

MOORE INFORMATION
PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH

GALLATIN COUNTY, MONTANA

VOTERS

APRIL 2000

Conducted for:
The Trust for Public Land

By:
Moore Information, Inc.

Portland, Oregon
Phone 503.292.7655
Fax 503.291.9038

Washington, D.C.
Phone 410.216.9856
Fax 410.216.9857

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METHODOLOGY

This book contains the results of a survey of likely voters in Gallatin County, Montana. It was conducted by Moore Information, Incorporated, an independent, public opinion research company located in Portland, Oregon.

Sample

A total of 500 interviews were conducted. Random digit dialing of telephone households county-wide and sampling within those households were used to ensure a representative sample of voters was interviewed. Potential respondents were screened to include only those registered voters who are likely to vote in the November 2000 election.

Data Collection

The interviews were conducted April 28-29, 2000 by Moore Information personnel working from the company's phone bank in Portland, Oregon. Ten percent of each interviewer's work was monitored while in process and verified by Moore Information supervisory personnel.

Sampling Error

Readers of this book should be aware that surveys are designed to measure public opinion at a specific point in time, within defined statistical limits. This survey should not be used as a prediction of future public opinion or action.

Every sample is subject to ranges of variability, usually called sampling error. Sampling error refers to the difference between results obtained and the results that would have been obtained if every eligible voter in the county had been interviewed. The sampling error associated with this survey is +/- 4% at the 95% confidence level. Sampling error is computed at the 95% confidence level. This means if the survey were repeated 100 times, in 95 of those cases the question response would not vary more than the sampling error. For purposes of determining statistical significance between two responses, the percentage difference must be greater than the sum of the sampling error from both responses.

Hello, this is (FIRST AND LAST NAME) of Moore Information, a public opinion research firm. Have I reached (PHONE #)? IF NO: TERMINATE

IF YES: Could I please speak to a member of the household who is registered to vote? IF NA SCHEDULE CALLBACK

IF YES: Could you spend a few minutes on the phone with me to discuss some issues in your area?

Looking ahead, how likely are you to vote in the general election in November 2000, very likely, fairly likely, not very likely or not likely at all? TERMINATE IF NOT VERY OR NOT LIKELY AT ALL

1. Next, how long have you lived in Gallatin County?

1.	0-4 years	18
2.	5-9 years	15
3.	10-19 years	24
4.	20 or more years	43
5.	(DON'T READ) don't know	*

2. Next, when it comes to quality of life, what do you think is the biggest asset of Gallatin County? (DON'T READ)

1.	Outdoors/scenic beauty	27
2.	Small town/low population	14
3.	Recreation/camping, hiking, fishing, hunting	13
4.	Clean environment	8
5.	Low crime rate/safe	5
6.	Clean air	5
7.	Mild climate	3
8.	Rural area	2
9.	Friendly people/families	2
10.	Farming	2
11.	Parks	1
12.	Clean water	1
13.	Good schools	1
14.	Job diversity	1
15.	University	1
16.	Quality of life	1
17.	Ranching	*

* less than one-half of one percent

18.	Churches	*
19.	Affordable housing	*
20.	Don't know	12

3. Do you live inside or outside the city limits of Bozeman?

1.	inside	44
2.	outside	56

4. Now I would like to ask you a few questions about a ballot measure to provide funding to protect lands in Gallatin County that could appear in an upcoming election. The wording of the measure may be something like this:

"Shall the Gallatin County Commission be authorized to issue general obligation bonds in the sum of ten million dollars, maturing in twenty years or less, to be used to preserve open space in the County by purchasing land and conservation easements from willing landowners, for the following purposes: managing growth, preserving ranches and farms, protecting wildlife areas and water quality in streams and rivers, and providing parks and recreation areas; with all expenditures based on recommendations of a citizen advisory board and subject to an annual independent audit?"

Do you think you would vote yes in favor of this measure or no to oppose it? IF YES/NO: Is that definitely yes/no or just probably yes/no?

1.	definitely yes	GO TO 5	31	
2.	probably yes	GO TO 5	37	(68)
3.	(DON'T READ) don't know	GO TO 7	12	
4.	probably no	GO TO 6	9	(20)
5.	definitely no	GO TO 6	11	

5. IF YES: What is the major reason you would vote for such a measure? (DON'T READ)

1.	Maintain open space	30
2.	To stop development	14
3.	To stop rapid growth	13
4.	Save farms/ranches	13
5.	Maintain quality of life	7
6.	Maintain water quality	5
7.	Preserve wildlife	4
8.	It's needed	3
9.	Favor citizen advisory board	2
10.	Money spent fairly/willing homeowners	1

* less than one-half of one percent

SPLIT SAMPLE 8A/8B-9A/9B

8A. Passing this open space measure would result in an increase in your property taxes. Please tell me whether you think you would vote yes in favor or no to oppose a property tax increase to pay for an open space measure if you knew that it would cost the owner of a $100,000 dollar home an average of about $28 dollars per year over the 20-year life of the bond. WAIT AND ASK: Is that definitely yes/no, or probably yes/no?

1.	definitely yes	34	
2.	probably yes	30	(64)
3.	(DON'T READ) don't know	6	
4.	probably no	9	(30)
5.	definitely no	21	

8B. Passing this open space measure would result in an increase in your property taxes. Please tell me whether you think you would vote yes in favor or no to oppose a property tax increase to pay for an open space measure if you knew that it would cost the owner of a $100,000 dollar home an average of about $14 dollars per year over the 20-year life of the bond. WAIT AND ASK: Is that definitely yes/no, or probably yes/no?

1.	definitely yes	40	
2.	probably yes	23	(63)
3.	(DON'T READ) don't know	9	
4.	probably no	9	(28)
5.	definitely no	19	

9A. Now let me ask you whether you think you would vote yes in favor or no to oppose a property tax increase to pay for an open space measure if you knew that it would cost the average farming or ranching business in the county an average of between $500 and $800 dollars per year over the 20-year life of the bond. WAIT AND ASK: Is that definitely yes/no, or probably yes/no?

1.	definitely yes	10	
2.	probably yes	12	(22)
3.	(DON'T READ) don't know	17	
4.	probably no	25	(60)
5.	definitely no	36	

9B. Now let me ask you whether you think you would vote yes in favor or no to oppose a property tax increase to pay for an open space measure if you knew that it would cost the average farming or ranching business in the county an average of between $200 and $400 dollars per year over the 20-year life of the bond.

1.	definitely yes	15	
2.	probably yes	15	(30)
3.	(DON'T READ) don't know	19	
4.	probably no	26	(51)
5.	definitely no	26	

10. Some people have proposed funding an open space bond to protect land in Gallatin County through a fee assessed on each household. Would you support or oppose state legislation that would allow counties to fund an open space bond issue through a per household fee rather than a property tax levy; thereby partially reducing the burden on farmers and ranchers? IF SUPPORT/OPPOSE: Is that definitely support/oppose, or probably support/oppose?

1.	definitely support	23	
2.	probably support	26	(49)
3.	(DON'T READ) don't know	19	
4.	probably oppose	10	(32)
5.	definitely oppose	22	

11. If the state allowed counties to fund open space programs through a household fee, do you think you would vote yes in favor of or no to oppose a bond issue funded by a $50 per household fee? IF YES/NO: Is that definitely yes/no, or probably yes/no?

1.	definitely yes	19	
2.	probably yes	26	(45)
3.	(DON'T READ) don't know	14	
4.	probably no	14	(41)
5.	definitely no	27	

12. Please tell me if you think you would vote yes or no on the measure if the total annual fee per household was $25, instead of $50? IF YES/NO: Is that definitely yes/no, or probably yes/no?

1.	definitely yes	38	
2.	probably yes	25	(63)
3.	(DON'T READ) don't know	8	
4.	probably no	8	(29)
5.	definitely no	21	

Next, please tell me if you would favor or oppose each of the following in order to protect open space and agricultural lands. IF FAVOR/OPPOSE: Is that strongly favor/oppose or somewhat favor/oppose? (ROTATE 13-17)

		----FAVOR--- Str.	Smwht.	Don't Know	-OPPPOSE--- Smwht.	Str.
13.	Local government purchase of private lands	(49) 21	29	14	(37) 13	24
14.	Local government purchase of development rights, leaving the property in private ownership	(44) 18	27	23	(33) 14	19
15.	Local government purchase of scenic easements on private property	(49) 20	30	14	(36) 14	22
16.	County-wide zoning regulations	(64) 38	27	13	(23) 9	14
17.	Voluntary agricultural preservation zoning	(70) 36	35	20	(10) 5	5

I am now going to read you a list of possible programs that money from this measure might pay for. Regardless of how you think you would vote on such a measure, please tell me if it would be extremely important to you that money for the project be included in the measure, fairly important, not too important or not at all important. (ROTATE 18-30)

		--IMPORTANT-- Extremely	Fairly	Don't know	-NOT IMPORTANT- Not too	Not at all
SPLIT SAMPLE 18A/B-22A/B						
18A.	Protecting wildlife areas	(88) 60	28	3	(10) 4	6
18B.	Protecting wildlife habitat	(90) 67	23	4	(6) 3	3
19A.	Managing growth and development	(84) 56	28	4	(12) 6	6
19B.	Limiting sprawl	(72) 45	27	13	(15) 9	6
20A.	Protecting fish habitat in rivers and streams	(91) 62	28	1	(8) 4	4
20B.	Protecting water quality in rivers and streams	(94) 78	16	2	(4) 2	2
21A.	Protecting the farming and ranching economy of Gallatin County	(91) 57	34	1	(8) 5	3
21B.	Preserving ranches and farmland	(86) 59	27	4	(10) 7	2
22A.	Purchasing open space land	(67) 31	36	11	(22) 12	9
22B.	Purchasing open space conservation easements	(67) 36	31	10	(23) 14	9

		--IMPORTANT-- Extremely	Very	Don't know	-NOT IMPORTANT- Smwht.	Not too
			(79)			(16)
23.	Protecting scenic views in the county	42	38	5	10	5
			(95)			(3)
24.	Protecting drinking water	83	12	2	1	2
			(78)			(20)
25.	Acquiring parks for recreation	33	45	3	13	6
			(56)			(23)
26.	Protection of the Storey Hills	22	34	21	13	10
			(56)			(24)
27.	Protection of Gooch Hill	21	35	20	13	10
28.	Protection of the farming area		(74)			(17)
	around Churchill	42	32	9	10	7
29.	Protection of the Madison,		(91)			(6)
	Jefferson and Gallatin Rivers	74	18	2	2	4
			(82)			(13)
30.	Protecting the area's rural lifestyle	51	30	5	7	6

31. A program in Gallatin County to protect and preserve scenic, natural, recreational and habitat lands would be managed by the Open Lands Board. In general, is your opinion of the Open Lands Board favorable, or unfavorable? If you have no opinion or have never heard of the Open Lands Board, just say so.

1.	favorable	16
2.	unfavorable	9
3.	no opinion	27
4.	never heard of	48

Now let me read you a list of some of the programs local government is responsible for funding. For each one, please tell me if you think it has a great need for additional funding, some need, a little need or no real need for additional funding. (ROTATE 32-35)

		---NEED--- Great	Some	Don't know	--NO NEED-- Little	None
			(79)			(17)
32.	education and public schools	51	29	4	6	11
			(67)			(27)
33.	public safety	25	43	6	15	12
			(79)			(17)
34.	roads	35	44	5	10	7
35.	protection of open space and		(77)			(17)
	agricultural lands	39	38	6	8	9

I am going to read some statements made by people who favor an open lands ballot measure. After hearing each statement, please tell me if it makes you more likely or less likely to support the measure. IF MORE LIKELY/LESS LIKELY: Is that much more/less likely or somewhat more/less likely? (ROTATE 36-42)

		--MORE LIKELY--		Don't	--LESS LIKELY-	
		Much	Smwht.	Know	Smwht.	Much
36.	Currently, a bond or property tax measure is the only legally available option capable of generating significant funds for open space	(45) 16	29	21	(34) 17	17
37.	An independent citizen's board will decide how to spend the money, and a public audit will be conducted to make sure the money is spent as promised	(69) 33	36	10	(22) 10	11
38.	All funds raised locally for open space will be matched by state and private funding	(76) 42	34	10	(14) 6	8
39.	At the current rate of growth, the population of Gallatin County will double in twenty years - we must act now to preserve rural lands before they are lost to development	(77) 53	24	8	(15) 7	8
40.	The local government will purchase development rights from landowners who voluntarily restrict development on their property through conservation easements, leaving land in private hands and on the county tax rolls	(63) 31	32	13	(24) 13	11
41.	The preservation of Gallatin County's rural lifestyle and agricultural economy is dependent on planned development	(71) 32	38	12	(18) 9	8
42.	The preservation of Gallatin County's rural lifestyle and agricultural economy is dependent on preserving farm and open space lands	(76) 39	38	8	(15) 9	6

43. Now once again I would like to ask you about a ballot measure to provide funding to protect lands in Gallatin County that could appear in an upcoming election. The wording of the measure may be something like this:

"Shall the Gallatin County Commission be authorized to issue general obligation bonds in the sum of ten million dollars, maturing in twenty years or less, to be used to preserve open space in the County by purchasing land and conservation easements from willing landowners, for the following purposes: managing growth, preserving ranches and farms, protecting wildlife areas and water quality in streams and rivers, and providing parks and recreation areas; with all expenditures based on recommendations of a citizen advisory board and subject to an annual independent audit?"

Do you think you would vote yes in favor of this measure or no to oppose it? IF YES/NO: Is that definitely yes/no or just probably yes/no?

1.	definitely yes	37	
2.	probably yes	30	(67)
3.	(DON'T READ) don't know	9	
4.	probably no	8	(24)
5.	definitely no	16	

Now a few questions for statistical purposes.

44. What is your age, please?

1.	18-29	16
2.	30-34	7
3.	35-44	19
4.	45-54	24
5.	55-59	9
6.	60-64	8
7.	65+	17
8.	NA	*

45. What is the last grade of education you have completed?

1.	0-11 (less than high school)	3
2.	12 (high school graduate)	20
3.	13-15 (some college/trade school)	29
4.	16 (college graduate)	29
5.	17+ (post graduate education)	19
6.	NA	*

* less than one-half of one percent

46. Which one of the following best describes your employment status? (READ 1-11)

1.	high-tech	5	
2.	farmer/rancher	4	
3.	other agriculture-related job	3	
4.	telecommute from home	1	
5.	work at home raising children/running home	5	
6.	retired	23	
7.	student	5	
8.	work for government or schools	13	
9.	work for small business	23	
10.	work for big business	7	
11.	work in health care	5	
12.	(DON'T READ) Other	6	
13.	(DON'T READ) refused	1	

47. Do you own or rent your place of residence?

1.	own	76
2.	rent	23
3.	(DON'T READ) refused	1

48. Do you own or operate a farm or ranch in Gallatin County?

1.	yes	7
2.	no	93
3.	(DON'T READ) refused	*

49. Which one of the following best describes how you usually vote? (READ 1-2, 4-5, 5-4, 2-1)

1.	mostly or only for Republicans	26	
2.	a few more Republicans than Democrats	19	(45)
3.	(DON'T READ) the person/Independent	16	
4.	a few more Democrats than Republicans	16	(37)
5.	mostly or only for Democrats	21	
6.	(DON'T READ) don't know	3	

50. Gender (BY OBSERVATION)

1.	male	49
2.	female	51

* less than one-half of one percent

51. Telephone prefix (FROM LIST)

52. Zip code (FROM LIST)

Overview

Gallatin County residents are concerned about protecting open space and the natural environment of the county. Drinking water, water quality and rivers and streams are considered most essential for protection. Further, there is widespread support for voluntary agricultural preservation zoning and county-wide zoning regulations.

The public's concern about open space protection is evidenced by its support for a $10 million bond for preservation of open space. This proposal is favored 68-20%. However, the cost impact of such a bond on the average farm or ranch owner ($500 a year) is a significant deterrent, as a majority oppose the bond after hearing this (60-22%). By comparison, an alternative source of funding, assessing an annual fee of $25 per household, is favored, 63-29%.

Initial Ballot: Open Space Bond Measure

Gallatin County voters widely favor a $10 million bond measure to preserve open space in the county. After hearing the following statement, 68% of voters say they would vote "yes" to pass a $10 million bond measure, while 20% would vote "no." The remaining 12% were undecided.

