DELIVERING SAFETY, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND JUSTICE FOR NEW YORK:
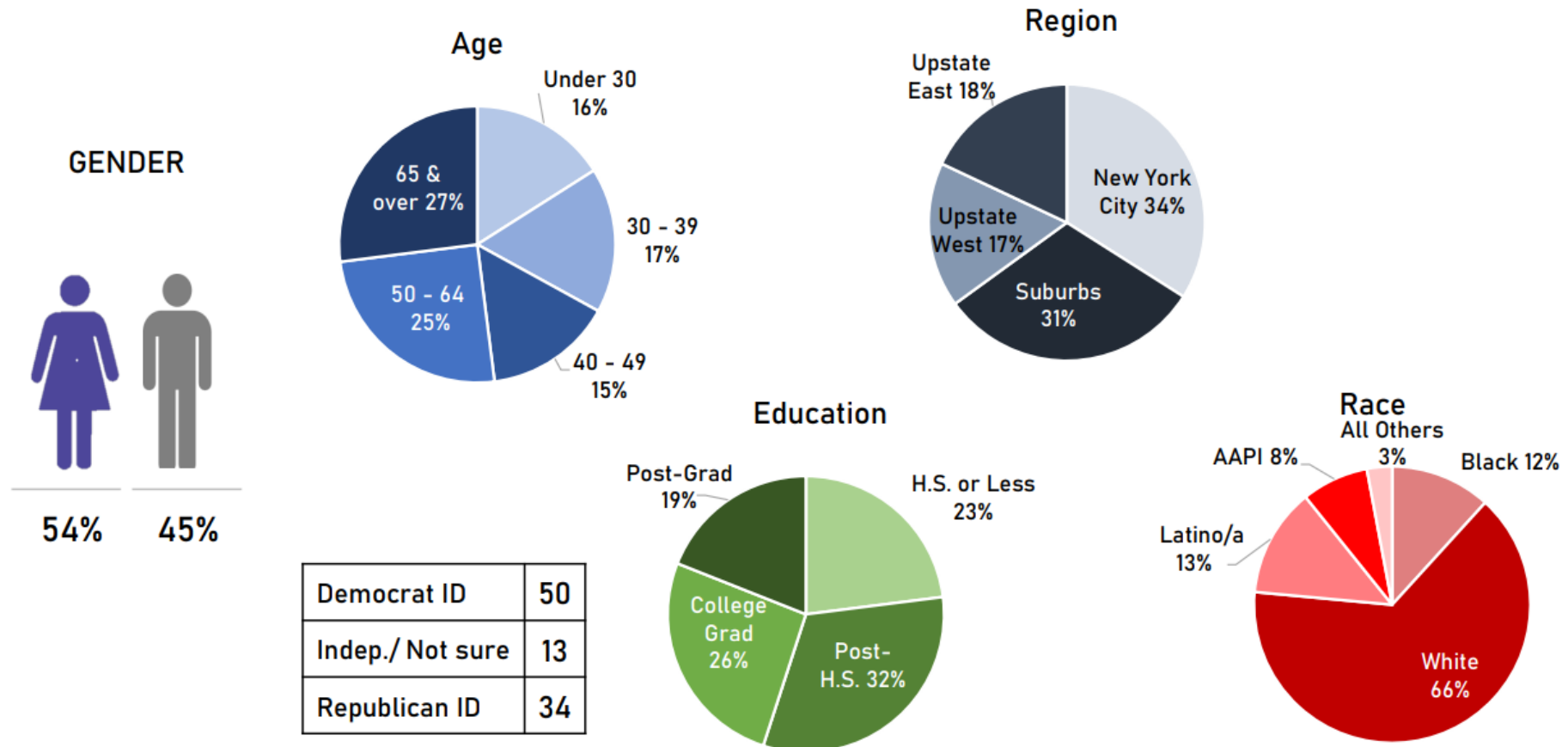
New York policies and polling

