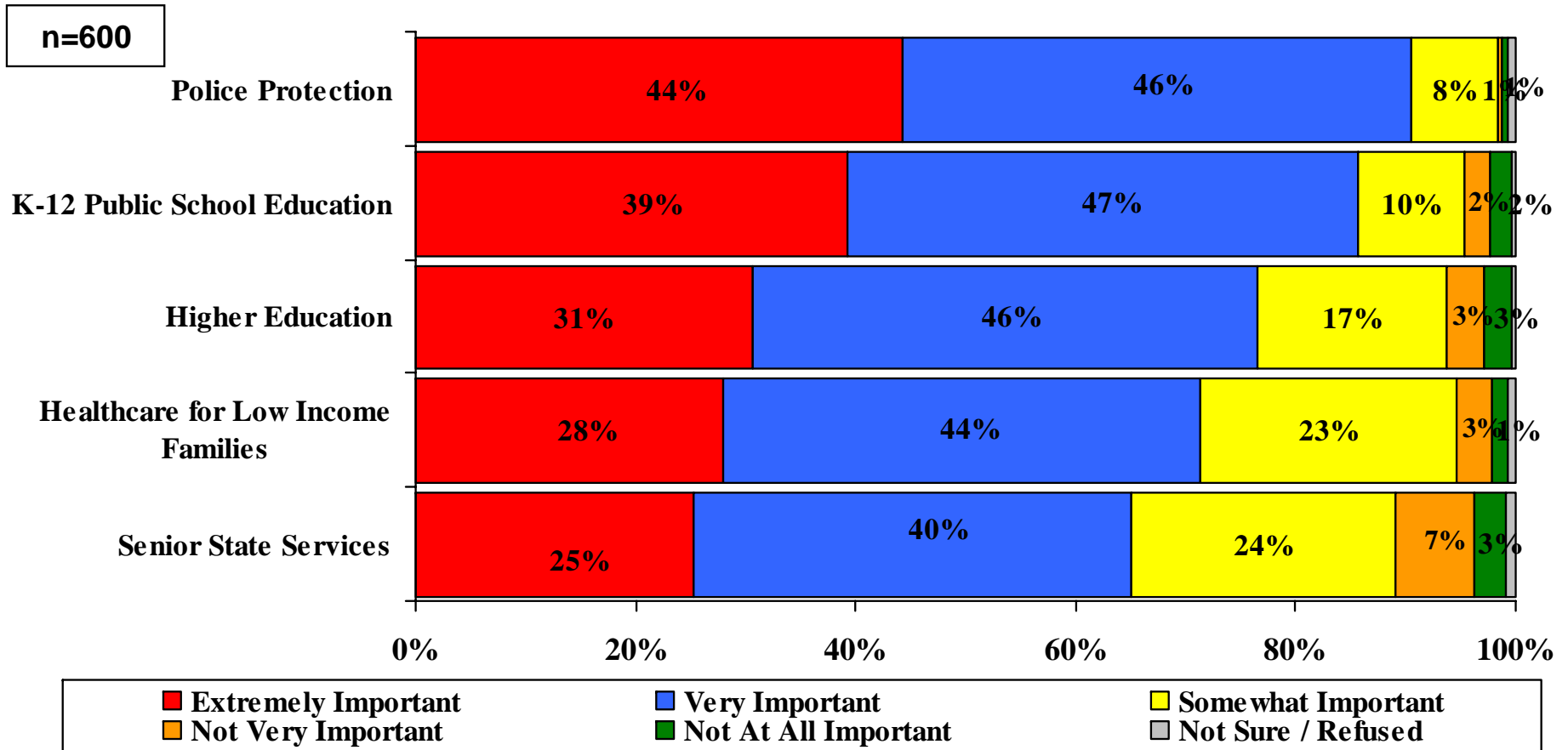
**Q9. Having heard arguments both for and against TABOR, now how strongly do you support or oppose TABOR in Oklahoma?**

*After hearing arguments both in support of and in opposition to the TABOR proposal, nearly half of AARP Members living in Oklahoma say they support the proposal. In comparison, just over one-third of Members say they oppose TABOR.*



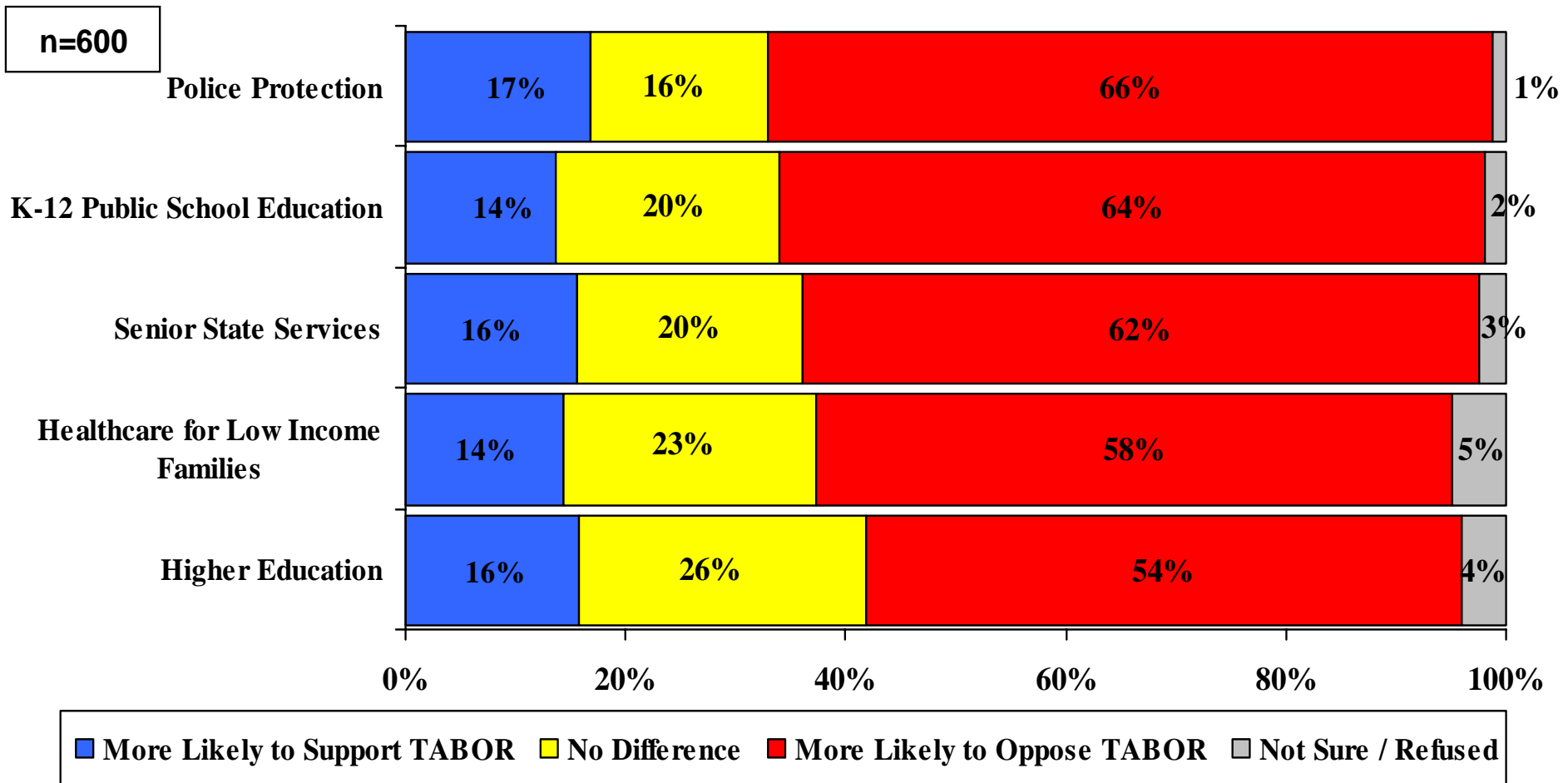
**Q10. Now, I am going to ask you about state and local services Oklahoma provides. How important is each of the following to you? Is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important?**

*AARP Members value police protection above all other state and local services presented. In fact, nine out of ten Oklahoma Members say this service is either extremely or very important.*



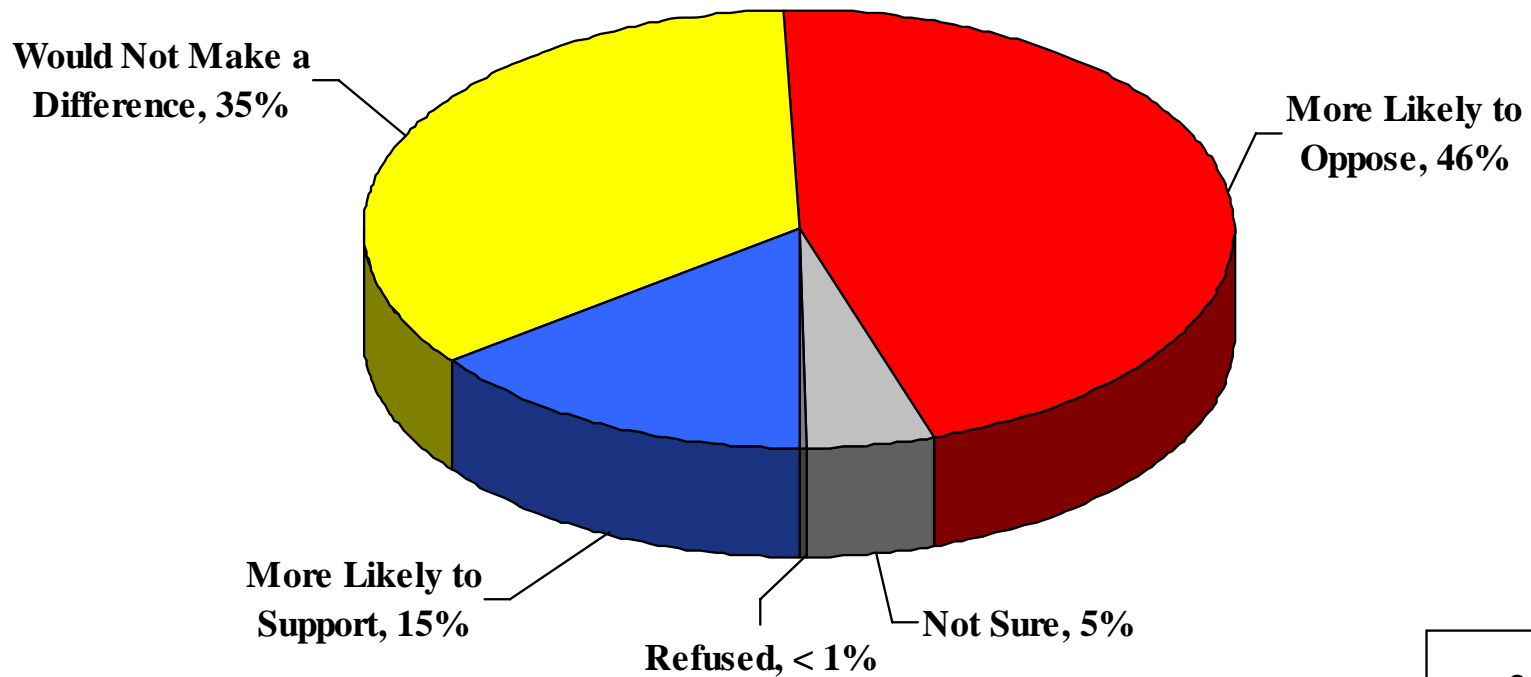
**Q11. If Oklahoma TABOR cut state funding for [each of the following services], would you be more likely to support TABOR, more likely to oppose TABOR, or would it not make a difference?**

*AARP Members would be more likely to oppose TABOR if the proposal cut funding for police protection, K-12 public education, or senior state services.*



**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 Oklahoma 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 Oklahoma TABOR Amendment?**

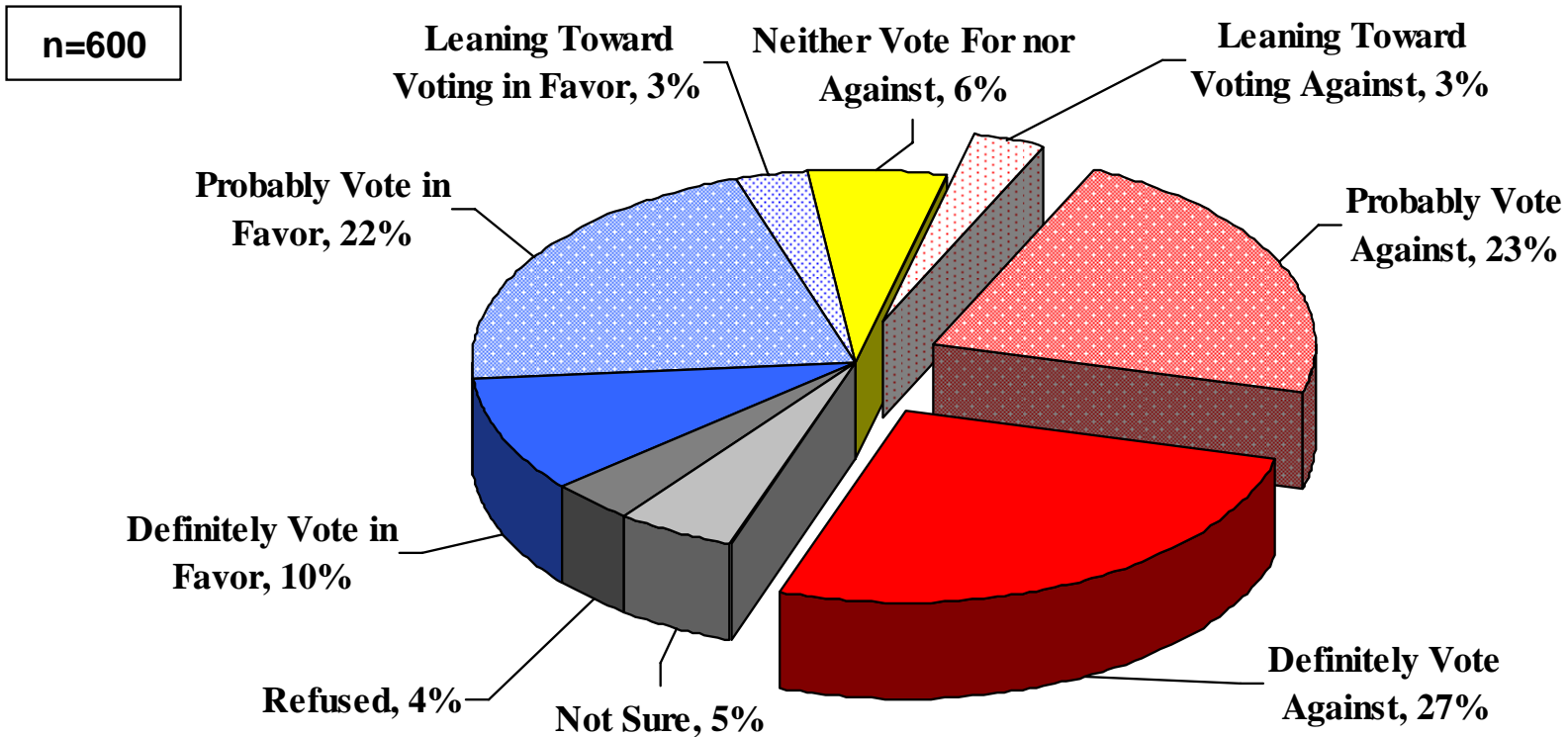
*Nearly half said AARP's opposition of TABOR would lead them to oppose TABOR. One-third of AARP Members living in Oklahoma say that knowing AARP and other senior organizations oppose TABOR would not make a difference in how they voted.*



n=600

**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, AARP Members appear to be against the proposal. Though a third of Members (35%) say they are at least leaning toward voting for TABOR, just over half of Members (53%) suggest they are leaning toward voting against the proposal.*

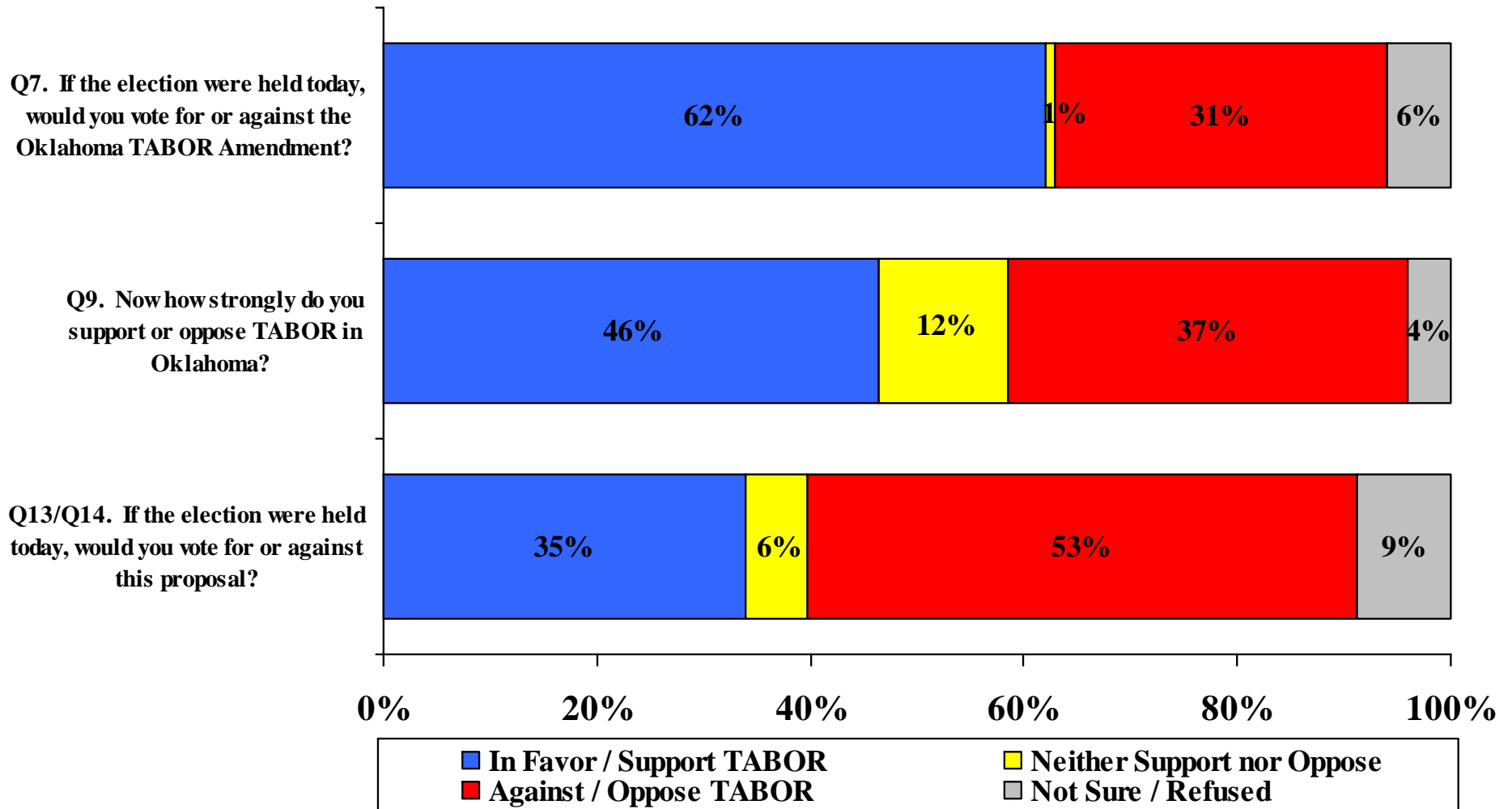


# TABOR Support/Oppose Summary Chart



## 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 TABOR between the measures asked first in the survey and the measure asked last.*

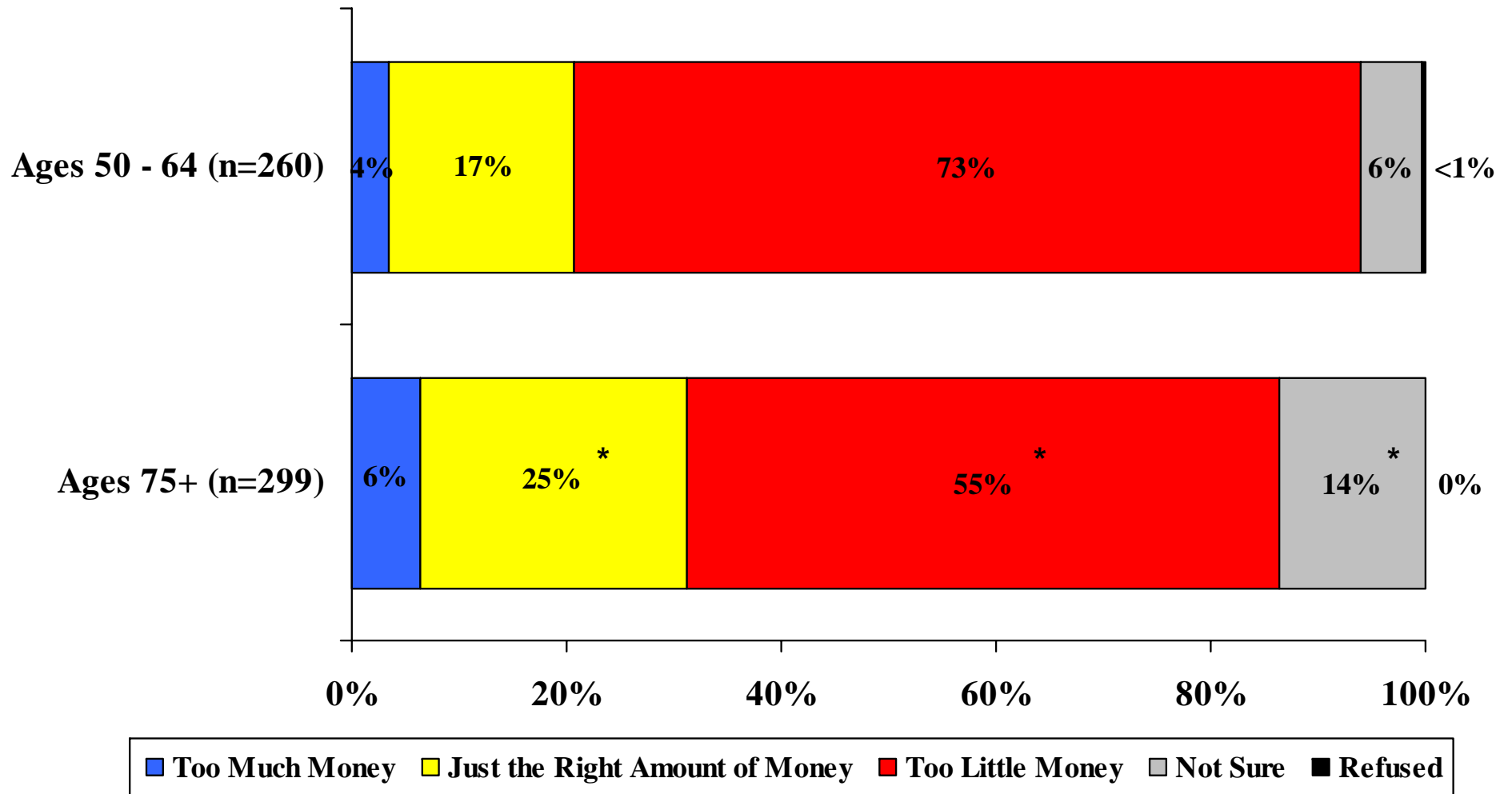


# **Subgroup Analysis: Survey Responses by Age**



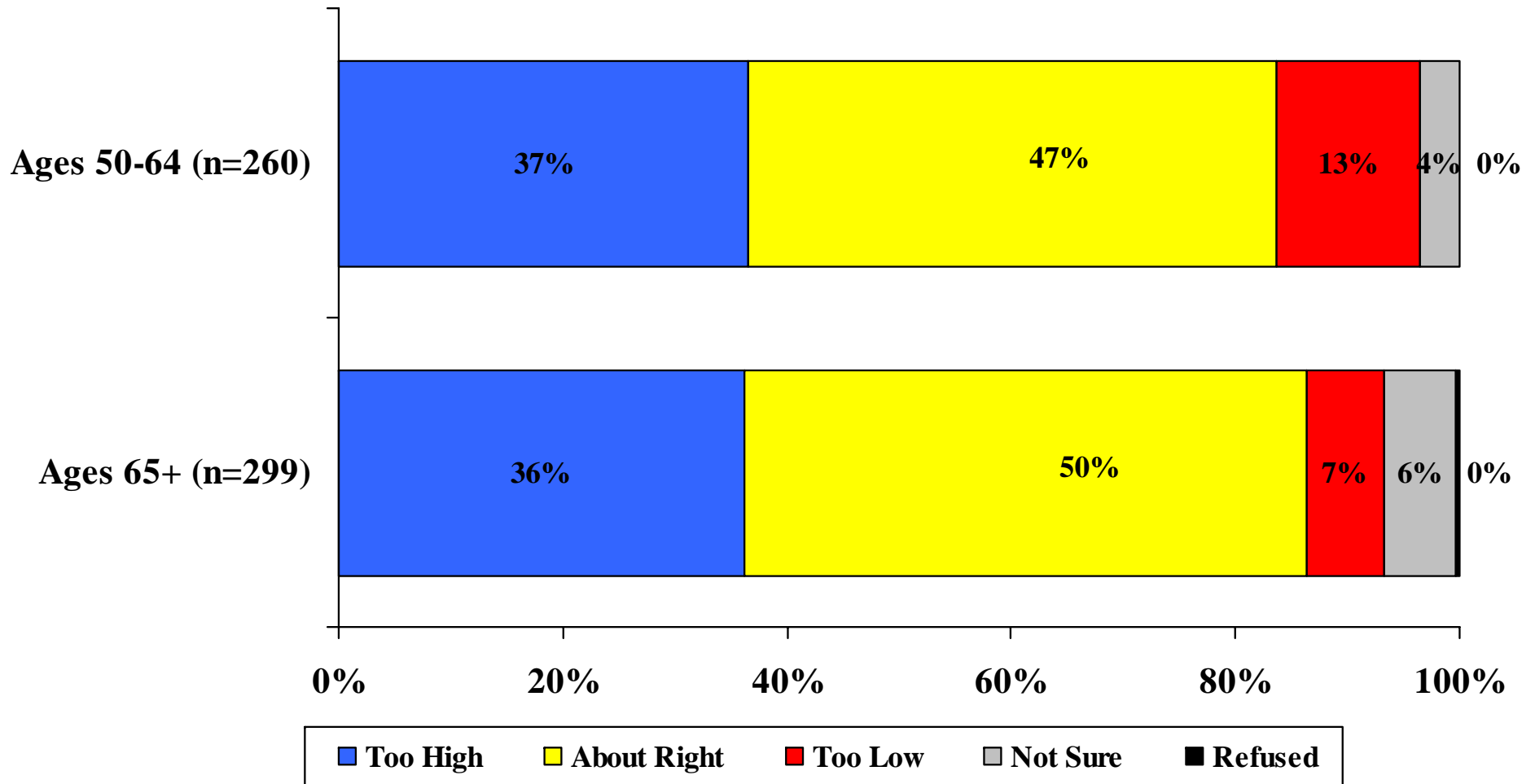


**Q1. Do you think that Oklahoma is spending too much money, too little money, or just the right amount of money on state services such as keeping people safe, providing health and long-term care, repairing roads and highways, maintaining parks, and providing education?**

