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# Voters Support Federal Investments to Improve Household Energy Efficiency

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## Introduction

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President Biden campaigned and won on a Build Back Better agenda to make much-needed investments in American infrastructure, create new jobs to help Americans recover from the coronavirus economic downturn, and address systemic environmental injustices. A major component of Biden's campaign plan to modernize and decarbonize American infrastructure is creating at least 1 million new jobs over the next four years to upgrade 4 million buildings and weatherize 2 million homes. In their new report, *Economic Recovery Begins at Home: Retrofitting US Housing Stock for Jobs, Health, Savings, and the Climate*, Evergreen Collaborative and the Roosevelt Institute outline a policy roadmap for President Biden to fulfill his campaign promise to create jobs while making American homes safer, more sustainable, and more energy-efficient.

As part of a recent national survey, Data for Progress assessed the attitudes of likely voters toward several policies outlined in *Economic Recovery Begins at Home*, including ensuring household weatherization and energy efficiency investments are priorities of new infrastructure legislation, investing in retrofitting and upgrading American homes, and expanding access to federal utility assistance programs.

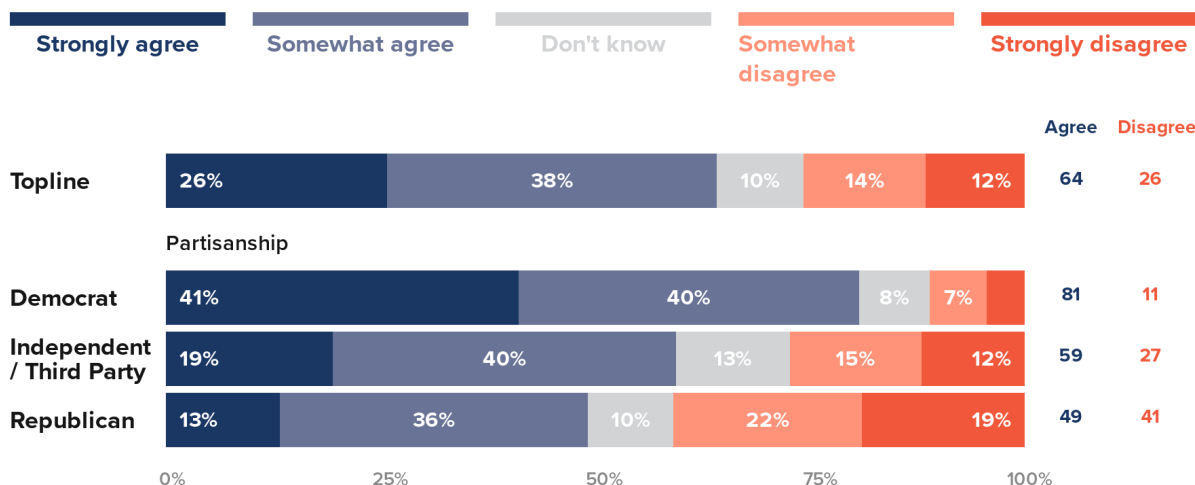
## Voters Support Including Funding for Weatherizing Homes and Buildings in the Next Infrastructure Bill

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After successfully passing the American Rescue Plan, Congress and the White House have signaled that an infrastructure bill is the next major legislative priority. Nearly two-thirds of all likely voters (64 percent) agree that this infrastructure bill should include investments to weatherize homes and residential buildings to make them more energy-efficient. Support is also bipartisan: Nearly all Democrats (81 percent), a majority of independents (59 percent), and a plurality of Republicans (49 percent) agree investments in retrofitting and weatherizing homes and residential buildings should be included in the next infrastructure bill.

# A Majority of Voters Agree Investments for Weatherizing Homes and Buildings Should Be Part of the Next Infrastructure Bill

President Biden and lawmakers in Congress are planning to unveil a large infrastructure investment bill this spring to jumpstart economic recovery from the coronavirus crisis. Do you agree or disagree that part of this infrastructure investment bill should include investments to weatherize homes and residential buildings to make them more energy efficient?



