

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Geoff Garin, Corrie Hunt, Jay Campbell
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RE: Key Takeaways from New Survey on the Build Back Better Reconciliation Plan

Our new national online survey of 1,006 registered voters (conducted July 26 to 29, 2021 for Climate Power and the League of Conservation Voters) finds an American public that overwhelmingly favors the Build Back Better reconciliation package and that sees its climate and clean energy elements as essential. In brief:

- Three in four voters support the reconciliation plan.
- There is a wide belief that, in general, action on climate and clean energy is highly important and that, specifically, this plan's climate, clean energy, and environmental justice components are essential.
- We can motivate the Democratic base to actively favor the plan with a focus on the plan's climate benefits, and swing voters by detailing the economic benefits to working families and middle-class Americans.
- Progressives have highly compelling responses to tax- and inflation-related attacks.

Key Survey Findings

Support for the reconciliation package is both broad and deep. After reading a detailed description* of the package that includes its cost and tax components, fully 73% of voters say they support the plan, while just 27% oppose it. Strong supporters (42%) outnumber strong opponents (14%) by a margin of three to one.

Importantly, support spans the electorate and includes large majorities of more traditionally conservative audiences, such as seniors (68% support), rural voters (65%), blue-collar workers (69%), and white voters without college degrees (67%).

*See Appendix to this memo for exact wording of plan description.

Support is all but universal among Democrats (96%), is extremely high among swing voters (75%), and is substantial among Republicans (49%).

The package’s climate change, clean energy, and environmental justice elements work entirely in its favor. Two in three voters (66%) say the fact that the plan expands the use of clean energy like solar and wind power makes them more likely to support it. Similar proportions say the same about the strong action the plan takes to address climate change (63%) and its promotion of environmental justice (63%). In each case more than 60% of swing voters say they are more likely to support the plan due to these elements.

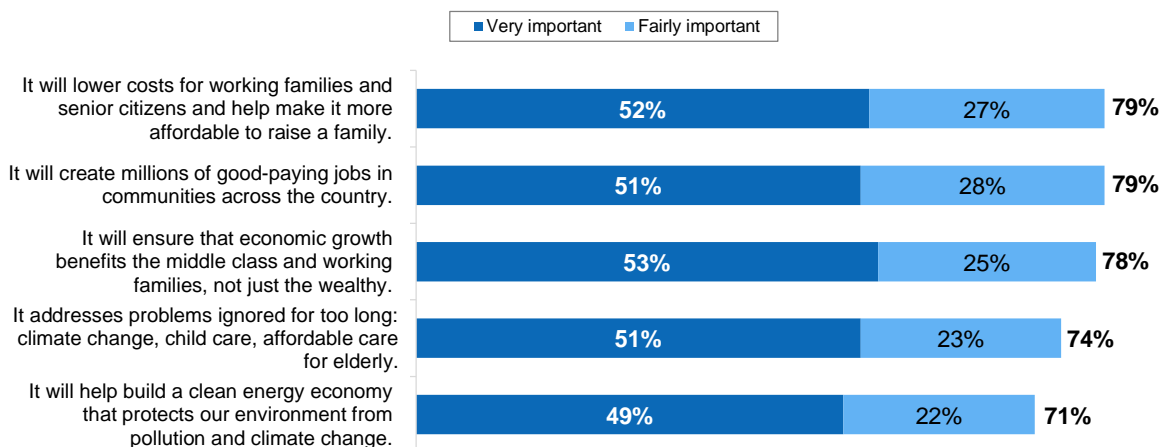
The reaction to these elements comports with the fact that 66% of voters say taking action to deal with climate change should be an important priority for the president and Congress this year—including 58% who say they feel strongly about this. Nine in 10 Democrats (91%) say it should be a priority, as do 71% of swing voters and more than one in three Republicans (37%).

It is worth noting that the voting public is clued into this summer’s extreme heat and wildfires (84% say they are paying attention to these stories), and a 56% majority attribute them to climate change.

Voters consider both economic and climate change benefits of the plan essential. Between seven and eight in 10 voters say each of the outcomes of the plan shown below are very or fairly important.

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

Important Reason Congress Should Pass the Legislation



When asked which of these outcomes are *most* important, Democrats gravitate toward addressing long-standing problems such as climate change and child care. Swing voters are equally likely to choose addressing problems, lowering costs for working families, and economic growth for the middle class.

We can win debates about the Build Back Better plan's cost, effect on inflation, and other unfounded attacks. In each instance, the poll finds highly compelling responses to these criticisms:

CRITICISM: 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. – **41% say this is more convincing.**

RESPONSE: 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. – **59% say this is more convincing.**

CRITICISM: 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. – **45% say this is more convincing.**

RESPONSE: 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 child care and home care for seniors. Families with children will have more money in their pockets because of the child tax credit. – **55% say this is more convincing**

CRITICISM: 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. – **34% say this is more convincing**

RESPONSE: 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. – **66% say this is more convincing**

In each case, swing voters side with the "response" statement as handily as voters overall do.

THE BOTTOM LINE: Momentum for passing this legislation is fully on our side, with the Democratic base highly energized by, and swing voters very enthusiastic about, this plan's focus on addressing climate change and helping working families. Our messaging should center on these favorable outcomes, while emphasizing that the vast majority of Americans will pay nothing additional in taxes to see these benefits come to fruition.

APPENDIX: Description of the BBB Plan Survey Respondents Read

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 child care 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.