



# American Climate Metrics Survey 2023

## *Guidance for the Climate Movement*

## Acknowledgments

This research and report are brought to you by ecoAmerica. ecoAmerica is moving society toward climate solutions by empowering trusted national health, faith, and civic institutions and their millions of stakeholders across America to visibly act and advocate.

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## Methodology

ecoAmerica designed and administered this survey, which was conducted online on July 10-17, 2023 using Survey Monkey Enterprise. The survey yielded a total of 1,196 complete adult responses and used the Census Bureau's American Community Survey to weigh the national general population and reflect the demographic composition of the US. The sample was drawn from an online panel and the respondents were screened to ensure that they were over the age of 18. The margin of error for the sample is +/-3%. In interpreting the survey results, it is important to note that all sample surveys are subject to possible sampling error. Thus, the results of a survey may differ from the results that would be obtained if the entire population was interviewed. The size of the sampling error depends upon both the total number of respondents in the survey and the percentage distribution of the responses to a particular question. For example, if 50% of the respondents in a sample of 1,196 respondents answered, "Yes" to a particular question, we can be 95% confident that the true percentage would fall within 3 points, or range from 47% to 53%.

## Suggested Citation

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This summer and fall, a series of wildfires burning through [Canada](#) and [Maui](#), [record-breaking heat](#), and [floods in the Northeast region](#) are stark reminders that our climate is changing rapidly, demanding swift attention and urgent action. The repercussions of inaction are not theoretical; they are unfolding before our eyes in the form of [extreme weather events](#) — heatwaves, heavy rainfall, severe storms, and drought-like conditions across different parts of the world. **Thus, action on climate solutions is time-sensitive.** It requires simultaneously reducing the pollution that is causing the climate to change and **strengthening preparedness to ensure a safe and more resilient world for current and future generations, especially the most vulnerable.**

ecoAmerica's latest American Climate Metrics Survey (ACMS) 2023 captures American climate awareness, attitudes, and behaviors to provide insights that steer the climate movement toward activating a broader diversity of Americans for climate solutions. This ACMS 2023 report delivers refreshingly good news on climate: there are *many* points of consensus to work from to scale engagement and activation (see p. 4).

The first point of consensus is that the majority of Americans (72%) report being personally concerned about climate change. However, there exists a notable gap in actual versus perceived concern about climate change, with many Americans falsely thinking that others around them are less concerned. This gap between perception and reality is especially evident across younger adults aged 18-24 and older Americans aged 65+. Nevertheless, regardless of this gap, strong concern about climate change exists across racially diverse American populations as well as across party lines.

ACMS 2023 reveals additional points of consensus, including that Americans show a strong inclination to move away from sources of energy that pollute our air, water and land. In fact, a high majority of Americans believe that clean air and water (89%) and clean energy (86%) are critical rights for all people. This belief is shared with strong consensus across party lines. The survey findings also reveal that nationally, 85% of Americans consider it their moral responsibility to create a safe and healthy climate for themselves and their children. Three-quarters (75%) of Americans surveyed agree that the government needs to protect people from the impacts of extreme weather and 65% agree to vote for leaders who will prioritize climate change solutions. Nearly seven in ten (69%) Americans say that mitigating climate change would improve people's health. Over half of Americans (53%) are switching to efficient appliances or lighting to conserve energy at home. Moreover, climate dialogue is happening — around half of the American population (48%) regularly discuss climate change with family and friends.

We still have time to forge a path toward a brighter, more just and resilient climate future. These findings highlight an opportunity to invite a broader diversity of Americans into relevant and empowering climate action.

# CLIMATE CONSENSUS

**89%** Agree that clean air and water are **critical rights** for all people.

**86%** Agree that **everyone has a right** to clean energy that does not pollute the air or water.

**85%** Agree that we have a **moral responsibility** to create a safe and healthy climate for ourselves and our children.

**75%** Agree that **the government needs to protect** people from the impacts of extreme weather.

**74%** Agree with the statement, "**I can** help reduce the pollution that is causing climate change".

**73%** Agree that **investing in solutions** to climate change will **benefit American communities** and make our country stronger.

