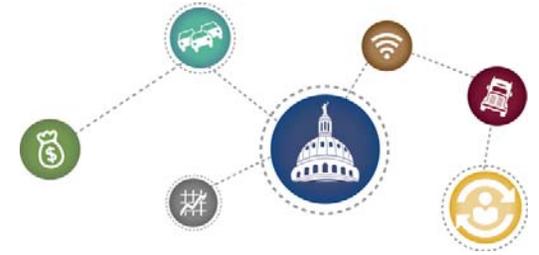


Texas Transportation Poll



Testimony of Ginger Goodin
Transportation Policy Research Center
Texas A&M Transportation Institute

before the
Senate Select Committee on Transportation Funding,
Expenditures and Finance

September 16, 2014



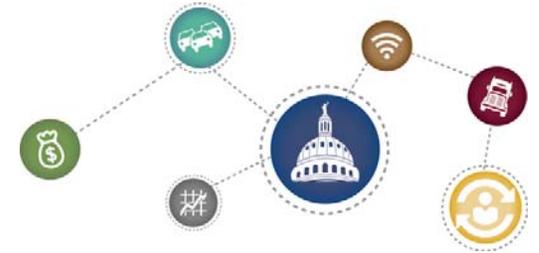
What are Texans saying about transportation?



TTI's attitudinal survey confirms what we have been hearing anecdotally:

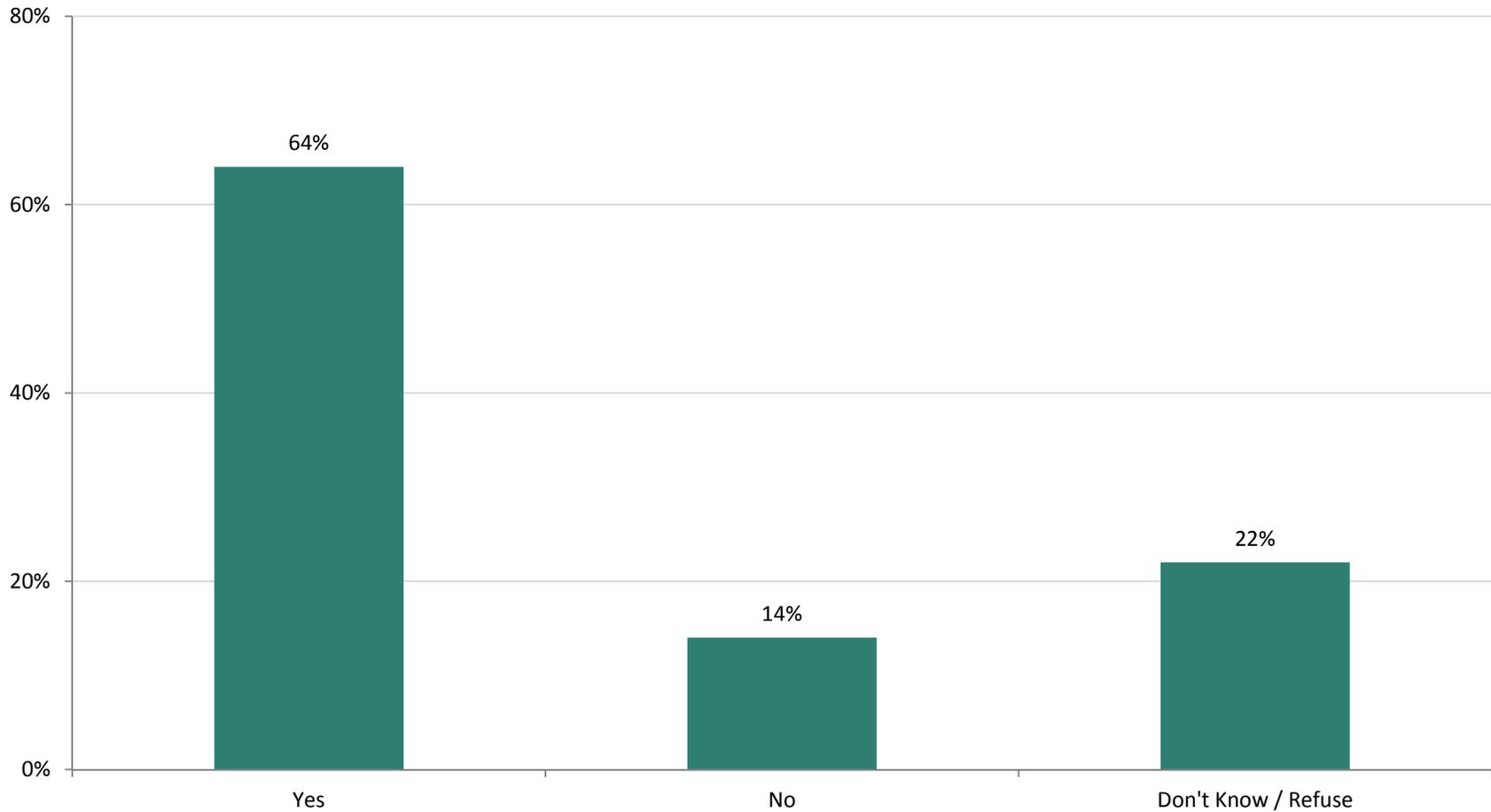
- 64% of respondents: increase funding, but not out of their pockets.
- Most Texans do not understand the specifics of the fuel tax.
- Texans are dependent on their cars and feeling the squeeze of gridlock and higher gas prices.
- Four in ten travelers have adjusted behavior in response to congestion.
- Better traffic signal timing and faster clearance of accidents were the most popular ideas (of 15 options).
- Transportation service providers received mixed reviews from their customers.

