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# Michigan Local Leaders' Perspectives on Policing Policy Reforms

Findings from the Spring 2024  
Michigan Public Policy Survey (MPPS)

Presented at the  
Michigan Justice Fund Annual Summit  
July 25, 2025

# The Michigan Public Policy Survey

- **A census survey** –  
all 1,856 Michigan counties, cities, villages, and townships
- **Local government respondents** –  
top elected and appointed officials
- **Administered** –  
online and via hardcopy
- **Topics** –  
examples include fiscal health, government operations and budget policies, elections, energy, roads, poverty, civic engagement, water infrastructure, employee policies and labor unions, housing, environmental sustainability, and much more.

# MPPS is not a typical opinion poll

- **70%+** response rates
- **Transparency**
  - ~ Questionnaires online
  - ~ Pre-run data tables online
  - ~ Sharing of (anonymized) datasets with other researchers
- **Research partnership with Michigan local government associations and others**

# What makes the Spring 2024 wave unique?

Responses from 1,307 Michigan local governments (**70%**)

plus:

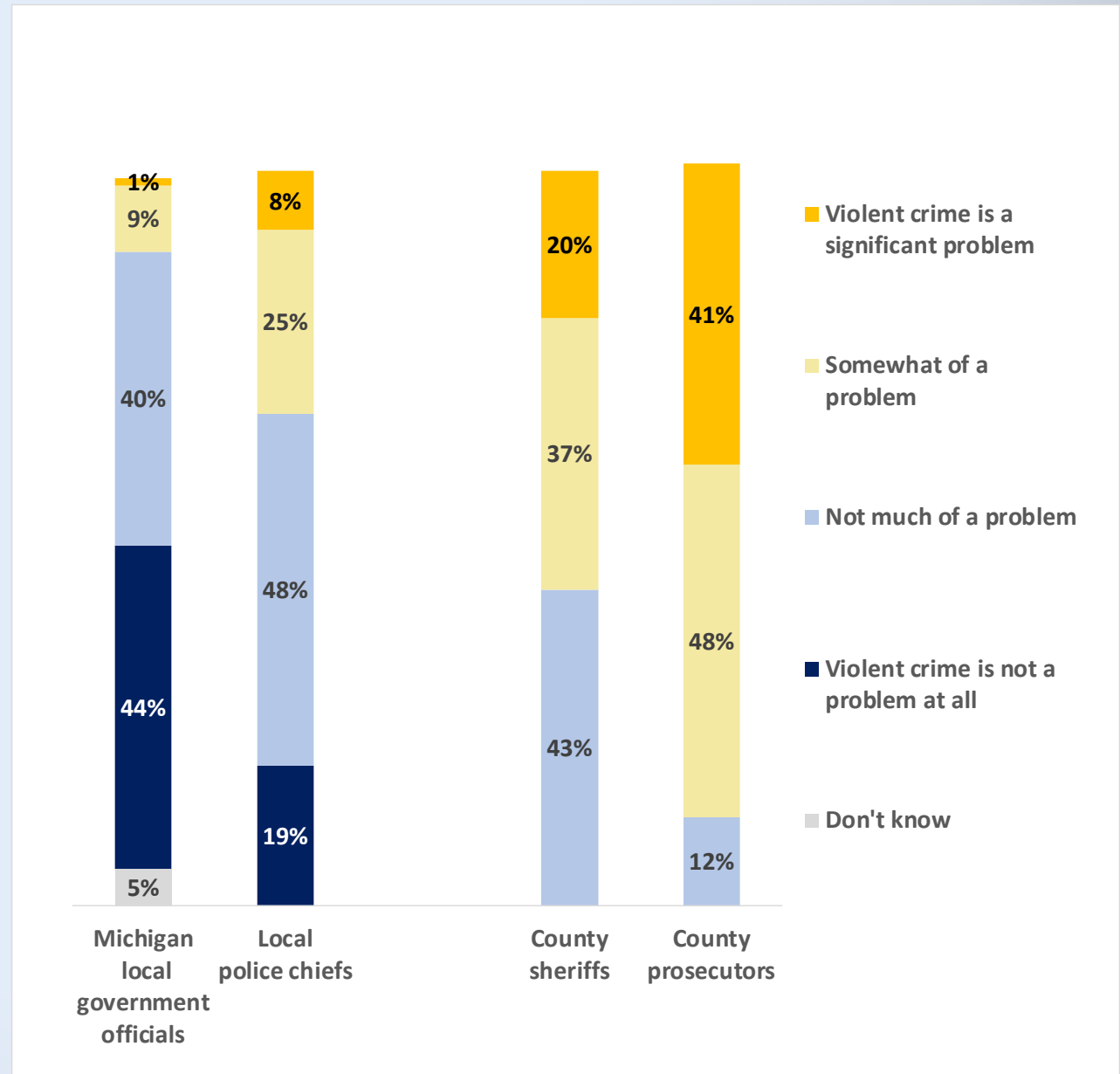
- 234 police chiefs and public safety directors (**54%**)
- 54 county sheriffs (**65%**)
- 55 county prosecutors (**66%**)



