

Despite Trump Withdrawal, Americans Back Climate Paris Agreement

Most Americans—including a majority of Republicans—favor a range of measures to reverse or adapt to climate change.

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On the first day of his second term, President Donald Trump signed [several executive orders](#) to repeal critical environmental regulations and initiatives, including one to withdraw the United States from the Paris Agreement. Data from a November 15–17, 2024, Chicago Council on Global Affairs-Ipsos survey and the 2024 Chicago Council Survey (CCS), fielded June 21–July 1, 2024, finds broad public support for federal measures to reverse or adapt to the negative effects of climate change. While Republicans are less convinced that climate change is a serious problem and are less willing to invest resources to address it than other partisans, majorities of GOP supporters still favor domestic climate action.

Key Findings

- Majorities of Americans across the board favor measures to reverse or adapt to the negative effects of climate change, like investing in climate resilient infrastructure (80%) and maintaining the US commitment to the Paris Agreement (69%), but Republicans are the least likely to favor such policies.
- Given that the United States is one of the largest producers of global greenhouse gas emissions, most Americans believe it should finance international efforts to address climate change (63%), but a majority of Republicans (57%) do not agree.
- Four in 10 Americans believe climate change is a serious and pressing problem that should be addressed now, even if it involves significant

costs (43%), but there are stark partisan differences in this view: while 73 percent of Democrats agree with this statement, only 13 percent of Republicans see it the same way and instead, about half (52%) believe the United States should deal with climate change by taking low-cost steps.

- Most Americans believe climate change is real (86%), but they are divided on the root of the problem: four in 10 (40%) Americans overall and pluralities of Independents and Republicans (42% and 39%, respectively) believe it is caused by a combination of human activity and natural processes, while a third (31%) overall and a majority of Democrats (53%) believe it is primarily caused by human activity. Finally, 15 percent believe it is primarily caused by natural processes alone.

Republicans Favor Climate Regulations and Initiatives . . .

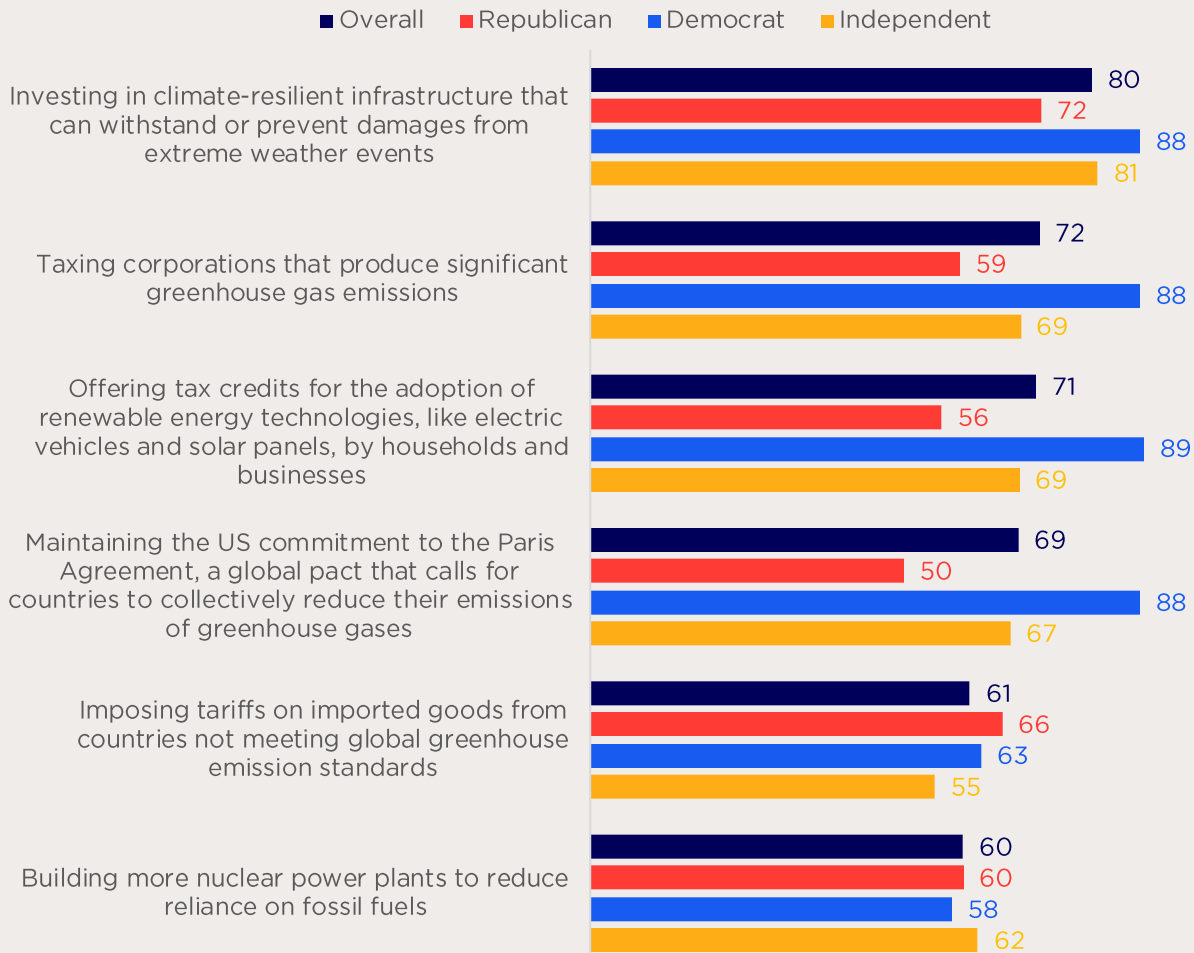
In 2024, the [United States experienced](#) 17 severe storms, four tropical cyclones, one wildfire, and two winter storms, all of which resulted in the deaths of 418 Americans and loss of more than \$1 billion. In a recent [survey by the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication](#), half of Americans said they have personally experienced the effects of global warming (50%) and nearly two-thirds said they are somewhat or very worried about the issue (64%).

