

# Climate Change in the American Mind

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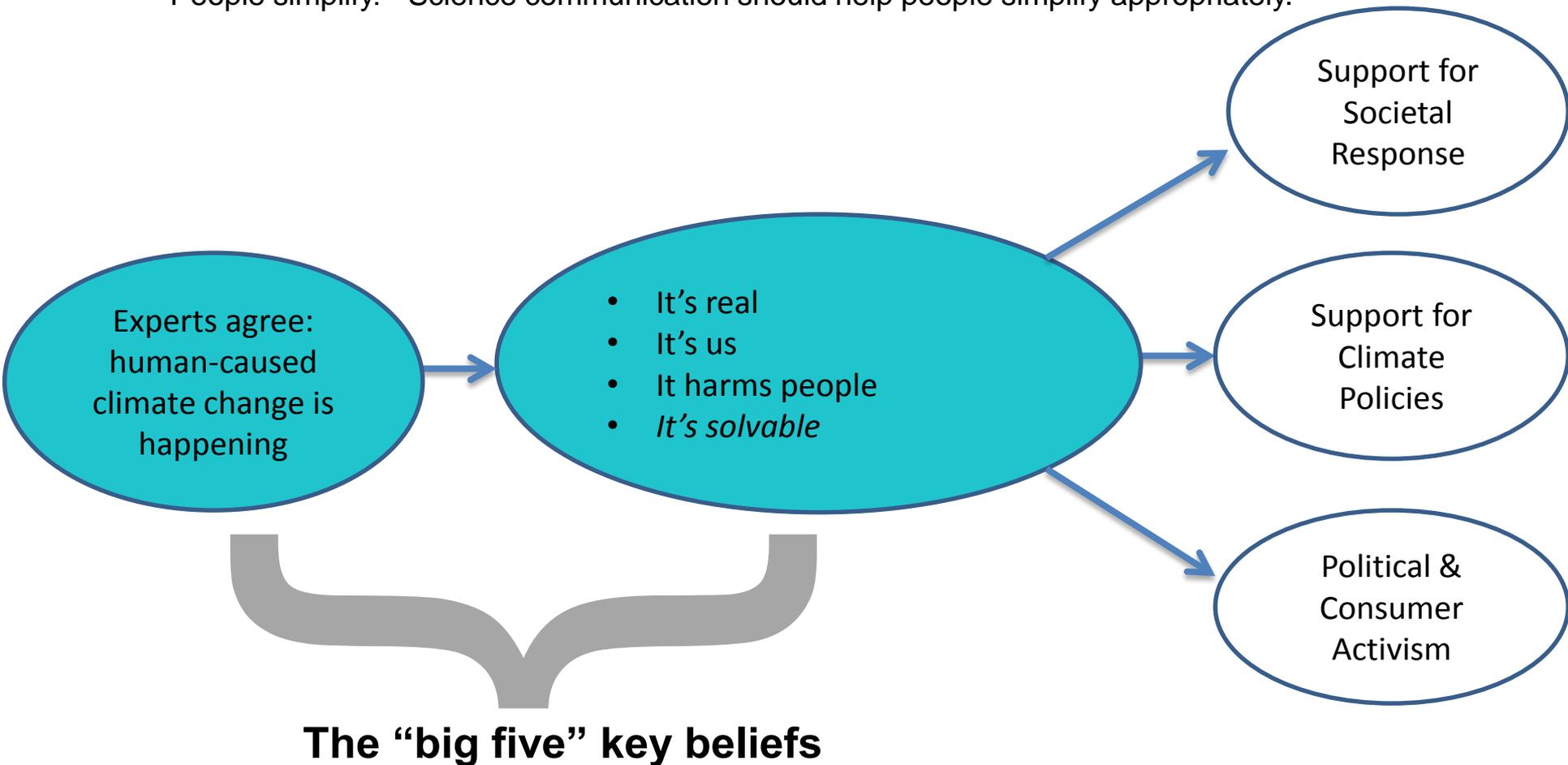


## The “Big Five Ideas” Haiku

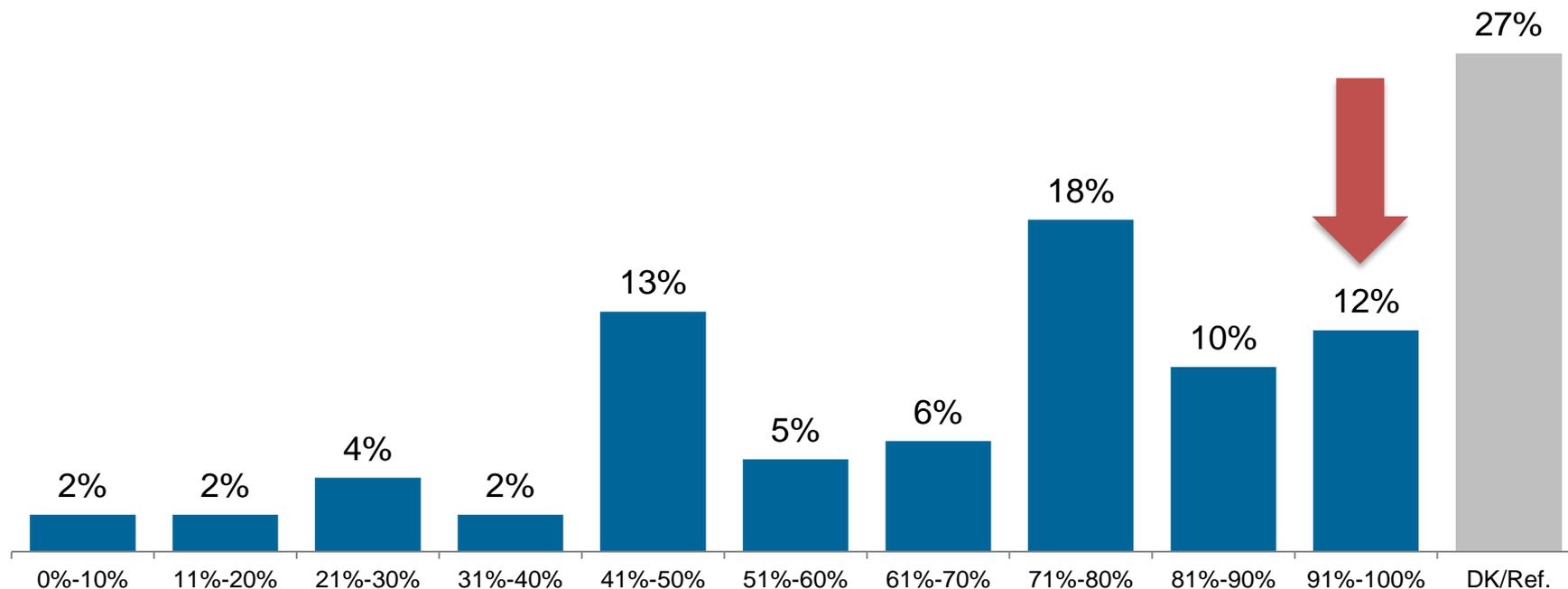
1. Scientists agree...
2. It's real.
3. It's us.
4. It's bad...
5. ...but there's hope!