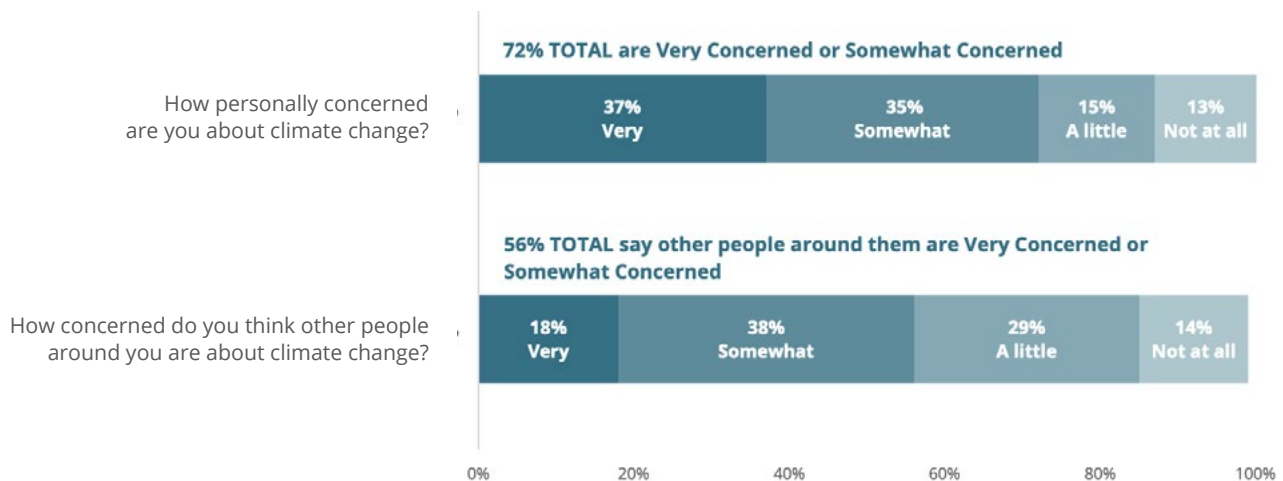
**72%** Are **personally concerned** about climate change.

## Americans Are Concerned About Climate, But Falsely Believe Others Are Not

The majority of Americans (72%) report being personally concerned about climate change, including 37% who are very concerned and 35% who are somewhat concerned. Another 15% exhibit little concern, contributing to a cumulative total of 87%. Only 13% of Americans report that they are not concerned at all about climate change.

Although there is a high level of concern amongst Americans, fewer believe that people around them share the same sentiment. Just over half of Americans (56%) believe that others around them are concerned about climate change. Only 18% say that others around them are very concerned when in reality twice as many Americans report this level of concern, reflecting a gap in perception versus reality, a phenomenon known as pluralistic ignorance\* which can lead to silence and inaction on solutions.

**The majority of Americans are concerned about climate change but fewer believe those around them are concerned.** Survey questions: “How personally concerned are you about climate change?” and “How concerned do you think other people around you are about climate change?” 1,196 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.



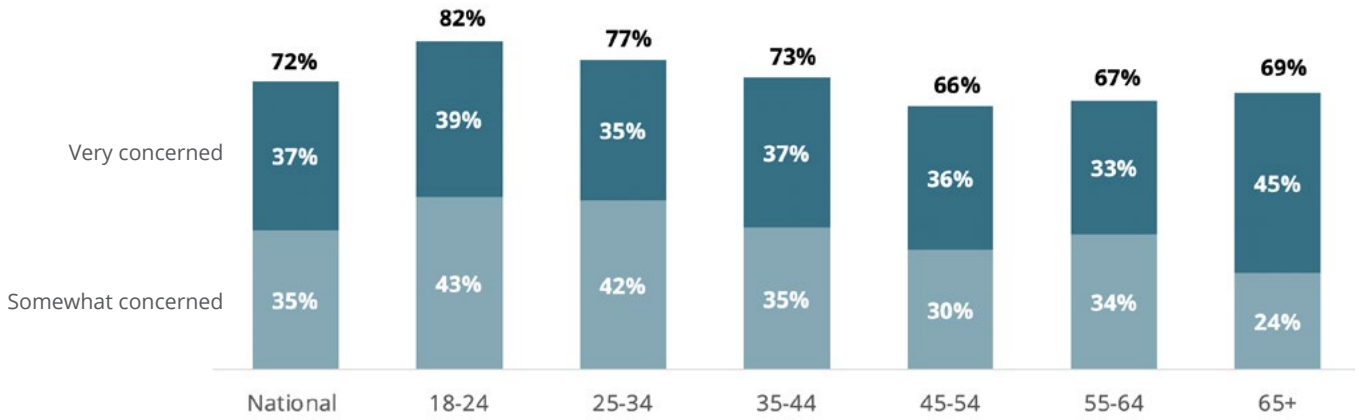
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The disparity between perception and reality with regard to climate concern is wider in certain age groups, with younger Americans between 18-24 years old exhibiting the most pronounced gap. Over four in five (82%) of Americans aged 18-24 express personal concern about climate change whereas only 58% believe the same level of concern is shared among people around them. Similarly, 45% of Americans aged 65+ say they are very concerned about climate change, whereas only 13% believe that others around them are very concerned.

Importantly, ecoAmerica’s survey finds that approximately more than one-third of Americans across all age groups are very concerned about climate change. This higher intensity concern may lead to action and support for solutions.

