AX ADVOCACY

THE BUSINESS OF WINNING

AxInsights National Survey:
A Snapshot of Americans' Views on Public Policy Issues

Methodology

Conducted by Ipsos using KnowledgePanel®

A survey of the American general population (ages 18+)
Interview dates: February 20-22, 2026
Number of interviews: 1,025
Number of Republican interviews: 300
Number of Democratic interviews: 289
Number of independent interviews: 326

Margin of error: +/- 3.2 percentage points at the 95% confidence level for all respondents
Margin of error: +/- 5.8 percentage points at the 95% confidence level for Republican respondents
Margin of error: +/- 5.9 percentage points at the 95% confidence level for Democratic respondents
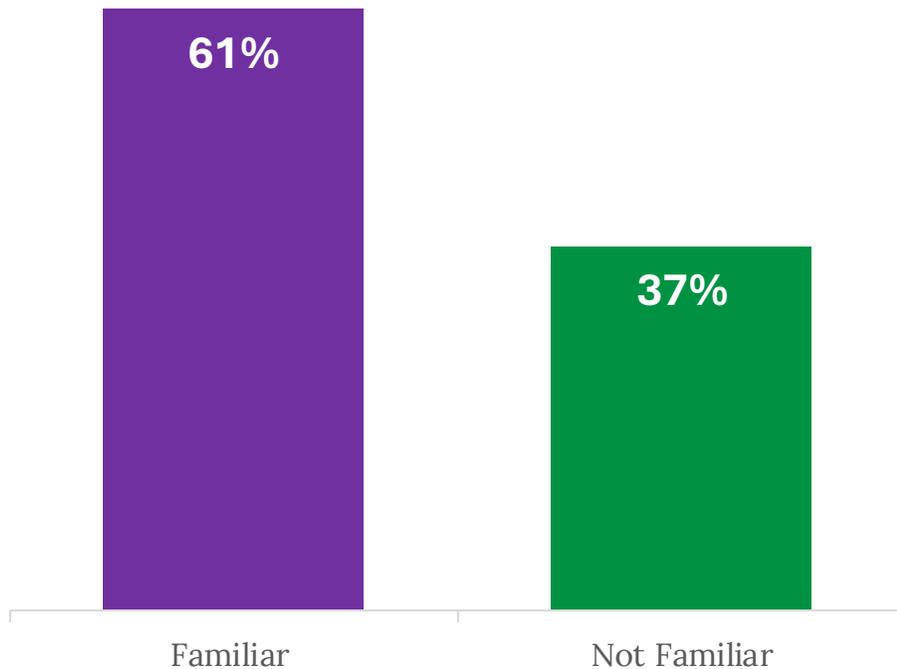*Margin of error: +/- 5.7 percentage points at the 95% confidence level for independent respondents*

NOTE: All results show percentages among all respondents, unless otherwise labeled. Reduced bases are unweighted values.

Data
Centers

As coverage of data center construction ramps up in local and national media, awareness of the issue is growing.

Data centers that process information for computing and artificial intelligence require a lot of energy and infrastructure investment. Prior to today, how familiar were you with this issue?
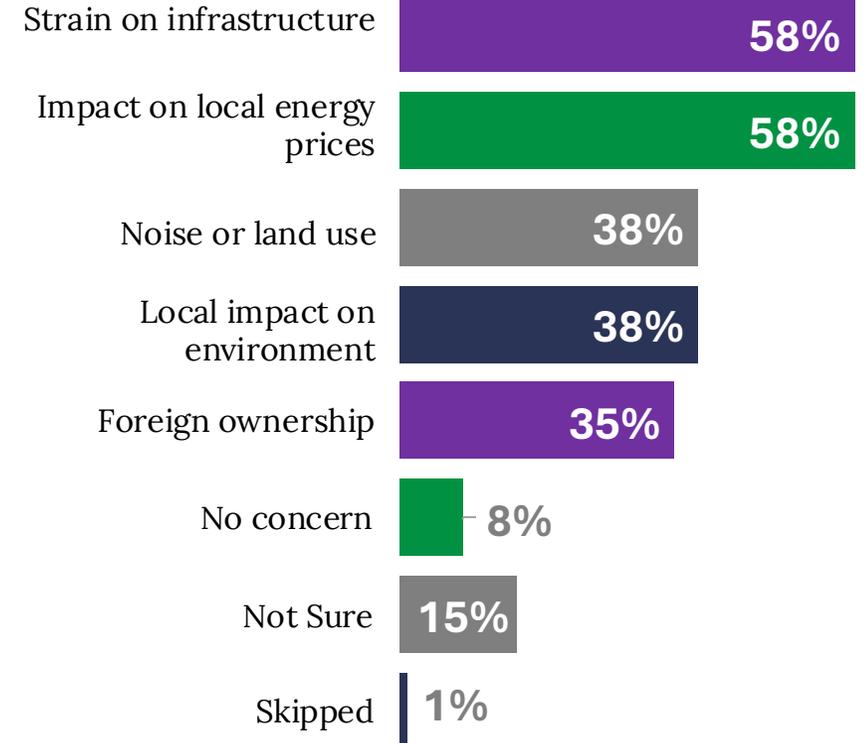
61% Familiar

