



Messaging to Advance Climate Engagement

Findings from key audiences in AZ, GA, MI, NV, PA, and WI

Research Approach & Methodology

1

~400 online interviews with registered voters conducted in each of CAC's six target states (AZ, GA, MI, NV, PA, WI) using a combination of robust online panels and text-to-web interviews; 2,405 interviews total completed March 22-31, 2024.

2

The survey design employed MaxDiff, a technique that helps makes clearer and more reliable distinctions in respondents' reactions and issue preferences; this tool can also accommodate more message statements than conventional message testing.

3

Respondents who consistently express the view that climate change is not a serious problem and never will be were systematically excluded from the survey (approximately 18-20% of voters in each state) as they were considered outside the target audience for this campaign; therefore, these findings are **not** reflective of a representative cross-section of each state's electorate.

The credibility interval is ± 2.3 percentage points for the full combined 6-state sample and ± 4.9 percentage points for the full sample in each individual state.

Messaging on Making the Case for Action on Climate

Climate's effects on weather and on Americans' wallets stand far ahead of other messages tested.

If the score is *above 100*, then it is of above average persuasiveness.

		MaxDiff Score
Extreme Weather	Climate change is causing more frequent and intense storms and wildfires that displace families and destroy communities, droughts that threaten our food supply and restrict water use, and heatwaves that increase heat-related illnesses and deaths and strain our electric grid. Failure to take action will only make these problems worse.	212
Consumer Prices	Climate change has real consequences for Americans' wallets--higher food prices because droughts hurt crop yields, higher insurance rates because of damage from stronger and more frequent storms and wildfires, and jobs being lost in places that depend on tourism or agriculture. Unless we act, these problems will only worsen, driving up prices and costing us more money every year.	171
Aspirational Vision	Twenty years from now, we want an America that has a thriving economy and a healthy environment. We want an America that has clean air and water, and abundant food. We want an America where everyone has access to good-paying jobs and our energy sources are safe, secure and clean. We can have all those things if we recommit to tackling the climate crisis and transition to clean energy sources. Clean energy can deliver on all of these things.	127
Good Health (Aspirational)	Good health is about more than just preventing disease, it is about the ability to enjoy your life fully. It means children being able to play outdoors without fear of toxic air pollution, being able to go for a swim in the ocean or a walk in the woods and being able to raise a healthy family. Climate change harms our ability to live a healthy, fulfilling life by endangering all of those things.	117
Scientific Agreement	People who claim there is disagreement about climate change among scientists are wrong--there is no debate about this issue. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of scientists have concluded that climate change is happening, and that human activity is the main cause of it, so the only way to deal with it is for us to take action--it won't fix itself.	106
Progress is Possible	The U.S. has already made major strides to address climate change. We passed groundbreaking legislation, making the largest investment ever in clean energy, clean air, and climate action. States are working toward ambitious goals for reducing pollution. At the same time, unemployment has been at record lows and we've created more than 200,000 clean energy jobs. These accomplishments show that it is possible to make progress on climate change and grow our economy, and we must continue to build on this momentum.	106
We've Done it Before	We've overcome huge environmental challenges before, and we can do it again. In the 1970s, cities like Pittsburgh and Detroit had horrible air pollution--now the air is cleaner and breathable. The Great Lakes are much cleaner now than they were 50 years ago. We had these successes because we committed to solving problems, and we can do the same with climate change.	106

Remaining messages rate as much less convincing.

If the score is *below 100*, then it is of below average persuasiveness.

