



TO: Interested Parties  
FR: Paragon Insights  
DT: October 21, 2014  
RE: Tennessee Survey Results On Voter Opinions Of EPA Carbon Emissions

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On behalf of the Partnership for a Better Energy Future, Paragon Insights conducted a statewide survey of 901 likely voters in Tennessee October 3-9, 2014. The interviews were conducted using both telephone and online methodologies. The data were weighted to approximate a target sample of likely voters based on age, race/ethnicity, gender, political party affiliation and cellular/landline telephone status. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of plus or minus 3.0 percentage points.

#### **BOTTOM LINE:**

- ✓ A majority of Tennessee voters believe the United States cannot afford new costs and potential job losses resulting from the EPA regulations — 56% of voters agree
- ✓ A majority of voters oppose the regulations, including 33% who say they strongly oppose them (versus 13% who strongly support them).
- ✓ Nearly 50% of voters say they are not willing to pay \$1 more for energy under the EPA regulations.
- ✓ Supporting the regulations is politically risky – 45% of Tennessee voters say they are less likely to vote for a candidate who supports the EPA regulations, versus just 20% who say they are more likely to vote for a candidate who supports the regulations.
- ✓ A majority of Tennessee voters are aware of the EPA regulations to reduce carbon emissions - but awareness is soft, as just 20% say they have heard “a lot” about the regulations.

#### **KEY DATA**

***A majority of Tennessee voters are aware of the EPA regulations, but that awareness is soft—*** 53% of voters say they have heard about the regulations, although just 20% indicate they have heard a lot, suggesting opinions on this issue are still malleable – and as the data indicates, voters are quicker to oppose the regulations than support them. Men, millennials and Republicans are more familiar with the EPA regulations than their counterparts.

***Upon learning of the potential further squeezing of the middle class and possibility of energy rationing, a majority of voters are less likely to support the regulations—*** 55% of Tennessee voters say they are less likely to support the regulations after learning that the EPA regulations could further squeeze middle class Americans, including 40% who say they are much less likely to

support the regulations. Further, 55% of voters say they are less likely to support the EPA regulations after learning they could lead to energy rationing during extreme weather events, including 38% who say they are much less likely.

***A majority of Tennessee voters are opposed to the EPA regulations***— 52% of voters are against the EPA regulations, with 33% strongly opposed, while 35% support the regulations with just 13% strongly supporting them. Men, seniors, and middle class voters are the most strongly opposed to the regulations.

***A strong majority of Tennessee voters believe the government should weigh all costs and benefits when creating new environmental regulations*** — 77% of voters say the government should weigh all costs/benefits when creating new environmental regulations, while just 12% say the government should improve the environment at any cost.

***Nearly 1/2 of voters say they are not willing to pay a single dollar more in their energy bill to accommodate the new EPA regulations***— 46% of Tennessee voters say they are not willing to pay any more on their monthly energy bill and 51% of voters say they are not willing to pay any more on their total energy bill.

***A majority of Tennessee voters believe the United States cannot afford new costs and potential job losses resulting from the EPA regulations*** — 56% of voters agree that the U.S. cannot afford these new costs while just 27% say the U.S. must be a leader in addressing global climate change regardless of cost or impact to the economy.

***25% of Tennessee voters believe the U.S. should address climate change only in conjunction with other countries or not address climate change at all***— 47% of voters believe the U.S. should address climate change only with other nations or not at all, while 37% believe the U.S. should address climate change regardless of what other nations are doing.

***Tennessee voters are less likely to vote for a candidate who supports the EPA regulations***— 45% of voters are less likely to vote for a candidate who supports the regulations while 20% are more likely to vote for a candidate who supports the regulations.

***A plurality of Tennessee voters believe that state/local officials are better equipped to make decisions on carbon emissions instead of the federal government***—46% of voters believe that state and local officials are best equipped to make decisions on regulations to reduce carbon emissions, compared to 14% who say the Obama administration is best equipped and 14% who say Congress is best equipped.

***A strong majority of Tennessee voters believe President Obama should work with Congress to create a climate change agreement***—Fully 64% of voters believe President Obama should work with Congress to create a climate change agreement, while just 14% believe the President should take executive action to create an agreement.