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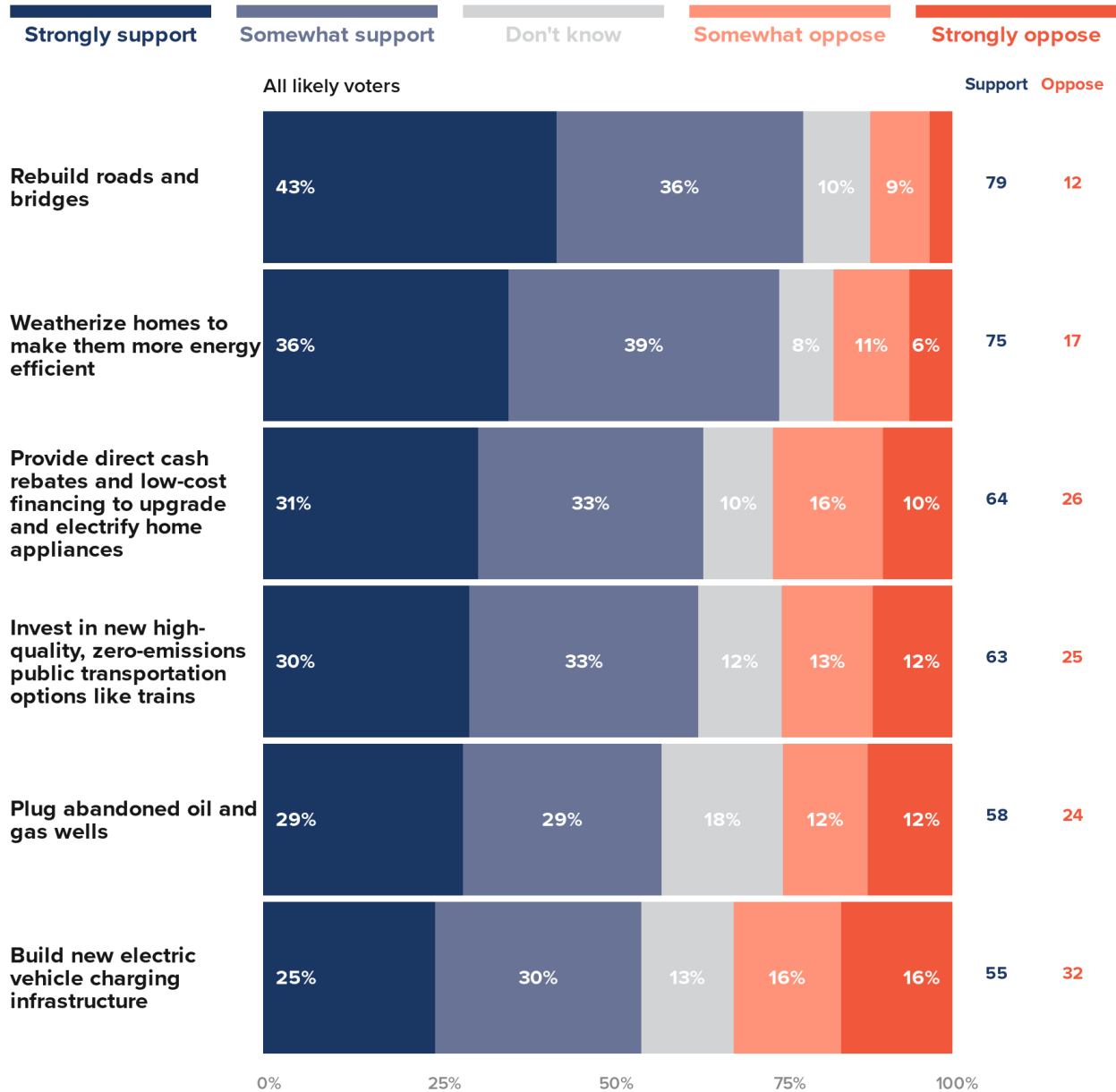
## Energy Efficiency Proposals Are Among the Most Popular Components of President Biden’s Build Back Better Plan

Among the major proposals in President Biden’s Build Back Better campaign plan, policies to weatherize and make households more energy efficient are overwhelmingly popular: three-quarters of all likely voters (75 percent) support weatherizing homes to make them more energy-efficient, while nearly two-thirds of all likely voters (64 percent) support providing direct cash rebates and low-cost financing to households to upgrade and electrify household appliances. While all components of the Build Back Better agenda that Data for Progress tested enjoy support from a majority of all likely voters, weatherizing homes and incentives to purchase energy-efficient appliances are more popular than all other policies tested with the exception of rebuilding roads and bridges (79 percent support).