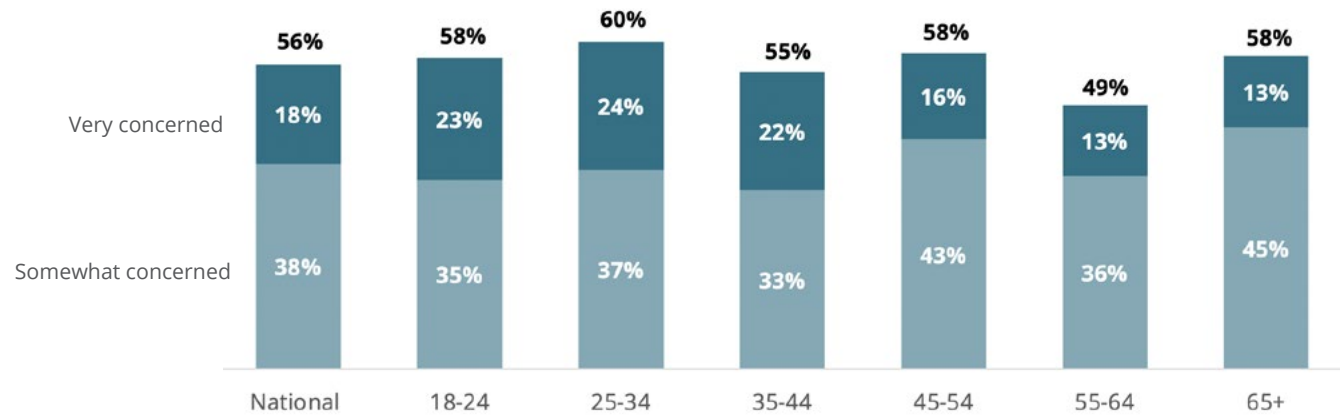
\*Pluralistic ignorance is the idea in which people’s beliefs about group consensus can differ from the actual opinions of the group members and inhibit the acknowledgment of a problem (American Psychological Association, 2020)

**Younger age groups in the United States voice concern for climate change.** Survey questions: "How personally concerned are you about climate change?" 1,196 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.



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**Older adults in the United States think few others are concerned about climate change.** Survey questions: "How concerned do you think others around you are you about climate change?" 1,196 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.

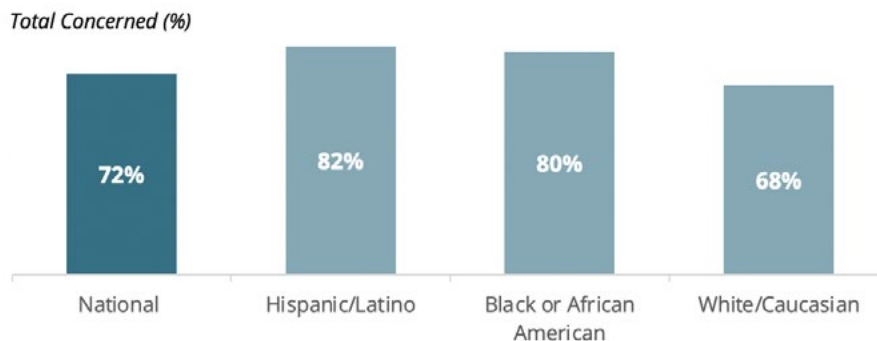


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Stronger concern about climate change is reported among Hispanic/Latino and Black or African American populations. ecoAmerica’s survey finds that 82% of Hispanic/Latino Americans and 80% of Black or African Americans express concern about climate change compared to 68% of White/Caucasian Americans. These findings may stem from lived experience — climate change [disproportionately impacts people of color](#).

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**Hispanic, Latino, and Black or African American adults in the US report climate change concern at a higher rate than White Americans.** Survey question: How personally concerned are you about climate change? 1,196 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.



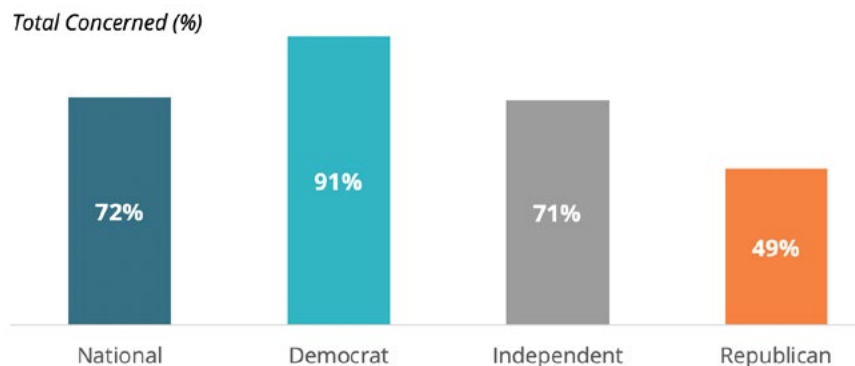
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Across party lines, 91% of Democrats report overall concern about climate change while 71% of Independents say the same. Roughly half of Republicans (49%) say that they are personally concerned about climate change.

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**More Democrats voice concern over climate change compared to other parties.** Survey question: How personally concerned are you about climate change? 1,196 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.

