



**MICROGRID  
KNOWLEDGE**

*Virtual Conference*

# Microgrids in an Election Year



# Voter Views on Microgrids and Other Energy Alternatives

**Moderator:** Matt Roberts (Microgrid Knowledge) Director of Strategic Growth and Development

## Speakers:

1. Vince Breglio (Vince Breglio and Associates) Pollster
2. Andrea Camp (Civil Society Institute) Senior Project Manager

## Resources:

- Speaker Bios
- Ask the Experts: Q&A at End
- Microgrid Resources Library

# Survey: Infrastructure Priorities

**Modernizing our electrical grid system is consistently ranked among the top three priority infrastructure projects by voters**

Priority data for seven national infrastructure projects (Partial table: Project Percent Ranked among Top Three National Infrastructure Projects)	Column N %
Repairing America's roads and bridges	57.3%
Modernizing America's water and sewage systems	55.7%
<b>Modernizing our electrical grid by incorporating more renewable energy sources</b>	<b>54.6%</b>
Stabilizing neighborhoods	43.0%
Rebuilding America's schools	34.7%
Rebuilding veterans administration hospitals and facilities	33.3%
Improving America's airports and airspace	21.3%

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Support for modernization of the grid comes from the following demographic groups:

- Men (57%)
- Voters over 50 (57%)
- Republicans (57%) and Independents (57%)

# Survey: The Introduction to Microgrids



**To test support of microgrids we shared the following description and depiction of microgrids.**

A microgrid is designed to serve an entire community – a neighborhood, a city, a military base, a hospital, or other community of electricity consumers. Microgrids connect various sources of electricity generation such as traditional power plants, solar energy, wind energy and other sources like fuel cells that can operate as part of a network but also independently.

Microgrids manage the storage of electricity from renewable sources and the distribution of electricity from all sources to consumers in the most efficient and inexpensive way thru the use of computer networks. Ultimately as more communities develop and use microgrids and connect to other near-by communities who also are using microgrid technology, a system of microgrids could replace the existing system of large centralized national / regional electrical grids that cross thousands of miles and many different states.

# Survey: Reactions to the Microgrid Concept

- When microgrids are introduced with an accompanying graphic, a majority of all voters (83%) say they have never heard of this concept (56%) or have heard of it but had the wrong impression (27%).
- The least informed audiences include:
  - Men (87%)
  - 18 – 34 year olds (95%)
  - College graduates (90%)

# Survey: Reactions to the Microgrid Concept

- Among all voters, two out of three (67%) express interest in learning more about microgrids.

Expressed interest is strongest among:

- Women (71%)
- Family age adults (34-50) (87%)
- HS Grads (72%); Post College Grads (71%)
- Independents (73%); Democrats (79%)
- African Americans (98%)

# Voters Believe Microgrids Will Reduce Dependence on Fossil Fuels

- A majority (52%) of all voters agree that if electrical grid modernization is implemented through microgrids, fossil fuels will be reduced and renewable energy sources will be increased.
- Strongest agreement comes from:
  - Young voters 18-24 (62%); 25 – 39 (57%)
  - Better educated voters (some college (57%); college grad or higher (55%))
  - Democrats (61%)

# Persuasive Microgrid Messages

Pro Microgrid Messages	Political party affiliation			
	Republican	Independent / Other	Democrat	All Voters Total
	N=395	N=86	N=519	N=1000
<b>On Updating our Infrastructure:</b> Modernization of our national electrical grid must be a top priority in any plan to update America's aging infrastructure. Rapid adoption of community-based micro grid systems will provide a safer and more reliable electricity system while saving consumers money.	53.2%	35.9%	61.7%	57.0%
<b>On Reducing Climate Damage:</b> We need to adopt better ways to reduce damage to our climate. Adoption of micro grid technology will reduce air pollution and protect communities during extended power outages caused by extreme weather events.	41.6%	53.4%	65.8%	55.2%
<b>On National Security:</b> National security experts caution that there are weaknesses in our current national electrical grid system that leaves us vulnerable to hackers and terrorists. The rapid adoption of community-sized micro grids will enhance electrical grid security and protect us from hackers.	57.1%	37.2%	52.6%	53.9%

