

To: *Climate Power*
From: *Hart Research*
Date: *March 13, 2024*
Re: *Latino Electoral Power: The Climate Case Against Trump*

On January 23 – 28, 2024, Hart Research Associates conducted an online survey on behalf of Climate Power. Hart Research interviewed 2,265 likely 2024 voters in the battleground states of Arizona, Georgia, Minnesota, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin, including 502 Latino voters. This online survey has a margin of error of ± 2.0 percentage points for the full sample of 2,265, a margin of error of ± 4.4 percentage points for the Latino voter sample of 502, and higher margins of error for subgroups of the sample.

1. With many Latino voters still open to Trump, or at risk of not turning out, a targeted campaign is crucial to make the case against Trump and for Biden.

Latino voters remain a pivotal voting bloc with the power to influence key presidential battleground states this year. Their greater tendency to identify as independents, hold fluid partisan affiliations, and vote less, consistently highlights the need for a strategy that blends persuasion and mobilization efforts into a cohesive communications campaign.

In our February survey, just under three in four (73%) of Latino voters say that they will definitely vote in the 2024 general election (compared to 82% of all voters), with lower turnout predictions among Latino voters under 50 (67%) and without a college degree (67%). President Biden's lead among Latino voters in the 2024 trial heat stands at just 7 points (48% Biden, 41% Trump, 12% undecided), a notable decrease from the 20-point advantage he held over Trump among the same group of respondents in the 2020 election—with Biden slightly underperforming his 2020 self-reported vote and Trump more significantly overperforming his. While President Biden needs to improve his vote share across Latino voters, he is particularly at risk of losing Latino voters under age 50 and men.

Looking at voter preferences a different way, if Trump becomes the Republican nominee, 32% of Latino voters would vote for him and 50% would not, leaving a persuadable 18% who say they would consider Trump as their candidate depending on the circumstances. This number is higher among Latino men (21%) and those under 50 (22%). Additionally, there is a not-insignificant proportion of Latino voters (23%) who have not yet accepted the virtual inevitability of Trump's nomination, including 28% of women and 25% of noncollege grads.



2. It is a mistake to assume that Latino voters remember Trump’s record and how destructive he was as president. We need to show voters the harm Trump caused by denying climate change, dismantling clean air and water protections, and obstructing progress on clean energy.

When Latino voters are asked to rate their satisfaction with Donald Trump’s handling of issues, Trump has a net positive rating on key economic issues but a net negative rating on other issues, including issues related to climate change or clean energy. While these issues, along with reproductive rights, immigration, and democracy, are obvious vulnerabilities for Trump with Latino voters, many Latino voters today do not have a clear view one way or the other about how Trump has handled them. We see both a need and an opportunity to raise his negatives on these issues by reminding Latino voters how bad he actually was as president and how dangerous he would be if he is elected again.

Satisfaction with Biden/Trump on each issue

	Satisfied with Trump %	Dissatisfied with Trump %	NET:
Climate change	23	46	-23
Abortion and women’s reproductive rights	27	47	-20
Clean energy	25	41	-16
Immigration	37	50	-13
Clean air and water	29	40	-11
Protecting democracy	35	44	-9
Energy policies	32	31	+1
The cost of living	41	38	+3
The economy	45	37	+8
Employment and the availability of good-paying jobs	43	35	+8

Across key benchmarks in the survey, Latino voters consistently express higher levels of concern about climate and clean energy issues than other battleground voters: six in ten Latino voters believe that climate change is currently a crisis or will be in the near future (compared to 52% of voters overall), 79% believe that the U.S. should increase its use of clean and renewable energy (compared to 71%), and 73% believe that the U.S. should reduce reliance on fossil fuels (compared to 64%).

There also is an opportunity to grow President Biden’s comparative advantage over Trump on climate change and clean energy issues. Today, the President receives only mixed ratings for his own efforts on climate change and clean energy. As with Trump, many Latino voters do not have a clear view on how President Biden has handled these issues, but the results are more favorable to Biden when voters compare him to Trump:

Who would do a better job handling each issue?

