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# Marin County Transportation Sales Tax Voter Survey

March 2004

# Research Objectives

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- Overall
  - Conduct a balanced and objective poll of Marin County voters to ascertain the support for a one-half cent sales tax increase to fund local transit and transportation programs
- Measure the relative importance of transportation-related issues in comparison to other issues facing the community
- Examine the impact of various features of the sales tax on voter behavior
  - Programs to be funded
  - Arguments for and against
  - Funding allocation
  - Other local and statewide measures

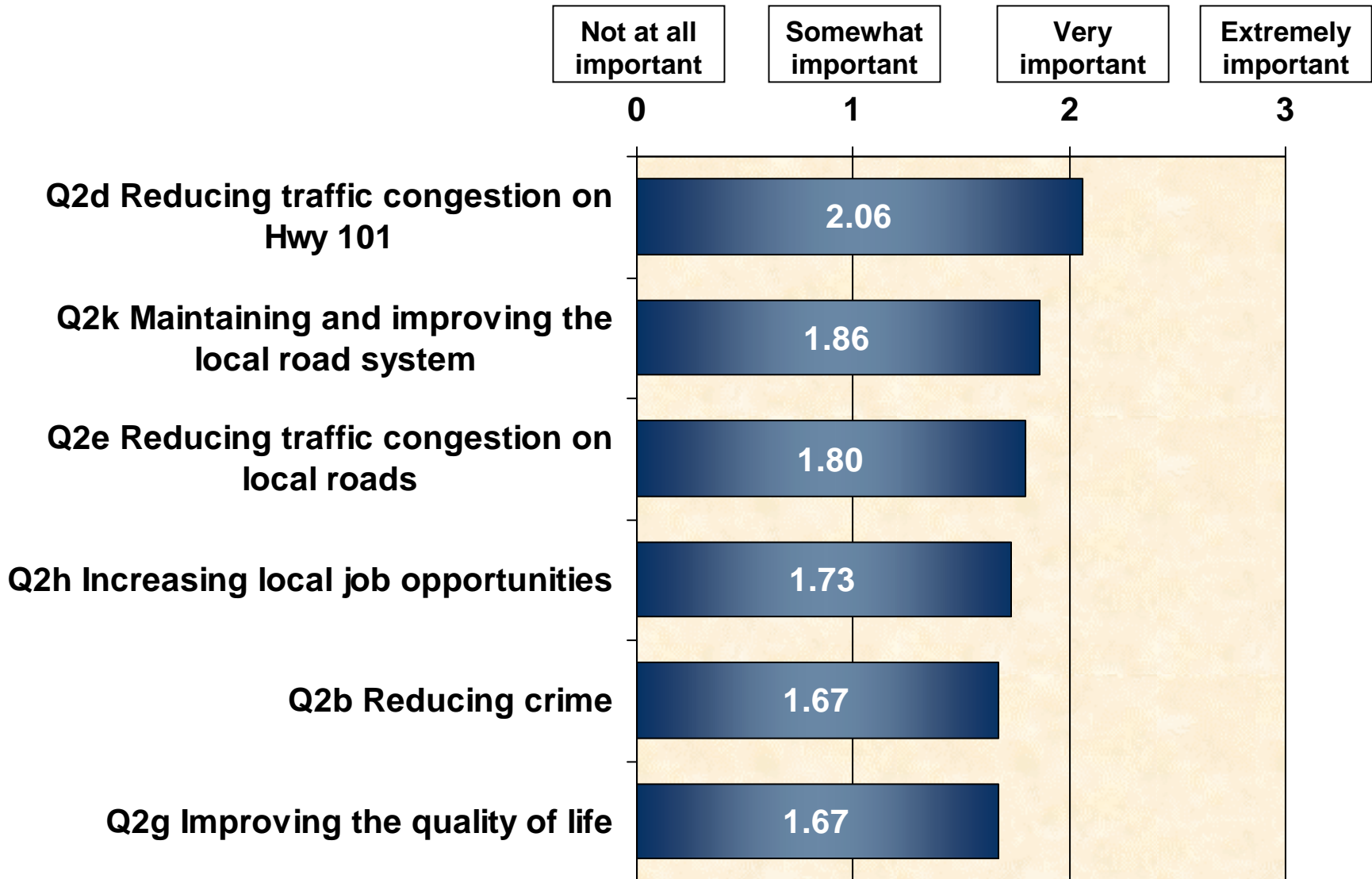
# Methodology

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- **Technique** Telephone Interviewing
- **Interview Length** 18 Minutes
- **Universe** 111,099 likely November 2004 voters in Marin County
- **Field Dates** March 13 to 20, 2004
- **Sample Size** n = 1000
- **Margin of Error** +/- 3.09%

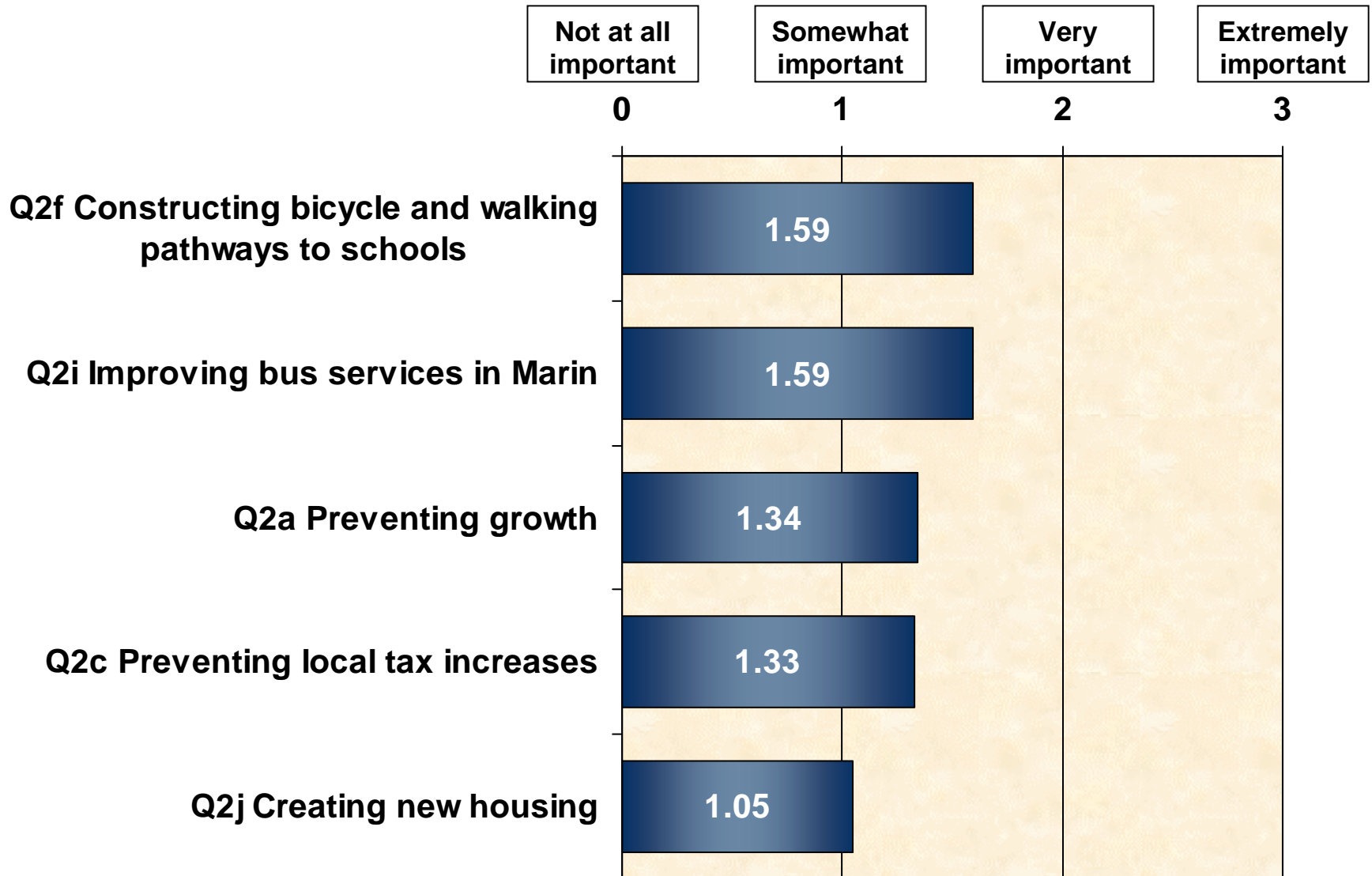
# Importance of Community Issues I

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# Importance of Community Issues II

