This week a study of the popularity of a wide range of issues among the American public came out – and created quite a stir. Most of the attention focused on the unpopularity of various Democratic positions on race and gender identity issues. But here I want to highlight the results in two areas I've written about: climate and "abundance."

Many of the policy goals climate advocates have been pushing for years – banning fossil fuel production on federal lands, or electric vehicle subsidies – are quite unpopular. The survey also found – as I've noted earlier – that climate change is a very low salience issue among Americans, even if they generally trust Democrats to do a better job on the topic. These results highlight a point I made in a recent post – climate policy likely has to use quiet politics. Instead of mass mobilization, climate policy will require building up interest group support, and technological innovation, in order to achieve its goals. Sweeping legislation that dramatically phases out fossil fuels is not likely on the table in the near future.

But as I've noted elsewhere, abundance policy has a lot of parallels with climate policy. Abundance policy reforms will often require short-term sacrifices by specific constituencies in order to achieve long-term benefits for the broader good. Just like climate policy. That's a tough path to follow in politics.

And we see this in the polling data. Abolishing single-family only zoning polls worse than electric vehicle subsidies. Requiring local governments to upzoning to allow for more housing is only slightly more popular. Even just providing grants to local governments to encourage upzoning – part of the bipartisan ROAD Act being considered in the Senate right now – is deep underwater.

The picture is a little more complicated in the energy space. On the one hand, removing restrictions on fossil fuel leasing on public lands is somewhat popular (about 54% support). On the other hand, removing environmental restrictions to encourage renewable energy production is somewhat unpopular (about 46% support). (The questions are not symmetric, as the clean energy question focuses on environmental deregulation and the fossil fuel question more broadly calls for "Increase fossil fuel production and make it easier for oil companies to get drilling leases." I do wonder how more symmetrically worded questions would poll.) Time clocks for environmental review for infrastructure projects are very popular, but repealing NEPA is quite unpopular.

I think some idea of the broader popularity of an abundance agenda can also be

gleaned from another set of recent survey results from Heatmap News, which asked respondents about whether they viewed various energy infrastructure projects favorably or not. Solar and natural gas are popular. Coal is not. Nuclear and wind were somewhat popular. And around break-even? Data centers and transmission. It will be hard to mobilize public support for items that the public is lukewarm about. Particularly in a politically polarized federal government.

Again, there are still important policy changes abundance advocates could pursue – but advocates will need to use a low salience approach, think strategically about the interest group politics, and probably avoid public mobilization. Just like climate advocates.