



# Attitudes on Investments in Clean Energy and Clean Manufacturing in 13 Key States

Strategic findings from an online survey of 1,011 registered voters with less than a 4-year college degree in 13 key states about implementation of the Inflation Reduction Act.

*May 2023*



# Methodologies & Geographic Profile of Respondents



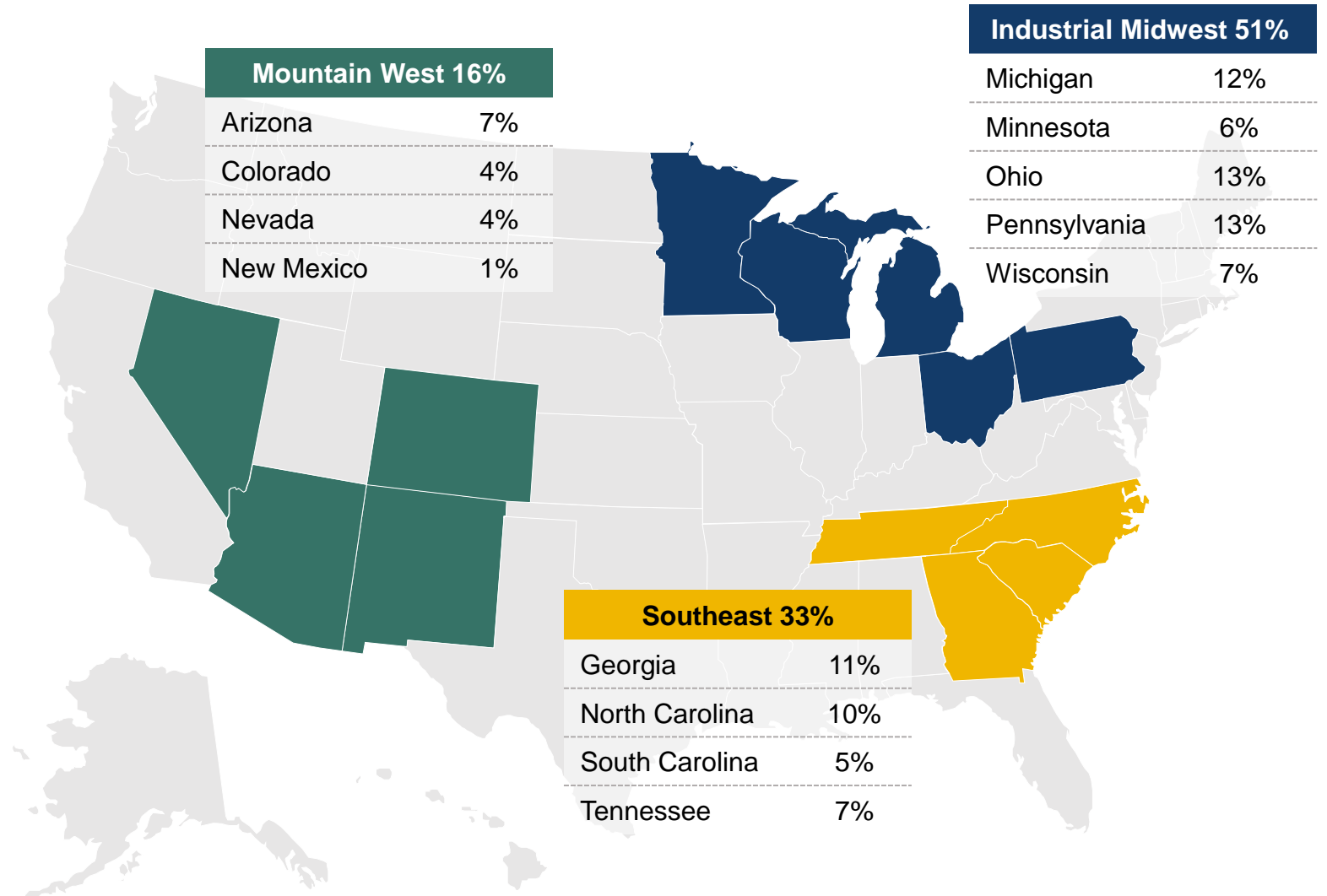
Three online focus groups with working-class adults from 13 key states

Conducted April 5-6, 2023



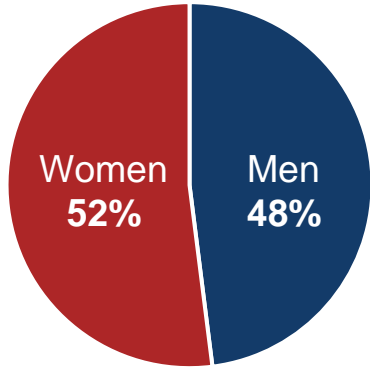
Online survey of 1,011 registered voters with less than a 4-year college degree in 13 key states about implementation of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

