

inquire

National Law School Student Study

Sponsored By:



**BUCKLEY
INSTITUTE**

May 28, 2024

Prepared by:

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Methodology and Demographic Summary

Inquire conducted a national survey of 232 law school students from April 25th to May 25th, 2024. All participants had to indicate that they were currently enrolled in one of the 197 law schools accredited and approved by the American Bar Association (ABA).

Respondents were invited to participate via advertisements on various social media applications and websites. Interviews were completed in a self-administered fashion on a secure online platform.

Data for this survey have been stratified by race/ethnicity, gender, class year and school using the 2023 ABA Standard 509 Information Report (JD Enrollment and Ethnicity) to reflect the actual demographic composition of current law school students in the United States. According to this 2023 ABA report, there were approximately 116,823 students enrolled in law school.

This poll of 232 law school students has an accuracy of +/- 6.4% at a 95% confidence interval. The error margin increases for cross-tabulations. Totals may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding, refusals and the ability for respondents to give multiple answers to certain questions. All surveys may be subject to multiple sources of error, including, but not limited to question wording and ordering, sampling error, coverage error and measurement error.

School Type	Total	School Rank	Total
Private	60%	Top 14	8%
Public	40%	16-50	18%
Class Year	Total	51-100	27%
1L/First Year	27%	101-197	47%
2L/Second Year	33%	Top Practices	Total
3L/Third Year	38%	Corporate	25%
4L/Part Time	2%	Business	21%
Ethnicity	Total	Crim. Defense	19%
White	59%	Family	16%
Hispanic	14%	Pers. Injury	14%
Black	10%	Civil Rights	11%
Asian	9%	Party ID	Total
Age	Total	Republican	19%
21-23	23%	Democrat	40%
24-26	50%	Ind./Other	36%
27-30	27%	Not Registered	3%
Gender	Total	Ideology	Total
Male	38%	Liberal	45%
Female	58%	Moderate	35%
Other	3%	Conservative	19%

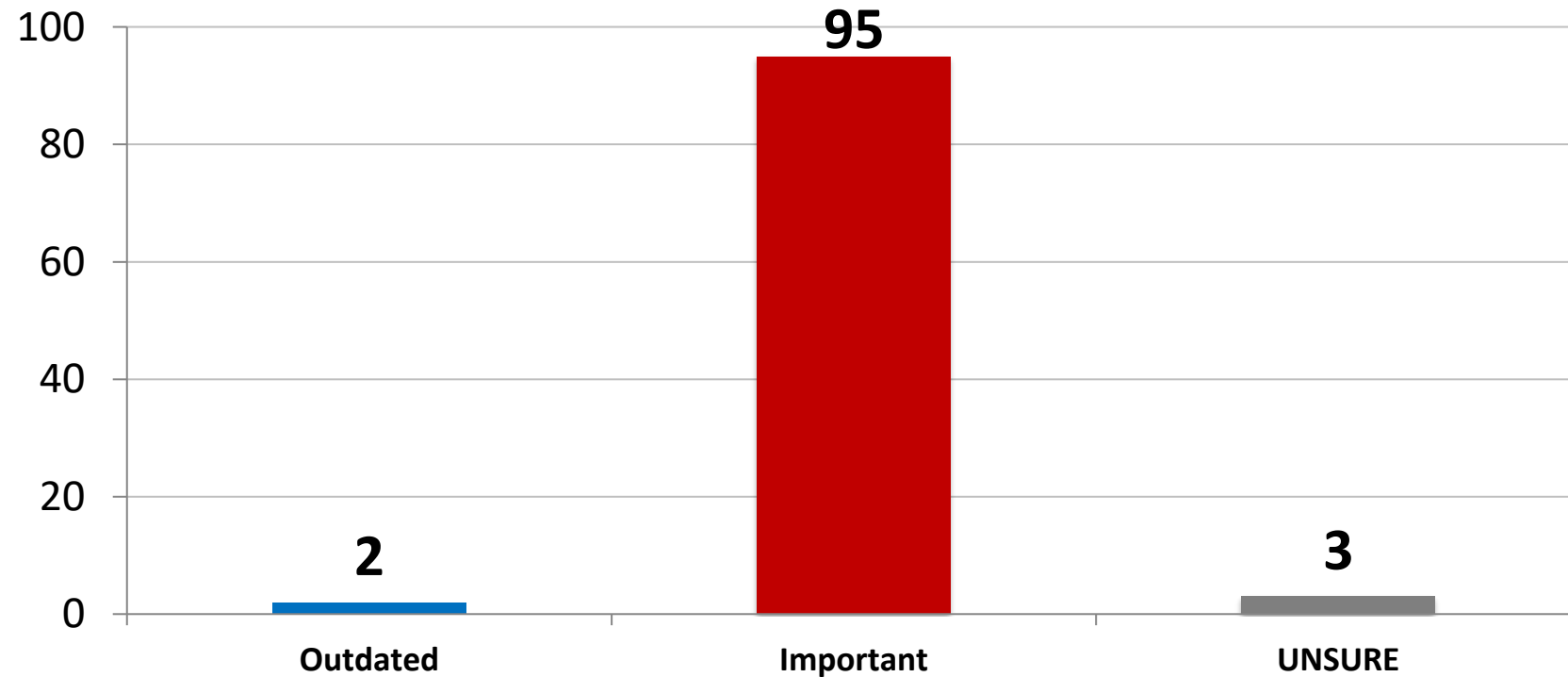
Part One – Free Speech and Intellectual Diversity

Generally speaking, do you think the First Amendment, which deals with freedom of speech, is...?

An outdated amendment that can no longer be applied in today's society and should be changed

OR

An important amendment that still needs to be followed and respected in today's society



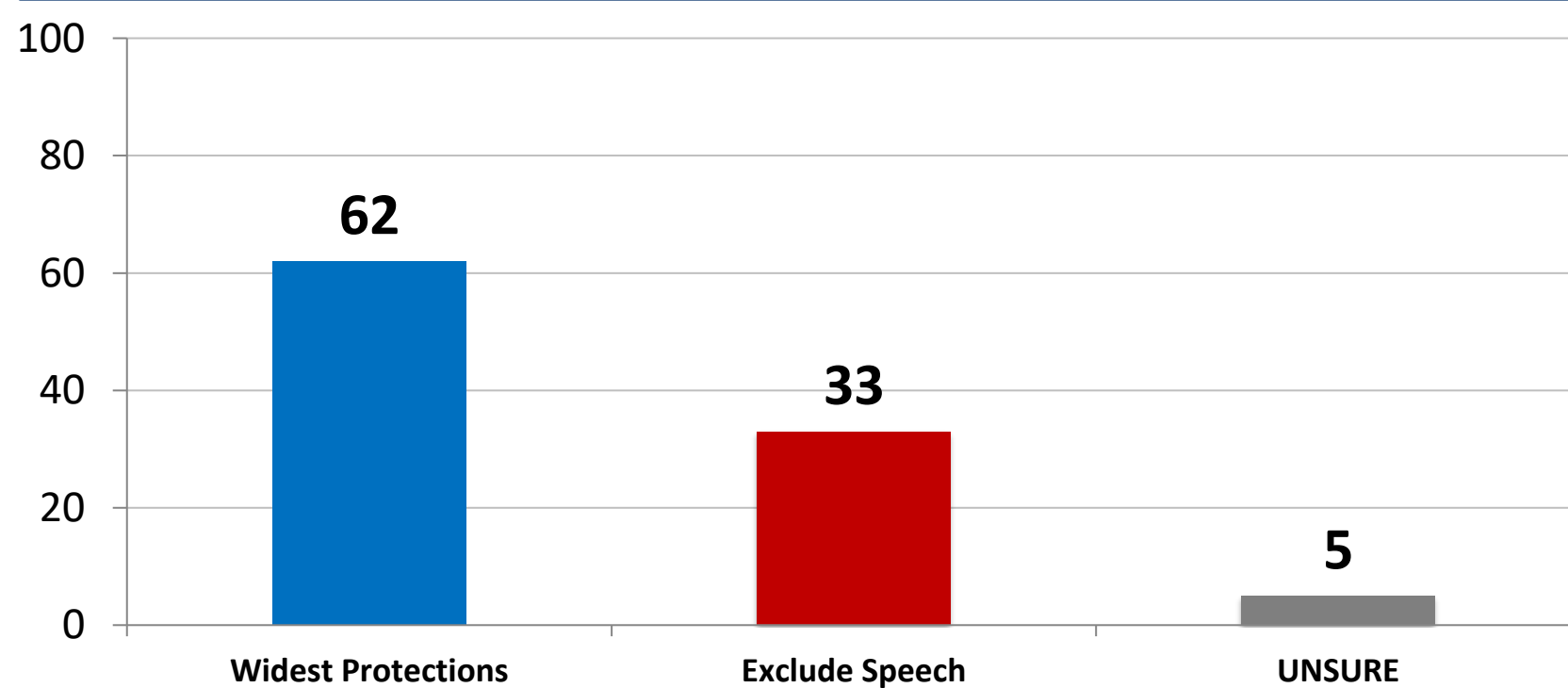
	Outdated	Important
Top 50 School	0	97
Top 14 School	0	100
16-50 School	0	96
51-100 School	3	97
100-197 School	3	93
Private School	3	93
Public/State School	1	98
1L/First Year	2	95
2L/Second Year	1	97
3L/Third Year	3	94
Vote Biden	4	95
Vote Trump	0	100
Vote RFK	2	89
Undecided	4	93
Republican	3	97
Democrat	3	93
Independent/Other	0	97
Liberal	3	94
Moderate	2	94
Conservative	1	99
White	2	96
Hispanic	2	98
Black	5	83
Asian	3	97
Male	1	97
Female	4	93

Which of the following comes closer to your own personal opinion regarding free speech under law?

