



Opinion Poll

Maine and New Hampshire Small Businesses Support Clean Energy Standards and Want Congressional Action on EPA Nominee

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Executive Summary

While the economy is slowly recovering, the road back to pre-recession employment levels has been peppered with potholes. Partisan politics in Congress are doing nothing to help the economy, or the small businesses working to rebuild it.

Small businesses are our country's primary job creators and are viewed positively by 71% of the general public. It's no wonder politicians try to harness their influence. One area where policymakers often use small businesses as political pawns is in the clean energy arena.

While some claim otherwise, polling conducted by Small Business Majority shows Maine and New Hampshire small business owners believe government can play an important role in creating financial incentives that help small businesses take energy efficiency measures, promote renewable technologies and generally support a competitive 21st Century clean energy-based economy. As the drivers of our economy, small businesses want lawmakers to do what they were sent to Washington to do, including holding an up or down vote on nominees to lead government agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency.

Polling found Maine and New Hampshire small businesses support the president's nomination to lead the EPA after learning about her qualifications. A strong 62% support nominee Gina McCarthy, who is currently the EPA's air chief.

McCarthy has more than three decades of public service at the local, state and federal levels, has worked for five Republican governors and has a reputation for working well with business and industry leaders.

What's more, Maine and New Hampshire small business owners support EPA action to limit carbon pollution that causes climate change and set standards for existing power plants, refineries and other major emitters. However, some lawmakers have accused the agency of killing jobs with overly burdensome air and water regulations and are not only attempting to block McCarthy's confirmation, but scratch a vote entirely.

These tactics don't fly with Maine and New Hampshire small business owners, who believe Congress isn't doing its job by attempting to delay these votes.

A whopping 74% of Maine and New Hampshire small business owners believe Congress is doing a poor job of confirming nominees to lead federal government agencies in a timely manner so that government can function effectively. The majority of small businesses also don't approve of the U.S Senate regularly holding up votes on confirming nominations to key government positions like judgeships and government agencies: 64% said they believe the president's nominations deserve a timely up or down vote from the Senate.

Small business owners don't make decisions based on ideology, and haven't based their opinions on the EPA or the president's nomination to take it over on partisan politics, either. This is important to note given the political breakdown of the poll, with 28% identifying as Republican, 32% identifying as Democrats and 40% as independent.

It's unfortunate when small businesses are used as a vehicle for pushing ideological agendas, or when those agendas get in the way of governing. This polling shows small businesses support standards that promote clean and renewable energy. It also shows they want lawmakers to do their jobs and base their decisions on what's best for our economy, not the party line.

Main Findings

- **Maine and New Hampshire small businesses believe the expanded use of renewable energy sources can have economic benefits and provide new business opportunities for entrepreneurs:** A vast 70% of small businesses agree the expanded use of renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power can have economic benefits for small business owners such as lowering utility bills and providing new business opportunities.
- **Maine and New Hampshire small businesses believe government can play an important role in creating financial incentives that help small businesses:** 56% of Maine and New Hampshire small businesses believe government can play an important role in creating financial incentives that help small businesses take energy efficiency measures, saving businesses money and reducing energy consumption.
- **Respondents support EPA efforts to keep the air clean and reduce climate change:** A vast 72% of small business owners support the EPA's rules to reduce mercury and other toxic emissions that get into the air from power plants; 64% support the EPA regulating carbon emissions from existing power plants that cause climate change.
- **Majority of small business owners support Gina McCarthy's nomination to head the EPA:** 62% of respondents support Gina McCarthy's nomination based on her bipartisan experience and her experience working with business and industry leaders.
- **Vast majority of respondents believe Congress is doing a "poor job" of confirming nominees in a timely manner:** 74% of respondents said that Congress was going a "poor job" at confirming nominees to lead federal agencies in a timely manner so that government can function effectively.
- **Maine and New Hampshire owners think the president's nominations deserve a timely up or down vote rather than delays, holds and filibusters:** By a 41-point margin, the vast majority of small business owners (64%) think the president's nominations deserve a timely up or down vote from the U.S. Senate.
- **Respondents were politically diverse:** 28% identified as Republican, 32% as Democrat and 40% as independent or other.

