

From: Data for Progress and The Justice Collaborative Institute

Re: Voters Support Federal Grants for Community Based Emergency and Non-Emergency Crisis Response

Date: 10/01/2020

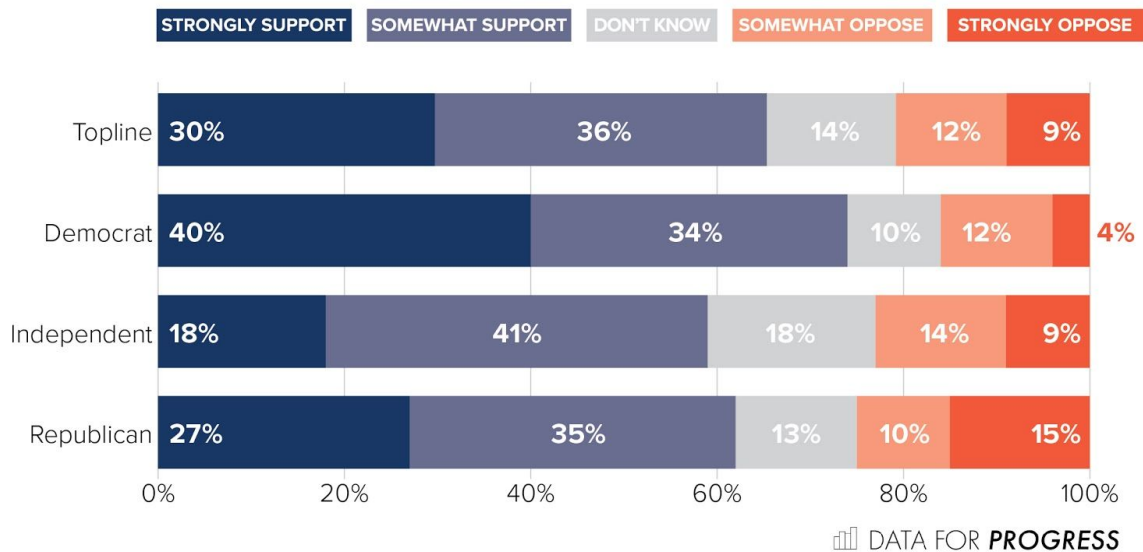
Law enforcement officers are often sent to respond to emergency calls related to crisis situations that do not actually require, or are even made worse by, a law enforcement response. Some of these calls relate to mental health or substance use disorder crises, check-ins for health and safety, a lack of housing or healthcare, and emergencies involving vulnerable populations in need who are likely to face disproportionate or adverse law enforcement contact. In some jurisdictions, [police spend more time](#) on mental health-related calls than on burglaries or felony assaults.

In these situations, communities are better served by a community-based emergency response with professionals trained in mental and behavioral health or crisis response. This would provide the best and most targeted professional intervention to the person in need, and allow for connection to immediate and ongoing services. It would also avoid the volatility, violence, and harm that law enforcement often brings, including needless arrests and incarceration. Studies show that as many as [half of the individuals killed by law enforcement have a disability](#); and people with an untreated mental illness are [16 times more likely to be killed](#) during a police encounter. Existing social services-based emergency response models, conversely, have been proven to defuse and resolve non-violent crisis situations, connect individuals with ongoing services and support, and save money.

The Community-Based Emergency Response Act, a new federal bill introduced by Maryland Senator Chris Van Hollen, would provide grants worth \$100 million to fund community-based emergency and non-emergency response through local governments and community organizations, while leaving the option to call law enforcement.

A new national poll from Data for Progress and The Justice Collaborative Institute shows strong transpartisan support for this proposal. Sixty-six percent of likely voters, including 74% of Democrats and 62% of Republicans, support the proposed federal grant program:

Do you support or oppose the federal government establishing Community-Based Crisis Response Grants, which would provide \$100 Million a year in funding for community-based emergency and non-emergency response, in addition to the option of calling law enforcement?



Polling Methodology

From 9/18/2020 to 9/19/2020, Data for Progress conducted a survey of 1,104 likely voters nationally using web panel respondents. The sample was weighted to be representative of likely voters by age, gender, education, race, and voting history. The survey was conducted in English. The margin of error is +/- 2.9 percentage points.