

# RHODE ISLAND SURVEY

A SURVEY OF 2020 VOTERS

April 2021



# METHODOLOGY

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- 500 interviews among 2020 voters were conducted from April 27-29, 2021.
- Interviews were conducted over the phone (both landline and cell phones).
- Results were weighted to ensure proportional response.
- The comparative margin of error for results is  $\pm 4.4\%$  at the 95% confidence level. This number is higher for subgroups.

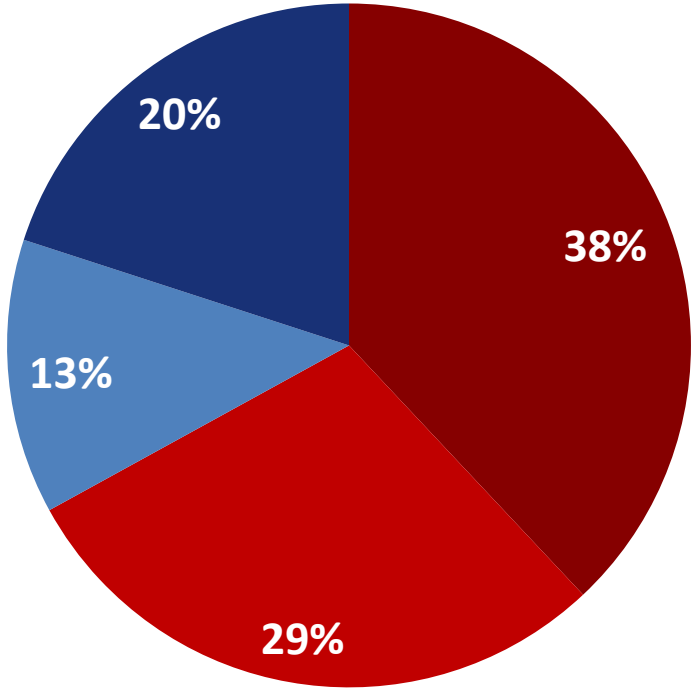
# BREAKOUT DEFINITIONS

Category	Definition	N
<b>TOTAL</b>	All respondents	500
Men	Respondents who identify as men	229
Women	Respondents who identify as women	270
Providence city	Respondents who live in Providence city	102
Other Providence County	Respondents who live in Providence county but not the city	156
Other county	Respondents who live in Bristol, Kent, Newport, or Washington county	242
CD 1	Respondents who live in CD 1	242
CD 2	Respondents who live in CD 2	257
Under 45	Respondents under the age of 45	165
45-64	Respondents age 45 to 64	186
65+	Respondents age 65 and older	149
Non-college	Respondents without a Bachelor's degree	240
College	Respondents with at least a Bachelor's degree	250
Democrats	Respondents who are registered Democrats	227
Non-Partisans	Respondents who are registered Non-Partisans	192
Republicans	Respondents who are registered Republicans	81

# LANDSCAPE

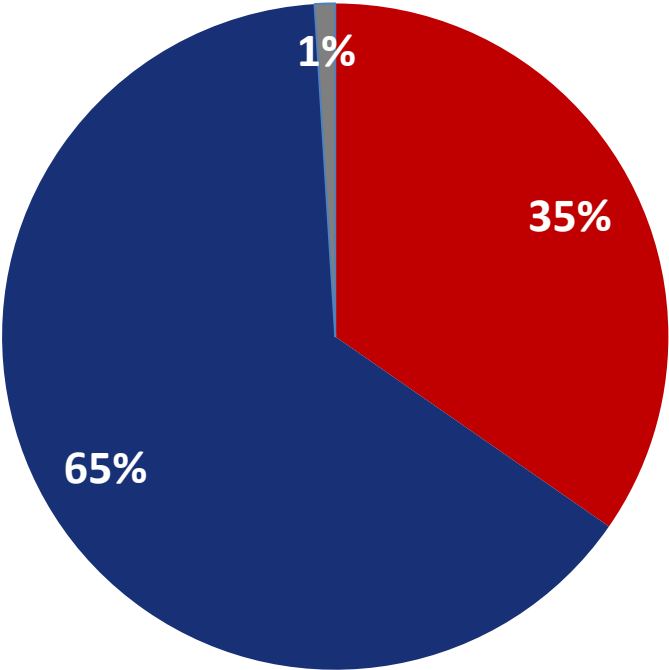
# 2020 VOTE METHOD

Method



- Voted in person on Election Day
- Voted in person early
- Dropped mail ballot in a drop box
- Mailed in ballot

If voted by mail



- Have voted by mail before
- First time voting by mail
- Don't know/refused

Q8. And how did you vote last year?

