

TO: Interested Parties  
FROM: Andrew Baumann, Global Strategy Group  
DATE: January 14, 2020  
RE: **New Survey: Climate Action the Top Priority for Democratic Primary Voters in Colorado**

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According to a new survey of likely Democratic presidential primary voters in Colorado conducted for the League of Conservation Voters, addressing climate change is the clear number one most important issue in how voters will choose their presidential candidate. Nearly all likely primary voters view climate change as a very serious problem or a crisis, think climate change will impact their families, and want to see their leaders take action within the next year. And by a three-to-one margin, likely primary voters prefer a candidate with a plan to take action on climate change starting on Day One of their term over a candidate who has not pledged to act starting on Day One.

In Colorado, 85% of primary voters would be more likely to support a candidate who has a plan to take immediate action on climate change by moving the United States to a 100% clean energy economy, and 21% of voters would disqualify any candidate who does not pledge support for such a position. This is because primary voters see extensive benefits to such a policy move – with nearly nine in ten stating such a plan would have a positive impact on not only climate change but also the quality of air and water, the health of their families, and their children and grandchildren. The majority also believes that such a plan would have a positive impact on the United States' economy and on their own electricity bills.

Finally, there is near-universal support for the Colorado Air Quality Control Commission (AQCC) taking timely action to create rules that guarantee that the state will meet the ambitious carbon reduction targets that lawmakers passed last year.

#### KEY SURVEY FINDINGS:

**Nearly all primary voters view climate change as a very serious problem that will impact their families.** When likely voters are asked if and when they expect to feel the effects of climate change, 91% either say that they worry about how the climate crisis will impact their family in the future (32%), or that their family is already feeling the effects (59%). Meanwhile, 84% of likely primary voters see climate change as a very serious problem or a crisis, with the highest intensity in those labeling it a crisis (60%).

**Addressing climate change is at the top of the list of issue priorities when choosing a candidate.** When voters were read a list of eight issues and asked to choose the top two or three most important to their vote for president, over half of likely primary voters chose addressing the climate change crisis and moving the United States to 100% clean energy (59%) – putting it as the clear top option, 10 points above the second-place health care (49%).

**Select the two or three most important issues when deciding which candidate to support (top 5 of 8 issues):**

Addressing the climate change crisis and moving the United States to 100% clean energy	59%
Achieving universal health care coverage	49%
Passing stronger policies to prevent gun violence	44%
Raising wages and incomes for working families	38%
Protecting a woman's right to choose	34%

**Primary voters are looking for policymakers to take action on climate change quickly – and they will vote on the issue.** 85% of primary voters want to see policymakers take action to combat climate change within the next year with nearly 72% demanding action “as quickly as possible.” Perhaps more important, when given a choice between the two options below, 74% of primary voters would support a candidate who will take action on Day One while just 26% would support the candidate who hasn’t pledged immediate action – even if they have a plan to combat climate change.

*A candidate who has pledged to make climate change a top issue in their administration with a specific plan to take aggressive action to combat climate change starting on Day One.*

*or*

*A candidate who has a plan to take action to combat climate change but has NOT pledged to make climate change a top issue in their administration or to act starting on Day One.*

**Democratic presidential candidates who adopt pro-climate, clean energy, and conservation policies overwhelmingly gain support from primary voters.** As the table below shows, primary voters are much more likely to support Democratic candidates who back a range of pro-climate, clean energy, and conservation policies. The positive electoral impact is particularly high for policies to combat climate change by restoring forests and moving the United States to a 100% clean energy economy by no later than 2050.

	<b>Would only vote for</b>	<b>Total more likely</b>
Has a plan to take immediate action on climate change by moving the United States to a 100% clean energy economy by no later than the year 2050.	21%	85%
Supports policies that combat climate change by protecting and restoring forests which absorb the carbon pollution that causes climate change.	18%	95%
Wants to transition away from the drilling and mining of oil, gas, and coal on public lands by 2030.	18%	72%
Has a plan to help retrain workers in the coal and oil industries so that they can get new jobs in the clean energy industry.	13%	88%
Supports policies that encourage farmers and ranchers to implement practices that combat climate change by absorbing carbon pollution into their farmlands.	13%	82%
Supports a plan to phase out gas-powered cars and trucks and transition the country to zero-emission vehicles, like electric cars, by 2050.	12%	76%

**Democratic voters believe that a plan to move the U.S. to 100% clean energy would have strongly positive impacts on air and water quality, the health and future generations of their family, and the economy and jobs, in addition to climate change.** Roughly 90% of voters believe moving to 100% clean energy will have a positive impact on air and water quality, future generations of their family, and climate change. Further, 55% believe it will have a positive impact on the economy and jobs.

Impact of moving the U.S. to a 100% clean energy economy by no later than 2050			
	Positive	Negative	Net Positive
The quality of the air we breathe	95%	2%	+93
Climate change	92%	4%	+88
The health of families like yours	91%	3%	+88
The quality of the water we drink	90%	2%	+88
Future generations of your family	89%	8%	+81
Electricity bills of families like yours	55%	29%	+26
The economy and jobs	55%	33%	+22

**Colorado voters want timely action taken by the Colorado Air Quality Control Commission to reduce carbon emissions.** More than nine in ten Colorado voters (91%) agree that the state’s air quality commission should take timely action to create rules that will **GUARANTEE** that the state meets its targets to reduce carbon emissions by 50% by 2030 and by at least 90% by 2050.

**ABOUT THIS POLL**

*Global Strategy Group conducted a survey of 400 likely Democratic primary voters in Colorado between December 13<sup>th</sup> and December 16<sup>th</sup>. The interviews were conducted via a combination of text invitation and web-based panel. Care has been taken to ensure the geographic and demographic divisions of the population of likely Democratic primary voters are properly represented.*

**APPENDIX:**

**Question text on AQCC for Colorado:**

*As you may know, earlier this year the Colorado Legislature passed, and Governor Polis signed into law, legislation that created statewide targets to reduce carbon emissions in Colorado - including emissions from power plants, factories, and vehicles - by at least 50% by 2030, and by at least 90% by 2050. This law set targets for the reduction of carbon emissions, but it did not specify how the state would meet these targets. Instead, it directed the Colorado Air Quality Control Commission [The Air Quality Commission] to develop rules to achieve these targets.*

*Please read the following statement, then indicate whether you agree or disagree. It's OK if you don't know much about this issue - just indicate whether you're inclined to agree or disagree based on what you do know.*

*The air quality commission should take timely action to create rules that guarantee that the state will meet its targets to reduce carbon emissions by at least 50% by 2030 and by at least 90% by 2050.*