

2004 Oregon Health Policymaker Survey: Information Wants and Needs

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From research to policy

- Policymakers receive large volumes of information on health policy research, but often don't get the answers they seek within these materials
- Health policy is only part of the job, but a complex and time consuming part; efficient communication around health policy research is essential
- **How can we make health policy research most useful to those making policy decisions?**

Basic Survey Statistics

- Legislators and staff identified with roles and responsibilities on health care committees
 - contacted by phone and/or email
 - 40 Elected: 10 surveyed
 - 15 Staff: 13 surveyed
 - 3 declined
- Telephone survey
 - 56 questions
 - Average length: 21 minutes

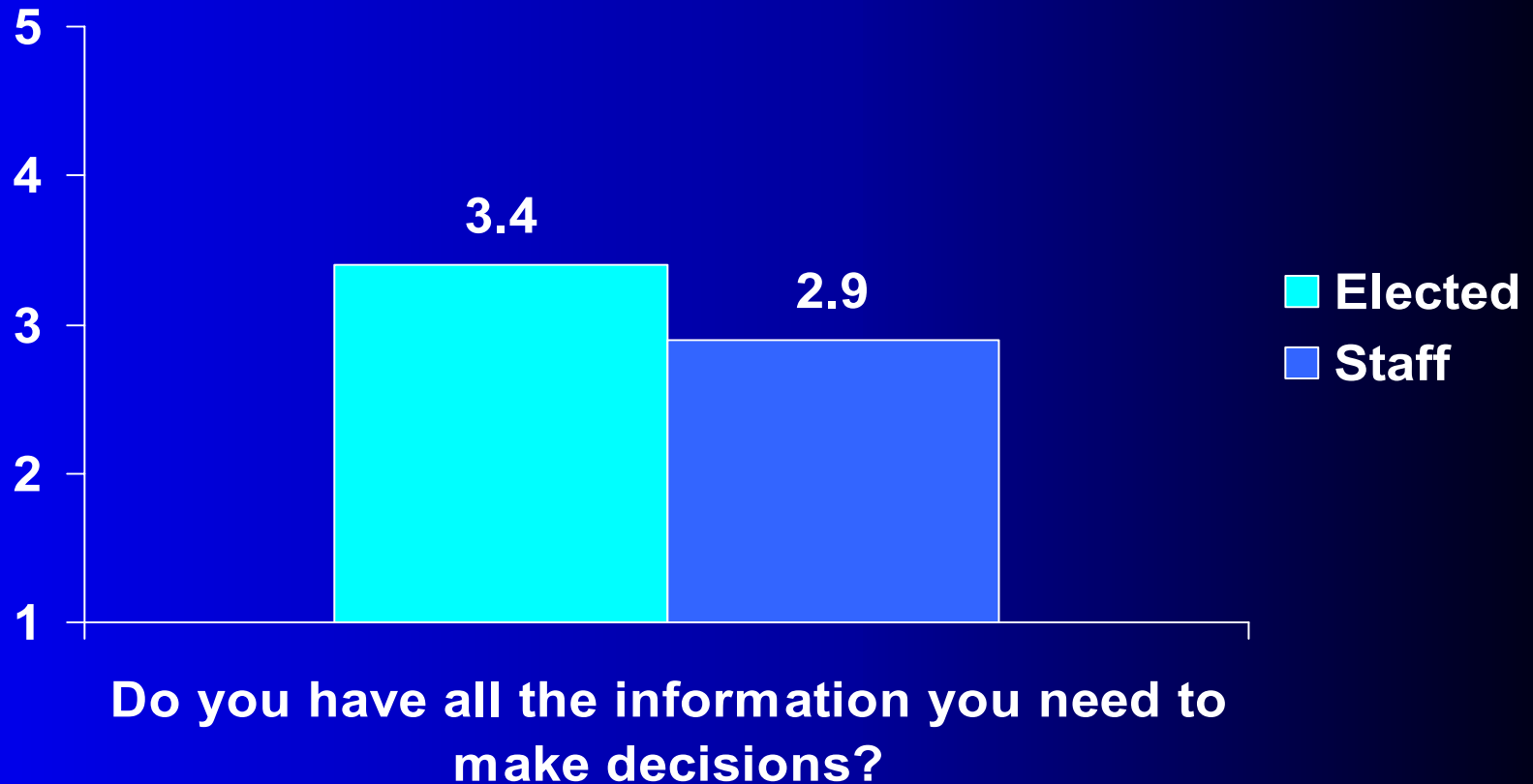
Who did we talk to?

- 5 Senators
- 5 Representatives
- 13 Staff

- Average number of years in position:
 - Elected: 5.0
 - Staff: 3.9

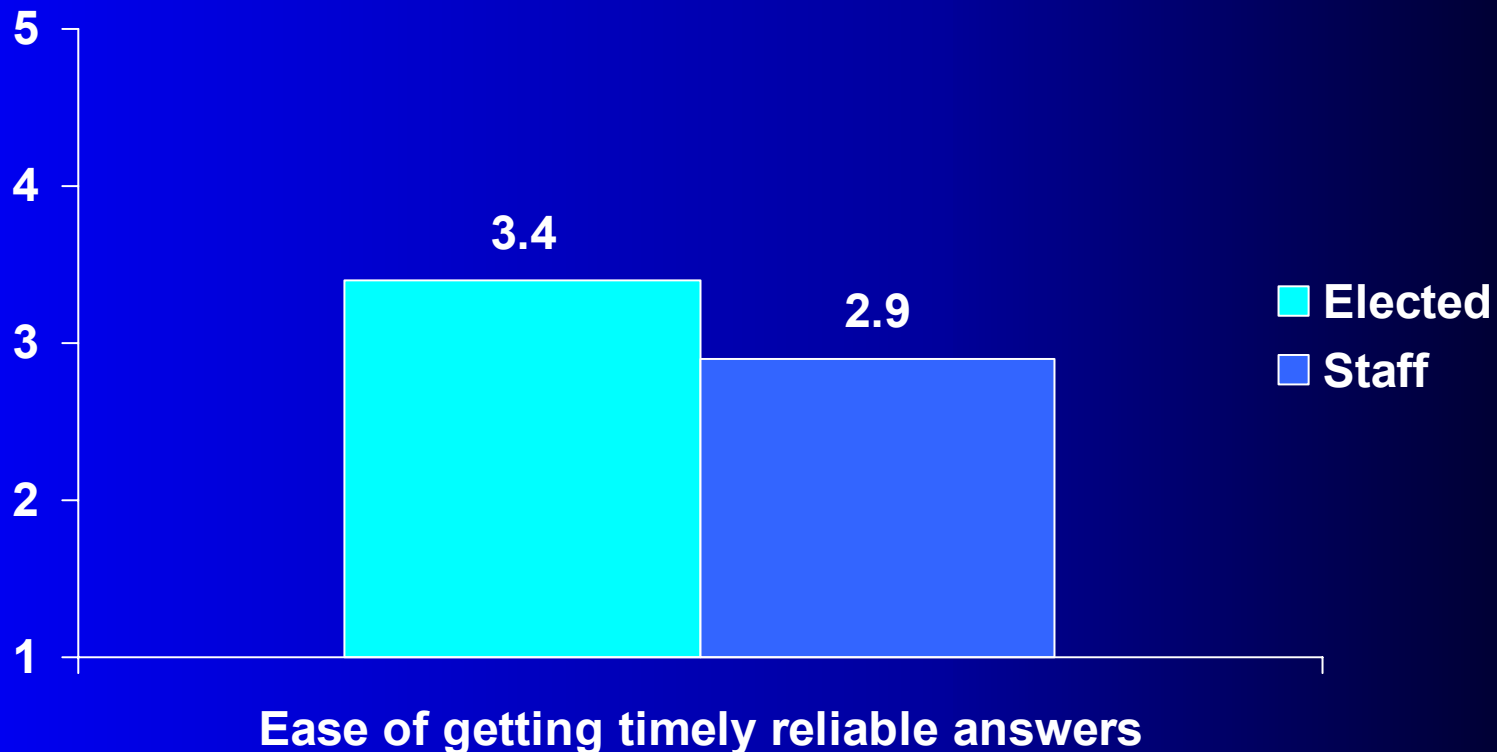
Staff were less likely to feel they had adequate information

