



Comparative Canada / US Poll Confirms Consensus on Climate Change but Major Differences on Attitudes Toward Action

February 23, 2011 (OTTAWA, ON) - A poll released today shows that Canadians believe that climate change is happening and would be willing to pay for government policies that reverse or slow the damage.

The poll is the first of its kind to explicitly compare public opinion between Canada and the U.S. and was commissioned by the Public Policy Forum and Sustainable Prosperity, two of Canada's leading policy organizations. The comparison of public opinion on climate change science and policy in Canada and the US provides extensive insight into attitudes on energy and environmental policy. The poll results also confirm that a majority of Canadians indicated that they would support policies such as cap and trade even if they imposed increased costs of up to \$50 per month in energy expenses.

Results were presented by two of the lead researchers at the **“Continental Divide? Canadian and US Views on Energy and Climate Change”** event in Ottawa on Wednesday, February 23 at the Delta in Ottawa.

Key findings include:

- *Belief in climate change among Canadians substantially outpaces belief in this phenomenon among residents of the United States:*
 - 80% of Canadians believe there is solid evidence of global warming compared to 58% of Americans
 - 91% of this group believe it is a serious problem
- *Majority of Canadians believe that both the federal and provincial governments should take actions to reduce global warming.*
 - 40% felt that municipalities have a great deal of responsibility in addressing climate change.
- *Canadians respondents expressed a higher degree of willingness to pay extra money each year in order for more renewable energy to be produced*
 - 73% percent of Canadians indicated a willingness to pay at least \$50 per year in extra energy costs, compared to 55% of Americans who reported the same
- *While most Americans do not support cap and trade and carbon taxes, a majority of Canadians indicated that they would support such policy options even if they imposed increased costs of up to \$50 per month in energy expenses.*

“The results are encouraging and inline with much of the research that we have recently published,” said Sustainable Prosperity’s Alex Wood. “The numbers are clear, Canadians want smart climate change policy, and the evidence here is that they believe carbon pricing to be a central element of smart climate change policy.”

“Quantitative research and public opinion polling play an important role in making solid public policy decisions,” said Paul Ledwell, Executive Vice-President at the Public Policy Forum. “These results should



be useful evidence for all levels of government who are seeking to establish policies that address climate change in Canada.”

The Canadian survey was conducted by Leger Marketing in Montréal Québec and was funded by the Public Policy Forum and Sustainable Prosperity. The telephone survey was administered to 1214 Canadian respondents in a regionally stratified random sample of the Canadian population, with a margin of error of +/- 2.8 %.

The Public Policy Forum is an independent, non-partisan organization dedicated to improving governance in Canada.

Sustainable Prosperity is a national research and policy network that bring the brightest minds together to find market-based approaches to build a stronger, greener economy. sustainableprosperity.ca

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Full background and survey is available at <http://www.pforum.ca/events/continental-divide>

Event hashtag: #condivide

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