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Voters Support Ambitious Climate and Clean Energy Investments

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Key Findings

- ▶ **Voters are growing more concerned** about the impacts of unemployment, air and water pollution, extreme weather, and climate change on their communities
- ▶ **83 percent of voters** are concerned that future generations will be more impacted by extreme weather events in their lifetimes compared to today
- ▶ **Voters are more likely to consider taking personal actions to address climate change** such as purchasing electric vehicles and appliances if the federal government creates new programs to lower consumer costs for these purchases
- ▶ **Over two-thirds of voters (71 percent)** support the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework supported by Democrats and Republicans in Congress
- ▶ **Three-quarters of voters (75 percent)** think it is important for lawmakers to make investments to address climate change and transition to clean energy in addition to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework's investments in physical infrastructure
- ▶ **A majority of voters support** the key climate and clean energy provisions excluded from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework but under consideration for a budget reconciliation proposal
- ▶ **Voters are more concerned about Republicans denying the extent of climate change and preventing action** than Democrats exaggerating the problem and pushing big and unnecessary government programs to address climate change
- ▶ **A majority of voters (53 percent)** think Democrats in Congress should use their majority to make investments in climate and clean energy, even if no Republicans in Congress will vote for them
- ▶ **Nearly two-thirds of voters (63 percent)** support a government investment to accelerate the production and adoption of electric vehicles
- ▶ **Voters find messaging in favor of federal investments in electric vehicles more convincing** than an attack claiming the investments would be a “Tesla tax cut” for the rich

Introduction

After months of bipartisan negotiations (and years of claims about a forthcoming ‘Infrastructure Week’), Democrats and Republicans in Congress finally announced they had reached a deal on an infrastructure bill. While the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework](#) makes historic investments in physical infrastructure like roads, bridges, and drinking water pipes, it does not include many of the key climate and clean energy investments that President Biden originally proposed in the [American Jobs Plan](#). However, Democrats in Congress have begun the process of passing a [\\$3.5 trillion budget reconciliation proposal](#) that will likely include many of President Biden’s priorities that failed to be included in the bipartisan bill.

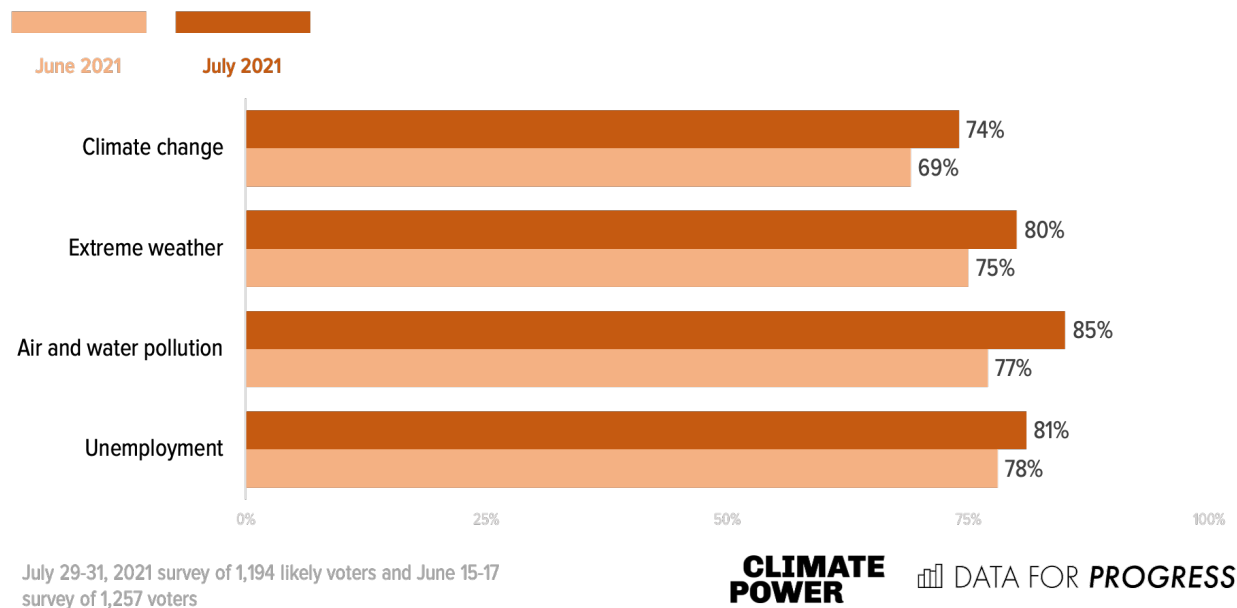
In a July 2021 [national survey](#), Climate Power and Data for Progress assessed the attitudes of likely voters towards the threats of extreme weather, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework, and additional federal investments to address climate change and transition to clean energy. We find that while voters widely support the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework, they also overwhelmingly agree that Congress should pass additional legislation to address the threats of climate change and extreme weather, reduce pollution, and create clean energy jobs. Moreover, voters think Democrats in Congress should use their majority to make these investments.

