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# Majority of Voters Support a Guaranteed Income

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Evangel Penumaka  
Isa Alomran  
Abby Steckel

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# Introduction

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As the U.S. starts to recover from the coronavirus pandemic, several cities are launching initiatives to address the economic and financial inequalities that the pandemic made glaringly visible. Following the example of a two-year pilot program started in Stockton, California by Mayor Michael Tubbs, these cities plan to conduct their own pilot guaranteed income programs providing direct, long-term payments to adults with no strings attached.

In a late-June survey of 1,137 likely voters, Data for Progress and Mayors for a Guaranteed Income examined likely voter attitudes towards a guaranteed income. We also examined support for a guaranteed income that is currently being implemented at a national scale: the Child Tax Credit (CTC) expansion. Implemented through the American Rescue Plan, the expanded credit will provide up to \$300 per month to most families through December 2021. This memo highlights key findings from our polling, which can be found [here](#).

We find that a majority of likely voters support a guaranteed income policy in general, as well as the guaranteed income provided through the CTC. Voters also believe that a guaranteed income would have positive impacts, such as helping people prepare for financial emergencies. Our survey findings show that public opinion is on the side of city and policy leaders working to implement a guaranteed income locally and on a national scale.

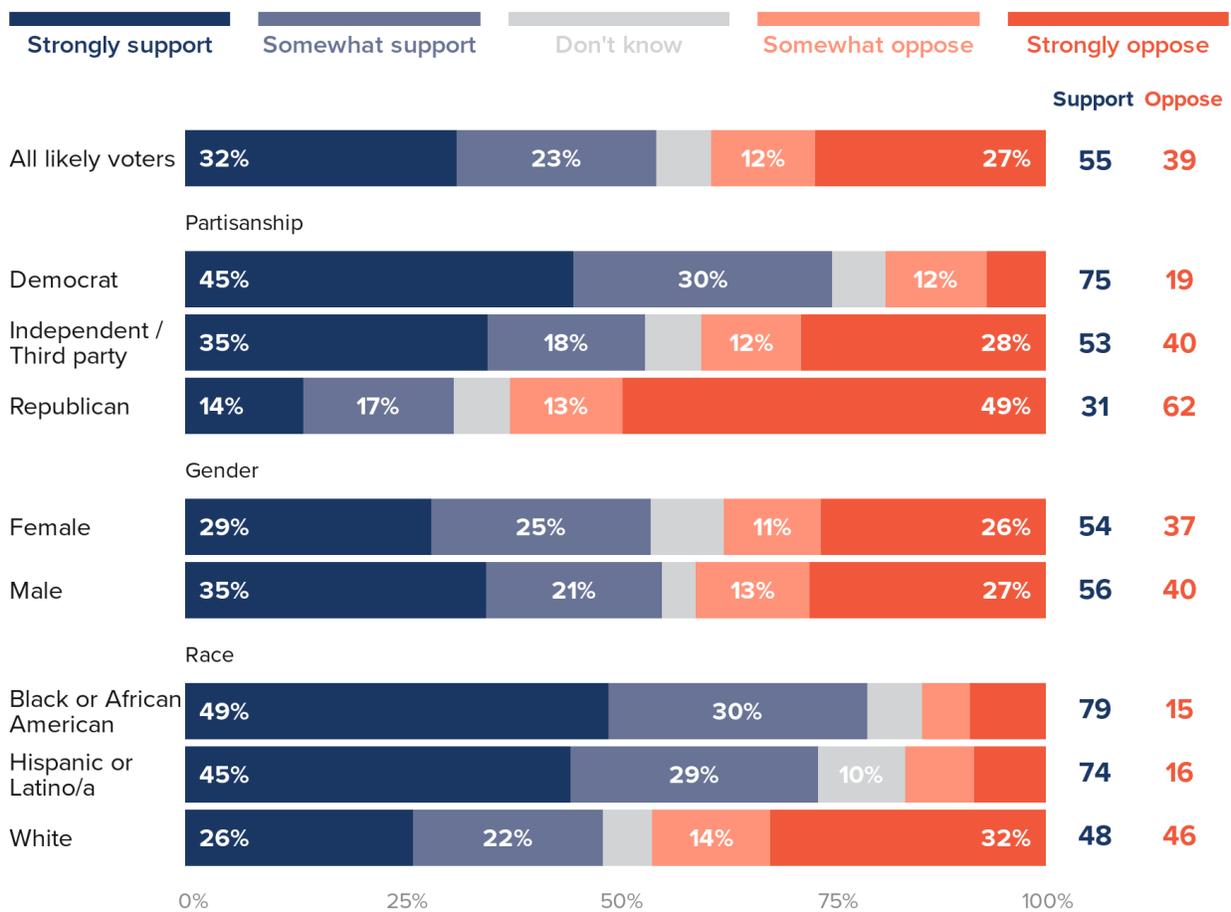
# Voters Support a Guaranteed Income

First, we measured likely voters' support for a guaranteed income broadly. We found that voters support a guaranteed income by a 16-point margin (55 percent support; 39 percent oppose). Democratic voters enthusiastically (75 percent) support the policy, along with 53 percent of Independents and nearly a third of Republicans. Support is also particularly strong among Black and Latina/o voters, who support a guaranteed income at 79 and 74 percent, respectively. Men and women support a guaranteed income by 16 and 17-percentage-point margins.

## A Majority of Voters Support Implementing a Guaranteed Income

A guaranteed income is a policy that would provide monthly payments of around \$500 - \$1,000 to individuals, regardless of their employment status and with no strings attached.

