



To: Interested Parties

From: Global Strategy Group

Date: June 9, 2021

Re: New Survey Shows West Virginians Back Buy Clean and Buy American Initiatives, Call on Senators to Take Action

President Biden and Congress are determined to pass historic legislation to modernize the nation's infrastructure, from repairing roads and bridges, to expanding broadband access and sources of clean energy. Democrats and Republicans may differ on which projects to prioritize or how to pay for them, but they generally agree we need to build a lot of stuff. With significant momentum behind these proposals, in tandem with public desire to see this administration support American businesses and workers and tackle climate change, advocates have an opportune window to merge these interests by supporting Buy Clean policies. A Buy Clean procurement framework encourages government spending on infrastructure materials that are produced using fewer carbon emissions and positions U.S. manufacturers to be more environmentally conscious and competitive. Antiquated perceptions of a zero-sum game between job creation and climate efforts have faded in the public eye, as more reliable and more affordable clean energy is now seen as means of creating jobs and boosting manufacturing, rather than hindering jobs and industry.

A new Global Strategy Group¹ survey of 600 registered West Virginia voters shows that this momentum is reflected in the priorities and demands of the state's electorate. In a state with a strong and long-standing relationship to America's manufacturing industry, including the 22% of voters in the state who report living in a manufacturing or construction household and the 35% who reside in counties with significant shares of the population employed in manufacturing, the importance of bolstering domestic industry while reducing emissions is vastly supported. West Virginia voters overwhelmingly see the manufacturing sector in the state getting weaker (70%), as do 67% of those who live in manufacturing counties and 74% of independents. West Virginia voters thus see a need for these initiatives and are looking for their representatives in Congress to support Buy Clean policies.

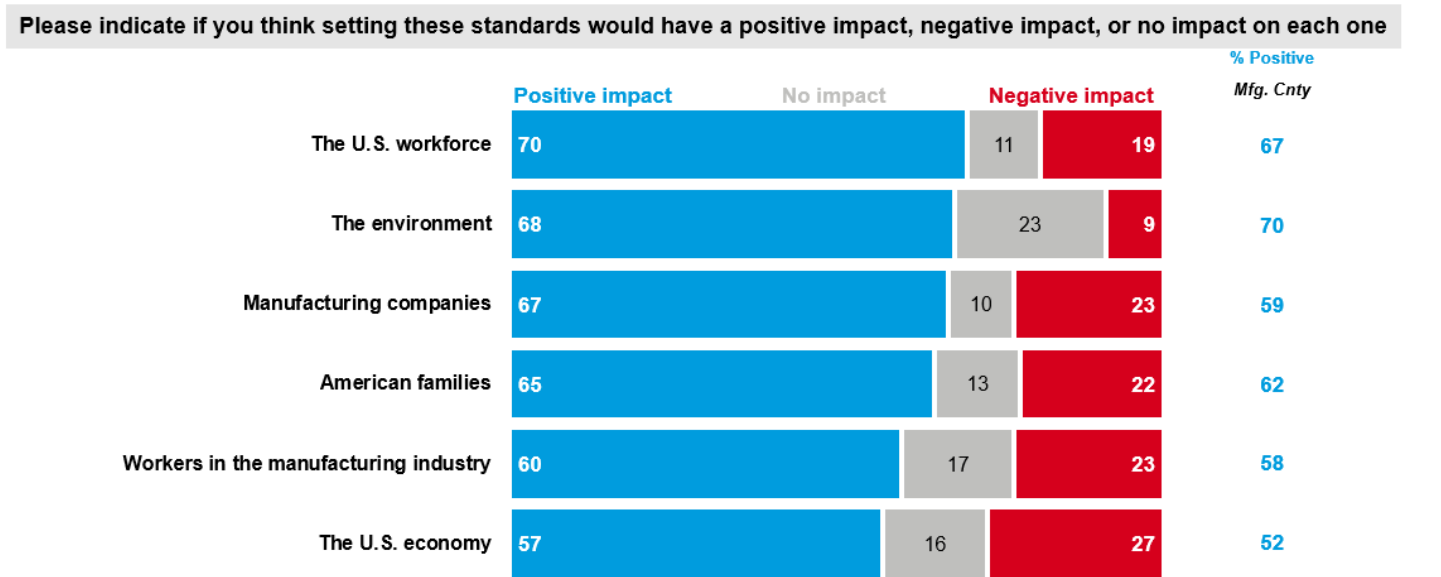
West Virginians are growing more supportive of transitioning to cleaner energy as they see economic benefits

