



**NATIONAL
WOMEN'S
LAW CENTER**

Justice for Her. Justice for All.

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Abortion Unites Us

Abortion Messaging For Union Members and Leaders

In 2023, Breakthrough Campaigns conducted a two-phase, national poll on behalf of the National Women's Law Center. The poll tested messages connecting abortion with economic and worker justice. The first phase tested messages with a national voter audience, while the second phase tested the best performing messages with a current and retired union member audience. The poll results provide rich insights about union members' abortion attitudes and the messages that most powerfully connect abortion access with economic and worker justice.

Key Findings: Abortion Attitudes

1. Registered voters and union members overwhelmingly support abortion being legal and many have intense concerns about abortion not being a constitutional right.
 - 62% of voters believe abortion should be legal in at least most cases, including 65% of union members.¹
 - Over 7 in 10 voters (71%) and over 8 in 10 (84%) union voters had concern about abortion no longer being a constitutional right, with nearly half (49%) of voters and more than half (52%) of union members being very concerned.
2. There is broad and intense support among voters for a law to guarantee the right to abortion nationally (60%) - and higher and more intense opposition to a national abortion ban (66% oppose).
 - Two in three (65%) union members want to see a national law guaranteeing the right to abortion.
3. About 3 in 5 union members would be more favorable to their labor union if the union came out in support of restoring and protecting abortion rights (60%) and if the union came out against a ban on abortion in their state (58%). Only a quarter would be less favorable to their labor union if they were to come out in support of abortion protections (25%).
4. Voters most impacted are the most concerned.
 - Women, people of color, and voters under 45 show the strongest support for abortion rights and the most concern about the issue.
5. Even some who are personally against abortion do not want politicians taking this decision away from individuals. About a third of voters and union members describe themselves as "personally against abortion, but also against government preventing someone from making their own decisions." They see politicians taking away the right to an abortion as an attack on freedom, liberty, and the ability to make one's own decisions and control one's own destiny.

¹ The poll asked respondents to select which of the following statements came closest to their view of abortion: Abortion should be a) legal in all cases, b) legal in most cases, c) illegal in most cases, or d) illegal in all cases.

Messaging and Insights

The following tested messages successfully draw connections between abortion and the rights and freedoms unions fight for every day.

UNIONS FIGHT FOR FREEDOM AND AUTONOMY

- We all deserve the freedom and opportunity to control our own bodies and our life's path. Restricting abortion access is about who has power over you, who can make decisions for you, and who is going to control how your future turns out. We should all have freedom, liberty, and the ability to make our own decisions and control our own destinies -- without politicians getting involved.
- Regardless of personal beliefs toward abortion, everyone should have the freedom to make their own decisions about their body without politicians getting involved. We want to ensure that our members can get the medical care they need and the freedom to decide if and when they have kids.
- We are committed to standing up to politicians who want to take away our rights. Make no mistake: the politicians that are trying to take away our right to unionize are the same ones that are trying to take away our right to access abortion care. We are committed to protecting the rights of our members from attacks on their freedom

UNIONS FIGHT FOR ECONOMIC JUSTICE

- Abortion is an economic justice issue. For many people, deciding if or when they will have a child has an enormous impact on their economic security.
- People have more control over their economic security when they can make their own decisions about their bodies and what's best for their families. These decisions affect their financial well-being, job security, and their ability to work and go to school. These decisions should be left up to people, not politicians.
- Being denied an abortion really hurts people's financial well-being. People who are denied an abortion are nearly four times more likely to live in poverty. Studies also show that being denied an abortion increases the amount of debt people are in, as well as the rate of bankruptcies and evictions.

UNIONS FIGHT FOR WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

- Having the freedom to decide if and when we have kids and how to care for our loved ones is fundamental to living the lives we choose. This includes policies that protect abortion care and expand paid family leave, affordable child care, and aging and disability care.
- The states that have the most abortion restrictions are also the states that fail to support women, children, and families. For example, many states that banned abortion after the legal right to abortion was overturned have the biggest gaps between what women and men get paid for the same work.
- Restricting abortion access hurts workers because being forced to continue a pregnancy may lead to income or job loss and make it harder to take care of themselves or their families. For some workers, being forced to carry a pregnancy may mean being forced to experience illegal pregnancy discrimination in the workplace.
- Abortion bans threaten working people. Low-paid workers are most impacted by abortion bans and are at very high risk of losing wages or their jobs when forced to carry a pregnancy.
- Protecting the right to an abortion is protecting workers' rights. Studies show clear links between access to abortion and higher participation in the workforce and economic independence for women. Access to abortion care increases people's ability to plan for their future careers and lives.

