



BENENSON STRATEGY GROUP

14 EAST 60TH STREET NEW YORK NY 10022
TEL 212 702 8777 FAX 212 750 6518

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Joel Benenson
DATE: May 7, 2010
RE: Support for energy bill

- In the aftermath of the oil spill disaster, voters overwhelmingly support a comprehensive clean energy bill. As we've consistently seen in research over the years, voters understand the dangers of our dependence on oil. Now, they're ready to hold Congress accountable.
- When asked who they blame for our dependence on oil, voters are more likely to blame Washington politicians protecting special interests that fund their campaigns (33%) than big oil companies and lobbyists trying to protect their profits (27%). And just 12% blame corporations who aren't doing enough to use clean energy and 10% blame environmentalists blocking sensible solutions.
- Consequently, not only do voters support a comprehensive clean energy bill by large double-digit margins, they also indicate their Senator's vote could be an impactful re-election factor.
 - Overall, 61% of 2010 voters support and just 31% oppose a bill "that will limit pollution, invest in domestic energy sources and encourage companies to use and develop clean energy. It would do this in part by charging energy companies for carbon pollution in electricity or fuels like oil."
 - 54% would be more likely to re-elect their Senator if he or she voted for the bill (just 30% would be less likely to re-elect).
 - 51% would be less likely to re-elect their Senator if he or she voted against the bill (just 30% would be more likely).
- While support has always been high for the energy bill, 39% of voters now say they are more likely to support it in the wake of the oil spill (14% say it makes them more likely to oppose the bill and 47% say it does not affect their view).
- Not surprisingly given the above, by almost two-to-one, voters agree that now is the time for Senators to act while opposition messaging falls flat. When asked which they agree with more:
 - **59% of voters agree** that *"Now is the time for Senators to take action. Oil companies and lobbyists have fought energy reform for decades to protect their profits. Our dependence on oil hurts our economy, helps our enemies and puts our security at risk. It's time to put America back in control – with clean energy that's made in America and works for America."*
 - **Just 31% agree that** *"Senators would be wrong to try to use this tragedy to pass a huge new Washington program and job-killing energy tax. Their plan will raise the price of gas right at the pump, hurt middle class families and stop oil drilling in America, which is a big part of the long-term solution to making us less dependent on foreign oil."*

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The Benenson Strategy Group conducted 650 interviews nationwide with registered voters who are likely to vote in the 2010 U.S. Congressional elections. All interviews were conducted between May 4th – May 5th, 2010 by telephone using a sample of registered voters. The total data set has a margin of error of $\pm 3.84\%$ at the 95% confidence level.