



DATA FOR *PROGRESS*



A CLEAN JUMPSTART TO REBUILD AMERICA'S ECONOMY

Public Opinion Polling
and Analysis

Ethan Winter
Julian Brave NoiseCat

May 2020

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- ▶ Voters support a host of proposals that could constitute a green stimulus package, and all fourteen proposals we tested enjoyed considerable margins of support.
- ▶ The most popular proposal we tested was directing federal aid to small, independent, and family farms rather than to agribusiness. Voters supported this policy by a margin of 66 percentage points.
- ▶ Support for a green stimulus is also bipartisan. For example, Republicans support the creation of a Climate Conservation Corps by a margin of 34 points.

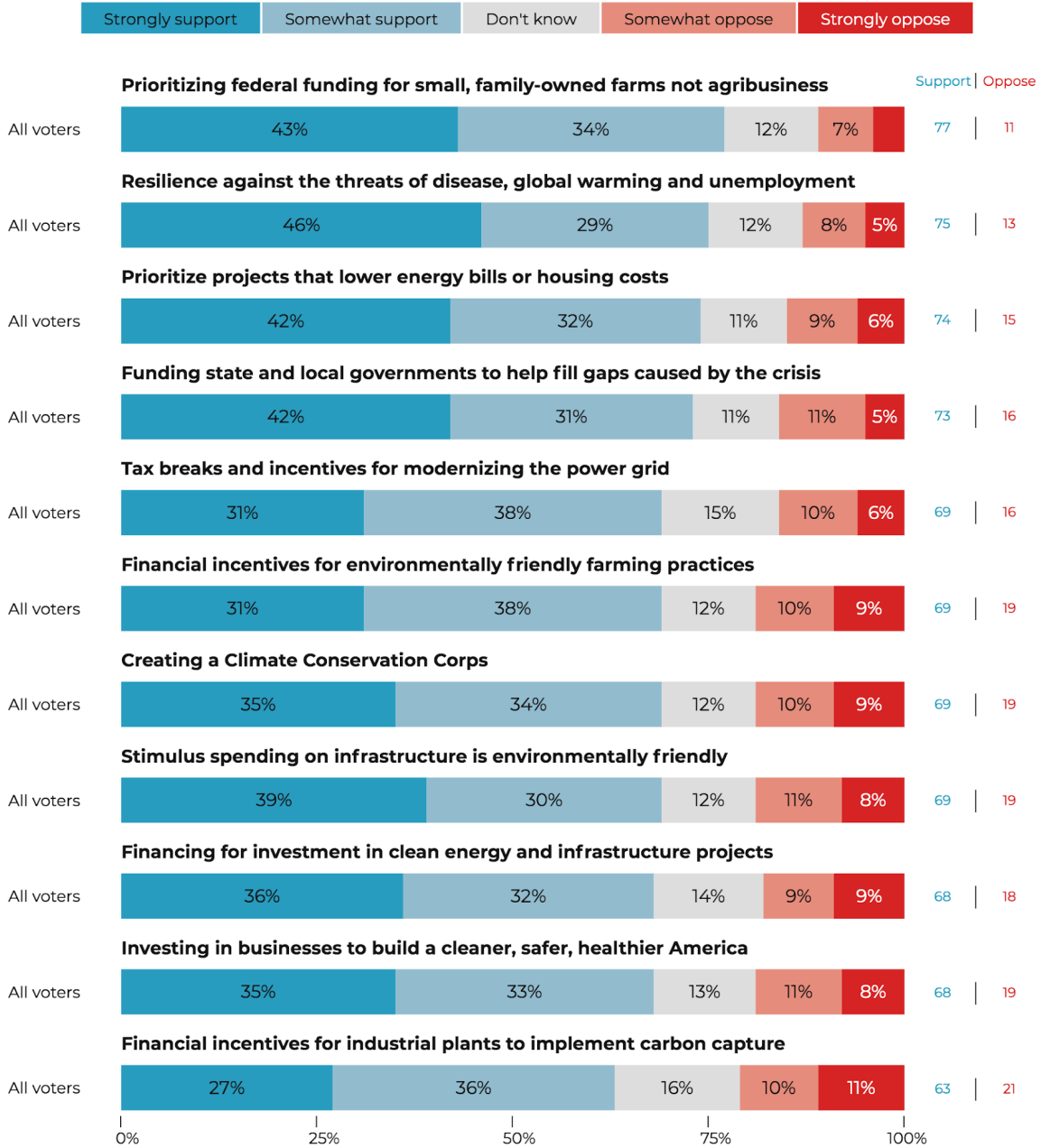
In blog posts published last month, Mark Paul, a senior fellow at Data for Progress, and Julian Brave NoiseCat, our vice president of policy and strategy, advanced the idea of a “green stimulus.” The idea would simultaneously tackle the twin crises of the coronavirus pandemic and climate change. As Paul wrote, “The first priority must be protecting public health as governments and healthcare workers try to get the pandemic under control. But there is no greater second priority than the climate crisis, which threatens our very civilization.” It’s clear that the current economic crisis demands fiscal stimulus, and climate change provides a direction for how to allocate this stimulus.

As part of Data for Progress’s April 2020 survey, we sought to test attitudes toward twenty-one proposals that could constitute a green stimulus. We found persuasive levels of support for all of them.

This first chart depicts topline findings for the first eleven proposals we tested. All enjoyed net-positive levels of support. The most popular policy prioritized sending federal aid to small, independent, and family farmers over sending aid to large, corporate agribusiness; voters support this proposal by a margin of 66-percentage-points (77 percent support, 11 percent oppose). Investment in critical services and infrastructure to rebuild an economy that is resilient to the threats of disease, global warming and unemployment yielded a 62-percentage-point margin of support (75 percent support, 13 percent oppose). Six other proposals enjoyed at least a 50-percentage-point margin of support. Meanwhile, two other proposals netted at least a 40-percentage-point margin of support.

