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April 22, 2016

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Sachi A. Hamai
Chief Executive Officer

POLLING RESULTS FOR POTENTIAL ONGOING REVENUE TO ADDRESS THE HOMELESS CRISIS IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY (ITEM NO. 14, AGENDA OF FEBRUARY 23, 2016)

On February 23, 2016, the Board of Supervisors instructed the Chief Executive Office (CEO) to explore options to increase revenue dedicated specifically to address Los Angeles County's homeless crisis. The Board also directed the CEO to conduct polling and research activities to inform the Board as to the optimum timing of when the various revenue options, if authorized, should be submitted for voter approval and how it should be crafted to ensure efficacy, transparency, accountability and the highest likelihood of passage; and to further clarify the full impacts that are being considered for the November 2016 ballot and take into consideration local and state initiatives and any additional local measures.

On March 9, 2016, the CEO provided an interim report to the Board of Supervisors on the various revenue options and advised the Board that the CEO is pursuing polling and additional research on various options.

The Chief Executive Officer proceeded with polling for the following potential revenue options identified in the March 9 interim report: Parcel Tax; Marijuana Tax; Transaction and Use Tax; and local supplement to Mental Health Services Act Tax. This polling also took into consideration a statewide revenue initiative that may appear on the November 2016 ballot, as well as the potential local 2016 Transportation Measure known as R2 and the potential Park Measure. The results of this polling are set forth in the attached document.

Please let me know if you have any questions, or your staff may contact Phil Ansell, Director, Homeless Initiative, at pansell@ceo.lacounty.gov or 213-974-1752.

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PA:AO:ef

Attachment

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisor
County Counsel

Los Angeles County Homelessness Survey Research Results

Conducted March 29th to April 7th, 2016

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David Binder Research

Research Overview - Methodology

- David Binder Research, in consultation with Evitarus Strategic Advisory, conducted 1400 telephone interviews from March 29th-April 7th, 2016.
- Interviews were conducted with likely November 2016, general election voters.
- Respondents were reached on landlines and cellphones.
- Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish.
- Margin of sampling error is ± 2.6% at the 95% level of confidence. Margins of sampling error are higher for subgroups.

Research Objectives

The research was designed to assess the following:

- General public attitudes toward the issue of homelessness
- Public support for a potential revenue measure to generate funding for homeless services
- Public attitudes toward potential ballot measure funding mechanisms
- The optimal election timing for ballot placement should a potential measure demonstrate viability given the 2/3rds vote-threshold required for passage of local special-purpose ballot measures
- The interaction between public support for a potential homeless services measure and other measures that may appear on a future ballot

Research Approach: Ballot Measure Interactions Assessment

The research tested interactions across four potential measures:

- A homeless services measure funded by a tax on income above one million dollars *(tested among one-half of the sample – Split Sample A)*
- A homeless services measure funded by a ½ cent sales tax *(tested among one-half of the sample – Split Sample B)*
- A statewide measure to extend Prop 30, a portion of which would continue a personal income tax on upper-income households*
- A Los Angeles County parks and open space measure funded by a parcel tax
- A Los Angeles County transportation measure funded by a ½ cent sales tax

While the local measures would require 2/3rds majority support for passage, the statewide measure only requires majority support.

Key Research Findings: Homeless Services Ballot Measure

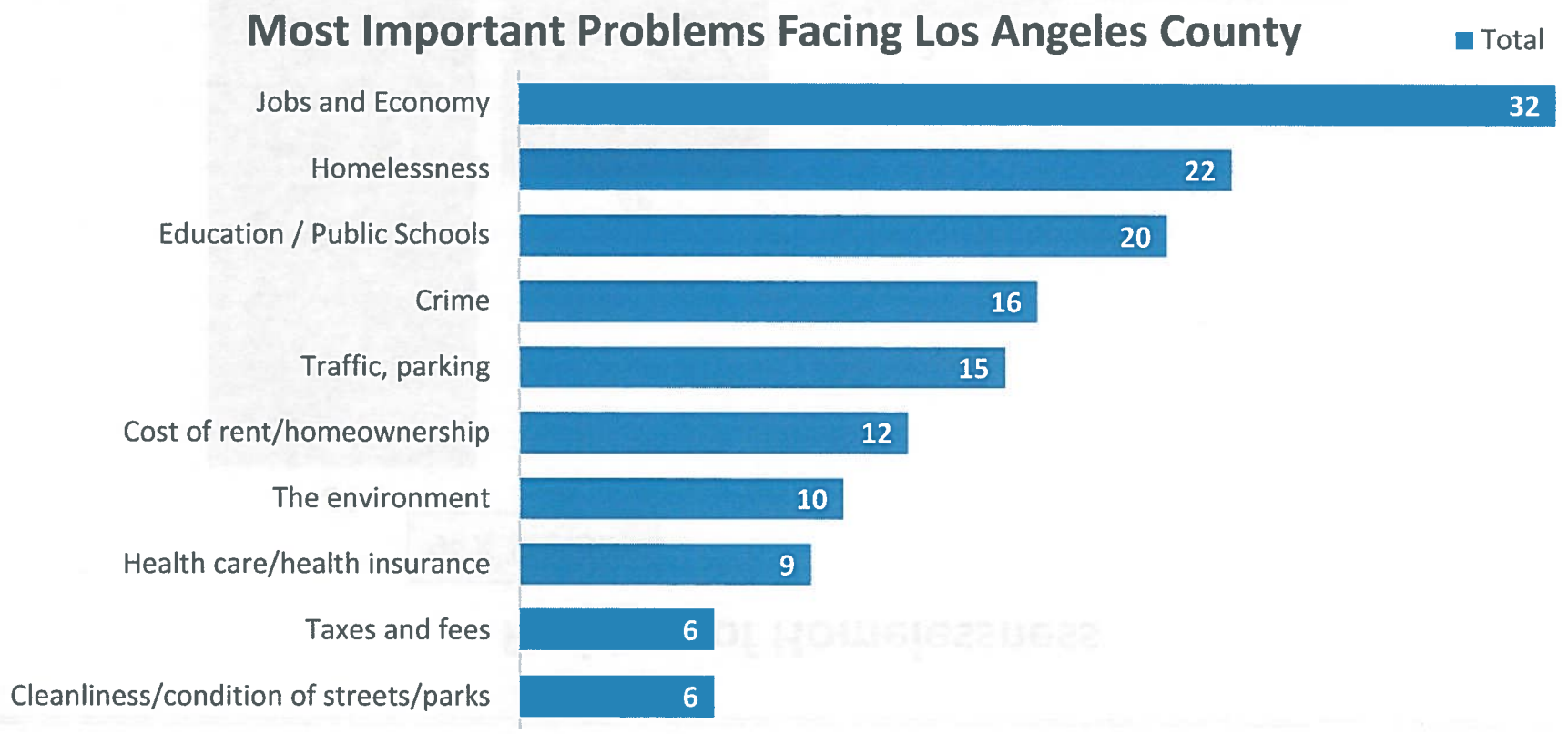
- A ballot measure to provide on-going funding to address Los Angeles County's homeless crisis does appear viable for November 2016.
  - A measure funded by a tax on personal income above one million dollars garners support from 76% percent of voters.
  - A measure funded by a ½ cent sales tax garners support from 68% of voters.
  - A measure funded by a 15% sales tax on marijuana garners support form 66% of voters.
  - A measure funded by a $49 parcel tax garners support from 47% of voters
- Support for a homeless services measure is lower among March 2017 likely voters.

