

Nationwide Attitudes Toward Unions

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I. Methodology and Sample Characteristics

Zogby International conducted interviews of 1,207 adults chosen at random nationwide. An over-sample of 261 was drawn randomly from a Zogby database of self-identified labor union members. All calls were made from Zogby International headquarters in Utica, N.Y., from Thursday, February 5 to Monday, February 9, 2004.

The margin of error is +/- 2.8 percentage points for the 1,207 adults, with a margin of error of +/- 4.8 percentage points for the union sample of 435. The margin of error is +/- 6.6 percentage points for the 233 public service union members. Margins of error are higher in sub-groups.

For the sample of 1,207 adults, slight weights were added to region, party, age, race, religion, and gender to more accurately reflect the population. For the sample of 435 union members, slight weights were added to age, race, union membership, and gender to more accurately reflect the population. For the sample of 233 public service union members, slight weights were added to age, race, and gender to more accurately reflect the population.

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS - OVERALL	FREQUENCY	VALID PERCENT*
Sample size	1,207	100
East	278	23
South	314	26
Central/Great Lakes	374	31
West	241	20
Registered to vote	1,112	92
Not registered to vote	93	8
Not sure if registered	2	0
Democrat	400	36
Republican	367	33
Independent/Minor party	250	23
Libertarian	6	1
Not sure of party	89	8
18-29	239	20
30-49	477	40
50-64	274	23
65+	203	17
18-24	137	12
25-34	172	14
35-54	496	42
55-69	241	20
70+	147	12

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS (CONTINUED)	FREQUENCY	VALID PERCENT
Did not answer age	14	--
Private business	675	56
Public agency/government	112	9
Not employed	398	33
Not sure of employer	22	2
Less than high school	64	5
High school graduate	265	22
Some college	359	30
College graduate+	517	43
Did not answer education	2	--
White	918	77
Hispanic	95	8
African American	131	11
Asian	12	1
Other	36	3
Did not answer race	15	--
Live in large city	305	25
Small city	330	27
Suburbs	253	21
Rural	313	26
Progressive/very liberal	96	8
Liberal	208	17
Moderate	366	30
Conservative	388	32
Very conservative	45	4
Libertarian	33	3
Not sure of ideology	66	6
Did not answer ideology	4	--
Managerial	130	11
Medical	66	6
Professional/Technical	223	19
Sales	90	7
Clerical	45	4
Service	65	5
Blue-Collar/Production	93	8
Student	33	3
Homemaker	91	8
Teacher/education	44	4

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS (CONTINUED)	FREQUENCY	VALID PERCENT
Military	5	0
Retired	227	19
Other occupation	87	7
Not sure of occupation	8	1
Did not answer occupation	2	--
Married	691	57
Single, never married	264	22
Divorced/widowed/separated	223	19
Civil union/domestic partnership	25	2
Roman Catholic	307	26
Protestant	565	47
Jewish	33	3
Muslim	1	0
Other (religion)	293	24
Born-again	298	53
Not born-again	264	47
Did not answer religion	8	--
NASCAR fan	305	25
Not NASCAR fan	901	75
Did not answer NASCAR fan	1	--
Own stock personally	376	25
Own stock through 401 (k)	368	24
Own stock through other pension plan	179	12
No stocks	552	37
Not sure if stockowner	40	3
Did not answer stockowner	--	--
Personally in labor union	129	11
Household member in union	90	7
Both I and member in union	15	1
No union member	965	80
Not sure if union member	9	1
Required to join union	102	8
Not required to join union	997	83
Not sure if union requirement	108	9
Very likely to join union	220	23
Somewhat likely to join union	213	22
Not likely to join union	507	53
Not sure how likely to join	24	3

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS (CONTINUED)	FREQUENCY	VALID PERCENT
Less than \$15,000	116	11
\$15,000-\$24,999	148	14
\$25,000-\$34,999	145	14
\$35,000-\$49,999	190	18
\$50,000-\$74,999	209	20
\$75,000 or more	264	25
Did not answer income	133	--
Male	582	48
Female	625	52
Works outside home for wages	348	56
Does not work for wages	277	44

***Numbers have been rounded to the nearest percent and might not equal 100.**

II. Executive Summary

Overall, labor unions are viewed positively by Americans. By two to one, Americans say they approve rather than disapprove of unions. Majorities believe that unions are still necessary and that they help the United States economy. People trust unions more than employers to provide good wages and benefits and safe working conditions.

