

**To:** Interested Parties  
**From:** Climate Power and Data for Progress  
**Date:** March 14, 2024  
**Re:** MEMO: The Climate Contrast Young Voters Need to Hear

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## Summary

Georgia's primary results officially set the stage for a 2024 presidential rematch between President Joe Biden and Donald Trump, with both candidates securing their party's nomination. Moving into the general election, the youth vote — and in particular, how younger voters view the candidates on the issues they care about — will be a critical factor in deciding the next president. Young voters consistently name climate change as a key issue, and the clear contrast between Biden and Trump on climate and clean energy underscores that this election will dramatically shape the direction of U.S. climate policy for years to come.

[Climate Power](#) and [Data for Progress](#) recently [surveyed](#) likely voters nationwide, including an oversample of 100 voters ages 18-34, to understand perceptions of recent climate actions taken by the Biden administration. The poll finds that U.S. likely voters back Biden's most notable climate achievements, as well as ambitious pollution reduction regulations pursued over the course of his term. Additionally, we find that younger voters, those ages 18-34, are especially supportive of the president's climate achievements and approve of his handling of the issue of climate change by a significant margin (+43 points) when informed about them. [The results echo Climate Power and Hart Research's battleground polling](#), finding that after learning about Biden's climate action, 18- to 34-year-old voters demonstrated high levels of enthusiasm and showed significant movement toward Biden based on his handling of climate change.

Taken together, these results demonstrate the importance of climate action among voters overall and among younger voters especially. Indeed, a supermajority of these younger voters favor a president who addresses the issue of climate change head-on (73%) rather than one who would step back from addressing climate change and promote the continued production of fossil fuels (20%). This research underscores the importance of educating younger voters on the Biden administration's climate achievements and drawing a clear contrast between Biden's and Trump's handling of the issue.

## **Biden Approval Jumps 17 Points Among Young Voters After Exposure to His Climate Policy Achievements**

The survey shows that approval for Biden's handling of climate change and the environment **improves by 17 percentage points among young voters** after respondents hear more about his climate action. Approval of Biden's handling of climate change and the environment reaches 69%

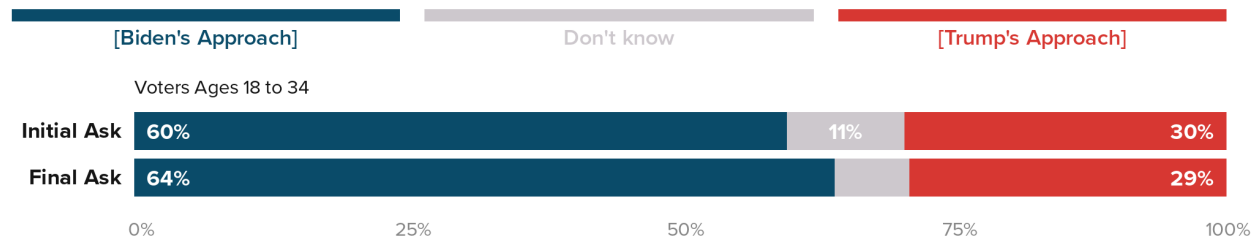
among 18- to 34-year-old voters after respondents read a series of questions about his climate achievements.

Contrasting Biden’s record with Trump’s also proves effective. Notably, 18- to 34-year-olds prefer Biden’s approach by a +30-point margin over Trump’s approach: 60-30%. Exposing voters to more of Biden’s recent climate accomplishments expands that gap by +5 points: 64%-29%.

## Preferences for Biden's Approach on Climate Change Increases for Younger Voters After Reading Through His Climate Accomplishments

[See survey crosstabs for full question response wording.]

Thinking about their approaches on the issue of climate, which of the following statements comes closest to your view, even if neither is exactly right?



