



# PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES

turning questions into answers

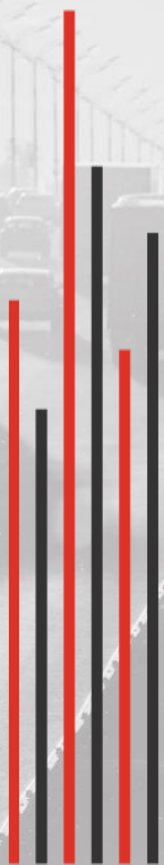


# Ohio Distracted Driving Statewide

February 26, 2021

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# METHODOLOGY

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On behalf of FOR Ohio, Public Opinion Strategies completed a survey of 1000 licensed drivers in Ohio with a representative sample of adult Ohioans, reflecting age, education, ethnicity and gender characteristics according to the census.

The survey was conducted February 17-24, 2021 and has a credibility interval of  $\pm 3.53\%$ .



# Summary of Findings

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**Distracted driving is clearly the single most important concern among Ohio's drivers, and they overwhelmingly believe there are more distractions now than there were five years ago. They see other drivers use their hand-held cell phones nearly every time they are on the road, a practice three-fourths describe as just as dangerous or more dangerous than driving under the influence.**

## Summary of Findings

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**Ohio's drivers across party and ideological lines overwhelmingly support passing a new law that prohibits using hand-held cell phones while driving to make or receive calls, texts, watch video or post on social media. The law still allows drivers to use voice commands to make calls/respond to communications.**

**There is consensus that this issue is serious enough to pass a new law – 71% of Ohio's drivers (across party lines) disagree with the notion that it doesn't merit a new law.**



# Key Findings

**#1**

***Distracted driving is THE major worry for Ohio drivers.***

# When asked what worries Ohio drivers the most...

Distracted drivers

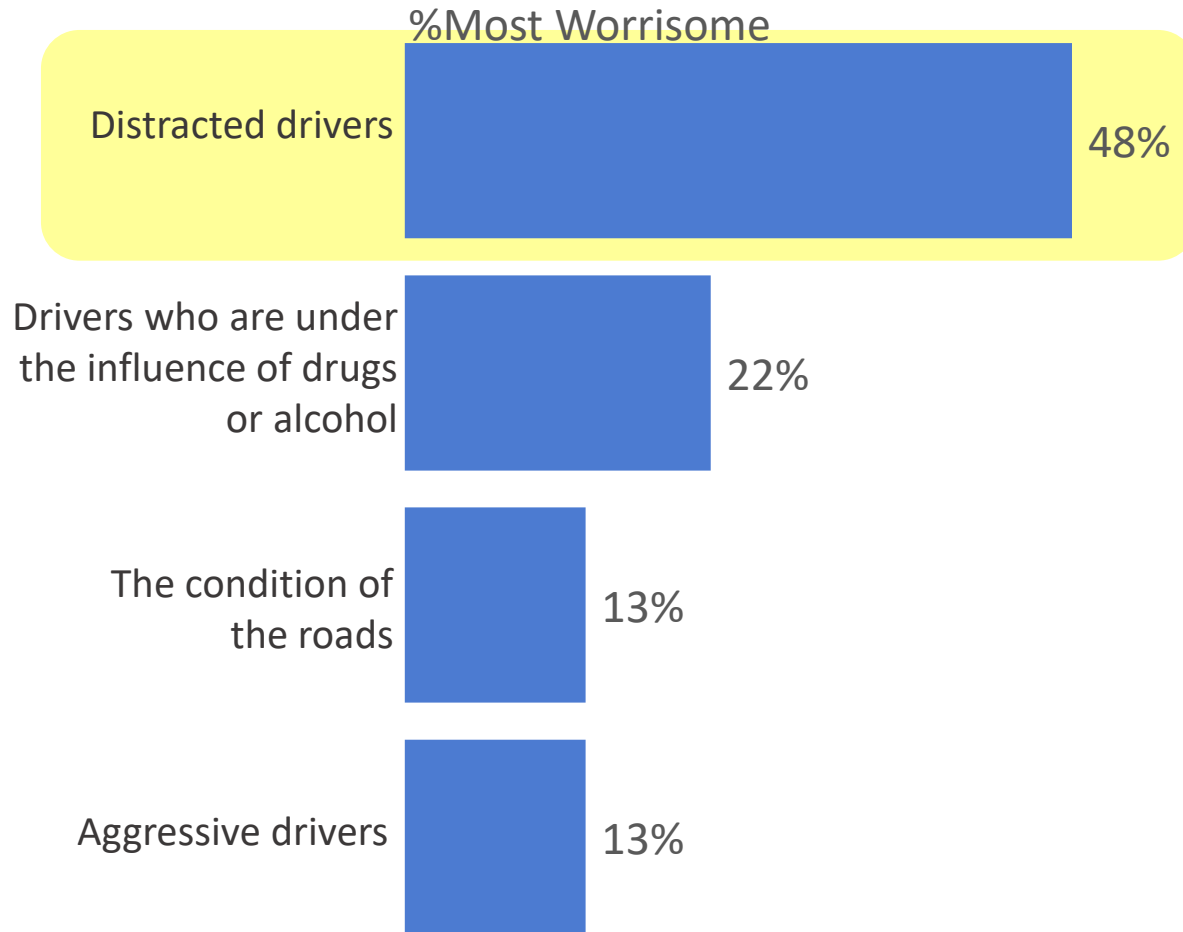
Drivers who are under the influence of alcohol

The condition of the roads

Aggressive drivers



# “Distracted drivers” tops the list.



# It's the top concern for Ohio drivers regardless of age...



%Most Worrisome	Total	18-34 (20%)	35-44 (20%)	45-54 (17%)	55-64 (18%)	65+ (25%)
Distracted drivers	48%	42%	41%	55%	51%	52%
Drivers who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol	22%	22%	27%	19%	23%	20%
Aggressive drivers	13%	13%	7%	13%	13%	19%
The condition of the roads	13%	19%	17%	9%	12%	7%

Or region of the state.