The First Amendment should be interpreted to extend the widest protections to speech, even speech considered offensive or hateful by some

OR

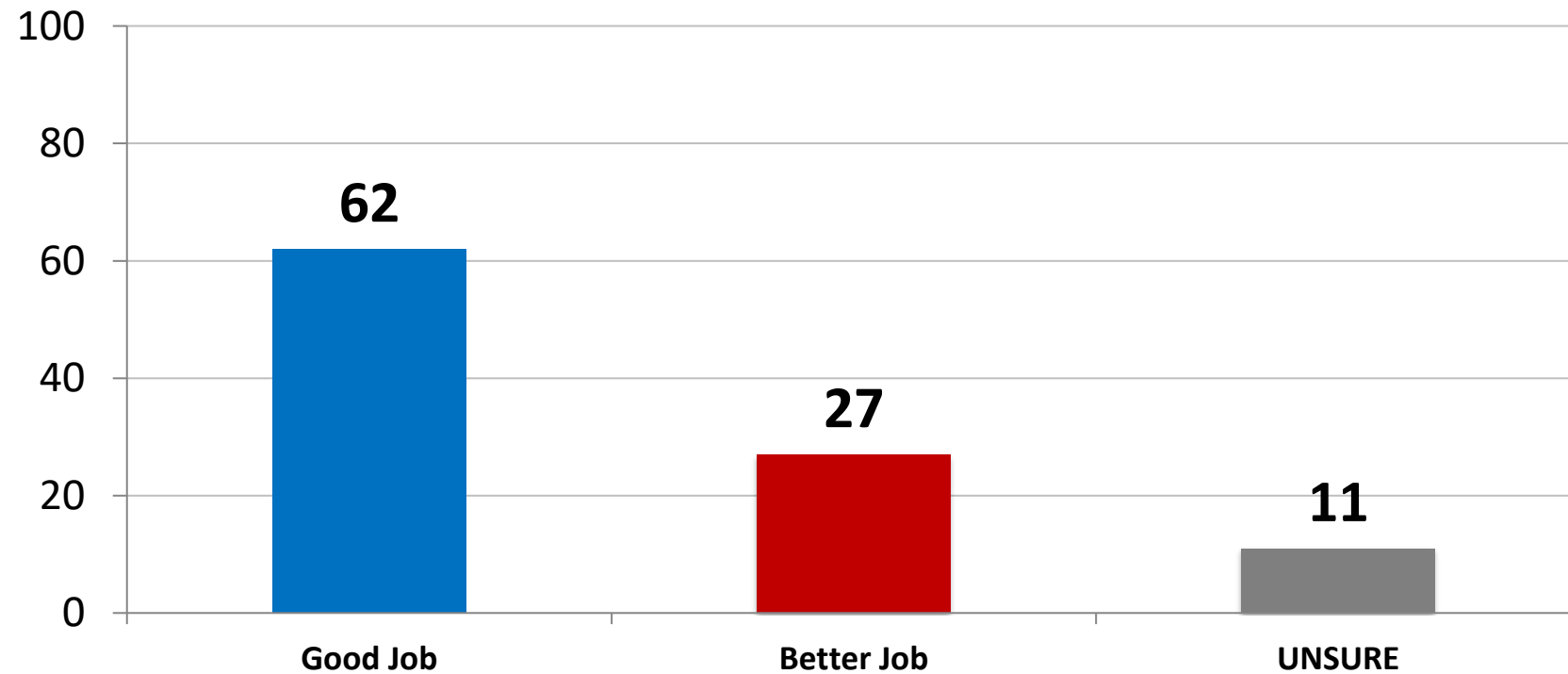
The First Amendment should be interpreted to exclude speech considered hateful or offensive by some



	Widest	Exclude
Top 50 School	57	37
Top 14 School	77	13
16-50 School	48	47
51-100 School	59	34
100-197 School	67	31
Private School	68	29
Public/State School	54	39
1L/First Year	49	46
2L/Second Year	73	21
3L/Third Year	65	33
Vote Biden	41	49
Vote Trump	97	0
Vote RFK	55	45
Undecided	65	31
Republican	82	15
Democrat	52	45
Independent/Other	66	28
Liberal	49	45
Moderate	66	29
Conservative	89	11
White	62	33
Hispanic	70	23
Black	70	30
Asian	40	60
Male	73	26
Female	57	37

Which of the following comes closer to your opinion regarding the faculty members and school administrators at your law school?

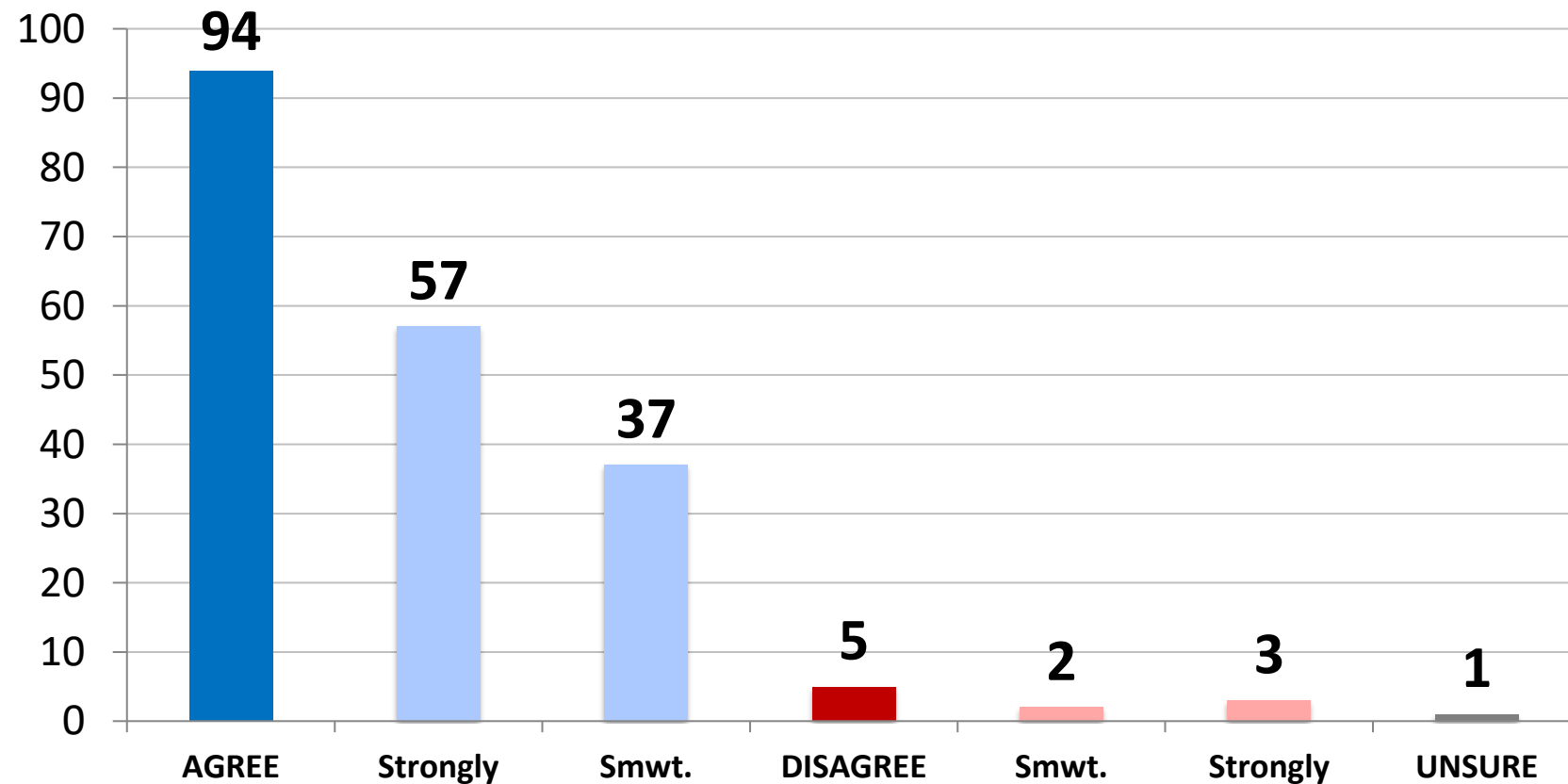
They do a good job encouraging free speech and intellectual diversity
OR
 They need to be doing a better job encouraging free speech and intellectual diversity



	Good Job	Better Job
Top 50 School	54	34
Top 14 School	46	40
16-50 School	58	31
51-100 School	72	17
100-197 School	62	28
Private School	63	26
Public/State School	62	29
1L/First Year	77	9
2L/Second Year	57	31
3L/Third Year	58	35
Vote Biden	61	29
Vote Trump	44	43
Vote RFK	69	22
Undecided	71	15
Republican	53	36
Democrat	62	30
Independent/Other	65	21
Liberal	60	29
Moderate	76	16
Conservative	40	42
White	58	27
Hispanic	63	35
Black	66	23
Asian	78	18
Male	55	30
Female	67	25

Agree/Disagree:

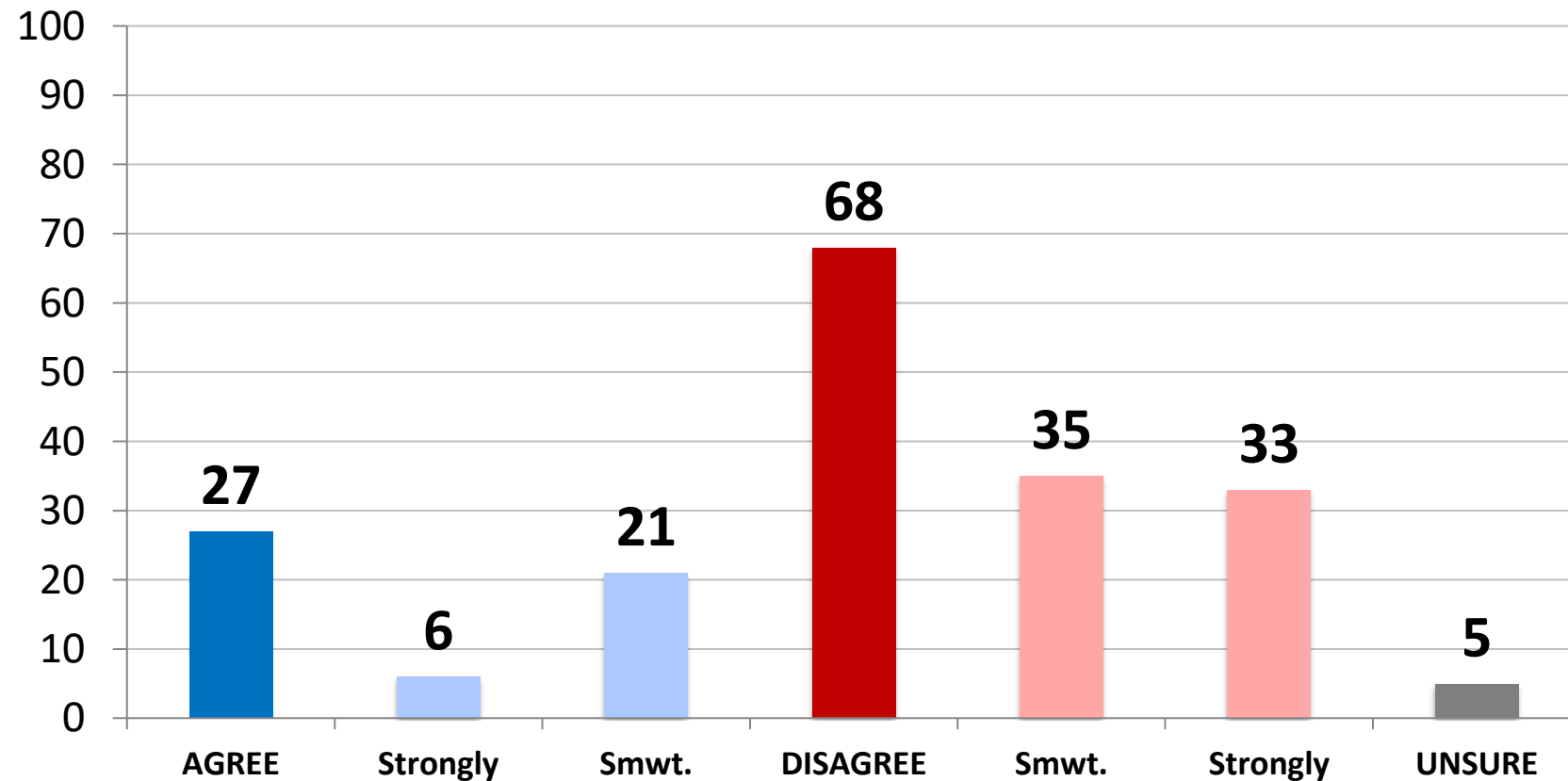
“Law schools should try to expose students to faculty with a wide range of ideological perspectives.”