MaxDiff
Score

Energy Independence	The U.S. must develop a plan to increase use of clean, renewable energy sources that will make America energy independent so that we have a reliable energy supply and stable energy prices. This will make America more secure, so we don't have to rely on oil from the Middle East or Russia.	87
Public Health (Traditional)	Reducing pollution is one of the most important steps we can take to protect public health according to medical experts. Countless scientific studies show that reducing pollution would help avoid thousands of premature deaths, heart attacks, and hospitalizations connected to air pollution and climate change.	80
Create Jobs	Producing clean energy in the United States has already created over 200,000 jobs in big cities and small towns--good jobs you can support a family on, from engineers and scientists to construction workers and carpenters. These are jobs that will provide a revitalized economy and a healthier environment, and help Americans build a sound future for their families.	79
Vulnerable Populations	Climate change hits our most vulnerable populations the hardest. Children, the elderly, and communities facing poverty and injustice experience more heat exposure and more asthma and heart attacks that are triggered and made worse by air pollution and the dangers from extreme weather.	72
Solutions Oriented	We know what needs to be done to deal with climate change, and we have the solutions and technology to do it. Americans are driving advancements every day in areas like renewable energy, pollution cleanup, energy efficiency, and sustainable farming. Just like other innovative periods like the space race and the gig economy, Americans are poised to drive innovation and tap into unlimited economic power by driving clean energy solutions.	67
Link to Other Issues	In order to address all the issues we care about, we need fresh air to breathe, clean water to drink, and a healthy environment that can sustain all of us. Climate change isn't just an environmental threat, it's a force that makes it harder for us to tackle other pressing problems like poverty, hunger, crime, and immigration.	64
Climate Justice	For decades, Black and Latino communities have been treated as dumping grounds for polluters--causing higher rates of cancer and asthma. People of color are three times more likely to breathe polluted air where they live. Dealing with climate change will deliver justice for communities that have borne the brunt of this kind of greater exposure to pollution and toxic chemicals.	64
Competitive Economy	The United States has been a world economic leader because of our ability to adapt to a changing world and develop new innovative technologies. By committing ourselves to dealing with climate change, we will win the race to be the world's clean energy leaders.	43

The further left someone is, the more they are drawn to negative/threat themes; aspirational messages about health and the future resonate across the board.

Top messages by partisanship

Liberal Democrats	Non-liberal Democrats	Independents	Not very conservative Republicans
Extreme Weather (254)	Extreme Weather (239)	Extreme Weather (198)	Extreme Weather (174)
Consumer Prices (176)	Consumer Prices (180)	Consumer Prices (175)	Consumer Prices (160)
Scientific Agreement (138)	Scientific Agreement (119)	Good Health (125)	Aspirational Vision (148)
Aspirational Vision (115)	Aspirational Vision (108)	Aspirational Vision (123)	Good Health (133)

Extreme weather loses some strength with voters of color, but still rates highest; climate justice is key to Black voters.

Top messages by race/ethnicity

White Voters	Black Voters	Latino Voters
Extreme Weather (224)	Extreme Weather (191)	Extreme Weather (171)
Consumer Prices (185)	Climate Justice (157)	Aspirational Vision (138)
Aspirational Vision (130)	Consumer Prices (144)	Consumer Prices (137)
We've Done it Before (115)	Good Health (114)	Good Health (131)
Good Health (112)	Vulnerable Populations (113)	Scientific Agreement (118)

Voters' recall underscores urgency; health threats are sticky (despite better-testing aspirational health frame).

What ideas stand out to you for why it is important for the United States to take action to deal with climate change and increase use of clean energy? (volunteered responses to open-ended question)

	All	AZ	GA	MI	NV	PA	WI
Need to take action, urgent situation, falling short, not going to fix itself	18%	18	17	19	18	18	18
Safeguard the future for our children/grandchildren, future generations	16%	15	18	14	15	17	14
Climate change affects public health, severe health risks	16%	16	17	16	15	15	14
Need clear air, need to reduce pollution, emissions	15%	14	17	14	17	14	12
Need to protect the environment, the planet	13%	13	16	11	11	15	11
Clean energy reduces the risks of climate change, less dependency on fossil fuels	12%	14	11	16	11	12	9
Extreme weather is increasing, drought, wildfires, storms, natural disasters	12%	12	10	13	13	14	11
Climate change is real, caused by human activity, 97% of scientists concluded this	12%	9	9	8	6	13	7
Climate change impacts the economy, our prosperity	9%	8	6	7	5	7	13

Framing Opponents

We have several strong ways to characterize opponents of climate action.

