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VOTERS DEMAND PROTECTION AND FUNDING FOR THE USPS

Ethan Winter
Benjamin Rahn

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ATTITUDES ABOUT THE USPS

By substantial margins, nearly all segments of voters prefer the USPS be funded as an essential service like the military, rather requiring it to cover its own costs like a business.

We asked voters whether they think either (a) that the USPS should be funded as an essential service similar to the fire department, military, and highway system, or (b) that it should be required to cover its own costs like a stand-alone business. We found that a clear majority (60%) of voters believe that USPS should be treated as an essential service, compared with only 32% percent of voters who believe it should be treated like a business.

While attitudes were loosely correlated with self-identified party affiliation, all segments include substantial support for treating the USPS as an essential service. Voters who self-identify as Democrats overwhelmingly want the USPS funded as an essential service (74% vs. 21% preferring it be treated as a business). A clear majority of voters who self-identify as Independent/third-party want the USPS funded as an essential service (59% vs. 24%). Voters who self-identify as Republican were roughly split (45% vs 50%).

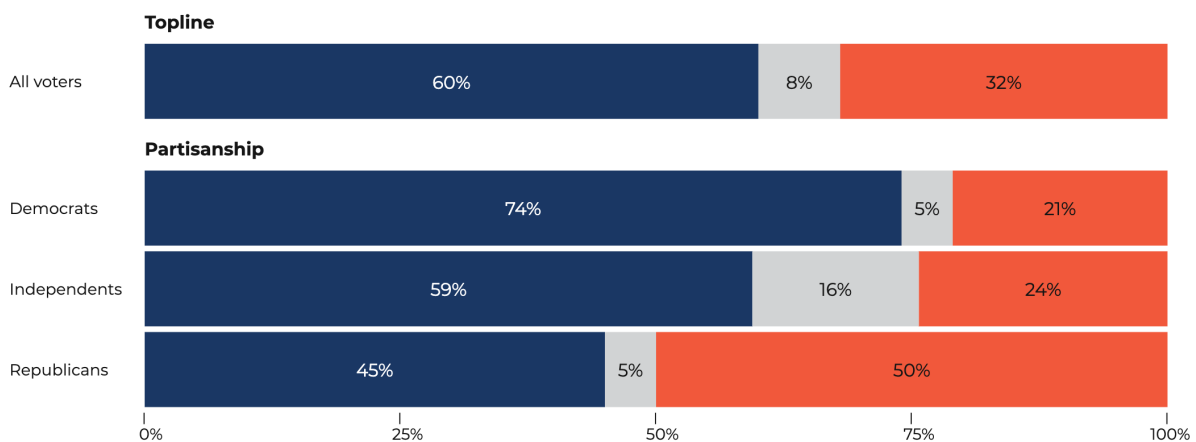
Voters Think The USPS Is An Essential Program That Should Be Treated As A Public Good

Which of the following most closely describes the way you think Congress should make decisions about the US Postal Service?

The US Postal Service is an essential program run for the benefit of our society. We should expect to spend money on it just as we do on the Fire Department, the military, and the highway system.

Don't know

The US Postal Service should be run like a business. It should be expected to make enough money to cover its own costs, and compete with private delivery services like FedEx and UPS.



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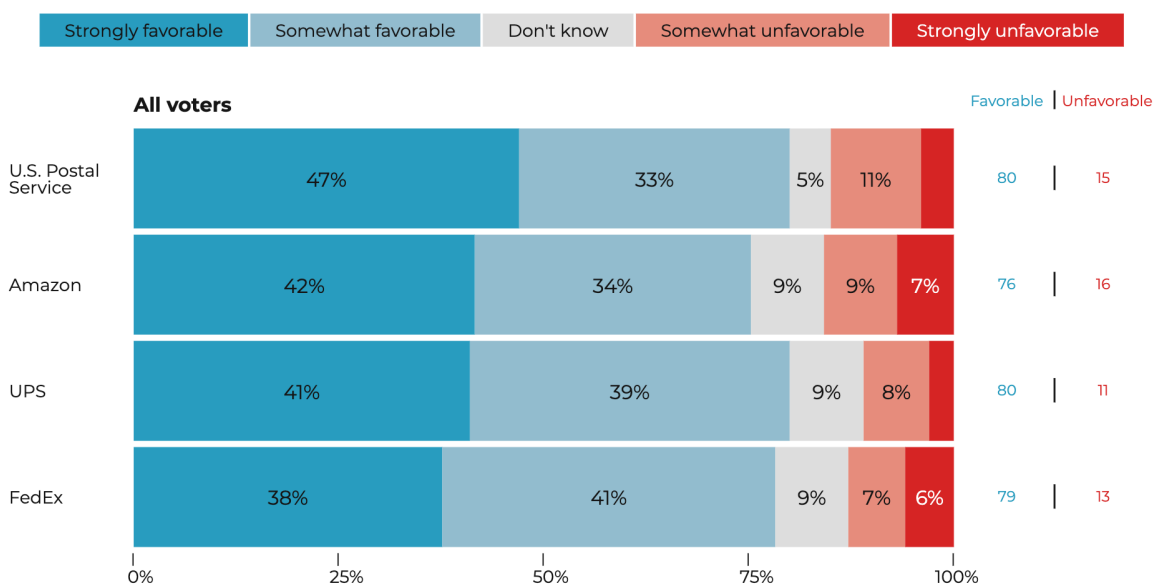
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The USPS is the most favorably viewed delivery service

We then asked voters whether they had a favorable or unfavorable view of institutions and companies with major roles in the delivery sector: the U.S. Postal Service, FedEx, UPS, and Amazon. While all four are viewed favorably by between 76% and 80% of voters, the U.S. Postal service had the deepest support, with 47% of voters describing their view as “strongly favorable”, compared to 38-42% for the other services.