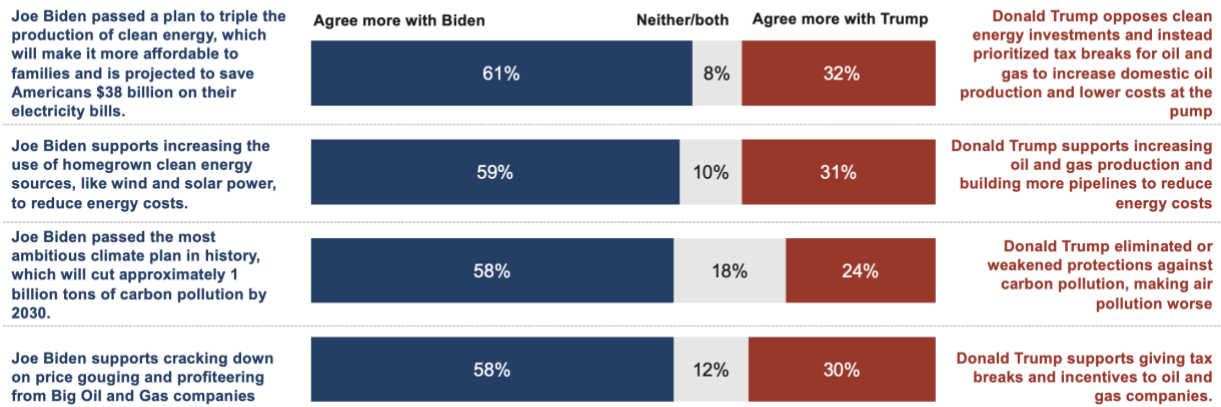
	Biden better job %	Trump better job %	NET: Biden - Trump
Climate change	47	31	+16
Clean air and water	47	33	+14
Clean energy	46	34	+12
Energy policies	43	42	+1

3. Communicating the difference between the candidates is key. Biden’s standing improves significantly when contrasted with Trump’s record as president, especially when highlighting Biden’s initiatives for affordable clean energy against Trump’s alliance with Big Oil.

Given the relatively low levels of awareness among voters about both candidates’ records, clarifying their distinct approaches becomes key. As the chart below shows, Biden increases his lead even more when the differences between the two are spelled out, especially when highlighting the benefits of clean energy for reducing electricity costs. The best detailed contrasts for Biden among Latino voters are on increasing the production of clean energy to make it more affordable and cut electricity costs for families, which tests well both compared to Trump giving tax breaks to the oil and gas industry (61% vs 32%, a 29-point advantage) and compared to Trump opposing clean energy investments and prioritizing tax breaks (59% vs 28%, a 31-point advantage).

Similarly, six in ten Latino voters (59%) prefer Biden’s focus on using homegrown clean energy sources to cut energy costs, a 28-point lead over Trump’s strategy of increasing oil and gas production (31%). By comparison, battleground voters overall are more split and only 48% agree with Biden on this same contrast. Latino voters are also supportive of Biden cracking down on price gouging by Big Oil and Gas compared to Trump’s tax breaks for the industry (58% vs 30%, a 28-point advantage), with this contrast working especially well with persuadable Latino voters.

Top contrasts



Like with voters overall, emphasizing Trump’s disastrous environmental record as president creates a better contrast for Biden than does warning against Trump’s future plans. Biden’s ambitious climate plan wins by 34 points against Trump’s record of eliminating or weakening protections against carbon pollution (58% vs 24%). Against Trump’s future environmental policies, Latino voters still prefer Biden but by a narrower margin of 25 points (57% vs 32%).

