



**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Interested parties  
**FROM:** Hickman Analytics, Inc.  
**RE:** Northeast Region Poll Results  
**DATE:** June 9, 2017

Energy issues are important to voters in the northeastern United States in part because most voters in the region believe they pay more for electricity than consumers in other states. They overwhelmingly believe pipelines are the safest means for transporting natural gas, and that having sufficient natural gas available is important for reliable and affordable electricity for consumers and business. Majorities support expanding natural gas pipelines even when expansion is juxtaposed to a strong environmental argument. Almost nine of every ten voters say energy issues will be important in their voting in the 2018 elections.

**Key Findings**

An overwhelming majority of voters (70%) in the Northeastern United States believe they pay more for electricity than voters in other states. Majorities of every major subgroup of the region believe they pay more than other states. Voters in this region cite taxes (31%) and policy choices by elected officials (20%) as the reason they pay more.

Voters overwhelmingly agree that pipelines are the safest way to transport natural gas. More than two-thirds (69%) believe pipelines are safest compared to 13% who believe rail and 10% who believe trucks are the safest.

A strong consensus exists on a number of others energy-related statements.

- 98% agree that “clean air and clean water are important for Northeastern families.”
- 97% agree that “affordable, reliable energy is important for Northeastern families and businesses.”
- 92% agree that “maintaining and delivering adequate supplies of affordable fuels is necessary for consumers and businesses.”
- 88% agree that “having sufficient supplies of natural gas is important in keeping electricity and home heating affordable and reliable.”
- 81% agree that “ensuring the Northeastern US has enough energy capacity to meet the demand for electricity.”
- 74% agree that “a balanced mix of renewables, natural gas, and nuclear is important to keep electricity affordable and reliable.”

When offered contrasting positions, a majority of voters in the Northeast (50%) support constructing “natural gas pipelines to boost and improve the economy and improve the efficiency of electricity

generation,” while 39% believe “Northeastern states should not construct natural gas pipelines and infrastructure because they increase our reliance on fossil fuels instead of renewable energy, could harm the environment, and are unnecessary to maintain affordable and reliable supplies of electricity given alternative options for transportation.”

Likewise, a majority of voters in the Northeast (53%) believe states in the region “should support pipeline infrastructure for fuel to maintain supplies, hold down prices, create jobs, and boost economic development,” while 39% believe “Northeastern states should not support pipeline infrastructure for fuel because they increase our reliance on fossil fuels instead of renewable energy development.”

Having been exposed to these contrasting positions, support for pipeline construction expands. When asked, 58% support “expanding pipelines to deliver transportation fuels for consumers and markets,” while only 35% oppose this expansion. They also support “generating electricity using natural gas and fuels” (76% support, 19% oppose).

Most voters also express support for generating “generating electricity using renewable sources such as wind and solar” (88% support, 9% oppose). Support is lower for “generating electricity using nuclear power plants” (49% support, 44% oppose) and “expanding offshore oil and gas drilling in US waters” (45% support, 49% oppose).

The vast majority (86%) of voters in the region say energy issues will be important in their voting in next year’s election, including 42% who say energy issues will be very important. Only 12% say energy issues will not be important in “determining how you will vote.”

**Technical note:** This memo is based on a survey of 513 registered voters in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and New York. Telephone interviewing was conducted June 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017. The sample was selected so all registered voters were equally likely to be contacted, including a sample of cell phone numbers. The results were adjusted slightly to align the sample with known facts about the geographic and demographic composition of the region’s registered voters. All polls are subject to errors associated with interviewing a sample rather than the entire universe. The estimation error associated with a sample of 513 is +/-4.3 percentage points. In other words, in 95 out of 100 cases, the results of this poll are within 4.3 percentage points (plus or minus) of the results that would have been achieved in interviews with every registered voter in these four states. Estimation errors are higher among subgroups of the sample.