

OHIO VOTERS SUPPORT CLIMATE ACTION



Ahead of the fourth Democratic primary debate in Ohio, [a new survey](#) finds Ohio voters support a broad array of policies to address climate impacts and increase production of renewable energy in the state, and want their elected officials to support those policies. Climate Nexus, in partnership with the Yale University Program on Climate Change Communication and the George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication, conducted a representative survey of 1,112 registered voters in Ohio from October 1-7, 2019. The margin of error for this survey is +/- 2.9% at the 95% confidence level.

CLIMATE CHANGE IS POLITICALLY SALIENT IN OHIO

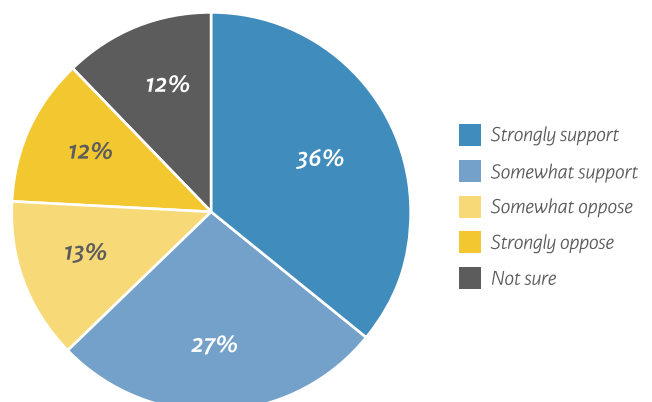
More than six in 10 (63%) Ohio voters support government action to address climate change, including more than a third (36%) who strongly support such action. At least two-thirds of Ohio voters also want the federal government (69%), the Ohio state government (67%), and their member of Congress (67%) to do more on climate change.

Climate change ranks as a top-tier issue for Democrats in the state as they consider their presidential vote. When asked to identify the two most important issues to their vote for president in 2020, Ohio Democratic and Democratic-leaning voters are most likely to choose health care (45%), climate change (25%), and the economy and jobs (24%). Fourteen percent of voters overall in the state say climate change is one of the two most important issues to their vote for president next year.

Ohio voters are also more likely to support political candidates who back specific climate action. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of Ohio voters say they

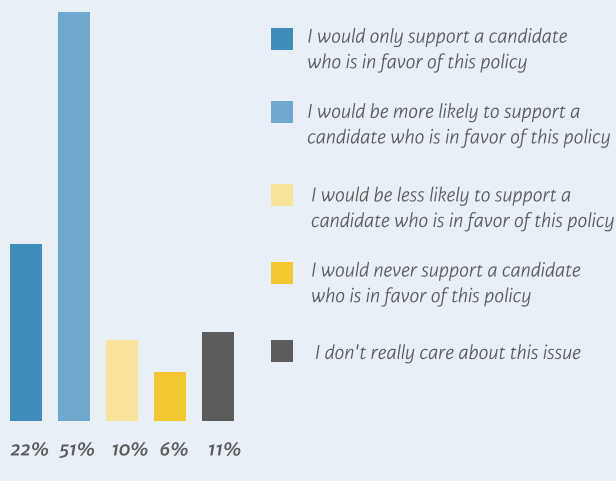
would be more likely to support a candidate for political office who favors setting stronger pollution standards for business and industry. Roughly two-thirds say they would be more likely to support candidates running for office who are in favor of extending government funding for renewable energy (69%), requiring fossil fuel companies to pay a tax on their carbon pollution (66%), and setting stronger fuel efficiency standards for cars, trucks,

Q: Do you support or oppose government action to address climate change?



Due to weighting and rounding, percentages may not always add up to 100%

Q: Please indicate how likely you would be to support a candidate for political office who is in favor of setting stronger pollution standards for business and industry. If you don't care about this policy, just say so.



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and SUVs (66%). And more than six in 10 (62%) say they would be more likely to support a candidate who favors establishing a national renewable portfolio standard (RPS) requiring 100% of electricity to be generated from renewable sources by 2050.

