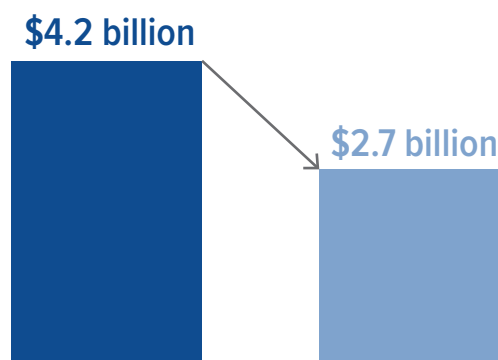


Rebuilding Public Housing

JUNE 2021

Funding for public housing repairs has fallen **35%** from 2000 to 2018



The American Jobs Plan (AJP) includes an investment of \$40 billion to improve already-existing public housing which has been damaged by decades of neglect from the federal government. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC), more than 10,000 public housing units are lost annually as a result of lack of maintenance, rendering them “uninhabitable.” To make public housing safer and more sustainable, the AJP calls for bolstering safety standards and improving energy efficiency.

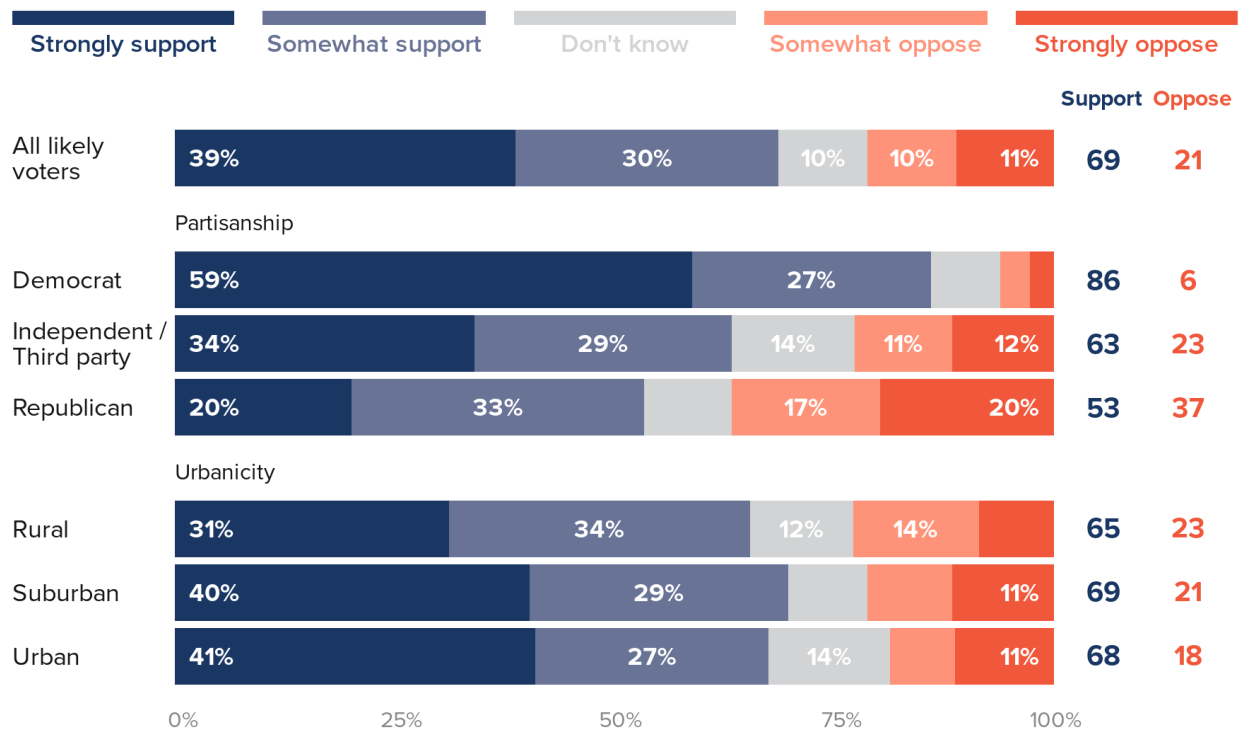
By including this investment in the AJP, the Biden Administration has signaled it intends to fix the crisis of decaying public housing in America after decades of underinvestment. While this is a welcome first step, \$40 billion is unlikely to be enough to complete the repair process of America’s entire public housing stock. Lawmakers agree that more ambitious investments are needed: 61 members of Congress have urged the White House to pursue at least \$70 billion in funding to repair America’s public housing. It is worth noting that the AJP does not include a proposal to increase funding for Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers, which Biden ran in favor of.

The [Green New Deal for Public Housing Act](#), introduced by Representative Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) and Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT), proposes investing up to \$172 billion over 10 years towards public housing repairs and renovations. To secure an energy-efficient future, the legislation seeks to eliminate carbon emissions from existing federal public housing buildings. [Research](#) by Data for Progress in 2019 found that an investment of this magnitude would retrofit over a million public housing units, improve the conditions of nearly two million public housing residents, and create over 240,000 jobs across the country. Finally, it should be noted that only a fifth of HUD-subsidized or funded units constitute “public housing units” per the AJP, and it is crucial that green requirements are also applied to these units, especially given the [growth](#) of the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program.

A bipartisan majority of likely voters (69 percent) support the AJP’s proposal to upgrade public housing. A majority of Democrats (86 percent), Independents (63 percent), and Republicans (53 percent) all support upgrading public housing to eliminate hazardous pollution and improve energy efficiency. While urban voters support this proposal by a significant 50-point margin (68 percent support, 18 percent oppose), both suburban and rural voters also widely support investments in public housing (69 percent support and 65 percent support, respectively). While public housing may be misconstrued as an issue that only urban voters care about, it is clear that voters across different geographies also widely support much-needed federal investments to make public housing safer, healthier, and more sustainable.

Voters Support Investments in Public Housing

Do you support or oppose the following proposal in the American Jobs Plan: Upgrading public housing to eliminate hazardous pollution and improve energy efficiency



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

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