(Mean score, 5-point scale: 1 = no reliable information, 5 = all the information I need)

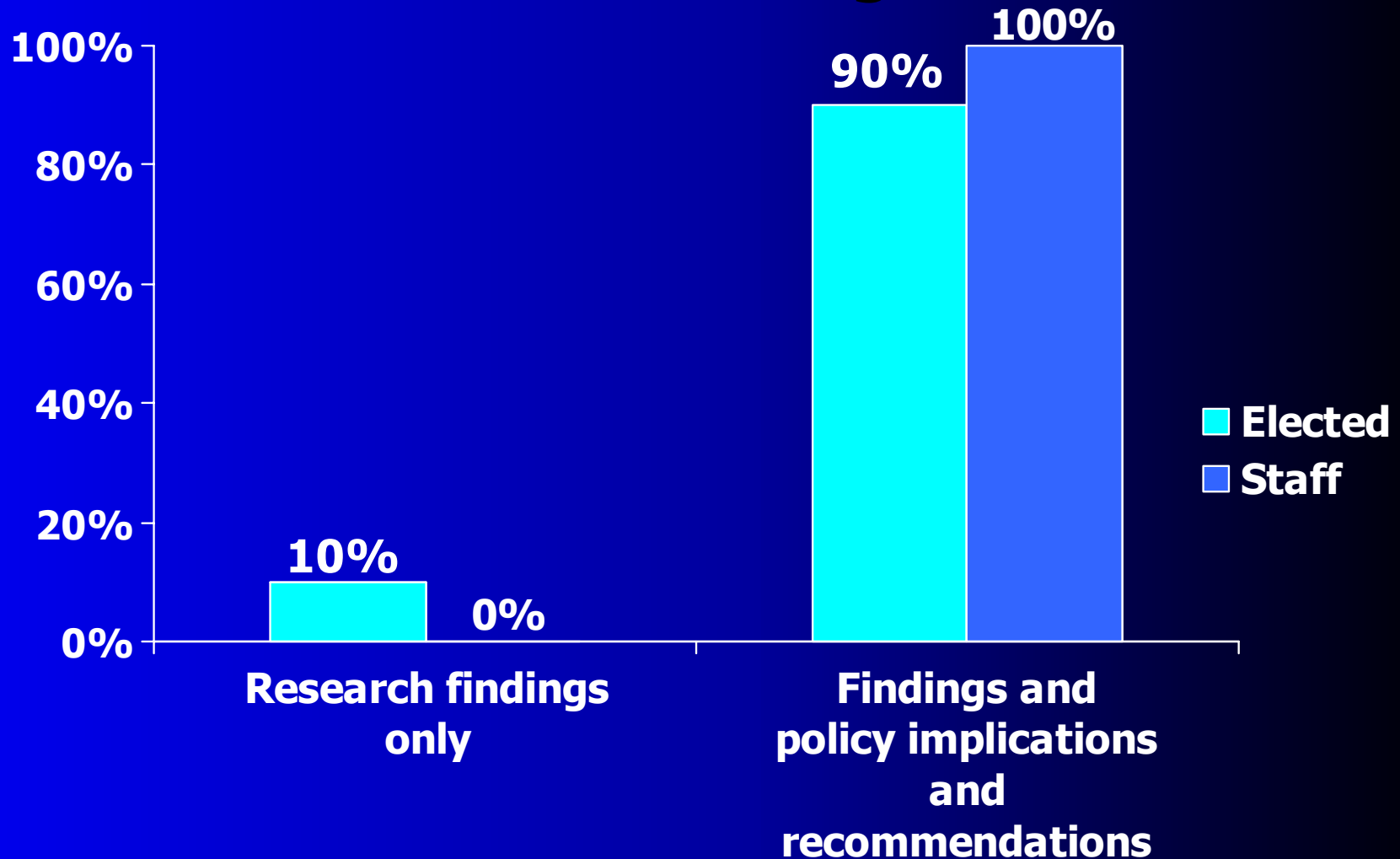


Staff felt it was more difficult to get timely, reliable answers

(Mean Score, 5-point scale: 1 = great difficulty, 5 = no problem)



Implications or recommendations for policy are helpful additions to research findings

