



Minnesota Clean Energy and Environmental Issues Poll and Focus Group Results

August 2014

A project of

Minnesota
Environmental
Partnership





Voter Attitudes Toward Energy Issues in Minnesota

Key Findings from a Statewide Voter Survey

August 2014

*Fairbank,
Maslin,
Maullin,
Metz &
Associates*

FM3

DAVE METZ & LORI WEIGEL



**PUBLIC OPINION
STRATEGIES**

Bipartisan Research Team



Dave Metz – FM3

Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) – a national Democratic opinion research firm with offices in Oakland, Los Angeles and Madison, Wisconsin – has specialized in public policy oriented opinion research since 1981. The firm has assisted hundreds of political campaigns at every level of the ballot – from President to City Council – with opinion research and strategic guidance. FM3 also provides research and strategic consulting to public agencies, businesses and public interest organizations nationwide.



Lori Weigel – POS

Public Opinion Strategies is the largest Republican polling firm in the country. Since the firm's founding in 1991, they have completed more than 10,000 research projects, interviewing more than five million Americans across the United States. Media outlets such as *The Wall Street Journal*, NBC News, CNBC, and National Public Radio rely on Public Opinion Strategies to conduct their polling. The firm conducts polling on behalf of hundreds of political campaigns, as well as trade associations, not-for-profit organizations, government entities and industry coalitions throughout the nation.

As a bipartisan team, FM3 and Public Opinion Strategies have researched a wide range of issues for nearly a decade, in particular on conservation-related initiatives and policies. Together, the two firms have jointly conducted research on behalf of political campaigns, businesses, not-for-profit organizations and public agencies in 42 states and nationally.

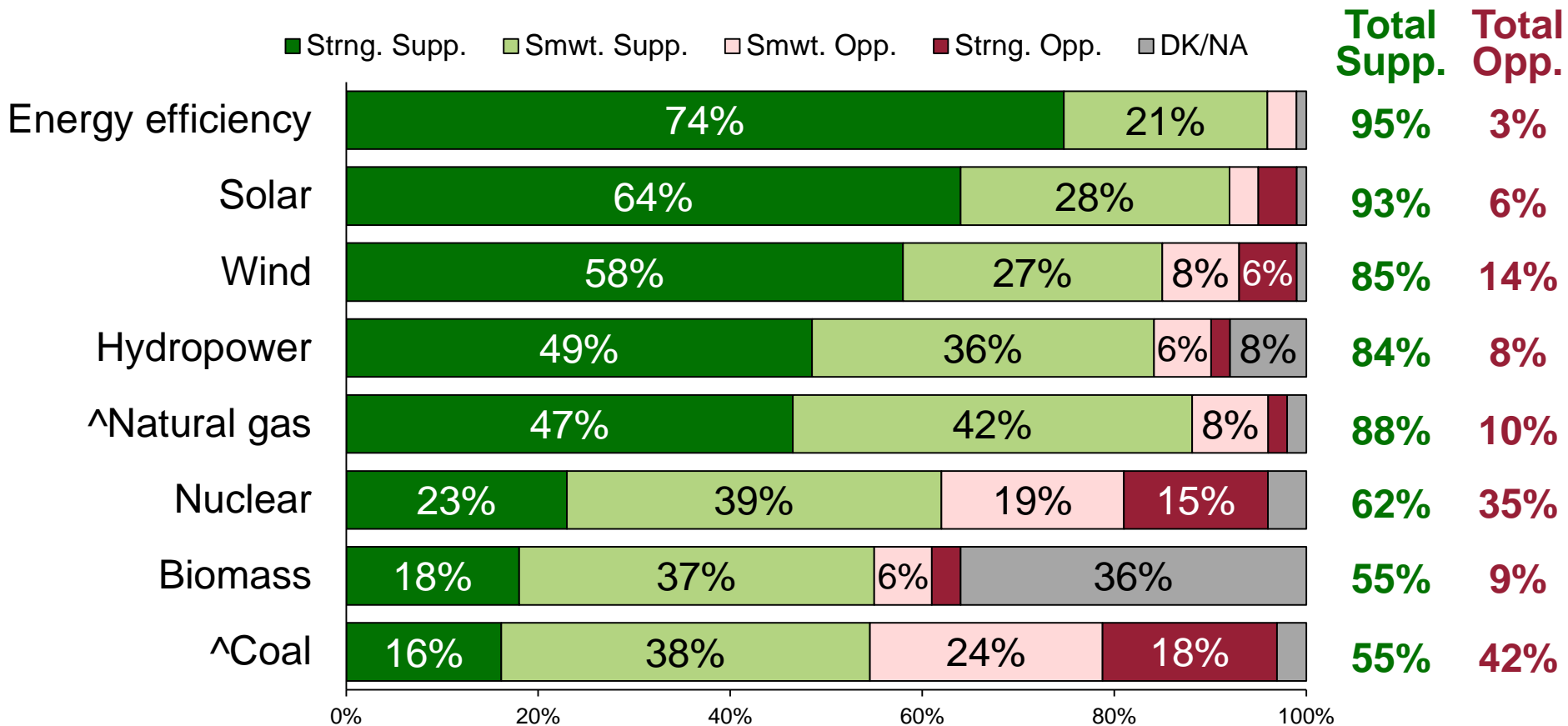
Methodology

- Survey conducted July 26 – August 3, 2014
- Interviews on landline and wireless phones with 421 randomly-selected Minnesota registered voters
- Margin of sampling error of +/-4.9%



Voters support increasing the use of many sources of energy, with varying intensity.

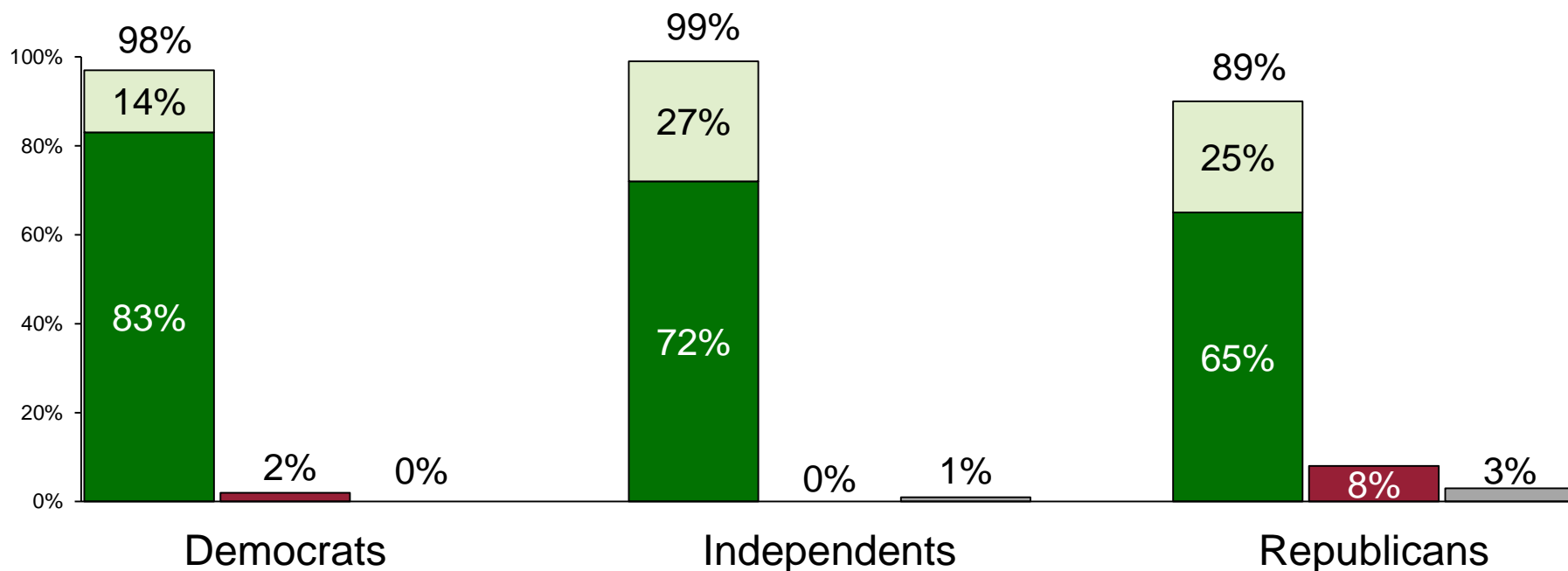
Here is a list of specific sources of energy. Please tell me whether you would support or oppose increasing use of that source of energy to meet your state's future needs.



Voters of all parties strongly support more energy efficiency.

Energy Efficiency by Party

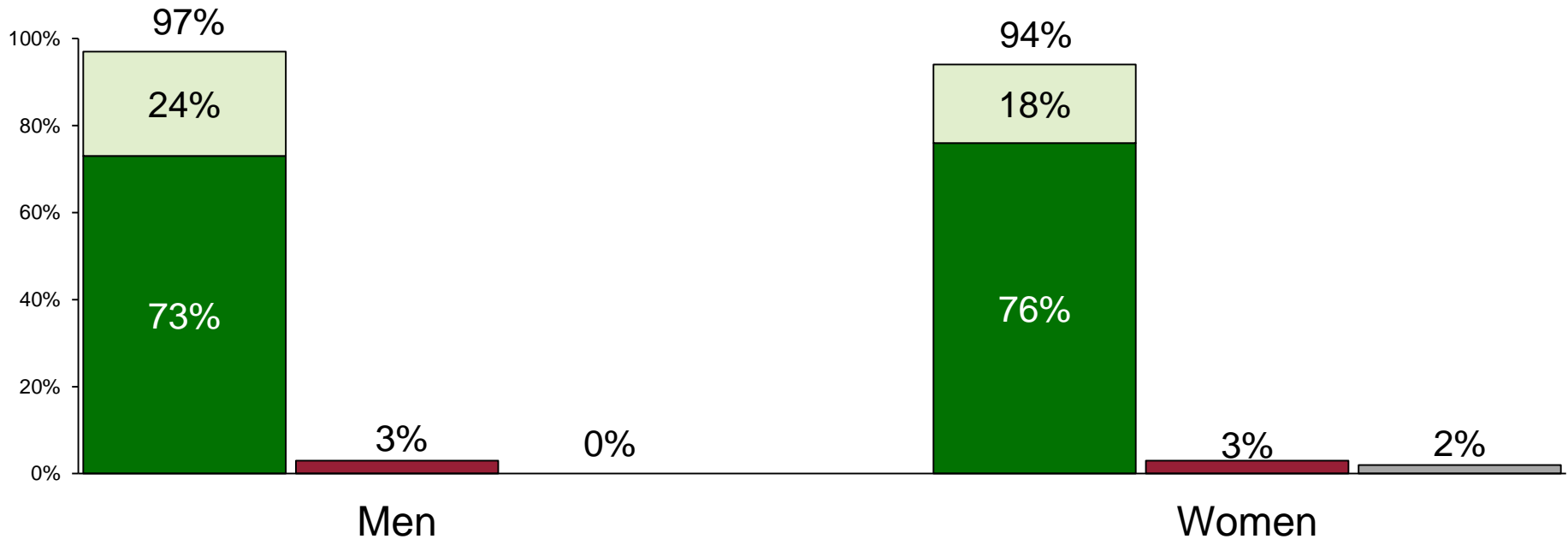
■ Strongly Support □ Somewhat Support ■ Total Oppose ■ DK/NA



There is no difference in support by gender.

Energy Efficiency by Gender

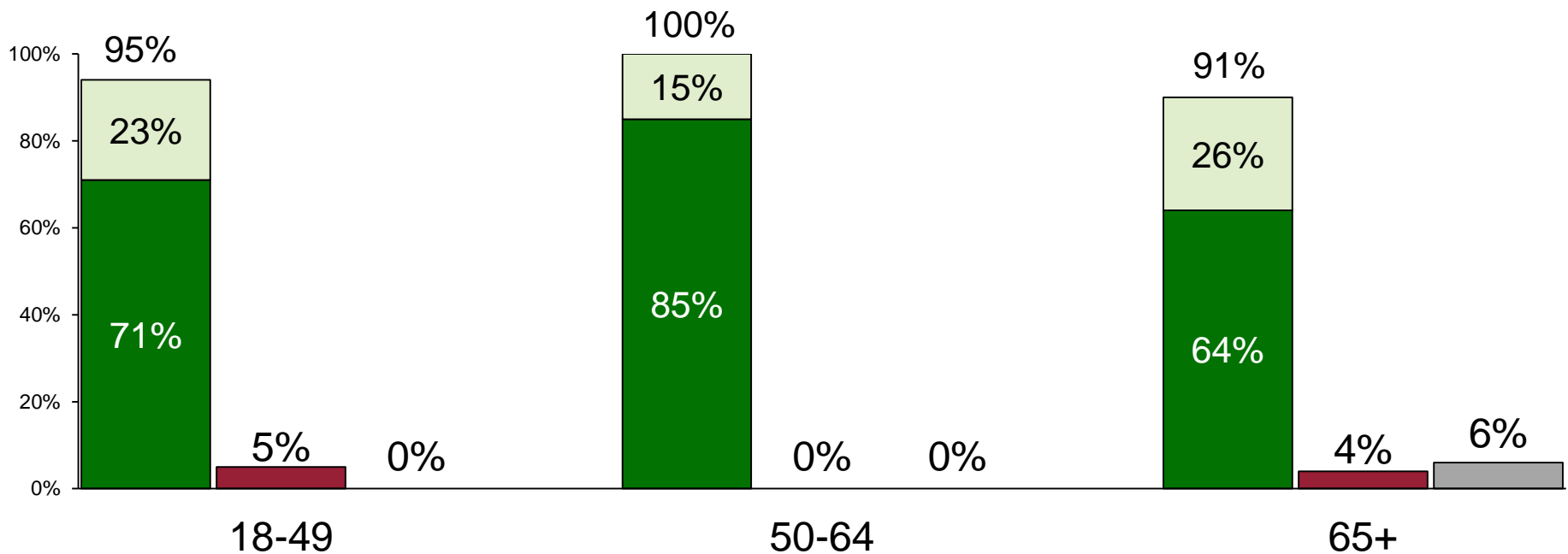
■ Strongly Support □ Somewhat Support ■ Total Oppose □ DK/NA



Older voters are only slightly less supportive than younger voters.

