

To: ACLU West Virginia
From: YouGov
Re: West Virginia Polling Results
Date: May 4, 2021

West Virginia voters support the DREAM Act, their state's DACA recipients, and their state's immigrant population

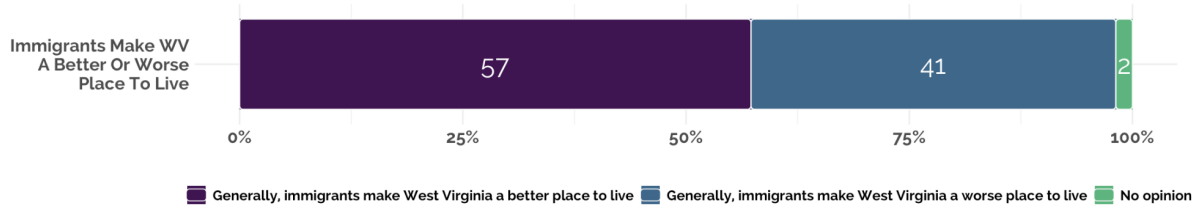
The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) commissioned YouGov to conduct a poll of registered voters in West Virginia to understand where West Virginians stand regarding various immigration policies. We find that large majorities of West Virginia voters -- including large majorities across the partisan divide, the urban-suburban-rural spectrum, among union households and non-union households, and elsewhere -- support new immigration reforms and protections for childhood arrivals. This memo briefly summarizes the results.

Executive Summary

- A majority of West Virginia voters (64 percent) support allowing undocumented immigrants who arrived in the US as children to remain in the US with a pathway to citizenship, including majorities of Democrats and Republicans, rural-area voters, and older voters.
- A majority of West Virginia voters (63 percent) support the version of the DREAM Act currently being debated in the Senate, including majority support across the partisan divide as well as urban/suburban/rural divide.
- On net, West Virginia voters support allowing Dreamers raised in West Virginia to pay in-state college tuition rates, including net support among voters with and without college degrees, and across the income spectrum.
- A majority of West Virginia voters support allowing refugee resettlement in their state, including majorities of Democrats and Independents, and nearly half of the state's Republicans.
- Fully 56 percent of West Virginia voters support creating a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants in the US currently working in frontline industries, such as first responders and healthcare workers
- Overall, 57 percent of West Virginia voters say that immigrants make their state a better place to live, including majorities of Democrats, Independents, and voters across age groups.

Overall, a majority of West Virginia voters think that immigrants make their state a better place to live: 57 percent of respondents said that this is the case, compared to just 41 percent who said the opposite (for a net support of 16 percentage points). A majority of Democrats (79 percent better, 20 percent worse for a net support of 59 percentage points) and Independents (50 percent better, 45 worse, for a net support of 5 percentage points), say that immigrants make West Virginia a better place to live. Contrary to what one may expect, younger voters and older voters feel similarly on this issue: voters aged 18-29 agree

by a +24 percentage point margin that immigrants make West Virginia a better place, and voters over the age of 65 agree by a +13 percentage point margin.



Respondents were also asked to provide their opinions about a variety of immigration policies, including providing a pathway to citizenship for dreamers, the DREAM Act of 2021, and providing a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants working in frontline industries. The specific question wording for each of those items was the following:

Pathway to Citizenship: *Do you [support or oppose] allowing undocumented people whose parents brought them to the United States as children and grew up in the U.S. to remain in the U.S. with a pathway to citizenship?*

