

## The *For the People Act* Enjoys Wide Bipartisan Support Among Voters

In February 2021, Data for Progress tested several core aspects of the *For the People Act*, a bill that would bring deep changes to our electoral system and found that **a large majority of voters support all of the bill's major components. The poll, commissioned by [Democracy for All 2021 Action](#), shows that more than 70 percent of voters support reforms to increase transparency around donations to super PACs and other dark money organizations, amplify small dollar contributions over large contributions, create stronger ethics rules to slow the revolving door of lobbyists, and establish fair districts that don't skew toward Democrats or Republicans.** Reforms to expand voter registration and access through mechanisms like automatic voter registration and early voting are also supported by over 65 percent of voters, even after sustained polarization of the ideas.

Below is a summary of our key findings, along with shareable charts available in the [Appendix](#).

**There is wide bipartisan support for the major components of the *For the People Act*.** Across the components of the bill that were tested, we find strong support when looking at voters across the political spectrum. The most popular component, limiting PACs and dark money, has 78 percent support, and **all components are supported by at least two-thirds of voters, with fairly minimal opposition.**

The major components of the bill are most popular among Democrats, whose support for specific policies included in the bill ranges from 76% at a minimum for stronger ethics rules to 84% support for expanding ways to vote. **For most measures, Independent support tracks or exceeds support from Democrats**, with the exception of expanding ways to vote and ways to register to vote (though these policies still retain more than 60% support.) **Republican support is not much lower across the components of the law**, except for the same two policies around expanding ways to vote and ways to register to vote, showing the impact of the polarized political discourse on expanding voting options. Even so, it is even, with **roughly half of Republicans saying they support and half saying they oppose these measures.**

**An astonishing 86% of Democrats and 83% of Republicans support democracy reforms for the purpose of establishing a “government that represents all of us equally.”** Among the various ways of describing the *For the People Act*'s core components that we tested, **a “good government” frame received by far the most bipartisan support.** Under the premise that “we deserve a government that represents all of us equally,” the law was described as “changes to how elections are conducted in the United States **so that our government is more representative of what the people want and better addresses our needs.**”

The specific components of the law were presented as follows: “This package of laws would expand and protect voting rights **so all eligible voters can cast a ballot and have their vote counted**; reduce the influence of money in politics **so the will of the people, not special interests, prevails in elections**; ensure legislative districts **aren't skewed to favor either Republicans or Democrats**, and **require that our elected leaders be transparent with voters** through new ethics rules.”

**Voters from all over the country (urban, suburban, rural America) are in favor of democracy reforms.** All major components of the *For the People Act* meet with at least 61% approval across urban, suburban, and rural areas (61% rural support for expanding ways to register to vote is the lowest performing policy/group). Components around reducing the influence of secret money, amplifying the power of small donors, and slowing the revolving door of lobbyists receive effusive support across the board (73% to 81%), **with the highest level of support (81%) coming from rural voters toward limiting the use of secret money. It is worth noting that all components of the bill receive strong majority support across swing states (67% to 78%).**

**A majority of voters still agree with the major components of the *For the People Act* when they go head-to-head with the argument that it amounts to a partisan “power grab.”** Opponents’ argument against the *For the People Act* generally involves framing it as “power grab on the part of politicians/Democrats who want to change the rules of the game to benefit themselves instead of combating voter fraud and defending the integrity of our elections.” **Voters disagree with them. Whether tested through a partisan frame (Democrats vs. Republicans) or neutral frame (supporters vs. opponents), majority support for the bill still ranges between 55% and 64%.**

