

## **Poll: Americans' belief in global warming cools**

By Dina Cappiello - Associated Press Writer  
In the Modesto Bee, Thursday, Oct. 22, 2009

WASHINGTON -- The number of Americans who believe there is solid evidence that the Earth is warming because of pollution is at its lowest point in three years, according to a survey released Thursday.

The poll of 1,500 adults by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press found that only 57 percent believe there is strong scientific evidence that the Earth has gotten warmer over the past few decades, and as a result, people are viewing the problem as less serious. That's down from 77 percent in 2006.

The steepest drop occurred during the last year, as Congress and the Obama administration have taken steps to control heat-trapping emissions for the first time. The drop also was seen during a time of mounting scientific evidence of climate change - from melting ice caps to the world's oceans hitting the highest monthly recorded temperatures this summer.

The poll was released a day after 18 scientific organizations wrote Congress to reaffirm the consensus behind global warming.

"The priority that people give to pollution and environmental concerns and a whole host of other issues is down because of the economy and because of the focus on other things," said Andrew Kohut, the director of the research center, which conducted the poll from Sept. 30 to Oct. 4. "When the focus is on other things, people forget and see these issues as less grave."

Despite misgivings about the science, half the respondents still said they supported limits on greenhouse gases, even if it could lead to higher energy prices. But many of those supporters have heard little to nothing about cap-and-trade, the main mechanism for reducing greenhouse gases favored by the White House and central to legislation passed by the House and a bill the Senate will take up next week.

Under cap-and-trade, a price is put on each ton of pollution and businesses can buy and sell permits to meet emissions limits.

Other results of the survey also suggest that it will be tough politically to enact a law limiting emissions of global warming pollution. While three-quarters of Democrats believe the evidence of a warming planet is solid, and nearly half believe the problem is serious, far fewer conservative and moderate Democrats see the problem as grave as they did last year.

Regional differences were also detected. People living in the Midwest and mountainous areas of the West are far less likely to view global warming as a serious problem and to support limits on greenhouse gases than those in the Northeast and on the West Coast. Both the House and Senate bills have been drafted by lawmakers from Massachusetts and California.

Earlier polls, from different organizations, have not detected a growing skepticism about the science behind global warming.

Since 1997, the percentage of Americans that believe the Earth is heating up has remained constant - at around 80 percent - in polling done by Jon Krosnick of Stanford University. Krosnick, who has been conducting surveys on attitudes about global warming since 1993 was surprised by the Pew results.

He described the decline in the Pew results as "implausible," saying there is nothing that could have caused it.

## **Britain publishes doomsday climate change vision**

The Associated Press  
In the Merced Sun-Star Thursday, Oct. 22, 2009

LONDON -- Two British Cabinet ministers showed off a doomsday vision of disappearing cities and rising seas on Thursday, part of an effort to push nations to strike a new pact on curbing emissions of global warming gasses.

Foreign Secretary David Miliband and his brother, Energy and Climate Change Secretary Ed Miliband, published an online map detailing the predicted impact of a 4 degrees Celsius (7 degrees Fahrenheit) rise in global temperatures.

Ed Miliband said the map, which was prepared by scientists at the British Meteorological Office, shows that the "stakes couldn't be higher" as nations prepare for a December summit in Denmark. The Copenhagen meeting aims to strike agreement on new action to limit temperature rises as a result of climate change to 2 degrees Celsius.

Britain has pledged to cut carbon dioxide emissions by at least 80 percent of 1990 levels by 2050.

"With less than 50 days left before agreement must be reached, the U.K.'s going all out to persuade the world of the need to raise its ambitions so we get a deal that protects us from a 4 degree world," Ed Miliband said.

## **New crematory planned on Lewelling Boulevard in San Lorenzo**

By Jason Sweeney, Oakland Tribune

In the Contra Costa Times, Tri-Valley herald and other papers, Thursday, Oct. 22, 2009

SAN LORENZO — Grissom's Chapel and Mortuary plans to build a crematory at its facility at 267 E. Lewelling Blvd., but some local residents aren't happy with the idea.

Plans for the multiple-chamber crematory, which would accommodate as many as 500 cremations a year, have been approved by the Alameda County Planning Commission and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District.

One of the mortuary's owners, Lisa Wyrabkiewicz, said Grissom's has been doing preliminary work for the crematory for the last 16 months.

"Our permit is already issued," she said. "It's a done deal."

Wyrabkiewicz would not say when the crematory would be up and running.

"We have not heard anything negative from the community," she said.

However, San Lorenzo resident Kathy Bossley said she opposes the crematory and has been canvassing the town, encouraging residents to attend a meeting next week at which the crematory will be discussed.

"I don't want a crematorium in a densely populated area," Bossley said. "I don't think it's in the best interest of the community. I believe they should be out in an industrial area."

Two other area residents have called Bay Area News Group to voice opposition to the project.

Grissom's has been in operation in San Lorenzo since 1957, according to the mortuary's Web site. It originally was on Hesperian Boulevard, then moved to East Lewelling Boulevard in 1969. In 1990, owner Jean Grissom sold it to the Wyrabkiewicz family.

The facility is between an apartment building and a liquor store, and across the street from St. John's Catholic Church. Behind it is the San Lorenzo Creek, and on the other side of the creek is a condominium complex. Single-family homes are located diagonally across Lewelling, on Meekland Avenue.

Also nearby are the St. John's Catholic School, Colonial Acres Elementary School and San Lorenzo High School.

Last June, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District sent out about 3,500 public notices about the proposed crematory to the parents of students at the three schools, as well as to residents and businesses within 1,000 feet of the property.

Sixteen people responded, disapproving of the project, worried mainly about a potential for odor and pollution.

Officials downplayed those concerns.

"Typically, there is no smell," said Nancy Yee, a senior air quality engineer for the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. "Cremators now are very well built. But if it malfunctions, there could be a smell. Cremators want to be good neighbors, so they will operate it in the cleanest possible way."

Yee will answer questions from the public during the county's unincorporated services meeting at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday at the San Lorenzo Village Homes Association, 377 Paseo Grande.

Wyrabkiewicz said anyone who has concerns about the crematory may call the mortuary at 510-278-2800.

[Letter to the Washington Post, Thursday, Oct. 22, 2009:](#)

### **It's hard to quantify cap-and-trade**

The headline on the Oct. 15 news story "Cap-and-Trade Would Slow Economy, CBO Chief Says" surely will be seized upon by detractors of such a system. But those who read the article would have known that it quoted Congressional Budget Office Director Douglas W. Elmendorf as emphasizing that his estimates "do not include any benefits from averting climate change." Hmmm. Isn't that what the cap-and-trade proposal is all about?

Too often, the sizable benefits of environmental action are not considered in the cost analyses of proposed bills, even though those benefits may be the very purpose of the legislation. Maybe they are too difficult to quantify. Many people anticipated that the Clean Air Act of 1970 would yield significant health benefits for Americans. But who could have predicted the finding, made this year in a study by researchers at Brigham Young and Harvard universities, that life expectancy in 51 U.S. cities increased nearly five months over a two-decade period because of cleaner air?

Much of the increasingly strident dialogue about climate change legislation is driven by wide-ranging and dueling estimates about jobs and additional energy costs for American consumers. These are crucial considerations, especially in today's economy. But too often missing is a discussion of the potential value to those consumers of reduced reliance on carbon energy sources and the long-term benefits to the quality of life on this fragile planet.

*Jeff Vincent, Alexandria*