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HART  
RESEARCH  
ASSOCIATES

# Americans' Commitment to Combatting Hunger

*Key findings from an online survey among 1,588 adults  
conducted July 29 – August 6, 2014*

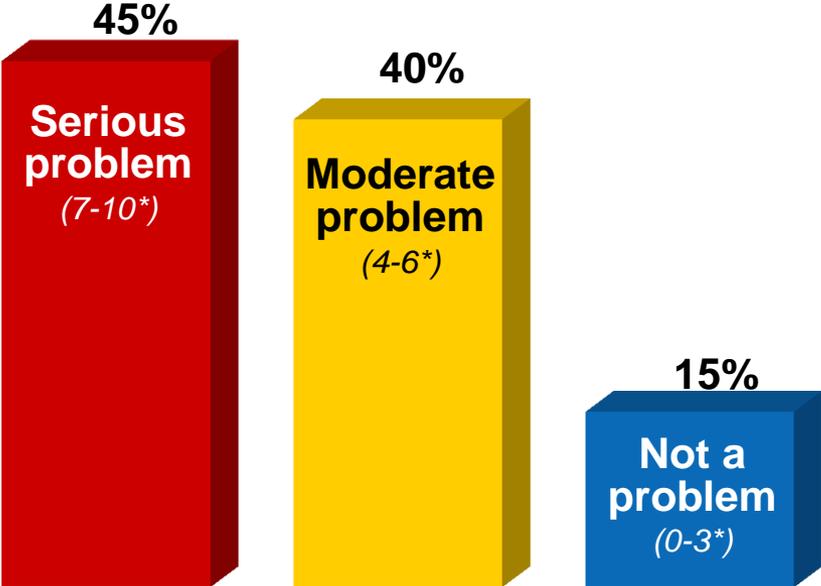
*for*

**FRAC**  
Food Research and Action Center



# Hunger Perceived to Be Serious National Problem

*How serious a problem is hunger in the United States today?*

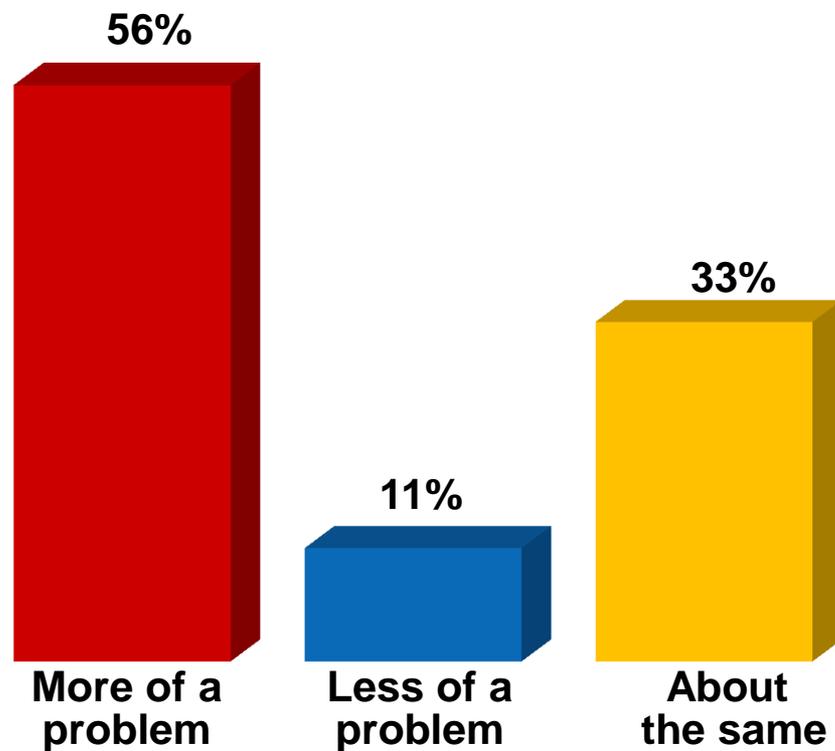


	Serious problem
Men	36%
Women	52%
Whites	44%
African Americans	48%
Hispanics	45%
Non-college grads	48%
College graduates	38%

