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STATEWIDE POLLING SHOW CALIFORNIA VOTERS BELIEVE CLIMATE CHANGE HAS BECOME MORE SEVERE

Voters of color and women are not willing to compromise the health of their families for jobs

Sacramento, Calif. – Courage California Institute partnered with Data for Social Good Foundation, Communities for a New California Education Fund, California Environmental Voters Education Fund, Inland Empire United Education Fund, and Voices in Solidarity Against Oil in Neighborhoods, to conduct polls of over 1,000 registered voters across the state to learn how Californians view the causes and effects of climate change. The poll was administered in English and Spanish, and intentionally oversampled from the demographic communities that have seen higher rates of growth in the last decade, including voters of color.

The majority of California voters believe climate change is real and have noticed the effects of climate change become more severe.

The majority of California voters believe climate change is real (63%) and have noticed the effects of climate change become more severe (73%). They see the greatest effects of climate change in environmental disasters (59%), pollution (19%), and health (18%).

That belief is higher among voters of color, women, and younger voters, who also see the effects of climate change more broadly.

Belief in climate change is higher among Asian (81%), Black (70%), and Latinx (66%) voters, as well as among younger voters (71% of voters 18-29), women (73%), voters with higher educational attainment (70% for college graduates), and voters who identify as liberal (94%). More voters of color (Asians, 88%; Black, 80%; Latino, 79%), younger voters (30-45-year olds, 82%; 18-29-year olds, 81%), and women (81%) have also noticed the effects become more severe.

	Agree with the statement that “climate change is real and is a threat to our way of life”	Have noticed the effects of climate change become more severe
All voters	63%	73%
By Race		
- Asian	81%	88%
- Black	70%	80%
- Latinx	66%	79%
- White	58%	66%
By Age		
- 18-29	71%	81%
- 30-45	74%	82%
- 46-55	64%	73%
- 56-65	57%	67%
- 66+	56%	67%
By Gender		
- Men	59%	66%
- Women	73%	81%
By Educational Attainment		
- High School/ GED or less	46%	71%
- Some college or currently attending	63%	73%
- College graduate	70%	75%
By Region		
- Bay Area	74%	78%
- Southern California	63%	73%
- Inland Empire	53%	63%
- Northern California	55%	60%
- Central Valley	58%	77%
By Political Lean		
- Liberal	94%	97%
- Moderate	60%	69%
- Conservative	21%	37%
- I don't think of myself in these terms	67%	75%

Of voters who have noticed climate change becoming more severe, larger portions of Black voters see the effects greatest in health (32%) and Latinxs in pollution (28%). Residents of the Inland Empire and voters who don't identify as liberal, conservative, or moderate are also more likely to see the effects greatest in pollution (23% and 28%, respectively) and health (30% and 27%, respectively).

Where the effects of climate change have been greatest				
	Environmental disasters: fires, flooding, beach erosion	Pollution: air pollution, water pollution, contaminated/hazardous sites	Health: cancer, allergies, asthma, bronchitis, skin condition or sensitivities	Economic: jobs quality and scarcity
Of voters who have noticed climate change become more severe	59%	19%	18%	4%
By Race				
- Asian	57%	21%	16%	5%
- Black	49%	11%	32%	8%
- Latinx	48%	28%	21%	3%
- White	67%	15%	15%	3%
By Age				
- 18-29	42%	40%	14%	4%
- 30-45	50%	20%	23%	7%
- 46-55	57%	26%	16%	1%
- 56-65	67%	9%	22%	2%
- 66+	72%	13%	13%	2%
By Gender				
- Men	67%	18%	12%	3%
- Women	59%	19%	19%	4%
By Educational Attainment				
- High School/ GED or less	44%	30%	21%	6%
- Some college or currently attending	55%	20%	20%	5%
- College graduate	67%	17%	14%	2%
By Region				
- Bay Area	63%	17%	17%	4%

- Southern California	60%	19%	19%	2%
- Inland Empire	45%	23%	30%	2%
- Northern California	63%	17%	19%	2%
- Central Valley	57%	23%	10%	10%
By Political Lean				
- Liberal	69%	14%	15%	2%
- Moderate	55%	22%	16%	7%
- Conservative	61%	22%	8%	9%
- I don't think of myself in these terms	45%	28%	27%	0%

While voters have identified jobs and the economy as their top issue in previous polls, the overwhelming majority are unwilling to accept new job creation if it leads to worse health outcomes for their families.

In our 2022 general election poll, more voters across six congressional districts (28-35%) identified jobs and the economy as their top issue than other issues. However, when asked in this poll if voters would be willing to accept new job creation even if it leads to worse health outcomes for them and their families, 72% disagreed, with highest disagreement from Black voters (77%), women (79%), and voters 46-55 (77%) and 30-45 (77%).

