



YALE PROGRAM ON  
**Climate Change  
Communication**



GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
**CENTER for CLIMATE CHANGE  
COMMUNICATION**

Please introduce yourself  
in the chat box with your  
**Name, Location, and  
Organization/Affiliation**



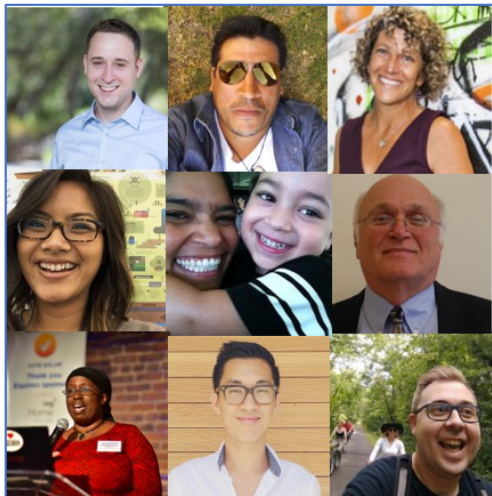
What advocates can  
take away from 10  
years of surveying  
“Climate Change in  
the American Mind”

*February 12, 2020*

# About the Climate Advocacy Lab

*Helping the climate community build grassroots power and win through evidence-based advocacy.*


Please introduce yourself in the chat box with your **Name, Location, and Organization/Affiliation**



Our (awesome!) members



Workshops & Webinars



May 31, 2016  
**Field Test Comparing Pro-Solar Messengers on Several Channels**

**Summary**

This test sought to determine if a homeowner messenger or a solar worker messenger was more effective in convincing either NV residents or US residents to sign a petition in support of solar net-metering policies. Test results were inconclusive, but our report points to significant shortcomings of Facebook Ads for validating message tests, and points to suitable alternatives.

**Campaign Background**

Last fall, Nevada's Public Utility Commission was considering a proposal from the State's dominant Utility to hike electricity rates for owners of rooftop solar systems. If passed, the proposed rates would severely limit the growth of rooftop solar installations in the state.

Our project objective was to recruit Nevada residents, and those already engaged with US climate advocacy groups, to sign a petition to the Nevada Public Utility Commission opposing the new rates. In addition, we wanted to increase participation by our supporters in a patch-through system that facilitated direct phone calls to the NVPUC.

**Initial Test Design**

Our beginning hypothesis was that engagement rates with messages delivered by homeowners and solar industry workers would result in higher rates of engagement than typical appeals issued by our staff. We based the hypothesis on evidence drawn from response to recent email and social media campaigns where we saw higher engagement rates on content featuring people directly impacted by climate change such as food and wildfire survivors.

Our next step was to scan the Climate Advocacy Lab network for contacts that could help us set up a rigorous test. We set up a call with Dr. Gabriele Wong-Parodi of

**Research & experimentation**



Welcome, Nathan ▾ About Contact ▾ MyLab  
"Exploring how to better engage the public on climate change."

HOME INTERACTIVE TOOLS RESOURCE LIBRARY LAB COMMUNITY ASK AN EXPERT

**CLIMATE CAMPAIGN TOOLS**

**LAB WELCOME VIDEO**

New to the Lab? Find out what it's all about by clicking here to take a virtual tour.

**YALE CONFERENCE VIDEOS**

Click here to view videos from last fall on "Building the Public and Political Climate Action."

**YALE CLIMATE OPINION MAPS FOR STRATEGISTS**

Interactive U.S. mapping of climate opinions

**NEW CLIMATE RESOURCES**

How do we get off fossil fuels when we've always f...  
change? **NEW!**  
NATHANIEL JOHNSON, GRIST

**Online platform & alerts**

Contact: [info@climateadvocacylab.org](mailto:info@climateadvocacylab.org)





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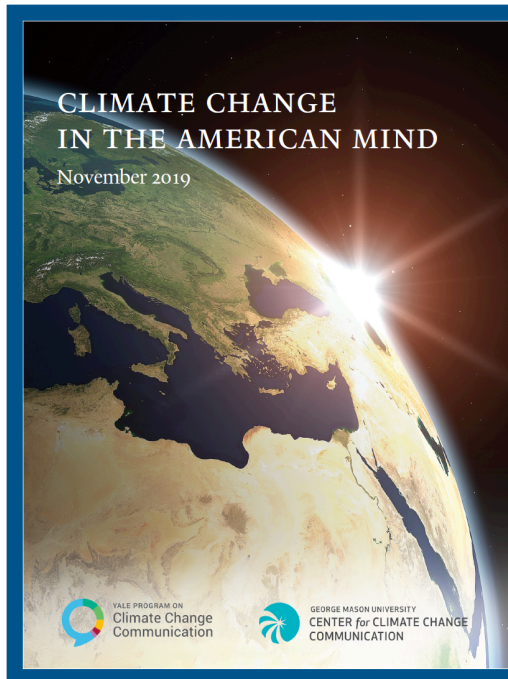
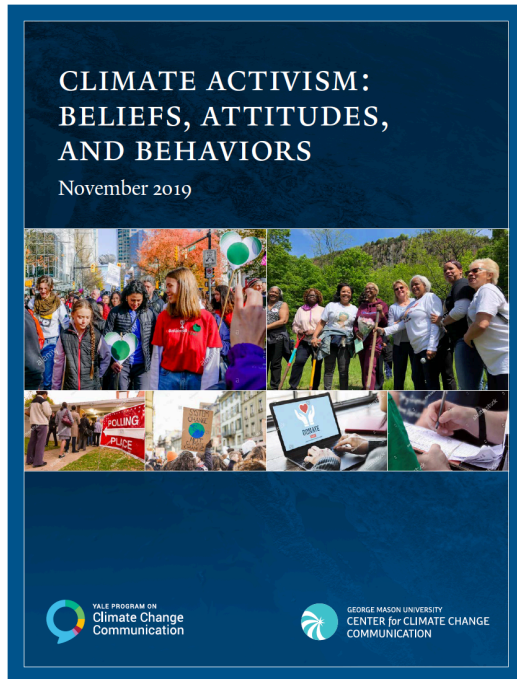
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## Roadmap

- Welcome & Overview
- Introductions
- Background
- 10 Actionable Insights!
- Powerful Tools
- Q&A
- Close





What advocates can take away from the last decade of surveying "Climate Change in the American Mind"

John Kotcher, George Mason Center for Climate Change Communication

Joshua Low, Yale Program on Climate Change Communication

# What is CCAM?



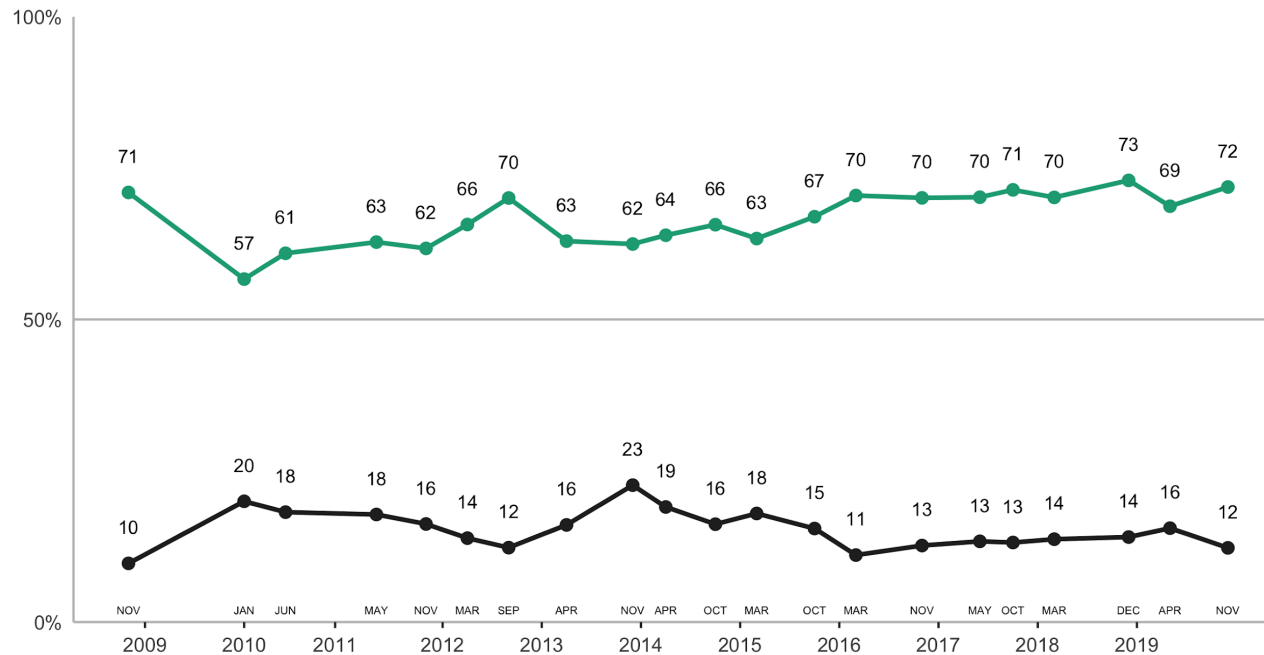
# Ten Actionable Insights

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# Insight: Trend toward belief in global warming