The Green Stimulus Agenda Is Popular With Voters

Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them:



Data for Progress

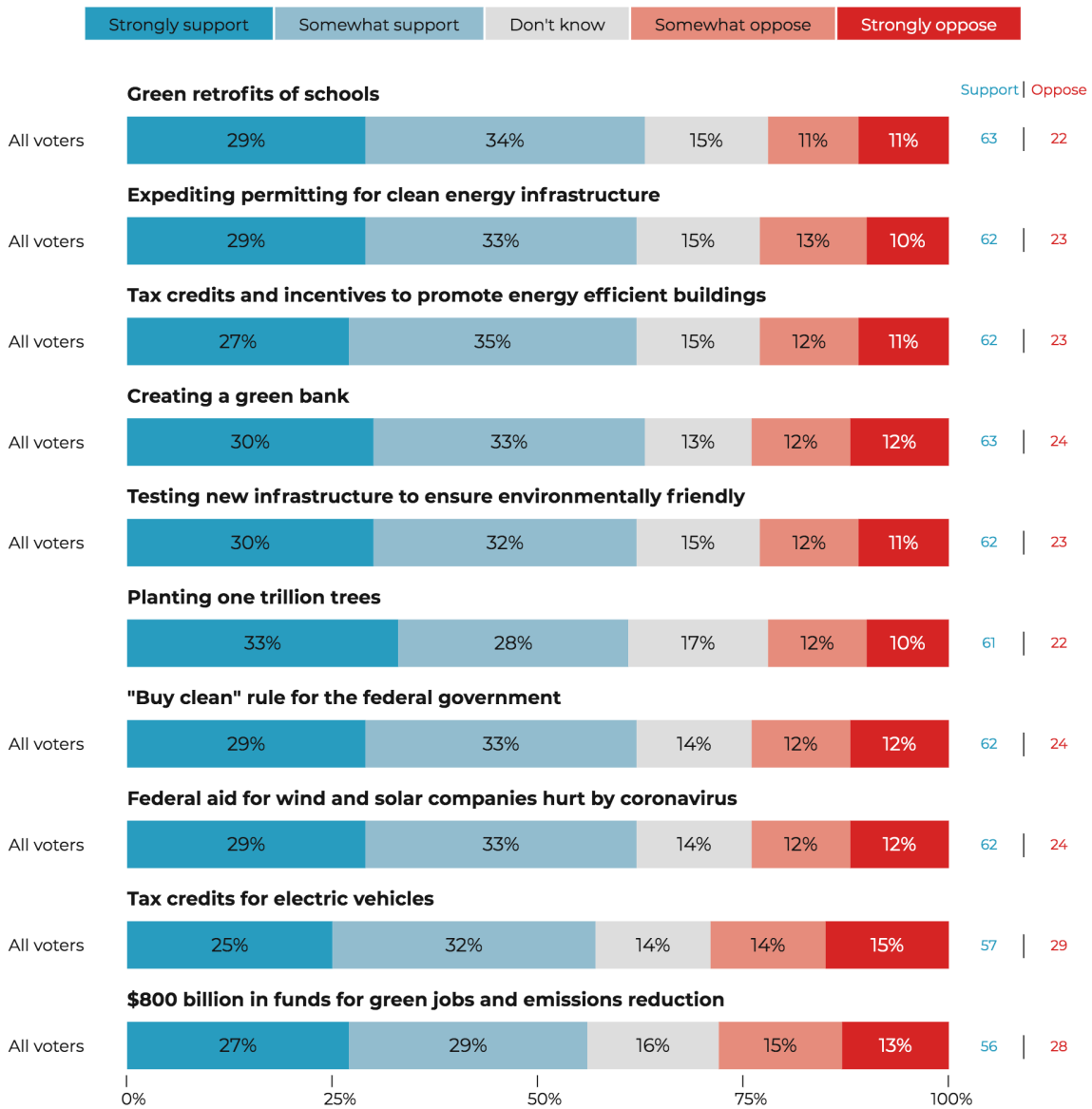
DATA FOR PROGRESS

The next slate of policies all enjoy majority support from voters. These topline results drive home two clear points: 1) green-stimulus framings are popular with voters, and 2) there is considerable support for a gamut of specific proposals, ranging from creating a green bank

to financing low-cost loans for homeowners and businesses, to a “buy clean” rule stipulating that “the federal government [will] prioritize purchases from manufacturing firms that run on clean energy, limit pollution and provide good paying union jobs.”

The Green Stimulus Agenda Is Popular With Voters

Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them:



