



**From: Tom Jensen, Director of Public Policy Polling**

**Subject: Political Landscape in 2016 Heavily Favors Democrats**

**Date: November 5, 2014**

New Public Policy Polling surveys of the battleground states both for this year's Senate races and for the 2016 Presidential race find broad support for key economic issues like increasing the minimum wage, passing the Paycheck Fairness Act, allowing people to refinance student loans at lower rates, and avoiding cuts to Social Security and Medicare. Democrats have much more credibility on these issues with voters in the key states for 2016, and Republicans will be in big trouble in the next election if they continue to impede progress on them.

**Key Findings Among the 2014 Electorate:**

-Even in the Republican leaning states that determined control of the Senate this year, there is strong support for addressing many of these issues. There was 86/6 opposition to allowing any cuts to Social Security and Medicare, 76/17 support for passing the Paycheck Fairness Act, 73/16 support for allowing people to refinance old student loans, and 52/44 support for increasing the minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour.

-Among voters who chose Republican Senate candidates yesterday, there's **still** strong support on many of these issues. Among those who voted Republican, there's 79/12 opposition to cuts to Social Security and Medicare, 61/29 support for the Paycheck Fairness Act, and 61/27 support for allowing the refinancing of old student loans. The Republicans' gains last night should not be taken as a mandate not to act on these issues, given the positions of their own base.

**Key Findings Among the 2016 Electorate:**

-Support for these issues is even higher in the key 2016 battleground states, which are much more friendly to Democrats than the terrain the 2014 election was fought on. There's 83/5 opposition to any Social Security and Medicare cuts, 78/9 support for allowing the refinancing of old student loans, 76/14 support for the Paycheck Fairness Act, and 60/35 support for increasing the minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour.

-In the key battlegrounds for 2016, voters trust Democrats considerably more than Republicans on all of these major issues. They have more faith in Democrats by a 54/35 spread on ensuring men and women receive equal pay for equal work, by a 54/37 spread on the minimum wage, by a 53/36 spread on preventing cuts to Social Security and Medicare, and by a 51/34 spread on allowing the refinancing of old student loans.

-Republican candidates for President and the US Senate stand to pay a price in 2016 if they take positions that are out of line with the public on the issues. Voters are less likely to vote for a candidate who supports making cuts to Social Security and Medicare by 70 points, less likely to vote for one who opposes allowing old student loans to be refinanced by 36 points, less likely to vote for one who opposes legislation to ensure equal pay for equal work by 34 points, and less likely to vote for one who opposes increasing the minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour by 18 points.

Despite the Republican victory last night there continues to be clear support for the public on all of these issues. The GOP may still be able to win in places like Kentucky and Arkansas without acting on them, but their stances won't fly in places like Florida, Ohio, and Virginia that will be the most important states in 2016. Continued inaction by them on these issues will put Democrats in position to have another strong Presidential year like they did in 2008 and 2012.

PPP interviewed 676 actual voters in the key 2014 Senate Battlegrounds of Alaska, Arkansas, Colorado, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, New Hampshire, and North Carolina on November 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. The margin of error among 2014 voters is +/-3.8%. PPP also interviewed 501 registered voters in the likely 2016 battleground states of Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Wisconsin on November 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. The margin of error among the the 2016 voters is +/-4.4%. These surveys were conducted on behalf of Americans United for Change and National Employment Law Project Action Fund.

**FULL RESULTS:** <http://www.americansunitedforchange.org/page/-/2014VoterSurvey.pdf>