Statute of Limitations for Child Sexual Abuse / Amendment 110 Poll

Findings from a survey of Massachusetts registered voters

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Survey Background

- Results are based on a survey of 802 registered voters Massachusetts.
- The survey was via online survey interviewing and text to web interviewing September 14-19, 2026.
- Results were weighted by race, age, gender, education, political party, and county to reflect known and estimated population parameters for Massachusetts registered voters.
- The poll was commissioned by Herman Law and conducted by The MassINC Polling Group.

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Key findings

- Support is very broad (84%) for the proposal to remove the statute of limitations for civil lawsuits involving sexual abuse of children and 67% say addressing the issue should be a high priority.

- The vast majority of voters (91%) agree it may take many years for survivors of childhood sexual abuse to come forward.

- A similarly large majority of voters (93%) say institutions should be able to be held accountable if they enabled sexual abuse to occur.

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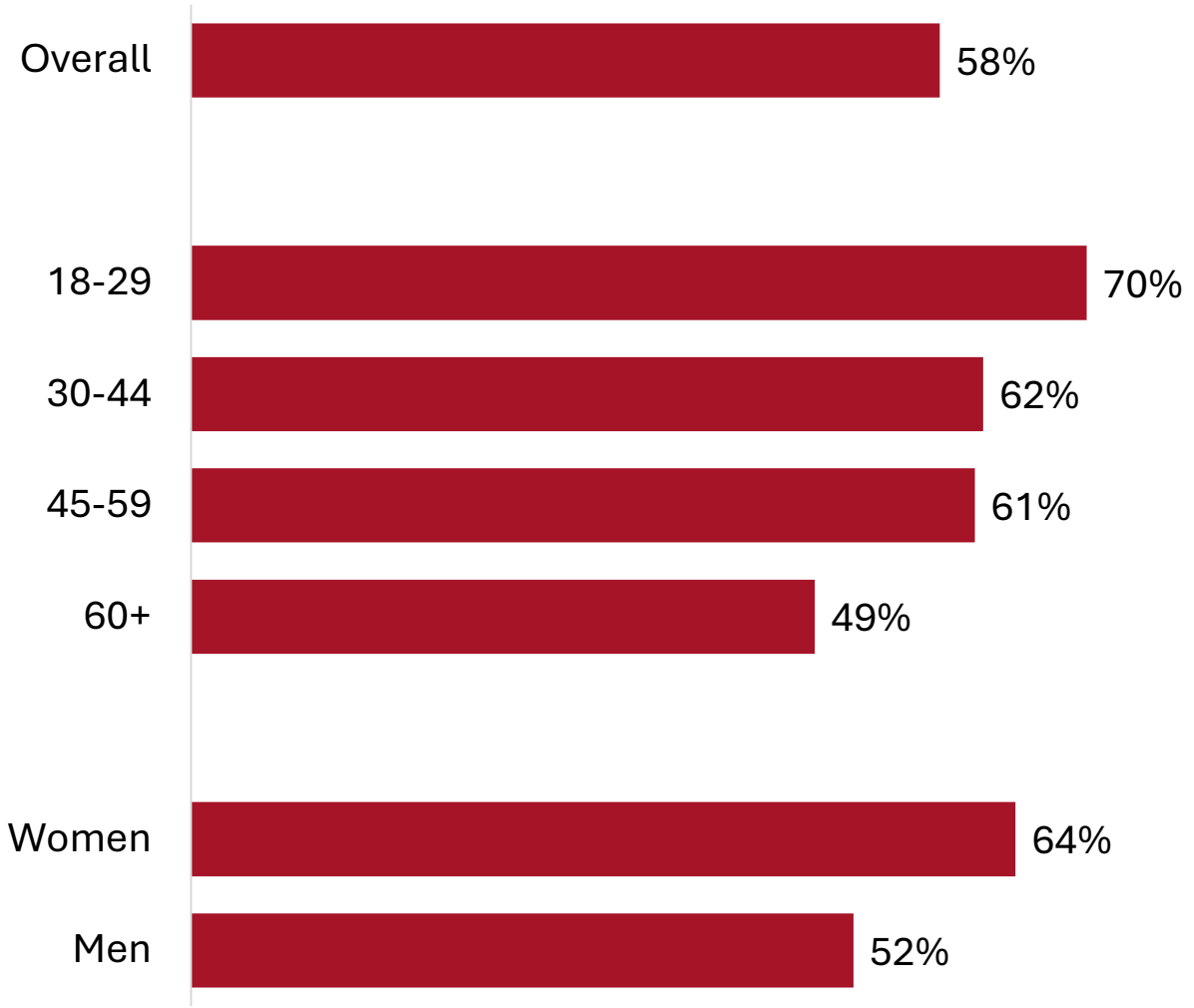
How common is child sexual abuse?