Data for Progress

DATA FOR PROGRESS

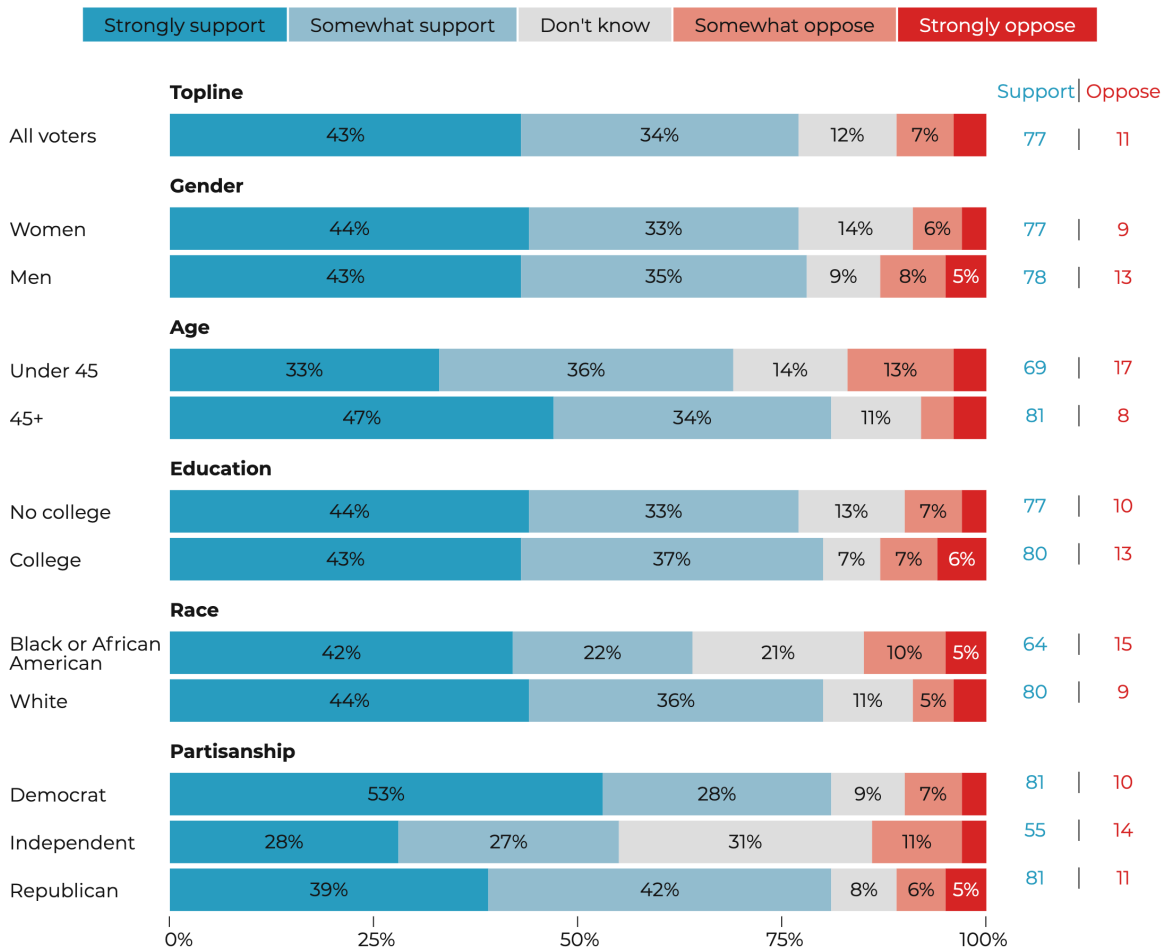
This next chart depicts support for the most popular proposal we tested—i.e., directing federal aid to small, independent, and family farmers rather than to agribusiness—broken out according to a series of measured demographics and by partisanship. Again, its margin of support among all voters is 66-percentage-points. Support is largely consistent regardless of gender and voters over the age of forty-five are slightly more

supportive than those under that age. Those self-identifying as Democrats and Republicans are almost equally enthusiastic about the proposal, supporting it by 71-percentage-point and 70-percentage-point margins, respectively.

We at Data for Progress have previously written about support for smaller farms. In a [recently published memo](#), authors Meleiza Figueroa and

Voters Want The Government To Assist Small, Independent, And Family Farms

Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them: -- prioritizing federal aid to small, independent, and family farmers over large corporate agribusiness.



