Voter Support for the Build Back Better Bill and Clean Energy Investments

Key findings from an online survey among 1,006 voters nationwide, conducted July 26 to 29, 2021 for Climate Power and LCV

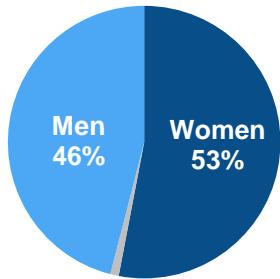**CLIMATE POWER**
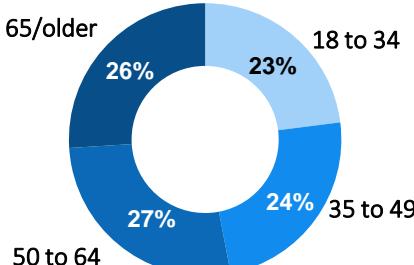
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HART RESEARCH
A S S O C I A T E S
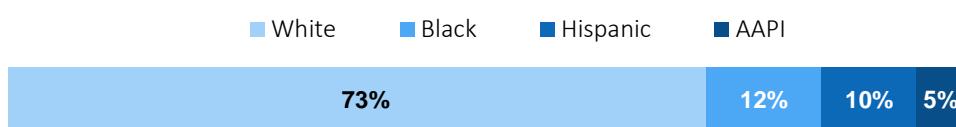
Characteristics of the Sample

GENDER

Men 46%
Women 53%

AGE

- 18 to 34: 23%
- 35 to 49: 24%
- 50 to 64: 27%
- 65/older: 26%

EDUCATION

HS grad/less	Some college	Four-year college grad	Postgrad degree
30%	29%	26%	15%

RACE

White	Black	Hispanic	AAPI
73%	12%	10%	5%

AREA TYPE

City 33%
Suburbs 40%
Small town/rural area 27%

2020 PRESIDENTIAL

Biden voters: 51%
Trump voters: 47%

97% say they voted

IDEOLOGY

- Conser-vatives 40%
- Liberals 29%
- Moderates 31%

PARTY ID

- Republicans 45%
- Democrats 46%
- Independents 9%

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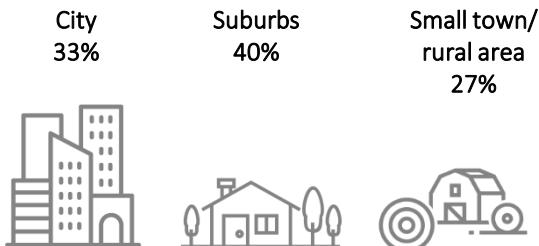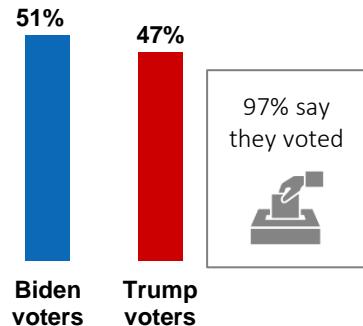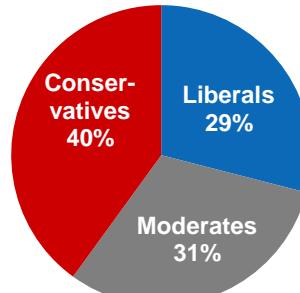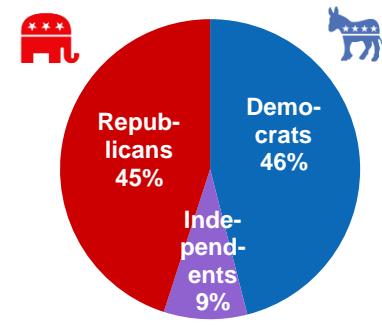
Key Takeaways

- The large majority of voters respond favorably to the Build Back Better reconciliation bill when its main elements (including the cost and tax provisions) are presented to them.

- Most voters say that climate change is responsible for extreme weather events and there is strong majority support for action on climate change. Voters say they are more likely to support the Build Back Better package because of its provisions on clean energy, climate change, and environmental justice.

- The provisions of the package that lower costs for working families and seniors, including energy costs, are important to swing voters and offer a winning response to criticisms that Build Back Better package will fuel inflation.

- There also is a winning rebuttal to the "tax-and-spend" criticism of the package, focusing on the facts that (a) the legislation would be paid for by making the wealthy and multi-national corporations pay their fair share; (b) no one under $400,000 will pay more in taxes; and (c) the long-term benefits will outweigh the costs because the proposed investments will grow the economy, create jobs, and help tackle climate change.