> *"Shall the Gallatin County Commission be authorized to issue general obligation bonds in the sum of ten million dollars, maturing in twenty years or less, to be used to preserve open space in the County by purchasing land and conservation easements from willing landowners, for the following purposes: managing growth, preserving ranches and farms, protecting wildlife areas and water quality in streams and rivers, and providing parks and recreation areas; with all expenditures based on*

recommendations of a citizen advisory board and subject to an annual independent audit?"

Importantly, a majority of voters in all subgroups throughout the county support the bond measure after hearing the proposed title. However, among the most supportive are women age 18-44, Democrats, county residents of less than five years, and renters. At the same time, people who own or operate ranches in Gallatin County are less likely to support an open space bond measure than are non-ranchers, while residents of Bozeman (both inside and outside the city limits) are more likely to support the bond measure than residents elsewhere in the county.

Support for the measure is driven by voters who want to preserve land and impede growth. When supporters were asked why they support the measure, "maintain open space" was the leading reason (for 30%), followed by desires to "stop development" (14%), "stop rapid growth" (13%) and "save farms and ranches" (13%). Other supporters want to "maintain quality of life" (7%), "maintain water quality" (5%), "preserve wildlife" (4%) or believe "it's needed" (3%).

At the same time, opposition to the measure comes from voters who "oppose a tax increase" (24%) or "oppose government intervention" (24%). Other voters oppose the measure because it "infringes on property rights" (13%), they "oppose citizen advisory board" (9%) or don't think it is necessary (5%).

Importantly, when it comes to the dollar amount of the bond measure, decreasing the amount of the bond does not increase support for the measure. In fact, support for the proposed open space bond measure suffers when the amount of the bond drops from $10 million to $5 million. Indeed, a $5 million bond measure is favored 59-19%, while a $10 million bond measure is favored 68-20%.

Voting Intentions: Payment Options for the Open Space Bond

Property Tax Levy: Taxpayers are just as likely to support a $28 annual increase in their property taxes as they are a $14 increase. For example, paying for the open space measure with an average annual increase in property taxes of $28 per year per $100,000 of property generates support from 64%, and opposition from 30%, while a measure funded by an average annual property tax increase of $14 is favored by a 63-28% margin.

At the same time, voters oppose funding the measure with a property tax increase after hearing how much local farmers and ranchers would have to pay. An open space measure that would cost the average local farming or ranching business $500-$800 a year in additional property taxes over the 20-year life of the bond, is opposed by a 60-22% margin, while a measure that would cost the average farming or ranching business an extra $200-$400 a year is opposed by a 51-30% margin.

Household Fee: State legislation allowing counties to fund an open space measure through a per household fee, rather than a property tax levy, partially reducing the burden on farmers and ranchers, is favored by a slim plurality (49-32%).

More specifically, a household fee of $25 is supported by a 63-29% margin. However, when the fee is increased to $50 annually, support declines (45% yes/41% no).

Importantly, voters are just as likely to favor a $25 annual household fee (63-29%) as they are a property tax levy that would cost homeowners an average of $14 (63-28%) or $28 (64-30%) per $100,000 of home value.

Methods to Protect Open Space

When it comes to what open space and agricultural land protection methods are favored, zoning is most popular. Indeed, 70% of voters favor "voluntary agricultural preservation of zoning," and 64% favor "county-wide zoning regulations." Voluntary agricultural preservation zoning is favored by a majority of voters in all subgroups throughout the county. However,

- Residents of the Manhattan/Three Forks area are less supportive of voluntary agricultural preservation zoning than are residents elsewhere in the county (52% favor versus 73%).
- Voters age 18-64 are more supportive of the idea than are seniors (74% versus 53%).
- Voters with at least some college education are more supportive of it than voters with high school or less education (75% versus 54%).
- There is no difference in attitude about voluntary agricultural preservation zoning among ranch owners and non-ranch owners in the county. Among each, it is supported by more than six in ten voters.

Looking at subgroups, "county-wide zoning" is likewise favored by a majority of voters in all subgroups throughout the county. However,

- Residents inside Bozeman zip codes are more supportive of county-wide zoning than are residents in rural parts of the county (71% favor versus 49%).

- Residents with at least some college education are more supportive of county-wide zoning than are voters with a high school or less education (70% favor versus 44%).

- Democrats are more supportive of county-wide zoning than Independents and Republicans (76% favor versus 64% and 55% respectively).

- There is no difference in attitude about county-wide zoning among ranch owners and non-ranch owners in the county. Among each, it is supported by more than six in ten voters.

At the same time, three other methods did not generate support from even half of voters:

- "Local government purchase of private lands" (49% favor/37% oppose);

- "Local government purchase of scenic easements on private property" (49% favor/36% oppose); and

- "Local government purchase of development rights, leaving the property in private ownership" (44% favor/33% oppose).

Prioritizing Uses for Open Space Protection Funding

A majority of Gallatin County voters rated each of the possible programs tested in the survey as important to be funded by an open space measure. However, programs designed to protect water generated the most *intense* reactions and were most likely to be rated "extremely" important:

- "Protecting drinking water" (83% extremely important);

- "Protecting water quality in rivers and streams" (78% extremely important);

- "Protection of the Madison, Jefferson and Gallatin Rivers" (74% extremely important);

In addition, a majority of voters said seven other programs were extremely important, including:

- "Protecting wildlife habitat" (67% extremely important);
- "Protecting fish habitat in rivers and streams" (62% extremely important);
- "Protecting wildlife areas" (60% extremely important);
- "Preserving ranches and farmland" (59% extremely important);
- "Protecting the farming and ranching economy of Gallatin County" (57% extremely important);
- "Managing growth and development" (56% extremely important); and
- "Protecting the area's rural lifestyle" (51% extremely important).

There are important semantic differences that appear to impact support for various open space programs. Notably, "protecting *water quality* in rivers and streams" is rated more important by voters than "protecting *fish habitat* in rivers and streams," and "managing growth and development" is rated more important than "limiting sprawl." Voters' reactions are more intense about "protecting wildlife *habitat*" than "wildlife *areas.*" Two other split-sample style questions revealed that voters don't distinguish between "protecting the farming and ranching economy of Gallatin County" and "preserving ranches and farmland," or "purchasing open space land" and "purchasing open space conservation easements."

Awareness and Perceptions of Open Lands Board

Approximately half of Gallatin County voters have heard of the Open Lands Board (52%). However, just a quarter of voters are familiar enough with the organization to

have an opinion about it (16% favorable/9% unfavorable). Importantly, voters who have a favorable opinion of the Board are more likely than those with an unfavorable opinion or no opinion about the Board to support a bond measure to protect open space in the county.

Perceptions of Local Government Program Funding Needs

More than two in three voters believe that each of the four government programs tested in the survey are in need of additional funding. However, when looking at the intensity of voters' reactions, we find that education and public schools are clearly perceived as having the greatest need for additional funding (51% believe they are in "great" need of funds), followed by protection of open space and agricultural lands (39%), roads (35%) and public safety (25%).

Proponent Messages

Six of the seven proponent messages tested in the survey generated support for an open lands ballot measure among more than six in ten voters.

- "At the current rate of growth, the population of Gallatin County will double in twenty years – we must act now to preserve rural lands before they are lost to development" (77% more likely to vote for measure after hearing this/15% less likely);

- "The preservation of Gallatin County's rural lifestyle and agricultural economy is dependent on preserving farm and open space lands" (76% more likely/15% less likely);

- "All funds raised locally for open space will be matched by state and private funding" (76% more likely/14% less likely);

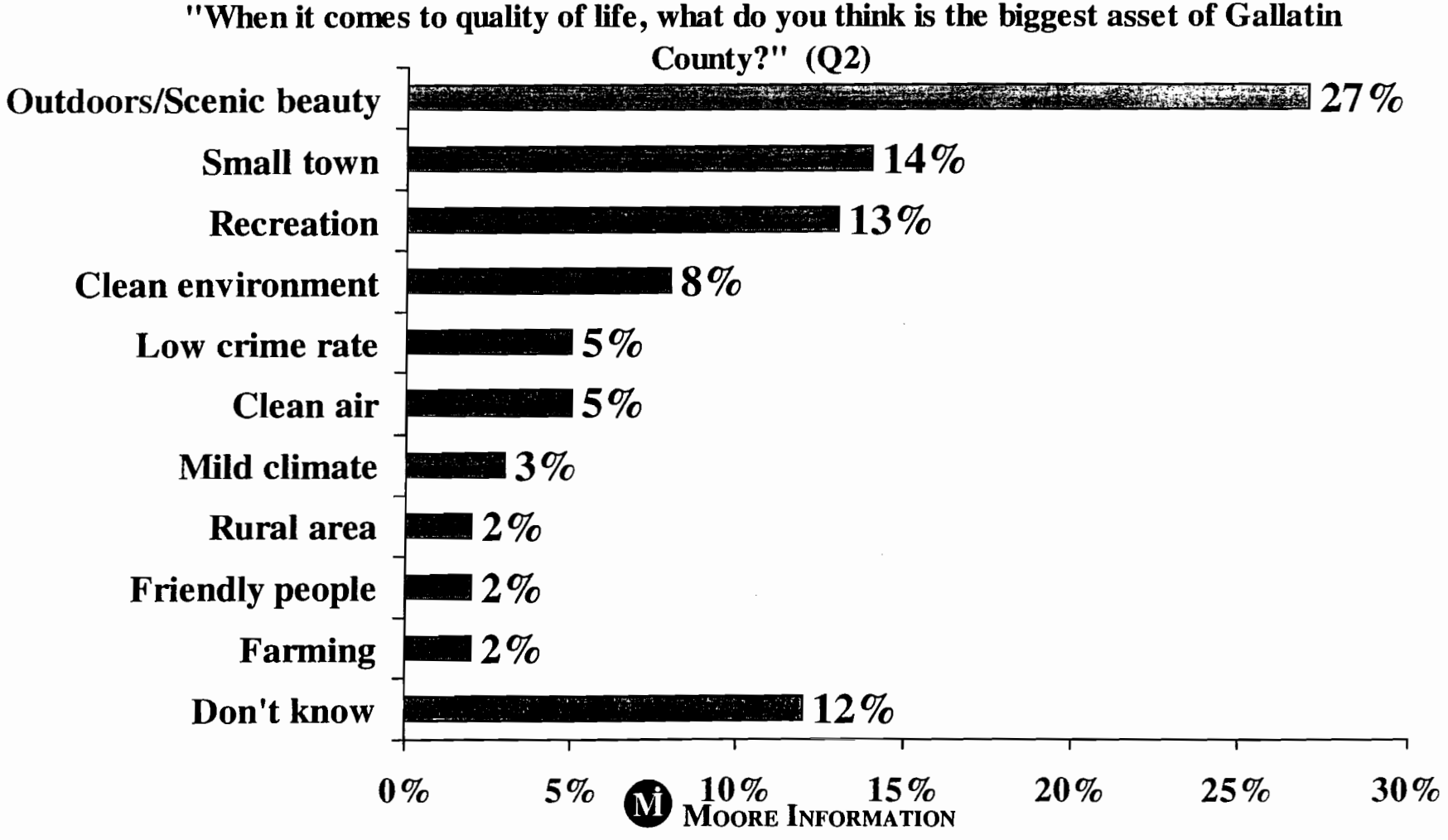
- "The preservation of Gallatin County's rural lifestyle and agricultural economy is dependent on planned development" (71% more likely/18% less likely);

- "An independent citizens' board will decide how to spend the money, and a public audit will be conducted to make sure the money is spent as promised" (69% more likely/22% less likely); and

- "The local government will purchase development rights from landowners who voluntarily restrict development on their property through conservation easements, leaving land in private hands and on county tax rolls" (63% more likely/24% less likely).

At the same time, the argument that "a bond or property tax measure is the only legally available option capable of generating significant funds for open space" was not as well received (45% were more likely and 34% less likely to support an open lands ballot measure after hearing this).

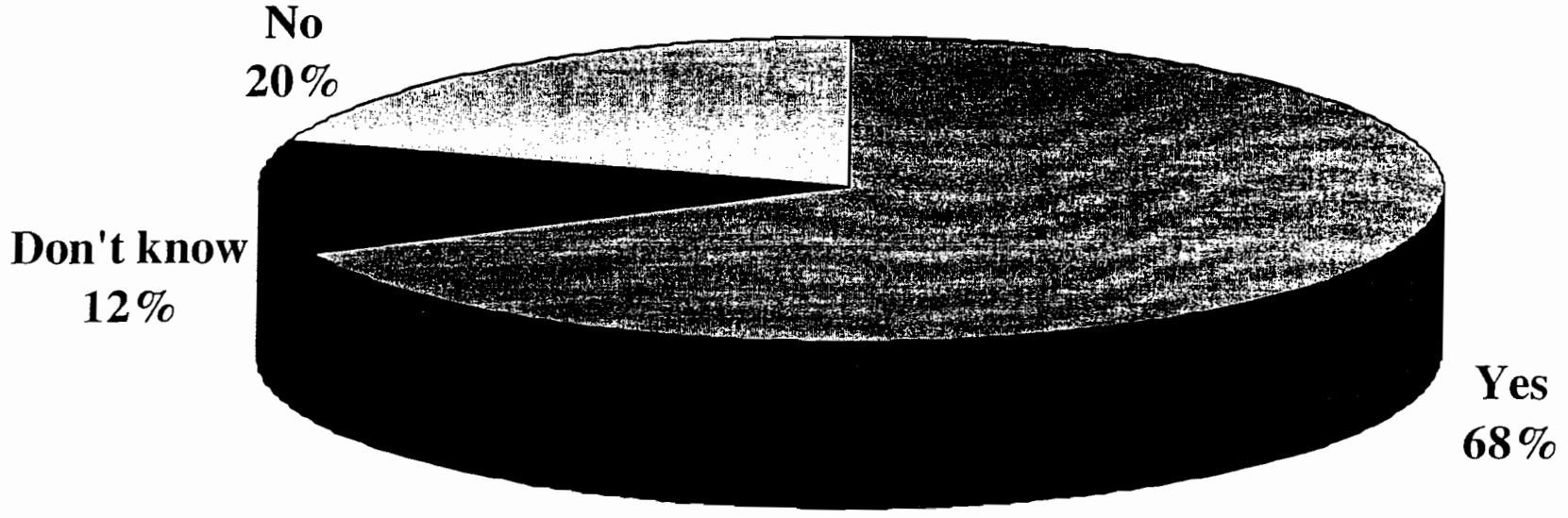
Quality Of Life:
Gallatin County Residents Value The Local Outdoors & Scenic Beauty Of Landscape



Initial Ballot:

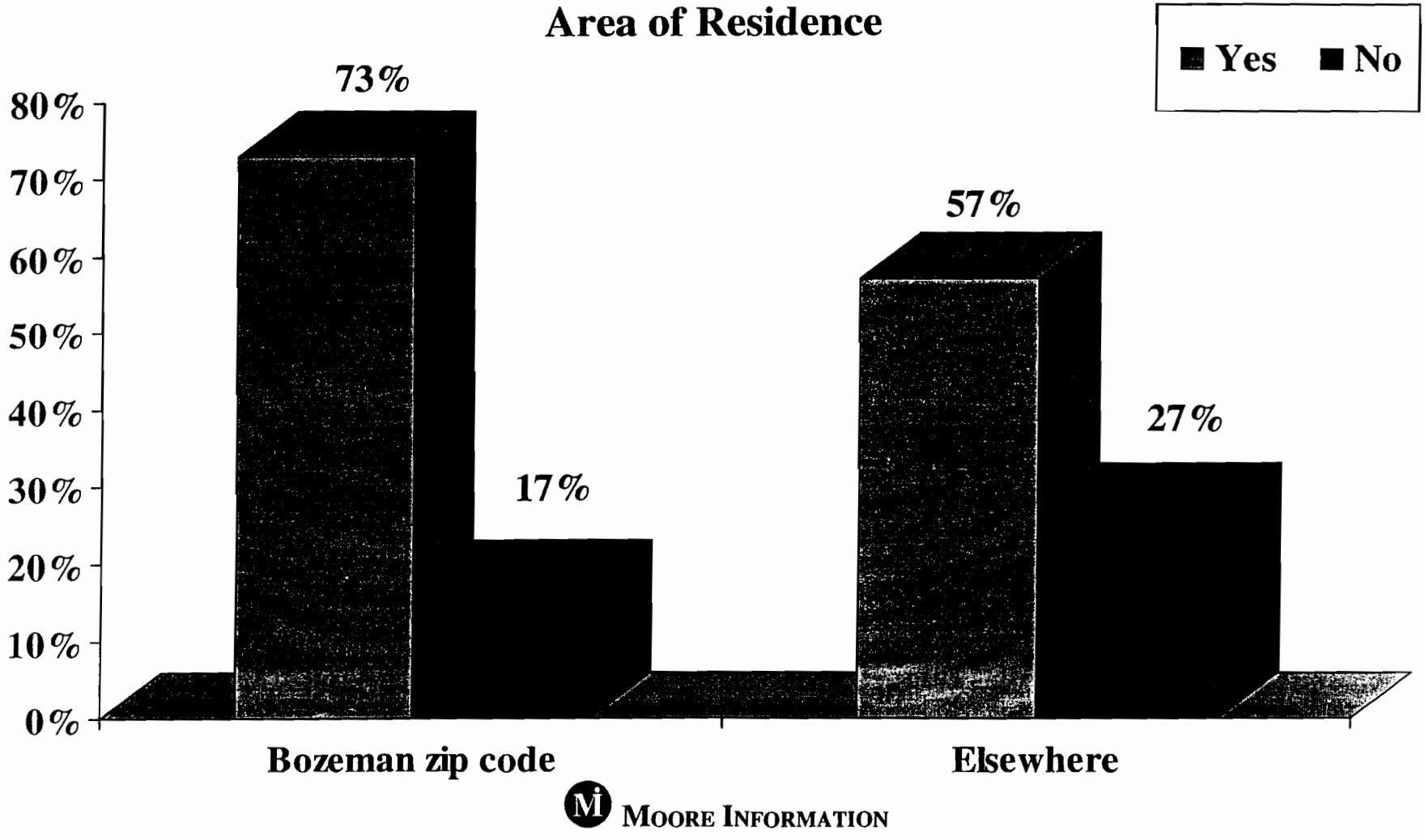
More Than Two-Thirds Of Voters Favor $10 Million Open Space Bond Measure

