



Virginia Coastal Zone
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



Virginia Survey on Plastic Pollution

Steve Raabe
President, OpinionWorks LLC



OpinionWorks Credentials

- Measure perceptions, attitudes
- Surveys, focus groups, in-depth interviews
- Seek engagement, behavior change
- Assess public support for policy proposals

Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program

- Behavior change related to marine debris

The Baltimore Sun

- Elections and issues polling since 2007

Chesapeake Bay Program

- Development of a Baywide indicator of stewardship behavior

University of Richmond

- Brand assessment among prospective students

The Recycling Partnership

- National consumer research on response to recycling prompts and tools

211 Maryland

- Branding and outreach related to behavioral health helpline

William Penn Foundation

- Assessing equitable access to the trails and parks in Greater Philadelphia

Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore

- Perceptions and visitation of Baltimore's Inner Harbor

Los Angeles County, California

- Evaluation of media campaign encouraging proper disposal of batteries



2021 Dayton Survey

Final Report





Inspiring Action, Fostering Stewardship

Thousands of Chesapeake Bay watershed residents were surveyed about their stewardship behaviors that impact the Bay's health.

[Learn about the survey](#)

What Is Chesapeake Behavior Change?

Chesapeake Behavior Change is a resource to help organizations apply the Stewardship Index Survey results to their work to ultimately increase the number of residents taking on-the-ground action to protect and restore the Bay. Explore the site to learn about the survey, its findings, and how to use

Research Method

- **Representative statewide sample**
 - 901 interviews
 - Very good ability to segment the data, understand audience segments
 - Representative of Commonwealth's population
 - $\pm 3.3\%$ sampling error, 95% confidence
- **Mixed-mode sampling**
 - Online using consumer panels
 - Wireless and landline phone
- **Fielded March 8–13, 2022**
- **10 in-depth follow-up interviews to understand thinking**
 - On-on-one, virtually; May 2022

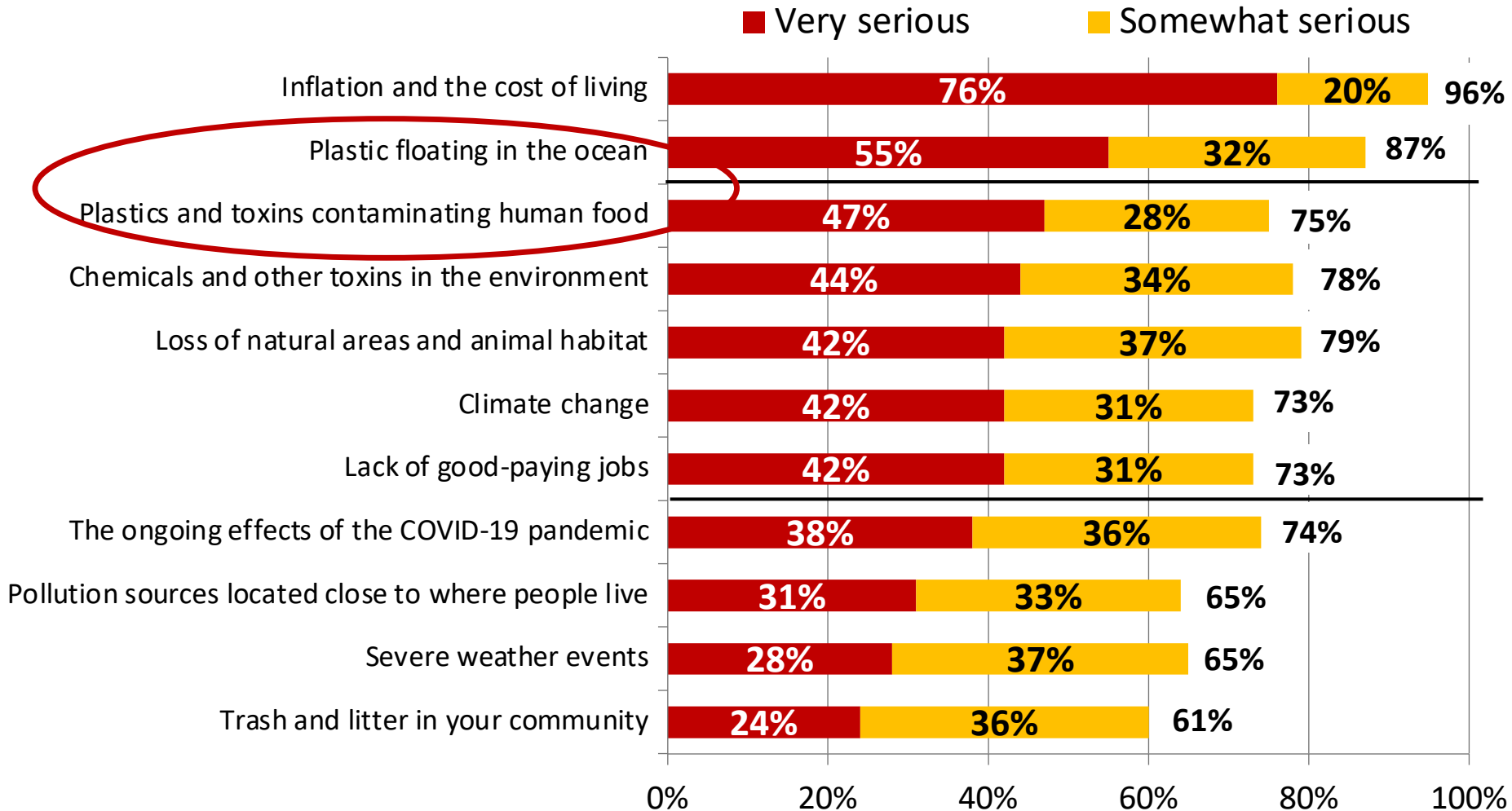
Survey Sample Composition

Under age 25	7%
20 to 34	18%
35 to 44	17%
45 to 54	17%
55 to 64	16%
65 or more	19%
Prefer not to say	6%
Caucasian or White	69%
African-American or Black	21%
Hispanic or Latino	5%
Asian	8%
All others	5%
Prefer not to say or not sure	2%
Male	49%
Female	50%
Another gender category	1%
Prefer not to say	1%
Democrats	33%
Republicans	32%
Unaffiliated or not sure	35%
Politically Progressive	27%
Moderate	39%
Conservative	29%
Prefer not to say or not sure	6%

**Context:
Serious Concerns
about Plastic**

Rating the Seriousness of Problems

Virginia Voter Survey, March 2022



Do you consider each of the following to be a very serious problem, somewhat serious problem, not much of a problem, or not a problem at all?

“It’s very disturbing. I am concerned about...plastic pollution in the water and elsewhere because it affects all the fish and wildlife and people. It’s not good, and it’s something that we really need to get a handle on, because it’s gotten to the critical point right now.”



Carol, Williamsburg

“It really kind of makes me sad that people won’t take care of the Earth, and they’ll just discard trash, not thinking anything about how it affects the ecosystem that we live in... it makes me wonder, why is this happening? Why hasn’t anybody done something to help stop this, or reduce this?”



