



**New England Energy Alliance**  
**2012 New England Consumer Energy Survey**

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**May 2012**

# About the Survey

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- **Telephone Interview Dates – April 17-26, 2012**
  - 600 interviews completed in New England
  - Margin of error is  $\pm 4\%$
  - Connecticut – 134
  - Maine – 62
  - Massachusetts – 281
  - New Hampshire – 58
  - Rhode Island – 41
  - Vermont – 24
- **Tracking data shown for past surveys conducted in New England in May 2011, April 2010, January 2009, April 2008 and March 2007**

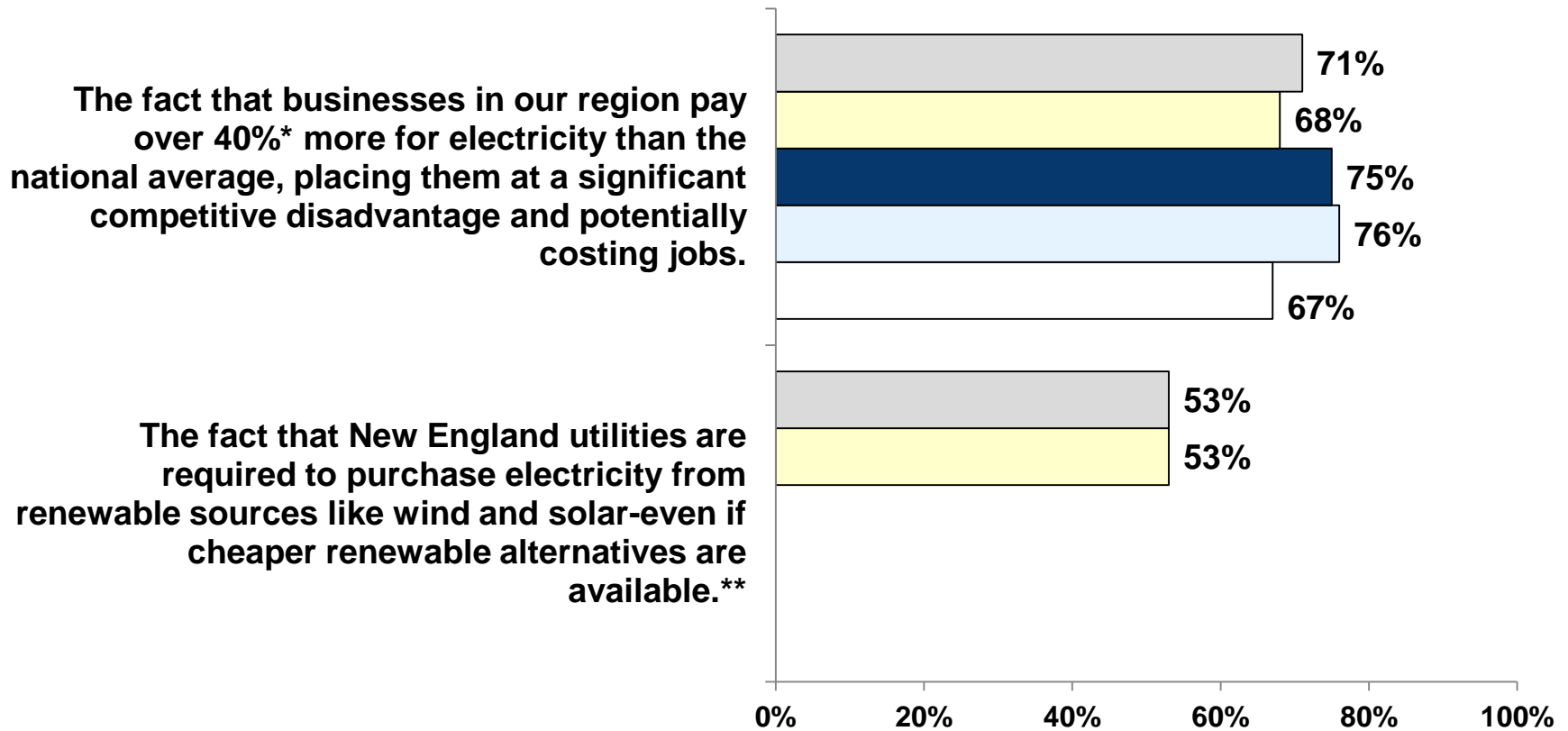
# What do you think is the single most important energy-related issue facing New England today?

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Energy prices/Cost of oil/Energy bills too high	32%
High gas prices	23
More use of alternative energy/Green energy/Less use of fossil fuel	12
Pollution/Need clean energy	4
Electricity/Fuel/Oil (unspecified)	4
Economy/Jobs	3
Over-dependence on oil/Foreign dependence	3
Not enough energy available	2
Energy conservation	2
Need more drilling in U.S.	1
Nuclear power	1
Global warming/Climate change	1
Don't want wind farms	1
Nothing	1
Other	2
Don't know/Refused	7

Using a scale of 1=*not concerned at all* and 5=*extremely concerned*  
 Please rate your level of concern about each of the following regional  
 energy-related issues  
 (Percentages show ratings of 4 and 5 combined)

□ April 2012    □ May 2011    ■ April 2010    □ January 2009    □ April 2008

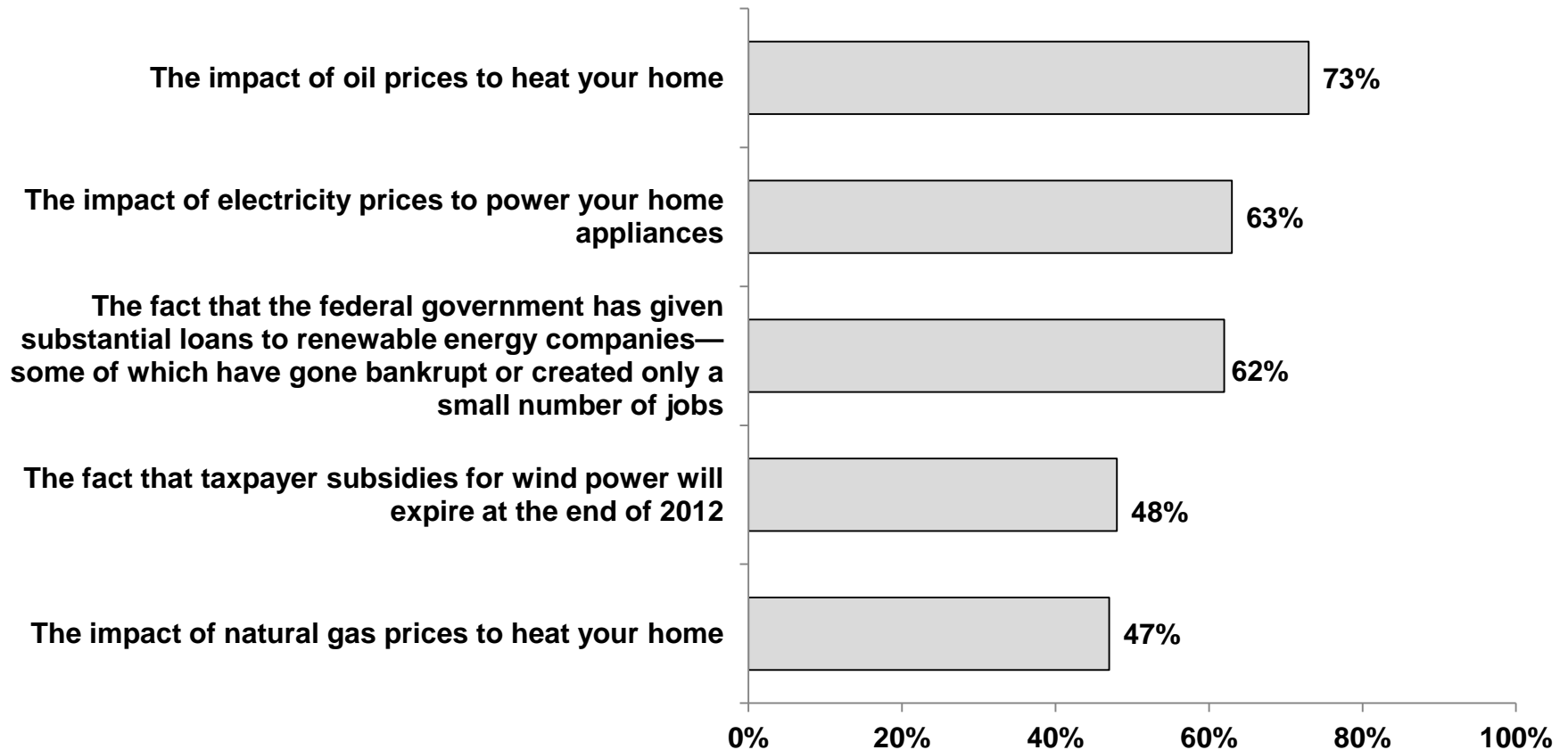


*Wording variations: \*65% in 2010, 60% in 2009 and 30% in 2008. "...and potentially costing jobs" added in 2012*

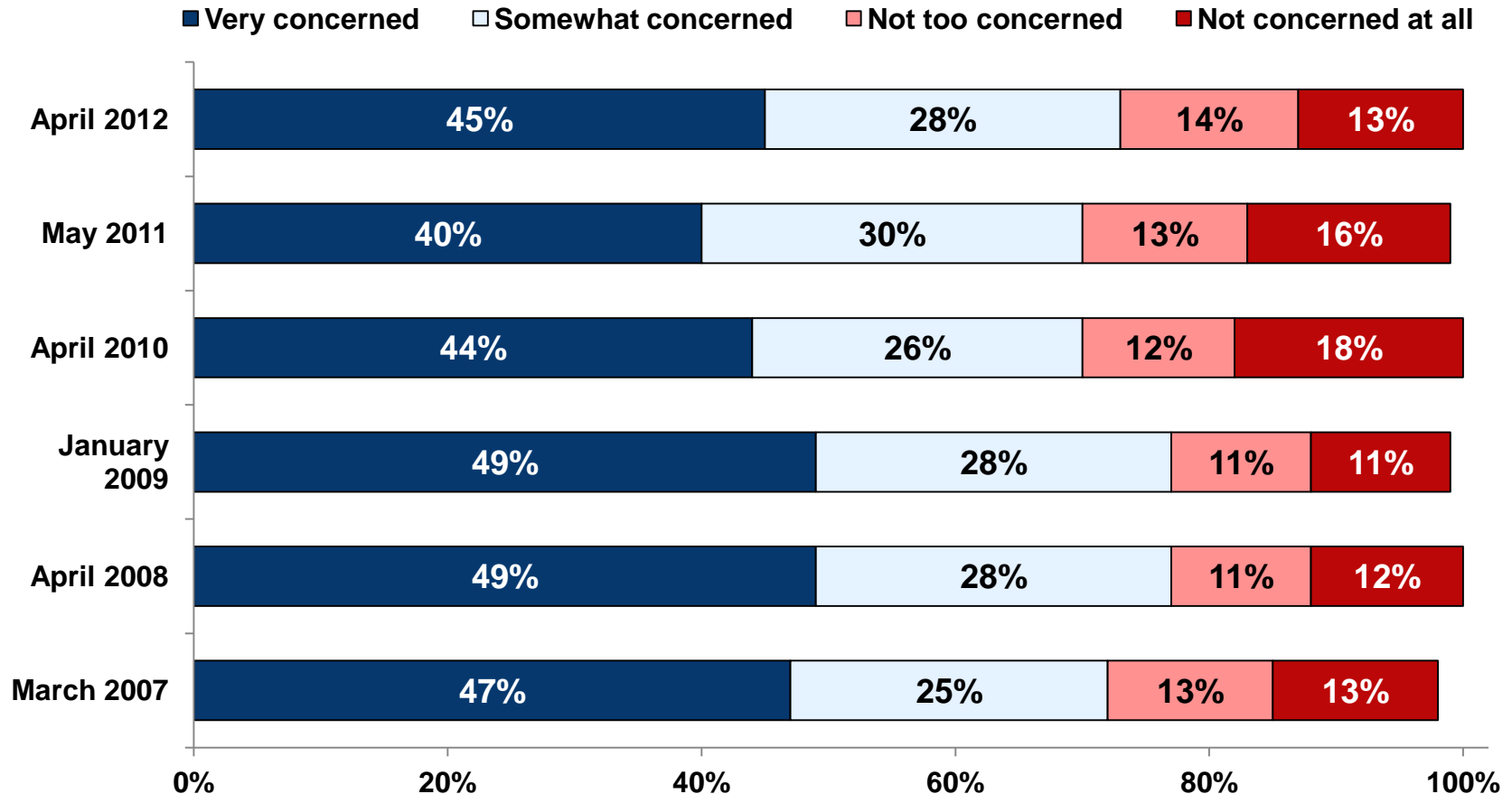
*\*\* The fact that the New England states require electric distribution companies to purchase certain amounts of electricity from renewable sources like wind and solar, regardless of how much it will increase the cost of electricity.*