	Agree	Disagree
Top 50 School	95	5
Top 14 School	100	0
16-50 School	93	7
51-100 School	98	1
100-197 School	92	7
Private School	94	6
Public/State School	95	3
1L/First Year	94	6
2L/Second Year	97	2
3L/Third Year	92	7
Vote Biden	95	4
Vote Trump	88	12
Vote RFK	95	2
Undecided	95	5
Republican	94	6
Democrat	94	4
Independent/Other	97	3
Liberal	96	3
Moderate	94	6
Conservative	93	7
White	95	5
Hispanic	92	8
Black	89	11
Asian	100	0
Male	93	7
Female	95	4

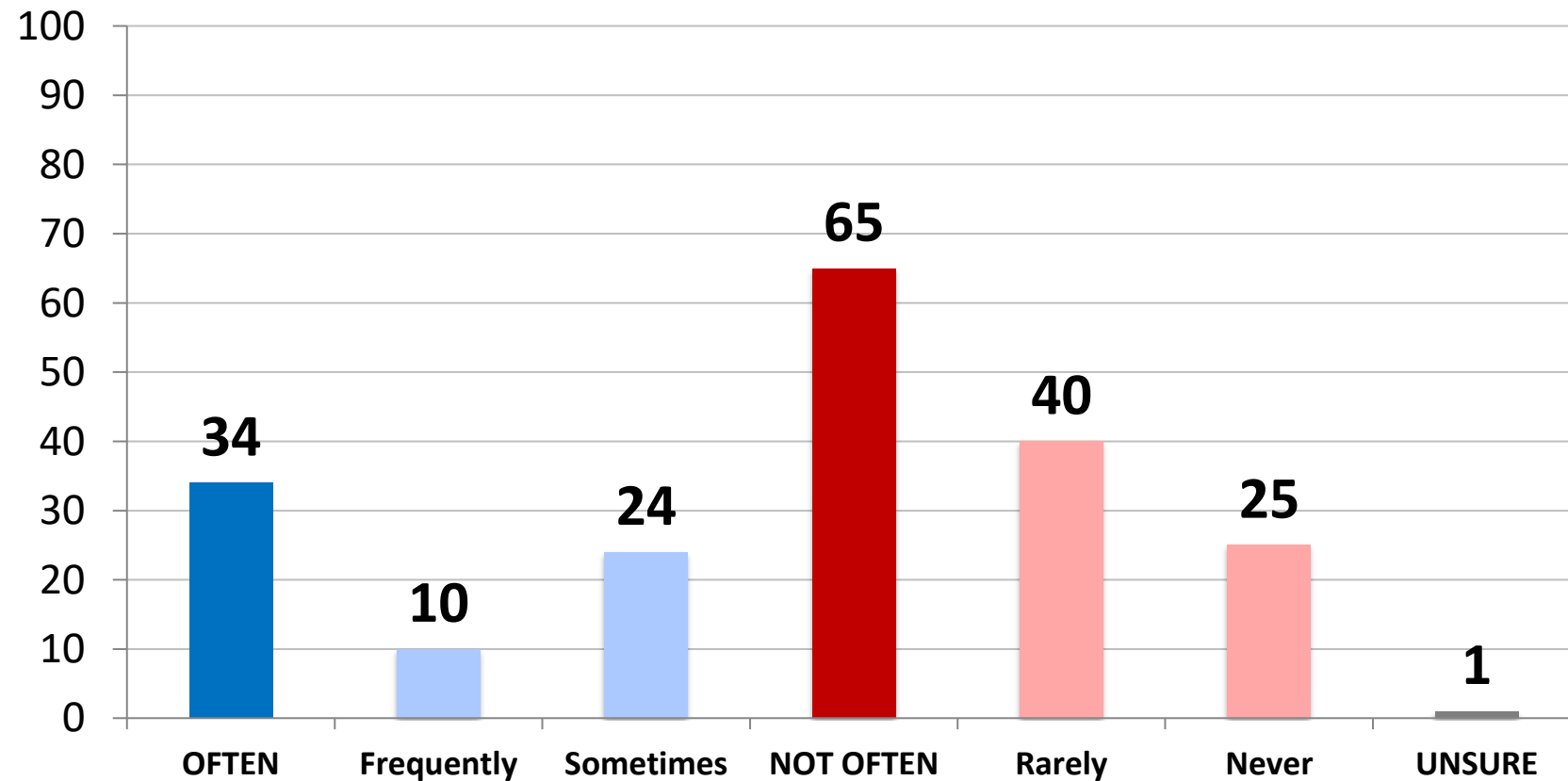
Agree/Disagree:

*“Law schools should **NOT** accept students who hold perspectives considered by some to be offensive or disgusting.”*



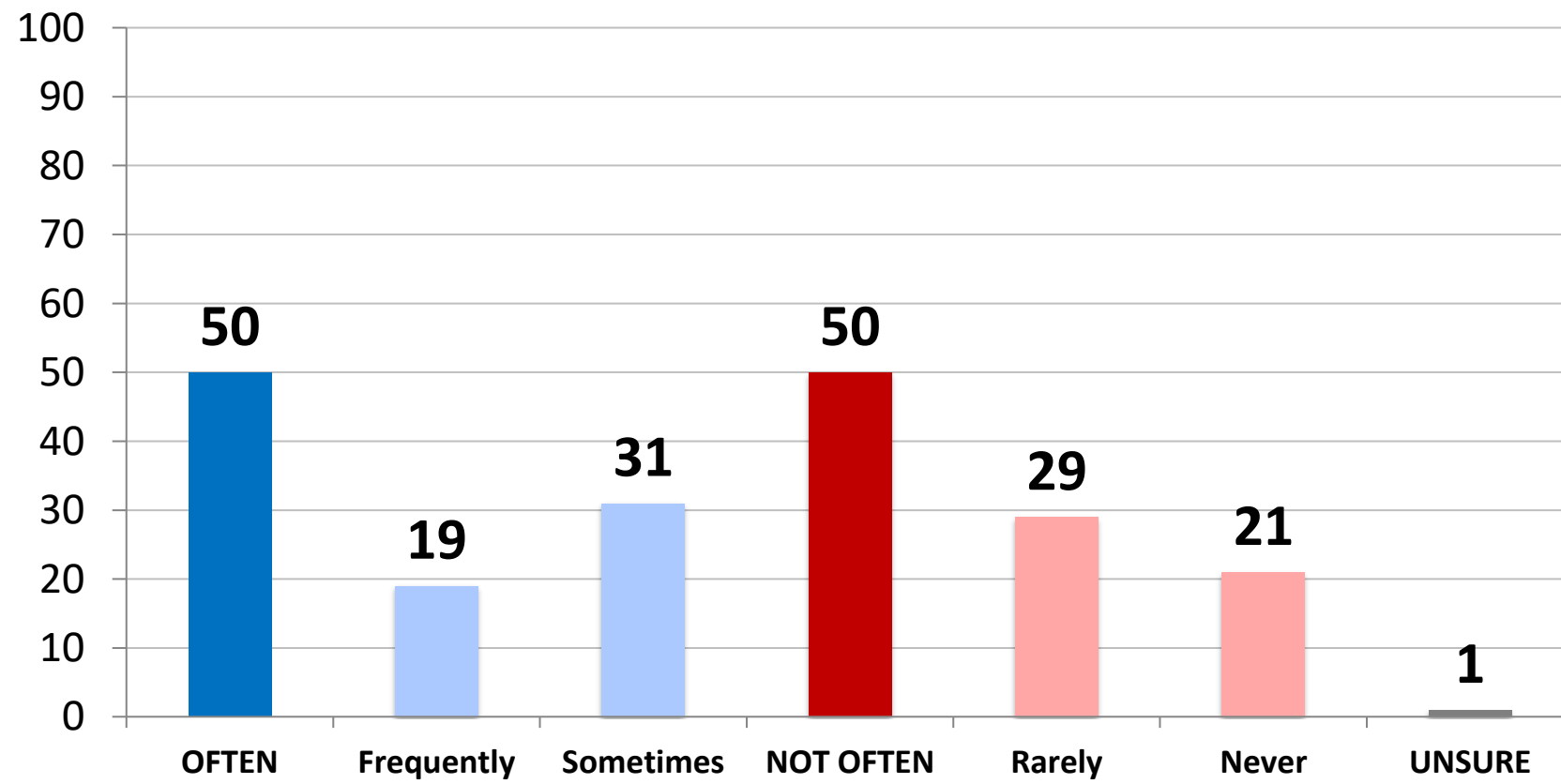
	Agree	Disagree
Top 50 School	27	63
Top 14 School	40	60
16-50 School	22	65
51-100 School	25	73
100-197 School	28	69
Private School	29	69
Public/State School	24	68
1L/First Year	29	69
2L/Second Year	30	62
3L/Third Year	23	73
Vote Biden	42	46
Vote Trump	2	98
Vote RFK	35	63
Undecided	23	74
Republican	3	97
Democrat	38	59
Independent/Other	24	68
Liberal	47	48
Moderate	13	83
Conservative	7	90
White	24	71
Hispanic	35	59
Black	31	70
Asian	32	68
Male	21	75
Female	28	67

Have you felt intimidated in sharing your ideas, opinions or beliefs about the law in class because they were different than those of your *professors*?



	Often	Not Often
Top 50 School	47	53
Top 14 School	39	61
16-50 School	51	49
51-100 School	22	78
100-197 School	33	64
Private School	34	66
Public/State School	35	64
1L/First Year	35	61
2L/Second Year	34	66
3L/Third Year	33	67
Vote Biden	20	80
Vote Trump	56	44
Vote RFK	39	58
Undecided	22	76
Republican	46	54
Democrat	29	68
Independent/Other	35	65
Liberal	21	77
Moderate	41	59
Conservative	52	48
White	37	62
Hispanic	29	71
Black	25	69
Asian	12	88
Male	41	59
Female	31	67

Have you felt intimidated in sharing your ideas, opinions or beliefs about the law in class because they were different than those of your classmates?

