



TO Interested Parties
FROM Beacon Research
DATE July 19, 2022
SUBJECT MA Energy Issues

The following are key findings from a recent statewide survey of registered voters in Massachusetts focused on the state's energy resources and, specifically, how nuclear energy can be utilized to achieve long-term clean energy goals.

1. Massachusetts voters are very interested leveraging nuclear energy in the fight against climate change. **Nearly 6 in 10 voters in the state support the use of nuclear energy as a tool in the fight against climate change.**
2. Supporting nuclear energy is NOT a third-rail issue in the Commonwealth. Only 24% of voters say nuclear is a bad idea. Once voters are informed of the value of nuclear energy as part of the fight against climate change, that number drops to 19%, while **only 12% say the next governor should rule out the use of nuclear energy entirely.**

Voters Define Energy Priorities in Terms of Keeping Costs Low and Combatting Climate Change. Half of all Massachusetts voters say keeping prices low is their top electric utility priority, while over a third say combatting global warming is their top issue. When informed of nuclear's status as a carbon-free and non-emitting energy source, **59% of voters support its inclusion in the state's long-term clean energy solution**, including 55% of Democrats, 58% of independents, and 65% of Republicans. While voters want to be assured of the safety and affordability of nuclear, only 24% see nuclear energy as a bad option altogether. Even among this 24%, more than half decide that they would support its use as part of the state's clean energy solution after hearing some of the merits of nuclear energy. Voters were presented with a range of information in the survey on nuclear energy, including its cost-effectiveness and utility as a clean energy alternative, its inclusion in Connecticut's clean energy plan, and the availability of existing nuclear plants in New England. After being presented with this information, **support for including nuclear in the state's clean energy solution jumped to 73% statewide**, including 68% among Republicans and 73% among Democrats and independents.

Voters Less Likely to Vote for Anti-Nuclear Politicians if Energy Costs Rise or the State Fails to Meet its Clean Energy Targets. A majority of Massachusetts voters say they would be less likely to support a politician who voted against nuclear energy if this led to higher utility costs or the state failing to meet its clean energy goals. When pushed on what they would like the state's next governor do on this issue, 27% want nuclear energy included in the Commonwealth's energy mix immediately; 55% would like to see the inclusion of nuclear if found to be safe and affordable by experts; and only 12% want to see its use ruled out entirely.

Methodology:

The survey interviewed 800 registered voters in Massachusetts from June 30th- July 6th, 2022. Interviews were conducted using a mixed mode methodology combining live phone interviews to cell phones (25%) and landlines (25%) and web interviews (50%). The margin of error is +/- 3.5% for the sample.