%Most Worrisome	Total	Cleveland (33%)	Columbus (22%)	Cincy (15%)	Dayton (11%)	Toledo (9%)	Y' Town (5%)	Total Small DMAs (6%)
Distracted Drivers	48%	45%	52%	56%	48%	45%	40%	46%
Drivers who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol	22%	22%	24%	20%	21%	19%	28%	26%
Aggressive drivers	13%	14%	13%	11%	17%	18%	8%	5%
The condition of the roads	13%	15%	9%	9%	12%	14%	24%	14%

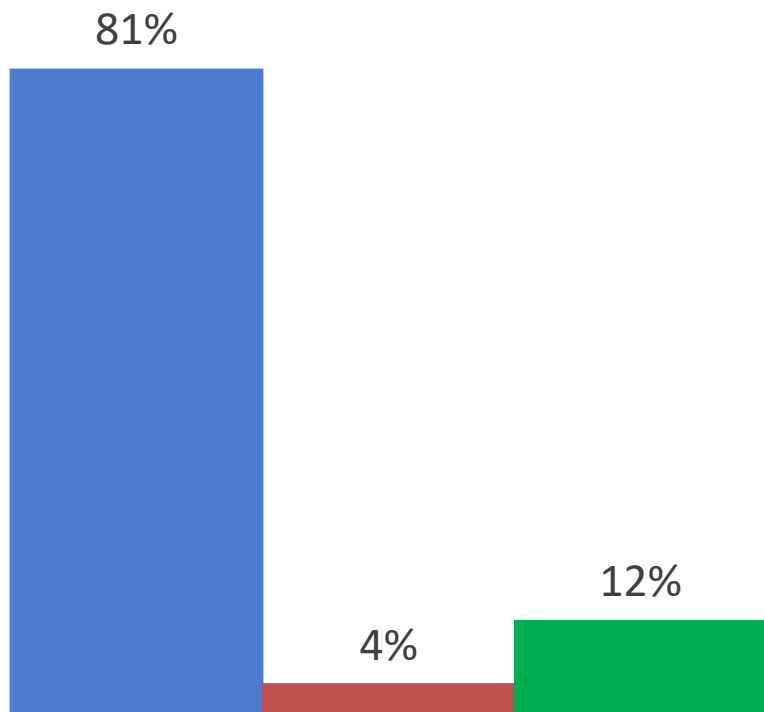
# Further, concern over distracted driving cuts across partisanship in the state.

%Most Worrisome	Total	GOP (39%)	IND (28%)	DEM (33%)
Distracted Drivers	48%	53%	44%	46%
Drivers who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol	22%	23%	21%	23%
Aggressive drivers	13%	12%	14%	15%
The condition of the roads	13%	11%	16%	13%

**#2**

***And, there are more distractions than ever.***

# More than 80% of drivers believe there are more distractions while driving than there were five years ago.



- More Distractions
- Fewer Distractions
- Just About the Same Amount

	18-34 (20%)	35-44 (20%)	45-54 (17%)	55-64 (18%)	65+ (25%)
More Distractions	76%	72%	85%	84%	88%
Fewer Distractions	6%	9%	3%	2%	1%
Just about the same amount	15%	17%	9%	12%	10%

# Eating while driving and talking on a hand-held cell phone while driving are the two most common distracted driving behaviors.

%Yes-No	Total
Eaten food while driving	46%-53%
Talked on a hand-held phone while driving	32%-67%
Dealt with your car's navigation system while driving	23%-75%
Texted or answered a text on your hand-held cell phone while driving	22%-77%
Plugged in GPS coordinates on your hand-held cell phone while driving	20%-78%
Driven 10 miles per hour or more above the speed limit in a residential area	15%-82%
Driven 10 miles per hour or more above the speed limit through a highway construction zone	12%-85%
Driven 20 miles per hour or more above the speed limit on a highway	12%-86%

%Yes-No	Total
Checked your email on your hand-held cell phone while driving	9%-90%
Driven through a red light when you could have stopped safely	8%-89%
Taken a picture on your cell phone while driving	8%-91%
Checked out a website while driving	7%-92%
Watched a part of a video on your hand-held cell phone while driving	5%-94%
Taken a selfie while driving	3%-96%
Driven after drinking enough alcohol that you may have been over the legal limit	3%-95%
Put on make-up while driving	3%-96%
Shaved while driving	1%-98%

# Younger drivers report being most prone to distracted driving.



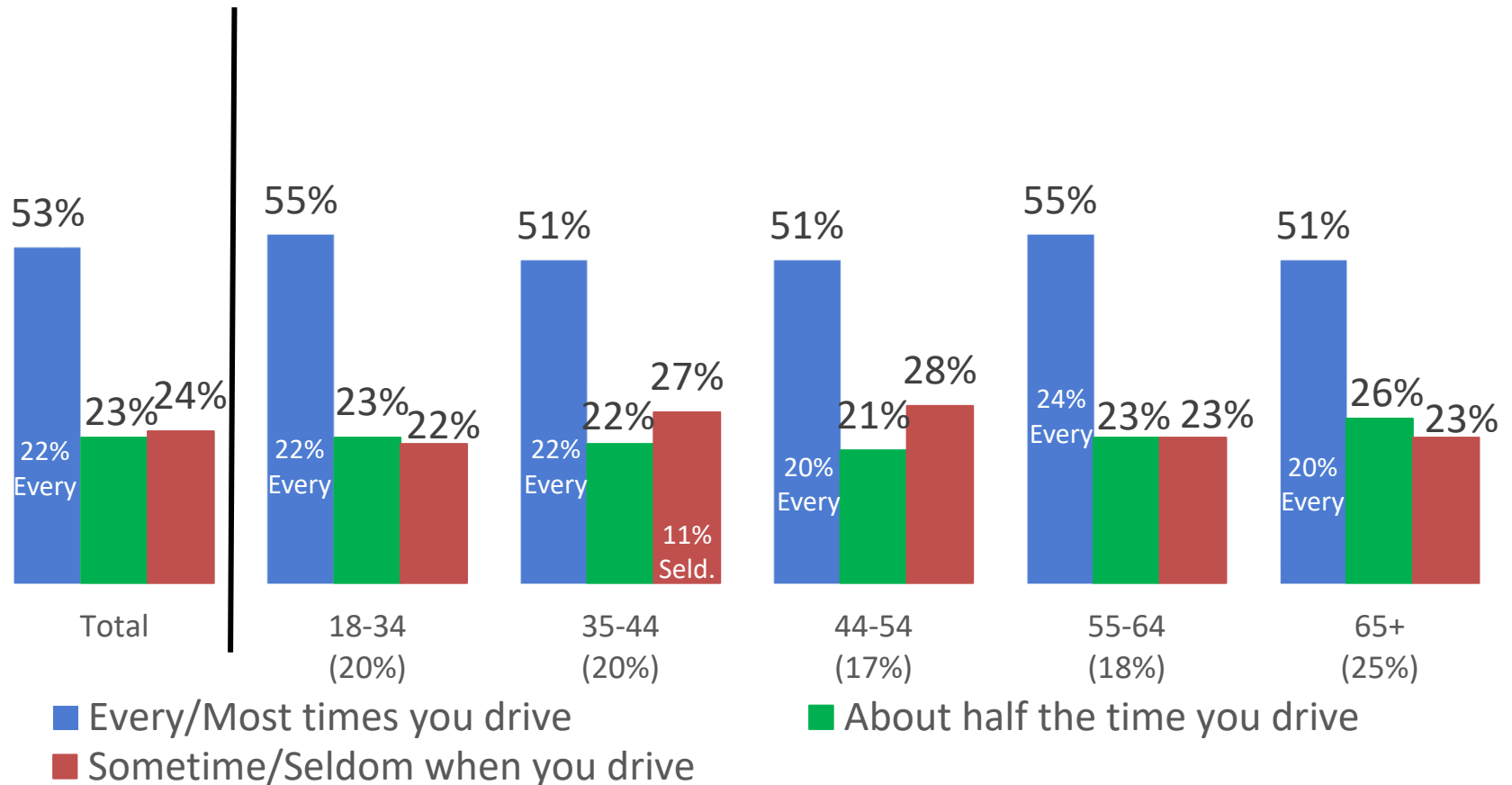
%Yes	Total	18-34 (20%)	35-44 (20%)	45-54 (17%)	55-64 (18%)	65+ (25%)
Eaten food while driving	46%	57%	50%	47%	44%	36%
Talked on a hand-held phone while driving	32%	45%	42%	32%	24%	17%
Dealt with your car's navigation system while driving	23%	41%	29%	25%	13%	10%
Texted or answered a text on your hand-held cell phone while driving	22%	40%	34%	24%	11%	5%
Plugged in GPS coordinates on your hand-held cell phone while driving	20%	41%	31%	20%	9%	4%