The U.S. Postal Service Is The Most Favorably Viewed Delivery Service

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable view of the following companies and government agency?



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A clear majority of voters -- and even 40% of Republicans -- are at least somewhat concerned that Trump will use control of the US Postal Service to disrupt voting.

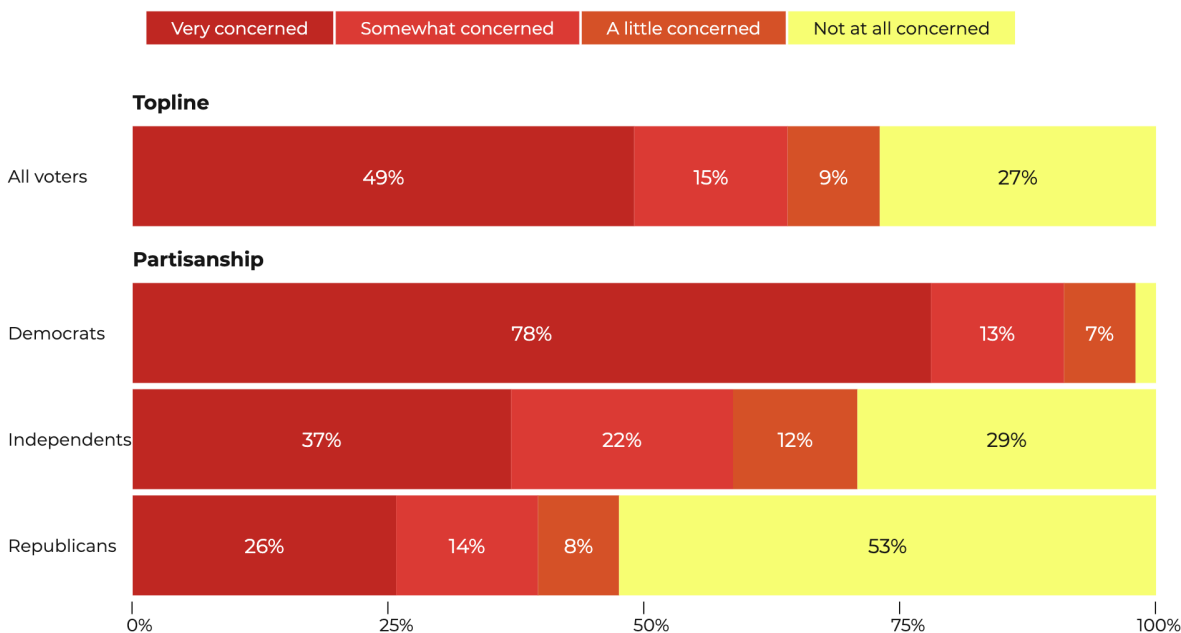
We explained to voters that Trump had appointed Louis DeJoy, one of his major donors, to the position of Postmaster General, and in that role DeJoy had instituted substantial cutbacks in staffing and equipment. We then asked about the degree to which they were concerned about Trump using his control of the USPS to disrupt voting.

We found that a clear majority (64%) of voters described themselves as “Very concerned” or “Somewhat concerned”, including 49% that described themselves as “very concerned.” On the other end, only 27% of voters described themselves as “not at all concerned.”

While the depth of concern was correlated with party self-identification, we found that deep concern had clear presence across all segments of the electorate. Unsurprisingly, 78% of self-identified Democratic voters described themselves as “very concerned.” We were more struck by the clear majority (59%) of Independent/third-party voters and clear plurality (39%) of Republican voters who described themselves as “very concerned” or “somewhat concerned.”

A Majority Of Voters Are Concerned That Trump Will Use Control Of The USPS To Disrupt Voting

President Donald Trump recently appointed Louis DeJoy, one of his top donors, as Postmaster General. DeJoy has instituted substantial cutbacks in Postal Service staffing and equipment. How concerned or not concerned are you that Trump and DeJoy will use their control of the postal service to disrupt vote-by-mail?