Monique, Roanoke

Reactions to Marine Debris



Newsweek.com



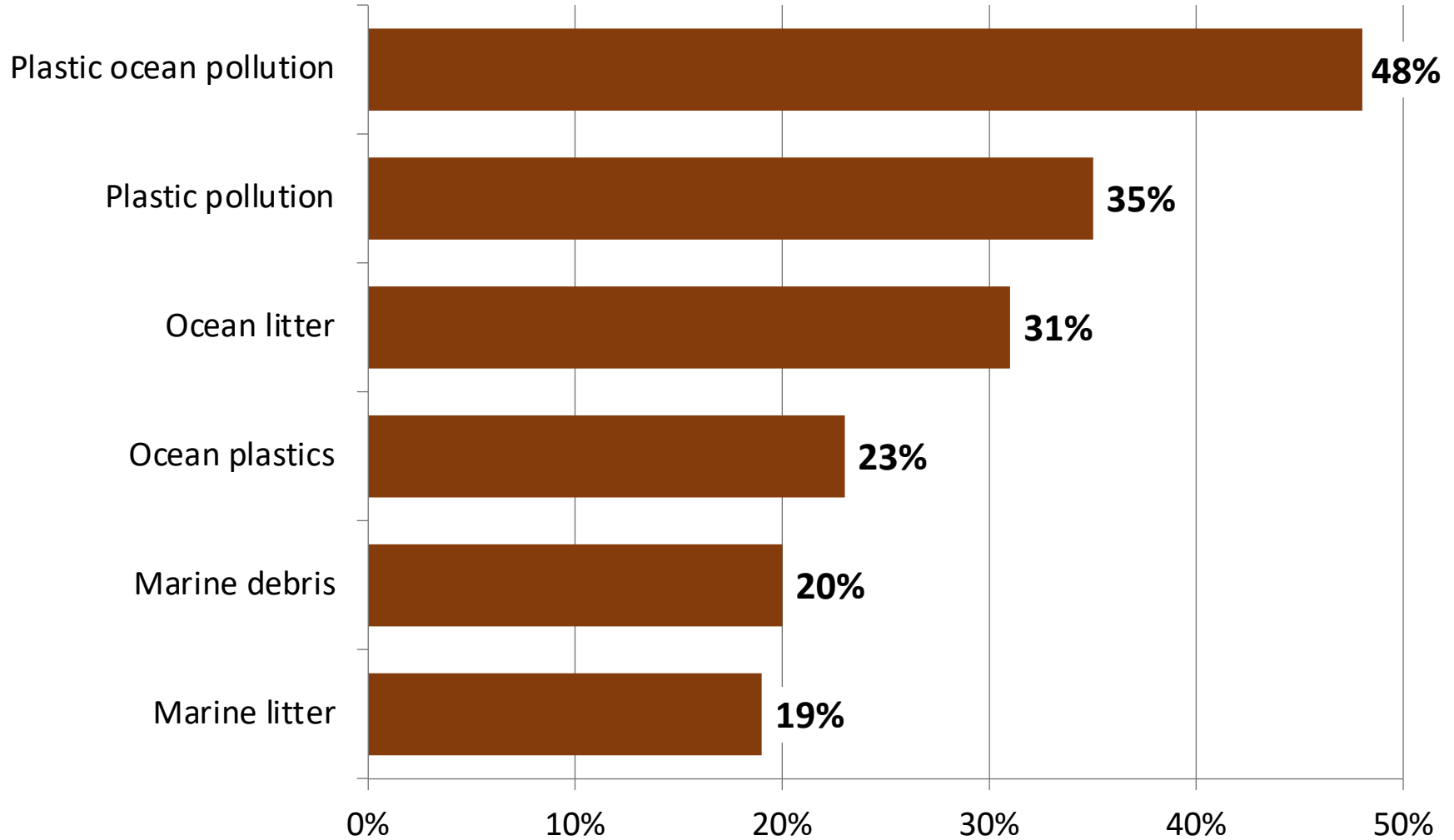
waterpollutionsolutions.com



Phys.org

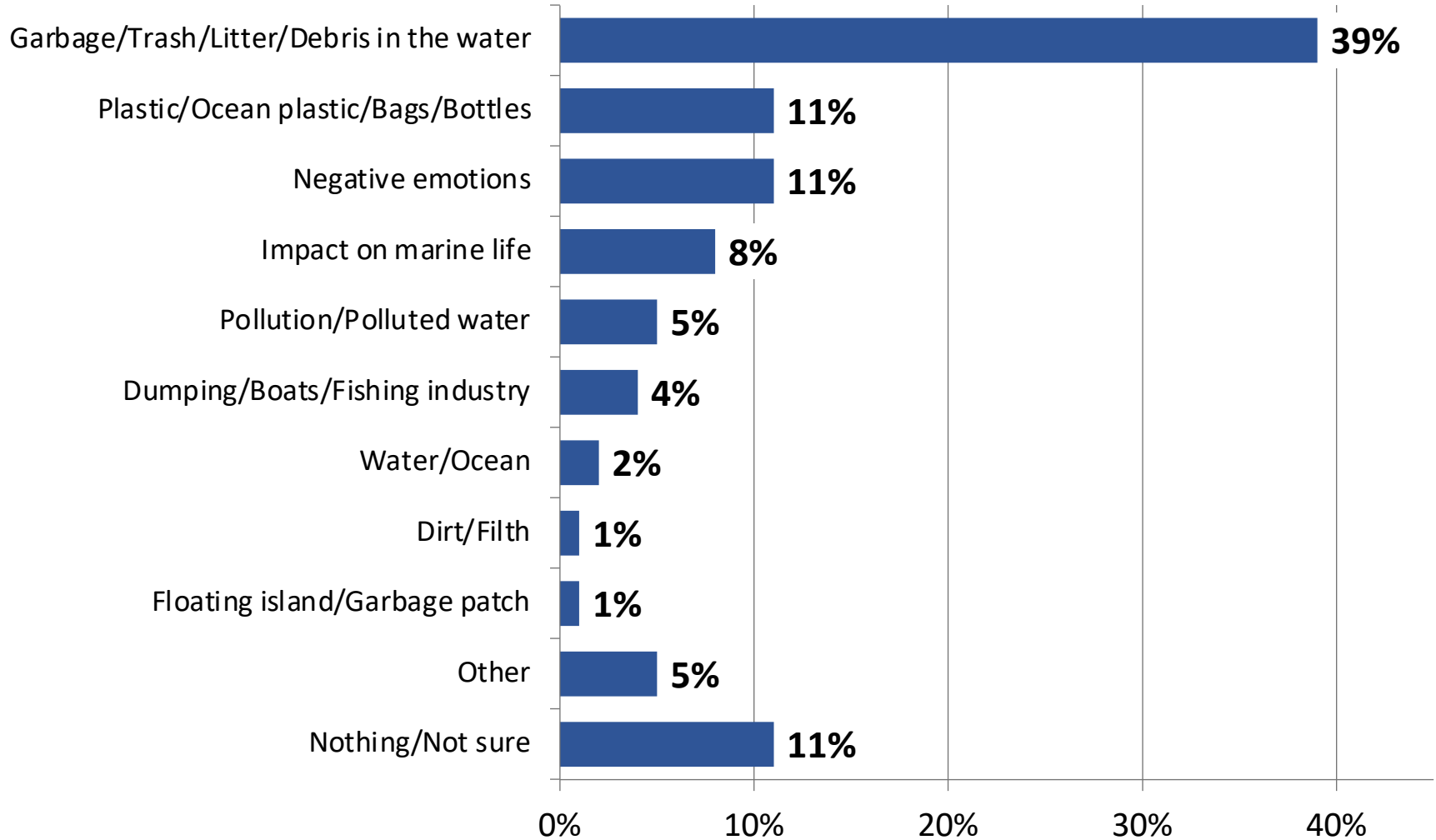
Seems More Serious

Respondents Could Choose up to Two



Which words seem more serious to you, or like a bigger problem? Choose up to two.
(Words randomized)

“Marine Debris”



What do you think of when you hear the term “marine debris?”
(Open-ended; categorized responses shown.)

Finding out that Plastics are in Our Food

“That's a big surprise, to be honest. (That makes me feel) kind of groggy...sick a little bit, just to think about it. You just imagine yourself biting plastic and eating, and that doesn't feel right or good at all.” – Edgar

“I'm going to have to think a lot about what I'm eating now. ...It's gross, it's sickening to know that.” – Taylor

“I don't want to put that in my body. ...We are what we eat and we're all interconnected. What we put into the ocean comes back to us.” – Helen

Finding out that Plastics are Made from Petrochemicals

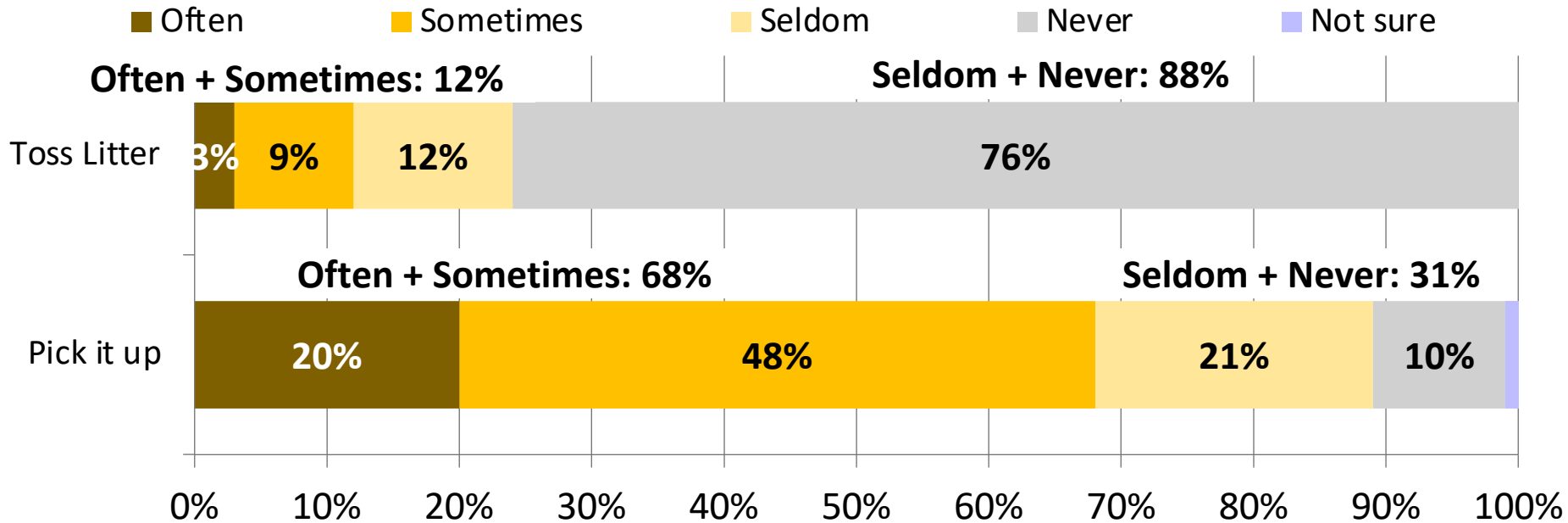
“That's, that's intense. I didn't know that. I knew there were like a lot of chemicals that were put into making plastic, but I didn't know that essentially the same thing that we used to drive around is what's in plastic.” – Taylor

“They come from a non-renewable resource, and those are limited. And so when I think about using plastics and the idea of recycling plastics or reusing plastics, it's not just the purpose of not polluting and littering, but also this idea that it comes from a non-renewable resource.” – Jamie

**0 out of 10 interviewees
knew what plastics are made from.**

Littering

Littering Behavior



Sometimes people toss things on the ground when they are not near a trash can. What about you? Do you often, sometimes, seldom, or never toss something on the ground when you are done with it?

