



Voter Support for the Build Back Better Bill and Clean Energy Investments

*Key findings from an online survey among 1,006 voters
nationwide, conducted July 26 to 29, 2021
for Climate Power and LCV*

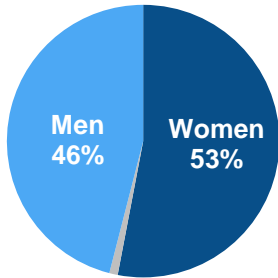
**CLIMATE
POWER**



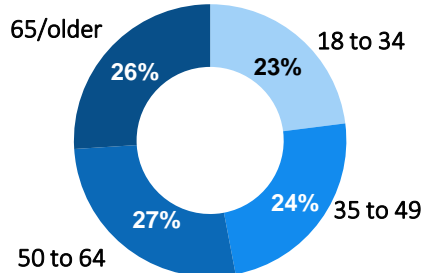
HART
RESEARCH
ASSOCIATES

Characteristics of the Sample

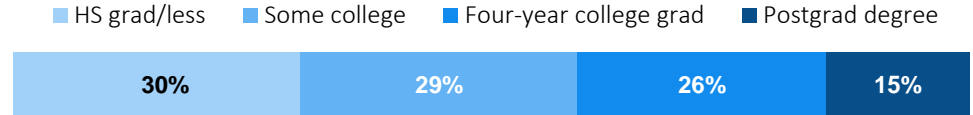
GENDER



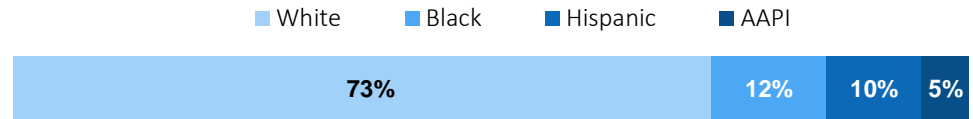
AGE



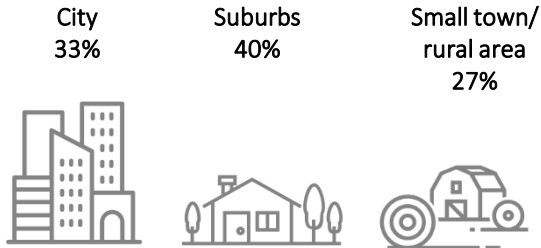
EDUCATION



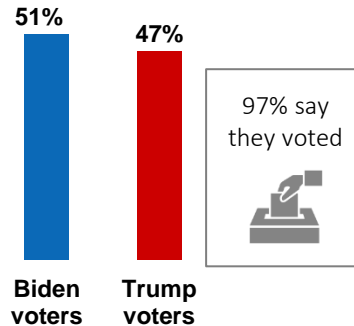
RACE



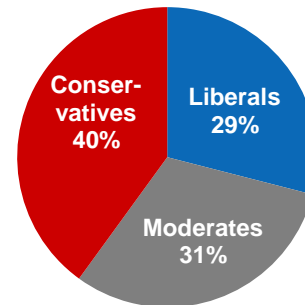
AREA TYPE



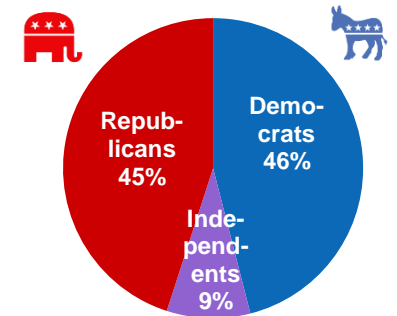
2020 PRESIDENTIAL



IDEOLOGY



PARTY ID



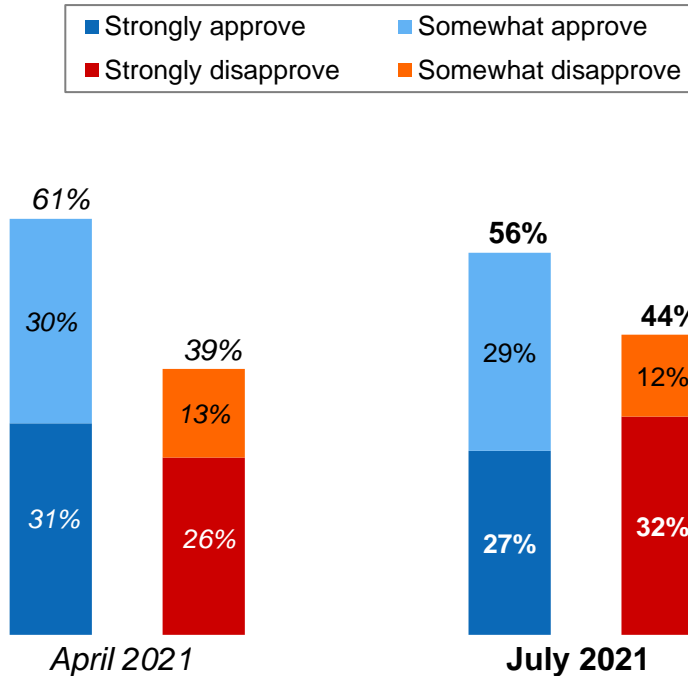
Key Takeaways

- The large majority of voters respond favorably to the Build Back Better reconciliation bill when its main elements (including the cost and tax provisions) are presented to them.
- Most voters say that climate change is responsible for extreme weather events and there is strong majority support for action on climate change. Voters say they are more likely to support the Build Back Better package because of its provisions on clean energy, climate change, and environmental justice.
- The provisions of the package that lower costs for working families and seniors, including energy costs, are important to swing voters and offer a winning response to criticisms that Build Back Better package will fuel inflation.
- There also is a winning rebuttal to the “tax-and-spend” criticism of the package, focusing on the facts that (a) the legislation would be paid for by making the wealthy and multi-national corporations pay their fair share; (b) no one under \$400,000 will pay more in taxes; and (c) the long-term benefits will outweigh the costs because the proposed investments will grow the economy, create jobs, and help tackle climate change.

THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

President Biden remains above water on his job rating, but his approval has dropped among some segments of the electorate.