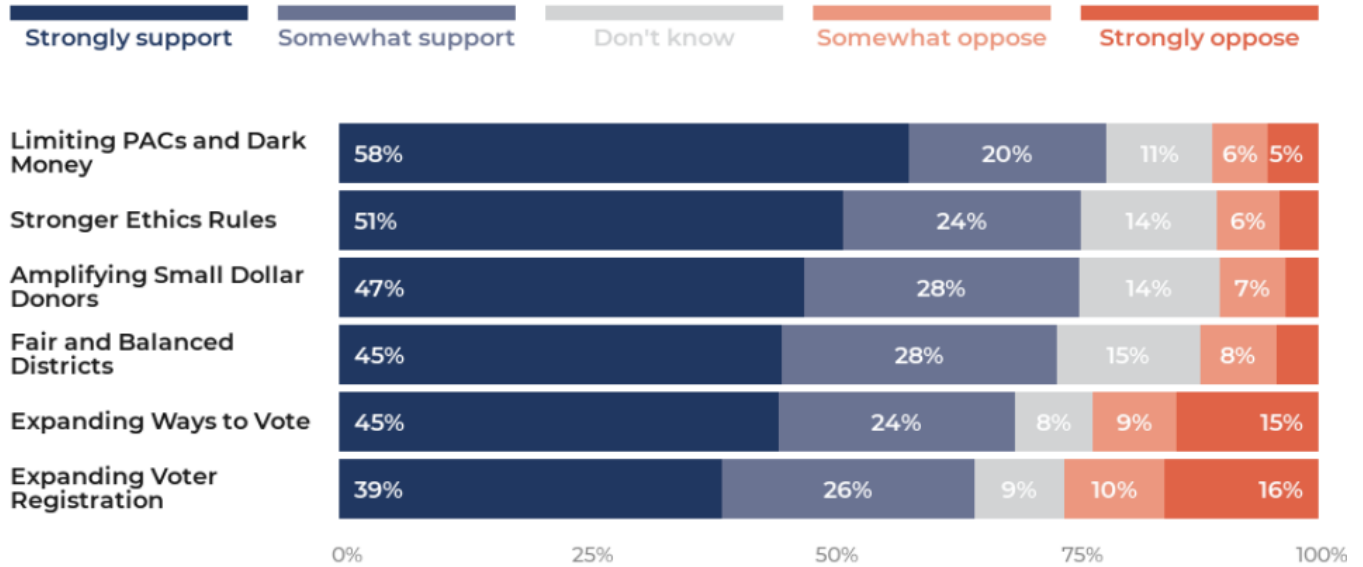
**Republican Congress members’ opposition to the *For the People Act* is at odds with the majority support from Republican voters for nearly all the major components of the bill.** The *For the People Act* previously passed the House in March 2019 **without a single Republican vote**, and was immediately blocked by then Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. **But Republicans’ votes in Congress do not align with the views of their constituents.**

**79% of Republicans support the *For the People Act* as a package of reforms, and that support grows to 83% through a “good government” lens.** Most components of the bill receive 67% to 75% of Republican voters’ support, and the two measures around expanding ways to vote and ways to register to vote split Republican voters roughly in half.

**A large majority of Democrats see democracy reform as a racial justice issue.** Among various frames tested, **83% of Democrats supported “changes to how elections are conducted in the United States so we finally put an end to voter suppression that targets people of color and ensure all votes are counted equally.”**

