



TO Interested Parties
 FROM Andrew Baumann, Global Strategy Group
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 RE **North Carolina Voters Strongly Support Limits on Carbon Emissions**

A new survey of North Carolina voters shows strong support for state action to limit carbon emissions. The survey of 918 likely 2020 voters, conducted by Global Strategy Group on behalf of EDF Action, shows that North Carolinians overwhelmingly support state action to limit carbon emissions in the state (75% support/25% oppose), regardless of proposal specifics:¹

Power Plant Proposal: *The proposal would create regulations to place a limit on carbon emissions from North Carolina power plants that would decline over time reaching zero emissions by 2040.*

Economy-wide Proposal: *The proposal would create regulations to place a limit on the total carbon emissions in North Carolina - including emissions from power plants, factories, and transportation fuels - that would decline over time, reaching net zero emissions by 2050.*

The survey also found that the proposal is a political winner for politicians who embrace limits on carbon pollution. Though Democrats and Republicans are tied on the generic legislative ballot (45% Democrat/45% Republican), when the ballot is framed as a Democrat who supports the carbon limit proposal versus a Republican who opposes it, the Democrat moves to a 20-point advantage (55% Democrat/35% Republican).

After North Carolinians are exposed to a balanced simulated debate that includes strong attacks from opponents of the proposal, support remains robust (64% support/36% oppose). The electoral impacts of the proposal remain significantly positive, as well, with a Democrat who supports the proposal leading a Republican who opposes it by 11 points (49% Democrat/38% Republican), a double-digit lift from the generic ballot.

Furthermore, in the unlikely scenario that North Carolinians are exposed to attacks from opponents without any response from proponents, the proposal maintains majority support (53% support/47% oppose). And the proposal remains a net electoral benefit, with a Democrat who supports it leading a Republican who opposes it 48% to 40%. The following memo outlines the key findings from this survey.

KEY SURVEY FINDINGS

North Carolinians overwhelmingly support a proposal to limit carbon emissions. Voters support a proposal to create regulations to place a declining limit on carbon emissions in North Carolina by 50 points (75% support/25% oppose). Majorities from each party back the proposal as do those in urban, suburban, and small town/rural areas.

CARBON LIMITS PROPOSAL SUPPORT							
<i>Support for a proposal to create regulations to place a limit on carbon emissions in North Carolina</i>							
	Overall	Dem.	Ind.	GOP	City	Suburban	Small town/ Rural
Support	75	91	78	55	93	78	69
Oppose	25	9	22	45	7	22	31
<i>Net support</i>	<i>+50</i>	<i>+82</i>	<i>+56</i>	<i>+10</i>	<i>+86</i>	<i>+56</i>	<i>+38</i>

¹ Because of the similar levels of support for the two versions, this memo will focus on the combined data for both versions.

Voters in North Carolina view regulations to limit carbon emissions, as well as legislators who support actions to prevent climate change, positively. North Carolinians rate “regulations to reduce carbon emissions” highly (64% favorable/19% unfavorable), impacting their positive views toward “lawmakers who support strong action to combat climate change” (55% favorable/30% unfavorable). Meanwhile, “lawmakers who oppose strong action to combat climate change” suffer (26% favorable/59% unfavorable). Notably, voters hold these positive opinions of regulations to limit carbon emissions and negative views of opponents of climate action, regardless of party affiliation.

NET FAVORABILITY						
<i>Support for a proposal to create regulations to place a limit on carbon emissions in North Carolina</i>						
	Overall fav.	Overall unfav.	Overall	Dem.	Ind.	GOP
Regulations to reduce carbon emissions	64%	19%	+45	+70	+42	+17
Lawmakers who oppose strong action to combat climate change	26%	59%	-33	-52	-36	-11

Key swing groups like independents, suburban voters, and women respond positively to legislators who support carbon limits. A Democrat and a Republican are initially tied in a generic ballot for state legislature. Then, voters were asked to consider a Democrat and a Republican in the frame of the carbon limit debate:

After reading about this proposal to create regulations to place a limit on carbon emissions and thinking again about the election for state legislature, if the election were held today between a Democratic candidate who supports this proposal to limit carbon emissions and a Republican candidate who opposes this proposal to limit carbon emissions, for whom would you vote?

