

**To:** *Interested Parties*  
**From:** *Hart Research Associates*  
**Date:** *October 5, 2023*  
**Re:** *Communicating with Latino Voters about Republicans' Record on Clean Energy and Climate Change*

Hart Research recently completed an online national survey of voters at the behest of Climate Power and LCV Victory Fund. The survey included an oversample of Latino voters, giving us a total of 329 individuals\* in this audience to analyze. The purpose of the survey was to understand the most effective messaging themes and points to illustrate that **Republicans' extreme positions are out of touch with Americans' views on climate change and clean energy.**

This memorandum outlines the key findings among and strongest messaging points to use when communicating with Latino voters on these issues.

**We should be very confident in taking strong pro-clean energy positions with Latino voters who widely believe in its importance.** Three data points show how extensive Latino voters regard for clean energy is:

- Eight in 10 (80%) Latino voters say it is important for the United States to increase its use of clean energy sources. This includes a majority of 56% who say this is *very* important.
- At the same time, 74% say it is important for the United States to reduce its reliance on fossil fuel sources, including 50% who say this is very important.
- Bringing these two ideas together, 72% of Latino voters believe we should be speeding up the transition to using more clean and renewable energy sources. Only 28% say we should be slowing the transition down.

In each case, women and voters under age 50 are especially likely to tout the importance of clean energy.

**Latino voters are much more likely to side with Democratic positions in energy and environmental policies than they are with Republicans.** We tested a series of “debates” between two generic candidates on climate and energy issues, *without* giving the candidates partisan labels, and asked respondents with whom they side in each debate. In every case, Latino voters prefer the (unlabeled) Democratic position by at least a 25-point margin, and in most cases,

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\* The survey was conducted from August 30 through September 3, 2023. It had a total of 1,667 voters, including 329 Latino voters. The credibility interval for the Latino subset is  $\pm 5.4$  percentage points.



the margin exceeds 30 points. There are three debates in which Latino voters are particularly apt to take the progressive position:

**Following science and dealing with climate change vs. Denying climate change is a threat**

A candidate who supports following the recommendations of scientists to sharply reduce carbon pollution so we can avoid the worst effects of climate change	72%
A candidate who does not believe climate change is a serious threat and does not want to burden the American economy with lots of climate change regulations	16%
<i>“Democratic” margin</i>	<b>+56</b>

**Acting to address extreme weather vs. Denying extreme weather is getting worse**

A candidate who believes climate change is making extreme weather events more frequent and more severe so we must act quickly to address it	72%
A candidate who believes the weather isn't getting worse and that the country should focus more on economic growth and less on regulation	23%
<i>“Democratic” margin</i>	<b>+49</b>

**Cracking down on oil company price gouging vs. Tax incentives to oil companies to increase production**

A candidate who supports cracking down on price gouging and profiteering by the major oil companies	65%
A candidate who supports giving tax cuts and incentives to oil and gas companies to increase the production of oil and gas	21%
<i>“Democratic” margin</i>	<b>+44</b>

It should be noted that one reason these three debates rise to the top is that they have the broadest bipartisan appeal, in that they are the three in which independent and Republican-identifying Latino voters are most likely to side with the progressive position.

**In addition to making a strong case for Democratic positions on the policy front, there is ample opportunity to hold Republicans accountable for working against Latino voters’ interests in the climate and energy space.** All of the anti-GOP messages we tested raise concern with majorities of Latino voters, but three accountability messaging themes are especially compelling:

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***[Republicans are stopping us from addressing extreme weather]*** *This summer's extreme weather--from wildfires in Hawaii, to smoke covering the East Coast, to unrelenting 100-degree heat waves across the South and West--signals a growing crisis. July was the hottest month ever recorded. Unless we act now it is only going to get worse. Yet Republicans are stopping us from doing anything about it and undoing the work we've made toward a sustainable future.*

- 72% say this gives them big concerns about voting for Republicans.
- This formulation—citing examples of specific extreme weather events—is more effective than one that cites the consequences of extreme weather (such as financial costs and loss of life).
- Among all the messages tested, this one has the broadest appeal across different demographic groups within the Latino electorate.
- Note that part of its effectiveness is that this message fits well with Latino voters' lived experiences—77% say that extreme weather events are increasing in frequency, and 71% say it is due to climate change.

***[Republicans are denying the scientific facts of climate change]*** *Nearly every scientist, including NASA and the Department of Defense, agrees that humans are making climate change worse and that switching to clean energy will start to fix the problem. But Republicans tell the scientists they are wrong, that politicians understand what is happening with climate better than scientists do. Republicans are denying scientific facts while climate change just gets worse every year.*

- 68% say this gives them big concerns about voting for Republicans.
- Within this same theme, in a separate message test, we found the language of Republicans' climate denialism leading them to “actively work to undo the progress we've made toward a cleaner future” is also highly compelling.

***[Republicans are destroying nature and increasing pollution by drilling on public lands.]*** *Republicans are determined to lock us into using dirty fossil fuels. They want us to drill for more oil off our coast and in pristine wilderness areas. This hurts us twice--by destroying untouched natural areas and releasing even more pollution into the air. But Republicans push for it anyway, regardless of the damage it does.*

- 68% say this gives them big concerns about voting for Republicans.
- It is especially compelling to women and voters under age 50.

One additional messaging point worth noting relates to dealing with oil and gas companies. In a test of shorter messages and proof points, one of the most effective was that “*Republicans take millions of dollars in donations from big oil companies and then refuse to hold those companies accountable when they pollute our air and water.*” This point would serve as a good companion point to the Democratic policy position of cracking down on oil company profiteering.