

US presidential candidates and their views on scientific issues

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What are the United States presidential candidates' positions on scientific topics ranging from evolution to global warming? A special news report, which is being published in the 4 January issue of the journal *Science*, addresses these questions and profiles the nine leading candidates on where they stand on important scientific issues.

The 10-page special report, "Science and the Next U.S. President" profiles Hillary Clinton, John Edwards, Rudy Giuliani, Mike Huckabee, John McCain, Barack Obama, Bill Richardson, Mitt Romney, and Fred Thompson and offers voters a glimpse at each candidate's views on science.

"*Science* felt that it was important to find out what the presidential candidates think about issues that may not be part of their standard stump speeches but that are vital to the future of the country--from reducing greenhouse gas emissions to improving science and math education," said Jeffrey Mervis, deputy news editor, who oversees election coverage for the magazine's news department. "We hope that the coverage may also kick off a broader discussion of the role of science and technology in decisions being made in Washington and around the world."

Mervis writes in the article's introduction that "the issues seem likely to remain relevant no matter who becomes the 44th president of the United States." Here are some of the reports from *Science's* news writers:

Hillary Clinton gives “the most detailed examination of science policy that any presidential candidate has offered to date” emphasizing innovation to drive economic growth, writes Eli Kintisch. She has proposed a “\$50 billion research and deployment fund for green energy that she’d pay for by increasing federal taxes and royalties on oil companies. She would also establish a national energy council to oversee federal climate and greentech research and deployment programs.” And, “her science adviser would report directly to her.”

John Edwards would end censoring research and slanting policy on climate change, air pollution, stem cell research and would increase science funding, write Jocelyn Kaiser and Eliot Marshall. He would oppose expanding nuclear power and proposes “to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050, using a cap-and-trade system to auction off permits as a regulatory incentive.”

Rudy Giuliani’s “campaign successfully discouraged key advisers from speaking to *Science* about specific issues,” writes Marshall. On abortion, he would with reservations let the woman decide what to do. And, that the “League of Conservation Voters reports that Giuliani has ‘no articulated position’ on most of the environmental issues it tracks.”

John McCain views global warming as “the most urgent issue facing the world” and makes climate change one of the top issues of his campaign, writes Constance Holden. On the human embryonic stem cell issue, “he draws the line at human nuclear transfer, or research cloning, arguing that there is no ethical difference between cloning for research and cloning for reproduction.”

Source: American Association for the Advancement of Science

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