- Most voters think child sexual abuse is very or somewhat common in Massachusetts.
- Younger people and women are particularly likely to see it as common.

Most voters think abuse is common in Massachusetts

% who say child sexual abuse is very or somewhat common



Q: How common do you think child sexual abuse is in the state of Massachusetts?

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Preventing abuse key to childhood well-being

- Voters see safety from sexual abuse as the most important element of a child's well-being. Women, and particularly those age 45+ were more likely to say so.

Preventing sexual abuse is seen as the most important element of a child's well-being

% who think _____ is the most important element of childhood well-being

	Overall	Men	Women	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+	M 18-44	W 18-44	M 45+	W 45+
Safety from sexual abuse	44%	37%	50%	34%	38%	50%	48%	30%	42%	42%	55%
Education	20%	23%	18%	23%	24%	18%	17%	26%	21%	20%	15%
Medical care	12%	11%	12%	12%	11%	11%	13%	12%	10%	10%	14%
Financial stability	9%	11%	8%	10%	16%	9%	6%	13%	14%	10%	4%
Childcare	9%	12%	7%	16%	7%	7%	9%	15%	8%	11%	6%

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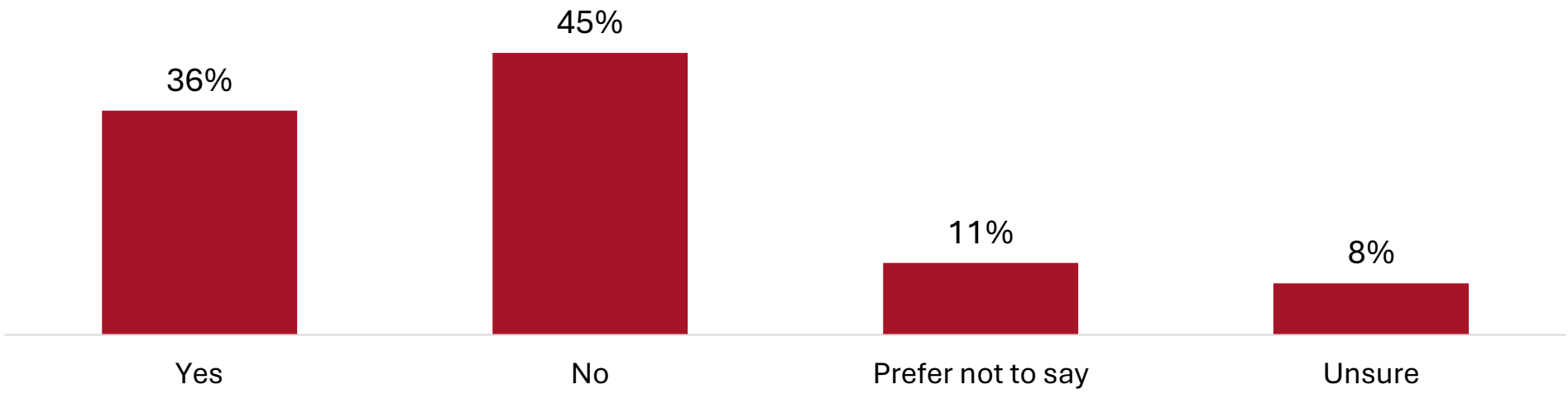
Q: Which of the following do you think is most important to a child's well-being?