# Five key beliefs about climate change contribute to a range of appropriate\* attitudes and actions

\* “People simplify.” Science communication should help people simplify appropriately.



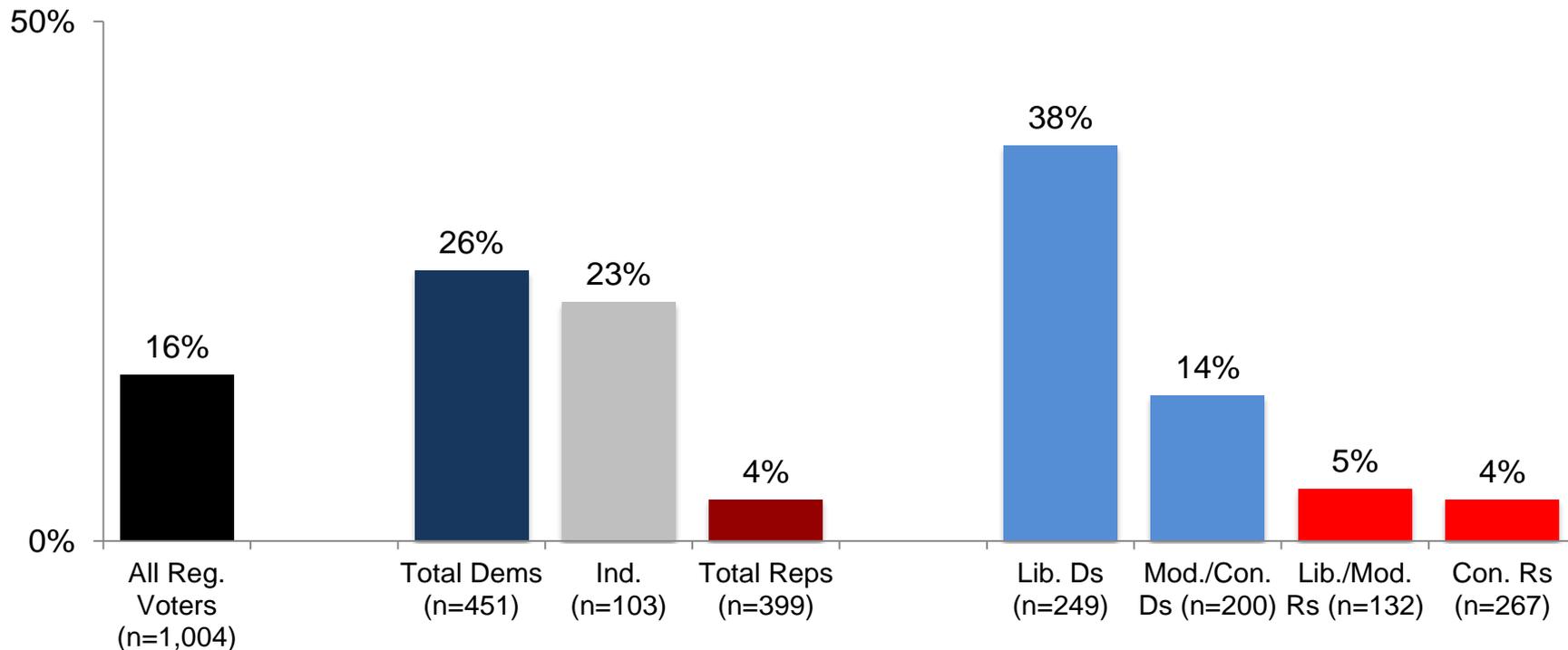
# Few Americans Understand the Scientific Consensus That Human-Caused Global Warming Is Happening



To the best of your knowledge, what percentage of climate scientists think that human-caused global warming is happening? Base: Americans 18+ (n=1,330). October, 2015.

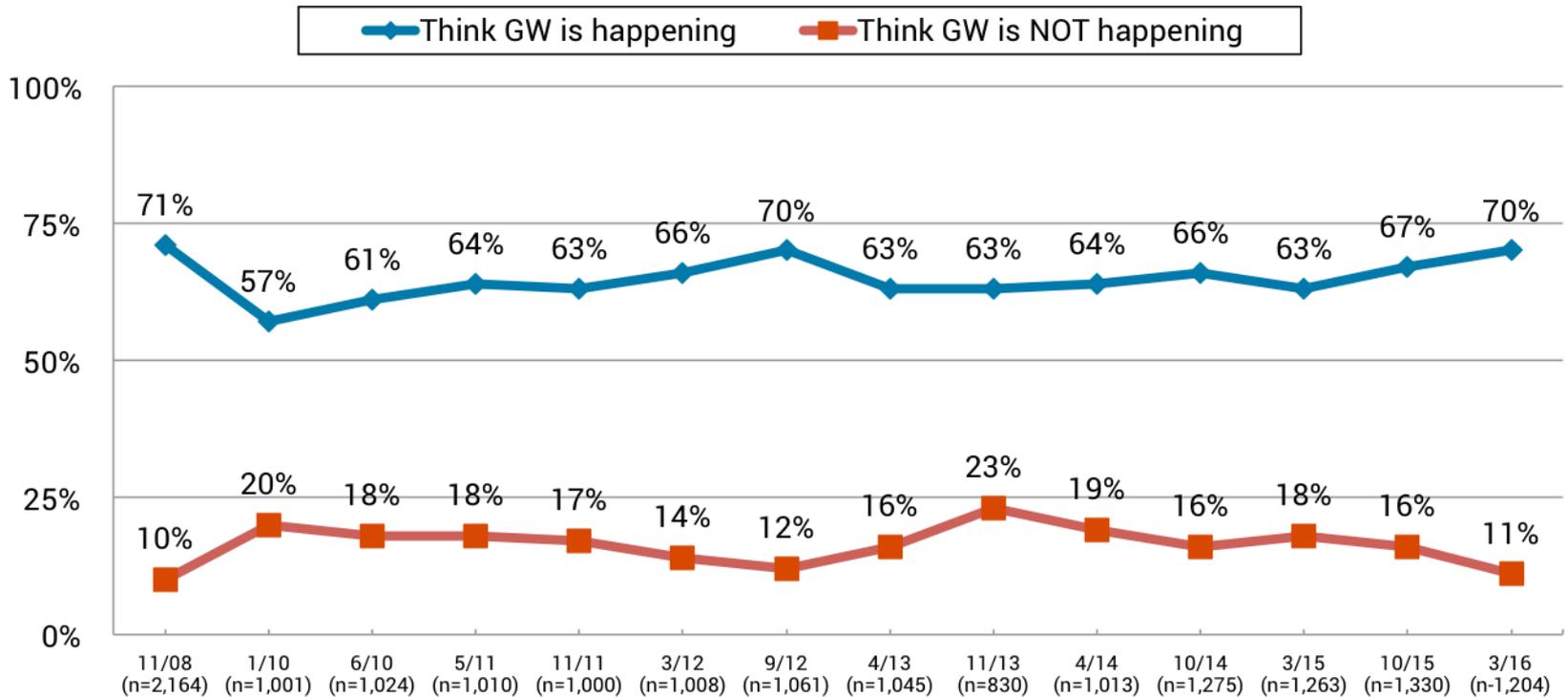
# Few Registered Voters Understand the Scientific Consensus On Global Warming

Percent who estimate that 90% or more climate scientists think human-caused global warming is happening



To the best of your knowledge, what percentage of climate scientists think that human-caused global warming is happening? Base: Registered American Voters 18+. March 2016.

