

# REPUBLICANS, CLEAN ENERGY, AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Poll of 1200 registered voters nationwide  
with an oversample to reach 500 Republicans

August 24-27, 2015  
MoE +/- 2.8%

conducted by Echelon Insights, North Star Opinion Research, and Public Opinion Strategies,  
on behalf of ClearPath



# THE HEADLINE:

**VOTERS - INCLUDING CONSERVATIVE  
REPUBLICANS - THINK CLEAN ENERGY KEEPS  
US HEALTHIER, SAFER, AND MORE  
PROSPEROUS.**

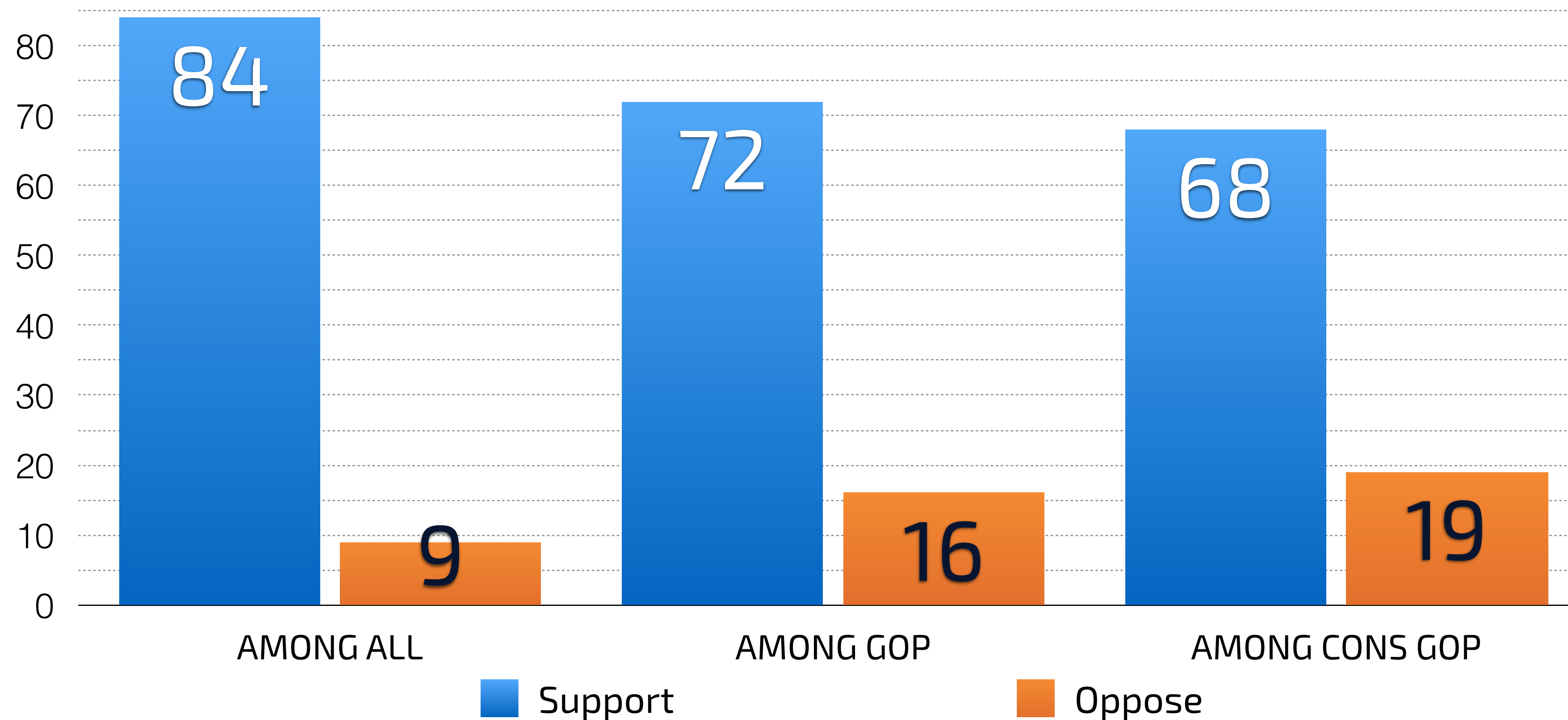


**THERE IS STRONG SUPPORT FOR  
CLEAN ENERGY.**



# VOTERS SUPPORT ACCELERATING THE DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF CLEAN ENERGY

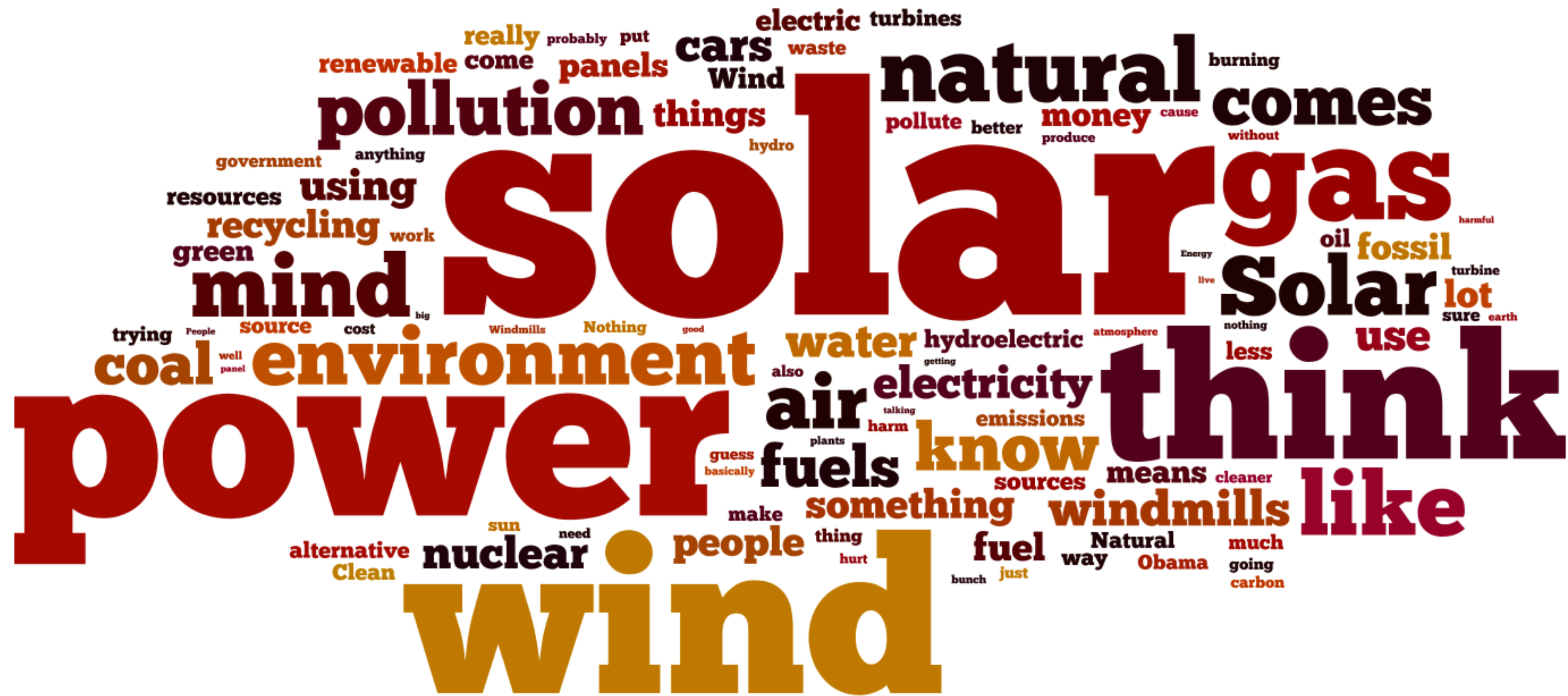
SUPPORT/OPPOSE? "Would you say you support or oppose taking action to accelerate the development and use of clean energy in the United States?"



MOST ASSOCIATE “CLEAN ENERGY”  
WITH SOLAR AND WIND POWER AS  
WELL AS LOWER POLLUTION.







ONLY REPUBLICANS



**STRONGEST FRAMES FOR DISCUSSING  
CLEAN ENERGY:  
LESS POLLUTION.  
MORE INNOVATION.  
GREATER INDEPENDENCE.**





# FRAMES WHERE A MAJORITY OF CONSERVATIVE REPUBLICANS STRONGLY AGREE

Agree or Disagree?	% Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Agree (Conservative GOP)	% Strongly Agree (Conservative GOP)
We should accelerate the growth of clean energy so that America can have <b>cleaner, healthier air and less pollution</b> at home.	91%	73%	80%	52%
We should accelerate the growth of clean energy so that <b>American innovation can create economic growth and jobs</b> at home.	89%	69%	77%	54%
We should accelerate the growth of clean energy so that America is <b>less dependent on energy from the Middle East</b> .	88%	70%	79%	64%



