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AMERICANS SUPPORT MORE STIMULUS:

Polling on Potential Stimulus
Policies to Meet the Scale
of the Moment

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- ▶ We find overwhelming, bipartisan support for an additional emergency relief bill.
- ▶ Voters support a variety of proposals to provide relief to individuals during the pandemic including halting evictions/foreclosures/utility shut offs, granting universal paid sick and family & medical leave, and providing free care for coronavirus treatment to everyone.
- ▶ There is support for expanding cash assistance given to individuals from the one-off \$1,200 in the current package to a \$2,000 per month payment.

On March 27, President Donald Trump signed into law a large economic relief package that provides payments to individuals, boosts unemployment, and provides \$500 billion in loans to businesses. “[T]he bill’s crown jewel,” Eric Levitz writes, was a provision that increases “standard weekly unemployment benefits by \$600 for the next four months.” Other, quite progressive, components of the bill included the creation of a Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, a program that covered freelancers, furloughed workers, and independent contractors (i.e., those who would not normally be covered by standard unemployment), and an extension of unemployment benefits for thirteen additional weeks.

This legislation wasn’t without its limitations, however. With economic projections darkening by the day—one, particularly grim, forecast from the St. Louis Federal Reserve estimated America’s unemployment rate could hit 32.1 percent—the limitations of the first economic relief package are becoming apparent. For example, the cash payments to Americans were quite meager and the choice to means test it opened up some fairly large holes in terms of who benefited. In addition, no steps were taken to ensure that those Americans who may be losing health insurance, or lack health insurance, would still get coverage in the midst of the ongoing pandemic.

Democrats in Congress are now arguing additional measures need to be taken. Speaker of the House, Democrat Nancy Pelosi, described in an interview “a list of Democratic priorities, including increased protections and equipment for workers on the front lines of the coronavirus, expanded paid leave, a major new infrastructure investment and additional funds for state and local governments” she’d like to see tackled in additional legislation.

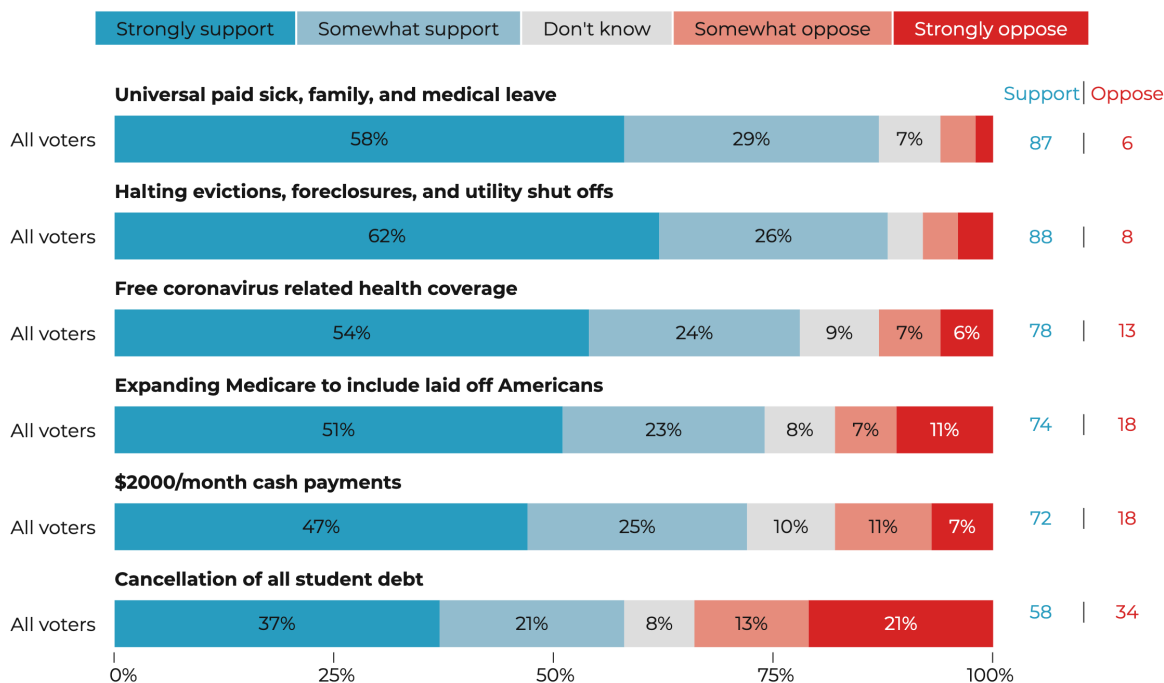
In a March survey, Data for Progress sought to test both general support for Congress passing another relief package and specific support for particular policies that could make up any additional legislation.