Energy Efficiency by Age

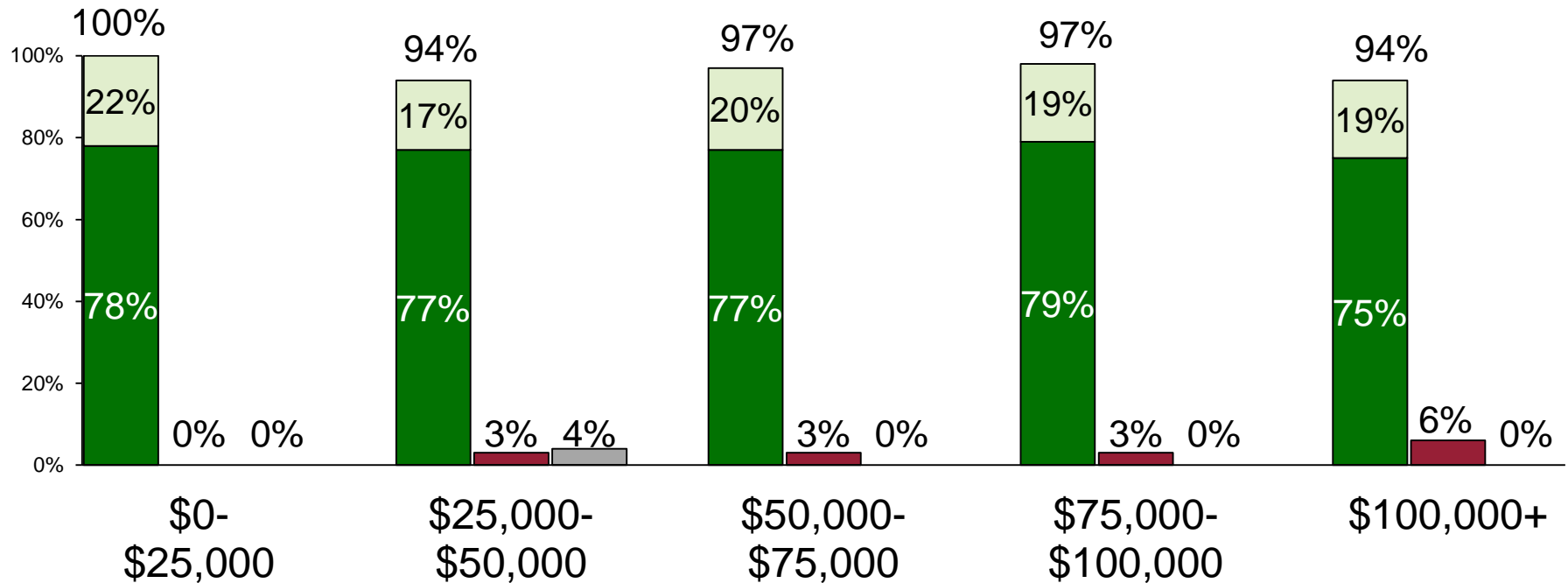
■ Strongly Support □ Somewhat Support ■ Total Oppose ■ DK/NA



Support is very consistent across income groups.

Energy Efficiency by Income

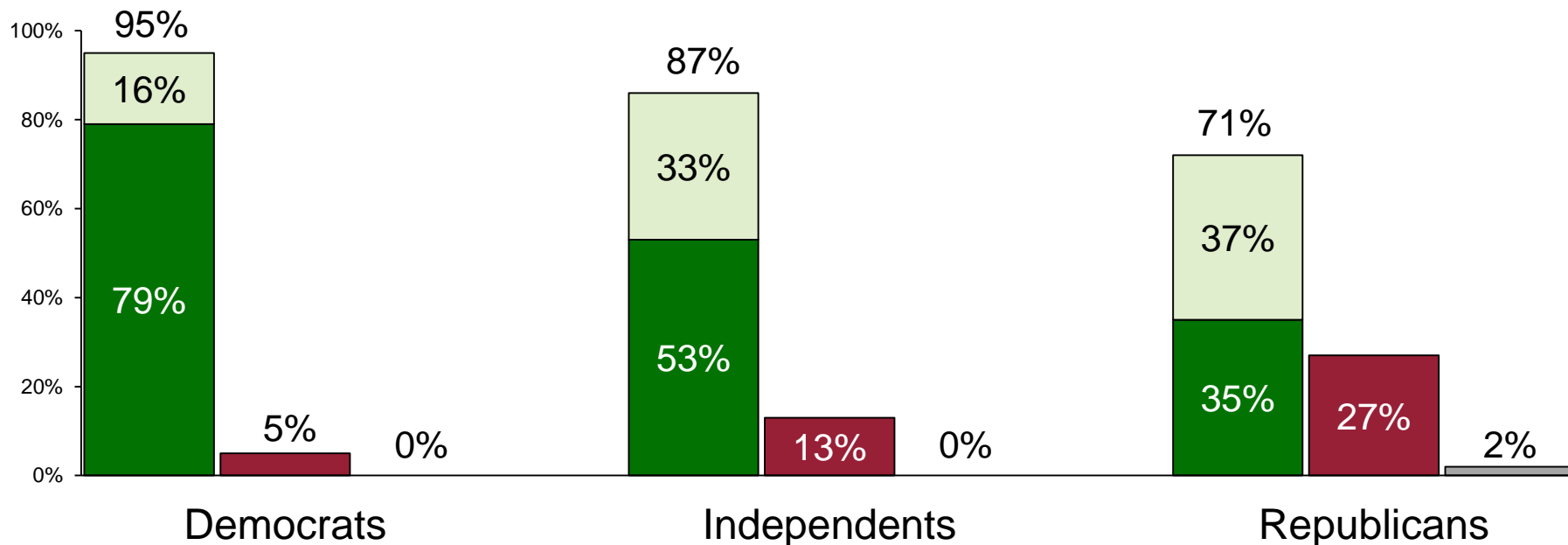
■ Strongly Support □ Somewhat Support ■ Total Oppose ■ DK/NA



Seven in ten voters of all parties support more use of wind power.

Wind by Party

■ Strongly Support
 ■ Somewhat Support
 ■ Total Oppose
 ■ DK/NA

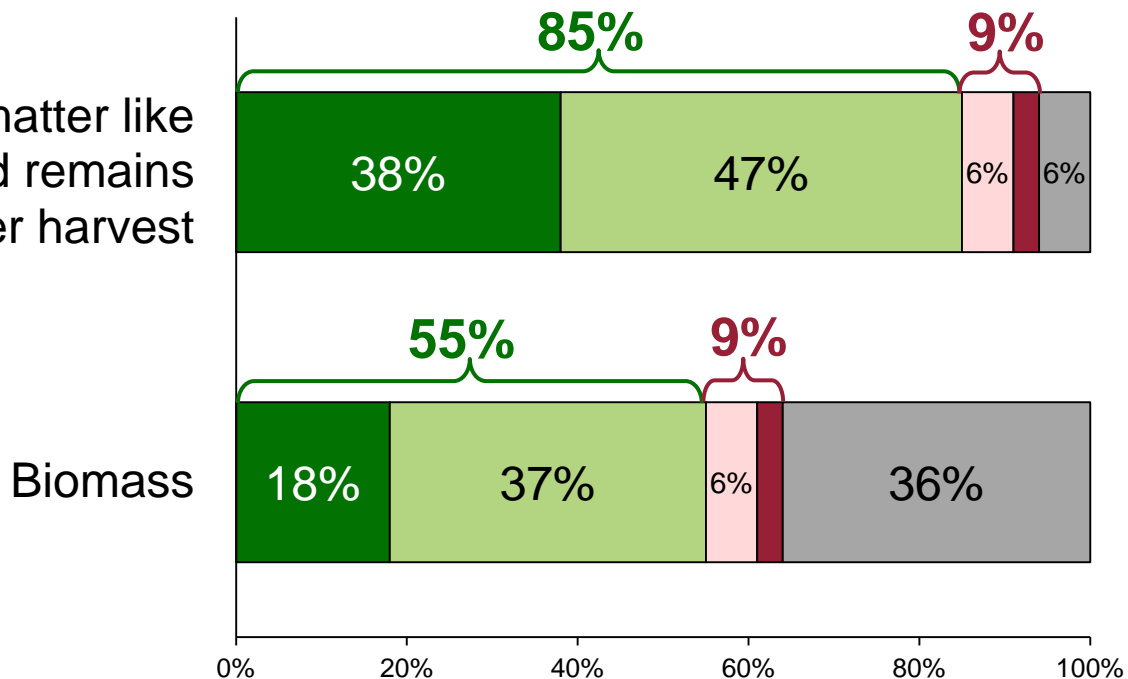


Biomass is well-received, but needs explanation and context.

Here is a list of specific sources of energy. Please tell me whether you would support or oppose increasing use of that source of energy to meet your state's future needs.

■ Strng. Supp. ■ Smwt. Supp. ■ Smwt. Opp. ■ Strng. Opp. ■ DK/NA

Biomass, energy from plant matter like switchgrass, wood waste, and remains of crops after harvest

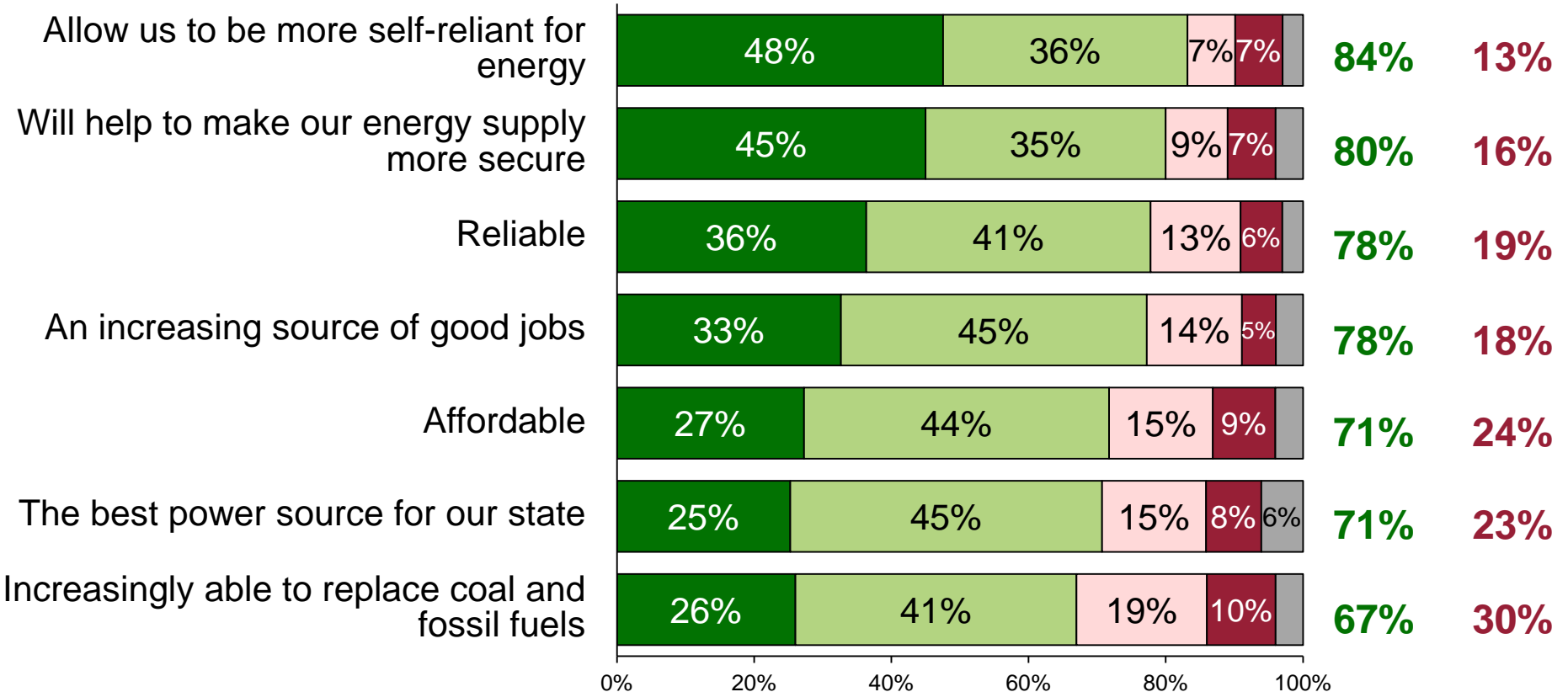


Voters see many benefits to renewables.

