

Maine Public Health Association Voter Poll – Public Health Issues

Prepared for:



Prepared by:



Spring 2019

About the Research

Background and Purpose

- The Maine Public Health Association is a statewide non-profit organization that seeks to improve the health and well-being of Maine people through a focus on disease prevention, health promotion activities and advocacy, and the advancement of health equity across the state, regardless of socio-economic status.
- The organization commissioned market research in the form of a public opinion poll aimed at exploring public attitudes across Maine concerning current and prospective tobacco taxation policies.
- Critical Insights (an operating division of Digital Research Inc. of Portland, ME) assisted the organization with the development and execution of a statewide poll of Maine voters, the results of which are discussed here.
- The poll was funded by Maine Cancer Foundation.

Method and Approach

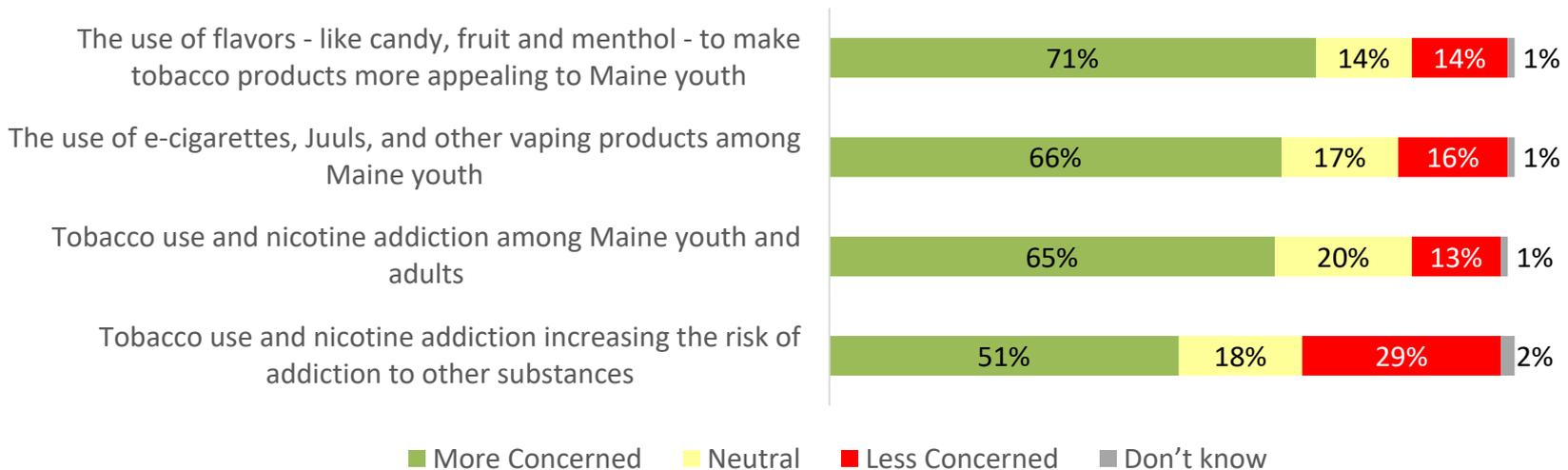
- The poll was conducted online via Critical Insights' secure data collection portal using a questionnaire developed collaboratively with the Maine Public Health Association and other project stakeholders.
- A double opt-in consumer panel encompassing the entire State of Maine in proportion to the population distribution of the state was used to sample prospective participants for the poll, with candidate participants invited to take part in the poll for a reasonable incentive.
- Upon visiting the portal, all candidates were screened and classified appropriately, with eligible participants allowed to continue and complete the survey.
 - Only registered Maine voters, age 18 or older, were allowed to take part in the poll (non-voters and those under age 18 were excluded from the polling sample).
- A survey of approximately 15 minutes in administrative length was conducted with a statewide cross-section of 450 Maine voters between April 4th and April 15th of 2019.
 - The state was sampled by county population in proportion to the most recent election turnout (based on data from the Office of the Secretary of State).
 - The sample of 450 voters offers a sampling error of +/- 4.7 percentage points, at 95% confidence.
- The makeup of the polling sample is discussed in the Demographics PDF.

Research Highlights

Views on Tobacco Use in Maine

Level of Concern About Tobacco-Related Issues

- Sizable numbers of voters polled express concern about the risk posed to youth by flavored tobacco products and by e-cigarettes.
 - Fully 71% are concerned about flavors making tobacco products more appealing to youth and 66% are concerned about the use of e-cigarettes by young people in Maine.
- Another 65% express concern about tobacco use and nicotine addiction among both youth and adults in Maine.
- Concern is still robust – but comparatively less – regarding tobacco use and nicotine addiction posing a risk for further addiction.

