

INDIANA INSIGHTS REVIEW

Understanding Advocacy and
Engagement in Indiana



ENGAGE AND INVEST IN COMMUNITIES

Throughout our conversations, policymakers consistently spoke about two areas where they want non-government organizations to improve their advocacy.

1 PHILANTHROPY

Policymakers express some skepticism about corporate philanthropy. . .

“They’re not here to be philanthropic, they’re here to do one thing and that is to make money.”

-Mayor, Municipal Branch, R

. . . and note that organizations engage with communities less than before.

*“Companies still have a local presence but **not nearly what they used to.**”*

-Analyst, IN Executive Branch, D

OUR RECOMMENDATION

We recommend advocates focus community engagement on education in addition to philanthropic efforts.

*“I enjoy seeing the community volunteers put on events, raise funds to benefit the community, while providing entertainment as well as **educating the community on needs, goals, and successes.**”*

-Regional Manager,
IN Executive Branch, D

2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Policymakers express interest in community investments. . .

*“The best way I’ve seen companies invest in their communities, is to **create long-lasting and stabilizing jobs.**”*

-Senior Manager, IN Executive Branch, D

. . . but share frustrations about the lack of current investment.

*“These companies are not altruistic or benevolent community partners yet benefit from State and Federal subsidies, craft legislation with expensive lawyers and campaign donations. **They have national interests and care nothing about the communities that they are negatively impacting through the rules promulgated to increase profits for the select few. Pathetic.**”*

-Senior Analyst, IN Executive Branch, R

OUR RECOMMENDATION

We recommend organizations demonstrate value to policymakers beyond the General Assembly. Specifically, we suggest they engage with community leaders, regulators, and the executive branch.

*“Companies touch everyone’s lives in terms of day-to-day operations, higher standards of living and such. **It would be nice for all to know what they’re doing outside of just providing their services.**”*

-Legislative Assistant,
IN Legislature, R

BUILD AND MAINTAIN RELATIONSHIPS

Policymakers also want non-government organizations to improve their communications.

1 CONTENT OF COMMUNICATIONS

Policymakers need non-government organizations to provide information. . .

*“Let me emphasize that we are radically understaffed to the point that **I think we would rather rely on lobbyists than on staff for information.**”*

-Representative, IN Legislature, D

. . . but express concerns about disinformation.

*“I wish there was a way that we could dial back the wingnuts. **To tamp down on the amount of disinformation that is generated and prevent the fringe groups from misrepresenting facts.**”*

-Representative, IN Legislature, R

OUR RECOMMENDATION

Share succinct and honest information.

*“**I appreciate people who are focused, precise, and provide information in a coherent way.** Start by telling me the facts and what you want. We need people to be more honest about what their goals are.”*
-Representative, IN Legislature, D

2 FREQUENCY AND TYPES OF COMMUNICATIONS

Policymakers receive too much information.

*“If you want to talk to me about an issue, **contact me directly.** I don't pay attention to mass mailings that all say the same thing.”*

-Representative, IN Legislature, R

*“I don't respond to auto generated emails or calls, but **if it's a legitimate original email or call, you get a reply.** That's how I roll.”*

-Representative, IN Legislature, R

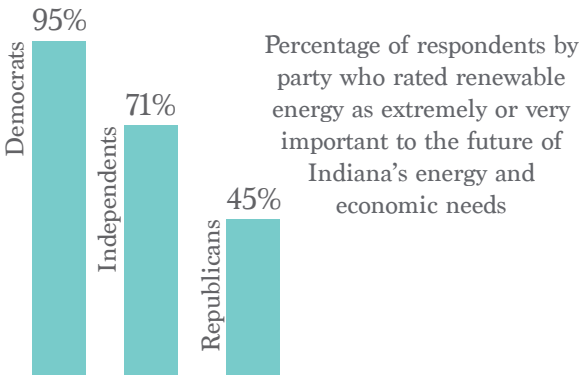
OUR RECOMMENDATION

Reach out personally to policymakers and keep in touch with them throughout the year.

