TO Interested Parties

FROM Beacon Research

DATE June 6th, 2024

SUBJECT Findings from Statewide Survey of Massachusetts Voters

This document presents key findings from a poll of 756 Massachusetts voters conducted May 15-22, 2024. Full methodological details are included at the end of this document.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Massachusetts voters want to protect the state's competitive retail electricity supply market:

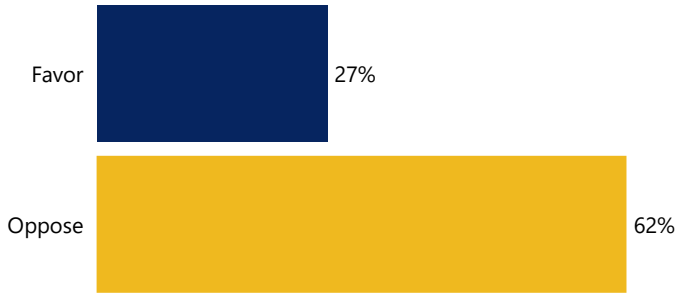
- 82% of current and former customers give positive ratings for their experience with retail electricity suppliers.
- 71% think protecting consumers against utility monopolies should be an important priority for policymakers.
- 62% of voters *oppose* eliminating the competitive retail supply market when they learn the big utilities would be the only option for buying electricity.
- 61% of current retail electricity supply customers—those who have the most experience with the competitive supply system—say the market is working well.

KEY FINDINGS

A May 2024 statewide poll of Massachusetts registered voters reaffirms there is little appetite to eliminate the competitive retail electricity supply market in Massachusetts. When voters learn about a proposal that would require them to purchase electricity from one of the big utilities instead of being able to shop for better rates, a wide majority (62%) is opposed.

Majority oppose proposal to eliminate competitive retail supply market

If the competitive supply market is eliminated, consumers would have to buy electricity from one of the big utilities and could not shop for better rates or choose cleaner, carbon-free electricity. Knowing this, do you favor or oppose eliminating the competitive supply market for electricity in Massachusetts?

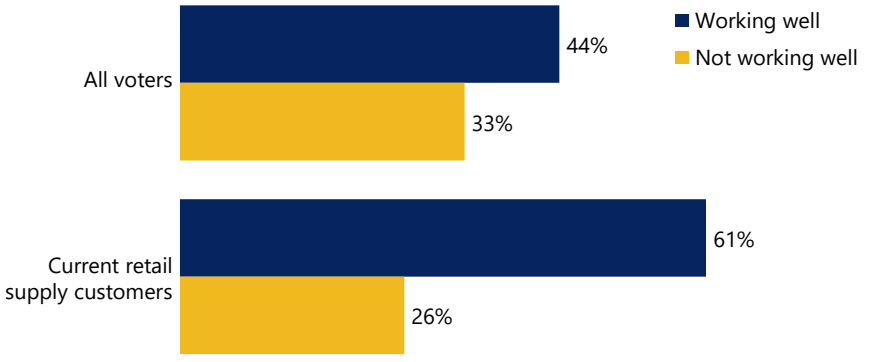


Voters fundamentally do not see the electric retail market as broken. Only one-third think the retail electric market system is not working.

Those who have the most experience with retail electric suppliers—current customers—have even more positive evaluations of the system. Over six-in-ten (61%) retail customers indicate having competition in the electricity market is working well, compared to just 26% who say it is not.