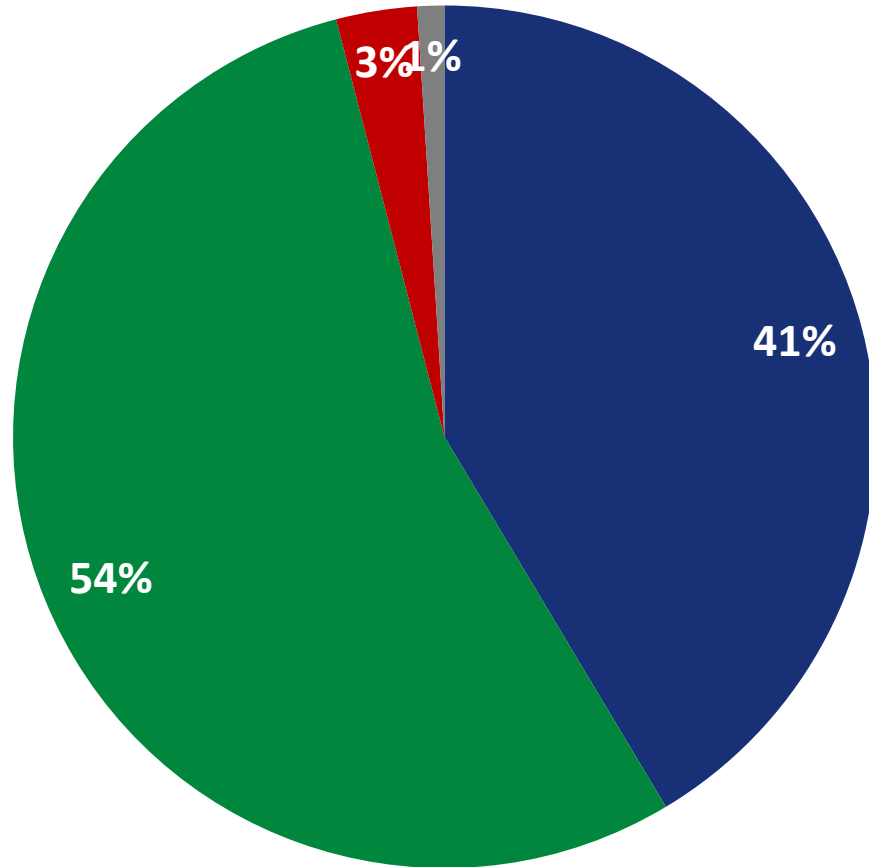
Q9. [IF BY MAIL] And have you voted by mail in previous elections or was this your first time voting by mail?

# BREAKOUT: VOTE METHOD

- Two-thirds of voters voted in-person with 38% voting on Election Day and 29% voting early. A third voted by mail.
- Men, voters in Providence county outside the city, middle aged voters, non-college voters, and Republicans were most likely to vote in person on Election Day while voters in Providence, older voters, and Democrats were most likely to vote by mail.
- Nearly two-thirds of voters who voted by mail said it was their first time doing so.

