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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## GreenLatinos & Earthjustice Release New Polling Data

According to a [new poll](#) conducted by Latino Decisions for Earthjustice, a national environmental nonprofit law firm, and GreenLatinos, a leading national nonprofit of Latino environmental leaders, 81 percent of registered Latino voters in California strongly support state clean energy standards to combat climate change. Further, 81 percent of California Latino voters are worried about climate change, and 79 percent say they are already directly experiencing the effects of climate change in California. This poll demonstrates that for California Latino constituents, climate change is real—it's happening now—and that they demand strong and decisive action by the state's lawmakers and leaders. (Read the [California results polling memo](#) and [California results full survey](#).)

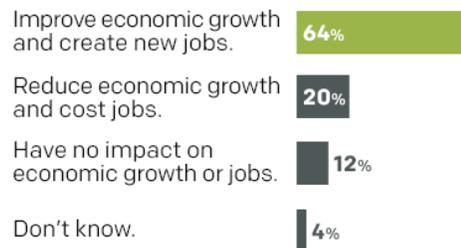
[See national results from poll »](#)

The U.S. Census shows that Latinos are largest ethnic group in California, with 14.99 million Latinos living in the state as of July 1, 2014. Additionally, Latinos are critical to the workforce for the state's \$45 billion dollar agriculture industry.

Over two-thirds of Latino voters in California (68%) accept the science, acknowledging that climate change is a result of human activities. An even greater number, 77% of Latinos in the state, say they are more likely to support policies and politicians that protect the environment.

This community strongly rejects the false claim that increasing environmental protection has a negative effect on economic growth. In fact, the survey found that a majority of California Latino voters (64%) believe that enacting stronger environmental laws will have a positive impact on economic growth and create new jobs.

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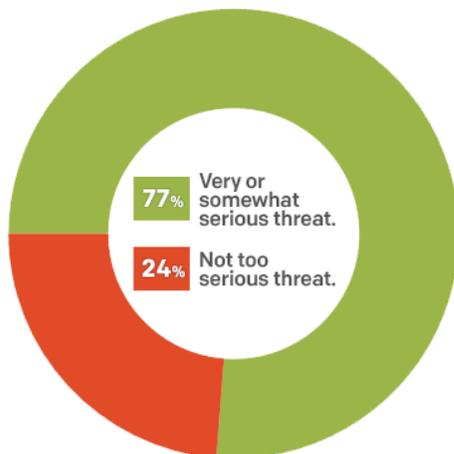
Nearly one out of every two Latinos lives in the country's top 25 most ozone-polluted cities. Latinos are three times more likely to die from asthma than other racial or ethnic groups. In California, Latinos are suffering the harms of air pollution even more acutely: California has six of the nation's 10 worst cities for air pollution, and Latino populations in the state are more likely to live in those areas overburdened by poor air quality and other pollution impacts. These problems are borne out in the polling data, as 77 percent of Latino residents in the state of California say air pollution is a serious threat to their health or that of their family members.

Latino voters in California are also willing to put their money where their mouth is: 79 percent are willing to pay \$5 more on their monthly utility bill in order to get their electricity from clean energy sources such as wind and solar, and sixty-nine percent may even be willing to pay up to \$10 more.

As California continues to battle a severe four-year drought, which scientists say is intensified by climate change, this recent study also sends a cautionary note to California's state legislature that inaction on climate change is not an option.

**Trip Van Noppen, President of Earthjustice, issued the following statement:** "Here in California, Latino voters have strong opinions about the need for California leaders to act boldly and swiftly on climate change. This powerful and growing community doesn't need to be told that climate change is a problem because they are experiencing the dramatic effects first hand. Our Latino communities in California and their children are facing some of the worst air quality in our country and as a result, this data tells us that 77% of Latino voters see air pollution as a serious threat to their health. The poll succinctly demonstrates that elected leaders must enact policies that promote clean energy and protect the air and water that Latinos breathe and drink."

**The issue of proximity to the sources of air and water pollution greatly affects the Latino community. Voter response was highest (77%) among California residents, who see air pollution as a serious threat to their health.**



**Mark Magaña, President and Founder of GreenLatinos, issued the following**

**statement:** "California is at the epicenter of the climate movement, both in the negative effects of climate change that they are experiencing daily and the ambitious, yet necessary, actions that they are taking to address it. This poll makes it clear why many California Latino elected officials are out front in addressing climate change; roughly four out of five California Latino registered voters say they are already directly experiencing the effects of climate change, are worried about the negative health effects on their family, strongly support state clean energy standards, are willing to pay more for clean energy if necessary, and are more likely to support policies and politicians that protect the environment. This is a community with significant commitment and consensus for demanding climate action now."

**Lisa Garcia, Vice President of Litigation for Healthy Communities at Earthjustice, issued the following**

**statement:** "This poll reiterates the strong connection California Latinos have to the environment and the understanding that by enacting tougher environmental standards, we can protect the health of our people. Latinos understand that promoting a clean energy economy will only help California, their families and

create green jobs. Latinos are saying it loud and clear—the time to act is now.”