# ***Narrative vs. Reality***

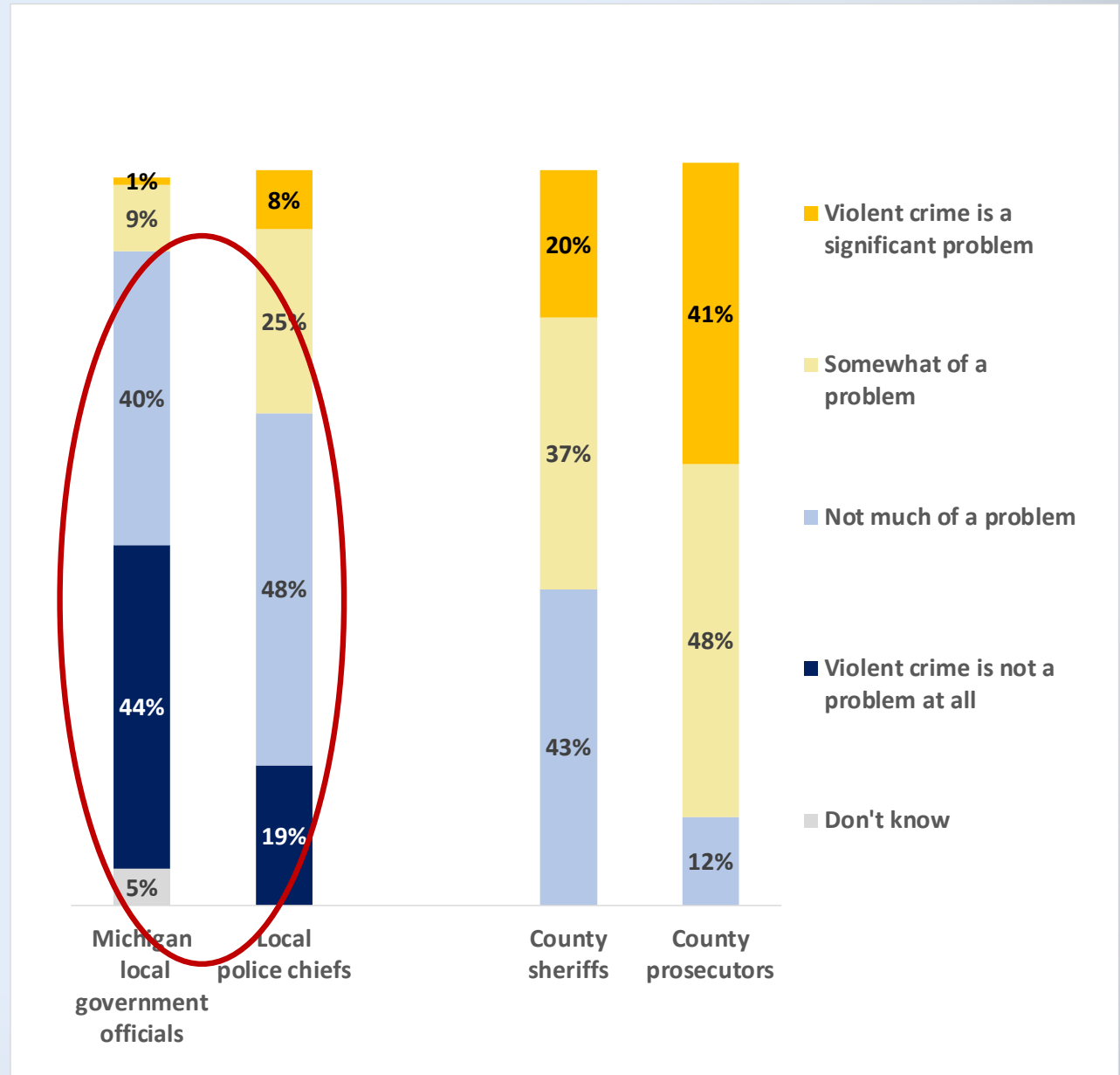
“To what extent, if any, would you say violent crime is currently (or has recently been) a problem in your jurisdiction?”

Violent crime is **not** seen as a major problem by most local government leaders, and by a majority of police chiefs.

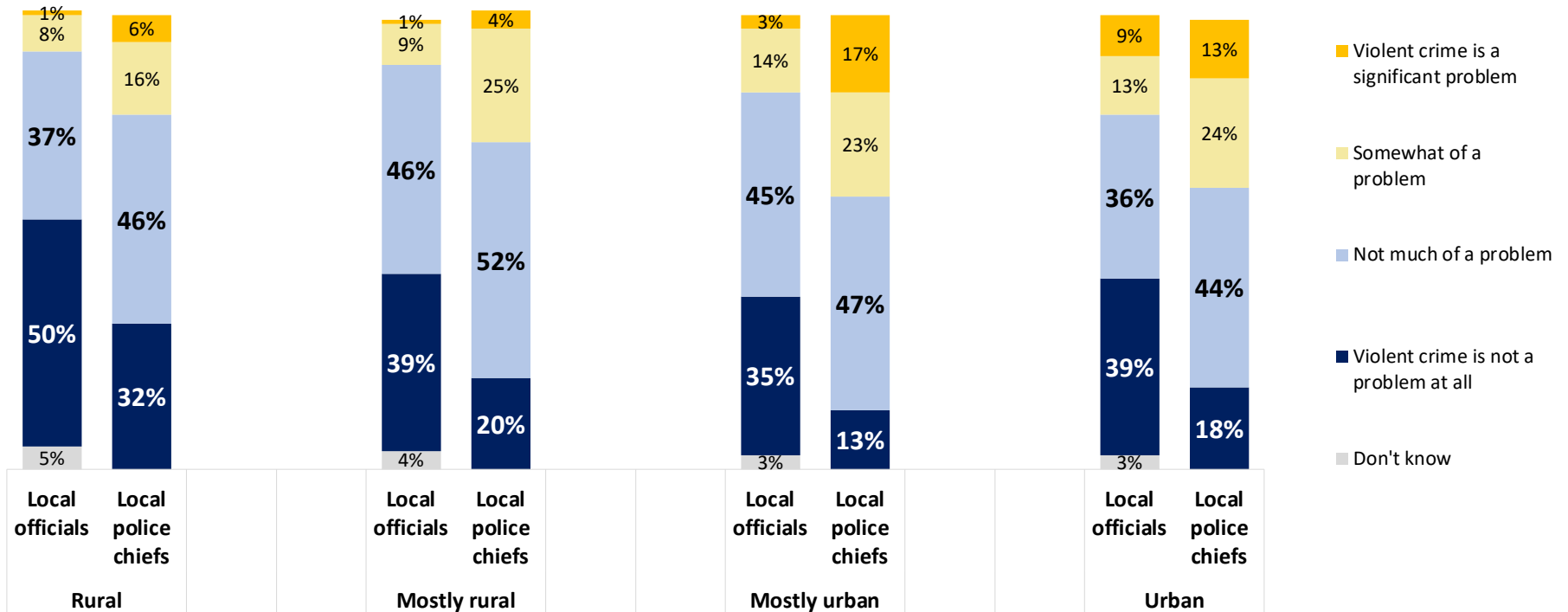


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# Generally small differences between rural and urban communities...



