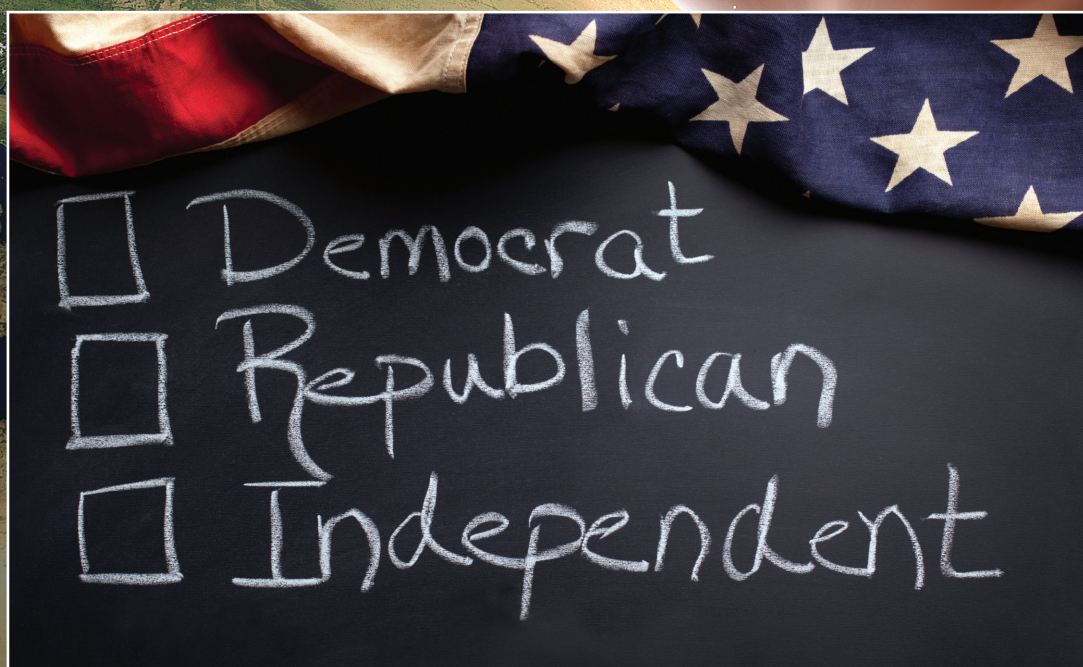


# PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE ACTION

March 2021



YALE PROGRAM ON  
Climate Change  
Communication



GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
CENTER for CLIMATE CHANGE  
COMMUNICATION

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## Introduction

This report is based on findings from a nationally representative survey – *Climate Change in the American Mind* – conducted by the [Yale Program on Climate Change Communication](https://climatecommunication.yale.edu) ([climatecommunication.yale.edu](https://climatecommunication.yale.edu)) and the [George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication](https://climatechangecommunication.org) ([climatechangecommunication.org](https://climatechangecommunication.org)). Interview dates: March 18 – 29, 2021. Interviews: 1,037 adults (18+), 922 of whom are registered to vote. Average margin of error for registered voters: +/- 3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. The research was funded by the 11th Hour Project, the Energy Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, and the Grantham Foundation.

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## Reading notes

- This report includes only registered voters.
- References to Republicans and Democrats throughout include respondents who initially identify as either a Republican or Democrat, as well as those who do not initially identify as a Republican or Democrat but who say they "are closer to" one of those parties (i.e., "leaners") in a follow-up question. The category "Independents" does not include any of these "leaners."
- For tabulation purposes, percentage points are rounded to the nearest whole number. As a result, percentages in a given chart may total slightly higher or lower than 100%. Summed response categories (e.g., "strongly support" + "somewhat support") are rounded after sums are calculated (e.g., 25.3% + 25.3% = 50.6%, which, after rounding, would be reported as 25% + 25% = 51%).
- Weighted percentages among registered voters of each of the groups discussed in this report:
  - Democrats (total) including leaners: 46%
    - Liberal Democrats: 24%
    - Moderate/Conservative Democrats: 21%
      - (Moderate Democrats: 19%; Conservative Democrats: 2%)
  - Independents excluding leaners: 10%
  - Republicans (total) including leaners: 40%
    - Liberal/Moderate Republicans: 13%
      - (Liberal Republicans: 1%; Moderate Republicans: 12%)
    - Conservative Republicans: 26%
  - No party/Not interested in politics/No response: 4% (included in results reported for "All Registered Voters" only)
- In the data tables, "0" denotes that the cell value is between 0.00 and 0.4̄9.
- In all tables, bases are unweighted and percentages are weighted.

