

To: Interested Parties
From: Climate Power and Data for Progress
Date: May 20, 2024
Re: MEMO: Trump's \$1 Billion "Deal" with Big Oil and Gas is a Political Liability with Voters

Summary

Recent reporting by the Washington Post [revealed](#) that Donald Trump told a group of oil executives that they should “raise \$1 billion to return [him] to the White House,” and Trump “vowed to immediately reverse dozens of President Biden’s environmental rules and policies and stop new ones from being enacted.” Donald Trump then went further, telling the executives that giving \$1 billion to him would be a “deal” for them because of his policies on taxation and regulation.

In light of this, Climate Power and Data for Progress recently [surveyed](#) national likely voters to understand voters' reaction to this recent news, the potential rollback of President Biden’s climate and clean energy policies, and attitudes towards the influence of the oil and gas industry. Notably, voters demonstrate strong concern at the prospect of a second presidential term for Donald Trump after learning about Trump’s meeting with oil and gas executives, with Black and Latino voters expressing the highest levels of concern, along with Independents.

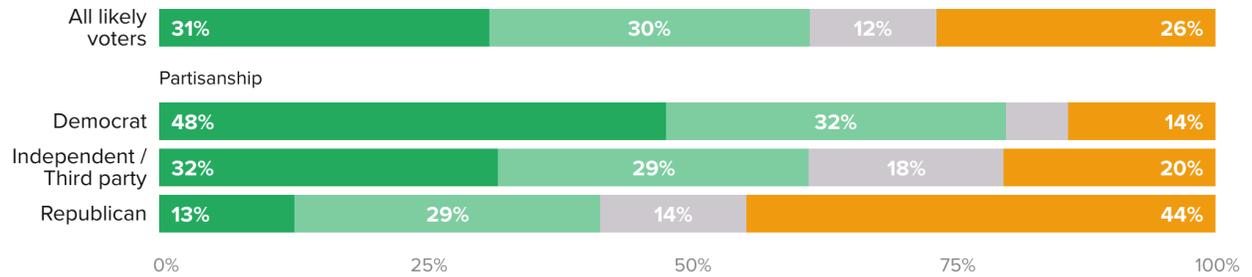
Voters Would Reconsider Their Vote for a Candidate Who Tells Oil and Gas Industry Executives That Donating to Their Campaign Would be a "Deal"

Sixty-one percent of voters say they would either not be able to vote for a candidate (31%) or would reconsider their vote for a candidate (30%) who tells oil and gas industry executives that donations to their campaign would pay off because of the taxes and regulations Big Oil would avoid. Just under one-third of Independents (32%) say they would **not** be able to vote for such a candidate, alongside 37% of voters under 45 and 36% of college voters. Many Republicans (42%) would also reconsider their vote for a candidate who said this.

Nearly Two-Thirds of Voters Would Reconsider Their Vote

If a candidate for elected office told oil and gas industry executives that donating to their campaign would be a "deal" for them because of the taxation and regulation they would avoid, which of the following would come closest to your view?

This news would be a deal-breaker and I would not be able to vote for that candidate **This news would make me reconsider my decision to vote for that candidate** **Don't know** **This news would not be a deal-breaker for me and I could still vote for that candidate**



May 10–13, 2024 survey of 1,231 likely voters

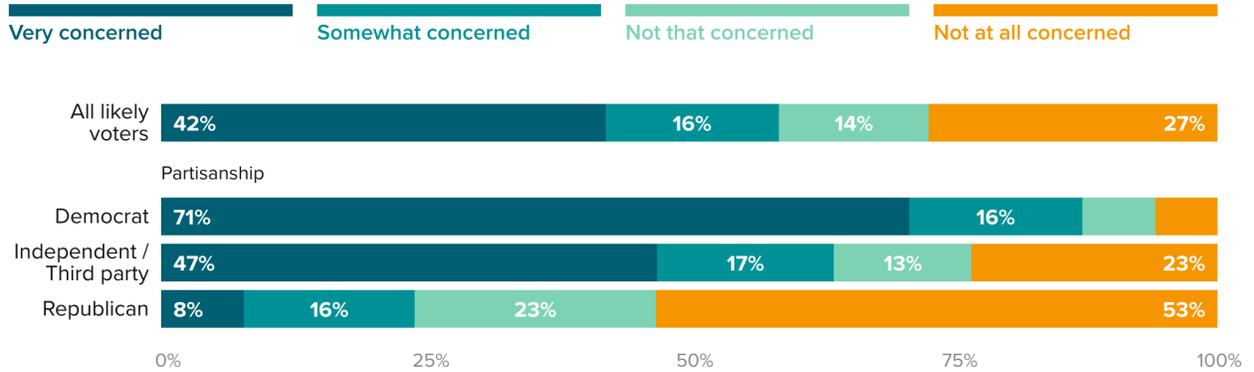
Voters Express Strong Backlash After Hearing About Trump's Meeting With Oil and Gas Executives

After learning about what Donald Trump reportedly said in a meeting with oil and gas executives, voters express wide concerns about a potential second presidential term for Donald Trump, with 58% of voters overall saying they are “very” or “somewhat” concerned. Notably, 64% of Independents say they are concerned about a second Trump term after hearing about this meeting, including 47% who say they are “very” concerned, indicating a high level of intensity for these persuadable voters. In addition, 71% of Black voters and 66% of Latino voters are concerned about a second Trump term in light of this news.

