

2024 CANDIDATE BRIEFING BOOK

THE CLIMATE OPPORTUNITY

How climate and energy issues make
the case for freedom.



CONSERVATIVE
COALITION *for* CLIMATE
SOLUTIONS

SECTION 1

The Core Message



SECTION 1.

3 principles of effective communications.

Principle 1.

Setting priorities is foundational.

Persuadables are bombarded with information. Start with your best points and narrow your focus.

Principle 2.

Concise is more important than clever.

Don't be paralyzed waiting for the perfect slogan or bumper sticker. Think clearly about what you're for and cleverness will follow.

Principle 3.

Persuading the libs is more important than owning them.

We can't just preach to the choir. The threat of bad climate policy is too great. By owning the issue we can essentially "own the libs."

SECTION 1.

How we frame the essentials.

It's real. I care. Economic freedom.

Climate change
is real.

Acknowledging that climate change is real gives conservatives an opening to make the case that economic freedom is the solution.

I care about
environmental
stewardship.

Expressing a genuine commitment to environmental stewardship is more effective than inveighing against 'wokeism' and ESG.

Free economies are
clean economies.

Free economies are twice as clean as less free economies. The faster conservatives pivot to this winning argument the better.

SECTION 1.

Persuading vs. "Owning"

Persuading the libs.

Decision	Retain the base.	Gain independent voters.	Win more elections.	Energy abundance.	Energy security.	Save capitalism.	Protect America.
	Fire up a minority of the base.	Lose independent voters.	Lose elections.	Energy poverty.	Dependence on foreign energy.	Lose capitalism.	America at risk

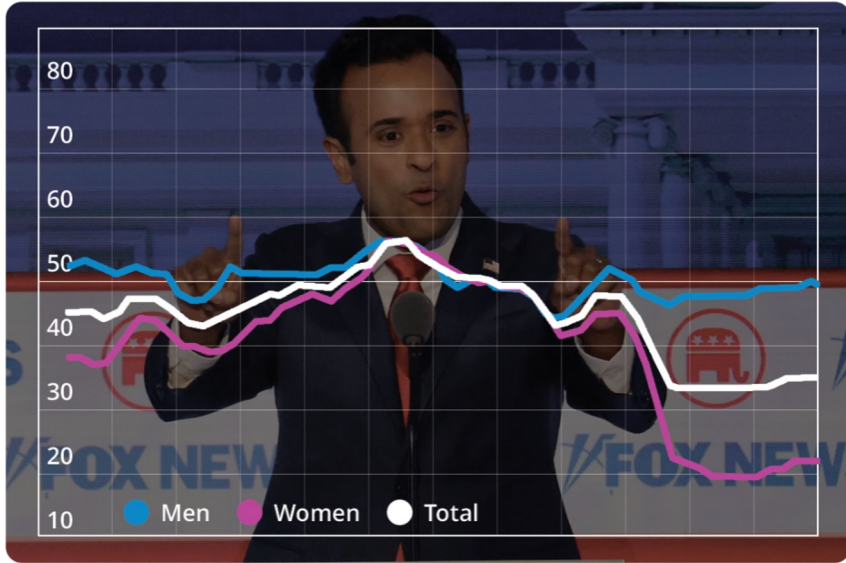
Owning the libs.

Don't fight crazy with crazy. Persuade & "own" the issue.

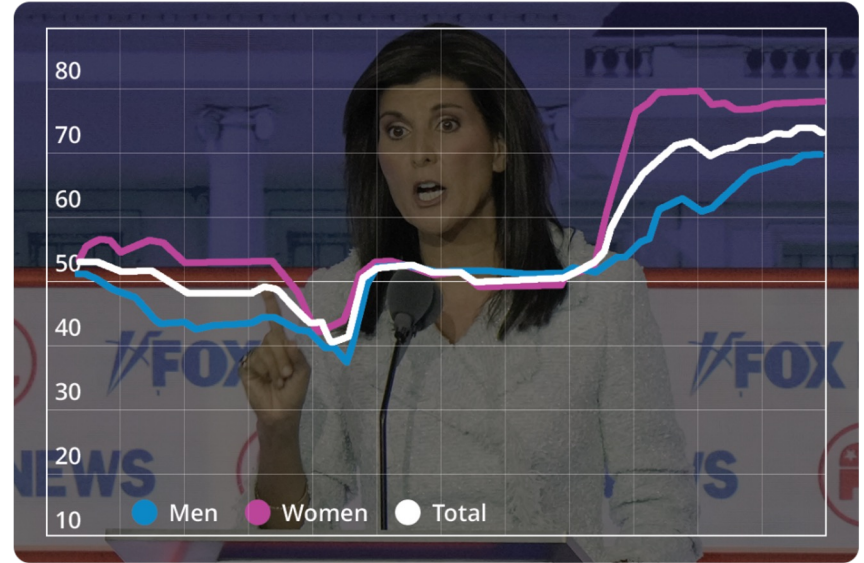


FIGURE 1.

Dial testing from the first Republican debate.



Vivek Ramaswamy: "...the climate change agenda is a hoax and we have to claim [energy] independence."



Nikki Haley: "Is climate change real? Yes it is. But if you want to go and really change the environment, then we need to start telling China and India that they have to lower emissions."

SECTION 2

Polling Reality Check

Americans, particularly younger Americans, generally do not want to hear “climate denier” arguments, but they do favor solutions rooted in economic freedom.

SECTION 2. Polling

It's Real.

People think climate change is real, and while there is real doubt about the role of human activity vs. natural cycles, climate denier arguments are big losers among younger Americans.