Given their experiences, most Americans favor a wide range of measures to reverse or adapt to the negative effects of climate change. Among the general public, investing in climate resilient infrastructure (80%), taxing greenhouse-gas-emitting corporations (72%), and offering tax credits for the adoption of renewable energy technologies (71%) are the most popular policy options.

Majorities of Republicans also favor such climate action but at lower levels than the general public and other partisans. However, they make an exception for imposing tariffs on imported goods from countries not meeting global greenhouse emission standards (66%) and building more nuclear power plants to reduce reliance on fossil fuels (60%), which they are about as likely as other partisans to support.

Support for Climate Policies

Do you favor or oppose the following measures to reverse or adapt to the negative effects of climate change? (% strongly + somewhat favor)



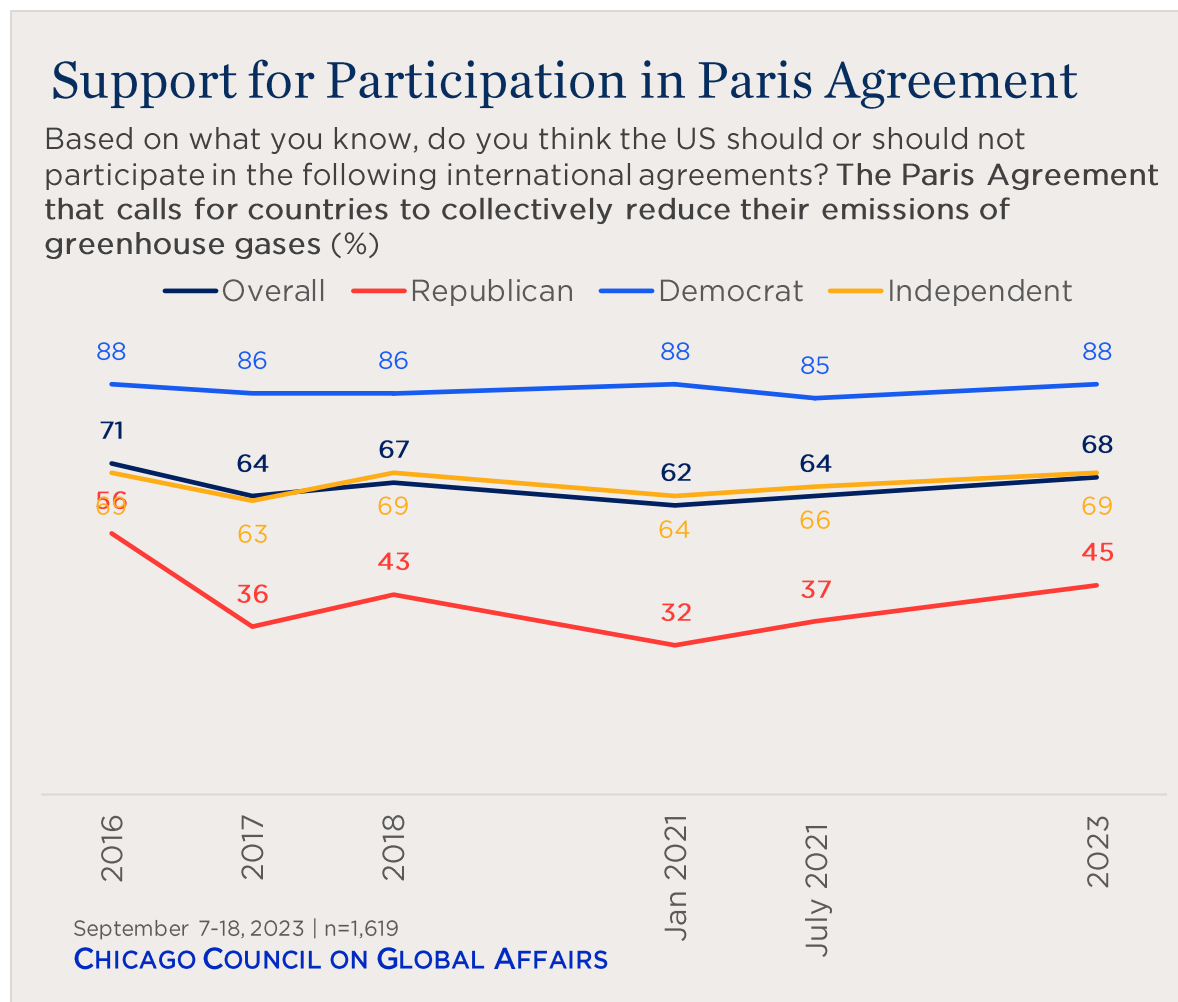
November 15-17, 2024 | n=1,031

