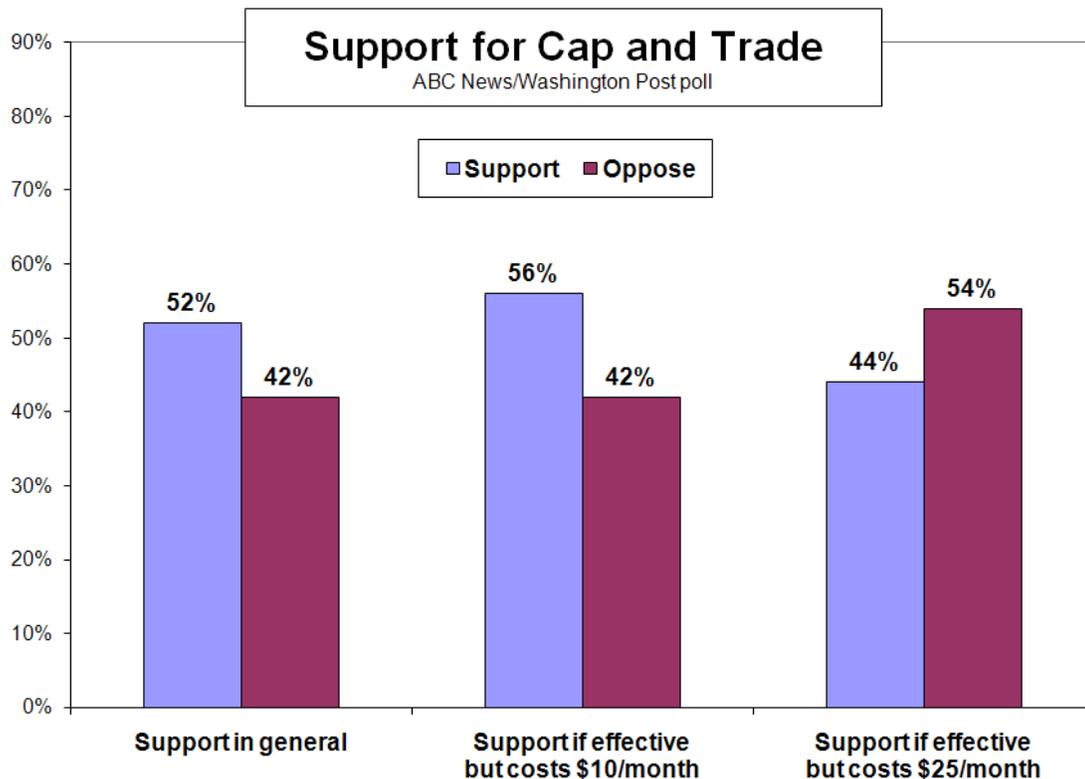


Most Back Moves on Climate Change, But with Cost as a Consideration

With major legislation pending in the House, most Americans support government action on climate change – but with an eye on how it works and what it costs.

In principle, support is there: Three-quarters in this ABC News/Washington Post poll favor government regulation of greenhouse gases, and 62 percent feel that way even if it raises prices. But fewer support a so-called “cap-and-trade” system – central to current efforts – especially as cost impacts rise.

Overall 52 percent support cap and trade, down 7 points from a year ago, led by a 14-point drop among political independents, the crucial center of political consensus. Forty-six percent of independents now favor cap and trade, on par with Republicans.



Asked another way, support's at 56 percent overall if cap and trade significantly lowered greenhouse gases while raising electric bills by \$10 a month. But at \$25 a month, it drops

to 44 percent, with 54 percent opposed. Specifically among independents, 58 percent favor cap and trade at \$10 – but just 43 percent at \$25.

A cap-and-trade system would have the government issue permits limiting the amount of greenhouse gases companies could emit; they could buy and sell these permits depending on their emission needs. A vote on the measure could come as early as Friday.

The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that the proposed bill would cost an average of \$175 annually per household (about \$15 a month); the Environmental Protection Agency puts it at \$80-\$111 per year (averaging \$8 monthly). But congressional Republicans have warned of \$3,100 in annual price increases.