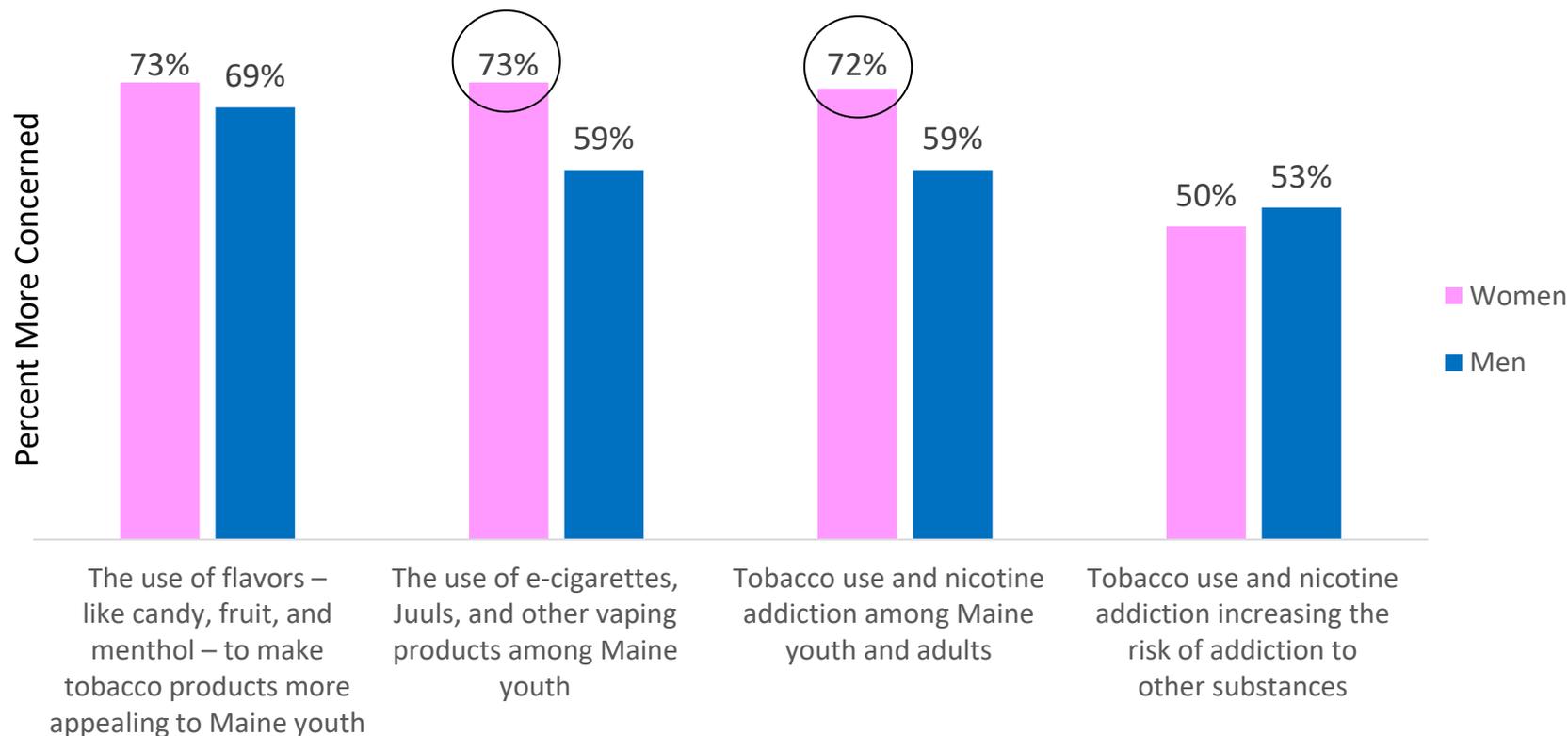


■ More Concerned ■ Neutral ■ Less Concerned ■ Don't know

Q1. Please tell us how concerned you are about the following issues in the state of Maine.