\* Ratings on zero-to-ten scale, 10 = extremely serious problem

# Economic Recession Has Resulted in Hunger Becoming Larger Problem

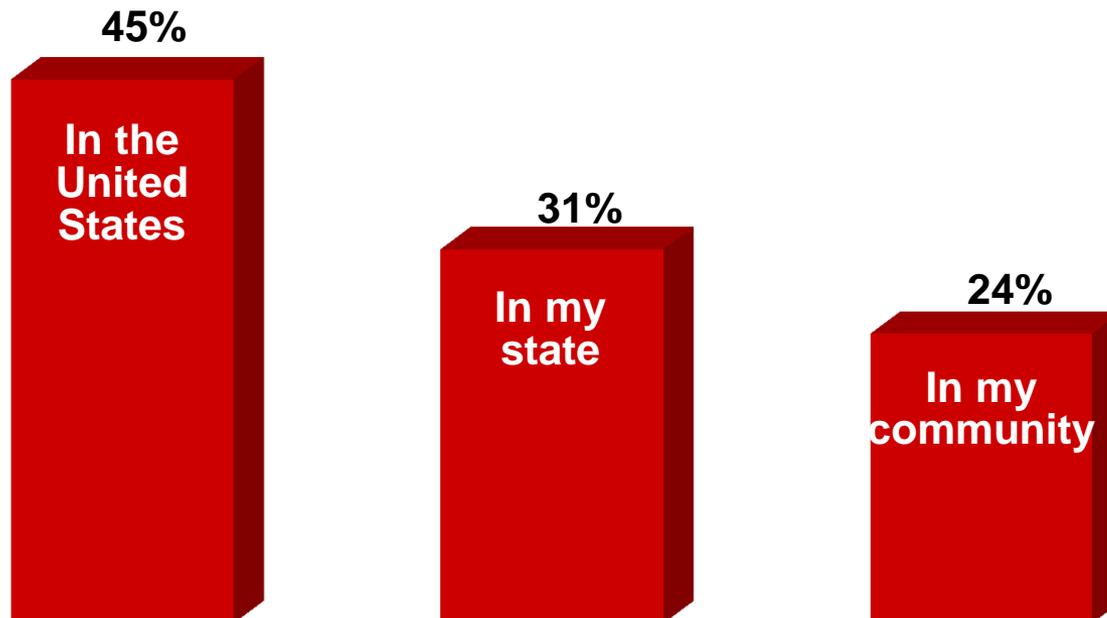
*Compared with before the economic recession that began in 2008, I think hunger in the United States today is:*



	More of a problem
Men	49%
Women	63%
Northeast	60%
South	51%
Midwest	55%
West	62%
Democrats	54%
Independents	60%
Republicans	56%

# Less Awareness of Hunger Closer to Home

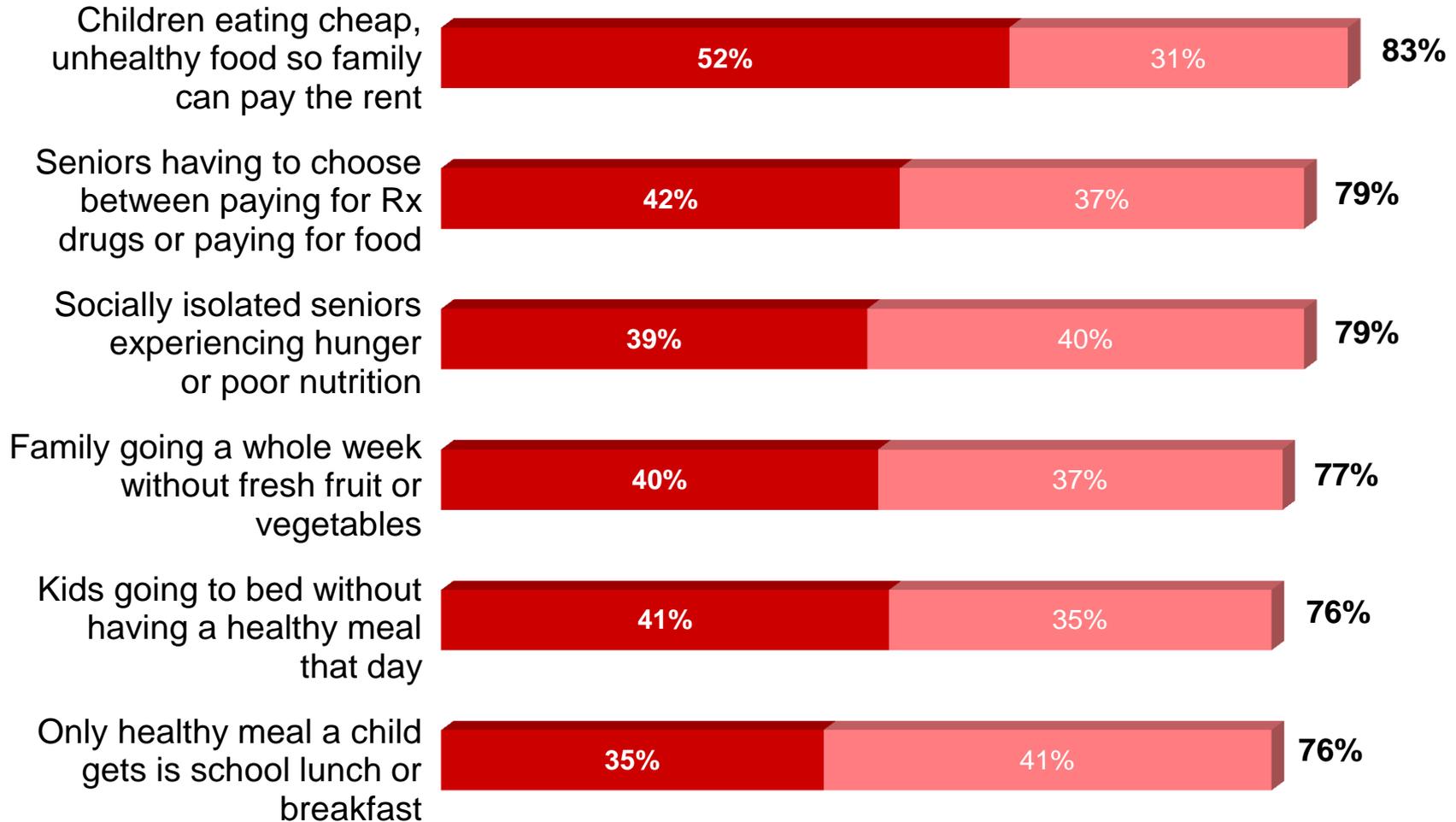
*Proportions rating hunger as a serious problem (7-10\*) in each area*



