

May 12, 2021

*Release is effective immediately*

### **Hawkeye Poll: Iowans support minimum wage increase**

According to a recent Hawkeye Poll — conducted by University of Iowa faculty and students between March 23 and April 12 — Iowans strongly support increasing Iowa's minimum wage and indexing it to inflation, though they are nearly evenly divided on recent discussions about increasing the Federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour.

Iowa's current minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour is the same as the Federal minimum that was set in 2009 and has not increased since then. When asked whether they supported increasing the Federal minimum wage to \$15 as was discussed in Congress in February, a near-majority of respondents, 48.6%, either strongly supported (29.9%) or somewhat supported (17.7%) this increase. 41.7% were opposed, either strongly (24.4%) or somewhat (17.3%). 7.3% neither favored nor opposed the change and 2.3% were not sure or declined to answer.

When asked what they thought Iowa's minimum wage should be respondents offered a wide range of answers. Almost all agreed that the minimum should be greater than the current value of \$7.25. Just 15.3% entered a number less than \$8 per hour and 37.7% preferred a minimum wage of less than \$10. 17.1% preferred \$15 or more. The median response was \$10, with 37.7% preferring a lower amount, 36.0% preferring a greater amount, and 25.4% entering exactly \$10.

Respondents were then asked whether they think that Iowa should follow other states' lead by indexing the minimum wage to increases in the cost of living. Increases in these costs mean that the \$7.25 set in 2009 is worth just \$5.95 today. 70.2% of respondents supported such indexing, 15.1% opposed it, and 14.7% did not know or declined to answer.

Finally, a majority of Iowans also supported state government passing legislation to allow local governments to set a minimum wage greater than the state minimum. Currently, state law restricts city and county governments from setting a local minimum wage greater than the state's minimum. 59.0% of respondents either strongly (32.8%) or somewhat (26.2%) supported allowing local governments to set their own minimum wage. Fewer than half that many, 28.7%, either strongly (10.1%) or somewhat (8.6%) opposed easing this law.

Opinions on these questions varied most widely according to partisanship. 75.8% of Democrats either strongly or somewhat supported a \$15 minimum wage compared to 26.1% of Republicans and 42.9% of Independents. When asked to state their own preferred minimum wage for the state of Iowa, the median response was \$9.00 for Republicans, \$10.00 for Independents, and \$12.00 for Democrats. All three groups agreed on linking the minimum wage to inflation, with support increasing from 58.3% among Republicans to 72.8% among Independents to 81.8% among Democrats. There was some modest disagreement on allowing local governments to set a minimum wage greater than the state's. Majorities of Democrats (76.3%) and Independents (56.1%) strongly or somewhat supported this. Support among Republicans was just shy of a majority at 45.7% supporting but easily surpassed the 28.4% that strongly or somewhat opposed local choice.

The University of Iowa Department of Political Science has conducted the Hawkeye Poll since 2007. A series of national and state public opinion polls, this experience serves as an important learning

opportunity for students. Over 1000 students have had the opportunity to directly participate in the research and survey process and to acquire valuable career-related knowledge about survey research and public polling in general. This year 17 students collaborated to design and implement a poll of Iowans. Learn more about the course at <https://now.uiowa.edu/2019/11/taking-iowas-pulse-hawkeye-poll>.

**Respondent Identification:** The Iowa Social Science Research Center (ISRC) assisted with data collection. Responses were gathered by phone (89) and by web (902). For the phone portion, the ISRC obtained a random sample of Iowans consisting of 40% household landline numbers and 60% mobile phone numbers. All respondents who stated they were over age 18 and willing to participate in the survey were included. After training, students in the class used the ISRC's computer-assisted interviewing resources to complete the calling and interviews. No quotas were set for the phone component. For the web portion, the ISRC contracted with a respected web panel vendor to field the survey to a demographically representative sample of 902 web respondents. Respondents invited to complete the web survey were Iowa adults, aged 18-120 years, recruited for participation via web panel. To obtain a census-representative sample, quotas were set on the following demographics: sex, age, and party identification.

**Sample:** 991 voting-age resident in Iowa (902 by web and 89 by phone), margin of error +/-3.2%

**Weighting:** Reported results are weighted by age, sex, and party identification.

#### **About the Hawkeye Poll**

The poll was conducted by the Hawkeye Poll Cooperative, comprised of University of Iowa faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students in the Political Science departments. The poll is a teaching, research, and service project, which uses the facilities of the Iowa Social Science Research Center directed by Frederick J. Boehmke, professor of political science and faculty advisor for the poll. The Department of Political Science, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the University of Iowa Public Policy Center support the poll; financial support was provided through a Student Technology Fee award (#1290-91).

Claire English, Ben Campos, and Abby Reller assisted with the preparation of this release.

#### **CONTACT:**

Frederick Boehmke, Faculty Advisor for the Hawkeye Poll, 319-335-2342 (office), 716-866-9277 (cell), [frederick-boehmke@uiowa.edu](mailto:frederick-boehmke@uiowa.edu).

###