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VOTERS PREFER A STANDARDS AND INVESTMENT APPROACH TO CLIMATE CHANGE

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EXECUTIVE PLANS

- ▶ Of three proposed plans to combat climate change, a plurality (44 percent) of voters preferred a “standards and investment” scheme wherein the federal government would set timelines for reducing carbon emissions and then invest money in a bid to meet these standards.
- ▶ Voters support the creation of a government-chartered infrastructure bank by a 32 percentage point margin.
- ▶ Voters support a proposal that would require 40 percent of climate and environmental investments to be targeted to low-income communities that are disproportionately impacted by climate change, coronavirus, and pollution by a 14 percentage point margin.

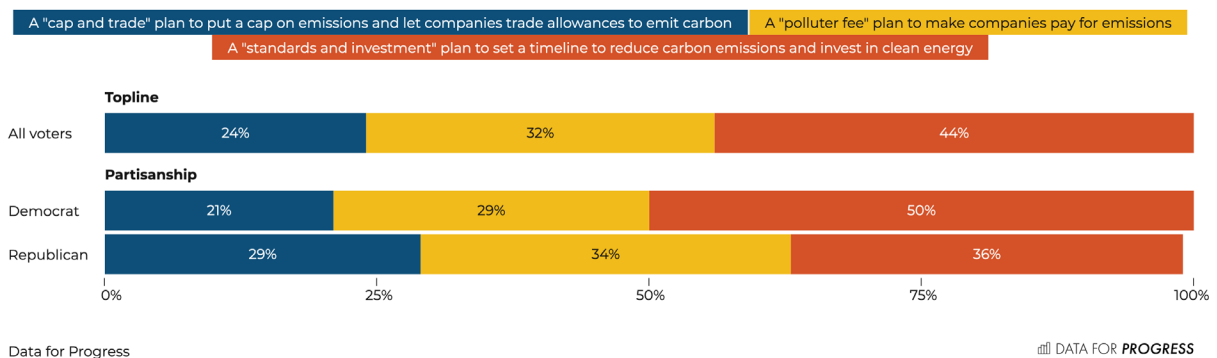
Voters were introduced to three plans to combat climate change. First was a “cap and trade” plan that would place a limit on the amount of carbon that companies could produce each year and then allow companies to trade allowances for carbon dioxide. The second was a “polluter fee” plan that

would place a price on carbon emissions and other forms of pollution. The third was a “standards and investment” plan where the government would set timelines for reducing carbon emissions and other toxic pollutants informed by scientists and experts. The government would then invest trillions of dollars in clean energy jobs and infrastructure to meet these goals. Of these three plans, a plurality of voters (44 percent) preferred the “standard and investment” plan. The second most preferred plan was at the “pollution fee” at 32 percent followed by “cap and trade” at 29 percent. The “standards and investment” plan is the most preferred choice of both self-identifying Democrats and self-identifying Republicans at 50 percent and 36 percent, respectively.

We also broke down preference based on candidate preference in the Democratic Party’s 2020 primary. We found considerable harmony in the attitudes of both supporters of former Vice President and now-presumptive Democratic Party presidential nominee Joe Biden and Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders. In fact, 52 percent of both of their supporters prefer the “standards and investment strategy.”

