



THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER
For The People & The Press

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Republicans View Gov't Energy Investments as Unnecessary

Partisan Divide Over Alternative Energy Widens

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Republicans View Gov't Energy Investments as Unnecessary Partisan Divide Over Alternative Energy Widens

Public support for increased federal funding on research into alternative energy technology, including solar technology, has decreased substantially since the early months of the Obama administration, with nearly all the decline coming from Republicans and Republican-leaning independents.

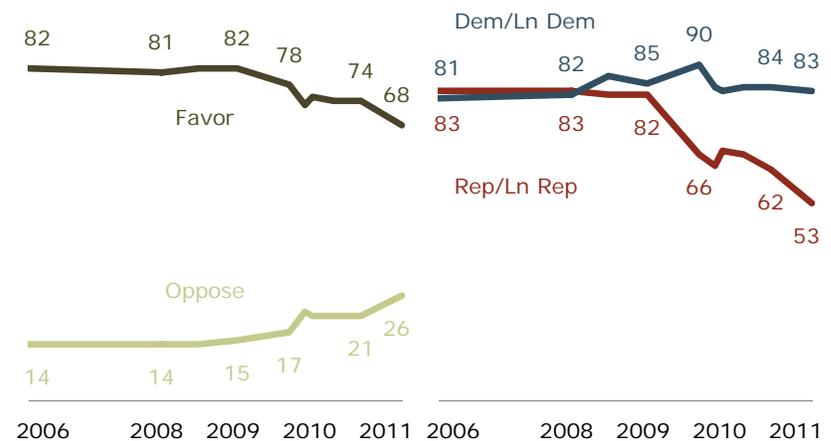
Overall, 68% of the public favors increasing federal funding for research on wind, solar and hydrogen energy technology while 26% are opposed. From 2006 through early 2009, roughly 80% supported increased federal funding for alternative energy research.

Since April 2009, there has been a 30-point decline in the percentage of Republicans and Republican leaners supporting more federal funding for research into alternative energy technologies. Currently, 53% favor this policy, down from 82% in April 2009. There has been little change in opinions among Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents. Currently, 83% of Democrats favor increased funding for research into alternative energy technologies.

Declining Republican Support for More Funding for Alternative Energy Research

% favor among general public

% favor, by partisanship*



PEW RESEARCH CENTER/WASHINGTON POST Nov. 3-6, 2011.

* Republicans & Republican-leaning independents; Democrats & Democratic-leaning independents.

The latest national survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press and *The Washington Post*, conducted Nov. 3-6 among 1,005 adults, finds that a narrow majority of the public (52%) thinks that government investment is necessary to develop new energy technology. About four-in-ten (39%) say that businesses will produce needed energy technology without government support.

On this measure there also is a large partisan divide. Two-thirds (68%) of Democrats and Democratic leaners say government investment in new energy is necessary. Most Republicans and GOP leaners (59%) say businesses will produce technology without government investment.

Overall, somewhat fewer now say that government investment is needed for the development of new energy technology than did so in April 2009. At that time, 58% viewed government investment as necessary and 32% said businesses were able to produce needed technology without government investment.

Views of Other Energy Policies

Support for government funding for alternative energy research has fallen since 2009, but this policy continues to draw more support than other ways to address America's supply. Nearly six-in-ten (58%) favor more oil and gas drilling in U.S. waters and the same percentage favors allowing more mining and drilling on federally owned land.

Most Democrats See Energy Investments as Necessary

<i>In developing new energy technology...</i>	Total %	Rep/Lean	Dem/Lean
		Rep %	Dem %
Gov't investment is necessary	52	36	68
Business will produce technology without gov't investment	39	59	24
Don't know	9	5	8
	100	100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER/WASHINGTON POST Nov. 3-6, 2011. PEWWP2.

Alternative Energy Draws More Support than Increased Drilling

<i>Policies for addressing nation's energy supply ...</i>	Favor Oppose DK		
	%	%	%
More federal funding for alternative energy	68	26	6=100
Allowing more oil & gas drilling in U.S. waters	58	35	7=100
Allowing more mining & drilling on federal land	58	34	7=100
Promoting the increased use of nuclear power	39	53	8=100
Providing subsidies for ethanol production	38	48	14=100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER/WASHINGTON POST Nov. 3-6, 2011. PEWWP1.

Support for increased offshore drilling is little changed from March, but has increased since last year's oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. In June 2010, before the spill was contained, only 44% favored more offshore drilling. Slightly fewer Americans favor increased offshore drilling today than did so a few months before the Gulf spill (63% in February 2010).

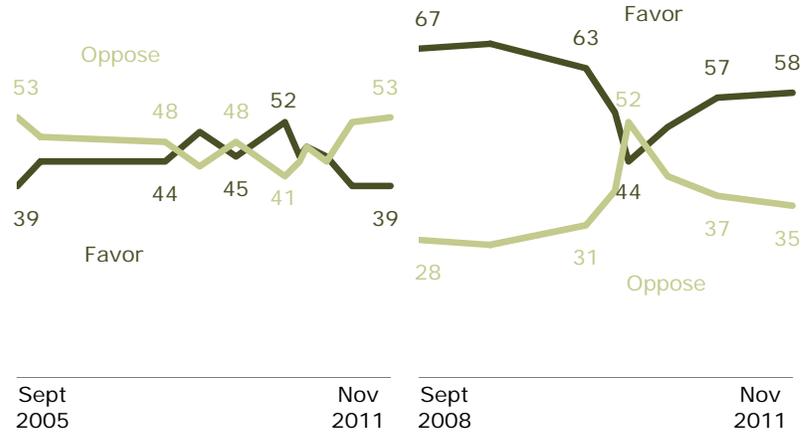
More Americans continue to oppose (53%) than favor (39%) promoting the increased use of nuclear power. Support for increased use of nuclear power has not recovered following the nuclear disaster at Japan's Fukushima nuclear power plant. Opinion about increased nuclear power had been divided prior to the Japan disaster. (*For more, see "[Opposition to Nuclear Power Rises Amid Japanese Crisis](#)," March 21, 2011*).

