



# American Voters and 40MPG Fuel Standards:

What They Want Congress to Do Now

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## Background and Purpose

- This report is based on the findings of a telephone survey conducted by Opinion Research Corporation's CARAVAN omnibus, among a sample of 1,013 adults (504 men and 509 women) aged 18 and over living in private households in the Continental United States. Interviewing for this survey was completed during the period of April 19-22, 2007.
- The survey was weighted by four variables: age, sex, geographic region and race to ensure reliable and accurate representation of the total population. The margin of error for both surveys at the 95% confidence level is plus or minus three percentage points for both samples. Smaller sub-groups in either survey will have larger error margins.

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## Executive Summary

- More than three out of four Americans (76 percent) would prefer to raise the federal fuel efficiency standards to 40 miles per gallon (mpg) by 2010 rather than to wait and raise them to 35mpg by 2018 (15 percent).
- There is little partisan difference in the preference for raising federal standards to 40mpg by 2010: Democrats (82 percent), Independents (80 percent) and Republicans (72 percent).
- 78 percent of those likely to vote in 2008 favor the idea of raising federal fuel-efficiency standards to 40mpg by 2010, rather than waiting to get to 35mpg by 2018.

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## Executive Summary

- Half of Americans (53 percent) say they would be more likely to support a candidate who advocated a 40mpg fuel-efficiency standard as a way to lower global warming and reduce U.S. reliance on Middle Eastern oil. Over a quarter (28 percent) say that such would stance would make them as likely to support a candidate, and only 15 percent say it would make them less likely to back a candidate.
- Over half (55 percent) of those likely to vote in 2008 would be the strongest supporters of a 40mpg candidate.
- Older voters are particularly supportive of 40mpg candidates. A substantial 64 percent of those age 55-64 say they would support a 40mpg candidate.
- Democrats are the most likely to support such a candidate (66 percent), followed by 45 percent of Independents and 42 percent of Republicans.



## Detailed Findings

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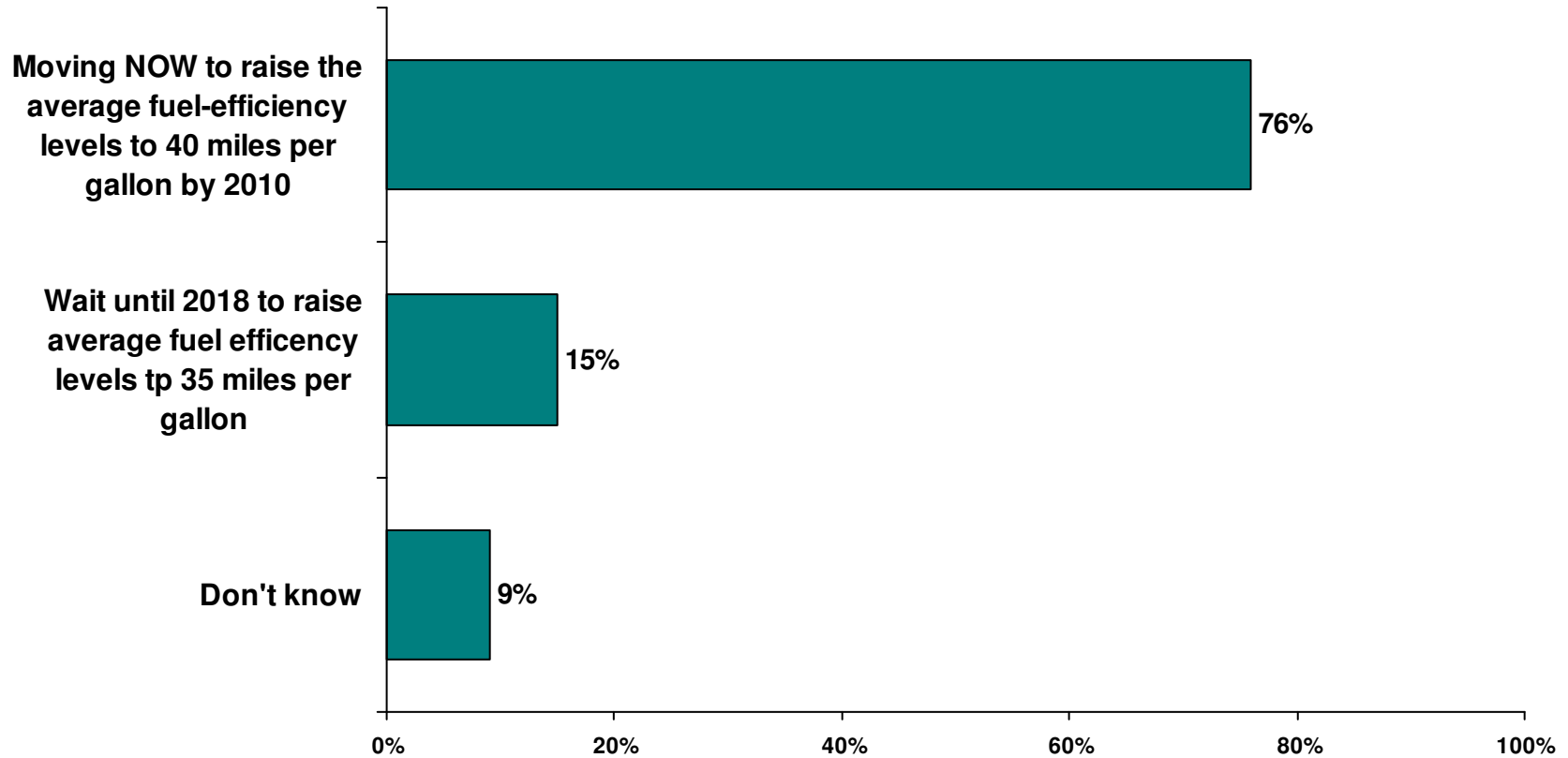
## Preferred Approach to Raise the Federal Fuel Efficiency Standards

