Report

Climate Change Politics

Greater Toronto Area: September 2020

We know Canadians

DATE 2020-09-04

METHODOLOGY

Context and Objectives

Context

Clean Prosperity works at federal and provincial level to find climate change solutions that are innovative, support economic growth and generate new economic opportunity. Through this project, Clean Prosperity team wants to understand the opinion of Greater Toronto Area residents on climate change issues, carbon tax and policies to address carbon pollution.

Objectives

Through this research, Clean prosperity team wants to understand:

- The importance of climate change for GTA '905' area voters
- Impact of Carbon tax as an issue in deciding Federal election ballot
- Impressions of the Ontario provincial government's position toward the federal carbon tax

Methodology

Study Population
- Greater Toronto Area (Area '905') resident, aged 18 and older.

Data Collection
- A total of n=1001 online surveys were conducted via Leger's online panel, LEO.
- Interviews were conducted from August 21 to August 27, 2020.

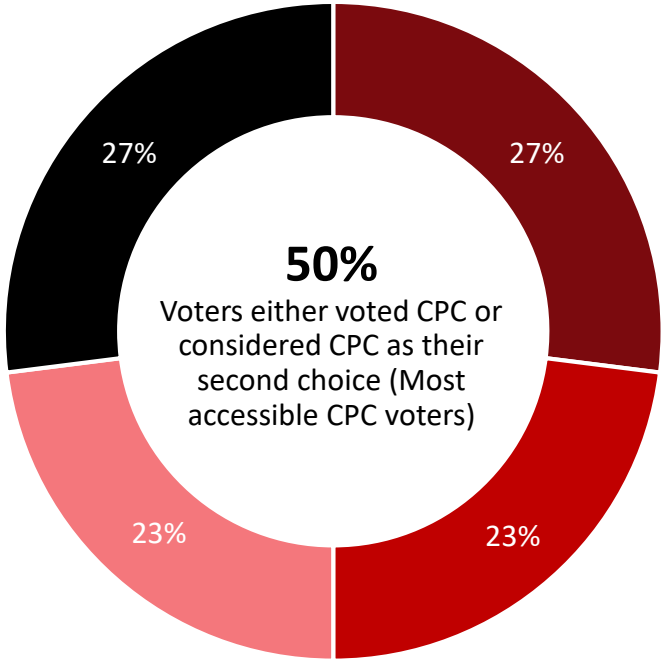
Statistical Analysis
- As a non-probability internet survey, a margin of error is technically not to be reported.
- If the data were collected through a random sample, the margin of error would be Greater Toronto Area residents (n=1001) ±3.1%, 19 times out of 20.
- Quotas were set to ensure survey completions were properly distributed across the EDAs in the region.
- Using data from the 2016 Census, results were weighted according to age, gender and region in order to ensure a representative sample of the population.
- The numbers presented have been rounded to the nearest whole number. However, raw values were used to calculate the sums presented and therefore may not correspond to the manual addition of these numbers.

Detailed Results

CPC Voter Pool

Half of GTA residents consider Conservative Party among their top two choices for Federal elections

Federal CPC Voters



Term	Definition	Proportion
CPC Voters	Voted CPC on 2019 General Election	27%
Most Accessible CPC Voters	CPC 2nd choice/CPC-Liberal Switcher	23%
Potential CPC Voters	CPC not excluded as a possible ballot choice	23%
Non-CPC Voters	Other than above (Never vote CPC)	27%

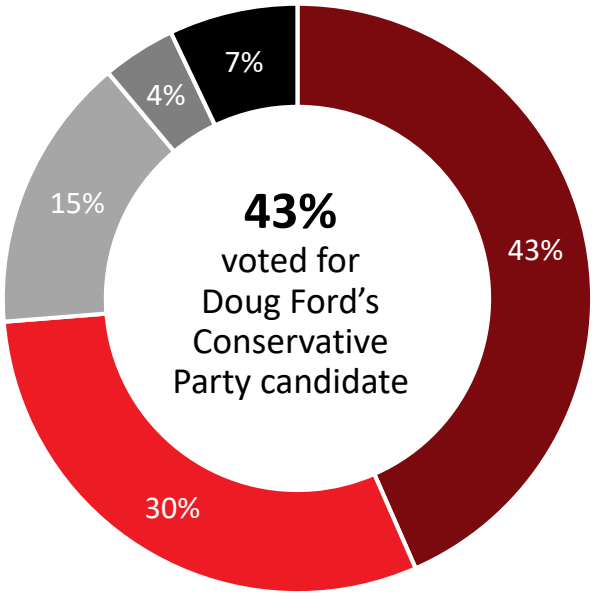
Accessible Voters

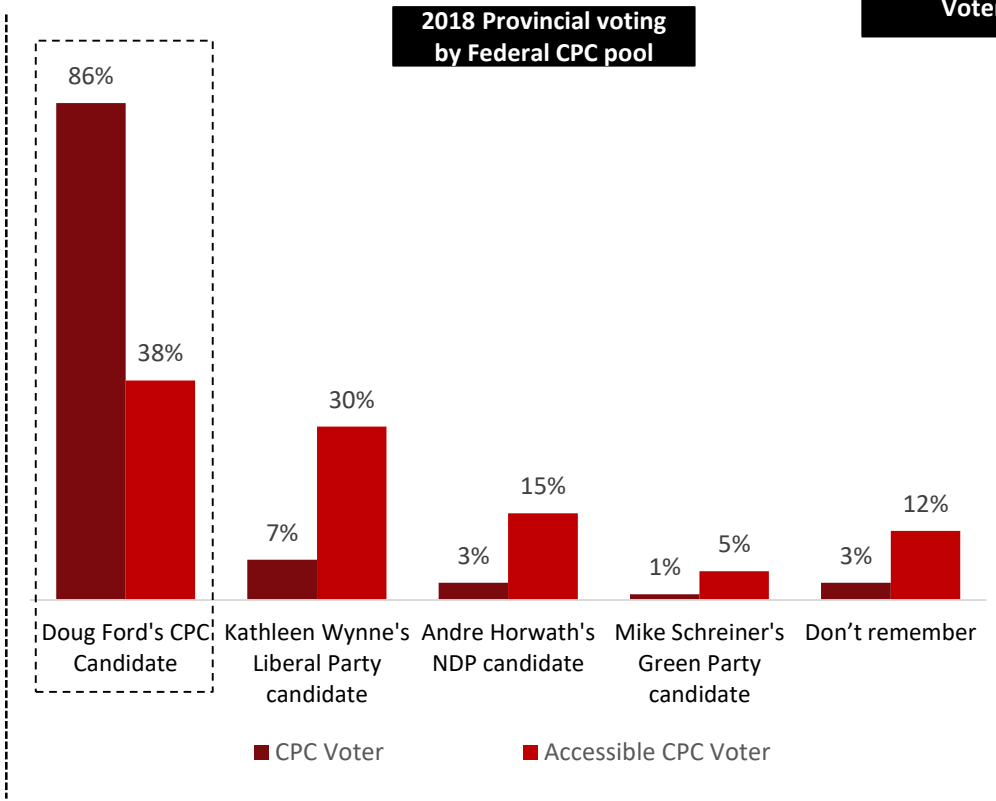
January 2020 the breakdown of voters was:
- CPC voter – 31%
- CPC Accessible – 39%
- Never vote CPC – 31%

Calculated based on Federal election voting questions
Base : Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

Most of federal CPC voters and 38% accessible CPC voters also voted for Doug Ford provinically

Voter pool





CPC Voters calculated based on Federal election voting questions

Q6: Thinking back to the last provincial election held in June 2018, which Provincial Party did you vote for then? (TOTAL WHO VOTE)