*“**The best advocates are always in touch,** keeping me up to date on where I can help them in the next cycle. So, I'm not overwhelmed trying to absorb information at any given time, especially when I have to make that decision to vote.”*
-Representative, IN Legislature, R

ENERGY ADVOCACY IN THE HOOSIER STATE

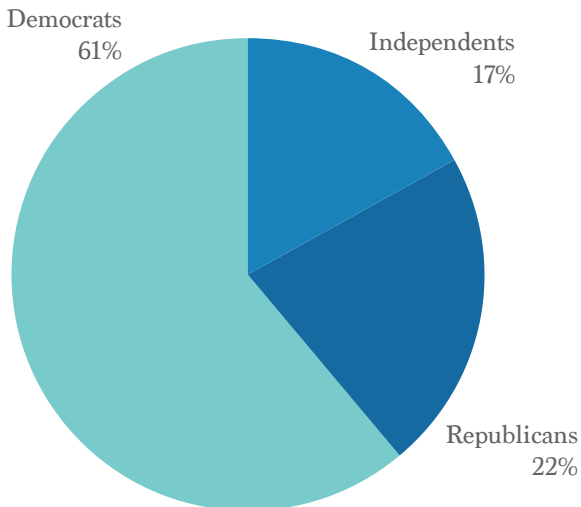
Our 2019 research focused on the intersection of the utilities sector and environmental issues. We found that sentiments on the importance of renewable energy to Indiana and utilities' role as stewards of the environment vary across party affiliations.



"I have a lot of concerns about environmental impact. Unfortunately, I don't know a ton of customers in Indiana that have a huge concern about environmental impact. In general, people kind of see environmental issues as a little more nebulous."

-Former Staff, IN Executive Branch, D

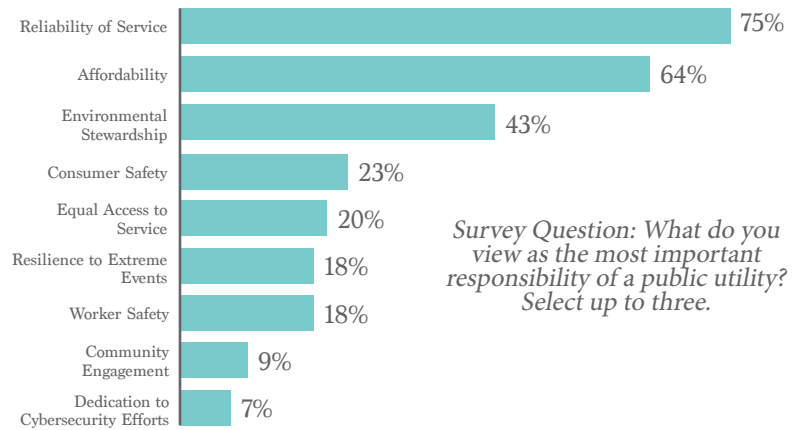
Percentage of respondents by party who rated 'Environmental Stewardship' as a top priority for electric utilities:



Despite environmental concerns, respondents overwhelmingly viewed reliability of service and affordability as the most important responsibilities of public utilities.

"A very high percentage of our energy in Indiana for years has been coal, and you get into the pollution and the standards and that kind of stuff and the question comes down to what's fair and what's equitable and what's best for our environment, long term and short term. Utility companies understand that. They're all switching over to a cleaner energy because the whole thing is going against coal all over the country and all over the world. But I think that the key is not moving too fast on those issues. Try to understand that the change process costs a lot of money to the consumer and everybody."