Data for Progress

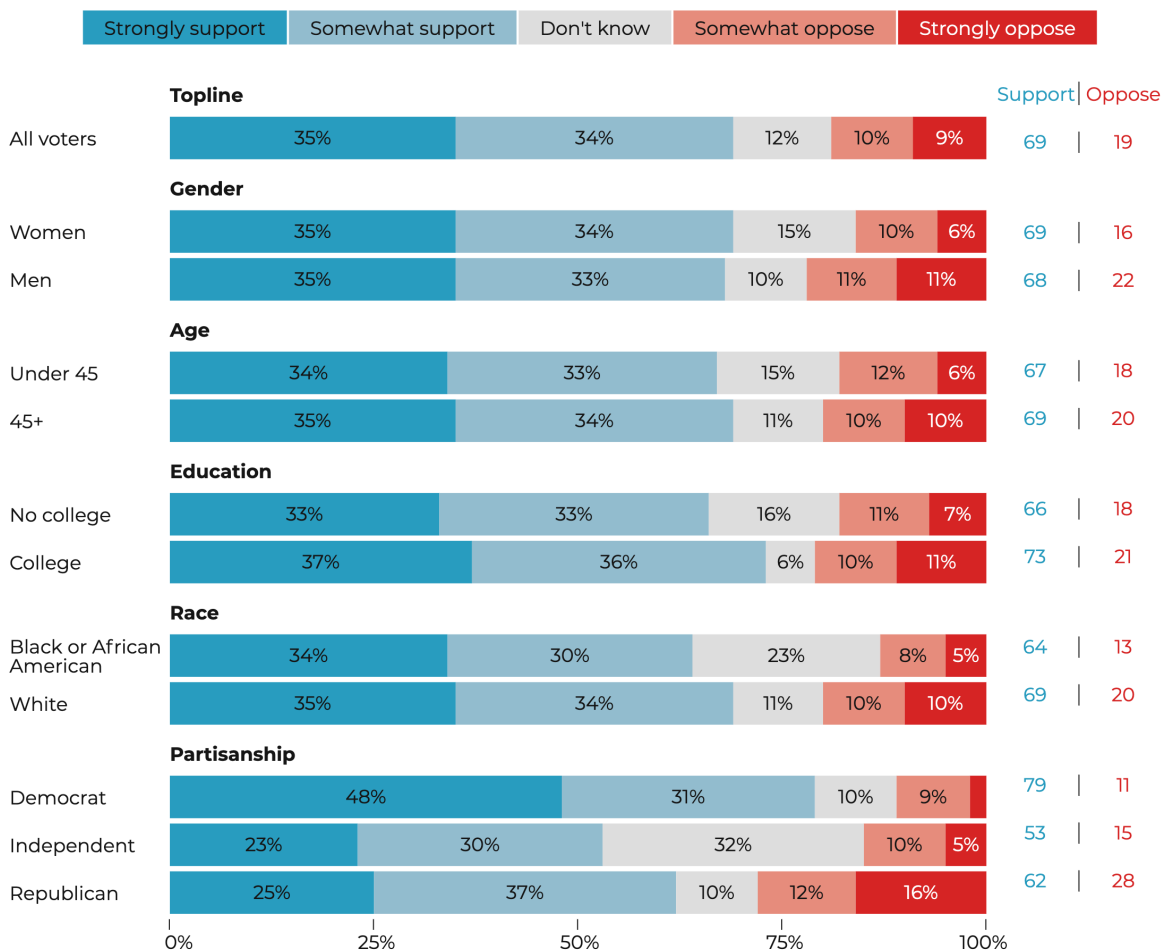
DATA FOR PROGRESS

Leah Penniman wrote: “Right now, American farmers are struggling to hold onto their livelihoods—over half living with negative on farm income. The lack of sufficient federal support for all but monolithic farming creates prohibitive barriers for new farmers who are trying to start small.” Shaping a green stimulus to support smaller farmers represents one way to ameliorate this issue.

In this next chart, we look closer at support for the creation of a Climate Conservation Corps, breaking it out across demographics and partisanship. Jay Inslee, the governor of Washington and a former Democratic presidential candidate, made the case for this proposal on the Data for Progress [blog](#) in May 2019. Inslee argued: “The Climate Corps will organize the greatest renewable resource of all—the talent and energy of the American people—to work together in

Voters Support Creating A Climate Conservation Corps

Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them: -- a Climate Conservation Corps to put Americans back to work planting trees, protecting forests, and restoring wetlands after the coronavirus pandemic.



Data for Progress

DATA FOR PROGRESS

cities and rural communities, in our great parks and public lands, and all around the planet.”

Overall, voters supported this proposal by a margin of 50-percentage-points (69 percent support, 19 percent oppose). Support is more or less consistent regardless of gender, age, educational attainment, or race. This proposal also enjoys considerable levels of bipartisan support. Democrats back the proposal by a margin of 68-percentage-points (79 percent support, 11 percent oppose), while Republicans back it by a margin of 34-percentage-points (62 percent support, 28 percent oppose).

CONCLUSION

A green stimulus provides an effective means of combating the coronavirus-fueled economic downturn as well as the long-term challenge of the climate crisis. Furthermore, as our polling demonstrates, a green stimulus offers a framing that is incredibly popular with voters. It underscores voters’ desire both for fiscal stimulus and for aggressive federal action to address the climate crisis. Congressional leaders would be smart to listen to this desire.

METHODOLOGY

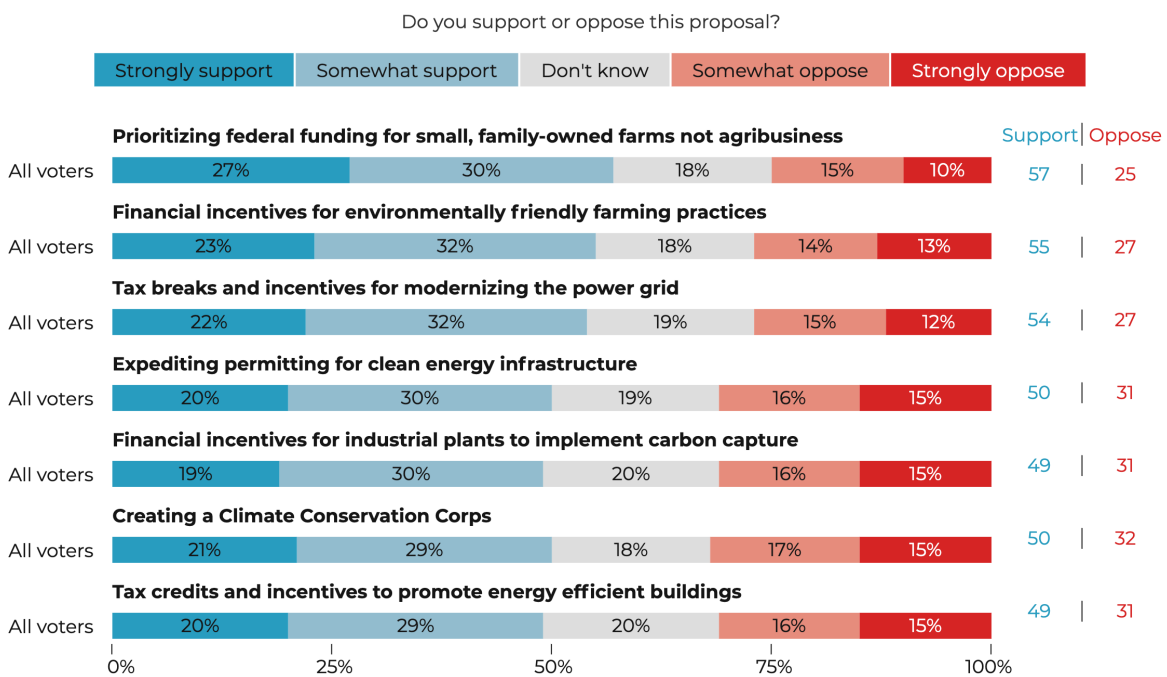
On April 6, 2020, Data for Progress conducted a survey of 2643 likely voters nationally using web panel respondents. The sample was weighted to be representative of likely voters by age, gender, education, urbanicity, race, and voting history. The survey was conducted in English. The margin of error is ± 1.0 percent.

