The Department of Energy's Role in American Energy Dominance

By Connor Sandagata

June 2025



Rainey Center



SUMMARY

Voters support an "all of the above" DOE.

With the Department of Energy's Loan Programs Office facing potential cuts, Rainey Center sought to understand voter attitudes about the Department of Energy. We found that voters are broadly supportive of the Department of Energy, though many were undecided, suggesting a lack of public attention to the topic. Voters supported common sense reforms such as merit-based hiring and promotion and standardized applications. Voters support an all of the above approach, believing the DOE should support all energy sources except for coal. Voters also support investments across all stages of technological development. Only 1 in 10 voters support cuts to the LPO.

METHODOLOGY

Online sample of 1,853 respondents fielded over web panels from May 10-12, 2025 and weighted to education, age, gender, race, and 2024 election results. The margin of error is +/- 2.8.



KEY FINDINGS

DOE Reforms

Voters support a number of common-sense proposals to improve the Department of Energy. Voters support making retention and staffing decisions based on merit, rather than time at the department (+44 net support), working more closely with the private sector (+28), standardizing applications across the department (+41) and simplifying licensing agreements (+31).

Voters also support guaranteeing companies an up or down approval within a year (+25), working with the private sector to put more risk in private hands, rather than on taxpayers (+29)

Across these proposals, there was a high rate of “don’t know” responses, suggesting voters do not have strong opinions on these proposals.



KEY FINDINGS

DOE Funding

Voters are supportive of DOE funding at all points in the value chain, including basic science (+43 net support), directly researching energy and physics (+48), helping businesses adopt new technologies (+48) and scaling tested technologies (+32). It's notable that scaling tested technologies scored weaker than the others.

Voters support an "all of the above" strategy, endorsing loans to solar (+52 net support), wind (+39), geothermal (+39), nuclear (+17), battery storage (+39), natural gas (+46) and oil (+23). Only coal had negative support (-2).



KEY FINDINGS

LPO Support

Voters support the Loan Programs Office (LPO) (+30 net support), with bipartisan support from both Democrats (+34) and Republicans (+29).

Only 11% of voters support cuts to the LPO including only 15% of Republicans. A plurality of voters (35%) support keeping funding the same and 16% support increasing funding. A large share of voters are unsure.



CONCLUSION

Voters do not support aggressive cuts to the Loan Programs Office (LPO) or Department of Energy.

Voters support an all of the above approach to energy investments and investing across the research chain, from basic research to deployment.



Rainey Center

(202) 350-1689
info@raineycenter.org
raineycenter.org