

EDF ACTION CAMPAIGN ACADEMY

EDF  ACTION
Advocacy partner of Environmental Defense Fund

CAMPAIGN ACADEMY



POLLING 101

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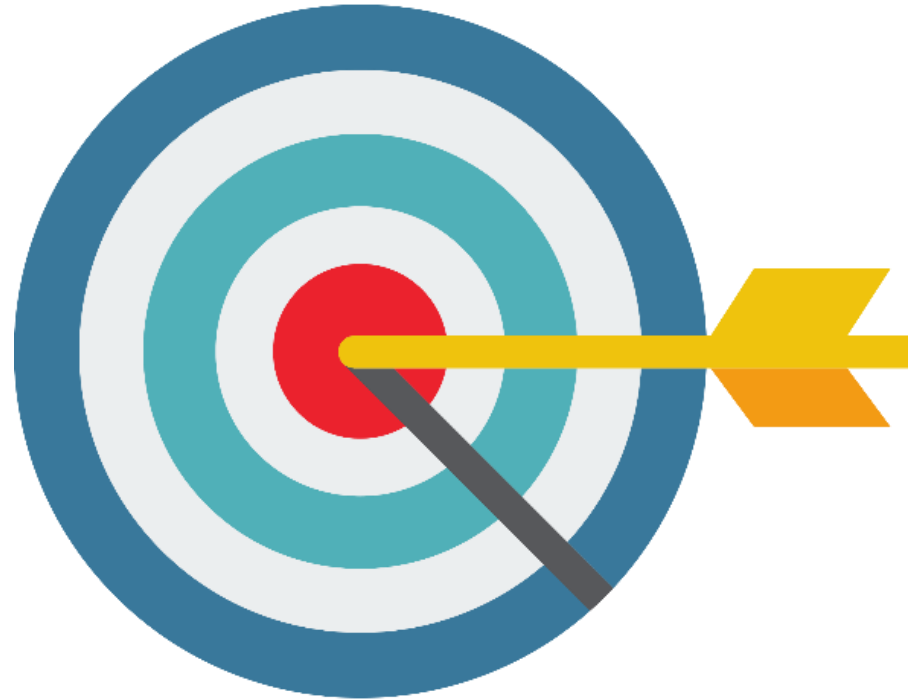
CAMPAIGN ACADEMY

STRATEGIC RESEARCH IN POLITICAL ELECTIONS

Strategic research provides the basis of an **informed plan** for all aspects of a campaign.

Its most important use is in **targeting**:

- **Targeting** messaging
- **Targeting** resources



GOALS OF STRATEGIC ELECTORAL POLLING



Political polling provides answers to key questions such as:

- Who is the most likely to win the election?
- How do voters view the candidate? Our opponents?
- How should we introduce the candidate to voters?
- What are the candidate's biggest vulnerabilities?
- How should we attack our opponents?
- What issues are most important to voters?
- How should we communicate our issue stances to voters?
- Who is in our key target universe?
- Where should we allocate our resources?
- How does the vote change over time?



MESSAGE TESTING

Message testing reveals the direction a race may take under various scenarios.

The results of the testing are used to create a **strategic message plan** for the campaign.

It tells us:

- What to say
- How to say it
- Who to say it to



SCREENERS

TYPICAL POLITICAL SURVEY STRUCTURE

SCREENERS

- S1. Are you at least 18 years old and registered to vote at (ADDRESS ON FILE)?
- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1. Yes | CONTINUE |
| 2. No | TERMINATE |
| 3. Don't know/Refused | TERMINATE |
- S2. As you may know, there will be an election for President, U.S. Senate, and U.S. Congress in November 2016. I know it is a long time from now, but how likely are you to vote in the November 2016 election for U.S. Senate will - you definitely vote, probably vote, are the chances 50-50, probably not vote, or definitely not vote?]
- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1. Definitely | CONTINUE |
| 2. Probably | CONTINUE |
| 3. Chance 50-50 | CONTINUE |
| 4. Probably not | TERMINATE |
| 5. Definitely not | TERMINATE |
| 6. Don't Know/Refused | TERMINATE |

POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

Right direction/Wrong track
Favorability Battery
Most Important Issue Battery

INITIAL VOTE

- V1. If the election for President was today, for which candidate would you vote – (ROTATE CLINTON/TRUMP) Democrat Hillary Clinton or Republican Donald Trump? (IF UNDECIDED) But if you had to decide today, which way would you lean?
- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Hillary Clinton | |
| 2. Lean Hillary Clinton | |
| 3. Donald Trump | |
| 4. Lean Donald Trump | |
| 5. Undecided/Refused | DO NOT READ |

CANDIDATE PROFILES

Intro to candidates

INFORMED VOTE

MESSAGE TESTING

Positive/Negative Message Battery → Ordering of messaging is meant to simulate the likely communications environment of the race

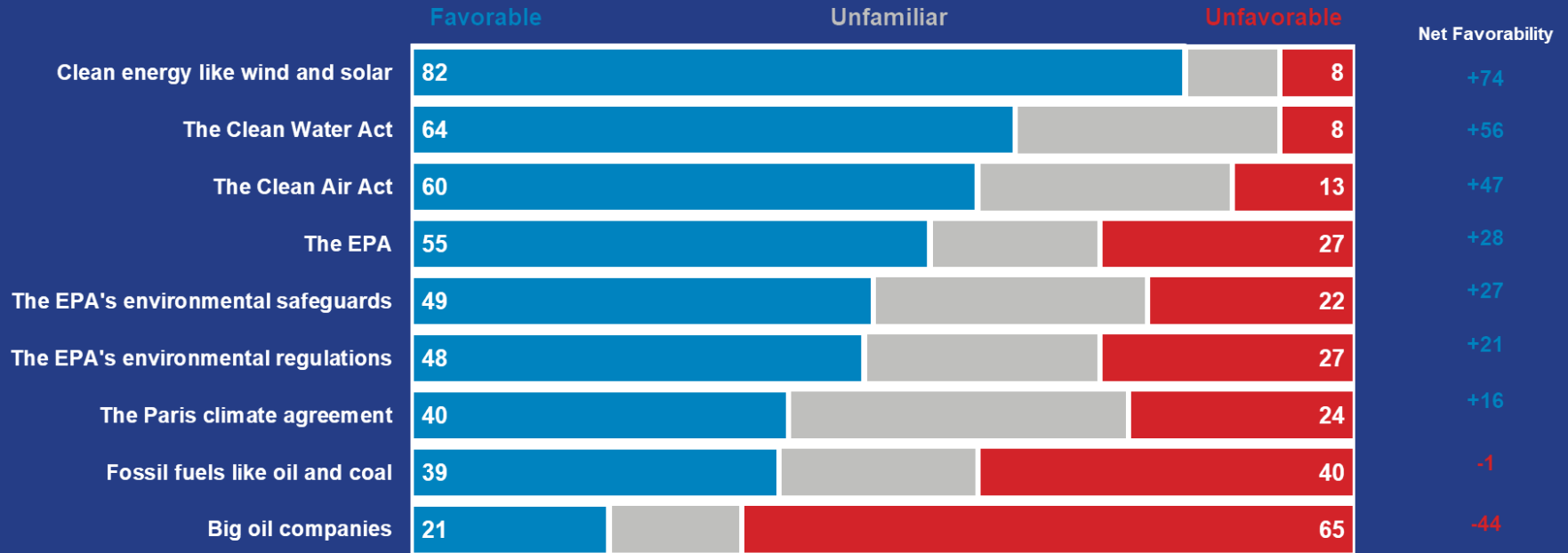
FINAL VOTE

DEMOGRAPHICS

VIEWS ON CLIMATE, CLEAN ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

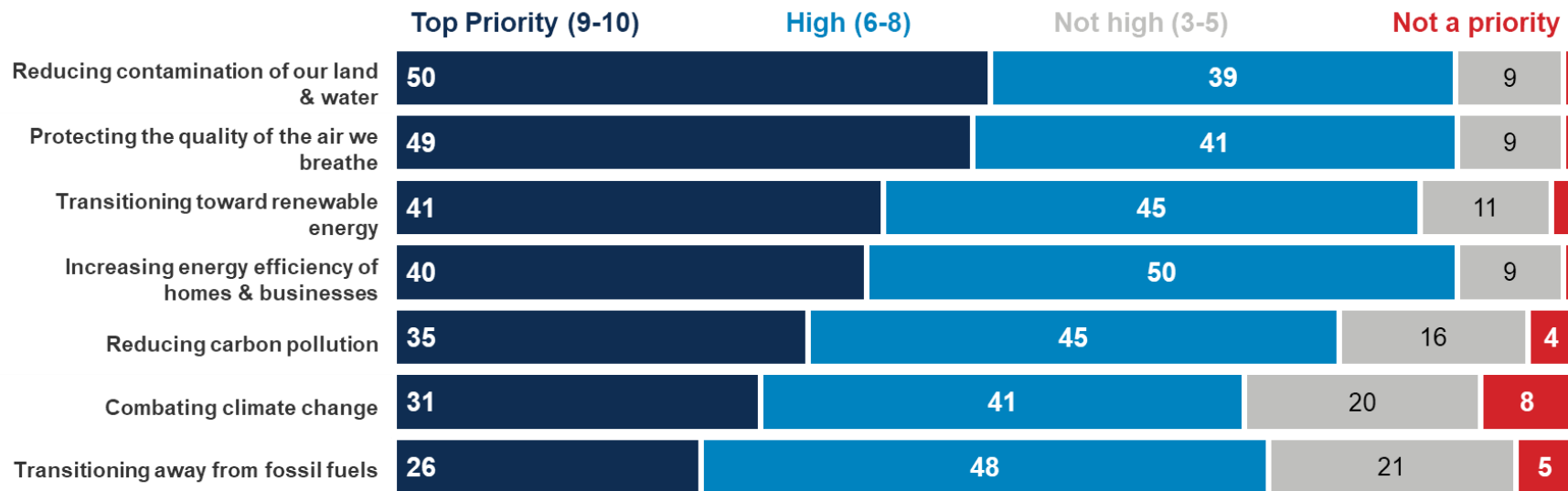
CLEAN ENERGY AND SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDS LIKE THE CLEAN WATER AND AIR ACTS REMAIN EXCEEDINGLY POPULAR, AS IS EPA

Favorability of All Tested



AMERICANS PRIORITIZE PROTECTING OUR AIR AND WATER, WHILE INCREASING RENEWABLES IS A STRONGER PRIORITY THAN CLIMATE OR GETTING OFF FOSSIL FUELS

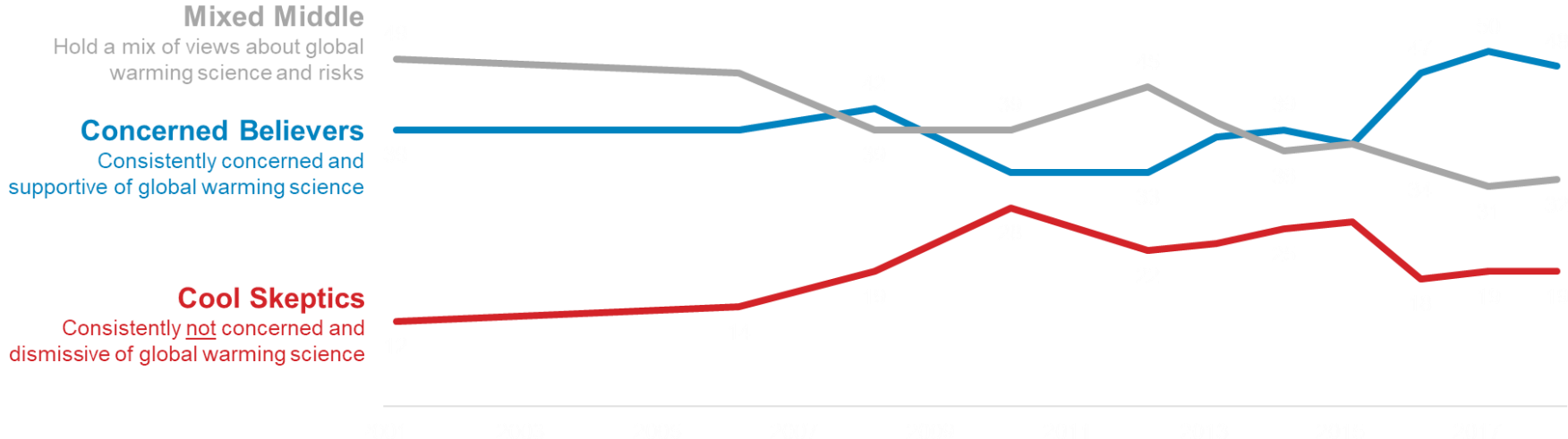
For each item below please indicate how important of a priority you think it should be for the United States on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means it is “not a priority at all” and 10 means the “top priority.”



