

PROTECTING HEALTH: A CLIMATE POLICY

A GUIDE TO HOW YOUR OFFICE CAN BENEFIT FROM HEALTH MESSAGING



DEAR PUBLIC LEADER,

Over 150 major medical organizations, representing over 650,000 health professionals have declared that climate change is a health emergency. This includes the Wisconsin Medical Society, whose physician membership strongly endorsed key policies to transition Wisconsin to 100% clean energy while preparing for climate change.

Climate change is here and harming our health now, and the public knows it. A transition to 100% Wisconsin-produced clean energy would clean our air, make us healthier, pay for itself, and create thousands of good-paying jobs benefitting both rural and urban Wisconsinites.

This document will help you develop ways to talk to your constituents about climate change, clean energy, and health. It consolidates key polling to highlight why your constituents want you to do so. It combines that polling driven messaging with the evidence base on clean energy benefits. Although the polling in this document is national, you can use [this link](#) to access polling specific to your district.


Over 80% of voters support policies to expand clean energy. Regardless of your party, it's clear that talking about these issues, and more importantly, supporting policy which transitions our state to Wisconsin-produced clean energy is not only good policy, it's good politics. Depending on your particular constituency, clean energy policies can be framed as climate change solutions with health, economic, and justice benefits, or without mention of climate change for their benefit to health, jobs, energy costs, clean air, and rural economies.

At WHPCA we look forward to working with you in the months and years ahead to protect the health of you and your constituents.

Sincerely,

Over 300 Doctors, Nurses, & Health Professionals from Across Wisconsin





Building a clean energy economy is good for Wisconsinites

IT WILL SAVE WISCONSIN LIVES, CREATE JOBS, AND SAVE US ALL MONEY.

A TRANSITION TO WISCONSIN-PRODUCED CLEAN ENERGY WOULD CLEAN OUR AIR, MAKE US HEALTHIER, PAY FOR ITSELF, AND CREATE THOUSANDS OF GOOD-PAYING JOBS.

- + It would save 1,900 Wisconsin lives each year, mostly from cleaner air. This means fewer asthma and heart attacks, less cancer, and fewer stillbirths and premature births.⁶
- + It would save \$21 billion/yr in avoided health damages.⁶
- + It would add 160K jobs to Wisconsin's economy.⁶
- + It would increase Wisconsin's GDP by \$14 billion.⁶
- + It is a major opportunity for rural economies to create rural jobs and boost township revenue that keeps schools open and roads repaired.⁷

BUILDING A CLEAN ENERGY ECONOMY IS POSSIBLE. WE CAN TRANSITION TO A 90% CLEAN GRID BY 2035, WHILE SAVING CONSUMERS MONEY, WITHOUT SACRIFICING RELIABILITY.⁸

Messaging: Climate Framing

Climate change is already making Wisconsinites sick.

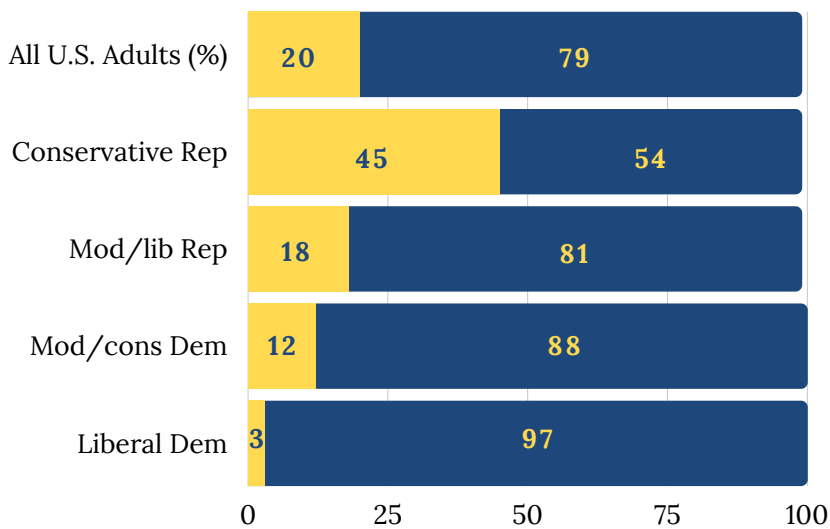
- Worse heat waves threaten the elderly, those with heart disease, and those who work outside.
- Worse air pollution makes kids vulnerable to asthma.
- Larger storms and worse flooding contaminate both rural wells and city drinking water.
- Warmer temperatures threaten to bring new diseases and increase the threat of vector-borne illness.