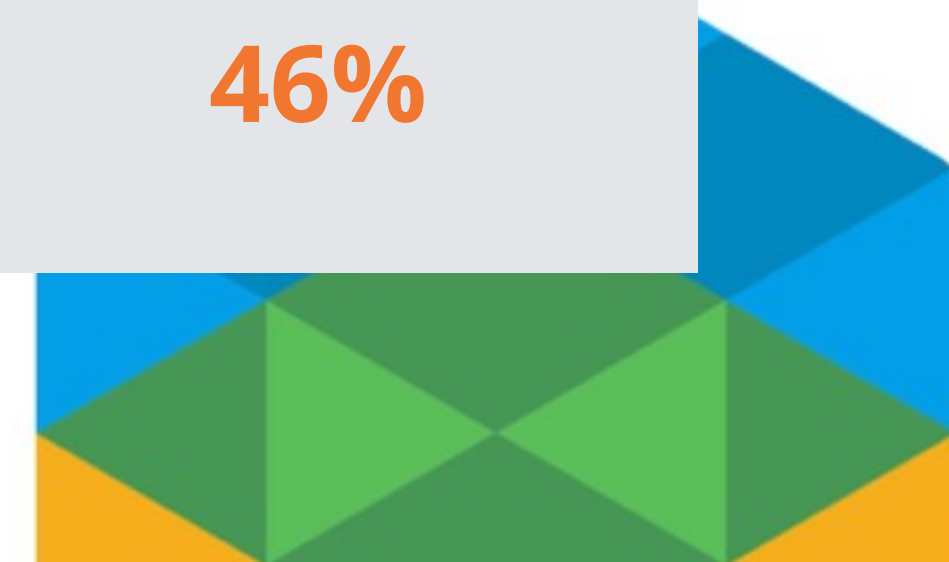
**THERE WAS A DROP-OFF IN “STRONGLY AGREE” FOR THE NEXT FOUR FRAMES:**

**GLOBAL LEADERSHIP  
INEVITABILITY  
BEATING CHINA  
A MORE SECURE GRID**



# FRAMES WHERE 34-46% OF CONSERVATIVE REPUBLICANS STRONGLY AGREE

Agree or Disagree?	% Agree	% Strongly Agree	% Agree (Conservative GOP)	% Strongly Agree (Conservative GOP)
We should accelerate the growth of clean energy so that America can <b>lead on addressing global environmental issues.</b>	83%	54%	63%	34%
We should accelerate the growth of clean energy so that we can <b>more quickly make the inevitable transition</b> away from carbon-emitting sources of energy	82%	55%	63%	34%
We should accelerate the growth of clean energy so that America is <b>not left behind by nations like China in developing next generation energy technology.</b>	81%	56%	69%	41%
We should accelerate the growth of clean energy so that we can decentralize our nation's electricity sources, making them <b>less susceptible to terrorist attacks.</b>	80%	52%	74%	46%



# WHAT POLICIES DO VOTERS - PARTICULARLY REPUBLICAN VOTERS - SUPPORT TO ACCELERATE DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF CLEAN ENERGY?



# ROOFTOP SOLAR AND NET METERING ARE HUGE WINNERS; MAJORITY “STRONGLY” SUPPORT

Support or oppose?	% Support	% Strongly Support	% Support (Conservative GOP)	% Strongly Support (Conservative GOP)
--------------------	-----------	--------------------	------------------------------	---------------------------------------

We should allow homeowners who use rooftop solar panels to receive credit on their energy bill for **sending extra power back to the electrical grid** that other customers can use.

89%

68%

87%

62%

We should support homeowners who lease **rooftop solar** panels from private companies to power their own homes and not fine them for doing so.

85%

57%

84%

58%



# PORTFOLIO STANDARDS AND GOV'T R&D SEE SUPPORT, LESS "STRONGLY" AMONG CONS GOP

Support or oppose?	% Support	% Strongly Support	% Support (Conservative GOP)	% Strongly Support (Conservative GOP)
--------------------	-----------	--------------------	------------------------------	---------------------------------------

Where utilities have a monopoly on providing power to consumers, they should be **required to have clean energy as one of the sources of power** they generate.

80%

51%

66%

32%

We should increase **government funding for basic research into clean energy technology** without picking winners and losers, launching a "space race" style effort to reach new energy frontiers.

