

Climate Change and Public Opinion: Perspectives from the United States and Canada and a Sampler of Michigan Public Opinion

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2011



National Survey of American Public Opinion on Climate Change

- Project began in Winter 2007 (MI, PA pilots)
- U.S. surveys have been run on 4 occasions: Fall 2008; Fall 2009; Spring 2010; Fall 2010.
- Partnership of the University of Michigan and Muhlenberg College in Pennsylvania
- Designed to examine American views on the existence of climate change, determinants of those beliefs, and public support for climate policies at national and sub-national levels



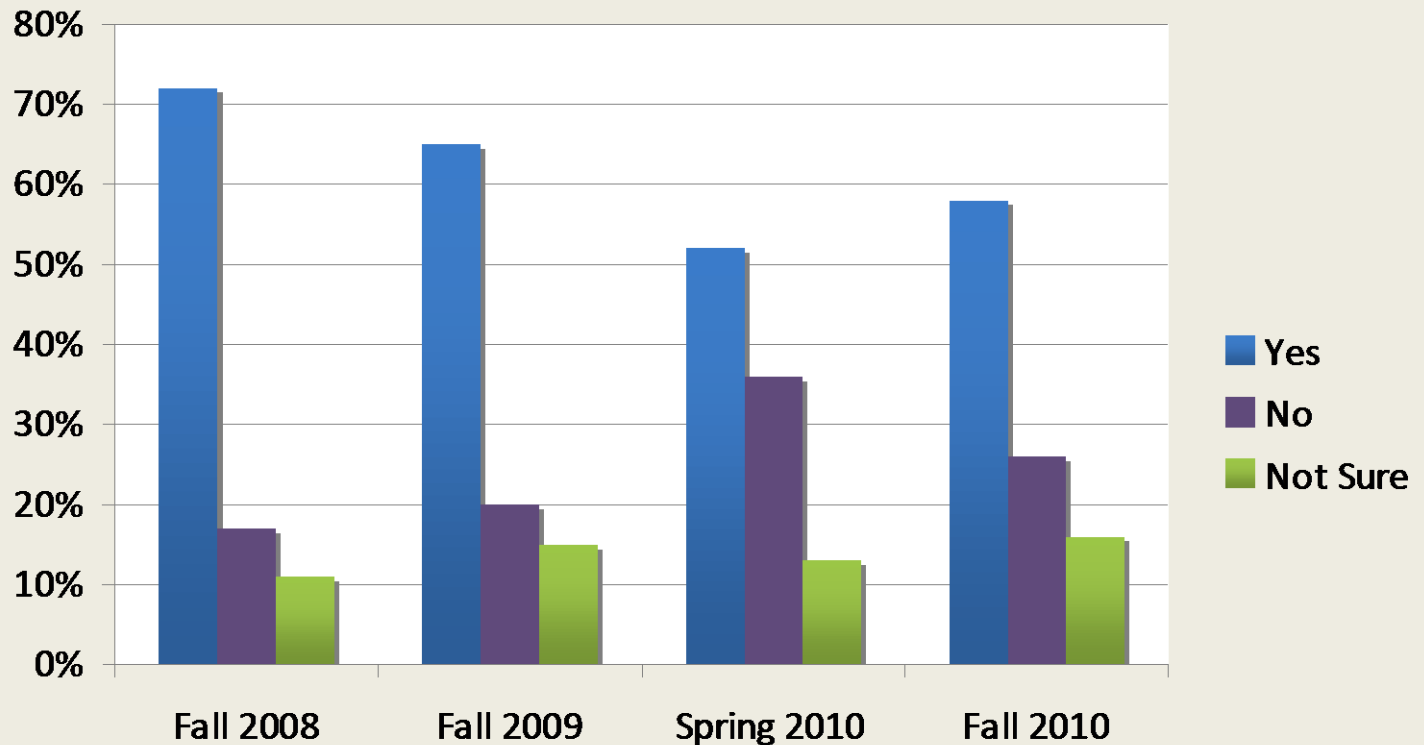
National Survey Details

- National sample via telephone survey of approximately 1,000 citizens per year
- State over-samples. 2010 Michigan sample courtesy CLOSUP
- Michigan-Muhlenberg (Chris Borick)
- 2011: The Canadian comparison



Overall Levels of Belief: U.S.

Is there solid evidence that temperatures on the Earth are rising?



A Profile in Belief

Positions on Climate Change by Respondent Characteristics

	YES	NO	NOT SURE
Democrat	69%	16%	15%
Republican	41%	43%	17%
Independent	56%	31%	13%
Tea Party Member	54%	37%	10%
Male	53%	30%	18%
Female	63%	23%	14%
18-29	62%	28%	10%
30-44	55%	31%	14%
45-64	64%	22%	14%
65 or Older	51%	29%	20%
College Educated	64%	25%	11%
Non-College Educated	50%	28%	23%

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A Reason to Believe

Primary reason for belief that temperatures on Earth are increasing

	Fall 2008	Spring 2010	Fall 2010
Glaciers Melting	19%	22%	17%
Warmer Temps	19%	15%	22%
Weather Change	18%	15%	17%
Scientific Research	9%	14%	10%
Gore Documentary	2%	<1%	<1%
Media Coverage	15%	16%	14%
Declining Species	<1%	N/A	1%
Human Activity	4%	5%	9%
Natural Patterns	<1%	3%	2%
Not Sure/Other	12%	10%	10%

