

April 12, 2017

To: Interested parties
From: Brian Stryker
Re: Prevailing wage polling results

Voters that are aware of prevailing wage laws oppose their elimination by a wide margin. After both neutral factual information and a balanced debate with pro- and anti-prevailing wage positions, voters even more heavily support keeping prevailing wage laws intact. Support for prevailing wage laws includes majorities of Republicans and Trump voters.

Key Findings

- **There isn't universal knowledge of prevailing wage laws, but voters who know them want to keep them in place.** Voters that can answer the question start out wanting to keep prevailing wage laws:

"Some have proposed eliminating prevailing wage laws. Would you prefer to eliminate prevailing wage laws, or would you prefer to not eliminate them?"
(14% eliminate / 47% not eliminate / 38% don't know)

Among voters who have an opinion, most support keeping the laws (23% eliminate / 77% not eliminate). This includes majorities of Democrats, Independents, and Republicans.

- **When voters hear both a fact-based description of the laws and a balanced debate about them, they overwhelmingly support keeping them.** Voters heard the following description of prevailing wage laws: "They require contractors on any government funded construction projects--like a road, bridge, or school --to pay workers at least the local market rate for their job where the project is being built." After hearing that, they heavily want to keep the laws (16% eliminate / 73% not eliminate). They also strongly support the laws after hearing the following arguments on both sides:

"Supporters say these laws are a local minimum wage for skilled construction workers. They say most studies show these laws do not increase total project costs—but they produce more jobs, lower poverty, result in more productive workers, safer worksites, and a stronger overall economy.

Critics say these laws really only benefit unionized workers, and that higher wages for workers unnecessarily increases the cost of building roads, schools, bridges and other critical infrastructure. They say this results in fewer projects actually getting built."

(21% eliminate / 68% not eliminate / 11% don't know)

ALG conducted a poll on cellphones and landlines among n=1000 2016 voters, from February 23-28, 2017. Results were apportioned by demographics including geography to represent the full American electorate. The poll has an expected margin of sampling error of +3.2% at the 95% confidence level.

- Support for prevailing wage laws includes many people who voted for President Trump and Republicans in Congress.** The overall poll sample reports narrowly voting for Hillary Clinton in 2016 (42% Clinton / 40% Trump / 7% other / 11% refused), just as the national electorate did in 2016 (Clinton won the popular vote by 2.1%). Clinton supporters overwhelmingly support prevailing wage laws at all points in the poll, including after a balanced debate (10% eliminate / 81% not eliminate). The 2016 Republican coalition also supports keeping the laws, though, as the following post-balanced-debate poll numbers reflect:

	% who want to eliminate prevailing wage laws	% who do not eliminate prevailing wage laws
Trump 2016 voters	32	54
Self-identified Republicans	32	55
White men without college degrees	21	64
White Southerners¹	20	68
White rural voters²	23	65
2014 midterm election voters	20	68
Likely 2018 midterm election voters	20	69

- Voters—including many Trump voters—like labor unions.** Most voters are favorable towards labor unions (52% favorable / 35% unfavorable). That includes 33% of Trump voters and 52% of third-party voters in 2016.

¹ Defined as US Census' South region

² Defined by the US Census as people who do not live in a metropolitan area (MSA)