

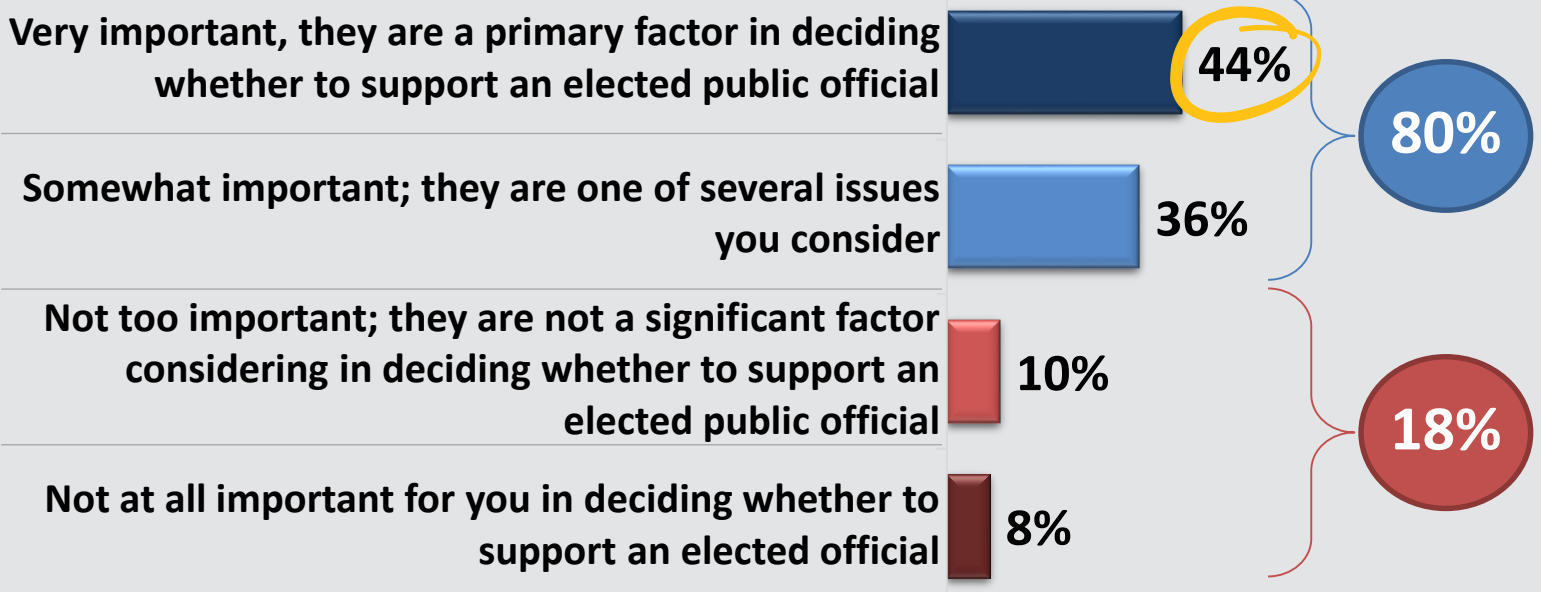
# Conservation in 2020

*Western voters prioritize conservation issues when deciding to support elected officials.*



Four-in-five Western voters (80%) say that compared to perennially important topics like the economy, health care, and education, issues involving “clean water, clean air, wildlife, and public lands” are important in deciding whether to support an elected public official. In fact, 44% now say that these issues are a primary factor in determining their support. In this presidential election year, likely Democratic primary voters/caucus goers are even more apt to say this is an important factor in their decision (56% primary importance, 91% total important).