Across the political spectrum

SUPPORT FOR CLIMATE ACTION IS GROWING FAST

80-90%
of voters support expanding clean energy

THE KEY DIVIDES ARE NOT BETWEEN REPUBLICANS & DEMOCRATS



Pew polling shows the main divides are actually between: ¹

- ⊕ Moderate and Conservative Republican voters
- ⊕ Millennial and Older Republican voters
- ⊕ Male and Female Republican voters

Essentially it is older male more conservative Republican voters that are **the only ones** not heavily favoring climate policy.



Messaging: Clean Energy Framing

Framing clean energy benefits for rural and urban communities:

Shifting to clean energy promises all Wisconsin communities cheap, never-ending sources of locally produced energy that clean our air and bring more jobs. Rural communities will benefit especially from more jobs and more property tax revenue to fund local schools and roads. Urban communities will benefit in particular from cleaner air, more jobs, and a more just energy system.

For more information on climate polling please see:

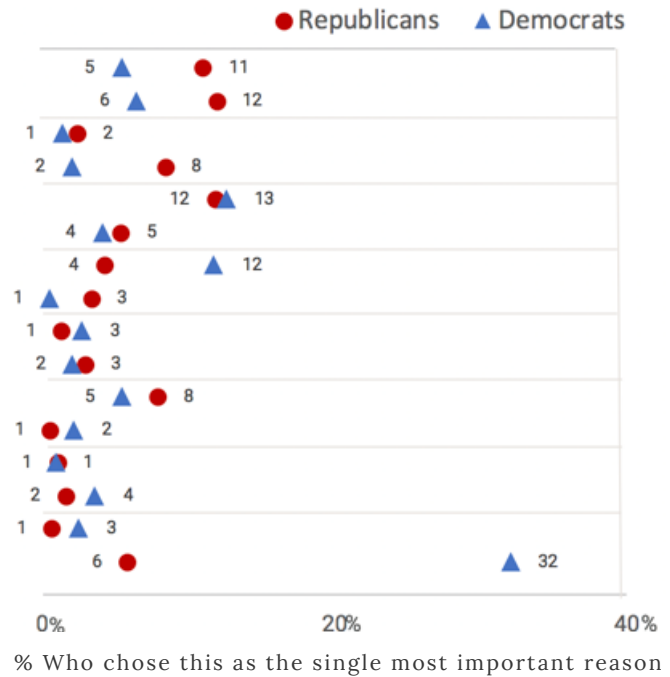
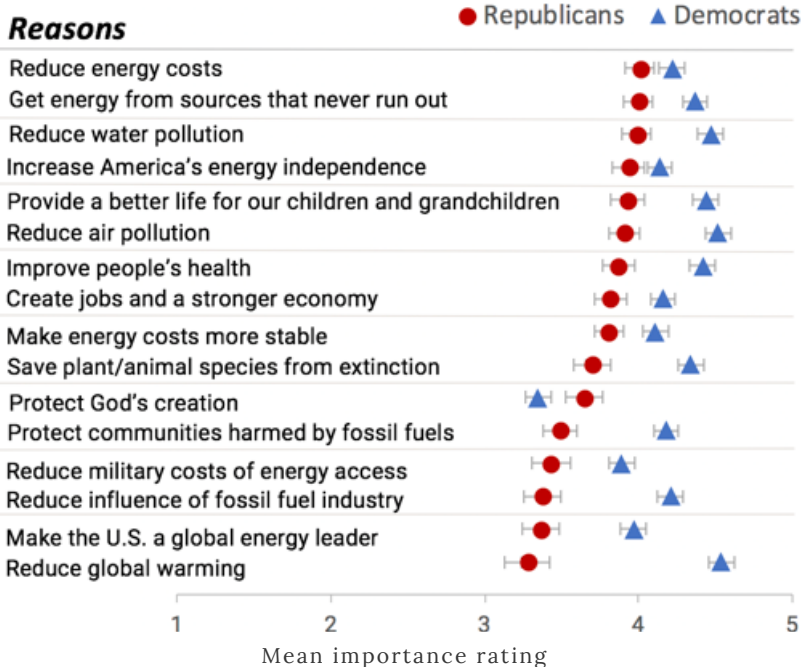
1. [Two-Thirds of Americans Think Government Should Do More on Climate](#), Pew Research Center
2. [An Open Letter to Candidates](#), Medical Society Consortium on Climate and Health

