

For Immediate Release: Monday, Jan. 16, 2012

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**POLL: HOOSIERS WANT MORE TIME; PUBLIC REFERENDUM ON “RIGHT TO WORK”**

INDIANAPOLIS – Hoosiers overwhelmingly support a public referendum on the controversial “right to work” legislation and are unhappy with the Indiana General Assembly’s rush to pass it, a new poll conducted by the Indiana AFL-CIO this weekend found.

Among the survey’s findings were that only one-third of Indiana voters currently favor passage of so called “right to work” law, while 69 percent say that the Indiana General Assembly should slow down the process to allow more debate. The poll also found that an overwhelming 71 percent of respondents want to give voters—not the legislature—the final say on this controversial legislation.

Hart Research Associates conducted the statewide telephone survey among a representative cross section of 500 registered Indiana voters on January 14 and 15, 2012. The poll has a margin of error of  $\pm 4.4$  percentage points.

Specifically, the poll found that:

Only one-third of Indiana voters favor passage of so-called “right to work,” and 69 percent reject Republican plans to pass it this week.

- Just one-third (33 percent) of Indiana voters currently favor “right to work,” while a 36 percent plurality oppose the law, and 30 percent have no opinion on the issue.
- More than two-thirds (69 percent) of voters agree with Democrats that the legislature should provide more time for the public to learn about and debate “right to work” before making a final decision, while just 27 percent support Republican efforts to pass it in the next few days. There is bipartisan agreement on this point, with large majorities of Democrats (95 percent) and independents (65 percent) joining a plurality of Republicans (50 percent) in saying that the vote does not need to be held soon.

Hoosiers believe that the voters, not the legislature, should have the final say on this issue.

- While voters may be divided about the wisdom of so-called “right to work,” there is overwhelming support for deciding the issue through voter referendum rather than in the legislature. Fully seven in 10 (71 percent) voters say that “right to work” should be decided by voters in a public referendum, rather than by the legislature (23 percent). Support for a voter referendum is widespread, with 50 percent of Republicans, 79 percent of independents, and 89 percent of Democrats preferring a referendum. Among those who are undecided on “right to work,” 84 percent favor a referendum.

- Indeed, Indiana voters’ marching orders for their own legislators are to put “right to work” to a public vote rather than to pass or defeat the bill. Fifty-three percent of all voters want their

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legislator to vote for a public referendum so voters can make the decision, another 14 percent want their legislator to oppose it outright, and a mere 26 percent hope their legislator will vote to pass the bill. Solid majorities of independents (60 percent) and Democrats (61 percent) want their legislator to refer the issue to voters. Surprisingly, only a 42 percent minority of Republican voters want their legislator to pass “right to work,” while 47 percent want their representative either to put the issue to a public vote (42 percent) or oppose it outright (5 percent).

Hoosiers want to slow this process down because public understanding of “right to work” remains limited, the issue is not considered a high priority, and they are suspicious of Republicans’ focus on the issue.

- Nearly half of all voters still say they know just a little (24 percent), not much (19 percent) or nothing (2 percent) about “right to work,” one major reason they are telling Republican legislators to slow down.
- Fewer than one in four (23 percent) voters agree that “right to work” should be the legislature’s top priority, while fully 70 percent say that other issues are more important, including 61 percent of Republicans and 71 percent of independent voters.
- Indiana voters suspect that Republican efforts to push “right to work” through the legislature are more about politics than policy. A plurality of voters (44 percent) believe that Republicans are making “right to work” their top priority more for political reasons to weaken labor unions and Democrats, while just 35 percent feel it is because Republicans truly believe it will create jobs and strengthen the economy.

The Indiana State AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations) is a federation of 800 local unions across the state belonging to 50 International Unions. In total, the Indiana State AFL-CIO represents more than 300,000 working Hoosiers.

For more information on please visit [www.in.aflcio.org](http://www.in.aflcio.org) or call 1-800-433-8423.

## MEMORANDUM

**TO: Interested Parties**

**FROM: Hart Research Associates**

**DATE: January 16, 2012**

**RE: Survey Of Indiana Voters On Right To Work**

*On January 14 and 15, 2011, Hart Research Associates conducted a statewide telephone survey among a representative cross section of 500 registered Indiana voters on the issue of Right to Work. The survey, conducted on behalf of the AFL-CIO, has a margin of error of  $\pm 4.4$  percentage points.*

**The survey results clearly indicate that Hoosiers are unhappy with Republican efforts to quickly pass "Right to Work" legislation. Only one-third of Indiana voters currently favor passage of RTW, 69% say that the legislature should slow down to allow more debate, and an overwhelming 71% majority wants to give voters—not the legislature—the final say on this controversial legislation.**

### **1. Only one-third of Indiana voters favor passage of Right to Work, and 69% reject Republican plans to pass it this week.**

- Just one-third (33%) of Indiana voters currently favor Right to Work, while a 36% plurality oppose the law, and 30% have no opinion on the issue.
- More than two-thirds (69%) of voters agree with Democrats that the legislature should provide more time for the public to learn about and debate Right to Work before making a final decision, while just 27% support Republican efforts to pass it in the next few days. There is bipartisan agreement on this point, with large majorities of Democrats (95%) and independents (65%) joining a plurality of Republicans (50%) in saying that the vote does not need to be held soon.

### **2. Hoosiers believe that the voters, not the legislature, should have the final say on this issue.**

- While voters may be divided about the wisdom of Right to Work, there is overwhelming support for deciding the issue through voter referendum rather than in the legislature. Fully seven in 10 (71%) voters say that Right to Work should be decided by voters in a public referendum, rather than by the legislature (23%). Support for a voter referendum is widespread, with 50% of Republicans, 79% of independents, and 89% of Democrats preferring a referendum. Among those who are undecided on RTW, fully 84% favor a referendum.

## Hart Research Associates

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- Indeed, Indiana voters' marching orders for their own legislator are to put Right to Work to a public vote rather than to pass or defeat the bill. Fifty-three percent of all voters want their legislator to vote for a public referendum so voters can make the decision, another 14% want their legislator to oppose it outright, and a mere 26% hope their legislator will vote to pass the bill. Solid majorities of independents (60%) and Democrats (61%) want their legislator to refer the issue to voters. Surprisingly, only a 42% minority of *Republican* voters want their legislator to pass Right to Work, while 47% want their representative either to put the issue to a public vote (42%) or oppose it outright (5%).

### **3. Hoosiers want to slow this process down because public understanding of RTW remains limited, the issue is not considered a high priority, and they are suspicious of Republicans' focus on the issue.**

- Nearly half of all voters still say they know just a little (24%), not much (19%) or nothing (2%) about Right to Work, one major reason they are telling Republican legislators to slow down.
- Fewer than one in four (23%) voters agree that Right to Work should be the legislature's top priority, while fully 70% say that other issues are more important, including 61% of Republicans and 71% of independent voters.
- Indiana voters suspect that Republican efforts to push Right to Work through the legislature are more about politics than policy. A plurality of voters (44%) believe that Republicans are making Right to Work their top priority more for political reasons to weaken labor unions and Democrats, while just 35% feel it is because Republicans truly believe it will create jobs and strengthen the economy.