

Washington State Loves The Initiative Process

Teacher Pay and Tax Issues are the Most Popular

Rasmussen Research
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By a 10-1 margin, voters in Washington state think that the initiative process should be continued in their state. By a 49 to 30 margin, Washington's voters think that Americans should be able to overturn federal laws through the Initiative process. The survey of 500 likely voters was conducted by Rasmussen Research for the Initiative and Referendum Institute.

58% of Washington's voters believe that special interest groups have more influence on the state legislature than they do on the initiative process. Only 13% think that the special interests have more influence on the initiative process.

Initiatives to base teacher pay on merit and to require voter approval for tax increases are the most popular with Washington's voters at this time.

The Portrait of America survey was conducted by Rasmussen Research on June 20, 1999. The telephone survey of 500 randomly selected likely voters has a margin of sampling error of +/- 4.5 percentage points, with a 95% level of confidence.

Question Wording:

1. In Washington State, citizens can place issues on the ballot by collecting petition signatures and using the initiative process. Some people say that the initiative process is bad for the state of Washington and should be eliminated. What do you think? Should the initiative process be continued or eliminated?

84% Continued
8% Eliminated
8% Not sure

2. Some people say that American voters should be able to use the initiative process to overturn federal legislation passed by Congress and signed by the President. Would this be a good idea

49% Yes
30% No
21% Not sure

3. Do lobbyists and special interest groups have more influence on laws passed by the state legislature or laws passed by the initiative process?

58% State legislature
13% Initiative process
29% Not sure

4. Which comes closer to representing the will of the people—laws passed by the state legislature or laws passed by the initiative process?

31% State legislature
48% Initiative process
21% Not sure

5. A number of initiatives may be on the ballot in the next general election. I'm going to read you a short list of potential initiatives. For each, please let me know if you would be likely to vote for or against. First, an initiative to abolish the system of state-owned liquor stores and replace them with privately owned liquor stores which are regulated by the state liquor control board?

58% For
33% Against
10% Not sure

6. An initiative that would require voter approval for any tax increase. It would also set license tab fees at \$30 per year for motor vehicles and repeal existing vehicle taxes.

73% For
22% Against
5% Not sure

7. An initiative that would base teachers' pay and job security on performance and not on how long they have had their job.

73% For
19% Against
9% Not sure

8. An initiative to prohibit commercial net, troll, and trawl fishing in Washington state fresh and marine waters, except tribal fisheries conducted under a valid treaty right?

39% For
44% Against
17% Not sure

9. An initiative to revise property taxes including a rollback to 1990 valuation levels, valuation at 80% of true value; and 60% voter approval required for changes.

70% For
16% Against
14% Not sure

10. An initiative requiring that public school teachers, other school district employees, and community and technical college faculty receive a cost-of-living salary increase each year, to begin in 2001?

58% For
30% Against
12% Not sure

11. An initiative that would authorize counties with a population of less than 15,000 to permit electronic gaming devices including slot machines.

33% For
60% Against
8% Not sure

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