



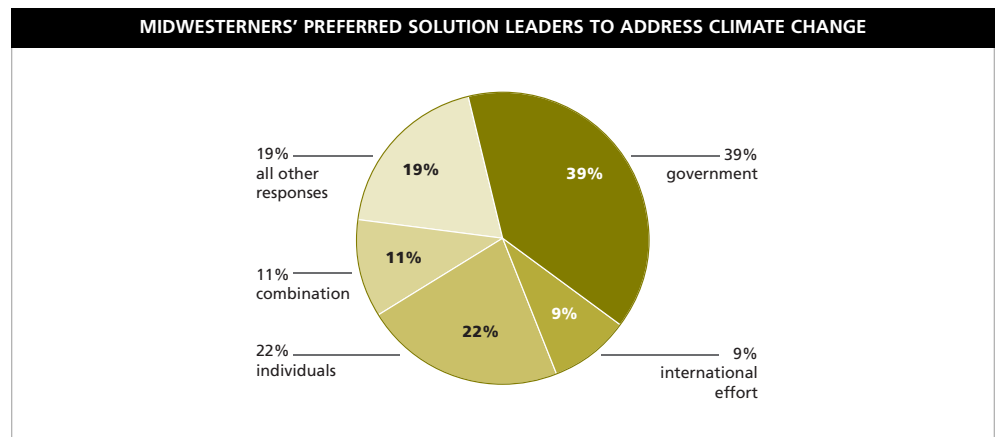
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The Energy Center of Wisconsin is an independent nonprofit that seeks solutions to energy challenges. We serve members, clients, and society through innovative research and education in support of economic and environmental sustainability.

Public Opinion

WE EXPECT GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP ON CLIMATE CHANGE

An Energy Center of Wisconsin study of public perceptions finds that Midwesterners expect public sector action on climate change. Forty-eight percent of Midwestern adults who believe climate change will result in negative consequences expect government or international bodies to take leadership in addressing climate change.



The study also suggests public recognition that a broad effort is needed. Twenty-two percent of survey respondents expected “individuals” or “everyone” to show leadership toward a solution, while large numbers selected a combination of entities when this option was explicitly offered. Respondents expect the business sector to play a role as well, but few singled out industry to lead the effort.

