



**To:** Interested Parties

**From:** Andrew Baumann and Will Jordan, Global Strategy Group

**Date:** June 2021

**Re:** New Survey Reveals Wide, Robust Support for Transition to Zero-Emission Vehicles

A new survey conducted by Global Strategy Group for the American Lung Association reveals that Americans strongly support the federal government advancing policies that will encourage a transition to zero-emission vehicles in the United States. Even after being exposed to a simulated debate that included the actual arguments from opponents claiming that such policies will kill jobs and cost regular Americans money, voters from across the political and demographic spectrum remain decisively in support of such a transition, and overwhelmingly support policies to achieve it, such as consumer tax incentives for the purchase of zero-emission vehicles, investments in charging infrastructure, stronger emissions standards for existing passenger cars and trucks, and more. Americans also firmly reject the idea that we must choose between the economy “or” the environment, and in fact, they believe that policies encouraging a transition to zero-emission vehicles will boost the economy and create good manufacturing jobs.

### Americans want stronger standards to protect the environment and reduce air pollution.

**Americans display near-unanimous support for efforts by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to keep our air clean.** Just shy of nine-in-10 Americans back “the EPA enforcing stronger standards on air pollution” (88% support/12% oppose). The EPA is now a part of the Biden Administration, but support for stronger efforts from the agency on air pollution is bipartisan: 98% of Democrats and 78% of Republicans are in favor. Moreover, the EPA itself is well-regarded, with 77% favorable towards the agency and just 12% unfavorable. For many Americans, air quality problems are urgent: 42% believe the air is getting dirtier while just 13% believe it is getting cleaner.

**American voters also understand that protecting the environment and growing the economy go hand in hand.** Eighty five percent (85%) agree with the statement that, “We don’t have to choose between building our economy and protecting our environment. We can do both.” And 72% believe stronger air pollution standards will “boost the American economy and create manufacturing jobs for U.S. workers” by encouraging technological innovation.

### Zero-emission vehicles are highly popular.

**Voters welcome a transition to zero-emission vehicles.** Seventy percent (70%) agree – and just 22% disagree – that “the federal government should implement policies that support a transition to zero-emission vehicles.” As the chart below shows, majorities of Democrats, independents, and Republicans all want to see federal policies advancing this transition. Agreement extends across demographics, regardless of race, gender, age, or educational attainment. The technology itself is also viewed positively, whether described as “zero-emission vehicles” (69% favorable/11% unfavorable) or “electric vehicles” (71% favorable/18% unfavorable).

**Zero-emission vehicles are seen as a valuable part of the economic recovery.** More than acknowledging the compatibility of economic growth with environmental protection, nearly three-quarters of voters (72%) agree that “we should make significant investments in zero-emission vehicles as part of our efforts to rebuild the economy.” Just 20% disagree with this statement.

**Agree or disagree:** “The federal government should implement policies that support a transition to zero-emission vehicles.”



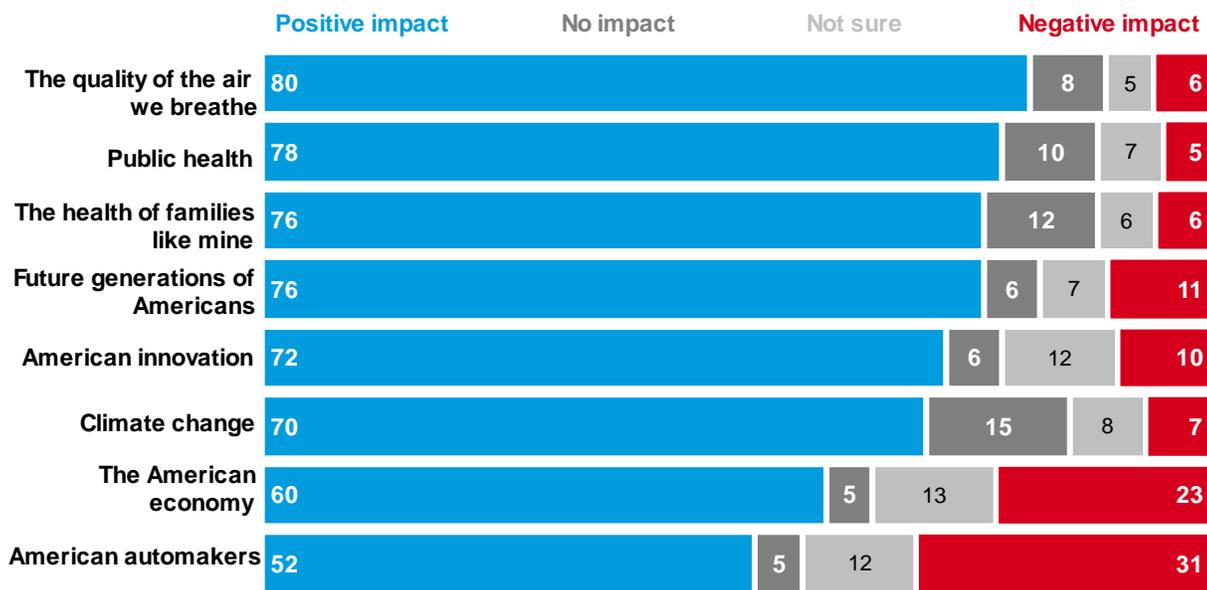
**Specific policies that will encourage a transition to zero-emission vehicles are also popular.** Support for the “transition” to a zero-emission future for cars and trucks does not exist only in the abstract. We asked voters to rate their level of support for a series of potential polices, specifically framing them as “proposals that the federal government could implement to encourage a transition to zero-emission vehicles.” As the table below shows, voters overwhelmingly support specific policies that will put the country on this path, including consumer incentives like tax rebates for people purchasing zero-emission vehicles; setting stronger standards on tailpipe emissions from passenger cars and trucks – with the standards strengthening over time; investments in publicly available charging infrastructure along major throughways; and requiring that by 2040 all new freight trucks, buses, and delivery vans sold in the United States must produce zero tailpipe emissions. Incredibly in this age of partisan polarization, each of these proposals enjoys majority support from Democrats, independents, and Republicans.