This support for unions, however, is not without some real concerns or criticisms. Majorities trust employers rather than unions to provide steady employment and to increase employee productivity. There is strong support for the right of employees to decide for themselves if they want to join a union and for employees to negotiate with their employers for wages and benefits apart from a union. In addition, a majority do not believe that union members should be required to give to political parties or organizations, through their dues, with which they disagree ideologically.

More than half say they are not likely to join a union and half believe that unions hurt workers who are not members.

The support of union members for many issues that on the surface appear anti-union seems counter-intuitive. However, on three issues in particular, union members appear to counter their leadership with strong opposition to these practices. For instance, a majority of union members (especially those under 50) support the right-to-work, the notion that individual workers should be free to decide for themselves whether or not to join a union.

Another area where union members seem to diverge from union leadership is in the contributions unions make to political entities. A solid majority of union members overall do not think that members should be required to contribute through their dues to organizations with which they disagree. Union members in some areas of the country – the west and central Great Lakes, for instance – are surprisingly strong in their opposition to this practice.

Union leadership has been fighting efforts to force detailed financial reporting. Their membership, however strongly supports such reporting. Even more union members than adults overall believe unions should be required to give detailed reporting of union finances to discourage abuse and corruption. A majority across every union member subgroup agrees.

So while support for unions is still alive, it is by no means uncritical or without reservations – among Americans in general and union members alike.

III. Narrative Analysis

5 – 8. I am now going to read you a list of organizations. Please tell me whether you would be more likely or less likely to vote for a political candidate based on an endorsement from this organization, or it makes no difference.

Table 1. Supporting a Candidate Based on Endorsements (ranked by % more likely)

OVERALL	MORE LIKELY	LESS LIKELY	NO DIFFERENCE	NOT SURE
A labor union	30	23	45	2
A single-issue organization, like Right to Life, Common Cause, the NRA, or the Sierra Club	27	16	53	4
A professional association like the doctors or lawyers	23	20	55	3
A business organization	16	19	59	6

UNION MEMBERS	MORE LIKELY	LESS LIKELY	NO DIFFERENCE	NOT SURE
A labor union	53	10	37	0
A professional association like the doctors or lawyers	30	19	49	2
A single-issue organization, like Right to Life, Common Cause, the NRA, or the Sierra Club	22	19	49	10
A business organization	15	27	55	3

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES	MORE LIKELY	LESS LIKELY	NO DIFFERENCE	NOT SURE
A labor union	52	12	36	--
A professional association like the doctors or lawyers	27	22	48	3
A single-issue organization, like Right to Life, Common Cause, the NRA, or the Sierra Club	21	26	39	15
A business organization	13	29	55	4

Among all three groups – adults overall, unions members and public service employees – there are only minor differences in the numbers saying they would be more likely or less likely to support a candidate if he or she was endorsed by a professional association, a single-issue organization, or a business organization. However, there is a

notable difference between adults overall and union members and public service employees with regard to the endorsement of a labor union – adults overall (30%) are about half as likely to say they would be *more likely* to support a candidate with a union endorsement than are union members (53%) and public service employees (52%).

In nearly every case, a majority or a plurality says it would make *no difference* in their support for a candidate if he or she were endorsed by any of the groups. Again, the notable difference is among union members and public service employees, where a majority says they would be *more likely* to support a candidate with union endorsement.

Among adults overall, those living in the the west (35%) are more likely than those in the other three regions to be more supportive of a candidate who is endorsed by a labor union. This is also true of union members and public service employees. Also, the youngest respondents (18-29 year olds) in all three groups are more likely to support a candidate with union endorsement.