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Despite Trump’s negative view of the Paris Agreement, a majority of Americans (69%) favor maintaining the US commitment to it. The United States became an official signatory to the agreement—which aims to limit the global surface temperature to just [two degrees above preindustrial levels](#)—in 2016, but in 2020, it became the first nation to withdraw from it, under the first Trump administration. The United States [rejoined the agreement](#) under the administration of President Joe Biden, but it is set to be withdrawn for [a second time](#) now that Trump has returned to the Oval Office.

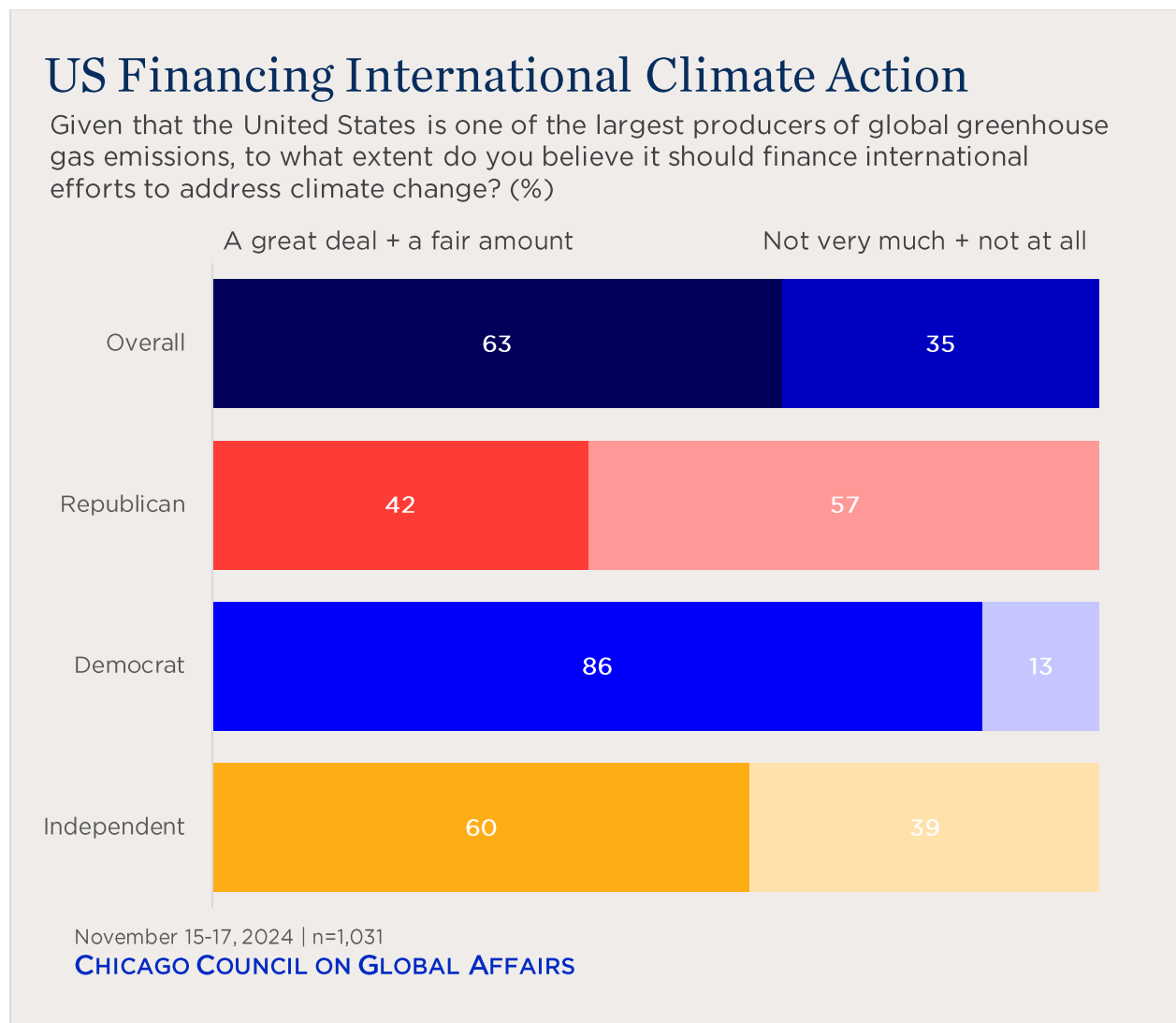
The president may receive backlash from Democrats and Independents, the majority of whom (88% and 67%, respectively) favor remaining a signatory to the pact. Half of Republicans (50%) also favor maintaining the US commitment to the agreement, but doing so is the least favorable climate policy among those this survey presented to GOP supporters.