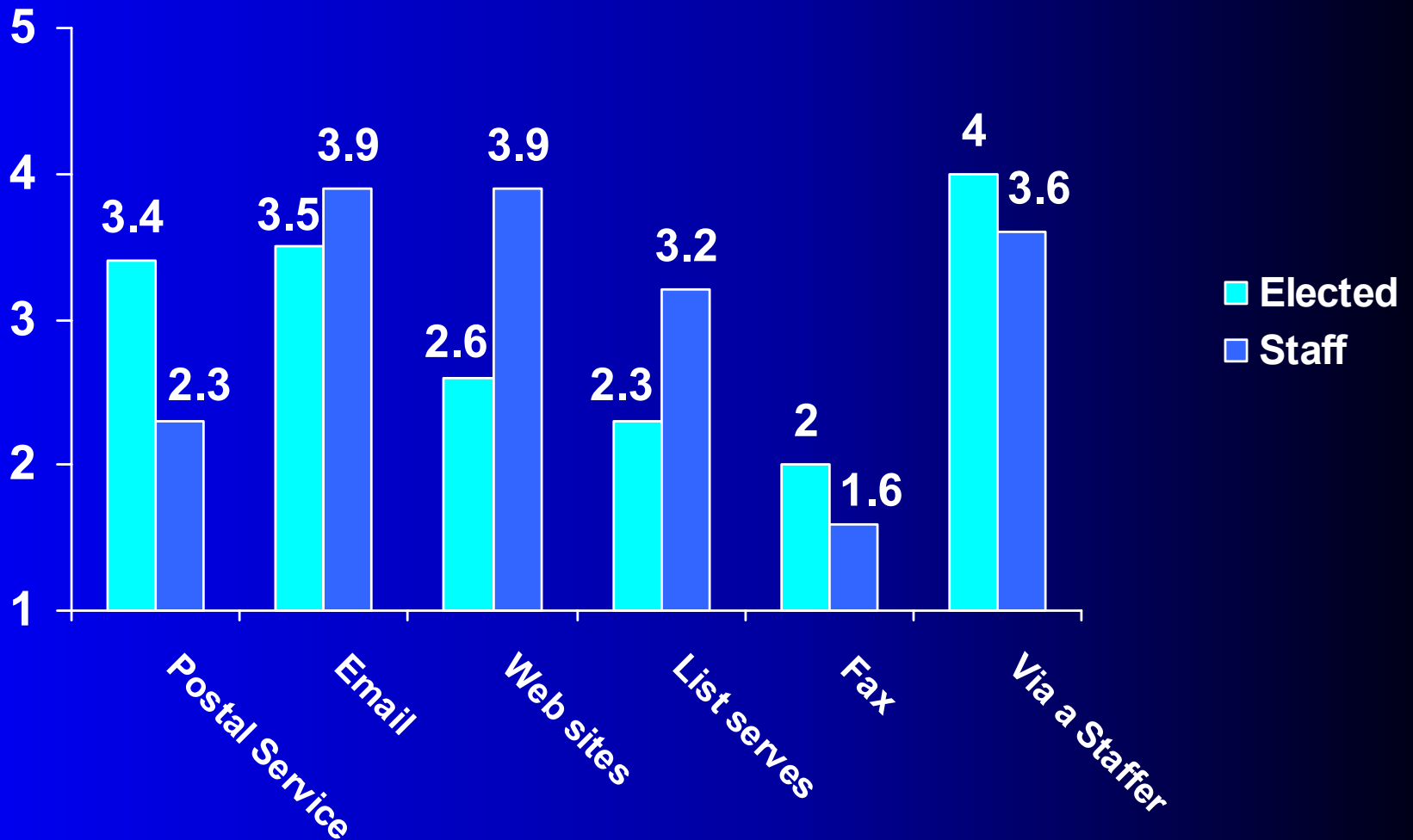


Oregon-specific research data is preferred

- When given 3 ways research data can be gathered, 60% ranked them in this order:
 1. Gathered from populations in Oregon
(78% ranked it 1st)
 2. State to state comparative data
 3. Gathered on a national basis

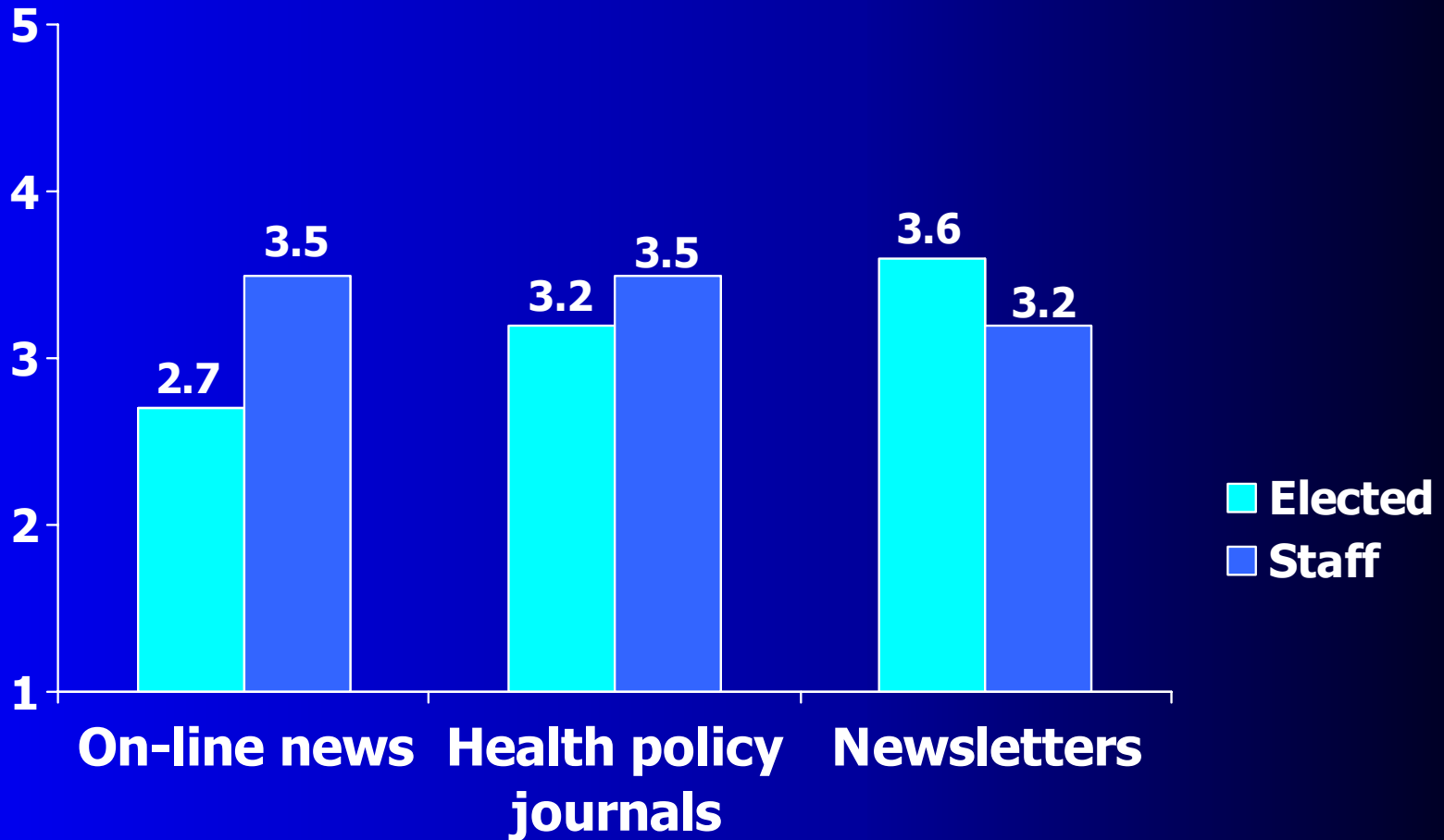
Legislators prefer to get information from staffers

(Mean Score, 5-point scale: 1 = least preferred, 5 = most preferred)



