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Two-thirds of Floridians Concerned About Climate Change and Feel Government Isn't Doing Enough to Address Impacts *Large Majority Favor Teaching About Climate Change in Florida Schools*

BOCA RATON, Fla. (October 29, 2019) – More than two-thirds of Floridians say that climate change has them concerned about the well-being of future generations in Florida and do not feel government is doing enough to address its impacts, according to the first-ever Florida Climate Resilience Survey conducted by the [Florida Atlantic University Center for Environmental Studies](#) (CES) in FAU's [Charles E. Schmidt College of Science](#), and the [Business and Economics Polling Initiative](#) (BEPI) in FAU's [College of Business](#).

The statewide survey, which will be conducted on a quarterly basis, shows that 68 percent of Floridians either agree or strongly agree that climate change has them concerned about the well-being of future generations in Florida. Only 28 percent said that Florida's government (state, county and municipal) is already doing enough to address the impacts of climate change. A majority of respondents support future solar energy production in Florida (51 percent) and favor teaching climate change causes, consequences and solutions in Florida K-12 classrooms (68 percent). Nearly half of the respondents (47 percent) are willing to pay \$10 per month to strengthen Florida's infrastructure (such as bridges, roads, stormwater systems) to weather hazards.

"Florida's prosperity is strongly influenced by its climate," said [Colin Polsky](#), Ph.D., director of the FAU Center for Environmental Studies and lead author of the study. "Our warm temperatures and abundant rainfall support our top-tier tourism, agriculture and other industries. But our weather patterns also present Floridians with risks, such as flooding and high winds. Today, the prospect of climate change adds to our risk profile in ways we are only starting to understand. The results from this first quarterly statewide survey paint a picture of how resilient Floridians are to the climate risks we face."

More than half of Floridians (56 percent) state that climate change is real and that it is largely caused by human activity, including 44 percent of Republicans, 59 percent of Independents and 70 percent of Democrats. Younger Floridians ages 18-49 are more likely to concur with the scientific consensus on climate change and its attribution to human activities (60 percent) than those ages 50-64 and 65 and over (51 and 52 percent, respectively).

"Since the early 1990s, the climate change question at the national-level has become increasingly polarized along party lines," Polsky said. "Yet in recent years a growing number of states and cities have taken meaningful actions to recognize, study, and address climate change."

These actions are largely consolidated in blue-leaning states, unlike Florida, and the national-level discourse remains polarized along partisan lines.”

Nearly 6 in 10 Floridians (59 percent) believe their household to be well-prepared for climate hazards, with survival supplies such as food, water, power generator, phone charger and radio. However, most Floridians are moderately or extremely concerned about hurricanes becoming stronger or more frequent (65 percent), temperatures rising (61 percent) and rising sea levels (59 percent).

The business community is viewed by a large swath of the electorate (45 percent) as the group who will, through innovation and entrepreneurship, lead Floridians to successfully adapt to weather hazards.

“In my experience in southeast Florida for the past five years, the private sector leaders are, regardless of party affiliation, not only actively concerned about challenges linked with our changing climate, but also committed to meaningful actions,” Polsky said. “They’re even getting impatient. Now through this survey, we may be seeing similar support statewide for climate solutions grounded in innovation and entrepreneurship.”

The survey was conducted in both English and Spanish from Oct. 1-15. The sample consisted of 1,045 Floridians, 18 years of age and older, with a margin of error (credibility interval) of +/- 3.5 percent. The data was collected using an online panel provided by [Dynata](#). Responses for the entire sample were weighted to adjust for gender, race, income, education and region according to recent [U.S. Bureau of the Census](#) data. It is important to remember that subsets carry with them higher margins of error, as the sample size is reduced. For more information, contact Colin Polsky, Ph.D., at cpolsky@fau.edu.

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About FAU CES:

The [Florida Center for Environmental Studies](#) (CES), founded in 1994, is an FAU unit designed to advance Florida’s sustainability on wetlands ecology and coastal resilience, through strategic research, education, and community engagement activities. To this end, CES employs five full-time and several part-time staff, plus a coordinated group of graduate and undergraduate students, actively managing ~\$800k in external grants and contracts each year.

About FAU BEPI:

The [Florida Atlantic University Business and Economic Polling Initiative](#) conducts surveys on business, economic, political and social issues with a focus on Hispanic attitudes and opinions at regional, state and national levels via planned monthly national surveys. The initiative subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research and is a resource for public and private organizations, academic research and media outlets. In addition, the initiative is designed to contribute to the educational mission of the University by providing students with valuable opportunities to enhance their educational experience by designing and carrying out public opinion research.

About Florida Atlantic University:

Florida Atlantic University, established in 1961, officially opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. Today, the University, with an annual economic impact of \$6.3 billion, serves more than 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students at sites throughout its six-county service region in southeast Florida. FAU’s

world-class teaching and research faculty serves students through 10 colleges: the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, the College of Business, the College for Design and Social Inquiry, the College of Education, the College of Engineering and Computer Science, the Graduate College, the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing and the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. FAU is ranked as a High Research Activity institution by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The University is placing special focus on the rapid development of critical areas that form the basis of its strategic plan: Healthy aging, biotech, coastal and marine issues, neuroscience, regenerative medicine, informatics, lifespan and the environment. These areas provide opportunities for faculty and students to build upon FAU's existing strengths in research and scholarship. For more information, visit www.fau.edu.