Statements about opponents of having the U.S. do more to deal with climate change -
Top two choices that cause most concern

		%
They Want You Stuck **	Climate change opponents want to keep the U.S. stuck--stuck with dirty fuels like gas and oil, stuck with cars that have terrible gas mileage, stuck with toxic pollution from industrial smokestacks. The status quo is great for them, because if we're stuck, they're making money. Lining their pockets with billions of dollars while regular people suffer the consequences.	53
Worse for You, Not Them *	We know that the effects of climate change are making life harder and more expensive for regular people, while oil company CEOs and their companies benefit by raking in billions every year while still receiving taxpayers subsidies. They are getting richer at Americans' expense.	52
Historically Lying *	Polluters and opponents of dealing with climate change have always lied--they've lied that climate change is not happening, that we couldn't reduce pollution without destroying the economy, that electric vehicles don't work. They claim the sky is falling, but it never does. They tell these lies because they make money if everything stays the same, no matter what damage that does.	51
MAGA Extremism	Claiming climate change isn't happening or isn't that bad is just more MAGA extremism. They want to totally outlaw abortion, support Vladimir Putin, lie about election results, and say that climate change is a hoax. These are dangerous and extreme positions that hold us back.	49
Historically Wrong **	Polluters and opponents of dealing with climate change have always been wrong--they've been wrong that climate change is not happening, that we couldn't reduce pollution without destroying the economy, that electric vehicles don't work. They claim the sky is falling, but it never does. They don't care that they have been wrong because they make money if everything stays the same, no matter what damage that does.	47
Wrong About Clean Energy *	Opponents claim that wind power turbines, solar panels, and electric vehicles are actually bad for the environment, but this is wrong--they are not bad for the environment, they are solutions that reduce climate pollution. To claim otherwise is misleading.	32
Lying About Clean Energy **	Opponents claim that wind turbines, solar panels, and electric vehicles are actually bad for the environment, but they are lying--they are not bad for the environment, they are solutions that reduce climate pollution. To claim otherwise is a lie.	32

Top Opposition Frames by State

% saying causes them the most concern

AZ	GA	MI	NV	PA	WI
They want you stuck 52%	They want you stuck 54%	They want you stuck 55%	They want you stuck 57%	Worse for you, not for them 55%	Worse for you, not for them 54%
Historically lying 50%	Worse for you, not for them 53%	MAGA extremism 53%	Historically lying 55%	They want you stuck 53%	MAGA extremism 54%
Historically wrong 50%	Historically wrong 50%	Historically lying 52%	Worse for you, not for them 53%	Historically lying 50%	Historically lying 50%

Building a State-Tailored Narrative: Extreme Weather & New Policy Investments

Top Extreme Weather Events by State: Deadly Heat and Wildfire Smoke Consistently Evoke the Most Concern

ARIZONA:

Heat-related deaths are spiking in Pima County, with 40 fatalities occurring in just a two-week period last summer. Temperatures were up to 112 degrees in some places.

GEORGIA:

There are approximately 20 **dangerous heat days** a year in Georgia, but scientists expect that number to increase to 90 by 2050.

Georgia saw its **strongest tornado** in a decade, with peak winds up to 170 mph. Over 16,000 insurance claims were filed in the region totaling \$200 million.

MICHIGAN:

Seven **tornadoes** tore through Michigan last summer, killing five, leaving hundreds of thousands of customers without power, and at least \$86 million in damages in its wake.

NEVADA:

Scientists have said that Nevada's most recent **drought** was the worst in the last 1,000 years.

Las Vegas experienced both a **severe drought AND heavy rains** and flooding during a monsoon last July.

PENNSYLVANIA:

Smoke from wildfires in Canada blew into the state last summer, causing dangerous air quality for days on end.

WISCONSIN:

Smoke from frequent fires in the West blew into Wisconsin, causing dangerous air quality for days on end.