Key Research Findings: Ballot Measure Interactions

- No apparent interactions emerge from the presence of multiple measures on the ballot.
- A solid majority of voters support the State Prop 30 extension at the top of the ballot, as well as LA County Parks and Traffic measures intermixed with the homeless measure:
  - The California Prop 30 extension is strongly supported in LA County, 64% Yes to 27% No, with 8% undecided.
  - The LA County Parks and Open Space measure garners support among a solid majority of voters, 69% Yes to 24% No, with 7% undecided
  - The LA County Traffic Congestion Relief measure also garners solid majority support, 71% Yes to 25% No, with 4% undecided

When asked about their views of the most important problems facing the County, homelessness is the second most cited problem.

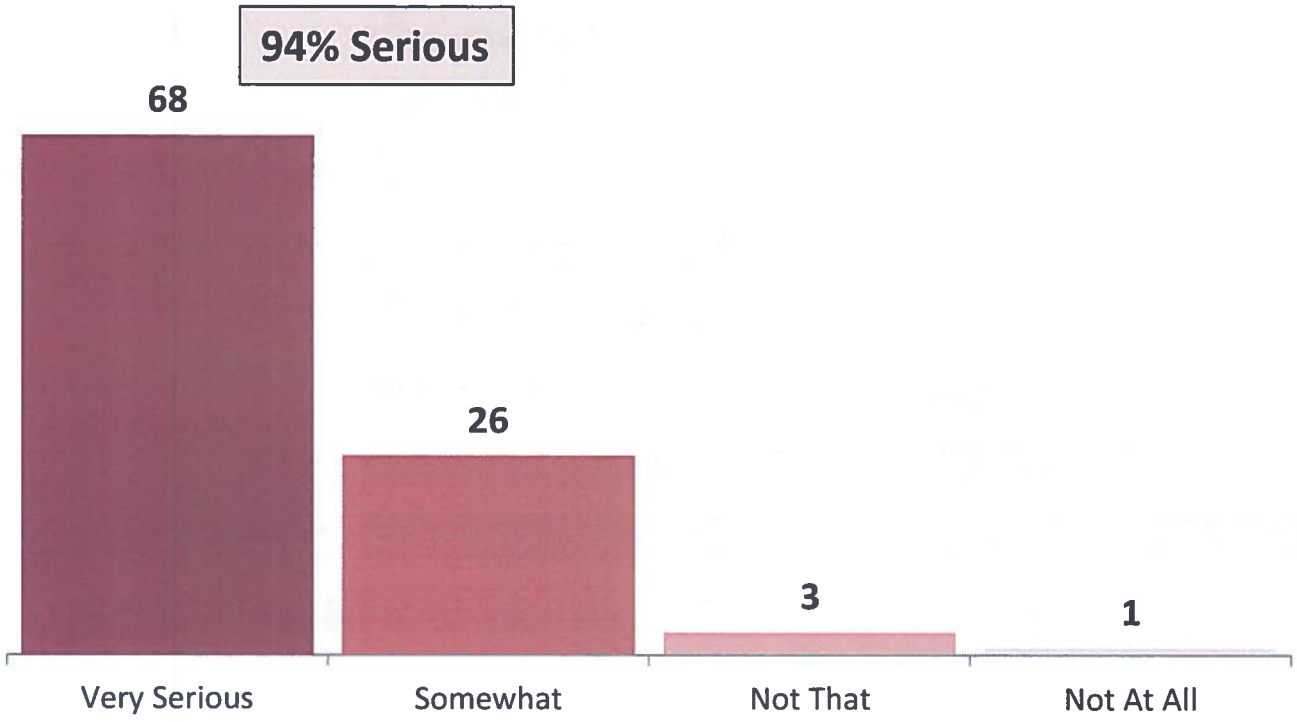
(open-end; responses grouped by category)



Q4: What would you say are the most important problems facing Los Angeles County?

When asked specifically about homelessness, nearly all voters identify homelessness as a serious issue, with two-in-three describing it as very serious.

Problem of Homelessness



Q10. How serious of a problem is homelessness in the County of Los Angeles – is it a very serious problem, somewhat serious, not that serious, or not at all serious?

