

To: Interested Parties
From: Andrew Baumann and Maura Farrell, Global Strategy Group
Date: August 27, 2020
Re: New Survey Shows that a Debate over Fracking and Climate Boosts Joe Biden in Pennsylvania

Global Strategy Group partnered with Climate Power 2020 and the League of Conservation Voters to explore the electoral landscape in Pennsylvania and understand how a debate about fracking and climate would impact the presidential contest in this critical state. The research shows that not only are Pennsylvania voters supportive of climate action and additional regulations on hydraulic fracturing (“fracking”), engaging in a debate around fracking and climate clearly helps Joe Biden, strengthening his favorability rating and increasing his lead over President Donald Trump in the state. The following memo is based on an online survey conducted August 13-19 among 801 registered voters in Pennsylvania. The margin of error for the survey is ±3.5%. This research was funded by Climate Power 2020, an independent project of CAP Action, the League of Conservation Voters, and the Sierra Club.

Key Findings:

Pennsylvania voters are strongly pro-climate and pro-clean energy:

- Pennsylvania voters believe that climate change is a serious problem and look unkindly at lawmakers who oppose action:** an overwhelming majority of voters in the state think climate change is a serious problem (83%) with a plurality saying it is very serious (46%). Pennsylvania voters also do not look kindly upon elected officials who disagree: voters are strongly unfavorable to both lawmakers who deny that climate change is a threat (21% favorable / 70% unfavorable) and lawmakers who oppose strong action to combat climate change (25% favorable / 58% unfavorable).
- Voters in the state also strongly support pro-climate policies,** including “the U.S. government taking bold action to combat climate change” (73% support / 20% oppose), plans to move the U.S. to 100% clean electricity by 2035 (74% / 17%) and a 100% clean energy economy by 2050 (73% / 20%), and investing \$2 trillion over the next four years to build clean energy infrastructure (71% / 21%).
- Pennsylvania voters’ support for bold action on climate translates to the ballot box:** voters would vote for a Democrat who supports taking bold action on climate over a Republican who does not by 19 points – outpacing the standard generic ballot (+7) by 12 points. Democrats gain ground on this exercise in both the Philadelphia market (+8 points net gain) and in the Pittsburgh market (+12 points net gain).

	Statewide
Generic Ballot: If the general election for Congress were today, would you vote for the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate?	51 / 44 (+7) Dem Rep
Climate Generic Ballot: If the election for Congress were held today between a Democratic candidate who supports taking bold government action to combat climate change and a Republican candidate who opposes taking bold government action to combat climate change, for whom would you vote?	57 / 38 (+19)

- Voters also prefer making investments in renewable energy over supporting oil and gas companies in order to help the state and country’s economy recover:** voters support investments in renewable energy over tax breaks and subsidies for oil and gas by a 20-point margin (60% to 40%) statewide, with an overwhelming margin in the Philadelphia market and a solid, 12-point margin, in the Pittsburgh market.

Which statement do you agree with more?	Statewide	Philly	Pitts.
Big oil CEOs have already gotten hundreds of billions in tax breaks and subsidies from taxpayers; we don't need to bail these corporate polluters out again. Instead, we should be investing in renewable energy like wind and solar because that will create good-paying jobs in Pennsylvania for all kinds of workers while boosting economic growth, combatting climate change, and protecting our kids' health in the long-term	60%	67%	56%
The oil and gas industry is critical to the economy here in Pennsylvania and across America and it has been devastated by this crisis. We should be removing unnecessary regulations and providing oil and gas companies with the support they need to protect their workers, get back to business, and start driving economic growth again - not using the crisis as an excuse to push through socialist climate change policies.	40%	33%	44%

Pennsylvania voters support stronger regulations on fracking.

- **Voters in the state are generally supportive of environmental regulations:** they are widely favorable to both environmental regulations (71% favorable / 19% unfavorable) and regulations to reduce carbon emissions (71% fav / 16% unfav).
- **And they are largely unfavorable toward the fracking industry:** while voters are favorable to the natural gas industry writ large (61% fav / 23% unfav), both the fracking industry (32% fav / 50% unfav) and the CEOs who run it (fracking CEOs: 21% / 53%) are underwater in the state.
- **Pennsylvania voters support policies to further regulate or limit fracking:** by large margins, voters support stronger regulations on oil and gas fracking both generally (+43) and when we spell out exactly what these regulations might be (+58). What’s more, voters in the state also support phasing out fracking by 2050 (+34) and phasing out new fracking permits on public lands/waters (+32). Pennsylvanians in both the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh markets support each of these proposals at high levels, with the exception of phasing out new fracking permits on public lands and waters, which is supported by a margin of four points in the Pittsburgh market (46% support / 44% oppose).

<i>Please indicate if you support or oppose each proposal.</i>	Statewide	Philly DMA	Pitts. DMA
Placing stronger regulations on oil and gas fracking, such as increasing the minimum distance between fracking sties and homes and requiring the disclosure of all chemicals used in fracking	74 / 16 Support Oppose	86 / 8	61 / 30
Placing stronger regulations on oil and gas fracking	66 / 23	74 / 18	64 / 26
Phasing out oil and gas fracking by the year 2050 and requiring utilities to use renewable energy like wind and solar instead	62 / 28	74 / 19	61 / 28
Phasing out all new oil and gas fracking permits on public lands and waters	59 / 27	70 / 18	46 / 40

Engaging on fracking, climate, and clean energy clearly helps Joe Biden.

- **Engaging in balanced debates on both fracking and climate boost Biden’s vote share and improve his favorability ratings:** After a balanced debate on fracking that starts with an attack from Trump that includes the false claim that Biden wants to ban fracking in Pennsylvania, kill 600,000 jobs and costs the state hundreds of billions that is then rebutted by an argument from Biden that corrects the record of fracking, outlines Biden’s supports for common sense safeguards and support for clean energy investments that will create millions of jobs (see below for the actual language tested) pushes voters away from Trump and expands Biden’s lead (from +8 to +12).