\* Ratings on zero-to-ten scale, 10 = extremely serious problem

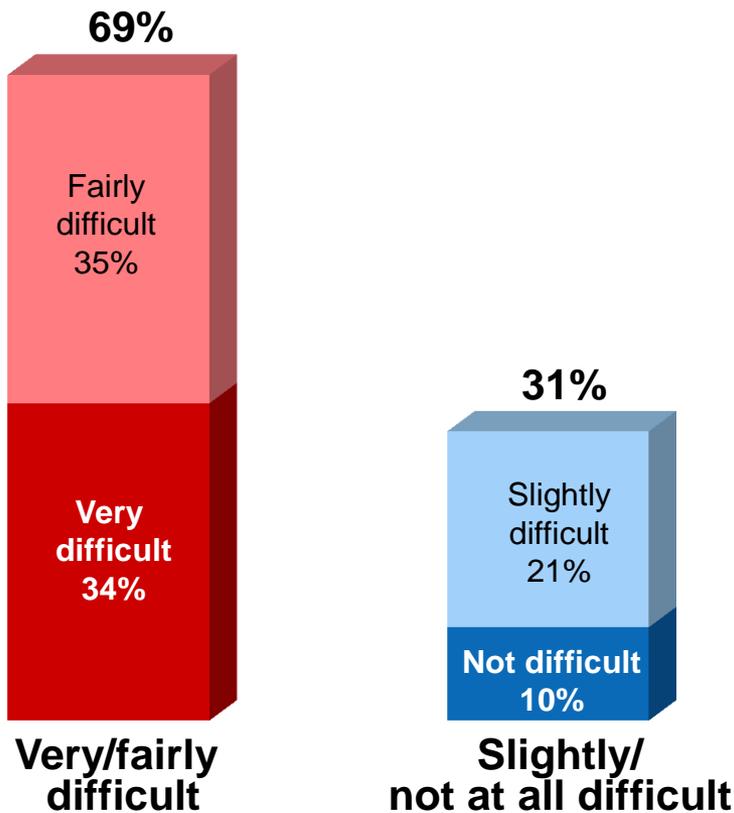
# Americans Perceive Frequent Food Security Problems

■ This happens very often in America today    ■ This happens fairly often



# People Say It Is Difficult for Low-Income People to Afford Nutritious Foods

*How difficult do you think it is for low-income people and families to afford nutritious foods like fruits and vegetables, proteins, dairy, and whole grains at grocery stores in your local community?*



	Very/fairly difficult
Men	66%
Women	72%
Age 18 to 34	71%
Age 35 to 49	73%
Age 50 to 64	67%
Age 65/over	59%
Northeast	74%
South	67%
Midwest	71%
West	65%

# Main Cause of Hunger Is Lack of Income, Not Lack of Knowledge

*When you think about the food and hunger problems people experience, which is the bigger problem?*

People not having enough money to afford nutritious food



Lack of knowledge about nutrition



## Personal Experience with Hunger

- **39%** report that they or a person close to them has experienced hunger in the past year.
- **39%** say that their family has benefited from a nutrition program in the past couple of years.
- **27%** say that they or their immediate family have benefited from food stamps, or SNAP.
- **76%** have donated money or food to a hunger organization.
- **35%** have worked at food bank or other food assistance provider in past few years.