Would you support or oppose implementing a guaranteed income in the U.S.?



June 30–July 1, 2021 survey of 1,137 likely voters

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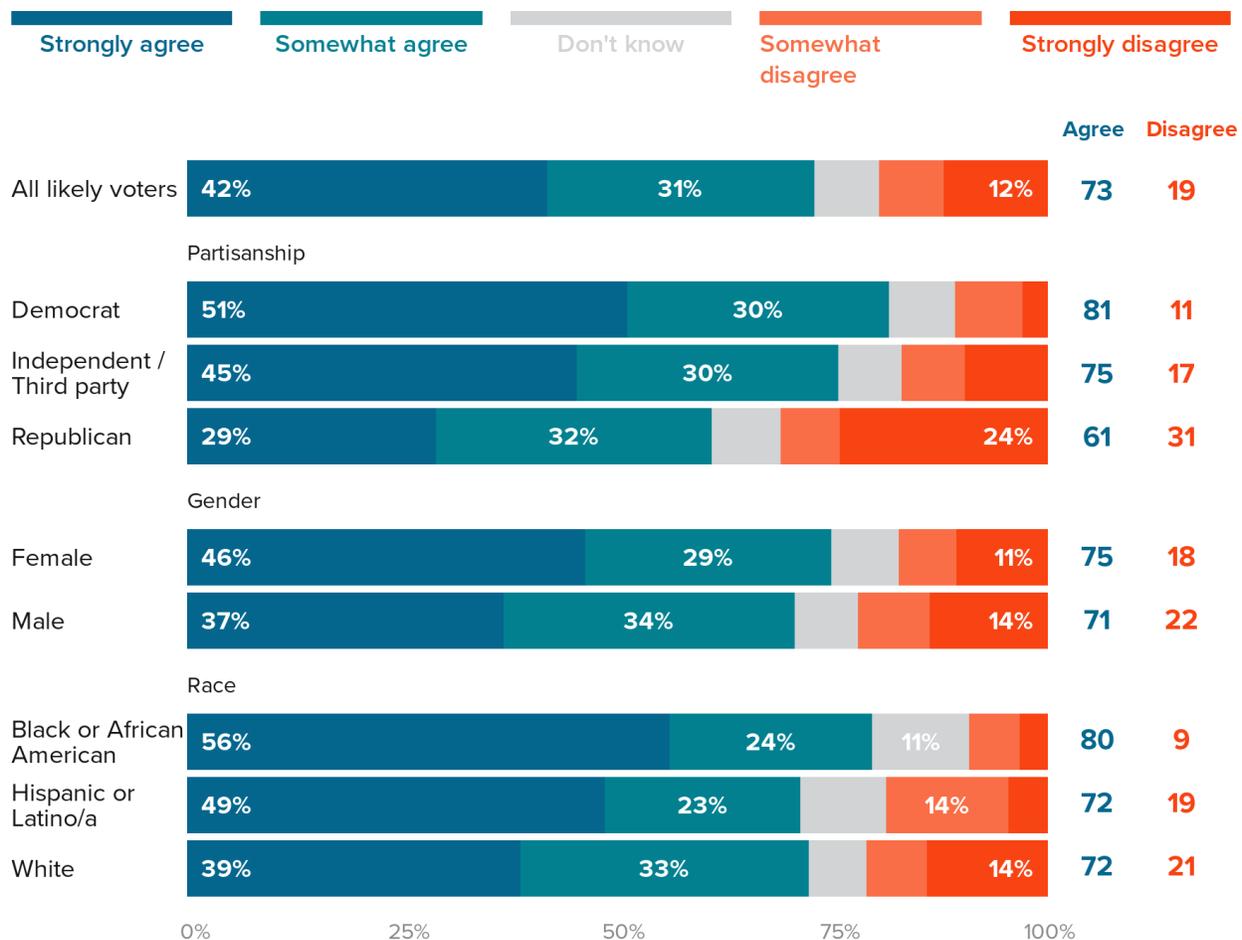
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After testing voters' overall support of a guaranteed income, we asked how they thought the policy would impact their lives. Seventy-three percent of voters agree that receiving a monthly guaranteed income will help them prepare for financial emergencies. Notably, we find voters agree on this sentiment across party lines: 81 percent of Democrats, 75 percent of Independents, and 61 percent of Republicans agree that a guaranteed income would help them in case of emergencies. We also find high levels of agreement across race, with 80 percent of Black voters, 72 percent of Latina/o voters, and 72 percent of white voters stating that a monthly income would aid in preparing for emergencies. We find support remains consistent across gender: 75 percent of women agree that a guaranteed income would help with financial preparedness, as do 71 percent of men.