71%

37%

58%

26%

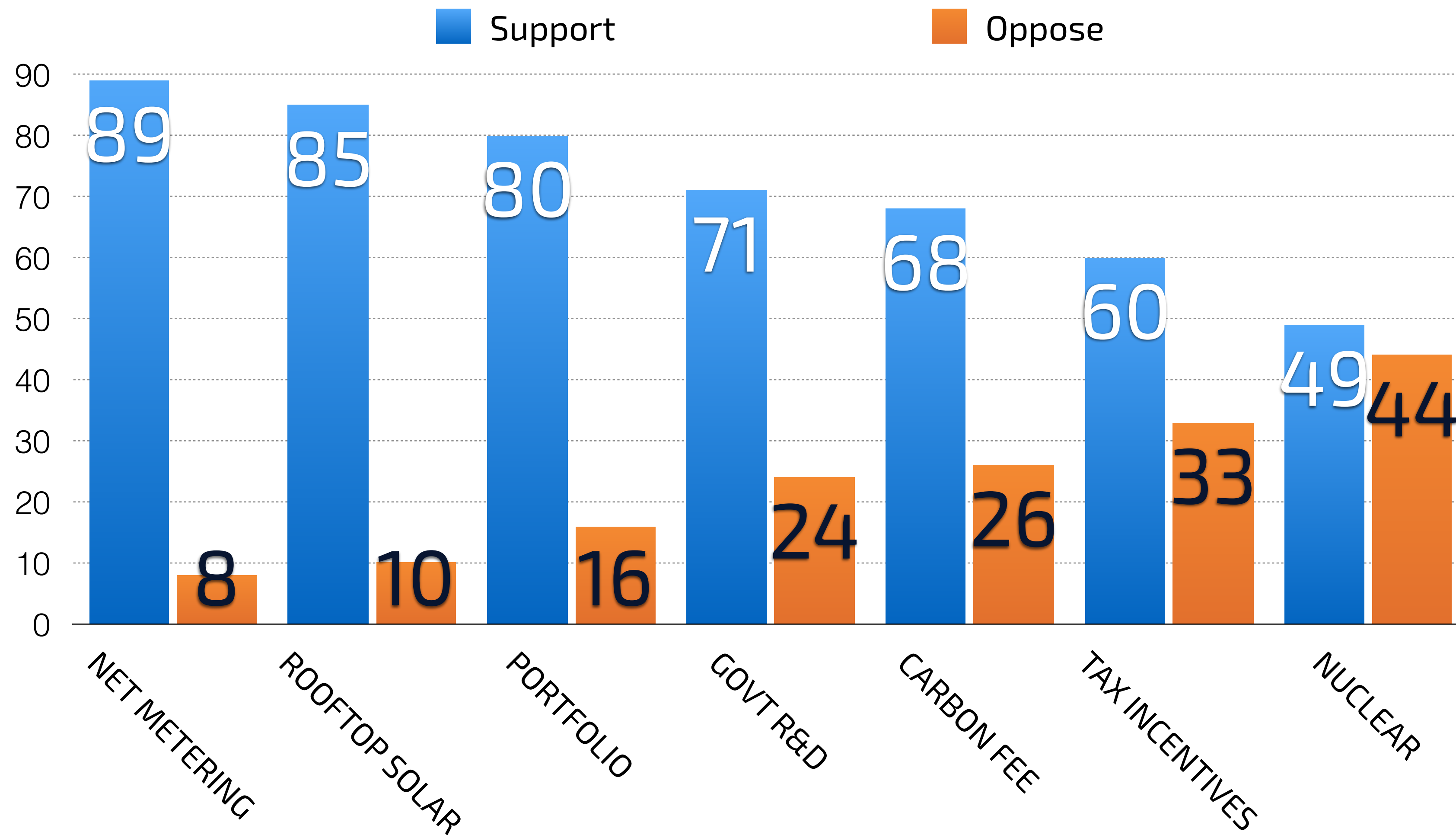


# CARBON FEES AND TAX INCENTIVES ARE NOT WELL LOVED BY CONSERVATIVES; NUCLEAR TESTS POORLY BUT CONSERVATIVES WARM TO IT

Support or oppose?	% Support	% Strongly Support	% Support (Conservative GOP)	% Strongly Support (Conservative GOP)
We should require power plants to <b>pay a fee for the carbon they emit</b> , and return that fee directly to consumers as a tax credit to offset a seven percent increase in utility bills.	68%	43%	54%	32%
We should increase <b>tax incentives for developing energy sources like solar and wind</b> so that they can compete fairly, but only for five years, after which we should eliminate subsidies for ALL energy types	60%	23%	54%	23%
We should expand the use of <b>nuclear power</b> in the United States because today's technology is extremely safe and creates no harmful emissions.	49%	23%	57%	30%

