



**New England Energy Alliance  
2010 New England Consumer Energy Survey**

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**April 2010**

# About the Survey

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- **Telephone Interview Dates – April 14-21, 2010**
  - 700 interviews completed in New England
  - Connecticut – 246
  - Maine – 63
  - Massachusetts – 265
  - New Hampshire – 60
  - Rhode Island – 38
  - Vermont – 27
  
- **Tracking data shown for past studies conducted in New England in January 2009, April 2008 and March 2007**

# What do you think are the first and second most important issues facing New England today?

	April 2010	January 2009	April 2008 <sup>1</sup>	March 2007 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Economy/Recession*/Jobs</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Health care concerns</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Taxes/Deficit*/Government spending</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>High energy prices (gas, heating, oil, etc.)</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Global warming/Environmental issues</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Housing market weakness*</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Infrastructure/Traffic</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>na</b>	<b>na</b>	<b>na</b>
<b>Corruption/poor government</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>na</b>	<b>na</b>	<b>na</b>
<b>War in Iraq/Afghanistan*</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Not sure/Refused</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>

Q1 Note: Top responses shown; responses shown in abbreviated form. \**Recession 2009/2010, deficit, market weakness and Afghanistan 2010* <sup>1</sup>Single most important issue in 2008 and 2007.



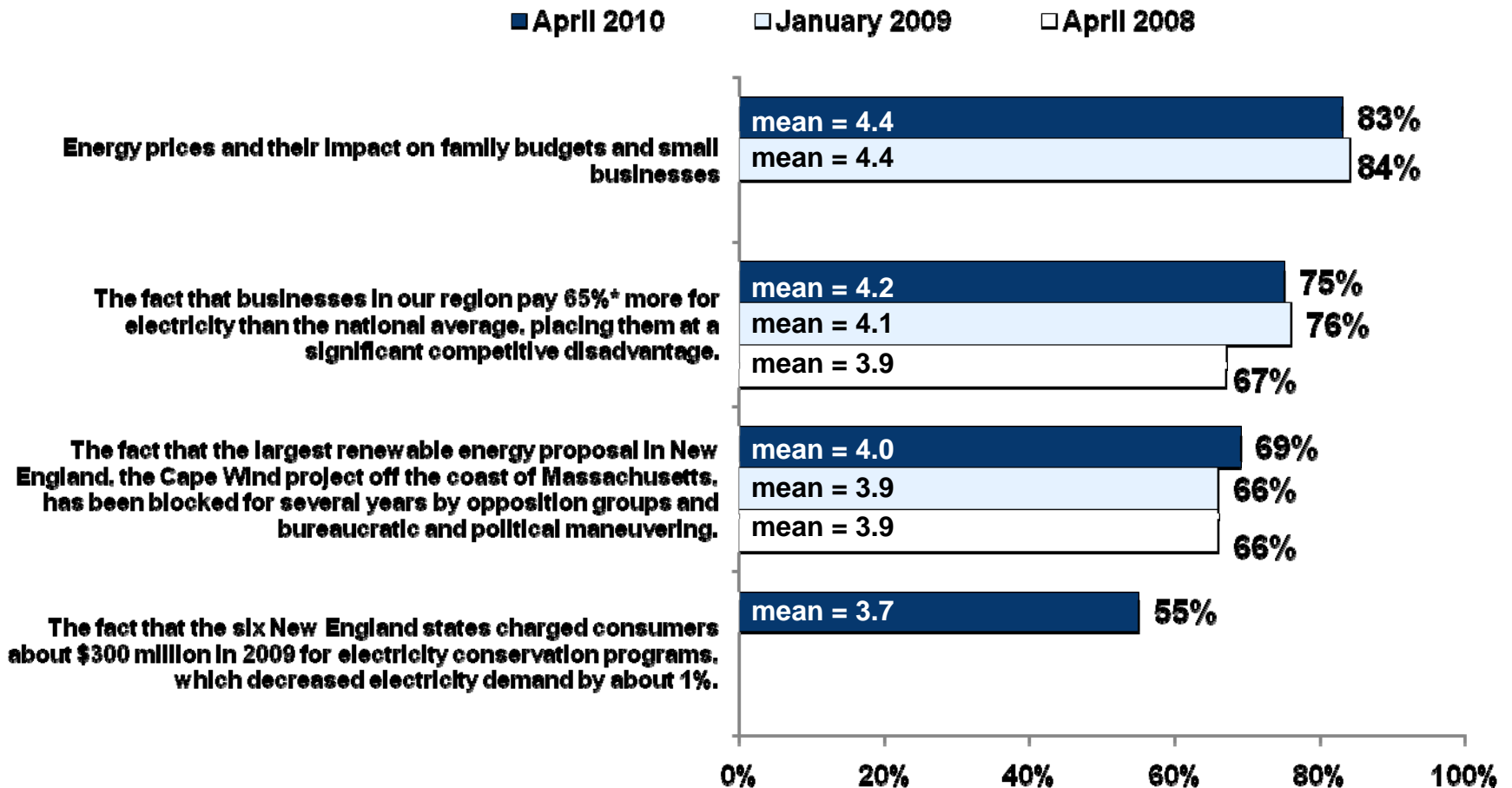
# What do you think is the single most important energy-related issue facing New England today?

	April 2010	January 2009
(High prices for gasoline, heating oil, natural gas or electricity)	47%	12
(Lack of renewable energy like wind and solar for electricity generation)	21	18
(An electricity supply that is over 50% dependant on fossil fuels)	4	na
(Potential for oil prospecting/ drilling in or near the Georges Banks fishing grounds)	3	7
(Global Warming from the burning of fossil fuels)	2	5
Dependence on (foreign) oil/energy	2	17
Nuclear energy*	2	1
(Repeated efforts by elected officials and environmental activists that subvert established permitting procedures for the construction of new energy supply facilities)	1	3
Pollution	1	1
New/variety of energy sources	1	1
Conserve energy/waste of energy*	1	1
(Potential for federal and state tax increases on gasoline by 25 to 50 cents per gallon)	na	23
(Other)	5	4
(Not sure/refused)	9	6

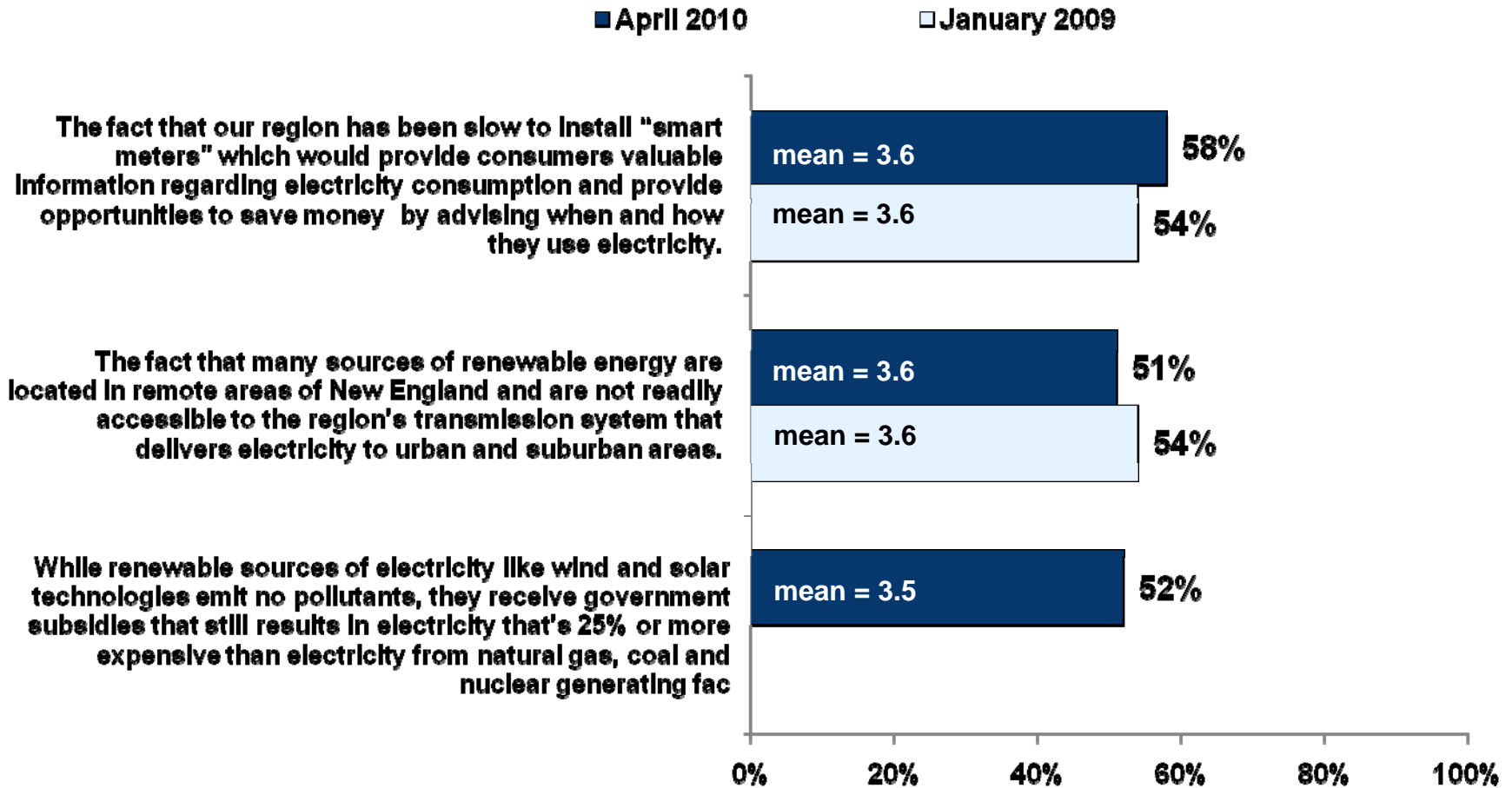
Q2 \*2009 wording: *An electricity supply that is 25% dependant on imported oil, which is among the highest in the nation, and Need for nuclear energy, and Use a lot of energy/conservation*



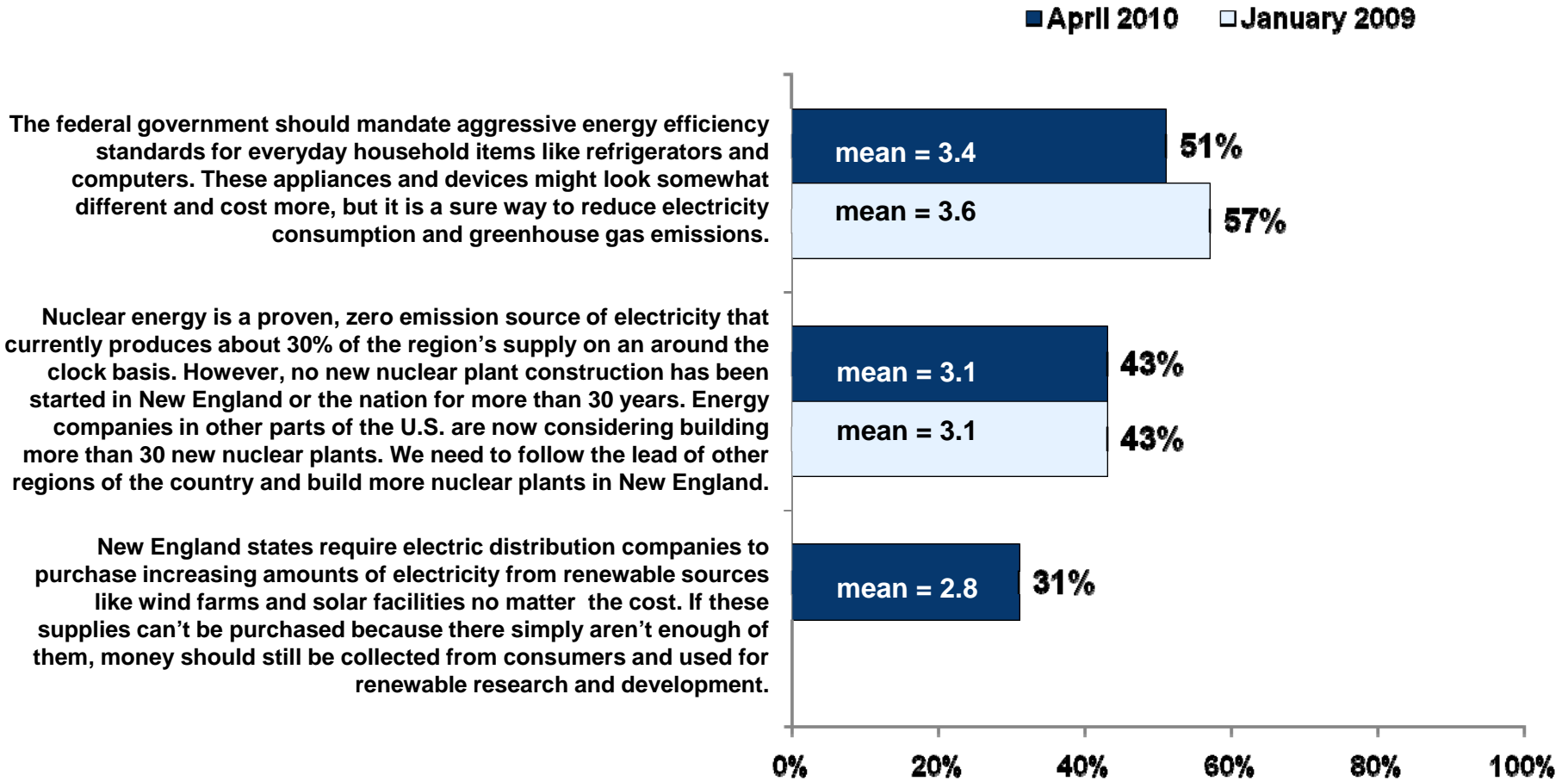
Using a scale of 1=*not concerned at all* and 5=*extremely concerned*  
 Please rate your level of concern about each of the following regional  
 energy-related issues  
 (Percentages show ratings of 4 and 5 combined)