## About seven in ten Americans think global warming is happening

- Think global warming is happening (%)
- Think global warming is NOT happening (%)



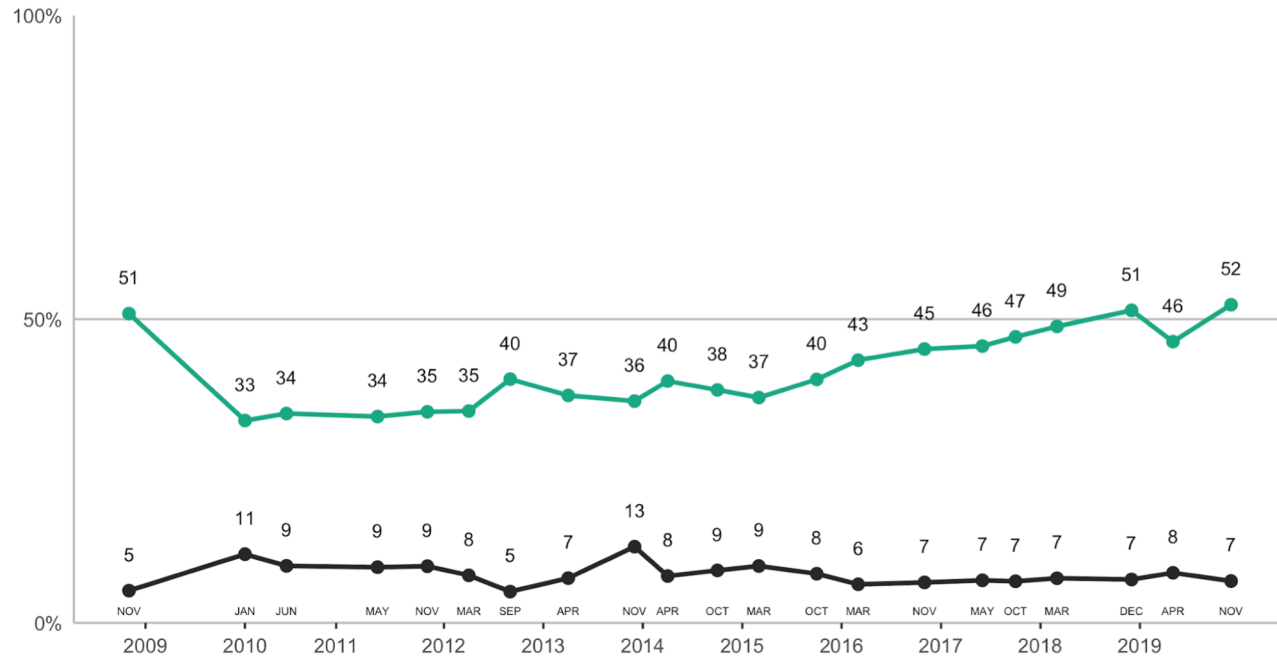
Do you think global warming is happening?  
November 2019



# Insight: Trend toward belief in global warming

## About half of Americans are sure global warming is happening

- Extremely/Very sure global warming is happening (%)
- Extremely/Very sure global warming is NOT happening (%)



How sure are you that global warming is/is not happening?

November 2019

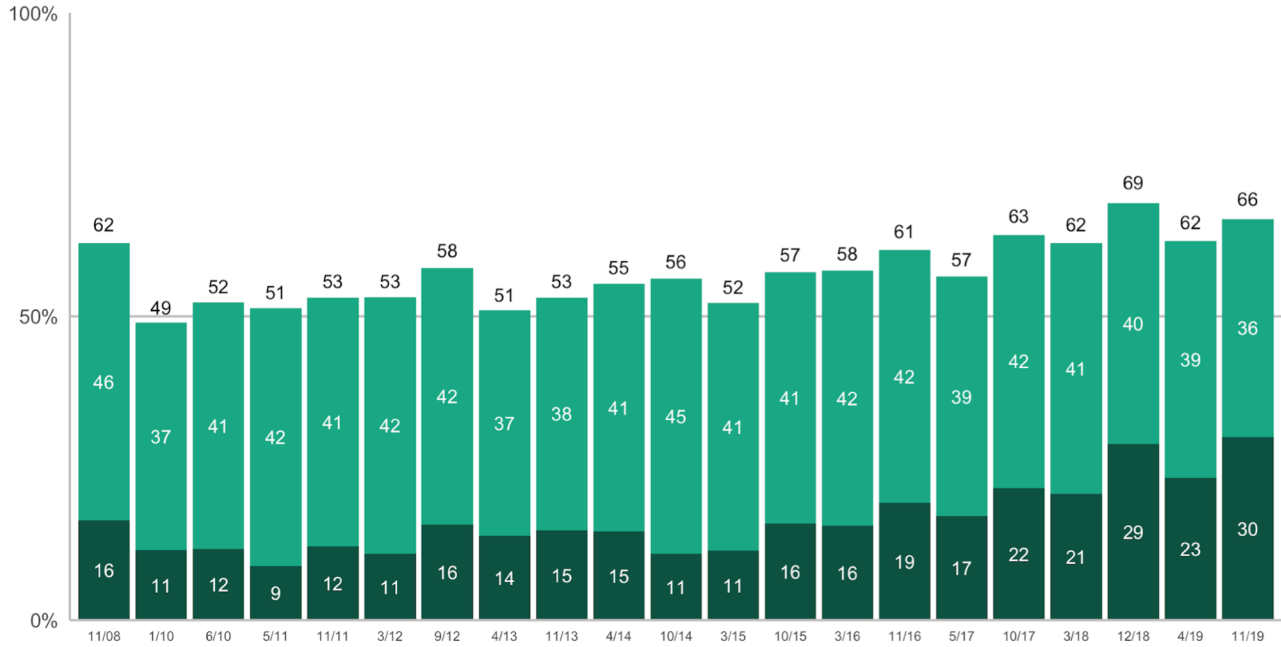




# Insight: Increasingly worried, but there's hope.

Two in three Americans are at least "somewhat worried" about global warming

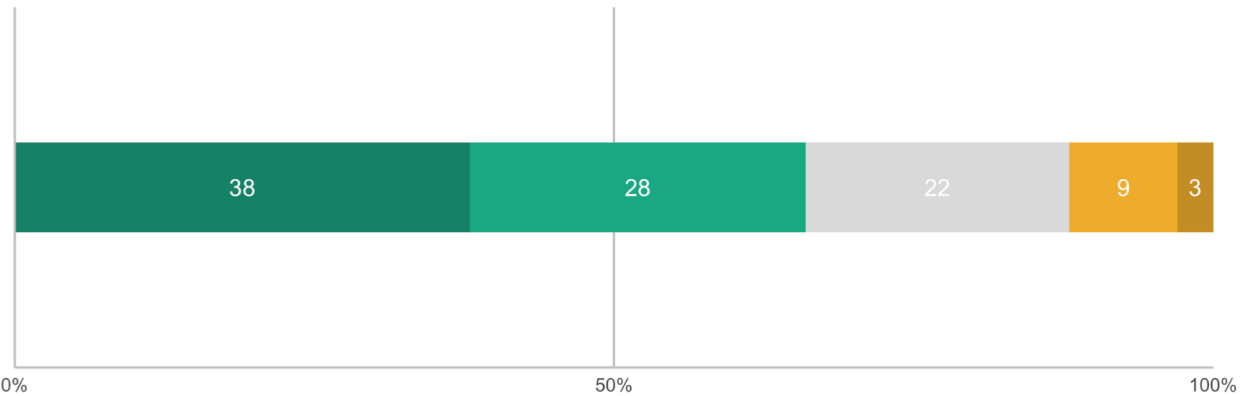
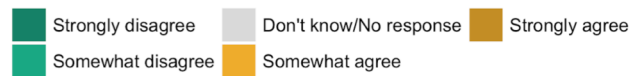
Very worried    Somewhat worried