# Most Americans Think Global Warming Is Happening



**Do you think global warming is happening?**

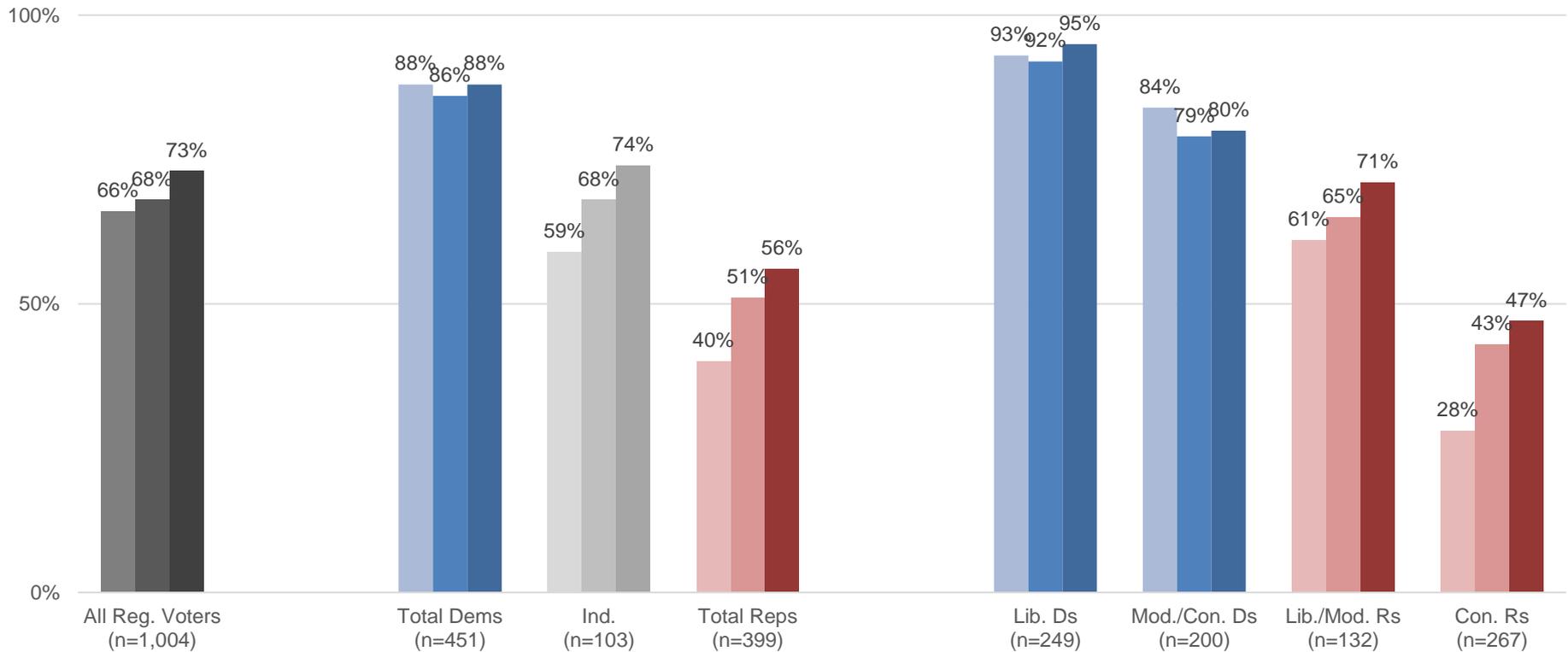
**Base: Americans 18+.**

Notes: Respondents who either said they “don’t know” or who did not answer the question are not included in the chart. Percentages therefore sum to less than 100%.

# Increasing Number of Registered Voters Think Global Warming Is Happening

- % who say “yes,” global warming is happening -

■ April 2014 ■ October 2015 ■ March 2016



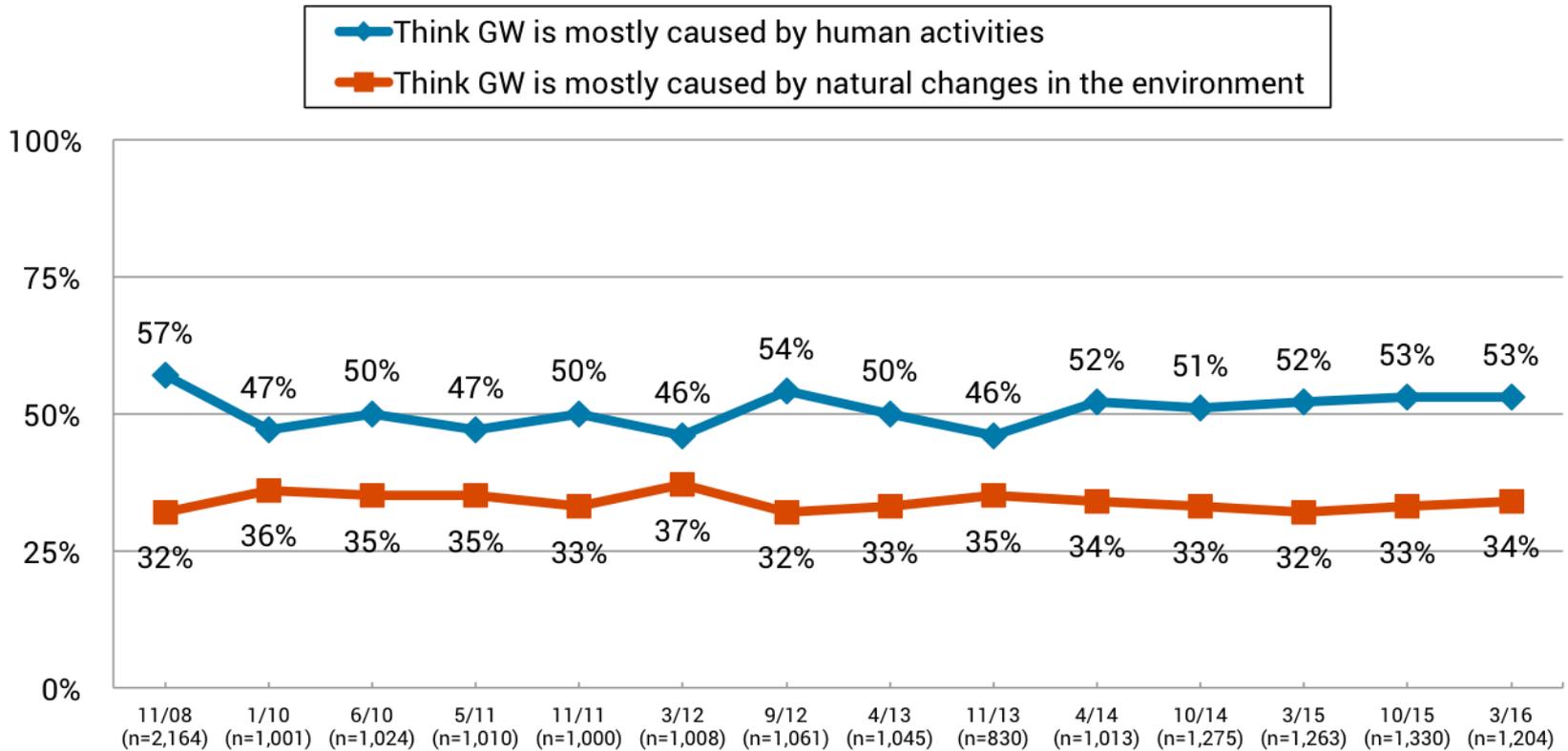
Recently, you may have noticed that *global warming* has been getting some attention in the news. Global warming refers to the idea that the world’s average temperature has been increasing over the past 150 years, may be increasing more in the future, and that the world’s climate may change as a result. What do you think: Do you think that global warming is happening?