Using a scale of 1=*not concerned at all* and 5=*extremely concerned*  
Please rate your level of concern about each of the following regional  
energy-related issues  
(Percentages show ratings of 4 and 5 combined)

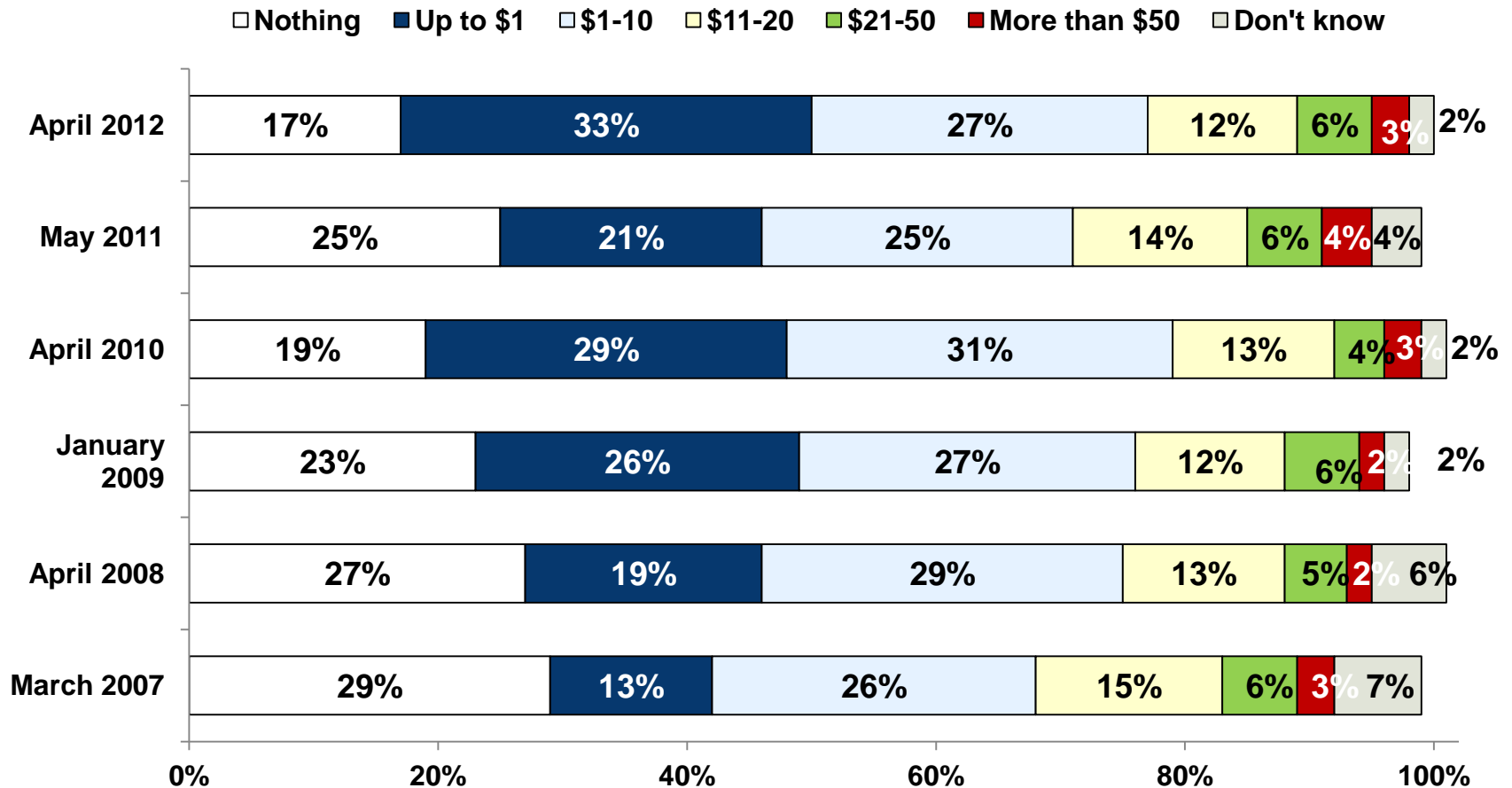
□ April 2012



# In general, how concerned are you about the effects of global warming or climate change?

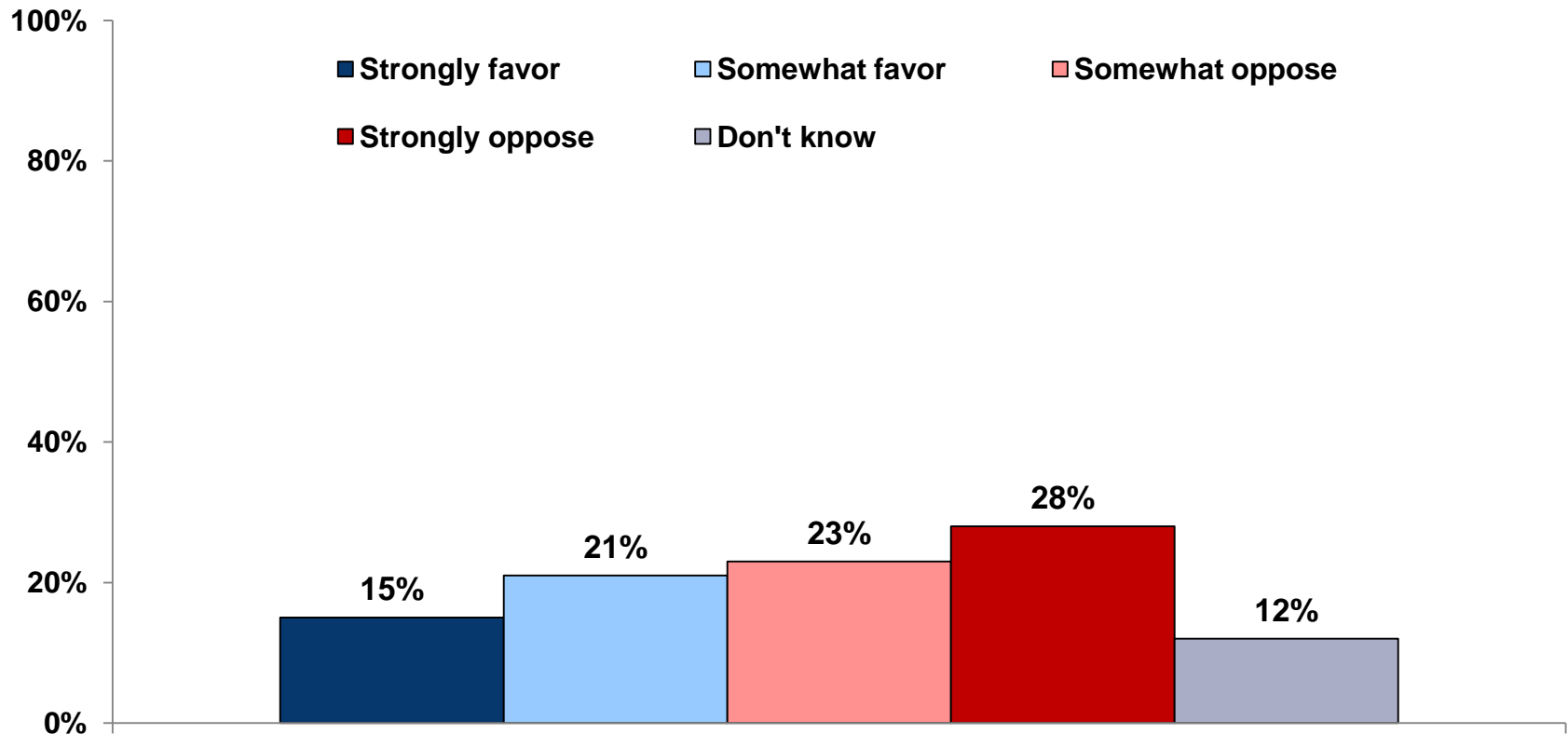


# About how much extra per month would you be willing to pay on your electric bill to support utility and government efforts to limit the effects of global warming by reducing carbon dioxide emissions from power plants?



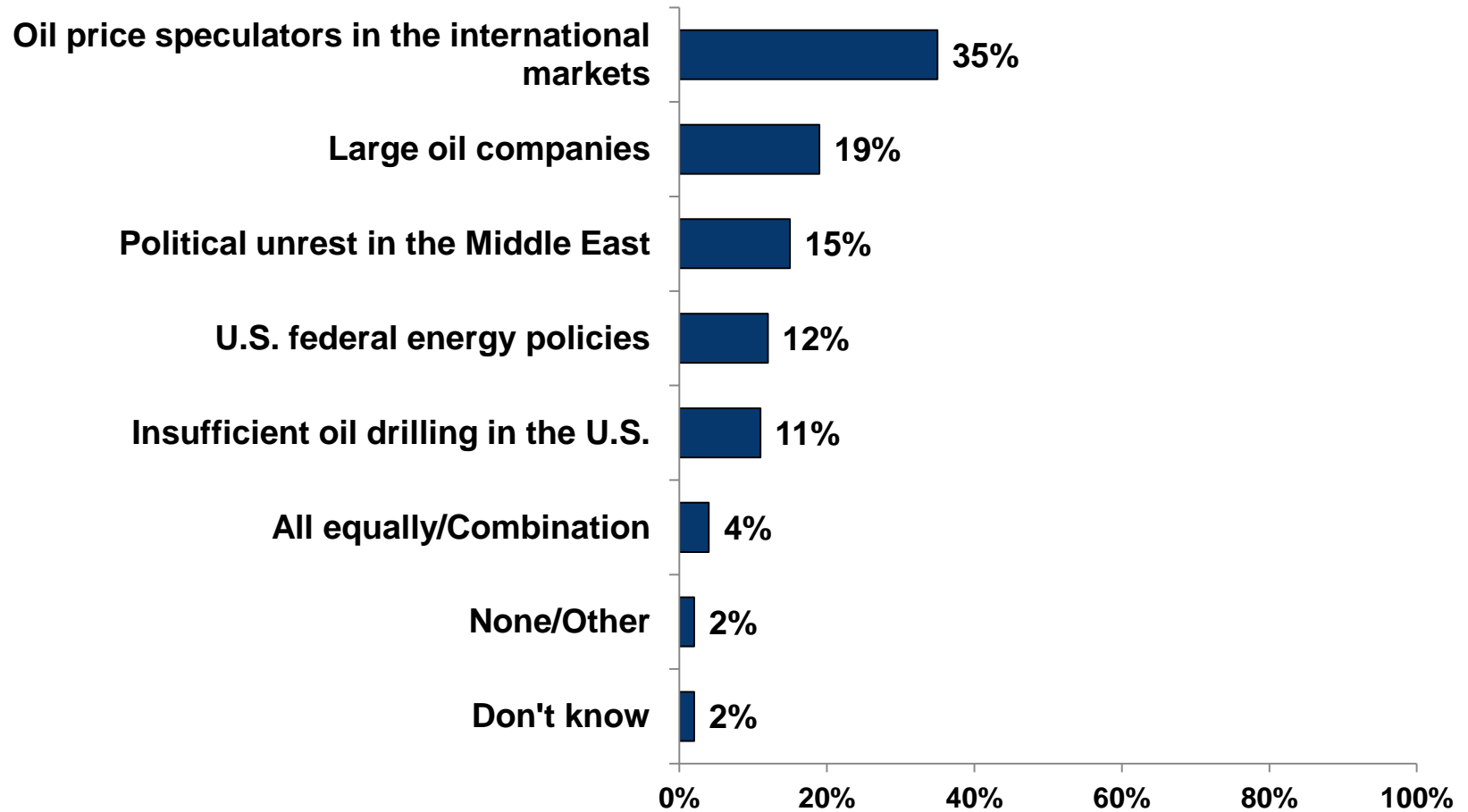
As you may know, New England is part of a first-in-the-nation 'cap and trade' initiative to reduce carbon emissions from electricity generating plants. Supporters of the program say the money collected through this program is well-spent on energy efficiency programs that have created over 7,000 jobs in the region over the past few years. Opponents say the 'cap and trade' program is just a carbon tax that has increased electricity prices by over \$270 million and hasn't reduced emissions.