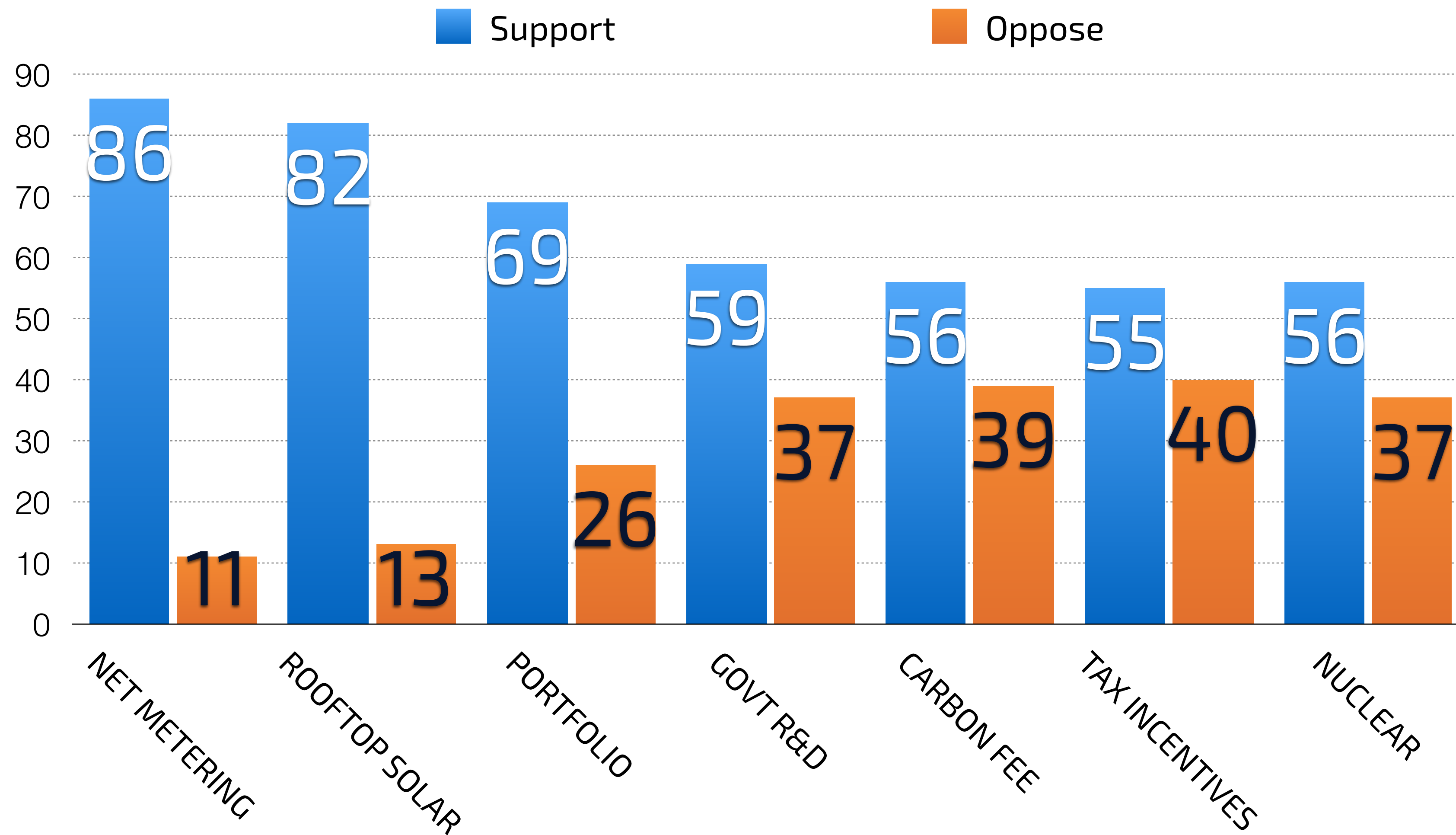


# ROOFTOP SOLAR AND NET METERING ARE CLEAR WINNERS (OVERALL)

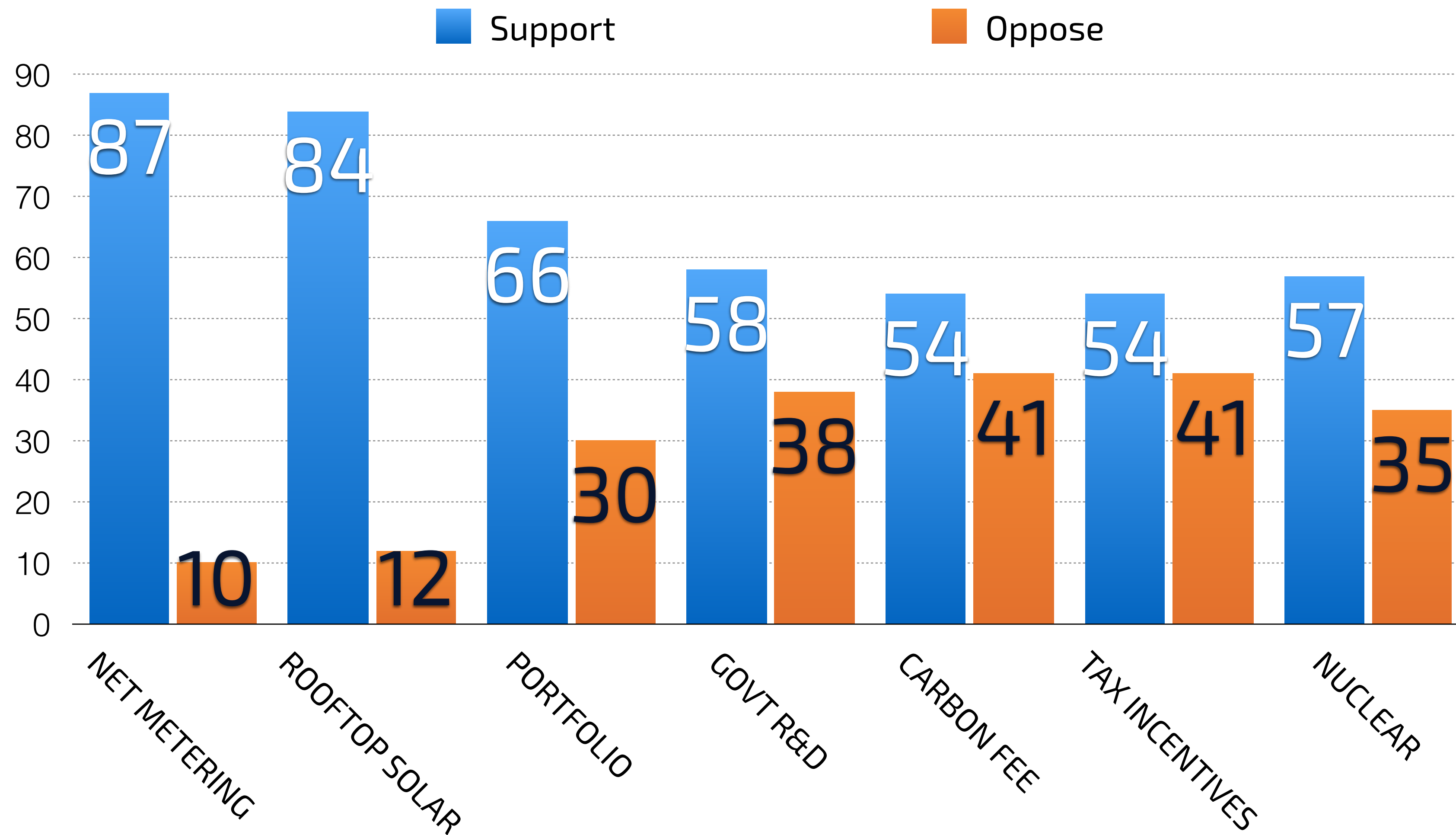




# ROOFTOP SOLAR AND NET METERING ARE CLEAR WINNERS (REPUBLICANS)



# ROOFTOP SOLAR AND NET METERING ARE CLEAR WINNERS (CONS REPUBLICANS)



IMPORTANT TO NOTE:

WHILE CONSERVATIVE SUPPORT MAY  
OUTPACE OPPOSITION, ROUGHLY A QUARTER  
OF CONSERVATIVE REPUBLICANS ARE  
“STRONGLY OPPOSED” TO CARBON FEES,  
GOV’T R&D AND TAX INCENTIVES.



