



SAVE THE  
CHILDREN  
ACTION  
NETWORK  
**IOWA**  
**POLLING**  
**RESULTS**

*Research Conducted by  
Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research (D)  
& TargetPoint Consulting (R)*

# KEY FINDINGS

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- 1. A strong majority of voters in Iowa want candidates to prioritize improving education from preschool through college.**
- 2. Voters recognized the importance of early childhood education (ECE).**
- 3. Voters believe preschool should be part of public education offerings. Iowa voters want voluntary preschool available for all 4-year-olds.**
- 4. Among a range of Iowa focused ECE programs preschool and childcare were voter's top choices on where to prioritize.**
- 5. A majority of voters agree with and would vote for candidates who advocate for investing more in early childhood education programs, even if it means a slight tax increase.**
- 6. Messaging matters and can help attract support for a variety of early childhood education policies. All of the messaging tested performed well, but we can maximize support by pairing the right messages with the right audiences.**

OVERALL ATTITUDES  
ON EARLY CHILDHOOD  
EDUCATION

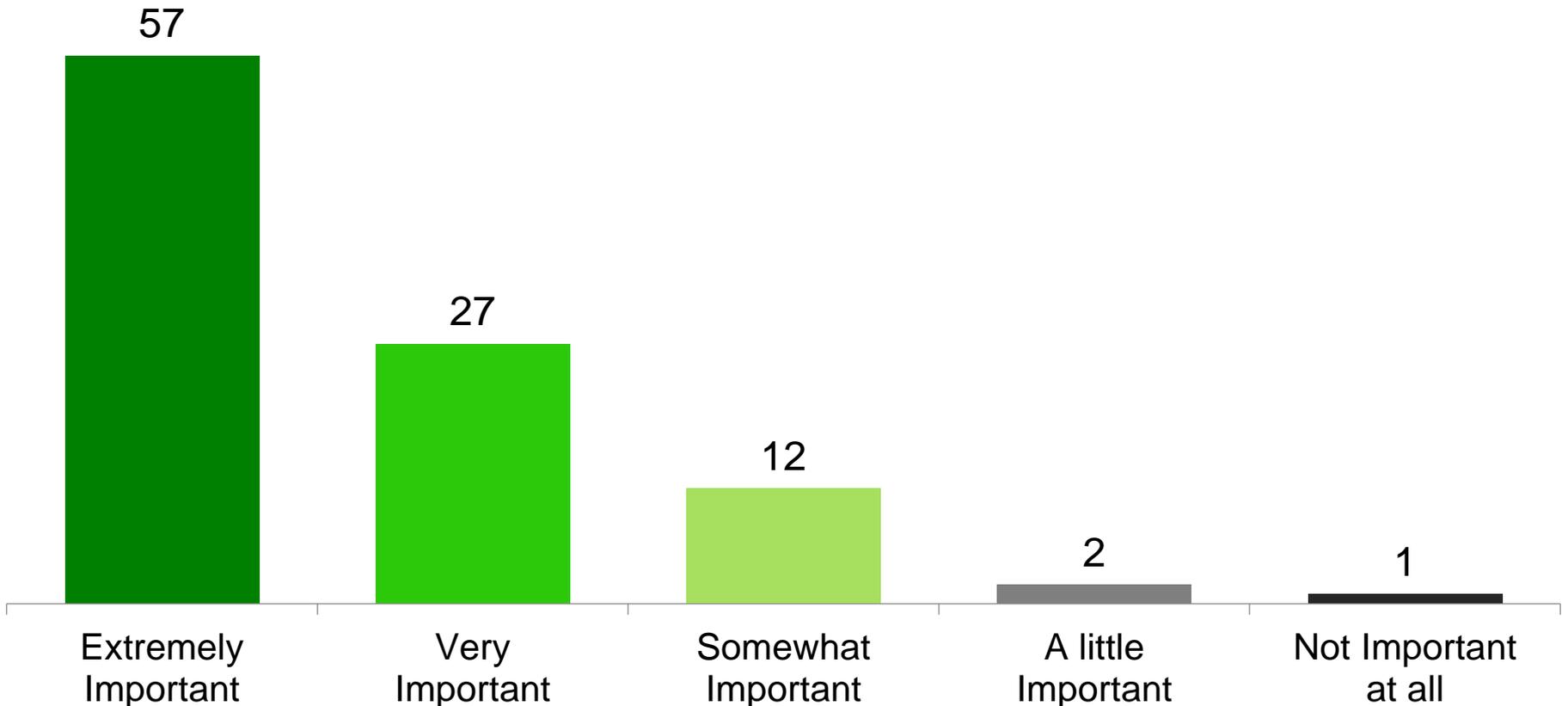
# THE IMPORTANCE OF 0-5 IS CLEAR

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In general, how important are the years zero to five years old to the learning, growth and development for children – are they extremely important, very important, somewhat important, a little important, or not important at all?

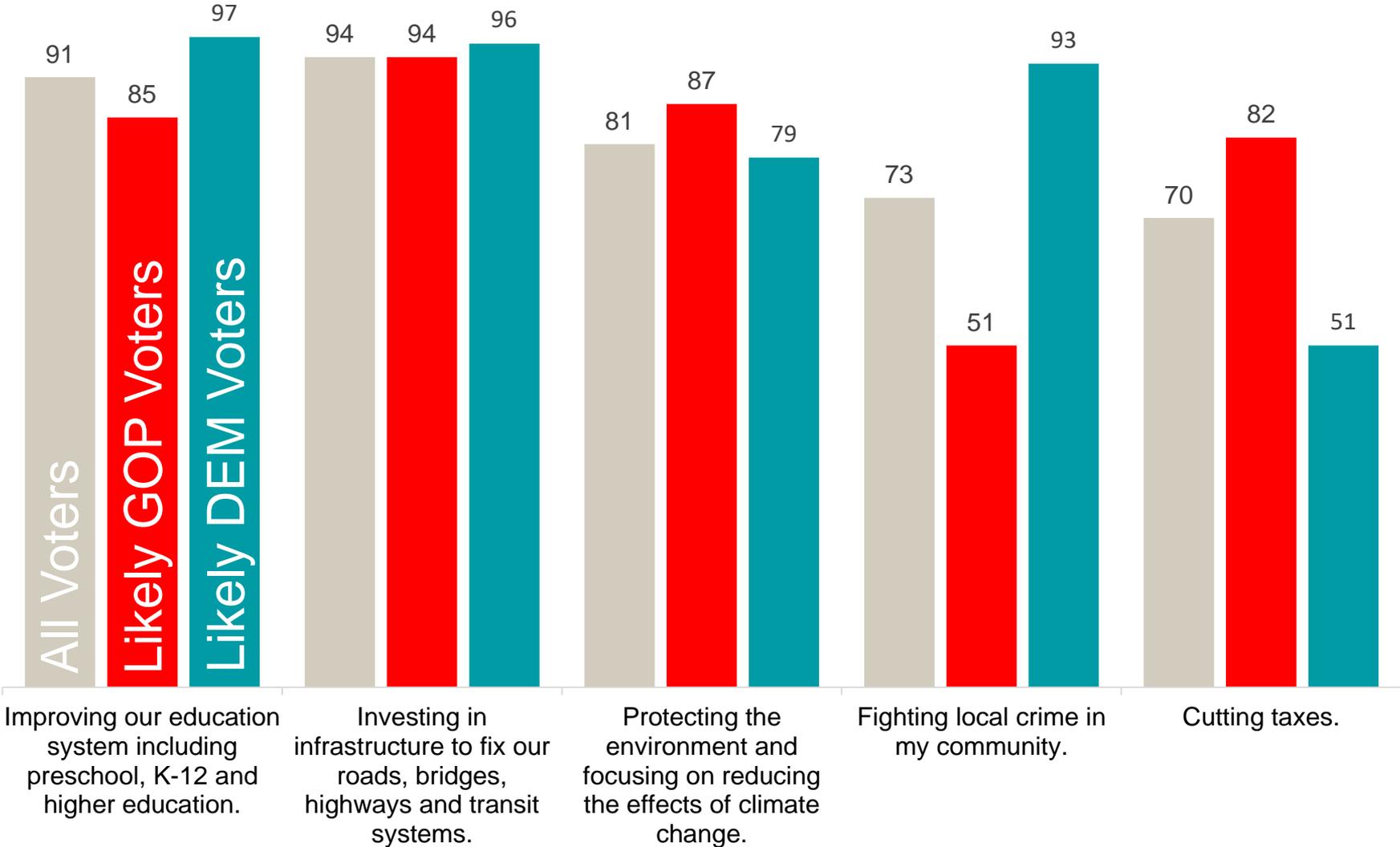
## TOTAL IMPORTANCE

96%



# EARLY EDUCATION A TOP PRIORITY

Thinking about different issues that candidates might prioritize as part of their agenda, how high of a priority are each of the following issues to you?