Public support for the Paris Agreement appears unchanged since 2023, at which point nearly seven in 10 Americans (68%) said the United States should participate in the pact. Democrats have remained steadfast in their support for this international agreement since 2016, while Republicans have maintained their opposition to it. Support for the climate accords among GOP supporters dipped in 2017, when Trump [announced the first withdrawal](#) from the agreement, and again in January 2021, just two months after [the withdrawal took effect](#).



... But Do Not Support the United States Financing International Climate Action

In addition to taking domestic steps, most Americans also believe the United States should finance international efforts to address climate change (63%), given that it is one of the largest producers of global greenhouse gas emissions. While majorities of Democrats (86%) and Independents (60%) favor the United States financing international climate action, the majority of Republicans oppose it (57%).



This partisan divide is not unusual: In [the 2023 CCS](#), Republicans were the least likely to say it is somewhat or very important for the United States to be a world leader in combatting climate change (52%), compared to three quarters of the general public (75%). And while most Americans broadly

favored the United States aiding countries that are disproportionately affected by climate change, Republicans were, again, the least likely to favor extending a helping hand. Finally, when asked in [the 2024 CCS](#) how the United States should allocate its resources, most Republicans (57%) said it should reduce its involvement in world affairs because it has limited resources and its own problems at home. By contrast, a plurality of Democrats (39%) believe the United States has enough resources to take care of its own problems at home and take a leading role in world affairs.

Taken together, these data suggest that Republicans are unwilling to invest resources internationally that could be used to advance domestic priorities, while Democrats see the United States as having the capacity and responsibility to lead globally—particularly on issues like climate change that require international cooperation to effectively address.

[Climate Change Is a Peripheral Issue for Republicans](#)

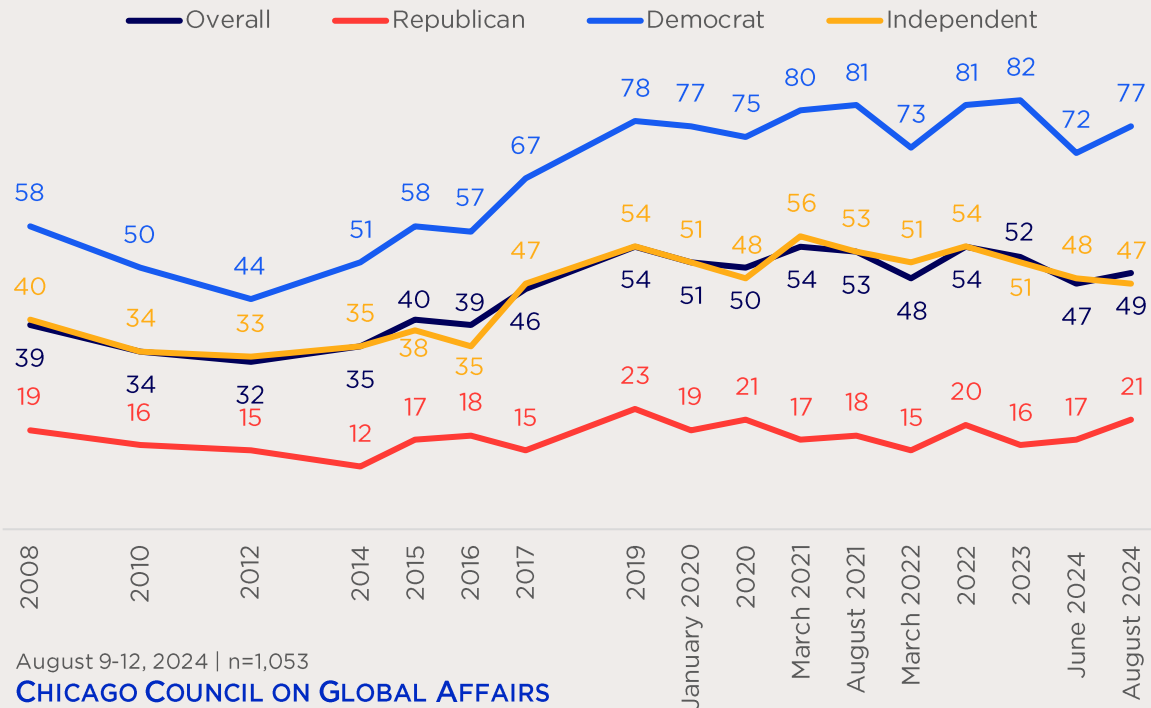
Despite rapidly rising surface temperatures, more frequent and severe weather events, and the increasing economic costs of weather disasters, climate change seems to be a peripheral issue for Republicans. Data from an August 2024 Chicago Council-Ipsos survey show that half of Americans (49%) consider climate change a critical threat to the vital interests of the United States in the next 10 years. While nearly eight in 10 Democrats (77%) consider climate change a critical threat, just two in 10 Republicans (21%) express the same concern.

Republicans have consistently expressed lower perceptions of threat from climate change since the Chicago Council first started asking this question in 2008. Comparatively, the share of Democrats who view climate change as a critical threat has grown significantly over the last decade, reaching its highest level in 2023 (82%).