Conducted May 9-13, 2023



# Demographic Profile of Respondents

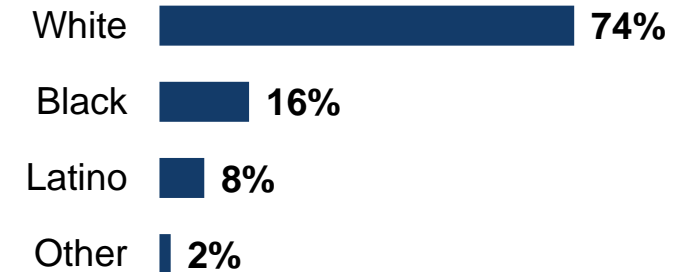
Gender



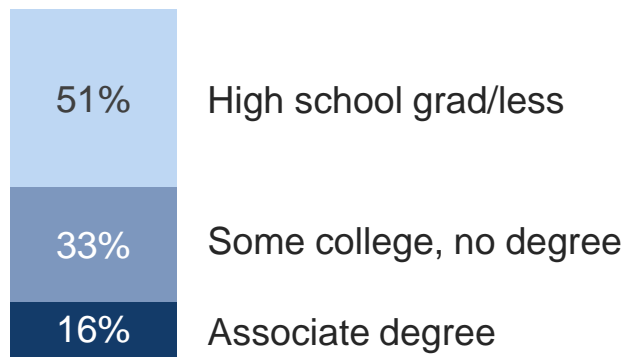
Age



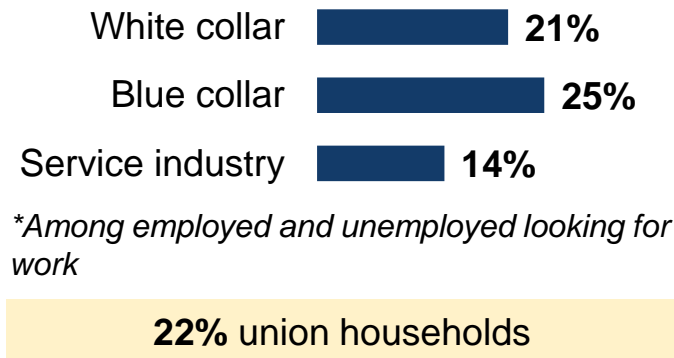
Race



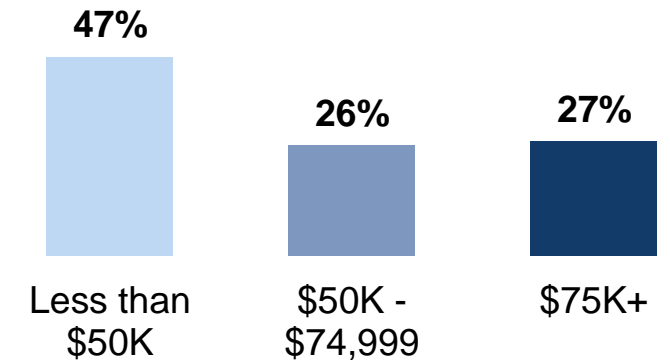
Education



Job type\*



Income



# Key Takeaways: Critical Context

1

**Noncollege adults in these 13 key states remain a challenging audience.**

- They are dissatisfied with how the economy is working for the country overall and for them personally.

2

**Investments in clean energy and clean manufacturing offer a promising opportunity to make an economic case with this audience.**

- Clean energy is highly popular across party lines, much more so than fossil fuels.
- Nearly three in four (72%) approve of the federal government making significant investments in clean energy and clean manufacturing.
- While noncollege adults initially focus more on potential environmental benefits, messaging is effective at convincing them that the investments will help the economy overall as well as working-class people like them.

# Key Takeaways: Communication Imperatives

We need to...

1

## **Briefly explain what clean manufacturing means:**

“cleaning up industry so factories make things in a way that produces less pollution, and manufacturing the components of clean energy, like solar panels and wind turbines.”

- “Clean energy” shorthand is readily understood without elaboration.

2

## **Give specific examples of what investments in clean energy will do.** These four are the most popular:

- Investing in U.S. clean energy manufacturers so that we are less reliant on China and other countries;
- Investing in our infrastructure, including roads, bridges, railways, and airports;
- Investing in U.S. manufacturers to create good-paying jobs for workers who have been hardest hit, including low-income workers, women, and people of color;
- Upgrading and expanding the U.S. electric grid so it can handle more energy use

# Key Takeaways: Communications imperatives

There are three main arguments to make for investments in clean energy and clean manufacturing:



## Environment

*Briefly (these benefits are already intuitive, credible, and important)*

Highlight benefits to:

- Improving our clean air and clean water
- Protecting people's health by reducing pollution.



## Economic Independence

*Important benefit but not top-of-mind*

Highlight:

- Making the US more energy independent
- Reviving American manufacturing to make here instead of relying on China, other countries
- Bringing supply chains back home



## Jobs

Need to make this argument clearly and explicitly.

Explain what kinds of jobs are created:

- Jobs for workers without college degrees or past experience who are willing to learn on the job
- Jobs that will strengthen and grow our communities and the U.S. economy far into the future

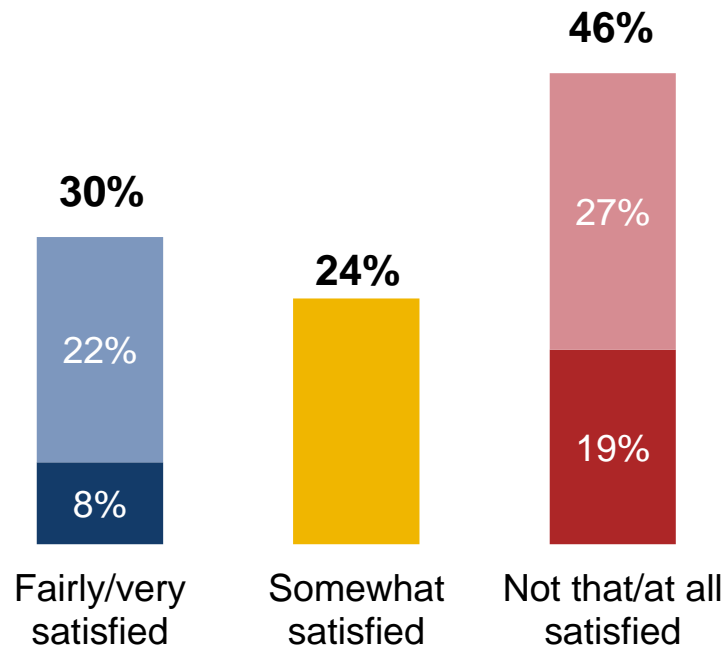
It's better to explain WHO will benefit, rather than the aggregate number of jobs created: Jobs for people who have been hardest hit, including low-income workers, women, and people of color

**Economic landscape**

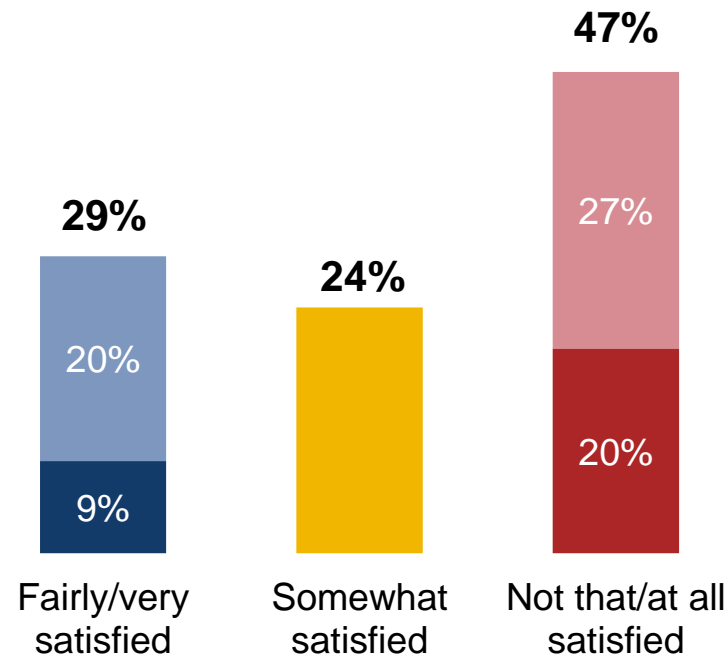
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# Noncollege adults have a pessimistic outlook on the current economic situation.