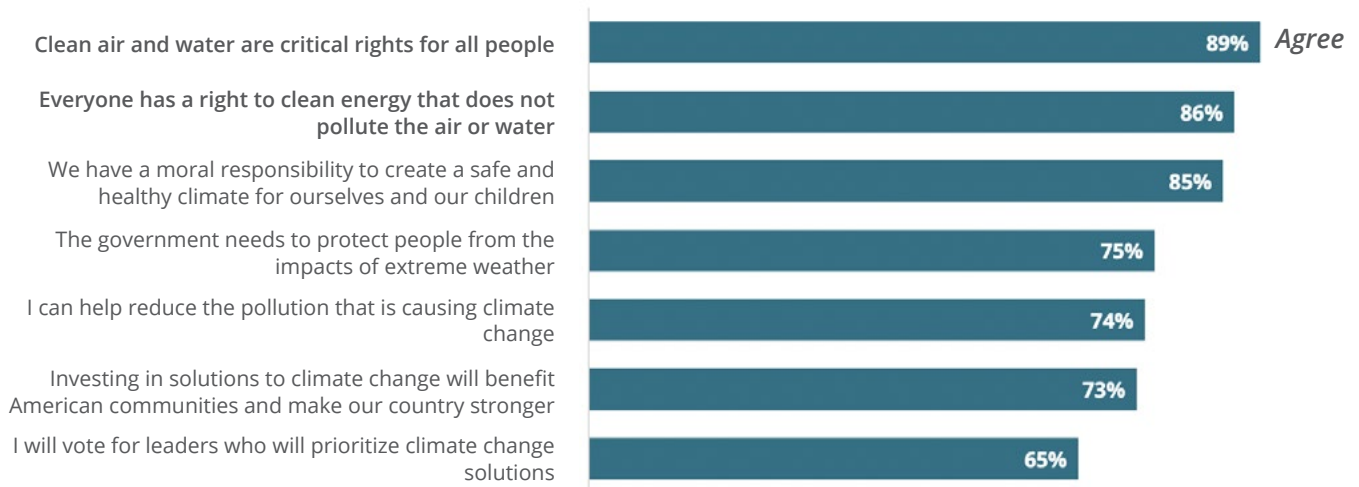


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## Americans Believe In Personal Rights to Clean Air, Water, and Energy, *For All*

The results of ACMS 2023 underscore the importance of personal rights to Americans. The survey reveals that the majority of Americans (89% and 86% respectively) believe that clean air and water are critical rights for all people and agree that everyone has a right to clean energy. Notably present in each of these findings are the words “for all” and “everyone,” offering promising pathways to invite a broader diversity of people into action on climate justice.

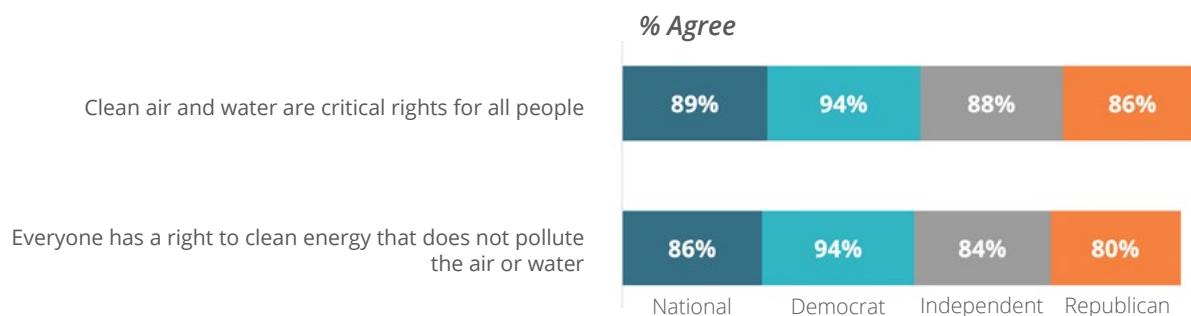
**Large majorities of Americans say we have rights to clean air, water, and energy.** Survey questions: Please indicate if you agree with each one of the following statements. 1,196 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.



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Consensus on the personal rights to clean air, water, and energy remains strong across party lines. 94% of Democrats, 88% of Independents, and 86% of Republicans believe that clean air and water are critical rights for all people. Similarly, 94% of Democrats, 84% of Independents, and 80% of Republicans agree that everyone has a right to clean energy that does not pollute air or water.

**The right to clean air, water, and energy is common ground across political affiliations** Survey questions: Please indicate if you agree with each of the following statements. 1,196 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.



