



TO: Interested Parties  
FROM: Andrew Baumann, Global Strategy Group  
DATE: January 15, 2020  
RE: **New Survey: Climate and Water Top Priorities for Democratic Primary Voters in Michigan**

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According to a new survey of likely Democratic presidential primary voters in Michigan conducted for the League of Conservation Voters, addressing climate change and protecting the Michigan's water and Lakes are critical policy position in how voters will choose their presidential candidate. Nearly all likely primary voters view climate change as a very serious problem or a crisis, think climate change will impact their families, and want to see their leaders take action within the next year. And by nearly a two-to-one margin, likely primary voters prefer a candidate with a plan to take action on climate change starting on Day One of their term over a candidate who has not pledged to act starting on Day One.

In Michigan, 86% of primary voters would be more likely to support a candidate who has a plan to take immediate action on climate change by moving the United States to a 100% clean energy economy, and 21% of voters would disqualify any candidate who does not pledge support for such a position. This is because primary voters see extensive benefits to such a policy move – with over eight in ten stating such a plan would have a positive impact on not only climate change but also the quality of air and water, the health of their families, and their children and grandchildren. Strong majorities also believe that such a plan would have a positive impact on the economy and on their own electricity bills.

Meanwhile, two-thirds of primary voters say it is essential that their candidate for president has a clear plan to protect the state's drinking water and the Great Lakes from toxic contamination – ranking it 12 points higher than any other issue tested. And an astounding 97% support immediate action to set tougher standards for PFAS chemicals and to force the military to clean up PFAS contamination in communities near military bases.

#### KEY SURVEY FINDINGS:

**Nearly all primary voters view climate change as a very serious problem that will impact their families.** When likely voters are asked if and when they expect to feel the effects of climate change, 85% either say that they worry about how the climate crisis will impact their family in the future (54%), or that their family is already feeling the effects (31%). Meanwhile, 75% of likely primary voters see climate change as a very serious problem or a crisis, with the highest intensity in those labeling it a crisis (42%).

**Protecting water and addressing climate change near the top of the list of issue priorities when choosing a candidate.** When voters were read a list of eight issues and asked to choose the top two or three most important to their vote for president, over a third of likely primary voters chose addressing the climate change crisis and moving the United States to 100% clean energy (36%), while the issue of protecting Michigan's drinking water and the Great Lakes from toxic contamination topped the list (47%).

**Select the two or three most important issues when deciding which candidate to support (top 5 of 8 issues):**

Protecting Michigan’s drinking water and the Great Lakes from toxic contamination	47%
Achieving universal health care	46%
Raising wages and incomes for working families	45%
Addressing the climate change crisis and moving the United States to 100% clean energy	36%
Passing stronger policies to prevent gun violence	35%

**Primary voters are looking for policymakers to take action on climate change quickly – and they will vote on the issue.** 80% of primary voters want to see policymakers take action to combat climate change within the next year with 58% demanding action “as quickly as possible.” Perhaps more important, when given a choice between the two options below, 64% of primary voters would support a candidate who will take action on Day One while just 36% would support the candidate who hasn’t pledged immediate action – even if they have a plan to combat climate change.

*A candidate who has pledged to make climate change a top issue in their administration with a specific plan to take aggressive action to combat climate change starting on Day One.*

*or*

*A candidate who has a plan to take action to combat climate change but has NOT pledged to make climate change a top issue in their administration or to act starting on Day One.*

**Democratic presidential candidates who adopt pro-climate, clean energy, and conservation policies overwhelmingly gain support from primary voters.** As the table below shows, primary voters are much more likely to support Democratic candidates who back a range of pro-climate, clean energy, and conservation policies. The positive electoral impact is particularly high for policies to combat climate change by restoring forests, move the United States to a 100% clean energy economy by no later than 2050, protect the Great Lakes, and clean up PFAS pollution.

	<b>Would only vote for</b>	<b>Total more likely</b>
Supports full funding for efforts to protect the Great Lakes from threats like oil spills, plastic micro-beads, and Asian Carp.	32%	97%
Supports a plan to clean up toxic PFAS chemicals that have polluted many communities’ drinking water in Michigan, including forcing the military to clean up PFAS pollution from its bases.	28%	95%
Supports policies that combat climate change by protecting and restoring forests which absorb the carbon pollution that causes climate change.	26%	90%
Has a plan to take immediate action on climate change by moving the United States to a 100% clean energy economy by no later than the year 2050.	21%	86%
Has a plan to retrain workers in the coal and oil industries so that they can get new jobs in the clean energy industry.	16%	84%
Supports policies that encourage farmers and ranchers to implement practices that combat climate change by absorbing carbon pollution into their farmlands.	12%	82%
Supports a plan to phase out gas-powered cars and trucks and transition the country to zero-emission vehicles, like electric cars, by 2050.	10%	68%

**Democratic voters believe that a plan to move the U.S. to 100% clean energy would have strongly positive impacts on air and water quality, the health and future generations of their family, and the economy and jobs, in addition to climate change.** More than four in five voters believe moving to 100% clean energy will have a positive impact on air and water quality, future generations of their family, and climate change. Further, 77% believe it will have a positive impact on the economy and jobs.

<b>Impact of moving the U.S. to a 100% clean energy economy by no later than 2050</b>			
	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Net Positive</b>
The quality of the air we breathe	91%	4%	+87
Future generations of your family	88%	6%	+82
The quality of the water we drink	87%	6%	+81
Health of families like yours	85%	6%	+79
Climate change	82%	7%	+75
The economy and jobs	77%	14%	+63
Electricity bills of families like yours	67%	22%	+45

**PFAS control and cleanup is a huge issue for primary voters in Michigan.** 97% of voters support, with 73% of voters strongly supporting, a proposal for the President and Congress to take immediate action to set tough standards for PFAS chemicals, and to force the military to clean up PFAS contamination in communities near its bases.

**ABOUT THIS POLL**

*Global Strategy Group conducted a survey of 400 likely Democratic primary voters in Michigan between December 13<sup>th</sup> and December 16<sup>th</sup>. The interviews were conducted via a combination of text invitation and web-based panel. Care has been taken to ensure the geographic and demographic divisions of the population of likely Democratic primary voters are properly represented.*

**APPENDIX:**

**Question text on PFAS:**

*Toxic PFAS chemicals used by the military and manufacturers have been detected at dangerous levels in drinking water supplies across Michigan. Some people have proposed that the President and Congress take immediate action to set tough standards for these chemicals, and to force the military to clean up PFAS contamination in communities near its bases. Just based on what you know, do you support or oppose this proposal?*