## Executive Summary

In March 2021, President Biden officially invited 40 world leaders to the [\*Leaders Summit on Climate\*](#) that he will host on April 22<sup>nd</sup> (Earth Day) and 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021. The overarching goal of the summit is to underscore the urgency – and the economic benefits – of stronger climate action. As context for the summit, this report describes how registered voters in the United States view a variety of policies related to international climate action. This survey was fielded from March 18 – 29, 2021, drawing on a representative sample of the U.S. population ( $n = 1,037$ ; including 922 registered voters). This executive summary reports the results from all registered voters, while the report breaks the results down by political party and ideology.

- Most registered voters (61%) think the United States should reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, regardless of what other countries do.
- About eight in ten registered voters (79%) think developing countries (such as China, India, and Brazil) should be doing more to address global warming.
- About seven in ten registered voters (71%) think other industrialized countries (such as England, Germany, and Japan) should be doing more to address global warming.
- About two in three registered voters (65%) think the United States should be doing more to address global warming.
- Seven in ten registered voters (70%) support U.S. participation in the Paris Climate Agreement.
- More than half of registered voters support providing financial aid and technical support to developing countries to limit their greenhouse gas emissions (i.e., mitigation, 58%) and to help them prepare for the impacts of global warming (i.e., adaptation, 54%).
- Three in four registered voters (75%) support the United States pressuring other countries to reduce their carbon pollution.

## 1. Which Countries Should Act on Global Warming?

### 1.1. Most registered voters say the United States should reduce greenhouse gas emissions, regardless of what other countries do.

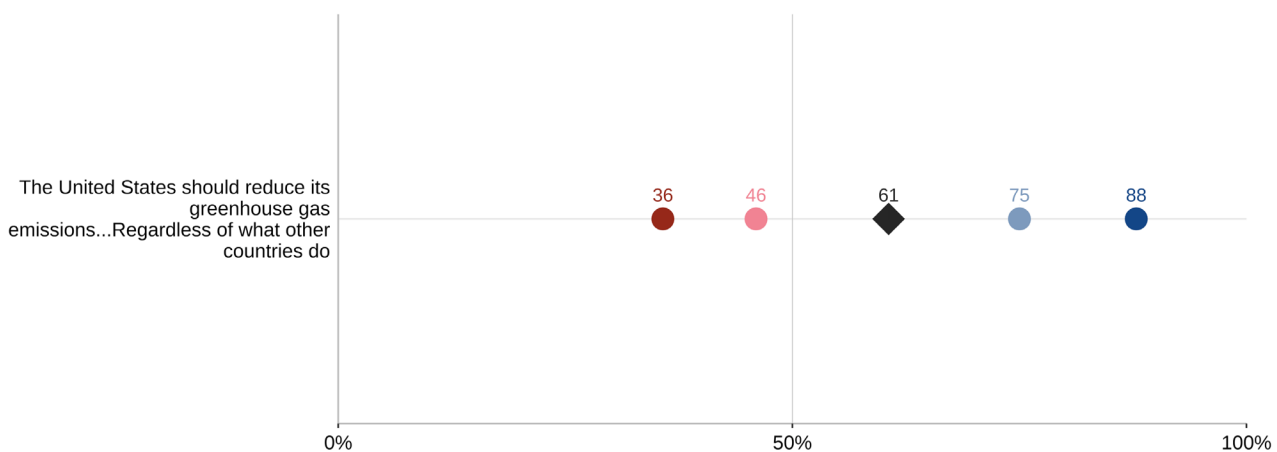
Most registered voters think the United States should reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, regardless of what other countries do (61%). Majorities of liberal Democrats (88%) and moderate/conservative Democrats (75%) take this position. Fewer liberal/moderate Republicans (46%) or conservative Republicans (36%), take this position.

