

Douglas E. Schoen, LLC  
Manhattan Institute State Survey  
August 29–September 5, 2011  
Survey of 400 registered voters in Wisconsin

Hello. I am conducting a survey on behalf of Douglas E. Schoen, LLC. I'm going to ask you some questions about the economy and the budgeting process, particularly with regard to state and local governments. I'm going to ask you some questions about people who work for state and local governments, who are called public sector employees, and some questions about various reforms or changes that have been raised for how to deal with some of the budgetary issues that state and local governments are facing.

MOOD OF THE COUNTRY
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1. Generally speaking, do you think the economy in your state is headed in the right direction or on the wrong track?

Right direction	39%
Wrong track	51%
Not sure	10%

2. How efficient would you say your state government is?

TOTAL EFFICIENT	57%
TOTAL NOT EFFICIENT	37%
Very efficient	15%
Somewhat efficient	42%
Not very efficient	28%
Not at all efficient	8%
Not sure	6%

## Public Sector Employees

Now I'd like to ask about public and private sector employees. Public sector employees work for city, state and federal agencies, while private sector employees work for private businesses.

3. Public sector employees receive salaries and two types of benefits: health care and defined benefit pensions, which guarantee workers a retirement income based on years worked and peak pay levels. Questions have been raised about whether salaries should be frozen and whether employees should be required to contribute more toward their benefits because state and local governments are having problems paying them due to budget deficits.

Some say that public employees' salaries should be frozen and that they should be required to contribute more toward their benefits. Others disagree and say that their salaries should not be frozen and that they should not be required to contribute more toward their benefits. Which is closer to your view?

Public employees' salaries should be frozen, and they should be required to contribute more toward their benefits 46%

Public employees' salaries should not be frozen, and they should not be required to contribute more toward their benefits 42%

Not sure 13%

4. What about retired public employees? Should they have to contribute more toward their pension and health-care benefits because of state and local government budget problems, or should they not have to?

Public employee retirees should have to contribute more toward their health-care benefits because of state and local government budget problems 47%

Public employee retirees should not have to 49%

Not sure 3%

5. If your state and local governments did not have enough money to pay the salaries and benefits of current public employees, would you be willing to have taxes raised so that the salaries and benefits could be paid at current levels?

Yes 35%

No 61%

Not sure 5%

6. If they did not have enough money to pay the salaries and benefits of current public employees, would you be willing to have social-services programs provided by your state cut so that the salaries and benefits could be paid at current levels?

Yes 25%

No 66%

Not sure 9%

CRISIS WITH STATE BUDGETS AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEE BENEFITS
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Now I'd like to ask a few questions about the crisis that many state and local governments faced this year over their finances.

7. From what you know, did your state face a budget crisis this year? And if so, how was the crisis resolved?

Yes, it was resolved with spending cuts	37%
Yes, it was resolved with tax increases	2%
Yes, it was resolved with a combination of spending cuts and tax increases	17%
Yes, it was resolved in another way [list]	24%
No, my state did not face a budget crisis this year	11%
Not sure	9%

8. As you may know, many U.S. state governments are facing large budget deficits this year, meaning that their spending has exceeded the amount of revenue that they have brought in from fees and taxes. This has caused many public employee pension plans and health-care plans to be greatly underfunded. What would you say is the main reason for these problems? [read choices]

State governments spent too much money	21%
State governments did not tax enough	9%
Public employees' benefits are too high and unsustainable	18%
Elected state officials made careless and self-serving decisions	44%
Not sure	8%

9. In your opinion, what is the best way to address the problem of states not being able to afford public employee benefits? [read choices]

Raise taxes	18%
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Cut government spending	38%
Require current public employees to contribute more toward their benefits	38%
Require retired public employees to contribute more toward their benefits	2%
Not sure	4%

10. What would you say is the least desirable way to address the problem? [read choices]

Raise taxes	55%
Cut government spending	8%
Require current public employees to contribute more toward their benefits	9%
Require retired public employees to contribute more toward their benefits	26%
Not sure	2%

11. Generally speaking, do you favor or oppose reducing or eliminating certain state services to reduce budget deficits?

TOTAL FAVOR	55%
TOTAL OPPOSE	40%
Strongly favor	27%
Somewhat favor	28%
Strongly oppose	24%
Somewhat oppose	17%
Not sure	4%

12. Do you favor or oppose increasing state sales, income or other taxes to reduce budget deficits?

TOTAL FAVOR	47%
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TOTAL OPPOSE	49%
Strongly favor	9%
Somewhat favor	37%
Strongly oppose	27%
Somewhat oppose	22%
Not sure	4%

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Now I'd like to ask some questions about the process by which state and local government employees bargain with those jurisdictions over wages and benefits.