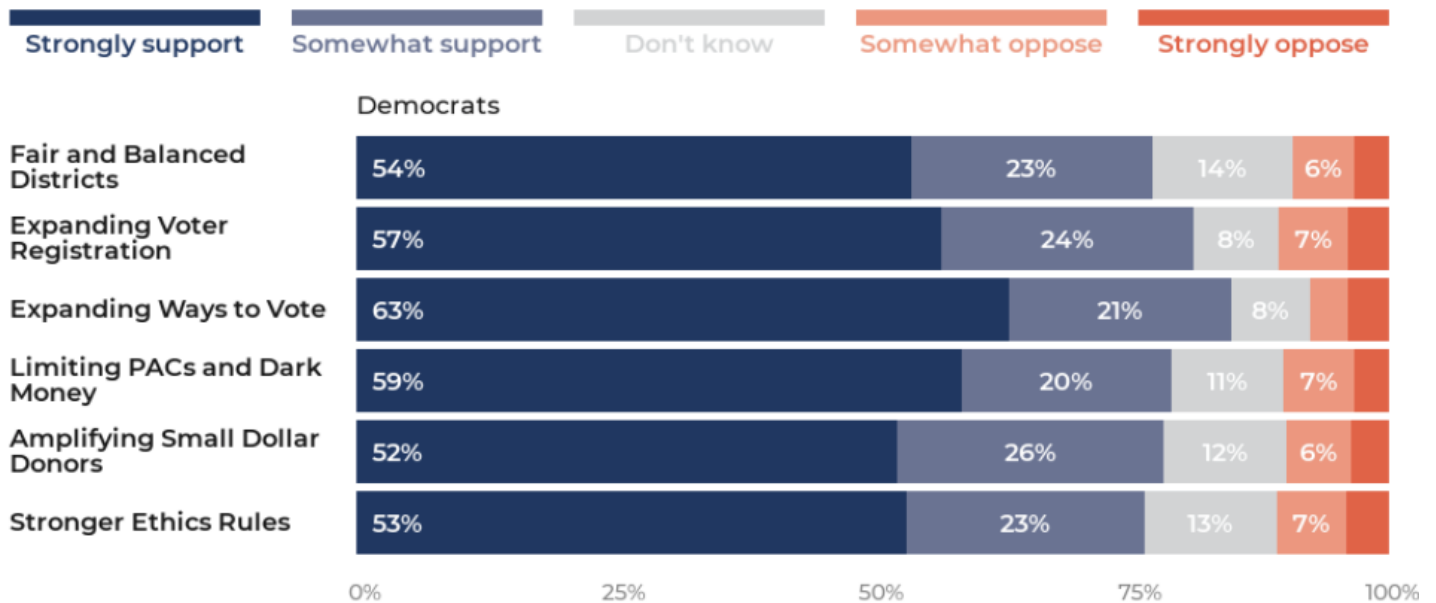
## APPENDIX

### Voters Support Core Components of the For the People Act



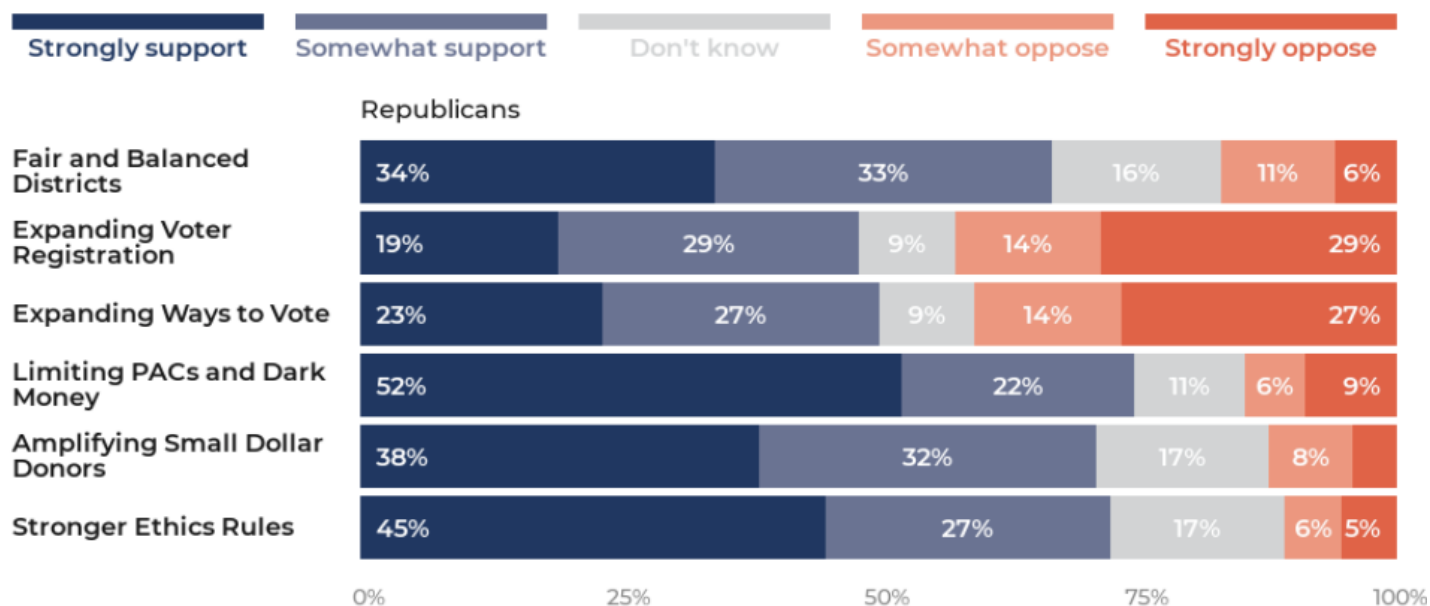
Feb 19 to Feb 22, 2021 survey of 1526 likely voters