Testing the Green Stimulus with Partisan Frames

Fourteen of proposals that could make up a green stimulus were also tested with Democratic and Republican arguments. The idea behind this was to see how both proposals would fare in a partisan environment. We found that even with partisan framing, both policies retain high levels of support. In this appendix, we present these findings.

The most popular policy was a scheme that prioritized sending federal aid to small, independent, and family farmers over sending aid to large corporate agribusiness; voters support this policy by a margin of 32-percentage-points (57 percent support, 25 percent oppose). Two other proposals—financial incentives for environmentally friendly farming practices, and tax breaks and incentives for modernizing the power grid—all netted margins of support wider than 20-percentage-points. Meanwhile, other policies—expediting permitting for clean-energy infrastructure; crafting financial incentives for industrial plants to implement carbon capture; creating a Climate Conservation Corps; tax credits and incentives to promote energy efficient buildings; funding public transport agencies; and creating a green bank—are all proposals that voters supported by a 14-percentage-point margin or higher.

The Green Stimulus Agenda Is Popular With Voters

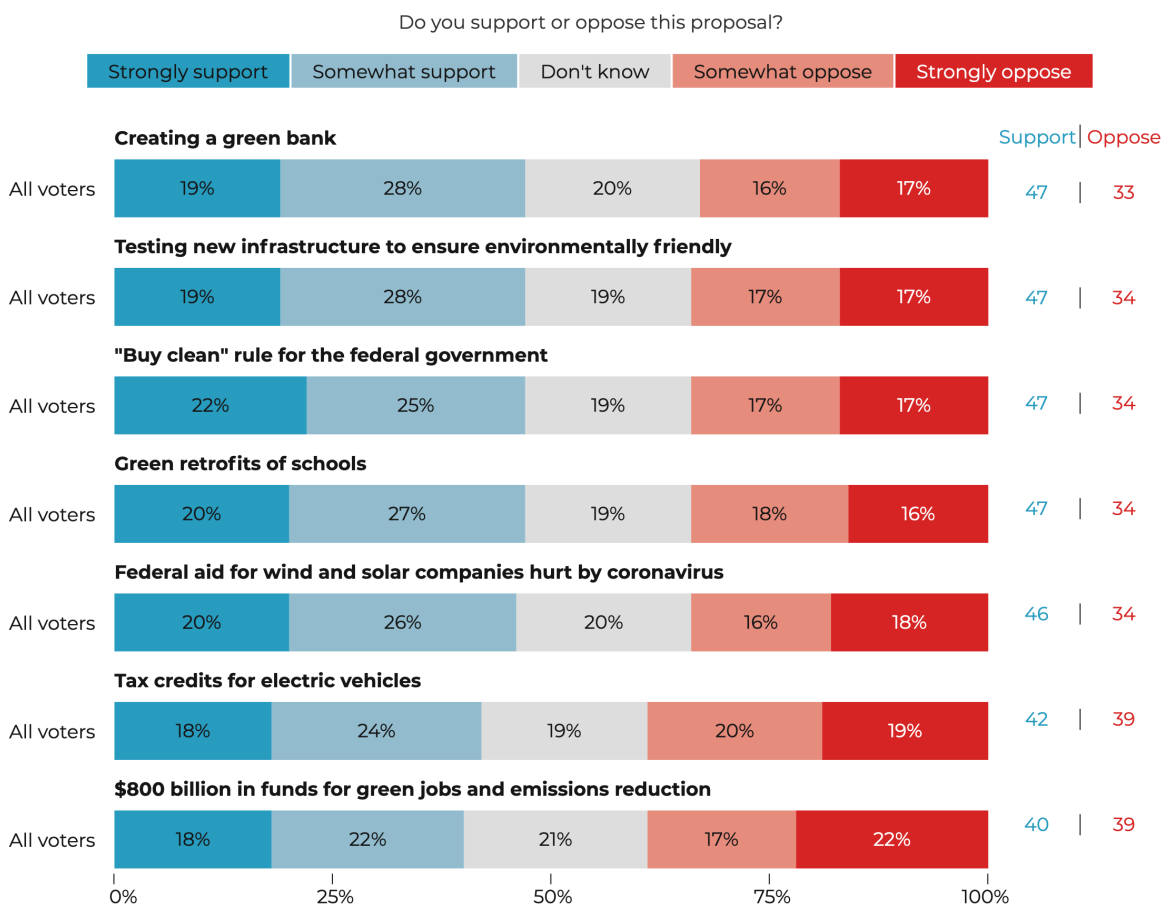


Data for Progress

DATA FOR PROGRESS

In this next slate of policies, all enjoy high levels of support from voters. Indeed, all but three have margins of support of wider than 10-percentage-points. These topline results make two things immediately clear: 1) that this framing of green stimulus is popular with voters, and 2) that there’s considerable support for a gamut of specific proposals, ranging from green retrofits of schools while they’re closed due to the coronavirus, to a “buy clean” rule stipulating that “the federal government [will] prioritize purchases from manufacturing firms that run on clean energy, limit pollution and provide good paying union jobs.”