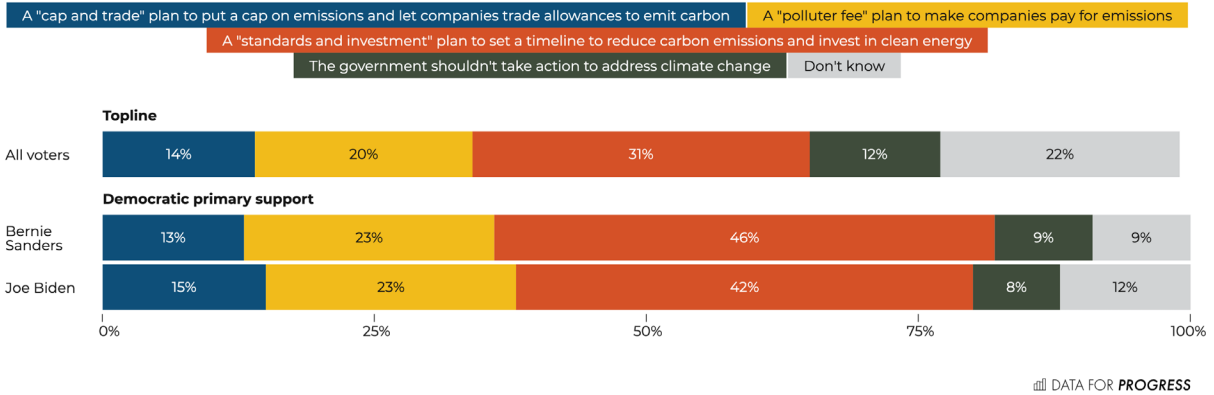
Voters Prefer A 'Standards And Investment' Plan

Between the three plans, which would most prefer:



Biden And Sanders Prefer A 'Standards And Investment' Strategy

Of the options, which would most prefer:



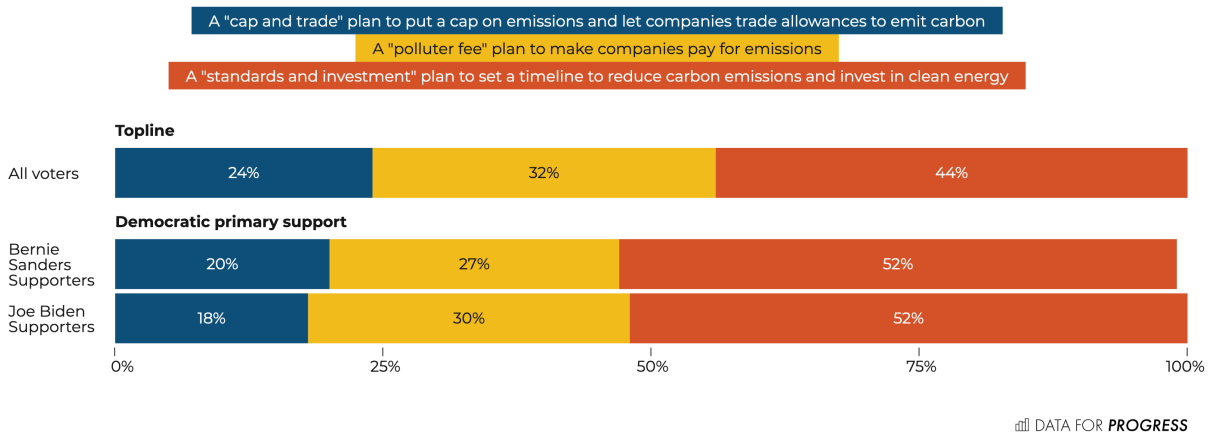
We then retested preferences, this time offering voters a fourth option—we should take no action to combat climate change—and a fifth option—they aren't sure. We found that attitudes remain generally stable. A plurality (31 percent) of voters still support the “standards and investment” strategy. When responses among Sanders and Biden supporters are examined, we see that 46 percent and 42 percent of Sanders and Biden supporters,

respectively, support the “standards and investment” strategy—a plurality in both cases.