Critical Threat of Climate Change

Below is a list of possible threats to the vital interest of the United States in the next 10 years. For each one, please select whether you see this as a critical threat, an important but not critical threat, or not an important threat at all:

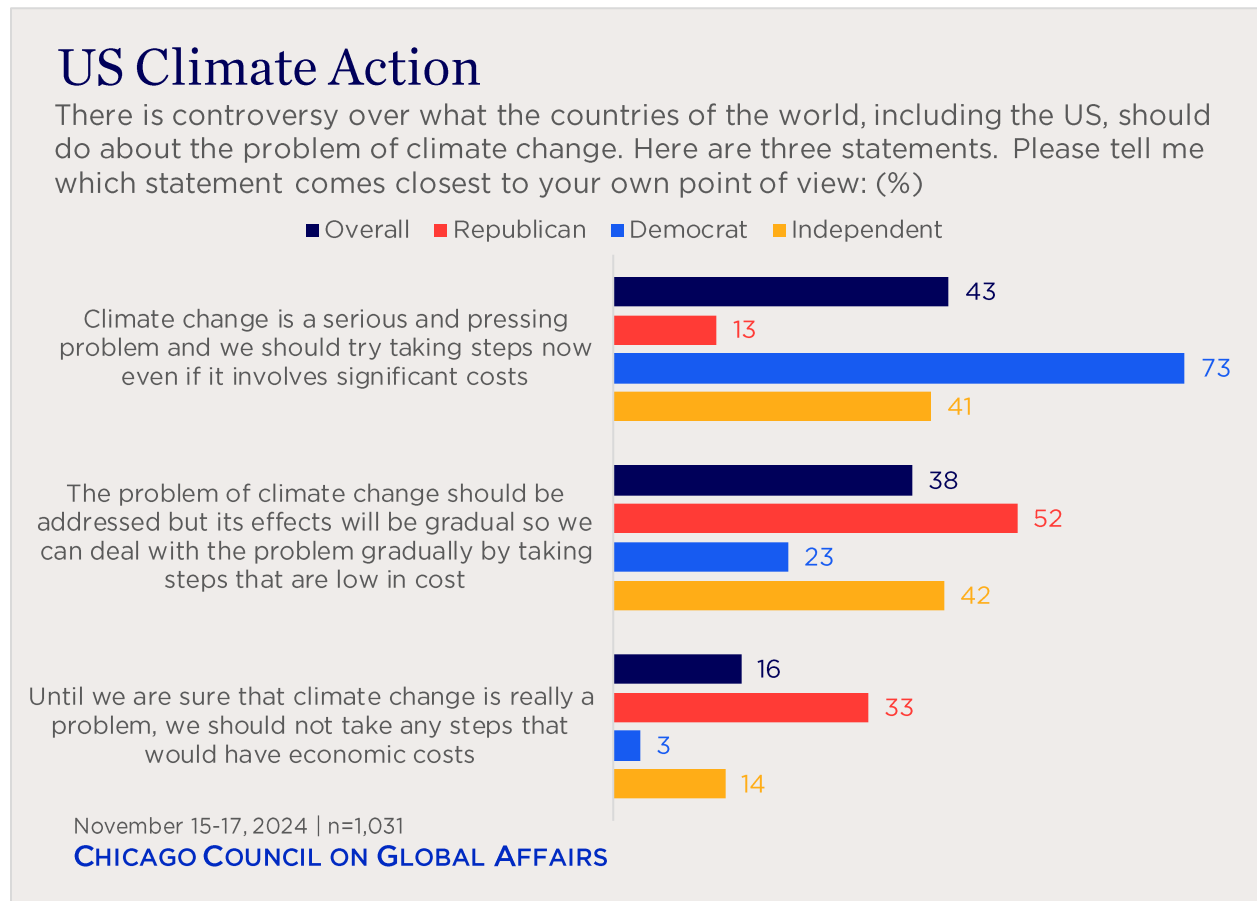
Climate change (% critical threat)



Instead, Republicans are—and have become—far more concerned about issues like immigration (83%), international terrorism (65%), and China’s territorial ambitions (61%) (see appendix Table 1). In the 2024 CCS, a bare majority of Republicans say American leaders are giving the issue of climate change too much attention (53%), while issues like immigration (84%) and competition with China (62%) are not receiving enough. Democrats, on the other hand, are most likely to say the issue of climate change does not receive enough attention from American leaders (78%) (see appendix Table 2).

While climate change is a top concern for Democrats, these data show that other issues take precedence for Republicans. Perhaps for this reason, they are less inclined to take immediate steps or invest significant resources to address the issue of climate change. A bare majority believe that since the effects of climate change will be gradual, the United States should take gradual, low-cost steps to address them (52%). In addition, a third of Republicans say that until they are sure climate change is really a problem,

the United States shouldn't incur any economic costs to address it (33%). Just 13 percent of Republicans believe immediate climate action is necessary, regardless of the cost.

