

TO: The Fossil Fuel Industry

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THE GREEN NEW DEAL IS POPULAR

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

We find most voters support the individual policies that comprise the Green New Deal. Clean air and clean water, sustainable agriculture and lead removal are especially popular, and could be used to win over swing voters in geographies where progressives often struggle.

The Green New Deal framework offers important public opinion promise in several ways: first, it expresses the urgency of action on climate change; second, it allows for a policy approach that addresses racial justice and economic inequality in addition to emissions; third, it moves beyond exclusively market-based approaches to global warming; and finally, it is broad enough to address many pollutants.

We find no evidence that a focus on racial justice or economic inequality as part of the Green New Deal will have negative public opinion implications. Instead, a

framework of jobs, racial justice and climate has strong support from the American public. In short, the Green New Deal is popular. Combating inequality and climate is a powerful way to mobilize the progressive base while persuading swing voters.

BACKGROUND

On behalf of Data for Progress, YouGov Blue fielded a national survey of US registered voters. The national issues survey was conducted by YouGov Blue from March 30-April 4, 2019 using YouGov's online panel. The sample consists of 1,012 respondents interviewed on the internet who were registered to vote. The sample was weighted to be representative of the national population of voters by age, race, sex, education, and region using a 2018 US voter frame. Later, a second survey was fielded on 1,095 respondents to explore additional Green New Deal policies. That survey fielded from April 29, 2019-May 5, 2019 and was weighted using the same sampling framework.

MESSAGING THE GREEN NEW DEAL

The first question we asked was simply how much respondents had heard of the Green New Deal, with an even fifty percent having “heard a lot” or “heard some” and 50 percent having “heard a little” or “heard nothing.”

By a substantial margin voters report that they have heard “mostly negative” things about the Green New Deal. Across respondents in our survey, just 14 percent reported that what they’d heard about the Green New Deal was “mostly positive,” compared to 40 percent who reported what they had heard was mostly negative, and 38 percent who said what they’d heard about the Green New Deal was mixed between positive and negative.

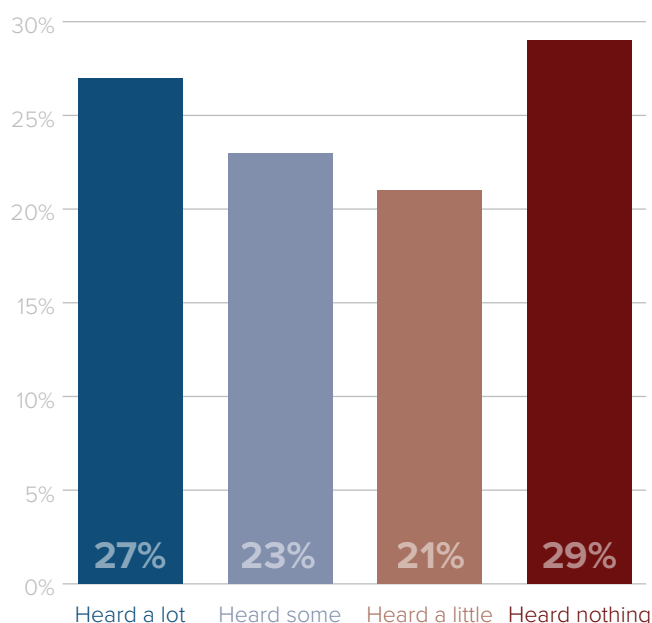
Respondents who said they’d heard “a lot” about the Green New Deal reported by a 58-14 margin that most of what they’d heard had been negative. Voters who

reported they’d heard “a little” about the Green New Deal also reported that by a 30-9 margin the things they’d heard about Green New Deal were negative.

