



Road to the Recall

California Statewide Voter Survey

Presented by Core Decision Analytics

August 3, 2021

Introduction / Executive Summary

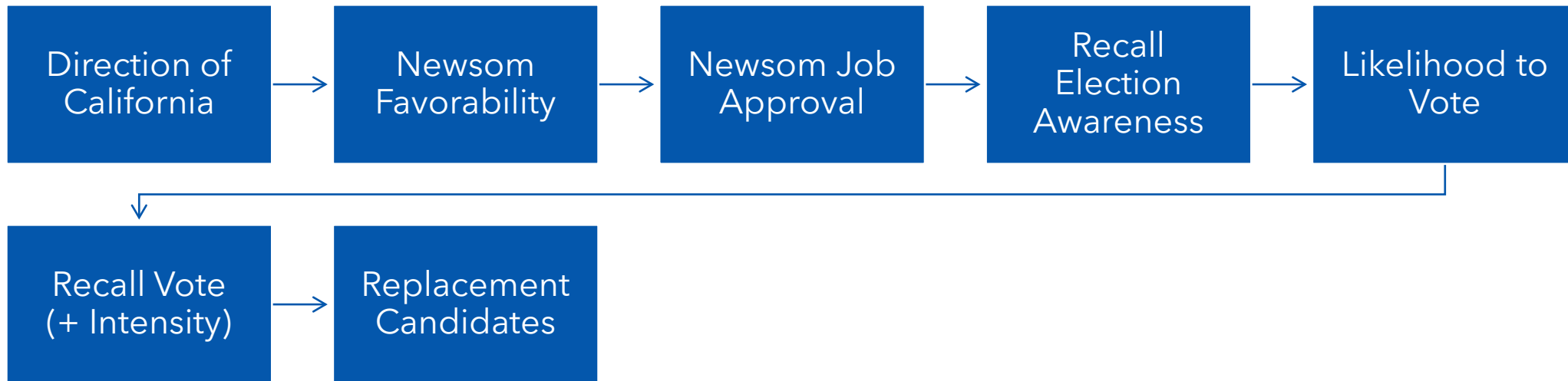


- With less than 45 days to go and a world of unknowns ahead, Gavin Newsom is in an unenviable situation
- In most typical electoral contests (such as a ballot measures), a “no” vote typically maintains the status quo.
 - **However, in the special recall election, maintaining the status quo (i.e., “keeping Newsom”) requires action**
 - **If Californians satisfied with Newsom choose not to vote, that is the equivalent of voting “yes” (remove him)**
 - “Yes” voters have a specific cause that compels them, and it is reasonable to assume many will vote in-person
- Since all registered voters will receive a ballot, the much-more-than-million-dollar-question is turnout: **who will vote?**
- At this moment in time, it is an extremely close contest in which Newsom is not safely assured victory

Road to the Recall: Methodology & Study Design



Core Decision Analytics (CODA) conducted N=804 online interviews among California registered voters from Tuesday July 27 - Thursday July 29, 2021. The overall margin of error is +/-3.46% at the 95% confidence interval. Some percentages may add to more or less than 100% due to rounding.



Sponsored by Core Decision Analytics, the “Road to the Recall” poll is independent and not affiliated with any client, candidate campaign, nor any independent expenditure effort for or against the recall.

Full poll results available at CoreDecision.com/RoadToTheRecall

High awareness but uncertain turnout



As you may know, there will be a special recall election later this year where voters will be asked whether or not they should recall (remove) Gavin Newsom as Governor. How much have you heard, read, or seen about the special recall election?

More than
8 in 10 {
have heard, read, or
seen "a lot" or "some"
about the recall

(%)	All California Voters
"A LOT" OR "SOME"	83
A lot	39
Some	44
Just a little	15
Nothing at all	2

But it is unclear how many Californians will ultimately vote



The special recall election will be held on Tuesday, September 14. All California voters will receive a ballot they can return by mail (USPS) or they can vote in-person. Do you think you will cast a ballot in the upcoming special election?