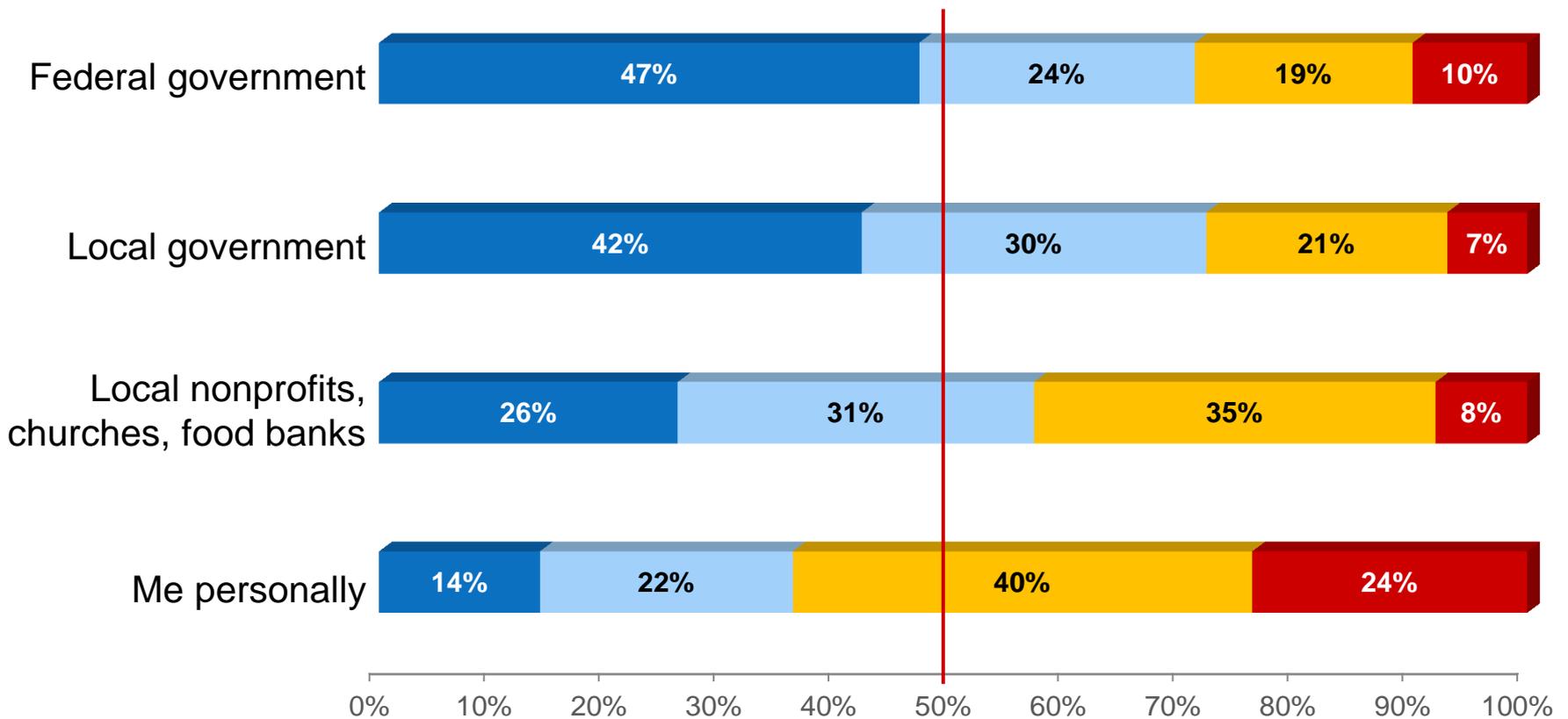
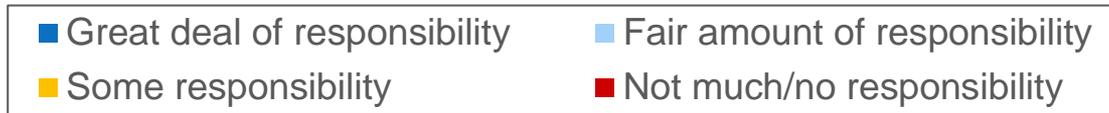
# Participation in Food Programs Crosses Demographic Lines

*Proportions who say that in the past couple of years, they or someone in their immediate family has benefited from food programs*

<b>All adults</b>	<b>39%</b>	Northeast	35%
		South	37%
Age 18 to 34	51%	Midwest	35%
Age 35 to 49	36%	West	48%
Age 50 to 64	41%		
Age 65/over	19%	Urban	46%
		Suburban	36%
Income (age 18 to 64)		Small town/rural area	38%
Under \$40K	61%		
\$40K to \$75K	40%	High school grad/less	49%
Over \$75K	31%	Some college	42%
		College graduates	26%
Whites	32%		
African Americans	59%		
Hispanics	56%		

