



TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Andrew Baumann, Erin Farrell, and Christopher Stauffer, Global Strategy Group
DATE: March 2024
RE: New survey demonstrates strong support for the EPA implementing stricter limits on carbon emissions from heavy-duty vehicles

RESEARCH SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

A new national survey conducted by Global Strategy Group for the American Lung Association shows that voters overwhelmingly support the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) implementing stricter limits on air pollution and placing a priority on cleaning up pollution in America's most polluted neighborhoods. Consequently, voters strongly support the EPA implementing stronger limits on carbon emissions from heavy-duty vehicles, like tractor trailers, buses, and delivery vans.

Voters plainly identify the environmental and health benefits that would come from stronger standards on carbon emissions from heavy-duty vehicles, and they reject the idea that stricter standards would damage the economy or drive up the cost of living. In fact, voters both prioritize the potential health impact of these standards over their potential economic impact AND, when push comes to shove, believe that these standards will end up creating jobs and improving the economy by encouraging innovation.

Moreover, even after being exposed to a simulated debate (including arguments from opponents focused on the supposed financial costs of electric vehicles for small businesses and American consumers), two-thirds of voters continue to support stricter standards on carbon emissions for heavy-duty vehicles.

Voters overwhelmingly support stronger clean air laws – including stricter standards on carbon emissions from heavy-duty vehicles.

Voters view environmental protections favorably: they want to see stricter air pollution standards, and they support a priority on cleaning up America's most polluted neighborhoods. Majorities view the Environmental Protection Agency (65% favorable/19% unfavorable) and the Clean Air Act (62% favorable/12% unfavorable) favorably. Moreover, 74% of voters nationwide support "the EPA updating standards with stricter limits on air pollution," and 83% support placing a priority on standards that clean up pollution in the most polluted American neighborhoods. Support for both ideas is bipartisan: 91% of Democrats, 65% of independents, and 58% of Republicans are in favor of stricter limits on air pollution; 92% of Democrats, 76% of independents, and 74% of Republicans support placing a priority on standards that clean up pollution in the most polluted American neighborhoods.

Voters want the EPA to place stricter limits on carbon emissions from heavy-duty vehicles. 72% of voters nationwide support the EPA setting stricter limits on carbon emissions from heavy-duty vehicles. What’s more, this support is spread across demographic and partisan lines; only the most conservative Republicans are opposed to such standards.

- Large bipartisan majorities – including Republicans overall (53%) – support the EPA placing stricter limits on carbon emissions from heavy-duty vehicles. When breaking out Republicans by ideology, 60% of not very conservative Republicans support these standards (while just 36% of very conservative Republicans support them).
- Around three in four Black (78%) and Hispanic (75%) voters support these standards.

	The Environmental Protection Agency is considering setting stricter limits on carbon emissions from heavy-duty vehicles, such as tractor trailers, buses, and delivery vans. Do you support or oppose the Environmental Protection Agency setting stricter limits on carbon emissions from heavy-duty vehicles?		
	Support	Oppose	Net Support
Overall	72	20	+52
Democrats	90	5	+85
Independents	67	19	+48
Not very cons. GOP	60	26	+34
Very cons. GOP	36	60	-24
White	69	24	+45
Black	78	10	+68
Hispanic	75	15	+60
Dads	77	18	+59
Moms	72	16	+56
Non-parents	71	21	+50

Voters prioritize health over the economy and see clear environmental and health benefits from the standards – but when push comes to shove, they also believe these new standards will have a positive impact on the economy by encouraging innovation.

American voters overwhelmingly believe that new standards limiting carbon emissions from heavy-duty vehicles would benefit “the quality of the air we breathe,” “future generations of Americans,” “the communities that have been impacted the most by pollution from fossil fuels,” and “the health of families like theirs.” As the following table shows, majorities of voters believe that stricter carbon emission standards would have an overwhelmingly positive impact on each of these items.

Voters reject the idea that these new standards would have a negative impact on the cost of living and the economy. Voters are split evenly on whether these limits would have a positive impact (36%) or negative impact (37%) on the economy. Notably, Black (50% positive, 21% negative) and Hispanic voters (48% positive, 25% negative) are very positive about the standards' impact on the economy. While fewer voters readily identify the positive impacts of these standards on the cost of living (29%), only 39% believe they would have a negative impact. That's a good results for advocates of the standards. Given the overwhelmingly positive perceptions of the standards' impact on other items, advocates don't need voters to believe that these standards will have a positive impact on costs; they just need them to reject the notion that they will have a negative impact – and 61% of voters do (including 77% of Black voters and 69% of Hispanic voters).