Each of the above messages resonates strongly with union members overall, while certain messages are more convincing to certain groups of union members. For example, union members who are personally against abortion but do not believe government should prevent someone from making that decision for themselves especially resonate with two slightly adjusted versions of these messages.

- We all deserve the freedom and opportunity to control our own bodies and our life's path. Restricting abortion access is about who has power over you, who can make decisions for you, and who is going to control how your future turns out. *When politicians take away the right to an abortion, they are taking away our freedom, liberty, and the ability to make our own decisions and control our own destinies.*
- *Continued attacks on abortion care are designed to divide us. We need leaders to focus on policies that put families' health, safety, and real-life needs first.* This includes policies that protect abortion care and expand paid family leave, affordable child care, and aging and disability care.

Key Insights

- The economic messages that rise to the top for voters highlight the negative impacts of people being denied abortion access and use personal, plain language, rather than academic terms.
- When talking about the impact of abortion bans on workers, focus on how it hurts their ability to earn pay and take care of their families.
- While highlighting the negative impacts of abortion bans is generally more effective than highlighting the positive impacts of abortion access, messages that use positive frames also perform strongly. This is especially true for union members who both support abortion being legal and are actively involved in their union's advocacy efforts.

Appendix

METHODOLOGY

Phase 1: Registered Voters Nationwide (7/6-7/17, 2023)

- Breakthrough Campaigns conducted interviews with n=844 registered voters nationwide from July 6-17, 2023. The sample additionally included oversamples for three key states: n=638 in Florida, n=409 in Missouri, and n=570 in Ohio

Phase 2: Union Members who are Registered Voters Nationwide (10/2-10/11, 2023)

- Breakthrough Campaigns conducted interviews with n=1,184 registered voters who were current or retired union members nationwide from October 2-11, 2023. The sample included oversamples for three key states: n=152 in Florida, n=160 in Missouri, and n=150 in Ohio

DEMOGRAPHICS

National Voters' Demographics

- Gender: 52% Women; 47% Men; 1% Neither/Non-Binary
- Party Identification: 31% Dem; 41% Ind; 28% Rep
- Ideology: 28% Liberal; 33% Moderate; 39% Conservative
- Age: 25% 18-34; 24% 35-49; 25% 50-64; 26% 65+
- Race: 67% White (only); 16% Black or African American; 14% Latinx or Hispanic; 2% Asian or Pacific Islander; 1% Middle Eastern; 2% Native American; 5% Other/Prefer not to answer
- Education: 65% Non-college; 35% College +
- Target Groups: 36% Working People; 14% Current Union Member; 13% Former (non-retired) union member

Union Member Demographics

- Gender: 49% Women; 50% Men; 1% Neither/Non-Binary
- Party Identification: 42% Dem; 30% Ind; 28% Rep
- Ideology: 30% Liberal; 36% Moderate; 35% Conservative
- Age: 16% 18-29; 35% 30-49; 28% 50-64; 21% 65+
- Race: 64% White (only); 16% Black or African American; 15% Latinx or Hispanic; 3% Asian or Pacific Islander; 3% Native American or Indigenous; 2% Other/Prefer not to answer
- Education: 58% Non-college; 42% College +
- Industries: 16% Education; 16% Healthcare; 11% Construction; 11% State or local government; 7% Manufacturing; 7% Wholesale and retail trade; 6% Transportation; 4% Utilities; 3% leisure and hospitality; 3% Protective service; 16% Other
- Union Membership: 12% National Education Association (NEA); 11% Service Employees International Union (SEIU); 10% American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); 10% United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW); 7% International Brotherhood of Teamsters (Teamsters); 6% International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW); 5% United Auto Workers (UAW); 5% United Steelworkers (USW); 5% American Federation of Teachers (AFT); 5% Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA); 22% Other