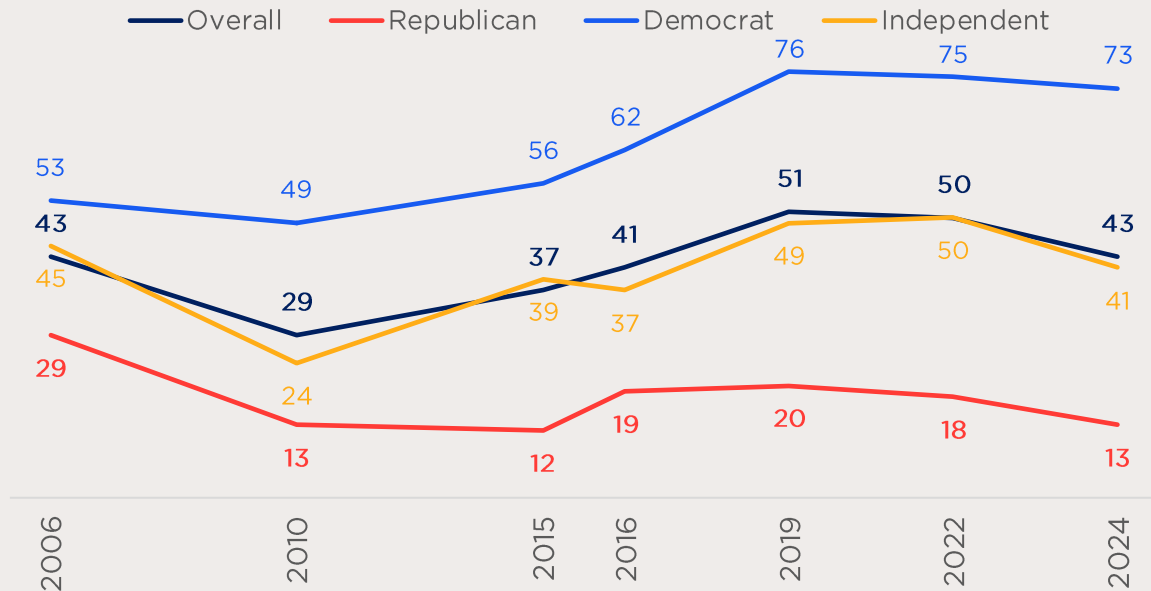


By contrast, a plurality of Americans overall (43%) and seven in 10 Democrats (73%) believe that because climate change is a serious and pressing problem, the United States should try taking immediate steps to address it—even if it involves significant costs.

In the last two decades, Americans have somewhat fluctuated in their sense of urgency and willingness to commit financial resources toward climate action. The share of those who believe the United States should take immediate steps dropped by 14 percentage points between 2006 and 2010—likely because of the 2008 financial crisis—but steadily increased to a high of 51 percent in 2019. Today, 43 percent of Americans believe immediate steps need to be taken to address climate change, falling back to the 2006 level (43%).

Willingness to Incur Costs to Address Climate Change

There is controversy over what the countries of the world, including the US, should do about the problem of climate change. Here are three statements. Please tell me which statement comes closest to your own point of view: **climate change is a serious and pressing problem and we should try taking steps now even if it involves significant costs (%)**



November 15-17, 2024 | n=1,031

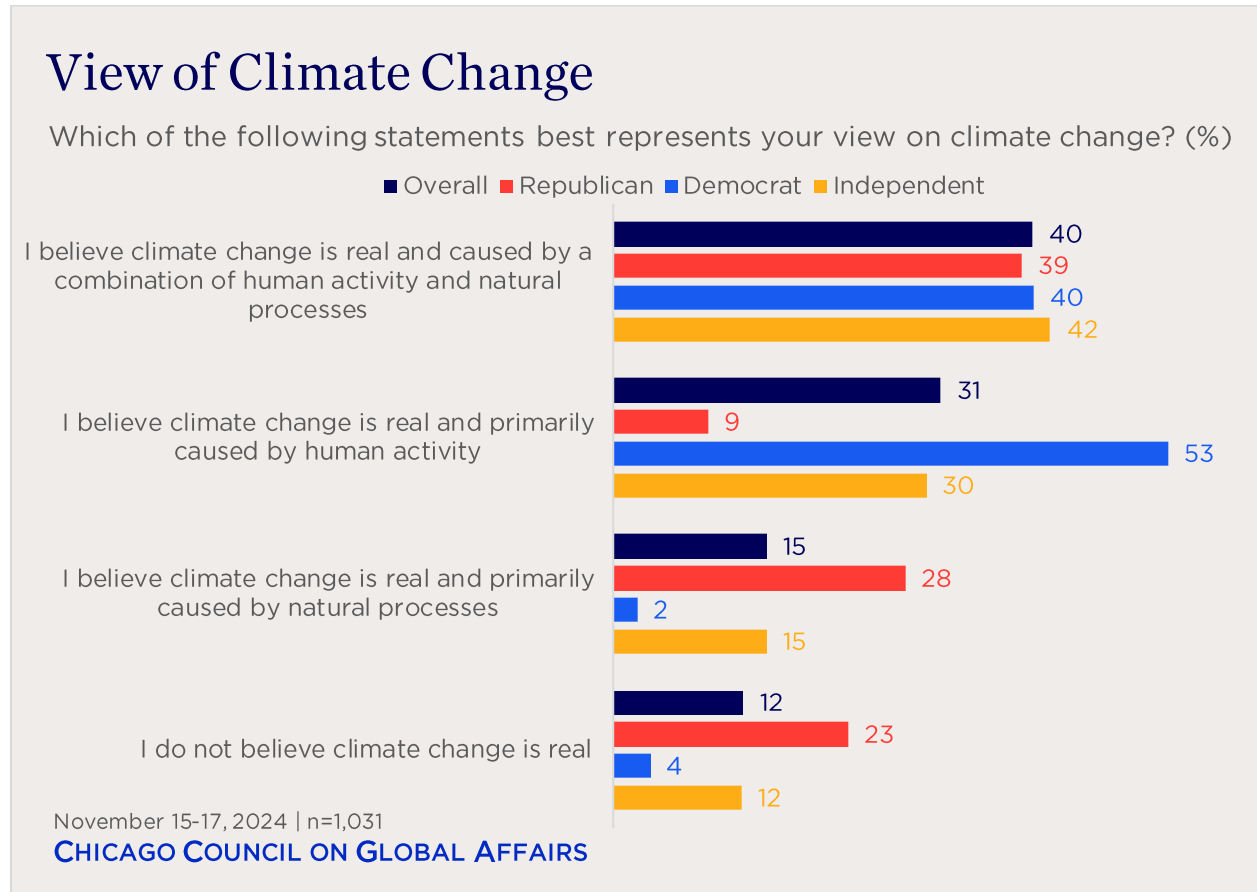
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Over time, Republicans have grown less convinced that climate change is a serious and pressing problem and are now less willing to incur economic costs to address it (a decline of 16 percentage points since 2006). On the other hand, Democrats have grown more resolute (an increase of 20 percentage points since 2006).

