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The Economic Impact of Prevailing Wage Law Repeals on Construction Market Outcomes

Evidence from Repeals Between 2015 and 2018

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Executive Summary

Prevailing wage laws establish minimum wages for skilled construction workers employed on taxpayer-funded projects. The main purpose of prevailing wage laws is to protect local construction standards in the competitive low-bid process. The laws create a level playing field for all construction contractors by ensuring that public expenditures maintain and reflect local market standards for compensation and craftsmanship. As of 2023, a total of 28 states plus the District of Columbia have prevailing wage laws.

Between 2015 and 2018, however, six states—Indiana, West Virginia, Kentucky, Arkansas, Wisconsin, and Michigan—repealed their prevailing wage laws. This report utilizes data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics at the U.S. Department of Labor to compare construction market outcomes in states that repealed their prevailing wage laws to those that maintained their prevailing wage laws.

Official economic data reveal that, in states that repealed their prevailing wage laws:

1. Construction worker wage growth was between 4 and 13 percent slower.
2. Construction worker benefits growth was between 7 and 10 percent slower.
3. Construction worker health insurance coverage rates decreased by 2 percent.
4. Construction worker reliance on food stamps increased by 2 percent.
5. Construction worker employment growth was between 11 and 14 percent slower.
6. The growth in total construction worker hours was between 6 and 9 percent slower.
7. The growth in construction worker productivity per hour was 1 percent slower.
8. The construction industry's on-the-job fatality rate was 14 percent higher.
9. There was no change in the racial and ethnic diversity of the construction workforce.
10. In-state contractors lost between 1 and 2 percent in total market share, amounting to a total loss of between $1.1 billion and $1.4 billion in annual business revenue.

There is also no evidence that the repeals reduced public construction costs or benefited taxpayers:

- Labor costs only account for 23 percent of total construction costs, so minor changes in productivity and in materials and fuels usage can offset any effect of paying prevailing wages.
- 85 percent of peer-reviewed studies conducted since 2000 find that prevailing wage laws have no effect on the cost of traditional public works projects, such as schools and highways.
- The Assistant Republican Leader in the Indiana House of Representatives commented that "we got rid of prevailing wage and, so far, it hasn't saved us a penny."
- The Republican Governor Jim Justice of West Virginia stated that "we got rid of prevailing wage… and we've run to the windows—and they haven't come," lamenting the failure of repeal to attract businesses or create jobs, as promised by those in favor of repeal.

The data show that repeals of state prevailing wage laws have negative consequences for construction workers, businesses, and communities. Construction worker wages, benefits, and productivity fall behind, on-the-job fatalities increase, reliance on government assistance programs worsens, and fewer projects are completed by local contractors—all without saving taxpayers any money.

At a time when the United States is making historic investments in the nation's infrastructure and contractors are having difficulty finding qualified workers, prevailing wage laws can attract, develop, and retain experienced construction workers. To ensure that American infrastructure is built locally by skilled construction workers, state lawmakers should consider strengthening or expanding their prevailing wage laws, implementing new prevailing wage laws, and reversing recent repeals of prevailing wage laws.

Table of Contents

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Introduction

State prevailing wage laws establish minimum wages for different types of skilled construction workers on taxpayer-funded and taxpayer-subsidized projects, based on wages, benefits, and workforce training investments that are paid for similar work in the local area where the projects are to be completed. By preventing public bodies from awarding bids to contractors that pay less than the privately-negotiated local market rate, prevailing wage laws promote a level playing field for local businesses, an adequate supply of skilled local trades workers, and ensure that workers can afford to live in the communities where they are building roads, bridges, public transit systems, airports, paths, parks, schools, water and sewage lines, broadband internet infrastructure, large solar and wind power systems, and other public projects.

Prevailing wage laws have been implemented at the federal, state, and local levels. The Davis-Bacon Act of 1931 establishes prevailing wages on federally funded and assisted construction projects. As of 2023, a total of 28 states plus the District of Columbia have prevailing wage laws. Most states conduct voluntary surveys of construction companies and industry stakeholders to ascertain prevailing wage rates by occupation or craft, by county or locality, and by project type. Prevailing wage rates are often determined by certified payroll records submitted to public bodies. In some states, prevailing wage rates match wages and benefits that have been collectively bargained between workers and their employers. Other states align their prevailing wage rates with those determined federally by the U.S. Department of Labor through the Wage and Hour Division's enforcement of the Davis-Bacon Act. The underlying data for wage determinations are available to the public and survey results can be challenged for reliability or correctness in established administrative procedures. As a result, prevailing wage laws produce wage rates that are transparent and reflective of local market standards (Jordan et al., 2006).

