



Written by [James Murphy](#) on November 8, 2023

Survey: Less Than Half of Americans Think Humans Are the Cause of Climate Change

In a shocking example of common sense breaking out, a recent survey is showing that Americans are less inclined to believe that so-called climate change is primarily the fault of mankind. The survey, conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, with funding from the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago (EPIC), noted a startling decrease across the political spectrum in the belief that human activities are the main or only cause of climate change.

The [survey](#) showed that, although three-quarters of Americans believe that climate change is real and a potential problem, only 49 percent of Americans believe it is mostly or entirely precipitated by human activity, a decrease of 11 percent since 2018.

Democrats were among the groups most affected by the drop in the belief that climate change is man-made. In 2018, 72 percent of Democrats were convinced that man was the primary cause of climate change; in 2023, only 60 percent believed that climate change is primarily anthropogenic.

Independents were even less inclined that man is the main problem. In 2018, 61 percent of Independents thought that man was driving climate change. In 2023, that fell to 42 percent.

When asked about new electric infrastructure, Americans were likely to support such efforts, although, “not in my back yard” appeared to be an important factor.

“As the Inflation Reduction Act begins to make incentives available for renewable power, Americans remain mixed in their support for the power lines needed to deliver that electricity to consumers. Fifty-six percent of Americans support a proposal to build high-voltage power lines to transport renewable energy to places in need, but support dropped to 48% when told that the power lines would be built in their neighborhood,” the Energy Policy Institute noted.

Regional differences showed up as well.

“People who live in the Southwest and on the West Coast are more likely than other Americans to say they’d consider moving to avoid extreme weather impacts. People in the Northeast are standing pat,” the survey makers found.

As far as electric vehicles (EVs) are concerned, Americans appear to like the idea of EVs, with just under 50 percent supporting the tax credits, cash rebates, or other financial incentives that will become available under the Inflation Reduction Act, but are balking at the high upfront costs of the vehicles.

“While there is plenty of interest in purchasing an electric vehicle, the high upfront cost of owning one



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and concerns about the country's charging infrastructure are barriers to more people driving them," said Jennifer Benz of The AP-NORC Center. "Policies that alleviate these concerns will be a key component of building support for an EV future."

Asked about the idea of climate change fees, only 38 percent of respondents were willing to pay a monthly carbon fee of \$1.

"It's striking that Americans' willingness to pay even a \$1 monthly fee to combat climate change fell to below half of respondents—the lowest level since we began tracking this data," said Michael Greenstone of the University of Chicago.

However, true climate change believers were willing to pay a lot more.

"On the other hand, a consistent, sizeable minority remains willing to pay quite a bit, even \$100 or more per month. Our estimates suggest that those respondents help keep the overall average at around \$30 per ton of CO₂," Greenstone said. "Still, no matter how you look at it, American's [sic] willingness to pay for climate policy is far below what research projects climate change will cost society per ton of CO₂ emissions."

Among other key takeaways from the survey, only about half of Americans believe that climate policy is important. The differences are, of course, dependent upon political affiliation. Asked about six policy concerns, Democrats ranked climate third in importance. Republicans ranked climate concerns last.

In addition, politicians aren't having the effect on climate change opinion that they might think. While half of all respondents say that scientists have a great deal of influence on opinions about climate change, politicians, who are often the loudest voices on the subject, have far less influence. Thirty-four percent of Democrats say that their political leaders have a great deal of influence on their climate views, while only 19 percent of Republicans say the same thing.

Perhaps the biggest takeaway from this particular survey is that, despite decades of global warming/climate change propaganda, everyday Americans are not uniformly buying what the United Nations and other climate zealots are selling.



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