Bases: Registered American Voters 18+.



George Mason University  
Center for Climate Change Communication

# Only Half of Americans Understand That Global Warming Is Mostly Human Caused

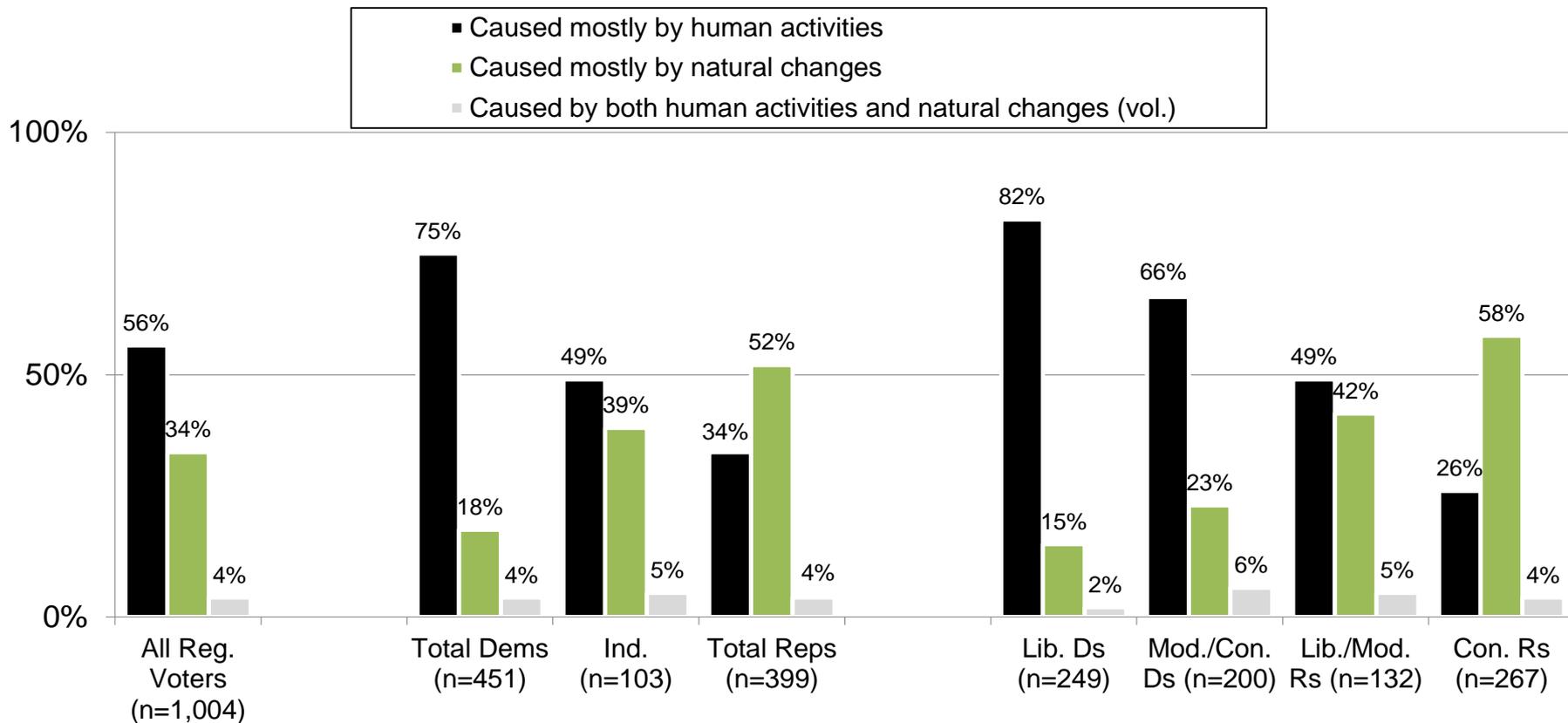


Assuming global warming is happening, do you think it is...

Base: Americans 18+. March, 2016.

# Half or More Democrats, Independents, and Liberal/Moderate Republicans Think Global Warming Is Caused by Human Activities

