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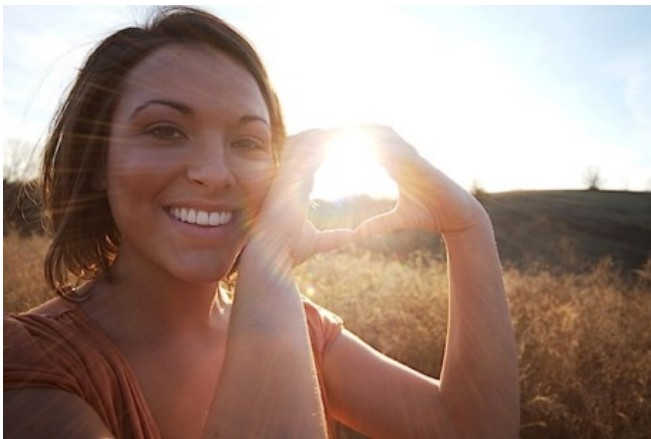
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Blog | Sustainable California

Numbers Don't Lie

Posted by Peter Allen, July 8, 2013 at 12:29 pm

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Recently, President Obama announced a bold initiative to move the country toward a more sustainable energy future. At the same time, a news story emerged in California indicating that Latino voters support this transition to a clean energy economy.

A poll commissioned by the William C. Velazquez Institute, one of the most respected Latino think tanks in America, and Californians Against Utilities Stopping Solar Energy (CAUSE), a new coalition of solar energy and clear air advocates, has found that 80% of Latino voters in Southern California believe "state legislators should make it a high priority to increase the amount of rooftop solar energy in California." The poll also found that 70% of Latinos support net energy metering, a policy in California and 42 other states that gives rooftop solar customers full credit for the excess energy they deliver back to the grid.

In response to the poll, long-time solar advocate and Executive Director of the Clean Coalition Craig Lewis commented, "These poll results reinforce the Clean Coalition's belief that there is strong public support for rooftop solar across all communities.

Net energy metering is an important policy for expanding rooftop solar, particularly within the residential segment, and this poll demonstrates strong support among voters for that policy." The

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Clean Coalition is a nonprofit that works to accelerate our country's transition to clean local energy.

Latinos are one of the fastest-growing voter groups in California. These poll results should therefore receive extra attention by state legislators, who must consider this overwhelming constituent support for net energy metering while facing a different message from Investor Owned Utilities (IOUs). The IOU monopolies are seeking to stymie competition from the rooftop solar industry, which offers consumers a choice for lower bills and cleaner electricity.

The poll results also show that 92% of Latino voters in Southern California agree with the statement that "increasing the use of clean, renewable energy is important to people like me." And, a vast majority of voters not only view rooftop solar important, but also affordable because of declining costs and innovative business models like third-party-ownership. A July 2012 report from the California Public Utilities Commission found a diversified rooftop solar market with two-thirds of the state's residential installations occurring in low and median income neighborhoods.

According to Lewis, "it is noteworthy that the California Solar Initiative (CSI) residential solar rebate has stepped down to zero in the majority of IOU service territories, and yet today more Californians are installing solar systems than ever. The industry has scaled, the demographics of residential adoption have expanded, and net metering is critical for continuing that expansion."

It is clear from this poll that voters want the choice to use rooftop solar, pay lower electricity bills, and contribute to cleaner air in their communities. Will California IOUs allow their customers this choice or continue to protect their own profits?

For additional poll results, please visit <http://causecleanair.org/>.

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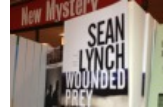
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