When you see litter on the ground that someone else has put there, do you often, sometimes, seldom, or never pick it up and throw it away?

How You Feel When You See Litter



Use this text box to type in one word that describes how you feel when you see litter on the ground near where you live.

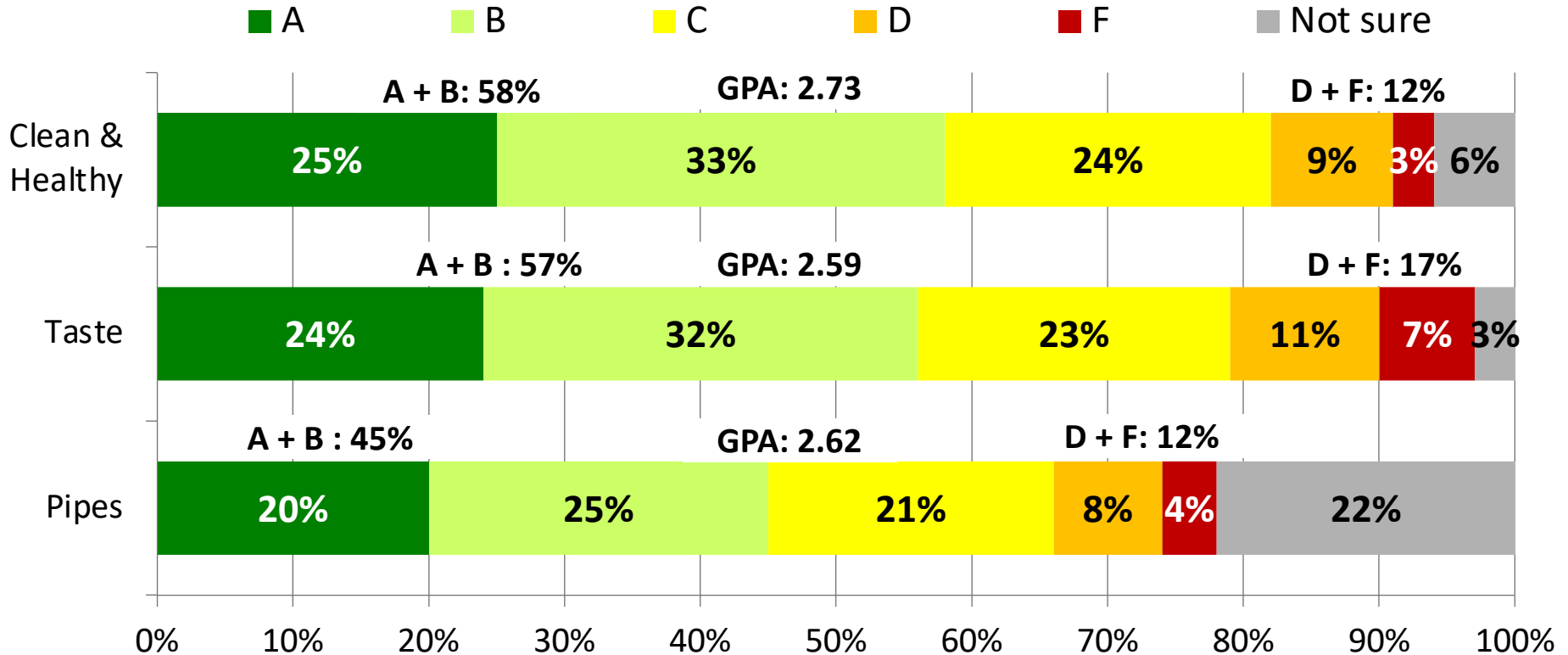
“I didn’t know that 80% (of the plastic in the ocean) comes from inland. And so I think understanding that basically the litter in our community is what makes up the litter in the ocean is a huge game changer.”



Taylor, Fairfax

Bottled Water

Grading Tap Water



Think about the water that comes out of the tap at your home. Please grade it for the following things on an A, B, C, D, F scale like in school, where A is excellent, and F is failing.

