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# Health Care Costs and Instability of Insurance: Impact on Patients' Experiences with Care and Medical Bills

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Hearing on "A Review of Hospital Billing and Collection Practices"

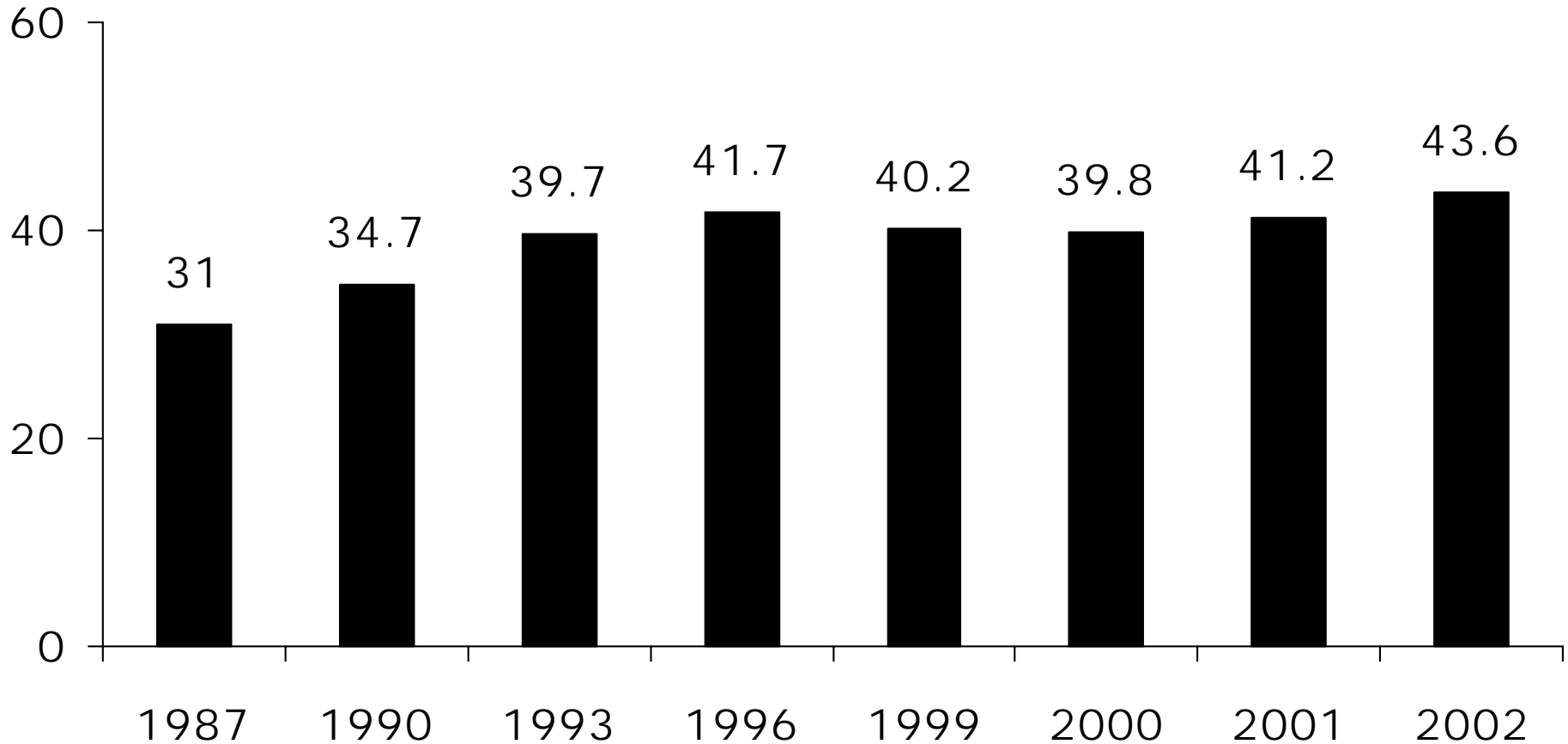
U.S. House of Representatives

Committee on Energy and Commerce

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

# Uninsured Up by Nearly 4 Million People in Past Two Years

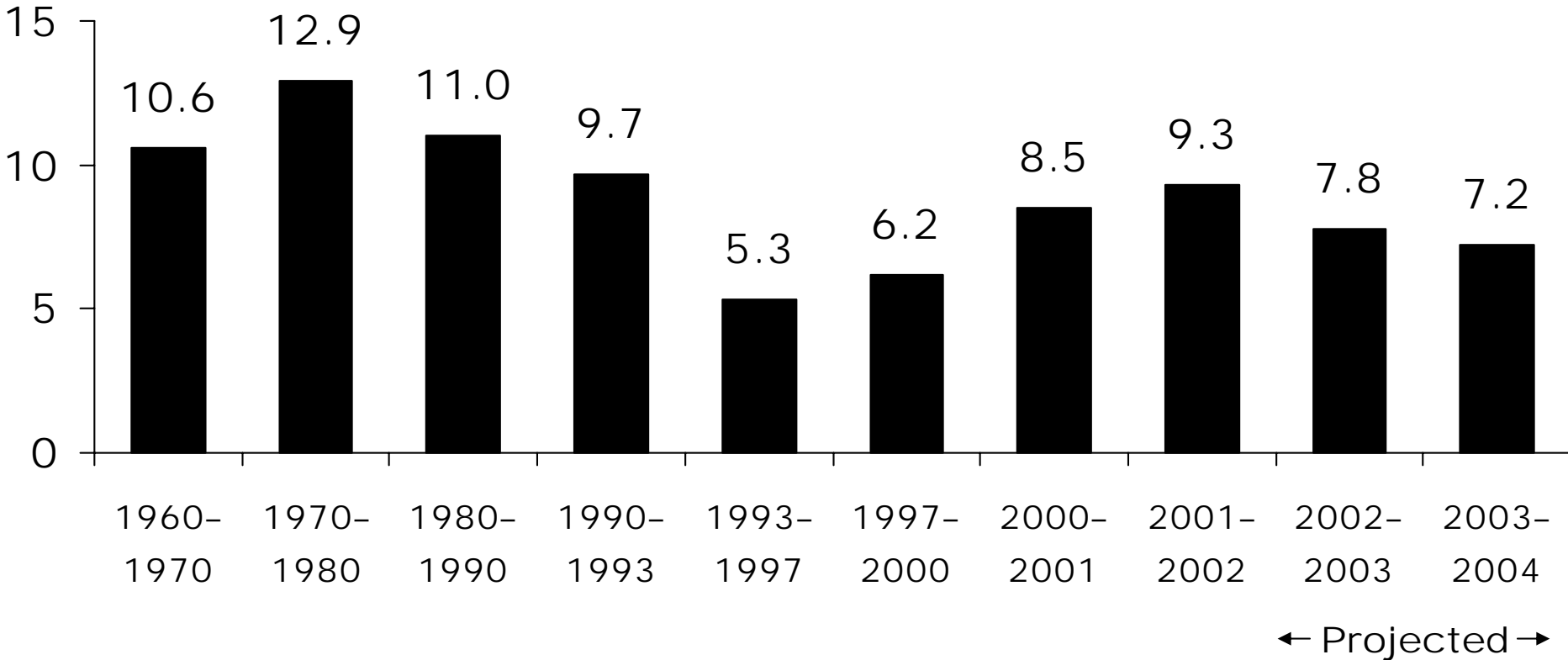
Millions uninsured, 1987-2002



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, March CPS Surveys March 1988 to March 2003. Years 1999 and on adjust for new question and for 2000 population weights.

