

VANCORE
JONES 
C O M M U N I C A T I O N S

Lessons Learned on Local Ballot Initiatives

**Case Studies/Analyses Using Local
Option Sales Tax**

The End



The Common Elements of Winning

1. Existing/Extending vs New Items
2. Ballot Language
3. Local Government Support
4. Citizen/Community Engagement
5. Election Cycle Timing

Existing vs New

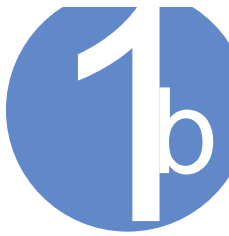
2014

County	Passed	County	Failed
Charlotte	Existing	Alachua	New
Escambia	Existing	Citrus	New
Leon	Existing	Hernando	New
Seminole	Quasi New*	Pinellas	New
		Polk	New
		Martin	Quasi New*

*Quasi counties, had previous infrastructure taxes that ended and were placed on the ballot 2-3 years after expiration.

Existing vs New

2016



County	Passed	County	Failed
Manatee	New	St. Lucie	New
Manatee	Existing	Broward	New
Bay	New		
Alachua	New		
Palm Beach	New		
Wakulla	Existing		
Indian River	Existing		

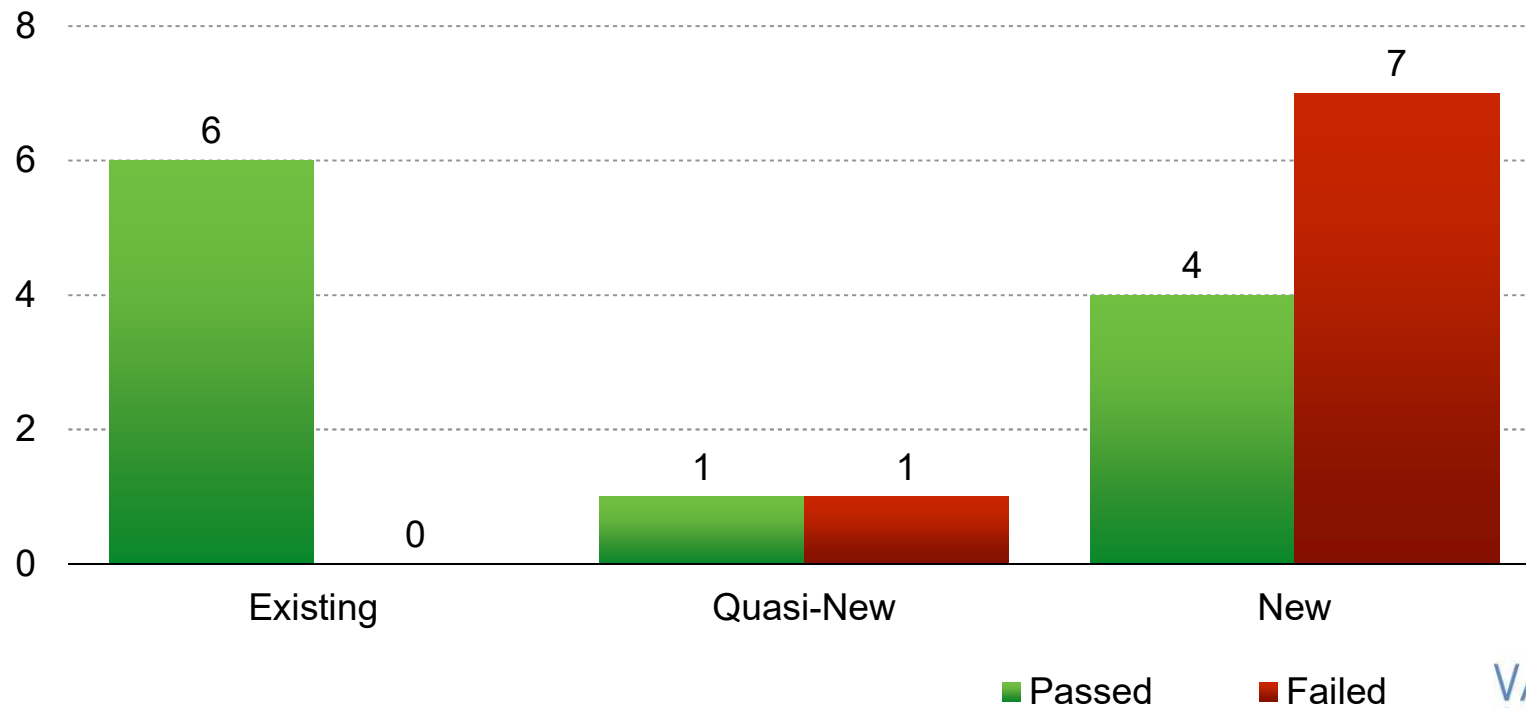
Existing vs New

Summary: 2014 & 2016

*Existing: 6-0

*Quasi-New: 1-1

*New: 4-7





Ballot Language

Localize, Itemize, “Citizen-ize”

Shall the one-cent sales tax, approved by the voters...