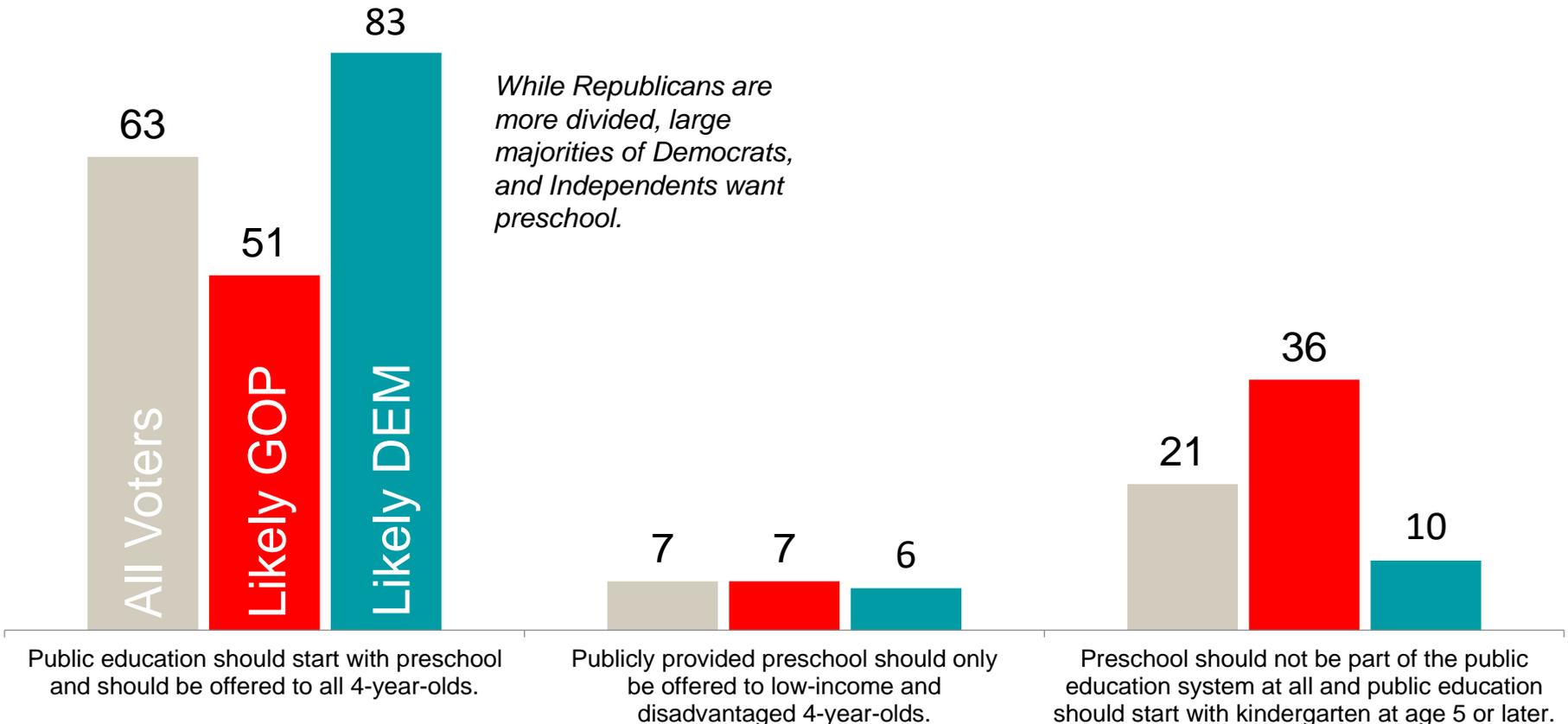
# ATTITUDES ON PRESCHOOL

And which of the following THREE statements best reflects your opinion about public education for young children?

OFFER TO ALL

OFFER TO LOW INCOME

DON'T OFFER



IOWA  
RESPONSES TO  
CANDIDATE POLICY  
POSITIONS

# OVERVIEW OF STATE SPECIFIC POLICIES

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In Iowa we tested five state specific policy points as if they were statements a candidate for governor, or state legislature might say on investing in early childhood education or early intervention programs. After reading each statement, we asked respondents whether support for that policy would make them more or less likely to vote for the candidate who said each statement.

The broad policy topics covered were **preschool**, **home visiting programs**, and **childcare**; however the policy was specific to potential Iowa needs in the early childhood education area.



INVESTING IN  
ACCESS TO  
PRESCHOOL  
IMPROVING  
PRESCHOOL  
QUALITY



INVESTING IN  
ACCESS TO  
HOME VISITING  
PROGRAMS



INVESTING IN  
ACCESS TO QUALITY  
CHILDCARE

# TOP POLICY ISSUE IN IOWA

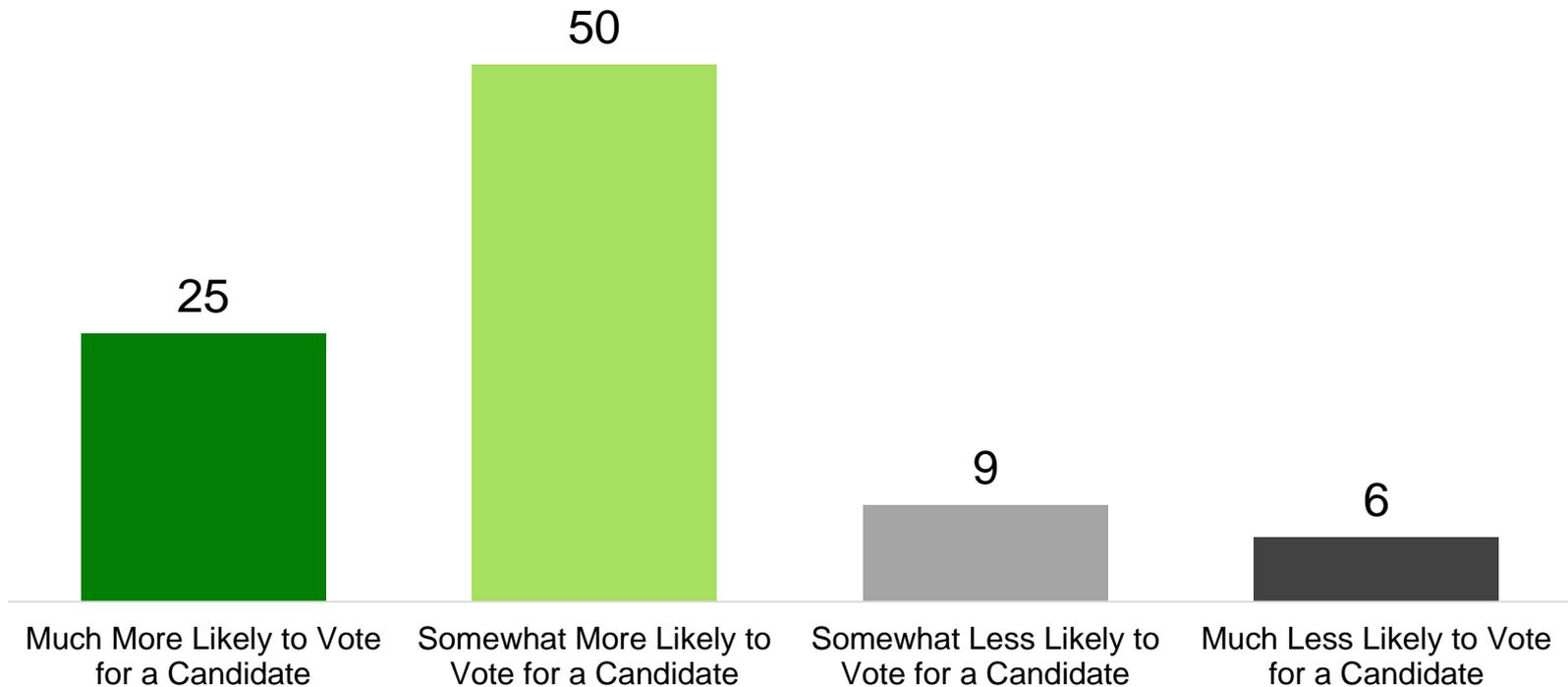
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## **ACCESS TO QUALITY CHILDCARE FOR CHILDREN:**

