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To: Friends of Democracy Corps and NextGen Climate

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Millennials Demand Action on Climate Will Punish “Ignorant” Politicians Who Deny Climate Change

A new survey¹ of presidential-year millennial voters in four critical battleground states, conducted for NextGen Climate and Democracy Corps by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner, shows that a strong majority of these voters across all four states view climate change as a significant threat that demands federal action – including those who are likely to vote next week. Perhaps more important, they have no time for politicians who would deny science by claiming that climate change is not caused by humans. In an open-ended response, a large majority of millennials describe such politicians as “ignorant,” “stupid,” “out of touch” or something similar. One important finding is that independent millennial voters are much closer to Democratic millennials than they are to Republican millennials, on nearly every measure tested, again showing overwhelming support for climate action. Only the 11 percent of millennials who identify as conservative Republicans show solid backing for climate change deniers.

Meanwhile, an overwhelming margin of millennial voters – including Republicans – say climate change denial would make them less likely to support a candidate – with more than 41 percent saying it would disqualify that candidate regardless of their other positions. With such strong sentiments, it is not surprising that millennial voters prefer a candidate who backs climate action over one who denies climate science by nearly 50 points.

Millennial voters hold overwhelmingly favorable view of EPA, disdain for Kochs, oil companies

Millennial voters in these four states give both the EPA and environmental groups a two-to-one favorability ratio, significantly higher than non-millennials gave these same entities in our recent

¹ The following memo is based on a survey of 1,000 voters in Colorado, Iowa, New Hampshire and Florida (250 per state) age 18 – 34 who either voted in 2012 or were too young to do so conducted October 21-28. The survey was conducted via cell phone (2/3 of the sample) and Internet (1/3 of the sample), with a small additional landline sample in New Hampshire. The margin of error for the entire sample is 3.1 percent. For each state it is 6.2 percent. Roughly half of the sample are likely 2014 voters, as defined by a combination of past vote history from the voter file, where available, stated past vote history, where not, and stated 2014 vote intention. Also referenced are results among non-millennials from a national survey of 950 2012 voters conducted October 16-21.



national survey. More important, as we see on nearly every measure in this survey, millennial independents look much more like Democrats, and also give these groups overwhelmingly positive ratings.

Meanwhile, millennial voters hold overwhelmingly negative views of both the Koch Brothers and, especially, oil companies – who garner a putrid 15/58 percent favorability rating. Coal companies also receive negative ratings, but do not earn quite the same level of hatred as oil companies. Again, independents have overwhelmingly negative views of the Kochs and their oil company brethren, and even Republican millennials have negative views toward oil companies. Millennials in New Hampshire are particularly negative toward oil companies.

	Total	Diff.	Non Mil ²	LV	Not LV	CO	FL	IA	NH	Dem	Ind	Rep
EPA	49/23	+26	+7	+20	+32	+25	+22	+25	+31	+53	+31	-30
Environmental groups	48/24	+24	+11	+18	+29	+22	+22	+15	+34	+43	+36	-39
Coal companies	18/36	-18	+12	-18	-18	-11	-18	-16	-25	-38	-12	-1
Koch brothers	9/38	-29	-16	-35	-22	-34	-13	-34	-33	-40	-34	+1
Oil companies	15/58	-43	-11	-46	-40	-37	-35	-36	-65	-57	-45	-14

Now, please rate your feelings toward some people and organizations, with one hundred meaning a VERY WARM, FAVORABLE feeling; zero meaning a VERY COLD, UNFAVORABLE feeling; and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold.

Taking action on climate significantly more important to millennials than reducing regulation on businesses

Unsurprisingly, millennials in these states put overwhelming emphasis on improving the economy and creating jobs. However, unlike their older counterparts, they also place a much greater emphasis on taking action on climate than on reducing regulation on businesses, as 55 percent rate such action an extremely or very important issue for the country (with another 29 percent calling it somewhat important).

