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New Poll Shows...

Pay To Blunt

BY TOM KENWORTHY



CREDIT: SHUTTERSTOCK

If this keeps up, more politicians may learn to love climate change as a political issue.

A new poll from Bloomberg shows that by nearly a two-to-one margin, 62 percent to 33 percent, Americans are willing to pay more for their energy to achieve reductions in carbon pollution, and a majority who plan to vote are more likely to support candidates who endorse policies to fight climate change.

The poll was conducted from June 6 to June 9 — shortly after the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a new proposed rule to limit carbon pollution from existing power plants — and surveyed 1,005 adults. It has a margin of error of 3.1 percent.

While the survey found Republicans nearly evenly split, 46-49, over the question of paying

more for energy if it means tackling carbon pollution, more than four out of five Democrats said they were in favor, and three out of five independents agreed.

“It is a rare poll where people responding will stand up and say ‘tax me,’” pollster J. Ann Selzer told Bloomberg.

But a recent Washington Post-ABC News [poll](#) got basically the same result, with 63 percent of respondents saying they support measures to significantly lower greenhouse gases even if it would raise household energy expenses by \$20 a month. That position was even favored by 51 percent of Republicans.

In another indication that the political dynamics around climate change are shifting, the New York Times, in a front page [article](#) on Monday with the headline “Democrats See Winning Issue In Climate Plan,” reported on a growing number of Democratic officeholders who have embraced the Obama administration’s coal plant proposal even as others run from it.

The Bloomberg poll echoed that assessment, as “majorities of female, young and independent respondents who plan to vote in the midterm elections say candidates who support measures to curb climate change are more likely to win their backing.”

While the EPA and President Obama have emphasized the [public health benefits](#) of the new EPA regulations on carbon pollution, the survey found that more than half of respondents are skeptical that the new power plant emission rules will mean fewer cases of asthma and other respiratory diseases.

While respondents were largely in favor of taking action to address climate change, they were far less sure about the scientific consensus that supports climate change. The poll found that 43 percent believe scientists “manipulate their findings for political reasons,” while only 48 percent say they trust the views of scientists on climate change. There is a 97 percent [consensus](#) among scientists that climate change is human-caused, but mainstream media often still [treats](#) the issue as if there is still a real debate over whether climate change is occurring and whether it is human-caused.

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Bill DeMott · ★ Top Commenter · Professor of Biology at Indiana University–Purdue University Fort Wayne

As someone who needs to get back to writing a scientific manuscript in the next few minutes, I can say that the idea of scientist exaggerate data is unfounded. If you want to get published, you need to be sure that conclusions are well supported by data and to point out any weaknesses or limitations in your study. Otherwise your study will be rejected by editors at least 90% of the time. Some journalists and some environmentalists exaggerate and mislead. However, the biggest problem is disinformation and misunderstanding from ideologues and anti-science propagandists and politicians.

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Randall Lilly · ★ Top Commenter · Sale Floor Associate at Petco

Thank you!

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Steven Bierer · ★ Top Commenter · Research Scientist at University of Washington

Thanks - that needed to be said. While not perfect, the self-policing and self-regulation practiced in modern science (at least in academia) actually works, something that is almost unachievable in the profits-at-all cost corporate world.

Good luck on that paper, Professor!

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Pamela Hayes · ★ Top Commenter

Of course the deniers never try to mislead do they. :p

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