# Government Has Responsibility to Deal with Hunger Issue

*How much responsibility should each of the following have in dealing with the issue of hunger in the United States?*



## Women More Attuned Than Men to Hunger Problem

	<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>
Local government has the responsibility to deal with hunger	75%	68%
Federal government has the responsibility to deal with hunger	75%	66%
Hunger is a serious problem in the US	52%	36%
Hunger is more of a problem now than it was before the recession in 2008	63%	49%
It is difficult for low-income people to afford healthy food	72%	66%
We should spend more to address the problem of hunger	51%	45%
We should increase spending on school nutrition	52%	47%

# Strong Support for Combating Hunger

■ Strongly agree with statement (8-10 on zero-to-ten scale)
 ■ Somewhat agree (6-7)

**In the United States of America, no one should go hungry.**



**We should support and improve government-sponsored food assistance programs so that more people who are struggling can get the help they need.**



**Providing assistance to people experiencing hunger is a job for churches and charities, not government.**

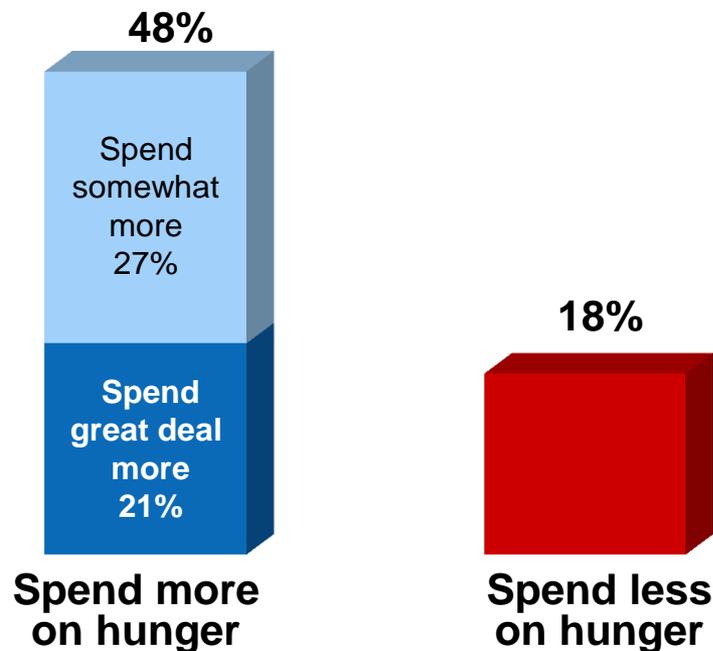


**Hunger is a big problem in many third-world countries, but not here in the United States.**



# Americans Say We Should Spend More to Address Hunger Compared to Other Problems

*Thinking about hunger compared to other problems facing the country, how much should we be spending on it?*



	Spend more	Spend less
Men	45%	22%
Women	51%	14%
Northeast	54%	12%
South	45%	22%
Midwest	43%	14%
West	50%	20%
Democrats	61%	12%
Independents	47%	20%
Republicans	33%	24%

# People See Link between Hunger and Social Problems

■ Strongly agree with statement (8-10 on zero-to-ten scale)   ■ Somewhat agree (6-7)

**Hunger and obesity are related, because the cheapest and most convenient foods are usually the foods that contribute to people becoming obese.**