Hearing about the stark differences between candidates on these issues helps re-engage key Latino voters for Biden with 55% saying that they are more likely to vote for Biden compared to Trump, including 60% of Latino women, 57% of younger Latino voters, and 52% of persuadable Latino voters.

4. While contrast messaging does double duty by lifting up President Biden’s leadership as well as raising doubts about Trump, we also see power in straight negative messaging against Trump. Messages to Latino voters about Trump should spotlight his dangerous environmental record, denial of climate change, and how his energy policies prioritize profits for Big Oil and raise costs for working families.

Latino voters express significant concern over Trump’s climate and environmental policies. The table below shows the strongest messages against Trump out of 15 tested. Trump’s dangerous environmental legacy alarms Latino voters (61%) more than warnings about his potential future actions (52%) if he is elected again, indicating that a strategic focus on his past record is more impactful.

When voters rank these messages, linking Trump’s climate denial to his broader disregard for reality emerges as a top concern for both Latino voters (35%) overall and particularly among Latino men (40% of whom rank this as a top concern), college grads (40%), younger Latino voters (37%), and persuadable Latino voters (44%).

Latino voters under age 50 and women also rank the impact on costs for working families as the most concerning.

Strongest messages against Trump

	Raises major concerns about Trump %
<p>DANGEROUS RECORD. Trump has the worst environmental record of any president in modern history. He weakened or wiped out more than 125 environmental protections, including protections that stop polluters from releasing toxic pollution -- like carbon, mercury, lead, and arsenic -- into the air we breathe and water we drink. He opposed rules that would ban corporate polluters from pumping chemicals linked to cancer, health risks for children, and brain damage into our water.</p>	61
<p>CLIMATE DENIER. Trump is a climate denier: he refuses to listen to scientists and health and national security experts. He repeatedly has called climate change a 'hoax' and a 'con job' and even spread the baseless claim that windmills cause cancer. Despite the overwhelming evidence showing climate change is real, happening now, and costing taxpayers billions in extreme weather disasters, Trump's refusal to accept the science puts the entire country at risk.</p>	61
<p>ISSUES PLUS CLIMATE. Donald Trump's denial that climate change is real is another example of how extreme and dangerous he is. We cannot afford the next four years with a president like Donald Trump who promises to be a dictator on day one, promotes political violence, opposes women's reproductive freedom, and lies about the greatest threat to the future of our planet.</p>	60
<p>WORKING FAMILIES / COSTS. Cost of living expenses are at an all-time high, but Trump's policies would increase profits for big corporations rather than decrease costs for working families. Big Oil CEOs and corporate executives used worldwide inflation and Russia's invasion of Ukraine as an excuse to increase prices and keep them high. Trump's short-sighted policies continue to put these companies first, leaving working Americans vulnerable to energy insecurity and high costs, squeezing already tight budgets.</p>	59
<p>GENERAL FACT DENIER. Trump refuses to accept facts and reality. He is a climate denier, refusing to listen to scientists, health and national security experts. He began his political career with the false claim that President Obama was not born in the United States and continues to spread lies about the 2020 election. He consistently prioritizes self-serving fiction over the truth and puts the entire country at risk.</p>	54

5. Strong messaging on climate change and clean energy makes Latino voters more likely to vote for President Biden, with significant movement in the trial heat after these issues are litigated with respondents.

Despite the challenging point of departure, focusing on climate and clean energy significantly boosts Biden's appeal among Latino voters. After messages comparing Biden's accomplishments against Trump's destructive record, Biden expands his lead with Latino voters from 7 points (48% Biden, 41% Trump) in the initial trial heat to 21 points in the final vote (56% Biden, 36% Trump). Encouragingly, the biggest shifts occur among some of the Latino demographics Biden is in most in danger of losing: men swing from an 8-point preference for Trump to a 6-point lead for Biden; voters under age 50 increase their support from an 8-point lead to a 26-point lead for Biden; and noncollege voters move from a slim 3-point margin to a robust 19-point lead for Biden.