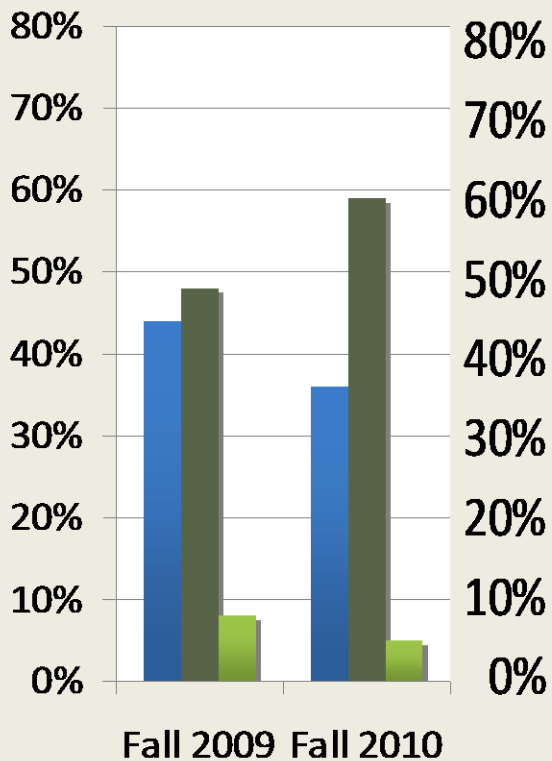
Note: Asked only of individuals who indicated a belief that global warming was occurring



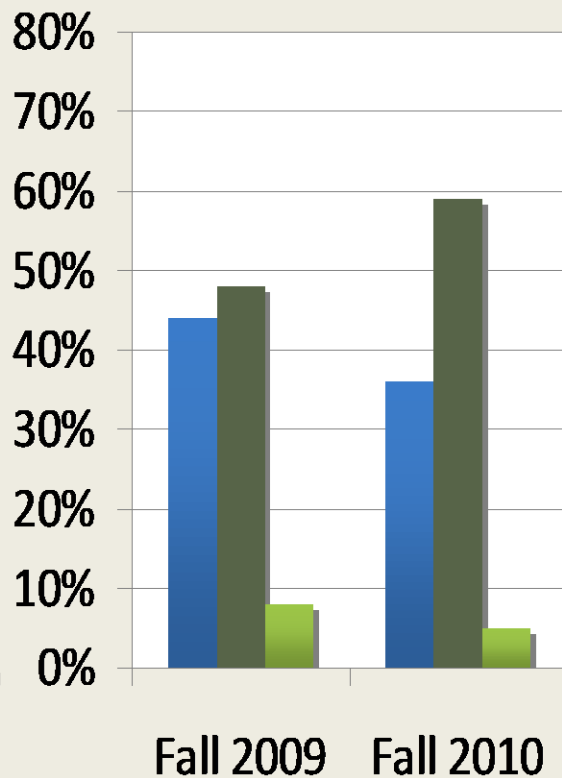
Support for Cap & Trade Policy

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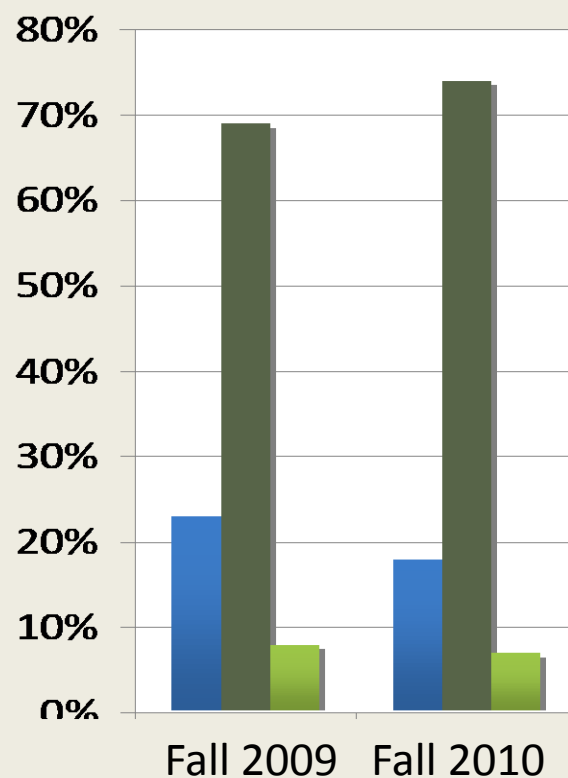
General View



What if it Increases Electric By \$15/mo?



What if it Increases Electric By \$50/mo?



Support Oppose Not Sure



Willingness to Pay

How much would you pay each year for more renewable energy to be produced?

	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010
\$0	22%	29%	41%
\$1-49	16%	31%	26%
\$50-99	17%	15%	17%
\$100-249	13%	13%	7%
\$250-499	10%	3%	4%
\$500 or more	7%	2%	2%
Not Sure	15%	7%	4%
Refused	1%	0%	<1%



Back to the States??