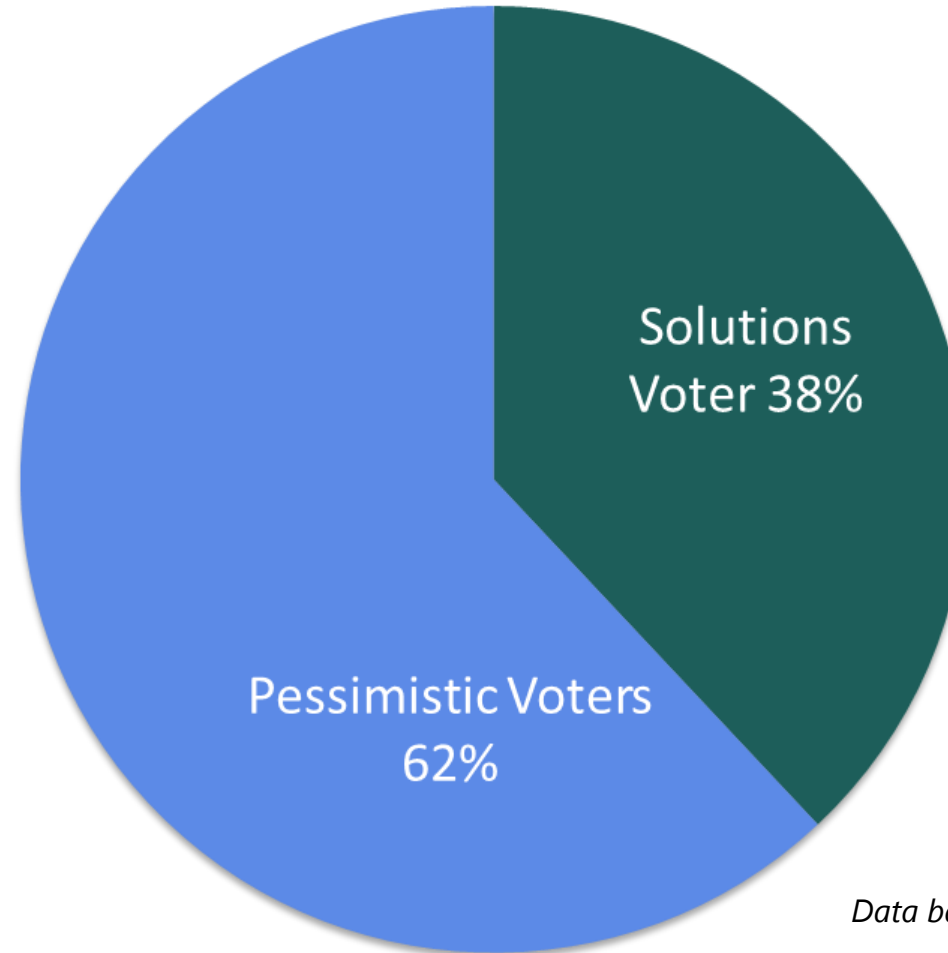
- Infrastructure: Modernizing our electrical grid with microgrid technology works best with Women, all Age Groups, HS grads / BA +, Whites / Hispanics, All income groups, and Democrats
- Reducing climate change is a strong favorite of Democrats, Women, Younger Voters, and Hispanics
- National defense works best with Republicans, Whites, Older Voters, Higher incomes

# Millennial Voters: Support Grid Modernization As a Priority and More Optimistic About Its Progress

		Voters Under 40		All Voters
		18 – 24 (N=119)	25-39 (N=257)	N=1000
		Column N %	Column N %	Column N %
Optimism - Rebuilding and modernizing our national electrical grid systems.	Optimistic	34.2%	30.9%	26.9%
“Modernizing America’s national electrical grid systems” will move America away from its reliance on fossil fuels and toward more sustainable energy sources such as wind and solar.”	Agree	61.8%	56.5%	51.9%

