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A STIMULUS FOR ALL AMERICANS:

Voters support including
all Americans in
stimulus, regardless of
immigration status

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- ▶ An overall majority of Americans support extending a number of benefits to immigrants regardless of immigration status—including the extension of free health treatment, monthly stimulus payments to taxpayers, the auto-renewal of visas to all immigrant essential workers and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients --as a means of mitigating the severity and duration of the coronavirus pandemic.
- ▶ Given visa renewal offices are closed, automatically renewing visas and immigration benefits for essential workers in particular--nurses, doctors, agricultural workers and transportation for the duration of the state of emergency in the U.S.--is very popular, with 71 percent support overall. Support for this proposal was 59 percent among Republicans--a leap of nearly 20 percentage points above Republican support for each of the other proposals surveyed.
- ▶ The American public believes including everyone in the United States in recovery efforts is best for public health and the economy.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

The first coronavirus relief bill (the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, or CARES Act) was signed into law by President Trump on March 27, 2020, and excluded many immigrants from its delivery of direct payments to taxpayers and free coronavirus testing, among other provisions. The omission of undocumented immigrants, which constitute a nontrivial contingency of the U.S. population, has the potential to impact the bill's efficacy in bolstering public health and stopping the spread of the virus throughout the country.

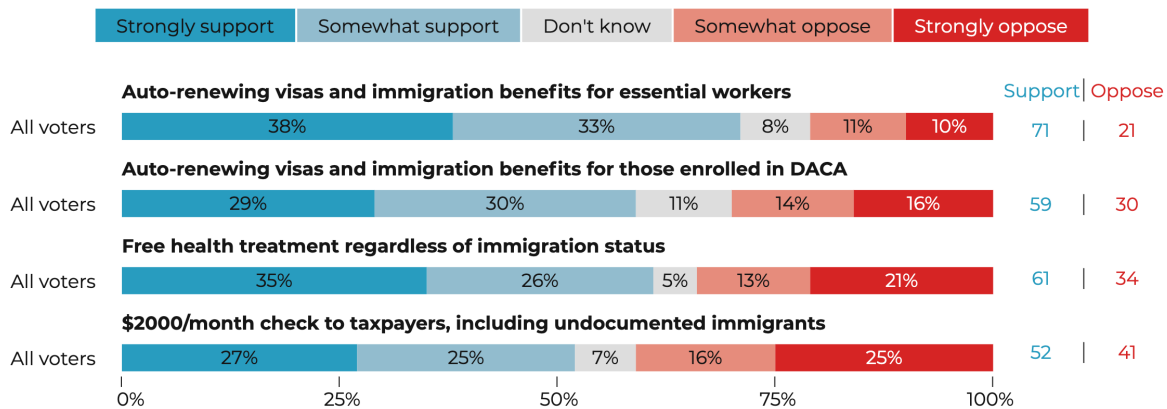
FINDINGS:

In our April 2020 survey, we find broad support for proposals extending coronavirus testing, government-distributed financial aid, and immigration benefits to essential workers, DACA recipients, and the immigrant population as a whole--irrespective of legal status--for the duration of the pandemic, with a slight majority (51 percent or higher) of voters in support.

Though our polling indicates these proposals to be viable among voters, the results do not suggest an overwhelmingly strong degree of bipartisan consensus. Support for each proposal surveyed is significantly lower among Republicans as compared to voters as a whole, and remains well below 50 percent (fluctuating between 35 and 42 percent) except in the case of extending immigration benefits to medical, agricultural, and transportation workers in particular. Republican

Voters Support Ensuring Americans Benefit From Stimulus Regardless of Their Immigration Status

Do you support or oppose the following proposals?



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support surges to 59 percent for this proposal, suggesting that the magnitude of the crisis may be shifting Republican adherence away from more hardline immigration views, and that the threat of virus to America's welfare and national security is greater than the perceived threat of more lenient immigration policies at this time.

While we find the highest levels of support among all voters for the proposal to auto-renew visas and immigration benefits to essential workers, our polling also shows that Democrats support providing free health treatment to all immigrants in nearly equal numbers (83 percent support) to their support for renewing visas and immigration benefits to immigrants performing essential roles (84 percent support). The similar popularity of these two proposals among Democrats suggests that they, unlike other voters, regard indiscriminate treatment of sick individuals as well as maintaining an ample workforce of medical, food supply, and transit personnel as equally critical to curtailing the spread of the virus and managing the pandemic. By contrast, Independent and Republican-identifying respondents prioritize keeping

essential industries staffed with immigrant workers during the crisis through auto-renewals of immigration benefits (at 62 and 59 percent support, respectively), but are far less supportive of administering treatment to the undocumented sick with the same accessibility (free, non-cost-prohibitive) available to individuals with legal status (at 52 and 39 support, respectively).

CONCLUSION:

Previous polling conducted by DFP earlier in April 2020 suggested that voters largely support government action to provide more protections for essential workers. This round of polling elaborates on our prior findings and indicates broad support for renewing immigration benefits to immigrants employed in essential fields such as medicine, agriculture, and transportation—a narrowing of the traditional partisan divide on immigration when it comes to workers who play key roles during the crisis. Voters also support automatic extension of the DACA program and ensuring that the vital stimulus protections benefit all Americans, regardless of immigration status.

COVER PHOTO
Jason Leung/Unsplash