Joe Biden's Job Approval as President



	April	July
Total approve:		
Democrats	95%	93%
Independents	59%	62%
Republicans	25% →	17%

Liberal Democrats	95%	97%
Non-liberal Democrats	94% →	88%
Less conservative GOPs	32% →	22%
Very conservative GOPs	16%	9%

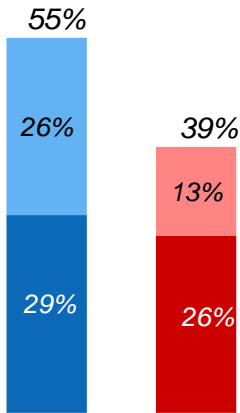
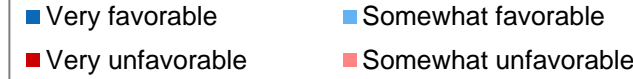
Black voters	89%	89%
Hispanic voters	74% →	60%

White non-college grads	48% →	40%
White college grads	62%	59%

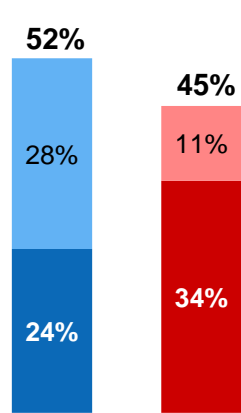
Biden has net positive ratings for his economic and environmental policies, which have held steady among his voters but have dropped among Trump voters.

Pres. Biden's Policies on Jobs and Economy

Favorable:	April	July
Biden voters	89%	92%
Trump voters	19%	10%



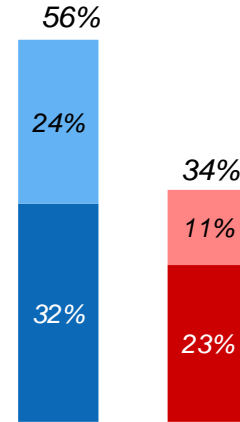
April 2021



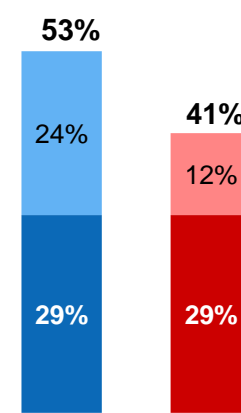
July 2021

Pres. Biden's Policies on Environment/Climate

Favorable:	April	July
Biden voters	88%	90%
Trump voters	22%	13%



April 2021



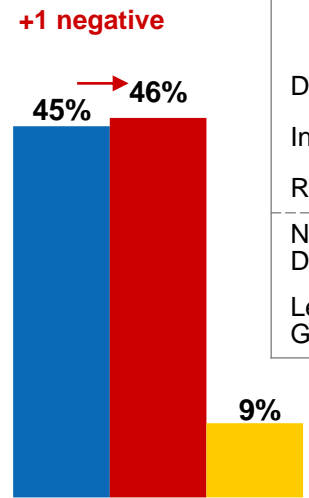
July 2021

Congressional Republicans are weaker among voters in their party and have higher negatives among independents, compared with congressional Democrats.

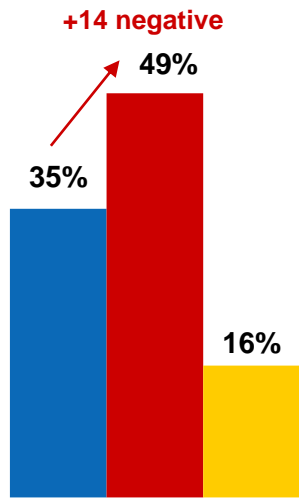
Feelings toward Democrats in Congress

Feelings toward Republicans in Congress

■ Positive feelings ■ Negative feelings ■ Neutral



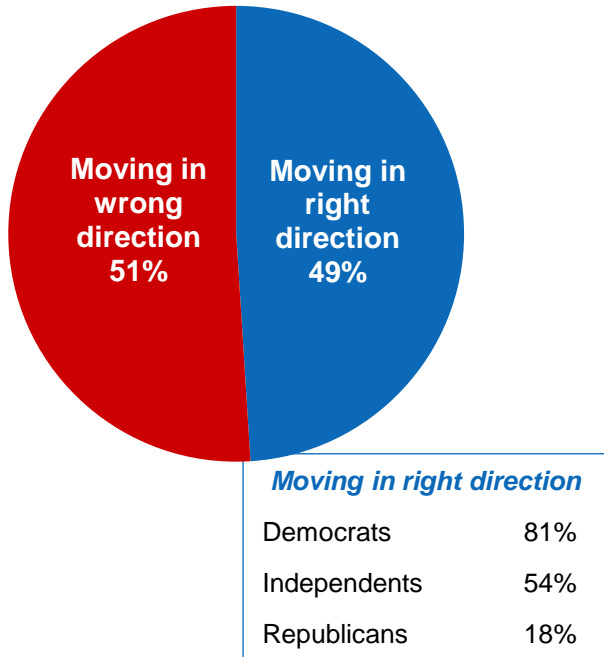
	Positive	Negative
Democrats	86%	8%
Independents	25%	35%
Republicans	9%	84%
Non-liberal Democrats	77%	13%
Less conservative GOPs	14%	77%



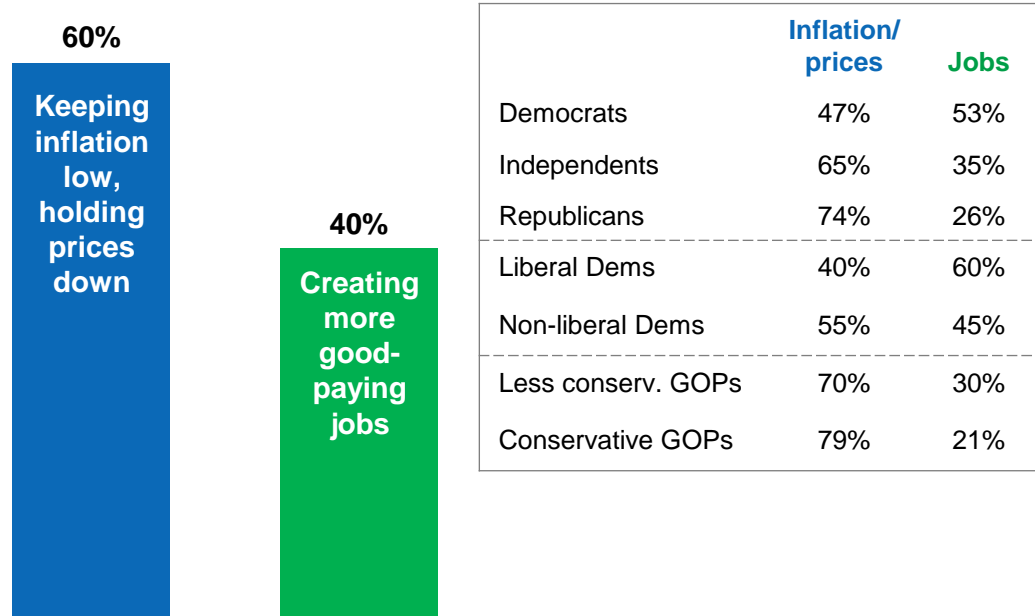
	Positive	Negative
Democrats	7%	81%
Independents	14%	47%
Republicans	69%	17%
Non-liberal Democrats	9%	75%
Less conservative GOPs	59%	23%

Voters' evaluations of the economy are split along party lines. With the exception of liberal Democrats, voters are more concerned with controlling inflation than creating jobs.