## Based on this information, do you favor or oppose the region's participation in this 'cap and trade' program?

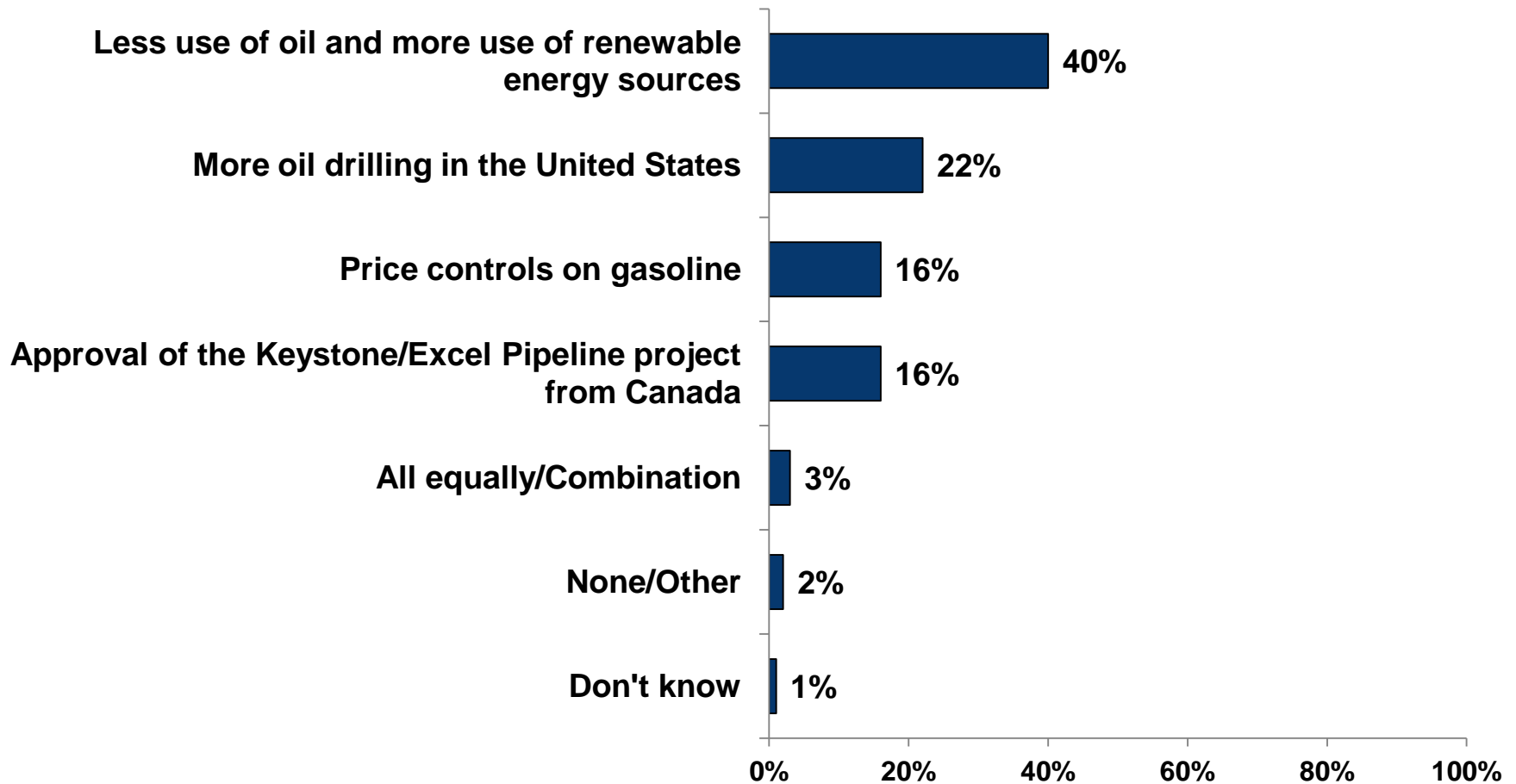




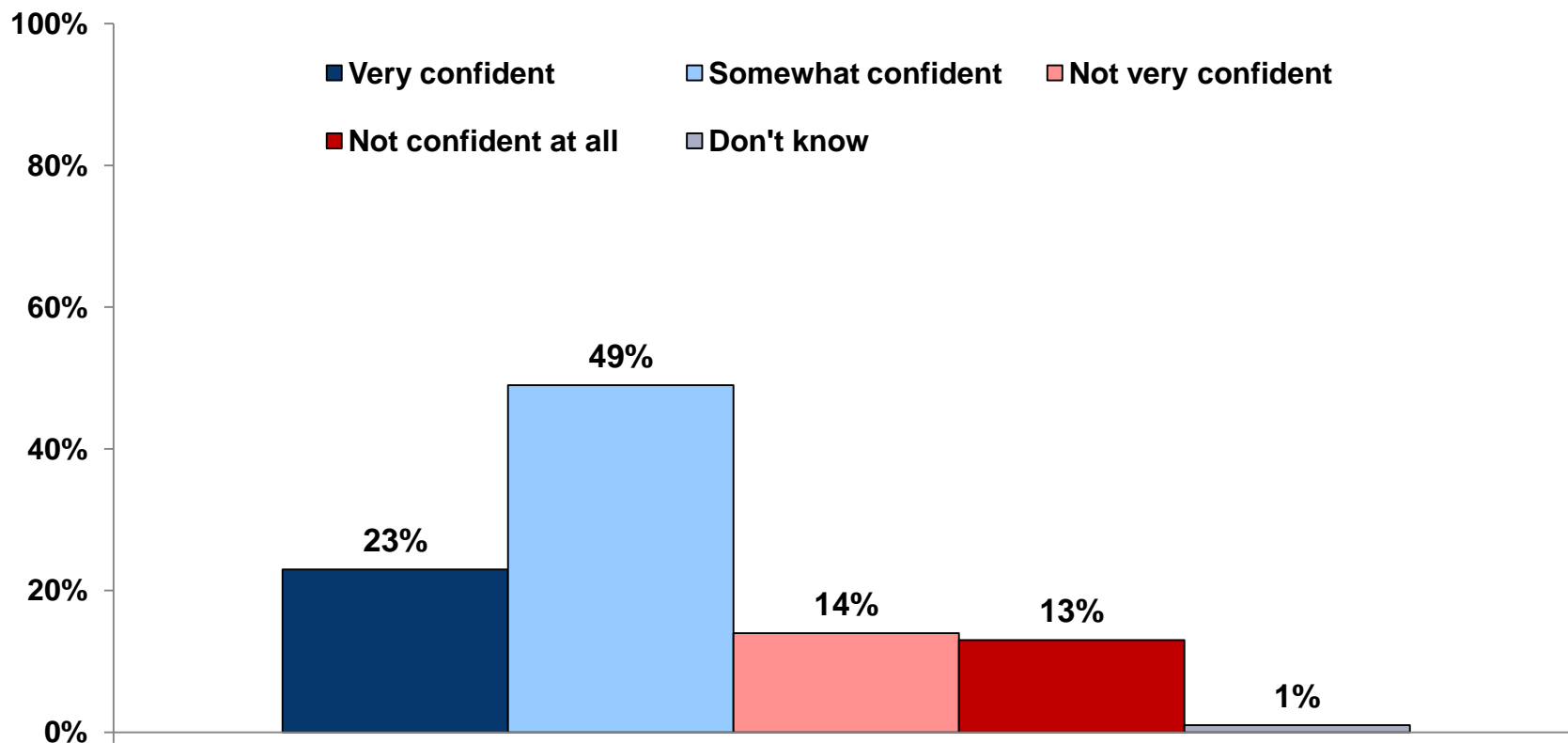
# As you know, gasoline prices have gone up in recent months. Which one of the following do you think is most to blame for the rise in gasoline prices:



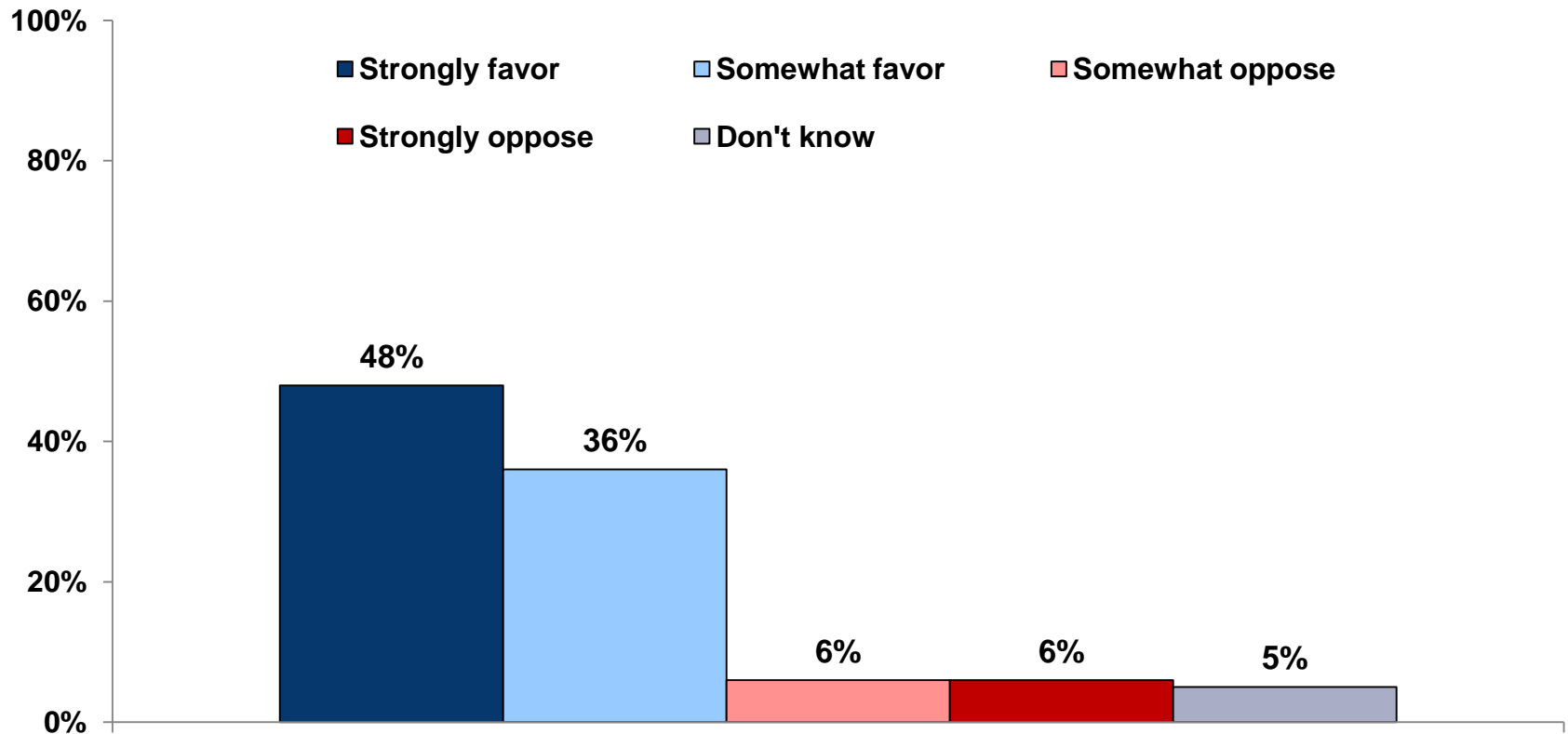
# Which one of the following do you think is the best solution to keep gasoline prices down:



After the Fukushima nuclear accident in Japan last year, President Obama ordered a safety review of all the nation's nuclear power plants. While this review declared U.S. plants to be safe, including their ability to withstand any number of natural disasters, plants are now required to install additional backup emergency equipment to make them even safer. How confident are you that these additional steps will assure that nuclear plants operating in New England are as safe and reliable as possible?