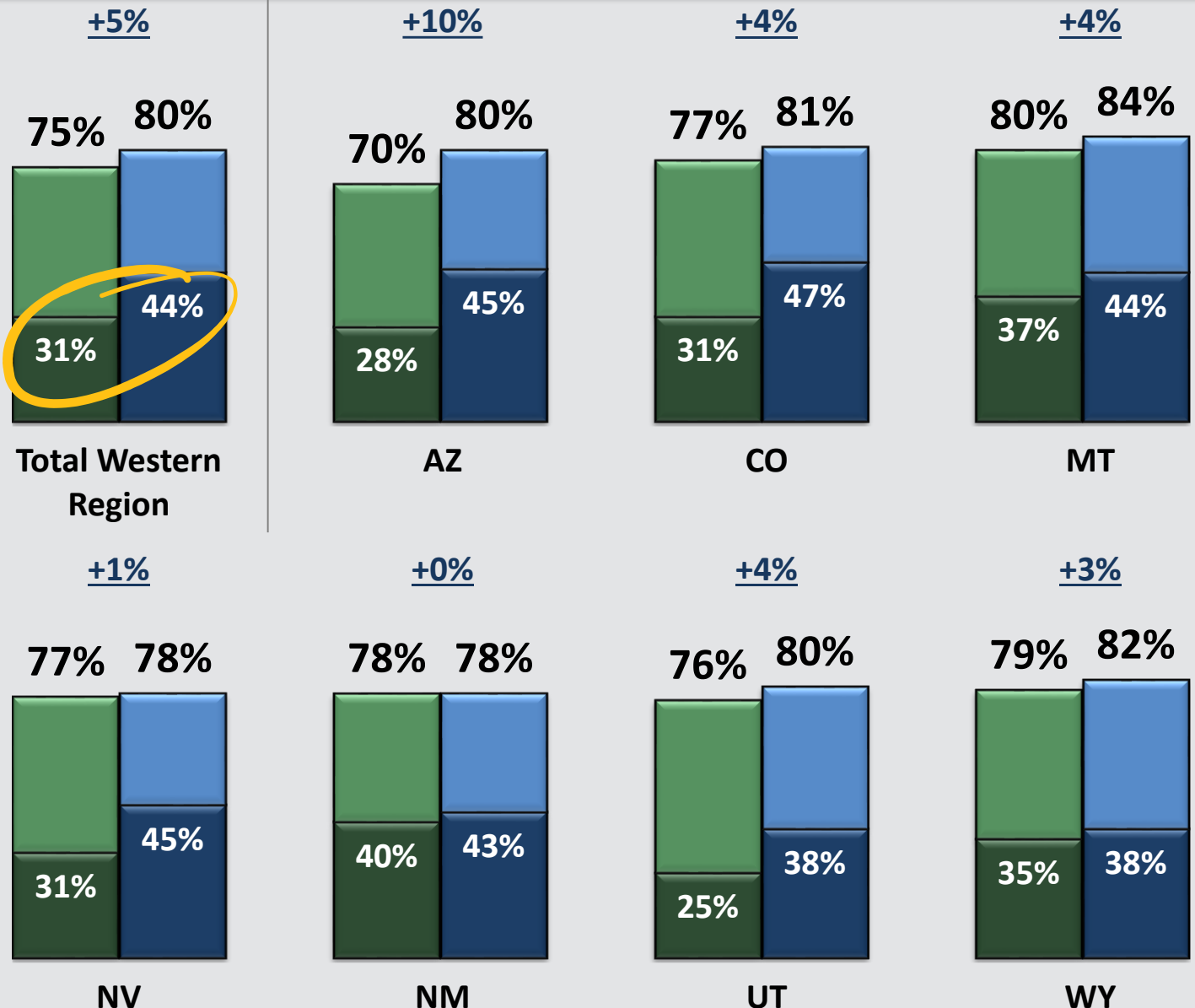
## Importance of Public Official’s Stance on Environment



**Western voters are placing more emphasis on conservation issues than four years ago.**

A comparison of the seven states that were interviewed in both 2016 and 2020 (AZ, CO, MT, NM, NV, UT, & WY), indicates that **voters are placing more importance on issues such as clean water, clean air, wildlife, and public lands as they decide whether to support an elected official.** In fact, the primacy of the issue has gone up 13 points overall, and increased in every single state.

