



TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Patinkin Research Strategies, LLC
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RE: Washington voters support an increase in the minimum wage
Date: December 12, 2013

This analysis is based on a telephone poll of 500 registered, likely November, 2014 voters in the state of Washington. A base sample of n=400 interviews was conducted statewide and two oversamples of n=50 interviews were conducted in Legislative Districts 17 and 30. Interviews were conducted December 6-9, 2013 and the margin of error is +/- 4.4 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. The margin of error for subgroups varies and is higher.

Washington voters are ready for a substantial increase in the minimum wage

Nearly two-thirds of likely November, 2014 voters support increasing Washington's minimum wage to \$12 per hour. Of these, over four in 10 (42%) say they favor the idea strongly—indicating a strong desire for change among a significant plurality of voters.

Indeed, nearly every major subgroup of the electorate offers significant amounts of support. Good numbers of self-identified Republicans like the idea (43% favor), and voters in

Swing Legislative Districts 17 (66% favor) and 30 (65% favor) provide strong support as well.

“Currently Washington’s minimum wage is \$9.19 per hour. Next year, Washington’s state legislature may consider a number of proposals that would increase the state’s minimum wage.

Do you favor or oppose raising the minimum wage to \$12.00 per hour?”

Favor, strongly	42%	65% net “favor”
Favor, not strongly	23%	
Oppose, not strongly	11%	28% net “oppose”
Oppose, strongly	17%	
Don’t know	8%	

On the other hand, opposition to an increase in the minimum wage is anemic at best. Only slightly more than one-quarter (28%) say they oppose the proposal. What’s more, there’s little passion among opponents, with fewer than one-in-five voters (17%) saying they dislike the idea “strongly.” With weak opposition and broad-based support, a proposal to increase the state’s minimum wage to \$12 per hour is clearly something Washington voters are ready to embrace.

Notably, support for a \$12 minimum wage (65% favor) outpaces the number in favor of an \$11 wage (62% favor). More telling, the intensity of opinion leans heavily towards \$12, with 42% indicating they “strongly favor” the proposal, and only 34% saying they have a “strong” preference for an \$11 minimum wage.

Supporting a minimum wage increase benefits candidates for state legislature

Not only do voters embrace a proposed increase in the minimum wage to \$12 per hour, they indicate a greater willingness to support legislative candidates who back the idea. Over four-in-ten (41%) were more willing to vote for a legislative candidate if they favored an increase in the minimum wage. Fewer than one-in-five (19%) said they would be less likely to vote for such a candidate.

This pattern holds true even in targeted legislative districts. Over four-in-ten (41%) LD17 voters say they would be more likely to vote for a candidate who supports a minimum wage increase, while 50% say they would vote for such a candidate in LD30.

Voters believe a minimum wage increase would benefit Washington’s economy

When given two short statements, one describing the potential benefits of a minimum wage increase and the other the potential negatives, Washington voters are much more likely to agree with the positive (64%) than the negative (27%) point of view. What’s more, the intensity of feeling is all on the positive side, with over four in ten (41%) saying they agree with the statement outlining the potential benefits of a minimum wage increase “strongly.” Only a little more than one-in-ten (14%) “strongly” agree with the statement that makes the case that a minimum wage increase would hurt Washington’s economy.

“I’m going to read you two statements regarding an increase in the state minimum wage to 11 dollars per hour:

[STATEMENT A] Raising Washington's minimum wage to 11 dollars per hour is the right thing to do, ensuring those who work hard for a living, can make a living. By giving all of Washington's families an opportunity to make ends meet, we'll put more money in consumer's pockets, which means more money will be spent at local small businesses-helping them grow and hire more employees. In the end, a fair, living wage will help Washington thrive, creating a positive legacy that strengthens our local small businesses, our communities, and our economy.

[STATEMENT B] The big labor unions pushing to raise Washington's minimum wage just don't get it. Their plan will hurt Washington's struggling small businesses, kill local jobs and mandate unrealistically high wages for entry-level jobs. Washington already has the second highest minimum wage in the United States. Locking in a new minimum wage that's almost two dollars higher and then allowing it to continue to grow based on inflation is a bad idea that will harm the economic security of our local communities, businesses and families across the state.

Having heard this, which opinion do you agree with more even if neither is exactly right?”

Statement A, strongly	41%	64% net “agree with statement A”
Statement A, not strongly	23%	
Statement B, not strongly	13%	27% net “agree with statement B”
Statement B, strongly	14%	
DK/NA	9%	