May 2025

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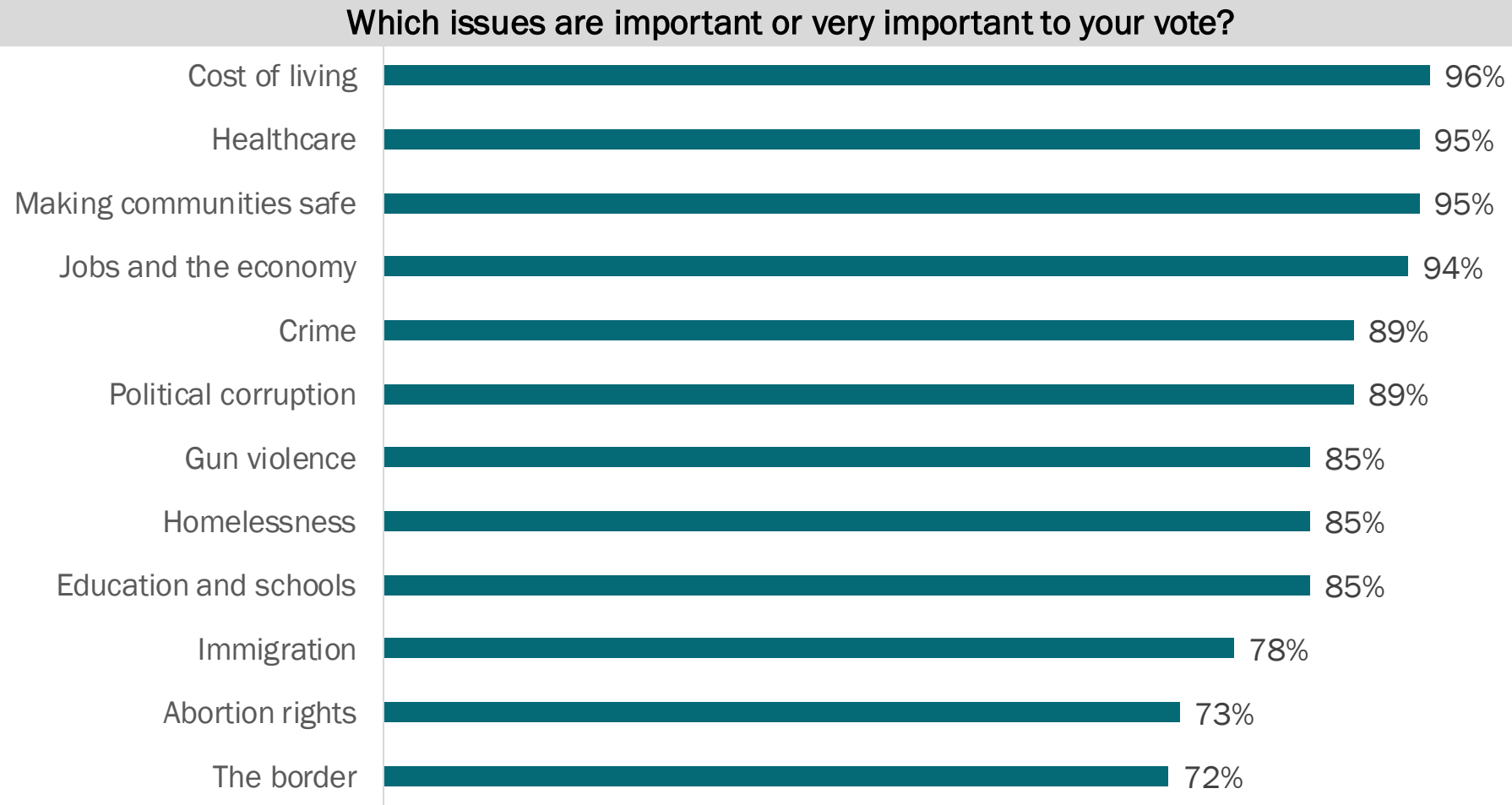# December 2024 poll by Lake Research Partners of likely voters in 2026

Profile of all 2026 general electorate (sample size = 600 voters)

GENDER

54%   45%

Age
- Under 30 16%
- 30 – 39 17%
- 40 – 49 15%
- 50 – 64 25%
- 65 & over 27%

Region
- Upstate East 18%
- New York City 34%
- Suburbs 31%
- Upstate West 17%

Education
- Post-Grad 19%
- H.S. or Less 23%
- Post-H.S. 32%
- College Grad 26%

Race
- All Others 3%
- Black 12%
- AAPI 8%
- Latino/a 13%
- White 66%

Democrat ID	50
Indep./ Not sure	13
Republican ID	34

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Margin of error: +/-4.0%

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What New Yorkers want:
Safety is *the* top priority for New Yorkers this election.

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"Making communities safe" was as high a priority as healthcare and the cost of living to surveyed voters

Which issues are important or very important to your vote?