**#3**

***Ohio drivers observe “distracted driving”  
nearly every time they go out.***

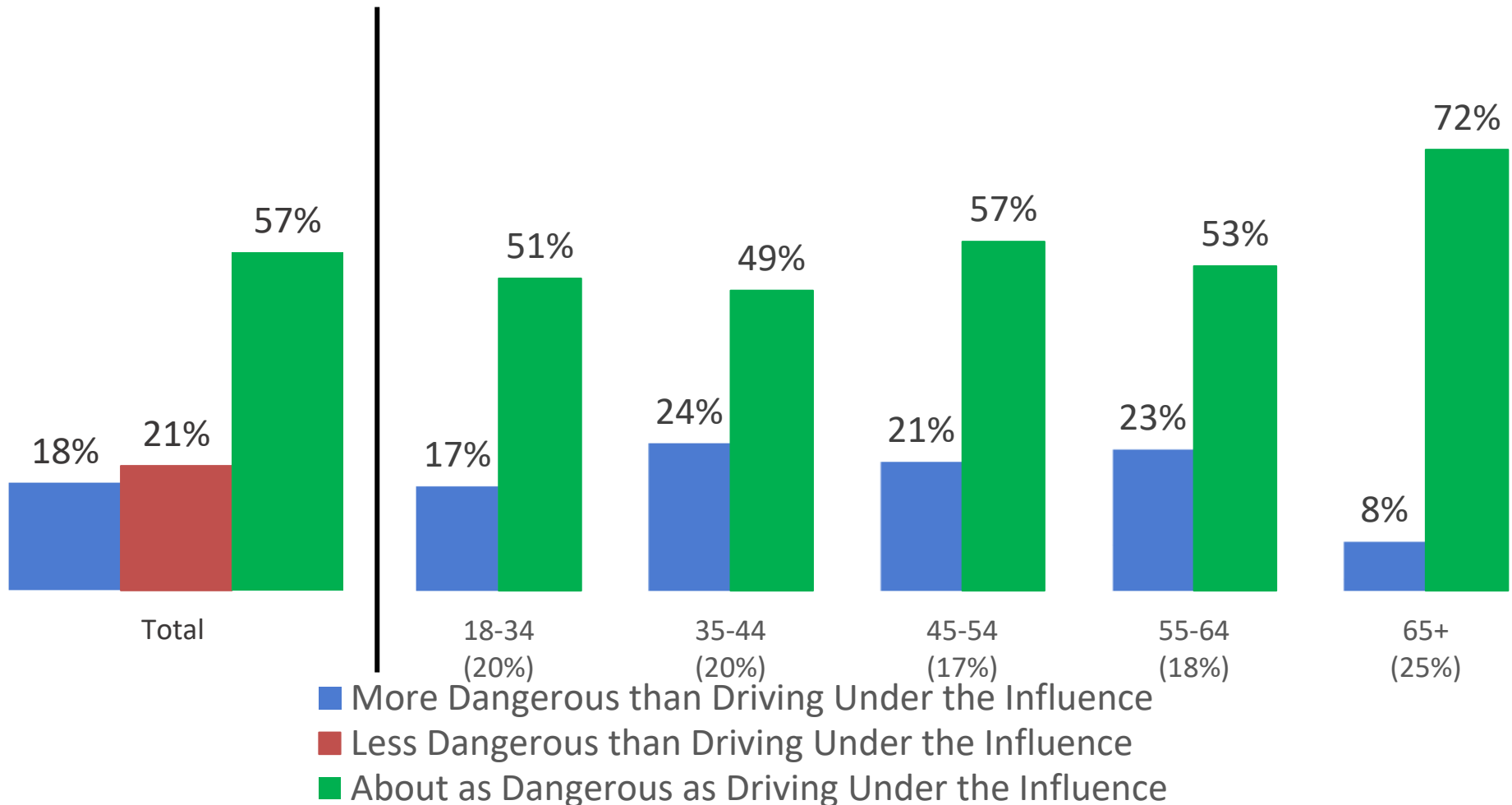
A majority of drivers say they see another driver using their hand-held phone while driving “most times” or “every time” they drive.



## #4

*Ohio drivers consider using hand-held phones while driving to be as dangerous as “driving under the influence.”*

Fully 75% of Ohio drivers believe that using a hand-held phone while driving is either “more dangerous” or “just as dangerous” as driving under the influence.



