



**From: Katherine Patterson, Public Policy Polling**

**To: Interested Parties**

**Subject: Majority of North Carolinians Believe Climate Impacts Will Cost the State, Support Joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative**

**Date: July 7, 2021**

A new Public Policy Polling survey, commissioned by EDF Action, finds that seven in ten North Carolina voters believe that climate impacts, like increasingly erratic weather and stronger storms, will cost the state of North Carolina in the next ten years (71%). The majority of North Carolina voters want to see a leader take bold action to combat climate change (59%), and support North Carolina joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) (54%), including Democrats (81%) and Independents (52%). Directing RGGI revenue towards North Carolina communities garnered strong support, with investments to reduce the risk of severe flooding by restoring wetlands and floodplains (67-26) earning the most support, followed by reducing electric bill costs for low-income families (66-28), and making sure homes use less energy (62-31).

### **North Carolinians concerned about cost of climate impacts, support climate action**

The impacts of climate change concern voters of all political parties - Independents (68%) and Republicans (53%) both think the impacts of climate change will cost the state over the next ten years, along with 89% of Democrats. And, one in two voters (50%) who supported Donald Trump in the 2020 election believe climate impacts will cost the state over the next ten years.

The survey finds strong support for leadership and action on climate and Governor Cooper's Executive Order 80:

- North Carolina voters support a leader who takes bold action on climate by 9-points (49-40), including 75% of Democrats and 54% of Independents.
- Governor Cooper's Executive Order 80 and Clean Energy Plan are supported by 14-points and a majority (51-37).

### **Support for participation in Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative**

North Carolina is considering joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a collaboration of 11 Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states working together to reduce carbon pollution from power plants. A majority of North Carolinians (54%) support the state joining RGGI, with a plurality (40%) strongly supporting joining RGGI.



The opportunity to invest proceeds from RGGI toward different programs garnered strong support. Investments in restoring wetlands and floodplains to reduce the risk of severe flooding earned the most support from voters (67-26), followed by the opportunity to reduce electric bill costs for low-income families (66-28), and making sure homes use less energy (62-31). There is also strong support for money from RGGI going to provide relief for pollution burdened communities, earning support by a 16-point margin (55-39).

- ***Reducing the risk of flooding by restoring wetlands and floodplains*** attracts support across demographics, with an equal number of voters who supported Trump in the 2020 election in support (47%) as opposed (46%) and Biden voters overwhelmingly supportive (87%). This includes support from Democrats (83%), Republicans (48%), and Independents (69%), as well as both African American (78%) and white (63%) voters. Flood reduction investments are also popular regardless of whether a voter has completed high school (56%), some college (69%), a two year degree (59%), a four year degree (78%), or a postgraduate degree (82%).
- ***Helping reduce electricity bills for low-income customers*** is very popular among Democrats (89%) and Independents (61%). Both women (69%) and men (66%) believe investing in reducing electricity bills for low-income families is important, with 46% of women and 39% of men saying it is very important. Helping low-income customers is popular across educational attainment: high school grad (69%), some college (64%), two-year degree (54%), four year degree (69%), or postgraduate degree (76%).

Public Policy Polling surveyed 768 North Carolina voters from June 10-11, 2021. The margin of error is +/- 3.5%. 50% of interviews for the survey were conducted by telephone and 50% by text message.