Consumer Attitudes Towards Electric Vehicles and Fuel Efficiency in Nevada: 2020 Survey Results

Nationally representative phone and internet survey
Prepared by CR Survey Research Department and Advocacy Division

March 2021

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this survey was to better understand familiarity with and attitudes toward electric vehicles (EVs) and vehicle fuel economy among people living in Nevada. This survey of 439 adults residing in Nevada was conducted by phone or internet from July 29 through August 12, 2020. Questions about electric vehicles were asked of the 400 who have a valid driver's license, while questions about fuel economy were asked of the 255 people who plan to purchase or least a vehicle in the next two years, except a few questions about policy that were asked of the full sample. The data are weighted separately for each section to be representative of all Nevadans.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **EV KNOWLEDGE**: About 95 percent of drivers in Nevada say they've heard of electric vehicles, but only about 37 percent say they "know quite a bit" or "know a lot" about them. Fifty-eight percent say they have "heard of" plug-in EVs but "don't know much about them."

- **EV BARRIERS**: Drivers who are not planning to purchase or lease a plug-in EV for their next vehicle say the most common attributes holding them back are purchase price (50 percent) and not enough public charging stations (40 percent).

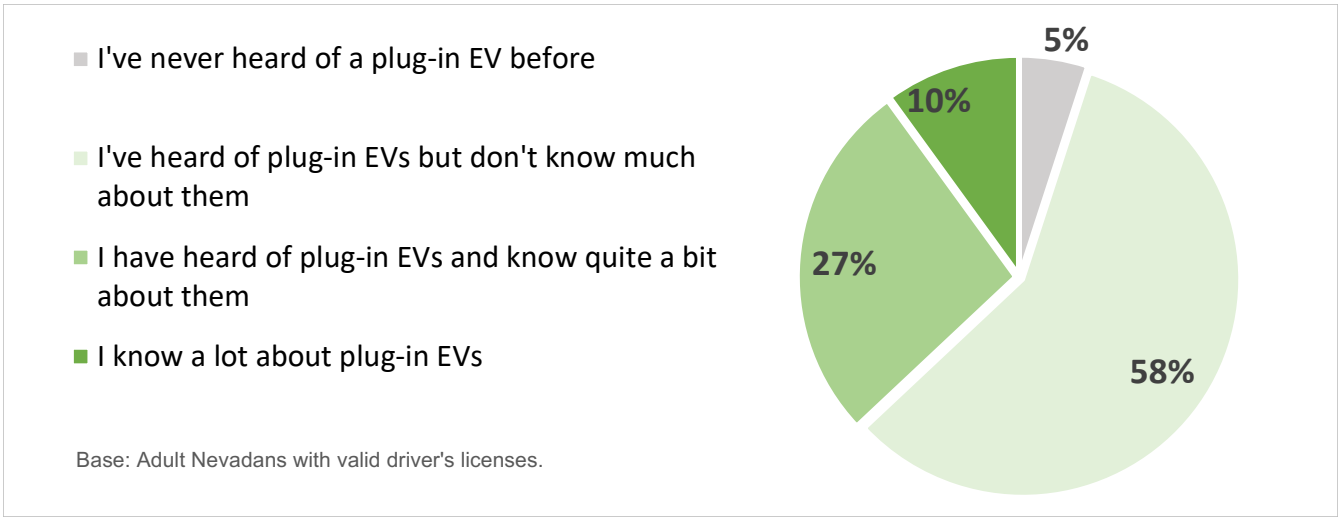
- **FUEL ECONOMY**: Fuel economy was chosen most often by prospective car buyers who currently own or lease a vehicle as the attribute in their current vehicle with the most room for improvement (41 percent).
    - Fewer than 1 percent of prospective vehicle buyers said fuel economy isn't important to them in deciding which vehicle to buy or lease next.
    - Ninety-two percent of Nevadans, regardless of purchase intent, agree automakers should improve fuel economy for all vehicle types.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES: Understanding and Interest

Questions about EVs were asked of 400 adult Nevadans who have a valid driver's license. CR defined plug-in electric vehicles (EVs) as "vehicles that are electric only" and do not use gasoline. Hybrids like Toyota's Prius or Prius Prime, for example, use both gasoline and electric power, and for the purposes of this survey are not EVs.

We had drivers characterize their EV knowledge. Most say they have heard of them (5 percent have not). However, a majority (58 percent) say they have heard of EVs but don't know much about them.

