

# CANADIANS AND AMERICANS GIVE THEIR VIEWS ON NORTH AMERICAN ENERGY ISSUES

The Canada Institute  
At The



**Public Release Date: March 1, 2004 -- 6:00 AM (EST)**

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## *CANADIANS AND AMERICANS GIVE THEIR VIEWS ON NORTH AMERICAN ENERGY ISSUES*

**Calgary, ALBERTA** – According to a new poll conducted by Ipsos-Reid on behalf of the Canada Institute of the Washington D.C. based Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars, public concern about energy shortages is widespread in both Canada and the United States.

The poll was released today as the Canada Institute of The Woodrow Wilson Center launches a two-day public dialogue in Calgary examining cross-border Canada/U.S. relations with a particular focus on continental energy issues.

Key findings indicate that two-thirds of both Canadians (66%) and Americans (67%) say that they are concerned about being personally affected by electricity shortages over the next five years. Virtually, the same number of Canadians (65%) are also concerned about gasoline shortages over the next five years, and this climbs to three quarters (76%) among Americans. Further, half of Canadians (51%) and two-thirds of Americans (66%) say they are concerned about shortages of natural gas or home heating oil over the next five years.

Despite these concerns, six-in-ten Canadians (61%) and Americans (60%) believe that governments and the energy industry are exaggerating about energy shortages to support their political or financial goals.

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The poll also sought feedback on a range of issues related to the North American energy marketplace. Nearly three quarters (74%) of Americans believe that energy supplied by Canada can play an important part in providing the United States with long term national security. Just under half of Americans (46%) agree they would be willing to pay more for gasoline if they knew it came from Canada and not the Middle East. Security concerns appear to play a part in these sentiments. A majority of Americans (78%) are concerned that their countries' energy supplies will be targets for terrorist attacks. This compares to a minority of Canadians (44%) who are concerned that Canada's energy supplies will be targets for terrorist attacks.

While many Canadians (42%) believe that increasing the amount of energy Canada supplies to the United States is a good thing because of the economic and job creation benefits, a majority (56%) believe that doing so will undermine the long-term national independence of the country. Seven-in-ten Canadians (70%) are already concerned about foreign ownership of Canada's energy resources.

Americans and Canadians were asked how important they believe it is for their federal government to address a number of specific policy issues over the next 12 months. Out of the six issues that were tested in the poll (healthcare, the economy, the environment, energy supply, relations between Canada and the United States, and national security), the issue of energy supply ranked fourth in each country. Americans, however, were more likely to characterise this issue as being "very important" for their government to address than were Canadians (70% "very important" in U.S. vs. 57% "very important" in Canada). Americans also gave the issue of environment and pollution similar "very important" ratings to those they assigned to the matter of energy supply (66% "very important" for environment, 70% "very important" for energy supply). Canadians, by contrast, were more likely to assign "very important" ratings to environment and pollution (68% "very important") than they were to energy supply (57% "very important").



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Canadians and Americans show limited knowledge of Canada's energy reserves. Across three true / false questions posed in each country, Americans and Canadians scored only a single correct answer on an overall basis. While, a majority of Canadians (73%) and Americans (60%) correctly stated that Canada is a major supplier of electricity to New England, New York, the Upper Midwest, the Pacific Northwest and California, less than three-in-ten Americans (28%) and only one-third of Canadians (33%) are aware that Canada has greater oil reserves than Iran, Iraq and every other country except Saudi Arabia. Similarly, less than two-in-ten Americans (15%) and less than three-in-ten Canadians (29%) are aware that Canada is the largest total supplier of imported oil and petroleum products to the United States.

*The Canadian portion of the poll is based on a randomly selected sample of 1,059 adult Canadians and was fielded between February 16 and 19, 2004. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate within + 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult Canadian population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age / sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to the 2001 Census data. The U.S. portion of the poll is based on a randomly selected sample of 1,000 adult Americans and was fielded between February 20 and 22, 2004. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate within + 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult US population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age / sex composition reflects that of the actual American population according to the 2001 Census data.*

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## *How Concerned Are Canadians and Americans That They Will Be Affected By An Energy Shortage Over The Next Five Years?*

Americans show a higher level of concern that they will be personally affected by shortages of energy than their Canadian counterparts. However, in both countries, more than half the population indicate that they're concerned about being personally affected by an energy shortage when questioned on their views related to electricity, gasoline, and natural gas or home heating oil.

Two-thirds of Canadians (66% -- 33% "very") and Americans (67% -- 38% "very") are concerned that they will be personally affected by an electricity shortage in the next five years. In Canada, this concern is up 15 points since an Ipsos-Reid poll in December 2001, while the views of those in the United States remain consistent (66%). The intensity of concern, however, rose among Americans from 31% "very concerned" in 2001 to 38% today.

