



Webinar:

# Safeguarding Your Electric Cooperative's Brand & Reputation Risk Amidst the EV Revolution

**August 16, 2023**

8 a.m. (PT) / 9 a.m. (MT) / 10 a.m. (CT) / 11 a.m. (ET)



Proud Member of the Farm Credit System 

# Keynote Speakers



**Tamra Reynolds**  
Managing Director,  
Electric Distribution,  
CoBank



**Mark Smither**  
Chief Strategy  
Officer and Principal,  
Paulsen



**Alicia Heun**  
Director of Engagement,  
Paulsen

Rural Electric  
Cooperatives  
Are Built On  
*Two Foundational  
Promises*

Reliability and  
Affordability





Rural Americans  
worry EVs will make their  
electricity

*less Reliable*

Rural Americans  
worry EVs will  
make their electricity

*less Affordable*



How will the inevitable growth of EVs  
impact your rural electric cooperative's

## *Brand Reputation?*



Plug-in vehicles are predicted  
make up  
*23% of new*  
vehicle sales globally  
in 2025.



Rural Americans,  
like the rest of  
the country,

*see EVs  
everywhere!*



# 2022 Was the Year That Electric Vehicles Took Off

EVs were sold in the first half of 2022 alone than any previous year—and there are signs the surge will continue.

## GM, Samsung plan new EV battery cell factory in US

By TOM KRISHER today

## Biden looks to boost EV sales with plan to cut vehicle emissions

By David Shepardson



Rural Americans, like the rest of the country, see EVs everywhere!

REUTERS World Business Markets Sustainability Legal Breakingviews Technology Investigative

Charged

4 minute read · May 11, 2023 5:00 AM CDT · Last Updated 3 hours ago

### EV maker Rivian takes bold bet with higher-priced vehicles amid heating competition

By Abhirup Roy

CEO RJ Scaringe stands outside the startup Rivian Automotive's electric vehicle factory in Normal, Illinois, U.S. April 11, 2022. Picture taken April 11, 2022. REUTERS/Kamil Krzaczynski/File Photo

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S&P Futures 4,143.25 -8.75 (-0.21%)	Dow Futures 33,433.00 -169.00 (-0.50%)	Nasdaq Futures 13,427.50 +18.00 (+0.13%)	Russell 2000 Futures 1,754.10 -10.80 (-0.61%)	Crude Oil 71.52 -1.04 (-1.43%)
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Banking Rates

### How Much Does It Cost To Charge an Electric Car?

2.4k

f

Twitter

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Electric Vehicles

FORD (F)	12.24	+0.77
GENERAL MOTORS (GM)	35.17	+2.31
TESLA (TSLA)	255.49	+13.09
TOYOTA (TM)	139.95	+4.36

Presented by BMW

with the current count of charging

POWERING THE EV BOOM

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America's Charging Challenge

### Developing a nationwide charging network takes coordination across states

could make up more than half of new cars within the next decade, but developing public charging infrastructure is a disjointed process that must be streamlined, industry experts say.

2023 12:00 AM | UPDATED 4 HOURS AGO



About 80 percent of new-car sales in Norway were electric last year, putting the country at the vanguard of the shift to emissions-free vehicles. David B. Torch for The New York Times

### In Norway, the Electric Vehicle Future Has Already Arrived

About 80 percent of new cars sold in Norway are battery-powered. As a result, the air is cleaner; the streets are quieter and the grid hasn't collapsed. But problems with unreliable chargers persist.

The Inflation Reduction Act

*\$7.5 billion invested in  
500,000 EV charging stations by 2030*



A dark blue-tinted photograph of a rural landscape. The scene features rolling hills and a dirt road that curves through the middle ground. The overall mood is quiet and contemplative. The text is centered over the image.

Did anyone ask  
*Rural America?*

*Paulsen*



PAULSEN

rural97  
INSIGHTS FOR RURAL AMERICA



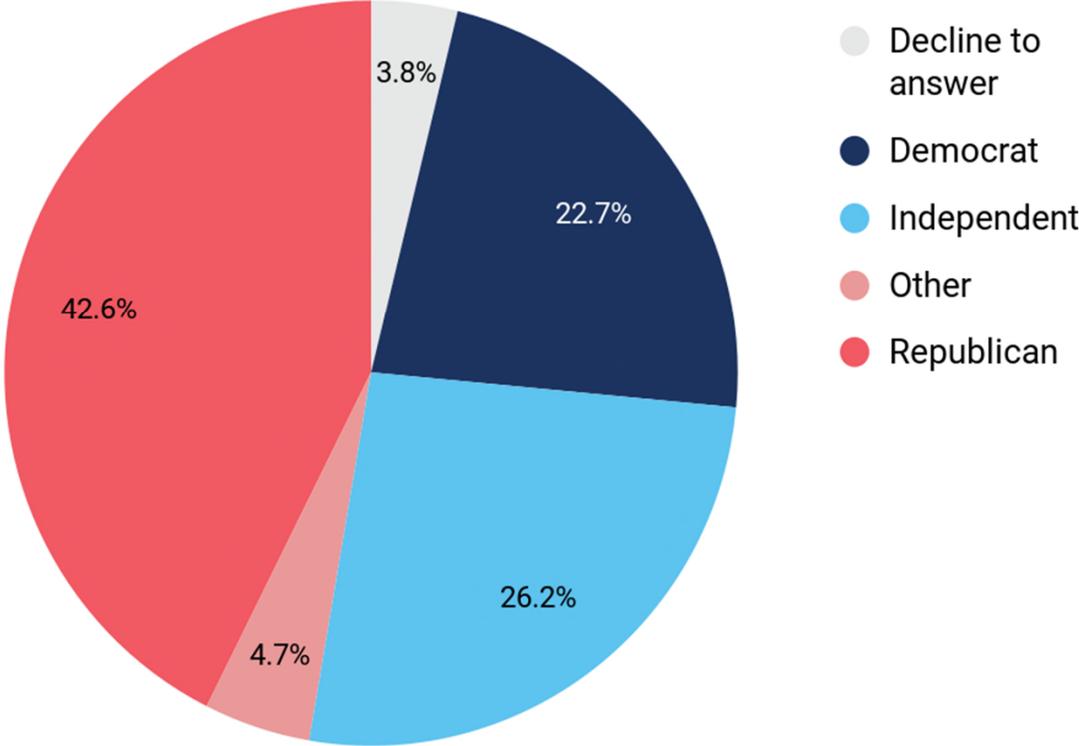
*Safeguarding Your Electric Cooperative's Brand  
& Reputation Risk Amidst the EV Revolution*

