

Americans Expect U.S. EPA To Ensure a Safe and Healthy Environment and Will Support Climate Solutions that Protect Health and Children

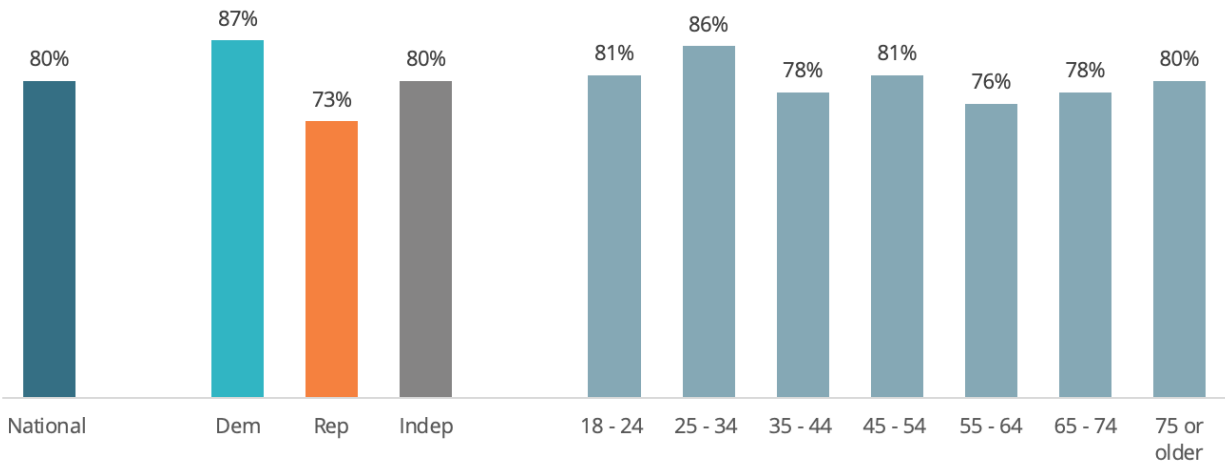
At a time when the role of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) is under review by the Supreme Court, ecoAmerica’s latest American Climate Perspectives Survey reveals widespread bipartisan support for the U.S. EPA’s role in ensuring a safe and healthy environment for all Americans. The survey also shows that the majority of Americans are concerned about climate change, including more than people may think. Top reasons for supporting climate action include safeguarding future generations (which was particularly activating for older Americans), protecting personal and public health, and ensuring everyone is safe.

Majorities of Americans Expect the EPA To Ensure a Safe and Healthy Environment

While national rhetoric might lead people to think otherwise, ecoAmerica finds that 80% of Americans nationwide expect the United States Environmental Protection Agency to ensure that the environment Americans live in is safe for our health. This support holds across political affiliation, with 87% of Democrats, 73% of Republicans, and 80% of Independents agreeing. Similarly, a strong majority (>75%) across all age groups agree that the EPA is responsible for a safe and healthy environment for all Americans.

Majorities of Americans Expect the EPA to ensure that our environment is safe for our health.

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statement. “I expect the United States Environmental Protection Agency to ensure that the environment Americans live in is safe for our health.” Showing total for “Strongly agree” and “Somewhat agree”. 1,006 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.



This chart shows that nationally, 80% of Americans say they “strongly” or “somewhat” agree that the United States Environmental Protection Agency must ensure that the environment Americans live in is safe for our health.

87% of Democrats, 73% of Republicans, and 80% of Independents say they “strongly” or “somewhat” agree that the United States Environmental Protection Agency must ensure that the environment Americans live in is safe for our health.

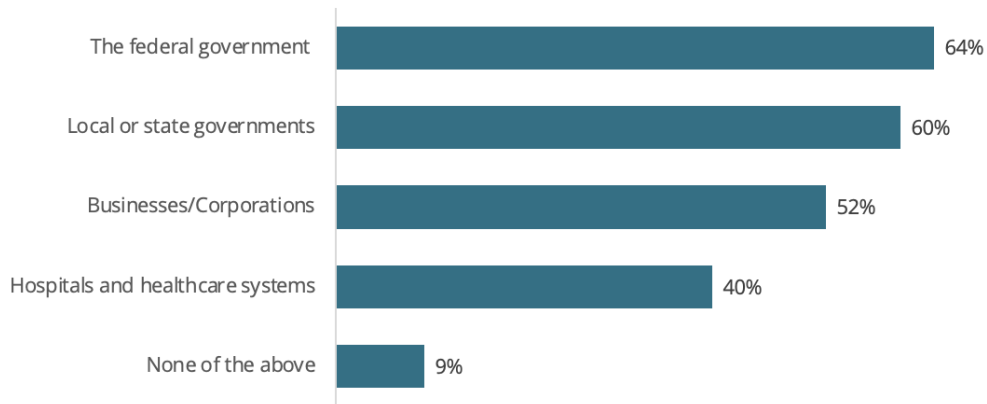
81% of Americans aged 18-24, 86% aged 25-34, 78% aged 35-44, 81% aged 45-54, 76% aged 55-64, 78% aged 65-74, and 80% 75 years or older say they “strongly” or “somewhat” agree that the United States Environmental Protection Agency must ensure that the environment Americans live in is safe for our health.

