

THE PIPA/KNOWLEDGE NETWORKS POLL

THE AMERICAN PUBLIC ON INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

Americans on Climate Change

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**PROGRAM ON INTERNATIONAL
POLICY ATTITUDES (PIPA)**

A joint program of the Center on Policy Attitudes and the Center for International and Security Studies at the University of Maryland



**Knowledge
NETWORKS**

A polling, social science, and market research firm based in Menlo Park, California

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The Center on Policy Attitudes (COPA) is an independent non-profit organization of social science researchers devoted to increasing understanding of public and elite attitudes shaping contemporary public policy. Using innovative research methods, COPA seeks not only to examine overt policy opinions or positions, but to reveal the underlying values, assumptions, and feelings that sustain opinions.

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The search of existing poll data was done with the aid of the Roper iPOLL database.

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INTRODUCTION

After a long pause, climate change has returned to the foreground of policy debate in the US. In October 2003 a Senate version of the Climate Stewardship Act, sponsored by the Republican John McCain and the Democrat Joseph Lieberman, made a better showing than expected, winning 43 votes, capturing headlines and bringing the idea of regulating greenhouse gas emissions back to the table. The recent release of “The Day After Tomorrow,” a Hollywood blockbuster about a highly unlikely but spectacular one-week climate change catastrophe, has made some observers ask whether this stimulus would sensitize the public to global warming issues.

Climate change has had a checkered recent history in American politics. In 1997, while the US was still a participant in the process of drafting the Kyoto Protocol, the US Senate voted a resolution—95 to 0—that was widely seen as a statement that the Kyoto Protocol should not be submitted to the Senate for ratification. The US continued to play a very active part in negotiating the Kyoto Protocol, especially seeing to the inclusion of a market system in emissions allowances (“cap and trade”). With the Bush administration, though, the US opted out of the process.

There has been speculation that US withdrawal would effectively mean the end of the Kyoto treaty, but so far this has not been borne out. The European Union remains an actor with great economic clout committed to the Kyoto framework, and is a primary negotiator with Russia and other countries with significant emissions. If Russia ratifies the Kyoto Protocol, then 105 countries, with 61% of 1990 emissions, will have ratified it and the treaty will come into force. Meanwhile in the US, legislation is on the table that, if passed, would lay down the domestic framework for de facto integration of the US into world efforts on climate change--reducing US emissions to year 2000 levels by 2010 and to 1990 levels by 2020.

But what are the views of the US public today on climate change—after three years during which the Bush administration has had ample opportunity to fully present its more economic growth-oriented approach to the issue? PIPA last conducted a study on the subject in 1998, and found strong majority support then for action on climate change. Since that time, the issue has been overshadowed by massive changes in the security landscape--the September 11 attacks, the war on terrorism, and the Iraq war. Has the loss of public attention been accompanied by a change in the public’s views?

To find out, PIPA and Knowledge Networks conducted a nationwide poll of 753 Americans over June 8-14 (margin of error plus or minus 3.6%). The poll was fielded by Knowledge Networks using its nationwide panel, which is randomly selected from the entire adult population and subsequently provided internet access, whether or not they previously had internet access. For more information about this methodology, go to www.knowledgenetworks.com/ganp.

Funding for this research was provided by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund and the Ford Foundation.

Key findings of the study were:

1. General Views on Global Warming

Three in four Americans embrace the idea that global warming is a real problem that requires action. However, this majority divides on the question of whether the problem is pressing and should include steps with significant costs, or whether the problem can be dealt with more gradually through low- cost steps. A majority is optimistic that steps taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions will actually benefit

the US economy. The public is split on whether or not there is a consensus in the scientific community about the reality of global warming. Nonetheless, nearly eight in ten say that President Bush should develop a plan to reduce the emission of gases that may contribute to global warming.....3

2. McCain-Lieberman Legislation (Climate Stewardship Act)

A very large majority of Americans (8 in 10) say that they support the targets of the McCain-Lieberman legislation (Climate Stewardship Act) that call for large companies to reduce their emissions to 2000 levels by 2010 and to 1990 levels by 2020. Two-thirds say they favor the legislation even if it costs \$15 a month for an average household. A modest majority says that if a candidate favors legislation requiring reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, this will increase the likelihood they will vote for that candidate; only a very small minority says that it would decrease the likelihood. Those in favor of taking steps are more likely to have their vote influenced by a candidate’s position than those opposed6

3. Strategies for Reducing Emissions

Very large majorities support strategies that provide tax incentives to utility companies that sell environmentally clean energy and to individuals who purchase energy-efficient appliances. Very large majorities support major efforts to reduce automobile emissions by requiring higher fuel efficiency standards in automobiles (even if this means higher costs), requiring half of all new automobiles to be hybrid-electric or similarly high-mileage by 2010, renewing the tax incentives for hybrids, and eliminating the tax incentives for large SUVs and Hummers. The strategy for reducing emissions through a system in which companies trade emissions allowances is not popular with the public, though arguments that it would reduce costs are convincing to a modest majority9

4. Developing Countries

A majority believes that developing countries should be expected to limit their greenhouse gases, but a majority feels they should not have to reduce their emissions 12

5. The Kyoto Treaty and Perceptions of Congress and the President

A majority of Americans would like their elected representatives to support the Kyoto Treaty and overestimate how much members of Congress and the President do support it. In both Republican and Democratic Congressional districts majorities assumed their member would favor Kyoto and would want them to do so. 13

6. Perceptions of the Public

A large majority believe they are more supportive of taking steps to reduce global warming than the average American, suggesting that the public as a whole underestimates the public’s readiness to take such steps 14