Voters were also asked if they'd support the creation of a government-chartered infrastructure bank. The bank would make long-term investments in jobs, technology, and the economy. It would accomplish this by encouraging investments that help meet long-

Biden and Sanders Support Prefer A 'Standards And Investment' Strategy

Between the three plans, which would most prefer:

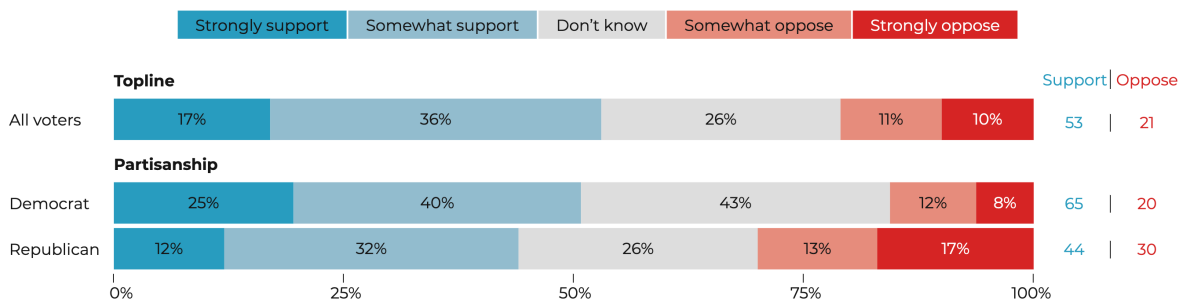


term goals like promoting innovation, increasing resilience against disasters, preventing economic downturns, and fighting climate change. Overall, voters supported this by a 32-percentage-point margin (53 percent support, 21 percent oppose). Support for the infrastructure bank is bipartisan: Democrats support its creation by a 45-point margin (65 percent support, 20 percent oppose) and Republicans do so by a 14-point margin (44 percent support, 30 percent oppose).

Voters were also asked if they'd support a proposed policy that would require 40 percent of climate and environmental investments to be targeted to low-income communities that are disproportionately impacted by climate change, coronavirus, and pollution. Overall, this proposal enjoys a 14-point margin of support (45 percent support, 31 percent oppose). Attitudes here are roughly correlated with partisanship: Democrats support it by a 39-point margin while Republicans oppose it by a 10-point margin.

Voters Support The Creation Of A New Government-Chartered Infrastructure Bank

Some members of Congress have proposed creating a new government-chartered infrastructure bank to make long-term investments in jobs, technology and the economy. The bank would encourage investments that help meet long-term goals like promoting innovation, increasing resilience against disasters, preventing economic downturns and fighting climate change, by making these investments profitable in the short-term instead of in 20-30 year time horizons. Would you support or oppose a government infrastructure bank to make essential long-term investments?

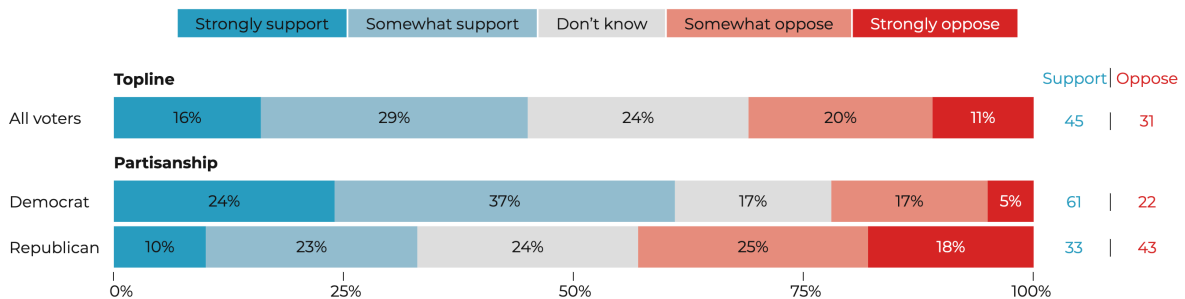


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Voters Support Targeting Government Aid To Communities Disproportionately Impacted By Climate Change

Some members of Congress have proposed a policy that would require 40 percent of climate and environmental investments to be targeted to low-income communities that are disproportionately impacted by climate change, coronavirus and pollution. Supporters say that investments should be prioritized in these communities to address legacies of poverty, pollution and disease and create a more fair economy for all. Opponents say that this distracts from fighting climate change and the coronavirus and that lawmakers should focus on creating the most jobs. Would you support or oppose this policy?



