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To: Interested Parties  
Cc: Bold Nebraska  
From: Joshua Ulibarri and Celinda Lake  
Re: Voter Attitudes Towards a Proposition to Regulate Oil Pipelines <sup>i</sup>  
Date: September 8, 2011

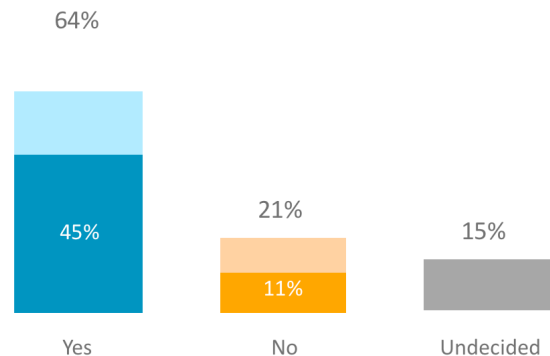
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**Our recent statewide survey in Nebraska shows that voters are poised to vote yes on a potential ballot proposition that would officially authorize the state to regulate oil pipeline routes, water paths and safety plans.**

Key findings include:

- When asked how they would vote using language approximating that for a 2012 ballot, **64% of voters say they would vote yes on this proposition**, while just 21% would vote no (combined split samples). <sup>ii</sup> Support for the initiative is broad and deep and does not drop below 54% among any major demographic group including men and women, younger and older voters, Democrats, independents and Republicans, as well as voters in every region of Nebraska.

Support for the Proposition to Regulate Pipelines



- Generally, proposition proponents look for ballot questions to have total support in the 60s and strong support in the 40s. Support at that level demonstrates the needed depth and breadth to stand up in a heated campaign. At this time, strong support for the initiative stands at 45%, and total support comes in at 64%, with both measures meeting the established criterion.
- Voters not only indicate they will vote yes on the proposition, **voters also indicate general opposition to the Keystone XL Pipeline**. Forty-seven percent of voters oppose the pipeline compared to 33% who support it. Opposition is intense (37% strongly oppose it), while support is weaker (only 21% strongly favor it).

- **Public opinion at this time is solid.** Even after hearing balanced arguments on both sides of the argument (both against and in support of the proposition), support does not drop. At the surveys' conclusion, total support stands at 63% and strong support is 43% (total opposition finishes at just 20%).
- Support for the proposition is buttressed by two core elements: gaining local authority to protect their state against companies focused on profit and using that authority to protect Nebraska's natural resources.
  - Fifty-seven percent of voters are very convinced to vote yes and give **Nebraska authority to regulate pipelines because of the possible damage** to the Sandhills and Ogallala aquifer.
  - Fifty-six percent of voters are very convinced to vote yes because **there currently is no state agency in charge of regulating oil routes** and current paths are set by oil companies without input from Nebraskans.
  - Fifty-three percent of voters are very convinced to vote yes because **these pipelines are risky, and an independent analysis says the line can expect up to 90 leaks** even as TransCanada assumes 12 leaks in the pipeline's lifetime.

Additionally, Nebraskans are motivated to support the following changes:

- Sixty-eight percent strongly support prohibiting **foreign-owned corporations from taking private land** through eminent domain (73% support overall).
- Fifty percent strongly support requiring the **Nebraska Attorney General to develop a uniform contract for landowners** to assist in negotiations with TransCanada (83% support overall).
- Eighty-three percent strongly support requiring that **TransCanada take out liability insurance** (89% support overall). Currently, landowners have to do this to protect themselves per the contract they signed with TransCanada.

In sum, Nebraskans strongly intend to support a proposition that gives their state authority to regulate oil pipeline routes, water paths and safety plans. They want to protect their natural resources and are unwilling to allow oil companies and federal authorities to make these important decisions without significant input from Nebraskans.

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<sup>i</sup> **Methodology:** Lake Research Partners designed and administered this survey, which was conducted by phone using professional interviewers. The statewide survey reached a total of 604 likely voters with past vote history in similar elections. The survey was conducted August 29 through September 1, 2011. The margin of error for the full sample is +/-4.0 percentage points.

<sup>ii</sup> **Question Wording:** There may be an initiative on the Nebraska ballot in November 2012 regarding the TransCanada Keystone XL Pipeline. Let me ask you about that. The proposition would authorize the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality to regulate oil pipeline routes, water paths and safety plans. It would grant the Department of Environmental Quality local authority to ensure oil companies are financially liable for oil spills, road repairs and damage done to land or contamination of water supplies. [Split sample language continued: It would also prohibit ANY future pipeline from going through the Sandhills.]