

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Interested Parties

FROM: American Rights at Work And Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc.

DATE: November 5, 2008

RE: Results From A Survey Among Voters In Senate Battleground States

Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc., has conducted 2,104 telephone interviews among 2008 voters in seven Senate battleground states: Colorado, Louisiana, New Hampshire, Maine, Minnesota, North Carolina, and Oregon (at least 300 interviews were conducted in each state). All of these are states in which opponents of the Employee Free Choice Act devoted significant resources to advertisements attacking candidates who support the Employee Free Choice Act. The survey was conducted from November 2 to 4, 2008; respondents interviewed on November 2 and 3 either voted early or said they were certain to vote on Election Day, while respondents on November 4 had all voted. The margin of error for this survey is ± 2.2 percentage points overall, ± 5.7 percentage points in each state, and is larger among certain subgroups.

Findings

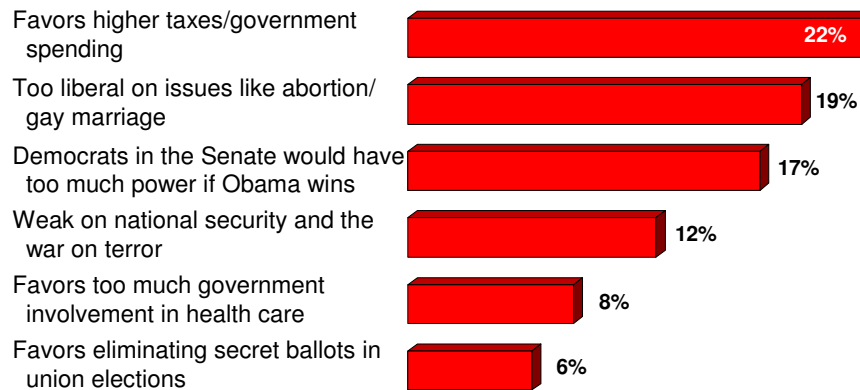
1 Attacks on candidates for their support of the Employee Free Choice Act do NOT appear to have played any significant role in voters' decisions.

Less than one percent of all respondents who voted for the anti-Employee Free Choice Act candidate volunteer any unfavorable mention of unions or the Employee Free Choice Act in an open-ended question as reason for their vote. Instead, these voters were far more likely to cite the candidates' on-the-job record (15%), overall ideology (12%), or party affiliation (9%) as reasons for their decision.

Similarly, when read six common criticisms of Democratic senatorial candidates in these campaigns and asked which is their greatest concern, Senate battleground voters who cast Republican ballots rank "favors eliminating secret ballots in union elections" last among their concerns (6%). Each of these Senate races featured advertisements that used this line of attack, but the data indicate it only registered with a very small group of voters.

Employee Free Choice Act Not A Factor In Voter's Choices For Battleground Senate Races

*(Proportion of voters saying this was their top concern about
Democratic Senate candidate)*



Voters in Senate battleground states who voted for the anti-Employee Free Choice Act candidate overwhelmingly describe their vote as being FOR (67%) that candidate rather than AGAINST (28%) the pro-Employee Free Choice Act candidate who was the target of negative advertising. If the attacks on supporters of the Employee Free Choice Act had made a significant impact, we would expect the proportion of voters saying they cast their ballot against those supporters to be higher.

2 Although this research confirms the Employee Free Choice Act did not play a significant role in voters' decisions, a majority of Senate battleground voters (and a majority in all seven of these states) support the Employee Free Choice Act and overwhelmingly agree that the next Congress should make passing the legislation a priority.

When told about proposed legislation in Congress that would "make it easier for workers to form unions by allowing employees to be represented by a union when a majority of their coworkers sign cards saying they want to join that union," voters in these states favor the Employee Free Choice Act by nearly three to one (55% favor; 28% oppose). Indeed, nearly one in four (22%) voters says they **strongly** favor the Employee Free Choice Act. Slightly fewer than one in five (17%) voters is not sure how they feel. If we exclude those with no opinion on the issue, voters support the Employee Free Choice Act by 67% to 33%.