Only 7% of registered voters (including 1% of Democrats, 12% of Independents, and 14% of Republicans) say the United States should *not* reduce its emissions (see Data Tables).

### Most registered voters say the U.S. should reduce greenhouse gas emissions, regardless of what other countries do

- % "regardless of what other countries do" -

◆ All Reg Voters ● Con R ● Lib/Mod R ● Mod/Con D ● Lib D



The United States should reduce its greenhouse gas emissions... (a) regardless of what other countries do; (b) only if other industrialized countries reduce their emissions; (c) only if other industrialized and developing countries reduce their emissions; (d) The U.S. should not reduce its emissions; (e) don't know

March 2021.



## 1.2. Registered voters across partisan lines say developing countries should do more to address global warming.

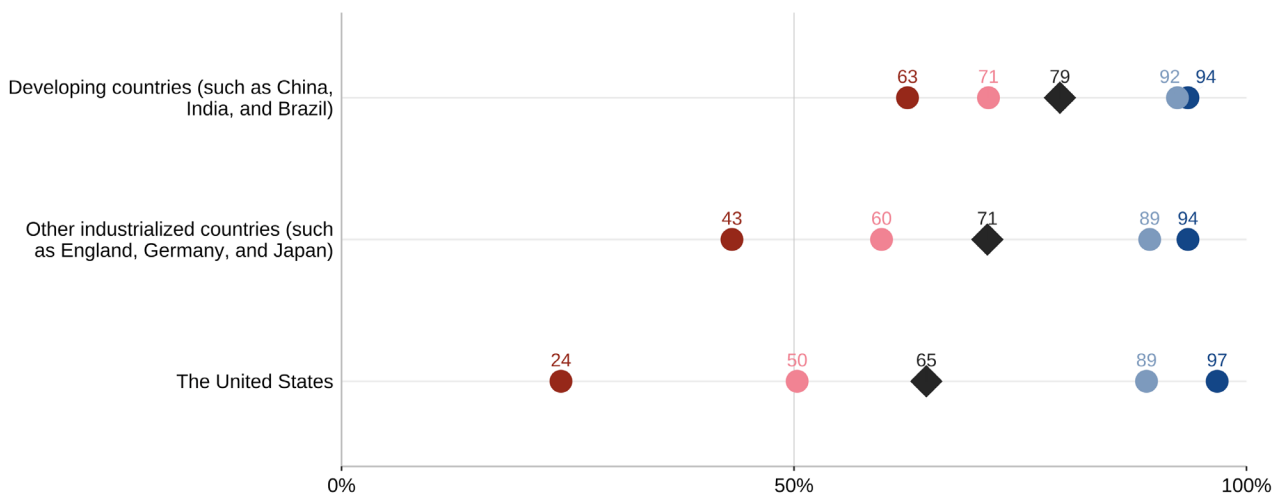
About eight in ten registered voters (79%) say developing countries (such as China, India, and Brazil) should be doing more to address global warming. Similarly, about seven in ten (71%) say other industrialized countries (such as England, Germany, and Japan) should be doing more. About two in three registered voters (65%) say the United States should be doing more to address global warming.

Large majorities of both liberal Democrats and moderate/conservative Democrats say developing countries, other industrialized countries, and the United States should *all* be doing more to address global warming. About seven in ten liberal/moderate Republicans say developing countries (71%) should be doing more, but fewer say other industrialized countries (60%) or the United States (50%) should be doing more. Similarly, while a majority of conservative Republicans (63%) say developing countries should be doing more, fewer than half say that other industrialized countries (43%) or the United States (24%) should be doing more.

### Registered voters across partisan lines say developing countries should do more to address global warming

- % "much more" or "more" -

◆ All Reg Voters ● Con R ● Lib/Mod R ● Mod/Con D ● Lib D



Do you think each of the following should be doing more or less to address global warming?