# National Health Expenditures' Average Annual Percentage Growth, Selected Calendar Years, 1960–2004

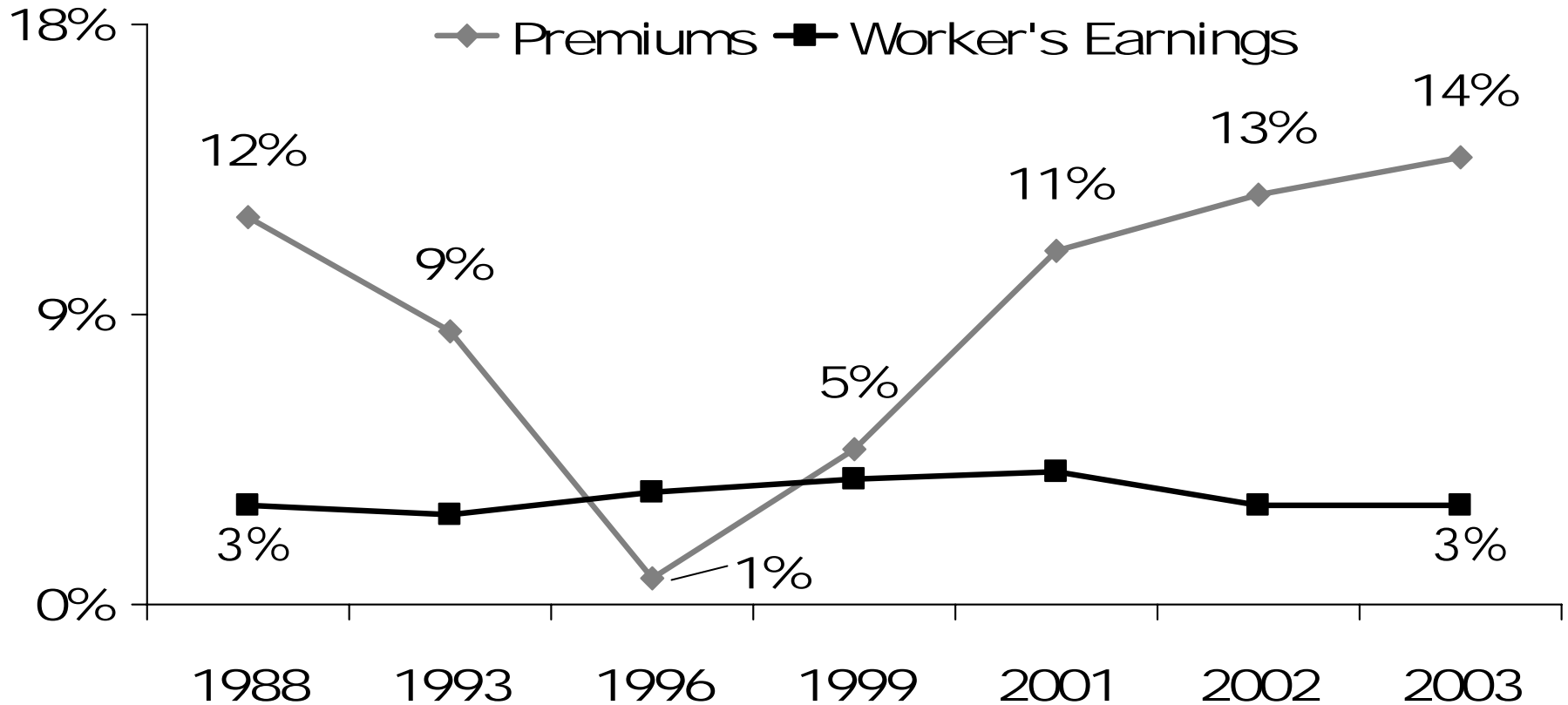
Percent



Source: The Commonwealth Fund, based on K. Levit et al., "Health Care Spending Rebound Continues in 2002," *Health Affairs* 23 (Jan./Feb. 2004): 147–59; and S. Heffler et al., "Health Spending Projections Through 2013," *Health Affairs* Web Exclusive (11 Feb. 2004): W4-79–W4-93.

# Growth in Employment-Based Insurance Premiums

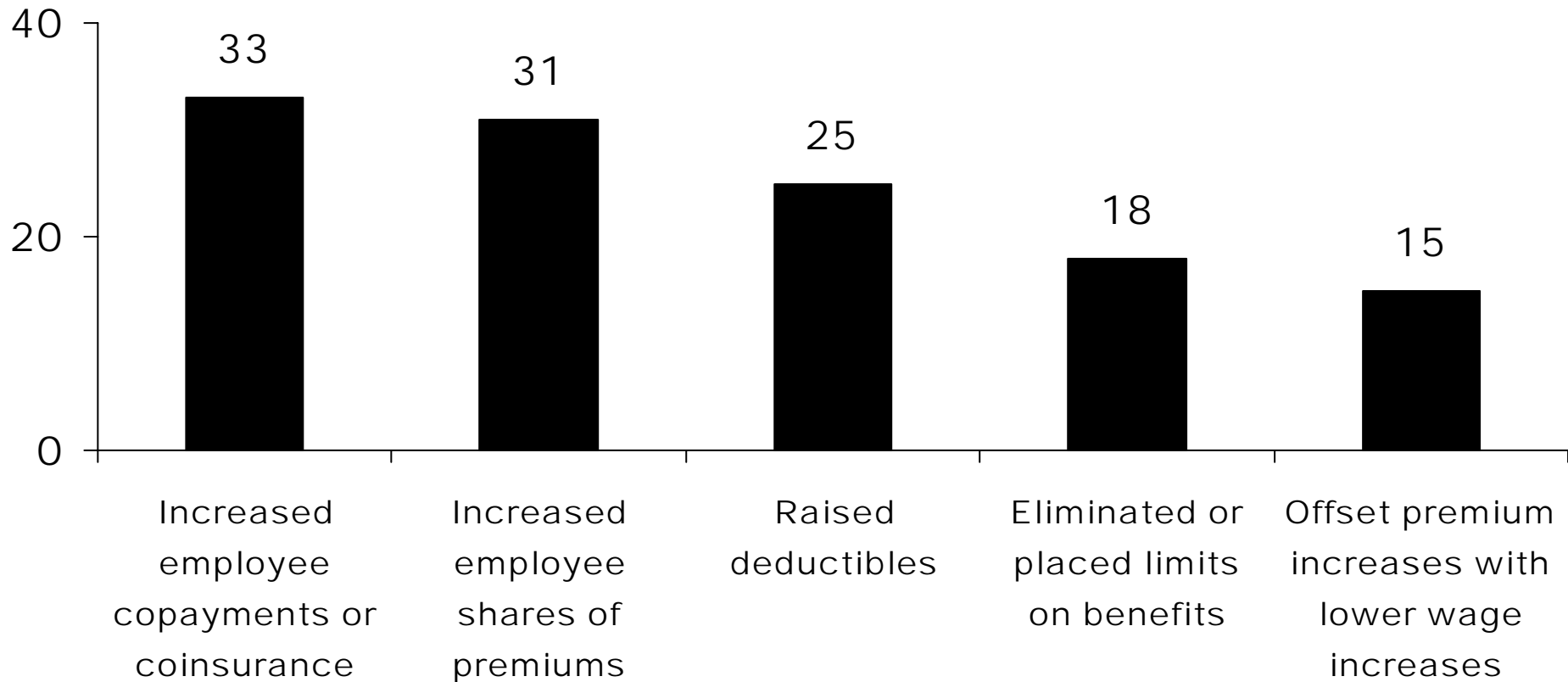
Percent change in health insurance premiums and workers' earnings from previous year