Preferred policy solutions

HIGH TOLERANCE FOR REGULATION AND GOVERNMENT ACTION

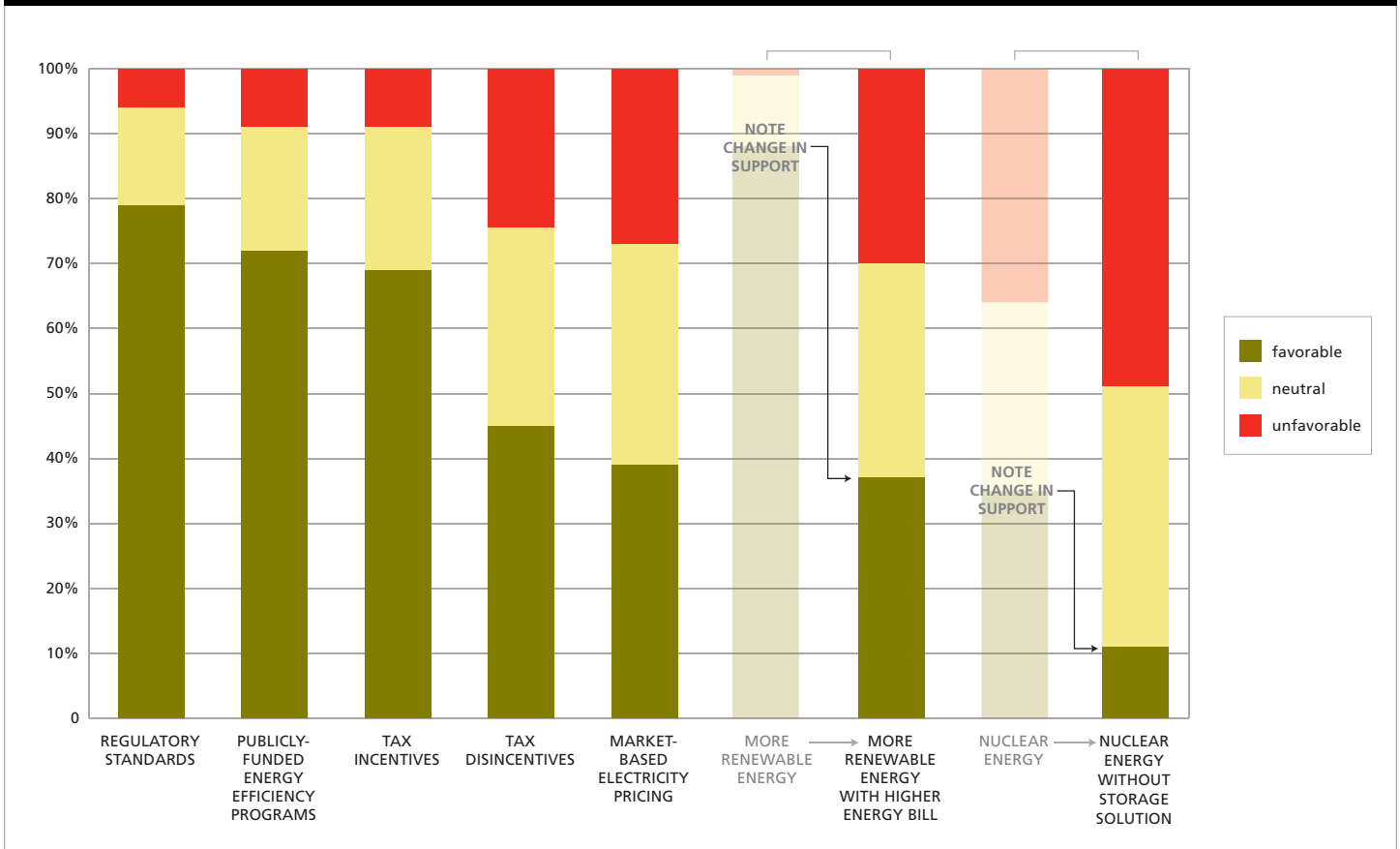
Midwesterners favor policy solutions to climate change that promote energy efficiency through regulation and publicly funded efficiency programs, and tax incentives. High favorability ratings (ranging from 69 to 79 percent) and low unfavorable ratings for these policy measures suggest high tolerance for regulatory and government intervention to protect the climate.

Most Midwestern states currently employ one or more of these approaches to support energy efficiency, but the level of effort will need to be increased if the Midwest is going to meet climate targets adopted by the Midwestern Governors Association at its 2007 Energy Summit. Expanding efficiency standards, increasing investments in programs that help individuals and businesses increase their energy efficiency, and providing more targeted tax incentives for climate-friendly behavior offer good first steps that are consistent with public preferences.

The use of more renewable energy also received highly favorable ratings among Midwesterners, but this support dropped substantially when coupled with increases in energy bills to pay for the higher cost of most renewable energy. This result may signal support for

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MIDWESTERNERS' POLICY PREFERENCES TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE



ABOUT THE STUDY

The *Climate Change and Energy Study of Public Opinion* is an on-going Energy Center of Wisconsin initiative. Project sponsors include the Integrity Energy Group; Wisconsin Energy Conservation Corporation; Wisconsin Power and Light Company, an Alliant Energy company; Wisconsin Public Power Inc.; and Xcel Energy.

Results presented here are based on 3,284 comprehensive surveys completed by residents of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin in late November and early December 2007. High-level results are being made public through three communiqués. Detailed reports were presented to project sponsors. The study will be repeated in 2008 to track changes, expand coverage beyond the Midwest, and explore some issues in more depth.

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the further development of renewable technologies to lower their cost, although the Energy Center did not explore this hypothesis.

Tax disincentives and market-based electricity pricing received moderate amounts of support among Midwesterners. These findings have implications for proposals to introduce carbon taxes and adjust the incentives built into electric rates. More research is needed to better understand the nature of public reactions to these policy options.

Nuclear energy was the least favored policy option tested by the study. This result was consistent across all nine states—regardless of the extent to which nuclear power contributes to the state’s electricity generation. 🌀

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS STUDY

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