

# Center for American Progress



**Date: November 24, 2014**

**FR: Center for American Progress**

**RE: Survey on Pregnancy Discrimination**

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## **Topline Findings**

An overwhelming majority of people support Peggy Young in her lawsuit against the United Parcel Service (**79 percent**). The poll – conducted by The Feldman Group, Inc. and commissioned by the Center for American Progress – finds 75 percent of men and 82 percent of women side with Young, including majorities of each gender who *strongly* support Young.

For the survey, 1,000 citizens from across the nation were interviewed by telephone between September 21 and September 28, 2014. The sample was drawn from people who participated in the 2012 election and so are active citizens. The sample included 600 women and 400 men in order to take a closer look at women’s attitudes as they are potentially affected more directly by instances of pregnancy discrimination.

## **Young v. UPS**

People’s impulses are to side with Peggy Young in her suit against the United Parcel Service. Following a description of the case, **79 percent believe SCOTUS should side with Young** while only 12 percent believe it should side with UPS. People rest their support on the argument that pregnant women should not be forced to choose between their job and the health of their pregnancies and that employers should therefore make reasonable accommodations. Their support softens slightly when they hear arguments on both sides but 75 percent still side with Young.

Table 1 below shows the demographics of Young’s support. A majority of every group supports Young although support is broadest of all among people of color and people under age 50. Young’s 79 percent support includes 63 percent of people who strongly support Young. Strong support rises to 76 percent of African Americans and 70 percent of all people between the ages of 30 and 39, including 70 percent of white people age 30 to 39, and 71 percent of all women under age 50. No more than 20 percent of any demographic subgroup sides with UPS.

**Table 1: Initial Court Decision**

	Total Young	Total UPS	DK
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>
Midwest	80	11	9
Northeast	80	9	11
South	79	14	7
West	77	12	11
Men	75	14	12
Women	82	10	8
Under 30	87	5	8
30-39	83	9	8
40-49	81	8	11
50-64	78	12	9
65+	77	16	7
White	78	12	10
African American	86	9	5
Hispanic	82	14	4
White Men	73	14	13
White Women	81	10	9
Married Men	74	13	12
Unmarried Men	77	13	10
Married Women	81	11	8
Unmarried Women	84	8	7
Democrat	88	6	6
Republican	75	16	9
Independent/Other	76	13	11

Table 2 shows that, after hearing both sides of the argument, **75 percent support Young** (down from 79 percent support) and 16 percent support UPS (up from 12 percent support). Thus, UPS’ arguments are ultimately unpersuasive – resulting in a stunningly small 4 point shift and leaving the overwhelming majority for Young intact.

**Pregnancy and Workplace Accommodations**

There is a broad consensus that employers should make reasonable accommodations if a woman becomes pregnant, though only four-in-ten believe that unpaid leave is appropriate if the woman cannot do her job. Ninety-five (95) percent believe that it is reasonable for employers to make reasonable accommodations for women who become pregnant and are unable to work. Another 93 percent believe that employers should provide her with lighter duties or a different schedule if her medical provider says it is necessary, and 89 percent

Thus, Young’s support crosses political lines and includes people who are not sensitized to discrimination and whose impulses are generally with business. Seventy-two (72) percent of those who say pregnant women rarely face discrimination support Young. Similarly, another 71 percent of those who reject the argument that we need more anti-discrimination laws and say that employers should be allowed to hire and fire whomever they want also support Young.

The issue is not part of people’s political frame, but is about supporting Young’s pregnancy. It includes people who believe abortion should always be illegal (73 percent, although 20 percent of these conservative people side with UPS) and 83 percent of those who believe abortion should be legal as it is now.

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**Table 2: Final Court Decision**

	Total Young	Total UPS	Net Position Shift
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>-5</b>
Midwest	72	15	-9
Northeast	80	11	1
South	74	18	-6
West	75	16	-4
Men	71	19	-6
Women	78	14	-5
Under 30	85	10	-3
30-39	79	13	-6
40-49	80	11	-3
50-64	74	19	-7
65+	69	19	-6
White	72	17	-7
African American	90	6	4
Hispanic	81	15	-1
White Men	66	21	-9
White Women	76	14	-5
Married Men	68	20	-8
Unmarried Men	76	16	-3
Married Women	76	16	-7
Unmarried Women	82	10	-2
Democrat	87	7	-1
Republican	70	24	-8
Independent/Other	70	17	-7

say that the employer should treat a pregnant woman the same as any other employee with a temporary disability.

People divide on whether requiring a pregnant woman to take unpaid leave (if she cannot do her job as she would ordinarily) is a reasonable policy. A 49 percent plurality says that it is unreasonable, while 42 percent believe it is reasonable. African American women (61 percent) are among the most likely to say that requiring unpaid leave is unreasonable. College graduates under the age of 50 (60 percent) and women without children (59 percent) are also disproportionately likely to say that unpaid leave is an unreasonable policy. Those furthest removed from the realities of pregnancy are more sympathetic to an unpaid leave policy. Men (49 percent), particularly men over 50 (56 percent) are more likely to say unpaid leave is reasonable policy.

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