THIRD WAY

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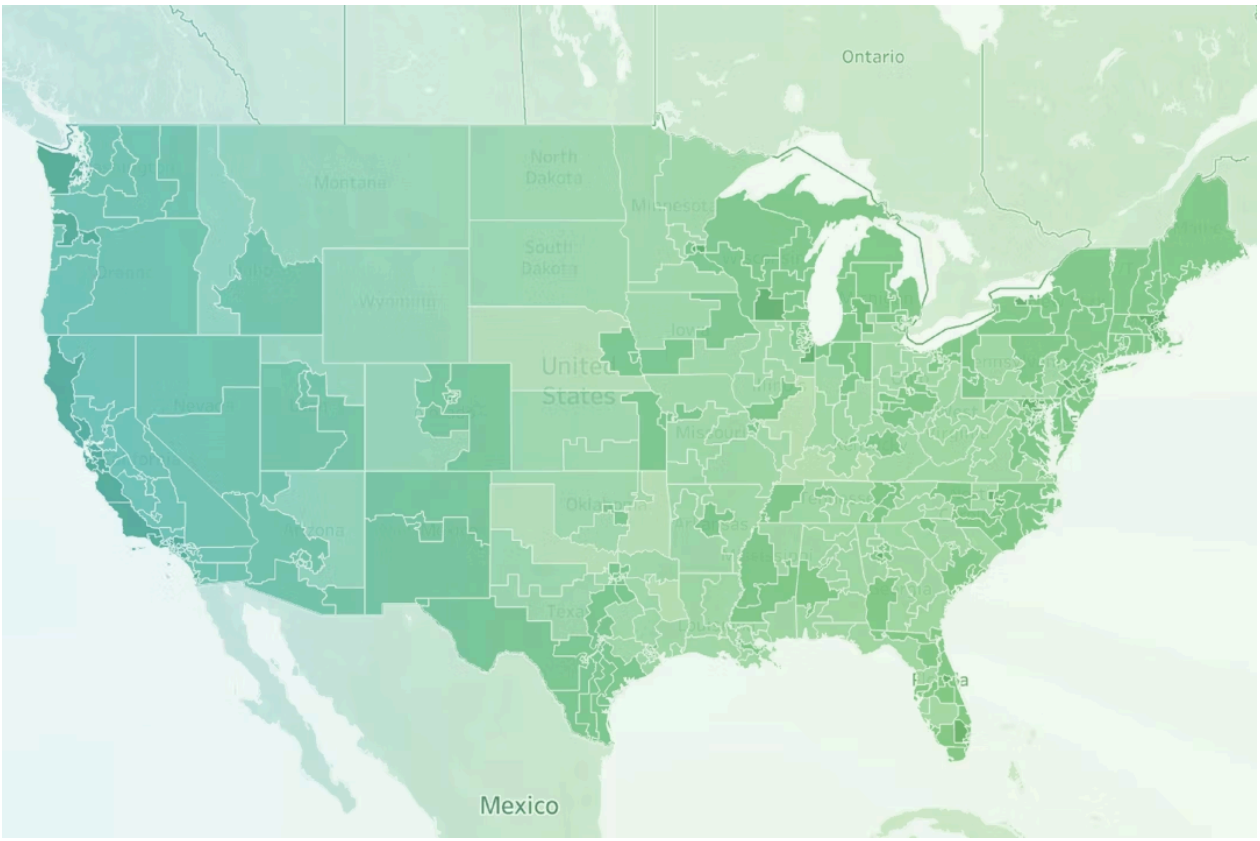
Americans Support Federal Action to Reach a 100% Clean Energy Grid