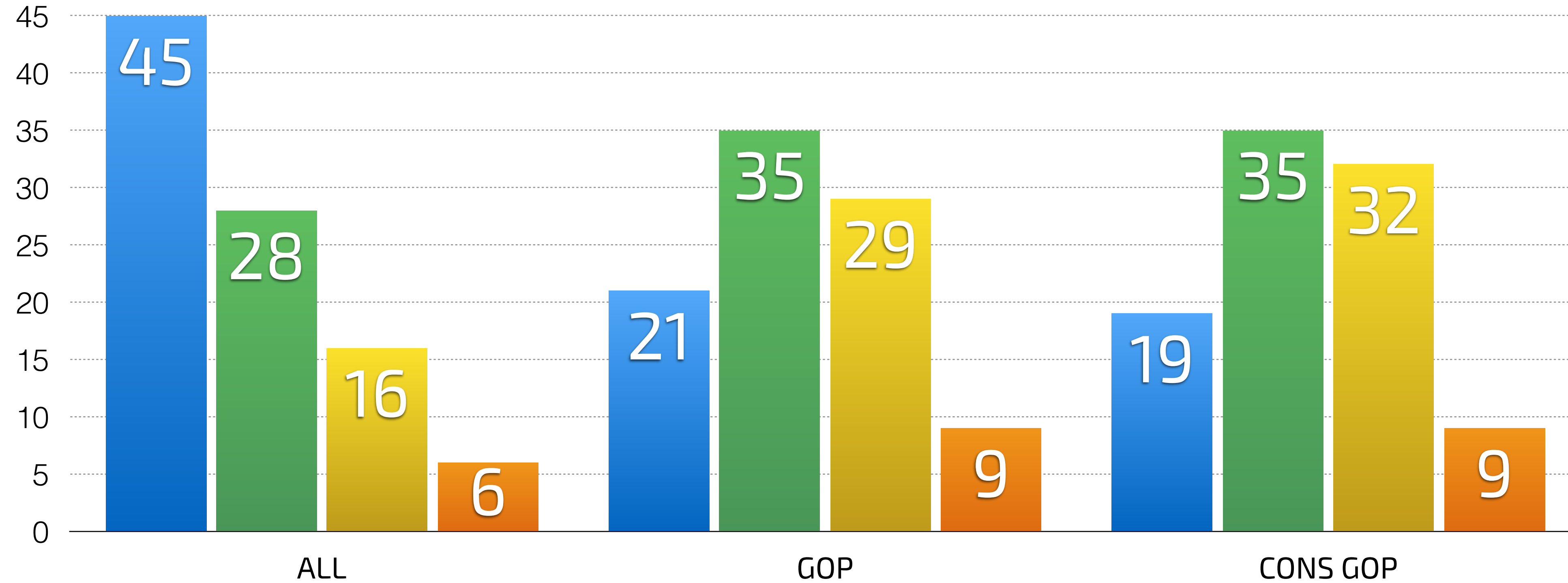
# HOW DOES CLIMATE CHANGE FIT INTO THE PICTURE?

**MOST VOTERS - INCLUDING MOST CONSERVATIVE REPUBLICANS - THINK THE CLIMATE IS CHANGING AND MANKIND IS PLAYING A ROLE.**



# MOST THINK THE CLIMATE IS CHANGING AND HUMAN ACTIVITY IS PLAYING A ROLE

"On the issue of climate, I'd like to know which of the following you agree with more..."



- Climate is changing and human activity is contributing a lot to the change
- Climate is changing and human activity is probably contributing a little to the change
- Climate is changing because of natural cycles and human activity isn't a factor
- Climate is not really changing



**IMPORTANT TO NOTE:**  
OUTRIGHT DISMISSAL OF CLIMATE CHANGE IS  
VERY LIMITED, EVEN AMONG CONSERVATIVE  
REPUBLICANS.

HOWEVER, MOST REPUBLICANS HESITATE TO  
SAY CLIMATE CHANGE HAS “A LOT” TO DO  
WITH HUMAN ACTIVITY.



WE TESTED A VARIETY OF POTENTIAL CLIMATE MATCHUPS, PITTING DIFFERENT POTENTIAL CONSERVATIVE POSITIONS AGAINST A LIBERAL POSITION.

EACH MATCHUP:

“CANDIDATE A SAYS CLIMATE CHANGE IS AN URGENT CHALLENGE AND THEREFORE WE NEED TO STRENGTHEN THE EPA’S RESTRICTIONS ON CARBON EMISSIONS AND SIGNIFICANTLY SUBSIDIZE CLEAN ENERGY.”

VS.

