EMBOLD research

WE ACT

Healthy Homes First Survey

May 2025

About Embold Research

Fast. Accurate. Affordable.

Who We Are

Embold Research is the nonpartisan unit of Change Research, founded in 2017 with the mission of improving American democracy by making public opinion insights more accessible to forward-thinking leaders in all sectors of society. We are a team of pollsters, engineers, data scientists, and communications professionals. Our team brings expertise in methodological innovation, research design, public opinion, and strategic consulting.

Our Unique Approach

All of our surveys are completed online, but we do **not** use panels! We recruit new participants for every poll using targeted online advertisements on websites and social media platforms, and using SMS text-to-web.

Our Products

In addition to custom polling, we offer:

- ***Magnify*** AI targeting (custom modeling)
- ***Voices*** qualitative research (in-depth interviews and text-based chats)
- ***ReSpark*** Renewable energy project viability and tracking (standardized and cost-effective polling)

METHODOLOGY

On behalf of WE ACT, Embold Research surveyed both national voters and low-income voters of color in three key cities to better understand voters current perceptions of the use of oil and gas to heat and power homes, as well as garner a deeper understanding of what motivates voters to support and advocate for a transition to electric energy in public housing.

Survey n=2,789 total, with 2,137 registered voters nationwide and 652 low-income BIPOC voters in Chicago, Houston, and New York City from January 6-17, 2025

Respondents were recruited via dynamic online sampling to obtain a sample reflective of the population.

Post-stratification performed on age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, and 2020 presidential vote.

The modeled margin of error is 2.8% for the Main Sample

The modeled margin of error is 4.4% For the Oversample

MAIN SAMPLE OVERVIEW

52% Women
47% Men
1% Other

64% White
12% Black
8% Hispanic
10% AAPI
6% Other

32% Democrat
35% Republican
33% Independent

25% 18-34
24% 35-49
24% 50-64
27% 65+

30% ≤$50k
17% $50-75k
14% $75-100k
9% $100-125k
18% >$125k

22% Midwest
18% Northeast
37% South
23% West

OVERSAMPLE OVERVIEW

55% Women
44% Men
1% Other

43% Black
37% Hispanic
20% AAPI
0% White
0% Other

64% Democrat
17% Republican
19% Independent

28% 18-34
26% 35-49
24% 50-64
22% 65+

63% ≤$50k
37% $50-75k
0% $75-100k
0% $100-125k
0% >$125k

63% New York City
20% Chicago
17% Houston

KEY FINDINGS

01

Rising energy costs are a central concern when it comes to housing. This concern is grounded in the reality that costs have increased for most.

02

Low-income communities of color are the most concerned about the health impacts of in-home gas use and least likely to have electric appliances,

For the communities where it matters most, concerns around the health effects of gas are high, access to electrical appliances falls short, and support for a transition to clean energy sources is strong.

03

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) receives substantial bipartisan support. LIHEAP receives overwhelming support from voters who experience the greatest risk from extreme heat and energy burdens.

04

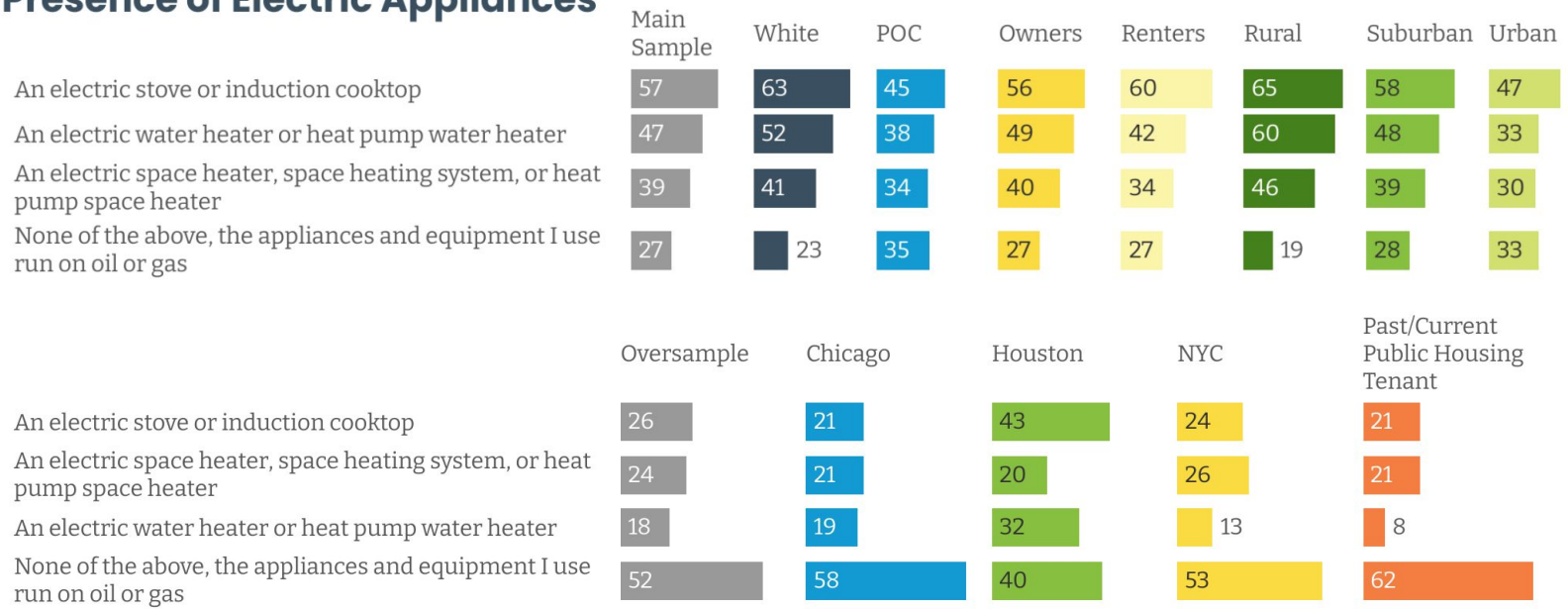
When building support around a transition away from gas, voters resonate with messages centered on racial equity, housing affordability, and better health outcomes

ELECTRIFICATION IN

CONTEXT

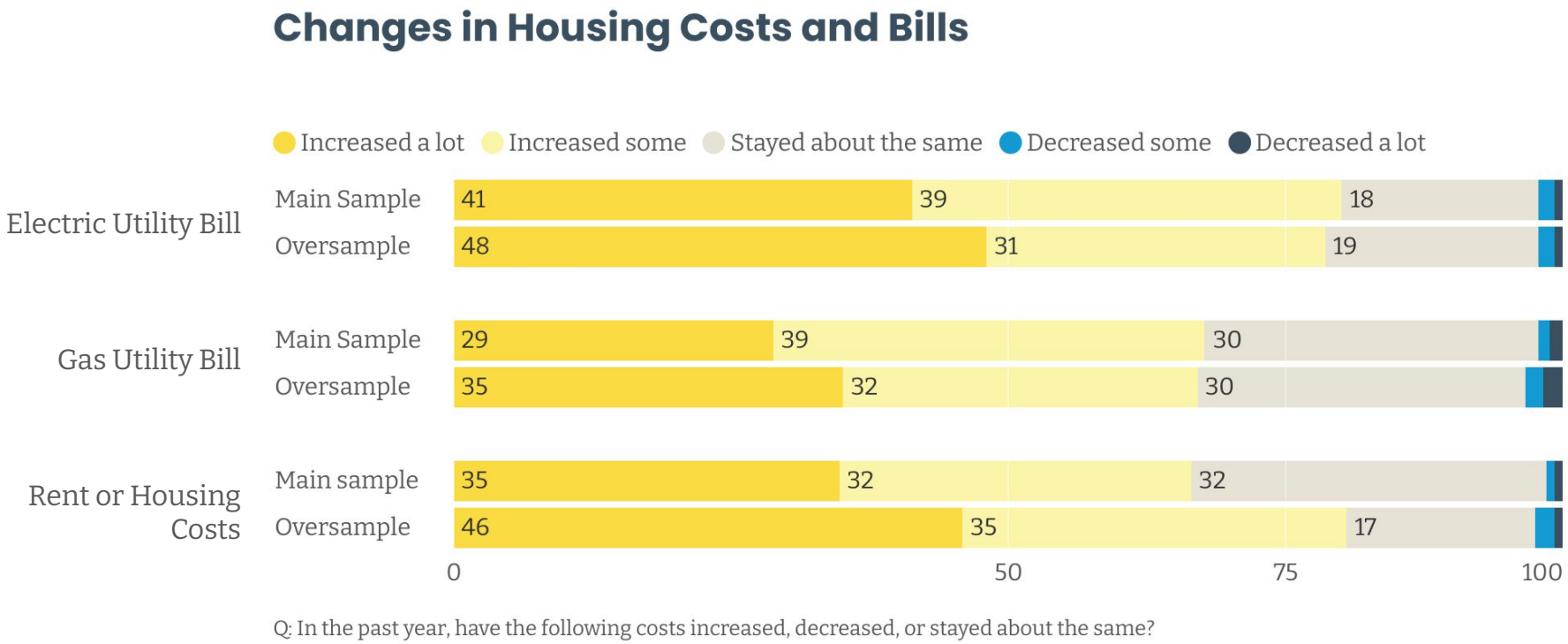
Urban residents, people of color, and – overwhelmingly – low-income individuals are the most likely to be without electric appliances.

