



**First Five Years Fund**

# A DIVIDED ELECTORATE IS UNITED ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

**Key findings from a national survey of 800  
registered voters conducted May 2016**

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# Methodology

- National survey of 800 registered voters conducted on both landlines and cell phones
- Interviewing completed May 19-23, 2016
- Overall margin of error of  $\pm 3.46\%$
- Sample distributed proportionally throughout the country and is demographically representative of the electorate
- Bipartisan research team of Hart Research and Public Opinion Strategies

**By a three-to-one margin, voters prefer the next President be someone who focuses on solutions to the country's problems.**



Someone who focuses more on finding solutions to the country's problems, but who does not share voters' anger and frustration with the political system

**66%**

Someone who shares voters' anger and frustration with the political system, but who focuses less on finding solutions to the country's problems

**21%**

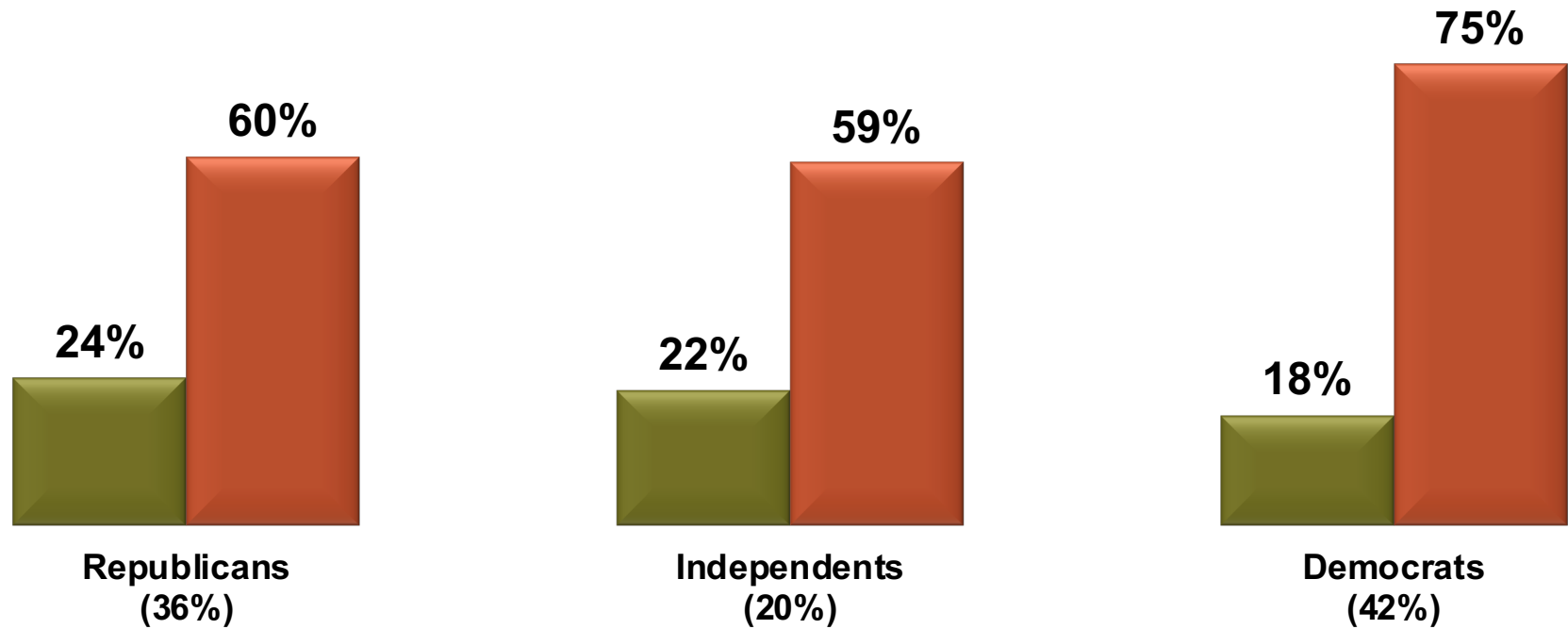
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*Would you prefer that the next president be...*

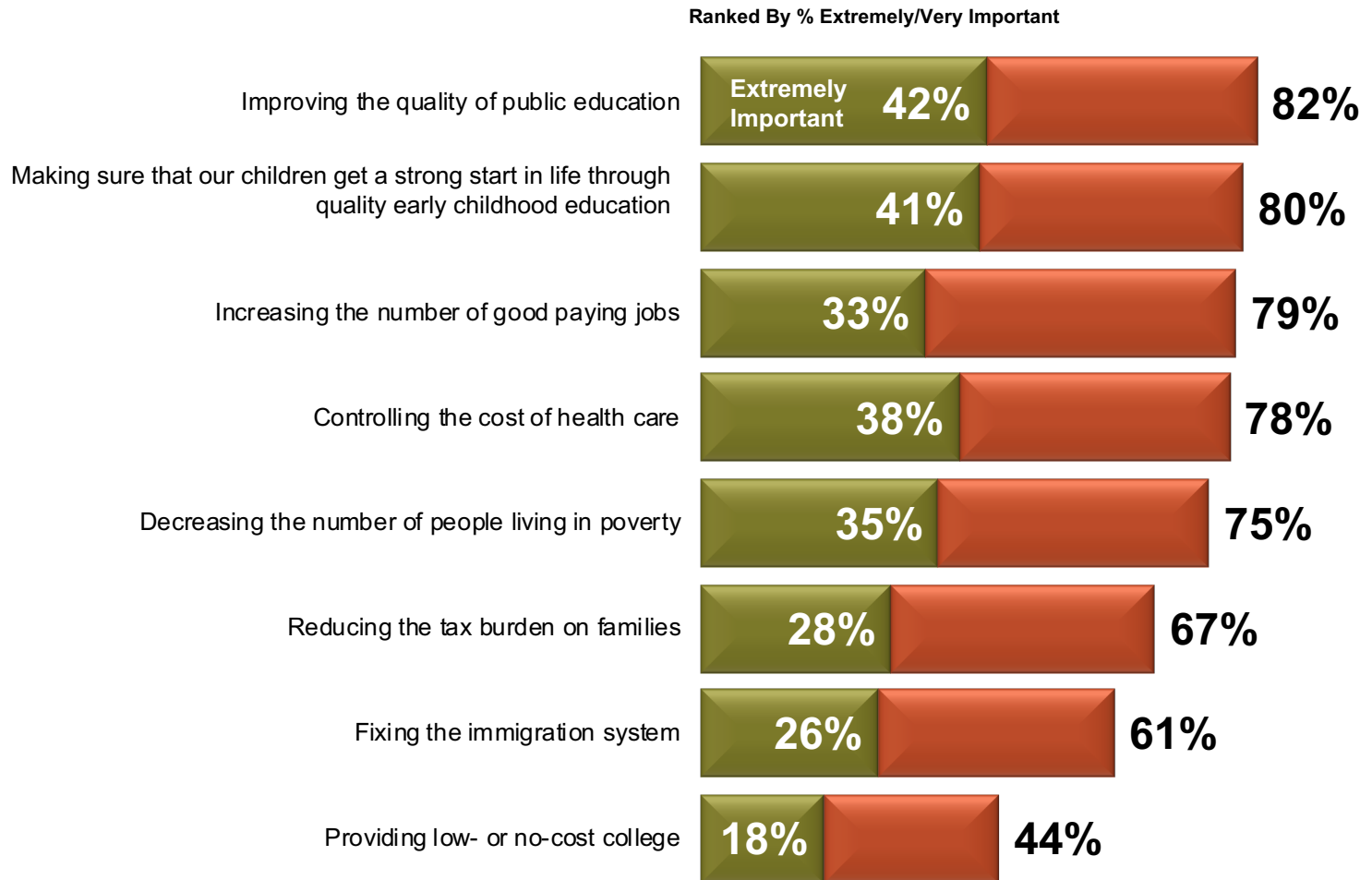
## There is a moderate partisan trend for this preference.