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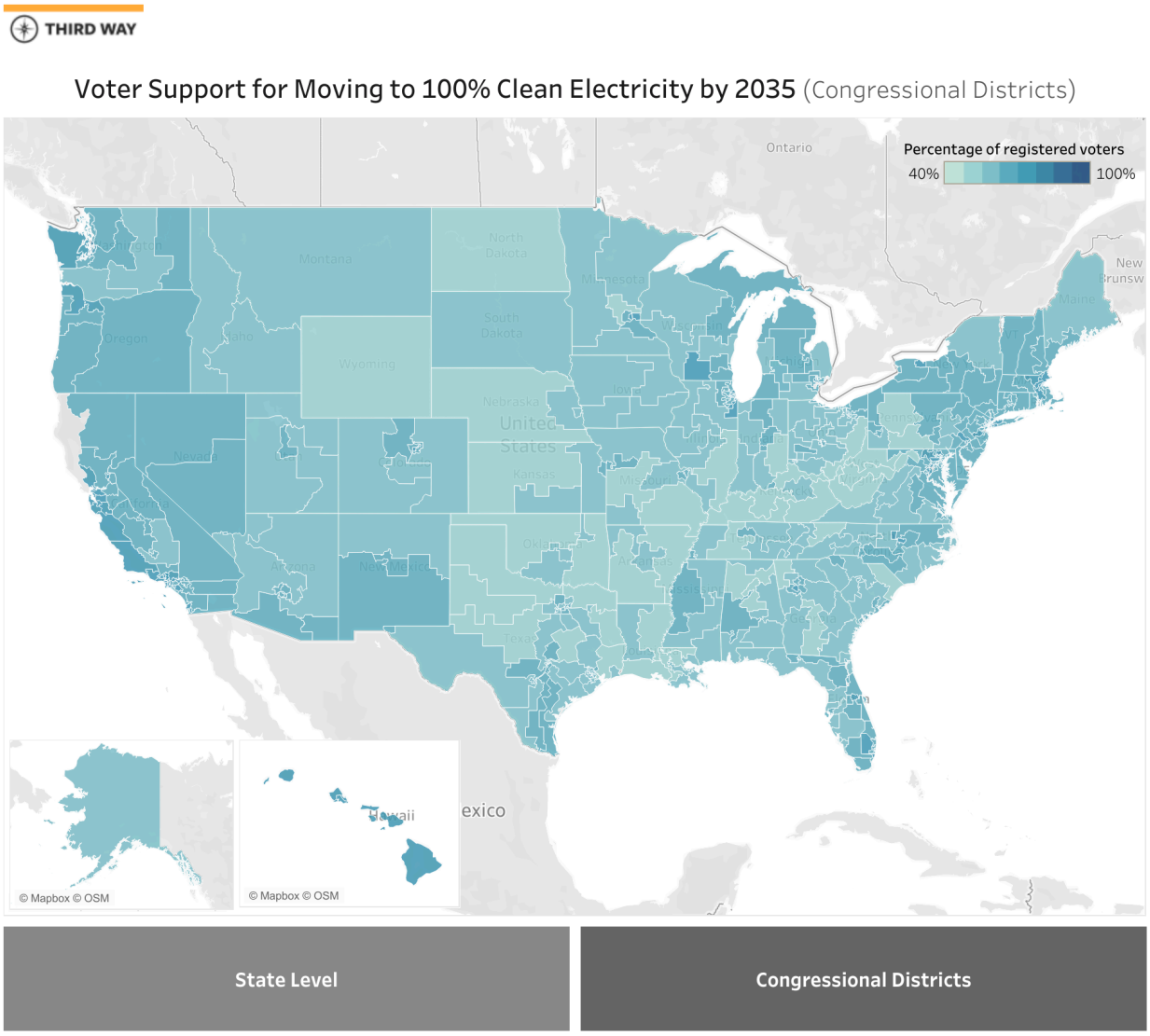
Voters across the country in both blue and red states support the federal government moving the country to 100% clean electricity, according to new polling from Third Way, in partnership with University of California, Santa Barbara political scientist Matto Mildenberger and using underlying data from Data for Progress national surveys. The polling estimates support from likely voters in every congressional district and state in America. It demonstrates that the majority of voters in all 50 states —and all but six of the 435 US congressional districts—endorse federal action to reach a 100% clean energy grid.

President Biden and Congress must now capitalize on this support and use this window of opportunity to pass a Clean Electricity Standard (CES) or similar policy that can transition the US to 100% clean

electricity.

To see where voters support federal action to move the country to 100% clean electricity by 2035, explore the map below, where you can toggle between a state level map and a map of congressional districts.



Polling Result Highlights: Widespread Support for 100% Clean Energy by 2035

The results are overwhelmingly positive: across the country, Americans think favorably of clean energy and share an interest in federal action to move the country toward 100% clean electricity by 2035.

There is considerable support from swing states that are targets for the 2022 midterms, like Arizona (62%), Georgia (60.8%), and Pennsylvania (64%).

Clean energy is even popular in traditional fossil fuel states and Republican strongholds. Support for moving to 100% clean electricity by 2035 breaks 60% in states like Texas (60.8%), Indiana (60.1%), and Iowa (62%), with other traditionally red states like Missouri (59.9%), Mississippi (59.3%) and Alabama (58.5%) not far behind.

Meanwhile, support for clean energy in blue states like California and Hawaii soars upward of 73%.