To provide for safer neighborhoods, reduce traffic congestion, and improve roadways and public facilities, shall the County levy a half cent sales surtax for a period of fifteen years...

...to fund roadways, sidewalks, intersections, street lights, infrastructure for law enforcement, emergency response, libraries, parks, waterways, public buildings and stormwater...

...all projects located exclusively in *Your County/City Here*, with "citizen oversight"



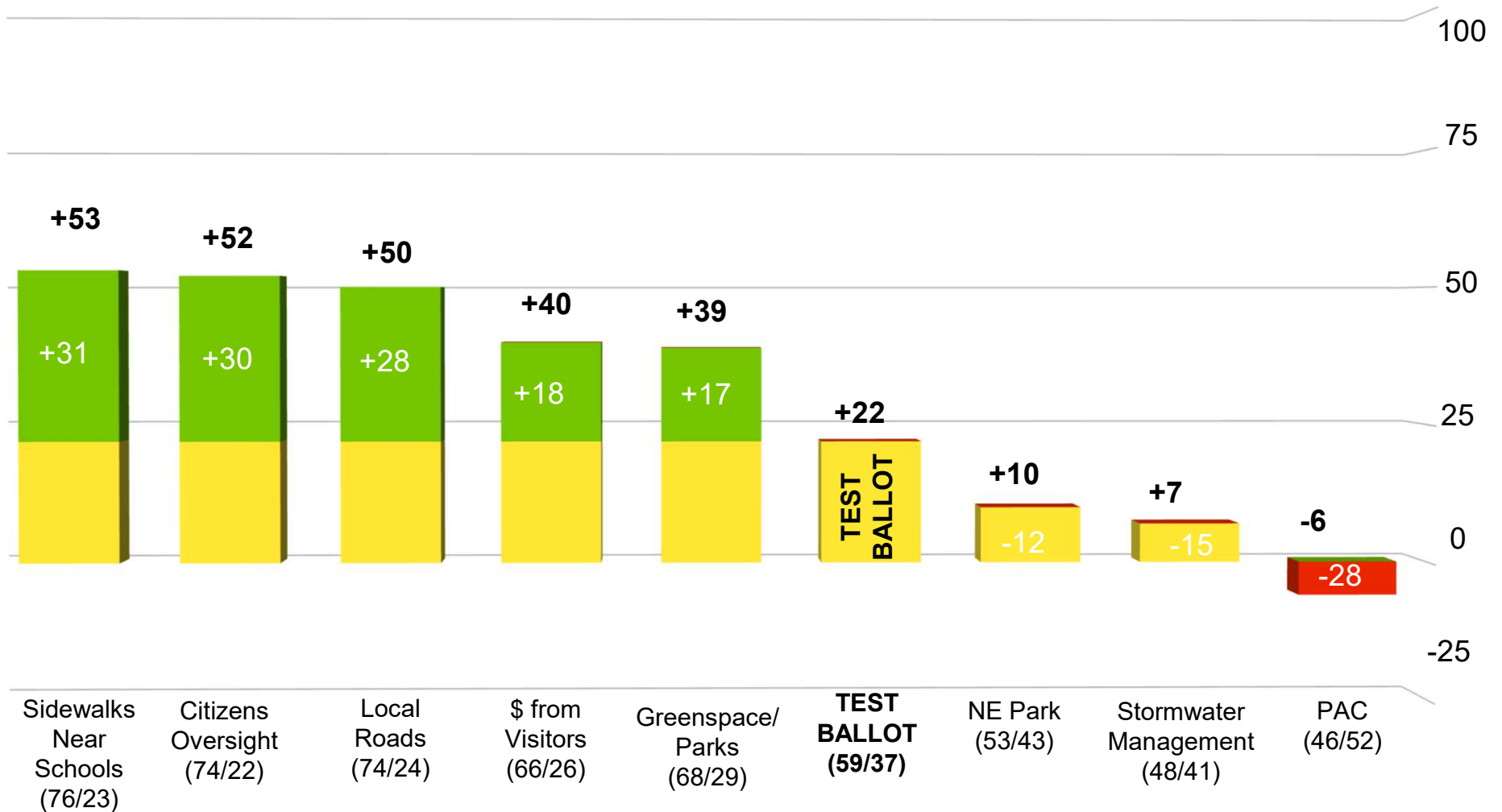
Ballot Language

Plain Language vs Bureaucratic Speak

Winners Said:	Losers Said:
To provide for projects designed to improve roads; reduce traffic congestion; protect lakes and water quality; reduce flooding...	Shall the improvement, construction, operation, maintenance and financing of public transit benefitting...
... improve roads; reduce traffic congestion...	...ongoing maintenance and periodic resurfacing...
...half-cent sales surtax be levied for ten years to provide for...	...be funded by levying a 30-year, 0.5% sales surtax, paid by residents and visitors, all proceeds held in trust.....

Ballot Language

Elevators and Anchors



Citizen/Community Engagement



Pre-Ballot

- * Citizen Engagement Builds Consensus
 - * Town hall meetings
 - * Citizen work groups
 - * Public events
 - * Local club events