# We Asked 1,000 Rural Electric Cooperative Members



Confidence level 95%; Margin of Error  $\pm 3.04\%$

# Political Affiliation Regardless of Voting History



# What We Found

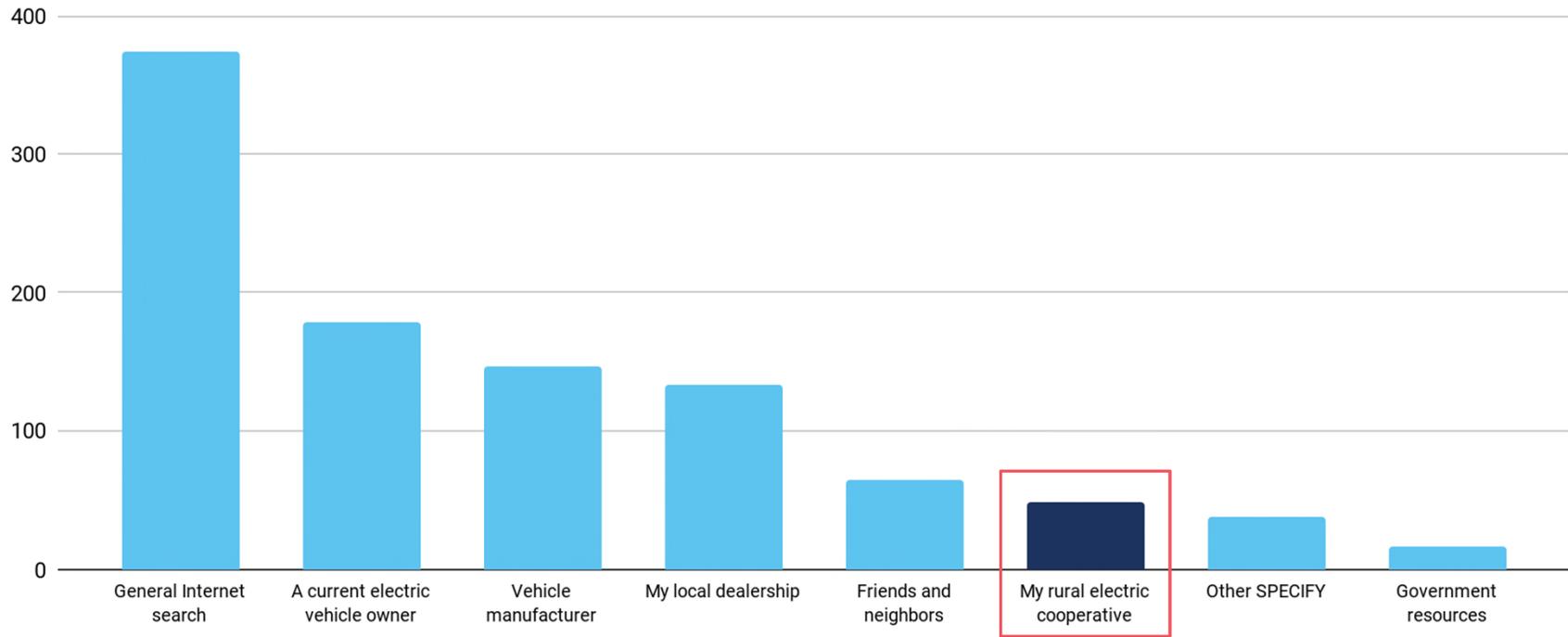
- **RECs are not seen as the most trusted source** for information about EVs.
- **Members are divided on wanting or not wanting EVs -** but RECs must effectively communicate with both.
- **Public charging stations are a positive brand opportunity** for rural electric cooperatives.
- **Members expect EVs to cause disruption -** at great risk to the REC brand reputation.

Rural Cooperatives are not seen as a  
trusted source for information about EVs

*Members Don't Think of Their Rural  
Electric Cooperatives Until After They've  
Made an EV Purchase*

# Rural Cooperatives are Not Top of Mind for EV Information

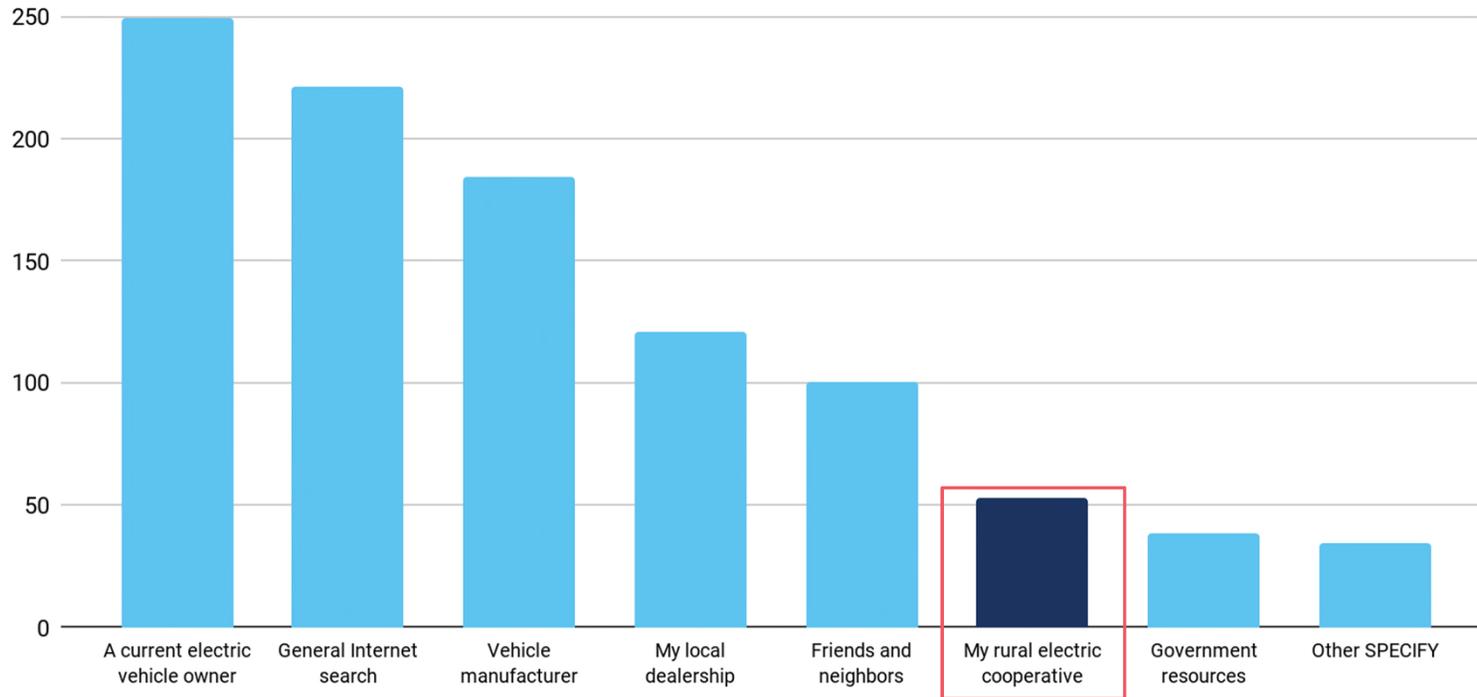
Which resource would you go to first to learn more about electric vehicles?



22 : Which resource would you go to first to learn more about electric vehicles?