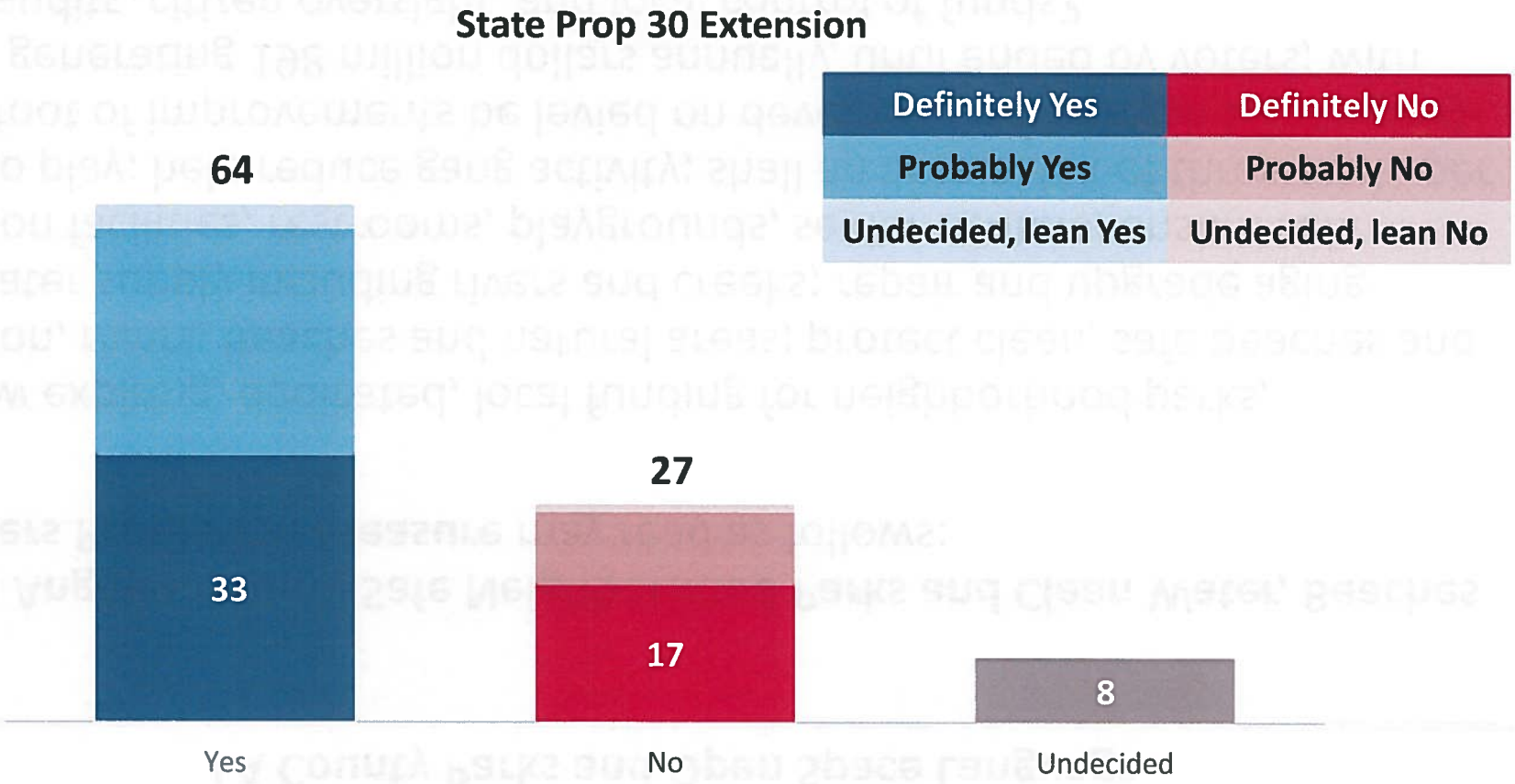
Ballot Measures

Prop 30 Extension Language

Tax Extension to Fund Education and Healthcare. Initiative Constitutional Amendment may read as follows:

Extends by twelve years the temporary personal income tax increases enacted in 2012 on earnings over $250,000. Allocates these tax revenues 89% to K-12 schools and 11% to California Community Colleges. Allocates up to $2 billion per year in certain years for healthcare programs. Bars use of education revenues for administrative costs, but provides local school governing board's discretion to decide, in open meetings and subject to annual audit, how revenues are to be spent.

A strong majority of LA County voters support the state Prop 30 extension.



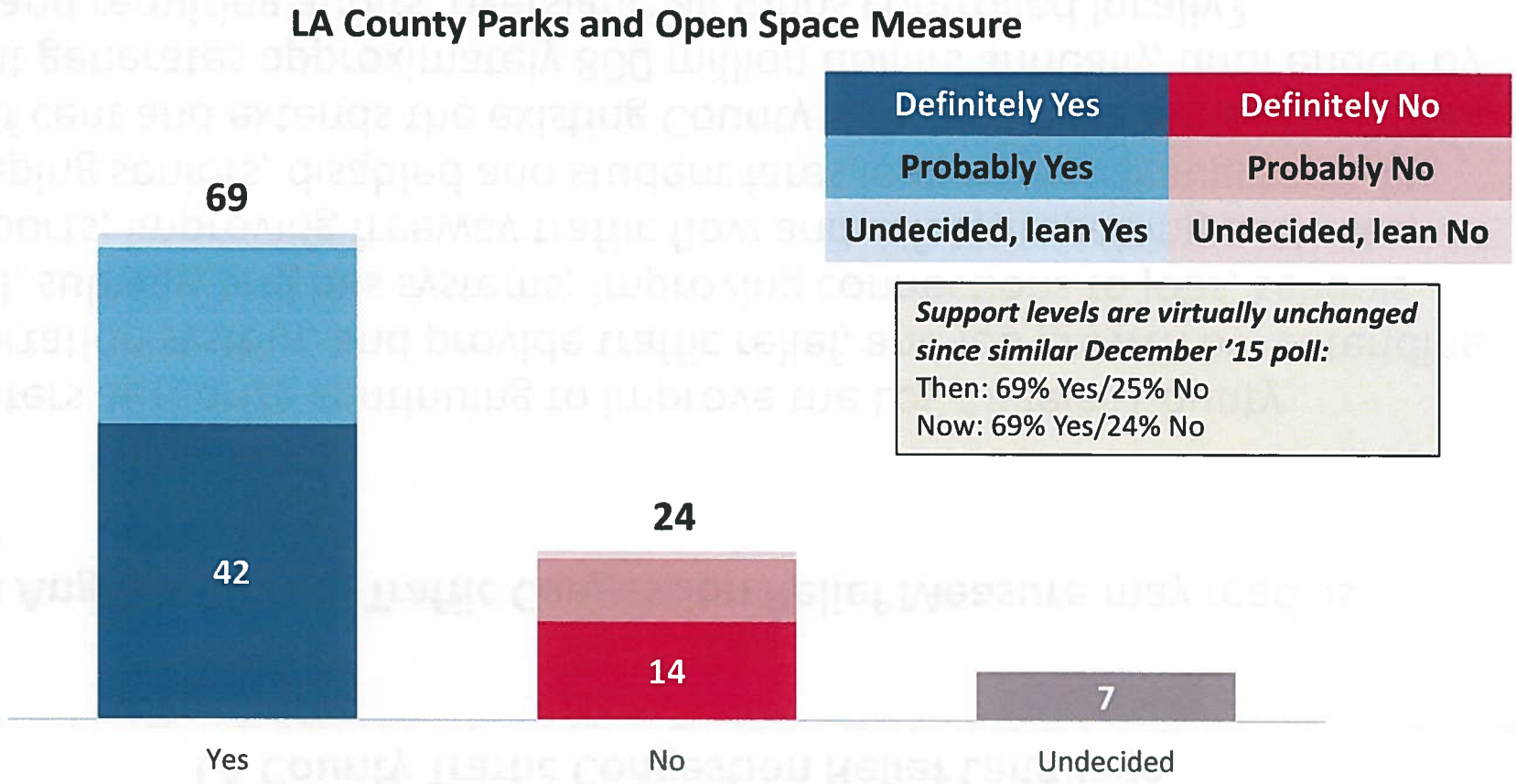
Q5: **IF YES:** Will you definitely vote yes, or might you still change your mind? / **UNDECIDED:** If the election were held today, would you lean more towards yes, or more towards no? / **IF NO:** Will you definitely vote no, or might you still change your mind?