U.S. citizens show higher levels of concern than Canadians that they will be personally affected by a gasoline shortage in the next five years. Three quarters (76%) of Americans say that they are concerned about a gasoline shortage (46% "very concerned"). These findings reflect an overall upward movement of six points since December 2001 and a notable increase in percentage of Americans who say they are "very concerned" (up 14 points) about a gasoline shortage. Two-thirds of Canadians (65%) say that they are concerned about being personally affected by a gasoline shortage (29% "very concerned"). As was the pattern in the United States, these findings reflect an overall upward movement of 11 points since December 2001 and a noteworthy increase in the percentage of Canadians who say they are "very concerned" (up eight points) about a gasoline shortage

Americans also show higher levels of concern than Canadians about the possibility of being personally affected by a shortage of natural gas or home heating oil. Two-thirds (66%) of Americans say that they are concerned about a natural gas or home heating oil shortage (37% "very concerned"). Overall concern about this issue in America has risen by 9 points since December 2001 with the percentage of

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those saying they are very concerned increasing 16 percentage points. Half of Canadians (51%) say that they are concerned about being personally affected by a natural gas or home heating oil shortage (21% “very concerned”). These outcomes reflect an overall upward movement of 12 points since December 2001 and a increase of 6 percentage points in the number of Canadians who say that they are “very concerned” about a natural gas or home heating oil shortage.

## ***Should Canadians Increase the Amount of Energy That Canada Supplies to the United States?***

While four-in-ten Canadians (42%) believe that increasing the amount of energy Canada supplies to the United States is a good thing because it provides economic and job creation benefits and will not threaten the long term national independence of the country, over half of Canadians believe otherwise. Specifically, 56% of Canadians agree that increasing the amount of energy Canada supplies to the United States is a bad thing because even though jobs and the economy will benefit, the long term national independence of the country will be undermined.

Canadians show high levels of concern about foreign ownership of Canada’s energy resources. A majority of Canadians agree (70% -- 42% “strongly”) that they are concerned about foreign ownership of Canada’s energy resources. These outcomes represent a decline from the findings in December 2001 that showed that 80% (50% strongly) of Canadians were concerned about this issue.



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## ***What are American Views on Foreign Oil, National Security and the Potential Role of Canada?***

Eight-in-ten Americans (83% -- 57% “strongly”) agree that reducing dependence on foreign oil and gas is important to national security. This finding is consistent with the overall outcomes recorded for this measure in 2001 (85% agreement) however the percentage of those saying that they “strongly agree” has increased by 7 points from 50% to 57%.

Almost three quarters of Americans (74% -- 28% “strongly”) agree that energy supplied by Canada can play an important part in providing the United States with long term national security. In fact, almost half (46% - 19% “strongly”) agree that they would be willing to pay more for gasoline if they knew it came from Canada and not the middle east.

## ***Americans Are Concerned About Possible Terrorist Attack on Energy Supplies, Canadians Less So...***

Eight-in-ten Americans (78% -- 43% “strongly”) are concerned that their country’s energy supplies will be a target of a terrorist attack. This compares to 44% (12% strongly) of Canadians who are concerned that Canada’s energy supplies will be a target of a terrorist attack.

## ***Should There Be a Common Set of Rules That Will Standardize Energy in North America?***

Seven-in-ten (70%) Canadians agree that Canada and the United States should create a common set of rules that will standardize how energy resources are developed, transported and sold in North America.

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One third (33%) strongly agree with this proposition while a further 37% say they somewhat agree with the concept.

Support for this proposition is even higher in the United States. Eight-in-ten (80%) of Americans agree that Canada and the United States should create a common set of rules that will standardize how energy resources are developed, transported and sold in North America. Just under four-in-ten (39%) strongly agree with this idea while a nearly equal number (41%) say they somewhat agree with the concept.

## ***Are Governments and the Energy Industries Exaggerating Energy Shortages?***

Six-in-ten Americans (60% -- 29% “strongly”) and Canadians (61% -- 24% “strongly”) agree with the view that governments and the energy industry are exaggerating about energy shortages to support their political or financial goals.

## ***Where Should The Issue of Energy Supply Rank On The Government’s Agenda In Both Canada and The United States Over The Next 12 Months?***

In both Canada and the United States the issue of energy supply ranks fourth out of the six tested in terms of being considered “very important” for the respective federal governments to address over the next 12 months. Americans, however, were more likely to characterise this issue as being “very important” for their government to address than were Canadians. (70% “very important” in U.S. vs. 57% “very important” in Canada).

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Americans and Canadians were asked how important they believe it is for their federal government to address a number of specific policy issues over the next 12 months. A number of notable differences emerged on both sides of the border.

In Canada, those issues that were considered to be “very important” were, in ranked order, healthcare (84%), the economy (72%), the environment (68%), energy supply (57%), relations with the United States (47%), and national security (42%).