Texas Transportation Poll



- Biennial survey by TTI's Policy Research Center
- Initial poll: March-May 2014
- Questions cover four areas:
 - How do you travel?
 - What are the solutions?
 - How do you want to pay?
 - What do you think about the service provided by transportation agencies?
- Mail, phone and online
- 5000 responses, margin of error of $\pm 3\%$
- Cross-tabulations shed light on views by demographics and geography (12 regions)

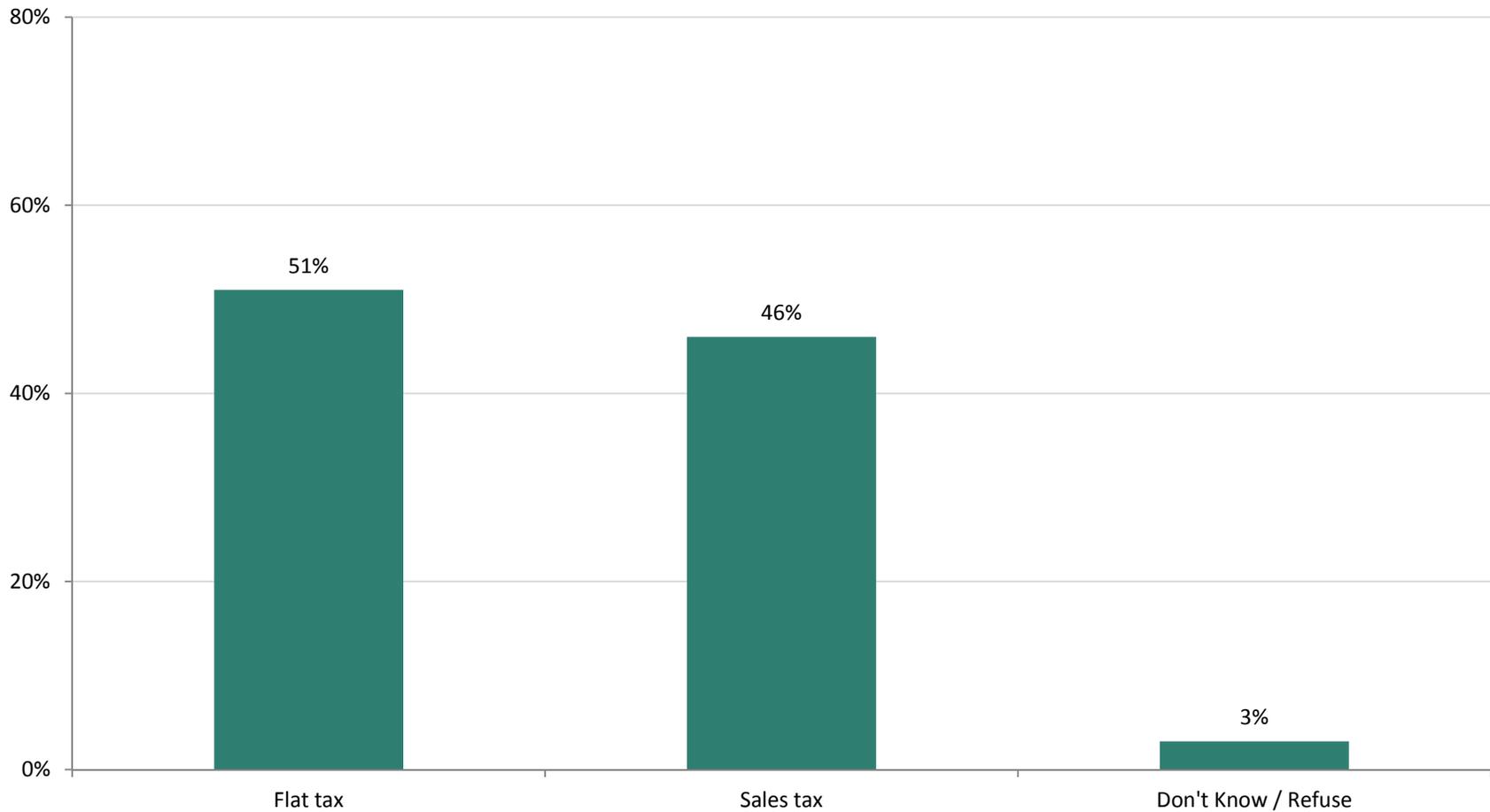
Is there a need to increase transportation funding in Texas?