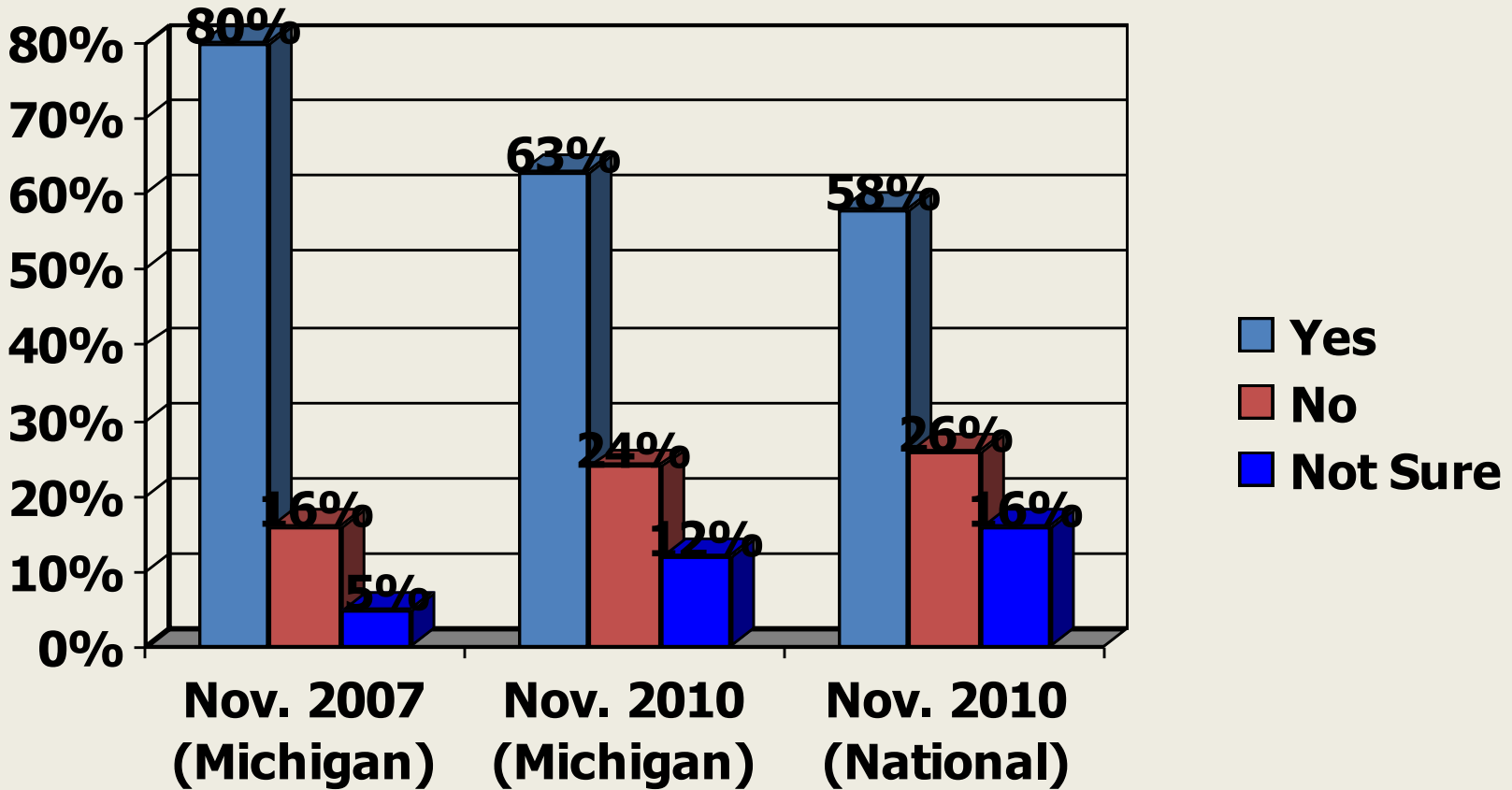
Whither Michigan??

And What About Canada??



Solid evidence of warming global temperatures over last 40 years? Michigan responds