7. Comparison of Republicans, Democrats and Independents

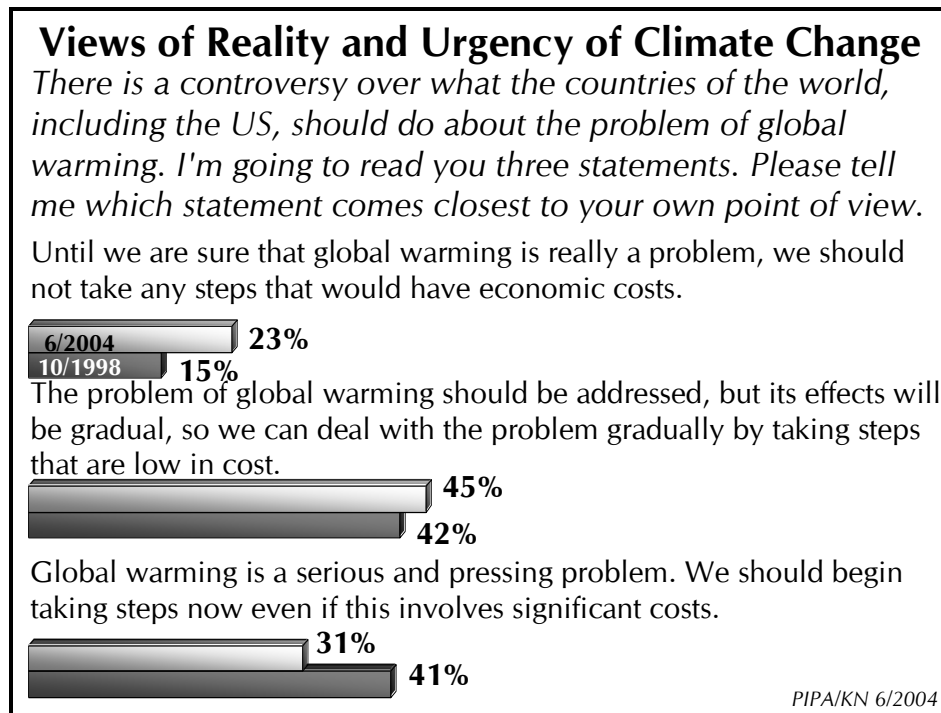
Republicans, Democrats and independents all favor, by majorities, the taking of steps to deal with climate change—even though majorities of Republicans and independents believe that the scientific community is divided on global warming. Strong majorities across the political spectrum support the McCain-Lieberman legislation to require reduced emissions 15

FINDINGS

1. General Views on Global Warming

Three in four Americans embrace the idea that global warming is a real problem that requires action. However, this majority divides on the question of whether the problem is pressing and should include steps with significant costs, or whether the problem can be dealt with more gradually through low-cost steps. A majority is optimistic that steps taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions will actually benefit the US economy. The public is split on whether or not there is a consensus in the scientific community about the reality of global warming. Nonetheless, nearly eight in ten say that President Bush should develop a plan to reduce the emission of gases that may contribute to global warming.

Three in four Americans embrace the idea that global warming is a real problem that requires action. However, this majority divides on the question of whether the problem is pressing and should include steps with significant costs, or whether the problem can be dealt with more gradually through low-cost steps. Given three options for what should be done about global warming, only 23% chose the option that “Until we are sure that global warming is really a problem, we should not take any steps that would have economic costs.” Overall, 76% chose options that described global warming as a real problem. However, these were divided between 45% who chose the position that “its effects will be gradual, so we can deal with the problem gradually by taking steps that are low in cost,” and 31% who took the position that “global warming is a serious and pressing problem. We should begin taking steps now even if this involves significant costs.”



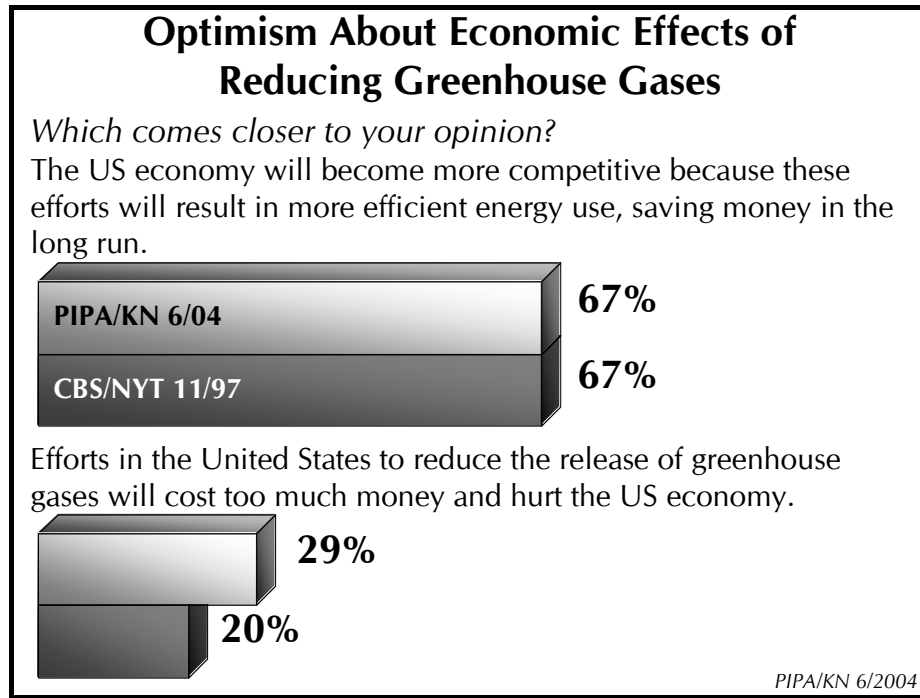
As compared to the last time this question was asked in October 1998, there has been a nine-point drop in the percentage saying that the problem is urgent enough to require steps with significant costs, and an eight-point increase in those who say that no steps with economic costs should be taken for now.

The small percentage that rejects the reality of global warming is consistent with numerous polls taken over the last few years. In no poll have more than about one in five rejected the reality or significance of global warming.

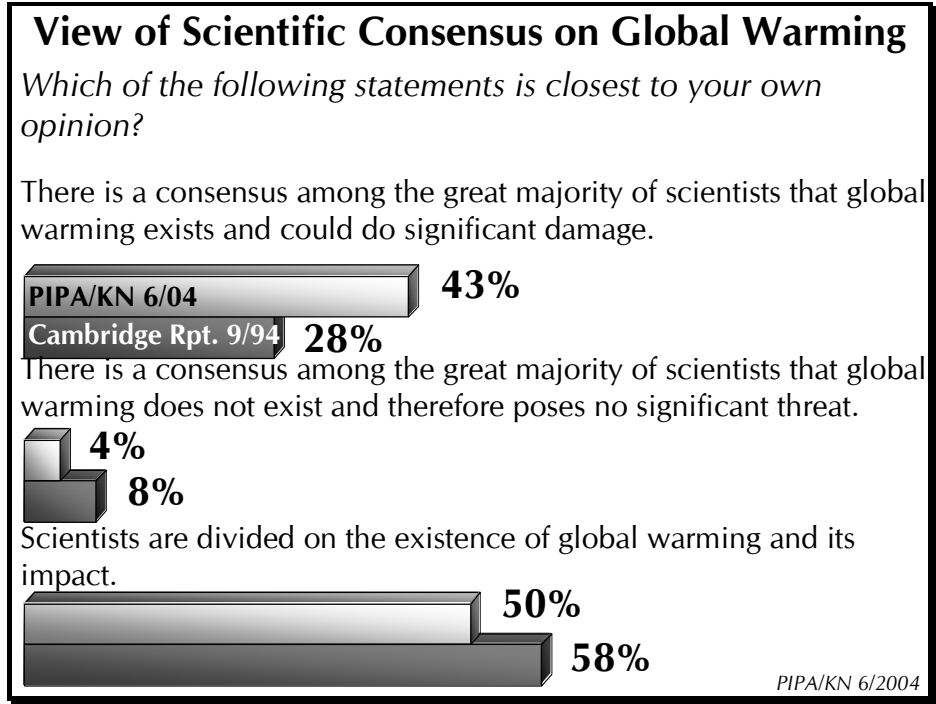
Those who said they saw the film “The Day After Tomorrow” were not significantly different in their views from those who had not seen the film.