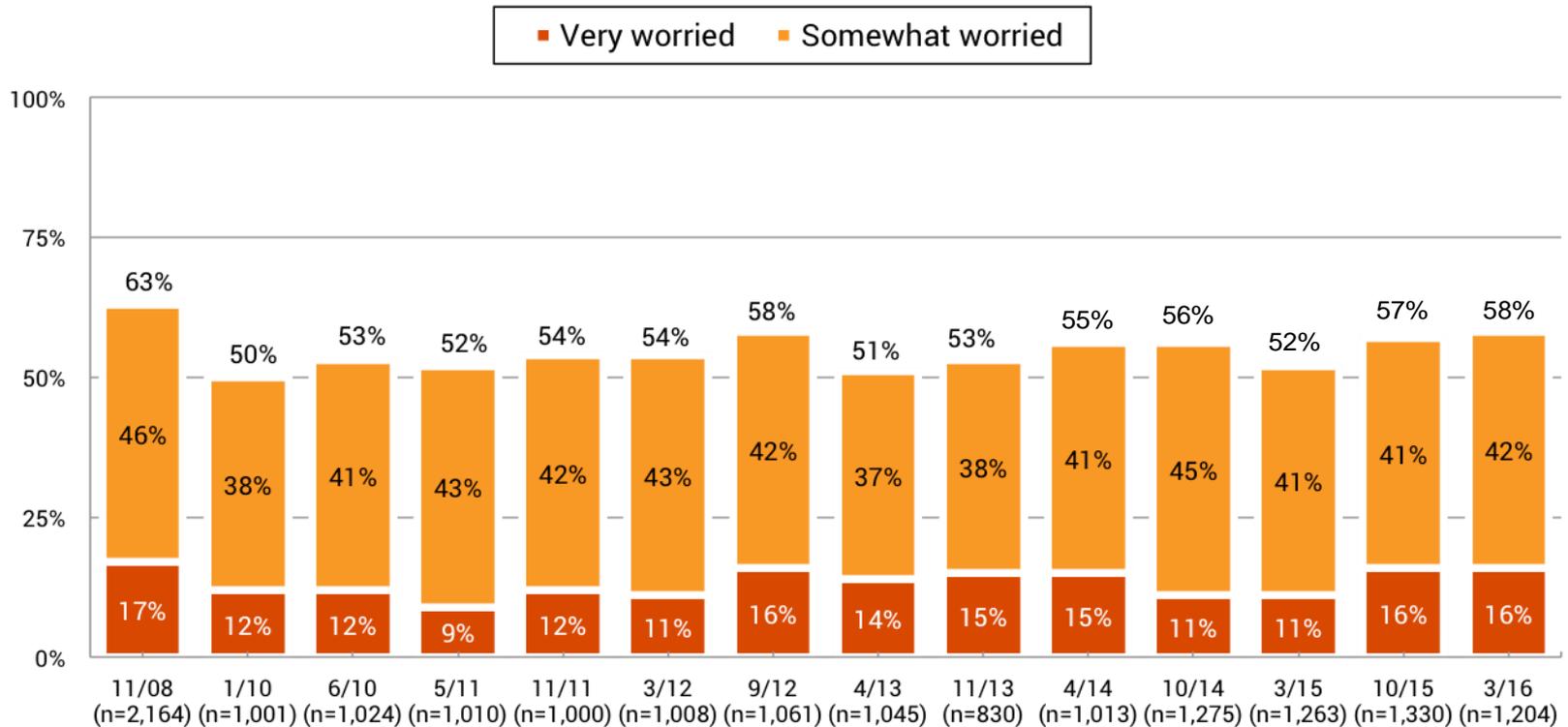
- % who say global warming is... -



Assuming global warming is happening, do you think it is...

Base: Registered American Voters 18+. March 2016.  
 Note: "Other" and "don't know" responses not shown.

# Few Americans Are “Very” Worried

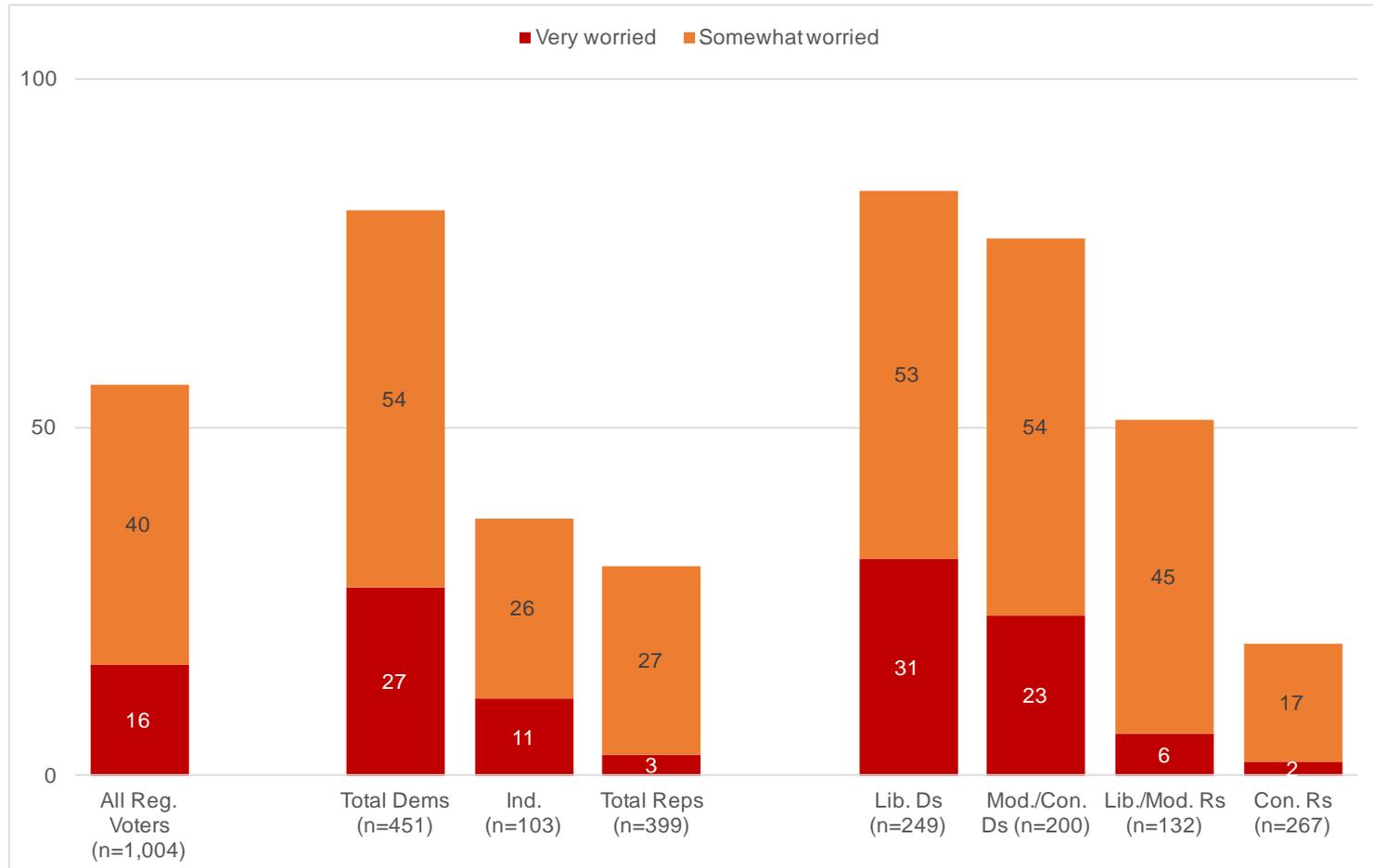


How worried are you about global warming?

Base: Americans 18+. March, 2015.