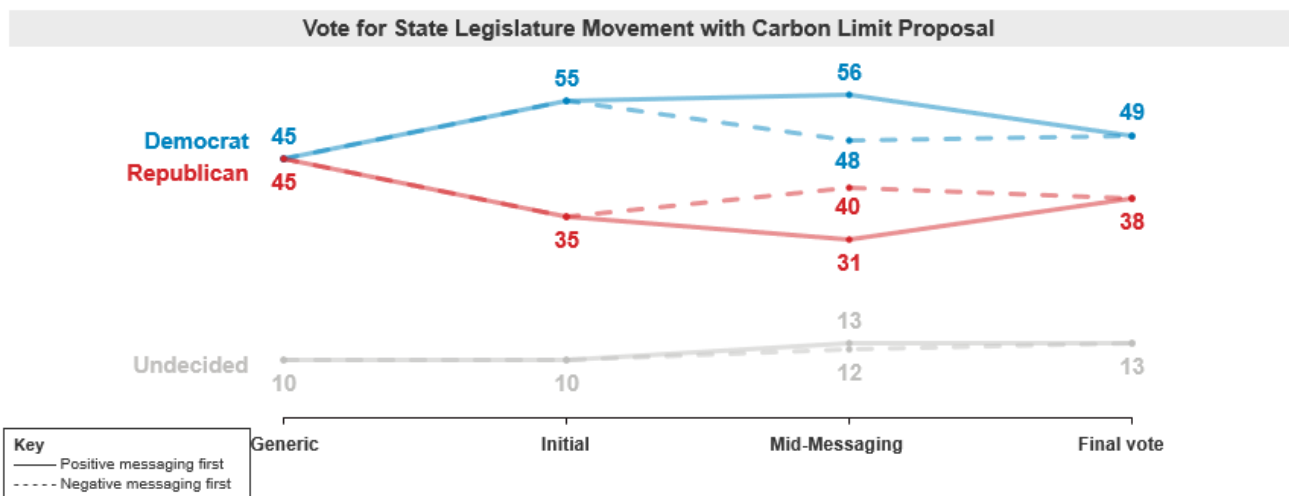
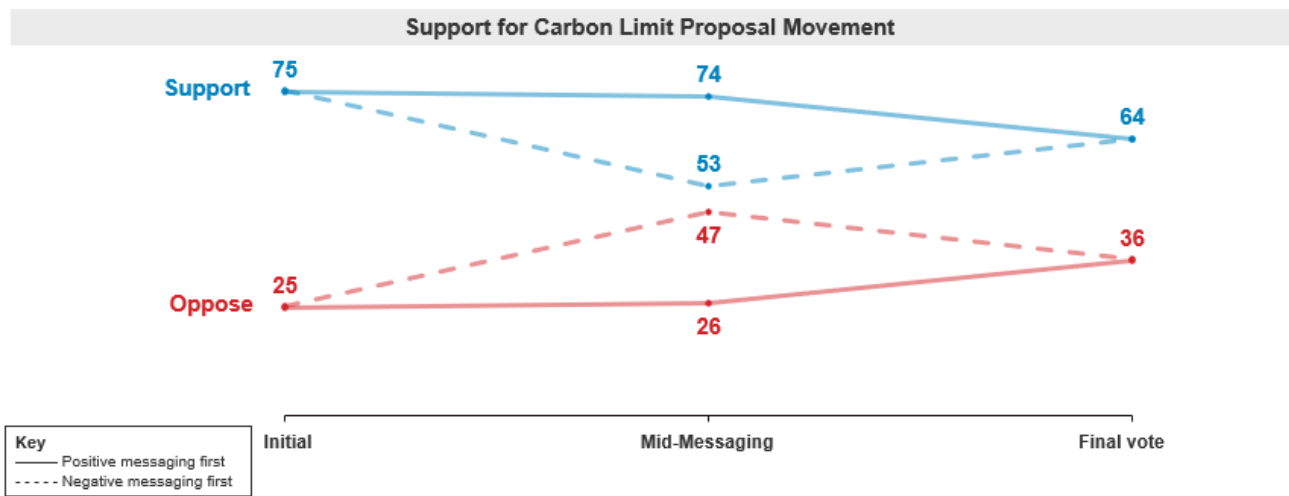
Within this framework, the margin increases to 20 points, with the debate giving legislative Democrats who support the proposal an especially strong boost among registered independents and Republicans along with suburban and white women.