■ Shares Voter Anger

■ Finds Solutions



# Early childhood education and education broadly top the list of voters' goals for the nation.

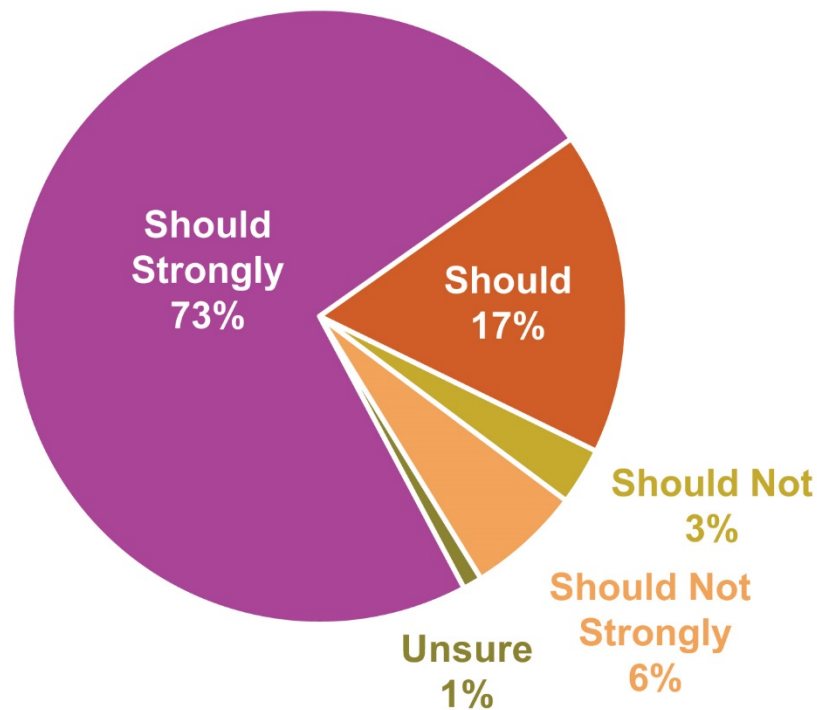


*Now I'm going to read you some goals that people might have for our country right now, and I'd like you to rate how important you personally consider each goal to be – is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important or not that important to you.*

# Nine-in-ten say that the next president and Congress should work together to improve access to early education.

Total Should  
**90%**

Total Should Not  
**8%**

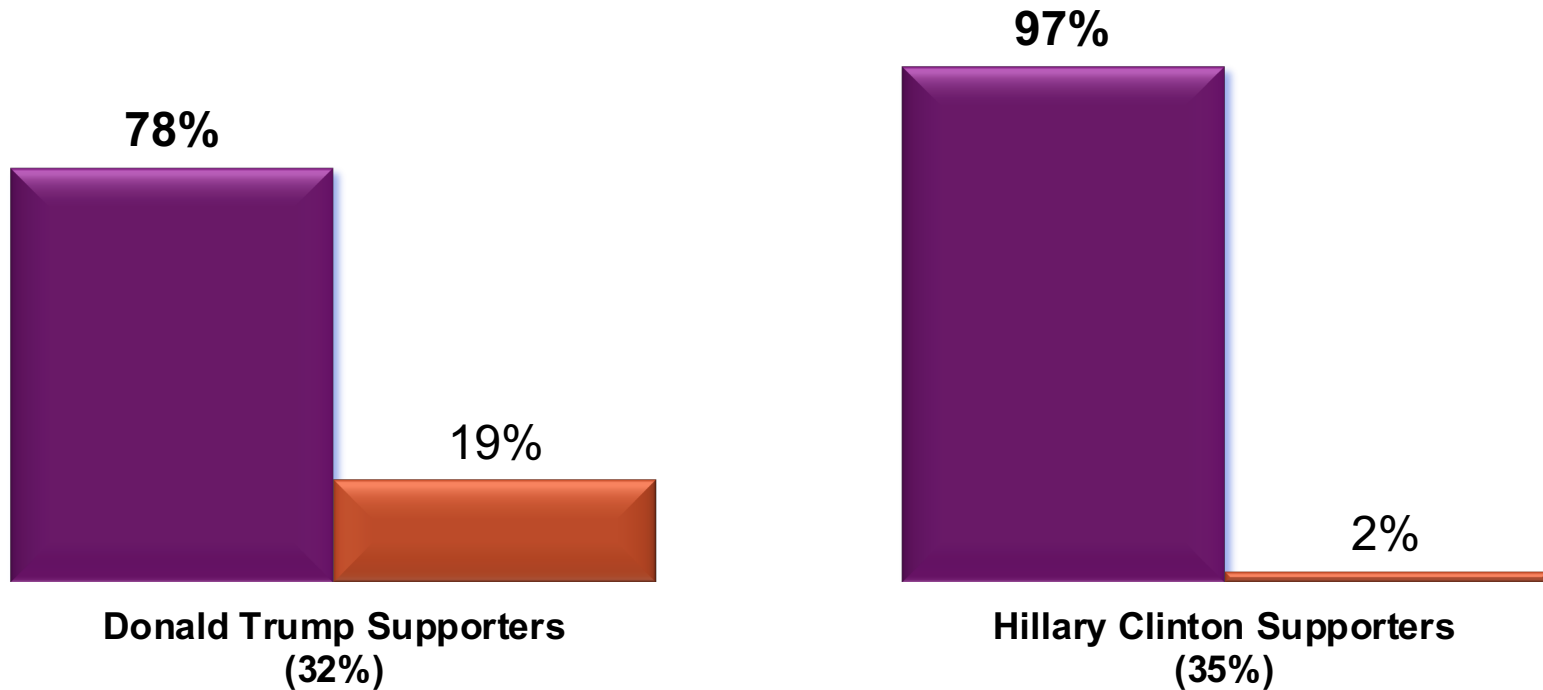


*Even if they are from different political parties, do you think the next president and Congress should or should not work together to improve access to quality early childhood education?*