- Most Americans (76%) would prefer to raise the federal fuel efficiency standards to 40mpg by 2010 than to wait and raise them to 35mpg by 2018 (15%).
  - Only 68% of those in households with incomes of less than \$25,000 favor raising the standards to 40mpg by 2010, compared to 82% of those in all other households.
  - There is little partisan difference in the preference for raising federal standards by 2010 to 40mpg: Democrats (82%), Independents (80%) and Republicans (72%).
  - The idea of raising standards to 40mpg by 2010 is more likely to be supported by the following: those who will likely vote in 2008 (78%), those who are more likely to support a 40mpg candidate in 08 (87%), those who favor using gas sales revenue for research into alternative energy (82%), those who favor increasing the gas sales tax and using the revenue for energy research (83%) and those likely to buy a hybrid (82%).

# Preferred Approach to Raise the Federal Fuel Efficiency Standards

A12: European and Asian vehicles have higher fuel efficiency than those here in the United States. More than 100 vehicles that get 40 miles per gallon or more are already for sale outside of the United States ... versus just two that get over 40 miles per gallon here in the United States. Knowing that, which of the following approaches would you prefer to raising U.S. fuel efficiency standards?

## Most Prefer Raising the Standards Higher and Doing it Faster



Base = Total respondents, 1,013 adults.



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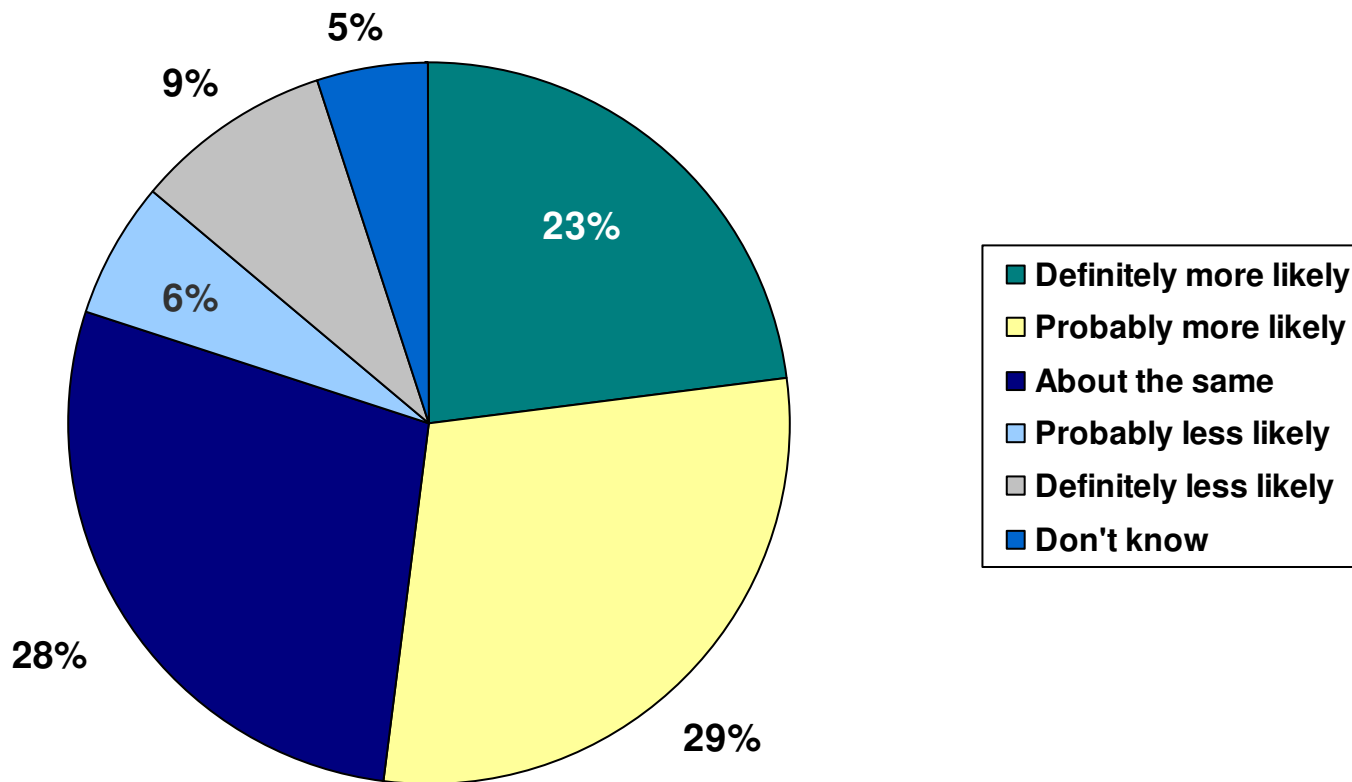
## Likelihood to Support 40mpg Candidate in the 2008 Elections