-Representative, IN Legislature, R



OUR ADVICE TO ADVOCATES IN THE ENERGY INDUSTRY

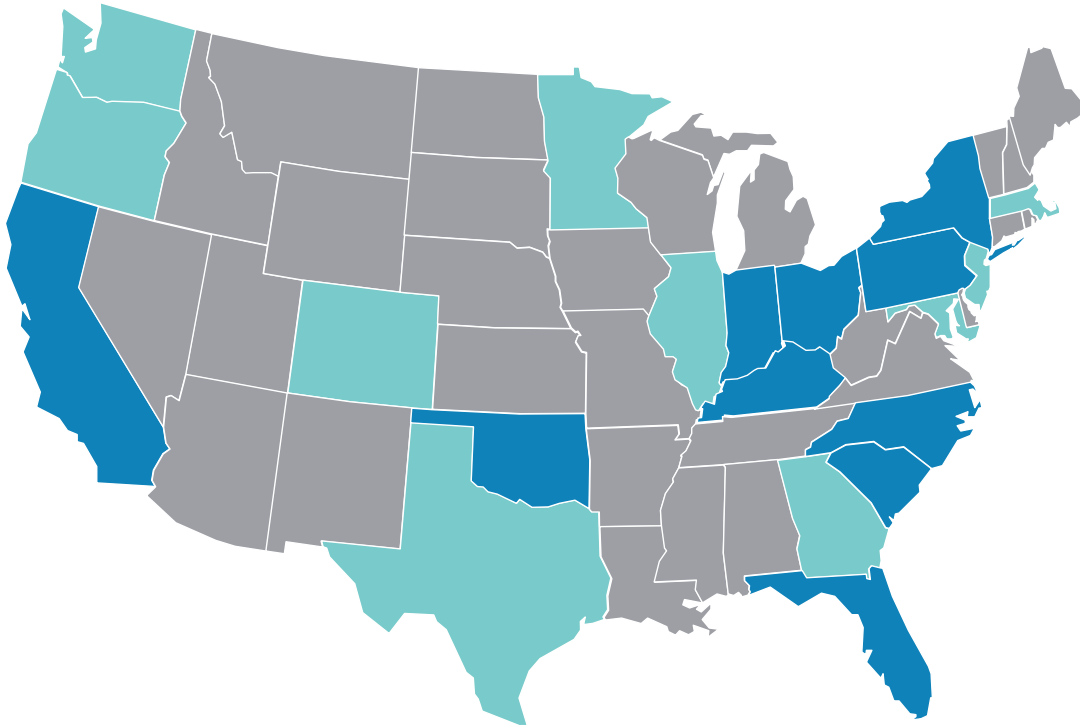
- ✓ Demonstrate value of jobs and economic development
- ✓ Invite policymakers to tour your facilities
- ✓ Convey the reliability and affordability of your services
- ✓ Sponsor community events to demonstrate philanthropic investments clearly to policymakers



BALLAST RESEARCH'S STATES INSIGHTS REVIEW

Ballast Research provides direct feedback from senior policymakers to government relations professionals, helping advocates make better use of policymakers' time and provide the resources most useful to those in government.

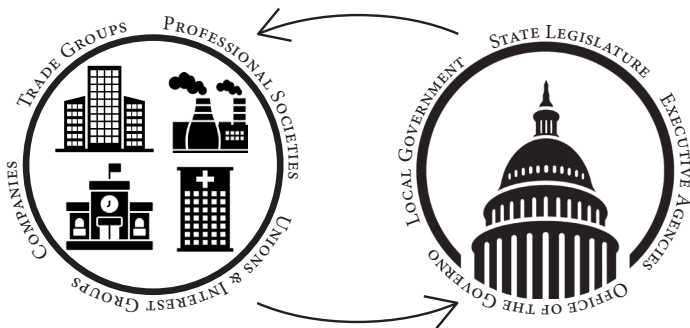
OUR PRESENCE



- CURRENTLY STUDYING:**
- | | |
|------------|----------------|
| Ohio | New York |
| Florida | Oklahoma |
| Indiana | Pennsylvania |
| Kentucky | South Carolina |
| California | North Carolina |

- CURRENTLY SCOPING:**
- | | |
|----------|---------------|
| Texas | Maryland |
| Illinois | Minnesota |
| Oregon | New Jersey |
| Georgia | Washington |
| Colorado | Massachusetts |

ABOUT BALLAST RESEARCH



Our clients are Fortune 500 companies, trade associations, and nonprofits looking to forge more productive partnerships with those in government. Each of our clients understands the value of policymakers' time and works with us to optimize every interaction. The result is more productive, mutually beneficial, and efficient engagement.

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OUR PROMISE: ALL PARTICIPATION IN OUR RESEARCH IS CONFIDENTIAL AND NOT FOR ATTRIBUTION.

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