Issue	Percentage
Cost of living	96%
Healthcare	95%
Making communities safe	95%
Jobs and the economy	94%
Crime	89%
Political corruption	89%
Gun violence	85%
Homelessness	85%
Education and schools	85%
Immigration	78%
Abortion rights	73%
The border	72%

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We recommend 3 big poll-tested ideas to advance safety, accountability, and justice

1	Invest in the full range of tools in the public safety toolbox to prevent crime, respond to crisis, and stop violence
2	Deliver better, more effective, and more accountable policing that lives up to the responsibility of the role
3	Improve the shopping experience for both workers and consumers

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A safety platform that meets the moment:
New Yorkers want comprehensive, neighborhood-driven, and community-based solutions.

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A comprehensive, community-based approach to safety wins over surveyed voters

Which statement comes closer to your own view about how to address crime and public safety?

TOUGH ON CRIME:
Do more to get tough on crime – like having tougher sentences for people convicted of violent crimes, maintaining strong bail laws to keep dangerous people in jail, and providing police more support and resources.
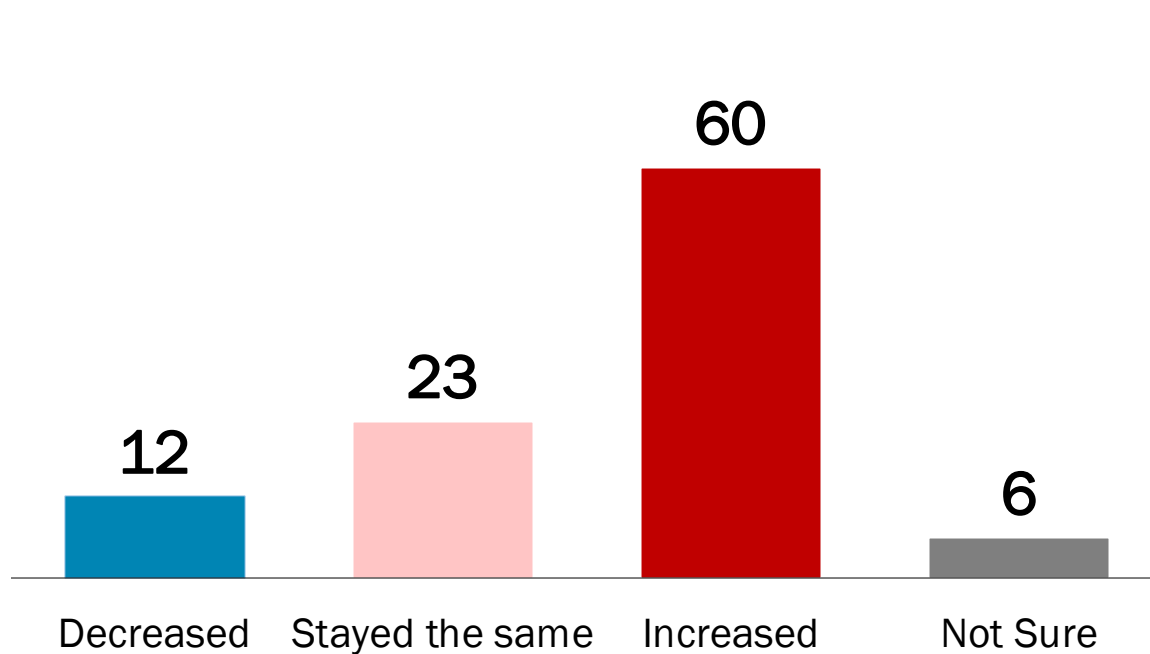
47%