The main purpose of a prevailing wage law is to protect local construction standards in the competitive bidding process. Public bodies are usually required to select the lowest bidder. In the low-bid model, contractors aim to lower their bids however possible, including through cutthroat reductions in worker wages, benefits, and apprenticeship training. Contractors often jettison long-term investments in worker training, health care, and retirement security in order to win bids on short-term projects. Additionally, large infusions of government spending into an area and a process that rewards the lowest bidder may attract contractors from areas with low wages and less investment in workforce training, which could erode standards in the local construction labor market. A prevailing wage law takes labor costs out of the equation, incentivizing construction contractors to compete based on core competencies and efficiencies rather than on undermining job quality for in-demand construction careers.

Economic research has found that prevailing wage laws create a level playing field for local contractors. In-state contractors are 8 percent more likely to be awarded federal highway projects that pay Davis-Bacon prevailing wages compared to similar projects that do not pay prevailing wages (Manzo, 2022). Local contractors account for a 10 percent higher market share when prevailing wages are paid on public school projects and county-resident contractors account for 16 percent higher market share when prevailing wages are paid on library construction projects (Manzo & Duncan, 2018a; Duncan, 2011). By keeping tax dollars in the local economy, more labor income and consumer spending remain in communities with prevailing wage policies.

Reflecting local market-based standards for wages, benefits, and training contributions in the communities where projects are being built also bolsters the apprenticeship system in the United States. Construction apprenticeship enrollments are up to 8 percent higher, and apprentices complete their on-

the-job and classroom training faster, in states with prevailing wage laws (Bilginsoy, 2005). The apprenticeship share of the construction workforce is 14 percent in states with prevailing wage laws compared to 8 percent in states without the laws (Dickson Quesada et al., 2013).

The result is that workers deliver higher levels of productivity and better safety outcomes due to prevailing wage laws. Productivity per construction worker is 14 to 33 percent higher in states that have prevailing wage laws (Philips, 2014). States with prevailing wage laws also have 12 percent fewer on-the-job fatalities per 10,000 construction workers (Manzo, 2017). Indeed, an analysis of the 13 states that repealed their prevailing wage laws between 1970 and 2016 reveals that repeal led to an increase in construction injury rates of at least 11 percent (Li et al., 2019).

In addition to ensuring that the next generation of construction workers is trained, productive, and safe, state prevailing wage laws foster better economic outcomes for construction workers. There is a significant disparity in the wages paid to blue-collar construction workers between states with and without prevailing wage laws (Philips, 2014). Prevailing wage laws statistically increase construction worker earnings by between 5 and 16 percent per year (Manzo, Gigstad, & Bruno, 2020; Manzo, Lantsberg, & Duncan, 2016; Duncan & Lantsberg, 2016; Philips, 2014). Due to their higher incomes from prevailing wage laws, 30 percent fewer construction workers live in poverty, 2 percent more construction workers own their homes, and income tax contributions and property tax contributions from construction workers are 17 percent higher (Manzo, Lantsberg, & Duncan, 2016; Manzo, Gigstad, & Bruno, 2020; Philips & Blatter, 2017). Research has also found that prevailing wage laws make construction workers less likely to rely on government assistance programs, such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) food stamps and the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) assistance (Manzo, Lantsberg, & Duncan, 2016).

Despite the academic consensus which shows that prevailing wage laws lead to more work for local contractors, enhanced workforce productivity, improved safety outcomes, and higher wages for skilled construction workers, lawmakers repealed prevailing wage laws in six states during the 2010s. Indiana repealed its prevailing wage law on July 1, 2015, West Virginia eliminated coverage for local projects on April 13, 2015 and for state projects on May 5, 2016, Wisconsin repealed prevailing wage for local projects on January 1, 2017 and for state projects on September 23, 2017, Kentucky completely repealed its prevailing wage law on January 9, 2017, Arkansas rescinded its law on April 6, 2017, and Michigan removed its law on June 6, 2018 (IN DOL, 2015; WV MetroNews, 2016; WI DWD, 2017; Beam & Schreiner, 2017; State of Arkansas, 2017; Lawler, 2018). Recent research argues that these repeals were driven more by political ideology and declining union power, not by any credible economic justification (Hwang, 2019).

This report, conducted by researchers at the Illinois Economic Policy Institute and at the Project for Middle Class Renewal (PMCR) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, evaluates actual economic data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Labor to assess the impacts of the 2015 to 2018 repeals of prevailing wage laws on construction worker earnings and benefits, construction worker hours and employment levels, construction productivity, the in-state contractor share of the local construction market, construction worker reliance on government assistance programs, the racial composition of the construction workforce, and on-the-job fatalities in the construction industry. This report also summarizes the peer-reviewed academic research on the effects of prevailing wage on both construction costs and bid competition before discussing policy research and public statements from elected officials on the impacts of recent prevailing wage law repeals. A concluding section recaps key findings.