March 2021.



## 2. How Should the U.S. Interact with Other Countries to Act on Global Warming?

### 2.1. A majority of registered voters support U.S. participation in the Paris Climate Agreement.

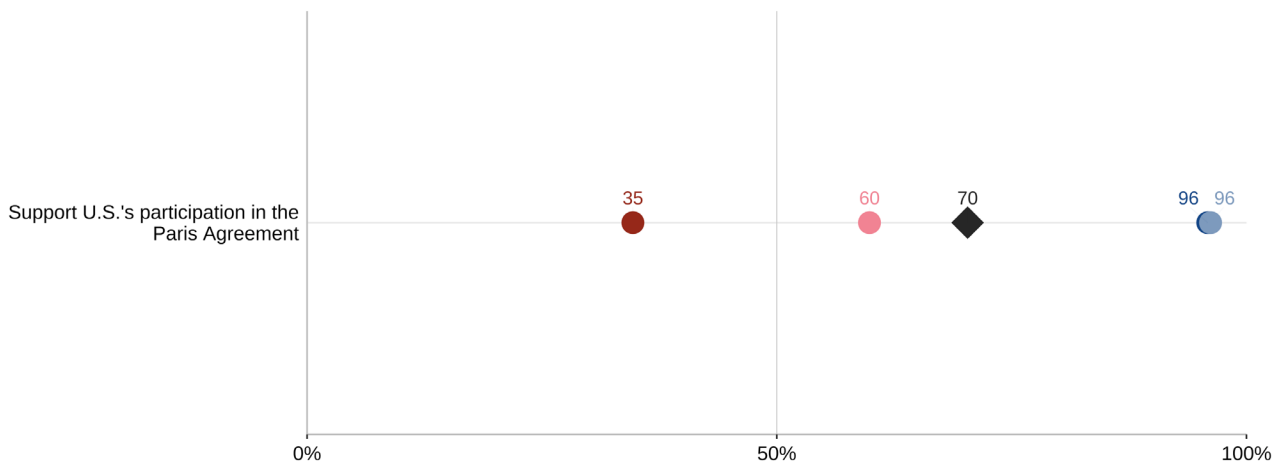
In December, 2015, officials from 197 countries (nearly every country in the world) met in Paris at the United Nations Climate Change Conference and negotiated a global agreement to limit global warming. On Earth Day, April 2016, the United States and 174 other countries signed the agreement, with all of the other countries following suit. On June 1, 2017, President Trump announced that the United States would withdraw from the agreement, and on November 4, 2020, the day after the U.S. presidential election, the U.S. formally withdrew. President Biden rejoined the agreement soon after his inauguration on January 20, 2021, and the United States officially became a party to the agreement again on February 19.

Seven in ten registered voters (70%) support U.S. participation in the Paris Climate Agreement, but support varies by party. Nearly all liberal Democrats (96%) and moderate/conservative Democrats (96%) support U.S. participation. Six in ten liberal/moderate Republicans (60%) support U.S. participation in the agreement as do about one in three conservative Republicans (35%).

### A majority of registered voters support U.S. participation in the Paris Climate Agreement

- % "strongly support" or "somewhat support"

◆ All Reg Voters ● Con R ● Lib/Mod R ● Mod/Con D ● Lib D



In 2015, the United States signed an international agreement in Paris with 196 other countries to limit the pollution that causes global warming. Do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose the U.S.'s participation in the Paris Agreement?  
March 2021.





## 2.2. A majority of registered voters support the U.S. providing aid and support to developing countries for climate mitigation and adaptation.