37% Not Familiar

Demographics	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not too familiar	Not at all familiar	Skipped
Female	11%	41%	29%	17%	1%
Male	26%	43%	19%	9%	2%
18-34	22%	38%	22%	14%	5%
35-49	18%	47%	21%	13%	2%
50-64	18&	41%	25%	16%	-
65+	17%	44%	29%	9%	-
White	21%	43%	23%	13%	1%
Black	12%	38%	26%	21%	2%
Hispanic	15%	37%	31%	12%	5%
No College Degree	15%	32%	28%	22%	4%
Some College	16%	45%	27%	11%	-
College Degree +	25%	51%	18%	5%	1%
Republican	13%	48%	27%	12%	-
Democrat	21%	40%	25%	13%	-
Independent	24%	40%	23%	12%	-
Rural	16%	41%	26%	15%	2%
Suburban	20%	39%	24%	15%	2%
Urban	19%	47%	23%	11%	1%

Americans' top concerns with data center construction are directly tied to their energy consumption.

Demographics	Strain on Infra	Impact on energy	Local env. impact	Noise / land use	Foreign ownership	No concerns	Not sure	Skipped
Female	56%	55%	50%	39%	35%	7%	17%	1%
Male	60%	61%	46%	37%	35%	9%	13%	2%
18-34	53%	52%	46%	39%	26%	8%	18%	4%
35-49	56%	54%	51%	36%	34%	9%	13%	1%
50-64	60%	61%	47%	38%	39%	8%	15%	-
65+	64%	66%	48%	39%	42%	6%	12%	-
White	67%	62%	50%	42%	39%	7%	12%	1%
Black	36%	40%	41%	26%	19%	8%	29%	2%
Hispanic	45%	52%	39%	31%	30%	9%	18%	2%
No College Degree	41%	47%	36%	29%	31%	9%	24%	3%
Some College	58%	57%	45%	36%	38%	10%	13%	-
College Degree +	75%	69%	62%	48%	36%	5%	6%	1%
Republican	57%	55%	33%	33%	44%	13%	11%	-
Democrat	60%	63%	61%	46%	27%	5%	15%	-
Independent	62%	60%	51%	38%	36%	7%	13%	-
Rural	58%	59%	47%	39%	40%	7%	16%	2%
Suburban	59%	60%	46%	37%	34%	8%	15%	1%
Urban	56%	54%	50%	38%	33%	9%	15%	1%

Which concerns, if any, would you have about data centers being built in your own local community?

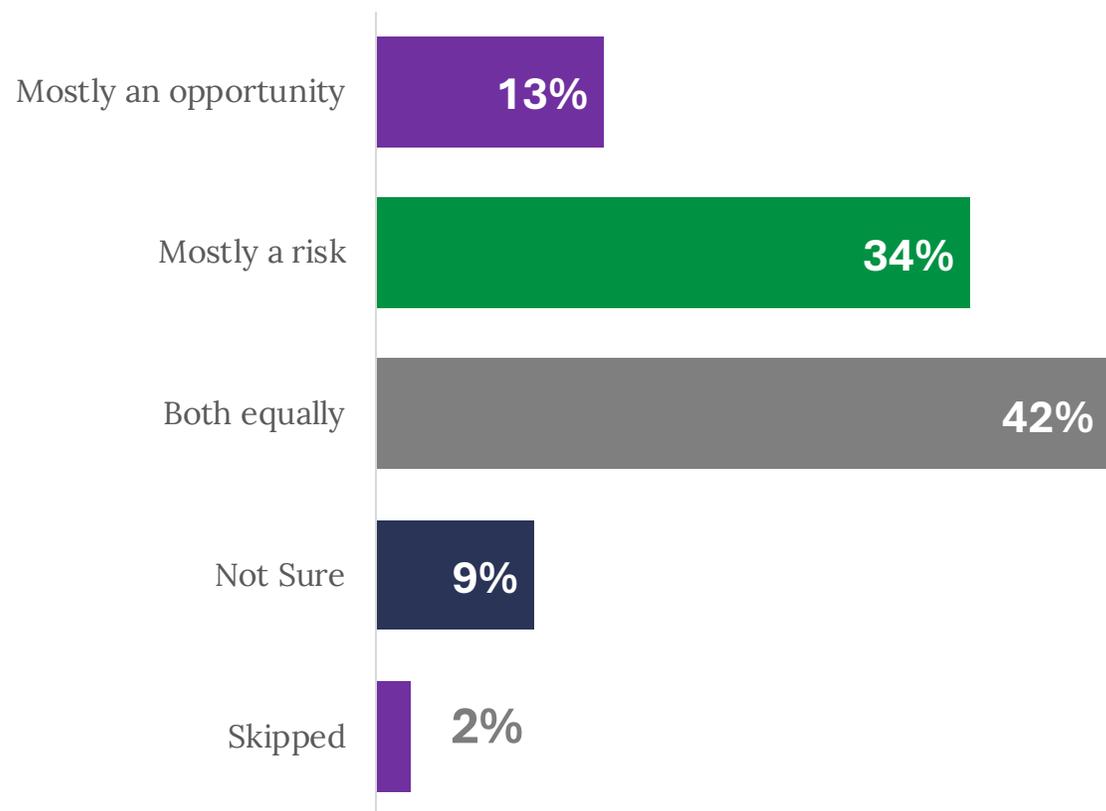| Concern	
Strain on infrastructure	58%
Impact on local energy prices	58%
Noise or land use	38%
Local impact on environment	38%
Foreign ownership	35%
No concern	8%
Not Sure	15%
Skipped	1%