Asked how much they have heard about “the problem of global warming or climate change due to the buildup of greenhouse gases,” two-thirds said they have heard a great deal (15%) or some (48%). One third said they had heard “not very much” (28%) or “nothing at all” (10%).

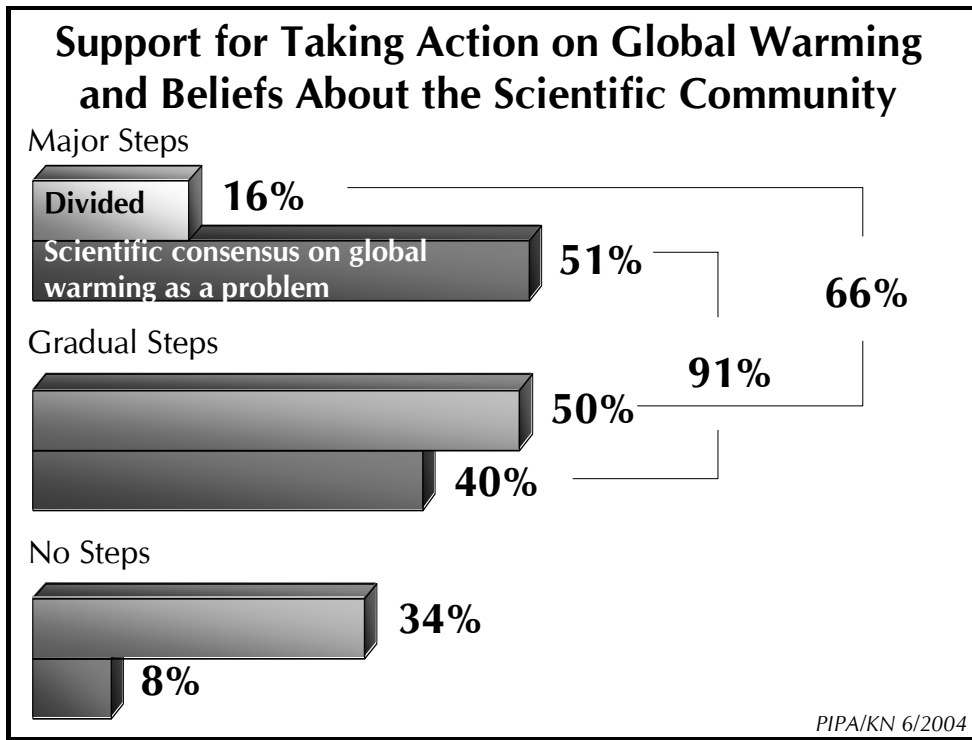
Consistent with the plurality position in favor of taking low-cost steps, a majority expresses optimism that steps taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions will actually benefit the US economy. Asked to choose between two statements, only 29% chose the position that “efforts in the United States to reduce the release of greenhouse gases will cost too much money and hurt the US economy,” while 67% chose the position that “the US economy will become more competitive because these efforts will result in more efficient energy use, saving money in the long run.” This very similar to the responses when CBS News/New York Times asked this same question in November 1997.



There is no clear majority viewpoint among the public on the question of whether there is a consensus in the scientific community about the reality and significance of global warming. Presented three options, just 43% chose the position that “There is a consensus among the great majority of scientists that global warming exists and could do significant damage.” A similar 50% chose the position that “Scientists are divided on the existence of global warming and its impact.” However, only 4% chose the position that “there is a consensus...that global warming does not exist and therefore poses no significant threat.” As compared to 1994 when Cambridge Reports first asked this question, there has been a substantial increase from 28% to 43% among those who believe that there is a consensus, and a substantial drop from 58% to 50% among those who believe that scientists are divided.



Not surprisingly, there is a strong relationship between the belief that there is a scientific consensus and the view that global warming is a problem that requires action. Among those who believe that views are divided, only 16% believe the problem requires major steps, 50% believe gradual steps are enough and 34% believe that no steps are necessary. Among those who believe that there is a consensus that global warming is occurring, 51% support major steps, 40% favor gradual steps and 8% favor no steps.

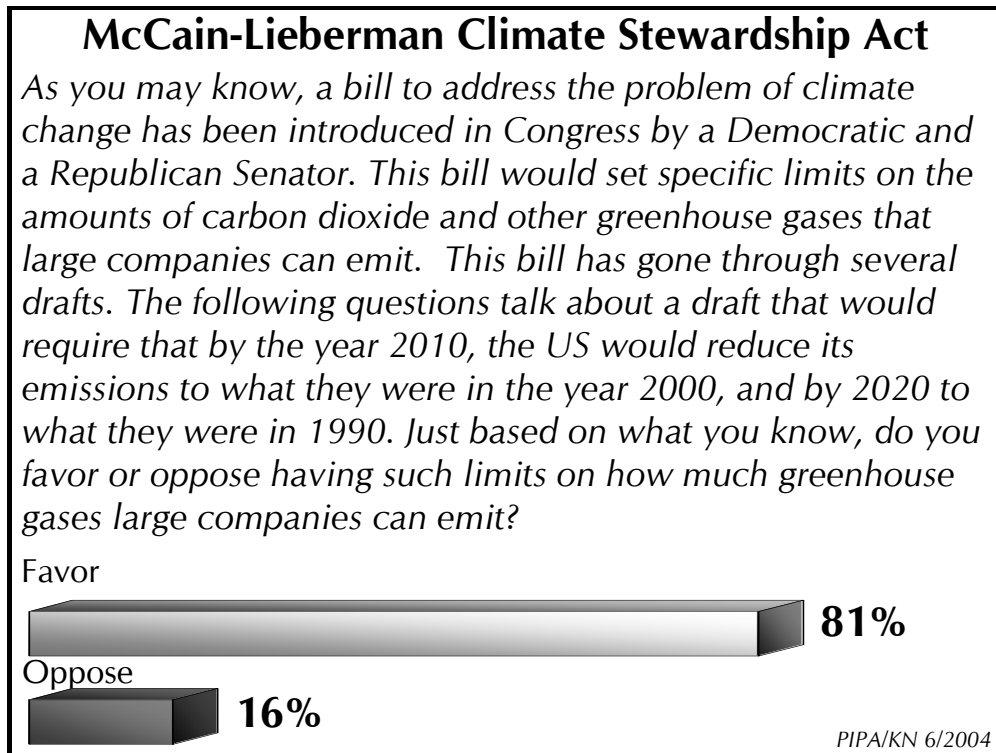


It is, of course, interesting that even though there is lack of clarity about the scientific consensus, almost eight in ten favor taking steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Similarly, 79% say that President Bush should “develop a plan to reduce the emission of gases that may contribute to global warming.” This is up a bit from March 2001, when CNN asked the same question and 67% said that he should.