Americans Believe Climate Change Is Real but Disagree on Its Cause

Another factor contributing to Republicans' views of climate action is their sense of personal responsibility, or lack thereof, for climate change. Most Americans believe climate change is real (86%), but they are divided on what causes it: four in 10 (40%) believe it is caused by a combination of human activity and natural processes, but nearly a third (31%) believe it is primarily caused by human activity. Independents and Republicans are most likely to believe climate change is caused by a combination of factors (42% and 39%,

respectively), whereas a bare majority of Democrats place sole responsibility on human activity (53%).



Fewer than two in 10 Americans believe climate change is primarily caused by natural processes (15%), like changes to the Earth’s orbit or variations in solar activity, but nearly three in 10 Republicans (28%) hold this view. Republicans are also most likely to say they do not believe in climate change at all (23%), compared to only 12 percent of the general public.

Because they are less likely to believe climate change is a result of human activities like burning fossil fuels and deforestation, Republicans may not feel personally responsible for addressing the issue. This view may contribute to their lower levels of concern about climate change.

Conclusion

Despite the partisan tug of war playing out on Capitol Hill, Americans across the board support efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change. However, the data show that climate change is a peripheral issue for Republicans, who are more concerned about issues like immigration and the economy than

other partisans. With the support of Republicans in Congress and apathy of GOP supporters, Trump is expected to reverse many of the federal climate regulations implemented by the Biden administration—including [parts of Biden’s signature climate law](#), the Inflation Reduction Act.

Appendix

Appendix Table 1

Q5. Below is a list of possible threats to the vital interests of the United States in the next 10 years. For each one, please select whether you see this as a critical threat, an important but not critical threat, or not an important threat at all.

Q5/6a. Large numbers of immigrants and refugees coming into the US (% critical threat)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
1998	55	56	58	51	-2
2002	60	58	62	57	-4
2004	52	62	49	50	13
2006	51	63	46	44	17
2008	51	63	46	44	17
2010	51	62	41	51	21
2012	40	55	30	40	25
2014	39	55	21	42	34
2015	44	63	29	46	34
2016	43	67	27	40	40
2017	37	62	21	35	41
2018	39	66	20	37	46
2019	43	78	19	42	59

2020	32	61	13	26	48
August 2021	42	74	22	38	52
March 2022	34	68	12	29	56
2022	39	70	18	37	52
2023	42	72	18	39	54
2024	50	83	27	45	56

Q5/8a. Climate change (% critical threat)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
2008	39	19	58	40	-39
2010	34	16	50	34	-34
2012	32	15	44	33	-29
2014	35	12	51	35	-39
2015	40	17	58	38	-41
2016	39	18	57	35	-39
2017	46	15	67	47	-52
2019	54	23	78	54	-55
January 2020	51	19	77	51	-58
2020	50	21	75	48	-54
March 2021	54	17	80	56	-63
August 2021	53	18	81	53	-63

March 2022	48	15	73	51	-58
2022	54	20	81	54	-61
2023	52	16	82	51	-66
2024	47	17	72	48	-55

