

TO: Centrist Democrats and
the Fossil Fuel Industry

FROM: Sean McElwee
Co-Founder of Data for Progress

Julian Brave NoiseCat
Director of Green New Deal Strategy

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GREEN NEW DEAL AND DEMOCRATIC PRIMARIES

KEY FINDINGS:

- ▶ Likely Democratic primary voters prefer candidates who support a Green New Deal. Nearly half (46 percent) of likely Democratic primary voters would disapprove if their incumbent House representative opposed a Green New Deal while only 26 percent would approve (28 percent did not express an opinion).
- ▶ In all districts polled, likely Democratic primary voters said they would disapprove if the incumbent did not support Green New Deal. In three districts (MA-06, MA-08 and NY-03, the preference was a majority, not plurality).

ANALYSIS:

Since the start of the 116th Congress, progressive first-term representatives have upended traditional political wisdom and aggressively pushed numerous high profile policies, none more significant than a Green New Deal. The Green New Deal, a collection of policies aiming to decarbonize the economy while ensuring a just transition for affected communities, has excited Democratic activists while causing some angst among centrist members of Congress.

New polling by Civis Analytics and Data For Progress in Democratic-controlled districts suggests incumbents would pay a political cost for not supporting a Green New Deal and may face a primary challenger for opposing a Green New Deal.

Civis surveyed 2,426 likely Democratic primary voters December 12th, 2018 through January 20th, 2019 online in the districts of Brian Higgins (NY-26), Dutch

Ruppersberger (MD-2), Eliot Engel (NY-16), Filemon Vela (TX-34), Gregory Meeks (NY-5), Henry Cuellar (TX-28), Jim Cooper (TN-5), Kathleen Rice (NY-4), Kathy Castor (FL-14), Seth Moulton (MA-6), Stephen Lynch (MA-8), and Tom Suozzi (NY-3). The districts ranged from the 14th most conservative district controlled by Democrats (+1D) to the 185th (+37D). Respondents were asked “If current representative [Rep Name Here] opposes a ‘Green New Deal’, would you approve or disapprove of [Rep Name Here]’s decision to oppose a ‘Green New Deal’?”

Among likely Democratic primary voters in the districts polled, opinion on the Green New Deal was clear; 26 percent said they would approve of their representative opposing GND whereas 46 percent said they would disapprove, for a net support of -20 percent (with 28 percent saying they did not know). The results by district were no less clear; in all of the districts polled a plurality of adults said they would disapprove if their congressman came out against GND, with that disapproval reaching an outright majority in Moulton, Lynch and Suozzi’s districts.

Age and education are the most significant factors in determining support for GND after controlling for ideology.

While non-white voters overall are much more likely to support a Green New Deal, within the Democratic party white voters are more likely to support a GND. Even controlling for ideology, higher educated voters are substantially more likely to support a GND. The tables below show change in candidate preference if candidate opposes GND. Negative numbers represent voters who would be less likely to vote for a candidate due to their refusal to support a green new deal whereas positive numbers represent that voters would be more likely to vote for a candidate who did not support a Green New Deal.

When Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Senator Ed Markey released a Joint Resolution outlining the first principles of the Green New Deal on February 7th, the resolution had 64 co-sponsors in the House including five from the districts Civis polled: Seth Moulton, Thomas Suozzi, Stephen Lynch, Gregory Meeks, Brian Higgins, and Eliot Engel. Given our research, Representatives such as Rep Cuellar -- who is not, at this time, a co-sponsor of the joint resolution -- may face significant headwinds in their own party if they fail to embrace bold action against climate change, along the lines of Green New Deal.

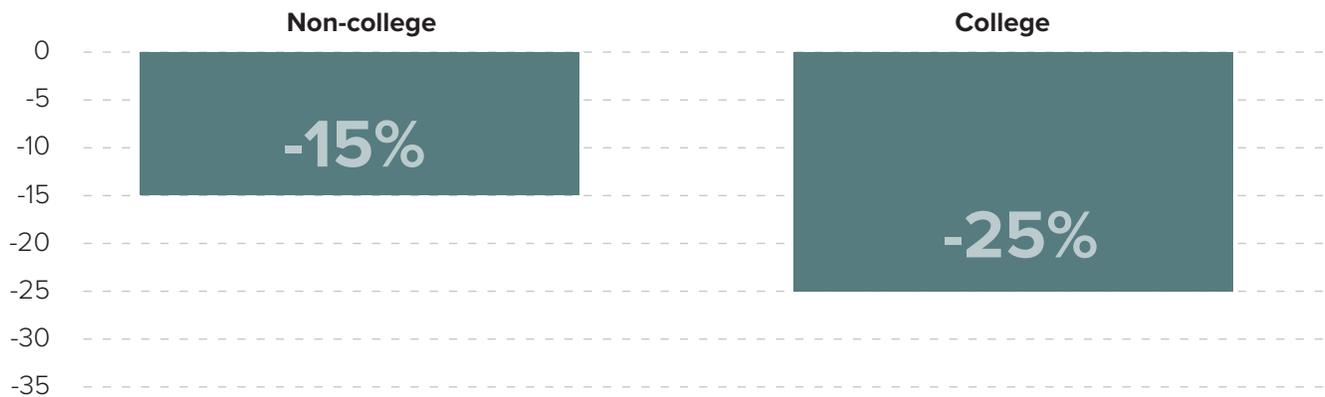
CANDIDATE	APPROVE	DISAPPROVE	DON'T KNOW	NET SUPPORT
Brian Higgins (NY-26)	26%	46%	28%	-21%
Dutch Ruppersberger (MD-2)	29%	42%	29%	-13%
Eliot Engel (NY-16)	28%	45%	28%	-17%
Filemon Vela (TX-34)	29%	42%	29%	-13%
Gregory Meeks (NY-5)	32%	37%	31%	-5%
Henry Cuellar (TX-28)	30%	41%	29%	-11%
Jim Cooper (TN-5)	27%	46%	27%	-19%
Kathleen Rice (NY-4)	26%	48%	26%	-22%
Kathy Castor (FL-14)	27%	44%	28%	-17%
Seth Moulton (MA-6)	21%	54%	25%	-32%
Stephen Lynch (MA-8)	23%	52%	25%	-30%
Tom Suozzi (NY-3)	22%	54%	24%	-32%

CONCLUSION:

While the rapid rise to prominence of the Green New Deal within the Democratic Party might suggest that it's a fringe issue only supported by the most activist Democrats - online and offline, we find the opposite. The

Democratic base wants their representatives to support a Green New Deal. There is not a single district of those polled where Democratic voters would prefer that their representative opposes a Green New Deal. With strong grassroots support and the endorsement of nearly every major presidential contender, elected Democrats oppose the Green New Deal at their own peril.

NET APPROVAL OF GND OPPOSITION: EDUCATION LEVEL



MEMBERS OF CONGRESS	GREEN NEW DEAL COSPONSOR
Ruppersberger, Dutch	✓
Rice, Kathleen	✗
Moulton, Seth	✓
Lynch, Stephen	✓
Higgins, Brian	✓
Cooper, Jim	✗
Suozzi, Thomas	✓
Engel, Eliot	✓
Meeks, Gregory	✓
Castor, Kathy	✗
Vela, Filemon	✗
Cuellar, Henry	✗