(%)	All California Voters
Definitely vote in the special election	73
Probably vote	18
Might or might not	7
Probably not	1
Definitely not vote in the special election	1

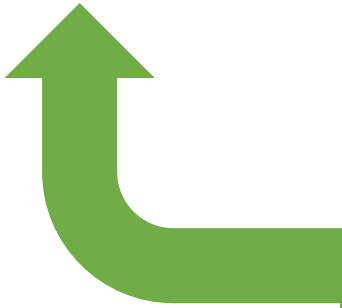
NOTE: These questions were asked AFTER direction of California, Newsom favorability, and Newsom job approval

Voter mood is a true tossup entering into August



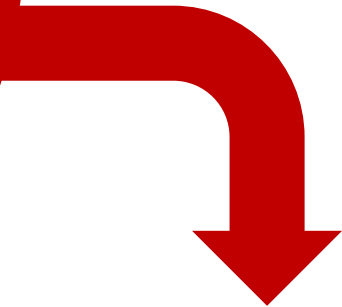
Would you say things in California are...

51%



Heading in the right direction

Headed down the wrong track

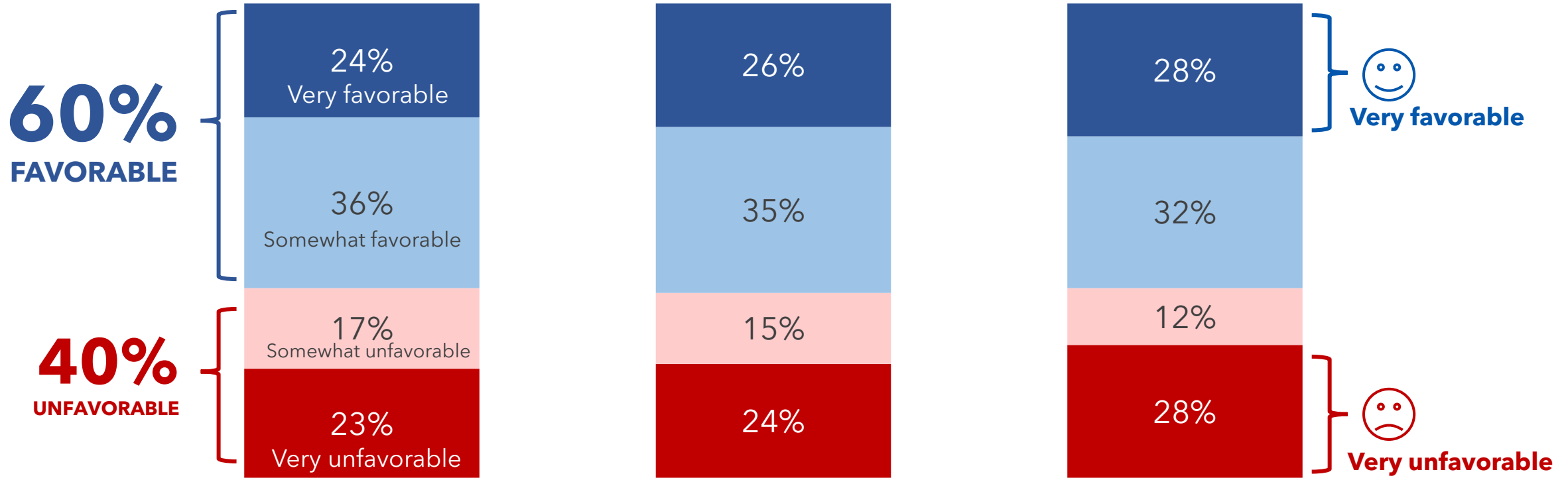
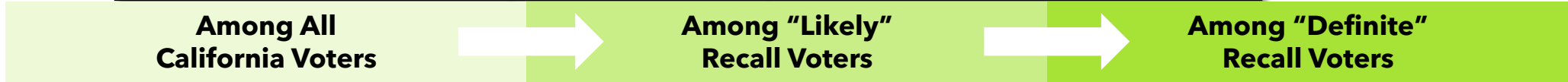


49%

While 3 in 5 voters hold a favorable opinion of Newsom, "definite" voters are sharply polarized



Do you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion of Gavin Newsom?



Job approval is cause for concern: voters more often rate Newsom "poor" rather than "excellent"