Voters Are Growing More Concerned About the Impacts of Extreme Weather

First, we asked voters the same question about their concern for how several major environmental crises are impacting their communities as we did on our June 2021 [survey](#). Again, overwhelming majorities of voters are concerned about how their communities are impacted by climate change (74 percent), extreme weather (80 percent), air and water pollution (85 percent), and unemployment (81 percent). Notably, voters have grown more concerned about climate change, extreme weather, and air and water pollution since our June 2021 survey. Voters are also still widely concerned about the impact of unemployment on their communities, though the level of concern remains relatively unchanged since June 2021.

Voters Are Growing More Concerned About Climate Change and Extreme Weather

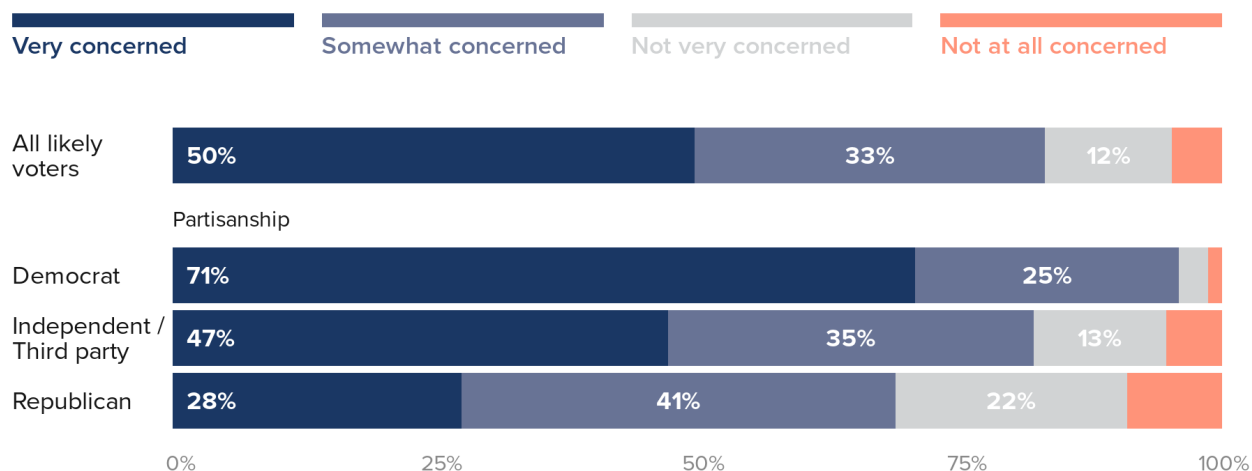
How concerned, if at all, are you about the impacts of the following on your community:



Given the historic heatwaves, droughts, and floods that have occurred this summer, voters are also overwhelmingly concerned that future generations will be more impacted by extreme weather events in their lifetimes compared to today. Eighty-three percent of voters, including nearly all Democrats (96 percent), a majority of Independents (82 percent), and over two-thirds of Republicans (69 percent) share this concern around future generations bearing the brunt of extreme weather events.

An Overwhelming Majority of Voters Are Concerned About the Impacts of Extreme Weather on Future Generations

How concerned or not concerned are you that future generations will be **more impacted** by extreme weather events like heat waves, droughts, and floods than you will be in your lifetime?



July 29–30, 2021 survey of 1,194 likely voters

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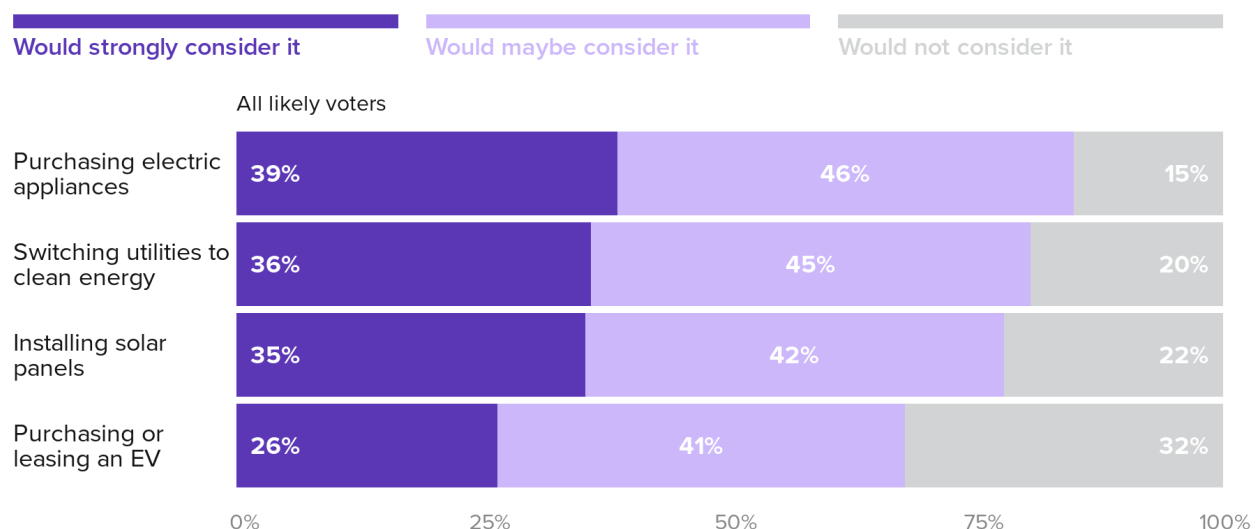
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Voters Are Open to Making Personal Changes to Address Climate Change — Especially With Government Incentives

We then asked voters several questions about actions they would take in their own lives to address climate change and support clean energy usage. Initially, over a third of voters say they would “strongly consider” switching their utilities to a clean energy provider (36 percent), installing solar panels on their homes (35 percent), and purchasing electric appliances (39 percent). Additionally, over a quarter of voters say they would “strongly consider” purchasing or leasing an electric vehicle (26 percent).

