

Holding Big Oil Accountable for Higher Gas Prices

May 2024



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Key Takeaways

1

Blame for high gas prices is up for grabs, but oil company blame is strong.

2

Voters believe Big Oil is manipulating energy policy and exploiting current events to make profits – and new revelations prove them right.

3

Voters are worried about Republicans taking money from Big Oil.

4

Contrasting Trump's record with Biden's is key – President Biden is standing up to Big Oil, while Trump touts his connections with them.

Blame for high gas prices is up for grabs, but oil company blame is strong – Democrats and Independents are more likely to blame oil and gas company CEOs than Biden for high energy prices.

MARCH 2024*: Which three of the following do you blame the most for high energy prices today?

Top 3 blame the most

		Dem %	Ind %	GOP %
President Biden	43%	10	35	74
Major oil companies like ExxonMobil, Shell Oil	35%	50	38	22
Democrats in Congress	34%	7	25	61
Oil and gas company CEOs	34%	47	45	20
Wealthy oil and gas investors/shareholders	32%	45	34	20
Saudi Arabia and other OPEC countries	28%	26	24	30
International conflict (Red Sea, Ukraine)	24%	23	31	24
Oil industry lobbyists	23%	33	21	14
Republicans in Congress	20%	35	20	5
Russia and Vladimir Putin	16%	17	16	16
Companies involved in solar/wind energy production	11%	6	13	15

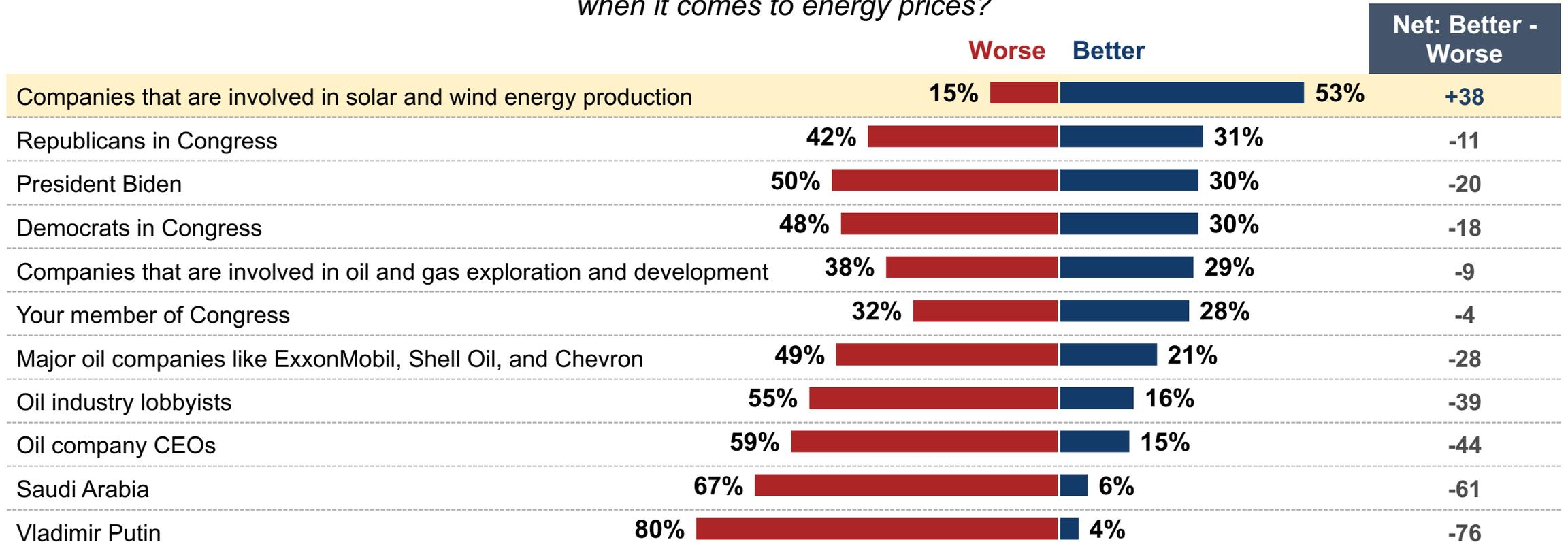
This pattern is persistent over time – in our polls, we consistently see voters showing similar attitudes around gas prices, with much anger directed toward Big Oil.