# *Hope vs. Headwinds*



***Pretrial diversion***

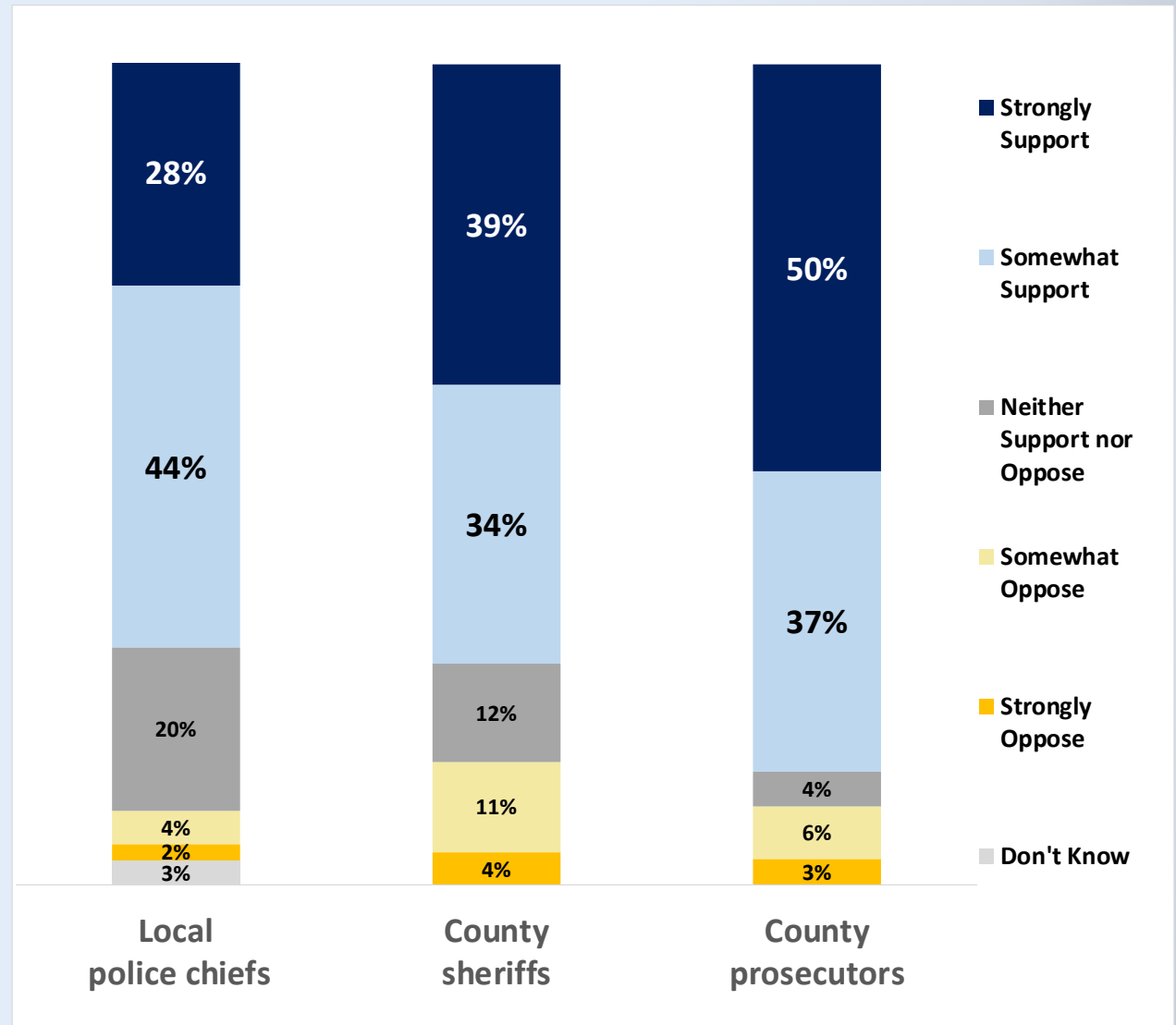
***Court fines and fees reform***

***Alternative policing and  
co-response programs***



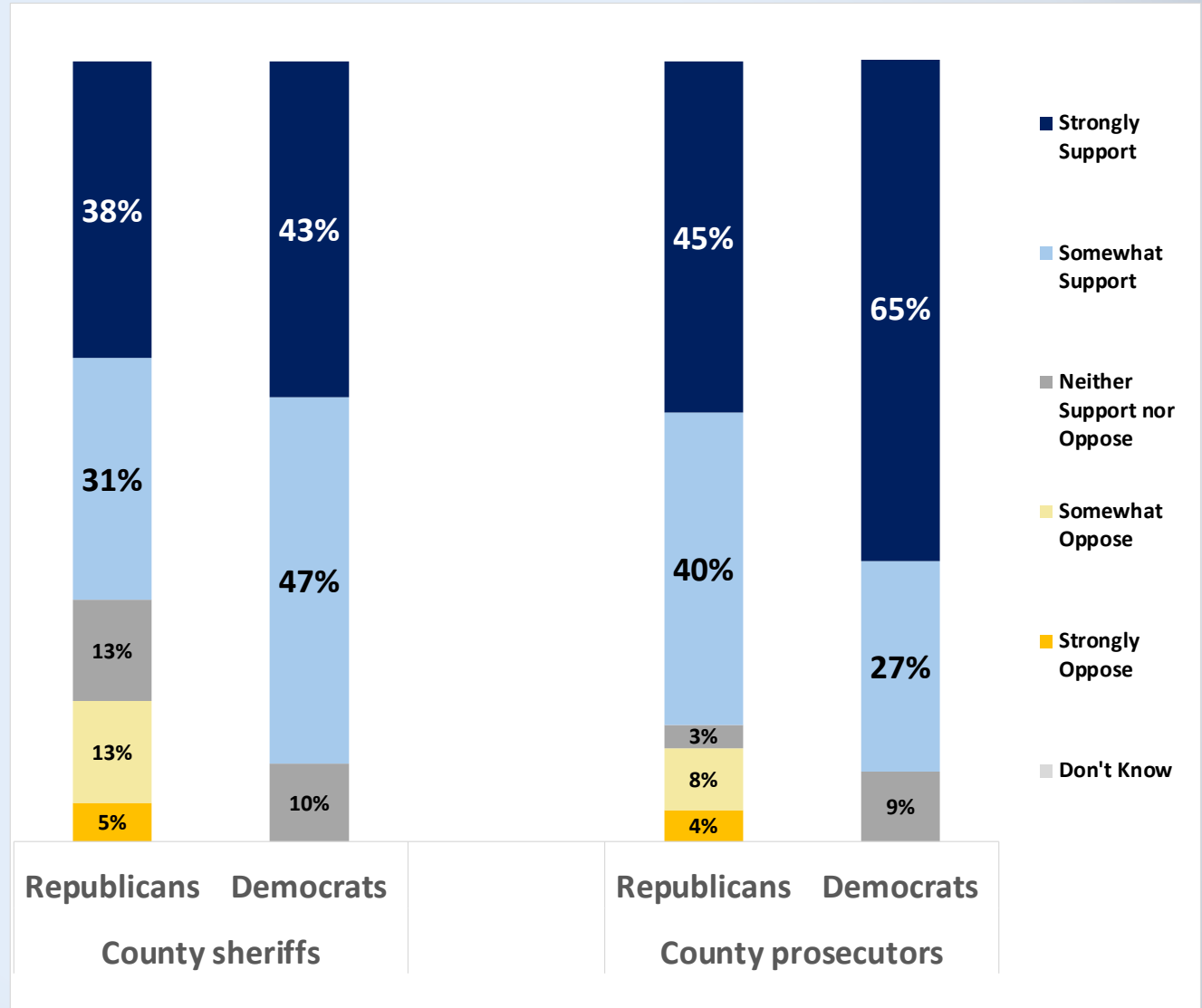
“Regardless of whether or not your county has pre-trial diversion programs, in general, do you support or oppose these types of diversion programs in your county?”