In this first chart, we present our topline findings for the seven questions we asked voters. We found overwhelming *bipartisan* support for passing another bill. Overall, voters support such a step by a wide 63 point margin (75 percent support, 12 percent oppose). We also found that voters support a slew of specific proposals. These include ensuring universal access to paid sick leave (87 percent support, 6 percent oppose), supplying free health care for coronavirus-related treatment (78 percent support, 13 percent oppose), providing

every American adult a monthly payment of \$2000 until the end of the crisis (58 percent support, 34 percent oppose), canceling student debt (58 percent support, 34 percent oppose), expanding Medicare to include recently laid off Americans (74 percent support, 18 percent oppose), and halting evictions, foreclosures, and utility shut offs (88 percent support, 8 percent oppose). What's clear is that voters are demanding action to address the economic and health crises currently gripping the country.

Voters Overwhelmingly Support Further Economic Relief

Do you support or oppose the following proposals?



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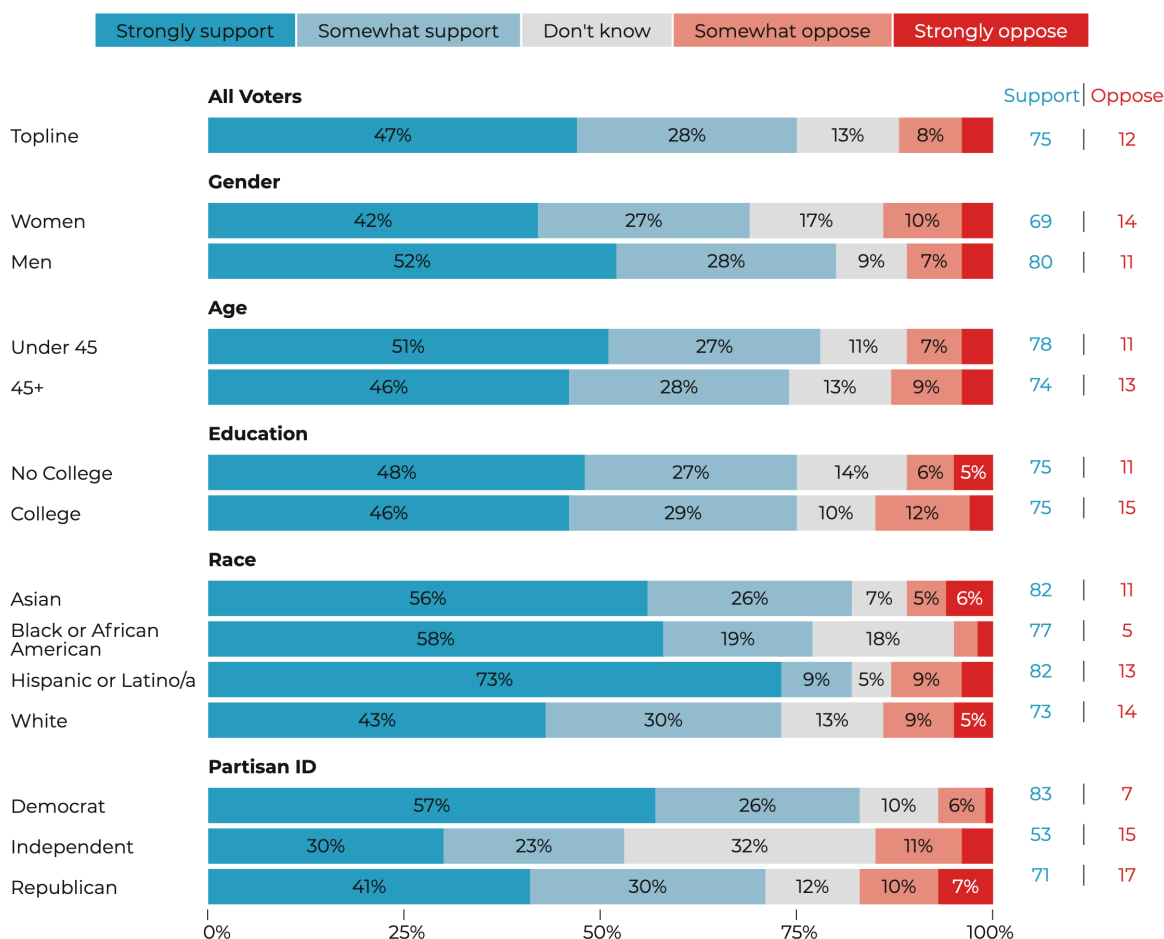
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In this next chart, we look at the breakouts for support for another economic relief bill across a host of demographic groupings by partisanship. What we can observe is that support is largely consistent across gender, race, age, and education.