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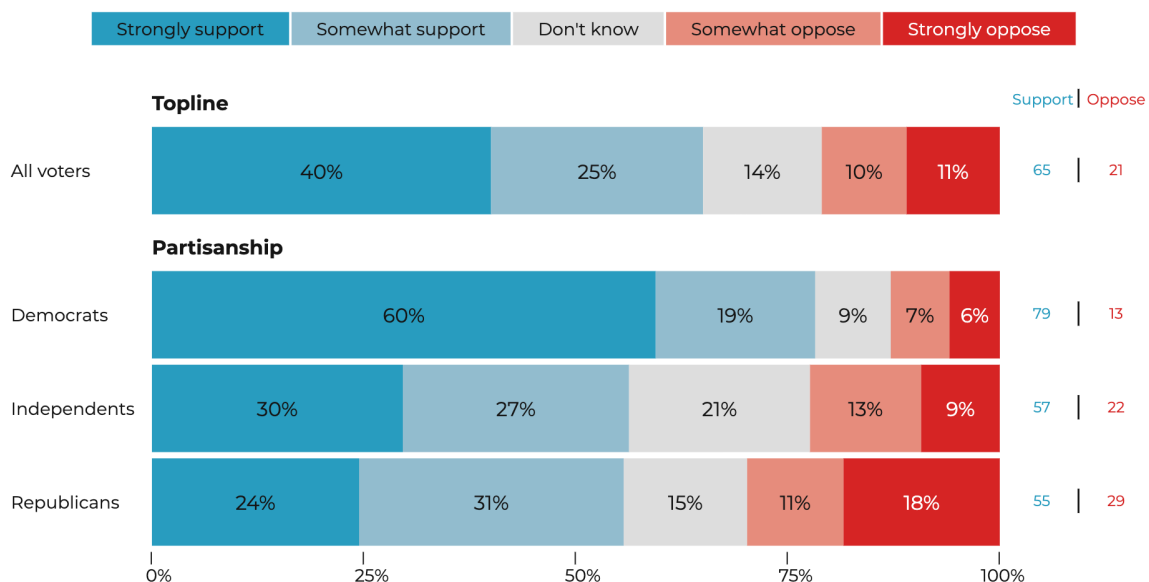
VOTERS WANT TO PROTECT USPS SERVICE STANDARDS

By substantial margins, voters of all parties demand a return to pre-2020 USPS standards of service.

Democrats in the House introduced legislation, the Delivering for America Act, that would block changes to USPS service standards as they existed on January 1, 2020. Voters of all parties overwhelmingly back this bill: 65% of voters support this proposal with only 21% opposed. We found deep support from voters of all parties: with Democrats, Independent/third-party, and Republicans backing it by 66-point, 35-point, and 26-point margins, respectively.

Voters Support The Delivering For America Act

Some lawmakers in Congress are proposing the Delivering for America Act. This bill would prohibit the Postal Service (USPS) from implementing any changes to the operations or level of service it had in place on January 1, 2020, until the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has ended. The goal is to maintain service standards and ensure the USPS can be relied upon to assist in carrying out the upcoming election. This would reverse changes made to the USPS since January 1, 2020. Would you support or oppose the Delivering for America Act?



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Similarly, a clear majority of voters -- and even 39% of Republicans -- want Louis DeJoy to resign or be removed from the office of Postmaster General.

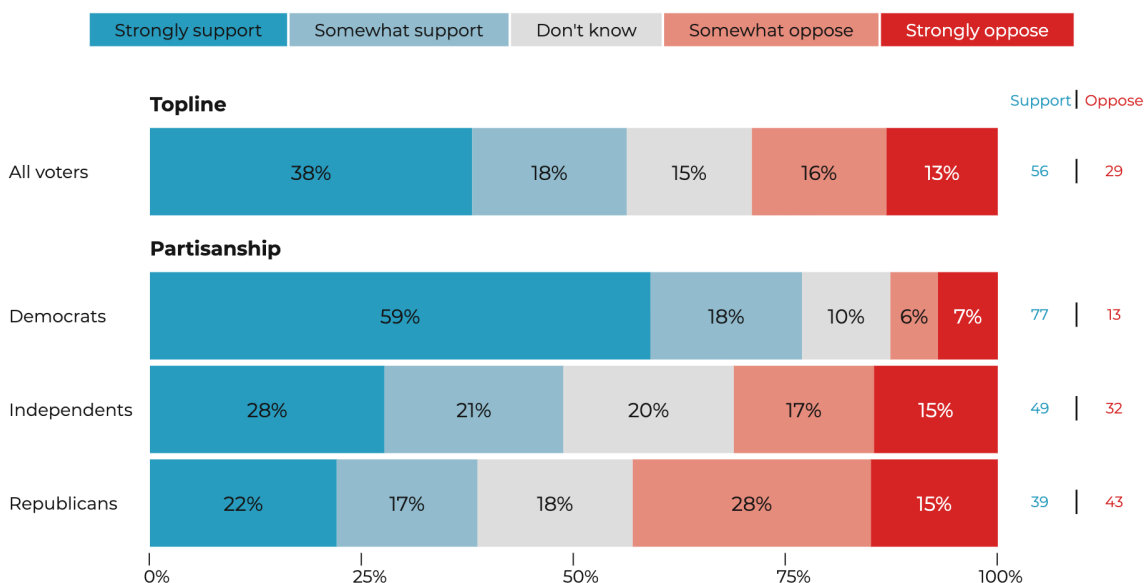
We informed voters about DeJoy detractors' concerns over his \$30 million of holdings in companies that compete with the US Postal Service, and his supporters' appreciation of his experience from the shipping industry, and then asked whether they would support or approve his resignation or removal from office.

Much like the concern about Trump using his control of the USPS to disrupt voting, we found a clear majority (56%) of voters support DeJoy's removal or resignation, with only 29% opposed.

And though support for removal or resignation was correlated with party self-identification, we found that 49% of Independents/third-party voters supported removal or resignation, with only 32% opposed. Even 39% of Republicans supported removal or resignation.

Voters Want The Postmaster General To Be Removed Or Resign From Office

President Donald Trump recently appointed Louis DeJoy, one of his top donors, as Postmaster General. DeJoy has instituted substantial cutbacks in Postal Service staffing and equipment. Some lawmakers in Congress are now calling for DeJoy's resignation. Those calling for DeJoy's resignation say that Postmaster General Louis DeJoy must resign or be removed from his office because he and his wife own more than a \$30 million stake in businesses that compete with the US Postal Service, and because he is using his office to corrupt the election. Those arguing DeJoy shouldn't resign say that DeJoy's expertise in the shipping industry makes him well-qualified for the role. The Post Office has been bleeding money for at least a decade and the job of mail delivery can be much better managed by a private company like FedEx or USPS. Do you support or oppose the resignation or removal of Louis DeJoy from the office of Postmaster General?