**#5**

***There is strong support for a new law  
addressing “distracted driving.”***

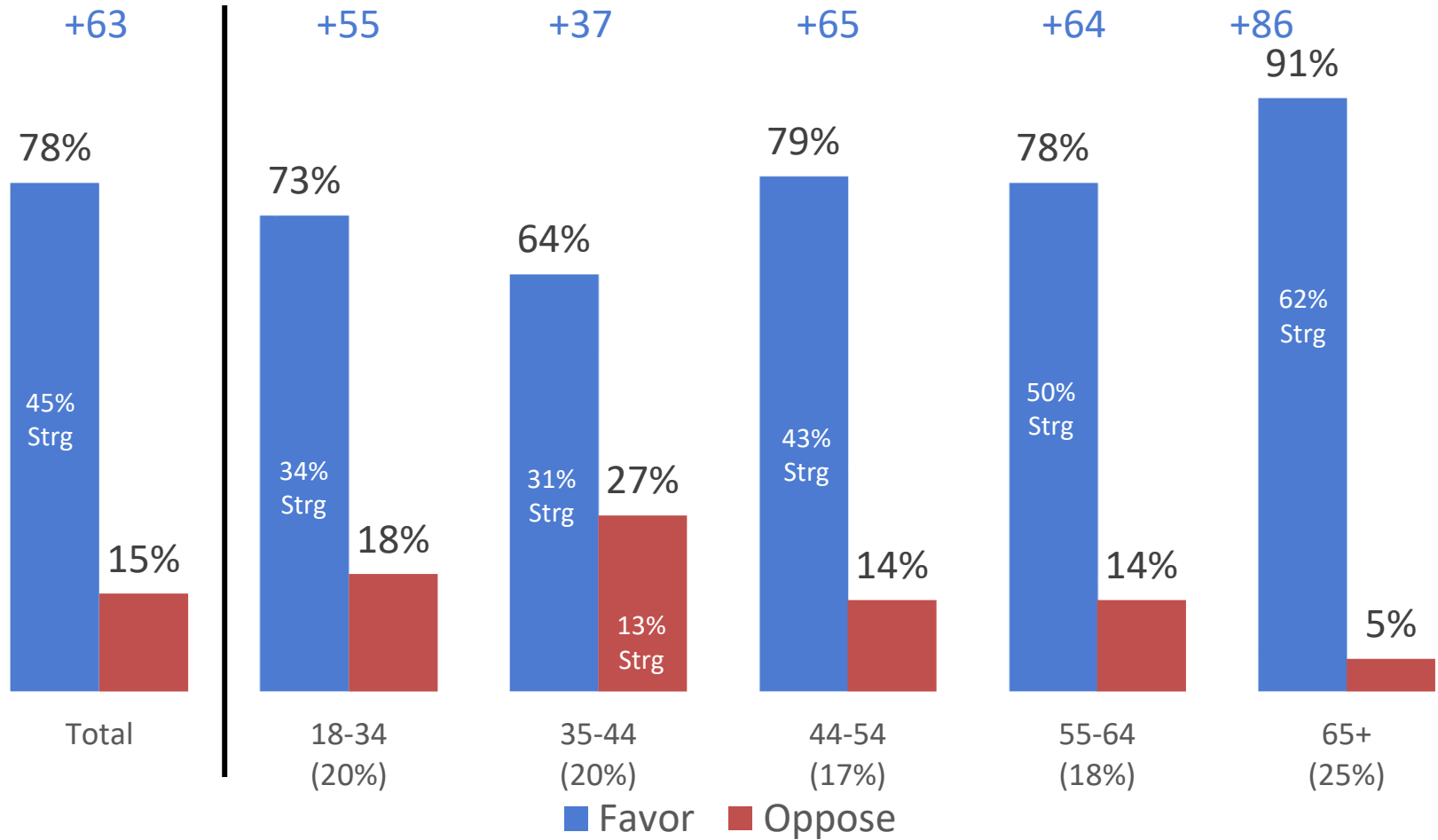
When Ohio drivers are asked about a potential new law dealing with “distracted driving” ...

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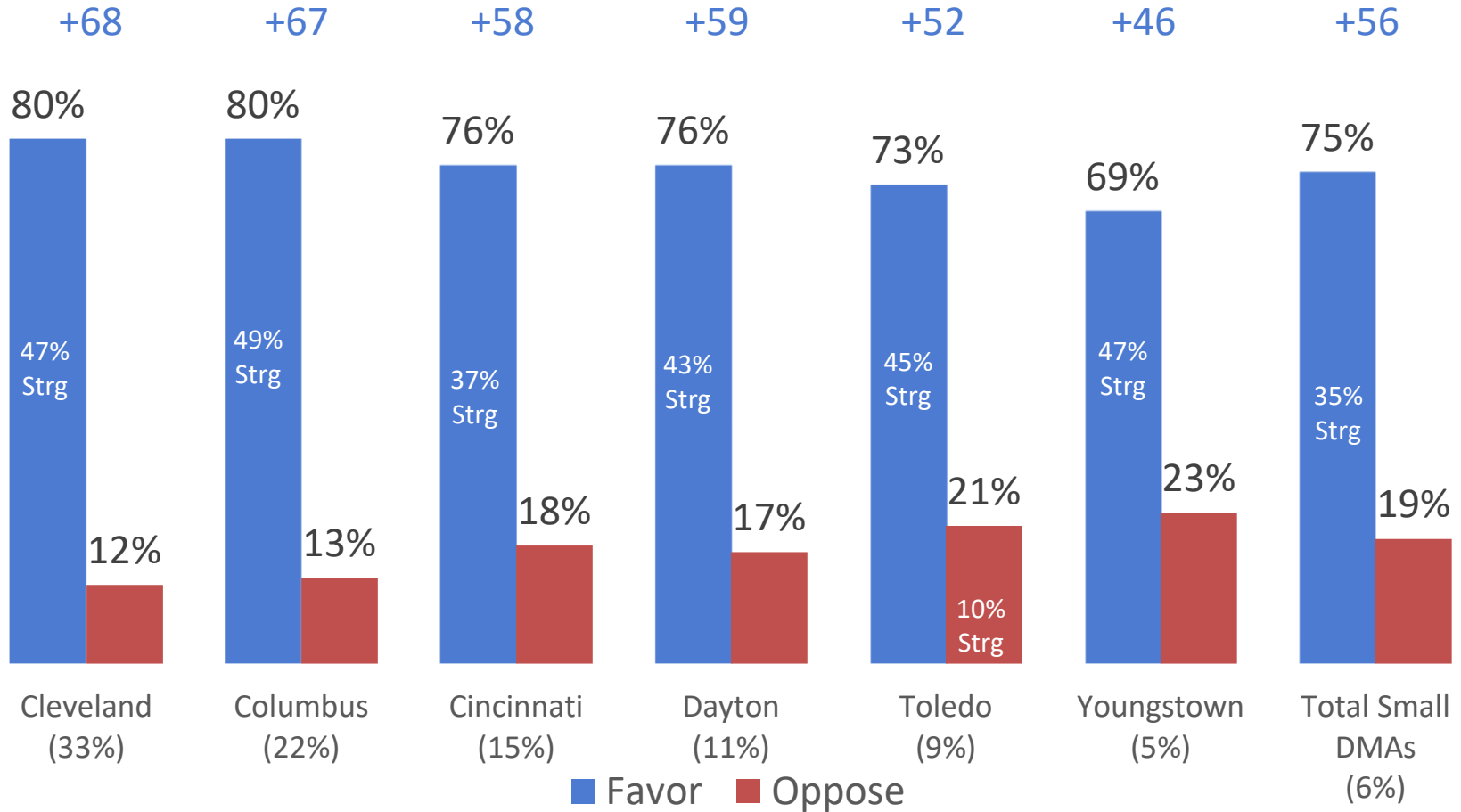
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*The state legislature is considering passing new legislation dealing with this issue. The new law would prohibit drivers from holding their cell phones while talking or manually using their hand-held cell phones to write an email or text, post on social media, view images or videos, manually enter data or broadcast videos or images. Further, it would allow drivers to use voice commands to make calls and respond to communications. Would you favor or oppose this proposed new law?*

It wins support from more than three-fourths of the state's drivers.