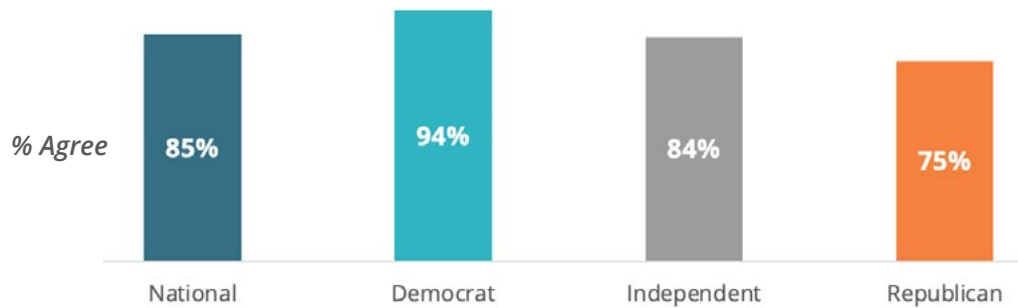
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## Feeling a Moral Responsibility to Create a Safe and Healthy Climate

A majority of Americans (85%) consider it to be their moral responsibility to create a safe and healthy climate for themselves and their children. Political division on this topic is limited, with 94% of Democrats, 84% of Independents, and 75% of Republicans sharing the same sentiment. More than 85% across all ages above 25 agree with the moral responsibility to create a safe and healthy climate.

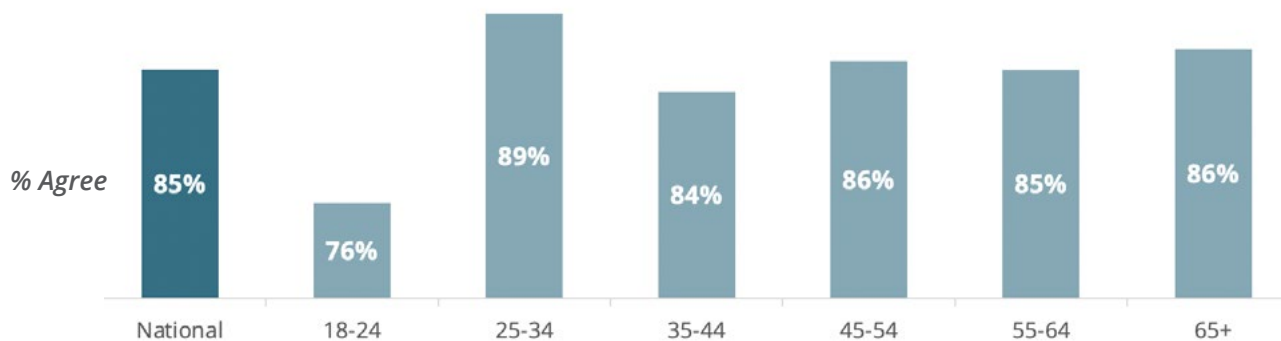
**Across the aisle, Americans agree we have a moral responsibility to create a safe and healthy climate.** Survey question: Please indicate if you agree with each of the following statements. Showing responses for “We have a moral responsibility to create a safe and healthy climate for ourselves and our children.” 1,196 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.



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More than 85% across all ages above 25 agree with the moral responsibility to create a safe and healthy climate.

**Across the age groups, Americans agree we have a moral responsibility to create a safe and healthy climate.** Survey questions: Please indicate if you agree with each of the following statements. Showing responses for “We have a moral responsibility to create a safe and healthy climate for ourselves and our children.” 1,196 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.

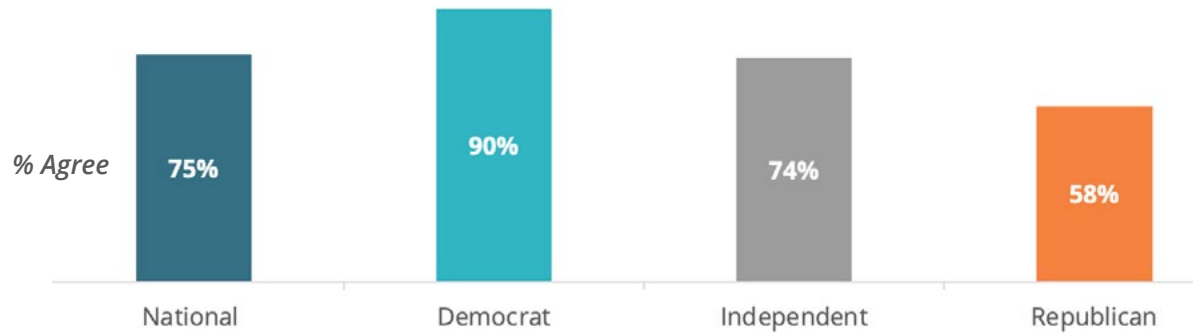


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## The Government's Responsibility to Protect Americans

In addition to personal responsibility, most Americans agree on a key role of the government with regards to climate impacts. Three quarters of Americans (75%) believe that the government needs to protect people from the impacts of extreme weather. This includes a high majority of Democrats (90%) and Independents (74%), and over half of Republicans (58%).

**Most Americans agree that the government needs to protect people from the impacts of extreme weather.** Survey questions: Please indicate if you agree with each of the following statements. Showing results for “The government needs to protect people from the impacts of extreme weather.” 1,196 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.



