

April 17, 2007

## Americans Feel New Urgency On Energy Independence and Global Warming

**To:** Interested Parties

**From:** Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research

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### New Urgency for Action on Energy Independence, Global Warming

A new survey by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research for the Center for American Progress shows a heightened demand among Americans for immediate action to tackle global warming and achieve energy independence. Most telling, Americans are demanding clean, alternative energy and they want their leadership to act now to change our energy policies to put the country on the right path. The public wants major change that quickly moves the country toward energy independence. Americans believe this will be a boon for the economy, will create jobs, and that America should lead the way. As this survey demonstrates, the public debate over whether global warming is here and whether it is caused by humans is settled. Americans now want immediate action.

Americans are deeply dissatisfied with the current energy policies and now believe America has fallen behind the rest of the world on energy. Concern about energy and global warming now rivals health care as the top domestic issue that requires immediate action. Americans believe reducing dependence on oil and coal to stop global warming is one of the most important challenges our country faces (29 percent) on par with bringing down rising health care costs (32 percent) and well ahead of other issues.

- **Case closed: global warming evident and caused primarily by human actions.** More than three-quarters (76 percent) of people believe the effects of global warming are apparent now, including 50 percent who strongly believe this<sup>1</sup>—a 7-point increase since November 2005<sup>2</sup>. Sixty-one percent believe that global warming is caused more by human actions than by naturally occurring forces, while just 34 percent believe global warming is caused more by nature. Forty-five percent *strongly* agree that human actions are primarily responsible for global warming<sup>3</sup>, which represents an 8-point increase in the past 16 months.
- **Americans want immediate action on global warming.** A solid majority, 60 percent, believes that the increasing pollution of the past few decades has set global warming into motion and “we must take action now or it will be too late to stop it.” Only 33 percent hold

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<sup>1</sup> This question was asked of 500 respondents

<sup>2</sup> Comparison taken from a November, 2005 survey of 1001 likely voters conducted by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research for the Natural Resources Defense Council

<sup>3</sup> This question was asked of 500 respondents

that the effects will not occur for decades and we have some time before we must take action to stop global warming.<sup>4</sup>

- **Americans of all political persuasions want to act now to stop global warming and become energy independent.** Unlike other issues before Congress and the President—such as the Iraq war—there is no strong partisan divide on stopping global warming. Huge majorities of Independents (59 percent) and Democrats (76 percent) support action now along with a significant bloc of Republicans (41 percent).

### Americans Do Not Want to Wait for Clean, Alternative Energy

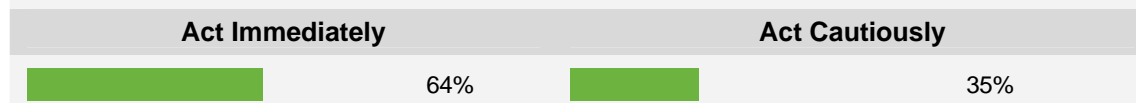
Americans want action on energy and global warming and they believe our country's current policies are off track. Only 27 percent of people feel that our energy policy is headed in the right direction, while 65 percent say our energy policy is seriously off on the wrong track. Moreover, a majority of Americans (52 percent) believes the United States is either falling or has fallen far behind other countries in developing clean, alternative energy. Only 14 percent of people believe we lead the world in developing these technologies.<sup>5</sup>

With the public expressing grave concerns that energy independence and global warming are major problems that face our country, Americans believe we need to act immediately to move toward clean alternative energy.

### Americans Want Immediate Action On Clean, Alternative Energy

***Some people say that America needs to act immediately to make our country less dependent on oil and move to cleaner, alternative energy sources.***

***Other people say that America needs to become less dependent on oil and move to cleaner, alternative energy sources, but we should do so cautiously and take our time.***