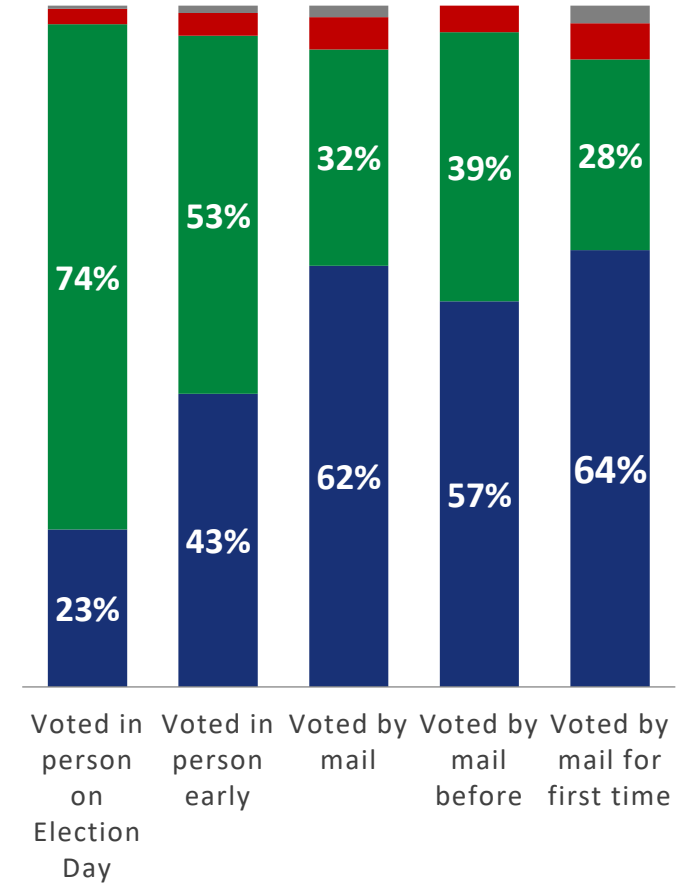
	Vote Method				If voted by mail	
	In person on Election Day	In person early	Dropped ballot in box	Mailed in ballot	Have voted by mail before	First time voting by mail
<b>TOTAL</b>	38%	29%	13%	20%	35%	65%
Men	41%	27%	12%	20%	26%	72%
Women	35%	31%	14%	20%	42%	58%
Providence (city)	38%	30%	6%	25%	49%	51%
Other Providence county	45%	23%	13%	19%	30%	70%
Other counties	34%	32%	15%	19%	32%	66%
CD 1	40%	23%	12%	24%	28%	71%
CD 2	36%	34%	13%	16%	43%	57%
Under 45	37%	33%	10%	20%	24%	76%
45-64	43%	27%	15%	15%	36%	64%
65+	33%	27%	13%	27%	43%	55%
Non-college	40%	30%	10%	19%	33%	65%
College	34%	28%	15%	21%	35%	65%
Democrats	32%	24%	16%	27%	40%	59%
Non-Partisans	40%	33%	12%	15%	32%	68%
Republicans	51%	32%	4%	12%	11%	89%

# 2020 VOTING EXPERIENCE



- It was easier than it had been in the past
- It was about the same experience for me personally
- It was harder for me to cast my ballot
- Don't know/refused

## Experience by method



Q10. In general, which of the following best describes your experience voting in the 2020 general election?

# BREAKOUT: VOTING EXPERIENCE

- Overall, two in five 2020 Rhode Island voters say their experience was easier than in the past but a majority said it was about the same.
- Voters who voted by mail were most likely to say it was easier than before along with voters who voted early.
- Three-quarters of voters who voted in person on Election Day said it was the same as the past.