Importantly, support for added economic relief is also bipartisan in nature. Democrats support it by a 76 percentage point margin (83 percent support, 7 percent oppose) and Republicans support it by a 54 percentage point margin (71 percent support, 17 percent oppose).

Voters Overwhelmingly Favor Further Economic Relief

The Senate recently passed a stimulus bill which would provide \$1,200 payments to individuals, boost unemployment benefits, and provide \$500 billion in loans to businesses among other measures. Some people are suggesting we need to pass another relief bill which would do more to provide additional resources to Americans, ensure everyone has access to free treatment for coronavirus, and ensure there is enough protective equipment to provide healthcare workers. Those supporting doing more say that the existing stimulus has been far too small to meet the financial and public health challenges facing the country from the coronavirus. Those opposed to doing more say that we have already spent trillions of dollars on stimulus and the private sector and individuals should be able to provide for themselves from here. Do you support or oppose Congress passing another relief bill?



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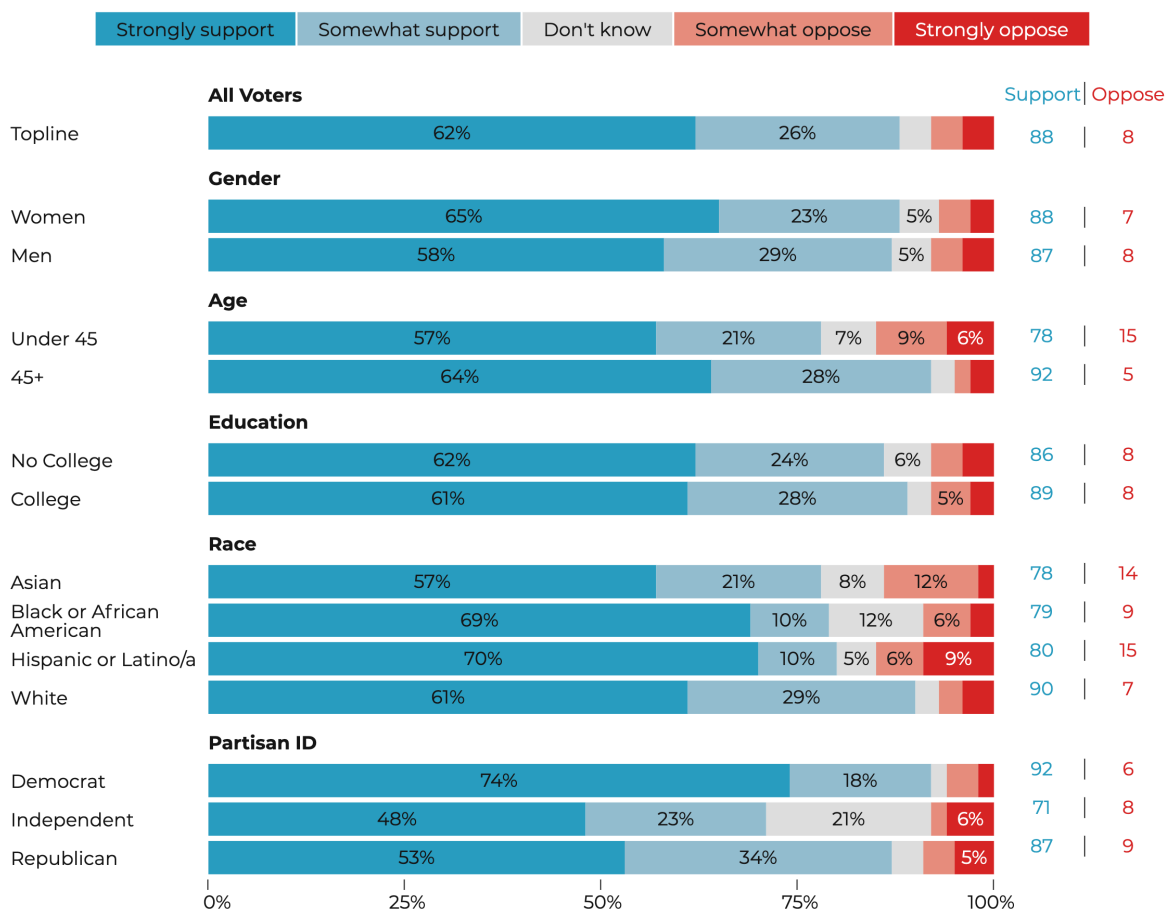
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Of the tested policies, the strongest support is for halting evictions, foreclosures, and utility shut offs. In a pandemic situation, where staying home is the safest option and sanitation is essential, voters recognize that giving people more housing and utility stability in a time of economic uncertainty is the right thing to do. Some municipalities have taken steps towards this already. Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan, for example, issued an executive order to halt all water shutoffs

for the duration of the pandemic. Our results show support for an expansion of this effort into a national halt to shut-offs, evictions, and foreclosures, until the end of the pandemic crisis, with 86 percent support. This measure is most popular among Democrats but well above water with both Republicans and Independents. Voters agree that during a crisis, no one should have their home or sanitation threatened because of their inability to pay.