# Member Trust in Rural Cooperatives for EV Information is Low

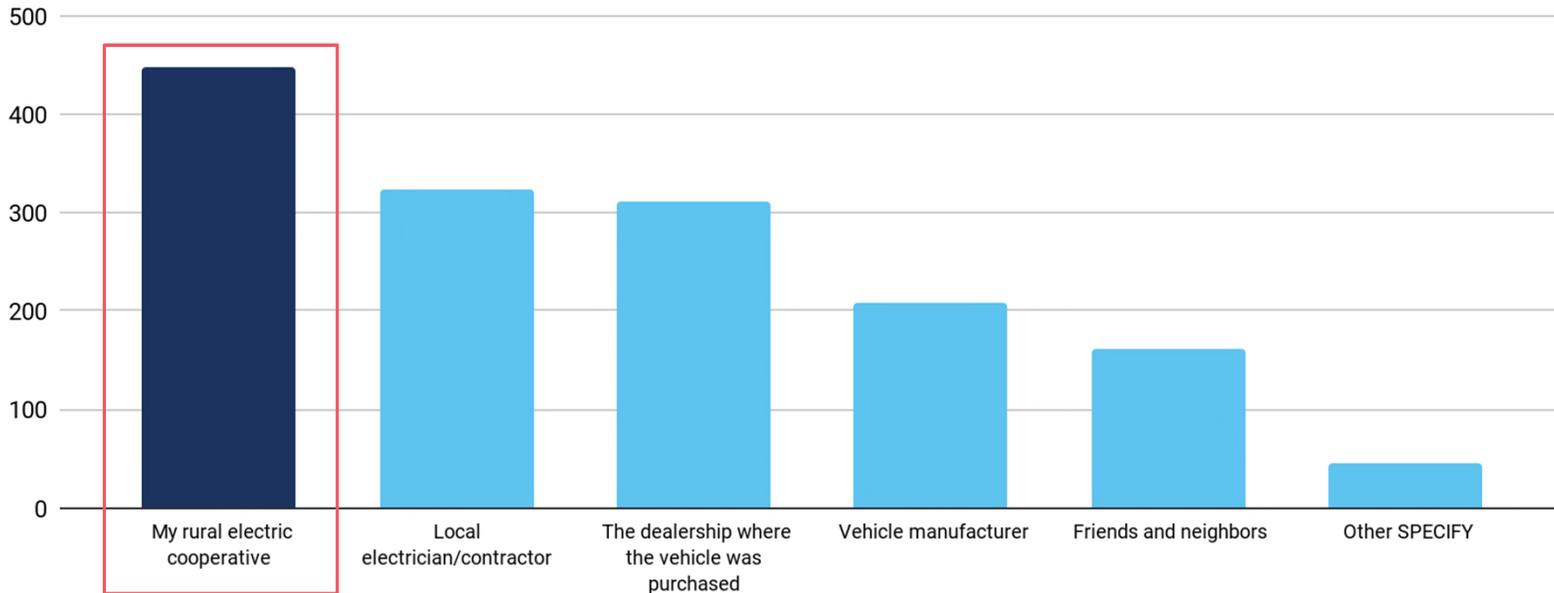
Which resource do you trust the most to learn more about electric vehicles?



23 : Which resource do you trust the most to learn more about electric vehicles?

# Once a Homeowner is Ready for In-Home Charging, their Rural Electric Cooperative is #1 Resource

**80% of all EV's are currently charged at home. Based on this information, who would you reach out to for advice about updating your home to be able to charge an electric vehicle?**





Rob Li



**Rob Li** is  looking for recommendations.



53m · 

Looking for a CB electrician to add a 240V outlet to my garage and circuit box... let me know in comments



Like



Comment



Share



## Taking Action: Enhance Awareness

- **Lead the conversation** on EVs, earlier in the purchase journey using SEM/SEO; partner with others
- **Leverage the power** of “friends and neighbors” i.e. video testimonials and demo drives.
- **Be prepared to discuss how EVs will impact your rural electric cooperative**  
Have your talking points ready - especially as it related to rates and reliability.



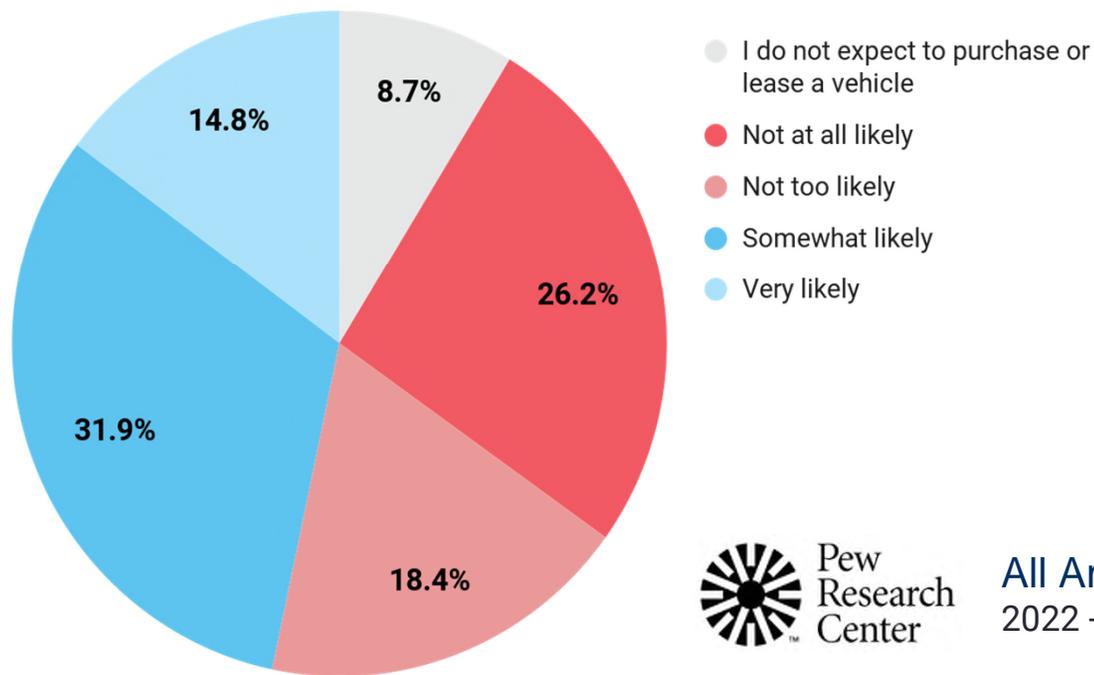
A woman with long hair and glasses is seen from the side, wearing a dark top, as she charges an electric vehicle. She is holding a charging cable connected to the car's charging port. The background shows a parking lot with other cars and a building. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

Members are divided on  
wanting or not wanting EVs

*RECs must effectively  
communicate with both.*

# Rural Americans - Same as All Americans - Divided on if Their Next Vehicle Purchase Will Be an EV

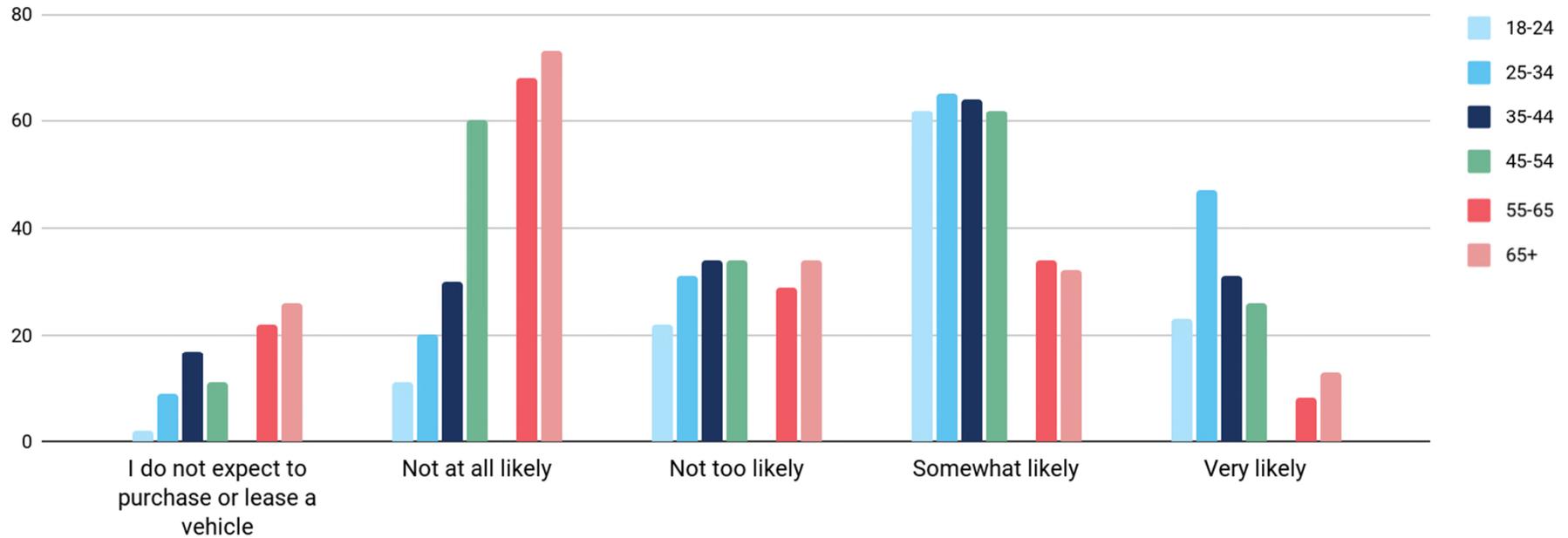
The next time you purchase or lease a vehicle, how likely are you to seriously consider an electric vehicle?