African Americans overall are almost twice as likely as whites (47% vs. 25%) to support a candidate with union endorsement. Even among union members and public service employees, African Americans are more likely than whites to support candidates endorsed by a labor union.

Overall, there is a slight difference among women and men (32% women; 28% men) and their support for a candidate endorsed by a union. However, among union members (58% women; 50% men) and public service employees (59% women; 44% men), there is a more pronounced difference, as women are notable more likely to support someone with union endorsement.

9 – 13. Now for following group of questions, please tell me who you would trust more on each of the following issues – employers or labor unions?

Table 2. Employers vs. Labor Unions: Who is More Trustworthy?
(ranked by % labor unions)

OVERALL	EMPLOYERS	LABOR UNIONS	NEITHER	NOT SURE
To provide safe working conditions	40	53	3	4
To provide good wages and benefits	40	51	5	5
To provide accurate information about workplace issues	40	46	9	6
To provide steady employment	51	36	8	5
To increase employee productivity	69	23	3	5

UNION MEMBERS	EMPLOYERS	LABOR UNIONS	NEITHER	NOT SURE
To provide good wages and benefits	20	71	8	1
To provide accurate information about workplace issues	19	66	12	3
To provide safe working conditions	26	65	8	2
To provide steady employment	30	59	8	4
To increase employee productivity	64	29	4	4

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES	EMPLOYERS	LABOR UNIONS	NEITHER	NOT SURE
To provide good wages and benefits	20	72	8	0
To provide accurate information about workplace issues	15	72	11	3
To provide safe working conditions	26	65	8	2
To provide steady employment	25	61	8	6
To increase employee productivity	67	24	3	6

More than half of adults overall believe that labor unions are more trustworthy than employers when it comes to providing safe working conditions (53% vs. 40%) and good wages and benefits (51% vs. 40%). Among union members (71%; 65% respectively) and public service employees (72%; 65% respectively), significant majorities believe unions are more trustworthy on these issues.

However, when it comes to providing steady employment (51% vs. 36%) and increasing employee productivity (69% vs. 23%), adults overall believe the employer is more trustworthy than labor unions. As might be expected, the feelings of union members and public service employees are different, with more than three in five of both groups saying that unions are more trustworthy than businesses when it comes to providing steady employment.

Interestingly, however, there is virtually no difference among the responses of unions members and public service employees as compared to adults overall (67%) on increasing employee productivity – an equal percentage of public service employees (67%) and only slightly fewer union members (64%) believe that the employer is more trustworthy on this issue.

By a narrow plurality, respondents overall say labor unions (46%) are more trustworthy than employers (40%) when it comes to providing accurate information about workplace issues. A large majority of union members (66%) and public service employees (72%) agree that on this issue, labor unions are the more trustworthy.

Youngest respondents, African Americans, and Democrats are more likely to trust labor unions to provide steady employment than are other sub-groups.

When asked who do you trust more to provide good wages and benefits, there are some interesting differences. Overall and among the two union sub-groups, 30 to 64 year olds trust the *unions* more. While African Americans overall (56%) say they trust unions more on this issue, African American union members (57%) and African American public service *employers* (63%), are far more like to trust employers than African Americans overall (33%), white union members (12%), and white public service employees (10%).

Overall, a majority of men and women (51% each) say they trust unions more to provide good wages and benefits. While a majority of women union members and public service employees (an average 62%) say they trust unions more to provide good wages and benefits, men are much more likely to say they trust unions on this issue (76% union men; 86% public service men).

When it comes to providing safe working conditions, there is another interesting divergence among racial groups. While a majority overall says they trust labor unions to do this (African Americans slightly more than whites), when it comes to African American union members (57%) and African American public service employees (63%), they are much more likely than whites (38%) and African Americans overall (35%) to trust employers.

14 – 16. Please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements.