Overall Direction of the Economy

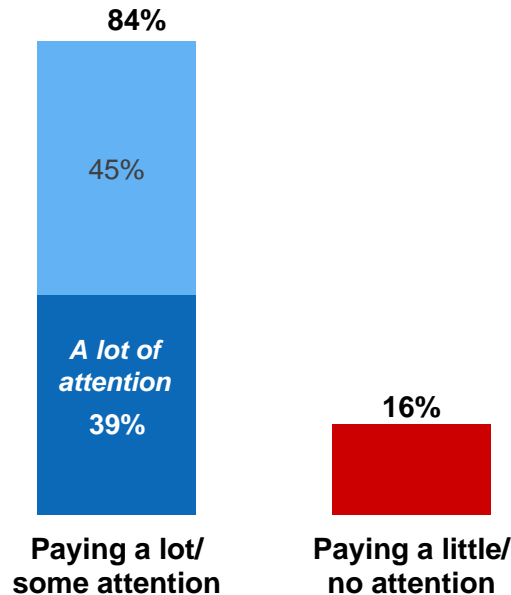


More Important Economic Priority

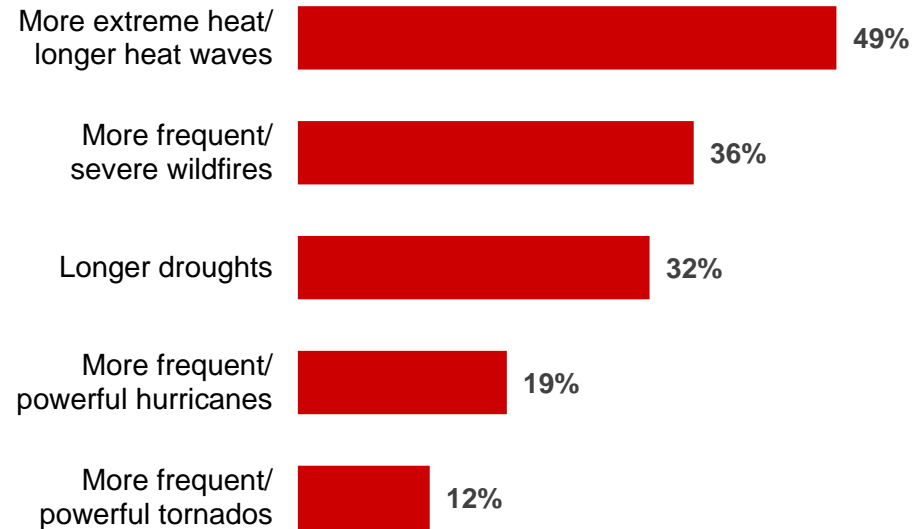


Voters are paying attention to the news about extreme weather and are focused particularly on extreme heat and longer heat waves.

How much attention have you been paying to the news about extreme temperatures, wildfires, and droughts in different parts of the country?

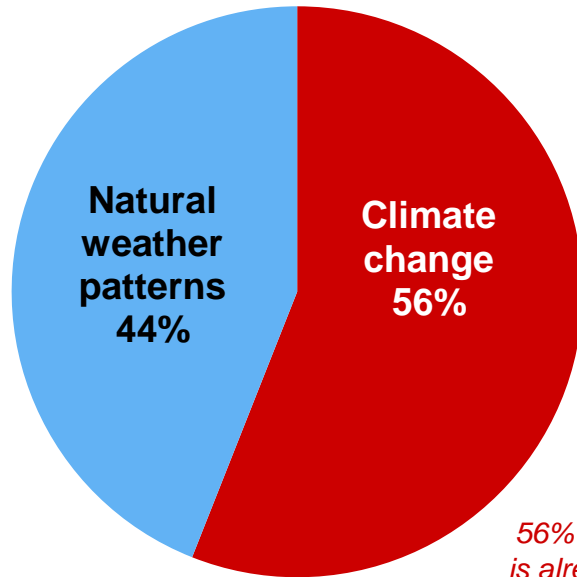


Most concerning weather changes:



A majority of voters attribute the extreme weather this summer to climate change.

The situation with extreme temperatures, wildfires, and droughts is happening because of:



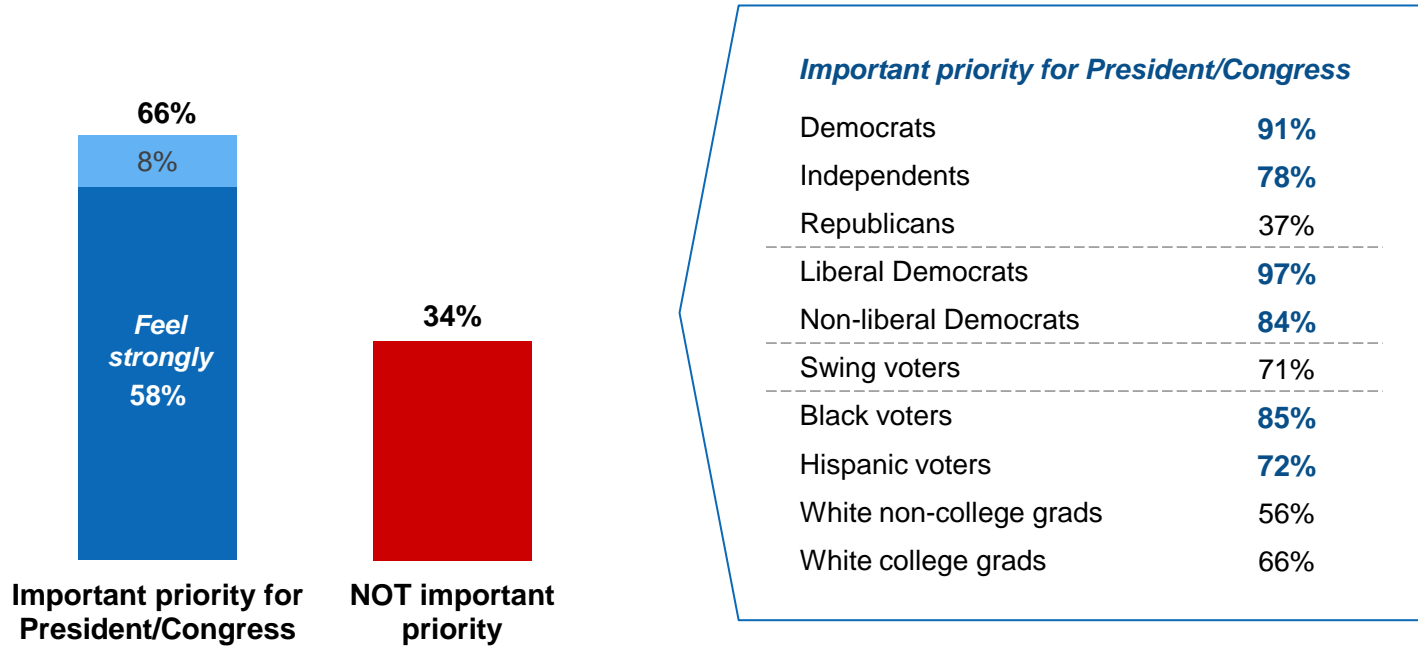
56% say climate change is already a crisis or likely to become one in the foreseeable future.

