

We're beginning to have a sense of where the leading candidates stand on climate change. On the Democratic side, **Hillary Clinton** [announced](#) a goal of 33% renewables by 2030, after saying that the "reality of climate change is unforgiving no matter what the deniers say. Meanwhile, **Bernie Sanders** is [said](#) to have the strongest record on climate issues in Congress.

What about the Republican side? There are too many candidates to discuss in this post, but the top candidates right now do offer some clear positions. Of course, we don't know yet how things will shake out later in the race, and you can find information about all the candidates [here](#). Here are four of the candidates who seem to be leading the pack as of now:

Donald Trump, I'm sure you'll be surprised to learn, does not take a nuanced position. He says he was being sarcastic when he tweeted that "the concept of global warming was created by and for the Chinese in order to make U.S. manufacturing non-competitive." In any event, he thinks that if global warming is actually real, its seriousness has been greatly exaggerated.

Scott Walker has avoided making major pronouncements on the issue, perhaps keeping his flexibility for the general election. He opposes a carbon tax or carbon auction, and has quietly implemented anti-environmental and anti-renewable energy policies in Wisconsin.

Jeb Bush has wavered but at some times has taken moderate positions. He expressed concern to a group in New Hampshire that "the climate is changing," and while he didn't view it as the highest priority, he also said it shouldn't be ignored. "Just generally I think as conservatives we should embrace innovation, embrace technology, embrace science."

Marco Rubio's position has been, shall we say, flexible. In the state legislature, he favored emissions caps and supported renewable energy. Today, however, "I do not believe that human activity is causing these dramatic changes to our climate the way these scientists are portraying it. . . . I do not believe that the laws that they propose we pass will do anything about it, except it will destroy our economy."

The full spectrum is broader, from Lindsey Graham, who wants "to address climate change, CO2 emissions in a business-friendly way," to Ted Cruz, who says climate change is "a theory that can't be proved or disproved."

In this dimension, and others, it's going to be a fascinating and momentous election.

UPDATE: Eugene Robinson has an August 4 [column](#) in the *Washington Post* about the first

GOP candidate session, rating the candidates from “hopeless to hapless.”