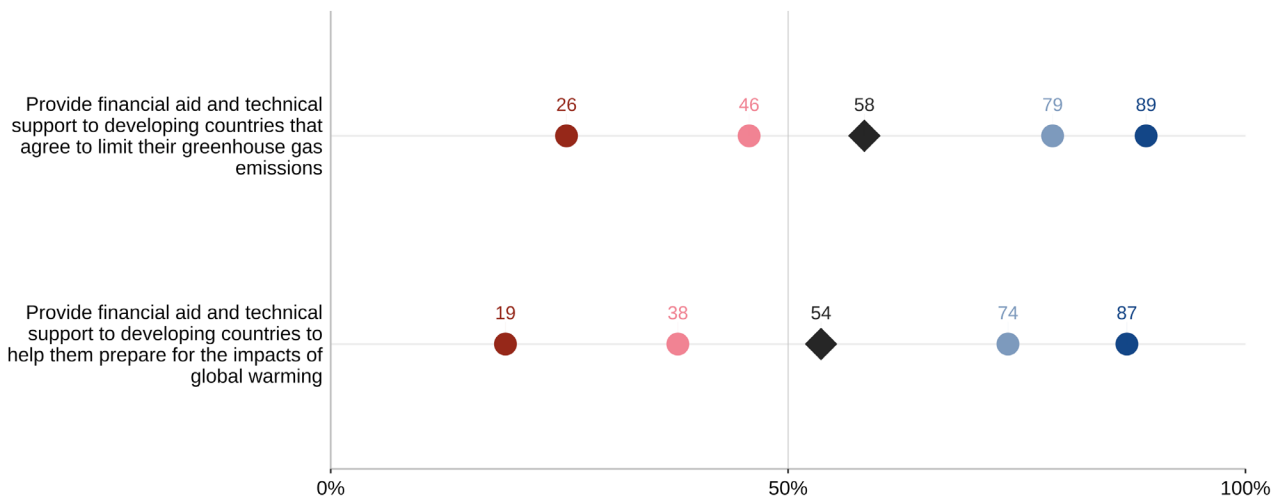
More than half of registered voters support providing financial aid and technical support to developing countries to limit their greenhouse gas emissions (i.e., mitigation, 58%) and to help them prepare for the impacts of global warming (i.e., adaptation, 54%).

Large majorities of liberal Democrats support providing aid for mitigation (89%) and adaptation (87%), as do most moderate/conservative Democrats (mitigation, 79%; adaptation, 74%). Providing financial aid and technical support to developing countries is supported by fewer than half of liberal/moderate Republicans (mitigation, 46%; adaptation, 38%) and even fewer conservative Republicans (mitigation, 26%; adaptation, 19%).

### A majority of registered voters support the U.S. providing aid and support to developing countries for climate mitigation and adaptation

- % "strongly support" or "somewhat support"

◆ All Reg Voters ● Con R ● Lib/Mod R ● Mod/Con D ● Lib D



How much do you support or oppose the following policies?

March 2021.



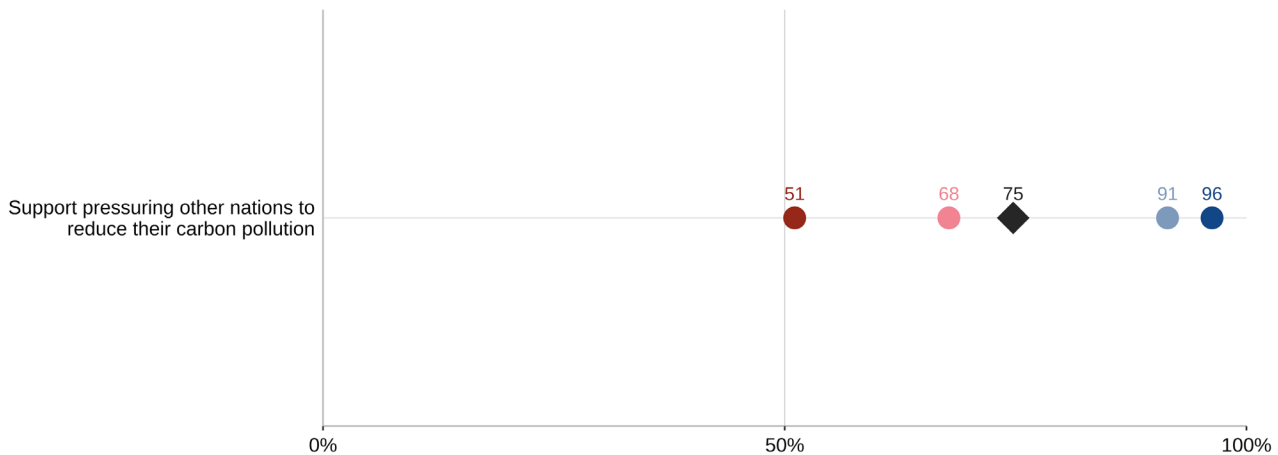
### 2.3. Three in four registered voters support the U.S. pressuring other countries to reduce their carbon pollution.