COMPREHENSIVE SAFETY:
Fully fund things that are proven to create safe communities – like good schools, jobs, and affordable housing – and help prevent crime by increasing treatment for mental health and drug addiction and getting illegal guns off the street.
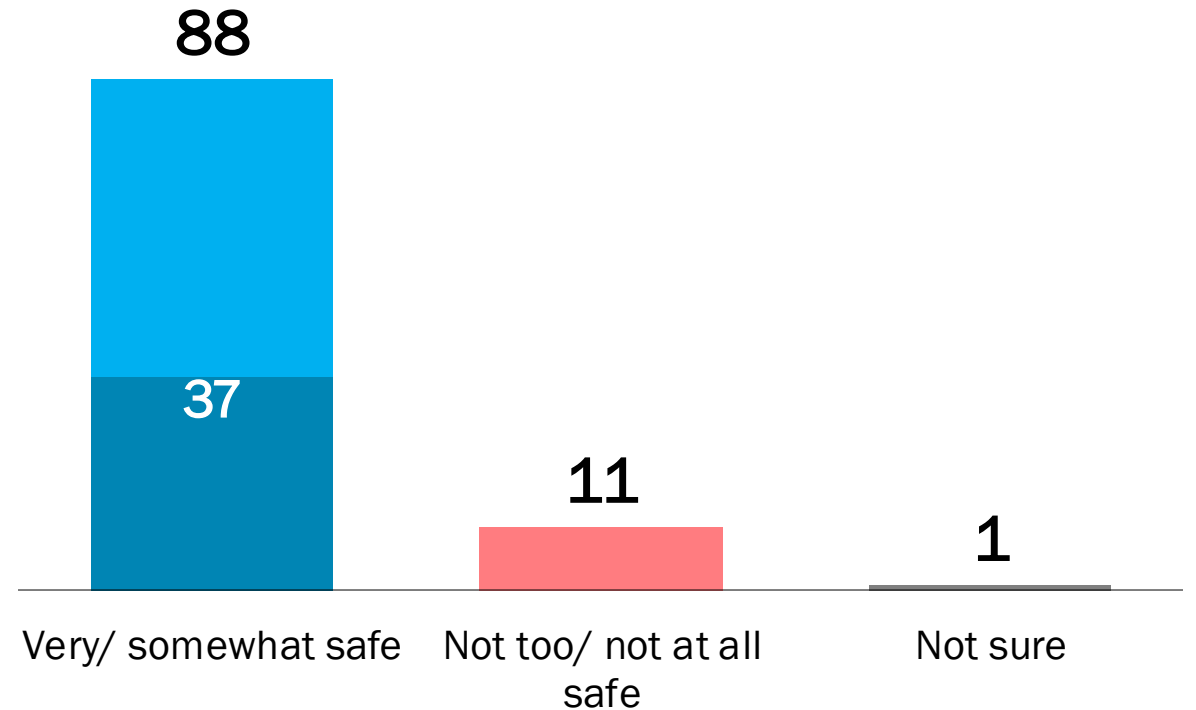
53%

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A neighborhood lens builds on a strong sense of local safety in contrast to concerns about citywide crime

In the past few years, do you think crime in NYS has…?
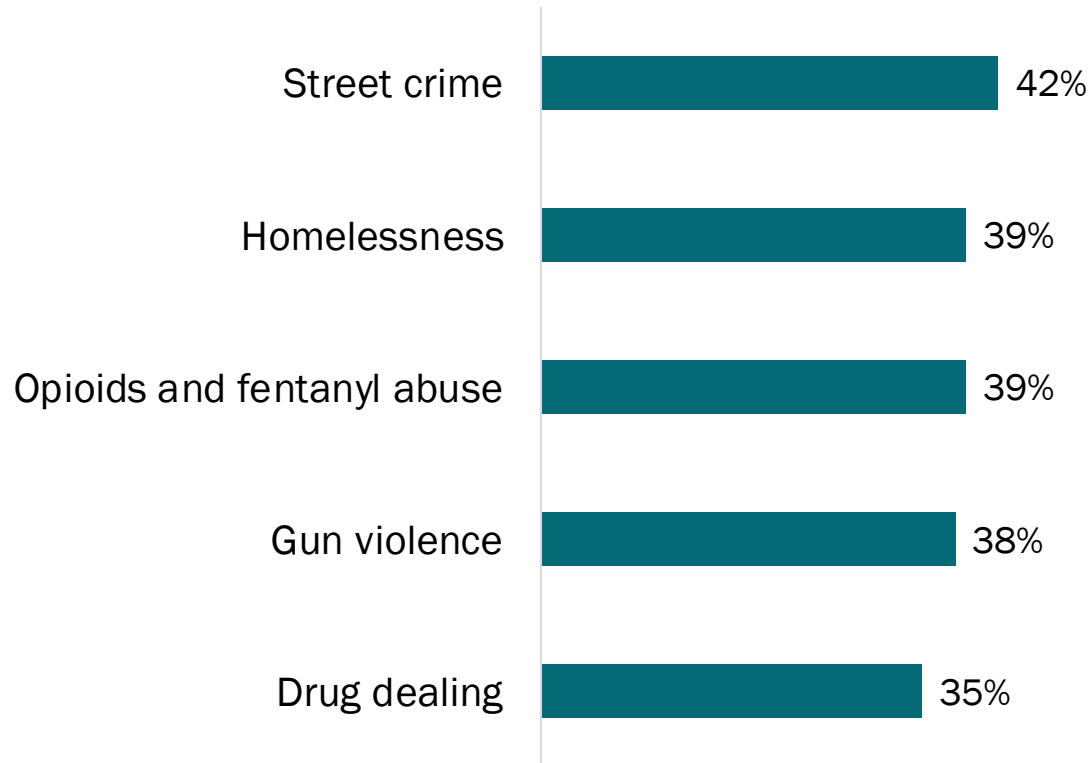
How safe do you feel in your own neighborhood?