## Voters Agree That a Guaranteed Income Would Help Them Prepare for Financial Emergencies

Pilot guaranteed income programs have shown that a monthly guaranteed income of \$500 - \$1,000 per month has the following impacts. Thinking about how a monthly basic income may impact you personally, do you agree or disagree with the following statements? -- A monthly guaranteed income would help me prepare for financial emergencies.



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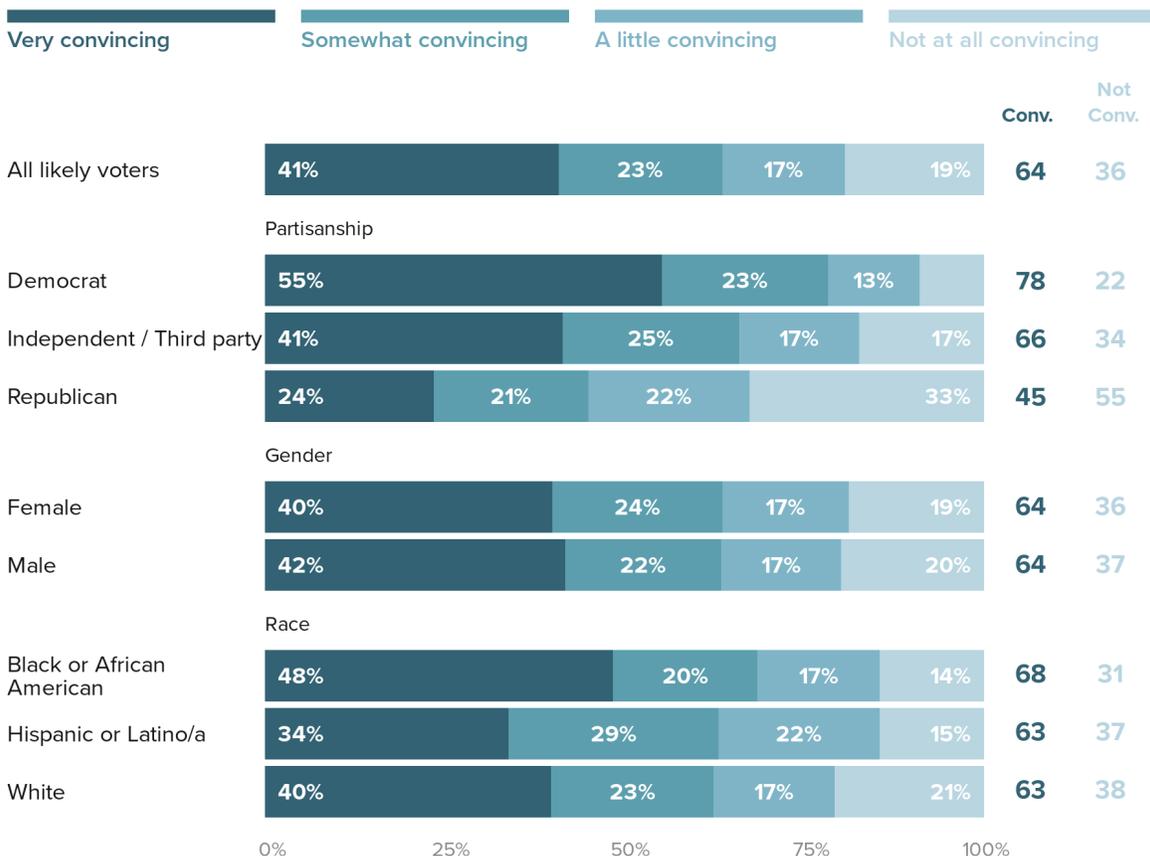
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# Voters Find Arguments on Income Inequality and Financial Stability Convincing