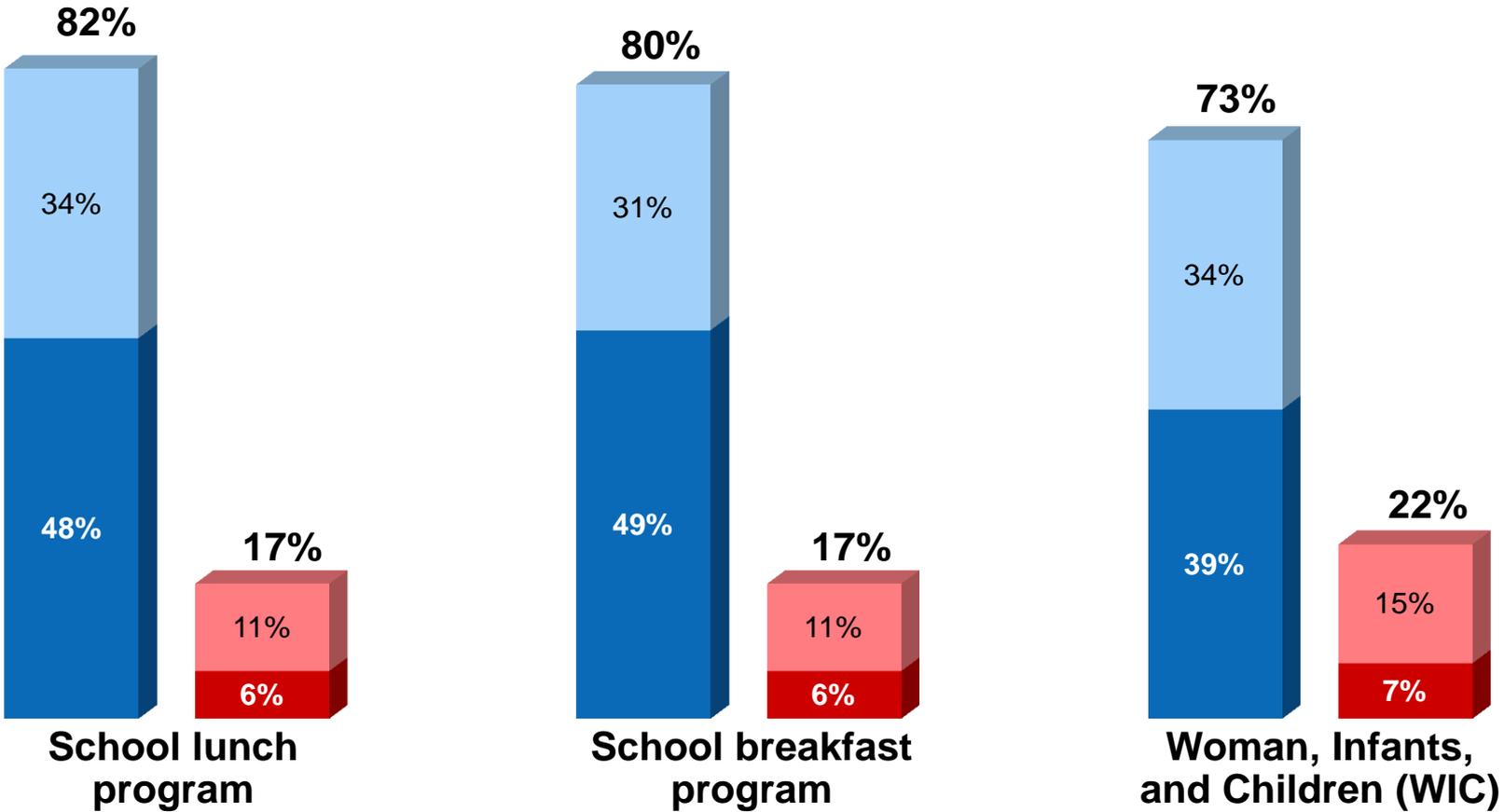
**Reducing hunger in this country would significantly reduce the amount of tax dollars we spend on healthcare.**



**Hunger is a significant reason why many children struggle in school.**

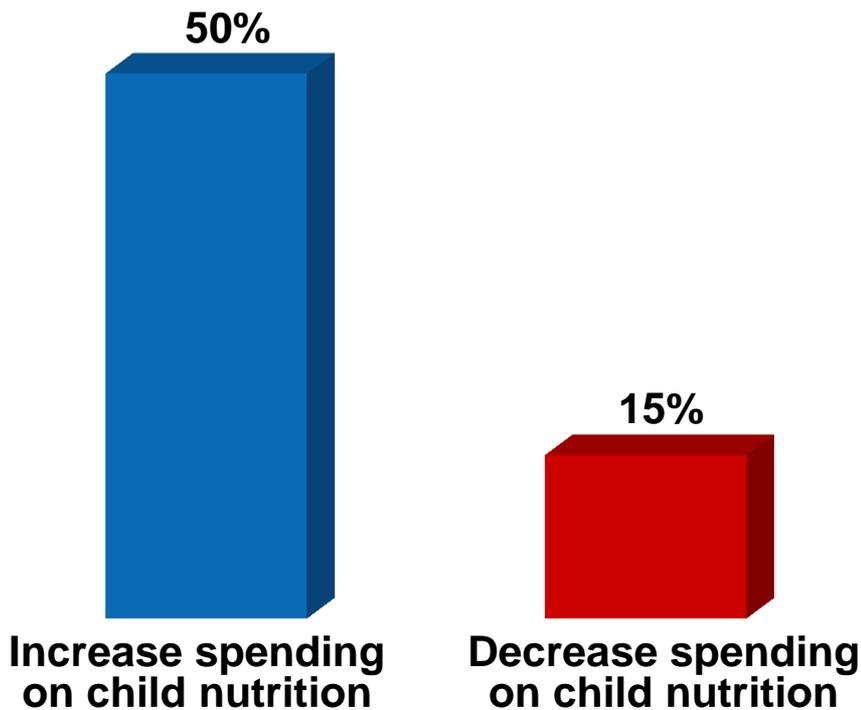


# View of Federal Child Nutrition Programs



# By More Than Three-to-One, Americans Say Spending on Child Nutrition Should Increase, Not Decrease

*Soon Congress will discuss legislation related to child nutrition programs, like school lunch and school breakfast and nutrition programs for pregnant women and infants. In general, what do you think the United States should do when it comes to these types of programs?*