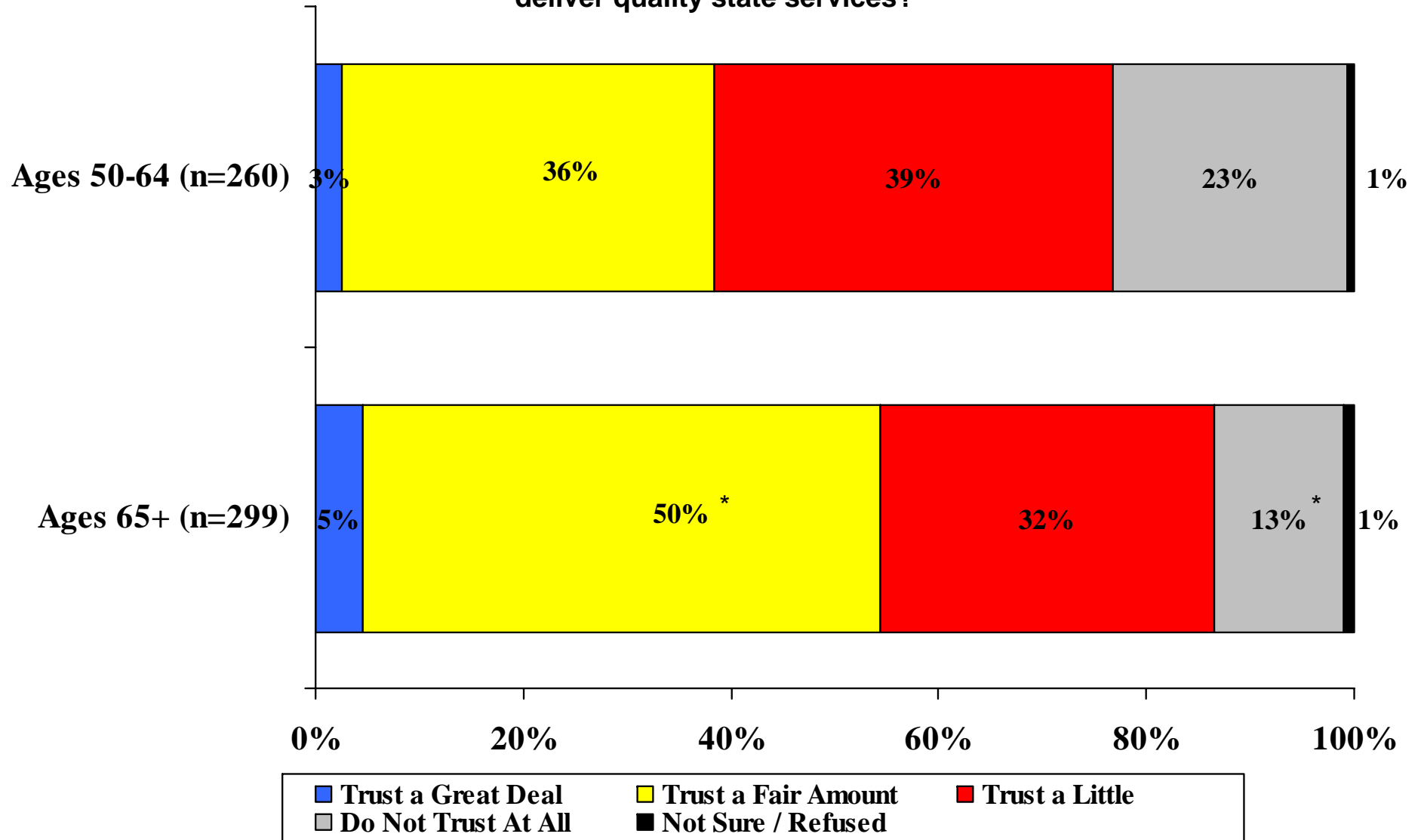


\* Statistically significant difference from Members aged 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence.

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

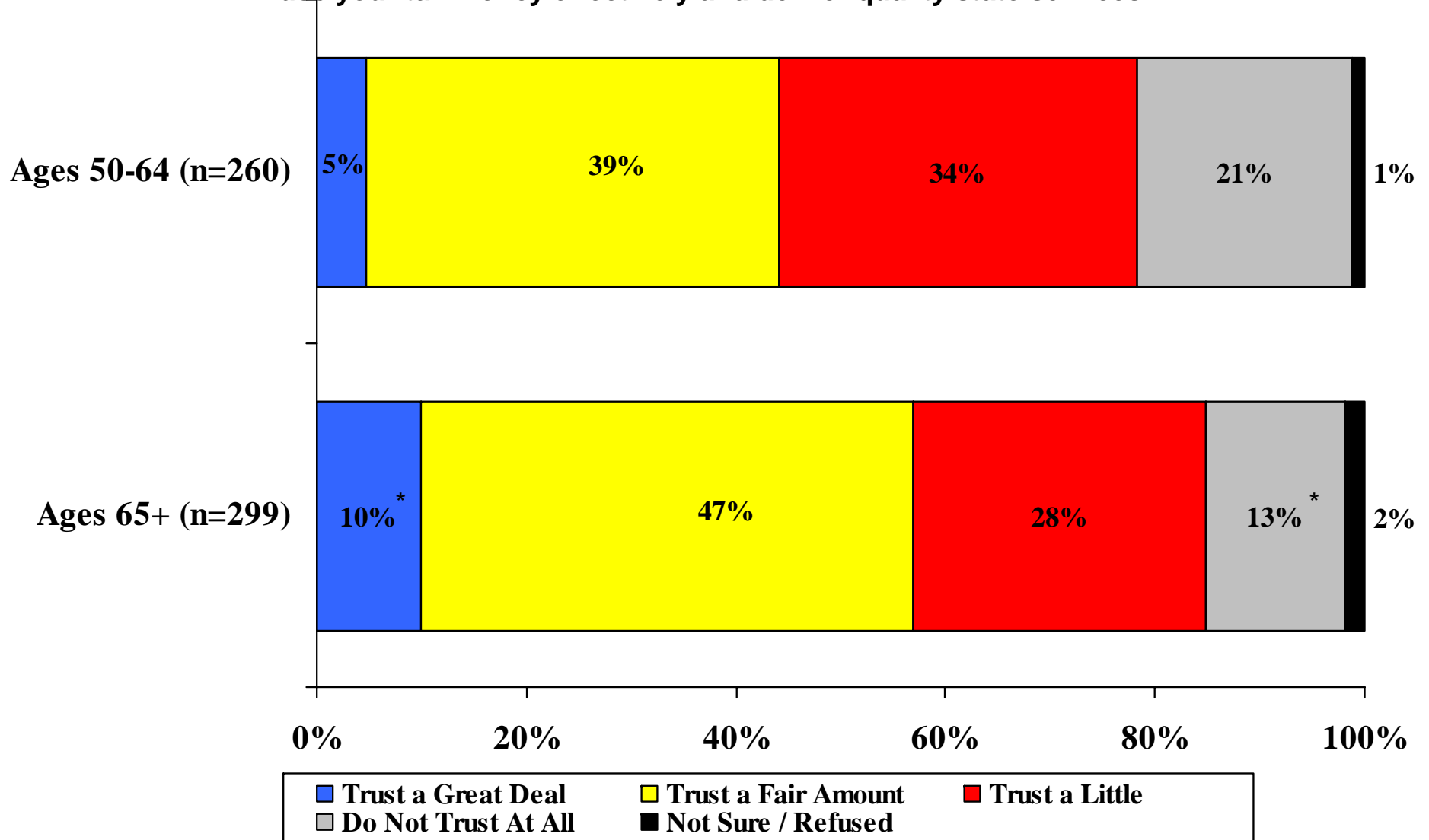


**Q3a. How much do you trust your state government to use your tax money effectively and deliver quality state services?**



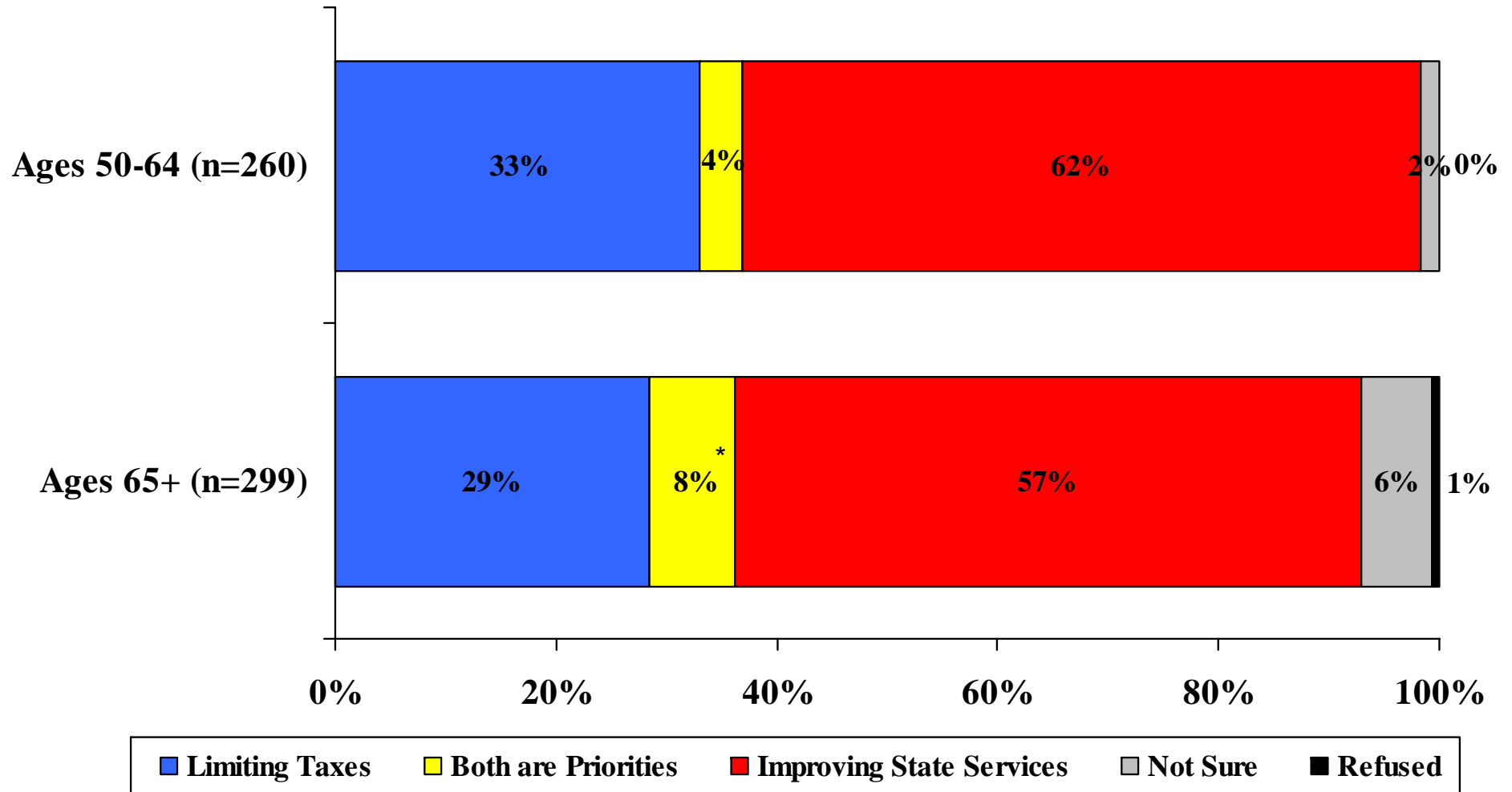
\* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

**Q3a. How much do you trust your local government (includes Towns, Cities, and Counties) to use your tax money effectively and deliver quality state services?**



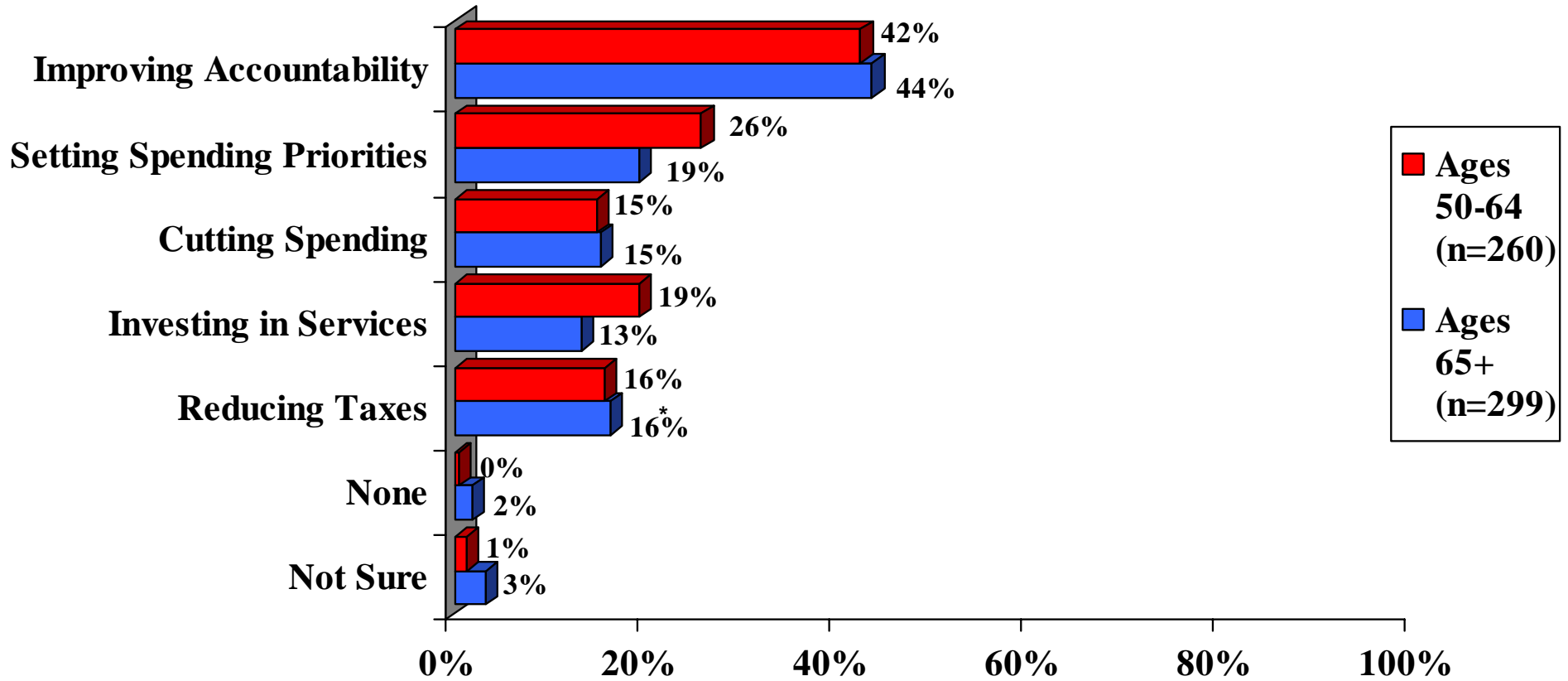
\* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

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

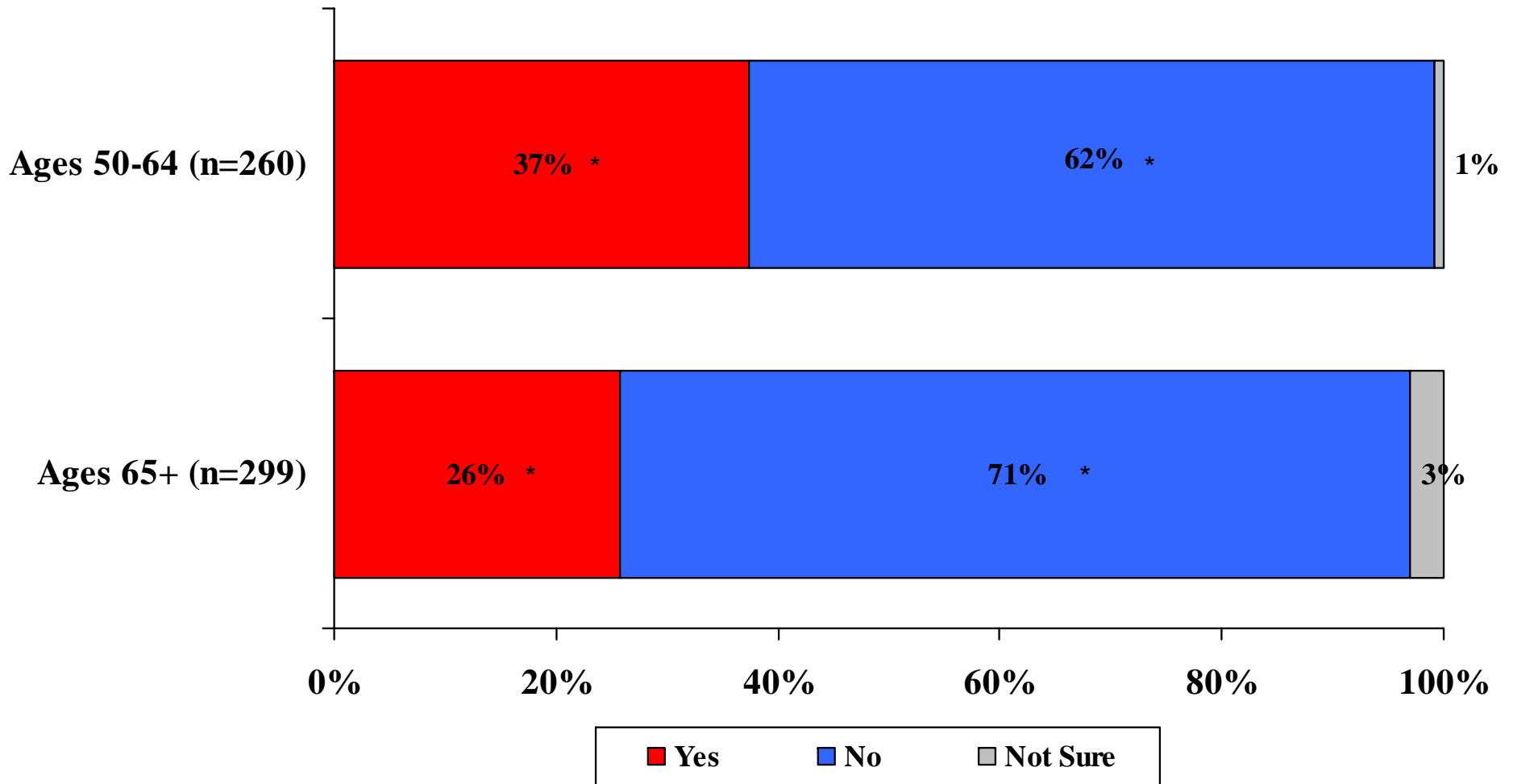


\* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

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

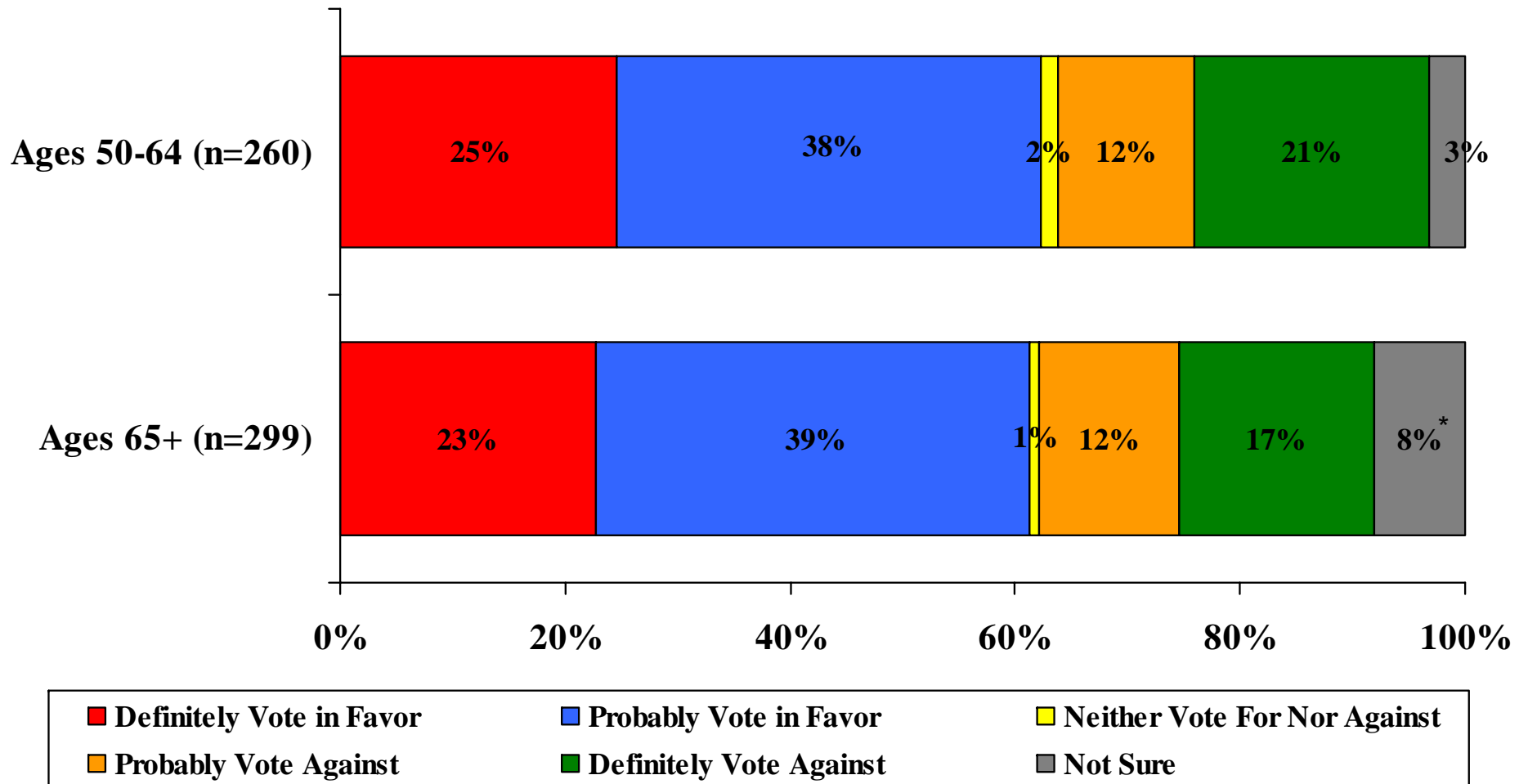


**Q6. Have you seen, read, or heard anything about the Oklahoma Taxpayer Bill of Rights, or TABOR proposal in the last year?**