Next, we presented several arguments made by supporters of a guaranteed income and asked voters how convincing they found these arguments. One argument focused on income inequality as a reason to implement a universal basic income, emphasizing how a small group of elites hold almost all the wealth in the world while everyday Americans struggle to make ends meet. A 28-point margin of voters found this argument somewhat or very convincing, as opposed to only a little convincing or not at all convincing. Responses are consistent among men and women, who deemed this argument convincing by 27 and 28-point margins, respectively. We find that the argument’s effectiveness varies across partisanship. Seventy-eight percent of Democratic likely voters and 66 percent of Independents said the income inequality argument was convincing. While a majority of Republicans (55 percent) do not find the messaging convincing, we find that 45 percent of Republicans are swayed by an income inequality frame.

## Voters See Income Inequality as a Good Argument for a Guaranteed Income

Please indicate how convincing or unconvincing you find the following statements made by **supporters** of a guaranteed income. -- Today a small elite group of people hold almost all the wealth in the world while everyday Americans struggle day by day to make ends meet.



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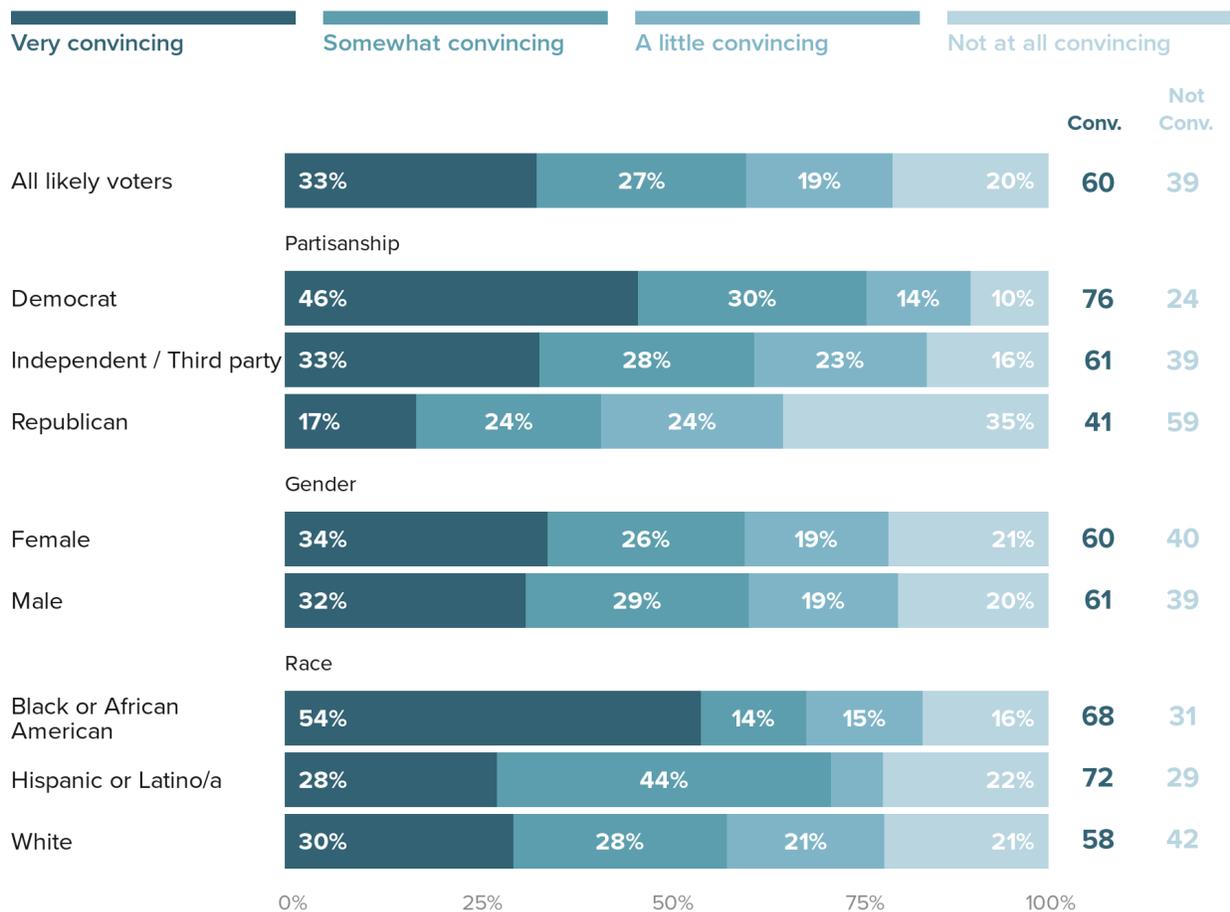
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Additionally, we tested an argument referencing the financial stress that many families have experienced during the coronavirus pandemic and how a guaranteed income will give families the ability to better prepare for financial emergencies. A 21-point margin of voters found this to be a somewhat or very convincing argument for a guaranteed income. Across partisanship, 76 percent of Democratic voters rated this argument as convincing, as well as 61 percent of Independents and 41 percent of Republicans. A 20-point margin of women and a 22-point margin of men found the framing around an emergency fund convincing.

## Voters Are Compelled by the Idea of a Guaranteed Income as an Emergency Fund

Please indicate how convincing or unconvincing you find the following statements made by supporters of a guaranteed income. -- The pandemic has shown us the levels of economic instability working Americans face. A guaranteed income will give families the opportunity to better prepare for financial emergencies.