Methodology

This poll reflects a national telephone survey of 858 small business owners with oversamples in Maine and New Hampshire of 126 small business owners, creating a combined data set of 984 small business owners. The poll was conducted by Public Policy Polling for Small Business Majority from April 12-14, 2013. The margin of error is +/- 8.7%.

Small Businesses Believe Government Can Play Important Role in Helping Small Firms Be Energy Efficient

Maine and New Hampshire small business owners see an important role for the EPA in keeping the air clean and limiting greenhouse gas emissions, with a 56% majority believing government can play an important role in creating financial incentives that help small businesses take energy efficiency measures. What's more, a vast 70% agree the expanded use of renewable energy sources can help small businesses lower their utility bills and can provide new business opportunities for entrepreneurs.

Figure 1: Owners agree government can play an important role in creating financial incentives that help small businesses take energy efficiency measures

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Government can play an important role in creating financial incentives that help small businesses to take energy efficiency measures, saving businesses money and reducing energy consumption?

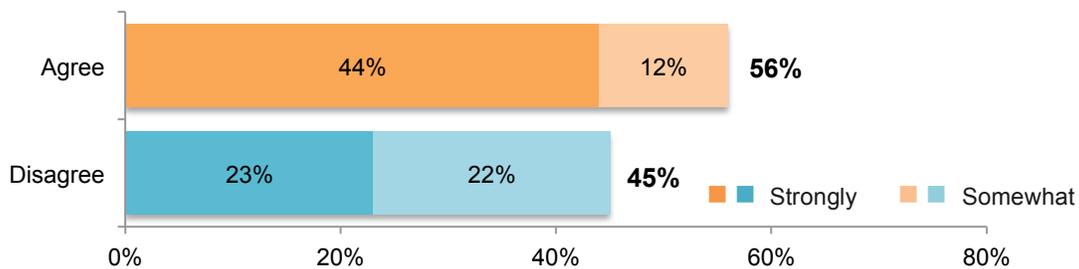
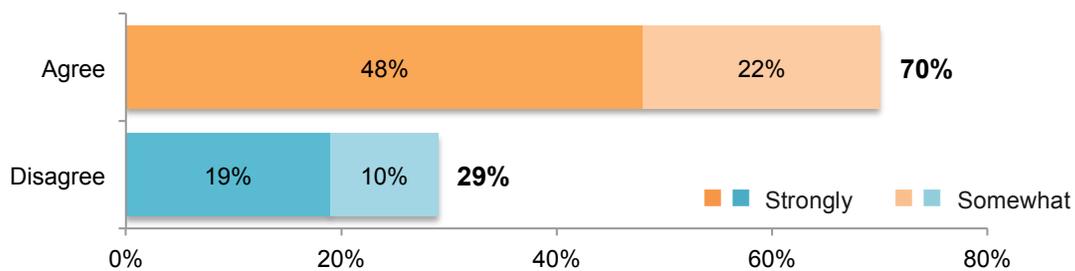


Figure 2: Small firms agree the expanded use of renewable energy sources can have economic benefits for small business owners