**Hope:  
widespread  
support for  
pretrial  
diversion  
programs**



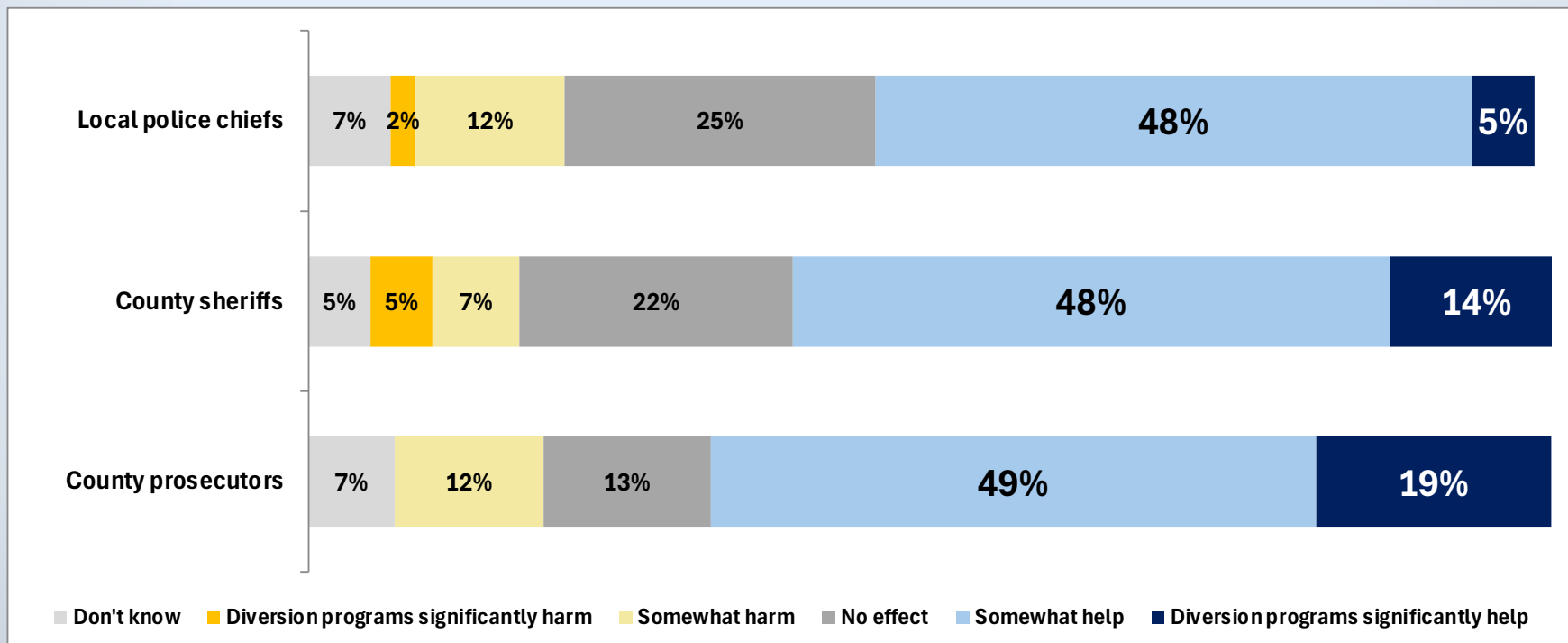
“Regardless of whether or not your county has pre-trial diversion programs, in general, do you support or oppose these types of diversion programs in your county?”

Hope:  
support is  
generally  
bipartisan



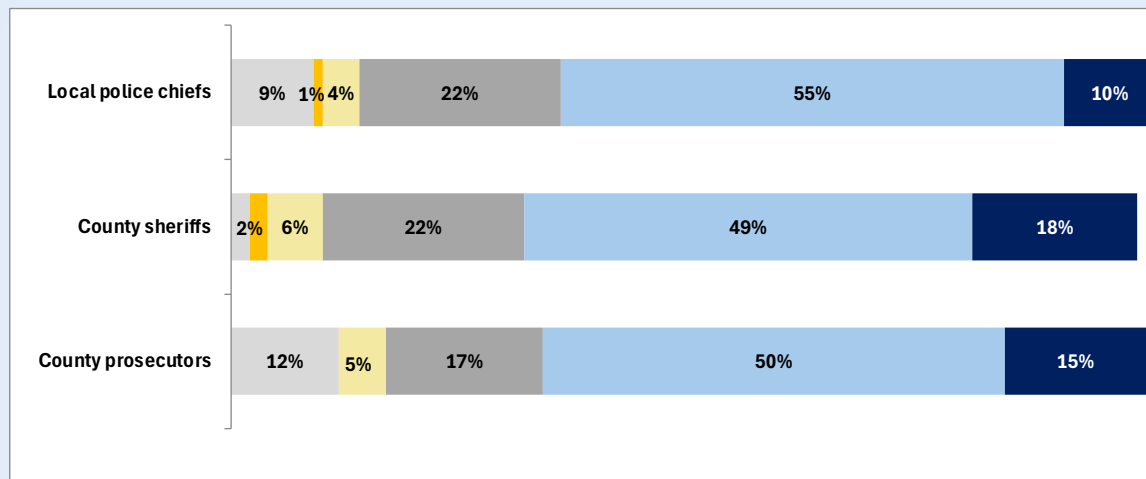
# Hope: most believe pretrial diversion programs **positively impact** public safety

Regardless of whether or not your county currently has pre-trial diversion programs (e.g., drug/alcohol treatment courts or programs, Veterans court, etc.), do you feel the use of pre-trial diversion programs in general helps or harms public safety in the community?