LA County Parks and Open Space Language

The Los Angeles County Safe Neighborhood Parks and Clean Water, Beaches and Rivers Protection Measure may read as follows:

To renew expiring, dedicated, local funding for neighborhood parks, recreation, rivers, beaches and natural areas; protect clean, safe beaches and clean water supply including rivers and creeks; repair and upgrade aging recreation facilities, restrooms, playgrounds, senior centers; ensure safe places to play; help reduce gang activity; shall an annual tax of three cents per square foot of improvements be levied on developed property in Los Angeles County, generating 198 million dollars annually, until ended by voters; with annual audits, citizen oversight, and local control of funds?

Voters broadly support the LA County Parks and Open Space Measure.



Support levels are virtually unchanged since similar December '15 poll:
Then: 69% Yes/25% No
Now: 69% Yes/24% No

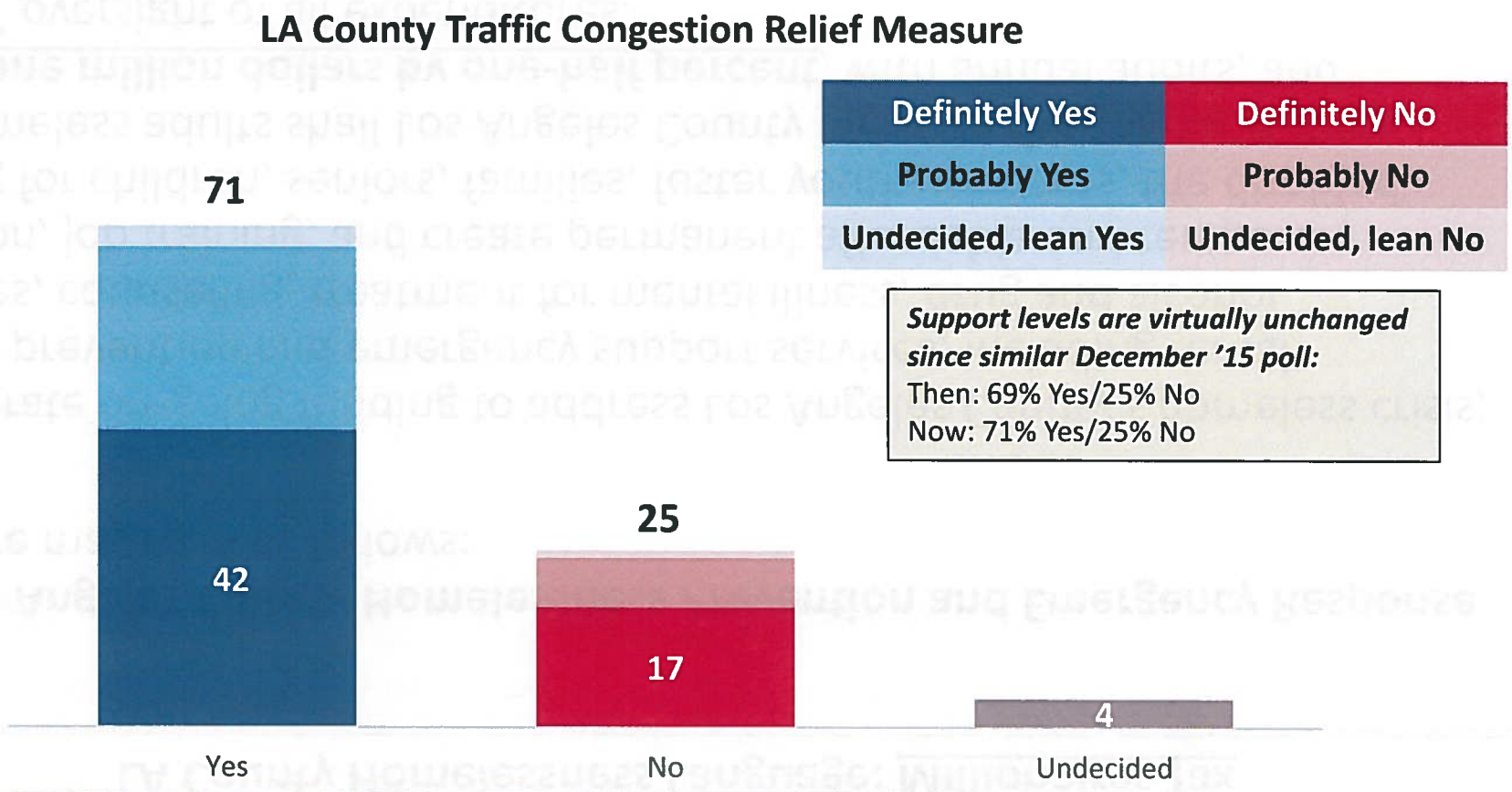
Q6: **IF YES:** Will you definitely vote yes, or might you still change your mind? / **UNDECIDED:** If the election were held today, would you lean more towards yes, or more towards no? / **IF NO:** Will you definitely vote no, or might you still change your mind?

LA County Traffic Congestion Relief Language

The Los Angeles County Traffic Congestion Relief Measure may read as follows:

Shall voters authorize continuing to improve the Los Angeles County transportation system, and provide traffic relief, and job growth by: extending light rail, subway, and bus systems; improving connections to jobs, schools and airports; improving freeway traffic flow and safety; repairing potholes; and keeping seniors, disabled and student fares low; approval augments by one-half cent and extends the existing County sales tax; each increase of one-half cent generates approximately 800 million dollars annually, until ended by voters; and requiring audits, oversight; all funds controlled locally?

By a nearly 3-to-1 margin, voters support the LA County Traffic Relief Measure.



Support levels are virtually unchanged since similar December '15 poll:
Then: 69% Yes/25% No
Now: 71% Yes/25% No