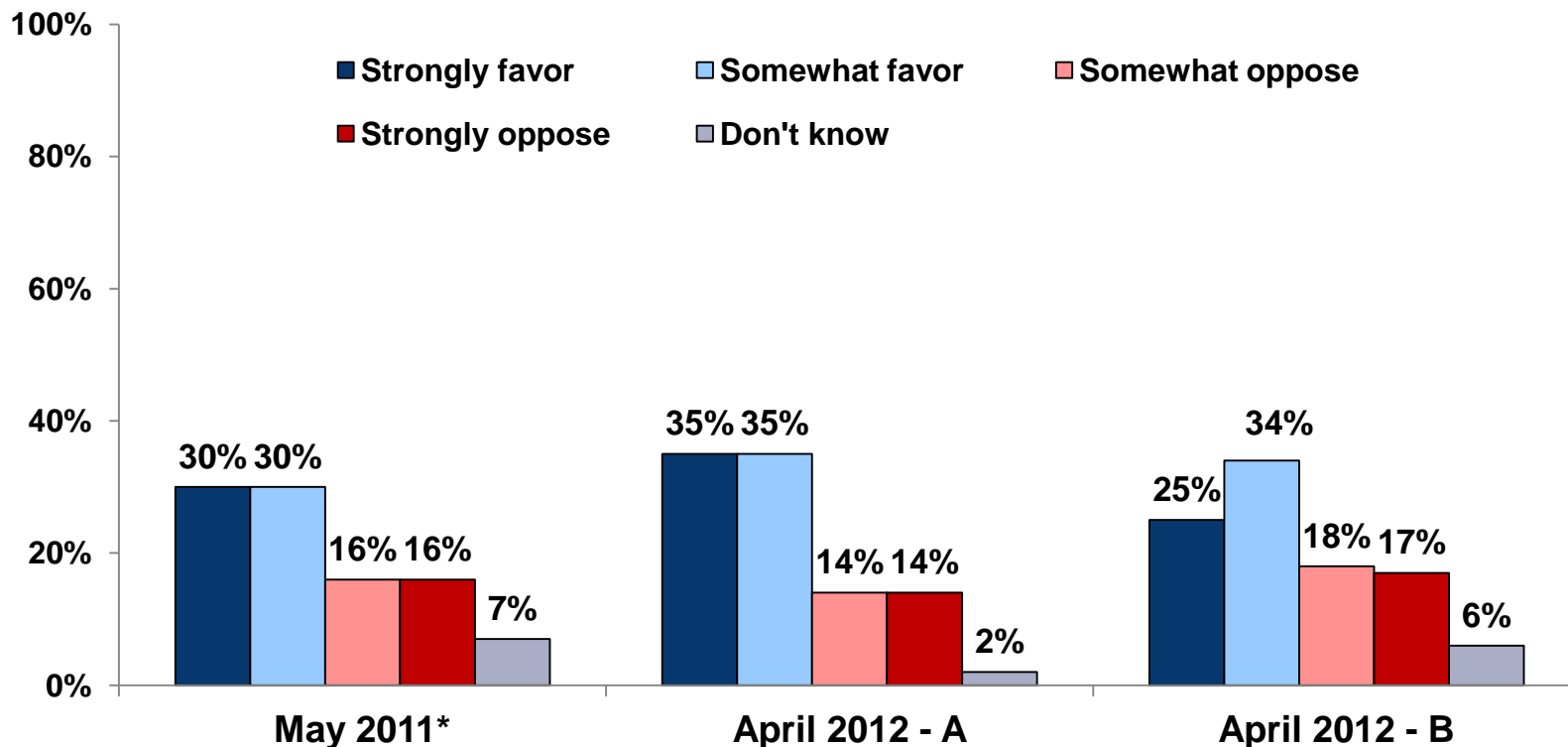


As you may know, electricity sales in New England were opened to competition about a decade ago. As a result, you may have the option to buy electricity from your electric utility company or switch to one of many licensed suppliers that compete on price and service. In general, do you favor or oppose this system?



On the issue of renewing the licenses of [VERSION A: existing nuclear energy plants] [VERSION B: existing nuclear energy plants like Vermont Yankee and the Pilgrim plant in Massachusetts], supporters say nuclear plants are safer and operating better than ever, and that they don't contribute to global warming. Opponents say the technology in these facilities is outdated, and that we need to be even more vigilant after what happened in Japan.

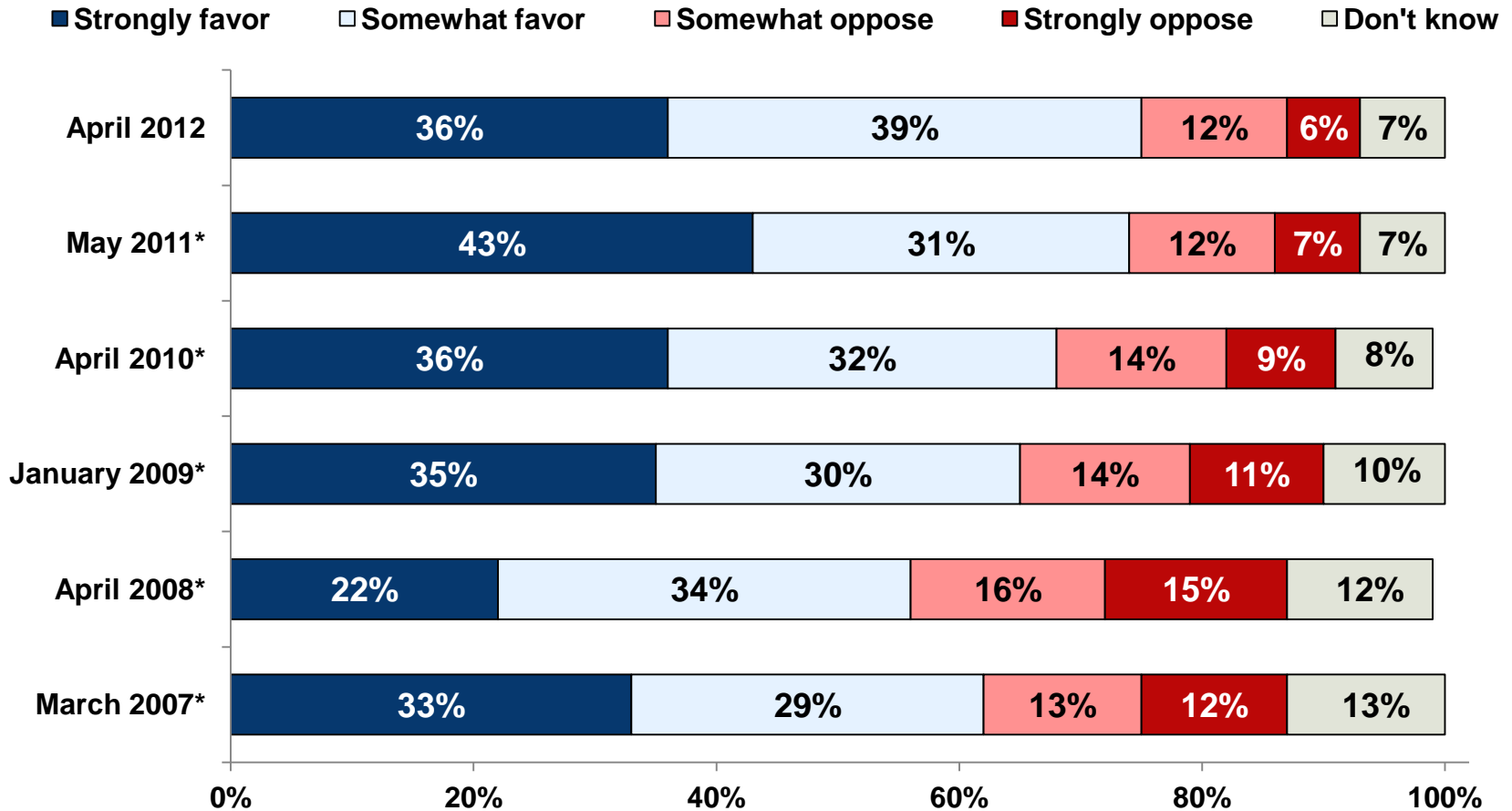
## Do you favor or oppose renewing licenses for [VERSION A: existing nuclear energy plants] [VERSION B: existing nuclear energy plants like Vermont Yankee and the Pilgrim plant in Massachusetts]?



\*Wording difference: On the issue of renewing the licenses of existing nuclear energy plants, supporters point to the fact that nuclear plants are operating better than ever, must meet rigorous regulatory inspection requirements to gain renewal, and that they don't contribute to global warming. Opponents say that the technology in these facilities is outdated, these plants are prone to mechanical failure and leaks as they get older, and that we need to be even more vigilant after what has happened in Japan. Based on this information would you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose renewing licenses for existing nuclear energy plants in New England?

On the issue of liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals, supporters point to the fact that LNG currently supplies 30%\* of the region's natural gas on a cold winter day, and that they have a proven track record of safety all over the world. Opponents point to safety concerns like vulnerability to a terrorist threat.

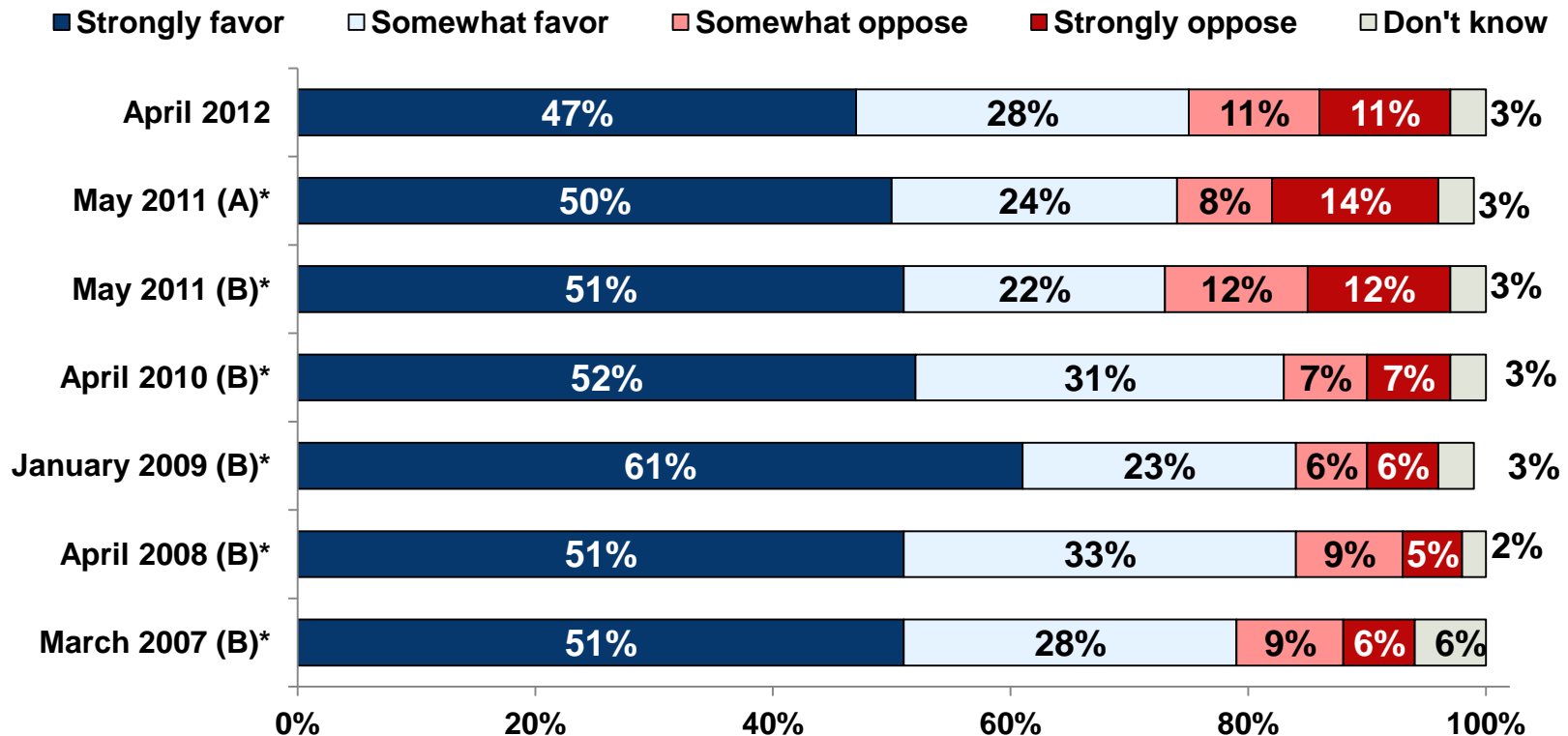
### Do you favor or oppose using LNG terminals?



