

Support for Energy Bill in Home States of Key GOP Senators

Poll conducted by Tom Jensen, Director of Public Policy Polling

Senators Scott Brown (R-MA), Olympia Snowe (R-ME), Susan Collins (R-ME), and George LeMieux (R-FL) all have the opportunity to play a pivotal role in the passage of historic energy legislation by providing vital bipartisan support to a new Senate bill. Statewide surveys we conducted between May 14th and 16th in each of their states find that their constituents are strongly supportive of the American Power Act, introduced last week by Senators John Kerry and Joe Lieberman and that their votes for the bill would likely be a political benefit back home:

Public support for the American Power Act is strong. Support for the bill includes a majority of Independents.

“The Senate may soon debate an energy 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. Would you say you strongly support this bill, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose this bill?”

Massachusetts voters support the overall bill 65/31, Maine voters favor it 57/39, and Florida ones go for it by a 50/42 margin. Among Independents: In Florida they break 53/44 for it, in Maine it's 52/43, and in Massachusetts it's 56/40. Centrist voters are eager to see Congress do something substantial on energy.

***Voters in the three states are particularly excited about the new jobs in clean energy industries that passage of the bill would generate. That aspect has 80% support in Massachusetts, 74% in Maine, and 71% in Florida. It has strong bipartisan appeal, including a majority of Republicans, in all three states.**

***There is greater than 60% support for many of the key objectives the bill hopes to accomplish. 65% of voters in Massachusetts and 60% in Florida and Maine would like to see the federal government invest more in clean energy technology. 76% in Massachusetts, 69% in Florida, and 63% in Maine think there should be stricter regulation of corporate polluters. And 80% of Massachusetts voters, 77% of Maine ones, and 74% of Florida ones want the country to reduce its dependence on foreign oil.**

***The spill in the Gulf of Mexico has residents in all of these coastal states feeling serious doubts about offshore drilling. 54% of voters in Massachusetts, 51% in Florida, and 49% in Maine say that the recent events have made them more opposed to drilling off the coastlines of their states.**

***The recent incident associated with offshore drilling has also increased public support for a comprehensive solution to the country's energy issues. 66% of folks in Massachusetts, 58% in Maine, and 54% in Florida say that the spill makes them more supportive of the bill being considered in Congress right now.**

PPP interviewed 501 Florida voters from May 14th to May 16th with a margin of error of +/-4.4%, 710 Maine voters on May 14th and 15th with a margin of error of +/-3.7%, and 500 Massachusetts voters from May 14th to 16th with a margin of error of +/-4.4%.