



PRINCETON RESEARCH ASSOCIATES
Massachusetts Public Opinion
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SOLAR SURVEY 2

N=500 super voters

Margin of error +/-5%

Field Dates: Dec 5-9, 2013

1. Generally speaking, how concerned are you about the cost of electricity?

	June 13	Dec 9
1. Very	36%	39%
2. Somewhat	43%	46%
3. Not very	7%	5%
4. Not at all	12%	8%
5. DK/ref	2%	2%

2. How important is the solar power industry to the Massachusetts economy?

	June 13	Dec 9
1. Very	27%	40%
2. Somewhat	30%	27%
3. Not very	21%	17%
4. Not at all	9%	8%
5. DK/ref	11%	8%

3. Do you know anyone who works in the renewable energy industry – as a researcher, installer, electrician, manufacturer, or other job?

	June 13	Dec 9
1. Yes	12%	17%
2. No	68%	65%
3. Not sure	20%	18%

4. Do you have solar panels at your home or place of residence?

	June 13	Dec 9
1. Yes	5%	9%
2. No	95%	91%

5. How about your city or town, has it installed solar systems at schools, public buildings or landfill sites?

	June 13	Dec 9
1. Yes	48%	32%
2. No	29%	35%
3. Not sure	13%	33%
5. DK/ref	10%	0%

IF YES:

6. How would you describe the benefits to your city or town in terms of tax revenue, energy savings or land use? Are they very significant, somewhat significant, not very significant or not significant at all?

1. Very significant	16%	Very + Somewhat	57%
2. Somewhat significant	41%		
3. Not very significant	21%	Not Very or Not Significant	40%
4. Not significant at all	19%		
5. Don't know	3%		

7. When considering the cost of solar power in comparison to other resources, such as oil and gas, is the cost of generating solar energy more expensive, less expensive or about the same cost of these fuels?

	June 13	Dec 9
1. More expensive	16%	15%
2. Less expensive	34%	39%
3. About the same	40%	35%
4. DK/ref	10%	11%

8. Now I'm going to read you two statements people have made about who benefits from government support for solar power systems and see which one you agree with most? (READ & ROTATE)

STATEMENT 1

The only people who benefit from tax credits and other subsidies for solar power systems are those who can afford to install these systems in their homes or businesses.

STATEMENT 2

Everyone benefits from tax credits and other subsidies for solar power systems because, as solar power becomes more widely available, it will reduce everyone's energy costs.

1. Those who can afford	26%
2. Everyone	42%
3. Neither	21%
4. Don't Know	12%

Recently, Gov Patrick quadrupled the state's solar power generation goal. Some folks think requiring utilities to provide that much solar power will increase electric rates significantly. Others say that in the long term it will bring electric rates down as well as create economic development benefits that come with clean energy.

9. How strongly do you support Gov Patrick decision to quadruple the state's solar power generation goal from 400 MW to 1600 MW, which is the equivalent of one large fossil fuel plant?

1. Very strongly support	33%	Very + Somewhat support	59%
2. Somewhat strongly support	26%		
3. Somewhat strongly oppose	14%	Very + Somewhat oppose	32%
4. Very strongly oppose	18%		
5. Don't know	9%		

10. How much have you heard about solar power systems receiving credits for putting extra power back on the grid, a policy known as net metering?

Net metering is a state policy to help homeowners, schools, communities and businesses adopt solar

energy. It allows solar energy systems to receive a financial credit for their extra power, which they can sell back to the utility at the same rate.

1. Quite a bit	26%
2. Some	28%
3. Not much	30%
4. Nothing	12%
5. Don't know	4%

11. Given what you know about net metering, how strongly do you support it? Would that be...

1. Very strongly support	27%	Very + Somewhat support	54%
2. Somewhat strongly support	27%		
3. Somewhat strongly oppose	13%	Very + Somewhat oppose	22%
4. Very strongly oppose	9%		
5. Don't know	24%		

12. The cap on how many solar energy systems can use net metering has almost been reached, how strongly would you support increasing the cap? Would that be...

1. Very strongly support	35%	Very + Somewhat support	59%
2. Somewhat strongly support	24%		
3. Somewhat strongly oppose	10%	Very + Somewhat oppose	20%
4. Very strongly oppose	10%		
5. Don't know	21%		

13. The State has a goal of 1600 MW of solar energy by 2020. Solar energy supporters want to set the net metering cap to 1600 MW as well. Would you support or oppose raising the MA cap to 1600 MW and would that be...

1. Very strongly support	28%	Very + Somewhat support	55%
2. Somewhat strongly support	27%		
3. Somewhat strongly oppose	11%	Very + Somewhat oppose	22%
4. Very strongly oppose	11%		
5. Don't know	23%		

Utilities are concerned about net metering. Energy bills have two parts, the cost of energy and the cost to distribute the energy over the electric grid, which includes the poles, wires, and maintenance.

The utilities say that solar energy systems pay little or no distribution costs to the utilities but the utilities are still required to provide energy to solar systems at night or as back up. Utilities argue that net metering, which is used by consumers with incomes high enough to purchase a solar energy system, will result in higher distribution costs for non solar system users especially urban consumers.

Solar providers say their own personal investments as well as town and city investments produce additional electricity when and where it's needed most. Excess solar power is resold by the utility to nearby energy customers and thereby saves the utilities from costly peak power generation and avoids

costly transmission grid upgrades, which, in turn, lowers costs for all customers.

14. Now that you have heard both sides, let me again ask you again how strongly would you support expanded net metering in Massachusetts?

1. Very strongly support	25%	Very + Somewhat support	55%
2. Somewhat strongly support	30%		
3. Somewhat strongly oppose	10%	Very + Somewhat oppose	23%
4. Very strongly oppose	13%		
5. Don't know	23%		

DEMOGRAPHICS

15. Are you or is anyone in your immediate family a member of a labor union or teacher's union?

1. Yes, self only	12%
2. Yes, family member only	16%
3. Yes, both self and family member	9%
4. No	64%

16. How would you describe yourself politically: Are you liberal, moderate, or conservative? (IF LIBERAL/CONSERVATIVE ASK: "Is that very liberal/conservative or just somewhat?")

1. Very liberal	17%
2. Somewhat liberal	20%
3. Moderate	28%
4. Somewhat conservative	17%
5. Very conservative	13%
6. Don't know	5%

17. With which ethnic group do you identify yourself: White or European, Black or African-American, Hispanic or Latino, Asian or Pacific Islander, or some other ethnic or racial background?

1. Hispanic/Latino	3%
2. White	70%
3. Black/African-American	8%
4. Asian/Pacific Islander	2%
5. OTHER	8%
6. Don't know	9%

18. Which age category best describes you?

1. 35 and under	19%
2. 36-45	21%
3. 46-55	22%
4. 56-65	19%
5. Over 65	19%

19. Education

1. Less than high school	2%
2. High School or GED	13%
3. Some college	23%
4. Bachelor's Degree	26%
5. Graduate Degree	35%

20. Which of the following ranges best describes your annual household income, is it:

1. Less than \$10,000	6%
2. Between \$10,000 and \$24,999	9%
3. Between \$25,000 and \$49,999	17%
4. Between \$50,000 and \$99,999	29%
5. Between \$100,000 and \$149,999	11%
6. Between \$150,000 and \$199,999	4%
7. \$200,000 or more	6%
8. Refused	17%

21. GENDER: (ASK ONLY IF NECESSARY)

1. Male	48%
2. Female	52%

22. REGISTRATION:

1. D	32%
2. R	11%
3. U	51%