OHIO VOTERS SUPPORT SPECIFIC CLIMATE AND CLEAN ENERGY POLICIES

Ohio voters believe the state should move away from fossil fuels and toward more renewable energy. More than six in 10 (63%) think developing more renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar, should be the most important priority for addressing Ohio's energy needs, significantly more than those who say building more natural gas (13%) or nuclear (7%) power plants should be the

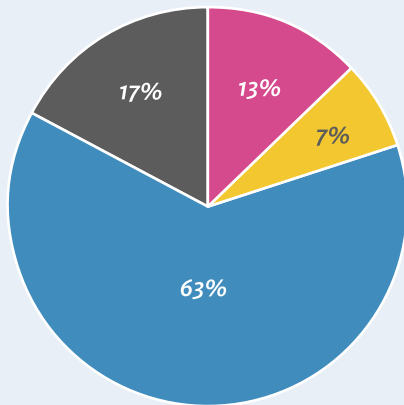
top priority. A majority (53%) of Ohio voters also think increasing domestic production of renewable energy is more likely to create good jobs for Ohioans, while fewer than three in 10 (28%) say the same of fossil fuels like oil and gas.

Not only do Ohio voters view renewable energy more favorably than fossil fuels, they also support specific policies to increase the amount of renewable energy in the state. More than seven in 10 (71%) Ohio voters support extending government funding for renewable energy, including four in 10 (40%) who strongly support doing so. Additionally, more than six in 10 (63%) Ohio voters support establishing a 100% RPS in the state. More than three-quarters (76%) say a 100% RPS in the state will have a positive impact on the state's environment, and nearly seven in 10 (69%) say this policy will improve Ohioans' health. Majorities believe a 100% RPS in Ohio will improve the economy (60%) and have a positive impact on rural and farming communities (56%), while pluralities believe the policy will lower the unemployment rate (47%), improve wages (47%), lower electricity costs (45%), and benefit communities of color (37%).

Ohio voters oppose specific legislation in the state that makes it more difficult to expand renewable energy. A majority (54%) of Ohio voters oppose HB 6, the recent legislation that subsidizes two nuclear power plants and two coal plants through a monthly surcharge, while also eliminating the state's RPS. Only about three in 10 (31%) Ohio voters support this legislation. Additionally, about two-thirds (68%) of Ohio voters say the state should eliminate its 2014 wind setback law, which requires wind turbines to be set back at least a quarter of a mile from the nearest property line and has resulted in fewer wind turbines being built in Ohio than in neighboring Indiana, Michigan, and Illinois.

Ohio voters support expanding access to electric vehicles (EVs) and more fuel efficient vehicles. Seven in 10 (70%) support setting stronger fuel efficiency standards, and more than six in 10 (63%) agree the federal tax credit for EVs should extend beyond each manufacturer's first 200,000 vehicles. Six in 10

Q: Right now, which of the following do you think should be the most important priority for addressing Ohio's energy needs?



- Developing more renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar
- Building more natural gas power plants
- Building more nuclear power plants
- Not sure

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(60%) say owners of electric vehicles should pay an annual fee equivalent to what an owner of a gas-powered vehicle pays in state gas taxes each year, and nearly three in 10 (29%) say owners of electric vehicles should not have to pay any annual electric vehicle fees. Only 11% say EV owners should pay an annual fee higher than what an owner of a gas-powered vehicle pays in gas taxes each year.

Ohio voters favor a variety of policies to address and reduce impacts from climate change. Two-thirds of voters in the state support requiring new infrastructure projects in the state to be built to withstand extreme weather events (67%) and requiring fossil fuel companies to pay a tax on their carbon pollution (67%).

OHIO VOTERS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT CLIMATE IMPACTS

Ohio voters are concerned about the impacts of climate change on their state. More than eight in 10 (84%) say the quality of infrastructure, such as roads and bridges, is a serious problem in their local area, and more than three-quarters (77%) say pollution of rivers, lakes, and streams is a serious problem. Roughly two-thirds say smaller crop yields (68%) and air pollution (64%) pose serious problems where they live, and nearly six in 10 (59%) say extreme weather is a serious issue as well.