Voters Are Considering Taking Personal Actions to Address Climate Change

Would you consider doing any of the following:



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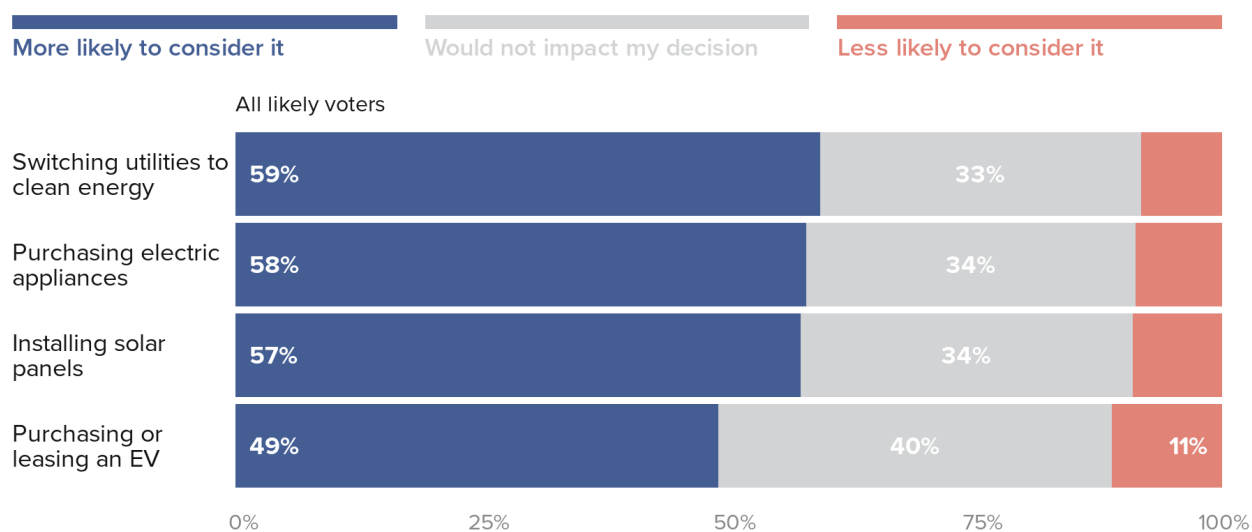
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However, voters indicate significantly more openness to taking these actions if the federal government would create new programs to lower consumer costs. Over half of voters would be more likely to consider switching to a clean energy provider (59 percent), purchasing electric appliances (58 percent), or installing solar panels (57 percent) if the government offered incentives for these initiatives. Meanwhile, nearly half of voters (49 percent) say they would be more likely to consider purchasing or leasing an electric vehicle with additional government incentives.

Voters Are More Likely to Take Actions to Address Climate Change if Given a Government Incentive

If the federal government created new programs to **lower the costs of doing each of the following**, would that make you more or less likely to consider doing it?



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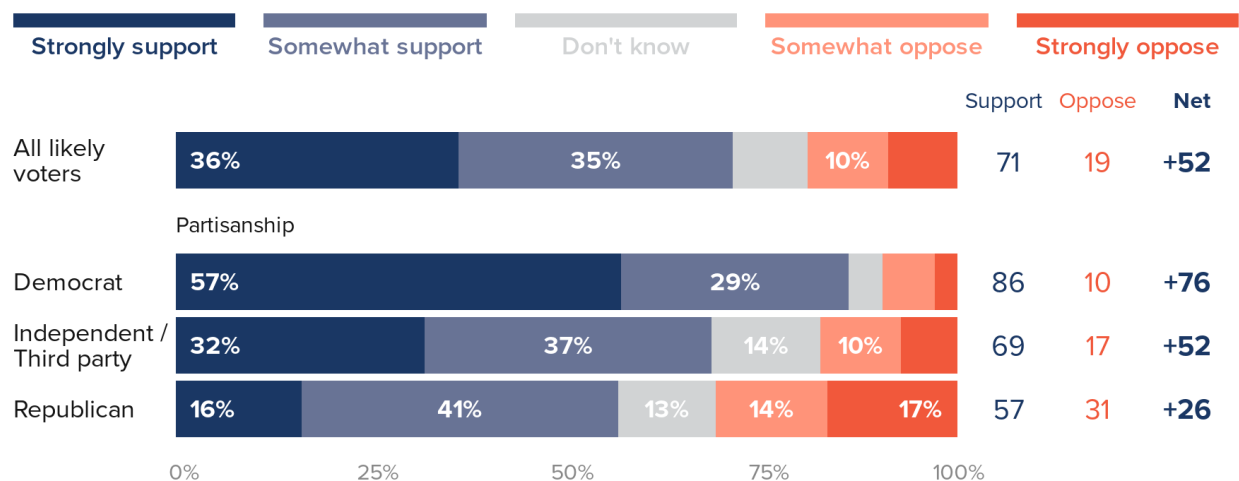
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Voters Support the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework but Want Lawmakers to Make Additional Investments in Climate and Clean Energy