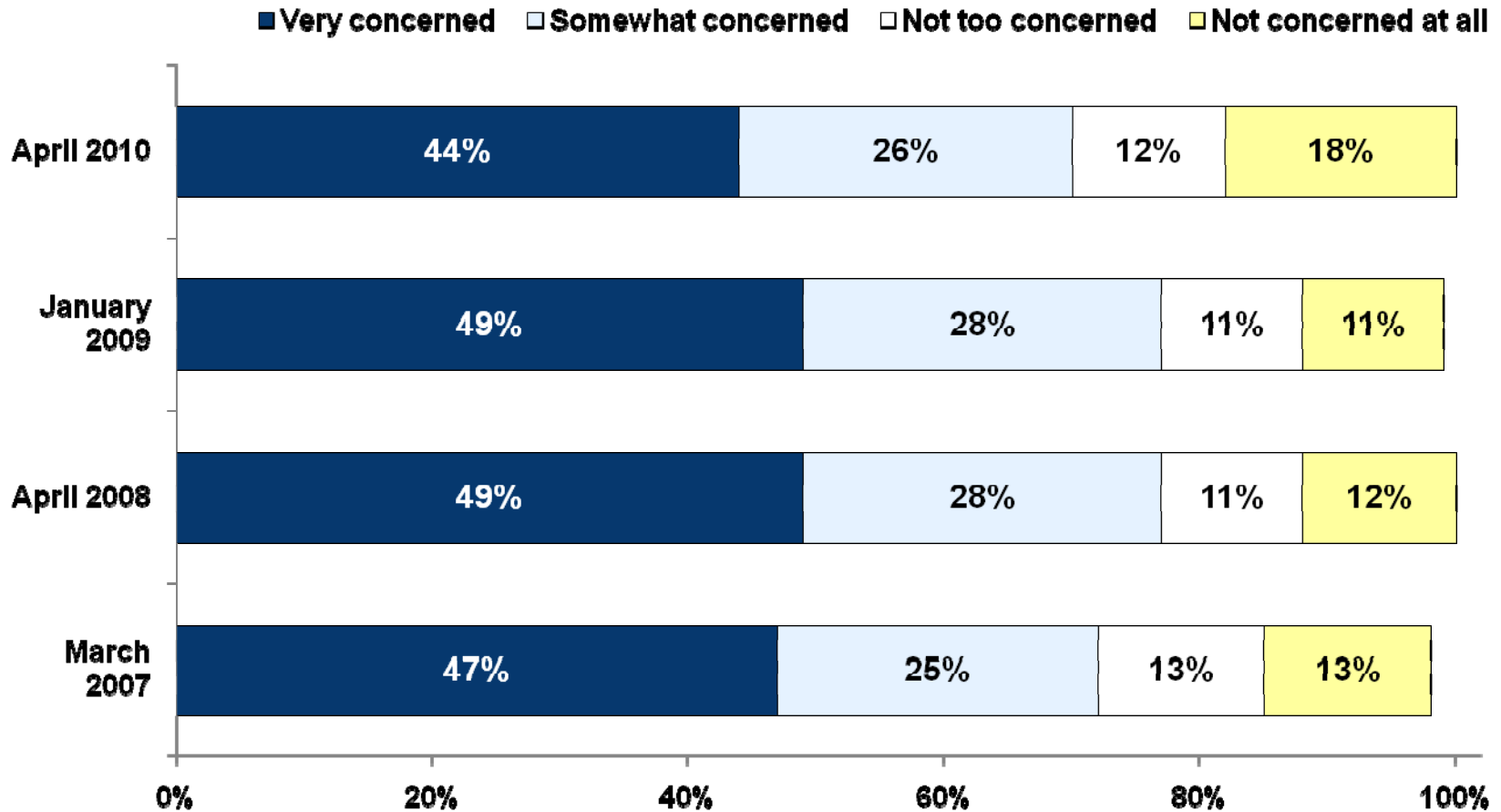
Using a scale of 1=*not concerned at all* and 5=*extremely concerned*  
 Please rate your level of concern about each of the following regional  
 energy-related issues  
 (Percentages show ratings of 4 and 5 combined)



Using a scale of 1=*strongly disagree* and 5=*strongly agree*  
 Please provide your level of agreement with each of the following  
 regional energy proposals  
 (Percentages show ratings of 4 and 5 combined)

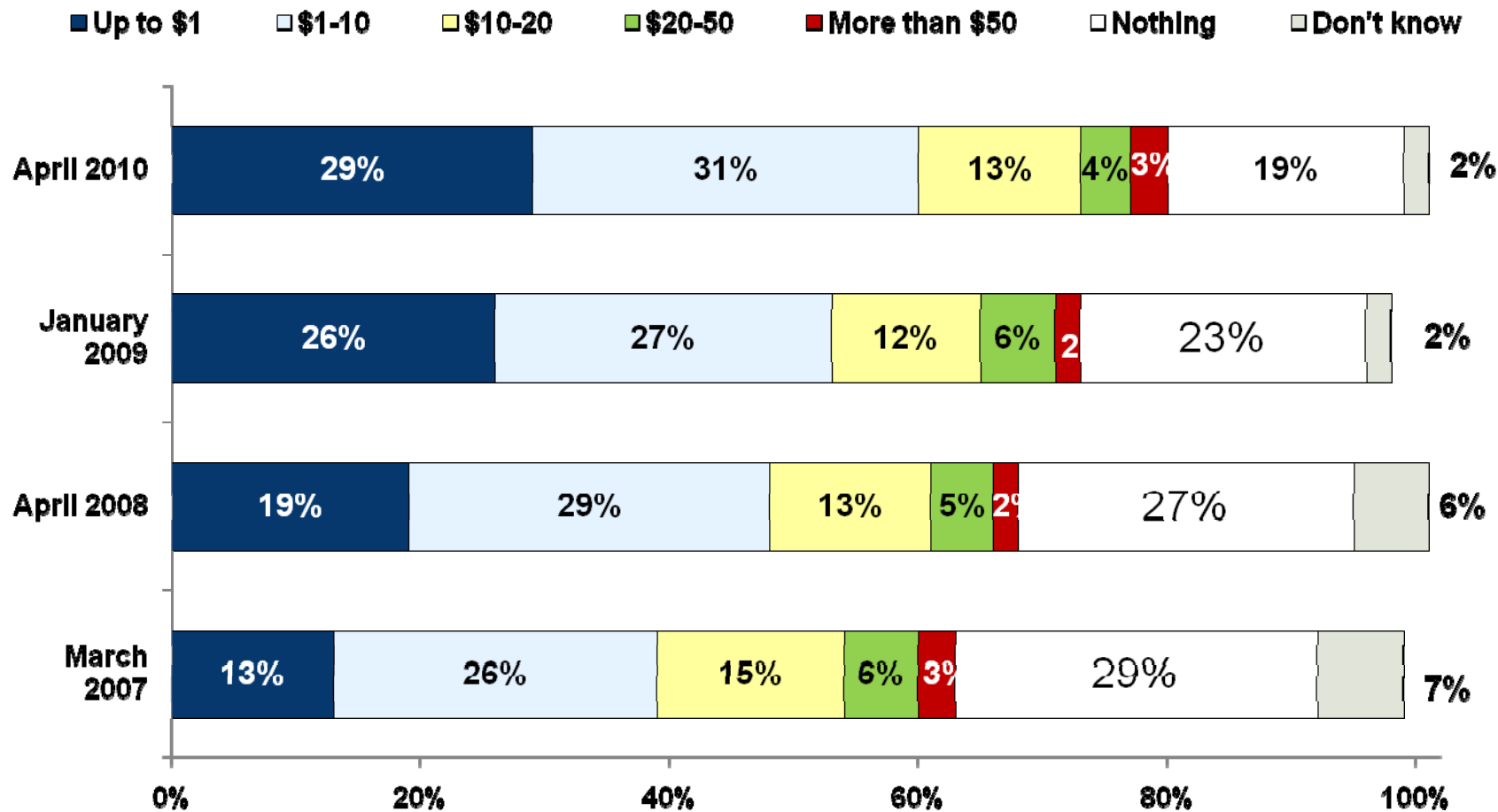


# In general, how concerned are you about the effects of global warming?

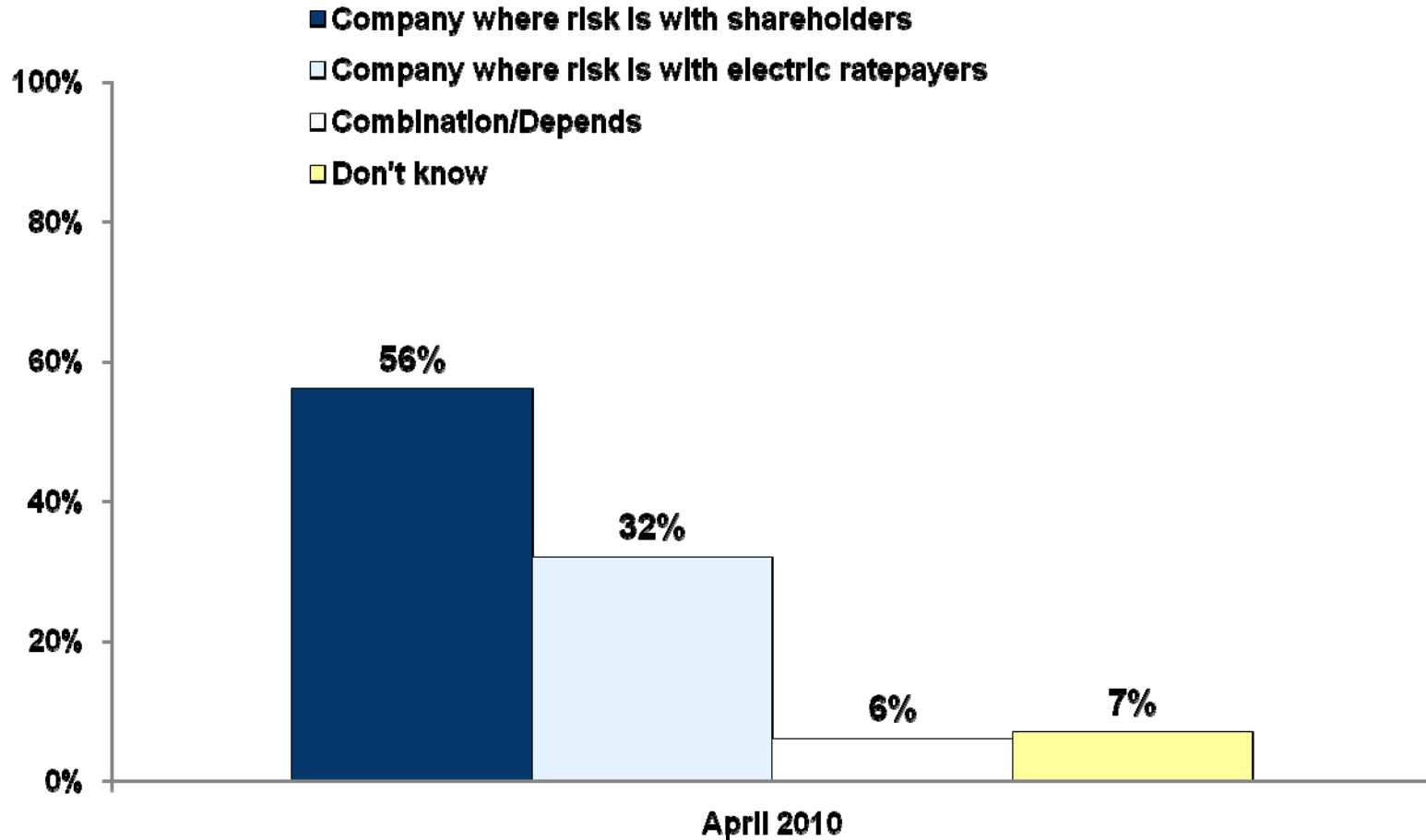




# About how much extra per month would you be willing to pay on your electric bill to support utility and government efforts to limit the effects of global warming by reducing carbon dioxide emissions from power plants?

