

# What Does "Top Talent" Think about Working in States that Ban Abortion?

Reactions to Abortion Bans among Workers in Florida

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PerryUndem conducted a robust national survey on the topics of attracting and retaining top talent and social values. Commissioned by the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies with support from the Tara Health Foundation, the survey was conducted using YouGov's online panel among a national sample of n = 1,804 adults ages 18 to 64 with a college degree who are working full time or looking for full-time work, and an oversample of n = 450 respondents in Florida. The purpose of the survey is to explore how "top talent" perceives the role of politics, social issues, and corporate values in their work and job choices. This research highlights the impact on top talent given the focus by corporate America on talent mobility and recruitment. Bans like S.B. 8 disproportionately impact frontline workers who already face multiple barriers to accessing healthcare. This research is especially relevant given the outsized [role](#) business plays among the most trusted institutions in society according to the recent [2021 Edelman Trust Barometer](#). Recent business [media](#) and [commentary](#) in the wake of corporate [reactions](#) to S.B. 8 in Texas also underscores how access to reproductive health, including abortion, is a workforce and economic issue.

This memo outlines key findings related to abortion restrictions. Data suggest:

- Large majorities of top talent nationally, and in Florida, support abortion access and consider the issue part of gender equity in the workplace;
- The economy and health care are the most pressing issues for top talent in Florida. Restricting or banning abortion falls to the bottom of a list of issues;
- Nearly half of Florida women in the survey (45%) says they'd consider moving out of the state if their lawmakers passed a similar ban to Texas';
- Abortion restrictions may mobilize top talent in Florida against anti-abortion elected officials: 59% say they are more likely to vote against an elected official if he or she tries to restrict or ban abortion, including 67% of women.

Following are more details.

## The college-educated workforce values abortion access and sees the issue as part of gender equity in the workplace.

Roughly eight in ten respondents (79%) do not want *Roe v. Wade* overturned (67% of top talent in Florida). The same proportion (80%) feels access to abortion is an important part of women's rights and gender equity (72% among Florida respondents) - 63% feel this strongly (55% of Floridians).

Respondents also connect abortion to other issues. Top talent would guess that states with abortion access protections are more likely to have good health care, good-paying jobs, and a higher-quality of life versus states that ban or restrict access (65% v. 10% nationally; 53% v. 18% among Florida respondents).

The survey asked respondents the following question:

*Let's say politicians in a state ban abortion or pass several restrictions on abortion access. What would that tell you about what it might be like to live in that state?*



Responses include:

- “As a woman with a daughter, that the state did not view either of us as autonomous individuals with the ability to succeed in any way other than broodmares.” – Florida woman
- “I would see that as a proxy for other issues that I care more about like voting rights.” – Florida man
- “It would tell me that state is not a safe place to live for women, LGBTQ+ people, or BIPOC people. It would tell me that the state’s politicians care more about political clout than the wants and needs of their constituents. It would make me not want to live or work in that state.” – Florida woman
- “It may tell me that I have no agency as a woman and that my rights will continue to diminish.” – Florida woman
- “It would suggest that I would not fit in, that the state is somewhat backwards, that the state does not value education and critical thinking skills, and that the state has other policies that attempt to keep its citizens in their place.” – Florida man

- “When politicians take these actions in their state, it shows that the state probably does not have the best quality of life for women. The access to reproductive health for women outside of abortion may not be as good. It may be a place where people are more closed-minded and judgmental. I would not want to live in a state like that.” – Florida woman
- “Unless you’re a wealthy, white male, literally awful.” – Florida woman
- “It may tell me that the men in that state don’t have any compassion for what women go through in their lives.” – Florida man
- “It tells me that the politicians are ruled more by their faith than they are the laws that protect individuals. It also tells me that bodily autonomy is not considered a right to all persons, only some.” – Florida woman

## **Abortion restrictions may mobilize top talent against anti-abortion elected officials.**

With the Florida legislature considering new abortion restrictions after S.B. 8, we asked respondents whether they’d be more or less likely to vote for an elected official who tries to restrict or ban abortion. More than half of top talent in Florida (59%) says they’d be less likely to vote for an elected official that restricted or banned abortion. One in four (26%) says they’d be more likely to vote for said elected official and 15% say it wouldn’t make a difference. Two-thirds of Florida women (67%) say they’d be less likely to vote for an elected official who tries to restrict or ban abortion.

