

# **Less than Half of Americans Blame Global Warming on Human Activity; Over One Quarter Do Not Think Global Warming Is Happening at All**

***In the Debate over Cap and Trade:  
Job Creation Trumps Higher Utility Bills***



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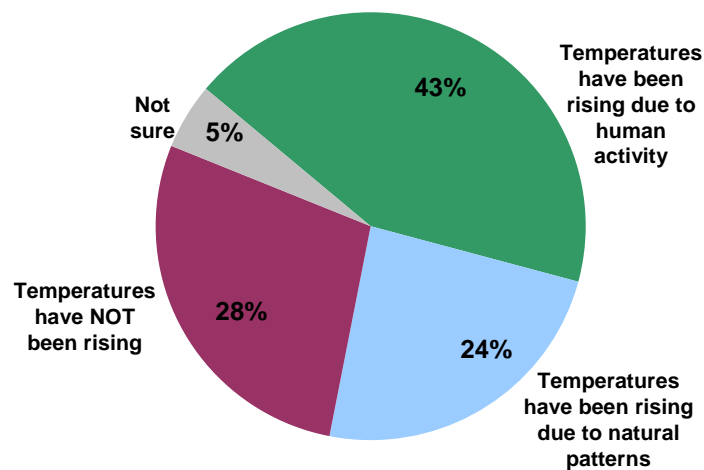
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## Less than Half of Americans Blame Global Warming on Human Activity; Over One Quarter Do Not Think Global Warming Is Happening at All

### *In the Debate over Cap and Trade: Job Creation Trumps Higher Utility Bills*

**Washington, DC** – Just 43% of Americans consider that the world’s temperature has been rising slowly over the past 100 years as a result of human activity, according to a new telephone poll of over 1,000 adults conducted by Ipsos Public Affairs. An additional quarter of adults (24%) acknowledge these rising temperatures, but feel that natural patterns of the earth’s environment is causing this warming. In contrast, 28% are skeptical of global warming all together, saying that they do not think it has been happening.

**Americans' Perceptions of Global Warming**



- Hispanics (69%), adults under 35 (54%), African-Americans (52%), parents of children under 18 (50%), and college graduates (49%) are among those most likely to say humans are to blame for the increasing temperatures.
- Those who are more likely to believe global warming is part of natural environmental patterns include retirees (31%) and Republicans (30%).
- Views on global warming vary drastically across party lines. While a majority of Democrats accept that global warming is happening and hold humans accountable for it (58%), a plurality of Republicans (43%) do not believe that the world’s temperatures have been rising slowly over the past 100 years.

### Weighing the Costs and Benefits of a Cap and Trade System

Americans are fairly split when it comes to a “Cap and Trade” system, which some say would lower the pollution levels that lead to global warming. With Cap and Trade, the

government would issue permits limiting the amount of greenhouse gases companies can put out. Companies that did not use all their permits could sell them to other companies. The idea is that many companies would find ways to put out less greenhouse gases, because that would be cheaper than buying permits.

When defined this way, a majority (52%) say that they would favor a Cap and Trade system, though 41% are opposed. Seven percent are unsure.

Those who are more likely to accept that global warming as a fact also tend to be more in favor of a Cap and Trade system:

- Younger adults, particularly those under 35 (68%), are more likely than adults aged 55 and older (38%) to favor a Cap and Trade system.
- Hispanics (73%), African-Americans (64%), and parents (61%) are also more likely to offer their support.
- Across partisan lines, two thirds of Democrats (67%) are supportive of such a system, while a majority of Republicans are opposed (59%). Independents are divided on this measure, as they are roughly as likely to be in favor (45%) as they are to be in opposition (41%).

When presented with possible costs and benefits of such a system, support varies. Americans prove more supportive of a Cap and Trade system if it were to create a significant number of new “green” jobs in the U.S. – even if it means a higher electrical bill. Seven in ten (69%) support a Cap and Trade system that would increase green jobs even if it meant paying an extra \$10 per month in utilities, compared to just 29% who oppose. While support wanes somewhat when the price tag jumps to \$25 per month, still 60% offer their support to the system if it would generate new jobs (vs. 36% who oppose it).

Americans are less likely to support this type of system when framed as lowering greenhouse gases. While half of adults (50%) would support a Cap and Trade system to help the environment at a personal cost of an extra \$10 per month on their electrical bill, nearly as many (48%) would oppose it. Increasing the personal cost to \$25 per month sways the majority in opposition of a Cap and Trade system, with 55% opposing it and 43% supporting it.

*These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted December 3 – 6, 2009. For the survey, a nationally representative, randomly selected sample of 1,120 adults aged 18 and older across the United States was interviewed by Ipsos. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate within 2.9 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult population in the U.S. been polled. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error. These data were weighted to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the actual U.S. population according to U.S. Census figures. Respondents had the option to be interviewed in English or Spanish.*

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