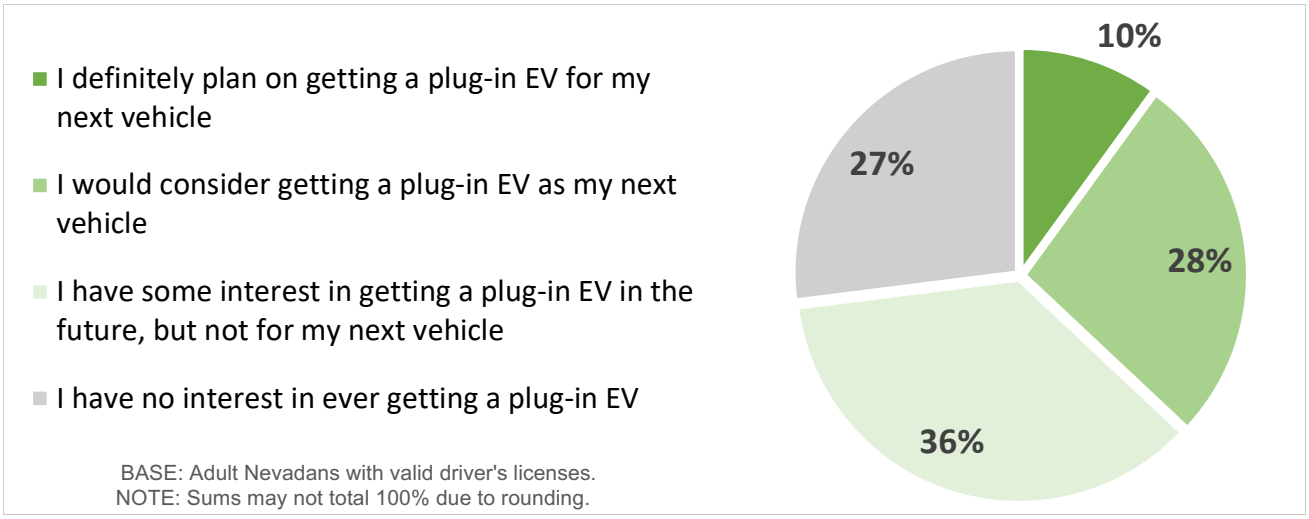
Which of the following best describes your knowledge of plug-in electric vehicles?



Base: Adult Nevadans with valid driver's licenses.

Despite this lack of knowledge, many Nevada drivers are generally interested in EVs. Seventy-three percent of adult drivers in the state have at least some interest in getting an EV, with 28 percent saying they would consider getting, and 10 percent saying they will definitely get, an EV the next time they purchase or lease a vehicle.

Which of the following statements best describes your thoughts on buying or leasing a plug-in electric vehicle?



BASE: Adult Nevadans with valid driver's licenses.
NOTE: Sums may not total 100% due to rounding.

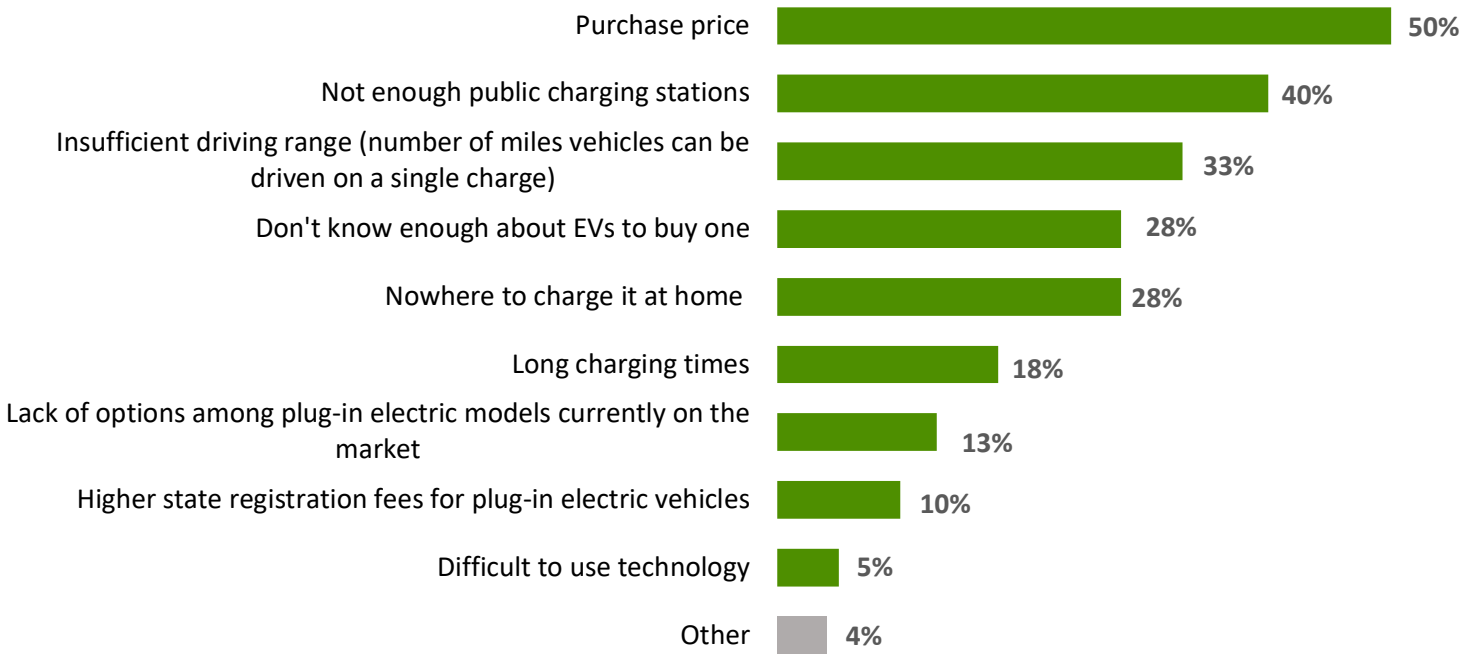
ELECTRIC VEHICLES: Attitudes and Barriers

