



# Top Line Results – PCAP Climate Action Attitude Study

## June 30, 2008

### Overview

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This top line report summarizes the results of an online study of a nationally-representative sample of likely voters conducted online by Harris Interactive during the period of June 25-27, 2008. The poll was commissioned by the non-profit, non-partisan Presidential Climate Action Project (PCAP), based at the University of Colorado Denver Graduate School of Public Policy. The sample size was 2,175 and weighted to reflect the US adult population.

### Findings

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1. Consistent with a previous poll during April (2008), a clear majority (63%) of likely U.S. voters consider it important that the next president initiate strong action to address climate change soon after taking office. Those most likely to vote tend to consider this issue of even greater urgency.
  - 38% believe it is extremely or very important that the president takes strong action to address climate change soon after taking office. This percentage increases to 42% among those absolutely certain to vote.
  - Only 16% believe it is not at all important.
2. Strong, immediate action on behalf of our future President remains particularly important to Hispanic (77%) and African Americans (74%).
  - 60% of Hispanic voters consider it extremely or very important and 42% indicate that it is extremely important.
3. The importance of taking strong global warming/climate change action by the next President is of concern among middle and lower income Americans. Two of three (67%) of those with household incomes of \$49,999 or below indicate that strong action to address climate change is important.

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4. Respondents from the West coast remain the most likely to ascribe a higher level of importance to the urgency question. More than 2 in 3 (69%) consider strong action important, while 46% consider it extremely or very important.

5. Women are more likely to believe that is important that the next President takes strong action to address climate change (67% versus 57% of men).

6. Younger voters (i.e. from Generation Y and X, ages 18-34) are particularly likely to believe that strong action is extremely or very important (43%).

7. More than 4 in 10 (41%) Americans believe that if strong action is not taken, our national security will be threatened by global instability. Among those absolutely certain to vote, 44% agree.

- 63% of Hispanic and 50% of African American respondents believe that our national security is at risk if no action is taken to address global warming/climate change.
- Male (35-44 years old) respondents were the most likely age/gender segment to agree with the statement. Nearly half (48%) agreed.
- Regionally, this belief in the threat of global warming/climate change to our national security is most strongly held along the West coast (45%) and in the Northeast (44%).
- Nearly one third (31%) remained neutral (neither agreeing nor disagreeing) with this statement.

8. Since the April poll, more Americans are aware of each of the Presidential candidate's climate change/global warming policies.

- 35% of respondents currently believe that Obama offers the strongest policy on climate change representing a 13% increase since the April poll.
- 17% of respondents believe that McCain offers a better climate change policy. This represents a 9% jump since the April poll (8%).
- Among those most likely (i.e. absolutely certain) to vote, 42% believe that Obama has the strongest policy on climate change and 19% believe that McCain does.

9. While over half (52%) of Americans now believe that one of the current Presidential candidates offers the strongest climate change policy, there remains a clear opportunity for the candidates to clarify their positions and plans in the current race. Nearly half (48%) of the respondents indicated that they did not know which candidate has the stronger policy on climate change.



- 60% of women ages 35-44 do not know which candidate has the stronger policy.

**10. Perceptions of the candidate's climate action policies vary across ethnic segments.**

- 53% of African American, 32% of White and 39% of Hispanic potential voters see Obama as offering the strongest climate change/global warming policy.
- 19% of both Hispanic and White voters see McCain as the candidate offering the best climate change/global warming policies compared to only 3% of African Americans.
- However, nearly half (49%) of White voters, followed by 44% of African American voters and 41% of Hispanic voters don't know which candidate offers the strongest policy.

## ***Summary***

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The need for current Presidential candidates to share their climate change policies and plans of action is clear. More than 6 out of 10 likely voters believe the next President should initiate strong action to address global warming/climate change soon after taking office. Yet, nearly half of those same voters remain uncertain which candidate has the strongest policy on climate change.