2. McCain-Lieberman Legislation (Climate Stewardship Act)

A very large majority of Americans (8 in 10) say that they support the targets of the McCain-Lieberman legislation (Climate Stewardship Act) that call for large companies to reduce their emissions to 2000 levels by 2010 and to 1990 levels by 2020. Two-thirds say they favor the legislation even if it costs \$15 a month for an average household. A modest majority says that if a candidate favors legislation requiring reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, this will increase the likelihood they will vote for that candidate; only a very small minority says that it would decrease the likelihood. Those in favor of taking steps are more likely to have their vote influenced by a candidate’s position than those opposed.

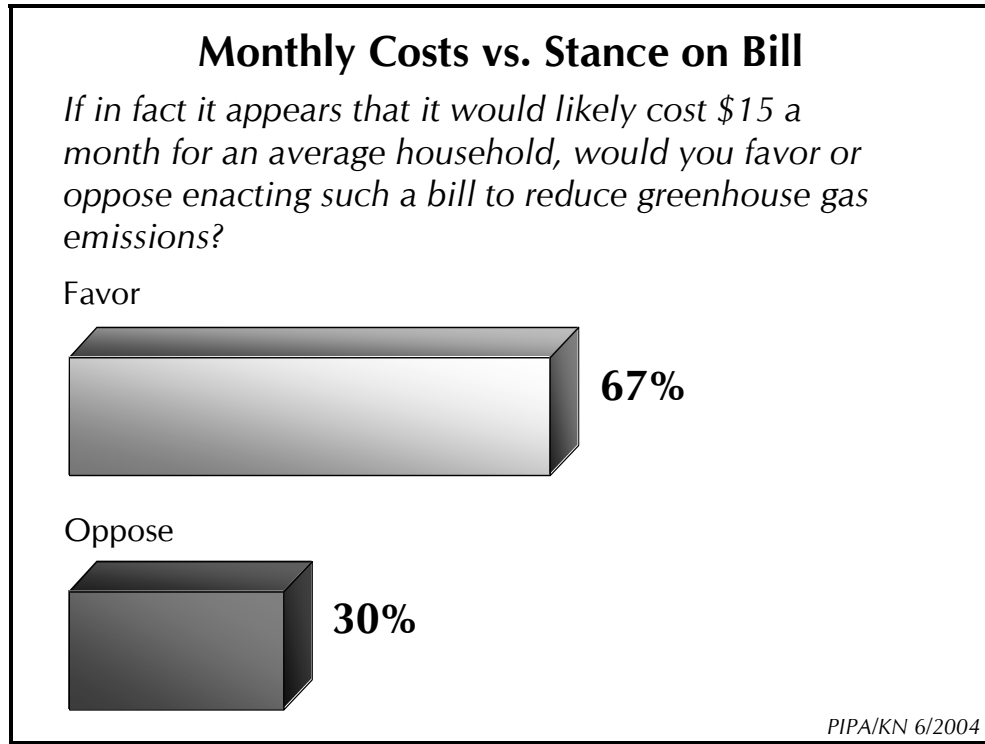
A very large majority of Americans say that they support the targets of the McCain-Lieberman legislation (Climate Stewardship Act). Respondents were introduced to the legislation and told about the targets for greenhouse gas emissions called for in one of the key drafts, for large companies to reduce their emissions to 2000 levels by 2010 and to 1990 levels by 2020. An overwhelming 81% said they favored the legislation, with just 16% opposed. Seventy-seven percent of Republicans, 85% of Democrats, and 79% of independents favored the legislation.



Americans also appear to be ready to accept significant costs in support of the legislation. First, respondents were told that “According to an estimate done by MIT, cutting greenhouse gas emissions as much as this draft of the new bill would require will increase various costs to the average American household by about \$15 a month.” They were then asked how they felt about this estimate. The response

was neutral overall, with a plurality of 34% assuming that it is “approximately correct” and nearly as many saying that it seems on the high side (29%) as saying it seems on the low side (31%).

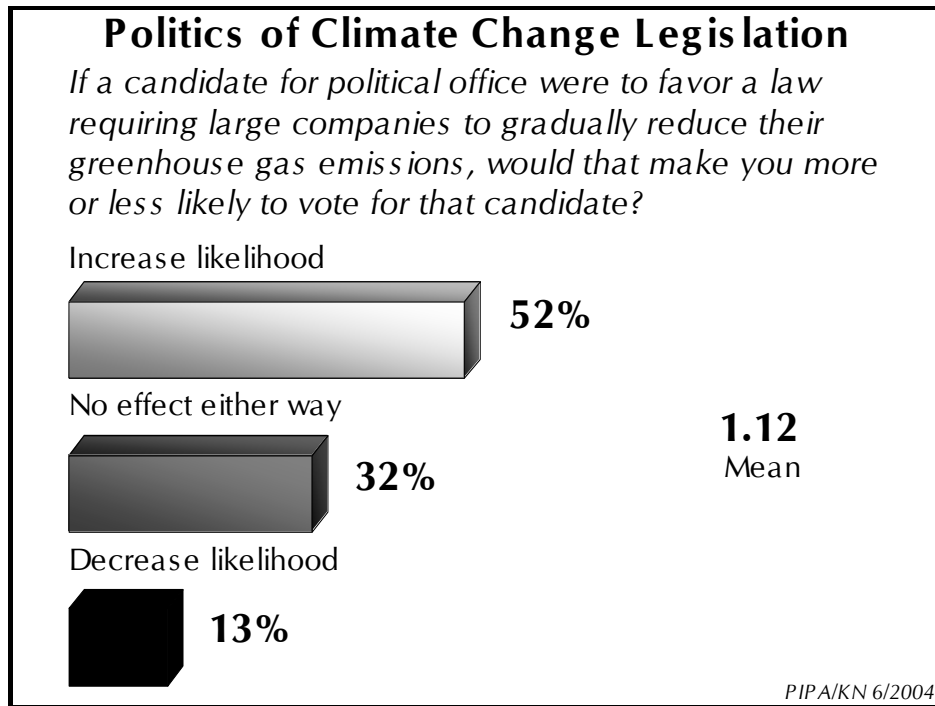
They were then asked if they would favor the bill “If in fact it appears that it would likely cost \$15 a month for an average household.” Two out of three (67%) said they would, while 30% said they would not.



