

# ***EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATIONS***

## 2025 USBC URETHANE BOWLING BALL **SURVEY RESULTS**

A **Future** FOR  
THE **Sport**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

USBC issued a one-question survey to members and followers to collect feedback on the future use of urethane bowling balls in certified competitions. The survey was distributed through email and social media, with a total of **20,943 responses** collected.

The results revealed that a majority of respondents support some form of change:

- **57.32%** of respondents preferred a change to urethane governance:
  - 36.61% supported a complete ban across all USBC-certified competition.
  - 17.63% favored tighter specifications (e.g., minimum 78 hardness).
  - 3.08% supported limiting urethane at national tournaments only.

By contrast:

- 38.67% supported continuing to allow urethane with no changes.
- 4% indicated the issue did not concern them.

Segmented response data was gathered from various USBC tournament groups (Open Championships, Women's Championships, PWBA Tour, PBA Tour, Youth and Collegiate, Senior Events) and public-facing platforms (Facebook, Instagram), providing a view of how different audiences perceive the topic.

## CONCLUSION

A complete ban on urethane would be a complicated transition for consumers and ball manufacturers. USBC is mindful of the impact such major governance changes would have on membership and the industry.

With more than 57% of respondents answering that USBC should take some form of action and less than 39% supporting no changes, USBC staff does believe new governance is needed. As next steps, USBC staff will work through the Equipment Specifications Committee to determine a recommendation that may include some combination of national tournament rules to remove current urethane balls from national events and/or considering higher hardness manufacturing specifications for urethane balls in the future. Alternatively, the Committee may decide not to make any changes at all.

USBC **is not** considering revocation of approved balls or rules that would prohibit urethane balls from USBC leagues or tournaments that choose to allow them. USBC is not considering changes that would justify a return or refund for any bowling ball.

USBC would also like to share as a point of clarification. In the USBC Equipment Specifications Manual there is a carve out for non-high-performance bowling balls. Non-high-performance bowling balls as defined in the Manual would not be impacted by any of the changes under consideration.

## BALL TYPES POTENTIALLY IMPACTED\*

### Examples of high-performance urethane balls that could be removed from national tournaments:

- Storm Pitch Black and IQ Tour 78/U
- Purple Hammer and Black Hammer 78D

### Examples of high-performance balls that are NOT under consideration for removal:

- NU Blue Hammer
- Storm Level
- Motiv Tank Yellowjacket

### Examples of non-high-performance balls that are NOT under consideration for removal:

- Storm Mix
- Hammer Axe
- Motiv Sniper

\*The list above is not exhaustive. These are simply examples from three manufacturers to help illustrate the types of balls considered urethane for potential removal from national tournaments and those not impacted.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A combined 57.32% of respondents favored changes to urethane governance.
- Support for tighter specifications presents a potential solution (17.63%).
- There was some support (3.08%) for a partial, national-tournament-only ban.
- Open Championships bowlers showed more support for change compared to general audiences. (2.72% increase for a total of 60.04% supporting change)
- 4% indicated the issue was not relevant or important to them.

## METHODOLOGY

The poll was conducted using SurveyMonkey with a one-question format and distributed in a phased approach to ensure broad reach and allow for segmented analysis.

- **Phase 1:** The survey was first shared publicly through social media (Facebook and Instagram).
- **Phase 2:** Next, targeted email distributions were sent to segmented USBC groups including Open Championships, Women's Championships, PWBA and PBA tournaments, Youth and Collegiate, and Senior bowlers. This allowed USBC to confirm consistency and compare results across known participant groups.

To promote data quality and protect against bias:

- **One response per IP address** was enforced through SurveyMonkey settings to limit duplicate responses.
- **Answers were locked** after submission, meaning users could not change their response once submitted.
- **No identifying information** (e.g., names, email addresses) was required to preserve anonymity and encourage honest feedback.
- **Answer choices were displayed in alphabetical order** to eliminate placement bias and ensure neutral presentation.
- **Segmented tracking** was used for each distribution channel (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Open Championships email), allowing response trends to be analyzed by groups.

