



New Poll Shows Widespread Bipartisan Support for Stronger Methane Pollution Standards, More Clean Air Protections

Washington, D.C. (December 10, 2014)—Americans across the country overwhelmingly support the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) establishing the first federal limits on methane emissions in the air they breathe, according to new data released today from a nationwide, bipartisan survey conducted for the American Lung Association. Moreover, an overwhelming bipartisan majority of American voters support the efforts of the EPA to establish stricter air pollution standards overall and believes that EPA scientists, not Congress, should be the ones to make these decisions.

"It is clear that the public supports stronger public health safeguards for the air we breathe," said Harold Wimmer, National President and CEO of the American Lung Association. "Cutting methane and toxic air pollutants like benzene is a winner with the American people. We urge the Environmental Protection Agency to act now."

Voters rated clean air as a higher priority than reducing regulations on businesses, with 80 percent of voters rating it as extremely or very important. By more than a three-to-one margin (69 percent in favor to 21 percent opposed), voters want the EPA, not Congress to set the nation's air pollution standards.

Wimmer added: "The Clean Air Act promises healthy air for all to breathe. The EPA needs to be allowed to continue their lifesaving work to curb dangerous air pollution, without interference from Congress. Anything less shortchanges our children and our health."

On the specific issue of methane pollution standards to address air pollution from the oil and gas industry, an overwhelming two-to-one majority favors new methane emissions standards from the EPA. Support for the new standards actually grew after voters heard simulated and balanced arguments that included the strongest messages from both sides of the issue (including attacks from opponents on cost and jobs), resulting in majority support across the political spectrum, including from Republicans.

Key poll findings include:

The majority of voters, 63 percent, support standards for methane emissions. After hearing a balanced debate on both sides, support increases overall to 66 percent. In particular, Republicans moved from 45 percent supporting to 53 percent supporting. EPA remains much more popular than Congress.

- The EPA continues to earn positive favorability ratings, at 42 percent favorable compared to 31 percent unfavorable.
- Voters' feeling toward Congress remains strongly negative with 60 percent giving it an unfavorable rating, a trend that crosses party lines.

Oil companies are extremely unpopular (23 percent favorable compared to 47 percent unfavorable).

By a more than 3-to-1 margin, voters believe that the EPA, not Congress, should be setting pollution standards. This includes large majorities of Democrats, Independents and Republicans.

"The poll shows that a large, bipartisan majority of American voters support a methane pollution standard that will protect public health," said Marc DeSignore, President, Perception Insight. "Support increases, in particular, with Republicans who move from being tied on the initial question to a 14-point margin in support after hearing arguments from both sides. This is despite opposing language in the survey arguing that these standards will raise energy prices and kill jobs."

"Voters reject the idea that we have to choose between the economy and the environment," said Andrew Baumann, Vice President, Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research. "Nearly three-quarters of voters believe we can protect our air quality and have a strong economy at the same time - including 77 percent independents and 63 percent of

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Republicans."

The analysis memo, slide deck and questions from Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research and Perception Insight can be found [here](#).

Methodology: This survey was conducted for the American Lung Association by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner and Perception Insight during November 13-18, 2014. The firms conducted a national survey of 1,000 registered voters reached via live telephone interviews on both landlines and cell phones. The margin of error for the full national sample is 3.1 percent.

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About the American Lung Association

Now in its second century, the American Lung Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease. With your generous support, the American Lung Association is "Fighting for Air" through research, education and advocacy. For more information about the American Lung Association, a holder of the Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Guide Seal, or to support the work it does, call 1-800-LUNG-USA (1-800-586-4872) or visit www.lung.org.

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