Artificial Intelligence

There is strong skepticism among Americans on the effects of AI on society.

Artificial intelligence is expected to change many things in the country including national security, healthcare, and the economy. Overall, do you see AI as mostly an opportunity or a risk for the U.S.?
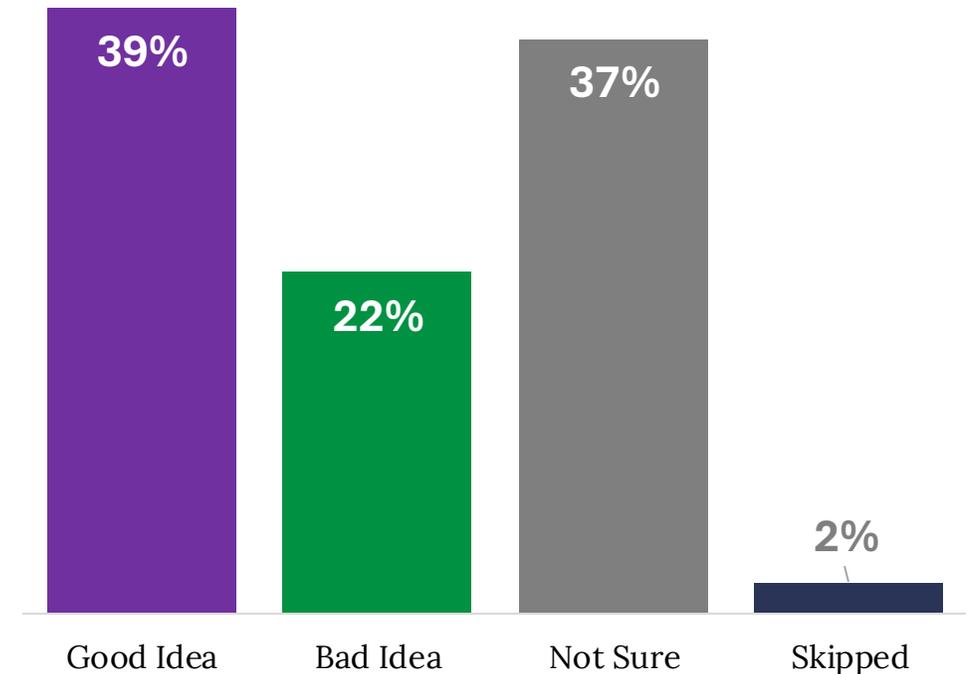
Mostly an opportunity: **13%**

Mostly a risk: **34%**

Both equally: **42%**

Not Sure: **9%**

Skipped: **2%**

Demographics	Mostly an Opportunity	Mostly a Risk	Both Equally	Not Sure	Skipped
Female	10%	37%	40%	11%	1%
Male	17%	30%	43%	8%	2%
18-34	13%	38%	33%	12%	4%
35-49	14%	38%	39%	7%	2%
50-64	13%	28%	51%	8%	-
65+	14%	30%	45%	10%	-
White	12%	37%	41%	9%	1%
Black	10%	33%	40%	14%	3%
Hispanic	13%	33%	43%	7%	3%
No College Degree	11%	33%	38%	14%	4%
Some College	13%	36%	43%	9%	-
College Degree+	16%	33%	44%	5%	1%
Republican	18%	29%	45%	8%	-
Democrat	9%	42%	41%	8%	-
Independent	15%	31%	45%	10%	-
Rural	12%	41%	36%	9%	1%
Suburban	15%	28%	45%	10%	2%
Urban	13%	38%	40%	9%	1%

Proposals for a "sandbox" approach to AI regulation are supported by a plurality of Americans, but nearly two-in-five voters remain unsure. As more information about AI regulations appears in the news, this issue could quickly move in either direction.