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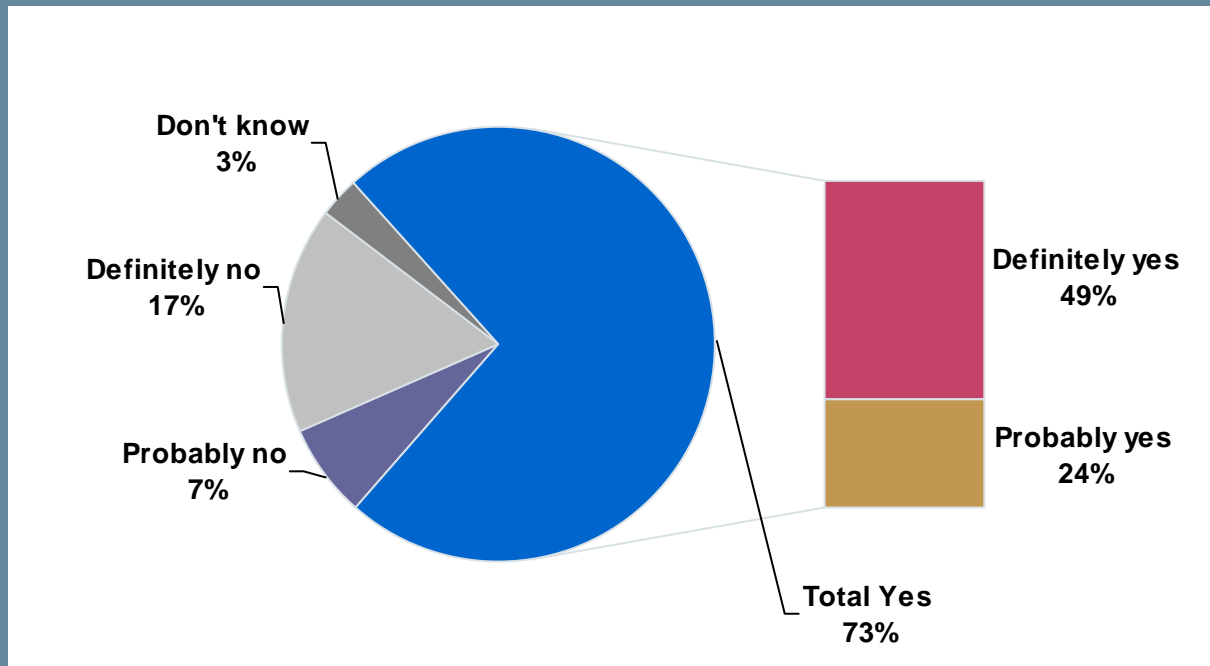
# First Ballot Test

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In order to relieve local traffic congestion and improve and maintain local transportation options, shall Marin County be authorized to impose a one-half cent sales tax increase to:

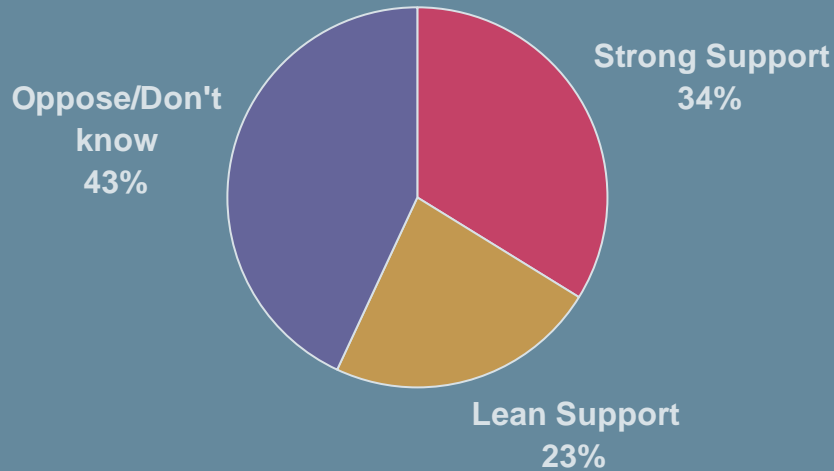
- ☐ • improve bus service within Marin;
- ☐ • complete the Highway 101 carpool lane through San Rafael;
- ☐ • improve key roads, sidewalks and bike lanes; and,
- ☐ • reduce traffic congestion near schools.

If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure?

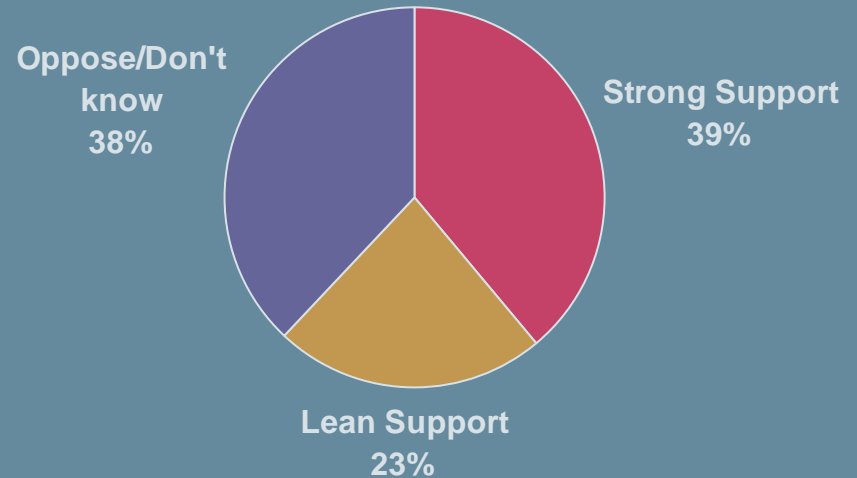


# First Ballot Test Comparison with Previous Polls

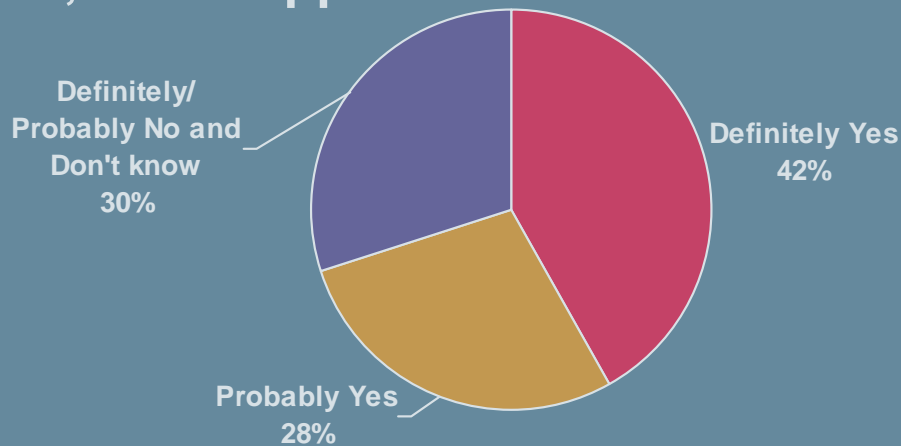
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**April 2000; 57% Support**