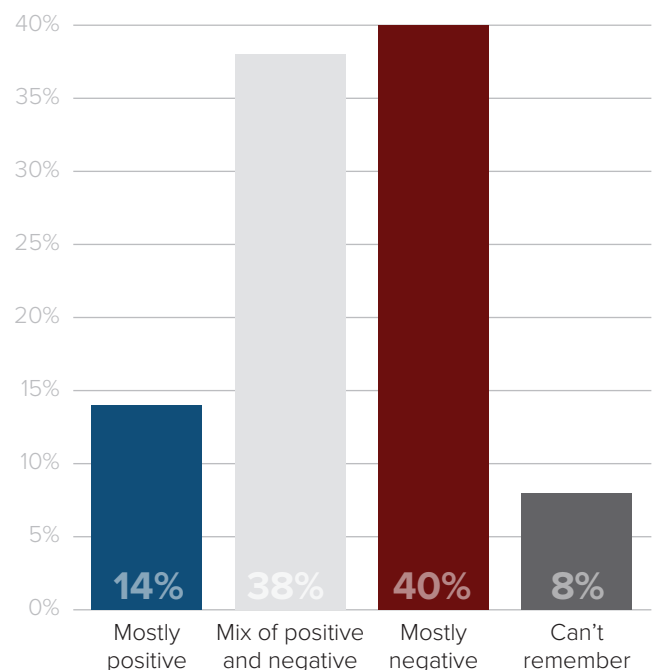
We also asked respondents where they got their news from. About 91 percent of voters reported getting their news from at least one of the following: CNN, FOX, MSNBC, “other cable news,” local news, national nightly network TV, news sites or apps, local papers, radio, late night comedy, Facebook, Twitter, reddit, YouTube, or other social media.

The news source most associated with negative coverage of the Green New Deal, perhaps unsurprisingly, was Fox. Among respondents who got their news from Fox, fully 74 percent reported that what they’d heard about the Green New Deal was “mostly negative.” 26 percent of the voters in our survey reported getting news from Fox, including 51 percent of Republicans and 26 percent of Independents.

HOW MUCH HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE “GREEN NEW DEAL”?



HAS WHAT YOU’VE HEARD ABOUT THE GREEN NEW DEAL BEEN...



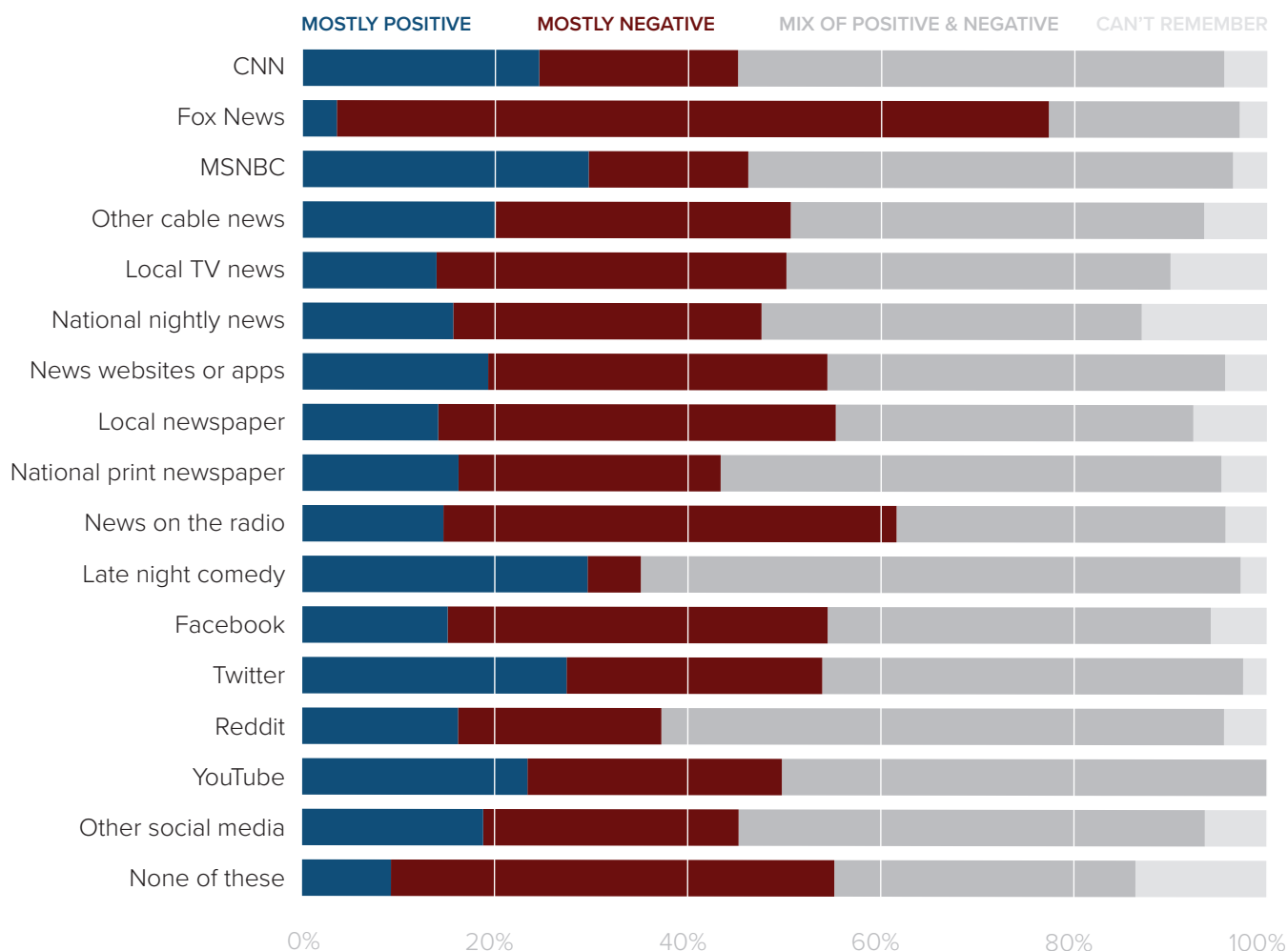
GND NEWS MOSTLY POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE	HEARD OF GREEN NEW DEAL		
	Heard a lot	Heard some	Heard a little
Mostly positive	14%	17%	9%
Mix of positive and negative	27%	51%	39%
Mostly negative	58%	28%	30%
Can't remember	0%	4%	23%