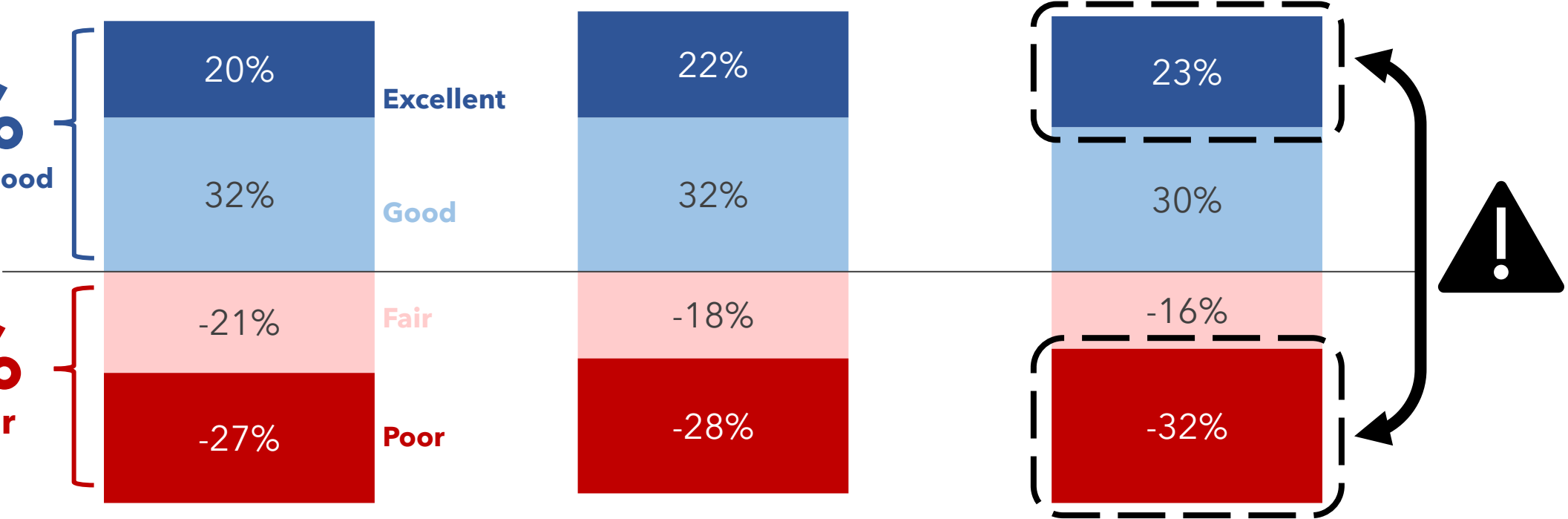


Generally speaking, how would you rate Gavin Newsom's job performance as governor of California?



52%
Excellent / Good

48%
Fair / Poor



NOTE: Fair / Poor displayed as negative percentages. Some percentages may add to more or less than 100% due to rounding.

Before we examine the ballot election itself, here's what we see on the Road to the Recall...



As we head into August, voters are evenly split on the direction of the state:
51% right direction - 49% wrong track

Newsom enjoys a +20 favorable rating...

...but he faces harsh detractors: "very unfavorable" just as large as "very favorable"

Newsom's job approval teeters almost identical to direction of the state.

However, the polarization when it comes to approval rating is even worse than favorability.

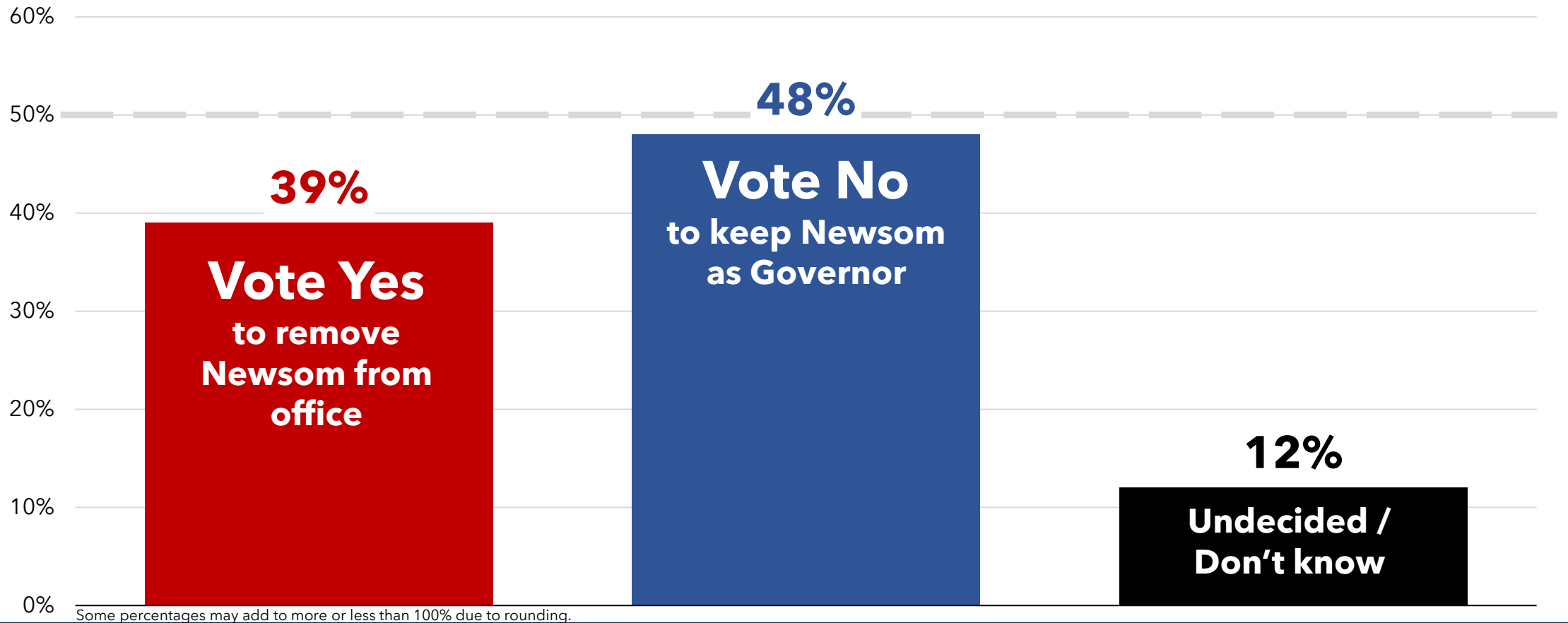
More voters award him lowest marks ("poor") rather than highest marks ("excellent").

