



TO: Interested Parties  
FROM: Andrew Baumann and Katie Drapcho, Global Strategy Group  
DATE: December 13, 2022  
RE: **POLL RESULTS: Michigan voters want to see state lawmakers take action on climate change and support policies to limit carbon emissions.**

A survey of likely Michigan voters conducted by Global Strategy Group in September finds that Michiganders want to see state lawmakers take action to reduce carbon pollution and tackle climate change and that voters support specific policies to do so. Supporting strong action on climate change also gives supportive candidates a political boost (and would damage opposing candidates) with all partisan groups and across the state.

Large majorities of Michigan voters are favorable to clean energy, regulations to reduce carbon emissions, and lawmakers who support action on climate change. Voters also believe that Michigan lawmakers need to do more to combat climate change and encourage more clean energy use, in part because they believe climate change is having an impact on their community and that clean energy will reduce costs and create jobs.

While Democrats and Republicans were tied on the statewide generic ballot for state legislature, when the race is reframed between a Democratic candidate who supports taking strong action on climate against a Republican who opposes taking action, the Democratic margin expands to 10 points. Importantly, support for taking action on climate holds up after a balanced debate focused on costs and the economy, and the political lift for a candidate who supports strong action on climate change actually increases by two points.

KEY SURVEY FINDINGS:

**Michigan voters want to see the state take action to encourage more clean energy and reduce carbon pollution.** Clean energy and climate action are popular with Michigan voters. Over three-quarters of voters are favorable to clean energy (76% favorable/20% unfavorable), including all partisan groups, and two in three (65%) agree with the statement that “Michigan policymakers should support policies that encourage more use of clean energy like wind and solar.”

NET AGREEMENT						
	Agree	Disagree	Net	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.
Michigan policymakers should support policies that encourage more use of clean energy like wind and solar	65%	33%	+32	+75	+31	-26
Michigan policymakers need to do more to combat climate change	62%	36%	+26	+77	+8	-31

Voters want to see state policy that addresses climate change, with three in five voters favorable to “regulations to reduce the carbon emissions that cause climate change” (64% favorable/31% unfavorable)

and “lawmakers who support strong action to reduce climate change” (58% favorable/35% unfavorable). Over six in ten voters (62%) agree “Michigan policymakers need to do more to combat climate change,” in part because they see the impact that it has in their communities, with 55% of Michigan voters agreeing that “climate change is having a serious impact on their community.”

**Michigan voters support moving to clean energy because they view it as an economic boon for the state’s economy.** Nearly two thirds of voters agree that “using more clean energy like wind and solar would create quality jobs and strengthen Michigan’s economy (64% agree/34% disagree), with an equal 64% to 34% share of voters also agreeing that “using more clean energy like wind and solar would save Michigan families money.” In both scenarios, majorities of Democrats and independents agree clean energy will be good for Michigan’s economy and families, as do majorities of voters across the state.

**As a result of Michigan voters’ support for tackling climate change, policies to reduce carbon pollution receive strong support.** Large majorities of voters support policies that would limit carbon pollution and help the state tackle climate change. While helping farmers and forest managers capture carbon is most popular (70% support/27% oppose), over six in ten voters also support joining other states to cap carbon emissions from power plants (61% support/37% oppose), placing a limit on carbon to reach net zero emissions by 2050 (61% support/36% oppose), and requiring Michigan utilities to get 60% of their electricity from clean energy by 2030 (60% support/37% oppose).

NET SUPPORT						
	Support	Oppose	Net	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.
Create opportunities for farmers and forest managers to get paid to change their practices in ways that allows Michigan lands and forest to capture more carbon and reduce the impacts of climate change	70%	27%	+43	+73	+54	-8
Join other states in the Midwest in an effort to combat climate change by capping carbon emissions from power plants and requiring power plants to pay for the carbon emissions they emit	61%	37%	+24	+68	+14	-28
Place a limit on the total carbon emissions in Michigan that would decline over time, reaching a 50% reduction in emissions by 2030 and net zero emissions by 2050	61%	36%	+25	+64	+12	-23
Require Michigan utilities to get 60% of their electricity from clean energy sources like wind and solar by the year 2030	60%	37%	+23	+58	+28	-32

**Michigan voters want the transition to a clean energy economy to ensure benefits for those communities most harmed by pollution and underinvestment.** Nearly eight in ten voters agree with the statement “as we move towards clean energy, we should make sure that we protect communities most impacted by harmful air pollution, including Black and Hispanic communities” (79% agree/18% disagree), including majorities of Democrats, Independents, and Republicans. As a result, by 69%-28%, voters support a policy that prioritizes clean energy investments in communities that suffer from disproportionate amounts of pollution, including large shares of all partisan groups and voters across the state