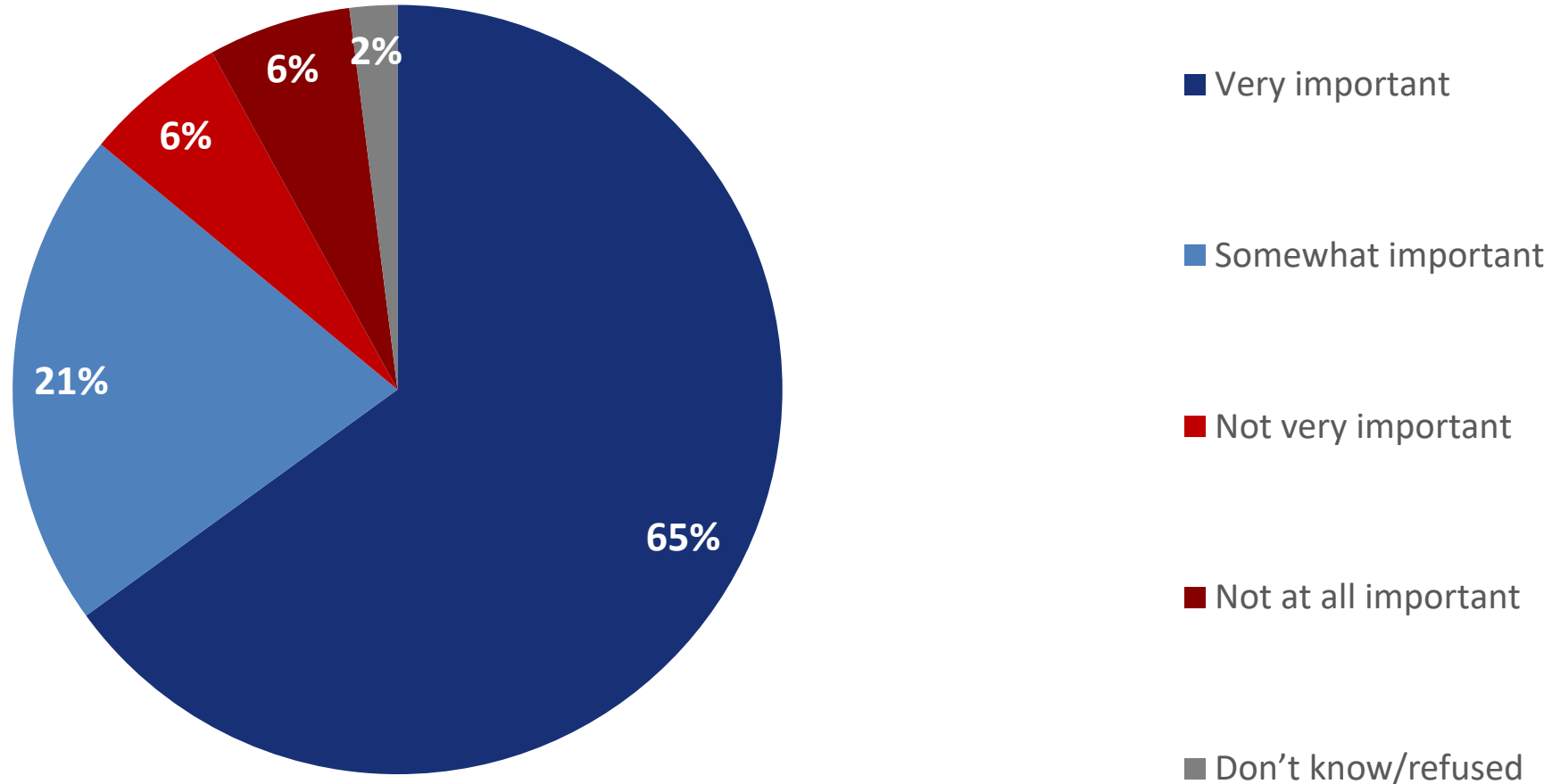
	Easier than in the past	About the same experience	Harder than in the past	Don't know/refused
<b>TOTAL</b>	41%	54%	3%	1%
Men	41%	53%	4%	2%
Women	42%	55%	3%	1%
Providence (city)	37%	60%	3%	0%
Other Providence county	38%	56%	5%	2%
Other counties	46%	50%	3%	2%
CD 1	39%	56%	3%	2%
CD 2	43%	52%	3%	1%
Under 45	36%	57%	3%	4%
45-64	40%	56%	5%	0%
65+	49%	48%	3%	0%
Non-college	39%	54%	5%	2%
College	45%	53%	2%	0%
Democrats	49%	46%	2%	2%
Non-Partisans	37%	58%	4%	1%
Republicans	29%	66%	5%	0%

Q10. In general, which of the following best describes your experience voting in the 2020 general election?