Description of Legislation

Congress is considering a major legislative package to address important needs of the country. Here is a list of some of the things this legislation would do. (ITEMS RANDOMIZED.)

- Make dental care, vision care, and hearing care more affordable for seniors by covering them under Medicare

- Reduce the cost of prescription drugs by giving Medicare the power to negotiate with pharmaceutical companies for lower prices

- Make health insurance more affordable for people who buy coverage on their own by expanding tax credits and subsidies

- Expand the use of clean energy sources and combat climate change by increasing tax incentives for wind and solar power and by setting clean energy standards that electric companies must meet

- Make electric vehicles more affordable for consumers by providing tax rebates for the purchase of electric vehicles

- Lower energy costs by making homes, buildings, and vehicles more energy efficient

- Expand access to quality, affordable home care for the elderly and people with disabilities

- Expand access to quality childcare that working parents can afford

- Continue the new child tax credit of $3,000 to $3,600 per child per year, which had been passed on a temporary basis

- Provide two years of tuition-free community college

- Provide pre-kindergarten for three- and four-year-old children

This legislation would cost $3.5 trillion and would be paid for by raising taxes on corporations and the wealthy. It would not raise taxes on anyone earning under $400,000 a year.

Nearly three-quarters of voters support the Build Back Better bill after hearing the main provisions, costs, and tax components.

Support for Reconciliation Bill

73%

31%

Strongly support

42%

27%

Support legislation **Oppose legislation**
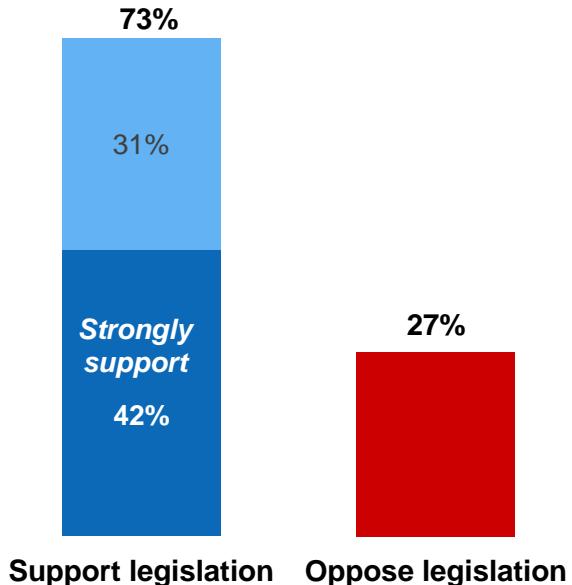
	Total support	Strongly support
Democrats	**96%**	**68%**
Independents	74%	29%
Republicans	49%	17%
Liberal Democrats	**99%**	**77%**
Non-liberal Democrats	**92%**	**57%**
Less conservative GOPs	62%	22%
Black voters	**92%**	**69%**
Hispanic voters	77%	44%
White non-college grads	67%	33%
White college grads	70%	41%
Voters age 18 to 34	**81%**	46%
Voters age 35 to 49	**79%**	46%
Voters age 50 to 64	65%	33%
Voters age 65/older	68%	44%

Voters respond affirmatively to key points in favor of the bill.

Important Reason Congress Should Pass the Legislation

■ Very important ■ Fairly important

Statement	Very important	Fairly important	Total
It will lower costs for working families and senior citizens and help make it more affordable to raise a family.	52%	27%	**79%**
It will create millions of good-paying jobs in communities across the country.	51%	28%	**79%**
It will ensure that economic growth benefits the middle class and working families, not just the wealthy.	53%	25%	**78%**
It addresses problems ignored for too long: climate change, child care, affordable care for elderly.	51%	23%	**74%**
It will help build a clean energy economy that protects our environment from pollution and climate change.	49%	22%	**71%**

➔ **Democrats** respond strongly to the fact that the bill addresses problems that have been ignored, including climate change. **Swing voters** respond strongly to the idea that the bill lowers costs for working families and seniors.

Large majorities say that they are more likely to support the plan because of its provisions on clean energy, climate change, and environmental justice.