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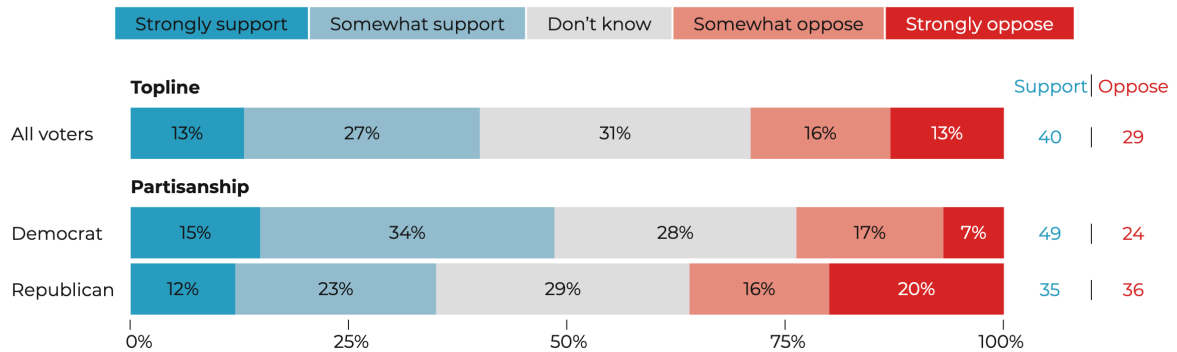
CONCLUSION

What these results make plain is that voters support a varied approach to combatting from climate change. In general, voters would prefer the government to rely upon experts to set targets and then invest to see these goals implemented. Voters also support the creation of an government-chartered bank, a valuable tool to fund climate-related efforts, as well as focusing federal investments on disproportionately impacted communities.

APPENDIX

Voters Support A 'Cap And Trade' Plan

Based on what you've read, would you support a "cap and trade" plan?

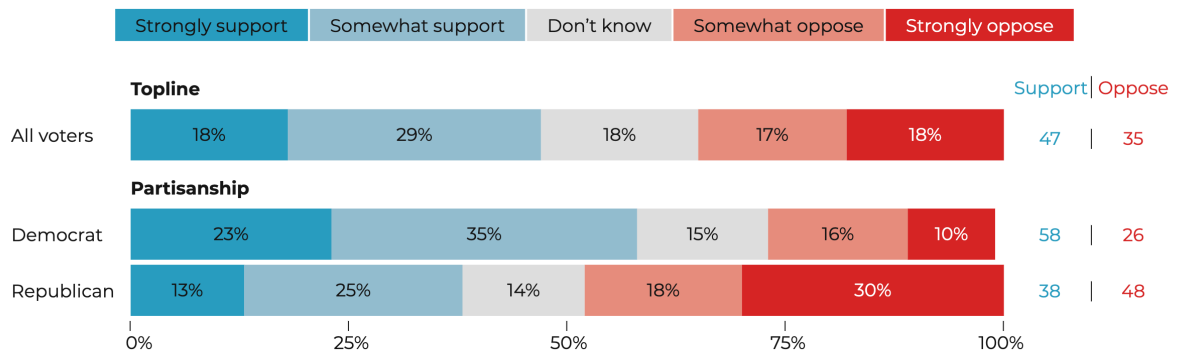


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Voters Support Implementing a 'Polluter Fee'

Based on what you've read, would you support a "polluter fee" plan?