# MAKING VOTING EASY

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# BREAKOUT: MAKING VOTING EASY

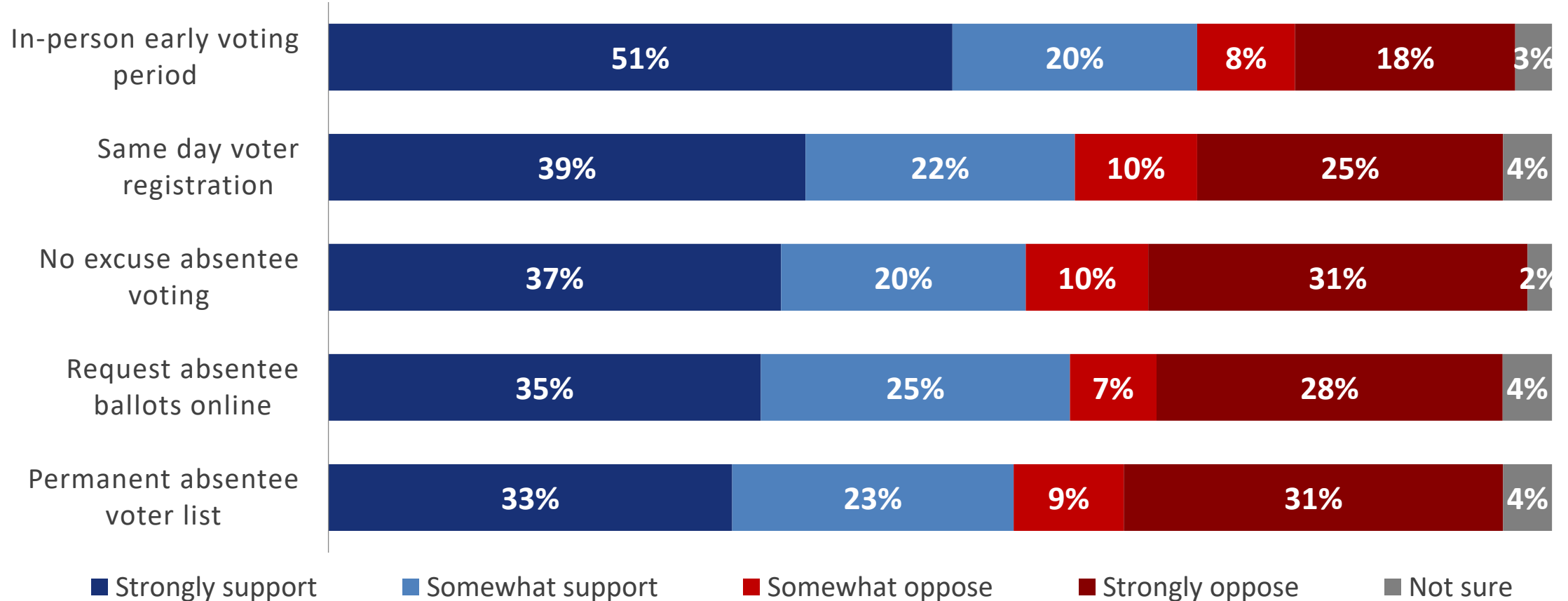
- Nearly two-thirds of voters think it is very important to make voting as easy as possible for Rhode Islanders and another 21% think it is somewhat important.
- Voters in Providence, CD 1, college educated voters, and Democrats are most likely to say it is very important
- Nearly three in ten Republicans do not think it is important.

	Very important	Somewhat important	Total not important	Don't know/refused
<b>TOTAL</b>	65%	21%	12%	2%
Men	63%	19%	14%	4%
Women	67%	23%	10%	1%
Providence (city)	77%	18%	6%	0%
Other Providence county	68%	19%	12%	0%
Other counties	57%	23%	15%	5%
CD 1	73%	15%	10%	2%
CD 2	57%	26%	14%	3%
Under 45	68%	16%	14%	3%
45-64	64%	24%	9%	3%
65+	63%	22%	14%	1%
Non-college	59%	24%	14%	3%
College	70%	19%	10%	1%
Democrats	81%	15%	3%	1%
Non-Partisans	57%	25%	15%	2%
Republicans	38%	28%	29%	5%

Q17. In general, how important do you feel it is to make voting as easy as possible for Rhode Islanders?

# VOTING REFORMS LANDSCAPE

# VOTING REFORMS



## BREAKOUT: VOTING REFORMS STRONG SUPPORT

- A majority of likely Rhode Island voters strongly support establishing an in-person early voting period with men, voters in Providence, younger voters, college educated voters, and Democrats most likely to strongly support it.
- A third of voters also strongly support the other policies in the voting reform bill.
- Voters in Providence, younger voters, college-educated voters, and Democrats are most likely to strongly support each of the proposals.

