

**To:** Evergreen Action

**From:** YouGov

**Re:** Climate concerns in the US electorate

**Date:** January 28, 2025

On behalf of Evergreen Action, YouGov fielded a survey of 1,124 US voters to better understand their views toward federal climate change policies, their experience with climate-related weather events, and related subjects. This memo summarizes the results.

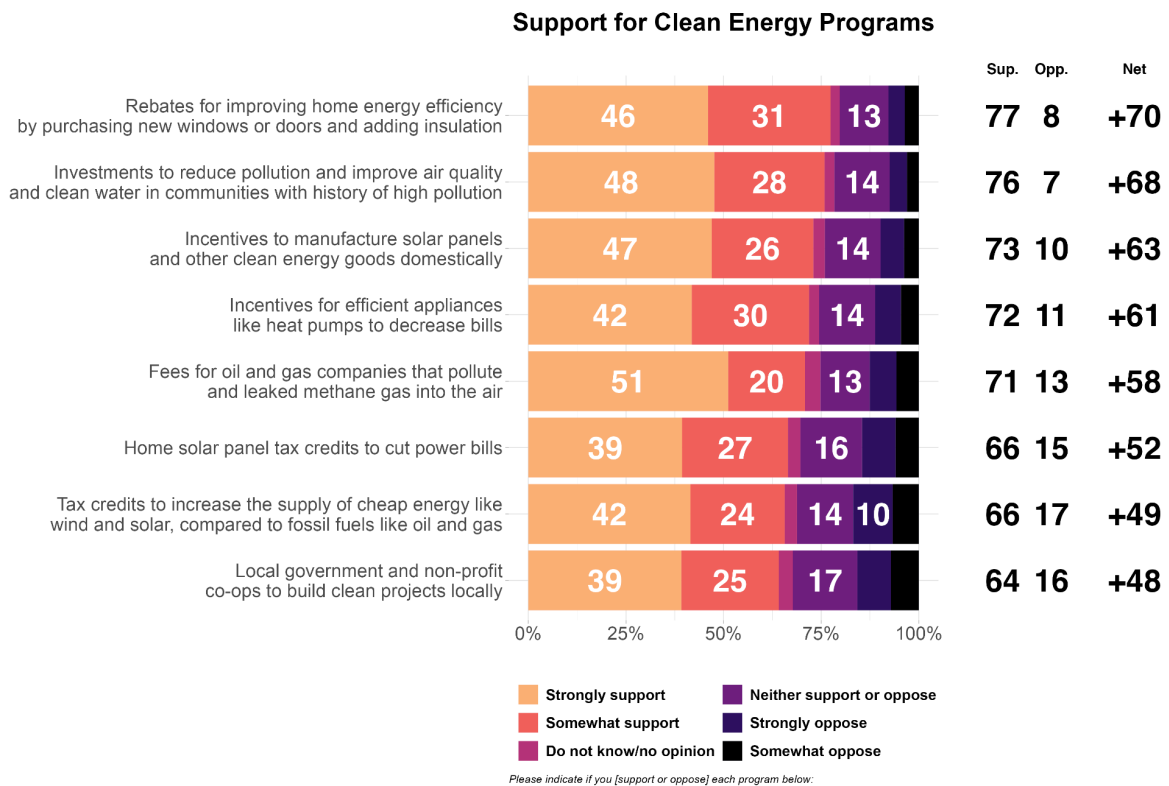
### **Key takeaways**

- Large majorities of voters support key clean energy policies, such as incentives to expand the use of clean energy, investments that help reduce pollution, and fees imposed on oil and gas companies for their pollution.
- 61 percent of voters strongly or somewhat support keeping federal tax credits to build up clean industries and encourage clean energy usage, like solar panels, wind power, electric cars and trucks, and energy-efficient household appliances.
  - This includes net positive support among Democrats (84 percent support and 2 percent oppose), Independents (61 percent support-11 percent oppose), and Republicans (38 percent support-33 percent oppose)
- When asked to choose between the two, 64 percent of voters said they preferred “expanding the use of clean energy, such as solar and wind” to just 35 percent saying they preferred “expanding the production of fossil fuels, such as coal, oil, and gas.”
- While voters do not believe there is one single “main culprit” when it comes to who is causing climate change, large shares of voters agree those most responsible for climate change include oil and gas companies (81 percent hold them somewhat or very responsible), national politicians and government (78 percent), and big tech companies (80 percent).

US voters are worried about climate change. Fully 66 percent of voters said they believe climate change is currently happening, with just 19 percent saying climate change isn't occurring at all. Similarly, 76 percent think it is either “very” or “somewhat likely” climate change is already making weather events worse. If asked to choose between the two, 64 percent said they preferred “expanding the use of clean energy, such as solar and wind” to just 35 percent saying they preferred “expanding the production of fossil fuels, such as coal, oil, and gas.” Even accounting for key factors like partisanship and education, significant majorities of Americans worry about climate change and believe it is impacting daily life now.