Data from the *Economic Census* in 2012 and 2017

The U.S. Census Bureau collects extensive statistics about American businesses every five years through the *Economic Census*. The U.S. Census Bureau surveys nearly 4 million businesses to provide data on revenues, employment, and gross domestic product (GDP) or "value added" by industry. Responses are required by law. Payroll must be reported on a calendar year basis, similar to IRS tax returns and forms. The last two *Economic Census* surveys were conducted for calendar years 2012 and 2017. Summary statistics on the construction industry from the 2017 *Economic Census* were released in August 2020 and data on the value of construction work performed by location of construction establishment were released in December 2020 (Census, 2021a).

This report compares construction worker wages, benefits, hours, and value added per hour as well as the in-state contractor share of states that repealed their prevailing wages laws between the 2012 *Economic Census* and the 2017 *Economic Census* and contrasts them with states that maintained their laws. Three states—Indiana (July 2015), West Virginia (May 2016), and Kentucky (January 2017)—had completely repealed their prevailing wage laws and had 12 full months of post-repeal data in 2017. Wisconsin eliminated prevailing wage for local construction projects in January 2017 but did not repeal the law for state construction projects until September 2017 and Arkansas rescinded its law in April 2017. To provide a holistic analysis, this report includes data for both the three full repeal states and for the five states that either fully or partially repealed their laws by 2017. Because Michigan did not repeal its law until June 2018, its information is included in totals with 26 other states plus the District of Columbia, which all had prevailing wage laws on the books in *both* 2012 and 2017.

Construction Worker Wages

According to official data from the *Economic Census* from the U.S. Census Bureau, construction worker earnings fell in the states that repealed their prevailing wage laws (Figure 1).[1] Prior to repeal in 2012, the average hourly wage for construction workers in Indiana, West Virginia, and Kentucky was $23.94. After repeal in 2017, their average hourly wage was just $23.77, a decrease of nearly 1 percent. These dollar values are not adjusted for inflation. By contrast, in the 27 states and the District of Columbia that maintained prevailing wage laws, the average wage of construction workers increased from $23.50 per hour to $26.37 per hour, a gain of 12 percent. Wages for construction workers in the three states that fully repealed prevailing wage during these years started off slightly higher than their peers but ended up significantly behind.

FIGURE 1: GROWTH IN AVERAGE HOURLY WAGES OF CONSTRUCTION WORKERS BY REPEAL STATUS, 2012–2017

Construction Worker Metric, by State Prevailing Wage Status*	Average Wage in 2012	Average Wage in 2017	Wage Growth	Repeal Difference
States with Prevailing Wage	**$23.50**	**$26.37**	**+12.2%**	**--**
3 Full Repeal States	$23.94	$23.77	-0.7%	**-12.9%**
3 Full and 2 Partial Repeal States	$23.64	$25.10	+6.1%	**-6.1%**

Source(s): Authors' analysis of the 2012 *Economic Census* and the 2017 *Economic Census* by the U.S. Census Bureau (Census, 2022). Values are in nominal terms (i.e., not adjusted for inflation). Differences may not sum perfectly due to rounding. *NOTE: The 3 Full Repeal States are Indiana, West Virginia, and Kentucky, which had 12 months of post-repeal data in 2017. The 2 Partial Repeal States are Arkansas and Wisconsin, which fully repealed their laws in the middle of 2017. Michigan is included in the States with Prevailing Wage because it repealed its law after the survey in 2018. For full results, see Table A in the Appendix.

[1] For full data from the *Economic Census* for every state included in this analysis, see Tables A through E in the Appendix.

The results are comparable when assessing all five states that had post-repeal data for either the full year or for a portion of the year in 2017 (Figure 1). After including Arkansas and Wisconsin, the five repeal states saw construction worker wages increase from $23.64 per hour to $25.10 per hour, a nominal (i.e., not adjusted for inflation) growth of 6 percent. Wages in these full-year and partial-year repeal states grew half as fast as the states that maintained their prevailing wage laws. A difference-in-difference analysis reveals the extent to which repeal states have fallen behind. Construction worker wages grew between 6 and 13 percent *slower* in states that repealed their prevailing wage laws than they did in the states that maintained their laws.

Construction Worker Benefits

Per the U.S. Census Bureau, "fringe benefits" include all Social Security benefits, unemployment compensation benefits, workers compensation benefits, federal survivors' insurance benefits, health insurance benefits, pension and retirement plan benefits, and other employer-paid benefits such as contributions to apprenticeship training programs (Census, 2021b). This thus includes both legally required benefits (e.g., Social Security benefits) as well as voluntary benefits (e.g., health insurance plans). Fringe benefits for construction workers are estimated by multiplying the blue-collar construction workforce's share of all wages paid in the construction industry by the total fringe benefits paid in the construction industry (Figure 2).[2] In the three full-year repeal states, nominal fringe benefits for construction workers increased from $6.78 per hour in 2012 to $7.37 per hour in 2017, a gain of 9 percent. When extended to the five states with full-year or partial-year repeals, nominal fringe benefits went from $6.75 per hour to $7.56 per hour, an increase of 12 percent. By contrast, in the states that maintained their prevailing wage laws, construction worker fringe benefits grew from $6.57 per hour to $7.80 per hour over the same period, a growth of 19 percent. Accordingly, construction worker benefits grew between 7 and 10 percent *slower* in states that repealed their prevailing wage laws than in the states that maintained their laws.

