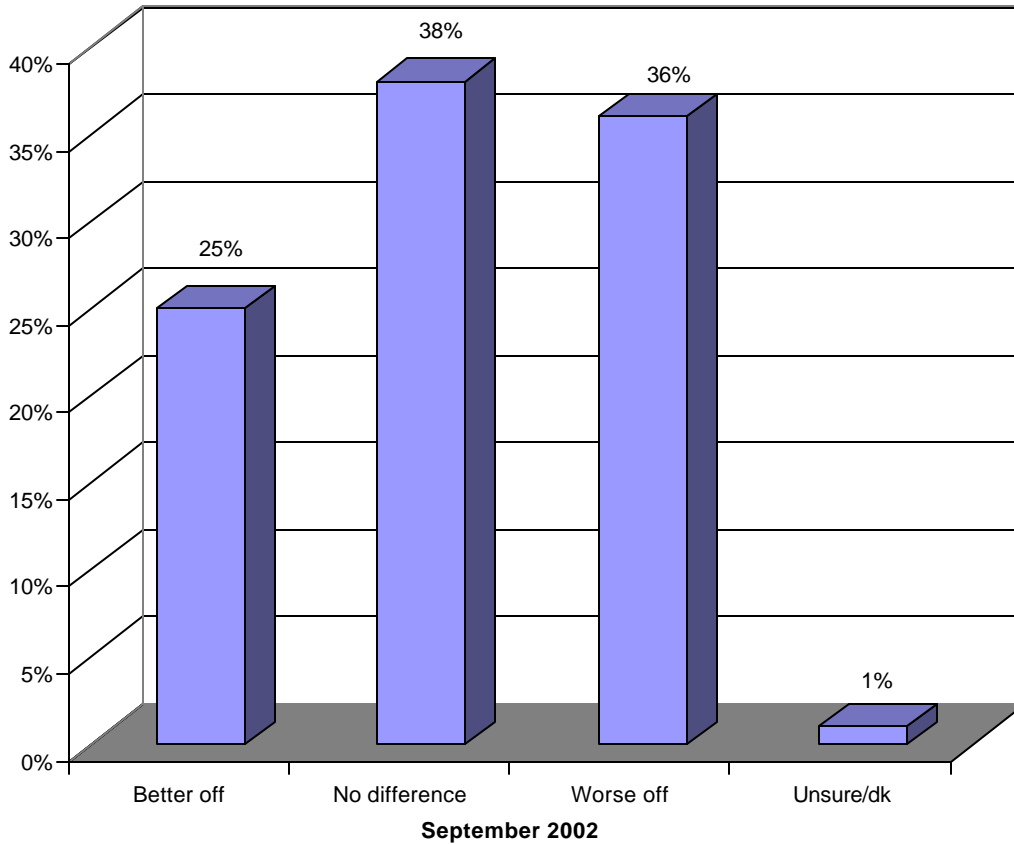


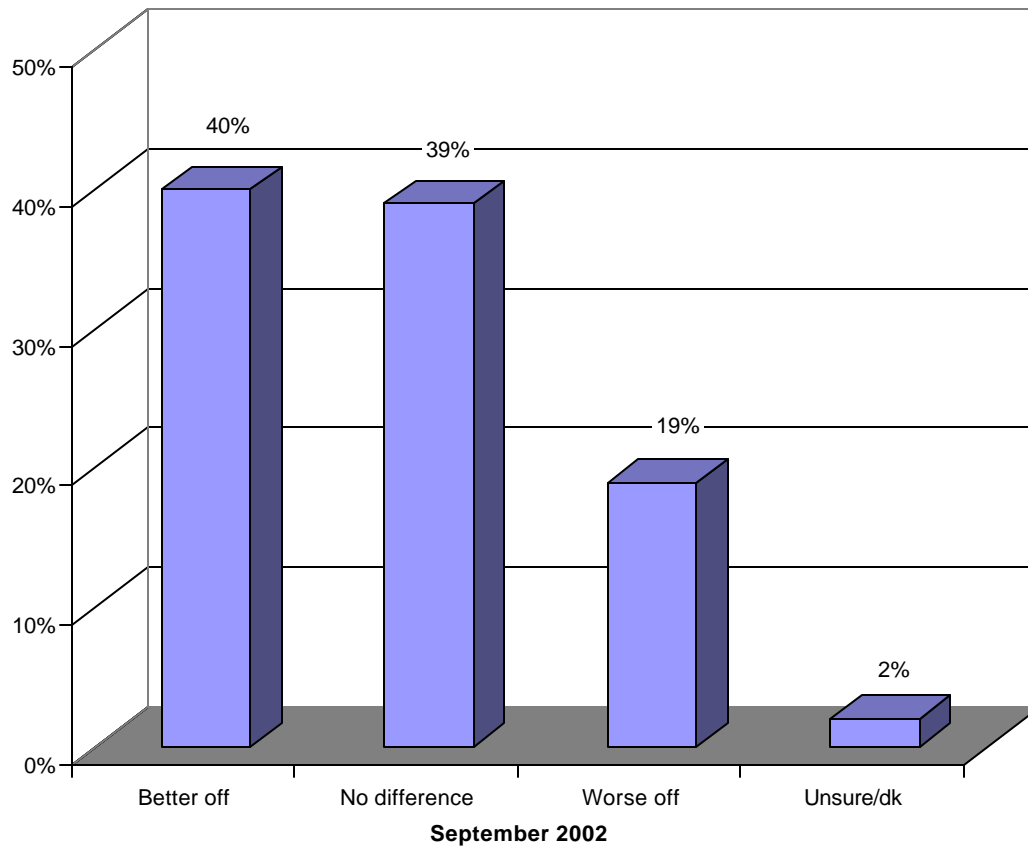
5.0 FINANCE

Question 22. Thinking of your own personal financial situation today, would you say that you are better off or worse off financially, than you were a year ago?



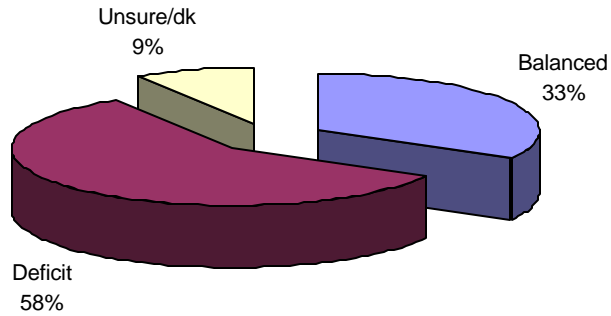
- The majority (63%) of Saskatchewan residents indicate that they are financially better off or no different than they were a year ago.

Question 23. Thinking of your own personal financial situation a year from now, do you expect to be better off or worse off financially, than you are today?