Personally know a survivor

- Overall, 36% of Massachusetts voters say they or someone they know were abused as children with another 19% unsure or preferring not to respond.

Many say they or someone they know experienced abuse as a child or declined to respond

% say yes / no to whether they or someone they know were sexually abused as a child



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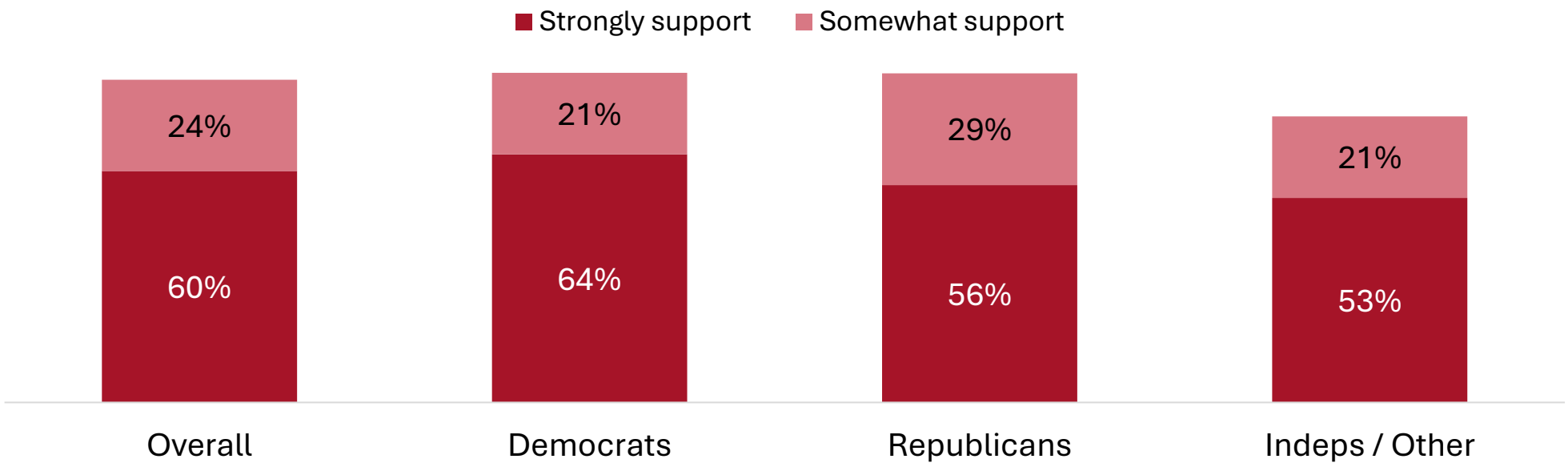
Q: To the best of your knowledge, have you or someone you know ever been sexually abused as a child?

Overall policy support levels

- There is broad, cross-partisan support for eliminating the time limit for filing civil lawsuits on childhood sexual abuse.

Over 80% overall support the proposal to remove the Massachusetts statute of limitations

