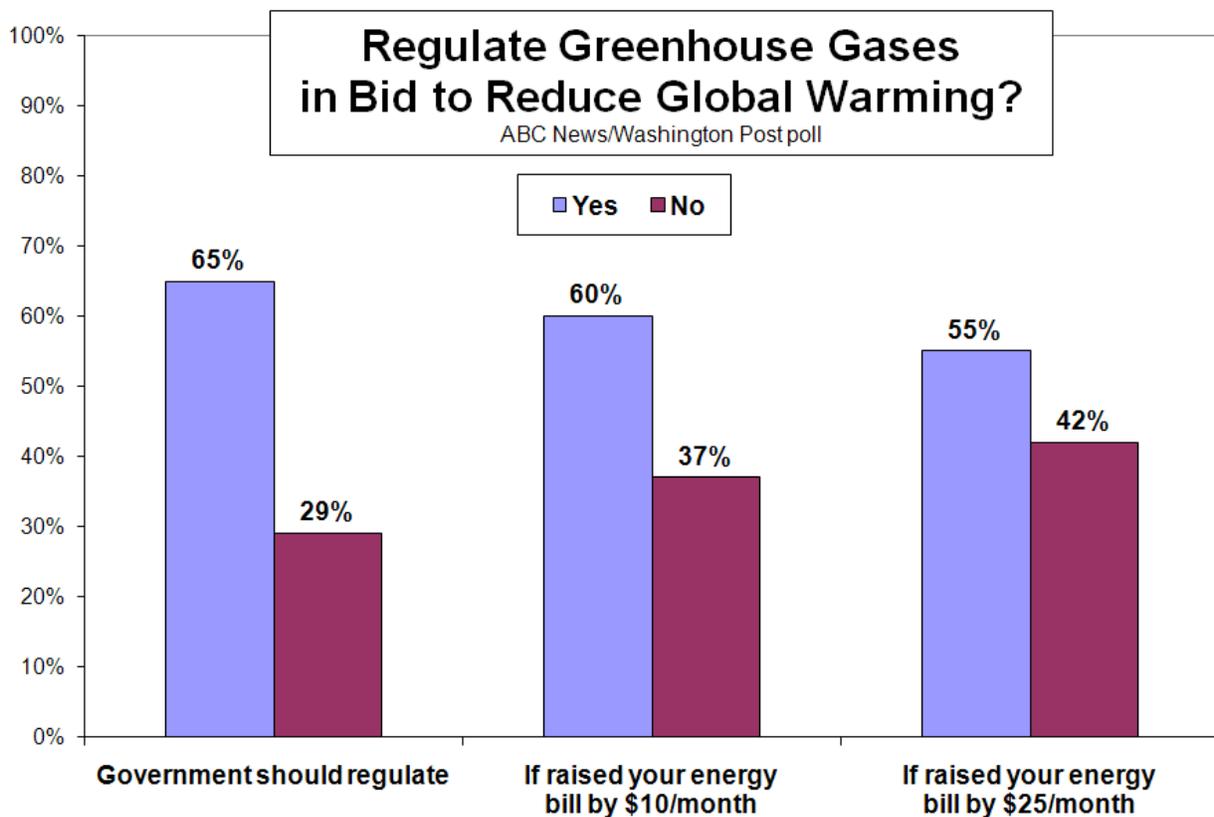


Fewer, Still Most, Back Regulations On Greenhouse Gas Emissions

With the Copenhagen conference reaching its climax, two-thirds of Americans support restrictions on greenhouse gas emissions in the United States. But that's down from its peak, most oppose U.S. aid for such measures in developing nations – and amid increasingly politicized views, most also now say they distrust environmental scientists.