Parents have a right to know the childcare they use provides a safe, quality environment for their children. Only 2% of childcare homes and programs in Iowa are nationally accredited. I want to provide children and families with a safe learning environment, qualified professional teachers, and the age appropriate learning opportunities that come with accredited facilities. As governor, I would encourage tax incentives so these facilities can become accredited.

76 – 16



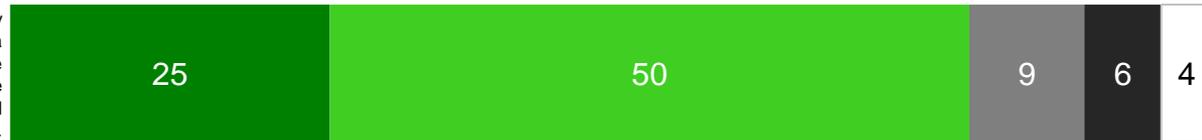
# IOWA ECE POLICY OPINIONS

Among All Voters

If a candidate running for Governor said the following about programs that would impact the lives of children zero to five years old, would you be more or less likely to vote for them?

Much More Likely      Somewhat More Likely      Somewhat Less Likely      Much Less Likely      Don't Know / Refused

Parents have a right to know the childcare they use provides a safe, quality environment for their children. Only 2% of childcare homes and programs in Iowa are nationally accredited. I want to provide children and families with a safe learning environment, qualified professional teachers, and the age appropriate learning opportunities that come with accredited facilities. As governor, I would encourage tax incentives so these facilities can become accredited.



Total More Likely: 76%

Only 59% of low-income children are being served by preschool programs in Iowa. That means over 20 thousand low-income kids who could benefit most from high-quality early education have no access to pre-kindergarten. I want to expand funding so at least the lowest income 4 year olds who want to attend preschool have access in our state, and help ensure more kids have an equal opportunity to succeed.



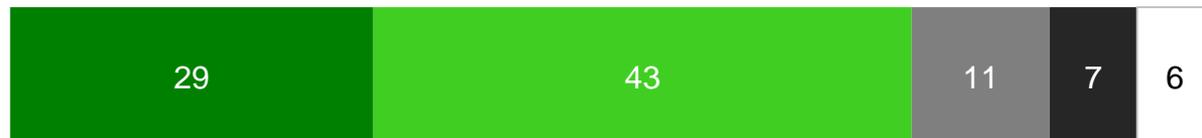
Total More Likely: 75%

In Iowa it should pay to work hard. I support changing the way childcare assistance works so that we can end the cycle of poverty. Families that reach a certain income level get cutoff from any childcare assistance. Instead of a strict cutoff, I believe we should gradually lower the amount of assistance families get so they still have help with childcare costs, enabling them to get out of poverty and move into the middle class.



Total More Likely: 74%

Less than 1% of new and at-risk mothers are getting the services they need. The State of Iowa can assist families and help parents by providing home visiting programs to vulnerable parents in need. In addition to programs with nurses who help pregnant adolescents and new mothers who are at risk for health problems during their pregnancy, Iowa has a program called Parentivity - an online virtual voluntary home visitation system that connects low income parents with virtual mentors and resources. We currently reach less than 1% of the families who need these programs and I support expanding this to reach more families and young mothers so our children's parents can parent better.



Total More Likely: 72%

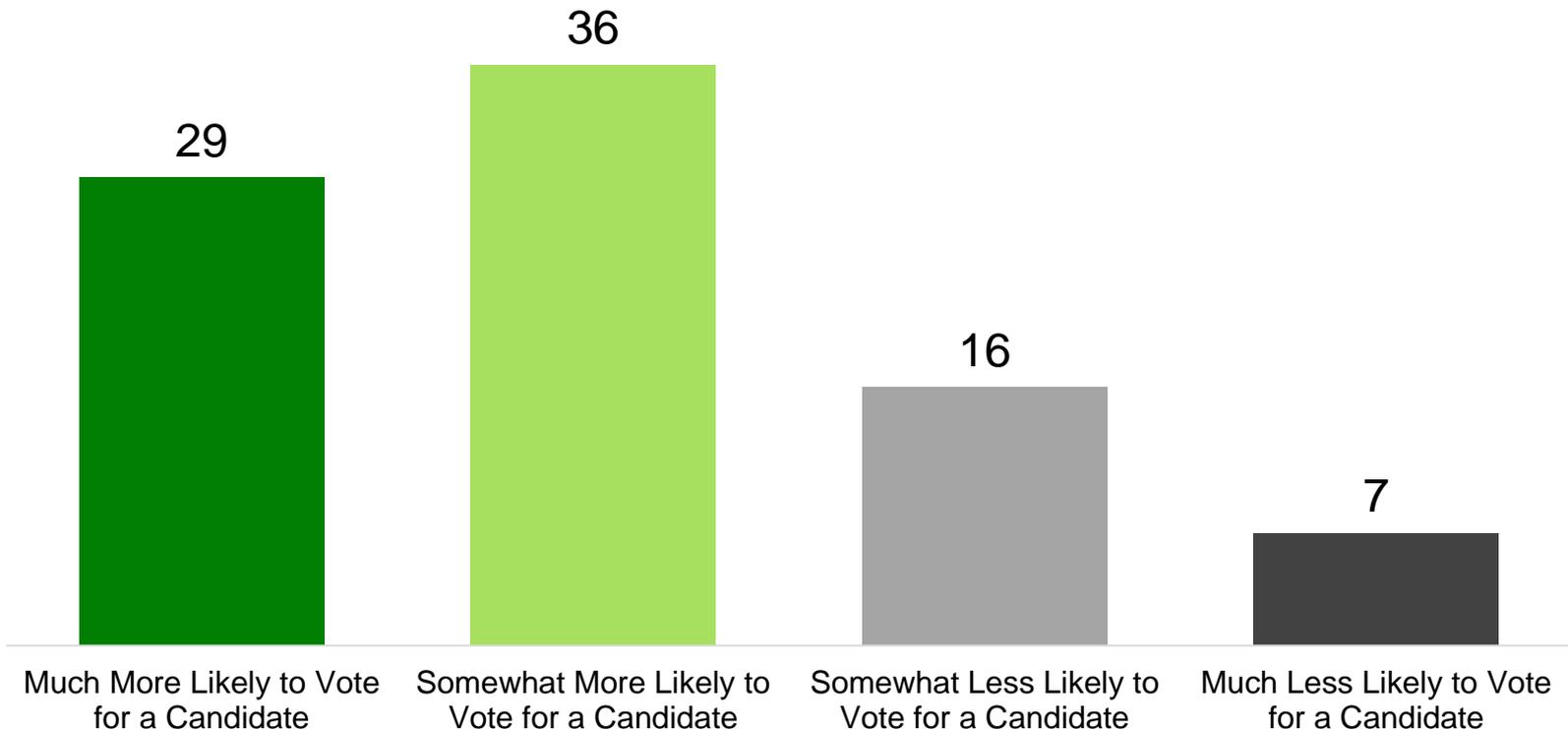
# TOP POLICY ISSUE AMONG GOP PRIMARY VOTERS



