

TO: Interested Parties  
FROM: Andrew Baumann, Global Strategy Group  
DATE: February 11, 2019  
RE: **Survey Findings: Minnesotans' Desire for 100% Clean Energy and Climate Action at Odds with Trump Administration's Dirty Energy Agenda**

---

According to a new statewide survey conducted by Global Strategy Group, overwhelming majorities of Minnesota voters across the political and demographic spectrum believe climate change is a real and serious problem, want action on climate from both the federal and state governments, and are highly supportive of policies that would limit carbon pollution and move the country to clean energy. In fact, nearly three-quarters (74%) of Minnesotans support setting a goal of moving the country to 100% clean energy by 2050, and nearly nine-out-of-ten (88%) support limiting carbon emissions from power plants.

At the same time, Minnesotans overwhelmingly reject the Trump administration's approach to energy and the environment. When asked to rate the job performance of the Trump administration on a range of issues, respondents give the administration its lowest marks on dealing with climate and the environment. Moreover, large majorities oppose a range of actions the administration has taken on environmental issues, from withdrawing the U.S. from the Paris Agreement, to overturning President Obama's Clean Power Plan, to rolling back limits on mercury emissions.

#### KEY SURVEY FINDINGS:

**Minnesotans believe that climate change is happening and is a very serious problem – and they want the state and federal governments to act.** Nearly eight in ten Minnesota voters (79%) believe that the world's climate is undergoing a change that is causing more extreme weather patterns and a rise in sea levels, and a similar 79% believe that climate change is a serious problem, with nearly half rating it very serious (48%). There is cross-partisan agreement with 98% of Democrats, 80% of independents and a remarkable 57% of Republicans rating climate change as a serious problem. Unsurprisingly, then, 85% of Minnesotans support the federal and/or state government doing more to reduce the kinds of pollution that causes climate change.

**There is strong support for policies to move the U.S. towards clean energy and away from fossil fuels.** When asked to choose between policies that encourage the US to move away from fossil fuels and towards clean energy or encourage more production of energy from American coal, oil and natural gas (text below), respondents overwhelmingly prefer moving towards clean energy (70%). This includes 87% of Democrats, 70% of independents, 78% of 18 to 44-year-olds, 81% of Latinx and African Americans and even nearly half of Republicans (49%).

*We should implement policies that encourage the U.S. to move away from dirty fossil fuels and towards clean, American energy like wind and solar.*

OR

*We should implement policies that encourage the production of more energy from American sources like domestic coal, oil and natural gas.*

**There is overwhelming support for a move to 100% renewable energy on a state and national level.**

Nearly eight in ten Minnesotans (78%) support moving Minnesota to 100% renewable energy sources for electric utilities by 2045. The same level of support (74%) is seen for setting a goal that 100% of energy in America, including energy used to power cars and trucks, come from renewable sources by 2050. The former proposal receives support from a majority of Democrats (95%), independents (74%), and Republicans (59%).

**Minnesotans want their leaders to support 100% clean energy.** Nearly two-thirds of Minnesotans (62%) would view an official who supports a transition to 100% more favorably, versus 15% who would view them less favorably. As the table below shows, at least pluralities of nearly every group in the survey – including Republicans – would view such officials in a more favorable light.

	Total	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.	White	Latinx/ AfrAm	18-44
More Favorable	62%	88%	57%	37%	61%	76%	70%
Less Favorable	15%	1%	15%	31%	16%	5%	7%

**Minnesotans overwhelmingly support a range of pro-environmental policies.** By a large margin, Minnesotans support policies to require oil and gas companies to reduce methane emissions, limit the amount of emissions from power plants, require higher fuel efficiency, and limit oil and gas production on public lands.

	Support	Oppose
Continuing to implement limits on the amount of carbon emissions that power plants can release	88%	12%
Requiring oil and gas companies to reduce the amount of methane emissions	87%	13%
Requiring new cars and trucks sold in America to have higher fuel efficiency and to produce lower carbon emissions	87%	13%
Limiting oil and gas production on federal public lands in order to protect the habitats of rare and endangered wildlife species	79%	21%

**The Trump administration gets its worst rating on climate and the environment.** The Trump administration gets poor ratings on a range of issues, but Minnesotans especially disapprove of the administration’s handling of the environment (37% approve / 63% disapprove) as well as climate change (35% approve / 65% disapprove) – placing these lowest on a list of seven issues tested.

**Minnesotans soundly reject the Trump administration’s approach to energy and the environment.**

Respondents were asked to read a neutral description of the administration’s overall approach to energy and the environment (text below), and they were not impressed. Two-thirds (67%) oppose this approach by the Trump administration while just 33% approve. While a majority of Republicans do approve of their approach, almost every other demographic group strongly disapproves, including Democrats (94% disapprove), independents (73%), 18 – 44-year-olds (71%), and Latinx and African Americans (76%).

*When it comes to energy and the environment, Donald Trump and his administration have attempted to boost the production of domestic oil, gas and coal by allowing oil, gas and coal companies to drill or mine in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska and in many national public lands in the continental U.S. They withdrew the United States from the Paris Agreement, an international agreement meant to combat climate change. They have overturned President Obama's rules that limited the amount of carbon emissions from power plants and vehicles, and have reduced government support for renewable energy like wind and solar. They have also rolled back E.P.A. regulations meant to limit air and water pollution, such as methane and mercury emissions.*

### **Minnesotans strongly reject the specific environmental actions taken by the Trump administration.**

While Minnesotans reject the Trump administration's overall approach soundly, their opposition to many of the administration's specific actions is even higher. On a range of 11 actions taken by the administration, disapproval ranged from a low of 62% to a high of 83%, with the greatest dissatisfaction reserved for the administration's decision to eliminate methane and carbon emission standards.

	<b>Approve</b>	<b>Disapprove</b>
Allowing oil and gas companies to release more methane emissions from their pipelines and production sites.	16%	84%
Rolling back air quality standards designed to limit the emission of mercury and other hazardous pollutants from power plants.	23%	77%
Rolling back the Clean Water Act and weakening federal rules designed to protect millions of acres of wetlands and thousands of miles of streams from pollution.	23%	77%
Eliminating standards that required new cars and trucks to have higher fuel efficiency and to produce lower carbon emissions.	23%	77%
Overturning federal rules that limited the amount of carbon emissions from power plants.	25%	75%
Eliminating incentives designed to increase the production of renewable energy like wind and solar.	25%	75%
Reducing the enforcement of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards designed to prevent air and water pollution.	26%	74%
Opening public lands to drilling by oil and gas companies and mining by coal companies.	29%	71%
Shrinking the amount of national public lands that are protected from oil and gas development as national monuments.	30%	70%
Opening nearly all of America's coastal waters to offshore oil and gas drilling.	32%	68%
Withdrawing the United States from the Paris Agreement, an international agreement designed to address climate change.	35%	65%

#### **ABOUT THIS POLL**

*Global Strategy Group conducted an online survey from January 9-22, 2019 with 604 registered voters in Minnesota. Care has been taken to ensure that the survey is representative of the registered voter population of Minnesota on a variety of demographics including party registration, race, age, gender, education, and region.*