\*40% in 2010 and 2011, "building new LNG terminals" in years prior to 2012

On the issue of wind farms, supporters say these facilities don't emit greenhouse gases, and are a high-tech, viable source of electricity. Opponents say wind farms are ugly, expensive, and have to be backed-up by fossil fuel plants because they only operate about 30% of the time.

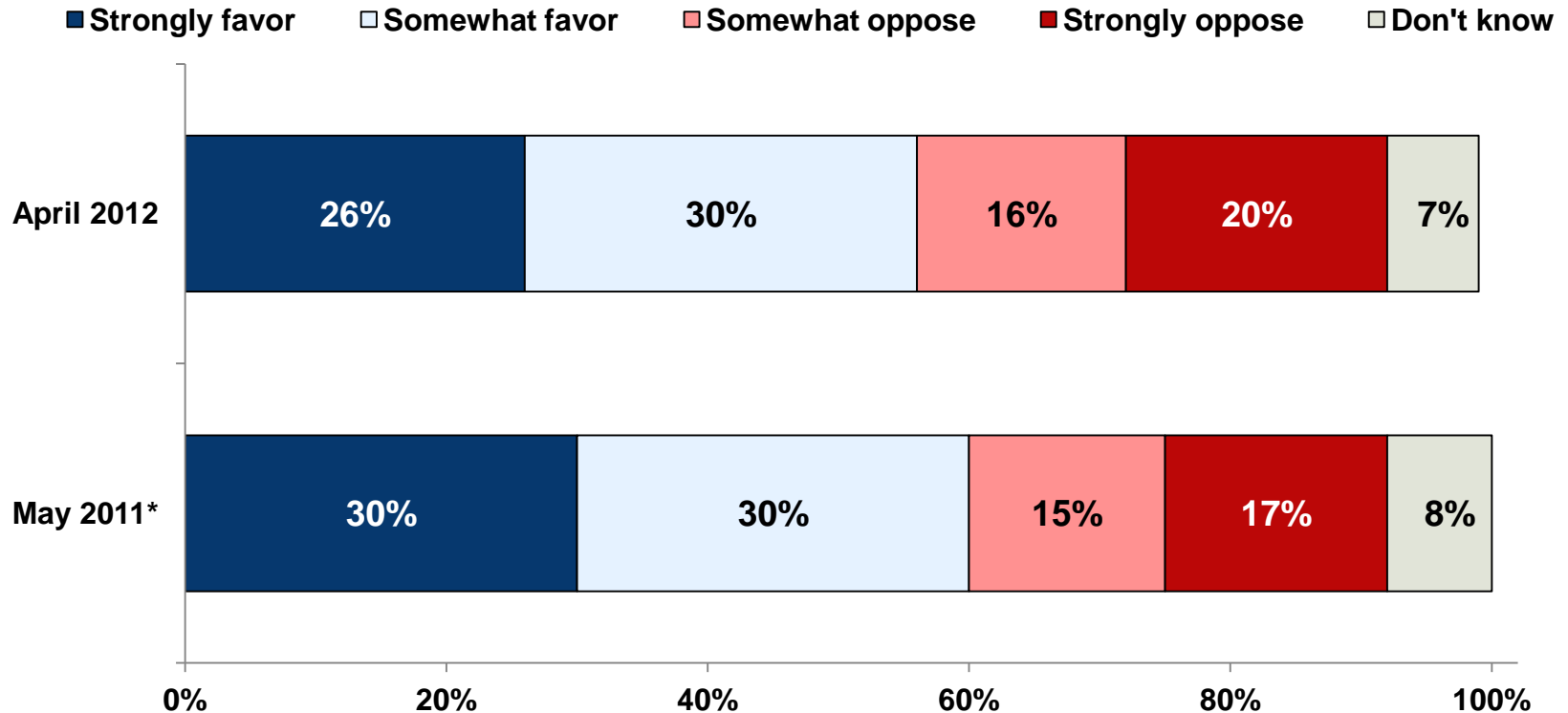
## Do you favor or oppose using wind farms?



*\*Wording difference: On the issue of [VERSION A: off-shore wind farms/VERSION B: large wind farms], supporters point to the fact these facilities don't emit greenhouse gases, that the wind is free and unlimited, and that new advances in technology make this a more viable source of electricity. Opponents say [VERSION A: off-shore wind farms/VERSION B: large wind farms] are ugly, that they are expensive even with taxpayer subsidies, and they only operate about 30% of the time and therefore require fossil fuel plants as back-up. Based on this information would you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose building [VERSION A: off-shore wind farms/VERSION B: large wind farms]?*

As you may know, smart meters are digital meters in the home that wirelessly transmit electricity usage data to utilities. Opponents say smart meters are an invasion of privacy and emit electromagnetic frequencies that can be harmful to one's health. Supporters say smart meters allow consumers to control their electricity usage, save money, and help the environment.

## Do you favor or oppose using smart meters?

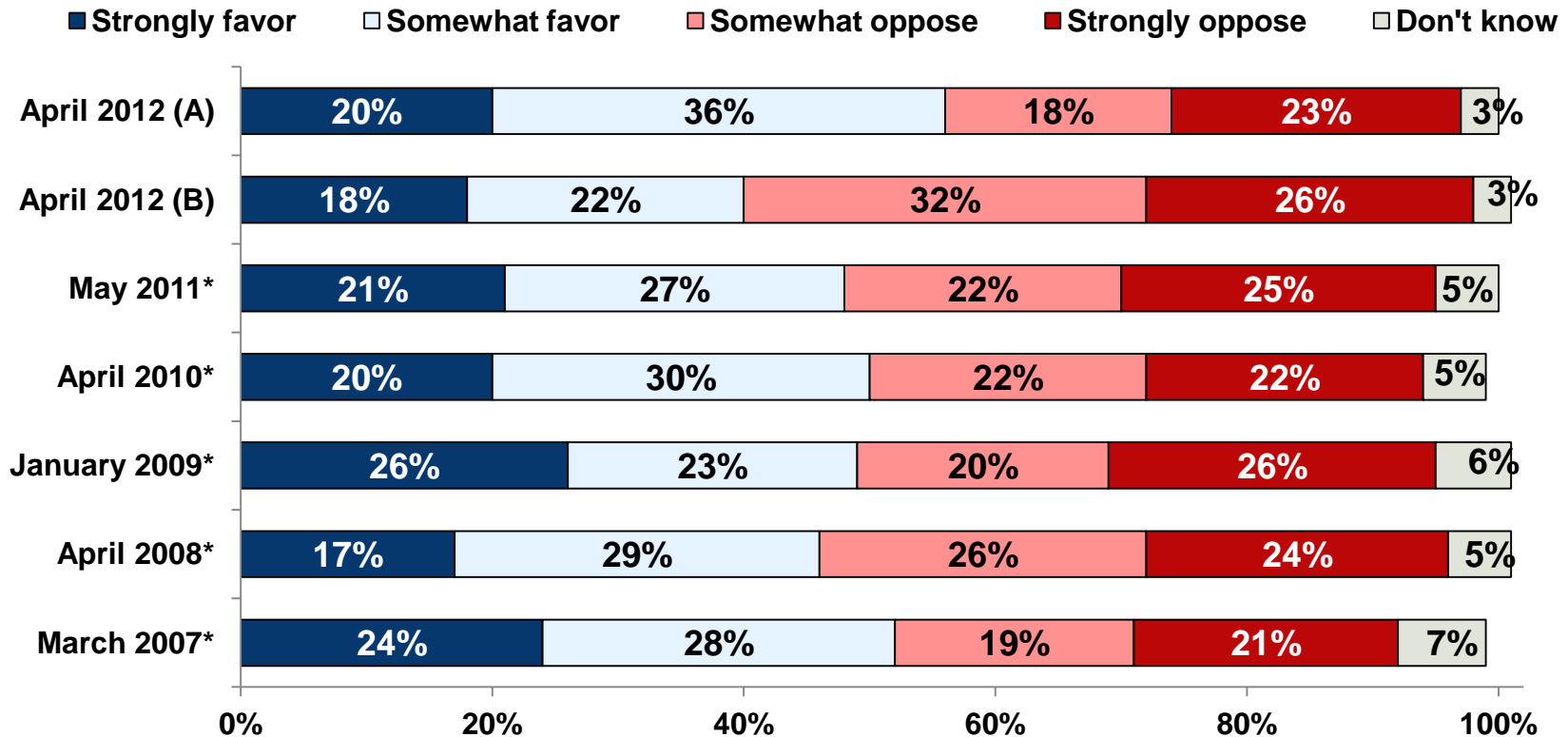


\*Wording difference: On the issue of smart meters, those opposed to them say that they are expensive, only tell homeowners what they already know about their use of electricity and are an intrusion on privacy. Supporters point out that smart meters will make the electricity grid much more efficient and provide information to homeowners and businesses that allow them to save money and help protect the environment. Based on this information do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose the installation of smart meters?