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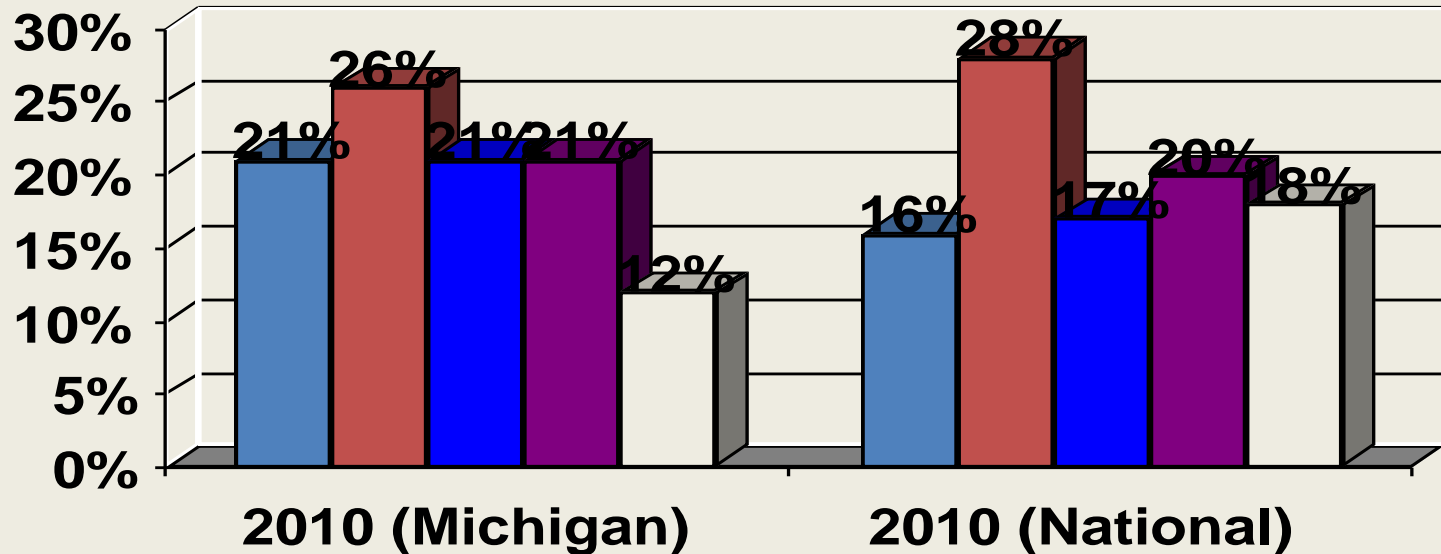


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Michigan views on localized impacts of global warming: 2010

Levels of Agreement with the statement "My state has already felt negative effects from global warming."

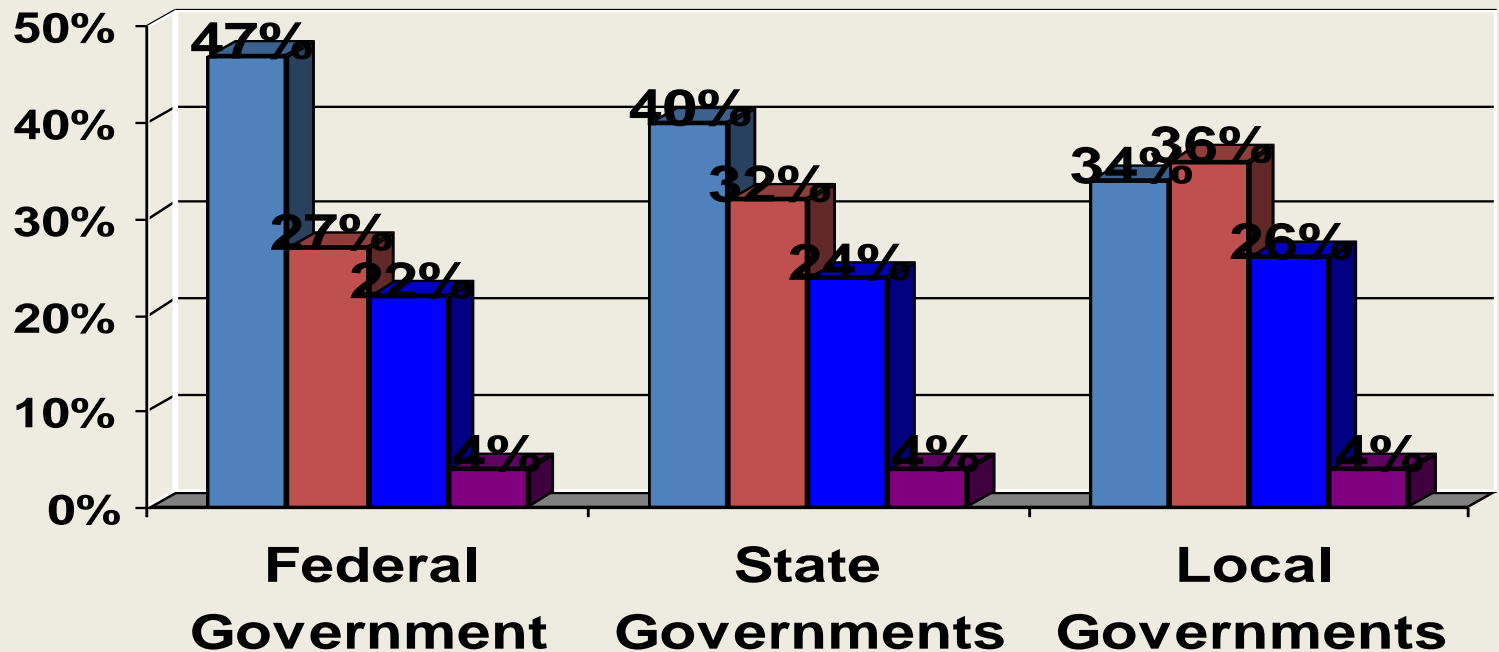


- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Not Sure



Michigan Views on Roles of Multiple Levels of Government: 2010

For each level of government that I mention please tell me if it has a great deal of responsibility, some responsibility or no responsibility for taking actions to reduce global warming:



■ A Great Deal of Responsibility
 ■ Some Responsibility
■ No Responsibility
 ■ Not Sure