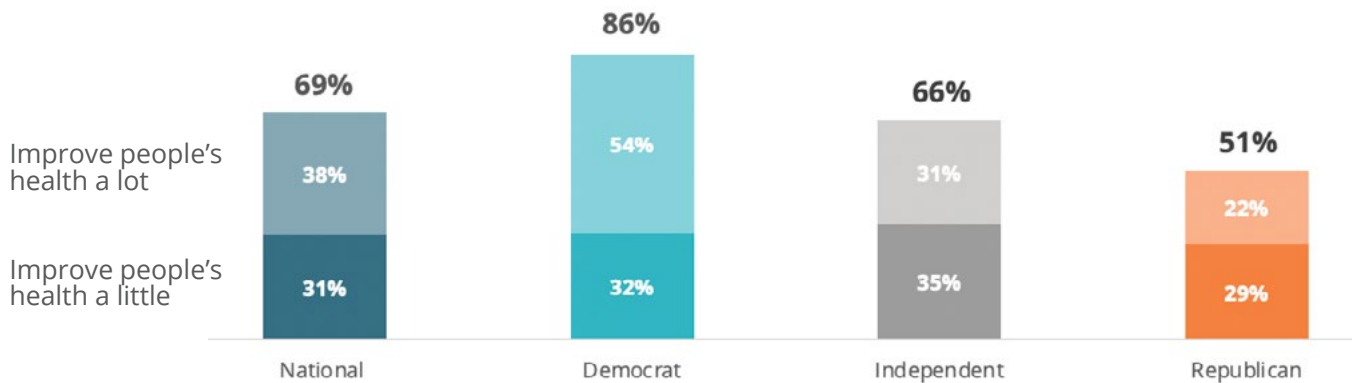
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## Recognizing the Benefits of Climate Change Action for Health and Our Communities

ACMS 2023 reveals that 69% of Americans understand that taking steps to deal with climate change would improve people’s health, including 38% who believe it would improve people’s health a lot and 31% who believe it would improve people’s health a little. A vast majority of Democrats (86%) believe that if the United States took steps to deal with climate change, it would improve people’s health while 66% of Independents believe the same. Just over half of Republican Americans (51%) also believe this.

**At a higher rate, Democrats say that addressing climate change will improve people’s health.**

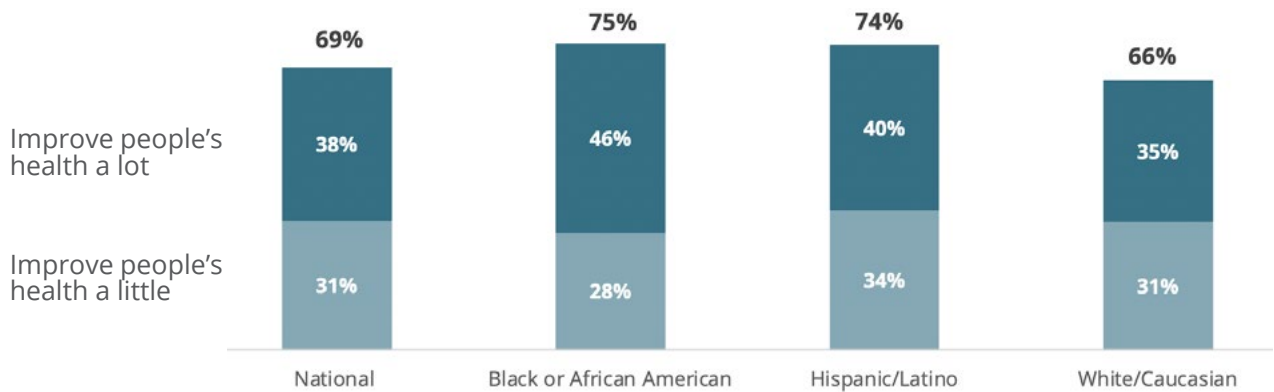
Survey questions: If the United States took steps to deal with climate change, how would it affect people’s health?. 1,196 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.



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Moreover, the survey reveals that 75% of Black or African American respondents and 74% of Hispanic/Latino American respondents believe that government action to deal with climate change would improve people's health versus 66% of White/Caucasian respondents who believe the same. [Research](#) shows that there is a strong correlation between climate injustice as a consequence of climate change and deepening racial disparity, especially across a wide spectrum of health outcomes. Therefore, it supports ecoAmerica's findings that show a greater proportion of American people of color calling for the government to take climate action.

**At a higher rate, people of color in the United States say that addressing climate change will improve people's health.** Survey questions: If the United States took steps to deal with climate change, how would it affect people's health? 1,196 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.



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## Climate Solutions Benefit Communities

A majority of Americans (73%) agree that investing in solutions to climate change will benefit American communities and make their country stronger. About one in three Americans (33%) say they somewhat agree with that statement and four in ten Americans said they strongly agree.

**Americans say investing in solutions will make the country stronger.** Survey questions: Please indicate if you agree with each of the following statements. Showing responses for "investing in solutions to climate change will benefit American communities and make our country stronger." 1,196 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.