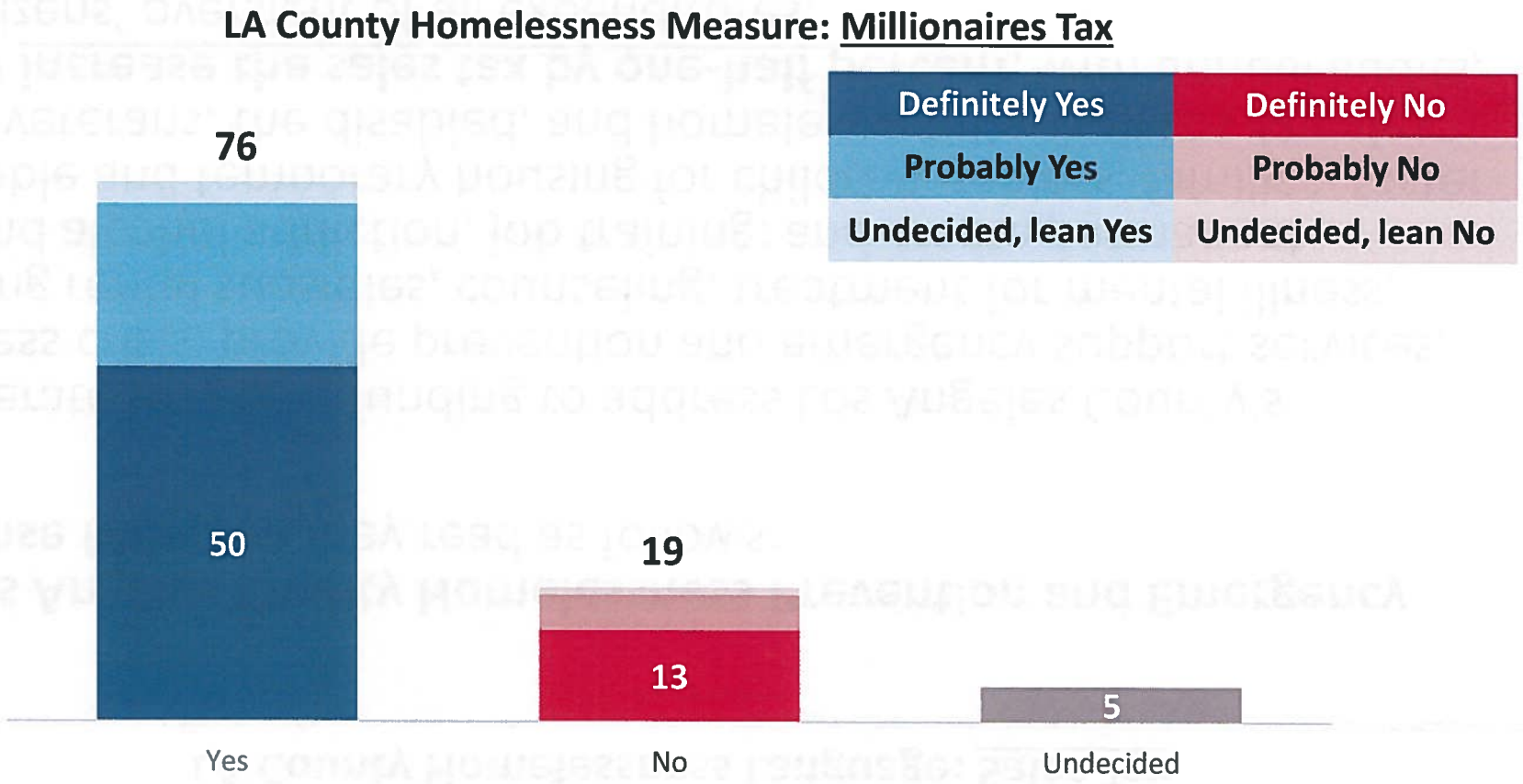
Q7: **IF YES:** Will you definitely vote yes, or might you still change your mind? / **UNDECIDED:** If the election were held today, would you lean more towards yes, or more towards no? / **IF NO:** Will you definitely vote no, or might you still change your mind?

LA County Homelessness Language: Millionaires Tax

The Los Angeles County Homelessness Prevention and Emergency Response Measure may read as follows:

To generate on-going funding to address Los Angeles County's homeless crisis; provide prevention and emergency support services, including rental subsidies, counseling, treatment for mental illness, drug and alcohol addiction, job training; and create permanent affordable and temporary housing for children, seniors, families, foster youth, veterans, the disabled, and homeless adults shall Los Angeles County **increase the tax on income above one million dollars by one-half percent**, with annual audits, and citizens' oversight of all expenditures.

A homelessness measure funded by a millionaires tax enjoys both a broad and firm base of support.



Q8: **IF YES:** Will you definitely vote yes, or might you still change your mind? / **UNDECIDED:** If the election were held today, would you lean more towards yes, or more towards no? / **IF NO:** Will you definitely vote no, or might you still change your mind?

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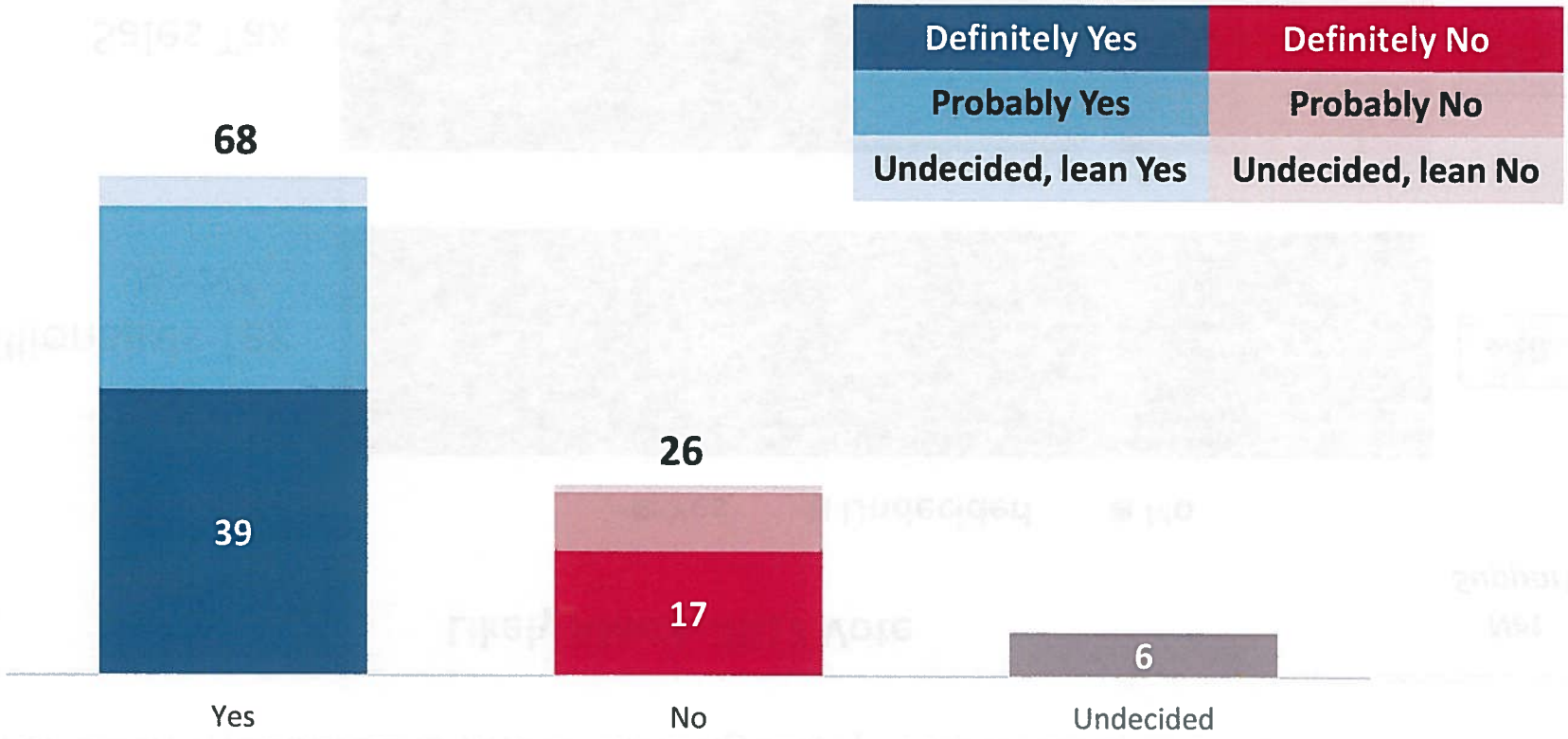
LA County Homelessness Language: Sales Tax