*How satisfied are you with the economic situation here in [STATE] today?*




*How satisfied are you with the economic situation for you and your family today?*



	Very/fairly satisfied %	
	State	Family
Industrial MW	29	30
Southeast	36	31
Mountain West	23	20
White collar	34	34
Blue collar	33	26
Service industry	26	23
Democrats	48	42
Independents	19	24
Republicans	19	20



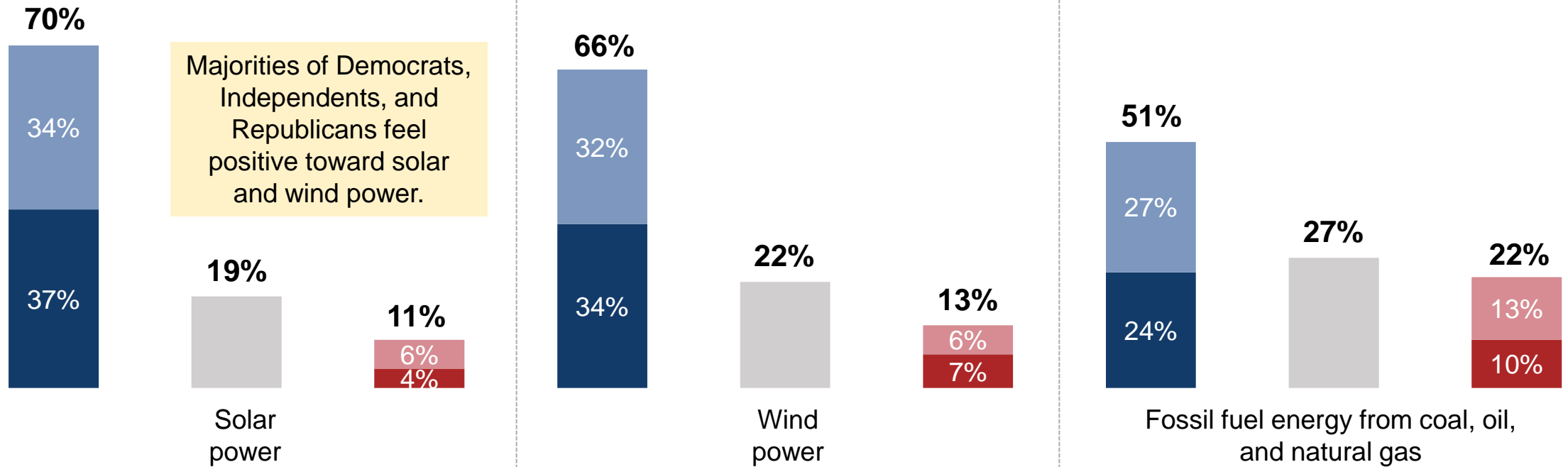
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**Clean energy and clean manufacturing receive strong support among noncollege adults in these 13 key states.**

# Solar and wind are much more popular than fossil fuels.

## Rating of feelings

■ Very positive   ■ Somewhat positive   ■ Neutral/no opinion   ■ Somewhat negative   ■ Very negative



# In focus groups, working-class participants demonstrate a clear and common understanding of clean energy. Clean manufacturing is less familiar and requires an explanation.



## “Clean energy” works effectively as shorthand

- Many intuitively think of solar panels and wind turbines
- Several go further and mention nuclear power, hydroelectric, and electric vehicles

The consensus in these conversations is that “clean energy” produces less pollution and is better for the environment



## “Clean manufacturing” is more of an enigma

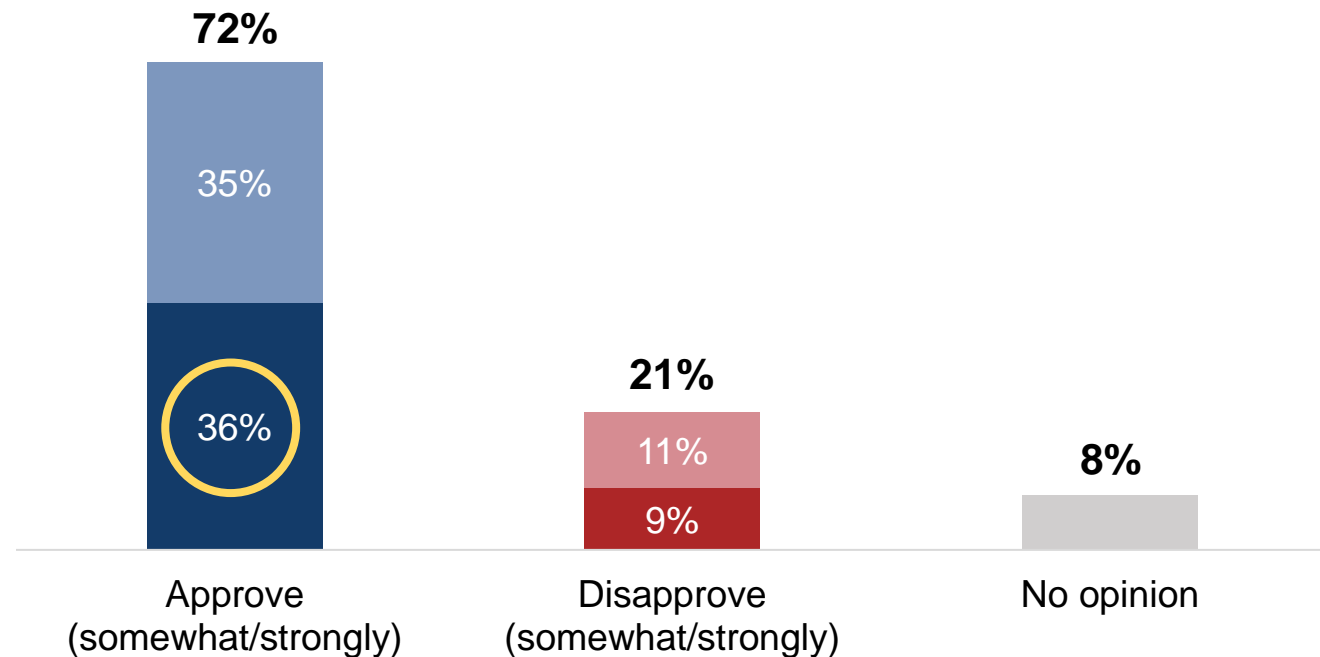
- Many say they have never heard the term before
- Several guess that it means a physically clean facility (e.g., “not dirty”) and others guess it refers literally to making cleaning products
- A few intuit that it involves less pollution and waste, but nobody suggested it relates to manufacturing of clean energy products or equipment

# Noncollege adults approve of investments in clean energy and clean manufacturing, but support is tepid.

**Clean energy** refers to energy made from sources like wind and solar power, which do not cause carbon pollution.

**Clean manufacturing** refers to cleaning up industry so that all kinds of things are made in a way that makes factories pollute less, as well as manufacturing the components of clean energy, like solar panels and wind turbines.

