

**To:** Myron Ebell[Myron.Ebell@cei.org]  
**From:** Myron Ebell  
**Sent:** Thur 10/19/2017 6:43:01 PM  
**Subject:** Cooler Heads Coalition polling information and next meeting date

The Cooler Heads Coalition will hold its next regular monthly strategy meeting on Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> November, beginning at 12 noon at CEI, 1310 L Street, N. W., Seventh Floor. Please e-mail or ring me at 331-2256 with agenda items or questions.

Pasted below are two important articles on polling results. First, Kevin Mooney's critical analysis of the poll by Clear Path Action on attitudes to "clean energy" and to candidates who support "clean energy". Second, the poll by the Institute for Energy Research and the American Conservative Union conducted by MWR Strategies on attitudes to climate change and energy taxes. At the bottom of the IER press release there are links to a slide show and a longer PDF of the questions and results plus sampling data. I encourage you to look at both these links.

<http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/conservative-clean-energy-group-misleads-gop-candidates-with-skewed-survey/article/2637965>

## **'Conservative' clean energy group misleads GOP candidates with skewed survey**

by [Kevin Mooney](#) | [Oct 18, 2017, 6:38 PM](#)



Taxpaye

*have been footing the bill for government subsidies to pay for wind and solar energy initiatives that cannot stand on their own two feet. (AP Photo/Julie Jacobson)*

Would you be more or less likely to vote for a congressional candidate in 2018 if that candidate supported expensive, inefficient, environmentally-hazardous wind farms in your community?

As a Nevada resident in a critical swing state, would you be more or less willing to vote for a congressional candidate who favors the installation of 400-foot-tall wind turbines that will block your view of the skyline, but leave the view from the candidate's private home unobstructed?

Any polling company that included such highly skewed questions in a voter survey could expect to receive responses in line with their policy preferences on energy policy. That polling company could then put out a press release that says candidates who oppose "clean energy" stand to gain politically.

These questions can also be asked from the opposite direction to produce a coerced outcome that says candidates who embrace so-called "clean energy" stand to gain politically in next year's mid-term congressional elections.

That's what an organization known as ClearPath Action, with offices in Washington, D.C., and Charlotte, did earlier this fall when it published the results of a survey that detected a significant swing toward "pro-clean energy GOP candidates," according to

the release.

While it may or may not be the case that support for "clean energy" will benefit Republicans politically, the polling results are highly suspect, and if news coverage of the polling were honest, it would say so.

Jay Faison, a North Carolina businessman, founded the ClearPath Foundation and the ClearPath Action Fund in 2015 for the purpose of convincing conservatives and Republicans to embrace clean energy.

"Energy drives everything that we do and for the longest time, the left has owned that debate," ClearPath declares on its [website](#). "It's time for us to take that back. It's time for a conservative clean energy agenda."

In the 2016 election cycle, ClearPath Action allocated [more than \\$3 million](#) to support 15 Republican congressional candidates, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. An investigator for the center estimates that individual donations from the Faison family came out to about \$5.3 million.

With the House potentially up for grabs next year, ClearPath appears poised to burrow in where individual races are competitive. If the self-described "conservative clean energy" group can convince even a handful of Republicans in the House and Senate to embrace its agenda, ClearPath could begin to exert real influence. That's clearly the overarching purpose of the poll, which found "more than a 25-point ballot movement statewide in Nevada, Michigan and Arizona" for Republicans who embrace clean energy.

But look at how [the questions are framed](#). Respondents are asked if they are more or less likely to vote for a candidate based on the following:

"A Republican candidate for Congress who supports accelerating the clean energy industry to bring more jobs into their district; stimulating the economy, boosting manufacturing, and expanding middle class job opportunities at home."

"A Republican candidate for Congress who is concerned about the continuing decline of middle class jobs. When thinking about the jobs of the future, they think it's critical to invest in clean energy jobs now so that the next generation will inherit a secure economy."

"A Republican candidate for Congress who believes we should do more to invest in clean energy here in America and reduce our country's dependence on foreign oil from hostile states in the Middle East. Our ability to avoid future wars will depend on our ability to be energy dominant."

And how about some rainbows and sunshine to go with that clean energy? The questions presume that so-called "clean energy" is economically feasible, financially

beneficial and environmentally sound. In reality, there is a growing body of evidence with regard to wind and solar that says otherwise.

Moreover, taxpayers have been footing the bill for government subsidies to pay for wind and solar energy initiatives that cannot stand on their own two feet. The Institute for Energy Research, a Washington-based nonprofit group that favors free market solutions for energy policy, has carefully analyzed government figures that show taxpayers have shelled out tens of billions of dollars to support unworkable green energy schemes.

I sent an email to the media contact for ClearPath asking the organization if it would like to defend its survey methodology and explain why its questions failed to acknowledge the economic and environmental problems associated with not-so-clean "clean energy" sources. I received no response.

In Searchlight, Nev., citizen activists and conservation groups successfully joined forces in litigation against the federal government to block an 87-turbine, 200-megawatt wind farm in the hometown of former Sen. Harry Reid. Local residents balked when finalized plans removed turbines from anywhere near Reid's property while placing them in close proximity to their rural neighborhoods. The lesson here is that when the fallout from government-backed green energy schemes is properly understood, average citizens respond.

That's what IER and the American Conservative Union found in their just released nationwide survey.

When asked about their opinion on a proposed tax on carbon dioxide, 44 percent of respondents said they were opposed while 39 percent said they were supportive. But what's even more revealing is that 74 percent of respondents said they would not trust the government to "wisely" spend the money from the tax.