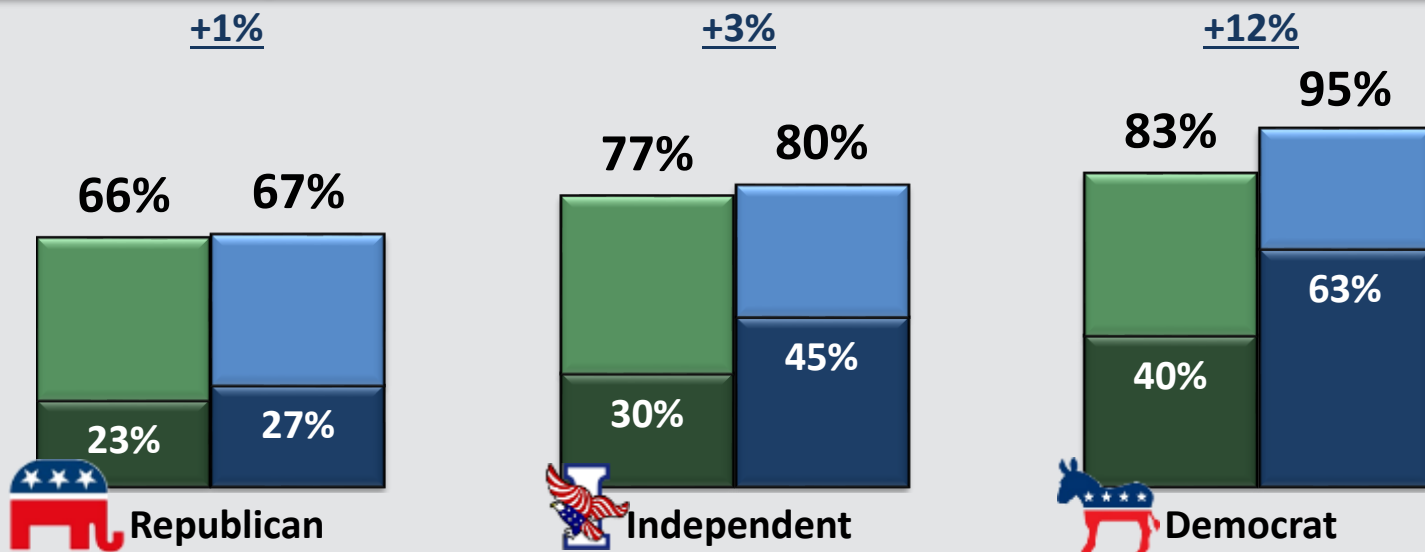
### Importance of Public Official's Stance on Environment



2016
2020
Very Important/Primary Factor  
2016
2020
Total Important/Several Issues Considered

Conservation has become increasingly important for critical independent voters and skyrocketed with Democratic voters. The importance Republicans place on conservation issues has remained stable, with two-thirds saying conservation issues are an important factor in supporting an elected official.

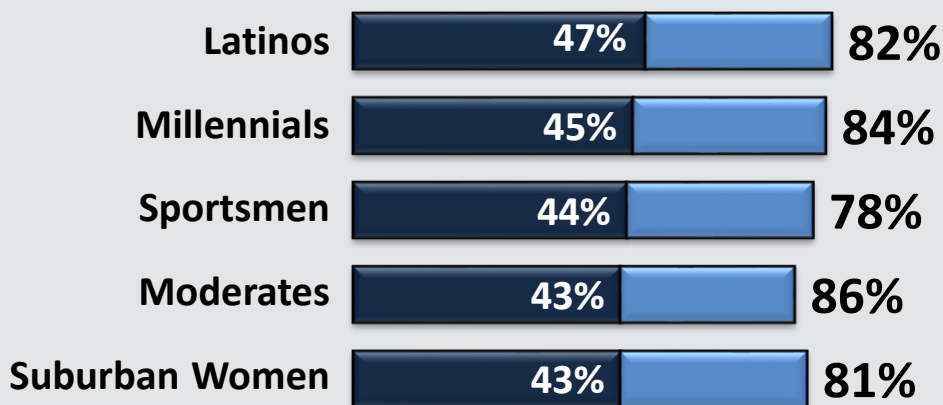
### Importance of Public Official's Stance on Environment



2016 2020 **Very Important/Primary Factor**  
2016 2020 **Total Important/Several Issues Considered**

Conservation issues are deemed important by many of the most critical “swing” sub-groups. More than four-in-ten Latinos (47%), millennials (45%), sportsmen (44%), moderates (43%), and suburban women (43%) indicate it is a primary factor in their decision to vote for a candidate.