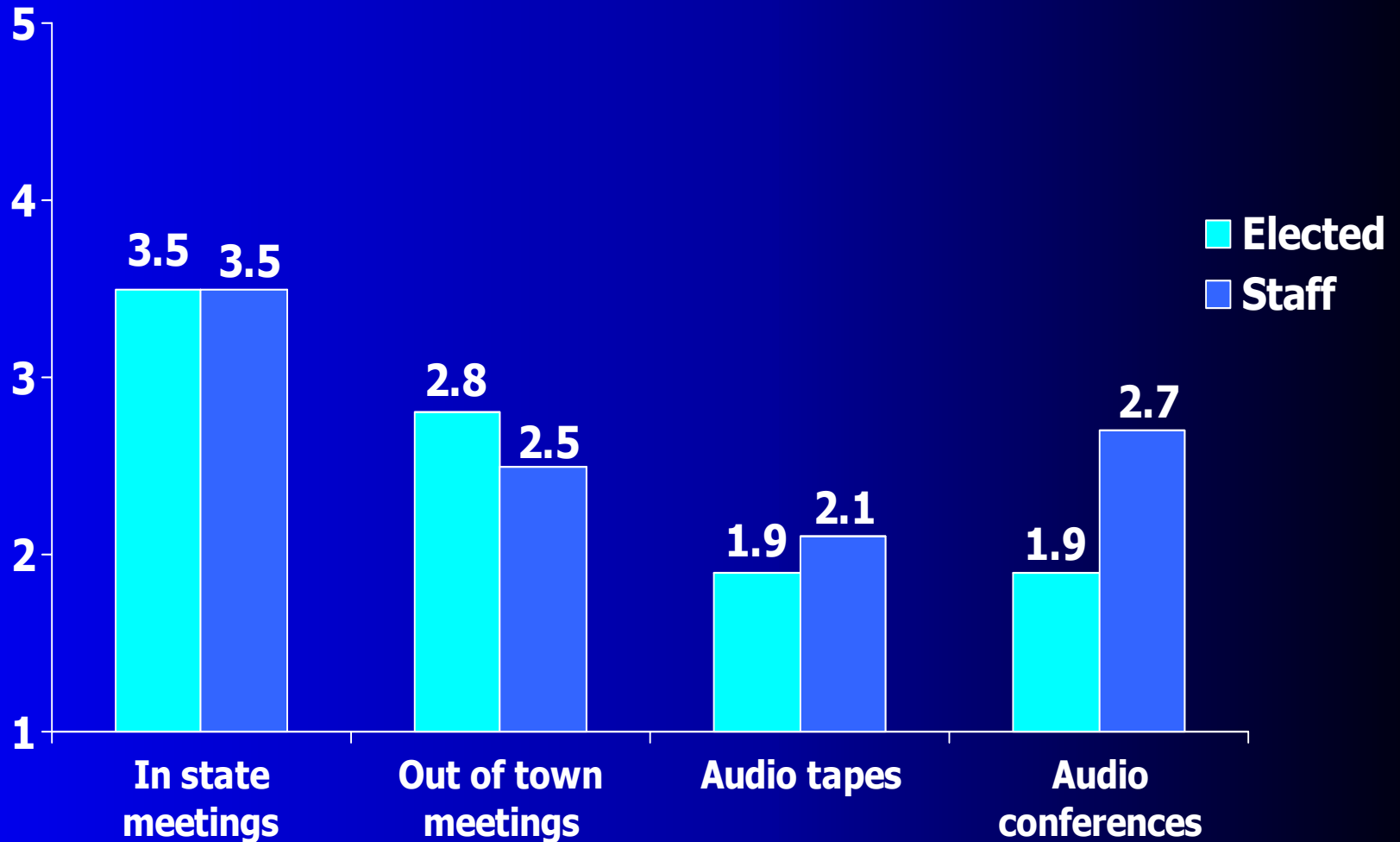
Useful sources of information

(Mean score, 5-point scale: 1 = useless, 5 = useful)