The Los Angeles County Homelessness Prevention and Emergency Response Measure may read as follows:

To generate on-going funding to address Los Angeles County's homeless crisis; provide prevention and emergency support services, including rental subsidies, counseling, treatment for mental illness, drug and alcohol addiction, job training; and create permanent affordable and temporary housing for children, seniors, families, foster youth, veterans, the disabled, and homeless adults shall Los Angeles County **increase the sales tax by one-half percent**, with annual audits, and citizens' oversight of all expenditures.

A homelessness measure funded by a sales tax is also widely supported.

LA County Homelessness Measure: Sales Tax



Q9: **IF YES:** Will you definitely vote yes, or might you still change your mind? / **UNDECIDED:** If the election were held today, would you lean more towards yes, or more towards no? / **IF NO:** Will you definitely vote no, or might you still change your mind?

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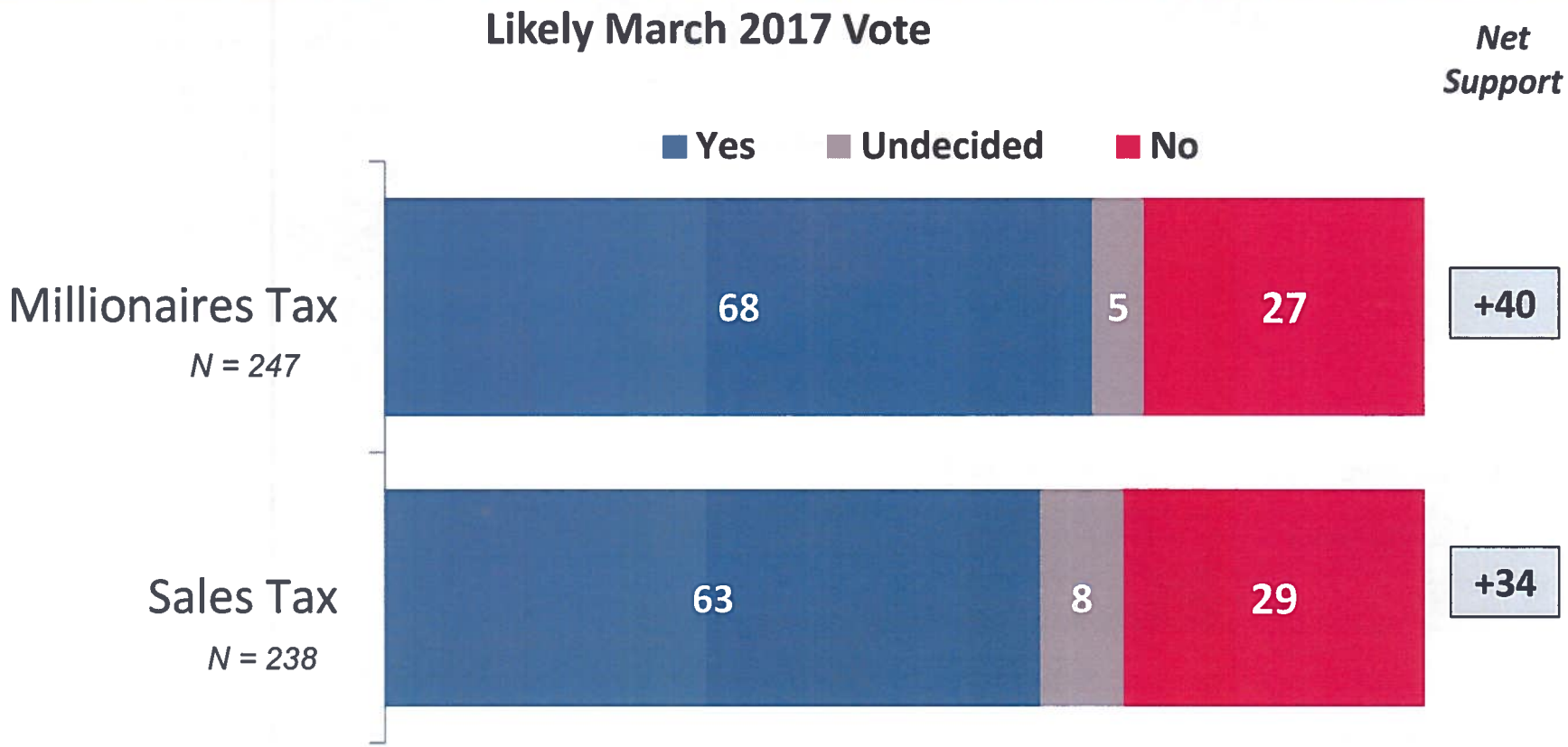
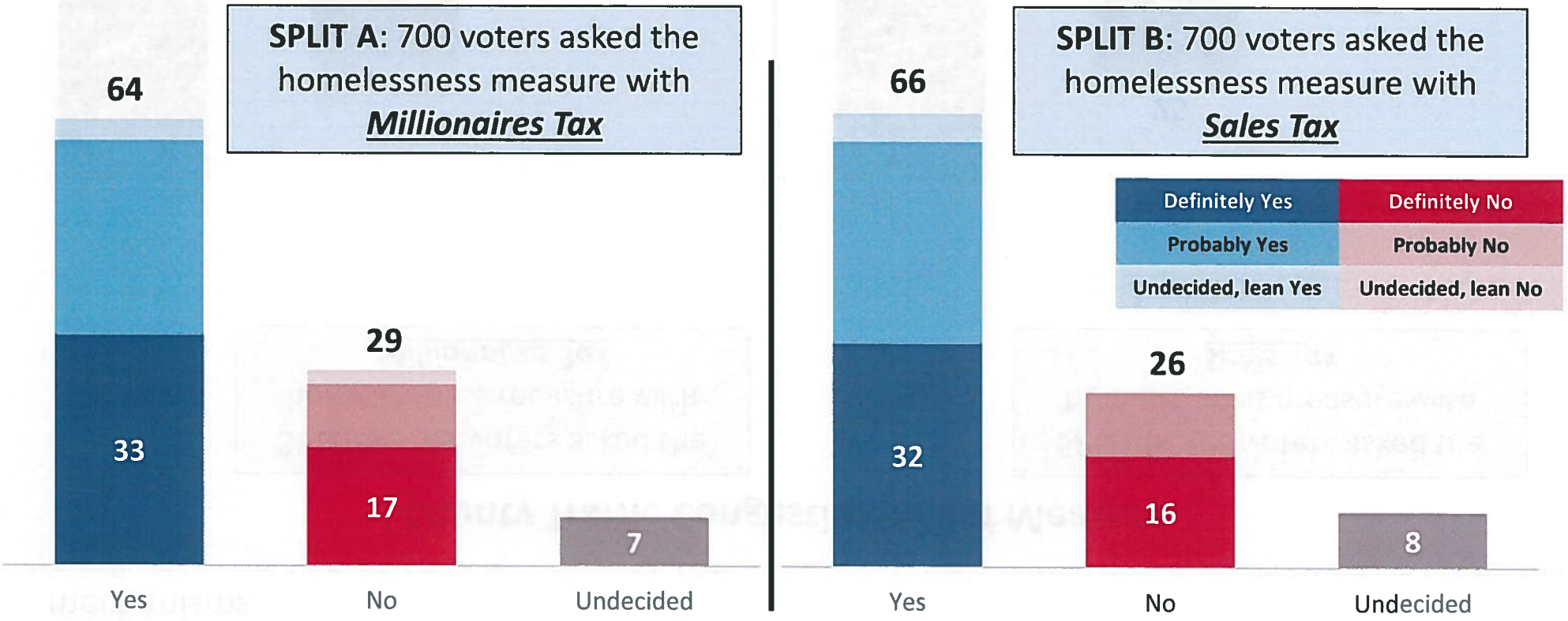
Support for both measures is lower among likely March 2017 voters.