In the past few years, do you think crime in NYS has…?
- Decreased: 12
- Stayed the same: 23
- Increased: 60
- Not Sure: 6

How safe do you feel in your own neighborhood?
- Very/ somewhat safe: 88 (37)
- Not too/ not at all safe: 11
- Not sure: 1

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IDEA #1:

Invest in the full range of tools in the public safety toolbox to prevent crime, respond to crisis, and stop violence.

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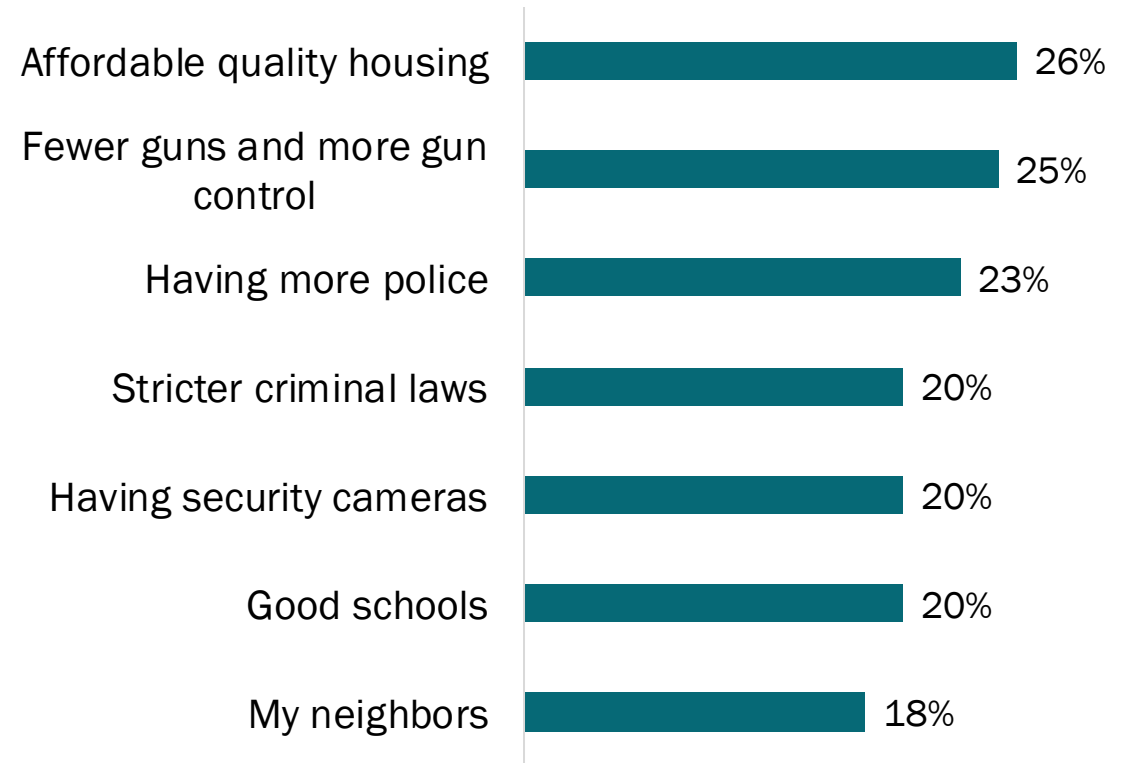# Housing, mental health treatment, and anti-gun violence programs will address New Yorkers' safety concerns

❖ **Invest in more affordable housing and other physical infrastructure:** Expanding access to housing vouchers and expanding supportive housing programs can break cycles of instability and crime—and at a fraction of the cost of incarceration. In addition, investing in better sanitation, street lighting, and green spaces can improve quality of life and reduce crime.

❖ **Expand community-based mental health treatment:** Investing in more Assertive Community Treatment teams, clubhouses, crisis respite centers, and stabilization centers, and expanding civilian mental health crisis response, will strengthen a continuum of community-based mental healthcare, improving safety and stability for all New Yorkers.

❖ **Reduce gun violence with a neighborhood-specific approach:** Community violence interruption is incredibly effective at reducing gun violence by relying on credible messengers to stop cycles of violence. Investing more in these vital community-based programs that prevent gun violence will enable service expansion, keeping more New Yorkers safe.

