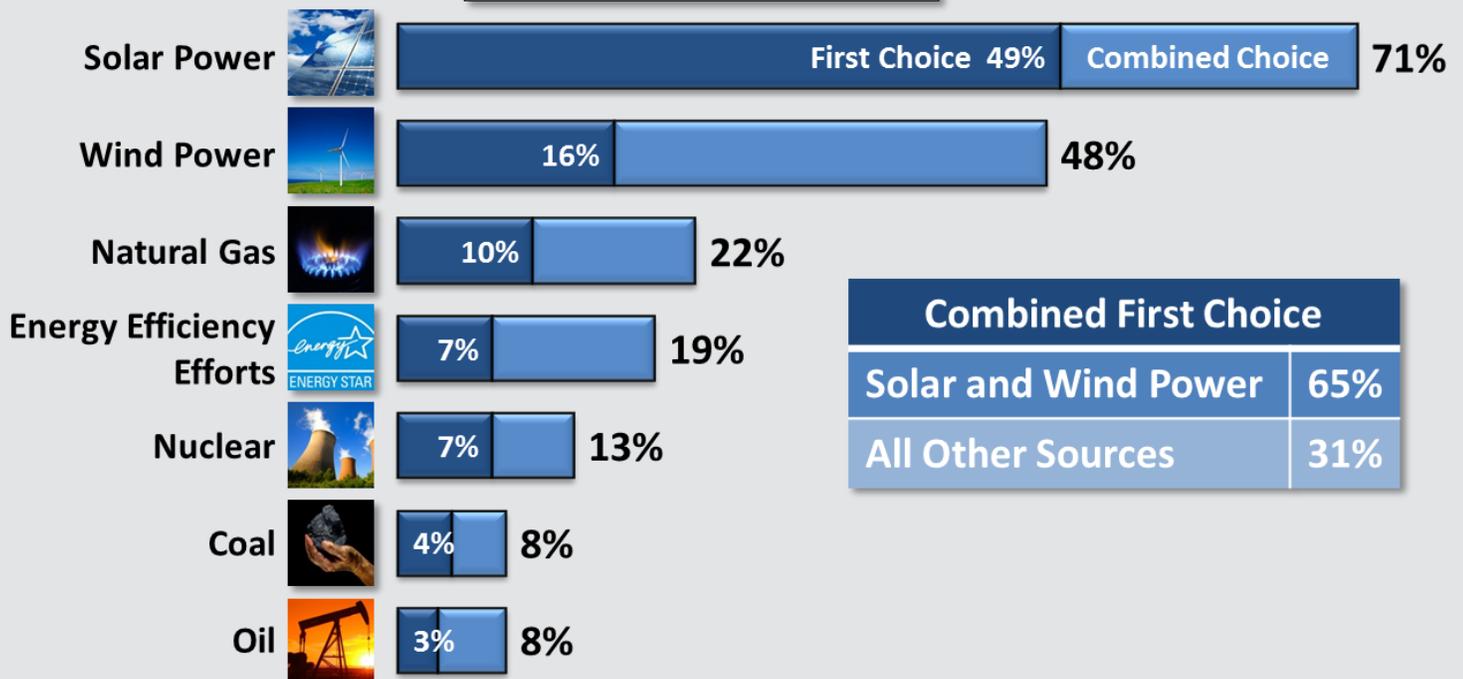


Energy

There is strong support for renewable energy in the West, with a clear majority of voters ranking solar and wind as the two energy sources that would want to encourage the use of in their home state. Nuclear and coal are viewed as energy sources to discourage in most states. Moreover, voters prefer jobs in renewable energy to any other major industry, including traditional energies. At the same time, voters want a balanced approach to energy production on public lands, albeit vastly preferring renewable energy production to greater drilling or mining.

