



# Washington State Short-Term Rental Tax Survey

*January 2025*

# Methodology

- ▶ Survey of registered voters in Washington state
- ▶ Mixed-mode (live telephone and email- & text-to-web) methodology
  - Phone interviews were conducted by trained, professional interviewers; landlines and mobile phones included
  - Email and text invitations were sent with link to web survey
- ▶ Survey conducted January 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025
- ▶ 700 total interviews; overall margin of error  $\pm 3.7$  percentage points

Please note that due to rounding, some percentages may not add up to exactly 100%.

# Key Findings

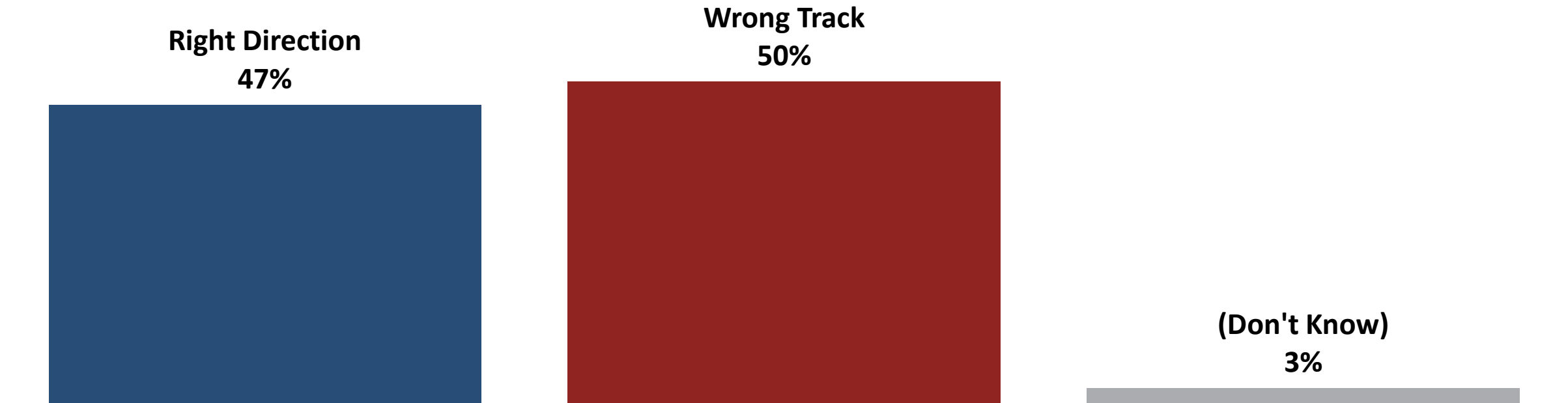
- ▶ Half of registered voters think things in Washington state are “pretty seriously off on the wrong track.”
- ▶ Prior to any messaging, more than 6-in-10 voters oppose “raising taxes on short-term rentals by up to 10% of the total rental cost to fund affordable housing” - strong opposition is ~2.5 times higher than strong support.
- ▶ Before messaging, two-thirds of Washington state voters believe “The only way to meaningfully increase affordable housing is for the state to make it easier and faster to build new housing.”
- ▶ Prior to any messaging, voters are much more likely to believe that implementing a new STR tax will have negative consequences than positive benefits.
  - Most believe this tax will be passed on to Washington families and nearly two-thirds think hosts will lose critical income that helps them stay in their home.
  - By contrast a majority think it is **unlikely** that this new tax will increase available housing and three-quarters think it is **unlikely** that this new tax will make housing more affordable.
- ▶ Strong majorities believe that STRs help support local economies and small businesses and nearly two-thirds **do not** feel like there are too many short-term rentals in their community.