Support for Reconciliation Bill If It Includes Specific Climate/Environmental Provisions

- ■ More likely to support bill
- ■ Less likely to support bill
- ■ Makes no difference

Expand use of clean energy like solar and wind
- 66%
- 21%
- 13%

Strong action to address climate change
- 63%
- 26%
- 11%

Environmental justice: target communities affected by pollution/development
- 63%
- 22%
- 15%
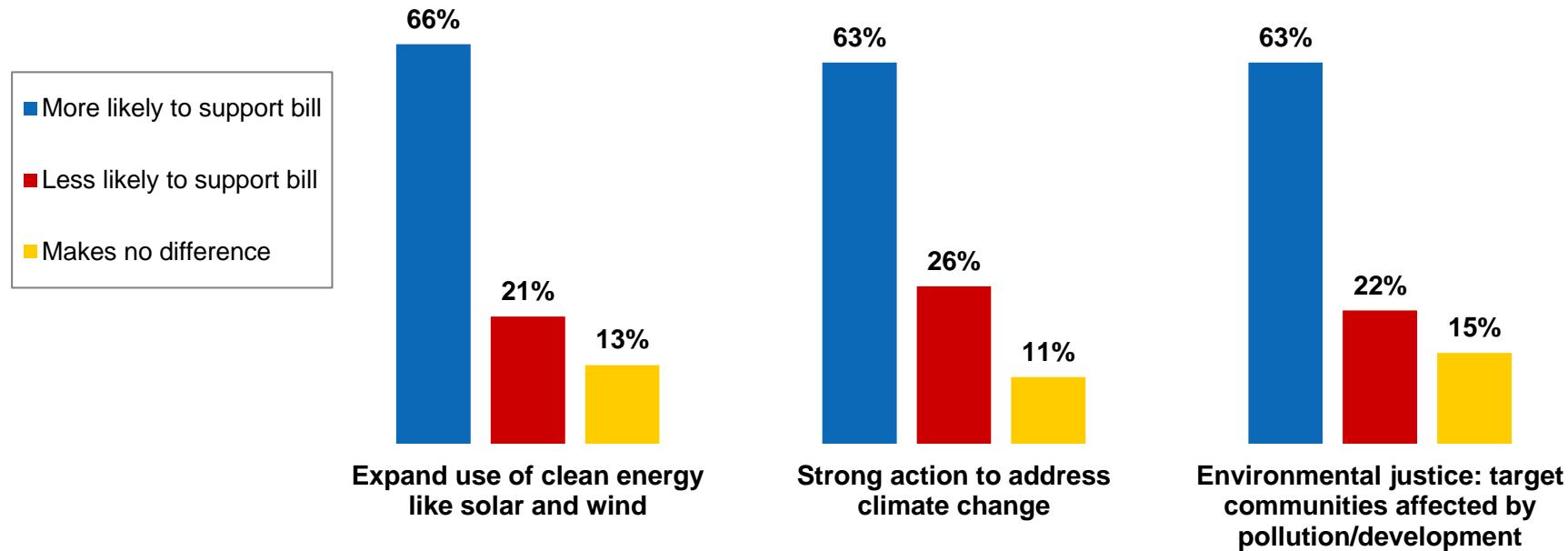
Voters express a strong desire for Congress to take action on climate change this year.

Support for Taking Action to Deal with Climate Change This Year

66%

8%

Feel strongly
58%

34%

Important priority for President/Congress

NOT important priority
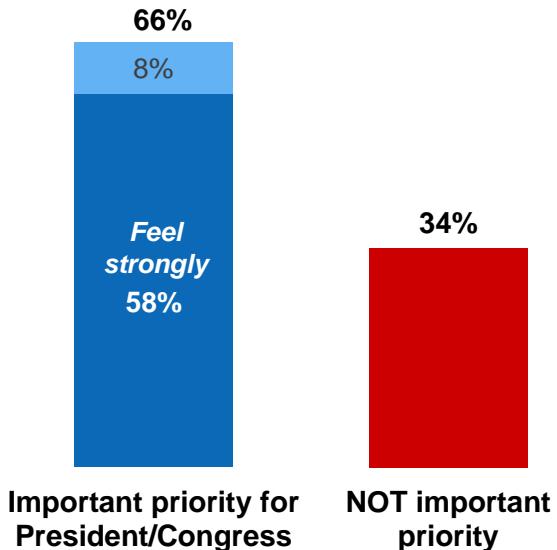
Important priority for President/Congress	
Democrats	**91%**
Independents	**78%**
Republicans	37%
Liberal Democrats	**97%**
Non-liberal Democrats	**84%**
Swing voters	71%
Black voters	**85%**
Hispanic voters	**72%**
White non-college grads	56%
White college grads	66%

HART RESEARCH

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Voters are paying attention to the news about extreme weather, and most say that it is happening because of climate change.