Happening because of climate change

Democrats	80%
Independents	70%
Republicans	29%
<hr/>	
Liberal Democrats	89%
Non-liberal Democrats	69%
Less conservative GOPs	38%
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Black voters	71%
Hispanic voters	63%
White non-college grads	45%
White college grads	60%
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Northeast	60%
South	52%
Midwest	53%
West	63%

Voters express a strong desire for Congress to take action on climate change this year.

Support for Taking Action to Deal with Climate Change This Year



RECONCILIATION BILL

Description of Legislation

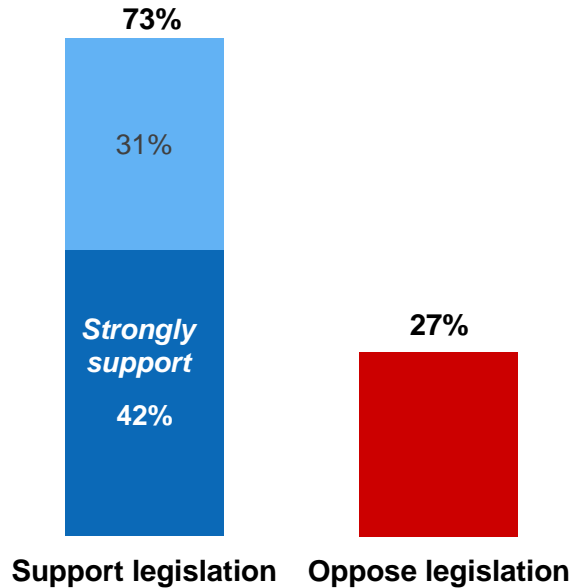
Congress is considering a major legislative package to address important needs of the country. Here is a list of some of the things this legislation would do. (ITEMS RANDOMIZED.)

- Make dental care, vision care, and hearing care more affordable for seniors by covering them under Medicare
- Reduce the cost of prescription drugs by giving Medicare the power to negotiate with pharmaceutical companies for lower prices
- Make health insurance more affordable for people who buy coverage on their own by expanding tax credits and subsidies
- Expand the use of clean energy sources and combat climate change by increasing tax incentives for wind and solar power and by setting clean energy standards that electric companies must meet
- Make electric vehicles more affordable for consumers by providing tax rebates for the purchase of electric vehicles
- Lower energy costs by making homes, buildings, and vehicles more energy efficient
- Expand access to quality, affordable home care for the elderly and people with disabilities
- Expand access to quality childcare that working parents can afford
- Continue the new child tax credit of \$3,000 to \$3,600 per child per year, which had been passed on a temporary basis
- Provide two years of tuition-free community college
- Provide pre-Kindergarten for three- and four-year-old children

This legislation would cost \$3.5 trillion and would be paid for by raising taxes on corporations and the wealthy. It would not raise taxes on anyone earning under \$400,000 a year.

Nearly three-quarters of voters support the Build Back Better bill after hearing the main provisions, costs, and tax components.

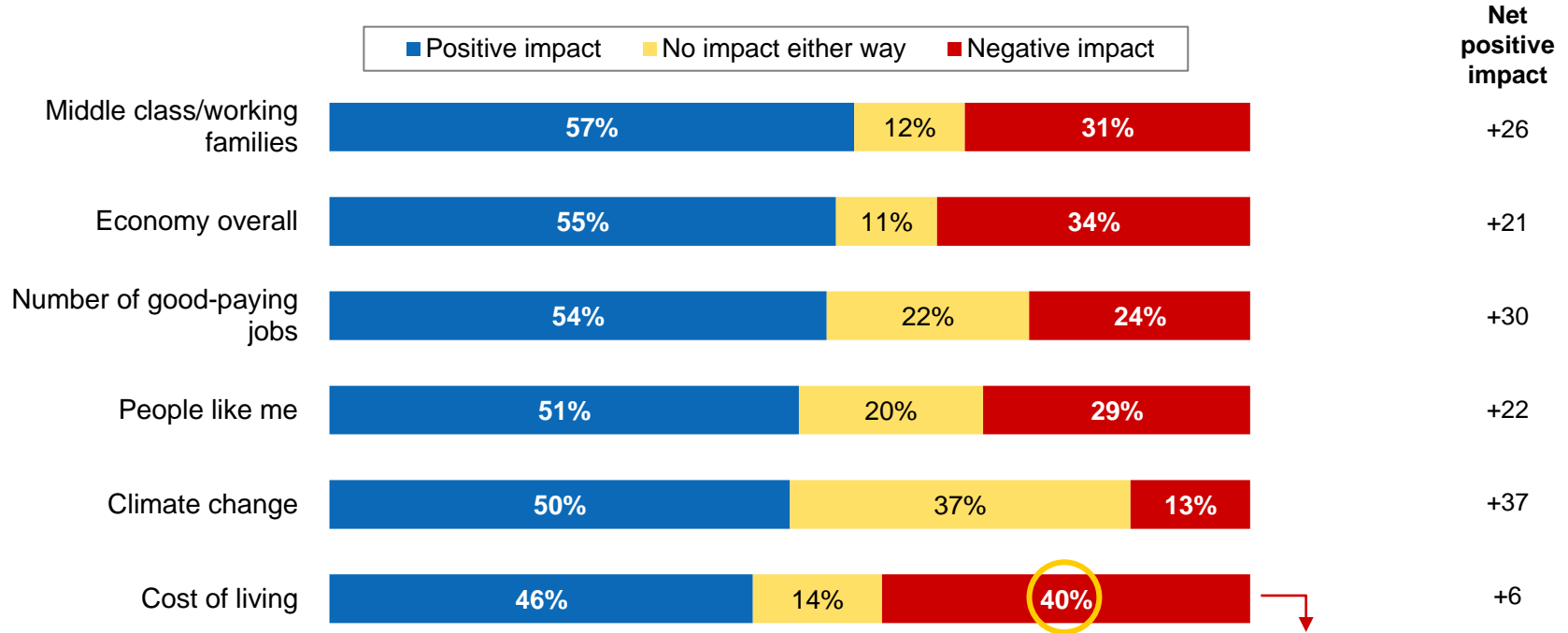
Support for Reconciliation Bill



	Total support	Strongly support
Democrats	96%	68%
Independents	74%	29%
Republicans	49%	17%
<hr/>		
Liberal Democrats	99%	77%
Non-liberal Democrats	92%	57%
Less conservative GOPs	62%	22%
<hr/>		
Black voters	92%	69%
Hispanic voters	77%	44%
White non-college grads	67%	33%
White college grads	70%	41%
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Voters age 18 to 34	81%	46%
Voters age 35 to 49	79%	46%
Voters age 50 to 64	65%	33%
Voters age 65/older	68%	44%

Voters anticipate economic and environmental benefits of the legislation, though there are some concerns about the impact on the cost of living.