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

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

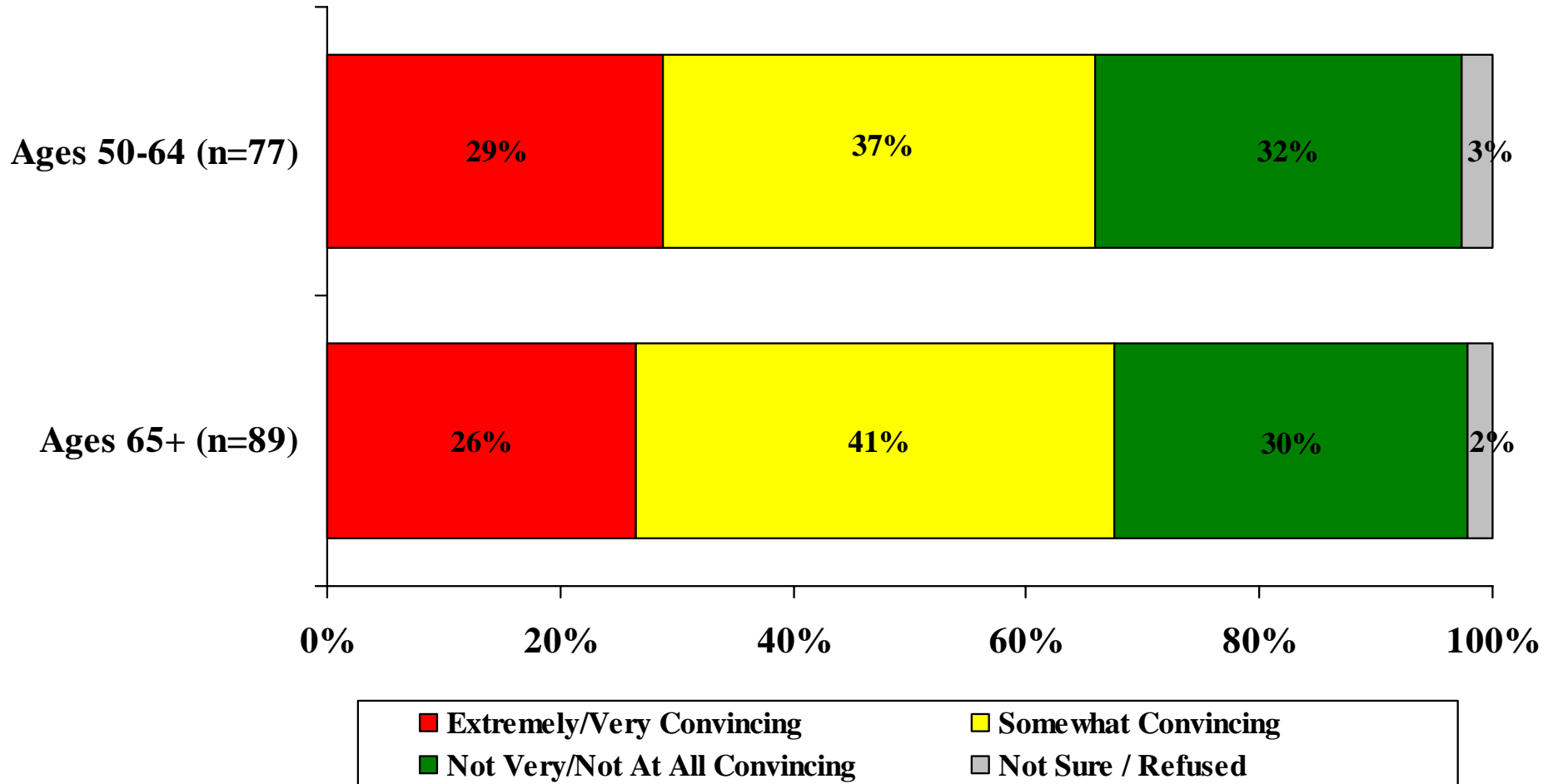


\* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence



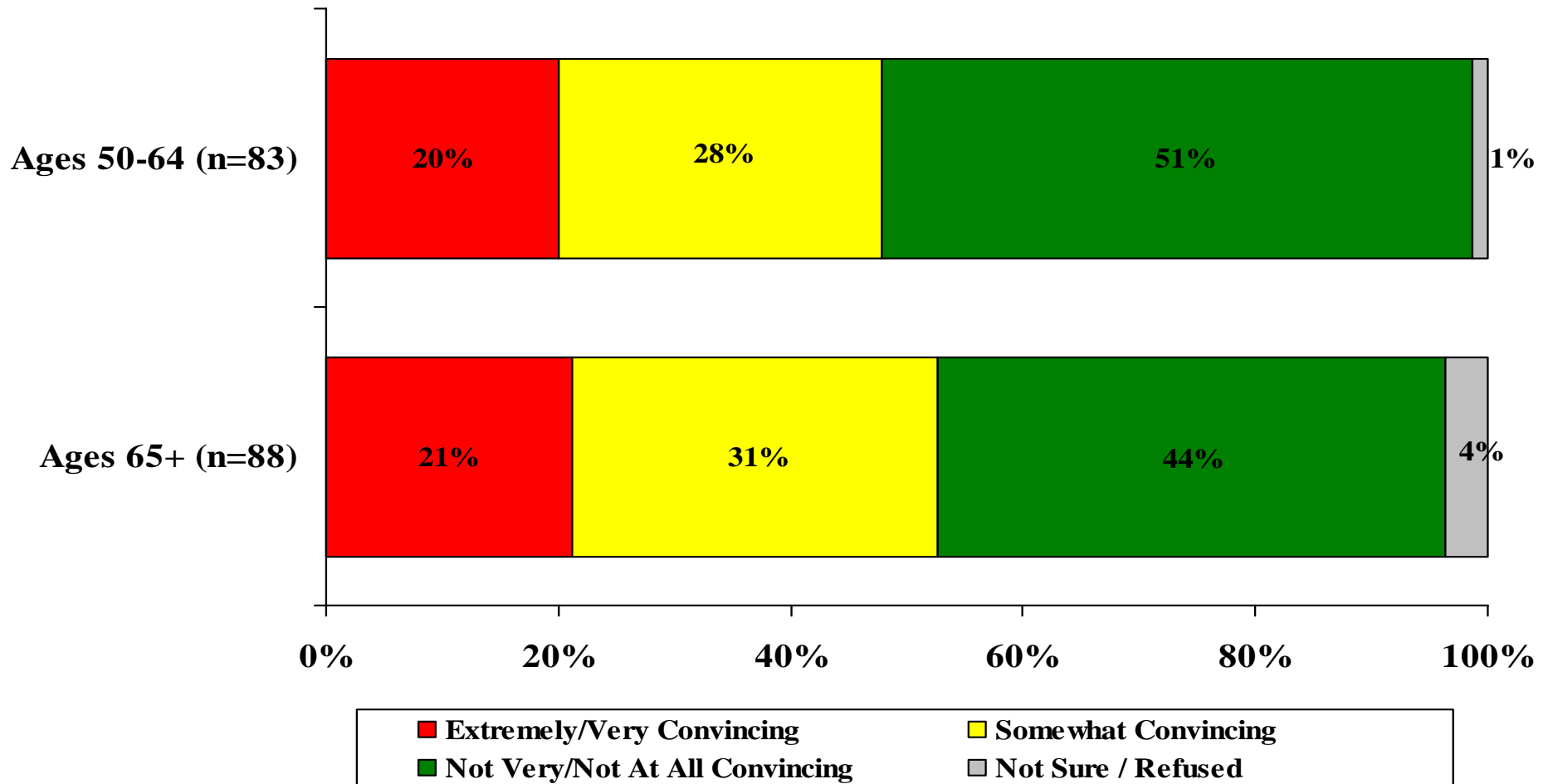
**Q8a1. I'd like you to please tell me whether you find [this] an extremely convincing argument, very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or whether this particular argument is not at all convincing:**

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



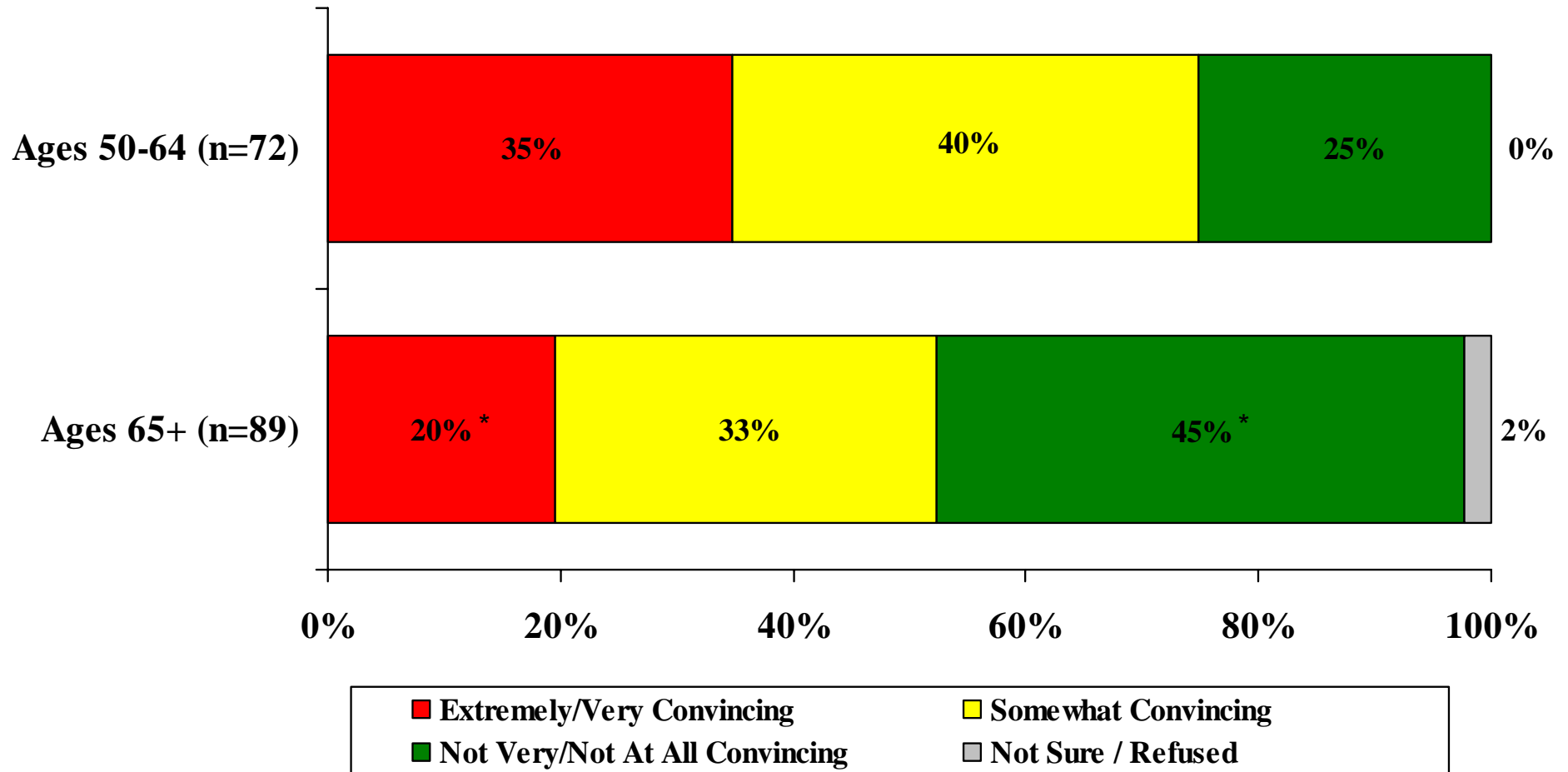
**Q8a2. I'd like you to please tell me whether you find [this] an extremely convincing argument, very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or whether this particular argument is not at all convincing:**

***Opponents of TABOR say the state already has a balanced budget requirement, voters already can control state government actions at the ballot box, and that TABOR would decrease the quality of life in Oklahoma, 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:**

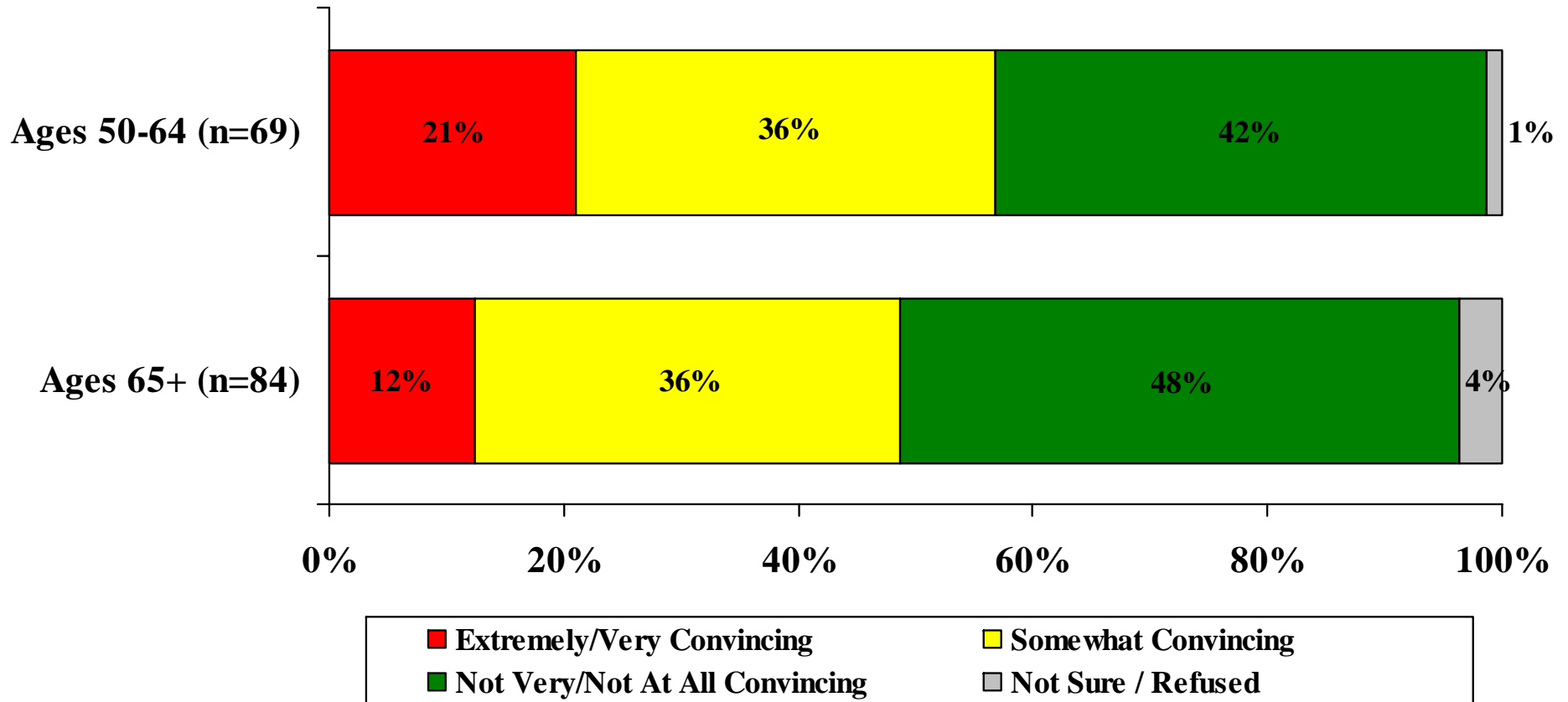
***Supporters of TABOR say that it would help the Oklahoma economy by returning money to taxpayers through tax rebates and tax cuts.***



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

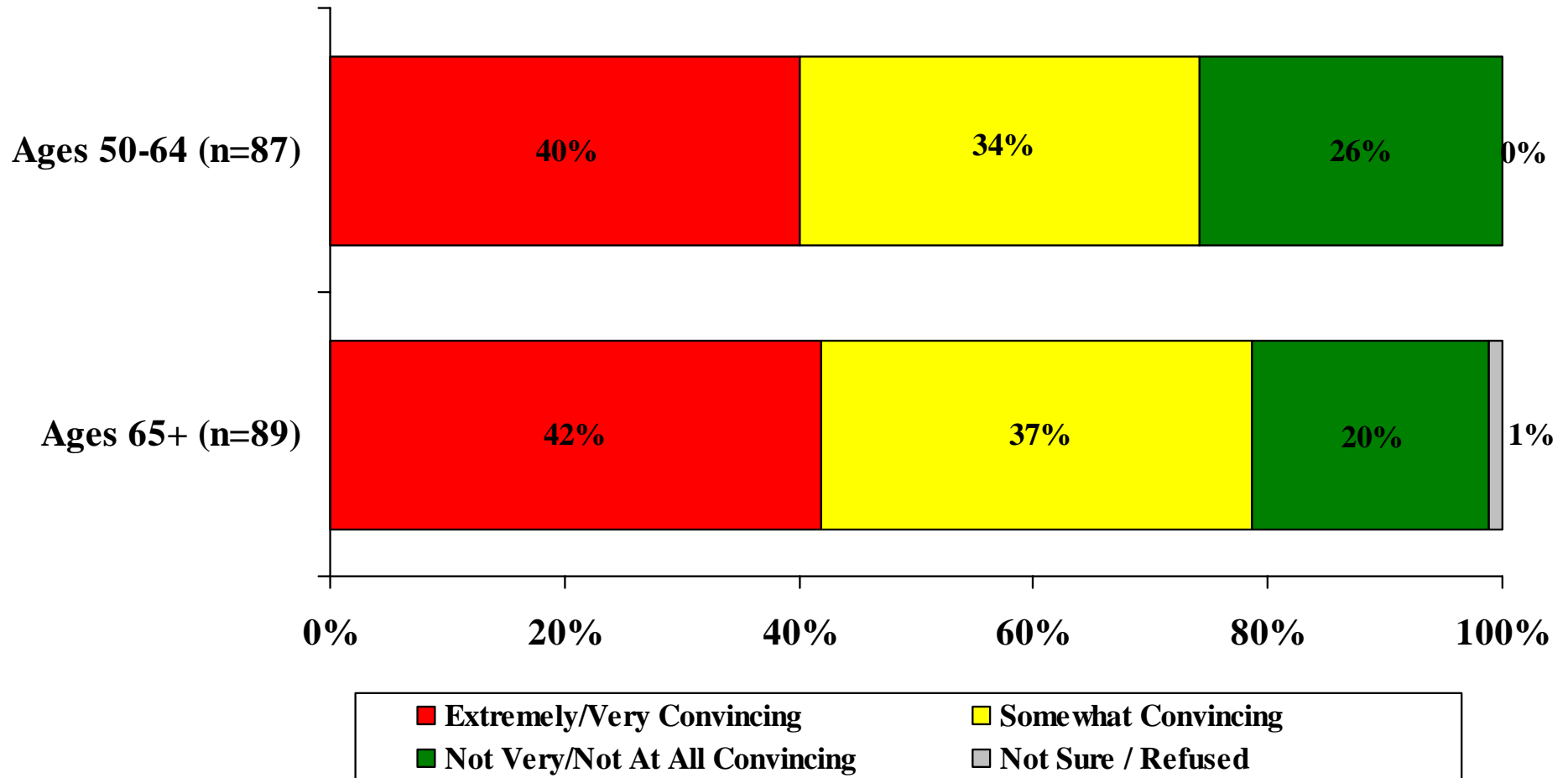
**Q8b2. I'd like you to please tell me whether you find [this] an extremely convincing argument, very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or whether this particular argument is not at all convincing:**

***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.***



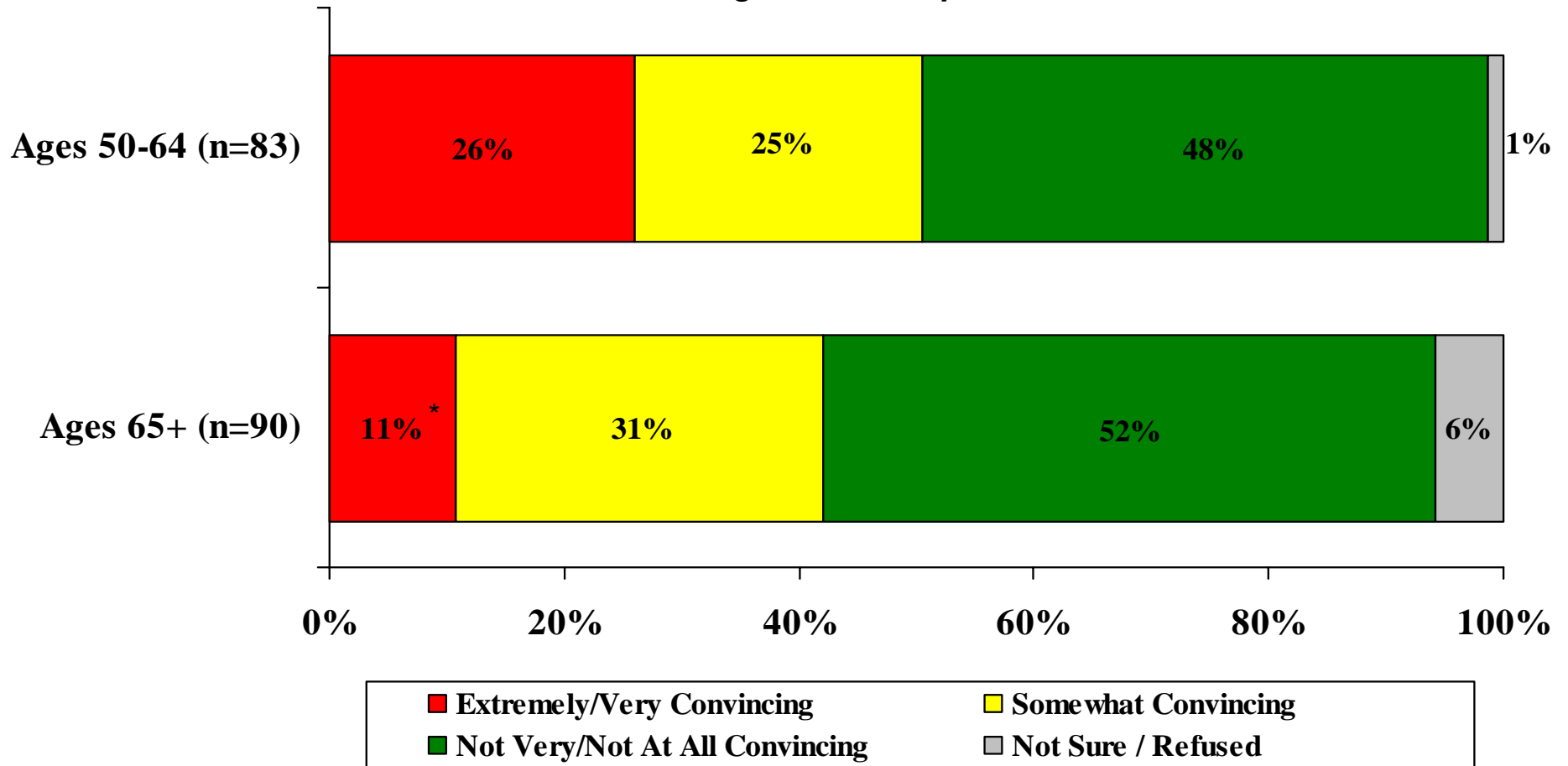
**Q8c1. I'd like you to please tell me whether you find [this] an extremely convincing argument, very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or whether this particular argument is not at all convincing:**