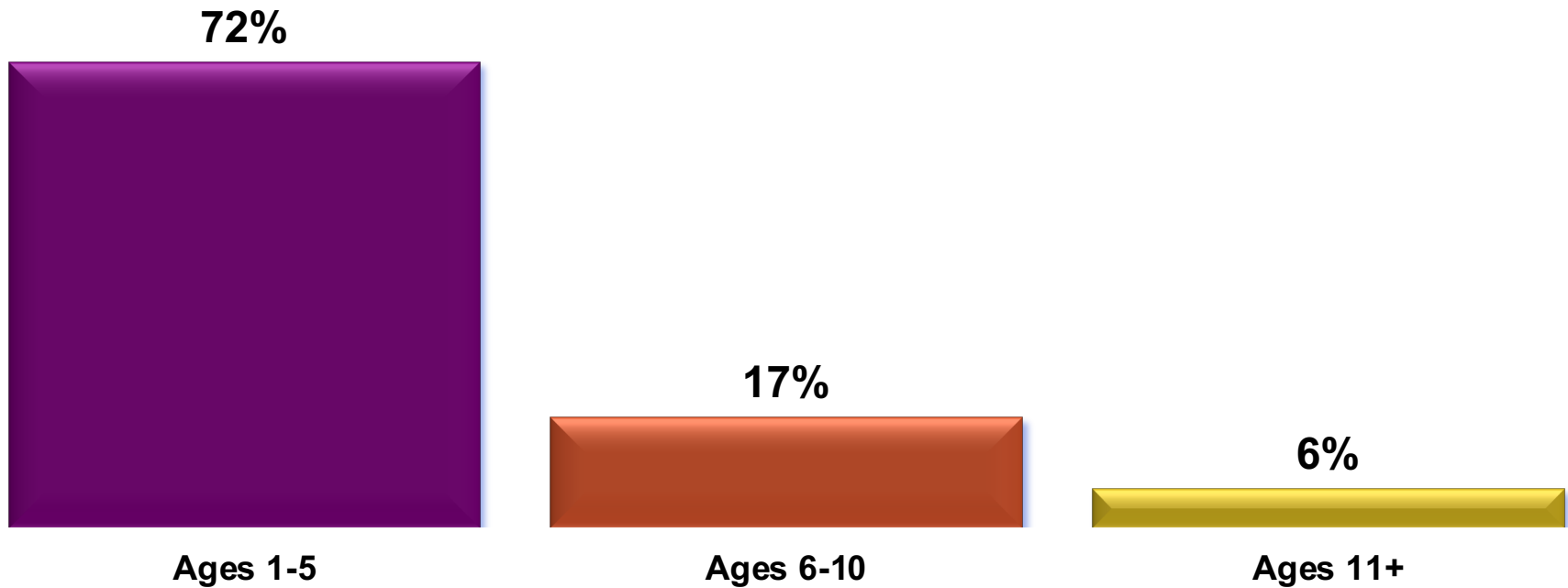
# Both Trump and Clinton supporters strongly favor cooperation between Congress and the next president when it comes to early education.

■ Total Should

■ Total Should Not



# American voters recognize that early ages are most important for learning.



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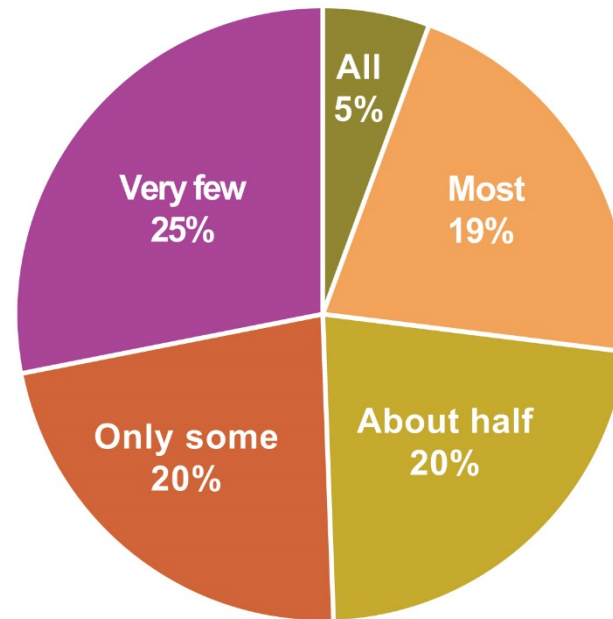
*What do you think is the most important age for developing a child's capacity to learn? Is it...*



**Voters see a critical lack of quality, affordable early childhood education. Far more say that there are only some or very few programs that offer high-quality, affordable programs for lower- and middle-income families in their area.**

