

Californians Overwhelmingly Want Action on Oil Hazards, Just Transition

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A new poll finds that Californians overwhelmingly favor more action from their elected officials to protect them from the negative health impacts of oil operations. The poll of 1,606 adults, conducted by Change Research, found extremely high support for 2,500 foot public health and safety buffer zones between oil operations and schools, homes, hospitals and parks. It also found Californians supporting a Just Transition policy, which would transition oil and gas workers to a renewable energy job with family-sustaining wages and benefits, by a 2 to 1 margin. The survey, which was conducted as a follow-up to one conducted in January, found that the levels and intensity of support for more regulations and for Just Transition were higher than in a similar survey conducted in January.

79% Support Buffer Zones from Oil Extraction Sites

When respondents are asked about a 2,500 foot safety buffer zone around oil operations, support is quite high. Overall, 79% support buffer zones, while just 12% oppose them. This includes 62% who “strongly” support — up from 57% in January. Even in the most conservative regions of the state, large majorities support buffer zones, while small minorities oppose them. Support for a 2,500 foot buffer zone is strong among oil producing regions, as well as regions without heavy oil production. In Los Angeles County and the Central Valley, the states’ largest oil-producing regions, overall support was 81% and 84%, respectively, with solid support in other counties, such as San Diego, which saw 75% support. In both LA County and the Central Valley, more respondents *strongly* support a buffer zone than did in January: in LA County,

strong support increased from 63% to 66%, while in the Central Valley, it increased from 57% to 66%.

74% Think Elected Officials Should Act to Protect Citizens from Oil Hazards

60% say that elected officials should “definitely” take action — up from 57% in the January survey. And only 20% think officials should *not* act to protect their constituents from health impacts associated with oil production. Support is even higher among people of color: 78% of Latinx Californians, 77% of those of Asian descent, and 90% of African Americans support action. Both Los Angeles County and the Central Valley saw 77% support for legislative action, while 72% of respondents in San Diego County support action.

Californians Strongly Favor a Just Transition Policy

Respondents were told that Just Transition means transitioning people in the oil industry to clean energy jobs with family-sustaining wages and benefits. By a 2-to-1 margin, they thought such a policy would benefit their community: 48% said it would, while 24% said it wouldn't. This was up from a 45-26 margin in January. Communities of color were likeliest to believe it would benefit them: 52% of Latinx respondents said Yes, 21% No; among Asians it was 50-11, and among African Americans, 56-21.

Guaranteeing family-sustaining wages and benefits to oil workers who lose their jobs also significantly increases support for oil regulations. When asked without context, 56% support more regulations and 32% oppose. But when respondents are asked if they'd support regulations if they came with guaranteed family-sustaining wages and benefits, support increases to 67%, while opposition falls to 24%.

Californians also believe that higher education institutions have a role to play in a transition. By a 75-25 margin, they would support funding for community colleges and universities to offer programs to retrain oil and gas workers for renewable energy jobs.

[Topline comparisons for the two surveys can be found here.](#)

For media inquiries, please email press@changeresearch.com

Change Research surveyed 1,606 adults in California on behalf of Greenpeace USA from June 28-July 1, and 1,197 adults from January 4-6 on behalf of California Environmental Justice Alliance Action. The surveys were conducted online, using Change Research's Dynamic Online Sampling Engine. Post-stratification was done on

age, gender, race, education, region of the state, partisanship and 2016 presidential vote.