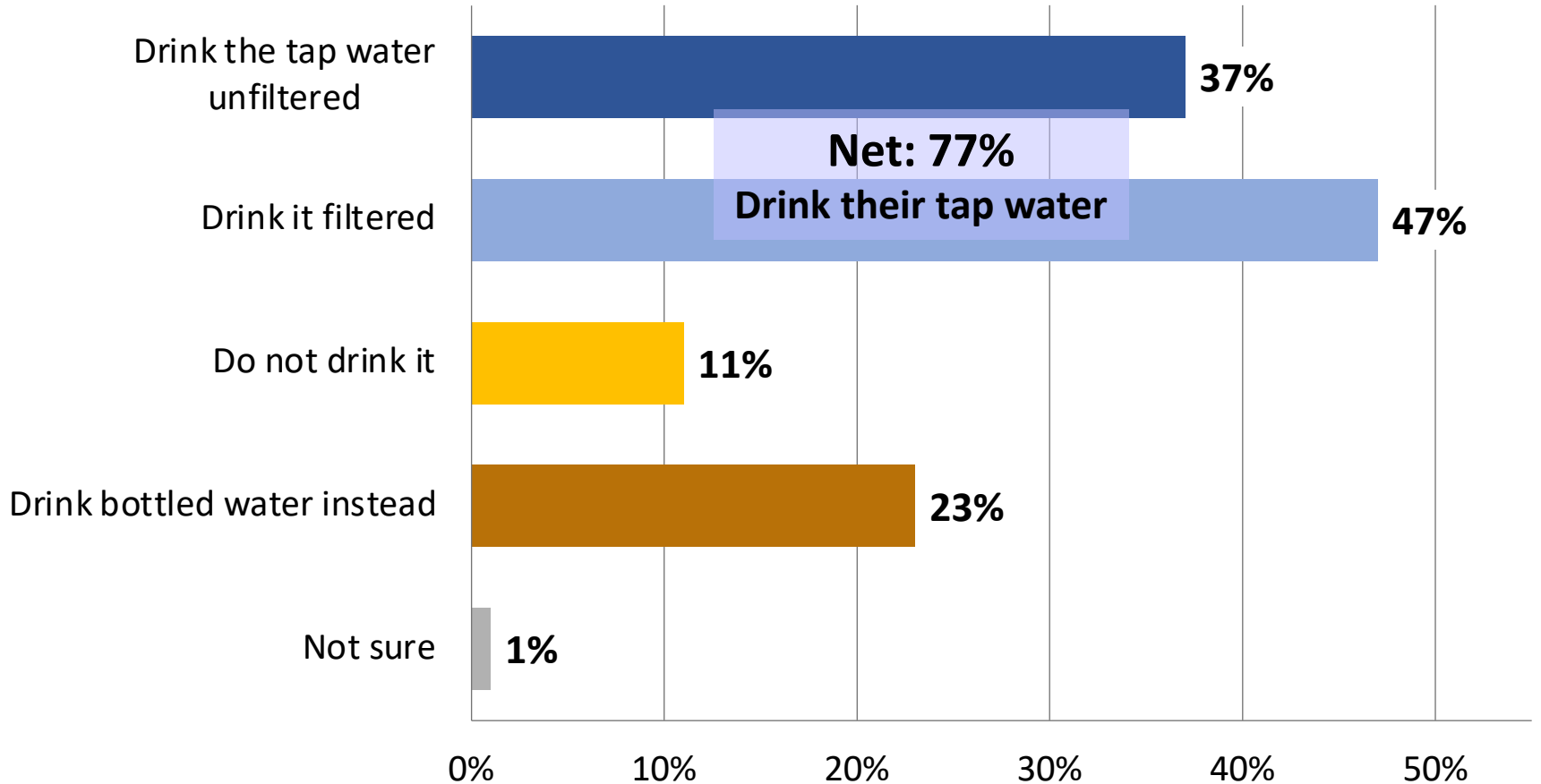
How clean and healthy the water is

How it tastes

The condition of the pipes coming to your home

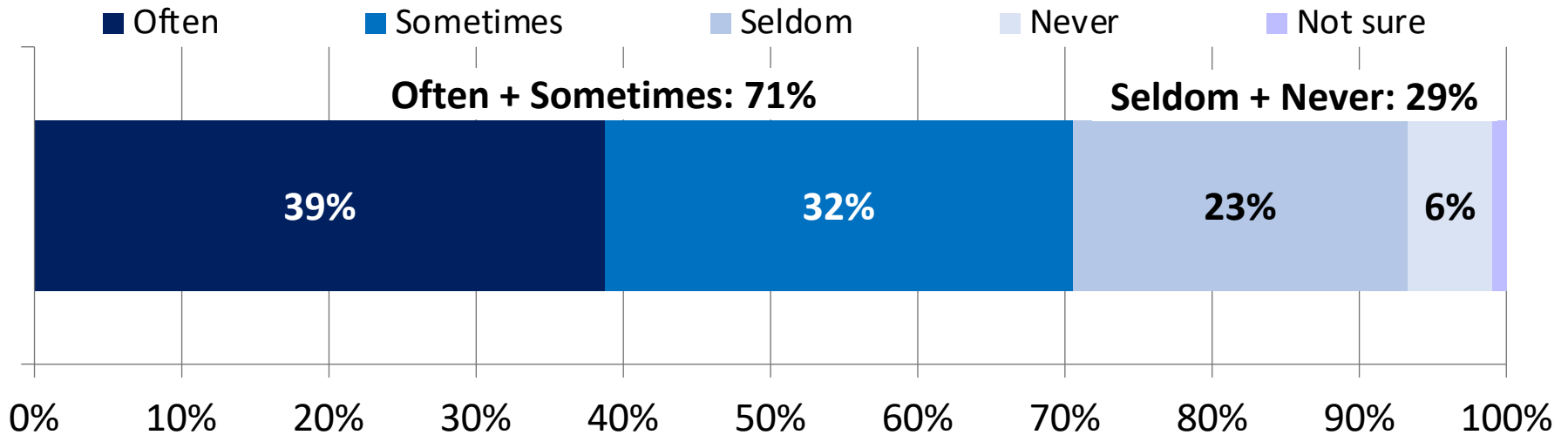
Drinking Tap Water

Respondents Could Choose More Than One



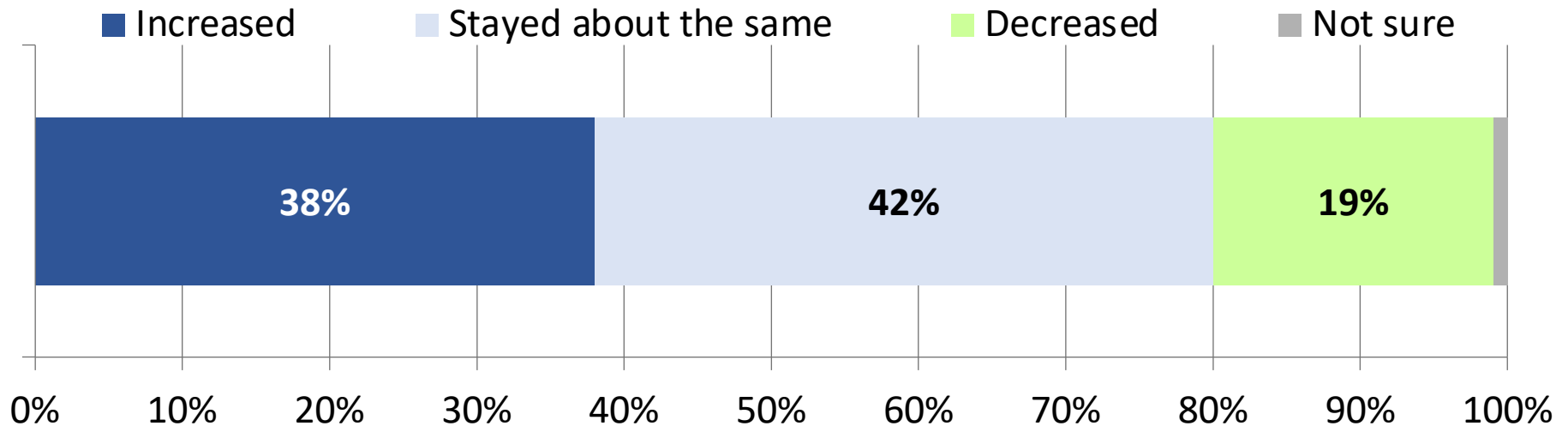
Do you drink the water that comes out of your tap unfiltered, filtered, or not at all? (Allow multiple.)

Frequency Drinking Bottled Water



Do you drink bottled water often, sometimes, seldom, or never?

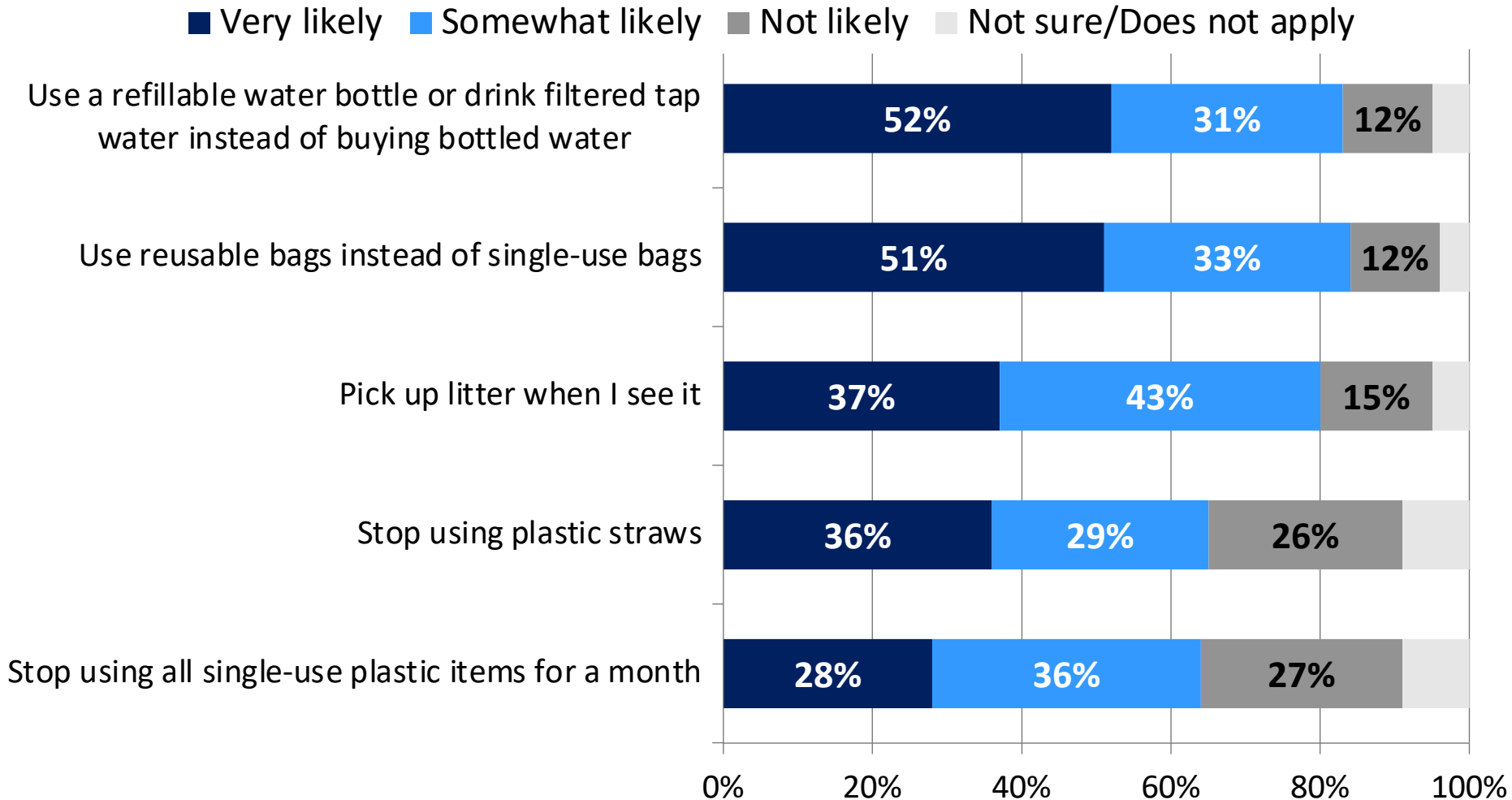
Trend in Drinking Bottled Water



Compared to a few years ago, has the amount of bottled water you drink increased, decreased, or stayed about the same?