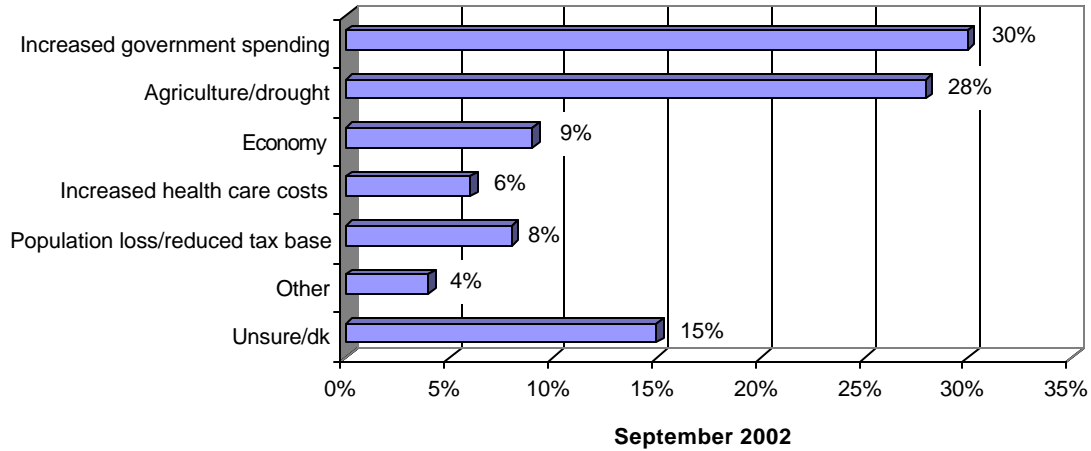
- More than three quarters (79%) of residents expect to be financially better off or no different than they are today.

Question 24. Now I'd like to ask you about the Saskatchewan provincial budget, which is usually introduced in the spring of each year. Looking ahead to the spring of next year, do you expect that the Saskatchewan provincial budget will be a balanced budget or a deficit budget?



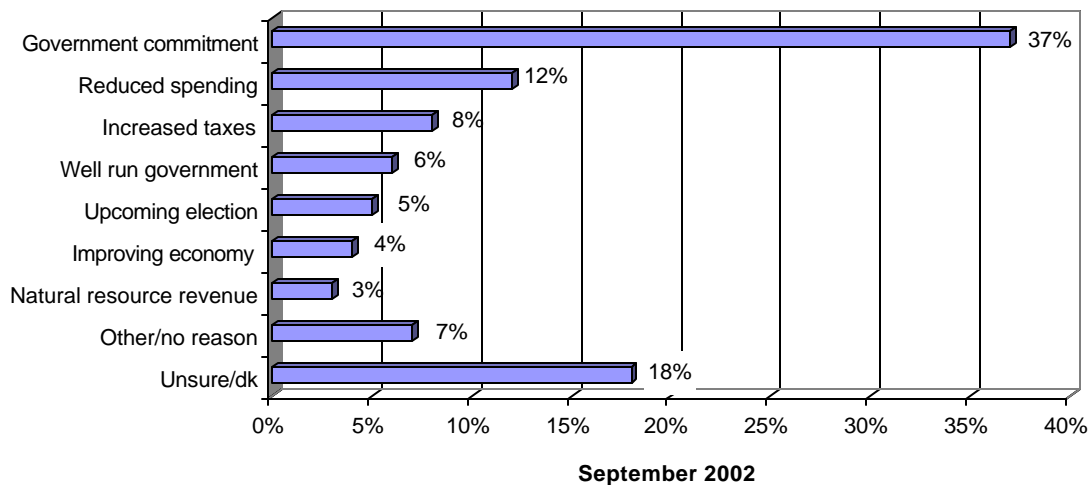
- The majority (58%) of residents expect the next Saskatchewan provincial budget to be a deficit budget; one third (33%) expect a balanced budget.

Question 25. And what's the main reason you expect there to be a deficit budget in Saskatchewan next year?



- Approximately 30% of those residents who expect a deficit in the next provincial budget indicate it will be the result of increased government spending (18% of all provincial residents) and 28% think the agriculture sector because of the drought will be the cause (17% of all provincial residents).

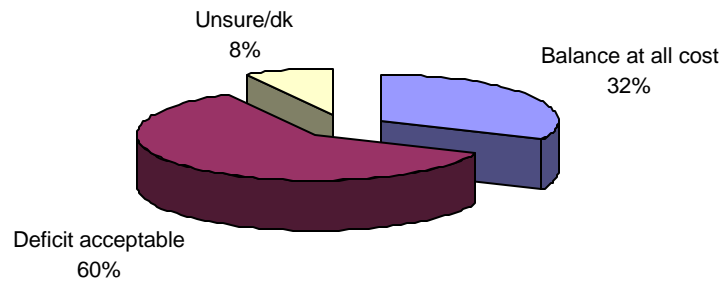
Question 26. And what's the main reason you expect there to be a balanced budget in Saskatchewan next year?



- More than one third (37%) of those residents who expect a balanced budget indicate the government has committed to balance the budget (12% of all provincial residents).

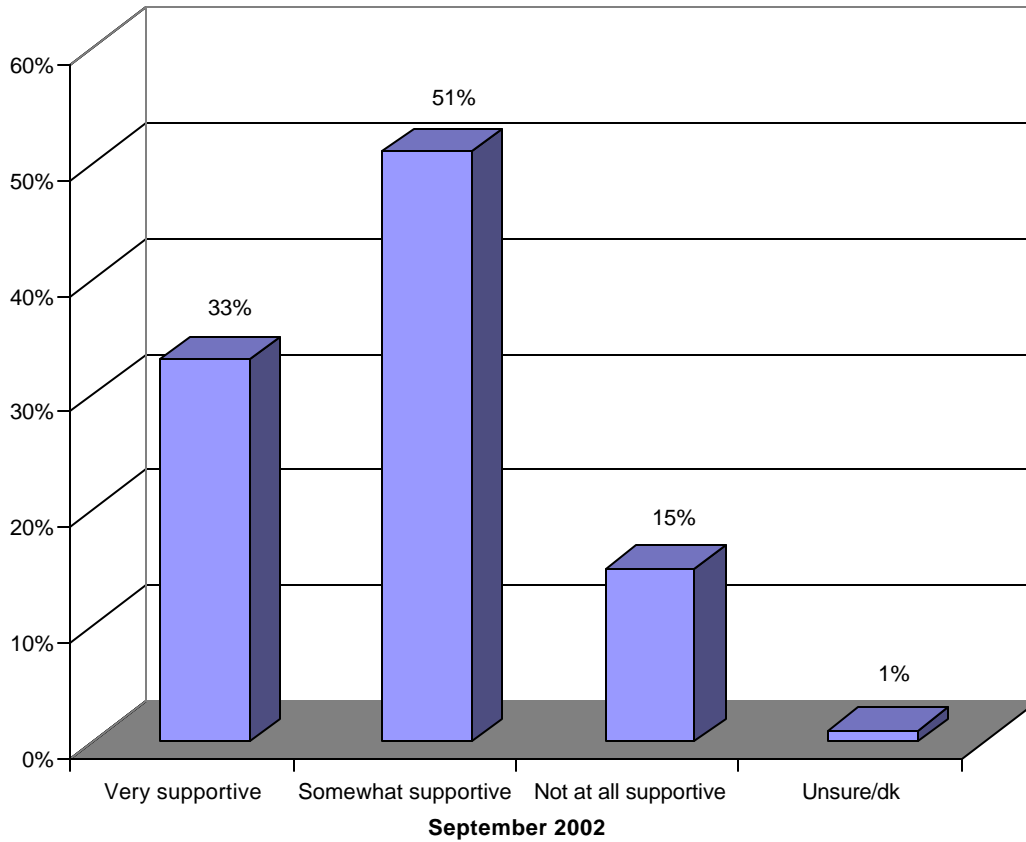
Question 27. Some people say that the Government of Saskatchewan should balance the budget at all cost. Some people say that a deficit budget is acceptable if the money is used to protect public services for Saskatchewan families.