**All/Most**  
**24%**

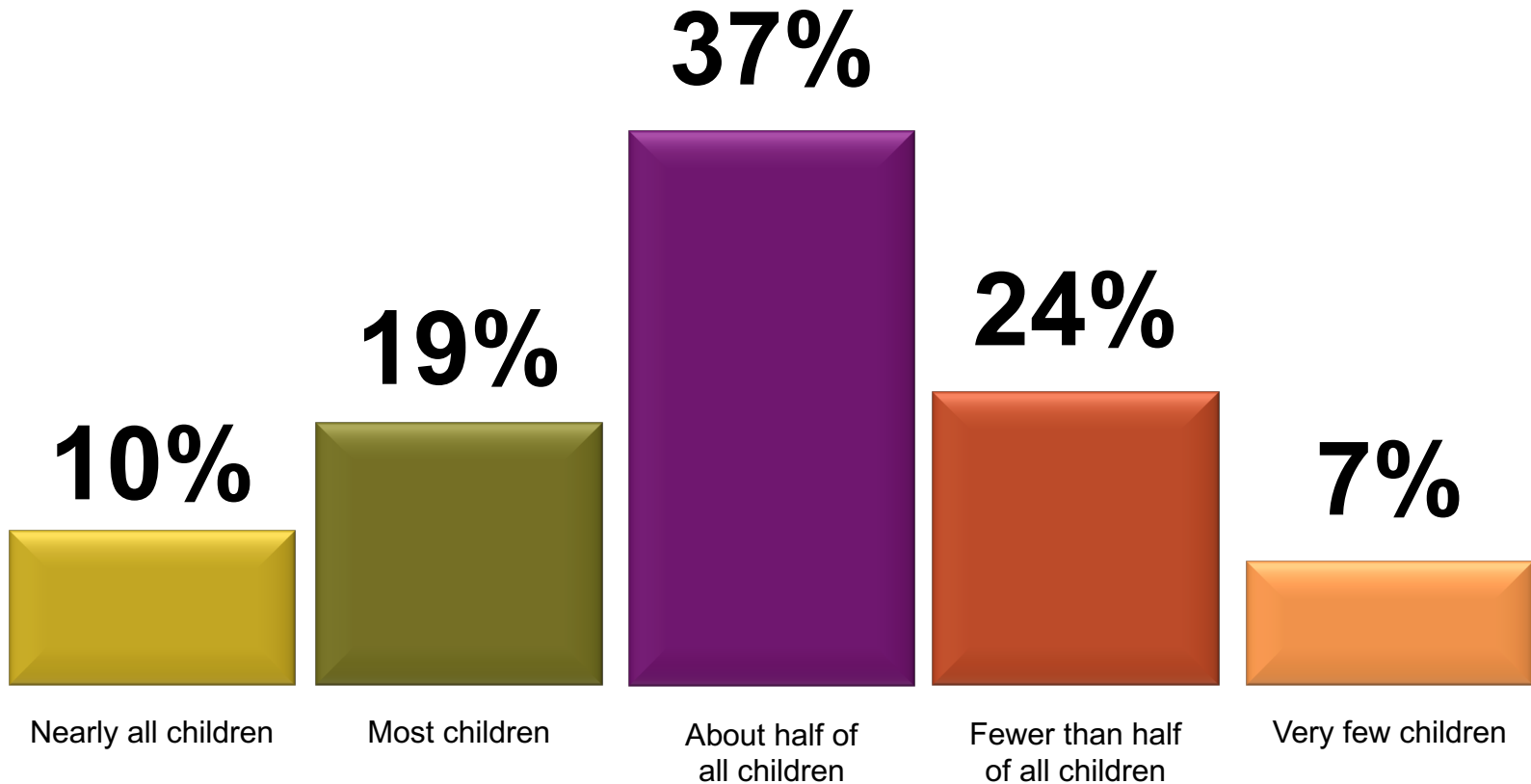
**Some/Few**  
**45%**



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*About how many of the early education programs in your area would you say are high-quality and affordable for lower- and middle-income families?*

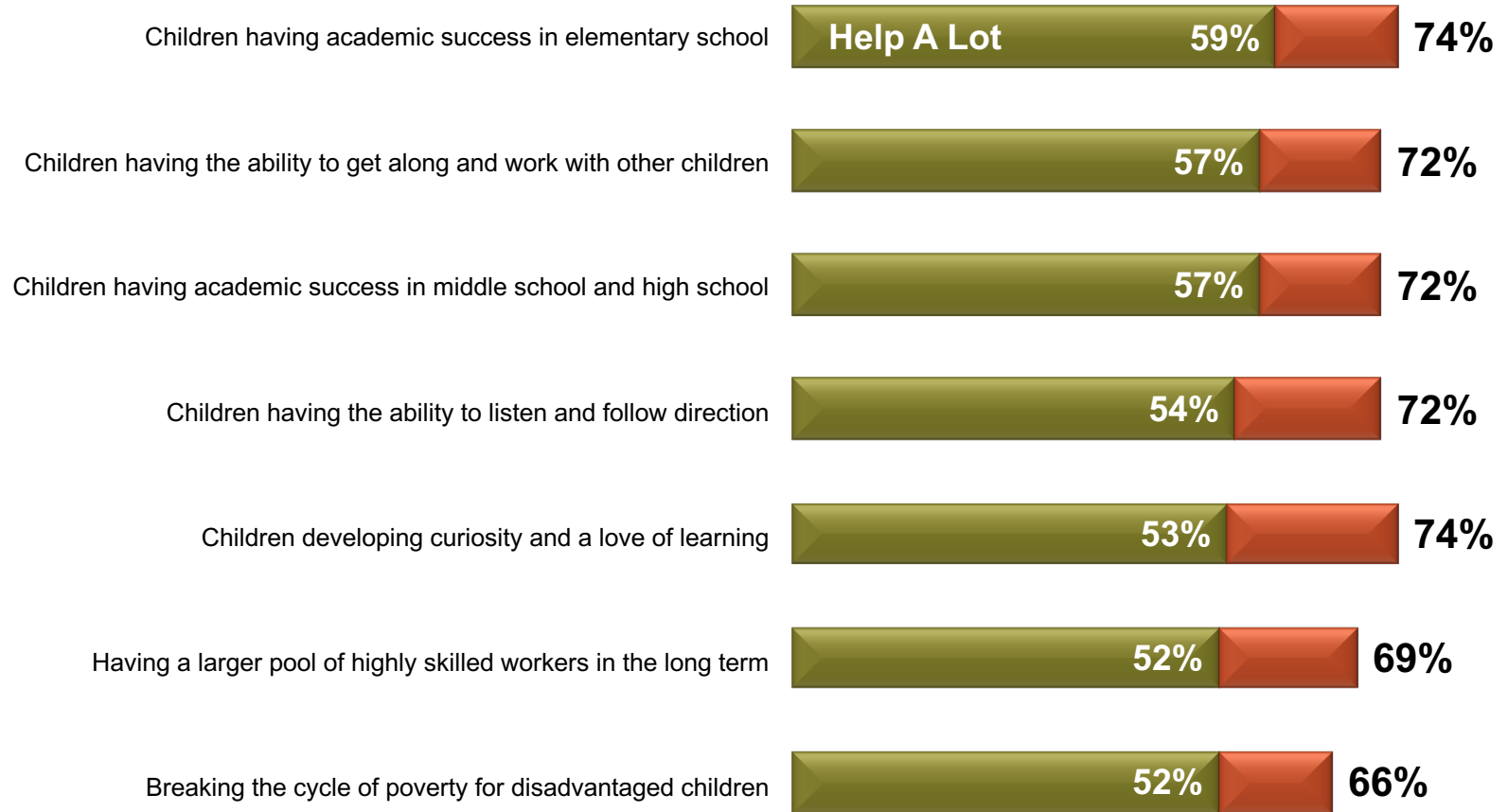
## More than two-thirds believe children aren't prepared for kindergarten.



*What proportion of children do you think begin kindergarten with the knowledge and skills they need to do their best in school--nearly all children, most children, about half of all children, fewer than half of all children, or very few children?*

# Voters say there are many benefits from children attending high-quality early education including seeing academic benefits throughout kids' school years.

Ranked By % Help A Lot



*If more children are able to attend high-quality early education programs, how much would it help in each of the following areas? Does it help a lot, a fair amount, some, very little, or not at all in each of the following areas?*

**In fact, American voters say we have our education priorities reversed—call for more investment in early education over college.**

**Early education, when children are beginning school and creating the foundation for their education experience**

**31%**

**Investments should be made equally**

**51%**

**College education, when children are finishing their education and deciding on careers**

**14%**

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*If you had to choose, do you think it would be better to invest more in -*