How worried are you about global warming?  
November 2019

# Insight: Increasingly worried, but there's hope.

## Few Americans think it is too late to do anything about global warming



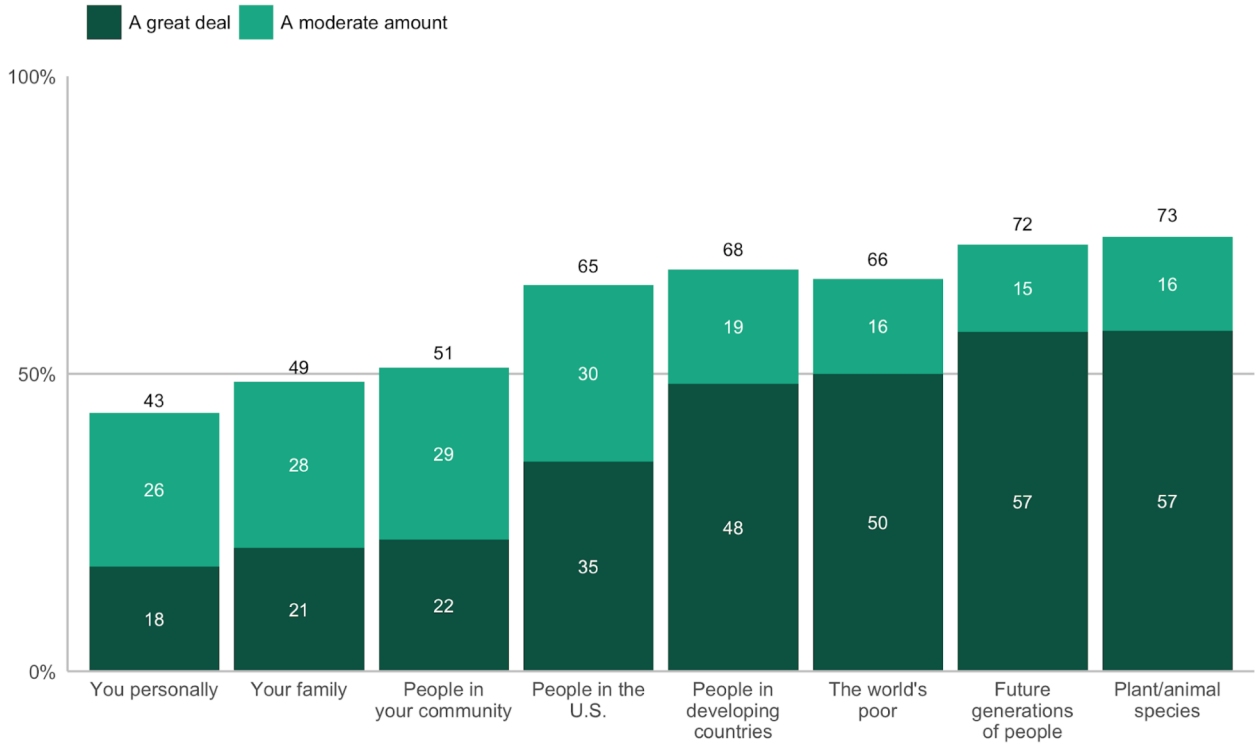
Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement: It's already too late to do anything about global warming.

November 2019



# Insight: Many Americans see global warming as a distant problem.

Many Americans think they will be harmed by global warming  
- But think others will be harmed more -



How much do you think global warming will harm...?  
November 2019

Action: Reduce psychological distance



# SEASONAL SNOW TRENDS

FALL WINTER SPRING



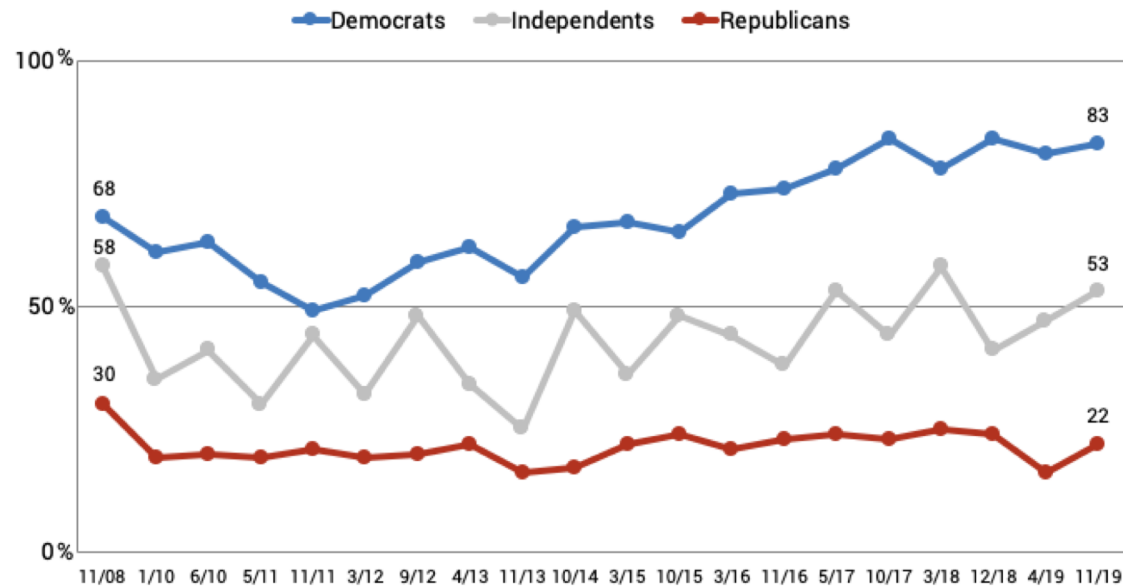
Change in total seasonal (fall, winter, spring) snowfall from Dec 1969 to Nov 2019.  
Source: RCC-ACIS.org. Produced 2/3/2020

CLIMATE  CENTRAL

# Insight: Partisan polarization on global warming.

## Most Democrats Think Global Warming Should Be A High Priority For the President and Congress

- % "high" or "very high" priority -



Do you think the following should be a low, medium, high, or very high priority for the president and Congress?  
[Global warming]

November 2019. Base: Registered American Voters.

## Most Democrats Say Global Warming Will Be a Very Important Issue When Deciding Who They Will Vote For In the 2020 Presidential Election

Rank by "very important"	All Registered Voters	Liberal Democrats	Moderate/Conservative Democrats	Liberal/Moderate Republicans	Conservative Republicans
1	The economy	Environmental protection	Healthcare	The economy	Border security
2	Healthcare	Healthcare	The economy	Social Security	The economy
3	Social Security	Global warming	Environmental protection	Healthcare	Terrorism
4	Gun policies	Developing clean energy	Social Security	Terrorism	Immigration reform
5	Education	Income gap	Russian election interference	Border security	Gun policies
6	Terrorism	Education	Education	Immigration reform	Social Security
7	Environmental protection	Russian election interference	Global warming	Gun policies	Healthcare
8	Russian election interference	Gun policies	Income gap	Education	Abortion
9	Immigration reform	The economy	Developing clean energy	Tax reform	Tax reform
10	Tax reform	Race relations	Race relations	Federal budget deficit	Federal budget deficit
11	Global warming	Improving roads, etc.	Gun policies	Improving roads, etc.	Foreign policy
12	Improving roads, etc.	Social security	Terrorism	Russian election interference	Energy independence
13	Developing clean energy	Tax reform	Improving roads, etc.	Foreign policy	International trade
14	Income gap	Foreign policy	Federal budget deficit	Energy independence	Education
15	Federal budget deficit	Disaster relief	Tax reform	Environmental protection	Improving roads, etc.
16	Border security	Campaign finance reform	Disaster relief	Opioid crisis	Russian election interference
17	Race relations	Abortion	Energy independence	International trade	Opioid crisis
18	Foreign policy	Energy independence	Foreign policy	Criminal justice reform	Criminal justice reform
19	Energy independence	Criminal justice reform	Criminal justice reform	Developing clean energy	War in Afghanistan
20	Abortion	Immigration reform	International trade	Abortion	Disaster relief
21	Disaster relief	Terrorism	Immigration reform	Income gap	Environmental protection
22	Criminal justice reform	Wall Street reform	Campaign finance reform	Disaster relief	Same-sex marriage
23	International trade	Same-sex marriage	Opioid crisis	Global warming	Race relations
24	Opioid crisis	Opioid crisis	Abortion	Race relations	Legalizing marijuana
25	Campaign finance reform	Federal budget deficit	War in Afghanistan	War in Afghanistan	Campaign finance reform
26	War in Afghanistan	International trade	Border security	Campaign finance reform	Developing clean energy
27	Same-sex marriage	Legalizing marijuana	Wall Street reform	Legalizing marijuana	Income gap
28	Wall Street reform	War in Afghanistan	Legalizing marijuana	Same-sex marriage	Wall Street reform
29	Legalizing marijuana	Border security	Same-sex marriage	Wall Street reform	Global warming