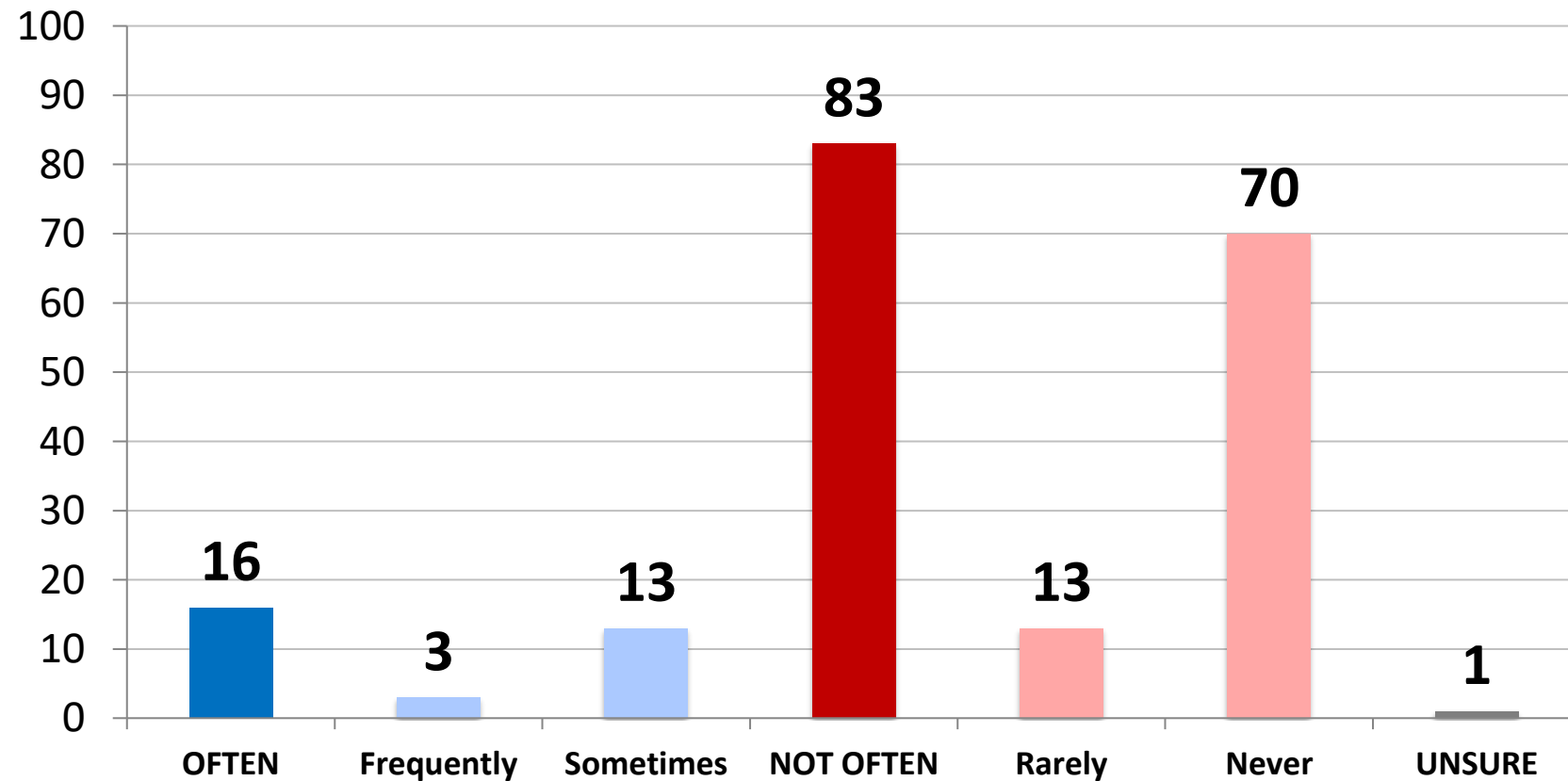


	Often	Not Often
Top 50 School	56	45
Top 14 School	42	58
16-50 School	61	39
51-100 School	45	55
100-197 School	49	50
Private School	50	50
Public/State School	50	50
1L/First Year	47	51
2L/Second Year	49	51
3L/Third Year	51	49
Vote Biden	39	61
Vote Trump	72	28
Vote RFK	49	47
Undecided	45	55
Republican	71	29
Democrat	41	57
Independent/Other	48	53
Liberal	32	66
Moderate	57	43
Conservative	75	25
White	53	46
Hispanic	48	52
Black	41	59
Asian	36	64
Male	49	51
Female	51	48

Comparison: % Often Intimidated Professors vs. % Often Intimidated Classmates

	Prof.	Class.	Diff.
TOTAL	34	50	+16
Top 50 School	47	56	+9
Top 14 School	39	42	+3
16-50 School	51	61	+10
51-100 School	22	45	+23
100-197 School	33	49	+16
Private School	34	50	+16
Public/State School	35	50	+15
1L/First Year	35	47	+12
2L/Second Year	34	49	+15
3L/Third Year	33	51	+18
Vote Biden	20	39	+19
Vote Trump	56	72	+16
Vote RFK	39	49	+10
Undecided	22	45	+23
Republican	46	71	+25
Democrat	29	41	+12
Independent/Other	35	48	+13
Liberal	21	32	+11
Moderate	41	57	+16
Conservative	52	75	+23
White	37	53	+16
Hispanic	29	48	+19
Black	25	41	+16
Asian	12	36	+24
Male	41	49	+8
Female	31	51	+20

During your time in law school, have you felt pressured to participate in a political activity or demonstration that you disagreed with out of concern for academic or social consequences?

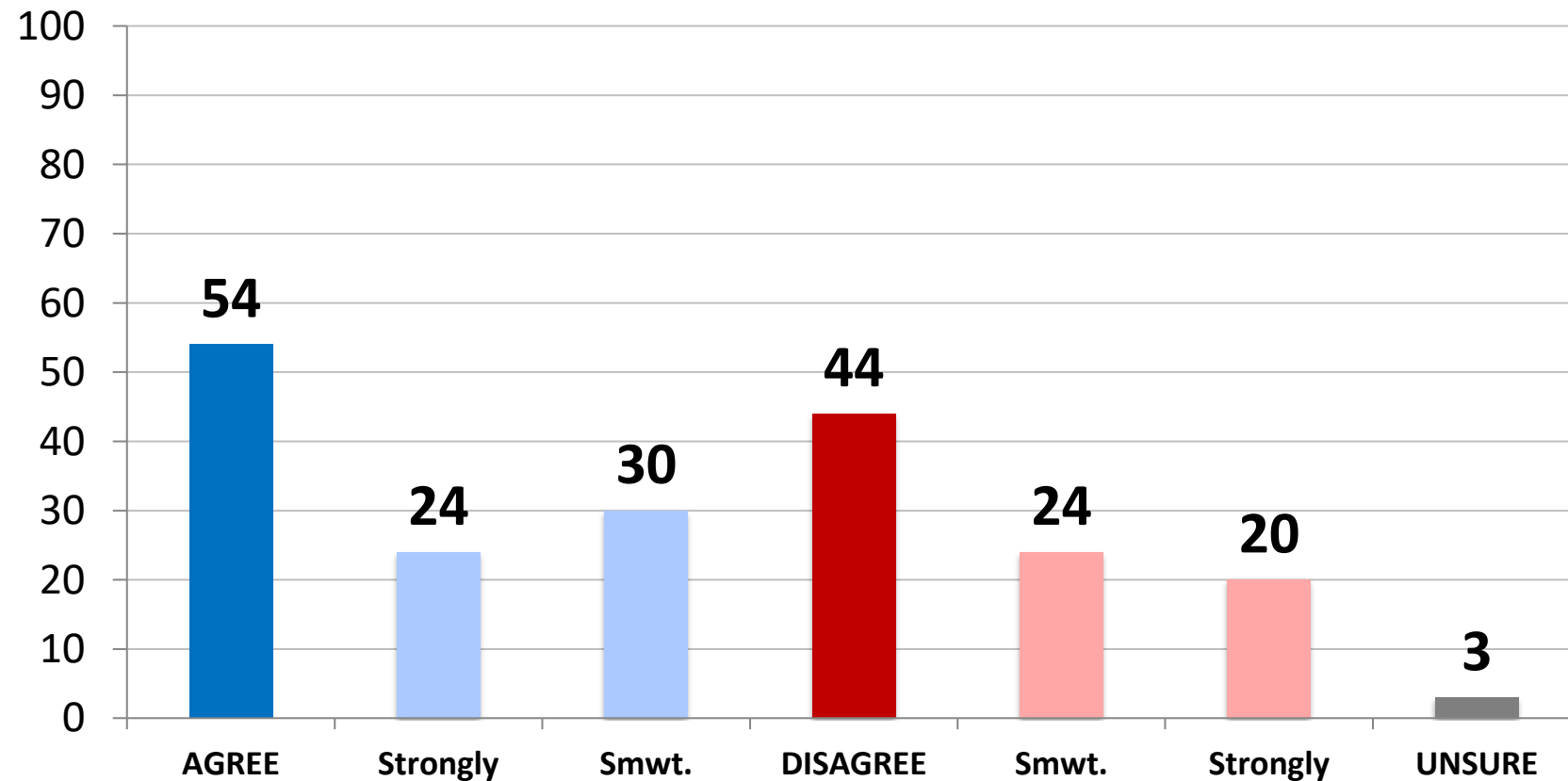


	Often	Not Often
Top 50 School	17	80
Top 14 School	16	84
16-50 School	18	78
51-100 School	7	93
100-197 School	19	80
Private School	13	85
Public/State School	19	81
1L/First Year	14	84
2L/Second Year	13	87
3L/Third Year	19	79
Vote Biden	12	88
Vote Trump	34	66
Vote RFK	21	71
Undecided	8	92
Republican	28	72
Democrat	10	89
Independent/Other	16	84
Liberal	9	90
Moderate	14	84
Conservative	32	68
White	14	85
Hispanic	23	77
Black	18	82
Asian	7	85
Male	19	79
Female	14	85

Part Two – Attitudes Towards Law and Practice

Agree/Disagree:

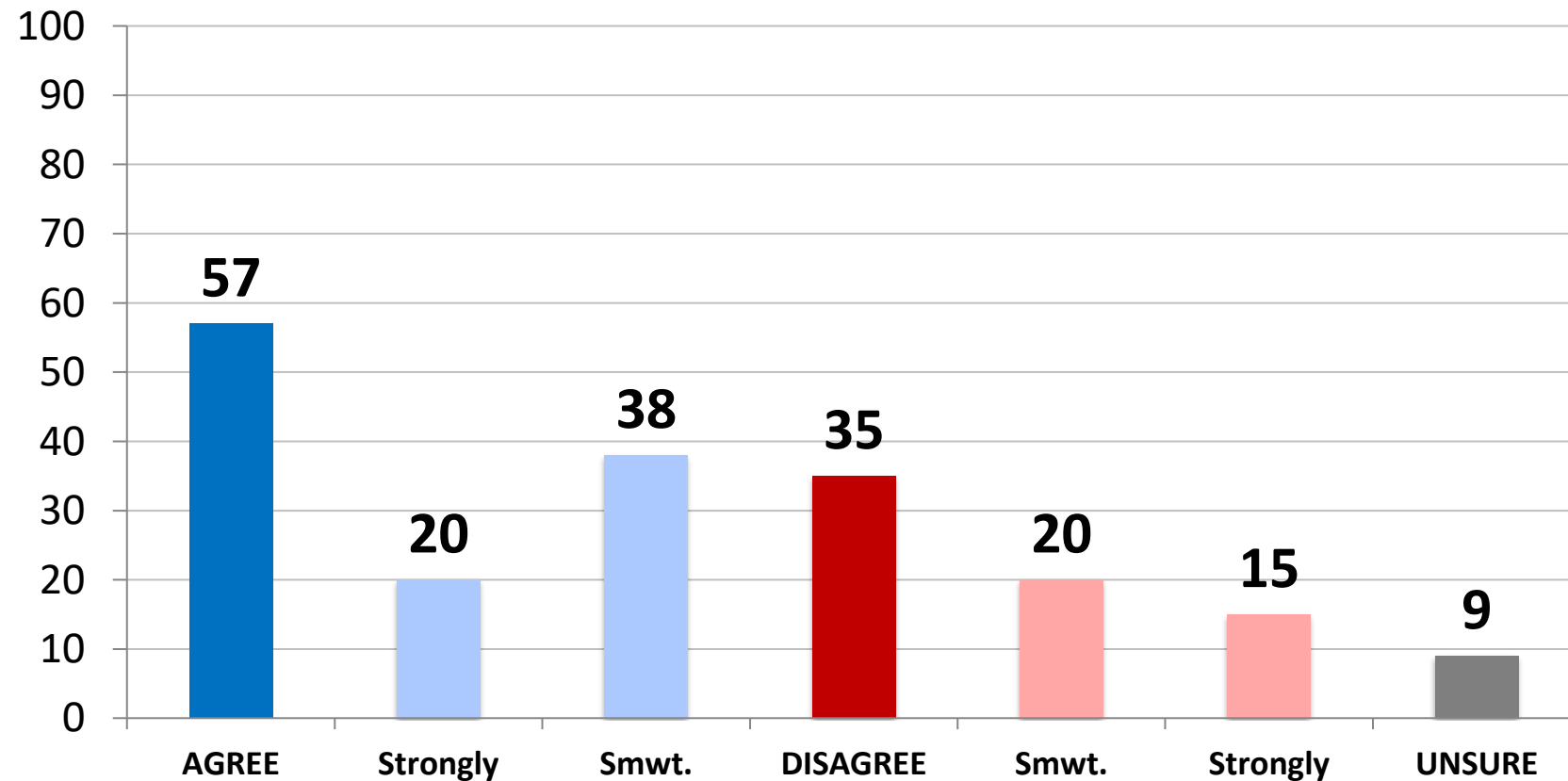
“The LSAT exam is an unfair way to evaluate prospective law school students. Schools should disregard the LSAT when considering applicants.”



	Agree	Disagree
Top 50 School	39	59
Top 14 School	41	59
16-50 School	38	59
51-100 School	45	51
100-197 School	67	30
Private School	52	45
Public/State School	56	42
1L/First Year	54	39
2L/Second Year	53	47
3L/Third Year	52	44
Vote Biden	62	30
Vote Trump	32	68
Vote RFK	60	40
Undecided	52	44
Republican	43	54
Democrat	62	34
Independent/Other	51	49
Liberal	65	32
Moderate	48	50
Conservative	37	60
White	52	44
Hispanic	66	34
Black	60	40
Asian	44	56
Male	44	57
Female	61	34

Agree/Disagree:

“The bar exam is an unfair way to determine if a prospective lawyer should be permitted to practice law. The bar exam should be eliminated in favor of another type of evaluation that is fairer.”



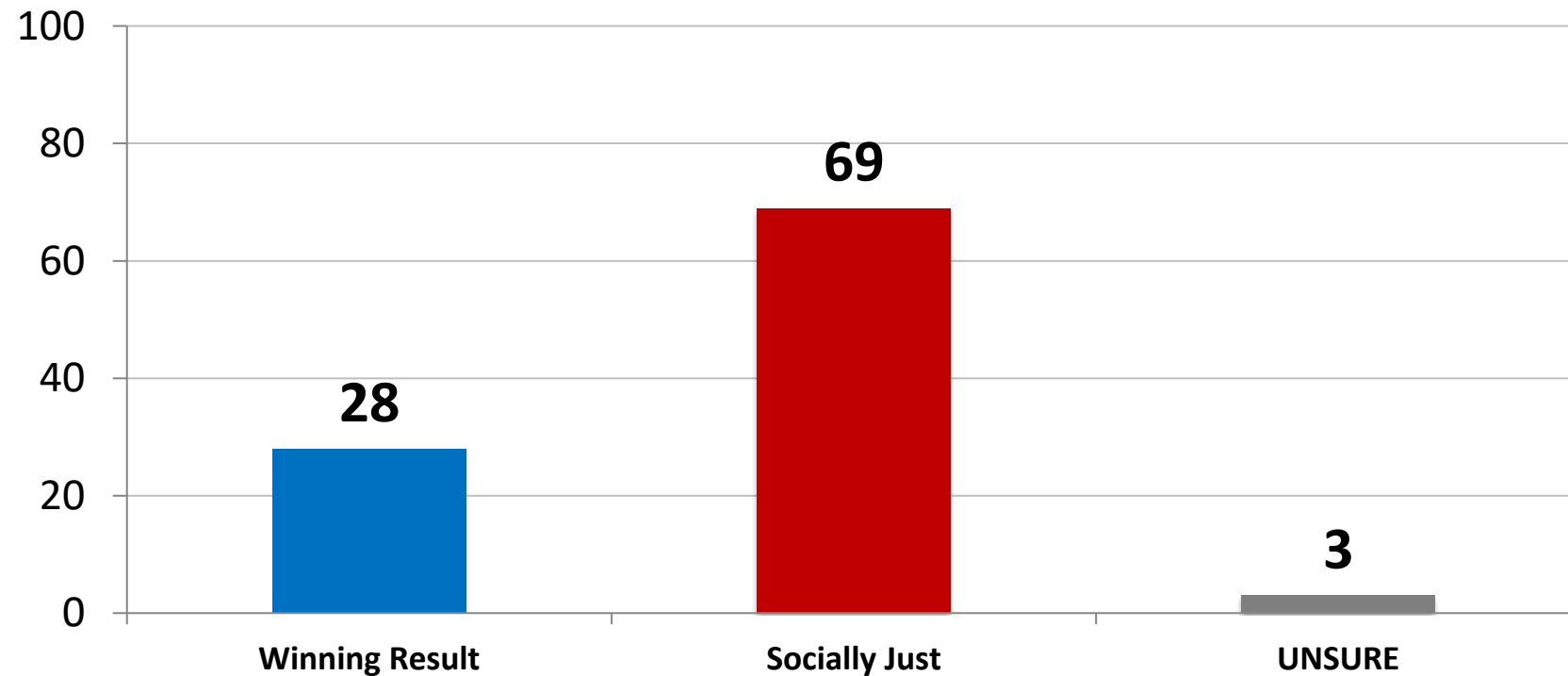
	Agree	Disagree
Top 50 School	65	34
Top 14 School	46	54
16-50 School	73	24
51-100 School	48	41
100-197 School	57	31
Private School	52	38
Public/State School	64	29
1L/First Year	50	32
2L/Second Year	59	33
3L/Third Year	60	37
Vote Biden	62	31
Vote Trump	37	42
Vote RFK	51	41
Undecided	57	35
Republican	43	46
Democrat	65	33
Independent/Other	57	28
Liberal	63	32
Moderate	51	36
Conservative	55	36
White	61	32
Hispanic	49	26
Black	46	54
Asian	56	37
Male	55	34
Female	57	36

Thinking about when you start practicing law, which of the following do you believe is more important?

Ensuring that the client you represent gets a winning or favorable result

OR

Ensuring that the work you do advances a more socially just and equitable legal system



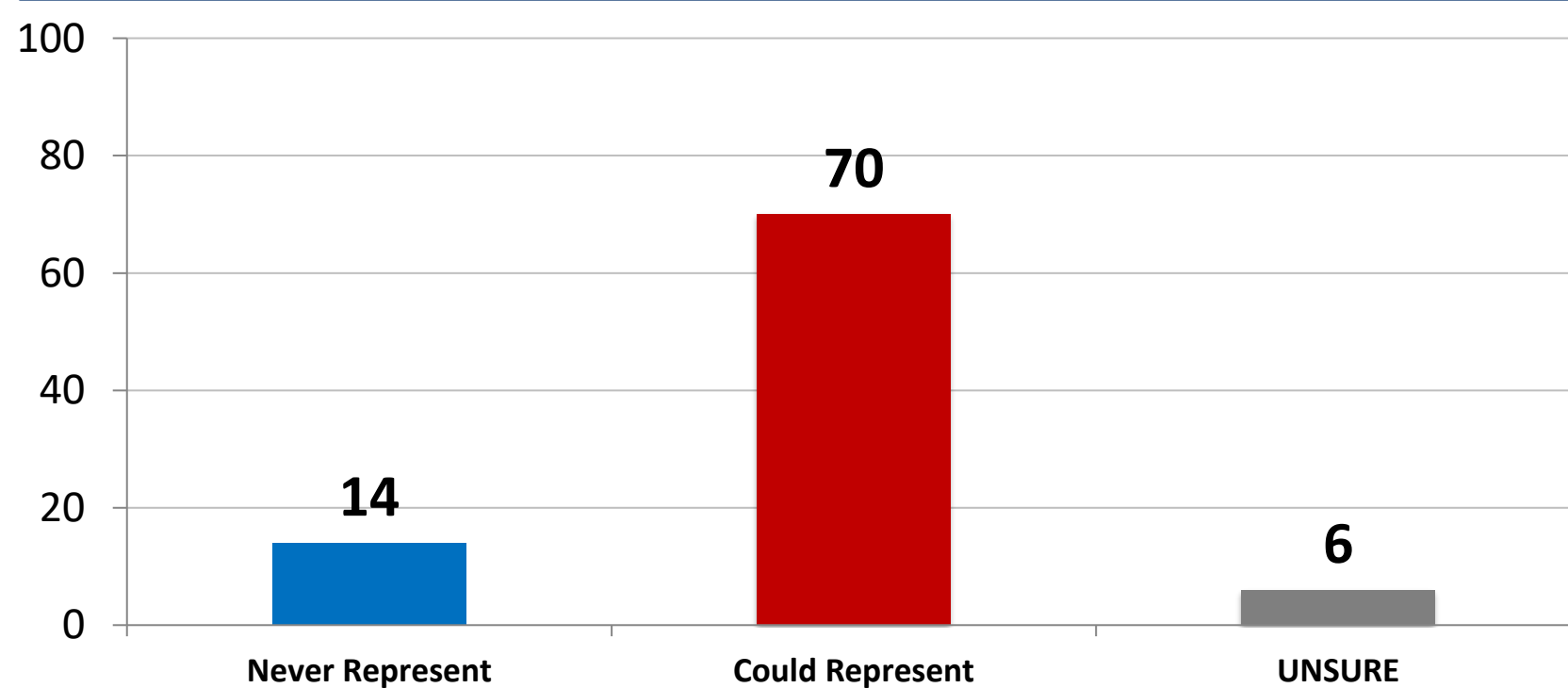
	Winning	Socially Just
Top 50 School	37	59
Top 14 School	46	46
16-50 School	33	65
51-100 School	31	65
100-197 School	22	76
Private School	30	67
Public/State School	26	72
1L/First Year	16	82
2L/Second Year	29	67
3L/Third Year	36	63
Vote Biden	11	87
Vote Trump	65	32
Vote RFK	36	62
Undecided	25	75
Republican	54	43
Democrat	19	79
Independent/Other	26	71
Liberal	16	80
Moderate	27	73
Conservative	59	35
White	28	67
Hispanic	21	79
Black	41	59
Asian	23	77
Male	50	49
Female	16	80

Which of the following statements comes closer to your view?