Which of these opposing views is closer to your way of thinking?



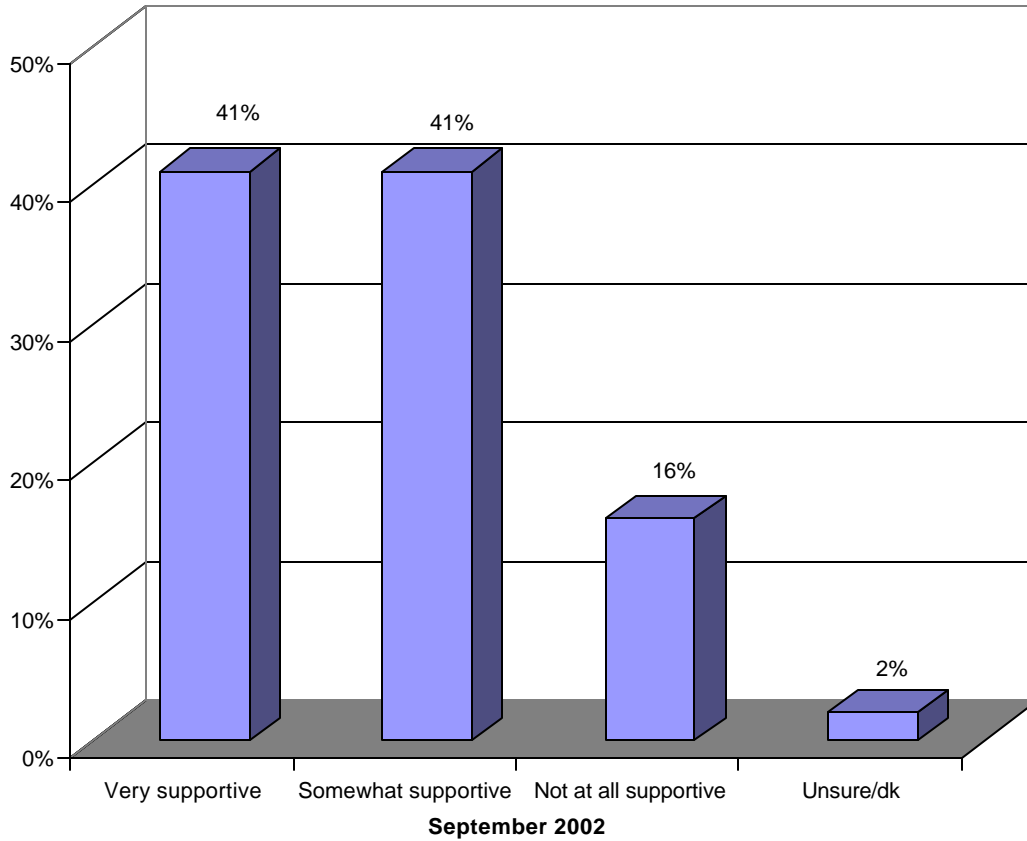
- The majority (60%) of Saskatchewan residents indicate a deficit budget is acceptable if the money is used to protect public services for Saskatchewan families.

Question 28. If the Government of Saskatchewan presented a deficit budget specifically to pay for emergency drought assistance to Saskatchewan farmers, would you describe yourself as being very supportive of that decision, somewhat supportive or not at all supportive?



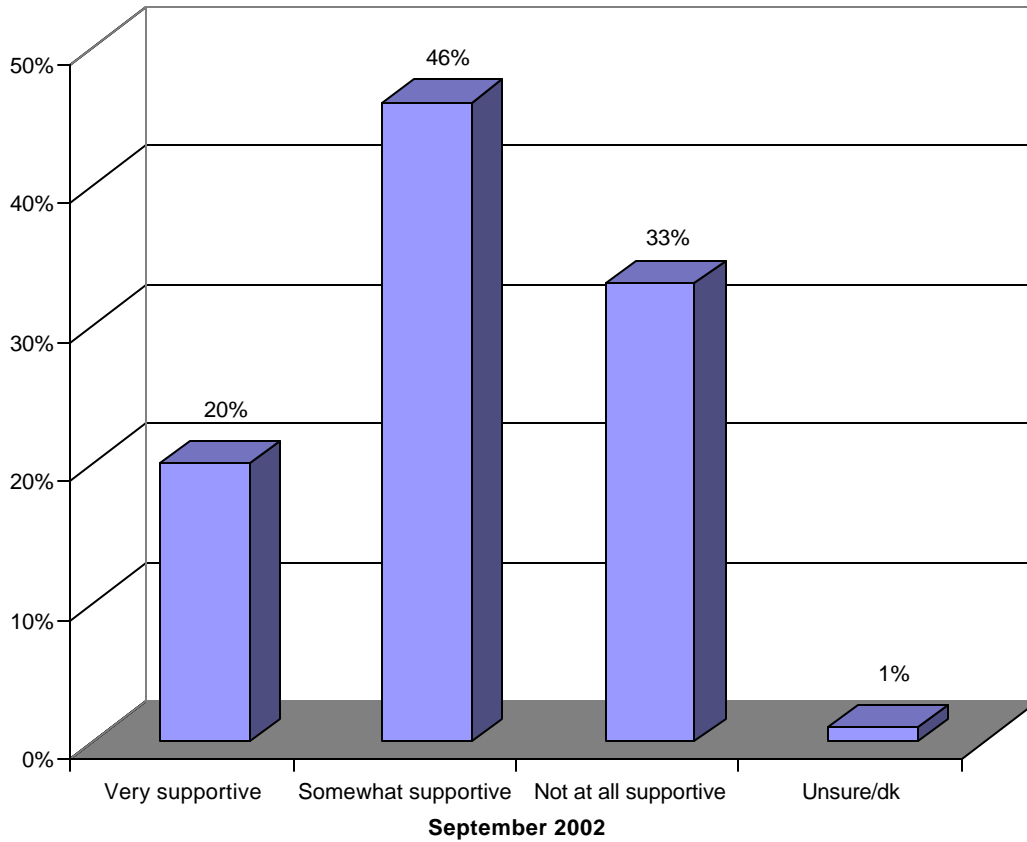
- The majority (84%) of Saskatchewan residents would be supportive if the provincial government presented a deficit budget specifically to pay for emergency drought assistance to Saskatchewan farmers.

Question 29. If the Government of Saskatchewan presented a deficit budget specifically to pay for improved health care services, would you describe yourself as being very supportive of that decision, somewhat supportive or not at all supportive?