Voters Want To Halt Evictions, Foreclosures, And Utility Shut Offs

Do you support or oppose halting evictions, foreclosures, and shut offs of water and electricity for the duration of the coronavirus pandemic?



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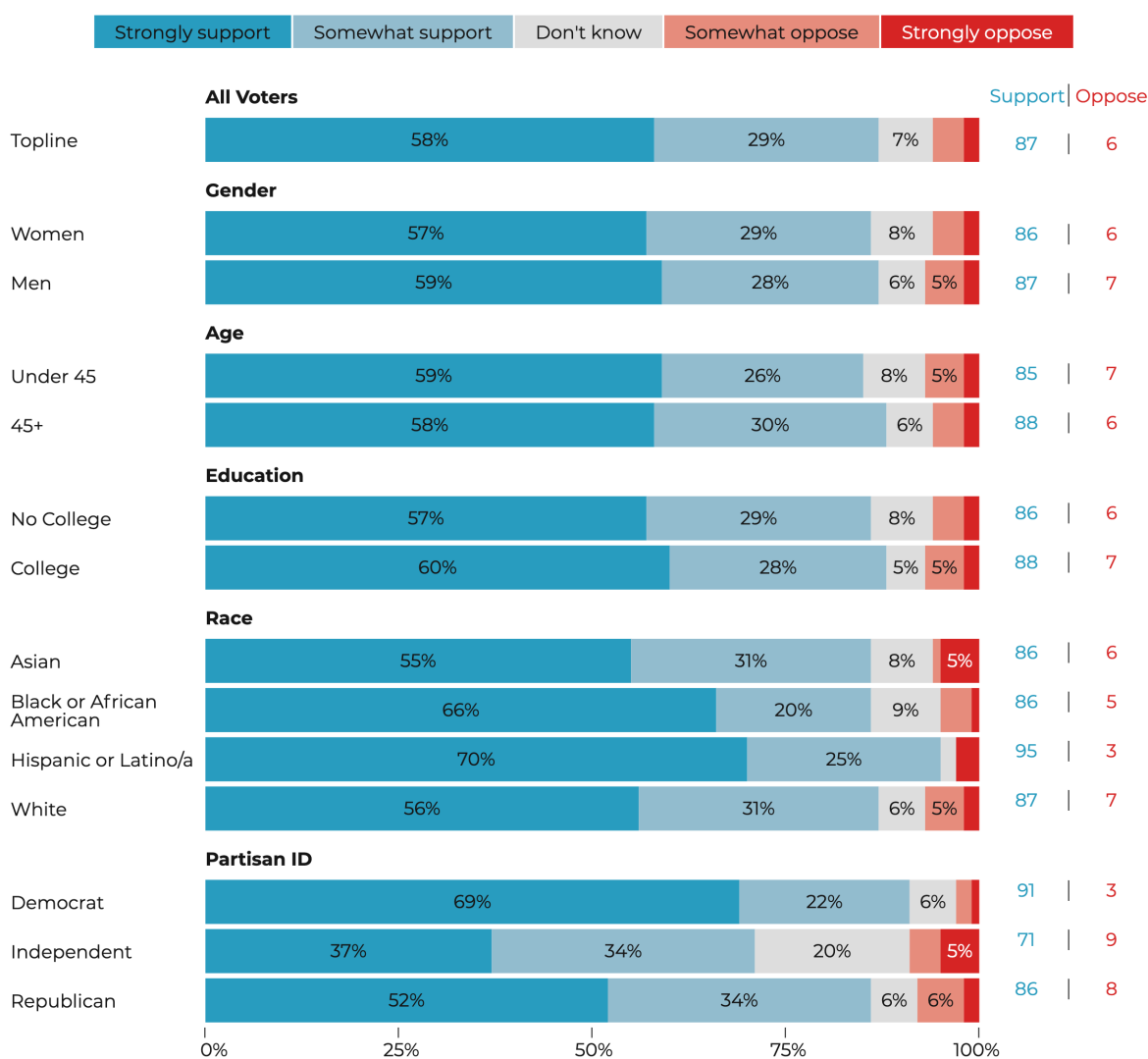
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Universal paid sick, family, and medical leave go beyond the protections offered by the current bill, which excluded employees at large companies and those typically ineligible for unemployment-type benefits like gig workers and the self-employed. As the economy has been massively impacted by

the coronavirus emergency, workers with non-traditional sources of employment are unable to get their normal hours and income. The public agrees that these workers should be offered paid sick leave protections that would allow them to stay home when ill and be compensated for their lost income.