13. How much have you heard or read about the recent efforts in many states to reduce state budget deficits by cutting the benefits of public employees—a lot, some, not much or nothing at all?

TOTAL A LOT/SOME	96%
TOTAL NOT MUCH/NOTHING	4%
A lot	73%
Some	23%
Not much	3%
Nothing at all	1%
Not sure	0%

14. Collective bargaining is a process of negotiations between employers and labor union representatives aimed at reaching agreements that regulate working conditions and determine salary and benefits. Advocates of collective bargaining say that by negotiating as part of a union rather than individually, public employees can have more leverage in securing the higher pay and more generous benefits that they deserve. Opponents say that public employees should not bargain collectively and use the power of the group to potentially limit, delay or restrict the delivery of important government services. Which position is closer to your view?

By negotiating as part of a union rather than individually, public employees can have more leverage in securing the higher pay and more generous benefits that they deserve	46%
Public employees should not bargain collectively and use the power of the group to potentially limit, delay or restrict the delivery of important government services	44%
Not sure	10%

15. Some states are trying to restrict collective bargaining rules of public employee unions. Do you favor or oppose restricting some of the collective bargaining rules of these unions?

TOTAL FAVOR	53%
TOTAL OPPOSE	45%
Strongly favor	29%
Somewhat favor	24%
Strongly oppose	35%
Somewhat oppose	11%
Not sure	2%

16. Some say that people go to work for public entities because they want the security of being part of a public employee union and they want to have better pension and health-care benefits, and so it is unfair to require people to contribute more toward these benefits. Others say that these benefits should be provided if state governments can afford them; but if they can't afford them, everyone must accept the fiscal realities of these times, and the benefits should be reduced or employees should be required to contribute more toward them. Which is closer to your view?

People work for public entities because they want the security, better pension and health-care benefits, so it is unfair to require people to contribute more toward these benefits	28%
These benefits should be given if state governments can afford them; but if they can't afford them, everyone must accept the fiscal realities of these times, and the benefits should be reduced or employees should be required to contribute more toward them	56%
Not sure	17%

17. Some people say that collective bargaining is an essential right of public employees. Budget problems that states face are the result of mismanagement and overspending, and public sector workers have bargained for the pay and benefits that they have received and have earned them by receiving higher levels of training and education. Others say that collective bargaining gives public sector employees an effective monopoly control over the government's workforce, giving the unions too much power over government budgets, which they use to get too much public money spent for their salaries and benefits. Which position is closer to your view?

Collective bargaining is an essential right of public employees. Budget problems that states face are the result of mismanagement and overspending, and public sector workers have bargained for the pay and benefits that they have received 48%

Collective bargaining gives public sector employees an effective monopoly control over the government's workforce, allowing the unions to get too much public money spent for their salaries and benefits. 43%

Not sure 9%

18. Some people say that limiting collective bargaining will result in more reasonable benefits for public employees and thus help states close their budget gaps. Others say that it is unclear how much money will actually be saved by limiting these rights. Which is closer to your view?

Limiting collective bargaining will result in more reasonable benefits for public employees and thus help states close their budget gaps 47%

It is unclear how much money will actually be saved by limiting these rights 47%

Not sure 5%

19. Some people say that tenure for teachers should be phased out because tenure protects bad teachers from being fired while making it harder to bring in new and better teachers. Others say that teacher tenure is a long-standing right for public school teachers and that it would be unfair for it to be taken away from them. Which opinion is closer to your view?

Tenure for teachers should be phased out because tenure protects bad teachers from being fired while making it harder to bring in new and better teachers 59%

Teacher tenure is a long-standing right for public school teachers, and it would be unfair for it to be taken away from them 35%

Not sure 6%

## Pension Plans

Now I'm going to ask you a few questions about pension plans and how they may be offered to employees.

