



**For Immediate Release:** June 9, 2022

**Contact:** Milena Paez, [milena.paez@nextgenpolicy.org](mailto:milena.paez@nextgenpolicy.org)

## **NextGen Releases New Primary Election Exit Poll from Change Research Finding Voters Prioritize Action on Climate and the Environment As #1 Issue**

*Poll Shows 75% of Voters Want Urgent Action Addressing Climate Change*

**Sacramento** – On the heels of a historically low-voter-turnout Primary Election, NextGen California is releasing results from a Change Research poll that was conducted over the 5 days leading up to and through Election Day of likely voters in California. The poll found that the #1 issue voters care about is addressing concerns about climate and the environment.

“It’s clear that if we want voters to care about elections, we need to prioritize their concerns -- and climate and the environment rank at the top of that list,” said **Arnold Sowell Jr.**, Executive Director of NextGen California. “Three in four voters want the state to take action to address climate change in the immediate future or in the next few years. That’s a clear signal to our state’s leaders that the time to prioritize climate action is now – later is simply too late.”

Currently, California Governor Gavin Newsom and the California State Legislature have proposed historic climate budget investments being made in the state budget.

NextGen California also this week launched a [new million-dollar ad campaign expenditure](#) to ensure that these expanded legislative proposals to invest in climate action are realized.

Below is a polling memo outlining the poll results from Change Research.

**TO: Interested Parties**

**FR: Ben Greenfield and Tiara Stanley, Change Research**

**RE: Action on Climate and the Environment Rank As #1 Issue Motivating California Voters**

A survey of 821 likely general election voters in California finds that climate is a top concern for voters in the state, and 75% of voters want the state to take action to fight climate change. California voters believe that it is urgent for the state to act on climate, with most saying that the state needs to move faster than it is currently moving. And as Governor Gavin Newsom enters his general election campaign, he could see a significant political boost from aggressive action, with many Democrats eager to see California act to address climate change.

**75% of California voters want the state to act to address climate change**

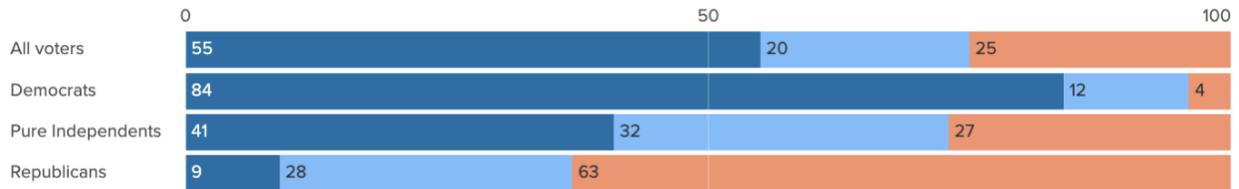
Three in four voters in California want the state to take action to address climate change, either immediately or in the next few years. Among Democrats, 84% say climate action must be immediate.

### Urgency of Climate Action

CHANGE RESEARCH™

Which of the following best matches your feelings about when California should act to address climate change?

- They should take action immediately - later is too late.
- They should take action over the next few years, but it does not need to be immediate.
- They should not take action over the next few years.



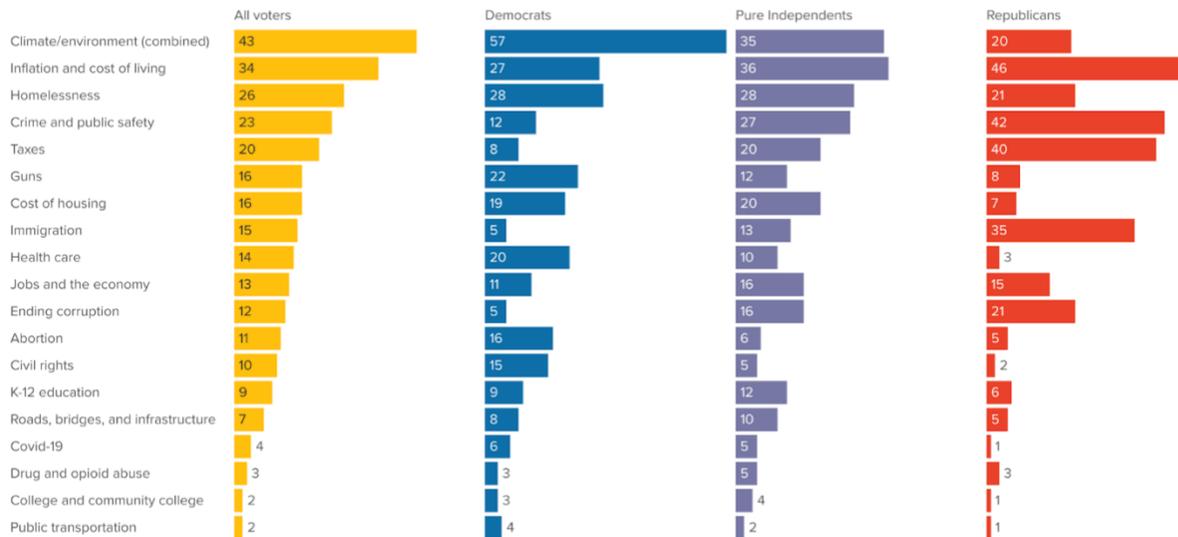
### Climate change is by far the most important issue for California Democrats

57% of Democratic voters indicated that climate and the environment were among their top three issues, twice as high as any other issue. Overall, 43% of California voters include climate and the environment in their top three – including 35% of independents who lean toward neither party and 20% of Republicans.

### Top Issues for California Voters

CHANGE RESEARCH™

What is the most important issue to you when choosing which candidates to vote for in elections in California? Please select up to three.



\*Climate/environment\* combines those who ranked climate, wildfires, droughts, or pollution among their top three.

### OTHER KEY FINDINGS:

- 63% believe that Washington’s failure to pass climate legislation makes it imperative for California to act.

- Support for aggressive climate action is especially high among Latinx voters: climate and the environment were selected more than any other issue. Additionally, 75% of Latinx voters called climate action urgent.
- California voters would prefer a candidate who prioritizes climate change over one who believes climate change is real but chooses instead to emphasize economic issues by an 18-point margin. Democrats would vote for the climate-focused candidate by a 91-9 margin. The descriptions were as follows:
  - Candidate A is supported by environmental groups and says one of her top priorities is taking action immediately on climate change, addressing wildfires, droughts, air pollution and getting more affordable, clean, renewable energy.
  - Candidate B is supported by oil and energy companies and says that, while she believes climate change is real, we should focus on keeping energy costs low and building the economy.

*A description of this survey's methodology can be seen [here](#).*

###