As clean energy continues to become more reliable and less expensive, West Virginians are becoming more supportive of transitioning to it. As fears of sky-high costs have generally not been realized, more than one in three (35%) voters in the state say they have grown more supportive of transitioning to cleaner energy over the last few years, including 38% of those who reside in manufacturing counties. Only 15% of West Virginia voters say they have become less supportive, with another 47% saying their opinion has not changed recently.

¹ Global Strategy Group is the go-to public opinion research firm for candidates running in some of the toughest seats in the country. Global Strategy Group has twice been named pollster of the year by the non-partisan American Association of Political Consultants (AAPC) and was involved in all four of the 2020 Senate races that flipped from red to blue. For more information about Global Strategy Group, please see <https://www.globalstrategygroup.com/>.

For more information about polling generally and the accuracy of issue polling, please see Pew Research's March 2021 study showing that "errors of the magnitude seen in some of the 2020 election polls would alter measures of opinion on issues by an average of less than one percentage point" at the following link: <https://www.pewresearch.org/methods/2021/03/02/what-2020s-election-poll-errors-tell-us-about-the-accuracy-of-issue-polling/>.

Contrary to the old debate that often pits imposing environmental regulations against creating jobs, voters believe regulations that encourage clean, American-made materials will *benefit* American manufacturers rather than hurt them. When asked whether manufacturing regulations that encourage clean, American-made materials will either help American companies “who are already doing the right thing” or “hurt American companies” by raising costs, nearly two in three West Virginia voters (63%) say additional regulations will help, while just 29% say they will hurt. Among those who reside in manufacturing counties, these numbers are almost identical (64% help / 27% hurt). Majorities in the state recognize a range of potential beneficiaries of these standards – with the greatest benefits going to the workforce (70% positive impact) and the environment (68%). Among those in manufacturing counties, the same is true.



Buying Clean is supported and remains so even with pressure from the opposition

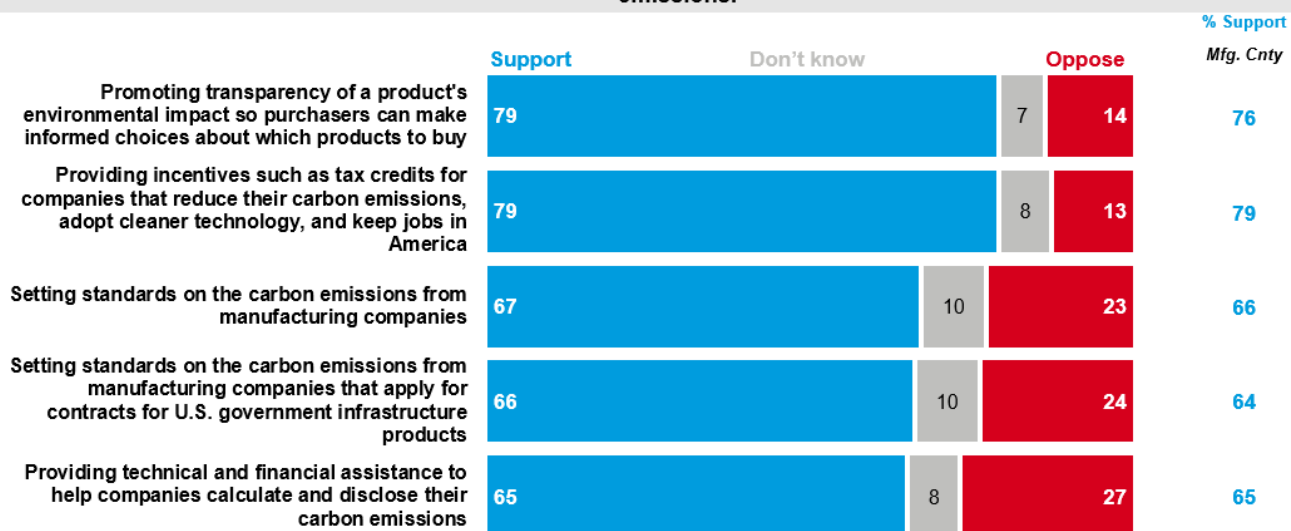
Voters support requiring the government to use materials that are sustainably produced in infrastructure projects. Almost seven in ten (68%) West Virginia voters support requiring manufacturing companies to disclose the carbon emissions of products they sell to the American government (including 75% of those who live in manufacturing counties who support the policy). Likewise, 63% of West Virginia voters support requiring the American government to buy more sustainable construction materials for taxpayer-funded infrastructure projects.