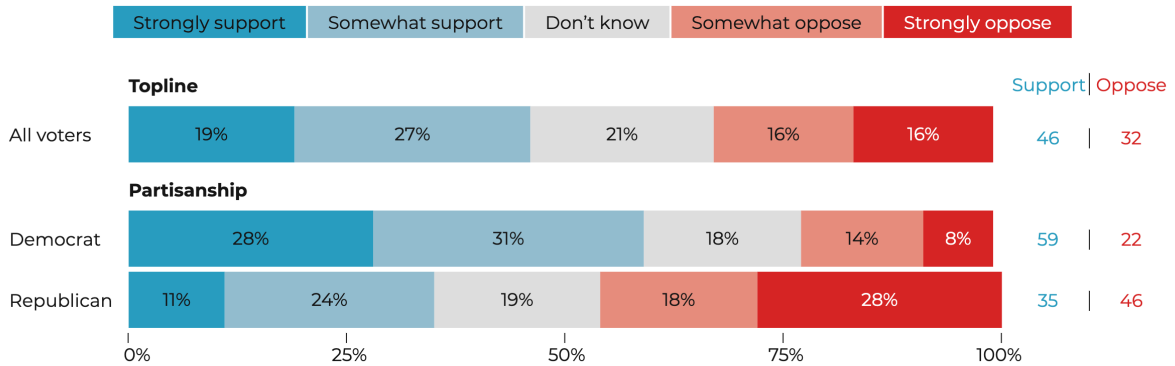


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Voters Support A 'Standards And Investment' Plan

Based on what you've read, would you support a "standards and investment" plan?

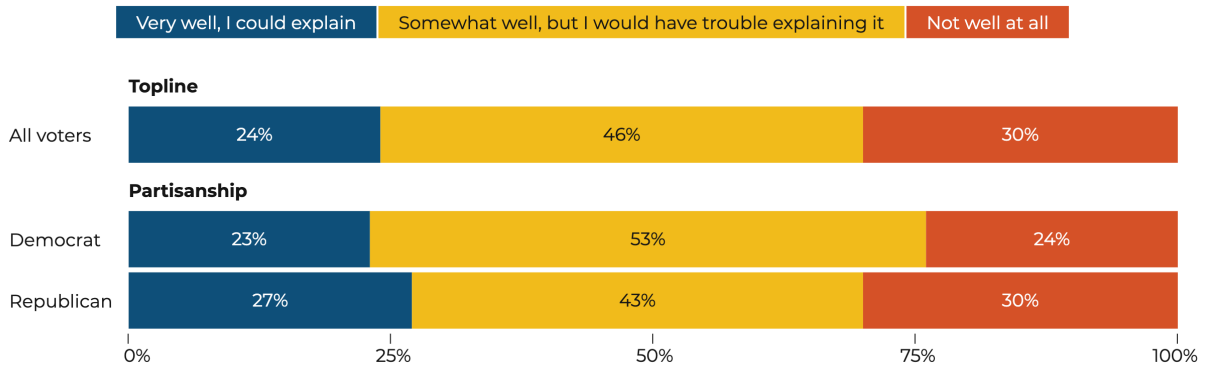


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Most Voters Somewhat Understand 'Cap And Trade' Plans

Some members of Congress have proposed addressing climate change through a plan called "cap and trade." A cap and trade plan would place a limit on the amount of carbon that companies could produce each year and then allow companies to trade allowances for carbon dioxide. Most of these allowances would be given away for free and the rest would be sold to generate revenue for the government. Supporters say that the plan would allow for the free market to reduce emissions in the cheapest way possible and that this model was successfully used to fight acid rain under the George H.W. Bush administration. Opponents say that the plan would lead to a dramatic increase in the costs of electricity and that the government plays favorites by giving away emissions allowances to the companies that lobby the most. How well would you say you understand the "cap and trade" plan?