## CHILDCARE ACCESS FOR CHILDREN:

In Iowa it should pay to work hard. I support changing the way childcare assistance works so that we can end the cycle of poverty. Families that reach a certain income level get cutoff from any childcare assistance. Instead of a strict cutoff, I believe we should gradually lower the amount of assistance families get so they still have help with childcare costs, enabling them to get out of poverty and move into the middle class.

65 – 23



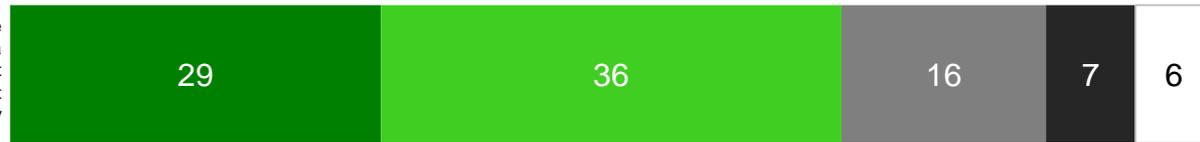
# IOWA ECE POLICY OPINIONS

Among GOP  
Primary Voters

If a candidate running for Governor said the following about programs that would impact the lives of children zero to five years old, would you be more or less likely to vote for them?

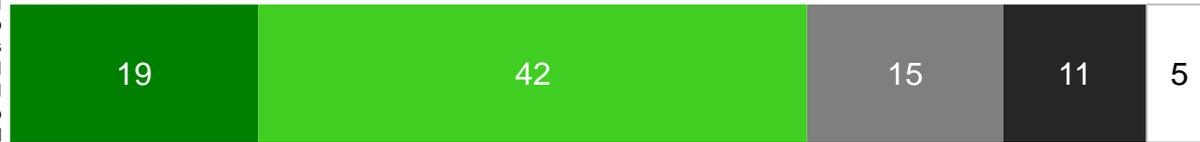
Much More Likely    Somewhat More Likely    Somewhat Less Likely    Much Less Likely    Don't Know / Refused

In Iowa it should pay to work hard. I support changing the way childcare assistance works so that we can end the cycle of poverty. Families that reach a certain income level get cutoff from any childcare assistance. Instead of a strict cutoff, I believe we should gradually lower the amount of assistance families get so they still have help with childcare costs, enabling them to get out of poverty and move into the middle class.



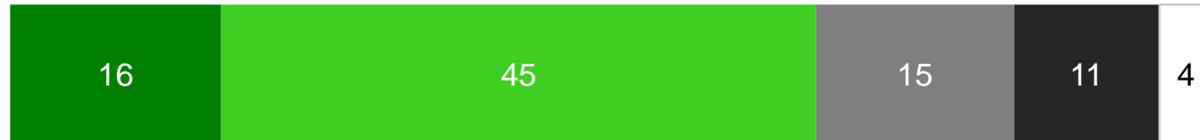
Total More Likely: 65%

Less than 1% of new and at-risk mothers are getting the services they need. The State of Iowa can assist families and help parents by providing home visiting programs to vulnerable parents in need. In addition to programs with nurses who help pregnant adolescents and new mothers who are at risk for health problems during their pregnancy, Iowa has a program called Parentivity - an online virtual voluntary home visitation system that connects low income parents with virtual mentors and resources. We currently reach less than 1% of the families who need these programs and I support expanding this to reach more families and young mothers so our children's parents can parent better.



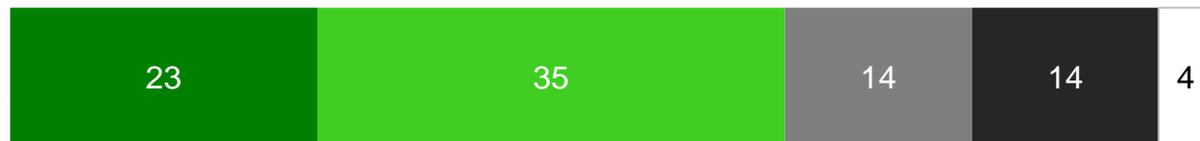
Total More Likely: 61%

Parents have a right to know the childcare they use provides a safe, quality environment for their children. Only 2% of childcare homes and programs in Iowa are nationally accredited. I want to provide children and families with a safe learning environment, qualified professional teachers, and the age appropriate learning opportunities that come with accredited facilities. As governor, I would encourage tax incentives so these facilities can become accredited.



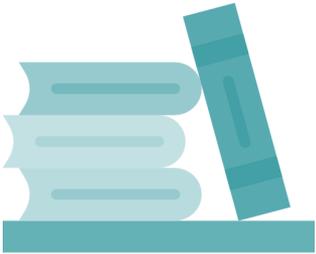
Total More Likely: 60%

Only 59% of low-income children are being served by preschool programs in Iowa. That means over 20 thousand low-income kids who could benefit most from high-quality early education have no access to pre-kindergarten. I want to expand funding so at least the lowest income 4 year olds who want to attend preschool have access in our state, and help ensure more kids have an equal opportunity to succeed.