**December 2001; 62% Support**



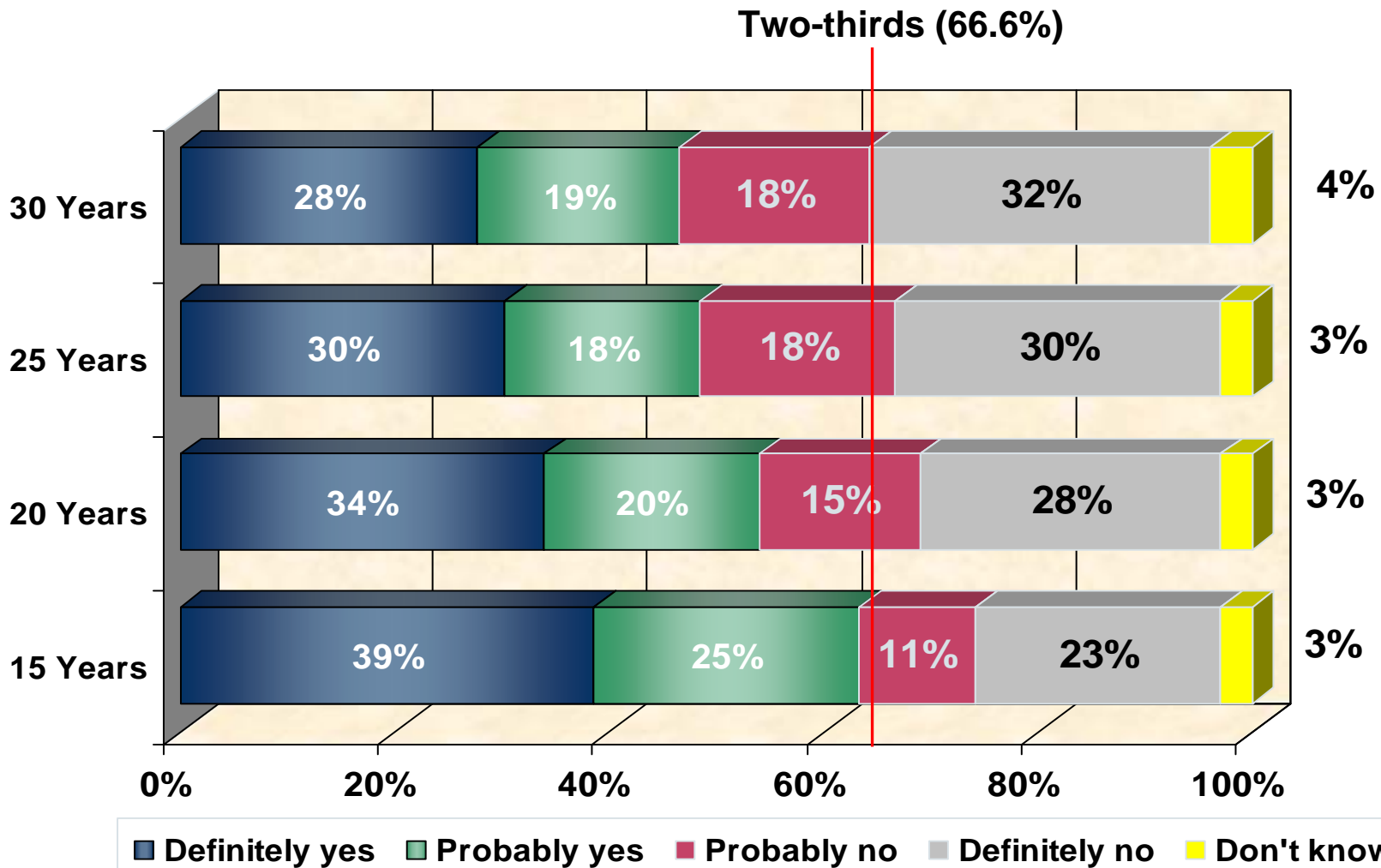
**September 2003; 70% Yes**

\* April 2000 and December 2001 polls conducted by SRI for the Marin County CMA.

\* September 2003 poll conducted by Godbe Research for MTC.

# Tax Duration Threshold

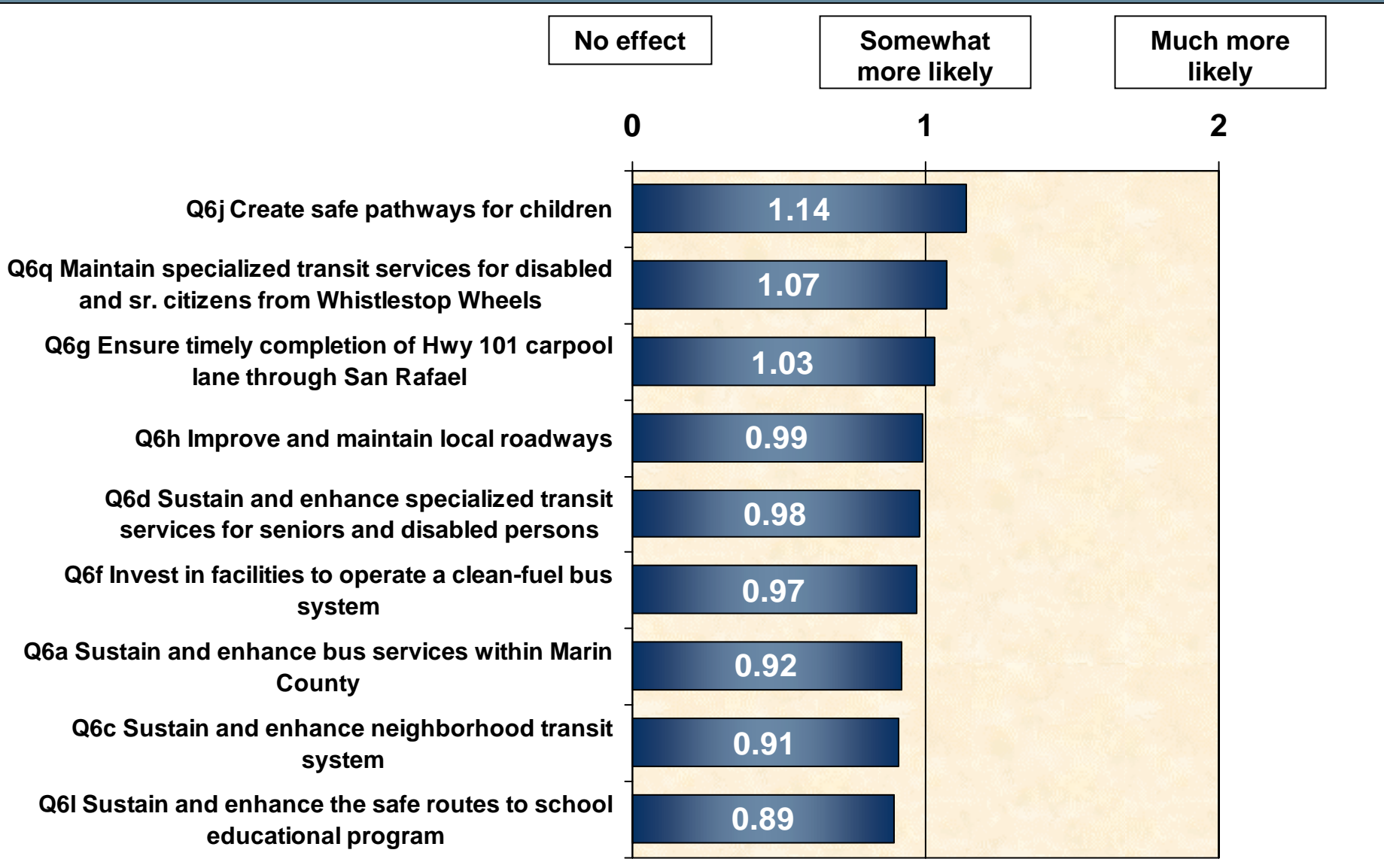
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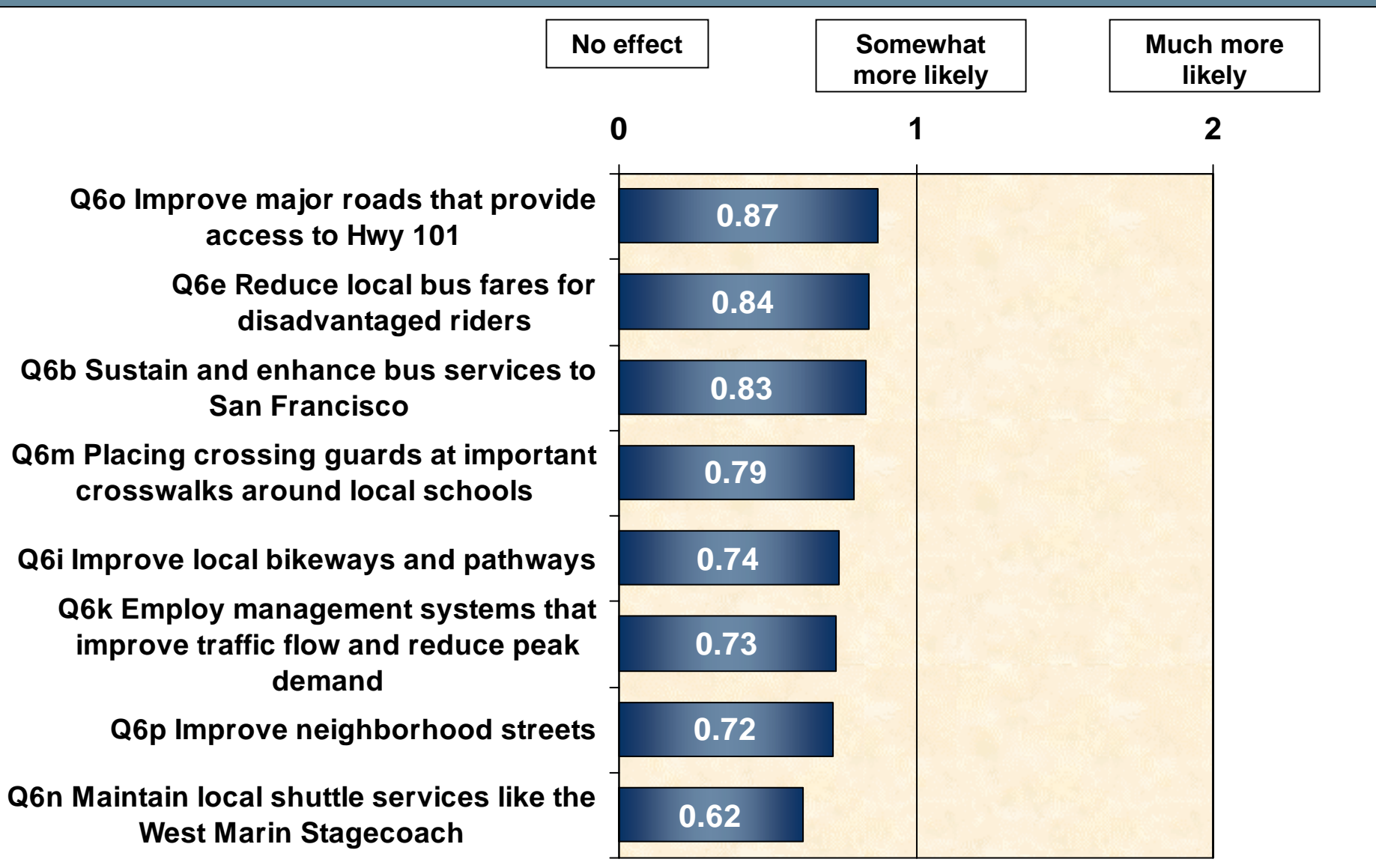
# Features of the Measure I