***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.***



**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:**

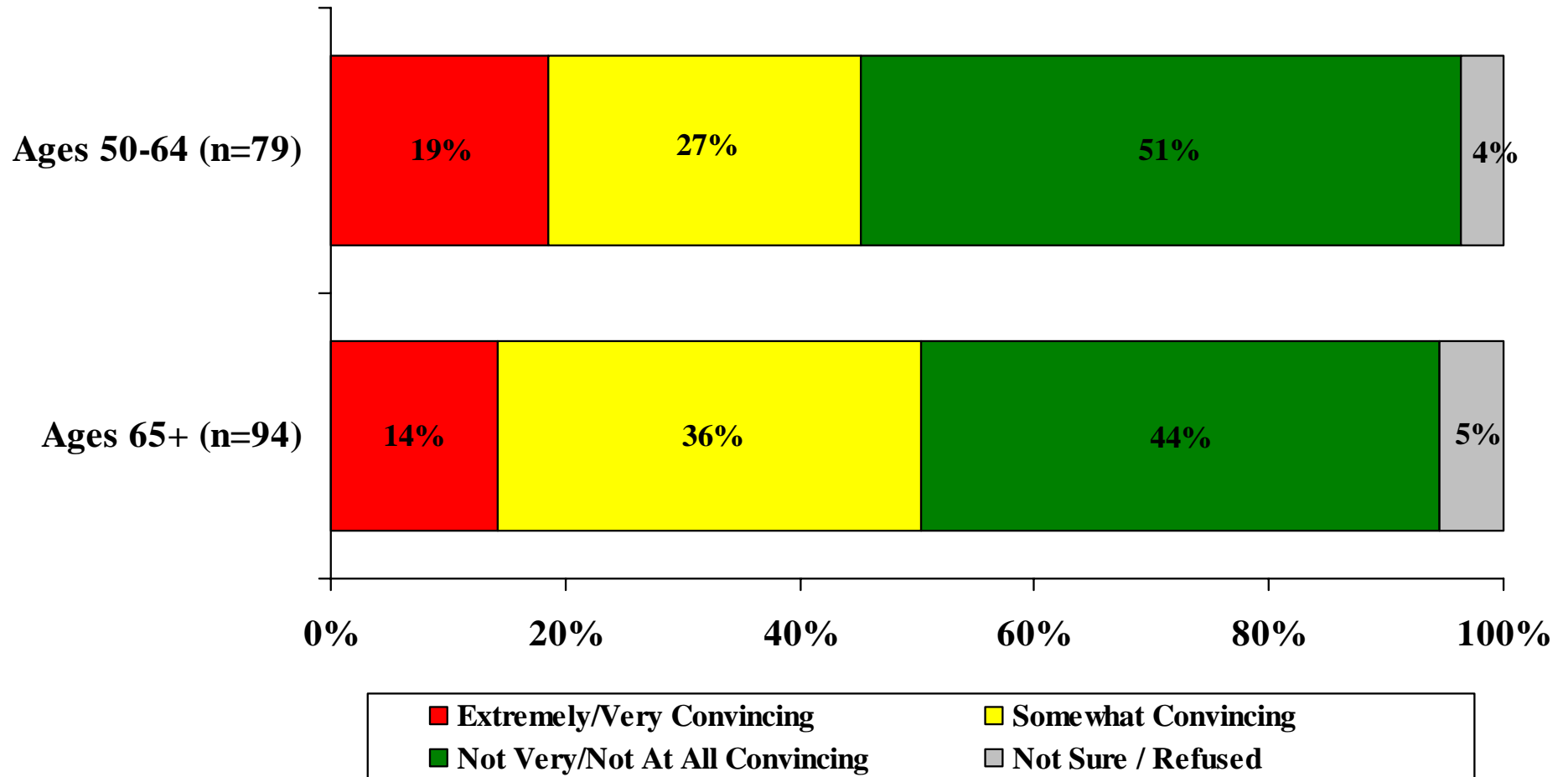
***Opponents of TABOR say that it allows lawmakers to shirk their responsibility for managing the state budget, and, by making voters decide on every single tax increase that the state may need, ties up the budget process and creates gridlock, in addition to expecting taxpayers to become budget and tax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



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

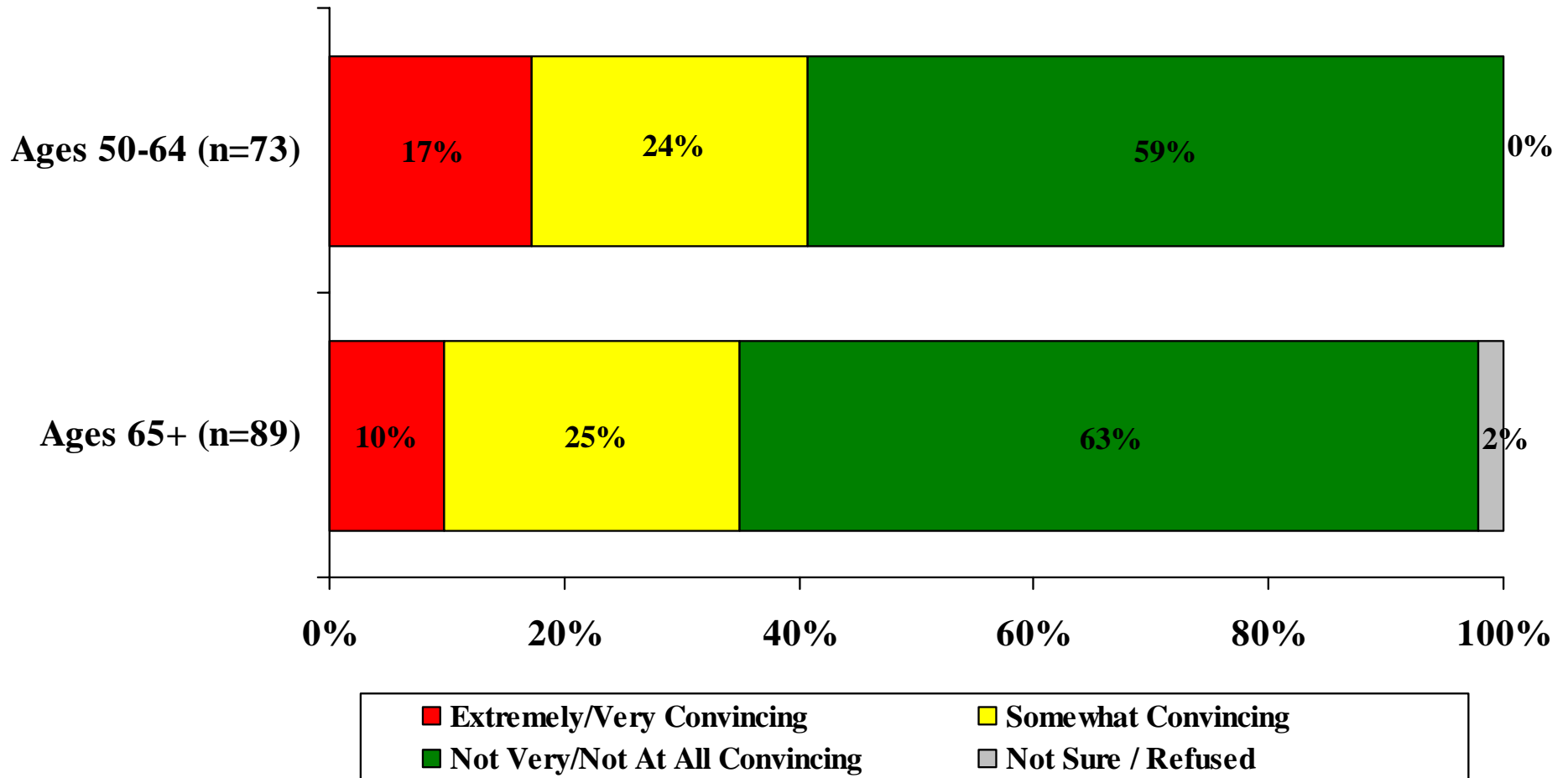
**Q8d1. I'd like you to please tell me whether you find [this] an extremely convincing argument, very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or whether this particular argument is not at all convincing:**

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



**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:**

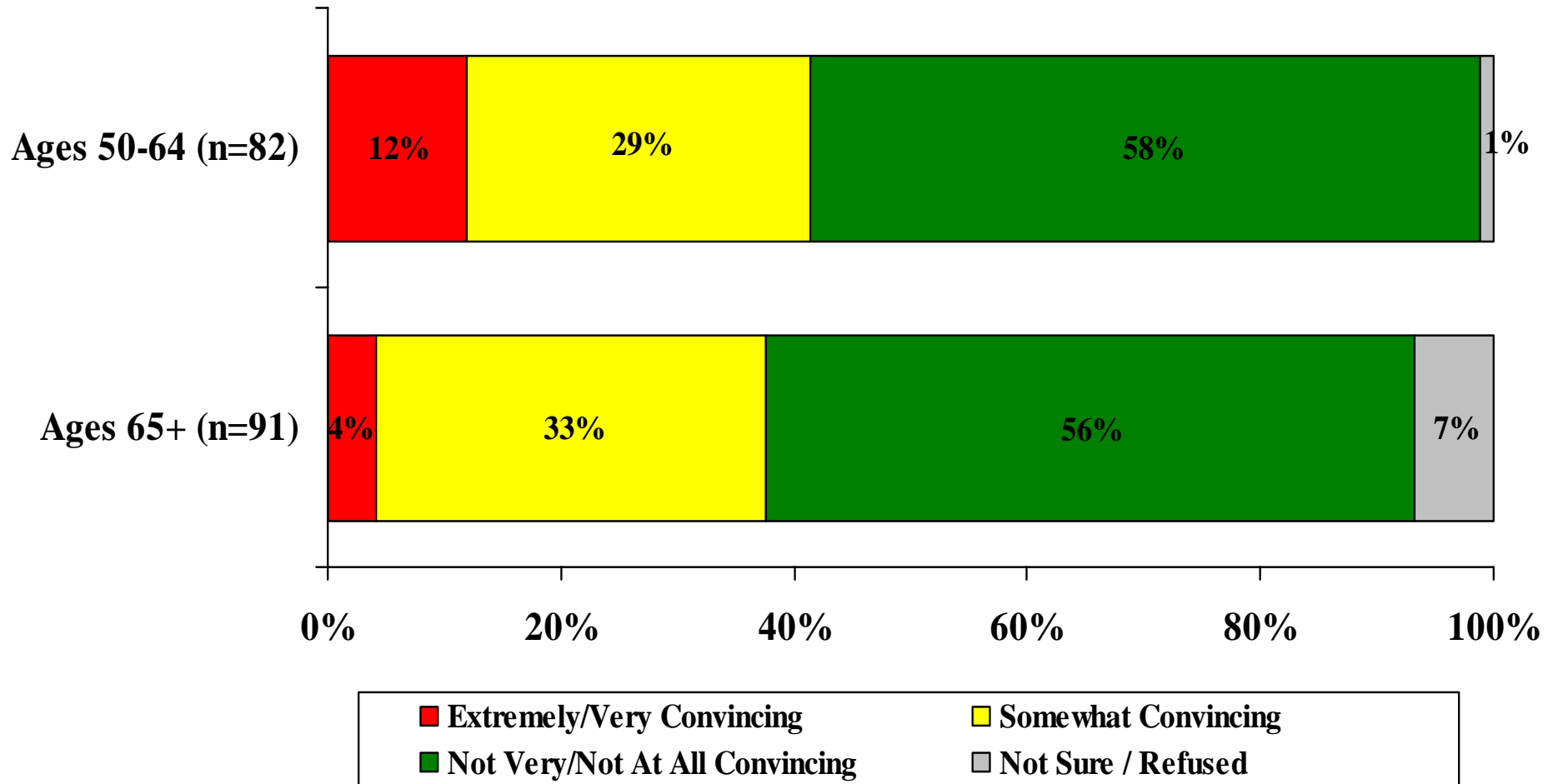
***Opponents of TABOR say that it would cause businesses to leave or prevent them from relocating to Oklahoma because the declining quality of life would drive desirable job applicants out of the state.***





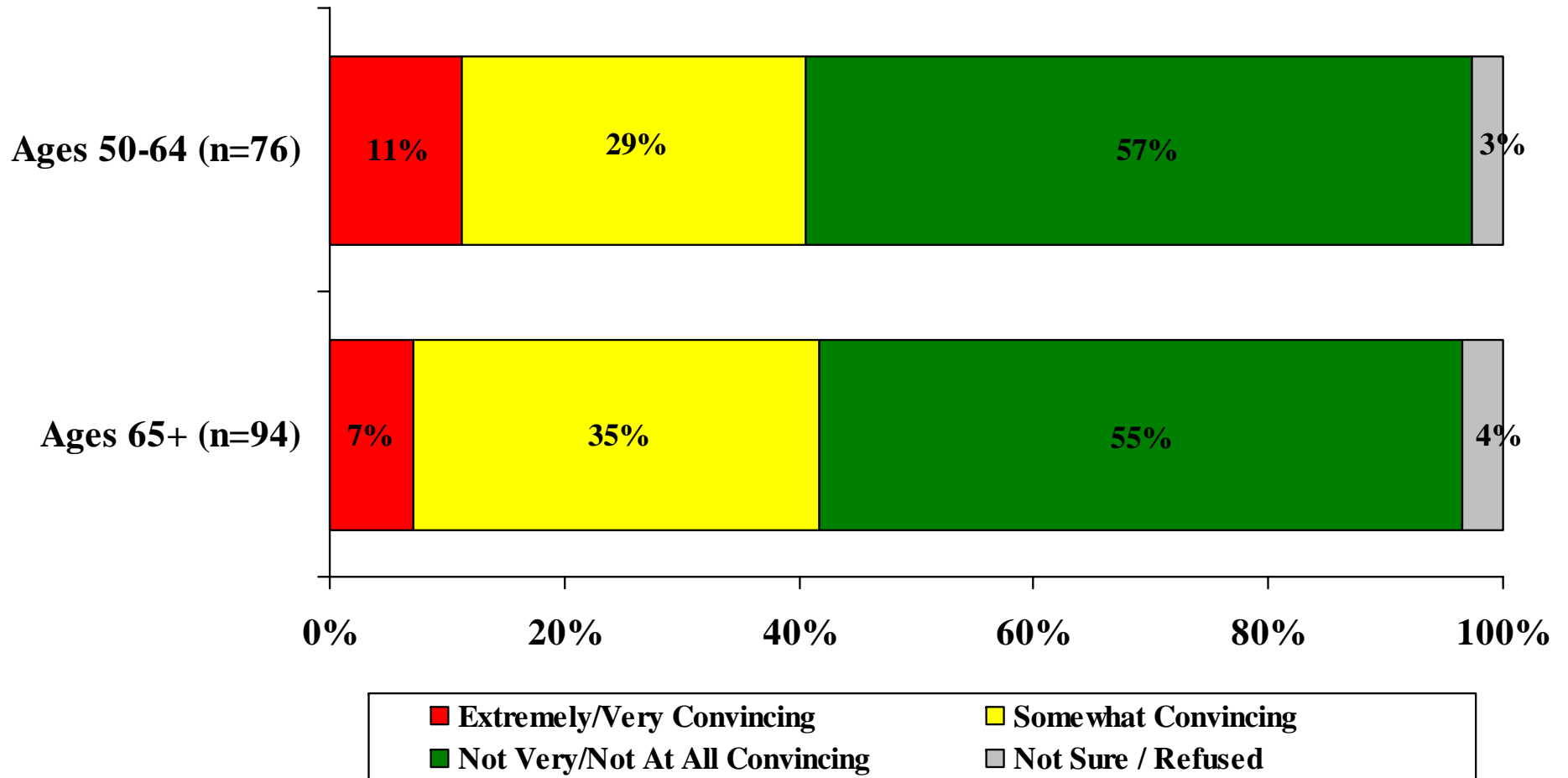
**Q8e1. I'd like you to please tell me whether you find [this] an extremely convincing argument, very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or whether this particular argument is not at all convincing:**

***Supporters of TABOR say that it would allow citizens to sue state government if they believe TABOR limits are not being met.***

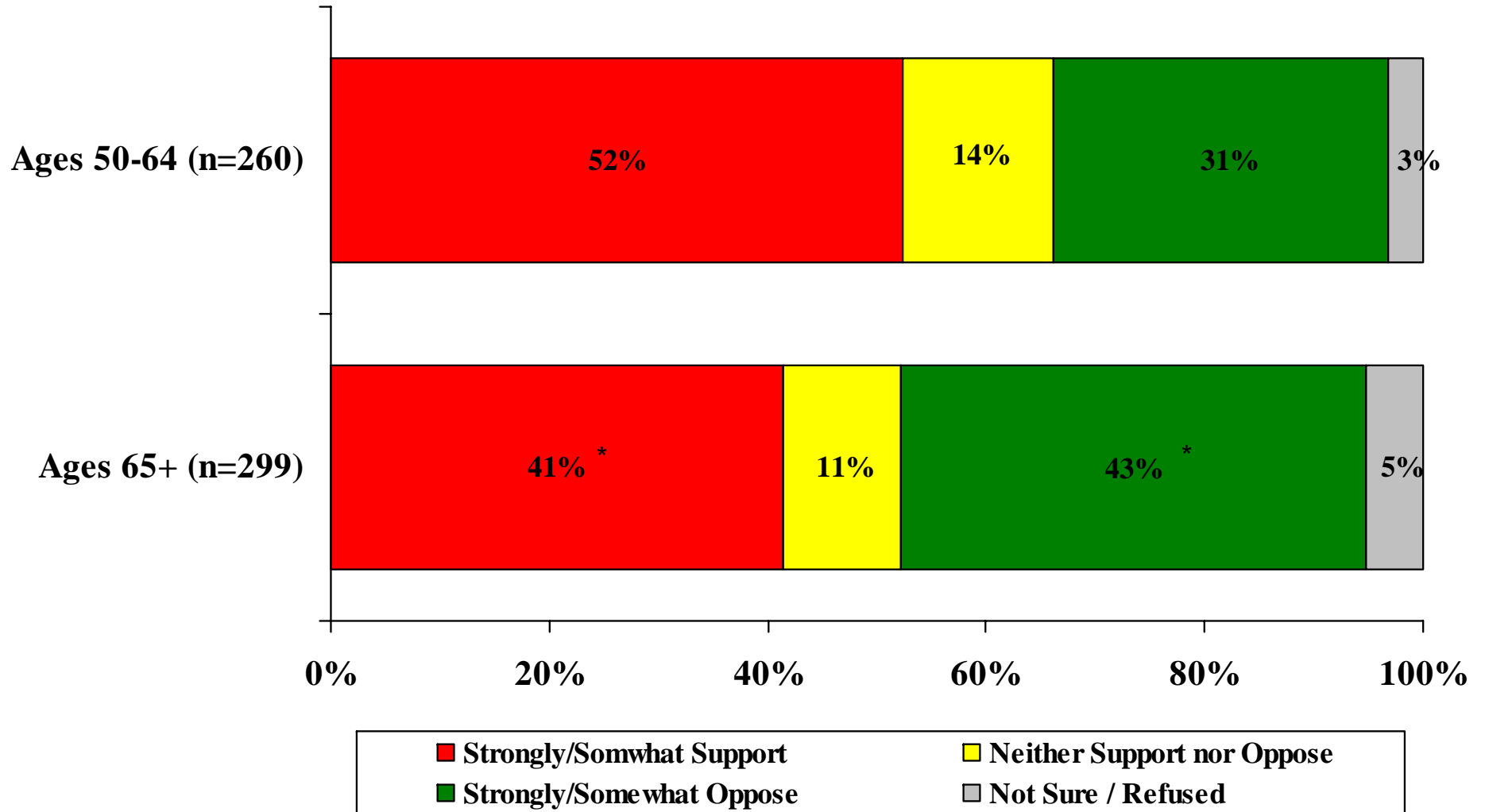


**Q8e2. I'd like you to please tell me whether you find [this] an extremely convincing argument, very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or whether this particular argument is not at all convincing:**

***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.***

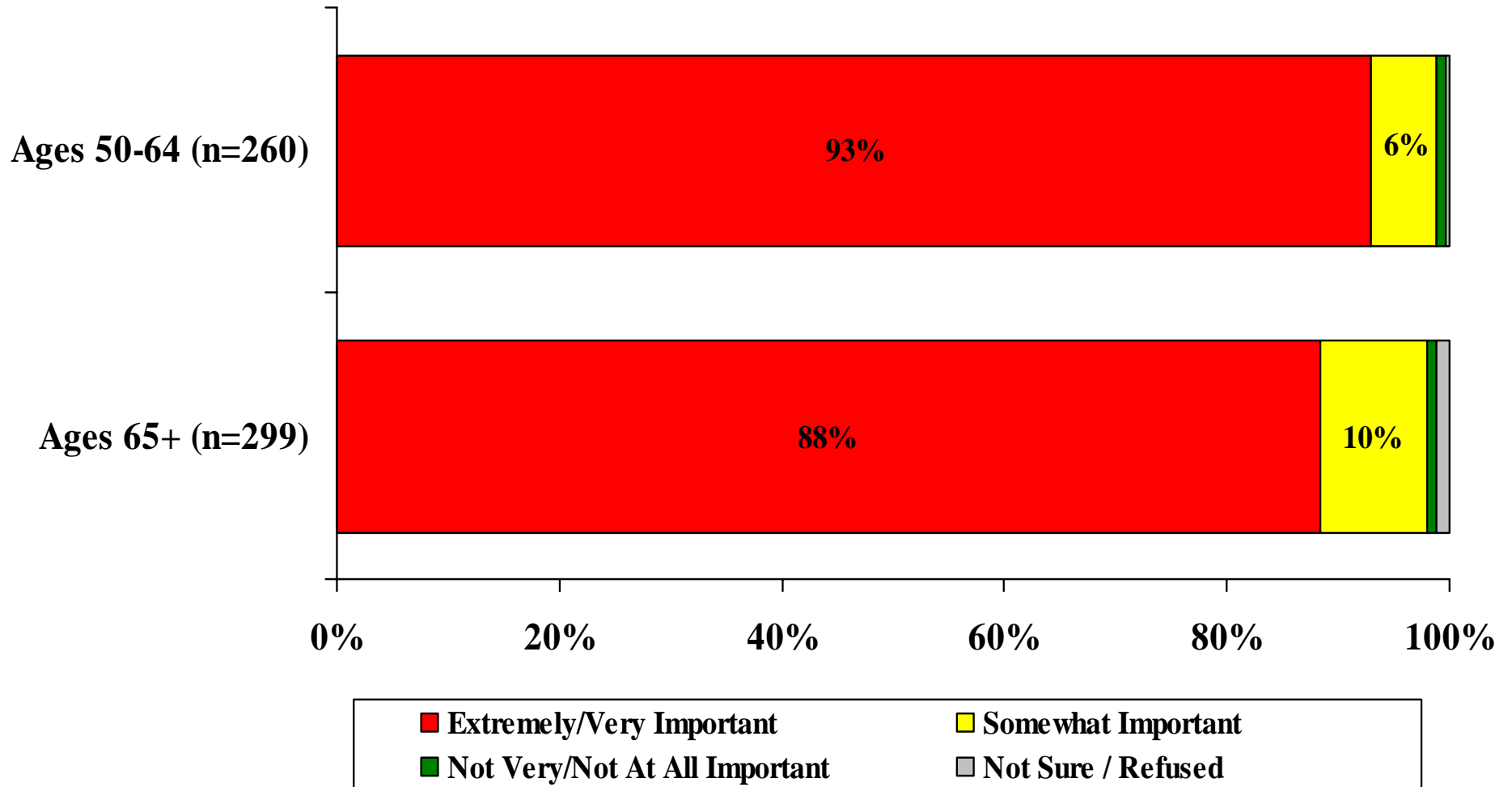


**Q9. Having heard arguments both for and against TABOR, now how strongly do you support or oppose TABOR in Oklahoma?**

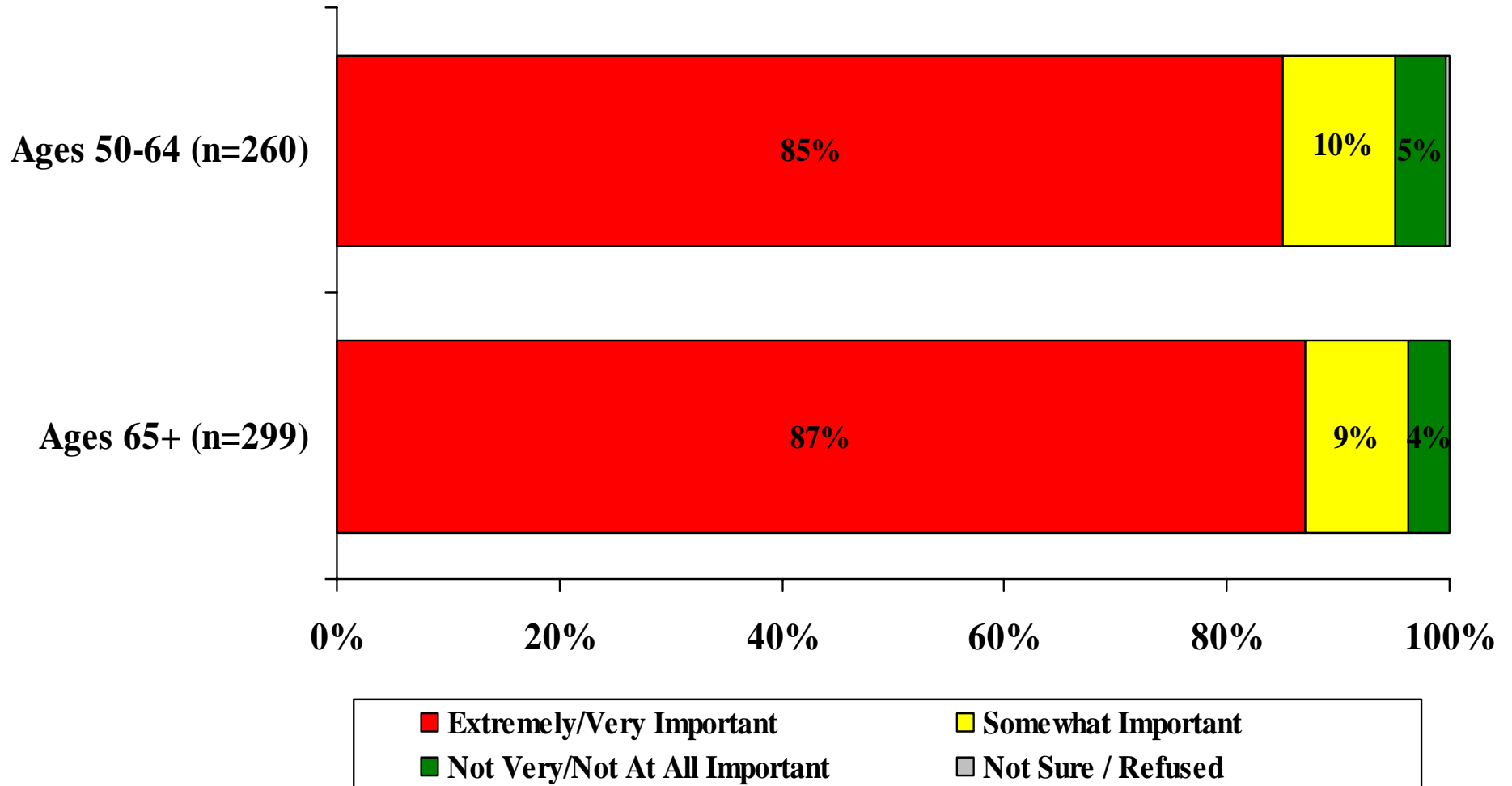


• Statistically significant difference from Members Age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