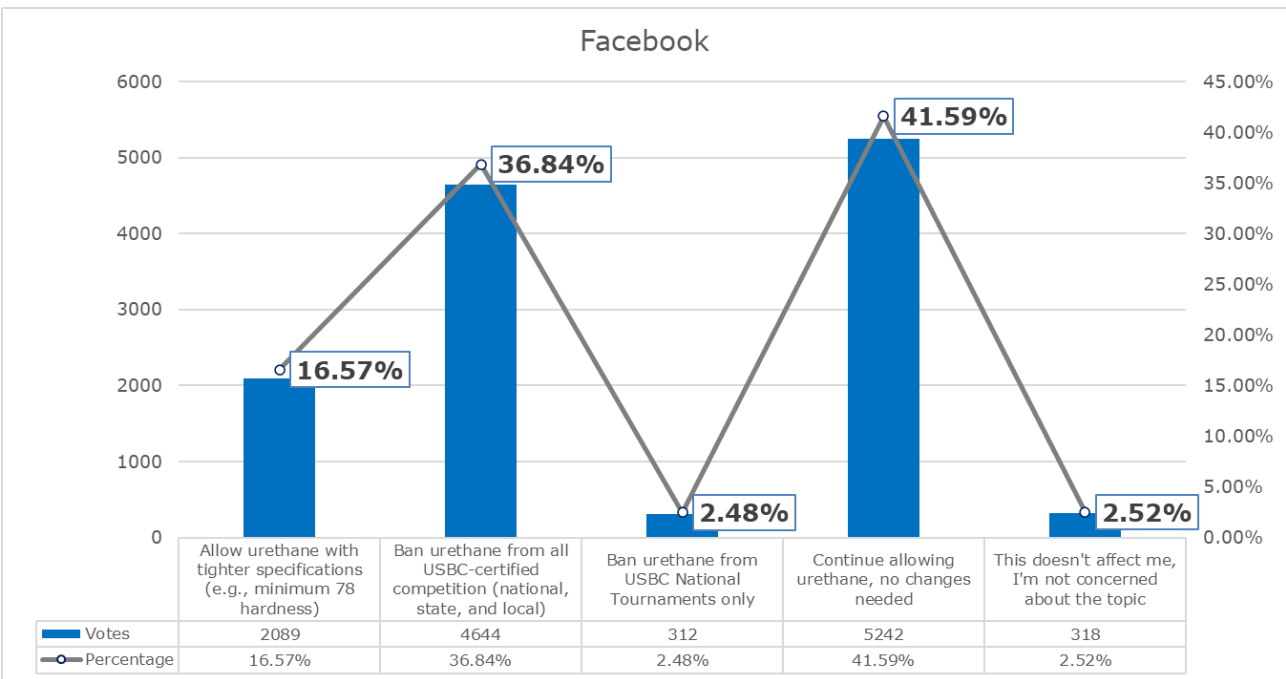
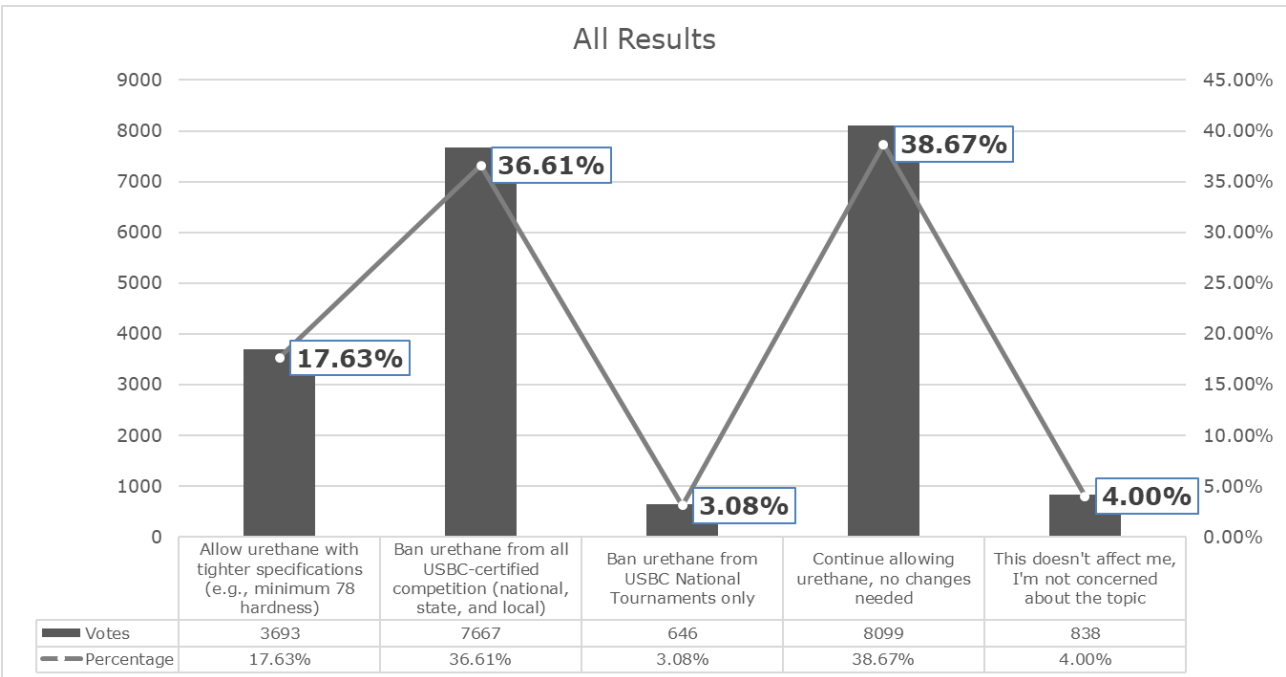
### Collector Breakdown:

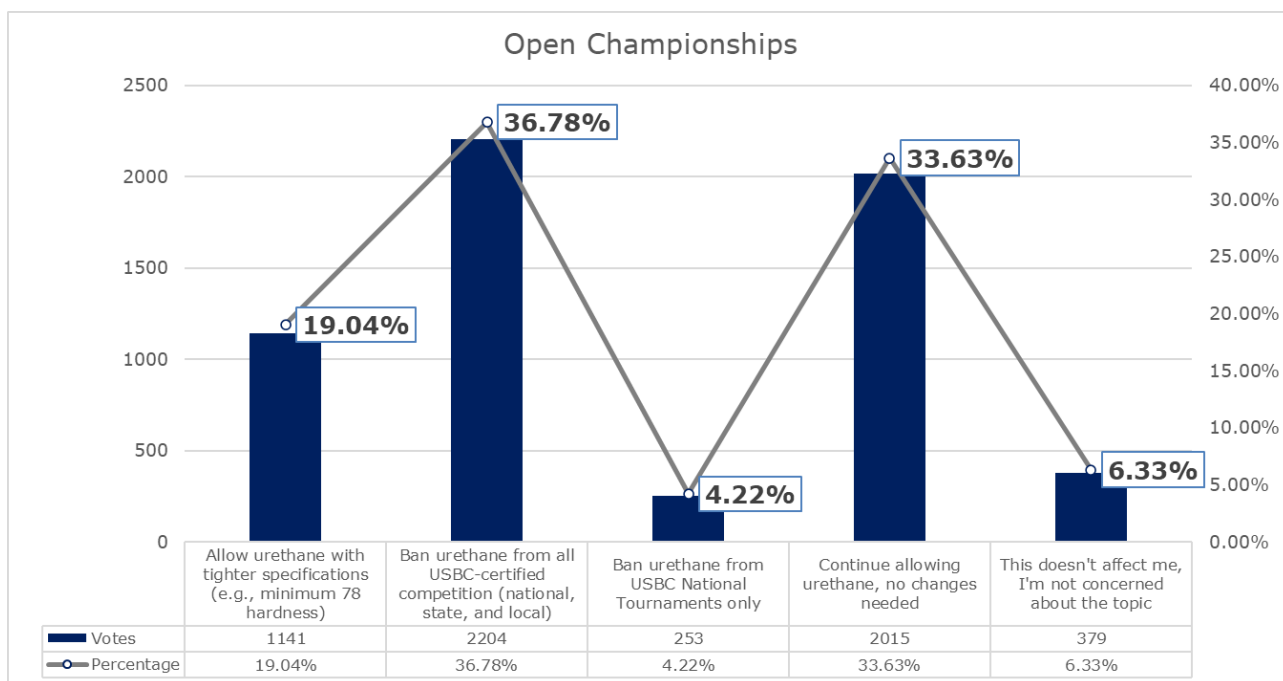
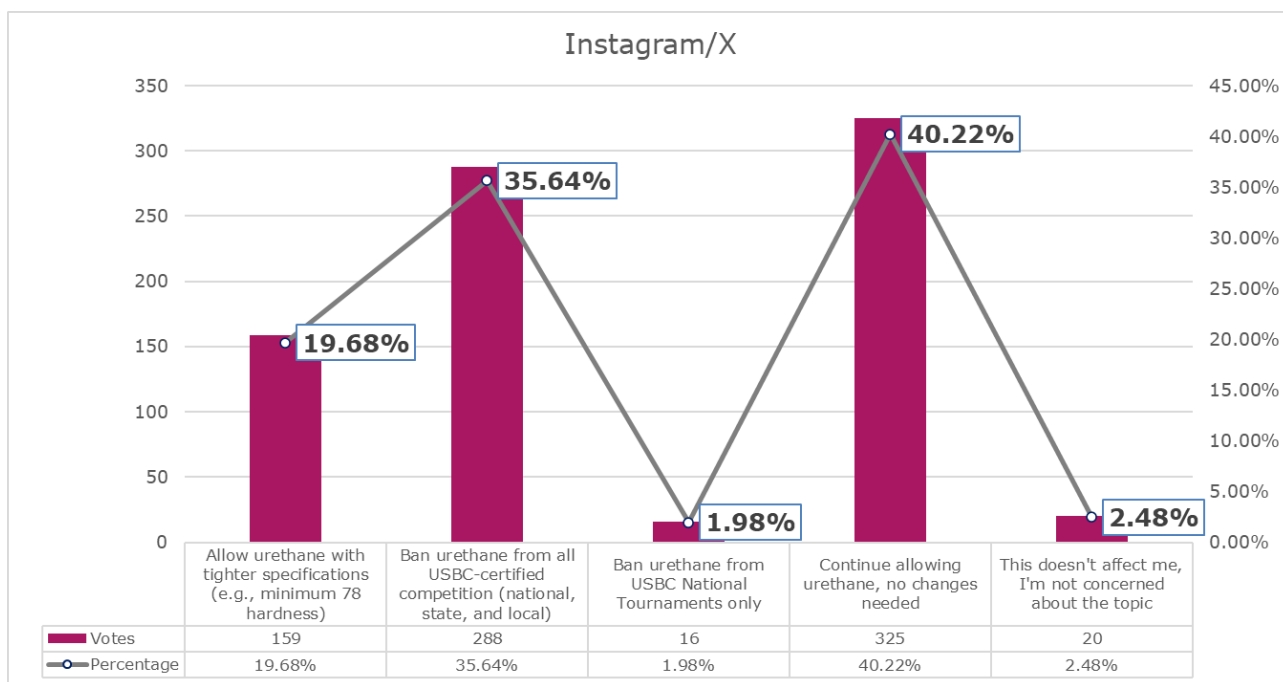
- Facebook: 12,605 responses
- Instagram/X: 808
- Open Championships: 5,992
- Women's Championships: 921
- Youth Tournaments: 472
- PWBA Tournaments: 56
- PBA Tournaments: 33
- Senior Tournaments: 56