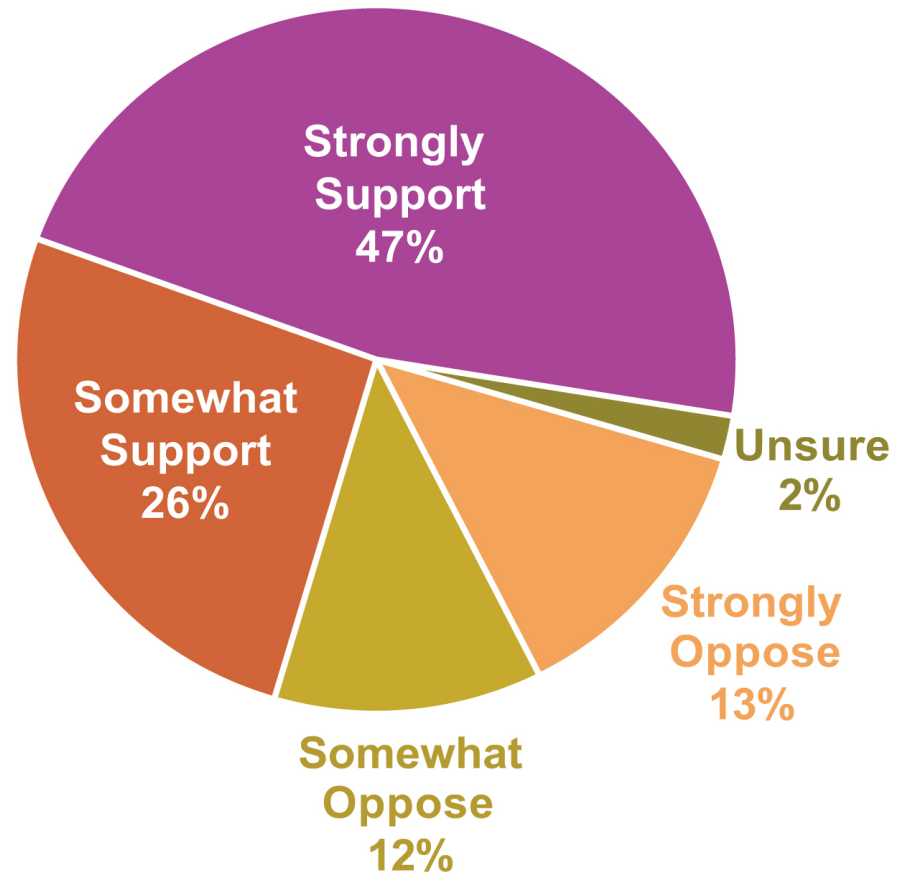
# The Proposal

*Congress could consider a plan that helps states and local communities provide better early childhood education programs to low- and moderate-income parents of children from birth to age five. The plan will make available ten billion dollars per year, for ten years, in grants to states in order to provide voluntary access to high-quality early childhood education through child care for infants and toddlers, preschool programs, home visiting and parent education.*

Nearly three-quarters of the electorate support a federal plan that helps states and local communities provide better early childhood education.

Total Support  
**73%**

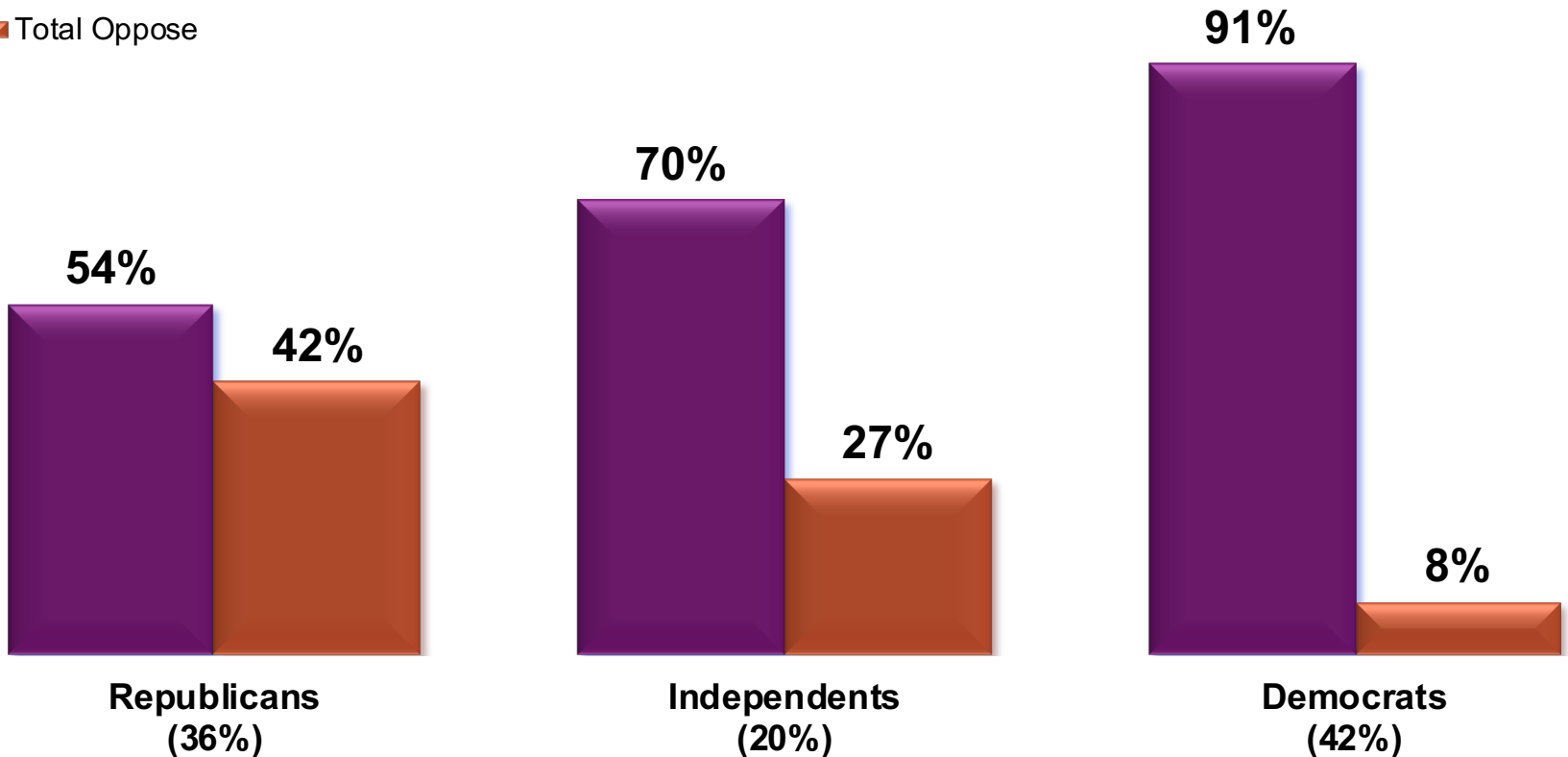
Total Oppose  
**24%**



*Would you support or oppose this plan to help states and local communities provide better early childhood education?*