- More than eighteen months away from the 2008 elections, half of Americans (53%) say they would be more likely to support a candidate who advocated a 40mpg standard as a way to lower global warming and reduce U.S. reliance on Middle Eastern oil. Twenty-eight percent say that stance would make them as likely to support a candidate, and 15% say less likely.
  - A substantial 64% of those age 55-64 say they would support such a candidate compared to only 41% of those age 18-24.
  - Regionally this candidate would get strong support from those in the Northeast (61%) and somewhat less in the Midwest (47%).
  - Democrats are the most likely to support such a candidate (66%) compared to only 45% of Independents and 42% of Republicans.
  - Support would be strongest from those likely to vote in 08 (55%), those who support changing the fuel standard to 40mpg by 2010 (60%), those who favor using gas sales taxes for alternative energy research (61%), those who favor increasing the gas sales tax (67%) and those likely to buy a hybrid (66%).

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## Likelihood to Support a 40mpg Candidate in 2008

A13: I now want you to think about the 2008 elections. In general would you be more or less likely to SUPPORT a candidate for federal office – Congress or the White House – who advocated a 40mpg fuel efficiency standard as a way to lower global warming and reduce U.S. reliance on Middle Eastern oil?



Base = Total respondents, 1,013 adults.

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## Likelihood to Vote in the 2008 Elections