"Shall the Gallatin Co. Commission be authorized to issue general obligation bonds in the sum of $10 million, maturing in twenty years or less, to be used to preserve open space in the Co. by purchasing land and conservation easements from willing landowners, for the following purposes: managing growth, preserving ranches and farms, protecting wildlife areas and water quality in streams and rivers, and providing parks and recreation areas; with all expenditures based on recommendations of a citizen advisory board and subject to an annual independent audit?
Do you think you would vote yes in favor of this measure, or no to oppose it?" (Q4)



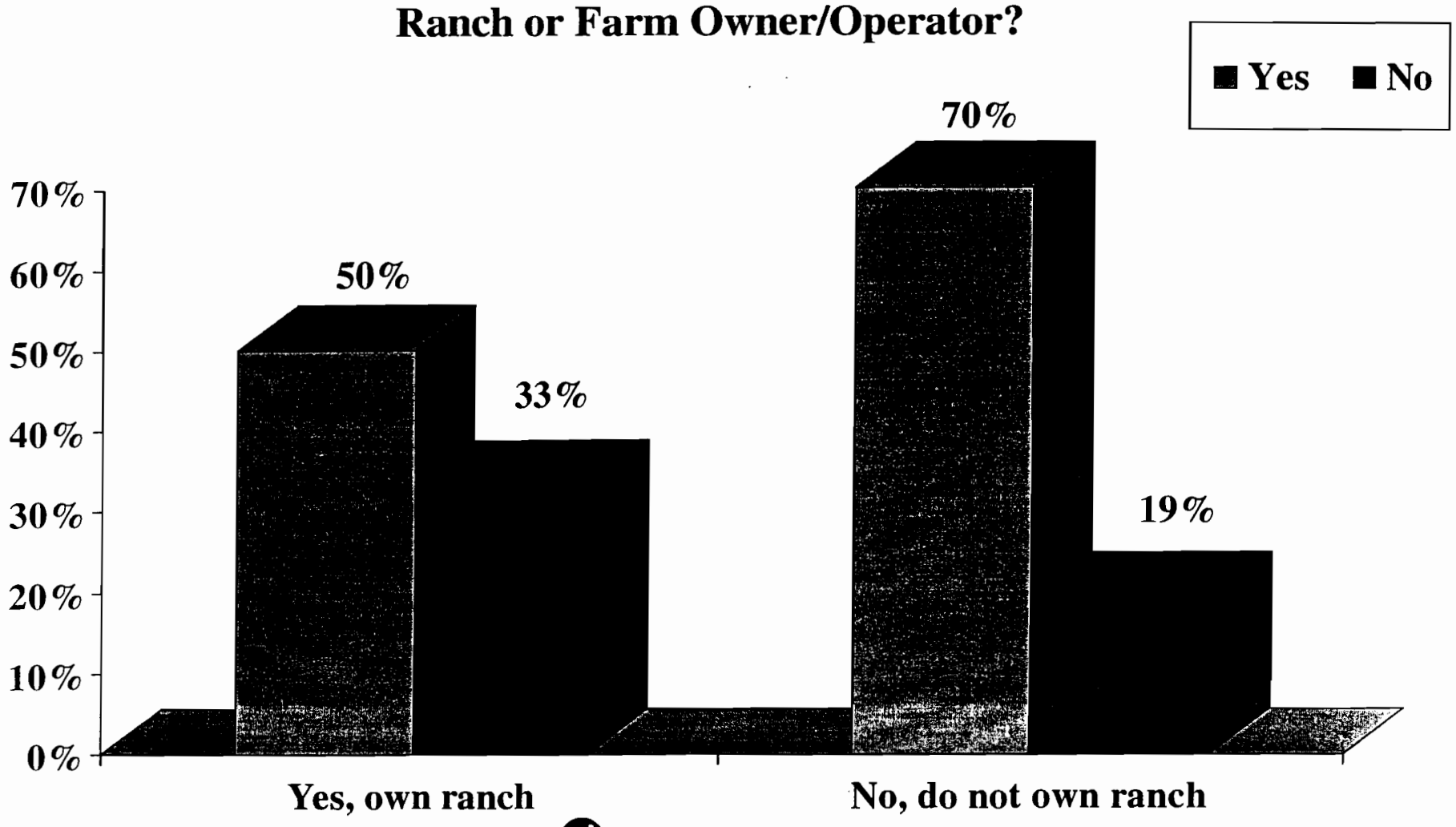
MOORE INFORMATION

Initial Ballot: *Bozeman Residents Are More Supportive Than Rural Residents*



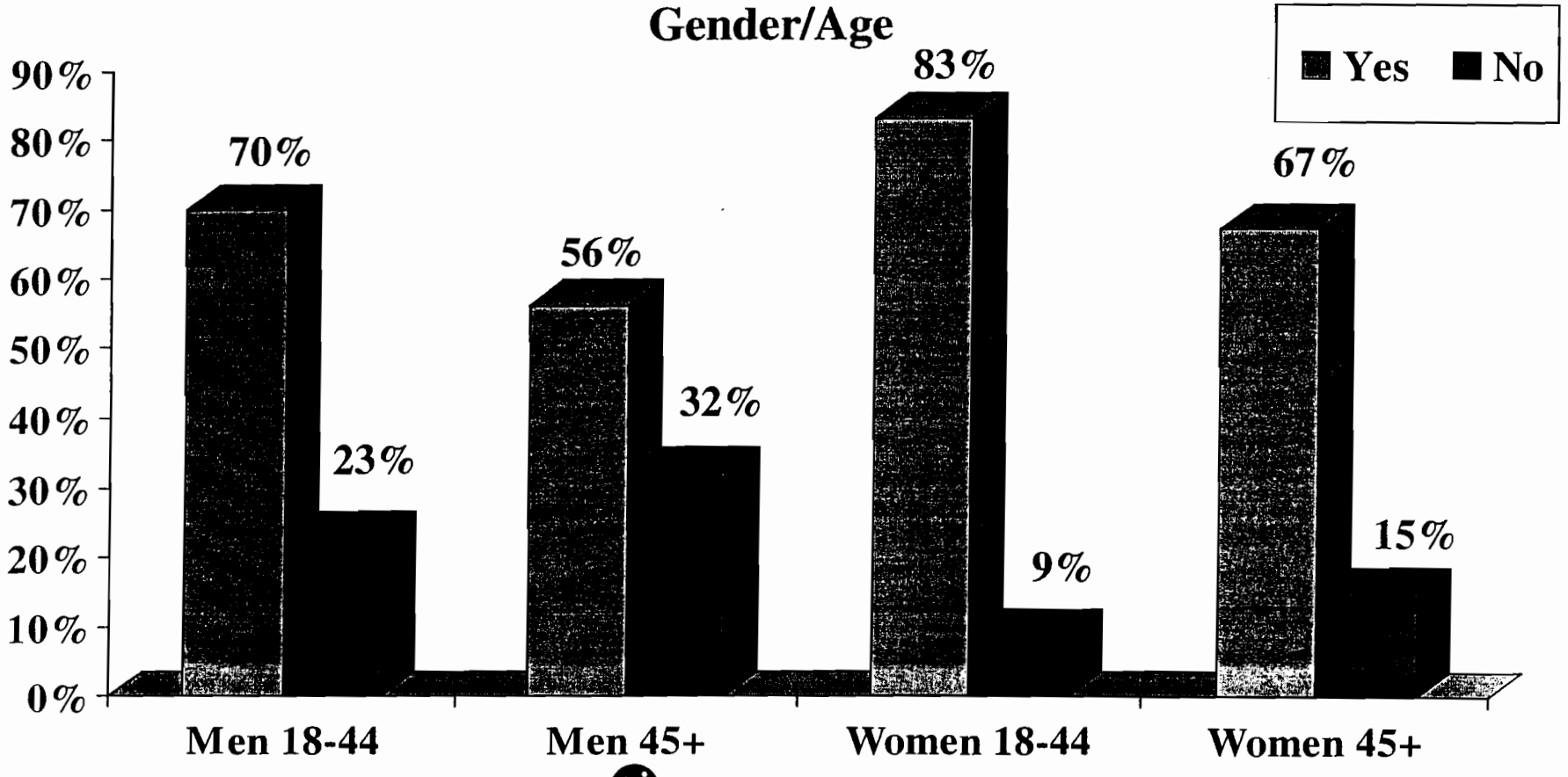
MOORE INFORMATION

Initial Ballot: *Ranch Owners/Operators Are Among The Least Supportive*



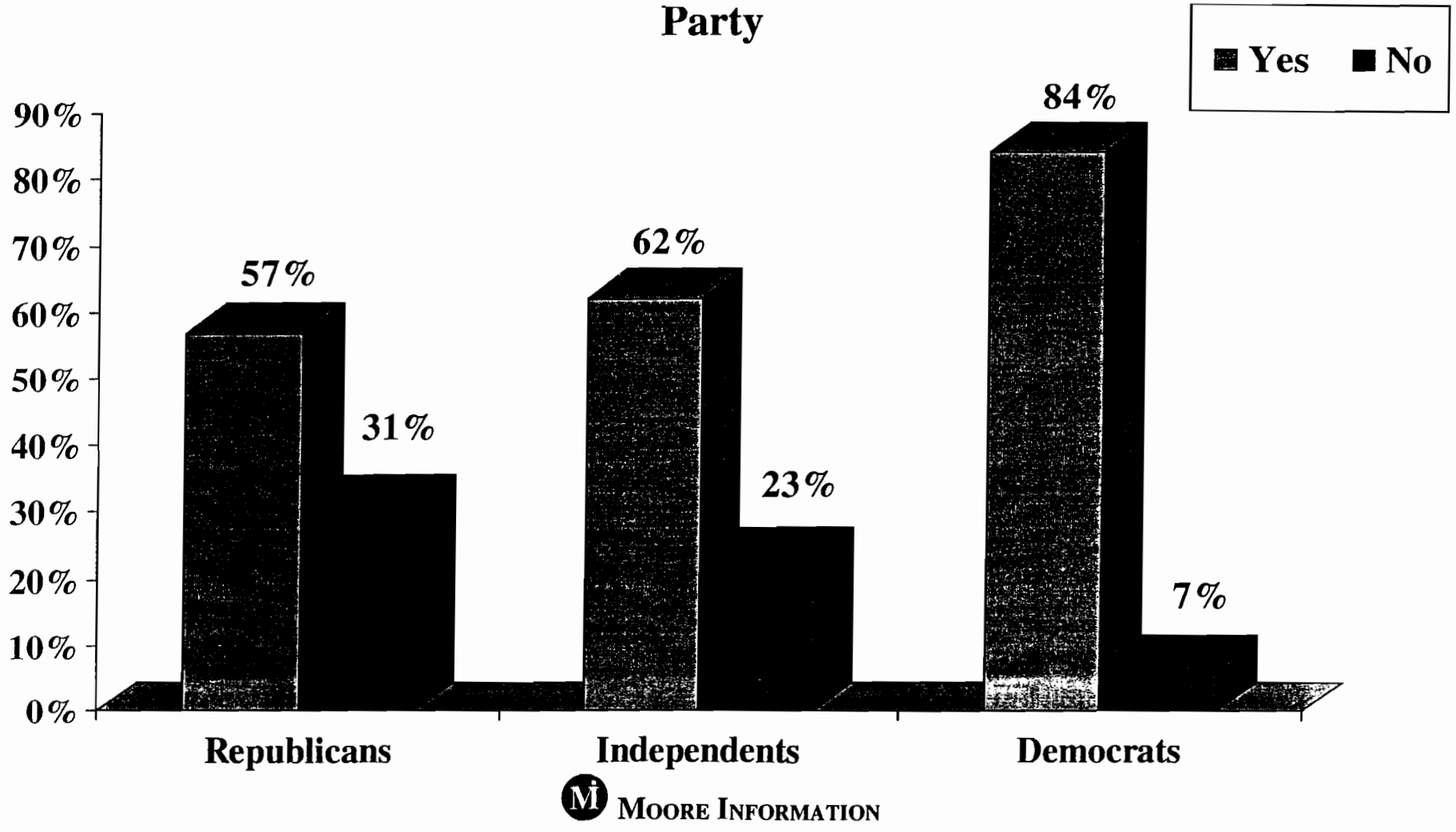
MOORE INFORMATION

Initial Ballot: *Women Are More Supportive Of Measure Than Men, & Voters 18-44 Are More Supportive Than Older Voters*



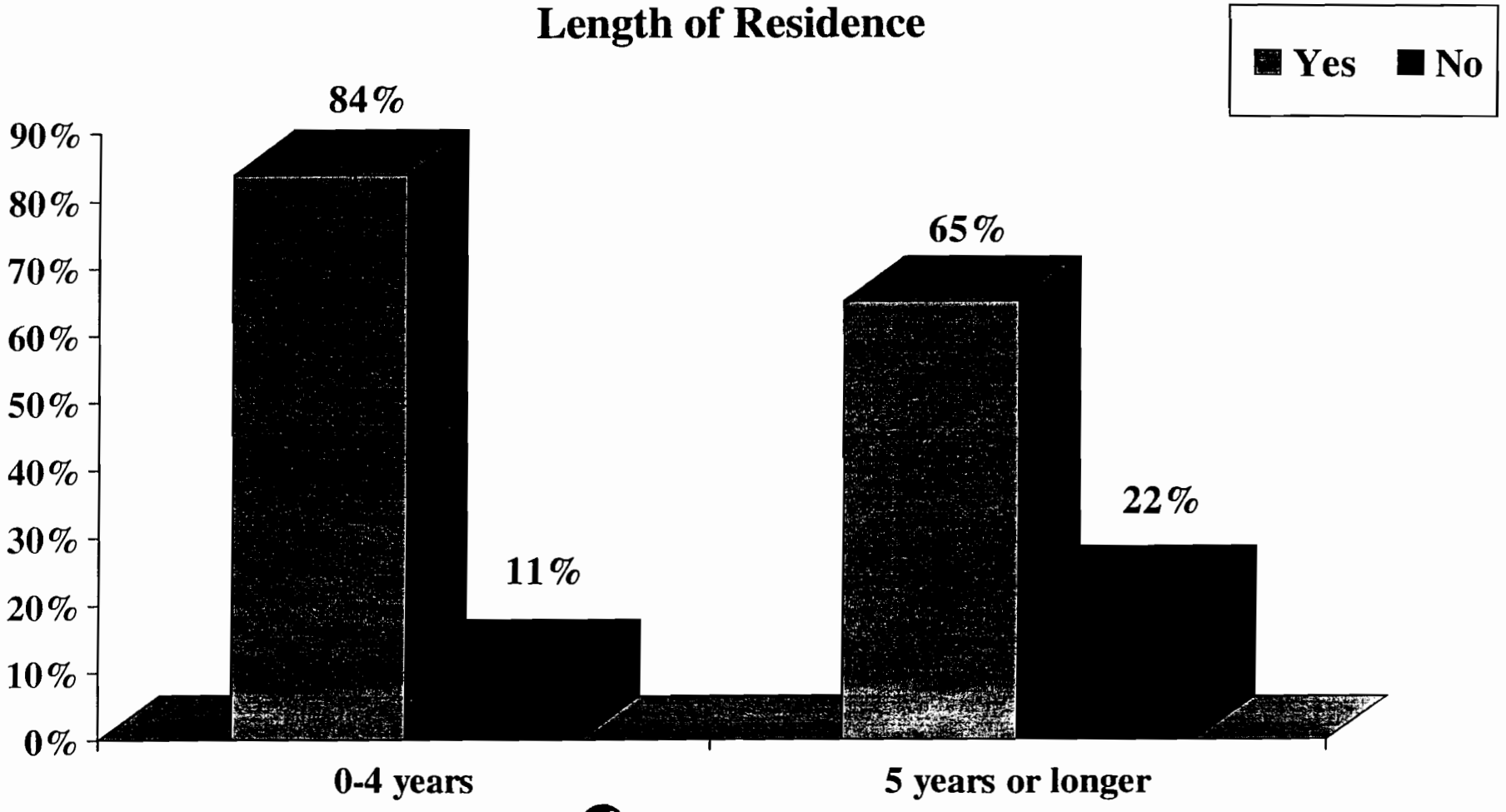
Moore Information

Initial Ballot: *Democrats Are More Supportive Of Measure Than Independents & Republicans*