When this debate is then followed by a more extensive debate over climate that includes attacks from Trump that tie Biden’s climate policies to the Green New Deal matched against pro-Biden messaging linking Trump’s inaction on climate change and coronavirus and outlining Biden’s plan to create 10 million good-paying jobs by investing in renewable energy, Biden’s lead expands even further (to +15). Following both debates, Biden’s net favorability jumps from +4 to +15 and the average motivation to vote among Biden supporters increases from 9.1 to 9.3 out of 10. Over the course of the full balanced debate, Biden gains in every part of the state, expanding his already sizable margin in the Philly market by 3, expanding his margin in the Pittsburgh market by 8, and, importantly, he narrows Trump's margin in the rest of the state by 11 points.

<i>Movement</i>	Initial	Following Balanced Fracking Debate	Following Balanced Climate Debate
Vote for president	+8 (50% / 42%)	+12 (53% / 41%)	+15 (55% / 40%)
Biden favorability	+4 (50% / 46%)	Not asked	+15 (56% / 41%)
Avg. motivation to vote Among Biden voters	9.1	Not asked	9.3

- Trump's attacks are seen as far less believable than Biden's responses on both fracking and climate. Independent fact-checkers have invalidated Trump's attack against Biden, and Pennsylvania voters also find them hard to believe. Trump's attack against Biden on climate change is seen as particularly outlandish, with 45% of voters saying it is not believable at all.

	Believable <small>% very believable - % not believable at all</small>
<p>Fracking attack: Joe Biden wants to ban fracking in Pennsylvania, which would kill 600,000 jobs, damaging Pennsylvanians' livelihood at a time when nearly two million people are already out of work in the state. Even before the coronavirus devastated our economy, studies showed that banning fracking would be a disaster for Pennsylvania. Biden's plan to ban fracking would cost the state hundreds of billions in lost income and raise energy costs for Pennsylvania families by thousands of dollars and shows just how willing he is to let the Democrats' liberal mob call the shots.</p>	<p>-4 (30%-34%)</p>
<p>Fracking response: Independent fact-checkers say these claims are simply "false," Joe Biden does not support a ban on fracking – he supports common sense safeguards to protect our water from contamination by toxic chemicals and investing in clean energy to combat climate change and create 10 million good-paying jobs across the country. Trump is trying to distract voters from the fact that he eliminated incentives for wind and solar power, making renewable energy more expensive for Pennsylvania families and costing almost 19,000 Pennsylvania clean energy workers their jobs – which is more people than work in natural gas production in the state.</p>	<p>+11 (39%-28%)</p>
<p>Climate Attack: Joe Biden, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Bernie Sanders and other liberal Democrats are pushing the so-called Green New Deal. Their plan is a massive government takeover of our energy system that economists say would cost nearly \$100 trillion – or \$40,000 for every American family. That is more than every dollar our federal government has spent in its entire history and Democrats want to raise taxes 70% to pay for it – something that is unthinkable even in the best of times.</p> <p>Biden's plan would kill our economy and have a devastating effect on our way of life. It would ban airplanes, hamburgers, and gasoline powered cars. It would crush the dreams of the poorest Americans, and disproportionately harm minority communities. What's worse, it would end the production of American coal, oil and natural gas, destroying an industry that has driven American economic growth and severely damaging our already fragile economy – economists say it would kill millions of jobs.</p> <p>With their Green New Deal, Biden and the liberal mob not only want to raise taxes, but also drive up electricity bills for families by hundreds of dollars per year and the cost of gas by 50 cents per gallon. That is a very bad idea. We have the cleanest air and water we've ever had. We will defend the environment, but we will also defend American sovereignty, American prosperity, and we will defend American jobs.</p>	<p>-18 (27%-45%)</p>
<p>Climate Response: Donald Trump is the same person who called coronavirus and climate change a hoax. Now he wants you to believe that Joe Biden wants to spend \$100 trillion and ban airplanes and hamburgers – it's ridiculous. Trump and his oil and coal CEO buddies are trying to stir up controversy to distract us from discussing real solutions – and protect their own profits.</p> <p>Instead of using taxpayers' money to give more bailouts to big oil CEOs – as Trump is doing – Biden has a plan to invest in clean, renewable energy that will create 10 million good-paying jobs for all kinds of workers starting right now while boosting innovation and economic growth, combating climate change, and protecting our kids' health in the long-term.</p> <p>Biden understands that our leaders have a duty to listen to our nation's most respected experts – and a responsibility to leave a better world for our children. But Trump ignored warnings from the CDC about the coronavirus. Now, he's ignoring scientists, NASA, and our military leaders when they say that climate change is a threat to our kids' future.</p> <p>Instead of listening to these experts, Trump put oil and coal lobbyists in charge of protecting our environment – and they immediately went to work rolling back over 100 environmental safeguards, allowing corporate polluters to pump more toxic pollution and chemicals into our air and water, and putting the health of our families and kids at risk.</p>	<p>+10 (39%-29%)</p>

Independent women and black voters are key targets for climate communication

- Looking at persuasion, registered independent women emerge as the most persuadable group when it comes to the issues of climate and fracking, with independent men and younger, non-college women as the next most persuadable groups. These groups over-index the most among swing voters – those voters who are not locked into both Biden in the presidential race and a Democrat on the generic ballot or Trump and a Republican.
- Independent women also emerge as a key motivation target, along with younger, college-educated women, and black voters of both genders. These groups are most likely to oppose Trump and become more motivated to vote after messaging.