



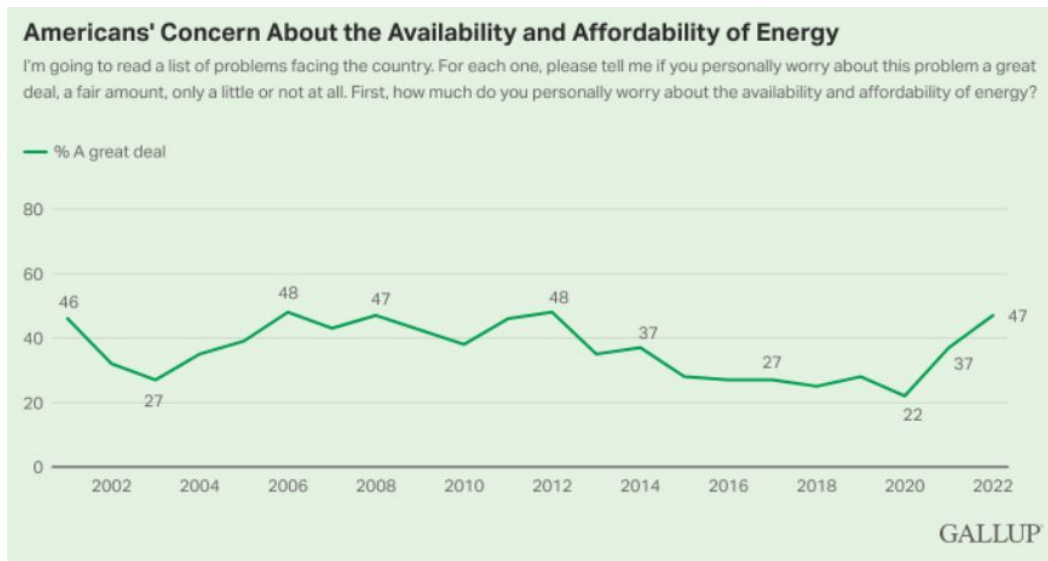
# **Public Opinion about the Energy Crisis: Historical & Political Context**

Prepared by the Environmental Polling Consortium



# Historical context

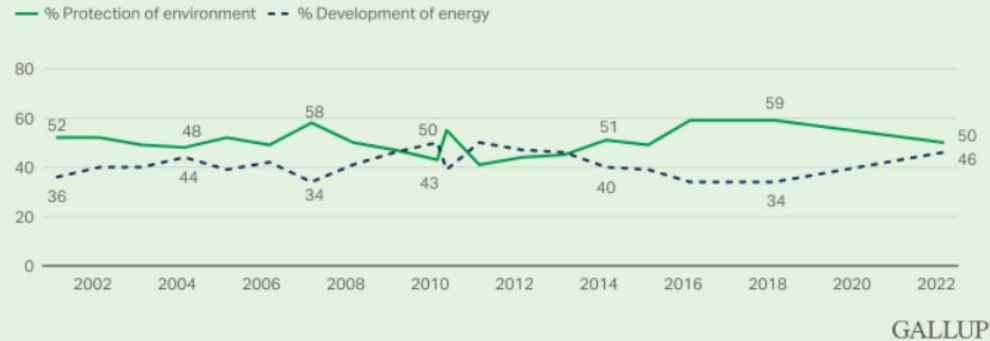
## Americans' concerns about the availability and affordability of energy are now on par with previous 21st century peaks