	Total	Non Mil	LV	Not LV	CO	FL	IA	NH	Dem	Ind	Rep
Getting economy moving, creating jobs³	85	93	86	83	83	90	82	85	92	80	87
Taking action to prevent climate change	55	44	55	55	57	54	51	56	74	55	22
Reducing regulations on businesses	28	41	35	21	23	36	28	24	23	24	45

Below is a list of issues facing the country. For each one, please rate important you find that issue to be. Is it EXTREMELY important, VERY important, just SOMEWHAT important, NOT AT ALL important or are you not sure? (PERCENT SAYING EXTREMELY OR VERY)

² Non-millennial data in all tables from national survey conducted Oct. 16-21.

³ For full language of all questions, see Frequency Questionnaire.



Millennials perceive climate change as a significant threat, support government action to combat it

Two thirds of millennials view climate change as a serious threat that requires action now or in the years ahead, 14 points higher than non-millennials. And an overwhelming 3-to-1 ratio believe that the federal government should be doing more, not less, to address the problem (another 26 percent are not sure, likely because they don't know that the government is currently doing).

Again, on both of these questions, independents look much more like Democrats. Women and millennials in Colorado and New Hampshire are especially concerned about the threat of climate change and supportive of government action to address it.

	Tot	Non Mil	CO	FL	IA	NH	Men	Women	Dem	Ind	Rep
Views on climate change											
Severe threat, must address now	46	40	52	42	46	46	43	49	64	49	14
Threat, but not urgent now	21	12	21	16	20	25	18	22	21	20	23
May be happening, but humans can't affect	23	33	19	28	27	20	29	19	9	23	45
Not really happening	3	7	3	3	4	2	3	3	1	2	9
Not sure	7	7	6	12	3	7	7	7	5	6	10
Total Threat	67	53	73	57	66	70	61	71	85	69	37
<i>Which of the following best describes your view of climate change?</i>											
Government Involvement											
Should do more	49	35	57	45	46	50	44	54	63	53	22
Should do less	17	26	16	20	17	15	24	11	7	14	40
Right amount	8	8	5	5	8	12	12	5	6	7	12
Not sure	25	30	22	30	29	22	21	30	24	26	27
More – Less	32	9	41	25	29	35	20	43	56	39	-18
<i>Do you think the federal government should be doing more or less to address the problem of climate change, is it currently doing the right amount, or are you unsure?</i>											

Millennials overwhelmingly reject false choice of climate vs. economy; believe climate action will create jobs.

Over three quarters of millennial voters reject the false choice put forth by climate change deniers that the country needs to choose between combating climate change and the economy. In fact, nearly the same amount agree that taking action on climate change will create jobs by encouraging innovation. This includes not only strong majorities of Democrats and independents, but majorities or pluralities of Republicans as well.

Meanwhile, there is nearly 70 percent agreement that carbon pollution is having a significant negative impact on both climate and health, and that by refusing to take action, older generations



are leaving the millennials’ generation a mess to clean up. And a 62-25 percent majority also agrees the climate change is increasing the number and severity of extreme weather events in their state and around the country.

	Strongly Agree	Total Agree	LV	Not LV	CO	FL	IA	NH	Dem	Ind	Rep
Possible to combat climate change and have a strong economy; don’t have to choose	50	77	78	75	73	77	75	83	86	79	58
Combatting climate change will create more jobs, encourage innovation	41	73	71	75	72	70	75	76	86	77	47
Carbon pollution negatively impacting our climate, health	42	69	67	70	63	70	65	76	83	74	33
Inaction means my generation cleaning up older generation’s mess	38	68	70	66	75	67	66	64	87	70	34
Climate change is increasing number, severity of extreme weather events	30	62	64	59	61	61	63	62	83	59	32

Below are a few statements about the issue of climate change. For each one, please tell me if you agree or disagree with that statement, or if you are unsure.

Millennials strongly back a candidate who supports climate action over a climate change denier

An overwhelming 3-to-1 ratio of millennials, 71-22 percent, would support a candidate who backs taking action on climate change over one who denies climate science. This includes huge majorities across all four states (but particularly in New Hampshire), and of Democrats and independents. Even Republican millennials are split evenly on this question.