+14

Younger Americans are 14 percentage points more likely to consider climate change a threat.

77%

of right-leaning Americans said climate change was important to them.

90%

of independent Americans said climate change was important to them.

14%

Percent of Republicans that believe climate change is not happening.

SECTION 2. Polling

I Care.

While polling consistently shows that voters rank traditional pocketbook economic issues like inflation and gas prices well above “climate change,” voters do want climate action.

Candidates have an opportunity to connect the dots by making the point that climate and energy policy directly impacts pocketbook issues like gas prices and inflation that voters rank higher than climate change.

77%

of voters rank traditional pocketbook economic issues like inflation and gas prices above climate change.

81%

of Republican primary voters aged 18-44 believe climate change is a threat and action should be taken.

67%

of adults said federal government was doing too little to reduce the effects of climate change

64%

of Americans believe that climate change is negatively impacting the economy.

SECTION 2. Polling

Economic Freedom.

Voters favor an economic freedom agenda (less spending, lower taxes, lower regulatory barriers, strong property rights) over a top-down, command and control Green New Deal agenda.

65%

of Democrats support an “all of the above” energy strategy.

+17

Democrats are 17 percentage points more likely to support fracking than oppose it.

5:1

There are 5 strong supporters of nuclear energy to every 1 strong opponent.

\$1

57% of Americans are willing to pay \$1 a month to fight climate change.

SECTION 3

How to Talk About Science

Essential.

“Climate change is real.”

Shorthand.

“It’s real.”



SECTION 3.

How to talk about science.

Acknowledging that climate change is real AND that human beings are contributing to climate change gives conservatives an opening to make the case for freedom.

Good Arguments

Embrace Science.

Conservatives should embrace science and rescue true science from “the science.”

Science isn't “Settled.”

Science that is “settled” is not science; it's ideology masquerading as science.

Climate Atheist Won't Work.

Climate atheism isn't a good response to climate alarmism.

Uncertainty ≠ Inaction

Being comfortable with uncertainty isn't a license for inaction, especially when the costs of a low-probability but adverse scenario are so high.

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Good Arguments

Think Like an Actuary.

An intellectually honest and scientific approach frames the conversation around risk assessment, which is how we think about insurance. For instance, even though there is a 1 in 3,000 chance of losing your home in a catastrophic fire, it's prudent to buy fire insurance and take sensible steps to mitigate the risks of fire.

Stop Setting Targets.

Setting targets isn't as important as enacting policies that hit targets and lower emissions.

Panic isn't Policy.

Panic is not a policy.

SECTION 4

How to Talk About “Wokeism” and ESG

Essential.

“I care about environmental stewardship..”

Shorthand.

“I care.”



SECTION 4.

How to talk about “Wokeism” and ESG.

When addressing climate issues, it’s fashionable for conservatives to start with attacking “wokeism” and ESG.

While the extremism of the degrowth environmental left is an inviting target, woke critics often struggle to define wokeness while voters generally don’t know what ESG means.

Good Arguments

Don’t Mandate Investment.

The government shouldn’t prohibit or mandate certain investment strategies. People should be allowed to invest freely.

Don’t Politicize Investment.

The government shouldn’t politicize investment decisions with mandates, prohibitions, and blacklisting companies. Governments should protect the freedom of the investor and ensure fiduciary responsibility is a priority.

Rights = Responsibility.

Property rights is the beginning of property responsibility. We have the responsibility to leave the planet better off than we found it.

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Good Arguments

Bottom-Up Stewardship.

No one cares more about environmental stewardship than America’s farmers, ranchers, and landowners. We need more of their bottom-up stewardship and fewer top-down lectures and mandates from Washington.

Natural Wonder.

It’s impossible to look at the beauty of the natural world without a sense of wonder and awe. We owe it to future generations to enact policies that protect America’s natural and economic resources.

Fight Fire with Freedom.

The best way to counter left-wing authoritarianism is not with right-wing authoritarianism, but with economic freedom. When policymakers fight fire with fire, consumers get burned.

Tell your personal story



SECTION 5

How to Talk About Economics

Essential.

“Free economies are clean economies.”

Shorthand.

“Economic freedom.”



SECTION 5.

How to talk about economics.

A survey of nearly every country on earth found a strong correlation between economic freedom and environmental performance. Free economies are nearly twice as clean as less free economies.

Good Arguments

Don't Cool the Economy.

Economic cooling won't stop global warming.

Don't Increase Prices for Low Income Families.

Solving energy poverty will help solve climate change. Where is the environmental justice in increasing energy prices for poor people?

We Have the Technology.

We already have the technology to "solve" climate change. What we lack is the political will and imagination to enact policies rooted in economic freedom.

Don't Pick Winners and Losers.

When Washington tries to pick winners and losers, they prop-up losers and punish winners. We need a tech-neutral perspective that allows the best tech to emerge.

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How to talk about economics.

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Good Arguments

Whole of Society.

We need a whole of society approach, not a whole of government approach.

Don't Limit Capacity.

Limiting American energy capacity does not limit global energy demand. In fact, limiting American capacity is de facto stimulus program for our worst enemies, especially Russia and Iran.

Don't Make it Expensive.

The best way to make something expensive is for Washington to make it "affordable."

Innovation = Harm Reduction.

The most successful carbon reduction innovation in the past 20 years – hydraulic fracking – had more to do with private innovation than government action.

SECTION 5.

How to talk about economics.

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Kuznets Curve

The environmental Kuznets curve illustrates that growing economies are cleansed by capitalism. The environmental degradation created by a growing economy is reversed as it develops and spurs innovations that produce less pollution and fewer emissions.