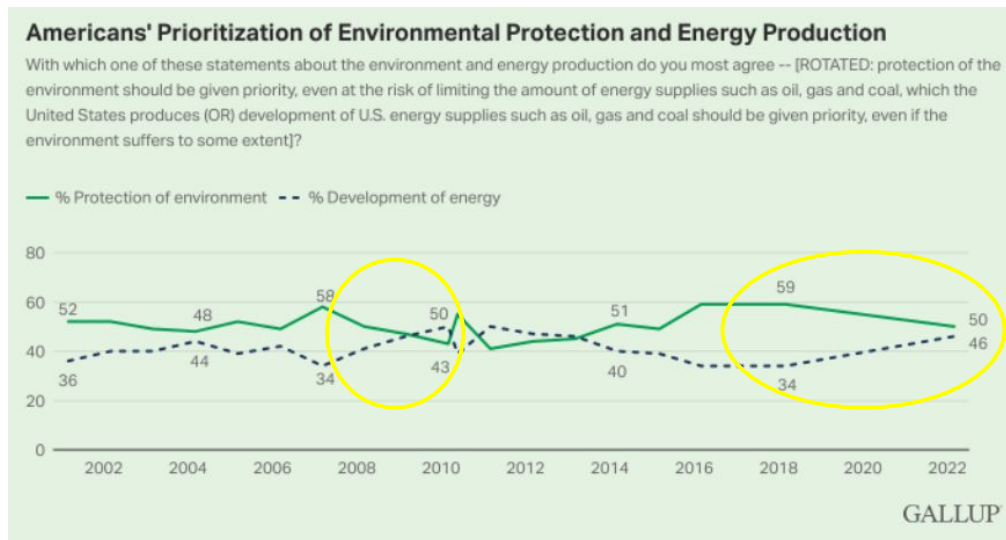
Americans still view environmental protection as (narrowly) more important than developing energy from fossil fuels, but the margin is tightening against us

### Americans' Prioritization of Environmental Protection and Energy Production

With which one of these statements about the environment and energy production do you most agree -- [ROTATED: protection of the environment should be given priority, even at the risk of limiting the amount of energy supplies such as oil, gas and coal, which the United States produces (OR) development of U.S. energy supplies such as oil, gas and coal should be given priority, even if the environment suffers to some extent]?



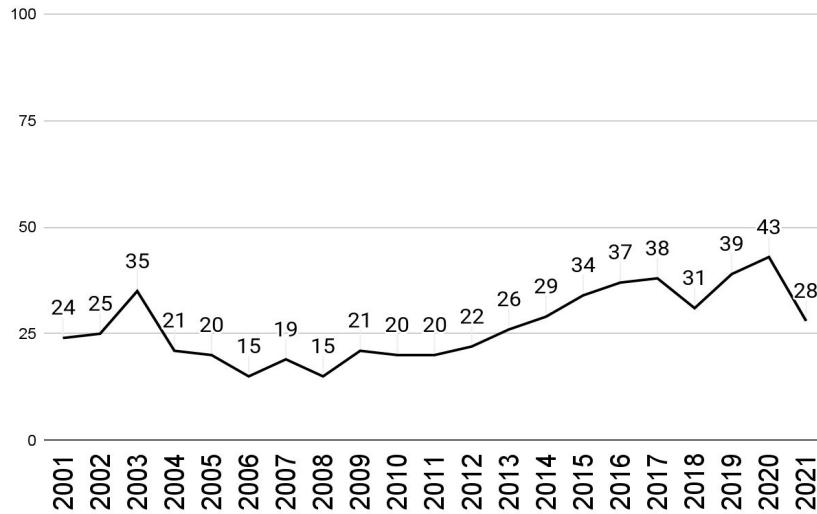
## The debate between environmental protection and fossil fuel development similarly shifted against us early in Obama's first term



	<i>Which is higher priority?</i>	
<b>Bush -&gt; Obama</b>	<b>Environmental protection</b>	<b>Fossil fuel development</b>
March 2008	50%	41%
March 2009	47%	46%
March 2010	43%	50%
<b>Trump -&gt; Biden</b>	<b>Environmental protection</b>	<b>Fossil fuel development</b>
March 2018	59%	34%
March 2022	50%	46%

**The oil and gas industry is consistently unpopular; while its image improved during the 2010s, it took a hit last year as gas prices rose**