The Green Stimulus Agenda Is Popular With Voters



Data for Progress

DATA FOR PROGRESS

In this next chart, we break out the demographics and partisanship of support for our most popular proposal—i.e., directing federal aid to small, independent, and family farmers rather than to agribusiness. We asked voters, specifically:

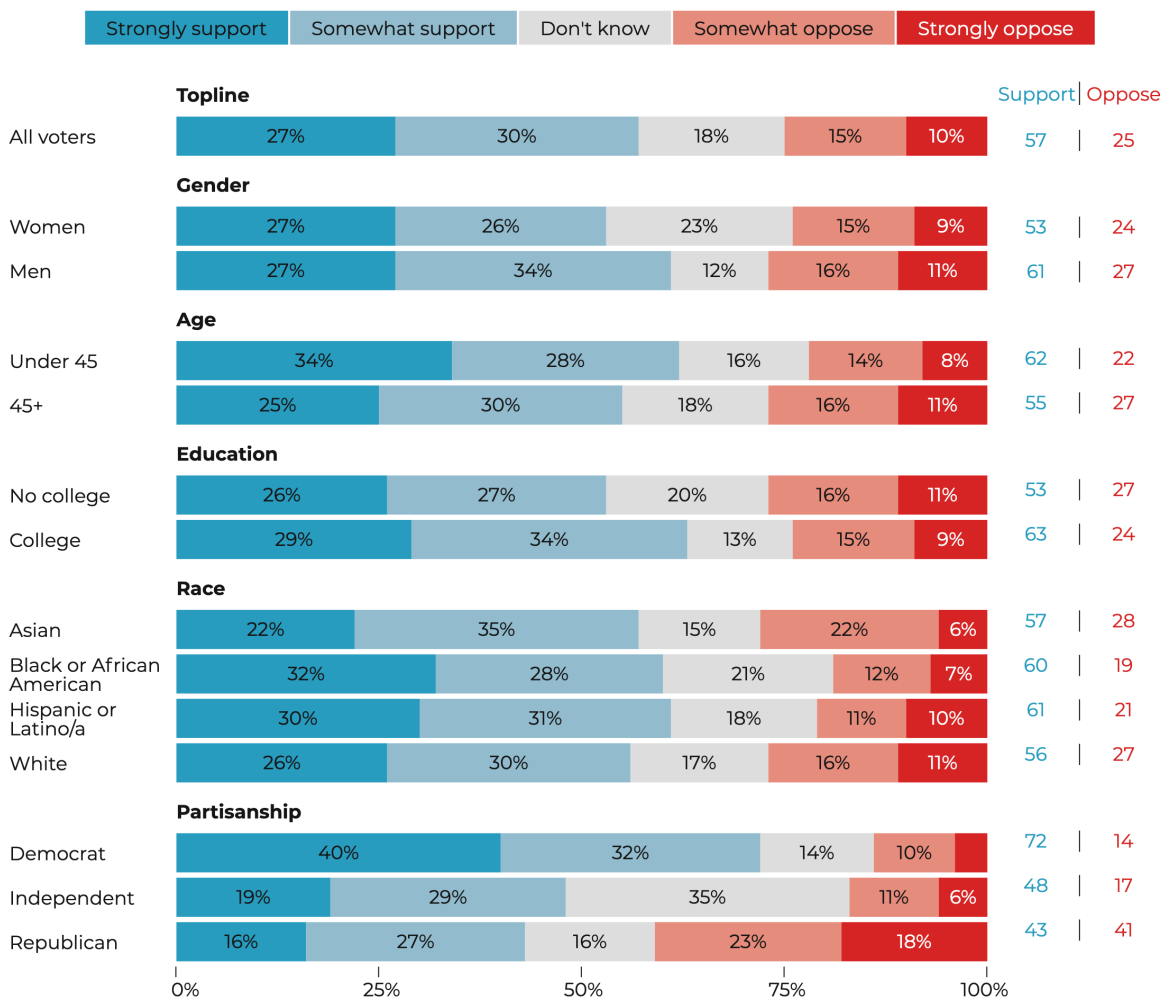
Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them: Some Democrats in Congress are proposing prioritizing federal aid to small, independent, and family farmers over large corporate agribusiness. Democrats say government

money should go to bailing out small, independent, and family farmers instead of big corporations. Republicans say that Democrats are adding red tape when lawmakers should be passing laws to provide relief as soon as possible rather than advancing special interests. Do you support or oppose this proposal?

Under partisan framing, the policy’s margin of support among all voters is 32-percentage-points. Especially enthusiastic, though, are voters under the age of forty-five, who support it by a margin of 40-percentage-points (62 percent support, 22 percent oppose). Support is largely consistent across gender, educational attainment, and race. Those self-identifying as Democrats are quite keen on this proposal, supporting it by a margin of 58-percentage-points (72 percent support, 14 percent oppose).

Voters Want To Support Small, Independent, And Family Farmers Rather Than Agribusiness

Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them: Some Democrats in Congress are proposing prioritizing federal aid to small, independent, and family farmers over large corporate agribusiness. Democrats say government money should go to bailing out small, independent, and family farmers instead of big corporations. Republicans say that Democrats are adding red tape when lawmakers should be passing laws to provide relief as soon as possible rather than advancing special interests. Do you support or oppose this proposal?



