

**To: Jamie DeMarco, Campaign Manager
Maryland Clean Energy Jobs Initiative**

**From: Steve Raabe, President
OpinionWorks LLC**

Date: January 5, 2018

Subject: Legislative District Poll on Renewable Energy Issues

This memorandum summarizes the results of our poll in two swing legislative districts in Maryland, District 8 in suburban Baltimore County, and District 38 on the Lower Eastern Shore. These two districts were chosen because they have a history of being competitive, with voters splitting their ballots between the two parties. District 8, for example, elected a Democratic State Senator in 2014 while two out of three Republicans led the ballot in the Delegate races. District 38 narrowly elected a Democratic State Senator in 2014 along with three Republican Delegates. District 38 is also home to the proposed offshore wind project.

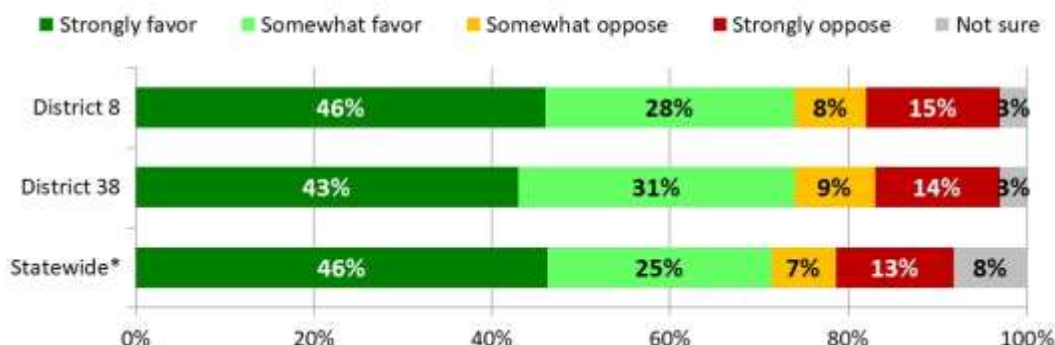
This poll was conducted among 503 voters in the two districts from December 14 to 26, 2017. A more detailed methodology statement is found at the end of this memo.

Voters Strongly Support Expanding the State’s Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard to 50%

Nearly three-quarters (74%) of voters in both of these swing districts support expanding the State’s Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (RPS) to 50% by the year 2030. Opposition rises to only about one-third of that level, amounting to 23% in both districts. Near majorities in both districts support this proposal *strongly*.

It is significant that voters were told this expansion of renewable energy would come “with a cost increase of less than two dollars per month for the average household.” Despite that cost, voters support it.

Expanding the Renewable Energy Requirement to 50%



“Current state law requires that 25% of our electricity each year come from renewable sources including wind and solar by 2020. There is a proposal to go further, expanding that requirement so that 50% of our electricity comes from renewable sources like wind and solar by 2030, with a cost increase of less than \$2 per month to the average home electricity bill. This proposal is also expected to create new jobs across Maryland. From what you know, would you favor or oppose expanding the state’s renewable energy requirement to 50% by 2030?”

(If favor or oppose): Would you say you would strongly (favor/oppose) or only somewhat (favor/oppose) it?”

*Statewide poll of 800 voters fielded Jan. 11-27, 2017; current wording “with a cost increase of less than \$2 per month” was “with just a slight cost increase” in the statewide poll.

For comparison, a very similar question was asked among 800 voters statewide in January 2017. At that time, voters were told there would be “just a slight cost increase,” rather than the two dollars mentioned in the legislative district poll. Total support statewide was 71%, with 46% strongly in favor, and only 21% opposed.

It is striking that these two swing legislative districts, despite the mention of a possible two dollar per month cost, support renewable energy at a level that so closely mirrors the State.

Big Electoral Impact for Renewable Energy: A Motivating Issue for Voters

The position legislative candidates take on renewable energy could have a significant impact on their 2018 elections. In these two swing districts, an impressive number of voters said they would switch their votes in the State Senate race based on the candidates’ positions on renewable energy, potentially shifting the outcome in these relatively close races. As the following tables demonstrate, this issue is potent with voters.

In District 8, the Democratic State Senate incumbent, Katherine Klausmeier, starts off 2018 with a 16-point lead against her intended general election challenger, Republican Delegate Christian Miele. However, told hypothetically that Sen. Klausmeier supports expanding the renewable energy requirement while Delegate Miele opposes it, the margin for Klausmeier increases dramatically to 42 points.

More noteworthy, the advantage for Klausmeier is erased and reversed if *Del. Miele* supports the legislation while Klausmeier opposes it. In this scenario, in a huge swing in voter support, the Republican Miele wins by 24 percentage points over the Democrat Klausmeier.

District 8: Support for State Senate Candidates Based on Renewable Energy Legislation

	Support Klausmeier	Support Miele	Margin
Generic State Senate Horse Race: Klausmeier (D) vs. Miele (R)	46%	30%	Klausmeier +16%
Klausmeier Supports Legislation Miele Opposes Legislation	59%	17%	Klausmeier +42%
Miele Supports Legislation Klausmeier Opposes Legislation	26%	50%	Miele +24%

“If the election for State Senate in this district were held today, and the candidates were (*read and rotate candidate names*), for whom would you vote? (*If undecided or not sure*): Which one do you lean towards at this time?” (*Result above + Support + Lean.*)

(*Rotate order of next two questions*):

“If you learned that Democratic Senator Klausmeier supported expanding the renewable energy requirement while Republican Delegate Miele opposed it, who would you be more likely to vote for, Klausmeier or Miele?”