20. States are now moving away from defined benefit programs, in which employees are guaranteed a set payment upon retirement based on their salary and years of work, to defined contribution programs (which most private sector workers are enrolled in), in which both the employer and employee contribute toward the retirement plan and the actual payout is based on the investment return. This is because defined benefit programs are too expensive. Do you favor or oppose giving public employees a choice between participating in a defined benefit plan or a defined contribution plan?

TOTAL FAVOR	68%
TOTAL OPPOSE	23%
Strongly favor	35%
Somewhat favor	34%
Strongly oppose	12%
Somewhat oppose	11%
Not sure	9%

21. Some people say that public employees should be given the opportunity to participate in a defined contribution plan, which gives employees the power to make decisions and the ability to take the plan with them as they move from job to job because defined contribution plans offer investor choice and portability. Do you favor or oppose giving public employees a choice between participating in a defined benefit plan or a defined contribution plan to increase investor choice and portability?

TOTAL FAVOR	72%
TOTAL OPPOSE	19%
Strongly favor	39%

Somewhat favor	33%
Strongly oppose	11%
Somewhat oppose	8%
Not sure	9%

22. Do you favor or oppose moving all new public employees from a defined benefit plan to a defined contribution plan?

TOTAL FAVOR	63%
TOTAL OPPOSE	18%
Strongly favor	33%
Somewhat favor	30%
Strongly oppose	13%
Somewhat oppose	5%
Not sure	19%

LABOR UNIONS

23. In general, do you think the salaries and benefits of most public employees are too high for the work that they do? Too low for the work that they do? Or are their salaries and benefits about right for the work that they do?

Too high	31%
Too low	13%
About right	50%
Not sure	6%

24. Do you think police officers and firefighters should be able to retire after 25 years of service and begin collecting pension checks, even if they are in their forties or fifties, or should they have to be older than that to retire and collect pension checks, regardless of the number of years they have served?

They should be able to retire after 25 years and begin collecting pension checks, even if they are in their forties or fifties	32%
They should have to be older than that to retire and collect pension checks	59%
Not sure	9%

25. Do you think teachers should be able to retire after a set period of service and begin collecting pension checks, even if they are younger than 65, or should they not be able to do this?

They should be able to retire and collect pension checks even if they are younger than 65	49%
They should not be able to	43%
Not sure	8%

26. [all] Public employee unions lobby and elect public officials with whom they later negotiate in the collective bargaining process. Do you think this gives them too much influence, or is this not really a concern?

This gives them too much influence	49%
This is not really a concern	47%
Not sure	4%

## Outcomes of Reform

I'm going to read you a list of outcomes that people say will result from reforming the way public employees are compensated and the benefits they receive. For each, please tell me whether this is likely to happen as a result of reforming public employees' salaries and benefits.

27. Reforming public employees' salaries and benefits will equalize private and public sector salaries.

Much more likely to support reform	11%
Somewhat more likely	51%
Not more likely	26%
Not sure	13%

28. Reforming public employees' salaries and benefits will make government more efficient and effective.

Much more likely to support reform	22%
Somewhat more likely	20%
Not more likely	47%
Not sure	11%

29. Reforming public employees' salaries and benefits will help preserve key social programs by making government more efficient.

Much more likely to support reform	10%
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Somewhat more likely	39%
Not more likely	42%
Not sure	8%

30. Reforming public employees' salaries and benefits will hold the line on taxes.

Much more likely to support reform	16%
Somewhat more likely	39%
Not more likely	34%
Not sure	12%

31. We have just asked about outcomes from reforming wages and salaries. Collective bargaining is the process by which these wages and salaries are negotiated. If there is collective bargaining reform, do you think it will make government more efficient and effective, or will it not make it more efficient and effective?

Government will become more efficient and effective	37%
It will not become more efficient and effective	55%
Not sure	8%

32. We have just asked about outcomes from reforming wages and salaries. Collective bargaining is the process by which these wages and salaries are negotiated. If there is collective bargaining reform, do you think it will equalize private and public sector salaries?

Yes	42%
No	44%
Not sure	14%

33. We have just asked about outcomes from reforming wages and salaries. Collective bargaining is the process by which these wages and salaries are negotiated. If there is collective bargaining reform, do you think it will help preserve key social programs by making government more efficient?

Yes	51%
No	38%
Not sure	11%

34. Do you think collective bargaining reform will make state budgets more resilient?

Yes	42%
No	43%
Not sure	14%

35. Which is more important to improving the state's finances: reforming the collective bargaining process, or reforming the way public employees are compensated and the benefits they receive?