Next, we asked voters several questions about the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework and additional actions lawmakers should take to pass climate and clean energy investments that were not included in the bipartisan deal. A majority of voters (71 percent) support the bipartisan infrastructure plan to repair roads and bridges, modernize and expand transportation infrastructure, replace lead drinking water pipes, and upgrade power infrastructure. Consensus is bipartisan: A majority of Democrats (86 percent), Independents (69 percent), and Republicans (57 percent) all support this proposal.

A Majority of Voters Support the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework

A group of Democratic and Republican lawmakers in Congress have proposed a Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework to repair roads and bridges, modernize and expand transportation infrastructure, replace lead drinking water pipes, and upgrade our power infrastructure. Do you support or oppose the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework?



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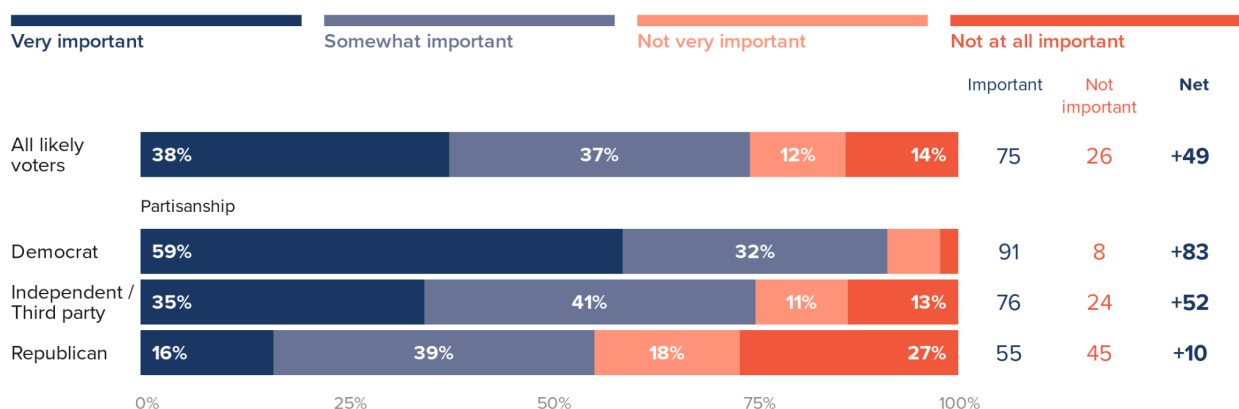
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However, given that the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework falls short in addressing several key climate and clean energy priorities, voters also agree that lawmakers in Congress should make additional investments to combat climate change and extreme weather, create new clean energy jobs, and reduce pollution. A majority of voters (75 percent), including nearly all Democrats (91 percent), over three-quarters of Independents (76 percent), and a majority of Republicans (55 percent) think it is “very” or “somewhat” important for lawmakers to make these additional investments.

An Overwhelming Majority of Voters Think it is Important for Congress to Make Additional Investments to Address Climate Change

While the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework makes investments in physical infrastructure, many lawmakers are calling for Congress to make additional investments to address climate change and extreme weather, create jobs in clean energy, and reduce pollution.

How important or not important do you think it is that lawmakers in Congress make these additional investments?



