



November 2, 2021

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Erik Iverson and Kelly Middendorff, Moore Information Group and David Binder, David Binder Research
RE: USA Voter Survey on Broadband Funding

A recent national voter survey (N=800) finds widespread support for funding broadband internet access as part of the federal infrastructure package. Specifically, the survey revealed six key findings:

- 1) **Access to broadband internet is essential to voters' daily lives and a wide majority believes the pandemic has increased the urgency of having access to an affordable and reliable broadband internet connection.**
 - A 54% majority say broadband internet is "essential" to their everyday lives and another 30% say it is important. Just 13% say it is not very or not important at all. Further, more than seven-in-ten say that lack of access to broadband internet for the 42 million Americans who don't have it is a problem (35% major problem, 37% minor problem).
 - More than three-in-five voters (62%) say the coronavirus pandemic has increased the urgency for every American to have access to an affordable and reliable broadband internet connection.
- 2) **A solid majority of American voters believes it is important that Congress pass the infrastructure bill which includes \$65 billion in funding for broadband internet programs.**
 - On the initial ballot test, 60% of voters support and 28% oppose a bipartisan infrastructure package that includes \$1 trillion in funding for bridges, highways, roads, ports, waterways, airports and broadband internet throughout the country. Just 12% remain undecided.
 - Fully two-thirds of voters say it is "essential" (38%) or "fairly important" (28%) that the U.S. House join the Senate in passing the "bipartisan infrastructure package that will invest \$65 billion to expand access to broadband internet by supporting the expansion of broadband networks, making permanent programs to help make broadband service affordable and expand access to programs that teach digital skills."
 - This sentiment is shared by the majority of Democrats and Independents. Soft Republicans also assign importance to the \$65 billion broadband expenditure, but hard-core Republicans are less likely to feel this way. Support is highest (74% saying "essential" or "important") among voters with annual incomes less than \$50,000.
- 3) **American voters recognize the need for equity in broadband internet access and that broadband access is essential in our ability to compete in the 21st Century global economy.**
 - **81% agree** "The 21st Century economy is becoming increasingly dependent on digital technology. Americans must have the digital skills necessary to succeed in an evolving workforce if we are going to be able to maintain America's competitive edge in the global economy."
 - **71% agree** "Access to broadband internet is essential to protecting and realizing the American Dream in the 21st Century economy and classroom." This includes 91% of African American voters.

- **67% agree** “Now more than ever, creating good jobs, lifting wages, reducing poverty, improving health outcomes and strengthening education depends on affordable, reliable broadband connectivity and access to digital devices in every American community.”
- **65% agree** “It’s important to fund permanent solutions to help low-income Americans afford broadband internet in order to support more equitable communities and create greater opportunity for every American.”
- **89% agree** “owning a device, like a tablet, laptop or desktop computer” is essential/important for success in the modern economy and classroom.

4) There is solid support for the three major components of the broadband infrastructure proposal, including digital workforce training, investment in infrastructure to provide access to those who don’t have it and financial assistance for Americans who can’t afford broadband services or devices.

- **66% support (45% strongly)** “Funding for digital training programs to help Americans in every community learn the skills necessary, including the ability to use, work and communicate from computers, for success in the 21st Century economy.”
- **66% support (44% strongly)** “Investments in broadband internet infrastructure to reach Americans without access to a broadband internet connection in the most cost-effective and rapid manner possible.”
- **62% support (45% strongly)** “Funding to provide permanent financial assistance for Americans who cannot afford broadband service or devices, like students in low-income families who need broadband access and tablets or laptops for school.”

5) Current gaps in broadband access for students, affordability and lack of equity in broadband coverage among communities of color are strong arguments that help increase support for federally funded broadband programs.

Wide majorities of voters find the following three statements about the need for broadband funding to be “very” or “fairly” convincing reasons to support the bill.

- **68% convincing (46% very convincing)** “As many as 17 million American students, nearly one-third of all public school students, live in a household without the broadband service, a device, or both, needed to complete schoolwork or homework requiring an internet connection.”
- **60% convincing (38% very convincing)** “The broadband gap disproportionately impacts communities of color. Thirty-five percent of Latino adults and 29% of African American adults lack a broadband connection at home. This stark divide not only exacerbates systemic challenges but hinders the economic progress of the entire nation.”
- **61% convincing (37% very convincing)** “Four-in-ten adults with lower incomes do not have broadband internet service in their home or a desktop or laptop computer. This gap in affordability reinforces historic barriers to opportunity, undermining efforts to bring greater equity to American communities.”

6) Nearly three-in-five (59%) of voters say they will be more likely to support a candidate for Congress who supports “Making sure every American can access an affordable and reliable broadband internet connection.”

- This includes three-quarters (77%) of Democrats, a majority of Independents (57%) and over one-third of Republicans (39%).

Methodology: *The survey was conducted by Moore Information Group, October 20-24, 2021, among a representative sample of 800 voters nationwide. Telephone interviews were conducted by live interviewers. The potential sampling error is plus or minus 3% at the 95% confidence level.*