



PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

**SURVEY ON SOLAR PANEL TARIFFS
APRIL 2018**

- QUESTIONNAIRE -

Fielded by: Nielsen Scarborough
Sample Size: 1,999 registered voters

Fielding Dates: March 9-23, 2018
Margin of Error: +/- 2.2%

Q1-13. Questions not yet released.

Q14-21. Questions were released previously.

We will now turn to an issue about solar energy panels. As you may have heard, there is a debate about whether the U.S. should impose a tariff (like a tax) on solar panels imported from other countries, especially from Asia.

Here is some background:

The U.S. has a law called the 1974 Trade Act which allows companies to request that the government help them provide protection from a surge of products being imported into the U.S. This law has not been invoked for quite some time-- the last time was 2001. That is in part due to the fact that the U.S. has joined a number of international trade agreements, as part of the World Trade Organization, to lower and generally seek the elimination of trade tariffs.

Recently, two companies named Suniva and Solar World, with US operations, who manufacture solar panels, requested such protection, saying that solar panels were being imported from other countries, especially from Asia, in such high volumes that these companies could not compete.

The U.S. government investigated their claims and agreed to apply a tariff on solar panels from most countries of 30% during the first year, declining to 25% in year two, 20% in year three and 15% in year four.

The effect of this tariff will be to increase the price of solar panels in the U.S. for U.S. consumers.

U.S. companies who manufacture solar panels will benefit from this tariff because it will make their solar panels more competitive. However, not all solar manufacturers favor the tariffs.

Nearly all U.S. companies who install solar panels have opposed this tariff because the higher cost of the imported solar panels makes it harder for them to provide solar energy at a price that is competitive with electricity from traditional sources, such as natural gas and coal.

Environmental groups have also opposed the tariffs because the increased cost of solar panels would discourage the use of solar energy.

We would like to know if you favor or oppose the plan to apply a tariff on imported solar energy panels over the next four years. But first, we would like you to evaluate arguments for and against this proposal.

Here are some arguments for and against this planned tariff on solar energy panels. We would like to know how convincing or unconvincing you find each one.

Q22. A tariff on solar energy panels will help protect some manufacturers of solar cells and panels, operating in the U.S., whose products are being undercut by a surge of lower-priced imports. Some of these companies have gone bankrupt, costing American jobs, and more could follow. The tariffs will give these companies a few years of breathing room they need to flourish. According to the government, this relief from the tariffs could generate thousands of new jobs in the solar manufacturing industry.

	Very convincing	Somewhat convincing	Total convincing	Somewhat unconvincing	Very unconvincing	Total unconvincing	Ref. / Don't know
National	19.4%	45.5%	64.9%	20.9%	13.7%	34.6%	0.5%
GOP	24.9%	48.5%	73.4%	15.3%	10.8%	26.1%	0.5%
Dem.	13.1%	44.9%	58.0%	25.8%	15.7%	41.5%	0.5%
Indep.	22.6%	40.4%	63.0%	21.0%	15.4%	36.4%	0.5%

Cook's PVI (D-R)

Very red	20.1%	52.2%	72.3%	15.5%	11.7%	27.2%	0.4%
Red	20.2%	39.9%	60.1%	20.6%	18.1%	38.7%	1.2%
Somewhat red	22.7%	44.2%	66.9%	18.7%	14.1%	32.8%	0.2%
Somewhat blue	17.8%	44.6%	62.4%	22.9%	14.4%	37.3%	0.3%
Blue	17.9%	45.8%	63.7%	24.8%	10.8%	35.6%	0.6%
Very blue	17.5%	45.5%	63.0%	23.1%	13.4%	36.5%	0.5%

Q23. These tariffs will ultimately hurt the solar industry and American workers as well. The tariffs will raise prices on solar products, making solar energy more expensive. Tariffs don't help build manufacturing infrastructure in the US - smart energy policy does. According to industry experts, though tariffs may benefit a few solar manufacturers, for the industry overall, they will result in about 20,000 fewer high-paying jobs. Solar was finally getting cheap enough to compete with coal, providing a low-cost alternative electricity source and leading to cleaner and healthier air.