West Virginians are so overwhelmingly supportive of both buying American-made materials and standards that require cleaner materials, that they are willing to pay for it. Even when posed in a framework of increasing the total cost of a public project by 2%, 66% of West Virginia voters say requiring cleaner construction materials would still be worth the taxpayer dollars, and 86% say it would be worth the taxpayer dollars to pay for a 2% increase in public project costs if they were to require American-made construction materials. Even against an opposition argument that “we cannot afford” higher taxes to pay for the costs that cleaner material standards might incur, a majority of voters support the Buy Clean-based arguments that we cannot afford to keep paying for low-quality products made cheaply by foreign companies that pollute the environment or cost American jobs.

Question	Overall	Manufacturing Counties
Do you support or oppose requiring manufacturing companies to disclose the carbon emissions of the products they sell to the U.S. government?	68 / 20 Support Oppose	75 / 17
For infrastructure projects that use taxpayer dollars, do you support or oppose requiring the U.S. government to buy construction materials, like cement and steel, only from manufacturers that create less pollution and use less energy?	63 / 24 Support Oppose	64 / 23
If requiring <u>American-made construction materials</u> for a bridge or a building increased the total cost of the project by 2%, do you think that would be:	86 / 10 Worth Not worth taxpayer dollars	87 / 19
If requiring <u>cleaner construction materials</u> for a bridge or a building increased the total cost of the project by 2%, do you think that would be:	66 / 25 Worth Not worth taxpayer dollars	71 / 23

West Virginia voters’ support for a wide range of clean materials proposals reflects their commitment to Buying Clean and Buying American. Across all individual proposals tested to support “clean, American-made manufacturing and reduce carbon emissions,” at least three in five support each one, including one in three West Virginia voters who “strongly support” the proposals. Among those who live in manufacturing counties in the state, support tends to be equally as strong.

Please indicate if you support or oppose each policy to support clean, American-made manufacturing and reduce carbon emissions.



Sustainability and supporting domestic manufacturing are winning issues for candidates on both sides of the aisle

Republicans who fail to speak to these desires for greater sustainability and clean energy job creation risk losing voters. When presented with no other details about potential Senate candidates, 45% of West Virginia voters would vote for a Democrat who supports environmental policies that create jobs over a Republican who does not – far surpassing partisan self-identification in the state (31% Democratic/57% Republican). Nearly half (49%) also would be more favorable to an elected official – with no party specified – who supports buying less polluting, American-made construction materials than one who does not.

Question	Overall
If the election for U.S. Senate was held today and this were all you knew about the candidates, for whom would you vote: a Democratic candidate who supports policies that protect the environment and create jobs OR a Republican candidate who opposes policies that protect the environment and create jobs?	45 / 39 Democrat Republican

ABOUT THE POLL

Global Strategy Group conducted an online survey of 600 registered West Virginia voters between May 6 and May 13, 2021. The survey had a confidence interval of +/- 4.0%. Care has been taken to ensure the geographic and demographic divisions of the populations of the electorates are properly represented, and the data was weighted to the actual 2020 results statewide.