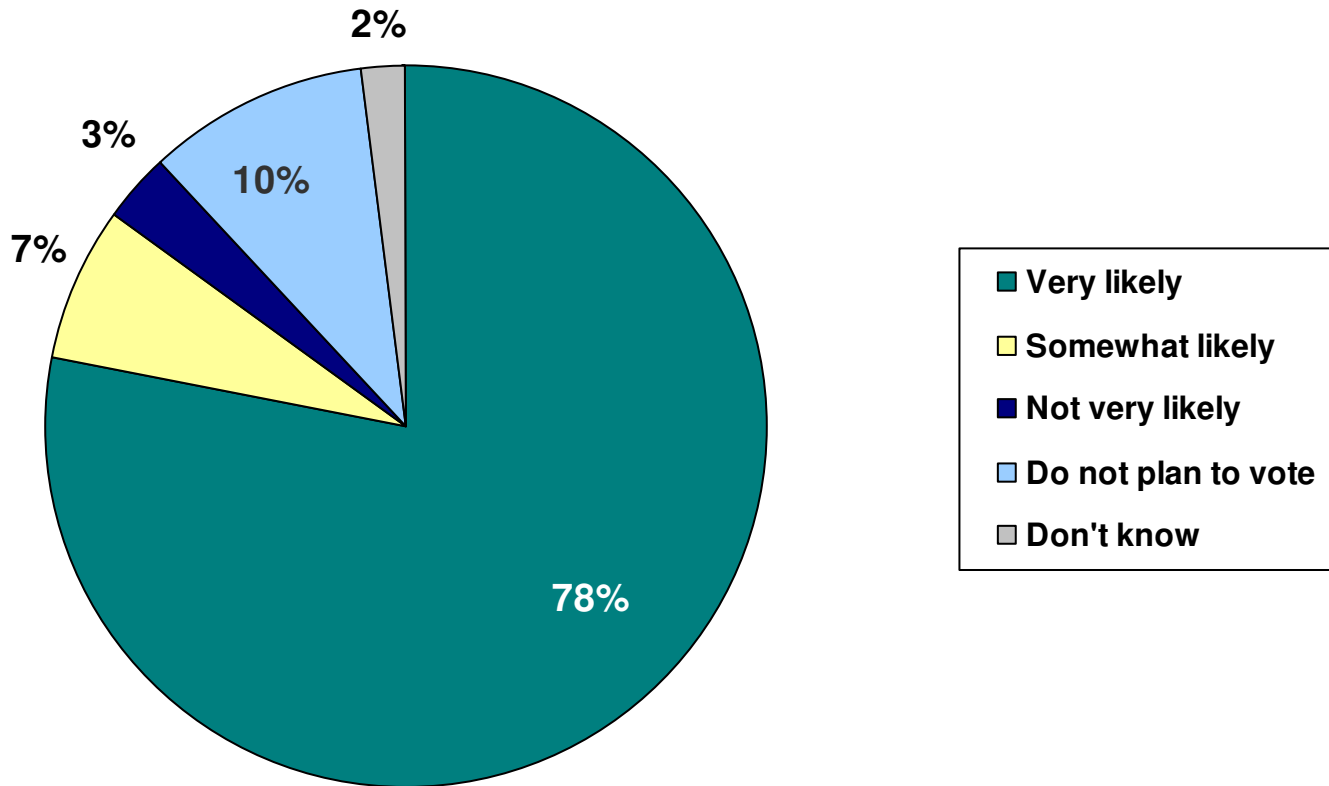
- A substantial majority of Americans (86%) say they plan to vote in the 2008 Presidential and congressional elections. While turnout is unlikely to be that high, certain segments of the American population say they are a lot more likely to vote than others.
  - A substantial 94% of those age 55 and over say they will vote in 2008 compared to only 73% of those 18-24 years of age.
  - Self-reported intention to vote is also lower in households with lower levels of income and among respondents with lower levels of education. 73% of those in households with less than \$25,000 in annual income and 57% of those with less than a high school education say they will vote in 2008. This is substantially lower than the 91% of those in households with incomes of \$50,000 or more, or 93% of those with a college degree who say they intend to vote.
  - A later question in this survey asked if the respondent prefers raising the U.S. fuel efficiency standards to 35 mpg in 2018 or if they prefer raising them to 40mpg by 2010. Those who favor raising the standards to a higher level and to do it more quickly (40 mpg by 2010), are more likely to say they will vote in 2008 (88%) than are those who favor the slower approach to raising the standard (75%).

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# Likelihood to Vote in the 2008 Elections

A1: How likely is it that you will vote in the 2008 Presidential and Congressional elections?

## Most Say They Plan to Vote in 2008



Base = Total respondents, 1,013 adults.



# APPENDIX

## RELIABILITY OF SURVEY PERCENTAGES

Results of any sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of the variation is measurable and is affected by the number of interviews and the level of the percentages expressing the results.

The table below shows the possible sample variation that applies to percentage results reported herein. The chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than the indicated number of percentage points from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample.

Size of Sample on Which Survey Results Are Based	Approximate Sampling Tolerances Applicable to Percentages At or Near These Levels				
	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
1,000 interviews	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%
500 interviews	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%
250 interviews	4%	5%	6%	6%	6%
100 interviews	6%	8%	9%	10%	10%

### Additional Sampling Tolerances for Samples of 1,000 Interviews

<u>9% or 91%</u> 2%	<u>8% or 92%</u> 2%	<u>7% or 93%</u> 2%	<u>6% or 94%</u> 1%	<u>5% or 95%</u> 1%
<u>4% or 96%</u> 1%	<u>3% or 97%</u> 1%	<u>2% or 98%</u> 1%	<u>1% or 99%</u> 2%	

## SAMPLING TOLERANCES WHEN COMPARING TWO SAMPLES

Tolerances are also involved in the comparison of results from independent parts of the sample. A difference, in other words, must be of at least a certain number of percentage points to be considered statistically significant – that is not due to random chance. The table below is a guide to the sampling tolerances in percentage points applicable to such comparisons, based on a 95% confidence level.

Size of Samples Compared	Differences Required for Significance At or Near These Percentage Levels				
	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
1,000 and 1,000	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%
1,000 and 500	3%	4%	5%	5%	5%
1,000 and 250	4%	6%	6%	7%	7%
1,000 and 100	6%	8%	9%	10%	10%
500 and 500	4%	5%	6%	6%	6%
500 and 250	5%	6%	7%	7%	8%
500 and 100	6%	9%	10%	11%	11%
250 and 250	5%	7%	8%	9%	9%
250 and 100	7%	9%	11%	11%	12%
100 and 100	8%	11%	13%	14%	14%