Presence of Electric Appliances



Q: Which of the following equipment or appliances do you have in your home? Select all that apply.

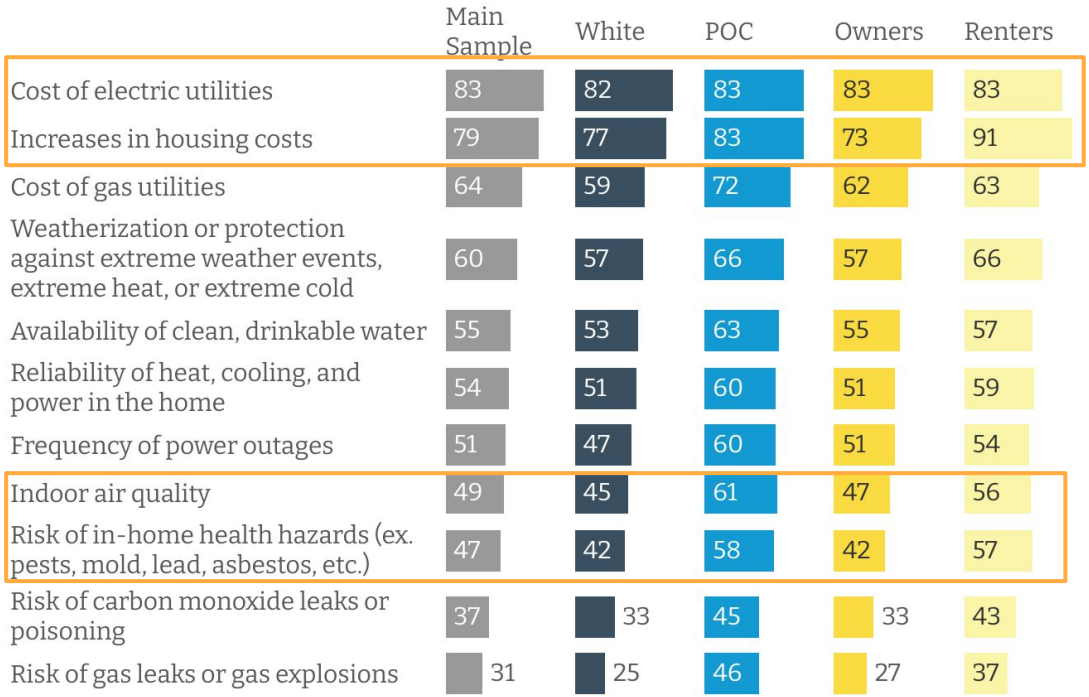
A large majority of voters have faced rising costs in housing and energy in the past year.



Cost is a top of mind concern across the board. Notably, majorities of people of color and renters show concerns toward health and safety.

Top Housing Concerns

Total Concerned

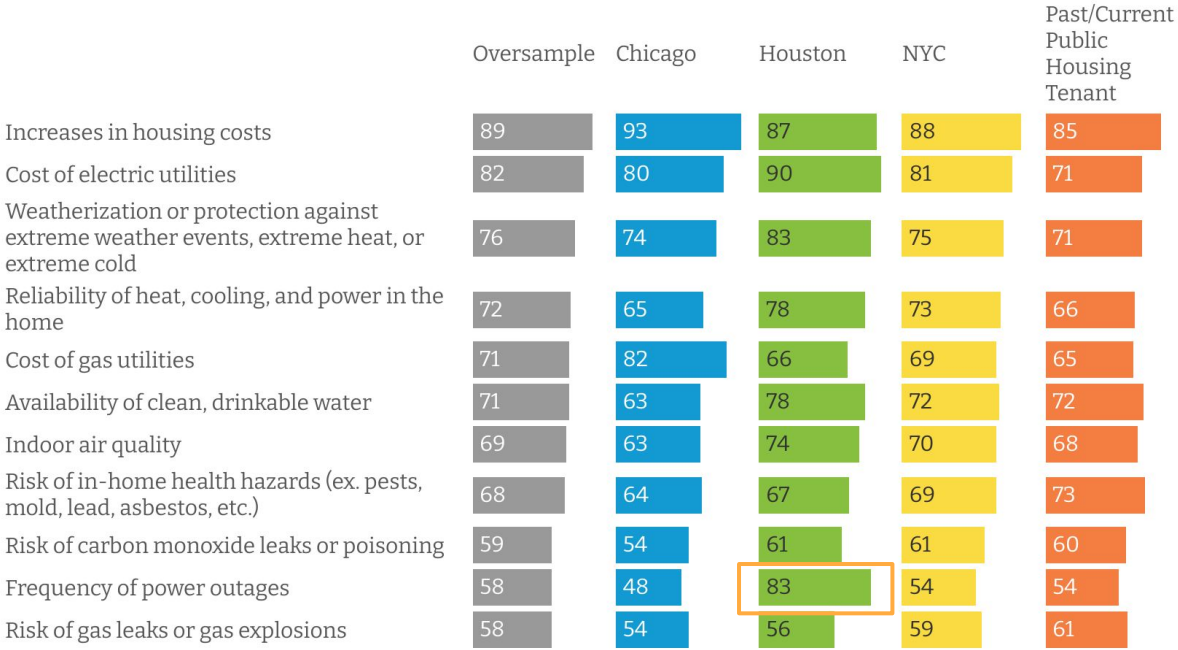


Q: How concerned are you about each of the following when it comes to your home?

Concerns related to quality of home life - both economic and health-related - are felt much more prominently among low-income respondents.