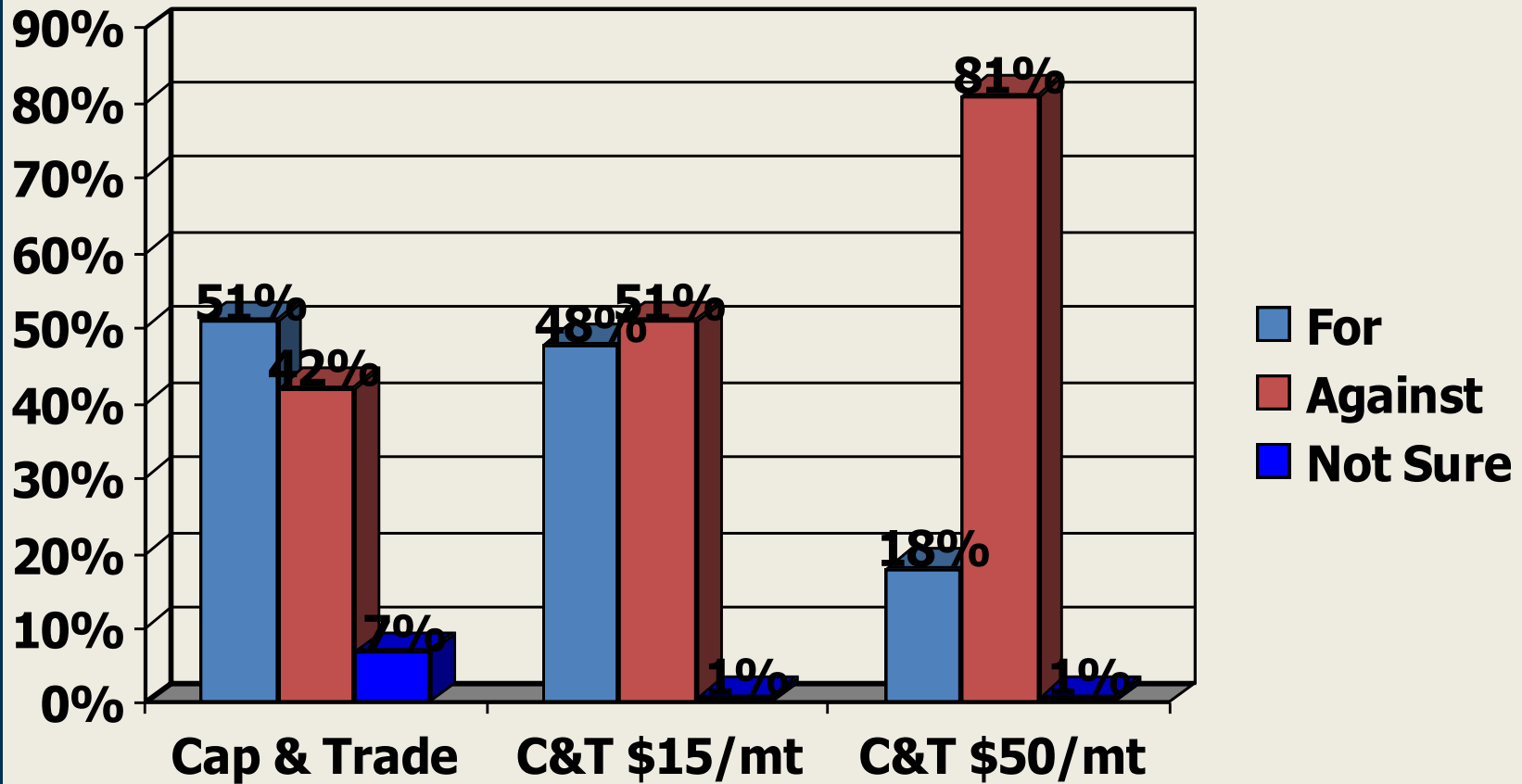


Responsibility for reducing global warming: Michigan

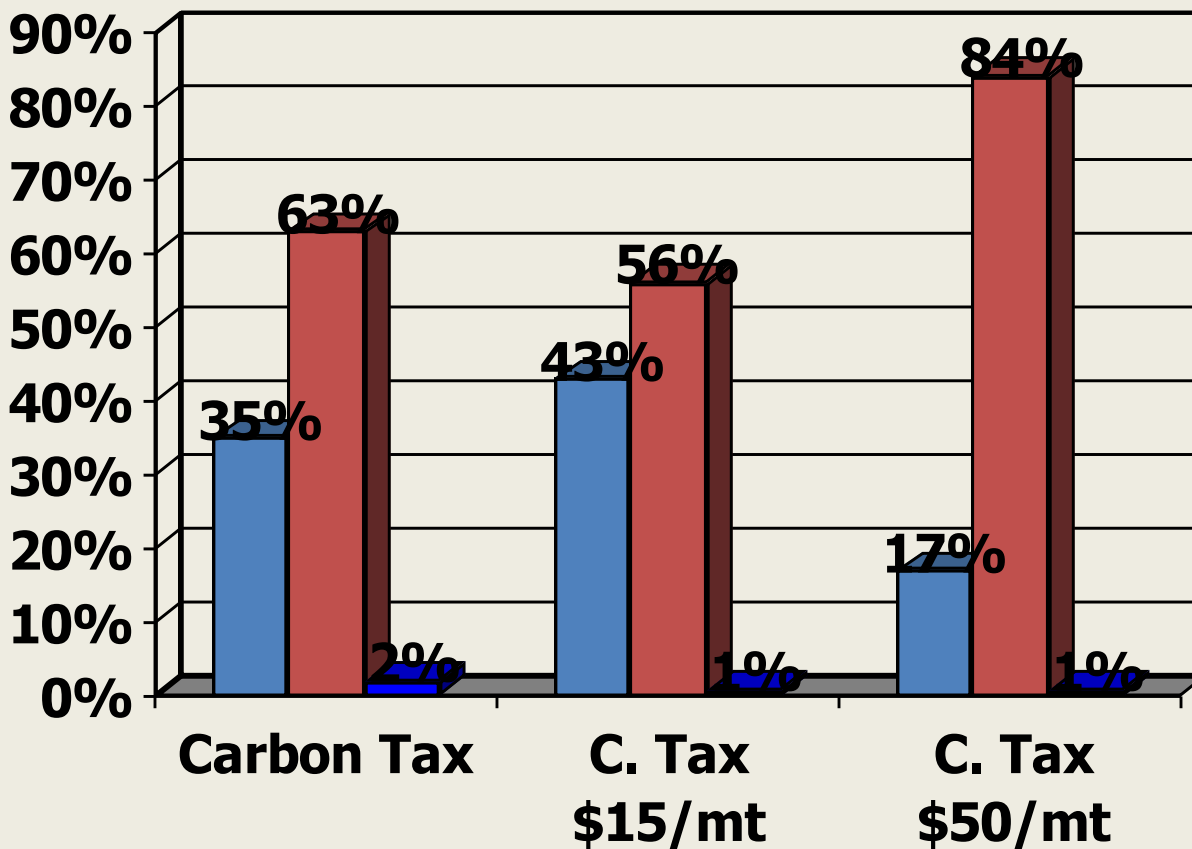
	MI Citizens	MI Local Gov't Leaders	Difference in % pts
Federal government			
Great deal of responsibility	47%	45%	-2%
Some responsibility	27%	32%	5%
No responsibility	22%	17%	-5%
Don't Know	4%	6%	2%
State government			