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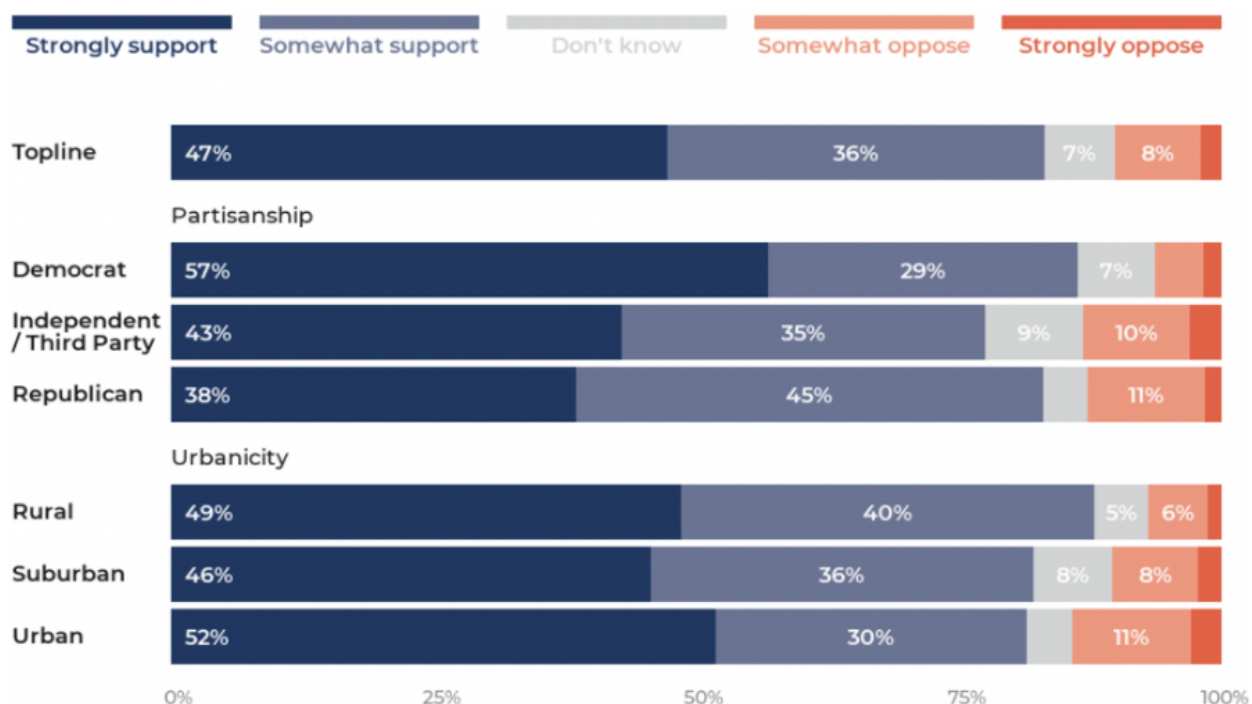
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## Key Excerpts:

We deserve a government that represents all of us equally. Some lawmakers in Congress are proposing changes to how elections are conducted in the United States so that our government is more representative of what the people want and better addresses our needs.

This package of laws would expand and protect voting rights so all eligible voters can cast a ballot and have their vote counted; reduce the influence of money in politics so the will of the people, not special interests, prevails in elections; ensure legislative districts aren't skewed to favor either Republicans or Democrats, and require that our elected leaders be transparent with voters through new ethics rules.

Would you support or oppose this?