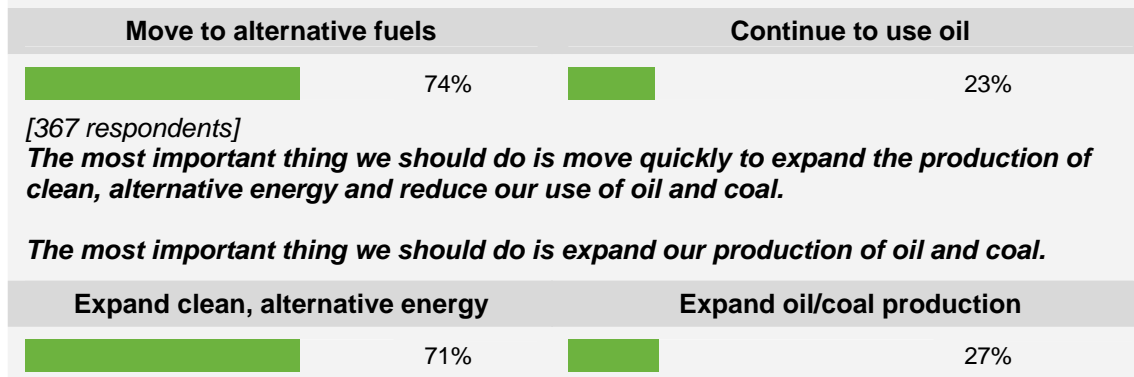
<sup>4</sup> This question was asked of 500 respondents

<sup>5</sup> This question was asked of 679 respondents

## Americans Ready To Move Away From Oil and Coal As Fuel Sources

***We should move from oil to alternative fuels for our vehicles because it will cause less pollution, stop global warming and make us more energy independent.***

***We should continue to use oil as our main source of fuel for vehicles because other sources for fuel are unreliable, less efficient and will cost consumers more.***



Americans view alternative energy and more efficient cars not only as a means for energy independence and reducing global warming, but also as economic boons.

- By a whopping 79 – 17 percent margin, people believe that shifting to new, alternative energy production will help America’s economy and create jobs, not cost American jobs.
- By a 22-point margin, 57 – 35 percent, Americans believe raising car and truck mileage standards will save, not cost, people money.<sup>6</sup>

## Strong Support for Four Proposals

Mirroring recent public data on this issue,<sup>7</sup> this survey shows strong public support for a series of proposals to move to clean, alternative energy, institute higher mileage standards for automobiles, and cap carbon emissions from industry to tackle our dependence on oil and stop global warming. These proposals receive bipartisan support, highlighting the consensus around the nation that Washington should take action now to improve our energy policy. This survey illustrates that support for these proposals is sufficiently robust to withstand attacks (the questions provided critiques of the proposals).

Support for these proposals exists among Democrats, Independents, and Republicans. For example, 60 percent of Republicans favor raising mileage standards, nearly equaling the 67 percent of Democrats who do as well (74 percent of Independents favor this proposal). On making 25 percent of our electricity come from alternative sources by the year 2025, 64 percent of Democrats favor the proposal, followed closely by 60 percent of Republicans (a staggering 71 percent of Independents favor this approach).

<sup>6</sup> These questions were asked of 500 respondents

<sup>7</sup> The Gallup Organization surveyed 1009 adults from March 11-14, 2007 on environmental and energy policy issues

### Support for Clean Energy Proposals Holds Up Despite Attacks From Critics

	Percent Favoring	Percent Opposing
<i>[500 respondents]</i> Provide tax credits to people who use solar and wind energy and companies who produce alternative sources of energy to expand the use of these new sources. Critics say it will end up increasing taxes for average Americans.	71%	27%
<i>[500 respondents]</i> Raise mileage standards for new cars and SUVs over the next ten years to 40 miles per gallon, instead of the current 24 miles per gallon. Critics say it would lead automakers to produce smaller and more expensive cars.	66%	31%
<i>[500 respondents]</i> Require 25 percent of all electricity in the U.S. to come from alternative sources by 2025. Critics say this will raise electricity rates.	65%	32%
<i>[500 respondents]</i> Cap the amount of carbon emissions from power plants and industry to reduce carbon emissions by 2 percent every year. Critics say it will reduce America's economic growth and lead to job losses.	58%	37%

This survey of 1000 registered voters was conducted March 19 – 22 by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research. The sample has a margin of error of approximately  $\pm 3.1$  percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level.