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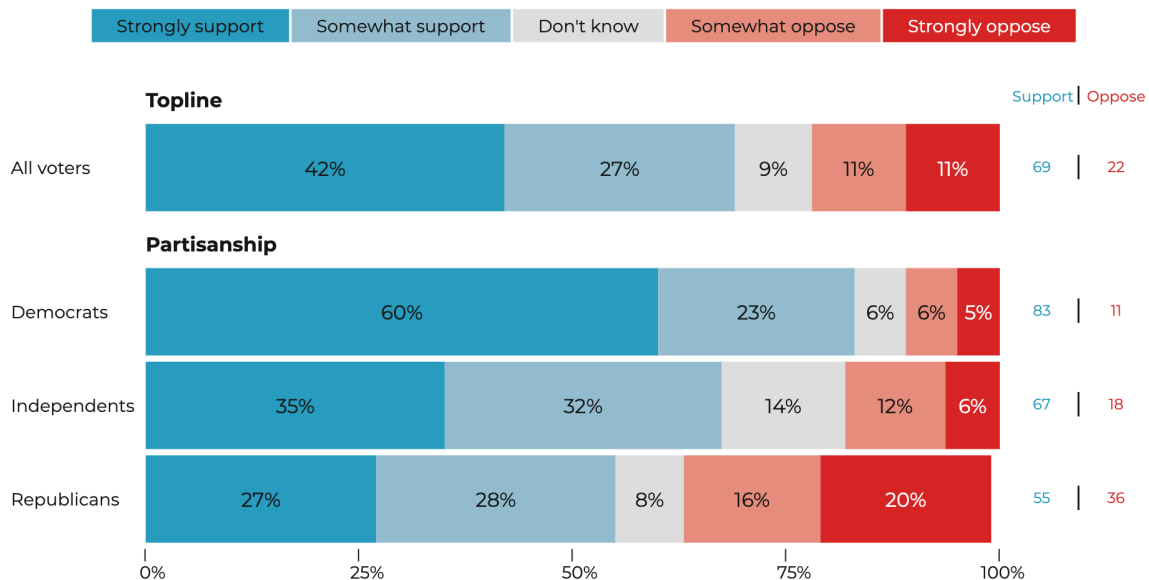
PROPOSALS TO FUND THE USPS

Voters support providing the USPS with \$25 billion as part of a Coronavirus relief bill.

We asked voters whether they would support or oppose passing the HEROES Act, legislation that House Democrats passed in May, explaining that the bill provides \$25 billion in funding for the USPS as part of a coronavirus relief bill. (Republicans in the Senate are currently blocking passage of this bill.) We find that asked this way, voters support the passage of the HEROES Act when reference to the USPS is included: it's backed by a 37-point margin across all voters (63% support, 26% oppose). Democrats support it by a 64-point margin, and even Republicans support it by a 15-point margin (55% support, 36% oppose). This result is also consistent with the findings of Data for Progress's [tracker poll](#) that shows high levels of support for the HEROES Act.

Voters Want To Pass The HEROES Act

In May, the House of Representatives passed the HEROES Act. In this coronavirus relief legislation, \$25 billion in funding was set aside for the United States Postal Service (USPS). This money was to be used to restore projected lost revenue due to the pandemic as well as hazard pay for postal workers. To date, the Senate has yet to bring the HEROES Act to a vote. Would you support or oppose passing the HEROES Act, a bill that includes additional funding for the USPS?



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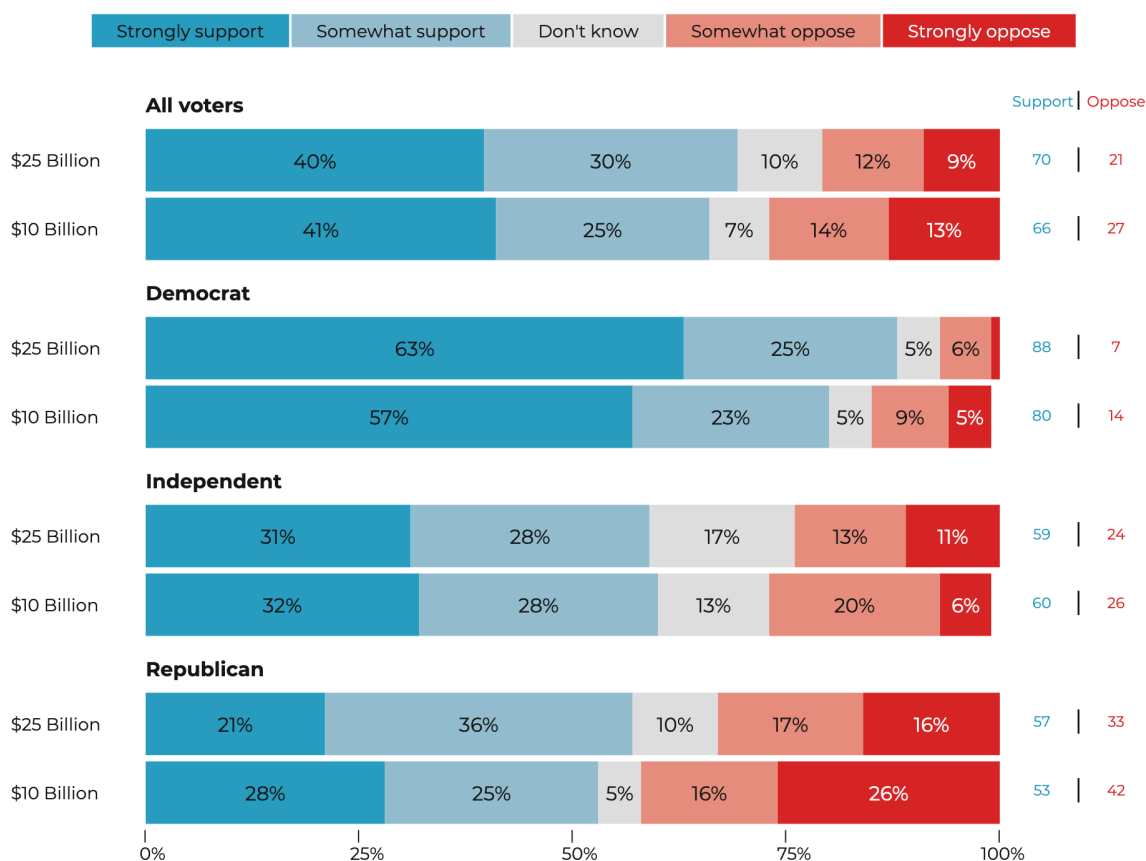
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We then asked voters about a straight funding proposal for the USPS in one of two ways: either with the \$25 billion figure or with a \$10 billion figure (the amount floated as a compromise between Democrats and Republicans).