A Majority of Voters Are Concerned About a Second Trump Term After Hearing About Trump's Meeting With Oil and Gas Executives

The Washington Post recently reported that Donald Trump told a group of oil executives that they should "raise \$1 billion to return [him] to the White House. At the dinner, he vowed to immediately reverse dozens of President Biden's environmental rules and policies and stop new ones from being enacted."

Knowing this, how concerned, if at all, are you about a potential second presidential term for Donald Trump?



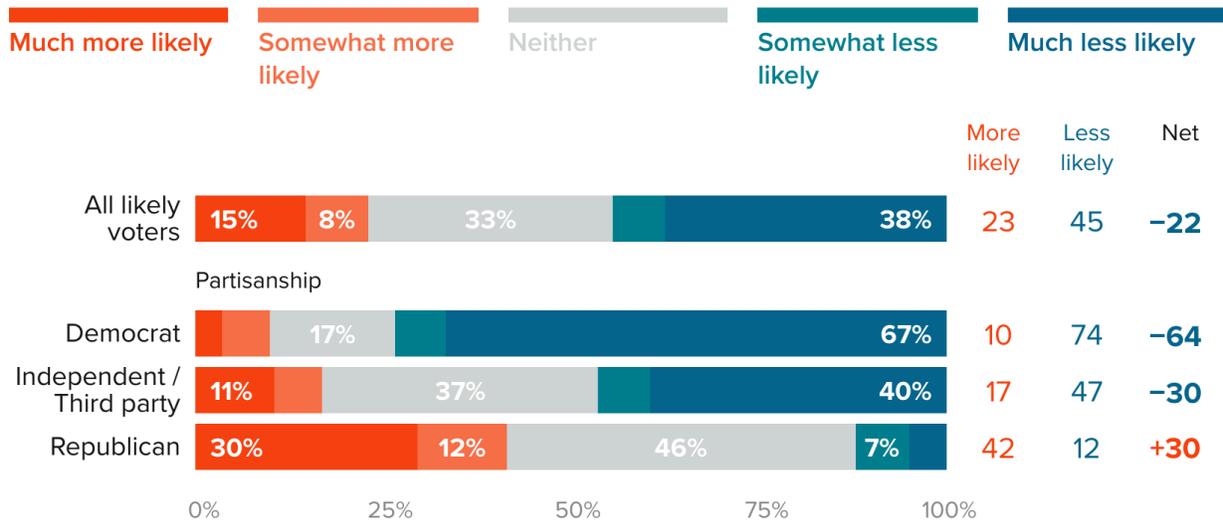
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These findings translate to voters' likelihood to vote for Donald Trump in the upcoming 2024 election, where we find that 45% of voters report being less likely to vote for Trump given his meeting with oil and gas executives. The plurality of voters overall (38%) say they would be **much less likely to vote for Donald Trump in 2024** after hearing this news, including 48% of Black voters and 40% of Independents.

A Plurality of Voters Are Less Likely to Vote for Donald Trump After Hearing About Trump's Meeting With Oil and Gas Executives

The New York Times recently reported that Donald Trump "told a group of oil executives and lobbyists gathered at a dinner at his Mar-a-Lago resort last month that they should donate \$1 billion to his presidential campaign because, if elected, he would roll back environmental rules that he said hampered their industry."

Does knowing this make you more or less likely to vote for Donald Trump in the upcoming 2024 presidential election?



May 10–13, 2024 survey of 1,231 likely voters

Voters Find Statements About Trump's Strong Ties to the Oil and Gas Industry Concerning

Finally, we found similarly high levels of concern regarding multiple statements highlighting Trump's connections to Big Oil, including allegations of his ally's attempted collusion with Big Oil to maintain high oil prices at the expense of consumers. A plurality of voters expressed high intensity for each statement tested, with "very concerning" figures ranging from 44%-45%. Across statements, Black and Independent voters are more likely to view these statements as "very concerning" regarding a potential second Trump term.

Reading About Trump's Increasing Connections to Big Oil Is Concerning to Voters

For each of the following statements, please indicate how concerning or not concerning that statement is regarding a potential second presidential term for Donald Trump.

Survey respondents who selected: *Very concerning or Somewhat concerning*

The FTC recently accused Trump's Big Oil ally of attempting to collude with OPEC to keep oil prices high—driving up costs for American families at the pump and lining the pockets of their already wealthy shareholders.

Big Oil is planning for a possible second Donald Trump term by preparing ready-to-sign executive orders that would cause pollution to soar by increasing offshore oil leases.

Donald Trump told Big Oil that he'd roll back dozens of pollution and conservation regulations that protect public health as he asked for \$1 billion in campaign contributions from the industry.

All likely voters	Democrat	Independent / Third party	Republican
69%	89%	69%	46%
66%	91%	68%	37%
65%	88%	70%	35%

May 10–13, 2024 survey of 1,231 U.S. likely voters

Conclusion

Overall, we find that Trump’s attempts to further cultivate ties with the oil and gas industry to be a significant electoral issue with voters. Voters express greater concern for a second Trump term in light of his recent meetings with Big Oil executives. These results are consistent across party lines and other key demographic groups. Furthermore, this growing concern is found to translate into decreased enthusiasm for voting for Trump, including among Independents. Taken together, this episode could prove to be a powerful catalyst for voters to reconsider their candidate choices and therefore should be considered as a fruitful avenue for climate and clean energy messaging as the 2024 election proceeds.

Survey Methodology

From May 10 to 13, 2024, Data for Progress and Climate Power conducted a [survey](#) of 1,231 U.S. likely voters nationally using web panel respondents. The sample was weighted to be representative of likely voters by age, gender, education, race, geography, and voting history. The survey was conducted in English. The margin of error is ±3 percentage points.