

TO: EDF Action

FR: Morning Consult

DT: January 26, 2021

RE: Results: Voters' Views on Federal Departments' or Agencies' Role in Addressing Climate Change

Morning Consult conducted a survey, on behalf of EDF Action between January 22nd – January 23rd, 2021 among a national sample of 1985 registered voters. The interviews were conducted online. Results from the survey have a margin error of plus or minus 2 percentage points.

The survey sought to measure perceptions of and support for key federal agencies or departments engaging in work to address the environmental, economic, and social impacts of climate change.

KEY FINDINGS – CLIMATE CHANGE AND DEPARTMENT OR AGENCY MISSIONS

Majorities of voters support key federal departments or agencies focusing on climate change.

This includes bipartisan Republican and Democratic support for departments or agencies such as the Department of Energy (R: 58%, D: 91%), Department of Transportation (R: 52%, D: 88%), and EPA (R: 58%, D: 91%) focusing on climate change.*

Importance of Addressing Climate Change	
% Support (Strongly + Somewhat)	Making climate change a mission focus
Department of Energy	
Registered Voters	75%
Environmental Protection Agency	
Registered Voters	74%
Department of Transportation	
Registered Voters	71%
Department of the Interior	
Registered Voters	67%

*Question asked after being informed of department or agency-specific initiatives

KEY FINDINGS – DEPARTMENTAL PRIORITIES

Voters also recognize the importance of the Department of Transportation engaging in a wide array of specific environmental priorities, chief among them clean infrastructure.

Nearly three in four Independent voters (73%) and three in five Republican voters (61%), say it's important to update infrastructure to reduce pollution and poverty where it is highest. Three in five Republican voters (59%) say it's important to build new infrastructure to be environmentally friendly.

Environmental Priorities: Department of Transportation	
% Important (Very + Somewhat)	Building new infrastructure to be environmentally friendly
Registered Voters	76%
Democratic Voters	91%
Independent Voters	72%
Republican Voters	59%
Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters*	93%
Voters ages 18-34	78%
% Important (Very + Somewhat)	Updating infrastructure to reduce pollution and poverty where it is highest
Registered Voters	77%
Democratic Voters	90%
Independent Voters	73%
Republican Voters	61%
Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters*	87%
Voters ages 18-34	78%
% Important (Very + Somewhat)	Creating more access to good jobs by building infrastructure where pollution and poverty are highest
Registered Voters	76%
Democratic Voters	89%
Independent Voters	71%
Republican Voters	61%
Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters*	84%
Voters ages 18-34	77%

Clean transportation is also important for the Department of Transportation to address.

Over two thirds of voters (68%) say it's important for the DoT to build public car charging infrastructure powered by clean energy, while an additional two thirds (66%) say it's important to incentivize the production of more electric trucks, buses, and cars.

*Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters': n size = 83

KEY FINDINGS – AGENCY PRIORITIES

Voters also recognize the importance of the Environmental Protection Agency carrying out its core mission.

Bipartisan Republican and Democratic majorities say it's important for the EPA to adopt pollution limits for the largest industrial emitters (R: 62%, D: 91%) as well as limit pollution from power plants, tailpipes, and oil and gas development (R: 61%, D: 92%). Additionally, over three in five Republican voters (63%) say it's important that the EPA restore a strong commitment to science.

Climate Priorities: Environmental Protection Agency	
% Important (Very + Somewhat)	Adopting limits on climate pollution for the largest industrial emitters
Registered Voters	76%
Democratic Voters	91%
Independent Voters	71%
Republican Voters	62%
Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters*	93%
Voters ages 18-34	77%
% Important (Very + Somewhat)	Limiting the pollution from power plants, tailpipes, and oil and gas development
Registered Voters	76%
Democratic Voters	92%
Independent Voters	71%
Republican Voters	61%
Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters*	96%
Voters ages 18-34	79%
% Important (Very + Somewhat)	Strengthening environmental protections for communities that are hit first and worst by climate change and air pollution
Registered Voters	75%
Democratic Voters	92%
Independent Voters	70%
Republican Voters	58%
Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters*	92%
Voters ages 18-34	81%
% Important (Very + Somewhat)	Restoring a strong commitment to science
Registered Voters	76%
Democratic Voters	89%
Independent Voters	69%
Republican Voters	63%
Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters*	94%
Voters ages 18-34	78%

*Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters': n size = 83

KEY FINDINGS – DEPARTMENTAL PRIORITIES

Voters also recognize the importance of the Department of Energy engaging in a wide array of climate-related priorities.

