# NEW ENGLAND CLEAN ENERGY & TRANSMISSION SURVEY

RENEW Northeast

March, 2023

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# RENEW Northeast New England Survey Key Findings

*March 2023*

# Methodology

New Bridge Strategy conducted a survey among N=600 registered voters throughout New England (N=200 each in Massachusetts, Maine, and New Hampshire) from March 20-23, 2023. Interviews were conducted via live telephone interviews (both cell phones and landlines) and online. Interviews were distributed proportionally throughout each state. Quotas were set for key demographic sub-groups, such as gender and age.

The total numbers have been statistically weighted to reflect the true geographic distribution of voters throughout this region.

The credibility interval is ±4.56% for the overall sample and ±7.9% for each of the state samples. The credibility interval will vary for sub-groups.

# Energy Priorities

# Voters in this region want affordable energy, but two-thirds also prioritize it being "renewable" or "cleaner" than today.

*The following terms could be used to describe energy here in [STATE]. Which one or two of the following values do you think should be the highest priorities in making decisions about how our state gets its energy? That it could be described as...*

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# Two-thirds of voters say they want their state to encourage more use of solar power, and nearly half say wind; only 2% want coal.

Solar power

**67%**

Wind power

**49%**

Natural gas

**30%**

Nuclear

**17%**

Oil

**12%**

Coal

**2%**

*Which two of the following sources of energy would you most want to encourage the use of here in [STATE]?*

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# Transition to Clean Energy

# A gradual transition to 100% clean, renewable energy has support from nearly four-in-five voters.

*Do you support or oppose gradually transitioning to one hundred percent of our energy being produced from clean, renewable sources like solar and wind over the next ten to fifteen years?*

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# More than seven-in-ten voters in every state support a gradual transition to 100% clean, renewable energy.

*Do you support or oppose gradually transitioning to one hundred percent of our energy being produced from clean, renewable sources like solar and wind over the next ten to fifteen years?*

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# Modernized Electric Transmission Grid

# A vast majority support support their state working with neighboring ones to plan and build new electricity transmission.

***Now, in order to gradually transition to more renewable energy, the electric grid and related infrastructure such as transmission lines will need to be modernized and added across states from where electricity is now being generated. The U.S. government has recently dedicated funding to assist in this effort.***

*Would you support or oppose your state working with neighboring states to plan and build new electricity transmission?*

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# More than three-quarters in every state support their state working with neighboring ones to plan and build new electricity transmission.

*Would you support or oppose your state working with neighboring states to plan and build new electricity transmission?*

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# Voters across party lines are supportive of their state working with neighboring ones to plan and build new electricity transmission.

*Would you support or oppose your state working with neighboring states to plan and build new electricity transmission?*

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# Most voters are willing to have new transmission for renewable energy if it means more stable and affordable energy.

***I am willing to have new transmission for renewable energy in my community if it means we have more stable and affordable energy for me and my family.***

*Next, here are some statements about energy. Please indicate whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with each statement.*

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# Most voters support adding and modernizing electricity infrastructure located in or near their community.

*Would you support or oppose adding and modernizing electricity infrastructure, such as transmission lines that carry clean energy over long distances if they were located in or near your community?*

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# Four-in-five or more voters in every state indicate support for additional transmission even if they are located in or near their community.

*Would you support or oppose adding and modernizing electricity infrastructure, such as transmission lines that carry clean energy over long distances if they were located in or near your community?*

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# Most voters across party lines support adding and modernizing electricity infrastructure located in or near their community.

*Would you support or oppose adding and modernizing electricity infrastructure, such as transmission lines that carry clean energy over long distances if they were located in or near your community?*

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# More than two-thirds of voters in this region are willing to pay higher monthly electricity prices to add transmission lines.

| | % |
|---|---|
| 50¢ | 7% |
| $1 | 13% |
| $2 | 11% |
| $5 | 20% |
| $10 | 19% |
| Total pay something | 69% |
| None | 30% |

*What is the most you would be willing to pay in higher electricity prices per month to add transmission lines through parts of New England in order to help bring more renewable energy on-line to be used by consumers in your state?*

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# Majorities in every state and across income categories are willing to pay something more on their electric bill to add transmission.

| *% Total pay something* | % |
|---|---|
| Massachusetts | 72% |
| Maine | 66% |
| New Hampshire | 62% |
| <$60K Income | 61% |
| $60K-$100K Income | 71% |
| $100K+ Income | 77% |

*What is the most you would be willing to pay in higher electricity prices per month to add transmission lines through parts of New England in order to help bring more renewable energy on-line to be used by consumers in your state?*

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# A majority agree that we can add transmission while also preserving natural areas, wildlife habitat and the character of communities.

