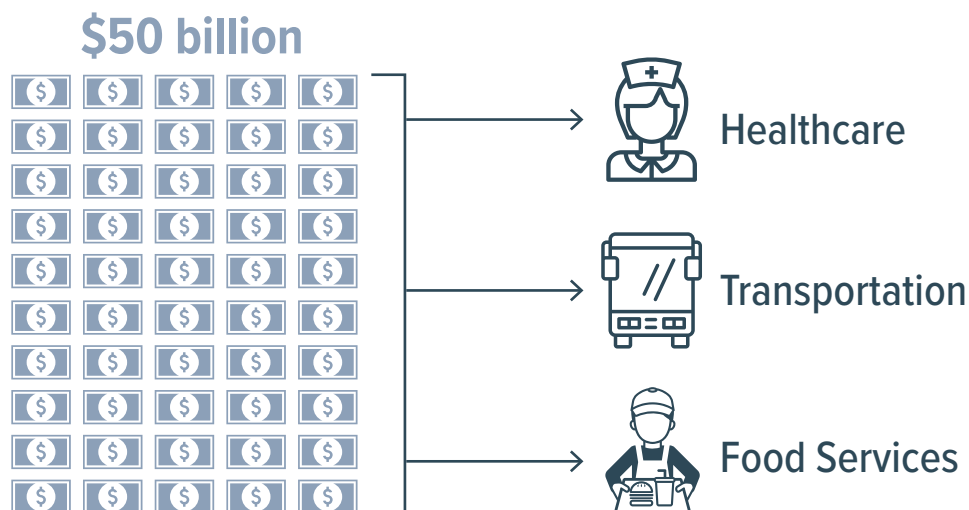


# Investing in Frontline Communities

JUNE 2021



**Low-income communities of color often live on the frontlines of poverty and pollution facing disproportionate exposure to disasters exacerbated by the climate crisis like heat waves, hurricanes and air pollution. As the climate crisis intensifies, the federal government must invest in measures to ensure these communities are resilient to extreme weather and natural disasters.**

The American Jobs Plan (AJP) allocates \$50 billion to help frontline communities safeguard key infrastructure such as healthcare, food, and transportation services. Additionally, 40 percent of the investments in the overall package are targeted to disadvantaged communities. Mitigating the impact of extreme weather and natural disasters will be crucial to our collective adaptation to climate change, and it is critical that the most vulnerable communities are not left behind by the federal government.

These provisions in the AJP complement several environmental justice bills introduced by lawmakers in Congress. In March 2021, Representatives Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ) and Donald McEachin (D-VA)

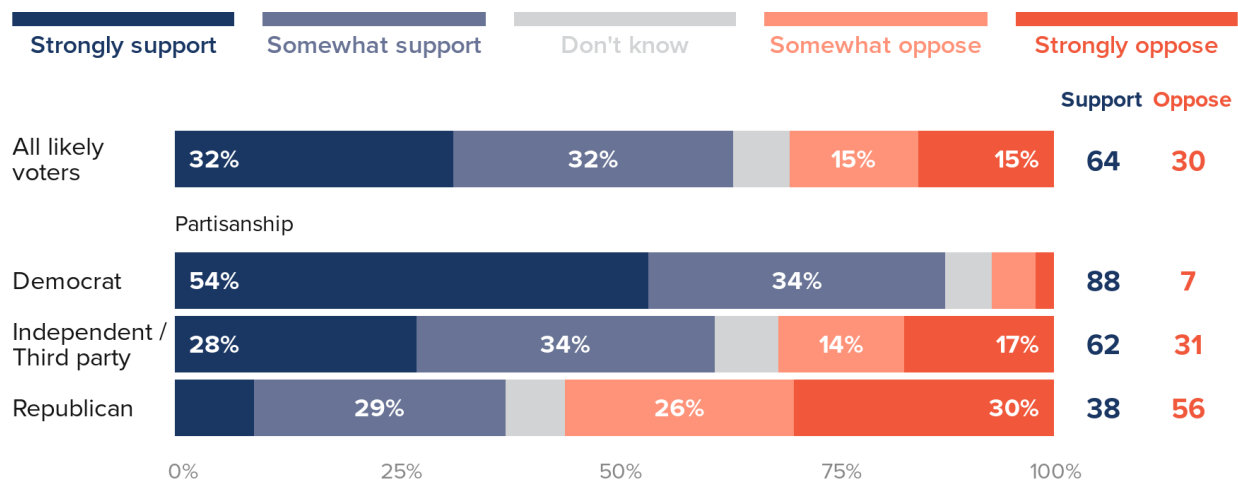
reintroduced the [Environmental Justice for All Act](#), originally sponsored in the Senate by Vice President Kamala Harris and now being led by Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL). If implemented, this legislation would establish environmental justice grant programs to fund projects seeking to safeguard vulnerable communities from environmental disaster. Senator Duckworth also co-introduced the [Environmental Justice Mapping and Data Collection Act](#) along with Senator Ed Markey (D-MA) and Representative Cori Bush (D-MO) earlier this year. This legislation would better equip the federal government to map and collect data on environmental injustice for the purpose of investing in harmed communities.

During her final year in the Senate, Vice President Harris also introduced the [Climate Equity Act](#) with Representative Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) to address the concerns of vulnerable communities in the rulemaking process. The bill called for creating two new federal offices, the Climate and Environmental Equity Office and the Office of Climate and Environmental Justice Accountability. It is critical that lawmakers reintroduce and pass this legislation in the 117th Congress to ensure frontline communities have a much-needed voice in the federal government on the issues that directly and disproportionately impact them.

Nearly two-thirds of all likely voters (64 percent) support including a provision in the AJP to deliver 40 percent of the benefits of climate and clean energy investments to low-income communities, communities of color, and other disadvantaged communities. A clear majority of Democrats (88 percent) and Independents (62 percent), as well as 38 percent of Republicans, support this investment standard. Voters clearly back this marquee environmental justice provision in the AJP, and it is critical that Democratic lawmakers include it in the final legislation.

## Voters Support Targeting Climate Investments to Frontline Communities

Do you support or oppose including a provision in the American Jobs Plan to deliver 40 percent of the benefits of climate and clean infrastructure investments to low-income communities, communities of color, and other disadvantaged communities?



April 22–28, 2021 survey of 3,031 likely voters

DATA FOR PROGRESS