How much attention have you been paying to the news about extreme temperatures, wildfires, and droughts in different parts of the country?
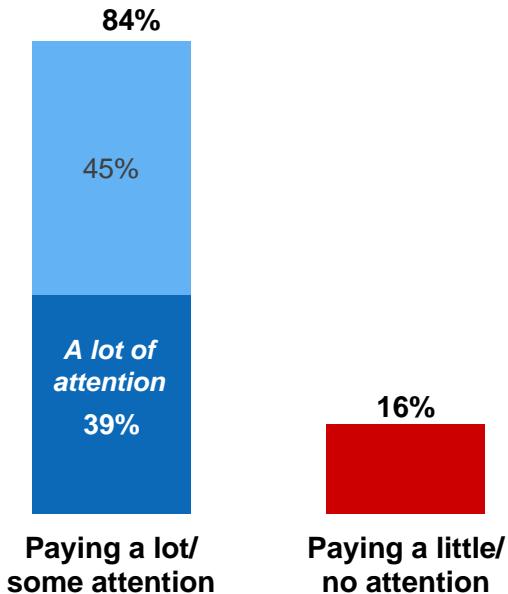
The situation with extreme temperatures, wildfires, and droughts is happening because of:

84%

45%

A lot of attention 39%

16%

Paying a lot/ some attention

Paying a little/ no attention

Natural weather patterns 44%

Climate change 56%
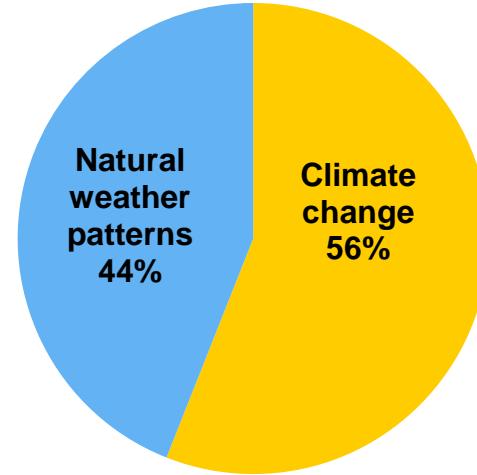
A response focused on who does and doesn't pay for the Build Back Better bill effectively counters the GOP tax and spend attack.

Which argument is more convincing?

This legislation would be **paid for by making sure the wealthy and multi-national corporations pay their fair share**. If you earn less than $400,000 per year, you will not pay a penny more in taxes, and **many people's taxes will actually go down**. These investments will grow the economy, create jobs, and help us tackle climate change. Top economists agree that the long-term benefits will far surpass the costs of the investments.

"Supporter statement" | **32% Much more** | 27% | **59%**

+18 SUPPORTER STATEMENT

Government spending was through the roof over the past year and the federal deficit is at an all-time high. This $3.5 trillion legislation would come on top of the nearly $2 trillion spending bill that Congress already passed and a trillion-dollar infrastructure package. Eventually **regular people's taxes will be increased** in order to pay for all of this.

"Opponent statement" | **27% Much more** | 14% | **41%**

	Swing voters	Soft supporters	Less conservative Republicans
Supporter statement	**63%**	**63%**	49%
Opponent statement	37%	37%	51%

Talk about the ways the legislation lowers costs and puts money in the pockets of average Americans effectively counters the GOP inflation attack.

Which argument is more convincing?

This legislation is about creating jobs and lowering costs for working families. It will make things more affordable for the middle class and working families, whether by **lowering electricity bills, saving people money at the gas pump, reducing the price of prescription drugs, or lowering the cost of childcare and home care** for seniors. Families with children will have more money in their pockets because of the child tax credit.

"Supporter statement" | **30% Much more** | 25% | **55%**

This legislation will **hit the American people right in their wallets at a time when people are still struggling** to recover financially from the pandemic. Gas prices are already spiking and now Democrats are proposing job-killing cuts to the oil and gas industry, raising our prices even more. By spending all this money, **this bill will fuel inflation and drive up the cost of everyday things** because it will cost manufacturers more to make things.

"Opponent statement" | **30% Much more** | 15% | **45%**

+10 SUPPORTER STATEMENT

	Swing voters	Soft supporters	Less conservative Republicans
Supporter statement	**55%**	**58%**	35%
Opponent statement	45%	42%	65%

**Emphasizing economic benefits for working families—including lower utility bills—effectively undercuts an attack on "radical environmentalism".**

Which argument is more convincing?

This legislation will **help lower the cost of living for working families** by reducing health insurance premiums, reducing the cost of prescription drugs, reducing the cost of child and elder care. **The environmental investments will reduce utility bills** by moving the country to lower-cost clean energy, while creating the next generation of good-paying jobs.