Total More Likely: 58%

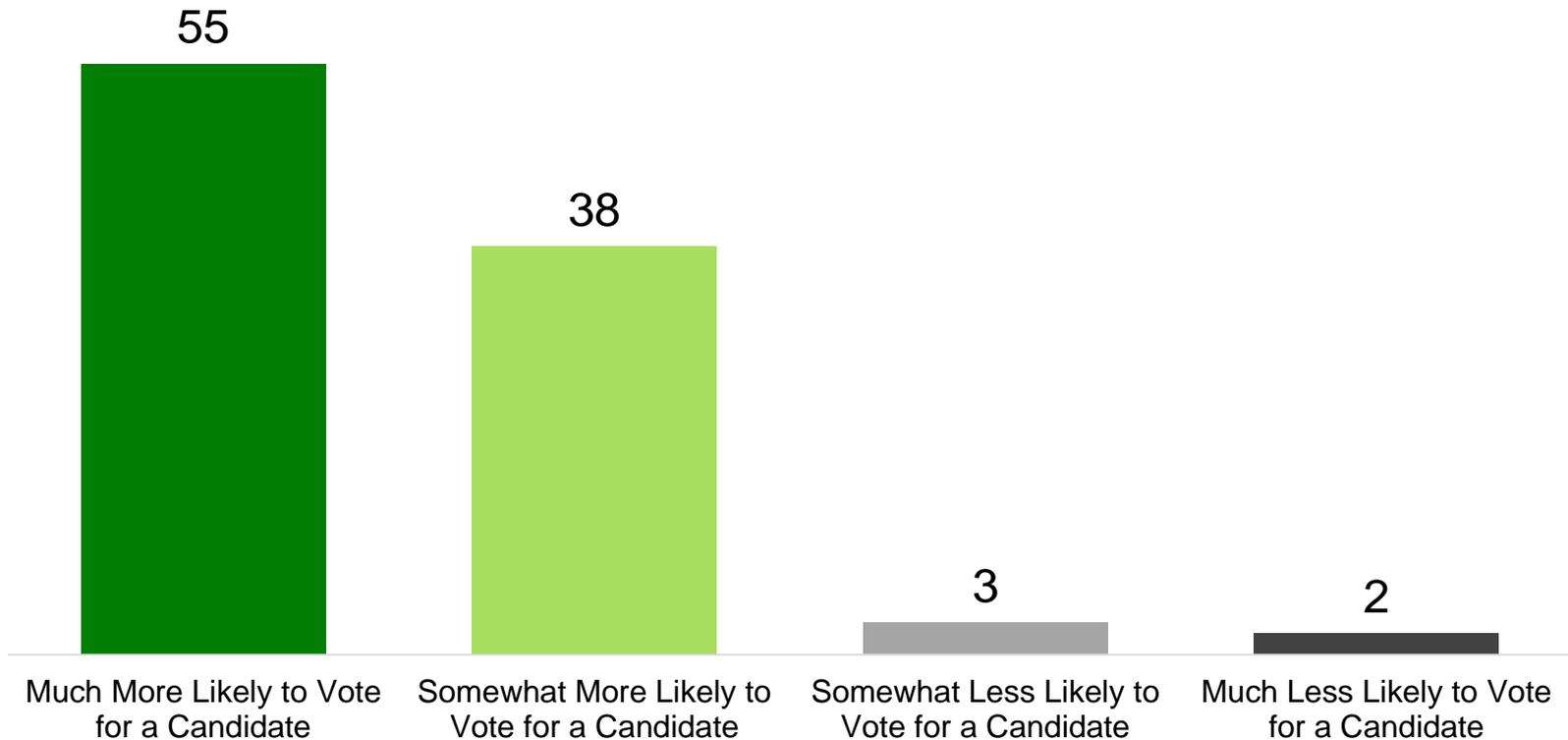
# TOP POLICY ISSUE AMONG DEM PRIMARY VOTERS



## **PRESCHOOL ACCESS FOR LOW INCOME CHILDREN:**

Only 59% of low-income children are being served by preschool programs in Iowa. That means over 20 thousand low-income kids who could benefit most from high-quality early education have no access to pre-kindergarten. I want to expand funding so at least the lowest income 4 year olds who want to attend preschool have access in our state, and help ensure more kids have an equal opportunity to succeed.

93 – 5



# IOWA ECE POLICY OPINIONS

Among DEM  
Primary Voters

If a candidate running for Governor said the following about programs that would impact the lives of children zero to five years old, would you be more or less likely to vote for them?

Much More Likely      Somewhat More Likely      Somewhat Less Likely      Much Less Likely      Don't Know / Refused

Only 59% of low-income children are being served by preschool programs in Iowa. That means over 20 thousand low-income kids who could benefit most from high-quality early education have no access to pre-kindergarten. I want to expand funding so at least the lowest income 4 year olds who want to attend preschool have access in our state, and help ensure more kids have an equal opportunity to succeed.



Total More Likely: 93%

Parents have a right to know the childcare they use provides a safe, quality environment for their children. Only 2% of childcare homes and programs in Iowa are nationally accredited. I want to provide children and families with a safe learning environment, qualified professional teachers, and the age appropriate learning opportunities that come with accredited facilities. As governor, I would encourage tax incentives so these facilities can become accredited.



Total More Likely: 88%

Less than 1% of new and at-risk mothers are getting the services they need. The State of Iowa can assist families and help parents by providing home visiting programs to vulnerable parents in need. In addition to programs with nurses who help pregnant adolescents and new mothers who are at risk for health problems during their pregnancy, Iowa has a program called Parentivity - an online virtual voluntary home visitation system that connects low income parents with virtual mentors and resources. We currently reach less than 1% of the families who need these programs and I support expanding this to reach more families and young mothers so our children's parents can parent better.



Total More Likely: 87%

In Iowa it should pay to work hard. I support changing the way childcare assistance works so that we can end the cycle of poverty. Families that reach a certain income level get cutoff from any childcare assistance. Instead of a strict cutoff, I believe we should gradually lower the amount of assistance families get so they still have help with childcare costs, enabling them to get out of poverty and move into the middle class.



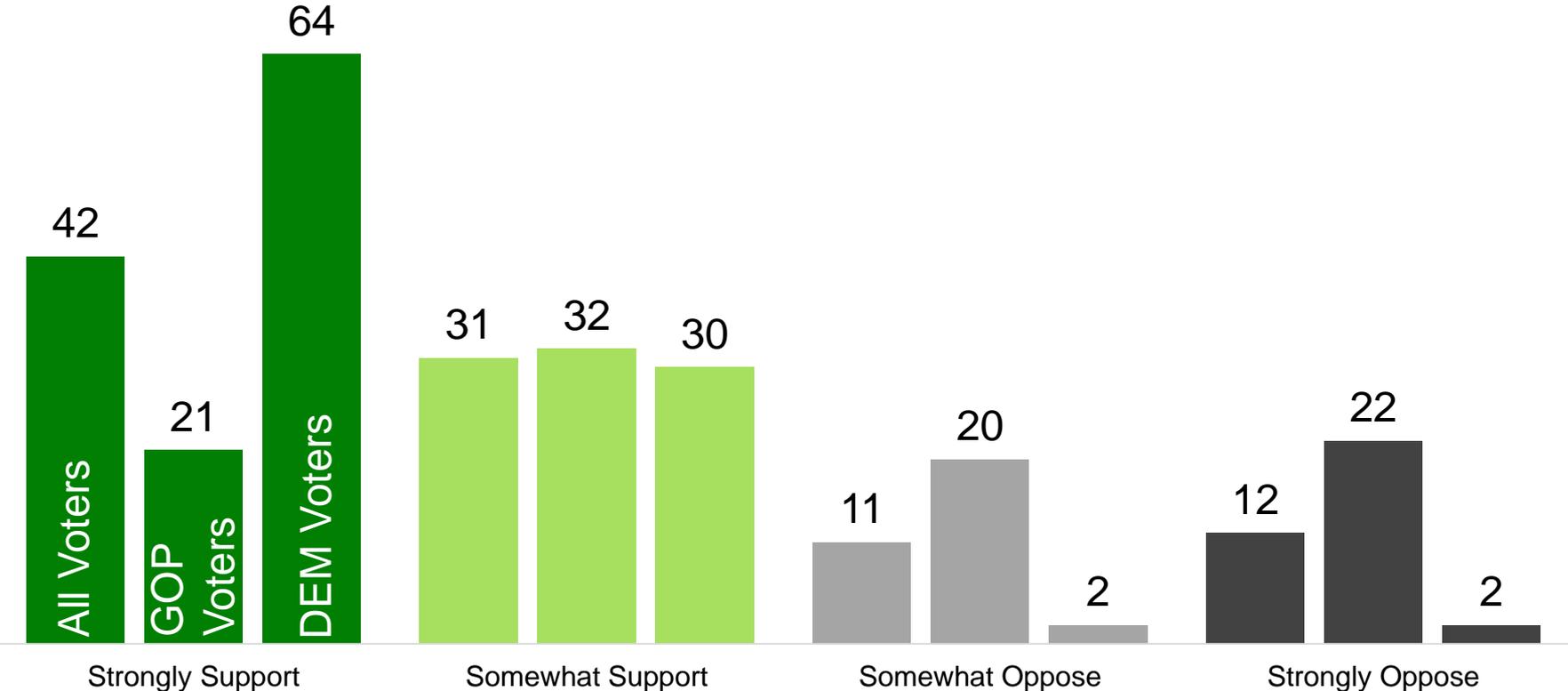
Total More Likely: 82%

\*message was half sampled

# STRONG SUPPORT FOR ECE INVESTMENT

Thinking about opportunities to support programs that improve the lives of children in your state, do you support or oppose investing more in these programs, even if it meant a slight increase in your taxes?