Table 3. Views on Unions (ranked by % agree)

OVERALL	AGREE*	DISAGREE*	NOT SURE
Unions make it easier for employees to negotiate with management for better working conditions	75	21	3
Unions represent the interests of their entire membership, not just those of the union leadership	57	39	4
Unions tend to oppose management when it comes to improving production goals and work rules	46	46	8

(*Agree and disagree each combines strongly and somewhat.)

UNION MEMBERS	AGREE*	DISAGREE*	NOT SURE
Unions make it easier for employees to negotiate with management for better working conditions	93	7	0
Unions represent the interests of their entire membership, not just those of the union leadership	77	22	0
Unions tend to oppose management when it comes to improving production goals and work rules	39	60	1

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES	AGREE*	DISAGREE*	NOT SURE
Unions make it easier for employees to negotiate with management for better working conditions	93	6	0
Unions represent the interests of their entire membership, not just those of the union leadership	83	16	1
Unions tend to oppose management when it comes to improving production goals and work rules	44	55	1

Three in four (75%) adults overall agree that unions make it easier for employees to negotiate with management for better working conditions. Nearly all union members and public service employees (93% each) agree.

A majority (57%) of respondents overall believe that unions represent all their members, not just their leadership. This is higher, as might be expected, among union members (77%) and public service employees (83%).

There is closer agreement among the three groups when it comes to agreeing that unions tend to oppose management on issues of improving production goals and work rules – 46% of adults, 39% of union members, and 44% of public service employees agree.

17. Are you required to join a union as a condition of your employment? (Asked at the end of the survey and only to those who currently belong to a union.)

Table 4. Required to Join a Union

	UNION MEMBERS	PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES
Yes	56	51
No	42	48
Not sure	2	1

A majority of union members (56%) overall say they are required to join a union. Just over two in five (42%) say they are not and 2% are not sure. Public service employees are about evenly divided – 51% say they are required to join a union and 48% say they are not required to do so.

Among union members, younger respondents are more likely than older respondents to report having to join a union. Majorities of those living everywhere but the south say they are required to join a union as a condition of work, especially in the west (72%). Both African Americans and Hispanics (82% each) are much more likely than whites (46%) to say they had to join a union. Women (60%) are more likely than men (53%) to report having to join a union.

Among public service employees, as with union members in general, younger respondents are more likely to say they had to join a union as a condition of employment. The same is true of African Americans (91%) and Hispanics (74%) more than whites (37%). And again, in keeping with union members overall, women (54%) public service employees are more likely than men (47%) to say they had to join.

18. In general, do you approve or disapprove of labor unions?

Table 5. Approval of Labor Unions

	OVERALL	UNION MEMBERS	PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES
Approve	63	83	89
Disapprove	31	13	10
Not sure	7	4	1

Overall, respondents are twice as likely to approve of labor unions as disapprove – 63% vs. 31%. Among union members and public service employees, the ratio is about seven to nine times more likely to approve of unions than disapprove (union 83% vs. 13%; public service employees 89% vs. 10%).

Southern union members and public service employees are more likely to approve of unions than their brothers and sisters in other parts of the country.

Among all adults, approval of unions generally declines with age (74% of 18-29 year olds approve vs. 58% of 65 and older approve). The reverse is true among union members and public service employees where support among older respondents is higher or remains equally as high as younger respondents.

19. What is the most important reason why you approve of unions?

Table 6. Reasons Unions are Approved

	OVERALL	UNION MEMBERS	PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES
Job security/job guarantees	29	25	24
Grievance representation/right to strike/bargain with employer	21	22	23
Receive good pay and benefits	20	16	15
Mandatory representation/no choice	5	3	5
Seniority	1	3	1
*Other	17	29	33
Not sure	7	2	1

***Other responses:**

Adults overall (percentages here indicate percentage of those saying “other”)

Family/belong to union/union history 28%; End worker exploitation/fairness/help employees 26%; Checks and balances for labor laws 17%; Ensure good working conditions/workplace stability 11%; All of the above 7%; Help keep working class/middle class 6%; Balance of power 5%

Union members/Public Service employees (percentages here indicate percentage of those saying “other”)

Negotiate fair wages, working conditions, benefits 38%; Group voice/collective bargaining 21%; Support social issues/protection 21%; Family quality of life 6%; All of the above 4%; Keeping politics out of the classroom 3%; No more Enron 2%

The top three reasons why they approve of unions among all three groups are because of job security (about one in four for all three), because of good pay and benefits (more so among adults overall than among union members or public service employees), and because of the right to strike and bargaining power (about one in five for all three).