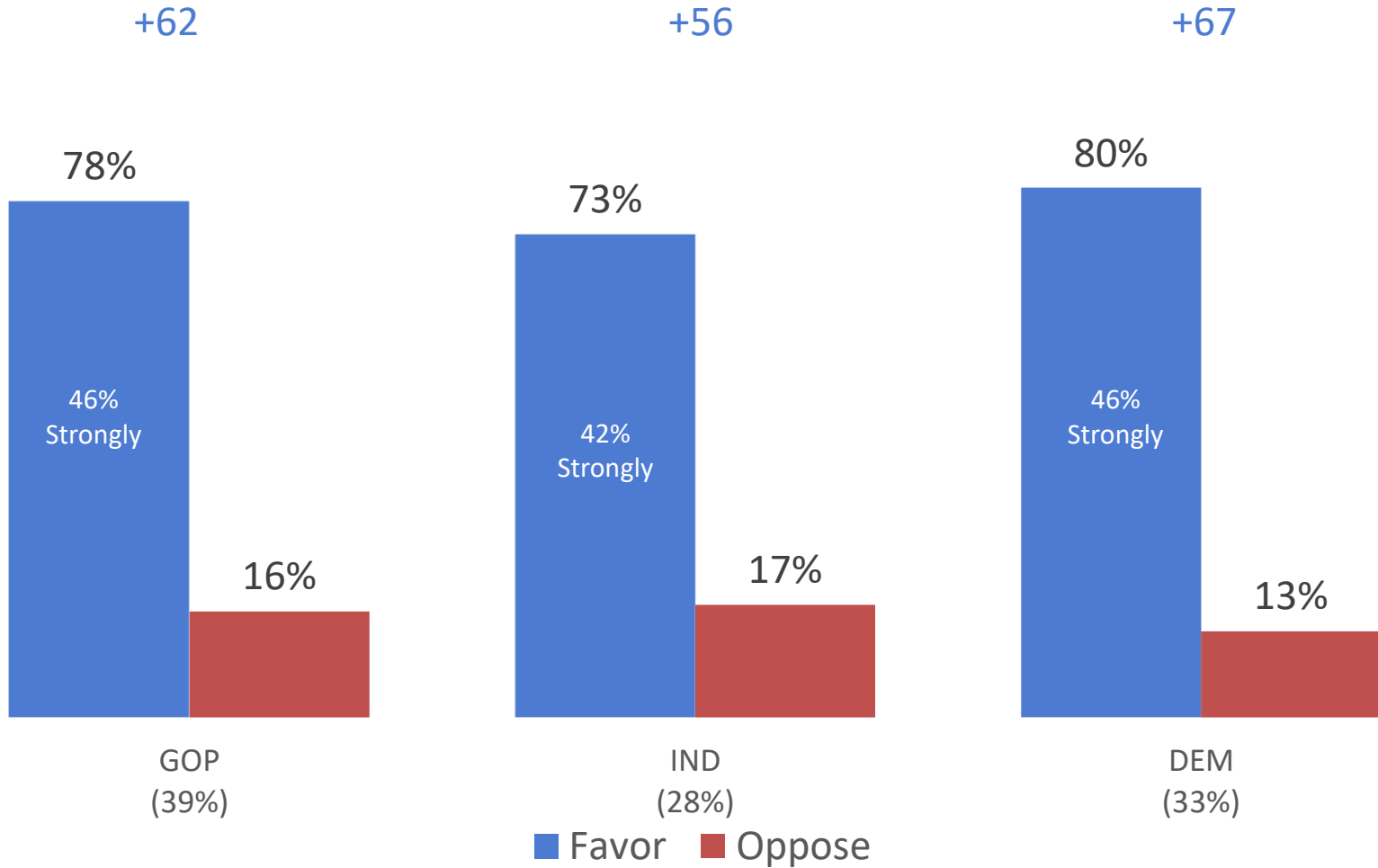


# Support cuts across the state's regions...

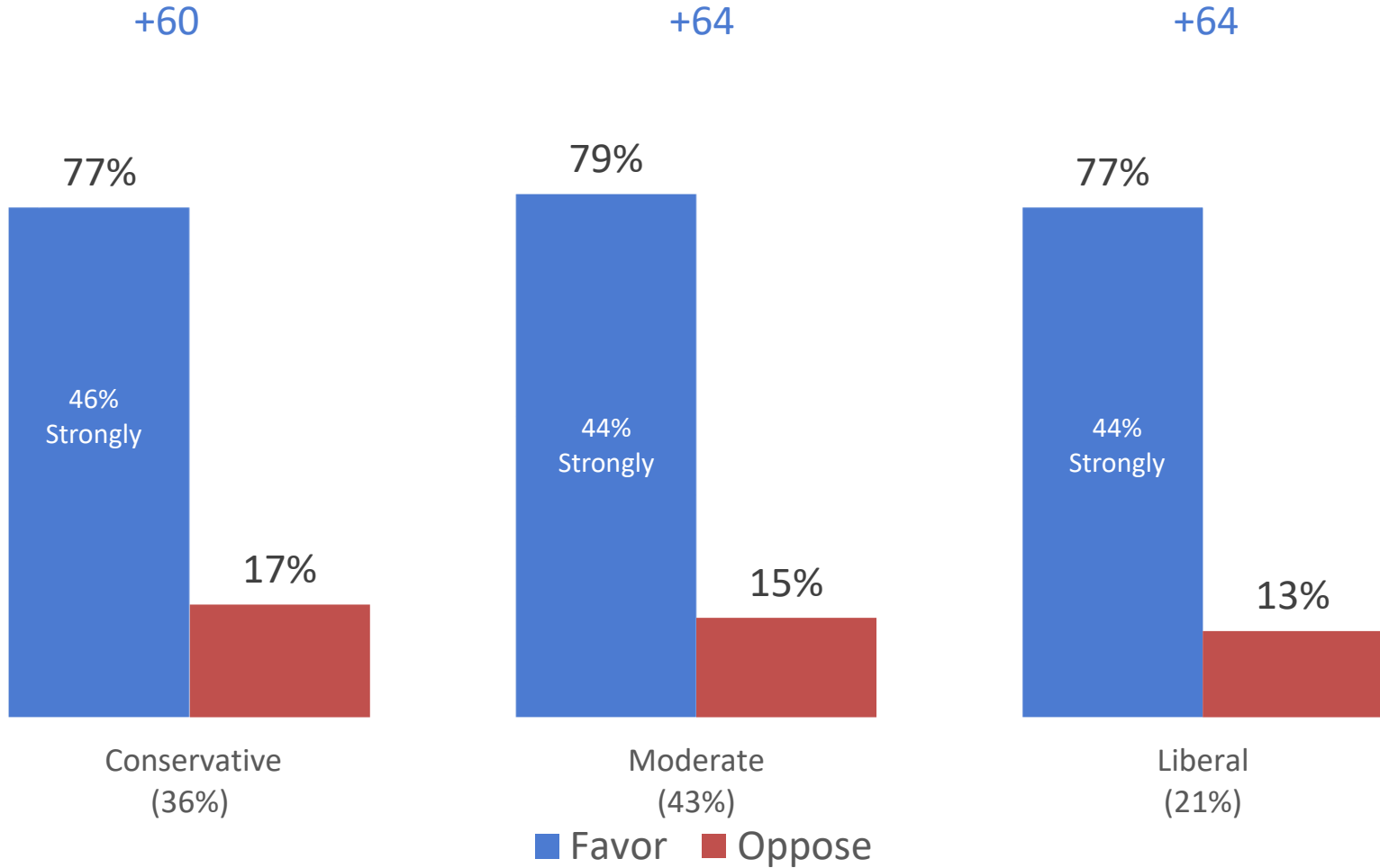




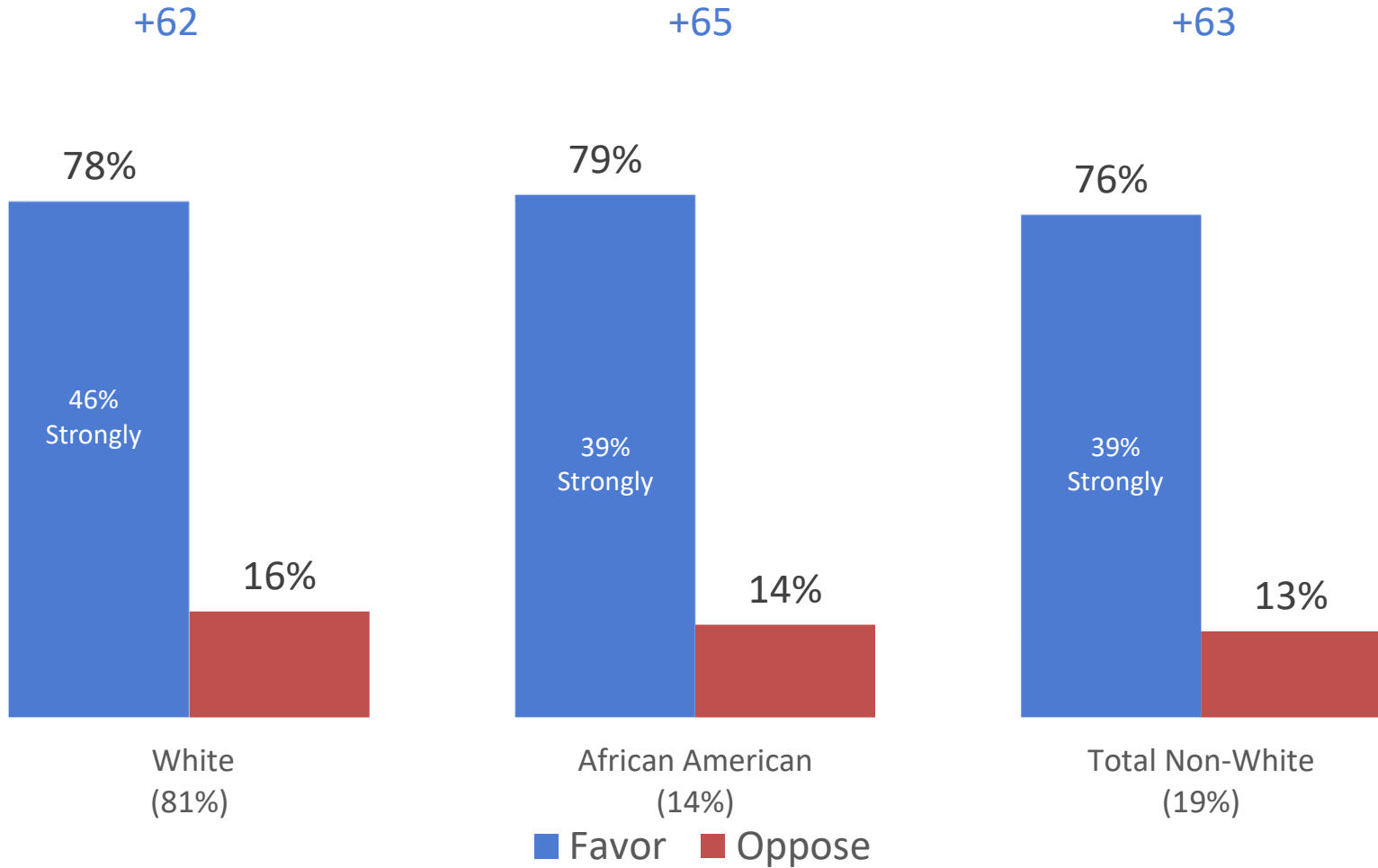
# Across partisanship...



# Across political ideology...



And, across ethnicity.



# Driver's comments on why they supported it...

“People have become so obsessed and reliant on their phones they continually put themselves, their family, and my family at risk, selfishly.”

– Female, 25-34, Cleveland

“Because it has become the norm and it's very dangerous. You lose track of your driving. Also, younger people, that's all they know.”

– Male, 55-64, Columbus

“Distracted drivers are a major safety threat. Unfortunately many people are so addicted to their phones that they are blind to the risk of using them.”

– Male, 45-54, Cleveland

“Distracted driving is a huge issue in Columbus, Ohio, from cell phones to doing other things.”

– Female, 25-34, Columbus

“My car insurance rates continue to go up because of distracted drivers. Stopping even a fraction of those people from having accidents would be a very good thing.”

– Male, 55-64, Columbus

“Too many jerks on their phone and not paying attention to the road.”

– Female, 65+, Wheeling-Steubenville

“I've heard a lot of stories about accidents with distracted drivers. It makes sense that it should be treated like driving drunk.”

– Female, 25-34, Dayton

“Distracted driving has become almost out of control. I am appalled at the number of drivers I witness using cell phones as they drive. These people are a threat to the safety of other drivers and should be punished.”

– Male, 55-64, Columbus

## Driver's comments on why they supported it (cont.)

"I strongly favor this law because I have had friends killed in car accidents because they were hit by distracted drivers. I also lost a friend in a car accident because she was driving while looking at her phone when she crashed full speed."

– Female, 25-34, Columbus

"In high school I lost a friend to texting and driving. Her life was cut short at seventeen years old because of the decision to text while driving. This has made an impact on my entire life."

– Female, 18-24, Cleveland

"Too many people doing everything but driving when in their cars. Cincinnati is a large city and I don't think the cops would be able to pull someone over every time they saw issues. Camera ticketing may work so they snap a picture and send a ticket."

– Female, 65+, Cincinnati

"I was driving a truck when a lady coming beside me was on a cell phone. She wound up hitting me and having an accident. I wound up losing my job and livelihood."