We asked Nevada drivers where, out of a list of public and private charging options, they think they would do most of their charging if they were to own an EV. A majority (52 percent) said they would charge an EV in their private driveway or garage.

If you were to own a plug-in electric vehicle in the future, where do you think you would do most of your charging?	
In my private driveway or garage	52%
At public charging stations at places like restaurants and shopping centers	17%
At a charger provided by my apartment building or complex	12%
At public fast-charging stations in my community	8%
At a charger provided at work	6%
Other	6%
Base: Nevada respondents with a valid driver's license	**400**

We also asked drivers except the 10 percent who definitely plan to buy or lease an EV which of a set of attributes, if any, are holding them back. Respondents could select up to three choices.

Of the following attributes, which, if any, are holding you back from purchasing or leasing a plug-in electric vehicle for your next vehicle?

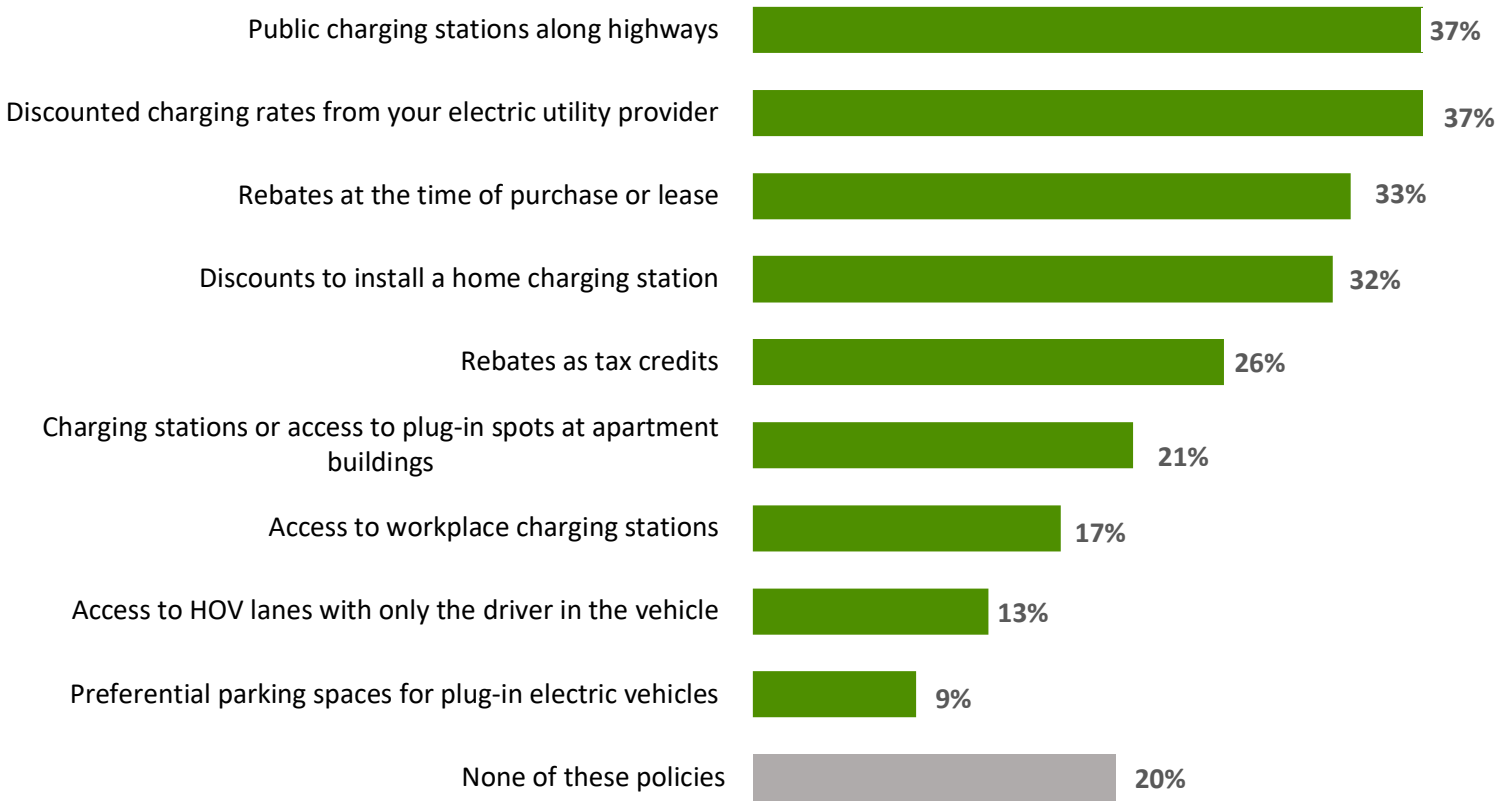