# Key Findings

- ▶ While there is concern about STRs impact on housing and rental costs and availability, voters are skeptical that increasing STR taxes will have a meaningful impact on housing availability or affordability - most believe that “the only way to meaningfully increase affordable housing is for the state to make it easier and faster to build new housing.”
- ▶ Three-quarters of Washington state voters say they **do not** trust their local government to spend money raised from this tax responsibly.
- ▶ Voters **do** not find messaging in favor of the tax particularly convincing and even after hearing **just the support messages**, a majority of voters are **still opposed** to the new tax.
- ▶ By contrast, the opposition messages are quite strong. After hearing messages from both sides, almost two-thirds of Washington state voters oppose a new STR tax. A strong majority of voters in every key subgroup – except self-identified Democrats, who are divided - are oppose to a new STR tax.
- ▶ Just over half of voters say they are **less likely** to vote for a legislator who supports this new STR tax. Only 1-in-5 say they would be more likely to vote for a legislator who supports a new STR tax.

*Half of registered voters think things in Washington state are “pretty seriously off on the wrong track.”*

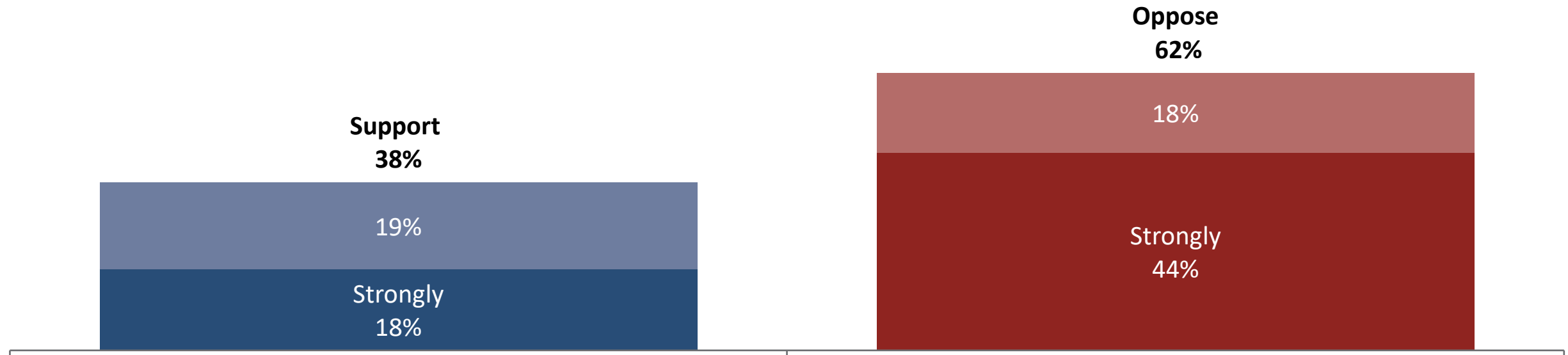
***Do you feel that things in Washington are generally going in the right direction or do you feel things have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track?***