The pattern of responses seems to suggest that almost no news source is providing mostly favorable coverage of the Green New Deal. About 30 percent of

respondents who reported getting news from MSNBC reported that what they'd heard about the Green New Deal was "mostly positive," compared to 17 percent who reported mostly negative. That positive-negative coverage gap is +13, compared to a -70 point positive-negative coverage gap for Fox viewers. This is in line with the thesis that conservative media is pushing an anti-Green New Deal narrative with far more urgency than the left leaning media is promoting it.

Across all of our news sources, the average positive-negative coverage gap was -14, indicating that about 14 percent more respondents reported hearing "mostly negative" things about the Green New Deal than "mostly positive" things from a given news source.

TYPE OF NEWS ABOUT GREEN NEW DEAL

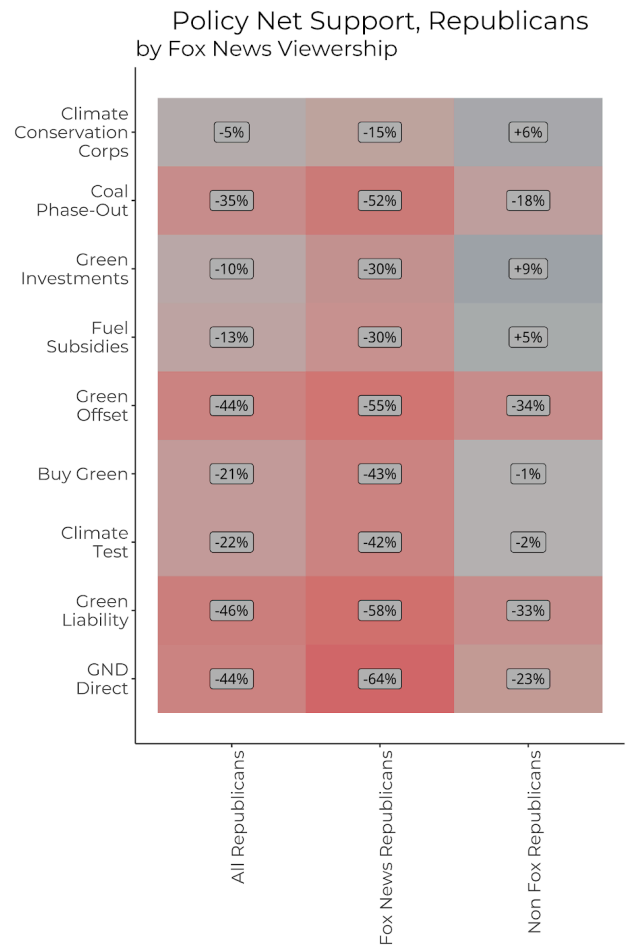


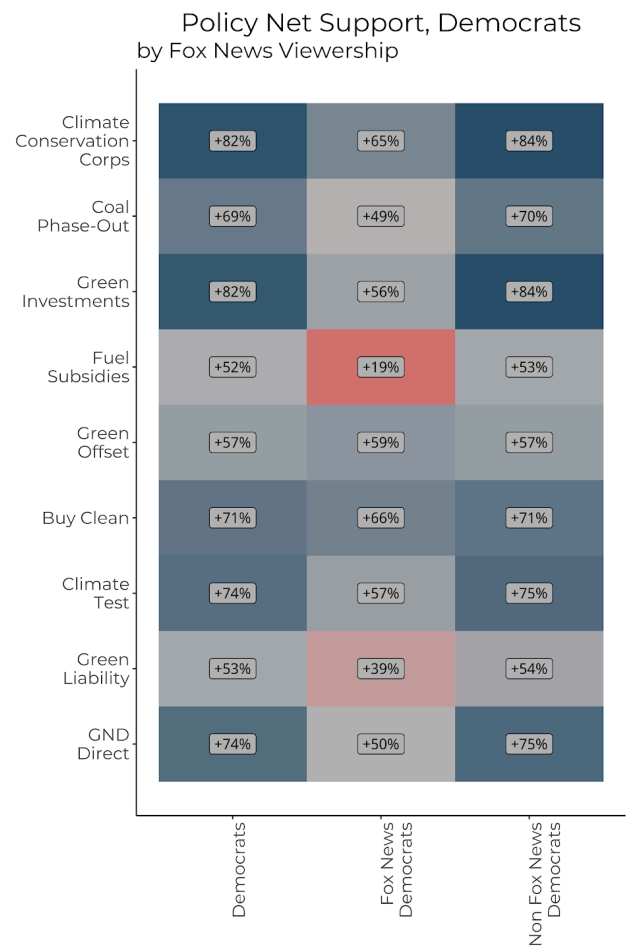
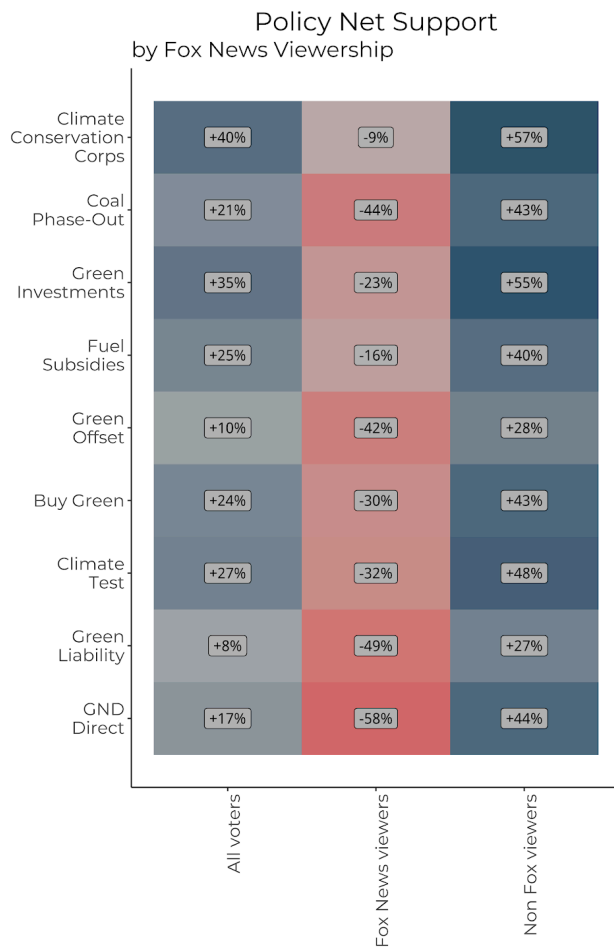
THE ROLE OF FOX NEWS

Overall, 26 percent of voters reported having watched Fox News in the past week (only 2 percent reported they had watched only Fox News in the past week). That number includes just 5 percent of Democrats, but fully 51 percent of Republicans and 27 percent of Independents. Fox News viewers are older and more conservative than voters who do not watch Fox News. About 87 percent of Republicans who watch Fox News identify as “conservative” or “very conservative,” compared to about 68 percent of Republicans. Fully 41 percent of voters over the age of 65 reported watching Fox News, down to just 14 percent of voters under thirty.

Even within Republicans, though, we see a clear split between those who watch Fox News and those who do not. While the smaller sample size of “non-Fox Republicans” makes it difficult to draw confident statistical conclusions about net support for most policies, it is clear that they differ from Republicans who watch Fox News. On average, Fox News Republicans are fully 33 percentage points less supportive of any given Green New Deal policy, and are 41 points less supportive of the Green New Deal overall. The following plot shows net support for Green New Deal policies among all Republicans, Republicans who watch Fox, and Republicans who don’t.

Indeed, among all voters, the gulf between Fox News viewers and those who don’t watch Fox is about as stark as the partisan divide itself. On average, Fox News viewers are net -34 against all of the Green New Deal policies we posed, compared to an average +43 support for those items from non Fox News viewers. Green New Deal advocates should be clear-eyed about the fact that conservative news media viewership is strongly associated with opposition to every such policy we polled.

