

Questions for Candidates

As you gather with your friends to talk about the election, you can help get people in your community, and the candidates, talking about the real issues that matter. We're working to push the presidential candidates to address the most pressing issues of our time—global warming, nuclear weapons, and the relentless assault underway on science, truth, and facts.

Science is a vital tool for a just, functioning democracy—it helps us understand the problems we face and make informed decisions for the public good. But when our leaders and elected officials sideline or attack science, it hurts the health and safety of countless families nationwide, especially for communities of color and low-income people who bear the burden of environmental and safety hazards.

This election cycle, we have an opportunity to come together, build new relationships and alliances, join or lead civic action in states and districts nationwide, and strengthen our advocacy muscles to take on challenges and opportunities for progress well into the future. We must demand that our elected officials protect science for its ability to serve all people.

Using resources from the Union of Concerned Scientists, you can reach out to presidential candidates and your congressional candidates to ask them to commit to protecting the role of science in democracy. Use these questions on social media, in local media, and at public events, thereby informing the community, the media, and the candidates.

By getting these issues into the public conversations during the election, you can inform the public and help elect officials that will stand up for the role of science in protecting the health and safety of all people. You can help inform current and future decisionmakers and voters about what's at stake.

How to use these questions at your debate watch party

- Before the debate: chat with your friends about which topics are most important to you.
- As you watch the debate: have these questions in hand, and make notes about when a candidate mentions one, OR brings up an issue that relates to one.
- On social media: tag candidates and ask them a question from this list, linking it back to comments they made in the debate.

Use these questions to join the national movement for science and democracy and make a local impact during this election season - with the media, candidates, debate moderators, or on social media.

Get candidates and the media talking about why we need science for the common good—so your future elected officials commit to protecting science's role in our democracy. Then together, we can work to hold candidates accountable for statements they've made while campaigning once they're in office.

Here are some key questions you can ask during the 2020 campaign season to ensure that candidates stand up for science to keep us safe and healthy, and get them on the record:

1. We can't solve the many threats to our health, safety, and environment if we don't have accurate information about what is really happening and what the best solutions are. That's why we need to make sure federal agencies protect their scientists from political interference and bring in qualified, dedicated experts.

How do you plan to ensure the federal government retains the strong scientific workforce needed to help protect our health and safety and the environment?

2. Political interference in science exacerbates the existing inequities that underserved communities face and opens the door to even greater harm. Decisionmakers need to listen to members of the communities on the front lines of these issues to make sure we're solving them in a fair, sustainable way.

How would you make sure science and democracy work for the communities who have historically been left out and left behind?

3. When scientific advice is censored and data is cut out of policymaking, the result is weaker public protections and less accountability to keep people safe. These attacks on science are often coming from politically powerful industries that want to avoid accountability for the harms they do to our health and safety.

How would you ensure decisionmaking about policies for our health, safety, and environment is informed by evidence and free from corruption or excessive influence from special interests?

4. We need to fix our voting system to represent the people and allow science to better serve the public—when voices are excluded from the process, it becomes easier to make policy decisions uninformed and unaccountable to the people.

How will you reverse the erosion of voting rights and protect effective congressional representation to make sure that everyone can participate and have their voice heard?

Were you able to ask a candidate a question? Please let us know about it at act.ucsusa.org/stand-up-2020. We can help amplify your work by holding candidates accountable for statements they've made while campaigning.

As a 501(c)(3) non-profit, the Union of Concerned Scientists does not support any candidate for office.



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www.ucsusa.org/resources/election-be-voice-science-and-democracy

The Union of Concerned Scientists puts rigorous, independent science to work to solve our planet's most pressing problems. Joining with people across the country, we combine technical analysis and effective advocacy to create innovative, practical solutions for a healthy, safe, and sustainable future.