Source: J. Gabel et al., "Health Benefits in 2003: Premiums Reach Thirteen Year High as Employers Adopt New Forms of Cost Sharing," *Health Affairs* (Sept./Oct. 2003): 117-26.

# Percent of Employers with Increases in Cost-Sharing, Reductions in Benefits

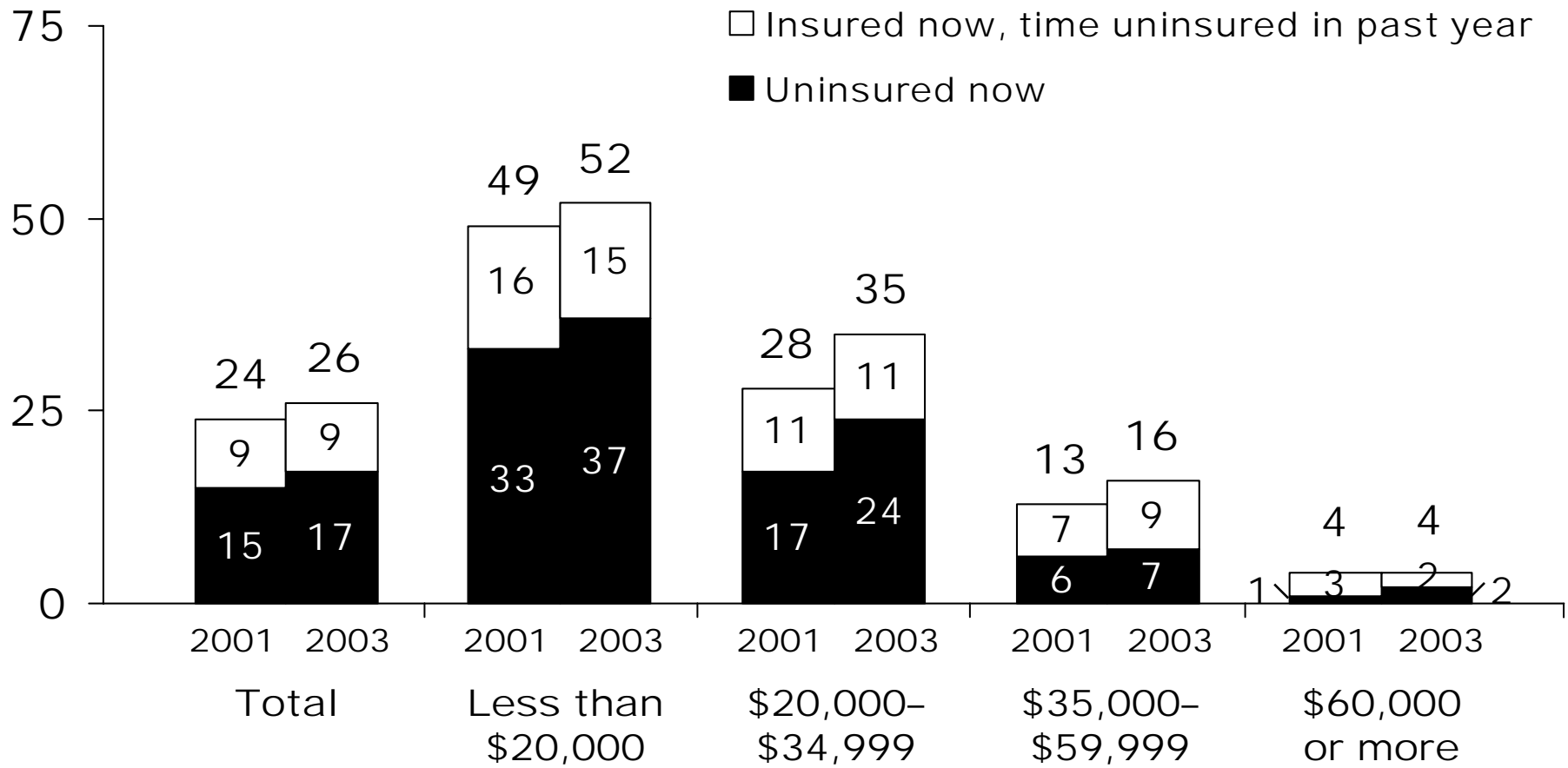
Percent of firms offering coverage



Source: S.R. Collins et al., *Job-Based Health Insurance in the Balance: Employer Views of Coverage in the Workplace* (New York: The Commonwealth Fund, March 2004).