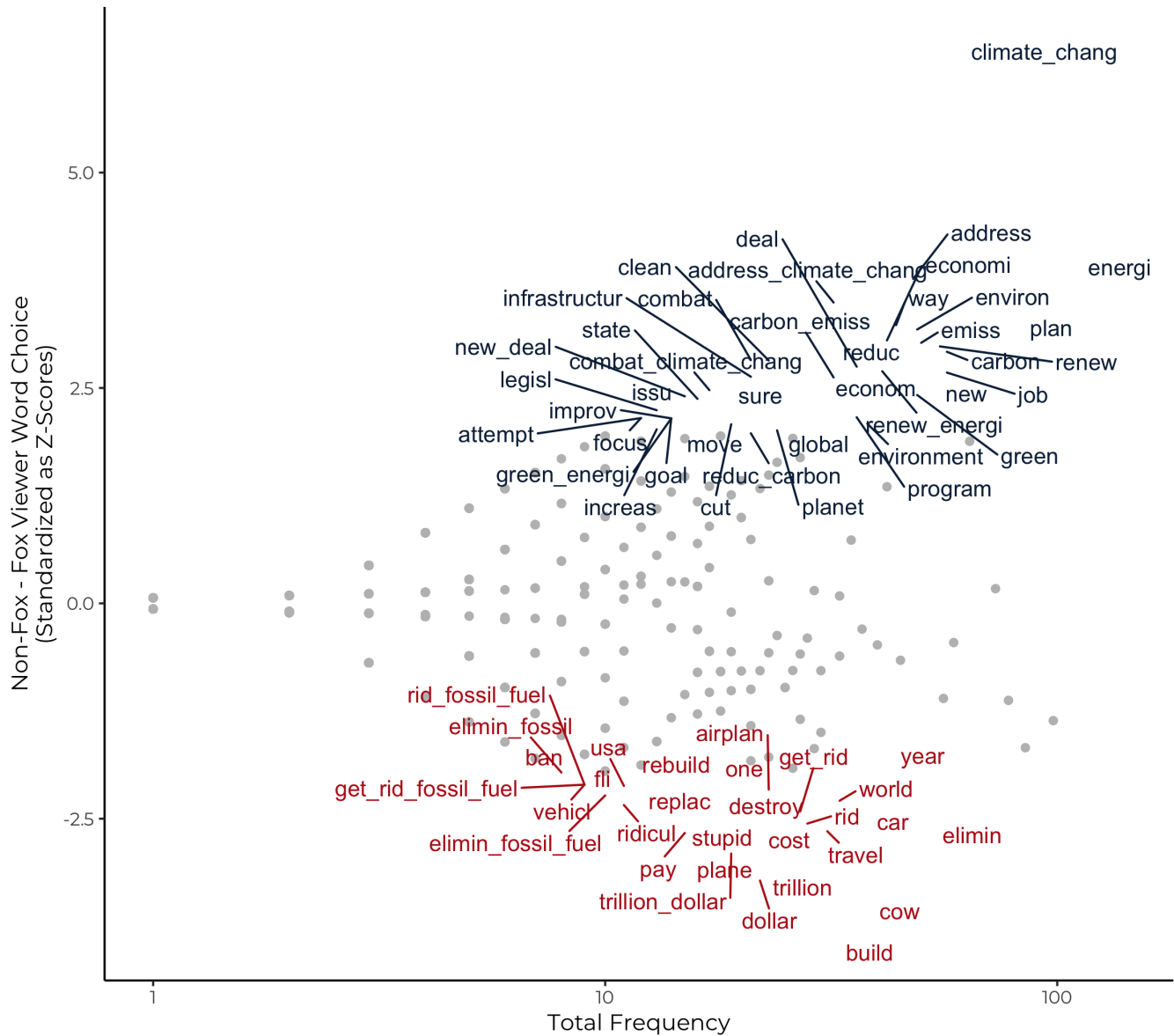




Even within Democrats, the differences between Fox News viewers and non-Fox News viewers are clear. The effect is somewhat less severe as far fewer Democrats watch Fox News than do Republicans, but the contrast between Fox Democrats and non-Fox Democrats is stark. The following plot shows the net level of support for each of the Green New Deal policies we polled among Democrats, among Democrats who watch Fox News, and among Democrats who do not watch Fox News.