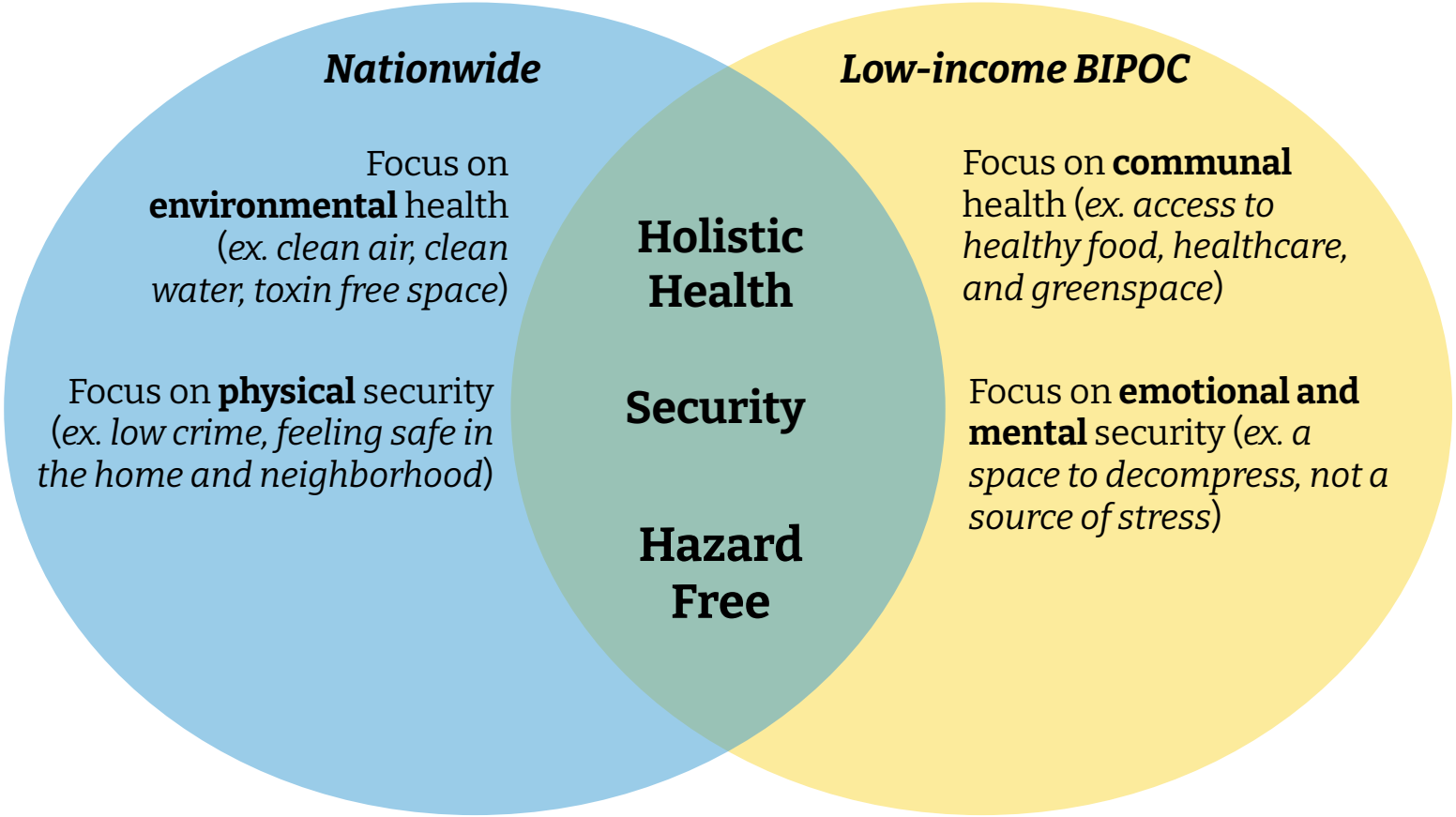
Top Housing Concerns

Total Concerned



Q: How concerned are you about each of the following when it comes to your home?

How do people define a “healthy home”?

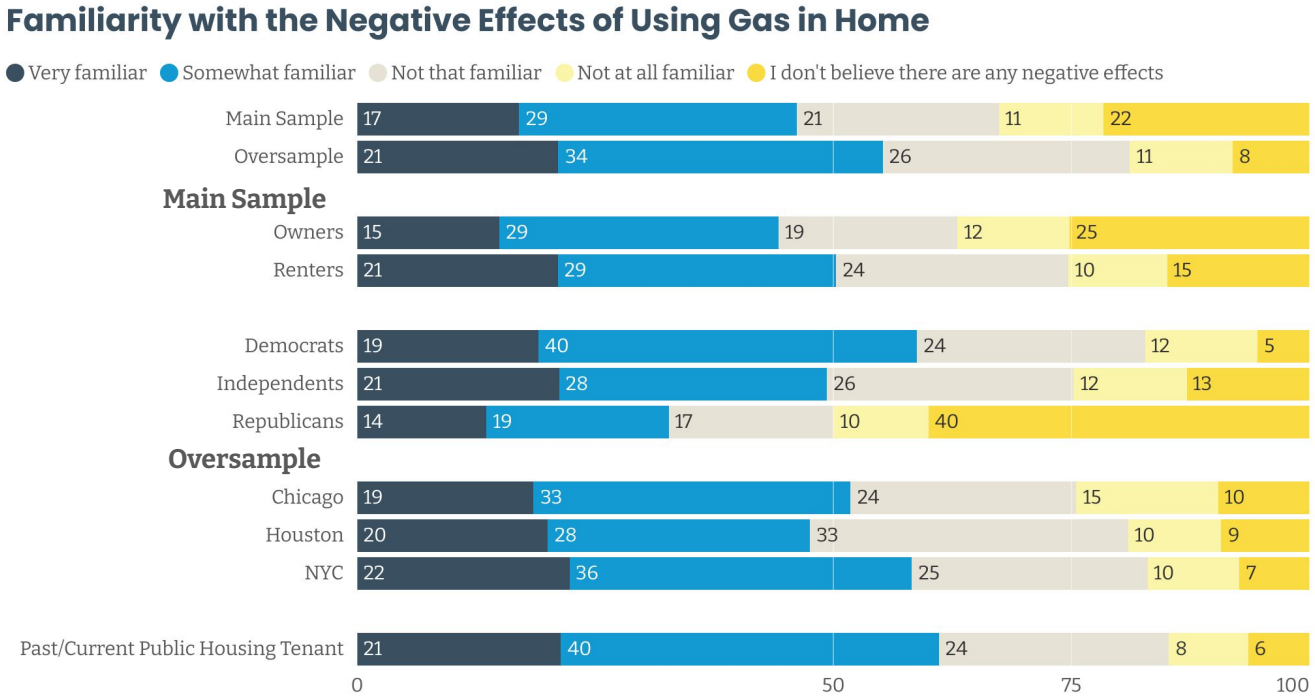


PERCEPTIONS OF THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF

OIL AND GAS

Barely half of voters nationwide are familiar with the negative effects of using gas, however, low-income BIPOC sample are much more likely to be familiar.

Notably, believe in any negative effects is a highly partisan issue at the national level.

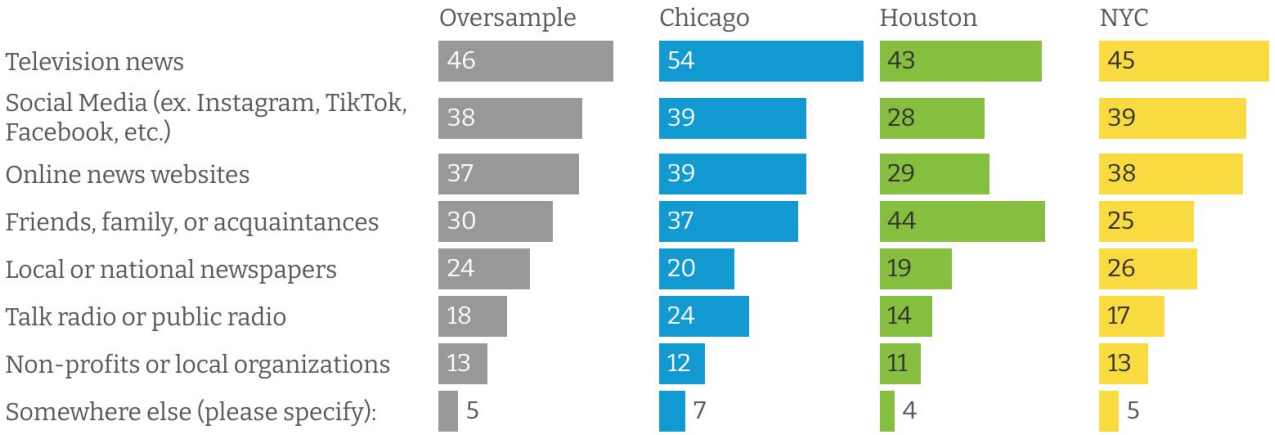


Q: How familiar are you with the negative effects of using gas to power everyday appliances such as heaters and stoves?

Low-income respondents of color are most likely to have heard about the negative effects of gas through TV news, social media, or online news.

In contrast, national audiences who are familiar with the negative effects are most likely to have learned about them through online news sites.