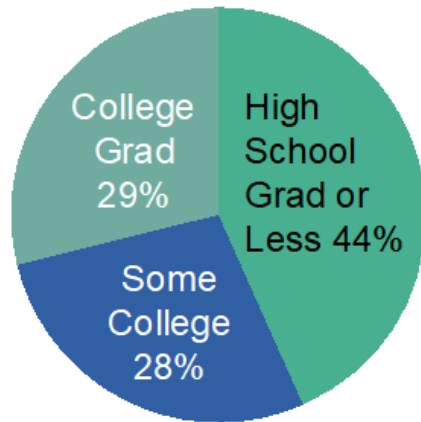
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# The Solutions Voter: A Significant Part of the Electorate

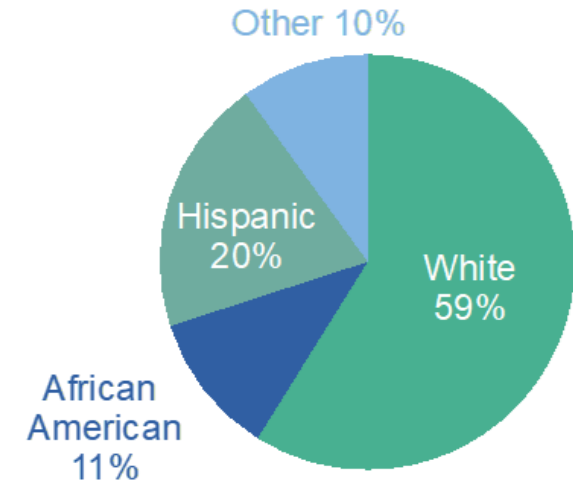


*Data based on CSI's October 2019 survey*

# Solutions Voter: Demographics

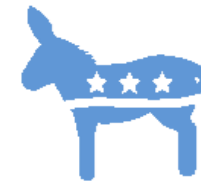


**56%**  
tend to be under  
50 years old



37% Republican

23% Independent



31% Democrat

9% Other

# Solutions Voters On Microgrids: In Their Own Words

- 64% of Solutions Voters agree that microgrids will move us away from fossil fuels and toward renewable energy.

“We can only move towards more sustainable energy—solar and wind—if the grid can handle it. Grid updates are critical to moving towards a more sustainable energy model.”

“Renewable energy is the way of the future to protect our planet, our children, our health.”

“Because we have this new technology it needs to be implemented EVERYWHERE.”

“The microgrid will make use of renewable resources. It will gradually move us away from fossil fuels but it will take longer than a decade.”

# Takeaways/Questions

- **Knowledge about microgrids leads to support for microgrids.** This is particularly relevant since the opportunity now exists to make a powerful case for microgrids based on the potential role for infrastructure investments in the wake of economic fallout from COVID-19.
- **Investing in good-paying jobs in the wake of the current economic crisis will be crucial.** Jobs associated with expanding microgrids have the additional benefits of greater energy efficiency, energy resiliency, local control, and facilitating transition to electric vehicles.
- **Recovering from the current crisis is an opportunity to move the country forward.** A more resilient electric grid that focuses on microgrids, in addition to creating more jobs, will strengthen national security and protect our air and water.
- **We need to know more.** It's important to continue research on voter views and industry views in the new COVID-19 political climate to learn today's challenges and opportunities in both education and policy on microgrids.

# Microgrid Knowledge Virtual Conference Resource Library

## Recommended Resources

- Microgrid Knowledge Newsletter

## Microgrid Resource Library

- Visit [ThinkMicrogrid.com](https://ThinkMicrogrid.com)

## Microgrid Policy Workshop:

- Nov. 18 at Microgrid 2020 – Philadelphia, PA



# Microgrid 2020 LIVE Conference – Nov. 18-20

Philadelphia, PA

**Finance Session:** *How to Navigate the Regulatory Jungle and Come out Safely on the Other Side*

Plus 90 speakers in 30+ sessions on best practices

- 35 exhibitors
- Networking opportunities





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# Thank You!

*6/2/20 Sessions: Welcome and Overview on at 9:45 AM EDT*

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# Methodology

- *Data from two different national surveys are presented in these tables*
  - *Microgrid Qualitative Survey – On-line qualitative discussion with 400 Solutions Voters completed in August of 2019 conduct by Qualtrix.*
  - *Solution Voter Survey – National on-line survey of 1000 eligible voters 18 and older completed in October of 2019 conducted by IPSOS.*