We included an open-ended early in the survey, before any GND policies were described. The chart below shows the difference between the ways that Fox and Non-Fox viewers describe the Green New Deal. Tropes such as “trillion,” “cow,” “fart,” “airplane” and “eliminate” are clear, further suggesting Fox tropes are affecting perceptions of the Green New Deal.

WORD CHOICE OF NON-FOX VS FOX-VIEWER IN DESCRIBING GND



Each point is a word (stemmed) plotted by the Z-Score and frequency.
Z-Scores indicate if a word is more likely used by one group.
Words that are displayed are above (below) 1.96 (-1.96)

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Chart by Kevin Reuning, for more details on how words were identified visit <https://www.dataforprogress.org/blog/2019/4/15/fox-news-green-new-deal-and-cows>

Some choice responses, broadly representative of the populations described, include:

Among Fox Viewers (Actual Respondents)

"Socialize all health care, guarantee jobs and pay for everyone regardless of whether they work or not, eliminate all fossil fuel use, print money to pay for it. "Free" college tuition for all. Cost of minimum of \$93T in only ten years."

"A farcical attempt to force socialism and government mandated energy austerity down the throats of Americans while simultaneously erasing or severely limiting freedom for the majority of the population, all the while fear mongering about existential threats to the earth. Pure, unadulterated bullshit!"

"Ridding the US of co2 gases from cars, buildings and animals"

"moving away from fossil fuels. Increasing use of solar power. Replacing private transportation with public transportation. Few/no cars or trucks. Eliminating coal use."

"No cars, No airplanes, no cows, no use of coal or gas. Only use wind and solar energy. Cost is around 90 trillion dollars. If we don't make these changes the world will end in 12 years. This is all a bunch of crap."

Non-Fox Viewers (Actual Respondents)

"it is a way to protect the environment and climate change"

"Socialistic giving to the everything to the poor free with no plan for financing-typical socialistic/democrat types of thinking to keep their lemming voters"

"related to setting environmental goals for the country"

"A plan to develop old and new ways to curb global warming"

"Low carbon emissions. Plans to combat global warming. Move to close dependency on fossil fuels."

"From what I can tell, the Green New Deal is an ambitious, yet expensive, proposition that will greatly benefit the environment. It contains a series of proposals that will affect several aspects of our lives."

Whether through statistical analysis or a qualitative investigation of attitudes toward the Green New Deal, it is clear that Fox News viewers and non-Fox News viewers differ significantly in their understanding of the Green New Deal. Those differences are reasonably predictable given what we understand about the role of Fox News in radicalizing its viewers against progressive reforms.