It is important to note that because the survey asked about a “Democratic candidate” who supports the proposal, we cannot conclude that a Republican candidate who supports the proposal would experience the same gains. However, the data does clearly indicate that a Republican candidate who opposes a proposal to limit carbon pollution would suffer with key blocs of voters.

LEGISLATIVE VOTE WITH CARBON LIMITS PROPOSAL									
	Overall	Dem.	Ind.	GOP	City	Suburban	Small town/ Rural	Suburban Women	White Women
Dem who supports limits	55	87	56	16	86	59	44	67	50
Rep who opposes limits	35	7	30	73	13	29	44	20	36
<i>Net support</i>	+20	+80	+26	-57	+73	+30	0	+47	+14
<i>Net Generic Democrat</i>	0	+68	+3	-83	+48	+12	-22	+23	-20
<i>Total Lift</i>	+20	+12	+23	+26	+25	+18	+22	+24	+34

Support for the proposal to limit carbon emissions, and candidates who support it, remains robust after a debate that includes strong attacks against the proposal. The graphs below show movement throughout a balanced simulated debate. Even after a totally one-sided attack – a battery of five messages against the proposal and none in favor of it – support for a limit on carbon emissions remains above water (53% support/47% oppose) and voters still back a Democrat who supports the proposal over a Republican who opposes it by an 8-point margin (48% Democrat/40% Republican), up 8 points from the generic ballot.

After a fully balanced debate, where both sides have a chance to communicate, nearly two-thirds of voters support carbon limits (64% support/36% oppose), and a Democrat who supports the proposal enjoys an 11-point advantage (49% Democrat/38% Republican). (Text of messages tested is in the appendix at the end of this memo.)



ABOUT THIS POLL

Global Strategy Group conducted a voter file -matched online survey from September 10 to 15, 2019 among 918 likely 2020 voters in North Carolina. Respondents were selected via online panels or texted a link to complete the survey on their mobile phones. Respondents from both modes were matched back to the North Carolina voter file. Care has been taken to ensure the political, geographical, and demographic divisions of the expected electorate are properly represented based on historical turnout. Questions about the proposal to place a limit on carbon emissions from only power plants were asked of a half sample of 459 likely voters. The other half sample of 459 likely voters were asked questions about the economy -wide carbon limit proposal, which would limit emissions from power plants, factories, and transportation fuels.

APPENDIX

MESSAGES FOR CARBON LIMITS PROPOSAL

[SPLIT SAMPLED] [PUBLIC HEALTH AND AIR - PP] By encouraging clean energy, this proposal will dramatically reduce the carbon, sulfur, and arsenic pollution that comes from burning dirty fuels like coal. Doctors say that it would reduce asthma, heart disease, lung disease, and even cancer – especially for children and seniors.

[SPLIT SAMPLED] [PUBLIC HEALTH AND AIR - EW] By encouraging clean energy and clean cars, this proposal will dramatically reduce the carbon, sulfur, and arsenic pollution that comes from burning dirty fuels like coal and oil. Doctors say that it would reduce asthma, heart disease, lung disease, and even cancer – especially for children and seniors.

[LEGACY] We have a basic responsibility to leave our kids and grandkids a healthy future, but climate change and unchecked air and water pollution from dirty energy sources is putting that at risk. This proposal will help us leave a better world to our children and grandchildren.

[SPLIT SAMPLED] [LANDS AND WATER] This proposal will protect North Carolina’s rivers and streams by encouraging investment in clean energy like wind and solar and reducing the coal ash pollution that contaminates our state’s water.

