

Wyoming citizens are deeply divided on how to approach legislation pertaining to undocumented immigrants, as are Americans in general. Results of the University of Wyoming Statewide Election Survey indicate a bit over one-third (37%) favor deporting illegal immigrants back to their home country. On the other hand, 39% would allow this group to remain in the United States in order to work but for a limited time. Only about one-quarter favor providing the undocumented with a path to citizenship. As with most current political issues, opinions are fairly highly correlated with party identification. For instance, only about 15 percent of the Republicans would provide a path to citizenship while over half of the Democrats would do so. The most preferred position for Republican identifiers was to permit the undocumented to remain to work but only for a limited amount of time.

Interestingly, a significant majority of Wyoming citizens favor the provisions of President Obama Dream Act which halts deportations for those who came to the U.S. before their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday and who meet certain qualifications such as graduation from high school or who received an honorable discharge from the military. Here, almost seven in ten Wyoming citizens favor the Obama policy. Again position on the Dream act varies by party identification. Sixty-one percent of Republicans favor the policy while over ninety percent of the Democrats do so.

Strong support for the Dream Act concept would probably vanish if a larger percentage of Wyoming citizens realized that it was a policy put forth by President Barak Obama said Oliver Walter, emeritus professor of Political Science at the University of Wyoming. The President is a negative cue for many Wyomingites and if he favors a position, their initial reaction is to oppose it, said Walter. "Eliminate the partisan cues, and it might be possible to reach accord on immigration reform but partisan polarization shows no signs of abating either in Wyoming or at the national level. Therefore, reform in the next several years is highly unlikely." Walter stated.

The statewide telephone survey of 768 Wyoming residents was conducted in October by UW's Survey Research Center and was sponsored by the Department of Political Science, Wyoming Public Radio and the Wyoming Survey and Analysis Center. The Survey has a margin of error of plus or minus four percentage points.