Demographics	Good Idea	Bad Idea	Not Sure	Skipped
Female	37%	24%	38%	1%
Male	42%	20%	35%	3%
18-34	29%	25%	41%	5%
35-49	41%	26%	31%	1%
50-64	43%	20%	37%	0%
65+	46%	19%	35%	-
White	38%	22%	38%	1%
Black	32%	29%	36%	3%
Hispanic	39%	22%	37%	3%
No College Degree	36%	21%	39%	4%
Some College	41%	24%	35%	0%
College Degree +	42%	22%	35%	1%
Republican	47%	21%	32%	1%
Democrat	38%	25%	37%	0%
Independent	39%	21%	39%	0%
Rural	33%	29%	36%	2%
Suburban	41%	19%	38%	2%
Urban	40%	24%	35%	1%

Some lawmakers have proposed an "AI regulatory sandbox," allowing companies to test AI systems under limited rules before full regulations are applied. Just your impression, do you think this is a good idea or a bad idea?

Good Idea	Bad Idea	Not Sure	Skipped
39%	22%	37%	2%

By a wide margin, respondents are more concerned with limiting the risks of AI than they are with slowing innovation.

Thinking about AI regulation and innovation, which do you think is the better approach?

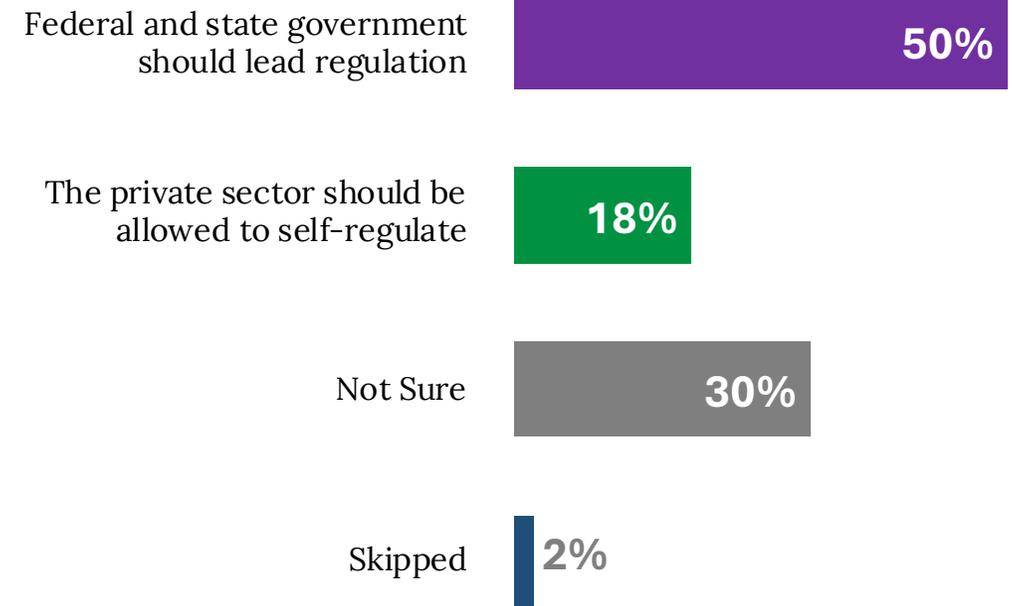| Category	Percentage
Encourage AI innovation first, even if there are risks	12%
Regulate AI early to limit risks, even if it slows innovation	69%
Not Sure	17%
Skipped	2%

Demographics	Encourage AI	Regulate AI	Not Sure	Skipped
Female	8%	72%	19%	1%
Male	16%	65%	15%	3%
18-34	13%	62%	20%	5%
35-49	11%	66%	21%	1%
50-64	13%	71%	15%	1%
65+	11%	77%	11%	1%
White	11%	72%	16%	1%
Black	13%	56%	28%	3%
Hispanic	12%	70%	16%	2%
No College Degree	10%	64%	22%	4%
Some College	10%	71%	19%	0%
College Degree +	16%	72%	10%	1%
Republican	17%	67%	15%	1%
Democrat	8%	76%	16%	0%
Independent	15%	70%	15%	0%
Rural	9%	70%	19%	3%
Suburban	14%	67%	18%	2%
Urban	12%	71%	15%	2%

Just 18% of Americans believe the private sector should be allowed to self-regulate on AI. A majority believe federal or state governments should step in to set ground rules.