Citizen/Community Engagement



Post-Ballot Engagement



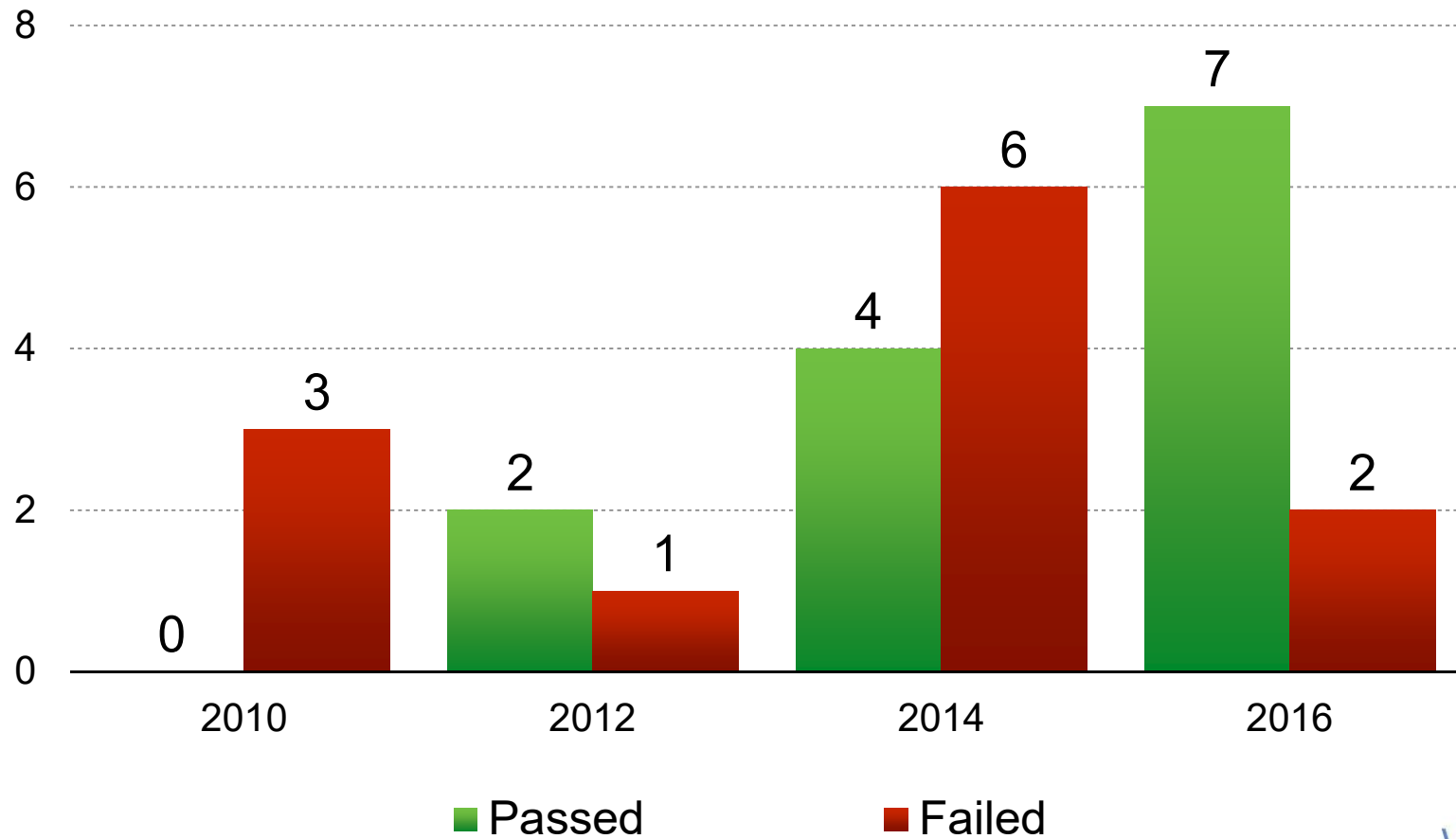
*One **cent** that makes **sense***

Miscellaneous

- * Local government cooperation
- * Use of end dates
- * Election cycle timing
 - * Election year
 - * Election type

