



Conservation WV | Toplines - May 2024

320 Interviews

Q1. How motivated are you to vote in the November election on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means you are not motivated at all and 10 means you are extremely motivated?

45%	10 - Extremely motivated
6	9
6	8
7	7
4	6
8	5
2	4
4	3
2	2
3	1
12	0 - Not motivated at all
58	Total 8-10
17	Total 0-2

Q2. What are the THREE most important issues to you when choosing which candidates to vote for in elections in West Virginia?

49%	Education
48	Health care
39	Abortion
34	Creating jobs that enable people to stay in West Virginia
30	Drug and opioid abuse
27	Climate change and the environment
26	Taxes
25	Roads and infrastructure
22	Clean air and drinking water
17	Crime and public safety
3	Protecting West Virginia from extreme weather (wildfires, floods etc.)
15	Something else (please specify)

Polling was conducted online from May 18-25, 2024. Using Dynamic Online Sampling to attain a representative sample, Change Research polled 320 voters age 18-40 from Conservation WV's target list in Berkeley Harrison, Jefferson, Marion, Monongalia, Ohio, and Wood Counties. Post-stratification was performed on age, gender, race/ethnicity, and 2020 presidential vote. You can see a full methodology statement [here \(to come\)](#), which complies with the requirements of AAPOR's Transparency Initiative. Members of the Transparency Initiative disclose all relevant details about our research, with the principle that the public should be able to evaluate and understand research-based findings, in order to instill and restore public confidence in survey results.

Q3. How favorable are your feelings about each of the following?

	<u>Favorable</u>		Neutral	<u>Unfavorable</u>		Never heard	Total fav	Total unfav
	Very	Smwt		Smwt	Very			
Coal companies	13	15	24	20	28	0	28	48
Coal workers	24	20	38	12	6	0	44	18
Natural gas companies	14	18	39	13	16	0	32	28
Natural gas workers	19	24	44	7	5	0	44	12
Renewable energy workers	48	27	23	0	1	1	75	1
Clean energy workers	48	21	25	3	1	1	69	4
Electric power companies	14	21	42	14	9	0	35	23
Solar farms	35	29	24	6	4	1	64	10
Rooftop solar companies	41	27	25	4	2	1	68	6
Environmental organizations	44	28	21	2	4	0	72	7
Conservation organizations	41	25	22	6	4	2	66	10
Conservation WV	40	22	21	2	1	14	62	3
National Rifle Association (NRA)	12	9	23	12	42	1	22	54
U.S. Forest Service	52	28	18	0	0	2	80	1
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	37	30	23	5	4	1	66	9
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	28	26	33	5	2	7	54	6

Q4. Which of the following best matches your views on extreme weather events, such as floods and wildfires, in West Virginia?

- 28% These events have become much more frequent in recent years
- 50 These events have become somewhat more frequent in recent years
- 22 These events have not become any more frequent in recent years

Q5. How concerned are you about the increasing frequency of extreme weather events?

- 25% Very concerned
- 50 Somewhat concerned
- 17 Not too concerned
- 7 Not at all concerned
- 1 Not sure
- 75 **Total concerned**
- 24 **Total not concerned**

Q6. Which of the following best matches your views on climate change?

- 82% Climate change is occurring, and it is mostly caused by human activities
- 10 Climate change is occurring, but it is not caused by human activities
- 2 Climate change is not occurring
- 6 If any changes are occurring, it's not enough to worry about

Q7. Do you support or oppose the following types of electricity generation in West Virginia?

	Support		Oppose		Not sure	Total support	Total oppose
	Strongly	Smwt	Smwt	Strongly			
Rooftop solar on homes and commercial buildings	65	26	3	2	4	91	5
Wind	58	31	4	3	4	89	7
Utility-scale solar projects	48	26	5	3	18	74	8
Natural gas	19	39	18	9	14	58	28
Nuclear	16	28	18	18	21	44	36
Coal	17	24	28	25	6	41	53

Q8. Below are some concerns that other West Virginians have about energy in the state. How serious of a problem do you think each of the following issues are in West Virginia?

	Very serious	Smwt serious	Not too serious	Not at all serious	Not sure	Total serious	Total not serious
	Rising cost of electricity	59	34	4	1	2	92
Coal and other fossil fuels polluting our air and water	61	23	10	3	4	84	12
Politicians in Charleston blocking development of renewable energy sources like solar and wind	67	16	8	2	6	83	11
The reliability of our energy system	47	35	10	1	7	82	11
Coal and other fossil fuels causing overheating and extreme weather	53	25	13	5	5	78	18
Renewable energy sources like solar and wind threatening the coal industry	10	19	31	37	4	28	68

Q9. Do you think renewable energy development in West Virginia will have an overall positive or negative impact on the number of quality jobs in West Virginia?