Level of Concern About Tobacco-Related Issues, by Gender

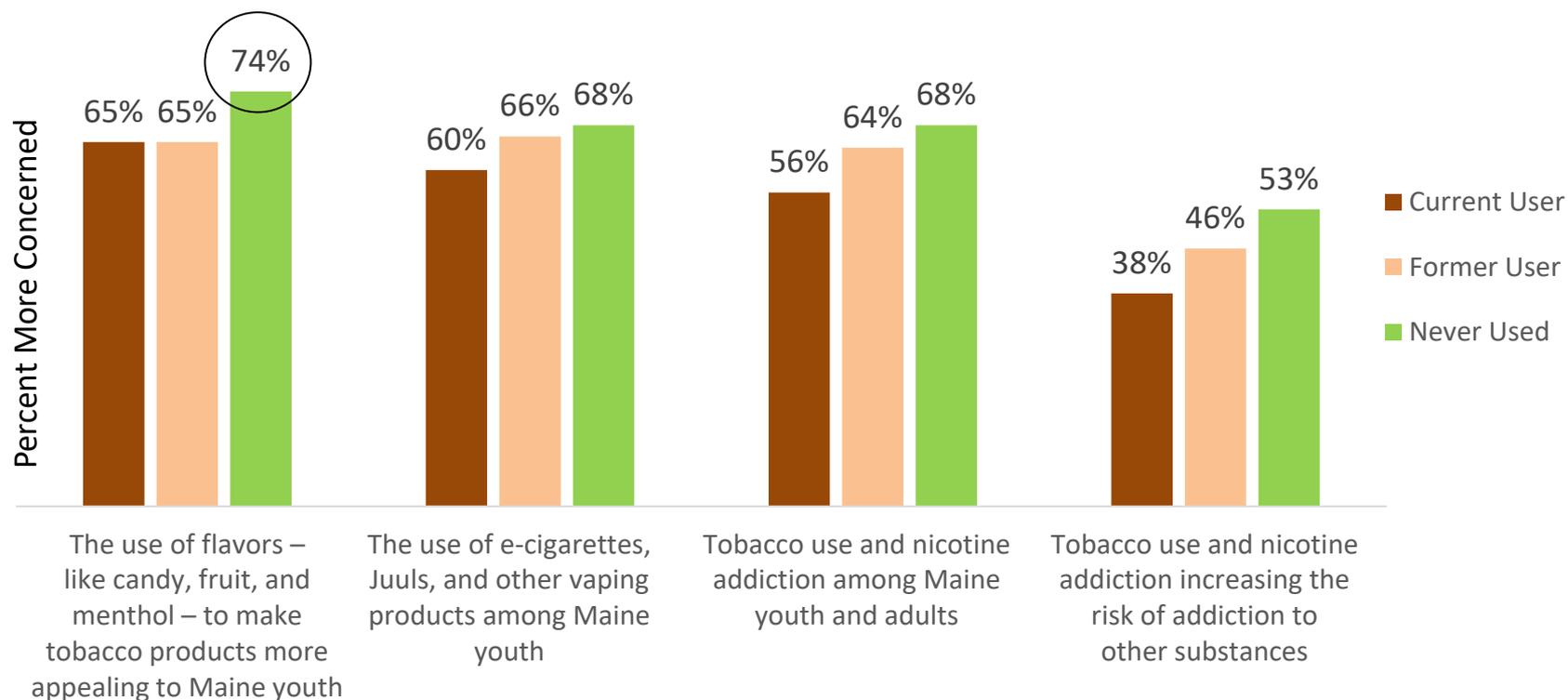
- Greater proportions of women tend to express concern about the tested issues, particularly issues involving Maine youth.
 - Significantly more women than men express concern about vaping and with overall tobacco use and addiction among both adults and young people, respectively.



Q1. Please tell us how concerned you are about the following issues in the state of Maine.

Level of Concern About Tobacco-Related Issues, by Tobacco Use Experience

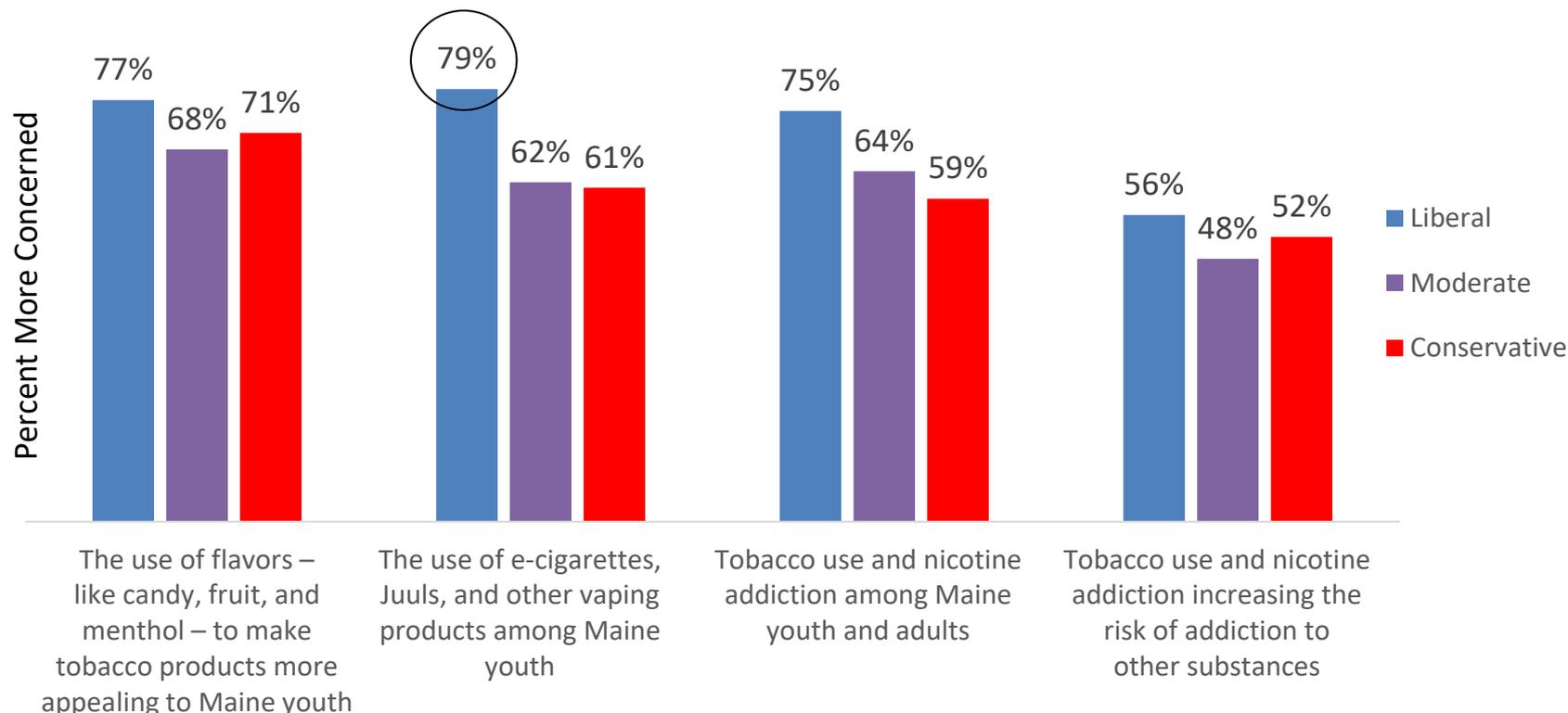
- Stated concern also tends to be greater among those who've never used tobacco and, to a lesser extent, former users; significantly more residents who've never used tobacco express concern about flavored tobacco products.