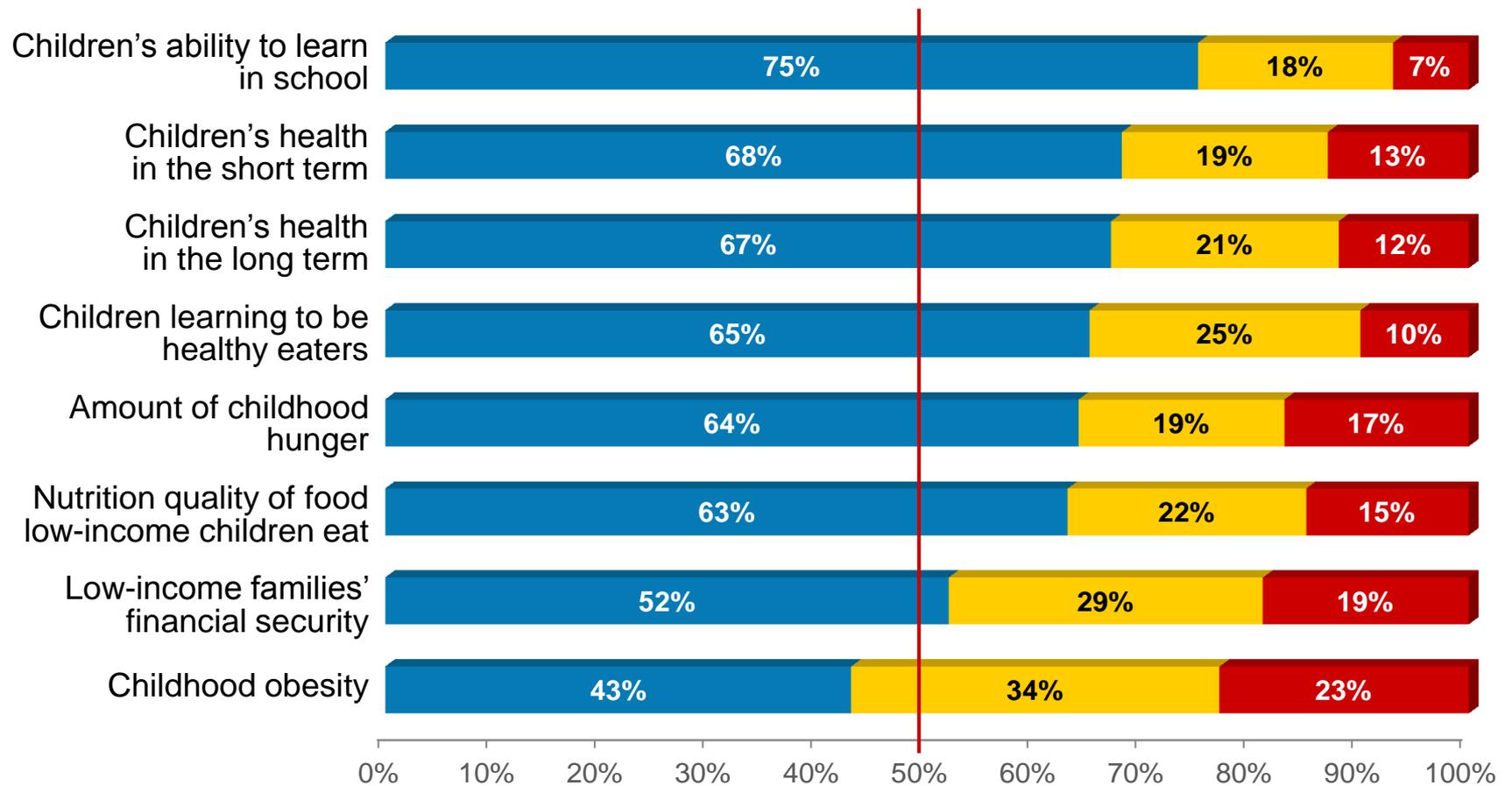


	Increase spending	Decrease spending
Men	47%	19%
Women	52%	12%
Age 18 to 34	59%	13%
Age 35 to 49	46%	14%
Age 50 to 64	49%	13%
Age 65/over	41%	22%
Northeast	51%	11%
South	48%	18%
Midwest	47%	13%
West	54%	16%