[SPLIT SAMPLED] [CLIMATE] The Department of Defense and NASA say that climate change poses an increasingly dangerous threat to the country, which we’re already seeing in the form of more severe flooding, droughts, wildfires, and hurricanes like Matthew, Florence, and Dorian. By reducing the carbon pollution that causes climate change, this proposal would help prevent the devastating impacts of climate change from getting even worse.

[SPLIT SAMPLED] [COSTS - NC ELECTRICITY] Renewable solar and wind energy is cheaper than ever before and is getting cheaper. This proposal will encourage a transition to these sources and save consumers money. In fact, a recent study by North Carolina economists shows that smart renewable energy policy has already saved North Carolina electricity customers \$2.4 billion.

[SPLIT SAMPLED] [COSTS - STANFORD ELEC + HEALTH] Renewable solar and wind energy is cheaper than ever before and is getting cheaper. This proposal will encourage a transition to these sources and save consumers money. In fact, Stanford University researchers say that moving to renewable energy will end up saving the average North Carolina family hundreds of dollars a year in electricity and health care costs.

[ECONOMY/JOBS] By encouraging the use of more wind and solar power, this proposal will drive clean energy business growth, solidifying North Carolina as a national leader and creating thousands of additional high-paying jobs that can’t be moved out of state for all kinds of people, from engineers, to factory workers, to administrative staff.

MESSAGES AGAINST CARBON LIMITS PROPOSAL

[SPLIT SAMPLED] [COSTS - PP] This proposal amounts to a new energy tax. By forcing us to phase out less expensive energy sources, this proposal would not only drive up electricity bills for the average family by hundreds of dollars per year but also raise costs for North Carolina businesses. That means higher prices for groceries and everything else we buy.

[SPLIT SAMPLED] [COSTS - EW] This proposal amounts to a new energy and gas tax. By forcing us to phase out less expensive energy sources, this proposal would drive up electricity bills by hundreds of dollars per year and the cost of gas by 25 cents per gallon, while raising costs for North Carolina businesses. That means higher prices for groceries and everything else we buy.

[SPLIT SAMPLED] [JOBS - PP] This proposal will kill thousands of North Carolina jobs by raising electricity bills for North Carolina businesses by thousands of dollars, making it harder to start or maintain a business in our state. Companies will be forced to send good-paying jobs to other states and overseas where costs are lower, hurting North Carolina's economy.

[SPLIT SAMPLED] [JOBS - EW] This proposal will kill thousands of North Carolina jobs by raising electricity bills and gas prices for North Carolina businesses by thousands of dollars, making it harder to start or maintain a business in our state. Companies will be forced to send good-paying jobs to other states and overseas where costs are lower, hurting North Carolina's economy.

[SPLIT SAMPLED] [WAR ON RURAL - PP] By replacing farmland with solar fields, this proposal will decimate North Carolina's agricultural economy. Agriculture is North Carolina's largest economic contributor and provides many of the jobs in our state's rural communities.

[SPLIT SAMPLED] [BUREAUCRATS - EW] This proposal is a bureaucrat's dream. It will put government bureaucrats in Raleigh in charge of nearly every facet of your life, regulating what kind of car you can drive, when you can run your air conditioner, and how big of a house you're allowed to buy.

[SPLIT SAMPLED] [TRADE SCHEME - PP] This proposal would set up a complicated, overly bureaucratic and unfair cap and trade scheme that would let big corporations avoid requirements to reduce pollution and, instead, actually trade and profit off the right to pollute our air.

[SPLIT SAMPLED] [UNTESTED - EW] This proposal would be a huge, complicated, and untested change to North Carolina's entire economy, from power generation, to manufacturing, to transportation. Economists say it could drive up costs across the entire economy and have all sorts of unintended consequences on North Carolina families and businesses.

[SPLIT SAMPLED] [SELF-INTEREST] This proposal would force utilities to buy energy from the same corporations who are backing the proposal, even if it costs more. These companies have already received hundreds of millions of dollars in taxpayer subsidies. North Carolina families shouldn't have to pay higher electricity bills just so these companies can profit even more.

[SPLIT SAMPLED] [REGRESSIVE] This measure is unfair to low-income and minority communities because the higher energy prices it will cause will hurt them more than anyone else, without even shutting down the dirtiest polluters near low-income neighborhoods.