In 2020, there will be an election to choose the U.S. president. As of today, how important will the following issues be to you when you decide who you will vote for in the 2020 Presidential election?

November 2019. Base: Registered American Voters.

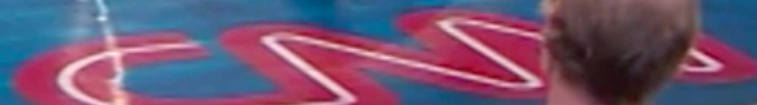


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CNN DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL TOWN HALL  
**THE CLIMATE CRISIS**



Action: Capitalize on this moment by working with the Liberal Democrats to raise the issue with candidates and elected leaders.





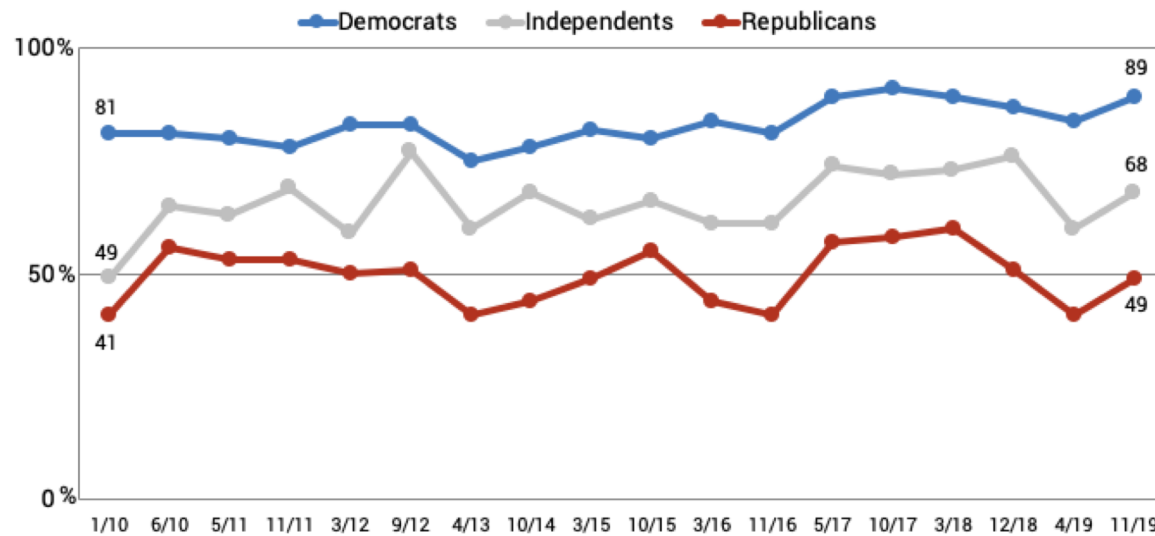


Action: Engage the 1 of 5 Republicans that do think it should be a high priority.

# Insight: Partisan agreement on clean energy

## Most Registered Voters Think Developing Sources of Clean Energy Should Be A High Priority For the President and Congress

- % "high" or "very high" priority -



Do you think the following should be a low, medium, high, or very high priority for the president and Congress?  
[Developing sources of clean energy]

November 2019. Base: Registered American Voters.

# Insight: Partisan agreement on clean energy

## Most Registered Voters, Including Republicans, Support Climate-Friendly Energy Policies

- % “strongly” or “somewhat” support -

	All Reg Voters	Democrats				Ind	Republicans		
		Total	Lib	Mod/Con	Total		Lib/Mod	Con	
		%	%	%	%		%	%	%
Fund more research into renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power	87	96	97	96	81	77	89	71	
Generate renewable energy (solar and wind) on public land in the U.S.	86	94	94	94	79	79	88	74	
Provide tax rebates for people who purchase energy-efficient vehicles or solar panels	82	95	95	95	68	70	86	61	
Regulate carbon dioxide (the primary greenhouse gas) as a pollutant	75	92	94	90	62	59	78	49	
Require electric utilities to produce at least 20% of their electricity from...renewables, even if it costs the average household an extra \$100/year	67	87	90	84	53	43	61	34	

How much do you support or oppose the following policies?  
November 2019. Base: Registered American Voters.

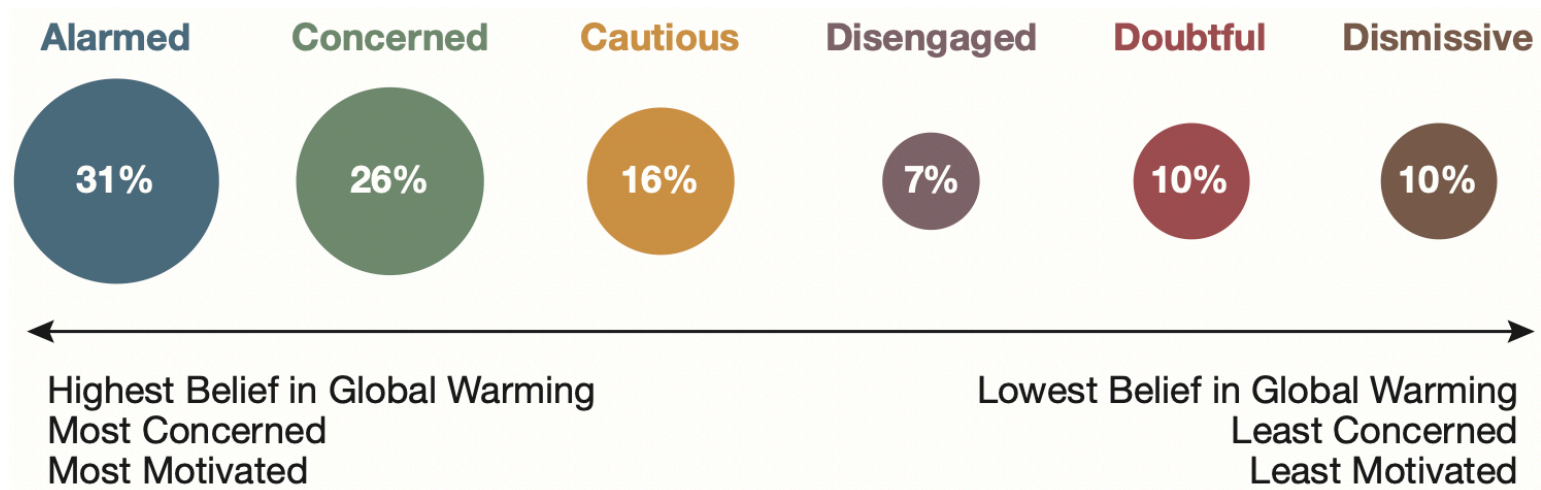


Action: Start the conversation with clean energy and other solutions with certain audiences