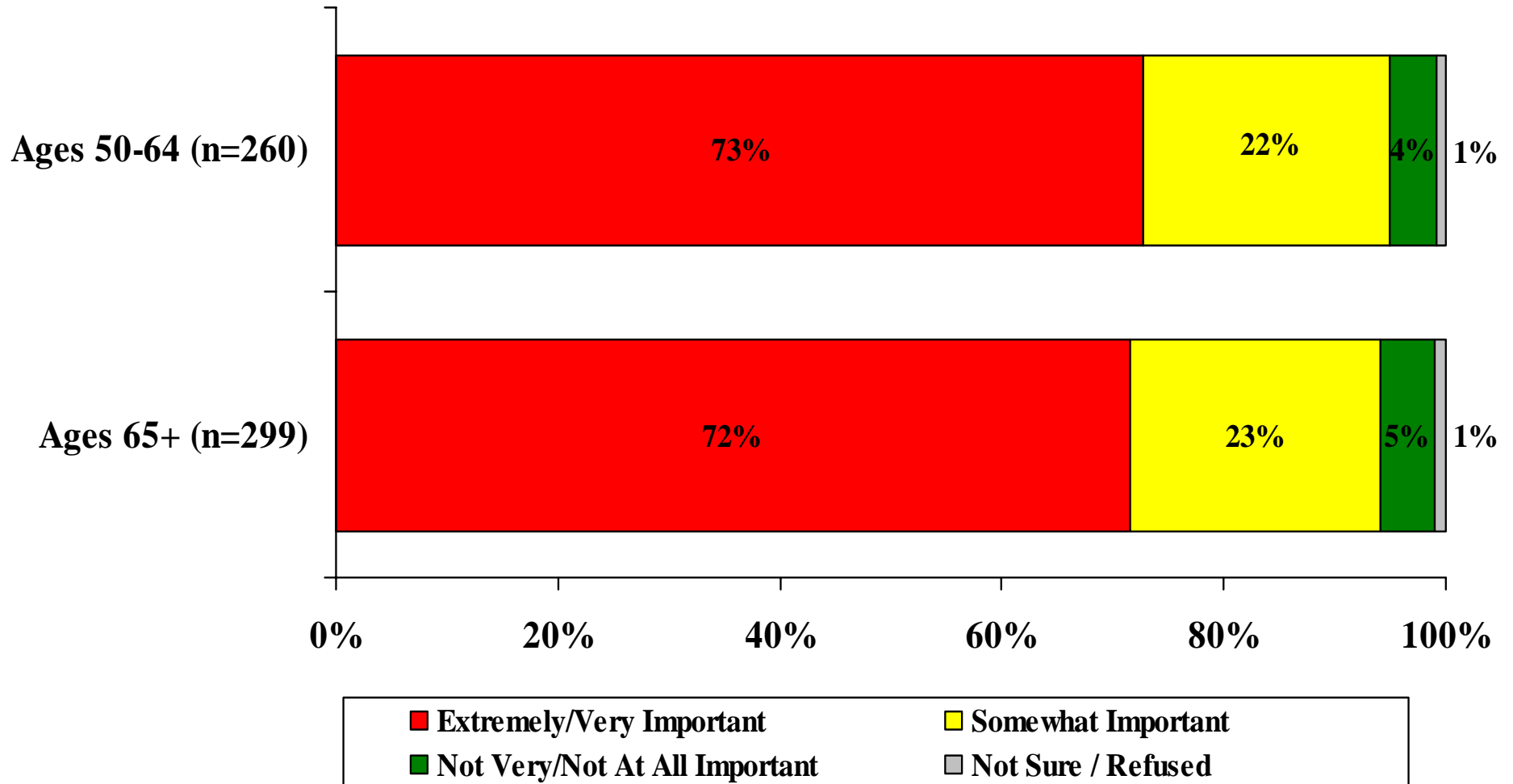
**Q10b. Now, I am going to ask you about state and local services Oklahoma provides. How important is police protection and public safety to you? Is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important?**



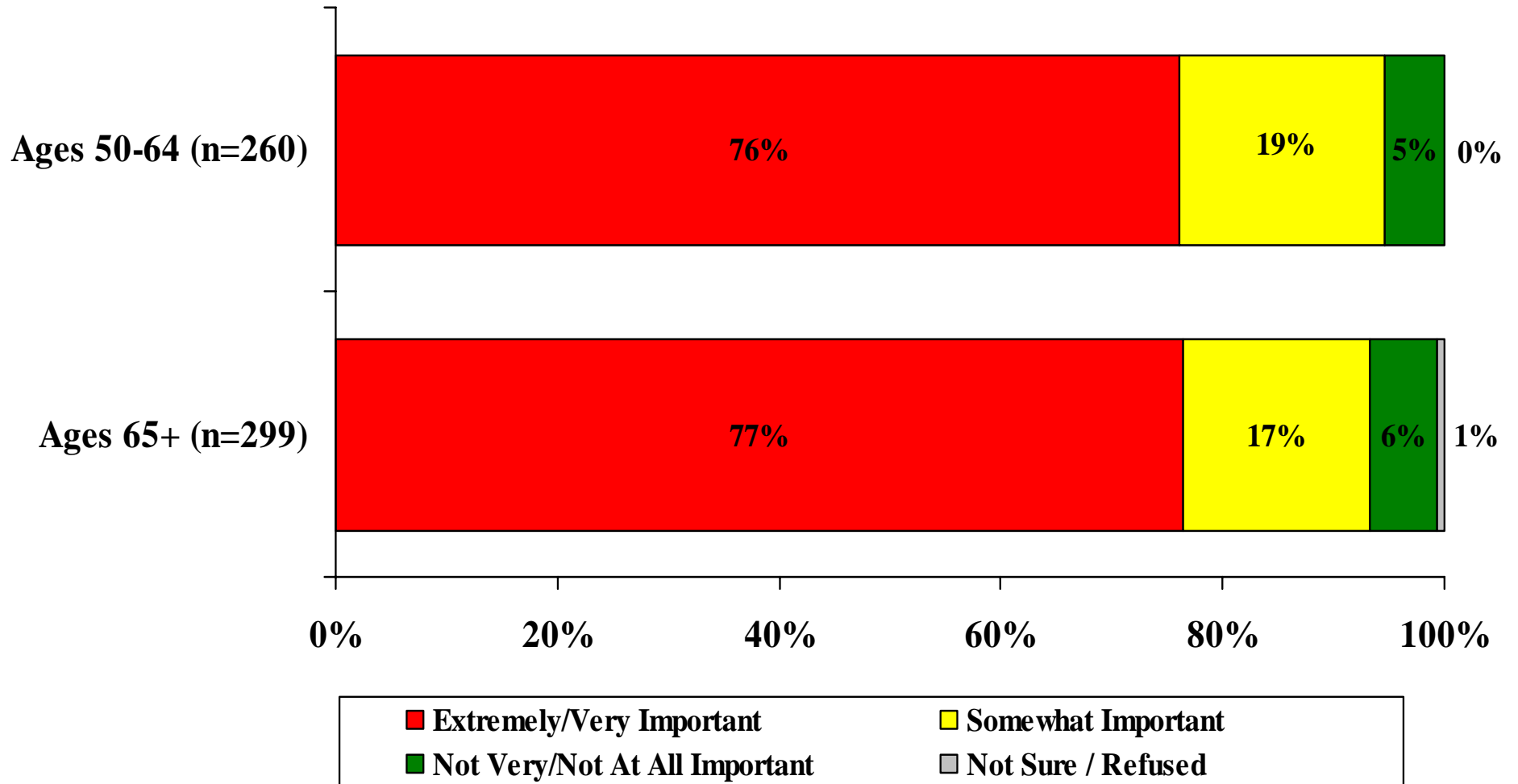
**Q10e. Now, I am going to ask you about state and local services Oklahoma provides. How important is K-12 public school education to you? Is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important?**



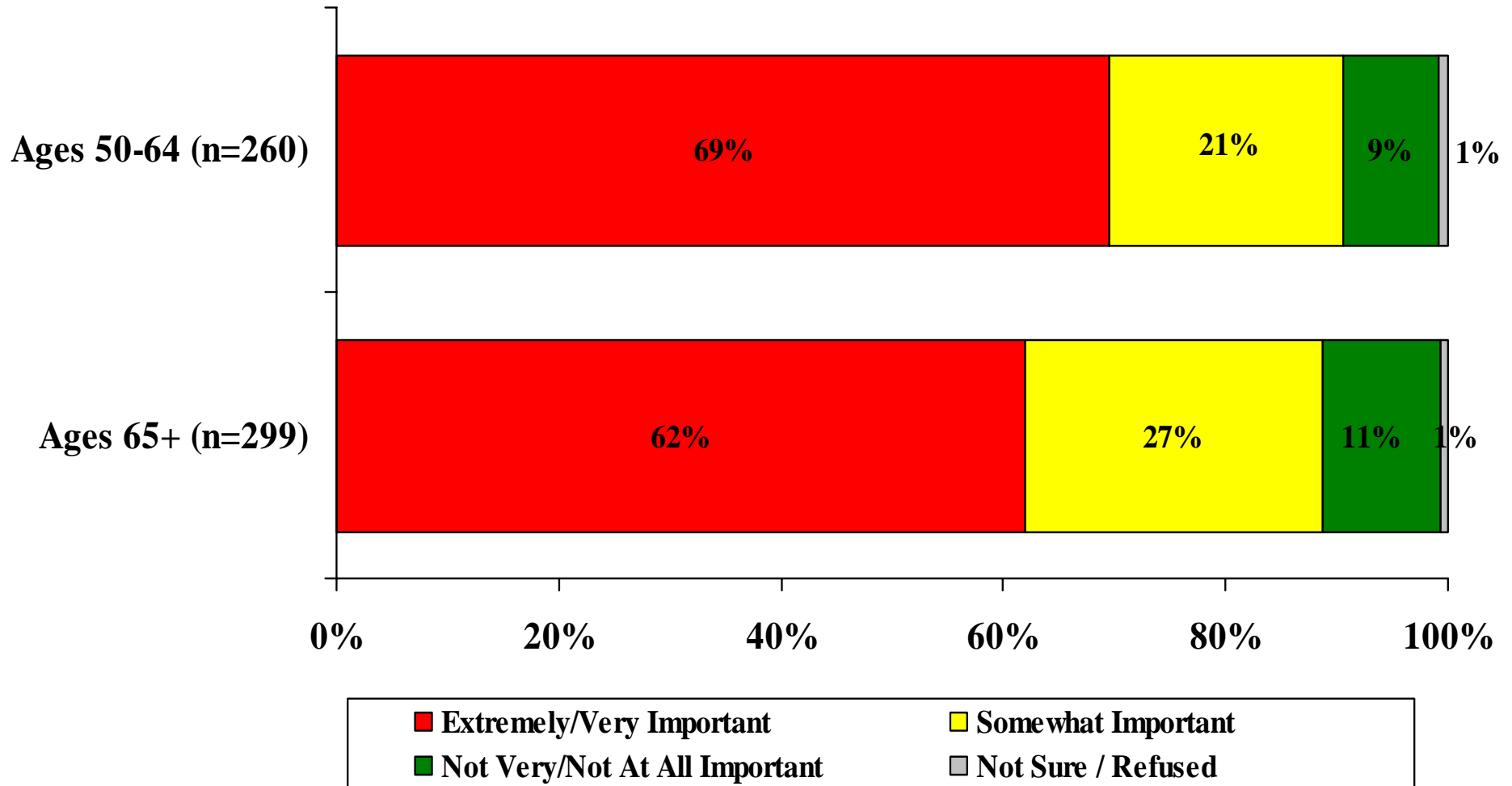
**Q10f. Now, I am going to ask you about state and local services Oklahoma provides. How important is healthcare for low income families and their children to you? Is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important?**



**Q10g. Now, I am going to ask you about state and local services Oklahoma 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?**

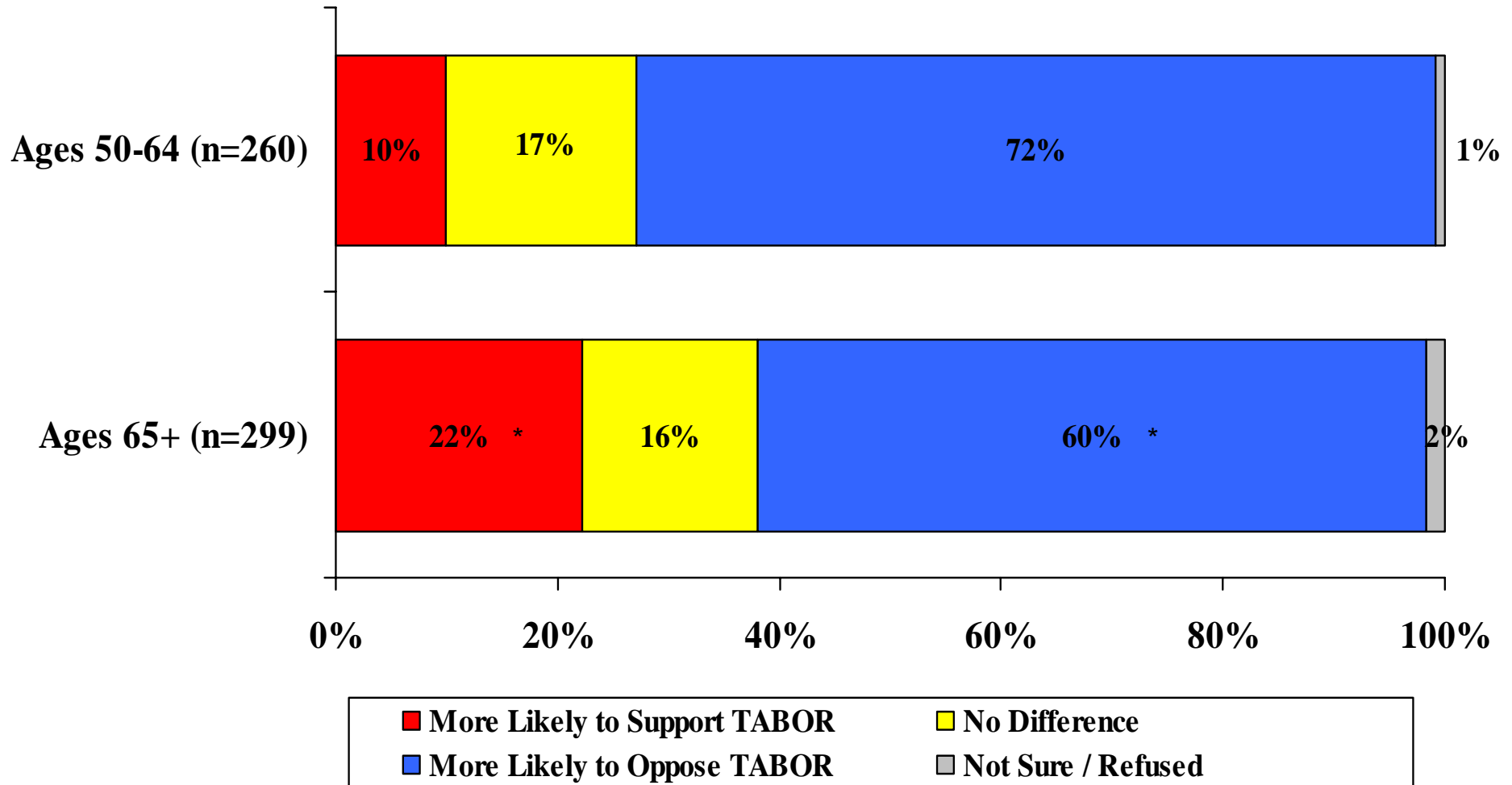


**Q10i. Now, I am going to ask you about state and local services Oklahoma provides. How important are senior state services including home delivered meals, low-income energy assistance, & senior transportation to you? Are they extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not very important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



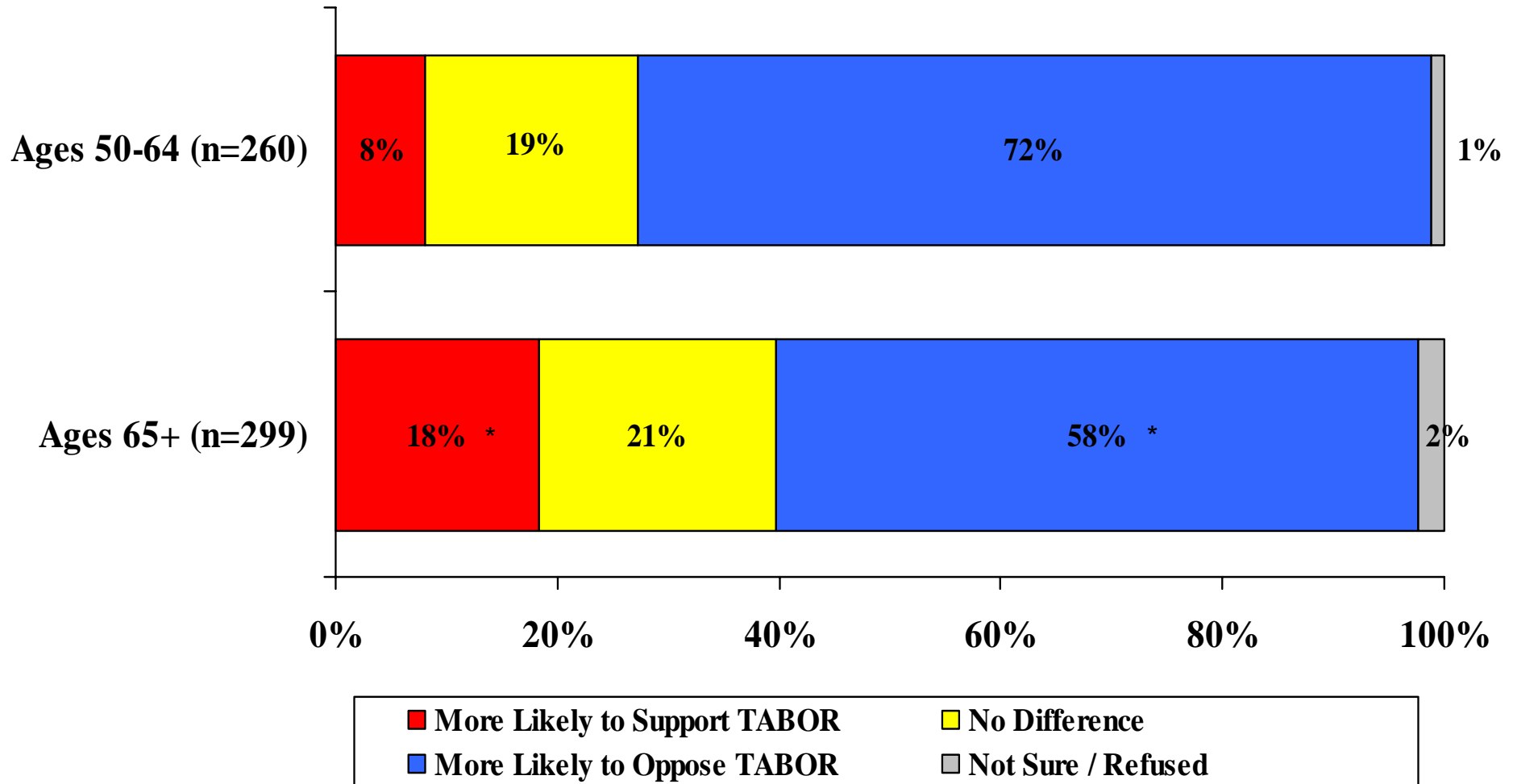


**Q11b. If Oklahoma TABOR cut state funding for police protection and public safety, would you be more likely to support TABOR, more likely to oppose TABOR, or would it not make a difference?**



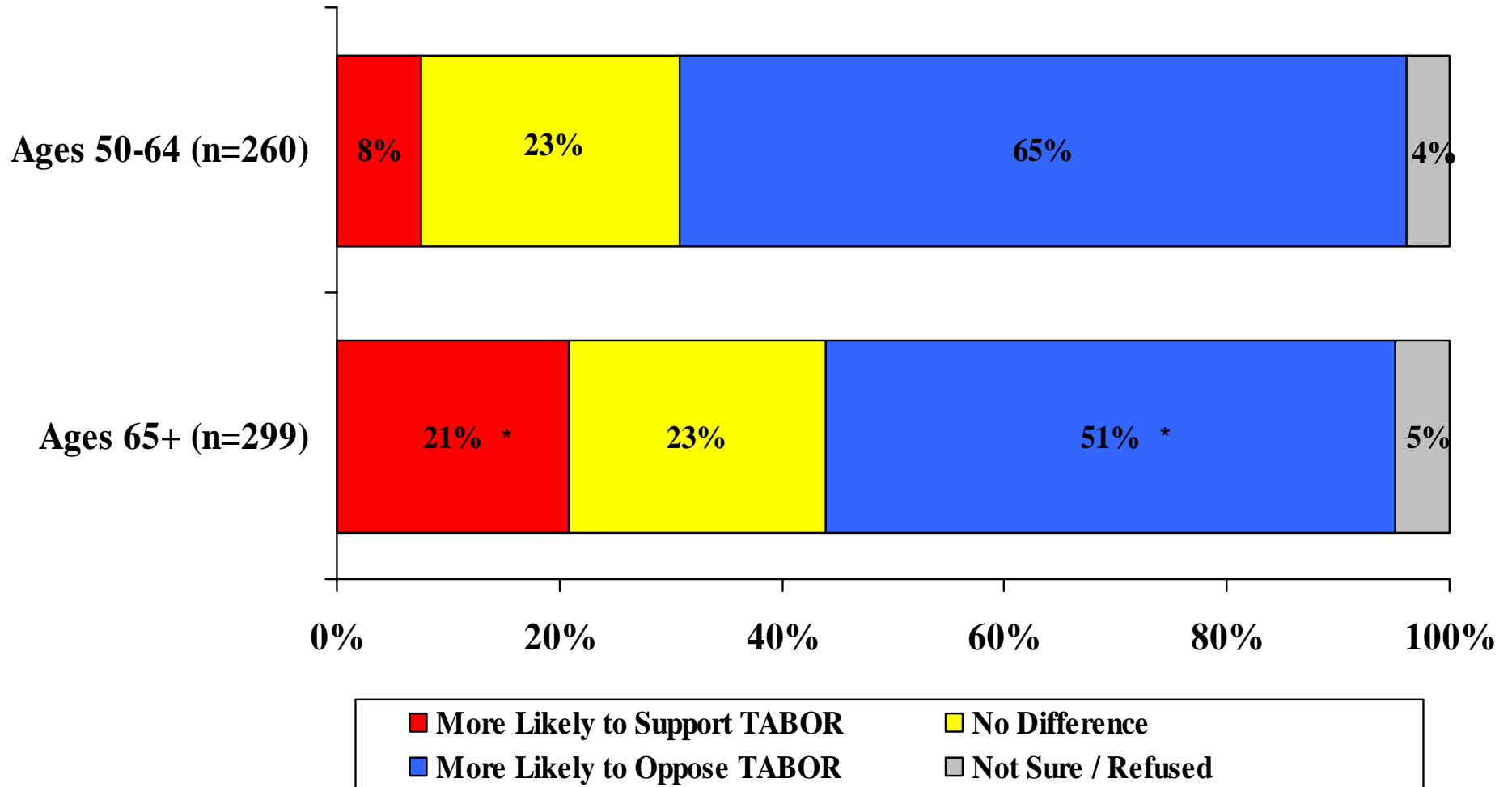
\* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