Top Economic Investments by State: Upgrading the Grid and Investments in Farmers are Most Compelling

ARIZONA:

Investments that help **farmers and ranchers** throughout the state on conservation efforts and dealing with climate change.

Investments to build two **new solar panel projects** in Maricopa County, which will create new jobs in the area.

GEORGIA:

Investments that **will upgrade Georgia's electricity grid** to strengthen us against climate change and allow us to make use of more clean energy sources.

MICHIGAN:

Investments that provide low-cost clean energy to **farms and rural small businesses** and helps them be more energy efficient in Grand Rapids, Traverse City, Lansing, and other rural areas.

NEVADA:

Investments that provide low-cost clean energy to **farms and rural small businesses** and helps them be more energy efficient in North Las Vegas, Reno, and other areas.

PENNSYLVANIA:

Investments to **upgrade Pennsylvania's electricity grid** to strengthen us against climate change and allow us to make use of more clean energy sources.

WISCONSIN:

Grants to help **farmers** across the state deal with climate change, such as improving soil health and reducing methane pollution from dairy farms.

Measuring Impact: Net movement

Positive movement: Climate messaging + extreme weather examples + clean energy investment build a compelling case.

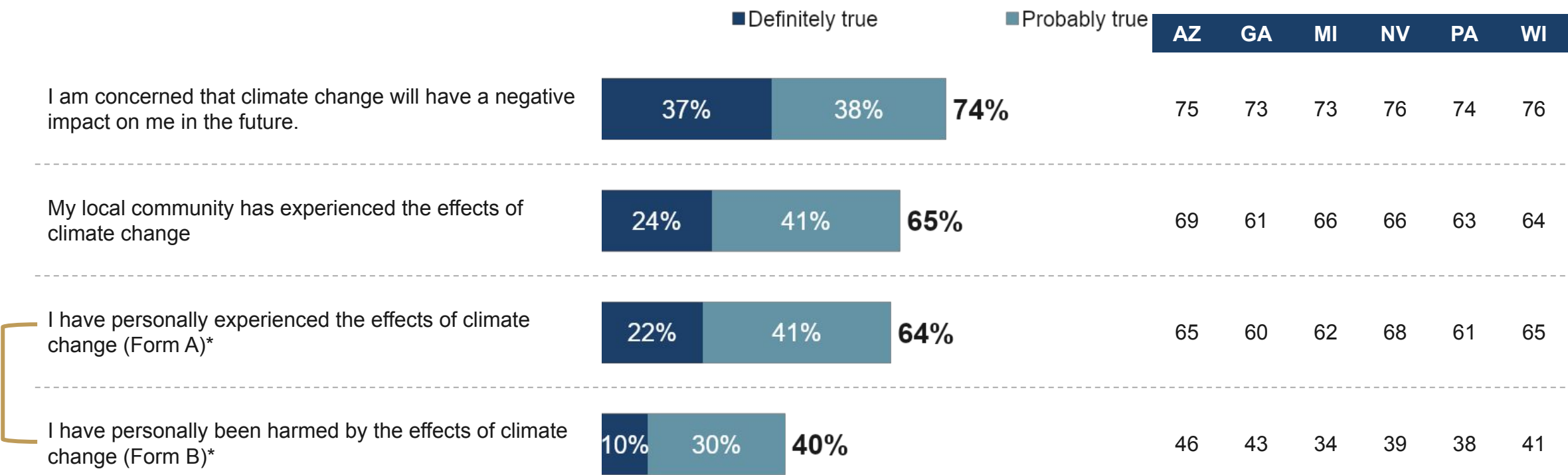
% Top 2-3 Priority or Very Important Priority

