



TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Lori Weigel and Robert Blizzard
Public Opinion Strategies

RE: Key Findings from a Survey of Ohio Voters Regarding Clean Ohio Funding

DATE: May 17, 2011

A recently completed survey of Ohio voters conducted by Public Opinion Strategies shows a strong voter preference for funding all parts of the Clean Ohio program, even during difficult budget times. The survey of 600 voters which has a margin of error of $\pm 4.0\%$ was conducted May 11-12, 2011.

Voters were provided with some neutral background regarding the Clean Ohio program and then asked which of two competing viewpoints comes closest to their own view, with a majority siding with ensuring full funding of the program:

“Now, as you may know, in 2008, Ohio voters passed a constitutional amendment to continue funding the Clean Ohio program for environmental conservation and revitalization. While the General Assembly has provided funding to go forward for brown field clean-up, it has not allowed any funding for preservation of natural areas, wildlife habitat, farmland, parks or trails as authorized under the amendment. Knowing this, please tell me which statement comes closest to your view.”

56% (45% strongly) side with the view that...

Some people say elected officials should follow through on maintaining Clean Ohio's funding for protection of natural areas, wildlife habitat and farmland.

38% (26% strongly) side with the view that...

Other people say that given the state's budget deficit, it is appropriate for elected officials to not fund all of the Clean Ohio program at this time, so they can use these funds for other needs.

As one can see, not only do a majority of Ohio voters side with funding all parts of Clean Ohio, but the intensity of that sentiment is significantly stronger than among those who believe the funds should be used for other state needs. Those who strongly side with complete funding for Clean Ohio out-number those who strongly feel funds should be used for other needs among nearly all key sub-groups. This is significant in that those who hold strong feelings about an issue are less likely to shift those views over time and more likely to be motivated to act on an issue.

Overall, the view that Clean Ohio funding for protection of natural areas, wildlife habitat and farmland should be allowed to move forward is evident across a number of sub-groups, including...

- Among men (57% maintain funding, 39% do not fund) and women (56% maintain funding, 37% do not fund);

- In the major media markets, including Columbus (66% maintain funding, 30% do not fund), Cleveland (55% maintain funding, 37% do not fund), and Cincinnati (59% maintain funding, 35% do not fund);
- Across age groups, particularly among younger voters under age 45 (60% maintain funding, 35% do not fund);
- Among both Whites (57% maintain funding, 35% do not fund) and African Americans (53% maintain funding, 43% do not fund);
- Among parents (57% maintain funding, 38% do not fund) and those without children at home (56% maintain funding, 38% do not fund);
- Across all education and income sub-groups, including voters with household incomes under \$60,000 (56% maintain funding, 40% do not fund) and those with household incomes of \$60,000 or more (60% maintain funding, 36% do not fund); and
- Among Democrats (66% maintain funding, 29% do not fund), Independents (54% maintain funding, 42% do not fund), and a closer division among Republicans (48% maintain funding, 46% do not fund).

We know from past research that voters hold positive views of the Clean Ohio program; support the conservation of natural areas, wildlife habitat and farmland in the state; and now this most recent data demonstrates their continued support for ensuring that the funding as authorized under the 2008 amendment goes forward.