

# Landlord Perceptions of Homelessness in the Bear River Region

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## Introduction

Homelessness has been rising at an alarming rate in the Bear River Region (BRR). From 2017 to 2019, there was an increase of 400% in unsheltered individuals in the BRR compared to about 75% increase across Utah (State of Utah Annual Report on Homelessness, 2019).

- **Lack of affordable housing** is one of the likely causes for the increase of homelessness in the BRR.
- **Housing programs, such as permanent supportive housing and rapid rehousing**, that could reduce homelessness are not widely implemented throughout the BRR.
- **Landlord engagement** within the BRR is critical for the implementation of these programs, particularly due to low housing stock.

### Research Objectives

1. To ascertain BRR landlords' perspectives and knowledge on the issue of homelessness.
2. Understand the interest of landlords in engaging in homeless services and housing programs.

## Methods

USU undergraduate social work students collaborated on a community-engaged class project related to awareness and attitudes regarding homelessness.

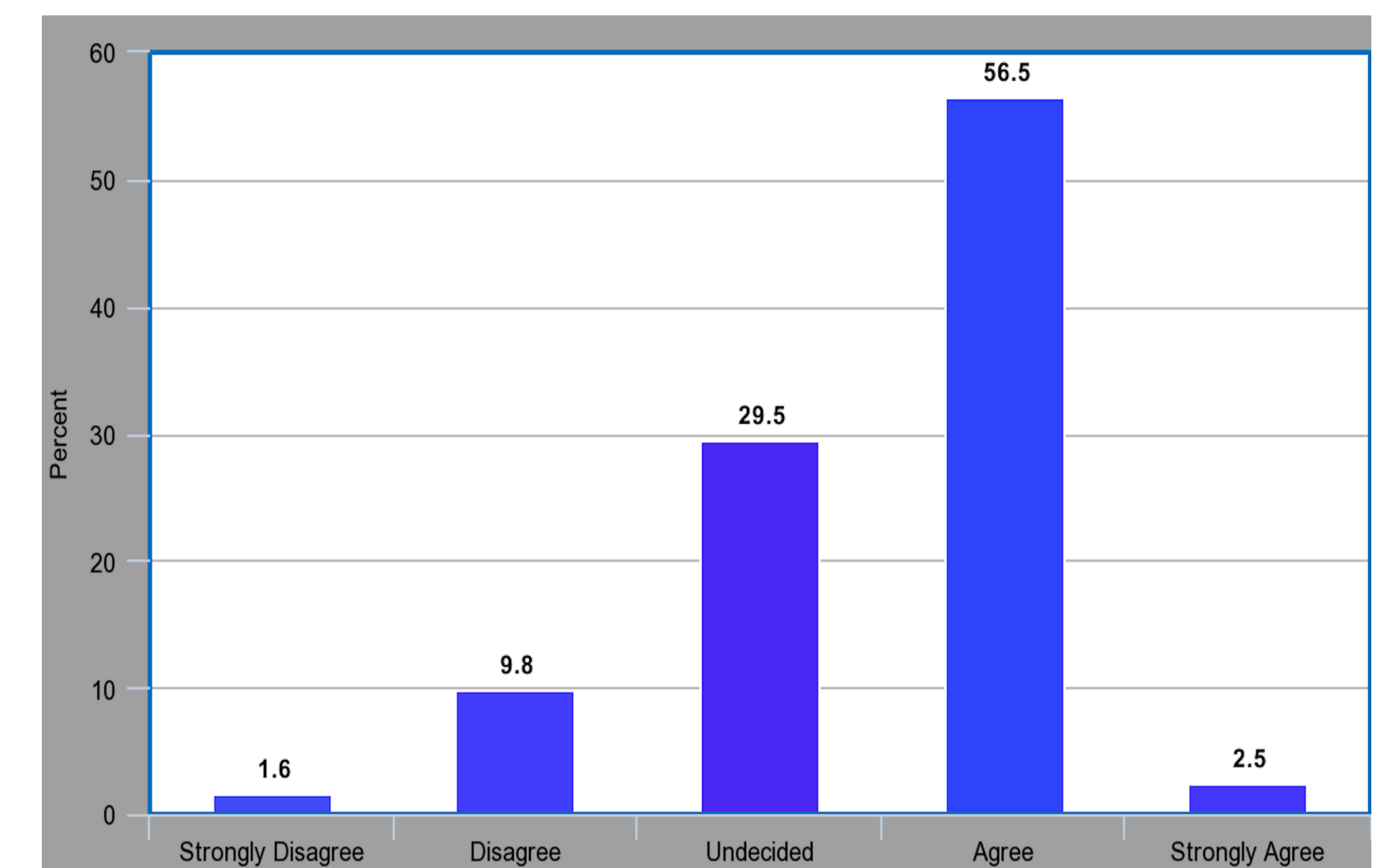
1. A random sample of 600 landlords and property managers in the BRR were selected.
2. After receiving training, surveys were administered by USU students via phone, email, and mail.

Results were collected in Qualtrics. Descriptive and bivariate statistics were generated.