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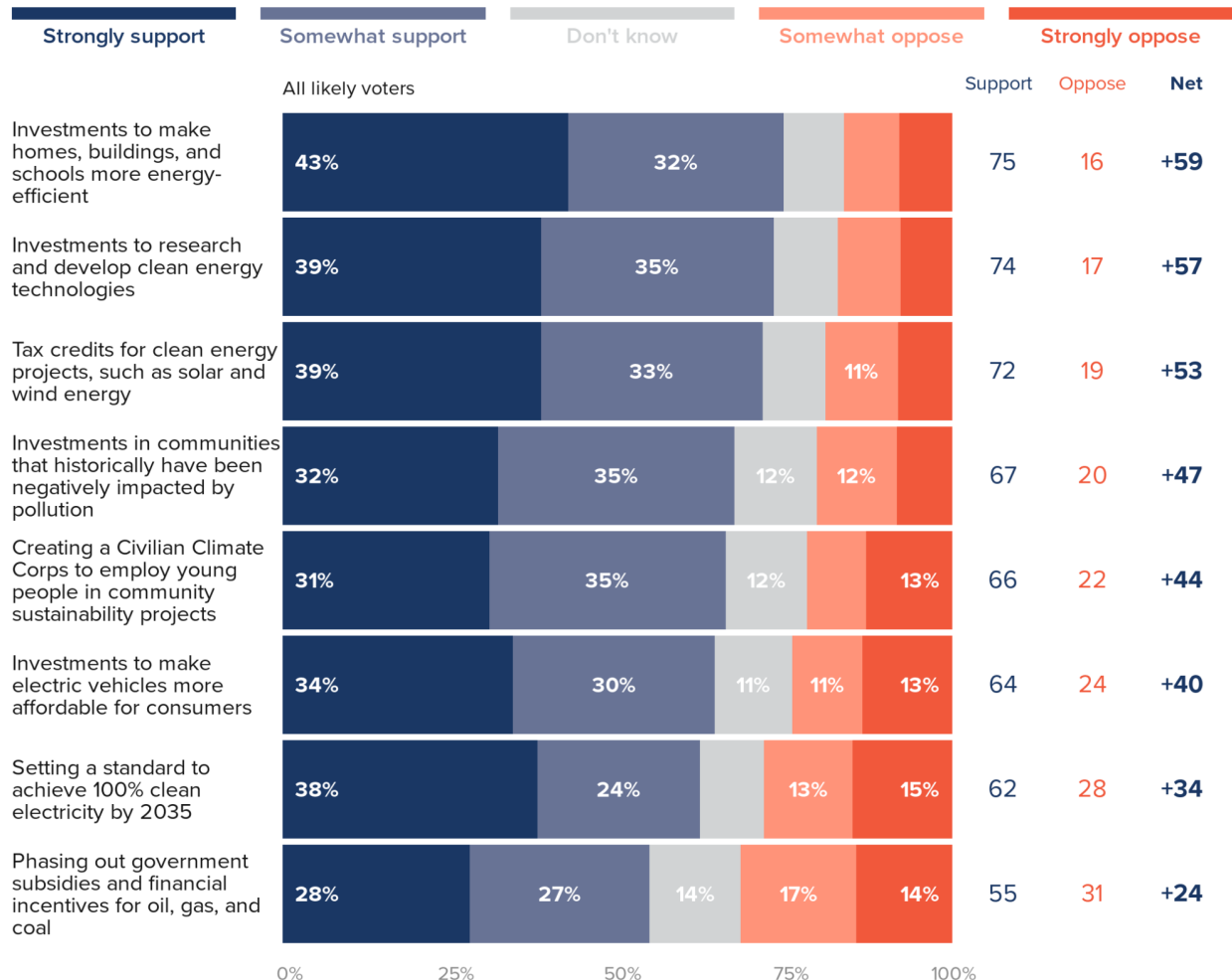
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Voters also broadly back the key climate and clean energy proposals under consideration for the budget reconciliation proposal that Democrats in Congress are currently assembling. Among the most popular proposals that lawmakers are considering are investments to make homes, buildings, and schools more energy efficient (75 percent support) and investments to research and develop new clean energy technologies (74 percent support). A majority of voters also support tax credits for clean energy projects (72 percent support), investments in communities that have been disproportionately impacted by pollution (67 percent support), creating a Civilian Climate Corps (66 percent support), making electric vehicles more affordable for consumers (64 percent support), putting America on a path to achieving a 100% clean electricity grid (62 percent), and phasing out subsidies for fossil fuels (55 percent).

Voters Support Key Climate and Clean Energy Investments Under Consideration for a Budget Reconciliation Proposal

Below is a list of proposals that are **not** included in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework, but are being considered by lawmakers to pass in another legislative package. Please indicate whether you support or oppose each proposal:



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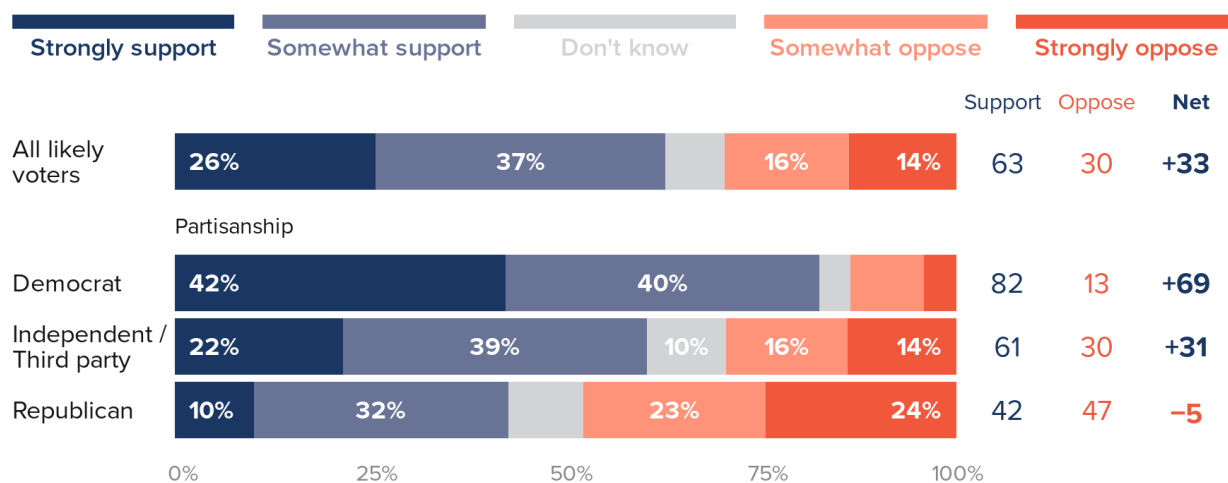
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Though the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework makes some investments in electric vehicles, funding is significantly less than what President Biden proposed in the American Jobs Plan. However, nearly two-thirds of all voters (63 percent), including a majority of Democrats (82 percent) and Independents (61 percent), support President Biden's original proposals to make electric vehicles more affordable for consumers, help American auto manufacturers re-tool their factories for electric vehicle production, build a network of 500,000 charging stations across America, and electrify mail delivery vans and school buses. While Republicans oppose these proposals by a 5-point margin, 42 percent of Republicans do support this investment in electric vehicles.