Voters Support Truly Universal Paid Sick, Family, And Medical Leave That Includes Gig Workers And The Self-Employed

Do you support or oppose expanding paid sick and paid family and medical leave to cover all workers impacted by this pandemic, including hourly workers, gig workers, contractors and the self-employed?



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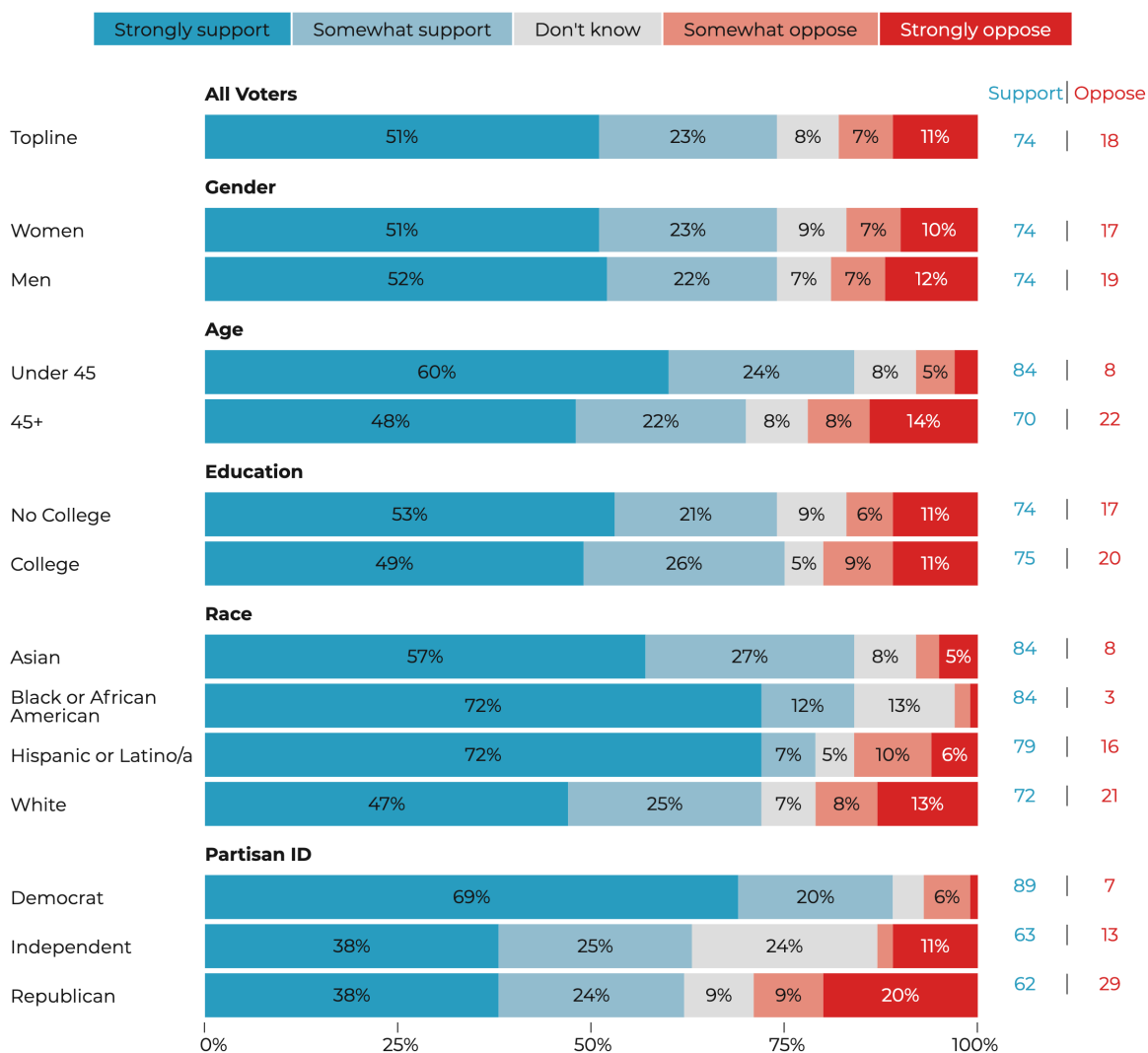
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A consequence of the economic downturn and our employer-provided health insurance system has been that laid off employees are losing healthcare in the face of a looming pandemic. While some options like COBRA and the healthcare exchange-provided individual plans are available to extend coverage, they are expensive and difficult

to navigate, particularly as many localities reduce hours and shutter offices in response to coronavirus. To help mitigate this threat, voters strongly support expanding Medicare to cover people and ensure they don't lose coverage when they lose their jobs.