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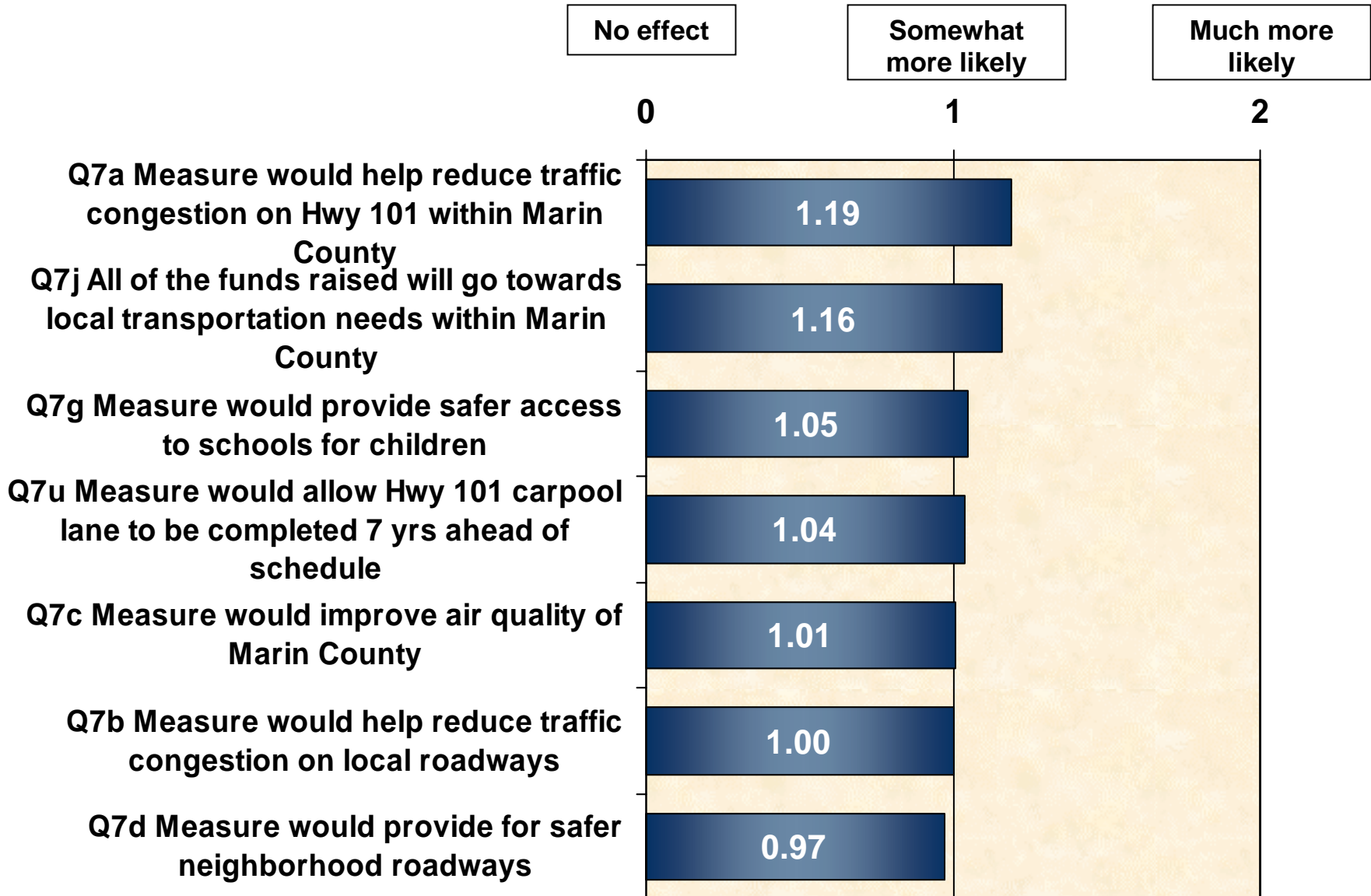
# Features of the Measure II