# SURVEY RESULTS

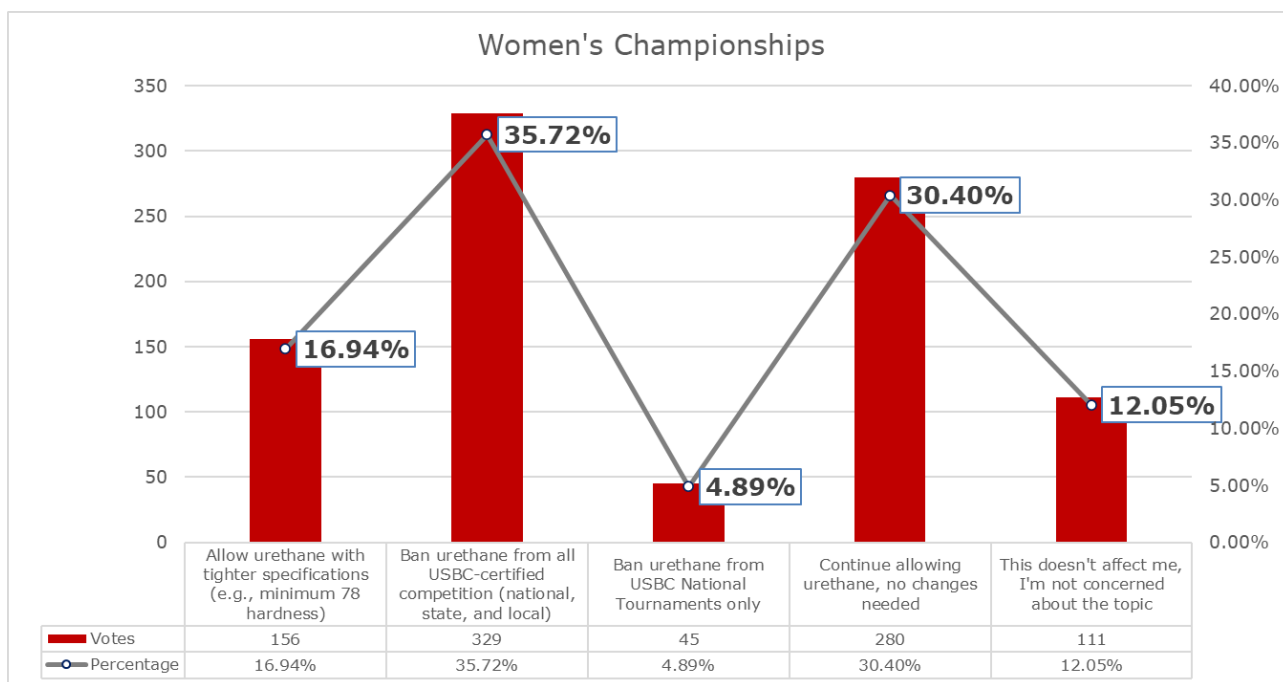
## Question:

What should USBC do about urethane bowling balls in certified competitions?