Base: Nevada respondents with valid driver's licenses who do not "definitely" plan to get a plug-in EV for their next vehicle purchase/lease.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES: Policies and Incentives

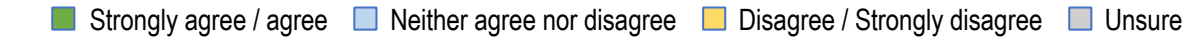
We asked all Nevada drivers which, if any, of a set of state or federal policies, would most likely encourage them to purchase an EV. Respondents were asked to select their top three choices.

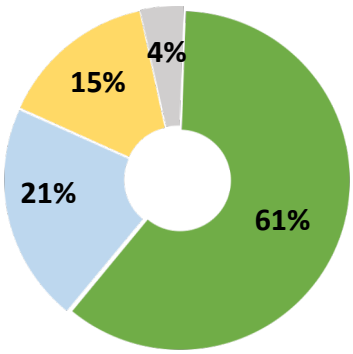
Of the following state or federal policies, which, if enacted, would most likely increase your interest in purchasing or leasing a plug-in electric vehicle?



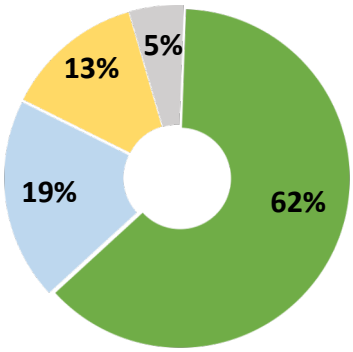
Base: Adult Nevadans with valid driver's licenses.

We asked Nevada drivers about federal and state policies related to electric vehicle use, and programs that might incentivize drivers to switch to an electric vehicle.

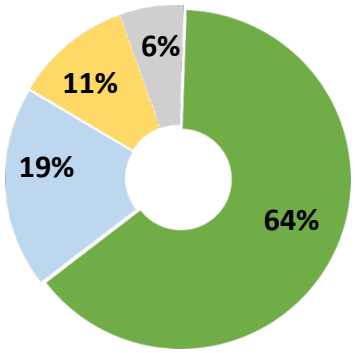




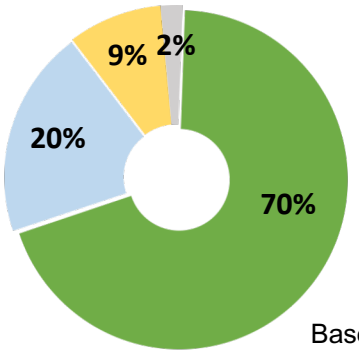
Statement: My state should invest money to increase the availability of plug-in EV charging stations.



