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Special Earth Day Poll

**Majority of NY'ers Very Concerned with Water Pollution, Air Pollution,
Deforestation, & Climate Change**
***Overwhelming Support for Pedestrian-Friendly Cities, Producing Electricity with
Zero Emissions by 2040, Electric Cars & Rejoining Paris Climate Accords***
By 60-26% Think Environmental Policies will Help NOT Hurt Economy
Most Very Often Re-cycle & Use Reusable Bags; Many Conserve Water & Electricity

Loudonville, NY – On the 51st anniversary of the first Earth Day, 64 percent of New Yorkers are very concerned about water pollution, 61 percent with air pollution, 60 percent with deforestation, and 56 percent are very concerned about climate change according to a new statewide survey released today by the Siena College Research Institute (SCRI). Large majorities support redesigning our cities to be more pedestrian friendly, promoting the widespread use of electric cars, having New York produce 100 percent of its electricity with zero-emissions by 2040 and the U.S. rejoining the Paris Climate Accords.

Sixty percent think that governmental policies aimed at protecting the environment are more likely to help the economy compared with 26 percent that think those policies will hurt the economy. Seventy percent of state residents very often recycle waste including paper, cardboard and plastic and 69 percent use reusable bags. Nearly half very often try to conserve water and conserve electricity by lessening their use.

“New Yorkers, by over two-to-one, believe policies designed to protect the environment are more likely to help rather than hurt the economy,” according to SCRI Director, Don Levy. “Just under 60 percent say that we are at the point of no return and if our government, businesses and population don’t actively address the threats to our environment, we will do irreparable damage to our planet.”

“While Democrats overwhelmingly support pro-environmental policies, believe those policies will spur economic activity and think failing to protect the environment will lead to irreversible harm, Republicans disagree,” Levy said. “Not only does a majority of Republicans think that pro-environmental policies will hurt the economy, but nearly two-thirds despite supporting efforts to protect clean water and air, say that we’re doing as much as we should and doing too much is too expensive for us and our nation.”

While 70 percent of New Yorkers very often recycle waste including paper, cardboard and plastic and 69 percent very often use reusable bags, fewer than half very often conserve electricity by lessening use, try to conserve water, or use reusable beverage containers. Majorities engage in each of those conservation behaviors at least sometimes, and a majority at least sometimes also cut back on the amount of computer paper that they use, and use forms of transportation that could include public transportation, carpooling, walking or biking in order to reduce auto emissions.

How often do you do each of the following, do you do very often, sometimes, not very often or not at all.											
		Gender			Age				Ethnicity		
		Total	M	F	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	White	Afr Amer /Black	Latino
Recycle waste including paper, cardboard and plastic	Very often	70%	68%	74%	57%	59%	88%	82%	69%	81%	65%
	Sometimes	19%	22%	16%	27%	27%	10%	9%	19%	13%	23%
Use reusable bags	Very often	69%	61%	76%	61%	67%	80%	73%	66%	76%	66%
	Sometimes	23%	27%	19%	29%	27%	17%	16%	24%	19%	27%
Conserve electricity by lessening your use	Very often	47%	47%	48%	38%	51%	54%	47%	45%	54%	47%
	Sometimes	37%	36%	38%	47%	37%	36%	28%	40%	32%	38%
Try to conserve water	Very often	46%	50%	43%	41%	54%	45%	46%	47%	49%	42%
	Sometimes	35%	30%	40%	41%	33%	34%	31%	33%	37%	35%
Use reusable beverage containers	Very often	42%	35%	49%	37%	47%	48%	38%	42%	37%	37%
	Sometimes	32%	38%	28%	39%	37%	25%	27%	33%	33%	31%
Cut back on the amount of computer printing that you do	Very often	32%	28%	35%	26%	34%	42%	28%	29%	24%	39%
	Sometimes	29%	35%	25%	39%	36%	21%	14%	33%	31%	30%
Use forms of transportation that could include public transportation, carpooling, walking or biking in order to reduce auto emissions	Very often	27%	24%	29%	35%	25%	22%	20%	17%	49%	38%
	Sometimes	24%	30%	18%	32%	31%	16%	12%	25%	13%	35%

A majority of state residents are very concerned about water pollution, air pollution, deforestation and climate change, half are very concerned about the loss of biodiversity and a large majority is either very or somewhat concerned about waste disposal and over population.

“While New Yorkers are very concerned about many environmental issues including pollution and climate change, not everyone is doing all the everyday activities that contribute to conservation,” Levy said. “Sure, most of us are recycling and using reusable bags, but only half of us are fully committed to conserving water, electricity and using reusable beverage containers.”

“When it comes to environmental policies, majorities of New Yorkers do support making our cities more pedestrian friendly, promoting the widespread use of electric cars, having New York produce 100 percent of its electricity with zero-emissions by 2040 and the United States rejoining the Paris Climate Accords,” Levy said. “A small majority even supports encouraging New Yorkers to move towards a more plant-based diet.”

How concerned are you about each of the following: very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned or not at all concerned.											
		Gender			Age				Ethnicity		
		Total	M	F	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	White	Afr Amer /Black	Latino
Water pollution	Very concerned	64%	58%	69%	61%	63%	67%	64%	60%	79%	62%
	Somewhat concerned	28%	34%	22%	32%	32%	22%	26%	29%	21%	36%
Air pollution	Very concerned	61%	55%	66%	63%	61%	59%	58%	52%	88%	65%
	Somewhat concerned	29%	33%	25%	29%	32%	27%	29%	35%	11%	24%
Deforestation	Very concerned	60%	57%	62%	61%	63%	59%	55%	52%	73%	70%
	Somewhat concerned	28%	31%	26%	26%	29%	26%	32%	32%	24%	21%
Climate change	Very concerned	56%	51%	62%	59%	54%	56%	54%	46%	80%	63%
	Somewhat concerned	24%	27%	21%	25%	27%	19%	25%	29%	17%	17%
Loss of biodiversity	Very concerned	50%	50%	51%	52%	48%	53%	46%	41%	79%	56%
	Somewhat concerned	35%	35%	34%	35%	41%	32%	31%	40%	15%	34%
Waste disposal	Very concerned	49%	44%	54%	42%	42%	58%	52%	41%	70%	50%
	Somewhat concerned	38%	41%	35%	44%	44%	27%	35%	41%	27%	41%
Over population	Very concerned	30%	28%	33%	27%	33%	32%	28%	27%	41%	31%
	Somewhat concerned	35%	37%	34%	36%	40%	32%	35%	39%	33%	27%

The SCRI Special Earth Day Survey was conducted March 1-8, 2021 by random telephone calls to 400 New York adults via landline and cell phones and 400 responses drawn from a proprietary online panel of New Yorkers. Telephone sampling was initiated by asking for the youngest male in the household. Telephone sampling was conducted via a stratified dual frame probability sample of landline and cell phone telephone numbers (both from ASDE Survey Sampler) from within New York State. Data from the telephone and web samples were blended and statistically adjusted by age, race/ethnicity, gender and party to ensure representativeness. The overall results has an overall margin of error of ± 4.2 percentage points including the design effects resulting from weighting. The Siena College Research Institute, directed by Donald Levy, Ph.D., conducts political, economic, social and cultural research primarily in NYS. SCRI, an independent, non-partisan research institute, subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research Code of Professional Ethics and Practices. For more information, call Dr. Don Levy, Director Siena College Research Institute, at 518-783-2901. For survey cross-tabs: www.Siena.edu/SCRI/research.