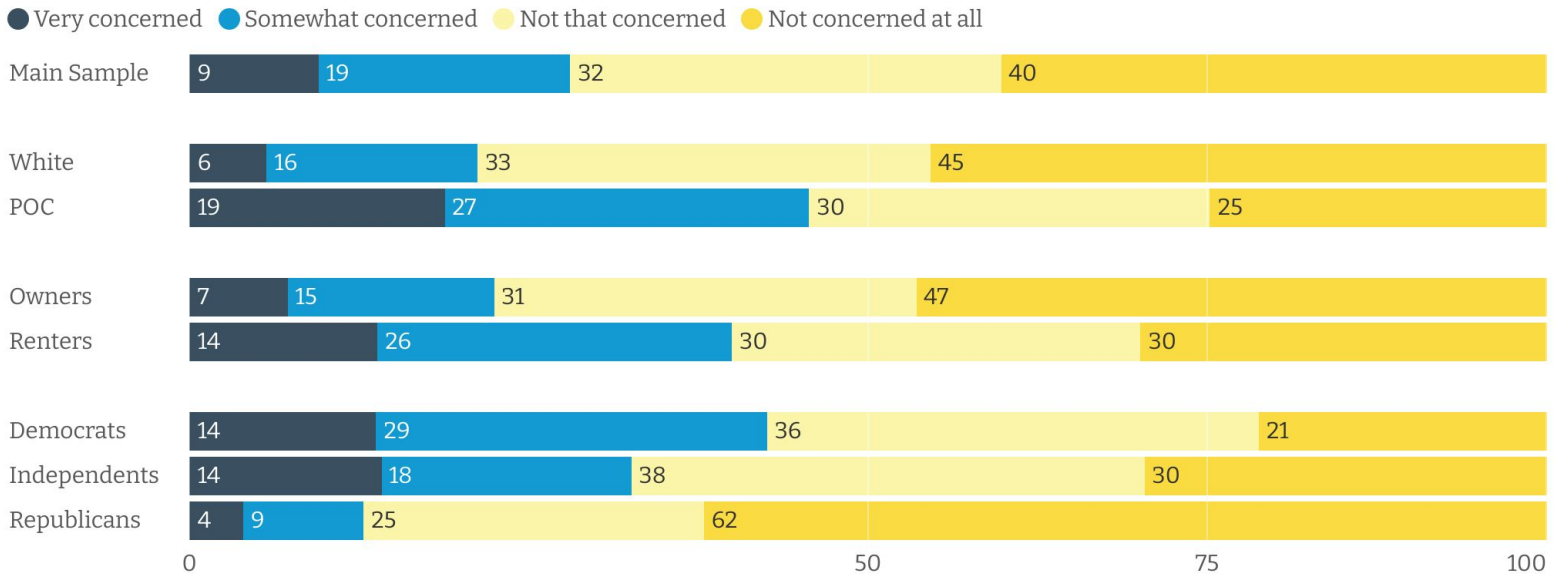
Top Sources for Learning about Negative Gas Effects



Q: [Only asked of respondents who are "very" or "somewhat" familiar with the negative effects of gas] Where have you seen, read, or heard about the negative effects of using gas to power everyday appliances? Select all that apply.

Nationally, voters of color and renters are most likely to be concerned about the negative effects of gas use in their households.

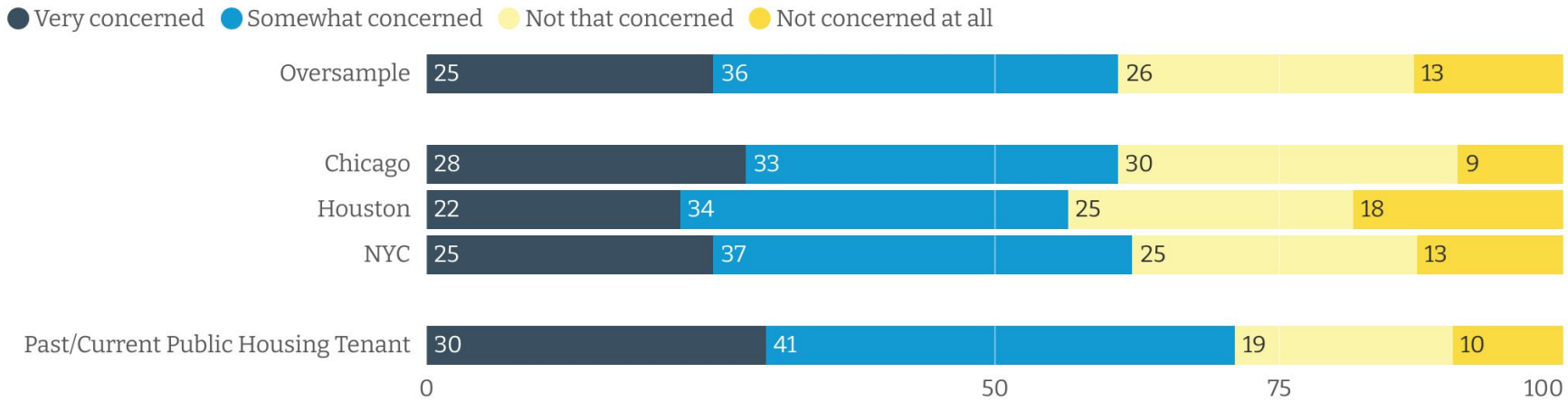
Concern toward Negative Effects of Gas in Own Household



Q: How concerned are you about the negative effects of using gas to power everyday appliances affecting your household?

Concern around the negative effects of using gas in their households are much more substantial among low-income BIPOC respondents.

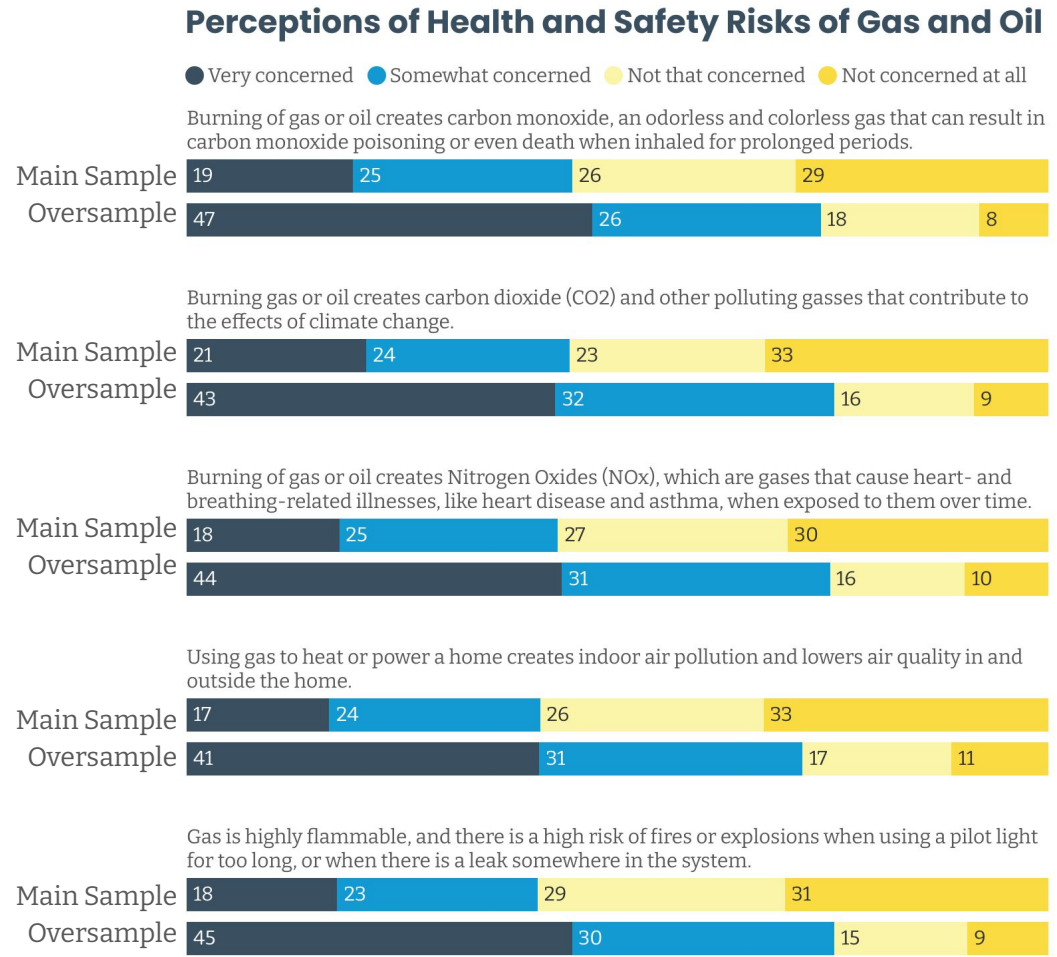
Concern toward Negative Effects of Gas in Own Household



Q: How concerned are you about the negative effects of using gas to power everyday appliances affecting your household?

There is a distinct divergence in levels of concern toward the risks of oil and gas between low-income residents and the national voting population.

The lack of concern at a national level is largely driven by rural, white, and republican respondents.

