



--For immediate release--

While the Supreme Court considers union policy, the court of public opinion remains deadlocked

**Americans evenly split over “right-to-work” or mandating union dues,
despite a majority of Americans preferring stronger unions**

ST. PAUL, Minn., June 13, 2018— A [new survey by the APM Research Lab](#) has found that despite being tied in their preference for “fair share” and “right-to-work” policies, the majority of Americans think the country is better off with stronger unions. Released today, the findings come from APM Research Lab’s June survey, which reached more than 1,000 American adults.

The survey, conducted in the wake of several national teachers strikes and just prior to the Supreme Court’s expected ruling in *Janus v. American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, Council 31*, found a statistical tie with roughly 45 percent of Americans favoring each of the two options:

- “Each worker covered by a union contract should be allowed to decide for themselves whether or not to pay dues,” which describes a “right-to-work” policy, and
- “All workers covered by union contracts should pay at least some union dues” describing a “fair share” policy.

“The public is still deadlocked on whether or not workers covered by union contracts should be required to pay any union dues, just as the Supreme Court was prior to the addition of Justice Gorsuch,” said Craig Helmstetter, APM Research Lab’s Managing Partner. “And yet, 62 percent of Americans said they think the United States would be better off if unions were stronger.”

Helmstetter added that this survey uniquely asked respondents to explain their reasons for supporting one policy over the other and asked about the union membership experience of the entire household.

“Forty percent of American adults live in households that include past or present union members. Respondents from these union households are more likely to support ‘fair share’ policies and stronger unions than are those from non-union households,” he said.

Additional key findings concerning “right-to-work” policies:

- Americans are evenly split in their preference for “right-to-work” as opposed to “fair share” union policy with about 45 percent choosing each option, and the remainder unsure.
- A “right-to-work” approach is favored by 50 percent or more of those with high school diplomas or less education, those without union experience in their household, Republicans, and those living in the south.

- The most popular reasons for supporting “right-to-work” policies have to do with freedom of choice, with nearly 50 percent of “right-to-work” supporters saying things like “*Why should somebody force someone to do what they don't want to do?*”
- A “fair share” approach is favored by 60 percent or more of those who have direct union experience themselves or through a household member, Democrats, and those living in North Eastern states.
 - Additionally, “fair share” is preferred by at least 50 percent of non-Hispanic Whites, those with at least some college education, those living outside of the South, and those living in states that have not adopted “right-to-work” legislation.
 - The most popular reasons given by those favoring “fair share” policies include a belief that workers who benefit from union contracts should pay something in return. For example: “*If you are going to benefit from it, you should pay into it.*”

Additional key findings concerning support for “weaker” or “stronger” labor unions:

- The majority of Americans (62%) indicate that stronger unions would be better for the country; only one-quarter of Americans indicate a preference for weaker unions.
- Stronger unions are preferred by at least three-quarters of Latinos and African Americans, Democrats, and those favoring “fair share” as opposed to “right-to-work” policies. Stronger unions also are preferred by at least two-thirds of women, those age 18-44, those with a high school diploma or less, and those with annual household incomes below \$50,000.
- Weaker unions are preferred by at least one-third of those with annual household incomes of \$75,000 or more, Republicans, and those favoring “right-to-work” policies over a “fair share” approach to unionization.
- Notably, even among these groups, about half indicated support for stronger unions. Even among Republicans—the only group APM Research Lab found where support for weaker unions was more common than support for stronger unions—over 40 percent supported stronger unions.

Complete APM Survey results and methods are available online [here](#).

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