# More than One-Quarter of Adults Uninsured: Rates Highest Among Adults with Low Incomes, 2001-2003

Percent of adults ages 19-64

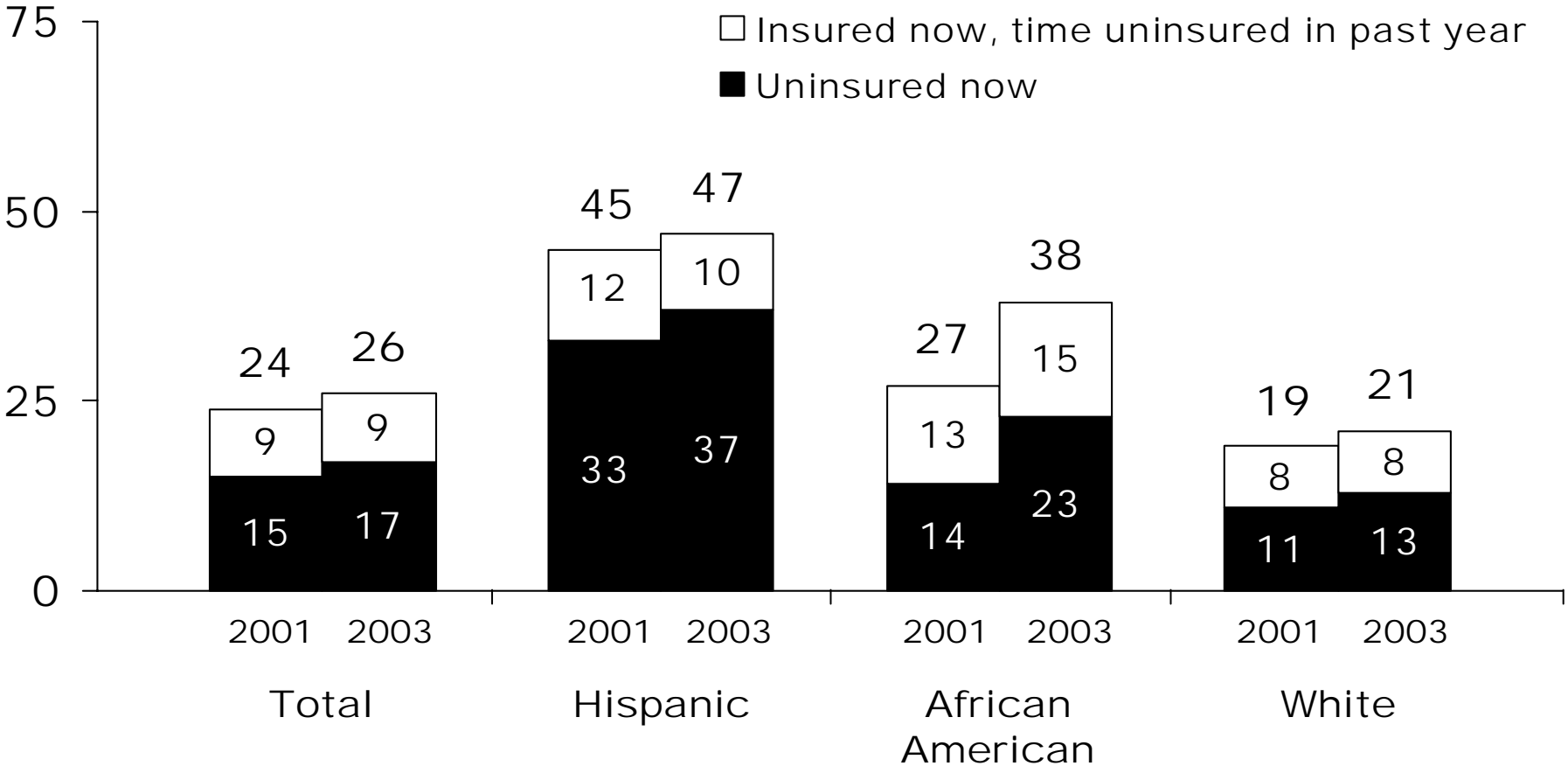


Note: Income groups based on 2002 household income.

Source: The Commonwealth Fund Health Insurance Surveys (2001 and 2003).

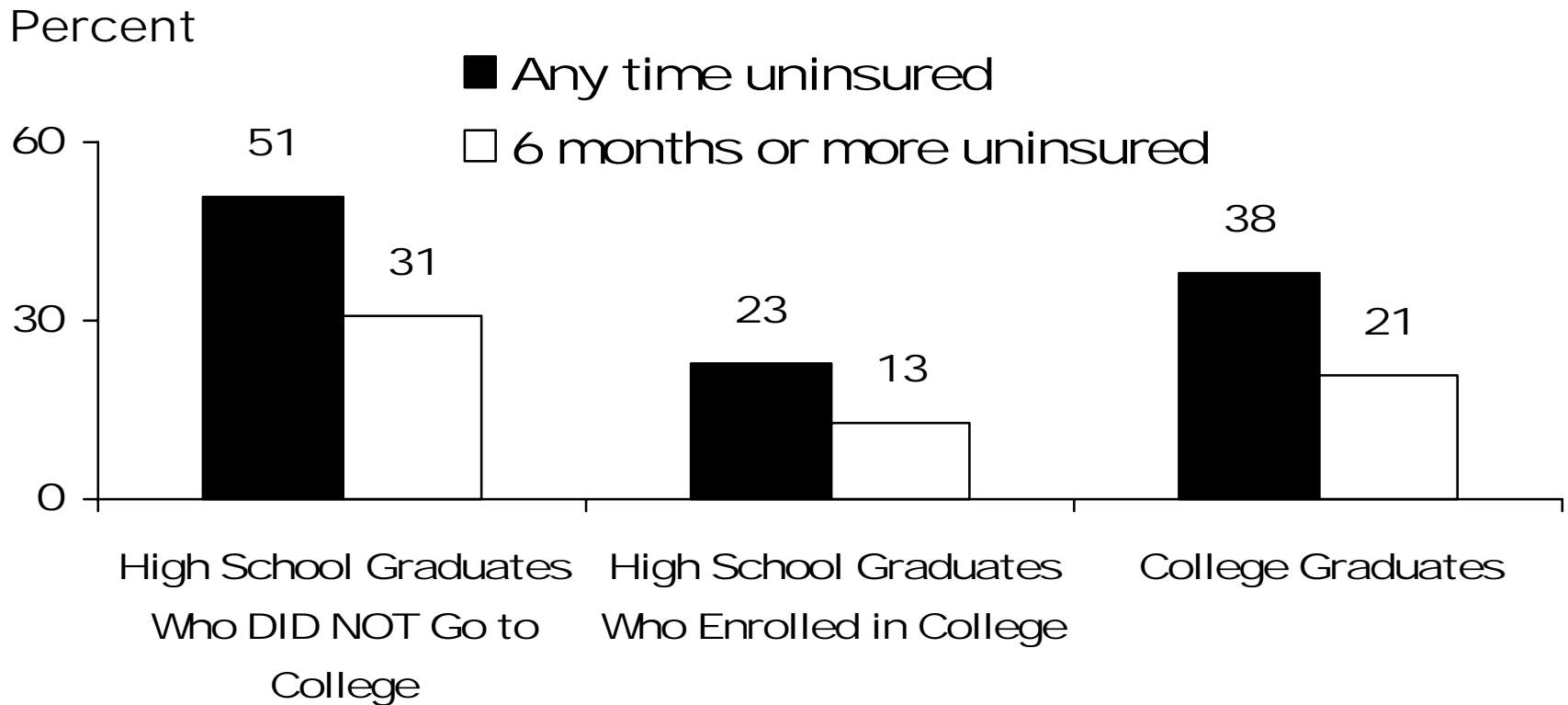
# Uninsured Rates Highest Among Hispanics and African Americans, 2001-2003

Percent of adults ages 19-64



Source: The Commonwealth Fund Health Insurance Surveys (2001 and 2003).