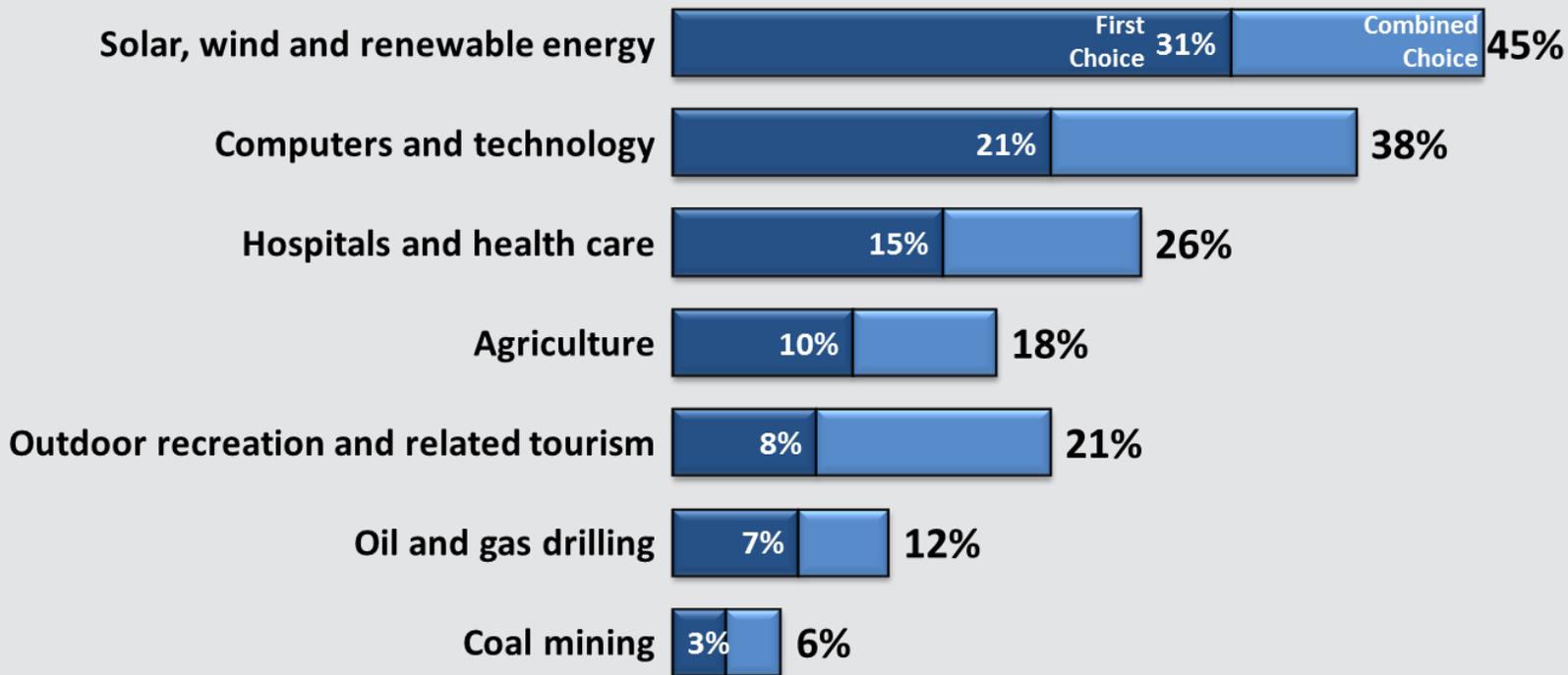
Renewable energy dominates as the preferred energy sources Western voters say their states should encourage. Fully 71% of voters in the West choose solar energy as one of their two preferred energy sources they would most like to encourage the use of in their state, up slightly from 2016 when 67% chose solar. Predictably, solar is vastly preferred in the Southwest, especially in Arizona (84%) and Nevada (80%), while Montanans split in their preference between wind and solar (52% and 53%). Only Wyoming places fossil fuels first (coal, 50% and natural gas, 38%). Voters across the partisan spectrum opt for renewable energy production in their state, as well.

Encouraged Energy Sources



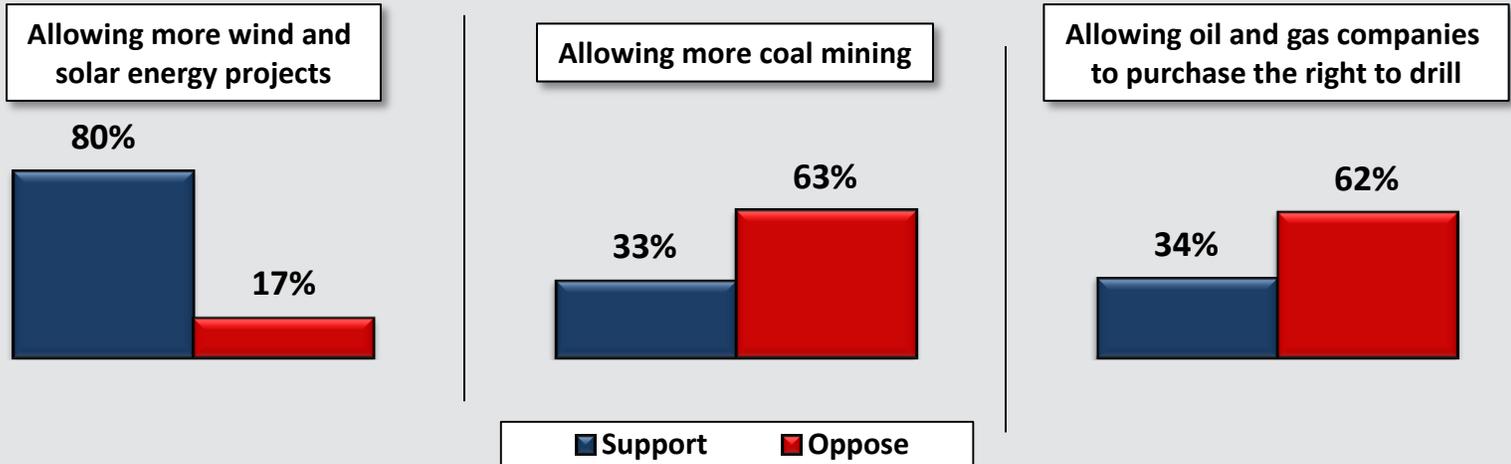
The preference for renewable energy production may be connected to the potential for jobs in this industry. In fact, when Westerners are asked to choose what kinds of jobs and businesses they would most like to see more of in their states, more cite renewable energy jobs. Jobs in the renewable energy sector eclipse those in any other industry including technology and health care. Jobs in oil and gas or coal mining rank at the bottom of preferences for Westerners, with the exception of Wyoming which places them at the top.