Reforming collective bargaining	28%
Reforming public employees' salaries and benefits	43%
Not sure	29%

**QUESTIONS ABOUT WISCONSIN**

36. Generally speaking, do you approve or disapprove of the way Scott Walker is performing his job as governor?

TOTAL APPROVE	49%
TOTAL DISAPPROVE	50%
Strongly approve	32%
Somewhat approve	18%
Somewhat disapprove	8%
Strongly disapprove	42%
Not sure	1%

37. Did you hear what happened in Wisconsin in the fight over collective bargaining?

Yes	92%
No	8%
Not sure	1%

38. [If yes] In that fight, did you side with the Republican governor or with Democrats in the legislature?

Governor	40%
Democrats in the legislature	49%
Not sure	11%

39. The Wisconsin law that was passed eliminates most collective bargaining rights for most Wisconsin teachers, road workers and other public employees, and it requires them to pay

more for pensions and health coverage. Firemen and policemen can still bargain collectively. Do you favor or oppose this law?

TOTAL FAVOR	45%
TOTAL OPPOSE	52%
Strongly favor	30%
Somewhat favor	15%
Strongly oppose	41%
Somewhat oppose	11%
Not sure	3%

40. Regardless of whether you favor or oppose this law, do you think this law is improving the state government's financial problems?

Yes	43%
No	41%
Not sure	16%

41. Regardless of whether you favor or oppose this law, do you think this law is improving your local government's financial problems?

Yes	48%
No	46%
Not sure	6%

42. Regardless of whether you favor or oppose this law, do you think this law is improving your local school district's financial problems?

Yes	38%
No	50%
Not sure	12%

43. Do you think the law is making it easier or more difficult for local government officials to control their budgets, or is it having no impact?

Easier for local government officials to control their budgets	47%
More difficult	18%
No impact	36%

44. Under this law, the government is no longer collecting dues from government unions. Do you favor or oppose this?

Favor	47%
Oppose	43%
Not sure	9%

45. This law requires public employee unions to recertify every year through a vote of their membership. This is a big change, as most unions only have to certify once. Do you support requiring unions to recertify every year, or do you think it imposes an unnecessary burden?

Support requiring unions to recertify every year	47%
It imposes an unnecessary burden	49%
Not sure	4%

46. Supporters of the law point to the Kaukauna school district, which says that as a result of the law that was passed, it went from a \$400,000 deficit to a \$1.5 million surplus, preventing massive layoffs and allowing more teachers to be hired. Opponents of the law say that the surplus is a result of unfair cuts in teachers' salaries and benefits—their pay was cut by over 7%

and their sick days were reduced from ten to five—and that the collective bargaining bill didn’t actually help save the district money. Given this information, do you favor or oppose this law?

TOTAL FAVOR	49%
TOTAL OPPOSE	40%
Strongly favor	28%
Somewhat favor	21%
Strongly oppose	25%
Somewhat oppose	15%
Not sure	10%

47. Who do you think is responsible for this school district’s success?

School district officials	36%
Governor Walker	27%
The unions	9%
Other [list]	16%
Not sure	12%

48. Supporters of the law point to the Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) and the Kenosha school district as examples of public employee unions abusing their power and refusing to negotiate. MPS had to sign a contract that heavily favored the union and, as a result, laid off 519 people. Kenosha is facing a \$33 million deficit and looking to lay off more than 200 teachers because the union won’t renegotiate. Given this information, do you favor or oppose this law?

TOTAL FAVOR	46%
TOTAL OPPOSE	43%
Strongly favor	32%

Somewhat favor	14%
Strongly oppose	30%
Somewhat oppose	14%
Not sure	11%

49. Opponents of this law say that it is unfair to strip public employees of their rights. They say that the unions are not to blame for the deficit, and stripping unionized workers of their collective bargaining rights won't in and of itself save any money. Further, Wisconsin has closed a much larger budget gap in the past without scrapping worker organizing rights. Given this information, do you favor or oppose this law?

TOTAL FAVOR	46%
TOTAL OPPOSE	46%
Strongly favor	35%
Somewhat favor	12%
Strongly oppose	33%
Somewhat oppose	13%
Not sure	7%

50. Do you live in one of the districts that recently had a recall election for your state senator?

Yes	37%
No	58%
Not sure	5%

51. [if yes] Did you vote in the election to recall your state senator? If so, how did you vote?