# Percent of Graduates with Gaps in Insurance Coverage in Year Following Graduation, by Student Status 1996–2000\*

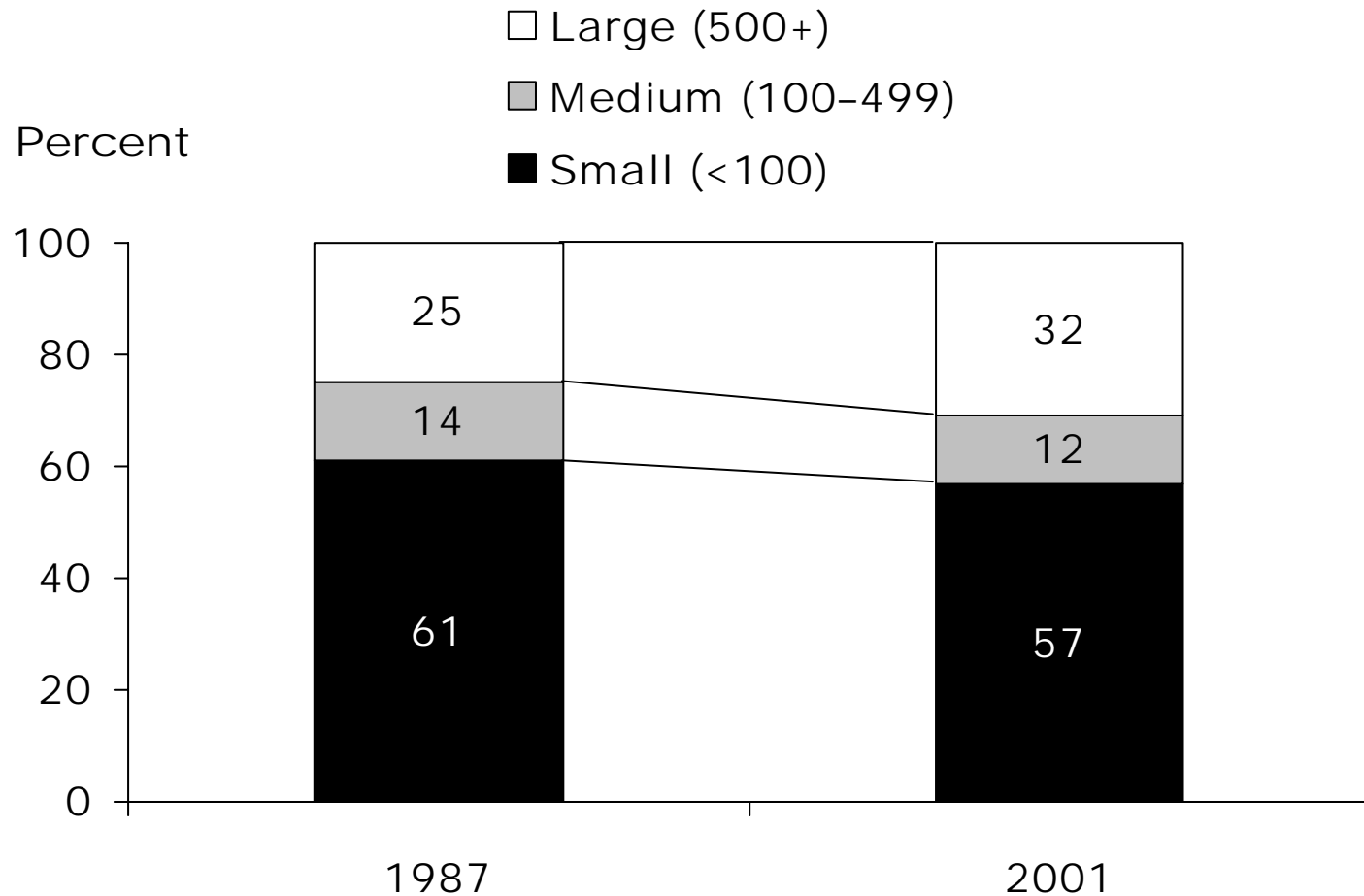


\* People who graduated from high school or college during 1996–2000.

Source: S.R. Collins et al., *Rite of Passage? Why Young Adults Become Uninsured and How New Policies Can Help* (New York: The Commonwealth Fund, May 2004).



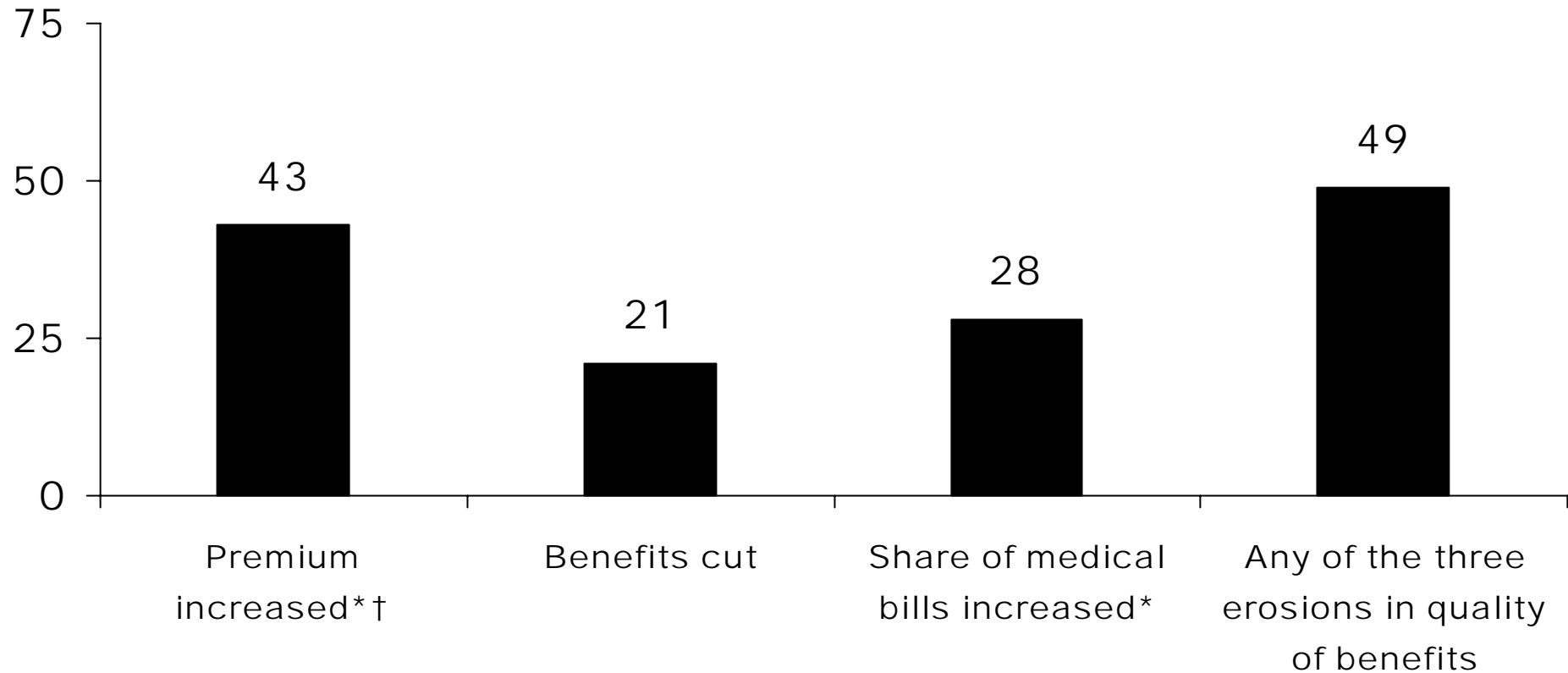
# Share of Uninsured Workers by Firm Size, 1987–2001



Source: S. Glied, J.M. Lambrew, and S. Little, *The Growing Share of Uninsured Workers Employed by Large Firms* (New York: The Commonwealth Fund, October 2003).