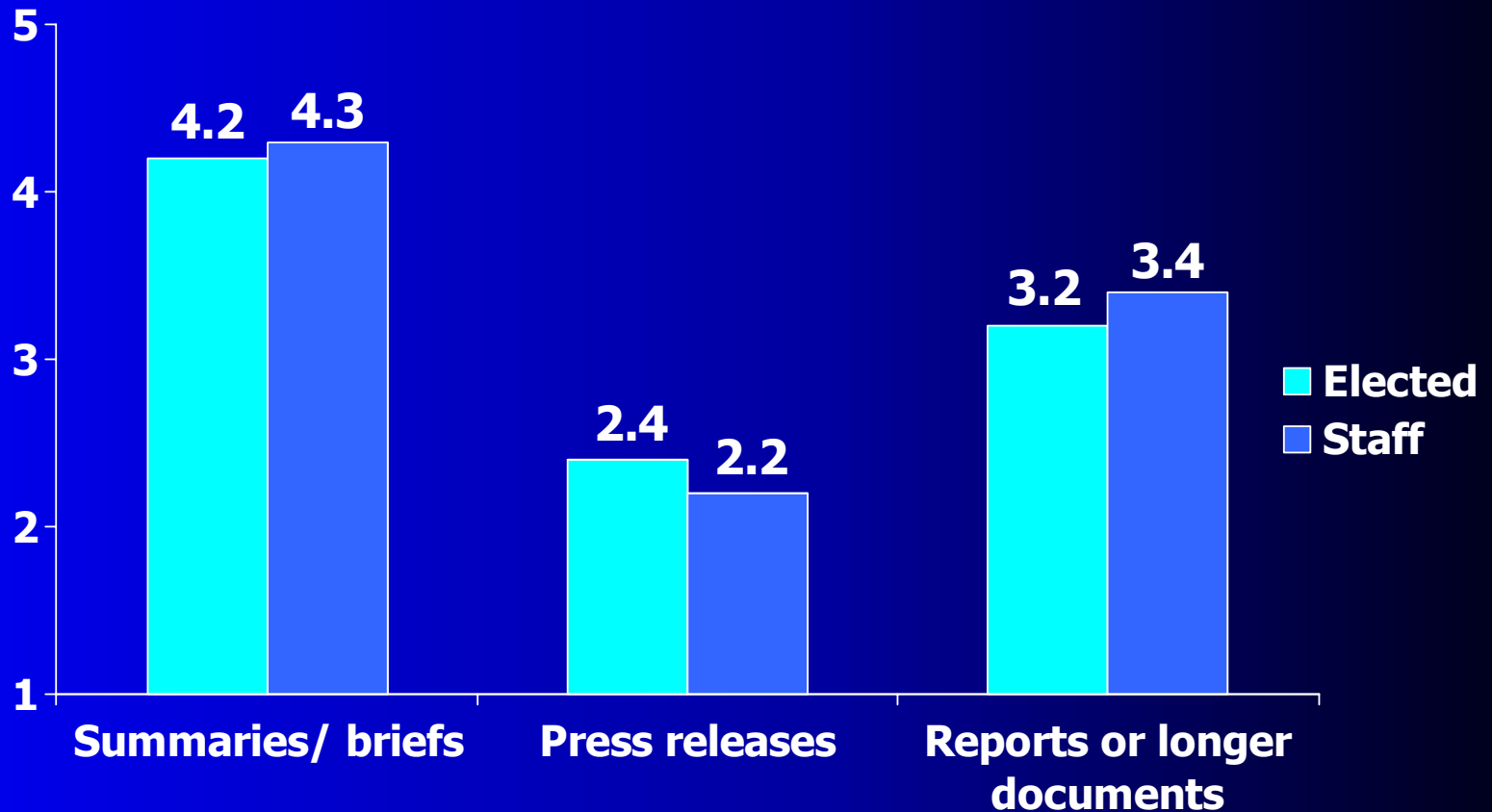
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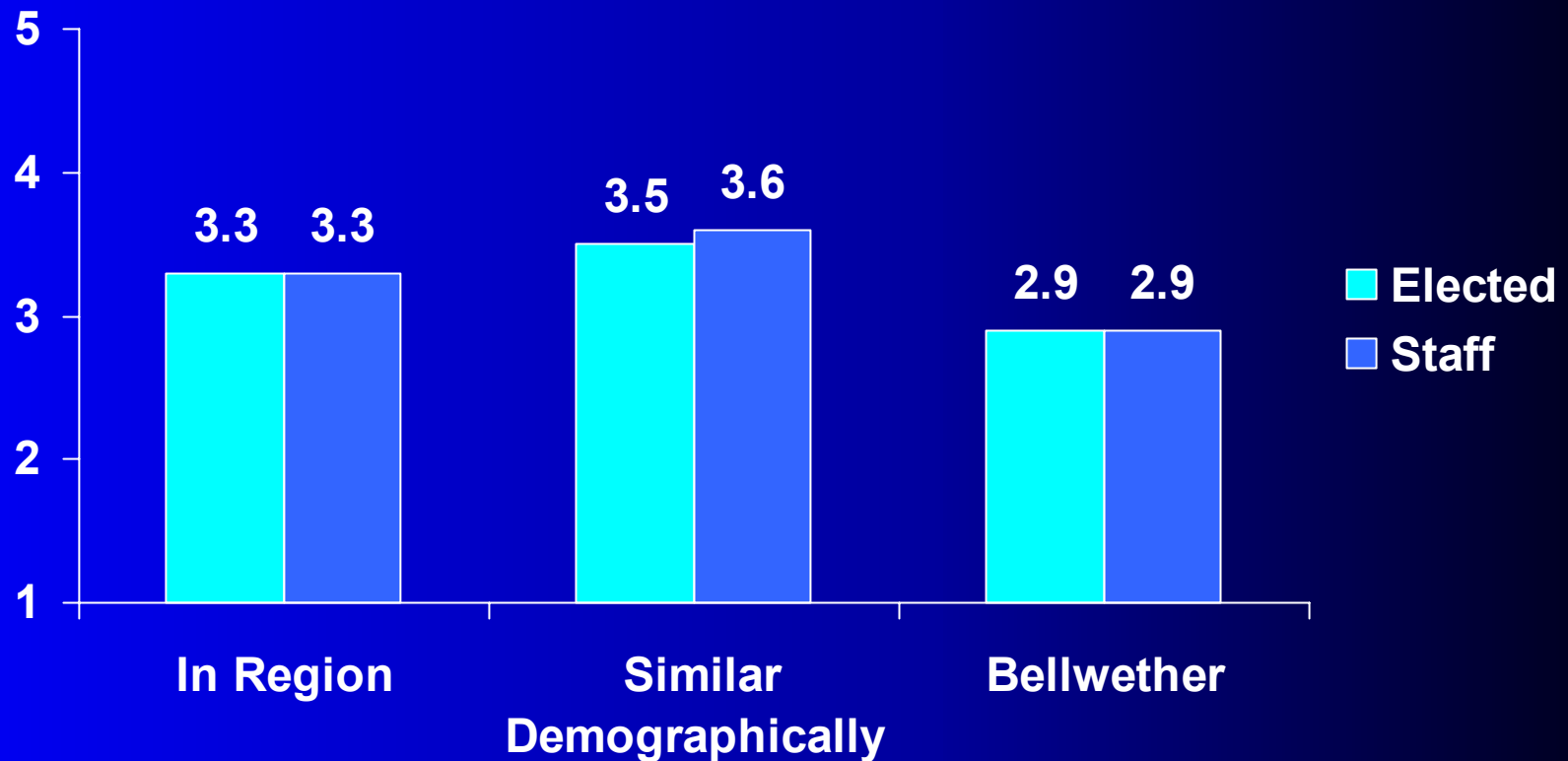
Legislators and staffers rated shorter summaries or briefs as the most useful source of health policy information

(Mean score, 5-point scale: 1 = useless, 5 = useful)



When looking at other states, both legislators and staffers are most interested in states similar to Oregon

(Mean score, 5-point scale: 1 = Useless, 5 = Useful)



What makes information about health policy useful to you?

- 65.2% - applicability
- 8.6% for each of:
 - Reliability/accuracy/objectivity
 - Broad issues/trends
 - Includes interpretations/perspectives
 - Clear graphs/tables
 - Brevity

What makes information about health policy less useful to you?

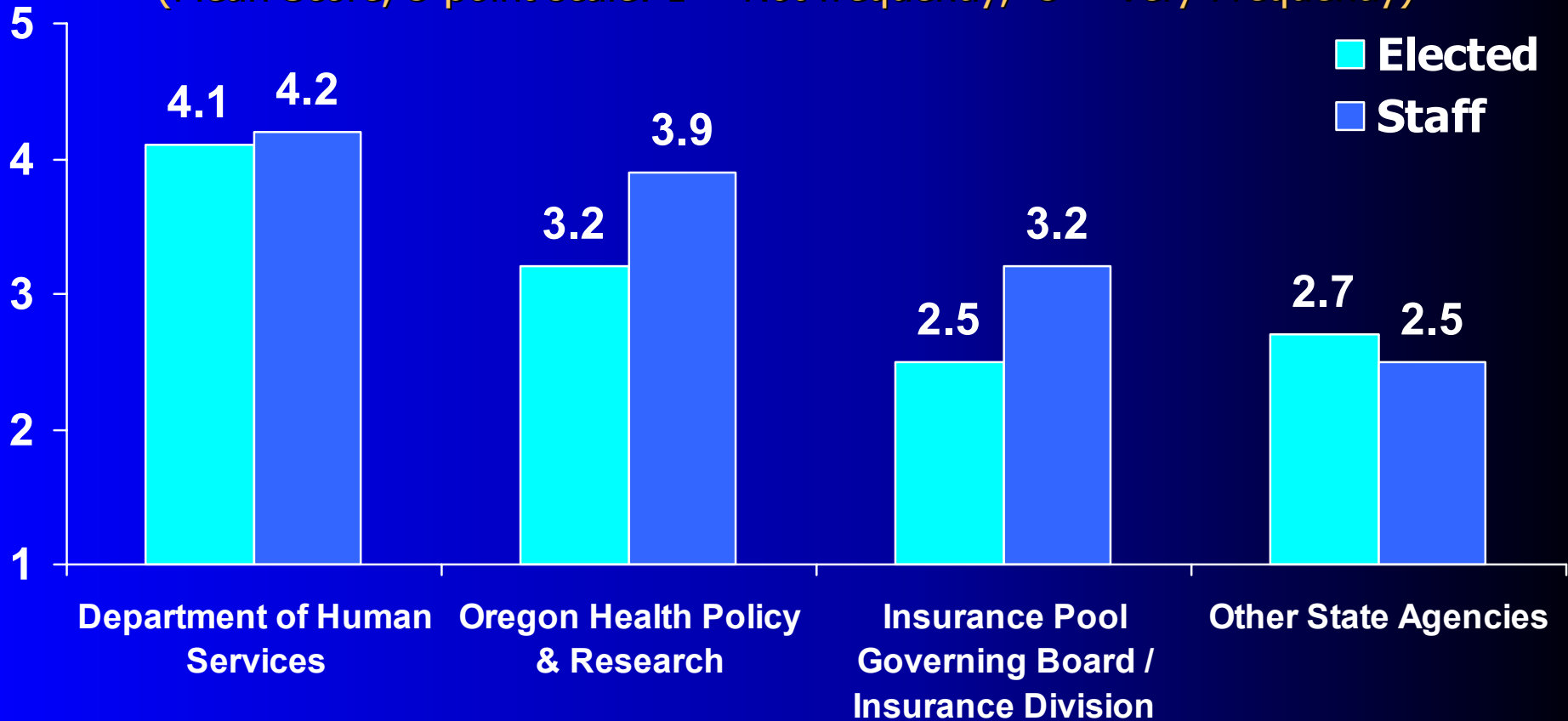
- 22% - Inapplicable/unrelated/irrelevant to current issues in Oregon
- 22% - Lots of numbers without any interpretation
- 17% - Excess bulk/volume
- 17% - Unreliable/biased/not backed by solid research
- 13% - Regurgitated/recycled/old data