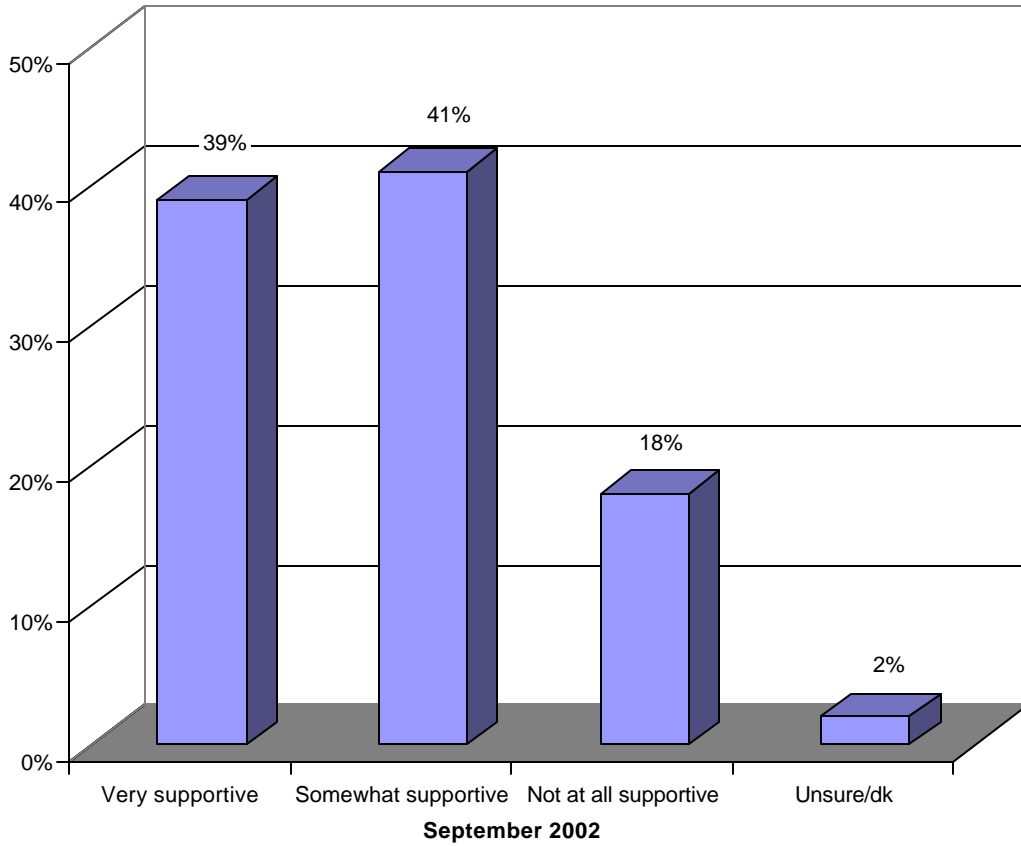
- The majority (82%) of residents would be supportive if the Government of Saskatchewan presented a deficit budget specifically to pay for improved health care services.

Question 30. If the Government of Saskatchewan presented a deficit budget specifically to pay for a plan to speed up the repair and construction of Saskatchewan roads and highways, would you describe yourself as being very supportive of that decision, somewhat supportive or not at all supportive?



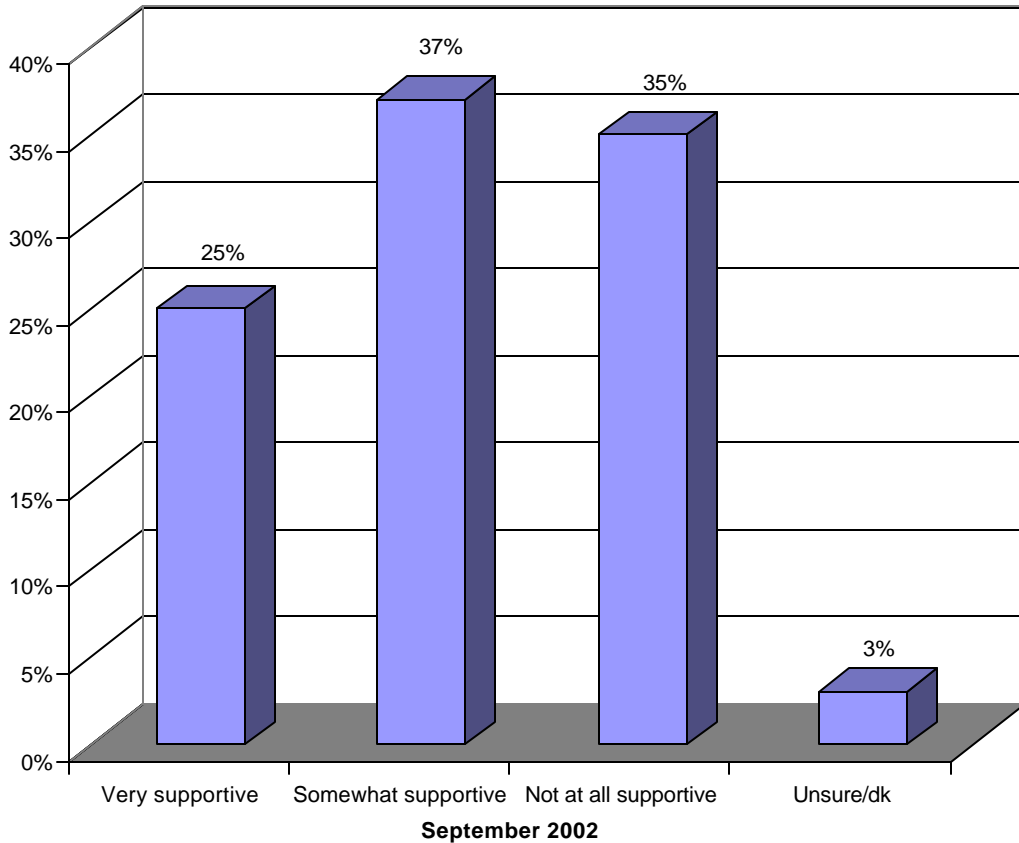
- Approximately two thirds (66%) of residents would be supportive if the Government of Saskatchewan presented a deficit budget specifically to pay for a plan to speed up the repair and construction of Saskatchewan roads and highways.

Question 31. If the Government of Saskatchewan presented a deficit budget specifically to pay for additional health care staff such as nurses, would you describe yourself as being very supportive of that decision, somewhat supportive or not at all supportive?