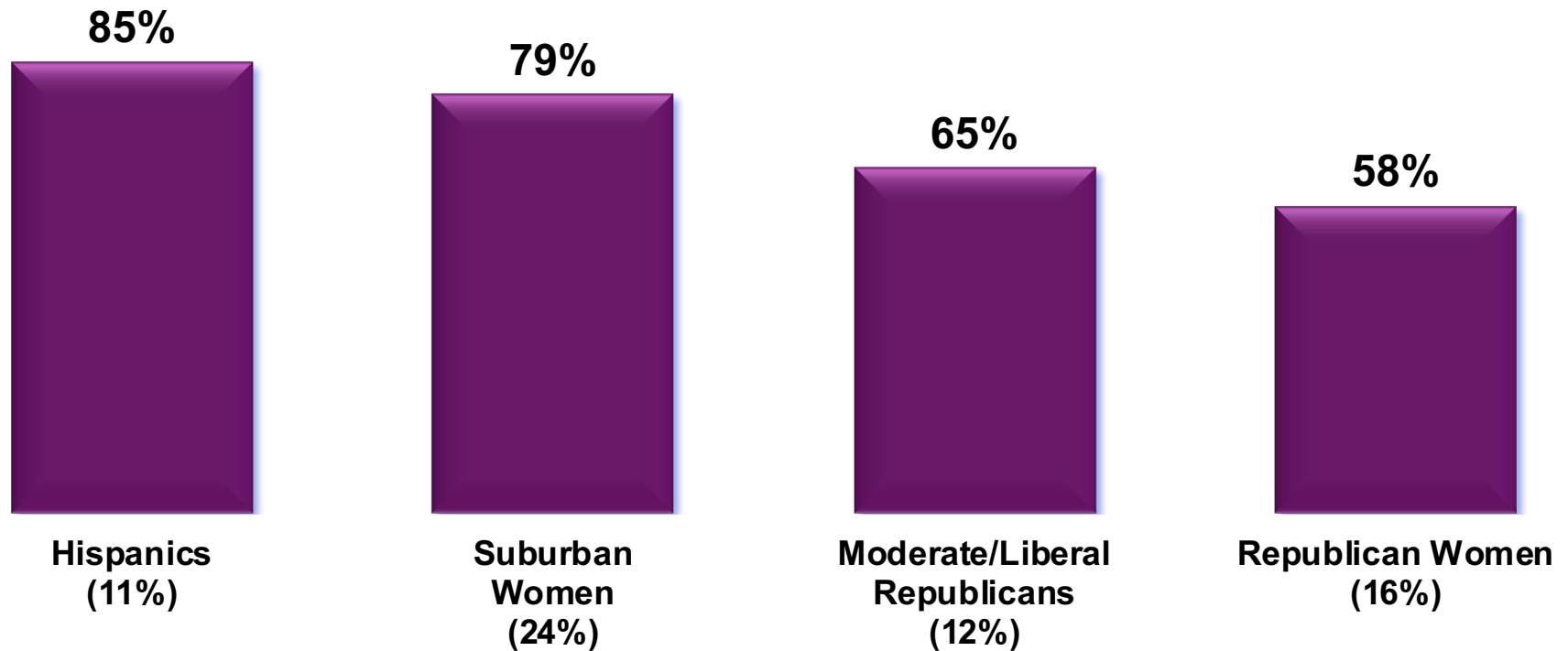
# There is majority support across the partisan spectrum.

■ Total Support  
■ Total Oppose



# More than two-thirds of the most important swing voter sub-groups support investments in early childhood education.

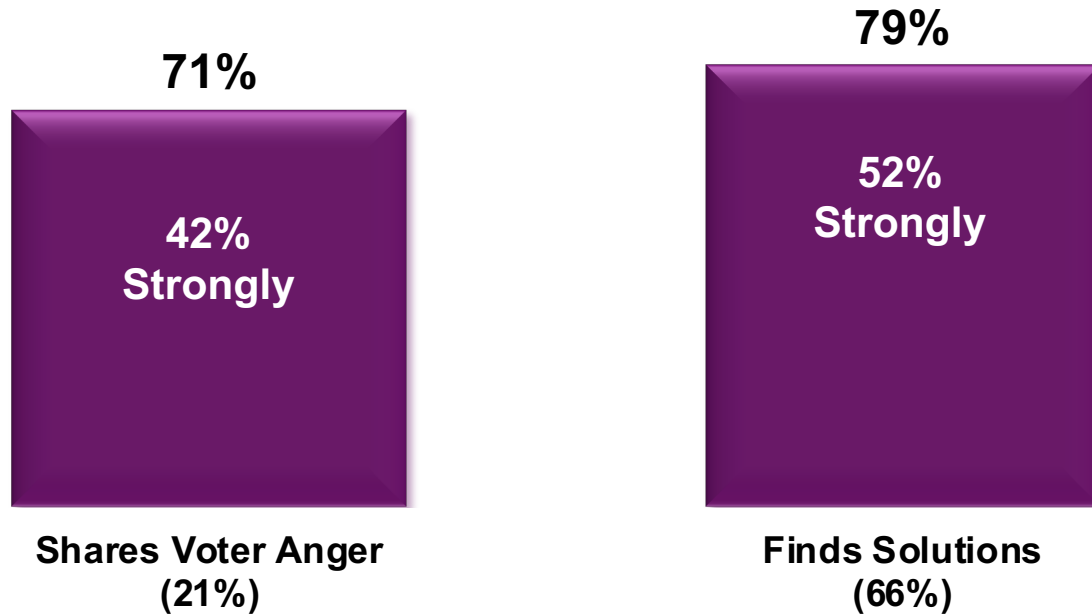
■ Total Support





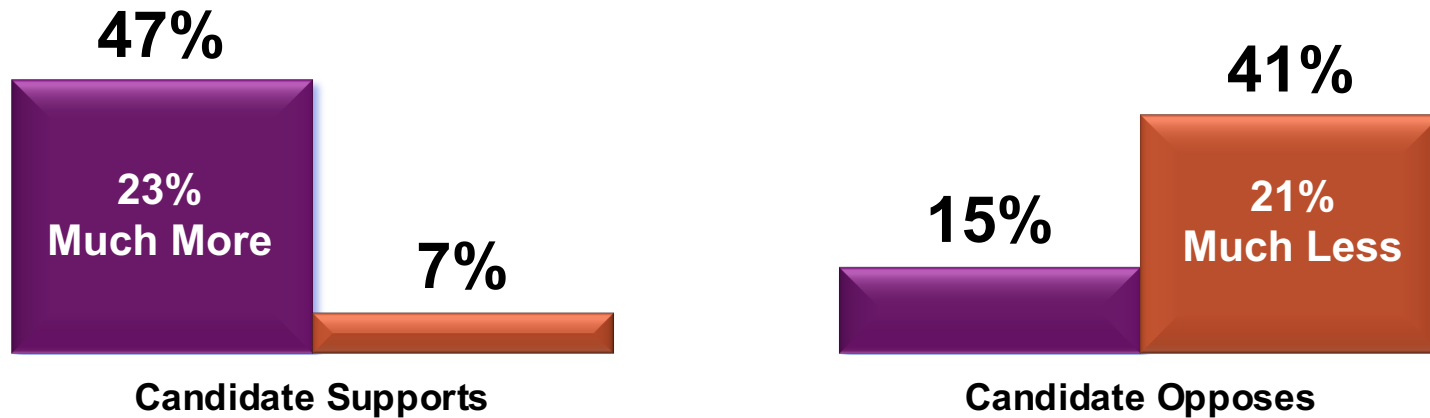
# Even those who say they are seeking a presidential candidate that shares voter anger strongly support this early childhood education “solution.”