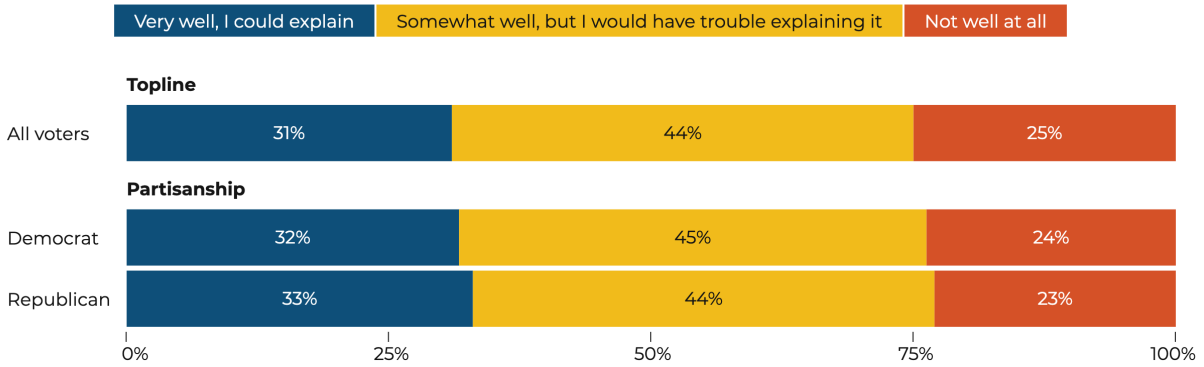


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Most Voters Somewhat Understand 'Polluter Fee' Plans

Some members of Congress have proposed addressing climate change through a plan called a "polluter fee." The polluter fee would place a price on carbon emissions and other forms of pollution. Companies that emit fossil fuels would pay for their emissions. Supporters say that this is the most efficient way to place a price on pollution and will encourage companies to innovate to reduce their emissions. They say money raised from the polluter fee could be used to pay for government services or be given back to taxpayers. Opponents say that this is an energy tax that will cause electricity bills to skyrocket because companies will just pass on the tax to customers. They say that this tax will disproportionately fall on the poorest Americans who spend the largest share of their money on energy. How well would you say you understand the "polluter fee" plan?

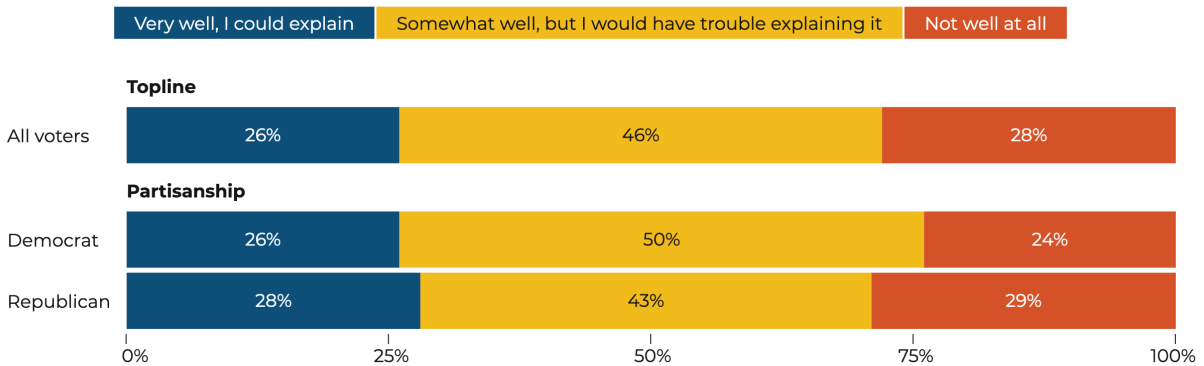


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Most Voters Somewhat Understand A 'Standards And Investment' Plan

Some members of Congress have proposed addressing climate change through a plan called "standards and investment." Under this plan, the government would set timelines for reducing carbon emissions and other toxic pollutants informed by scientists and experts. The government would invest trillions of dollars in clean energy jobs and infrastructure to meet these goals. Supporters of the plan say that this will create millions of middle-class jobs and lower energy bills by making the country more energy efficient. They say standards have been passed with bipartisan support in states across the country because they help businesses plan for the future. Opponents of the plan say that this is a socialist Green New Deal that will require a massive tax increase on the middle-class and increase the national debt. They say this will lead to taxpayer money getting funneled to businesses with powerful political connections like Solyndra. How well would you say you understand the "standards and investment" plan?