Base : Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

Detailed Results

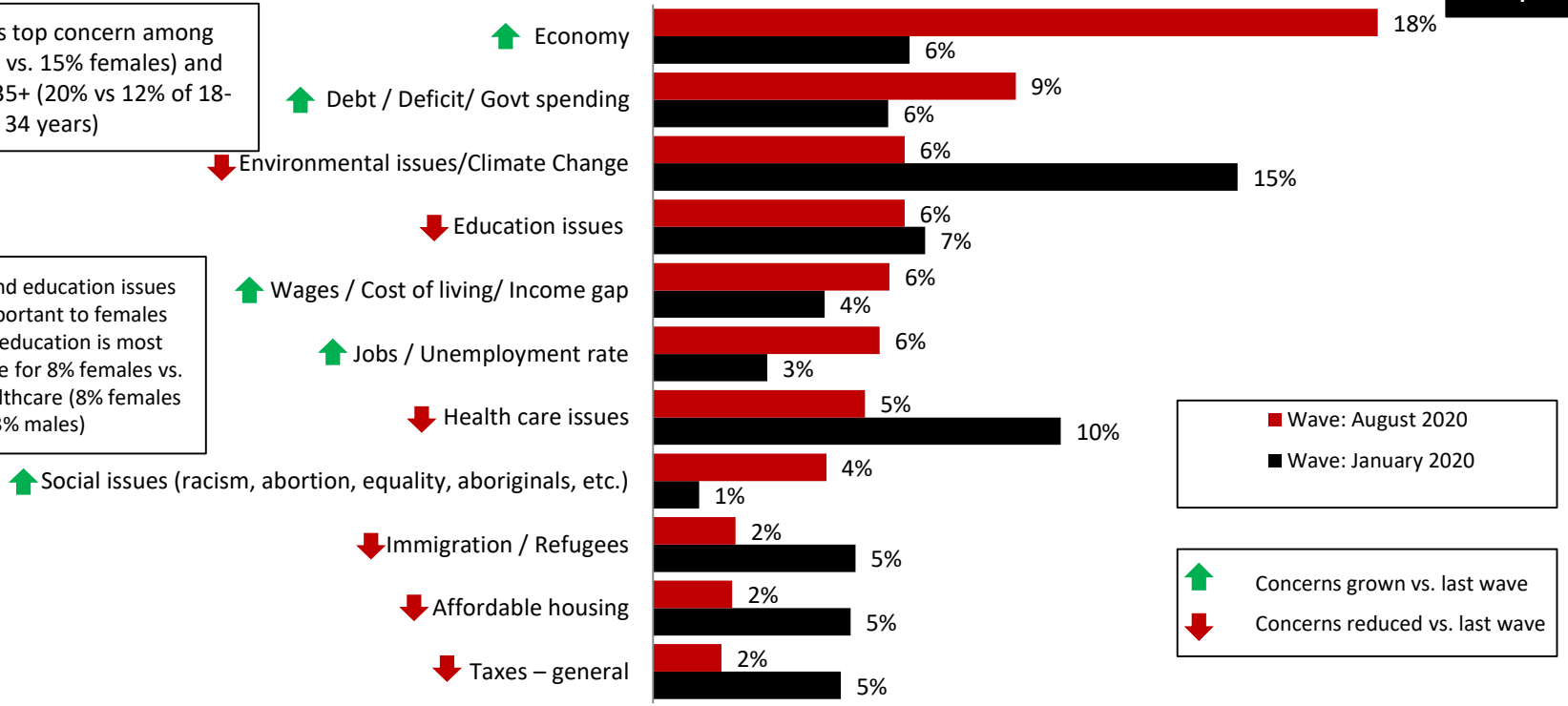
COVID-19 Impact: Shift in priority issues (Un-aided)

Concerns about economy and debt have risen after pandemic, Climate change is top concern of 6% GTA residents currently

Top concerns

Economy is top concern among Males (22% vs. 15% females) and those aged 35+ (20% vs 12% of 18-34 years)

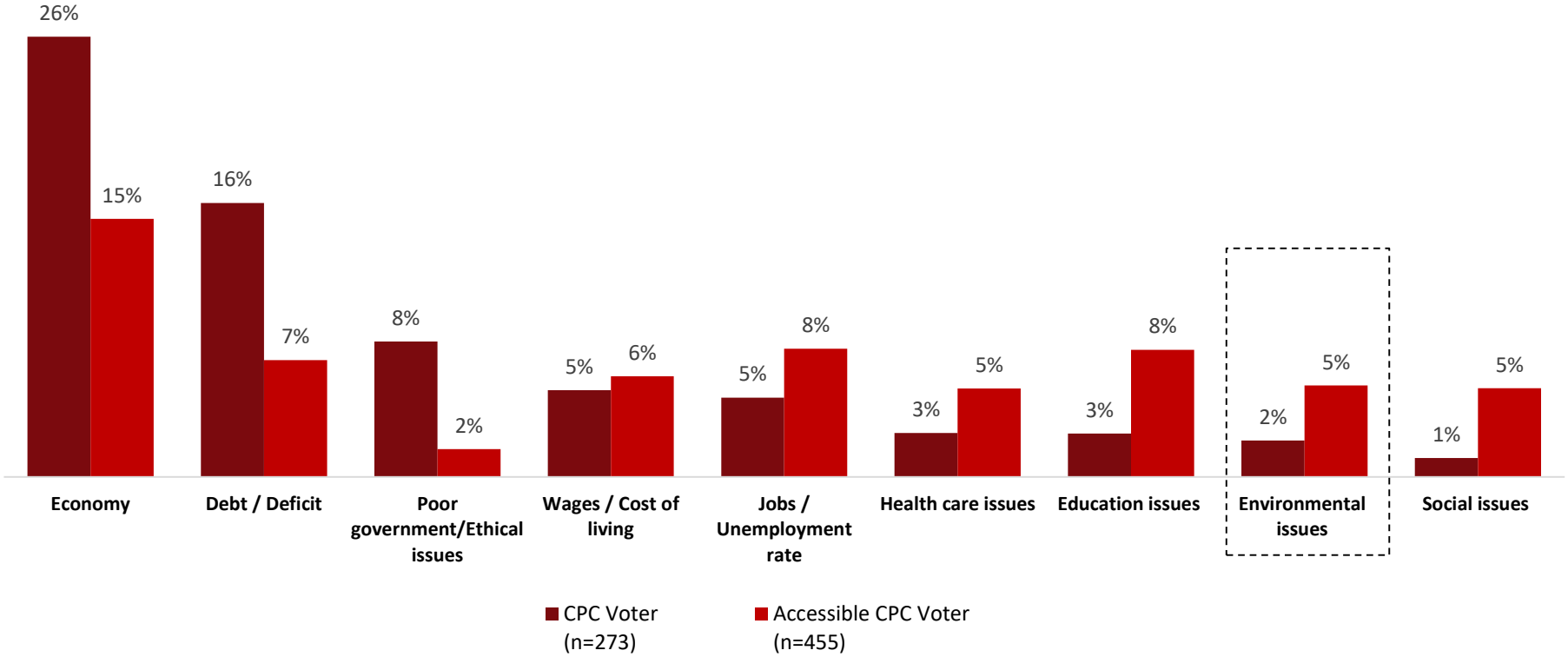
Health care and education issues are more important to females than males (education is most important issue for 8% females vs. 4% males, healthcare (8% females vs. 3% males)



Q1: Besides the pandemic, what in your opinion is the next most important issue you think the government in Ottawa should be dealing with these days? [TOP MENTION- UNAIDED] Base: Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001), (n=3028, January 2020 wave)

Economy related issues have gained importance among both CPC voters and accessible voters

Top concerns



Q1: What in your opinion is the next most important issue you think the government in Ottawa should be dealing with these days? [TOP MENTION]

Base : Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

Detailed Results

Other priority issues (Aided)

On being asked to choose priority issues from a list (aided), about four in ten CPC voters pick economy and jobs as top two choices

Top concerns

Top priority issue

Issues	Total	CPC voter	Accessible CPC voter
Total 'N'	***1001***	*274*	*455*
Growing the economy and creating jobs	**37%**	36%	39%
The level of taxes Canadians pay	**17%**	20%	18%
Reducing the Government deficits and the size of the Federal debt	**15%**	25%	14%
Climate change and its effects in Canada	**13%**	4%	10%
Reforming Canada's immigration system	**6%**	9%	4%
Reducing the cost of prescription drugs with a national pharmacare program	**6%**	2%	6%
Increasing spaces and reducing the cost for childcare	**4%**	1%	4%
None of these	**4%**	2%	5%

Q7: Once the COVID-19 situation is under control and we likely have a vaccine in place, what is the other issue that you think the government in Ottawa should prioritize?

Base : Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

2nd priority issue

Issues	Total	CPC voter	Accessible CPC voter
Total 'N'	***1001***	*274*	*455*
Growing the economy and creating jobs	**23%**	25%	25%
The level of taxes Canadians pay	**21%**	25%	20%
Reducing the Government deficits and the size of the Federal debt	**20%**	25%	20%
Climate change and its effects in Canada	**12%**	4%	12%
Reducing the cost of prescription drugs with a national pharmacare program	**10%**	5%	9%
Reforming Canada's immigration system	**7%**	11%	5%
Increasing spaces and reducing the cost for childcare	**6%**	1%	7%
None of these	**2%**	3%	1%

Q8: Again, what is the other issue that you think the government in Ottawa should prioritize as well?