A broad cross section of Americans from "all ideological stripes and all demographic characteristics remain profoundly skeptical of the ability of government to do anything meaningfully and well," IER said in a press release.

That much is evident, but you wouldn't know it from the misleading questions that ClearPath has put into circulation.

*Kevin Mooney (@KevinMooneyDC) is a contributor to the Washington Examiner's Beltway Confidential blog. He is an investigative reporter in Washington, D.C. who writes for several national publications.*

<https://instituteforenergyresearch.org/press/people-think-climate-change/>

# What Do People Think About Climate Change?

 [instituteforenergyresearch.org/press/people-think-climate-change/](http://instituteforenergyresearch.org/press/people-think-climate-change/)

10/12/2017

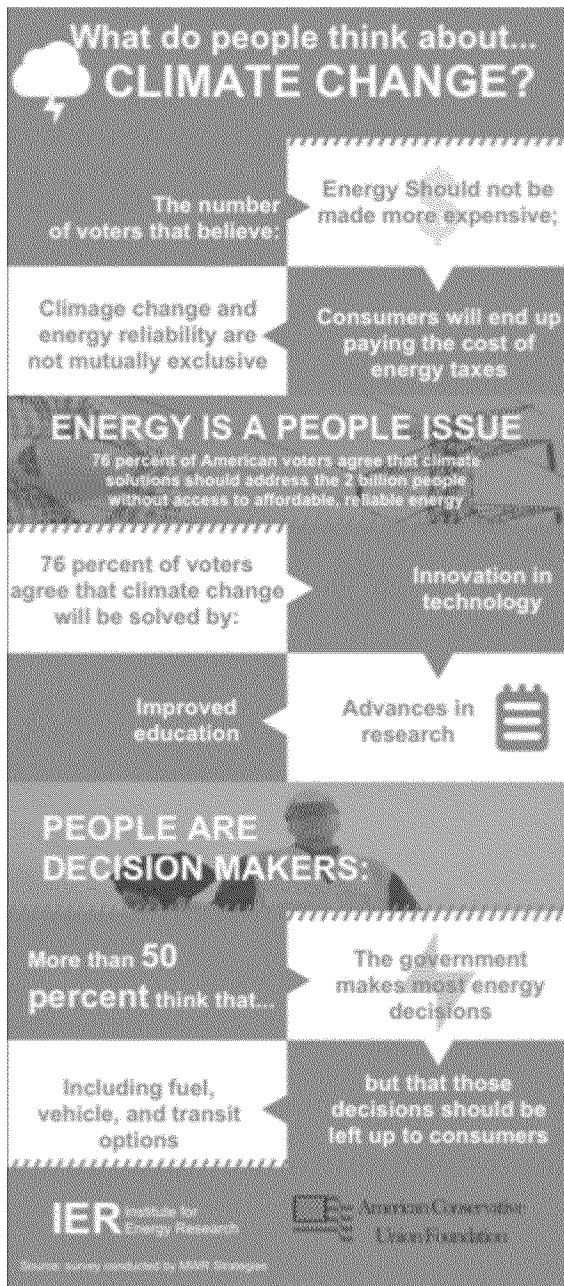
A national research project sponsored by the Institute for Energy Research and the American Conservative Union Foundation consisting of ten focus groups and a nationwide survey (1018 registered voters, margin of error 3.1%) discovered that:

***There is little enthusiasm for taxing energy.*** When asked about a tax on carbon dioxide, 44% of respondents opposed, while 39% favored. More importantly, when asked whether they trusted the federal government to spend the money from such a tax wisely just 18% said they did, while 74% said they did not.

Even among those who ranked climate change as an important risk (identifying it as a 6 or higher on a scale of 1 to 10), just 42% indicated taxing energy was an appropriate response to climate change.

***People of all ideological stripes and all demographic characteristics remain profoundly skeptical of the ability of government to do anything meaningfully and well.*** Consequently, they're unwilling to pay for (or really even consider) anything that looks like a government mandate. Government action is considered a last, worst resort, used only when all other ideas have failed.

***Carbon dioxide not considered a pollutant.*** A solid majority – 55% – said that carbon dioxide is needed for plant life and humans both exhale it and consume it every day. Just 31% said it is damaging the environment.



This (and other results) suggests three things:

First, the obsessive nature of the conversation about carbon dioxide escapes most people. In other words, debates around things like the Paris agreement are more noise than signal.

Second, carbon dioxide and climate change have become decoupled in the minds of many voters. This emphasizes one of the significant findings of this project, namely that climate change has become a catch basket into which all environmental problems have been tossed.

Third, this conversation is far from over. Sentiments about climate change remain as poorly formed and unsettled as they were when this conversation began three decades ago. In other words, in spite of the time and billions of dollars spent, those who press this issue don't seem to be any further along than they were when they started.

"This survey confirms what we have known for a long time. Voters think taxes on energy or its proxy, carbon dioxide, are a bad idea, and they do not trust the government to spend the money from such taxes," said Thomas Pyle, IER President and ACU Foundation Policy Fellow.

"As the tax reform debate unfolds in Washington, lawmakers are forewarned that the voters have no appetite for energy or carbon taxes," said ACU leader Matt Schlapp.

**To view the nationwide survey in the form of a graphic slideshow, click [here](#). To view it in the form of a PDF, click [here](#).**

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*Stop continental drift!*