Demographics	Federal & State	Private Sector	Not Sure	Skipped
Female	47%	15%	37%	1%
Male	54%	20%	23%	3%
18-34	44%	19%	33%	5%
35-49	50%	19%	30%	1%
50-64	50%	20%	30%	1%
65+	60%	12%	27%	0%
White	54%	16%	28%	1%
Black	40%	16%	40%	3%
Hispanic	44%	23%	31%	2%
No College Degree	40%	17%	39%	4%
Some College	50%	20%	30%	-
College Degree +	61%	17%	21%	1%
Republican	52%	23%	25%	1%
Democrat	60%	12%	28%	0%
Independent	48%	20%	31%	1%
Rural	45%	22%	32%	2%
Suburban	49%	18%	31%	2%
Urban	54%	16%	29%	1%

Who do you think should take the lead in regulating AI?

Federal and state government should lead regulation — **50%**

The private sector should be allowed to self-regulate — **18%**
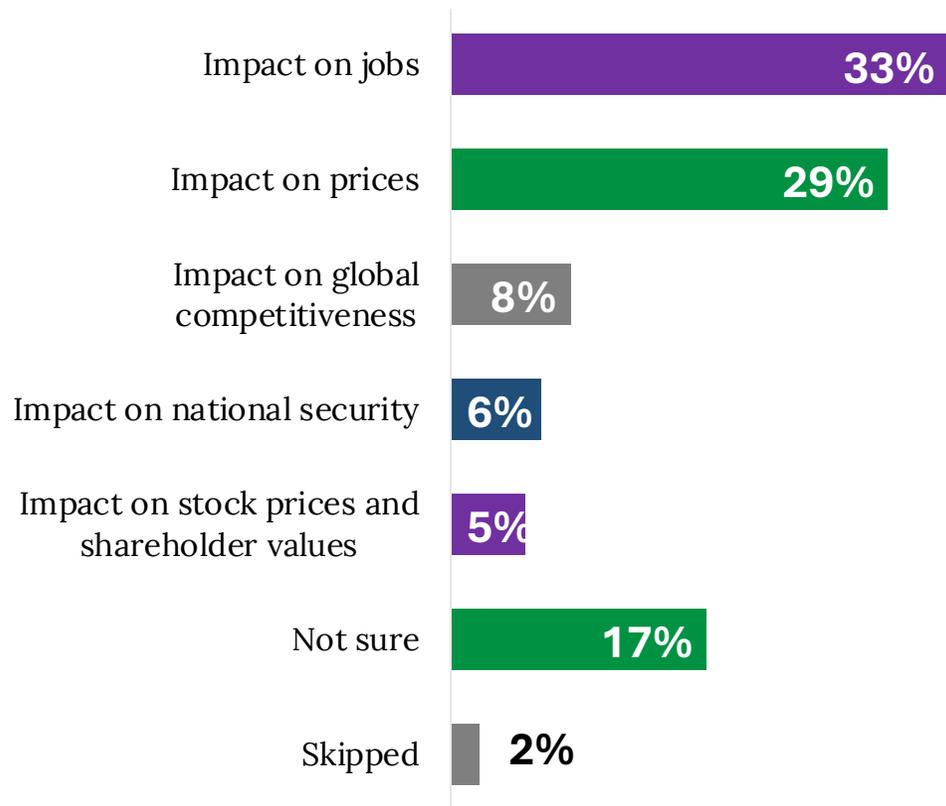
Not Sure — **30%**

Skipped — **2%**

Corporate Mergers

When it comes to corporate mergers, Americans are most concerned with how it will affect their families and communities in the form of impact on jobs and prices.