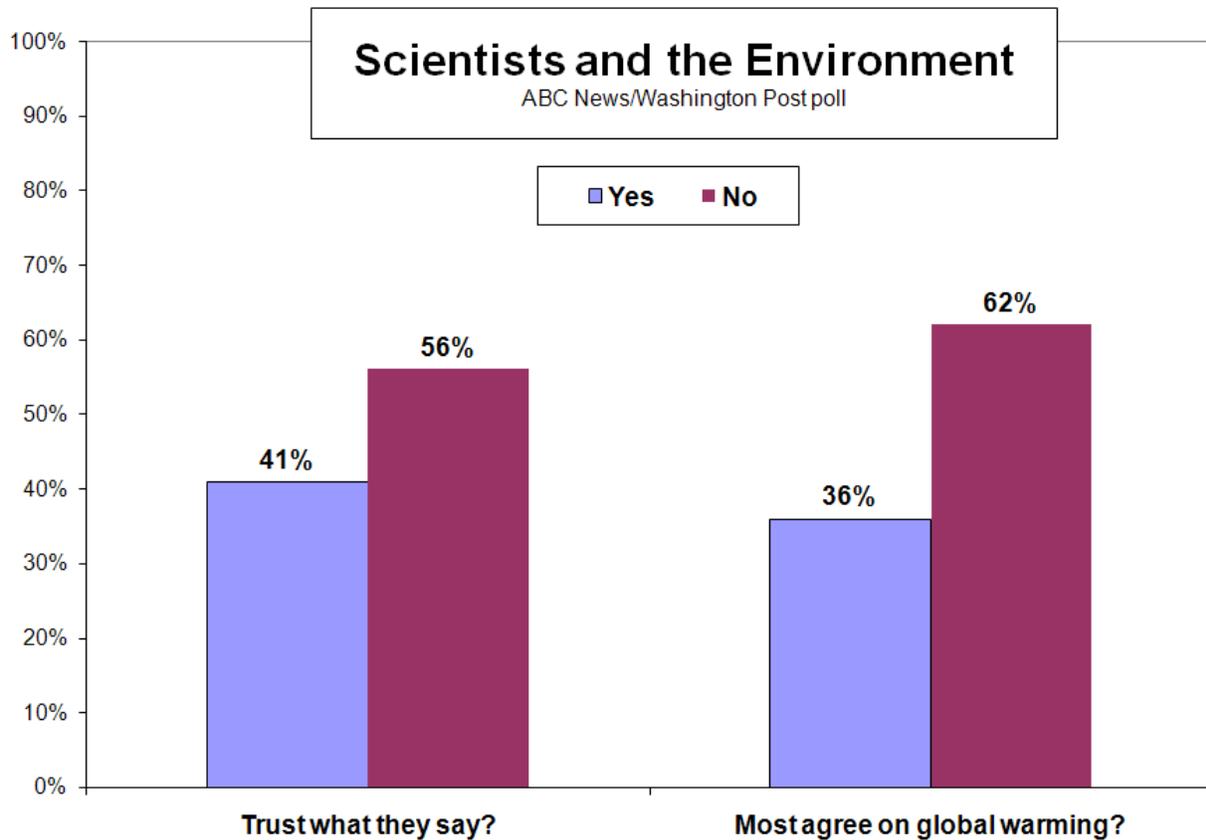
This ABC News/Washington Post poll finds support for government regulations on the release of greenhouse gases down from 75 percent this spring and summer to 65 percent now. Still, underscoring public concern, government action retains majority support if worked but would raise energy costs by \$10 or even \$25 a month; 60 and 55 percent, respectively, back it.



At the same time, far fewer, 39 percent, say the United States and other wealthy nations should contribute \$10 billion a year to developing countries for this purpose. Poorer nations have made

assistance a condition for agreement at Copenhagen, and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton yesterday pledged support for the concept – with a far higher figure, \$100 billion a year by 2020.

These views come among a backdrop of increasing politicization on climate change – and heightened skepticism about scientific pronouncements on the subject. Fifty-six percent now say they don't trust the things scientists say about the environment – up from 49 percent, itself a substantial number, a year and a half ago. Similarly, 62 percent perceive “a lot of disagreement” among scientists on whether global warming is happening, up 5 points from summer 2008.



It's not clear that this change stems from the controversy surrounding the disclosure of e-mails from climate scientists at the University of East Anglia in Norwich, England, since similar shifts preceded that development. An ABC/Post poll last month, done before the e-mail disclosure, found an 8-point drop (to 72 percent) in views that global warming is happening.

PARTISAN – As in the last poll, the change is highly partisan in nature. The rise in distrust of what scientists say about the environment, and the sense that scientists disagree on climate change, both have occurred entirely among Republicans and independents who lean toward the Republican Party – up by 13 points and 10 points, respectively, in this group.