Three in four registered voters (75%) support the United States pressuring other countries to reduce their carbon pollution. This includes nearly all liberal Democrats (96%) and moderate/conservative Democrats (91%), a majority of liberal/moderate Republicans (68%), and about half of conservative Republicans (51%).

### Three in four registered voters support the U.S. pressuring other countries to reduce their carbon pollution

- % "strongly support" or "somewhat support"

◆ All Reg Voters ● Con R ● Lib/Mod R ● Mod/Con D ● Lib D



How much do you support or oppose the United States pressuring other nations to reduce their carbon pollution?

March 2021.



## Appendix I: Data Tables

Note: Percentages reported are weighted to match U.S. Census parameters.

### (Base: Registered Voters in the United States)

People disagree whether the United States should reduce greenhouse gas emissions on its own, or make reductions only if other countries do so. Which of the following statements comes closest to your own point of view?

#### The United States should reduce its greenhouse gas emissions...

	All Registered Voters	Total Democrats	Liberal Democrats	Moderate/Conservative Democrats	Independent/Other	Total Republicans	Liberal/Moderate Republicans	Conservative Republicans
Unweighted Base	922	403	213	188	83	397	129	266
Regardless of what other countries do (%)	61	82	88	75	52	39	46	36
Only if other industrialized countries (such as England, Germany, and Japan) reduce their emissions (%)	2	2	2	2	0	3	3	3
Only if other industrialized countries and developing countries (such as China, India, and Brazil) reduce their emissions (%)	14	4	3	5	19	25	19	28
The U.S. should not reduce its emissions (%)	7	1	1	1	12	14	6	17
Don't know (%)	16	12	7	17	14	20	25	16
Refused (%)	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0

**(Base: Registered Voters in the United States)**

Do you think each of the following should be doing more or less to address global warming?

**Developing countries (such as China, India, and Brazil)**

	All Registered Voters	Total Democrats	Liberal Democrats	Moderate/Conservative Democrats	Independent/Other	Total Republicans	Liberal/Moderate Republicans	Conservative Republicans
Unweighted Base	922	403	213	188	83	397	129	266
Much more (%)	37	47	47	48	31	29	31	28
More (%)	42	46	47	45	47	37	40	35
Currently doing the right amount (%)	10	5	5	5	8	16	17	15
Less (%)	4	1	1	2	6	6	6	5
Much less (%)	7	1	0	1	8	13	6	16
Refused (%)	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1

**Other industrialized countries (such as England, Germany, and Japan)**

	All Registered Voters	Total Democrats	Liberal Democrats	Moderate/Conservative Democrats	Independent/Other	Total Republicans	Liberal/Moderate Republicans	Conservative Republicans
Unweighted Base	922	403	213	188	83	397	129	266
Much more (%)	25	38	41	35	21	11	16	9
More (%)	47	53	53	54	50	38	43	35
Currently doing the right amount (%)	18	7	5	9	12	32	31	33
Less (%)	3	1	0	1	5	6	4	7
Much less (%)	7	1	2	1	11	13	5	16
Refused (%)	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1

**The United States**

	All Registered Voters	Total Democrats	Liberal Democrats	Moderate/Conservative Democrats	Independent/Other	Total Republicans	Liberal/Moderate Republicans	Conservative Republicans
Unweighted Base	922	403	213	188	83	397	129	266
Much more (%)	27	47	54	38	18	8	14	4
More (%)	38	46	43	51	39	25	36	20
Currently doing the right amount (%)	18	5	2	7	19	34	35	34
Less (%)	7	1	0	2	7	15	5	19
Much less (%)	9	1	1	0	14	17	9	21
Refused (%)	1	0	0	1	3	1	0	1

