

MEMORANDUM

TO: INTERESTED PARTIES
FROM: NEIL NEWHOUSE – PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES
SUBJECT: KEY FINDINGS FROM UTAH STATEWIDE POLLING
DATE: AUGUST 4, 2021

On behalf of The Nature Conservancy, Public Opinion Strategies recently completed a statewide survey of 600 registered voters in Utah. The poll was conducted July 12-14 and has a margin of error of +/- 4.0% in 95 out of 100 cases.

The purpose of this memo is to briefly review the key findings of the completed research.

KEY FINDINGS

1. Over 60% of Utahns support infrastructure legislation being passed and signed into law.

By a 61%-27% margin, Utah voters support infrastructure legislation being passed and signed into law, with at least a plurality of voters across party lines agreeing. Fully 85% of Democrats, 64% of Independents and 49% of Republicans support passing infrastructure legislation. (Republicans support passing the legislation by a 49%-38% margin.)

2. Utah voters support ALL of the projects that could be included in the infrastructure legislation.

Voters were questioned about fourteen specific projects that could be included in the infrastructure legislation, and a majority of voters in the state responded that each of the projects tested should either “definitely” or “probably” be in the bill:

Proposal	Total % in Bill
Upgrading and improving water infrastructure and storage capability.	96%
Overhauling and upgrading transportation across the country, including repairing and upgrading roads, bridges, and rail lines.	93%
Upgrading the nation's cybersecurity infrastructure.	91%
Updating the country's electric grid.	90%
Encouraging more products to be made in the US in order to be less economically reliant on China.	82%
Expanding and improving broadband Internet access to rural communities.	77%
Increasing affordable housing.	68%
Replacing all lead water pipes in homes and businesses with non-lead pipes.	66%
Transitioning the nation's energy from coal and gas to renewable energy.	65%
Retrofitting homes, schools and commercial buildings to make them more	65%

energy efficient.	
Increasing pay for caregivers of elderly and disabled people.	63%
Increasing pay for caregivers of elderly and disabled people.	56%
Significantly boosting the electric car market and support for electric vehicles by building electric vehicle charging stations across the country.	55%
Promoting greater racial equality in the economy through job training.	54%

3. When voters learn more about what might be in the legislation, support increases across party lines.

After hearing specifics about what might be in the infrastructure legislation, support for passing an infrastructure plan increased from 61% to 70%, with Democrats increasing their support from 85% to 98%, Independents from 64% to 69% and Republicans from 49% to 60%.

4. Make no mistake, environmental/climate issues are a top priority for Utah voters.

When asked the importance of fifteen different issues that the President and Congress could address, four of voters’ top six issues deal with environmental/climate issues:

Issue	% Very High Priority
Ensuring adequate and clean water supply	49%
Reducing the country’s dependence on foreign oil	42%
Improving the economy	38%
Having reliable electrical power	37%
Preventing catastrophic wildfires	37%
Improving air quality	34%

5. Utahns strongly support renewable energy sources.

Solar power (89% favorable), hydropower (81%), geothermal power (81%) and wind power (80%) are all favorably perceived by at least 80% of the voters in the state, indicating strong support for renewable energy sources.

6. Don’t underestimate the importance of water infrastructure to Utah voters.

Not only is “ensuring adequate and clean water supply” rated as the top priority for the President and Congress, but “upgrading and improving water infrastructure and storage capability” scores the highest of the fourteen different infrastructure programs that could be included in legislation.

Further, by a whopping 84%-14% margin, Utah voters support the use of “using federal infrastructure funds to invest in greater water conservation efforts, reduce wildfire risks, and improve forest resilience.” (Even 80% of Republicans support this.)

Bottom Line

Utah voters not only support an infrastructure package being passed and signed into law, they have strong opinions as to what should be in it. Water infrastructure tops their list of priorities in the legislation, while wildfires, air quality and reliable power are on their “to-do” list for the President and Congress.

Support for infrastructure legislation starts off strong in the state and only grows (across party lines) once voters learn more about what could be included in it.