A Majority of Voters Support a Federal Investment in Electric Vehicles

Some lawmakers are proposing an investment to increase America's production and adoption of electric vehicles (EVs). This funding will be used to make EVs more affordable for consumers, help American auto manufacturers create jobs and re-tool their factories for EV production, build a network of 500,000 charging stations across America, and electrify mail delivery vans and school buses. Do you support or oppose this investment?



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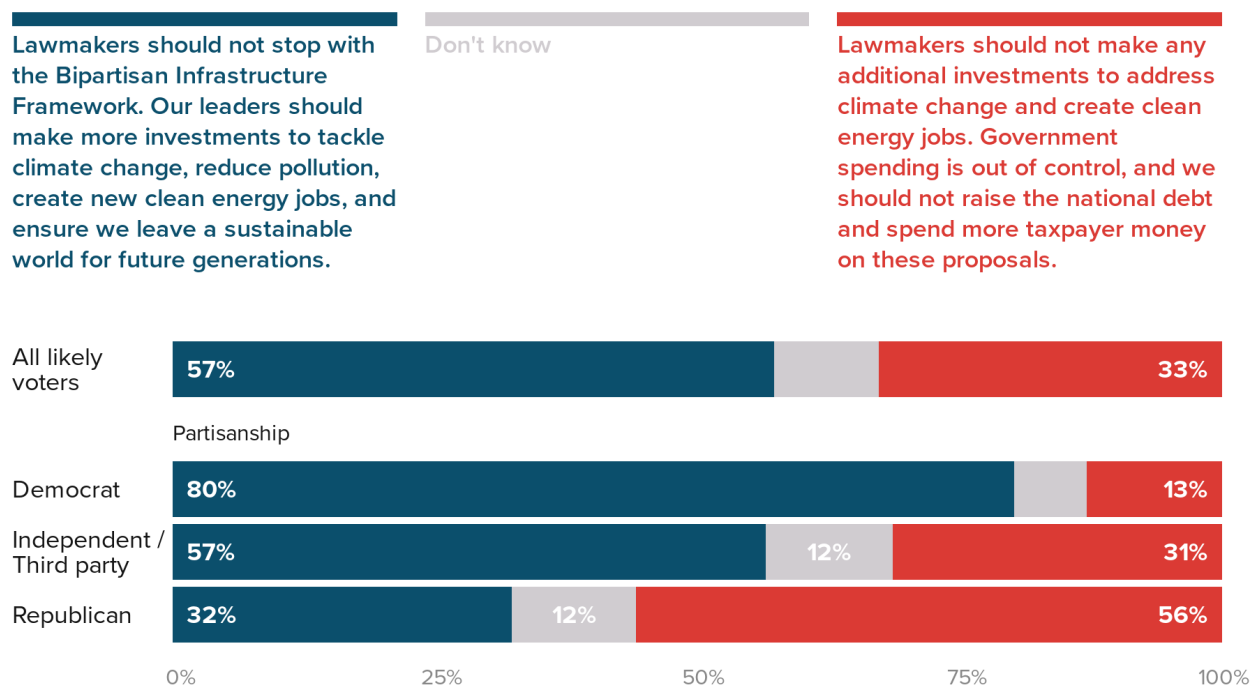
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Moreover, a majority of voters agree that lawmakers should not stop with the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework, even when presented with negative messaging around costs and government spending. By a 24-point margin, voters agree that our leaders should make more investments to tackle climate change, reduce pollution, create new clean energy jobs, and ensure we leave a sustainable world for future generations. A majority of Democrats (80 percent) and Independents (57 percent), as well as nearly a third of Republicans (32 percent), agree with this stance.

A Majority of Voters Think Lawmakers Should Pass Additional Legislation to Address Climate Change

Which statement comes closer to your view, even if neither is exactly right?