Additionally, 64% agree the state should focus on transitioning away from polluting fossil fuels to cleaner renewable energy, with higher agreement from voters of color (Asian, 82%; Black, 79%; and Latinx, 69%) and women (71%).

Corporations and elected officials are seen as having the most power to effectively combat climate change, but are also viewed as the biggest barriers to addressing it.

Voters believe corporations (31%) and elected officials (31%) have the most power to effectively combat climate change, but also see corporations (22%) and government (23%) as the biggest barriers to addressing it.

Californians see voting as the best way to bring about an improved environment.

The overwhelming majority of voters (74%) see voting as the best way to bring about an improved environment, and 51% also see advocating for a policy as the best way.

Voters hear about climate change most from the news and are more likely to trust scientists and environmental organizations for climate change information.

Voters hear about climate change most from the news (61%), then social media (17%). Social media was higher among voters of color (Latinx, 25%; Asian, 23%; Black, 21%), younger voters (18-29-year olds, 40%; 30-45, 24%), and women (19%), as well as residents of the Inland Empire (25%) and liberals (18%) and people who don't identify as liberal, conservative, or moderate (20%).

On a scale of 1 to 8 (1 being the most trusted and 8 being the least trusted), voters trust scientists most for information regarding climate change (1.88), then environmental organizations (3.16), environmental activists (4.38), and friends and family (4.52). They are least likely to trust social media (5.96), an energy supplier (5.79), and the government (5.17).

Voters are split on whether or not California is prepared to effectively address climate change and in their belief they can encourage their state representatives to focus more on doing so.

When asked if California is prepared to address climate change, 38% of voters disagree, 36% agree, and 25% neither agree nor disagree. Similarly, 36% of voters believe they can encourage their state representatives to focus more on addressing environmental issues, 25% do not, and 29% might or might not. Notably, voters of color have higher belief in encouraging their state representatives: Black, 52%; Asian, 49%; and Latino, 42%.

They also demonstrate broad support for several policy approaches to minimize the effects of climate change.

Voters were in greater support of policies that would punish corporate polluters (22%), add funding to support corporations developing green technologies (22%), provide tax breaks for individuals who purchase more environmentally friendly alternatives (20%), and provide efficient and inexpensive public transportation. Asian (34%), Latinx (27%), younger (30-45-year-olds, 30%), and Central Valley voters (33%) and voters who don't identify as liberal, conservative, or moderate (33%) were especially more supportive of punishing corporate polluters.

Overwhelming majorities support increasing funding for policies that protect access to safe drinking water (85%), mitigate and prevent wildfires (82%), develop new surface and groundwater conservation technologies (81%), and restore ecosystems and encourage land-use planning (74%).

About this poll

Data for Social Good Foundation conducted the poll for Courage California Institute, Communities for a New California Education Fund, California Environmental Voters Education Fund, Inland Empire United Education Fund, and Voices in Solidarity Against Oil in Neighborhoods from May 4 - June 7, 2023. The poll was administered online in English and Spanish. We polled 1,002 registered voters, intentionally oversampling from demographic communities that have seen higher rates of growth in the last decade, including voters of color.

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[Courage California Institute](#) defends and extends economic justice, human rights, and corporate and political accountability through public education, strategic research, and innovative leadership-development training. We empower Californians by providing the resources needed to courageously participate in the democratic process and create change for the betterment of their families and communities.

Communities for a New California Education Fund promotes economic prosperity and community health for residents in the rural areas of California. We bring valley residents together to champion the needs of poor and working-class families through community organizing, integrated leadership development, and mass non-partisan voter engagement.

California Environmental Voters (EnviroVoters) Education Fund, formerly the California League of Conservation Voters Education Fund, believes the climate crisis is here and this moment requires transformative change. EnviroVoters Ed Fund fights for equity and justice for all Californians, from voting rights to clean air and water. We work together to make government, policy, and voting accessible by conducting public opinion research, shaping the public narrative, organizing with allies and local communities, and educating legislators on pressing environmental issues. We won't stop until we have resilient, healthy, thriving communities, and a democracy and economy that is just and sustainable for all.

Inland Empire United Education Fund is a coalition of community based organizations serving San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. As a coalition, we organize civic engagement activities and programs that uplift historically marginalized communities and build community power.

VISIÓN (Voices in Solidarity Against Oil in Neighborhoods) is a coalition of environmental justice, public health, and frontline organizations leading the fight to end the toxic practice of neighborhood oil and gas drilling in California. Founded in 2019, VISIÓN centers the voices of low-income and non-white communities living near oil and gas extraction in California climate policy.