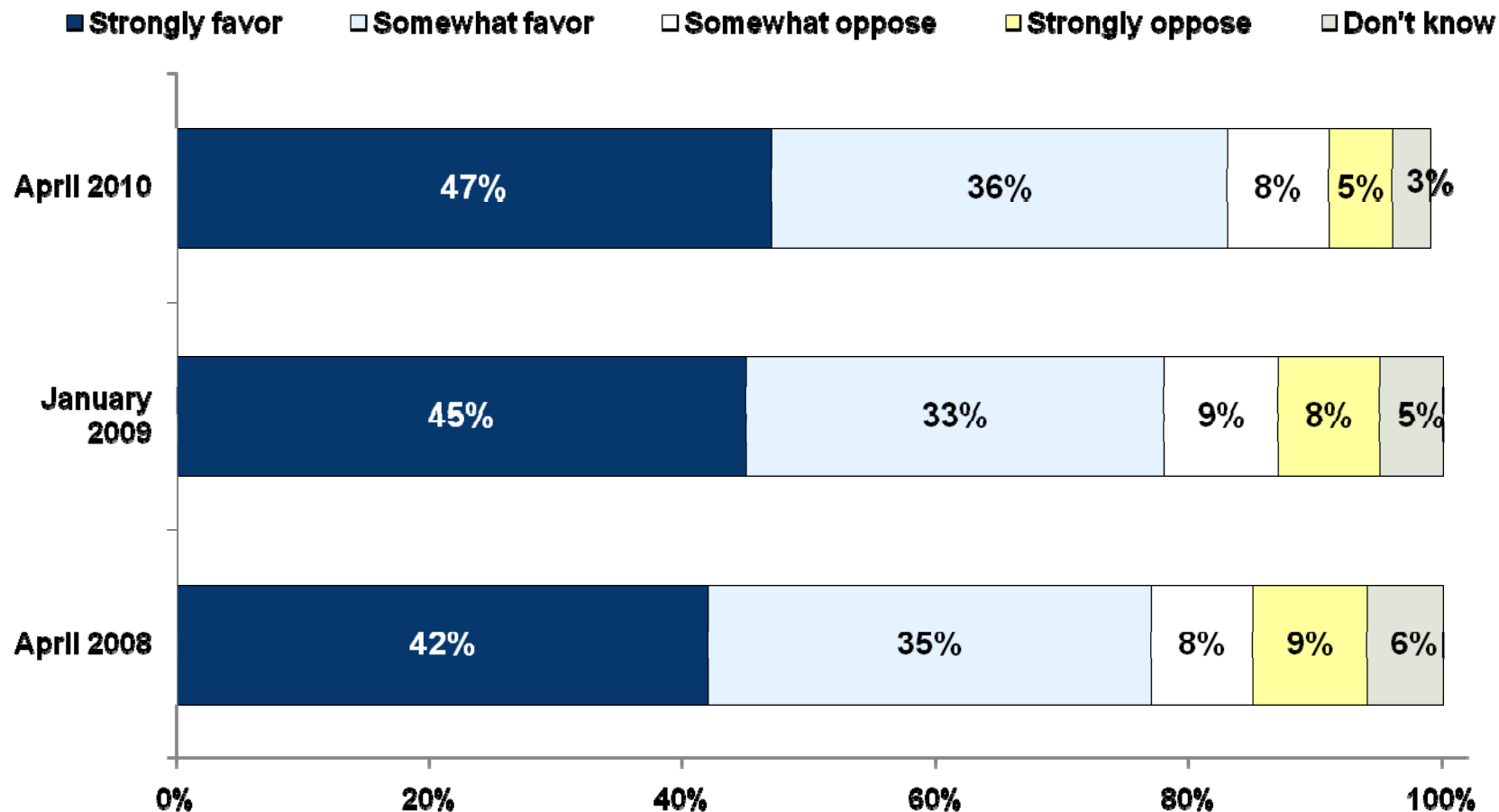


Whenever new electricity plants are built, there is some financial risk involved. Which type of company do you think should build the next generation of electricity generating plants – a company whose financial risk is borne mostly by its shareholders, or a company whose financial risk is borne mostly by electric ratepayers?

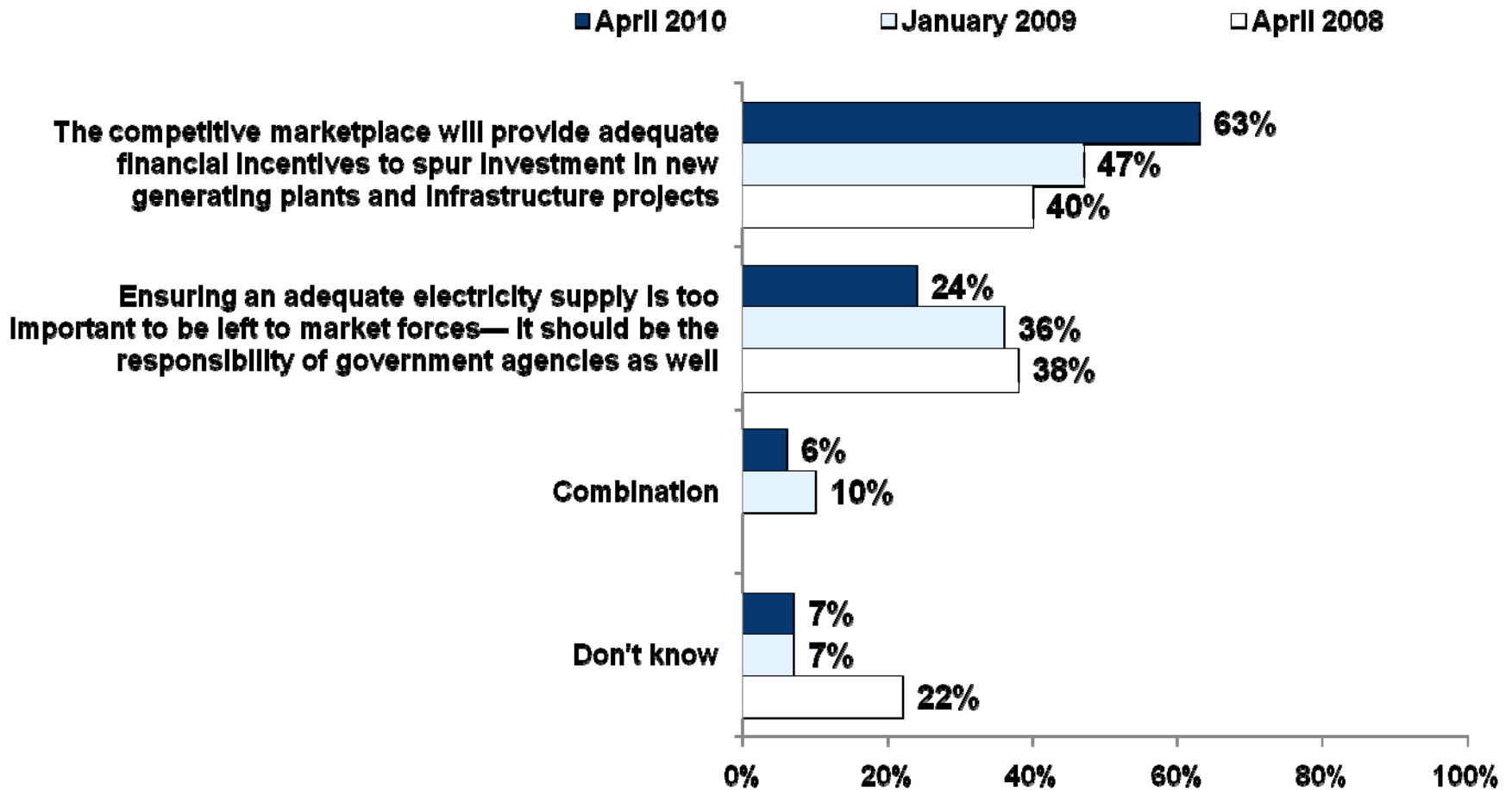


Historically, electricity was delivered by regulated electric utility companies that acted like monopolies. They were mandated by state regulators to build generating plants, as well as generate and deliver electricity to homes and businesses. As you may know, electricity restructuring means that rather than having a regulated utility company responsible for both producing and delivering power, privately-owned companies compete based on price and consumers have the choice from whom to purchase their electricity. Distribution over wires to homes and businesses is still the responsibility of a regulated electric utility company. Under a restructured electricity system, switching electricity suppliers is no more difficult than switching your telephone service from, say, Verizon to Comcast.