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These solutions align with what makes surveyed voters feel safe

What safety issues concern you?

Issue	Percentage
Street crime	42%
Homelessness	39%
Opioids and fentanyl abuse	39%
Gun violence	38%
Drug dealing	35%

What makes you feel safe?

Factor	Percentage
Affordable quality housing	26%
Fewer guns and more gun control	25%
Having more police	23%
Stricter criminal laws	20%
Having security cameras	20%
Good schools	20%
My neighbors	18%

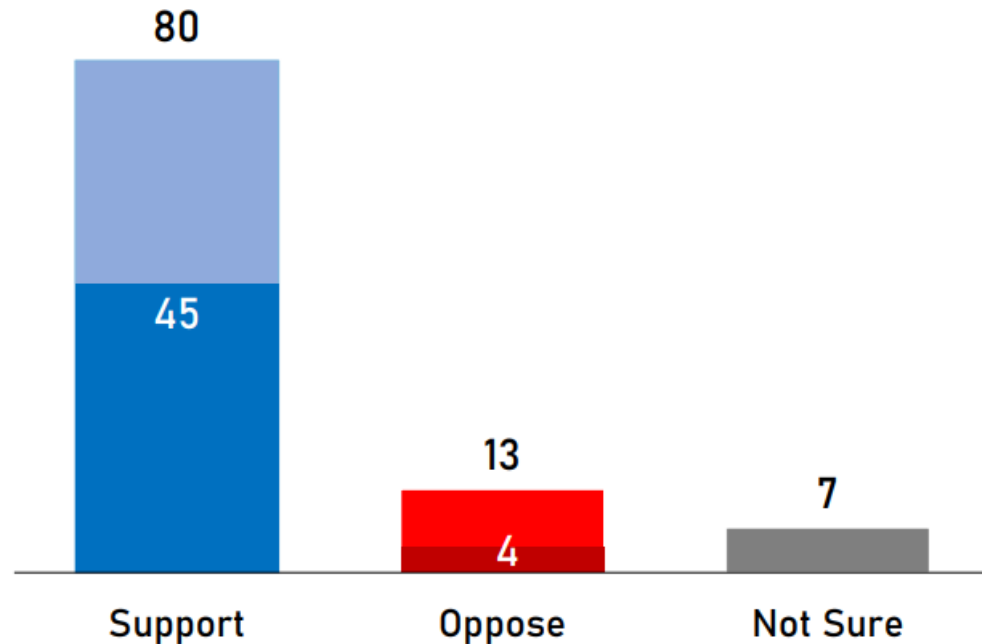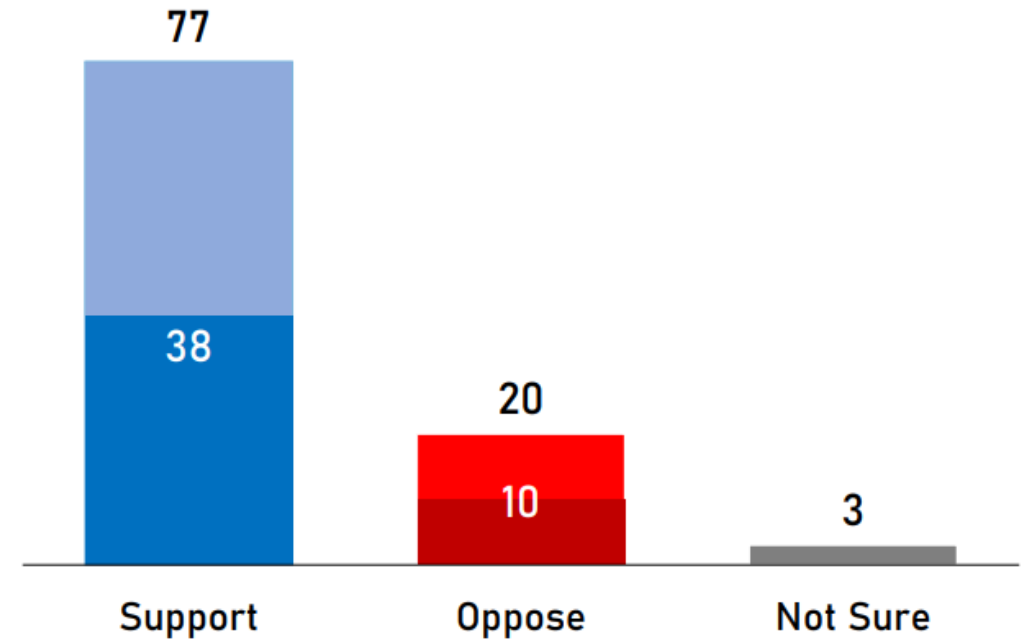Vera ACTION

