

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Interested Parties

FROM: John Anzalone, Anzalone Liszt Grove Research
Joel Benenson, Benenson Strategy Group
David Binder, David Binder Research
Geoff Garin, Hart Research Associates
Anna Greenberg, Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research
Paul Harstad, Harstad Strategic Research
Celinda Lake, Lake Research Partners
Mark Mellman, The Mellman Group
Jefrey Pollock, Global Strategy Group

DATE: November 16, 2015

RE: The National Consensus on Climate Change and Clean Energy

In our work as opinion researchers and analysts, we have reached similar conclusions about the emergence of a significant and growing national consensus regarding the imperative of addressing global climate change and accelerating the movement to an economy that is powered by clean energy sources.

The most important elements of this consensus are as follows.

(1) A large majority of Americans consider climate change to be a serious problem and want action to be taken now to address it.

There is a growing awareness that human activity, such as burning fossil fuels, contributes to the problem of climate change. People in the millennial generation, among others, are especially hostile to politicians who deny the reality of climate change, and perceive them as ignoring the reality of the world in which they live. A clear majority of voters believe that there is already enough evidence to warrant action now to address climate change.

(2) There is broad support for the E.P.A.'s Clean Power Plan to limit carbon pollution from electric power plants and require greater use of clean energy sources.

Support for the Clean Power Plan crosses party lines and includes significant shares of Republican voters – even when the plan is explicitly associated with the Obama Administration.

Voters continue to support the Clean Power Plan even after hearing arguments both for and against it, including criticisms related to its

economic impacts. The most compelling reasons for voters to support the Clean Power Plan include:

- The impact of unregulated carbon pollution on asthma and other respiratory illnesses, and the health benefits and cost savings that can occur by limiting carbon pollution now;
- The moral irresponsibility and increased financial costs of passing the problem of climate change onto our children and grandchildren; and
- The economic and environmental benefits of accelerating America's transition to clean energy sources.

Increasingly, opposition to any regulation of carbon pollution emissions and doing nothing about climate change are politically indefensible propositions for officeholders or candidates, especially when those positions are tied to financial contributions from coal, oil, and gas interests.

(3) There is avid support for increasing our use of clean, renewable energy sources and voters expect the shift to these cleaner sources will lead to more jobs and lower electricity costs over the long term.

Significant majorities of voters want the government to do more than it currently is doing to promote the use of clean and renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power. There is broad support among voters for setting clear clean energy goals for America – including having at least 50% of our power come from clean energy sources by 2030 and having all of our power come from clean energy sources after that.

Voters expect that the transition to clean energy will result in a net increase in American jobs, and ultimately will result in lower electricity costs. Consumers support policies to promote clean energy sources even if they result in some short-term increases in electricity rates, just as they have supported regulations on air pollution emissions in the past, but there is a growing view that the transition to clean power will result in cost savings sooner rather than later.