In contrast, U.S. citizens rated the following issues as “very important” -- national security (81%), the economy (81%), healthcare (80%), energy supply (70%), the environment (66%), and relations between Canada and the United States (39%).

Interestingly, Canadians and Americans appear to share a similar sense of importance with respect to concerns about healthcare (84% Canadian vs. 80% American “very important”), and the environment (68% Canadian vs. 66% American “very important”). Although ranked as a top tier issue in each country, the economy is considered a “very important” issue by a greater percentage of Americans (81%) than is the case in Canada (72% very important.)

As noted above, Americans (70%) are more likely than Canadians (57%) to say that energy supply is a “very important” issue for their federal government to address in the next twelve months. A gap also exists on the matter of Canada / US relations with 47% of Canadians saying this is a “very important” issue versus 39% of Americans who offer the same rating.

The most divergent views between the two countries concern the issue of national security and terrorism. Just over eight-in-ten (81%) of Americans say this issue is very important for their federal government to address in the next twelve months compared to 42% of Canadians who express the same view.

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## *What Facts About Energy Do Canadians and Americans Really Know?*

Canadians and Americans were asked a series of true / false questions about energy. Across three true / false questions posed in each country, Americans and Canadians scored only a single correct answer on an overall basis.

Nearly three quarters (73%) of Canadians correctly indicate that Canada is a major supplier of electricity to New England, New York, the upper Midwest, the Pacific Northwest and California compared to 60% of Americans.

However, only one-third (33%) of Canadians and 28% of Americans know that Canada has greater oil reserves than Iran, Iraq and every other country except Saudi Arabia

Similarly, just under three-in-ten (29%) Canadians and 15% of Americans know that Canada is the largest total supplier of imported oil and petroleum products to the United States.

The poll also tested Canadians knowledge about their levels of energy consumption. Less than half (47%) were aware that they are the heaviest users of energy in the world on a per capita basis.

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## **About The Event And The Canada Institute At The Woodrow Wilson Center For Scholars...**

On March 1st, 2004, the Woodrow Wilson Center will mark the third anniversary of the Canada Institute by presenting the Woodrow Wilson Award in Calgary, Alberta. The Hon. Peter Lougheed, P.C., C.C., Q.C., will receive the Award for Public Service, and Richard Haskayne, O.C., Chairman of TransCanada, the Award for Corporate Citizenship. The reception and dinner, beginning at 6:30 p.m., will be held at the Hyatt Regency Calgary. For more information, please call Lorraine Royer at 403-264-3800.

On March 2<sup>nd</sup>, business leaders and government officials from Canada and the U.S. will gather at the Rozsa Centre at the University of Calgary to present and discuss their views in a forum titled "Closing the Gap : Creating a Collaborative Cross-Border Business Environment" with a particular focus on continental energy issues. **Confirmed panelists include:** Nancy Hughes-Anthony (President & CEO, Canadian Chamber of Commerce), Pierre Alvarez (President, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers), Thomas d'Aquino (President, Canadian Council of Chief Executives), Scott Brison (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, U.S.- Canada Relations), Stephen Gallogly (Director of International Energy Policy, U.S. Department of State), Barry Worthington (Executive Director, U.S. Energy Association), John Felmy (Chief Economist, American Petroleum Institute) Please RSVP to Betty Peterson at 403- 531-0331 or by email to [bpeterson@national.ca](mailto:bpeterson@national.ca)

The Canada Institute, one of the many programs of the Woodrow Wilson Center, fosters discussion, research, study, and collaboration on policy and scholarship in Canadian and Canada-U.S. affairs. It seeks to promote policy debate and analysis of key issues of bilateral concern between Canada and the United States by highlighting the importance of the U.S.-Canada relationship; increasing knowledge about Canada among U.S. policymakers; creating new channels of communication among scholars, business leaders, public officials, and non-governmental representatives in Canada and the United States; and generating discussion about future visions for North American integration and practical steps to increase collaboration among Canada, the United States, and Mexico. The Institute sponsors programming both in the United States and Canada, encouraging dialogue on issues relevant to Canada-U.S. concerns.

Established by an Act of Congress in 1968, the Woodrow Wilson Center is the United States' preeminent policy forum. Under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institution, the Center brings together the world's leading scholars, business leaders and policymakers in a nonpartisan atmosphere of study and discourse. Created as a "living memorial" to U.S. President Woodrow Wilson, the country's only President to hold a Ph.D., it unites his passion for government and academics. Located in the heart of Washington, D.C., the Woodrow Wilson Center is host to nearly 400 meetings and

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*lectures each year. In addition, the Center maintains an active campaign of outreach through books, newsletters, the award-winning Wilson Quarterly journal, and the globally syndicated dialogue radio and television programs. Additional information on the Canada Institute and the Woodrow Wilson Center can be found at [www.wilsoncenter.org](http://www.wilsoncenter.org).*

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