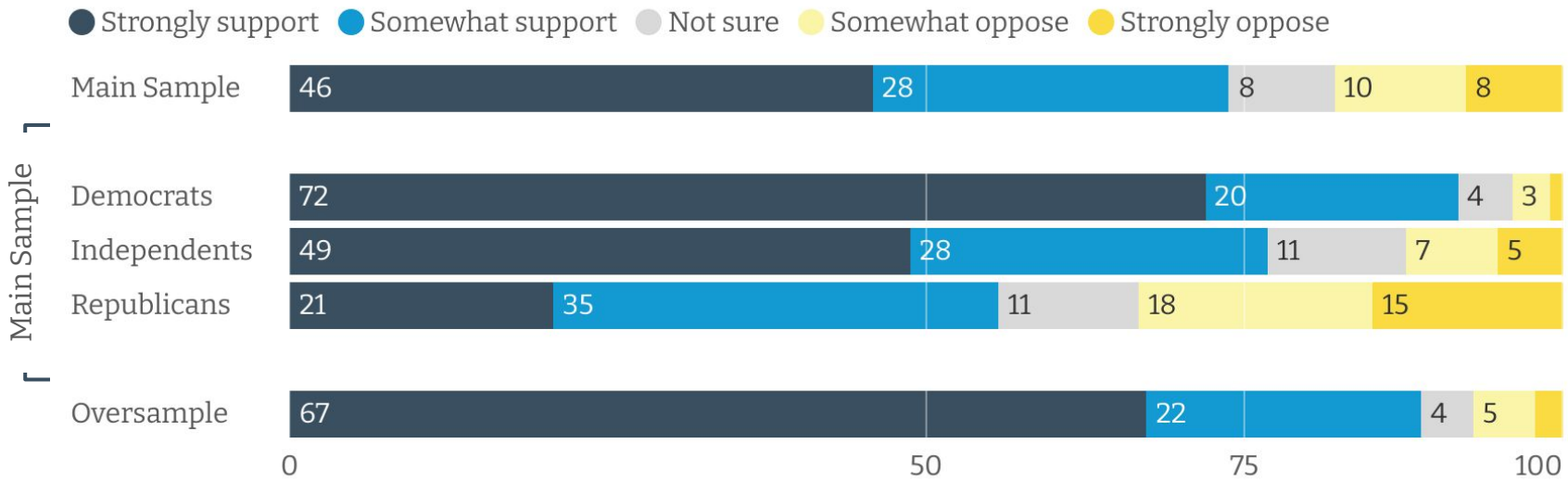


POLICY

SUPPORT

There is widespread, bipartisan support for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

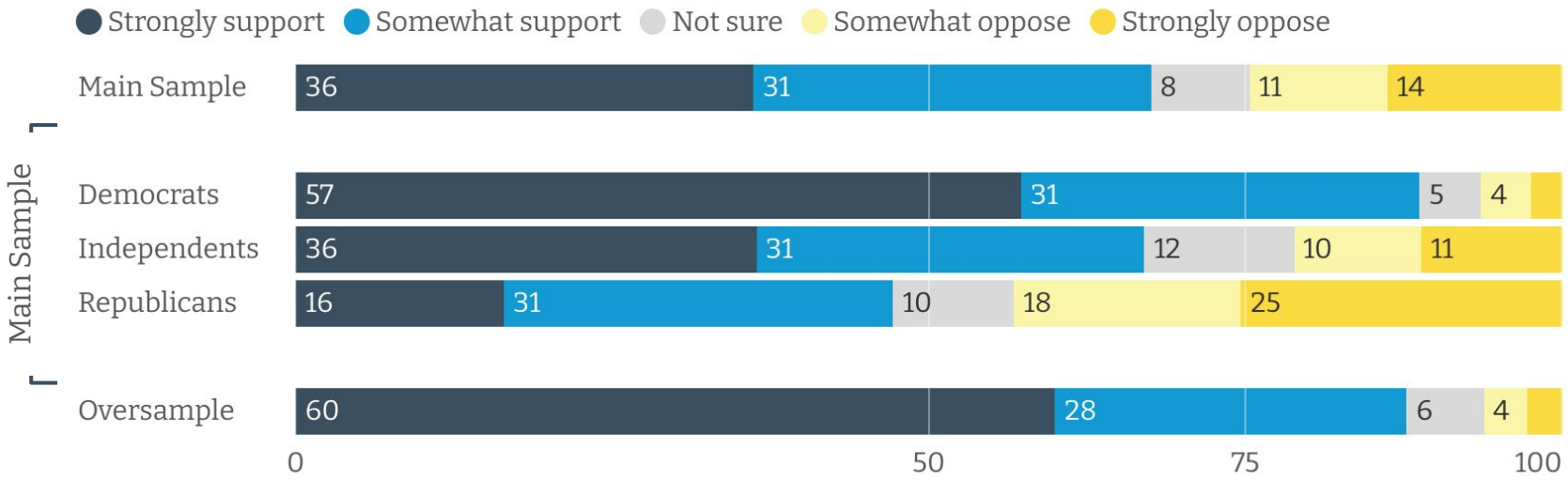
Support for LIHEAP



Q: As you may or may not know, there is a program called the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), which provides low-income families with federal assistance to help cover the costs of home energy bills and weatherization, and provides funding during crises related to extreme weather. Do you support or oppose this program?

Voters largely support updated building codes in their communities.

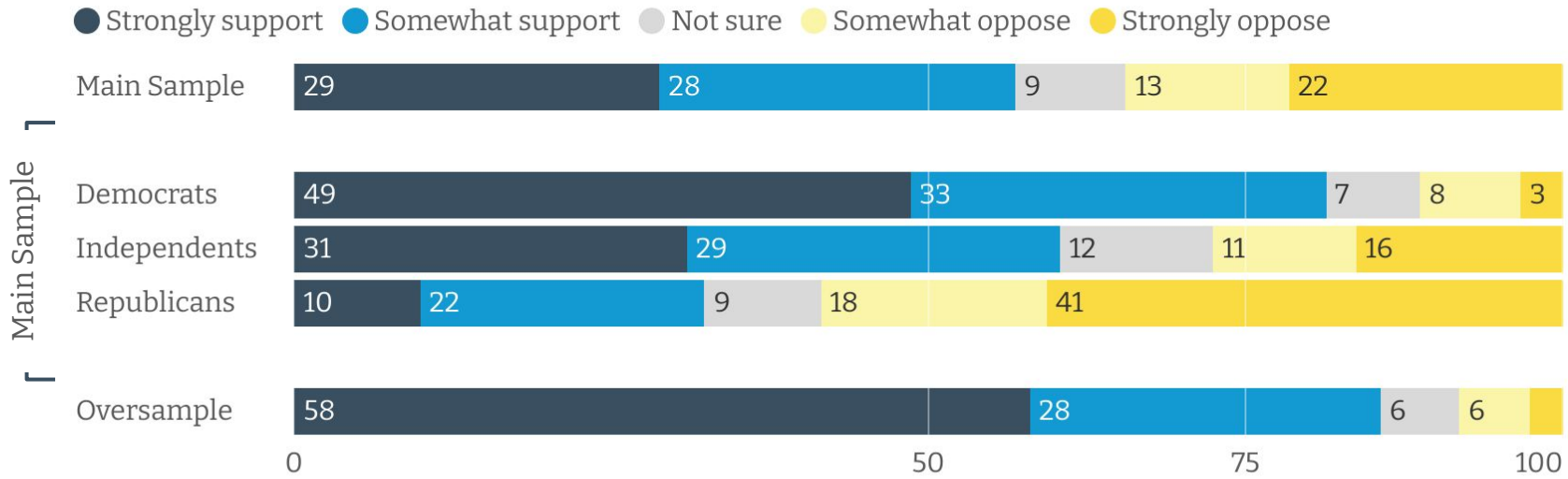
Support for Updated Building Codes



Q: Would you support or oppose your city or state creating updated building codes to ensure that housing would be more energy efficient and have weather-proofing that can better withstand extreme heat and cold?

A majority of voters support the creation of city/statewide air quality standards or guidelines.