FIGURE 2: GROWTH IN AVERAGE HOURLY BENEFITS OF CONSTRUCTION WORKERS BY REPEAL STATUS, 2012–2017

Construction Worker Metric, by State Prevailing Wage Status*	Average Fringe Benefits in 2012	Average Fringe Benefits in 2017	Benefits Growth	Repeal Difference
States with Prevailing Wage	**$6.57**	**$7.80**	**+18.7%**	**--**
3 Full Repeal States	$6.78	$7.37	+8.7%	**-10.1%**
3 Full and 2 Partial Repeal States	$6.75	$7.56	+12.0%	**-6.7%**

Source(s): Authors' analysis of the 2012 *Economic Census* and the 2017 *Economic Census* by the U.S. Census Bureau (Census, 2022). Values are in nominal terms (i.e., not adjusted for inflation). Differences may not sum perfectly due to rounding. *NOTE: The 3 Full Repeal States are Indiana, West Virginia, and Kentucky, which had 12 months of post-repeal data in 2017. The 2 Partial Repeal States are Arkansas and Wisconsin, which fully repealed their laws in the middle of 2017. Michigan is included in the States with Prevailing Wage because it repealed its law after the survey in 2018. For full results, see Table B in the Appendix.

These findings corroborate previous studies which have shown that repeal of prevailing wage laws decrease construction worker earnings. A peer-reviewed study on the effects of prevailing wage repeals in nine states between 1979 and 1988 found that repeal decreased blue-collar construction worker

[2] For example, in 2017, blue-collar construction workers in the three states that fully repealed their laws earned $9.1 billion in wages and white-collar workers in the construction industry earned $3.7 billion in wages, for a total of $12.9 billion in wages paid. Blue-collar construction workers accounted for 71.0 percent of the total wages paid. This share of wages is multiplied by the total fringe benefits of $4.0 billion paid in the construction industries of these three states to estimate that blue-collar construction workers earned $2.8 billion in fringe benefits in 2017. The blue-collar construction worker share for these states in 2012 was 72.4 percent. For the states with prevailing wage, it was 66.8 percent in 2012 and 69.3 percent in 2017.

incomes by between 2 and 4 percent and reduced total fringe benefits by between 7 and 12 percent (Fenn et al., 2018). Early policy research has shown that, relative to their neighboring states with prevailing wage, construction worker wages have fallen by 8 percent in Indiana, as much as 8 percent in West Virginia, and 6 percent in Wisconsin (Manzo & Duncan, 2018b; Kelsay & Manzo, 2019; Manzo et al., 2020). The comparison to states that did not change their laws is important because wages and benefits may go up marginally following the repeal of prevailing wage laws, but at significantly slower rates than in other states—causing blue-collar tradespeople to fall behind—as revealed by the *Economic Census* data (Manzo, 2021a).

Construction Worker Employment

One claim that is sometimes made by opponents of prevailing wage laws is that repeal would lead to higher employment amongst construction workers. One report states that repeal would "remove barriers to entry into the construction industry and stimulate construction sector employment" (Divounguy & Hill, 2017). In West Virginia, some elected officials even suggested that repeal of prevailing wage would allow the state to build "five new schools for the price of three" (SBA WV, 2017). The implication was that, by paying construction workers less, governments could complete more projects and employ more workers—causing an increase in employment levels or total hours worked.

Data from the *Economic Census* fail to justify this claim (Figure 3). In the three full-year repeal states, average construction worker employment was about 161,700 workers in 2012 and 188,700 workers in 2017, an increase of 17 percent. Employment levels rose from about 269,600 construction workers to an estimated 323,800 construction workers, or 20 percent, when all five full-year and partial-year repeal states are considered. Over the same time, average construction worker employment in states that maintained their prevailing wage laws increased from 2.6 million workers to 3.4 million workers, a growth of 31 percent. As a result, construction worker employment grew between 11 and 14 percent *slower* in states that repealed their prevailing wage laws than in the states that maintained their laws.

FIGURE 3: TOTAL EMPLOYMENT GROWTH OF BLUE-COLLAR CONSTRUCTION WORKERS BY REPEAL STATUS, 2012–2017

Construction Worker Metric, by State Prevailing Wage Status*	Construction Jobs in 2012	Construction Jobs in 2017	Jobs Growth	Repeal Difference
States with Prevailing Wage	**2,603,153**	**3,402,134**	**+30.7%**	**--**
3 Full Repeal States	161,742	188,701	+16.7%	**-14.0%**
3 Full and 2 Partial Repeal States	269,611	323,789	+20.1%	**-10.6%**

Source(s): Authors' analysis of the 2012 *Economic Census* and the 2017 *Economic Census* by the U.S. Census Bureau (Census, 2022). Values are in nominal terms (i.e., not adjusted for inflation). Differences may not sum perfectly due to rounding. *NOTE: The 3 Full Repeal States are Indiana, West Virginia, and Kentucky, which had 12 months of post-repeal data in 2017. The 2 Partial Repeal States are Arkansas and Wisconsin, which fully repealed their laws in the middle of 2017. Michigan is included in the States with Prevailing Wage because it repealed its law after the survey in 2018. For full results, see Table C in the Appendix.