*In the past two years, the federal government has made significant investments in clean energy and clean manufacturing here in the United States. Do you approve or disapprove of these investments?*



# Approval of investments in clean energy and clean manufacturing is high across the board.

## % saying strongly/somewhat approve

All Adults	72
Industrial MW	71
Southeast	76
Mountain West	65
Democrats	92
Independents	75
Republicans	53
Men	73
Women	70
White adults	68
Black adults	84

## % saying strongly/somewhat approve

18-34	83
35-49	67
50-64	70
65+	66
Urban	80
Suburban	71
Small town/rural	68
White collar	74
Blue collar	73
Service	80
Union household	78

# The top reasons for approving of the investments relate to environmental benefits.

*Aggregated volunteered responses among those who approve of the investments*

**Helps with climate change**

**Long term benefits/looking out for future generations**

Expanding use of clean energy/transfer away from fossil fuels

Beneficial/good/like it

Boosting manufacturing

**Good for the environment**

Creating jobs/keeps jobs in America

Good for/stimulates the economy

Clean/cleaner air

Good for the country/moving forward/right direction

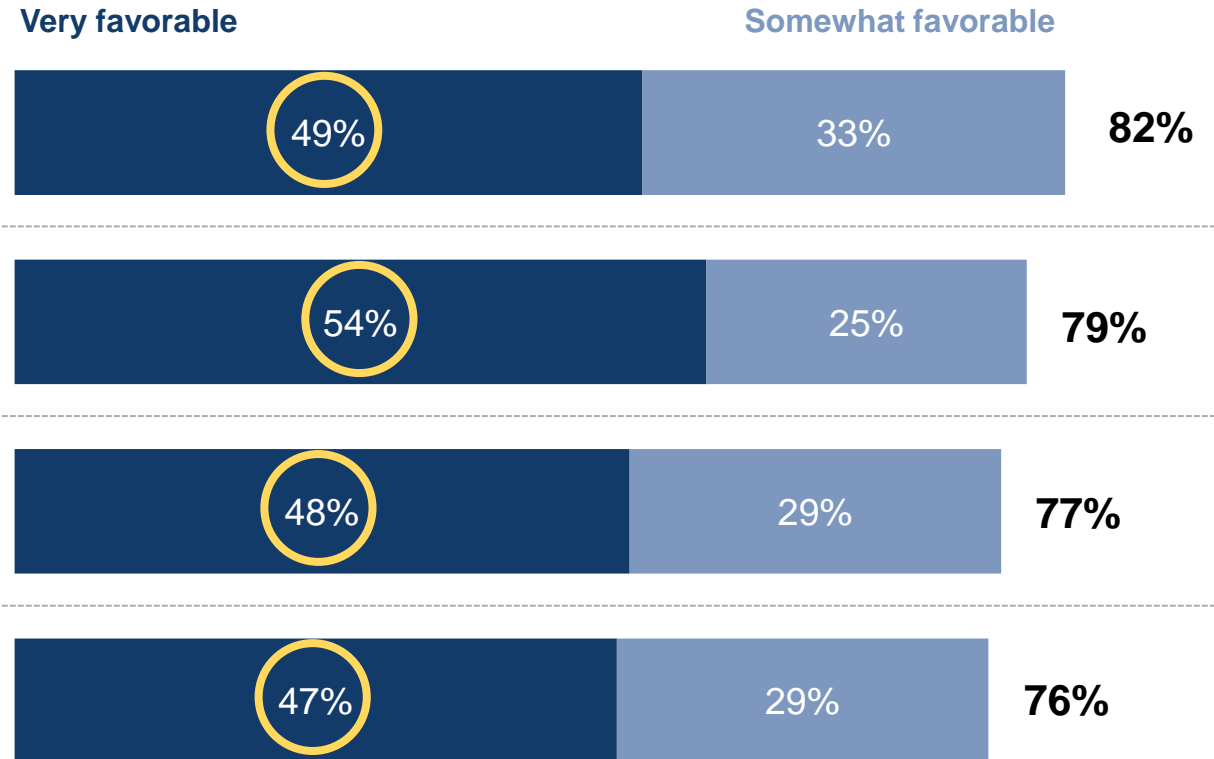
Trying to increase energy independence/self reliance

Reducing greenhouse gas

**Beneficial to society/will help people/improve lives**

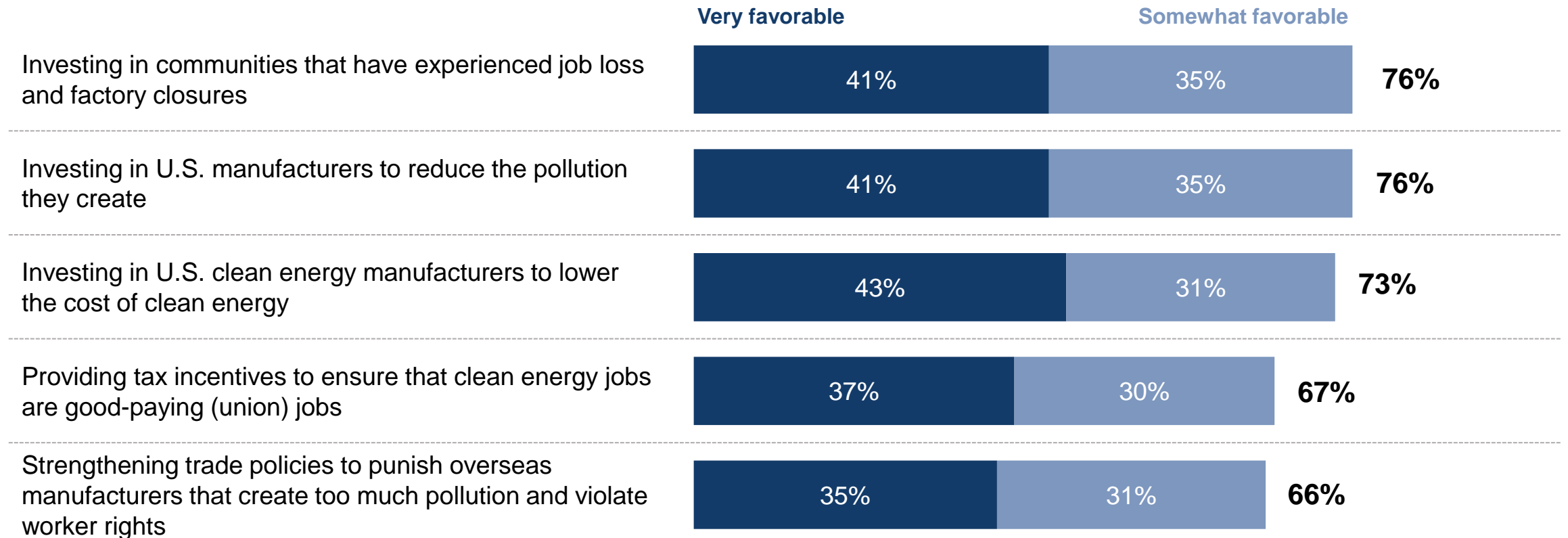
# Four specific components of the investments are especially appealing, with roughly half or more feeling very favorable toward them.