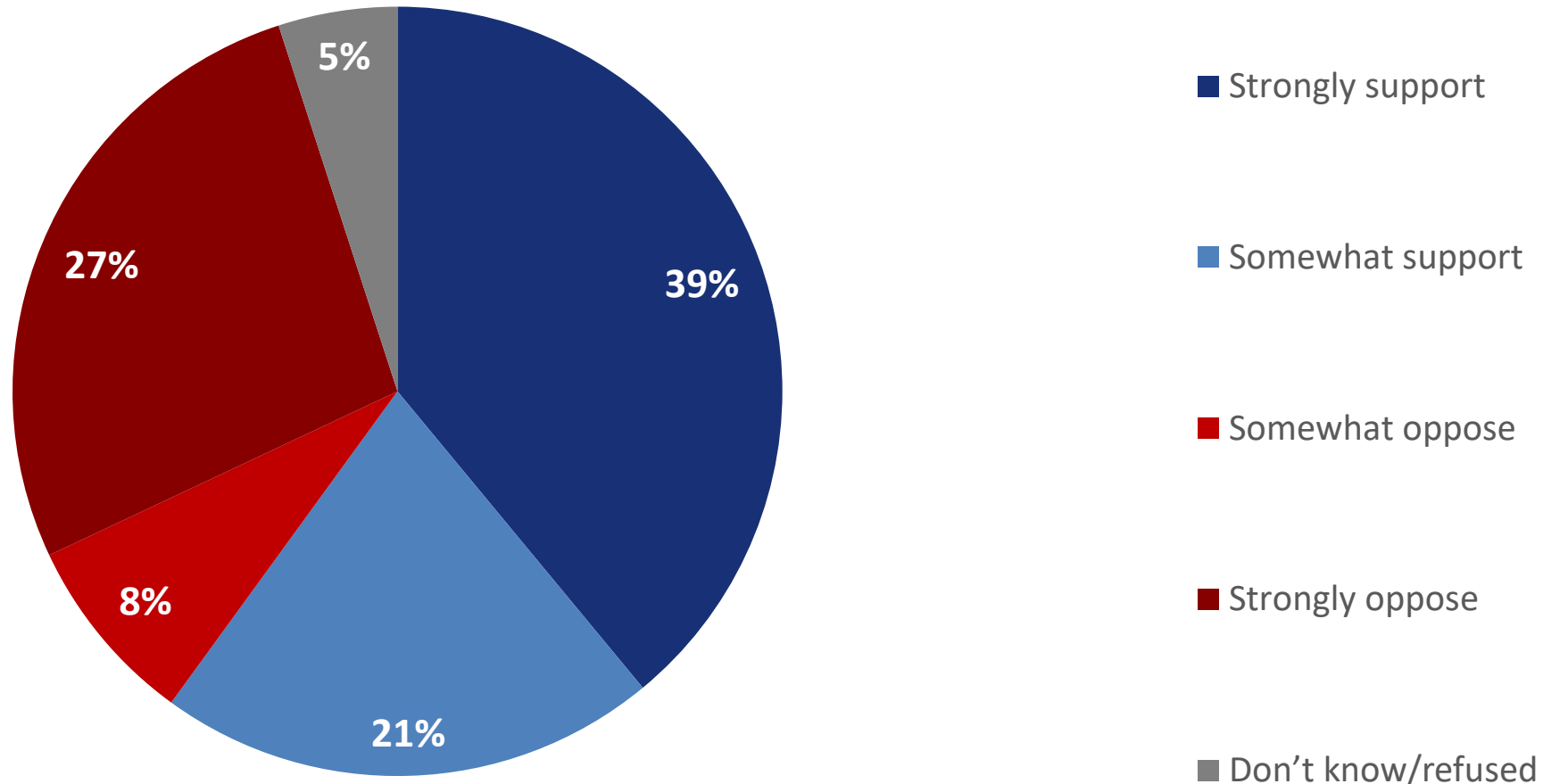
	In-person early voting period	Same day voter registration	No excuse absentee voting	Request absentee ballots online	Permanent absentee voter list
<b>TOTAL</b>	51%	39%	37%	35%	33%
Men	54%	42%	35%	37%	33%
Women	49%	37%	39%	34%	33%
Providence (city)	67%	60%	50%	47%	48%
Other Providence county	46%	35%	38%	31%	32%
Other counties	48%	33%	32%	32%	28%
CD 1	54%	44%	40%	36%	37%
CD 2	49%	35%	34%	34%	30%
Under 45	59%	48%	43%	46%	43%
45-64	52%	37%	33%	34%	26%
65+	42%	32%	36%	24%	31%
Non-college	45%	35%	30%	28%	25%
College	59%	43%	45%	42%	41%
Democrats	69%	58%	56%	49%	49%
Non-Partisans	43%	27%	27%	28%	24%
Republicans	23%	14%	9%	13%	8%

