

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Geoff Garin and Jay Campbell, Hart Research
DATE: June 5, 2026
RE: Building Energy Affordability into Campaigns' Messaging

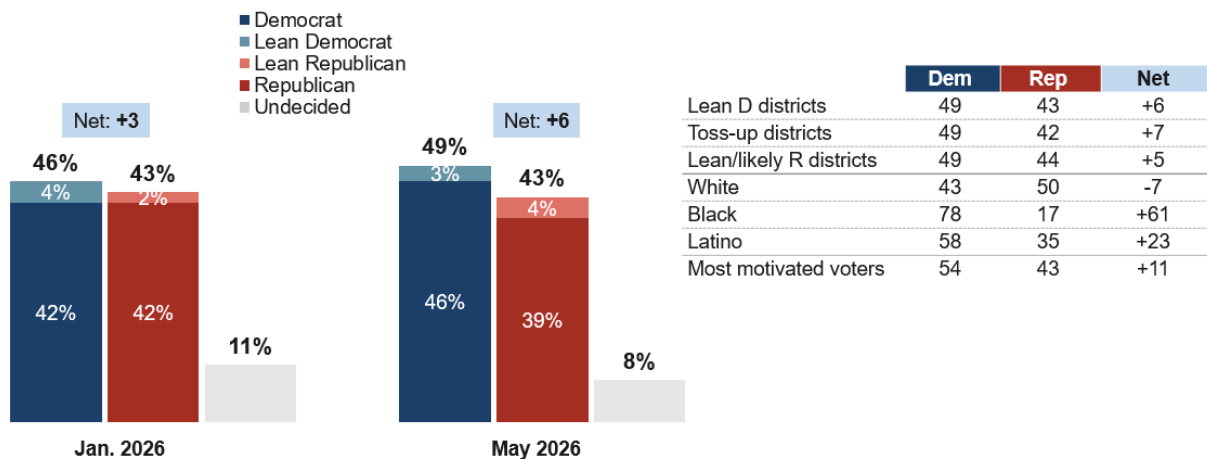
Hart Research was retained by Climate Power, EDF Action, League of Conservation Voters, and NRDC Action Fund to conduct a survey to learn how messaging around energy affordability and clean energy can help Democratic candidates win in November. We interviewed voters* across 51 House districts which the *Cook Political Report* rates as Lean D, Toss Up, Lean R, or Likely R.

Key Findings

- Democrats have momentum:** On the generic ballot, Democrats lead Republicans 49% to 43%, a three-point improvement over the last five months, and Democrats are leading in Lean D, Toss-up, and Lean/Likely R districts. The most motivated voters favor Democrats by 11 points.

The Democratic lead has widened.

All else being equal, would you prefer that the next congressperson in your district be a Democrat or a Republican?



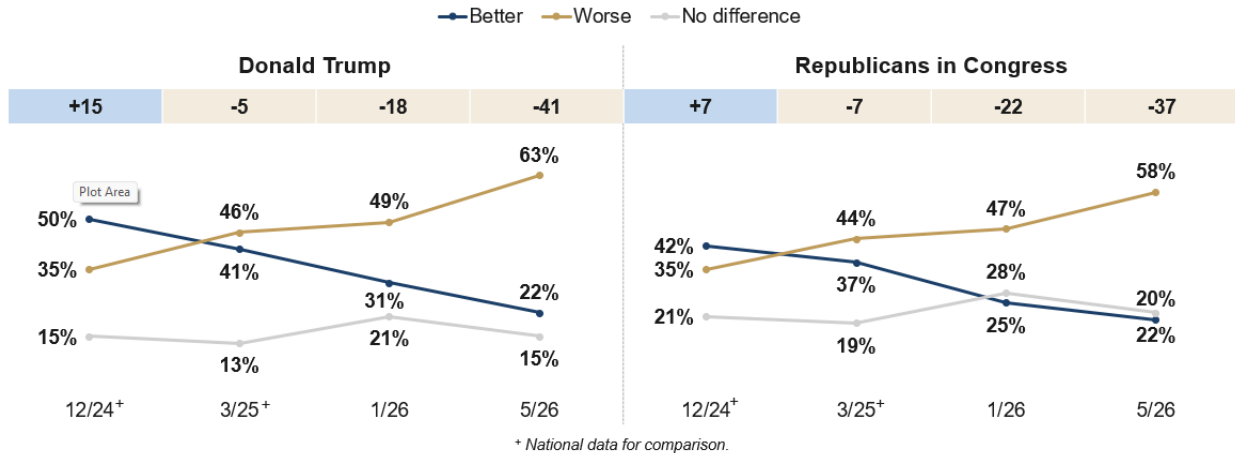
- A weakened GOP brand:** Approval of Donald Trump is down several points since the beginning of the year (just 38% approve now, 62% disapprove), as are positive feelings toward Republicans in Congress (30% positive, 55% negative feelings).
- Energy costs are a major concern:** Across 12 marquee issues, the cost of food is the top voting issue; energy costs—which can easily and credibly be connected to increasing food prices—are atop the second tier. Since January, serious concern about gas prices has more than doubled, and concern about electricity costs is up 10 points.

* n=1,286 registered voters, credibility interval of ±3.1 percentage points; data collected May 20-28, 2026

- 4) **Voters say Trump and the GOP are making energy costs worse:** Since the month after the 2024 election, voters' belief that Republicans are helping ease energy costs has dropped and dropped; at the same time, the belief they are making things worse has climbed considerably and consistently.

Voters blame Republicans.

Is each of the following making things better or worse for consumers when it comes to **energy prices**?



- 5) **Clean energy boosts the Democratic argument:** We found that a Democratic candidate who talks about building more affordable, American-made wind and solar energy in conjunction with stopping Trump's agenda and making life affordable again has a greater electoral advantage than one who leaves clean energy out. This is just as true in Likely and Lean R districts as it is in Lean D ones, proving that clean energy messaging has real value regardless of a district's political bent.
- 6) **Clean energy fits easily into a broader affordability point AND positions Democrats as pro-consumer:** The most compelling pro-Democratic message we tested is the idea that expensive energy is driving up the cost of everything else and that investing in more cheap, clean energy can bring gas and utility costs down. A solid secondary message—that cheap clean energy can give people back control over their unpredictable electricity bills—shows Democrats as being aligned with consumers and against big corporations.
- 7) **Two messages effectively hit Republicans on energy affordability:** Democratic campaigns can hold Republicans accountable and set a clear contrast with them:
- Using their own words and actions against them: Republicans don't care about Americans' struggles—they keep claiming gas prices will come down quickly, and Trump admitted he doesn't "think about Americans' financial situations even a little bit."
 - Forcing them to own the last year and a half: Republicans said they'd bring down the cost of living right after being elected. But electricity prices are up 16%* and gas prices are up 40%, all while Republicans have had full control in Washington. And now they're making it even worse by blocking cheaper energy from clean sources.

* Asked as 13% in the survey; new analysis has found the increase to actually be 16%.