



OPINION
RESEARCH
& STRATEGY

TO Interested Parties

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RE: Oregon Voter Views of a Cap-and-Invest Policy

DATE December 30, 2018

Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) recently completed a telephone survey of likely November 2020 voters in the state of Oregon to assess opinions on a proposed cap-and-invest policy.¹ The study found that Oregon voters **broadly support a policy that would cap carbon emissions and raise revenues to invest in clean water and healthy forests, clean energy, and transportation.** Voters are more likely to back a state legislator who supports this kind of action, and are particularly enthusiastic about the potential to invest in forest and river conservation and expanding the use of clean energy. In addition, they prefer a policy that does not exempt specific industries -- even if it increased the price of fuel in the short-term.

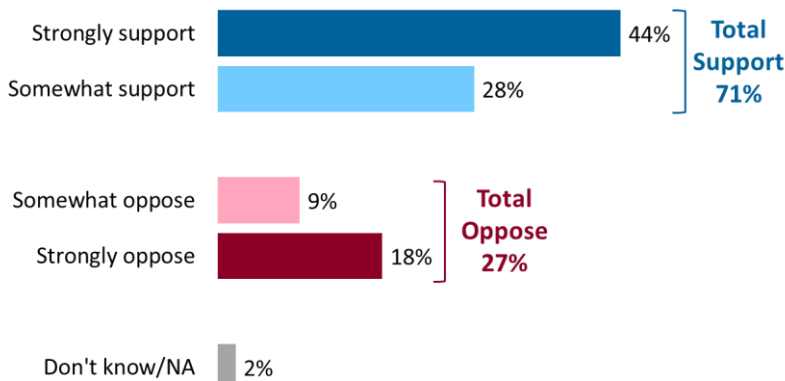
Key specific findings of the survey include:

- **Oregon voters overwhelmingly support a cap and invest policy.** As shown in Figure 1, fully seven in ten (71%) back the proposal, with 44 percent "strongly" in favor. Only about one-quarter (27%) oppose the policy. Support for cap and invest crosses major demographic groups, including:
 - *80% in urban areas and 67% in rural areas;*
 - *79% of women and 63% of men;*
 - *More than three-quarters (77%) of voters under 50, 65% of voters ages 50 to 64, and 67% of voters 65 and older;*
 - *77% of voters in households earning \$50,000 or less annually, 75% in households earning between \$50,000 and \$75,000, 62% in households earning \$75,000 to \$100,000, and seven in ten in households earning at least \$100,000 annually; and*
 - *91% of Democrats and 68% of independents.*

¹ **Methodology:** From Dec. 13-16, 2018, FM3 completed 600 telephone interviews on landlines and cell phones with randomly selected Oregon voters likely to cast ballots the 2020 election. The margin of sampling error is +/-4.0% at the 95% confidence level; margins of error for population subgroups within each sample will be higher. Due to rounding, not all totals will sum to 100%.

Figure 1: Support for Cap-and-Invest Legislation

This policy would limit the amount of carbon pollution allowed in Oregon. To enforce the limit, the largest industrial polluters would have to purchase permits based on the amount of carbon pollution they emit. The number of permits available will decrease each year to guarantee less pollution over time. The money generated from the sale of permits would be invested in building renewable energy and energy efficiency projects, reducing fire risk and preparing for drought, and training workers for clean energy jobs.



- Voters prefer a policy that applies immediately to the transportation sector.** Survey respondents were given a pair of statements describing the trade-offs between implementing the cap and invest policy for oil companies at the same time as other industries, or delaying putting a cap on oil companies. Despite the explicit mention of a potential increase in fuel prices, a majority (55%) supports quicker implementation over a delayed roll-out for oil companies. Among voters who support cap and invest, fully seven in ten (72%) believe we should apply framework to oil companies immediately.

Figure 2: Preference for Policy Treatment of Oil Companies

Statement	% Agree Overall	% Agreement Among Supporters of Cap and Invest
Some people say that we should apply the proposed cap and fee to oil companies at the same time as other industries. This might mean a small increase in fuel prices in the near term, but would also result in a faster reduction in Oregon’s largest source of carbon pollution.	55%	72%
Other people say that we should delay applying the proposed cap and fee to oil companies. This would mean no increase in fuel prices in the near term, but would also mean a delay in reducing Oregon’s largest source of carbon pollution.	36%	19%

- **More broadly, Oregon voters prefer a policy with no exemptions for any large emitters.** A majority (54%) of Oregon voters supports a policy that holds all businesses that are large emitters accountable. Among voters who support cap and invest, nearly two-thirds (63%) believe it should apply to all companies with no exemptions

Figure 3: Views of Potential Exemptions for Specific Businesses

There are about 100 businesses that are large sources of carbon pollution in Oregon that would potentially be affected by this policy, and the policy may be designed to include all or just some of them. I am going to read you two statements about this issue, and I would like you to tell me which comes closer to your opinion:

Statement	% Agree Overall	% Agreement Among Supporters of Cap and Invest
We should hold all businesses that are large emitters accountable for the impacts of their pollution with no exemptions	54%	63%
We should exempt certain businesses from the cap on emissions if it would make it too hard for them to carry out their business or would put jobs at risk	37%	28%

- **Voters' top priorities for investment of fee revenue include protecting clean water and restoring forests.** Figure 4 on the next page lists potential investments that strong majorities agree are "extremely" or "very important" priorities for use of cap-and-invest proceeds. Protecting water and forests and reducing wildfires are broadly important, as are creating jobs through upgrades to transportation and clean energy.

Figure 4: Preferences for Use of Funds

I am going to read you a list of different ways in which the funds generated by this proposal could be spent. Please tell me how important it is to you personally that money be used in that way: extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not too important.

Priority	% Extremely/Very Important
Protecting and restoring forests that provide natural filters to clean our air and water	73%
Reducing the number of wildfires by improving forest health	71%
Upgrading roads and bridges to strengthen them against flooding, storms and earthquakes	66%
Creating jobs by building and installing solar panels, windmills, and clean energy technology	59%
Upgrading irrigation equipment to help farmers save water and energy and protect against drought	59%
Creating jobs in programs to reduce the risk of wildfire	58%

In sum, **Oregon voters overwhelmingly support a policy to cap carbon emissions and raise revenue for investments like water and forest protection, infrastructure improvements, and clean energy.** By wide margins, supporters of this policy prefer that it not make exemptions for certain industries (even if there is a small cost impact for them personally).