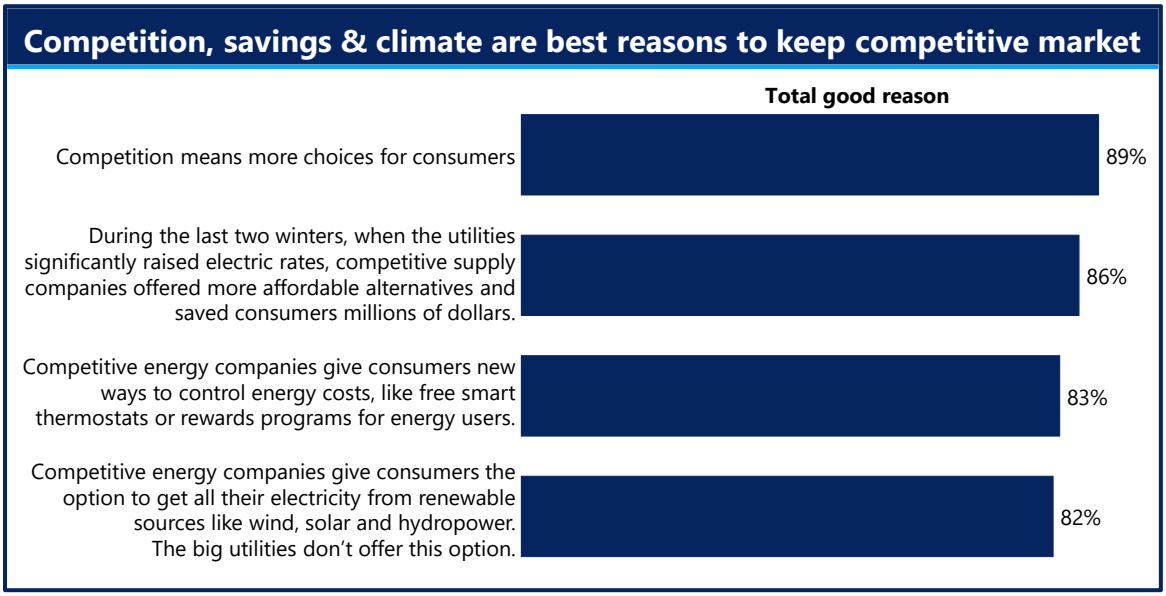
Plurality of voters see current system working well, especially customers

In 1997, the Massachusetts legislature authorized a competitive electric supply market for the state by letting qualified retail suppliers compete with electric utility companies for customers. In general, do you think this system of allowing more competition in the electricity market in Massachusetts is working:

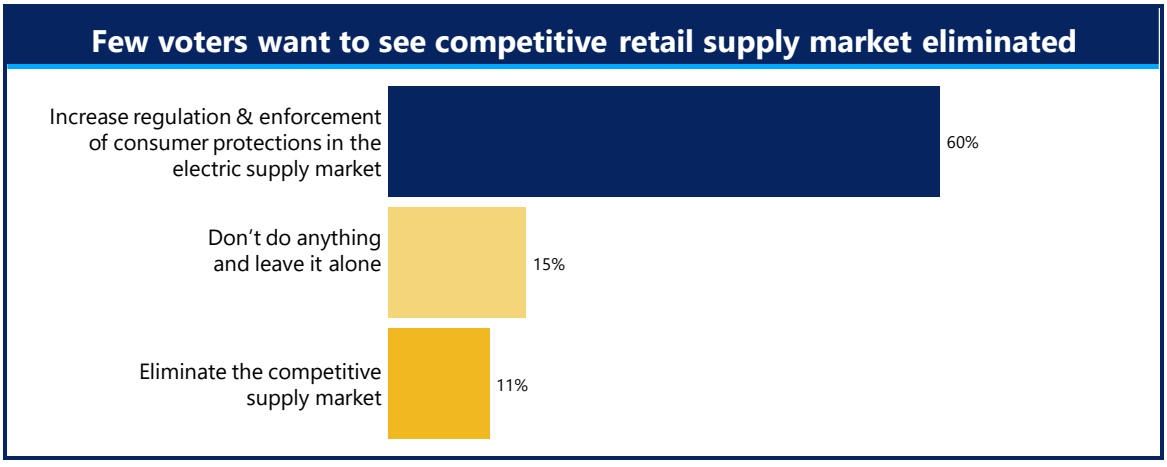


A majority (58%) of voters are currently unaware of having the choice to purchase electricity from competitive retail suppliers. Nearly four-in-ten (39%) believe utility companies are their only option for electricity.