Thinking about when large companies propose mergers with smaller companies, which factor matters most to you when thinking about corporate mergers?
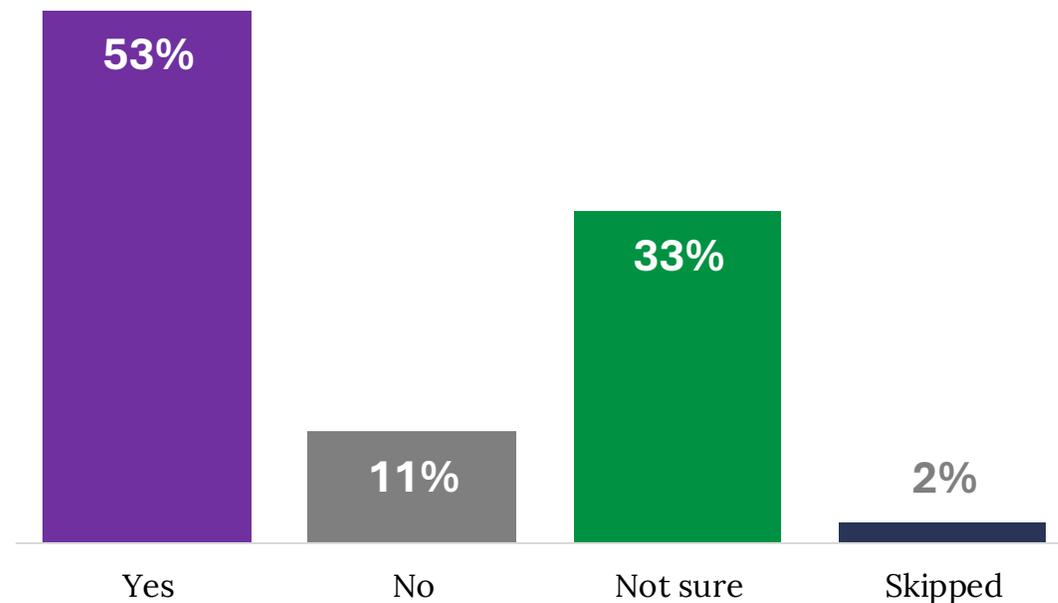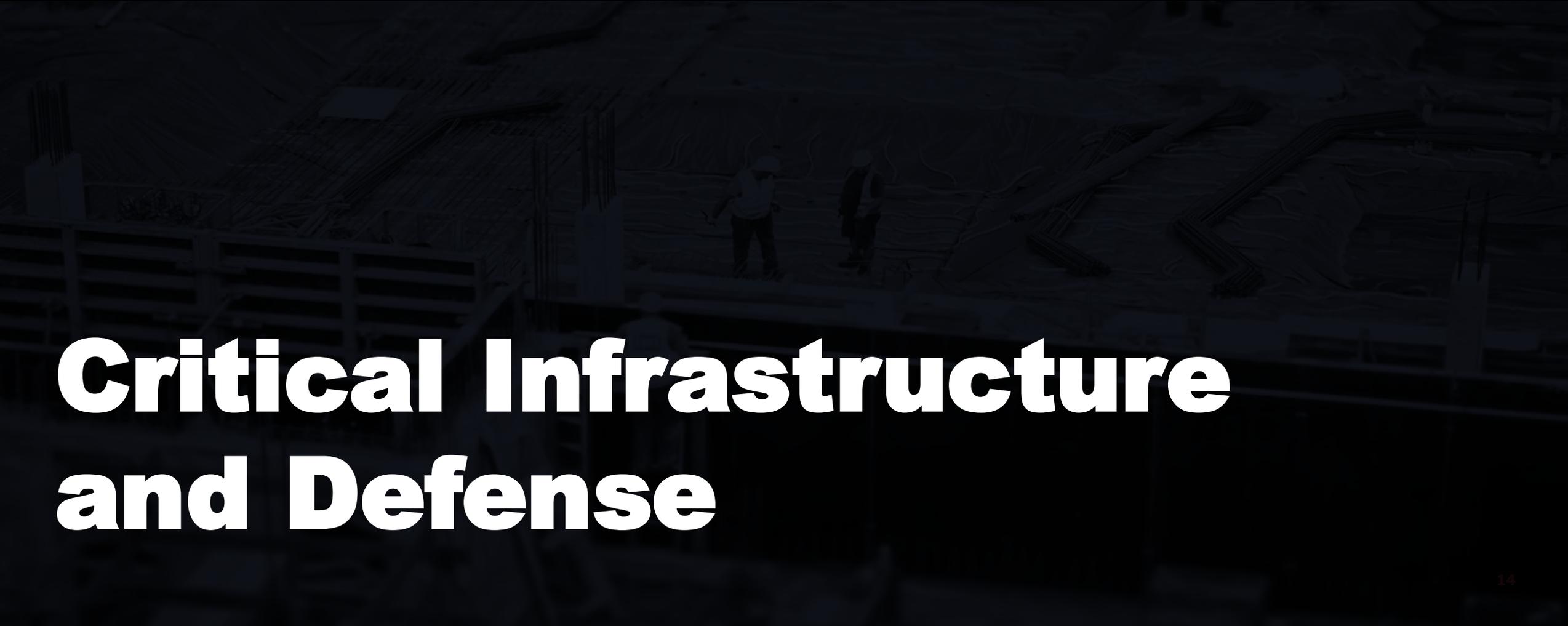
Factor	%
Impact on jobs	33%
Impact on prices	29%
Impact on global competitiveness	8%
Impact on national security	6%
Impact on stock prices and shareholder values	5%
Not sure	17%
Skipped	2%