20% of adults rate transitioning toward renewable energy as 8+ but not combating climate change—including significant numbers of Republicans (24%), adults in rural areas (23%), and 18-29 year olds (23%).

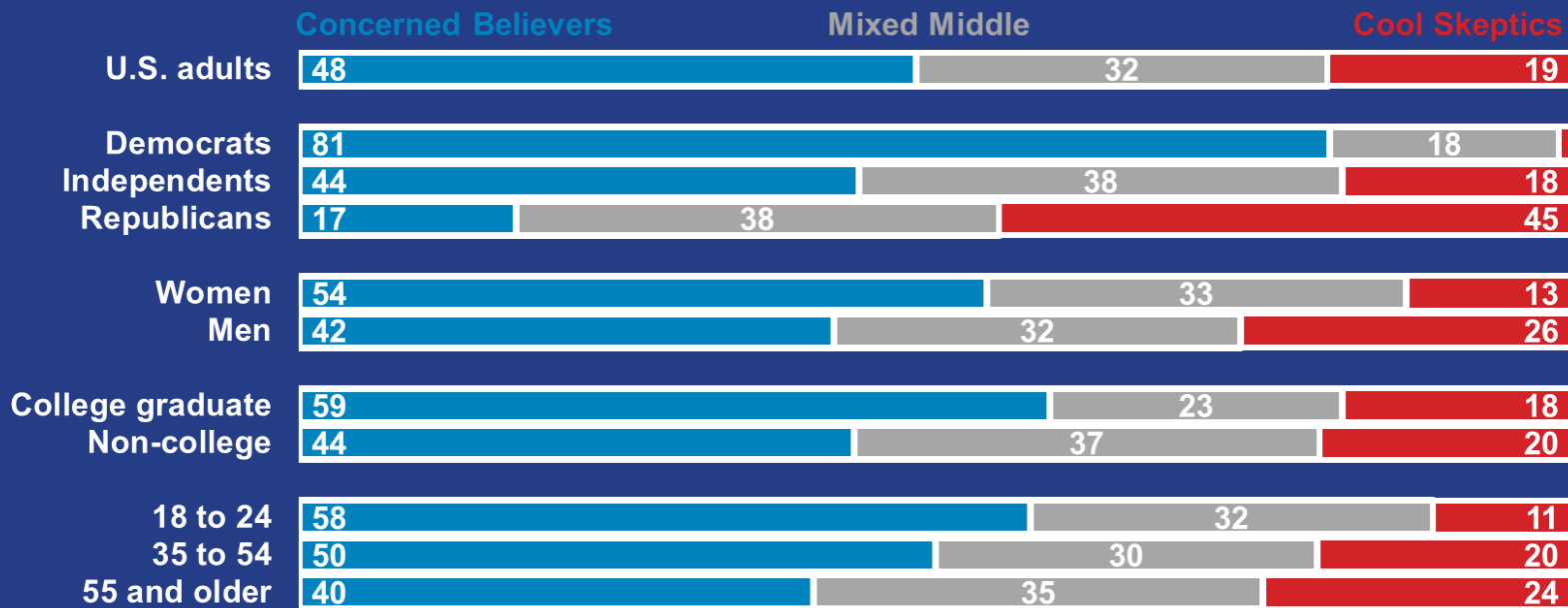
CONCERN ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE NEAR ALL-TIME HIGH, BUT ONLY HALF OF AMERICANS ARE “CONCERNED BELIEVERS”