Are there sources you tend to trust more than others?

- 96% responded YES...and specified:
 - 36% - Kaiser Family Foundation
 - 27% - National Council of State Legislatures
 - 23% - Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
 - 23% - Journals (JAMA, Health Affairs, other nationally published journals)
 - 18% - Academic and university sources
 - 9% - Oregon Health Policy & Research

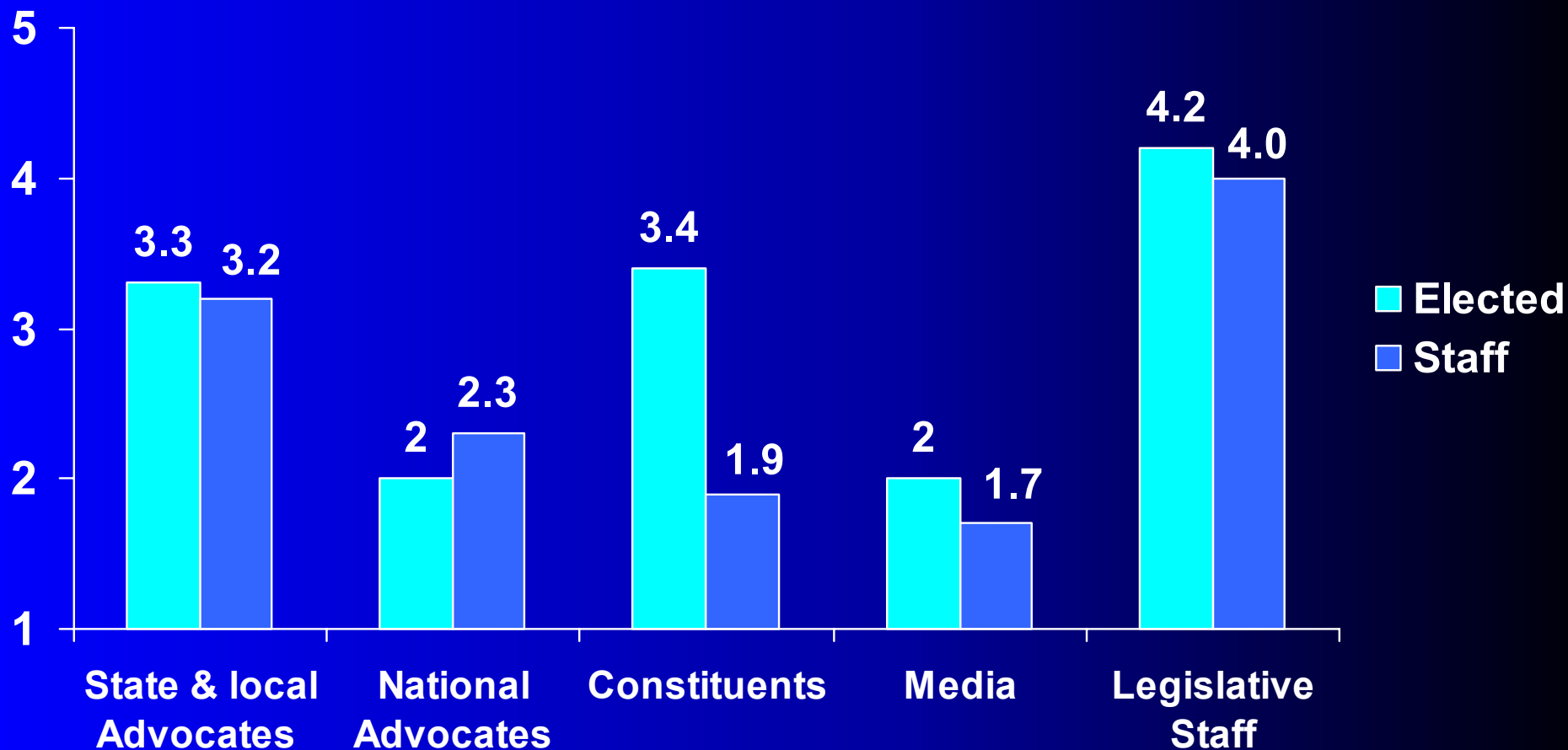
DHS and staffers are the most frequently sought out sources of health policy information

(Mean Score, 5-point scale: 1 = Not frequently, 5 = Very Frequently)