85% Positive impact – renewable energy development will result in more quality jobs for West Virginians

15 Negative impact – renewable energy development will result in fewer quality jobs for West Virginians

Q10. Which of the following candidates would you be likeliest to support?

31% A candidate who believes West Virginia should move off of coal and towards renewable energy as fast as possible

60 A candidate who believes West Virginia should begin incorporating more renewable energy

9 A candidate who believes West Virginia should not incorporate any more renewable energy, because it will create a threat to coal workers and communities

Q11. How important are each of the following to you?

	Very	Somewhat	Not very	Not at all	Total important	Total not important
Preserving West Virginia's water, air, and land	87	13	0	0	100	0
Preventing pollution of our water and air	87	12	1	1	99	1
Leaving a clean environment for future generations	82	18	0	0	100	0
Preserving wildlife habitat	84	14	2	0	97	3
Protecting West Virginia from climate change	68	23	7	2	91	9
Protecting West Virginia from overheating and extreme weather events	65	25	8	2	90	10

Q12. Which of the following activities do you do regularly? Select all that apply.

- 66% Hiking
- 63 Swimming
- 44 Camping or backpacking
- 40 Kayaking or canoeing
- 33 Fishing or angling
- 30 Mountain, trail or road bicycling
- 17 Hunting
- 13 None of these

Q13. Politicians in Charleston have restricted West Virginia's freedom to produce and buy clean energy, because they are beholden to certain industries. They tell us we don't have a choice about whether we keep our state's air and water clean, and we don't have a choice about whether West Virginians can get the good-paying energy jobs of the future. But we do have a choice. We can choose to elect officials who won't stand in the way of our freedoms, and who will let West Virginians determine our own future. Is this a:

- 51% Very convincing argument
- 36 Somewhat convincing argument
- 8 Not very convincing argument
- 4 Not at all convincing argument

Q14. West Virginia needs good jobs to be available for young people, who are leaving the state in droves. But politicians in Charleston are putting up roadblocks to clean energy jobs which pay well and are booming in other states. We need officials who will open the doors to these industries that will allow our young people to stay and work in the Mountain State. Is this a:

- 57% Very convincing argument
- 36 Somewhat convincing argument
- 5 Not very convincing argument
- 2 Not at all convincing argument

Q15. West Virginians are outdoor people who take great pride in our state's natural beauty. But warmer temperatures, pollution, and extreme weather like hurricanes and wildfires are stressing our land and water. We need politicians who won't turn a blind eye to the dangers of extreme weather, and who will instead take action to protect the beauty of our state and preserve our way of life. Is this a:

- 48% Very convincing argument
- 34 Somewhat convincing argument
- 12 Not very convincing argument
- 7 Not at all convincing argument

Q16. The cost of solar power has dropped by 90% over the past decade, and solar and wind are now cheaper than coal. But West Virginians are still forced to buy electricity from monopoly power companies using outdated coal plants, keeping our energy bills much higher than they need to be. We need politicians who will allow other energy sources into the state to give us all some financial relief. Is this a:

- 65% Very convincing argument
- 27 Somewhat convincing argument
- 6 Not very convincing argument
- 3 Not at all convincing argument

Q17. We need to protect our wild and scenic waterways to ensure that all West Virginians have access to clean water. But pollution threatens our water, and politicians in Charleston have shrugged their shoulders at the problem. We need politicians in office who will take measures to ensure that our water remains clean. Is this a:

- 57% Very convincing argument
- 35 Somewhat convincing argument
- 5 Not very convincing argument
- 3 Not at all convincing argument

Q18. For generations, West Virginians have taken great pride in our outdoor way of life, like hunting, hiking, camping, or fishing. But pollution and extreme weather are threatening our waters and lands, jeopardizing those traditions for future generations of West Virginians. We need politicians who will act to keep West Virginia livable for our children and grandchildren, so they can enjoy traditions like hunting and fishing as well. Is this a:

- 57% Very convincing argument
- 34 Somewhat convincing argument
- 5 Not very convincing argument
- 4 Not at all convincing argument

Q19. All our lives, we've been told that coal is the only energy source that can thrive in West Virginia. Just like we've been told that the same old leaders will always run Charleston. But if enough of us come together and say that we want a different direction, where new types of energy – and new types of leaders – can join the mix, then, little by little, we can change West Virginia for the better. Is this a:

- 46% Very convincing argument
- 40 Somewhat convincing argument
- 11 Not very convincing argument
- 3 Not at all convincing argument

Q20. While the war on coal has gone on for years, West Virginia has stood strong, protecting thousands of jobs for coal miners. We need to keep politicians in Charleston who will continue to protect these jobs and keep the legacy of coal production alive in our state. Is this a:

- 13% Very convincing argument
- 22 Somewhat convincing argument
- 30 Not very convincing argument
- 36 Not at all convincing argument

Q21. While our leaders in Charleston have pursued an all-of-the-above energy program that creates jobs in West Virginia and moves us toward energy independence, those on the extreme left are trying to shove wind and solar down our throat so they can destroy the coal industry – as they've been trying to do for years. We can't let them win. Is this a:

- 16% Very convincing argument
- 15 Somewhat convincing argument
- 20 Not very convincing argument
- 49 Not at all convincing argument

Q22. Of the messages you just read, which one made you feel the most motivated about voting in November?

