

Building Digital Infrastructure

JUNE 2021

Roughly

24%

of rural Americans say access to high-speed internet is a major problem, compared to

13% of urban Americans and

9% of suburban Americans

24%

13%

9%

From online schooling to telehealth doctor visits, the virtual challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic have proven that access to reliable high-speed internet is a necessity in the 21st century, not a luxury. As such, the government has a duty to secure universal broadband so that no one gets left behind in the digital age. Tens of millions of Americans remain without access to reliable internet services, with rural areas, particularly tribal jurisdictions, being hit the hardest. The American Jobs Plan (AJP) seeks to bridge America’s digital divide through an investment of \$100 billion to expand broadband internet access across the nation. This proposed investment is more ambitious in scope than the \$94 billion Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act proposed by Representative Jim Clyburn (D-SC) and Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN).

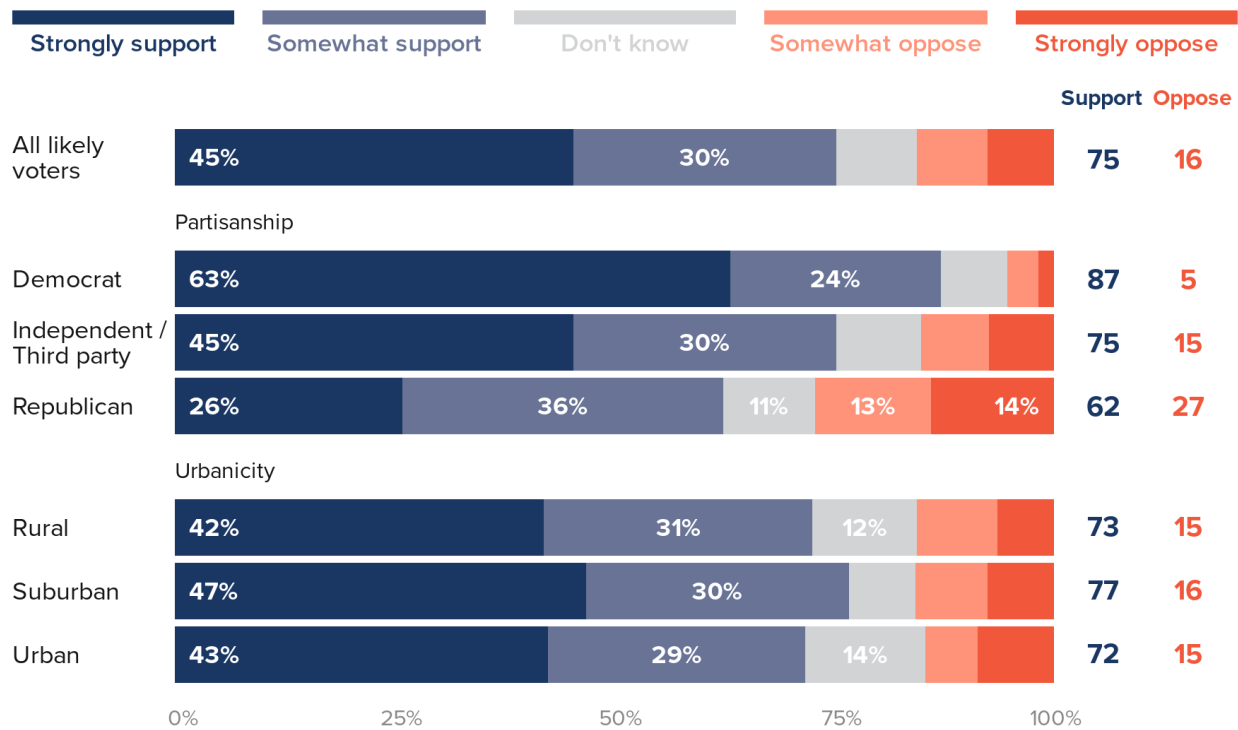
To lower costs for consumers, the AJP’s broadband proposal also calls for investments in municipal broadband services to facilitate competition between internet service providers (ISPs) and increase pricing transparency for consumers. Increasing competition between ISPs to lower consumer costs

is key because exorbitant internet service prices form a barrier to access for many Americans. These policy changes, coupled with robust federal investments, have the potential to transform rural communities and allow for Americans across the country to succeed in the digital age.

The AJP’s broadband proposal enjoys overwhelming bipartisan support. Three-quarters of all likely voters (75 percent), including a majority of Democrats (87 percent), Independents (75 percent), and Republicans (62 percent), all support the AJP’s proposal to expand broadband internet access to reach all Americans.² Additionally, this proposal enjoys broad backing among rural (73 percent support), suburban (77 percent support), and urban (72 percent) voters.

An Overwhelming Bipartisan Majority of Voters Support Federal Investments to Expand Broadband Access

Do you support or oppose the following proposal in the American Jobs Plan: Expanding broadband internet access to reach all Americans



May 5–6, 2021 survey of 1,328 likely voters

DATA FOR PROGRESS