Statement: Incentives and tax rebates for plug-in EVs should be available to all consumers, including high income.



Statement: Incentives and tax rebates for plug-in electric vehicles should be targeted towards low- and moderate-income consumers.



Statement: Electric utility providers should offer discounts to charge EVs at times when electricity demand is low.

Base: Adult Nevadans with a valid driver's license.

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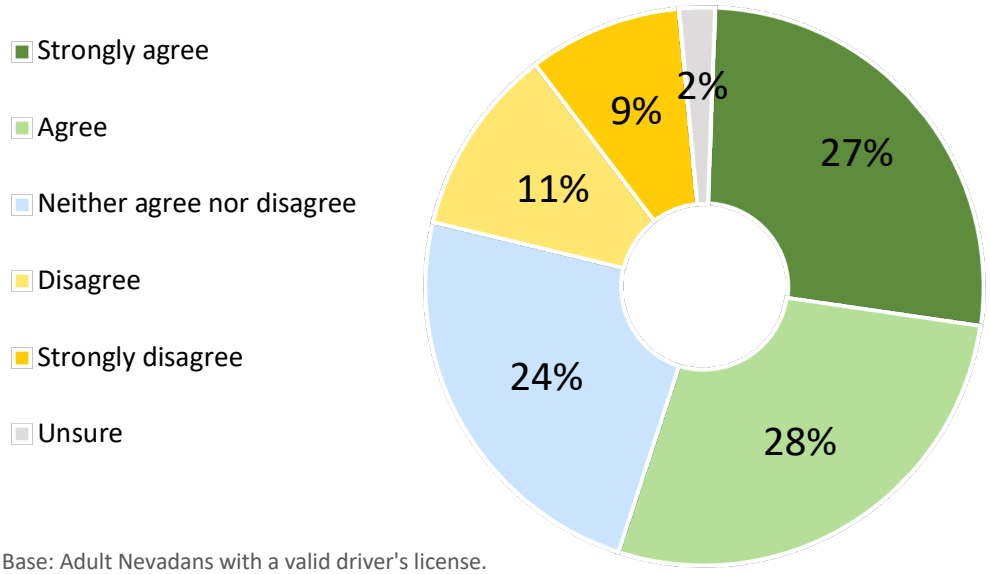
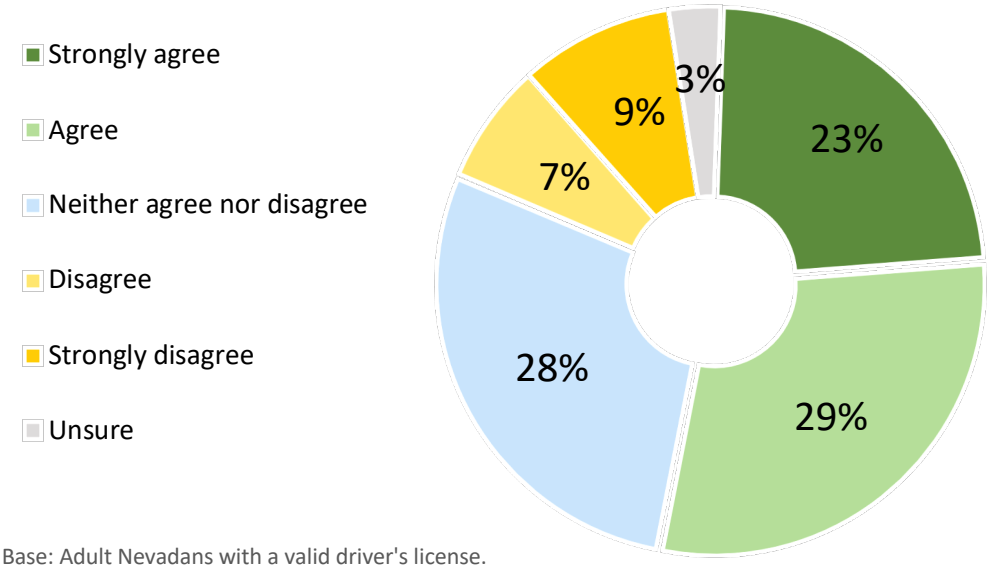
We also asked if state governments and the federal government should require automakers to offer EVs. In both cases, just over half of respondents support these policies, about a quarter are neutral on the subject, and less than a fifth say they disagree.

Statement: My state should require automakers to offer plug-in EV options.