## In general, do you favor or oppose this overall concept of consumer choice in the purchase of electricity?

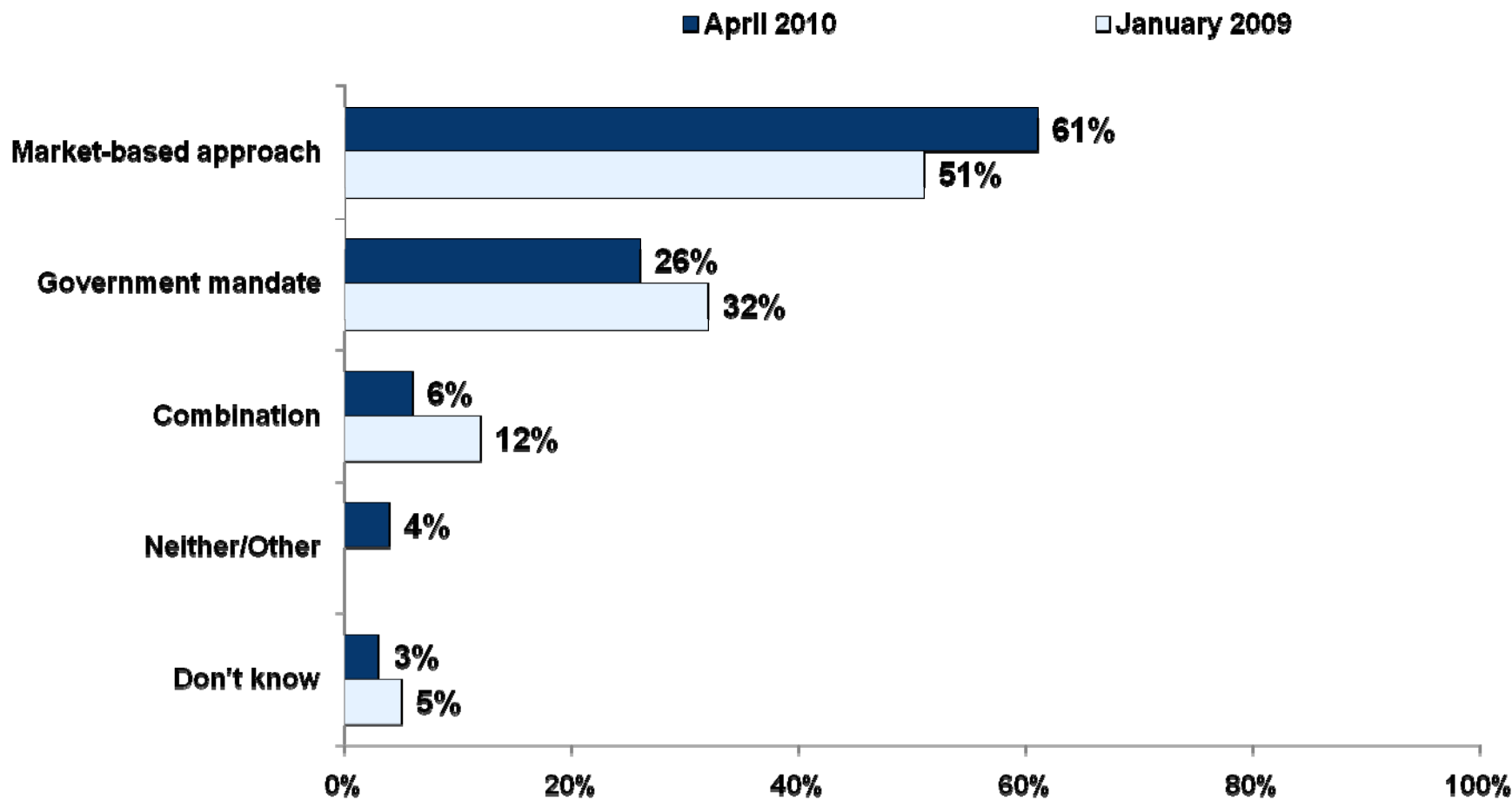


# Which of these two statements about restructured electricity markets is closer to your opinion?



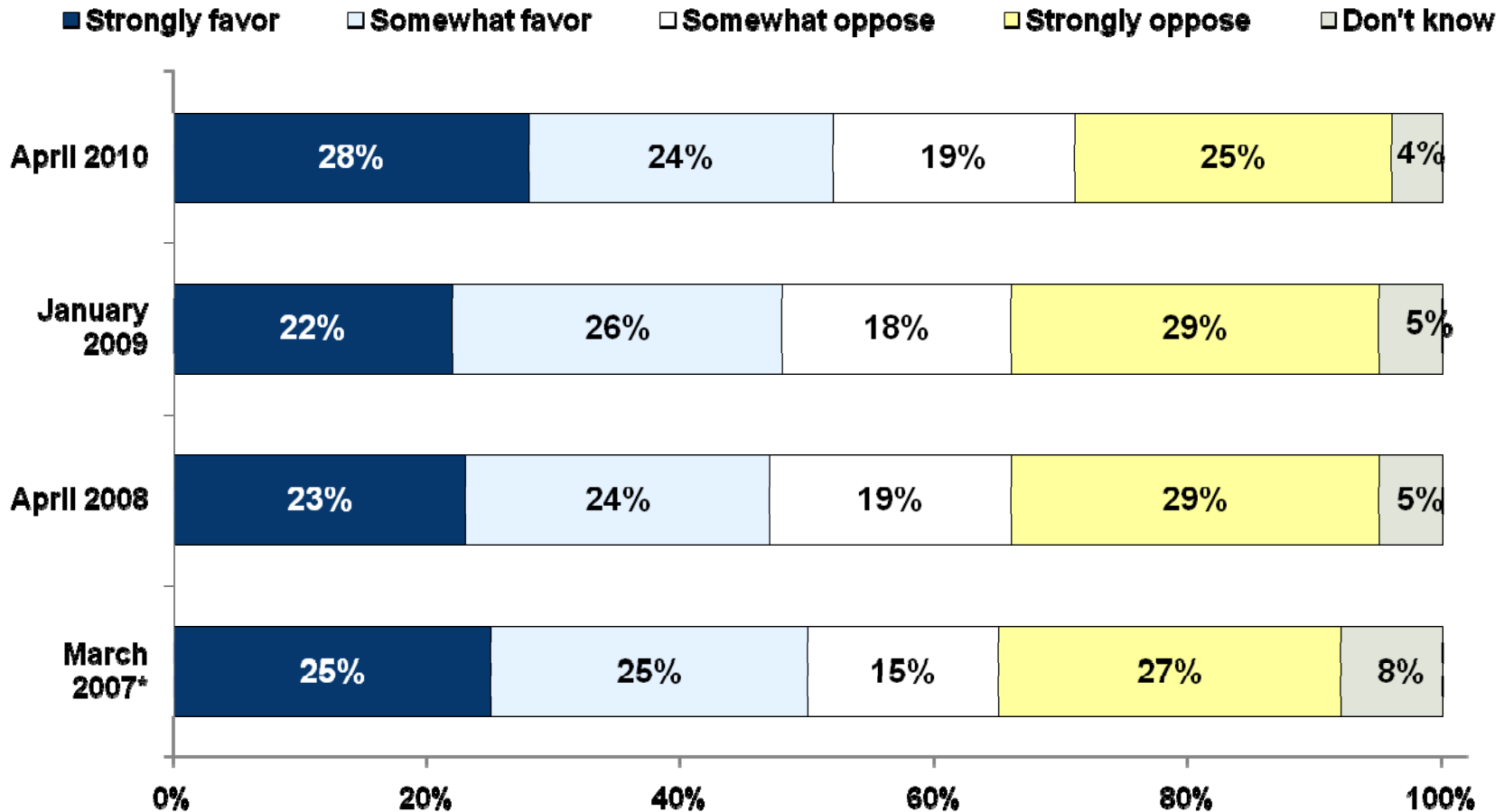
On the issue of limiting the greenhouse gas emissions from electricity generating plants there is a strong consensus to take action, but there are two competing approaches being proposed. One involves a market-based approach such as cap-and trade that uses profit as a motive for companies to invent, improve, or acquire a way to cost-effectively and flexibly reduce their emissions. This approach has been successfully used since the early 1990s to reduce acid rain-causing emissions from electricity generating plants. The other is a government-driven approach through the imposition of taxes and increasingly tougher mandates that a generating plant would have to either comply with or face shutdown.

**Based on this information, which of these two approaches would you favor?**



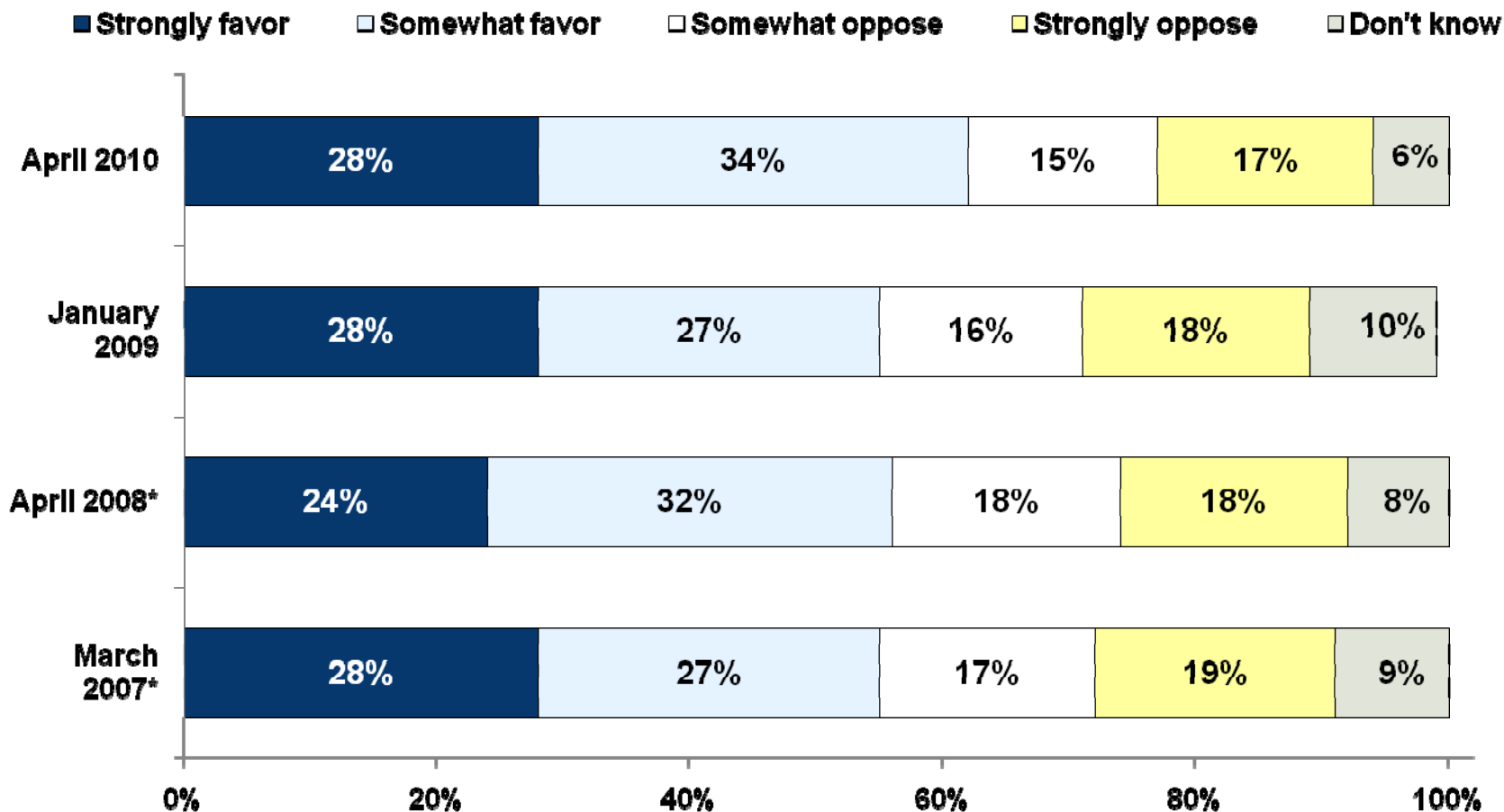
On the issue of building new nuclear energy plants, supporters point to the fact that nuclear plants emit no greenhouse gases, have excellent safety records, and most recently President Obama has endorsed the construction of new plants. Opponents say that there is still no workable solution for disposing of (A: nuclear waste/B: spent nuclear fuel), that nuclear plants are very expensive to build, and that an accident cannot be ruled out.

**Based on this information would you favor or oppose building new nuclear energy plants?**

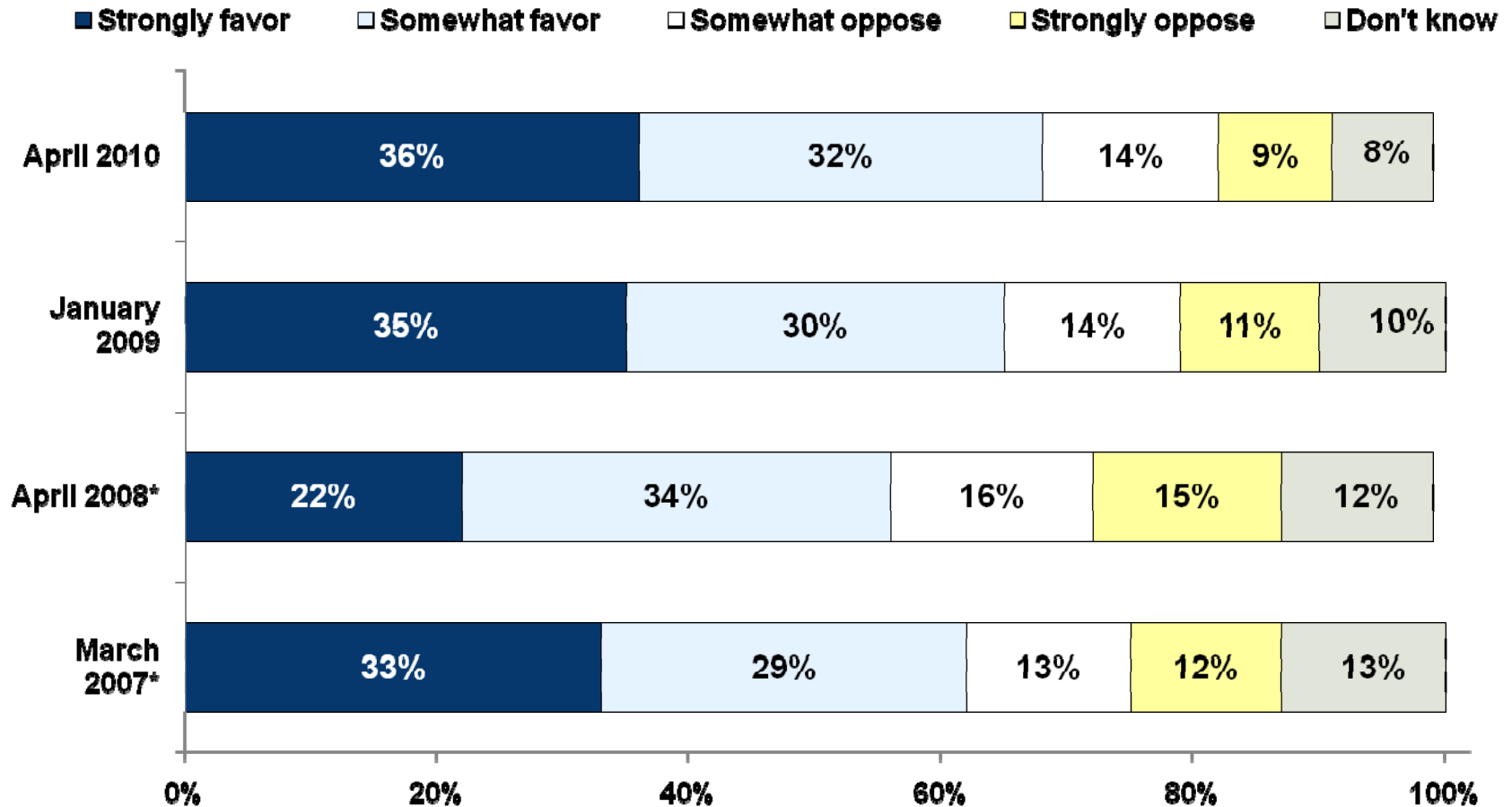


On the issue of renewing the licenses of existing nuclear energy plants, supporters point to the fact that nuclear plants are operating better than ever and must meet rigorous regulatory inspection requirements to gain renewal, and that they don't contribute to global warming. Opponents say that the technology in these facilities is out-dated and these plants are prone to mechanical failure and leaks as they get older.

