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New poll shows Californians overwhelmingly back oil drilling restrictions

The poll found 71 percent of likely voters support a law passed in 2022 to ban and slowly phase out neighborhood oil drilling. | Mario Tama/Getty Images



BY **BLANCA BEGERT**

Californians want to keep an existing law prohibiting oil and gas drilling near schools, homes and hospitals, according to [a new poll](#) shared exclusively with POLITICO. They also support offshore wind turbines. But they're more split on the California Air Resources Board's 2022 decision to ban the sale of gas-powered cars after 2035.

The poll, conducted by University of Southern California, California State University, Long Beach, and Cal Poly Pomona, found 71 percent of likely voters support [CA SB1137 \(21R\)](#), a law passed in 2022 to ban and slowly phase out neighborhood oil drilling that the oil industry is trying to repeal via a November ballot measure. While the poll found only 20 percent of likely voters favor a repeal, it noted that the final wording of the proposition will be important for shaping the vote outcome.

A majority of Californians also favored offshore wind turbines, with 41 percent of voters strongly supporting it for electricity generation, 32 percent somewhat supporting it, 7 percent somewhat opposed and 12 percent strongly opposed. Currently California has no offshore wind although there are several projects in development.

Poll respondents were polarized on the state's ruling to require only zero-emission vehicle sales after 2035. About half, 52 percent, agreed with the policy, and 48 percent did not. California has already surpassed 25 percent electric vehicle sales of the total new car market share last year, but challenges with charging infrastructure and affordability remain. In a recent U.S. Senate primary debate, two out of the three leading Democratic candidates [questioned the feasibility](#) of the ban.

Broadly, when asked if they approved of the job Gov. Gavin Newsom was doing on the environment, the majority — 54 percent — approved. Another 36 percent disapproved, and 10 percent said they didn't know.

The survey was conducted Jan. 21-29 and included 1,416 online respondents who were randomly selected using voter records and surveyed in English and Spanish. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 2.6 percentage points.