Statewide 72 – 23  
GOP 53 – 42  
DEM 94 – 4



# POSITIVE IMPACT ON CANDIDATES

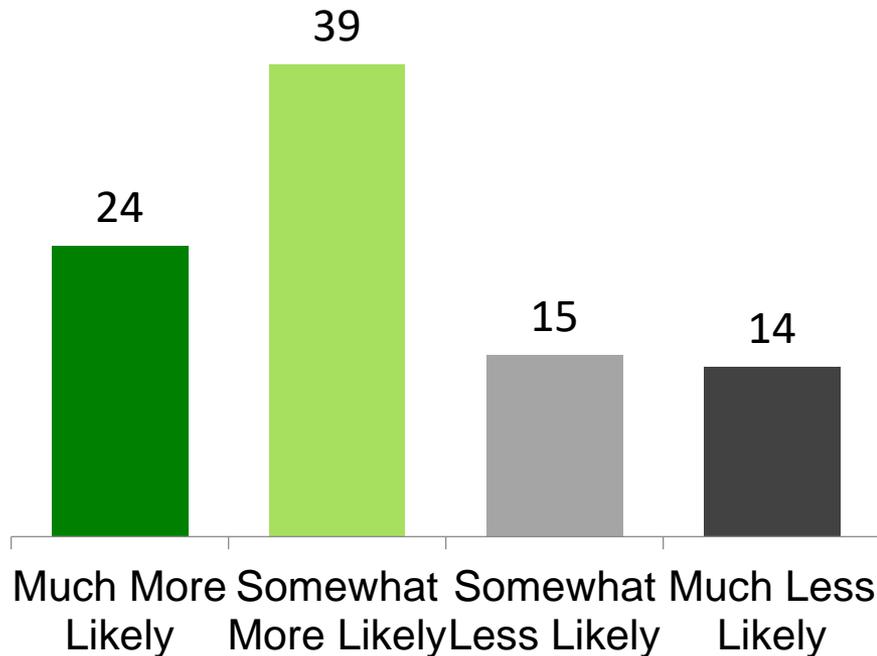
Among All Voters

Voters are willing to put their money where their mouth is – even if a candidate wants to raise taxes slightly they will support them in the election.

## Half Sample A:

And if a candidate for office came out in FAVOR of investing in high quality early childhood education programs and childcare, **even if it meant raising taxes**, would you be more or less likely to vote for that candidate?

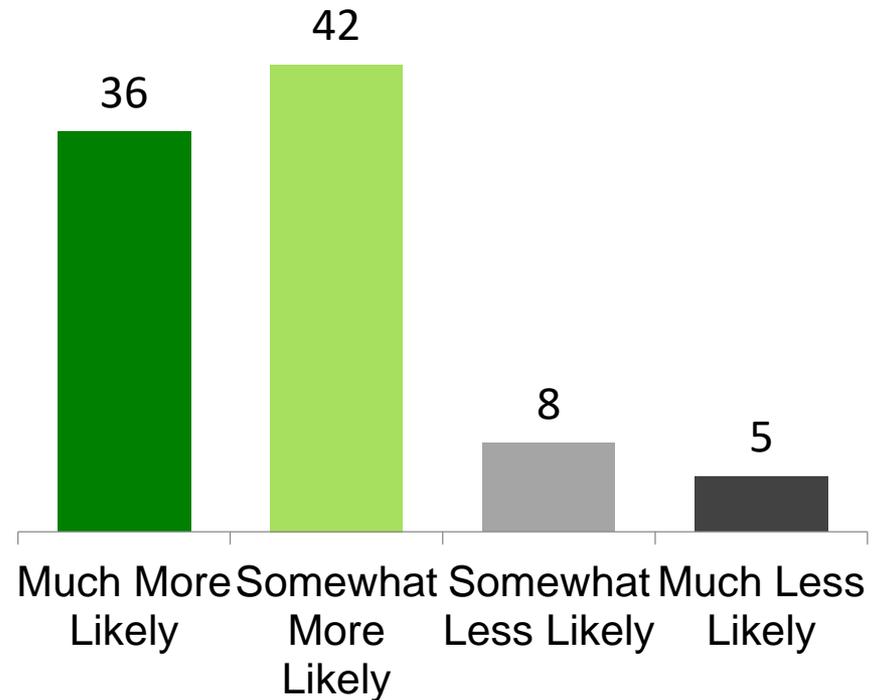
63 – 29



## Half Sample B:

And if a candidate for office came out in FAVOR of investing in high quality early childhood education programs and childcare, would you be more or less likely to vote for that candidate?

79 – 14



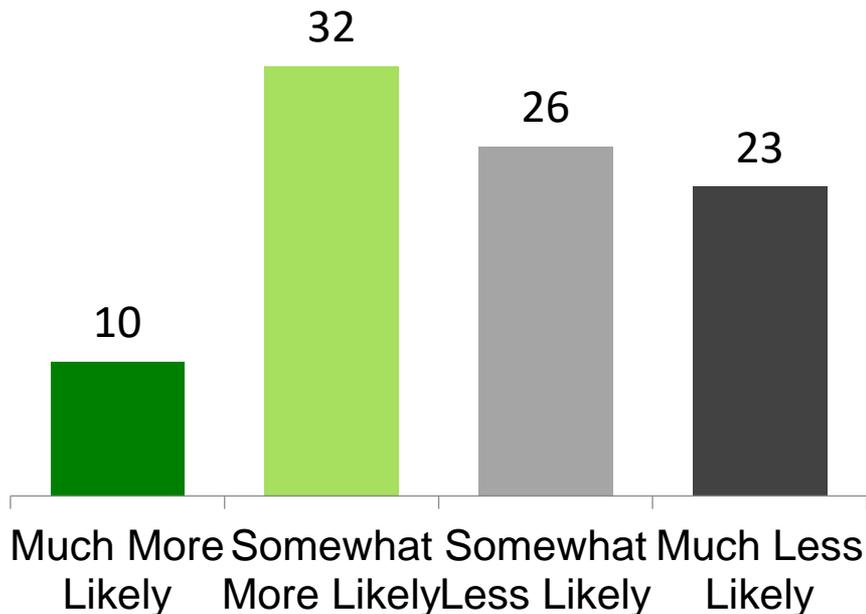
# POSITIVE IMPACT ON CANDIDATES

*Among GOP Voters*

## Half Sample A:

And if a candidate for office came out in FAVOR of investing in high quality early childhood education programs and childcare, **even if it meant raising taxes**, would you be more or less likely to vote for that candidate?

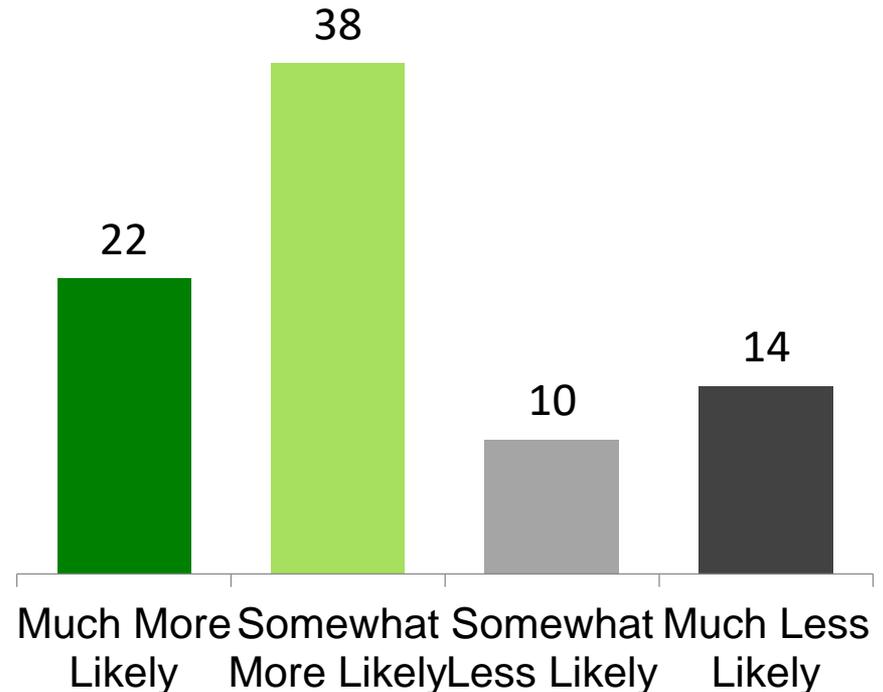
41 – 49



## Half Sample B:

And if a candidate for office came out in FAVOR of investing in high quality early childhood education programs and childcare, would you be more or less likely to vote for that candidate?