Is there a need to increase transportation funding in Texas?

Nearly two thirds of Texans believe there is a need to increase transportation funding in Texas. The data suggest a majority agreement on this sentiment across all socio-economic groups. Support was strongest among more highly educated Texans and Texans that primarily use modes other than the personal auto.

Is the fuel tax a flat tax or a sales tax?

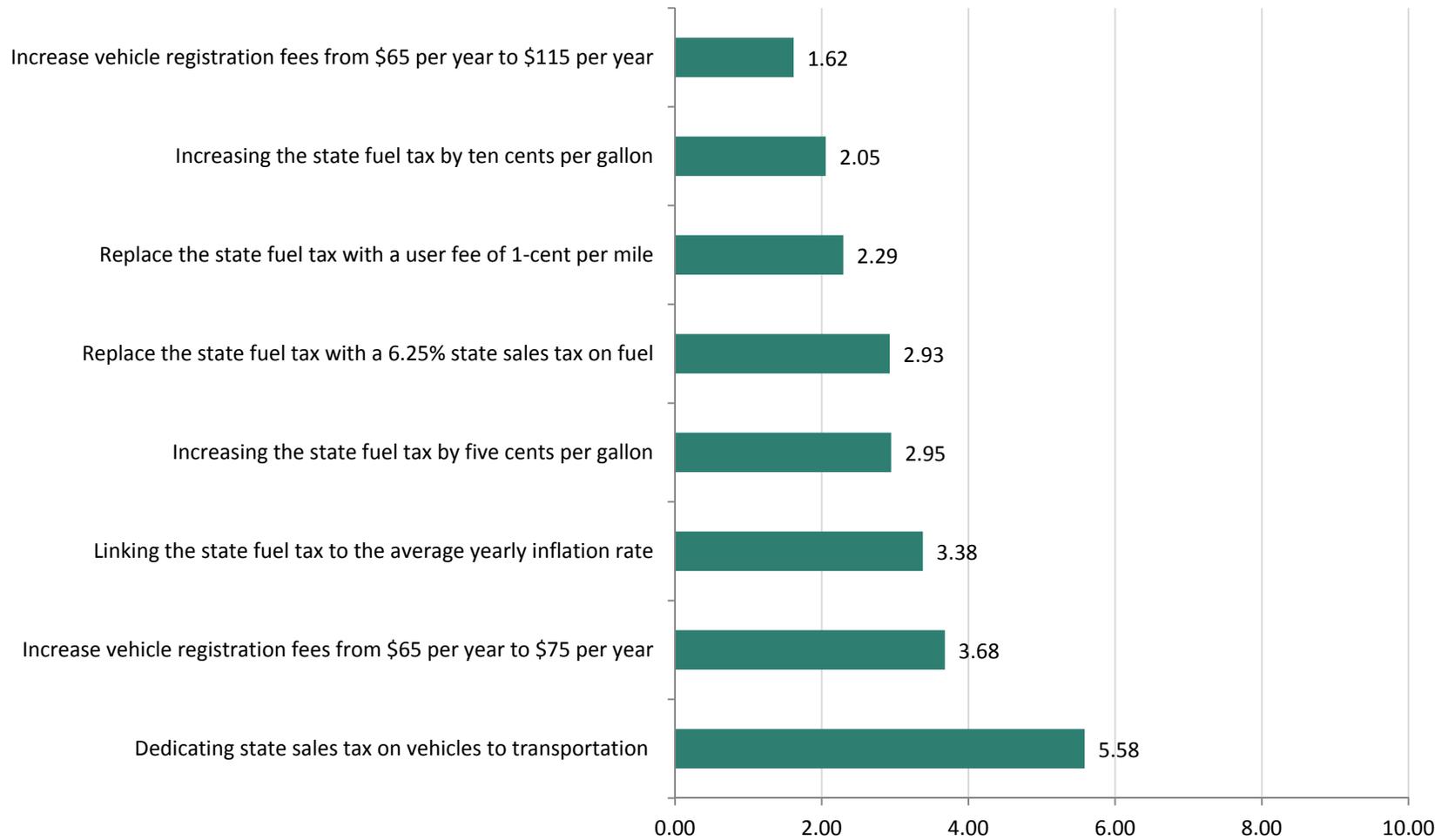


Is the fuel tax a flat tax or a sales tax?

Respondents were told that the majority of transportation funding in Texas was from revenue generated by the fuel tax. When asked if the fuel tax was a flat tax or a sales tax, a slight majority (51 percent) of respondents correctly reported it was a flat tax. However, almost that many (49-percent) either reported it as a sales tax or did not know.

Of those correctly reporting the fuel tax as a flat tax, 71 percent of respondents commented that they did not know the amount of fuel tax paid for every gallon of gasoline purchased. Of the 29 percent that reported knowing the correct amount, only two percent correctly identified the total gas tax (Federal and state) as 38-cents per gallon of gasoline purchased. This translates into less than one percent of respondents knowing the correct amount they pay in fuel tax for every gallon of gasoline purchased. The data clearly suggest that respondents have a low level of knowledge about the specifics of the fuel tax.

