



May 13, 2008

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Bob Moore & Hans Kaiser
RE: U.S. Voters and Energy Options

Despite gas prices reaching record levels, voters have not significantly changed their views about how to reduce the United States' dependence on foreign oil. Furthermore, increasing gas prices do not appear to have a major impact on views about oil and gas exploration in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Yet the idea that nuclear energy does not contribute to global warming increases support for this as an energy option, according to the findings from our April national survey of voters. Following are the details.

Reducing Reliance on Foreign Oil

When it comes to ideas for reducing U.S. reliance on foreign oil sources, voters are most likely to favor allowing more drilling in and around the U.S. (30%) and some form of government investment in alternative energy sources (29%).

We asked a similar question in February 2007, and the results are not significantly different.

"As you may know, the United States depends on foreign countries for oil. In your opinion, which one of the following is the best way to reduce our reliance on foreign oil?"

	Feb. 2007	Apr. 2008
Allow more drilling for oil and gas in the U.S., Alaska and off the coasts	26%	30%
Government investment in alternative energy sources	29%	29%
Tax incentives for energy companies who invest in alternative energy sources (2007 wording: credits)	14%	10%
Tax incentives for consumers who practice conservation and recycling (2007 wording: increase requirements on)	10%	9%
Permit more nuclear power plants	4%	8%
Impose stricter mileage standards to increase fuel efficiency	9%	6%

Southern voters stand out in their support for drilling, as do seniors, Republicans and voters with 0-15 years of education, while Pacific and Northeast voters, voters age 18-29, Democrats and voters with college degrees lean more toward government investment in alternative energy sources. Specifics include:

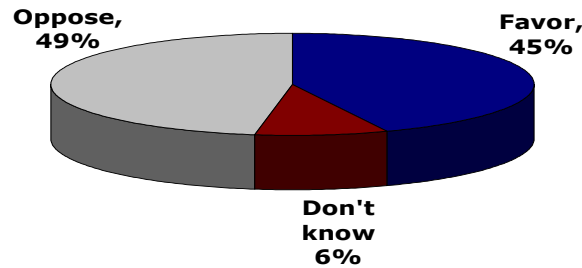
Reducing Reliance on Foreign Oil: Key Subgroups

	Government investment in alternative energy	Drilling in and around the U.S.
All	29%	30%
Region		
Pacific	36%	23%
Mountain/Plains	27%	28%
North Central	33%	31%
South	15%	45%
Northeast	33%	22%
Age		
18-29	41%	26%
30-49	28%	27%
50-64	29%	30%
65+	19%	43%
Party		
Republican	23%	44%
Independent	21%	35%
Democrat	37%	18%
Education		
0-12 years	28%	40%
13-15 years	23%	39%
16 years	32%	23%
17+ years	32%	16%

ANWR

Even with the rising cost of gasoline, voters narrowly oppose opening up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) in Alaska for oil and natural gas drilling (45% favor, 49% oppose). This sentiment is almost unchanged since 2006, when voters were divided over whether or not the ANWR should be opened to drilling (May 2006: 46% favor, 44% oppose; January 2006: 44% favor, 47% oppose; *Source – Pew Research Center*)

"Given the rising cost of gas prices, would you favor or oppose opening up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska for oil and natural gas drilling?"



Southern voters again are most likely to favor drilling, as are men, seniors, Republicans and voters with 0-12 years of education. Most likely to oppose drilling are voters in the Pacific, North Central and Northeastern regions, women, voters age 18-29, Democrats and those with a college degree. Specifics include:

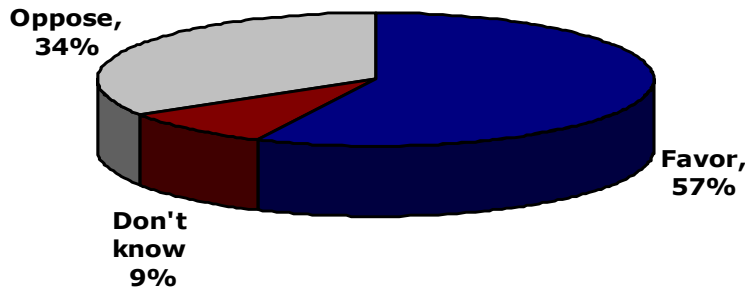
Drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge: Key Subgroups

	Favor	Oppose
All	45%	49%
Region		
Pacific	43%	51%
Mountain/Plains	48%	43%
North Central	42%	53%
South	58%	36%
Northeast	37%	58%
Gender		
Men	52%	46%
Women	39%	51%
Age		
18-29	30%	63%
30-49	47%	49%
50-64	45%	48%
65+	56%	37%
Party		
Republican	62%	32%
Independent	43%	49%
Democrat	33%	62%
Education		
0-12 years	51%	40%
13-15 years	47%	48%
16 years	45%	51%
17+ years	34%	62%

Nuclear Power

A majority of voters today say they would favor building nuclear power plants after hearing that nuclear power, like wind and solar energy, is one of the energy sources that does not contribute to global warming (57% favor, 34% oppose). Yet as recently as April 2007, voters have been divided about building more nuclear power plants (45% approve, 47% disapprove; Source – CBS News/New York Times).

"Nuclear power is one of the energy sources, like wind and solar energy, that doesn't contribute to global warming. After hearing this, would you favor or oppose building new nuclear power plants to generate electricity?"



Interestingly, there is majority or plurality support for building nuclear power plants among most voter subgroups, with only a few exceptions: Democrat women and Democrats 18-54 are divided; Liberal Democrats and African American voters are opposed.

Please feel free to call or email with any questions.

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