# Perceived Impact of Child Nutrition Programs

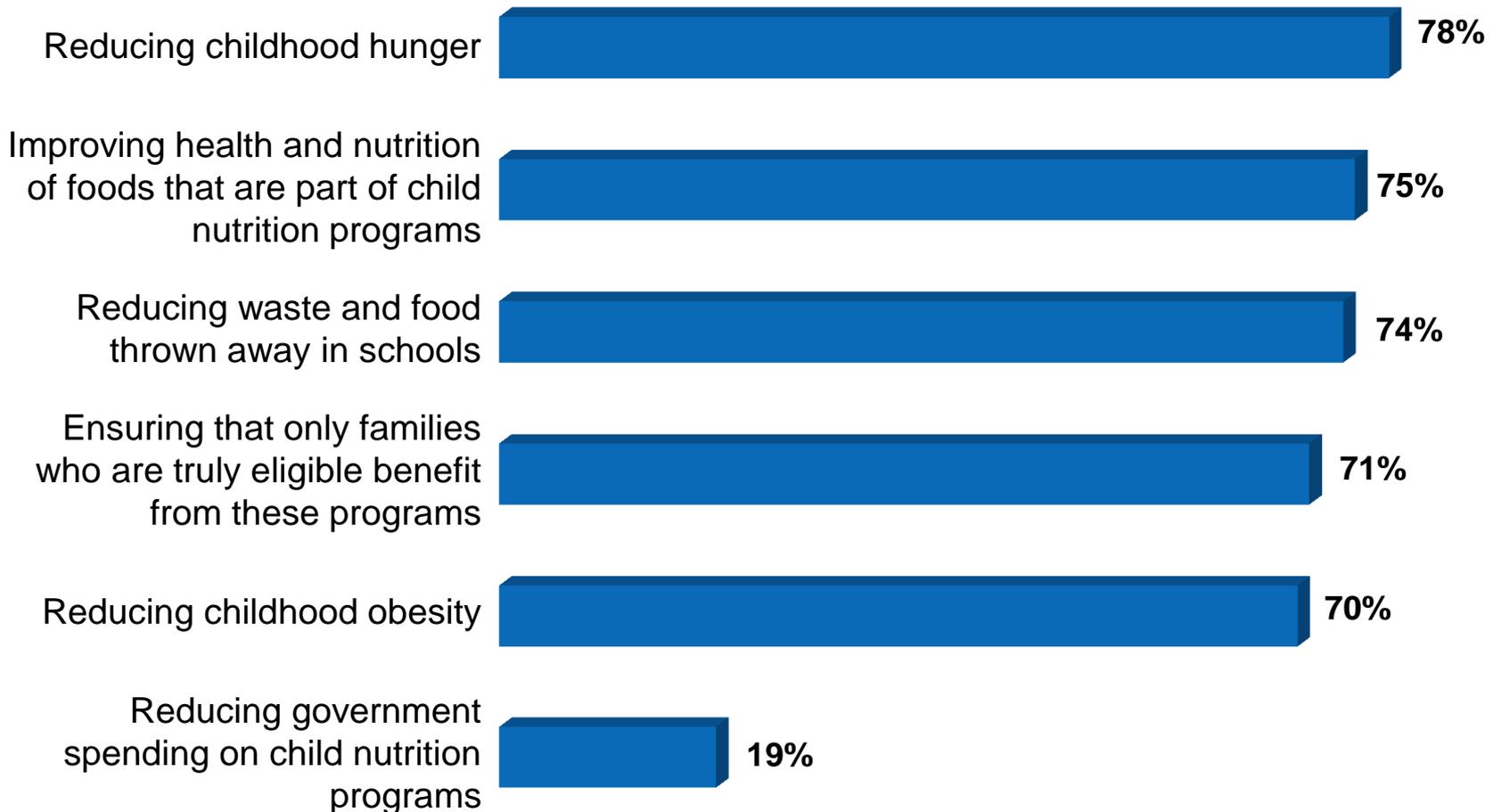
*Effect of child nutrition programs, such as school lunch/breakfast and nutrition programs for pregnant women and infants on selected areas*

■ Child nutrition programs will make things better ■ Have no effect either way ■ Make things worse



# Priorities for Child Nutrition Laws: Reduce Childhood Hunger, Not Spending

*Proportions rating each as a very high priority for Congress in passing laws relating to child nutrition (8-10 ratings on zero-to-ten scale)*



# Americans Overwhelmingly See Hunger as Bipartisan Issue