Today Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents by 59-39 percent say they trust what scientists say about the environment, while Republicans and independents who lean Republican

do not, by 75-22 percent. Leaned Democrats perceive scientific consensus, by 55-43 percent, while leaned Republicans do not, by 78-21 percent.

The divisions carry through to policy. Seventy-nine percent of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents favor government regulation of greenhouse gas emissions in an effort to reduce global warming; far fewer leaned Republicans, 52 percent, agree. At the \$10 and \$25 price impacts, regulation retains majority support among leaned Democrats, but slips beneath a majority among leaned Republicans.

Trust in scientists, and a sense they agree, are powerful factors in these views. Americans who trust what scientists say about the environment are nearly twice as likely to support regulation of greenhouse gases as those who are distrustful, 89 percent vs. 48 percent. Among those who perceive scientific consensus on the issue, similarly, 84 percent support government measures; among those who see substantial disagreement, support for regulation drops to 54 percent.

Indeed, in a regression analysis testing these and other factors, three stand out as the strongest predictors of views on regulation of greenhouse gases: trusting scientists, believing they agree with one another on whether global warming is occurring, and holding conservative political views.

President Obama, for his part, has 45 percent approval for his handling of the global warming issue, with 39 percent disapproving and a substantial 15 percent unsure – considerably more undecided than on other issues. His approval is vastly higher among people who trust scientists, think there’s consensus on global warming and support government regulation of greenhouse gases.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone Dec. 10-13, 2009, among a random national sample of 1,003 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 Gary Langer.

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

Media contact: Cathie Levine, (212) 456-4934.

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

1 previously released.

2. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Obama is handling [ITEM]? Do you approve/disapprove strongly or somewhat?

g. Global warming (HALF SAMPLE)

----- Approve ----- ----- Disapprove ----- No

	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
12/13/09	45	22	24	39	12	27	15
6/21/09	54	NA	NA	28	NA	NA	17
4/24/09	61	NA	NA	23	NA	NA	16

3-25 previously released.

26. 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
12/13/09	65	50	15	29	9	20	6
6/21/09	75	53	22	22	9	13	3
4/24/09	75	54	21	21	9	12	4

27. (HALF SAMPLE) What if that significantly lowered greenhouse gases but raised your monthly energy expenses by 10 dollars a month - in that case, do you think the government should or should not regulate the release of greenhouse gases?

	Should	Should not	No opinion
12/13/09	60	37	3

28. (HALF SAMPLE) What if that significantly lowered greenhouse gases but raised your monthly energy expenses by 25 dollars a month - in that case, do you think the government should or should not regulate the release of greenhouse gases?

	Should	Should not	No opinion
12/13/09	55	42	3

29. It's been proposed that the United States and other developed countries contribute 10 billion dollars a year to help developing countries pay for reducing the amount of greenhouse gases they release. Is this something you support or oppose?

	Support	Oppose	No opinion
12/13/09	39	57	4

30. How much do you trust the things that scientists say about the environment - completely, a lot, a moderate amount, a little, or not at all?

	----- Trust -----				---- Do not trust ---			
	NET	Completely	A lot	Moderate amount	NET	A little	Not at all	No opinion
12/13/09	29	10	19	30	40	26	14	1
7/28/08	30	6	24	39	30	23	7	1
4/10/07	32	5	27	43	24	19	5	1
3/14/06	31	5	27	41	27	22	5	1

31. (IF MODERATE) Would you lean toward saying a lot or a little?

	----- Trust -----					----- Do not trust -----				
	NET	Completely	A lot	Lean	Moderate amount	NET	Lean	A little	Not at all	No opinion
12/13/09	41	10	19	12	1	56	17	26	14	1
7/28/08	47	6	24	17	3	49	19	24	7	1

32. Do you think (most scientists agree with one another) about whether or not global warming is happening, or do you think (there is a lot of disagreement among scientists) on this issue?

	Most agree	A lot of disagreement	No opinion
12/13/09	36	62	2
7/28/08*	39	57	4
4/10/07	40	56	3
3/14/06	35	64	1
2/13/98	30	67	3
10/5/97	35	62	3

*2008, ABC/Planet Green/Stanford University; 2007, ABC/Post/Stanford; 2006, ABC/Time/Stanford; 1998 and 1997, Ohio State University

33-35 previously released.

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