Demographics	Impact on Jobs	Impact on Prices	Impact on Global Competitiveness	Impact on National Security	Impact on Stock Prices	Not Sure	Skipped
Female	36%	29%	7%	6%	4%	17%	1%
Male	30%	30%	9%	7%	6%	16%	3%
18-34	23%	28%	9%	7%	3%	24%	5%
35-49	33%	26%	9%	5%	5%	20%	2%
50-64	41%	28%	7%	6%	5%	13%	-
65+	36%	35%	6%	7%	7%	8%	-
White	33%	32%	9%	6%	4%	15%	1%
Black	34%	19%	6%	6%	4%	28%	3%
Hispanic	28%	30%	8%	7%	8%	16%	3%
No College Degree	29%	23%	5%	7%	6%	25%	4%
Some College	34%	34%	5%	7%	3%	17%	-
College Degree +	37%	32%	13%	5%	5%	8%	1%
Republican	37%	28%	7%	8%	5%	14%	1%
Democrat	34%	30%	9%	4%	6%	17%	-
Independent	33%	33%	9%	7%	4%	14%	-
Rural	33%	28%	6%	7%	4%	20%	3%
Suburban	32%	27%	10%	5%	5%	18%	2%
Urban	33%	33%	6%	7%	5%	13%	2%

Americans are wary of corporate mergers in critical infrastructure sectors, with 53% believing they should face stricter review than mergers in other industries.

Demographics	No	Yes	Skipped	Not Sure
Female	10%	45%	2%	43%
Male	12%	61%	3%	42%
18-34	13%	42%	6%	40%
35-49	12%	50%	2%	36%
50-64	10%	58%	1%	32%
65+	11%	64%	-	25%
White	10%	56%	2%	32%
Black	20%	32%	3%	45%
Hispanic	10%	54%	3%	33%
No College Degree	12%	44%	5%	40%
Some College	12%	45%	1%	33%
College Degree +	11%	62%	1%	27%
Republican	14%	56%	1%	29%
Democrat	13%	52%	-	35%
Independent	10%	56%	1%	34%
Rural	12%	49%	36%	3%
Suburban	11%	53%	34%	2%
Urban	12%	55%	31%	3%

Do you believe mergers in critical infrastructure sectors should face stricter review and scrutiny than mergers in other industries?
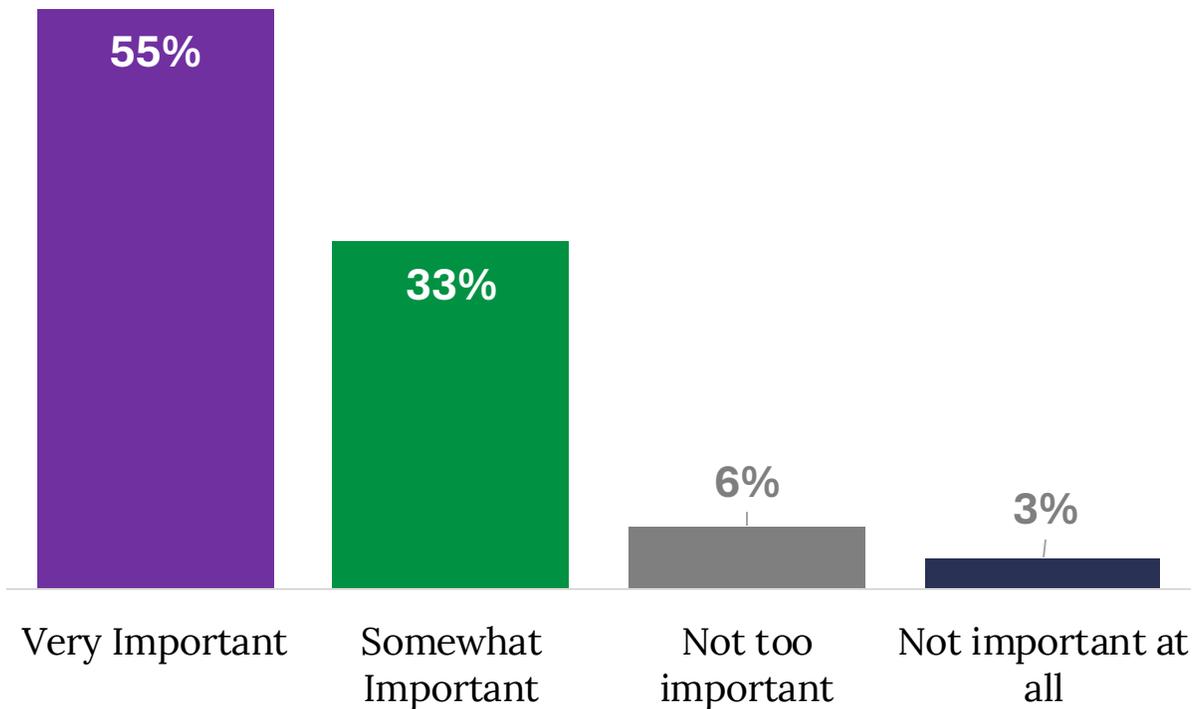
Critical Infrastructure and Defense

There is near-universal support for manufacturing critical materials at home.