Based on this information would you favor or oppose renewing licenses for existing nuclear energy plants in Vermont and Massachusetts?



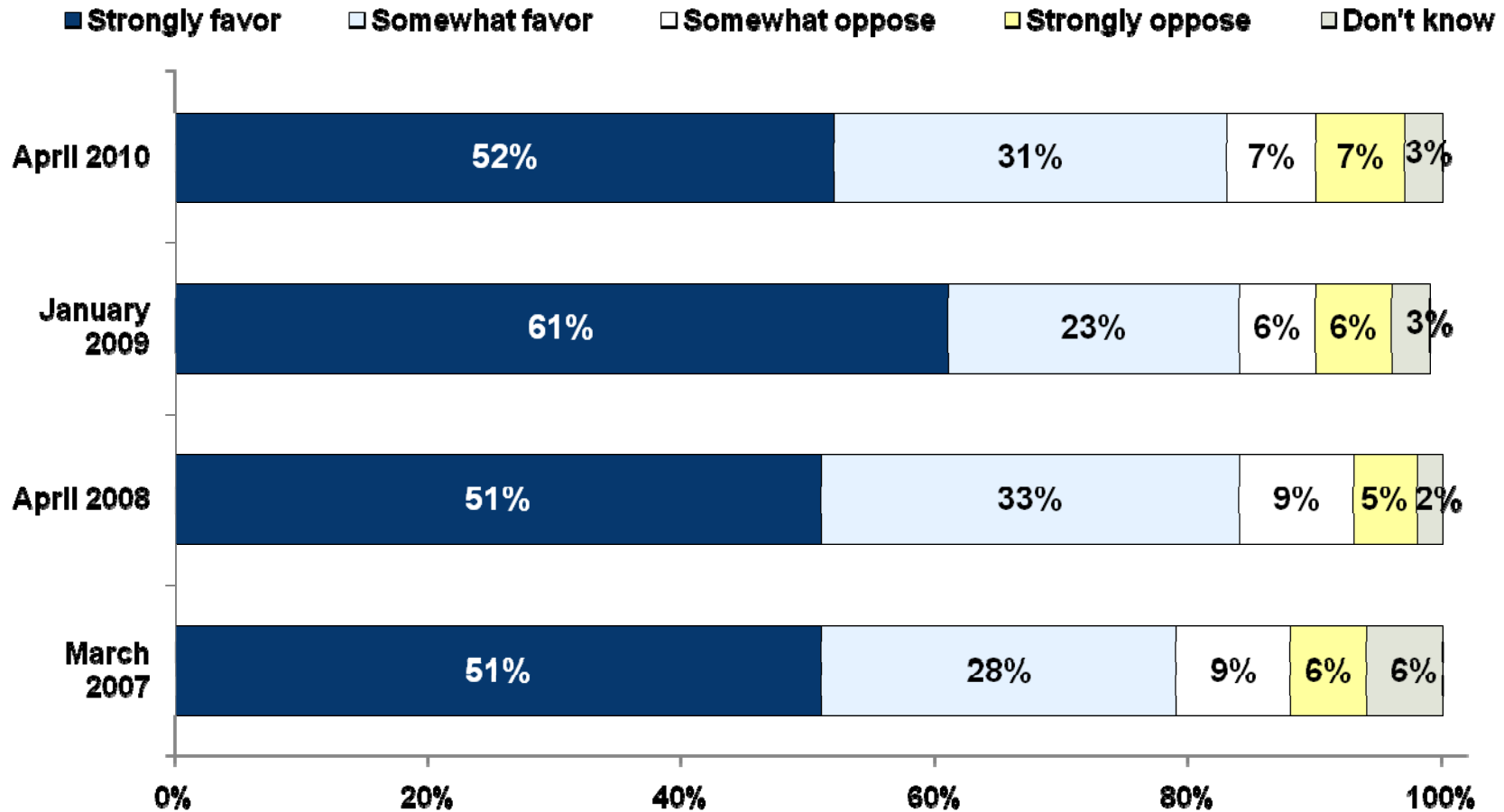
On the issue of liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals, supporters point to the fact that LNG currently supplies 30% of the region's natural gas on a cold winter day, and that they have a proven track record of safety all over the world, and that we need to expand supplies of natural gas. Opponents point to safety concerns like vulnerability to a terrorist threat. Based on this information would you favor or oppose building new LNG terminals?





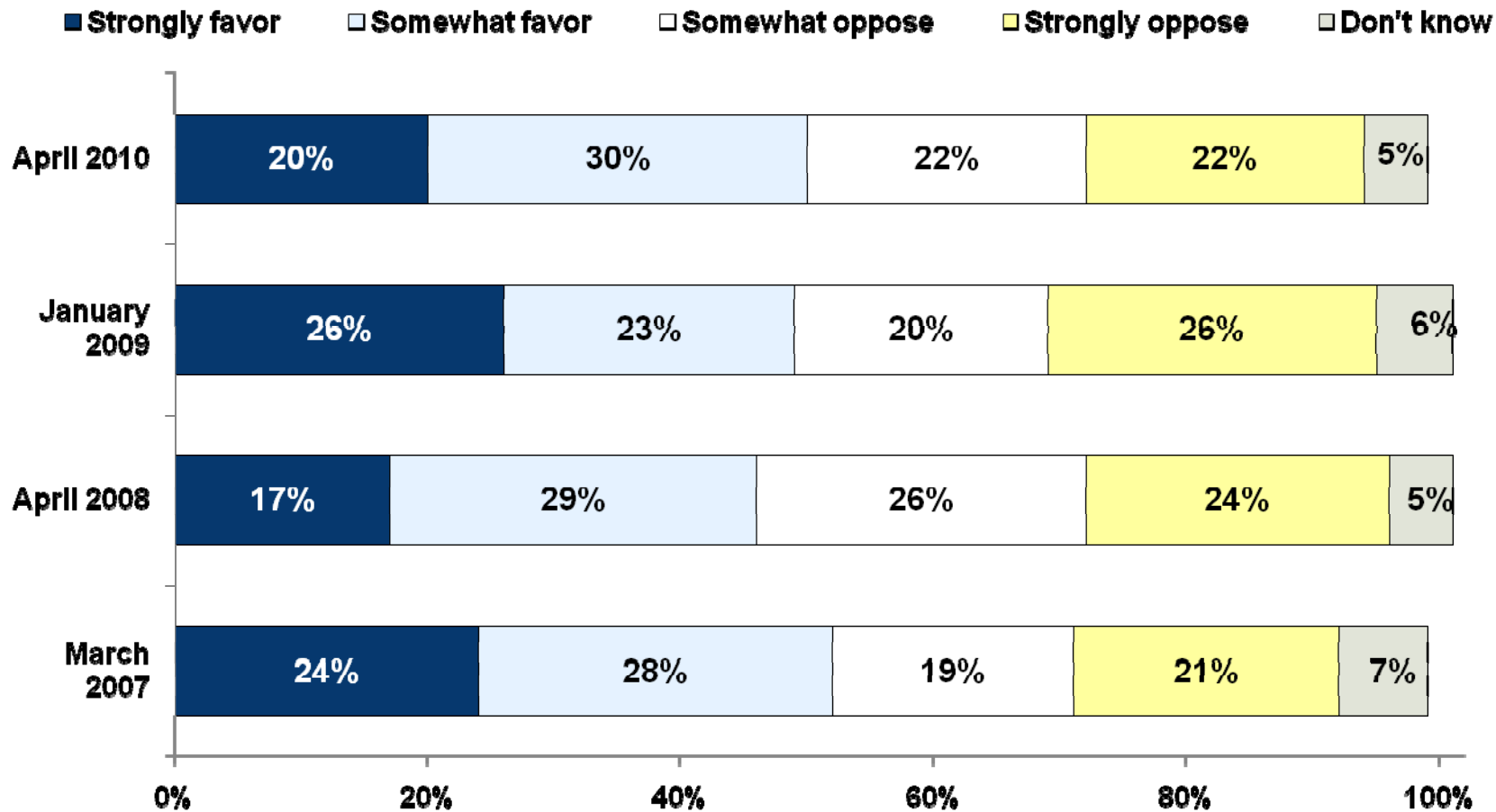
On the issue of large wind farms, supporters point to the fact wind farms don't emit greenhouse gases, that the wind is free and unlimited, and that new advances in technology make this a more viable source of electricity. Opponents say wind farms are ugly, that they are expensive even with taxpayer 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 favor or oppose building large wind farms?



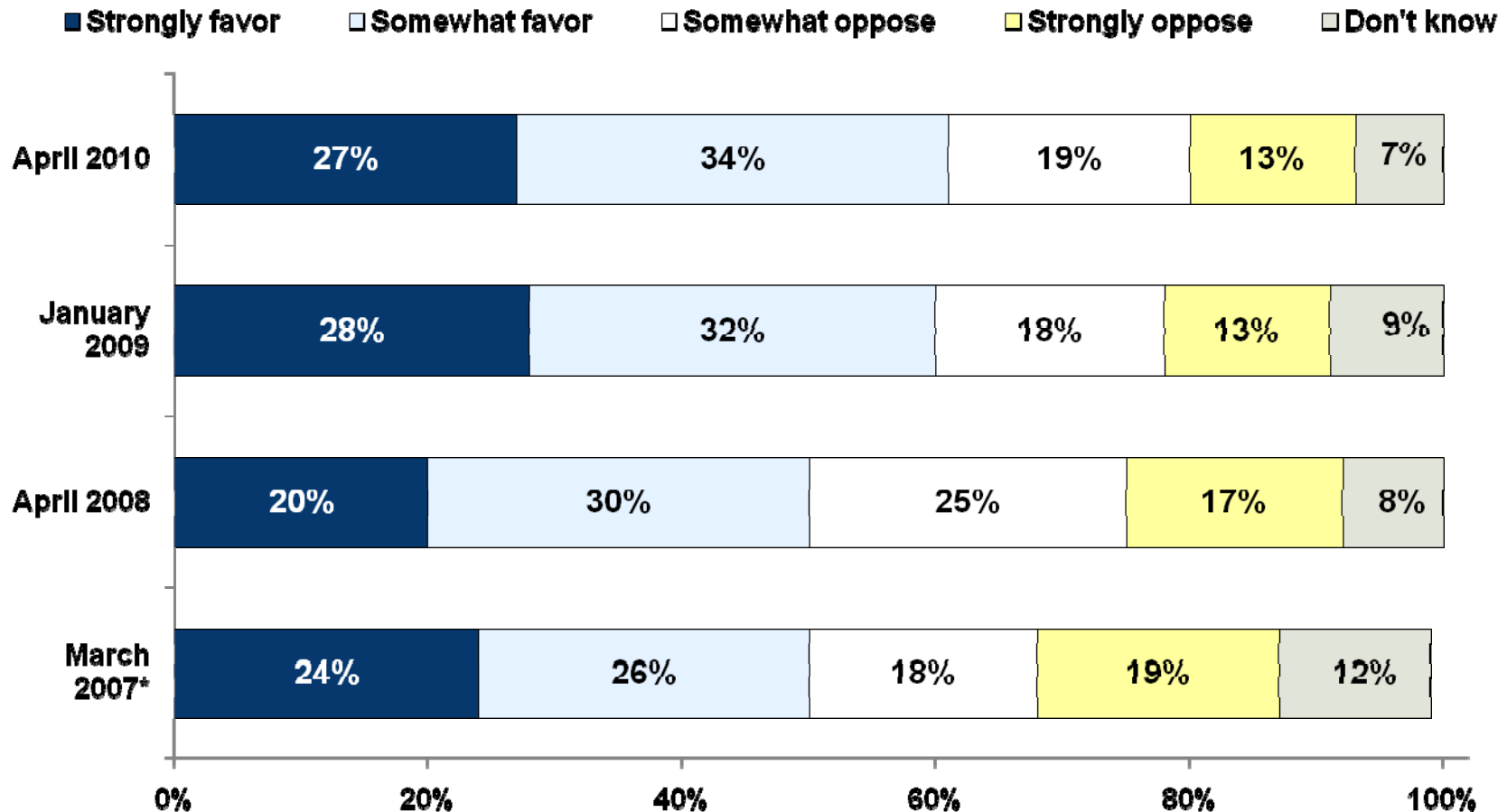
On the issue of clean coal plants, supporters point to the fact that clean coal plants reduce greenhouse gas emissions by about 50% from existing coal technology, that coal is a low cost, domestic source of fuel, and that they are easy to build and operate. Opponents say clean coal plants still produce considerable amounts of greenhouse gases, and that mining coal damages the environment.