Individual Actions (Behavior Change)

Willingness to Act

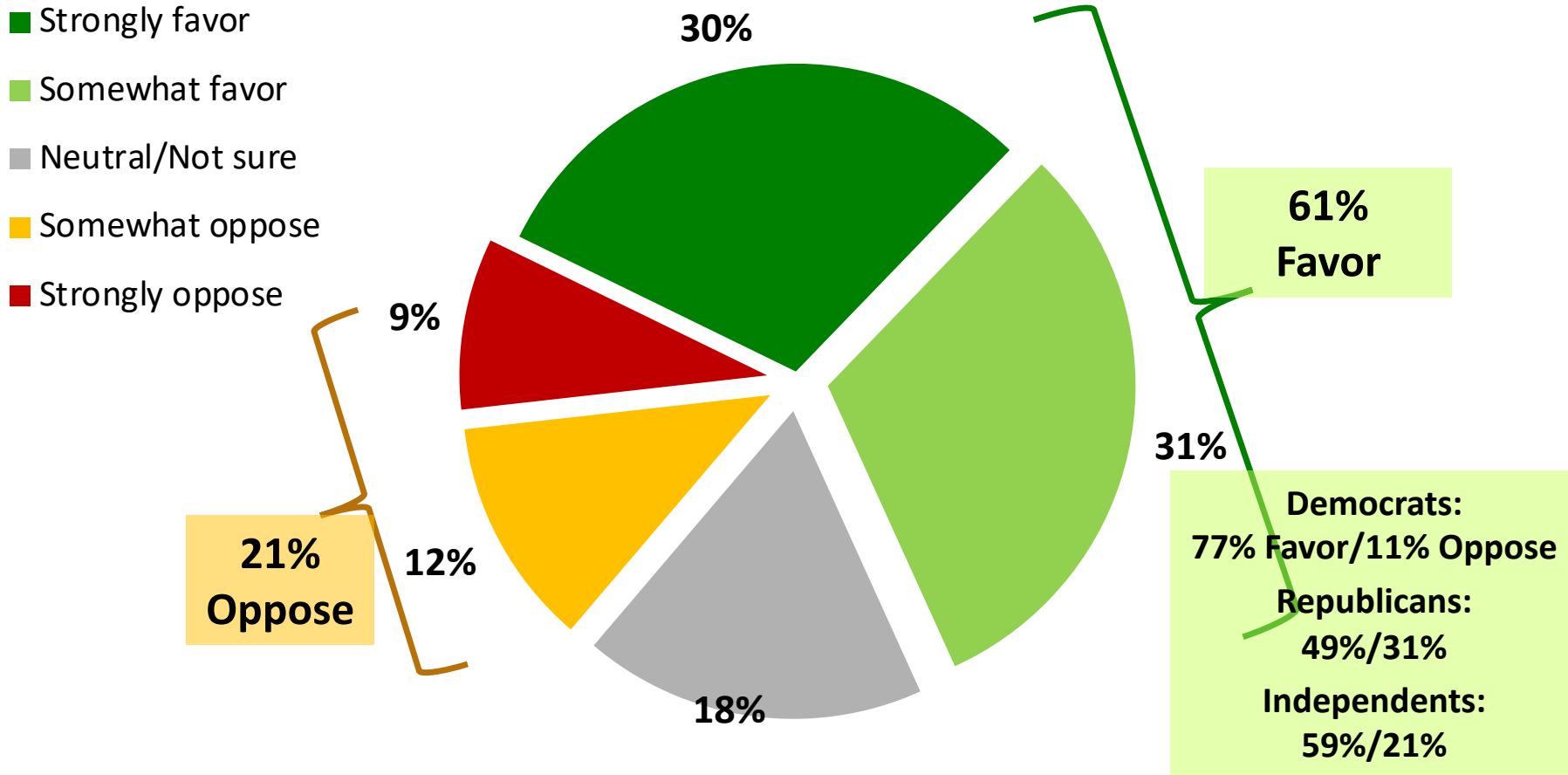


In the future, how likely would you be to do any of these things, if you thought they would reduce the amount of plastic in the environment and the ocean? For each one, please say if you would be very likely, somewhat likely, or not likely to do it. If a question does not apply to you, just say so.

Public Policy

Ban Single-Use Plastic Bags

Virginia Voter Survey, March 2022

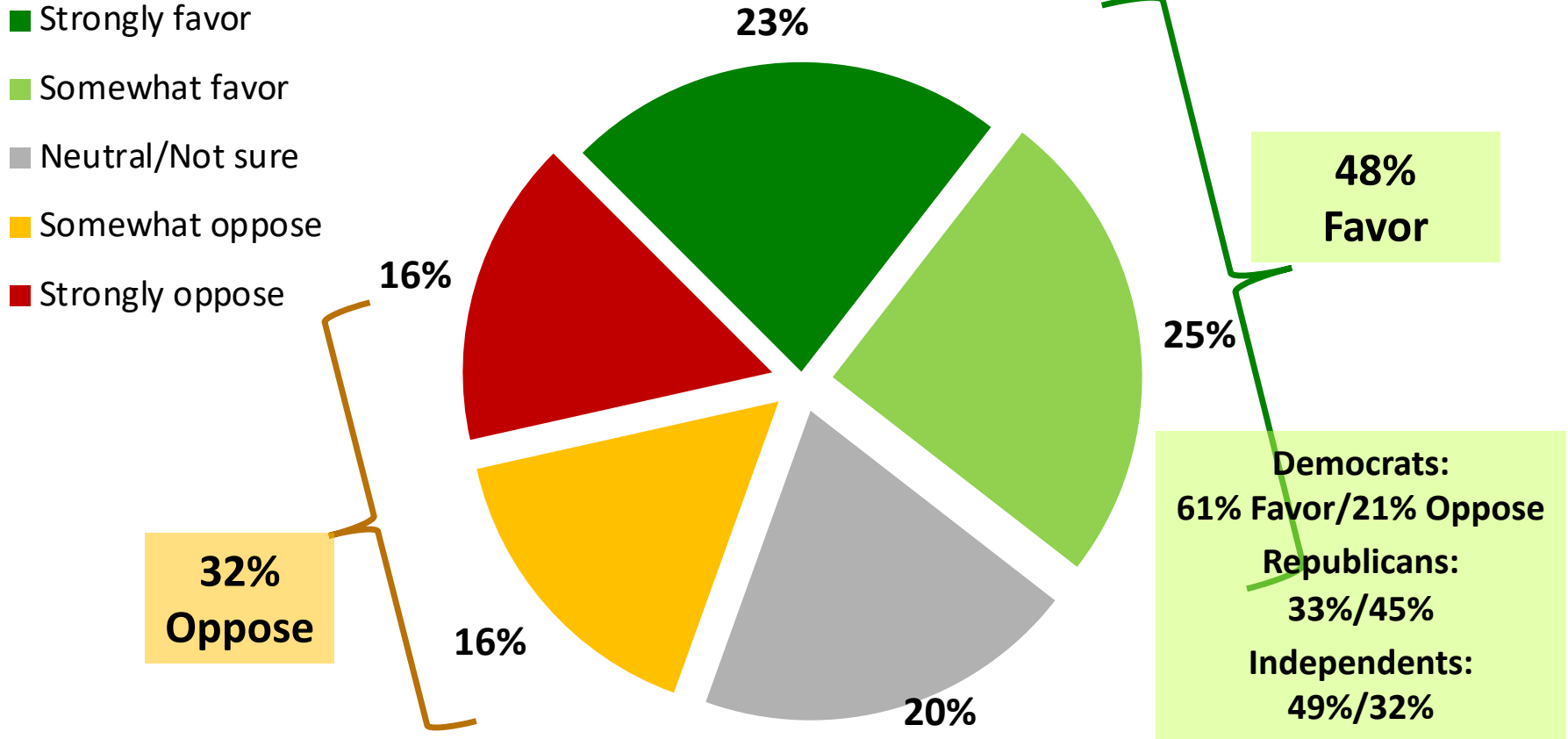


...For each idea, please say if you strongly favor it, somewhat favor it, are neutral, somewhat oppose it, or strongly oppose it.

Ban single-use plastic grocery and shopping bags and require paper or reusable bags instead.