Only about four-in-ten (38%) favor government subsidies for ethanol production as a policy for addressing the U.S. energy supply. Nearly half (48%) oppose ethanol subsidies.

Opposition to More Nuclear Power, Support for Increased Offshore Drilling

Promoting the increased use of nuclear power

Allowing more offshore oil and gas drilling in U.S. waters



PEW RESEARCH CENTER/WASHINGTON POST Nov. 3-6, 2011. PEWWP1a & PEWWP1c.

Energy Policies Divisive

Nearly eight-in-ten Republicans and Republican leaners (78%) favor allowing more mining and drilling on federally owned land; just 46% of Democrats and Democratic leaners support this policy. The partisan gap is as wide in views of allowing more offshore oil and gas drilling (31 points).

In addition, more Republicans (54%) than Democrats (30%) favor promoting the increased use of nuclear power.

More Democrats and Democratic leaners than Republicans and Republican leaners favor promoting federal subsidies for ethanol production (45% vs. 32%). And Democrats are far more likely than Republicans to support increased federal funding for alternative energy research (83% vs. 53%).

In contrast to the gap over alternative energy, the partisan differences over more offshore drilling and increased use of nuclear power date back several years.

In April 2009, 86% of Republicans and GOP leaners favored increased offshore oil and gas drilling, compared with 57% of Democrats and Democratic leaners. In addition, 59% of Republicans favored greater use of nuclear power compared with just 38% of Democrats.

Partisan Gaps over Energy Policies

	Total	Rep/ Lean Rep	Dem/ Lean Dem	R-D Diff
<i>% in favor ...</i>	%	%	%	
More mining/drilling on federal land	58	78	46	+32
More oil/gas drilling in U.S. waters	58	77	46	+31
Promoting increased use of nuclear power	39	54	30	+24
Subsidies for ethanol production	38	32	45	-13
More fed. funding for alternative energy	68	53	83	-30

PEW RESEARCH CENTER/WASHINGTON POST Nov. 3-6, 2011. PEWWP1.

About the Survey

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted November 3-6, 2011, among a national sample of 1,005 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (601 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 404 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 185 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see: <http://people-press.org/methodology/detailed>.

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin, region, and population density to parameters from the March 2010 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status, based on extrapolations from the 2010 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size within the landline sample. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The following table shows the sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Group	Sample Size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	1,005	4.0 percentage points
Rep/Lean Rep	387	6.0 percentage points
Dem Lean Rep	461	5.5 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER
NOVEMBER 3-6, 2011, OMNIBUS
FINAL TOPLINE
N=1,005**

PEW.1-PEW.2 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

ASK ALL:

On a different subject...

PEWWP.1 As I read some possible government policies to address America's energy supply, tell me whether you would favor or oppose each. First, would you favor or oppose the government [INSERT FIRST ITEM, RANDOMIZE]? Would you favor or oppose the government [INSERT NEXT ITEM]?

		(VOL.)		
		<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
a.	Allowing more offshore oil and gas drilling in U.S. waters			
	November 3-6, 2011	58	35	7
	March 17-20, 2011	57	37	6
	October 13-18, 2010	51	41	7
	June 16-20, 2010	44	52	4
	May 6-9, 2010	54	38	8
	February 3-9, 2010	63	31	6
	April 14-21, 2009	68	27	5
	September, 2008	67	28	5
b.	Increasing federal funding for research on wind, solar and hydrogen technology			
	November 3-6, 2011	68	26	6
	March 17-20, 2011	74	21	5
	October 13-18, 2010	74	21	6
	June 16-20, 2010	75	21	3
	May 6-9, 2010	73	22	5
	February 3-9, 2010	78	17	5
	April 14-21, 2009	82	15	3
	September, 2008	82	14	4
	Late February, 2008	81	14	5
	February, 2006	82	14	4
c.	Promoting the increased use of nuclear power			
	November 3-6, 2011	39	53	8
	March 17-20, 2011	39	52	8
	October 13-18, 2010	45	44	11
	June 16-20, 2010	47	47	6
	May 6-9, 2010	45	44	11
	February 3-9, 2010	52	41	7
	April 14-21, 2009	45	48	7
	September, 2008	50	43	7
	Late February, 2008	44	48	8
	February, 2006	44	49	7
	Mid-September, 2005	39	53	8
d.	Allowing more mining and drilling on federally owned land			
	November 3-6, 2011	58	34	7
e.	Providing subsidies for ethanol production			
	November 3-6, 2011	38	48	14
	TREND FOR COMPARISON:			
	<i>Increasing federal funding for research on ethanol</i>			
	September, 2008	57	36	7
	Late February, 2008	57	35	8

PEWWP.1 TREND FOR COMPARISON CONTINUED...

February, 2006

	(VOL.)		
	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
	67	22	11

PEW.3-PEW.4 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**ASK ALL:**

PEWWP.2

When it comes to developing new energy technology, do you think **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**Nov 3-6
2011

52

Government investment is necessary [OR DO YOU THINK]

Businesses will produce the technology we need without

39

government investment

9

Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**April 14-21
2009

58

32

10