

TO: Center for American Progress
FROM: Hart Research Associates
DATE: December 19, 2014
RE: Public Opinion on the Use of Domestic Oil

On behalf of the Center for American Progress, Hart Research conducted a national survey of 1,101 likely 2016 voters. These interviews were conducted by telephone from December 5 to 9, 2014, 30% of which were reached on cell phones.

1) Large majorities of voters across party lines oppose allowing oil and gas companies to export more US oil and gas to foreign countries.

- A vast majority (82%) of voters support a proposal that would require oil companies to use oil that is produced in the United States from public lands and offshore to meet energy needs here at home instead of exporting US oil to foreign countries. This proposal receives broad support across the country, including among Democrats (84%), independents (82%), and Republicans (82%).
- Not only do voters want oil and gas companies to prioritize meeting domestic energy needs, they actively oppose increasing the amount of oil exported abroad. Sixty-nine percent (69%) of voters oppose (including 46% who strongly oppose) allowing oil and gas companies to export more US oil and gas to foreign countries, including 75% of Democrats, 69% of independents, and 61% of Republicans.

2) After hearing both sides of the debate, seven in 10 voters prefer investing in refinery capacity at home over lifting restrictions on the export of domestic oil.

- After hearing arguments for both sides (shown below), support for investing in domestic energy is strong across the country, demographic groups, and partisan affiliations.

Some people say that we need to lift restrictions on oil exports to allow US oil to be sold to foreign countries. They say that selling American oil to customers overseas will lead to more investment in US oil production, which will help to strengthen our economy and create jobs, and will lower prices at the pump. People who want to lift restrictions also say that exporting more US oil will help our allies abroad, improve American energy security, and reduce the power of foreign oil cartels.

Other people say that lifting restrictions on oil exports would only increase gas prices here at home while making oil companies richer. And because exporting oil overseas would reduce the amount available to meet our domestic needs, it could threaten American energy security. They say that instead we should invest in more refinery capacity here at home so that more US oil can be refined and sold domestically, creating jobs and keeping energy prices low.

	Lift restrictions on oil exports	Invest in more refinery capacity at home
All	15	71
Democrats	16	71
Independents	12	74
Republicans	16	69
Northeast	15	71
South	16	67
Midwest	10	77