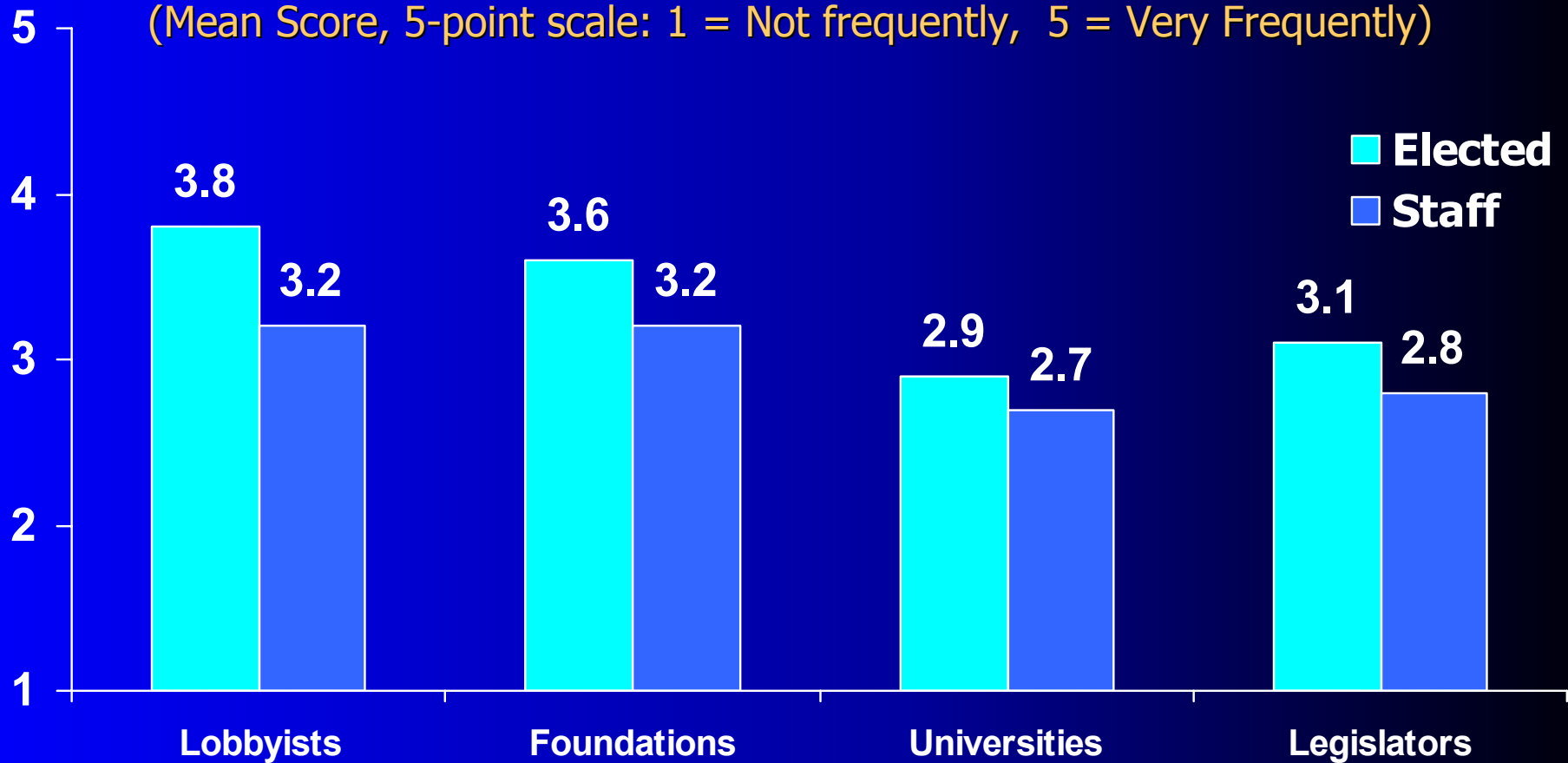
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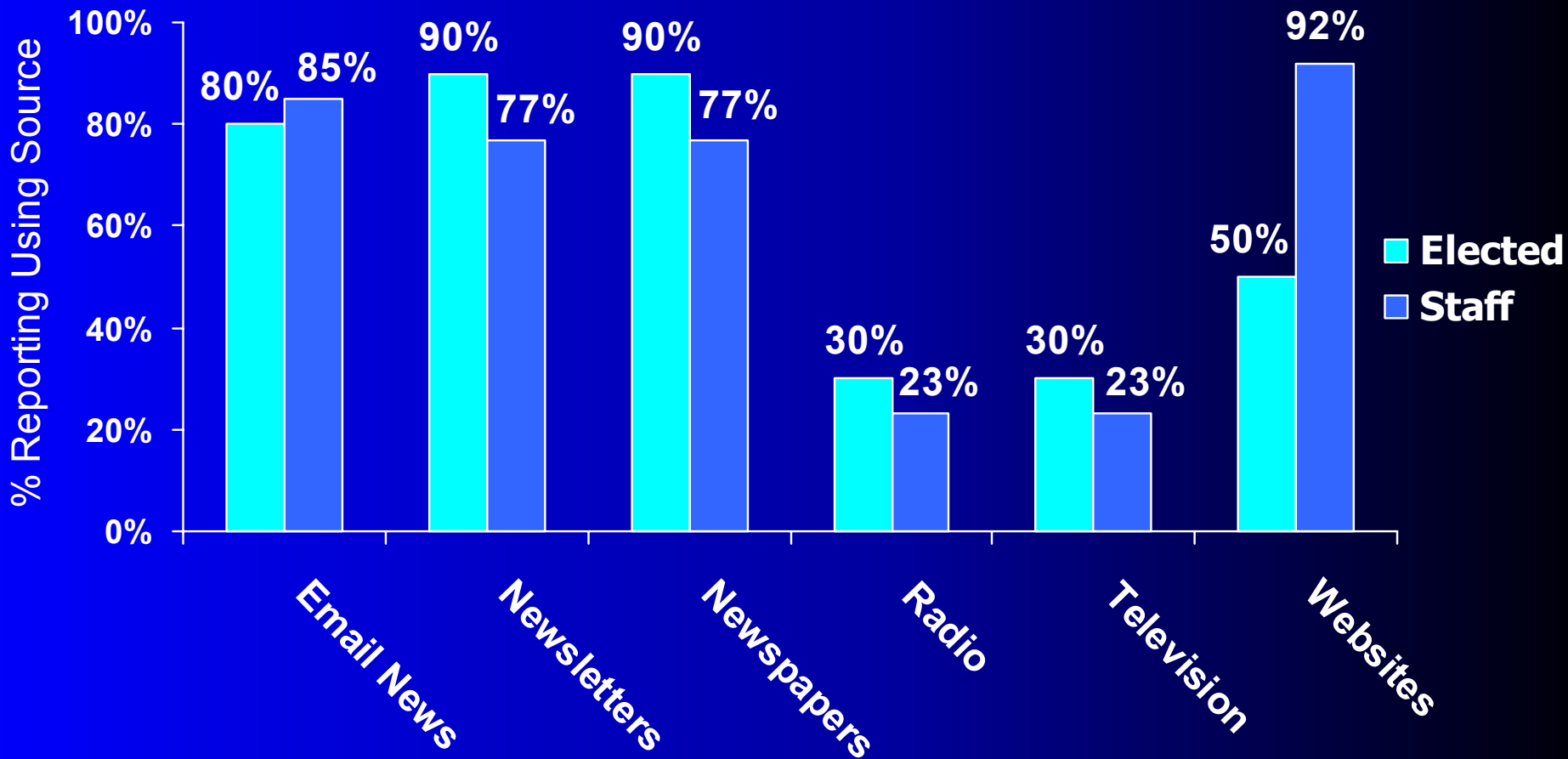
Most respondents don't have a regular set of steps they take when attempting to learn more about a given health policy issue

- 26% - Take regular steps to learn more
 - 10% of elected, 38% of staff
- 74% - Varies by issue
 - 90% of elected, 62% of staff