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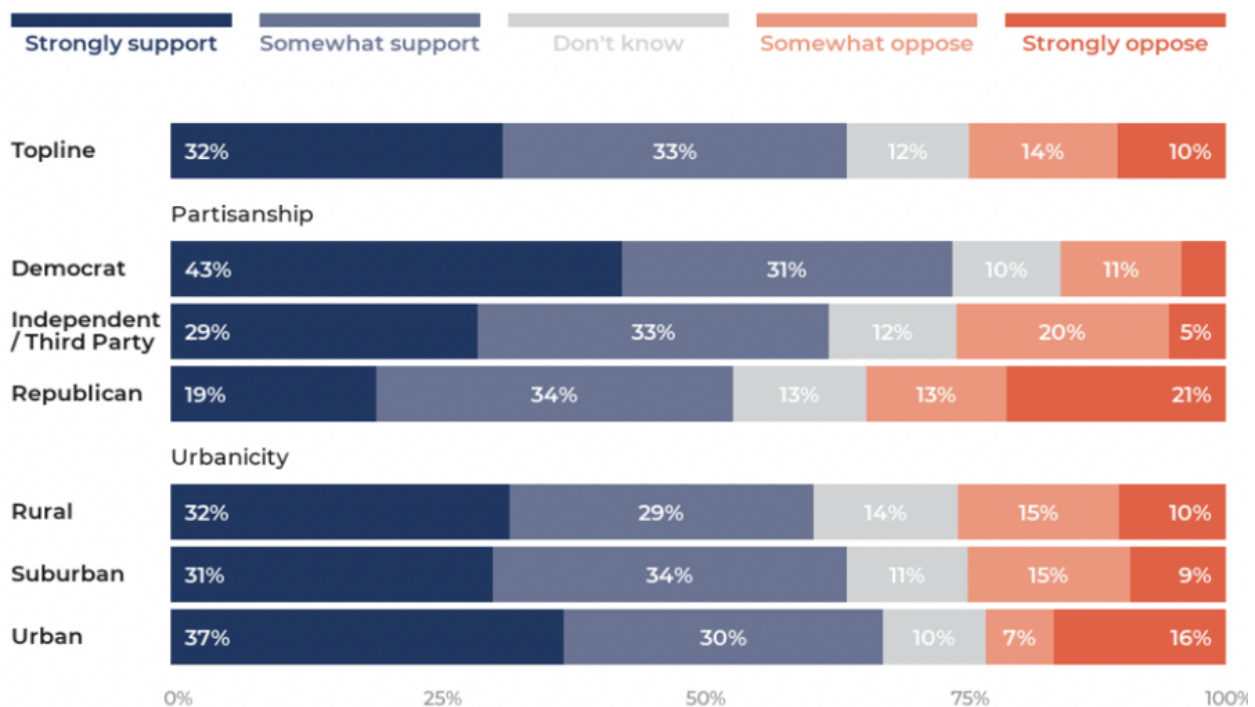
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Some lawmakers in Congress are proposing changes to how elections are conducted in the United States. This package of laws would expand and protect voting rights, reduce the influence of big money in politics and increase the power of small donors, change how legislative districts are drawn to make sure that no party gets an unfair advantage, and create new ethics rules for federal officeholders.

Supporters of this say everyone deserves an equal voice in our democracy. However, millions of people don't have equal representation in government because of state laws that create unnecessary barriers for eligible voters to cast a ballot and have it counted. This is especially true for poorer people and people of color. These changes would give everyone an equal opportunity to vote.

Opponents of this proposal say that this is a partisan power grab on the part of politicians who want to change the rules of the game to benefit themselves instead of combating voter fraud and defending the integrity of our elections. Policymakers who are serious about addressing the problems of our elections should focus on voter fraud.

Would you support or oppose this?



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## Methodology

From February 19 to February 22, 2021, Data for Progress conducted a survey of 1526 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  $\pm 3$  percentage points.

## Questions

1. Below is a list of proposals that legislators are considering. For each, please say whether you support or oppose it.
  - a. Establishing independent commissions to draw legislative districts that are fair and balanced - not skewed to favor either Democrats or Republicans.
  - b. Making sure that all eligible voters have a wide range of options to register to vote such as automatically registering voters when they turn eighteen and allowing people to register online or on the same day they vote.
  - c. Making sure that registered voters have a wide range of options to cast their ballot, including by voting in person early, voting in person on Election Day, and voting by mail.
  - d. Limiting the use of secret money to sway our elections by making sure that the public has access to the names of donors to super PACs and dark money organizations.
  - e. Reduce the influence of big donors and amplify the power of small donors in elections.
  - f. Strengthen government ethics by slowing the revolving door of special interest lobbyists.

### Scale

- Strongly support
  - Somewhat support
  - Somewhat support
  - Strongly oppose
  - Don't know
2. We deserve a government that represents all of us equally. Some lawmakers in Congress are proposing changes to how elections are conducted in the United States so that our government is more representative of what the people want and better addresses our needs.

This package of laws would expand and protect voting rights so all eligible voters can cast a ballot and have their vote counted; reduce the influence of money in politics so the will of the people, not special interests, prevails in elections; ensure legislative districts aren't skewed to favor either Republicans or Democrats, and require that our elected leaders be transparent with voters through new ethics rules.

Would you support or oppose this?

Scale

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- Somewhat support
- Strongly oppose
- Don't know

3. Some lawmakers in Congress are proposing changes to how elections are conducted in the United States. This package of laws would expand and protect voting rights, reduce the influence of big money in politics and increase the power of small donors, change how legislative districts are drawn to make sure that no party gets an unfair advantage, and create new ethics rules for federal officeholders.

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Would you support or oppose this?

Scale

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- Somewhat support
- Strongly oppose
- Don't know