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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Thursday April 4, 2019

Poll reveals overwhelming support for enhanced taxpayer protection in public construction projects

(Madison)...Wisconsin residents overwhelmingly support laws that create new levels of taxpayer protection and highlights Wisconsin-based employers in publicly-funded construction projects.

The proposals would impact publicly-funded infrastructure projects and create a series of new protections for taxpayers from being burdened with hidden costs by companies that bid on taxpayer-funded projects that require low bids. In addition, the poll demonstrates strong support for ensuring Wisconsin workers are building Wisconsin projects.

“There is clear-cut and passionate support for a series of taxpayer protections that increase transparency and foster highly skilled Wisconsin workers’ ability to compete aggressively for public projects in the state,” says Robb Kahl, WIIN’s executive director. “These reforms would be similar to various protections already in place in other states and prevent dumping hidden costs on taxpayers.”

Among the findings:

- More than 90% of voters support laws that require public bids accurately reflect all taxpayers’ costs associated with a company’s bids.
- More than 2/3rds of voters support eliminating loopholes and making workers independent contractors to avoid paying worker’s compensation and avoiding paying employment taxes.
- 2/3rds support protections that would prevent contractors from forcing employees onto taxpayer-funded healthcare rather than paying them as part of their contract.
- More than 80% of the voters polled support provisions ensuring Wisconsin workers are building Wisconsin projects keeping the taxpayer funds in our state.

“These reforms protect Wisconsin taxpayers by increasing the integrity of the bidding process and not letting out-of-state firms undercut Wisconsin contractors by misclassifying workers and dumping hidden costs onto taxpayers without them knowing,” said Kahl.

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About the poll: Public Opinion Strategies conducted this statewide survey from March 3-5, 2019. The survey was paid for by Wisconsin Infrastructure Investment Now, Inc. (WIIN). ***See the attached memorandum and presentation from Public Opinion Strategies (POS).***