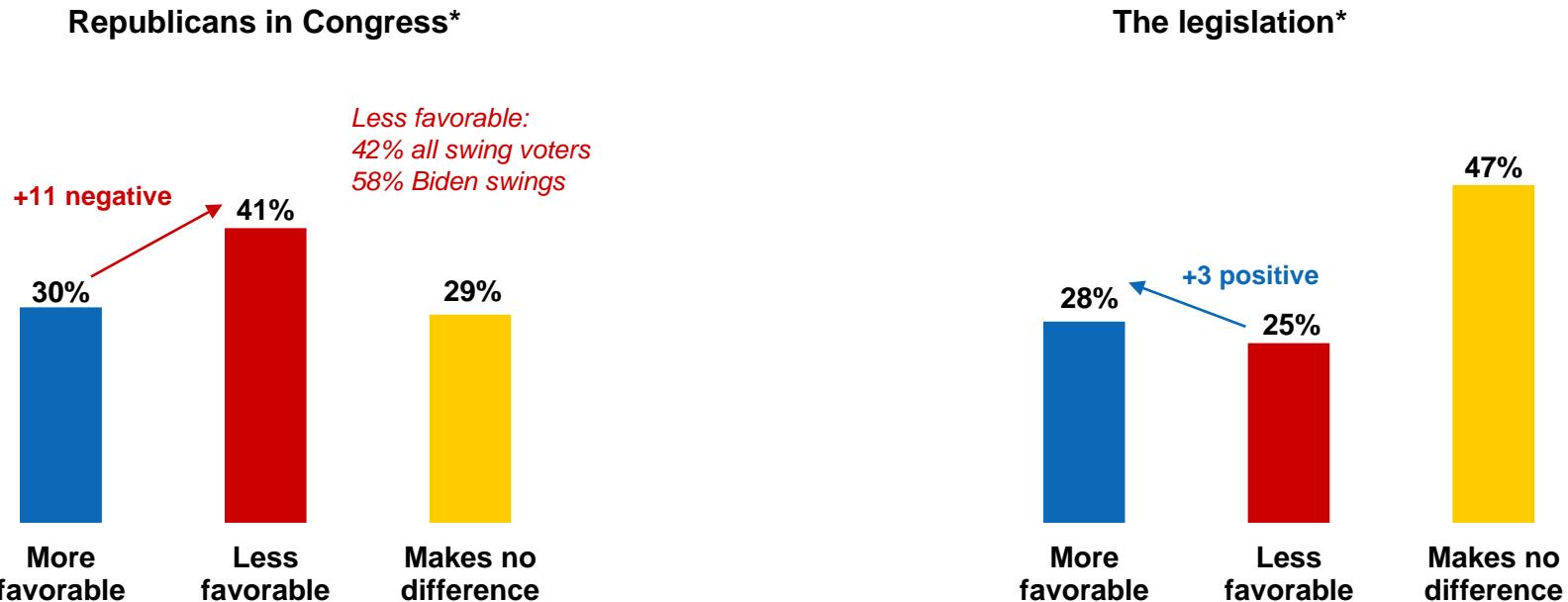"Supporter statement" | 35% Much more | 31% | **66%**

This legislation will spend **trillions of dollars on radical environmentalism** like the Green New Deal that will drive up utility bills and force up costs on everyday things.

"Opponent statement" | 24% Much more | 10% | **34%**

+32 SUPPORTER STATEMENT

	Swing voters	Soft supporters	Less conservative Republicans
Supporter statement	**69%**	**73%**	**58%**
Opponent statement	31%	27%	42%

Voter Support for the Build Back Better Bill and Clean Energy Investments – July 2021

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Republicans' unanimous opposition to the bill hurts their image, but doesn't hurt the bill itself.

No Republicans in the U.S. Senate or U.S. House of Representatives support this legislation. How does knowing this make you feel toward . . . ?

Republicans in Congress*

Less favorable:
42% all swing voters
58% Biden swings

+11 negative

30% — More favorable
41% — Less favorable
29% — Makes no difference

The legislation*

+3 positive

28% — More favorable
25% — Less favorable
47% — Makes no difference

*Half of respondents were asked about Republicans in Congress, the other half were asked about the legislation

After hearing from both sides, we maintain solid support across the board, including on the center-right.

POST-MESSAGING Support for Reconciliation Bill

	Support	Oppose		Support	Oppose
All voters	**67%**	**33%**	Whites	61%	**39%**
Democrats	**94%**	6%	Blacks	**89%**	11%
Independents	64%	36%	Hispanics	**75%**	25%
Republicans	39%	**61%**	White non-college grads	59%	**41%**
Less conservative	52%	48%	White college grads	64%	36%
Very conservative	23%	**77%**	Urban	**78%**	22%
			Suburban	66%	34%
			Small town/rural	55%	**45%**