Both funding plans, at either the \$25 billion or \$10 billion amount, command majority support from Democrats, Independent/third-party voters, and Republicans alike. But we find that the \$25 billion funding level is more popular: it garners net support of 49 points, compared with a net support of 39 points for the \$10 billion plan.

Voters Overwhelmingly Support Congress Providing Aid To The USPS

Would you support or oppose (\$10 / \$25) billion in funding for the USPS so that they can safely and effectively help to carry out the upcoming election, provide hazard pay for their employees who are working during the pandemic, and update their infrastructure to assure the mail can be delivered on time?



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USPS AND VOTE-BY-MAIL

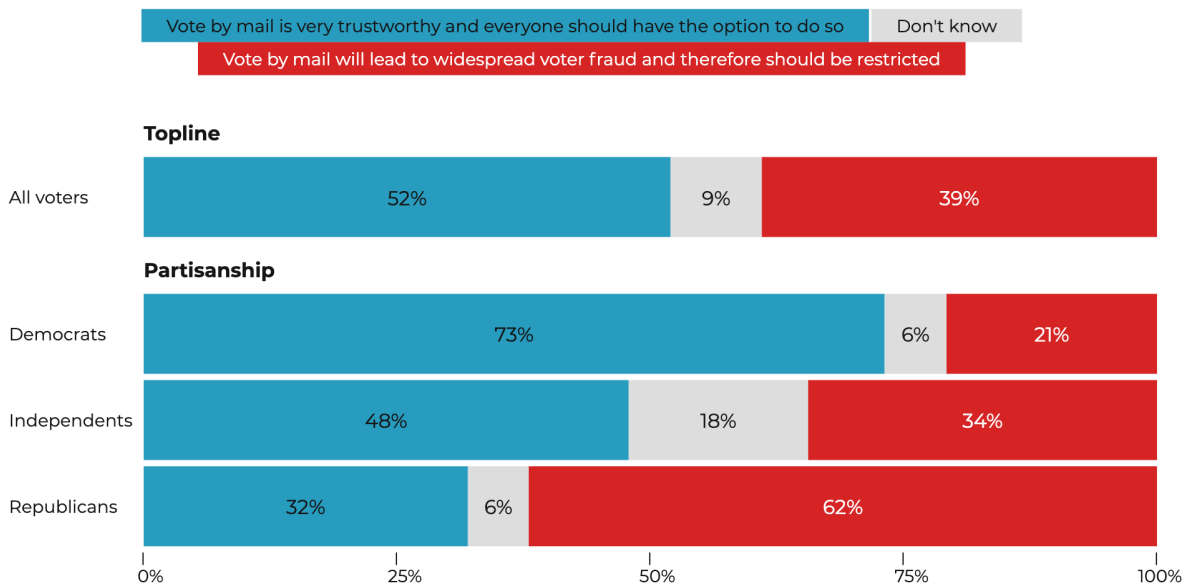
A majority of voters trust vote-by-mail.

We asked voters if they think voting by mail is trustworthy or will lead to fraud. We find that 52% of voters think that it's very trustworthy, while 39% think it will lead to fraud. There is some sorting based on partisan identification. By a 52-point margin, Democrats trust vote-by-mail. Independents/third-party voters, meanwhile, think vote-by-mail is very trustworthy by a 14-point margin. 62% of Republicans think voting by mail will lead to fraud while 32% think it's very trustworthy.

This result points to the limit of Trump's influence. While he's waged a campaign against vote-by-mail, most voters --and even 1/3 of Republicans -- continue to have high trust in the practice.

Voters View Vote By Mail As Very Trustworthy

Prior to 2020, a number of states controlled by both Democrats and Republicans, including Oregon and Utah, allowed everyone who wanted to vote by mail or vote absentee. Non-partisan election experts say that, historically, there has been essentially no voter fraud with vote-by-mail. President Donald Trump says that vote-by-mail will lead to massive fraud. When thinking about voting by mail, what comes closer to your view?