Voters Support Enrolling Americans Who Lose Their Jobs In Medicare

Do you support or oppose expanding Medicare to cover Americans so that when people lose their jobs they don't lose their health care?



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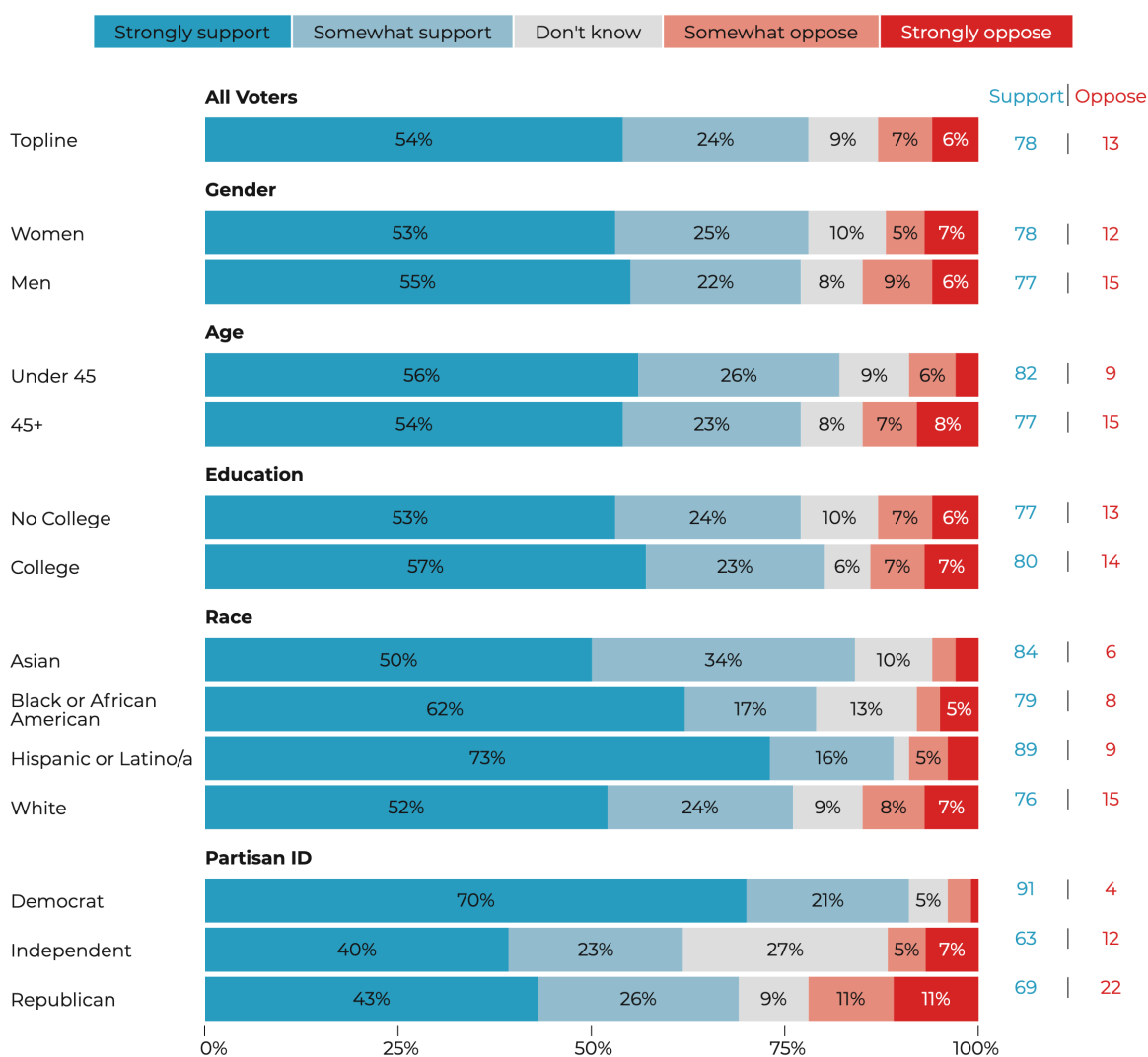
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Voters also strongly support eliminating the out of pocket costs of coronavirus-related treatments for patients regardless of insurance or even citizenship status, by a margin of 65 points. This includes providing free care to the homeless, incarcerated individuals, and immigrants.

Americans understand that the ability to pay should not restrict access to vital care during a global pandemic, particularly when the community benefits of encouraging people to seek appropriate care are so great.

Voters Want Coronavirus Health Treatment To Be Free For Everyone

Do you support or oppose extending health care coverage for coronavirus treatment at no out-of-pocket cost to everyone, including immigrant families, people in detention, people with disabilities and people experiencing homelessness and other similar groups?



