

TO: Interested parties
FROM: Global Strategy Group
DATE: November 10, 2017
RE: **Key Findings and Recommendations from EPA Survey**

A survey from Global Strategy Group on behalf of the Environmental Defense Fund finds that the EPA, the Clean Air and Water Acts, as well as “clean air and water laws” in general are all very popular among voters in battleground congressional districts. Voters overwhelmingly oppose proposed cuts to the EPA, and a member’s support for the cuts could be an albatross around their neck.

KEY FINDINGS:

- **The EPA and clean air and water laws are very popular, but the latter is less polarizing.** The EPA has an overwhelmingly positive favorability rating (62% favorable vs. 24% unfavorable), and “America’s Clean Air and Water Laws” have the same positive ratings with even less negatives (61% favorable vs. 16% unfavorable). Moreover, large majorities say that funding for the EPA or to “enforce America’s clean air and water laws” should either increased or stay the same. Again, support from Republicans for decreasing funding is lower when we focus on “clean air and water laws” rather than the EPA.
- **Trump and the Republicans’ proposed EPA cuts are overwhelmingly and intensely opposed and could be a huge albatross for candidates who support them.** Two-thirds of voters oppose the Trump/GOP budget proposal to cut EPA funding by 31%, including an astounding 76% of independent voters. Moreover, huge majorities of Democrats and independents say they would be less likely to vote to re-elect their member of Congress if they support these EPA cuts – even a plurality of moderate Republicans say that they’d be less likely to support such a member.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Show what the EPA has done to benefit real people – specifically in protecting the health of our kids.** Messaging about how the EPA helped clean up a town in Ohio was very compelling in this survey. Voters want to hear real stories of the benefits of the EPA’s help. And, to achieve the best results, these stories should emphasize how the EPA protects the health and wellbeing of our kids by protecting them from toxic air and water pollution.
- **Lean in to the EPA’s success.** We found that stark visuals that demonstrated the progress the EPA has achieved are extremely effective, particularly in the context of what that means for regular people (cleaner air is healthier, etc.). And a message that cutting the EPA would undo 50 years of progress is also strong.
- **Frame the motivation of the Trump administration around Scott Pruitt (though not by name).** The most effective negative is to emphasize that Trump put a politician who has taken over \$4 million from corporate polluters – and protected their interests at every turn – in charge of regulating these same companies as the head of the EPA.

RECOMMENDED LANGUAGE:

The EPA protects our health and well-being.

Cutting funding for the EPA will undo the progress we've made over the last 50 years to make our air and water clean and safe.

It will weaken limits on toxic smog, mercury, and carbon pollution, and put the health of our kids at risk.

Donald Trump put a politician who has taken over \$4 million from corporate polluters - and protected their interests at every turn - in charge of regulating these same companies as the head of the EPA.

ABOUT THIS POLL

Global Strategy Group conducted a survey from April 14 through 20, 2017 with 1,507 registered voters in battleground congressional districts.