



TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Andrew Baumann and Katie Drapcho, Global Strategy Group
DATE: August 17, 2022
RE: **NEW POLL RESULTS: Pennsylvania voters want action on carbon and methane emissions and the issue generates political gains for candidates who support such action**

A new survey of likely Pennsylvania voters conducted by Global Strategy Group, which included oversamples in the Philadelphia suburbs and Pittsburgh media market, not only finds that Pennsylvanians want state lawmakers to take action to reduce carbon and methane emissions, but also that such actions would give supportive Democrats a political boost (and would damage opposing Republicans) with key voting blocs around the state – even after voters are exposed to harsh attacks on the two proposals.

Big majorities of Pennsylvania voters think that lawmakers should make reducing pollution a priority and that the state, specifically, needs more rules to limit pollution from the oil and gas industry. This translates into greater than 60% support for proposals to limit carbon emissions in Pennsylvania over time to reach net zero by 2050 and to implement new rules to reduce methane emissions from the oil and gas industry.

While the generic ballot for state legislature is tied between Democrats and Republicans, when it is reframed to pit a Democratic candidate who supports either proposal against a Republican who opposes them, the Democrat margin expands to 10 points in the case of the carbon limits proposal and to 8 points in the case of new rules to limit methane emissions. Importantly, both overall support and the positive political impact for supportive candidates holds up after a balanced debate that includes strong, economic-based attacks against each proposal.

KEY SURVEY FINDINGS:

Voters want to see lawmakers take stronger action to limit pollution, including from the oil and gas industry. Strong majorities of Pennsylvania voters agree that state lawmakers should “make reducing air pollution a priority” (62% agree) and that “we need more rules to protect our air, water, and climate from oil and gas pollution in Pennsylvania” (62% agree). A majority also reject the industry’s contention that we have to choose between the environment and economy, with 56% agreeing that new “rules to cut oil and gas pollution will create new jobs in manufacturing and in the field inspecting and fixing leaks.” Registered independents solidly join Democrats in agreeing with these statements, along with overwhelming majorities in the Philadelphia suburbs and small majorities in the more conservative Pittsburgh media market.

NET AGREEMENT								
	Overall agree	Overall disagree	Overall	Dem.	Ind.	GOP	Philly Suburbs	Pitts DMA
Pennsylvania lawmakers should make reducing air pollution a priority	62%	37%	+25	+77	+10	-23	+51	+4
We need more rules to protect our air, water, and climate from oil and gas pollution in Pennsylvania	62%	37%	+25	+73	+31	-31	+22	+13

Strong majorities support specific steps to reduce carbon emissions statewide and to reduce methane emissions from the oil and gas industry. 61% of voters support placing a limit on the total carbon emissions in Pennsylvania that would decline over time, reaching net zero emissions by 2050 and 65% support Pennsylvania adopting strong rules to reduce methane emissions from the oil and gas industry, including requiring regular inspections of smaller oil and gas wells. Both initiatives are supported by a majority of registered Democrats and Independents, voters in the Pittsburgh DMA, and voters in the Philadelphia suburbs.

NET SUPPORT								
	Overall support	Overall oppose	Overall	Dem.	Ind.	GOP	Philly Burbs	Pitts DMA
Adopting strong rules to reduce methane emissions from the oil and gas industry including requiring regular inspections of smaller oil and gas wells	65%	33%	+32	+73	+36	-14	+41	+17
Combatting climate change by placing a limit on the total carbon emissions in Pennsylvania that would decline over time, reaching net zero emissions by 2050	61%	38%	+23	+72	+18	-28	+38	+3

Putting the generic legislative ballot in the context of these proposals significantly boosts supportive Democrats and harms opposing Republicans. The generic ballot for state legislature is tied in Pennsylvania, with 46% supporting a Democratic candidate and 46% supporting a Republican. However, putting the race in the context of a Democrat who *supports* either proposal to reduce carbon and methane emissions versus a Republican who *opposes* either proposal increases support for the Democrat. A Democrat who supports the limits on carbon emissions leads a Republicans who opposes those limits 51% to 41% (and net lift of 10 points relative to the straight generic ballot) while a Democrat who supports the plan to reduce methane pollution from the oil and gas industry leads a Republican who opposes the plan 50% to 42% (a net lift of 8 points relative to the straight generic ballot). As the table below shows, reframing the generic ballot gives supportive Democrats a lift (and damages opposing Republicans) among registered Democrats, Republicans, and in the Philadelphia suburbs.

LEGISLATIVE VOTE WITH CARBON LIMITS PROPOSAL						
	Overall	Dem.	Ind.	GOP	Philly suburbs	Pitts DMA
Democrat who supports carbon limits	51	80	47	23	55	52
Republican who opposes carbon limits	41	14	36	70	35	40
<i>Net support</i>	<i>+10</i>	<i>+66</i>	<i>+11</i>	<i>-47</i>	<i>+20</i>	<i>+12</i>
<i>Net Generic Democrat</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>+61</i>	<i>-5</i>	<i>-61</i>	<i>+9</i>	<i>+12</i>
<i>Total Lift</i>	<i>+10</i>	<i>+5</i>	<i>+16</i>	<i>+14</i>	<i>+11</i>	<i>0</i>
LEGISLATIVE VOTE WITH METHANE EMISSIONS PROPOSAL						
Democrat who supports methane limits	50	81	41	17	59	40
Republican who opposes methane limits	42	12	52	73	34	52
<i>Net support</i>	<i>+8</i>	<i>+69</i>	<i>-11</i>	<i>-56</i>	<i>+25</i>	<i>-12</i>
<i>Net generic</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>+66</i>	<i>-8</i>	<i>-69</i>	<i>+23</i>	<i>-17</i>
<i>Total lift</i>	<i>+8</i>	<i>+3</i>	<i>-3</i>	<i>+13</i>	<i>+2</i>	<i>+5</i>