*Rating of opinion on policies that are part of the federal investments in clean energy and manufacturing.*



# Additional specific components of the investments in clean energy and clean manufacturing also garner high levels of support.

*Rating of opinion on policies that are part of the federal investments in clean energy and manufacturing.*





# Emphasizing that union jobs will be created strengthens the appeal for blue collar and service workers.

*% total favor*

■ All noncollege adults

■ Blue collar and service workers

Providing tax incentives to ensure that clean energy jobs are **good-paying jobs**



Providing tax incentives to ensure that clean energy jobs are **good-paying union jobs**



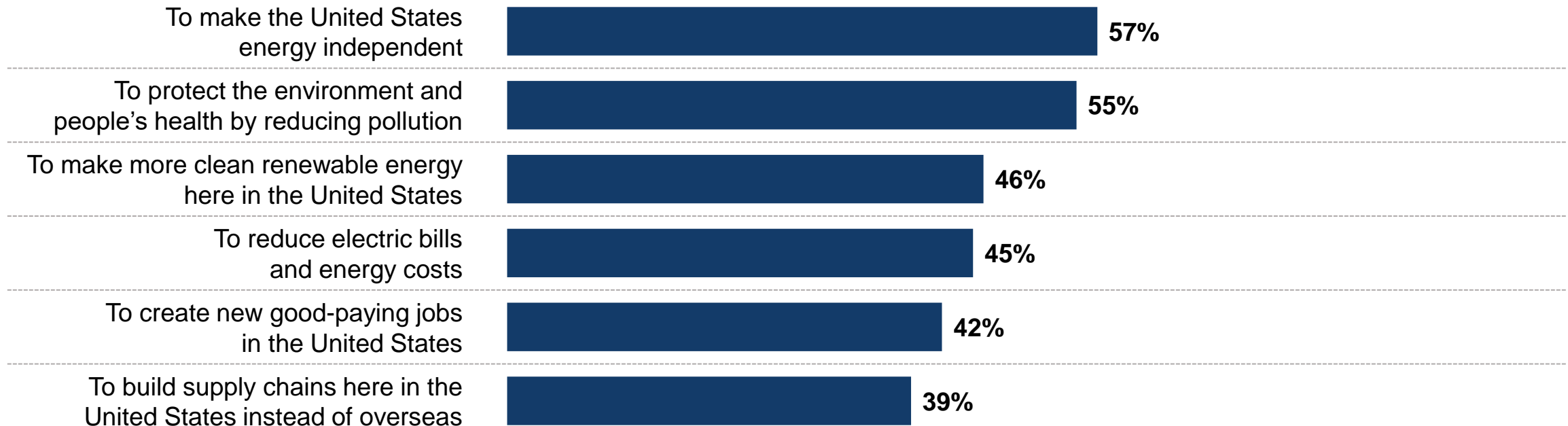
*Each statement shown to half the sample*

**Protecting the environment and economic independence are the top frames for investing in clean energy and clean manufacturing.**

**Because environmental benefits are intuitive, messaging should focus on how these investments will help revive American manufacturing and benefit noncollege workers.**

# Energy independence and protecting the environment and people's health are the most important frames in building enthusiasm for expanding clean energy and clean manufacturing.

*Top three most important reasons to increase our use of clean energy and expand clean manufacturing here in the US*

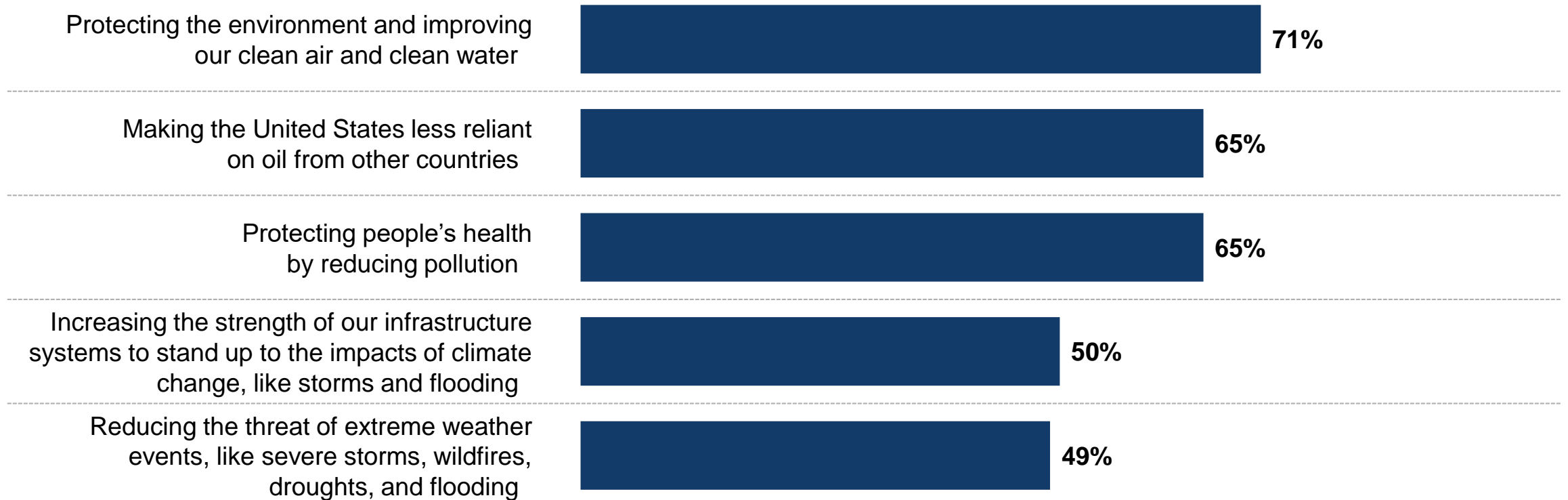


# Top reasons to expand clean energy and clean manufacturing are fairly consistent across gender and generations for blue collar and service workers.