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Americans also Believe Government is Responsible for Ensuring a Safe and Healthy Environment

In addition to the role of the EPA, the survey found that most Americans believe it is the responsibility of federal and local or state governments to ensure a safe and healthy environment. 64% of Americans believe that the federal government and 60% believe that local or state governments should be responsible.

Majority of Americans Believe that Federal and State Governments Should Be Responsible for Ensuring our Environment is Safe and Healthy. Survey question: Who else do you think should be responsible for ensuring that Americans have a safe and healthy environment? 1,006 national respondents. Showing total agree. +/- 3% margin of error.



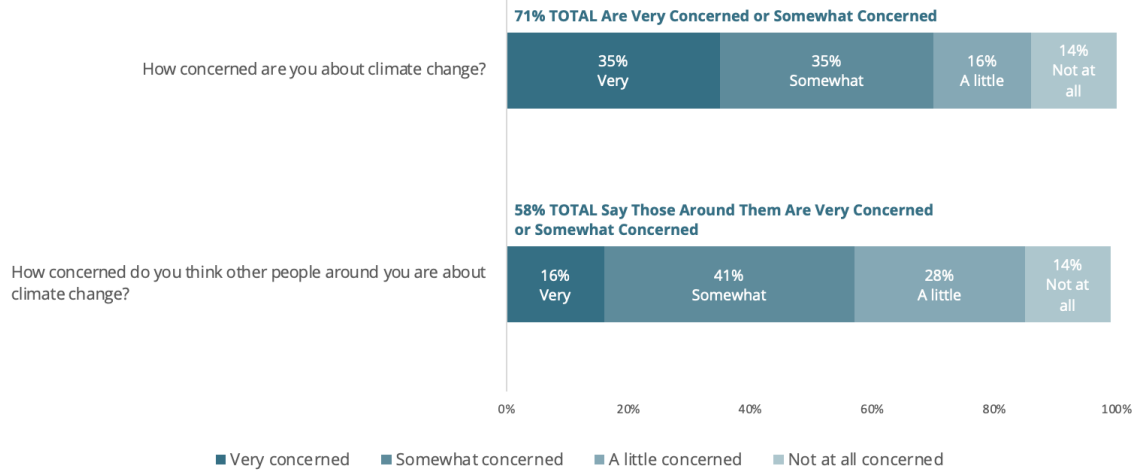
This chart shows that nationally, 64% of Americans think that the federal government should be responsible for ensuring that Americans have a safe and healthy environment. 60% think that the local or state governments should be responsible for ensuring that Americans have a safe and healthy environment. 52% think that businesses/corporations, and 40% think that hospitals and healthcare systems should be responsible for ensuring that Americans have a safe and healthy environment. 9% of Americans do not think any of the listed groups are responsible for ensuring that Americans have a safe and healthy environment.

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A Majority of Americans Are Concerned about Climate: More Than You Might Think

The majority of Americans (71%) report being concerned about climate change, including over 35% who are very concerned and 35% who are somewhat concerned. Another 16% are “a little” concerned, bringing the total to well over 85%. Only 14% report that they are not concerned about climate change. Although there is a high level of climate concern, fewer Americans believe others around them feel the same. Only 16% say that others around them are “very” concerned, for example, when, in reality, more than twice this many report being so. This gap in perceived versus actual climate concern (a phenomenon called pluralistic ignorance) can lead to silence and inaction on climate because people are hesitant to step outside perceived social norms to act.

Perception vs. Reality: Twice as Many Americans Are Very Concerned About Climate Change in Reality. Survey questions: 1) How concerned are you about climate change? 2) How concerned do you think other people around you are about climate change? 1,006 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.



This chart shows that nationally, 71% of Americans are “very” or “somewhat” concerned about climate change, but only 58% think that others around them are very or somewhat concerned about climate change.

35% of Americans say they are “very” concerned, 35% say they are “somewhat” concerned, 16% say they are “a little” concerned, and 14% say they are “not at all” concerned.

16% say they think others around them are “very” concerned, 41% say they think others around them are “somewhat” concerned, 28% say they think others around them are “a little” concerned, and 14% say they think others around them are “not at all” concerned.