***We can modernize the electric grid and add the necessary transmission infrastructure, while also preserving our natural areas, wildlife habitat and the character of our communities.***

*Next, here are some statements about energy. Please indicate whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with each statement.*

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# The most important factor for siting electricity infrastructure is impact on wildlife and providing cleaner energy.

*There are a number of different factors which can affect where electricity infrastructure such as transmission lines are located. Please indicate how important each one of these is to you personally - is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not that important to you.*

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# Voters in Massachusetts and New Hampshire are more likely to prioritize transmission lines reducing use of polluting energy sources.

| Massachusetts |
|---|
| Least impact on wildlife 79% |
| Reduce high-polluting energy sources 76% |
| Least impact on economically struggling communities 72% |
| American produced renewable energy 70% |
| Most cost effective 67% |

| Maine |
|---|
| Least impact on wildlife 78% |
| Least impact on economically struggling communities 69% |
| American produced renewable energy 69% |
| Most cost effective 69% |
| Reduce high-polluting energy sources 67% |

| New Hampshire |
|---|
| Least impact on wildlife 78% |
| Reduce high-polluting energy sources 71% |
| Most cost effective 69% |
| American produced renewable energy 65% |
| Least impact on economically struggling communities 61% |

Showing % Extremely/Very Important

*There are a number of different factors which can affect where electricity infrastructure such as transmission lines are located. Please indicate how important each one of these is to you personally - is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not that important to you.*

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# Cost effectiveness is a factor, especially for those voters with an income lower than $100K.

***The most cost effective***

| <$60K Income | $60K-$100K Income | $100K+ Income |
|---|---|---|
| 75% | 75% | 59% |

*There are a number of different factors which can affect where electricity infrastructure such as transmission lines are located. Please indicate how important each one of these is to you personally - is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not that important to you.*

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# Scientists are the most trusted source of information on a modernized electric transmission grid.

*Here is a list of people and groups that could provide information on a modernized electric transmission grid. Please indicate if you would generally trust that opinion, or if you would be suspicious of it. If you have never heard of the person or organization, or do not have an opinion, you can just indicate that instead.*

**Sample A, N=291 **Sample B, N=309*

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# Scientists are the most trusted source of information across each state.

| Massachusetts |
|---|
| Scientists** 48% |
| Fishermen** 32% |
| Farmers** 32% |
| Your state environmental agency** 29% |
| People who live in communities that have been affected by pollution** 28% |

| Maine |
|---|
| Scientists** 46% |
| Farmers** 40% |
| Fishermen** 30% |
| A researcher from a major university* 26% |
| Forestry workers* 26% |

| New Hampshire |
|---|
| Scientists** 45% |
| Farmers** 32% |
| People who live in communities that have been affected by pollution** 32% |
| Linemen/Electrical workers* 27% |
| Forestry workers* 26% |

Showing % Trust A Great Deal

*Here is a list of people and groups that could provide information on a modernized electric transmission grid. Please indicate if you would generally trust that opinion, or if you would be suspicious of it. If you have never heard of the person or organization, or do not have an opinion, you can just indicate that instead.*

**Sample A, N=291 **Sample B, N=309*

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# The Bottom Line

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- Almost four-in-five voters in this region support a transition to clean and renewable energy and they want wind and solar to be encouraged in their state.
- Almost nine-in-ten support their state working with neighboring states to plan and build new electricity transmission in order to accommodate where energy is now being produced.
- Even more striking is the fact that the overwhelming majority of voters in this region - 87 percent - support adding and modernizing electricity infrastructure, such as transmission lines that carry clean energy over long distances, even if they are located in their community.
- More than two-thirds of voters in this region are willing to pay higher monthly electricity prices to add transmission lines.
- Scientists and farmers are the strongest messengers.

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