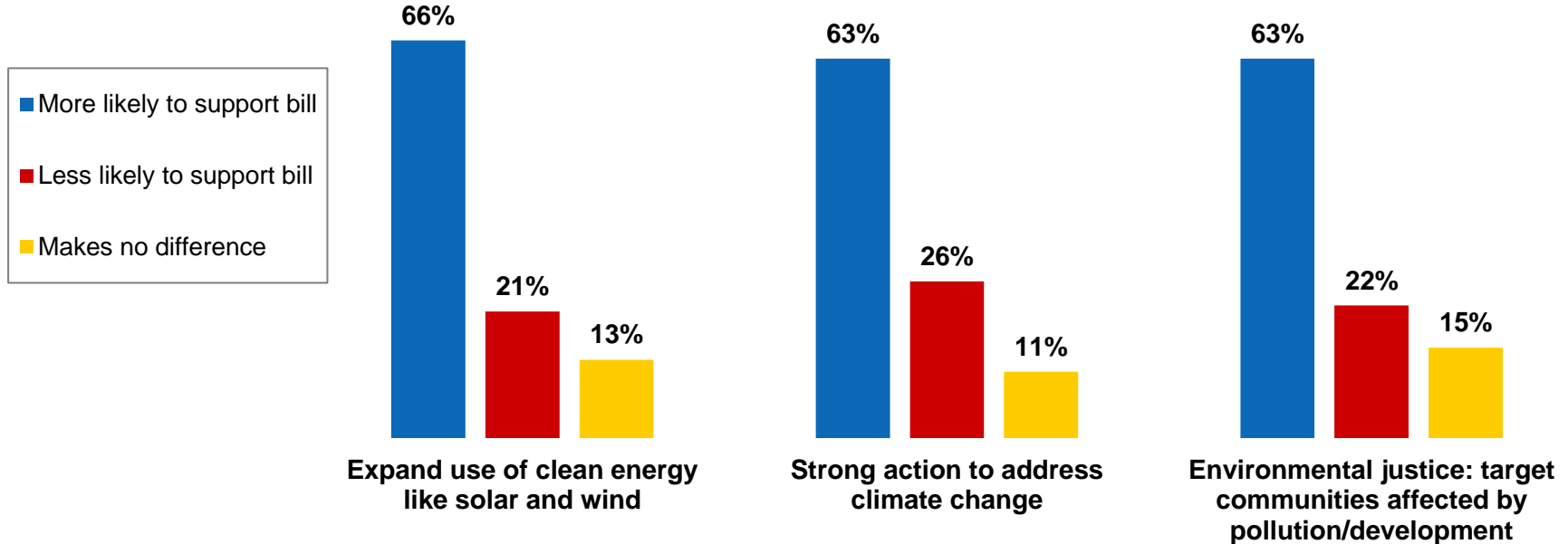
Expected Impact of Reconciliation Bill on Various Aspects of our Lives



Cost of living negative: 44% swing voters, 66% Republicans, 57% white non-college men, 62% white men age 50+

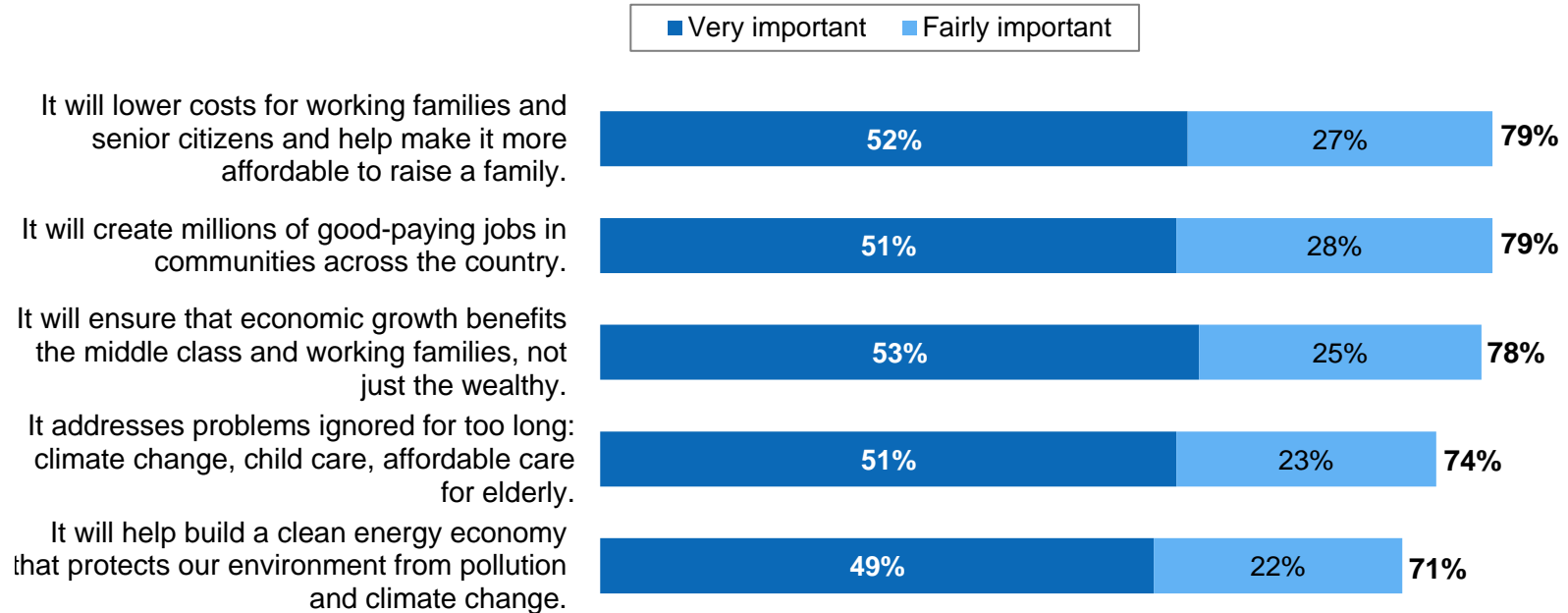
Large majorities say that they are more likely to support the plan because of its provisions on clean energy, climate change, and environmental justice.