Q1. Please tell us how concerned you are about the following issues in the state of Maine.

Level of Concern About Tobacco-Related Issues, by Self-Reported Political Views

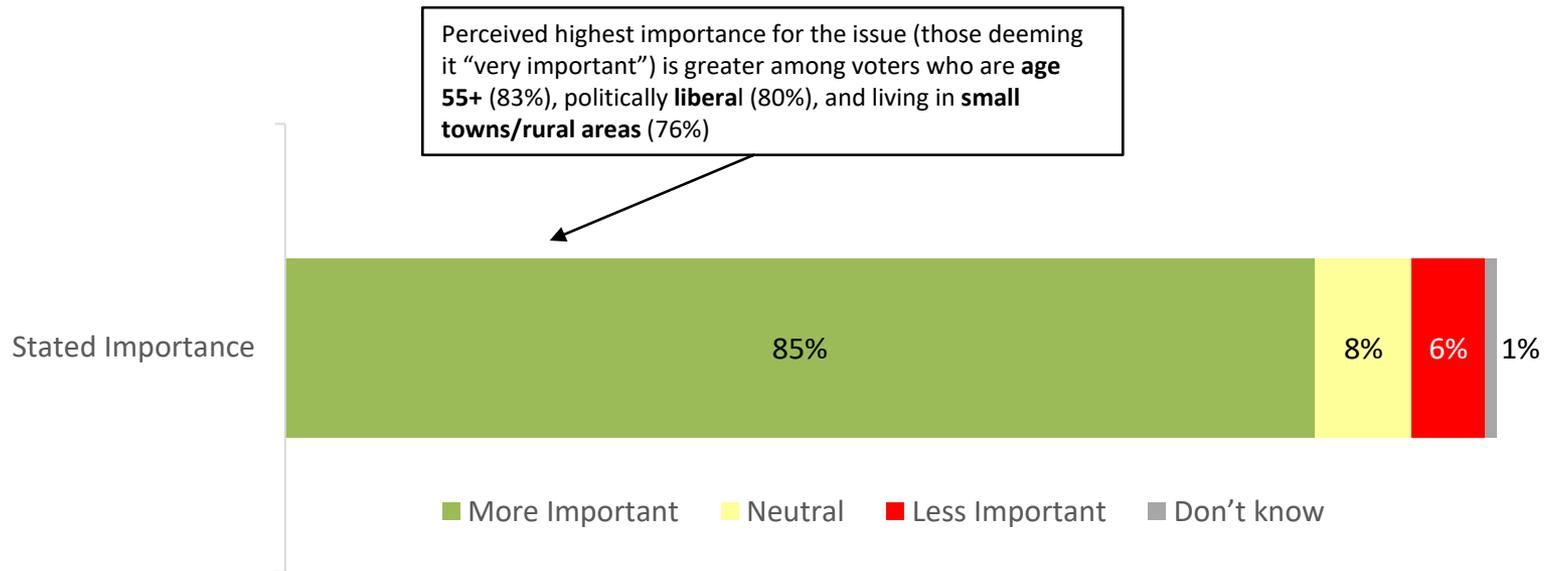
- While a majority of all voters support each tested position, political conservatives appear – by comparison – directionally softer in that support on some issues, with support increasing with moderates, and being strongest among political liberals; liberals are significantly more concerned than are others about the issue of vaping.



Q1. Please tell us how concerned you are about the following issues in the state of Maine.

Importance of Youth Tobacco Use Prevention

- The vast majority of Maine voters believe the issue of youth tobacco use prevention is important, with a strong majority (71%) indicating it is “very important” to keep young people from using tobacco products (including traditional cigarettes and other tobacco products, as well as e-cigarettes).



Q4. How important do you believe it is to prevent Maine youth from using tobacco product, such as cigarettes, chewing or spit tobacco, cigars or pipe tobacco, and electronic cigarettes (sometimes called e-cigarettes, Juuls, or vaping products)?