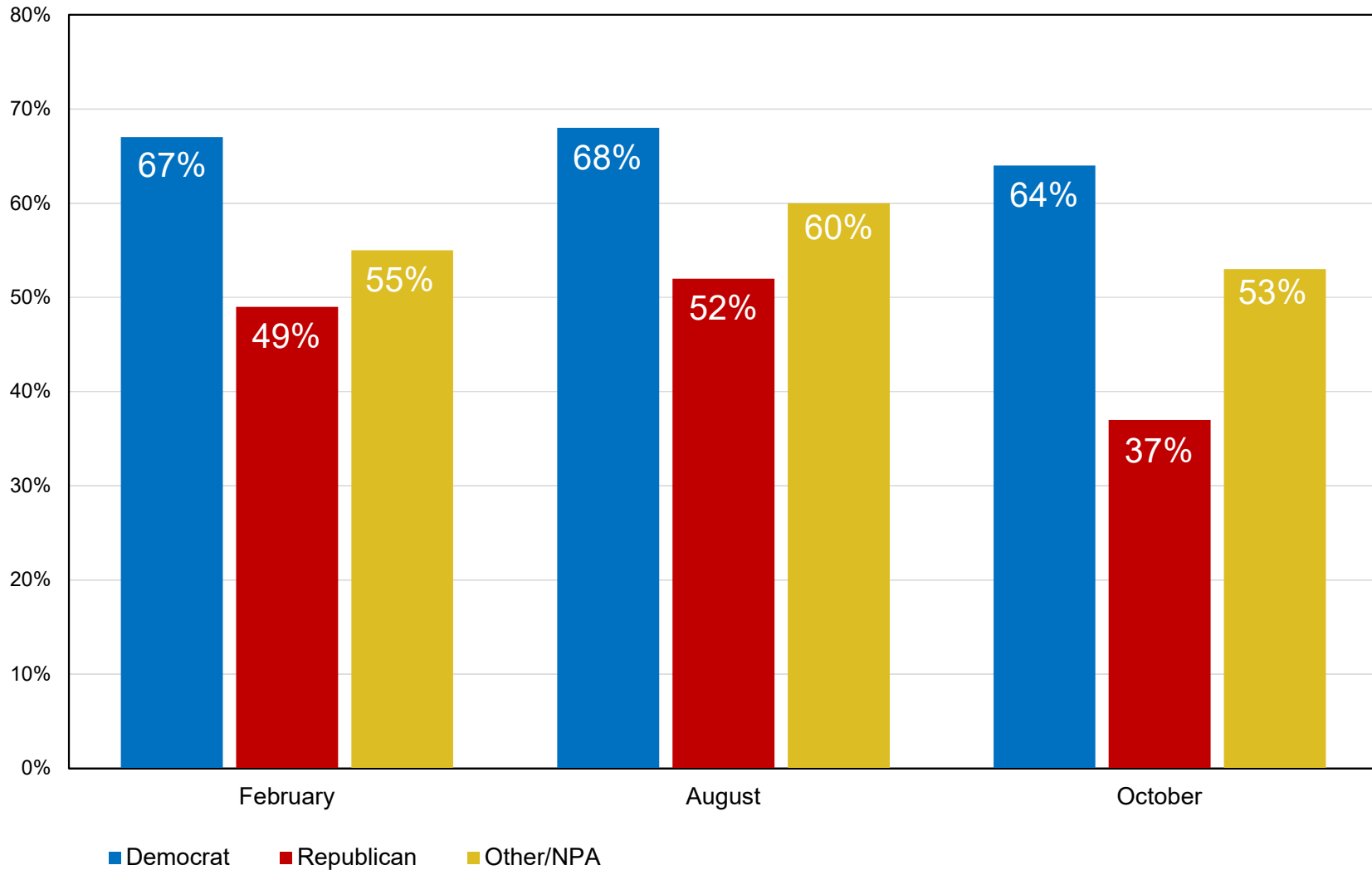
Election Cycle Timing

Election Year



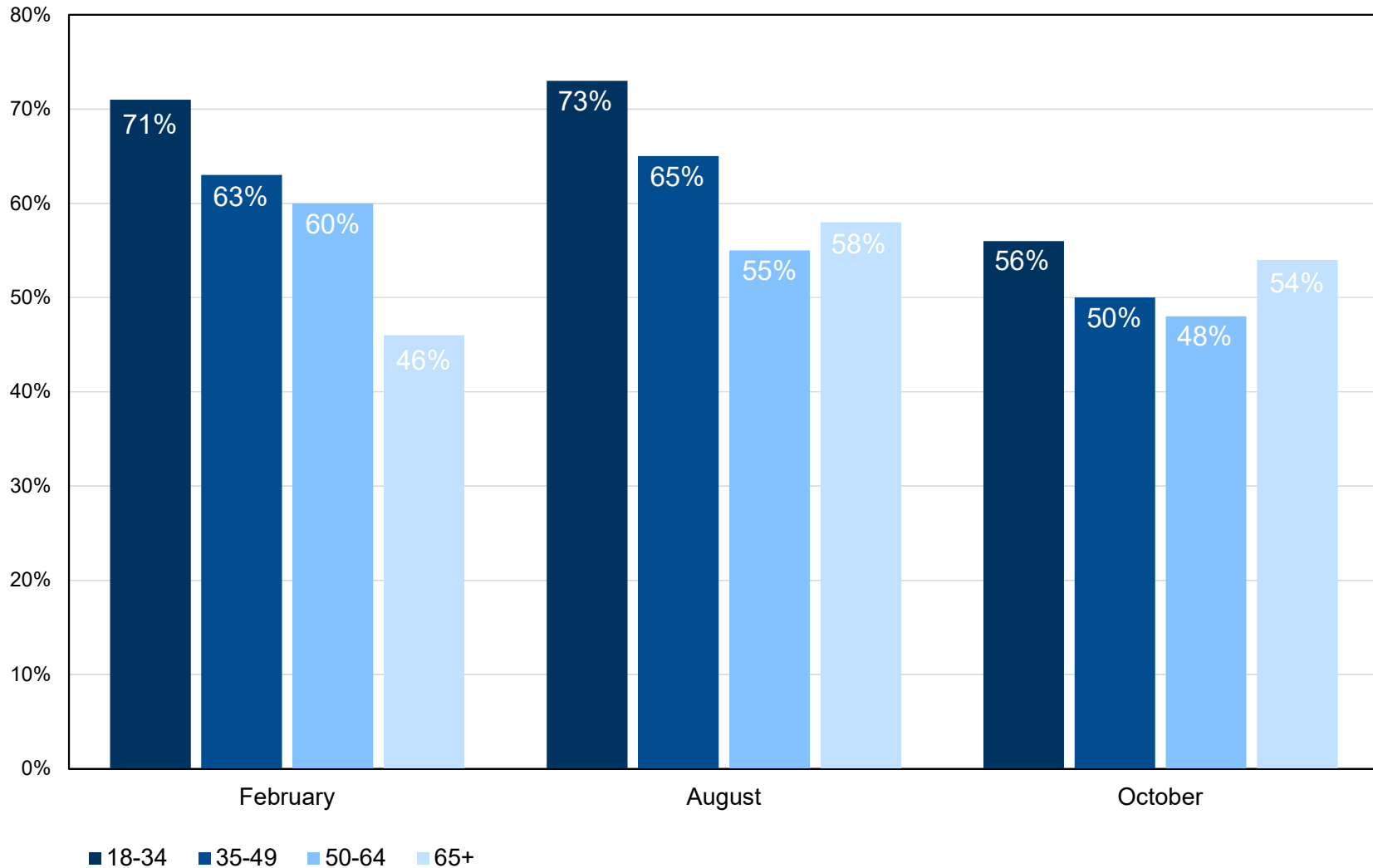
Election Cycle Timing

Election Type: Party Skew



Election Cycle Timing

Election Type: Age Skew



The 5 Steps to Success

1. Engage the Public Early
2. Poll Test Your Ideas
3. Draft the Best Ballot Language
4. Engage Local Leaders/Citizens
5. Communicate Directly to Citizens
 - *Private
 - *Public

The End