## Based on this information would you favor or oppose building clean coal plants?



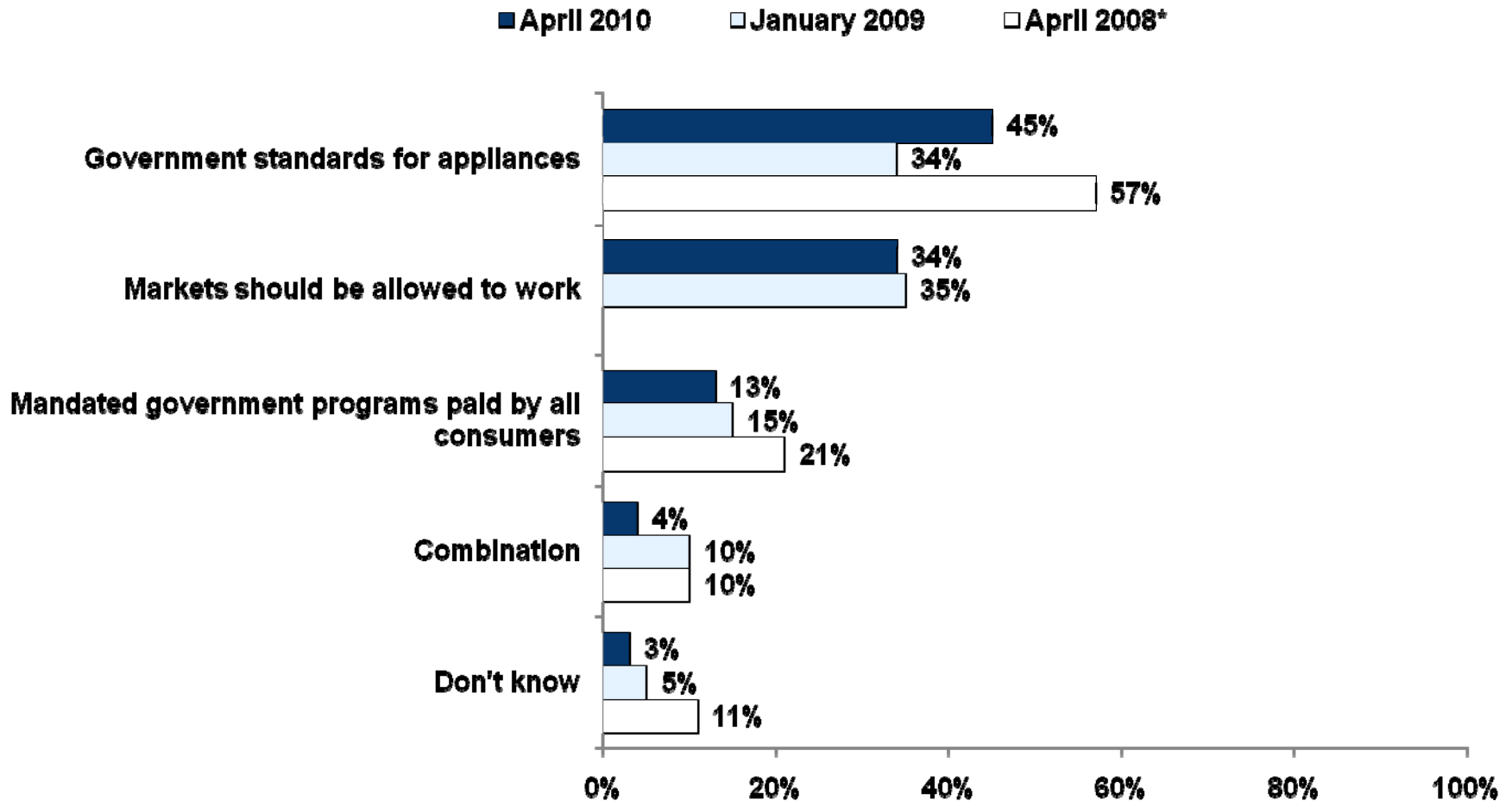
On the issue of new above-ground electricity transmission lines, supporters say congestion on existing transmission lines costs consumers hundreds of millions of dollars each year and jeopardizes reliability, and that new lines would solve this. In addition, new lines could bring in electricity generated by renewable hydroelectric and wind facilities in Canada as well as from wind farms located in the mid-west. 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 simply reduce our use of electricity.

## Based on this information would you favor or oppose building new above-ground electricity transmission lines?



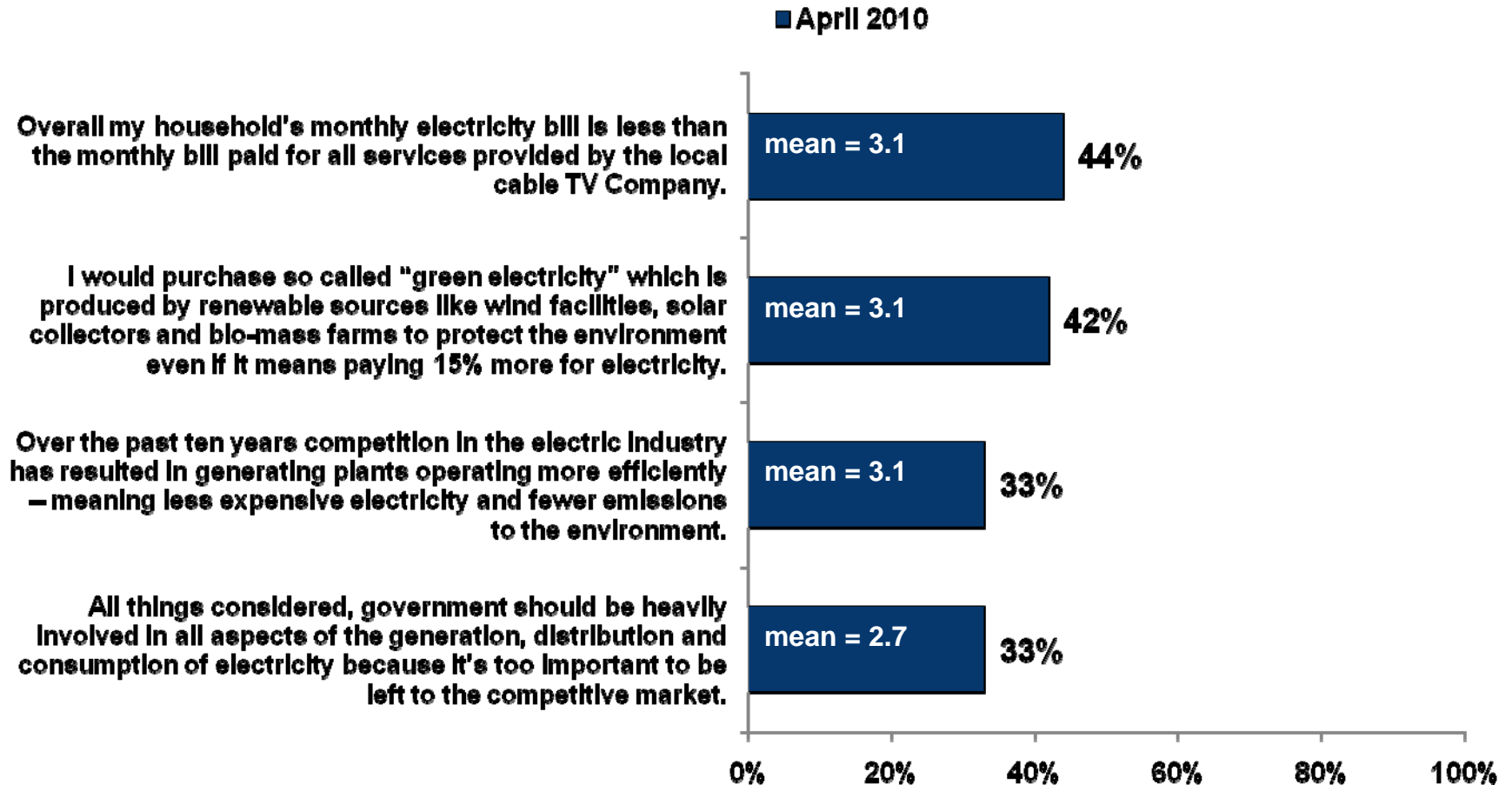
On the issue of decreasing the amount of electricity that we use, some people argue that mandated government programs paid by all consumers on their monthly bill are needed to encourage efficiency and help finance measures by homeowners and businesses. Other people argue that government appliance standards --- like for washing machines --- can have the same effect and although the appliance may be more expensive, the choice is in the hands of the consumer. Still others say that we should rely on the marketplace with its profit motive to introduce more energy efficient appliances and everyday products.

**Which one of these three approaches do you think is the better option?**

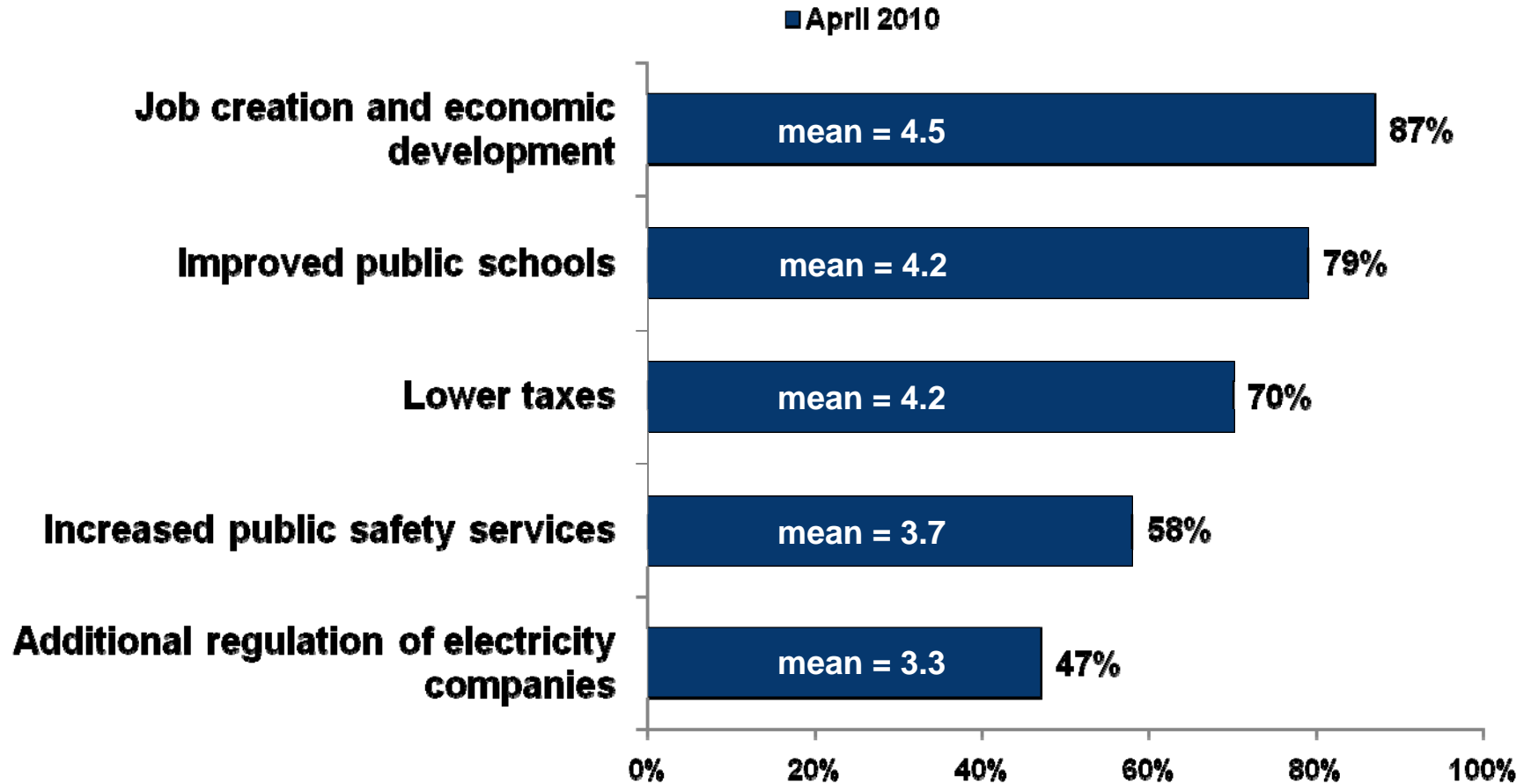


Using a scale of 1=*Strongly disagree* and 5=*Strongly agree*  
Please rate your level of agreement with each of the following  
statements