Perceived Influence of E-Cigarettes

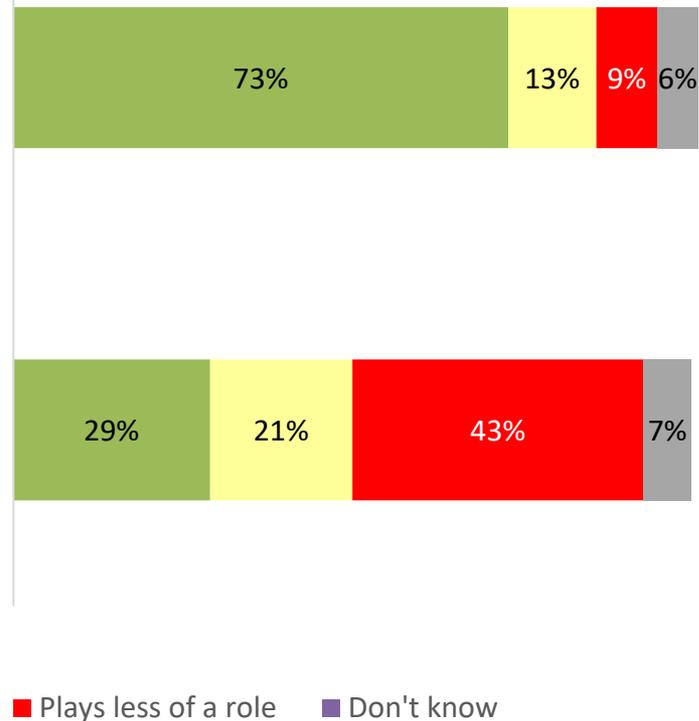
- While a strong majority of voters believe that e-cigarettes play a significant role in increasing nicotine addiction among youth and young adults in Maine, a lesser proportion feel that e-cigarettes play a significant role in helping smokers quit.
 - Close to half claim that e-cigarettes do not play a significant role in cessation.

Increasing nicotine addiction among youth and young adults

More **affluent** voters (86%) are more likely to see e-cigarettes playing a significant role in increasing nicotine addiction.

Helping cigarette smokers to quit smoking

Younger voters – particularly those under age 35 (36%) – are more likely to see e-cigarettes playing more of a role in helping smokers to quit.
Current tobacco users (28%) and **current users of e-cigarettes** (39%) are the most likely to see these products as playing a “very significant role” in cessation.



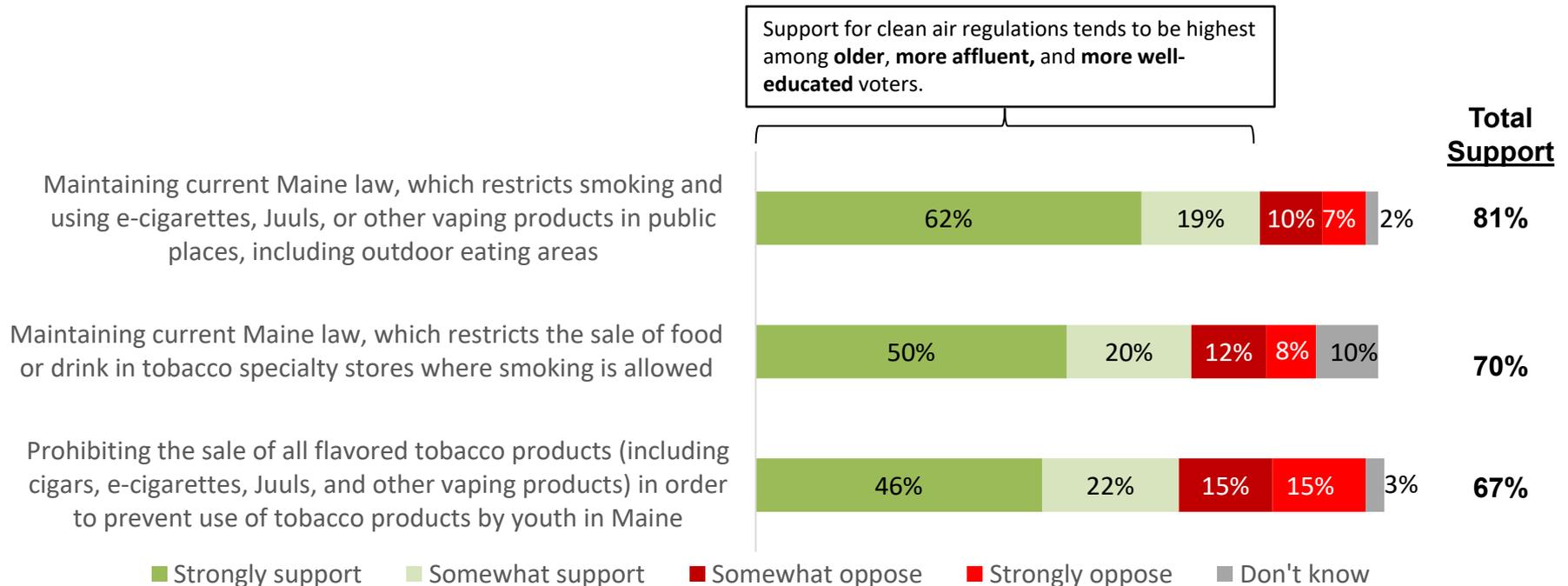
■ Plays more of a role ■ Neutral ■ Plays less of a role ■ Don't know

Q2. Based on what you know or have heard, how much of a role do you believe e-cigarettes, Juuls, and other vaping products play in increasing nicotine addiction among youth and young adults?
Q3. Based on what you know or have heard, how much of a role do you believe e-cigarettes, Juuls, and other vaping products play in helping cigarette smokers to quit smoking?