% who would strongly / somewhat support the proposed legislation



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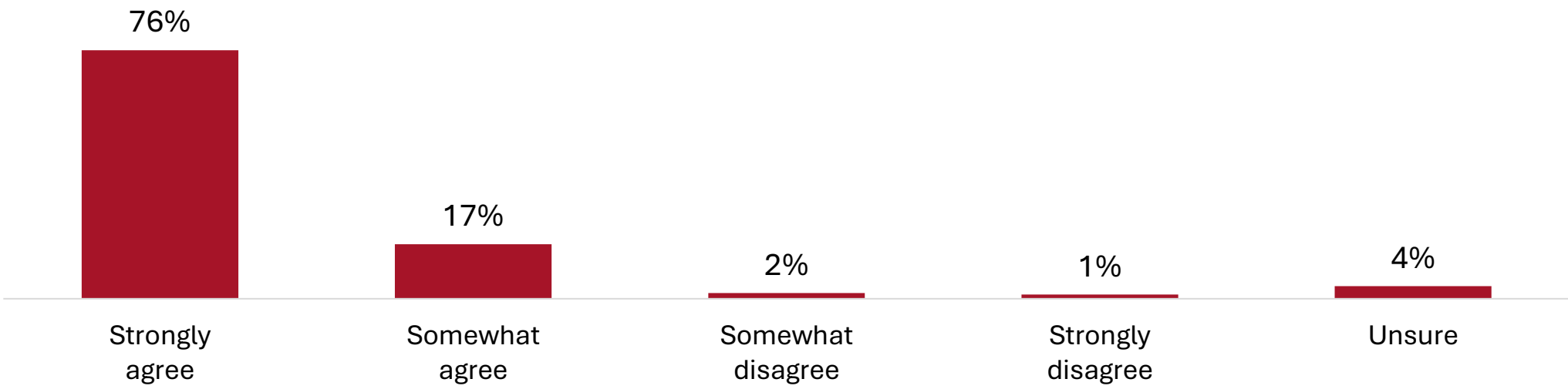
Q: Massachusetts law currently has a time limit in place for child sexual abuse survivors to file a civil lawsuit. A proposed Massachusetts law would eliminate the time limit for filing civil lawsuits related to child sexual abuse. This would allow survivors whose claims are currently barred because too much time has passed to file civil lawsuits. Would you support or oppose this change to Massachusetts law?

Holding institutions accountable

- A large majority of voters see the need for institutional accountability for enabling sexual abuse, with 93% agreement and just a few expressing disagreement.

The vast majority agree that institutions should be held accountable for failing to protect children

% who agree / disagree institutions should be held accountable for enabling abuse to occur



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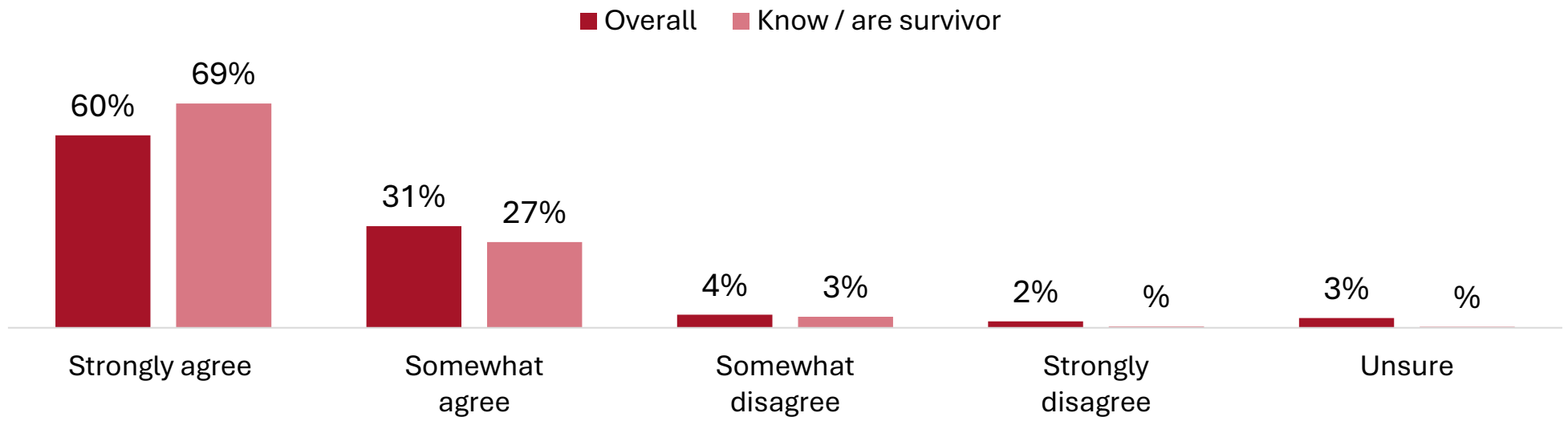
Q: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Organizations such as schools, religious organizations, or youth programs that knowingly enabled sexual abuse to occur and failed to protect children from sexual abuse should be held accountable.

