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# VOTERS SUPPORT THE AFFORDABLE DRUG MANUFACTURING ACT

Sean McElwee, Executive Director, Data for Progress

**The Affordable Drug Manufacturing Act, introduced into Congress by Senator Elizabeth Warren and Representative Jan Schakowsky would allow the government to manufacture generic versions of drugs in some circumstances. Because the legislation is likely to face strong industry push-back, we tested it in two environments: with and without a Democratic message in support. This is designed to simulate how the legislation would perform in an environment where it is massively outspent on television. We find that in both scenarios, voters overwhelmingly support the legislation.**

## **Executive summary**

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- When both Republican and Democratic messages are presented, voters support the American Drug Manufacturing Act 57 percent to 29 percent.
- Even without a Democratic message voters are in favor of the American Drug Manufacturing Act 49 percent to 36 percent.
- When Republican and Democratic messages are presented, voters support the government manufacturing insulin 58 percent to 32 percent.
- Even without a Democratic message voters support the government manufacture of insulin 48 percent to 33 percent.
- In all scenarios tested, independents on net support government manufacturing of generic drugs both broadly and insulin specifically.

## **Letting the government manufacture drugs if the price is too high**

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In our survey we included a randomized experiment to test baseline support for the Affordable Drug Manufacturing Act and analyzed how it would perform if it was outspent in advertising. Specifically, we asked half the voters in our sample,

*Some Democrats have proposed allowing the government to manufacture a generic version of drugs if the price of the drug has spiked and there is no generic version available.*

**Democrats say that this will lower the costs of prescription drugs and ensure all Americans have access to the medicine that they need. They say that pharmaceutical companies should not be allowed to exploit people who need medicine just to boost profits.**

*Republicans say that this proposal a government takeover of healthcare which would waste taxpayer money, lead to medicine shortages, and result in lower-quality*

prescription drugs. They argue that this will reduce investments in new prescription drugs, destroying high-paying jobs and preventing better drugs from coming to market.

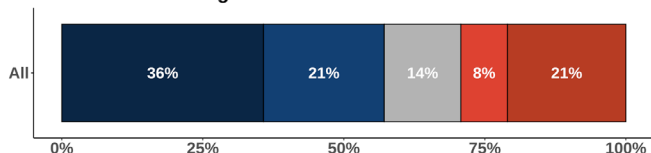
Would you [support or oppose] this proposal?

Half the sample received the same statement without the Democratic message.<sup>1</sup> Respondents could report if they supported, opposed, or were unsure how they felt about the policy. In the condition where voters saw both the Republican and Democratic statements, the statements

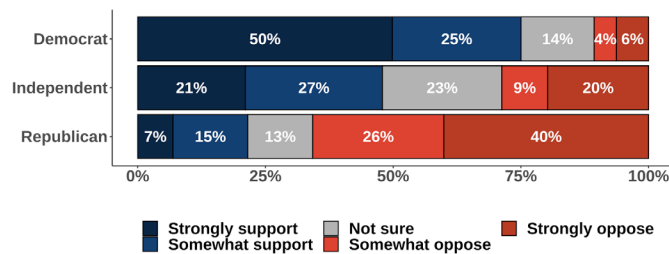
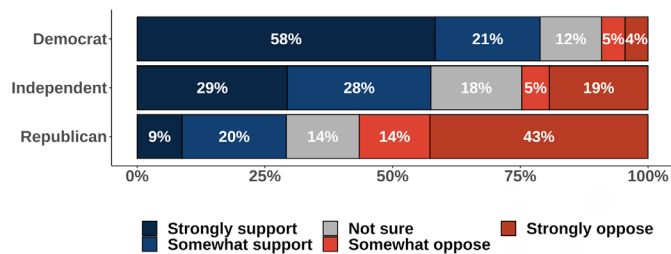
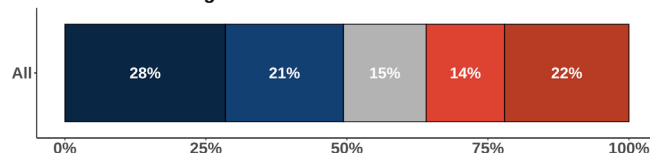
were rotated so that voters would either see the Republican statement before the Democratic statement or vice versa.

Even without a Democratic argument in favor of the policy, voters supported it 49-36 percent. Strong support (28 percent) was larger than strong opposition (22 percent). When voters are given both a Democratic and Republican argument, support is overwhelming: 57-29 percent. Strong support (36 percent) swamps strong opposition (21 percent) among the population generally and Independents specifically.

