

TO: Interested Parties
 FROM: Amy Levin, Lindsay Vermeyen, Benenson Strategy Group
 RE: Recent Polling on Rooftop Solar in California
 DATE: March 15, 2021

Our recent poll shows widespread support for California’s existing net metering policy, and widespread *opposition* to a proposal that reduces credits for people who contribute solar power to the electric grid.

- **More than 7 in 10 voters want the state of California to do more to encourage the use of solar power:** 71% believe the state of California should be doing more to encourage the use of solar power, 14% say it should do about the same as what it currently does, and just 14% say it should be doing less.
 - **Among Democrats:** 85% want California to do more, 7% want California to do less.
 - **Among Independents:** 68% want California to do more, 17% want California to do less.
 - **Among Republicans:** 48% want California to do more, 24% want California to do less.
- **A whopping 80% of California voters support net metering after a neutral description, and just 11% oppose it.**
 - **The explanation read:** *Currently, when people have rooftop solar panels, those panels can sometimes produce more electricity from the sun than that home or building needs. When that happens, this extra electricity goes into the electric grid to be used by someone nearby. California's net metering program compensates people who have rooftop solar for their extra electricity. They receive a bill credit close to the full rate consumers otherwise pay for that electricity. The credit helps reduce the electricity bill for people who have rooftop solar.*
- **Not surprisingly then, nearly two thirds of voters oppose a proposal** to “reduce the credit that people who have rooftop solar receive from their local utility for any extra electricity that their rooftop solar generates and feeds back to the grid.”
 - 64% oppose the proposal to reduce the credit, with only 25% supporting it.

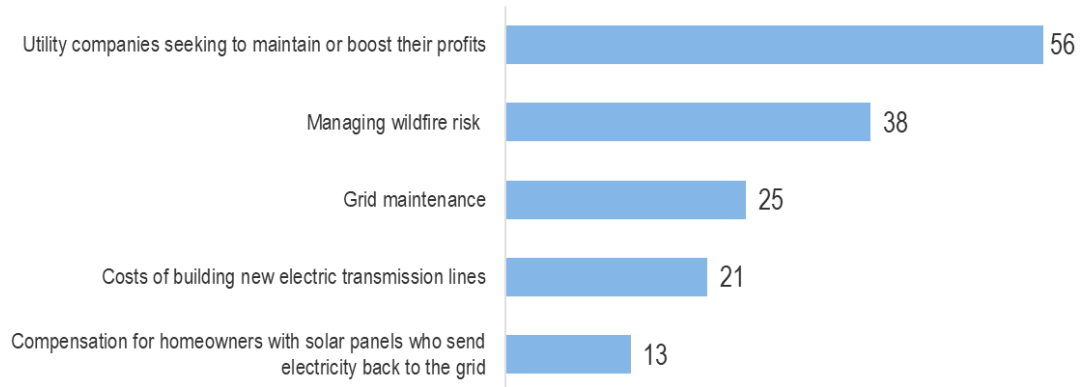
This proposal would reduce the credit that people who have rooftop solar receive from their local utility for any extra electricity that their rooftop solar generates and feeds back to the grid.

Do you support or oppose allowing utility companies to reduce the credits they give to people who contribute solar power to the electric grid?



- **Certainly, keeping energy bills low is a priority for California voters – and they are far more likely to blame rising electricity bills on utility company profits than anything related to solar.**

Which of the following do you think are the TWO main reasons for recent increases in electricity bills in California?



- Later in the poll, after voters have heard messages from supporters and opponents of the current net metering policy, they were presented with the following and overwhelmingly agreed with supporters of the current net metering policy.
 - **72% agree that:** Half of California’s rooftop solar is found in working and middle-class neighborhoods. Net metering has brought costs down and is essential to make it possible for more people to get solar power. We can’t go back to a time when only the rich could afford it.
 - **Only 27% agree with:** The current credits for net metering give a massive subsidy to wealthy homeowners who can afford to install huge, pricey solar power systems. But it’s working and middle-class Californians who foot the bill in the form of higher energy costs.

Methodology: Benenson Strategy Group conducted 811 interviews with registered voters in California from February 22-26, 2021. Interviews were conducted using SMS text-to-web services, on landline phones, and with online panels. The sample was weighted to ensure it was proportionately representative of registered voters in California. The margin of sampling error is $\pm 3.46\%$ for the full sample at the 95% confidence level.