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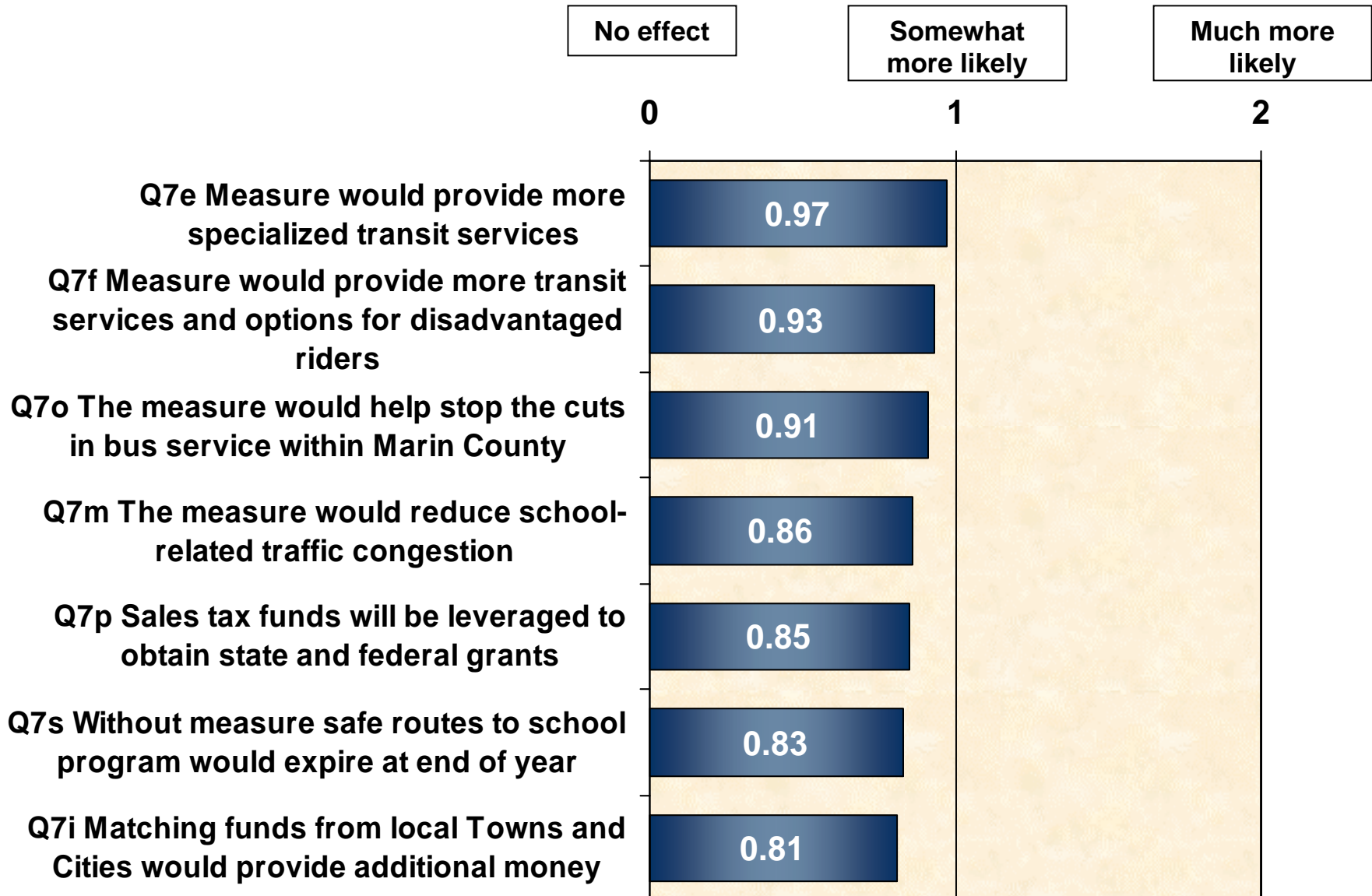
# Arguments for the Measure I

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# Arguments for the Measure II

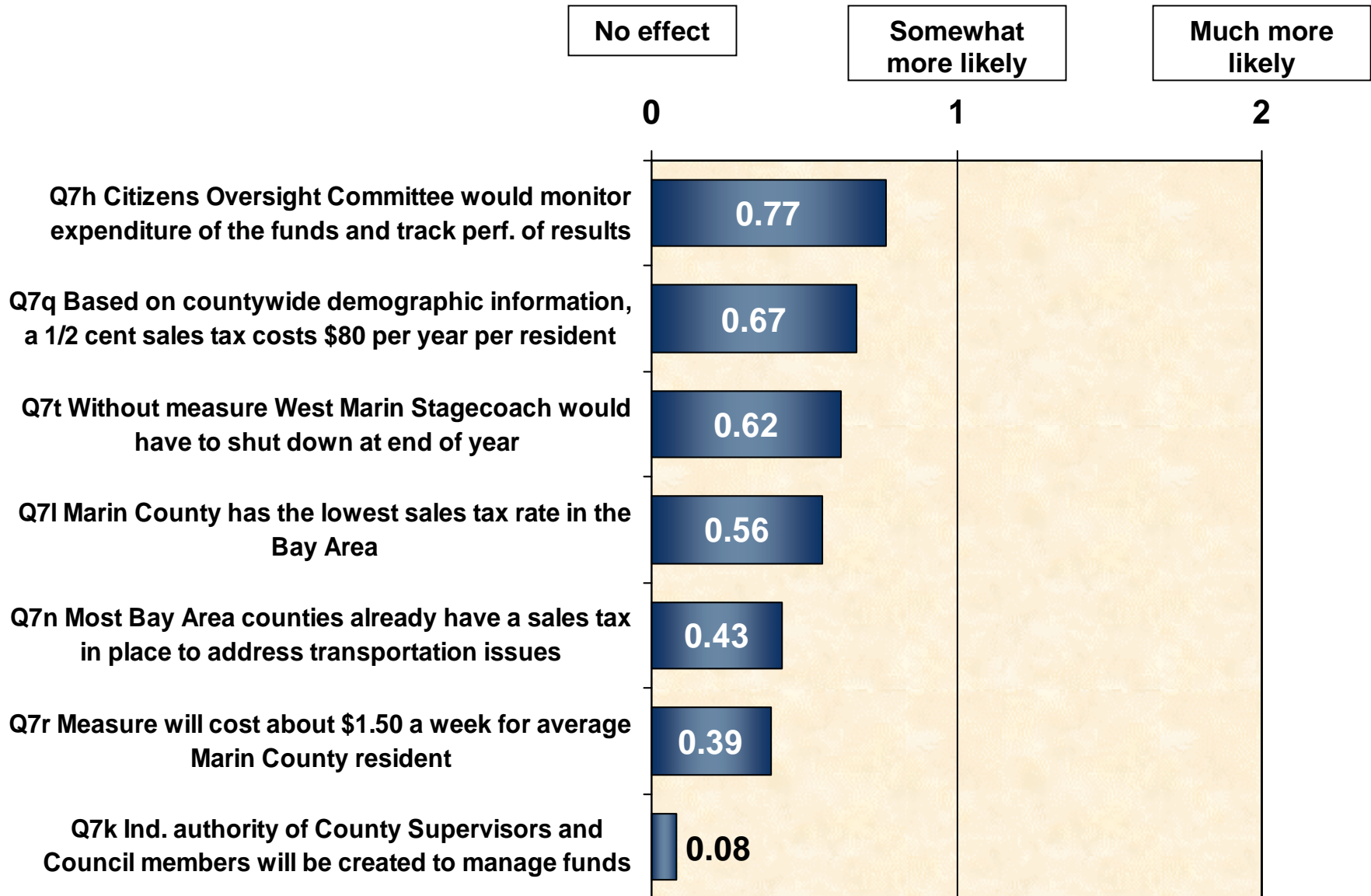
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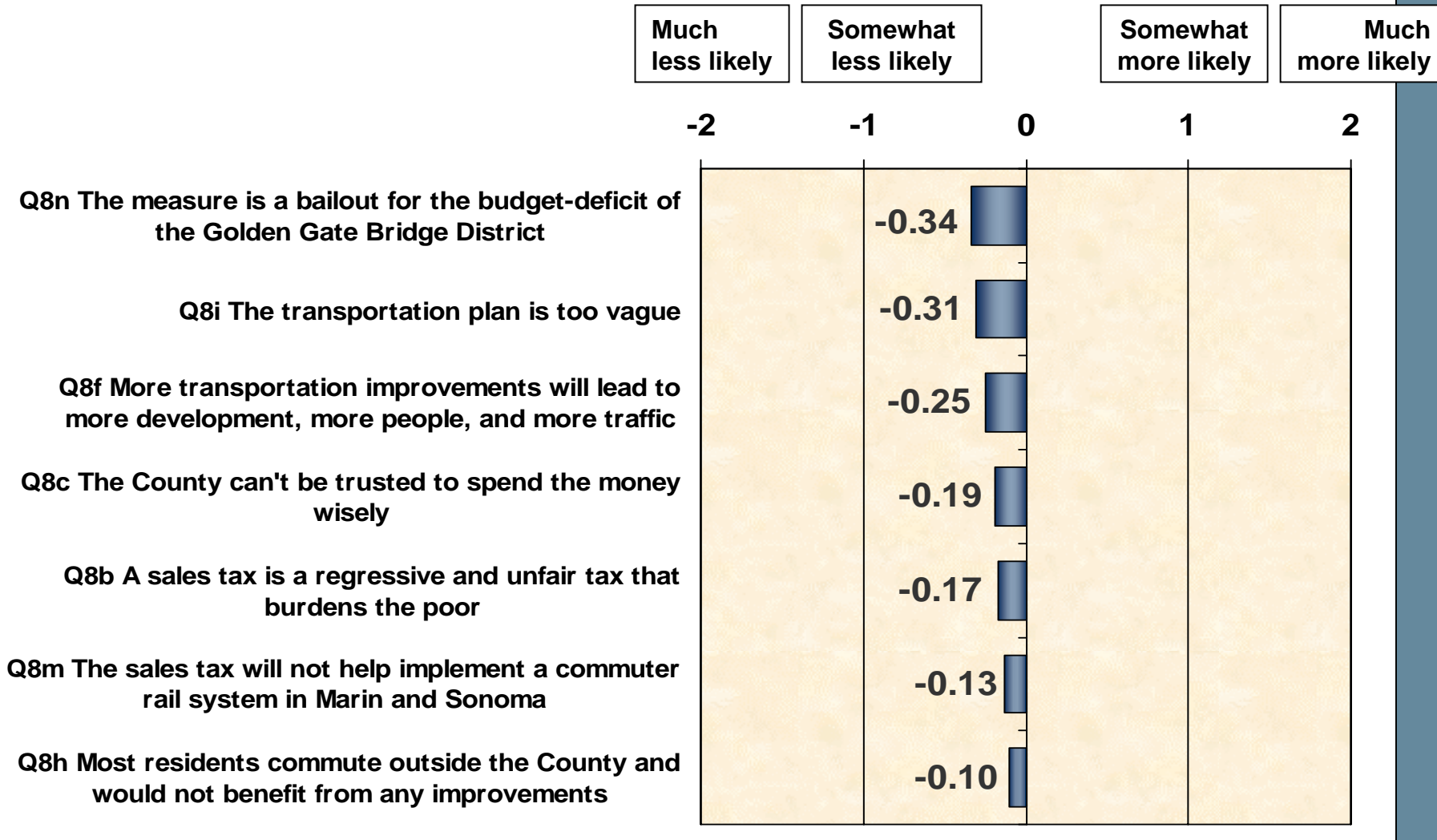
# Arguments for the Measure III