I could **NEVER** represent a client who I believe is guilty and has done something wrong

OR

While I might believe my client is guilty or has done something wrong, I could represent them out of duty to the law and our legal system



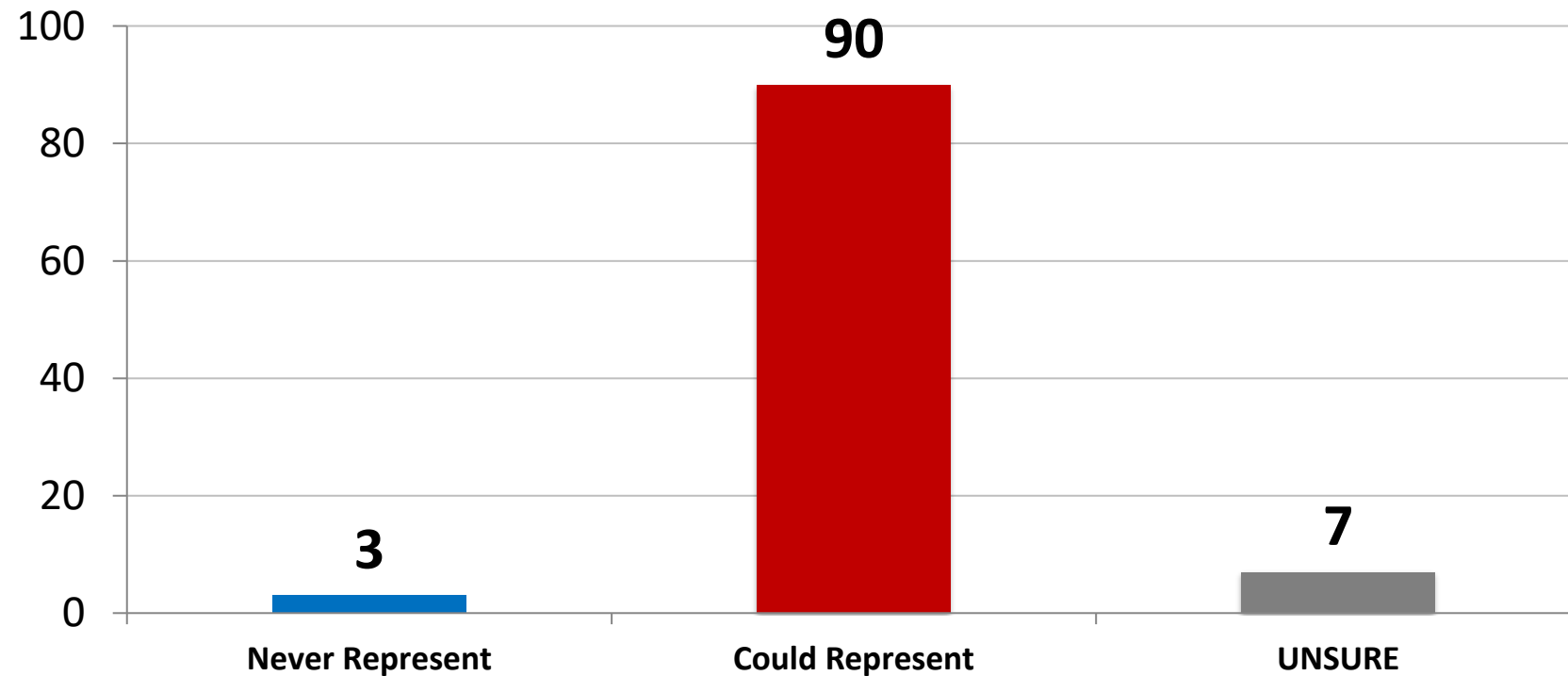
	Never	Could
Top 50 School	14	81
Top 14 School	17	68
16-50 School	13	87
51-100 School	15	80
100-197 School	14	79
Private School	9	85
Public/State School	23	73
1L/First Year	23	70
2L/Second Year	12	84
3L/Third Year	11	82
Vote Biden	10	83
Vote Trump	9	79
Vote RFK	27	69
Undecided	9	86
Republican	11	81
Democrat	13	79
Independent/Other	16	80
Liberal	12	81
Moderate	18	79
Conservative	11	79
White	12	84
Hispanic	7	87
Black	26	72
Asian	25	65
Male	5	88
Female	19	75

Which of the following statements comes closer to your view?

I could **NEVER** represent a client who has different political beliefs than me

OR

Even if I strongly disagree with the political beliefs of a client, I could represent them out of duty to the law and our legal system

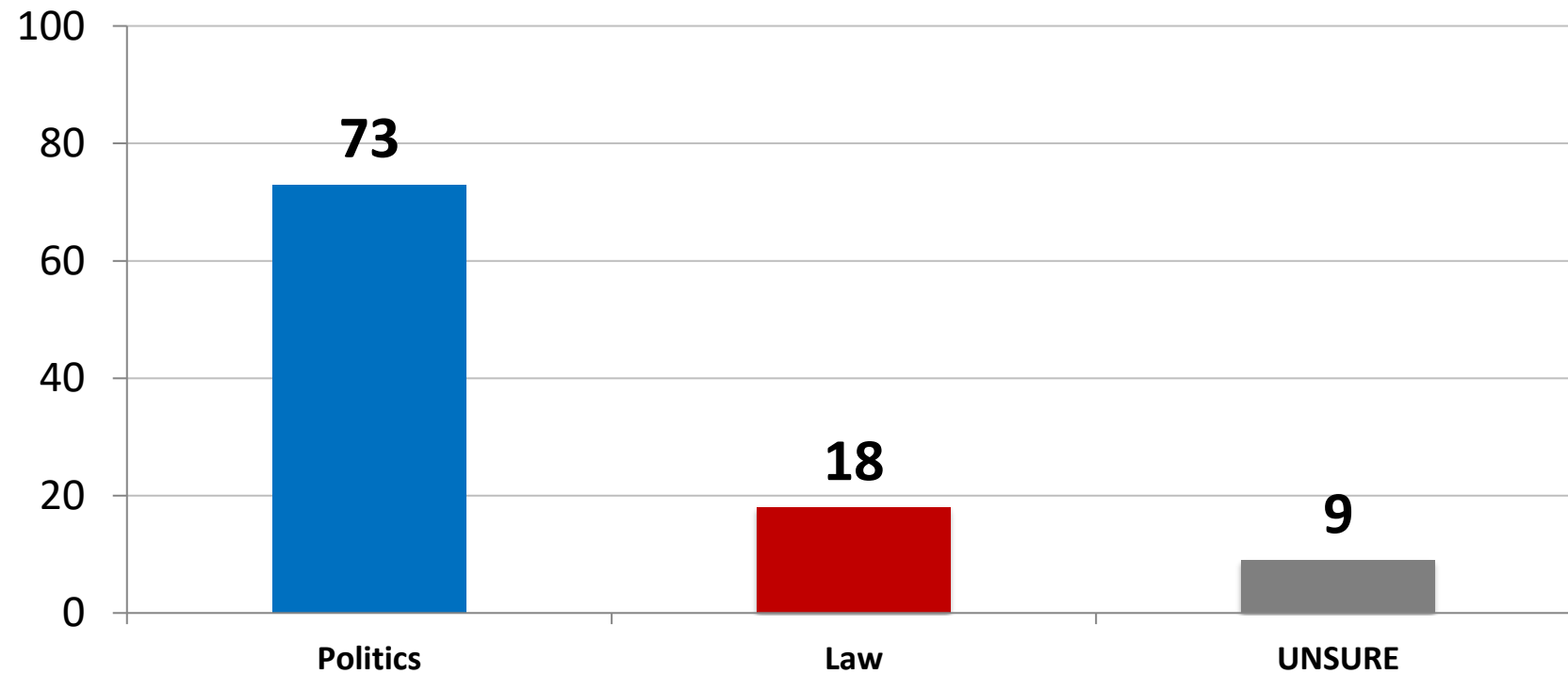


	Never	Could
Top 50 School	10	81
Top 14 School	12	79
16-50 School	8	82
51-100 School	1	93
100-197 School	1	93
Private School	1	93
Public/State School	7	84
1L/First Year	0	98
2L/Second Year	5	85
3L/Third Year	5	89
Vote Biden	6	83
Vote Trump	9	84
Vote RFK	2	98
Undecided	0	96
Republican	0	92
Democrat	8	85
Independent/Other	1	95
Liberal	3	90
Moderate	2	94
Conservative	8	81
White	5	87
Hispanic	0	93
Black	1	90
Asian	0	96
Male	7	90
Female	2	89

Part Three – Attitudes Towards the Supreme Court

Which of the following is closer to your opinion regarding *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, the Supreme Court decision that overturned the constitutional right to abortion in America and returned the decision to voters and legislatures at the state-level?