**Earthjustice Staff Attorney Angela Johnson Meszaros issued the following statement:** “This state’s air pollution issues are worsening and Latinos and communities of color are bearing the brunt of them. California can no longer turn a blind eye to the hundreds of thousands of people who need clean air and are suffering from asthma and other chronic lung disorders. This research shows California’s Latinos want action now.”

*This release is in coordination with Presente.org, Communities for a Better Environment (CBE), the California Environmental Justice Alliance (CEJA), Physicians for Social Responsibility – Los Angeles (PSR-LA), and the Greenlining Institute.*

**Statement by Arturo Carmona, Executive Director of Presente.org:** “We are thrilled by the data in this poll, which finds overwhelming support for key arguments in the environmental justice fight and validates strong Latino commitment to fighting climate change. Latino voters are sending a powerful message that we see a bright future without petroleum, with less pollution, where most resources and pollution reduction mandates benefit the most impacted communities in the state. Our community is demanding a healthier, greener, a more just and more equitable environmental transformation of our economy and society. But the poll also sends a chilling message of accountability to those elected officials still willing to advance the lies of Big Oil and their allies saying ‘we don’t support you and you do not speak for us’.”

**Statement by Martha Arguello, Executive Director of Physicians for Social Responsibility – Los Angeles:** “Community and individual health is threatened by poor air quality, the drought, wildfires, and extreme heat. Our use of fossil fuel comes with a steep price tag for asthma, cancer, low birth weight, and all chronic illnesses linked to poor air quality and climate change. Latinos want and expect strong climate policies that address air pollution, promote clean energy production and promote real economic opportunities. We know Latino health is threatened by the drought, extreme heat and other weather events. Additionally, climate change will make our current air pollution problem worse, as days get hotter we will see more ground-level ozone. With fires we will see increased particulate matter and with that will come more emergency room visits, hospitalizations and acute asthma attacks. As this poll suggests, addressing climate change is a public health imperative that Latinos understand and take seriously. Reducing health disparities and protecting the health of future generations is a major priority for Latinos who are calling for a rapid transition to a just and healthy economy by investing in clean energy solutions.”

**Statement by Strela Cervas, Co-Director of the California Environmental Justice Alliance:** “California’s new majority wants clean, equitable energy. Latino and other communities of color have been on the frontlines of fossil fuel pollution for decades and now our neighborhoods are among the most vulnerable to climate disruption and extreme weather. That’s why we need to be on the frontlines of the solution: clean, renewable, local energy. This poll clearly demonstrates that Latinos see the need for renewable energy to combat climate change. Latinos want to see the economic benefits as well—living wage, sustainable and healthy jobs—and they want to see renewable energy investments and infrastructure spread equitably across all California communities. It’s time to ensure that low-income communities of color no longer bear the disproportionate impacts of energy pollution. As California creates our ‘next generation’ of climate policies, we have the opportunity to build an even stronger renewable energy system that invests in the communities who need it the most. Equitable renewable energy can provide some of California’s most over-polluted communities with a clean, healthy environment and create living wage economic opportunities.”

**Statement by Alvaro Sanchez, Environmental Equity Director at the Greenlining Institute:** “California Latinos understand how clean energy investments can bring both jobs and cleaner air to Latino communities— communities that now breathe some of the dirtiest air in the country. We’ve made a promising start, charging polluters and putting those dollars into clean transportation, energy efficiency and solar power for low-income communities, and Latinos want to see those investments grow. Every community needs a piece of the clean energy future.”

**Statement by Byron Gudiel, Executive Director of Communities for a Better**

**Environment:** "Oil industry operations and fossil fuel combustion in transportation accounts for more than half of greenhouse gasses emitted in California in addition to causing wide range of other serious health impacts in Latino communities as well as low income communities and communities of color. The community is fully aware of these negative impacts, and they strongly support urgent decisive action by their elected officials as demonstrated by this revealing poll results. We need massive and equity-based clean energy investments through a just transition away from fossil fuels towards a sustainable path in economic development, job creation and building healthy, safe and resilient communities."

## POLL DOCUMENTS

- [California results, polling memo](#)
- [California results, full survey](#)
- [Latino Decisions slide deck: Highlights from the California Environmental Attitudes Survey](#)
- [National results, in English \(full survey, polling memo and graphics\)](#)
- [National results, in Spanish \(full survey, polling memo and graphics\)](#)

## BACKGROUND

During Summer 2015, Earthjustice and GreenLatinos joined forces to field this state research poll among U.S. Latino voters. The survey, fielded between June 24 and July 8, is based on a national sample of 1,200 Latino registered voters who were interviewed by landline, cell and on-line in English and Spanish. As part of that effort, California, Colorado and Florida were oversampled, with 300 interviews completed in each of those states. The state samples carry a nominal margin of error of +/- 5.7 percentage points.