**Q11e. If Oklahoma 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?**



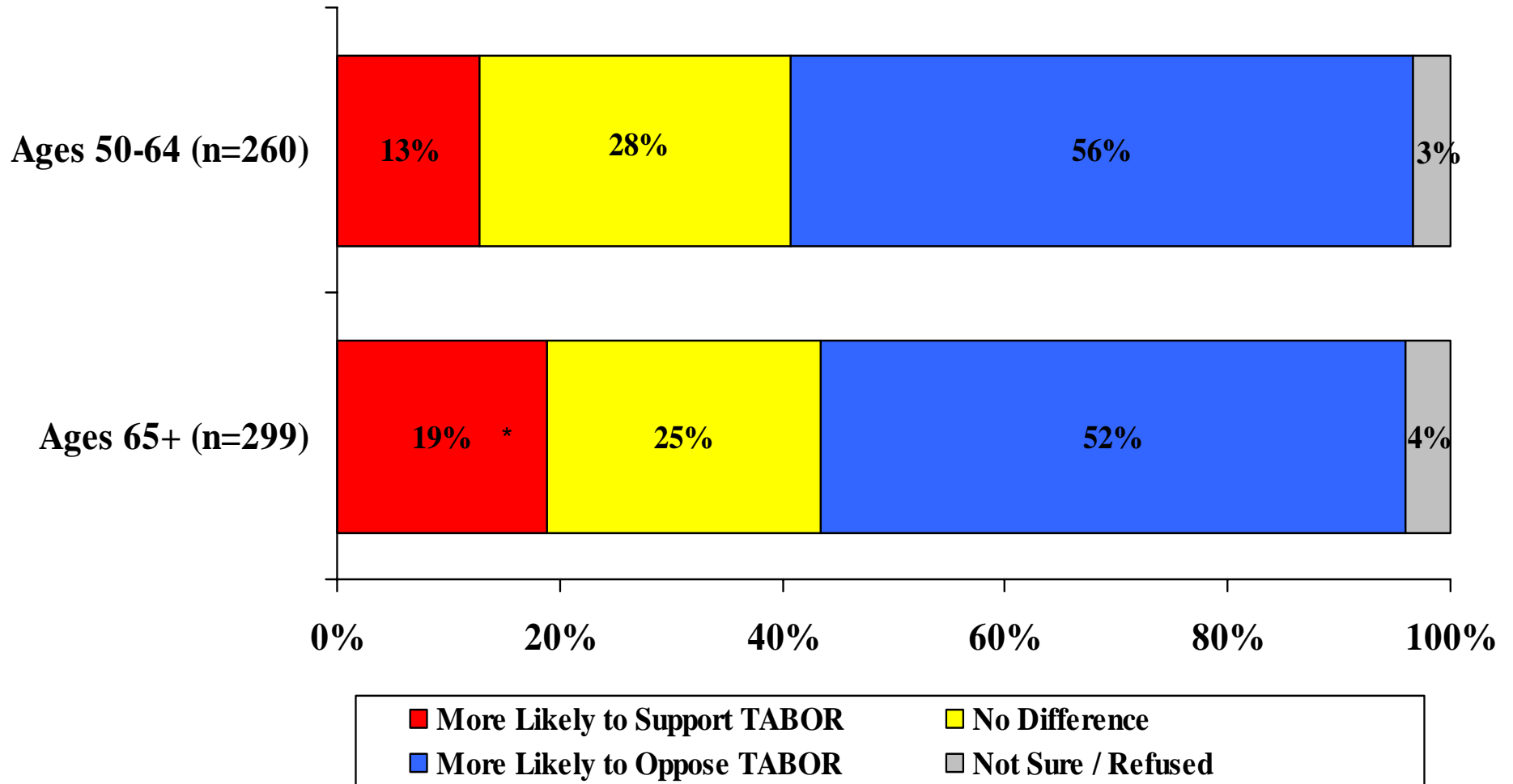
\* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

**Q11f. If Oklahoma 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?**



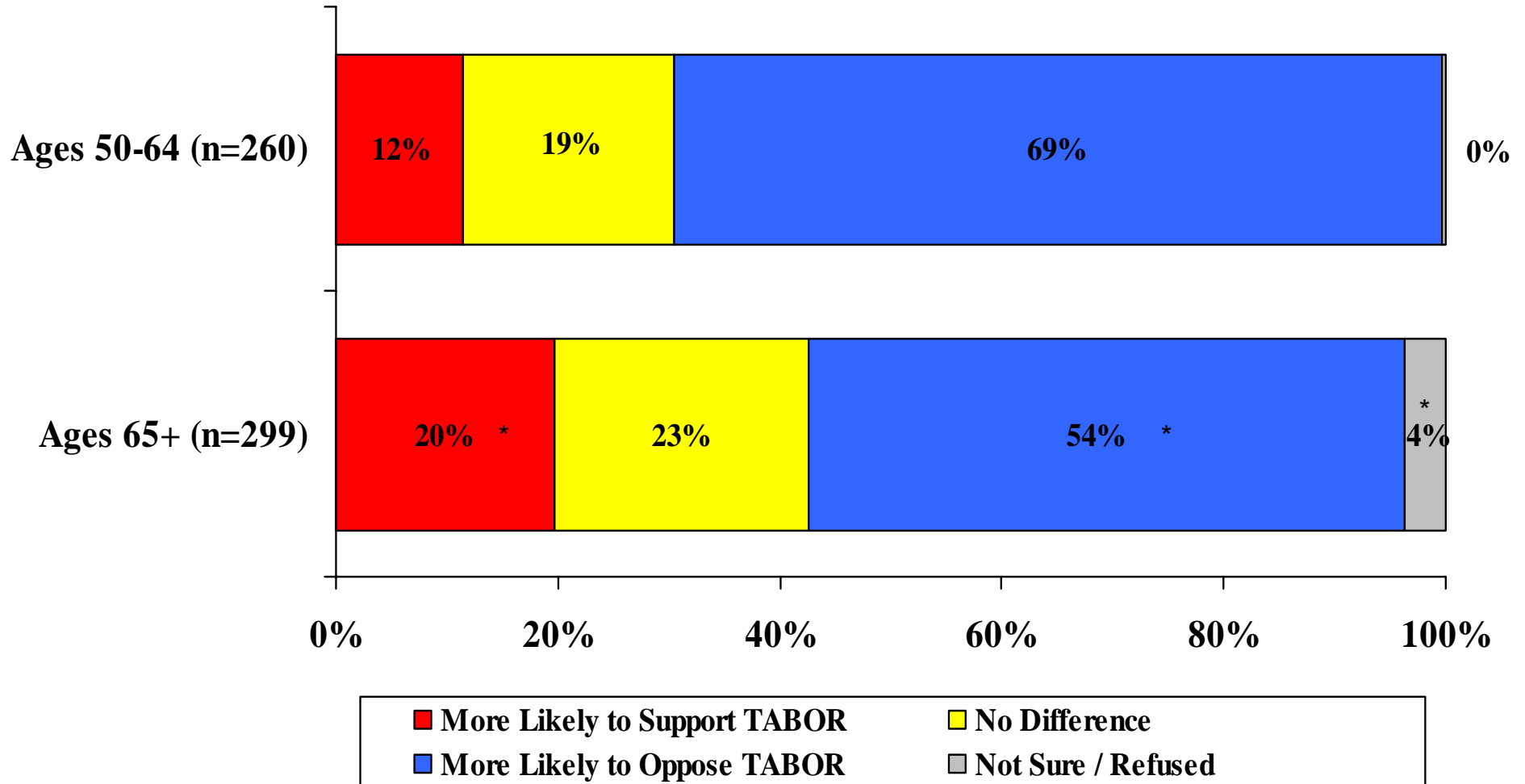
\* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

**Q11g. If Oklahoma 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?**



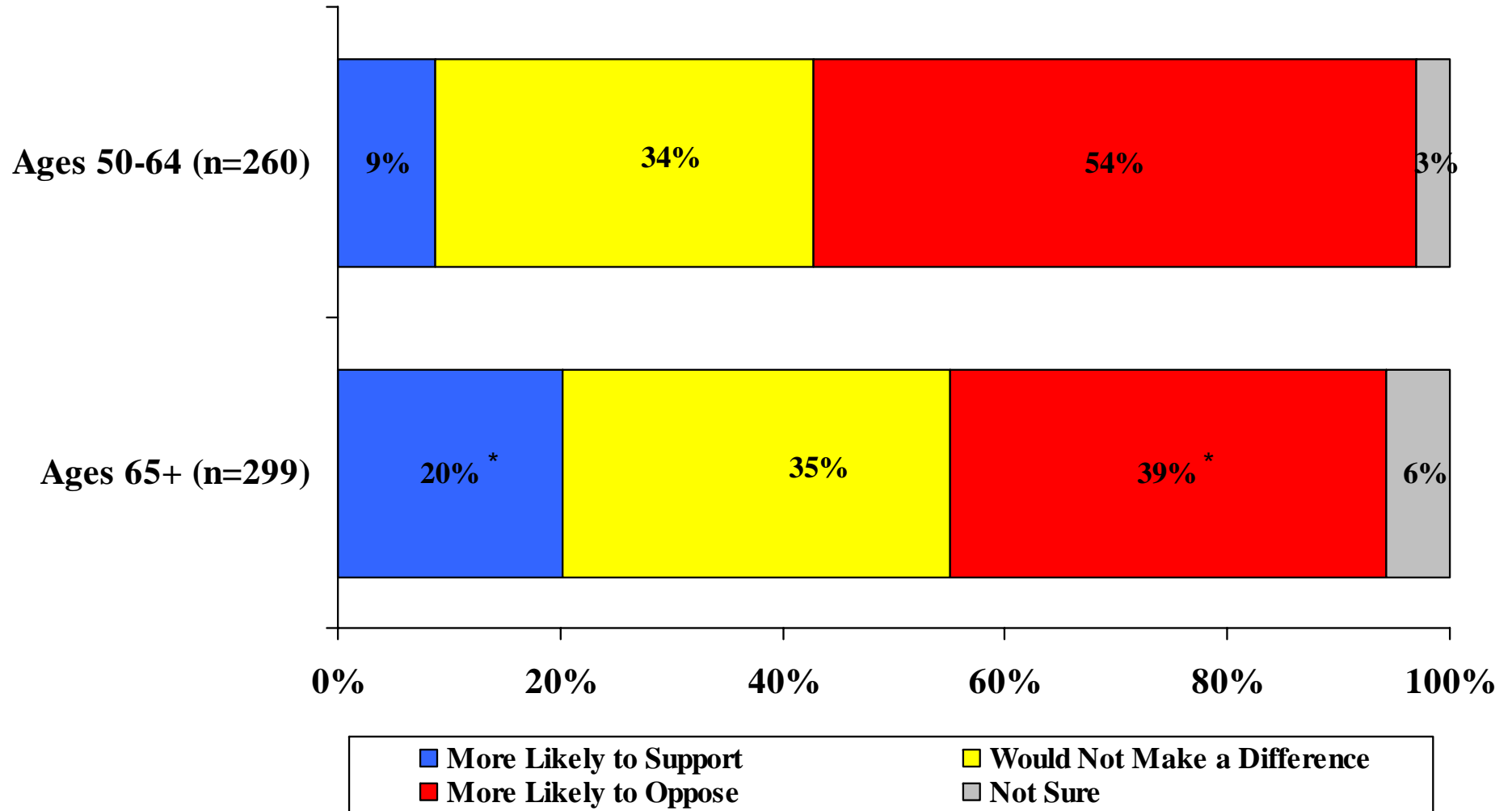
\* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

**Q11i. If Oklahoma 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?**



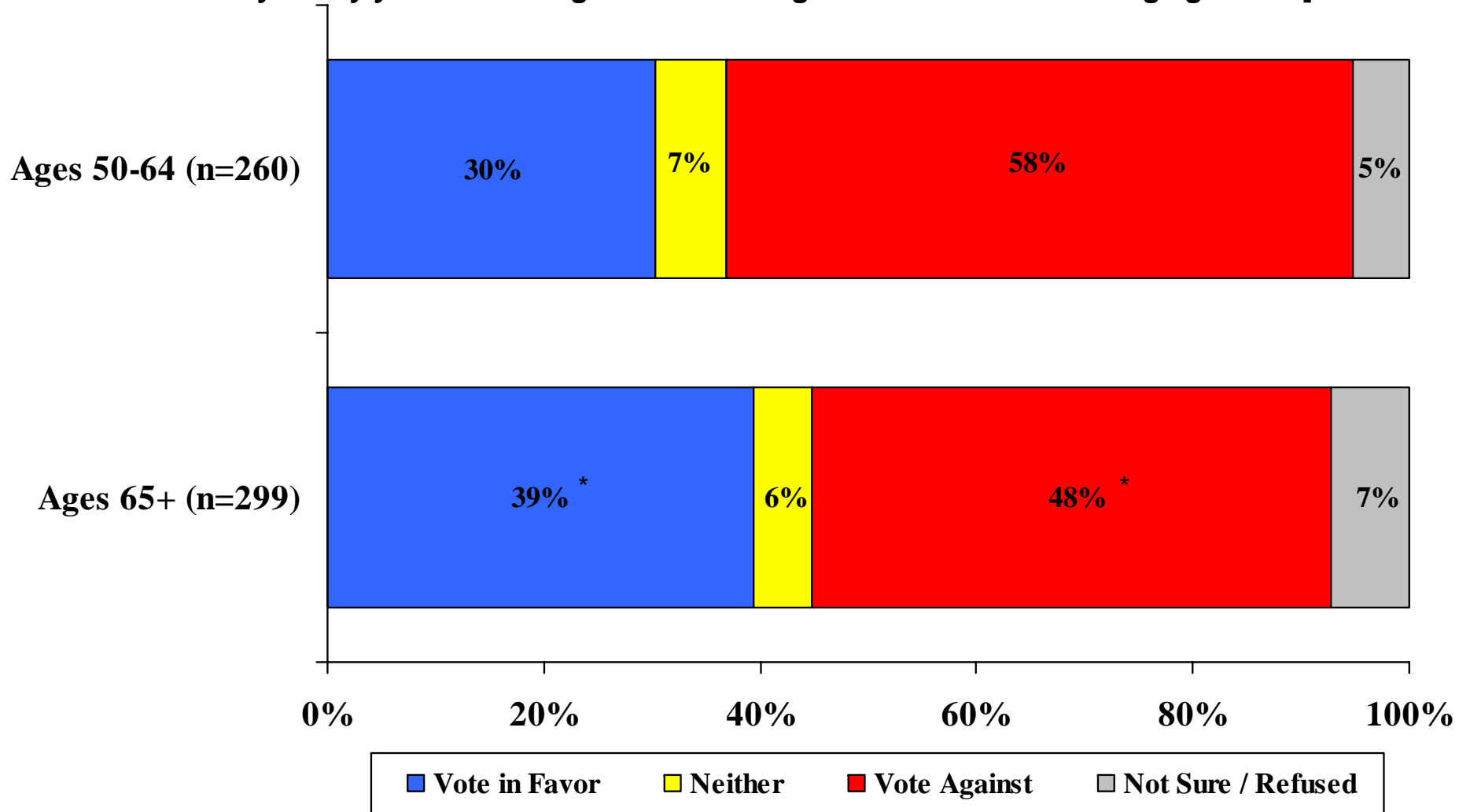
\* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

**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 Oklahoma 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

**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?"]**



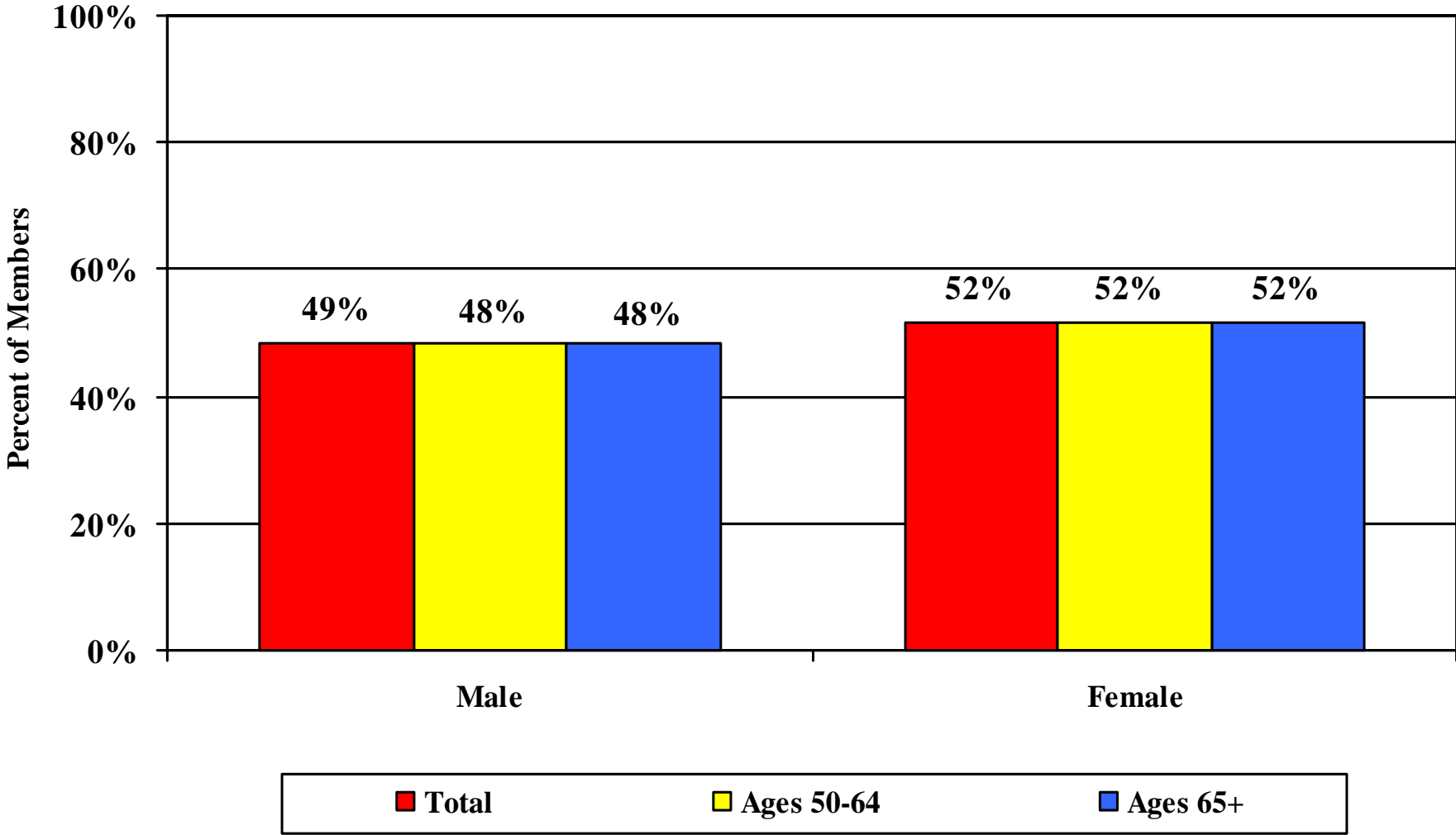
\* Statistically significant difference from Members age 50 to 64 at the 95% level of confidence

