

September 16, 2015

# Voters Overwhelmingly Favor Strong Limits on Methane

## Findings from a National Poll of Voters

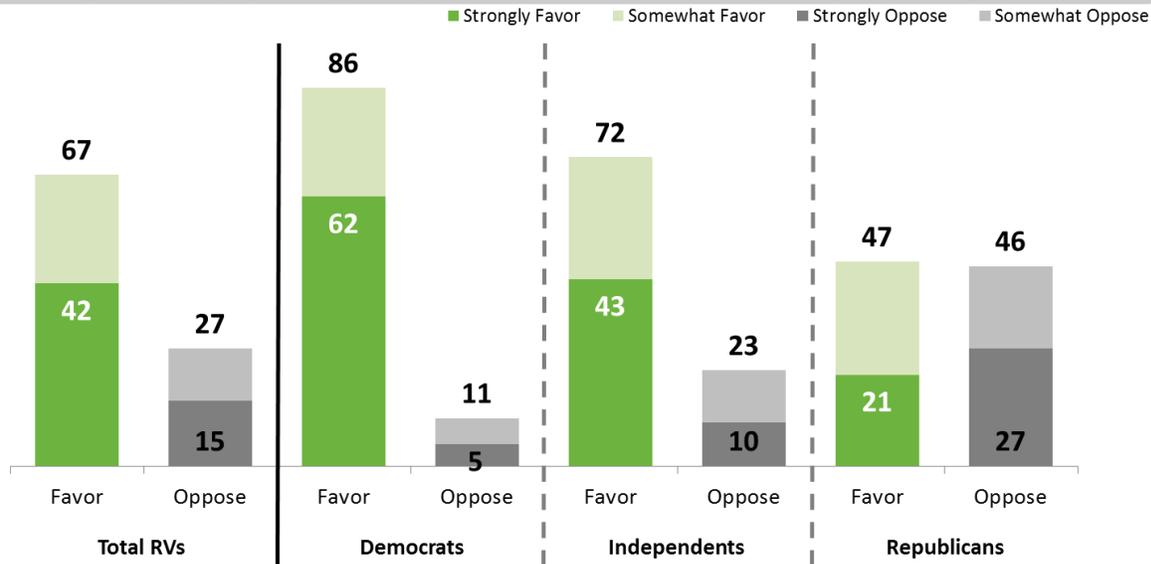
**To:** American Lung Association

**From:** Missy Egelsky, Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research

Americans overwhelmingly support strong limits on the amount of methane and other toxic pollution from the oil and gas industry, according to a new national survey of 871 registered voters<sup>1</sup>. Fully two-thirds of voters favor the Environmental Protection Agency placing tough standards on this pollution, while just 27 percent oppose the proposal. Support for the plan crosses partisan lines as strong majorities of Democrats and Independents and a plurality of Republicans favor the plan.

**Figure 1: Voters overwhelmingly support stricter limits on methane**

*As you may know, the Environmental Protection Agency has proposed strong limits on the amount of methane and other toxic pollution from the oil and gas industry. Do you favor or oppose this proposal to limit methane and other toxic pollution from the oil and gas industry?*



<sup>1</sup> Findings are based on a national survey of 871 registered voters reached via live telephone interviews on both landlines and cell phones. Conducted for the American Lung Association August 20-23, 2015. The margin of error for results is +/-3.32 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence interval.