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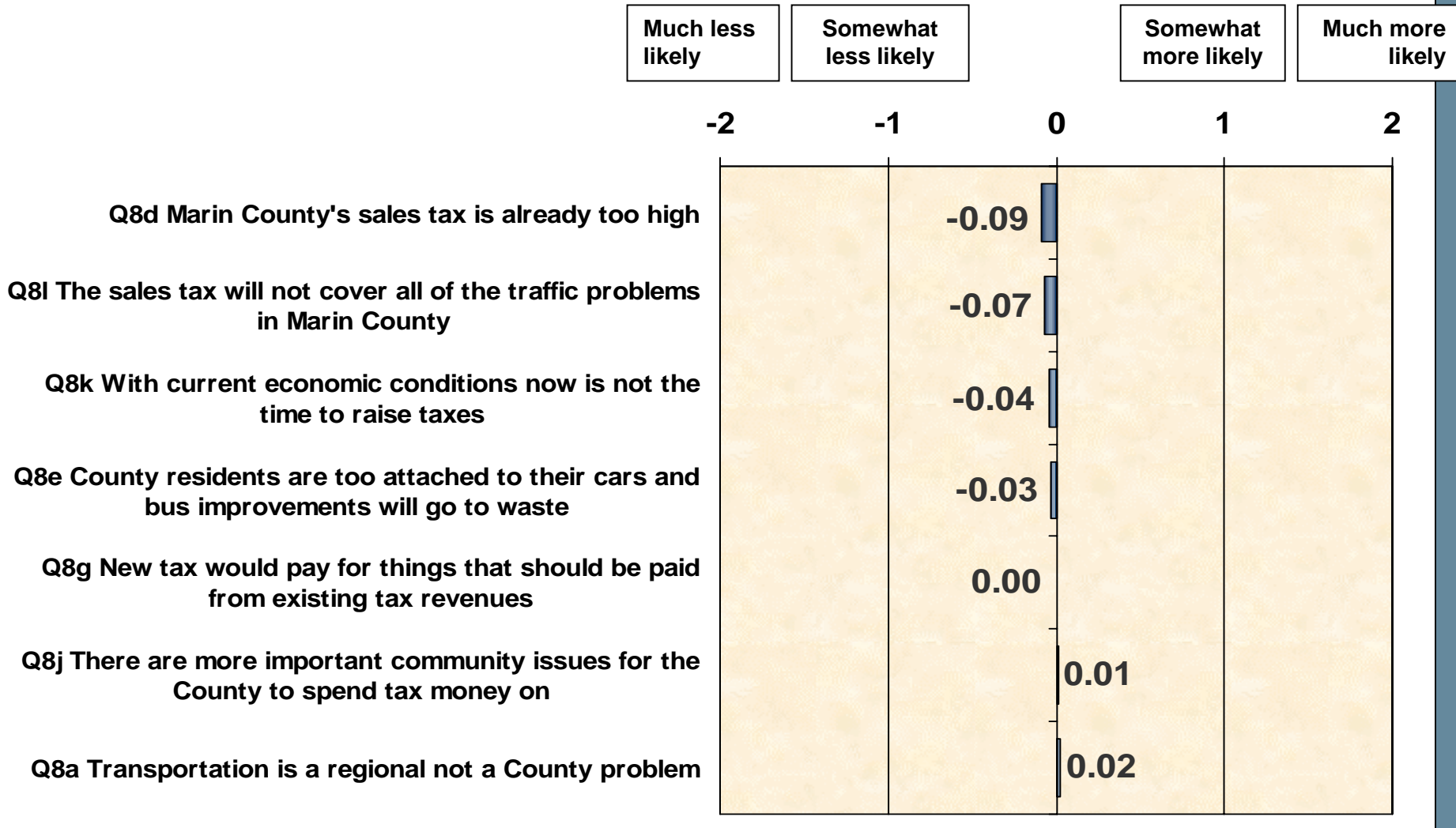
# Arguments against the Measure I

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# Arguments against the Measure II

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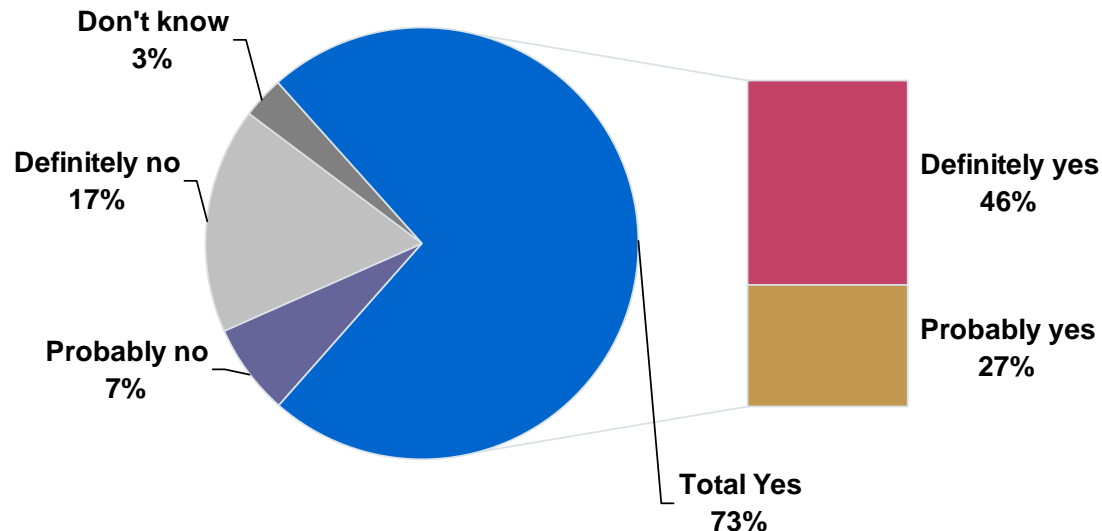
# Second Ballot Test

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In order to relieve local traffic congestion and improve and maintain local transportation options, shall Marin County be authorized to impose a one-half cent sales tax increase to:

- ☐ • improve bus service within Marin;
- ☐ • complete the Highway 101 carpool lane through San Rafael;
- ☐ • improve key roads, sidewalks and bike lanes; and,
- ☐ • reduce traffic congestion near schools.