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Voters of all parties overwhelmingly want delivery of ballots prioritized, even at additional cost to state governments.

We also asked voters if they want ballots to be handled as first-class mail, rather than marketing mail. This designation means that the turn around for the delivery of ballots is shortened, hopefully ensuring they'd all arrive in time to ensure voting is carried out smoothly. We explained this comes at a cost to state governments. We found attitudes were mostly uniform, with partisans of all stripes evincing robust support. Voters support this by a 58-point margin, with 74% in favor and 16% opposed. Democrats, Independents/third-party voters, and Republicans all backed this at nearly uniform rates.

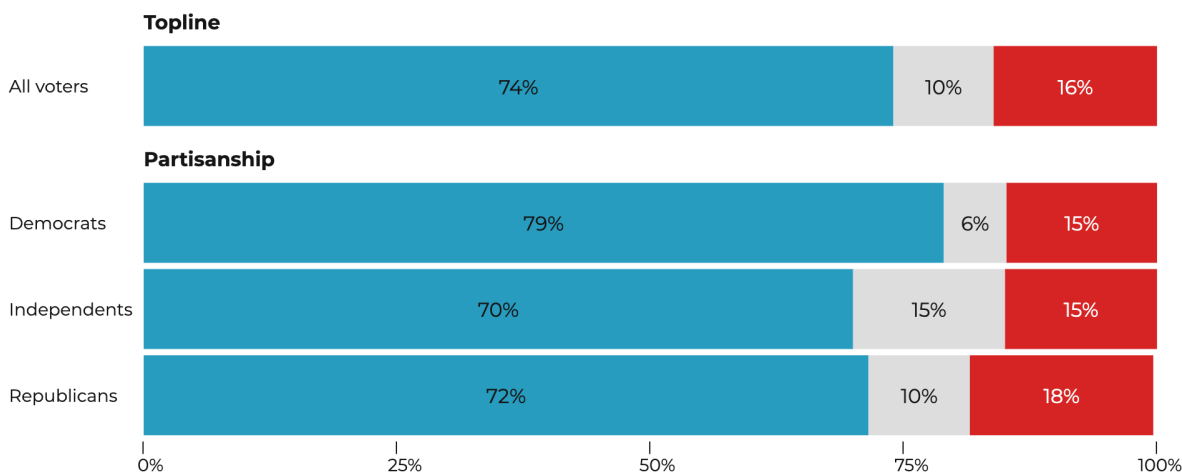
Voters Want Ballots To Be Treated As First Class Mail

When thinking about how the United States Postal Service (USPS) should treat ballots that are sent through the mail, what comes closer to your view?

Mail in ballots should be treated as first class mail . This means they will be treated with higher priority and there will be a higher cost for state governments.

Don't know

Mail in ballots should be treated as marketing mail . This is cheaper than first class mail but gets treated with lower priority.



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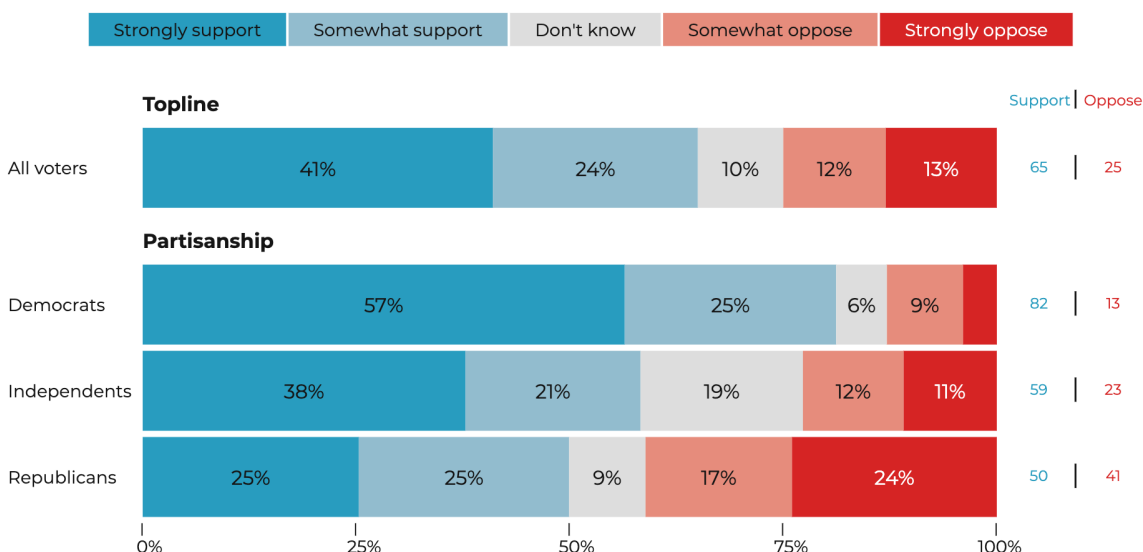
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Voters want the federal government to cover the cost of first-class postage for ballots.

It's estimated that the total cost of first class postage for all ballots that will be sent through the mail for the upcoming election is \$4 billion. With state budgets already hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic and ensuing economic downturn, we tested a proposal to have the federal government cover this cost. We find that 65% of voters are in favor of this, with only 25% opposed. Support for this proposal extends across party lines with Democrats, Independent/third-party voters, and Republicans backing it by 69 points, 39 points, and nine points respectively.