5-Cent Fee on Single-Use Plastic Bags

Virginia Voter Survey, March 2022

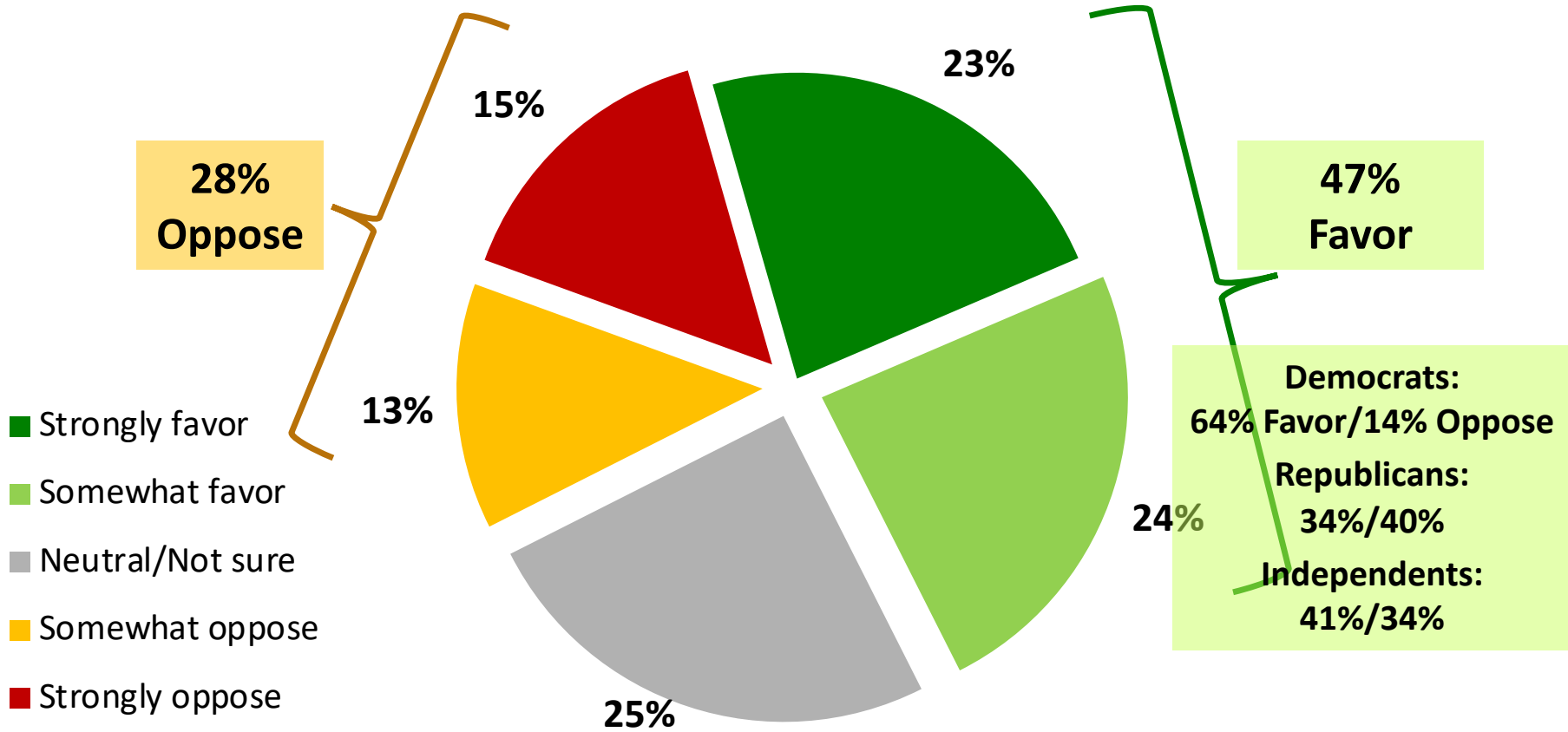


...For each idea, please say if you strongly favor it, somewhat favor it, are neutral, somewhat oppose it, or strongly oppose it.

Place a 5-cent fee on single-use plastic bags to discourage their use.

Ban Plastic Straws

Virginia Voter Survey, March 2022

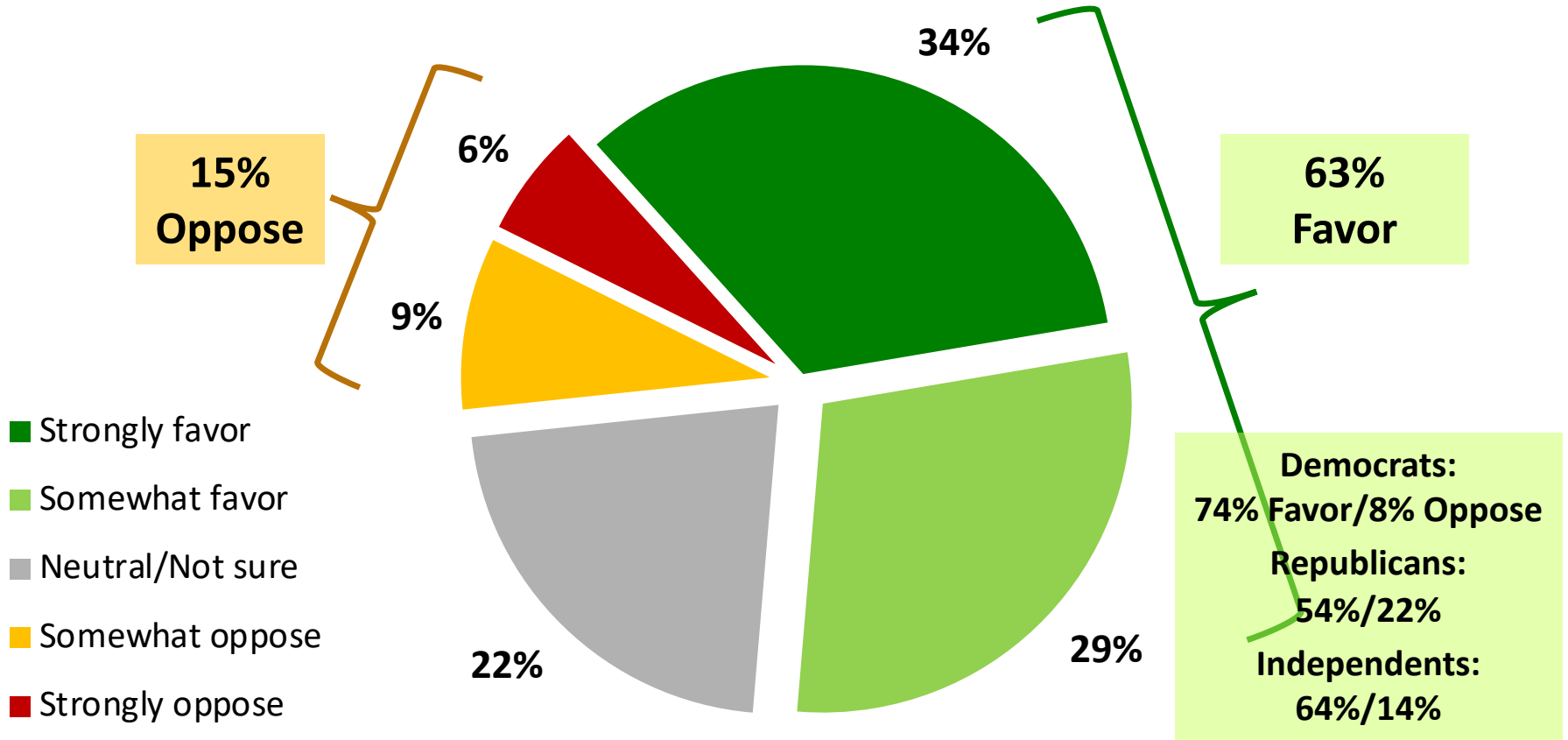


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Ban plastic straws.

Ban Polystyrene Containers

Virginia Voter Survey, March 2022



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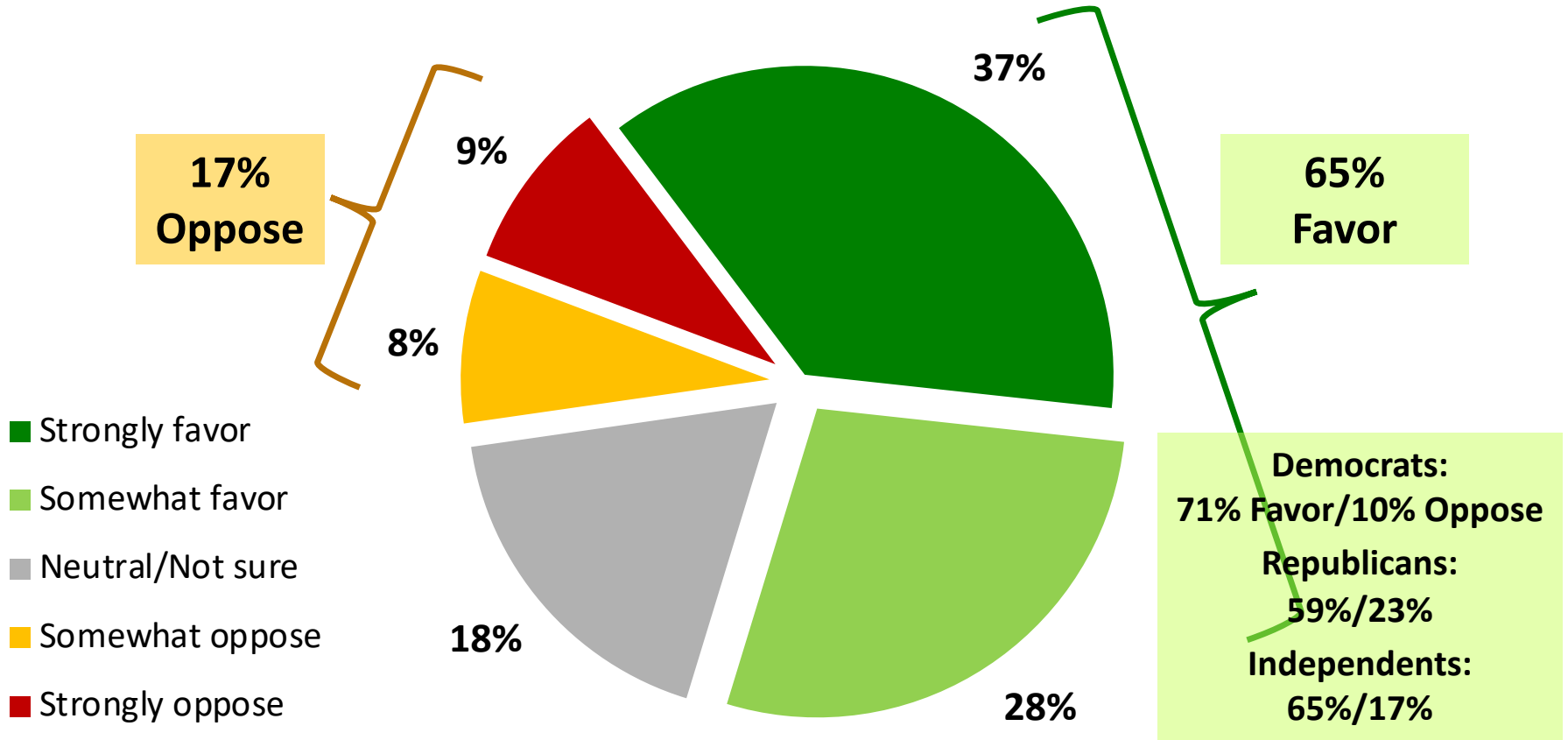
Ban polystyrene or foam take-out containers.