Feb. 28 – Mar. 4, 2024 survey of 1,289 likely voters, including an oversample of 100 18-34 year olds

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### The Big Win

Climate Power and Data for Progress’ research also finds that Biden’s clean energy plan, arguably the most significant climate legislation in history, is widely popular, especially among young voters. Two tested frames — clean energy job creation and home energy cost savings — work equally well when talking about the legislation. More than three-quarters of 18- to 34-year-old voters support the plan with both message framings (77% and 78%, respectively). This suggests that both job creation and energy savings are viewed as credible accomplishments to highlight when talking to young voters about the clean energy plan.

# More Than Three-Quarters of Young Voters Support the Clean Energy Plan When Described by Either a Clean Energy Jobs or Lower Energy Costs Framing

In 2022, President Biden signed the Clean Energy Plan into law.

[Respondents then were randomly assigned to read one of two descriptions of the provisions and impacts of the law.]

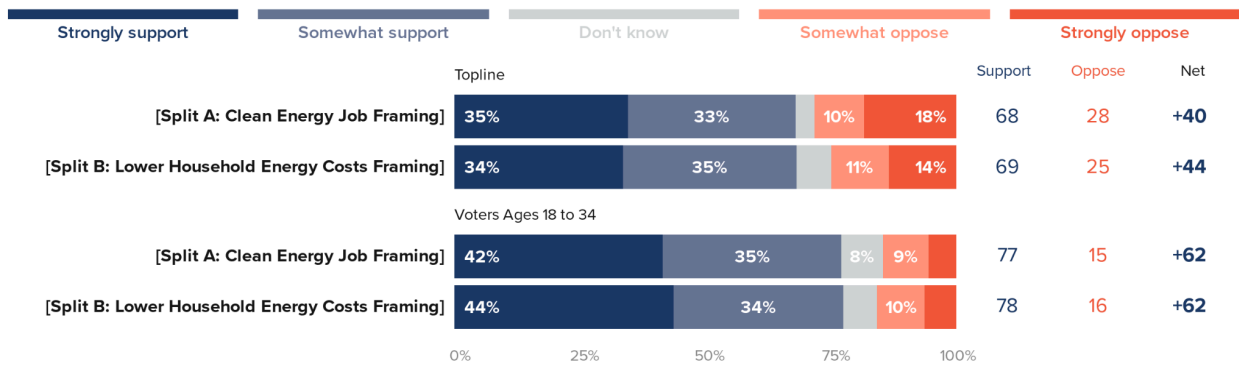
## [Split A: Clean Energy Job Framing]

This law invests over \$430 billion into expanding the clean energy economy, which has increased the production of clean energy technologies, like energy-efficient appliances, battery storage, and electric vehicles. Since the bill was passed, companies have announced and started developing clean energy projects that will create more than 200,000 jobs.

## [Split B: Lower Household Energy Costs Framing]

This law invests over \$430 billion into expanding the clean energy economy, providing households across the country tax credits to lower energy costs and help them afford energy-efficiency improvements. Since the bill was passed, U.S. households have been able to save thousands of dollars on their home energy bills.

Do you support or oppose the Clean Energy Plan?



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In another sign of support for the Biden clean energy plan among young voters, investments in the electric vehicle (EV) industry included in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law are favored by a majority of voters ages 18-34 (65%), compared with 28% who oppose these efforts, reflecting the growing popularity of EVs among younger Americans.