– Male, 55-64, Columbus

"I believe texting while driving is extremely dangerous and should be stopped by law enforcement. While I also believe that voice commands can be a safe alternative if necessary."

– Female, 25-34, Columbus

"We have a lot of teen drivers that do not know how to drive."

– Male, 65+, Cleveland

"It has been proven that texting while driving is just as dangerous as driving under the influence of alcohol. Using your phone while driving causes moderate to extreme distraction."

– Female, 65+, Cincinnati

# Driver's comments on why they opposed it...

“What goes on in my car is my business, same as what goes on in my house. The car is an extension of your home.”

– Female, 25-34, Columbus

“The police have enough work to do. This would be a waste of tax dollars.”

– Male, 35-44, Cincinnati

“Putting other things for law enforcement to regulate when they should be doing more for the citizens, not writing tickets.”

– Male, 45-54, Fort Wayne

“We don't need more laws on the books, especially with the draconian lockdown measures.”

– Male, 35-44, Toledo

“I am not tech savvy so using voice commands to get an address into my GPS would be hard for me to figure out.”

– Female, 25-34, Columbus

“Because this is a fast pace world we live in and it does not happen at our convenience so if you don't take a call when you're ringing and are waiting for days for a call they you might miss out big on important stuff you been waiting for and you can't sit.”

– Female, 45-54, Cleveland

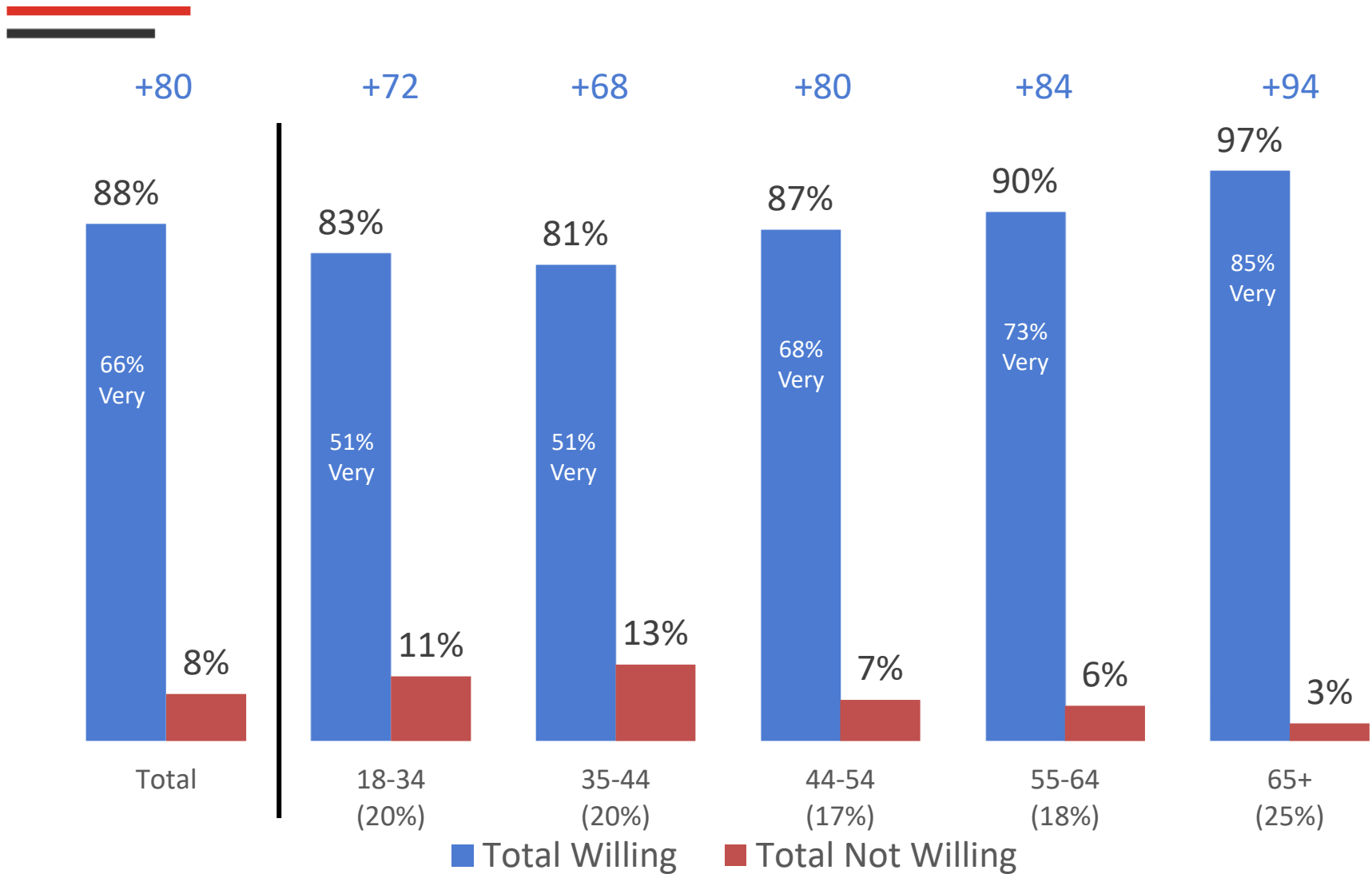
“If looking down at your phone while driving becomes something you can get pulled over for, then why don't they make it so any mom who looks at her child in the backseat gets pulled over, too.”

