Voters in swing states would prefer that EPA rather than Congress decide on U.S. climate policy. According to a poll commissioned by the League of Conservation Voters, "The voters are much more inclined to trust the Environmental Protection Agency than they are to trust members of Congress" — by a 66-12 margin. Here are my reactions to the poll: (a) the results are plausible; (2) the voters are being realistic; (3) this is good news in the short run; (4) it's also bad news in the long run.

The results are plausible. Admittedly, the poll was commissioned by a group with an ax to grind. But the results make sense. As I posted on Monday, EPA's approval ratings are pretty good overall. Meanwhile, in terms of Congress's ratings, another pollster says:

> Hemorrhoids, toenail fungus, dog poop, and cockroaches all might be a little bit gross- but they're all more popular than Congress. Hemorrhoids beat out Congress 53/31 with bipartisan support. On the other three there's a partisan split- Republican voters go for Congress while Democrats take the alternative but overall it's a 47/40 victory for dog poop, a 44/41 one for toenail fungus, and a 44/42 triumph for cockroaches.

So it's not surprising that people trust Congress less than EPA!

The voters are being realistic. Given current performance, why would anyone trust Congress to decide anything at all? EPA, on the other hand, does manage to make decisions and explain the data and arguments behind the decision.

It's a good thing in the short run. Congress obviously isn't going to do anything about climate change in the near future, and in the meantime carbon is pouring into the atmosphere. So it's a good thing that EPA has followed the Supreme Court's prompting and taken up the issue.

It's a bad thing in the long run. Just thinking in terms of climate change, there is a limit to what states and EPA can do without congressional direction. Eventually, we need Congress to step in. But at present it's hard to know if we c an ever expect that. More fundamentally, however, it's a bad thing in a democracy when people lose faith in their elected representatives. Even if the voters are being realistic.

Maybe *especially* if the voters are being realistic.