**(Base: Registered Voters in the United States)**

**In 2015, the United States signed an international agreement in Paris with 196 other countries to limit the pollution that causes global warming. Do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose the U.S.'s participation in the Paris Agreement?**

	All Registered Voters	Total Democrats	Liberal Democrats	Moderate/Conservative Democrats	Independent/Other	Total Republicans	Liberal/Moderate Republicans	Conservative Republicans
Unweighted Base	922	403	213	188	83	397	129	266
Strongly support (%)	40	71	81	59	20	11	19	8
Somewhat support (%)	30	25	15	37	39	32	41	27
Somewhat oppose (%)	10	3	3	2	9	19	17	19
Strongly oppose (%)	19	1	1	2	31	37	21	46
Refused (%)	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	1

**(Base: Registered Voters in the United States)**

**How much do you support or oppose the following policies?**

**Provide financial aid and technical support to developing countries that agree to limit their greenhouse gas emissions**

	All Registered Voters	Total Democrats	Liberal Democrats	Moderate/Conservative Democrats	Independent/Other	Total Republicans	Liberal/Moderate Republicans	Conservative Republicans
Unweighted Base	922	403	213	188	83	397	129	266
Strongly support (%)	16	28	39	16	10	4	6	2
Somewhat support (%)	43	56	50	63	32	29	40	23
Somewhat oppose (%)	19	11	9	15	27	25	30	23
Strongly oppose (%)	22	3	2	5	31	41	21	50
Refused (%)	1	1	0	2	1	1	3	1

**Provide financial aid and technical support to developing countries to help them prepare for the impacts of global warming**

	All Registered Voters	Total Democrats	Liberal Democrats	Moderate/Conservative Democrats	Independent/Other	Total Republicans	Liberal/Moderate Republicans	Conservative Republicans
Unweighted Base	922	403	213	188	83	397	129	266
Strongly support (%)	17	30	40	18	12	4	8	2
Somewhat support (%)	37	51	47	56	31	22	30	17
Somewhat oppose (%)	21	14	10	18	21	29	35	26
Strongly oppose (%)	24	4	3	6	35	44	24	54
Refused (%)	2	2	0	2	0	2	3	1

**(Base: Registered Voters in the United States)****How much do you support or oppose the United States pressuring other nations to reduce their carbon pollution?**

	All Registered Voters	Total Democrats	Liberal Democrats	Moderate/ Conservative Democrats	Independent/ Other	Total Republicans	Liberal/ Moderate Republicans	Conservative Republicans
Unweighted Base	922	403	213	188	83	397	129	266
Strongly support (%)	34	54	57	51	17	16	22	14
Somewhat support (%)	41	40	39	40	45	40	46	37
Somewhat oppose (%)	14	5	2	7	20	23	21	23
Strongly oppose (%)	10	1	1	2	15	19	8	25
Refused (%)	1	0	1	0	2	1	3	1

## Appendix II: Survey Method

The data in this report are based on a nationally representative survey of 1,037 American adults, aged 18 and older. Results are reported for the subset of 922 registered voters who participated in the survey. The survey was conducted March 18 – 29, 2021. All questionnaires were self-administered by respondents in a web-based environment. The survey took, on average, about 25 minutes to complete.

The sample was drawn from the Ipsos (formerly GfK) KnowledgePanel®, an online panel of members drawn using probability sampling methods. Prospective members are recruited using a combination of random digit dial and address-based sampling techniques that cover virtually all (non-institutional) resident phone numbers and addresses in the United States. Those contacted who would choose to join the panel but do not have access to the Internet are loaned computers and given Internet access so they may participate.

The sample therefore includes a representative cross-section of American adults – irrespective of whether they have Internet access, use only a cell phone, etc. Key demographic variables were weighted, post survey, to match US Census Bureau norms.