All Americans  
2022 - 45% not too/not at all likely

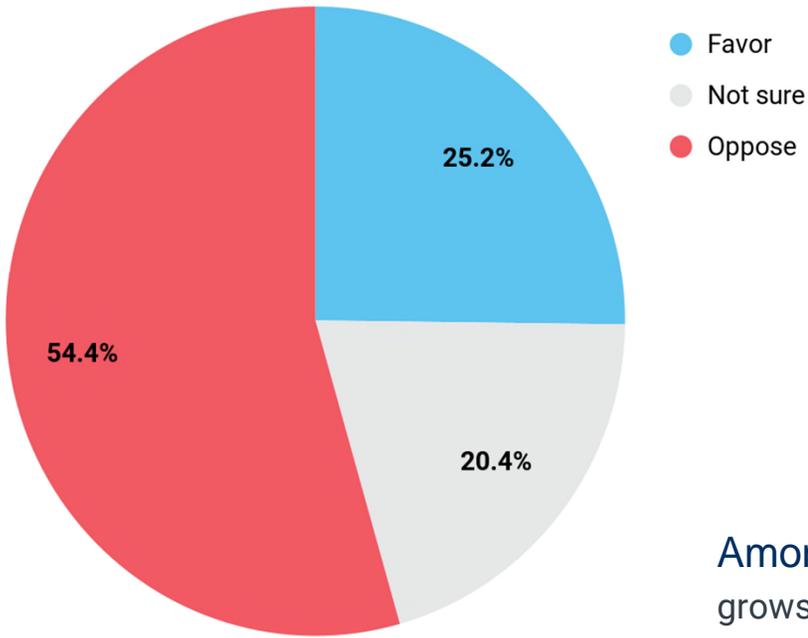
# Younger People More Likely to Purchase EVs

**13 : The next time you purchase or lease a vehicle, how likely are you to seriously consider an electric vehicle?**



# 54% of REC Members Oppose Phasing Out Gas/Diesel Engines

**Do you favor or oppose phasing out the production of new gasoline/diesel cars and trucks by the year 2035?**



Among Republicans Only Opposition grows to 70% with 15% unsure.

## Some Will Never Adopt

What, if anything, would encourage you to purchase or lease an electric vehicle?

**24.1% “none of the above”**

Which of the following would most likely increase your interest in purchasing or leasing an electric vehicle?

**21.5% “none of the above”**

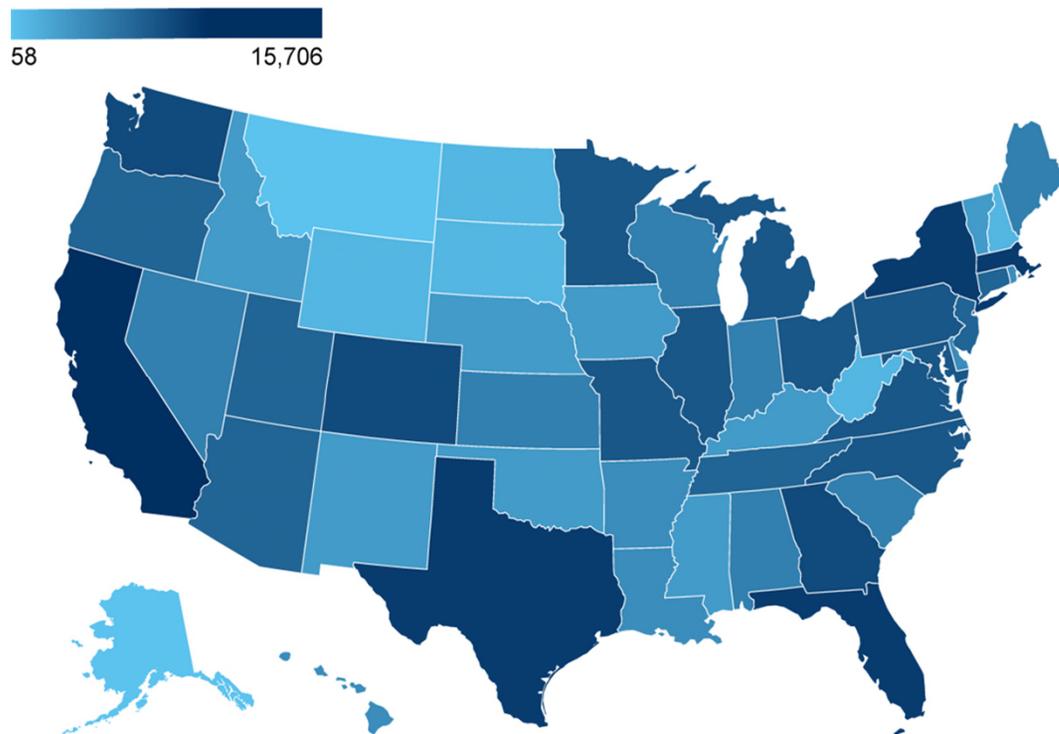
## Take Action: Targeted, Unbiased Messaging

- **Connect EV advocates** with those in the moveable middle; give them the tools and training to tell others the co-op story
- **Consider the best message for each audience**  
(Climate change vs cost and convenience)
- **Present a clear plan** for the future and address the “how does this affect me?” factor
- **Provide advice** without taking a pro/anti-EV stance; just the facts

## *Brand Power(ed)*

Public charging stations hold brand opportunity for rural electric cooperatives

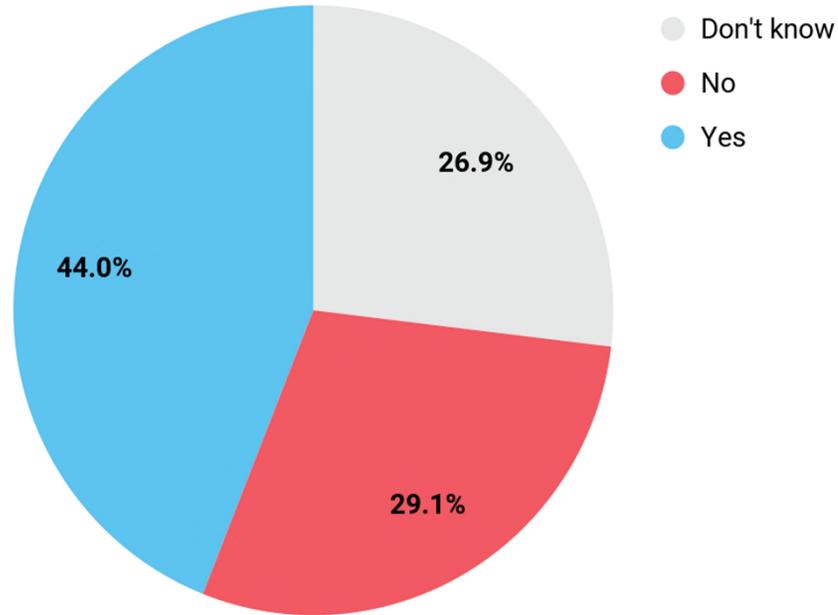
# EV Charging Stations Lag in Rural States