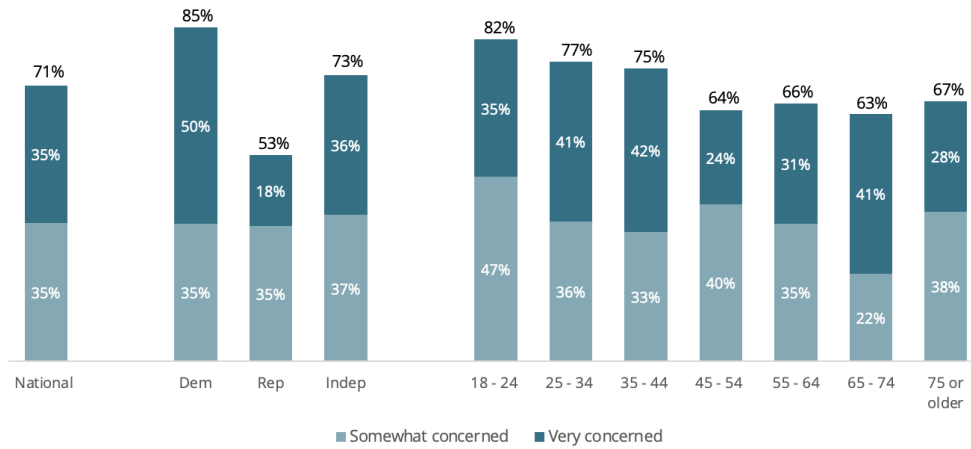
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Climate Concern Varies Across Parties and Generations

A high majority of Democrats (85%) report being concerned about climate change, with half of them being very concerned. 73% of Independents report overall concern about climate change, with over a third of them being very concerned. 53% of Republicans report being concerned about climate change. While there is an over 30-point difference between Republicans and Democrats, it is notable that the level is over half and that nearly 1 in 5 Republicans report being “very” concerned about climate change.

Climate concern varies across age groups. Younger demographics report higher concern compared to older groups, with Americans between 18 and 24 years old reporting the highest (82%) level of concern. Despite this cross-generational variation in concern, a majority (>60%) in each age group report being concerned about climate change.

More than half of Americans across party lines and age groups are concerned about climate change. Survey question: How concerned are you about climate change? 1,006 national respondents. +/- 3% margin of error.



This chart shows that nationally, 71% of Americans are concerned about climate change, with 35% “very” concerned and 35% “somewhat” concerned about climate change.

85% of Democrats are concerned about climate change, with 50% “very” concerned and 35% “somewhat” concerned.
 53% of Republicans are concerned about climate change, with 18% “very” concerned and 35% “somewhat” concerned.
 73% of Independents are concerned about climate change, with 36% “very” concerned and 37% “somewhat” concerned.
 82% aged 18-24 are concerned about climate change, with 35% “very” concerned and 47% “somewhat” concerned.
 77% aged 25-34 are concerned about climate change, with 41% “very” concerned and 36% “somewhat” concerned.
 75% aged 35-44 are concerned about climate change, with 42% “very” concerned and 33% “somewhat” concerned.
 64% aged 45-54 are concerned about climate change, with 24% “very” concerned and 40% “somewhat” concerned.
 66% aged 55-64 are concerned about climate change, with 31% “very” concerned and 35% “somewhat” concerned.
 63% aged 65-74 are concerned about climate change, with 41% “very” concerned and 22% “somewhat” concerned.
 67% aged 75 or older are concerned about climate change, with 28% “very” concerned and 38% “somewhat” concerned.

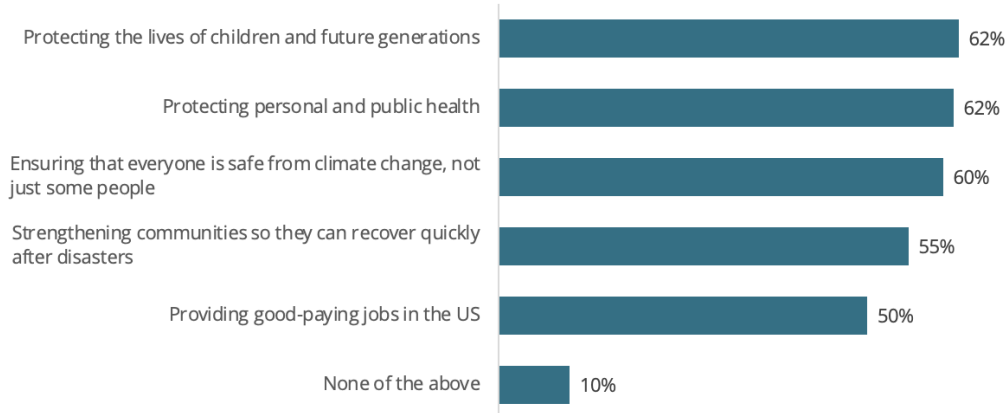
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Future Generations, Health, and Safety Are Top Reasons for Supporting Climate Solutions

ecoAmerica’s survey finds that most Americans (62%) would support climate solutions to protect the lives of children and future generations. Similarly, 62% would favor climate solutions to protect personal and public health. Moreover, ensuring that everyone is safe from climate change, not just some people, was a reason selected by 60% of respondents, signaling a path forward for justice and equity. Jobs, a topic often cited as the perceived top rationale for action on climate, was selected by the least number of respondents (50%).