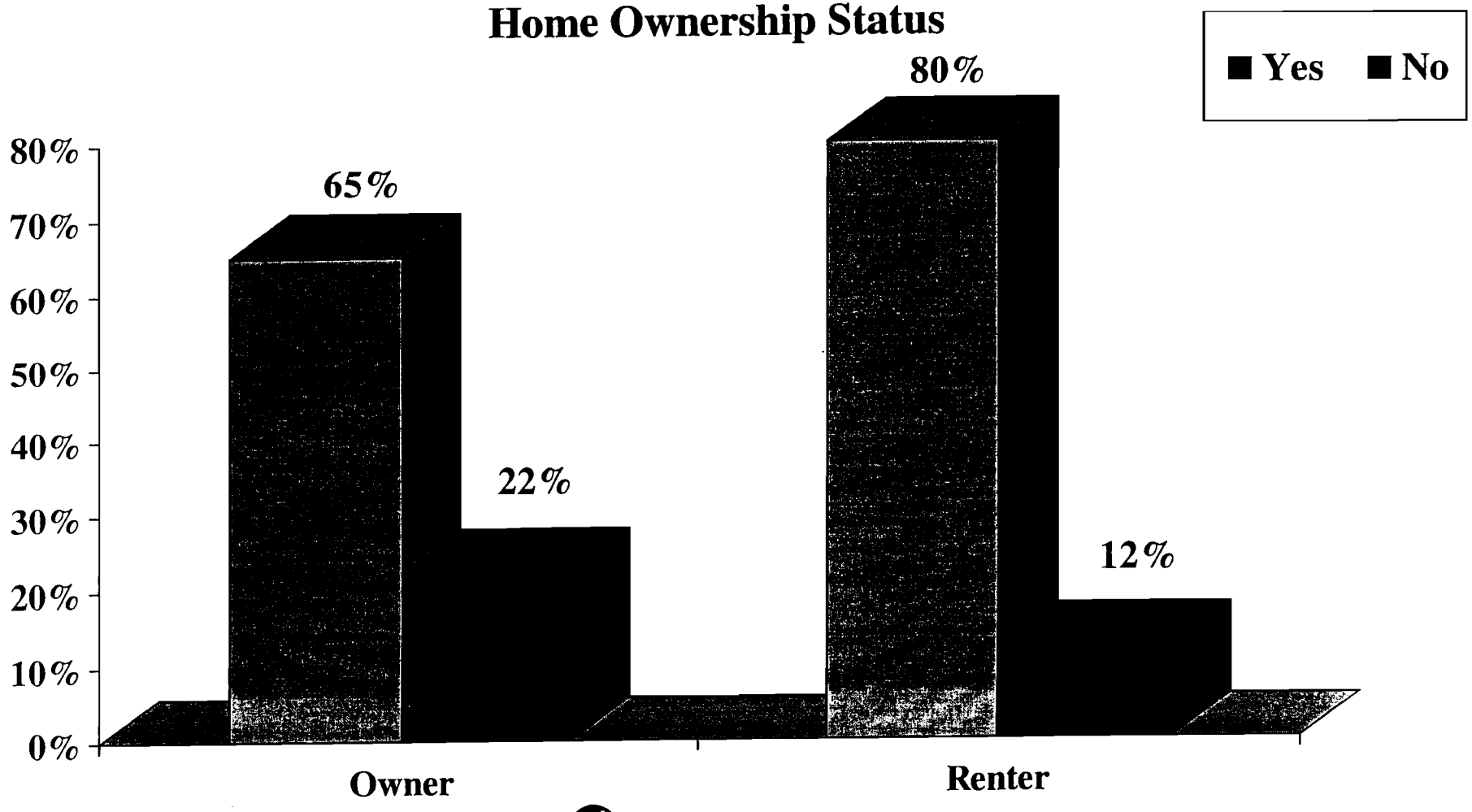
Moore Information

Initial Ballot: *Newer Residents Are More Supportive Than Long-Time Residents*



MOORE INFORMATION

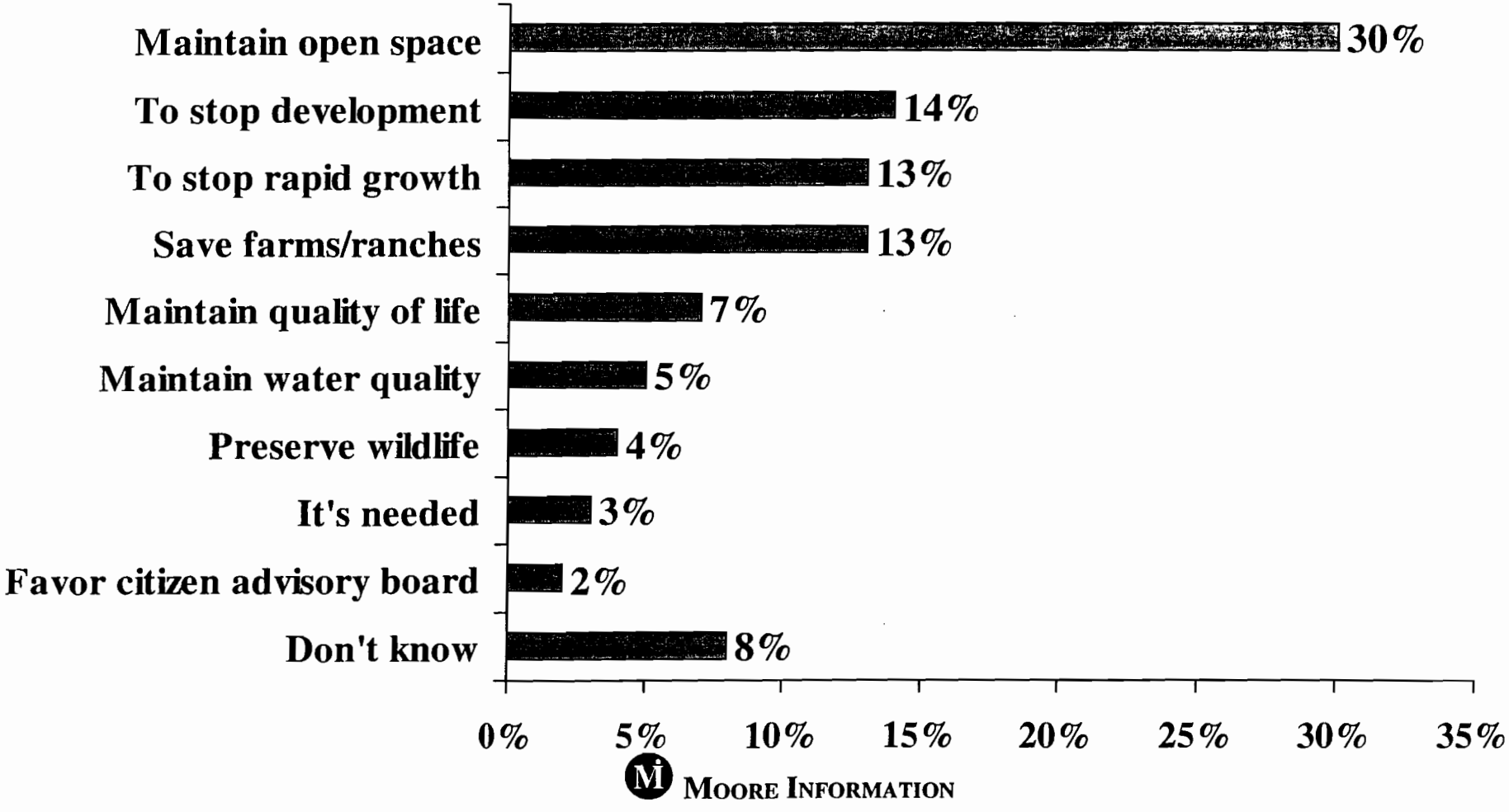
Initial Ballot: *Renters Are More Supportive Than Home Owners*



MOORE INFORMATION

Supporters Of Open Space Bond Measure Want To Maintain Open Space & Stop Growth

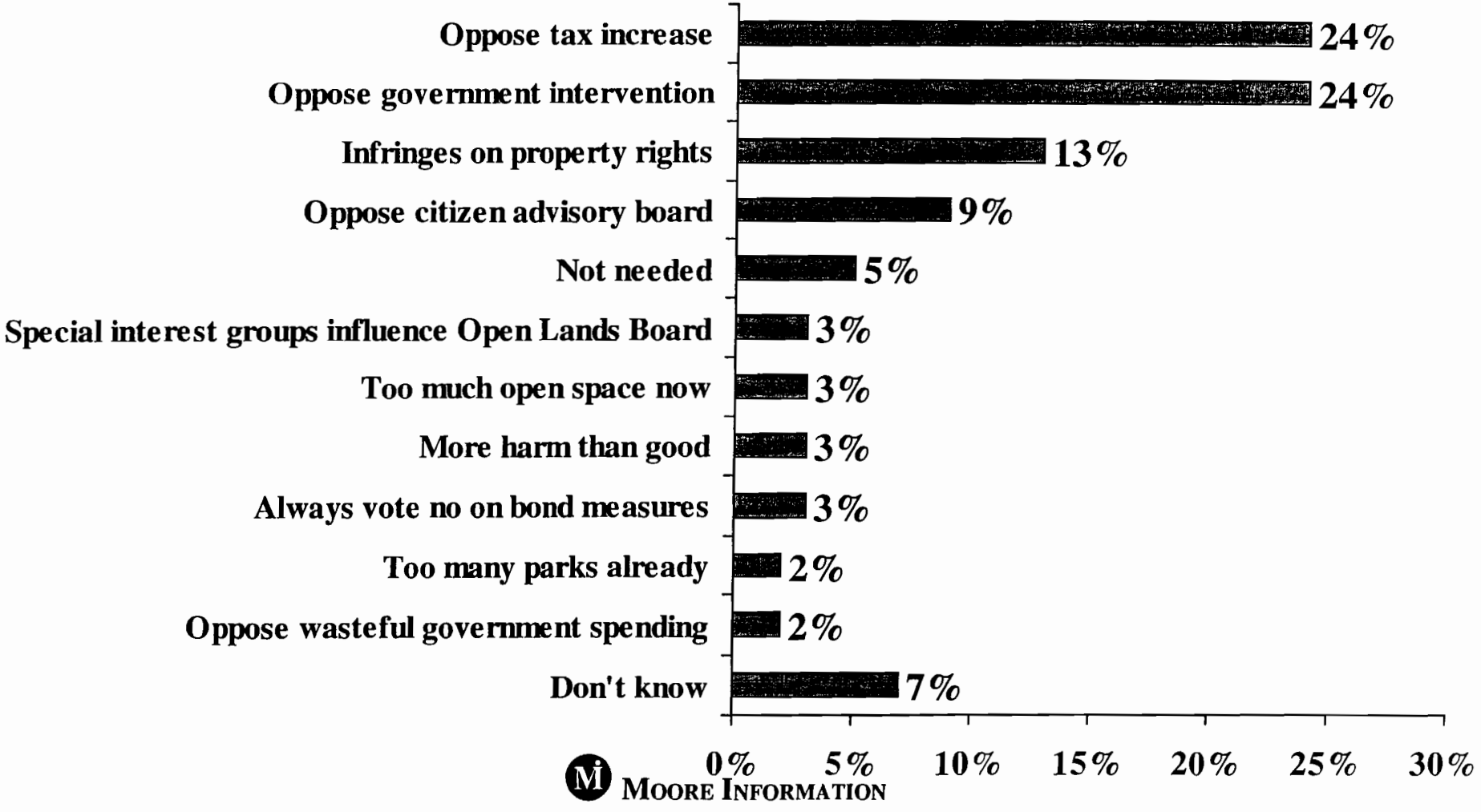
"What is the major reason you would vote for such a measure?" (Q5)



Moore Information

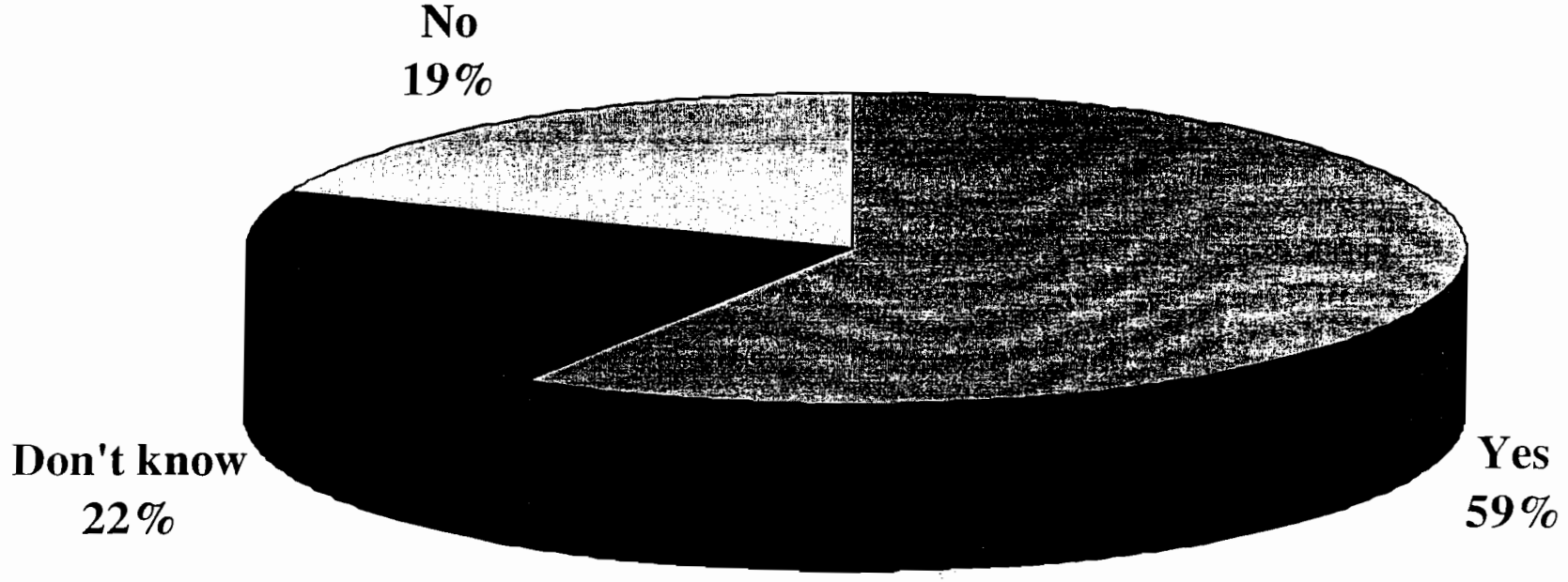
Voters In Opposition To Open Space Bond Measure Don't Want To Pay Or Have Government Involved

"What is the major reason you would vote against such a measure?" (Q6)