	All	AZ	GA	MI	NV	PA	WI
Initial (Ask #1)	43%	43%	40%	43%	40%	47%	46%
Post MaxDiff Message Testing (Ask #2)	53% (+10)	51% (+8)	52% (+12)	52% (+9)	53% (+13)	54% (+7)	56% (+10)
Post Messaging to Frame Opponents & Test State-Specific Weather Impacts (Ask #3)	54% (+1)	53% (+2)	54% (+2)	53% (+1)	54% (+1)	55% (+1)	56% (0)
Final: Post Messaging about State Investments/ROI (Ask #4)	56% (+2)	56% (+3)	55% (+1)	54% (+1)	55% (+1)	57% (+2)	58% (+2)
<i>Net from Initial (Ask #1) to Final (Ask #4)</i>	+13	+13	+15	+11	+15	+10	+12

**Building climate consciousness:
Personal experiences, behaviors & habits**

Target voters are starting to recognize the effects of climate change as a personal experience, but more needs to be done to help them connect those dots.

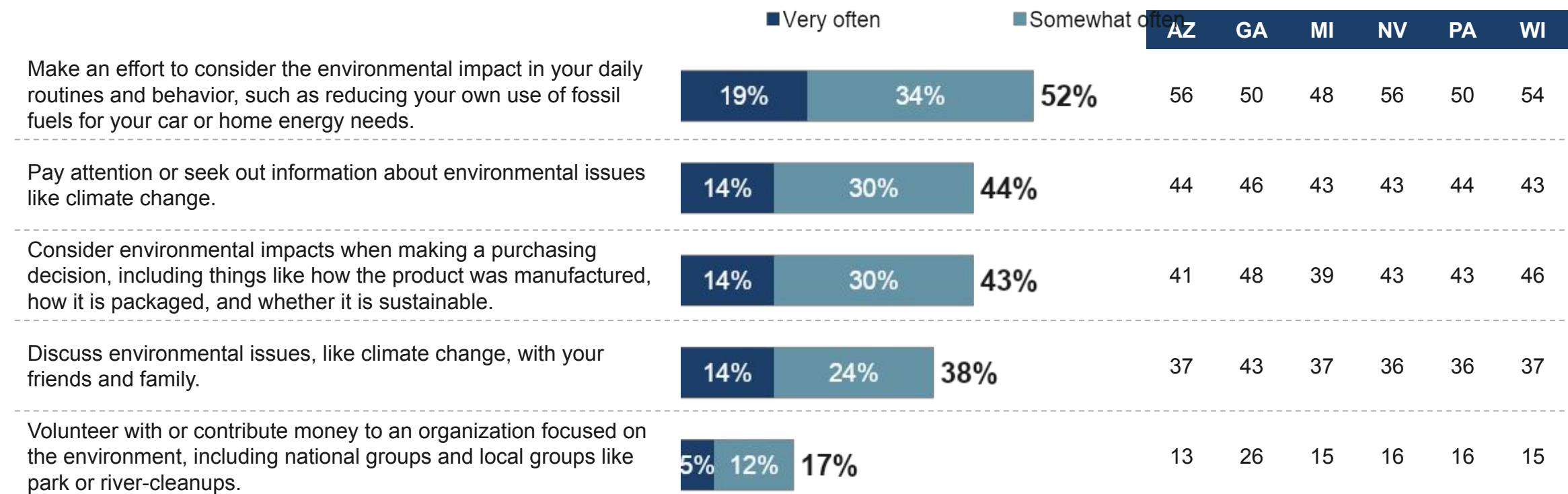
Please read the statements below and indicate whether you think each is true or not true.



* In this split form experiment, voters more readily recognize and affirm having "experienced the effects of climate change" rather than having "been harmed by the effects of climate change."

Target voters are inconsistent in demonstrating their climate concerns through personal behavior, this may be an important opportunity to build greater environmental consciousness.

How often, if ever, do you do the following?



Helping voters to recognize the personal impact of climate change is especially important in building momentum for a campaign—there is a clear relationship between the two.

(Examples of the elevated impact of personal experience include:)

	Have personally experienced/been harmed by climate change	Have not personally experienced/been harmed by climate change
Climate change is one of top 2-3 issue priorities (initial)	26%	10%
Pay attention to/seek information about climate change	60%	27%
Climate change is real and caused by human behavior	96%	81%
Extreme weather events are happening because of climate change	89%	59%