**73% of total agree**

Investing in solutions to climate change will benefit American communities and make our country stronger

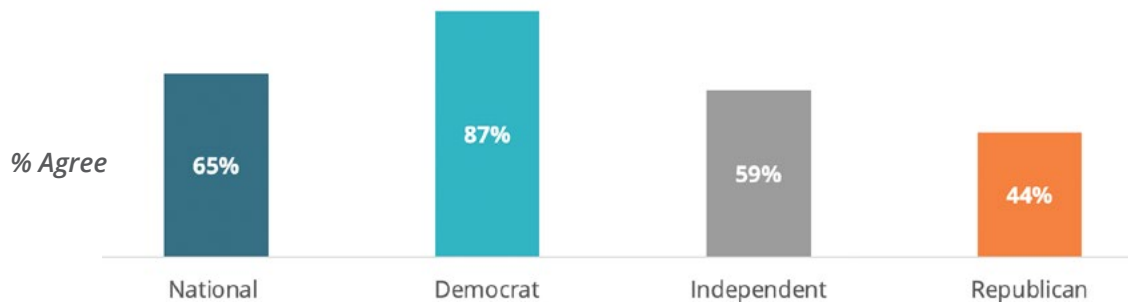


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## Nearly Two-Thirds of Americans Will Vote for Leaders Who Prioritize Climate Change Solutions

ACMS 2023 identifies an opportunity to cultivate robust bipartisan support for climate action. Nationally, 65% of Americans say that they will vote for leaders who will prioritize climate change solutions. Comparing across party lines, 87% of Democrats reported this intent, in addition to 59% of Independents. While the percentage is significantly lower, the fact that 44% of Republicans share a similar sentiment shows promise.

**Most Americans say they will vote for leaders who will prioritize climate action.** Survey questions: Please indicate if you agree with each of the following statements. Showing results for "I will vote for leaders who will prioritize climate change solutions." 1,196 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.



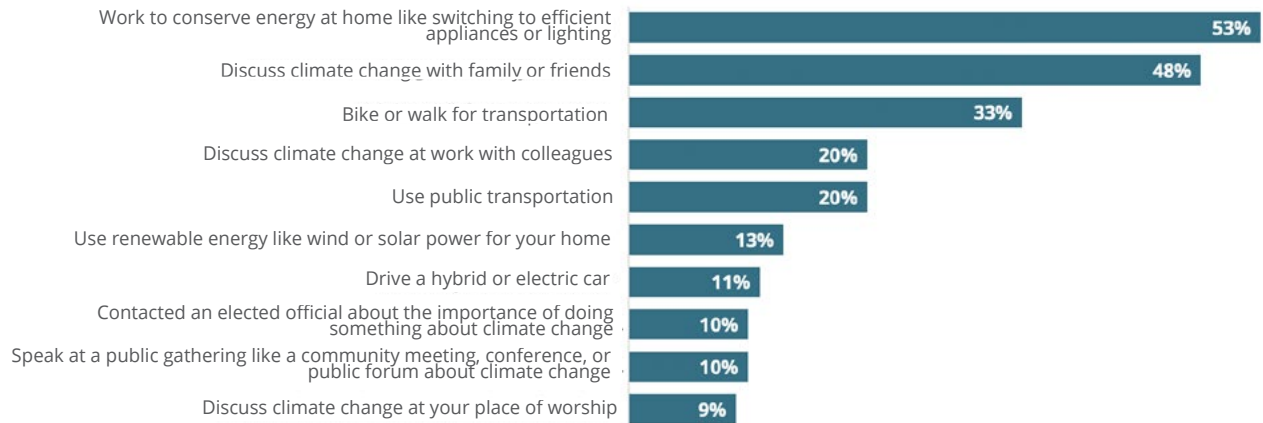
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## Personal Hope and Action on Climate Solutions

Overall, the majority of Americans (74%) are hopeful that they can help reduce pollution that is causing our climate to change (see p. 8). And, many are taking steps in their daily lives to be part of the solutions. These results indicate that with the necessary information, communication, guidance, and support, Americans are ready to elevate their action and advocacy for climate solutions.

Almost half (48%) of Americans feel comfortable regularly discussing climate change with family and/or friends. Fewer Americans discuss climate change at work with colleagues (20%) or at their place of worship (9%). Only 10% of Americans regularly speak at public gatherings or forums on the topic. Knowing that most Americans are concerned and want action on the issue, as noted above, climate advocacy groups should interpret these findings as an opportunity to broaden inclusion, make climate action more accessible and personally relevant, and thereby foster growth of the climate movement.