■ Total Support



# A candidate's position on early education matters to voters.

■ Total More Favorable



*And if a candidate for president [supported/opposed] helping states provide better early childhood education, would you have a more favorable impression of him or her, less favorable impression or would it not affect your opinion much one way or the other?*

## Voters have consistently sided with those who support investing in early childhood education.

This proposal is a good idea. Investing in our children is investing in our future. We must do more to make sure our children begin kindergarten with the knowledge and skills they need to do their best in school. Too many families can't afford the quality early childhood education their children need to get a strong start in life. This proposal will help states expand their local early childhood programs so that children who need them can participate and do well in school and life.

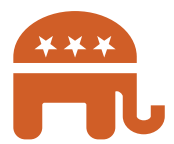


**58%** **63%** **62%**  
Year: 2014      Year: 2015      Year: 2016

This proposal is a bad idea. We can't afford another huge government entitlement program that costs billions of dollars. This is particularly true in the instance of early childhood education when we already have federal programs serving children birth to five. If we want to do more to help low-income children have access to quality early learning opportunities we should be working within these existing programs.

**36%** **34%** **35%**  
Year: 2014      Year: 2015      Year: 2016

*Thinking more about the proposal to invest in early childhood education. Please tell me which of the following statements comes closer to your opinion, even if neither one matches your opinion exactly.*

# This is not a partisan issue. Majorities of every partisan persuasion support investing in these elements.

Plan Items By Party (% Total Important)	 <b>GOP</b>	 <b>INDEPENDENTS</b>	 <b>DEMS</b>
Making early education and child care more affordable for working families to give children a strong start.	<b>82%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>98%</b>
Helping states and local communities build better preschool services for parents and making them more accessible to children from low- and middle-income families.	<b>75%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>97%</b>
Making available high-quality early learning programs for infants and toddlers to give them a strong start on developing school ready knowledge and social skills.	<b>66%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>92%</b>
Providing voluntary home visiting and parent education programs that help first-time parents support their child's early learning, health and emotional development.	<b>60%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>89%</b>



## **First Five Years Fund**

# **Key findings from a statewide surveys of registered voters in:**

- **Ohio**
- **Florida**
- **North Carolina**
- **Colorado**

# METHODOLOGY

- Statewide survey of 500 registered voters (in each state) FL, NC, CO and 600 registered voters in OH conducted on both landlines and cell phones
- Interviewing completed July 19-August 1, 2016
- Overall average margin of error of  $\pm 4.19\%$
- Sample distributed proportionally throughout the state and is demographically representative of the electorate
- Bipartisan research team of Hart Research and Public Opinion Strategies

Ensuring adequate funding for state needs like education remains more important than keeping taxes low to voters.

OH

FL

NC

CO

Making sure that there is sufficient funding for needs such as education

53%

58%

59%

55%

Holding the line on taxes and spending

43%

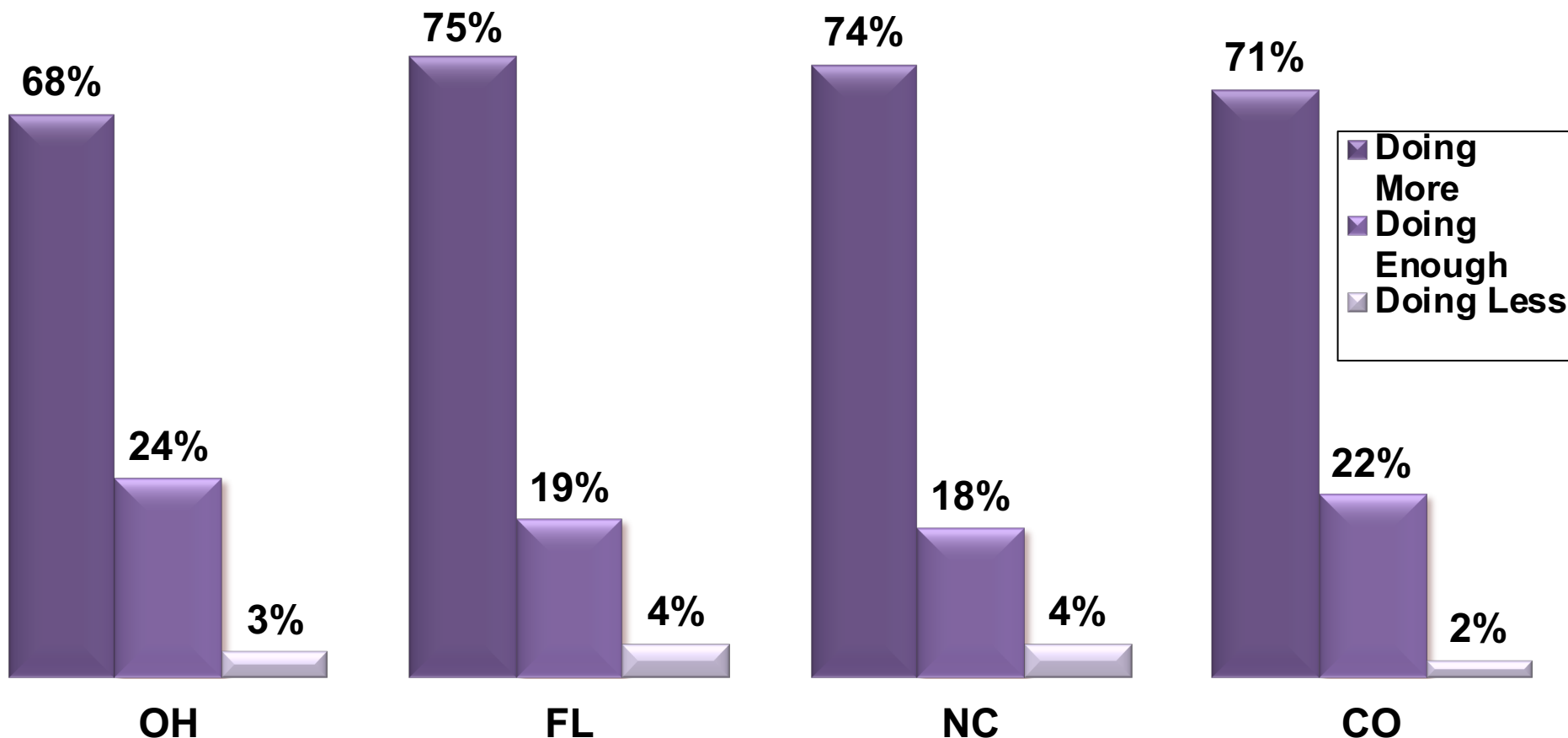
37%

37%

43%

*Which of the following do you think is a greater priority right now – holding the line on taxes and spending, or making sure that there is sufficient funding for needs such as education?*

# A significantly larger proportion of state voters today say we should be doing more for young children's education.



*And when it comes to ensuring that children here in X state begin kindergarten with the knowledge and skills they need to do their best in school, do you think we should be doing more, doing less, or are doing enough?*



Nearly three-in-four support this significant investment by the federal government in early childhood education.