Ban Polystyrene Containers

“This would've been great legislation back in 1990. ... This is something that not only do I support it, I think that it should be given two months or two weeks to find alternatives. Because there's so many alternatives out there. There's so many things that are compostable, there's so many things that are easily recyclable and cheaper for the restaurants. I have no clue why places are still using Styrofoam.” – Henry

Bottle Deposit

Virginia Voter Survey, March 2022

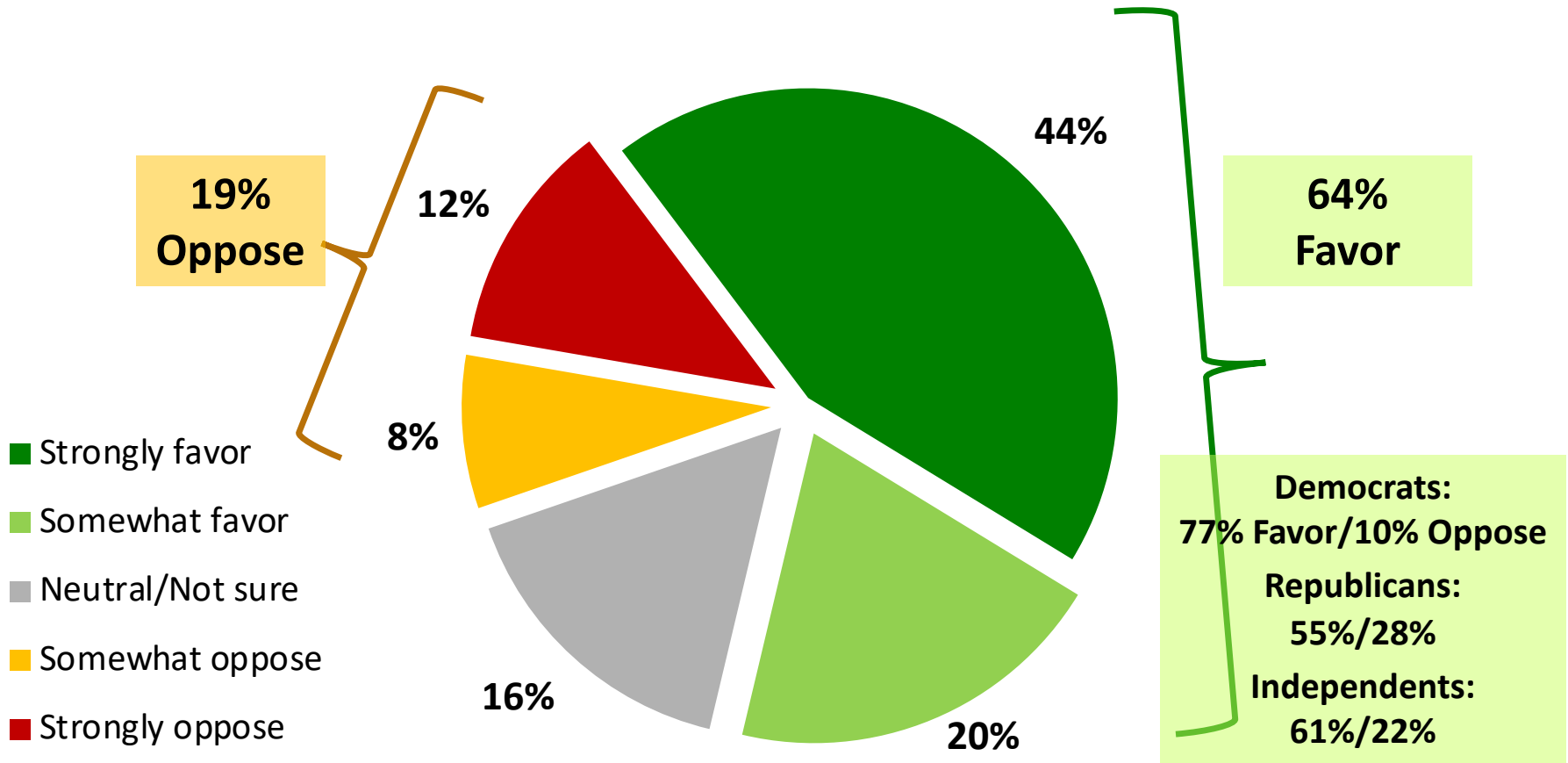


...For each idea, please say if you strongly favor it, somewhat favor it, are neutral, somewhat oppose it, or strongly oppose it.

Charge a 5-cent or 10-cent fee on bottled drinks that you get back when you return the bottles to a store or redemption center.

50-Cent per Cigarette Pack Litter Fee

Virginia Voter Survey, March 2022

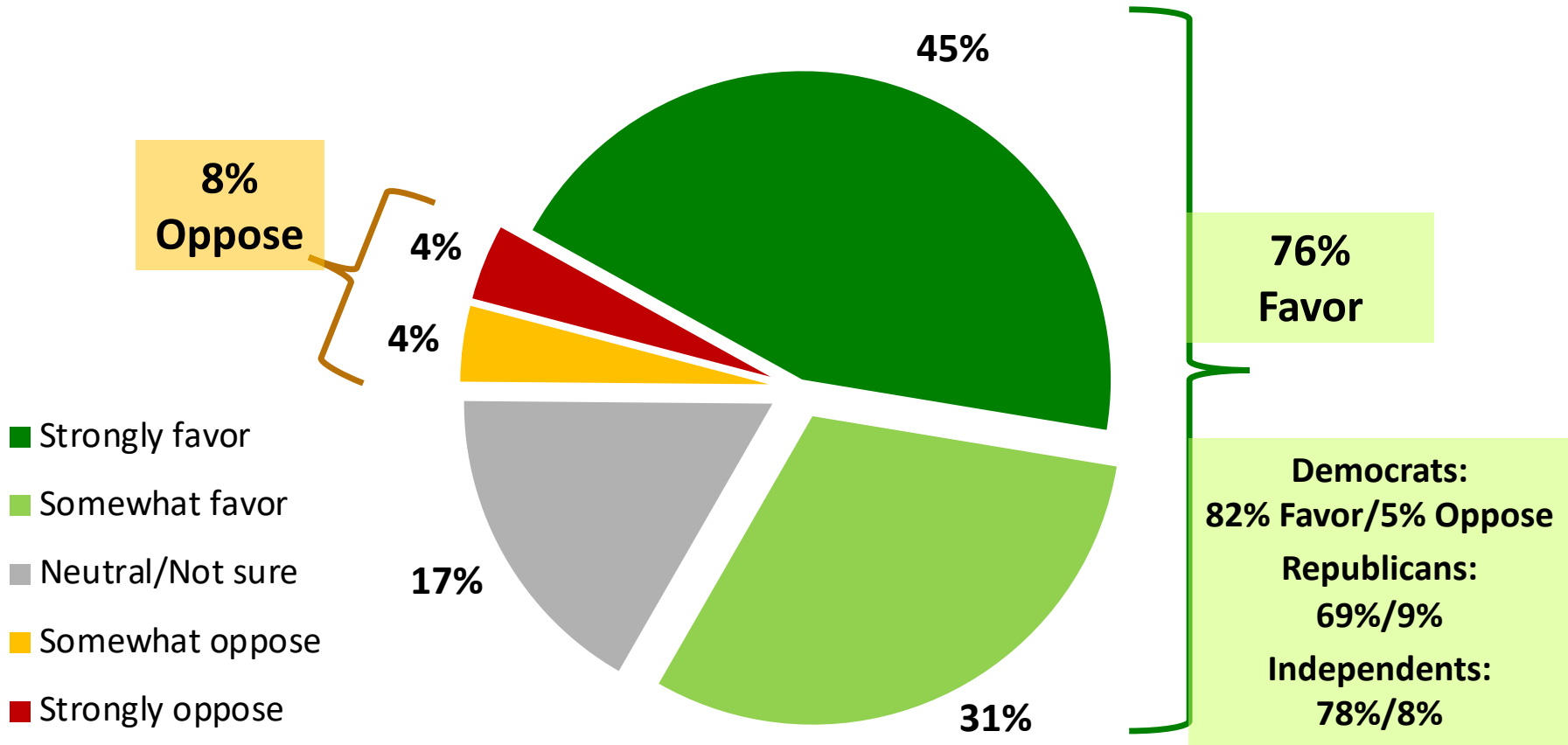


...For each idea, please say if you strongly favor it, somewhat favor it, are neutral, somewhat oppose it, or strongly oppose it.