Construction Worker Hours

An investigation into total hours worked yields similar conclusions (Figure 4). In the three full-year repeal states, the total hours worked by all construction workers went from 303 million hours to 385 million hours, an increase of 27 percent. The change was from 508 million hours to 663 million hours, or 30 percent, in the five full-year and partial-year repeal states. In comparison, total hours worked by construction workers in states that maintained their prevailing wage laws increased from 5.1 billion hours

to 7.0 billion hours, a growth of 36 percent. Hours worked grew between 6 and 9 percent *slower* in states that repealed their prevailing wage laws than in the states that maintained their laws.

FIGURE 4: GROWTH IN TOTAL HOURS WORKED BY CONSTRUCTION WORKERS BY REPEAL STATUS, 2012–2017

Construction Worker Metric, by State Prevailing Wage Status*	Construction Hours in 2012	Construction Hours in 2017	Hours Growth	Repeal Difference
States with Prevailing Wage	**5,137,113,000**	**7,003,987,000**	**+36.3%**	**--**
3 Full Repeal States	303,325,000	384,962,000	+26.9%	**-9.4%**
3 Full and 2 Partial Repeal States	507,866,000	662,620,000	+30.5%	**-5.9%**

Source(s): Authors' analysis of the 2012 *Economic Census* and the 2017 *Economic Census* by the U.S. Census Bureau (Census, 2022). Values are in nominal terms (i.e., not adjusted for inflation). Differences may not sum perfectly due to rounding. *NOTE: The 3 Full Repeal States are Indiana, West Virginia, and Kentucky, which had 12 months of post-repeal data in 2017. The 2 Partial Repeal States are Arkansas and Wisconsin, which fully repealed their laws in the middle of 2017. Michigan is included in the States with Prevailing Wage because it repealed its law after the survey in 2018. For full results, see Table D in the Appendix.

Construction Worker Productivity

Construction worker productivity also lagged in the states that repealed their prevailing wage laws, according to official *Economic Census* data (Figure 5). The U.S. Census Bureau captures a construction worker's contribution to the nation's gross domestic product, or GDP, through a metric called "value added." Value added measures the value of business done minus the costs of construction work subcontracted out to others and the costs for materials, components, supplies, and fuels (Census, 2021b). Dividing total value added in the construction industry by the total number of hours worked shows that construction worker productivity—not adjusted for inflation—increased from $72 per hour in 2012 to $78 per hour in 2017 in the three full-year repeal states, a gain of 8 percent. Construction worker productivity increased from $73 per hour to nearly $80 per hour when Arkansas and Wisconsin are added in, a change of less than 9 percent. In the 27 states plus the District of Columbia where prevailing wage laws remained in effect, construction worker productivity grew from about $80 per hour to more than $87 per hour, a growth of more than 9 percent. The data show that not only did the growth in construction worker hours trail states with prevailing wage laws, but average construction worker value added per hour also grew slower as well. States that repealed their prevailing wage laws saw per-hour productivity grow about 1 percent slower than their counterparts that maintained prevailing wage laws.

FIGURE 5: GROWTH IN PRODUCTIVITY PER HOUR BY CONSTRUCTION WORKERS BY REPEAL STATUS, 2012–2017

Construction Worker Metric, by State Prevailing Wage Status*	Value Added (GDP) Per Hour in 2012	Value Added (GDP) Per Hour in 2017	GDP Growth	Repeal Difference
States with Prevailing Wage	**$79.78**	**$87.22**	**+9.3%**	**--**
3 Full Repeal States	$72.11	$77.93	+8.1%	**-1.3%**
3 Full and 2 Partial Repeal States	$73.30	$79.81	+8.9%	**-0.4%**

Source(s): Authors' analysis of the 2012 *Economic Census* and the 2017 *Economic Census* by the U.S. Census Bureau (Census, 2022). Values are in nominal terms (i.e., not adjusted for inflation). Differences may not sum perfectly due to rounding. *NOTE: The 3 Full Repeal States are Indiana, West Virginia, and Kentucky, which had 12 months of post-repeal data in 2017. The 2 Partial Repeal States are Arkansas and Wisconsin, which fully repealed their laws in the middle of 2017. Michigan is included in the States with Prevailing Wage because it repealed its law after the survey in 2018. For full results, see Table D in the Appendix.