The survey included several measures of support for key climate policies, and found that voters support a variety of efforts to expand the use of clean energy. Voters also support

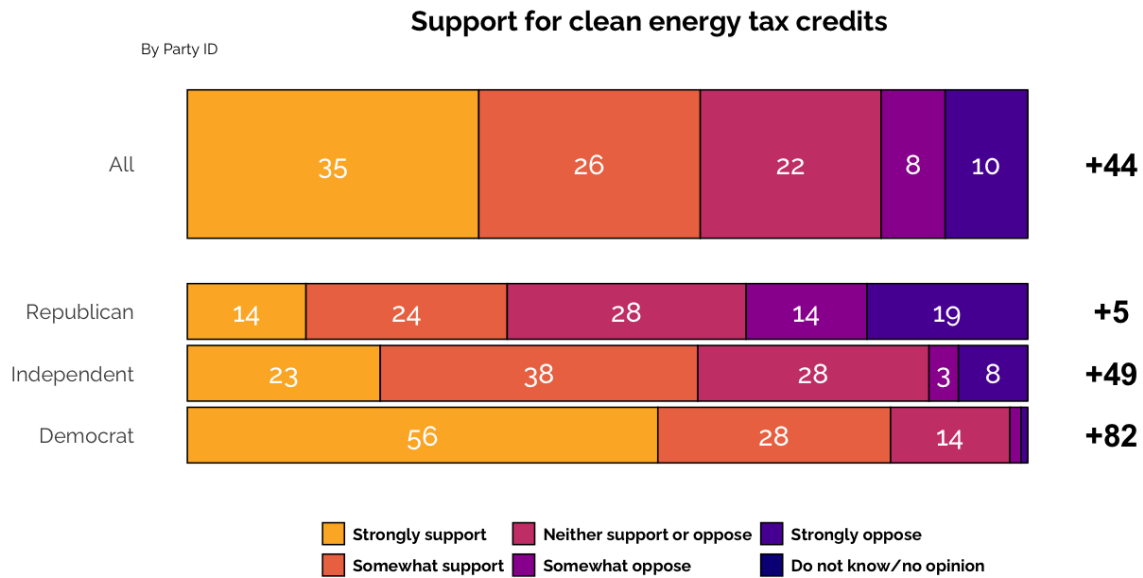
imposing fees on oil and gas companies and offering tax credits to improve the value proposition of wind and solar power relative to fossil fuels. Overall, each of these policies is backed by two-thirds or more. The following chart shows support and opposition for each policy, and “net support,” which is the total share of respondents who said they “somewhat” or “strongly” supported that policy minus the total share who said they “somewhat” or “strongly” opposed that policy,



Several of these policies have strong support across the political spectrum. For example, while Republican voters typically say they oppose many policies that would help mitigate climate change, Republicans supported each of these policies on net.

Across the partisan spectrum, voters support tax credits, rebates, and incentives to support developing America's clean energy sector. Democrats and Independents overwhelmingly

favor these tax credits, as do a plurality of Republicans.



To strengthen America's clean energy competitiveness and greatly reduce climate pollution, the federal government offers tax credits, rebates, and other incentives to build up clean industries and encourage clean energy usage, like solar panels, wind power, electric cars and trucks, and energy-efficient household appliances. Do you (support or oppose) keeping these tax credits?