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METHODOLOGY

From May 11 to May 14, 2020 Data for Progress conducted a survey of 1,919 likely voters nationally using web-panel respondents. The sample was weighted to be representative of likely voters by age, gender, education, urbanicity, race, and voting history. The survey was conducted in English. The margin of error is ± 2.2 percentage points.

Question Wording

Some members of Congress have proposed addressing climate change through a plan called “cap and trade.” A cap and trade plan would place a limit on the amount of carbon that companies could produce each year and then allow companies to trade allowances for carbon dioxide. Most of these allowances would be given away for free and the rest would be sold to generate revenue for the government. Supporters say that the plan would allow for the free market to reduce emissions in the cheapest way possible and that this model was successfully used to fight acid rain under the George H.W. Bush administration. Opponents say that the plan would lead to a dramatic increase in the costs of electricity and that the government plays favorites by giving away emissions allowances to the companies that lobby the most. How well would you say you understand the “cap and trade” plan?

- 1- Very well, I could explain
- 2- Somewhat well, but I would have trouble explaining it
- 3- Not well at all

Based on what you’ve read, would you support a “cap and trade” plan?

- 1- Strongly support
- 2- Somewhat support
- 3- Somewhat oppose
- 4- Strongly oppose
- 5- Don’t know

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- 1- Very well, I could explain
- 2- Somewhat well, but I would have trouble explaining it
- 3- Not well at all

Based on what you've read, would you support a "polluter fee" plan?

- 1- Strongly support
- 2- Somewhat support
- 3- Somewhat oppose
- 4- Strongly oppose
- 5- Don't know

Some members of Congress have proposed addressing climate change through a plan called "standards and investment." Under this plan, the government would set timelines for reducing carbon emissions and other toxic pollutants informed by scientists and experts. The government would invest trillions of dollars in clean energy jobs and infrastructure to meet these goals. Supporters of the plan say that this will create millions of middle-class jobs and lower energy bills by making the country more energy efficient. They say standards have been passed with bipartisan support in states across the country because they help businesses plan for the future. Opponents of the plan say that this is a socialist Green New Deal that will require a massive tax increase on the middle-class and increase the national debt. They say this will lead to taxpayer money getting funneled to businesses with powerful political connections like Solyndra. How well would you say you understand the "standards and investment" plan?

- 1- Very well, I could explain
- 2- Somewhat well, but I would have trouble explaining it
- 3- Not well at all

Based on what you've read, would you support a "standards and investment" plan?

- 1- Strongly support
- 2- Somewhat support
- 3- Somewhat oppose
- 4- Strongly oppose
- 5- Don't know

Between the three plans, which would most prefer:

- 1- A "cap and trade" plan to put a cap on emissions and let companies trade allowances to emit carbon
- 2- A "polluter fee" plan to make companies pay for emissions
- 3- A "standards and investment" plan to set a timeline to reduce carbon emissions and invest in clean energy

Some members of Congress have proposed creating a new government-chartered infrastructure bank to make long-term investments in jobs, technology and the economy. The bank would encourage investments that help meet long-term goals like promoting innovation, increasing resilience against disasters, preventing economic downturns and fighting climate change, by making these investments profitable in the short-term instead of in 20-30 year time horizons. Would you support or oppose a government infrastructure bank to make essential long-term investments?

- 1- Strongly support
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- 4- Strongly oppose
- 5- Don't know

Some members of Congress have proposed a policy that would require 40 percent of climate and environmental investments be targeted to low-income communities that are disproportionately impacted by climate change, coronavirus and pollution. Supporters say that investments should be prioritized in these communities to address legacies of poverty, pollution and disease and create a more fair economy for all. Opponents say that this distracts from fighting climate change and the coronavirus and that lawmakers should focus on

creating the most jobs. Would you support or oppose this policy?

- 1- Strongly support
- 2- Somewhat support
- 3- Somewhat oppose
- 4- Strongly oppose
- 5- Don't know