Thinking about renewable energy like wind and solar power, please tell me if you think each of the following phrases describe renewable energy – very well, somewhat well, not very well, or not at all well.

■ Very Well
 ■ Smwt. Well
 ■ Not Very Well
 ■ Not At All Well
 ■ No Opin./DK/NA

Total Well **Total Not Well**



Voters would rather reduce the need for fossil fuels by expanding the use of energy efficiency and renewables.

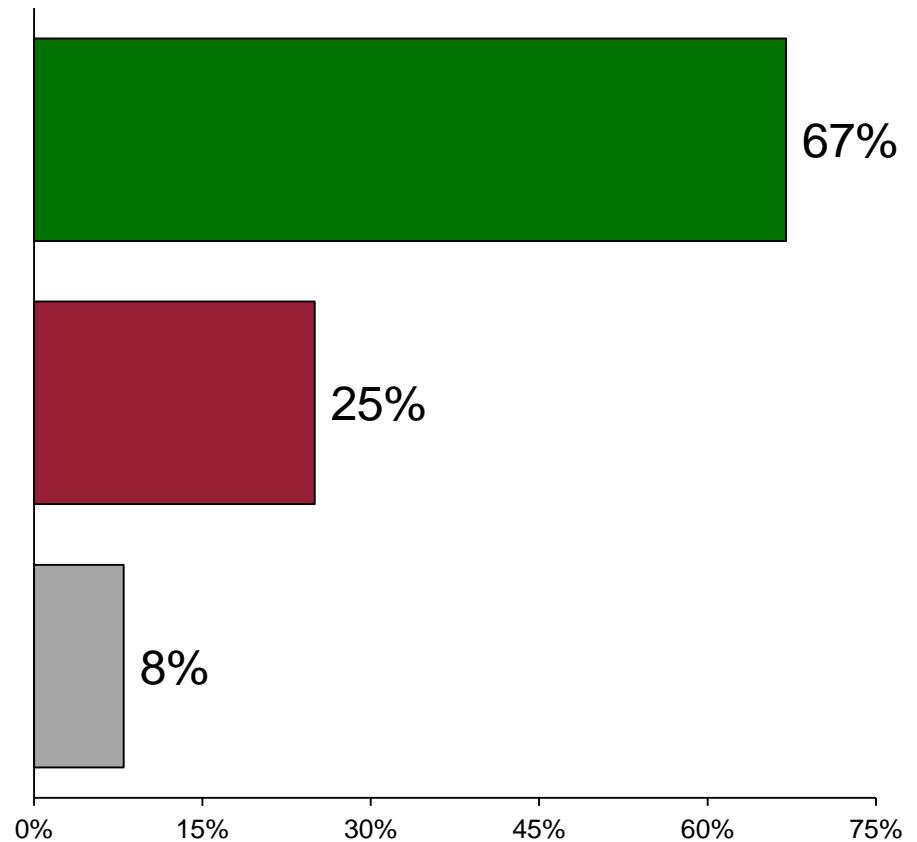
Which of the following do you think should be the highest priority for meeting America's energy needs?

Reducing our need for oil, natural gas and coal by increasing energy efficiency and expanding our use of clean and renewable energy

OR

Drilling and digging for more oil, natural gas, and coal within the United States

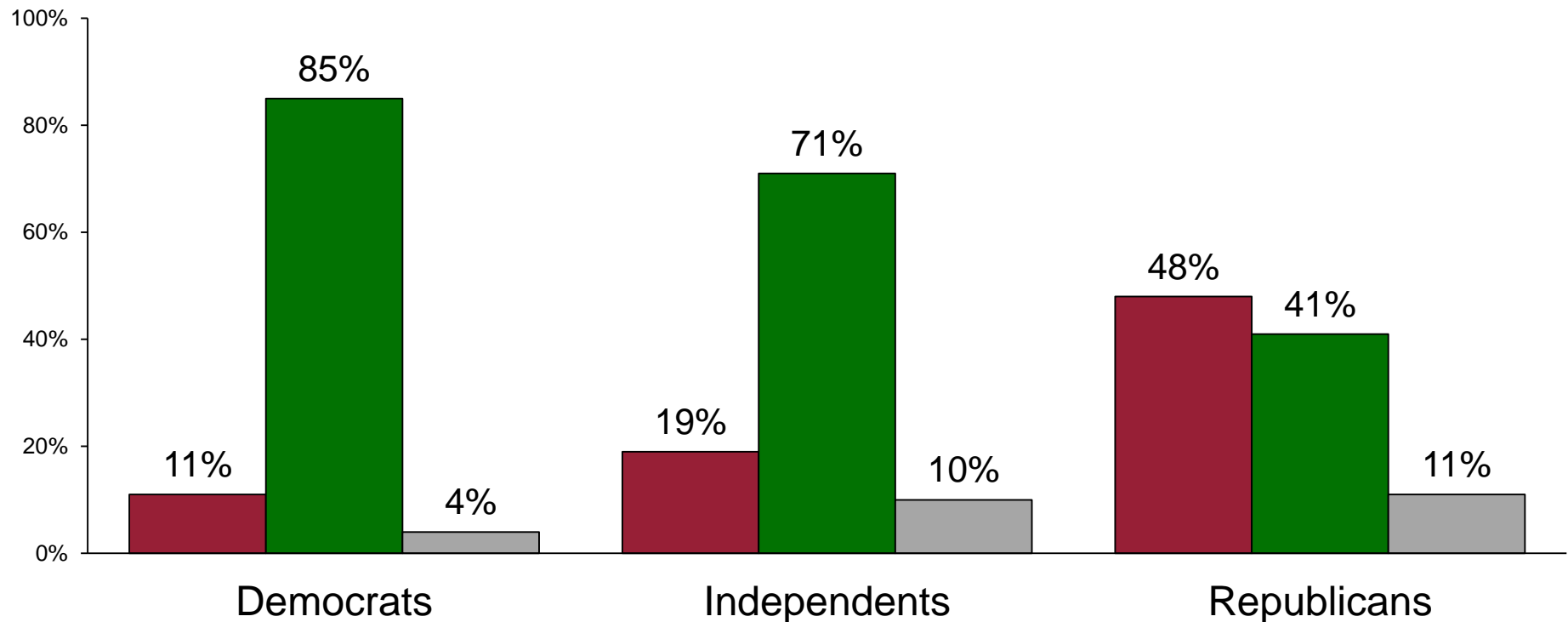
Both/Neither/DK/NA



Democrats and independents overwhelming favor moving away from oil.

Highest Priority for Meeting America's Energy Needs by Party

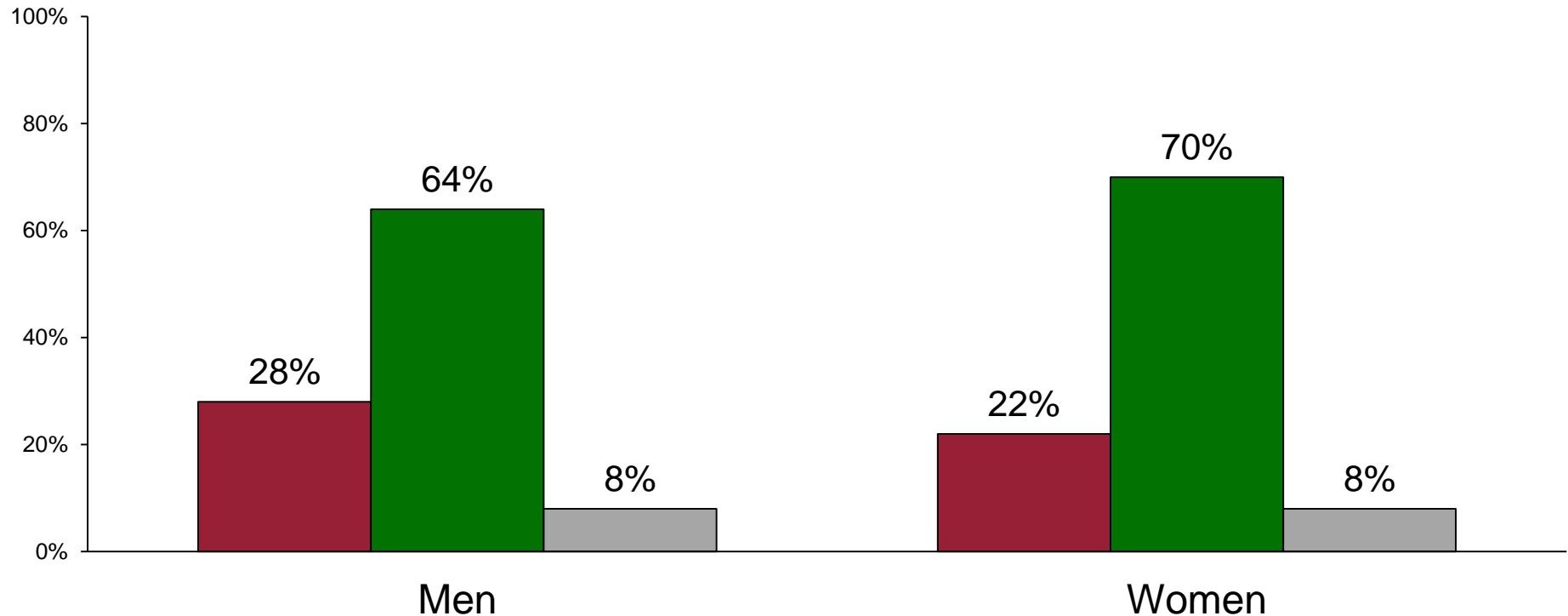
■ Drilling and Digging ■ Reducing Need for Oil ■ Both/Neither/DK/NA



More than three in five voters, regardless of gender, favor less use of oil.

Highest Priority for Meeting America's Energy Needs by Gender

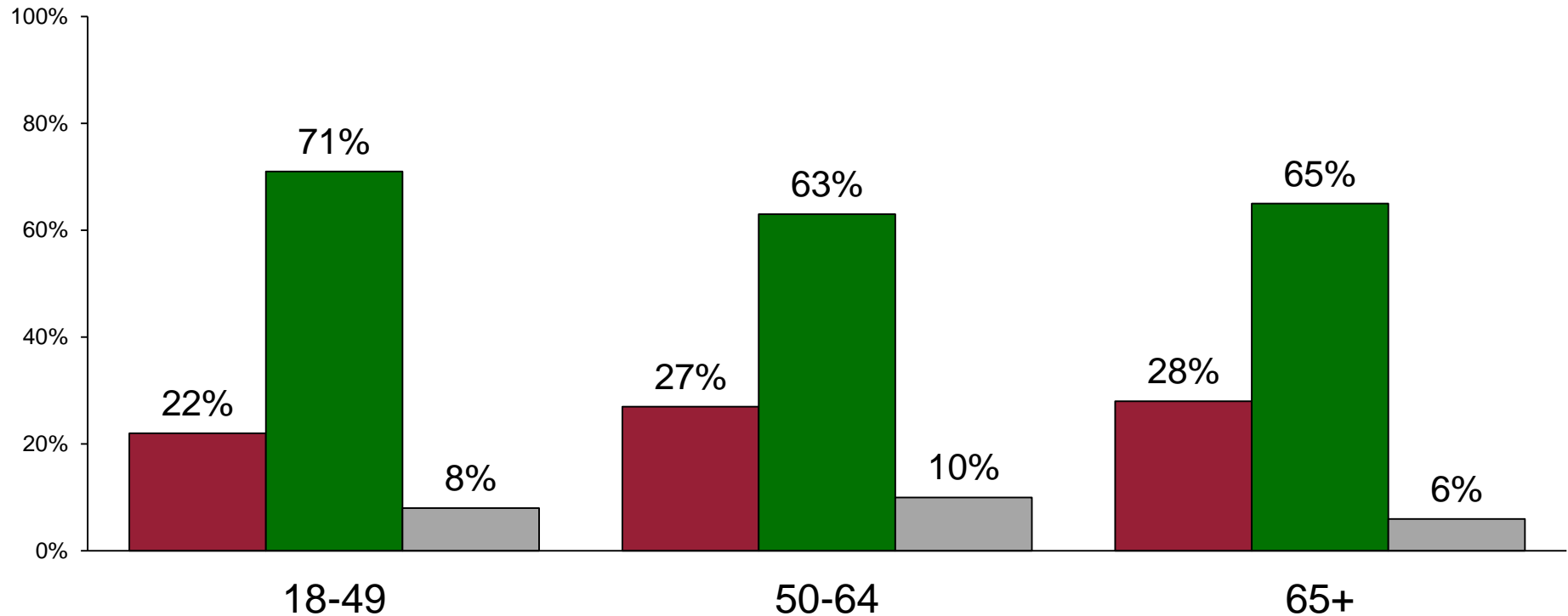
■ Drilling and Digging ■ Reducing Need for Oil ■ Both/Neither/DK/NA



Support for this position cuts across age groups.