## Issue priorities for top talent: the economy and health care.

We asked Florida respondents to choose the top one or two issue priorities they'd want their state lawmakers to focus on. The economy / jobs, lowering health care costs, and addressing the pandemic top the list. Banning or restricting abortion is at the bottom of the list of issues we examined.

	Total	Women	Men
Improving jobs and the economy .....	46.....	45 .....	47
Lowering health care costs .....	30.....	33 .....	28
Addressing the coronavirus / pandemic.....	26.....	31 .....	20
Dealing with climate change .....	23.....	27 .....	19
Improving education and local schools.....	21.....	21 .....	22
Cutting taxes.....	17.....	14 .....	20
Working on immigration reform.....	17.....	17 .....	17
Banning or restricting abortion .....	8.....	4 .....	12

## About half of respondents say they'd consider moving out-of-state if their lawmakers passed an abortion ban like S.B. 8.

Nationally, about half of top talent (49%) says they would think about moving out of state if their state passed a law like S.B. 8.

Respondents in Florida were asked, *“Let's say a law like the Texas one passed in Florida. Would you think about moving out-of-state because this law passed?”*

Close to half of Florida women (45%) would consider moving out of state as does one-third (33%) of men in the state (39% of all Florida respondents).

Other demographic breakdowns nationally include:

- Women (56% would think of moving out of state)
- Men (42%)
- Gen Z (56%)
- Millennials (53%)
- Black employees (37%)
- Latino/a employees (46%)
- AAPI employees (47%)
- Recent graduates (52%)

## A majority of respondents would not apply for a job in a state that passed a ban like S.B. 8.

Respondents read the following description of the Texas ban:

*Texas lawmakers recently passed a law that bans abortion after six weeks, which is before most women know they are pregnant. That means it'll be illegal for most people to get an abortion. This law also calls on people to report each other in order to enforce the law. People would get a reward for reporting anyone, like healthcare providers or friends, who help a person get an abortion.*

After the description, respondents were asked whether they'd apply for a job in a state that passed a law like this Texas one.

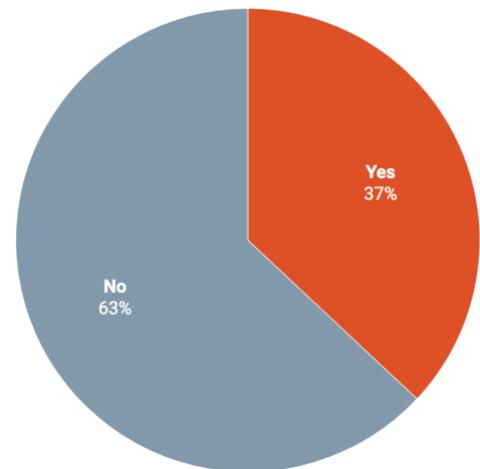
Sixty-three percent of top talent nationally and 52% of Florida top talent say they would not apply for a job in a state that passed a ban similar to S.B. 8. In Florida, 63% of women and 40% of men say they would not apply for a job in such a state.

Other demographic breakdowns nationally include:

- Women (73% would not apply for a job in state)
- Men (53%)
- Gen Z (68%)
- Millennials (66%)
- Black employees (66%)
- Latino/a employees (63%)
- AAPI employees (64%)
- Recent graduates (66%)

**Would you apply for a job in a state that passed a law like this Texas one?**

Total of n = 1,804 respondents nationally



## **Top talent wants reproductive health care, including abortion access, included in corporate gender equity efforts.**

Roughly seven in ten respondents nationally (69%) say access to reproductive health care, including abortion, should be part of the issues companies address when it comes to gender issues in the workplace.

## **Political contributions to anti-abortion candidates and elected officials are much more likely to elicit negative rather than positive feelings toward companies.**

We asked respondents how they would feel if they found out their company was making political contributions to candidates and elected officials who support abortion bans and restricting abortion access. By a margin of 50 points, top talent nationally say these contributions would make them feel less positively (64%) toward their company vs. more positively (14%). Among Florida respondents, 52% would feel less positively v. 22% more positively.