Support for Reconciliation Bill If It Includes Specific Climate/Environmental Provisions



Voters respond affirmatively to key points in favor of the bill.

Important Reason Congress Should Pass the Legislation



Best Proactive Talking Points among Key Audiences



It will lower costs for working families and senior citizens and help make it more affordable to raise a family.

- ✓ Soft supporters
- ✓ Swing voters
- ✓ Seniors
- ✓ White non-college grads
- ✓ Republicans (*esp. less conservative*)



It will ensure that economic growth benefits the middle class and working families, not just the wealthy.

- ✓ Soft supporters
- ✓ Hispanic voters



It addresses problems that have been ignored for too long, like climate change, lack of childcare, and affordable care for growing elderly population.

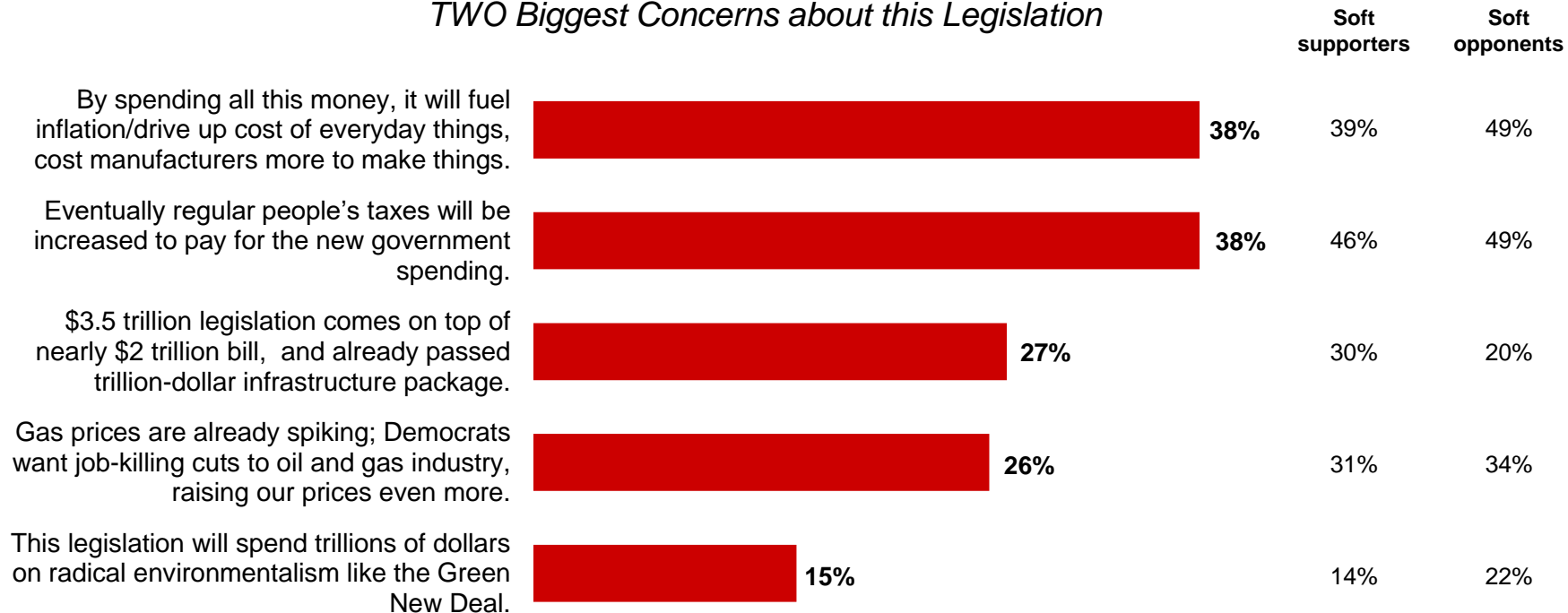
- ✓ Strong supporters
- ✓ Democrats
- ✓ Voters age 18 to 34
- ✓ Black voters

**BEST
AMONG**

RESPONDING TO ATTACKS

Of possible GOP attacks, criticisms related to higher costs and higher taxes, most require a response—but there are effective counters to both.

TWO Biggest Concerns about this Legislation

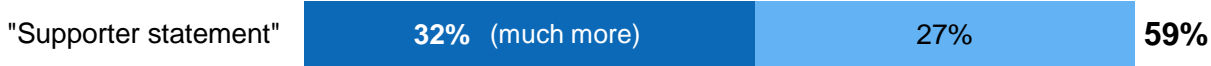


(16% of voters say none are concerns.)

A response focused on who does—and doesn't—pay for the Build Back Better bill effectively counters the GOP tax and spend attack.

Which argument is more convincing?

This legislation would be **paid for by making sure the wealthy and multi-national corporations pay their fair share. If you earn less than \$400,000 per year, you will not pay a penny more in taxes, and many people's taxes will actually go down.** These investments will grow the economy, create jobs, and help us tackle climate change. Top economists agree that the long-term benefits will far surpass the costs of the investments.



Government spending was through the roof over the past year and the federal deficit is at an all-time high. This \$3.5 trillion legislation would come on top of the nearly \$2 trillion spending bill that Congress already passed and a trillion-dollar infrastructure package. Eventually **regular people's taxes will be increased** in order to pay for all of this.



+18
SUPPORTER
STATEMENT

	Swing voters	Soft supporters	Less conservative Republicans
Supporter statement	63%	63%	49%
Opponent statement	37%	37%	51%

The fact that you won't pay more if your income is under \$400,000 is a key point for swing audiences.

Which part of response to cost criticism is most convincing?

	All voters	Swing voters	Soft supporters	Less conservative GOPs
If you earn less than \$400,000 per year, you will not pay a penny more in taxes , and many people's taxes will actually go down.	28%	31%	31%	31%
These investments will grow the economy, create jobs, and help us tackle climate change, and top economists agree that the long-term benefits will far surpass the costs of the investments.	26%	26%	27%	20%
The legislation would be paid for by making the wealthy and multi-national corporations pay their fair share.	20%	20%	23%	14%

(26% of voters say none of these responses are convincing.)

Emphasizing economic benefits for working families—including lower utility bills—effectively undercuts an attack on “radical environmentalism”.

Which argument is more convincing?