Base : Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

Priorities of GTA residents have shifted since the pandemic. Economy now front and centre.

Top priority issue: Wave 1 vs Wave2

Issues	Wave 1	Wave 2
Total 'N'	***3028***	***1001***
Growing the economy and creating jobs	**18%**	**37%**
The level of taxes Canadians pay	**22%**	**17%**
Reducing the Government deficits and the size of the Federal debt	**11%**	**15%**
Climate change and its effects in Canada	**23%**	**13%**
Reforming Canada's immigration system	**9%**	**6%**
Reducing the cost of prescription drugs with a national pharmacare program	**8%**	**6%**
Increasing spaces and reducing the cost for childcare	**4%**	**4%**
None of these	**5%**	**4%**

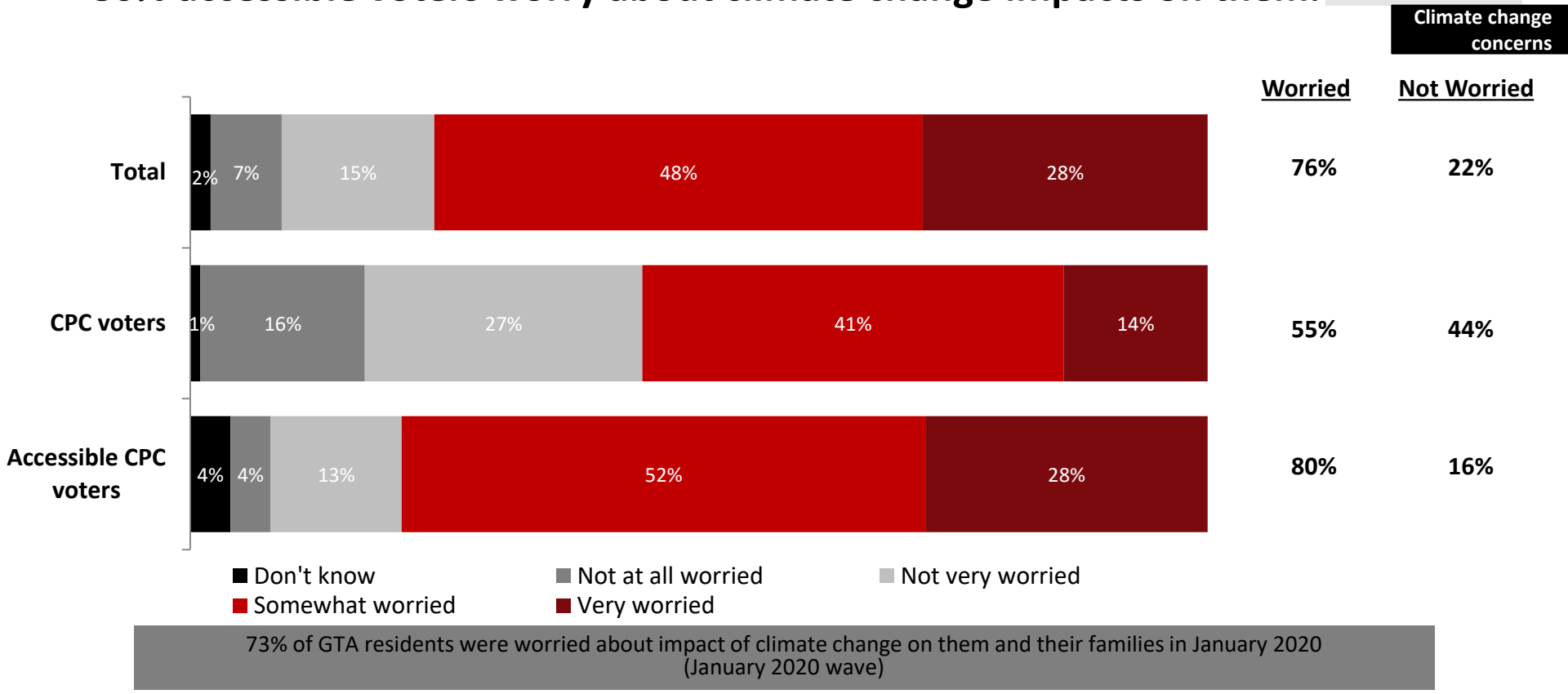
Q7: Once the COVID-19 situation is under control and we likely have a vaccine in place, what is the other issue that you think the government in Ottawa should prioritize?

Base : Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

Detailed Results

Climate change issues

However, climate change continues to worry 76% of GTA residents. 80% accessible voters worry about climate change impacts on them.



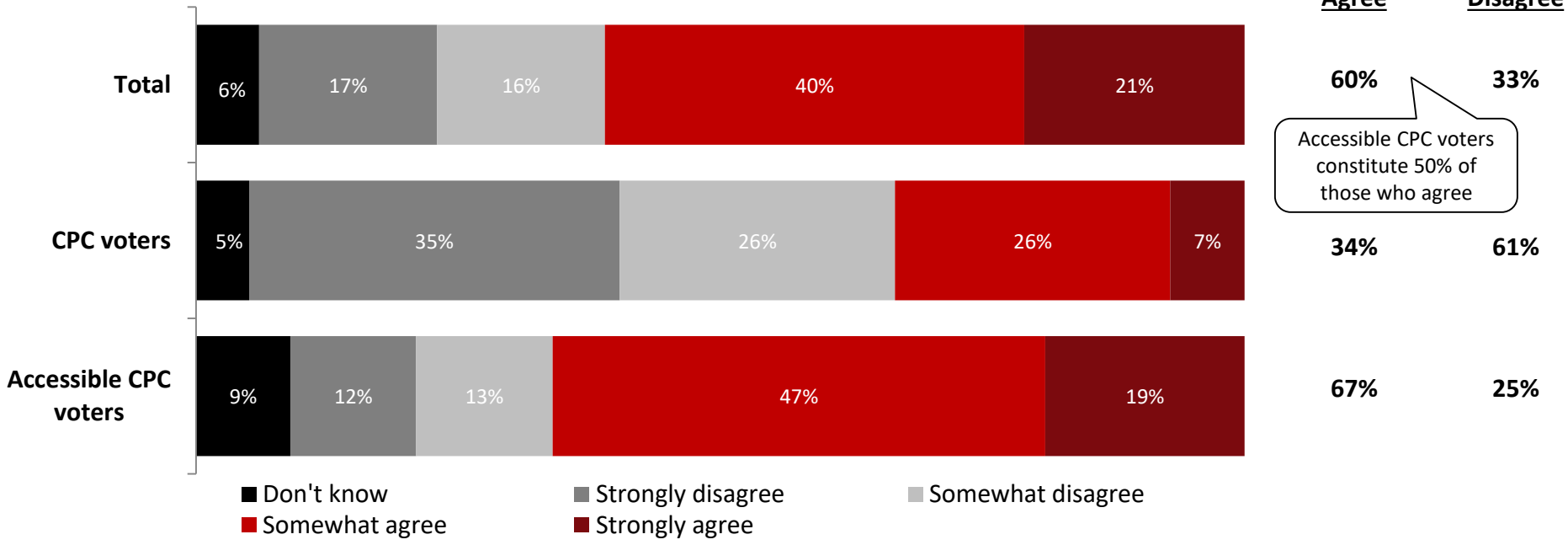
73% of GTA residents were worried about impact of climate change on them and their families in January 2020 (January 2020 wave)

Q9: When you hear news and discussion about climate change how worried are you about how this will impact you and your family?
Base : Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

Almost 60% choose federal party based on party's strong climate change plans, half of these are conservative Party accessible voters