## Results

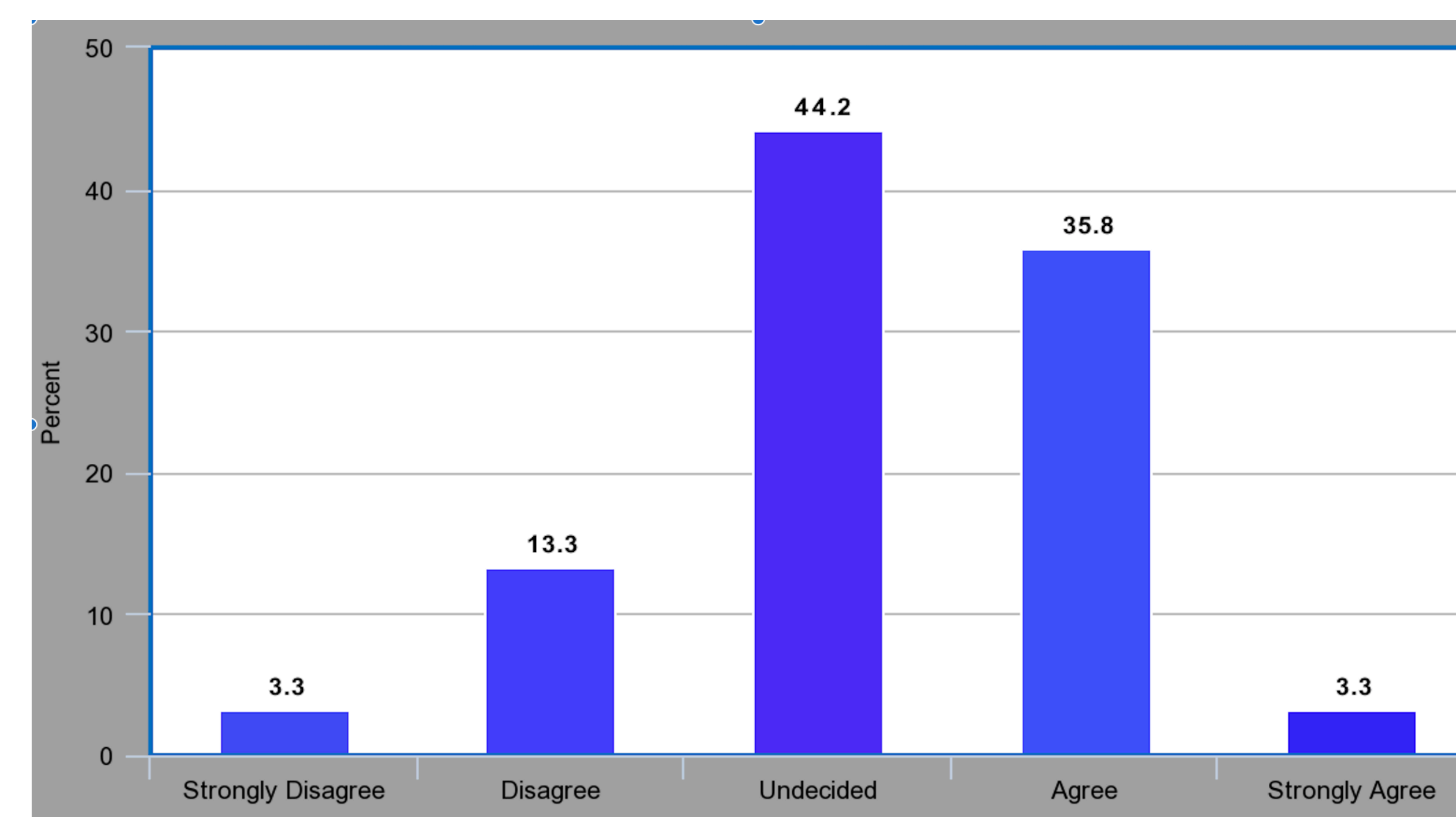
- Landlords (n= 130) underestimate rates and growth of homelessness. **No respondents correctly estimated the rates and growth in the BRR.**
- **2 out of 3** landlords are not well informed on available resources.
- **50%** of landlords would be more likely to rent to individuals experiencing homelessness if they had an outside point of contact (e.g., social services) to utilize if issues arose.
- **Half** of landlords are interested in helping solve homelessness.

**Figure 2 – Landlords Who Want to Help Solve Homelessness but Don't Know How**



Respondents were asked if they wanted to help solve homelessness but did not know how to address the issue within the BRR.

**Figure 1 – Landlords' Belief Regarding Personal Impact on Homelessness**



Respondents were asked if they believed they could have a personal impact on homelessness within the BRR.



## Conclusions

Currently, 36 USU social work students are using these data in their community practice class to develop interventions targeting landlord involvement in reducing homelessness in the BRR. Examples include:

- **FAQ page** for the Local Homeless Coordinating Committee's website
- Printed and mailed **resource guide** for landlords

Data will also be shared with state officials who have interest in engaging landlords in reducing homelessness in Utah.