Base: Adult Nevadans with a valid driver's license.

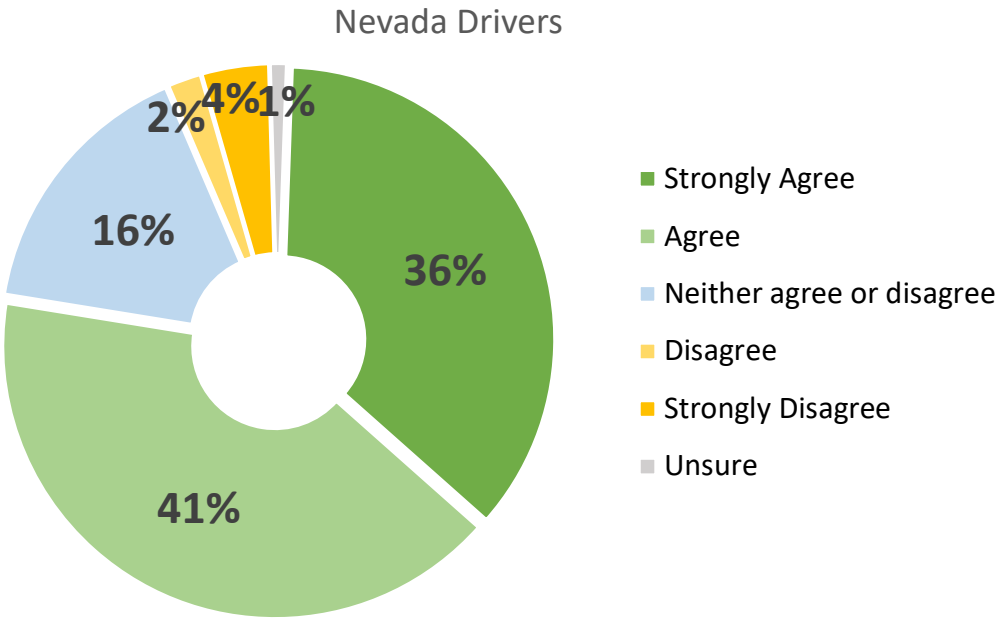
Statement: The federal government should require automakers to offer plug-in EV options.



Base: Adult Nevadans with a valid driver's license.

We also asked Nevada drivers if they agreed, disagreed, or were unsure about whether increased electric vehicle use would help reduce air or climate pollution. Seventy-seven percent said they agree (agree or strongly agree) and 5 percent say they disagree (disagree or strongly disagree).

Statement: Widespread electric vehicle use will help reduce air or climate pollution.