From November 2008 to December 2018, no KnowledgePanel® member participated in more than one *Climate Change in the American Mind* (CCAM) survey. Beginning with the April 2019 survey, panel members who have participated in CCAM surveys in the past, excluding the most recent two surveys, may be randomly selected for participation. In the current survey, 316 respondents, 272 of whom are registered voters included in this report, participated in a previous CCAM survey.

The survey instrument was designed by Anthony Leiserowitz, Seth Rosenthal, Jennifer Carman, Matthew Goldberg, Karine Lacroix, and Jennifer Marlon of Yale University, and Edward Maibach and John Kotcher of George Mason University. The charts and tables were designed by Xinran Wang of Yale University.

### Margins of error

All samples are subject to some degree of sampling error – that is, statistical results obtained from a sample can be expected to differ somewhat from results that would be obtained if every member of the target population was interviewed. Average margins of error, at the 95% confidence level, are as follows:

- All Registered Voters ( $n = 922$ ): Plus or minus 3 percentage points.
- Democrats (total;  $n = 403$ ): Plus or minus 5 points.
- Liberal Democrats ( $n = 213$ ): Plus or minus 7 points.
- Moderate/conservative Democrats ( $n = 188$ ): Plus or minus 7 points.
- Independents ( $n = 83$ ): Plus or minus 11 points.
- Republicans (total;  $n = 397$ ): Plus or minus 5 points.
- Liberal/moderate Republicans ( $n = 129$ ): Plus or minus 9 points.
- Conservative Republicans ( $n = 266$ ): Plus or minus 6 points.

### Rounding error and tabulation

In data tables, bases specified are unweighted, but percentages are weighted to match national population parameters.

For tabulation purposes, percentage points are rounded to the nearest whole number. As a result, percentages in a given chart may total slightly higher or lower than 100%. Summed response categories (e.g., “strongly support” + “somewhat support”) are rounded after sums are calculated (e.g., 25.3% + 25.3% = 50.6%, which, after rounding, would be reported as 25% + 25% = 51%).



## Appendix III: Sample Demographics

### Registered Voters

	N (unweighted)	% (weighted)
Total	922	100
Male	442	48
Female	480	52
Generation Z (1997 or later)	38	8
Millennials (1981 - 1996)	186	27
Generation X (1965 - 1980)	240	26
Baby Boomers (1946 - 1964)	373	32
Silent (1945 or earlier)	85	7
No high school diploma or GED	46	7
High school graduate (high school diploma or the equivalent GED)	214	25
Some college or Associate's degree	285	33
Bachelor's degree or higher	377	35
<\$25K	55	8
\$25K-<\$50K	148	17
\$50K-<\$75K	167	18
\$75K-<\$100K	139	15
\$100K-<\$125K	135	14
\$125K+	278	29
White, Non-Hispanic	693	67
Black, Non-Hispanic	81	12
Hispanic	79	14
2+ Races, Non-Hispanic	30	2
Other, Non-Hispanic	39	6
Northeast	169	18
Midwest	207	22
South	339	37
West	207	23

**Full Sample**

	N (unweighted)	% (weighted)
Total	1,037	100
Male	504	48
Female	533	52
Generation Z (1997 or later)	46	9
Millennials (1981 - 1996)	233	31
Generation X (1965 - 1980)	269	25
Baby Boomers (1946 - 1964)	400	30
Silent (1945 or earlier)	89	6
No high school diploma or GED	74	11
High school graduate (high school diploma or the equivalent GED)	264	27
Some college or Associate's degree	307	30
Bachelor's degree or higher	392	31
<\$25K	89	12
\$25K-<\$50K	177	18
\$50K-<\$75K	186	17
\$75K-<\$100K	148	14
\$100K-<\$125K	139	12
\$125K+	298	26
White, Non-Hispanic	753	63
Black, Non-Hispanic	94	12
Hispanic	106	16
2+ Races, Non-Hispanic	33	2
Other, Non-Hispanic	51	7
Northeast	188	17
Midwest	223	21
South	391	38
West	235	24

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