Federal assistance for households to improve energy efficiency and afford utility bills enjoys strong support across party lines. Over three-quarters of all likely voters support federal incentives and rebates for weatherizing homes (77 percent) and utility bill assistance for low-income households and those suffering from pandemic-related unemployment (76 percent). Federal incentives and rebates for household weatherization and utility bill assistance are supported by nearly all Democrats (84 and 83 percent, respectively), a majority of independents (79 percent and 74 percent, respectively), and over two-thirds of Republicans (71 percent and 66 percent, respectively). With such strong bipartisan support, it is clear that voters across party lines overwhelmingly support federal assistance to ensure households do not lose access to utilities during the pandemic and to help lower household utility bills.

# Incentives to Weatherize and Make Households More Energy-Efficient Are Among the Most Popular Proposals of the Build Back Better Agenda

President Biden and lawmakers in Congress are planning to unveil a large infrastructure investment bill this spring. Please indicate whether you support or oppose the following proposals that may be funded as part of the bill:

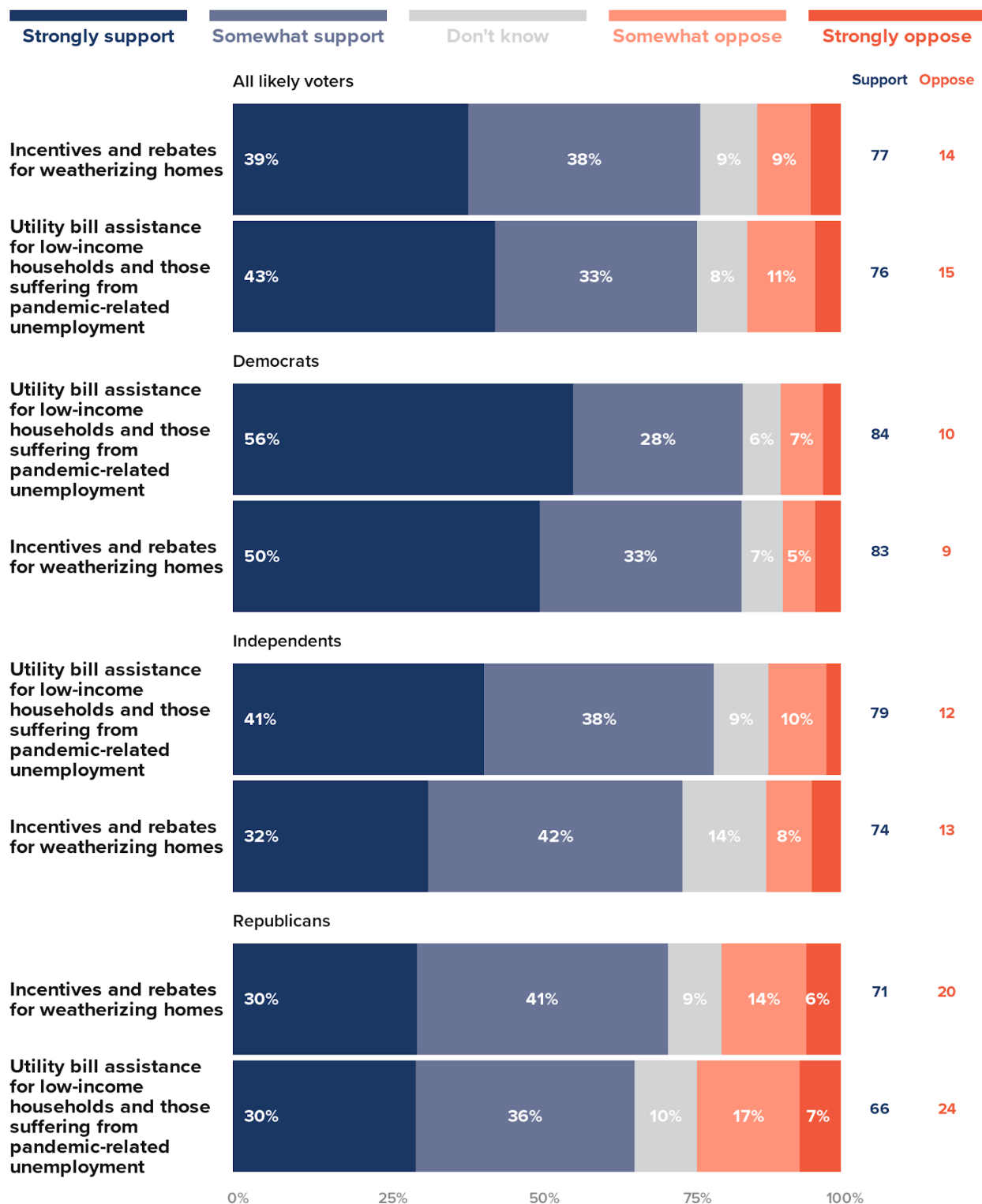


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# Voters Across Party Lines Support Federal Incentives for Weatherizing Homes and Utility Bill Assistance

The federal government is considering several ways to provide assistance with energy and utility bills. Please indicate whether you support or oppose each proposal:



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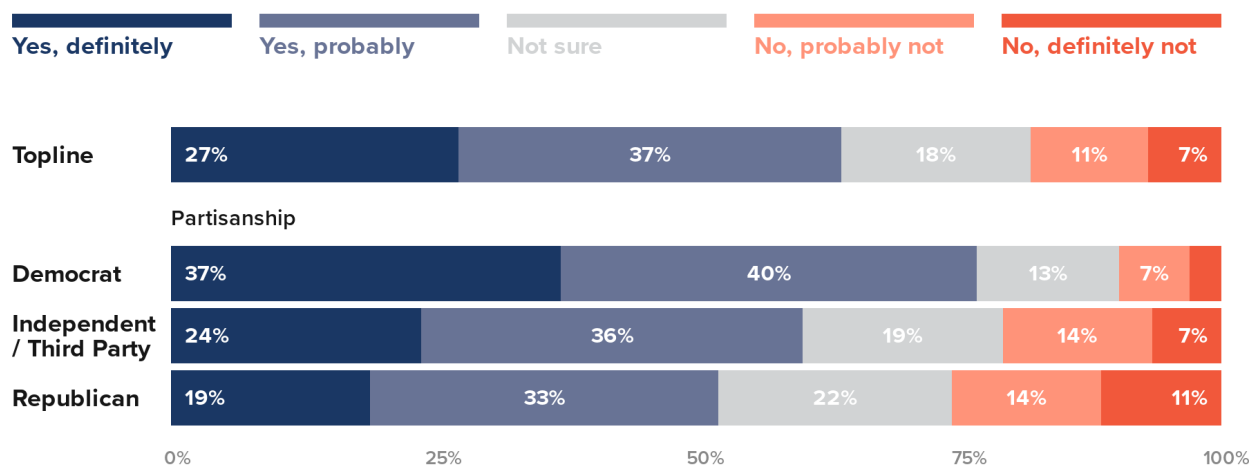
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# Federal Energy Efficiency Incentive Programs Have Potential for High Participation

Given the bipartisan popularity of these weatherization and energy efficiency policies, it is unsurprising that nearly two-thirds of all voters (64 percent) say they would definitely or probably participate in a federal program that would provide cash rebates to weatherize homes and purchase energy-efficient building materials and appliances. Over three-quarters of Democrats (77 percent), a majority of independents (60 percent), and a majority of Republicans (52 percent) all say they would definitely or probably participate in federal weatherization and energy efficiency incentive programs.