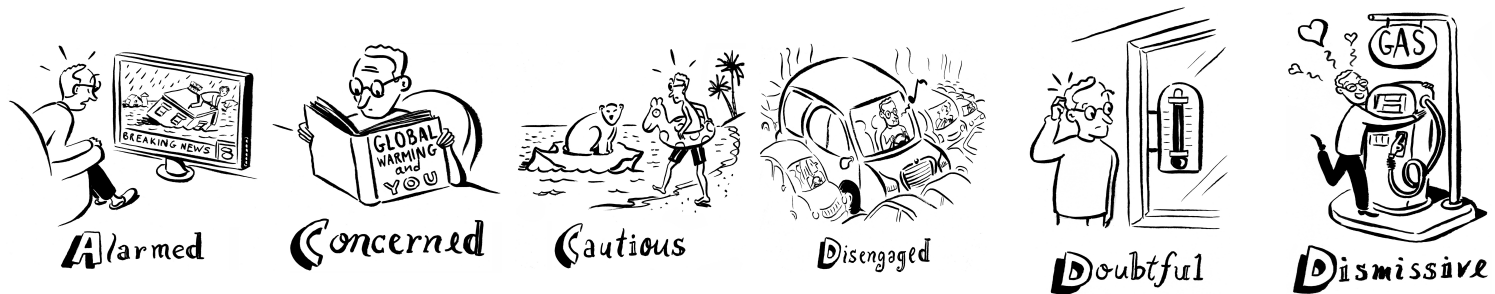
**Commissioner Vince Lago**  
CITY OF CORAL GABLES