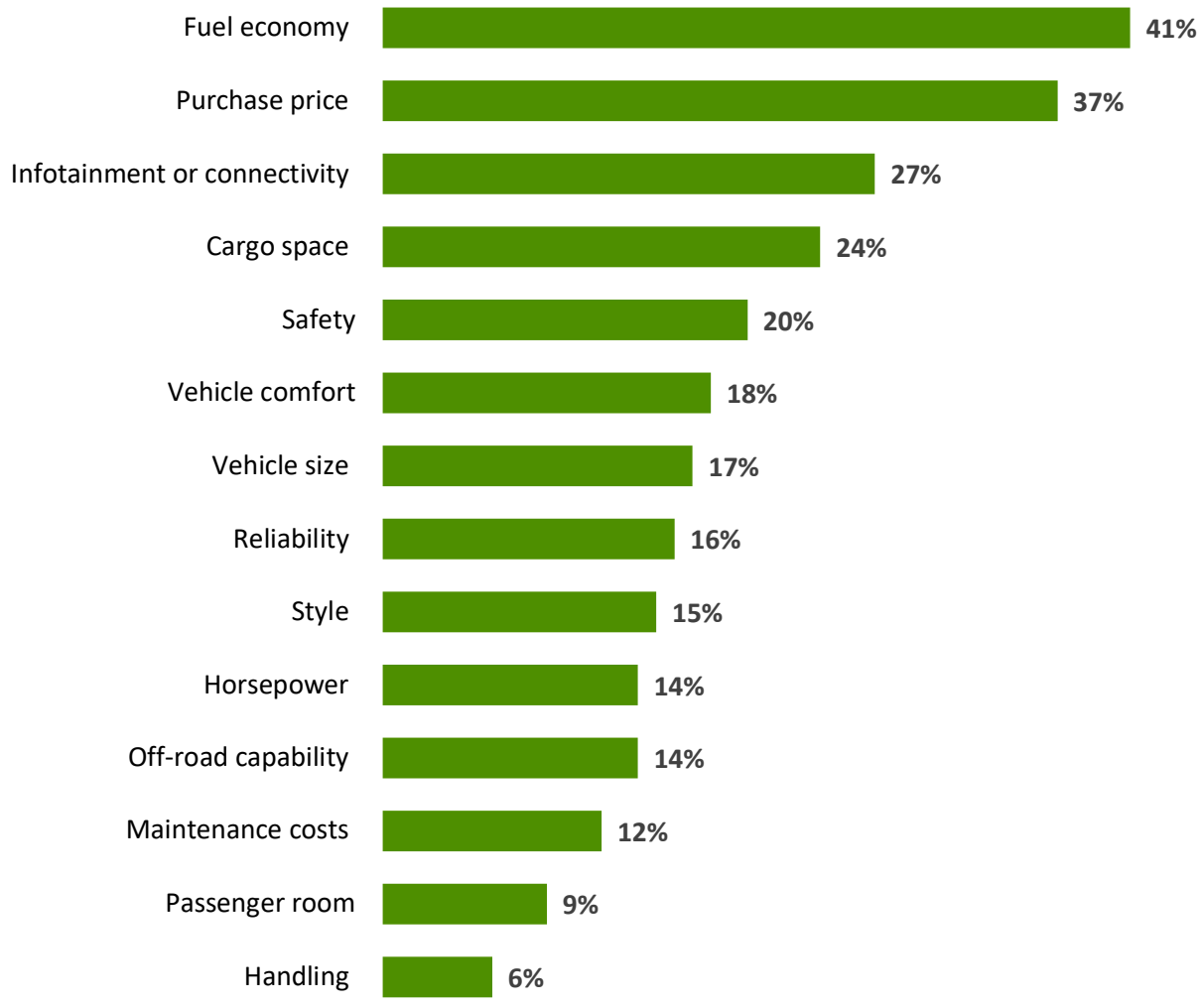
Base: Adult Nevadans with a valid driver's license.

FUEL ECONOMY: Interest and Importance

Except for a few questions on policy, which will be clearly labeled, all questions about fuel economy were asked of Americans who plan to purchase or lease a vehicle sometime within the next two years. In this report, we refer to these people as "prospective vehicle buyers."

We asked prospective vehicle buyers in Nevada *who currently have a vehicle* which three attributes of their current vehicle have the most room for improvement.

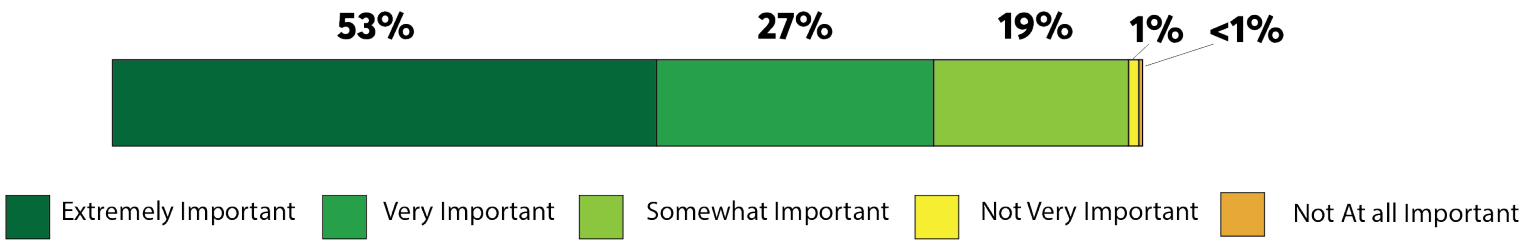
Thinking about your current vehicle, which three attributes have the most room for improvement?



Base: Adult Nevadans planning to buy or lease a vehicle within the next two years. Some responses abbreviated.

We asked prospective vehicle buyers how important fuel economy is to them when considering a vehicle. Eighty percent said it was highly important ('extremely important' or 'very important'). Only 1 percent said it was not important ('not very important' or 'not at all important').

How important is fuel economy to you when considering what vehicle to purchase or lease?