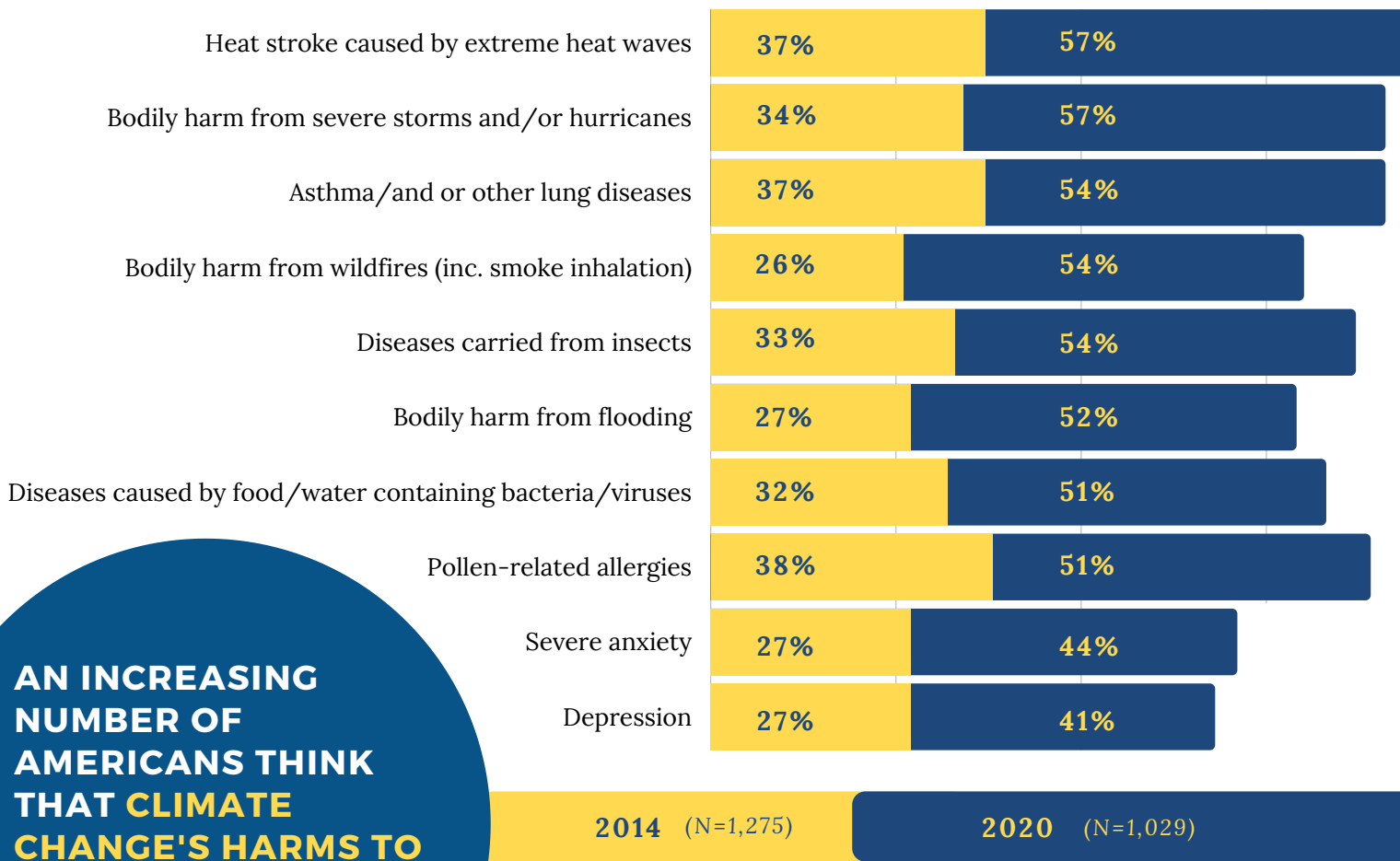


OVER 150 MAJOR U.S. HEALTH AND MEDICAL ORGANIZATIONS, REPRESENTING OVER 650,000 HEALTH PROFESSIONALS, HAVE DECLARED THAT CLIMATE CHANGE IS A HEALTH EMERGENCY²

WHICH REASONS TO SUPPORT A TRANSITION TO CLEAN ENERGY ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT?