Work Performed by Local Contractors

Finally, the repeal of state prevailing wage laws during the 2010s has also been associated with less work for local contractors (Figure 6). The U.S. Census Bureau reports both the total value of all construction

work in a state as well as the total value of construction work performed in every U.S. state by the home location of a construction establishment.[3] In the three full-year repeal states, the share of construction work performed by in-state contractors fell from 88 percent in 2012 to about 85 percent in 2017, a loss of 3 percent. In the five states with either full-year or partial-year repeals, the in-state share fell from 89 percent to under 87 percent, a loss of more than 2 percent. The drop-off was particularly steep in West Virginia, which saw its in-state contractor share fall by 8 percent, from 92 percent pre-repeal to 84 percent post-repeal.[4] The in-state contractor share of the market also fell in the states that maintained their prevailing wage laws, but by a smaller amount. In-state contractors went from completing 92 percent of all construction work in their states to completing 91 percent, a decrease of just 1 percent, in jurisdictions that maintained prevailing wage laws.[5] As a result, the market share of in-state contractors *fell* by between 1 percent and 2 percent in states that repealed their prevailing wage laws relative to their counterparts in states that maintained their prevailing wage laws—amounting to between $1.1 billion and $1.4 billion in lost revenue for local contractors in these states in 2017 alone (Figure 7). This aligns with previous research, which has found that states without prevailing wage laws have about 2 percent more of the total value of construction completed by out-of-state contractors (Manzo, Lantsberg, & Duncan, 2016).

FIGURE 6: CHANGE IN IN-STATE CONTRACTOR SHARE OF TOTAL CONSTRUCTION VALUE BY REPEAL STATUS, 2012–2017

Construction Contractor Metric, by State Prevailing Wage Status*	In-State Market Share in 2012	In-State Market Share in 2017	Market Change	Repeal Difference
States with Prevailing Wage	**92.1%**	**90.7%**	**-1.4%**	**--**
3 Full Repeal States	88.7%	85.4%	-3.3%	**-1.9%**
3 Full and 2 Partial Repeal States	89.4%	86.7%	-2.7%	**-1.3%**

Source(s): Authors' analysis of the 2012 *Economic Census* and the 2017 *Economic Census* by the U.S. Census Bureau (Census, 2022). Values are in nominal terms (i.e., not adjusted for inflation). Differences may not sum perfectly due to rounding. *NOTE: The 3 Full Repeal States are Indiana, West Virginia, and Kentucky, which had 12 months of post-repeal data in 2017. The 2 Partial Repeal States are Arkansas and Wisconsin, which fully repealed their laws in the middle of 2017. Michigan is included in the States with Prevailing Wage because it repealed its law after the survey in 2018. For full results, see Table E in the Appendix.

FIGURE 7: IMPACT OF REPEAL ON TOTAL CONSTRUCTION WORK (ONE-YEAR REVENUE) BY IN-STATE CONTRACTORS, 2017

Impact of Repeal on In-State Contractor Market Value	Value of Construction Work in 2017	Net Impact of Repeal	Estimated Change in In-State Revenue
3 Full Repeal States	$60,499,416,000	-1.9%	**-$1,130,214,000**
3 Full and 2 Partial Repeal States	$108,517,056,000	-1.3%	**-$1,417,163,000**

Source(s): Authors' analysis of the 2012 *Economic Census* and the 2017 *Economic Census* by the U.S. Census Bureau (Census, 2022). Values are in nominal terms (i.e., not adjusted for inflation). Differences may not sum perfectly due to rounding. *NOTE: The 3 Full Repeal States are Indiana, West Virginia, and Kentucky, which had 12 months of post-repeal data in 2017. The 2 Partial Repeal States are Arkansas and Wisconsin, which fully repealed their laws in the middle of 2017. Michigan is included in the States with Prevailing Wage because it repealed its law after the survey in 2018. For full results, see Table E in the Appendix.

[3] For example, in Illinois, a total value of $73.7 billion of construction work was completed in 2017. Construction establishments based in Illinois completed $66.3 billion of this construction work. In-state contractors thus accounted for 89.9 percent of the market share in Illinois. Wisconsin-based contractors accounted for the next-highest value of construction work completed in Illinois at just under $1.0 billion (1.3 percent). On the other hand, among Illinois-based contractors, the next-highest state by value of construction projects was Indiana, where they performed $1.3 billion worth of work.

[4] For more, see Table E in the Appendix.

[5] Because Alaska and Hawaii both have prevailing wage laws, researchers may elect to omit them from this type of analysis, given their remoteness and the difficulty of out-of-state contractors entering their construction markets. However, between 2012 and 2017, the combined in-state contractor share of the market fell by 3.1 percent in these states—more than the average for all other states that maintained their prevailing wage laws. For more, see Table E in the Appendix. Alaska and Hawaii are thus included to provide the most *conservative* estimates on the impact of repeal of prevailing wage laws on in-state contractors.