Great deal of responsibility	40%	25%	-15%
Some responsibility	32%	51%	19%
No responsibility	24%	18%	-6%
Don't Know	4%	6%	2%
Local government			
Great deal of responsibility	34%	18%	-16%
Some responsibility	36%	50%	14%
No responsibility	26%	25%	-1%
Don't Know	4%	7%	3%



MI on Cap & Trade (2010)



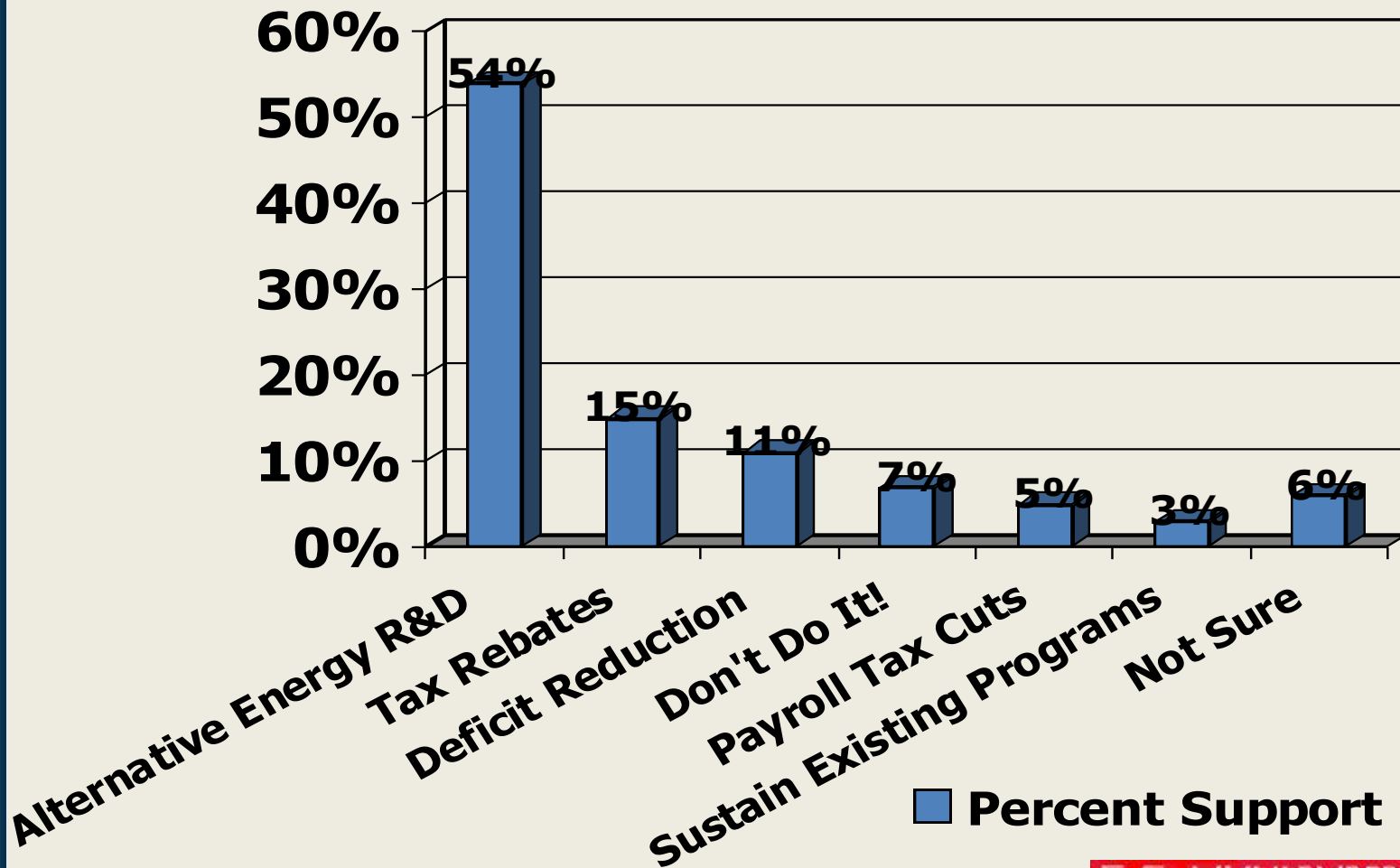
MI on Carbon Tax (2010)