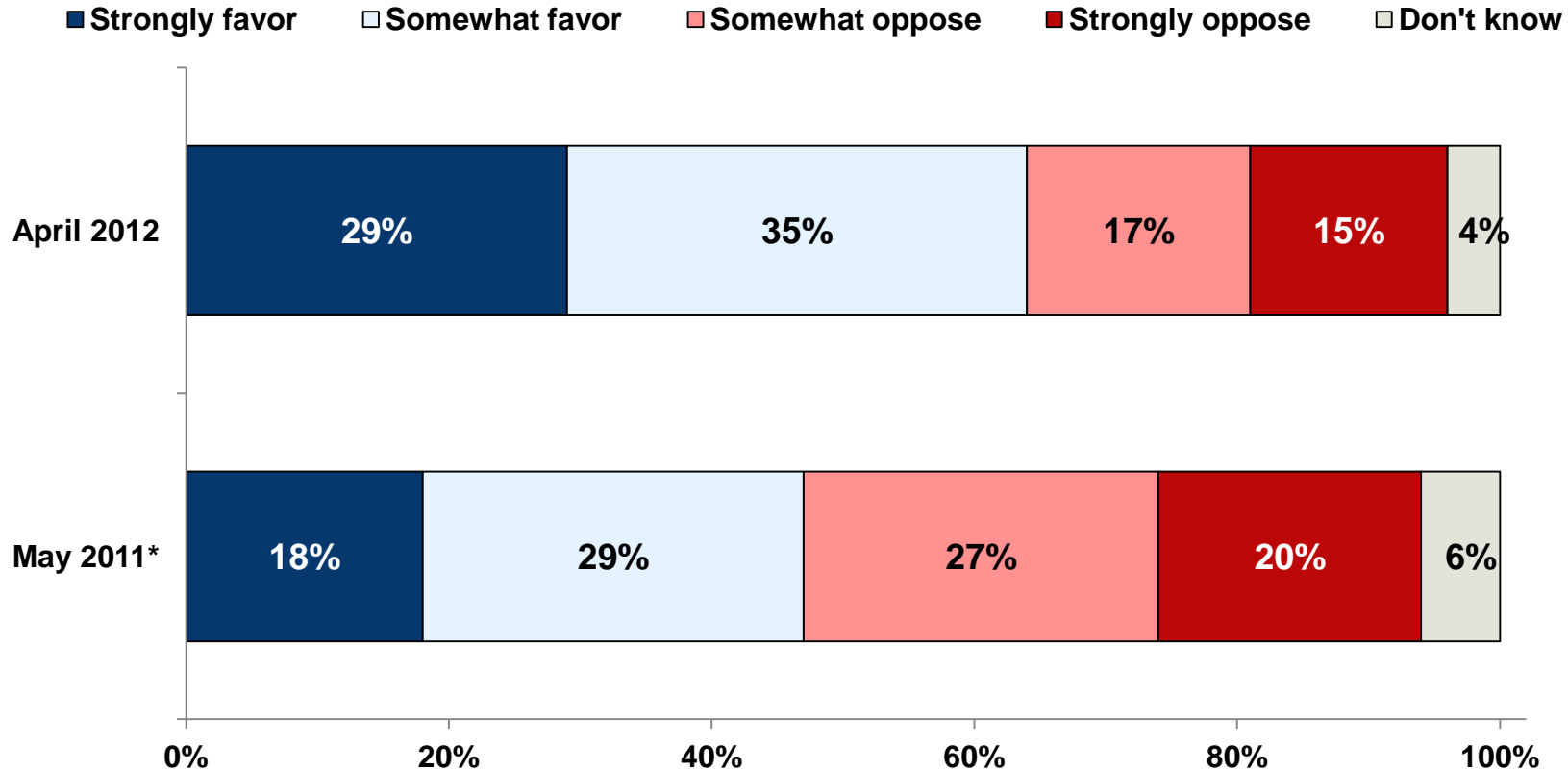
On the issue of [VERSION A: clean coal plants] [VERSION B: coal plants], supporters say this technology reduces greenhouse gas emissions compared to old coal technology, and coal is a low-cost, domestic source of fuel. Opponents say cleaner coal plants still produce a lot of greenhouse gases, and mining coal damages the environment.

Do you favor or oppose using [VERSION A: clean coal plants] [VERSION B: coal plants]?



\*Wording difference: On the issue of clean coal plants, supporters point to the fact that clean coal plants reduce greenhouse gas emissions by about 50% from existing coal technology, that coal is a low cost, domestic source of fuel, and that they are easy to build and operate. Opponents say clean coal plants still produce considerable amounts of greenhouse gases, and that mining coal damages the environment. Based on this information would you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose building clean coal plants?

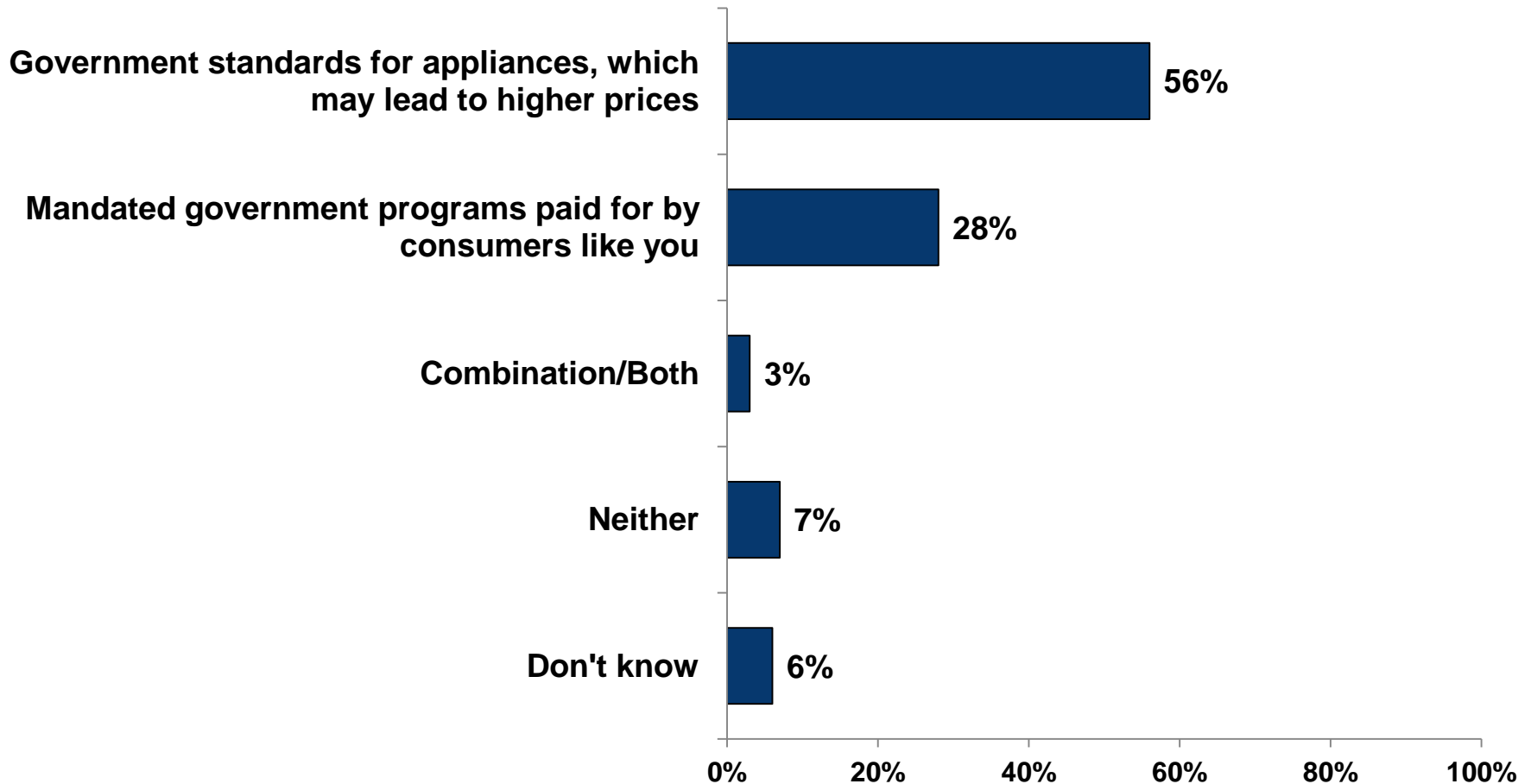
**On the issue of new above-ground electricity transmission lines, supporters say new lines could bring in affordable electricity generated by hydro and wind facilities in Canada. Opponents say transmission lines are ugly, and can pose health risks. Do you strongly or oppose new above-ground electricity transmission lines?**



*\*Wording difference: On the issue of new above-ground electricity transmission lines, supporters say new lines could bring in affordable electricity generated by hydro and wind facilities in Canada or neighboring regions. Opponents say transmission lines are ugly, require rights of way through many communities, pose health risks, and their expensive construction could be avoided if we built wind generating facilities closer to where they are needed in New England. Based on this information would you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose building new above-ground electricity transmission lines?*

Some people say the only way to really reduce electricity usage is with government-mandated energy efficiency programs, like home energy audits and insulation programs. Others say government energy efficiency standards for appliances—like the Energy Star ratings—can result in equally significant energy reductions, even though it may result in higher appliance prices for consumers.

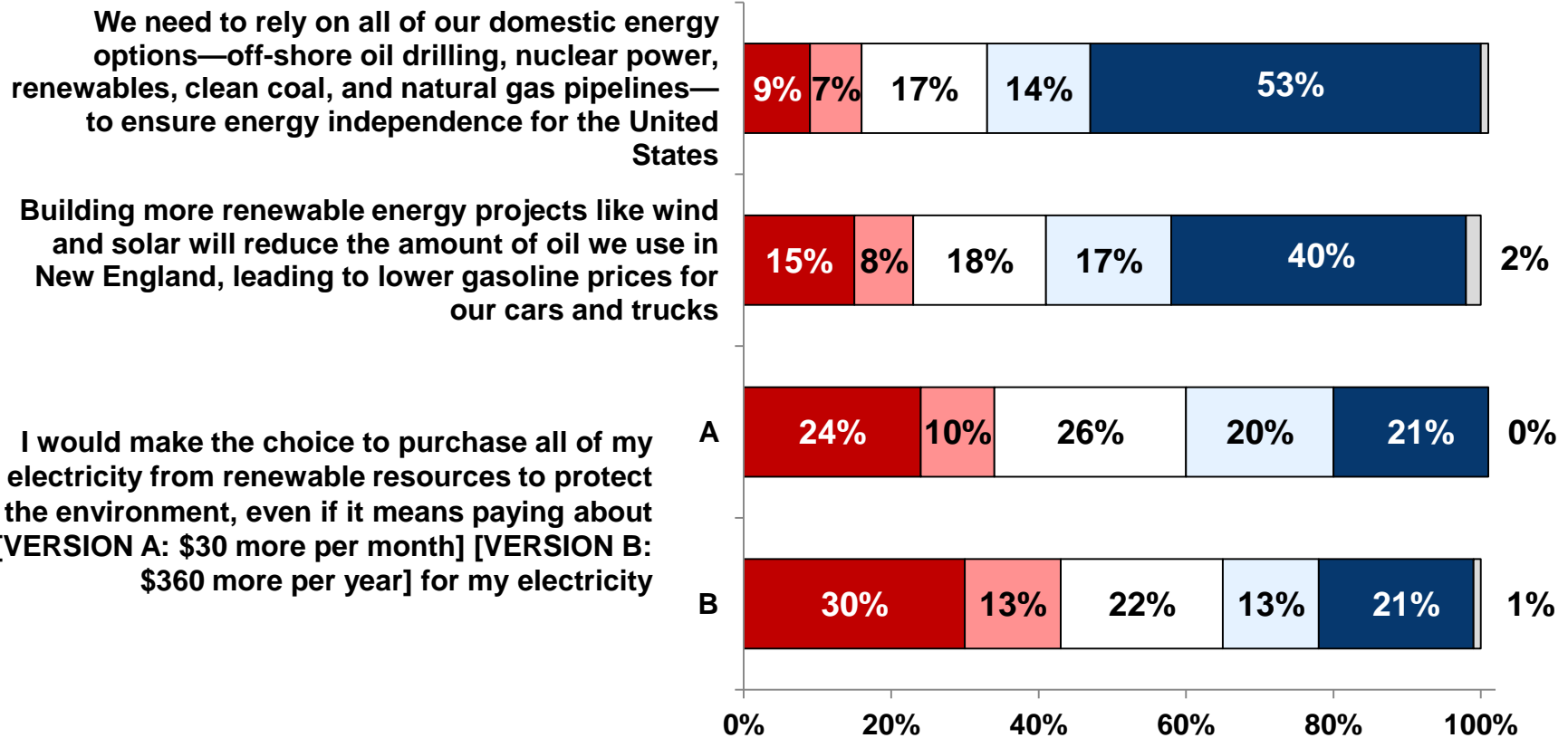
## Which one of these two approaches do you think is the better option?