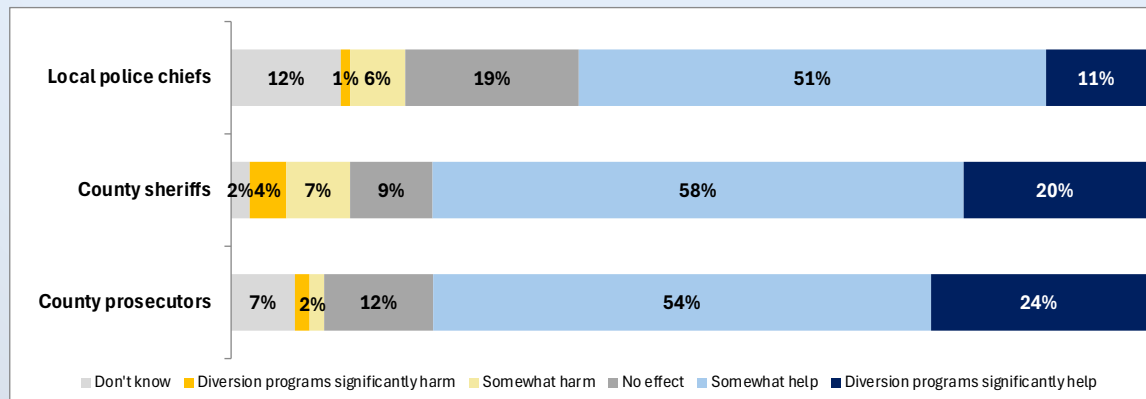


# Hope: most believe pretrial diversion programs **reduce** recidivism and **help** people with behavioral health needs

*Help or harm recidivism rates?*

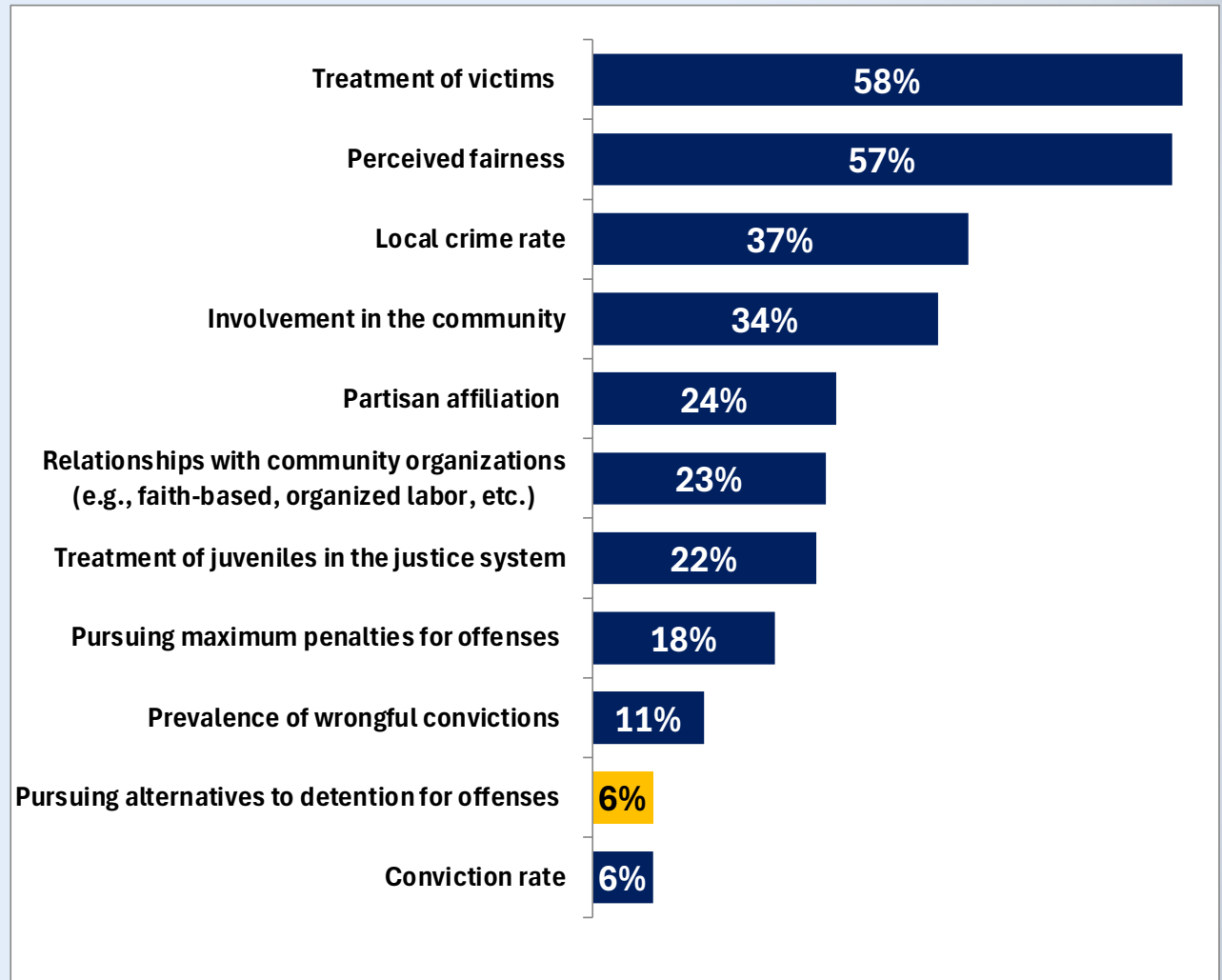


*Help or harm the wellbeing of defendants with mental illness or drug dependency?*



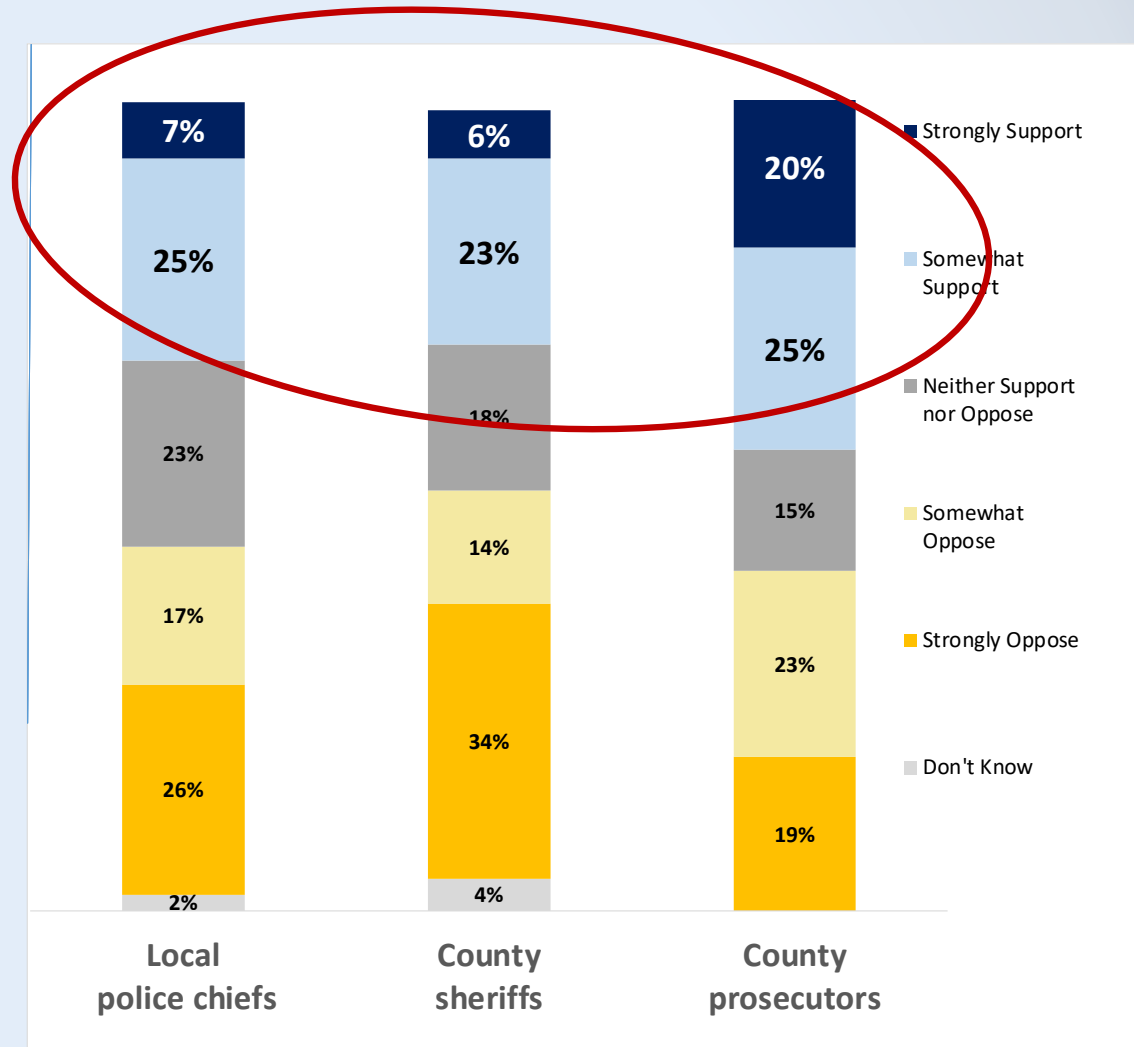
“When residents in your county are voting for Prosecutor, how important do you think the following are to voters?”