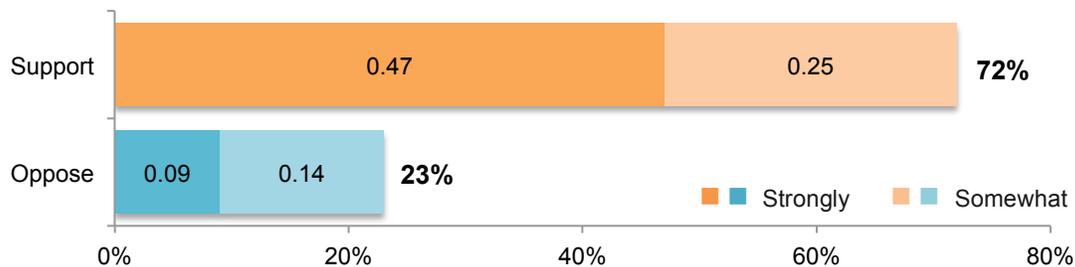
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: the expanded use of renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power can have economic benefits for small business owners such as lowering utility bills and providing new business opportunities for entrepreneurs?



Poll results revealed particularly overwhelming support for EPA requirements to reduce emissions of mercury, arsenic, chromium, nickel and acid gases from new and existing power plants: 72% of respondents support the EPA regulating these emissions and nearly half (47%) *strongly* support it.

■ **Figure 3: Small businesses support the EPA regulating mercury and other toxic emissions that get into the air from power plants**

The EPA has created rules to reduce the emissions of mercury, arsenic, chromium, nickel and acid gases from new and existing power plants. Generally speaking, do you favor or oppose the EPA regulating mercury and other toxic emissions that get into the air from power plants?



Maine and New Hampshire small businesses also demonstrate support for EPA’s authority to regulate carbon pollution and set standards for existing power plants, refineries and other major emitters. Nearly two-third (64%) support this approach, including 43% of respondents who strongly support it. Owners support the EPA enforcing these standards despite 41% of Maine and New Hampshire small business owners saying this will have an impact on their business. Nearly half of small businesses say the standards will have not much or no impact on their business.

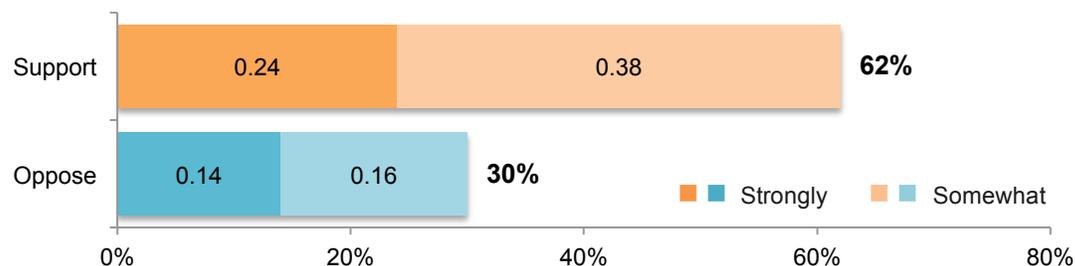
A wide margin of Maine and New Hampshire owners also support the work the EPA has already done to reduce carbon pollution. The vast majority, 72%, support increasing automotive fuel efficiency standards—including 43% who *strongly* support the policy.

Vast Majority Think Congress Doing ‘Poor Job’ of Confirming Agency Nominees; Support EPA Nominee Gina McCarthy

The president recently nominated Gina McCarthy to head the Environmental Protection Agency. McCarthy has more than three decades of public service at the local, state and federal levels, has worked for five Republican governors, and has a reputation for working well with business and industry leaders who applaud her qualifications and approach even when they disagree. In 2009 she was confirmed with overwhelming bipartisan support in the Senate to her current post of EPA assistant administrator. When asked whether they supported Gina McCarthy’s nomination to head the EPA, 62% of respondents said they do based on her bipartisan experience and her experience working with business and industry leaders. Maine and New Hampshire small businesses support her nomination by more than a 2:1 ratio.