# Using a scale of 1=*Strongly disagree* and 5=*Strongly agree*

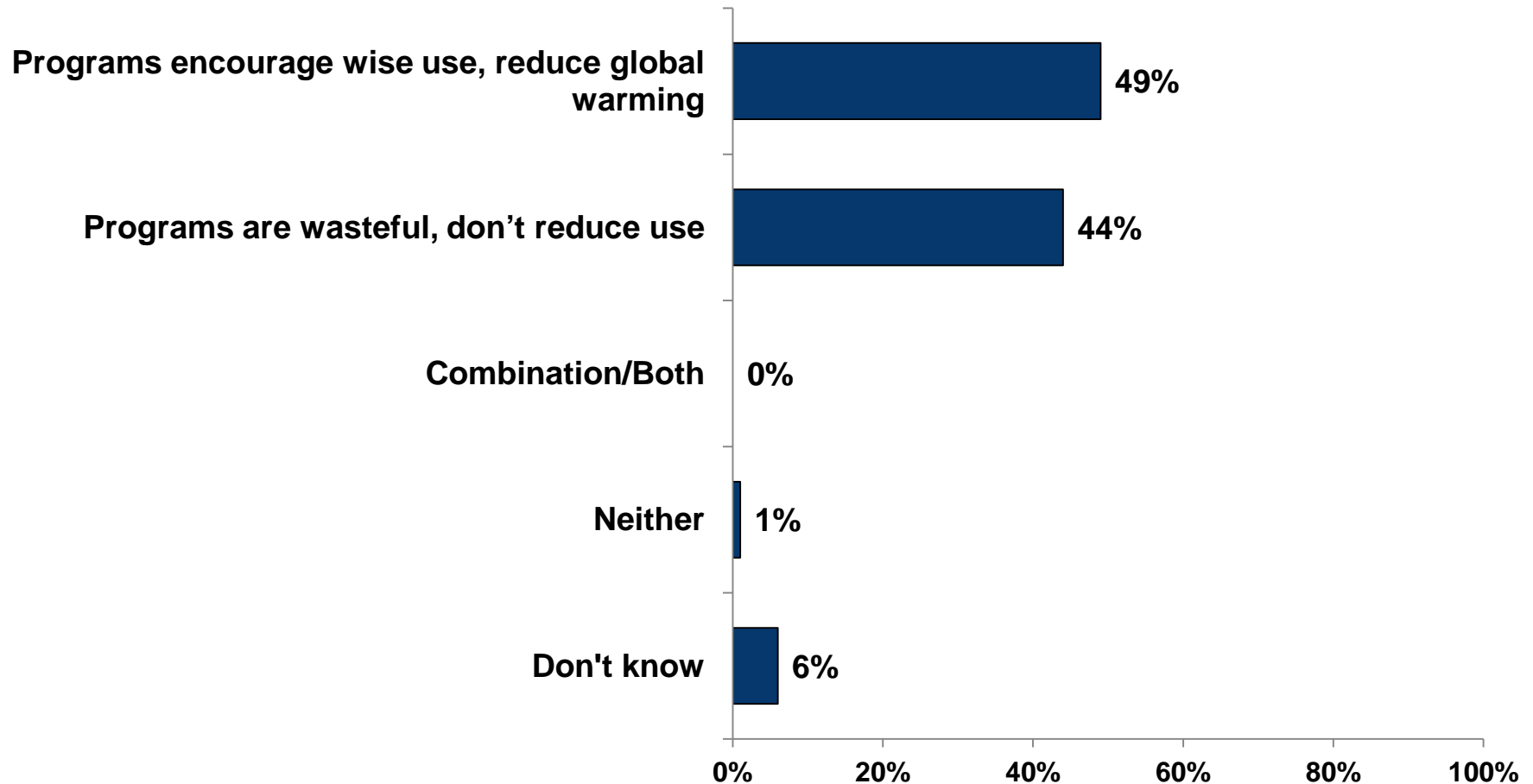
## Please rate your level of agreement with each of the following statements

■ 1=Strongly disagree   
 ■ 2   
  3   
  4   
 ■ 5=Strongly agree   
  Don't know



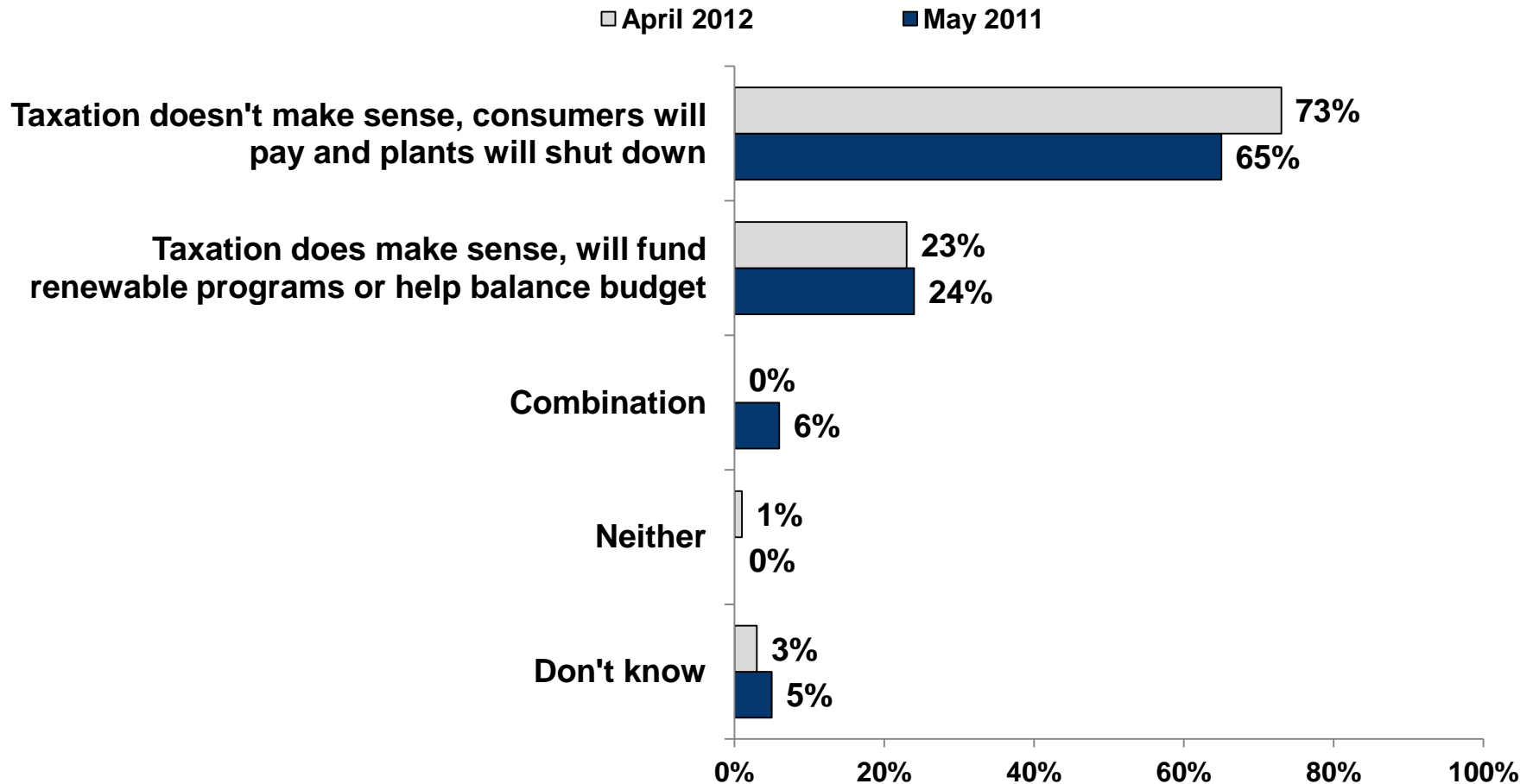
In some states, a surcharge is paid by all electricity customers to subsidize energy efficiency and green energy programs. Some people say these programs help encourage the wise use of electricity and reduce global warming. Others say these programs are wasteful, and do nothing to reduce electricity usage or help global warming.

## Which of these positions is closer to your own?

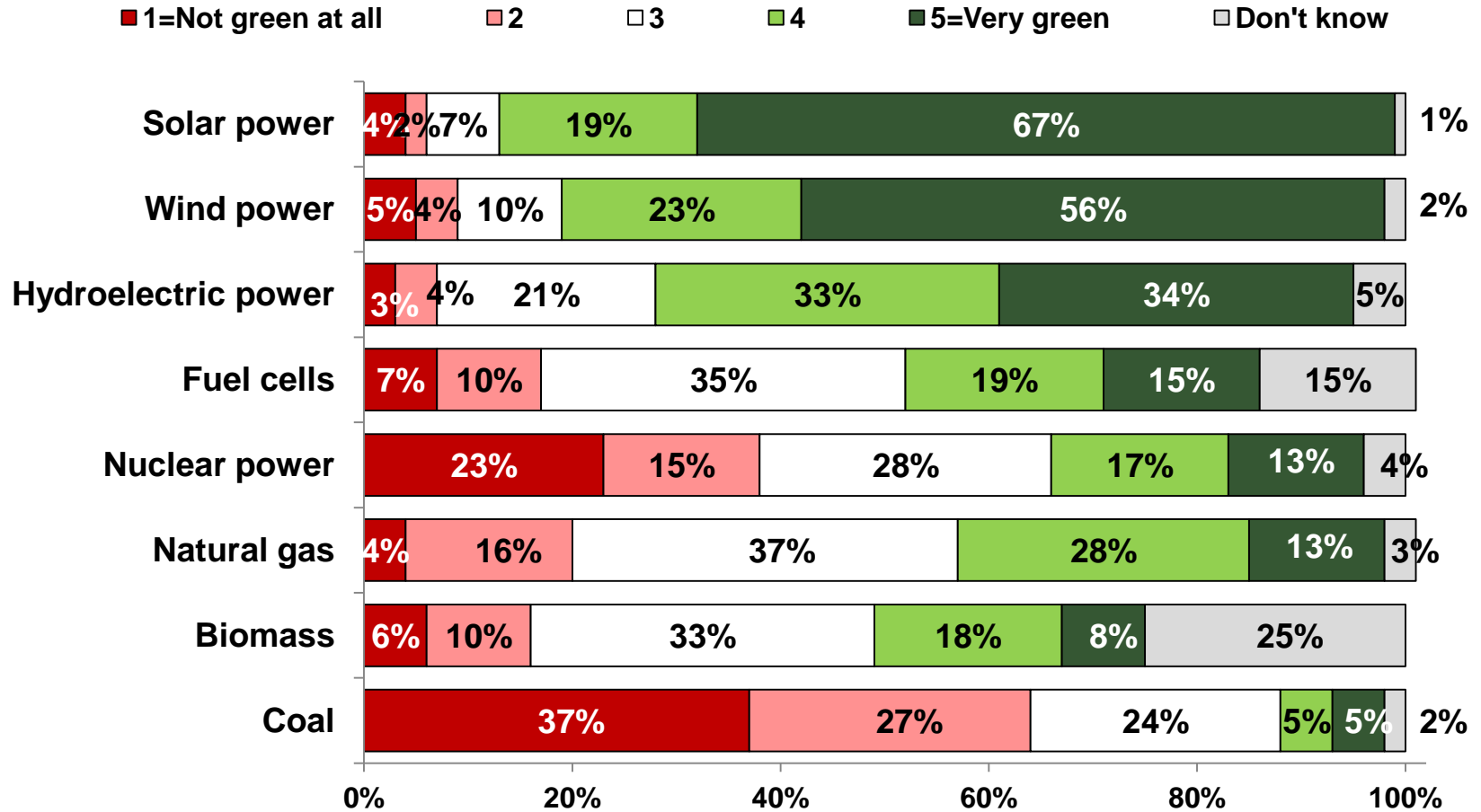


There have been proposals in some New England states to impose a new tax totaling up to hundreds of millions of dollars each year on electricity generating companies. Some people say that this taxation makes sense, since the revenue will be used to fund renewable and energy efficiency programs or help balance the state budget. Others say that this taxation doesn't make any sense at all because the companies will just find a way pass the extra costs onto consumers or will shut down needed electricity plants.