- 26% We need leaders who will open the doors to new industries that will keep young people in WV.
- 20 If enough of us come together and say that we want new types of energy and new types of political leaders, then we can change West Virginia for the better.
- 15 We need to elect leaders who will keep West Virginia livable for our children and grandchildren.
- 12 We need leaders who will allow other energy sources into the state to give us all some financial relief.
- 9 We need to elect leaders who won't stand in the way of our freedoms, and who will let West Virginians determine our own energy future.
- 8 We need leaders who will take action to protect the beauty of our state.
- 4 We need to keep leaders in Charleston who will continue to protect coal jobs and keep the legacy of coal production alive in our state.
- 4 We need to stop politicians who are trying to shove solar and wind down our throat so they can destroy the coal industry.
- 1 We need leaders in office who will take measures to ensure that our water remains clean.

Q23. Once again, which of the following candidates would you be most likely to support?

- 29% A candidate who believes West Virginia should move away from coal and towards renewable energy as fast as possible
- 64 A candidate who believes West Virginia should begin incorporating more renewable energy
- 7 A candidate who believes West Virginia should not incorporate any more renewable energy, because it will create too much of a threat to coal workers and communities

Q24. In general, how much do you trust the information from the following sources?

	A lot	Some	Not too much	Not at all	Not sure	Total a lot/some	Total not too much/not at all
Local farmers and ranchers	31	54	12	2	1	85	14
Teachers	37	44	14	3	3	81	16
Your friends and family	26	55	12	6	1	81	18
Nonprofit organizations	18	59	15	6	2	77	21
Conservation organizations	25	51	14	8	2	76	22
Local business owners	17	58	17	7	1	75	24
Renewable energy companies	13	59	18	8	2	72	26
Agriculture extension services	18	52	12	4	14	70	16
Local labor unions	18	46	18	10	7	65	28
Local newspapers	7	52	21	20	1	59	40
Local veterans	15	43	28	8	6	58	36
Your neighbors	8	44	32	14	2	52	46
Employees of state and local government agencies	4	48	24	21	2	52	46
Coal workers	12	35	29	19	5	47	48
Local TV news	3	43	28	25	1	46	53
Elected officials in local government	2	35	36	26	1	37	62
Elected officials in the federal government	1	26	32	40	1	27	72
Elected officials in state government	1	24	39	34	2	25	73
Social media sites (e.g., Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, etc.)	2	23	41	33	1	25	74
Your utility provider	2	21	37	38	2	23	75
Coal industry executives	3	12	21	63	1	15	84

Q25. Have you, or anyone in your immediate family, ever worked in the coal industry?

4% I have
 36 Someone in my immediate family has
 60 No

Q26. Have you, or anyone in your immediate family, ever worked in the natural gas industry?

6% I have
 23 Someone in my immediate family has
 71 No

Q27. Have you, or anyone in your immediate family, ever worked in the solar or wind industry?

3% I have
 8 Someone in my immediate family has
 89 No

D1. How did you vote in the 2020 election for President, or for some reason were you unable to vote?

57% Joe Biden, the Democrat
18 Donald Trump, the Republican
6 Jo Jorgensen, the Libertarian
4 Not registered/Too young/Ineligible
16 Did not vote

D2. Are you registered to vote in West Virginia?

95% Yes
5 I am eligible to vote, but am not registered
0 I am not eligible to vote

D3. Are you:

37% Male
61 Female
2 Other

D4. Age

26% 18 to 24
24 25 to 29
24 30 to 34
26 35+

D5. Race/Ethnicity

89% White / Caucasian
5 Black or African American
3 Hispanic or Latino/a
2 Asian / Pacific Islander
0 American Indian or Alaska Native
2 Other

D6. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

13% High school diploma or less
24 Some college, but no degree
13 Associate's degree, or two-year college degree
31 Bachelor's degree, or four-year college degree
18 Graduate degree

D7. Party Identification

30% Strong Democrats
18 Weak Democrats
15 Independent lean Democrats
23 Pure independents
5 Independent lean Republicans
4 Weak Republicans
5 Strong Republicans

47% Base Democrats
44 Independents + Leaners
9 Base Republicans

63% Democrats
23 Pure independents
15 Republicans

D8. County

11 Berkeley
15 Harrison
13 Jefferson
7 Marion
26 Monongalia
6 Ohio
15 Wood