This legislation will **help lower the cost of living for working families** by reducing health insurance premiums, reducing the cost of prescription drugs, reducing the cost of child and elder care. **The environmental investments will reduce utility bills** by moving the country to lower-cost clean energy, while creating the next generation of good-paying jobs.



This legislation will spend **trillions of dollars on radical environmentalism** like the Green New Deal that will drive up utility bills and force up costs on everyday things.



+32
SUPPORTER
STATEMENT

	Swing voters	Soft supporters	Less conservative Republicans
Supporter statement	69%	73%	58%
Opponent statement	31%	27%	42%

To counter GOP attacks that the bill is inflationary, focus on ways it will lower costs for working families.

Which argument is more convincing?

This legislation is about creating jobs and lowering costs for working families. It will make things more affordable for the middle class and working families, whether by **lowering electricity bills, saving people money at the gas pump, reducing the price of prescription drugs, or lowering the cost of childcare and home care** for seniors. Families with children will have more money in their pockets because of the child tax credit.



This legislation will **hit the American people right in their wallets at a time when people are still struggling** to recover financially from the pandemic. Gas prices are already spiking and now Democrats are proposing job-killing cuts to the oil and gas industry, raising our prices even more. By spending all this money, **this bill will fuel inflation and drive up the cost of everyday things** because it will cost manufacturers more to make things.

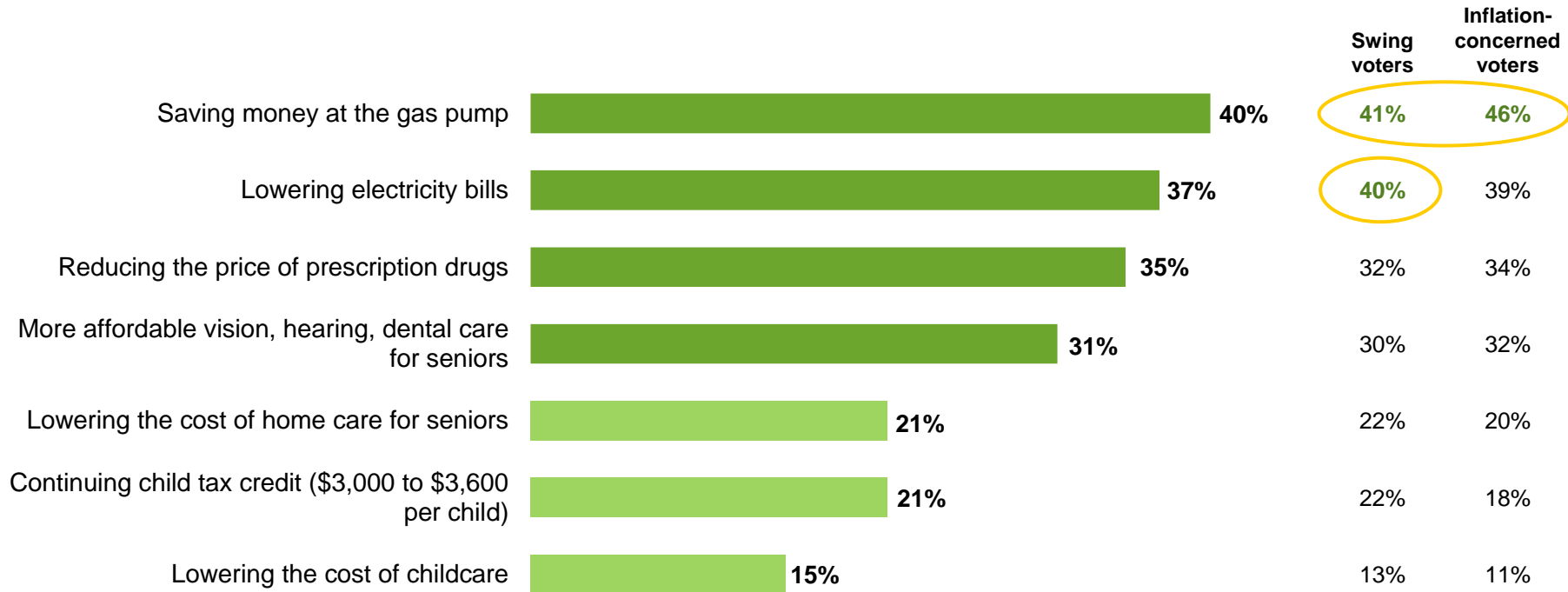


+10
SUPPORTER
STATEMENT

	Swing voters	Soft supporters	Less conservative Republicans	Inflation-concerned voters
Supporter statement	55%	58%	35%	54%
Opponent statement	45%	42%	65%	46%

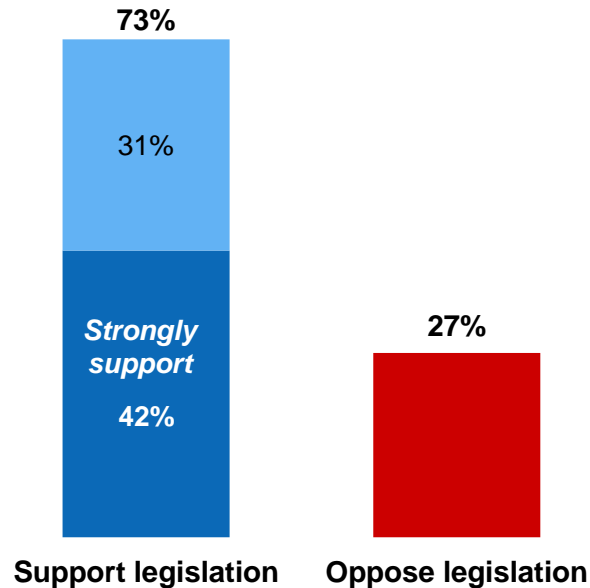
When it comes to affordability, there is a lot of salience around lowering gas prices and lowering electricity bills.

TWO Most Important Ways this Legislation Could Make Life More Affordable

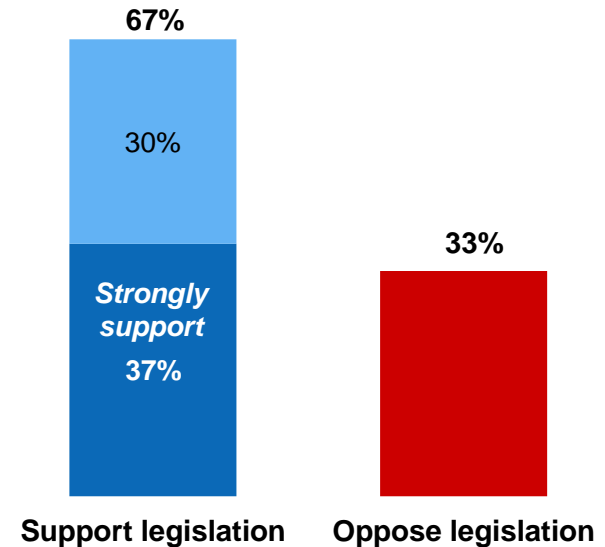


With criticisms of the package and our responses in mind, support for the package holds strong.