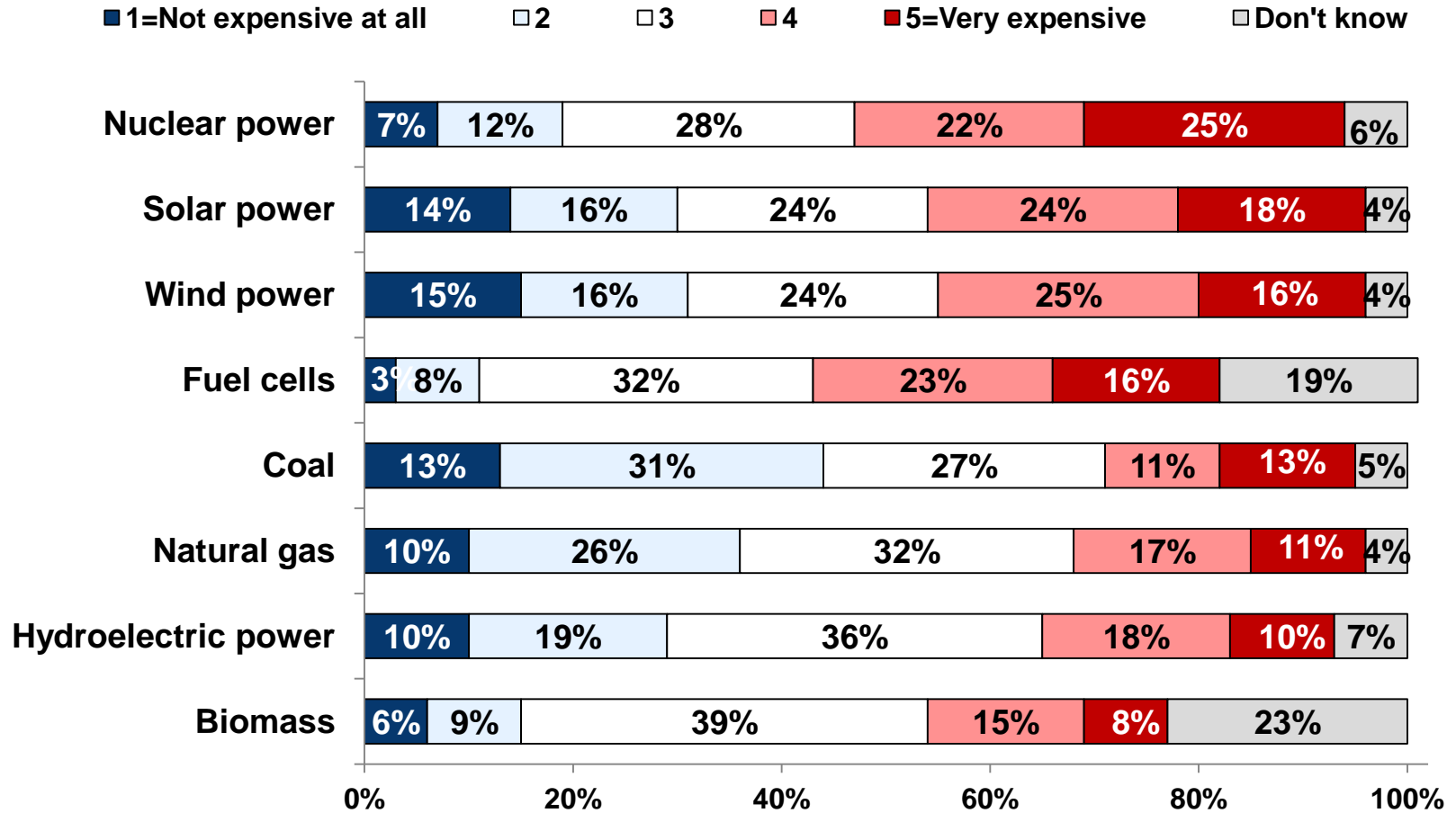
### Which of these positions is closer to your own?



Using a scale of 1=Not green at all and 5=Very green  
 Please rate how green you think the following electricity-generating technologies are

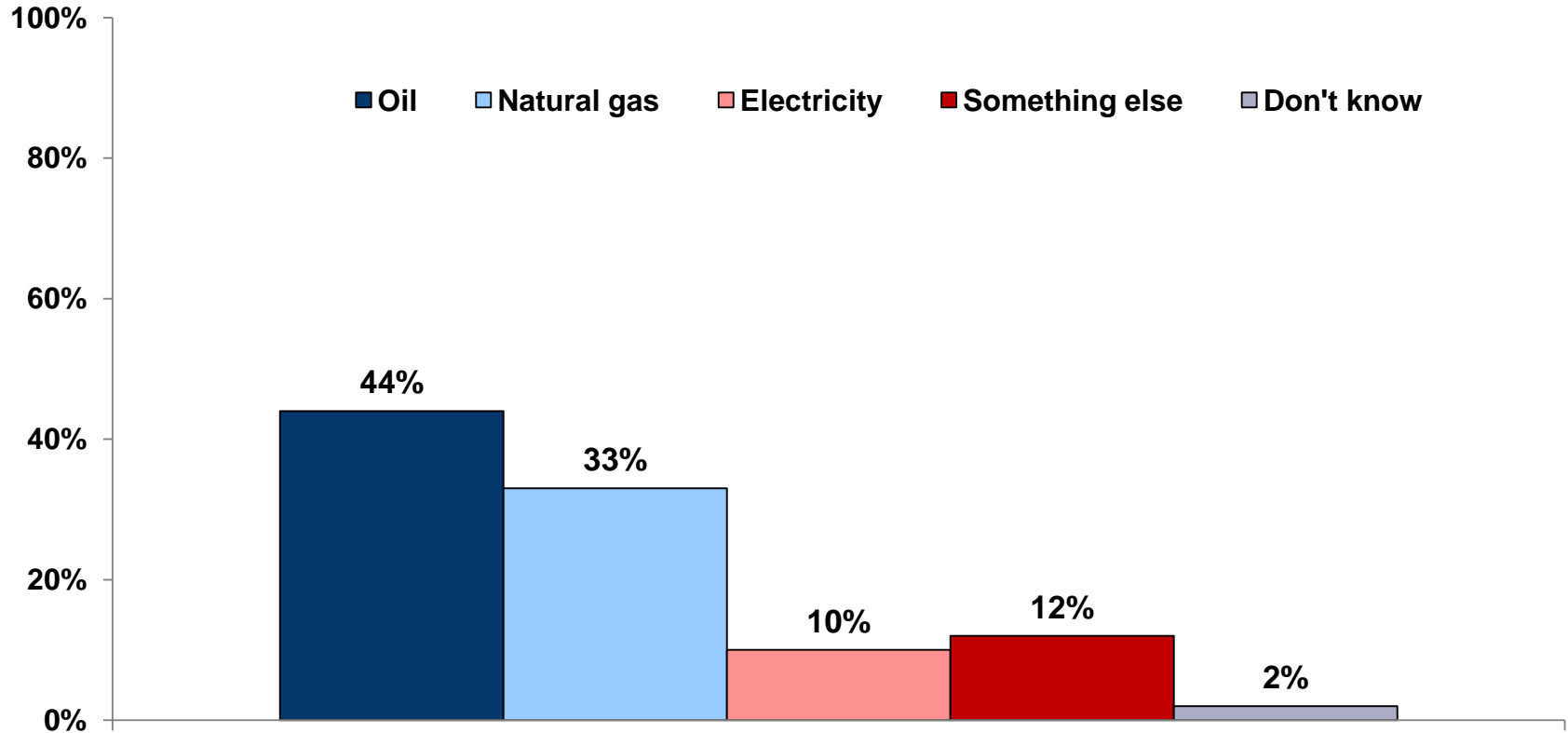


Using a scale of 1=Not expensive at all and 5=Very expensive  
 Please rate how expensive you think the following electricity-generating technologies are



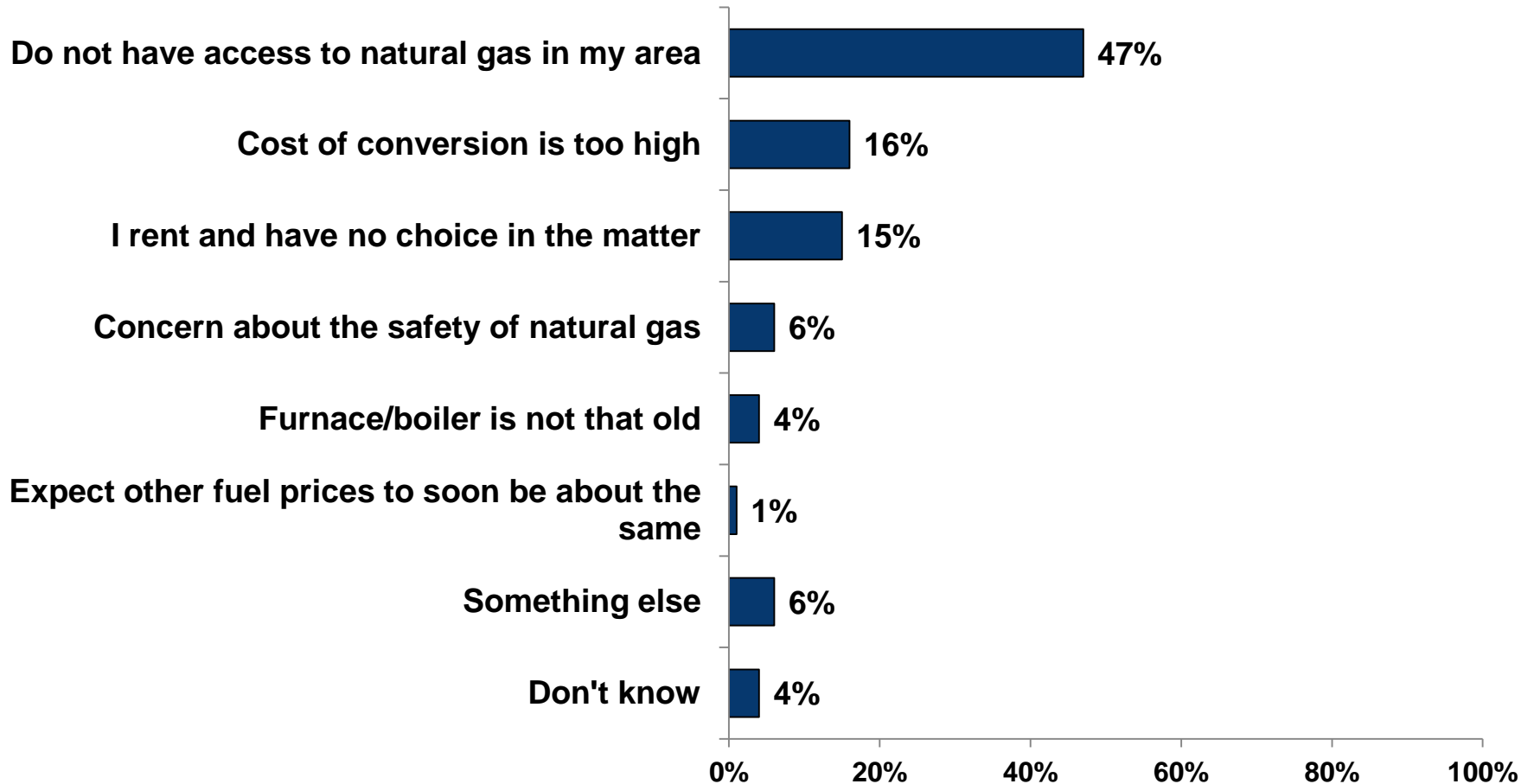


# Is your residence primarily heated by oil, natural gas, electricity, or something else?



(If not *natural gas*, n=393)

## Which one of the following is the main reason you have not converted to natural gas for home heating:



# Demographics

Income: \$0-19,999	7%	Age: 18-25	3%
\$20-34,999	9	26-35	13
\$35-49,999	12	36-45	24
\$50-74,999	16	46-55	22
\$75-99,999	14	56-64	16
\$100-150,000	13	65+	22
Over \$150,000	15		
Refused	14	HS education or less	21%
		Some coll./tech./voc.	19
Democrat	30%	Graduated college	35
Republican	19	Graduate/Professional school	24
Independent	31		
Other/Don't know/Refused	20	Female	53%
		Male	47