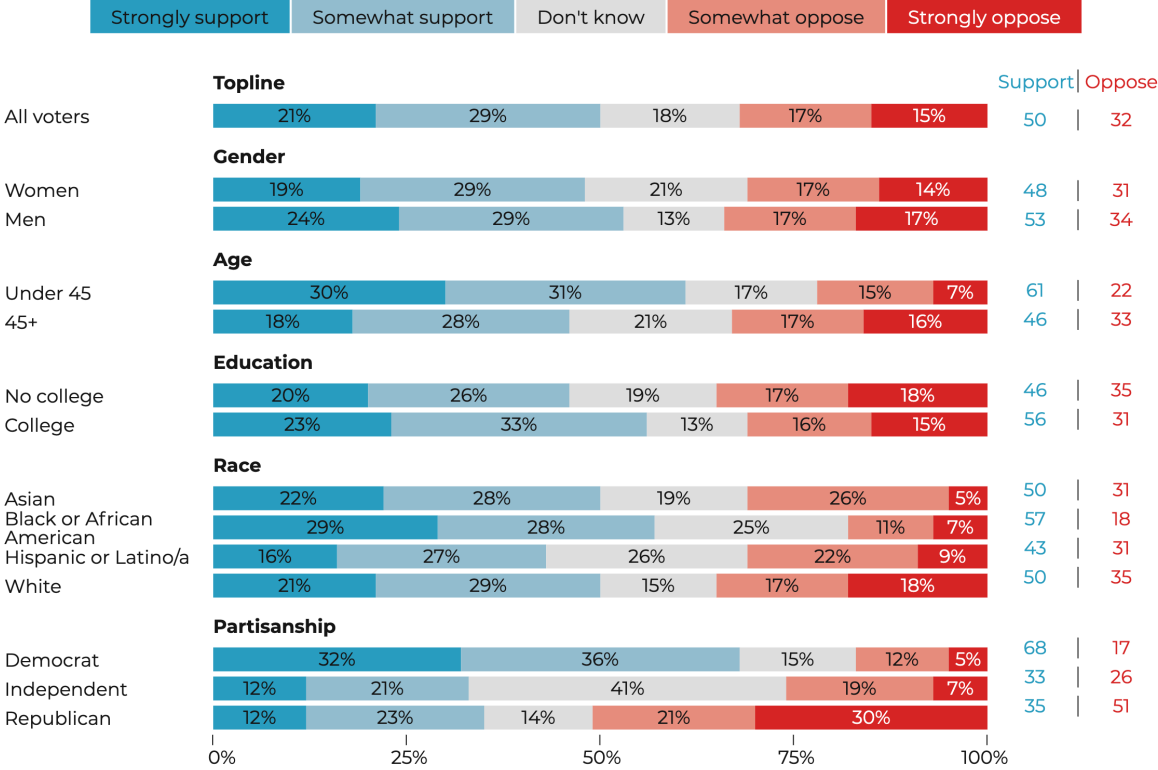
Support for this proposal is also bipartisan, and among those self-identifying as Republicans, the proposal is narrowly above water, with a two-percentage-point margin of support (43 percent support, 41 percent oppose).

This next chart depicts attitudes around the creation of a Climate Conservation Corps. Voters were presented with the following arguments for and against the proposal:

Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them: Some Democrats in Congress are proposing creating a Climate Conservation Corps to put Americans back to work planting trees, protecting forests, and restoring wetlands after the coronavirus pandemic. Democrats say this will help put Americans back to work after the coronavirus pandemic and would create meaningful work creating a sustainable economy that the private sector won't do on its own. Republicans say that the government employs too many people already and we don't need additional people being hired when they could do more useful work in the private sector. Do you support or oppose this proposal?

Voters Support The Creation Of A Climate Conservation Corps

Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them: Some Democrats in Congress are proposing creating a Climate Conservation Corps to put Americans back to work planting trees, protecting forests, and restoring wetlands after the coronavirus pandemic. Democrats say this will help put Americans back to work after the coronavirus pandemic and would create meaningful work creating a sustainable economy that the private sector won't do on its own. Republicans say that the government employs too many people already and we don't need additional people being hired when they could do more useful work in the private sector. Do you support or oppose this proposal?



Overall, voters supported this proposal by a margin of 18-percentage-points (50 percent support, 32 percent oppose). Again, voters under the age of forty-five are quite supportive, backing the proposal by a margin of 39-percentage-points (61 percent support, 22 percent oppose). Support is more or less consistent regardless of gender, educational attainment, or race. Democrats support the policy by a margin of 51-percentage-points (68 percent support, 17 percent oppose), while Republicans oppose it by 16-percentage-points (35 percent support, 51 percent oppose).

CONCLUSION

Even when subjected to partisan arguments for and against, the green stimulus agenda retains high levels of support. All of these proposals represent a way for lawmakers in Congress to combat both the economic consequences of the coronavirus while also dealing with the challenge of climate change.

METHODOLOGY

On March 31, 2020, Data for Progress conducted a survey of 2165 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 ± 2.1 percent.

Included below are all the partisan arguments for each proposal:

- A. *Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them: Some Democrats in Congress are proposing prioritizing federal aid to small, independent, and family farmers over large corporate agribusiness. Democrats say government money should go to bailing out small, independent, and family farmers instead of big corporations Republicans say that Democrats are adding red tape when lawmakers should be passing laws to provide relief as soon as possible rather than advancing special interests. Do you support or oppose this proposal?*
- B. *Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them: Some Democrats in Congress are proposing creating financial incentives like tax credits and grants to promote environmentally friendly farming practices. Democrats say this will help farmers rebuild from the coronavirus pandemic by increasing crop yields, improving soil health, and fighting climate change. Republicans say that the priority should be putting Americans back to work and that companies should do whatever they need to keep prices low while ensuring an adequate food supply. Do you support or oppose this proposal?*