Headwind:  
**only 6%** of  
Prosecutors  
think voters  
care about  
alternatives to  
detention



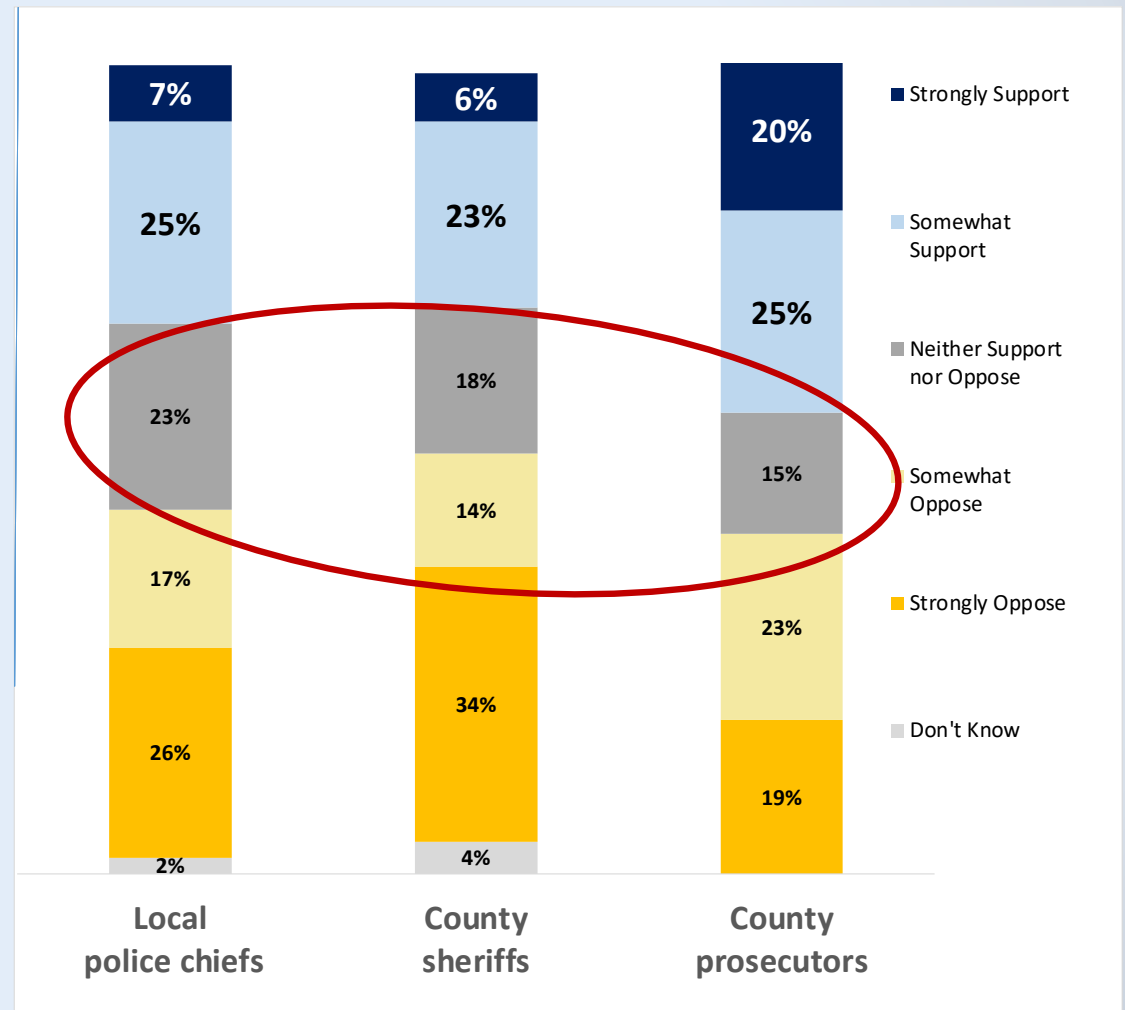
“Would you, in your role as a law enforcement official, support or oppose limiting the use of fines and fees in sentencing to those who are able to pay, and community service or other alternatives for those who are unable to pay?”