APRIL 2023*: Who or what do you blame for high gasoline prices?
(Aggregated volunteered responses)

	All voters %	Democrats %	Independents %	Republicans %
Oil and gas companies, executives	28	39	26	18
Biden, Biden administration	27	4	26	51
Corporate greed, price gouging	15	24	11	8
The government, Congress, politicians	15	11	25	16
War in Ukraine	14	22	4	9
Inflation, the economy	10	13	7	9
Regulations on oil/gas	9	2	6	19
Too dependent on overseas oil sources	8	3	4	15
OPEC, oil-producing countries	8	9	12	5
Russia, Putin	7	9	7	5
Global supply and demand	6	8	13	2

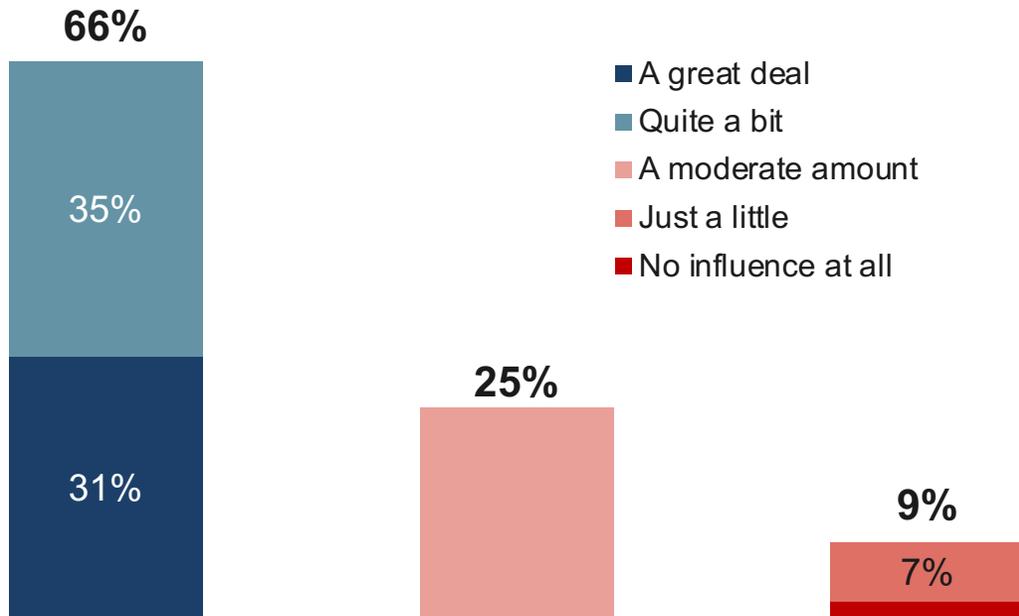
Clean energy producers stand out as playing a positive role on energy prices, while all other actors get a net-negative response.

APRIL 2023*: Are the following people/groups making things better or worse for consumers when it comes to energy prices?



Voters believe oil and gas lobbyists have significant influence, but remain unclear on the extent of their connections to Trump and Republicans.

MARCH 2024*: How much influence do you believe oil and gas lobbyists have on elected leaders in the federal government when it comes to shaping policy related to energy and the environment?

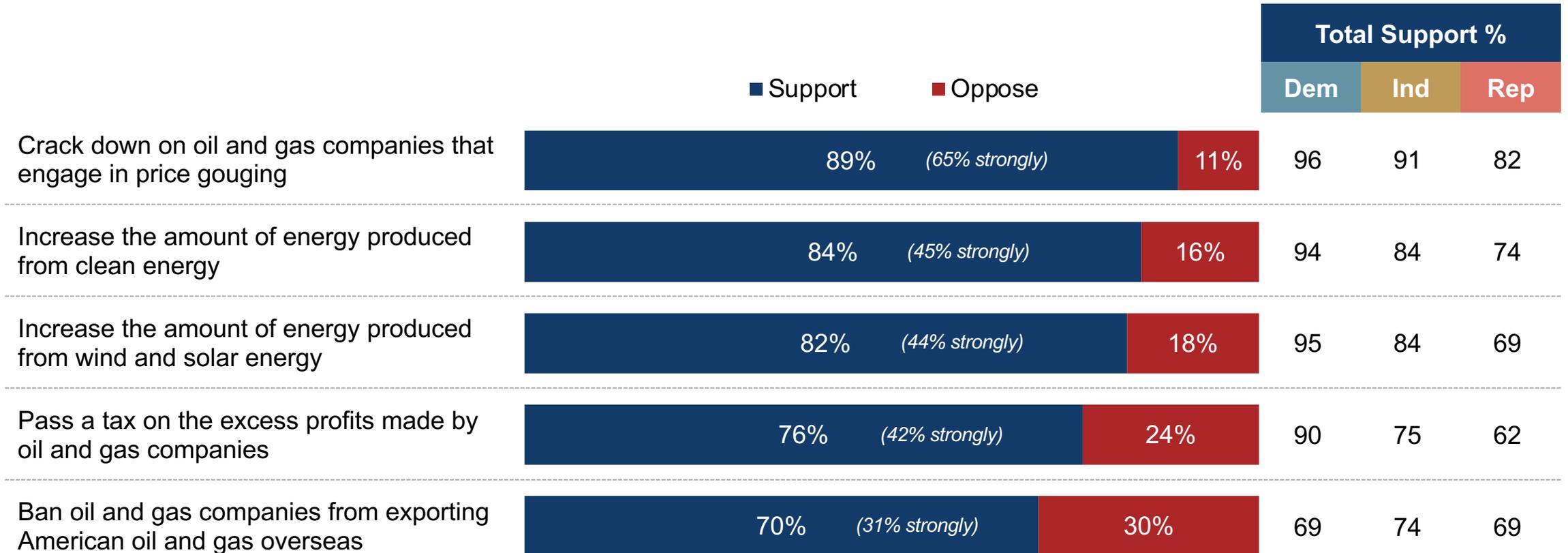


(Among those who say lobbyists have at least a little influence) Which group do you think oil and gas lobbyists have more influence over?