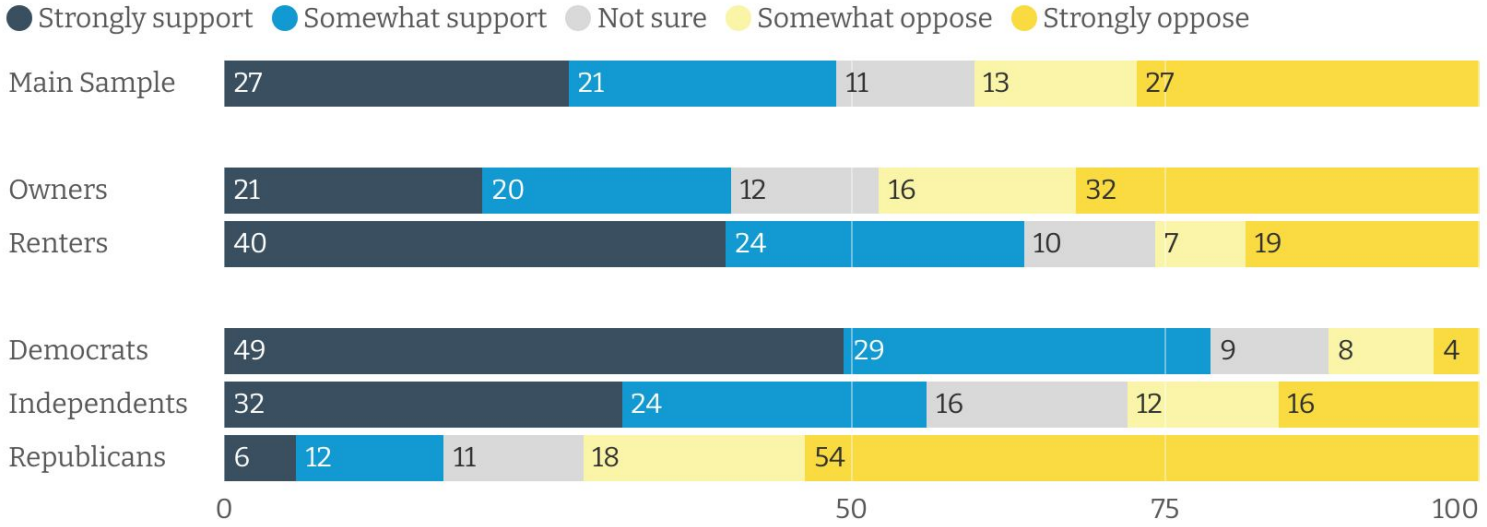
Support for Air Quality Standards or Guidelines



Q: Would you support or oppose your city or state creating indoor air quality standards or guidelines to reduce indoor air pollution in homes and buildings?

At the national level, voters most likely to be impacted by transitioning public housing away from gas are the most supportive of it.

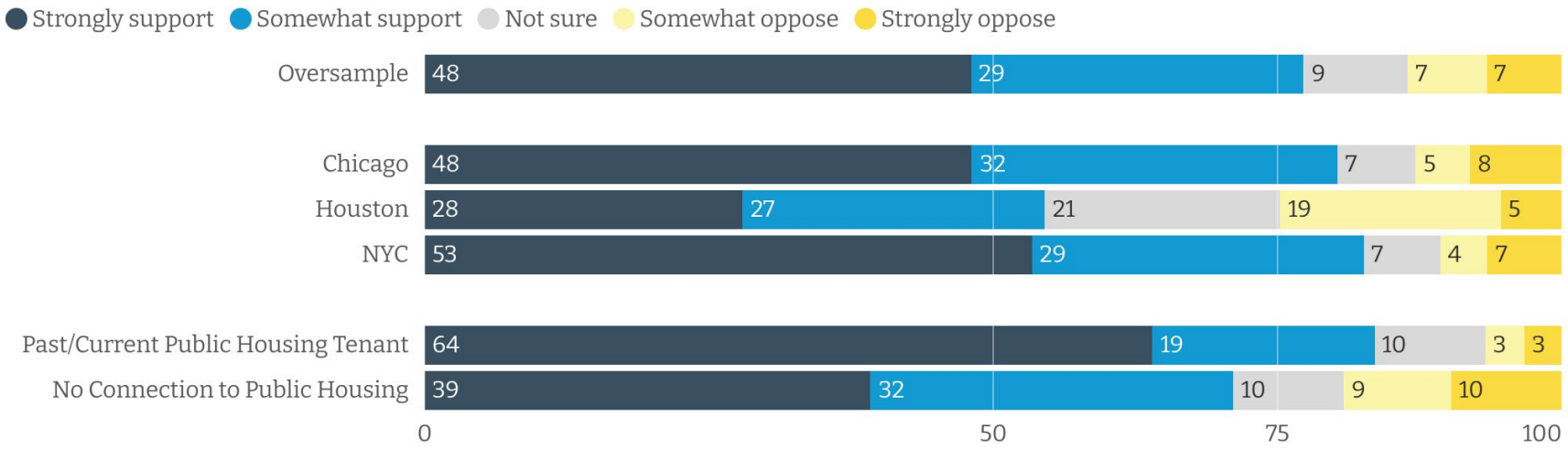
Support for Transitioning Public Housing Away from Gas



Q: Do you support or oppose transitioning away from using gas to heat and power public housing to using clean energy alternatives?

Low-income respondents of color show overwhelming support for the transition from gas to electric in public housing.

Support for Transitioning Public Housing Away from Gas



Q: Do you support or oppose transitioning away from using gas to heat and power public housing to using clean energy alternatives?

MESSAGE

TESTING

Support Messages Tested - Part 1

Message Title	Full Text
Racial Justice A: Health*	Everyone deserves the right to live in a safe and healthy home environment. But families with lower income and communities of color are more likely to experience the negative effects of indoor air pollution and hazards like mold, which cause asthma and heart disease. Ensuring that these communities have access to pollution-free, lower-cost heating will bring us closer to making sure everyone can live in dignity and health in their homes.
Racial Justice B: Energy*	The rising cost of energy has made it harder for families to afford heat and power, and these costs are felt hardest by the people who are struggling the most. Families with lower incomes and communities of color are more likely to spend more of their money on energy bills. Ensuring that these communities have access to pollution-free, lower-cost heating will bring us closer to making housing more affordable.
Children	Choosing to prioritize new pollution-free and lower-cost alternatives to gas will help us protect the health of our children and our future. Children are more likely to be impacted by the negative effects caused by toxic gases created by burning fossil fuels in stoves and for heating, and are more likely to develop asthma as a result. Transitioning public housing units away from gas will help us protect our children's health.
Health Hazards	Burning gas to power and heat homes creates toxic gasses that can cause serious heart- and breathing-related health issues. For example, studies have found that gas stoves produce 400% more dangerous nitrogen dioxide gases in homes than electric stoves do, which can cause heart- and breathing-related illnesses. Additionally, using gas comes with the risk of leaks, carbon monoxide poisoning, and even gas explosions. Transitioning away from gas to other cleaner and safer forms of energy in public housing units would eliminate these health hazards and ensure everyone has access to healthy air, both indoors and out.

*Only shown to 50% of participants (randomly selected)

Support Messages Tested - Part 2

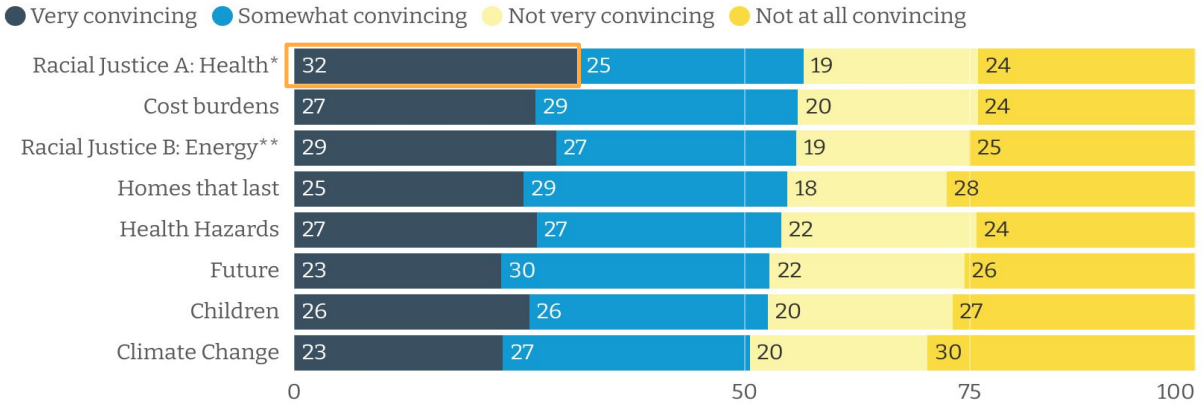
Message Title	Full Text
Climate Change	Burning gas to power and heat homes creates outdoor air pollution and carbon dioxide, which is a gas that heats our planet and drives climate change. Upgrading public housing units to run on clean energy is one step we can take to reduce air pollution and the effects of climate change.
Cost Burdens	The cost of gas utilities keeps rising and will become even more expensive as aging gas pipelines need to be fixed and replaced over time. Upgrading public housing units to energy-efficient electric appliances and other new, lower-cost clean energy technology will ensure that housing remains affordable for the families who live there.
Homes that Last	We need to be protecting our homes for the future, and that includes preparing for more frequent extreme weather events. Transitioning public housing away from gas and toward pollution-free, lower-cost heating and cooling can help households become more resilient to extreme weather events by stabilizing in-home temperatures even during power outages and lowering energy costs during extreme heat or cold.
Future	Many Americans are already upgrading to cleaner energy sources and using state-of-the-art electric appliances to heat and cool their homes. Lower-income communities are often neglected when it comes to transitioning to modern energy while the rest of the country moves forward. Transitioning public housing units away from gas and toward clean energy will let lower-income communities access the modern upgrades and equipment that other Americans already enjoy.