**Hope:**  
many support  
**limiting the  
use of fines  
and fees in  
sentencing to  
those who are  
able to pay**

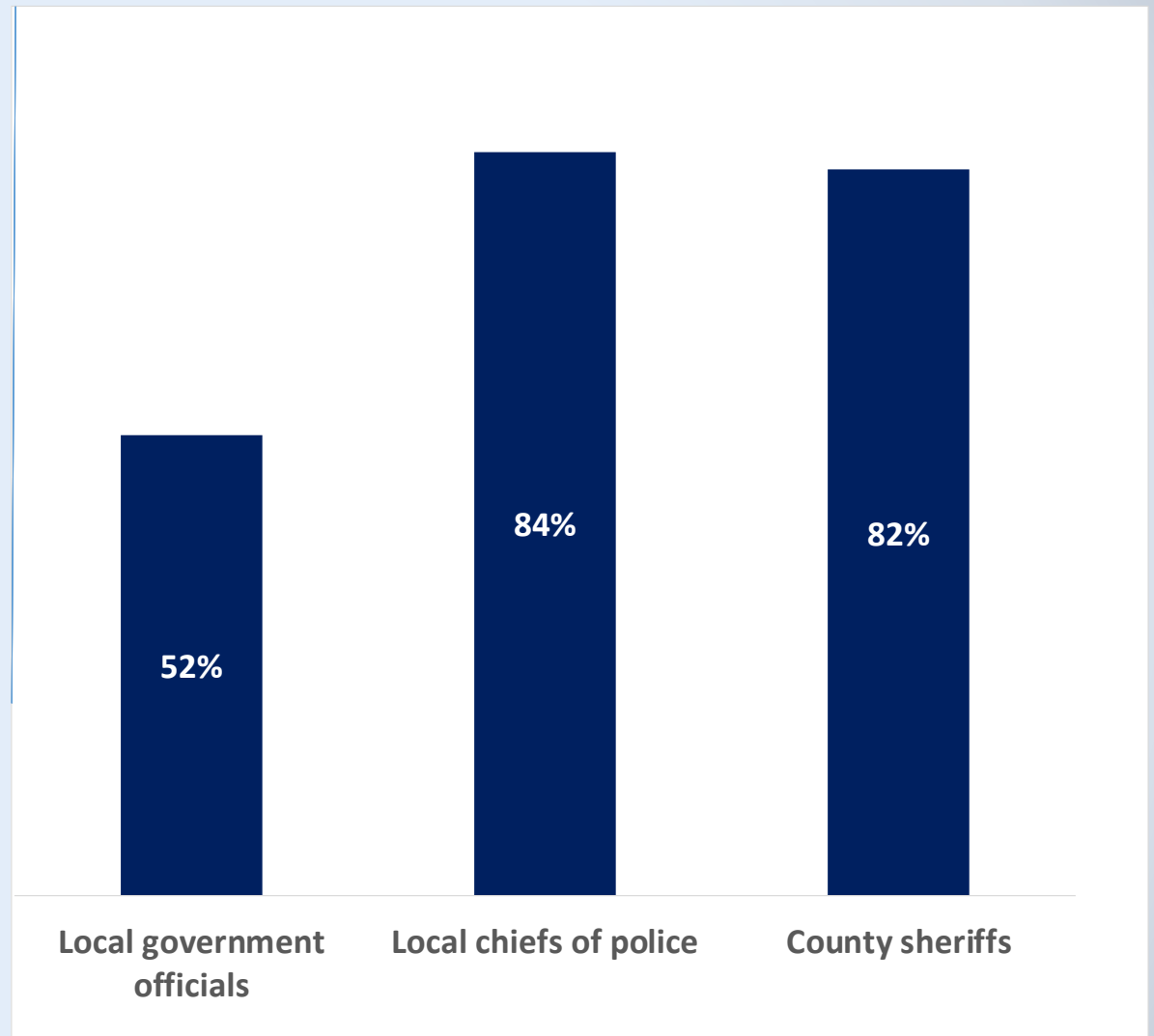


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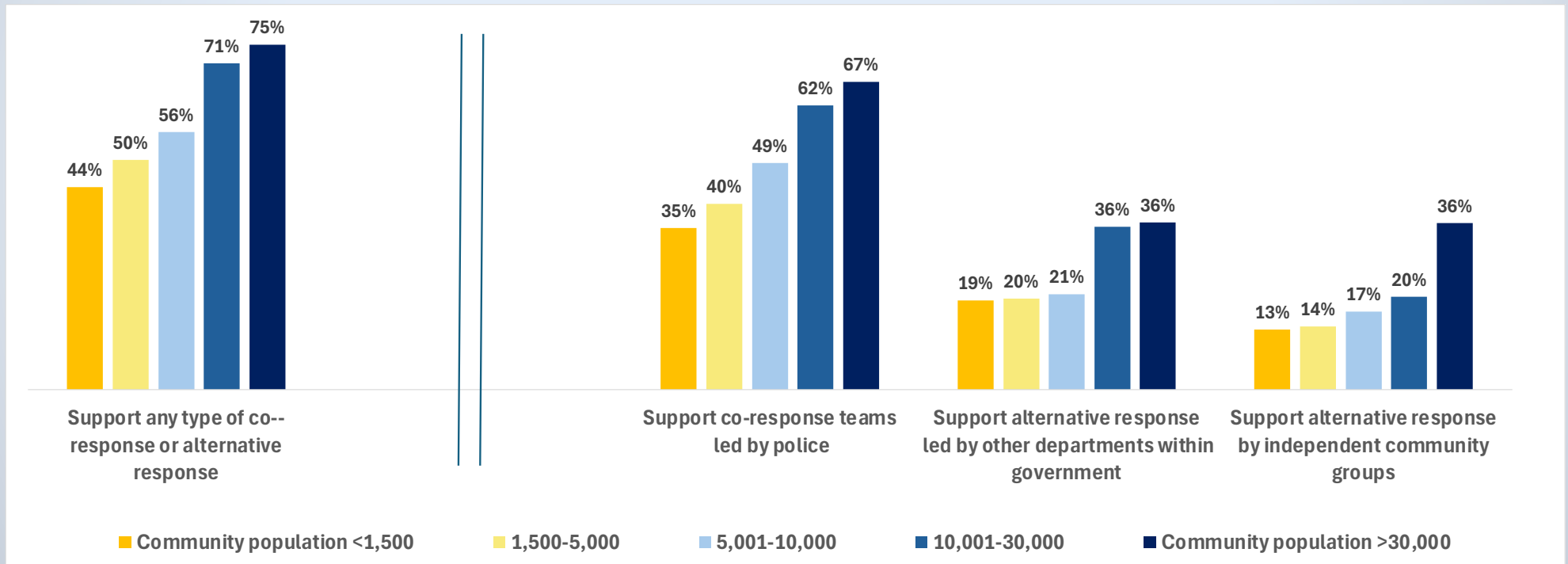
# Headwind: difficulty persuading the undecideds



Hope:  
**most** police  
and sheriffs  
support **some**  
**kind** of co-  
response or  
alternative  
response