Highest Priority for Meeting America's Energy Needs by Age

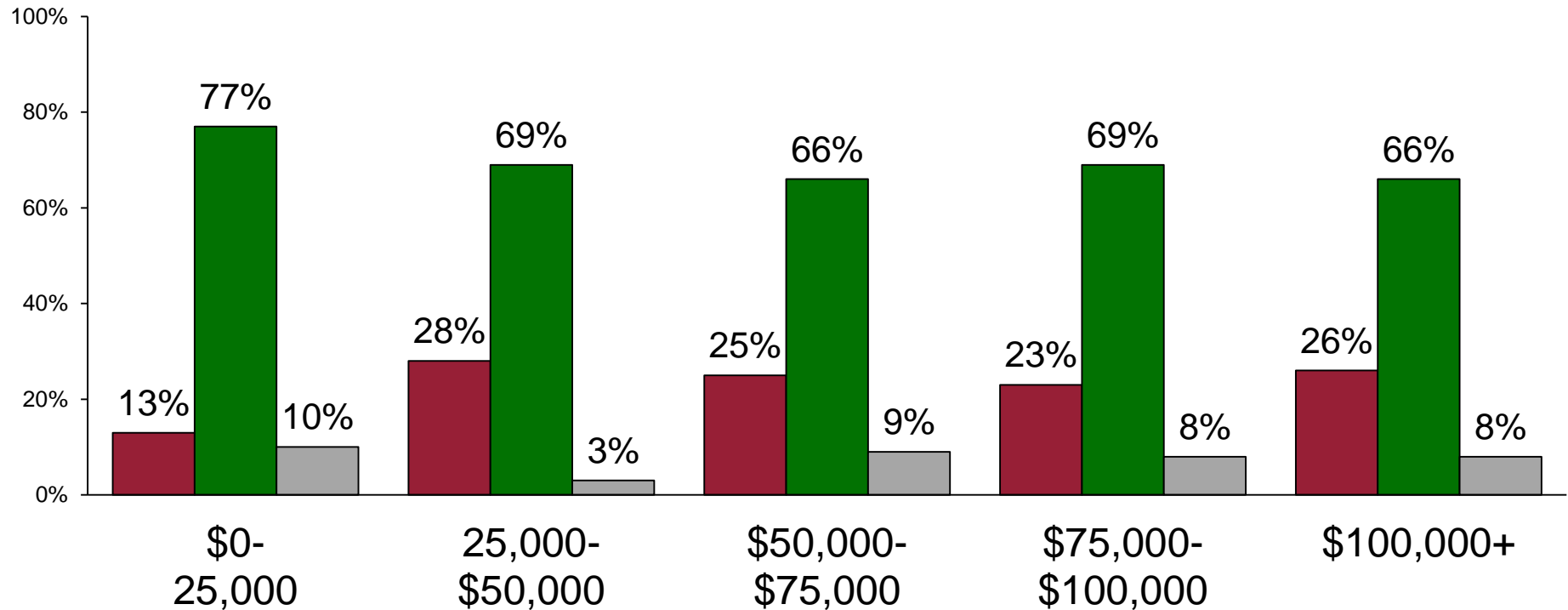
■ Drilling and Digging ■ Reducing Need for Oil ■ Both/Neither/DK/NA



Voters in every income bracket favor moving away from oil.

Highest Priority for Meeting America's Energy Needs by Income

■ Drilling and Digging ■ Reducing Need for Oil ■ Both/Neither/DK/NA



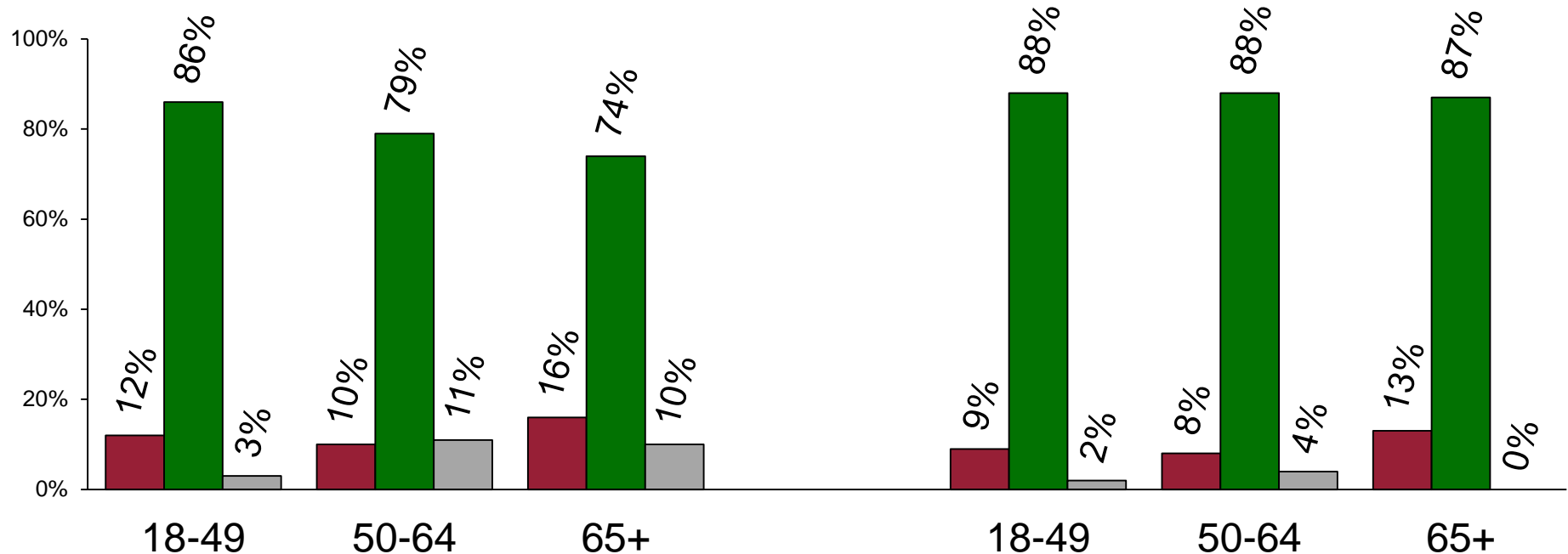
Age and gender variations among Democrats are very slight.

Highest Priority for Meeting America's Energy Needs by Democrats by Gender by Age

■ Drilling and Digging ■ Reducing Need for Oil ■ Both/Neither/DK/NA

Men

Women



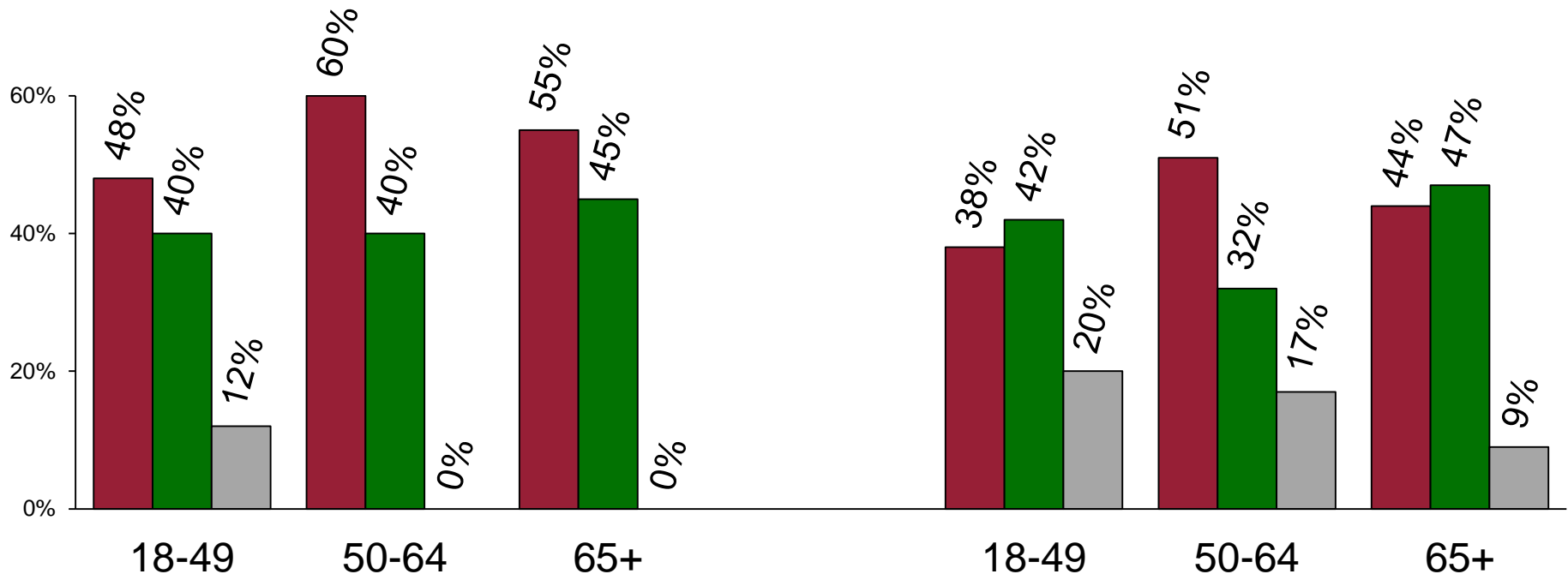
Most GOP women are evenly split on the issue, while others favor oil.

Highest Priority for Meeting America's Energy Needs by Republicans by Gender by Age

■ Drilling and Digging ■ Reducing Need for Oil ■ Both/Neither/DK/NA

Men

Women

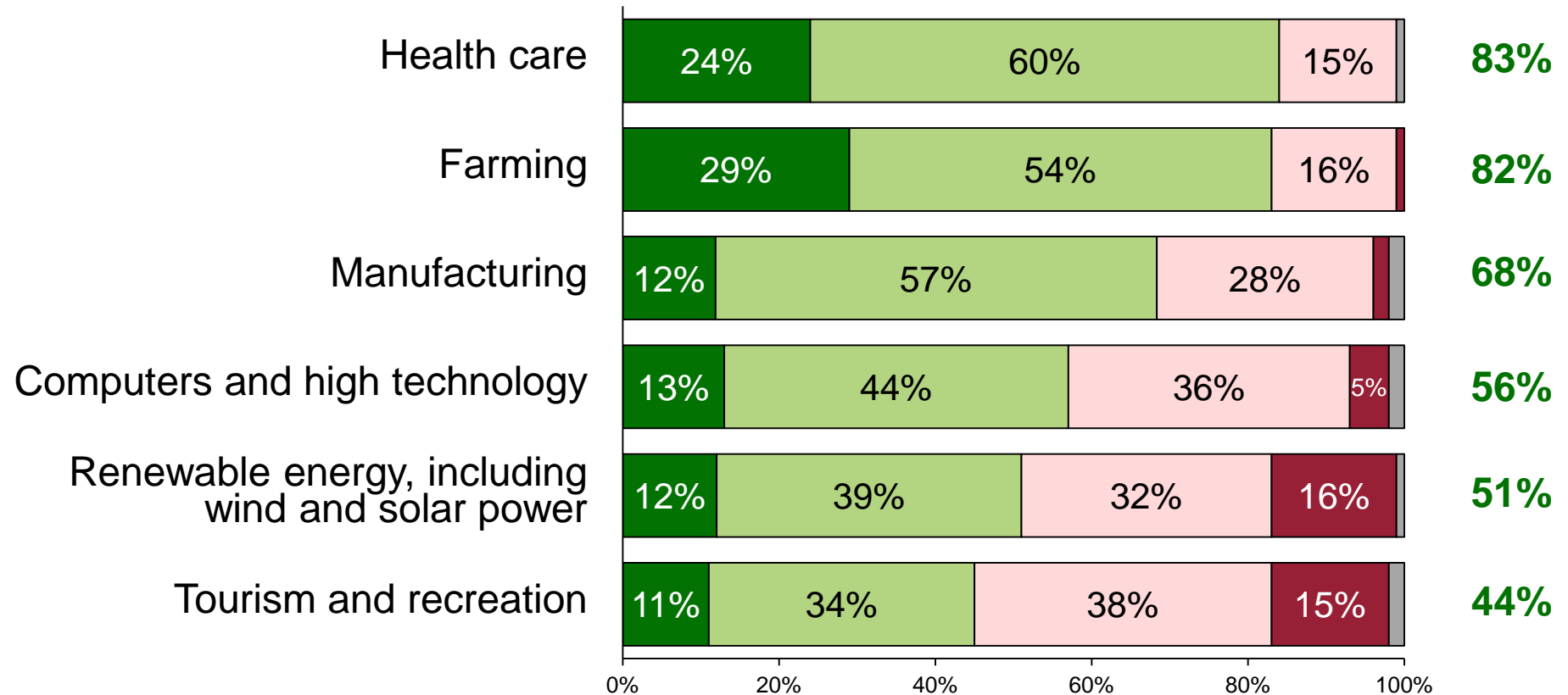


Voters see renewables as a major contributor to the Minnesota economy.

Thinking about the economy in your state, how important is each of the following industries to the economy in your state: one of the most important, very important, somewhat important, or not too important?

