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Voters Strongly Favor Offshore Wind Energy

New Polling shows near identical support among Republicans and Democrats for adding more offshore wind to the American energy portfolio

Majority of voters say wind energy will be more important in 10 years than oil and natural gas

Washington, D.C. – Over 80 percent of the nation’s voters favor offshore wind energy, with widespread support coming from both major political parties and every demographic group across the country, according to a national survey conducted by Public Opinion Strategies March 16-19, 2020 and released today by the American Wind Energy Association (AWEA).

Voters across the board appreciate the benefits wind energy delivers, with Republicans overwhelmingly viewing wind as a clean, renewable, affordable power source that also reduces carbon emissions (88 percent) and keeps utility costs stable, while providing critical power to America’s densely populated areas (80 percent).

“Voters are strongly in favor of offshore wind energy, regardless of ideology or party affiliation,” said AWEA CEO Tom Kiernan. “Republicans and Democrats alike see offshore wind as playing a key role in the nation’s future energy portfolio, providing tremendous economic and environmental benefits and helping stabilize the cost of electricity.”

According to the poll, both Democrats and Republicans prefer wind to the increased use of coal, nuclear, or even natural gas. Voters currently believe both oil and natural gas and wind energy play an important role in today’s economy (93 percent and 86 percent), with more than half of Republican voters saying the United States should put more emphasis on producing domestic energy from both wind and solar (58 percent and 66 percent) than other forms of energy. A majority of voters think the wind energy industry will be more important to the country’s economy than oil and natural gas ten years from now (57 percent to 43 percent). And 85 percent of voters agree wind energy is a clean, renewable, and affordable power source of the future, including 80 percent of Republicans.

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Republicans find facts about offshore wind energy convincing. The offshore wind industry possesses a power potential of more than 2,000 gigawatts (GW), nearly double the nation's current electricity use (76 percent convincing); the industry will support [83,000, well-paying jobs by 2030](#) (76 percent convincing); and the industry will drive \$25 billion dollars per year in new economic activity by 2030 (71 percent convincing). And 76 percent of GOP voters believe that offshore wind energy is America's new ocean energy resource.

Support for offshore wind also crosses party lines and is largely favored by voters across the country, not just in coastal states, with those in the South (90 percent) and the Midwest (89 percent) viewing it most favorably. Unlike other pressing economic and environmental issues, there are no generational divisions over how people feel about offshore wind. Voters from Gen Z to Millennials to Gen X and Boomers all consistently express 83 percent to 88 percent favorability in their support for offshore wind.

Notably, those who identify politically as either very conservative (81 percent) or somewhat conservative (85 percent) align closely with those who lean moderate (84 percent) and liberal (92 percent) in their overall approval rating of offshore wind.

GOP voters are more likely to support offshore wind energy when hearing the industry creates well-paying, stable jobs and improved economic revitalization for port communities/coastal states (86 percent). In a close three-way tie at 85 percent, they believe offshore wind:

- Will protect the environment, since it doesn't pollute the air and water, and greenhouse gases are not emitted when its used
- Provides long-term, low-cost, stabilized utility rates for consumers
- Is projected to be a \$70 billion opportunity that could create up to 80,000 well-paying jobs by 2030

Support for wind energy is strong among voters who don't identify as Republican or Democrat as well. Nearly 70 percent of Independents say the U.S. needs to put more emphasis on wind energy and 82 percent of Independents favor offshore wind energy specifically.

Support for offshore wind jumps five points (from 86 percent to 91 percent total favoring) and nine points in intensity (from 34 percent to 43 percent strongly favoring) after voters learn more about the industry.

"The strong bipartisan support for offshore wind among voters is very encouraging," Kiernan said. "Consumers clearly see that offshore wind provides significant environmental benefits and will serve as a real economic game-changer in the coming years, helping the nation recover and adding family-supporting jobs where they're needed most at the local level following the coronavirus pandemic."

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AWEA POLLING SUMMARY AND FULL RESULTS:

[LINK](#)

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Join AWEA and [#SupportOffshoreWind](#). The United States has a vast offshore wind energy resource with a technical potential of more than 2,000 gigawatts (GW), nearly double the nation's current electricity use. Harnessing America's offshore wind resources presents an enormous opportunity to create tens of thousands of jobs, revitalize coastal communities, and deliver large amounts of clean, reliable energy to the country's biggest population centers. AWEA is the national trade association of the U.S. wind industry, the largest source of renewable energy in the country. We represent 1,000 member companies and over 114,000 jobs in the U.S. economy and serve as a powerful voice for how wind works for America. Visit AWEA's new [website](#) to learn more about the enormous economic benefits offshore wind power will bring to America and be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).