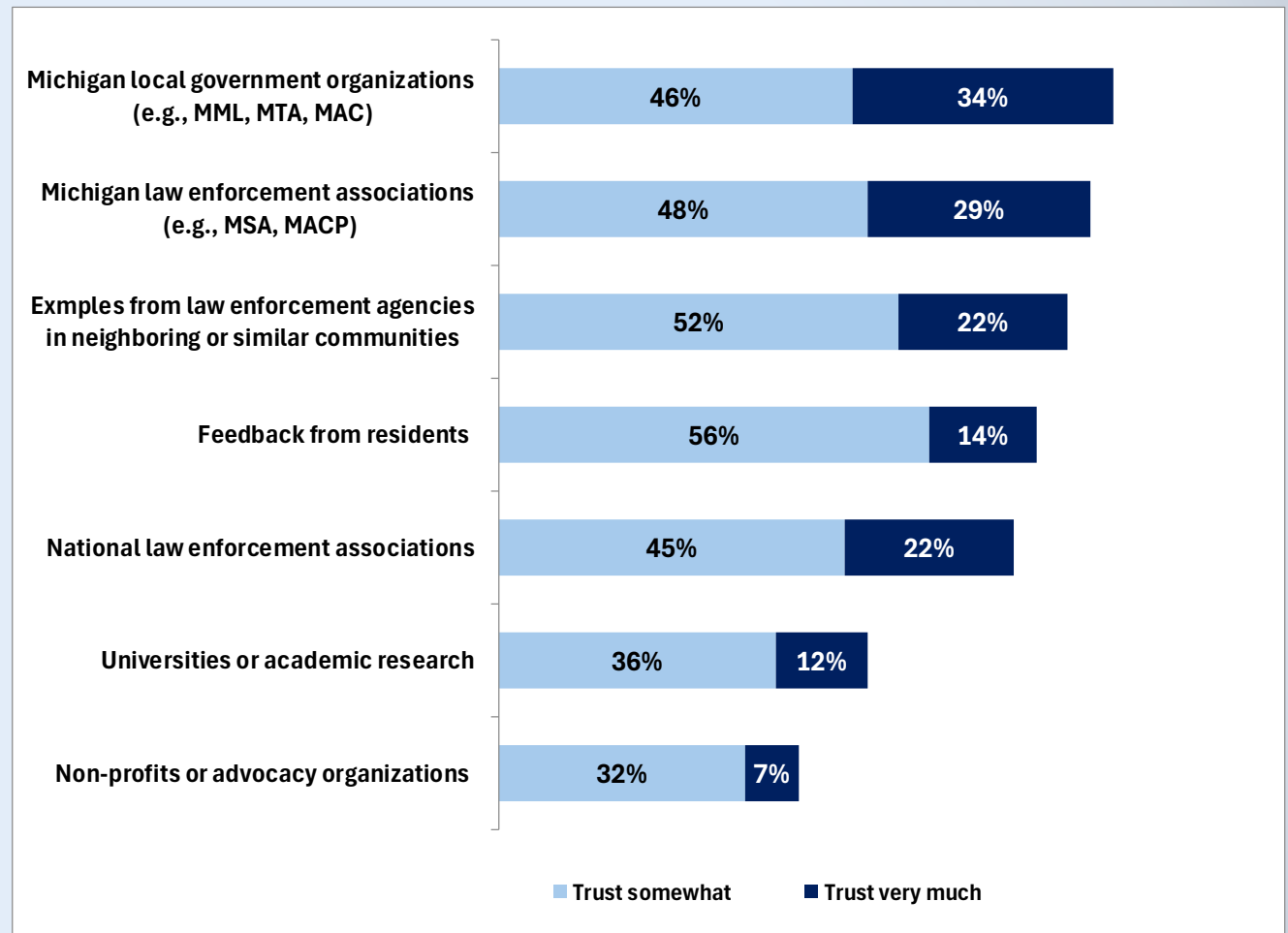
# Headwind: support among local government officials is lower, and most support focused on co-response



# *Who can help drive change?*

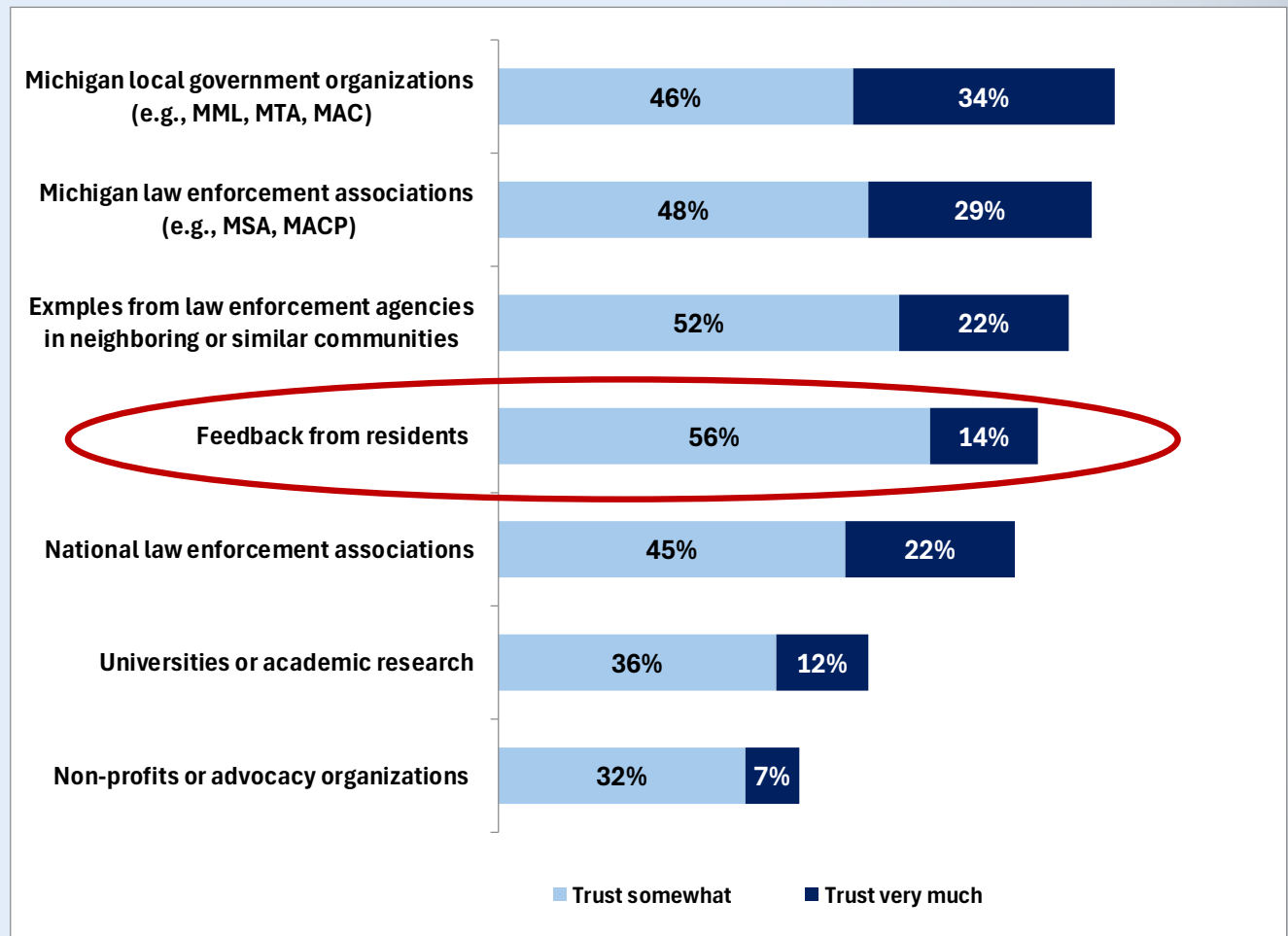
# Building a coalition of trusted sources to encourage change

“Thinking about sources of information on policing strategies and practice, in general, how much do you trust the following sources?”



“Thinking about sources of information on policing strategies and practice, in general, how much do you trust the following sources?”

## Building a coalition of trusted sources to encourage change





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**And for additional information on MPPS data**

**Web: [www.closup.umich.edu](http://www.closup.umich.edu)  
Email: [closup-mpps@umich.edu](mailto:closup-mpps@umich.edu)  
or  
[dhorne@umich.edu](mailto:dhorne@umich.edu)**