### Importance of Public Official's Stance on Environment

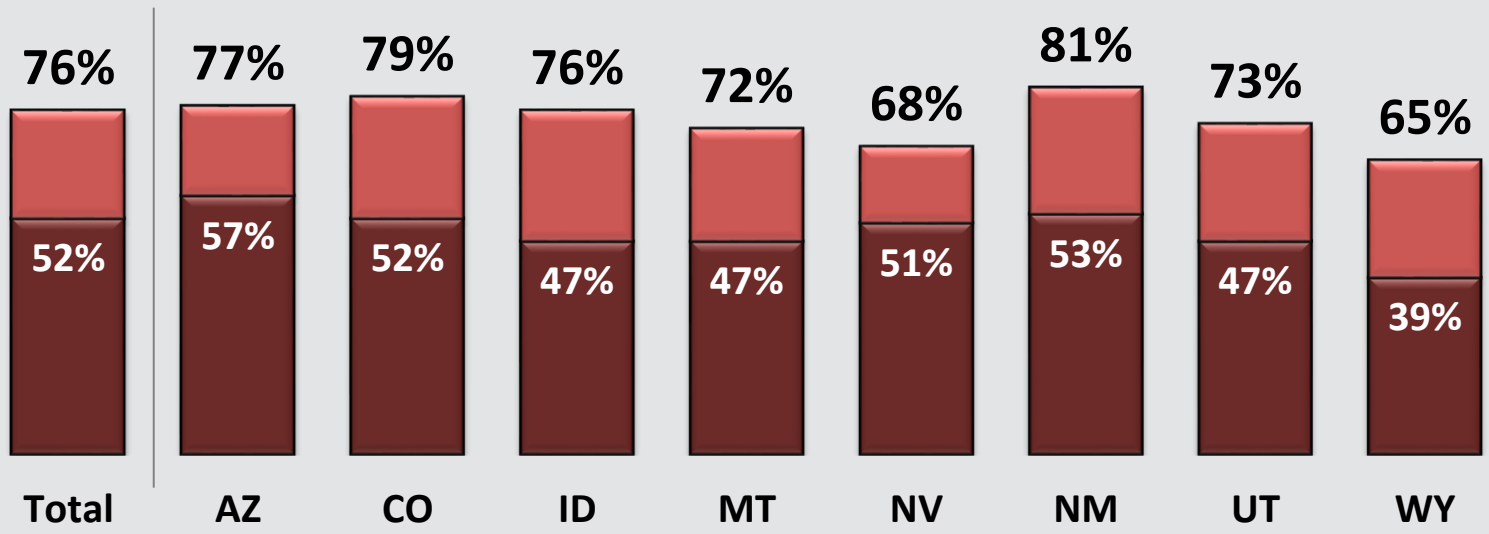


■ **Very Important/Primary Factor**  
■ **Total Important/Several Issues Considered**



The increasing primacy of conservation issues may be grounded in recent policy decisions. **Three-quarters of Western voters deem rollbacks of laws that protect our land, water, and wildlife as a serious problem, up from just a few years ago.** Indeed, 59% of Republicans, 79% of Independents, and 93% of Democrats perceive this to be a serious concern. Compared to 2018, concerns on this issue have increased the most among voters in New Mexico, Idaho, and Colorado.

**Seriousness of Rollbacks of Laws that Protect Our Land, Water, and Wildlife**



■ Extremely/Very Serious Problem    ■ Total Serious Problem

**68%**  
2018  
Total Serious

**76%**  
2020  
Total Serious

**↑ +8**



Two-thirds of Western voters would prefer their Member of Congress to place more emphasis on protecting and creating public lands than on allowing mining and drilling on public lands. Although not a majority, Republicans also lean in favor of this approach (47% protect, 40% mining/drilling), while 71% of Independents and 86% of Democrats favor protection.

**Preference for National Public Land Decisions**

Ensuring we protect sources of clean water, our air quality and wildlife habitat while providing opportunities to visit and recreate on our national public lands

**67%**

Ensuring we produce more domestic energy by maximizing the amount of national public lands available for responsible oil and gas drilling and mining

**25%**

As voters look to the future, most say they would support setting a national goal of protecting 30% of America's lands and ocean areas by the year 2030. This goal garners majority support across party, with 57% of Republicans, 77% of Independents, and 89% of Democrats in favor of the proposal.

**Support for Setting a National Goal of Protecting 30 Percent of America's Lands and Ocean Areas by the Year 2030**