Americans increasingly view health as a primary impact of climate change. **Improving health and cleaner air are bipartisan reasons to support the expansion of clean energy and climate policy.**^{3,4}



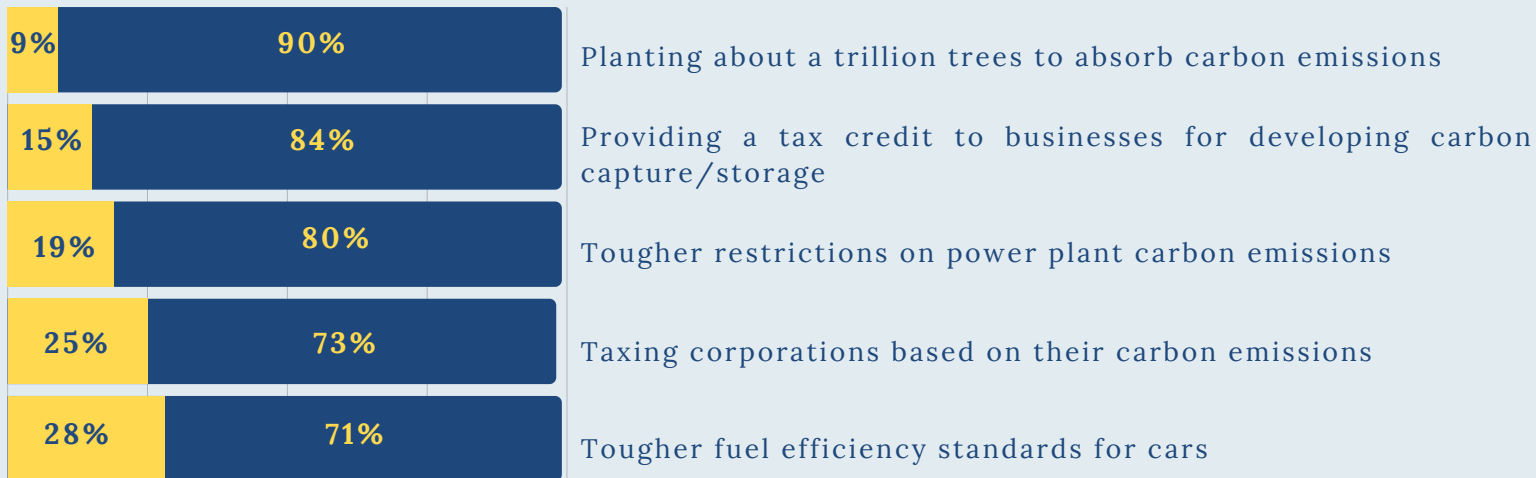


AN INCREASING NUMBER OF AMERICANS THINK THAT CLIMATE CHANGE'S HARMS TO HUMAN HEALTH ARE BECOMING MORE COMMON^{3,4}

MESSAGING ON THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF CLIMATE POLICIES CAN PRESENT A COMPELLING NEW PERSPECTIVE FOR UNDECIDED VOTERS.

Which policies have support?

PROVIDING SOLUTIONS



% U.S. Adults (across political leanings)¹





On a
National Level

A CLEAN ENERGY ECONOMY WOULD BENEFIT ALL OF US

Shifting to a clean energy economy free of fossil fuel air pollution would ultimately:

- Save at least 250,000 American lives each year.^{9,10}
- Produce \$700 billion each year in benefits from avoided health costs and improved labor productivity.¹⁰

For more information & health messaging

3. [Republicans and Democrats Differ in their Primary Reasons for Supporting Clean Energy, from the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication](#)

4. [George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication](#)

5. [Reframing climate change as a public health issue: an exploratory study of public reactions](#)

6. [Wisconsin Opportunity in Domestic Energy Production: The Economic and Health Benefits of 100% In-State Energy Production](#)

7. [Wind and Solar, the New Cash Crops.](#)

8. [Goldman School of Public Policy, 2035 The Report](#)

9. Vohra, K., Vodonos, A., Schwartz, J., Marais, E.A., Sulprizio, M.P., Mickley, L.J., Global mortality from outdoor fine particle pollution generated by fossil fuel combustion: Results from GEOS-Chem, Environmental Research, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envres.2021.110754>.

10. [Health and Economic Benefits of a 2C Climate Policy.](#) Drew Schindell

All figures are from research conducted by the Pew Research Center, the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication, and the George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication.

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