# Initial Support

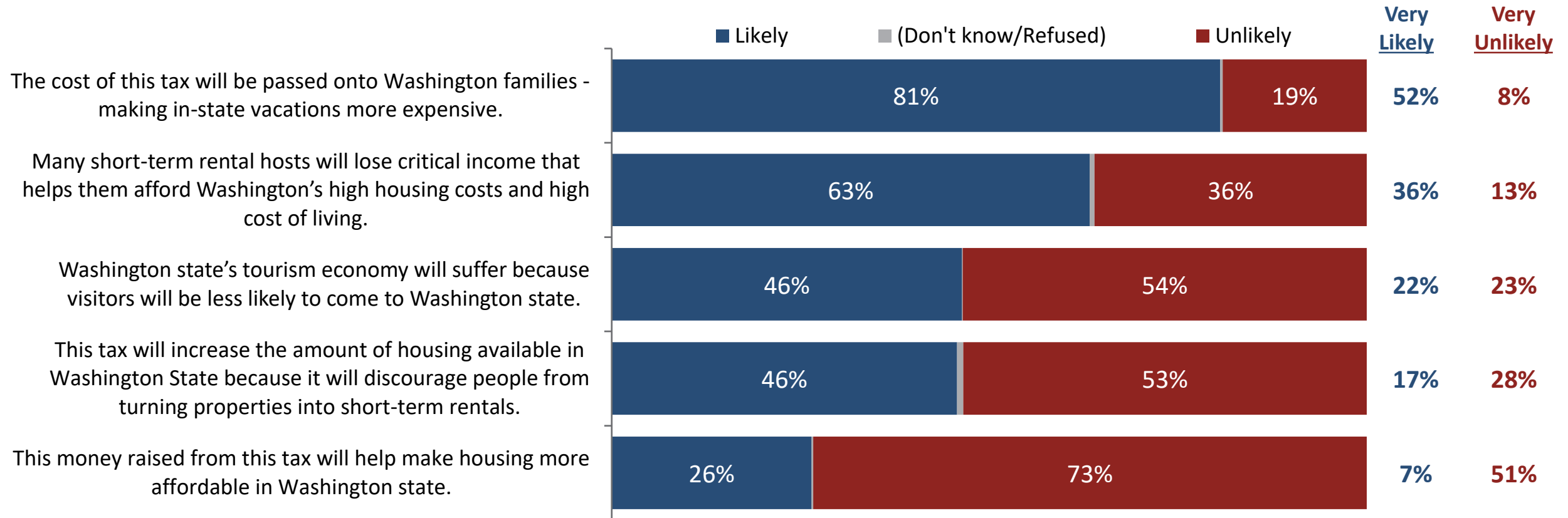
*Prior to any messaging, nearly two-thirds of Washington state voters oppose raising taxes on short-term rentals, with just under half “strongly opposed.” Fewer than 1-in-5 strongly support the new tax.*

*A short-term rental is a residential unit that is rented for less than 30 days in a row. Short-term rentals can be for an entire home or just a part of the home. The Washington Legislature is considering raising taxes on short-term rentals by up to 10% of the total rental cost to fund affordable housing. Corporate hotels would be exempt from this new tax.*



# Potential Consequences

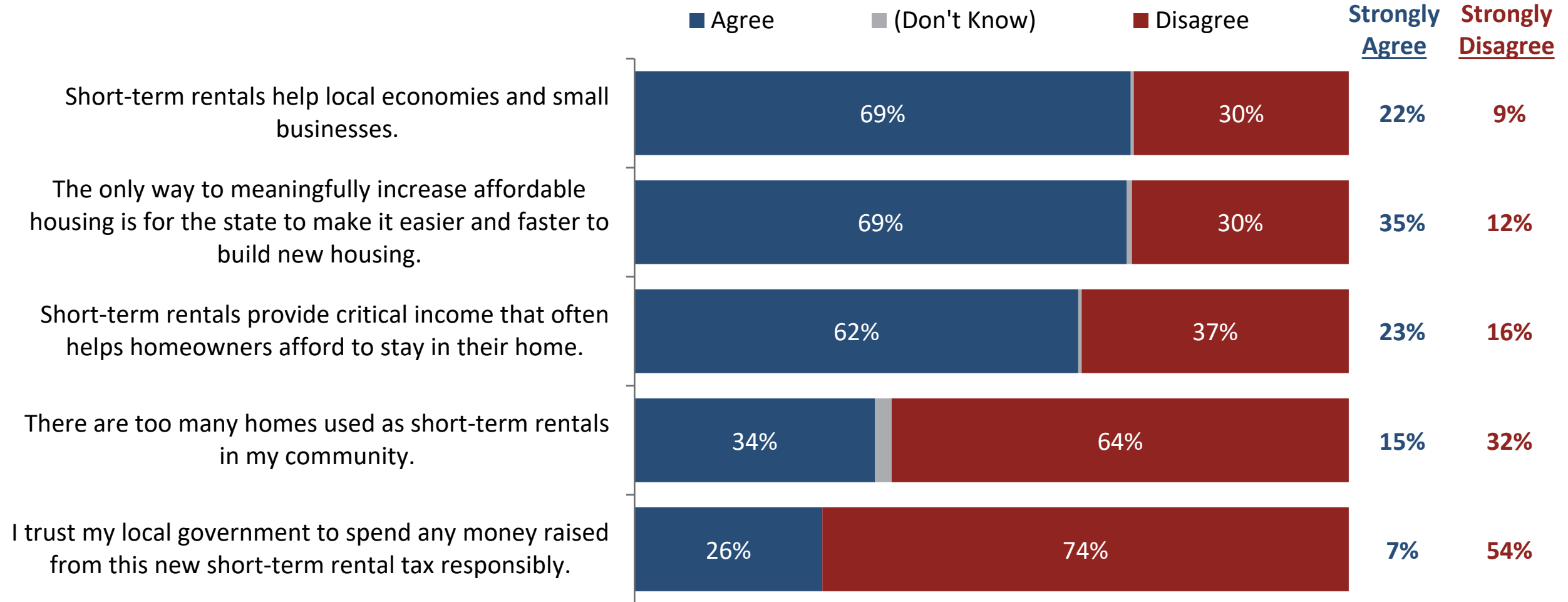
*Prior to any messaging, voters are much more likely to believe that implementing a new STR tax will have negative consequences than positive benefits. Most believe this tax will be passed on to Washington families and nearly two-thirds think hosts will lose critical income. By contrast a majority think it is unlikely that this new tax will increase available housing and three-quarters think it is unlikely that this new tax will make housing more affordable.*



