

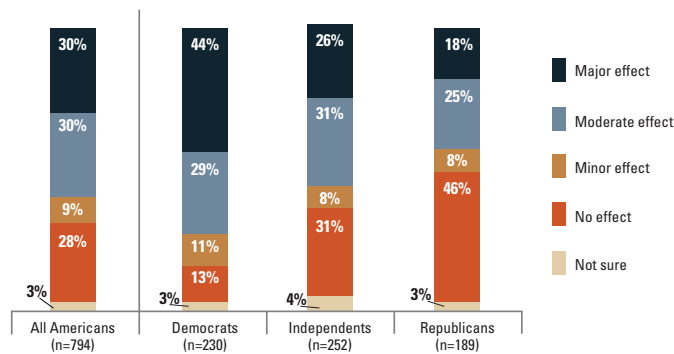
Global Warming and the American Voter in the 2018 Midterms

Perspectives from the Fall 2018 NSEE

In the wake of a summer and fall of extreme weather events and record wildfires in the United States the issue of climate change appears to be on the minds of many Americans as the much anticipated 2018 midterm elections approach. According to the Fall 2018 version of the National Surveys on Energy and Environment from the University of Michigan and Muhlenberg College, 6 out of 10 Americans said that a candidate's position on global warming would have a major or moderate effect on their decision of who to vote for in the upcoming congressional elections. Comparatively just under 4 out of 10 Americans said that candidate positions on climate change would have either a minor or no effect on their vote choice this November.

As is so often the case in matters related to global warming, partisanship is a major determinant of the role climate change will play in an individual's choice of candidates in the midterms. While a plurality of Democrats (44%) said that global warming would be a major factor in their vote for Congress, a plurality of Republicans (46%) said the issue would have no effect on their choice in congressional races. Notably a majority (57%) of Americans who identify themselves as independent said that candidate views on climate change will have a major or moderate effect on their choice in the congressional elections.

Figure 1. The Effect of Global Warming on Candidate Preferences in the 2018 Congressional Midterms Among Americans



Question text: "In terms of your vote in the 2018 Congressional Midterm Election will a candidate's position on the issue of global warming have a major effect, moderate effect, or no effect on your decision on who to vote for in the upcoming congressional election?"

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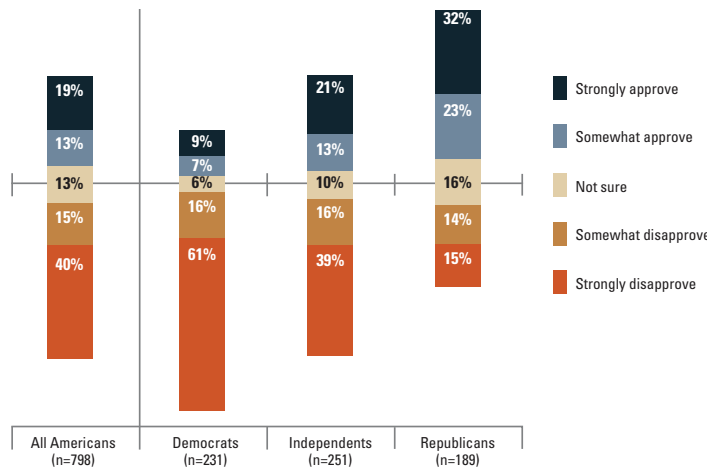
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With midterms often seen as a referendum on the President’s performance in office, President Trump’s work on global warming is not well regarded by a majority of Americans. The NSEE results show only one third of Americans approve of President Trump’s handling of the issue of global warming, with a majority (55%) disapproving of his work on this matter. Again partisanship is a key predictor of individual perceptions of the President’s handling of the issue with over 3 out 4 Democrats (77%) disapproving of Trump’s handling of global warming, while a majority (55%) of Republicans approve of the President’s work on this issue.

Figure 2. Approval of President Trump’s Handling of Global Warming



Question text: “In general do you strongly approve, somewhat approve, somewhat disapprove or strongly disapprove of the way that President Donald Trump is handling the issue of global warming.”



Methods

The following report contains the results of a telephone survey of 800 adult (age 18 or older) residents of the United States between September 18 and October 19, 2018. Respondents were interviewed in English on both land lines (173) and cell phones (627) by the staff of the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion (MCIPO) in Allentown, Pennsylvania on the Institute's Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system. With a randomly selected sample of 800 respondents the margin of error for the surveys is +/- 3.4% at a 95% level of confidence. Margins of error for questions with smaller sample size will be larger. In addition to sampling error, one should consider that question wording and other fielding issues could introduce error or bias into survey results. The sample data has been weighted by gender, race, age, income and educational attainment to reflect those population characteristics of the United States as reported by the United States Census Bureau for 2016. The calculation of sampling error takes into account design effects due to the weighting identified above. In order to reach a representative sample of Americans both land lines and cell phones are called up to 5 times. The response rate for this survey as calculated using the American Association of Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) RRII formula is 7%. Due to rounding the totals provided in the frequency report may not total 100%. The survey instrument was constructed by the staff of the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion and the Center for State, Local and Urban Policy (CLOSUP) of the University of Michigan. The survey was funded exclusively by Muhlenberg College and the University of Michigan. For more detailed information on the methods employed please contact the MCIPO at 484-664-3066 or email Dr. Christopher P. Borick at cborick@muhlenberg.edu.

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Reports from National Surveys on Energy and Environment

- Solar, Wind, and State Mandates: 10 Years of Renewable Energy in the NSEE (October 2018)
- Fuel Economy, Electric Vehicle Rebates, and Gas Taxes: 10 Years of Transportation Policies in the NSEE (July 2018)
- As Americans Experienced the Warmest May on Record Their Acceptance of Global Warming Reaches a New High (July 2018)
- Federalism and California's Role in Light-Duty & Heavy-Duty Vehicle Emissions Standards (July 2018)
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- Should State and Local Governments Address Climate Change? 10 Years of Climate Federalism in the NSEE (March 2018)
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- A Majority of Americans Support Net Energy Metering (September 2017)
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- Acceptance of Global Warming Rising for Americans of all Religious Beliefs (November 2015)
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- Belief in Global Warming Among Americans Gradually Increases Following the Winter of 2015 (July 2015)
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- Acceptance of Global Warming Among Americans Moderately Increases in Late 2014 (February 2015)
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- The Chilling Effect of Winter 2013 on American Acceptance of Global Warming (June 2013)
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- NSEE Findings Report for Belief-Related Questions (March 2013)
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All NSEE reports are available online at: <http://closup.umich.edu/national-surveys-on-energy-and-environment/>



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