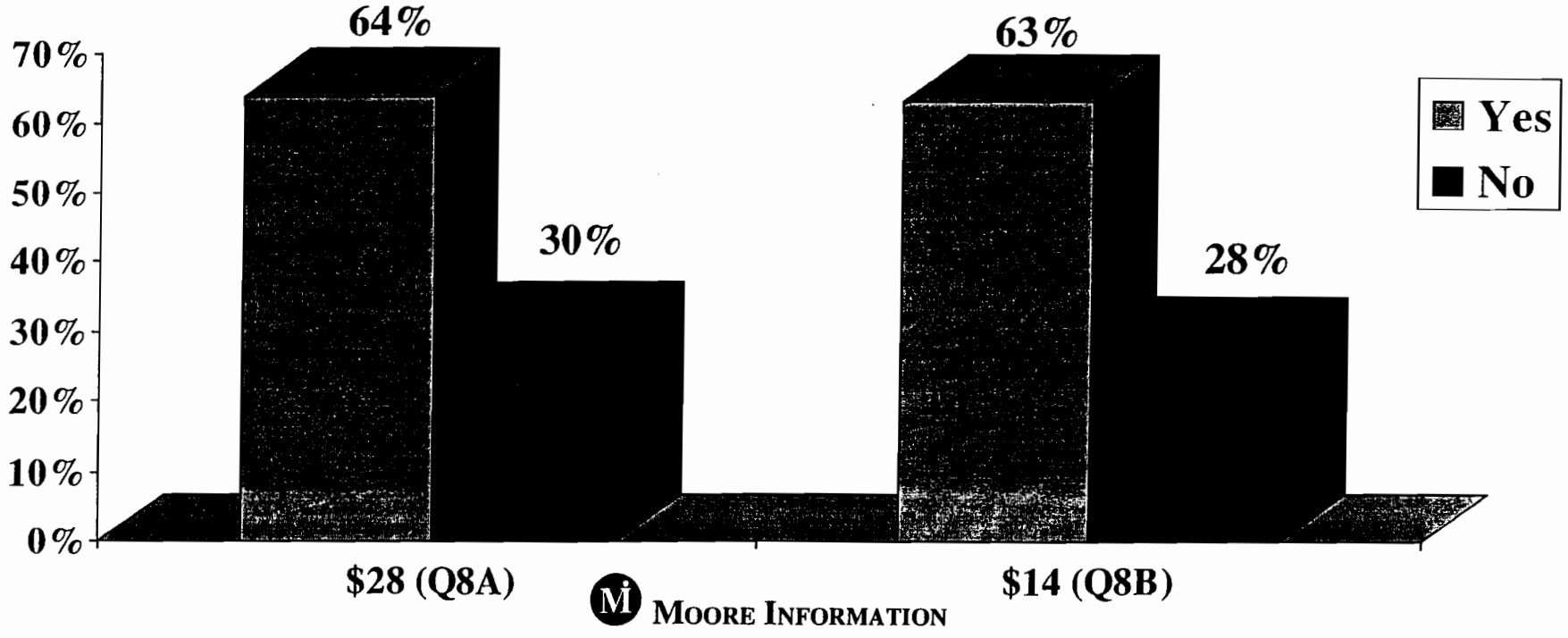
Support For Open Space Bond Measure Drops When Bond Amount Drops From $10 Million to $5 Million

"The final amount of a county open space bond measure has not been determined. Please tell me if you think you would vote yes or no on the measure if the total amount of the bond were $5 million, instead of $10 million." (Q7)



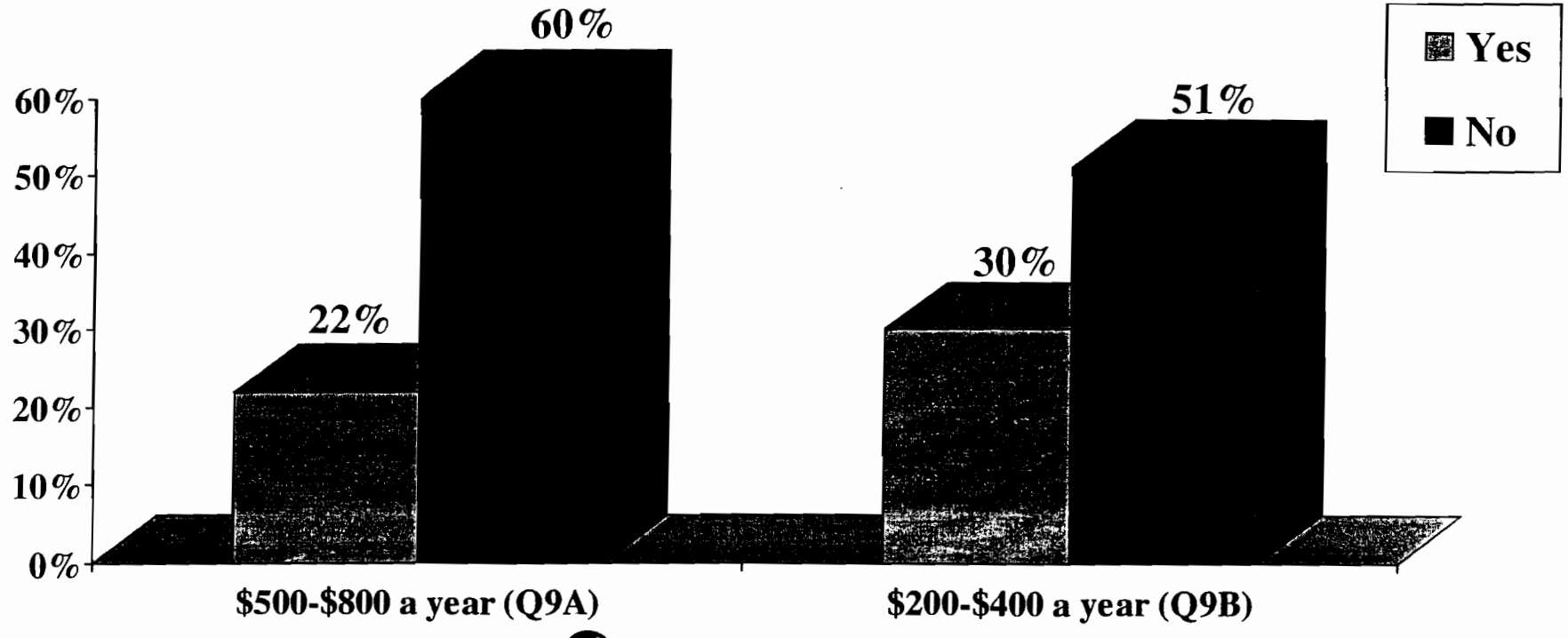
Voters Are Just As Willing To Pay An Additional $28 Per Year In Property Taxes As $14 Per Year

"Passing this open space measure would result in an increase in your property taxes. Please tell me whether you think you would vote yes, in favor, or no, to oppose a property tax increase to pay for an open space measure if you knew that it would cost the owner of a $100,000 home an average of about . . . per year over the 20-year life of the bond."



Voters Oppose The Measure After Hearing How Much Farmers Could Pay In Increased Property Taxes

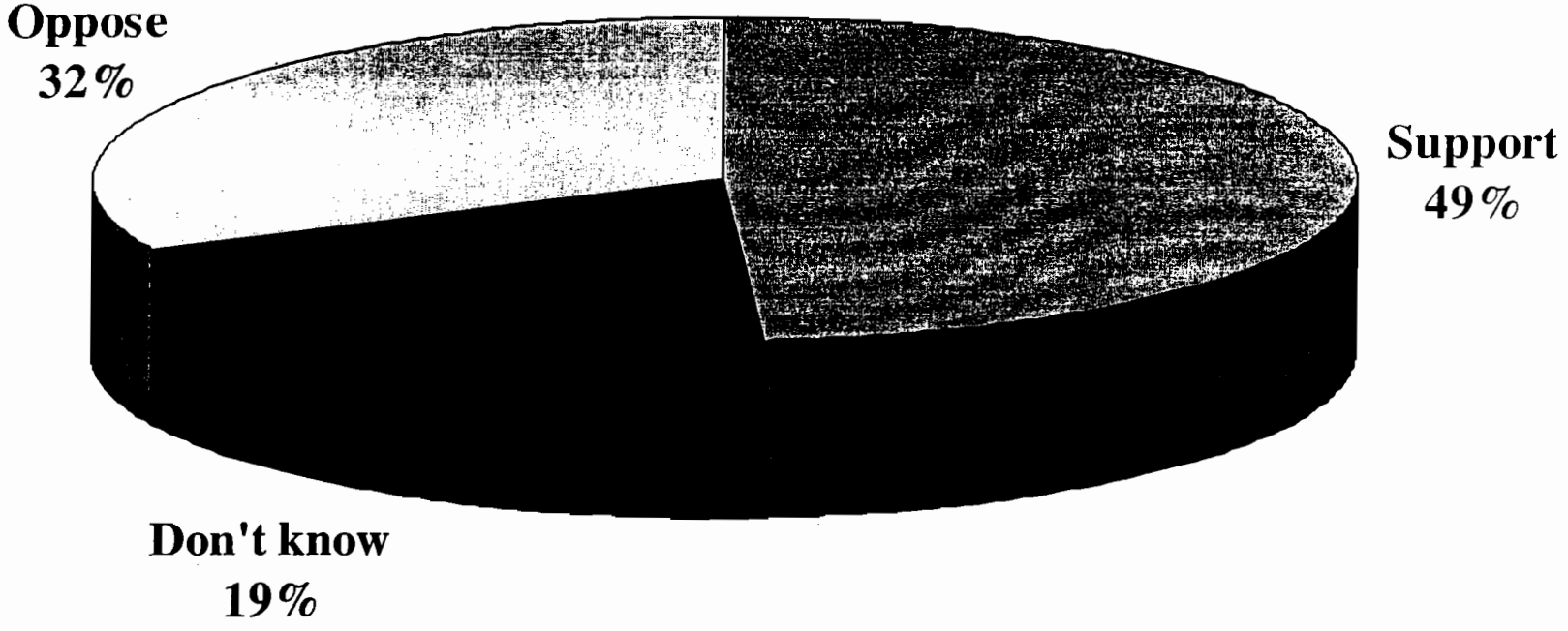
"Now let me ask you whether you think you would vote yes, in favor, or no, to oppose a property tax increase to pay for an open space measure if you knew that it would cost the average farming or ranching business in the county an average of between . . . per year over the 20-year life of the bond."



MOORE INFORMATION

Legislation Allowing Household Fees To Fund Open Space Bonds Is Supported By A Plurality Of Voters

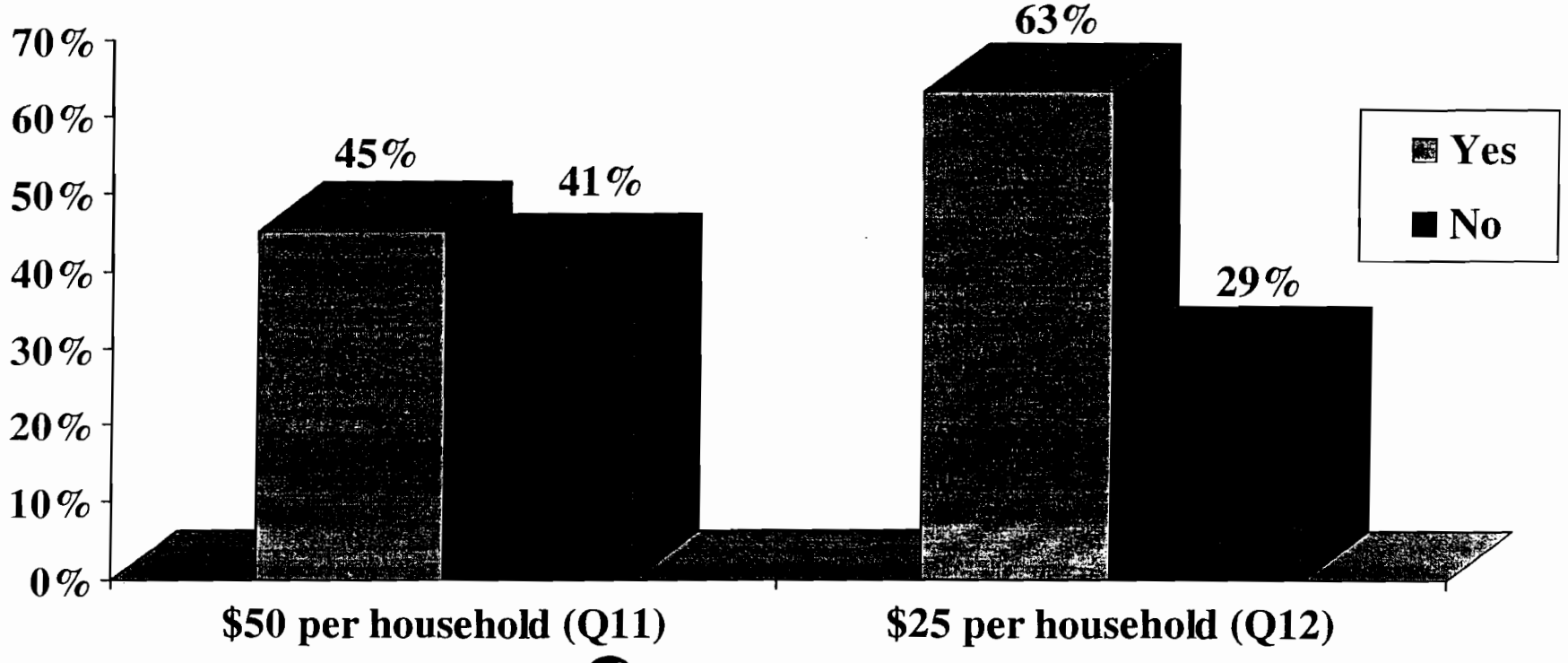
"Some people have proposed funding an open space bond to protect land in Gallatin County through a fee assessed on each household. Would you support or oppose state legislation that would allow counties to fund an open space bond issue through a per household fee rather than a property tax levy; thereby partially reducing the burden on farmers and ranchers?" (Q10)



MOORE INFORMATION

A $25 Household Fee To Fund Open Space Bond Is Well Received, But A $50 Household Fee Is Less Popular

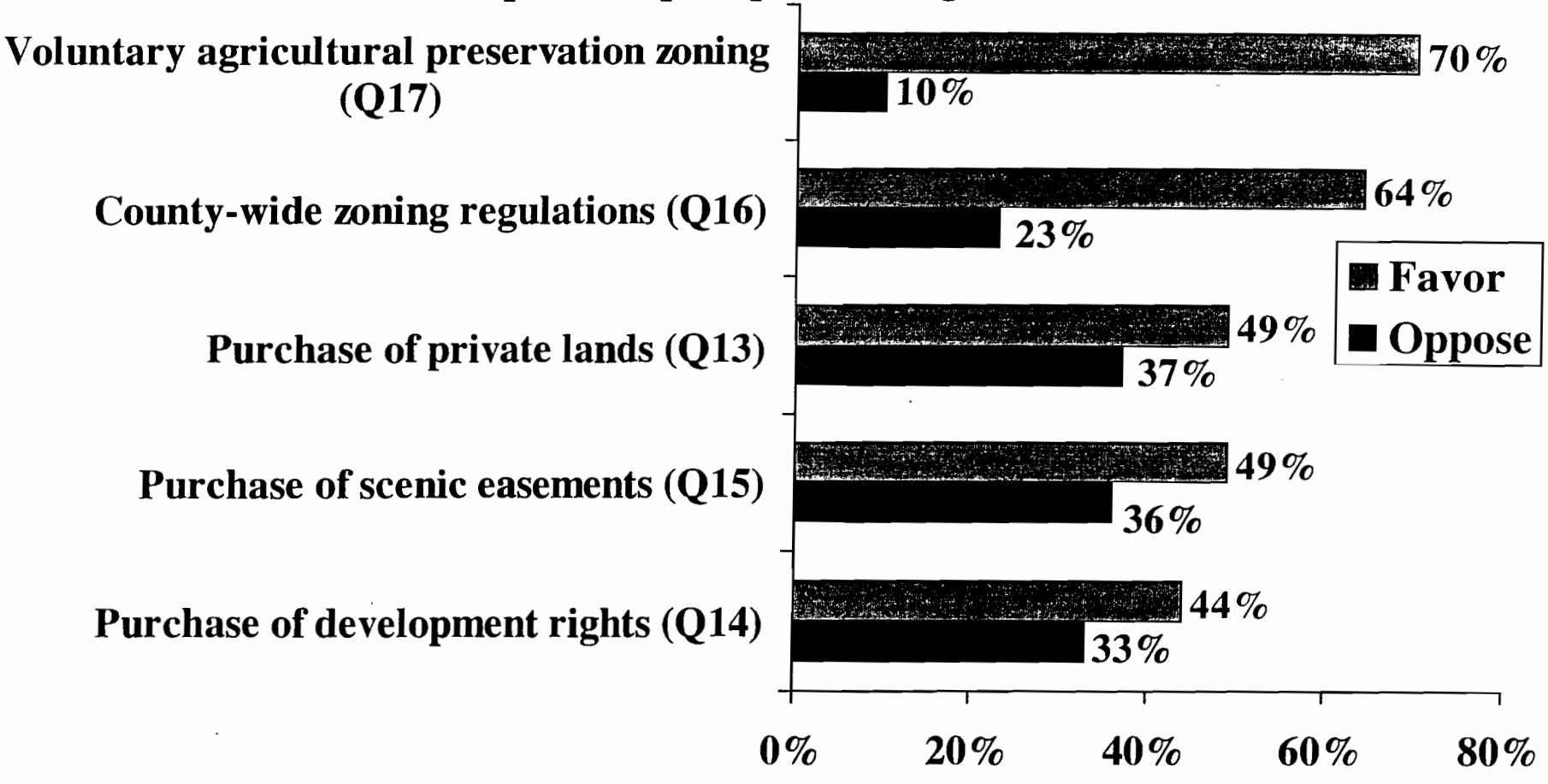
"If the state allowed counties to fund open space programs through a household fee, do you think you would vote yes, in favor of, or no, to oppose a bond issue funded by a . . . per household fee?"