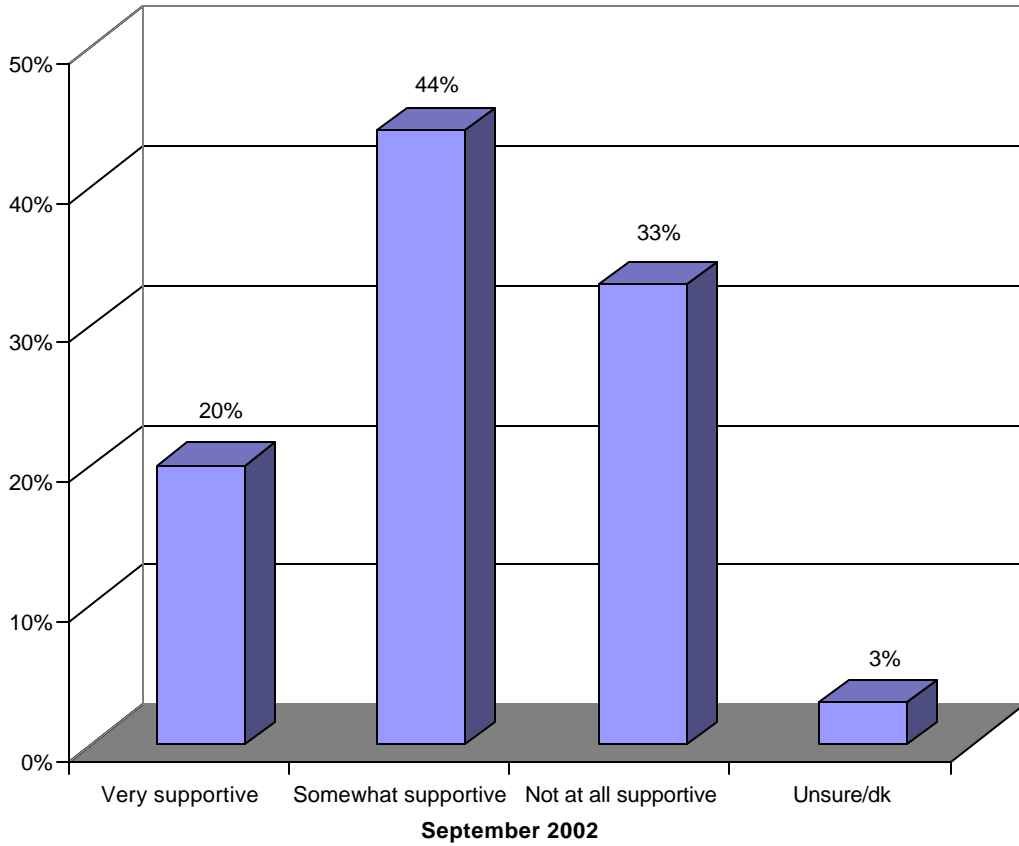
- The majority (80%) of Saskatchewan residents would be supportive if the provincial government presented a deficit budget specifically to pay for additional health care staff such as nurses.

Question 32. If the Government of Saskatchewan presented a deficit budget specifically to pay for tax cuts for middle class families, would you describe yourself as being very supportive of that decision, somewhat supportive or not at all supportive?



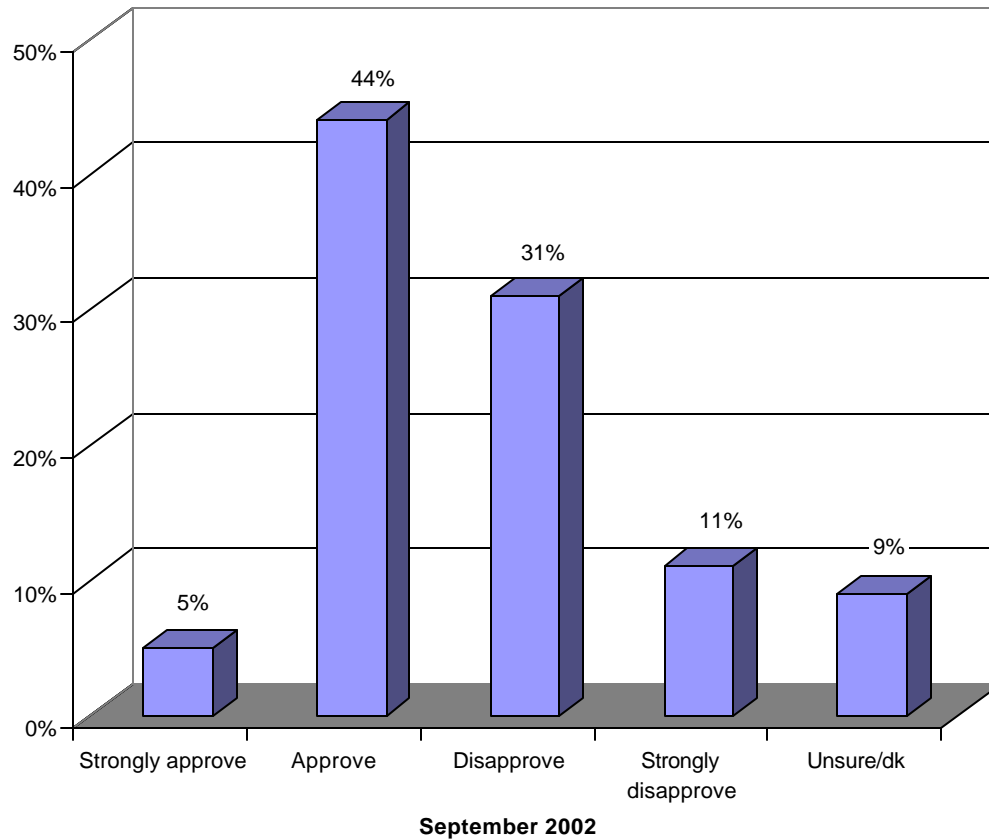
- The majority (62%) of residents would be supportive if the Government of Saskatchewan presented a deficit budget specifically to pay for tax cuts for middle class families.

Question 33. If the Government of Saskatchewan presented a deficit budget specifically to pay for increased policing in our cities and towns, would you describe yourself as being very supportive of that decision, somewhat supportive or not at all supportive?



- The majority (64%) of residents would be supportive if the Government of Saskatchewan presented a deficit budget specifically to pay for increased policing in the province's cities and towns.

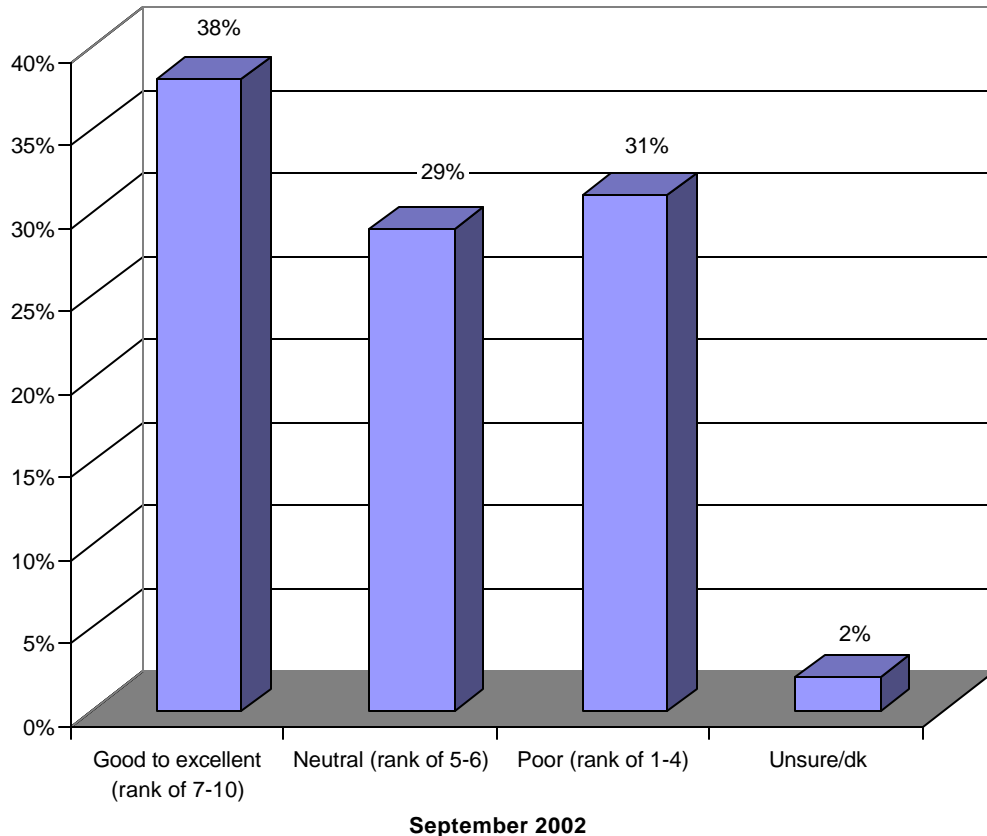
Question 34. On balance, would you say that you approve or disapprove of the way the Government of Saskatchewan has been handling public finances?