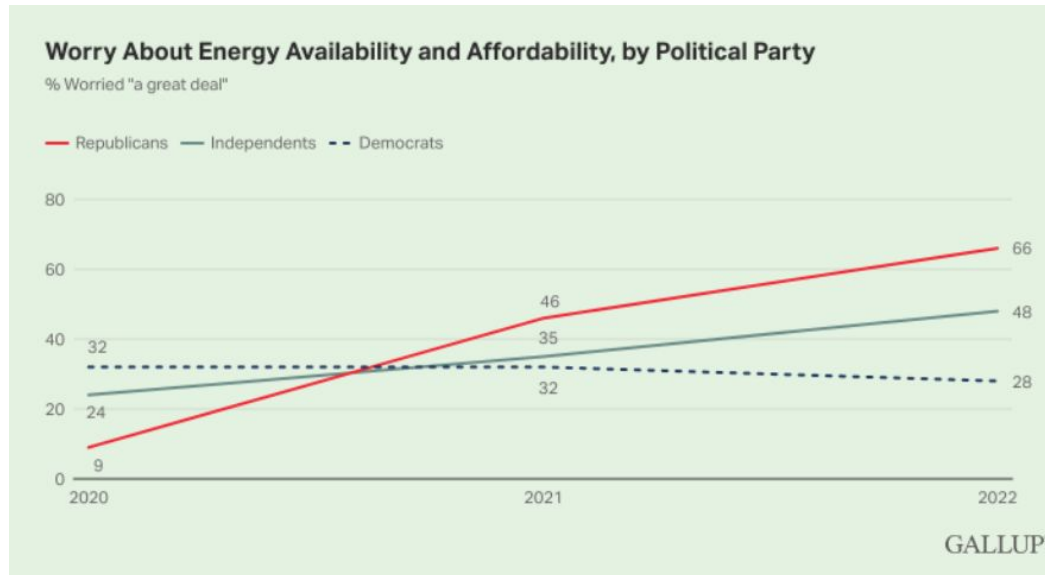
Positive ratings of the oil and gas industry (U.S. adults)



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# Partisan & political context

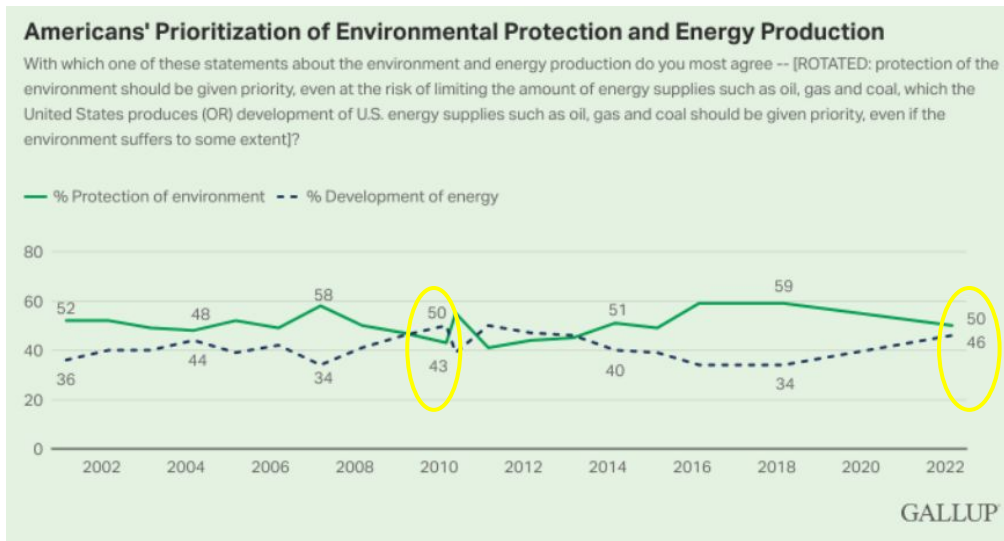
## Concerns about energy today are driven sharply by Republicans, whose level of alarm has risen since Biden took office



Source: [Gallup poll, conducted March 1st - March 18th, 2022.](#)



# Despite Biden's historically low approval ratings, the debate between the environment and fossil fuels hasn't turned against us to the same extent as it did under Obama



