

National Poll Shows Strong Disapproval for President Obama's Smog Rule Delay, Unfavorable Ratings for Congress' Assault on Clean Air Act

9 Battleground States Also Surveyed: Suburban Women in Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Latino Women in California, Florida and New Mexico Disagree With Obama Decision; Health Also Trumps Polluters in Colorado, Nevada, and Virginia.

Washington, DC – October 13, 2011: President Obama's decision to block new public health standards for ozone and smog pollution may have pleased big business, but it sorely disappointed key demographic groups, including Latinos and women nationally and in nine key 2012 battleground states, according to 10 new polls conducted for the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), the League of Women Voters of the US (LWV), and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC).

Among the national poll's major findings:

- Nationwide, 70 percent of Americans disapproved of Obama's decision to block the ozone pollution standard while only 30 percent approved. Roughly eight out of 10 women (79 percent) overall and 71 percent of Latino women disapproved of Obama's decision on ozone.
- Nearly four out of five Americans (78 percent) want the EPA to hold corporate polluters accountable for what they release into the community. Better than four out five women (83 percent) and 80 percent of Latino women share this view.

Americans don't buy the line from some in Congress that EPA safeguards are bad for jobs and the economy and they support stricter safeguards against the toxic chemicals released by power plants. Women and Latino women particularly want stronger protections from toxic air and carbon pollution.

- Roughly seven out of 10 Americans (69 percent) agree with health experts who support reducing toxic air pollution from industrial sources and oppose those in Congress who say they must overrule the EPA to protect jobs; three out of four women overall and 73 percent of Latino women agree with health experts.
- Seven out of 10 support the EPA requiring stricter limits on the amount of toxic chemicals that industrial facilities can release and 69 percent are in favor of the EPA limiting the amount of carbon pollution that power plants and industrial facilities can release. Among women overall, 77 percent support stronger toxics limits and 78 percent support limiting carbon pollution; 76 percent and 77 percent of Latino women support those limits, respectively.

The polls, conducted between October 6-9, 2011 by Public Policy Polling (PPP), surveyed 1,249 registered voters nationwide (as well as a national oversample of 200 Latino women); and surveyed voters in nine 2012 battleground states: Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, California, Florida, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico and Virginia with oversamples of suburban women and Latino women in several states. To access all PPP survey results, go to http://switchboard.nrdc.org/blogs/paltman/polls_obamas_ozone_retreat_dis.html.

"Delaying clean air standards endangers Latino communities across the country. This poll shows how disappointed the Latino community is with President Obama and Congress when it comes to cleaning up our air," said Brent A. Wilkes, national executive director, League of United Latin American Citizens. "Latinos are more likely to live in counties with air pollution levels that are unhealthy due to fine particulates and ozone -- two dangerous and prevalent pollutants that cause or worsen respiratory problems. Latino children are 60 percent more likely to have asthma than non-Hispanic Whites."

Support for the EPA and stricter pollution limits is particularly strong among Latino women in key states. Asked whether they support the EPA's work to hold polluters accountable, 80 percent of Latino women in California, 79 percent in Florida and 86 percent in New Mexico said yes.

"Americans clearly are very displeased that politicians are interfering with EPA scientists. It's wrong to play politics with the health of our children and seniors," said Elisabeth MacNamara, president of the League of Women Voters of the US. "From the president's decision to delay smog pollution standards to the Congress's attempts to block EPA action on everything from mercury to soot to carbon, the voting public is fed up with politicians second guessing the science. It's fundamentally unfair for polluters to force us to live with unhealthy air, which causes asthma attacks, heart attacks and even premature death."

Support for stronger pollution limits and opposition to blocking the EPA is markedly strong among suburban women in Michigan, Ohio and Pennsylvania.

- 79 percent of suburban women in Michigan, 76 percent in Ohio and 87 percent in Pennsylvania disagreed with Obama's decision to block stronger smog standards.
- 78 percent of suburban women in Michigan, 78 percent in Ohio and 82 percent in Pennsylvania support reducing toxic air pollution from industrial sources and oppose those in Congress who say they must overrule the EPA to protect jobs.

Independent respondents also expressed strong support for the EPA's mission and efforts to reduce pollution, and disagree with those who would block the EPA. More than three out of four (77 percent) support the EPA's efforts to hold polluters accountable and 68 percent say the President should not have blocked stronger smog standards and that Congress should not block stronger limits on toxic air pollution.

"What is clear from this polling is what we've known all along: Americans want cleaner, healthier air and want corporate polluters held accountable for their actions. President Obama's decision to delay the ozone air pollution standard puts him out of step with most Americans, and notably with independents, women and Latinos," said Wesley Warren, director of programs at the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Tom Jensen, director, Public Policy Polling, said: "The shorthand version of these findings is clear: Attacks on clean air and the federal agency charged with protecting the environment and the health of Americans is an unpopular position with most Americans, including those in nine key 2012 battleground states. These poll findings provide more than ample evidence that assaults on the Clean Air Act and the Environmental Protection Agency are likely to be perceived as decidedly extreme and well outside of the mainstream of the public's thinking."

About the national poll: The margin of error for the national survey is +/-2.8 percent. Margins of error for oversamples and states vary. Public Policy Polling surveys are conducted through automated telephone interviews. PPP is a national survey research firm located in Raleigh, North Carolina. It was named by the *Wall Street Journal* as one of the two most accurate polling companies in the country for its swing state polling in 2008. More recently it was recognized by the *Washington Post* and *Politico* for its pinpoint polling of the surprising results in the Delaware Republican Senate primary and the Massachusetts Senate special election.

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