■ One of Most Impt. ■ Very Impt. ■ Smwt. Impt. ■ Not Too Impt. ■ DK/NA

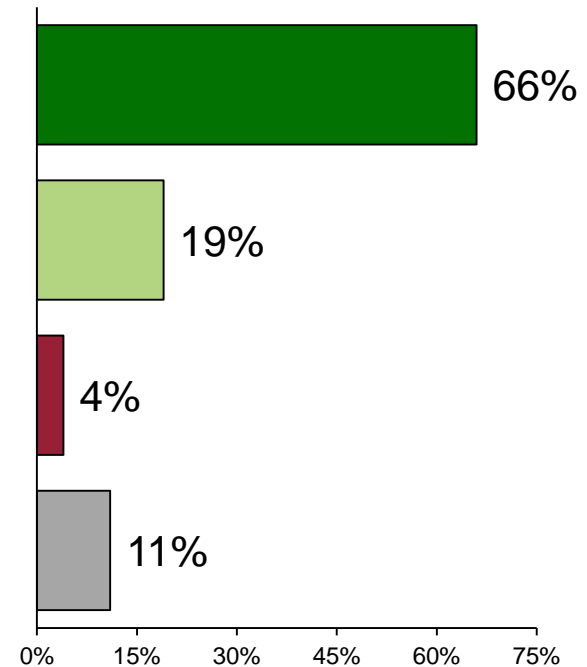
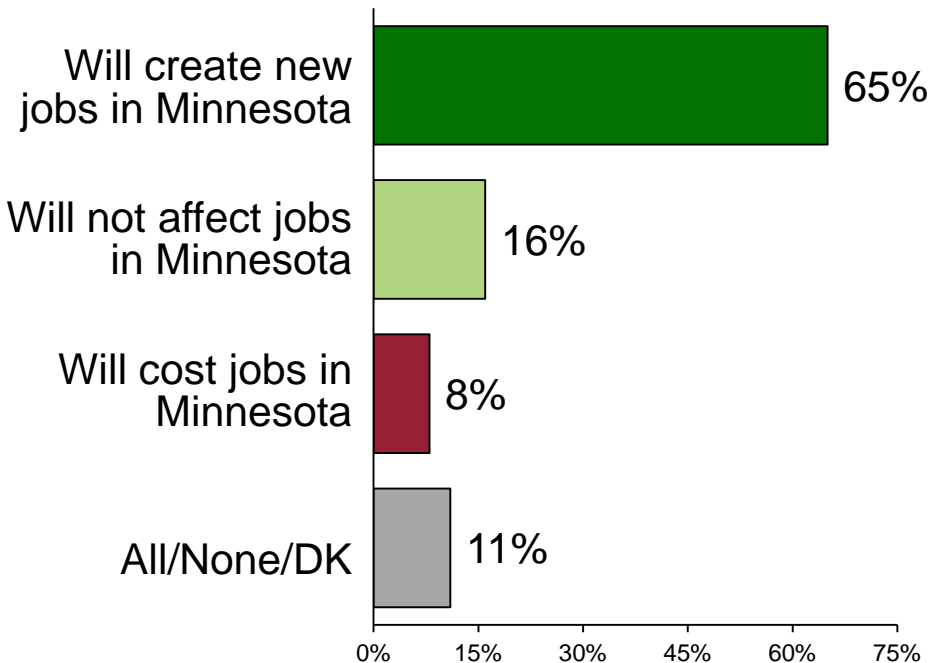
One of Most/Very Impt.



Voters believe increasing the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency projects will create new jobs....

Increasing the use of clean, renewable energy sources like wind and solar power....

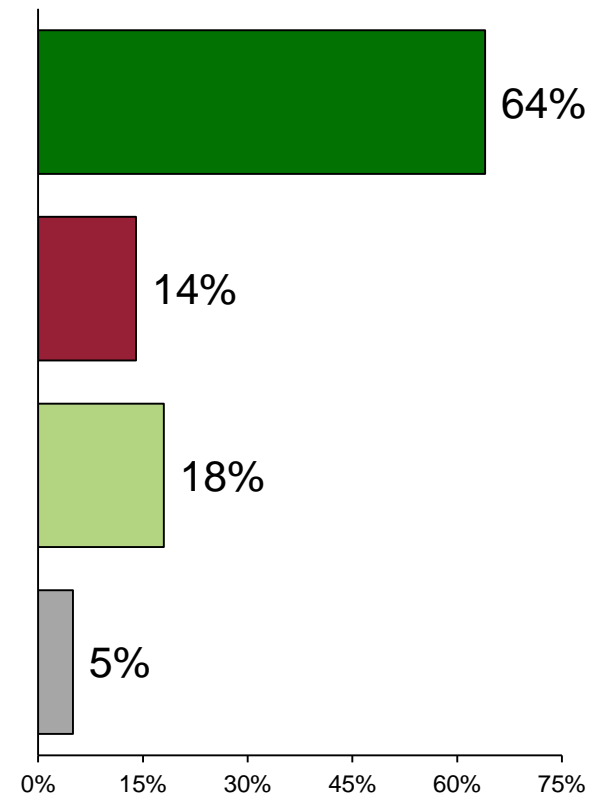
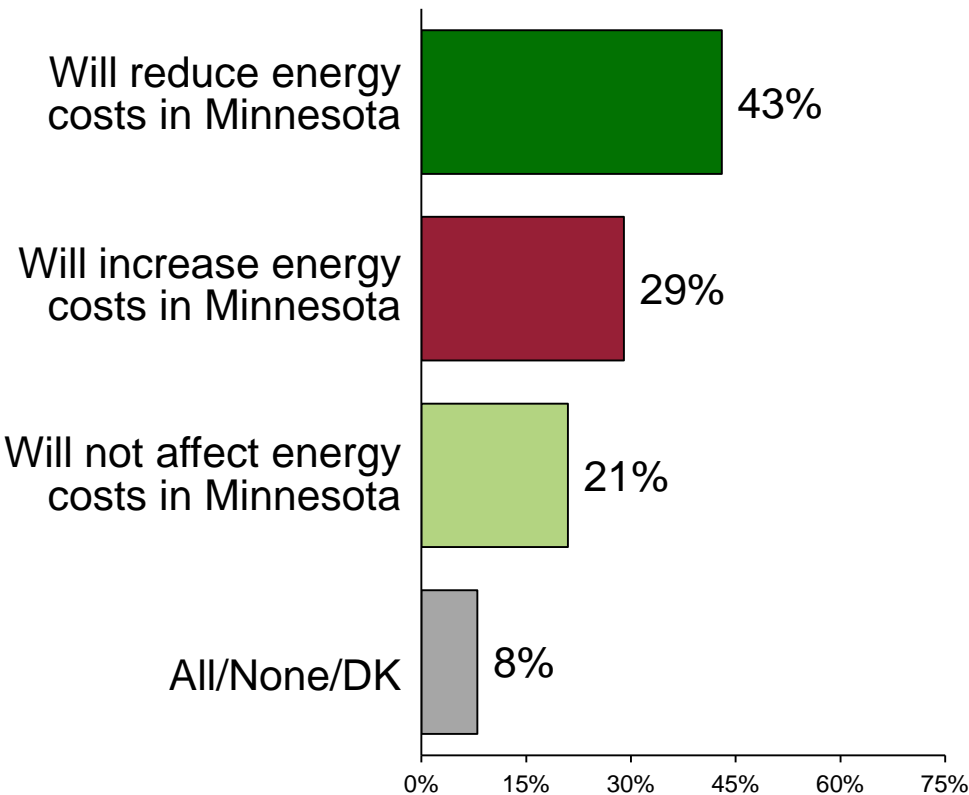
Energy efficiency projects like weatherizing and insulating buildings, and upgrading appliances and technology in homes and businesses



...and *reduce* energy costs.

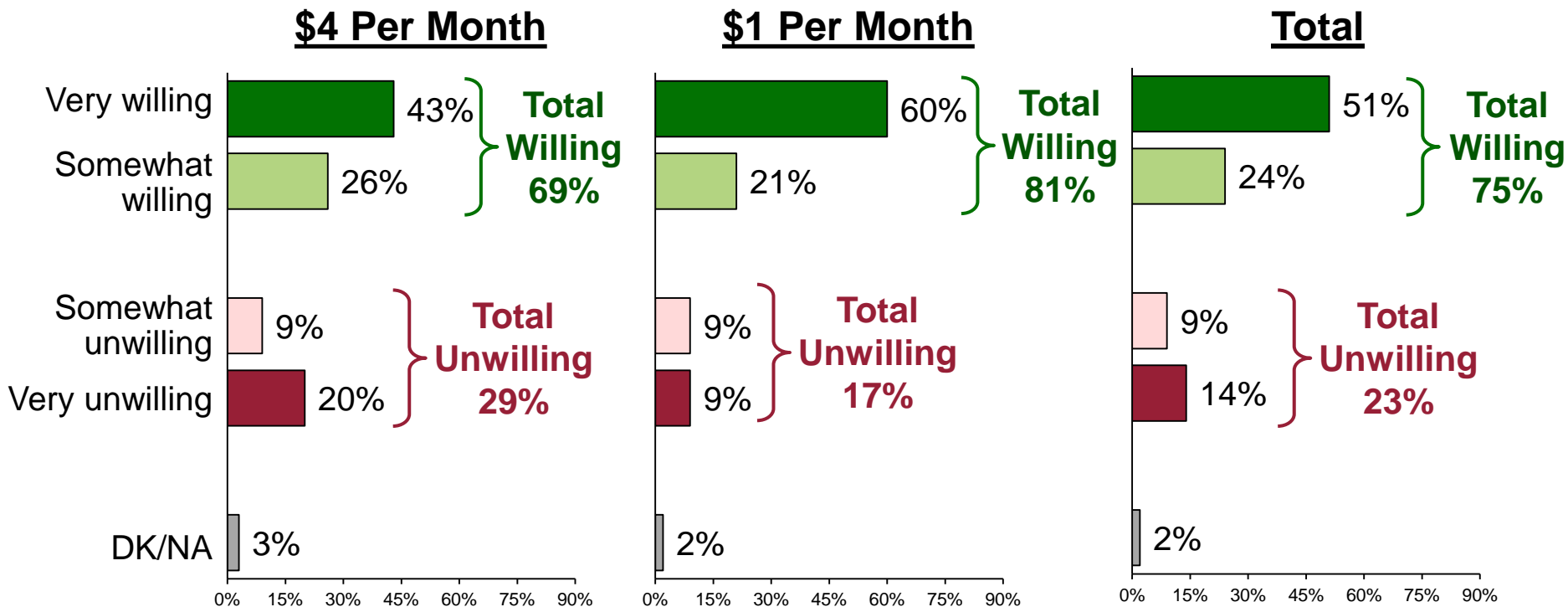
Increasing the use of clean, renewable energy sources like wind and solar power....

Energy efficiency projects like weatherizing and insulating buildings, and upgrading appliances and technology in homes and businesses



Most voters would be willing to pay a little extra on their energy bills to promote clean energy and energy efficiency.

In some – but not all – cases, using more clean and renewable energy may cost more money in the short term. Would you be willing to pay an additional (HALF SAMPLE: \$4)/ (HALF SAMPLE: \$1) per month to ensure that more of your energy comes from clean and renewable sources?



Voters have strong feelings about the way clean energy should be generated.

■ Strng. Agr. ■ Smwt. Agr. ■ Smwt. Disagr. ■ Strng. Disagr. ■ DK/NA

Total Agr. **Total Disagr.**

I should have the right to put solar on my own home and pay for it how I choose.



95%

3%

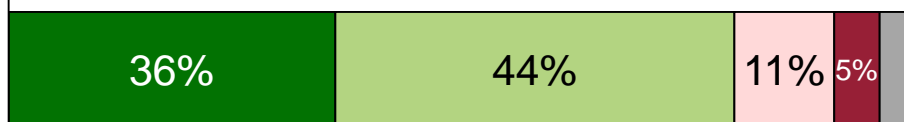
We should ensure that all utilities and electricity customers in our state are subject to the same clean, renewable energy requirements.



84%

12%

Our state should build additional electrical transmission lines so that our state can have greater access to wind-generated electricity.



80%

16%

Utilities should be able to block residential customers from installing solar power, energy storage and other similar systems on their property.