# Few Registered Voters are “Very” Worried

- % who say “very” or “somewhat” worried -

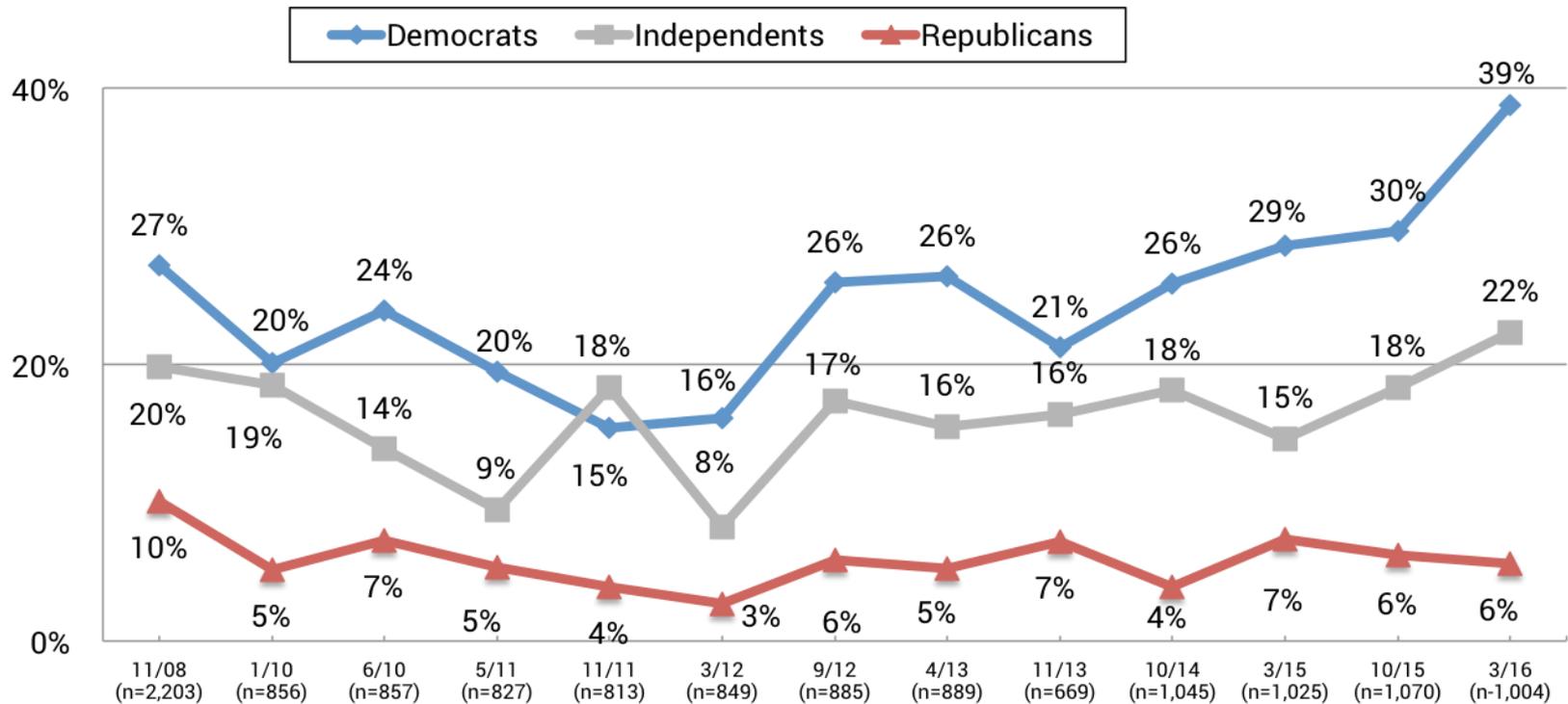


**How worried are you about global warming?**  
**Base: Registered American Voters 18+. March 2016.**

# “Top Priorities” For President and Congress in 2016

Priority	%
Economy	75
Terrorism	75
Education	66
Jobs	64
Social Security	62
Health care costs	61
Medicare	58
Crime	58
Budget deficit	56
Poor and needy	54
Immigration	51
Military	49
Environment	47
Tax reform	45
Justice reform	44
Climate change	38
Gun policy	37
Global trade	31

# Global Warming Should be a “Very High” Priority for the Next President and Congress



Do you think each of these issues should be a low, medium, high, or very high priority for the next president and Congress? [Global warming]  
 Base: Registered Voters.

# Global Warming Is a Much More Important Issue to Liberal Democrats Than to Other Registered Voters; It Is the Least Important Issue for Conservative Republicans

Rank by "very imp."	Liberal Democrats	Moderate/Conservative Democrats	Liberal/Moderate Republicans	Conservative Republicans
1	The economy	The economy	The economy	The economy
2	Health care	Social Security	Terrorism	Terrorism
3	Income gap between rich and poor	Health care	Federal budget deficit	Federal budget deficit
4	Protecting the environment	Terrorism	Immigration reform	Immigration reform
5	Education	Education	Health care	Supreme Court nominations
6	<b>Global warming</b>	Income gap between rich and poor	Social Security	Tax reform
7	Race relations	Federal budget deficit	Tax reform	Foreign policy
8	Developing sources of clean energy	Improving the nation's roads, bridges, and powerlines	Gun control/rights	Health care
9	Social Security	Protecting the environment	Education	Gun control/rights
10	Improving the nation's roads, bridges, and powerlines	Tax reform	Foreign policy	Social Security
11	Gun control/rights	Developing sources of clean energy	Improving the nation's roads, bridges, and powerlines	Abortion
12	Terrorism	Foreign policy	Energy independence	Education
13	Energy independence	<b>Global warming</b>	Protecting the environment	Energy independence
14	Supreme Court nominations	Energy independence	Income gap between rich and poor	International trade
15	Campaign finance reform	Gun control/rights	Developing sources of clean energy	Same-sex marriage
16	Foreign policy	Race relations	International trade	Improving the nation's roads, bridges, and powerlines
17	Reforming Wall Street	Reforming Wall Street	Race relations	Campaign finance reform
18	Federal budget deficit	Supreme Court nominations	Supreme Court nominations	Income gap between rich and poor
19	Tax reform	Immigration reform	Abortion	Race relations
20	Abortion	Campaign finance reform	Reforming Wall Street	Reforming Wall Street
21	Immigration reform	Abortion	<b>Global warming</b>	Protecting the environment
22	Same-sex marriage	International trade	Campaign finance reform	Developing sources of clean energy
23	International trade	Same-sex marriage	Same-sex marriage	<b>Global warming</b>

How important will the following issues be when you decide who you will vote for in the 2016 Presidential election?  
 Base: Registered American Voters 18+. March 2016.