Global Warming Opinion Groups



VIEWES ON CLIMATE ARE EXTREMELY POLARIZED; AND THERE ARE SIZABLE EDUCATION, GENDER AND AGE DIFFERENCES

Global Warming Opinion Groups



BUT SUPPORT FOR A TRANSITION TO CLEAN ENERGY CROSSES PARTISAN AND DEMOGRAPHIC LINES

Setting a binding goal for the U.S. to 'transition completely away from fossil fuels like coal, oil and natural gas and get all of our energy needs from renewable sources like wind and solar by the year 2050'



BUT SUPPORT FOR A TRANSITION TO CLEAN ENERGY CROSSES PARTISAN AND DEMOGRAPHIC LINES

Which statement is closer to your own view?

It is possible to protect our air quality and public health and have a strong economy with good jobs at the same time. We don't have to choose one over the other

Creating more environmental regulations will increase costs, hurt our economic recovery and destroy jobs. We have to prioritize between the environment and the economy



Strengthening safeguards against pollution will create more jobs because it will encourage innovation and investment in new technologies.

Creating new environmental regulations will destroy jobs by increasing costs and making American businesses less competitive



**MESSAGING IN SUPPORT OF CLEAN ENERGY
AND CLIMATE POLICIES**

FOUR MESSAGES TO USE IN SUPPORT OF PRO-CLIMATE OR CLEAN ENERGY POLICIES



Aggressively stress the potential long-term cost savings using Stanford researchers as a validator. Invariably, the best chance our opponents have to undermine support is convincing voters that these policies will mean money out of their pockets. But voters are now much more open to arguments that these policies will save them money in the long-term – after all, the wind and sun are free. Several GSG surveys show that one of the most effective ways to make this point is by noting that Stanford University researchers say that moving to renewable energy will save the average family over \$1,000 a year in health costs and energy savings.

- This is a strong message with all voters, but is particularly important for *center-right voters*



Go beyond just jobs to emphasize the impact on American innovation and the economy broadly. A broad based economic message is at the top of the list, but this needs to go beyond simply talking about the creation of new jobs. The strongest messages talk about how these policies will help restore America as a leader in innovations that revolutionize industries, create news businesses, drive economic growth and, yes, create hundreds of thousands of new jobs.

- This is a strong message with all voters, but is particularly important for *center-right voters*

FOUR MESSAGES TO USE IN SUPPORT OF PRO-CLIMATE OR CLEAN ENERGY POLICIES



Highlight the health benefits of reduced pollution – with a focus on specific pollutants and diseases. By encouraging a shift to clean energy, these policies will sharply reduce toxic pollutants like carbon, mercury and sulfur dioxide. Doctors say this will dramatically reduce the rates of heart disease, asthma, respiratory diseases, and even cancer – especially for children and seniors.

- This is a strong message with all voters, but is particularly important for *liberal base voters*



Underscore the obligation we have to future generations to act now. Voters are less certain that climate change will impact themselves, but are significantly concerned it will impact their children and grandchildren. A message that argues that we have “an obligation to do something now, so we don’t leave them a planet that’s damaged and polluted” resonates strongly. Depending on the situation, this message can also be strengthened by arguing that waiting to take action will make the cost of action much higher when we eventually act – a cost that our children will be forced to bear.

- This is a strong message with all voters, but is particularly important for *liberal base voters*

THE CORE FRAME AGAINST ANTI-ENVIRONMENT POLITICIANS IS THAT THEY ARE SELLING OUT OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE FOR THE BENEFIT OF THEIR CORPORATE DONORS

Emphasize the fealty that these politicians show to corporate polluters, but always tie it back to how they are putting profits ahead of people's health.

- The environment can be a great proof point in showing that your opponent is on the side of special interests. But **it is not enough to focus on the bad actors without connecting them back to the impact on regular people** —that your opponent is helping these special interests boost their own profits at the expense of the health of our families and children.