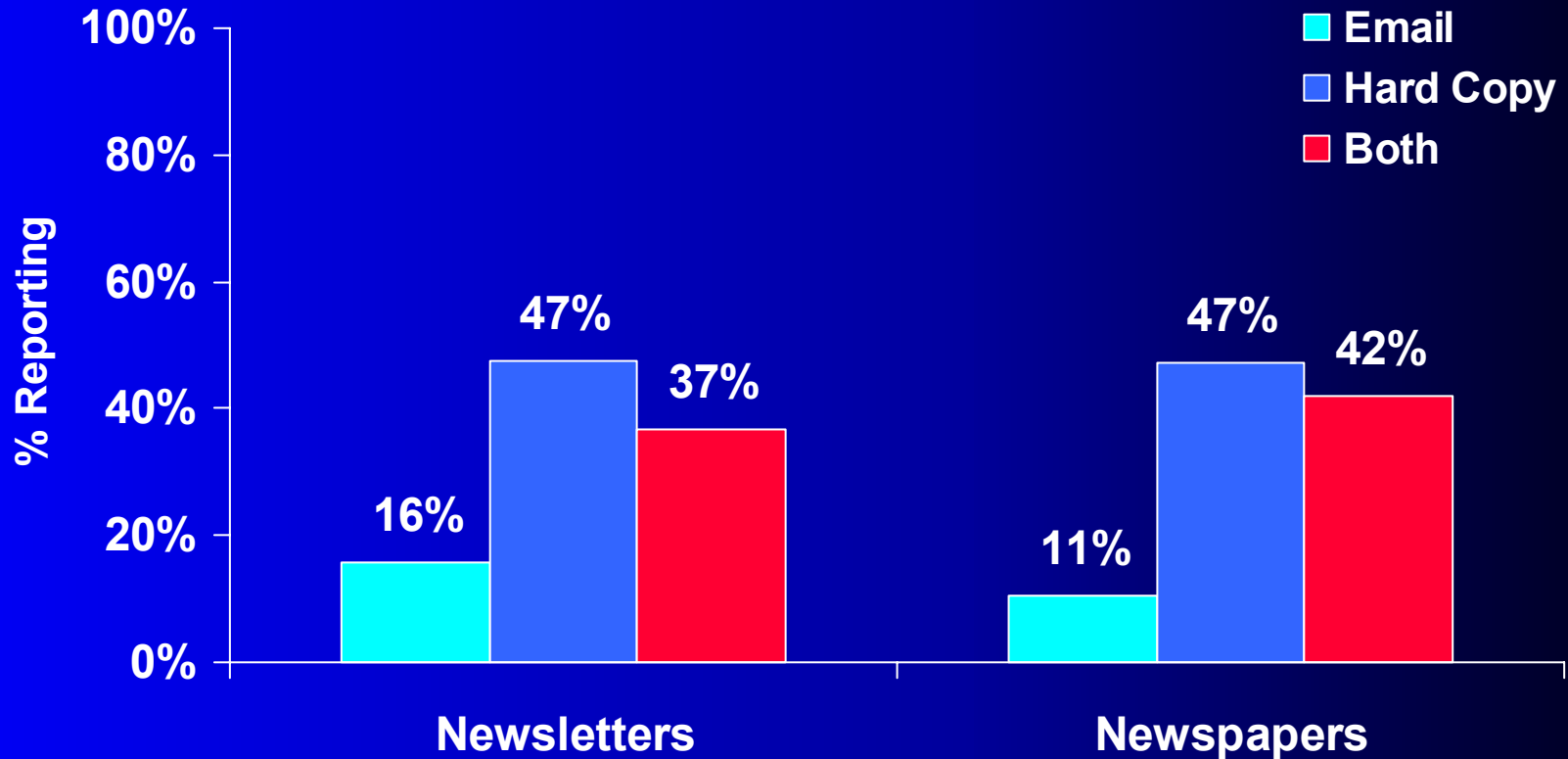
Sources most frequently cited as part of a “regular set of steps” used to learn more about a particular issue:

- 50% - Oregon Health Policy & Research
- 42% - Department of Human Services
- 25% - Lobbyists
- 25% - Staff

Staff more likely to go to websites for information; legislators more likely use newspapers/newsletters



Most legislators and staffers using newsletters or newspapers are reading hard copy versions



Some specific sources mentioned...

- Email news and health care updates
 - 21%: Kaiser Family Foundation
 - 16%: Department of Human Services
 - 11%: National Conference of State Legislatures
 - 11%: Oregon Health Forum
- Newsletters
 - 32%: National Conference of State Legislatures
 - 32%: Oregon Health Forum

Some specific sources mentioned...

- Newspapers:
 - 42% locals or local clipping service
 - 32% NY Times
 - 16% Wall St Journal
 - 11% Washington Post
- Radio
 - 83% National Public Radio/Oregon Public Broadcasting

Some specific sources mentioned...

- TV

- 67%: KOPB (public television)
- 33%: Local news

- Websites

- 35%: Kaiser Family Foundation
- 24%: National Conference of State Legislatures
- 18% For each: Department of Human Services, Health Affairs, search engine/Google

Which health related conferences or meetings sponsored by local, state or national associations do you try to regularly attend?

- 30%: None
- 17%: National Conference of State Legislatures
- 13%: Council of State Governments

Other information, services, or help that would be useful

- 17% each:
 - Regular agency briefs/updates, and regular meetings with agencies/analysts
 - Improved ease of access to data, centralized location to locate information, such as a website
- 9% each: Webcasts, interim briefs, hard copy publications with references of research for more information

During the last legislative session, what health related information services would have been useful, that you were unable to obtain?

- 30%: Accurate/reliable/credible data
- 22%: Nothing
- 17%: Fast, easy access to data
- 13%: Details about the Oregon Health Plan

In the next two years, what are the 3 health care issues that you believe Oregon SHOULD address?

- 48%: Affordability/costs
- 35%: Prescription drug issues
- 30%: Service delivery
- 22% each: Access, uninsured, mental health
- 13% each: Long term care, tort reform, new insurance methods

In the next two years, what are the 3 health care issues that you believe Oregon WILL address?

- 43%: Oregon Health Plan
- 26%: Uninsured
- 22% each: Access, mental health, prescription drugs
- 17%: Tort reform

Top issues policymakers report needing more information about:

- Uninsured in general
- Uninsured: Impact/cost shifting to overall system
- Health care finance and delivery in general
- Health care finance and delivery: provider reimbursements
- Access: Safety Nets
- Prescription drug coverage
- Mental health and substance abuse
- Medical liability and tort reform

Oregon Health Policy & Research

- 91% reported having received materials or information from OHPR in the past
- 95% of those found the info helpful
- Reasons cited as to why it was helpful:
 - 30%: Trusted/reliable/credible
 - 25% each: Relevant, concise
 - 15% each: Timely, objective, key people
 - 10%: Included references to research

Suggestions for improvement in Oregon Health Policy & Research materials

- Anticipate questions before they are raised, and have the info available
- Redesign website
- Focus on broad market trends/big picture
- Provide concrete solutions

References

- Sorian R, Baugh T. Power of Information: Closing the Gap Between Research and Policy. *Health Affairs* 2002; 21:264-73.
- Reh D, Taymans C, Andrews E. 2002 Connecticut Health Policymaker Survey. *Conn Med.* 2002; 66(7):415-8.
- Special thanks to both groups for allowing us to view original survey instruments, and to borrow and/or adapt questions for use in this survey.