Yes, I voted to recall my state senator	38%
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Yes, I voted against recalling my state senator 34%

No, I did not vote 28%

52. There has been talk about recalling Governor Walker. Would you favor or oppose this?

Favor 44%

Oppose 50%

Not sure 6%

53. Do you want to keep the law that Governor Walker passed as is, amend it, or repeal it entirely?

Keep as is 34%

Amend it 18%

Repeal entirely 43%

Not sure 5%

54. From what you know, can government fire ineffective teachers with the current collective bargaining protections in place?

Yes 34%

No 33%

Not sure 34%

55. Governor Walker believes that the size of government and how much you pay in taxes are directly connected to the excesses of collective bargaining. Government unions believe that it is a fundamental right for an individual to belong to a union. Which position is closer to your view?

The size of government and how much you pay in taxes are directly connected to the excesses of collective bargaining	39%
It is a fundamental right for an individual to belong to a union	52%
Not sure	9%

56. Do you think this law helped a great deal, somewhat, not a lot or not at all in erasing Wisconsin's \$3 billion budget deficit?

TOTAL GREAT/SOMEWHAT	55%
TOTAL NOT A LOT/AT ALL	41%
A great deal	20%
Somewhat	35%
Not a lot	10%
Not at all	31%
Not sure	4%

57. Do you think the new restrictions on collective bargaining have helped local school districts deal with budget deficits resulting from state education aid cuts a great deal, somewhat, not a lot or not at all?

TOTAL GREAT/SOMEWHAT	50%
TOTAL NOT A LOT/AT ALL	44%
A great deal	18%
Somewhat	32%
Not a lot	16%
Not at all	27%
Not sure	6%

58. Recently, Racine County attempted to save money by having local inmates perform routine maintenance, but the local government union objected. Do you think government work should

be carried out in the most taxpayer-friendly way, or should priority be given to hiring union workers?

Government work should be carried out in the most taxpayer-friendly way	73%
Priority should be given to hiring union workers	20%
Not sure	7%

59. In your opinion, should a teacher be laid off based on seniority, a performance evaluation or student test scores?

Seniority	<b>8%</b>
A performance evaluation	<b>72%</b>
Student test scores	4%
Other [list]	11%
Not sure	5%

## DEMOGRAPHICS

### 60. Age

Under 18 [END]	0%
18–29	21%
30–39	19%
40–49	22%
50–64	23%
65 and older	14%
REFUSED	1%

### 61. Gender

Male	49%
Female	51%

### 54. Race/Ethnicity

White or Caucasian	89%
Black or African-American	5%
Hispanic	3%
Asian	1%
Some other racial or ethnic heritage	1%
REFUSED	1%

### 62. Party

Democrat	32%
Republican	24%
Independent	28%
Other	10%
REFUSED	7%

63. Religion

Protestant	39%
Evangelical	5%
Catholic	33%
Jewish	1%
Muslim	0%
Atheist or Agnostic	4%
Other	5%
None	9%
Not sure	4%

64. Do you consider yourself liberal, moderate or conservative?

Liberal	25%
Moderate	37%
Conservative	35%

65. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Some high school or less	2%
High school graduate	20%
Some college	25%
College graduate	25%
Some graduate school	4%
Graduate degree	17%
Technical school	7%
REFUSED	0%

66. Do you belong to a union?

Yes	12%
No	88%

67. [If yes] Is it a public or private union?

Public	71%
Private	27%
REFUSED	1%

68. Income

You and your family earn... less than \$20,000 annually	9%
\$20,000 to \$40,000	16%
\$40,000 to \$60,000	20%
\$60,000 to \$75,000	15%

\$75,000 to \$100,000	10%
Over \$100,000	17%
Not sure	12%

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**Methodology**

*Douglas E. Schoen, LLC conducted interviews with 400 randomly selected voters from August 29 – September 5, 2011 in each of the following states: FL, IL, IN, MI, MT, NC, NY, OH, PA, WI. The margin of error for each of these surveys is +/-4.9%. Each survey was conducted by telephone using random digit dialing, which gives every phone subscriber and cell phone user a theoretically equal chance of being selected.*