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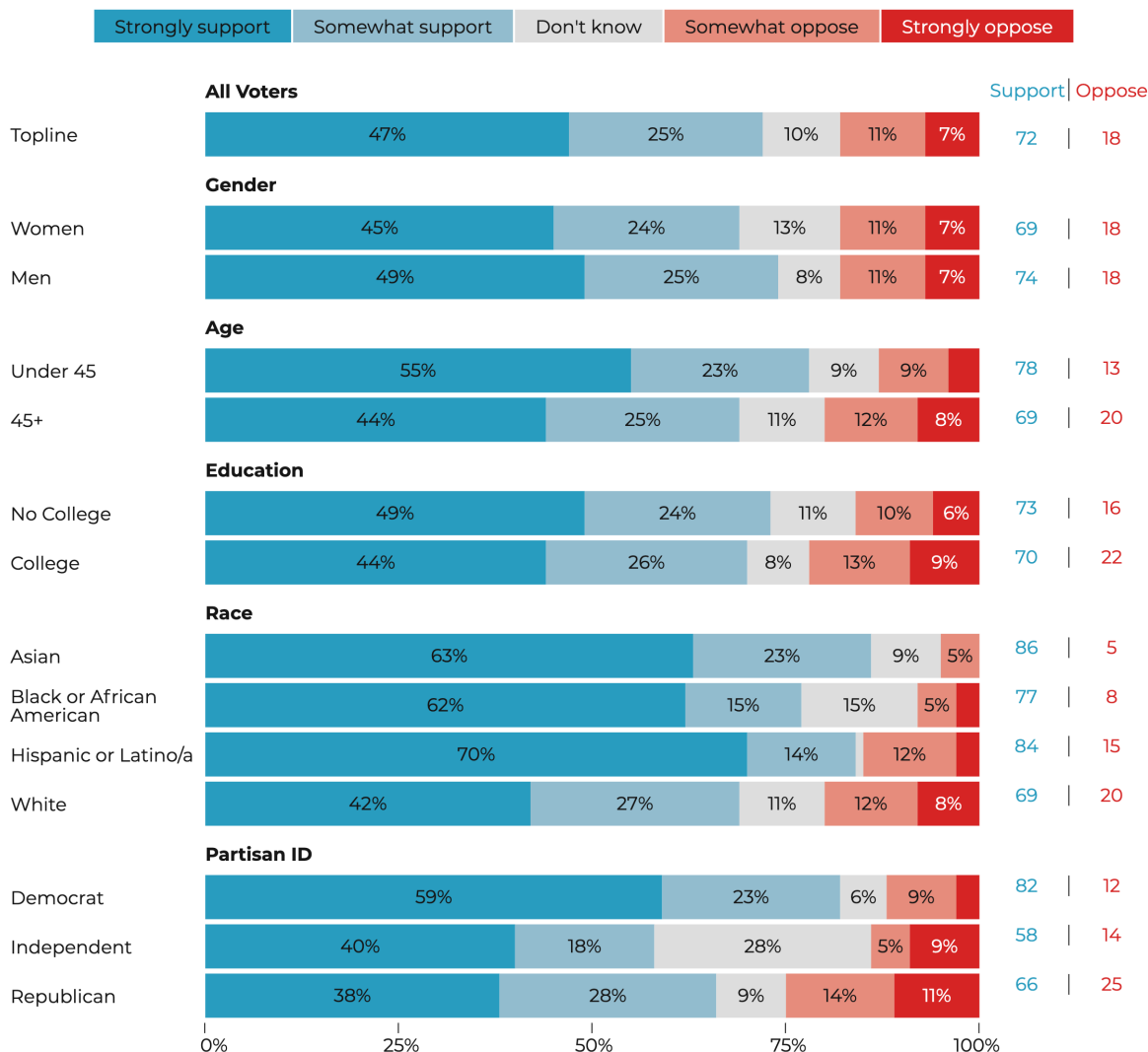
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We also show strong support for a substantially increased individual benefit (monthly \$2,000 per person, compared to the \$1,200 total in the current stimulus bill). With unemployment numbers smashing new weekly records and the prospect of sustained social distancing, people need assistance to get through the emergency. This would require a huge increase in the number

of individual support people get—roughly a 7x increase if the crisis lasts for 4 months. We find very strong support for this increased cash assistance. Voters support it by a 72-18 margin, and a full 66 percent of Republicans support the proposal. Congress has both the support and the mandate to increase the amount of help it gives directly to the American people.

Voters Support \$2000/month Payment During The Duration Of The Crisis

Do you support or oppose providing \$2,000 in cash assistance monthly to every adult for the duration of the coronavirus pandemic?