**Support for letting the government manufacture generic drugs if the price is too high**  
With Democratic argument



**Support for letting the government manufacture generic drugs if the price is too high**  
No Democratic argument



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# Generic Manufacture of Insulin

In addition, we tested support for the generic manufacture of insulin specifically. In that split, we asked voters,<sup>2</sup>

*Some Democrats have proposed allowing the government to manufacture a generic version of insulin and sell it at a price that covers the manufacturing costs and ensures patients have access to the drugs.*

**Democrats say that this would lower the cost of insulin and guarantee that everyone with diabetes gets the insulin that they need. They say that pharmaceutical companies should not be allowed to exploit people who need medicine just to boost profits.**

*Republicans say that this proposal a government takeover of healthcare which would waste taxpayer money, lead to insulin shortages, and result in lower-quality insulin. They argue that this will reduce investments in new prescription drugs, destroying high-paying jobs and preventing better drugs from coming to market.*

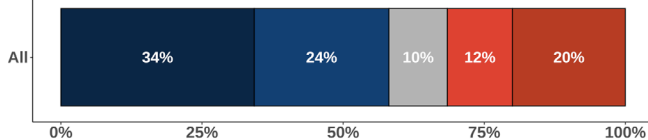
Would you support or oppose this proposal?

Whereas in the other split, we asked a similar item but without a Democratic statement.<sup>3</sup> Fifty percent of the sample received statement one, and fifty percent received statement two. In the condition that included the Democratic message, we rotated the Democratic and Republican messages so voters would randomly see one or the other first.

In both conditions voters support the policy. In an environment where voters see both messages, support for the policy is overwhelming: 58-32, with a strong net positive +41 percent support among independents. As before strong support (34 percent) was greater than strong opposition (20 percent). Even when no positive Democratic message is provided, voters support the policy 48-33 percent, with independents in support 40-37 percent. Even with no positive message, strong support (29 percent) was greater than strong opposition (20 percent). Even if the legislation faces a strong media deficit, it will have net support among voters.

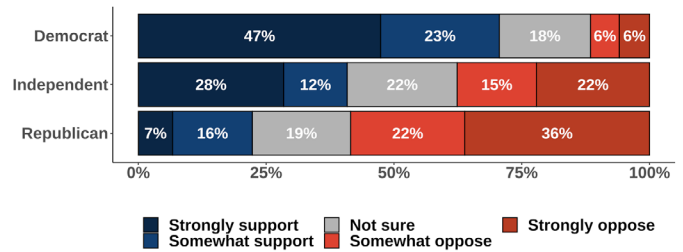
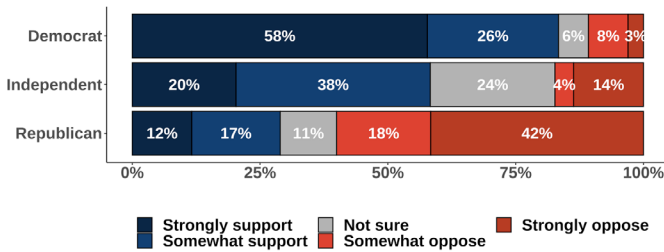
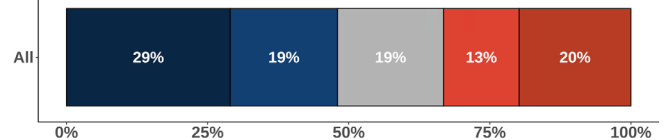
**Support for letting the government manufacture insulin**