# RESPONDENT PROFILE

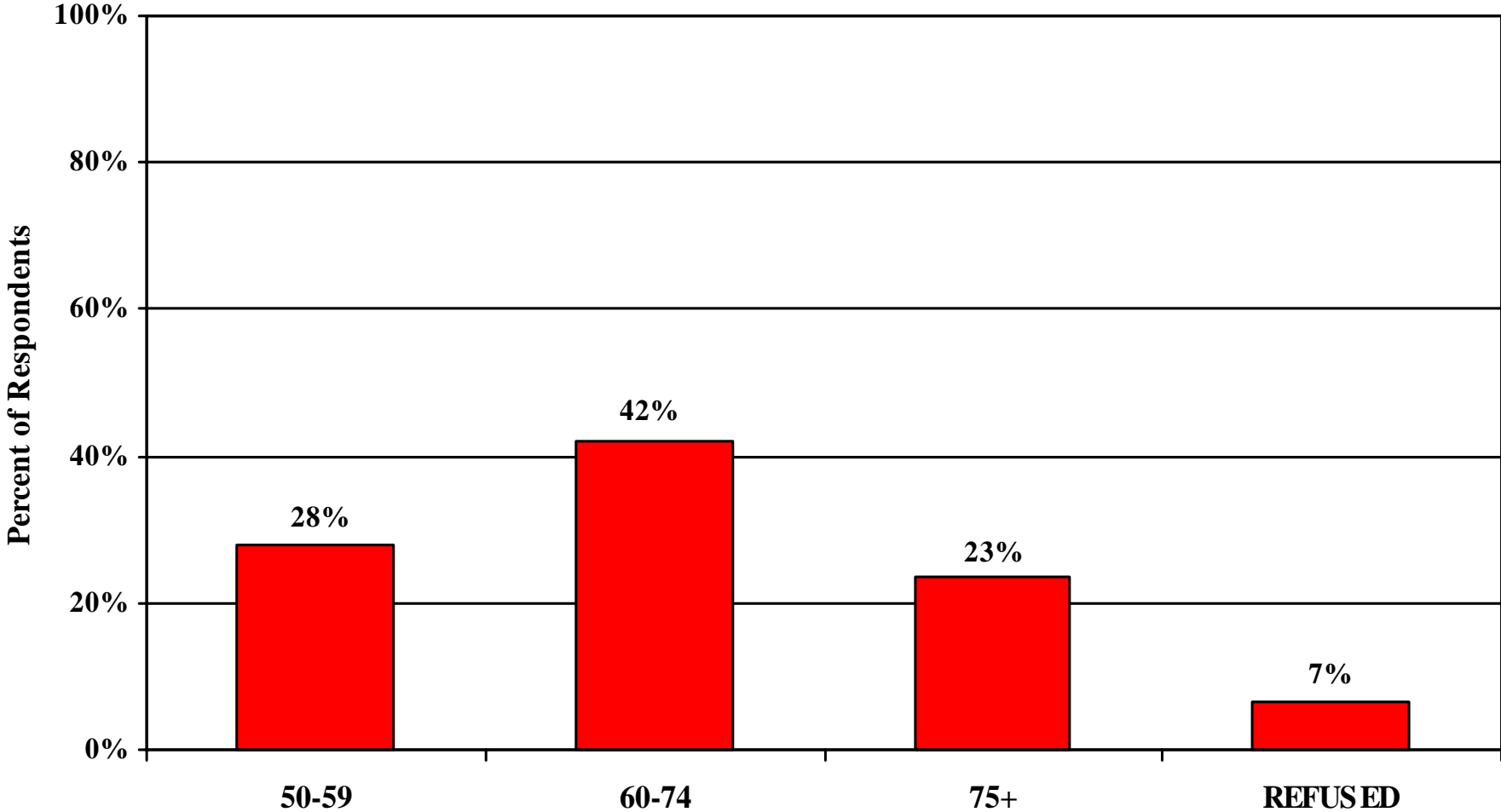




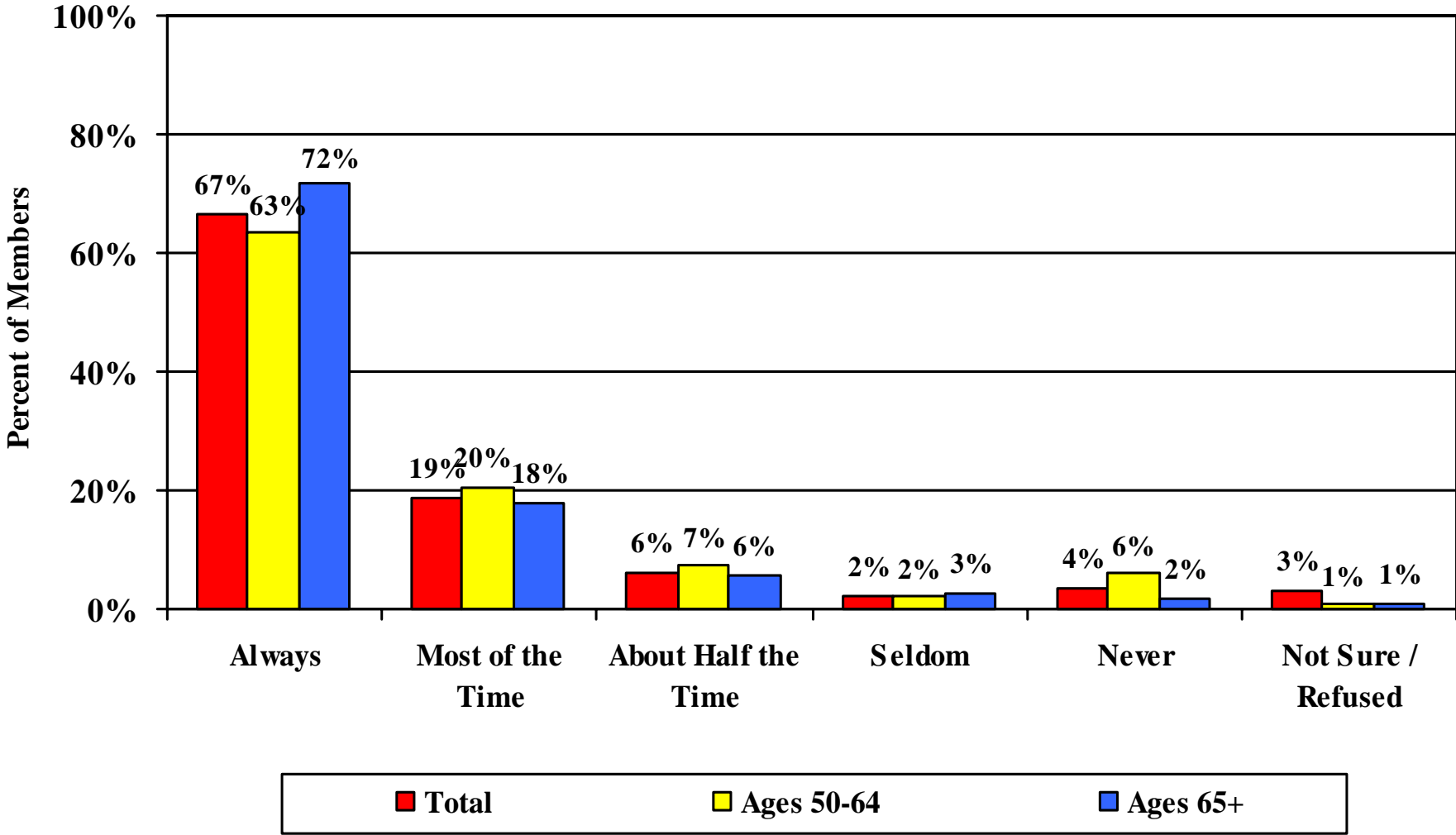
### GENDER



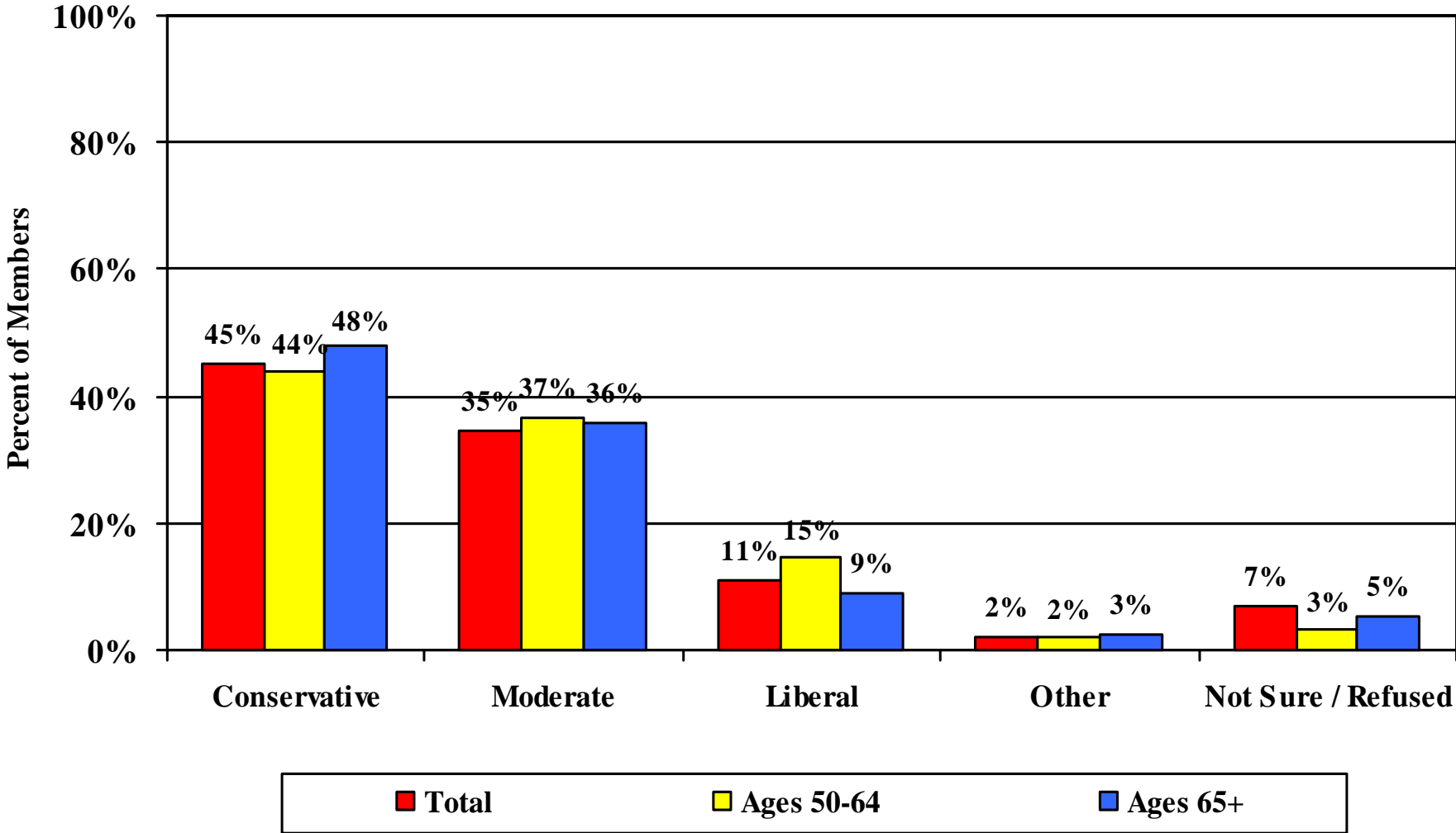
**AGE**



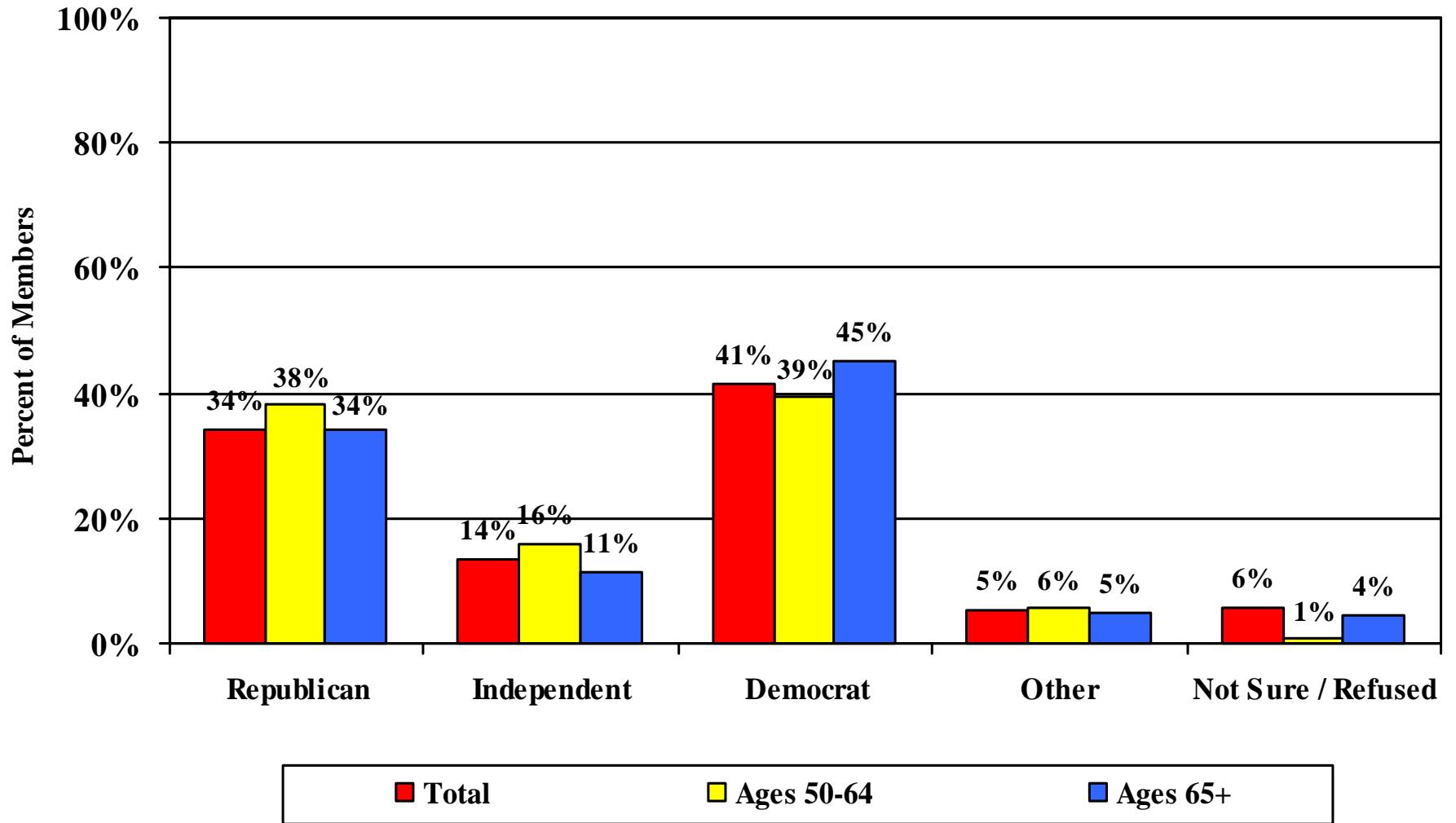
### FREQUENCY OF VOTING



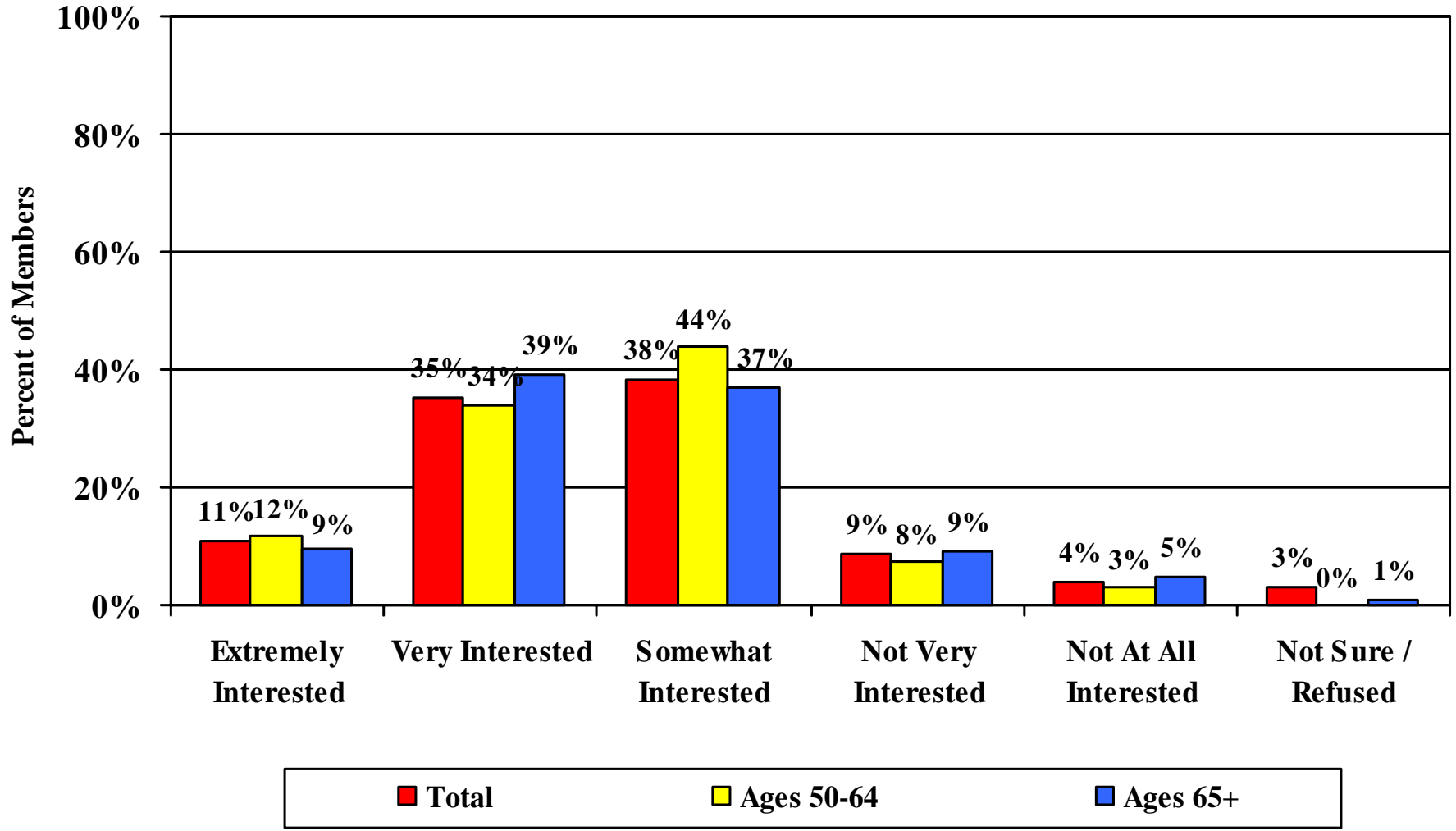
### POLITICAL VIEWS



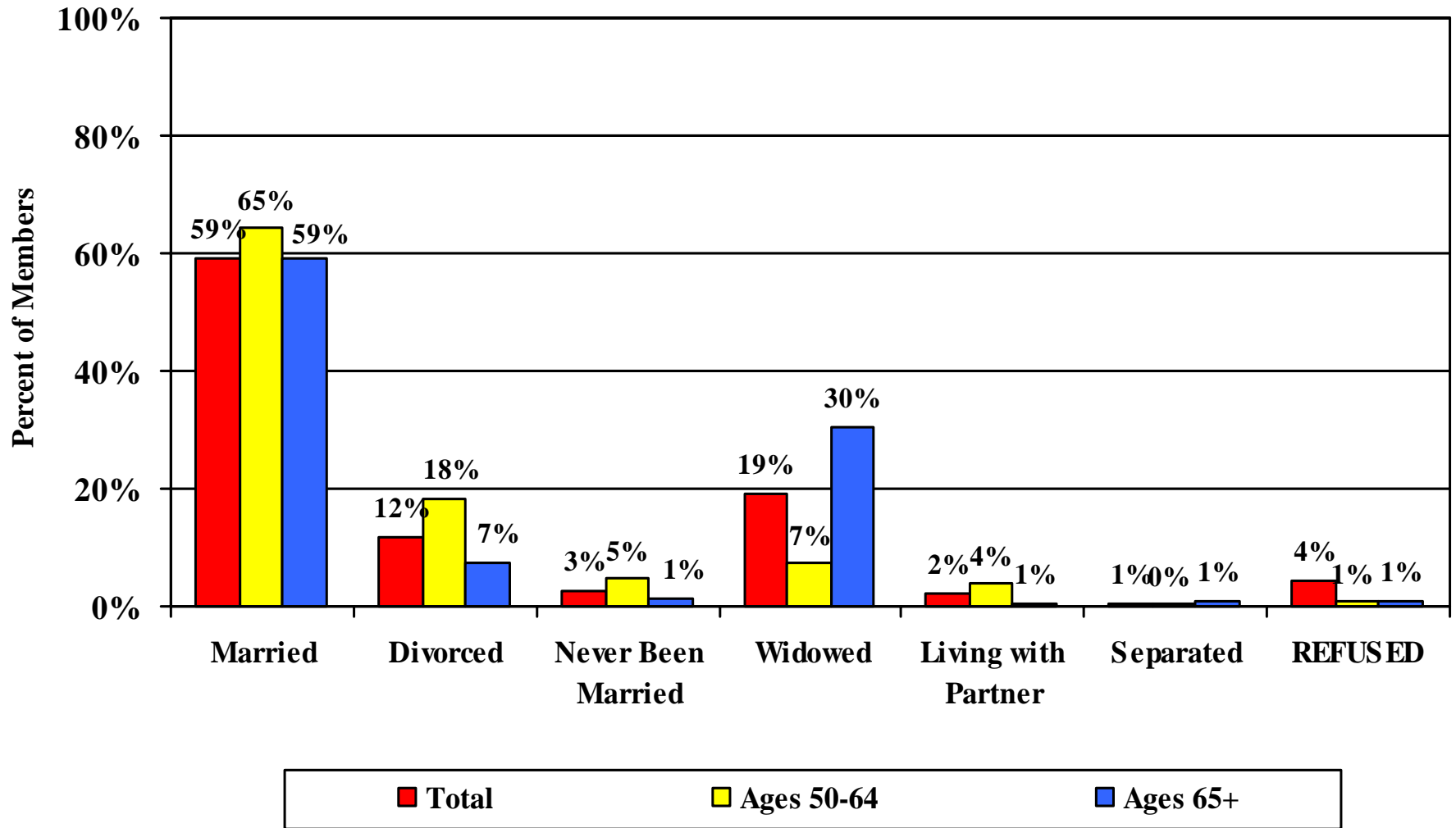
### PARTY IDENTIFICATION



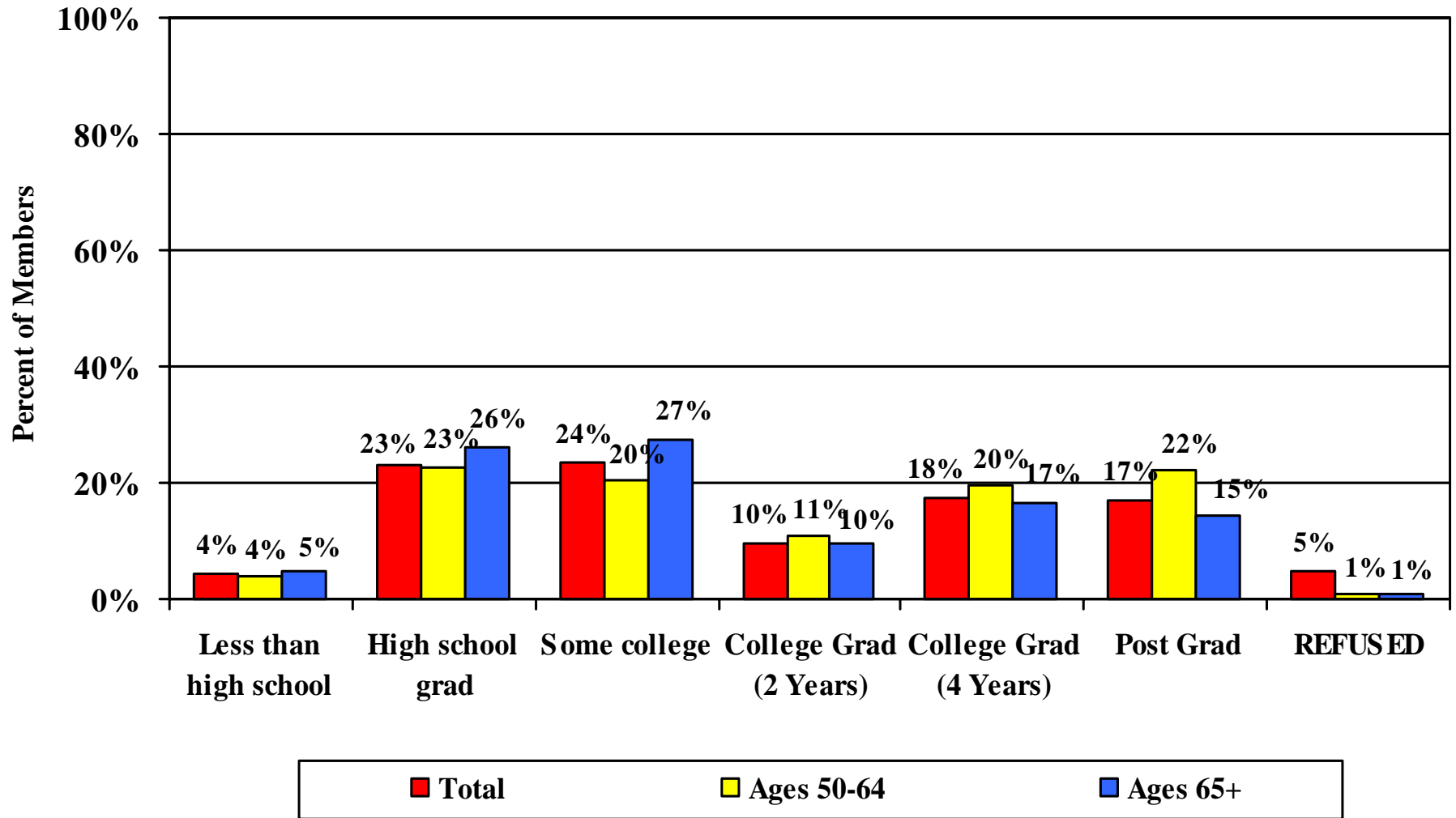
### INTEREST IN OKLAHOMA'S STATE GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES