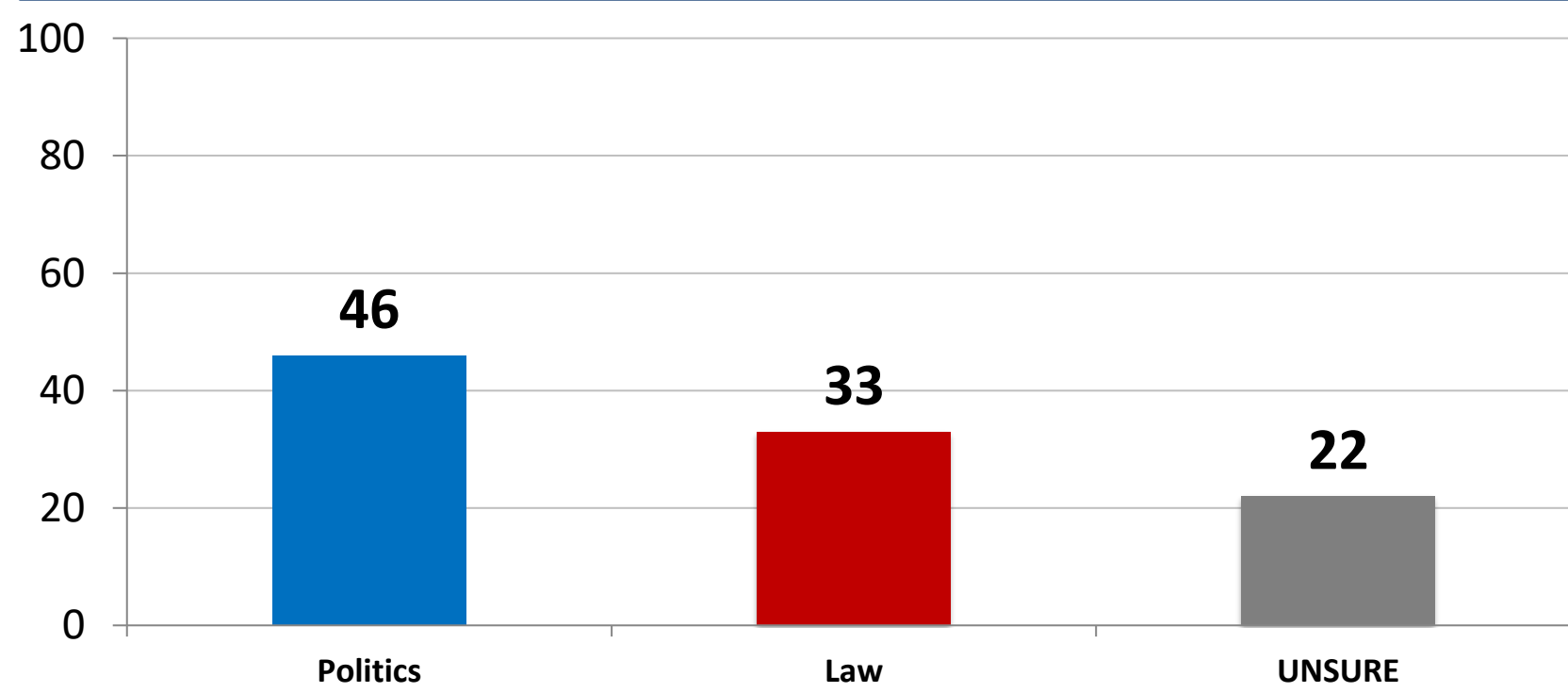
The decision was based more in politics than in law
OR
 The decision was based more in law than in politics



	Politics	Law
Top 50 School	72	23
Top 14 School	72	19
16-50 School	73	25
51-100 School	80	13
100-197 School	70	18
Private School	74	15
Public/State School	73	23
1L/First Year	75	8
2L/Second Year	74	22
3L/Third Year	72	21
Vote Biden	88	5
Vote Trump	25	59
Vote RFK	78	19
Undecided	82	8
Republican	40	50
Democrat	86	10
Independent/Other	75	13
Liberal	93	4
Moderate	74	14
Conservative	28	57
White	73	17
Hispanic	76	16
Black	74	22
Asian	97	3
Male	59	32
Female	82	10

Which of the following is closer to your opinion regarding *National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebelius*, the Supreme Court decision that upheld large parts of the Affordable Care Act as constitutional, including the individual mandate to purchase health insurance?

The decision was based more in politics than in law
OR
 The decision was based more in law than in politics



	Politics	Law
Top 50 School	58	26
Top 14 School	49	16
16-50 School	62	30
51-100 School	38	37
100-197 School	43	34
Private School	46	30
Public/State School	46	37
1L/First Year	43	39
2L/Second Year	49	30
3L/Third Year	46	30
Vote Biden	27	42
Vote Trump	59	27
Vote RFK	55	36
Undecided	49	29
Republican	63	18
Democrat	38	37
Independent/Other	45	38
Liberal	41	37
Moderate	40	35
Conservative	71	18
White	48	32
Hispanic	36	31
Black	56	18
Asian	35	54
Male	60	31
Female	37	33

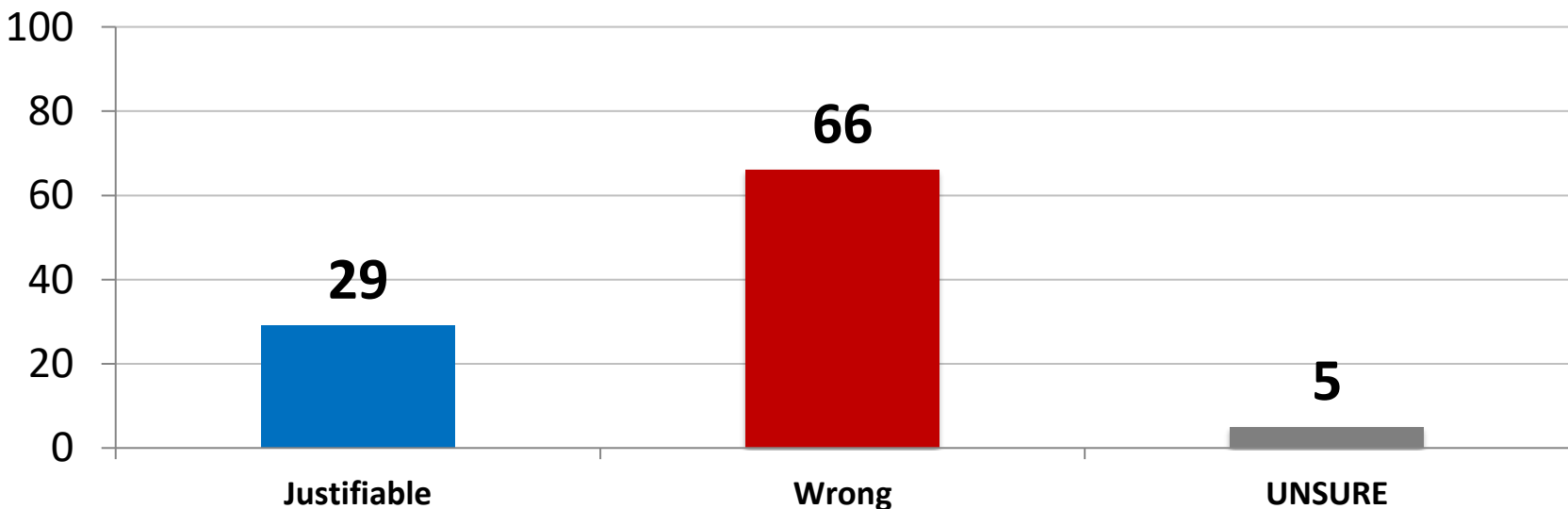
It has been about two years since the United States Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*. You may recall that the draft decision was leaked beforehand. Chief Justice John Roberts immediately announced an investigation into the source of the leak and news reports have said at least one law clerk is among the suspects. While the findings have not yet been officially released, which statement comes closer to your view?

If true, it is entirely justifiable for a law clerk to have leaked this draft opinion. The overturning of *Roe v. Wade* was a monumental ruling that impacts millions of Americans and they have a right to know.

OR

If true, it was wrong for a law clerk to have leaked this draft opinion. While we may have severe disagreements on issues like abortion, this leak by a clerk – if true – is unprecedented and shatters the norms of our justice system.

	Justifiable	Wrong
Top 50 School	24	69
Top 14 School	23	68
16-50 School	24	69
51-100 School	31	64
100-197 School	31	65
Private School	29	65
Public/State School	29	67
1L/First Year	28	71
2L/Second Year	31	61
3L/Third Year	27	69
Vote Biden	37	56
Vote Trump	0	98
Vote RFK	35	62
Undecided	26	69
Republican	4	96
Democrat	34	59
Independent/Other	37	57
Liberal	38	55
Moderate	30	67
Conservative	5	91
White	26	70
Hispanic	43	52
Black	35	56
Asian	19	74
Male	22	75
Female	34	59



Part Four – Miscellaneous Issues

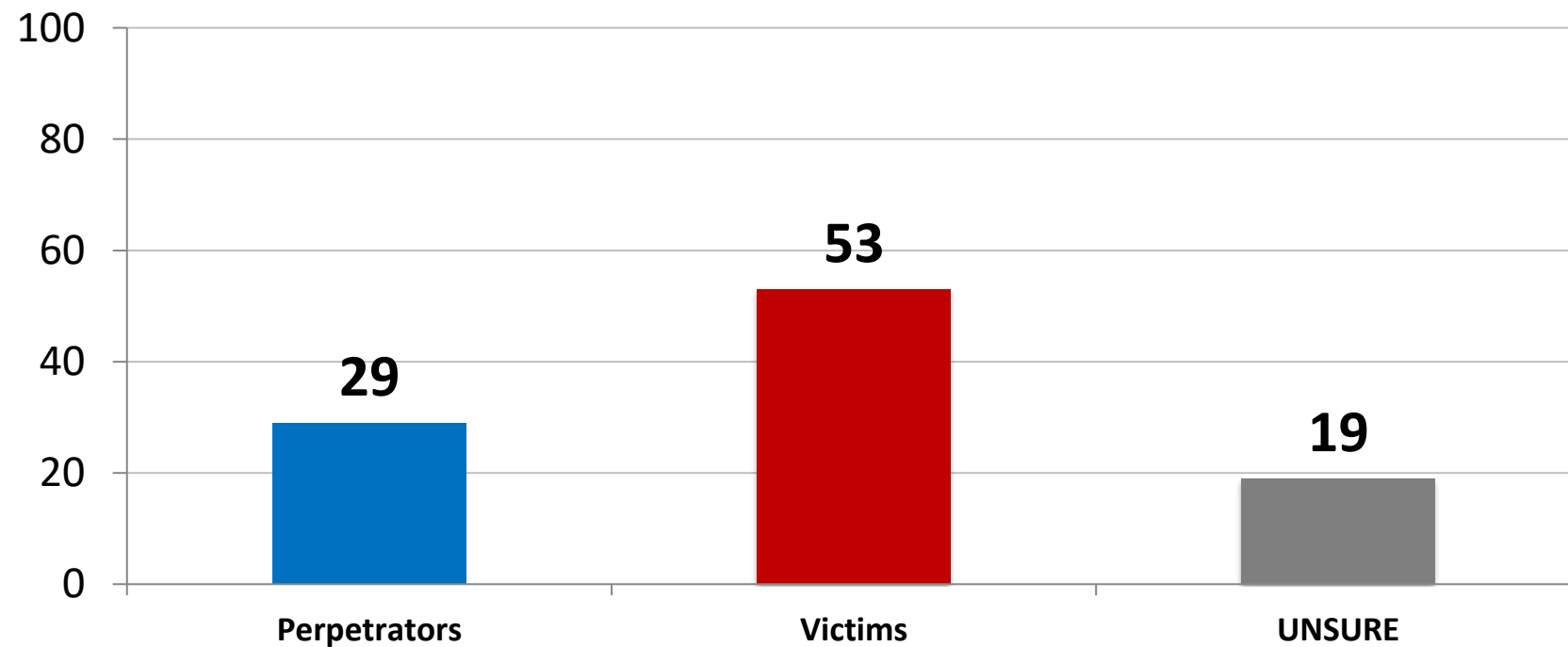
Generally speaking, which of the following comes closer to your own personal opinion regarding the practice of law?