Agree/Disagree

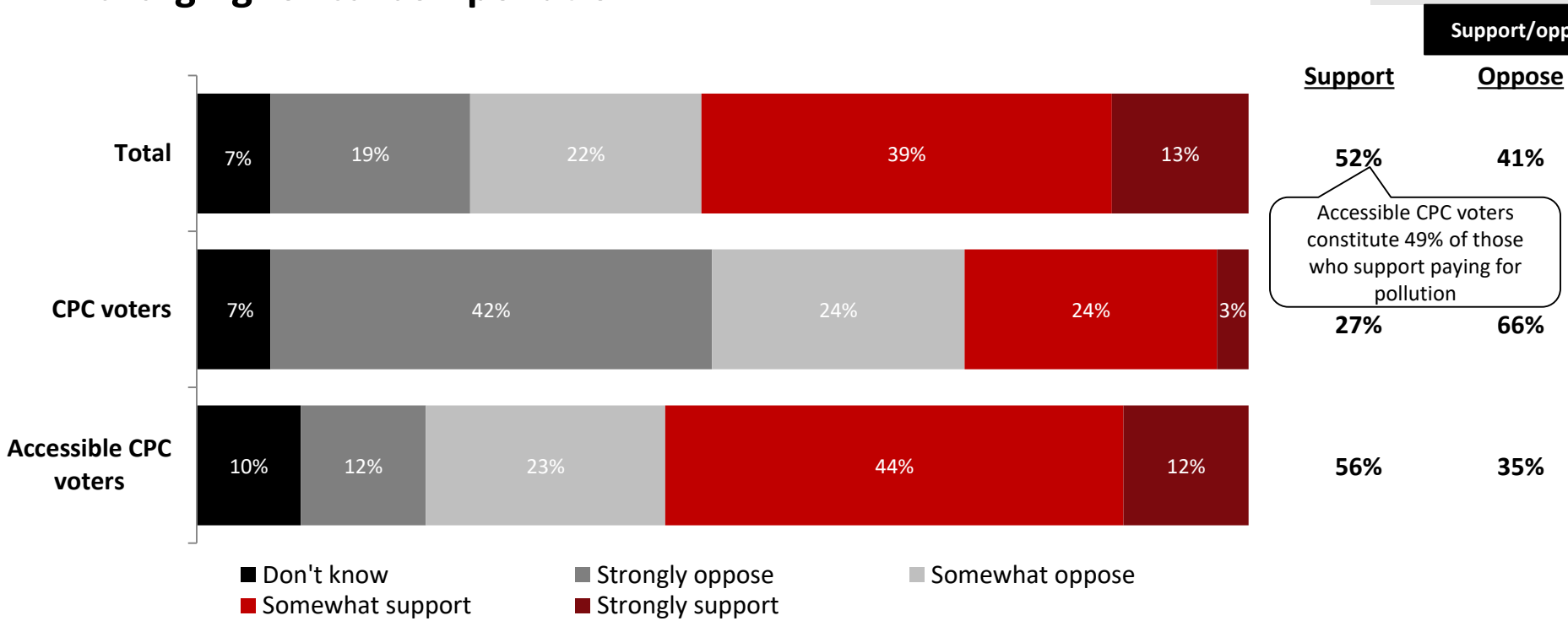
Agree or disagree: *I cannot vote for a federal political party unless they have a strong plan for addressing climate change.*



61% of GTA residents said they were worried about impact of climate change on them and their families in January 2020

Q10: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: *I cannot vote for a federal political party unless they have a strong plan for addressing climate change.* Base: Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

Half of Area 905 residents, especially accessible CPC voters, support charging for carbon pollution



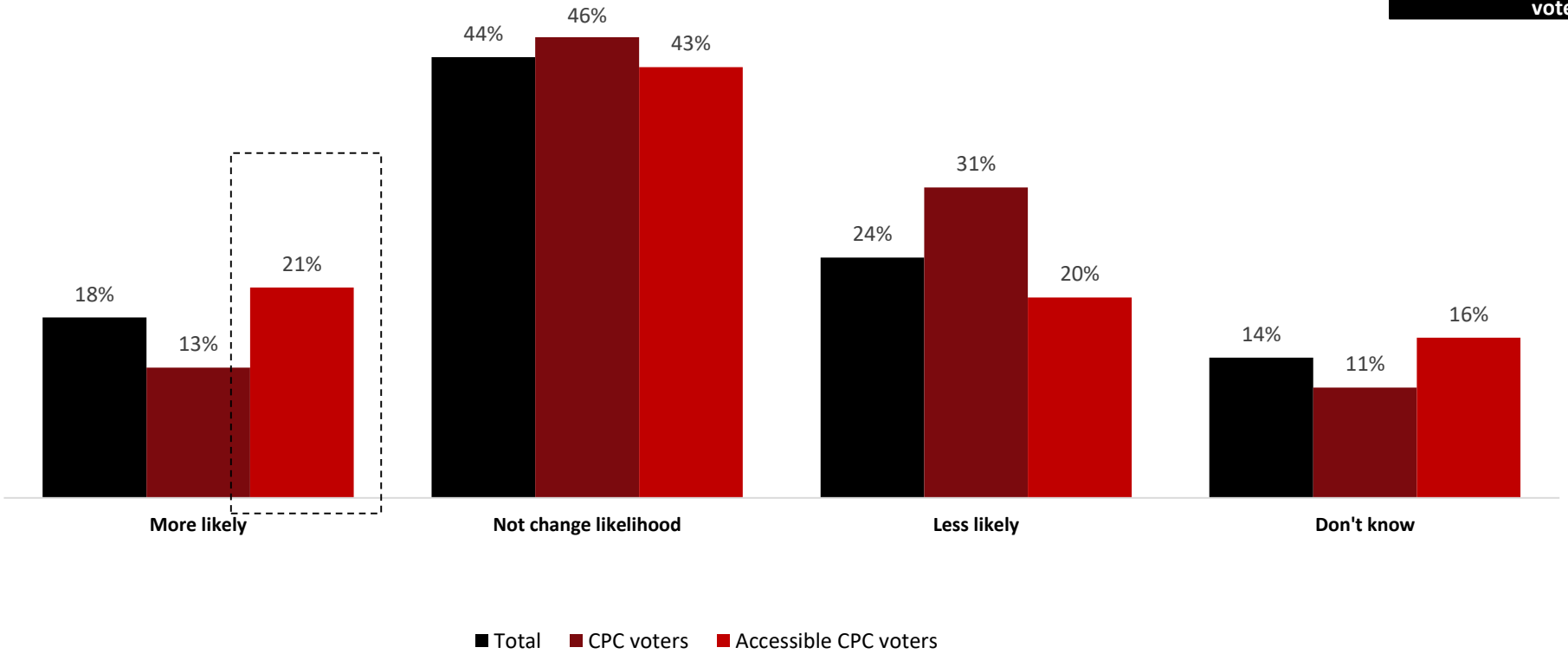
Information on screen: A common approach to address climate change is to charge for carbon pollution, which creates a financial incentive to generate less carbon pollution. Under this policy, people would pay more for activities that create pollution. For example, they would pay more per litre at the gas station, and pay more per unit of natural gas used for home heating. Companies that produce carbon pollution would also pay more.

Q13A: Do you support or oppose this type of policy as a way to address climate change?

Base : Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

Adopting the policy won't affect likelihood to vote CPC drastically, about a quarter 'accessible voters' would be more likely to vote