## A Majority of Voters Say They Would Participate in a Federal Energy Efficiency Incentive Program

If the government created a new program to provide cash rebates for weatherizing your home to make it more energy efficient, such as for purchasing new windows, electric appliances, and insulation, would you consider participating in this program?



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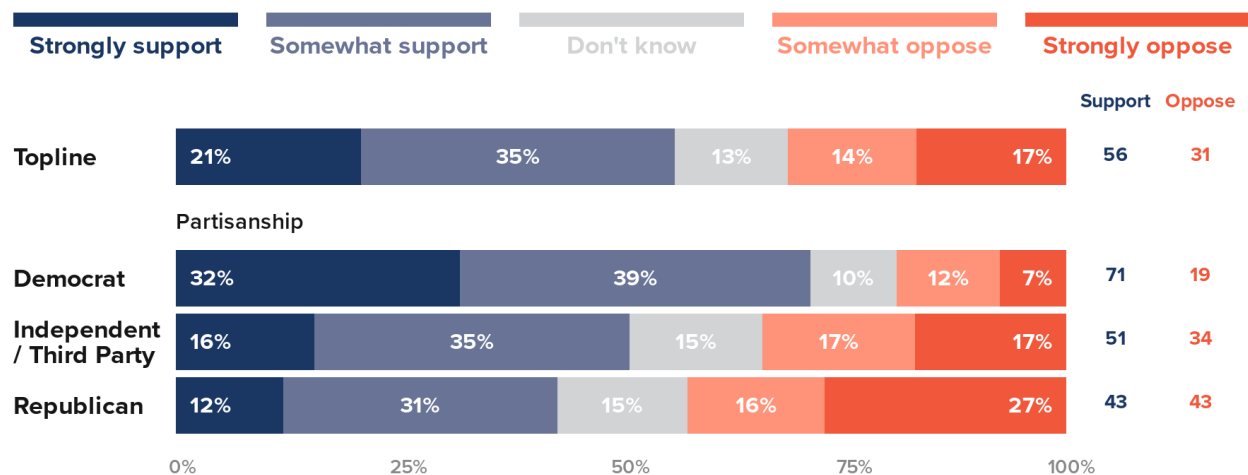
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# Voters Support Dedicating Medicaid Funding to Improving Household Health

Besides lowering utility bills and carbon emissions, improving household energy efficiency can have a significant positive impact on household health, such as reducing air pollution to improve air quality and reduce rates of asthma. To ensure this critical outcome of household energy efficiency improvements benefits disadvantaged communities, Evergreen and Roosevelt propose directing one percent of annual Medicaid funding for making energy efficiency upgrades focused on air quality and accident and disease prevention. A majority of all likely voters (56 percent) support this proposal, including a majority of Democrats (71 percent), a majority of independents (51 percent), and 43 percent of Republicans.

## A Majority of Voters Support Directing 1% of Annual Medicaid Funding for Making Energy Efficiency Upgrades

Some lawmakers are considering a proposal to direct 1% of annual Medicaid funding for making energy efficiency upgrades focused on indoor air quality and accident and disease prevention to improve public health for low-income Americans. Would you support or oppose this proposal?



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## Conclusion

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Federal investments to make households healthier, cheaper, and more energy-efficient are not only overwhelmingly popular across party lines, but also key to decarbonizing and modernizing the American economy. Proposals to provide assistance to disadvantaged communities that have faced systemic barriers in household safety and efficiency are also overwhelmingly popular and key components of President Biden's commitment to addressing environmental injustices. When considering the proposals of the forthcoming infrastructure bill, lawmakers have a clear mandate from voters to prioritize initiatives for improving household energy efficiency.

## SURVEY METHODOLOGY

From February 19 to February 22, 2021, Data for Progress conducted a survey of 1,555 likely voters nationally using web panel respondents. The sample was weighted to be representative of likely voters by age, gender, education, race, and voting history. The survey was conducted in English. The margin of error is  $\pm 2$  percentage points.