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Poll: Voters Overwhelmingly Back Great Lakes Tunnel Project, Want Regulators to Move Forward with Permitting

Energy Infrastructure Project Enjoys Strong Bipartisan Support

Lansing, Mich – Michigan voters from across the political spectrum strongly back construction of the Great Lakes Tunnel, according to a new poll conducted by TargetPoint Consulting. Majorities of Democrats, Republicans and Independents support construction of the Tunnel, believe it's the best solution for Line 5, and want the state to move forward immediately with permitting for the project, according to the new survey results.

The Great Lakes Tunnel will move a portion of Line 5 out of the water in the Straits of Mackinac and place it into a state-of-the-art tunnel buried deep below the lakebed, providing multiple layers of protection and, according to an analysis by the state of Michigan, make the chances of a leak into the Straits virtually zero.

"It is clear that voters across Michigan, of all political persuasions and across many different backgrounds, support the Great Lakes Tunnel," said Michael Meyers, President of TargetPoint Consulting. "They recognize its value both from an energy security standpoint as well as its many environmental advantages. Michigan's political leaders would be well-served to listen to the voice of the people and move forward with a permitting process that ensures both safe and timely construction of the Great Lakes Tunnel."

Among key findings from the poll:

60% of voters surveyed support the Tunnel, with only 16% opposed.

Support for the Tunnel is broad and bipartisan. 73% of Republicans support construction, with only 7% opposed. 57% of Independents back the building project, with only 20% opposed, and Democrats support it more than 2 to 1, with 52% in support and just 21% opposed.

Tunnel opponents at a recent meeting of the Michigan Public Service Commission frequently asked regulators to block the energy infrastructure project to force Michigan to use less fossil fuels. Pollsters asked voters if they sided with those Tunnel opponents or with those who want to begin construction on the Tunnel. **63% of respondents back Tunnel construction, with only 21% siding with opponents.**

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Voters were also asked their level of support for the Tunnel during the state’s permitting process. **Overall, 65% of respondents hope the state moves forward with permitting quickly.** 44% believed that overall the Tunnel is the “best solution” to a difficult problem and that state agencies should move forward, while another 21% agreed the Tunnel is a “great solution,” encouraging state agencies to begin the permitting process as quickly as possible. Only 21% believe the risks associated with any tunnel or pipeline in the Great Lakes are too great, and the project should be rejected, even if it means an interruption of our state’s energy supply.

“Michigan workers, businesses and families overwhelmingly back the Great Lakes Tunnel,” said Geno Alessandrini, Business Manager for the Michigan Laborers Union. “The Tunnel is a \$500 million private investment in the state’s energy infrastructure, will protect the Great Lakes, and mean millions of man hours in new labor for the state’s economy. No wonder Republicans, Democrats and Independents are standing together asking state regulators to move forward with permits.”

Leading Michigan voices from labor, business and industry have formed the Great Lakes Michigan Jobs coalition, have offered public comment before the Michigan Public Service Commission, and filed individual public comments with the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy, and other regulatory bodies in support of the Tunnel project. They are speaking out together, encouraging state and federal agencies currently reviewing permit applications – and all Michiganders – to embrace the Tunnel project, and the lakes and jobs it protects.

The coalition has also submitted to regulators over 4,000 individual public comment cards and petition signatures from union members, job creators, and individuals who support construction of the Great Lakes Tunnel.

The coalition is made up of diverse organizations, including:

- Lake Superior Community Partnership
- Michigan Building and Construction Trades Council
- Michigan Chamber of Commerce
- Michigan Chemistry Council
- Michigan Laborers Union
- Michigan Manufacturers Association
- Michigan Oil and Gas Association
- Michigan Petroleum Association
- Michigan Propane Gas Association
- Midland Business Alliance
- National Federation of Independent Business Michigan
- Operating Engineers 324
- Small Business Association of Michigan
- American Petroleum Institute

The poll of 800 registered voters was conducted September 15 through September 18, and has a margin of error of +/- 3.46%. 40% of the interviews were conducted with voters reached on cell phones.

To learn more about the coalition, the Great Lakes Tunnel project or to join the coalition, visit GreatLakesMichiganJobs.com.