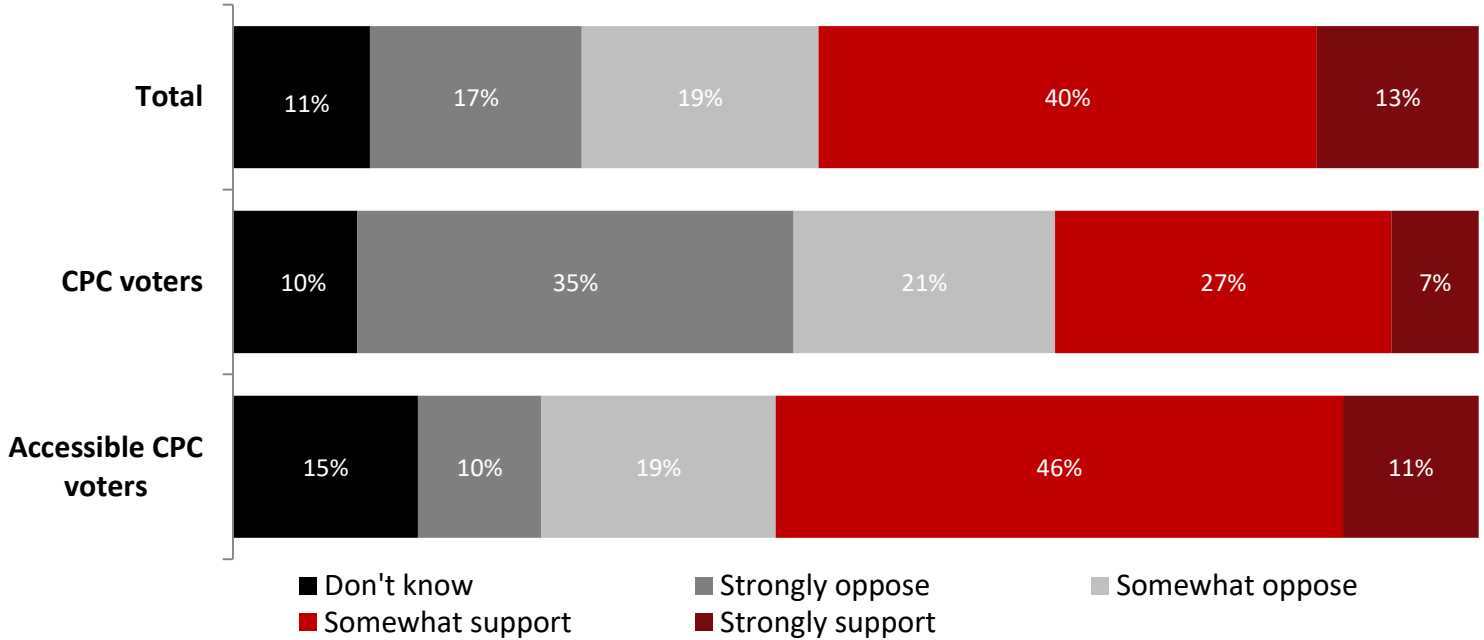
Likelihood to vote



Q13B: If the Conservative Party of Canada were to adopt this policy of charging for carbon pollution, would it make you more likely to vote for them in an election, less likely or not change your likelihood of voting Conservative?

Base : Greater Toronto Area Residents , CPC and accessible CPC voters (n=729)

GTA residents have mixed opinions about the current carbon tax policy in Ontario, more than half of accessible voters support current policy



Support/oppose	Support	Oppose
Total	53%	36%
CPC voters	34%	57%
Accessible CPC voters	57%	28%

Information on screen: The system of charging for carbon pollution that is currently active in Ontario is commonly referred to as a carbon tax. This year, it added 7 cents to the price of gasoline and increased costs for home heating by an average of $12 per month. The average Ontario household also received $448 back in rebates from this carbon tax. The carbon tax and the carbon rebate will both rise each year until 2022. In that year, the tax will add $12 cents / liter in gasoline and will return $700 in rebates to the average Ontario household.

Q13C: Do you support or oppose this policy?

Base : Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

Over half of residents support the policy of using pollution charges to get tax cuts, no major effect on likelihood to vote CPC

Support/oppose

Opinion on Policy: Where the proceeds from charging for carbon pollution are used to cut personal income tax rates

Issues	Total	CPC voter	Accessible CPC voter
Total 'N'	*1001*	*274*	*455*
Strongly Support	15%	11%	16%
Somewhat support	46%	42%	45%
Somewhat oppose	17%	19%	18%
Strongly oppose	9%	16%	7%
Don't know	13%	11%	14%
Total support	**61%**	**54%**	**61%**
Total Oppose	**26%**	**35%**	**25%**

Q14A: Do you support or oppose a policy where the proceeds from charging for carbon pollution are used to cut personal income tax rates?

Base : Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

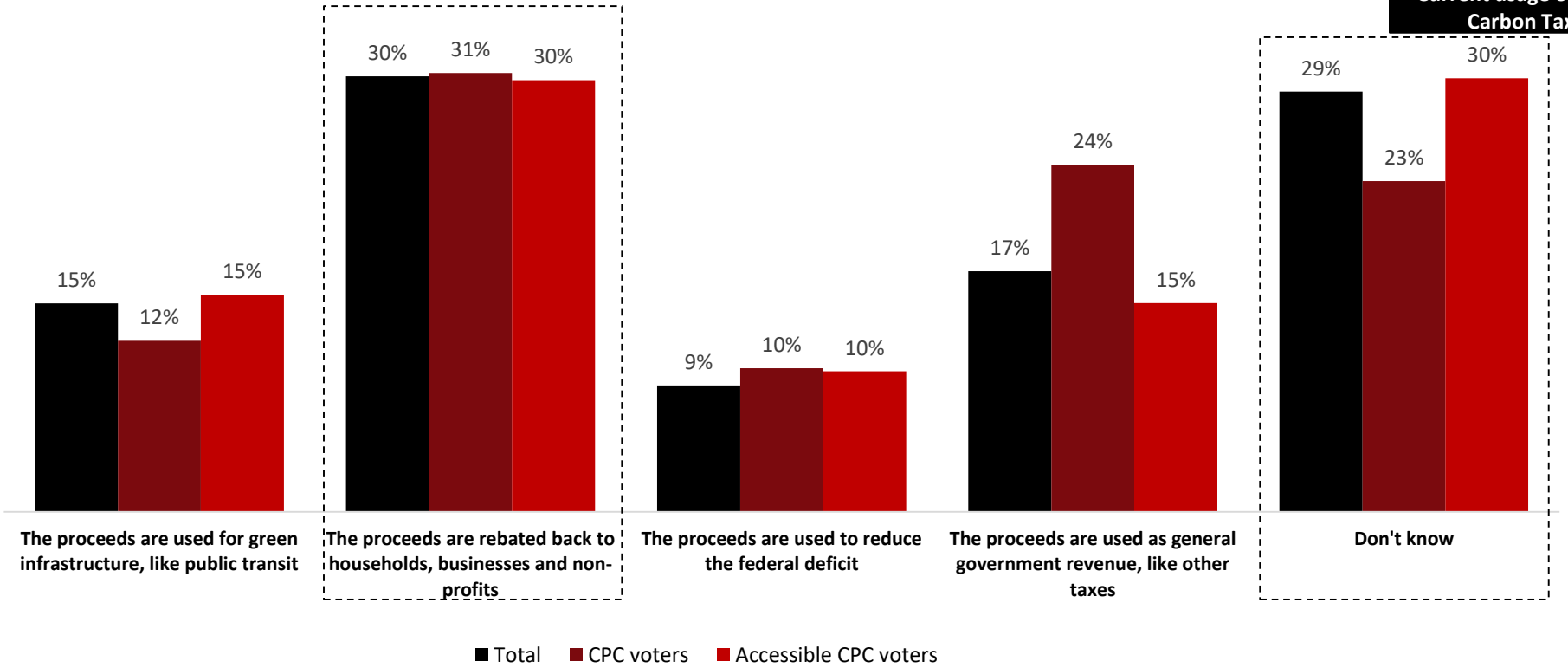
Issues	Total	CPC voter	Accessible CPC voter
Total 'N'	*1001*	*274*	*455*
Less likely	18%	17%	19%
Not change likelihood	37%	44%	33%
More likely	28%	27%	28%
Don't know	17%	13%	19%

Q14B: If the Conservative Party of Canada were to adopt this policy, would it make you more likely to vote for them in an election, less likely or not change your likelihood of voting Conservative?

Base : Greater Toronto Area Residents, CPC and accessible CPC voters (n=729)

About 30% resident believe the carbon tax is rebated back to households, an equal number aren't sure how tax is used

Current usage of Carbon Tax



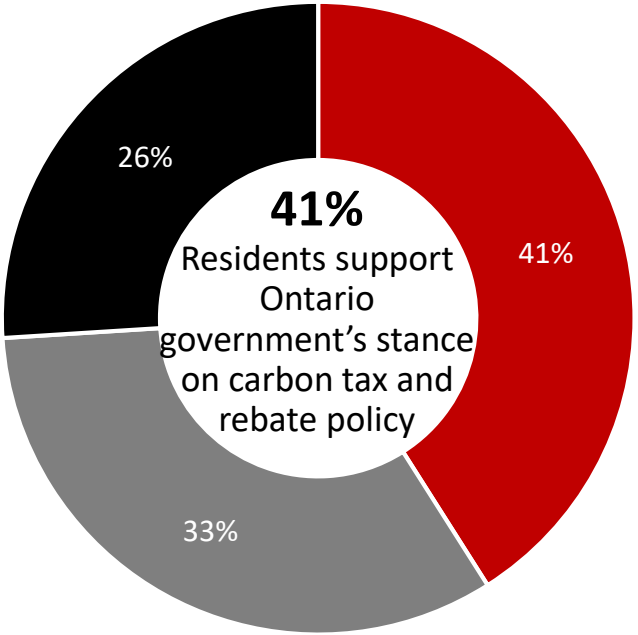
Q16: Which of the following options correctly states how the proceeds from the federal carbon tax are being used? Note this question is NOT about how you would like the proceeds to be used, but rather how the proceeds ARE being used currently.