When choice is added into the equation, the results don’t change much overall, but this significantly polarizes the issue, boosting support for the pro-climate action candidate among Democrats, but eroding it among Republicans. Interestingly, adding choice improves the margin in Colorado and Florida and among women, but reduces support in Iowa and New Hampshire and with men.



	Total	CO	FL	IA	NH	Men	Women	Dem	Ind	Rep
CLIMATE ONLY										
Candidate A	71	69	67	72	78	70	73	83	74	46
Candidate B	22	22	28	24	16	25	20	13	19	45
Undecided	6	10	5	5	6	5	7	3	7	9
Candidate A-Candidate B	49	47	39	48	62	45	53	70	55	1
CLIMATE W/CHOICE										
Candidate A	71	76	71	61	74	60	80	96	72	26
Candidate B	26	24	23	35	24	35	18	4	23	71
Undecided	3	0	6	3	2	5	2	-	5	3
Candidate A-Candidate B	45	52	48	26	50	25	62	92	49	-45
CLIMATE ONLY – W/CHOICE	4	-5	-9	22	12	20	-9	-22	6	44
<i>And thinking again about the election for Congress next month, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today and the choices were:</i>										
<i>(CLIMATE) Candidate A, who supports taking action to combat climate change or Candidate B, who denies the science of climate change.</i>										
<i>(CLIMATE W/CHOICE) Candidate A who supports taking action to combat climate change and who supports a woman's right to choose or Candidate B who denies the science of climate change, and who wants to outlaw most abortions.</i>										
<i>Would you vote for candidate A or candidate B, or would you be undecided?</i>										

Climate change denial one of most disqualifying positions for millennials

Climate change denial could be a death blow for candidates among this important bloc – more so than nearly any other issue tested. An overwhelming 67-11 percent margin say that they would be less likely to support a candidate who denies climate science and rejecting NASA, the US military and 97 percent of scientists.

In fact, 55 percent say it would make them MUCH less likely to support such a candidate, and 41 percent say that they could NEVER support a candidate who holds this position. Moreover, there is remarkable cross-partisan consensus on this position – even a strong plurality of Republicans say climate change denial would make them less likely to back such a candidate. This is a more disqualifying issue for these voters than all but one other issue tested – bigger than supporting overturning Roe v. Wade, opposing gay marriage, opposing background checks, or comprehensive immigration reform.

Meanwhile, a similar margin would be less likely to vote for a candidate who took large contributions from the oil and gas industry, though there is much less intensity here.



	More	Less	Much Less	Could Never	Net	CO	FL	IA	NH	Dem	Ind	Rep
Voted to double student loan int. rates	5	83	70	50	-78	-75	-78	-80	-79	-82	-81	-66
Denied climate change, rejecting NASA, military, scientists	11	67	55	41	-56	-62	-39	-61	-61	-75	-55	-28
Accepted oil and gas industry contributions	6	57	40	20	-51	-55	-46	-50	-54	-70	-50	-26
Opposed background checks on gun sales	13	60	44	23	-47	-42	-45	-39	-62	-68	-44	-23
Wants to overturn Roe vs. Wade	20	65	54	45	-45	-49	-45	-28	-57	-69	-59	29
Wanted to make same-sex marriage illegal	19	62	51	42	-43	-49	-29	-48	-47	-58	-49	-8
Opposed pathway to citizenship for illegal immigrants	25	50	33	18	-25	-39	-17	-29	-17	-51	-20	3

Below is a list of stances that a candidate for office could take on a few important issues. For each one, please tell me if a candidate held that position would that make you more or less likely to vote for that candidate, or would it make no difference?

(IF MUCH LESS LIKELY) Could you ever vote for a candidate who held that position?

Millennials describe politicians who deny climate science as “ignorant,” “uneducated,” “idiots.”

As illustrated in the word cloud below, when these millennials are asked to describe, in their own words, a politician who denies climate science, 63 percent offer a negative response, with the dominant responses centered on that politician being “ignorant,” either “stupid,” an “idiot,” “uneducated” and “out of touch with reality.”