OBAMA – President Obama, who urged passage of the legislation at a news conference Tuesday, holds majority approval on handling global warming, 54 percent. But that's down from 61 percent in April, amid some slippage for the president on several issues.

The change, again, occurred chiefly among independents, from 62 percent approval for Obama on global warming in late April to 52 percent now.

Likely cognizant of cost concerns, Obama focused Tuesday not on cap and trade but rather on what he said would be cost savings and other gains produced by the legislation, saying it would “spur new energy savings,” “reduce our dependence on foreign oil” and reduce pollution, all positive attributes in public opinion.

G8 – Obama is scheduled to take the issue to the international stage at a meeting of world leaders on climate change to be held next month in Italy immediately after the G8 economic summit there. On this, too, there's persuasion ahead: While most Americans support U.S. action even if unilateral, this also has declined in the past year.

In a July 2008 poll 68 percent said the United States should take action on global warming regardless of whether other industrial countries, such as China and India, take similar steps. Today 59 percent still hold that view – a majority, but less of one. (The decline was led by a 13-point drop in this view among Democrats, 12 points among women.)

Of the rest, 20 percent say the United States should act only if other countries do as well; 18 percent say it should not act at all.

GROUPS – There is strong partisanship on all these measures; for example, 69 percent of Democrats say the United States should act unilaterally if necessary on global warming; that drops to 59 percent of independents and 45 percent of Republicans.

Among other groups, there's a notable difference by age: Seniors are 10 points less apt than adults under 65 to favor government regulation of greenhouse gases overall; 10 points less apt to support it if it raises prices; and again 10 points less apt to back cap and trade. Support for cap and trade peaks, at 65 percent, of under-30s.

Costs, meanwhile, are particularly important to less well-off Americans. Among those making less than \$50,000 a year, support for regulating greenhouse gas emissions drops by 17 points (from 75 percent to a still-majority 58 percent) if it raises prices; support if it costs \$10 a month is 49 percent; and at \$25, just 35 percent.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone June 18-21, 2009, among a random national sample of 1,001 adults, including landline and cell-phone-only respondents. Results for the full sample have a 3.5-point error margin; click [here](#) for a detailed description of sampling error. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by TNS of Horsham, PA.

Analysis by Giovanni Russonello.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>

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Full results follow (*= less than 0.5 percent).

1-35 previously released or held for release.

36. On another subject, do you think the federal government should or should not regulate the release of greenhouse gases from sources like power plants, cars and factories in an effort to reduce global warming? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	----- Should -----			----- Should not -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
6/21/09	75	53	22	22	9	13	3
4/24/09	75	54	21	21	9	12	4

37. (IF SHOULD REGULATE) What if it raised the price of things you buy - in that case do you think the federal government should or should not regulate the release of greenhouse gases?

	Should	Should not	No opinion
6/21/09	80	18	2

36/37 NET

	Should regulate	- Should not regulate -			No opinion
	NET	At first	Now do		
6/21/09	62	35	22	13	3

38. There's a proposed system called "cap and trade." The government would issue permits limiting the amount of greenhouse gases companies can put out. Companies that did not use all their permits could sell them to other companies. The idea is that many companies would find ways to put out less greenhouse gases, because that would be cheaper than buying permits. Would you support or oppose this system?

Support	Oppose	No opinion
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6/21/09	52	42	6
7/28/08	59	34	7

39. (HALF SAMPLE) What if a cap and trade program significantly lowered greenhouse gases but raised your monthly electrical bill by 10 dollars a month - in that case would you support or oppose it?

	Support	Oppose	No opinion
6/21/09	56	42	2
7/28/08	57	41	2

40. (HALF SAMPLE) What if a cap and trade program significantly lowered greenhouse gases but raised your monthly electrical bill by 25 dollars a month - in that case would you support or oppose it?

	Support	Oppose	No opinion
6/21/09	44	54	1
7/28/08	47	51	2

41. Do you think the United States should take action on global warming only if other major industrial countries such as China and India agree to do equally effective things, that the United States should take action even if these other countries do less, or that the United States should not take action on this at all?

	Take action only if other countries do	Take action even if other countries do less	Should not take action at all	No opinion
6/21/09	20	59	18	3
7/28/08	18	68	13	2

42 held for release.

END