A month is a lifetime in a campaign - and much can change (for better or worse)...

Newsom leads +9 among voters as a whole, BUT he does NOT have a majority; 12% undecided



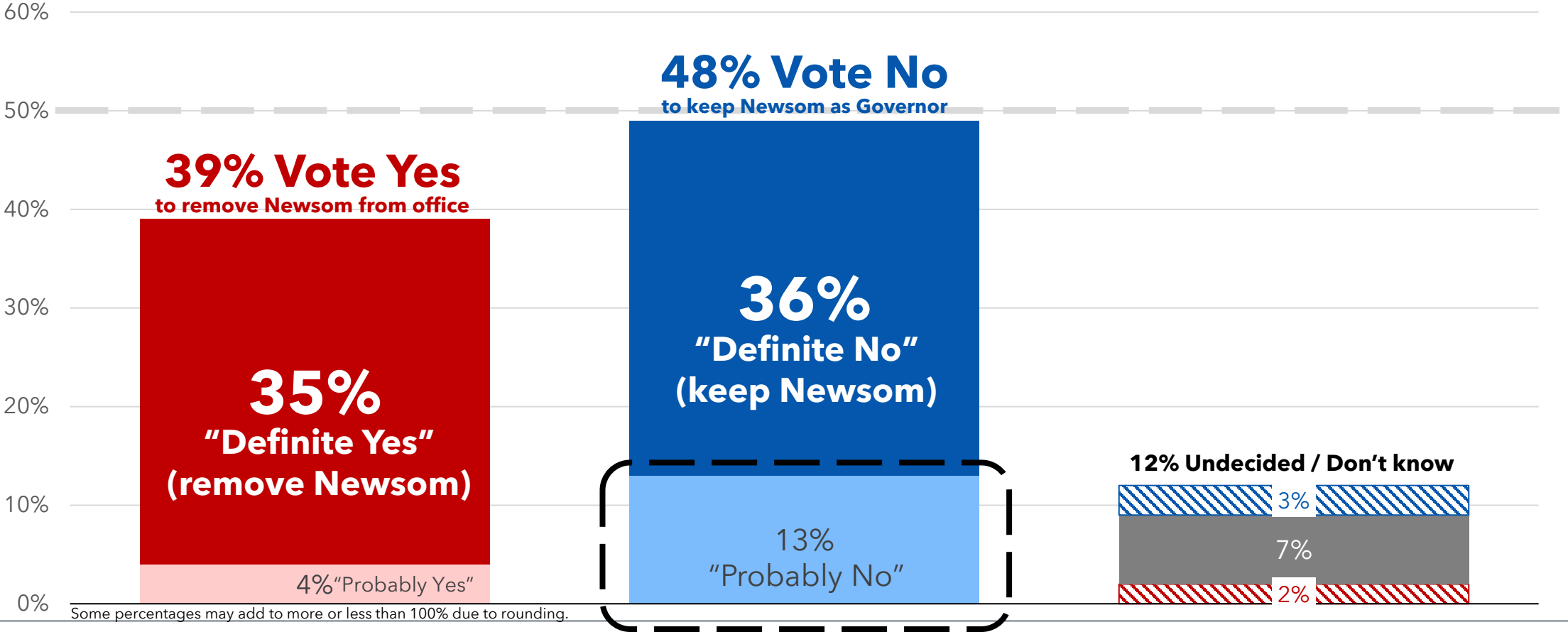
The special election ballot will ask voters: *"Shall Gavin Newsom be recalled (removed) from the office of Governor?"* How would you vote? Would you...