Taking time to come forward

- A large majority of voters agree that survivors may need many years to come forward, with 91% total agreement.
- Those who know or are a survivor are more likely to strongly agree.

Most voters strongly agree that survivors may need time to come forward, 91% total agree

% who agree / disagree abuse survivors may need many years to come forward



Q: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? People who are sexually abused as children may need many years before they are ready to come forward about what happened to them.

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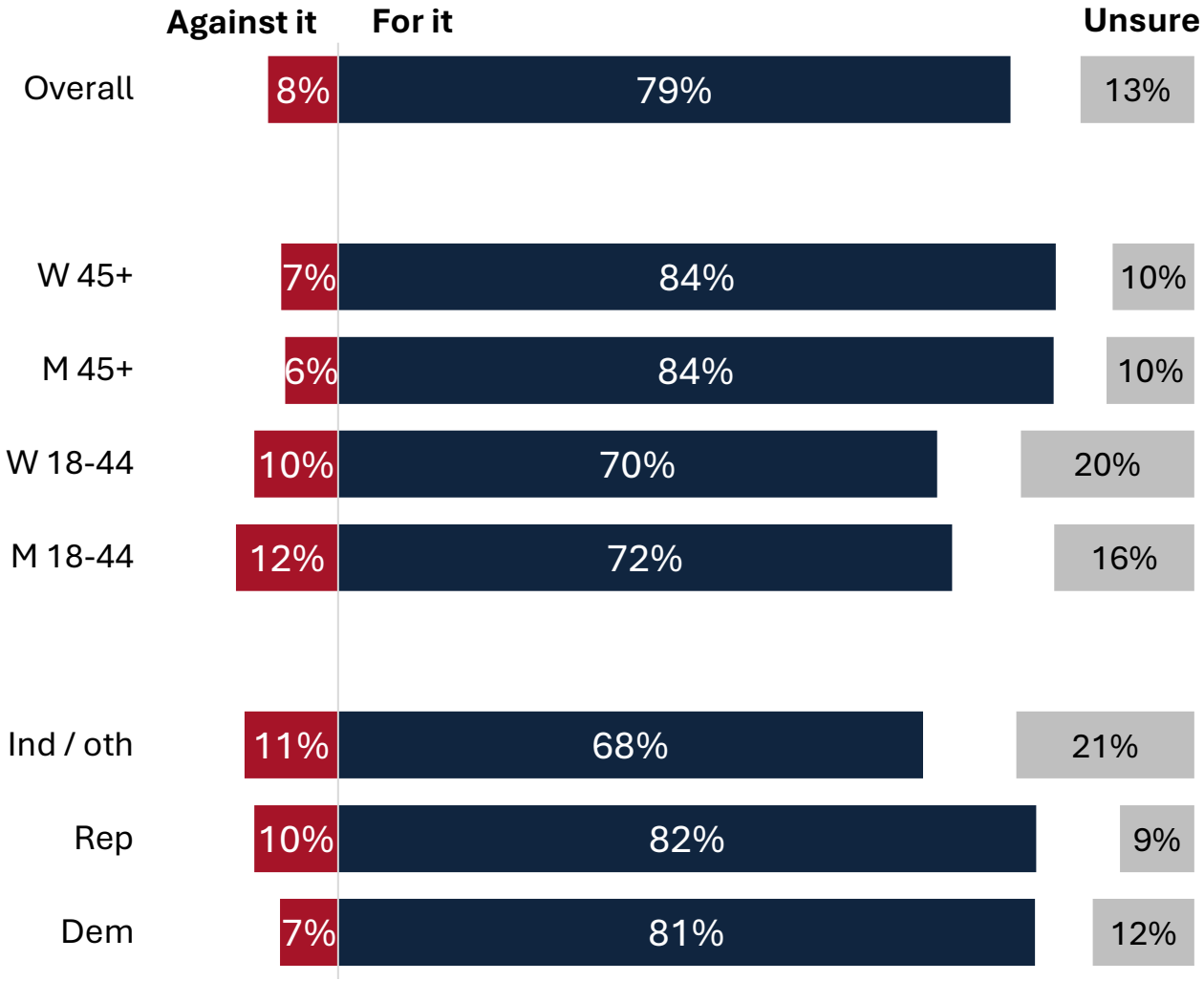
Support for legislative action