Apparently it would be advantageous for a political candidate to show support for such legislation. Respondents were asked how it would affect their likelihood to vote for a candidate for political office if he or she “were to favor a law requiring large companies to gradually reduce their greenhouse gas emissions” and asked to answer “on a scale of +5 to -5, with +5 meaning that it will greatly increase the likelihood you will vote for the candidate, -5 meaning that it will greatly decrease the likelihood you will vote for the candidate, and 0 meaning that it will have no effect either way.” A modest majority of 52% gave a score above zero; much more than the 12% which gave a score below zero, while 33% gave a score of zero. Overall the mean score was 1.12.

The current **McCain-Lieberman version of the Climate Stewardship Act** would require the EPA to regulate emissions in sectors of the economy that account for 85% of greenhouse gas emissions. The bill would cap emissions at 2000 levels by 2010. Though a variety of sectors are discussed in the bill, it would ultimately only apply to large emitters--emitting more than 10,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide per year. The bill does not apply to residential or agricultural sectors. The implementing legislation would include the use of flexible mechanisms, such as the banking of emission allowances through early compliance, using tradable allowances for companies unable to meet scheduled reductions, and providing loans to companies who plan to scale back their emissions to 1990 levels.

The MIT analysis used for determining the \$15-per-month household cost suggested to this study's respondents is based on an earlier version of the McCain-Lieberman legislation. This version included a two-phase process that would cap emissions in Phase I at 2000 levels by 2010, and require further emission reductions in Phase II to 1990 levels by 2020. Cost estimates were based on worst-case cost scenarios for the implementation of Phase I and the average case cost scenario for the implementation of Phase II. These estimates are significantly higher than MIT's cost estimates, expected to be no more than \$20 per year, for the legislation in its current form. The full MIT analysis¹ is available online at http://web.mit.edu/globalchange/www/MITJSPGC_Rpt97.pdf



Perhaps more significant, the more a person believes that the problem is real and pressing, the more likely it is to affect their vote. Among those who think global warming does not require taking steps right now, 48% say that a candidate's position on climate change will affect their position, with 31% saying that if a

¹ Sergey Paltsev, John M. Reilly, Henry D. Jacoby, A. Denny Ellerman and Kok Hou Tay, "Emissions Trading to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions in the United States: The McCain-Lieberman Proposal" (Cambridge, MA: MIT Joint Program on the Science and Policy of Global Change, report no. 97, June 2003).

candidate favors emission-reducing legislation this will decrease the likelihood they will vote for the candidate and 17% saying that it will increase the likelihood—a net effect of minus 14%. Among those who think that gradual steps are required, 60% percent say that it will affect their vote, with 53% saying that favoring such legislation will make them more likely to vote for the candidate and just 7% saying it will make them less likely—a net effect of plus 46%. Among those who say that the problem requires serious action, a remarkable 85% say that it will affect their vote, with support for such legislation producing a net effect of plus 67%.

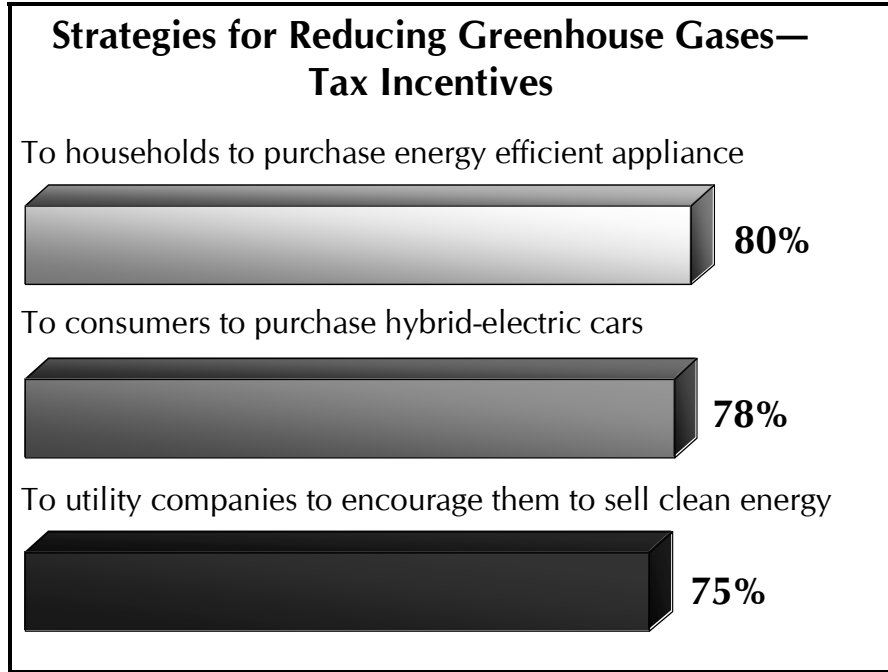
	Don't take steps until sure it's a problem	Gradual problem – gradual solution	Pressing problem – immediate solution
Less likely to vote for candidate	31	7	9
No effect either way	49	37	13
More likely to vote for candidate	17	53	76
Net effect	-14%	+46%	+67%

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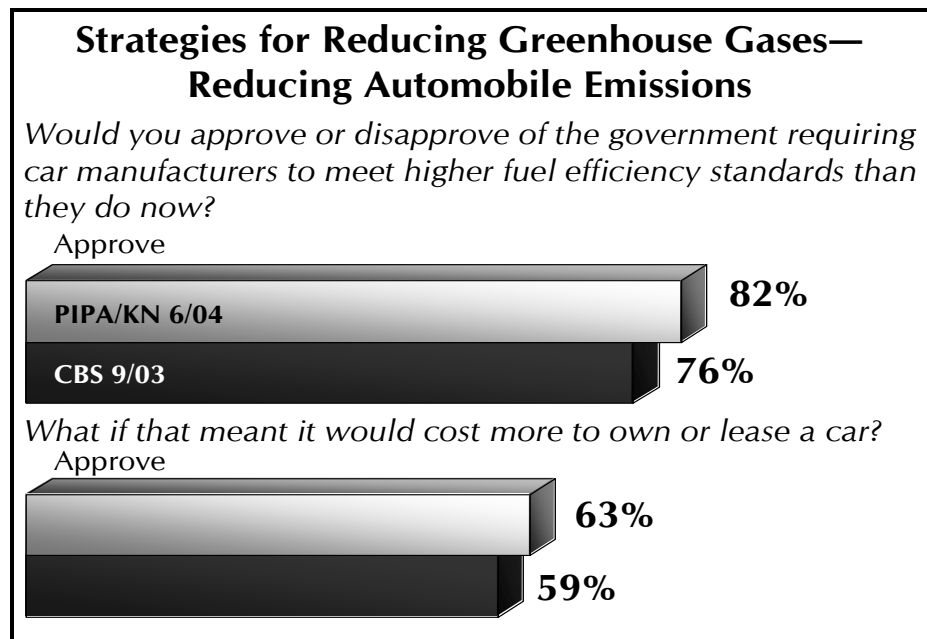
3. Strategies for Reducing Emissions

Very large majorities support strategies that provide tax incentives to utility companies that sell environmentally clean energy and to individuals who purchase energy-efficient appliances. Very large majorities support major efforts to reduce automobile emissions by requiring higher fuel efficiency standards in automobiles (even if this means higher costs), requiring half of all new automobiles to be hybrid-electric or similarly high-mileage by 2010, renewing the tax incentives for hybrids, and eliminating the tax incentives for large SUVs and Hummers. The strategy for reducing emissions through a system in which companies trade emissions allowances is not popular with the public, though arguments that it would reduce costs are convincing to a modest majority.