Voters tend to resonate with messaging in support of transitioning public housing to electric energy, with a focus on racial justice and housing affordability performing best.

Messaging tends to resonate strongest with urban voters, voters under 35, and voters of color.

Resonance of Support Messages

Main Sample



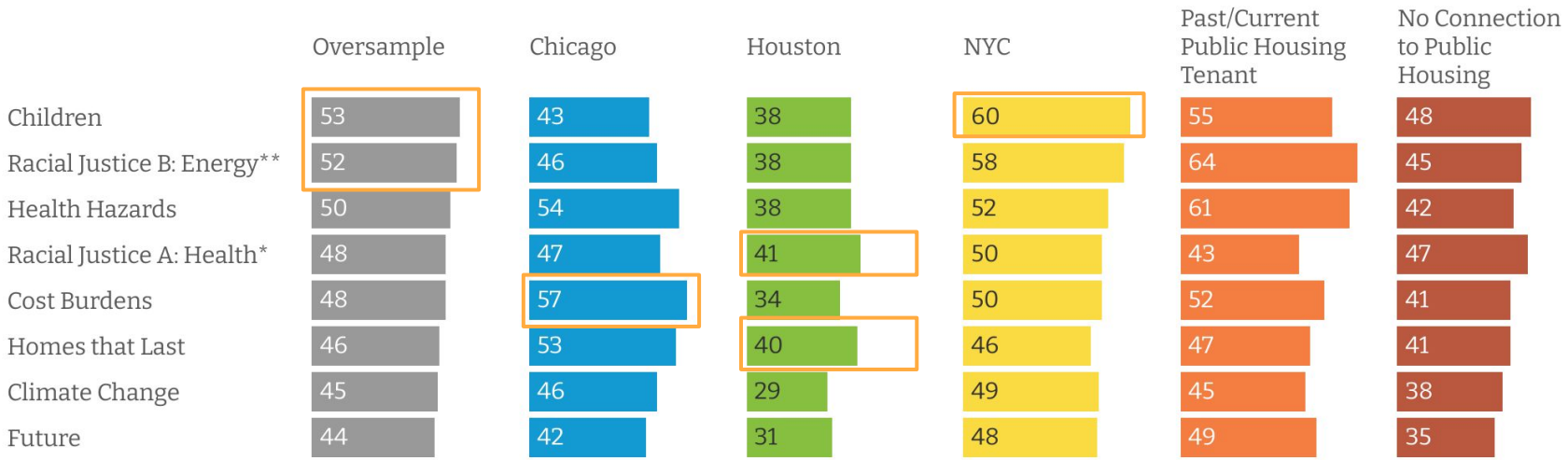
Q: Next, you will see arguments in support of transitioning away from using gas to heat and power public housing. Please indicate how convincing you find each argument.

*Version A shown to 50% of respondents
**Version B shown to 50% of respondents

Among oversample respondents, top message varies by media market.

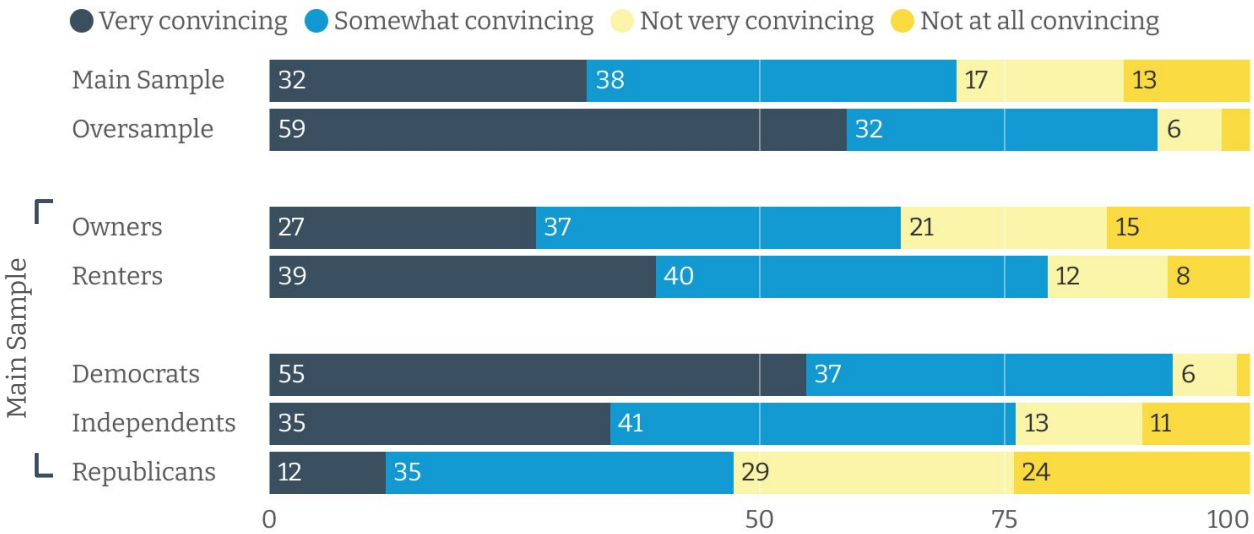
Resonance of Support Messages by City and Connection to Public Housing

Total "Very convincing"



Q: Next, you will see arguments in support of transitioning away from using gas to heat and power public housing. Please indicate how convincing you find each argument.

Reactions toward a Holistic Approach



Q: Below is a statement in support of removing health hazards like pests and mold from low-income homes to prepare them for weatherization and clean energy. How convincing do you find this argument?

We need to protect our homes for our families and the future, but many homes remain unprepared to handle current-day hazards and extreme weather. We need to be focused on making sure homes are protected from hazards like mold, pests, and lead to ensure that families can benefit from weatherization, making homes a safe and comfortable place to live as extreme weather conditions become more common. Removing current health hazards in public housing will pave the way for providing cleaner, low-cost energy sources that will help make sure everyone has a safe and healthy place to live, now and in the future.

There is overwhelming support for a holistic framework, tying access to clean energy with the removal of health hazards.

Among low-income respondents of color, a message prioritizing the removal of health hazards is universally convincing.