Please indicate the impact you think the Environmental Protection Agency setting stricter limits on carbon emissions from heavy-duty vehicles would have on each of the following things.				
	Positive Impact	No impact/ not sure	Negative Impact	Total Non-Negative Impact
The quality of the air we breathe	76	18	6	94
Future generations of Americans	71	18	11	89
Communities that have been impacted the most by pollution from fossil fuels	68	21	11	89
The health of families like yours	67	25	8	92
Climate change	62	28	10	90
The American economy	36	27	37	63
The cost of living for families like yours	29	32	39	61

When forced to choose between the economic and health benefits of stricter standards and their purported costs, voters prioritize the former. To dig into this a bit more, we presented voters with a choice between the following two statements:

- *We need stricter limits on pollution from heavy-duty vehicles because these standards would prevent 1.8 billion metric tons of carbon pollution and provide billions of dollars in health benefits by preventing premature deaths and sick days.*
- *We can't afford new regulations on heavy-duty vehicles because they will drive up the price of vehicles and costs for American businesses and kill American jobs.*

Two-thirds (66%) of voters say they agree more with the first statement compared to just 34% who agree more with the second, including 87% of Democrats, 69% of independents, and 42% of Republicans who agree more with the first statement.

Voters think that stronger limits on carbon emissions from heavy-duty vehicles will create jobs and boost the American economy. Similar to the previous exercise, we presented respondents with a choice between these two statements:

- *These stricter limits on pollution from heavy-duty vehicles will encourage innovation and the development of new technologies, boosting the American economy and creating American jobs.*
- *These stricter limits on emissions from heavy-duty vehicles are unnecessary and burdensome regulations that will drive up costs for American businesses and kill American jobs.*

Nearly seven in ten voters (69%) agree more with the statement that new limits would encourage innovation, compared to just 31% who agree with the statement that it will drive up prices. 90% of Democrats, 71% of independents, and 46% of Republicans agree more with the first statement.

Voters support other standards on vehicle emissions that the EPA is currently considering. Most voters support the EPA setting stricter limits on emissions from light-duty vehicles like cars or trucks, as well as granting waivers to allow California to implement its own, stronger limits on vehicle emissions.

Below are some other policies that are being considered by the Environmental Protection Agency. Please indicate whether you support or oppose each of the following.			
	Support	Oppose	Net Support
Setting stricter limits on emissions from light-duty vehicles like cars and trucks	60	30	+30
Granting waivers to allow California to implement its own, stronger limits on emissions from vehicles	56	25	+31

Support for stricter limits on carbon emissions from heavy-duty vehicles remains robust after a balanced debate between supporters and opponents.

After voters read a statement from supporters of stricter limits on carbon emissions from heavy-duty vehicles (focused on their health consequences and how transportation is the largest source of the carbon pollution that causes climate change) and a statement from opponents that says that now is the worst time for the EPA to enact new regulations like these (focused on the financial costs of electric vehicles for small businesses and American consumers), **a majority of voters continue to support the EPA setting stricter limits on carbon emissions from heavy-duty vehicles** (67% support, 33% strongly support).

...Do you support or oppose the Environmental Protection Agency setting stricter limits on carbon emissions from heavy-duty vehicles?		
	Pre-Messaging	Post-Messaging
	Net Support	
Overall	+52	+41
Democrats	+85	+81
Independents	+48	+42
Not very cons. GOP	+34	+8
Very cons. GOP	-24	-34

While this represents a slight decline from our initial ask as some more conservative voters move to their partisan corner after hearing opposition messaging, even after the debate, Democrats and independents overwhelmingly support these standards, and less-conservative Republicans continue to support the standard, though by a smaller margin.

ABOUT THE POLL

Global Strategy Group conducted an online survey of 1600 registered voters nationwide between January 29th and February 5th, 2024. The survey had a confidence interval of +/- 2.5%. Care has been taken to ensure the geographic, demographic, and political divisions among registered voters are properly represented. 801 of those voters received questions related to limits on carbon emissions from heavy-duty vehicles, which is the focus of this memo. Those questions have a confidence interval of +/- 3.5%. The other 799 voters received questions related to a separate clean air topic. The latter results will be detailed in a future memo.

APPENDIX

Simulated debate:

Supporters of stricter limits on carbon emissions from heavy-duty vehicles say: We have a basic responsibility to leave a better world for our children, and we can't do that unless we drastically reduce carbon pollution and keep our air clean. Transportation is the largest source of the carbon pollution that causes climate change, and one of the top sources of smog, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, and other toxic air pollution. Doctors say that reducing toxic pollution from heavy-duty vehicles will mean less asthma attacks, respiratory diseases, and cancer, especially among seniors and children. And by encouraging innovation and the development of new technologies, it will boost the American economy and create tens of thousands of good American jobs.

Opponents of stricter limits on carbon emissions from heavy-duty vehicles say: Given high levels of inflation and rising energy prices, now is the worst time for the EPA to enact costly regulations that will drive up prices on American businesses and kill jobs. These regulations would disproportionately impact small businesses who can least afford to purchase expensive new electric vehicles for their fleets. When it comes to trucks, electric vehicles aren't ready for prime time. The technology can't handle what's needed to deliver goods to American consumers, including the kinds of traveling distances delivery trucks need to go, and there aren't enough places to charge them. Forcing businesses to make the switch to electric vehicles will harm jobs and consumers.