

**TO:** Interested parties  
**FROM:** Brian C. Tringali, The Tarrance Group; and Molly O’Shaughnessy, EMC Research  
**RE:** Ohio Statewide Survey on the Repeal of HB6  
**DATE:** August 18, 2020

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From August 6-11, 2020, EMC Research conducted a statewide multimodal survey of likely November 2020 voters in Ohio, reaching voters with live telephone interviews as well as through SMS text message and email. The Tarrance Group participated in the design of the survey instrument, as well as research analysis. The margin of error for this survey was  $\pm 4$  percentage points at a confidence interval of 95%.

The focus of the survey was the potential repeal of House Bill 6, a recently passed bailout program for the nuclear industry in Ohio. The Ohio electorate already favors repeal of the measure, even before they are made concretely aware of the felony charges surrounding the passing of this measure in an unfolding political and industry scandal.

**Key Findings**

- Awareness of HB6 is surprisingly high, as more than half (53%) of Ohioans have heard of it. Even without any description given, respondents already tie HB6 to the words scandal, bailout, Larry Householder and the need to repeal.
- Without any additional information, over half (55%) of Ohioans currently oppose HB6. Similarly, 56% are already interested in its repeal. It must be emphasized that *this is before any new information is provided to respondents*.
- After just one summary statement both in support of and against HB6, respondents move to 64% in favor of repeal. Only 28% of the total electorate remains in support of the existing legislation.

	Uninformed ballot	Informed ballot
Support HB6 repeal	56%	64%
Don’t know/Refused	10%	8%
Oppose HB6 repeal	34%	28%

- A key finding early in the survey is that **a plurality of voters (56%) would be more likely to support a state legislator who supported repeal of HB6**. This holds true among a majority of Republicans and Independents. The figure rises to two-thirds among those most likely to vote. After hearing messaging, two-thirds of voters say they would likely support a legislator; a 10% increase from the initial ask.
- Former State House Speaker Larry Householder is not universally known among Ohio voters, but those that are aware of him are decidedly negative. Just over 60% have heard of Householder and a majority (54%) are unfavorable toward him, with 45% strongly unfavorable.

- While the electric utility industry has an image only slightly more favorable than unfavorable, the image for FirstEnergy has slipped below that level. Among Ohio voters, 30% are favorable toward FirstEnergy and 41% are unfavorable. Energy efficiency and solar energy garner the highest favorable ratings. It is worth noting that among types of energy producers, only the coal industry has a lower rating than the nuclear industry in Ohio.
- There are a few energy reforms that appear in the survey after the ballots on HB6. Voters support the pillars of a repeal and replacement plan, including investigating FirstEnergy, a zero-carbon energy future, and an equity focused move to clean energy.

	Support	Oppose
Prohibiting utilities from direct lobbying and campaign contributions to current or future lawmakers, and requiring the Public Utilities Commission to investigate FirstEnergy and consider revoking its ability to operate as a provider in Ohio.	76%	17%
Putting Ohio on a path to a zero-carbon energy future where by 2050, we meet our energy needs without causing any emissions that contribute to pollution and climate change.	64%	33%
Ensuring that Ohio’s energy policy creates cost savings, air quality improvement and job creation in low-income communities and in areas that bear the biggest impacts of energy related air pollution.	78%	17%

- After hearing about some potential energy reforms, **67% of voters support repealing HB6 and replacing it with a clean energy plan**, with 42% strongly supporting repeal and replace.
- The survey included other messages regarding the HB6 scandal and Ohio’s current political climate that could continue to move the electorate. One of these powerful messages reads:

*As COVID-19 ravages our economy, HB6 would put more than 110,000 jobs at risk. Ohio should be investing in clean and renewable energy technologies of the future that create good jobs and protect clean air for our children and grandchildren, not bailing out the failed energy sources of the past.*

Sixty-four percent (64%) of Ohioans found this message to be convincing. This and similar results suggest that the Ohio electorate remains open to future messaging regarding HB6 and Ohio’s energy future.

- Seven out of ten voters say they are likely to sign a petition to place HB6 on the ballot for repeal if the Legislature does not repeal it themselves.