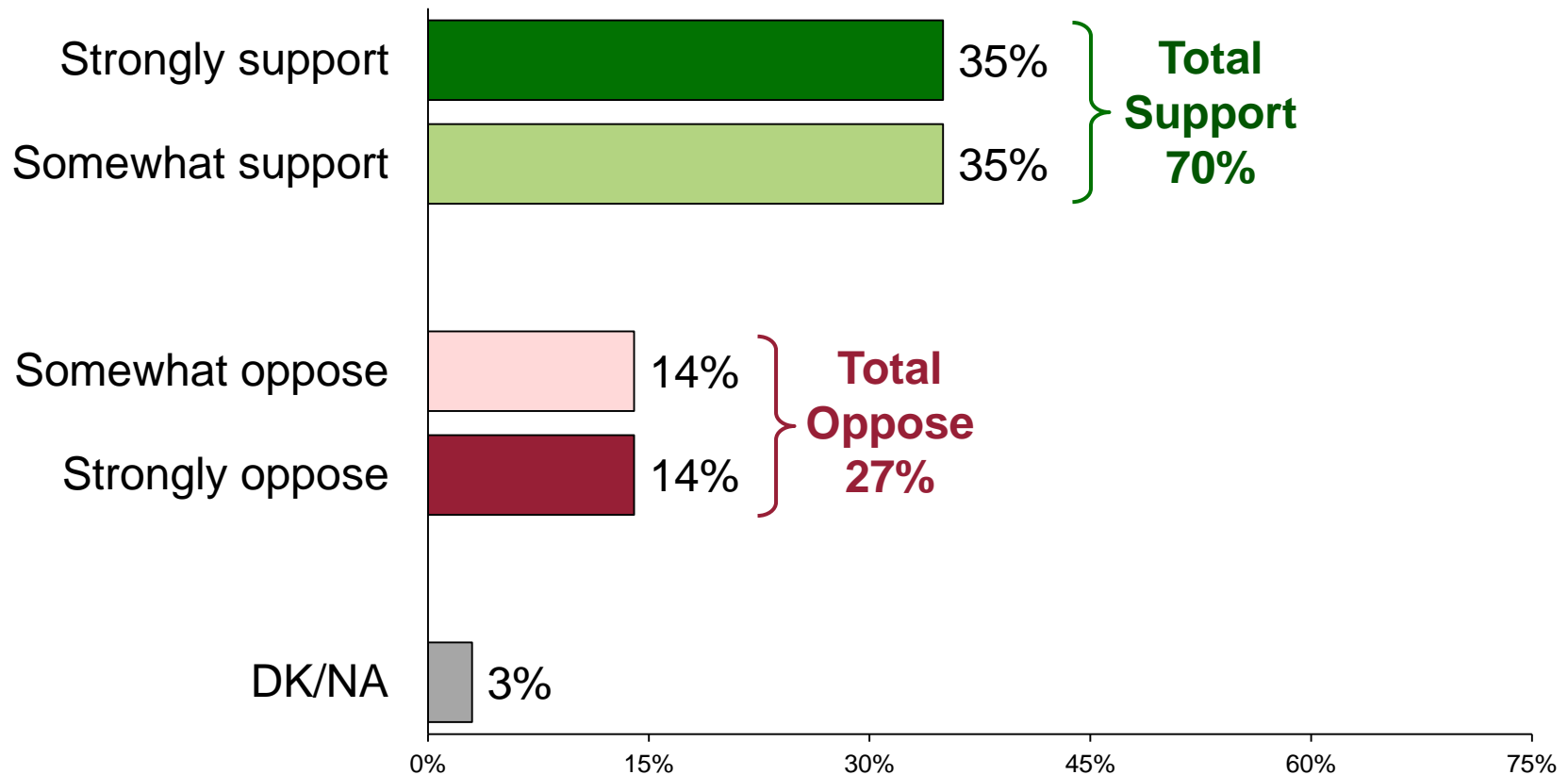
9%

89%

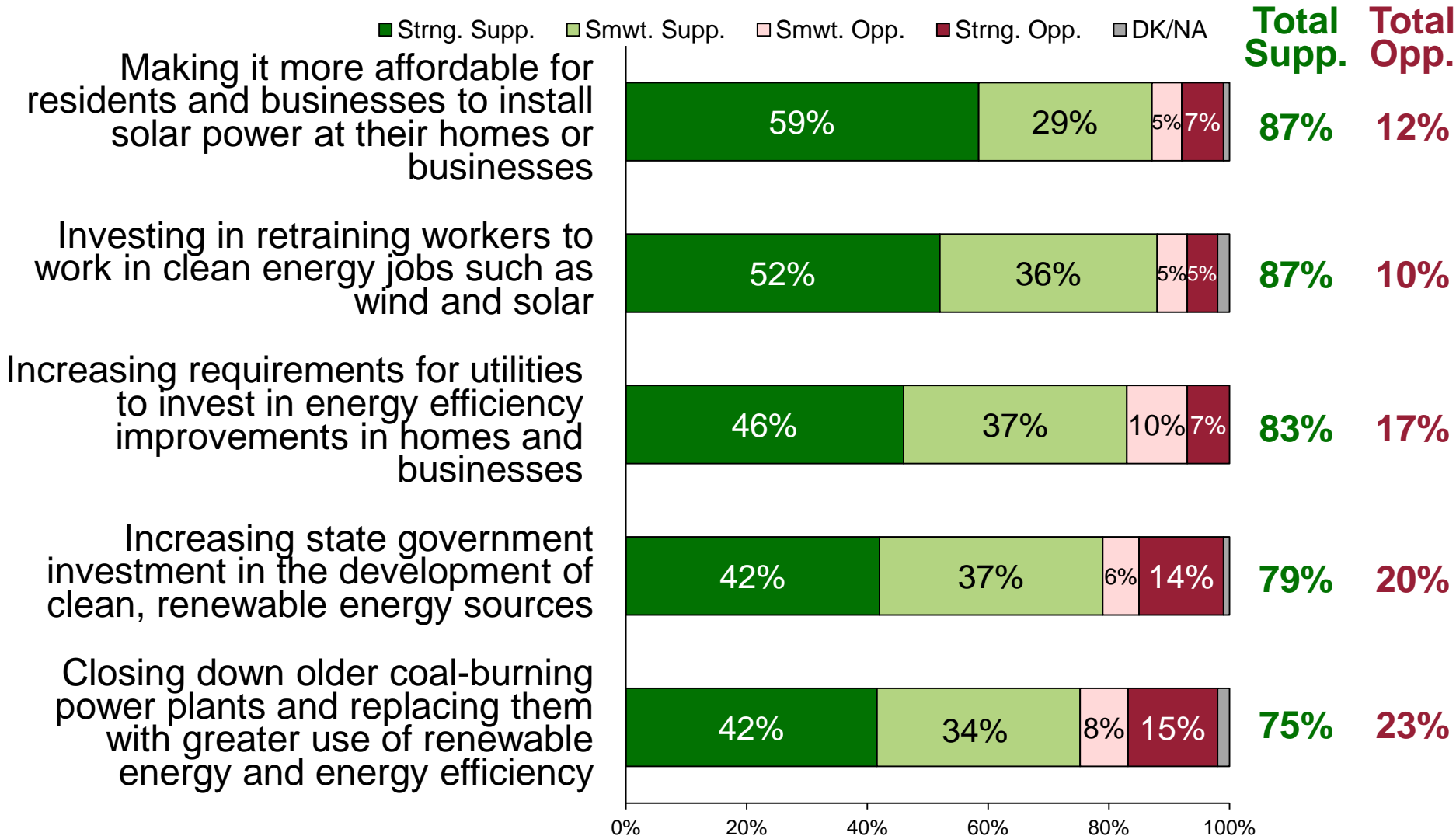
0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

Seven in ten Minnesota voters back an increase in the renewable energy standard.

Requiring that Minnesota get 50% of its electricity from renewable sources



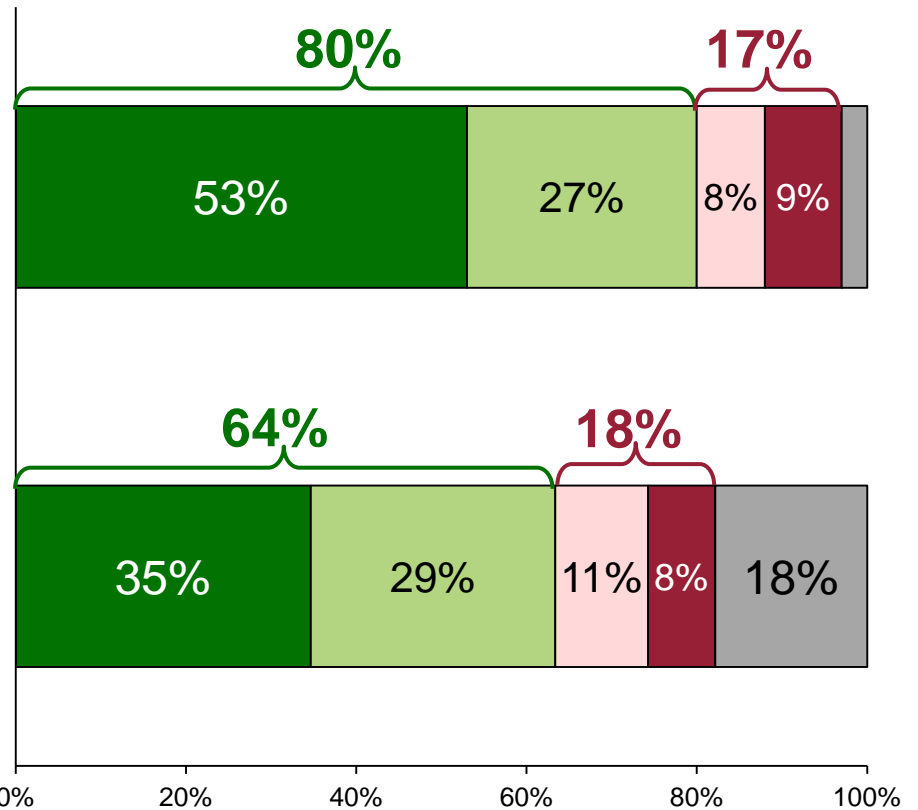
Minnesotans support a wide range of other policy proposals to increase clean energy use. ...



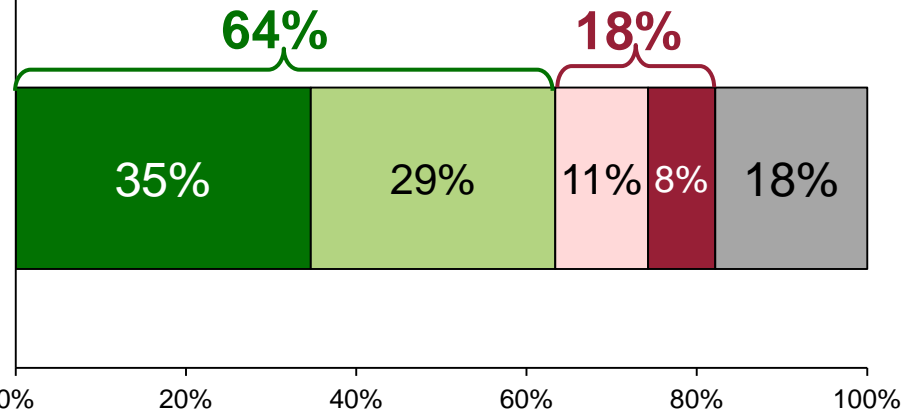
Voters like the idea of carbon pollution limits.

■ Strng. Supp. ■ Smwt. Supp. ■ Smwt. Opp. ■ Strng. Opp. ■ DK/NA

Limiting the amount of carbon pollution from power plants



Implementing the Environmental Protection Agency's clean power plan



Voters also favor a candidate who wants a transition to renewables.

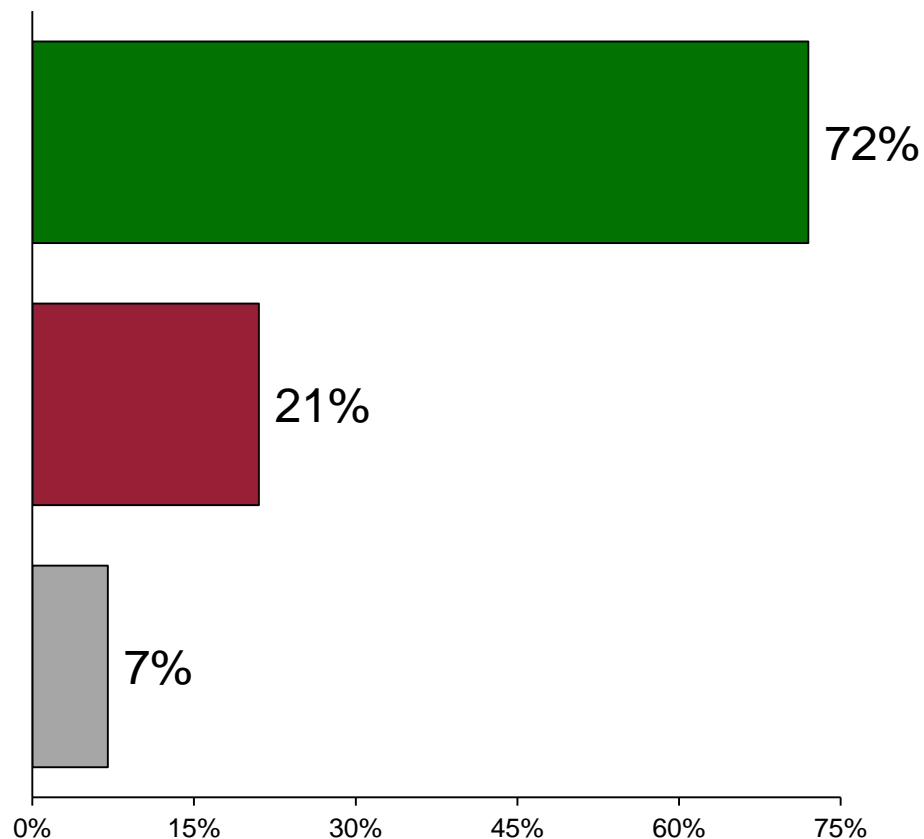
In thinking about the election for state office in your area later this year, I am going to read you a series of pairs of descriptions of different candidates. Please tell me which candidate in each pair you think you would be most likely to vote for:

A candidate who wants to promote more use of clean, renewable energy – like wind and solar power – in Minnesota