Views on Tobacco Policies

Views on Tobacco Prohibitions and Restrictions

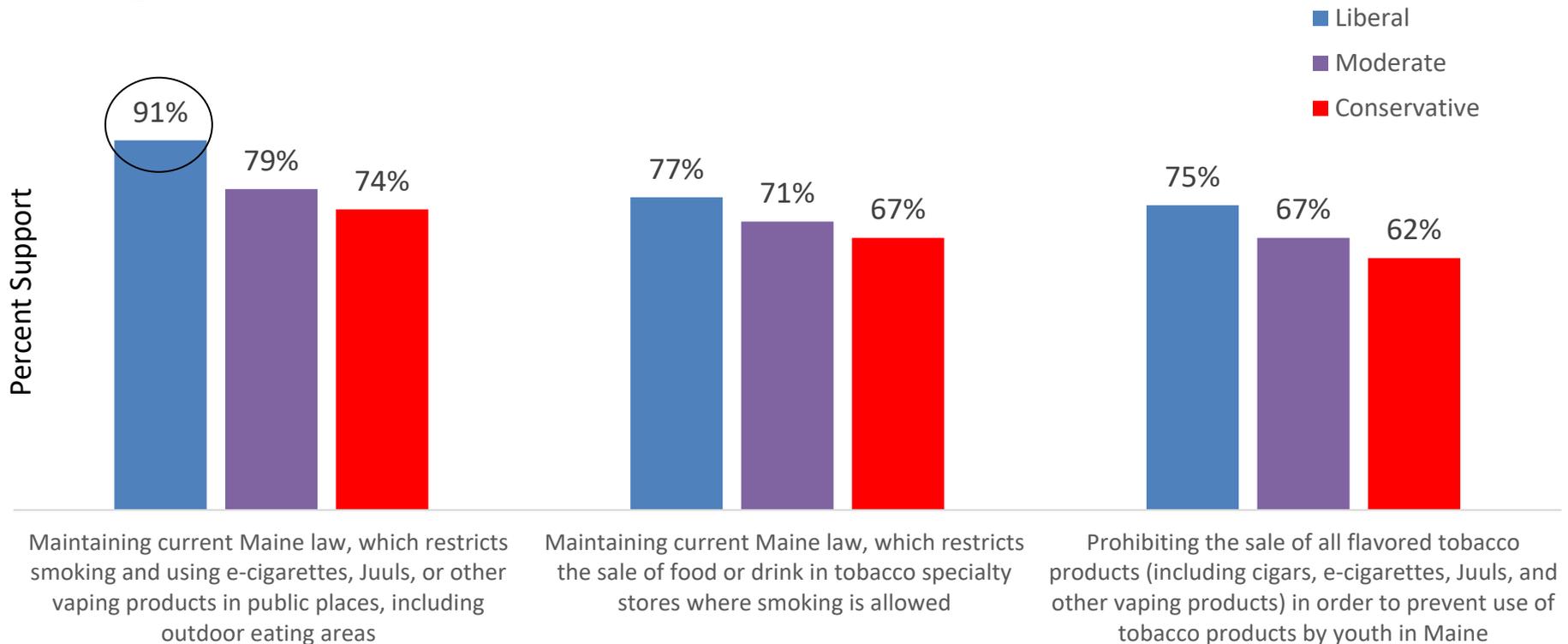
- Fully 81% of voters support restrictions for smoking and using e-cigarettes or other vaping products in public places.
- Seven-in-ten favor the current law which restricts the sale of food or drink in tobacco specialty stores where smoking is allowed and a similar proportion support prohibiting the sale of all flavored tobacco products in order to help prevent the use of tobacco products among Maine youth (consistent with earlier concerns about flavored tobacco products).



Q5. Using the scale provided, please tell us your level of opposition or support for the following policies.

Views on Tobacco Prohibitions and Restrictions, by Self-Reported Political Views

- While a majority support each of the tested positions, political conservatives are – by comparison – directionally softer in that support, with support increasing with moderates, and strongest among political liberals (particularly for continuing current clean air regulations).

