

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Global Strategy Group
DATE: November 21, 2016
RE: **Nevada Post-Election Survey Findings: Opposition to Solar Energy Hurt Joe Heck**

A new post-election survey in Nevada shows that protecting and expanding the state's solar energy industry is a major priority for Nevada voters, and in a closely contested Senate race, Joe Heck's poor record on solar energy and fealty to the oil billionaire Koch Brothers hurt him among persuadable voters. Ads run by LCV, Sierra Club and EDF Action over the course of the campaign helped Senator-elect Catherine Cortez Masto build advantages on several important metrics measured in this survey and were particularly helpful in consolidating Latino voters, who place a high priority on clean energy and climate change.

KEY SURVEY FINDINGS:

- **Solar energy is a major priority for Nevada voters:** An overwhelming majority have a positive view of the Nevada's solar energy industry (60% favorable/18% unfavorable). A strong majority (56%) also believes "protecting and expanding solar energy to help create jobs in Nevada" should be a major priority of the state's Senators and Representatives in Washington.
- **Heck's opposition to solar energy – and fealty to big oil billionaires - hurt him among persuadable voters:** Despite not running over the last two weeks of the campaign, more than half (54%) of Nevada voters still recall advertising critiquing Heck for opposing solar energy and siding with oil companies instead. Nearly two-thirds of swing voters¹ (62%) say this critique was a convincing reason to vote against Heck – tied at the top among a list of five messages tested against Heck, including his positions on women's health and abandoning veterans during the government shutdown.

"Joe Heck voted to limit solar energy – and the jobs it creates – in Nevada. Instead, Heck supports giving billions in taxpayer subsidies to oil companies, including the oil billionaire Koch Brothers who spent millions to elect Heck."

- **Holding Heck accountable on solar strengthened Cortez Masto's advantage on key issues – and the vote:** This line of messaging helped Cortez Masto build strong advantages over Heck on being better able to "address climate change" (+32 CCM) and to "protect and expand solar energy to create jobs in Nevada" (+16 CCM) – advantages much larger than her final 2-point margin on the vote. She was also able to hold a 13-point advantage on "standing up to big oil companies and other corporate special interests" even though Republicans and their allies spent millions to portray Cortez Masto as "corrupt" and tied to special interests herself.

¹ Swing voters are defined as the 18 percent of the electorate that considered voting for the candidate whom they did not end up supporting.

Perhaps more importantly, the survey suggests that this message helped boost Cortez Masto’s vote. Among the 46% of voters who did not recall hearing this message, her margin over Heck lagged partisanship by six points. However, among the 54% of voters who DO recall hearing this message, Cortez Masto ran behind partisanship by just a point. In fact, logit regression modeling confirms that recalling this message had a statistically significant impact on the probability of voting for Cortez Masto.

Cortez Masto Vote Margin Relative to Partisanship			
	Overall	Recall Message	Don’t recall Message
Net Party ID (D-R)	+6	+18	-8
Net Senate Vote (CCM-Heck)	+2	+17	-14
Difference	-4	-1	-6

- The Solar vs. Oil Company message was particularly potent with Latinos:** An overwhelming majority of Latino voters in the state (71%) believe Nevada’s solar energy industry should be a major priority for their Senators and representatives. More important, a similar number (72%) say that Heck’s record of supporting oil companies over the solar industry was a convincing reason to vote against him – again, tying this message at the top of the list of five messages tested against Heck. The aggressive targeting of this message (along with others) to Latino voters helped Cortez Masto win the Latino vote by 47 points, according to our survey (which included a large oversample of Hispanics and significant Spanish-Language interviewing), the same margin enjoyed by Hillary Clinton, after she had lagged Clinton among Latinos for much of the campaign.

ABOUT THIS POLL

Global Strategy Group conducted a survey on November 8-14, 2016 of 800 2016 General Election voters in Nevada. The results have a margin of error of +/-3.5%. GSG also surveyed an oversample of 223 Hispanic 2016 General Election voters in Nevada, and the results among the total Hispanic sample of 326 interviews have a margin of error of +/-5.4%.