



# PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES

## MEMORANDUM

TO: INTERESTED PARTIES

FROM: GLEN BOLGER

RE: KEY FINDINGS – SURVEY IN Grant COUNTY, SOUTH DAKOTA

DATE: MAY 1, 2018

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### **Methodology**

*Public Opinion Strategies is pleased to present the key findings of a survey conducted in three counties in South Dakota – Codington, Deuel, and Grant. The survey was conducted April 22-25, 2018, with 300 registered voters across the counties, with 100 interviews conducted in each county. There were 120 interviews (40 per county) conducted with cell phone respondents.*

### **Key Findings**

**1. *The political environment in Grant County is positive.***

Voters are optimistic about the direction of the county, as 77% say it is going in the right direction and 16% say it is off on the wrong track.

The Grant County Board of Commissioners gets high marks from voters, as 70% approve and 17% disapprove.

**2. *County voters support the state putting more emphasis on producing energy from wind, solar, and natural gas. They prefer less emphasis on coal and nuclear power.***

Survey participants were asked about five different energy sources, and asked for each whether the state should put more emphasis, less emphasis, or about the same emphasis as it does now on producing energy from each of the following:

	<u>Wind</u>	<u>Solar</u>	<u>Natural gas</u>	<u>Coal</u>	<u>Nuclear</u>
More emphasis	48%	68%	47%	29%	9%
Less emphasis	19%	15%	6%	29%	57%
About the same	30%	14%	43%	38%	27%

3. ***A strong majority of county voters say it is important for state and local governments to support the development of wind energy sources to help meet South Dakota's need for electricity.***

Fully 80% of Grant County voters say it is important, while just 20% say it is not important.

Similarly, 62% say wind-generated energy should be a part of the state's overall electricity mix, while 36% say South Dakota should focus on other methods of generating energy.

4. ***A strong majority of Grant County voters support the development of a wind energy farm in their county.***

Fully 68% of Grant County voters support the development of a wind energy farm in their county. Only 25% oppose.

5. ***Grant County voters overwhelmingly support wind even when we tested a pro and con message question on wind energy.***

Here is the wording of the question we asked:

"I am going to read you two **(additional)** statements about wind energy, and please tell me which one comes closest to your own opinion... **(ROTATE)**

73% We should encourage wind energy companies to invest more in our state because additional wind energy projects will create more jobs in South Dakota and continue to keep our air clean.

...or...

22% We should prohibit the construction of additional wind energy projects in South Dakota because they would ruin scenic areas and are not worth investing in."

6. ***Grant County voters are similar to those in Codington and Deuel; voters across all three counties strongly support wind energy development.***

By 72%-25%, voters in the three counties say we should be encouraging wind energy companies to invest in South Dakota. And, by a ratio of three to one, voters believe South Dakota should be encouraging wind energy development.

#### **The Bottom Line**

Grant County voters strongly support the development of a wind energy farm in their county.