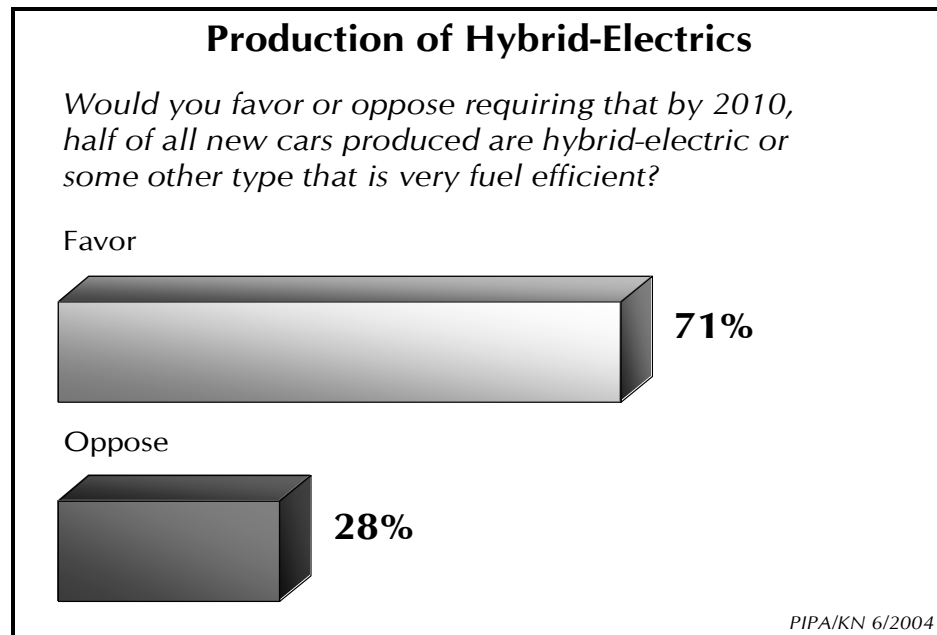
Respondents were asked to consider a variety of possible strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Very large majorities supported offering tax incentives to corporations and individuals. Seventy-five percent supported providing “tax incentives to utility companies to encourage them to sell environmentally clean energy, such as solar and wind power, to consumers.” Eighty percent favored giving “cash incentives like tax credits and rebates to individual households that upgrade to more energy efficient appliances like refrigerators and air conditioners.”



Very large majorities supported major efforts to reduce automobile emissions. Eighty-two percent favored “the government requiring car manufacturers to meet higher fuel efficiency standards than they do now,” up from 76% when CBS asked this question in September 2003. More significantly, when asked in a follow-on question “What if that meant it would cost more to own or lease a car?” 63% still said they would favor higher fuel efficiency standards.



Large majorities also favored taking even stronger regulatory steps for automobile design and production. Seventy-one percent favored requiring “that by 2010, half of all new cars produced are hybrid-electric or some other type that is very fuel-efficient.” Seventy-eight percent favored “continuing the tax credit for purchasing a hybrid-electric car.” On the other hand, 83% opposed “continuing to give large SUVs and Hummers a bigger tax credit than for ordinary cars used for business purposes,” as is done in current tax law.



Trading Emissions Allowances

A controversial aspect of the McCain-Lieberman legislation is that it calls for a system in which companies trade emissions allowances (also known as “cap and trade”). The public did not find this an attractive idea. However, this opposition does not appear to be deep-seated, as a majority found arguments in favor of the idea convincing, as well as arguments that opposed it.

Because this subject is somewhat complex, respondents were taken through a series of questions. First they were introduced to the subject with the following statement:

If this bill (McCain-Lieberman legislation) were to pass, each large company would be allowed to emit a limited amount of greenhouse gasses. A controversial aspect of the bill is that it allows companies to buy and sell their allowances to each other. The idea is that it will cost some companies much more than other companies to change business practices to lower their emissions. If companies with low costs could reduce their emissions further, they could sell their emission allowances to other companies who would save money by buying those allowances. Here are some arguments on these issues. Please select whether you find them convincing or not.

They were then presented a series of pro and con arguments. The con arguments were found convincing by large majorities. Seventy-seven percent found convincing (45% very convincing) the argument that

“It is just not right for companies to buy the right to emit greenhouse gases. All companies should have to reduce their emissions.” Seventy-seven percent also found convincing (22% very) the argument, “Requiring all companies to lower their emission levels the same amount will force them to adopt new technologies that may be expensive in the short run but will be economically beneficial in the long run.” This is consistent with the popular view (discussed above) that reducing greenhouse gas emissions will ultimately benefit the economy.

At the same time though, majorities--albeit much more modest ones--found the pro arguments convincing. Fifty-five percent found convincing (14% very) that “If companies are not allowed to buy and sell their emission allowances, the costs of lowering emissions will be substantially higher than presently estimated for the average American household.” Similarly, 53% found convincing (11% very) the argument that “If we do not let companies buy and sell emission allowances, this would be unfair to companies for whom it is more expensive to lower their emissions, and overall would make it more costly to reduce emissions.”

Finally, asked, “Now, having considered these arguments, do you favor or oppose permitting companies to buy and sell their allowances to emit greenhouse gases?” 62% said they opposed the idea while 34% said they favored it.