Base : Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

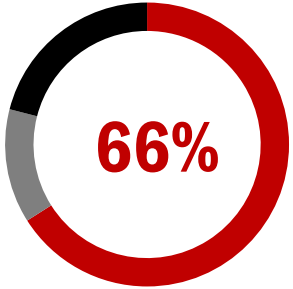
4 in 10 GTA residents support the Ontario government's legal challenging of the federal carbon tax and rebate policy, accessible CPC voters are divided in opinion

Ontario's position on carbon tax

Support/Oppose the position of Ontario Government: The Ontario government is challenging the federal carbon tax and rebate policy at the Supreme Court.

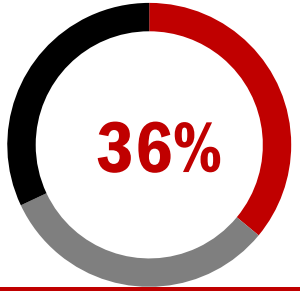


CPC Voters



66% of CPC voters favour Ontario govt's stance on tax and rebate

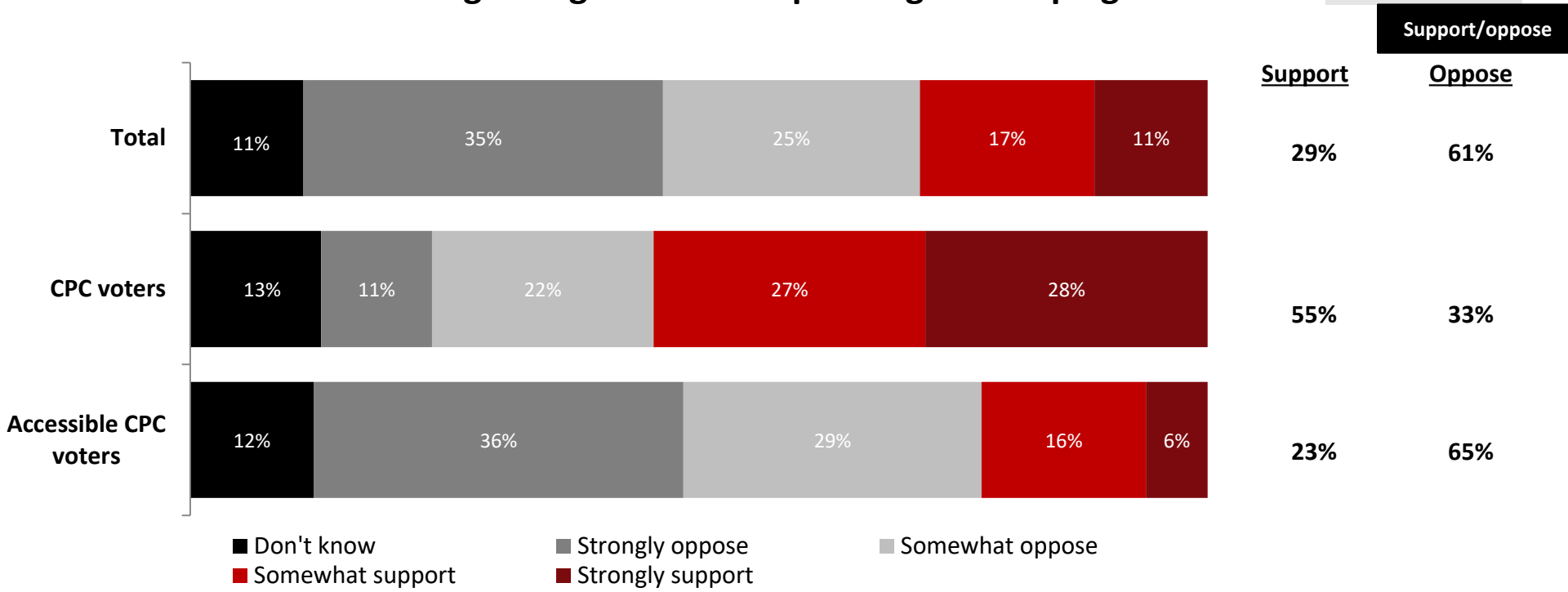
Accessible CPC voters



36% of accessible voters favour Ontario govt's stance on tax and rebate

Q20: The Ontario government is challenging the federal carbon tax and rebate policy at the Supreme Court. Do you support the Ontario government fighting the carbon tax and rebate policy in court? Base: Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

While half of CPC voters support Doug Ford's anti-carbon tax campaign, 65% of accessible voters are against government spending on campaign

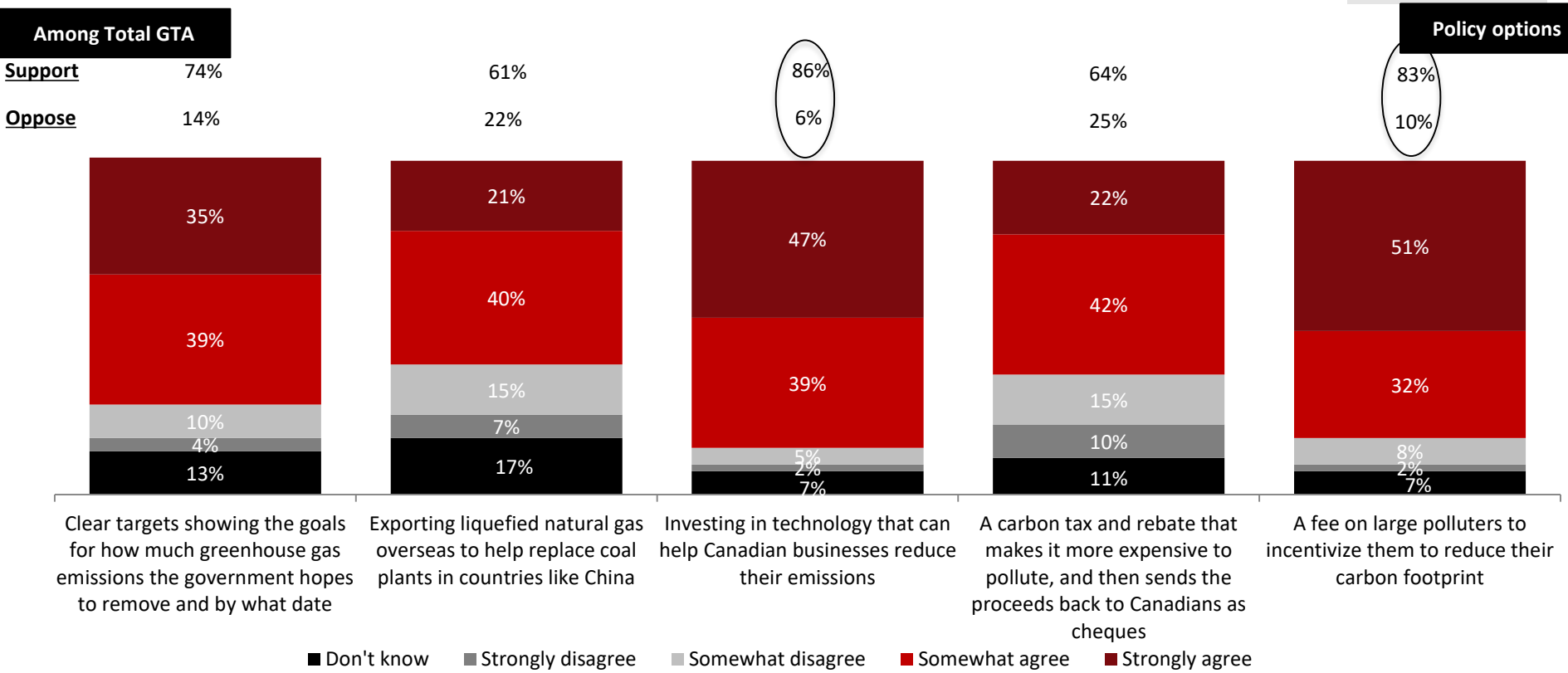


Support/Oppose: Doug Ford has launched a campaign to oppose the carbon tax and rebate policy, and his government has approved spending $30 million on this campaign.

Q21: Do you support or oppose Premier Ford using taxpayer money to wage this campaign against the carbon tax and rebate?