OR

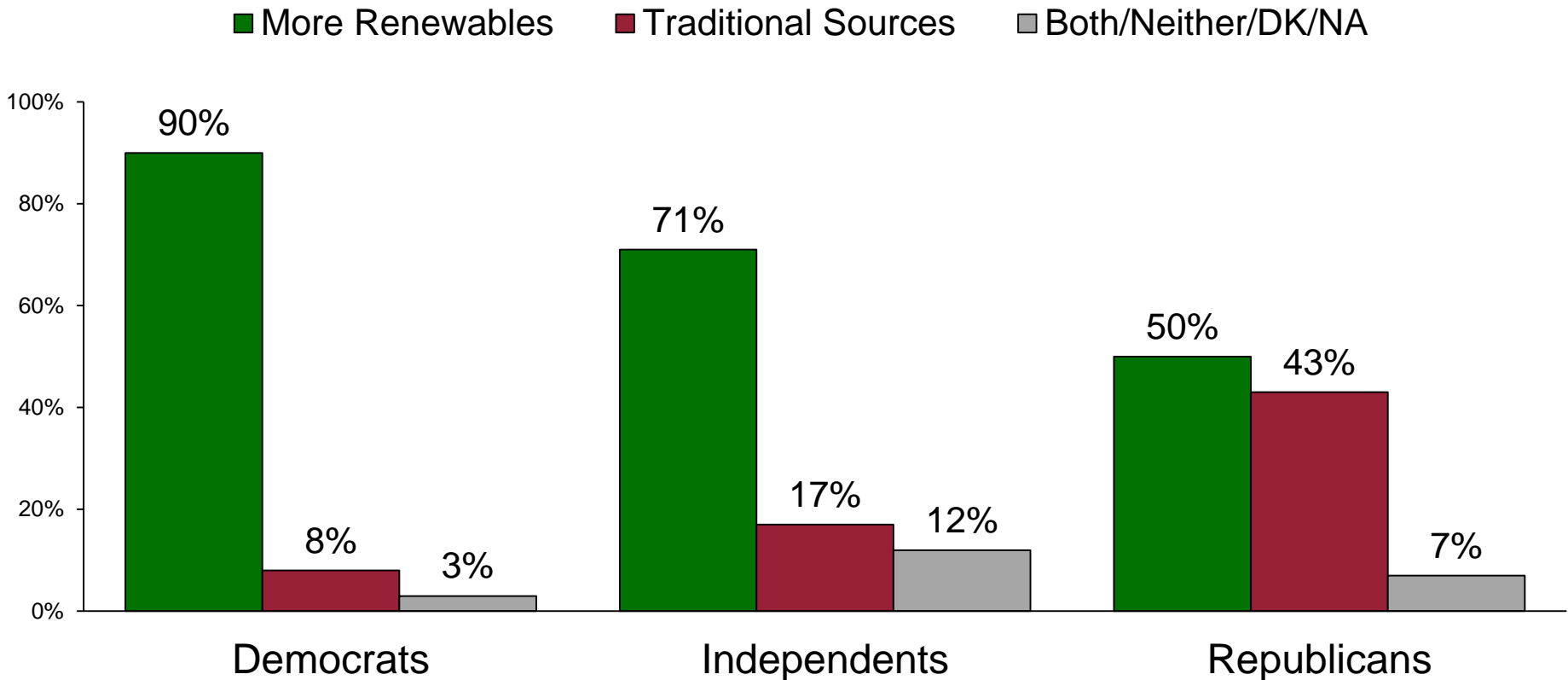
A candidate who wants to continue to rely on coal, natural gas or nuclear power to meet Minnesota's energy needs

Both/Neither/DK/NA



Voters of all parties favor a candidate who will shift to more use of renewables.

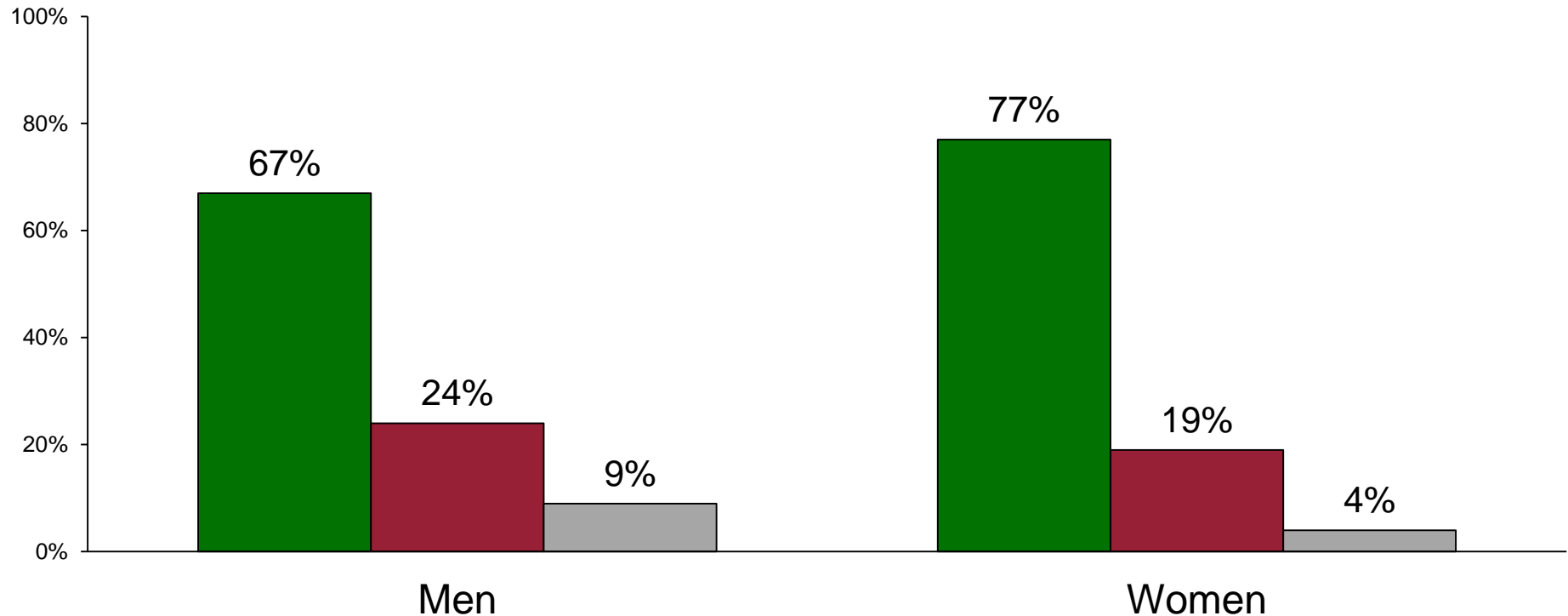
Preferred Candidate Position on Energy, by Party



Women in particular are likely to favor a candidate who prefers renewables.

Preferred Candidate Position on Energy, by Gender

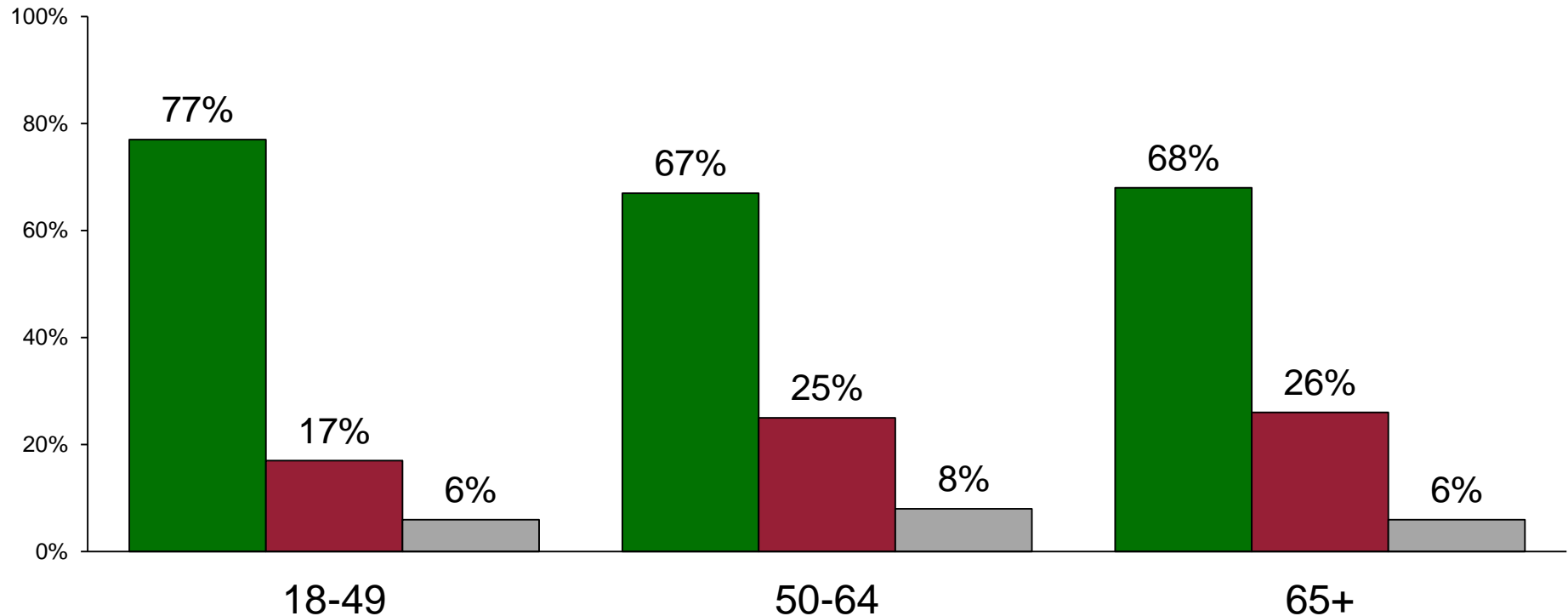
■ More Renewables ■ Traditional Sources ■ Both/Neither/DK/NA



Younger voters are particularly enthusiastic about such a candidate.

Preferred Candidate Position on Energy, by Age

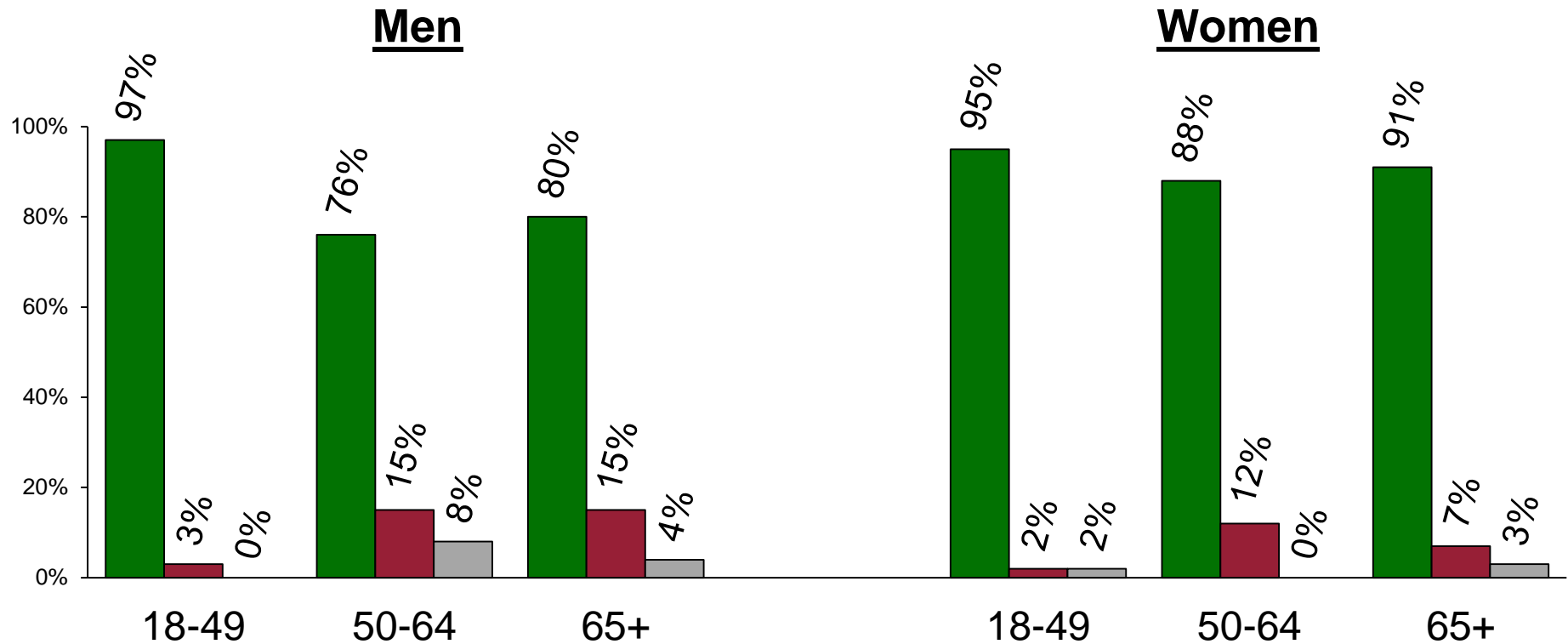
■ More Renewables ■ Traditional Sources ■ Both/Neither/DK/NA



Among Democrats, support exceeds 75% among all age and gender cohorts.