Data from the *American Community Survey* in 2014 and 2019

The U.S. Census Bureau annually conducts the *American Community Survey* (ACS) to produce information on economic, social, housing, and demographic characteristics for the United States. Every year, the U.S. Census Bureau surveys approximately 1 percent of the U.S. population, or more than 3 million individuals (Census, 2017). *American Community Survey* data are used by the federal government, local and state agencies, private businesses and nonprofit organizations, emergency planners, and the public to make decisions affecting citizens, constituents, clients, and consumers. The information is made publicly available from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS-USA) dataset provided by the Minnesota Population Center at the University of Minnesota (Ruggles et al., 2021).

The U.S. Census Bureau did not initially release 2020 *American Community Survey* data due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, people with lower incomes, lower levels of educational attainment, and lower homeownership rates were considerably less likely to respond to the survey in 2020 than in previous years, leading the U.S. Census Bureau to determine that the 2020 data did not meet its "Statistical Data Quality Standards" (Census, 2021c). Consequently, this report only uses data through 2019. It compares 2014 data to 2019 data to understand changes in annual incomes, health insurance coverage rates, and government assistance reliance for construction workers as well as the racial composition of the construction workforce. These two years are selected because 2014 is the last year prior to a state repeal of a prevailing wage law (Indiana in July 2015) and the most-recently available year—without "experimental weights"—since the last repeal of a prevailing wage law (Michigan in June 2018).

While results are once again contrasted with states that maintained their prevailing wage laws, this section differs from the section using *Economic Census* data for two reasons. First, it evaluates impacts on blue-collar construction workers against other nonfarm workers in the private sector. For example, repeal of a prevailing wage law may affect health insurance coverage among construction workers. However, if comparable workers in other occupations also experienced similar changes in health insurance coverage, then other state-level factors may be at play and the effect of repeal is likely to be smaller than the surface-level difference among just construction workers. Comparing over time, between different types of states (repeal states and prevailing wage states), and between construction workers and other types of workers produces what economists call a "difference-in-difference-in-differences" (DDD) analysis.

Second, this section utilizes a statistical technique called "regressions." Regressions are used to parse out the unique impact that certain variables—such as repeal of a prevailing wage law—have on market outcomes. For example, a regression describes how much a variable is responsible for raising or lowering worker incomes, after accounting for other observable factors. However, states that repealed prevailing wage laws may have similar economic dynamics and public policies that result in lower incomes for all workers—not just those in construction occupations that are directly impacted by repeal. For example, the six repeal states all have so-called "right-to-work" laws that weaken collective bargaining units (Manzo & Bruno, 2021; Hogler, Shulman, & Wieler, 2004). Accordingly, "interaction terms" are used in the difference-in-difference-in-differences analyses to control for these state-level factors. Regressions can also account for the influence that demographic factors, level of educational attainment, and residence in a city, suburb, or rural America have on annual incomes and other labor market outcomes.

Figure 8 presents summary statistics on private-sector construction workers in the six states that repealed their prevailing wage laws between the beginning of 2015 and the end of 2018—Indiana, West Virginia,

Kentucky, Arkansas, Wisconsin, and Michigan—and their counterparts in the 26 states plus the District of Columbia that had prevailing wage laws on the books from 2014 through 2019.[6] In the six states that repealed their prevailing wage laws, the average inflation-adjusted income of blue-collar construction workers increased from about $42,900 per year in 2014 to $45,200 per year in 2019, a growth of 5 percent. In the states that maintained their prevailing wage laws, the average inflation-adjusted income of blue-collar construction workers increased from about $41,300 per year to $46,600 per year, a gain of 13 percent. Consequently, construction worker incomes grew about 8 percent *slower* in the states that repealed prevailing wage laws (Figure 8). This supports the *Economic Census* data in the previous section.

Other differences in the summary statistics in Figure 8 are noteworthy. In the six states that repealed prevailing wage laws, the health insurance coverage rate of construction workers rose by 2 percent and the share of construction workers who qualified for and received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) food stamps fell by 4 percent. By contrast, the states that maintained their prevailing wage laws experienced a 5 percent increase in construction worker health insurance coverage and a 5 percent drop in SNAP food stamp recipiency among construction workers. The expansion in health insurance coverage was thus 3 percent *slower* and the reduction in government assistance reliance was 1 percent *worse* in states that repealed their prevailing wage laws. Moreover, the share of all construction workers who are White, non-Hispanic fell by about 3 percent in the six repeal states but by 4 percent in the states with prevailing wage, a difference of 1 percent. In other words, racial and ethnic diversity in nonsupervisory construction occupations improved at a *slower* rate in the states that repealed their prevailing wage laws (Figure 8).