Map: Alternative Fuels Data Center • Source: Alternative Fueling Station Locator

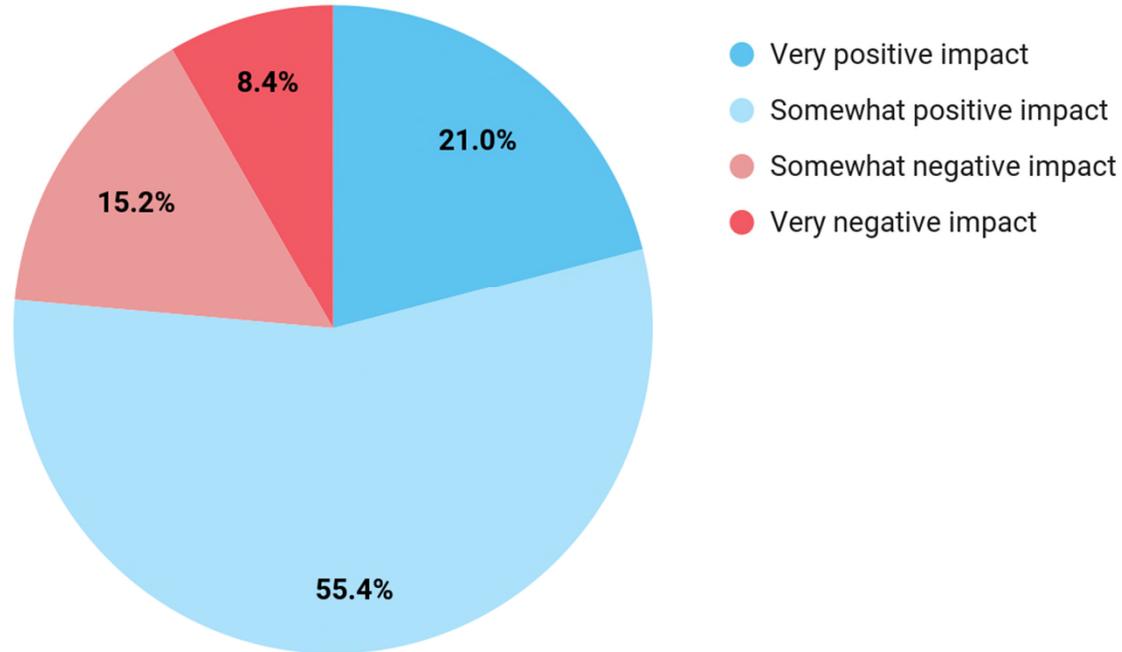
# Nearly 1/3 Don't Know if There is a Charging Station within 50 Miles

Is there an electric charging station within 50 miles of your house?



# Involvement in Public Charging has Positive Perception

**If you were to see a new public charging station installed by your rural electric cooperative, how would this impact your perception of your rural electric cooperative?**



## Taking Action: Leverage Charger Branding

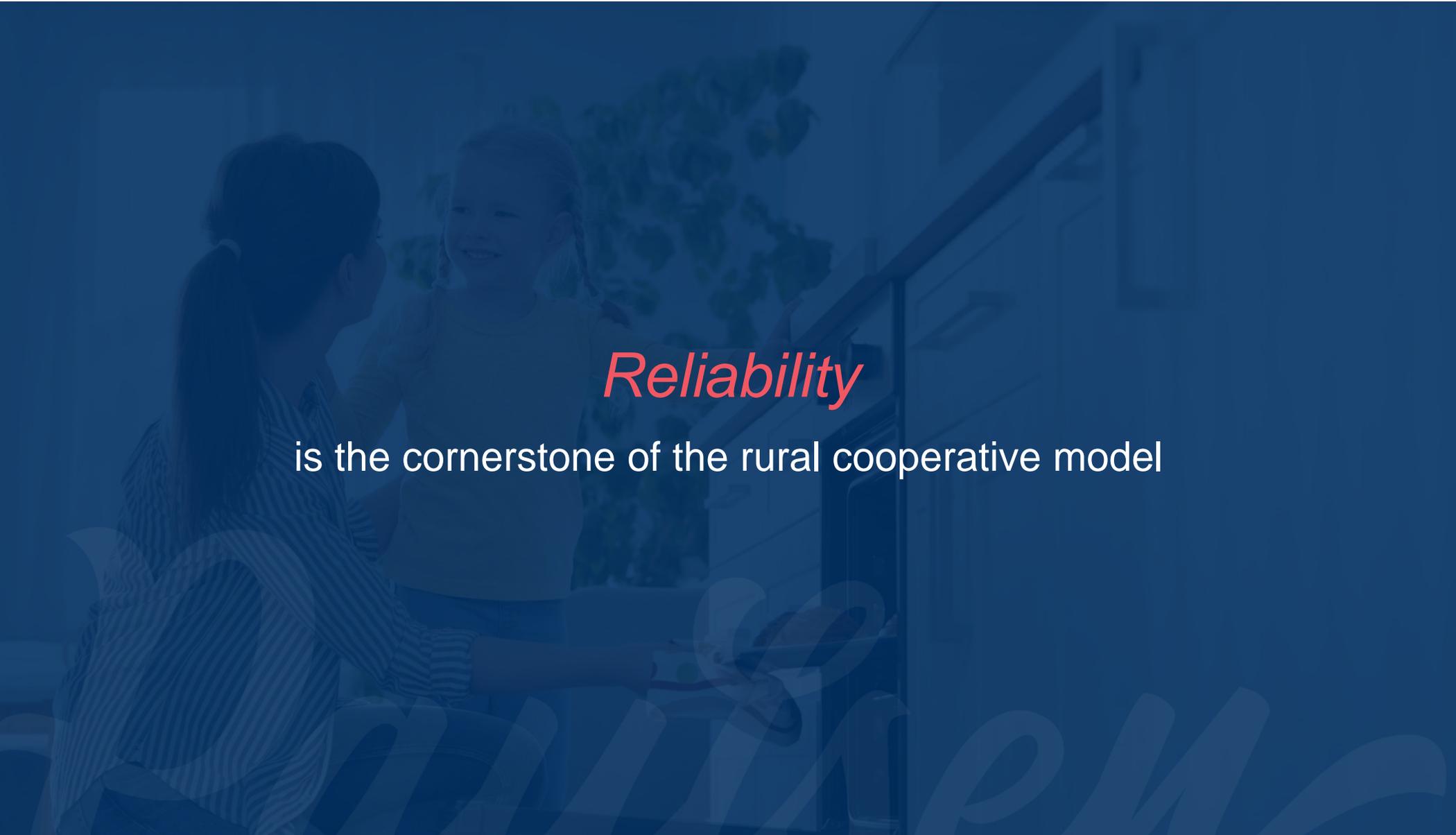
- **Commit to visual representation** of your REC brand at public charging stations
- **Promote your coop's investment** in EV infrastructure through paid, earned and owned media channels
- **Charging stations bring pro-EV customers;** poor experience could hamper reputation
- **Charging time at public stations opens new doors for engagement during charging**
  - Economic development - destination brands
  - Retail
  - Entertainment
  - Informational