**Question Text:** Please indicate how much you support or oppose each of the following proposals that the federal government could implement to encourage a transition to zero emissions vehicles.

	Overall (%)			By Party (NET)		
	Support	Oppose	NET	Dem	Ind	Rep
Providing consumer incentives like tax rebates to encourage the purchase of zero-emission vehicles	78	16	+62	+89	+59	+35
Investing in publicly available infrastructure for charging zero-emission vehicles along major highways and roads	73	15	+58	+83	+51	+33
Setting stronger standards on tailpipe emissions from passenger cars and trucks, with the amount of emissions allowed declining over time	74	18	+56	+80	+47	+34
Requiring that by 2040 all new freight trucks, buses and delivery vans sold in the U.S. must produce zero tailpipe emissions	70	20	+50	+83	+42	+19

**Voters believe stronger standards on tailpipe emissions will boost the economy, as well as protect public health and the climate.** Voters support these proposals so strongly because they believe that their benefits will be broad-based. We asked voters if the proposal to implement stronger standards on tailpipe emissions from passenger cars and trucks – with the emissions allowed declining over time – would have a positive, negative, or no impact on a range of items. Unsurprisingly, as the chart below shows, voters overwhelmingly believe that the proposal would have a positive impact on the “the quality of the air we breathe,” “the health of families like mine,” and climate change. They also strongly believe it will have a positive impact on “American innovation,” “the American economy,” and even “American automakers.”

**Question text:** If the federal government were to set stronger standards on tailpipe emissions from passenger cars and trucks, with the amount of emissions allowed declining over time, what impact do you think it would have on the following things?



Strong public support for a transition to the zero-emission future continues even after voters hear arguments from both sides of the debate.

Each respondent read two statements: one statement making the case in favor of policies to accelerate the adoption of zero-emission cars and trucks, and another statement making an argument against – describing potentially negative impacts of the effort to “eliminate the internal combustion engine” on the auto industry and arguing it will kill jobs and mean higher taxes and electricity bills for consumers (see appendix for full text of the messages). As might be expected when support starts so high, support for some policies declines slightly as some conservative voters respond to the opposition argument’s partisan dog whistles; but even so, support remains remarkably robust. After the exchange, voters still want the government to pursue the transition to zero-emission vehicles by a decisive margin (66% agree/28% disagree), and they continue to believe investments in this technology should be part of our efforts to rebuild the economy (68% agree/25% disagree). Support for policies like investment in charging infrastructure and tax rebates for zero-emission vehicle consumers continues to hover around 70%, with opposition always below 30%.

**Question Text:** Please indicate how much you support or oppose each of the following proposals that the federal government could implement to encourage a transition to zero emissions vehicles.

	Before Statements			After Statements		
	Support	Oppose	NET	Support	Oppose	NET
Providing consumer incentives like tax rebates to encourage the purchase of zero-emission vehicles	78	16	+62	74	18	+56
Investing in publicly available infrastructure for charging zero-emission vehicles along major highways and roads	73	15	+58	69	22	+47
Setting stronger standards on tailpipe emissions from passenger cars and trucks, with the amount of emissions allowed declining over time	74	18	+56	73	20	+53
Requiring that by 2040 all new freight trucks, buses and delivery vans sold in the U.S. must produce zero tailpipe emissions	70	20	+50	65	26	+39

**ABOUT THE POLL**

Global Strategy Group conducted an online survey of 1,000 registered voters nationwide between May 28 and June 1, 2021. The survey had a confidence interval of +/- 3.1%. Care has been taken to ensure the geographic, demographic, and political divisions among registered voters are properly represented.

## Appendix: Simulated Debate Message Statements

**Supportive argument:** (Some/Other) people say we have a basic responsibility to leave a better world for our children and we can't do that unless we drastically reduce carbon pollution and keep our air clean. Transportation is the largest source of the carbon pollution that causes climate change, and one of the top sources of smog, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, and other toxic air pollution. Scientists say that encouraging a transition to zero-emission vehicles is one of the most important steps we can take to combat climate change, and doctors say that reducing toxic pollution from cars and trucks will mean less asthma attacks, respiratory diseases, and cancer, especially in children and seniors. And by encouraging innovation and the development of new technologies, investing in zero-emission vehicles will boost the American economy and save the average American thousands of dollars at the pump.

**Opposition argument:** (Some/Other) people say that with our economy only now starting to recover from the pandemic, the last thing we need is a liberal, big-government effort to eliminate the internal combustion engine, which would take away affordable and reliable vehicle options and wipe out millions of American jobs in the auto industry and supply chain. Forcing Americans to buy more electric vehicles will cause everyone to pay higher taxes and electricity bills in order to subsidize the wealthy few who can afford to buy expensive electric cars like Teslas. And the electricity used to charge electric cars still comes from mostly coal- and gas-fired power plants, which emit massive amounts of carbon, sulfur, and arsenic pollution into the air. So, forcing electric cars on Americans won't even help the environment. These changes would result in significant pain but very little gain.