### CURRENT MARITAL STATUS

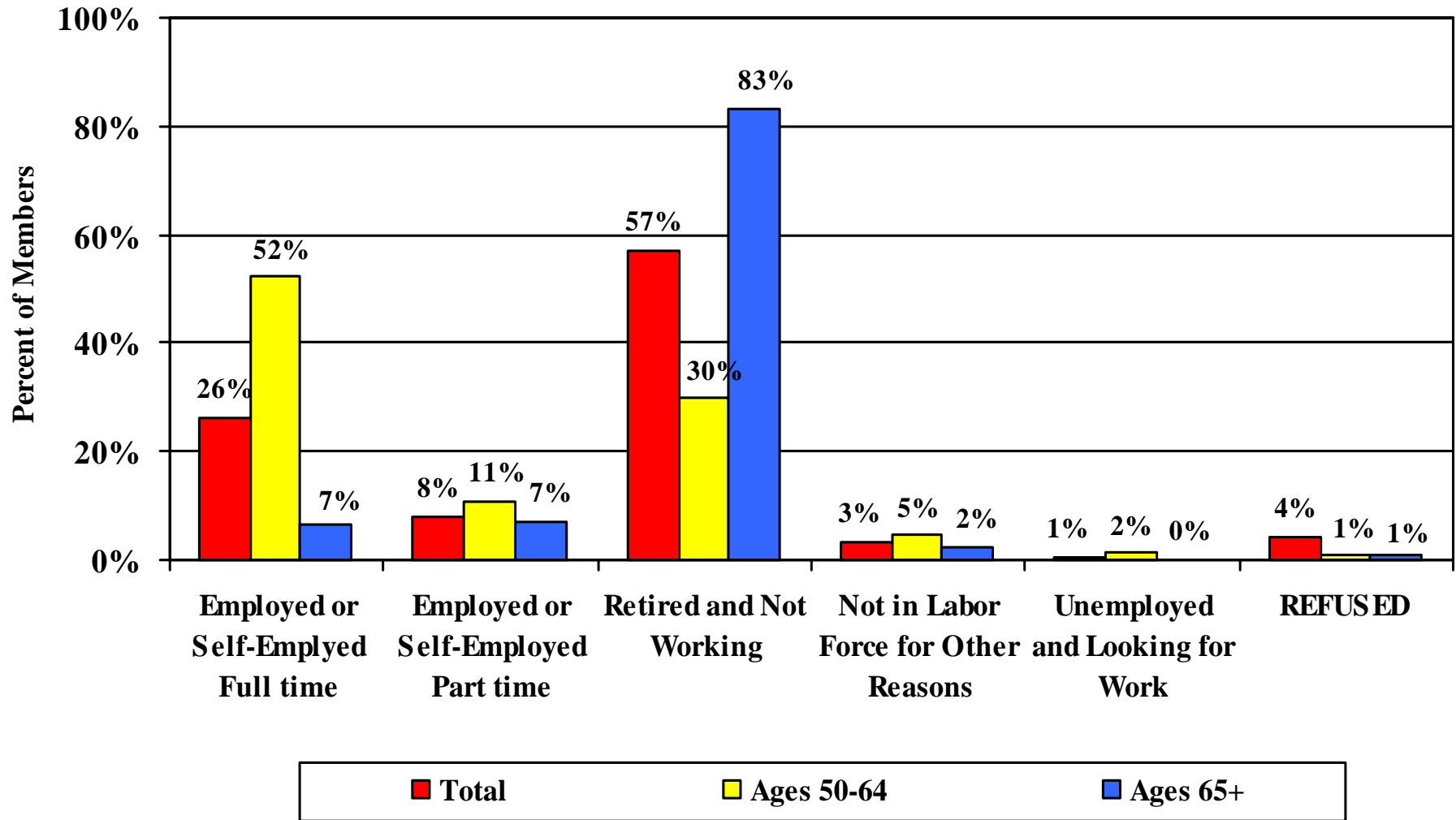


### EDUCATION

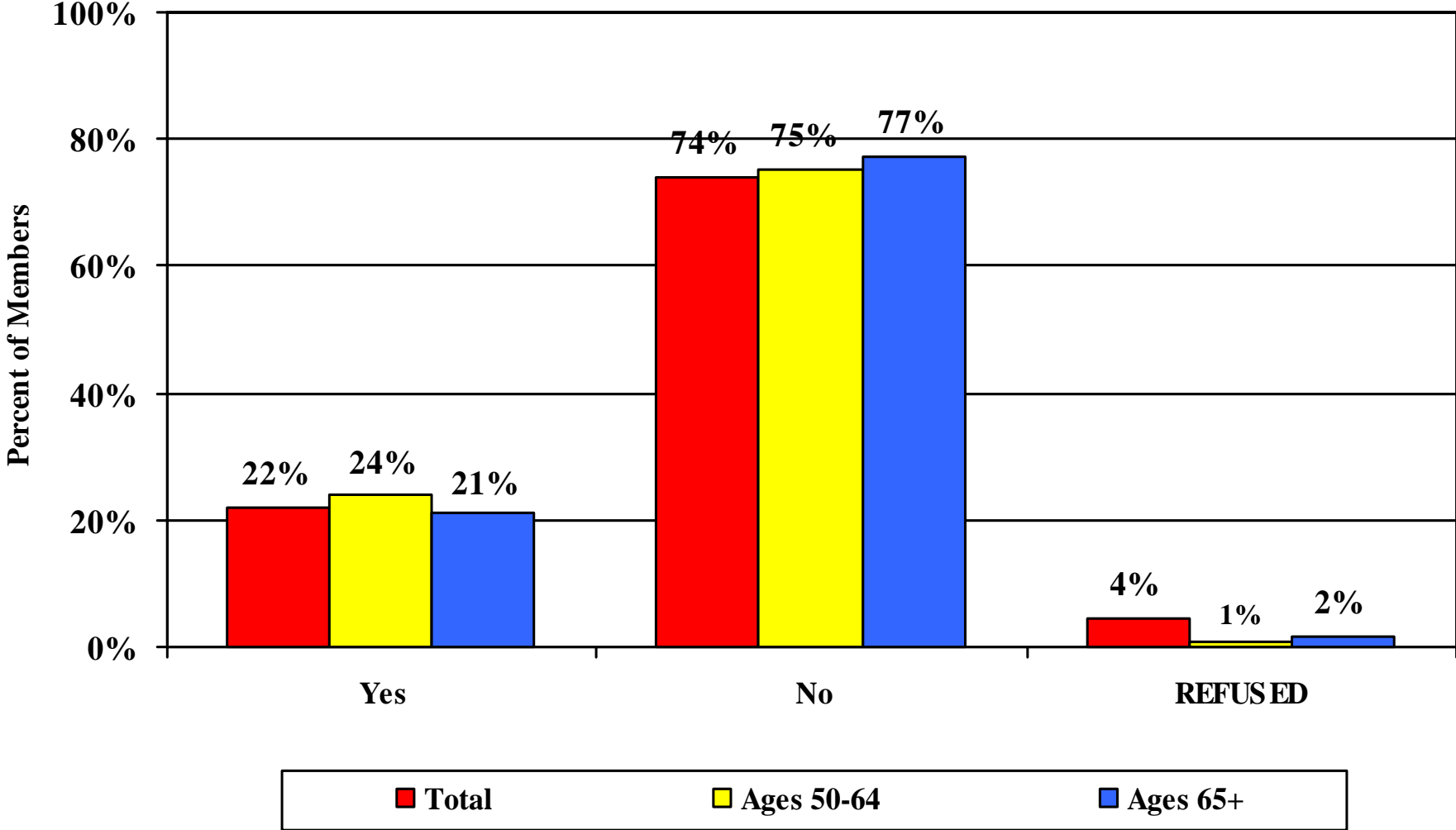




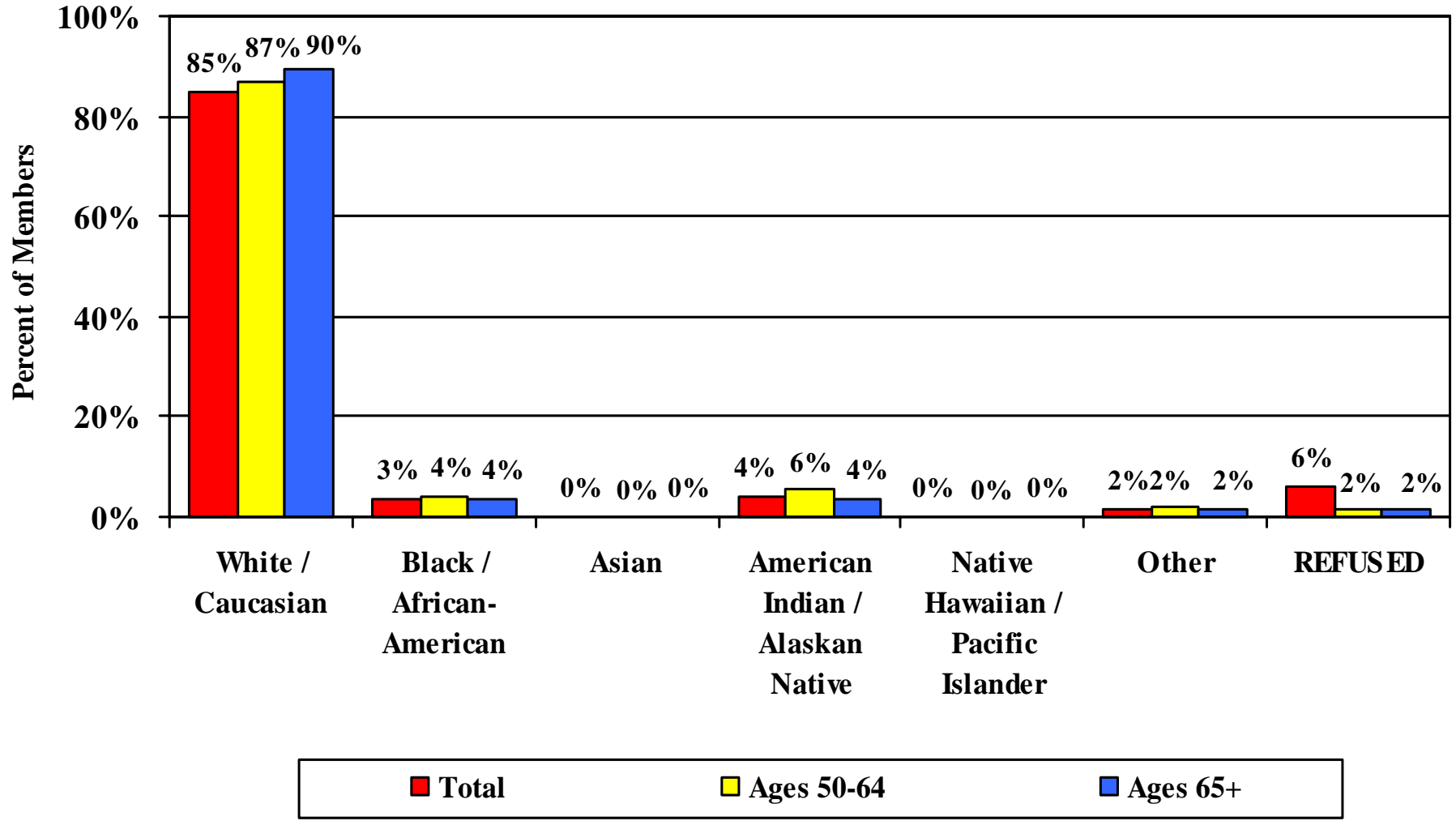
### CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS



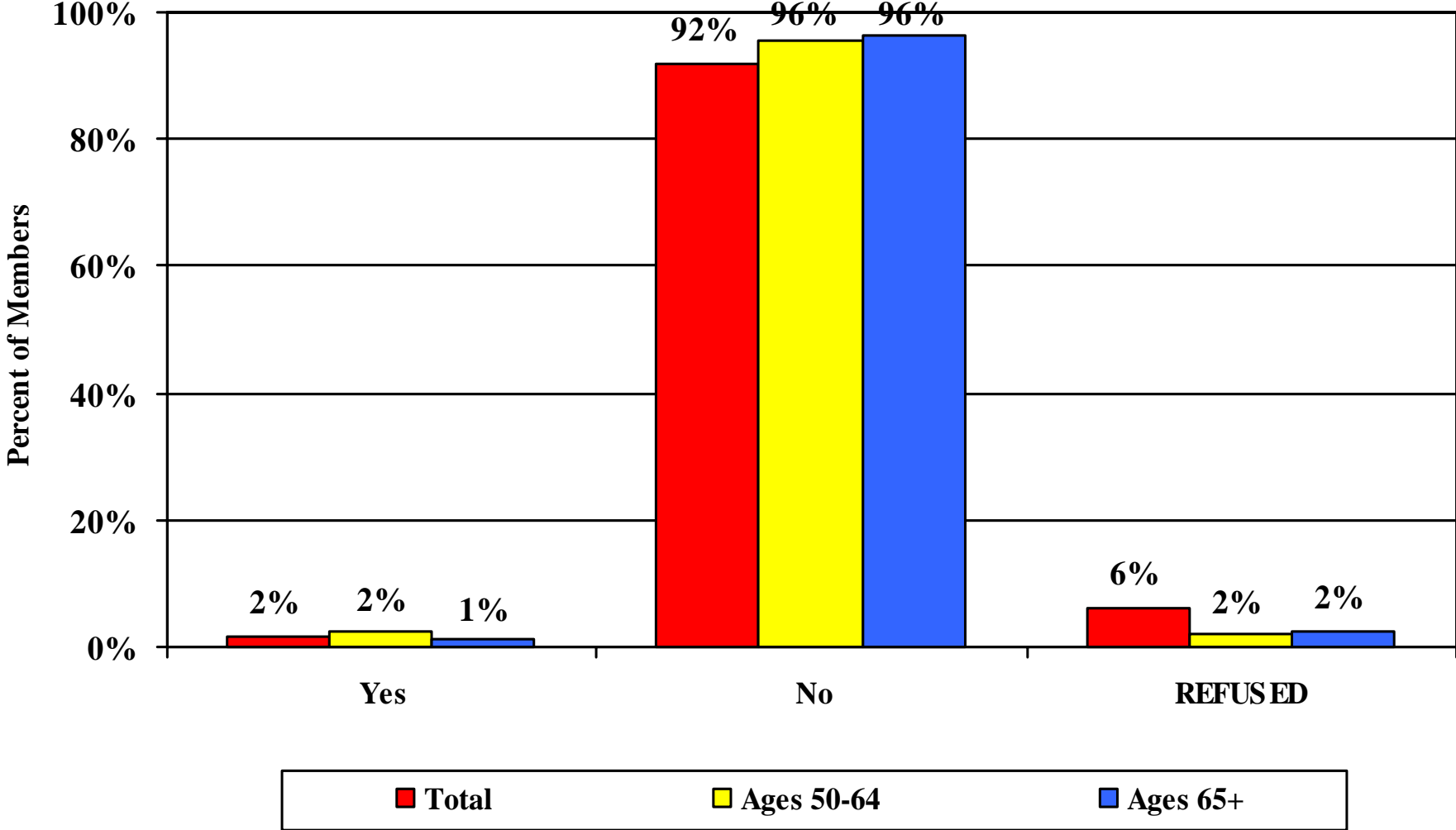
### EVER BEEN STATE OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE



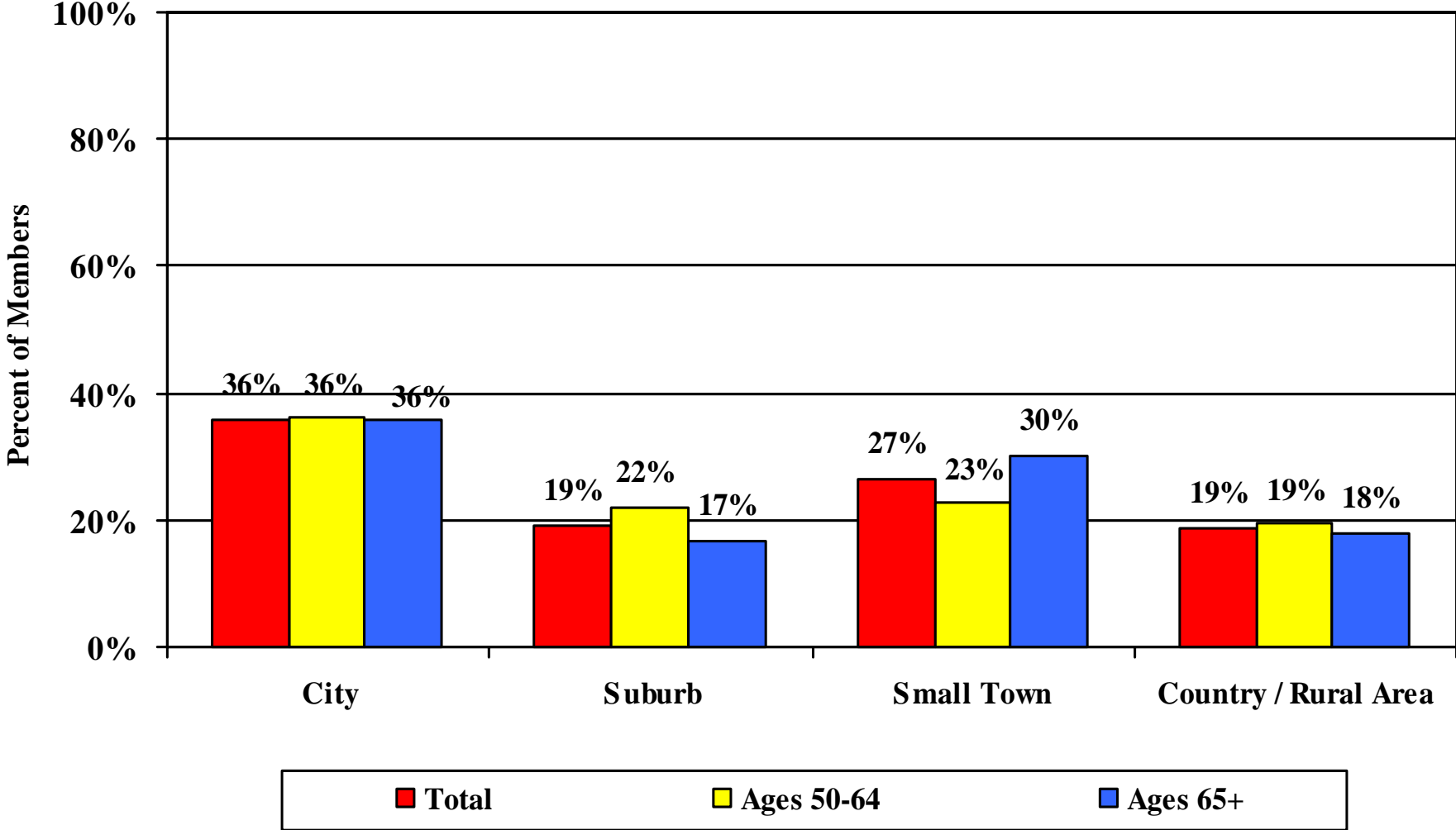
**RACE / ETHNICITY**



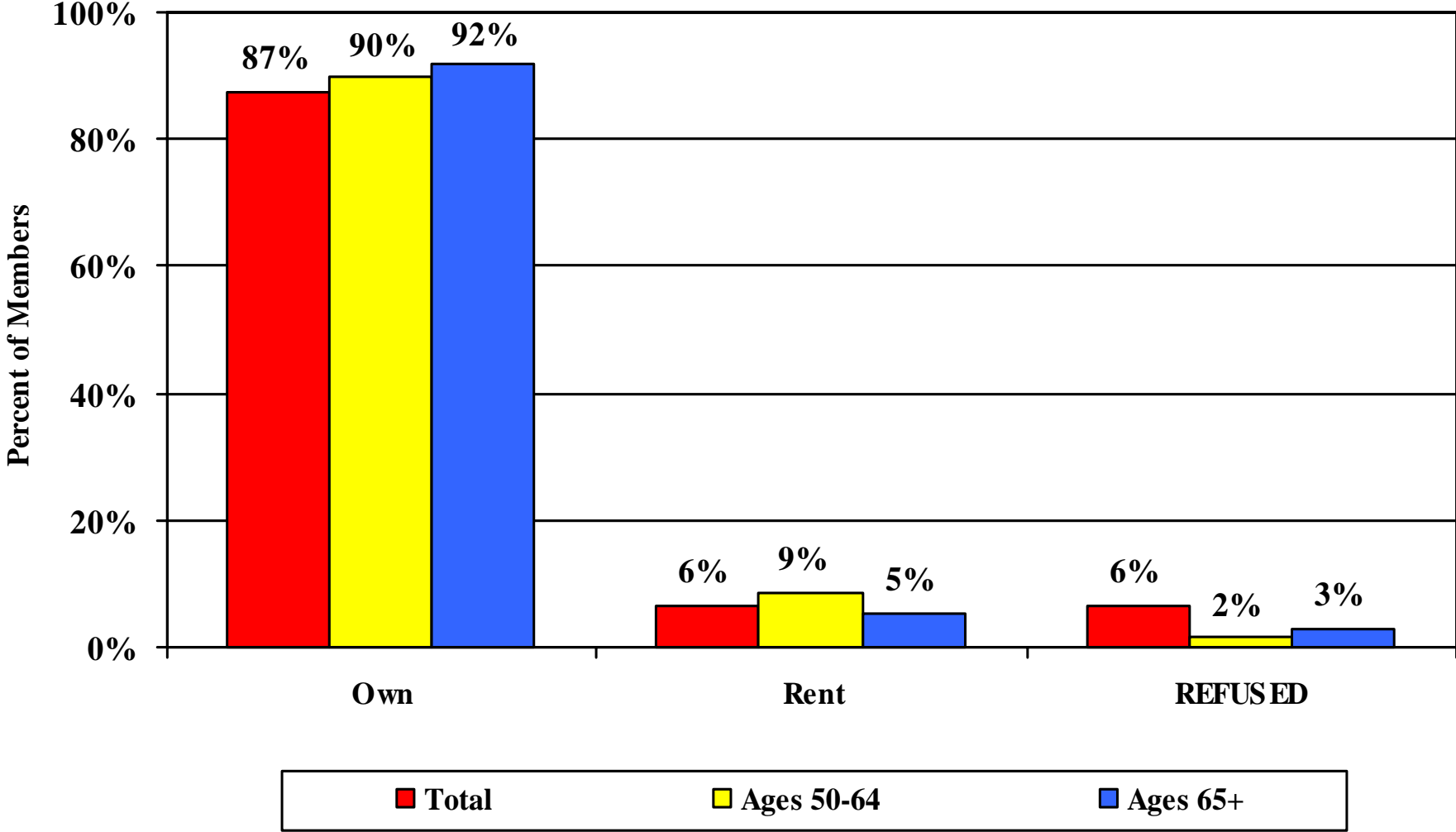
### SPANISH, HISPANIC, OR LATINO ORIGIN



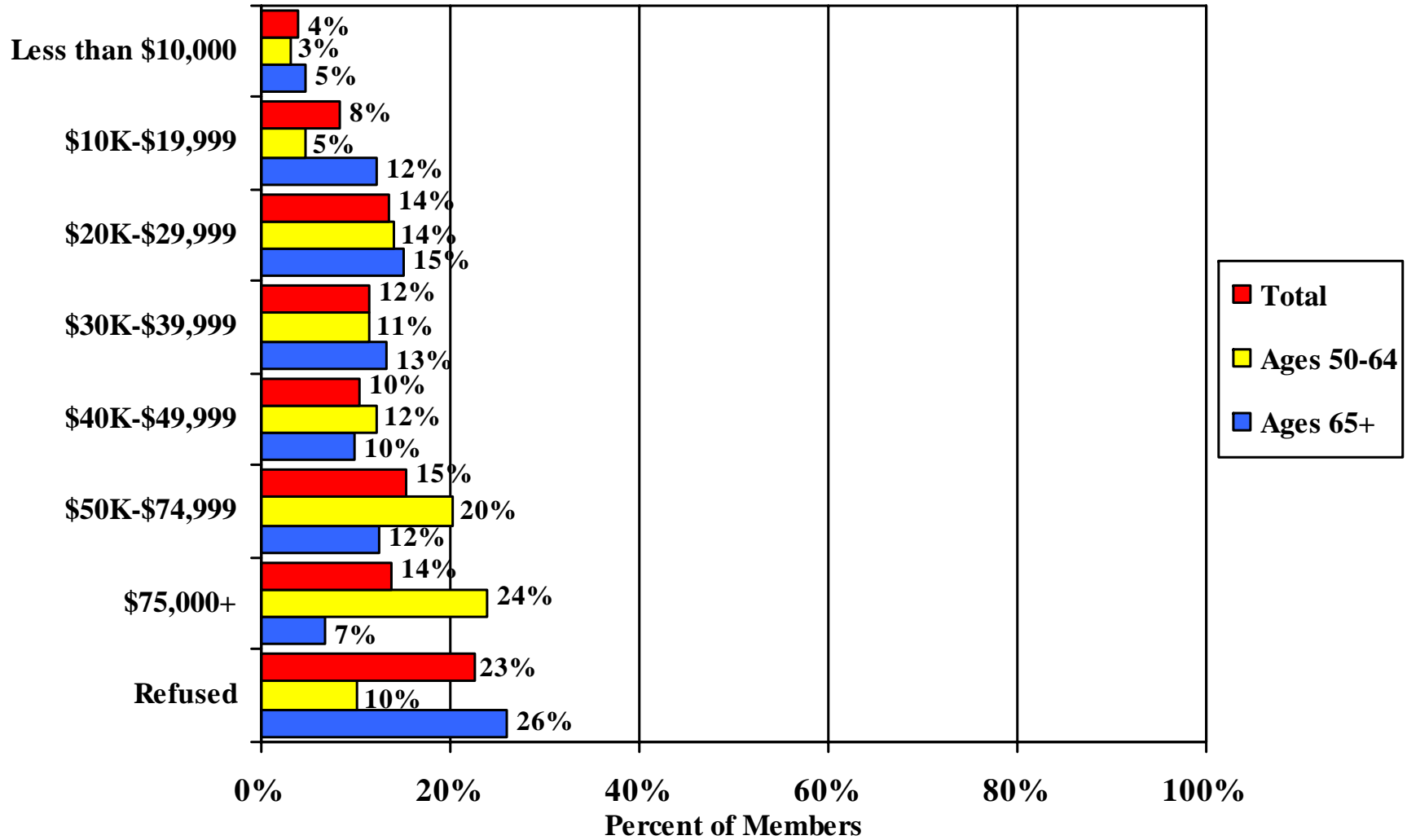
### PLACE OF RESIDENCE



### HOME OWNERSHIP



### HOUSEHOLD INCOME



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MARKET RESEARCH CONSULTANTS