Charge a 50-cent-fee on each pack of cigarettes to help pay the cost of cleaning up littered cigarette butts.

Require Less Plastic in Packaging

Virginia Voter Survey, March 2022

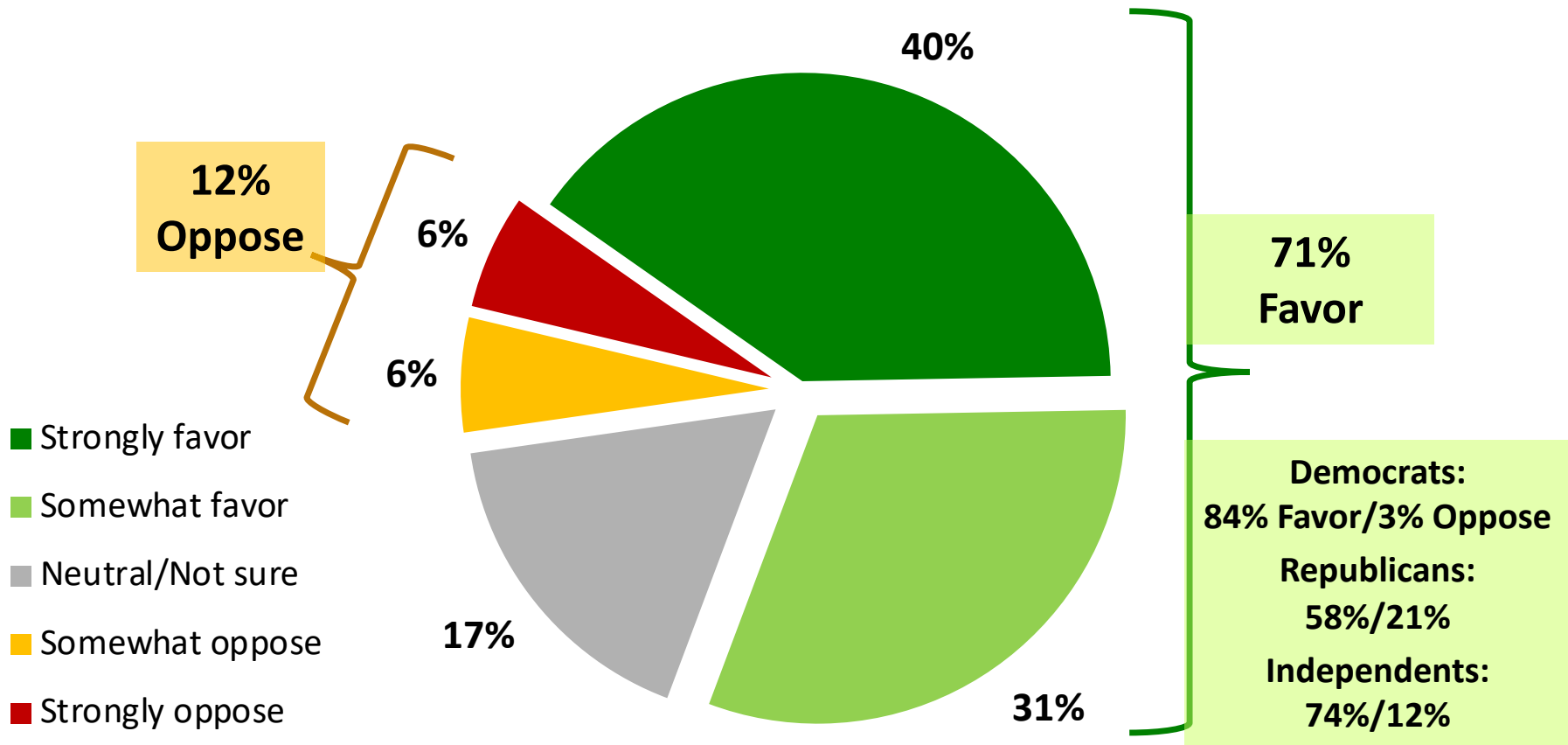


...For each idea, please say if you strongly favor it, somewhat favor it, are neutral, somewhat oppose it, or strongly oppose it.

Require manufacturers to use less plastic in product packaging.

Require Manufacturers to Pay for Recycling

Virginia Voter Survey, March 2022



...For each idea, please say if you strongly favor it, somewhat favor it, are neutral, somewhat oppose it, or strongly oppose it.

Require manufacturers to help pay for recycling pick-up and processing in local communities, reducing burden on taxpayers.

“It’s time for (producers) to pay, because (they) need to be involved also. You’re producing all these things. You need to understand the necessity of making sure things get recycled...and as a taxpayer, I think it’s about time we enforce some of these things for these producers so they can start picking up the slack...so for me, when I see companies and organizations making an effort, that encourages me to make an effort also.”

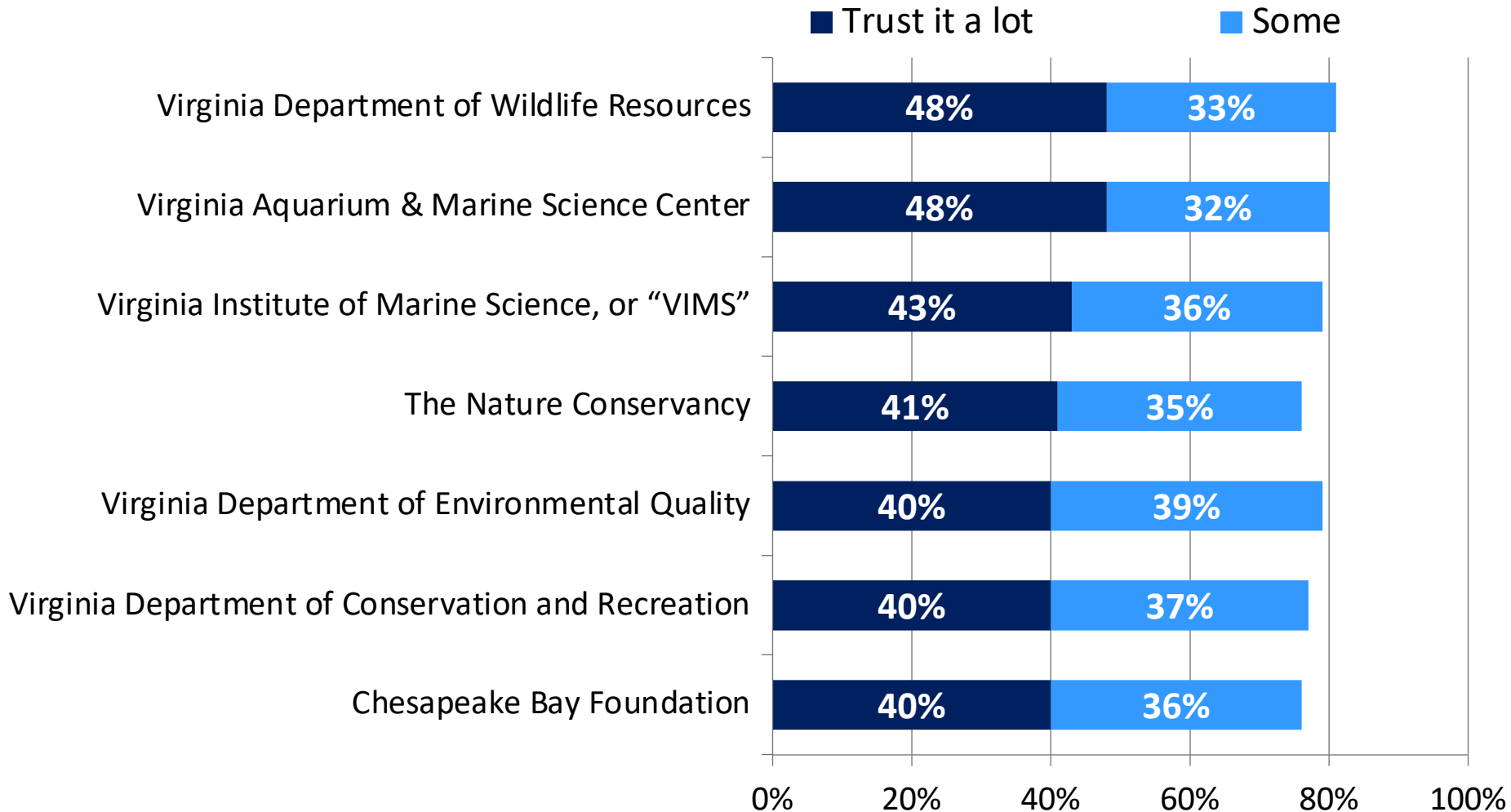


Michael, Hampton

Trusted Messengers

Trusted Messengers

Top Tier



How much would you trust information about plastic pollution that comes from each of these sources? Say if you would trust it a lot, some, only a little, or not at all. If you don't know, just say so.



Virginia Coastal Zone
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

**CLEAN
VIRGINIA
WATERWAYS**

Affiliated with Longwood University & Ocean Conservancy



Virginia Survey on Plastic Pollution

Let's Discuss!

OPINIONWORKS
PUBLIC SPIRITED RESEARCH