■ **Figure 4: Small business owners support nominee Gina McCarthy to head EPA**

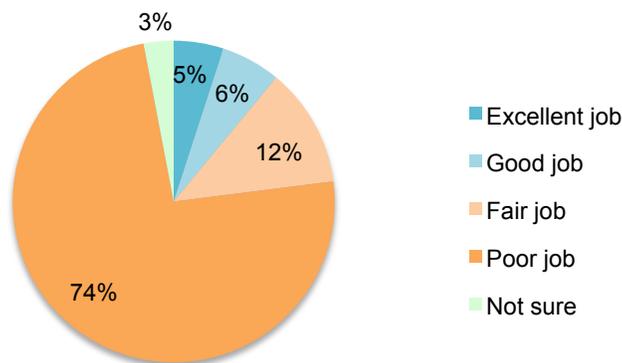
Do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose Gina McCarthy’s nomination to head the EPA?



Some lawmakers in Congress have been attempting to delay or even scratch McCarthy’s nomination entirely. Maine and New Hampshire small business owners do not support these tactics. They believe Congress is doing a “poor job” of moving nominees through the confirmation process in a timely manner because of political obstruction. A vast 74% of respondents said Congress was going a “poor job” at confirming nominees to lead federal agencies in a timely manner so that government can function effectively.

■ **Figure 5: Small business owners overwhelmingly believe Congress doing a ‘poor job’ of confirming nominees to lead federal government agencies in a timely manner so that government can function effectively**

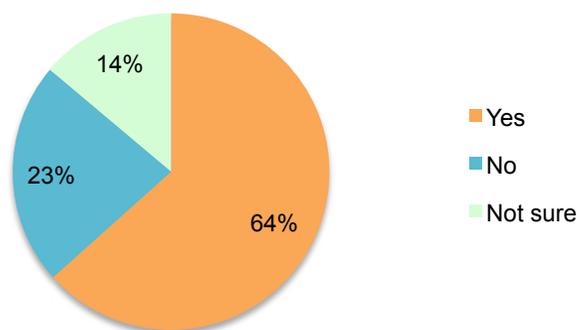
In general, do you think Congress is doing an excellent job, a good job, a fair job, or a poor job at confirming nominees to lead federal government agencies in a timely manner so that government can function effectively?



What’s more, a majority of Maine and New Hampshire owners think the president’s nominations deserve a timely up or down vote instead of long delays, holds and filibusters. By a 41-point margin, the majority of small business owners (64%) believe the president’s nominations deserve a timely up or down vote from the U.S. Senate.

■ **Figure 6: Majority of owners believe the president’s nominations deserve a timely up or down vote from the U.S. Senate**

The U.S Senate has regularly held up votes on confirming nominations to key government positions like judgeships and government agencies. Do you think the president’s nominations deserve a timely up or down vote from the U.S. Senate, or not?



Conclusion

Small business owners are adept at innovating—they have to be to survive in this tough economic environment. With that in mind, it's not surprising the vast majority of Maine and New Hampshire entrepreneurs see opportunities in the renewable energy arena, along with a role for government in helping create financial incentives that help small businesses take energy efficiency measures. What's more, they support the Environmental Protection Agency doing its job by regulating toxic emissions and enforcing fuel efficiency standards. It's clear our job creators are steadfastly committed to these policies as pragmatic long-term ways to usher small businesses into a clean, modern economy.

However, they're disappointed in the job lawmakers are doing when it comes to confirming nominees to lead government agencies—the EPA in particular. While Maine and New Hampshire small business owners support EPA nominee Gina McCarthy to lead the agency, some lawmakers are attempting to delay her nomination because of partisan politics. Small businesses don't support this approach. They think Congress is doing a poor job of confirming nominees to lead federal agencies in a timely manner so the government can function effectively, and believe the Senate should give nominees a timely up or down vote.

Small business owners work hard to lead their companies to success. They do it through pragmatic decisions that are void of ideology. They expect lawmakers to do the same when it comes to leading the country.

Poll Toplines

April 12 – April 14, 2013

126 Maine and New Hampshire mall business owners of 100 or less employees

1. Are you the owner of a small business?

Yes.....100%

No0%

2. How many people are directly employed by your business, including yourself?

1..... 25%

2-5 61%

6-10 4%

11-25..... 7%

26-50 3%

51-100..... 0%

More than 100..... 0%

3. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: the expanded use of renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power can have economic benefits for small business owners such as lowering utility bills and providing new business opportunities for entrepreneurs?