## *Members Expect EVs to Cause Disruption*

REC reputation on reliability, rates and renewables are at risk

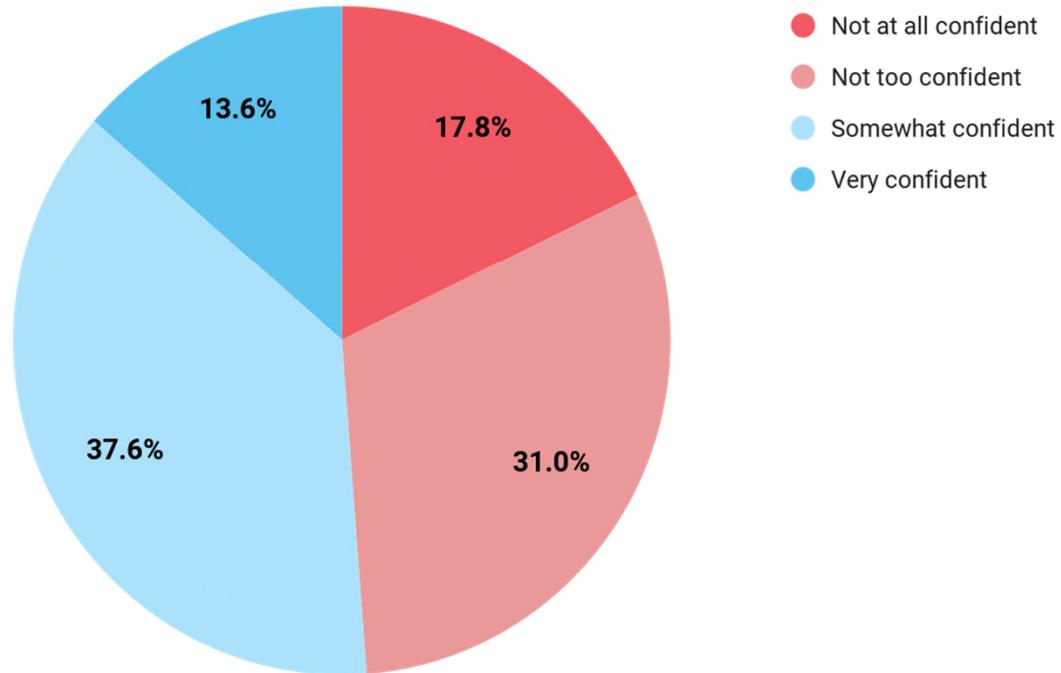


## *Reliability*

is the cornerstone of the rural cooperative model

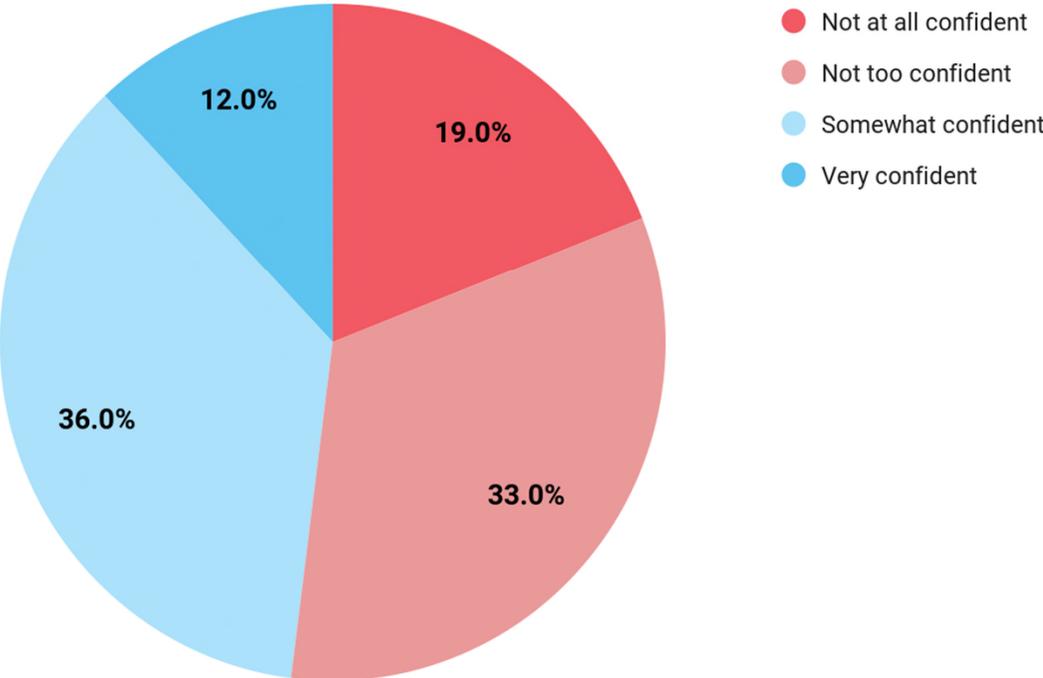
# Member Confidence Split in Electric Cooperative's Ability to Keep Pace with Energy Demands

**As more people own electric vehicles, how confident are you that your rural electric cooperative can keep up with the increased energy demands?**



# Member Confidence Split in Electric Cooperative's Ability to Keep Pace with Infrastructure/Charging Station Demands

**As more people own electric vehicles, how confident are you that your rural electric cooperative can keep up with the increased infrastructure demands, like charging stations?**





**Phil Ar**

Jun 26, 2022 · 🌐

**You are being told to lower your AC usage on hot days to prevent overwhelming the existing electric grid while simultaneously being told to trade in your gas cars for electric vehicles 😏**

 Like

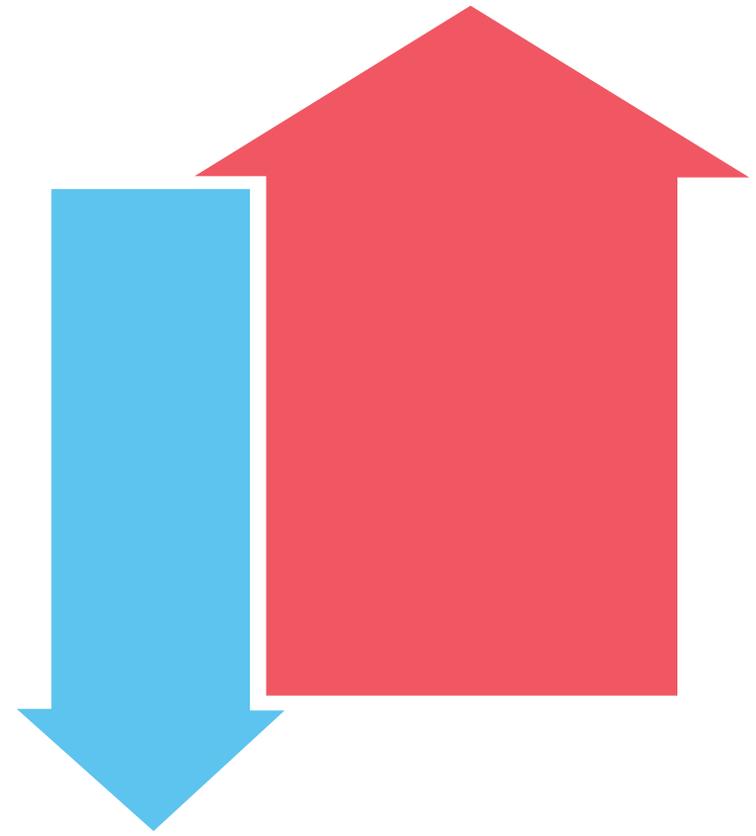
 Comment

 1



As More People Own Electric Vehicles, How Do You Think this Trend Will Affect Your Rural Electric Cooperative?