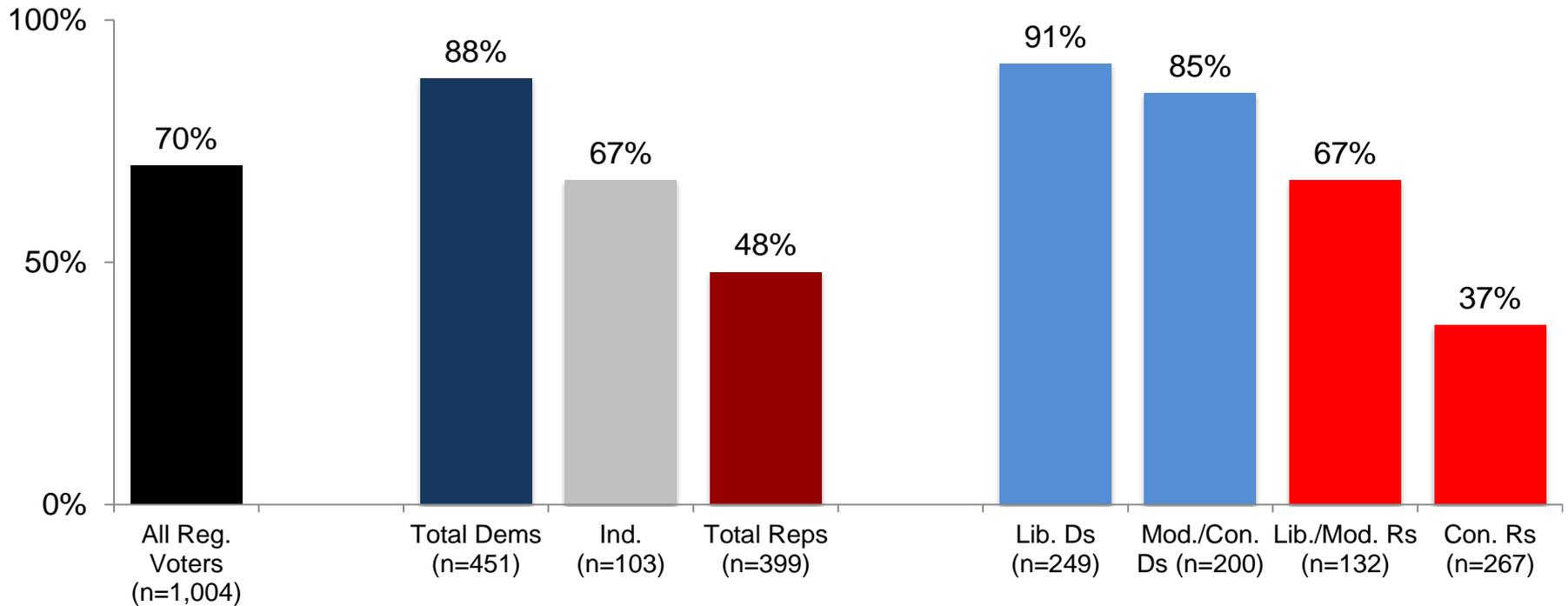


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# **Policy Support**

# Most Voters Support Setting Strict CO<sub>2</sub> Emission Limits on Existing Coal-Fired Power Plants

- % who say “strongly” or “somewhat support” -



How much do you support or oppose the following policy? Set strict carbon dioxide emission limits on existing coal-fired power plants to reduce global warming and improve public health. Power plants would have to reduce their emissions and/or invest in renewable energy and energy efficiency. The cost of electricity to consumers and companies would likely increase.

Base: Registered American Voters 18+. March 2016.

# Registered Voters Support Diverse Energy Policies

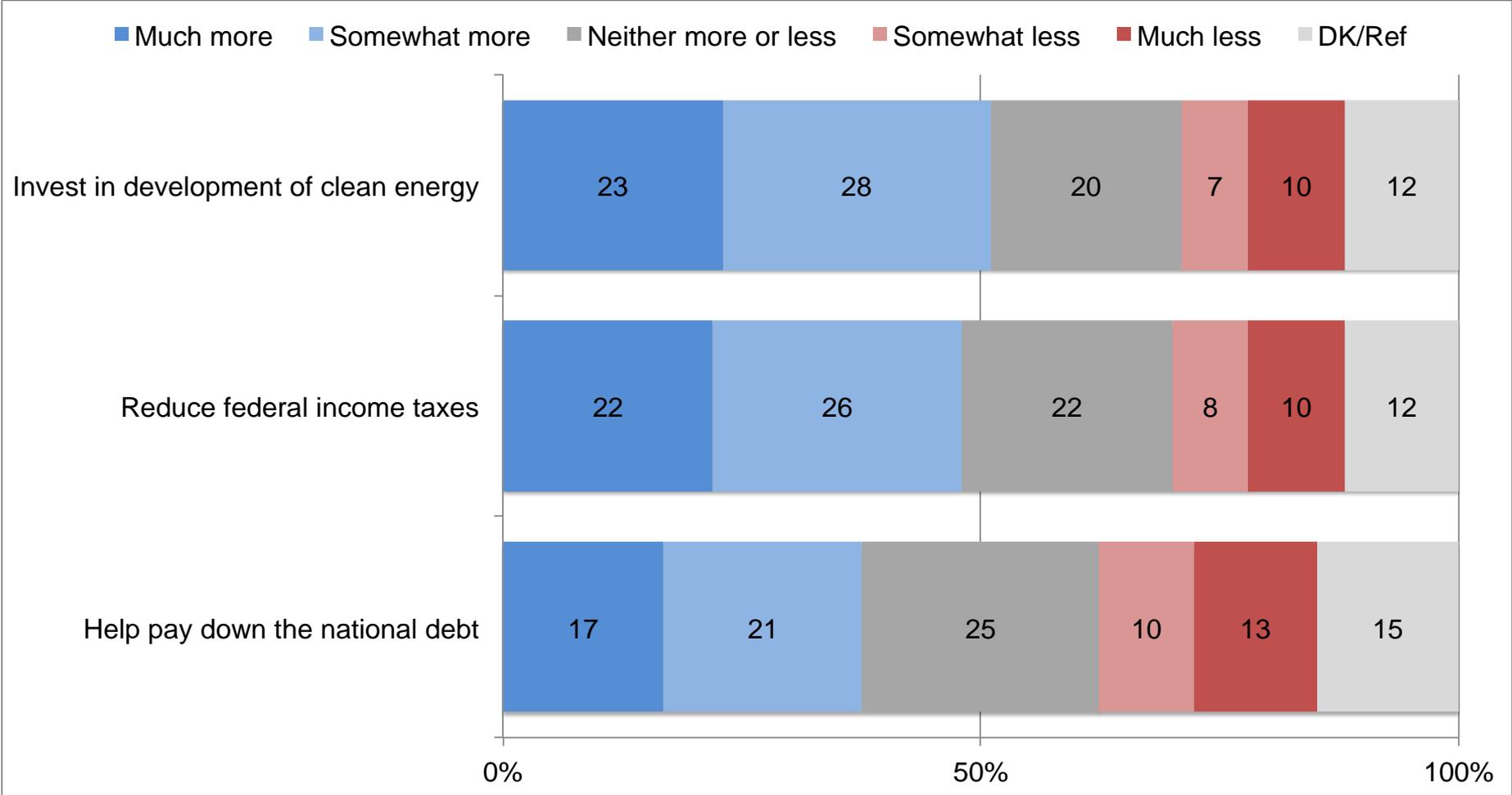
- % who say “strongly” or “somewhat support” policy -

(Unweighted base)	Democrats				Ind.	Republicans			
	All Reg. Voters	Total	Lib.	Mod./Con		Total	Lib./Mod.	Con.	
	(1,004)	(451)	(249)	(200)		(103)	(399)	(132)	(267)
	%	%	%	%		%	%	%	%
Fund more research into renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power	84	91	95	87	87	75	82	72	
Provide tax rebates for people who purchase energy-efficient vehicles or solar panels	81	91	94	87	84	70	79	65	
Regulate carbon dioxide (the primary greenhouse gas) as a pollutant	75	88	93	82	78	61	74	53	
Require fossil fuel companies to pay a carbon tax and use the money to reduce other taxes (such as income tax) by an equal amount	68	86	88	84	66	47	65	37	
Expand offshore drilling for oil and natural gas off the U.S. coast	58	42	36	49	57	78	71	82	

How much do you support or oppose the following policies?