■ For
■ Against
■ Not Sure



MI use of funds if carbon pricing imposed (2010)



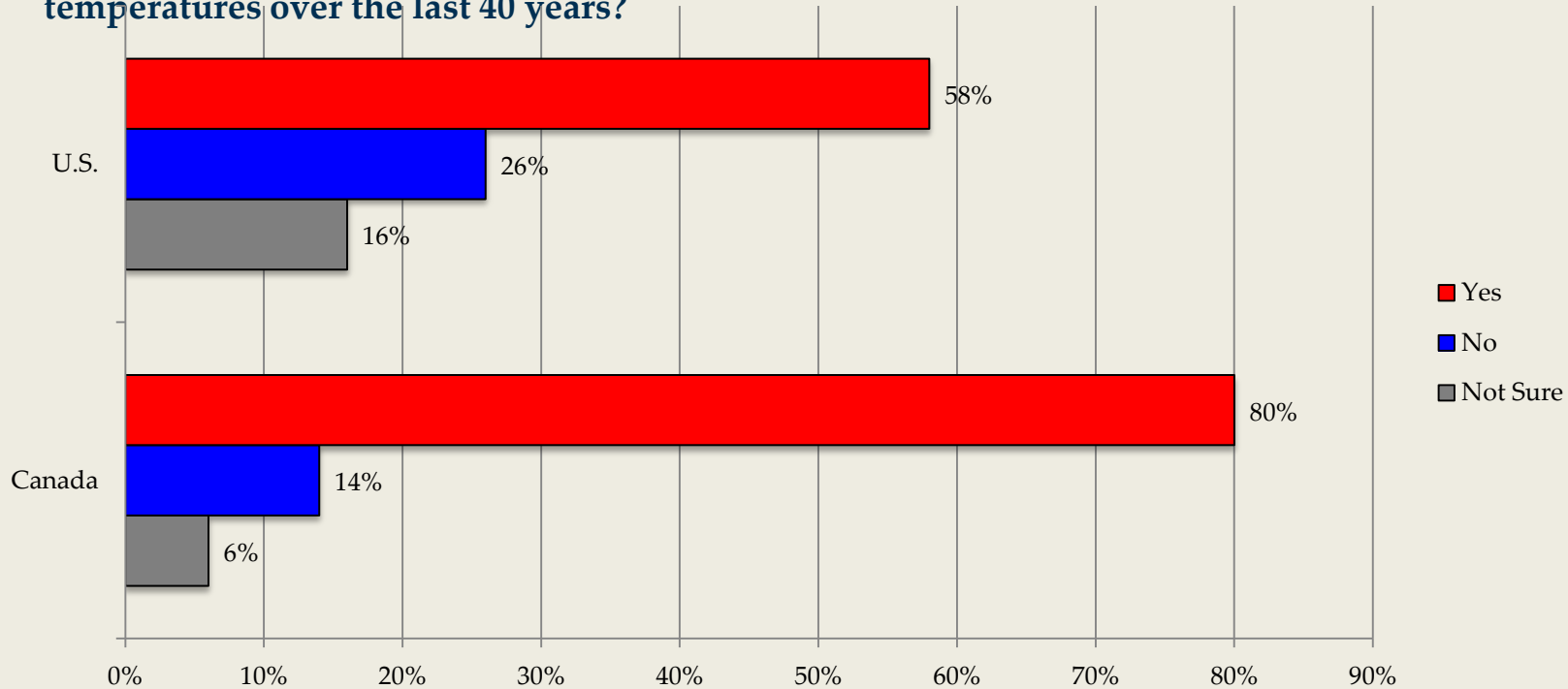
But What About Canadian Views on the Same Issues?

- Similar rates of per capita GHG emissions
- Similar political constraints on federal policy
- Similar mixture of provincial/local involvement
- Similar sample, methods, survey...

