

NEW POLL: MOST AMERICANS ARE WILLING TO PAY A PREMIUM FOR AN AMERICAN-MADE ELECTRIC VEHICLE OVER ONE MADE IN CHINA

Americans continue to be open to purchasing electric vehicles, but are deterred by cost, range, charging capacity, and a lack of charging stations. They also view a host of climate policies as important for the next president to address and, with the exception of older Republicans, do not support the expansion of fossil fuels.

CHICAGO, June 4, 2024—When given the option between a more expensive electric vehicle made in the United States and a less expensive electric vehicle made in China, the majority of Americans report they would purchase the American-made vehicle, according to a new survey from the [Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago \(EPIC\)](#) and [The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research](#). This holds true if told that the American-made vehicle cost \$500, \$1,000, \$2,000, or \$5,000 more than the Chinese-made vehicle with 6 in 10 saying they would pay \$5,000 more for the American-made vehicle.

While few Americans currently drive an electric vehicle, 42% are at least somewhat likely to purchase one in the future. Groups more likely to already own an electric vehicle—such as younger and wealthier Americans, as well as those who say climate change is happening—are also more likely to consider purchasing an electric vehicle in the future.

Reducing personal impact on climate change is a reason for purchasing an electric vehicle for 66% of adults. Financial considerations such as saving money on gas (70%), saving money on vehicle maintenance (62%), or receiving a tax break (60%) are also top factors. The cost of a new electric vehicle (83%) tops the list of reasons Americans would not purchase one, but concerns about range (75%) and charge time (73%) are also key considerations. Despite [recent investments in electric vehicle charging stations](#), two-thirds of Americans report they don't know of charging stations nearby, regardless of whether they live in a rural, suburban, or urban area.

While many Americans are willing to pay a monthly carbon fee on their energy use, more than half are still unwilling to pay anything. Forty-five percent of Americans would support a monthly carbon fee of \$1, and 25% would support a \$75 or \$100 monthly fee. Democrats are more willing than Republicans and independents to pay a monthly carbon fee, regardless of the amount.

“Americans’ reported willingness to pay a carbon fee reveals the complicated politics of carbon pricing. Less than half of Americans would pay even \$1 per month, but the average willingness to pay across the entire adult population is about \$36 per month, up from \$31 last year,” says Michael Greenstone, director of EPIC and the Milton Friedman Distinguished Service Professor in Economics at the University of Chicago. “The average is driven by the quarter of respondents who are willing to pay \$100 or more per month. Still, Americans’ willingness to pay for climate policy is far below the U.S. EPA’s [recent announcement](#) that the costs of climate change have quadrupled, based on EPIC’s [Climate Impact Lab](#).”

Most Americans say climate actions are extremely or very important for the next president to address. These actions include protecting conservation lands and wildlife (62%), enforcing strict clean air and

water regulations (56%), expanding the U.S. clean energy industry (53%), and reducing U.S. greenhouse gas emissions (50%). But there is a sharp divide along party lines, with three-quarters of Democrats supporting these policy actions. Few Americans (34%) find it important for the next president to protect and expand U.S. fossil fuel development, while about 6 in 10 say they would support the building of wind turbines and solar farms in their communities. Republicans under 45 are closer to Democrats than they are to their older Republican counterparts on the issue of fossil fuel development, with only 35% of younger Republicans supporting it compared to 53% of older Republicans and 28% of Democrats.

When it comes to specific climate and energy policies, most Americans support regulations to limit emissions from power plants and vehicles (59%) and funding to states to help communities adapt (54%)—Democrats overwhelmingly support these policies (78% and 75%, respectively). The majority of Republicans—and to a lesser extent independents—do not support these policies. Americans are the least supportive of expanding U.S. natural gas exports (41%), with Democrats (37%) and independents (32%) being less supportive than Republicans (50%).

While most Americans are unwilling to pay a monthly carbon fee on their energy use, more than half (58%) say they would support a tax that companies would pay on the carbon they emit—including about three-quarters of Democrats, half of independents, and 40% of Republicans.

This sentiment is in line with who Americans believe bears a responsibility to address climate change. Individuals bear the least responsibility (41%), a belief that has declined from 50% in 2019. Corporations (62%) and the federal government (59%) bear the greatest responsibility. Fifty-seven percent of Americans say rapidly developing countries like India and China bear responsibility, and 52% say developed countries bear responsibility. For Republicans, rapidly developing countries bear the greatest responsibility out of all the choices (48%).

Eighty-four percent of Democrats rank climate change policy as an important factor to their vote in the 2024 presidential election compared with 43% of Republicans. When it comes to energy policy, majorities of both parties say it is an important factor to their vote, including 78% of Democrats and 65% of Republicans.

After a slight decline in the belief of human-driven climate change in last year's poll, more Americans say climate change is at least mostly human-driven—but still only about half (54%). The increase was most pronounced among Democrats, with a 7-percentage point increase in belief of human-driven climate change from 2023 (60% vs 67%). Republicans under the age of 45 are more likely to believe climate change is happening than they were in 2021 (69% vs 60%), but there was no change in older Republicans' views over the same period. And younger Republicans are also more likely to believe that climate change is caused mostly by humans than older Republicans (40% vs 29%).

“Climate issues have topped the agenda for Democrats for a number of years, but this poll suggests generational change may increase the salience among Republicans as well,” said Jennifer Benz, deputy director of the AP-NORC Center. “Compared to older Republicans, the younger generation of the party is more likely to believe climate change is happening, that human factors are causing it, and to prioritize a clean energy industry in the U.S.”

Meanwhile, extreme weather has played a role in most Americans' lives and attitudes on climate change over the past year. Eighty-nine percent of Americans report experiencing extreme weather-related events in their local communities in the past year, most commonly in the form of unusually hot or cold days (74%), poor air quality (55%), and severe storms (47%). Among those who have experienced these extreme weather-related events, about half (55%) say their views on climate change have been influenced by extreme weather and a quarter (26%) have considered moving due to its impacts. Those who experienced extreme weather were also more likely to consider climate change an important issue this election season (68%) and want actions to be taken to reduce emissions (53%) and provide communities with funding to adapt (58%).

About the Survey

This survey was conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, with funding from the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago (EPIC). Staff from NORC at the University of Chicago, The Associated Press, and EPIC collaborated on all aspects of the study.

Data were collected using both probability and non-probability sample sources. Interviews for this survey were conducted from March 25 – April 10, 2024, with adults age 18 and older representing the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

The probability sample source is the AmeriSpeak® Panel, NORC's probability-based panel designed to be representative of the U.S. household population. The non-probability sample was provided by Dynata based on quotas related to age, race and ethnicity, gender, and education.

The overall margin of sampling error for the combined sample is +/- 1.7 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level, including the design effect. The margin of sampling error may be higher for subgroups.

Sampling error is only one of many potential sources of error and there may be other unmeasured errors in this or any other survey.

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