Q5/10. International terrorism (% critical threat)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
1998	84	88	83	84	5
2002	91	90	94	88	4
2004	75	88	71	71	17
2006	74	85	76	64	9
2008	69	82	67	61	15
2010	73	81	72	68	9
2012	67	77	65	61	12
2014	63	66	61	61	5
2015	69	75	68	64	7
2016	75	83	74	71	9
2017	75	82	73	71	9
2018	66	74	61	64	13
2019	69	76	67	66	9
2020	54	62	51	50	11
August 2021	63	77	61	55	16
2022	58	60	59	55	1
2023	52	59	50	47	9

2024	53	65	51	43	14
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Q5/29. North Korea's nuclear program (% critical threat)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
2015	55	58	53	56	5
2016	60	63	64	52	-1
2017	75	80	76	70	4
2018	59	61	62	53	-1
2019	61	67	62	55	5
January 2020	52	57	58	41	-1
2020	51	53	54	47	-1
March 2021	59	65	61	53	4
2022	52	57	55	45	2
2023	52	57	53	48	4
2024	52	59	53	45	6

Q5/15. Iran's nuclear program (% critical threat)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
2010	68	76	65	65	11
2012	64	75	60	58	15
2014	58	66	59	51	7
2015	57	70	54	49	16
2018	52	59	50	48	9
2019	57	70	52	51	18

January 2020	61	73	62	51	11
2020	49	54	46	48	8
March 2021	57	67	54	54	13
2022	53	65	52	47	13
2023	49	56	45	46	11
2024	53	62	52	45	10

Q5/20. Lack of a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians (% critical threat)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
2014	26	29	27	22	2
2024	31	27	39	26	-12

Q5/20B. The war between Israel and Hamas escalating into a wider war in the Middle East (% critical threat)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
2024	41	42	49	34	-7

Q5/38b. Weakening democracy in the United States (% critical threat)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
2023	69	73	73	65	0
2024	67	62	75	64	-13

Q5/38. The decline of democracy around the world (% critical threat)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap

2018	43	36	54	36	19
2022	46	40	54	42	-14
2024	54	44	68	48	-24

Q5/21. Russia's territorial ambitions (% critical threat)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
2014	38	48	35	34	13
2015	32	39	28	30	11
2016	30	32	31	29	1
March 2022	67	66	73	64	-7
2022	60	56	68	56	-12
2024	50	48	60	42	-12

Q5/45. China's territorial ambitions (% critical threat)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
2022	52	60	50	48	10
2024	48	61	49	36	12

Q5/45B. Economic competition from China (% critical threat)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
2024	33	45	25	30	20

Q5/34C. Political violence around the 2024 election (% critical threat)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
2024	49	33	65	47	-32

Q5/34b. Foreign interference in American elections (% critical threat)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
2019	53	38	69	48	-31
2020	54	41	69	49	-28
2024	54	51	61	50	-10

Appendix Table 2

<i>Q131. Do you think US leaders are giving each of the following issues too much attention, not enough attention, or about the right amount of attention? (% not enough attention)</i>					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
The Ukraine-Russia conflict	32	26	38	32	-12
US competition with China	47	62	35	46	27
Climate Change	52	22	78	54	-56
The conflict between Israel and Hamas	32	36	30	31	6
Immigration	59	84	41	57	43

Methodology

This data comes from a joint Chicago Council on Global Affairs-Ipsos survey. It was conducted November 15-17, 2024, by Ipsos using its large-scale, nationwide, online research panel, KnowledgePanel, among a weighted national sample of 1,031 adults 18 or older living in all 50 US states and the District of Columbia. The margin of sampling error for the full sample is ± 3.3 percentage points, including a design effect of 1.17.

Additional analysis is based on data from the 2024 Chicago Council Survey of the American public on foreign policy, a project of the Lester Crown Center on US Foreign Policy. The 2024 Chicago Council Survey was conducted June 21-July 1, 2024, by Ipsos using its large-scale nationwide online research

panel, KnowledgePanel, in English and Spanish among a weighted national sample of 2,106 adults 18 or older living in all 50 US states and the District of Columbia. The margin of sampling error for the full sample is ± 2.3 percentage points, including a design effect of 1.1229. The margin of error is higher for partisan subgroups (± 4.2 points for Republicans, ± 3.9 points for Democrats, and ± 3.8 points for Independents) or for partial-sample items.

The data for the total sample were weighted to adjust for gender by age, race/ethnicity, education, Census region, metropolitan status, and household income using demographic benchmarks from the 2023 March Supplement of the Current Population Survey. Specific categories used were:

- Gender (Male, Female) by Age (18–29, 30–44, 45–59 and 60+)
- Race/Hispanic Ethnicity (White Non-Hispanic, Black Non-Hispanic, Other, Non-Hispanic, Hispanic, 2+ Races, Non-Hispanic)
- Education (Less than High School, High School, Some College, Bachelor or higher)
- Census Region (Northeast, Midwest, South, West)
- Metropolitan Status (Metro, non-Metro)
- Household Income (Under \$25,000, \$25,000–\$49,999, \$50,000–\$74,999, \$75,000–\$99,999, \$100,000–\$149,999, \$150,000+)

Partisan identification is based on how respondents answered a standard partisan self-identification question: “Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?”

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