- If it were to come to a vote, about 8 in 10 say they would like their own state legislator to vote in favor of the proposal.
- This view extends across demographics with large majorities supporting a “yes” vote.

Q: If these proposed changes were before the Massachusetts Legislature, would you want your state legislator to vote for it or against it?

Most voters would support their own legislator voting “yes”

% who say they think their legislator should vote for / against the proposal



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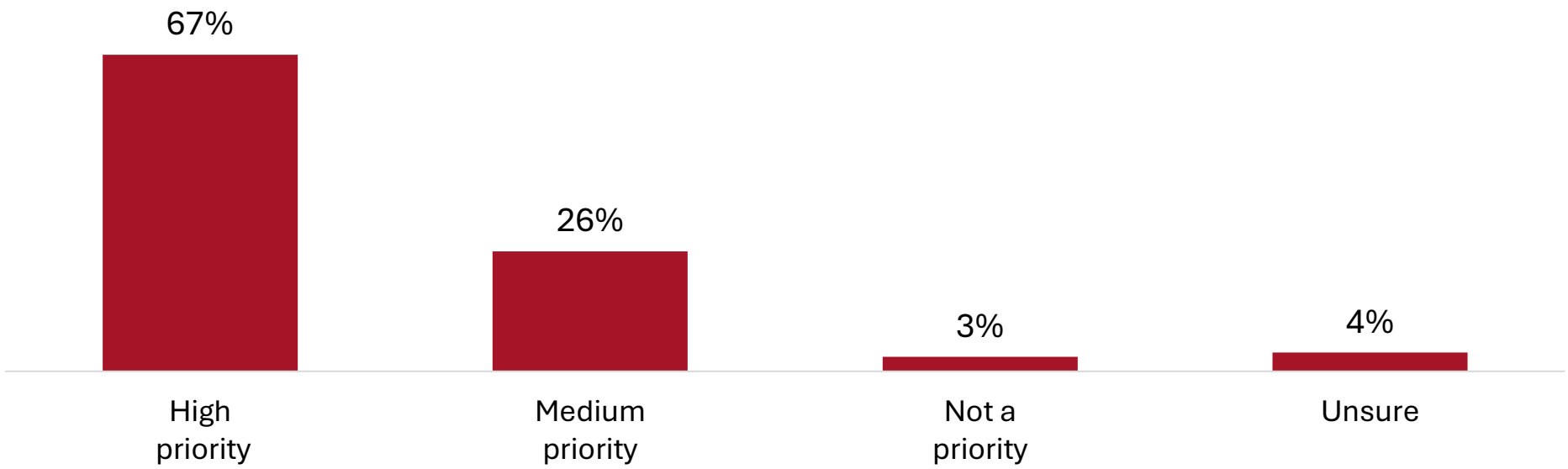
Desired legislative priority level

- Most say this proposed update to child sexual abuse laws in Massachusetts should be a high priority for the state legislature.

Voters would like to see this amendment / proposal receive a high level of priority

% who say the amendment should receive a _____ level of priority



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Q: How much of a priority do you think these changes to childhood sexual abuse law should be?

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