Encouraged Types of Businesses and Jobs – Ranked by First Choice



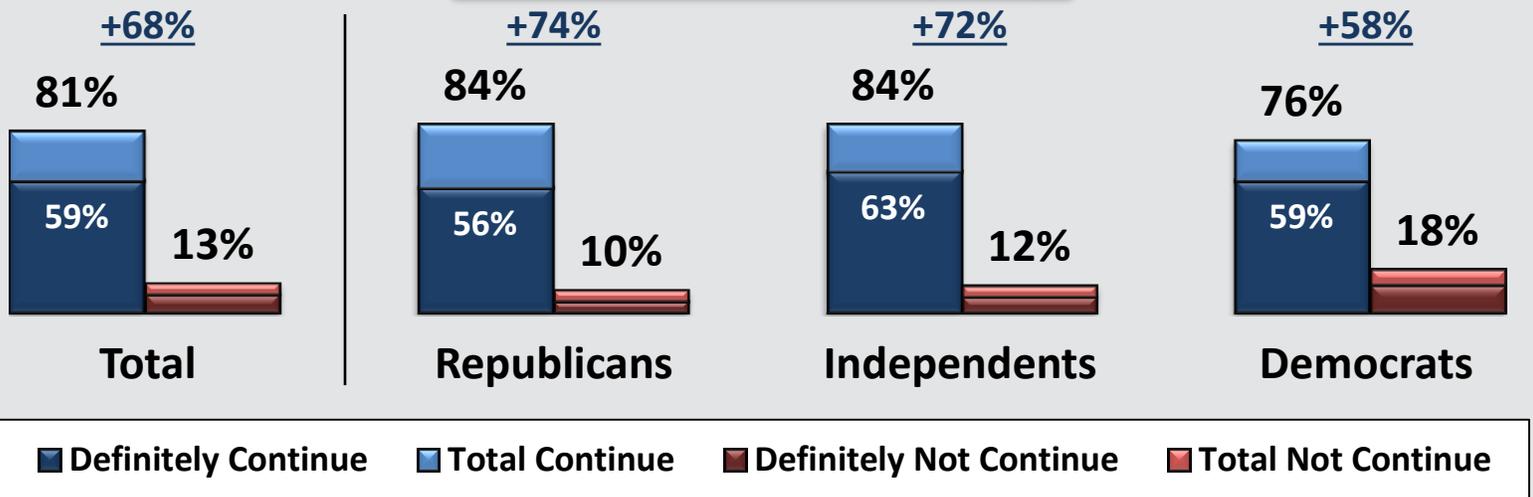
Given their strong preference for renewable energy, it is no surprise that Western state voters are also broadly supportive of the Trump administration allowing more wind and solar energy projects on public lands. Four-in-five (81%) back this potential action, while just 17% oppose it. A solid majority in every single state support this policy.

Opinions on opening up public lands to increased oil drilling and coal mining are markedly different, with north of 60% of voters being opposed to either possibility.



For any oil and gas production that does take place on public lands, Western voters want the methane rule kept in place. Fully four-in-five (81%) say we should “continue to require oil and gas producers who operate on national public lands to use updated equipment and technology to prevent leaks of methane gas during the extraction process and reduce the need to burn off excess natural gas into the air.” A majority (59%) strongly support continuing the methane rule, with overwhelming support in every state including Wyoming (87% continue the methane rule). Support extends across the partisan spectrum as well.

Continue Methane Rule by Party



At the same time, we see a continued concern about the country's dependence on foreign oil, with 41% of Western voters labeling it an extremely or very serious problem. That may help explain why voters try to seek a middle ground regarding drilling on public lands. Half opt for drilling being allowed, but environmentally sensitive areas safeguard.

[View on Public Land Drilling](#)

Oil and gas drilling on public lands should be strictly limited.

35%

Some public lands should be drilled, while environmentally sensitive places should be permanently protected.

50%

Public lands should generally be open to oil and gas drilling.

9%