# Global Warming's "Six Americas"

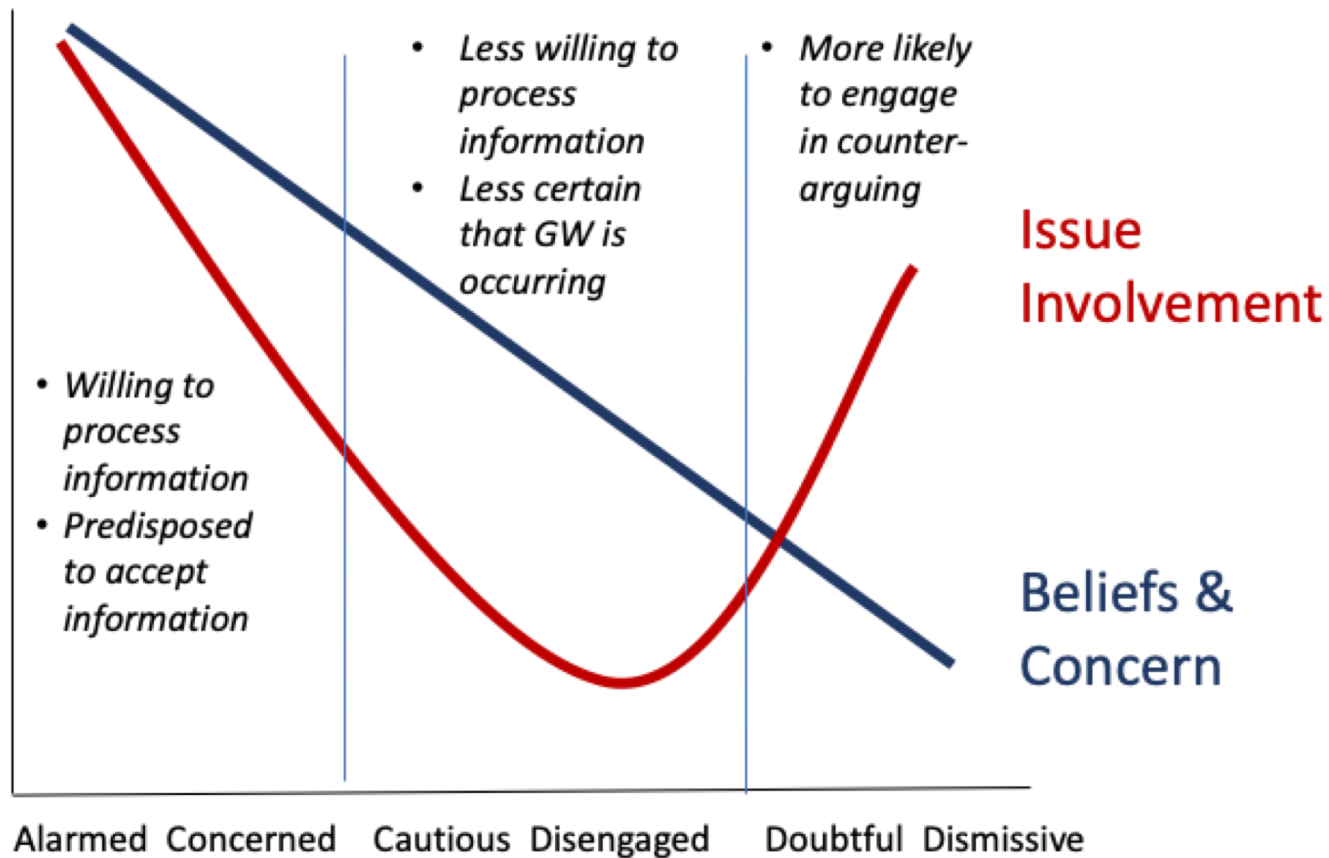


Nov. 2019  
N = 1,303

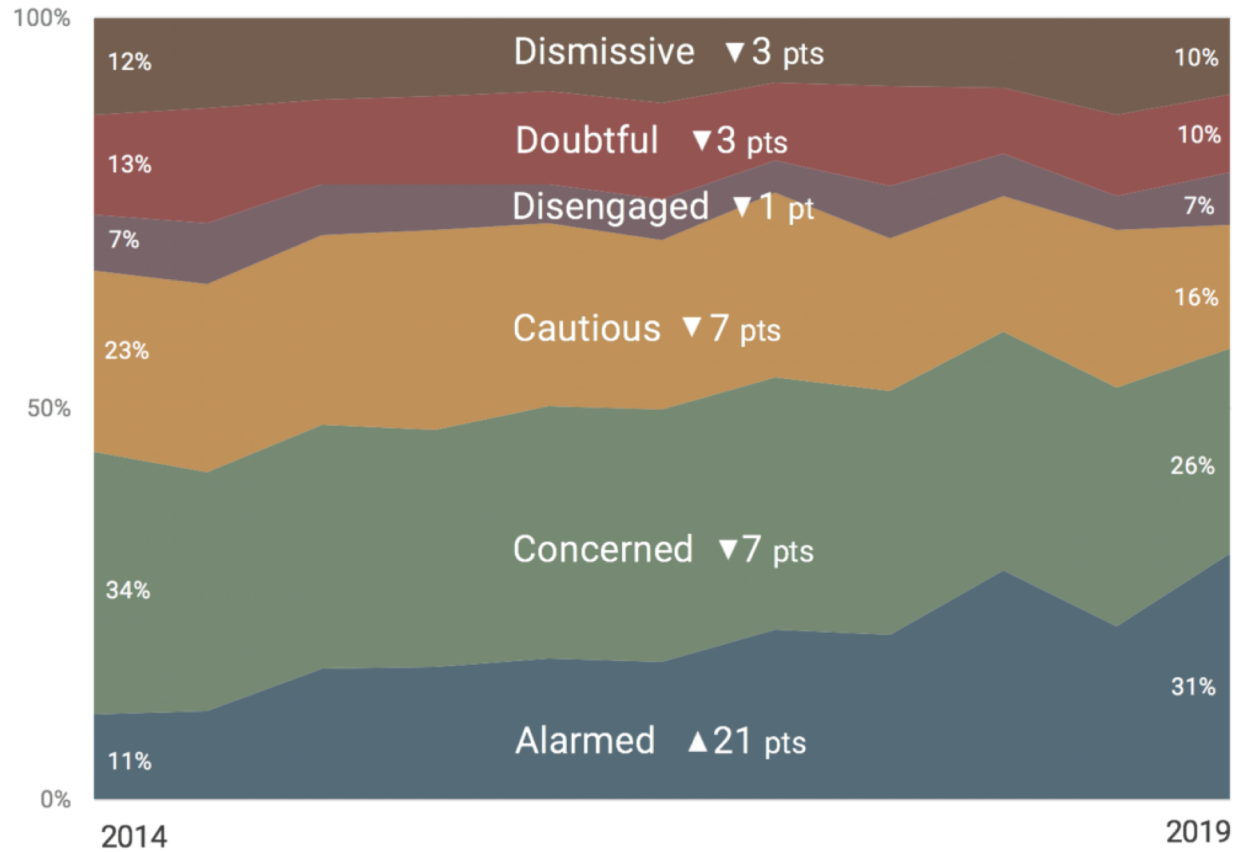


Illustrations by Michael Sloan

# Primary differences between the six groups



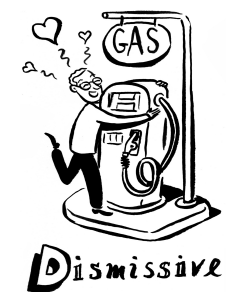
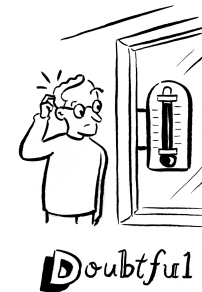
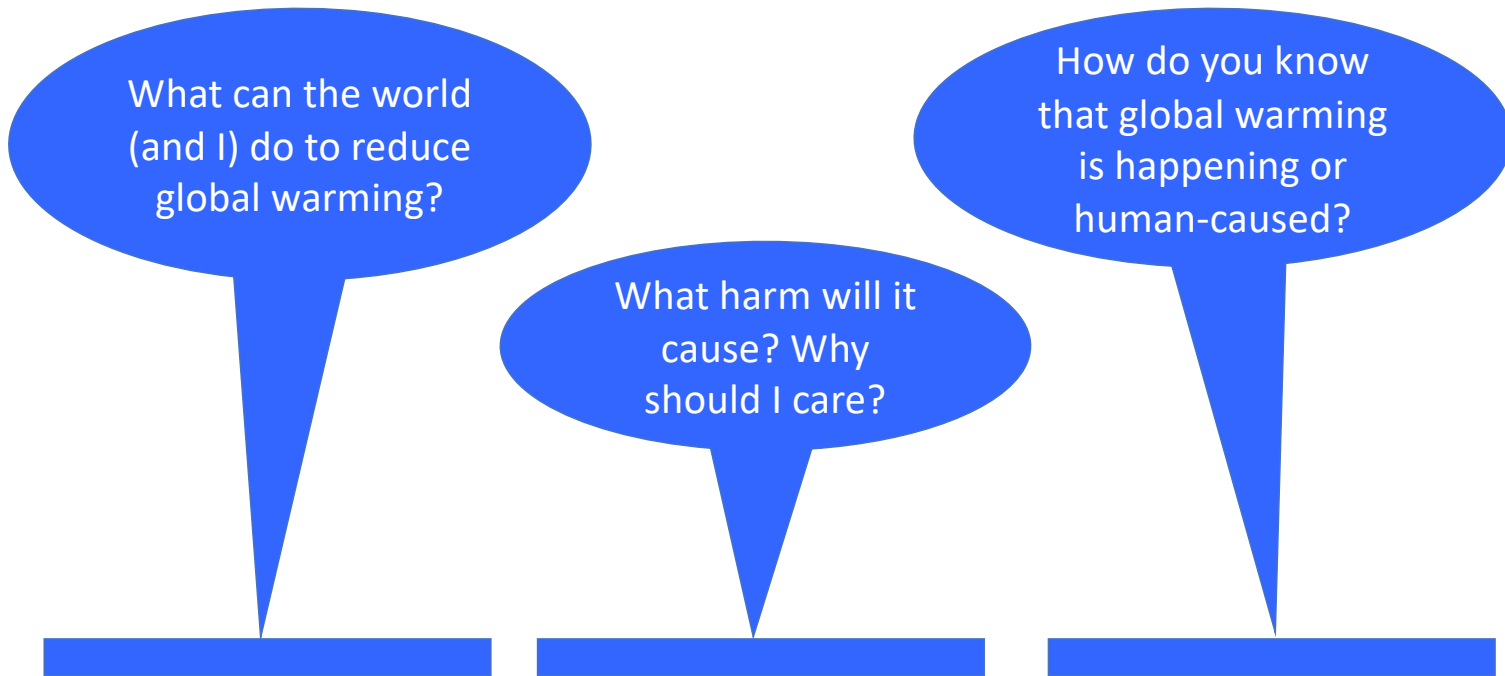
## Global Warming's Six Americas: Five-year Trend



Data from 11 national surveys ( $N = 13,854$ ) from Oct. 2014 to Nov. 2019. Difference scores are calculated before rounding (example:  $12.3\% - 9.7\% = 2.6\%$  which, after rounding, would appear in the figure as  $12\% - 10\% = 3\%$ ).



Action: Use a different strategy with each of the 6 Americas.







ARE YOU SILENT ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE?

#CLIMATESILENCE

@YALECLIMATECOMM

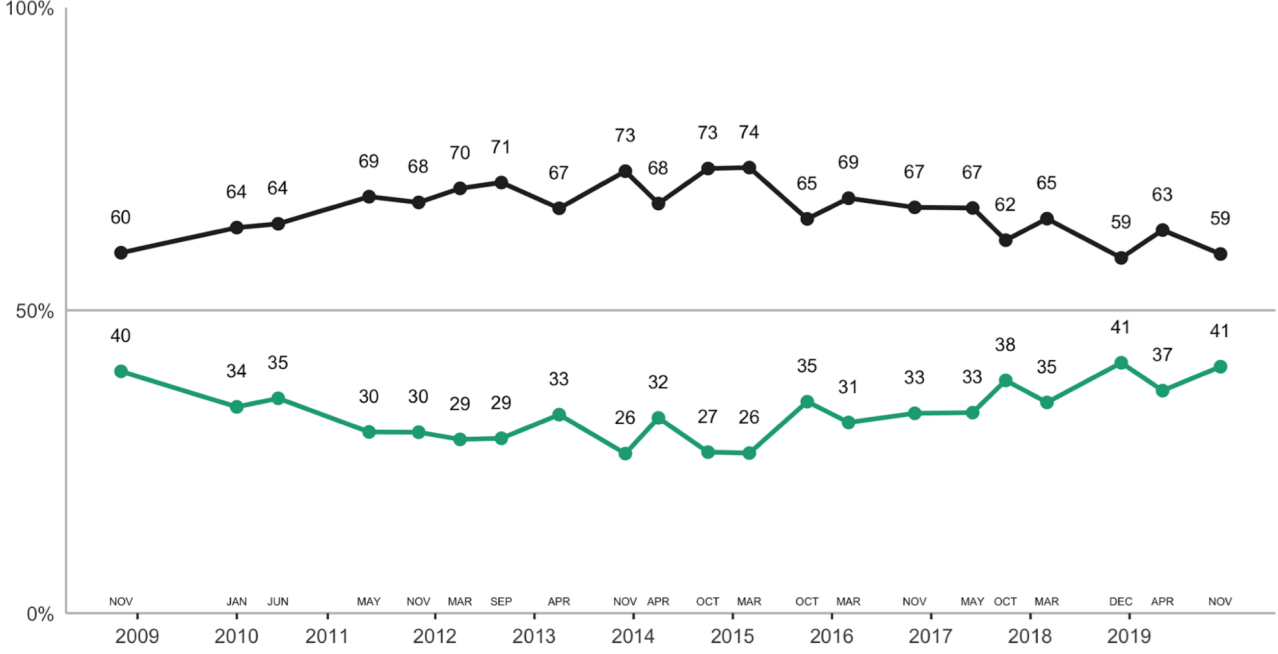


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# Insight: Spiral of silence