Assessing intensity shows Newsom appears to be ahead in part thanks those who say "probably no"



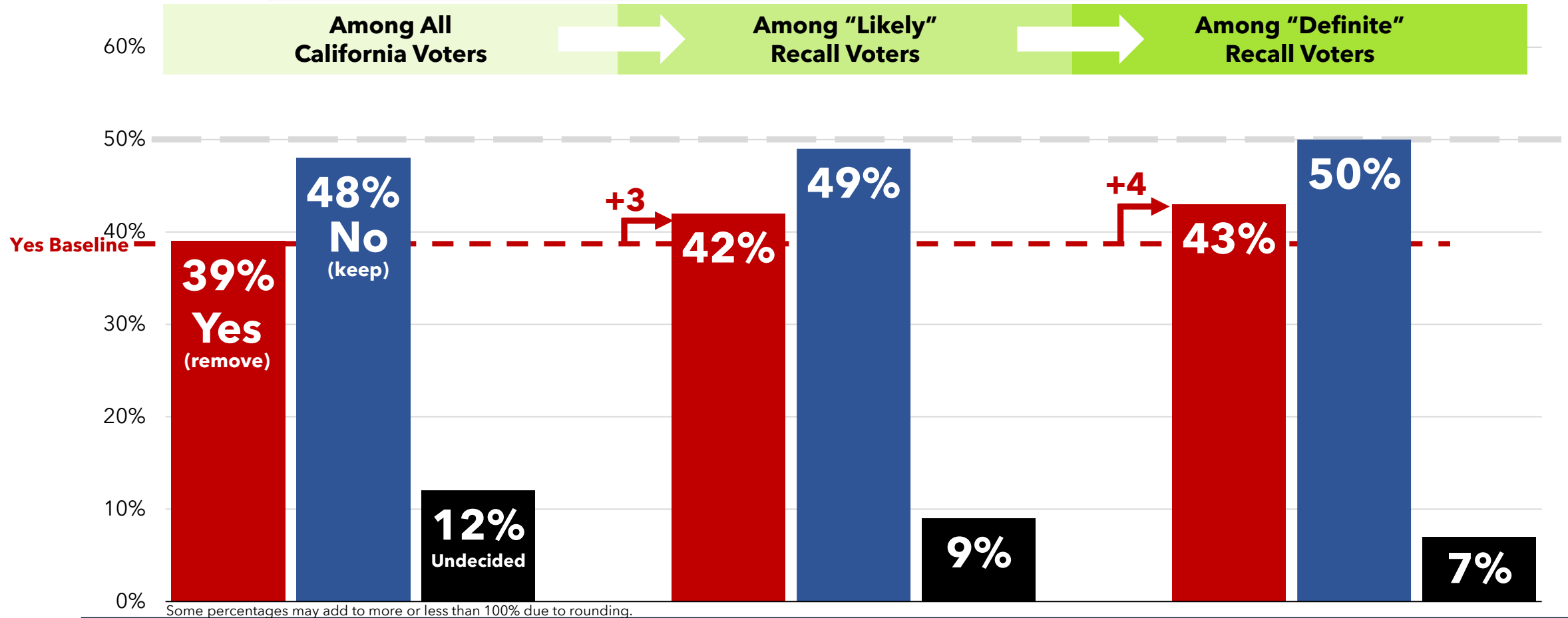
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Analysis of "likely" and "definite" voter shows Newsom facing an even tighter gap