Bipartisan majorities of voters say developing energy-efficient buildings (79%), appliances (77%), and renewable energy (76%) is important for the Department of Energy to take on. Three quarters also say it's important to incentivize individuals to use energy-saving technology at home (74%).

Climate Priorities: Department of Energy	
% Important (Very + Somewhat)	Promoting the development of energy-efficient buildings
Registered Voters	79%
Democratic Voters	92%
Independent Voters	75%
Republican Voters	65%
Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters*	92%
Voters ages 18-34	80%
% Important (Very + Somewhat)	Incentivizing the development and sale of energy-efficient appliances
Registered Voters	77%
Democratic Voters	89%
Independent Voters	73%
Republican Voters	64%
Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters*	88%
Voters ages 18-34	78%
% Important (Very + Somewhat)	Incentivizing the development of renewable energy, such as wind and solar
Registered Voters	76%
Democratic Voters	90%
Independent Voters	70%
Republican Voters	63%
Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters*	89%
Voters ages 18-34	79%
% Important (Very + Somewhat)	Incentivizing individuals to use energy-saving technology at home, such as solar panels
Registered Voters	74%
Democratic Voters	87%
Independent Voters	69%
Republican Voters	62%
Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters*	91%
Voters ages 18-34	77%

*Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters': n size = 83

KEY FINDINGS – DEPARTMENTAL PRIORITIES

Voters also recognize the importance of the Department of the Interior engaging in environmental priorities, including land-use and water issues.

Bipartisan majorities of voters, including 92% of Democratic voters and 78% of Republican voters say ensuring clean and affordable water supplies is important for the Department of the Interior to address, as well as local input on land-use decisions (80%).

Environmental Priorities: Department of the Interior	
% Important (Very + Somewhat)	Ensuring that communities with unreliable water supplies, including tribes, have clean, affordable water
Registered Voters	84%
Democratic Voters	92%
Independent Voters	81%
Republican Voters	78%
Moderate Republican Voters	77%
Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters*	92%
Voters ages 18-34	81%
% Important (Very + Somewhat)	Ensuring that all people have a voice in the land use and infrastructure decisions that affect their lives
Registered Voters	80%
Democratic Voters	90%
Independent Voters	76%
Republican Voters	69%
Moderate Republican Voters	84%
Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters*	88%
Voters ages 18-34	79%

Endangered and threatened species are also important for the Department of the Interior to address.

Three quarters of voters (76%), including 90% of Democratic voters and 60% of Republican voters say it's important for the Department of the Interior to expand protections for habitats for threatened and endangered species.

*Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters': n size = 83

KEY FINDINGS – DEPARTMENTAL PRIORITIES

Voters say it's important that the Department of Agriculture reward farmers' positive environmental contributions with new market opportunities.

Over three in four voters (78%), including two in three Republican voters (66%), say it's important to provide new market opportunities for farmers that reward positive environmental contributions. Three quarters of voters ages 18-34 (77%) say positive environmental contributions should lead to new market opportunities for farmers as well.

Climate Priorities: Department of Agriculture	
% Important (Very + Somewhat)	Providing new market opportunities for farmers that reward positive environmental contributions
Registered Voters	78%
Democratic Voters	90%
Independent Voters	74%
Republican Voters	66%
Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters*	93%
Voters ages 18-34	77%

Voters also say it's important that the Department of Agriculture break down barriers for new farmers as well as end discriminatory practices in USDA programs and throughout the farming system.

Over three in four voters (77%), including over four in five Democratic voters (86%) and two in three Republican voters (69%), say it's important to remove program barriers for new and beginning farmers. Three in five Republican voters (60%) also say it's important to end discrimination in USDA programs as well as other discriminatory barriers in the farming system (59%). See chart on following page for more detail.

*Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters': n size = 83

KEY FINDINGS – DEPARTMENTAL PRIORITIES

Climate Priorities: Department of Agriculture	
% Important (Very + Somewhat)	Removing program barriers for new and beginning farmers
Registered Voters	77%
Democratic Voters	86%
Independent Voters	73%
Republican Voters	69%
Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters*	83%
Voters ages 18-34	72%
% Important (Very + Somewhat)	Ending discrimination based on race across all USDA programs
Registered Voters	75%
Democratic Voters	91%
Independent Voters	71%
Republican Voters	60%
Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters*	90%
Voters ages 18-34	78%
% Important (Very + Somewhat)	Removing barriers in the farming system that discriminate, including discrimination against people of color
Registered Voters	74%
Democratic Voters	89%
Independent Voters	68%
Republican Voters	59%
Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters*	90%
Voters ages 18-34	76%

*Trump '16 – Biden '20 Voters': n size = 83