Q5-9: **IF YES:** Will you definitely vote yes, or might you still change your mind? / **UNDECIDED:** If the election were held today, would you lean more towards yes, or more towards no? / **IF NO:** Will you definitely vote no, or might you still change your mind?

Prop 30 performs as strongly between voters who were asked about the homelessness measure funded by the millionaires tax as it does among those asked about funding the measure through the sales tax.

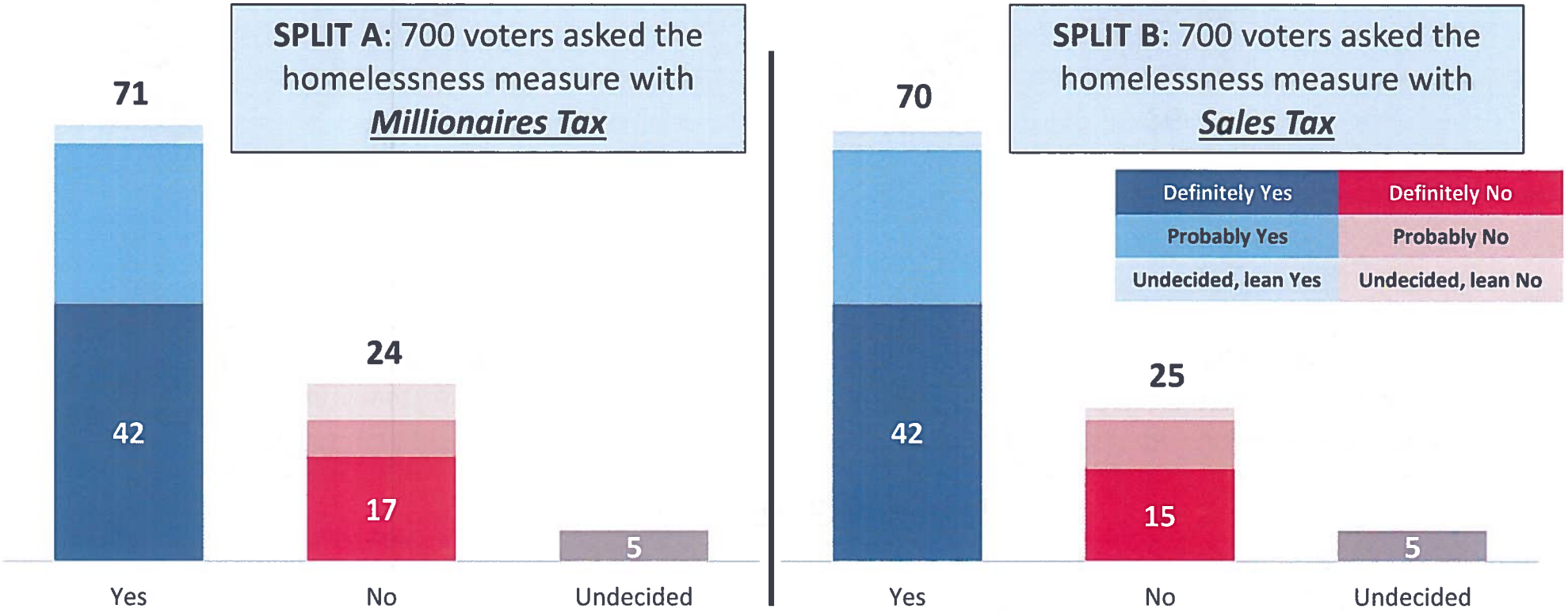
State Prop 30 Extension



Q5: **IF YES:** Will you definitely vote yes, or might you still change your mind? / **UNDECIDED:** If the election were held today, would you lean more towards yes, or more towards no? / **IF NO:** Will you definitely vote no, or might you still change your mind?

The County Traffic Congestion Relief measure also performs strongly across both funding mechanisms.