Voters Want To Cover The Cost Of First Class Postage For Ballots

Would you support or oppose a proposal to have Congress spend \$4 billion so that all mail-in ballots can be treated as first class mail, meaning they would be delivered in roughly two to five days?



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USPS AND EXPANDED SERVICES

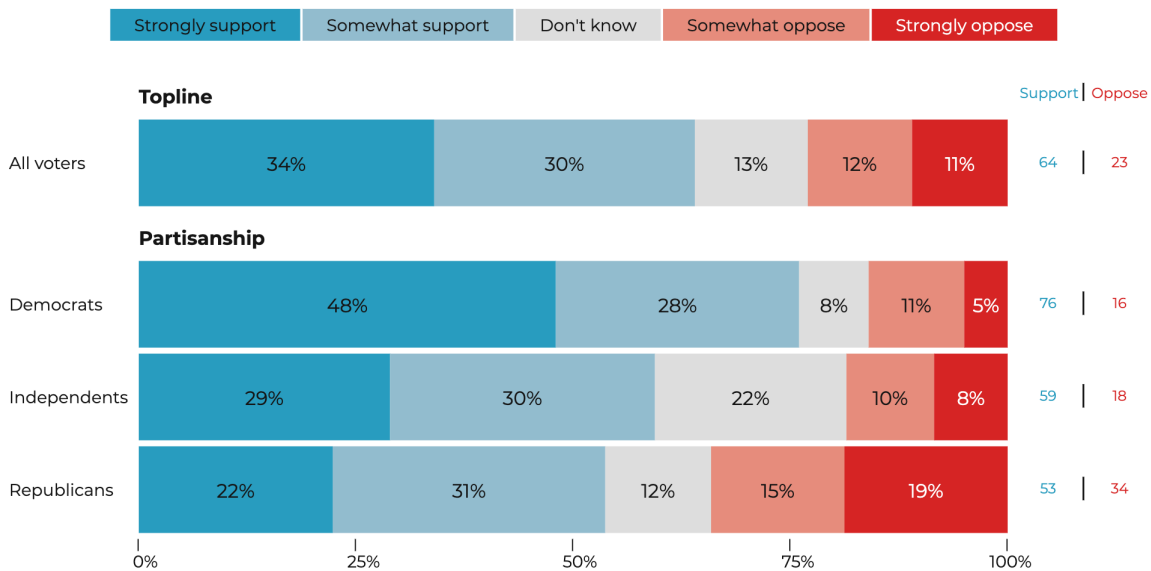
Voters want the USPS to offer internet service

The USPS is incredibly popular and can provide a strong social base for providing other services. On the Data for Progress blog, Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) [made the case](#) for postal banking and pointed to polling that demonstrates deep support for the idea. Here, we asked about another idea: having the USPS provide basic internet services, both as means of raising revenue and for expanding coverage to those who need it.

We find this idea is popular with voters. By a 51-point margin, voters support this idea. It's popular across party lines. Democrats back it by a 60-point margin, Independent/third-party voters do so by a 41-point margin, and Republicans do so by a 19-point margin.

Voters Support Having The USPS Offer Internet Services

Would you support or oppose allowing the United States Postal Service (USPS) to offer basic internet services as a way for the agency to raise revenue and to provide internet to those who need it?



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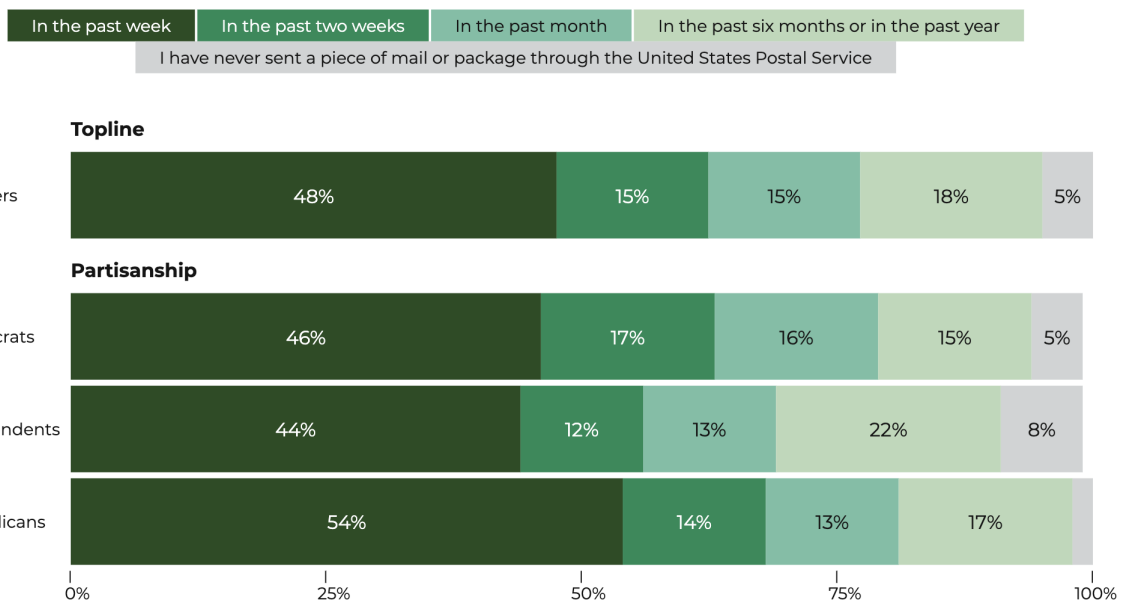
VOTERS RELY UPON THE USPS

A majority of voters have sent mail through the USPS in the past two weeks.