- Approximately one half (49%) of Saskatchewan residents approve of the way the provincial government has been handling public finances.

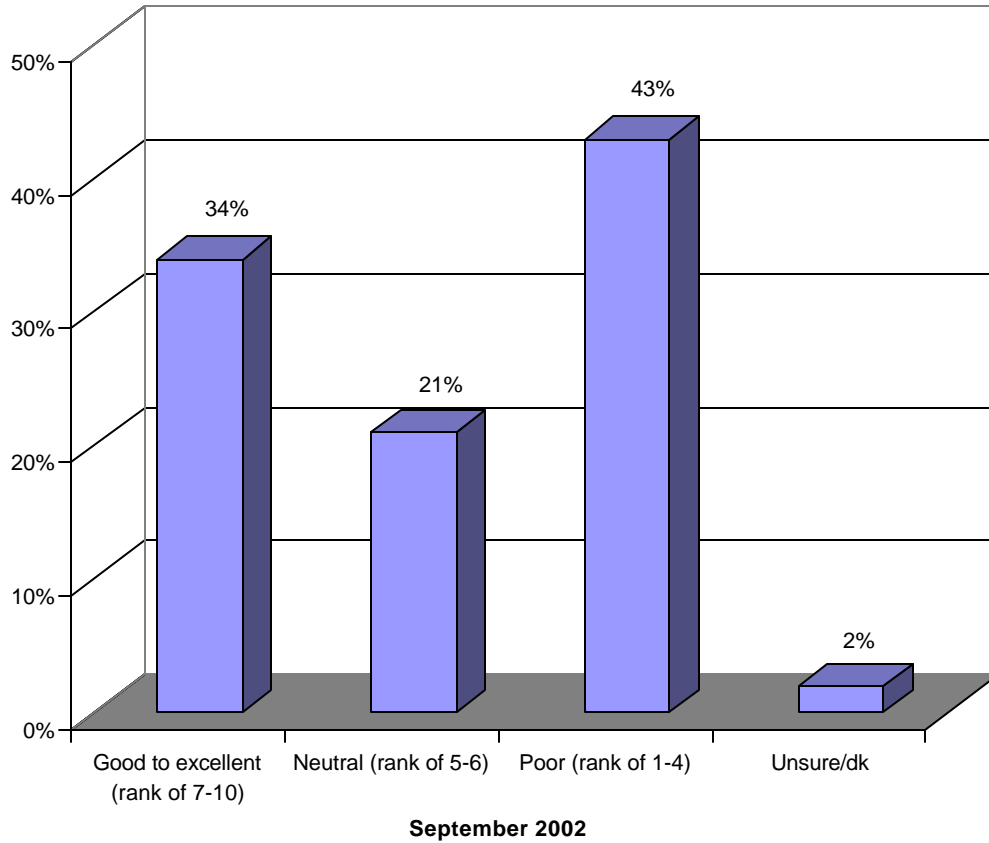
Health care spending is increasing at a much faster rate than other areas of government spending. A number of options have been suggested to help meet rising health costs. Please tell me what you think of each of the following options on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 meaning you think it is very poor and 10 meaning you think it is an excellent option.

Question 35. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate the option of health care premiums to help pay for the rising cost of health care?



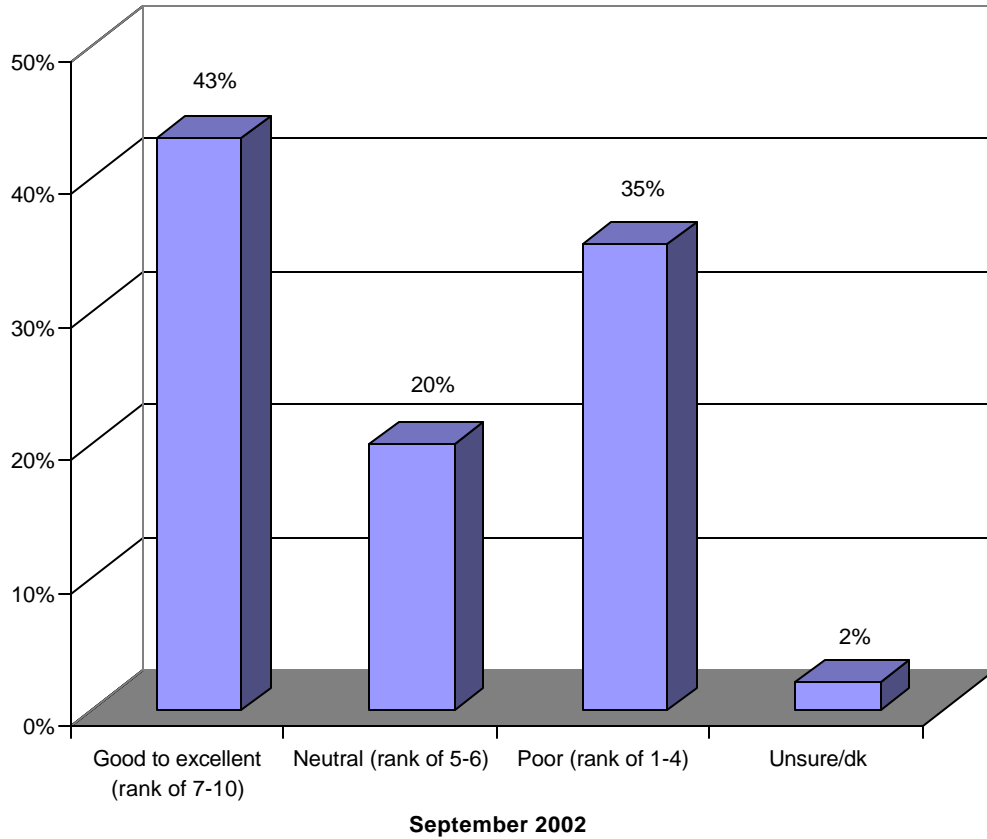
- Approximately one third (38%) of Saskatchewan residents give the option of health care premiums to help pay for the rising cost of health care a ranking of good to excellent (7 to 10). The mean score for the option of health care premiums is 5.50 on a scale of 1 to 10.