# Nearly Half of Adults with Private Health Insurance Report Erosions in Their Benefits

Percent of adults 19-64 with continuous coverage throughout past year



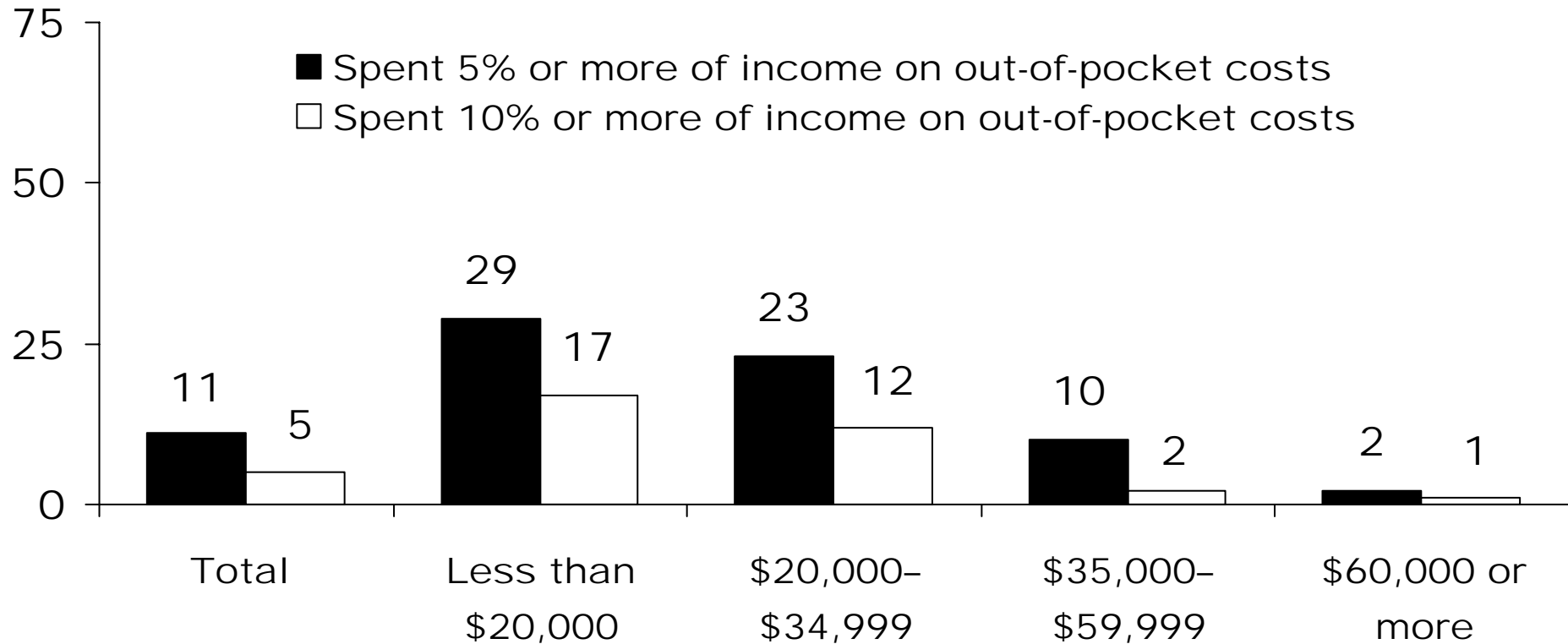
\* Increased a lot or a moderate amount.

† Among those who pay any premium.

Source: The Commonwealth Fund Biennial Health Insurance Survey (2003).

# Adults with Low and Moderate Incomes Spend Greatest Share of Income on Out-of-Pocket Costs

Percent of adults ages 19–64 insured all year  
with private insurance

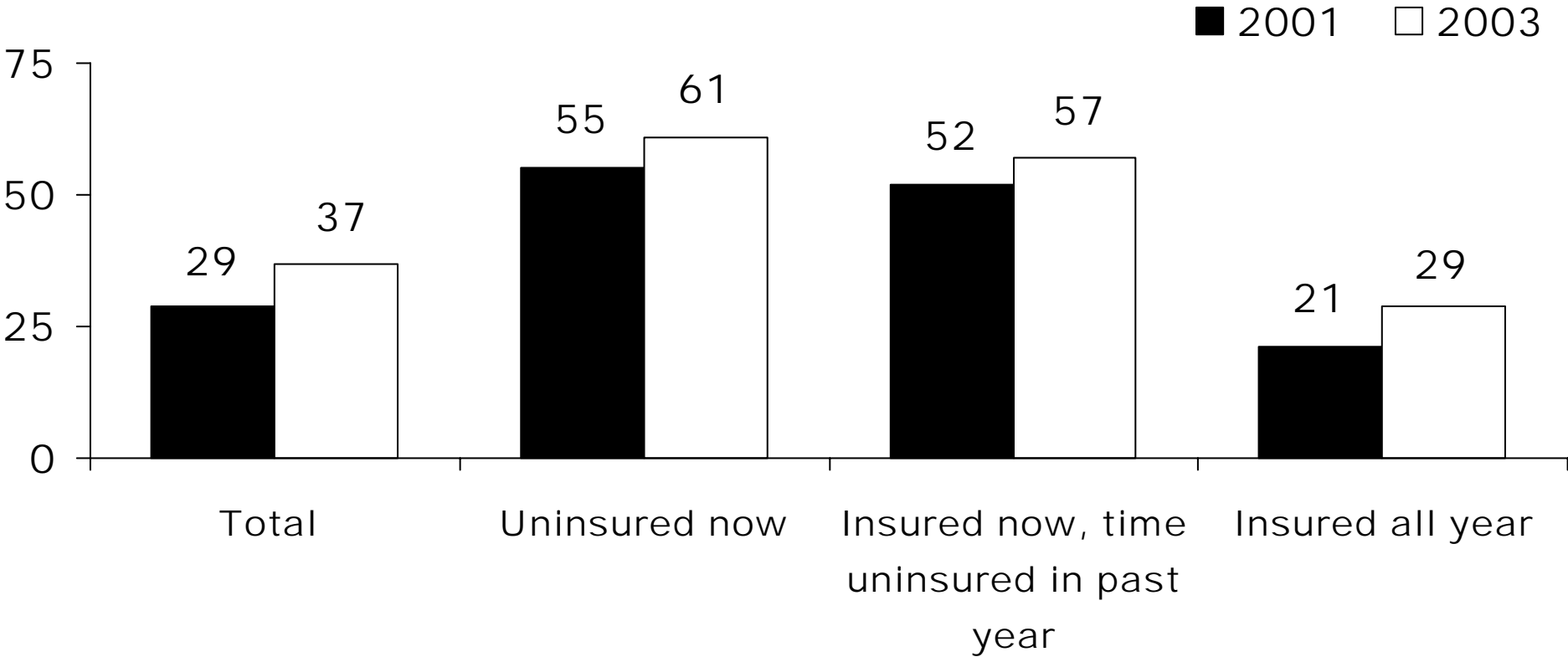


Note: Income groups based on 2002 household income.

Source: The Commonwealth Fund Biennial Health Insurance Survey (2003).