(Percentages show ratings of 4 and 5 combined)

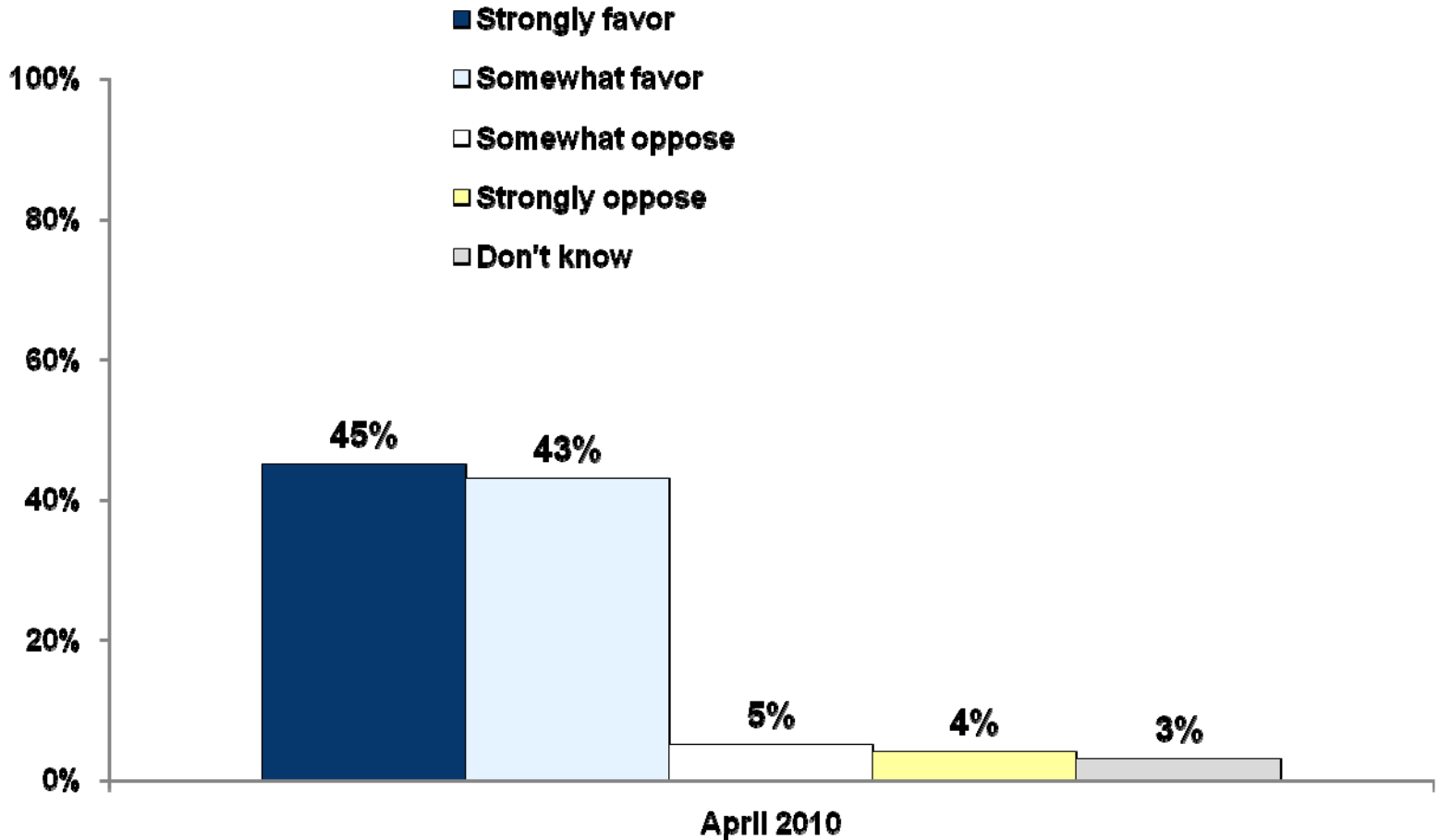


Using a scale of 1=*Not important at all* and 5=*Extremely important*  
Please tell me how important it is that each of the following issues be  
acted upon by the Connecticut Legislature  
(Percentages show ratings of 4 and 5 combined)



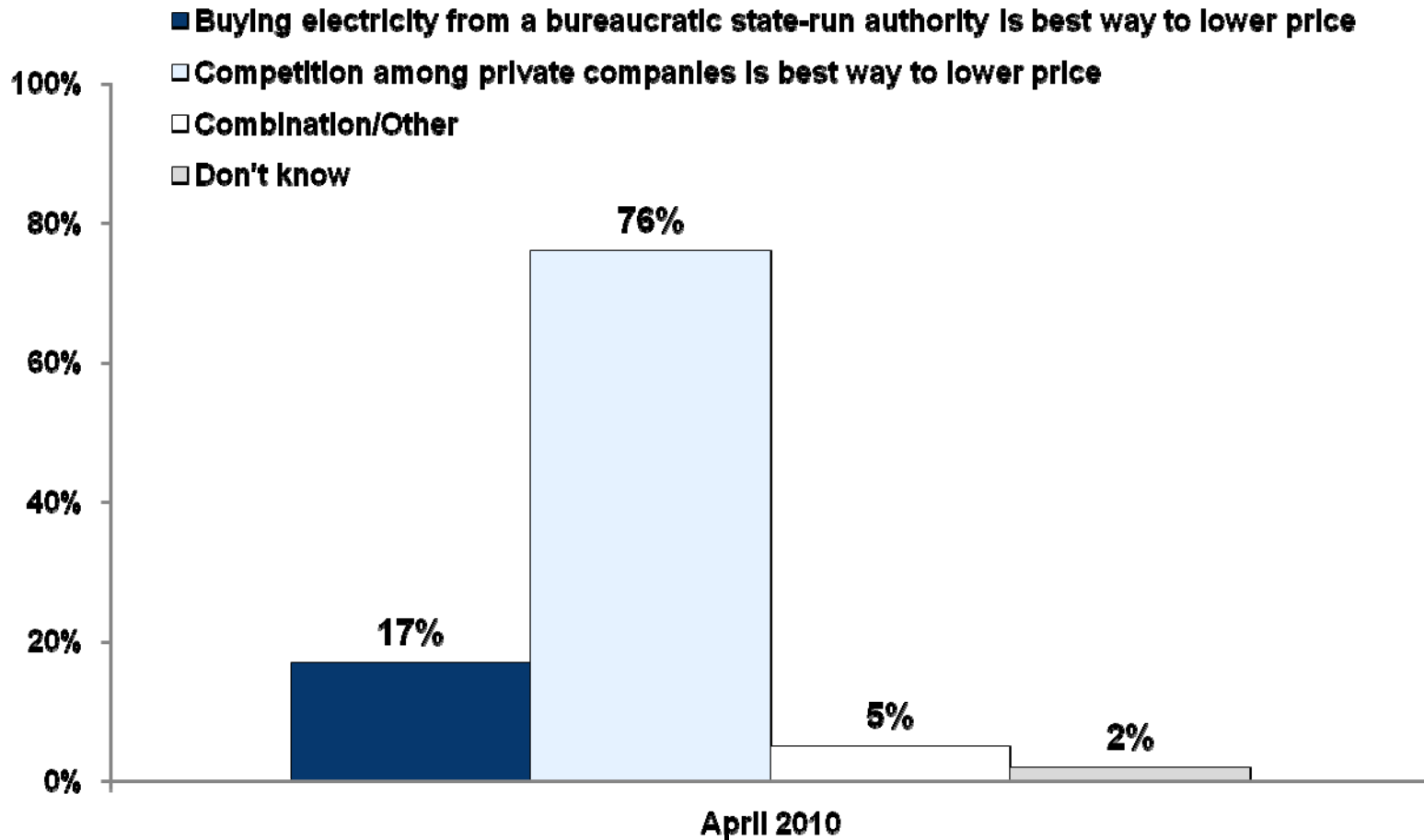
Electricity sales were opened to competition about ten years ago. As a result, you now have the option of buying electricity from your utility company or switching to one of over 30 alternative suppliers licensed to sell electricity in the state that compete on price and service.

**In general, do you favor or oppose this system?**



The Connecticut Legislature is considering a bill to create a state electric authority. It would be able to borrow money, build, own and operate electric generating plants and enter into contracts to buy electricity. The costs of such an authority would be funded by a combination of state-issued bonds, additional charges on electricity bills and new taxes. Some people say that buying electricity from a state-run authority is the best way to lower the price of electricity, while others claim that competition among companies in the private sector is the best way of lowering prices.

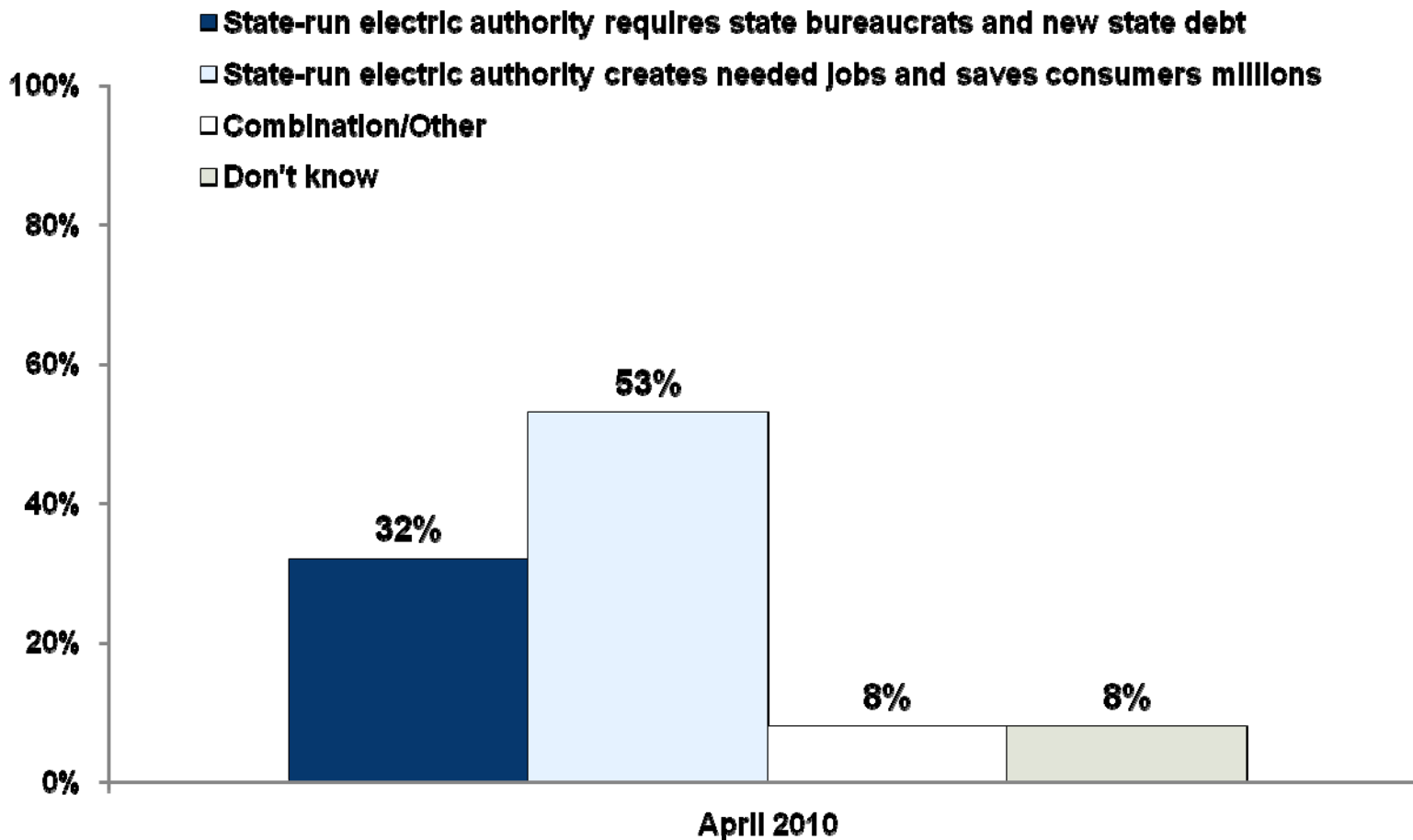
## Which of these positions is closer to your own?





