

# [***Is electric vehicle ownership partisan? Three graphics show what we know***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BCP-TYY1-JBSS-S2V5-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

Electric vehicle sales hit a new milestone last year, with more than a million sold across the US - and buyers might not be following partisan patterns, new data suggests.

The research by the Environmental Defense Fund Action, which acquired the voter and vehicle data from L2, a political firm that analyzes and sells voter registration and consumer records, suggests that despite common perceptions, not all electric vehicle owners are Democrats.

In nine of the 31 states and DC that register voters by party, for example, more Republicans voters are linked to records of electric vehicles - including insurance and repair records - than Democrats. Republicans, independents and third-party voters associated with electric vehicles also exceed Democrats in 24 of those states.

This data contradicts the idea that electric vehicles are "only popular with coastal elites and liberals," said David Kieve, president of the Environmental Defense Fund Action. Recent polling has supported that idea as well.

The group'sfindings, which still paint an incomplete picture of the market, show that former President Donald Trump won six states where registered Republicans were associated with more than half of the electric vehicles on the roads.

L2 linked voter registration to commercial records of electric vehicles, including insurance, credit and repair records, which vary in each state and could include multiple voters in the same household - or exclude some voters with electric vehicles due to privacy laws or missing data.

The data doesn't include each voter with an electric vehicle, but it does offer some insight into political attitudes among consumers.

Many of the drivers of electric vehicles adoption are unrelated to ***politics***, according to market experts. Before the vehicles become more mainstream, for example, their availability and the proximity to charging infrastructure affects whether consumers buy them.

Currently, the most widely available electric vehicles options are luxury brands, while mainstream consumers have more limited options. As long as batteries remain [*costly*](https://www.cnn.com/2023/11/23/cars/solid-state-battery-tech-promises-to-radically-change-evs/index.html), automakers are unlikely to sell cheaper models. Additionally, challenges [*remain*](https://www.cnn.com/2023/11/04/business/why-ev-charging-is-still-such-a-pain/index.html) with charging infrastructure, and being able to charge the car at home is a big selling point that tends to limit the market more to consumers in single-family homes.

A 2023 Gallup [*poll*](https://news.gallup.com/poll/474095/americans-not-completely-sold-electric-vehicles.aspx) found that while 43% of respondents might consider buying an EV, 41% of respondents would not.

Among new vehicle shoppers who are not considering an electric vehicle, JD Power's research has found, "Consistently, the number one reason that [these shoppers] cite is lack of charging station availability," said Stewart Stropp, executive director of the agency's EV intelligence. In states like California, the average road miles between public chargers is only nine, while in North Dakota, there can bemore than 800 miles between chargers, he said.

In addition to infrastructure, consumer awareness of electric vehicles also plays a role in adoption, according to Brett Williams, a senior principal advisor for EV programs at the Center for Sustainable Energy.

"We're not finding universally that charging centers sell cars unless EVs are already on the mind of the consumer," Williams said.

Essentially, there is a mix of market factors, such as consumer awareness, infrastructure, incentives and availability, that drive sales. States that have more of those things, such as California, have more consumer interest.

But evidence suggests other states are catching up.

"Some of the markets that had the richest soup of those ingredients got an early start," Williams said. "We're also seeing that things are really changing over time... That speaks to the fact that the economic and pollution benefits of electric vehicles don't obey political boundaries."

Still, public opinion research suggests interest in electric vehicles has some partisan roots, even if the landscape may be changing.

A 2023 Gallup [*poll*](https://news.gallup.com/poll/474095/americans-not-completely-sold-electric-vehicles.aspx) found that 71% of Republicans would not consider buying an electric vehicle, compared with 17% of Democrats. Similarly, a 2023 Pew Research [*survey*](https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2023/07/13/how-americans-view-electric-vehicles/) found that 70% of Republican or Republican-leaning Americans were unlikely to consider one.

The Environmental Defense Fund Action's findings also show that, in states where more than 50% of voters linked to electric vehicles were Democrats, just one - Kentucky - went for Trump in 2020. The remainder supported President Joe Biden.

And while the new state-level evidence in the adoption of electric vehicles might show less of a partisan divide, one left-leaning state still has the most in the country. More than one-third of electric and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles were registered in California, according to data from the US Department of Energy in 2022.

Still, buyers are driven not just by ***politics*** but by things like charging station availability, awareness of EVs and incentives like rebates, experts such as Williams and Stropp say.

"The more people get behind the wheel of an electric vehicle the happier they are," Kieve, the EDF Action president said, adding that, while 2023 was the first year that a million units were sold, "It won't be the last."

Understanding the political leanings of electric vehicle consumers may affect how those policies develop on the national level, especially in an election year when Trump and Biden discuss their plans on the issue.

Alex Leeds Matthews, CNN

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