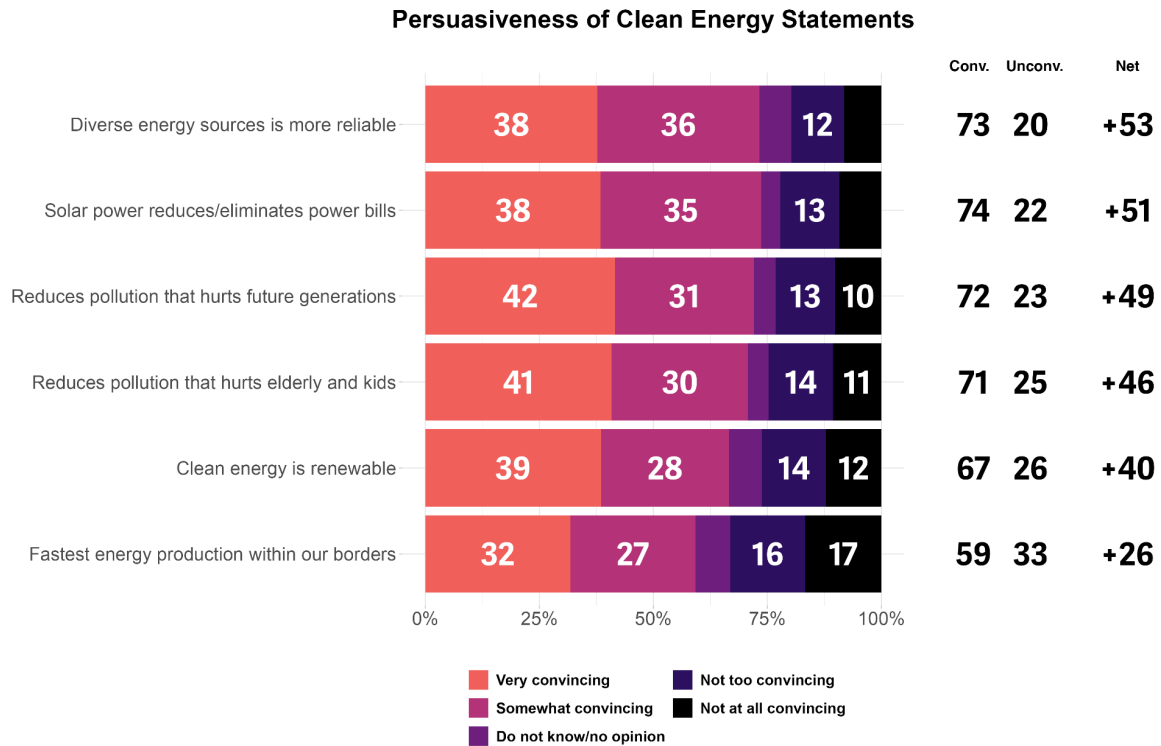
In a follow-up battery, the survey included several statements some have made in favor of various clean energy tax credits, and then asked respondents to say whether they agreed or disagreed with each statement. These included:

- *Solar power is a way for homeowners to reduce or eliminate their power bills by producing their own electricity*
- *A mix of energy sources is cheaper, safer, and more reliable than depending on fossil fuels alone*
- *Clean energy is the fastest way for the country to produce more energy within our borders*
- *Clean energy cuts down on air pollution that especially hurts kids and the elderly*
- *Clean energy cuts down on air pollution that threatens the health of future generations*
- *Clean energy is renewable, unlike fossil fuels, which have a limited supply*

Overall, the most effective statements in favor of clean energy center on lowering costs. While each of these statements were overall viewed as more convincing than not, the strongest statements overall included "A mix of energy sources is cheaper, safer, and more reliable than depending on fossil fuels alone" and "Solar power is a way for homeowners to reduce or eliminate their power bills by producing their own electricity."

The statement pertaining to developing new energy "quickly" and "within our borders" was the least convincing. Voters may not believe that clean energy is being built quickly, or they may believe that it is but simply find the pace of construction to be an unconvincing

argument. Accounting for other demographic factors, Republicans and conservatives generally were the most likely to find this statement unconvincing. Of all the arguments for expanding the use of clean energy, its expediency was generally the least convincing.



For each of the following, how convincing a reason is this to emphasize clean energy production?

While many of the survey's results are positive signs for the policies and tax credits that could best help mitigate climate change, some results suggest more complexity. For example, while support for the policies and credits on offer clearly suggest there is a need to reform and regulate the energy industry, voters do not really see a "main culprit" behind human impacts on the climate. Nearly identical shares of voters say "Oil and gas companies" (81 percent) and "National politicians" (78 percent) are at least somewhat responsible. Fully 69 percent say "individuals" hold responsibility for climate change as well. These results do not suggest voters have a clear idea who is responsible for climate change.

A recurring theme throughout the data is that voters are most responsive to arguments in favor of climate change mitigation strategies that will also benefit them financially. Tax credits and incentives overall were overwhelmingly popular, and voters said the most convincing arguments for them related to helping lower the cost of their bills. This suggests that voters base their views on climate policy *instrumentally* to their financial needs, and thus may be persuadable on the basis of arguments traditionally advanced by fossil fuel supporters around cost.

### Methodology Statement

This survey is based on 1,124 interviews conducted by YouGov on the internet of registered voters. The sample was weighted according to gender, age, race/ethnicity, education, and U.S. Census region based on voter registration lists, the U.S. Census American Community Survey, and the U.S. Census Current Population Survey, as well as 2020 Presidential vote and approximate 2024 Presidential vote based on available results. Respondents were selected from YouGov to be representative of registered voters. The weights range from 0.15 to 5.58 with a mean of 1 and a standard deviation of 0.48.

The margin of error (a 95% confidence interval) for a sample percentage  $p$  based upon the subsetted sample is approximately 3.2%. It is calculated using the formula:

$$\hat{p} \pm 100 \times \sqrt{\frac{1 + CV^2}{n}}$$

where  $CV$  is the coefficient of variation of the sample weights and  $n$  is the sample size used to compute the proportion. This is a measure of sampling error (the average of all estimates obtained using the same sample selection and weighting procedures repeatedly). The sample estimate should differ from its expected value by less than margin of error in 95 percent of all samples. It does not reflect non-sampling errors, including potential selection bias in panel participation or in response to a particular survey. Some questions withheld for later release.