MOORE INFORMATION

Methods To Protect Open Space:
Zoning Is Most Popular

"Please tell me if you would favor or oppose each of the following in order to protect open space and agriculture lands."



MOORE INFORMATION

County-Wide Zoning Regulations Are A Popular Idea

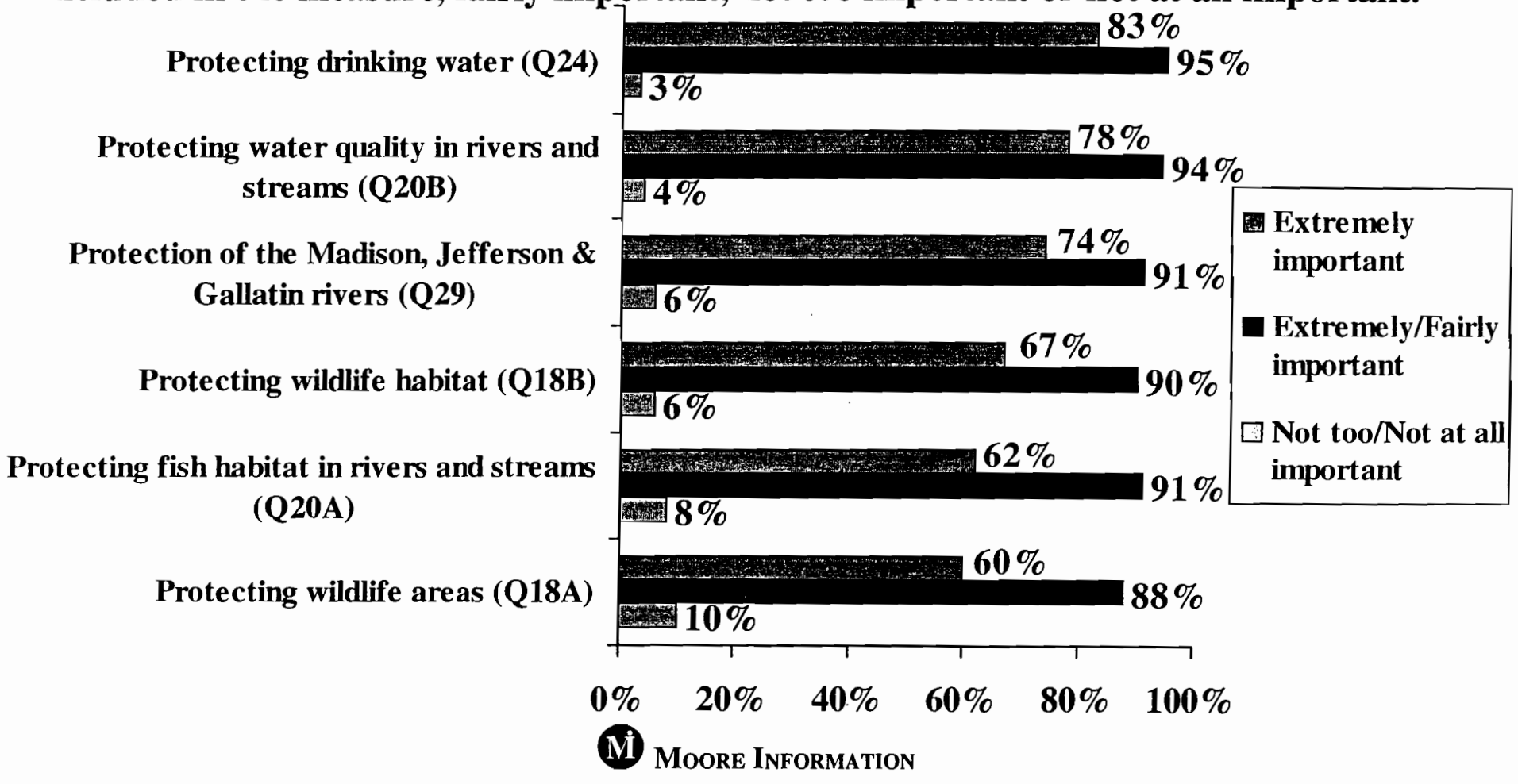
- A majority of voters in all subgroups favor county-wide zoning regulations to protect open space and agricultural land.
  - Among the most supportive are Democrats, post-graduates, Bozeman area residents & women 18-44.
  - Among the least supportive are rural area residents & voters with a high school or less education.
  - There is no difference in sentiment between ranch owners/operators and non-ranch owners. Each support the idea.

Voluntary Agricultural Preservation Zoning Is Popular Too

- A majority of voters in all subgroups favor voluntary agricultural preservation zoning regulations to protect open space and agricultural land.
  - Among the most supportive are voters age 18-44, renters, Democrats, postgraduates, & residents of fewer than 20 years.
  - Among the least supportive are seniors, Independents and voters with a high school or less education.
  - Manhattan/Three Forks residents are less supportive of the idea than residents elsewhere.
  - There is no difference in sentiment between ranch owners/operators and non-ranch owners. Each support the idea.

Highest Open Space Protection Priority: Protect Water

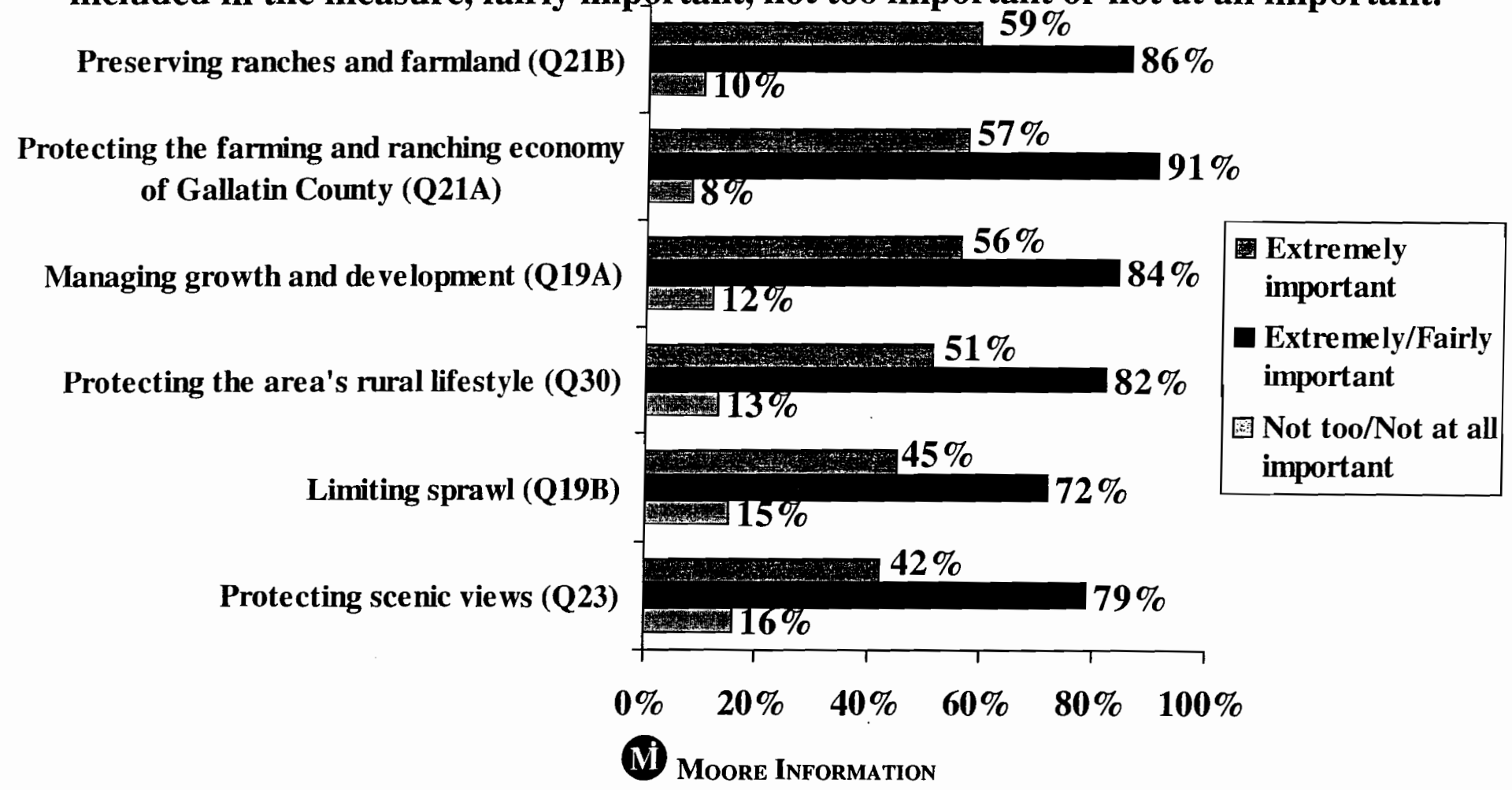
"I am now going to read you a list of programs that money from this measure might pay for. Please tell me if it would be extremely important to you that money for the project be included in the measure, fairly important, not too important or not at all important."



MOORE INFORMATION

Other Open Space Funding Priorities

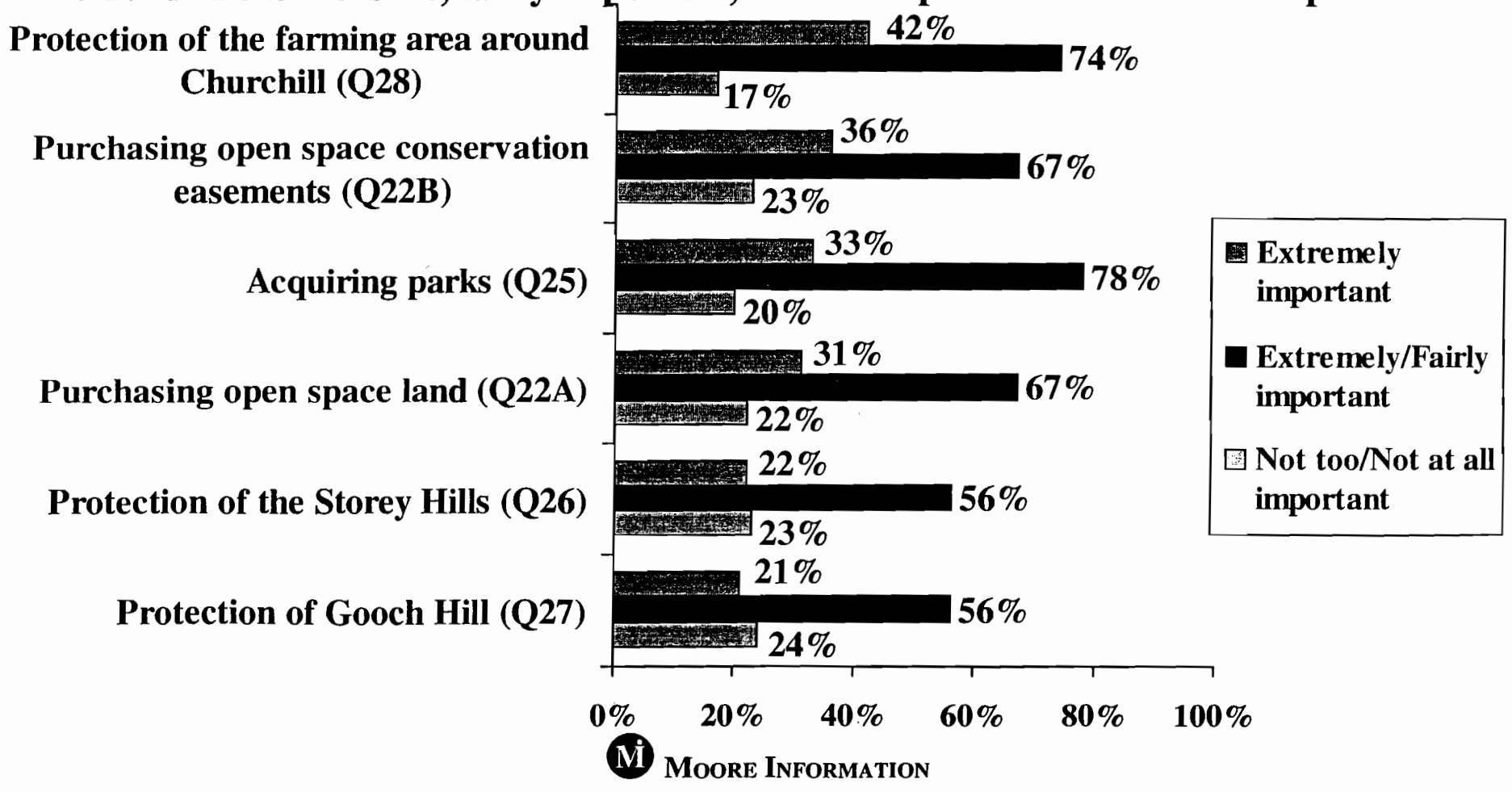
"I am now going to read you a list of programs that money from this measure might pay for. Please tell me if it would be extremely important to you that money for the project be included in the measure, fairly important, not too important or not at all important."



MOORE INFORMATION

More Open Space Funding Priorities

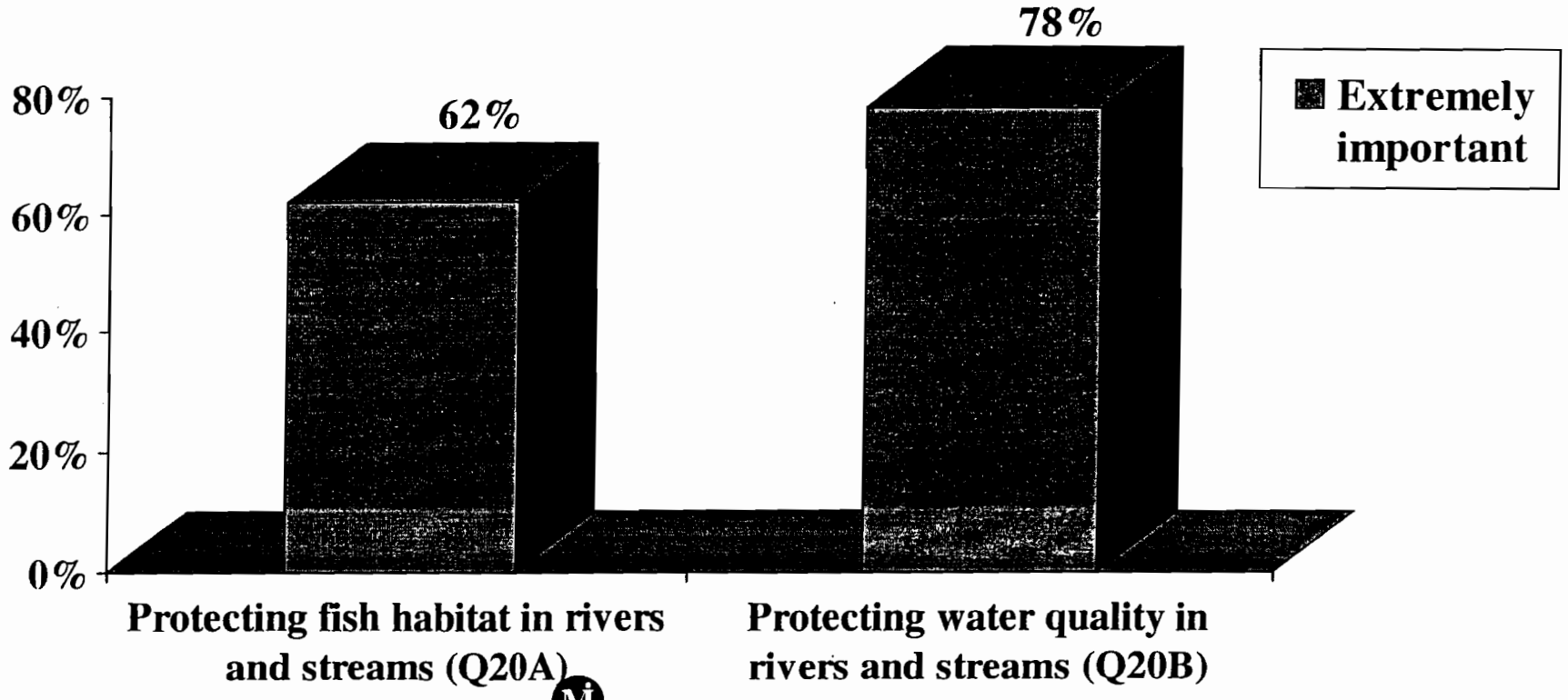
"I am now going to read you a list of programs that money from this measure might pay for. Please tell me if it would be extremely important to you that money for the project be included in the measure, fairly important, not too important or not at all important."