<b>March 2010</b>			<b>NET</b>
Obama Approval	<b>48%</b> Approve	<b>45%</b> Disapprove	<b>+3</b>
Environment vs. Fossil Fuels	<b>43%</b> Environment	<b>50%</b> Fossil Fuels	<b>-7</b>

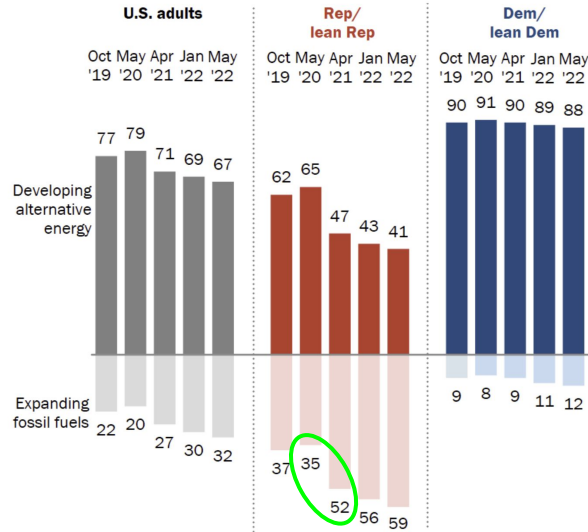
<b>March 2022</b>			<b>NET</b>
Biden Approval	<b>42%</b> Approve	<b>54%</b> Disapprove	<b>-12</b>
Environment vs. Fossil Fuels	<b>50%</b> Environment	<b>46%</b> Fossil Fuels	<b>+4</b>

Sources: [Gallup poll, conducted March 1st - March 18th, 2022](#), [Gallup presidential approval ratings \(Obama\)](#), [Gallup presidential approval ratings \(Biden\)](#)

**Republicans' shift back toward supporting fossil fuels goes back to the start of Biden's presidency; while the energy crisis may be exacerbating it, this trend began before the current spike in gas prices**

**Most Democrats prioritize developing alternative energy; about four-in-ten Republicans say the same**

*% of U.S. adults who say the more important priority for addressing America's energy supply should be ...*



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown.  
 Source: Survey conducted May 2-8, 2022.  
 "A Majority of Americans Favor Expanding Natural Gas Production To Export to Europe"

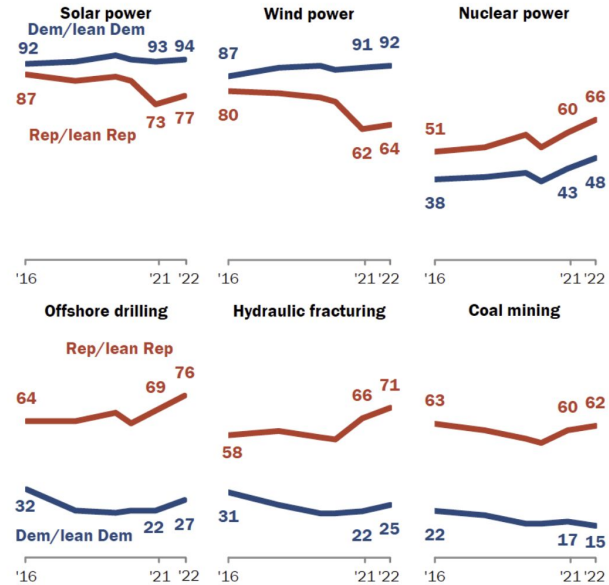
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Source: [Pew survey, conducted May 2nd - May 8th, 2022.](#)

Majorities of Republicans still support increasing wind and solar production, but they don't want it to happen at the expense of fossil fuels

### Republicans and Democrats continue to offer differing levels of support for energy production sources

% of U.S. adults who favor more ...



Note: Respondents who gave other responses or did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey conducted May 2-8, 2022.

"A Majority of Americans Favor Expanding Natural Gas Production To Export to Europe"

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Source: [Pew survey, conducted May 2nd - May 8th, 2022.](#)