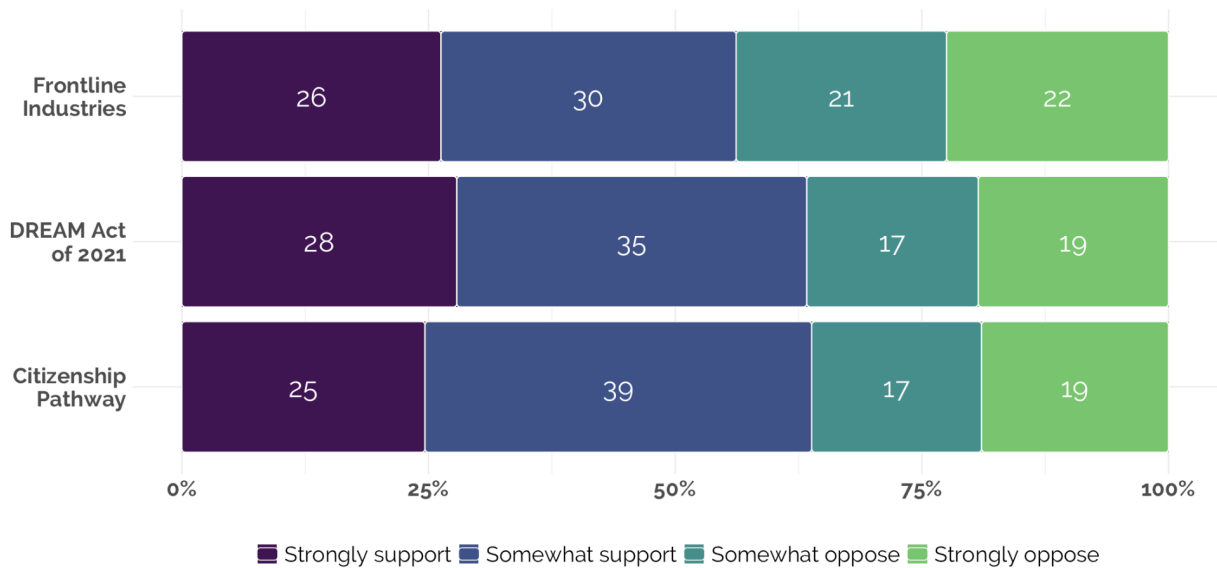
DREAM Act of 2021: *The Senate is debating a proposal called the Dream Act of 2021. If passed, Dreamers, or undocumented people who came to the country as children and have grown up in the U.S., would have a pathway to U.S. citizenship and protection from deportation. Do you [support or oppose] this proposal?*

Frontline Industries: *Congress is debating a proposal to create a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants who live in the United States and worked in "frontline industries," such as first responders, health care providers, and grocery store employees, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Do you [support or oppose] creating a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants working in frontline industries?*

Strong majorities of West Virginia voters support each of these policies. Fully 64 percent of respondents said that they either strongly or somewhat support providing a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers, 63 percent said that they support the DREAM Act and 56 percent said they support providing a pathway to citizenship for individuals that have worked in frontline industries during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fully 90 percent of Democrats, 50 percent of Independents, and 51 percent of Republicans support a pathway to citizenship for undocumented people brought to the US as children. Similar shares -- 86 percent of Democrats, 50 percent of Independents, and 52 percent of Republicans -- somewhat or strongly support the current version of the DREAM Act being debated in the Senate. About 84 percent of Democrats support a pathway to citizenship for workers in frontline industries, as do 40 percent of Republicans and 46 percent of Independents.

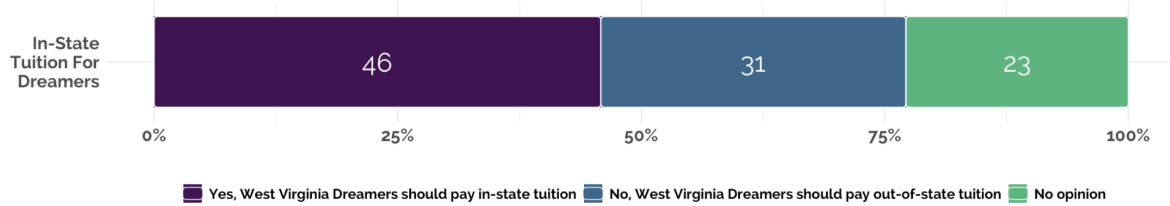
Notably, support for these policies remains strong in West Virginia's union households. About 74 percent of voters living in a union household (i.e., are union members themselves or live with someone who is) support providing a pathway to citizenship for undocumented people brought to the US as children. About 71 percent of union households in West Virginia support the current version of the DREAM Act, and about 72 percent support providing citizenship to undocumented people working in frontline industries.