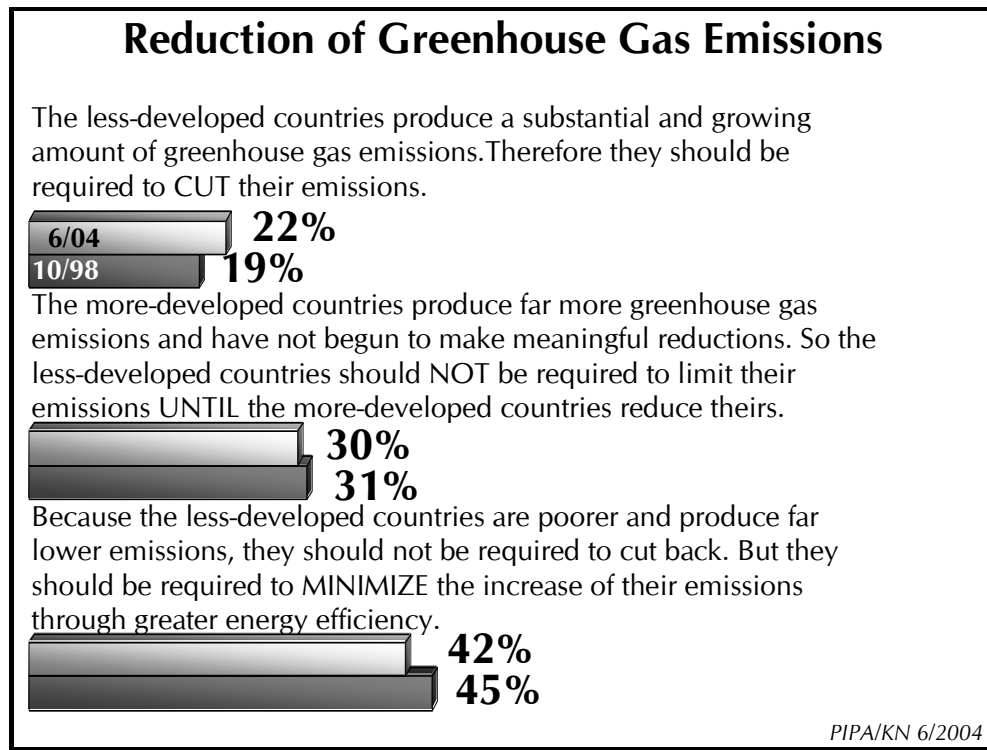
Trading Emission Allowances			
PRO		CON	
If companies are not allowed to buy or sell their emissions allowances, the costs of lowering emissions will be substantially higher than presently estimated for the average American household.		It is just not right for companies to buy the right to emit greenhouse gases. All companies should have to reduce their emissions.	
Convincing	55%	Convincing	77%
If we do not let companies buy and sell emission allowances, this would be unfair to companies for whom it is more expensive to lower their emissions, and overall would make it more costly to reduce emissions.		Requiring all companies to lower their emission levels the same amount will force them to adopt new technologies that may be expensive in the short run but will be economically beneficial in the long run.	
Convincing	53%	Convincing	77%
Conclusion			
Now, having considered these arguments, do you favor or oppose permitting companies to buy or sell their allowances to emit greenhouse gasses?		Favor	34%
		Oppose	62%

Another indication of the possible softness of the opposition to this kind of idea was the public response to an international system for trading emission rights as part of the Kyoto Treaty that PIPA explored in a 1998 poll. Initially 61% were opposed to such a system. However, when given the information that the cost of compliance with the Kyoto Treaty had been estimated to be \$50 a month without such a regime, as compared to \$10 a month if it were instituted, 66% then said they would favor it.

4. Developing Countries

A majority believes that developing countries should be expected to limit their greenhouse gases, but a majority feels they should not have to reduce their emissions.

A major controversy in international negotiations on addressing climate change—and central to the debate surrounding the Kyoto Treaty—is the question of whether developing countries should be expected to modify their level of emissions of greenhouse gases. Respondents were given three options. As shown below, the least popular option (supported by 22%) was that developing countries should not be required to limit their emissions at all. However the other end of the spectrum—that developing countries should be required to cut their emissions only received 30% support. The most popular position—supported by 42%—said developing countries “should not be required to cut back. But they should be required to minimize the increase of their emissions through greater energy efficiency.” Thus 64% rejected the idea that developing countries should be required to cut their emissions, but 72% said they should at least be expected to limit the increase.



Responses were very similar to this question in 1998. In 1998 PIPA also asked "If the less-developed countries are willing to limit their emissions, do you think the developed countries should provide the technology and training necessary to help them make their industries less polluting?" A remarkable 90% said that the developed countries should provide this technology and training (should not: 7%). Given the near-unanimity of this response, it is likely a large majority would still support this position.

5. The Kyoto Treaty and Perceptions of Congress and the President

A majority of Americans would like their elected representatives to support the Kyoto Treaty and overestimate how much members of Congress and the President do support it. In both Republican and Democratic Congressional districts majorities assumed their member would favor Kyoto and would want them to do so.

Asked whether they would want their Congressional representative to “vote for or against the US participating in the Kyoto agreement to reduce global warming,” 64% said they would. This is the exact same percentage who replied this way to this question in November 2002, and is also the same percentage

who favored US participation in the Kyoto Treaty when asked by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations in June 2002.

Respondents were then asked, “Do you think your Congressional representative *would* vote for or against the US participating in the Kyoto agreement to reduce global warming?” Nearly as many--58%--assumed that their member would vote for participation (56% in November 2002). There was a strong tendency to assume that one’s member was similar to oneself. Among those who favored Kyoto, 66% assumed their member did, while among those who opposed it only 42% assumed their member did.

Even in Republican Congressional districts a majority—51%--assumed that their member would favor Kyoto and 61% wanted their member to do so. In Democratic districts 63% assumed that their member would favor it and 67% wanted them to do so.

Respondents were also asked, “Do you think a majority in Congress would vote for or against the U.S. participating in the Kyoto agreement?” and the response was evenly divided, with 46% saying they thought Congress would vote for it and 46% thinking Congress would vote against it, though Congress has not approved the Treaty and appears unlikely to do so. Interestingly, there was a 12-point gap between the percentage who said their own member would vote for Kyoto and those saying the majority of Congress would vote for it.

Just under half—48%--were aware that President Bush opposes Kyoto. A remarkable 42% assumed he favors it.

In November 2002 larger percentages believed that both Congress and the President were supportive. At that time a majority of 52% believed incorrectly that a majority of Congress favored it and a plurality of 48% believed that Bush favored it. Beliefs about Congress and the President may have changed slightly while perceptions of one’s member did not, because the fact that Congress and the President have not enacted Kyoto is more visible than is the position of one’s member of Congress.

