



For Immediate Release

Contact: Kerwin Olson (317) 735-7727

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SURVEY SHOWS “POLITICAL DIVIDE” ON ENERGY ISSUES IS A MYTH, AMERICANS CAN WORK TOGETHER FOR CLEANER ENERGY FUTURE

“The Verdict is clear: Clean Energy Advocates Are the Majority, Not the ‘Fringe’; Survey Finds Across-the-Board Political Support for Shifting from Dirty Energy.”

Republicans, Independents and Democrats agree that the United States should move away from its reliance on dirty energy sources that foul the air and water and toward a future that makes greater use of clean energy sources, according to a major new ORC International survey conducted for the nonprofit and nonpartisan Civil Society Institute (CSI) and released today in Indiana by Citizens Action Coalition.

In releasing the survey, Kerwin Olson, Executive Director of CAC, said: “Dirty energy companies and their lobbyists like to marginalize those of us who are working towards a cleaner energy future for Indiana and the rest of the United States. But the verdict of this new survey is clear: We are the majority, not the ‘fringe’ when it comes to how Americans of all political leanings view energy issues. The truth is that those who are clinging to America’s dirty energy past are the people who are way out of step with the American political mainstream. The survey shows that Republicans, Democrats and Independents can sit down and hammer out a U.S. energy future that makes sense; it’s just that major energy companies are doing everything they can to keep common sense from prevailing.”

Pam Solo, founder and president, Civil Society Institute, said: “Our new survey is a clarion call to action: Americans think that it is time for decisive action toward a renewable energy future that will protect public health and provide reliable and cost effective energy. It is only through the work of groups like Citizens Action Coalition that this ‘bottom up’ process of change will take place. And it is only through such a grassroots-driven process that we can shake off the partisan gridlock of Washington, D.C., so that Americans can focus on what is really important to them: a clean energy future that does not sacrifice our water, air and health to politically powerful nuclear and fossil fuel interests.”

Conducted March 22-25, 2012, the new ORC International survey of 1,019 Americans shows that:

- More than eight out of 10 Americans (83 percent) – including 69 percent of Republicans, 84 percent of Independents, and 95 percent of Democrats -- agree with the following statement: ‘The time is now for a new, grassroots-driven politics to realize a renewable energy future. Congress is debating large public investments in energy and we need to take action to ensure that our taxpayer dollars support renewable energy-- one that protects public health, promotes energy independence and the economic well-being of all Americans.’
- Even with high gasoline prices today, 85 percent of Americans – including 76 percent of Republicans, 87 percent of Independents, and 91 percent of Democrats -- agree with the statement “(e)nergy development should be balanced with health and environmental concerns” versus just 13 percent who think “health and environmental concerns should not block energy development.”
- More than two out of three (68 percent) think it is “a bad idea for the nation to ‘put on hold’ progress towards cleaner energy sources during the current economic difficulty.”
- Eight out of 10 Americans agree that “water shortages and the availability of clean drinking water are real concerns. America should put the emphasis on first developing new energy sources that require less water and result in lower water pollution. “Only 15 percent of Americans think that “America should proceed first with developing energy sources even if they may have significant water pollution and water shortage downsides.”
- Two thirds of Americans (67 percent) think that “political leaders should help to steer the U.S. to greater use of cleaner energy sources – such as increased efficiency, wind and solar – that result in fewer environmental and health damages.” Under a third of Americans (30 percent) think that “political leaders should stay out of the energy markets and let private enterprise have a free hand in picking energy sources and setting prices.”

For the full survey findings, go to <http://www.CivilSocietyInstitute.org> on the Web.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The new survey findings are based on a telephone survey conducted by ORC International among a national probability sample of 1,019 adults comprising 506 men and 513 women 18 years of age and older, living in private households in the continental United States.

Interviewing for this survey was completed during the period March 22-25, 2012. The margin of error is plus or minus three percentage at the full sample size.

ABOUT THE GROUPS

Based in Indianapolis, IN, Citizen Action Coalition (www.citact.org) mission is to initiate, facilitate and coordinate citizen action directed to improving the quality of life of all inhabitants of the State of Indiana through principled advocacy of public policies to preserve democracy,

conserve natural resources, protect the environment, and provide affordable access to essential human services. With a continued emphasis on truly clean renewables, distributed resources, and energy efficiency, CAC is a firm believer that clean, safe, and affordable energy is not only attainable, but it is our right as an essential human service.

Based in Newton, MA, the nonprofit and nonpartisan Civil Society Institute (<http://www.CivilSocietyInstitute.org>) is a think tank that serves as a catalyst for change by creating problem-solving interactions among people, and between communities, government and business that can help to improve society. Since 2003, CSI has conducted more than 25 major national and state-level surveys and reports on energy and auto issues, including vehicle fuel-efficiency standards, consumer demand for hybrids/other highly-fuel efficient vehicles, global warming and renewable energy. In addition to being a co-convener of TheCLEAN.org (<http://www.TheClean.org>), the Civil Society Institute also is the parent organization of the Hybrid Owners of America (<http://www.HybridOwnersofAmerica.org>).

CONTACT: Kerwin Olson, for CAC, at (317-735-7727) or kolson@citact.org; and Leslie Anderson Maloy, for CSI, at (703) 276-3256 or lmaloy@hastingsgroup.com.

EDITOR'S NOTE: A streaming audio replay of the news event will be available on the Web at <http://www.CivilSocietyInstitute.org> as of 5 p.m. EDT on April 25, 2012.