- C. Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them: Some Democrats in Congress are proposing financial incentives like grants and tax credits for states and utility companies to modernize the power grid. Democrats say this would help rebuild after the coronavirus pandemic by creating jobs, providing more affordable and clean energy while limiting utility shut-offs and wildfires. Republicans say that utilities, state governments, and local jurisdictions, not Washington, should make decisions about the power grid. Do you support or oppose this proposal?
- D. Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them: Some Democrats in Congress are proposing expedited permitting for clean energy infrastructure to allow clean energy to be built faster. Democrats say this will help put Americans back to work after the coronavirus pandemic by building green infrastructure, cutting red tape for new projects, and promoting jobs in clean energy. Republicans say that clean energy companies should play by the same rules as every other company and the government should act consistently towards all types of companies to ensure a reliable energy mix. Do you support or oppose this proposal?
- E. Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them: Some Democrats in Congress are proposing financial incentives for industrial facilities like steel mills to implement technologies that capture and store carbon emissions that contribute to pollution and climate change. Democrats say this would help rebuild after the coronavirus pandemic by investing in clean technologies to create jobs and combat climate change. Republicans say that the free market, not the government, should determine the implementation of new technologies and that if these ideas were good they would be competitive without government intervention. Do you support or oppose this policy?
- F. Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them: Some Democrats in Congress are proposing creating a Climate Conservation Corps to put Americans back to work planting trees, protecting forests, and restoring wetlands after the coronavirus pandemic. Democrats say this will help put Americans back to work after the coronavirus pandemic and would create meaningful work creating a sustainable economy that the private sector won't do on its own. Republicans say that the government employs too many people already and we don't need additional people being hired when they could do more useful work in the private sector. Do you support or oppose this proposal?
- G. Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them: Some Democrats in Congress are proposing creating financial incentives like grants and tax credits to promote energy efficient buildings and appliances as well as green retrofits for households and businesses. Democrats say this would help businesses recover from the coronavirus pandemic by creating construction jobs while addressing climate change and lowering electricity bills for families and businesses. Republicans say that the construction companies are already moving to energy efficient buildings because they save money and that these new rules are unnecessary red tape will only slow down the recovery. Do you support or oppose this proposal?

- H. Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them: Some Democrats in Congress are proposing creating a green bank to provide low cost loans for homeowners, businesses, and local governments to invest in energy efficiency and clean energy technology. Democrats say this would help rebuild after the coronavirus pandemic by empowering every American to invest in a clean energy future that would create jobs, promote new technologies, and fight climate change. Republicans say that private banks, not the government, should invest in clean energy and that the government shouldn't be responsible for banking anyways. Do you support or oppose this policy?
- I. Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them: Some Democrats in Congress are proposing a test to ensure that infrastructure built with stimulus money is environmentally friendly. Democrats say that an environmental test is critical to ensuring that new infrastructure built in America is set up to ensure a green and sustainable future. Republicans say that we need shovel ready projects to get Americans back to work immediately, and not bog businesses down with bureaucratic red tape. Do you support or oppose environmental testing for projects that receive stimulus money?
- J. Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them: Some Democrats in Congress are proposing a rule called "Buy Clean" that requires the federal government to prioritize purchases from manufacturing firms that run on clean energy, limit pollution and provide good paying union jobs. Democrats say that companies that receive government funding and contracts should pay a living wage, support the right to collective bargaining, and be responsible stewards of the environment. Republicans say that the government shouldn't play favorites with special interests and labor unions and should focus on getting the lowest prices possible to save taxpayer money. Do you support or oppose this proposal?
- K. Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them: Some Democrats in Congress are proposing creating financial incentives like grants and tax credits to promote energy efficient buildings and appliances as well as green retrofits for households and businesses. Democrats say this would help businesses recover from the coronavirus pandemic by creating construction jobs while addressing climate change and lowering electricity bills for families and businesses. Republicans say that the construction companies are already moving to energy efficient buildings because they save money and that these new rules are unnecessary red tape will only slow down the recovery. Do you support or oppose this proposal?

- L. Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them: Some Democrats in Congress are proposing providing federal aid to wind and solar corporations hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic by increasing tax credits to help ensure that more renewable energy projects are built in America. Democrats say this will preserve and create good paying clean energy jobs, build a strong clean energy industry and reduce pollution. Republicans say that the government should not be picking winners and losers in the energy sector and that after decades of subsidies wind and solar companies should be able to compete without government help. Do you support or oppose this proposal?
- M. Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them: Some Democrats in Congress want to increase tax credits for electric vehicles to help preserve clean energy jobs, encourage consumers to purchase electric vehicles and rebuild industries to fight climate change. Democrats say this will help auto manufacturers rebuild from the coronavirus pandemic by increasing demand for electric vehicles, creating jobs, and helping the US transition to a green economy. Republicans say that the free market should determine what vehicles auto manufacturers produce and that if customers want electric vehicles, they should purchase them without needing taxpayer money. Do you support or oppose this proposal?
- N. Congress is considering a stimulus package to address coronavirus and the economic fallout from the pandemic. For each of the following potential components of the package, please indicate if you support or oppose them: Some Democrats in Congress are proposing a rule that would require \$800 billion in federal funds be spent every year on jobs, infrastructure and clean energy until unemployment and carbon pollution are brought to zero. Democrats say this level of funding is needed to address the scale of the economic and environmental crisis facing our nation and that this will get Americans back to work while helping fight climate change. Republicans say that this proposal would explode the national debt and would lead to massive government waste with billions of dollars flowing to shady companies like Solyndra that take taxpayer money then go bankrupt. Do you support or oppose this proposal?

EDITED BY

Andrew Mangan Senior Editor, Data for Progress

COVER PHOTO

Thomas Richter/Unsplash