*INITIAL Support
for Reconciliation Bill*



*POST-MESSAGING Support
for Reconciliation Bill*



After hearing from both sides, we maintain solid support across the board, including on the center-right.

POST-MESSAGING Support for Reconciliation Bill

	Support	Oppose		Support	Oppose
All voters	67%	33%	Whites	61%	39%
Democrats	94%	6%	Blacks	89%	11%
Independents	64%	36%	Hispanics	75%	25%
Republicans	39%	61%	White non-college grads	59%	41%
Less conservative	52%	48%	White college grads	64%	36%
Very conservative	23%	77%	Urban	78%	22%
			Suburban	66%	34%
			Small town/rural	55%	45%

Voters' biggest positive takeaways from our messaging are climate and helping working families, but deficit concerns increase as well.

Volunteered Favorable and Unfavorable Impressions of Reconciliation Bill

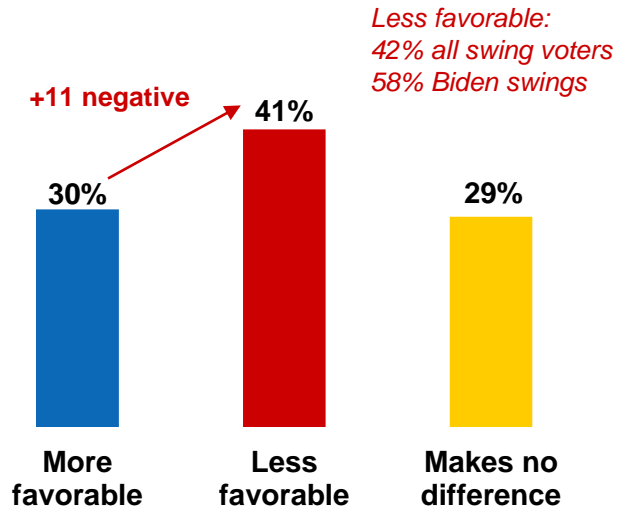
(aggregated volunteered responses to open-ended questions)

Favorable Impressions	Pre-message	Post-message	Unfavorable Impressions	Pre-message	Post-message
Will help average American, working class, middle class	6%	15%	Will increase deficit, debt; spending is out of control	4%	9%
Addresses, combats climate change, will benefit environment	8%	14%	The cost, too expensive	10%	9%
Like the plan, like everything	7%	9%	Will raise taxes	8%	7%
Wealthy, corporations should pay their fair share of taxes, higher tax rates	6%	8%	Cost of electric vehicles, all other criticisms of EVs	0%	6%
Will help seniors, elderly	0%	7%	Will cause inflation, higher prices	3%	5%
Will help families, families are struggling	4%	7%	Wealthy, corporations will not pay for this, will pass costs on to the rest of us	5%	5%
Addresses important issues, current needs, focuses on things that matter	7%	6%			

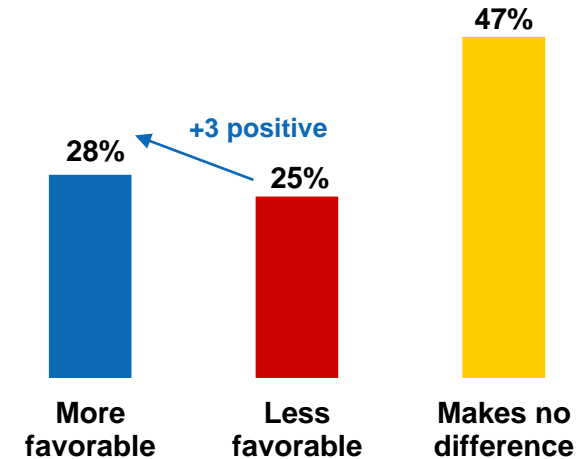
Republicans' unanimous opposition to the bill hurts their image, but doesn't hurt the bill itself.

*No Republicans in the U.S. Senate or U.S. House of Representatives support this legislation.
How does knowing this make you feel toward . . . ?*

Republicans in Congress*



The legislation*



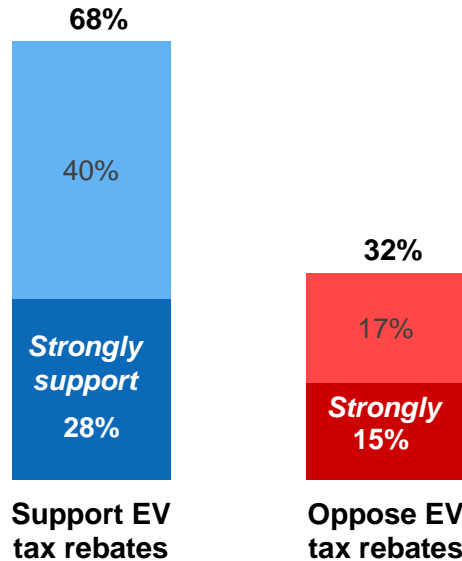
*Half of respondents were asked about Republicans in Congress, the other half were asked about the legislation

ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Support for EV tax rebates is broad, but soft, including among more challenging audiences.



Support for Tax Rebates to Make Electric Vehicles More Affordable



	Support	Oppose
Swing voters	70%	30%
Less conservative GOPs	64%	36%
Conservative GOPs	28%	72%
<hr/>		
Seniors	59%	41%
Small town/rural voters	54%	46%
White non-college grads	60%	40%

An “elites” attack on tax rebates has some resonance, but we have two good points we can make.

Proportions Saying Each Is a VERY/FAIRLY CONVINCING Argument

CRITICISM

ELITES: Giving tax rebates to purchasers of electric vehicles would mainly benefit wealthy elites who can afford electric cars and see them as status symbols. Electric vehicles are not only expensive, but they are impractical for working people and people in rural areas who drive long distances. The federal government should not be subsidizing electric cars for the rich.



OUR TALKING POINTS

CLIMATE/HEALTH PROBLEMS: Gas-powered vehicles are the biggest driver of the carbon pollution that causes climate change, while also emitting pollution that causes asthma and other health problems. By making electric vehicles more affordable for more Americans, we will be taking an important step in taking on climate change and leaving a better world for our children and future generations.



AMERICAN JOBS: We need to make sure that America is a world leader in electric vehicle manufacturing, so those jobs do not end up overseas as electric vehicles account for a larger share of the auto market. By making electric vehicles more affordable for more Americans, we can help create good-paying manufacturing jobs in the U.S.A.