Question 36. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate the option of having patients pay a small portion of their health care costs as they use the service, what some call “Utilization Fees”?



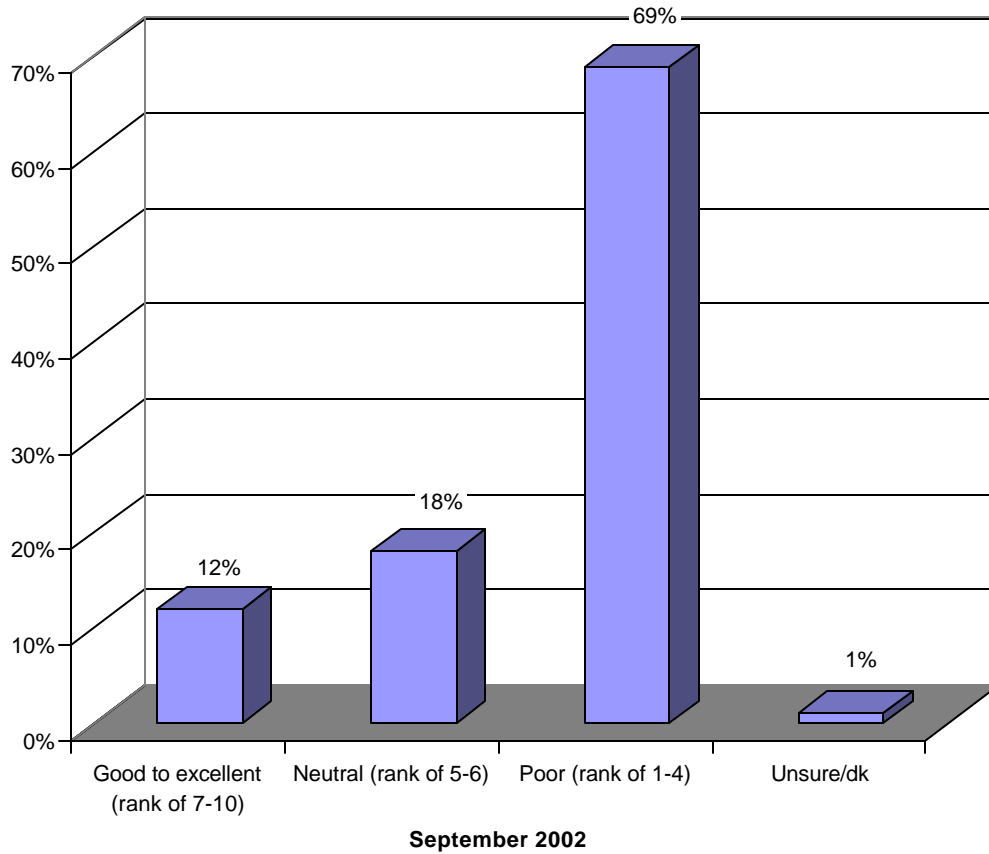
- Approximately one third (34%) of Saskatchewan residents give the option of having patients pay a small portion of their health care costs as they use the service a ranking of good to excellent (7 to 10). The mean score for the option of having patients pay a small portion of their health care costs as they use the service is 4.98 on a scale of 1 to 10.

Question 37. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate the option of having all health care spending reviewed by outside experts, looking for waste and inefficiencies within the health care system?



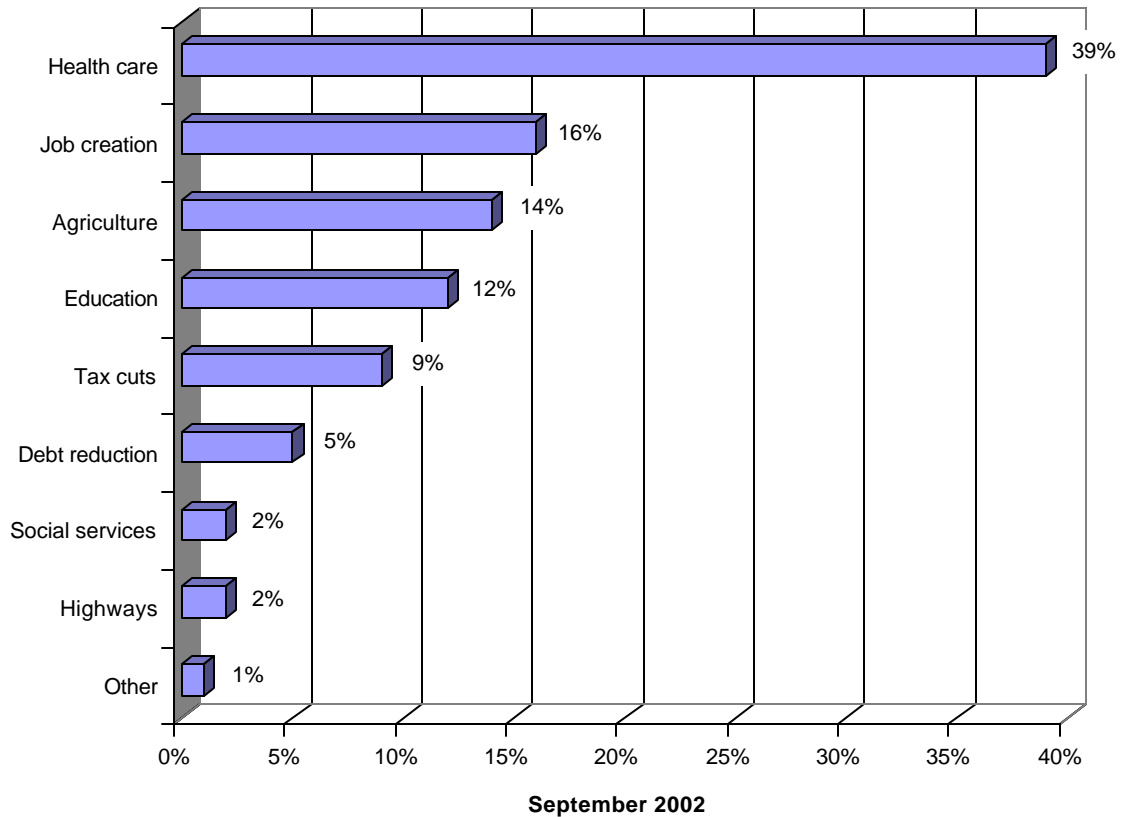
- More than one third (43%) of Saskatchewan residents give the option of having all health care spending reviewed by outside experts, looking for waste and inefficiencies within the health care system a ranking of good to excellent (7 to 10). The mean score for the option of having all health care spending reviewed by outside experts is 5.60 on a scale of 1 to 10.

Question 38. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate the option of having the government raise the Provincial Sales Tax to help pay for the rising cost of the health care system?