## Key Findings

- Voters express broad and deep support for tough limits on methane pollution.** Two-thirds of voters favor strong limits on methane and other toxic pollution from the oil and gas industry, with 42 percent who strongly support this proposal. In addition to bipartisan support for stricter methane standards, both men and women, younger and older, and more than 65 percent of voters in every region of the country favor the proposal.<sup>2</sup>

■ **Figure 2: Broad support for stricter limits on methane**

	% Favor	% Oppose
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Northeast</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Central</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>South</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>West</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Men</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Women</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Under age 50</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Over age 50</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>31</b>

- Voters strongly side with the need for tough regulation of methane pollution over voluntary action by oil and gas companies.** When voters hear balanced messages<sup>3</sup> on both sides of the debate, they continue to support the need for strong limits on methane pollution. More than 6-out-of-10 voters (61 percent) believe that industry cannot be trusted to adhere to voluntary pollution limits and that the EPA needs to place strict standards on methane to protect people's health; only 34 percent believe that industry can deal with methane pollution on its own. Voters reject voluntary action even with the discussion of strong economic consequences—higher energy prices and job losses—included as part of industry's argument.

<sup>2</sup> Please see the appendix for full text of question.

<sup>3</sup> Please see the appendix for full text of messages.

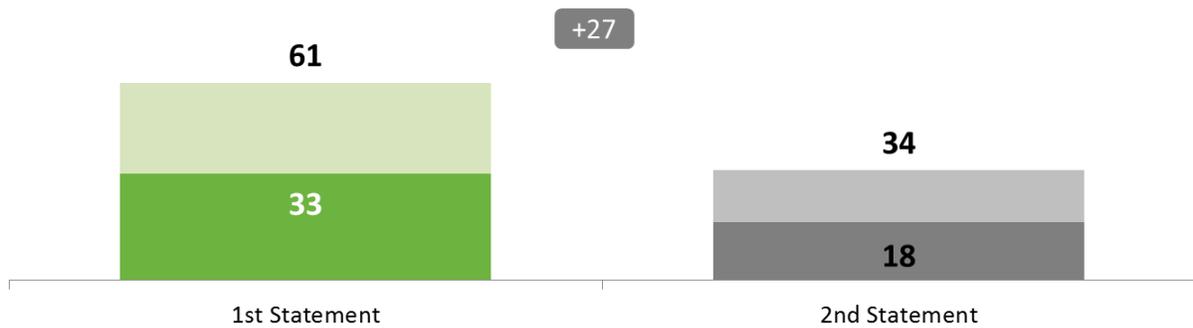
**Figure 3: Voters favor health argument over opposition argument that includes strong economic pushback**

Now let me read you two statements. Please tell me which comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right.

*The oil and gas industry dumps millions of tons of methane and toxic pollutants like benzene into our air each year. These toxic pollutants are linked to cancer and contribute to childhood asthma attacks. We cannot trust oil and gas companies to voluntarily limit their own pollution. Instead, we need scientists at the EPA to set enforceable methane pollution standards.*

*More one size fits all regulations from Washington will increase energy prices and cost jobs. Oil and gas companies have already significantly cut methane emissions and the industry can solve this problem on its own. We don't need more interference by unelected bureaucrats at the Environmental Protection Agency.*

■ 1st Statement Much Closer ■ 1st Statement Somewhat Closer ■ 2nd Statement Much Closer ■ 2nd Statement Somewhat Closer



## Appendix A — Text of Description of Methane Standards

As you may know, the Environmental Protection Agency has proposed strong limits on the amount of methane and other toxic pollution from the oil and gas industry. Do you favor or oppose this proposal to limit methane and other toxic pollution from the oil and gas industry?

## Appendix B — Text of Methane Messaging

Now let me read you two statements. Please tell me which comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right. (Statements were rotated)

*The oil and gas industry dumps millions of tons of methane and toxic pollutants like benzene into our air each year. These toxic pollutants are linked to cancer and contribute to childhood asthma attacks. We cannot trust oil and gas companies to voluntarily limit their own pollution. Instead, we need scientists at the Environmental Protection Agency to set enforceable methane pollution standards.*

OR

*More one size fits all regulations from Washington will increase energy prices and cost jobs. Oil and gas companies have already significantly cut methane emissions and the industry can solve this problem on its own. We don't need more interference by unelected bureaucrats at the Environmental Protection Agency.*