

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Voters are seeing the effects of climate disruption in their daily lives, are concerned about the impacts, and are hungry for leadership and solutions. A large body of recent research shows a solid majority of voters respond favorably to confident, pro-clean energy, climate leadership messages grounded in three core American values:

RESPONSIBILITY.

*Message theme: **Stepping up to the climate challenge is the right and responsible thing to do.** Message elements include:* (1) We can't ignore the increasingly severe weather. Extreme weather is dangerous and not normal. (2) We owe it to our kids and grandkids to protect them and that means addressing climate change before it becomes irreversible. Running away from tough problems only makes them worse. (3) We need to implement common-sense strategies to reduce risk.

PATRIOTIC PRIDE.

*Message theme: **America can rise to the challenge and succeed.** Message elements include:* (1) No one should doubt America's ingenuity and resolve. Those who say nothing can be done about climate change forget who we are and what we can do. We don't run away from a challenge. (2) We already have the energy technologies to run our economy cleanly and affordably. American businesses and scientists have developed amazing renewable energy technologies, including solar mirrors that magnify the power of the sun, efficient wind turbines and jet fuel from algae. (3) America can build a healthier, more secure future by leading the world in clean energy solutions. Developing clean energy creates jobs, strengthens local economies, and helps us gain control of our energy future.

ACCOUNTABILITY.

*Message theme: **We can't allow the billionaire Koch Brothers and Big Oil to continue to rig the system and block clean energy solutions.** Message elements include:* (1) Dirty fossil fuel companies are holding back progress. (2) They have rigged our political system, paying off politicians to keep a stranglehold on Washington. (3) They pay for deceptive campaigns to spread doubts about climate science and the role of fossil fuels in causing climate change.

An excerpt from: Climate Solutions for a Stronger America: A Guide for Engaging and Winning on Climate Change

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The three themes function together as a narrative: Stepping up to the climate challenge is the right and responsible thing to do. America can rise to the challenge and succeed. We can't allow Big Oil to continue to rig the system in Washington and block clean energy solutions. This narrative triangle stands alone as a strong message strategy, and can be used to outmaneuver opposition message attacks. It also positions climate and clean energy leaders to gain the upper hand on jobs and the economy, while driving the conversation back to this powerful message triangle. (See: "Taking the high ground on jobs and the economy" below.)

