

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Corrie Hunt & Geoff Garin
DATE: August 8, 2024
RE: Poll Results: Energy & Climate Change in the Presidential Election

On behalf of Climate Power, Hart Research recently completed an online survey, fielded August 2-4, 2024, among 2,011 voters in battleground states. Here are the key points from the survey.

- 1. Climate and clean energy are strengths for Vice President Harris. The campaign should confidently embrace these issues and emphasize how expanding clean energy translates into lower energy costs.**
 - Vice President Harris leads Trump by double digits when it comes to who voters think would be better on the issue of climate change (51% Harris vs 28% Trump) and expanding clean energy (52% Harris vs 30% Trump). Like her 22-point advantage on abortion, Harris is on solid ground on these issues.
 - At the same time, voters are initially split on who would be better on lowering costs for working families and seniors (45% Harris vs 43% Trump). Showing how investing in clean energy lowers electricity bills can strengthen Vice President Harris' economic message and can give her an edge on addressing the cost of living.
- 2. Leaning into clean energy and going on offense against Big Oil is a winning strategy. Vice President Harris' record delivering policies to make energy more affordable and taking on Big Oil contrasts with Trump's alliance with oil and gas CEOs.**
 - Vice President Harris can effectively challenge Trump on energy costs, boosting her credibility on lowering the cost of living for voters. A contrast messaging that highlights Vice President Harris' tie-breaking vote to triple clean energy production, saving Americans billions, against Trump's alignment with price-gouging CEOs is effective with both persuasion and mobilization audiences.
 - Out of eight messages tested, the cost-of-living message rose to the top, with almost half of persuadable voters (voters who are undecided or could change their mind in the presidential) rating it as a convincing reason to support Harris. This message pulls triple duty—showcasing Vice President Harris' achievements in reducing costs, outlining her vision for the future, and taking Trump to task for siding with the wealthy over working Americans.

Kamala Harris knows prices are too high, and many Americans are struggling with the cost of living. That's why she cast the tie-breaking vote for a plan to triple clean energy production and save Americans \$38 billion on electricity bills. She will take on Big Oil for price gouging. Trump sides with Big Oil billionaires over working people. His policies increase profits for Big Oil CEOs, leaving Americans vulnerable to more price hikes at the pump. (48% persuadable voters and 89% of soft Harris voters say this is important reason to support Harris)



3. Climate and clean energy bolster Vice President Harris’ case as an advocate for freedom. The freedom to breathe clean air, drink clean water, and live in a healthy climate is on par with values like reproductive freedom and gun safety.

- Voters embrace Vice President Harris’ goals to protect and strengthen Americans’ freedoms. When asked to rate the importance of different freedoms, issues related to climate, clean air, clean water, and reducing pollution resonate as highly as a woman’s right to make decisions about her own body and the freedom to be safe from gun violence. In particular, the freedom for every child to be safe from pollution that dirties our air and water and fuels the climate crisis is a top value. In a split sample test, the statement combining clean air, clean water, and a healthy climate resonated highly with voters and was even stronger than the same statement without climate among soft Harris voters—those who are currently supporting Vice President Harris but say they could still change their minds.

Priorities for Kamala Harris <i>(Proportion rating each goal as extremely important*)</i>			
	<u>All</u> <u>Voters</u> %	<u>Soft</u> <u>Harris</u> %	<u>Harris</u> <u>Expansion</u> %
The freedom to vote	69	74	62
The freedom of a woman to make decisions about her own body	59	73	60
The freedom for every child to be safe from the pollution that dirties our air and water**	59	61	55
The freedom to be safe from gun violence	58	70	53
The freedom to have clean air and clean water**	58	58	56
The freedom for every child to be safe from the pollution that dirties our air and water and fuels the climate crisis**	57	71	57
The freedom to have clean air, clean water, and a healthy climate**	57	67	56
The freedom to build a healthier future with clean energy	53	65	53
The freedom to choose affordable, clean energy options	50	60	46
The freedom to protect our communities from the worst impacts of extreme weather	49	60	45

**Rated as an 8-10 on a 0 to 10 scale*
***Asked of half sample*

4. Attacking Trump for his harmful record and positions on climate and energy issues reinforces the narrative that he is dangerous.

- Climate and clean energy are not just a strength for Vice President Harris, but a real weakness for Trump. In another recent poll¹ conducted with battleground voters in late May, we found that climate and energy messaging increased the share of voters who view Trump as dangerous by 5 points (moving from 50% initially to 55% after messaging). This movement was especially pronounced among those who didn’t vote or voted third party in 2020 (45% initial to 57% final), nonpartisans (52% initial to 59% final), Black voters (74% initial to 84% final), and voters ages 18 to 34 (50% initial to 60% final).
- This same poll found that the strongest frames against Trump are that he prioritizes his own interests and those of corporate polluters over the health of communities and the

¹ Online poll conducted May 20-26 among 1,921 battleground voters.

economic interests of working people. Our Maxdiff exercise finds that the top proof points among persuadable voters and those who came to view Trump as more dangerous are his plans to be a dictator on day one so he can increase drilling on our nation's treasured public lands and that Trump would end investments in clean energy, leading to thousands of workers in clean energy jobs being laid off, hurting local communities. These points resonate particularly well with swing demographics and are crucial for disqualifying Trump as a candidate among voters who mistakenly believe a second Trump presidency would benefit them.

5. **There is no evidence that fracking is an impediment to leaning into climate and clean energy. If Vice President Harris is attacked on fracking, messages centered on freedom and her support for commonsense safeguards effectively counter the criticisms and leave voters with a net positive view of her energy positions.**

- Republican criticisms of Vice President Harris on fracking have not gained traction with voters. In an open-ended question on what people know about Vice President Harris' record on climate change, energy policies, and the environment, only 3% of all voters mention any concerns about her positions on drilling and fracking as a negative.
- The Harris campaign should feel confident in responding strongly to fracking attacks and linking her energy positions to her advocacy for freedom and commonsense safeguards. When presented with a conservative attack on Vice President Harris centered on fracking—claiming she is a radical, far-left politician who supports a complete ban on fracking that would skyrocket electricity costs and cost thousands of jobs—our responses defending and clarifying her positions left Vice President Harris at a net positive. After hearing the criticism and responses, voters were more likely to say her positions on energy are more of a reason to vote FOR her (41%) rather than against her (33%) by an eight-point margin. This is true among presidential swing voters (+8) and Pennsylvania voters (+7).
- Two responses are particularly effective for rebutting Republican attacks on fracking. These are significantly more convincing to voters than a response presenting Vice President Harris as having an all-of-the above energy strategy.

[FREEDOM] *Kamala Harris is running for president to protect Americans' freedoms. Harris believes Americans should be free from the grip of Big Oil. She continues to invest in cheaper, cleaner energy manufacturing to give the American people a real choice. Trump just wants to block clean energy which will keep us dependent on Big Oil.*

[COMMONSENSE SAFEGUARDS] *Kamala Harris supports commonsense protections and safeguards to keep our air, water, and health safe. Fracking can cause water contamination and air pollution, which can cause cancer, birth defects, and other diseases, according to doctors and scientists. Harris believes in setting limits to reduce these risks while moving toward cleaner energy sources and creating a new generation of renewable energy jobs, which she has worked to do through the passage of historic legislation.*