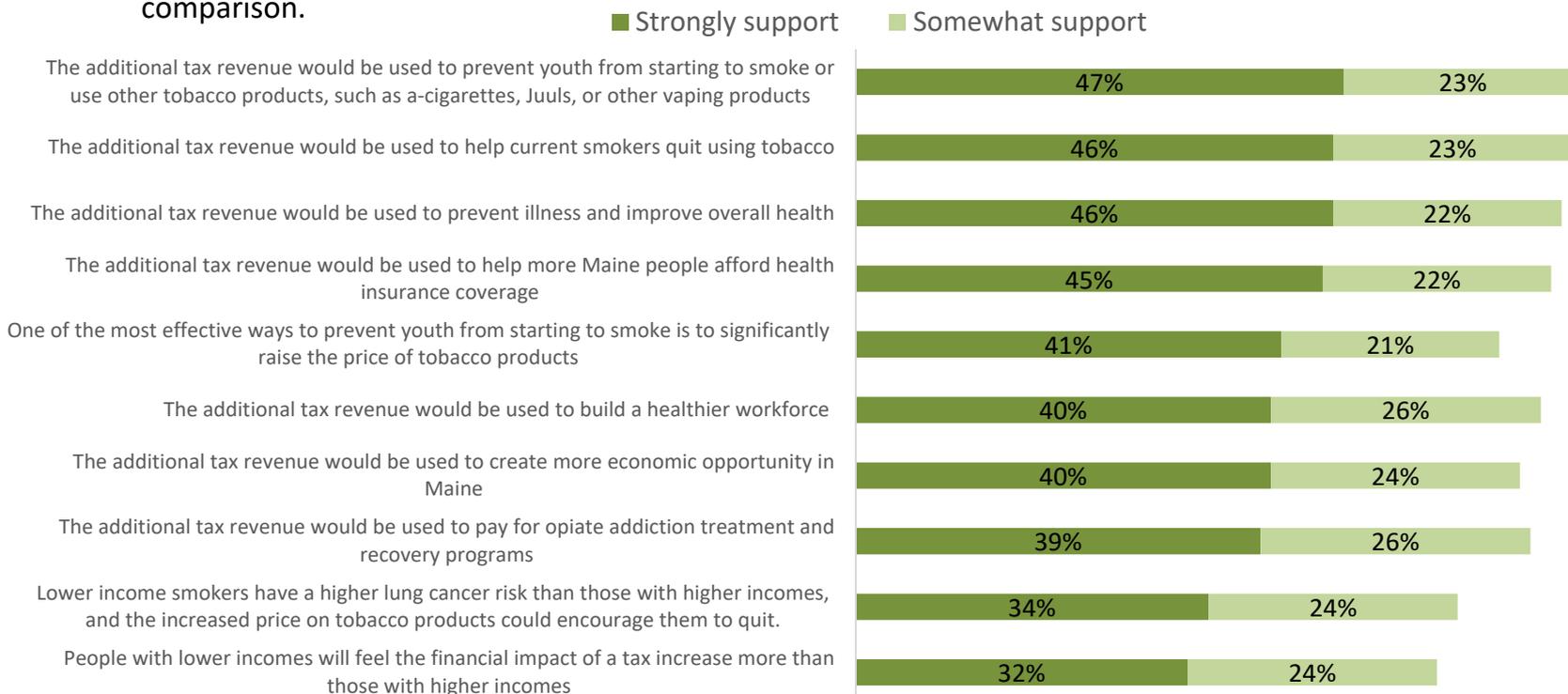


Q5. Using the scale provided, please tell us your level of opposition or support for the following policies.

Views on Tobacco-Related Tax Policy in Maine

Views on Tobacco-Related Tax Policy: Increasing Cigarette Tax

- Voters were informed in the poll that the current excise tax on cigarettes is \$2.00 per pack and that an increase of \$1.50 per pack would result in an additional \$40 million in annual revenue to the state.
- Support is strong across all tested dimensions, with stated strong support being directionally higher for the use of revenue to improve the health of Maine’s workforce and to pay for opiate addiction treatment.
- While using revenue for youth prevention efforts is viewed favorably, increasing the price of tobacco as a way to prevent youth from starting to smoke or use tobacco is seen as a directionally less compelling position by comparison.