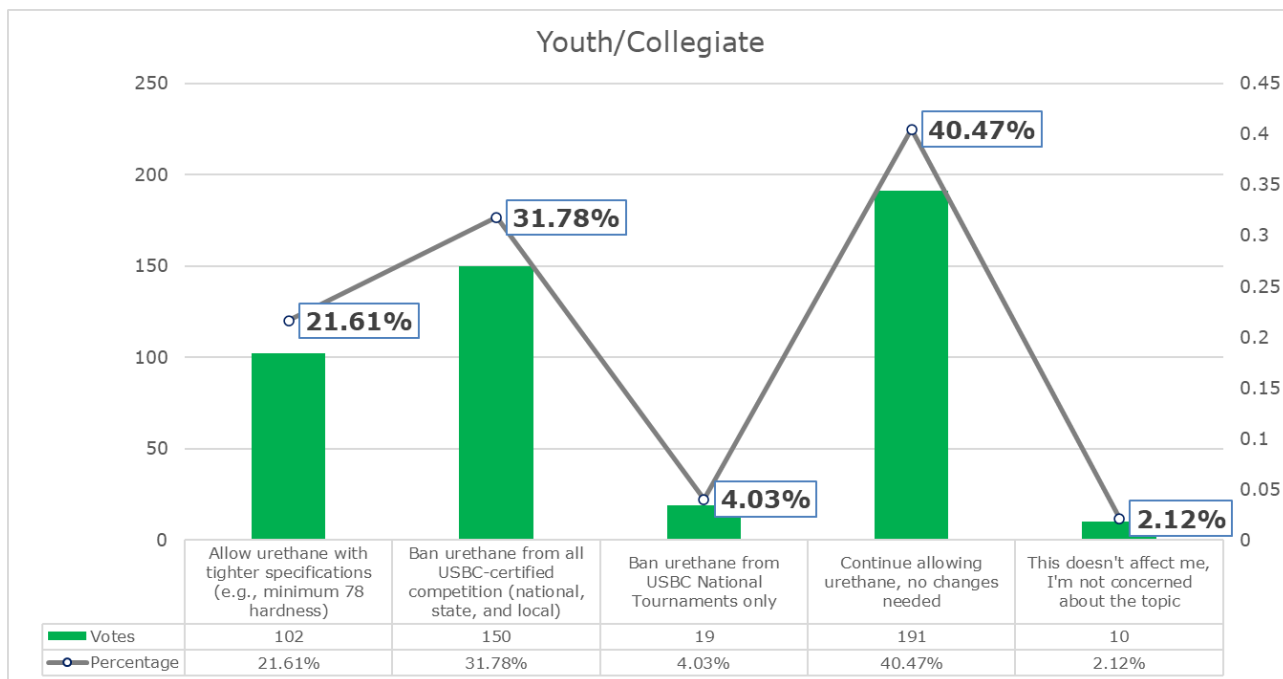




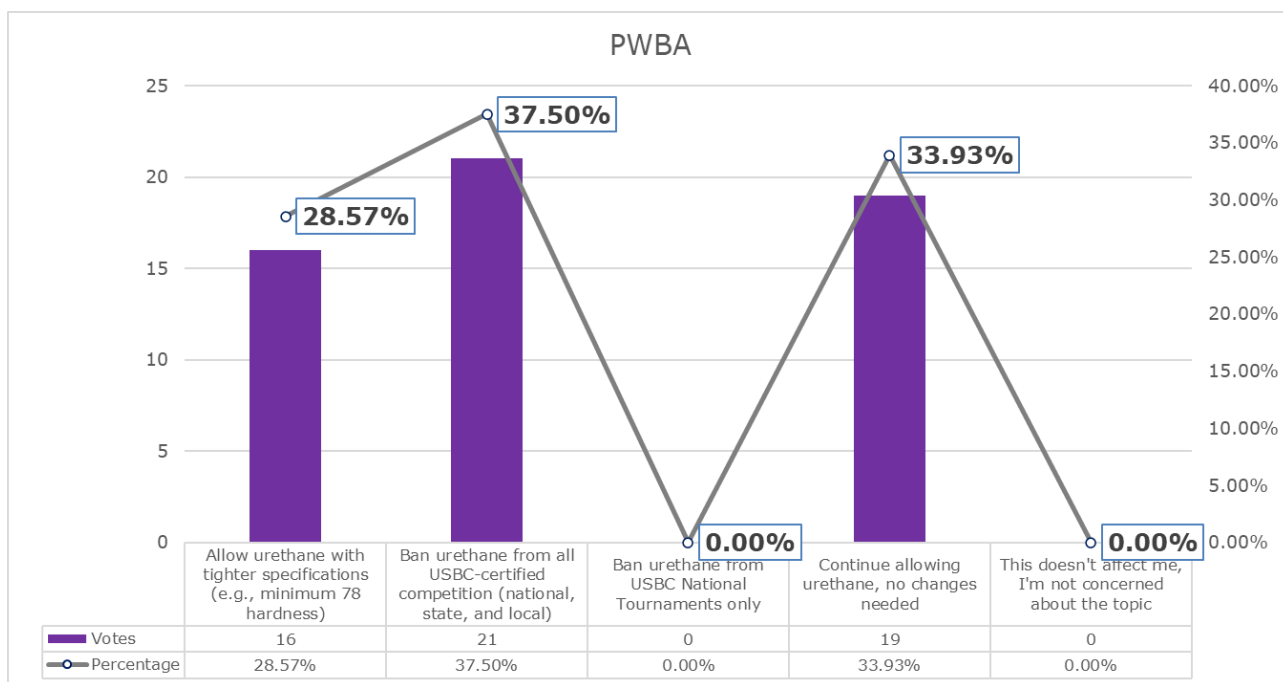
Open Championships bowlers showed more support for some form of change compared to the general audience.