– Female, 18-24, Cincinnati

**#6**

***Ohioans say they would obey this new law  
if it passed.***

# Nearly 90% of Ohio's drivers say they would obey this new state law.

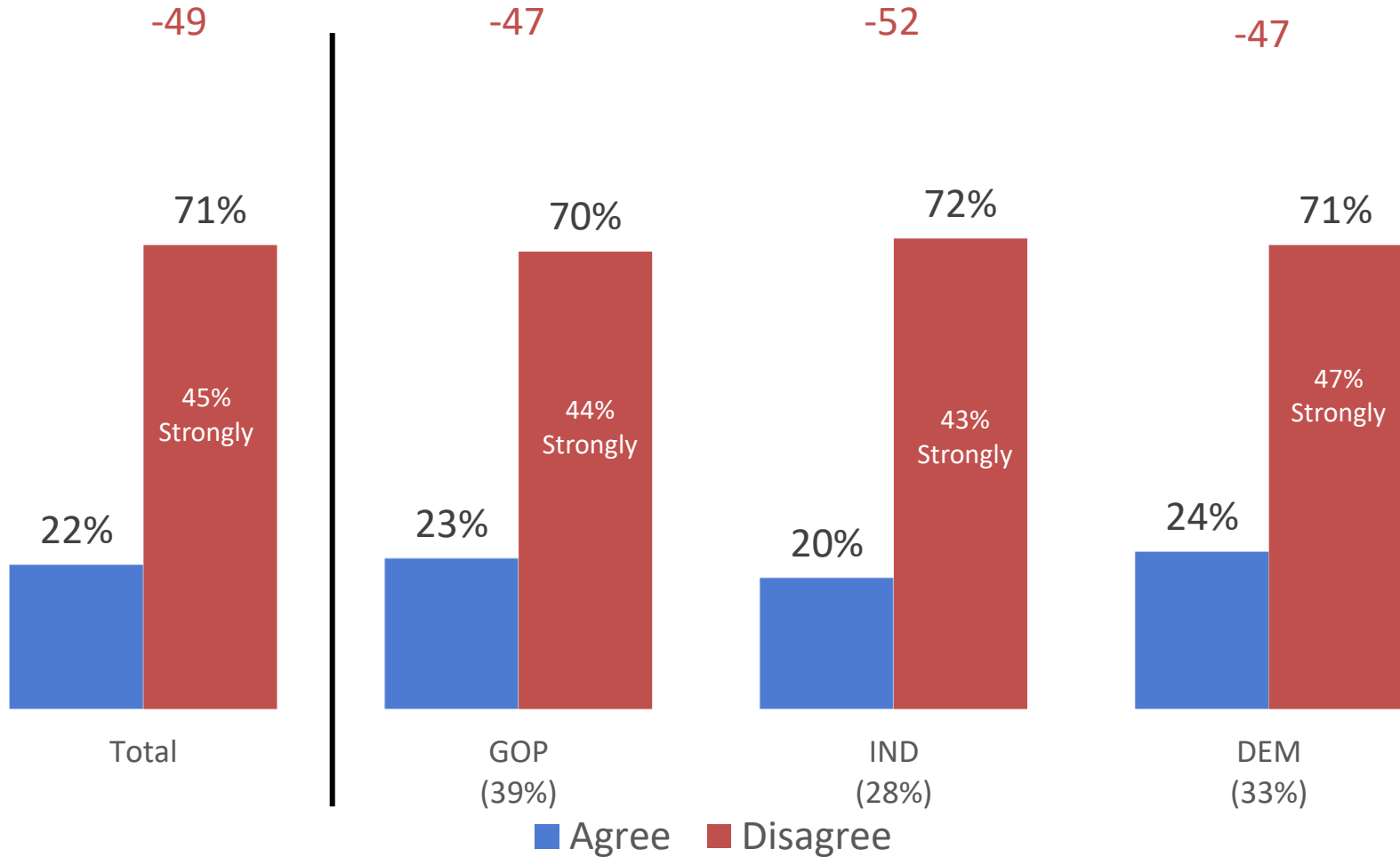




**#7**

***Ohio drivers believe the law is needed.***

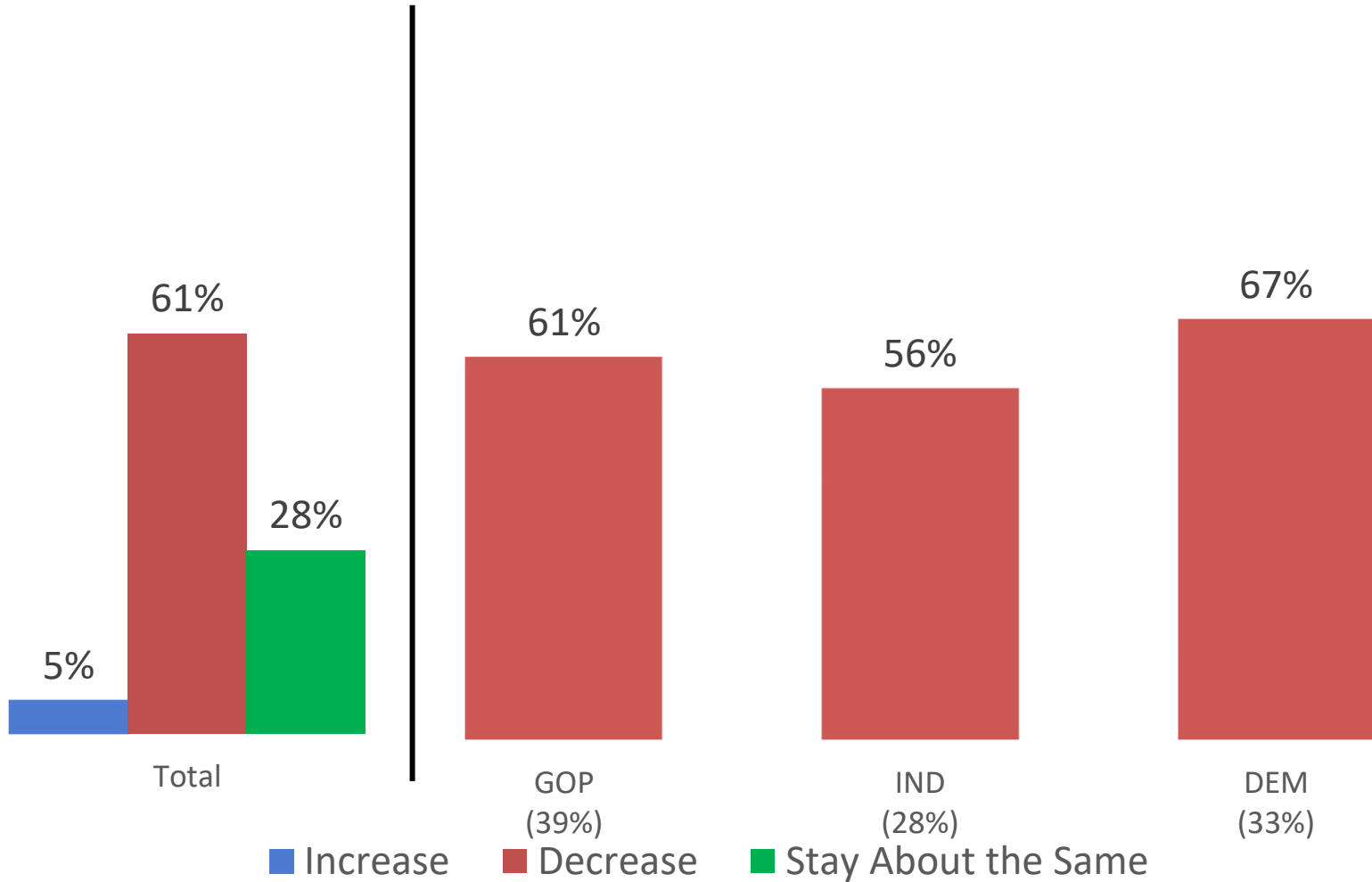
Fully 71% of drivers reject the notion that this law is not needed.



**#8**

***Ohio drivers believe the new law will  
be effective.***

More than 60% of Ohio drivers believe that if this new “hands-free” law was passed and enforced, the number of distracted driving accidents would decrease.



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