Fully funding supportive housing enjoys widespread support, including in the context of immigration

Do you support or oppose expanding programs like supportive housing, mental health treatment, and drug treatment for New Yorkers awaiting trial? – 2026 General Election Voters NY State

Support	Oppose	Not Sure
80 (45)	13 (4)	7

Do you support or oppose fully funding programs and services, like jobs, education, access to treatment and medical care, that improve the lives of all New Yorkers, including immigrants in New York? – 2026 General Election Voters NY State

Support	Oppose	Not Sure
77 (38)	20 (10)	3

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12

Investing in a continuum of mental healthcare is also popular among surveyed voters

INVOLUNTARY HOSPITALIZATION:
No New Yorker should have to walk down the street in fear of being attacked by a mentally unstable person. If dangerous people refuse the care that they need, police should take them to the nearest hospital for treatment or to jail. It's the only way to make our streets and subways safe for everyone and it isn't hard to do. It's time to put the safety of our families and law-abiding New Yorkers first.

39%

COMMUNITY-BASED MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT:
It is scary to see someone having a mental health crisis on the street or in the subway. We need to set up more healthcare clinics and mobile crisis response teams so that people with mental illness don't wait months, or even years, to get help. Making it easy to get treatment is the key to keeping people stable, not throwing them in the hospital or jail for short stays.
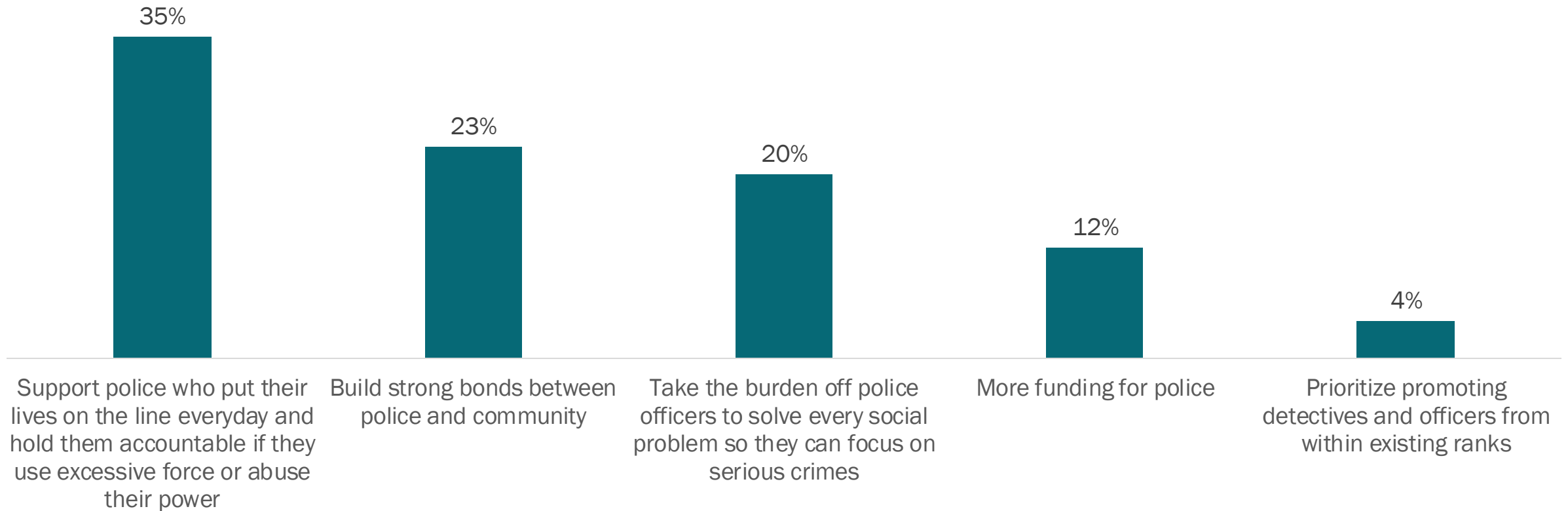
54%

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IDEA #2:
Deliver better, more effective, and more accountable policing that lives up to the responsibility of the role.

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Focus on concrete ways to improve NYPD with a balanced message of support and accountability

❖ **Redeploy police resources to focus on the right priorities:** Police should limit low-level enforcement and instead focus on the violent crime that matters most to New Yorkers. Civilianizing administrative and management roles will allow police to redeploy officers and detectives, thereby improving response times, raising clearance rates, and enabling the department to better meet New Yorkers' needs.