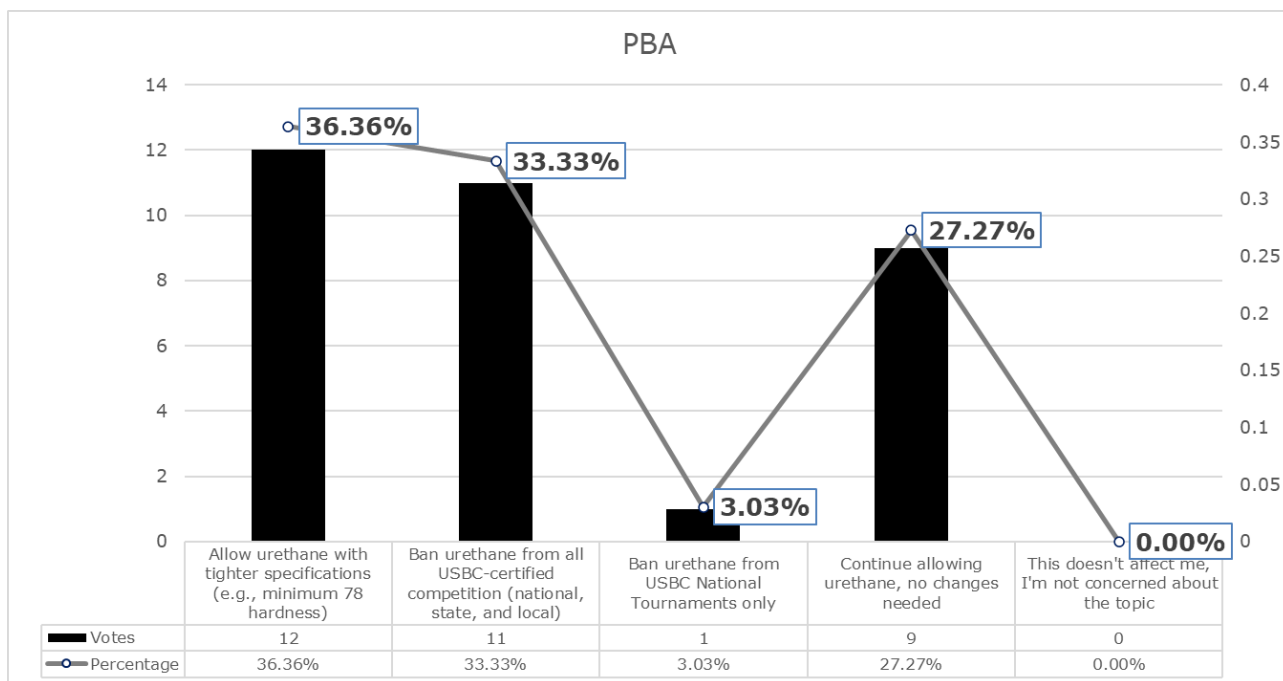
A higher percentage of Women's Championships bowlers compared to the general audiences said this doesn't affect them.