With Democratic argument



**Support for letting the government manufacture insulin**

No Democratic argument



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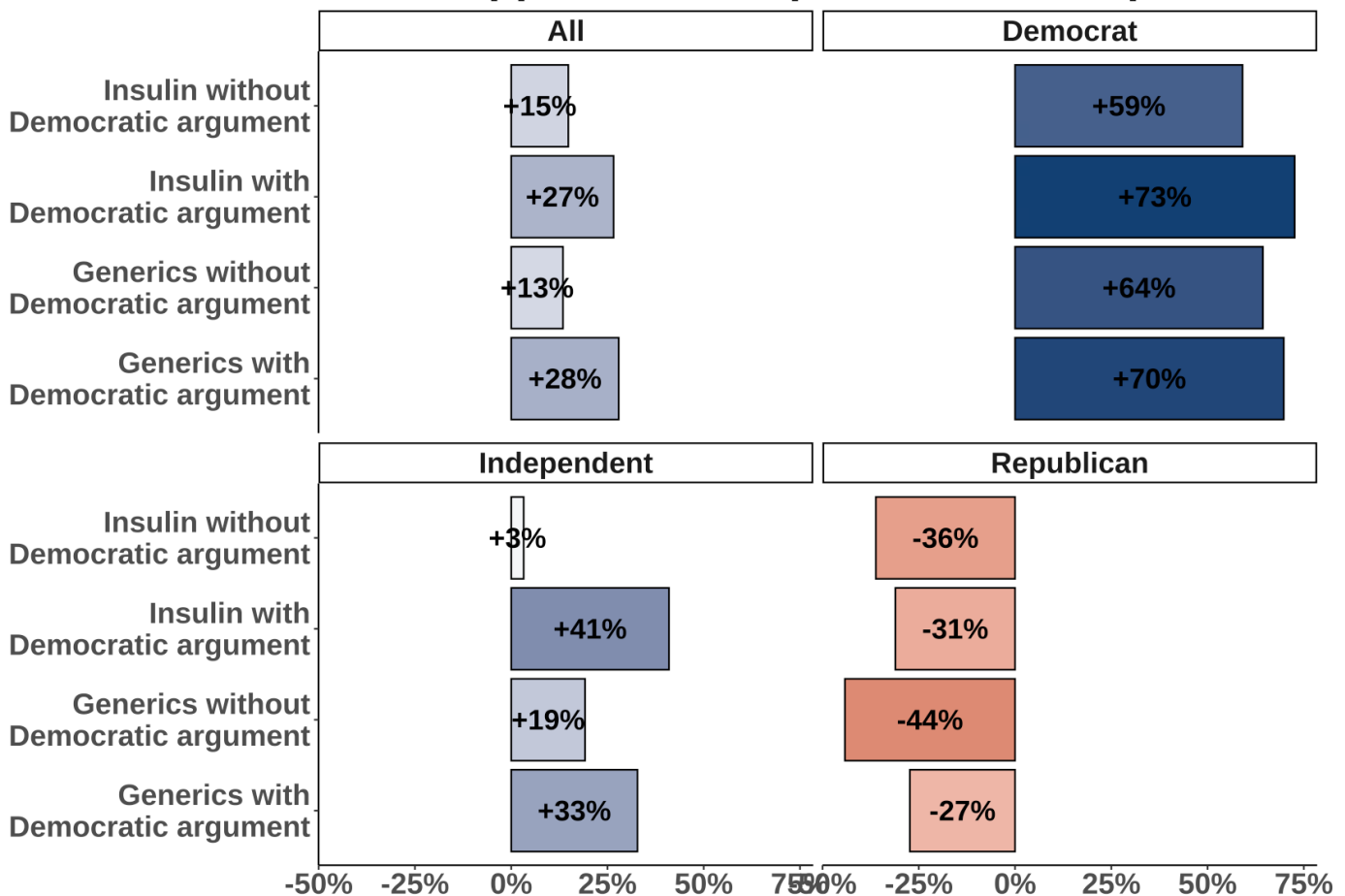
## Summary

As the chart below shows, the Affordable Drug Manufacturing Act is on net popular among Democrats, Independents, and all voters aggregated together with and without Democratic messages.

Progressives have worried that taking on big pharma will lead to hundreds of millions in negative messaging. Our test shows that even in an asymmetric media environment, progressive pharmaceutical policy like the Affordable Drug Manufacturing Act will have net positive support among voters.

On behalf of Data for Progress, YouGov Blue fielded a survey of US registered voter as part of its Registered Voter Omnibus. The sample included 1,062 US voters and was weighted to be representative of the population of voters by age, race/ethnicity, sex, education, US Census region, and 2016 Presidential vote choice. Here, we focus on the results of a message test centered around letting the government manufacture generic pharmaceuticals.

### Net support for new pharmaceutical policies



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## ENDNOTES

1. Some Democrats have proposed allowing the government to manufacture a generic version of drugs if the price of the drug has spiked and there is no generic version available.
2. Republicans say that this proposal a government takeover of healthcare which would waste taxpayer money, lead to medicine shortages, and result in lower-quality prescription drugs. They argue that this will reduce investments in new prescription drugs, destroying high-paying jobs and preventing better drugs from coming to market.

Would you [support or oppose] this proposal?

In the survey itself, the Democratic message was not bolded, but is highlighted here for ease of comparison with the control condition statement.

3. Some Democrats have proposed allowing the government to manufacture a generic version of insulin and sell it at a price that covers the manufacturing costs and ensures patients have access to the drugs.

Republicans say that this proposal a government takeover of healthcare which would waste taxpayer money, lead to insulin shortages, and result in lower-quality insulin. They argue that this will reduce investments in new prescription drugs, destroying high-paying jobs and preventing better drugs from coming to market.

Would you support or oppose this proposal?