Criminal law practitioners should extend special sympathy to perpetrators of crimes. Oftentimes these people are facing difficult circumstances and systemic injustices that cause crime.

OR

Criminal law practitioners should extend special sympathy to the victims of crimes because the rule of law is paramount and people are entitled to basic rights of safety and security.

	Perpetrators	Victims
Top 50 School	24	59
Top 14 School	28	44
16-50 School	23	65
51-100 School	33	51
100-197 School	28	50
Private School	31	50
Public/State School	24	56
1L/First Year	23	72
2L/Second Year	29	46
3L/Third Year	31	46
Vote Biden	39	39
Vote Trump	5	77
Vote RFK	29	59
Undecided	30	45
Republican	10	68
Democrat	41	43
Independent/Other	24	57
Liberal	44	39
Moderate	17	56
Conservative	12	77
White	26	54
Hispanic	36	47
Black	45	42
Asian	13	74
Male	21	63
Female	32	45

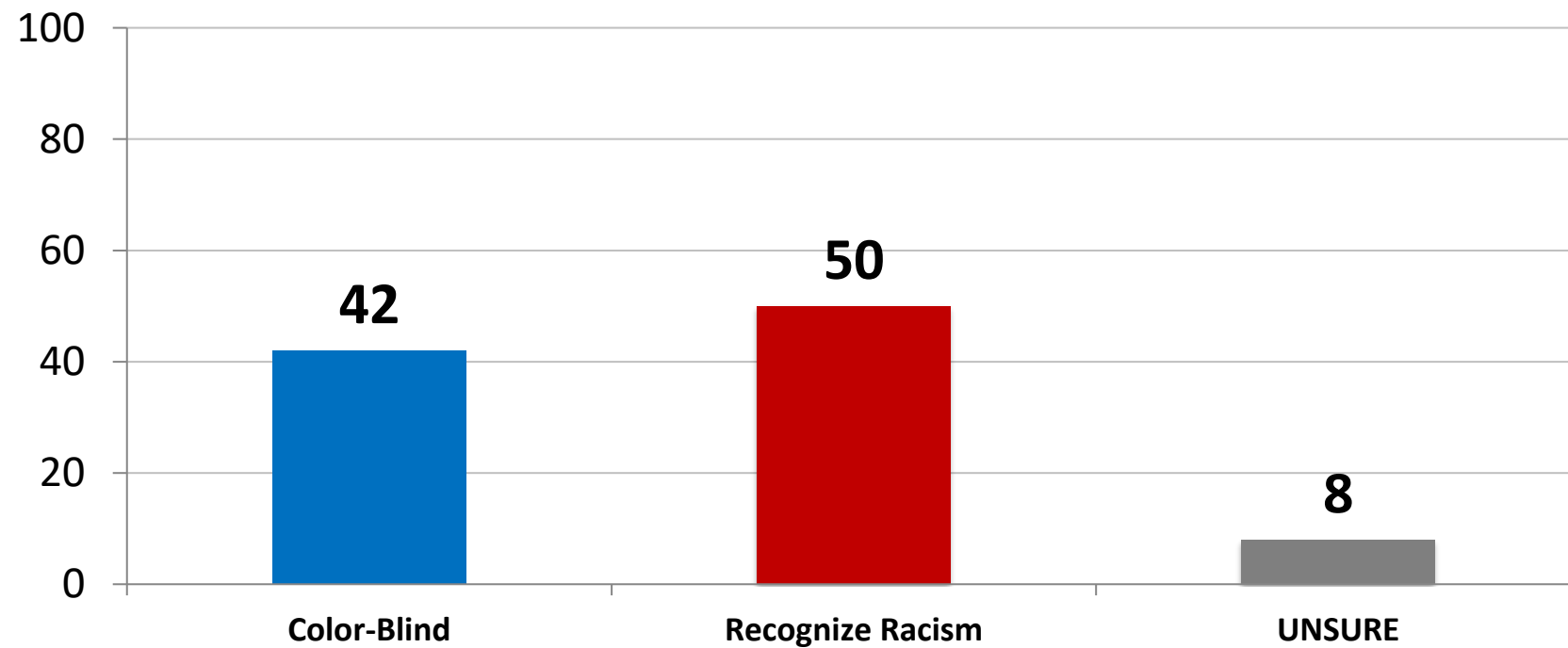


Which of the following comes closer to your own personal opinion?

America and its public and private institutions should pursue a color-blind society where all individuals are treated the same regardless of their gender, race, religion, or ethnicity.

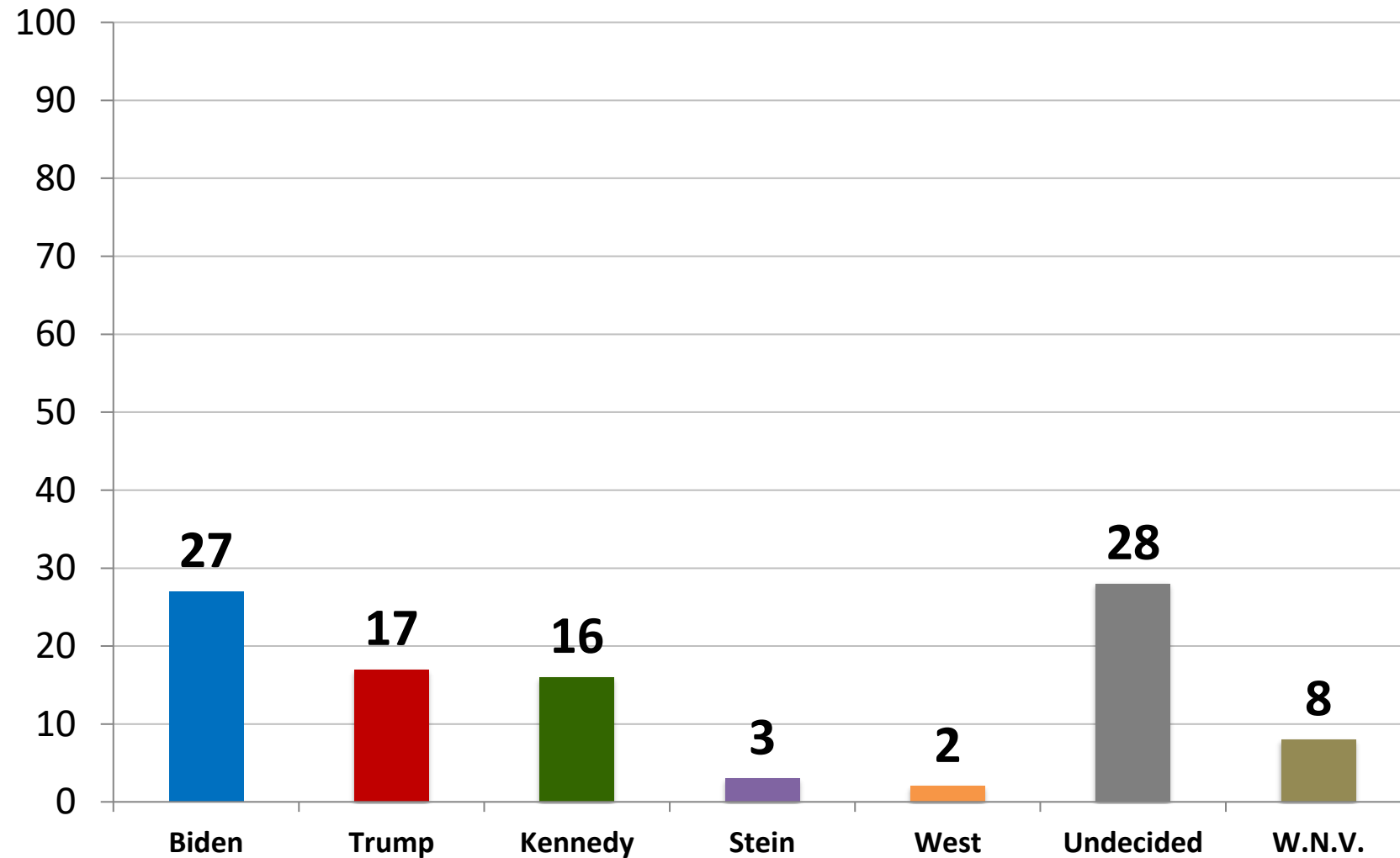
OR

America and its public and private institutions should recognize systemic racism in society, and support members of disadvantaged groups even at the direct expense of members of advantaged groups.



	Color-Blind	Recognize
Top 50 School	56	44
Top 14 School	46	54
16-50 School	61	39
51-100 School	24	59
100-197 School	43	49
Private School	38	56
Public/State School	48	41
1L/First Year	37	49
2L/Second Year	42	51
3L/Third Year	44	50
Vote Biden	10	82
Vote Trump	91	3
Vote RFK	53	35
Undecided	28	63
Republican	84	12
Democrat	21	76
Independent/Other	43	44
Liberal	14	79
Moderate	45	40
Conservative	100	0
White	50	44
Hispanic	13	68
Black	22	77
Asian	53	40
Male	60	32
Female	30	63

Ballot: 2024 President



	<u>Biden</u>	<u>Trump</u>	<u>RFK</u>	<u>Und.</u>
Top 50 School	31	22	6	21
Top 14 School	39	19	5	38
16-50 School	27	24	6	14
51-100 School	44	6	11	30
100-197 School	15	19	26	30
Private School	31	14	14	29
Public/State School	20	21	20	26
1L/First Year	20	9	32	24
2L/Second Year	31	26	2	31
3L/Third Year	28	15	18	27
Vote Biden	100	0	0	0
Vote Trump	0	100	0	0
Vote RFK	0	0	100	0
Undecided	0	0	0	100
Republican	0	64	12	20
Democrat	44	4	12	30
Independent/Other	22	8	23	25
Liberal	46	0	12	30
Moderate	17	12	25	30
Conservative	0	64	12	19
White	28	19	13	25
Hispanic	38	12	24	24
Black	17	15	22	42
Asian	18	7	21	30
Male	22	29	22	14
Female	30	10	14	37



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