**Protecting clean drinking water is singularly important to Michigan voters.** 91% of voters agree that “Michigan policymakers should support policies that guarantee clean drinking water to all communities, particularly those most impacted by unsafe drinking water from pollution and lead pipes” and 89% agree that “Michigan policymakers need to do more to protect our water from pollution and toxic chemicals like PFAS,” including a majority of Republicans and independents. As a result of these attitudes, Michigan voters strongly support policies to reduce water pollution, with over eight in ten supporting setting tougher standards on toxic PFAS chemicals and forcing the military to clean up PFAS contamination in Michigan communities (82% support/14% oppose).

NET AGREE						
	Agree	Disagree	Net	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.
Michigan policymakers should support policies that guarantee clean drinking water to all communities, particularly those most impacted by unsafe drinking water from pollution and lead pipes	91%	7%	+84	+90	+86	+73
Michigan policymakers need to do more to protect our water from pollution and toxic chemicals like PFAS	89%	9%	+80	+86	+83	+68
As we move towards clean energy, we should make sure that we protect communities most impacted by harmful air pollution, including Black and Hispanic communities	79%	18%	+61	+87	+46	+34

**Democrats running for state legislature get a political boost when the race is framed around supporting action on climate change.** In September, Democrats and Republicans were tied on the generic ballot for state legislature, with voters split 45%-45% on whether they planned to vote for a Democratic or Republican candidate. However, putting the race in the context of a Democrat who *supports* strong action to combat climate change versus a Republican who *opposes* action on climate gives the Democratic candidate a boost. A Democrat who supports taking strong action on climate change leads a Republican who opposes it by 10 points, 51% to 41% (a net lift of 10 points relative to the straight generic ballot). As the table below shows, reframing the generic ballot gives supportive Democrats a particular lift (and damages opposing Republicans) among independents and outside of the Detroit media market.

LEGISLATIVE VOTE WITH CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION						
	Overall	Dem.	Ind.	GOP	Detroit DMA	Rest of State
Democrat who supports strong action on climate change	51	79	44	19	54	49
Republican who opposes strong action to combat climate change	41	15	47	74	39	43
<i>Net support</i>	<i>+10</i>	<i>+64</i>	<i>-3</i>	<i>-55</i>	<i>+15</i>	<i>+6</i>
<i>Net Generic Democrat</i>	<i>+0</i>	<i>+55</i>	<i>-15</i>	<i>-64</i>	<i>+8</i>	<i>-7</i>
<i>Total Lift</i>	<i>+10</i>	<i>+9</i>	<i>+12</i>	<i>+9</i>	<i>+7</i>	<i>+13</i>

**Support for taking action on climate change – and its positive impact on supportive Democrats - hold up after voters hear a balanced debate from both sides.** After hearing a simulated debate that includes balanced statements in support and in opposition to taking action on climate change, with opposition messaging primarily focused on costs, large majorities of voters continue to want to see the state take action on climate change and believe moving to clean energy will benefit Michigan’s economy and families. Notably, after the simulated debate, a Democrat who supports action on climate change receives more political support, growing their lead on the ballot for state legislature over a Republican who opposes action on climate to 12 points (53% to 41%).

#### **ABOUT THE POLL**

Global Strategy Group conducted a survey of 800 likely 2022 general election voters in Michigan between September 21-25, 2022. The survey had a margin of error of +/- 3.5%. The margin of error on subgroups is greater.

## APPENDIX

### CLIMATE CHANGE DEBATE

**Supporters say** that taking action to combat climate change and move Michigan to clean energy would dramatically reduce the carbon, sulfur, and arsenic pollution that disrupt our climate, make our families sick, and pollute our lakes and rivers while creating tens of thousands of quality jobs for all kinds of people, from installers to factory workers. And since the cost of wind and solar is already lower than coal and gas – and still dropping – using more clean energy would save consumers money. In fact, Stanford University researchers say that moving to clean energy will save the average Michigan family hundreds of dollars a year.

**Opponents say** that the cost of gas and energy is already too expensive and taking unnecessary action on climate change will only make things worse. By forcing us to phase out less expensive energy sources, these proposals would drive up electricity bills by hundreds of dollars per year and make the cost of gasoline even more expensive, leading to higher prices on groceries and everything else we buy. What's more, by raising electricity bills and gas prices, this proposal will force businesses to move to other states and overseas where costs are lower, killing thousands of jobs and hurting Michigan's economy.