**My rates  
will go**

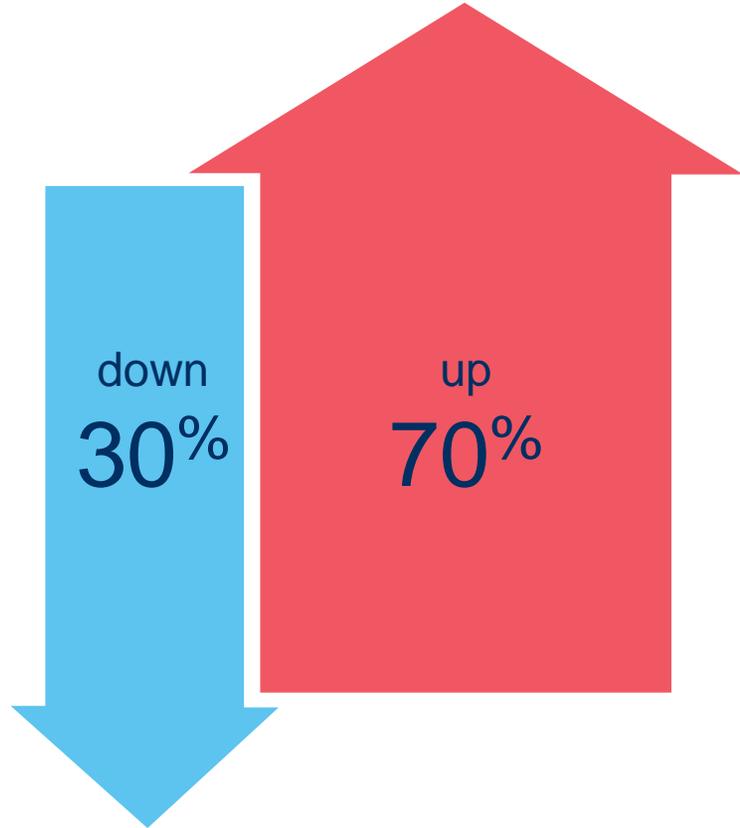


# As More People Own Electric Vehicles, How Do You Think this Trend Will Affect Your Rural Electric Cooperative?

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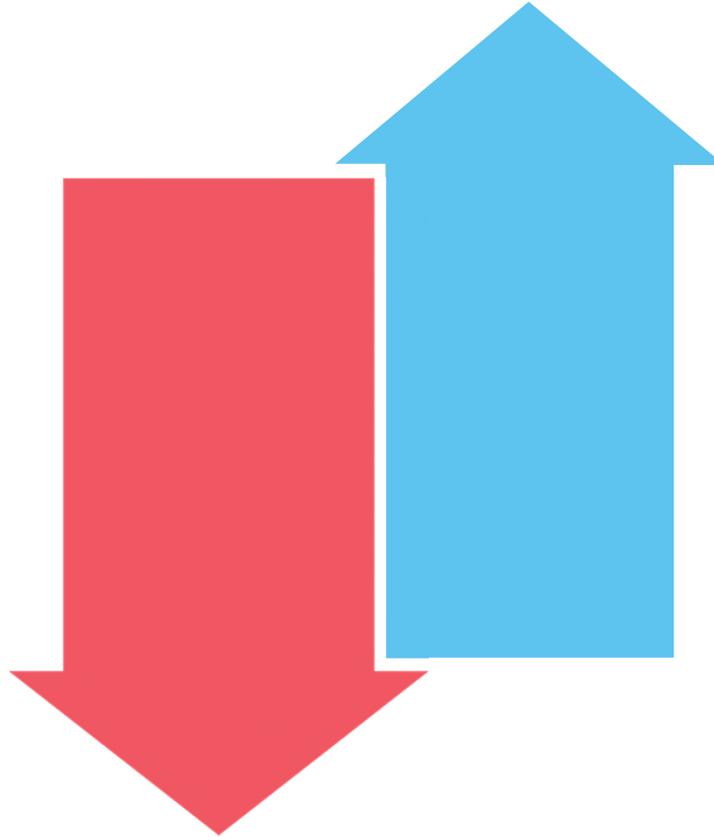
down  
**30%**

up  
**70%**

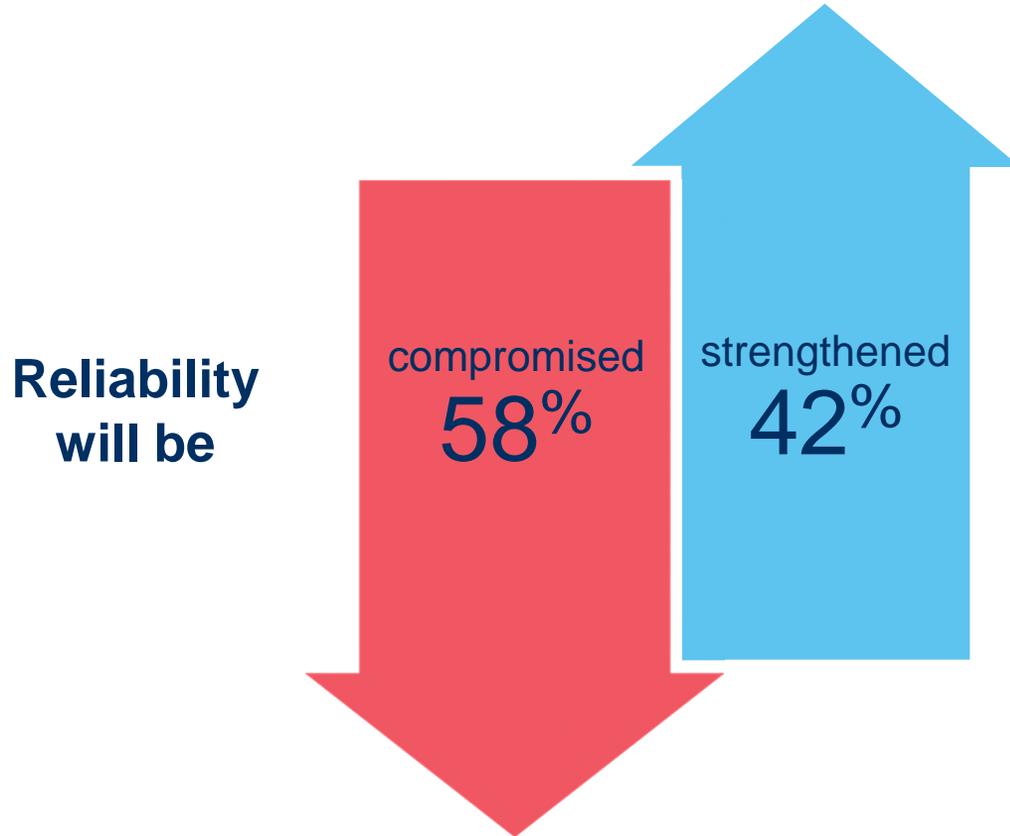


**Reliability** - As More People Own Electric Vehicles,  
How Do You Think This Trend Will Affect Your  
Rural Electric Cooperative?