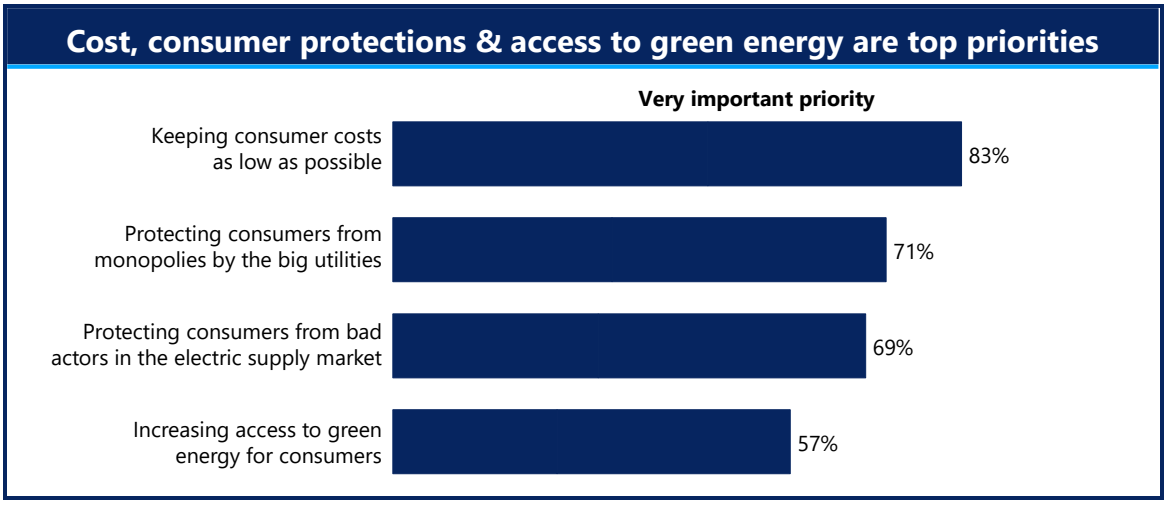
Voters see many good reasons for preserving the competitive retail electric supply market in Massachusetts. Nearly all (89%) believe maintaining competition for more consumer choices is a good reason to keep the competitive retail market. The cost savings opportunities of the competitive supply market—both as compared to utility rates over the past two winters (86%) and through rewards programs (83%)—are compelling to many voters. More than eight-in-ten (82%) see the renewable energy options offered by competitive supply companies as another good reason to keep the competitive retail market in place.



Voters' preferred approach to dealing with the industry is for the legislature to increase regulation and consumer protections (60%), rather than leaving the system as is (15%) or eliminating it entirely (11%).



Voters' top priority for lawmakers when it comes to the energy markets is simple: *keeping costs as low as possible* (83% say this is very important). *Protecting against utility monopolies* (71% very important) and *protecting against bad actors in the electric supply market* (69%) form a second tier of priorities, followed by *increasing access to green energy* (57%).



Around 40% of Massachusetts voters are past or current customers of retail electric suppliers. The most cited reason for purchasing from one of these companies is cost (45%). Most of those voters (82%) give positive ratings to their experience, while just one-in-ten (7%) give a negative rating. These ratings are slightly better than ratings of utility companies among those who get their electricity from a major utility.

Among current customers, an even higher share (88%) rate their experience positively.



METHODOLOGY

This poll of 756 Massachusetts registered voters was conducted between the dates of May 15 and 22, 2024. Respondents were randomly selected from an online panel of active, registered voters. Slight weights were applied to account for known and estimated demographics for Massachusetts registered voters statewide by age, gender, race, education level, and political party identification. The survey was sponsored by NRG.

Beacon Research is a Boston-based firm specializing in providing highly accurate, actionable research to political and corporate clients. Beacon Research Co-Founder Chris Anderson has provided polling to a presidential campaign, numerous ballot initiative campaigns, local and state political candidates, and is currently the Democratic pollster on the Fox News Channel's bipartisan team, which conducts a monthly national telephone poll of 1,000 voters.