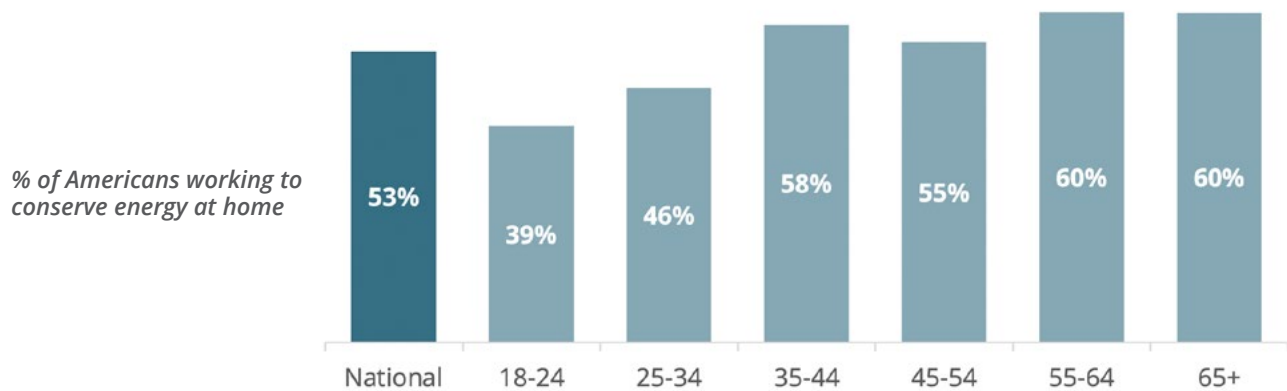
**Americans on action to address climate change.** Survey questions: Please indicate which of the following actions you do regularly. 1,196 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.



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Over half of Americans (53%) are switching to efficient appliances or lighting to conserve energy at home. Across age, 60% of older Americans aged 55 and above report doing this action regularly while a lower 39% of Americans aged 18-24 report doing the same. This difference presents an opportunity to engage American youth in climate solutions and a path to climate advocacy. Additional findings pointing towards pluralistic ignorance in young adults further reiterates the need to engage youth in climate action (see p. 2).

**Over half of Americans work to conserve energy at home.** Survey questions: Please indicate which of the following actions you do regularly. 1,196 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.



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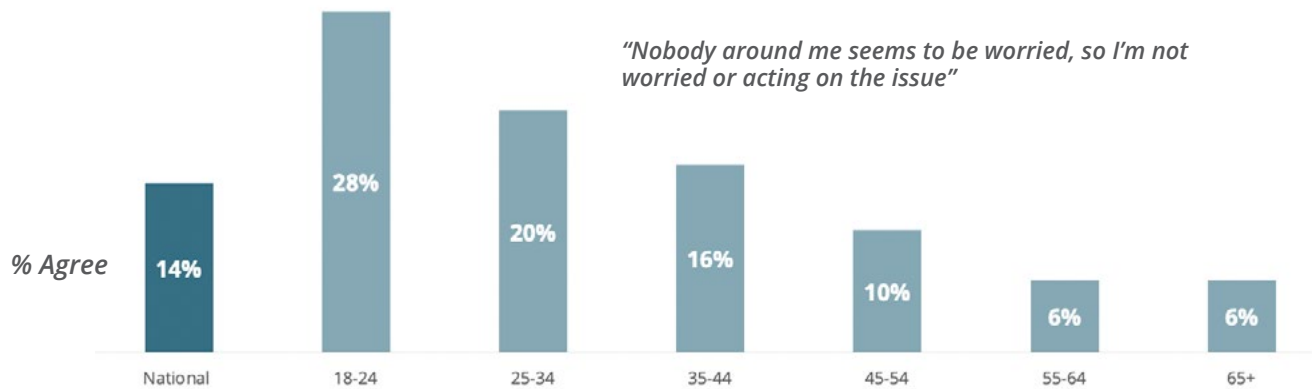
Other actions that Americans report engaging in include biking or walking for transportation (33%), using public transportation (20%), using renewable energy like wind or solar power for home (13%), and driving a hybrid or electric car (11%).

Overall these findings show that while Americans feel hopeful about their ability to reduce the pollution that causes our climate to change, there is advocacy, policy and technical work to do to ensure that all people can access climate solutions equitably, from both physical and financial perspectives.

## What Might Be Getting in the Way of Climate Action

Only 14% of Americans believe that nobody around them seems to be worried about climate change. Even fewer (6%) older Americans aged 55 and above believe the same. However, a greater proportion of younger adults (28% of Americans aged 18-24 and 20% of Americans aged 25-34) say that since nobody around them seems to be worried about climate change, they are not worried about it, and it keeps them from acting on climate change. This pluralistic ignorance necessitates engaging with American youth and presents an opportunity to fill the gap between perception and reality through potent climate advocacy and urgent climate action.

**More young adults say they are not acting on climate because people around them don't seem worried.** Survey question: What keeps you from acting on climate change? 1,196 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.



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Ongoing climate-related events continue to remind us of the urgency for solutions. These ACMS 2023 survey results offer hope, showing 72% of Americans are concerned about climate change — this shared concern spans demographics. The survey underscores consensus (89%) for clean air, water, and energy rights, cutting across political lines. Moreover, 85% feel morally responsible for a healthy climate, supporting government action to protect people in the United States against extreme weather. By leveraging these shared values and insights, we can pave the way for a brighter tomorrow that upholds the needs of current and future generations, especially those made most vulnerable to climate change impacts. The time to act is now.

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*everyone, every day*

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