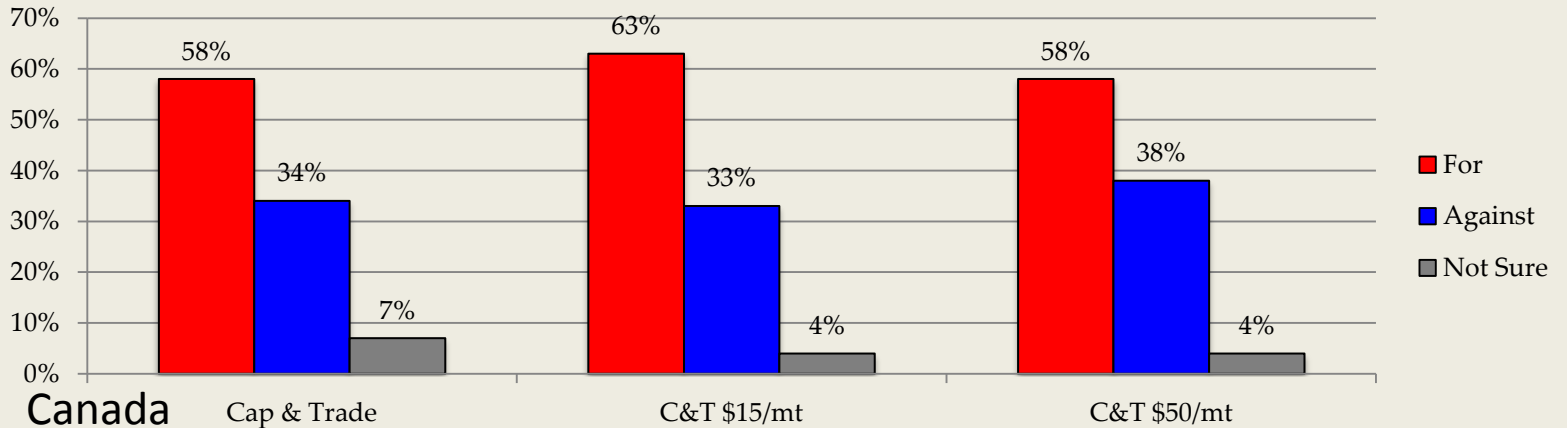
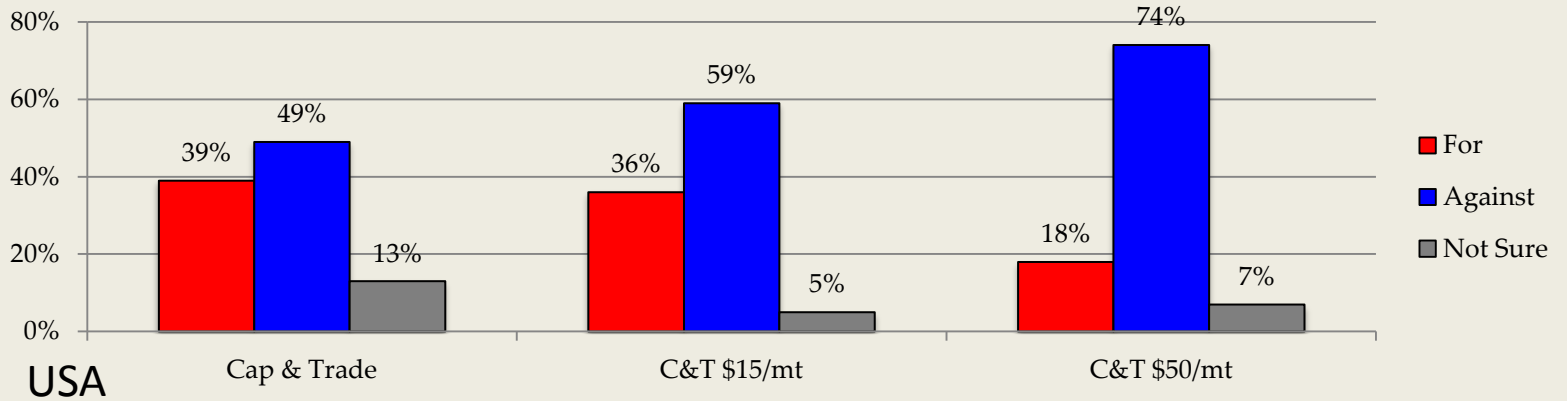


Solid evidence of warming global temperatures over last 40 years?

“From what you’ve read and heard, is there solid evidence of warming global temperatures over the last 40 years?”



Support for Cap and Trade



Concluding Thoughts

The U.S. remains an outlier in comparison with Canada, EU, Australia in public opinion on this issue

Future of federal, state, local policy?

Connecting “costs” and “benefits”?



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Michigan Views on State and Federal Responsibilities, 2010

Please identify your level of agreement with the following statements. For each statement please indicate if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure
The federal government should allow state governments to adopt stricter standards for the emission of greenhouse gases than any federal standards.	39%	30%	17%	9%	6%
My state should not adopt anti-global warming policies unless its neighboring states also adopt similar policies.	14%	22%	23%	37%	5%
If the federal government fails to address the issue of global warming it is my state's responsibility to address the problem.	37%	34%	15%	13%	2%
State governments will boost their economies by requiring greater use of renewable energy.	39%	35%	10%	9%	6%