	Very convincing	Somewhat convincing	Total convincing	Somewhat unconvincing	Very unconvincing	Total unconvincing	Ref. / Don't know
National	34.3%	37.1%	71.4%	19.7%	8.4%	28.1%	0.5%
GOP	19.4%	37.7%	57.1%	29.2%	13.2%	42.4%	0.5%
Dem.	48.3%	35.6%	83.9%	11.7%	4.0%	15.7%	0.4%
Indep.	32.4%	39.7%	72.1%	18.7%	8.6%	27.3%	0.5%

Cook's PVI (D-R)

Very red	30.8%	37.4%	68.2%	21.6%	10.3%	31.9%	0.0%
Red	27.5%	39.9%	67.4%	19.5%	11.9%	31.4%	1.3%
Somewhat red	38.0%	34.2%	72.2%	20.9%	6.8%	27.7%	0.1%
Somewhat blue	33.1%	36.2%	69.3%	23.2%	7.1%	30.3%	0.3%
Blue	33.1%	39.9%	73.0%	18.1%	8.2%	26.3%	0.7%
Very blue	42.4%	36.2%	78.6%	14.2%	6.8%	21.0%	0.4%

Here is another pair of arguments:

Q24. Many of the trade deals that are negotiated between the United States and other countries are a bad deal, and America's inability to compete in the manufacture of solar energy panels is yet another reflection of those bad deals. The United States has too often let countries like China push us around. The United States should more strongly

confront other countries on how they treat America and get better deals. Pushing back on low-priced solar energy panels is a good place to start.

	Very convincing	Somewhat convincing	Total convincing	Somewhat unconvincing	Very unconvincing	Total unconvincing	Ref. / Don't know
National	21.8%	33.5%	55.3%	22.7%	21.0%	43.7%	1.1%
GOP	31.5%	42.3%	73.8%	16.7%	8.6%	25.3%	0.9%
Dem.	12.4%	26.9%	39.3%	26.5%	33.5%	60.0%	0.7%
Indep.	23.1%	30.4%	53.5%	26.6%	17.4%	44.0%	2.5%

Cook's PVI (D-R)

Very red	23.2%	39.8%	63.0%	18.8%	15.4%	34.2%	2.9%
Red	21.0%	34.3%	55.3%	23.1%	19.7%	42.8%	1.8%
Somewhat red	23.4%	31.5%	54.9%	19.9%	25.0%	44.9%	0.2%
Somewhat blue	16.6%	35.9%	52.5%	25.1%	21.8%	46.9%	0.6%
Blue	23.1%	29.1%	52.2%	24.1%	22.9%	47.0%	0.8%
Very blue	23.1%	28.9%	52.0%	26.7%	21.1%	47.8%	0.3%

Q25. If we start putting up tariffs against imports, it will only hurt us in the end. Other countries will retaliate and put tariffs on US products and we could end up in an escalating trade war. Reducing the supply of solar panels will cost the jobs of Americans who install them. Free and fair trade has been an important part of the growth of the US economy, resulting in lower prices for American consumers. It is fine to try to negotiate better trade deals, but randomly picking solar energy panels as a target for new tariffs does not make sense.

	Very convincing	Somewhat convincing	Total convincing	Somewhat unconvincing	Very unconvincing	Total unconvincing	Ref. / Don't know
National	30.4%	37.8%	68.2%	20.6%	10.5%	31.1%	0.7%
GOP	13.2%	38.4%	51.6%	30.7%	17.0%	47.7%	0.7%
Dem.	46.4%	38.3%	84.7%	11.1%	3.8%	14.9%	0.4%
Indep.	28.6%	35.1%	63.7%	22.0%	13.0%	35.0%	1.3%

Cook's PVI (D-R)

Very red	30.4%	38.6%	69.0%	17.1%	13.3%	30.4%	0.6%
Red	25.4%	39.5%	64.9%	22.1%	11.3%	33.4%	1.7%
Somewhat red	32.6%	39.2%	71.8%	18.2%	9.9%	28.1%	0.1%
Somewhat blue	28.4%	39.9%	68.3%	21.0%	9.9%	30.9%	0.7%
Blue	29.4%	34.7%	64.1%	23.6%	11.5%	35.1%	0.9%
Very blue	35.4%	34.8%	70.2%	22.3%	7.3%	29.6%	0.2%

Q26. So, having considered these arguments, do you favor or oppose the plan to impose a tariff on solar energy panels of 30% in year one, declining to 25% in year two, 20% in year three and 15% in year four?

	Favor	Oppose	Ref. / Don't know
National	40.8%	58.4%	0.8%
GOP	57.5%	41.9%	0.6%
Dem.	23.1%	75.9%	1.0%
Indep.	47.7%	51.3%	0.9%

Cook's PVI (D-R)

Very red	45.8%	53.9%	0.4%
Red	41.9%	56.6%	1.5%
Somewhat red	40.9%	58.5%	0.5%
Somewhat blue	40.4%	59.1%	0.5%
Blue	42.4%	55.8%	1.8%
Very blue	32.6%	67.2%	0.2%

Thank you so much for completing the survey! Your response is very valuable to us.