60 – 24



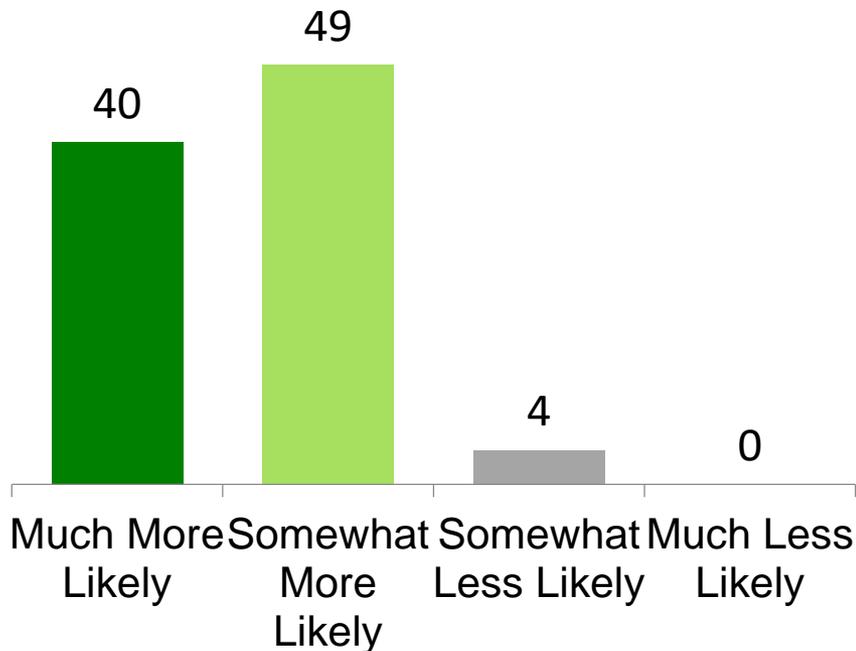
# POSITIVE IMPACT ON CANDIDATES

*Among Dem Voters*

## Half Sample A:

And if a candidate for office came out in FAVOR of investing in high quality early childhood education programs and childcare, **even if it meant raising taxes**, would you be more or less likely to vote for that candidate?

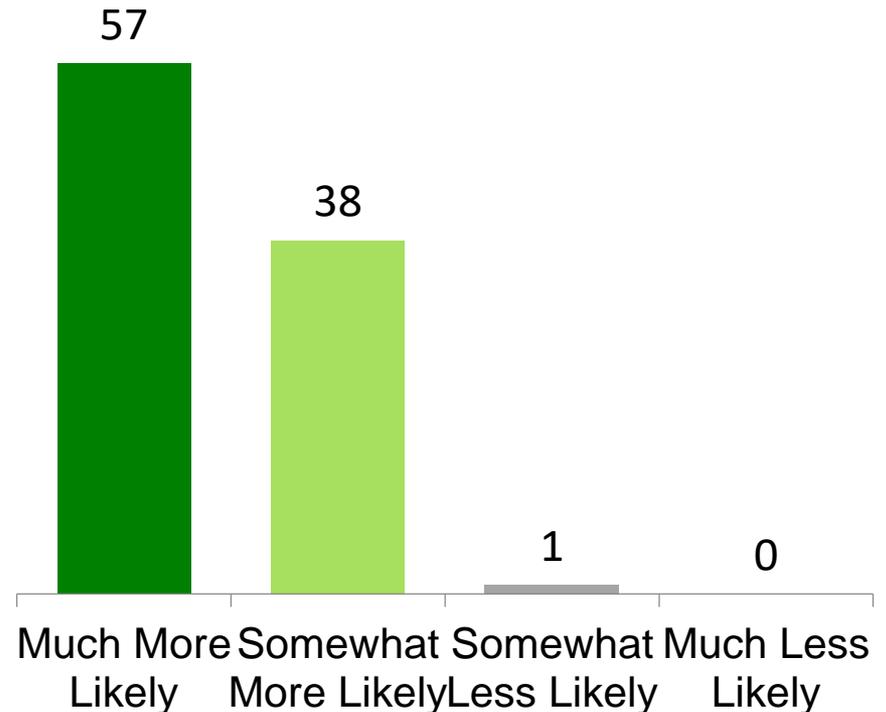
89 – 8



## Half Sample B:

And if a candidate for office came out in FAVOR of investing in high quality early childhood education programs and childcare, would you be more or less likely to vote for that candidate?

94 – 1



**COMMUNICATING IN  
IOWA  
& TARGET GROUPS**

# IMPACT MEASURED ON 6 ECE MESSAGES

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The six messages below were read to voters. No message scored lower than 72% of voters saying it was a convincing argument for early childhood education.

In science and math scores, **American children are falling behind students around the world because other countries** are investing in high-quality early education programs. It is time we put American children on a level playing field by investing in early childhood education programs.

It is ultimately the responsibility of parents to raise and instruct their children, but **early childhood education programs can assist families, particularly those facing tough times**, so that all children have an equal opportunity to succeed in life.

A recent national news report on **early childhood education cited positive long-term outcomes** including less grade repetition, lower high school drop-out rates and fewer teen pregnancies.

**High-quality early childhood education exposes kids to reading earlier in life** and results in increased literacy rates for participants by third grade.

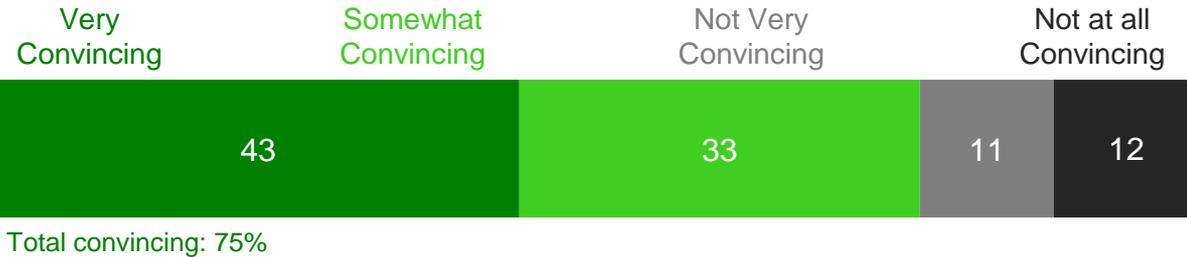
Scientific studies show **the human brain develops most rapidly in the earliest years between birth and age five**, but almost all the public money we invest in children happens after the age of five. We should change this and invest more in high-quality early childhood education.

Our **public school system is in desperate need of reform**, and any effort to fix our state's public schools needs to include investments in high-quality early childhood education as a part of such larger education reform.

# MOST POWERFUL MESSAGES

Among All Voters

Do you find that argument very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing or not at all convincing?



# MESSAGING WITH LOWER SUPPORT

Among All Voters

Do you find that argument very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing or not at all convincing?