A DIFFERENT POTENTIAL CONSERVATIVE RESPONSE



# THE BEST CONSERVATIVE CLIMATE MESSAGE? DE-POLITICIZE CLIMATE CHANGE AND EMPHASIZE CLEAN AIR + ENERGY INDEPENDENCE.

For whom would you be more likely to vote?	OVERALL	INDEPENDENTS	GOP	CONS GOP
Candidate A says climate change is an urgent challenge and therefore we need to strengthen the EPA's restrictions on carbon emissions and significantly subsidize clean energy.	19%	20%	11%	10%
Candidate B says we should expand the use of clean energy <b>regardless of the debate over climate</b> , because it will <b>reduce our dependence on foreign oil, reduce air pollution, and improve public health.</b>	76%	75%	83%	82%





# SECOND BEST CONSERVATIVE CLIMATE MESSAGE MATCHUP?

## FRAME CLIMATE ACTION AS RISK AVERSION.

For whom would you be more likely to vote?	OVERALL	INDEPENDENTS	GOP	CONS GOP
<p>Candidate A says climate change is an urgent challenge and therefore we need to strengthen the EPA's restrictions on carbon emissions and significantly subsidize clean energy.</p>	29%	28%	15%	14%
<p>Candidate B says <b>even if we aren't certain what the climate will be decades from now</b>, we should accelerate clean energy now to <b>minimize the risk</b> of serious climate change effects or the need for harsh regulation.</p>	65%	67%	76%	75%



# TALKING ABOUT THE NEED FOR “MARKET-BASED” ACTION HOLDS STRONG SUPPORT WITH GOP BUT SEES DROP OFF AMONG DEMS/INDS.

For whom would you be more likely to vote?	OVERALL	INDEPENDENTS	GOP	CONS GOP
Candidate A says climate change is an urgent challenge and therefore we need to strengthen the EPA's restrictions on carbon emissions and significantly subsidize clean energy.	48%	48%	26%	24%
Candidate B says <b>climate change is a challenge</b> , and <b>we need an approach that is market-based</b> instead of one driven by more top-down government regulation.	47%	48%	69%	72%



# THE “IGNORE CLIMATE” MESSAGE ONLY WINS 1/3RD OF VOTERS, THOUGH IT DOES WELL WITH REPUBLICANS IN CONTRAST TO TRADITIONAL DEMOCRATIC MESSAGING.

For whom would you be more likely to vote?	OVERALL	INDEPENDENTS	GOP	CONS GOP
Candidate A says climate change is an urgent challenge and therefore we need to strengthen the EPA's restrictions on carbon emissions and significantly subsidize clean energy.	60%	63%	35%	33%
Candidate B says <b>the science around climate change is not at all clear, so the government should focus on other, more important issues.</b>	36%	34%	62%	64%



# VOTERS OF ALL STRIPES RESPOND LEAST WELL TO MESSAGING THAT SUGGESTS CLEAN ENERGY DOESN'T MATTER BECAUSE OF CHINA

For whom would you be more likely to vote?	OVERALL	INDEPENDENTS	GOP	CONS GOP
Candidate A says climate change is an urgent challenge and therefore we need to strengthen the EPA's restrictions on carbon emissions and significantly subsidize clean energy.	66%	66%	43%	40%
Candidate B says <b>it does not matter what the United States does about clean energy, because countries like China will never curb their carbon emissions.</b>	29%	31%	49%	53%



For whom would you be more likely to vote? (VS CANDIDATE A CLIMATE MESSAGE)	OVERALL	INDEPENDENTS	GOP	CONS GOP
Candidate B says we should expand the use of clean energy <b>regardless of the debate over climate</b> , because it will <b>reduce our dependence on foreign oil, reduce air pollution, and improve public health.</b>	76%	75%	83%	82%
Candidate B says <b>even if we aren't certain what the climate will be decades from now</b> , we should accelerate clean energy now to <b>minimize the risk</b> of serious climate change effects or the need for harsh regulation.	65%	67%	76%	75%
Candidate B says <b>climate change is a challenge</b> , and <b>we need an approach that is market-based</b> instead of one driven by more top-down government regulation.	47%	48%	69%	72%
Candidate B says <b>the science around climate change is not at all clear, so the government should focus on other, more important issues.</b>	36%	34%	62%	64%
Candidate B says <b>it does not matter what the United States does about clean energy, because countries like China will never curb their carbon emissions.</b>	29%	31%	49%	53%



# THE BOTTOM LINE:

VOTERS - INCLUDING CONSERVATIVE  
REPUBLICANS - THINK CLEAN ENERGY KEEPS  
US HEALTHIER, SAFER, AND MORE  
PROSPEROUS.



## THE BOTTOM LINE:

THE STRONGEST MESSAGING DEPOLITICIZES CLIMATE AND PUTS OTHER BENEFITS - HEALTH, SECURITY, INNOVATION - FIRST.



# REPUBLICANS, CLEAN ENERGY, AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Poll of 1200 registered voters nationwide  
with an oversample to reach 500 Republicans

August 24-27, 2015  
MoE +/- 2.8%

conducted by Echelon Insights, North Star Opinion Research, and Public Opinion Strategies,  
on behalf of ClearPath