MOORE INFORMATION

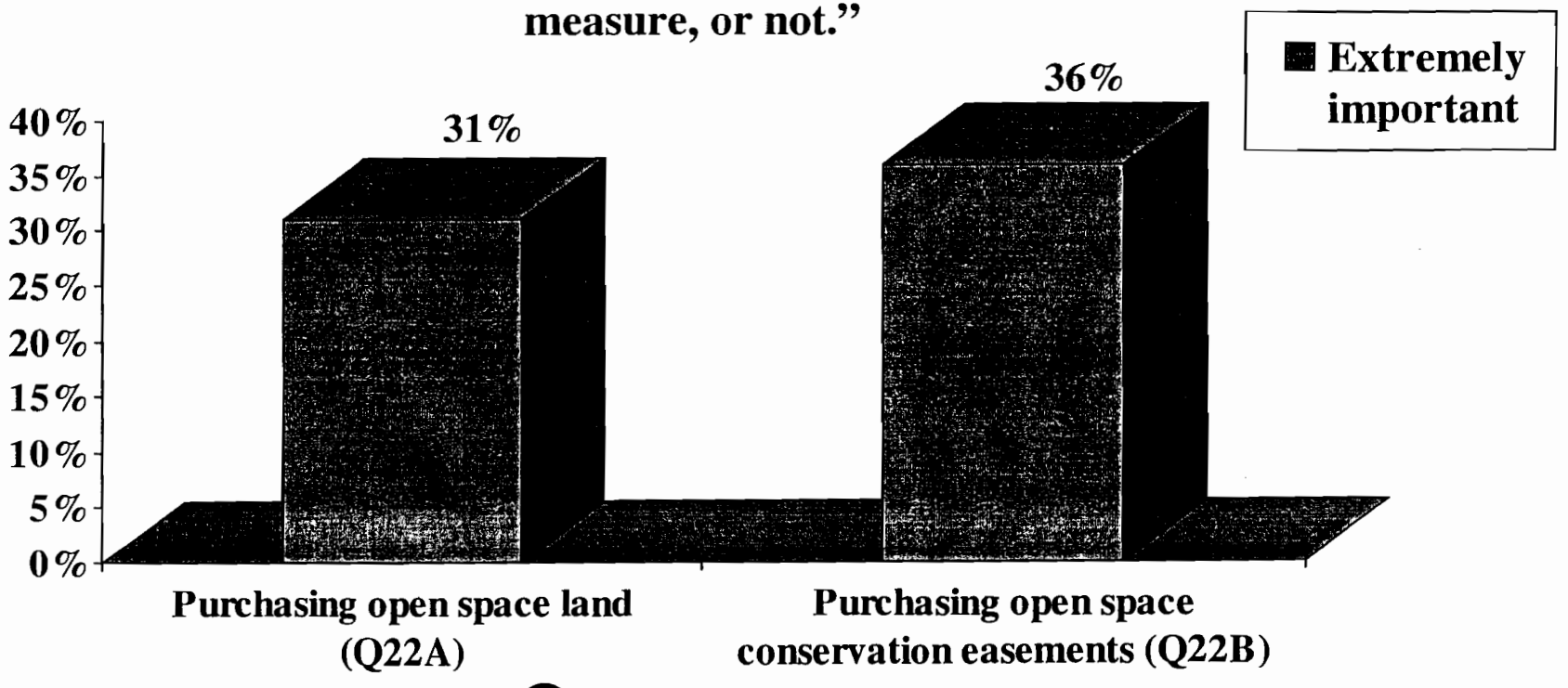
Funding Priorities:
"Protecting Water Quality" Is More Important Than "Protecting Fish Habitat"

"I am now going to read you a list of programs that money from this measure might pay for. Please tell me if it would be important to you that money for the project be included in the measure, or not."



Funding Priorities:
Purchasing "Open Space" Rated As Important As "Purchasing Open Space Conservation Easements"

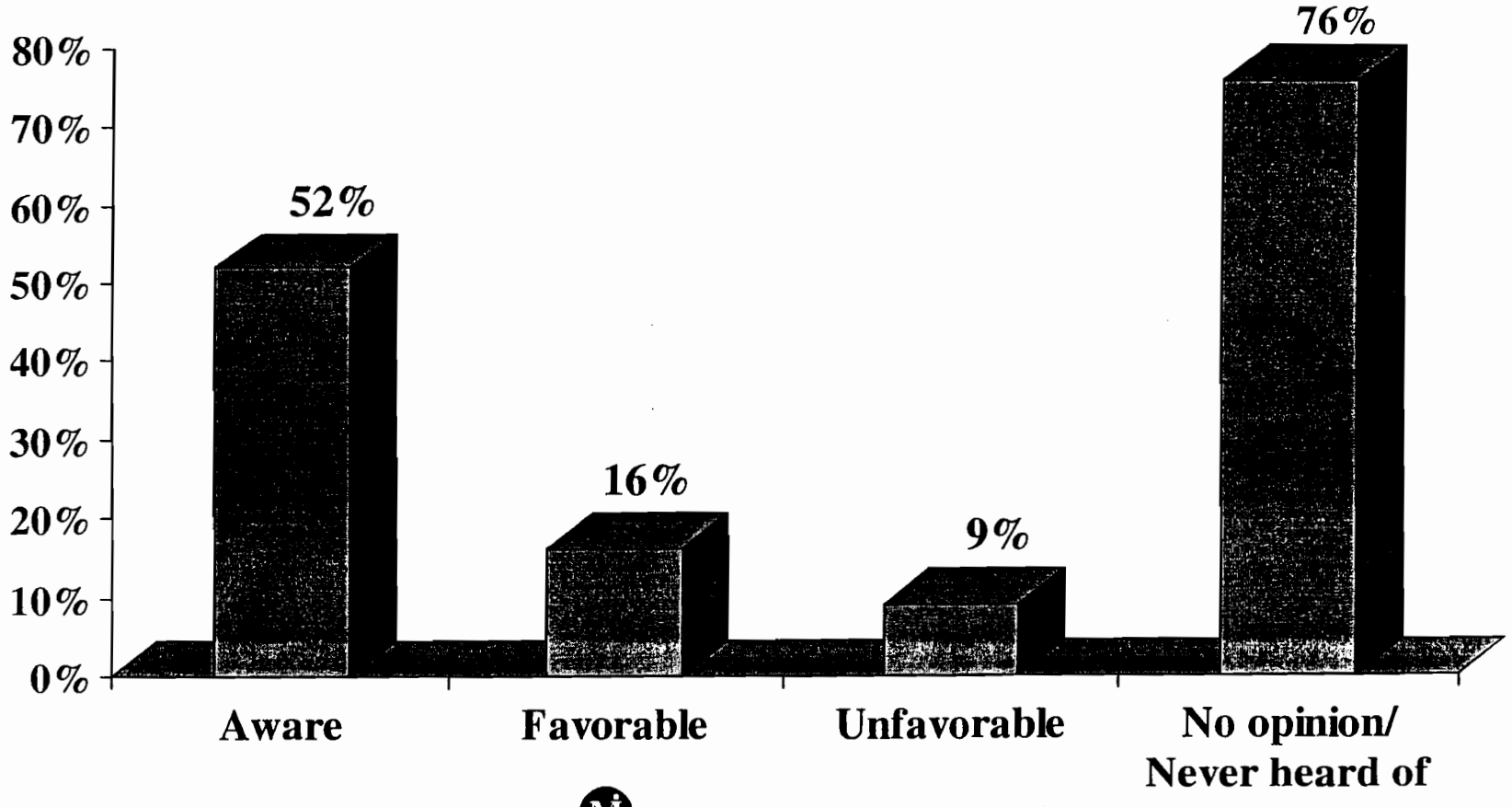
"I am now going to read you a list of programs that money from this measure might pay for. Please tell me if it would be important to you that money for the project be included in the measure, or not."



MOORE INFORMATION

Three In Four Voters Have No Opinion About The Open Lands Board

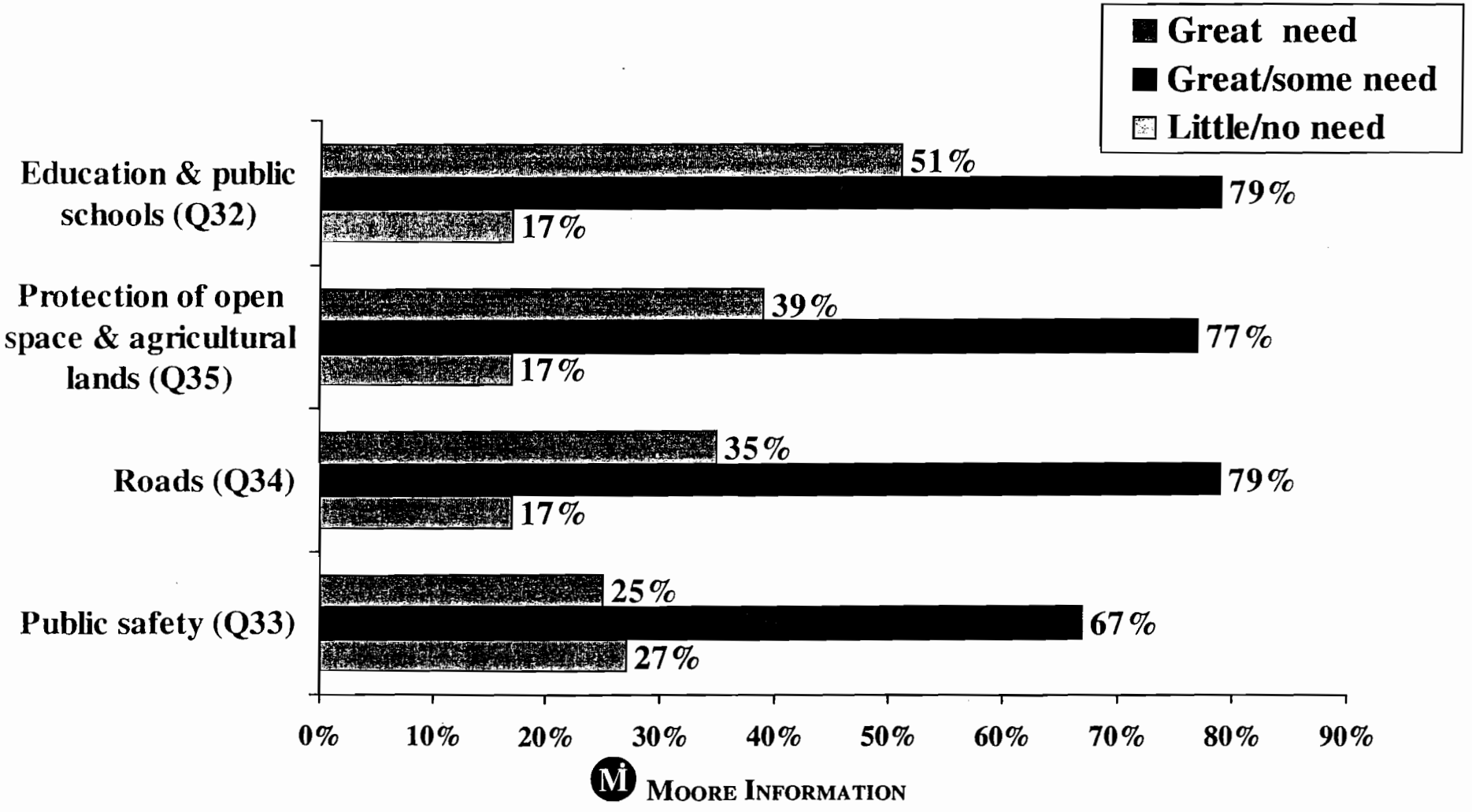
"A program in Gallatin County to protect and preserve scenic, natural, recreational and habitat lands would be managed by the Open Lands Board. In general, is your opinion of the Open Lands Board favorable or unfavorable?" (Q31)



MOORE INFORMATION

Local Government Program Funding Needs: Education is #1

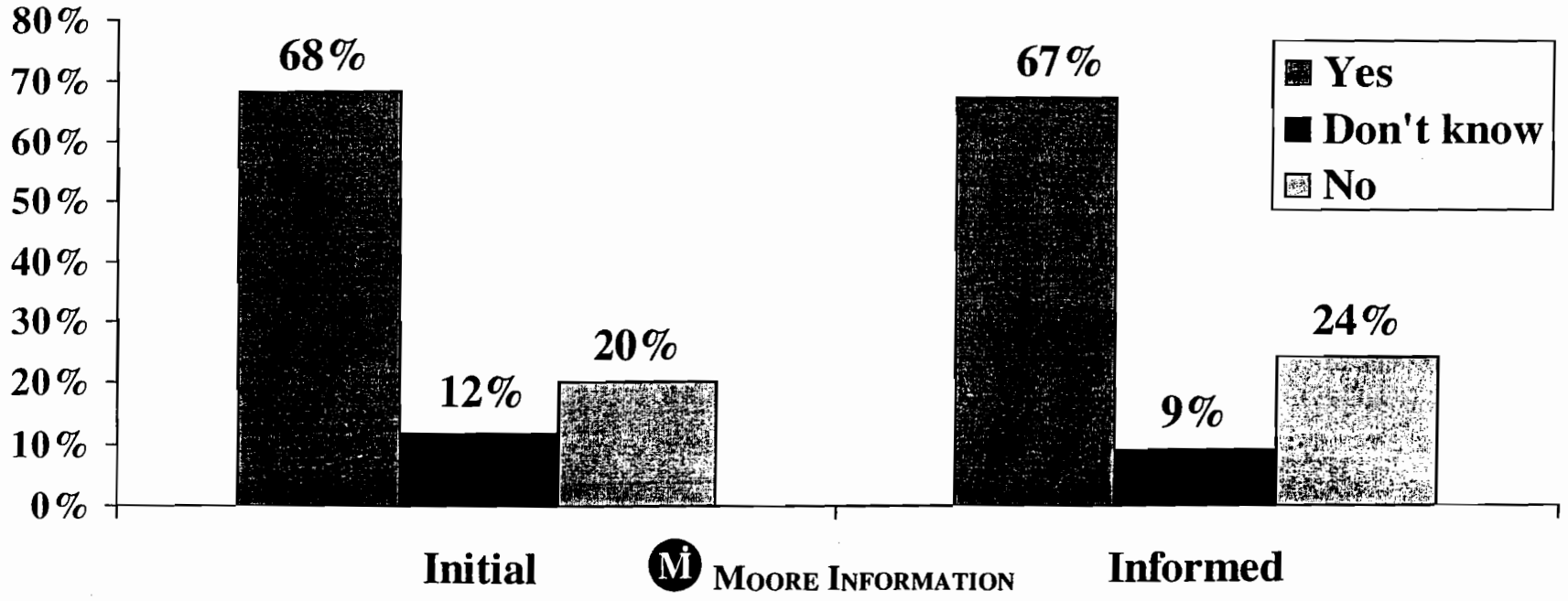
"Please tell me if you think . . . has a great need for additional funding, some need, a little need or no real need for additional funding."