6. Perceptions of the Public

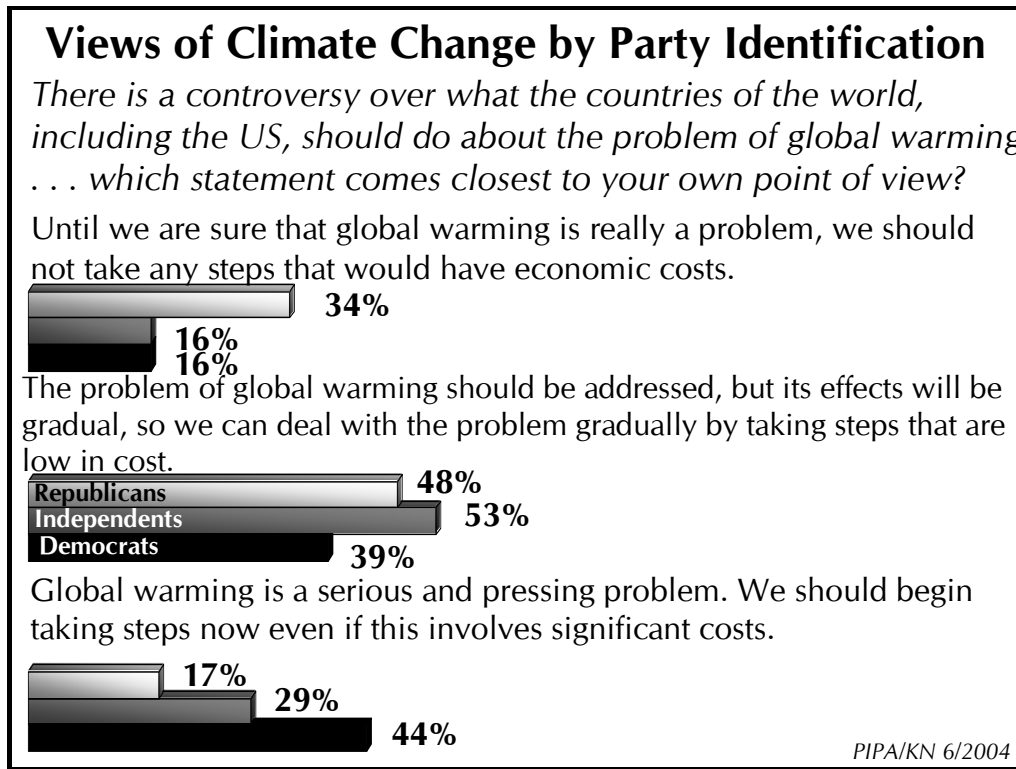
A large majority believe they are more supportive of taking steps to reduce global warming than the average American, suggesting that the public as a whole underestimates the public’s readiness to take such steps.

Respondents were asked, “Overall, compared to the average American, would you say you are more or less supportive of taking steps to reduce global warming?” Sixty-six percent said they were more supportive, while just 30% said they were less supportive. (These numbers have changed little from when PIPA asked this question in 1998; 68% then said they were more supportive and 22% said they were less supportive.) This suggests that the public underestimates public support for taking such steps. If the public perceived itself correctly, the percentage saying they are more supportive than average would be equal to those who say they are less supportive. But in fact the ratio is about two-to-one in favor of the perception that the self is more supportive. This dynamic may help explain why many policymakers and media analysts seem to assume that the public is less supportive of taking steps to address the problem of global warming than appears to actually be the case.

7. Comparison of Republicans, Democrats and Independents

Republicans, Democrats and independents all favor, by majorities, the taking of steps to deal with climate change—even though majorities of Republicans and independents believe that the scientific community is divided on global warming. Strong majorities across the political spectrum support the McCain-Lieberman legislation to require reduced emissions.

Though Americans’ beliefs about climate change do differ by party preference, majorities in both parties support taking active steps—65% of Republicans and 83% of Democrats. Only a third--34%--of Republicans said no steps should be taken on global warming that would involve costs. Even fewer Democrats and independents (16% each) took this view. Forty-eight percent of Republicans and a majority of independents (53%) said global warming is a problem that can be dealt with gradually, but only 39% of Democrats agreed. A plurality of Democrats (44%) said global warming is a pressing problem that requires immediate action, while only 17% of Republicans and 29% of independents agree. In general, differences between Bush supporters and Kerry supporters closely mirrored the differences between Republicans and Democrats.



These differences may be related to different perceptions of what experts are saying about global warming. While 63% of Republicans (and 61% of Bush supporters) said experts are divided on the issue, only 39% of Democrats (and 38% of Kerry supporters) shared this view. Fifty-two percent of independents thought experts are divided. Fifty-five percent of Democrats (and the same percentage of Kerry supporters) said experts mostly agree global warming is a problem. Only 30% of Republicans (33% of Bush supporters), and 41% of independents shared this view.

On the McCain-Lieberman legislation, strong majorities supported the legislation regardless of party preference. Seventy-seven percent of Republicans, 85% of Democrats, and 79% of independents favored the legislation—differences that are statistically significant, though minor. When people were told the bill

may raise costs by \$15 per month, 63% of Republicans, 72% of Democrats and 64% of independents still supported the legislation.

Candidates who support such legislation benefit from a net positive effect on people’s vote, regardless of political preference, though the effect is mildest among Republicans. Democrats give strong support to environmental candidates with a 54% net positive, as do independents with a 45% net positive. Republicans, though, also gave a 19% net positive for candidates that support such legislation.

Voting and Party Identification			
	Republicans	Independents	Democrats
Less likely to vote for candidate	23	9	9
No effect either way	34	34	25
More likely to vote for candidate	42	54	63
Net effect	+ 19%	+ 45%	+ 54%

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Sixty-nine percent of Republicans, 87% of Democrats and 78% of independents also say President Bush should develop a plan to deal with climate change. On regulatory initiatives--such as higher fuel economy--Democrats are more likely to support such initiatives than Republicans, but the differences are not substantial. For instance, 76% of Republicans supported higher fuel efficiency standards on cars, as did 89% of Democrats and 79% of Independents. When asked if they would still support a measure if this meant the cost of cars would rise, 58% of Republicans still supported such policies, as did 67% of Democrats and 63% of independents.

METHODOLOGY

The poll was fielded by Knowledge Networks, a polling, social science, and market research firm in Menlo Park, California, with a randomly selected sample of its large-scale nationwide research panel. This panel is itself randomly selected from the national population of households having telephones and subsequently provided internet access for the completion of surveys (and thus is not limited to those who already have internet access). The distribution of the sample in the web-enabled panel closely tracks the distribution of United States Census counts for the US population on age, race, Hispanic ethnicity, geographical region, employment status, income, education, etc.

The panel is recruited using stratified random-digit-dial (RDD) telephone sampling. RDD provides a non-zero probability of selection for every US household having a telephone. Households that agree to participate in the panel are provided with free Web access and an Internet appliance, which uses a telephone line to connect to the Internet and uses the television as a monitor. In return, panel members participate in surveys three to four times a month. Survey responses are confidential, with identifying information never revealed without respondent approval. When a survey is fielded to a panel member, he or she receives an e-mail indicating that the survey is available for completion. Surveys are self-administered.

For more information about the methodology, please go to:
www.knowledgenetworks.com/ganp.