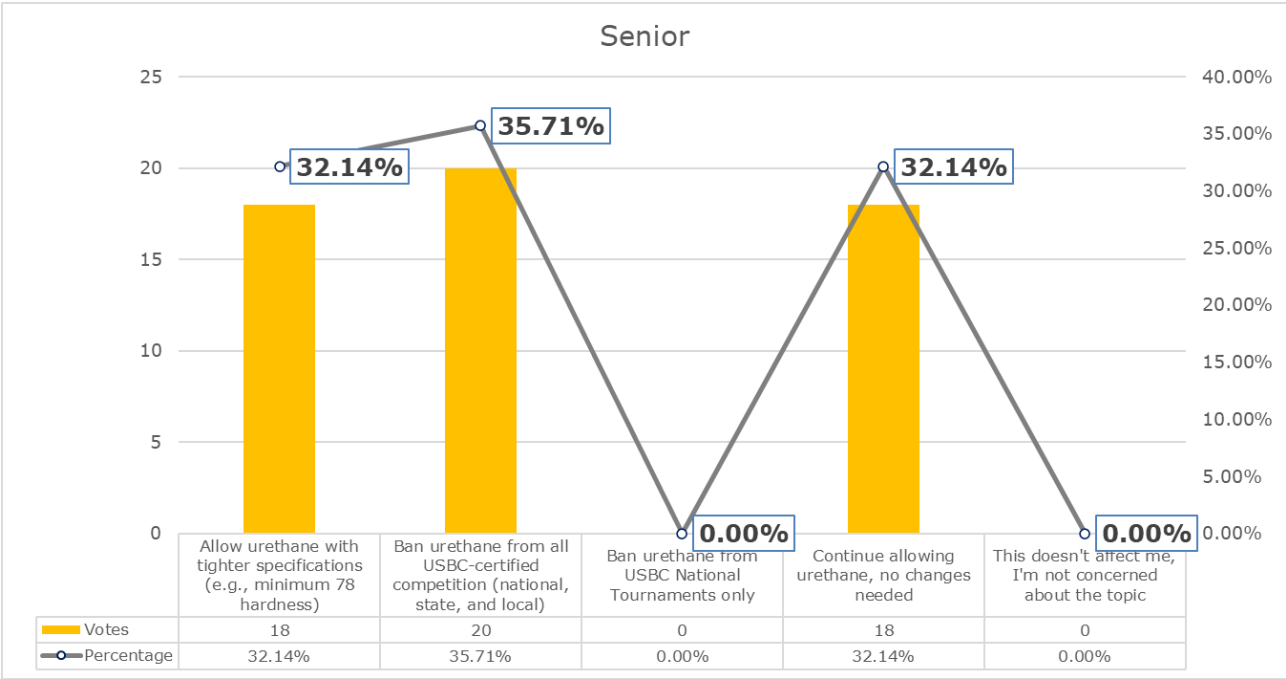


Youth and Collegiate voted at a higher rate compared to the general audiences for allowing urethane with tighter specifications.



Although a small sample size, both PBA and PWBA voted for continuing to allow Urethane with tighter specifications compared to the general audiences.





Similar to the PBA and PWBA results, Senior tournament bowlers also indicated a higher percentage compared to the general audiences for allowing Urethane with tighter specifications.

## SUMMARY

The USBC urethane bowling ball survey generated significant engagement, with more than 20,000 responses collected across multiple segments of the bowling community. The results reflect a wide range of viewpoints on the future of urethane in certified competition.

More than half (57.32%) of respondents expressed support for some form of change, including a complete ban, tighter specifications, or limiting use in national tournaments. A substantial portion (38.67%) indicated a preference to maintain the current rules, while a small percentage (just 4%) said the issue does not concern them.