

TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Hart Research Associates

DATE: June 3, 2014

RE: Pennsylvania Attitudes about EPA Carbon Regulations and Climate Change

On behalf of the League of Conservation Voters, Hart Research Associates conducted quantitative research on public opinion about new EPA regulations on power plant carbon pollution. This survey consisted of 600 interviews with registered voters throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The interviews were conducted by telephone, including both landline and cell, from May 27 to 31, 2014. The margin of error is \pm four percentage points and higher among subgroups. This memo reviews the survey's key findings.

1) There is solid majority support for new EPA regulations that are being proposed to limit the amount of carbon pollution released by power plants.

- Nearly three in four (72%) Pennsylvania voters favor the EPA's proposed regulations to limit the amount of carbon pollution that power plants can release into the air. Just 23% oppose the EPA's regulation of carbon pollution. There is strong consensus in favor of the new regulations in the Philadelphia area (76%) and in the Pittsburgh area (69%) and the proposal also is strongly supported by a 63% majority in Western Pennsylvania (including Johnstown and Erie but excluding urban Pittsburgh), where traditionally there has been greater support for coal. Democrats (86% to 10%) join independents (69% to 25%) and Republicans (58% to 37%) in supporting the measure.
- While women (76%) and 18- to 34-year-olds (79%) are especially favorable toward the new regulations that are being proposed, majorities across demographic groups agree: 66% of men favor the new regulations, as do 69% of voters age 65 and over.

2) Voters trust the EPA, not Congress, to set regulations on carbon pollution.

- By more than four to one, Pennsylvanians say they have more trust in the EPA to decide whether there should be regulations on carbon pollution (59%) than the United States Congress (13%, a difference of 46 points). The EPA enjoys greater public trust than Congress among Democrats (by 65 points), independents (by 43 points), and Republicans (by 29 points).

3) A majority of Pennsylvanians feel more favorable toward an elected official who supports the EPA regulations.

- A 53% majority of Pennsylvanians say they would feel more favorable toward an elected official who supported the new regulations. Just 19% say they would feel less favorable.
- Pennsylvanians are consistent, with 47% feeling less favorable toward an elected official who opposed the new regulations. Just 21% would feel more favorable toward an elected official that opposed the new regulations.

4) A majority of Pennsylvanians recognize that climate change is a serious problem and many penalize elected officials who deny this scientific consensus.

- More than two in three (71%) Pennsylvanians say that climate change is a serious problem, including 41% who say it is a very serious problem and 30% who say it is a somewhat serious problem. This view is widespread, including a 78% majority in the Philadelphia area, 62% in the Pittsburgh area, and 65% in Western Pennsylvania.
- Denying climate change is a substantial liability for elected officials with a 55% majority of Pennsylvanians saying that it would make them less favorable toward an elected official in their state if they said that climate change is not a problem and opposed measures to reduce carbon emissions. An overwhelming 74% majority of Democrats would feel less favorable, as would 53% of independents. Republicans are more divided, with 36% saying they would feel less favorable and 25% more favorable toward an elected official who denied the problem and opposed measures to reduce carbon.

5) A strong majority believe that addressing climate change creates jobs rather than costs them.

- By a 63%-to-27% margin, Pennsylvania voters select a statement that addressing climate change would create jobs by boosting wind, solar, and other clean energy industries over one that says addressing climate costs jobs because it would hurt the oil, gas, and coal industries.
- The view that addressing climate change would create jobs is held by a majority of men (58%) and women (67%), by majorities across all age categories rising from 59% of Pennsylvanians over 65 years old to 73% of 18- to 34-year-olds. A 71% majority of Philadelphia-area residents believe doing more to address climate change would create jobs, as do majorities in Pittsburgh (53%) and Western Pennsylvania (60%).

6) After Pennsylvanians heard arguments for and against the regulations, support for them holds strong, with greater than three in five wanting their senator to support the regulations.

- The survey tested arguments in favor of and against the new EPA regulations. On the opposition side, voters heard the most frequent arguments against the new regulations, including that it is part of the war on coal, would raise electricity rates, and that it would kill jobs. On the proponents' side, voters heard the most common arguments in favor of the regulations, including the moral obligation to protect the planet for future generations, the importance of reducing climate change for public health, and a competing message about job growth. After hearing both sides, voters overwhelmingly say they want their US senator to support the new regulations (61% compared with 27% who want their senator to oppose).