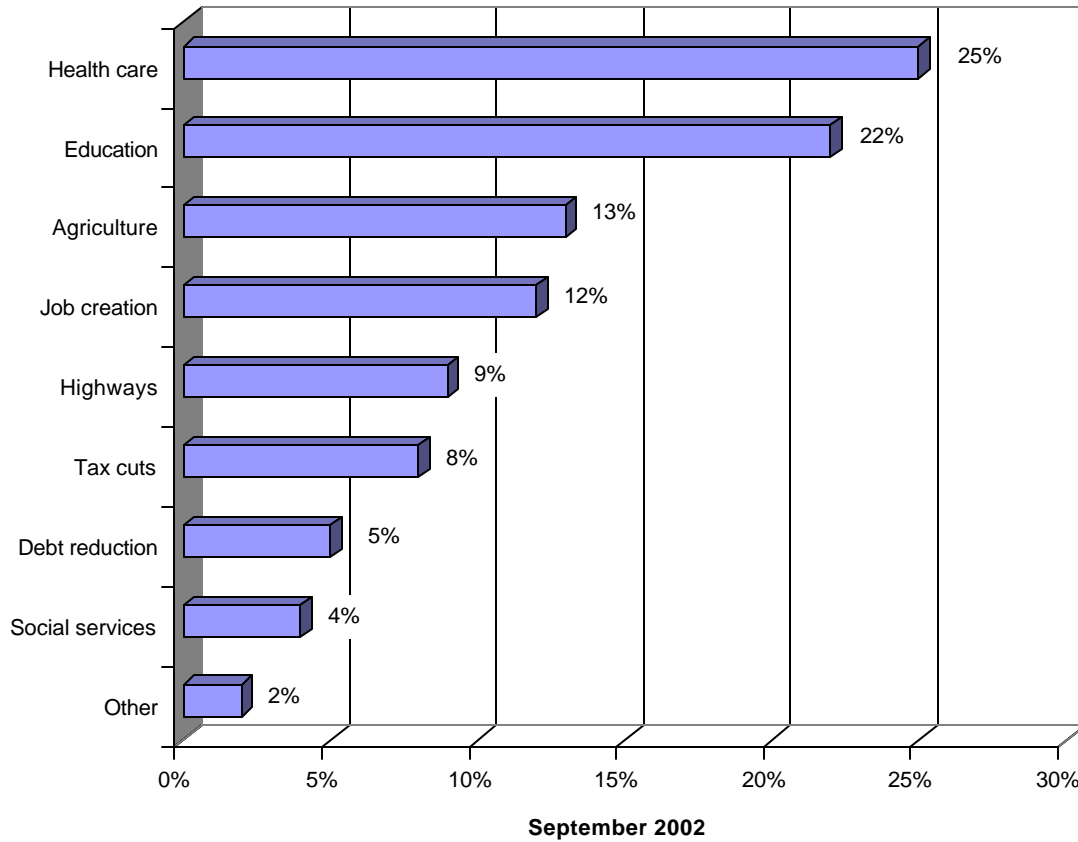
- Approximately one in ten (12%) Saskatchewan residents give the option of having the government raise the Provincial Sales Tax to help pay for the rising cost of the health care system a ranking of good to excellent (7 to 10). The mean score for the option of having the government raise the Provincial Sales Tax to help pay for the rising cost of the health care system is 3.02 on a scale of 1 to 10

Question 39. I am now going to list eight priority areas for any government when it sets a provincial budget. Please listen to the list, and then tell me which one you think should be the top priority in the next provincial budget: education, health care, tax cuts, debt reduction, highways, social services, agriculture or job creation?



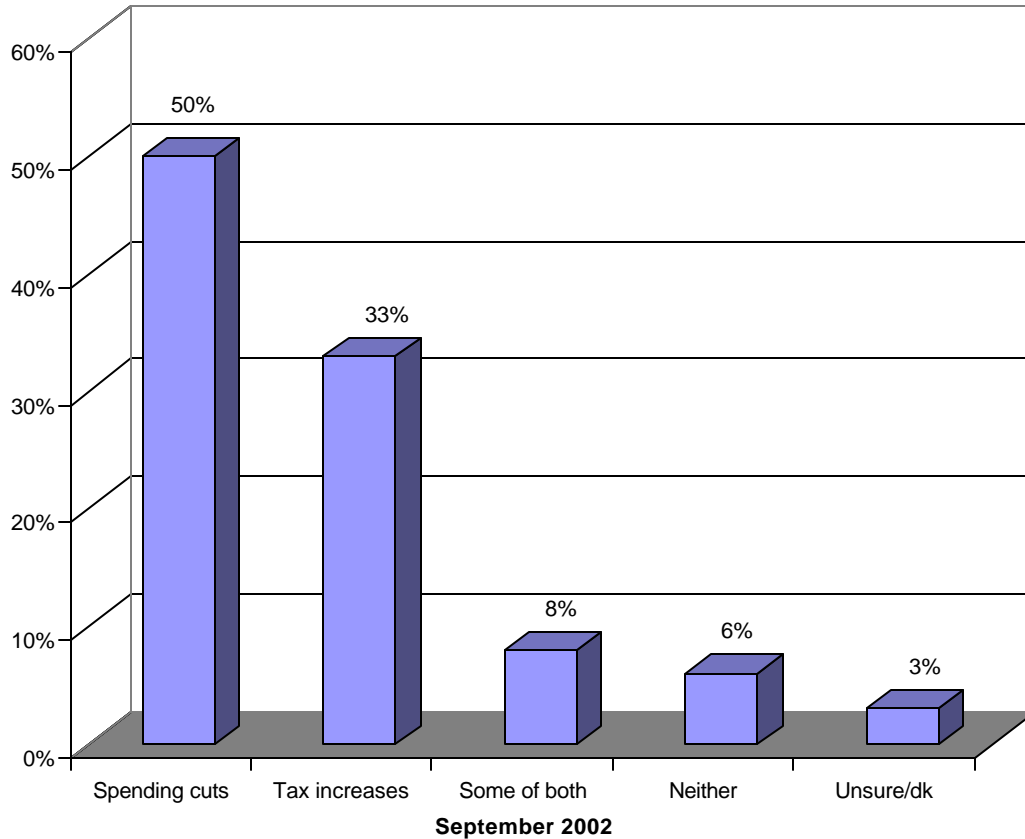
- Although Saskatchewan residents believe that agriculture is the most important issue facing the province in September, more than one third (39%) of residents select health care as the area that should be the top priority for the government when it sets the next provincial budget (more than 2:1 over agriculture).

Question 40. Now I'm going to read you the remaining priorities. Please listen to the list again, and then tell me which one you think should be the second highest priority in the next provincial budget.



- The area of health care continues to be the top priority when Saskatchewan residents are asked to think of the next highest priority for them in the next provincial budget.
- Health care is selected as the first or second most important priority area for consideration in the next provincial budget by 64% of Saskatchewan residents.

Question 41. In any government budget, there are always choices to be made. If you were making those choices, and you were faced with either raising taxes or cutting spending for programs such as health care, to balance the budget, would you choose tax increases or spending cuts?



- One half (50%) of Saskatchewan residents would currently choose spending cuts if they were faced with the choice of either raising taxes or cutting spending for programs such as health care, to balance the budget.