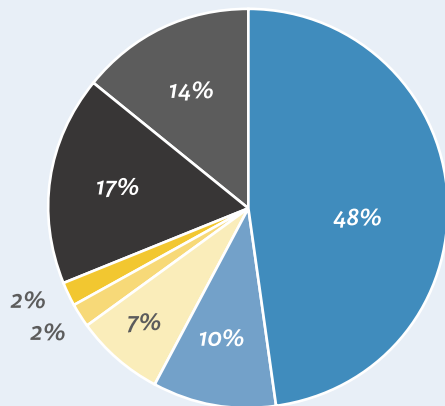
Many Ohioans report personally experiencing impacts from extreme weather and climate change. Nearly four in 10 (38%) say they or someone in their family has experienced more severe seasonal allergies over the last year, and more than a quarter (26%) report they or someone in their family has experienced anxiety about extreme weather events in the last year. Roughly one in five say they or a family member has had to take a break from work or take a day off because of extreme weather (20%), experienced heat stress or heat-related illness (17%), or had to deal with property damage or other economic hardships as a result of extreme weather and heavy rainfall (16%).

Ohio voters also recognize the impact climate change is having across the state. Nearly two-thirds (66%) say climate change is having a large or some effect on agriculture in the state, and more than six in 10 (62%) say climate change is impacting extreme weather. Majorities of voters in the state say climate change has an effect on the health of Ohio residents (55%) and the state's economy (52%), and close to half (47%) say climate change is impacting their own family's health.

While a majority (54%) of Ohio voters believe the state's environment will be about the same for the next generation as it is now, more than a third (36%) say the quality of the environment will be

Q: *When extreme weather events (such as hurricanes, floods, or heat waves) occur, when do you think is the proper time for the news media to talk about how climate change impacts these events?*

- Talk about climate change as the event is occurring
- Wait about a day or two after the event
- Wait about a week after the event
- Wait about a month after the event
- Wait longer than a month after the event
- Never talk about climate change and its role in weather-related disasters and extreme weather events
- Not sure



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worse for the next generation. Only 9% say Ohio’s environment will be better for future generations than it is now.

When extreme weather events, such as hurricanes, floods, or heat waves occur, a majority of voters in Ohio believe the media should discuss how climate change impacts those events as they unfold or immediately after. Close to half (48%) say the media should talk about how climate change impacts extreme weather events while extreme weather events are occurring, and another 10% say the media should discuss climate change in the first day or two after extreme weather events. Only about one in 10 say the media should wait a week (7%), a month (2%), or longer than a month (2%) to discuss how climate change affects extreme weather.

AHEAD OF FOURTH DEMOCRATIC DEBATE, BIDEN AND WARREN LEAD

Ahead of the fourth Democratic presidential primary debate, nearly one-third (32%) of Democratic and Democratic-leaning likely voters in Ohio select Joe Biden as their top choice, and more than one in five (21%) select Elizabeth Warren. Thirteen percent pick Bernie Sanders, followed by Kamala Harris (6%) and Pete Buttigieg (5%), with all of the other candidates receiving 3% or less. Ten percent say they prefer another candidate or are unsure who they would like to see as the Democratic presidential nominee.

When asked how they would vote if the election for president versus Donald Trump were held today, or toward which candidate they lean if they are unsure, (53% to Trump’s 47%) and Sanders (52% to Trump’s 48%) both beat Trump. Warren (51% to Trump’s 49%), Harris (50% to Trump’s 50%), and Buttigieg (50% to Trump’s 50%) come within the margin of error.

More than three-quarters (76%) of Ohio voters have been paying a lot of or some attention to recent news about members of the Trump administration’s dealings in Ukraine. A majority (52%) of Ohio voters also approve of the House of Representatives beginning a formal impeachment inquiry, including more than a third (36%) who strongly approve.

Climate Nexus Polling, Leiserowitz, A., Maibach, E., Rosenthal, S., Kotcher, J. (2019). Ohio Voters Support Climate Action. Climate Nexus Polling, Yale University, and George Mason University. Washington, DC: Climate Nexus Polling.