- Each of the proposals in the voting reform bill receives support from a majority of voters with in-person early voting the most popular followed by same day voter registration.
- A majority of voters support each of the proposals regardless of gender, area, or age with voters in Providence and younger voters most supportive.
- Over three in five college educated voters support each of the policies while support drops below 50% for non-college voters when it comes to no excuse absentee voting and establishing a permanent absentee voter list.
- Similarly, over three-quarters of Democrats support each of the policies tested while support among Non-Partisans drops slightly below 50% for no excuse absentee voting and establishing a permanent absentee voter list.
- Two in five Republicans support establishing an early voting period.

## BREAKOUT: VOTING REFORMS TOTAL SUPPORT

	In-person early voting period	Same day voter registration	No excuse absentee voting	Request absentee ballots online	Permanent absentee voter list
<b>TOTAL</b>	72%	61%	57%	60%	56%
Men	73%	61%	55%	64%	56%
Women	71%	60%	59%	56%	56%
Providence (city)	84%	75%	82%	76%	85%
Other Providence county	71%	59%	52%	54%	45%
Other counties	67%	56%	50%	57%	51%
CD 1	75%	66%	61%	62%	63%
CD 2	69%	56%	53%	58%	50%
Under 45	77%	63%	60%	69%	63%
45-64	76%	63%	57%	59%	53%
65+	60%	55%	55%	51%	52%
Non-college	64%	56%	45%	55%	48%
College	79%	66%	68%	65%	64%
Democrats	85%	77%	76%	77%	78%
Non-Partisans	67%	54%	48%	53%	45%
Republicans	43%	30%	26%	27%	20%

# SIGNATURE MATCHING REQUIREMENTS



## BREAKOUT: SIGNATURE MATCHING

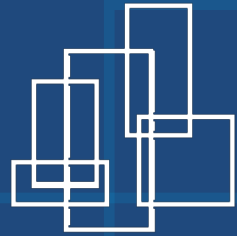
	Total support	Total oppose	Don't know/refused
<b>TOTAL</b>	60%	35%	5%
Men	57%	35%	8%
Women	63%	34%	3%
Providence (city)	83%	12%	5%
Other Providence county	56%	38%	6%
Other counties	53%	42%	5%
CD 1	63%	30%	7%
CD 2	57%	39%	4%
Under 45	64%	31%	5%
45-64	61%	36%	3%
65+	55%	38%	7%
Non-college	53%	41%	6%
College	67%	29%	3%
Democrats	76%	19%	5%
Non-Partisans	54%	40%	6%
Republicans	28%	65%	6%

Q16. As you may know, if you want to vote by absentee ballot in Rhode Island you are required to either have your signature notarized or witnessed by two people. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, Rhode Islanders were allowed to vote absentee without doing either of those things. Instead, the state matched the voter signature on file to the application to confirm a voter's identity.

Based on what you know about this issue, would you support or oppose Rhode Island permanently confirming voters' identities by their signatures for absentee ballots? [IF CHOICE] And would you say you strongly or somewhat support/oppose?

- Three in five likely Rhode island voters support switching from notarization or witnesses to signature matching for absentee ballots.
- A majority of voters across demographic groups support permanently adopting signature matching, except among Republicans. However, over a quarter of Republicans support it.
- Support is highest among women, voters in Providence, voters under 65, and college educated voters.





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