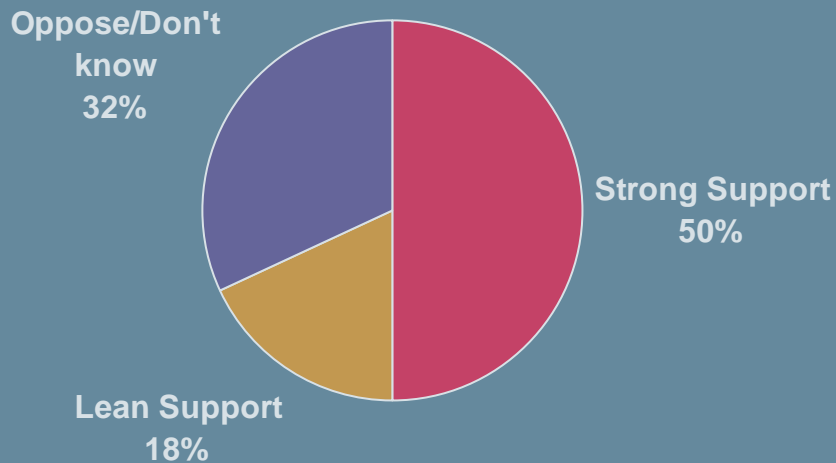
If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure?



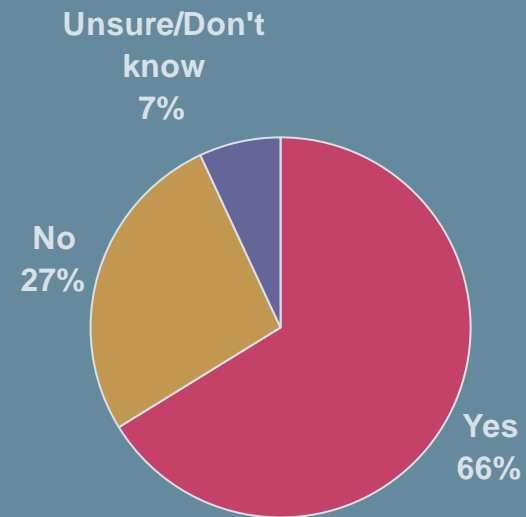


# Second Ballot Test Comparison with Previous Polls

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**April 2000; 68% Support**

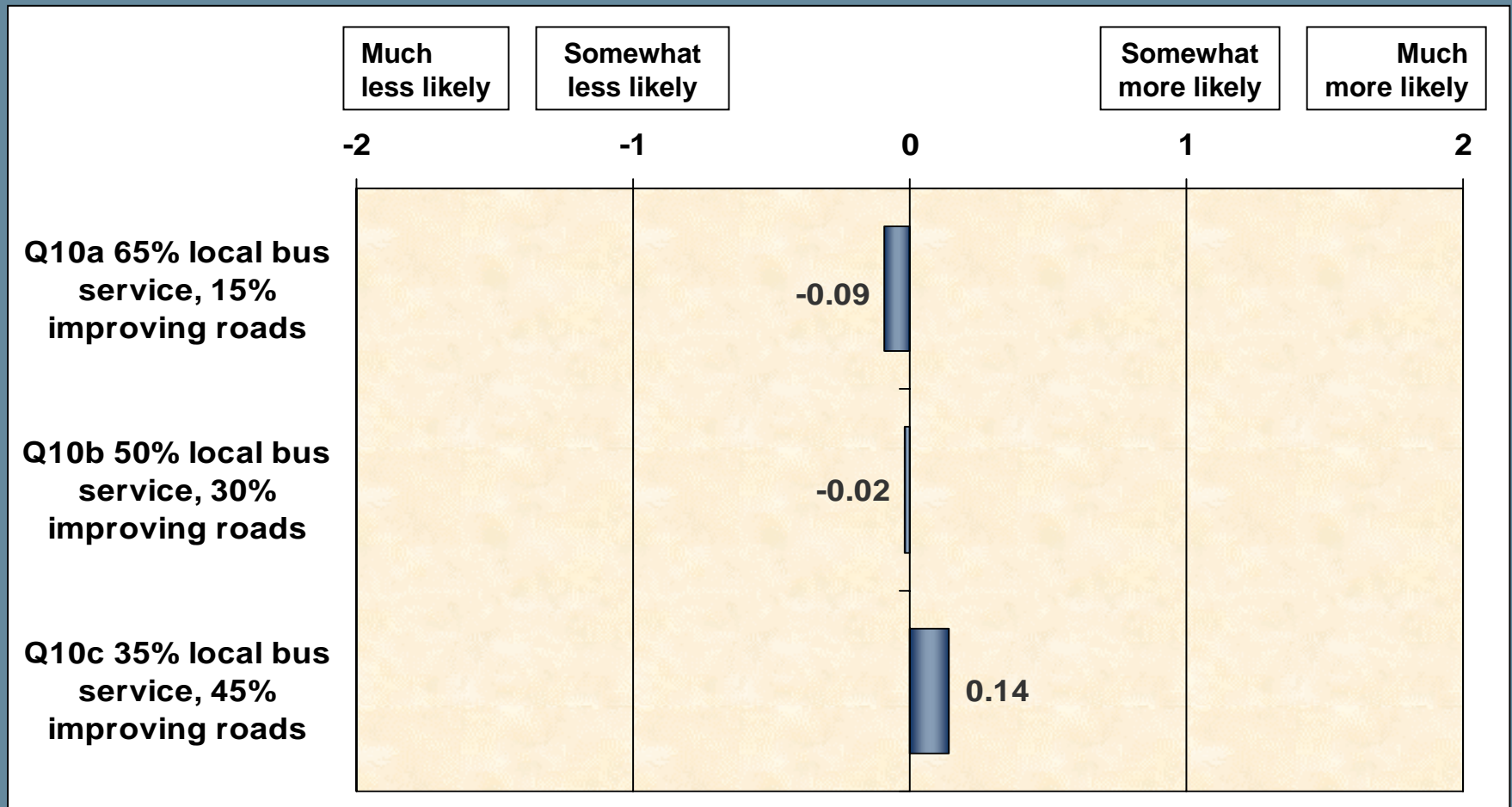


**December 2001; 66% Yes**

\* April 2000 and December 2001 polls conducted by SRI for the Marin County CMA.