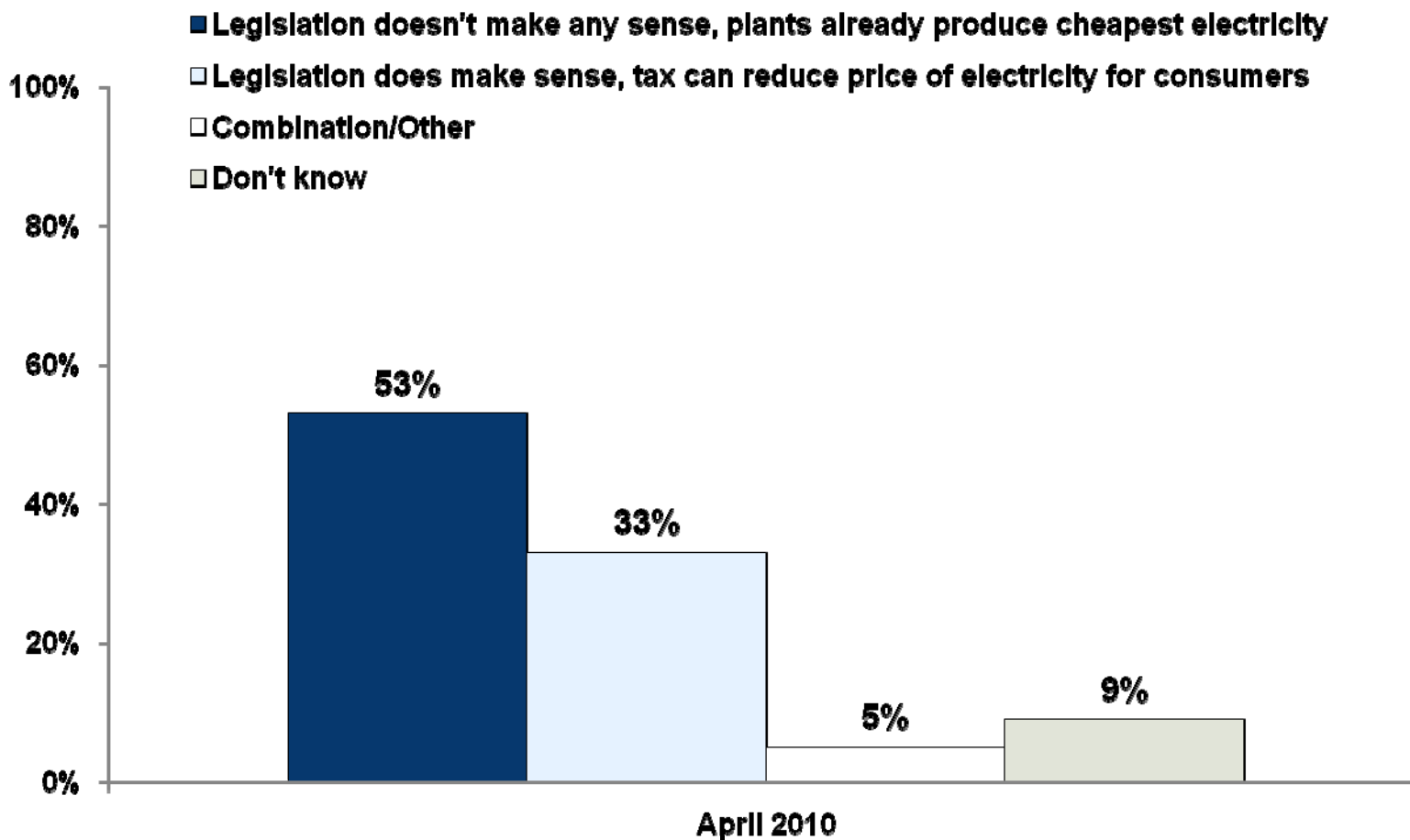
Some people say that a state-run electric authority that builds, owns and operates generating plants would require hundreds of new bureaucrats and the issuing of billions of dollars in new state debt—which are ultimately backed by taxpayers. Others say that electric generating plants built and operated by a state agency would create needed jobs and also save consumers tens of millions of dollars every year in lower electricity prices.

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



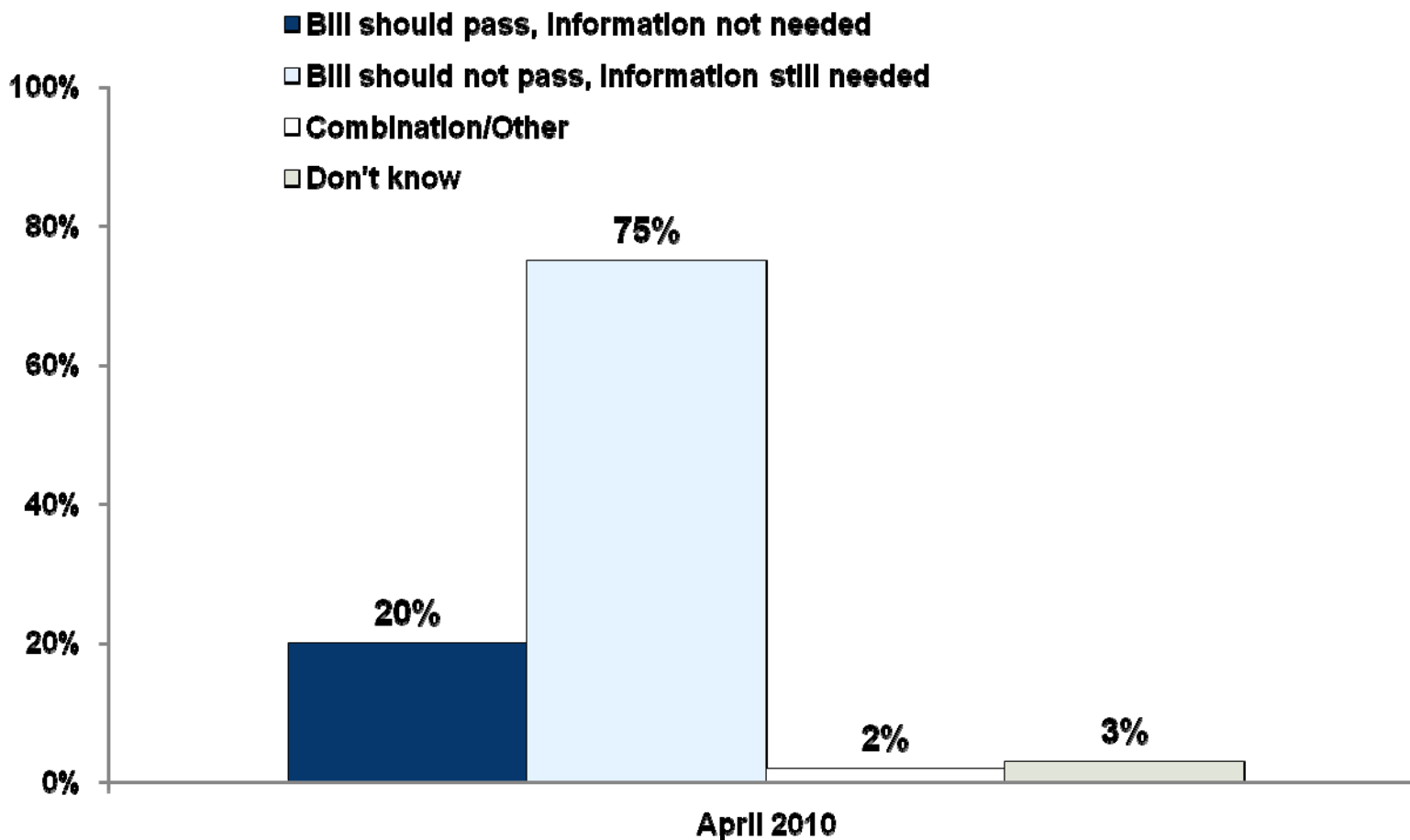
Another bill under consideration by the Connecticut legislature would single out electric generating plants in our state for a new tax that is one of the highest in the state's history. Some people say that this legislation doesn't make any sense, since it punishes the same Connecticut plants that produce the cheapest electricity for consumers. Others say that this legislation does make sense because new taxes on electricity plants can help bring down electricity prices for consumers.

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



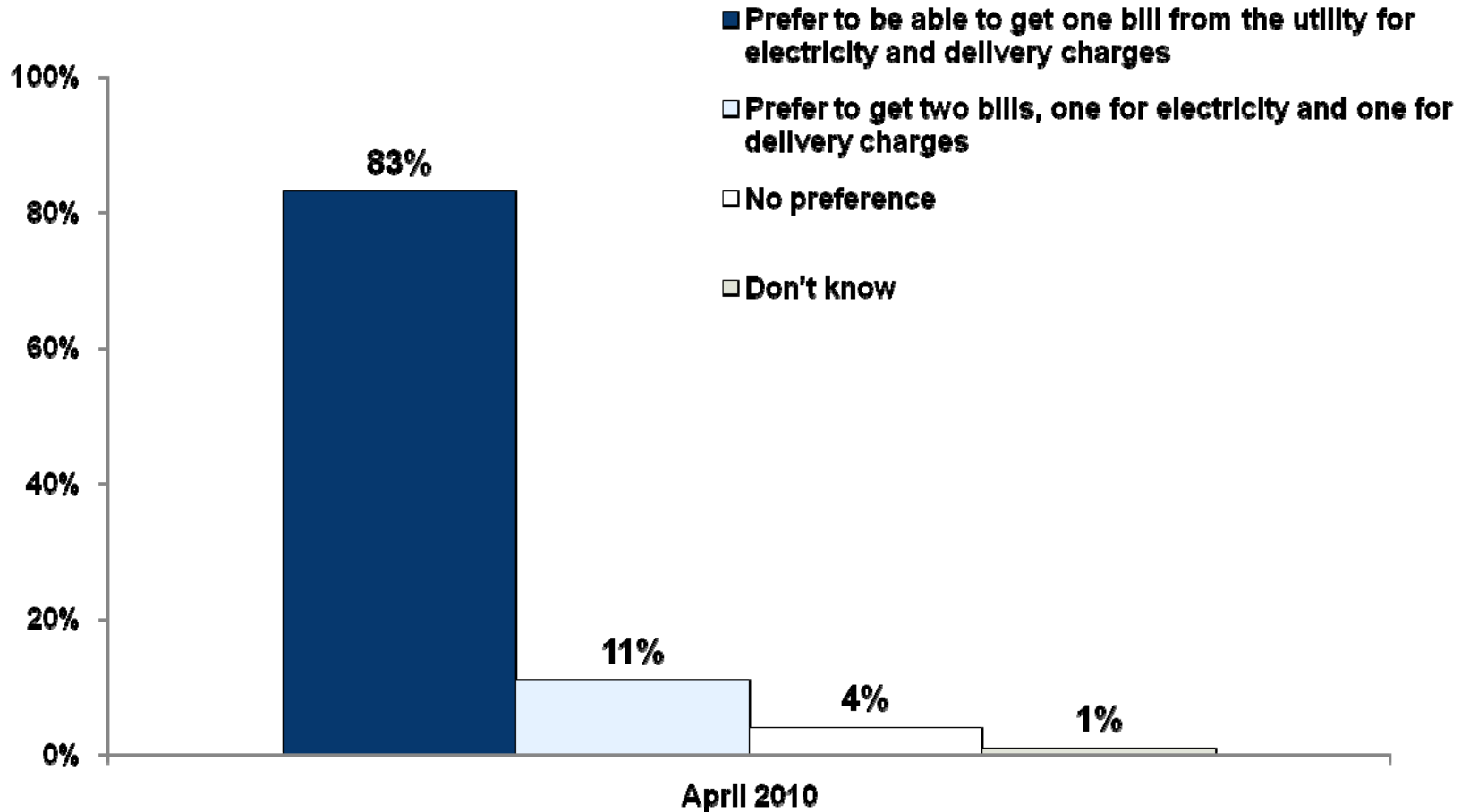
The legislature is also considering eliminating the requirement that electric companies provide information to consumers on how to choose alternative electricity suppliers. Some support this bill because so many residential consumers have already switched electricity suppliers and that this information is no longer needed. Others say the bill should not pass because Connecticut residents and businesses will always need more information -- not less -- about their options for electricity choice and competition.

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



Lastly, the Legislature is considering a bill that would require customers who buy electricity from a company other than the utility to get two bills, one from the company that supplies the electricity and another from the utility that delivers it. The current system allows customers to get one bill for both electricity and delivery charges from the utility.

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



# Demographic Profile

Income: \$0-19,999	8%	Age: 18-25	4%
\$20-34,999	8	26-35	12
\$35-49,999	12	36-45	24
\$50-74,999	14	46-55	22
\$75-99,999	17	56-64	16
\$100-150,000	12	65+	22
Over \$150,000	8		
Refused	21	HS education or less	24%
		Some coll./tech./voc.	25
Female	57%	Graduated college	32
Male	43	Graduate/Professional school	18
Single-family residence	84%	Democrat	36%
Multi-family residence	15	Republican	23
		Independent	34
5 yrs or less in single-family residence	27%	Other/Don't know/Refused	7
5-10 yrs in single-family residence	20		
More than 10 yrs in single-family residence	52		