How to Maintain Support

While this polling shows that President Biden's plan to decarbonize the grid has initial support from the majority of Americans, it does not test the resiliency of that support against attacks by the GOP or tell us what policies voters prefer to reach the goal of 100% clean electricity by 2035.

Our previous polling has demonstrated that when you explain to voters the details of the provisions within the American Jobs Plan, they're more likely to support it, even when presented with counter arguments. So when it comes to moving to 100% clean electricity, it's critical we follow up with these voters to demonstrate that decarbonizing the grid with a CES or similar policy would create hundreds of thousand jobs, improve local air and water quality, and can be achieved without increasing costs to ratepayers.

Below are some counterarguments to potential GOP attacks that could help us preserve or even bolster this initial base of support.

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nd what Congress is currently discussing, is a policy to reach 80% clean energy by 2030. Research
› by 2030 is proven to be technologically feasible, will drive significant investment in every region in
reate new jobs, and will enable our existing electric grid to continue operating reliably in 2030.
hallenges with cost and build rate of clean energy to reach 100% clean electricity by 2035, but a CES
flexibility to adjust and ensure we reach 100% clean in a timeline that is affordable and achievable.

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ight. Modeling shows that an 80% by 2030 CES would result in wholesale electricity costs that are
costs today. Historical trends in clean energy and innovation show that the cost of clean energy is
ng and will continue to do so over the next decade, meaning clean energy technologies will
me less costly and more widely available.

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eate around 500,000 jobs in the next decade alone. We can also invest in place-based strategies that
ortunities for workers and communities transitioning away from fossil fuel production.
ossil fuel economy, the jobs and economic benefits are only concentrated in a few states. But in an
100% clean electric grid, all 50 states will have an opportunity to contribute to clean energy
ribution, storage, and/or supply chain manufacturing.
CES will save roughly 317,500 lives over the next 30 years by reducing air pollution. It will also save
.13 trillion in health costs.

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endorsed by leading scholars, industry experts, large utilities, and major businesses and
tilities are asking policymakers to ensure the timeline to reach 100% clean energy is achievable and
that the federal government is supporting the development and demonstration of clean energy
at can help them get all the way to 100%. Current proposals being discussed in Congress include
ısure just that.

How Congress Can Meet This Moment

Because there is such a widespread base of support for moving to 100% clean energy, lawmakers should act accordingly and pass a CES that will incentivize a historic build-out of clean energy infrastructure. The Biden-Harris Administration, which initially proposed a CES as part of the American Jobs Plan (AJP), is now pursuing a two-track approach to implementing the AJP: a bipartisan infrastructure package and a reconciliation package that addresses additional climate, social, and economic issues.

Since the bipartisan infrastructure package, which is largely negotiated, does not include a CES, the reconciliation package must include a CES-like proposal to start moving the country to a 100% clean electricity grid. We are off to a good start, with a CES-like policy said to be included in the $3.5 trillion dollar budget resolution framework being finalized in the Senate.

We say “CES-like,” because anything passed through the reconciliation process must primarily serve to increase or decrease federal spending or revenue. This would not be a traditional CES, but rather a proposal that mimics the trajectory of a CES—setting a performance target for companies to sell increasing shares of clean power and providing them with a payment if they meet that target or requiring them to pay a fee for each megawatt-hour they’ve fallen short. Combined with tax incentives, this would put the US on the path to reach 80% clean electricity by 2030, well on our way to a 100% clean grid. The Biden-Harris Administration supports passing a CES-like policy through budget reconciliation, as do many Congressional Democrats.

We have a short window of opportunity to act on climate change and invest in America’s clean energy future. In order to build a thriving clean energy economy that uplifts Americans in every state, we must make smart investments and utilize the best tools at our disposal. By passing a CES or CES-like policy within the reconciliation bill as a complement to the bipartisan infrastructure framework, we can ensure we’re on the fastest and fairest track to hit our climate goals and reach net-zero carbon emissions.

Methodology

These maps report the results from a statistical model that uses a large-n polling dataset (n=20,455), and "downscales" these results to the state and congressional district level. This method for projecting

public opinion is called multilevel regression with post-stratification (MRP) and has been extensively developed and tested in public opinion research.

These maps were produced using a model specification that has been validated against independent local polling data and statistical simulations, and published in the journal *Nature Climate Change* as a peer-reviewed article. For more details on the model and method, see: Howe, P., Mildenberger, M., Marlon, J.R., and Leiserowitz, A., "Geographic variation in opinions on climate change at state and local scales in the USA," Nature Climate Change. DOI: 10.1038/nclimate2583.

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