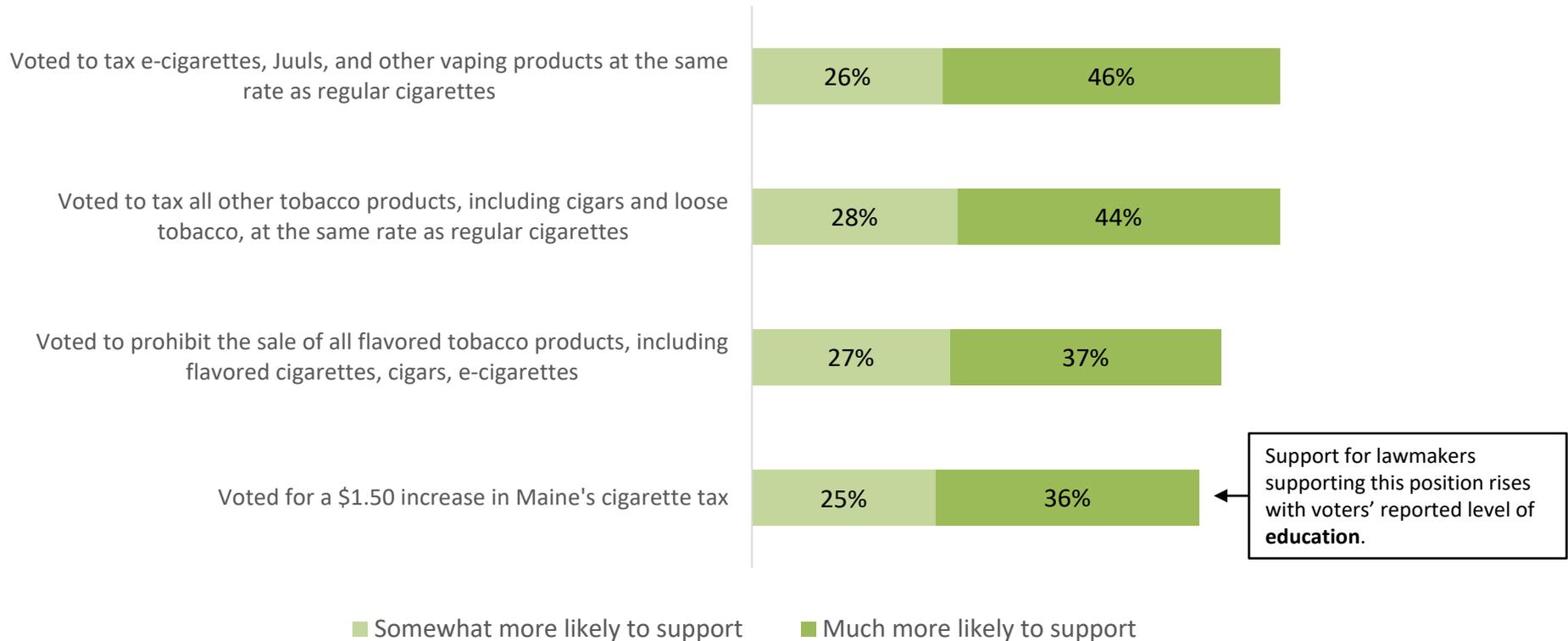


Q11a. Please tell us if you would oppose or support increasing the cigarette tax if you knew that...

Views on Lawmakers and Tobacco-Related Tax Policy

Views on Tobacco-Related Tax Policy

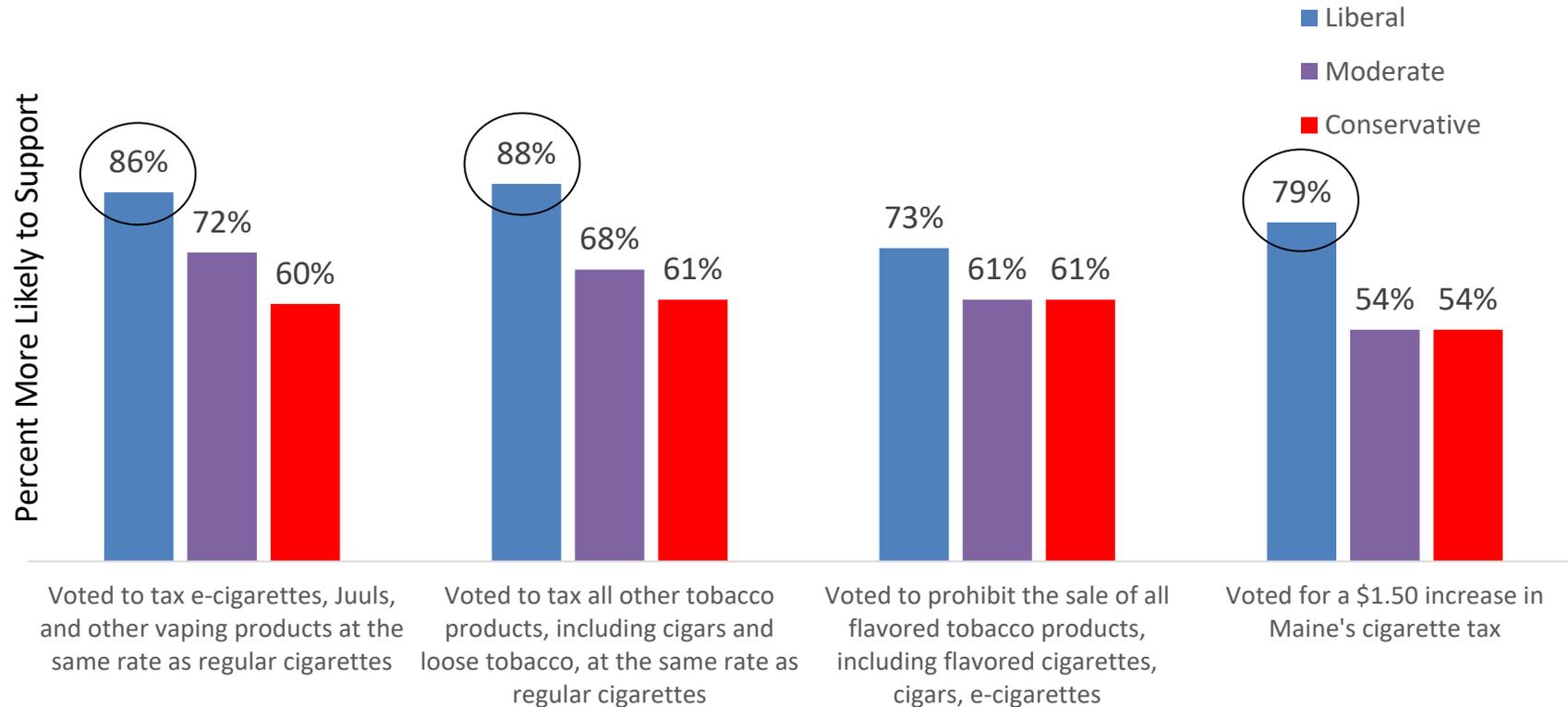
- While a lawmaker's vote on standardizing tobacco taxes or on the taxation of e-cigarettes appear to wield somewhat greater influence on voter perception, all tested tobacco tax policies would appear to affect voters' feelings about political candidates.



Q15a. Please tell us if you would be more likely to oppose or support a candidate for political office in Maine who voted in the following manner.

Views on Tobacco-Related Tax Policy, by Self-Reported Political Views

- Results for all tested positions concerning tobacco tax policy and the effect on support for involved lawmakers is largely non-partisan, but is comparatively lower among conservatives, and often rises among moderates and, especially, among liberals.



Q15a. Please tell us if you would be more likely to oppose or support a candidate for political office in Maine who voted in the following manner.