



WISCONSIN CIVIL JUSTICE COUNCIL, INC.

Promoting Fairness and Equity in Wisconsin's Civil Justice System

Wisconsin Voters Oppose Lawsuit Changes in Governor's Budget

Bi-Partisan Poll shows Strong Opposition across Political Spectrum

For more information, visit: www.wisciviljusticecouncil.org or contact:

April 16, 2009

Bob Fassbender-608-258-9506

MADISON- A bipartisan poll has found nearly two-and-a-half times as many voters opposed to the lawsuit changes buried in Governor Doyle's budget as in support. The poll found only 23% support for the changes to joint and several liability with a full 57% of Wisconsin voters opposed.

Opposition to the trial lawyer supported provision was strong across party lines with 53% of Independents, 55% of Democrats, and 62% of Republicans opposing the measure. The question was asked without any prior leading statements on either side of the debate.

Andy Franken, President of The Wisconsin Insurance Alliance, which commissioned the survey, said, "We wanted a fair look at this issue, so we got a leading national pollster from each party to ensure we got it right. The Glover Park Group is new to Wisconsin, but with names like Joe Lockhart and Carter Eskew, they have Democratic credentials to match any firm in the country."

In a follow-up question, voters were given an unbiased presentation of the main arguments used by supporters and opponents of the provision. The addition of the facts presented by both sides raised opposition to 59% versus only 27% support. The arguments presented were:

Some people say/ Other people say that right now, some victims are not being treated fairly. This provision is absolutely necessary to protect victims, and will make sure people who are hurt get the money they deserve.

Other people say/ Some people say that the provision is unfair because individuals or businesses that are as little as 1% at fault can be made to pay up to 100% of the damages. This could hurt job growth and drive up the cost of goods and services in the state.

"Democrats, Republicans and Independents all agree that the Governor's changes to Joint and Several Liability are unfair and will cost Wisconsin jobs." said Bob Fassbender of the Wisconsin Civil Justice Council. "This is the wrong time to drive up costs and make Wisconsin a less attractive place to do business."

The poll was conducted from March 22-23 and surveyed 500 "likely" voters in Wisconsin. The Glover Park Group is a national communications firm whose partners include former Clinton White House Press Secretary Joe Lockhart and Al Gore strategist Carter Eskew. The Tarrance Group is a nationally recognized Republican polling firm.

A memo from both firms conducting the poll is attached.