OH

FL

NC

CO

Total Support

74%

72%

74%

69%

Total Oppose

24%

25%

24%

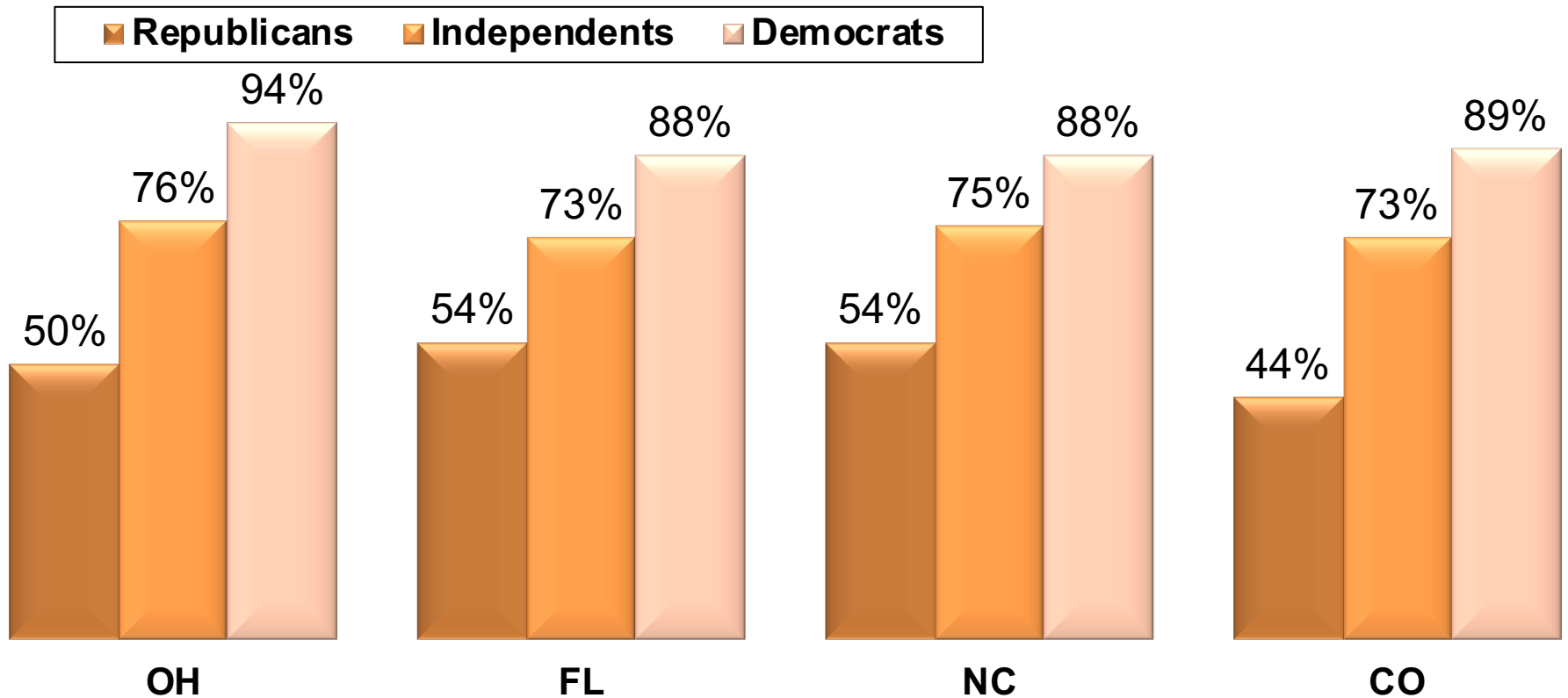
26%

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*Would you support or oppose this plan to help states and local communities provide better early childhood education?*

# A majority of voters across the political spectrum support this federal investment in early childhood education.

## Early Education Proposal By Party



# The Bottom Line

Voters perceive a need for improving **access to quality early childhood education** options. In fact, they say this is **a priority for the nation**, even when compared to other policy issues.

There continues to be solid support for a specific proposal to make **significant federal investments** in this arena. Even those who are more focused on an **outlet for their anger** in this presidential election support this policy “**solution.**”

Nine-in-ten voters say the next President and Congress should **act on this** – Trump supporters & Clinton supporters share this view.

The states’ electorate expresses **strong support for federal investments** that would **help states** meet the need for affordable, quality early childhood education options, and rates this as **a top-tier goal** for the nation at this time.

It's clear the  
**DEMAND**  
is out there.

Our job is to  
**HARNESS  
THE  
DEMAND**

and  
**CONVERT  
IT INTO  
ACTION**

# A DIVIDED ELECTORATE IS UNITED ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.

In the midst of an angry and polarized election, 90% of voters agree on one thing: Congress and the next president should work together to make quality early childhood education more accessible and affordable to low- and middle-income families. **85% of Trump supporters and 97% of Clinton supporters** shows that early childhood education is one of their top priorities because it is one of their top priorities.

**Quality early childhood education is a top priority** for voters. 90% say making sure that our children get a strong start in life is important to them personally.

**There is overwhelming support—with little opposition**—with little opposition. **Communities provide better access to quality early childhood education** support this plan: 73% favor and only 24% of Democrats voice support. A majority of key swing voters from birth to age five.

  
**85%**  
HISPANICS

  
**79%**  
SUBURBAN WOMEN

**Americans say our education priorities should be reversed, calling for more or equal investment in early education over college.** 31% say we should invest more in early education when children are beginning school and creating the foundation for their education experience. 51% say we should invest equal amounts in early education and higher education. Only 14% say we should invest more in college education.

<sup>1</sup> **Methodology:** Public Opinion Strategies (P) and Hart Research (H) conducted a telephone survey of N=800 voters throughout the country on both landline and cell phones. The survey was conducted May 19-23, 2016 and has an overall margin of error of +/- 3.46%. This sample was distributed proportionally throughout the nation and is demographically representative of the electorate.

Congress and the president should work together to improve access to early childhood education.

**78%**  
OF TRUMP SUPPORTERS  
**AGREE**

**97%**  
OF CLINTON SUPPORTERS  
**AGREE**

Quality #ECE is essential for children and families. Learn more at [www.ffyf.org](http://www.ffyf.org).

**72% of voters agree:**

The most important years for developing the capacity to learn are between one and five.



Quality #ECE is essential for children and families. Learn more at [www.ffyf.org](http://www.ffyf.org).

## The Atlantic

The First Five Years Fund is betting that lawmakers from both parties will be more willing to work on the issue because of voters' priorities, not because of presidential dictates. The group's latest annual poll, conducted by two polling firms, Public Opinion Strategies and Hart Research, supports the idea that additional investment in young children is increasingly important to voters. In the nationally representative sample, 90 percent of voters across both parties agreed with the statement: "The next president and Congress should work together to make quality early-childhood education more accessible and affordable to low- and middle-income families."



### Trump Promises to Deliver on Child Care and Paid Leave

Affordable early childhood care has ballooned as a campaign issue recently as it's become more and more expensive.

Indeed, according to [polling](#) from the **First Five Years Fund**, a nonpartisan child care advocacy group, 90 percent of voters agree that Congress and the next president should work together to make quality early care and learning more accessible and affordable to low- and middle-income families -- and that includes 78 percent of Trump supporters and 97 percent of Clinton supporters.





**First Five Years Fund**

# QUESTIONS?