Base: Registered American Voters 18+. March 2016.

# Would you be more or less likely to vote for a candidate who supports increasing taxes on fossil fuels if these tax revenues were used to...





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# **Global Warming's Six Americas**

# Global Warming's "Six Americas"

Alarmed      Concerned      Cautious      Disengaged      Doubtful      Dismissive

March  
2015  
n=1,263

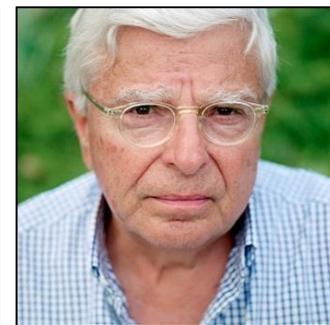


Highest Belief in Global Warming  
Most Concerned  
Most Motivated

Lowest Belief in Global Warming  
Least Concerned  
Least Motivated

*Proportion represented by area*

Source: Yale / George Mason University

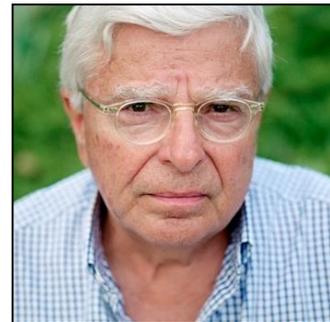


# “If you could ask an expert on global warming one question, which question would you ask?”

What can the world (and I) do to reduce global warming?

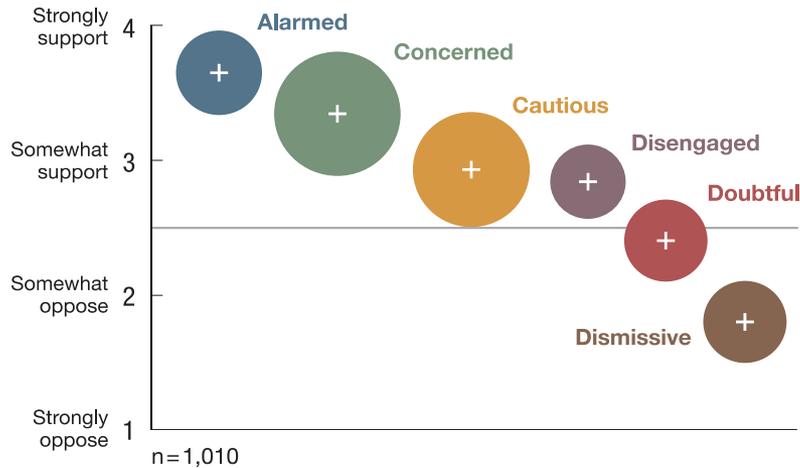
How do you know that global warming is happening or human-caused?

What harm will it cause? Why should I care?

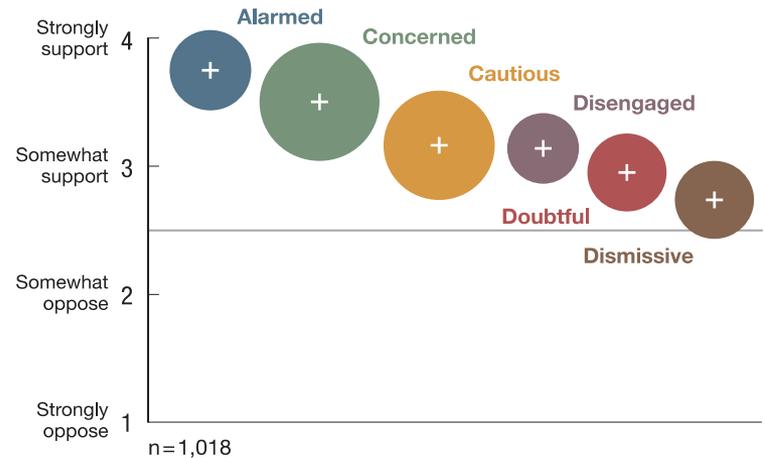


# Support for Climate & Energy Policies

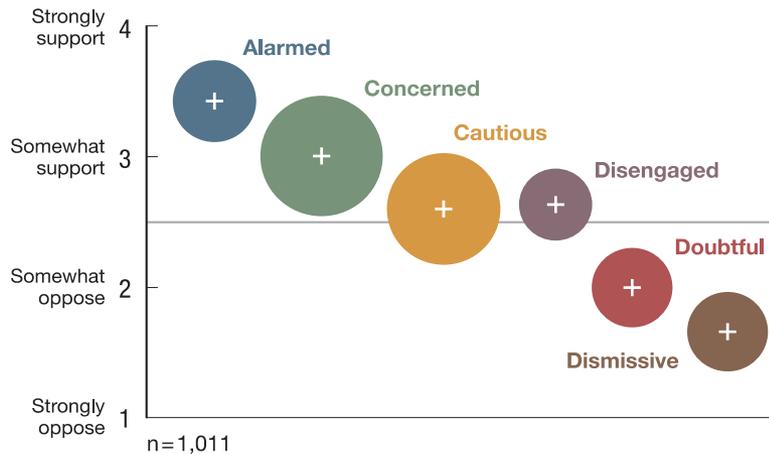
## Regulate CO<sub>2</sub> as Pollutant



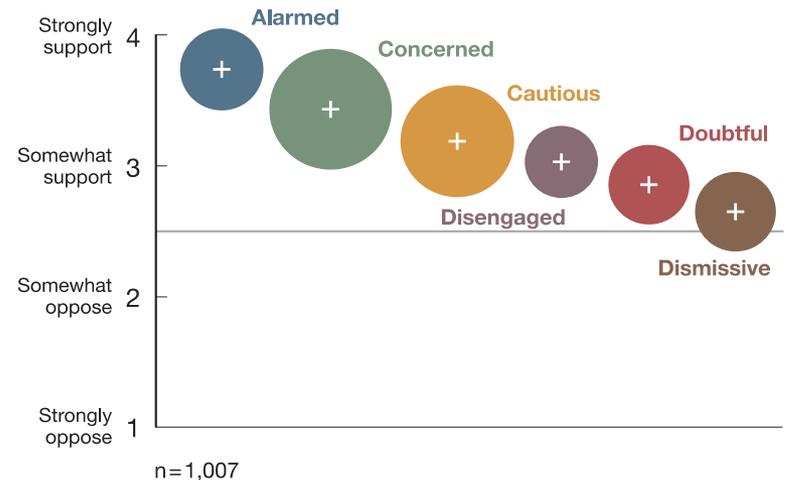
## Renewable Energy Research



## 20% National RPS



## FE Vehicles/Solar Panel Rebates





# The Yale Climate Opinion Maps

Interactive maps providing validated estimates of public climate change beliefs, risk perceptions, and policy support for all 50 states, all 435 congressional districts, and 3,000+ counties in the United States (including Connecticut):

<http://bit.ly/1pmUhVU>

Estimated % of adults who are worried about global warming, 2014

Display model output: Worried about global warming

- National
- State
- Congressional District
- County**