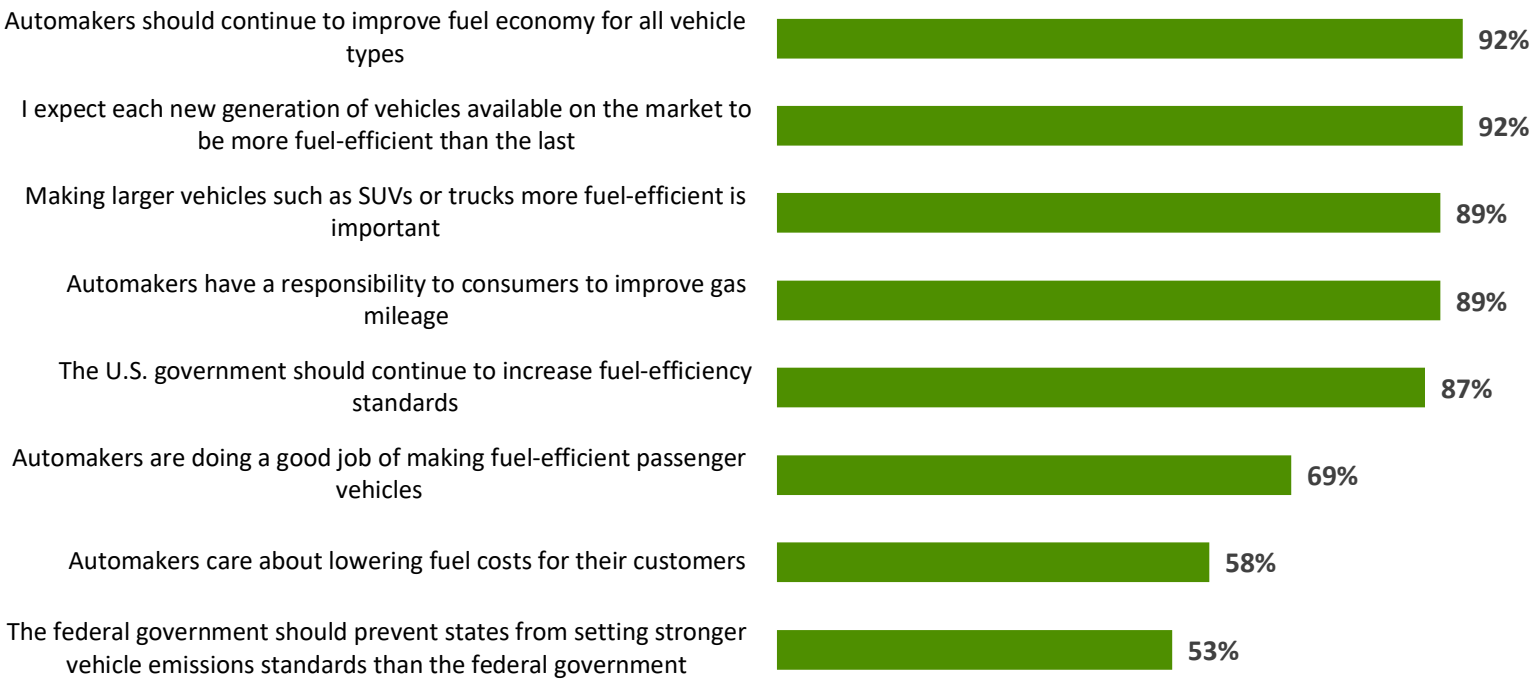


Base: Adult Nevadans planning to buy or lease a vehicle within the next two years.

FUEL ECONOMY: Policies and Expectations

We asked *all* Nevadans, regardless of purchase plans, about agreement or disagreement with some more general beliefs and opinions related to fuel economy and related policies.

Percentage of Americans who agree (agree + strongly agree) with certain policies and attitudes related to fuel economy:



Base: All Nevadans.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

This survey was administered from July 29 through August 12, 2020, to 439 adults residing in Nevada. The survey was fielded through NORC's AmeriSpeak Panel, a nationally representative probability-based panel, with additional sample recruited through Dynata's nonprobability opt-in panel.

Questions about electric vehicles were asked of the 400 who have valid driver's licenses, while questions about fuel economy were asked of those who plan to purchase or lease a vehicle in the next two years (n=255) -- except a few about policy that were asked of the full sample.

Panelists were initially offered the cash equivalent of $2 for taking the survey regardless of which section they qualified for, or whether they qualified for both. This was increased to $5 on August 11 to boost engagement toward the end of the field period.

The data were weighted separately for each section to provide state-representative estimates of Nevada's adult population based on sex, age, education, race/ethnicity, census region, housing tenure, and telephone status.

The margin of error for the electric vehicle sample is +/- 9.51 percent, and for the fuel economy sample it is +/- 14.8 percent.