# Cost-Related Access Problems Have Increased, 2001-2003

Percent of adults ages 19-64 who had any of four access problems\* in past year because of cost



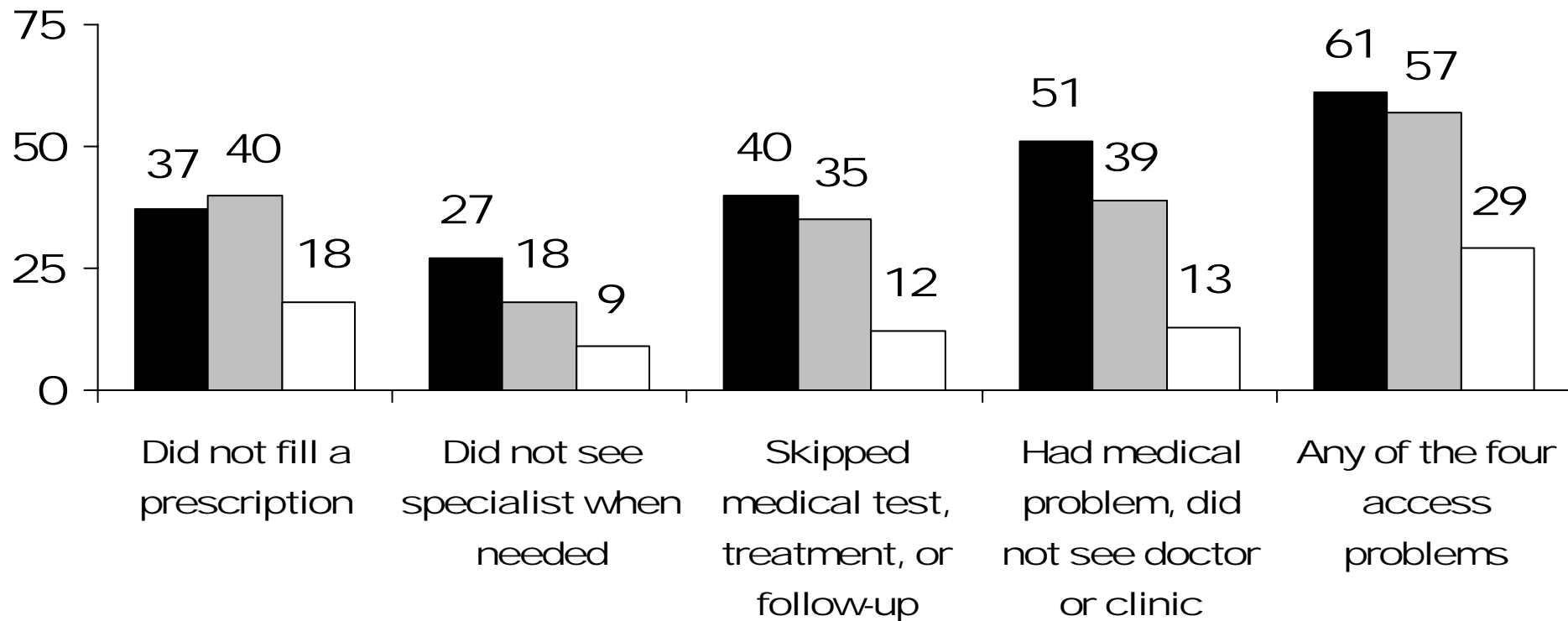
\* Did not fill a prescription; did not see a specialist when needed; skipped recommended medical test, treatment, or follow-up; had a medical problem but did not visit doctor or clinic.

Source: The Commonwealth Fund Health Insurance Surveys (2001 and 2003).

# Lacking Health Insurance for Any Period Threatens Access to Care

Percent of adults ages 19–64 reporting the following problems because of cost:

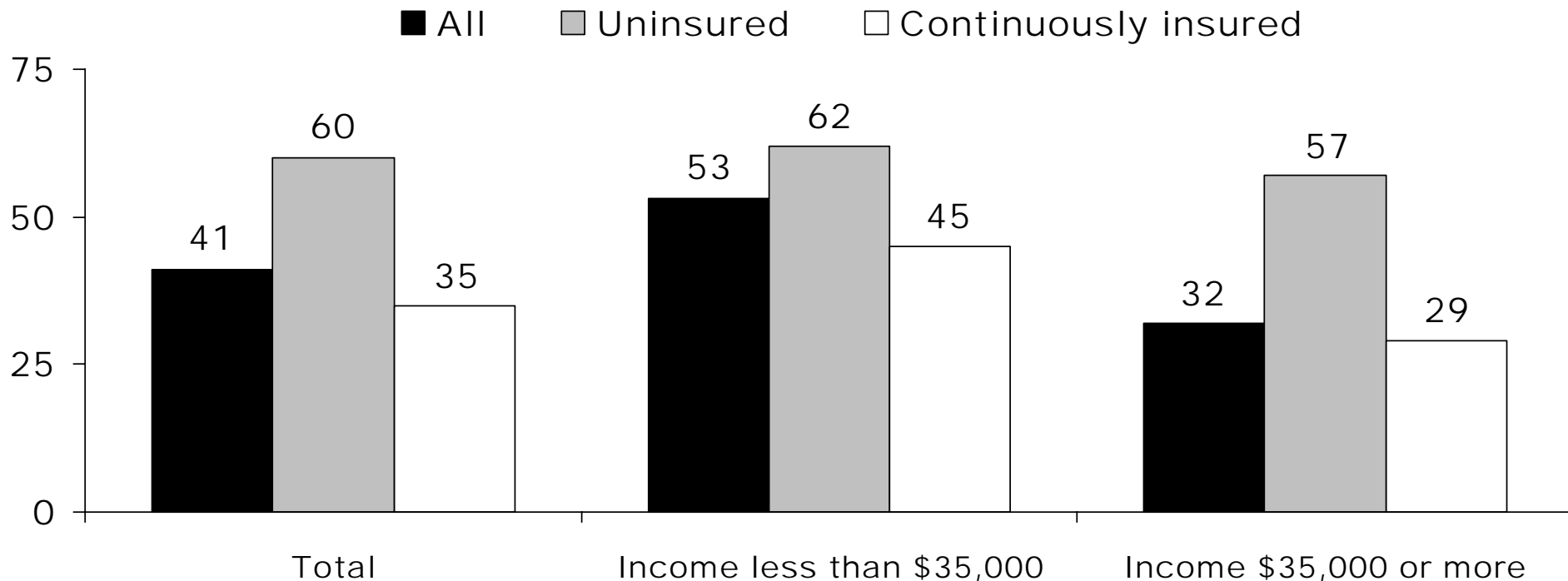
■ Uninsured now    ■ Insured now, time uninsured in past year    □ Insured all year



Source: The Commonwealth Fund Biennial Health Insurance Survey (2003).

# Two of Five Adults Have Medical Bill Problems or Accrued Medical Debt:<sup>\*</sup> Uninsured and Low Income Most at Risk

Percent of adults ages 19–64 with any medical bill problem or outstanding debt



<sup>\*</sup> Problems paying/not able to pay medical bills, contacted by a collection agency for medical bills, had to change way of life to pay bills, or has medical debt being paid off over time.