Strongly agree 48%

Somewhat agree..... 22%

Somewhat disagree 10%

Strongly disagree..... 19%

Not sure 2%

4. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Government can play an important role in creating financial incentives that help small businesses to take energy efficiency measures, saving businesses money and reducing energy consumption?

Strongly agree 44%

Somewhat agree..... 12%

Somewhat disagree 22%

Strongly disagree..... 23%

Not sure 0%

5. Would you support or oppose the expanded availability of “green banks”, which would provide financial incentives and capital support for small businesses to expand energy efficiency measures?

Strongly support..... 36%

Somewhat support..... 21%

Somewhat oppose 18%

Strongly oppose..... 23%

Not sure 2%

6. The EPA has created rules to reduce the emissions of mercury, arsenic, chromium, nickel and acid gases from new and existing power plants. Generally speaking, do you favor or oppose the EPA regulating mercury and other toxic emissions that get into the air from power plants?

Strongly support..... 47%
Somewhat support..... 25%
Somewhat oppose 14%
Strongly oppose..... 9%
Not sure 6%

7. Generally speaking, do you support or oppose increasing automotive fuel efficiency standards?

Strongly support..... 43%
Somewhat support..... 29%
Somewhat oppose 17%
Strongly oppose..... 9%
Not sure 3%

8. In general, do you think Congress is doing an excellent job, a good job, a fair job, or a poor job at confirming nominees to lead federal government agencies in a timely manner so that government can function effectively?

Excellent job 5%
Good job 6%
Fair job..... 12%
Poor job 74%
Not sure 3%

9. The U.S Senate has regularly held up votes on confirming nominations to key government positions like judgeships and government agencies. Do you think the president's nominations deserve a timely up or down vote from the U.S. Senate, or not?

Yes..... 64%
No 23%
Not sure 14%

10. Gina McCarthy has recently been nominated to head the Environmental Protection Agency. Ms. McCarthy has more than three decades of public service at the local state and federal levels, has worked for five Republican Governors, and has a reputation for working well with business and industry leaders, who applaud her qualifications and approach even when they disagree. In 2009 she was confirmed with overwhelming bi-partisan support in the Senate to her current post of Assistant Administrator at EPA. Having heard this information, do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose her nomination to head the EPA?

Strongly support..... 24%
Somewhat support..... 38%
Somewhat oppose 16%
Strongly oppose..... 14%
Not sure 8%

11. Under the authority of the Clean Air Act, the Environmental Protection Agency may decide to regulate carbon emissions that cause climate change and set standards for existing power plants, refineries and other major emitters. Generally speaking, do you favor or oppose EPA regulating carbon emissions?

Strongly favor 43%
Somewhat favor 21%
Somewhat oppose 14%
Strongly oppose 20%
Not sure 2%

12. Do you believe such EPA regulation of carbon emissions would have a major impact, a minor impact, not much of an impact or no real impact on your business specifically?

Major impact 17%
Minor impact 24%
Not much of an impact 34%
No real impact 21%
Not sure 3%

13. If you are a woman, press 1. If a man, press 2.

Woman 46%
Man 54%

14. If you are a Democrat, press 1. If a Republican, press 2. If you are an independent or identify with another party, press 3.

Democrat 32%
Republican 28%
Independent/Other 40%

15. If you are Hispanic, press 1. If white, press 2. If African-American, press 3. If other, press 4.

Hispanic 6%
White 88%
African-American 2%
Other 4%

16. If you are 18-29 years old, press 1. If 30-45, press 2. If 46-65, press 3. If older than 65, press 4.

18-29 3%
30-45 13%
46-65 68%
Older than 65 16%