Mean scores assigned to potential transportation funding mechanisms



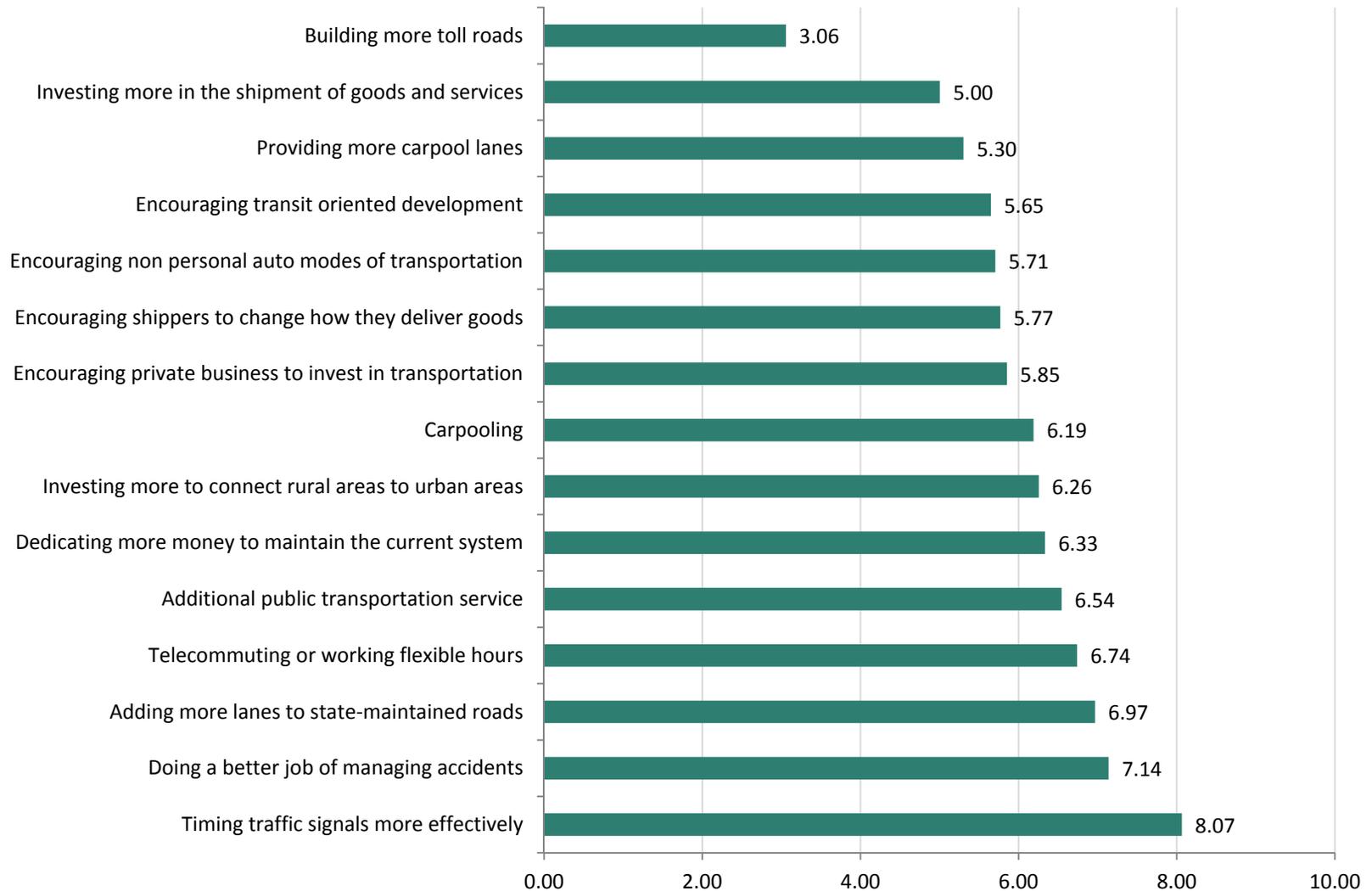
*Rated on scale of 0 to 10: 0 = strongly oppose, 10 = strongly support

Mean scores assigned to potential transportation funding mechanisms

Texans were not overly supportive of any potential transportation funding mechanism offered. Among those offered, respondents were most supportive of dedicating the state sales tax on vehicles to transportation and least supportive of increasing vehicle registration fees by \$50, from \$65 per year to \$115 per year.

The data suggests that Texans are more comfortable with transportation funding mechanisms that do not require any perceived additional spending on their part (dedicating to transportation an existing tax) than those that do (increasing vehicle registration fees or the state fuel tax).

Level of support for strategies to resolve regional transportation issues



*Rated on scale of 0 to 10: 0 = strongly oppose, 10 = strongly support

Level of support for strategies to resolve regional transportation issues

Texans are most supportive of timing traffic signals more effectively and doing a better job of managing accidents as strategies to help resolve regional transportation issues.

Building more toll roads was, by far, the least-supported strategy. The lack of support held true in both metropolitan areas and rural areas, as well as areas with and without toll roads. The data suggest that demographic and geographic characteristics not only influence travel behavior, but also one's perception of the utility of transportation management strategies.