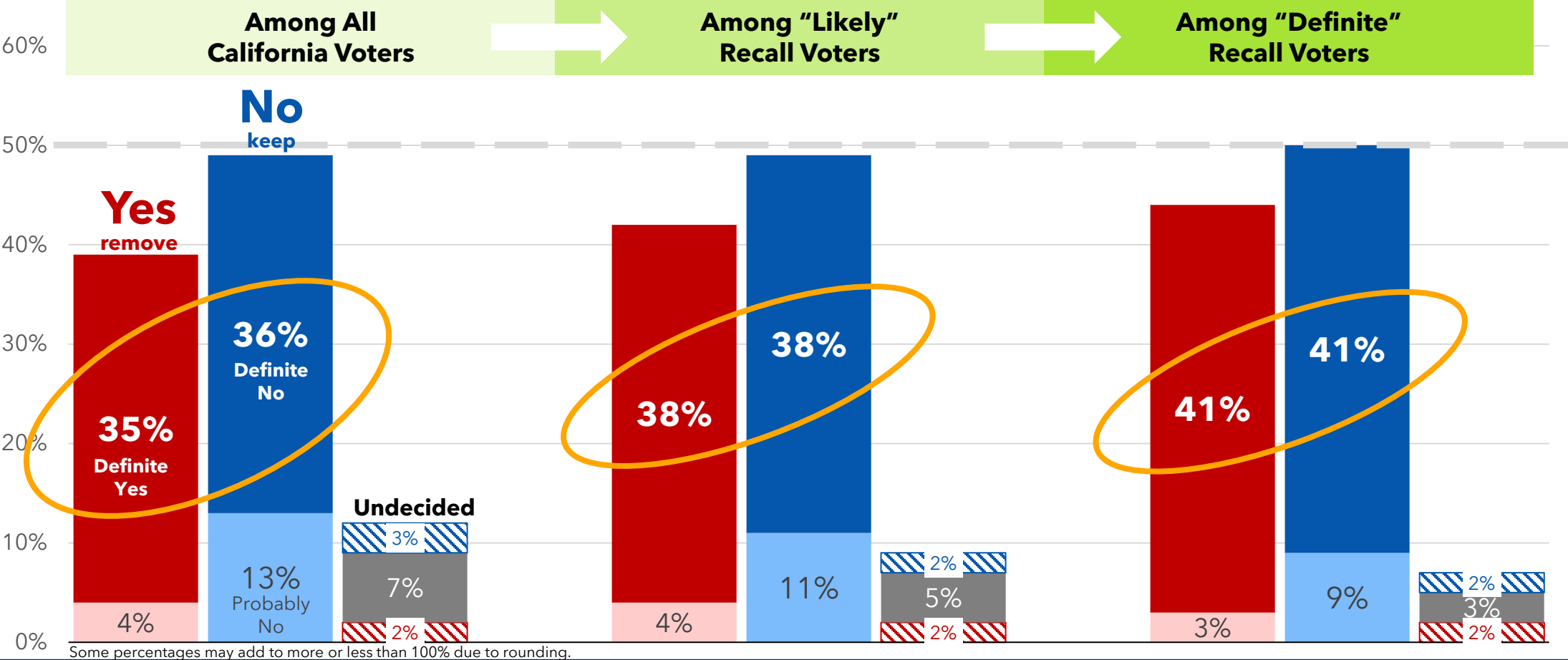
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With less than 45 days until the recall, all three portraits paint a worrisome picture for Newsom



The special election ballot will ask voters: "Shall Gavin Newsom be recalled (removed) from the office of Governor?" How would you vote? Would you...



While the recall is centered around Newsom, 46 others from Angelyne to Zacky on the ballot too...