	Biden/Democrats%	Trump/(MAGA) Republicans %
All voters	27	37
Democrats	19	51
Independents	21	29
Republicans	35	26
Swing voters	24	33
White voters	27	37
Black voters	24	41
Latino voters	29	35
AAPI voters	21	32
18-29-year-olds	24	34

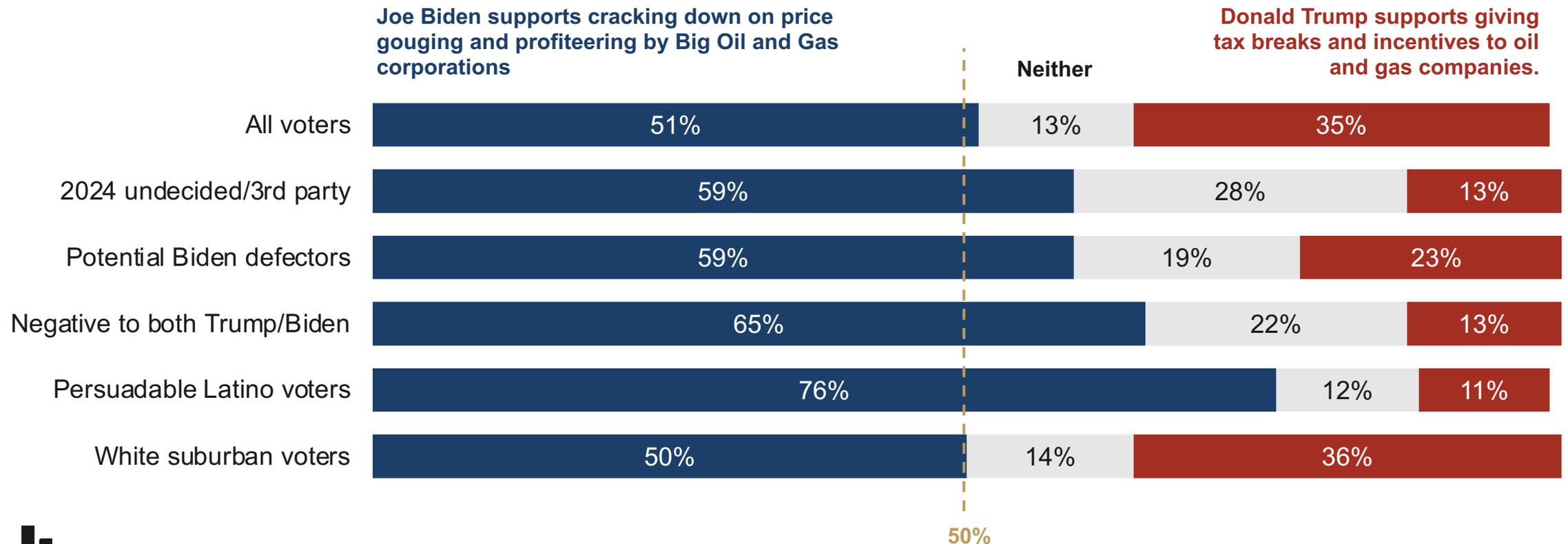
There is strong and bipartisan support for policies that hold oil and gas companies accountable and expand clean energy.

APRIL 2023*: Do you support or oppose this step leaders could take to lower energy prices?



Contrasting Biden’s fight against price gouging with Trump’s tax cuts for Big Oil and Gas highlights Biden’s focus on everyday Americans – especially for persuadable voters.

JANUARY 2024*: Which candidate would you prefer?



Two messages linking Trump to Big Oil's greed raise serious concerns for voters.

JANUARY 2024*: % Gives me major concerns about electing Donald Trump

	All Gettable voters*	Persuadable voters**	Potential Biden defectors***
<p>[BIG OIL NEGATIVE] Trump took millions from Big Oil donors and put them ahead of the American people. As president, he staffed his environmental agencies with fossil fuel lobbyists, weakened air and water protections, and sued automakers who volunteered to meet clean air standards. Trump also gave tax breaks to oil companies and proposed expanding offshore drilling that would create billions of tons of pollution that even Republican governors opposed.</p>	53	43	45
<p>[WORKING FAMILIES/ COSTS] Cost of living expenses are at an all-time high, but Trump's policies would increase profits for big corporations rather than decrease costs for working families. Big Oil CEOs and corporate executives used worldwide inflation and Russia's invasion of Ukraine as an excuse to increase prices and keep them high. Trump's short-sighted policies continue to put these companies first, leaving working Americans vulnerable to energy insecurity and high costs, squeezing already tight budgets.</p>	52	36	41

*Participants who are strong Republicans and definitely voting for Trump in 2024 skipped over message testing. | **Undecided or just leaning in 2024 vote | ***Voted Biden in 2020 but not currently for him in 2024

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