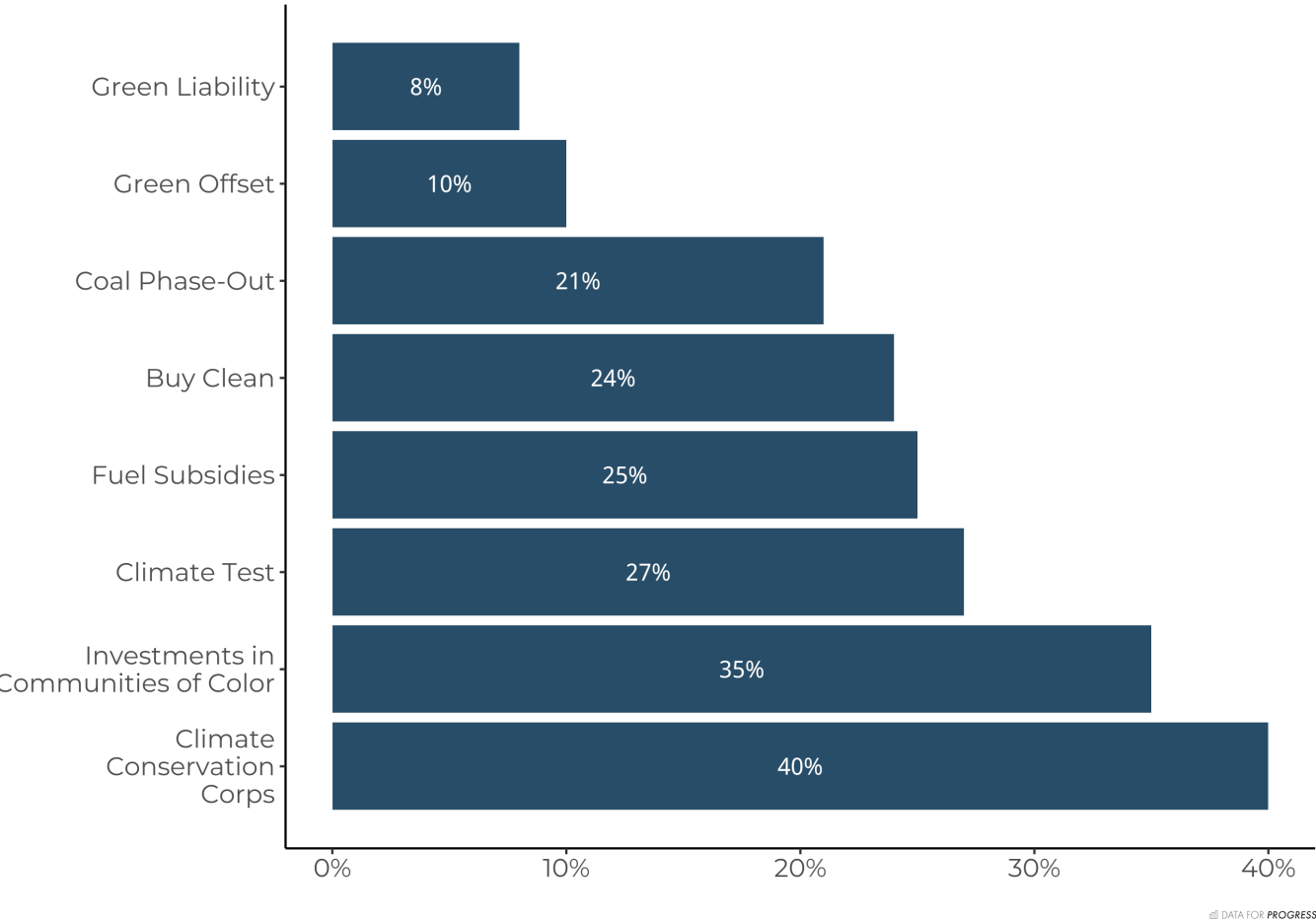
INDIVIDUAL ISSUE POLLING

Of the eight core potential GND policies surveyed, net support ranged from 23 percent to 47 percent among respondents who answered “Don’t Know’ on whether they support or oppose the Green New Deal.

For each of those items, respondents reported whether they strongly supported, somewhat supported, neither supported nor opposed, somewhat opposed, or strongly opposed those policies.

The following plot summarizes responses to each of those policies. Specifically, it summarizes the percent of respondents reporting they “strongly or somewhat supported” a given policy minus the percent of respondents reporting they “strongly or somewhat opposed.” Each square represents support minus oppose for each item, with a more blue square representing higher net support, and a red square representing lower net support.