Informed Ballot:

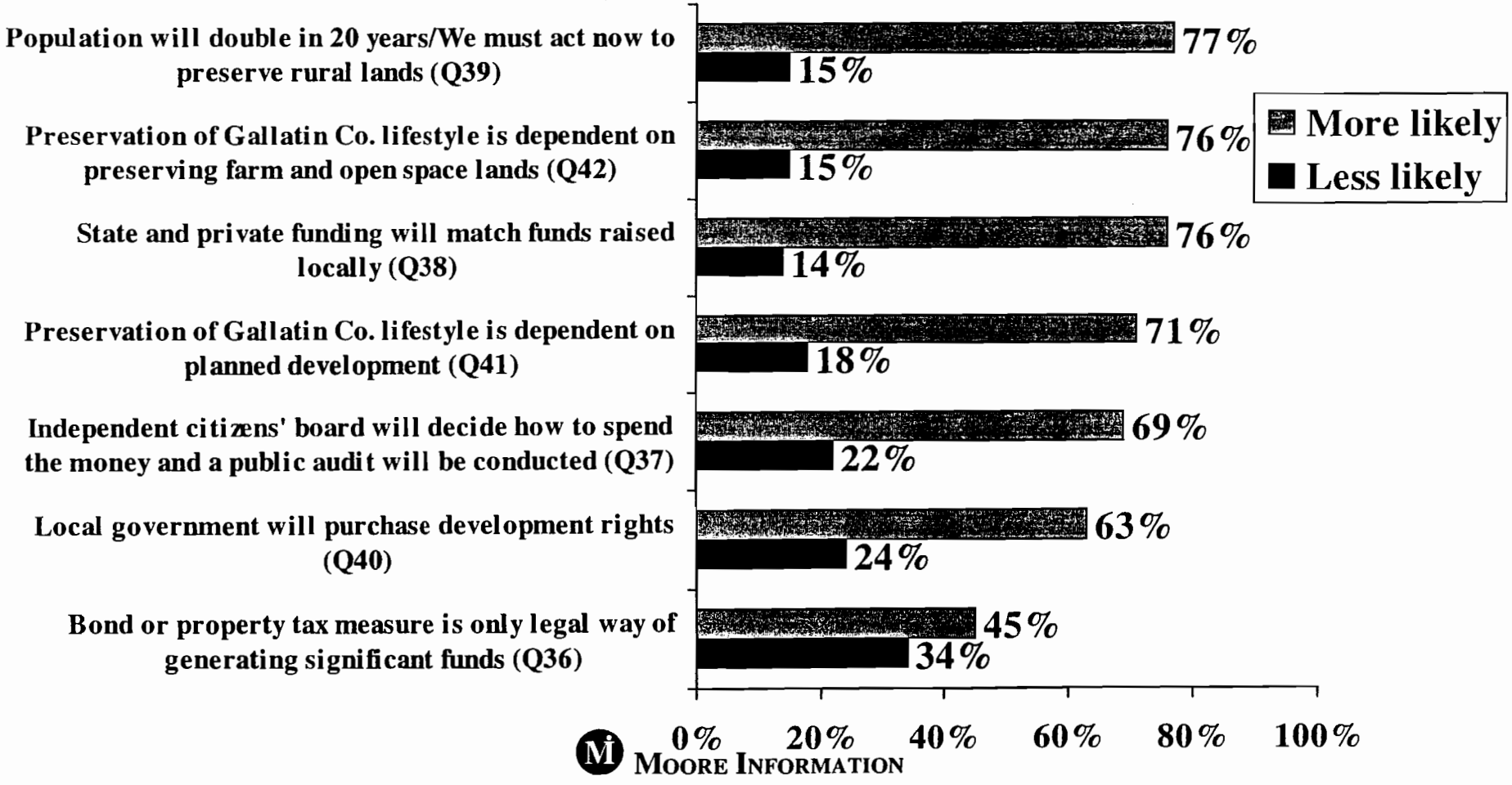
Voters Remain Widely Supportive Of Open Space Bond Measure

"Shall the Gallatin Co. Commission be authorized to issue general obligation bonds in the sum of ten million dollars, maturing in twenty years or less, to be used to preserve open space in the Co. by purchasing land and conservation easements from willing landowners, for the following purposes: managing growth, preserving ranches and farms, protecting wildlife areas and water quality in streams and rivers, and providing parks and recreation areas; with all expenditures based on recommendations of a citizen advisory board and subject to an annual independent audit?
Do you think you would vote yes in favor of this measure, or no to oppose it?" (Q43)



Voters Are Receptive To Proponent Messages

"I am going to read some statements made by people who favor an open lands ballot measure. After hearing each statement, please tell me if it makes you more or less likely to support the measure."

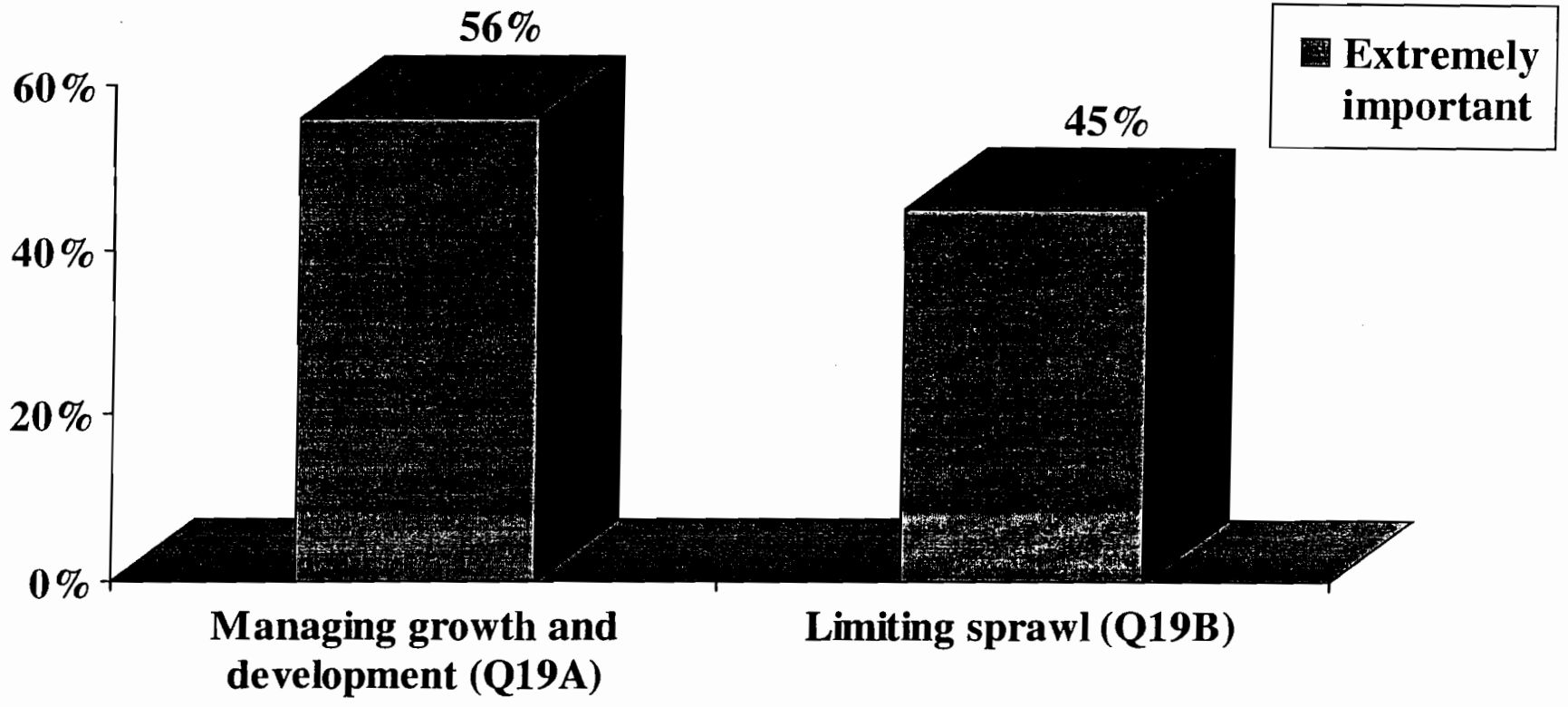


MOORE INFORMATION

Funding Priorities:

"Managing Growth & Development" Rated More Important Than "Limiting Sprawl"

"I am now going to read you a list of programs that money from this measure might pay for. Please tell me if it would be important to you that money for the project be included in the measure, or not."

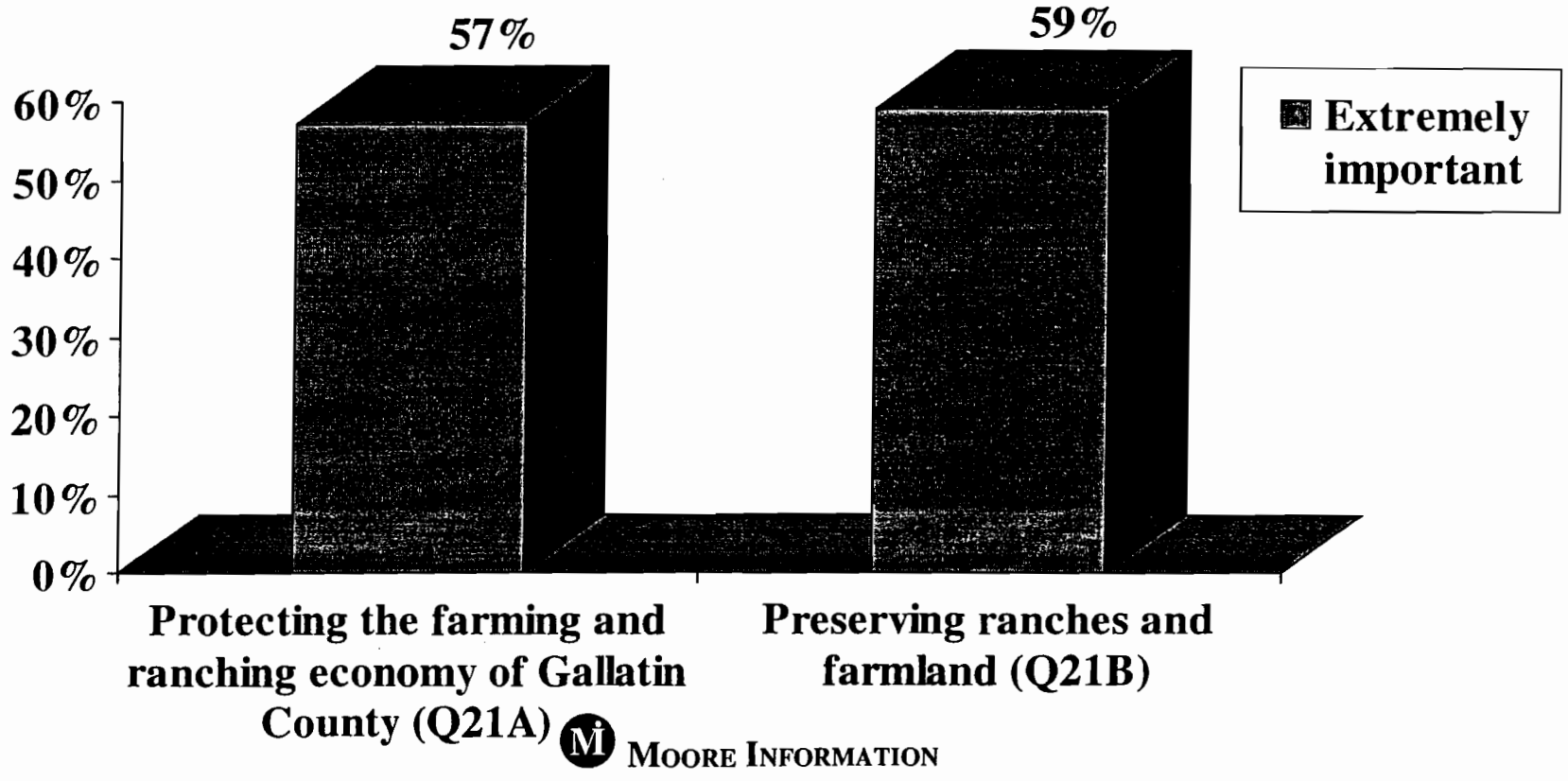


MOORE INFORMATION

Funding Priorities:

Protecting "Farming & Ranching Economy" Is Equally Important As "Preserving Farmland"

"I am now going to read you a list of programs that money from this measure might pay for. Please tell me if it would be important to you that money for the project be included in the measure, or not."

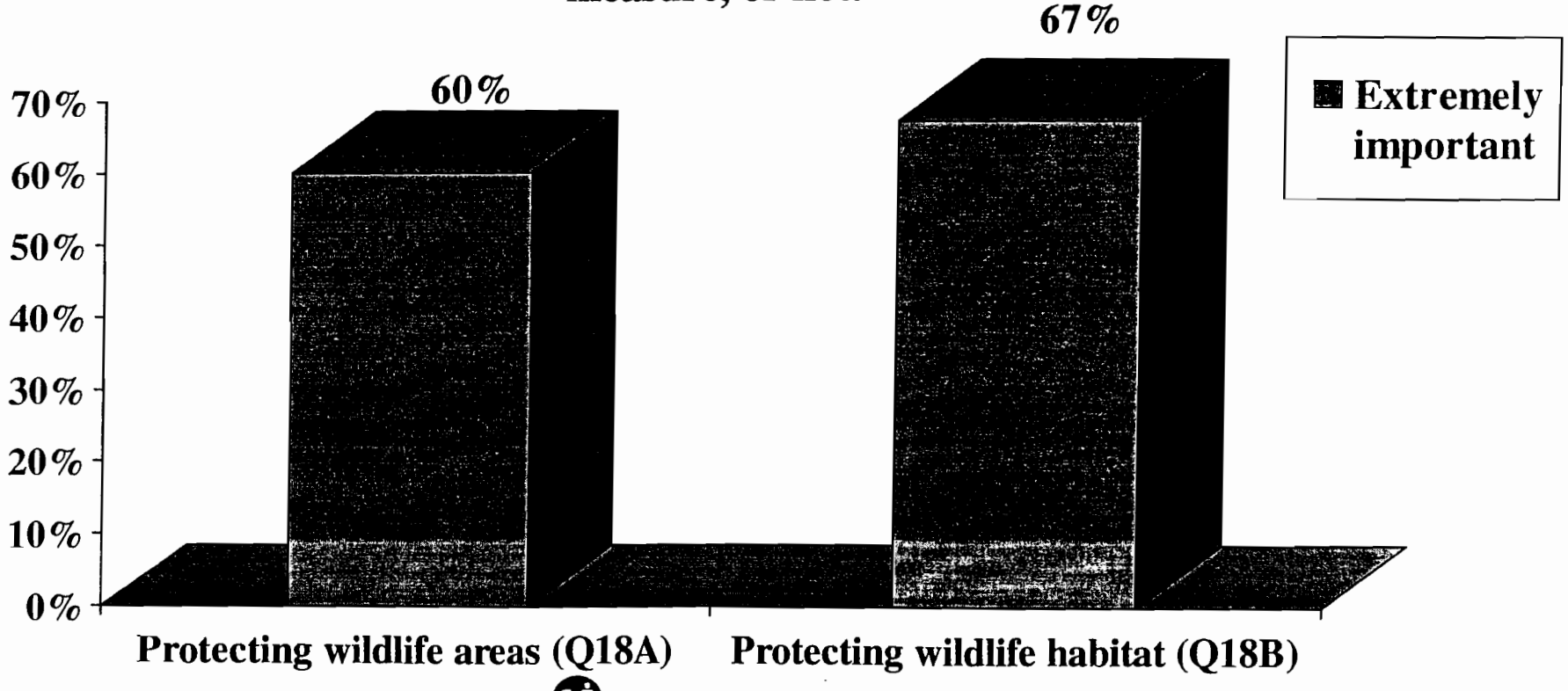


MOORE INFORMATION

Funding Priorities:

Voters Rate Protection Of Wildlife "Habitat" More Important Than Wildlife "Areas"

"I am now going to read you a list of programs that money from this measure might pay for. Please tell me if it would be important to you that money for the project be included in the measure, or not."



MOORE INFORMATION