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New Poll: North Carolinians tired of volatile gas prices, want more renewable fuel

New survey details what N. Carolina residents cut out of their budgets when gas prices spike; their attitudes toward oil and policies that support biofuels

76% of North Carolinians want more renewable fuel at gas stations

57% of North Carolinians blame the oil industry for high gas prices

76% of North Carolinians support the federal Renewable Fuel Standard

RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA (June 26, 2013) – With summer driving season here, a new public opinion poll gauges the consumer impacts of constantly fluctuating gas prices and reveals what residents of North Carolina think is the solution: renewable fuel.

Overwhelmingly, Americans think the nation should be using more renewable fuel (80%) and support the one policy, the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS), that is making that happen (73%). For an infographic, click [here](#).

The survey, conducted by Research Now and commissioned jointly by Fuels America and the Biofuels Center of North Carolina, identifies specific budget items families give up when they are faced with high gas prices, and their attitudes around oil, renewable fuel and the impacts both have on the economy and environment. The poll was conducted nationally, and in North Carolina.

What volatile gas prices mean for North Carolinians

Four of the top five things that North Carolina residents give up when faced with high gas prices are social or family related activities, serving to highlight the difficult choices they face as a result of high and volatile oil prices:

- **58% said that if gas prices go up, they would likely to take fewer road trips to visit friends and family**
- **34% responded they would enjoy fewer meals out at restaurants**



- **14% would cut back on clothes shopping**
- **10% would spend less on gifts for birthdays and holidays**

The new normal: unpredictable gas prices, brought to you by the oil industry

As North Carolinians make tough choices, it is also clear who is at fault: 57% blame the oil industry for high gas prices. That percentage was slightly lower than the 59% of respondents who blame oil companies nationwide.

“Renewable fuels are working for North Carolina – and that’s reflected in these numbers,” Adam Monroe, Americas Regional President of Novozymes, said. “Renewable fuels are generating investment and jobs in our state, and saving drivers money to spend on their families. Our local innovation can lead America in developing these fuels. That’s why we need policies like the Renewable Fuel Standard in place.”

North Carolinians want less oil and more renewable fuel

Poll results indicated:

- Nearly four in five respondents (79%) believe that transitioning the state’s economy from one that depends on oil to one that uses more renewable fuel is a good idea.
- The trend extends to personal choices as well - three in four said they want more renewable fuel options at gas stations (76%).
- 70% of North Carolina respondents believe renewable fuel is a more sustainable energy source than oil.
- 70% of North Carolina respondents believe increasing the amount of renewable fuel we use, and reducing the amount of oil we import, is critical to our national security.
- 65% of North Carolina respondents agree that renewable fuel helps reduce the cost of gas and saves consumers money at the pump.

Overwhelmingly, North Carolinians think the nation should be using more renewable fuel (79%) and support the one policy, the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS), that is making that happen. Seventy-six percent of North Carolina respondents support the policy, compared to 73% nationwide.

“The poll reveals that a large majority of North Carolinians strongly agree with state and national trends: committed policy must bring more renewable fuels to the mix for clear economic, personal, strategic, and environmental benefits,” said Steven Burke, President and CEO of the Biofuels Center of North Carolina.

Overall support for renewable fuel

The poll’s findings demonstrate that the vast majority of North Carolinians are seriously impacted by high gas prices, blame oil companies for that situation, and support renewable fuel and the only policy supporting the growth of renewable fuel in the U.S. – the RFS.



“From the economic damages of extreme weather fueled by climate change to the high costs of water and air pollution when petroleum is spilled or burned, we are paying the price every day for our reliance on oil. Alternatives like renewable fuel offer consumers a choice, bringing down prices for individual and businesses and ensuring all of us a cleaner, more sustainable future,” said Vice Admiral [Dennis V. McGinn](#) (USN, ret.), President and CEO of the American Council on Renewable Energy.

Methodology

The survey was conducted on behalf of Fuels America and the Biofuels Center of North Carolina via an online panel by Research Now, an independent research company. Interviews were conducted between June 7 and June 12, 2013. The national sample was a representative audience of 1000 adults (18+) nationwide yielding a margin of error of +/- 3.1 %. The North Carolina sample was a representative audience of 400 adults (18+) statewide yielding a margin of error of +/- 4.9%. Both the national and North Carolina poll results are available upon request.

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About Fuels America

Fuels America is a coalition of organizations committed to protecting America’s Renewable Fuel Standard and promoting the benefits of all types of renewable fuel already growing in America. Fuels America is founded on a simple core principle: Renewable fuel is good for the U.S. economy, for our nation’s energy security and for the environment. Visit us at www.fuelsamerica.org.

About the Biofuels Center of North Carolina

The long-term task of the Biofuels Center of North Carolina is to develop a statewide biofuels industry sector to reduce the state's dependence on imported petroleum. The Center's mandate to do so is from the General Assembly and the framework for doing so is provided by North Carolina's Strategic Plan for Biofuels Leadership.