“If you learned that Republican Delegate Miele supported expanding the renewable energy requirement while Democratic Senator Klausmeier opposed it, who would you be more likely to vote for, Miele or Klausmeier?”

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The phenomenon repeats itself in District 38, but even more dramatically. In the likely 2018 general election matchup, incumbent Democratic State Senator Jim Mathias leads Republican Delegate Mary Beth Carozza by a 10-point margin. The Senator’s electoral margin grows to a comfortable +38% if he supports expanding the renewable energy requirement while Del. Carozza opposes it.

If the candidates’ positions on this legislation are reversed, voter support swings dramatically. In this scenario, Carozza beats Mathias in this Lower Shore district by a whopping 39-point margin.

District 38: Support for State Senate Candidates Based on Renewable Energy Legislation

	Support Mathias	Support Carozza	Margin
Generic State Senate Horse Race: Mathias (D) vs. Carozza (R)	46%	36%	Mathias +10%
Mathias Supports Legislation Carozza Opposes Legislation	56%	18%	Mathias +38%
Mathias Supports Legislation Carozza Opposes Legislation	15%	54%	Carozza +39%
<p>“If the election for State Senate in this district were held today, and the candidates were (<i>read and rotate candidate names</i>), for whom would you vote? (<i>If undecided or not sure</i>): Which one do you lean towards at this time?” (<i>Result above + Support + Lean.</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(Rotate order of next two questions):</i></p> <p>“If you learned that Democratic Senator <u>Mathias supported</u> expanding the renewable energy requirement while Republican Delegate <u>Carozza opposed</u> it, who would you be more likely to vote for, Mathias or Carozza?”</p> <p>“If you learned that Republican Delegate <u>Carozza supported</u> expanding the renewable energy requirement while Democratic Senator <u>Mathias opposed</u> it, who would you be more likely to vote for, Carozza or Mathias?”</p>			

Solid Support for Offshore Wind Energy

Support for placing an offshore wind project in the waters off Ocean City is strong in both of these swing districts. If anything, support for this project may be even higher in District 38, where the project would be located.

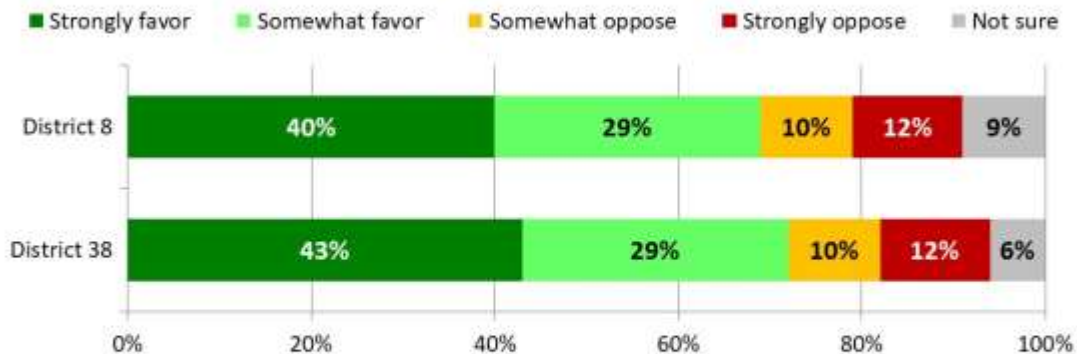
Voters were told, “As you may have heard, there is a proposal to build a group of energy-producing wind turbines off the coast of Ocean City. The proposal is to build them 15 to 20 miles offshore.” They were then asked:

“Opponents of the wind turbines say that even at a distance of 15 to 20 miles from shore, they could impact tourism and property values in Ocean City. Supporters of the project say that it will create thousands of jobs, and moving the wind turbines further from shore would make the project not viable, and would probably kill it. Based on these facts, do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose the current proposal to build these wind turbines 15 to 20 miles from shore?”

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Having heard these arguments for and against, 69% in District 8 and 72% in District 38 support the offshore wind project as currently proposed, rather than pushing it out further from shore. Forty percent in District 8 and 43% in the Lower Shore District 38 *strongly* favor the current proposal. Only 22% in each district oppose it.

Support for Offshore Wind



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How This Poll Was Conducted

A total of 503 Interviews were conducted in these districts (267 in District 8, 236 in District 38) December 14–26, 2017, representing the partisan and demographic makeup of each district within a potential margin of error of $\pm 6.3\%$ at the 95% confidence level. Live interviewers reached voters on both wireless and landline telephones, and a third group were given the option of responding online to ensure the poll best represented the electorate. Results for RPS expansion can be compared to our statewide poll conducted January 11-27, 2017 among 800 Maryland registered voters.

Brief Background on OpinionWorks

OpinionWorks conducts frequent opinion studies at the state and local level across the country. Since 2007 we have been the polling organization for *The Baltimore Sun* newspaper in Maryland, and have polled for numerous other media throughout the Mid-Atlantic region. We are currently engaged by state and local government agencies in Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and New York to assess public needs and preferences. Our recently released Citizen Stewardship Indicator, conducted for the Chesapeake Bay Program, is a model nationally for measuring behavior adoption and potential behavior change on behalf of water restoration. We measure health attitudes and practices for the Horizon Foundation and public health departments across the country. In addition to these public surveys, we assess donor and customer relationships for a variety of non-profit and for-profit entities nationally and internationally, with a growing body of work in Latin America.