# Impact of Various Allocations

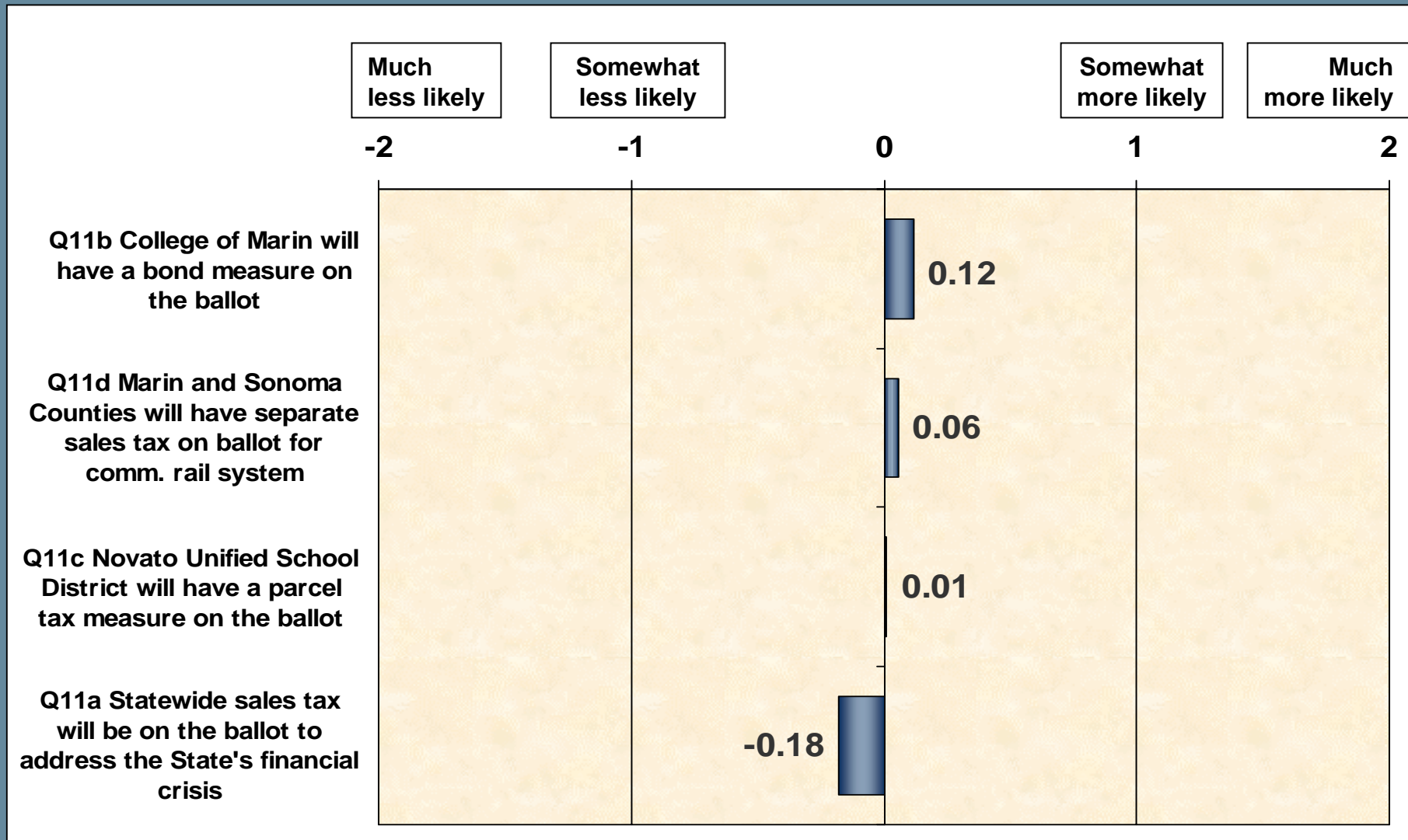
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\* Sample was split three ways and questions 10a, 10b, and 10c were rotated between respondents; each respondent heard a single allocation.

# Impact of Other Measures

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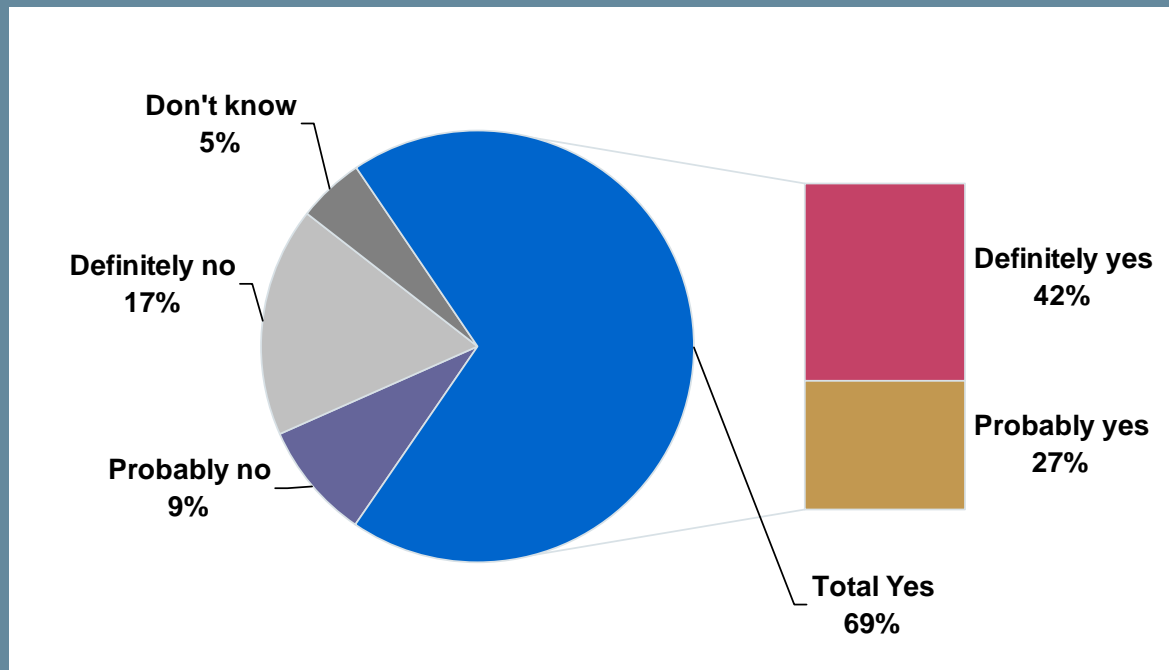
# Third Ballot Test

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- ☐ • reduce traffic congestion near schools.

If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure?



# Third Ballot Test by Supervisory District

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		Supervisory District				
	Overall	1	2	3	4	5
Base	1000	218	224	206	166	186
Yes	689 68.9%	153 70.2%	167 74.6%	136 66.0%	114 68.7%	119 64.0%
No	265 26.5%	56 25.7%	50 22.3%	54 26.2%	44 26.5%	61 32.8%
DK/NA	46 4.6%	9 4.1%	7 3.1%	16 7.8%	8 4.8%	6 3.2%

# Third Ballot Test by Age

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		Age				
	Overall	18 to 29	30 to 39	40 to 49	50 to 64	65 or older
Base	1000	48	89	209	396	251
Yes	689 68.9%	36 75.0%	55 61.8%	160 76.6%	259 65.4%	175 69.7%
No	265 26.5%	9 18.8%	28 31.5%	42 20.1%	118 29.8%	65 25.9%
DK/NA	46 4.6%	3 6.3%	6 6.7%	7 3.3%	19 4.8%	11 4.4%

# Conclusions and Recommendations I

- Research results show more than two-thirds support for this sales tax measure
  - When asked about the importance of selected community issues, Marin County voters rate transportation related issues as more important than preventing local tax increases
  - All three ballot tests are above the two-thirds threshold
  - A good number of features and benefits test strongly while arguments against the measure have little impact on voting behavior
- While the tax duration threshold results show 15 years as the optimal duration, there is abundant support to suggest that an educational campaign could pass a measure with a 20 year duration
- Measure should be placed on the November 2004 ballot

# Conclusions and Recommendations II

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- **Features important to Marin County voters include:**
  - **Transit**
    - Maintaining specialized transit services for disabled and senior citizens from Whistlestop wheels
    - Sustaining and enhancing specialized transit services for seniors and the disabled
    - Investing in facilities to operate a clean-fuel bus system
    - Sustaining and enhancing bus services within Marin County
  - **Highway 101**
    - Ensuring the timely completion of the Hwy 101 carpool lane through San Rafael
  - **School-related**
    - Creating safe pathways for children walking and biking to school
    - Sustaining and enhancing the safe routes to school educational campaign
  - **Roadways**
    - Improving and maintaining local roadways
    - Improving major roads that provide access to Highway 101



# Conclusions and Recommendations III

- **Benefits important to Marin County voters include:**
  - Reducing traffic congestion on Hwy 101 in Marin
  - Funds going towards local transportation needs of Marin County
  - Providing safer access to schools for our children
  - Improving the air quality of Marin County
- **Few strong arguments against surface in the survey results**
  - Top two have high “no effect” percentages
    - The measure is a bailout for the budget deficit of the Golden Gate Bridge District (No effect: 45%)
    - The transportation plan is too vague (No effect: 45%)
- **Although results of the allocation questions show a slight preference for improving roads over bus services, there is little indication that different allocations impact voter support**
  - The results do not warrant major changes to current allocation amounts
- **Other local and statewide measures do not decrease support for this measure dramatically**