Support for the methane and carbon emissions plans – and their positive impact on supportive Democrats - hold up after hearing a balanced debate from both sides. After hearing a simulated debate that includes balanced statements in support and in opposition to the carbon and methane emission plans, the margin for both the carbon emissions plan (55% support/43% oppose) and the methane emissions plan (58% support/39% oppose) narrows a bit, but both maintain majority support. Perhaps more important, both also continue to provide a lift to supportive Democrats (and damage opposing Republicans), as voters back a Democratic candidate who supports the carbon emissions plan 49% Democrat/42% Republican (+7 lift relative to the straight generic) and a Democratic candidate who supports the methane emissions plan 49% Democrat/45% Republican (+4 lift).

Even after industry messaging, voters want new methane rules to apply to all well, including smaller ones. After hearing statements from both sides, 51% of voters say that knowing that the new rules to reduce methane emissions from oil and gas operation would apply to all wells – including smaller wells – makes them more likely to support the proposal, while 42% say it makes them less likely to support the plan. This includes a majority of voters in both the Philadelphia suburbs and Pittsburgh market.

LIKELIHOOD TO SUPPORT METHANE RULES			
	More likely	Less likely	Net more
All	51%	42%	+9
Philly Suburbs	53%	43%	+10
Pitts DMA	51%	43%	+8

Democrats lead by large margins in the upcoming elections for Governor and U.S. Senate, while the generic race for state legislature is tied. Josh Shapiro leads Doug Mastriano by 8 points in the race for Governor (50% Shapiro/42% Mastriano), while John Fetterman leads Mehmet Oz by 11 points in the U.S. Senate race (51% Fetterman/40% Oz). Shapiro and Fetterman both lead by equal amounts in the Pittsburgh DMA (+4 for each) and have double-digit leads in the Philadelphia suburbs (+21 for Shapiro and +22 for Fetterman). The generic ballot for state legislature is tied (46% Democrat/46% Republican), with voters in the Pittsburgh DMA narrowly favoring a Republican (45% Democrat/48% Republican), while those in the Philadelphia suburbs strongly prefer a Democrat (55% Democrat/38% Republican).

ABOUT THE POLL

Global Strategy Group conducted a survey of 1200 likely 2022 general election voters in Pennsylvania between July 14-19, 2022, with additional oversamples of 100 voters each in the Philadelphia suburbs and the Pittsburgh DMA. The survey had a margin of error of +/- 2.9%. The margin of error on subgroups is greater.

APPENDIX

MESSAGES FOR CARBON EMISSIONS PROPOSAL

Supporters say that by moving Pennsylvania to clean energy, this proposal would dramatically reduce the carbon, sulfur, and arsenic pollution that disrupt our climate and cause heart disease, asthma, and cancer while creating tens of thousands of quality jobs for all kinds of people, from installers to factory workers, to engineers. And since the cost of wind and solar is already lower than coal and gas – and still dropping – this proposal would save consumers money. In fact, Stanford University researchers say that moving to renewable energy will end up saving the average Pennsylvania family hundreds of dollars a year.

Opponents say that the cost of gas and energy is already too expensive, and this proposal will only make things worse. By forcing us to phase out less expensive energy sources, this proposal would drive up electricity bills by hundreds of dollars per year and make the cost of gasoline even more expensive, leading to higher prices on groceries and everything else we buy. What's more, by raising electricity bills and gas prices, this proposal will make it harder to maintain a business in our state and force businesses to move to other states and overseas where costs are lower, hurting Pennsylvania's economy.

MESSAGES FOR METHANE EMISSIONS PROPOSAL

Supporters say that methane is a powerful greenhouse gas responsible for a quarter of the climate change Pennsylvania is already experiencing today. Air pollution released alongside methane can lead to an increased risk of cancer, cause heart disease, and worsen respiratory diseases. What's more, methane is the main ingredient of natural gas, and methane leaks cause hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of natural gas to be wasted every year. There are proven, cost effective fixes that would eliminate up to half of this waste and pollution. Adopting strong rules to reduce methane emissions is a win-win that will reduce pollution, protect our health and climate, and create jobs.

Opponents say that stricter regulations of methane will hurt Pennsylvania's economy, raise energy prices, and cost jobs. Pennsylvania is the second-largest natural gas producer in the country, with over thirty-two thousand Pennsylvanians working in the natural gas industry. This rule will result in a loss of jobs, decreased production, and reduced funding for things like education, hospitals, and law enforcement. What's more, this rule will create unneeded red tape and bureaucracy that will stifle economic growth by raising costs for oil and gas producers. These producers would pass these higher costs on to the rest of us, resulting in higher prices on groceries to gas to electricity bills.

MESSAGES FOR SMALL WELLS INSPECTIONS

(Some/Others) say the rules to limit methane pollution should include regular inspections at smaller oil and gas wells with leak-prone equipment that are responsible for approximately half of all methane pollution, despite only accounting for six percent of the state's oil and gas production. About 75% of these wells are owned by larger companies that can afford to do regular inspections.

(Some/Others) say the rules to limit methane emissions should NOT apply to smaller oil and gas wells because these new burdensome regulations will force mom-and-pop producers in Pennsylvania to cut jobs and raise energy prices for consumers, harming local businesses and working families.