For all three groups, 30 to 49 year olds are most likely to say that they approve of unions because of job security. Job security is also the most important reason for both whites and African Americans in all three groups. Women in all three groups are more likely to say job security than any other reason, and they are also more likely to cite job security than are men. Men in all the groups are more likely or equally likely to cite the right to strike and bargaining power.

20. *What is the most important reason why you oppose unions?*

Table 6. Reasons Unions are Opposed

	OVERALL	UNION MEMBERS	PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES
Corruption	17	23	5
Politics/oppose them using political influence/spending dues on candidates	12	7	2
Mandatory representation/dues/no choice	10	4	4
Strikes are disruptive/harmful	7	3	--
Conflicts with religious beliefs	2	--	--
*Other	46	55	69
Not sure	7	8	20

***Other responses:**

Adults overall (percentages here indicate percentage of those saying “other”)

Don’t help employees/unfair representation 39%; Not needed/outlast purpose 21%; Drive business costs higher/wages too high/capitalistic 13%; Non-productive/inadequate workers keep jobs 12%; Too powerful/socialists 10%; All of the above 4%

Union members/Public Service employees (percentages here indicate percentage of those saying “other”)

Worker’s benefits/wages and Socialists 27% each; Lack of unified representation 20%; Lack of leadership and Credibility 13% each

Overall, those who oppose unions are most likely to cite corruption (17%), followed by unions’ political influence and support of political candidates (12%), and mandatory representation or having to pay dues when you do not want to (10%).

Among union members, one in four (23%) who disapprove of unions cite corruption. About one in eight (12%) overall say politics or giving money to candidates is the main reason they disapprove of unions. This is less of an issue for union members and public service employees, as 7% and 2% respectively, cite this as the reason for their disapproval.

Both men and women overall and those who belong to unions are most likely to cite corruption as the main reason for disapproving of unions.

21. If you had a choice, how likely would you be to join a union?

Very likely	23%		
Somewhat likely	22	Likely	45%
Not likely	53		
Not sure	3		

Overall, more than half (53%) say they are not likely to join a union, while 45% say they are very or somewhat likely. Three percent are not sure.

Respondents in the east (50%) are more likely than those in the south (41%), in the Central Great Lakes region (44%), and in the west (46%) to say they are likely to join a union. Democrats (60%) are more than twice as likely as Republicans (25%) to say they would be likely to join a union and African Americans (61%) and Hispanics (58%) are more likely than whites (41%) to say they would join.

22 – 29. I will read you a series of statements. Please tell me which statement, A or B, comes closer to your opinion.

Table 8. More Views on Labor Unions

OVERALL		%	NOT SURE
22	A: There was a time when unions were needed, but the need for them has now passed	42	4
	B: Unions are necessary, because without them, individual employees would be powerless	54	
23	A: Individual workers should be free to decide for themselves whether or not to join or support a union, and nobody should be required to join or support a union as a condition of employment	73	2
	B: No one should be a free-rider. If workers benefit from union representation, they should be required to pay their fair share of the cost of union representation	25	
24	A: Employees deserve to be paid on the basis of their own merit. Even where a union represents the majority of the workers, individual workers should be free to make their own deal with the employer	51	5
	B: Allowing individual employees to make their own deal would undermine the union's ability to negotiate better terms for its members. When a union is supported by a majority, the terms of the union contract must apply to all employees	44	
25	A: Unions have too much influence on our political leaders and public policy	36	8
	B: Unions do not have as much influence on our political leaders and public policy as they once did	56	
26	A: Union members should not be required to contribute through their union dues to political or ideological groups with which they disagree.	63	4
	B: Unions have a responsibility to represent all their members and should not have to ask each member individually how to spend treasury money	33	
27	A: Some powerful unions can demand high salaries and benefits that end up hurting business and destroying jobs	56	10
	B: Most businesses cannot be trusted to adequately compensate employees unless there is pressure from the union	34	
28	A: Teacher unions have been responsible for lowering standards and have hurt the quality of public education	38	17
	B: Teachers unions have helped raise standards that improve the quality of public education	46	
29	A: Government ought to do more to protect union members from corrupt union officials. Unions should be required to give detailed reporting of union finances to discourage abuse	71	7
	B: There are already laws on the books to deal with corruption. Giving detailed financial reports would be overly burdensome on unions	22	