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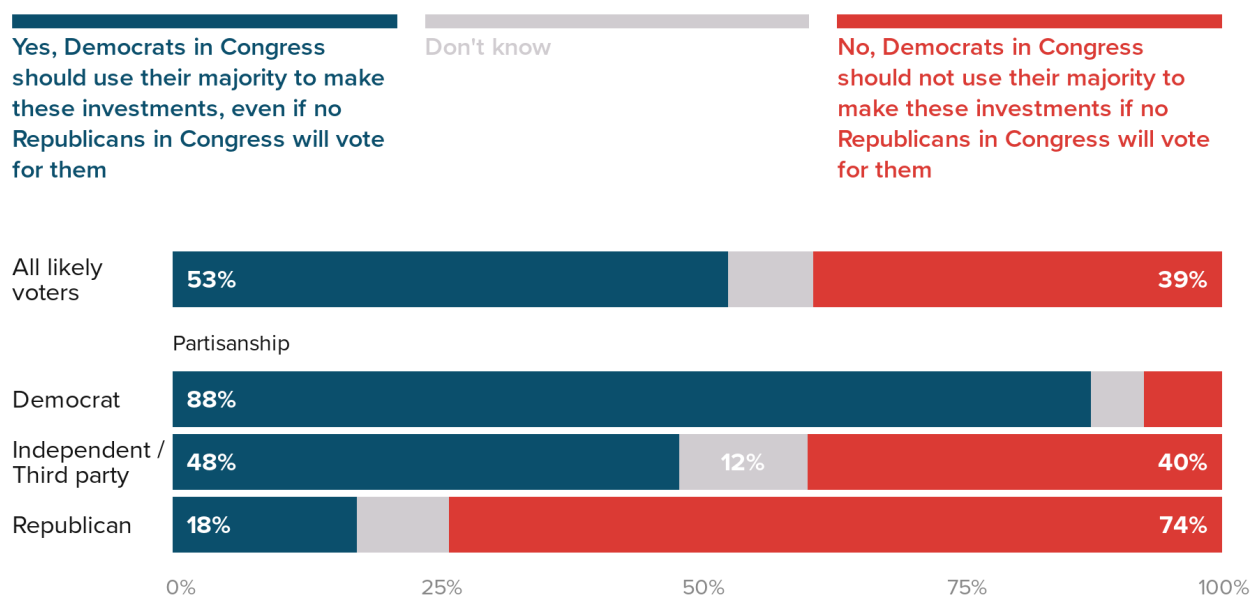
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Given the broad levels of support for key climate and clean energy proposals, voters agree by a 14-point margin that Democrats in Congress should use their majority to make these investments, even if no Republicans in Congress will vote for them. Nearly all Democrats (88 percent) and a plurality of Independents (48 percent) agree with this sentiment.

Voters Think Democrats Should Use Their Majority to Pass Climate and Clean Energy Investments

President Biden and most Democrats in Congress support investments to address climate change and transition to clean energy. Most Republicans in Congress oppose these investments. Do you think Democrats in Congress should use their majority to make investments to address climate change and transition to clean energy?



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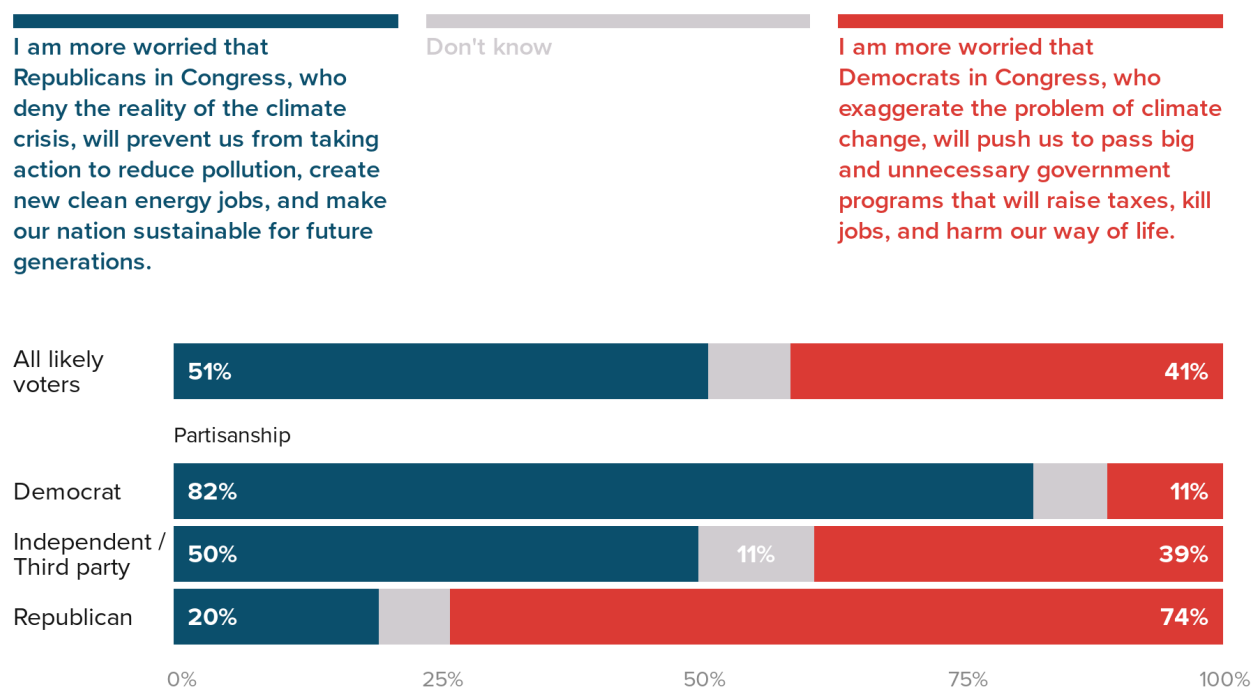
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Voters Aren't Buying Republican Attacks Against Addressing Climate Change and Transitioning to Clean Energy

Finally, we asked voters several questions to assess the salience of Republican attacks against climate and clean energy investments. By a 10-point margin, voters say they are more worried that Republicans in Congress who deny the reality of the climate crisis will impede legislation, rather than the prospect of Democrats in Congress exaggerating the problem of climate change and pushing the government to pass expensive, unnecessary programs. A majority of Democrats (82 percent) and half of Independents (50 percent) agree that the potential of Republicans preventing climate action is a greater concern than Democrats overstating the importance of addressing climate change.