Men working in blue collar/service	Women working in blue collar/service
US energy independence (56%)	Protect the environment and people's health (60%)
Protect the environment and people's health (52%)	US energy independence (52%)
18-49 working in blue collar/service	50+ working in blue collar/service
Protect the environment and people's health (59%)	US energy independence (67%)
Reduce electric bills and energy costs (51%)	Protect the environment and people's health (50%)
Black adults	White adults
Protect the environment and people's health (62%)	US energy independence (60%)
Create new good paying jobs in the US (55%)	Protect the environment and people's health (53%)

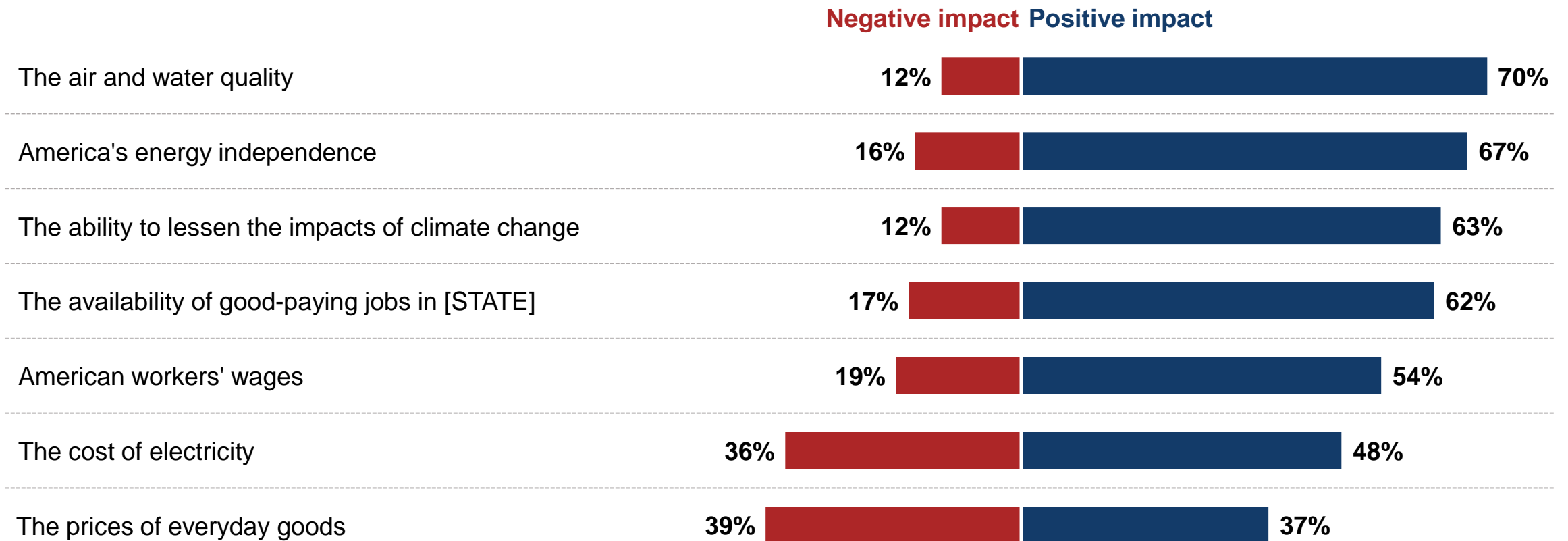
# The most important environmental reasons center on the fundamentals: protecting clean air, clean water, and people's health, while making the nation energy independent.

*Top three most important additional benefits of the federal investments in clean energy and clean manufacturing*



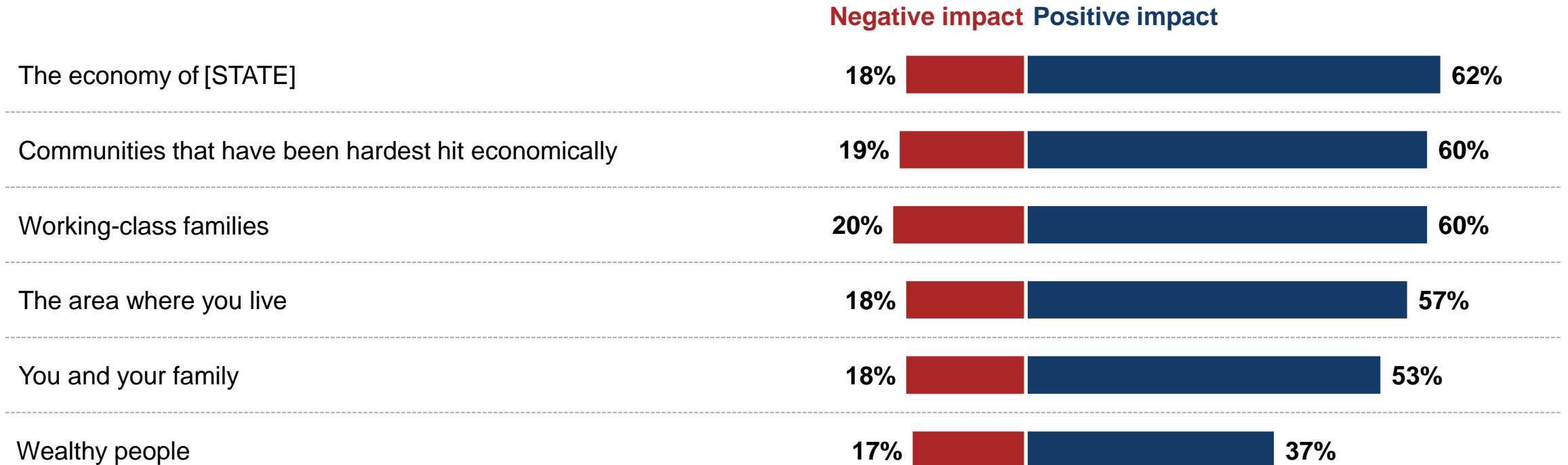
# Positive impacts on the environment and energy independence are highly credible.

*Do you think these policies will have a positive or negative effect on each of the following?*