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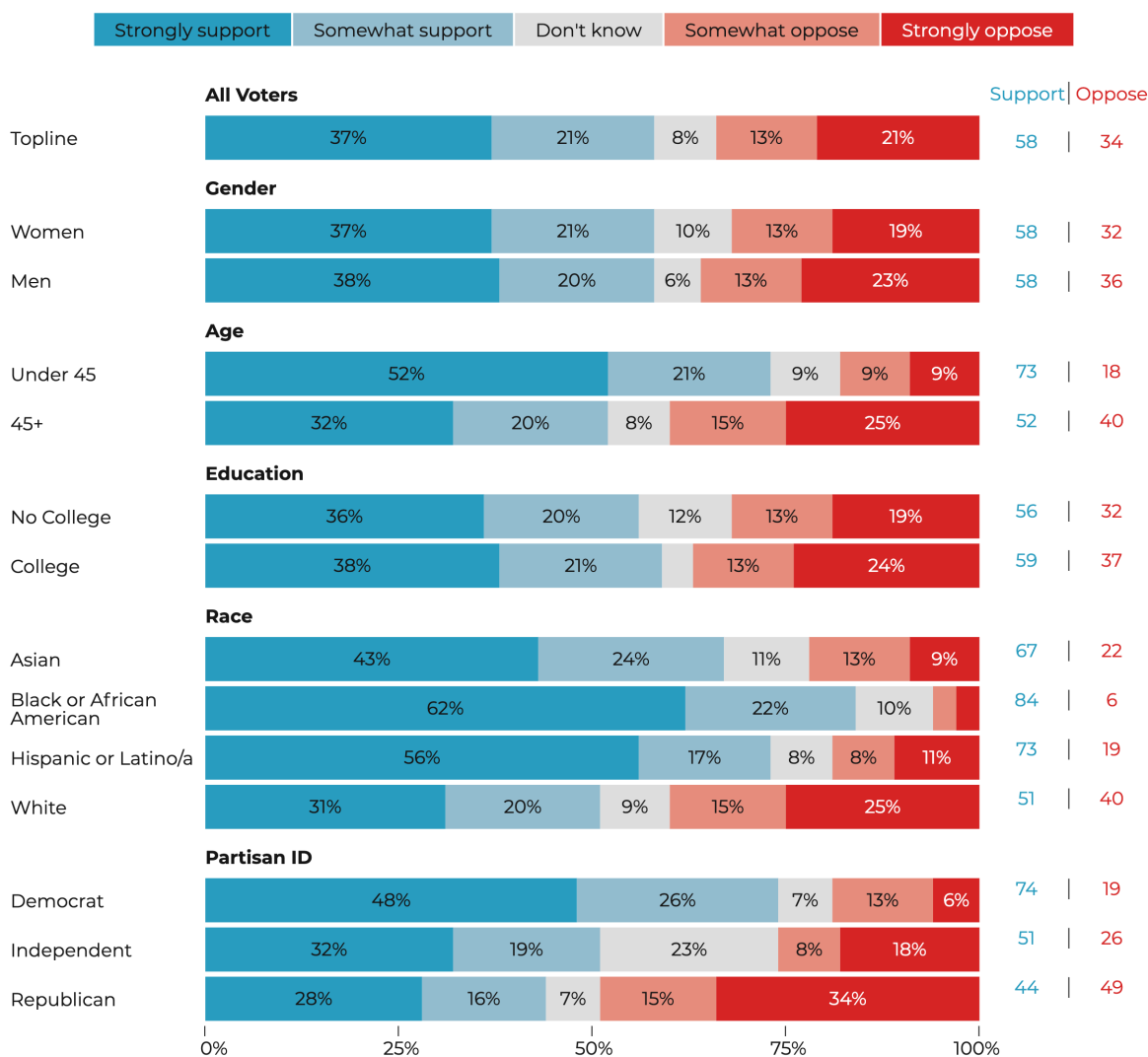
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Canceling student debt is the least bipartisan proposal tested. Democrats are very supportive, with 74 percent in favor to 19 percent opposed, but Republicans are narrowly opposed, at 49

percent are opposed while 44 percent support. It is also an issue that had been highlighted before the pandemic in a highly partisan fashion during the Democratic primary, a factor that could explain the reduced support.

Voters Want To Cancel All Student Debt

Do you support or oppose full cancellation of all student debt?



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CONCLUSION

Congress has a clear agenda, a clear need, and clear public support for a fourth emergency relief bill while Americans suffer through one of the most urgent crises in recent memory. This memo lays out a clear set of policy principles that are popular with the public and would help address the problem at hand.

METHODOLOGY

From March 27 through March 28, 2020, Data for Progress conducted a survey of 1,243 likely voters. Responses were weighted to represent the likely electorate.