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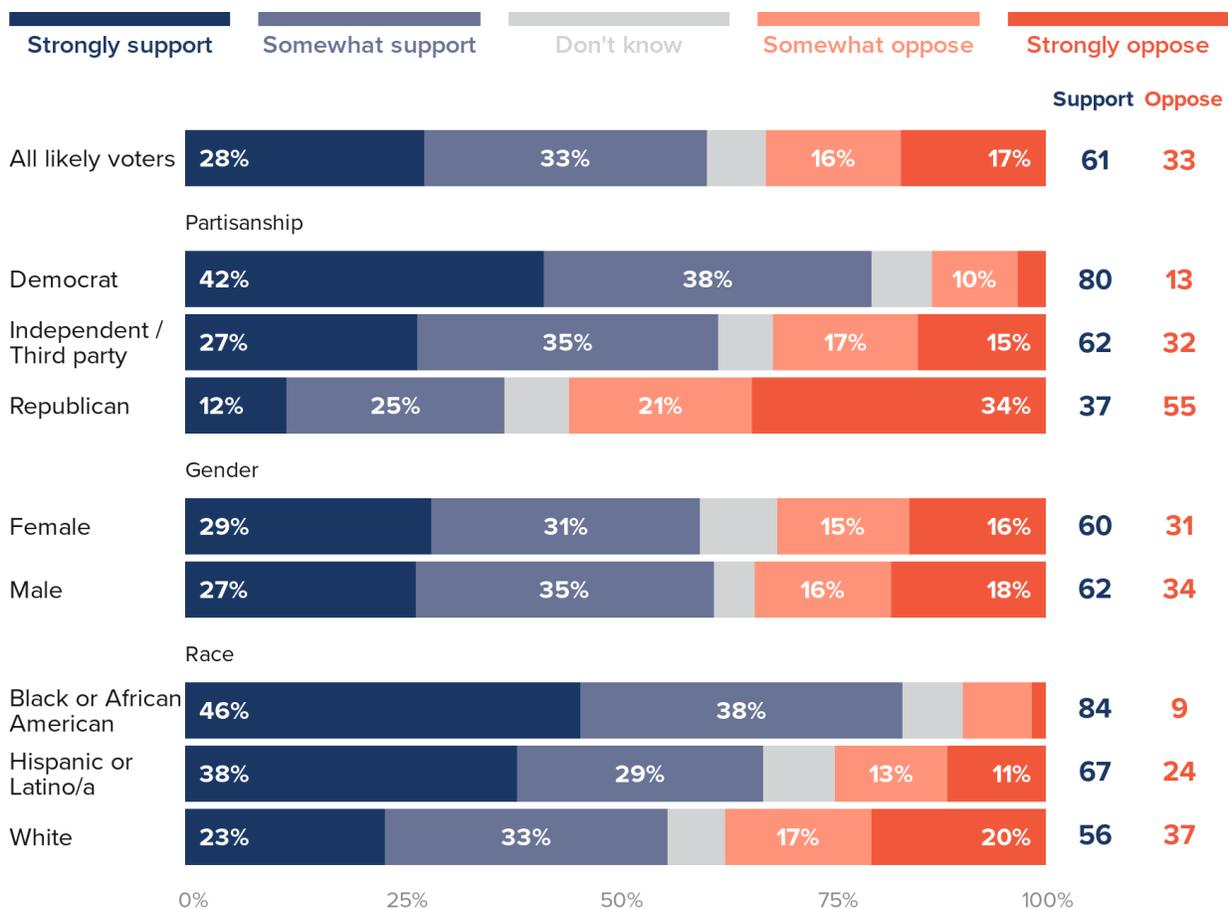
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# Support for the Child Tax Credit Expansion

Lastly, we tested voters' opinions on the expanded Child Tax Credit (CTC) implemented through the American Rescue Plan. We found that a 28-point margin of likely voters support the guaranteed income that is being provided through the CTC. As above, responses were similar by gender, with a 31-point margin of support among women and a 28-point margin among men. Support is notably different across partisanship. Eighty percent of Democratic voters and 62 percent of Independents support the CTC, while the majority of Republicans (55 percent) oppose the expansion. Likewise, support for the CTC varies between racial groups. While a majority of white voters support the expansion by a 19-point margin, we find stronger support among Black and Latina/o voters by 75-point and 43-point margins, respectively.

## Voters Support the Expanded Child Tax Credit

Do you support or oppose the American Rescue Plan policy temporarily expanding the Child Tax Credit to give millions of U.S. families up to \$300 a month per child starting in July and ending in December?