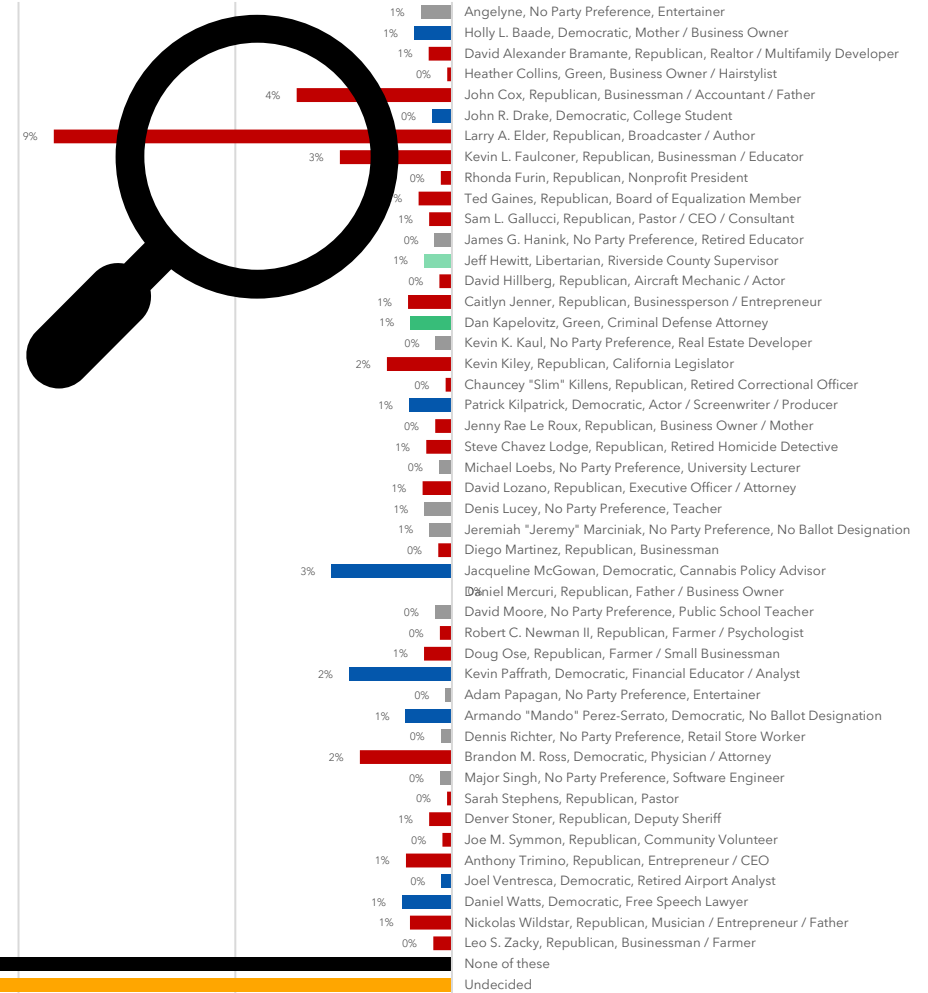


The special election ballot will also ask “replacement candidates.” If a majority of voters choose to recall the Governor, then the replacement candidate with the most votes would be elected.

All voters have the opportunity to select a replacement candidate even if they vote NO against the recall (in other words, if they vote to “keep Newsom”).

We will present you the full list of the 46 replacement candidates as they will appear on the ballot, including their political party preference and occupation.

Which “replacement candidate” would you be most likely to vote for?



Elder presently outpacing other GOP contenders, meaning Gov may be Newsom or newcomer

