

Support for Energy Bill in Washington

Poll conducted by Tom Jensen, Director of Public Policy Polling

Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell both have the opportunity to play a pivotal role in the passage of historic energy legislation by providing vital leadership in support of a new Senate bill. A statewide survey we conducted on May 18th and 19th in Washington finds that their constituents are strongly supportive of the American Power Act, introduced last month by Senators John Kerry and Joe Lieberman and that their votes for the bill would likely be a political benefit back home:

- Washington voters support the overall bill 54/41. Support for the bill is overwhelming among Democrats, who break for it by an 81/14 margin. The senators' own party's voters are eager to see Congress do something substantial on energy.
- Voters in Washington are particularly excited about the new jobs in clean energy industries that passage of the bill would generate. That aspect has 70% support. It has strong bipartisan appeal, with 88% of Democrats, 54% of Republicans, and 63% of independents saying the bill creating green jobs makes them more likely to support it.
- There is clear majority support for many of the key objectives the bill hopes to accomplish. 57% of voters in Washington would like to see the federal government invest more in clean energy technology, including 50% of independents. 62% of all Washington voters, and 53% of independents, think there should be stricter regulation of corporate polluters. And 76% want the country to reduce its dependence on foreign oil. That last figure includes 68% of Republicans and 70% of independents who are more likely to support the bill knowing that it will boost our national security.
- The spill in the Gulf of Mexico has Washington residents feeling serious doubts about offshore drilling. 53% of voters say that the recent events have made them more opposed to drilling off the Washington coastline. 75% of Democrats and 50% of independents say that.
- The recent incident associated with offshore drilling has also increased public support for a comprehensive solution to the country's energy issues. 57% of all Washington voters, and 82% of Washington Democrats, say that the spill makes them more supportive of the bill being considered in Congress right now.

PPP interviewed 711 Washington voters from May 18th to May 19th with a margin of error of +/-3.7%.