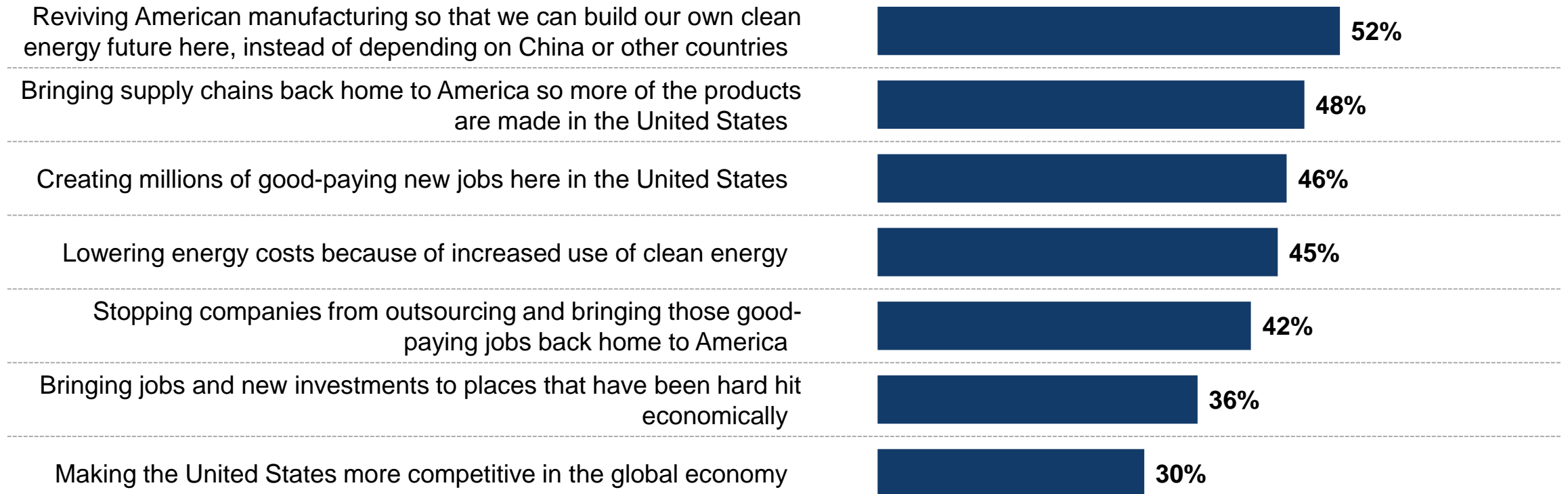
# An encouraging sign: a majority of noncollege adults also anticipate positive economic impacts, broadly and for themselves and their communities.

*Do you think the federal investments in clean energy and clean manufacturing will have a positive or negative impact on each of the following?*



# Economic independence is a crucial part of the story: reviving American manufacturing and making goods here in the United States are top benefits of these investments.

*Top three most important benefits of the federal investments in clean energy and clean manufacturing related to the economy.*

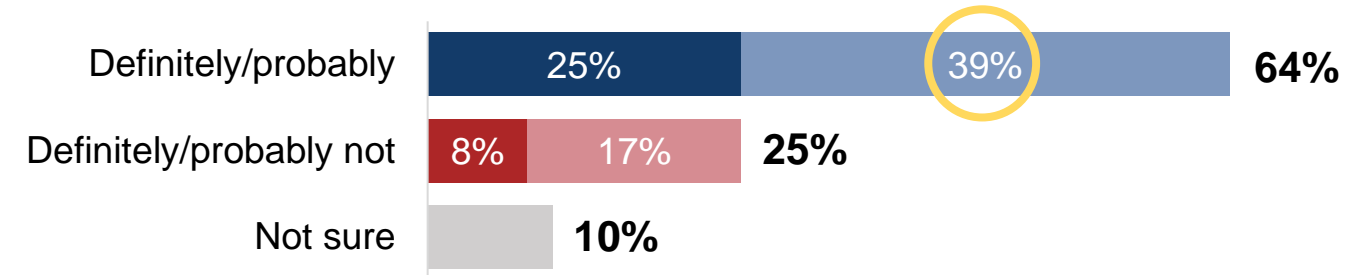
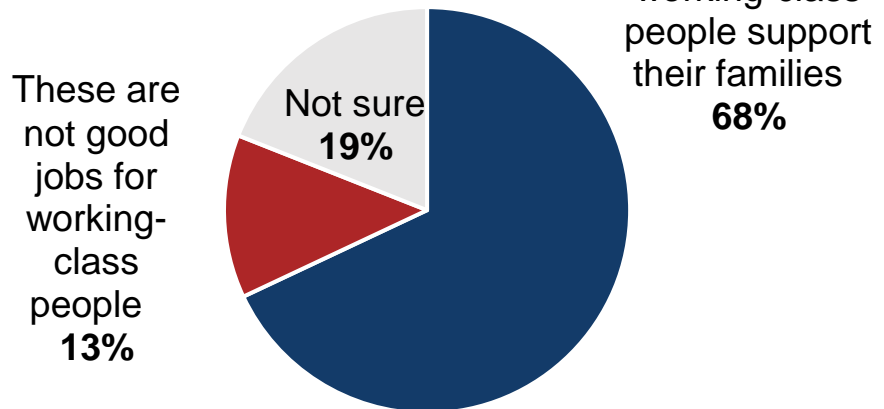




# Noncollege adults believe the jobs that will be created will be good jobs for working-class families. Many lean toward seeing these jobs as personally relevant.

*Which statement comes closest to your point of view about the jobs that will be created in clean energy and clean manufacturing.*

*Are the jobs that will be created due to investments in clean energy and clean manufacturing the kinds of jobs you can see yourself, your family, or people you know doing?*



	Definitely/ probably %
Men working in blue collar/service	75
Women working in blue collar/service	68
18-49 working in blue collar/service	78
50+ working in blue collar/service	57
Black adults	83
White adults	59
Union households	77

# Creating jobs with long-term security for workers without degrees or experience who are willing to work hard is an important part of the narrative.

*Top three most important additional benefits specifically related to the jobs that will be created due to investments in clean energy and clean manufacturing.*



# Emphasizing the ability of workers without past experience to learn on the job strengthens the appeal of the jobs being created.

*Top three most important additional benefits specifically related to the jobs that will be created due to investments in clean energy and clean manufacturing.*



*Each statement shown to half the sample*

# Beyond the requisite good pay and benefits, working-class focus group participants explain that ‘good jobs’ must offer on-the-job training and provide long-term security.