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Support for the Employee Free Choice Act is strong across the electorate in these states:

- ◆ Respondents who voted for the Democratic candidate favor the Employee Free Choice Act by an overwhelming margin (69% to 13%). Even among voters who cast their ballot for the Republican senatorial candidate in these states, feelings are evenly divided with 42% favoring the legislation and 42% opposing.
- ◆ Among those respondents who voted for the Republican senatorial candidate and describe their vote as mostly AGAINST the Democratic candidate, opinion also is evenly divided 43% to 44%.
- ◆ Senate swing voters—voters who say they considered voting for the other candidate—favor the Employee Free Choice Act by nearly three to one (61% to 23%).
- ◆ Seven in 10 (72%) union members favor the Employee Free Choice Act, but even among nonunion households a majority (54%) support the legislation. Just 29% of voters in nonunion households oppose the legislation.

A Majority Of Senate Battleground Voters Support the Employee Free Choice Act

	<u>All</u>	<u>CO</u>	<u>LA</u>	<u>NH</u>	<u>ME</u>	<u>MN</u>	<u>NC</u>	<u>OR</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total favor	55	49	55	55	60	59	51	59
Total oppose	28	34	28	25	24	29	31	21
Differential (favor minus oppose)	+27	+15	+27	+30	+36	+30	+20	+38

Nearly two-thirds (60%) of voters in these states agree that in these tough economic times, it is important to pass the Employee Free Choice Act, making it easier for workers to form unions and negotiate with their employers for better pay, health insurance, and retirement benefits. One in three (31%) voters **strongly** believes it should be a priority for Congress. Just 28% of Senate battleground voters disagree and 12% are not sure.

3 Voters in these Senate battleground states are much more concerned about the power of big corporations than about the power of big labor unions.

Voters in these states are more than twice as likely to say big corporations having too much power (50%) creates a bigger problem for people like them than big labor unions having too much power (23%). About one in 10 (11%) voters say neither is a problem for them.

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- ◆ Among Democrats, 70% of voters say big corporations are a bigger problem for people like them. However, half (49%) of independents also feel big corporations are more of a problem for people like them, while just 17% of independents say big unions are the more significant problem.

Voters Are Much More Concerned About The Power Of Big Corporations Than The Power Of Big Unions

	<u>All</u> %	<u>CO</u> %	<u>LA</u> %	<u>NH</u> %	<u>ME</u> %	<u>MN</u> %	<u>NC</u> %	<u>OR</u> %
Big corporations have too much power	50	46	44	51	57	52	45	55
Big labor unions have too much power	23	27	25	21	17	23	25	20
Differential (big corporations minus big unions)	+27	+19	+19	+30	+40	+29	+20	+35

4 A majority of Senate battleground voters approve of labor unions.

Overall, 55% of voters in these states say they approve of labor unions, compared with just 27% who say they disapprove. Nearly one in five (18%) voters is not sure how they feel about labor unions. This approval extends across demographic groups, including some surprising segments of voters:

- ◆ Among Senate battleground voters who cast their ballots for the Republican candidate, feelings toward labor unions are evenly split. Nearly two in five (39%) of these voters approve of labor unions and 42% disapprove.
- ◆ Feelings also are evenly divided among McCain voters in these states. Thirty-eight percent (38%) of McCain voters in Senate battleground states approve of labor unions and 43% disapprove.
- ◆ In nonunion households—homes in which no one is a union member—approval of unions is far more common than disapproval. Half (50%) of voters in nonunion households support unions, compared with just 31% who disapprove.

A Majority Of Senate Battleground Voters Approve Of Labor Unions

	<u>All</u> %	<u>CO</u> %	<u>LA</u> %	<u>NH</u> %	<u>ME</u> %	<u>MN</u> %	<u>NC</u> %	<u>OR</u> %
Approve of labor unions	55	40	51	61	56	68	47	64
Disapprove of labor unions	27	38	27	27	26	20	32	21
Differential (approve minus disapprove)	+28	+2	+24	+34	+30	+48	+15	+43

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Appendix

The questionnaire specified the names of candidates in the individual Senate races. Survey samples in each state were weighted so that the Senate result closely matched the actual vote result as reported by secretaries of state on the morning of November 5.

Senate Battleground Results, As Reflected By The Survey	
	<u>Vote</u>
	<u>%</u>
CO	
Mark Udall	52
Bob Schaffer	43
LA	
Mary Landrieu	52
John Kennedy	46
ME	
Susan Collins	61
Tom Allen	39
MN	
Al Franken	42
Norm Coleman	42
Dean Barkley	15
NC	
Kay Hagan	53
Elizabeth Dole	44
NH	
Jeanne Shaheen	52
John Sununu	45
OR	
Jeff Merkley	49
Gordon Smith	48