

MEMORANDUM

TO: INTERESTED PARTIES
FROM: JARRETT LEWIS, ROBERT BLIZZARD, & LUKE JACKSON – PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES
DATE: NOVEMBER 20, 2020
SUBJECT: OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING NATIONAL SURVEY – KEY FINDINGS & DATA

METHODOLOGY

On behalf of the Institute for Justice, Public Opinion Strategies conducted a national online survey of N=1,000 registered voters. The survey was conducted October 26-29, 2020 and has a confidence interval of $\pm 3.53\%$.

KEY FINDINGS

- 1. A large majority of Americans agree that small businesses (90% agree) and self-employed workers (71% agree) are struggling right now, and they overwhelmingly believe government should not stand in the way of those small businesses and self-employed workers trying to get back on their feet (82% agree).**
 - The same holds true across party lines for small businesses (GOP 85%, IND 87%, DEM 94%) and self-employed workers (GOP 63%, IND 72%, DEM 76%). And majorities of Republicans (90%), Democrats (77%) and Independents (80%) all agree that the government should not stand in the way of self-employed workers and small businesses getting back on their feet.
- 2. More than six-in-ten voters across the country agree with the idea that there should be less government regulation for small businesses (68%) and self-employed workers (65%).**
 - Majorities of Women (67%), Men (69%), Republicans (76%), Independents (72%), Democrats (59%), Conservatives (80%), Moderates (67%) and Liberals (53%) all agree there should be less government regulation of small businesses.
 - And majorities of Women (63%), Men (67%), Republicans (76%), Independents (60%), Democrats (58%), Conservatives (78%), Moderates (60%) and Liberals (55%) all agree there should be less government regulation of self-employed workers.
- 3. A majority of voters across the country agree that excessive government regulation could increase prices to consumers (78%) and lead to job losses (77%).**
 - White Americans (79%), African Americans (73%) and Hispanic Americans (74%) all agree that excessive government regulation could lead to price increases on consumers.
 - White Americans (78%), African Americans (70%) and Hispanic Americans (82%) all agree that excessive government regulation could lead to job losses during the pandemic.
- 4. Nearly three-quarters of Americans (72%) have used an online rating system to evaluate a business or professional.**
 - Men (71%) and Women (73%) are almost equally likely to have used online rating systems.
 - White Americans (72%), African Americans (71%) and Hispanic Americans (78%) are almost equally as likely to have used an online ratings system to evaluate a business or professional.

- 5. When it comes to selecting a service from an independent professional, government issued licenses rank last on importance to the decision (24%) and frequency of reviewing (20%). Instead, the professional's reputation, recommendations from friends, and word of mouth reviews lead the way on both metrics (78%).**
 - Across all age groups, respondents consistently ranked the government issued licenses at the bottom when it comes to importance and frequency of review.

- 6. When voters are asked which criteria makes someone qualified for an occupation, having a government-issued license is at the bottom of the list of seven criteria (Ranked #1: 10%). Education and training rose well above the other criteria as making a professional the most qualified (32%), followed by having multiple years of experience (15%) and having thousands of hours of experience (12%).**

- 7. A majority of Americans (56%) support efforts to reform occupational licensing in the United States, compared to only 15% who are in opposition.**
 - Republicans (61%) are more likely to support efforts to reform occupational licensing, although a majority of Independents (52%) and Democrats (54%) support reform as well.
 - Majorities of African Americans (59%), White Americans (56%) and Hispanic Americans (55%) support reforming occupational licensing.
 - A majority of Men (63%) and Women (51%) support reforming occupational licensing.
 - Fully two-thirds of voters who currently hold a job that requires a government issued occupational license support reforming the requirements in the United States.

- 8. A plurality of voters (36%) would be more likely to support a political candidate who supported legislation to reform occupational licensing, compared to just 13% who say they would be less likely to support that candidate, with 32% saying it would make no difference in their vote.**

- 9. Fully 64% of voters agree that online reviews would be a good substitute for licensing to determine quality in some occupations like cutting hair.**
 - Republicans (67%), Democrats (63%) and Independents (59%) all agree that online reviews would be a good substitute.
 - Men (65%) and Women (62%) both agree that online reviews are indeed a good substitute for licensing in some cases.