Voters Are More Concerned About Republicans Not Addressing the Scale of the Climate Crisis

Which statement comes closer to your view, even if neither is exactly right?



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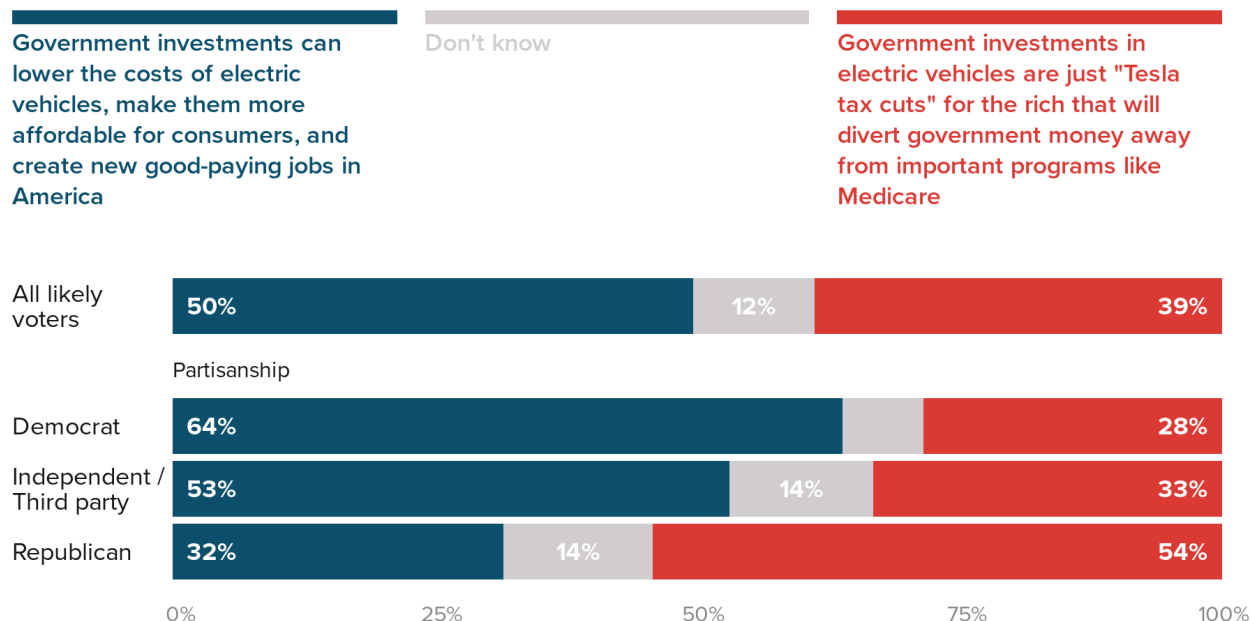
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To assess how voters perceive attacks against electric vehicles, we presented voters with a positive and negative statement about government investments in electric vehicles and asked them to choose which one they found more convincing. By an 11-point margin, voters find the positive statement emphasizing the economic benefits of government investments in electric vehicles more convincing than a negative statement claiming these investments are “Tesla tax cuts” for the rich that will divert government funding away from critical programs. Nearly two-thirds of Democrats (64 percent), a majority of Independents (53 percent), and nearly a third of Republicans (32 percent) find the positive statement more convincing.

Voters Aren't Buying Republican Attacks Against Electric Vehicles

Which statement do you find more convincing?



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YwHAX2

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Conclusion

While voters widely support the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework that makes significant investments in our nation's crumbling infrastructure, they are also overwhelmingly concerned about climate change, extreme weather, and pollution. Given that the bipartisan deal falls short of making many of the historic climate and clean energy investments proposed in the American Jobs Plan, voters want lawmakers to pass additional legislation to address these priorities.

Moreover, many of the key proposals from the American Jobs Plan that were excluded from the bipartisan infrastructure deal, including investments to create new clean energy jobs and invest in communities that have been disproportionately impacted by pollution, enjoy backing from a majority of voters. Support for these investments is resilient to negative talking points, as a majority of voters — including Independents — are not swayed by attacks that deemphasize the severity of climate change or claim that climate and clean energy investments would negatively impact the economy. As lawmakers in Congress continue the legislative process to pass both the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework and a budget reconciliation proposal, they should feel confident advocating for making ambitious investments in climate and clean energy knowing that voters widely support these measures.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

From July 29 to 30, 2021, Data for Progress conducted a survey of 1,194 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 ± 3 percentage points.