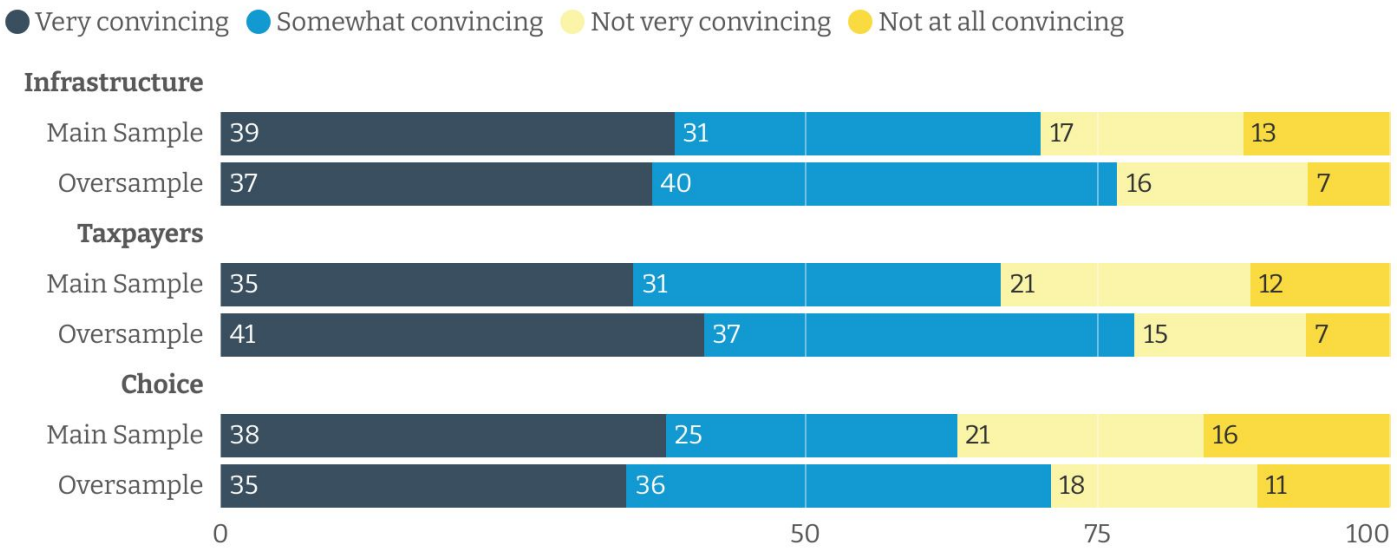
Opposition Messages Tested

Message Title	Full Text
Taxpayers	Electrifying homes and buildings can be expensive, requiring substantial investment in replacing and updating equipment. The costs of transitioning public housing away from gas to other energy sources could burden taxpayers and increase energy and housing costs for everyone in the short term, even if it ultimately reduces costs in the long term.
Choice	People should have the right to choose how they heat and power their homes. Transitioning public housing units from gas to clean energy sources limits the energy options of public housing residents.
Infrastructure	Our electric grids are currently not set up to power and heat homes on a large scale. Prioritizing moving public housing units away from gas to clean energy sources with our current energy infrastructure could potentially destabilize our power grids, leading to blackouts and brownouts.

Voters resonate strongly with opposition messaging, responding most to concerns about the resiliency and reliability of our current electric infrastructure.

Despite the power of support messaging among low-income respondents of color, opposition talking points also hold.

Reaction to Opposition Messages



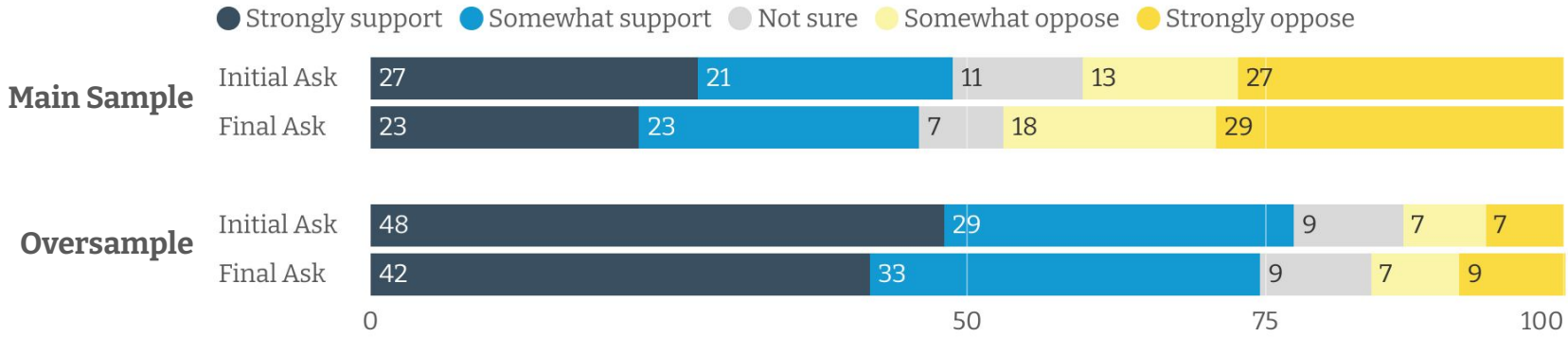
Q: Next, you will see arguments against transitioning away from using gas to heat and power affordable and public housing. Please indicate how convincing you find each argument.

POST-MESSAGING SUPPORT AND

ACTION

Support toward transitioning public housing from gas to electric dips slightly after seeing opposition messaging.

Post-Messaging Support



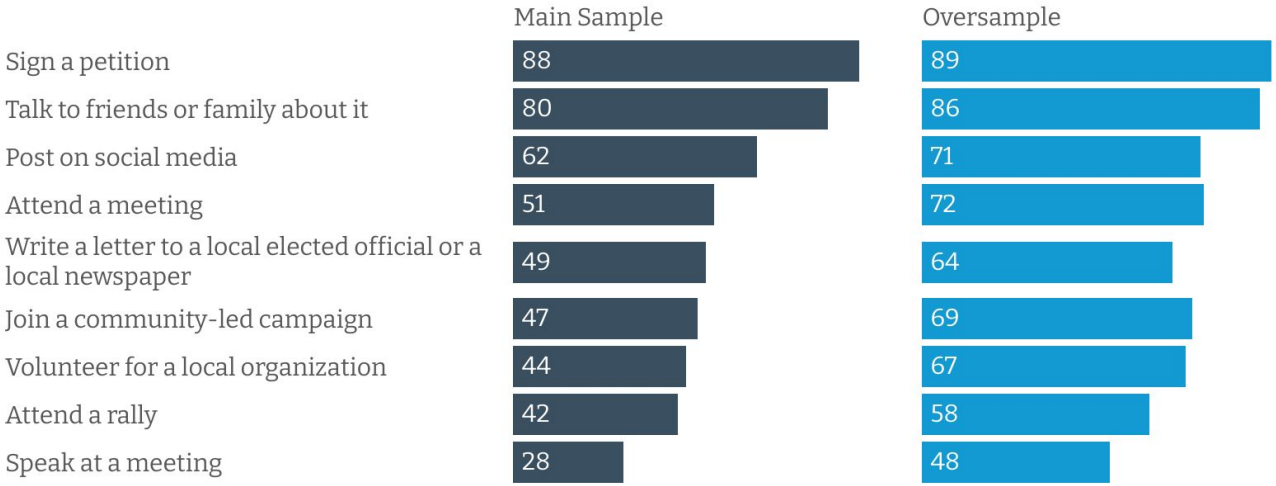
Initial Ask: Do you support or oppose transitioning away from using gas to heat and power public housing to using clean energy alternatives?

Final Ask: In surveys like this, sometimes people change their minds and sometimes they don't. Now that you've read more, do you support or oppose transitioning away from using gas to heat and power public housing to using clean energy alternatives?

Majorities of supporters of this transition say they are likely to sign a petition, talk to friends and family, or post on social media, but are less likely to do more involved work.

Low-income respondents of color report a much higher likelihood of getting involved compared to a national audience.

Likelihood of Taking Action



Q: [If "somewhat" or "strongly" support transition from gas to electric energy in public housing] If there was an effort in your city or state to transition public housing away from gas and toward clean energy sources, how likely do you think you would be to take each of the following actions supporting that effort?

RECOMMENDATIONS

Activate our communities: Renters, voters of color, and low-income voters are the most likely to be concerned about the negative effects of using gas to heat and power their homes and are the least likely to have electric appliances in their homes. These same communities are also the strongest supporters of electrifying public housing, and indicate a high likelihood of taking action to show their support. It will be important to activate these voters in order to deepen support and further advocacy efforts.

Lean into LIHEAP: Majorities of voters of all backgrounds show support for LIHEAP, and that support is particularly strong among the communities that are more vulnerable to extreme heat and energy burdens and benefit most from LIHEAP. Moreover, a holistic framework resonates much more strongly than messaging focused specifically on the electrification of public housing. As the risks become more real for public housing residents, it is essential to demonstrate that LIHEAP is a popular policy that works.

Take charge of the definition of a "healthy home": Both voters nationwide and in our key communities share key visions of what a healthy home means to them: hazard-free spaces that provide a sense of well-being and security. In this moment, we have the opportunity to take these key pillars of home health to demonstrate how holistic home upgrades, including a transition away from gas, contributes to healthier homes and communities.

THANK YOU

QUESTIONS?