**Reliability  
will be**



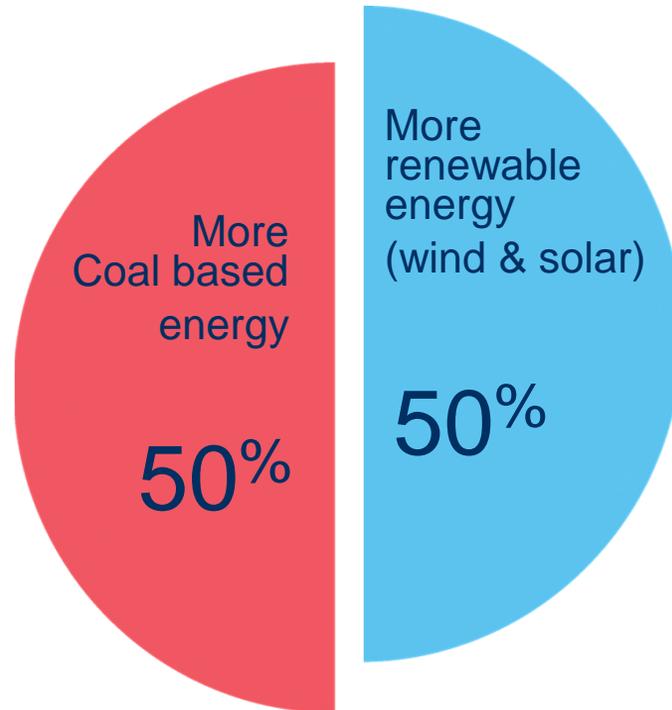
**Reliability** - As More People Own Electric Vehicles,  
How Do You Think This Trend Will Affect Your  
Rural Electric Cooperative?



More Coal-Based Energy Will Be Needed to Meet Increased Demand - More Renewable Energy, Like Wind and Solar, Will be Needed to Meet Increased Demand



More Coal-Based Energy Will Be Needed to Meet Increased Demand - More Renewable Energy, Like Wind and Solar, Will be Needed to Meet Increased Demand



## **Take Action: Take Proactive, Thought-Leadership Position**

- **Proactive communication is critical** to maintaining your brand reputation through this transition; control the narrative
- **Messaging about electricity reliability** in rural America will become even more important as EV adoption continues to grow; communicate your plan
- **Showcasing the strength of local infrastructure** to handle new energy demand is key to maintaining consumer trust







## *Rural electric cooperatives*

introduced electricity into farm houses

A family of four (a woman, a man, and two children) is sitting on a light-colored sofa in a living room. They are all looking at a laptop screen that is open on the sofa. The woman is on the left, the man is in the center, and the two children are on the right. The scene is dimly lit, and the overall color palette is a deep blue. The text is overlaid on this image.

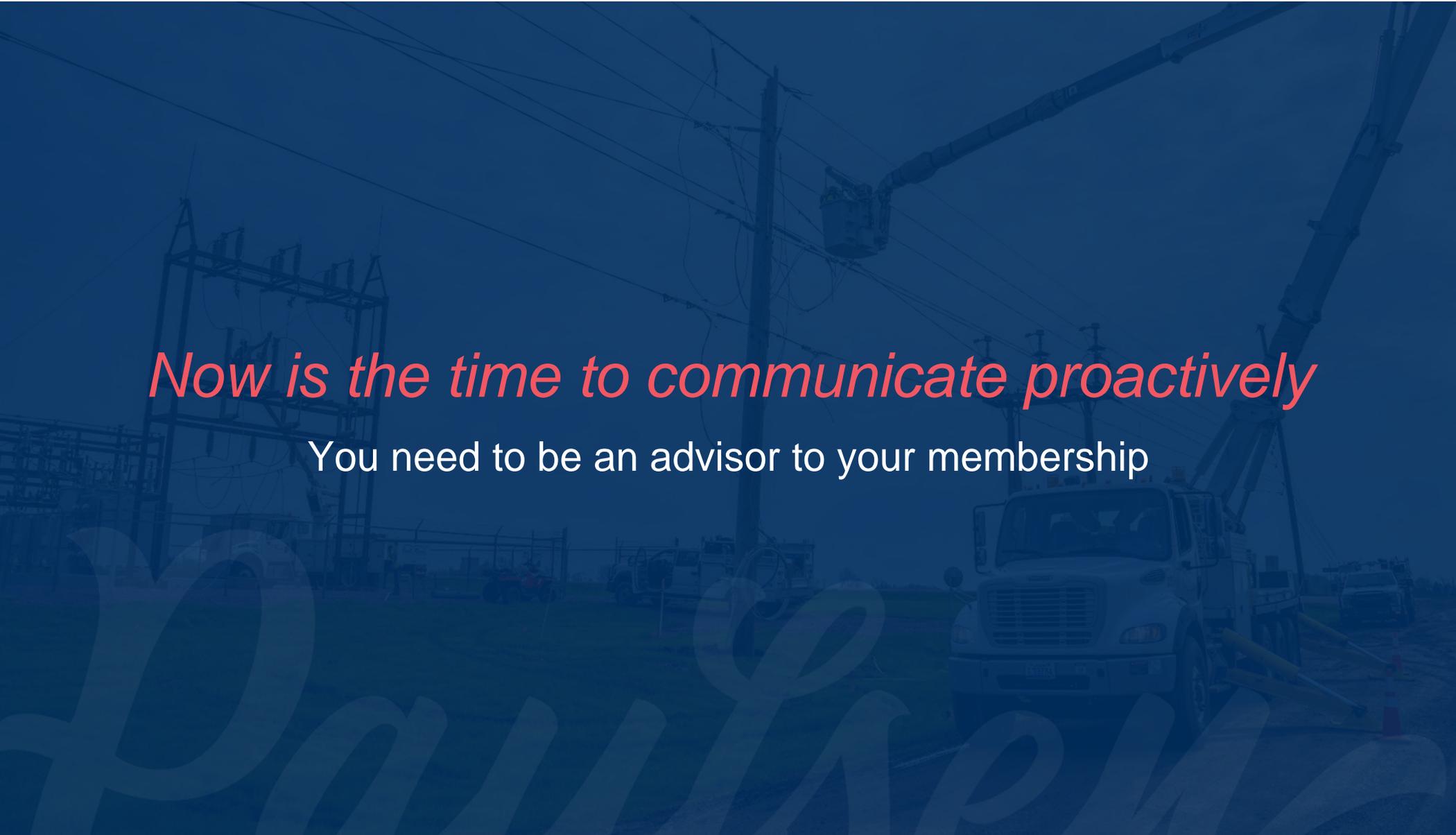
## *Rural electric cooperatives*

brought high speed broadband to  
rural towns and farm businesses

A group of approximately ten people, including men and women of various ages, are standing in a large, open industrial space, likely a warehouse or a factory. They are dressed in casual work attire, including jackets, sweaters, and hats. The background shows the structural elements of a large building, such as steel beams and overhead lighting fixtures. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The text is centered over the group of people.

*Rural electric cooperatives*

are the voice for rural Americans  
in the ocean of EV messaging



*Now is the time to communicate proactively*

You need to be an advisor to your membership

# *Paulsen Rural97*



*[paulsen.agency/rural97](https://paulsen.agency/rural97)*

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