**Most Americans "rarely" or "never" discuss global warming with family and friends**

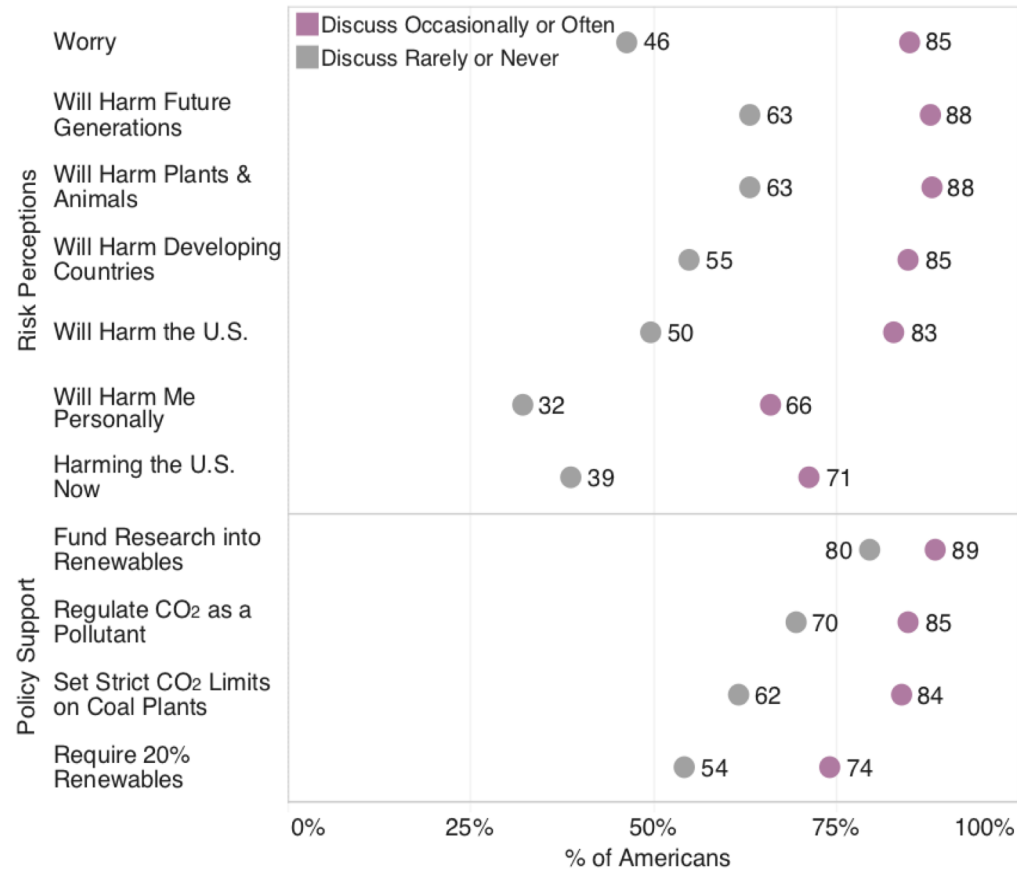
● Often/Occasionally (%)  
● Rarely/Never (%)



How often do you discuss global warming with your family and friends?  
November 2019



# Insight: Spiral of silence.



March 2016 – October 2017



**41% of Americans**  
**say they discuss global warming**  
**with family and friends.**



Action: Organize conversations.

# 33% of registered voters

say they would volunteer their time to an organization working on global warming.



Insight: 1 out of 3 would join a climate campaign.

**Only 12% of voters** say that they've urged an elected official to take action to reduce global warming within the past year.



## More Than Three In Four Registered Voters Have Never Been Asked to Contact Elected Officials About Global Warming

- % who “strongly” or “somewhat” agree -

(Unweighted base)	All Reg Voters (1,070)	Democrats			Ind (120)	Republicans		
		Total (459)	Lib (240)	Mod/ Con (219)		Total (442)	Lib/ Mod (127)	Con (313)
		%	%	%		%	%	%
Nobody has ever asked me to	78	78	70	86	70	78	83	77
It wouldn't make any difference	64	59	56	63	59	67	70	66
I am not an activist	62	52	42	64	61	72	71	73
I don't know which elected officials to contact	52	55	43	67	48	45	52	42
I wouldn't know what to say	51	53	42	64	49	44	51	42
I'm too busy	47	43	39	47	44	49	50	49
It's too much effort	43	38	29	47	33	46	45	47
I would feel uncomfortable	41	42	35	50	32	41	43	41
I don't think it's important	39	23	14	32	35	58	48	62
I don't need to because I'm already taking other actions	28	23	20	25	30	34	35	33
People will criticize or make fun of me	15	14	10	19	10	16	18	15
I might attract unwanted attention from immigration authorities	12	14	8	19	11	10	10	10

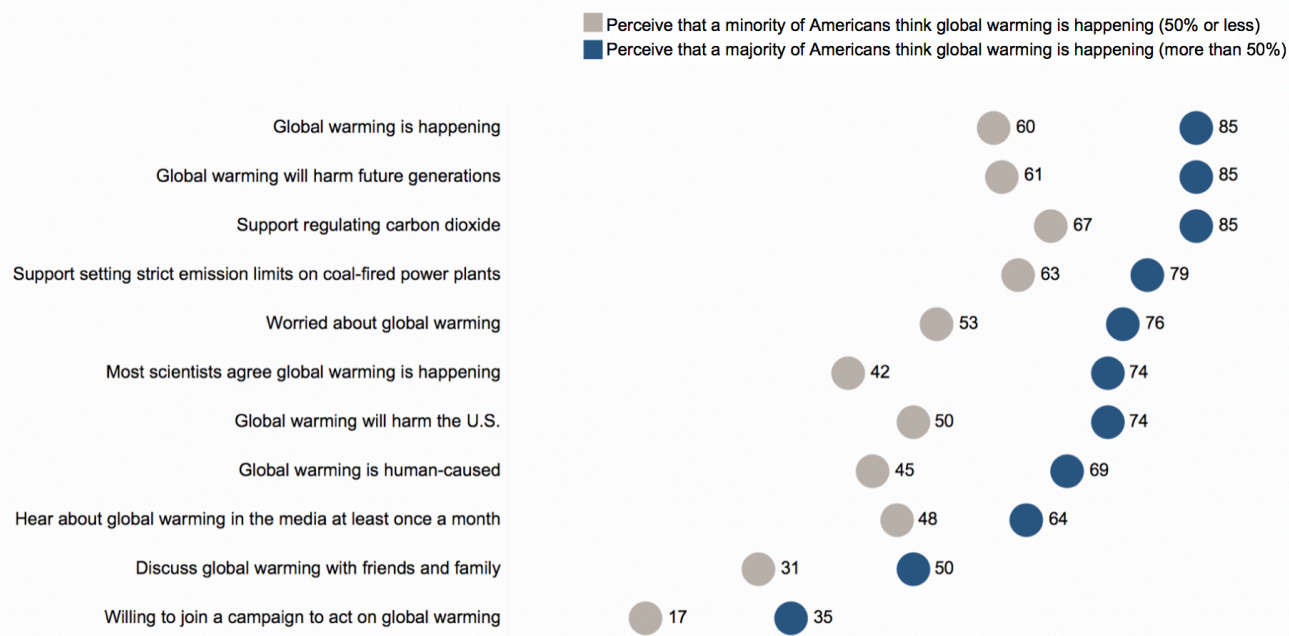
How strongly do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements regarding contacting elected officials about global warming?

May 2017. Base: Registered American Voters.



# Insight: The Power of Social Norms.

## Americans Who Perceive Greater Social Consensus are More Pro-Climate and Engaged than those who Perceive Less Consensus



To the best of your knowledge, what percentage of adults in the United States (18 years or older) think that global warming is happening? 0 – 100% with a “Don’t know” option

April, 2019. Base: U.S. adults who said 0-50% (n=510) or 51-100% (n=545). Estimates are rounded to the nearest whole percentage point.





# Action: Leverage Social Norms.



**THAT'S NEARLY 8 IN 10 ADULTS WHO SAY  
STUDENTS SHOULD LEARN ABOUT  
CLIMATE CHANGE AT SCHOOL.**

Screenshot

**66%** of English-language Latinos, and  
**50%** of non-Latinos in the U.S.  
are **Alarmed or**  
**Concerned about**  
**global warming.**

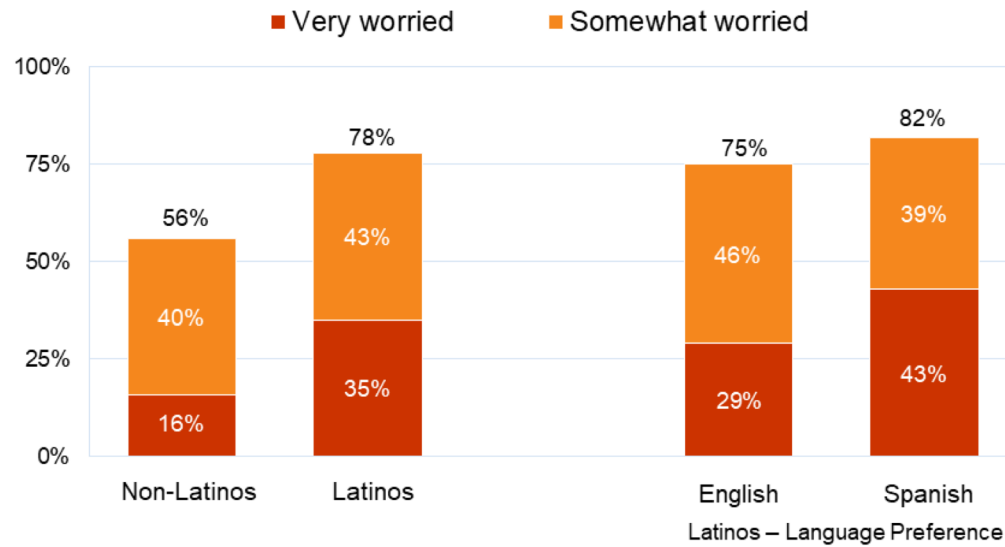


Insight: More Latinos are worried, and more are willing to join a campaign.