Q13-17. There are a number of things that could happen if this new short-term rental tax passes. For each of the following, please indicate how likely you think that result is.

# Attitudes About STR's

*Voters agree that STRs help support local economies/small businesses and that they provide critical income for homeowners but are split on STR's impact on the local housing market. Most do not trust their local government to spend this new money responsibly.*

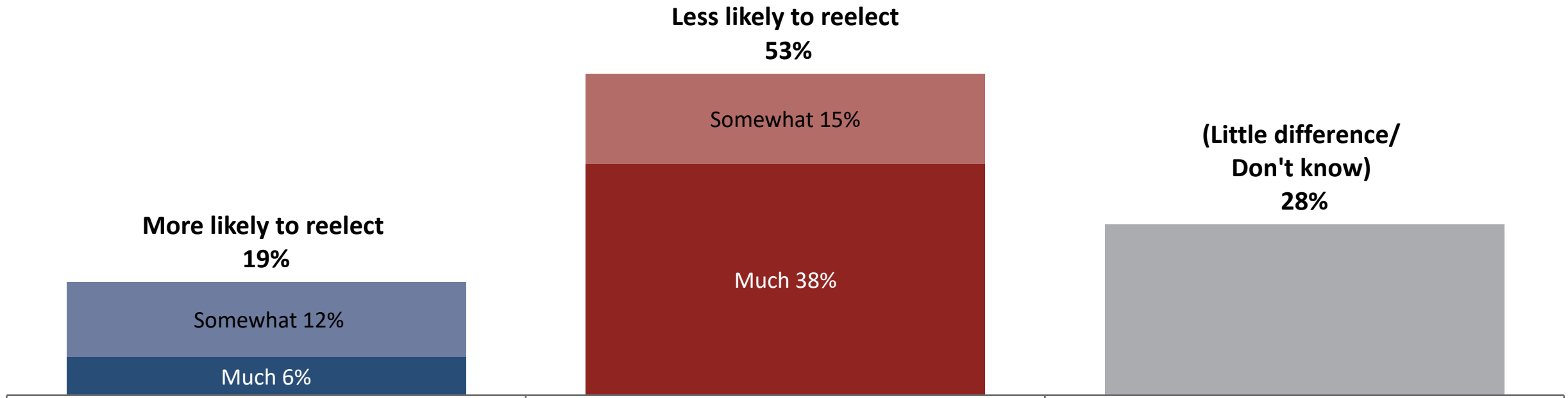




# Effect on Legislators

About half of voters say that they are less likely to vote to reelect their state legislator if they vote in favor of a STR tax, and 4-in-10 say they are “much less likely” to voter for a legislator who supports this new tax..

*If your state legislator voted in favor of this new short-term rental tax, would you be more or less likely to vote to reelect them, or would it make little difference one way or the other?*



Q43. If your state legislator voted in favor of this new short-term rental tax, would you be more or less likely to vote to reelect them, or would it make little difference one way or the other?



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