❖ **Improve training:** Strong training, particularly on topics like procedural justice, can help officers build trust with the public and do their jobs more effectively. Regular training accompanied by ongoing evaluation will help make any operational changes last, to the benefit of all New Yorkers.

❖ **Insist on accountability:** By seeking community input and feedback by surveying residents on an ongoing basis (at a minimum), increasing data transparency, and disciplining officers who use their power to cause harm, elected leaders can make clear that we can support police while holding them accountable when they abuse their power and break the law.

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Polling shows that New Yorkers want better policing, not more policing

Which statement about the police do you support most?

35% — Support police who put their lives on the line everyday and hold them accountable if they use excessive force or abuse their power

23% — Build strong bonds between police and community

20% — Take the burden off police officers to solve every social problem so they can focus on serious crimes

12% — More funding for police

4% — Prioritize promoting detectives and officers from within existing ranks

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Support and accountability polls significantly ahead of messages championing failed police policies of the past

SUPPORT STOP-AND-FRISK:
Crime in New York is out of control because woke policies have blocked the police from doing their jobs. Law enforcement maintains public safety by letting people know that if they commit a crime, they will face consequences. It's simple: more police equals less crime. While bringing back widespread stop-and-frisk is a bad idea, police should use this tool aggressively in the most dangerous neighborhoods. We need to support the police to do their jobs—anything less puts us all at risk.

36%

SUPPORT AND ACCOUNTABILITY:
It isn't fair to expect the police to solve every social problem. No one profession can do that. Stop-and-frisk raises tensions between police and communities without making us any safer. The police should focus on investigating and solving serious crimes and send trained experts to help New Yorkers who are homeless or in crisis. By sending the right first responder, we can make our communities safer. This is not anti-police. We can support police doing their jobs while holding them accountable if they abuse their power or break the law.

55%

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IDEA #3:

Improve the shopping experience for both workers and consumers.

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Combating retail theft requires different approaches for organized crime vs. crimes of desperation

❖ **Curb organized retail crime:** Much retail theft is driven by large-scale fencing operations that resell stolen goods online. Federal law requires large online marketplaces to verify the identity of high-volume third-party sellers on their platforms and to make it easier for consumers to report suspicious sellers. Leaders should support a law requiring online retailers to investigate and report the resale of stolen goods to prevent it from happening.

❖ **Work with businesses to reduce theft:** Retailers with low levels of theft have attributed their success to measures like employee training and store layouts. Leaders should launch a fund and work with BIDs to increase employee safety.

❖ **Support neighbors stealing necessities:** Community navigator programs that connect people who have been caught stealing to housing, treatment, and other stabilizing services, as well as scaling up alternatives to incarceration for theft offenses, can help address root causes and break cycles of shoplifting.

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Addressing previous reforms:
Protect progress and invest in what truly works

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Recent reforms have been scapegoated, but New Yorkers need more progress, not a return to the past

❖ **Bail reform** lowered New York's, reduced recidivism, and saved families across the state $104 million in bail payments by eliminating money bail for many misdemeanor and nonviolent felony charges. Judges can still set bail on violent or repeat charges, but the reforms mean that wealth no longer determines freedom for people accused of nonviolent crimes.

❖ **Raise the Age** saw arrests drop by double digits for 16-year-olds within the first year of the law's passage without increasing crime. Implementation has been a challenge—the state has yet to distribute most of the funds it set aside to connect young people with programming—but the law itself advances safety and justice for young New Yorkers.

❖ **Discovery reform** brought transparency and fairness to the pretrial process. New York needs better implementation so that evidence is shared efficiently and in a timely manner between law enforcement, prosecutors, and the defense bar, but the reforms are a critical step to ensuring fair trials.

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Our suggestion:
Be "serious about safety," not tough on crime.

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Being "serious about safety" means talking about real solutions that will make a difference

- Lead with safety

- Talk about preventing and breaking cycles of crime

- Include immediate and long-term solutions

- And own accountability and justice too

"I stand for safety, accountability, and justice. I will make communities safer with real solutions that prevent crime before it happens by investing in good schools, affordable housing, treatment for mental health and drug addiction, and well-paying jobs. I will break the cycle of crime by holding people accountable when they violate the laws and build a just system that treats everyone fairly. I will support police who put their lives on the line everyday, while also holding them accountable if they abuse their power or break the law. I will get illegal guns off the street and focus police resources on solving the most serious cases."

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