



2021 WBI U.S. WORKPLACE BULLYING SURVEY

The Fifth National Scientific WBI Study
Zogby Analytics, Pollster

11.

SUPPORT FOR A NEW LAW

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11. SUPPORT FOR A NEW LAW

Question: Do you support or oppose enactment of a new law that would protect all workers from repeated, harmful, abusive mistreatment in addition to current laws against discrimination and harassment?

Table 20

	Proportion	Percentage
Not needed. Existing laws are adequate	.0867	9%
Strongly support	.6057	61%
Somewhat support	.2895	29%
<i>Support</i>	.8952	90%
Somewhat oppose	.0721	7%
Strongly oppose	.0326	3%
<i>Oppose</i>	.1050	10%

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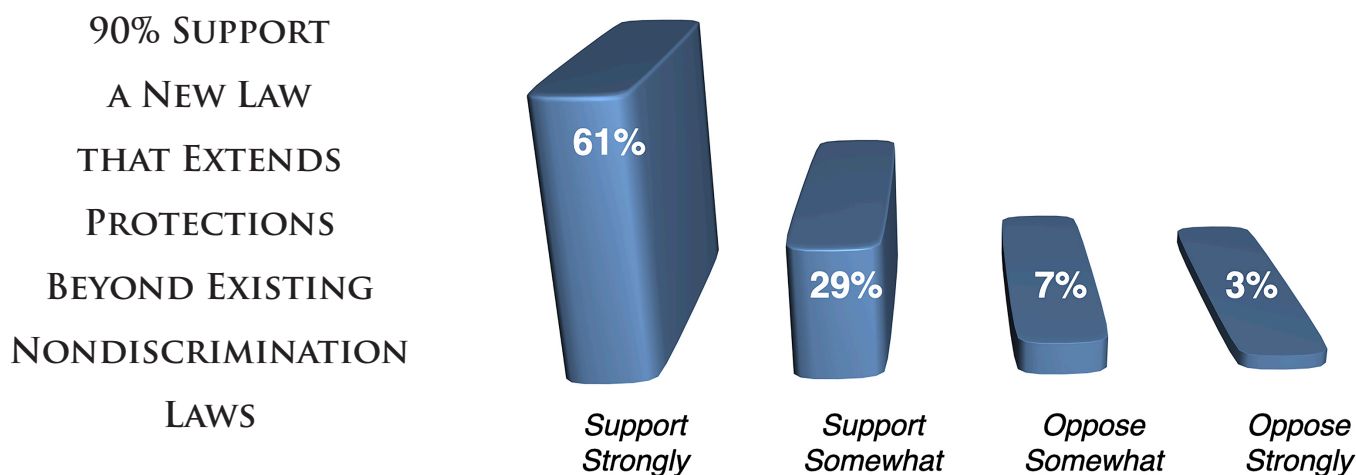
Unshaded rows in Table 20 were response options for survey respondents in the Adults national sample.

WBI through its network of volunteer Coordinators across the U.S. has been lobbying for the anti-bullying Healthy Workplace Bill (HWB) for 18 years as of the date of this survey. In the 31 states and two territories in which HWB has been introduced, pro-business lobbying groups, including SHRM, the HR trade association, have opposed our legislation. In each jurisdiction, opponents argue that the HWB is not necessary. They claim that current civil rights laws offer sufficient deterrence and employee protections. Not true. Research by D. Yamada finds that current laws are inadequate (also see the same-gender discussion in Chapter 4).

We built a question within the question. We asked the American public about the adequacy of current employment law. The result is that only 9% of respondents agree with the Not Needed business lobby argument.

We scores the level of support and opposition for a new law, by excluding the Not Needed responses. Based on that truncated sample, we calculated the percentages shown in Table 20. Support for a new law, explicitly described as additional to nondiscrimination laws, is certainly overwhelming (90%).

Figure 16



WBI 2021 U.S. Survey - Adults

We have always believed the HWB to be non-partisan legislation. The bill gives employers liability exemption as an incentive to do the right thing and take steps to prevent and correct abusive workplace conduct (the term “workplace bullying” does not appear in the bill). Attentive lawmakers, regardless of party affiliation, should see value for their business constituents.

In fact, HWB has enjoyed bipartisan support. In New York State, its inaugural sponsor was Republican. Everyone should be able to agree that stopping abuse at work is a noble goal. Abuse at work is the sole form of abuse in America that still has not been made taboo. Worse yet, it is too often encouraged (see Chapter 9) and normalized (see its prevalence in Chapter 1).

One of the demographic variables provided by our pollster was the self-declared political ideology of survey respondents. Table 21 shows that support for a new law is strong across the Conservative to Liberal continuum. Only Conservatives show a double-digit belief that current law is adequate.

Table 21

	Support	Oppose	Current Law Is Adequate
Conservative	86%	14%	18%
Moderate	92%	8%	4%
Liberal	92%	8%	2%

WBI 2021 U.S. Survey - 1,002 Adult Americans



An alternative analysis.

We treated the Not Needed response choice as a question separate from the other responses. It is possible to simply include the option as a fifth option in a single list. Using the slightly larger sample size, the level of support dips slightly to 82% (Strongly support, .5532; Somewhat support, .2644) with opposition remaining at 10% (Somewhat oppose, .0658; Strongly oppose, .0297) and the Not Needed proportion at .0866.