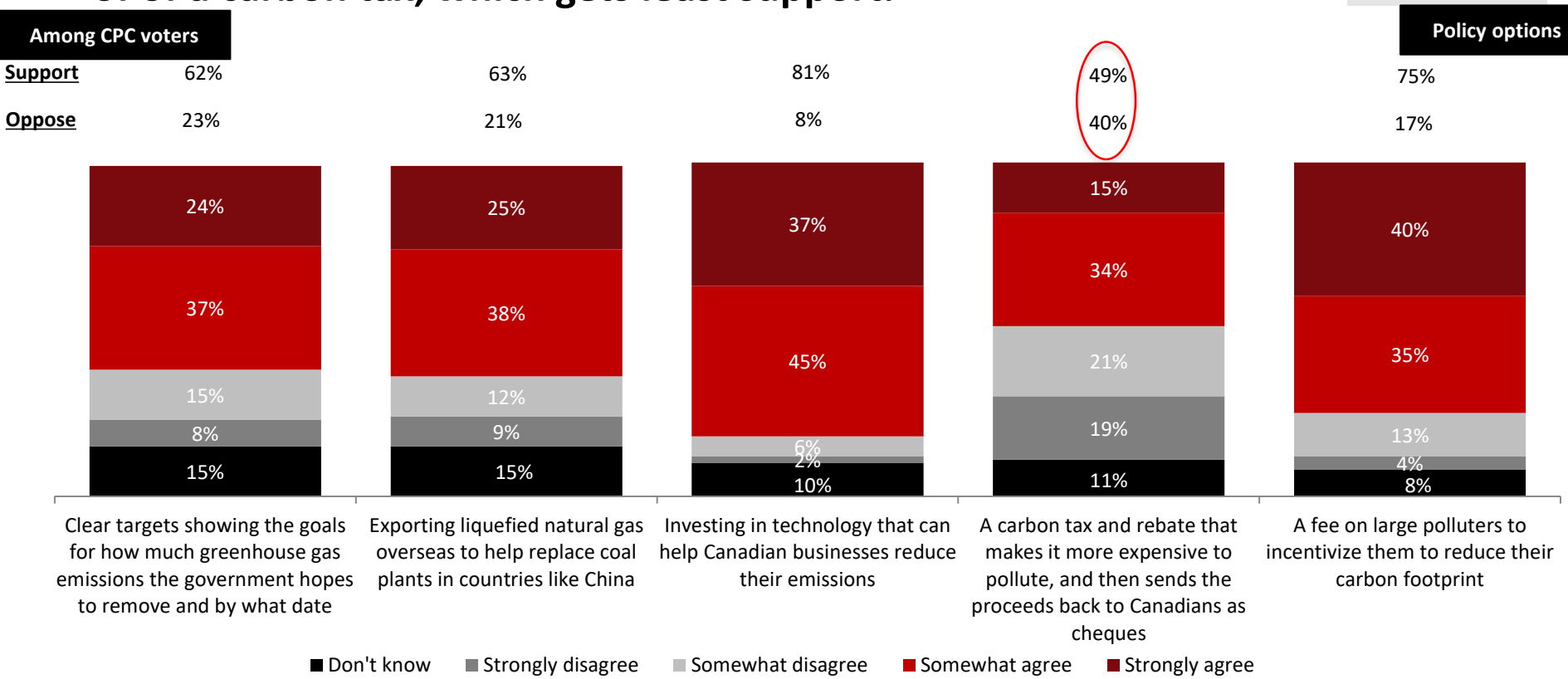
Base : Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

Investing in technology to reduce emissions and a fee on large polluters generate strong agreement as effective climate change policies



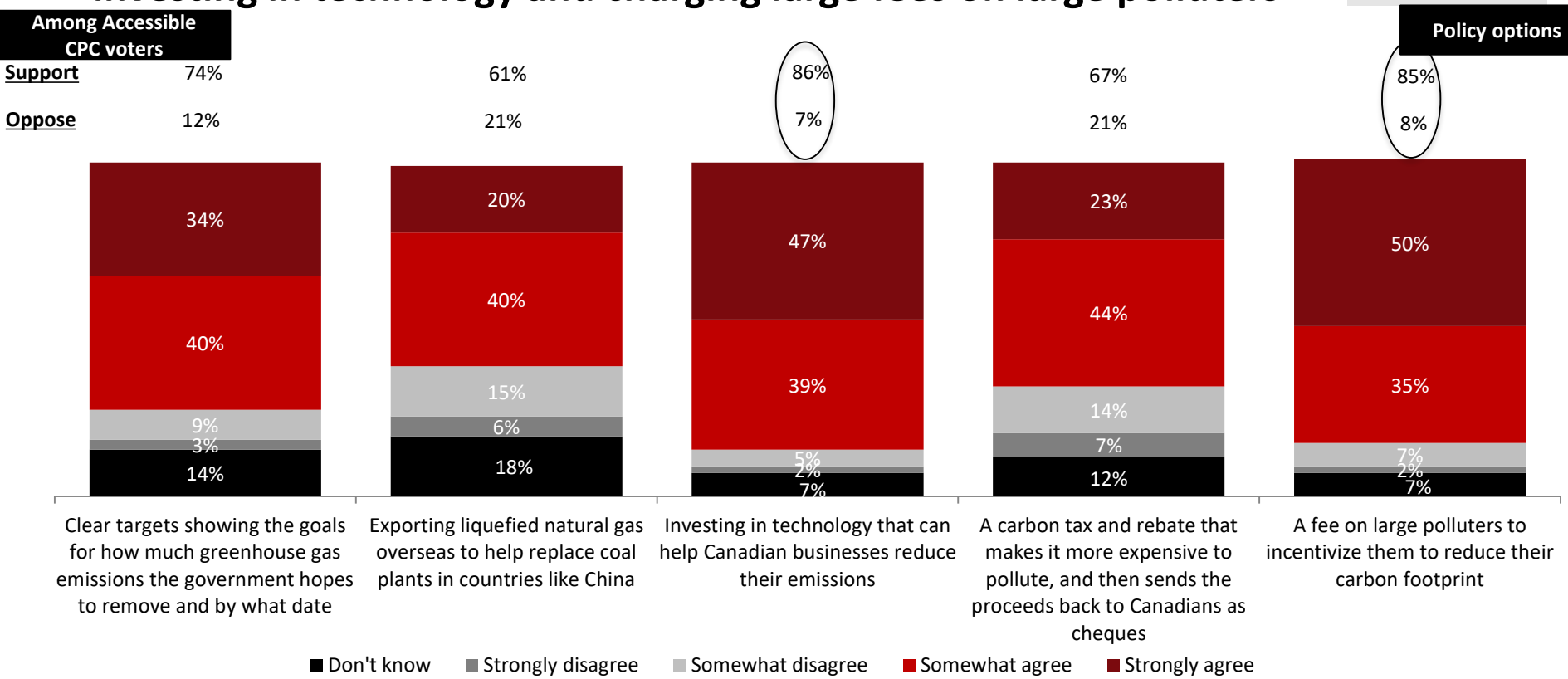
Q22: Below are several actions which Governments-Federal or Provincial- could implement as part of an effective and credible climate change plan. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree these actions should be priorities to include in a climate change plan. Base: Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

CPC voters also share the overall voter sentiments, except the policy of of a carbon tax, which gets least support.



Q22: Below are several actions which Governments-Federal or Provincial- could implement as part of an effective and credible climate change plan. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree these actions should be priorities to include in a climate change plan. Base : Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