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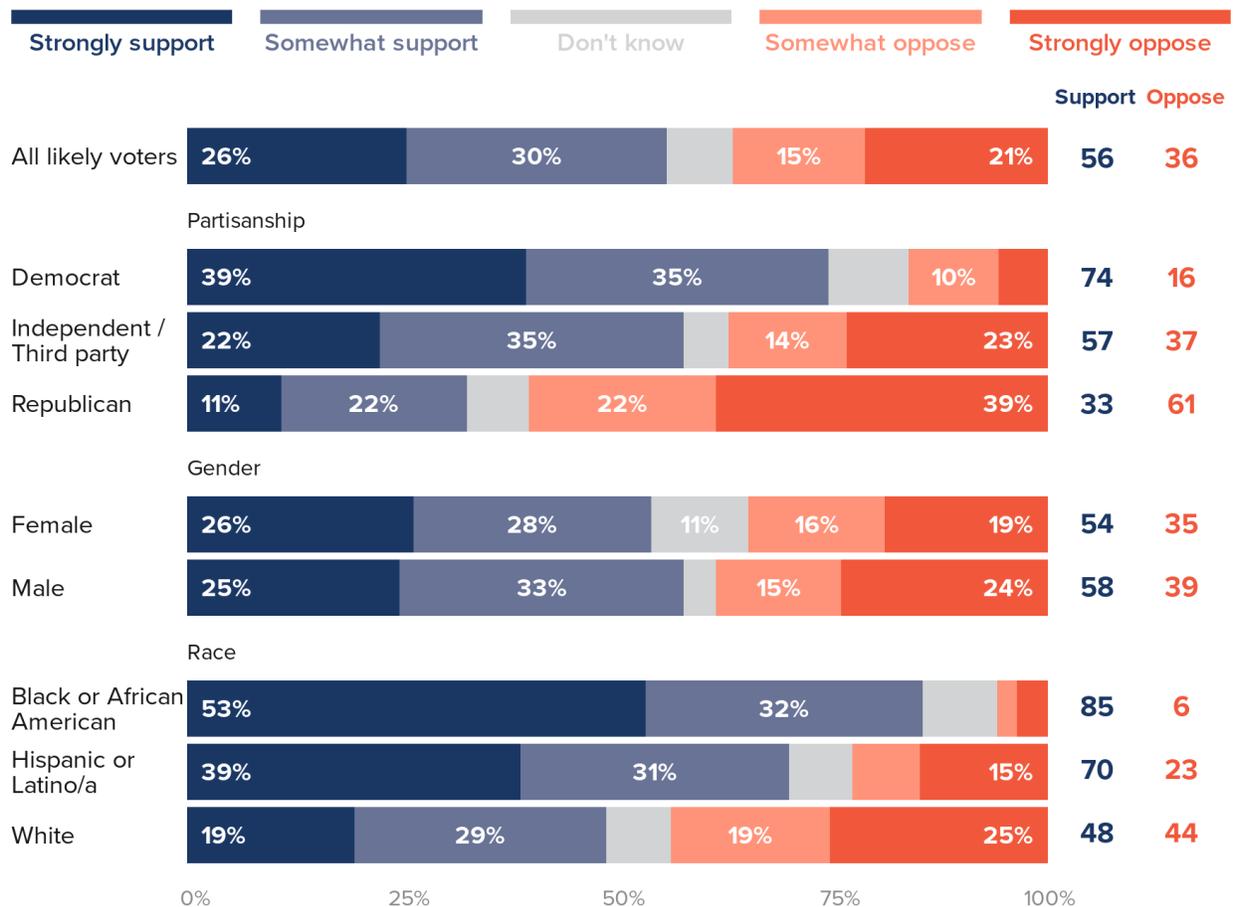
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After assessing support for the current CTC that expires in December 2021, we explored the favorability of permanently expanding the CTC. By a 20-point margin, likely voters support making the CTC expansion permanent. Women and men both support this policy by a 19-point margin. As with previous questions, we observed different levels of support by political party and racial identity. The permanent CTC expansion is supported by 74 percent of Democrats, 57 percent of Independents, and a third of Republicans. White voters support the permanent expansion by a slim margin of 4 percentage points. In contrast, the permanent expansion is enthusiastically supported by Black and Latina/o voters by margins of 79-points and 47-points, respectively.

## A Majority of Voters Support Permanently Expanding the Child Tax Credit

Families will receive a monthly payment per child through the American Rescue Plan's temporary expansion of the Child Tax Credit until the policy expires in December 2021.

Do you support or oppose permanently expanding the Child Tax Credit?



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# Conclusion

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These survey results show that a majority of likely voters broadly support a guaranteed income and associate it with positive impacts on their lives. The pandemic has exposed the financial and economic instability faced by working Americans on a day-to-day basis. Implementing a guaranteed income would be a vitally needed expansion to our existing social safety nets — and one that is popular across likely voters. A guaranteed income would ensure that we are taking the right steps for families to achieve secure financial futures and reduce the income inequality we see today. As city leaders begin to implement pilot programs for a guaranteed income throughout the U.S., they can do so knowing they have the support of voters behind them.

## METHODOLOGY

From June 30 to July 1, 2021, Data for Progress conducted a survey of 1,137 likely voters nationally using web panel respondents. The sample was weighted to be representative of likely voters by age, gender, education, race, and voting history. The survey was conducted in English. The margin of error is  $\pm 3$  percentage points.