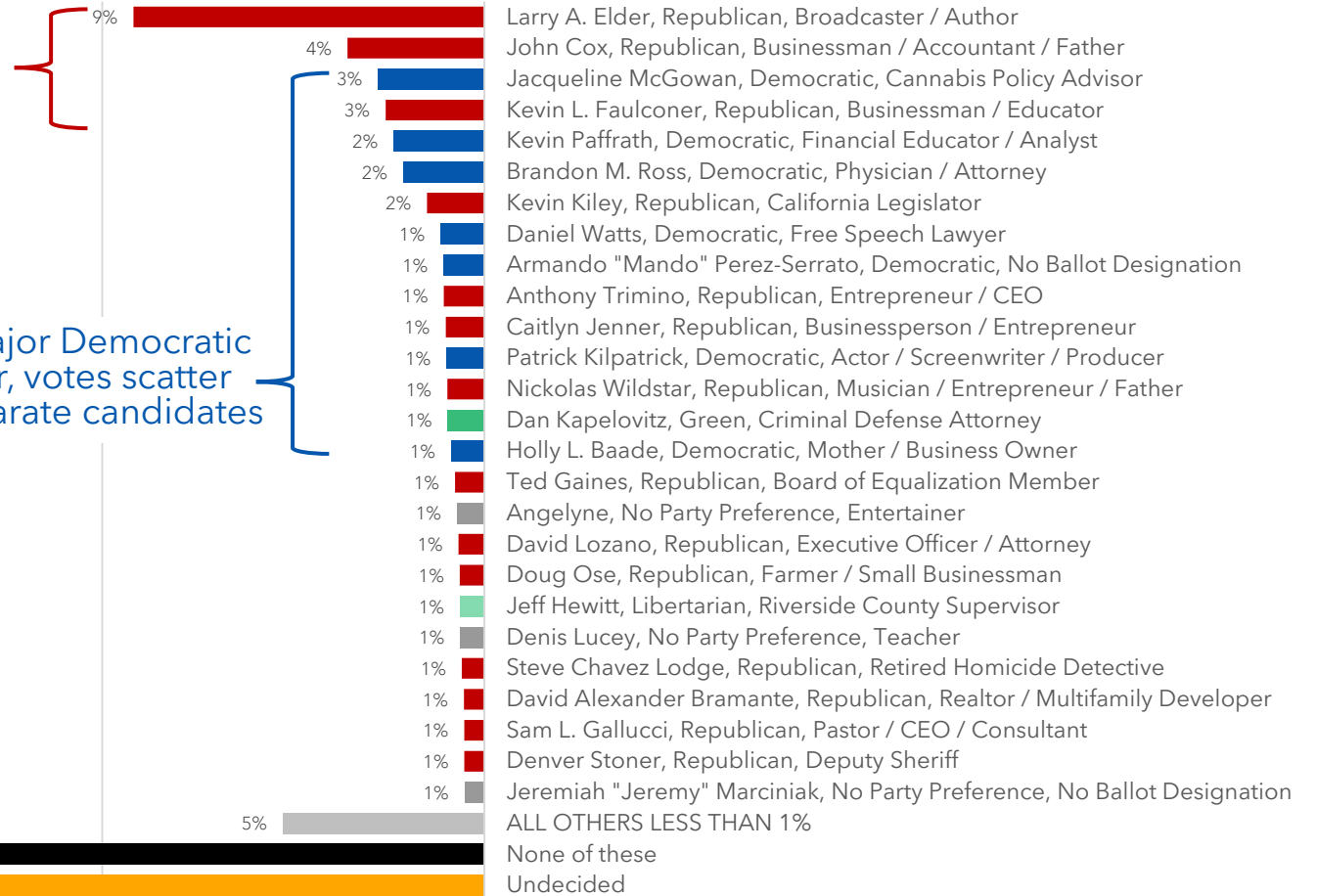


...Which "replacement candidate" would you be most likely to vote for?

Likely boosted by name ID and recent news bump among GOP voters, Elder has statistically significant lead over candidates who have been running for several months such as Cox and Faulconer

With no major Democratic contender, votes scatter across disparate candidates

Majority (56%) pick "none" or "undecided"



"Likely" & "definite" analysis shows that 7 in 10 are up for grabs (i.e., not with a leading candidate)



...Which "replacement candidate" would you be most likely to vote for?

(%)	All California Voters	"Likely" Recall Voters	"Definite" Recall Voters
Larry A. Elder , Republican, Broadcaster / Author	9	10	12
John Cox , Republican, Businessman / Accountant / Father	4	4	4
Jacqueline McGowan , Democratic, Cannabis Policy Advisor	3	3	2
Kevin L. Faulconer , Republican, Businessman / Educator	3	3	3
Kevin Paffrath , Democratic, Financial Educator / Analyst	2	3	3
Brandon M. Ross , Democratic, Physician / Attorney	2	2	2
Kevin Kiley , Republican, California Legislator	2	2	2
OTHER LESS THAN 2% (TOTAL)	20	20	17
<i>OTHER LESS THAN 2% (DEMOCRAT)</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>OTHER LESS THAN 2% (REPUBLICAN)</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>OTHER LESS THAN 2% (NO PARTY PREFERENCE)</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>4</i>
None of these	22	22	24
Undecided	34	32	31

While Elder appears to be the leading candidate at this moment...



...7 in 10 votes are up for grabs (and even among "definite" voters)



- **Newsom or new Governor? Right now, it's too close to call but here are things that may help or hinder his fate.**
 - COVID / Delta variant. Will the public mood and anger revert back to that seen at the height of lockdowns?
 - Natural disasters / fire season. Will unforeseen circumstances lead voters to rally around their leader, or revolt?
 - Crime and public safety. Will there be a flashpoint / black swan event? Does that make things better or worse?
 - 46 replacement options to choose... but no Schwarzenegger-style celebrity nor Bustamante-level major Democrat.
- **Most importantly, a month is an eternity in a campaign.**
 - There appear to be many factors looming against Newsom. He would seem to be on unsteady ground given a sharply divided electorate when it comes to the direction of the state, his favorability, and his job approval.
 - But there is more than enough time (and money) for Newsom to shore up his base, convert more no voters, and expand the pool of who shows up – particularly since all registered voters will receive a ballot by mail
 - And don't neglect to consider the value of campaign warchests – nor the power of tactical organizing efforts
 - Motivated "Yes" voters might eagerly cast their ballot in-person, but Gavin's gambit may be in the (mail)bag