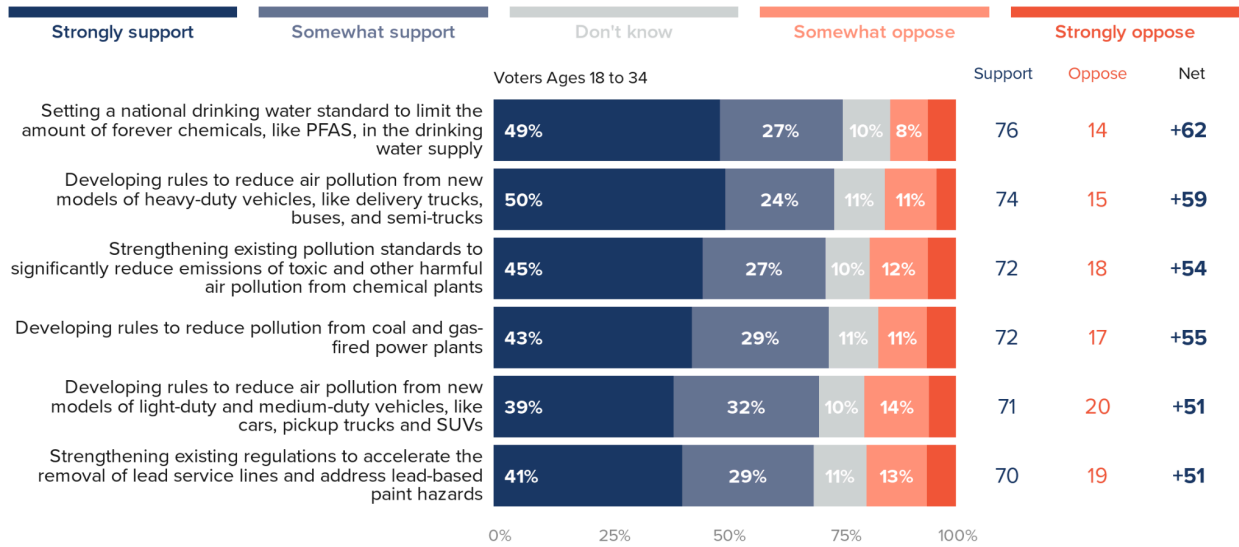
## The “Boring Stuff” Matters

Biden signed into law the most ambitious climate legislation in history. Furthermore, he has also taken significant steps through regulations and executive actions that, while frequently treated as in-the-weeds policy minutia, also represent potent political arguments.

The polling assessed responses to key Biden regulatory actions, revealing strong support overall. **Notably, at least 70% of voters ages 18-34 support all of the regulations aimed at reducing pollution and cleaning up air and water**, with topline voters also expressing majority support for all regulations tested.

# Young Voters Strongly Support Proposed Pollution Reduction Rules Under the Biden Administration

For each of the following actions taken under the Biden administration, please say whether you support or oppose the action:



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Young voters also back Biden's actions to prevent adverse climate impacts from the natural gas industry and develop thousands of clean energy job opportunities.

- A majority of voters ages 18-34 (**57%**) agree with Biden's decision to pause approval of new liquefied natural gas projects to protect the climate and local communities from health impacts, while only 30% disagree.
- The American Climate Corps, which offers young Americans opportunities to work in climate- and clean energy-related fields, is supported by a majority of voters (65%), including more than three-quarters of voters ages 18-34 (**76%**).

## Conclusion

Young voters want a president who will take on climate change and prioritize clean energy investment, not one who embraces a return to a fossil fuel-centered energy plan. That truth sets the stage for an incredibly potent argument in favor of Joe Biden over Donald Trump in 2024.

Young voters must hear about the candidates' actual records on climate. A 17-point swing toward Biden among this critical voting block is possible, but first, Democrats must overcome two challenges:

- 1) Voters are either not aware of or have forgotten Donald Trump's record in office, and
- 2) Voters are not yet giving Joe Biden credit for his historic accomplishments.

In many elections, campaigns are tasked with scrounging up election-year promises and policies with the hope that they might be popular among voters. This requires first convincing them to like the idea and then the candidate.

Biden's opportunity is clear; he has already taken bold climate action and achieved progress that young voters find popular, while Trump's record is simply unpalatable to the majority of 18- to 34-year-olds. Over the next eight months, voters — particularly young voters — need to hear about this incredibly sharp contrast.

### **Survey Methodology**

*From February 28 to March 4, 2024, Data for Progress and Climate Power conducted a [survey](#) of 1,289 U.S. likely voters nationally, including an oversample of 100 voters ages 18-34, using web panel respondents. The sample was weighted to be representative of likely voters by age, gender, education, race, geography, and voting history. This sample is also weighted to account for the oversample of voters ages 18-34 to ensure proportional representation of likely voters nationally. The survey was conducted in English. The margin of error is  $\pm 3$  percentage points.*