Majority of Americans Would Support Climate Solutions to Protect Future Generations and Public Health.

Would you support climate solutions if they benefitted any of the following? 1,006 national respondents. Showing total agree +/- 3% margin of error.



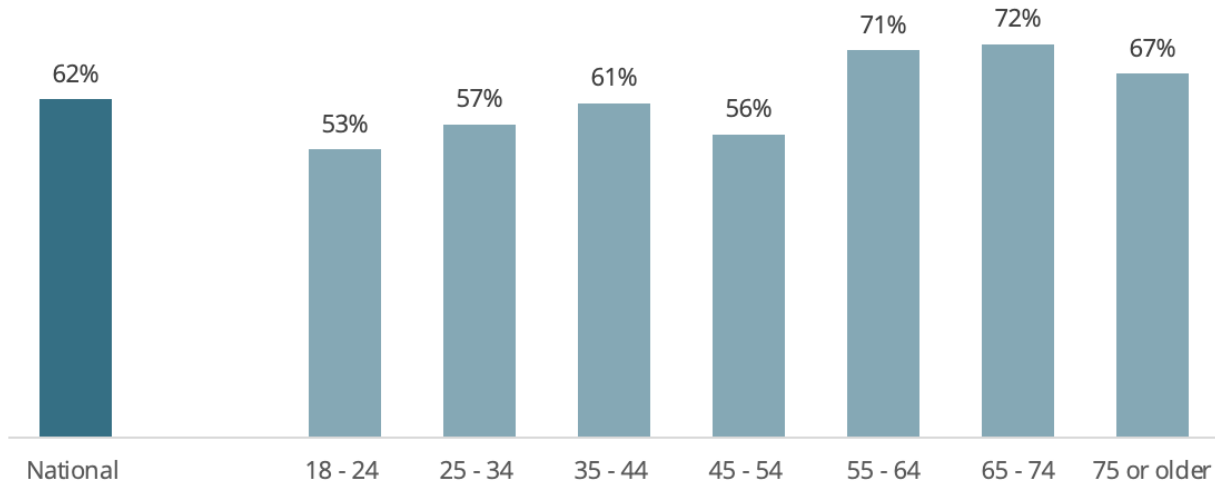
This chart shows that nationally, 62% of Americans would support climate solutions if they protect the lives of children and future generations. 62% would support climate solutions if they protect personal and public health. 60% would support climate solutions if they ensure that everyone is safe from climate change, not just some people. 55% would support climate solutions if they strengthen communities so they can recover quickly after disasters. 50% would support climate solutions if they provide good-paying jobs in the U.S. 10% of Americans would not support climate solutions for any of the listed reasons.

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Protection of Children and Future Generations is Strongest Motivation for Older Americans

Despite holding lower climate concerns compared to younger age groups, older Americans show the strongest support for climate solutions when given the rationale to protect children and future generations. 71% of Americans aged 55-64, 72% aged 65-74, and 67% aged 75 or older say they would support climate solutions if they protect the lives of children and future generations.

Majority of Americans Aged 55 and Older Support Climate Solutions to Protect Lives of Children and Future Generations. Would you support climate solutions if they benefitted any of the following? 1,006 national respondents. Showing total agree +/- 3% margin of error.



This chart shows that nationally, 62% of Americans would support climate solutions if they protect the lives of children and future generations. 53% of Americans aged 18-24, 57% aged 25-34, 61% aged 35-44, 56% aged 45-54, 71% aged 55-64, 72% aged 65-74, 67% aged 75 or older would support climate solutions if they protect the lives of children and future generations.

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Our Climate of Opportunity: Closing Gaps, Building Solutions

ecoAmerica’s American Climate Perspectives Survey underscores resounding support across party lines and generations to address climate change and protect the environment. With widespread support for the U.S. EPA and a clear recognition of government responsibility, the report reveals a solid foundation for implementing robust climate solutions. The findings point to the opportunity to move past partisan rhetoric to close the perception gap about climate concern and emphasize the benefits of intergenerational climate action for children, future generations, and personal and public health.

Full data is available in the accompanying [toplines](#).

Methodology

ecoAmerica designed and administered this survey, which was conducted online on February 26-27, 2024, using Survey Monkey. The survey yielded a total of 1,006 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 errors. Thus, the results of a survey may differ from the results that would be obtained if the entire population were 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 1,006 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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