UNION MEMBERS		%	NOT SURE
22	A: There was a time when unions were needed, but the need for them has now passed	19	1
	B: Unions are necessary, because without them, individual employees would be powerless	80	
23	A: Individual workers should be free to decide for themselves whether or not to join or support a union, and nobody should be required to join or support a union as a condition of employment	54	1
	B: No one should be a free-rider. If workers benefit from union representation, they should be required to pay their fair share of the cost of union representation	45	
24	A: Employees deserve to be paid on the basis of their own merit. Even where a union represents the majority of the workers, individual workers should be free to make their own deal with the employer	28	2
	B: Allowing individual employees to make their own deal would undermine the union's ability to negotiate better terms for its members. When a union is supported by a majority, the terms of the union contract must apply to all employees	70	
25	A: Unions have too much influence on our political leaders and public policy	21	4
	B: Unions do not have as much influence on our political leaders and public policy as they once did	75	
26	A: Union members should not be required to contribute through their union dues to political or ideological groups with which they disagree.	61	3
	B: Unions have a responsibility to represent all their members and should not have to ask each member individually how to spend treasury money	37	
27	A: Some powerful unions can demand high salaries and benefits that end up hurting business and destroying jobs	39	10
	B: Most businesses cannot be trusted to adequately compensate employees unless there is pressure from the union	51	
28	A: Teacher unions have been responsible for lowering standards and have hurt the quality of public education	32	12
	B: Teachers unions have helped raise standards that improve the quality of public education	56	
29	A: Government ought to do more to protect union members from corrupt union officials. Unions should be required to give detailed reporting of union finances to discourage abuse	71	4
	B: There are already laws on the books to deal with corruption. Giving detailed financial reports would be overly burdensome on unions	26	

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES		%	NOT SURE
22	A: There was a time when unions were needed, but the need for them has now passed	13	2
	B: Unions are necessary, because without them, individual employees would be powerless	85	
23	A: Individual workers should be free to decide for themselves whether or not to join or support a union, and nobody should be required to join or support a union as a condition of employment	58	1
	B: No one should be a free-rider. If workers benefit from union representation, they should be required to pay their fair share of the cost of union representation	41	
24	A: Employees deserve to be paid on the basis of their own merit. Even where a union represents the majority of the workers, individual workers should be free to make their own deal with the employer	33	2
	B: Allowing individual employees to make their own deal would undermine the union's ability to negotiate better terms for its members. When a union is supported by a majority, the terms of the union contract must apply to all employees	65	
25	A: Unions have too much influence on our political leaders and public policy	22	4
	B: Unions do not have as much influence on our political leaders and public policy as they once did	74	
26	A: Union members should not be required to contribute through their union dues to political or ideological groups with which they disagree.	57	3
	B: Unions have a responsibility to represent all their members and should not have to ask each member individually how to spend treasury money	40	
27	A: Some powerful unions can demand high salaries and benefits that end up hurting business and destroying jobs	38	7
	B: Most businesses cannot be trusted to adequately compensate employees unless there is pressure from the union	55	
28	A: Teacher unions have been responsible for lowering standards and have hurt the quality of public education	26	7
	B: Teachers unions have helped raise standards that improve the quality of public education	67	
29	A: Government ought to do more to protect union members from corrupt union officials. Unions should be required to give detailed reporting of union finances to discourage abuse	63	5
	B: There are already laws on the books to deal with corruption. Giving detailed financial reports would be overly burdensome on unions	32	

In three of the A and B statement match-ups, the three groups indicate some surprisingly similar answers. About three in five respondents overall (63%), among union

members (61%) and public service employees (57%) do not believe that union members should be required through their dues to contribute to political or ideological groups with which they disagree.