The poll also asked respondents about their views on providing in-state tuition to West Virginia Dreamers. The full question wording for that item read as follows:

In-State Tuition For Dreamers: *Dreamers, or undocumented people who entered the country as children, who grow up and live in West Virginia have to pay out-of-state tuition at public colleges and universities at significant financial cost. Do you believe West Virginia should allow West Virginia Dreamers to pay in-state tuition?*

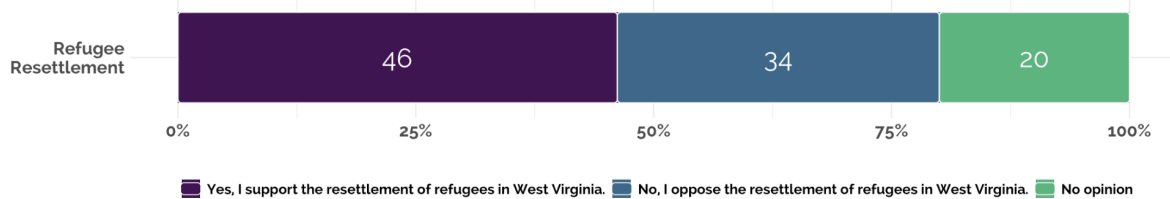
A plurality of voters, 46 percent, agreed that West Virginia Dreamers should pay in-state tuition and 31 percent opposed this policy (for a net support of +15 percentage points in favor of the policy). This policy is overall supported by West Virginians who have a college degree (by a +23 percentage point margin) and do not (a +12 percentage point margin), and is supported by West Virginians across the income spectrum (including, for example, by a +15 percentage point margin among those earning less than \$30,000 per year, and by a +12 margin among those earning over \$100,000 per year).



Respondents also answered a question about whether they support or oppose the resettlement of refugees in West Virginia. We asked West Virginians,

Refugee Resettlement: *Refugees are people who have fled war, persecution, or natural disaster and have been admitted by the U.S. government after undergoing an intense vetting process and background checks. Do you support the resettlement of refugees in West Virginia?*

Again, a strong plurality of respondents support this statement (46 percent) instead of oppose it (34 percent). The net support for resettlement of refugees in the state is 12 percentage points. West Virginians do not buy the rhetoric that letting in more refugees would endanger the state's prospects for good-paying union jobs: Voters who are union members or who lived with a union member support refugee resettlement in West Virginia by a 66-23 margin.



Conclusion

Strong majorities of West Virginia voters support a variety of pro-immigration reforms. Notably, we find few major demographic divides on most of the issues we polled. While Democrats and Republicans clearly feel differently about various issues, once we account for partisanship, we do not find major demographic gaps in support for immigration reform and protections for childhood arrivals in West Virginia. West Virginians tend to support these reforms whether they are older or younger, college educated or not, higher-income or lower-income, from a union household or not, and so on. These policies generally do not pit West Virginians against one another except by partisan identification.

Methodology

This survey is based on 406 interviews conducted by YouGov on the internet of registered voters in West Virginia. The sample was weighted according to gender, age, race/ethnicity, education, US Census region, and 2016 Presidential vote choice based on the American Community Study and the Current Population Survey Voting and Registration Supplement. Respondents were selected from YouGov to be representative of West Virginia registered voters. The weights range from 0.07 to 5.5 with a mean of 1 and a standard deviation of 0.71. The margin of error is approximately 6%. Some questions are held for future release.