Focus on the specific actions (undermining cherished safeguards) and their impacts (unlimited amounts of specific, named pollutants in our air and water).

- The above lays down the values-based motivation for anti-environment politicians' actions, but then we need to make the impacts clear: These politicians are trying to undermine or **eliminate safeguards like the Clean Air and Water Acts** that protect our health and, instead, allow power plants to **spew unlimited amounts of toxic pollution like mercury, arsenic and sulfur dioxide** in our air and water

UNDERNEATH THAT CORE FRAME, SEVERAL SPECIFIC MESSAGES HAVE STRONG RESONANCE WITH VOTERS:

Hammer politicians who would privatize public lands—particularly in the West.

- Proposals to sell off our public lands are among the most wildly unpopular throughout the country, but especially in the West. Highlighting how politicians are threatening the ability of our children to enjoy our outdoor heritage is a strong critique of their agenda.

Avoid a solo focus on their fealty to fossil fuels and instead juxtapose their opposition to clean energy with support for more subsidies for oil and coal.

- Simply attacking politicians for wanting to “double down on fossil fuels like oil and coal” falls flat. But messages that focus on how they want to end incentives for clean energy and instead give billions more in taxpayer subsidies to oil companies resonate strongly.

Highlight these politicians’ habit of putting ideology and politics ahead of science with white-collar, suburban voters.

- While climate changes itself isn’t the most salient attack on anti-environment politicians, any insistence that it is a “hoax,” while the military and NASA say it is a threat to our country, is beyond the pale to many voters. When combined with his efforts by some politicians to deny science and muzzle scientists, this can be a powerful narrative, particularly with college-educated voters.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE MESSAGING DO'S...

DO's

Always bring your messaging back to how these issues impact regular people.

Use specifics as much as possible—specific safeguards (i.e., the Clean Air and Water Acts), specific named pollutants (i.e., mercury, arsenic, sulfur dioxide), and specific health impacts (asthma and respiratory diseases, heart disease, cancer).

Talk about how we have a “moral obligation” to “future generations” or “our kids and grandkids.”

Aggressively stress that clean energy will save regular families money in the long-term.

When talking about public lands:

- **Focus on protecting the legacy of our “outdoor heritage” for future generations.**
- **And argue that our “wild is not for sale” to the highest bidders**

Talk about how (EPA) scientists should be deciding what kinds of safeguards we need, not Washington politicians (who are in the pocket of corporate polluters)

Highlight how anti-environment politicians put ideology and partisanship ahead of science with white-collar voters.

Focus more on economic arguments with center-right voters, and more on health, legacy and climate arguments with the progressive base.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE MESSAGING DON'TS...

DON'TS

Ever cede the economic debate to anti-environment politicians.

Ever use the term “Green Jobs.” Voters have no idea what that means.

Be afraid to endorse an ambitious clean energy target (like 100% by 2050). Voters not only support it but believe it is totally viable.

Be afraid to support the EPA. In most places, it is quite popular and not at all a boogeyman to voters.

Focus only on anti-environment politicians' fealty to fossil fuels. Instead, always juxtapose this with their opposition to clean energy.

Limit your economic message to jobs, particularly with center-right voters. Also talk about innovation, businesses, and economic growth.

Be afraid to support aggressive climate action, but also don't focus your message only on climate —broaden the message to clean energy, clean air and water, and public lands.

TERMINOLOGY IS IMPORTANT

DON'T use the terms

DO use the terms

Climate Pollution
Global Warming Pollution
Carbon Dioxide



Carbon Pollution

Alternative Energy



Clean Energy
(When your focus is more on clean air or health)

Green Energy



Renewable Energy
(When your focus is more on the economy and innovation)

Green Jobs
(Voters have no idea what this means)



Clean/Renewable Energy Jobs

TERMINOLOGY IS IMPORTANT

DON'T use the terms

DO use the terms

Asthma



Asthma attacks

Regulations or Rules



Safeguards

Emissions



Pollution

Environment



Land, air and water

Environmental



Conservation

Federal



American

Fossil Fuels



"Dirty" and "Outdated" energy sources

THANK YOU