How important is it for the U.S. to be able to manufacture important materials inside of the country for things like national defense and building and construction materials?
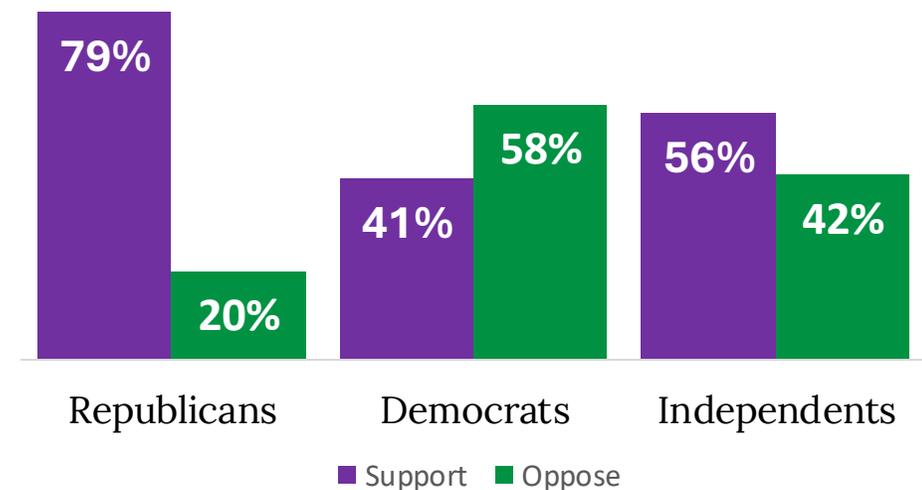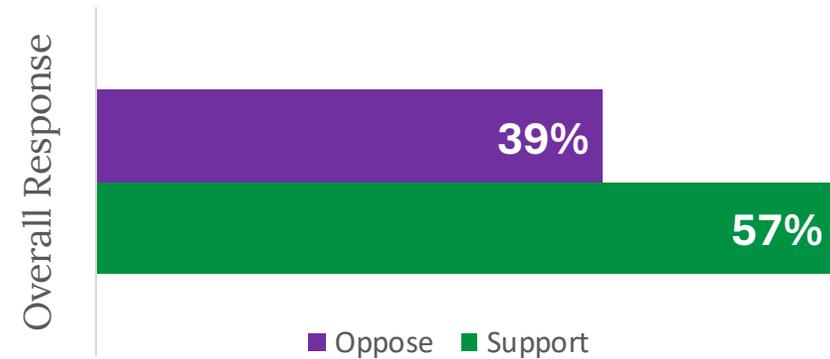

- Very Important: 55%
- Somewhat Important: 33%
- Not too important: 6%
- Not important at all: 3%

Demographics	Important	Not Important	Skipped
Female	89%	9%	2%
Male	88%	9%	3%
18-34	78%	17%	5%
35-54	87%	9%	4%
50-64	95%	5%	-
65+	97%	2%	-
White	93%	6%	1%
Black	82%	13%	5%
Hispanic	83%	12%	4%
No College Degree	84%	10%	5%
Some College	92%	7%	1%
College Degree +	91%	8%	2%
Republican	96%	3%	1%
Democrat	87%	13%	1%
Independent	91%	8%	1%
Rural	90%	6%	4%
Suburban	90%	8%	2%
Urban	86%	11%	2%

A majority support increased federal investment in national defense, even if it adds to the debt, driven overwhelmingly by Republicans.

Demographics	Support	Oppose	Skipped
Female	56%	40%	4%
Male	59%	38%	3%
18-34	45%	48%	7%
35-54	53%	42%	5%
50-64	64%	35%	1%
65+	70%	28%	1%
White	63%	34%	3%
Black	42%	51%	7%
Hispanic	50%	47%	4%
HS Grad or Less	58%	36%	6%
Some College	61%	38%	1%
College Degree +	54%	43%	3%
Republican	79%	20%	1%
Democrat	41%	58%	1%
Independent	56%	42%	2%
Rural	67%	28%	5%
Suburban	61%	37%	4%
Urban	48%	49%	4%

Do you support increased federal investment in national defense and infrastructure even if it adds to the national debt?

Overall Response

- Oppose 39%
- Support 57%

■ Oppose ■ Support

Republicans: 79% / 20%
Democrats: 41% / 58%
Independents: 56% / 42%

■ Support ■ Oppose

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