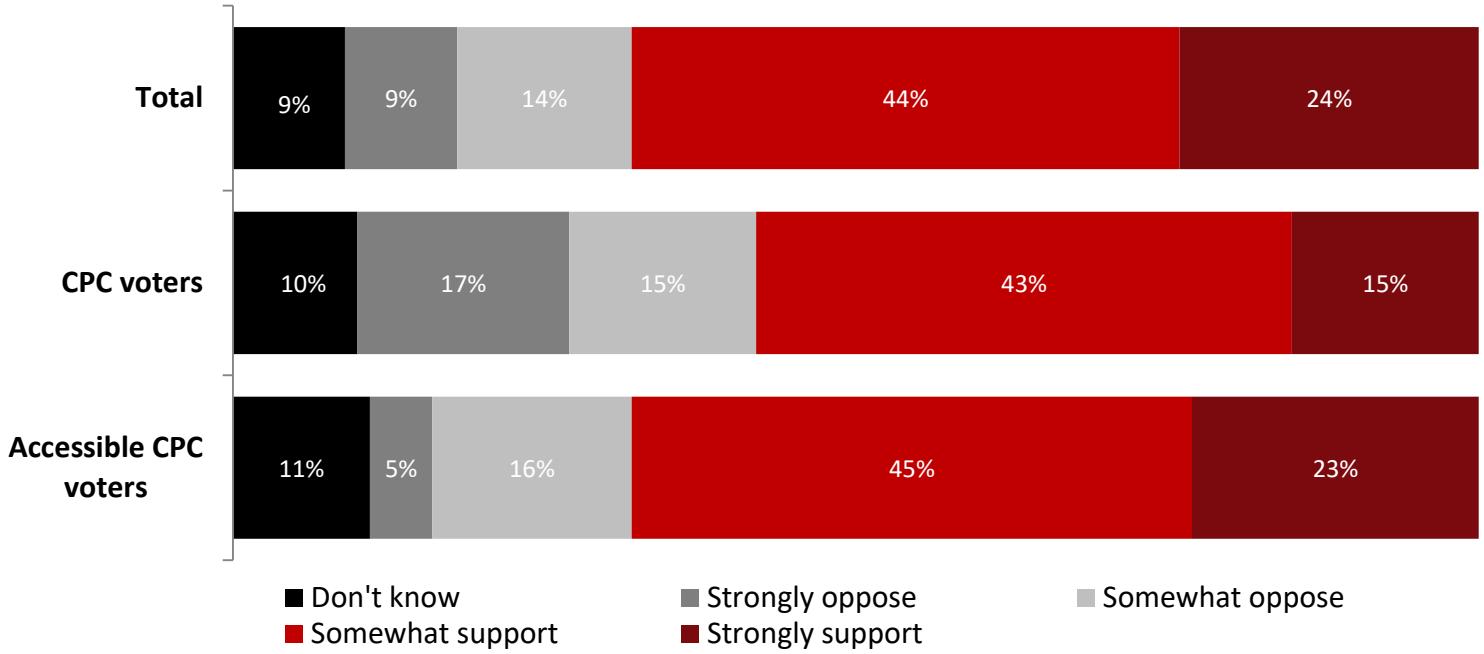
Mirroring general residents, accessible CPC voters also favour investing in technology and charging large fees on large polluters



Q22: Below are several actions which Governments-Federal or Provincial- could implement as part of an effective and credible climate change plan. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree these actions should be priorities to include in a climate change plan. Base : Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

Over two-thirds accessible CPC voters would support carbon tax if they knew the money was being rebated back

Support/Oppose

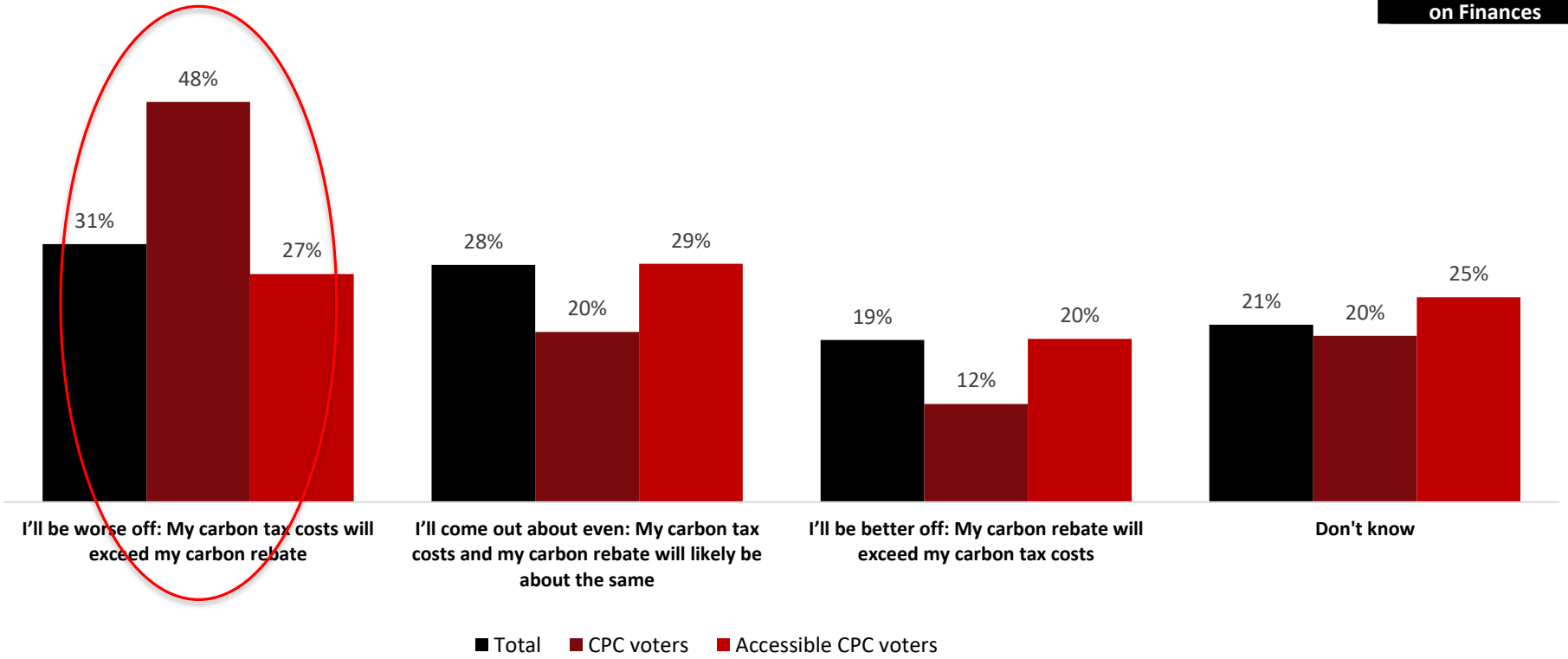


	Support	Oppose
Total	67%	23%
CPC voters	58%	32%
Accessible CPC voters	68%	21%

Q23: Would you support or oppose a carbon tax if you knew that all the money from the tax was being rebated back to families and businesses?
Base : Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

About impact of carbon tax on personal finance, 31% GTA voters including about half of CPC voter feel they'll be worse off

Carbon tax-Impact on Finances



Q24A: How do you expect the carbon tax will impact your personal finances?

Base : Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

About half of voters support changing the carbon tax so that larger share of the proceeds can go to rural and suburban households

Support/Oppose

Issues	Total	CPC voter	Accessible CPC voter
Total 'N'	*1001*	*274*	*455*
Strongly Support	9%	10%	8%
Somewhat support	40%	38%	38%
Somewhat oppose	23%	17%	25%
Strongly oppose	11%	17%	10%
Don't know	18%	18%	19%
Total support	**49%**	**48%**	**46%**
Total Oppose	**34%**	**34%**	**35%**

Support/Oppose: People who live in rural and suburban areas typically drive more and have less access to public transit compared to people who live in cities. For this reason, rural and suburban households often pay more than urban residents in carbon taxes. Would you support or oppose changing the carbon tax so that a larger share of the proceeds was given to rural and suburban households and a smaller share was given to urban households

Q25. Would you support or oppose changing the carbon tax so that a larger share of the proceeds was given to rural and suburban households and a smaller share was given to urban households? Base: Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

Three quarters of GTA resident consider carbon footprints of products only occasionally or less, but 70% support product labels informing emissions

Product & services- Carbon footprint

Carbon footprints	Total	CPC voter	Accessible CPC voter
Total 'N'	*1001*	*274*	*455*
Always	5%	4%	5%
Very often	23%	15%	22%
Occasionally	46%	44%	50%
Never	26%	37%	23%

Carbon footprints	Total	CPC voter	Accessible CPC voter
Total 'N'	*1001*	*274*	*455*
Unlikely	8%	17%	5%
Not very likely	13%	19%	11%
Somewhat likely	45%	40%	49%
Very likely	26%	15%	24%
Don't know	9%	8%	11%
Total likely	**71%**	**56%**	**73%**
Total unlikely	**20%**	**36%**	**16%**

Q26A: How often do you consider the carbon footprint (the emissions required to produce something) of goods and services before purchasing them?

Base : Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

Q26B: How likely would you be to support labels on products and services that informed you of their carbon emissions?

Base : Greater Toronto Area Residents (n=1001)

RESPONDENTS PROFILE

RESPONDENT PROFILE – *GTA Region*

	Weighted
n=	1001
Gender	(%)
Male	48
Female	52
Age	
18 to 34	28
35 to 54	38
55 years of age or older	34
Origin of Birth	
Born in Canada	63
Born outside of Canada	36

	Weighted
n=	1001
Household Income	(%)
Less than $60K	23
$40K to less than $100K	29
$100K and over	37
Education	
High school	11
Some college or university	15
A college or university degree	52
A graduate degree	22
Region	
East GTA	45
West GTA	55

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