**majority of Americans accept science behind global warming**

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Photo: Matt Brown, STF

Texas and other states sued the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to block the Obama administration's Clean Power Plan, arguing it would obliterate the U.S. coal industry.﻿

About 79 percent of Americans say global warming is happening, with majorities from both political parties supporting government action to address the problem.

So when will Republican politicians accept scientific fact and do something?

The UT Energy poll of 2,043 Americans by the University of Texas' Energy Institute found that 89 percent of self-identified Democrats and 62 percent of self-identified Republicans accept the overwhelming scientific consensus about global warming. In 2012, only 45 percent of Republican accepted climate change science as fact.

That's in direct contrast with Republican leaders, both nationally and in Texas, who still publicly question whether humans burning fossil fuels for the past 250 years has contributed to a warming planet and rising sea levels.

"Some of these findings reflect entrenched positions of the two parties," Sheril Kirshenbaum, the poll's director, said.

Most importantly, perhaps, 91 percent of Americans under the age of 35 accept climate science. This might account for why millennials overwhelmingly reject Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, who has called climate science a Chinese hoax to destroy the U.S. economy.

Not surprisingly, 62 percent of millennials support phasing out coal as a source of electricity, while only 28 percent of seniors do. About 52 percent of millennials support a carbon tax, while 77 percent of senior citizens oppose one.

On hydraulically fracturing wells, only 47 percent said they understood what the technology involved, but of those, 45 percent oppose the technology. Opposition to fracking has grown 8 percent since last year.

The results appear to show greater awareness of the fossil fuel issues.

Republicans should recognize they need to get with mainstream scientific opinion, because the American public already has.