Preferred Candidate Position on Energy, by Democrats by Gender by Age

■ More Renewables ■ Traditional Sources ■ Both/Neither/DK/NA



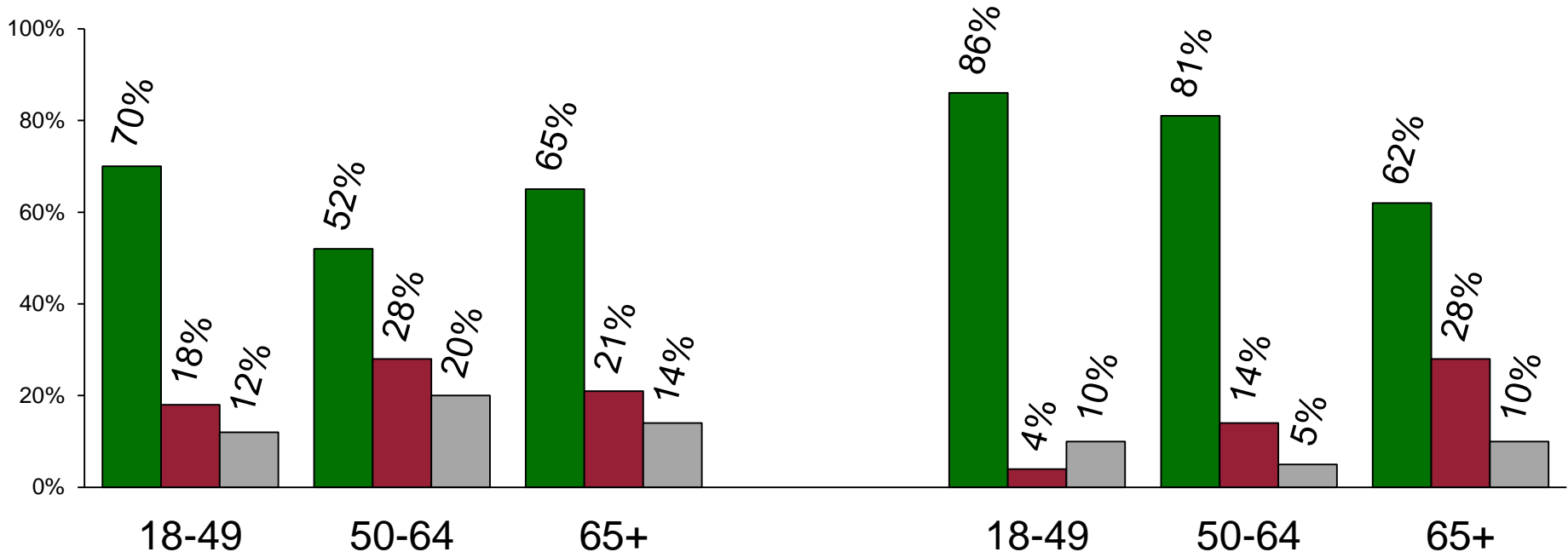
Among independents, majorities are supportive across age and gender lines.

Preferred Candidate Position on Energy, by Independents by Gender by Age

■ More Renewables ■ Traditional Sources ■ Both/Neither/DK/NA

Men

Women



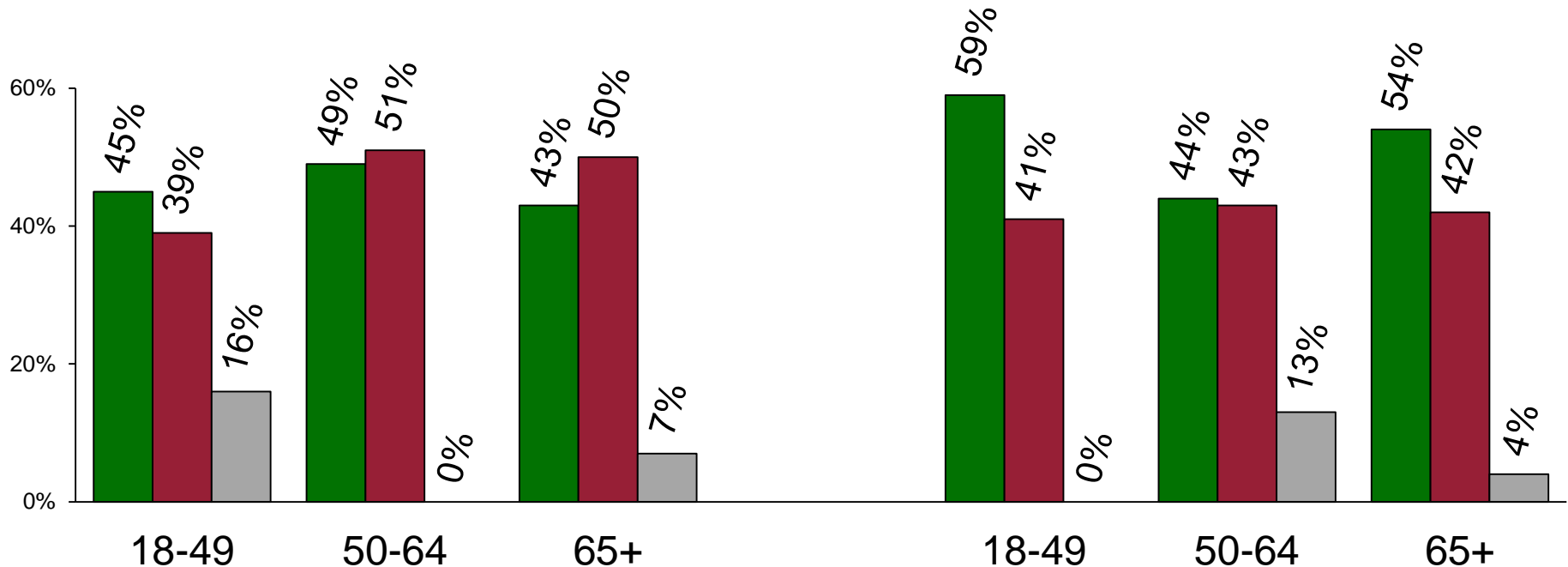
Subgroups of GOP voters are more mixed in their positions.

*Preferred Candidate Position on Energy, by
Republicans by Gender by Age*

■ More Renewables ■ Traditional Sources ■ Both/Neither/DK/NA

Men

Women



The strongest positioning for a candidate focuses on middle-income job creation.

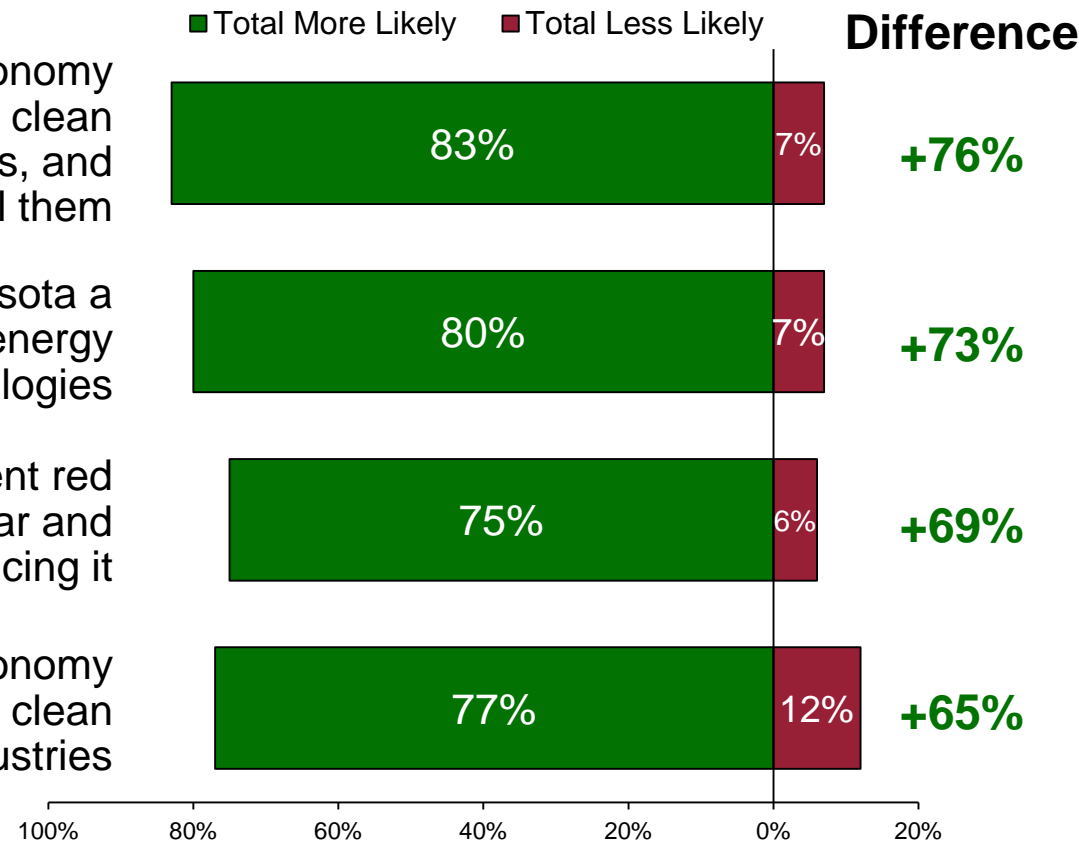
In thinking about the elections for state office this November, please tell me how a candidate taking each of the following positions would impact your vote – would it make you more likely or less likely to vote for that candidate, or would it not make much difference in your vote decision?

A candidate who wants to improve the economy by creating more middle-income jobs in the clean energy and clean technology industries, and training Minnesota workers to fill them

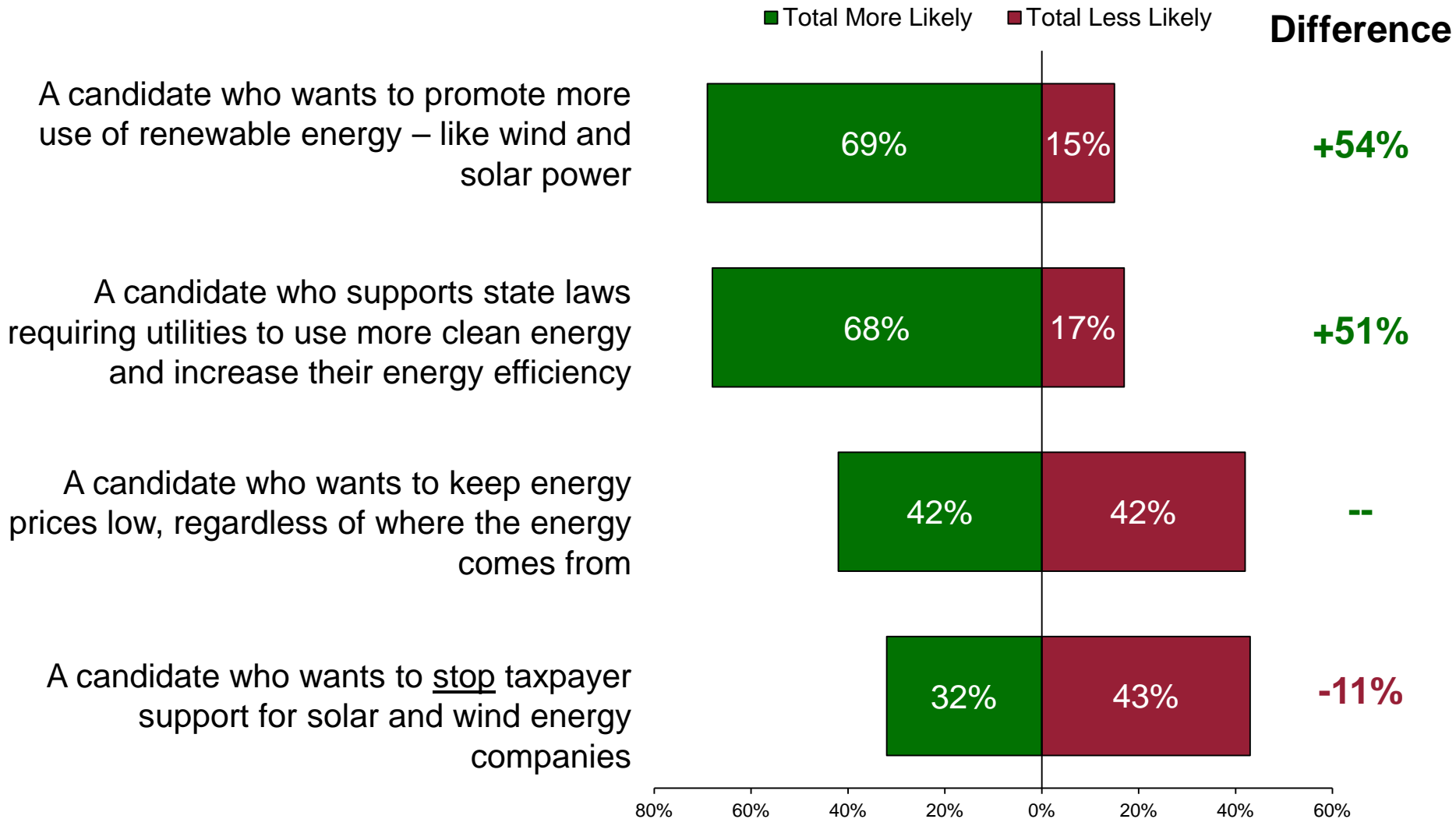
A candidate who wants to make Minnesota a leader in developing innovative clean energy technologies

A candidate who wants to reduce government red tape so consumers can choose rooftop solar and any form of financing it

A candidate who wants to improve the economy by creating more middle-income jobs in the clean energy and clean technology industries



The only negative profile focuses on a candidate who wants to cut support for clean energy.



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