We first asked voters about their use of the postal service. Rates of use of the USPS are high. We find that: a clear majority of voters (63%) report that they've used the USPS to send mail or a package in the past two weeks -- including a majority of those who self-identify as Democrats (63%) and Republicans (68% percent). A near-majority (48%) report having done so in the past week. On the other end, only 5% of voters reported that they've never sent mail or a package through the USPS.

A Majority Of Voters Have Sent Mail Through The USPS In The Past Two Weeks

When did you last send a piece of mail or package through the United States Postal Service?



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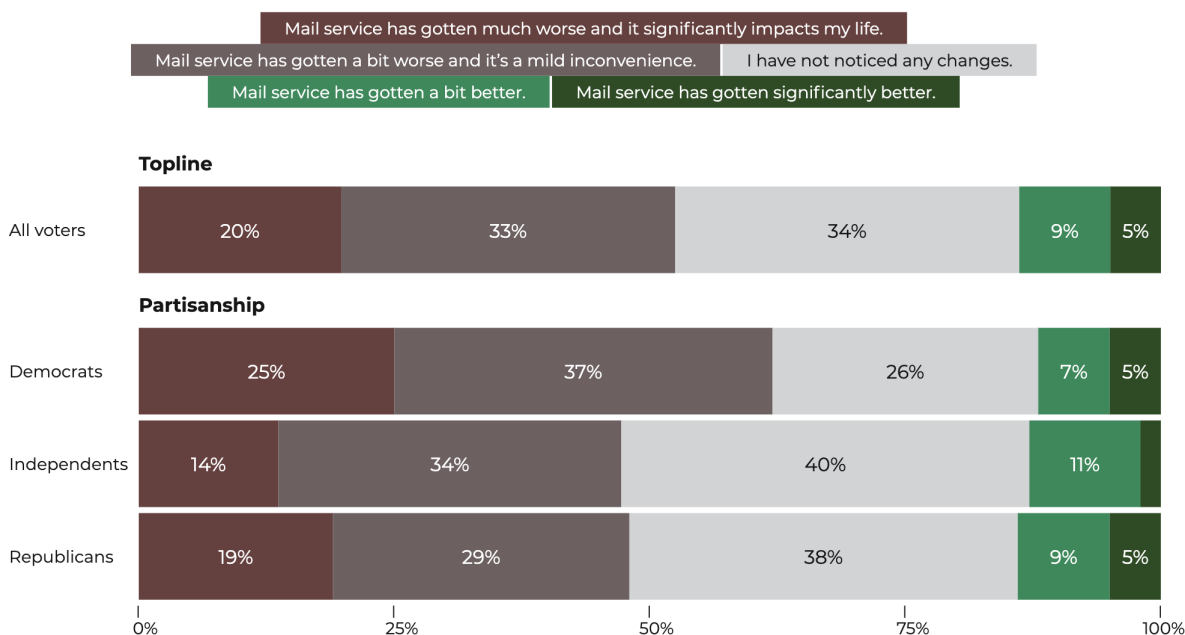
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A majority of voters think mail service has gotten worse in the past month, with 20% indicating a significant negative impact on their lives owing to the slowdown.

We then asked voters if they think that mail service quality has gotten worse over the past month. We find that: A majority (53%) say it has gotten worse -- including a clear majority of Democrats (62%) and near-majority of Republicans (48%) -- while only 14% think it has improved. 20% of voters report a decline in service with “a significant impact on my life” (including 25% of Democrats and 19% of Republicans).

A Majority Of Voters Now Report That Mail Service Has Gotten Worse

Think about your experience sending and receiving mail and packages with the US Postal Service. Which of these statements best describes your experience over the past month compared to the prior year?



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CONCLUSION

The USPS is extremely popular with voters. Support is incredibly high to provide financial assistance to the agency and voters want to see the changes DeJoy implemented reversed, with service returned to the status quo of January 1, 2020.

There is substantial concern about how Trump and DeJoy may use the USPS to disrupt the election. Despite Trump's repeated attacks on the practice of vote-by-mail, a majority of voters trust this way of conducting an election. Furthermore, voters support ways to operationalize vote-by-mail at a large scale, specifically, by having the federal government cover the cost of first class ballots for the upcoming election.

Voters rely on the USPS to an extraordinary degree. A near majority (48 percent) of voters report using the USPS in the past week, with many reporting a slowdown in service. The popularity of the agency and its wide usage by voters means the agency could also function to provide other services, such as the internet. After all, if the USPS can deliver the mail, there's no reason they couldn't do the same with emails.

While Trump and Republicans in Congress may wish to attack the agency, the opinion of voters is squarely against them.

AUTHORSHIP

ETHAN WINTER (@EthanBWinter) is an analyst at Data for Progress.

BENJAMIN RAHN (@brahn) is on sabbatical from software engineering at Stripe*, and is a founder and director of ActBlue*.

*(*Affiliations listed for identification purposes only.)*

You can email the authors at ethan@dataforprogress.org and brahn@dataforprogress.org.

On August 21, 2020, Data for Progress conducted a survey of 1,135 likely voters nationally using web-panel respondents. The sample was weighted to be representative of likely voters by age, gender, education, race, and voting history. The survey was conducted in English. The margin of error is +/- 2.7 percentage points.