# Insight: More Latinos are worried.

## Three in Four Latinos Are Worried About Global Warming; One in Three Are “Very Worried”

- Eight in ten Spanish-language Latinos are worried about global warming -



How worried are you about global warming?

May/June 2017. Base: Non-Latinos 18+ (n=1,140); Latinos 18+ (n=2,054), English (n=1,256), Spanish (n=798)

Action: Invest in organizing with Latino communities.

**51%**

**of Latinos would participate in a campaign to convince elected officials to take action to reduce global warming.**



## Ten Insights

- Trend toward belief in global warming
- Increasingly worried, but there's hope.
- Distant problem
- Partisan polarization
- Agreement on clean energy
- Six Americas
- Spiral of silence
- 1 out of 3 would join a climate campaign
- Power of social norms
- More Latinos are worried

Insights  
contributed by

- Anthony Leiserowitz
- Jennifer Marlon
- Lisa Fernandez
- Seth Rosenthal
- Edward Maibach
- Eric Fine
- John Kotcher
- Parrish Bergquist
- Tony Sirna

Tools

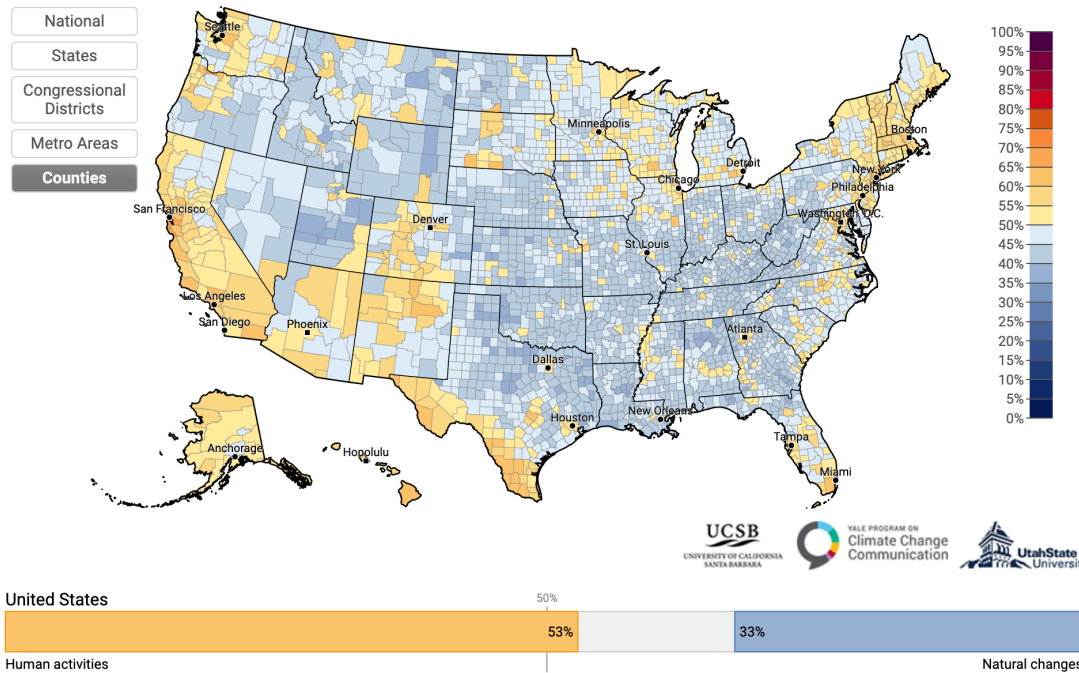
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# Yale Climate Opinion Maps

Estimated % of adults who think global warming is mostly caused by human activities (53%), 2019

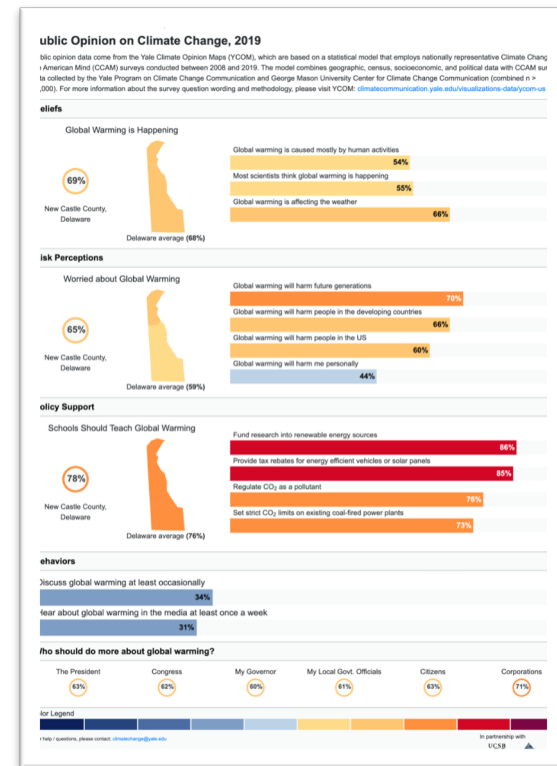
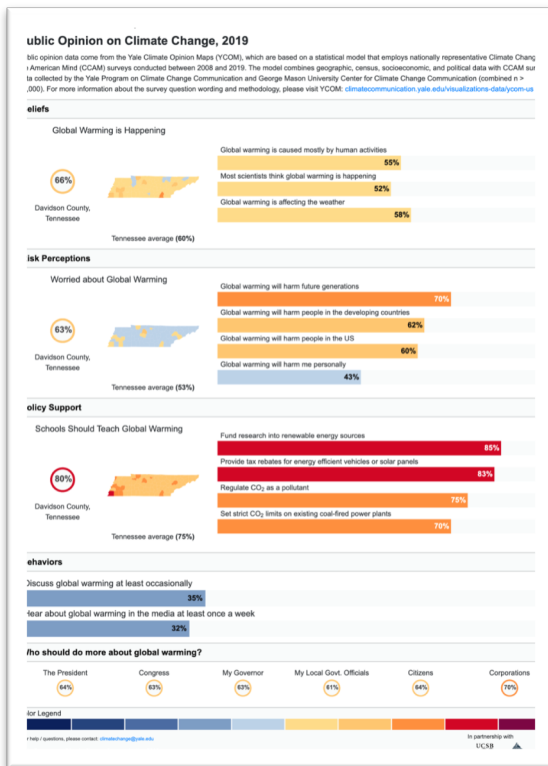
Select Question:  Absolute Value

Click on map to select geography, or:





# Yale Climate Opinion Factsheets Tool




# Six Americas Super Short Survey (SASSY!)

1. How important is the issue of global warming to you personally?
2. How worried are you about global warming?
3. How much do you think global warming will harm you personally?
4. How much do you think global warming will harm future generations of people?

Group Scoring About

Global Warming's Six Americas is an audience segmentation tool designed to help people better understand their own climate views as well as others. The original questionnaire was based on 36 items, but has now been reduced to just four questions in the Six Americas Super Short Survey (SASSY).



Take the Quiz!



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# Questions & Discussion

**Contact**

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[info@climateadvocacylab.org](http://info@climateadvocacylab.org)





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# Thank you!

**Feedback**

<https://forms.gle/cn22MpUUNf3sYCML9>

**Contact**

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[jkotcher@gmu.edu](mailto:jkotcher@gmu.edu)

[info@climateadvocacylab.org](mailto:info@climateadvocacylab.org)