Also, a substantial majority (at least 63%) in all three groups believes that the government ought to do more to protect union members from corrupt union officials. In addition, there is general agreement across groups that union officials do not have as much influence on political leaders as they once did.

Areas of real disagreement exist on other issues between adults overall and both union members and public service employees. Four in five or more of union members (80%) and public service employees (85%) believe that unions are still necessary, while just over half (54%) of adults overall agree. Respondents overall (42%) are more than twice as likely as union members (19%) and public service employees (13%) to disagree.

Another area of significant disagreement is on the value of individual employees bargaining with an employer. Half (51%) of adults overall believe that employees should be free to make their own deal with an employer, while 28% of union members and 33% of public service employees agree. Significant majorities of union members (70%) and public service employees (65%) believe that allowing individuals to make their own deals undermines the union's ability to negotiate better terms for its members, while 44% of adults believe this.

While majorities of union members (51%) and public service employees (55%) believe that most businesses cannot be trusted to adequately compensate employees without pressure to do so, only one in three (34%) adults overall believe this. On the other hand, a majority (56%) of respondents overall believe that demanding high salaries and benefits end up hurting businesses and destroying jobs; 39% and 38% of union members and public service employees, respectively, agree.

Older union members and public service employees are more likely than younger members and adults overall to believe that unions are still needed.

Younger respondents overall and younger union members and public service employees are significantly more likely than those 65 and older to agree that individual workers should be free to decide for themselves whether or not to join a union. While whites overall (74%) are more likely than African Americans overall (68%) to believe that people should not be forced to join a union, white union members (53%) and white public service employees (55%) are less likely than African American union members (69%) and African American public service employees (92%) to agree. Women in all the groups are more likely than men to agree with Statement A (free to join a union or not).

Again, there is a divergence of views among African Americans overall and African Americans who are union members or public service employees. Overall, a majority of African Americans (58%) believe that unions should not have to ask each member individually how to spend treasury money, while among union members (75%)

and public service employees (85%), they are significantly more likely to say that they should not be required to contribute their union dues to political or ideological groups with which they disagree.

While a plurality of women overall (49%) agrees that teacher unions have helped raise the standards that improve education, by more than two to one, women union members and public service employees say the teacher unions have helped raise standards.

30 – 33. For the following statements, please tell me if you think labor unions mostly help or hurt.

Table 9. Do Labor Unions Help or Hurt? (ranked by % help)

OVERALL	HELP	HURT	NOT SURE
Workers who are members of unions	74	18	8
The companies where workers are unionized	55	33	12
The U.S. economy in general	51	37	12
Workers who are not members of unions	34	50	16

UNION MEMBERS	HELP	HURT	NOT SURE
Workers who are members of unions	92	4	3
The companies where workers are unionized	82	15	3
The U.S. economy in general	78	14	8
Workers who are not members of unions	57	33	10

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES	HELP	HURT	NOT SURE
Workers who are members of unions	97	3	--
The companies where workers are unionized	87	10	3
The U.S. economy in general	82	14	5
Workers who are not members of unions	64	29	8

Overall, nearly three in four (74%) say unions help their membership, while 18% say unions hurt these people. Fifty-five percent say unions help the companies where workers are unionized, and just over half (51%) say unions are helpful to the United States economy in general. About one-third (34%) says unions help workers who are not members of unions, while half (50%) say unions hurt these workers, and 16% are not sure.

Not surprisingly, union members and public service employees are much more likely to believe that unions help in these cases more than they hurt.