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Political Candidates Who Fight Climate Change Stand to Benefit in Election

FAU Survey: Most Floridians Prefer Candidates Tackling Climate Change, 52% More Likely to Vote for Those with Climate Action Records

BOCA RATON, Fla. (Oct. 15, 2024) – A majority of Floridians expressed support for political candidates who fight climate change in a new [Florida Atlantic University](#) survey. The survey found that nearly 52% of respondents agreed that a candidate with a record of reducing climate impacts was more likely to get their vote.

The [Invading Sea](#)'s [Florida Climate Survey](#) also revealed strong support in the state for increasing renewable energy use and teaching climate science in K-12 classrooms. The survey is the 11th conducted by the FAU Center for Environmental Studies ([CES](#)) on Floridians' opinions about climate-related issues since October 2019.

The results of the survey, which was conducted before hurricanes Helene and Milton, showed that most Floridians want more government action on climate change. About 68% agreed that the state should do more to address climate impacts, while 67% agreed that the federal government should do more.

“Floridians are experiencing enough of the weather challenges predicted by climate change researchers that a majority of adults in the state now see value in some kind of collective action to fight climate change,” said [Colin Polsky](#), Ph.D., associate vice president of [Broward Campuses](#) for FAU and a professor of geosciences within the [Charles E. Schmidt College of Science](#).

While the survey found majority support for candidates with a climate-fighting record, there were significant differences between respondents depending on their political party.

More than 74% of Democrats said they were more likely to vote for a candidate with a record of reducing the impacts of climate change, as compared to about 35% of Republicans and 39% of respondents with no party affiliation.

But the survey found strong support across party lines for renewable energy. About 75% of all respondents agreed with the statement that Florida should diversify its energy mix to include more electricity produced by renewable sources.

Broken down by party, 87% of Democrats, 68% of Republicans and 66% of respondents reporting no party affiliation agreed that Florida should use more renewable energy.

“The partisan split on climate in Florida appears to be growing, reversing the growing consensus we’ve observed in recent years. That said, when specific climate-related actions are discussed, such as increasing the

share of solar in our electricity portfolios, voters are overwhelmingly supportive,” said Polsky. “Despite some climate policy progress in the face of polarization, we still need a ‘humble climate politics’ to advance to a stable trajectory of effective climate action.”

Respondents also reported concerns about the costs of electricity and insurance in Florida, with 73% concerned about home energy costs, while nearly 58% were concerned about being able to afford and maintain homeowners’ insurance due to climate change.

The survey found consistent results on several questions that have been asked since the survey started in 2019.

About 69% of Floridians believe climate science should be taught in K-12 schools, according to the latest survey. More than two-thirds of respondents have supported climate education in schools in 10 of the 11 surveys conducted since 2019.

And the latest survey also found that about 88% of Floridians believe that climate change is happening, a finding that has been around 90% of respondents in all prior FAU surveys.

“The existence of climate change is simply not up for debate in Florida,” Polsky said. “That question is settled based on our 11 surveys to date.”

Polsky is the former director of CES, which conducts the survey every spring and fall. The survey was renamed this fall after The Invading Sea (theinvadingsea.com), a nonpartisan environmental journalism website that is managed by CES.

The survey was conducted in English and Spanish from Sept. 4-6. The sample consisted of 1,400 Floridians, ages 18 and older, with a survey margin of error of +/- 2.53%.

For more information, survey results and full cross-tabulations, visit www.ces.fau.edu/ces-bepi/ or email cpolsky@fau.edu.

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Florida Atlantic University, established in 1961, officially opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. Today, the University serves more than 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students across six campuses located along the southeast Florida coast. In recent years, the University has doubled its research expenditures and outpaced its peers in student achievement rates. Through the coexistence of access and excellence, FAU embodies an innovative model where traditional achievement gaps vanish. FAU is designated a Hispanic-serving institution, ranked as a top public university by U.S. News & World Report and a High Research Activity institution by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. For more information, visit www.fau.edu.