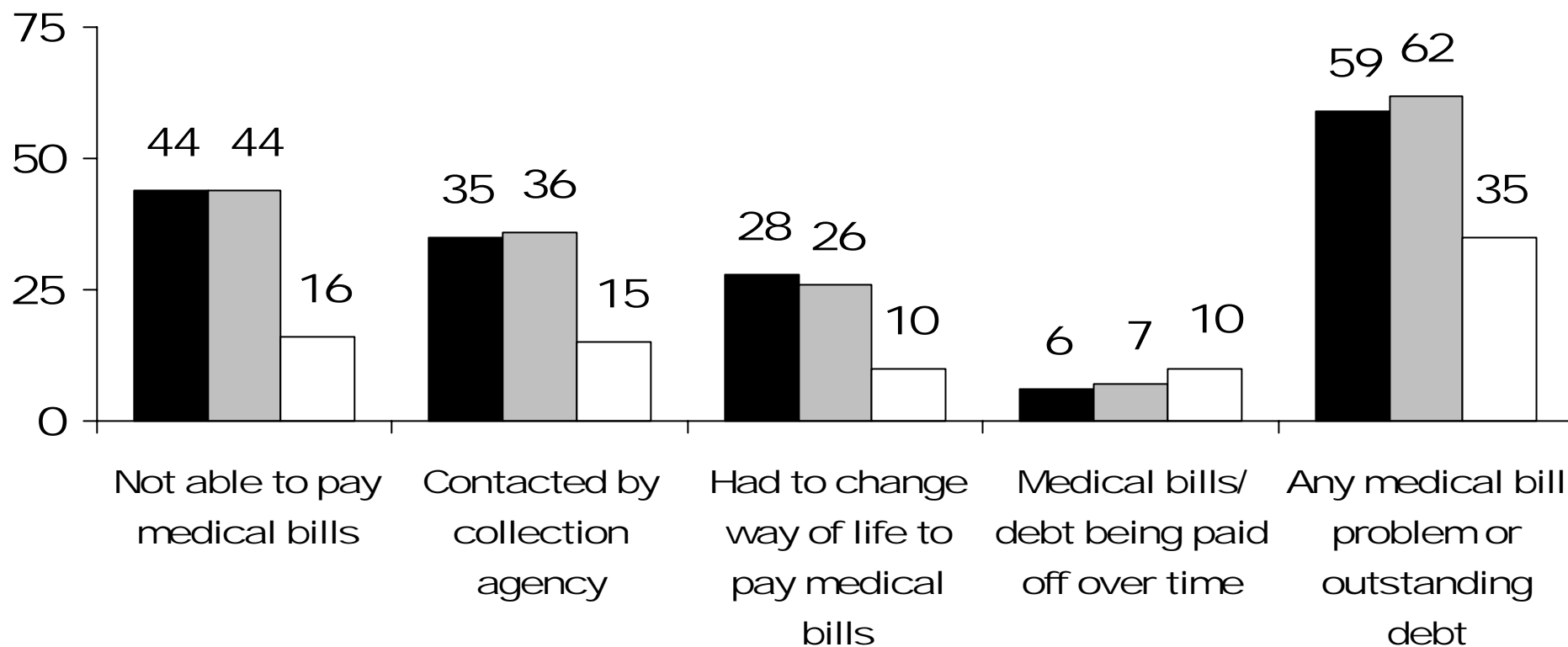
Note: Income groups based on 2002 household income.

Source: The Commonwealth Fund Biennial Health Insurance Survey (2003).

# Adults with Any Time Uninsured Have High Rates of Medical Bill Problems

Percent of adults ages 19–64 who had the following problems in past year:

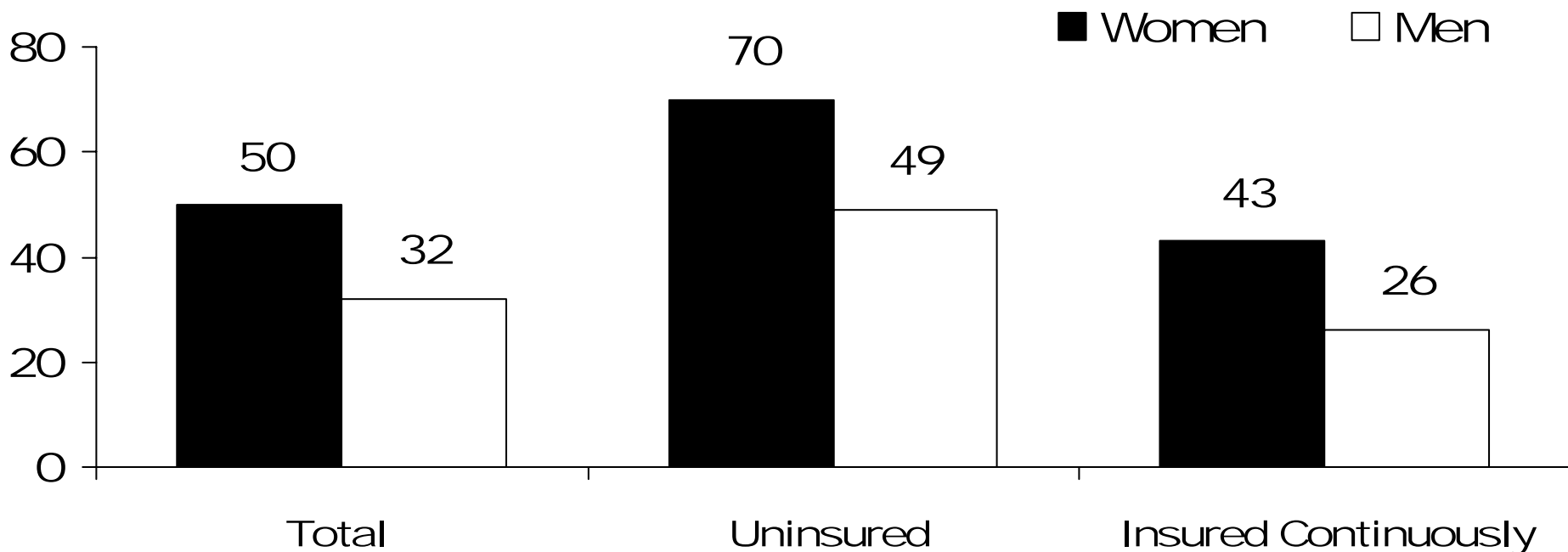
■ Uninsured now    ■ Insured now, time uninsured in past year    □ Insured all year



Source: The Commonwealth Fund Biennial Health Insurance Survey (2003).

# Half of Adult Women Have Medical Bill Problems or Accrued Medical Debt,\* Uninsured at Highest Risk

Percent of adults ages 19–64 with any medical bill problem or outstanding debt



\* Problems paying/not able to pay medical bills, contacted by a collection agency for medical bills, had to change way of life to pay bills, or has medical debt being paid off over time.

Source: The Commonwealth Fund Biennial Health Insurance Survey (2003).



# More than Two of Five Adults with Medical Bill Burdens Used All or Most of Their Savings on Medical Bills

Percent of adults ages 19–64 with medical bill problems or accrued medical debt:

Percent of adults reporting:	Total	Uninsured now	Insured now, time uninsured during year	Insured all year
Unable to pay for basic necessities, such as food, heat, or rent	27%	39%	41%	18%
Used all or most of savings	44	53	46	39
Had large credit card debt, or had to take loan against home	20	21	30	18