



TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Amy Levin, Benenson Strategy Group

DATE: March 25, 2015

RE: Topline results on international climate change action

Methodology

Benenson Strategy Group conducted 1000 interviews with 2016 likely voters nationwide, including an oversample of 200 women voters, from January 12th to 20th, 2015. Benenson Strategy Group also conducted interviews with an additional 200 voters from each of Arizona, New Hampshire, Ohio, and Tennessee. All interviews were conducted over telephone using a voter list. The margin of error is $\pm 3.4\%$ for the base sample at the 95% confidence level.

Key Findings

- In advance of the U.N. Climate Change Conference in Paris later this year, voters nationwide overwhelmingly would support “President Obama signing an international agreement committing all countries to address climate change by reducing their carbon emissions.”
 - ✓ 72% support signing an international agreement; just 24% oppose.
- In addition to strong support for the U.S. to engage with other countries to secure action around the world, ultimately, people want the U.S. to lead on this issue.
 - ✓ 65% say the U.S. “should take the lead and make meaningful reductions in its carbon emissions and other gases that may cause global warming, regardless of what other countries do.”
 - ✓ Another 13% say the U.S. “should make meaningful reductions only if other countries do as well.”
 - ✓ Just 17% say the U.S. “does not need to make significant reductions of carbon dioxide or other gases, regardless of what other countries do.”
- Majorities across the partisan and demographic spectrums support President Obama taking action alongside the international community.

Do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose President Obama signing an international agreement committing all countries to address climate change by reducing their carbon emissions?

		Total Support	Total Oppose
Overall		72%	24%
Party ID	Democrat	88%	9%
	Independent	73%	22%
	Republican	52%	41%
Gender	Men	63%	32%
	Women	79%	16%
Age	18-34	86%	11%
	35-49	69%	28%
	50+	68%	27%
Race	White	68%	26%
	African American	85%	12%
	Hispanic	79%	18%

Additional Findings

- Americans' top priorities for the U.S. in international climate negotiations include:
 - ✓ Lead by example, showing the world what the U.S. is doing – and can do – to reduce its carbon pollution (73% say important – 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 5 means “extremely important priority”)
 - ✓ Demonstrate that the U.S. is willing and ready to work with any country that's ready to work with it (73%)
 - ✓ Ensure scientists, not politicians, determine the appropriate steps to take to address climate change (70%)
 - ✓ Advocate for common-sense, achievable actions to address climate change (68%)
 - ✓ Hold other countries accountable to their commitments to reduce their carbon pollution (67%)

- Three components of the plan are particularly likely to endear the public further to it.
 - ✓ 65% say they would be more likely to support an agreement if it required other countries to do their fair share to reduce carbon pollution.
 - ✓ 63% would be more likely to support it if it committed significant resources to investments in clean energy technology and development that would benefit all countries.
 - ✓ 60% would be more likely to support it if it made the details of each country's commitment public, and required public updates of countries' progress in meeting those commitments.

- Encouragingly, the opposition's false dichotomy between the environment and the economy continues to weaken as an argument for them.
 - ✓ 47% of voters are more concerned that the U.S will not do enough to reduce its pollution and address the climate change problem, whereas
 - ✓ 44% are more concerned that the U.S will go too far, and do more than it should in reaction to climate change, hurting jobs and the economy.

- Moreover, support withstands intense opposition – when the best argument from each side of the issue is pitted against each other, supporters win by 39 points.
 - ✓ 65% agree that *“No country is immune from climate change and no country can meet the challenge alone. It will take ambitious action to tackle this global challenge, and every country needs to work together and do its fair share. The United States has always led the world in meeting big challenges. And we can meet, and lead, on this one – by seizing the opportunity to develop renewable energy resources and create clean energy jobs here at home – ensuring we leave our children and grandchildren a better planet.”*
 - ✓ Just 26% agree that *“China and India are the real problem when it comes to climate change. But Obama just signed a deal with China that requires nothing of China for 16 years, yet commits the U.S. to policies that will increase energy prices for the middle class and destroy jobs. The last thing we need is an even more massive agreement with every country in the world that won’t make any real difference in pollution levels but leaves the U.S. with the short end of the stick and footing the bill.”*

- Given all of the above, it is not surprising to see that people have strong enough feelings about the issue that a politician’s view is important to them as well.
 - ✓ 51% of 2016 voters say they would be more favorable to their Congressperson if they supported an international agreement, and just 17% would be less favorable.
 - ✓ Conversely, 46% say they would be less favorable to their Congressperson if they opposed an international agreement, while only 19% said it would make them more favorable.

- These sentiments follow the same pattern across parties, with negative feelings toward opponents also particularly strong among young voters and women. Standing on the wrong side of the issue could prove a liability in key states as well.

If your Congressperson opposed signing an international climate change agreement, would that make you much more favorable, somewhat more favorable, somewhat less favorable, or much less favorable to them, or would it not affect your view either way?

		Total More Favorable	Total Less Favorable
Overall		19%	46%
Party ID	Democrat	16%	58%
	Independent	18%	48%
	Republican	25%	30%
Gender	Men	25%	41%
	Women	14%	50%
Age	18-34	17%	53%
	35-49	22%	44%
	50+	19%	43%
State	Arizona	19%	49%
	New Hampshire	18%	55%
	Ohio	17%	45%
	Tennessee	17%	40%