NET SUPPORT FOR GREEN NEW DEAL POLICIES

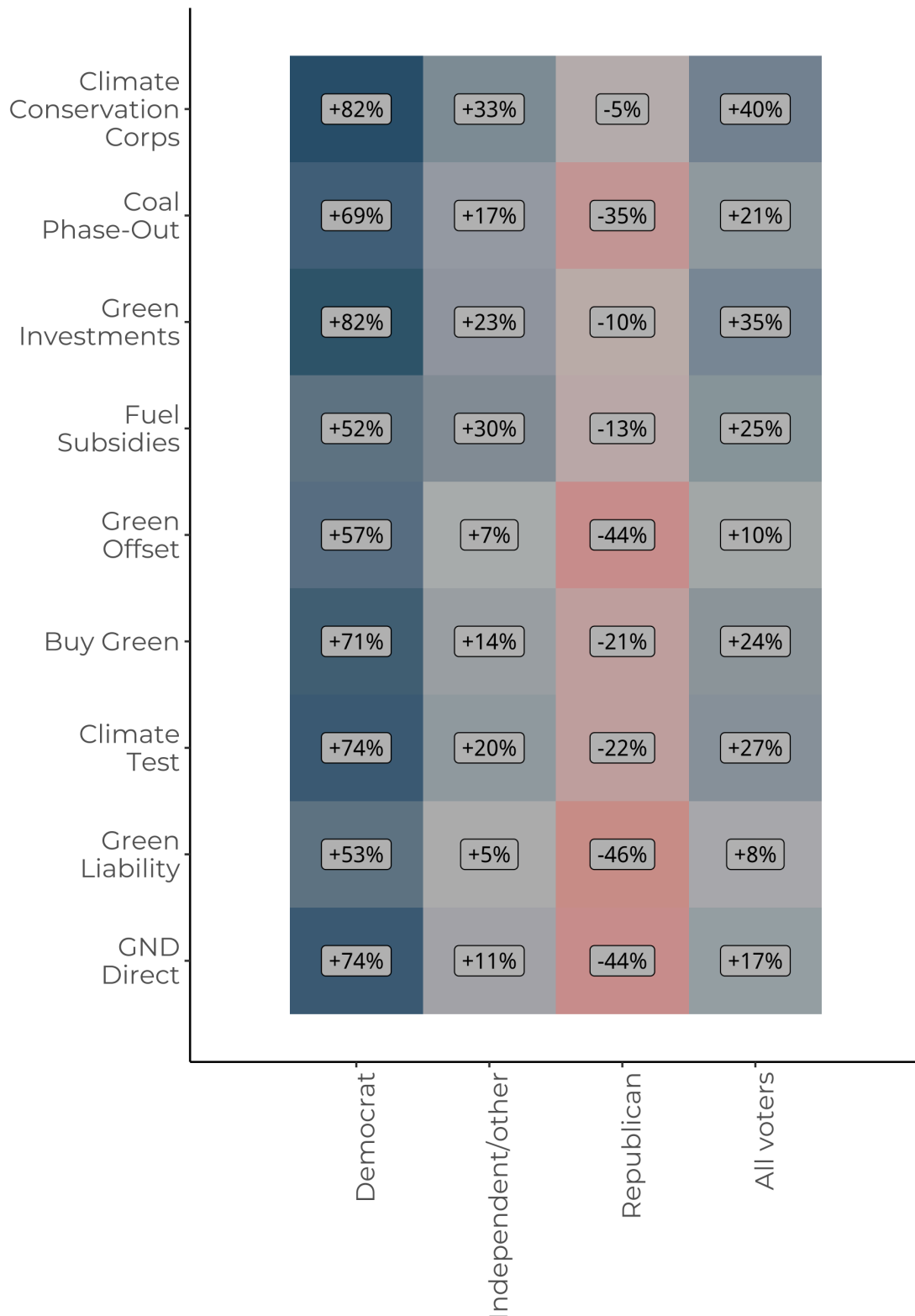


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POLICY	QUESTION WORDING
Green Liability	Would you support or oppose a policy in which people are permitted to sue companies that fail to meet government emissions targets?
Climate Test	Would you support or oppose a mandated assessment of climate, environment, and public health impacts for all new infrastructure projects requiring federal permits?
Climate Conservation Corps	Would you support or oppose a government policy creating a “Climate Conservation Corps”, which would provide jobs to those who qualify, repairing and upgrading our infrastructure to reduce pollution?
Buy Clean	Would you support or oppose a “Buy Clean” law, requiring the government to prioritize purchasing and spending to go towards clean manufacturing firms with good paying union jobs? (Note: This item was asked in the second survey)
Green Offset	Would you support or oppose a proposal to create a \$10 billion fund for public utility commissions to offset the costs for low-income families of adopting new energy efficiency standards?
Fuel Subsidies	Would you support or oppose ending government subsidies given to energy companies that fund the production and distribution of fossil fuels?
Investments in Communities of Color	Would you support or oppose a new policy requiring the government to invest in clean energy infrastructure in poor communities and communities of color with disproportionate levels of pollution? (Note: This item was asked in the second survey)
Coal Phase-Out	Would you support or oppose a policy mandating the phasing out of domestic coal plants over the next ten years in favor of new clean energy facilities?

When broken out by respondents’ party ID, an important trend stands out. Democrats clearly favor and Independents narrowly favor every individual policy we polled. On the specific policies that may or may not end up being part of the Green New Deal, voters in the middle side with Democrats.

Policy Net Support/Split/Oppose by Party ID



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At the end of this issue battery, we asked about the Green New Deal, including an explicit mention of the Green New Deal by name and reference to some of the general concepts behind the policy. We asked respondents,

As you may know, the Green New Deal is a proposal to significantly reduce carbon pollution and create jobs by spending billions of government dollars on infrastructure, wind and solar energy, and more efficient buildings and transportation systems. Based on what you know, do you support or oppose the Green New Deal?

With that phrasing, support for the Green New Deal was +17 net positive among all voters.

Given the importance of the Green New Deal on both a policy level (representing the most realistic chance for meeting climate scientists' carbon targets) and the political level (having been endorsed by nearly every major presidential candidate), progressives cannot afford to cede this issue to the right. The aggressive right-wing misinformation campaign must be countered with clear and informative messaging from the left to win over the significant portion of voters who would support a Green New Deal under the proper framing.

SUPPORT FOR GREEN NEW DEAL