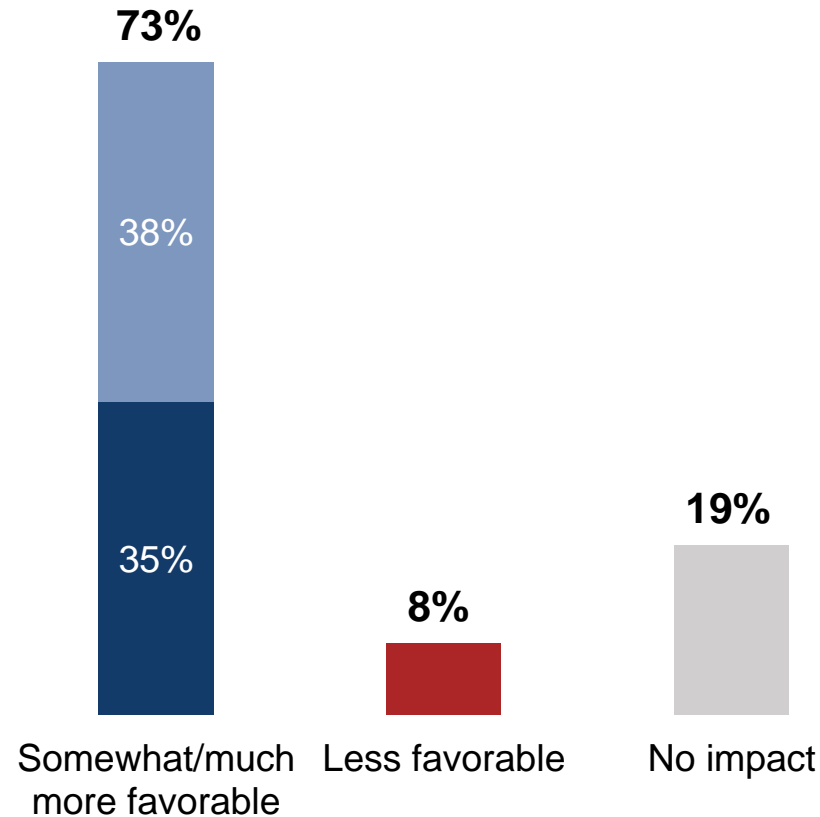
- “Good jobs” for working-class people are jobs that nearly **anyone who is willing to work hard can do.**
  - Working-class participants point to manufacturing, construction, and warehouses as examples of good-paying jobs that don’t require a college degree or prior experience
  - On-the-job training is highly appealing because it opens opportunities to a wider range of people and offers chance to develop new skills
- Security and stability are valuable qualities in blue-collar jobs:
  - It is important to highlight jobs that are likely to be in demand for a long time, cannot be outsourced, and cannot be replaced by robots.

*“[Good jobs are] jobs that are in demand, jobs that you don't necessarily need to go to college for, jobs that are easy for someone to get, jobs that you can take a class for, or get a certificate for. They would just be easier for people to do. Because not everyone graduates from college and not everyone wants to go to college.”*

# Highlighting the private spending on manufacturing projects that has already been spurred by the federal investments increases favorable feelings across the board.

The federal investments in clean energy and clean manufacturing have encouraged private companies to invest. In just the past nine months, companies have committed more than \$200 billion to U.S. manufacturing projects, including projects here in [STATE].

*Does learning this make you more favorable or less favorable toward the federal investments in clean energy and clean manufacturing?*



	% More favorable
Industrial MW	74
Southeast	74
Mountain West	67
Democrats	91
Independents	70
Republicans	59
White adults	69
Black adults	87
White collar	72
Blue collar	80
Service industry	77
Union household	82

# Focus group conversations suggest that communication about clean energy jobs needs to clearly and simply explain the kind of jobs involved and how the work is better for the environment.

*Using testimonials, there are two imperatives for demonstrating to working class people that jobs in clean energy and clean manufacturing are good, desirable jobs.*

## What exactly does the person do in their job?

- “I install solar panels on rooftops”
- “I make the blades used in wind turbines”
- “As a technician, I fix and maintain charging stations for electric vehicles”

## How is what the company is making or doing better for the environment than traditional alternatives?

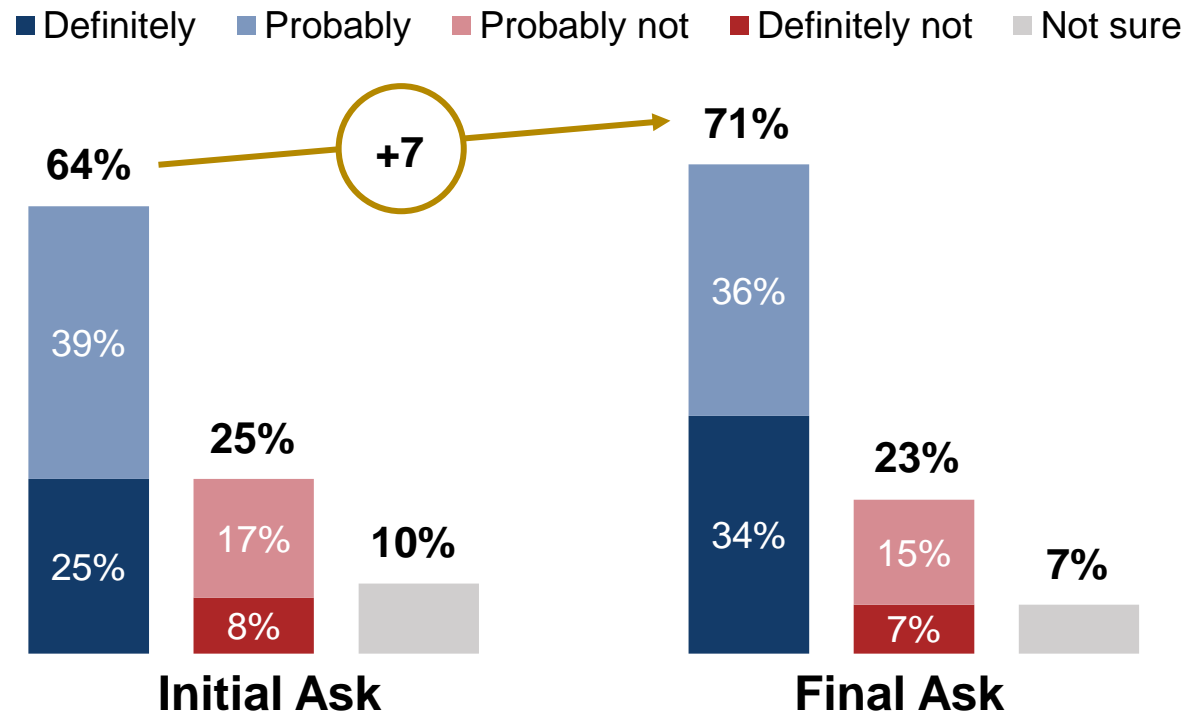
- “At our facility, we use renewable energy sources like wind and solar power, instead of burning coal, to drastically reduce the amount of air pollution associated with producing steel.”
- “I make the aluminum that goes on trucks and cars, which makes the vehicles lighter and more energy efficient.”

## Several additional approaches strengthen the testimonial

- Personalize the employee with details about their life
- Show impact of investments across multiple regions or states
- Include different types of jobs with diverse people to illustrate range

# Messaging also helps noncollege adults to see themselves in clean energy and clean manufacturing jobs.

*Are the jobs that will be created due to investments in clean energy and clean manufacturing the kinds of jobs you can see yourself, your family, or people you know doing?*



	Definitely %	
	Initial	Final
Democrats	38	48
Independents	27	39
Republicans	14	21
Black adults	44	58
White adults	20	28
Men ages 18-49	30	45
Men ages 50+	22	23
Women ages 18-49	29	39
Women ages 50+	21	32