Very  
Convincing

Somewhat  
Convincing

Not Very  
Convincing

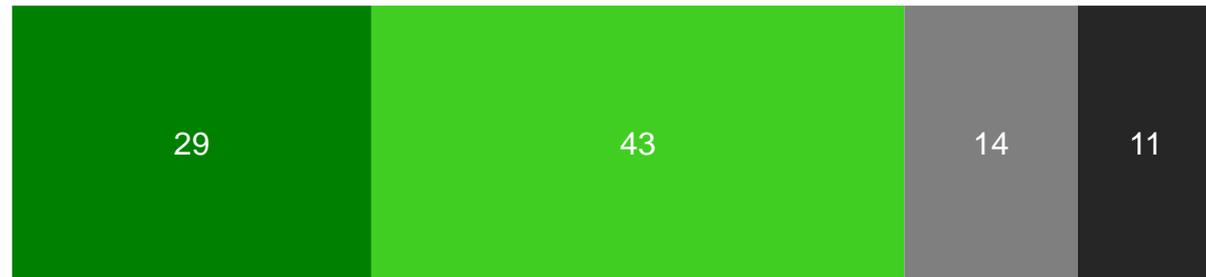
Not at all  
Convincing

Our **public school system is in desperate need of reform**, and any effort to fix our state's public schools needs to include investments in high-quality early childhood education as a part of such larger education reform.



Total convincing: 73%

A recent national news report on **early childhood education cited positive long-term outcomes** including less grade repetition, lower high school drop-out rates and fewer teen pregnancies.



Total convincing: 72%

# TOP MESSAGES: REPUBLICANS

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## BEST MESSAGES TO USE WITH THIS AUDIENCE...

Scientific studies show **the human brain develops most rapidly in the earliest years between birth and age five**, but almost all the public money we invest in children happens after the age of five. We should change this and invest more in high-quality early childhood education.

In science and math scores, **American children are falling behind students around the world because other countries** are investing in high-quality early education programs. It is time we put American children on a level playing field by investing in early childhood education programs.

**High-quality early childhood education exposes kids to reading earlier in life** and results in increased literacy rates for participants by third grade.

# TOP MESSAGES: DEMOCRATS

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## BEST MESSAGES TO USE WITH THIS AUDIENCE...

A recent national news report on **early childhood education cited positive long-term outcomes** including less grade repetition, lower high school drop-out rates and fewer teen pregnancies.

**High-quality early childhood education exposes kids to reading earlier in life** and results in increased literacy rates for participants by third grade.

Our **public school system is in desperate need of reform**, and any effort to fix our state's public schools needs to include investments in high-quality early childhood education as a part of such larger education reform.

# TOP MESSAGES: INDEPENDENTS

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## BEST MESSAGES TO USE WITH THIS AUDIENCE...

In science and math scores, **American children are falling behind students around the world because other countries** are investing in high-quality early education programs. It is time we put American children on a level playing field by investing in early childhood education programs.

Scientific studies show **the human brain develops most rapidly in the earliest years between birth and age five**, but almost all the public money we invest in children happens after the age of five. We should change this and invest more in high-quality early childhood education.

**High-quality early childhood education exposes kids to reading earlier in life** and results in increased literacy rates for participants by third grade.

# TOP MESSAGES: MILLENNIALS

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BEST MESSAGES TO USE WITH THIS AUDIENCE...

**High-quality early childhood education exposes kids to reading earlier in life** and results in increased literacy rates for participants by third grade.

A recent national news report on **early childhood education cited positive long-term outcomes** including less grade repetition, lower high school drop-out rates and fewer teen pregnancies.

Our **public school system is in desperate need of reform**, and any effort to fix our state's public schools needs to include investments in high-quality early childhood education as a part of such larger education reform.

# TOP MESSAGES: SENIORS

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## BEST MESSAGES TO USE WITH THIS AUDIENCE...

Scientific studies show **the human brain develops most rapidly in the earliest years between birth and age five**, but almost all the public money we invest in children happens after the age of five. We should change this and invest more in high-quality early childhood education.

In science and math scores, **American children are falling behind students around the world because other countries** are investing in high-quality early education programs. It is time we put American children on a level playing field by investing in early childhood education programs.

**High-quality early childhood education exposes kids to reading earlier in life** and results in increased literacy rates for participants by third grade.

# TOP MESSAGES: COLLEGE EDUCATED WOMEN

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## BEST MESSAGES TO USE WITH THIS AUDIENCE...

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In science and math scores, **American children are falling behind students around the world because other countries** are investing in high-quality early education programs. It is time we put American children on a level playing field by investing in early childhood education programs.

A recent national news report on **early childhood education cited positive long-term outcomes** including less grade repetition, lower high school drop-out rates and fewer teen pregnancies.

# TOP MESSAGES: LOW EDUCATION WHITE MEN

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## BEST MESSAGES TO USE WITH THIS AUDIENCE...

In science and math scores, **American children are falling behind students around the world because other countries** are investing in high-quality early education programs. It is time we put American children on a level playing field by investing in early childhood education programs.

**High-quality early childhood education exposes kids to reading earlier in life** and results in increased literacy rates for participants by third grade.

Our **public school system is in desperate need of reform**, and any effort to fix our state's public schools needs to include investments in high-quality early childhood education as a part of such larger education reform.

# TOP MESSAGES: HISPANIC VOTERS

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BEST MESSAGES TO USE WITH THIS AUDIENCE...

**High-quality early childhood education exposes kids to reading earlier in life** and results in increased literacy rates for participants by third grade.

In science and math scores, **American children are falling behind students around the world because other countries** are investing in high-quality early education programs. It is time we put American children on a level playing field by investing in early childhood education programs.

Our **public school system is in desperate need of reform**, and any effort to fix our state's public schools needs to include investments in high-quality early childhood education as a part of such larger education reform.

# TOP MESSAGES: AFRICAN AMERICANS

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BEST MESSAGES TO USE WITH THIS AUDIENCE...

**High-quality early childhood education exposes kids to reading earlier in life** and results in increased literacy rates for participants by third grade.

It is ultimately the responsibility of parents to raise and instruct their children, but **early childhood education programs can assist families, particularly those facing tough times**, so that all children have an equal opportunity to succeed in life.

# TOP MESSAGES: CHURCHGOERS

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BEST MESSAGES TO USE WITH THIS AUDIENCE...

Our **public school system is in desperate need of reform**, and any effort to fix our state's public schools needs to include investments in high-quality early childhood education as a part of such larger education reform.

Scientific studies show **the human brain develops most rapidly in the earliest years between birth and age five**, but almost all the public money we invest in children happens after the age of five. We should change this and invest more in high-quality early childhood education.

**High-quality early childhood education exposes kids to reading earlier in life** and results in increased literacy rates for participants by third grade.

# TOP MESSAGES: MOMS AND DADS

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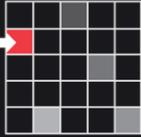
## BEST MESSAGES TO USE WITH THIS AUDIENCE...

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**High-quality early childhood education exposes kids to reading earlier in life** and results in increased literacy rates for participants by third grade.

GREENBERG QUINLAN ROSNER RESEARCH

TargetPoint 

Michael Meyers | Dave Walker  
mmeyers@targetpointconsulting.com  
dwalker@gqrr.com

# High 5 for Kids: Upcoming Trainings



## Cedar Rapids:

Monday, July 16

6:30pm – 8:00pm

Hawkeye Area Community Action Program

1515 Hawkeye Drive, Hiawatha

## Sioux City:

Tuesday, July 17

6:00pm – 7:30pm

Wilber Aalfs Public Library

529 Pierce St, Sioux City

## Des Moines:

Saturday, July 21

10:00am – 11:30am

Gravitate Valley Junction

318 5th St, West Des Moines