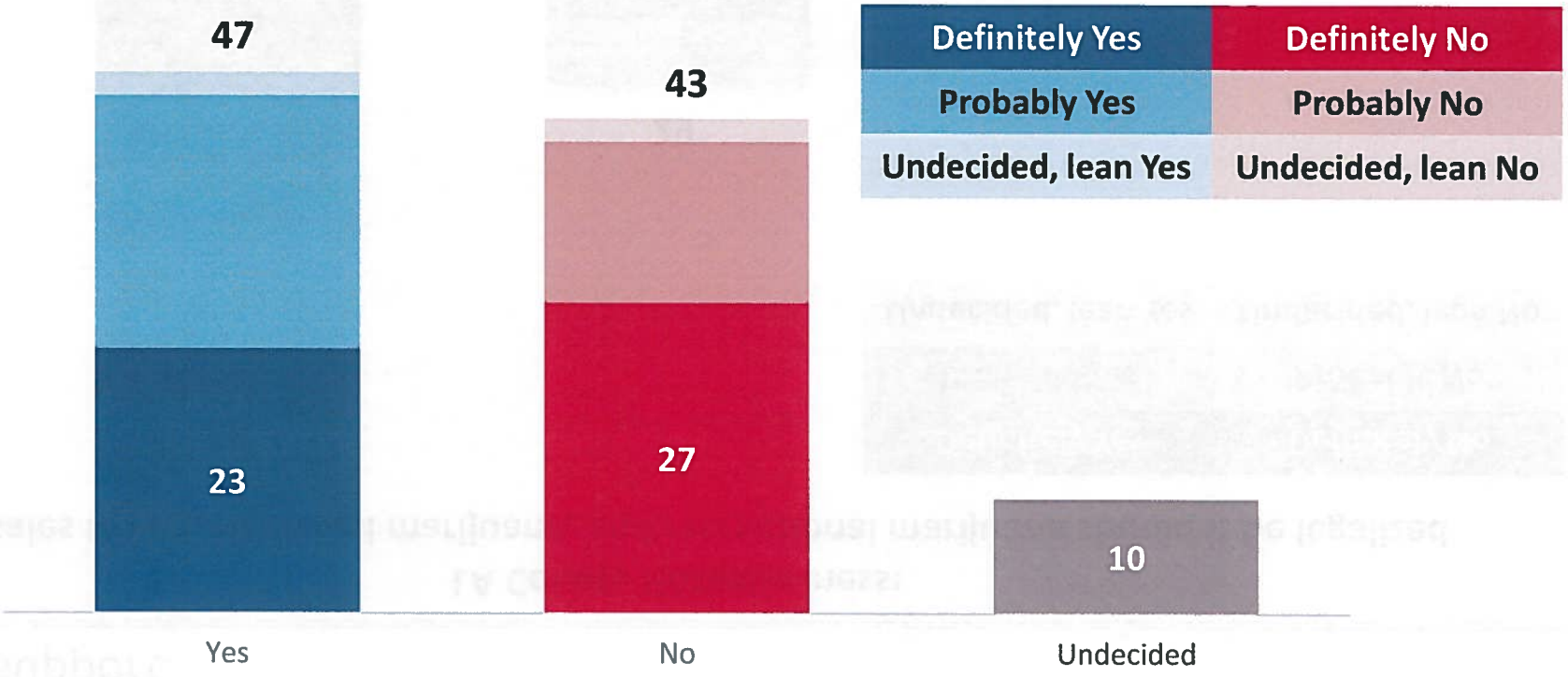
County Traffic Congestion Relief Measure



Q5: **IF YES:** Will you definitely vote yes, or might you still change your mind? / **UNDECIDED:** If the election were held today, would you lean more towards yes, or more towards no? / **IF NO:** Will you definitely vote no, or might you still change your mind?

However, a $49 parcel tax to pay for the homelessness measure fails to attract majority support.

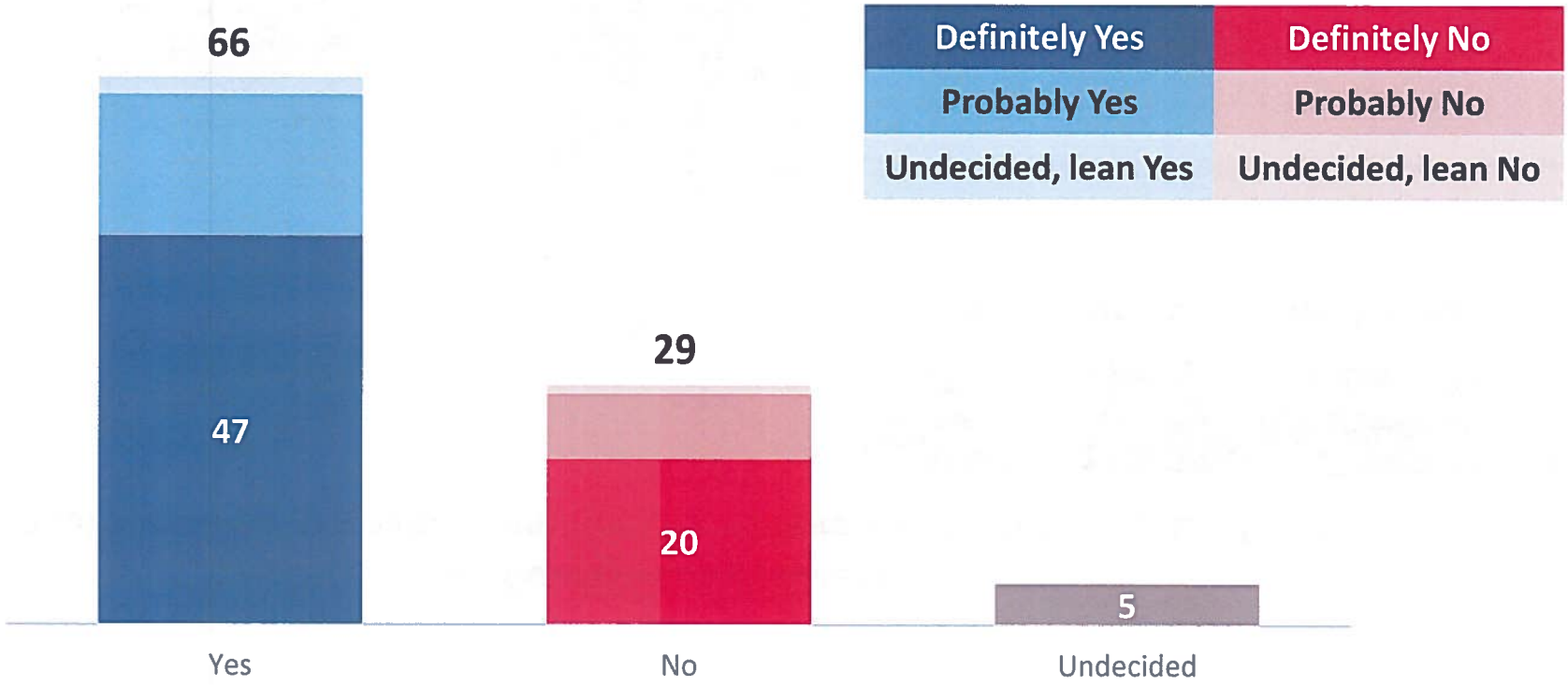
LA County Homelessness:
Annual $49 parcel tax, with exemption for seniors and qualified disabled citizens



Q52: **IF YES:** Will you definitely vote yes, or might you still change your mind? / **UNDECIDED:** If the election were held today, would you lean more towards yes, or more towards no? / **IF NO:** Will you definitely vote no, or might you still change your mind?

A 15% sales tax on marijuana to fund the homelessness measure also earns majority support.

LA County Homelessness:
15% sales tax on medicinal marijuana, and recreational marijuana should it be legalized



Q53: **IF YES:** Will you definitely vote yes, or might you still change your mind? / **UNDECIDED:** If the election were held today, would you lean more towards yes, or more towards no? / **IF NO:** Will you definitely vote no, or might you still change your mind?