FIGURE 8: SUMMARY STATISTICS OF BLUE-COLLAR CONSTRUCTION WORKER LABOR MARKET OUTCOMES, 2014–2019

Construction Worker Metric, by State Prevailing Wage Status*	States with Prevailing Wage			6 Full Repeal States			Repeal Difference
	2014	2019	Change	2014	2019	Change	
Inflation-Adjusted Annual Income	$41,296	$46,627	+12.9%	$42,938	$45,244	+5.4%	**-7.5%**
Health Insurance Coverage Rate	65.6%	70.5%	+4.9%	76.6%	78.8%	+2.3%	**-2.6%**
Share Receiving Food Stamps	15.4%	10.2%	-5.2%	12.2%	7.9%	-4.3%	**+0.9%**
White, Non-Hispanic Share	49.7%	45.7%	-4.1%	84.0%	81.3%	-2.7%	**+1.4%**
Black or African American Share	4.6%	4.6%	-0.0%	3.8%	4.2%	+0.4%	**+0.4%**
Hispanic or Latinx Share	42.0%	45.3%	+3.3%	11.1%	12.7%	+1.6%	**-1.7%**

Source(s): Authors' analysis of the 2014 *American Community Survey* (1-Year Estimates) and the 2019 *American Community Survey* (1-Year Estimates) by the U.S. Census Bureau (Ruggles et al., 2021). Differences may not sum perfectly due to rounding.
*NOTE: The 6 Full Repeal States are Indiana, West Virginia, Kentucky, Arkansas, Wisconsin, and Michigan. Blue-collar construction workers are employed individuals in construction occupations excluding first-line supervisors (occupation codes 6210–6765).

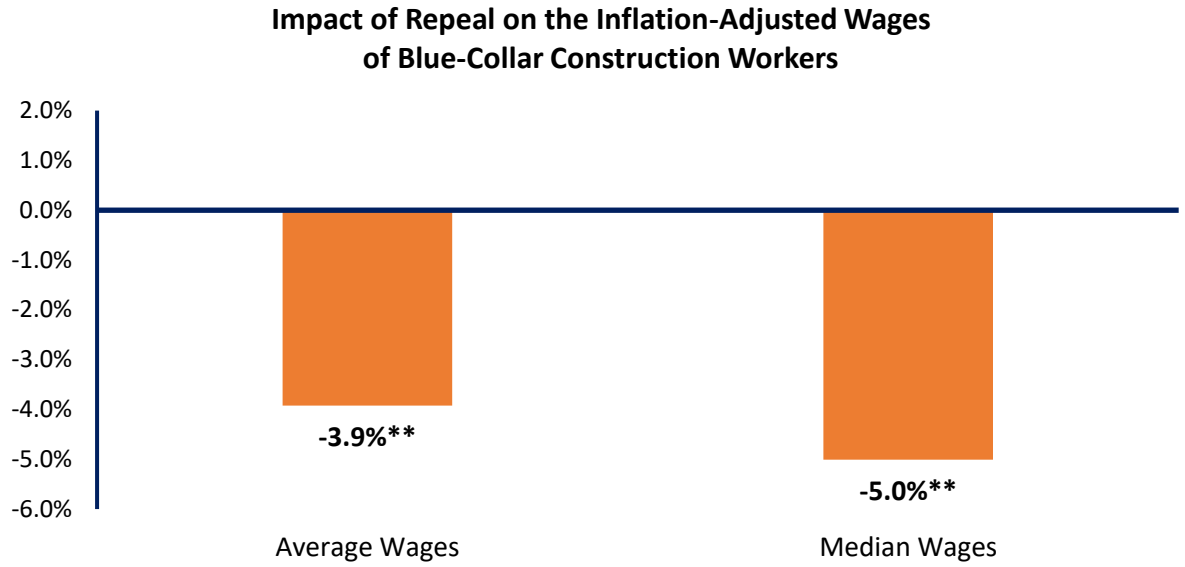
Construction Worker Annual Incomes

As noted previously, many factors influence a worker's annual income, such as level of educational attainment, age, gender identification, racial or ethnic background, and urban status. Figure 9 uses regression analyses to parse out the unique and independent effect of the repeals of prevailing wage laws on the annual incomes of blue-collar construction workers.[7] After accounting for these and other observable factors, repeal of prevailing wage is associated with a 4 percent decrease in the *average*

[6] Recall that as of 2019, Michigan no longer has a prevailing wage law. Conversely, both Colorado (May 2019) and Virginia (April 2020) passed prevailing wage laws that applied to state-funded construction projects (CO General Assembly, 2019; VA LIS, 2020). These laws, however, were scheduled to take effect in the summer of 2021.
[7] For full regression results using *American Community Survey* data, see Tables F and G in the Appendix.

inflation-adjusted annual income for construction workers, relative to the states that maintained their prevailing wage laws. A separate quantile regression reveals that repeal of prevailing wage has reduced the *median* inflation-adjusted annual income of construction workers by 5 percent. Both results are statistically significant at the 95-percent level of statistical confidence (Figure 9).[8]

FIGURE 9: REGRESSION RESULTS – IMPACT OF REPEAL ON CONSTRUCTION WORKER INCOMES, 2014–2019



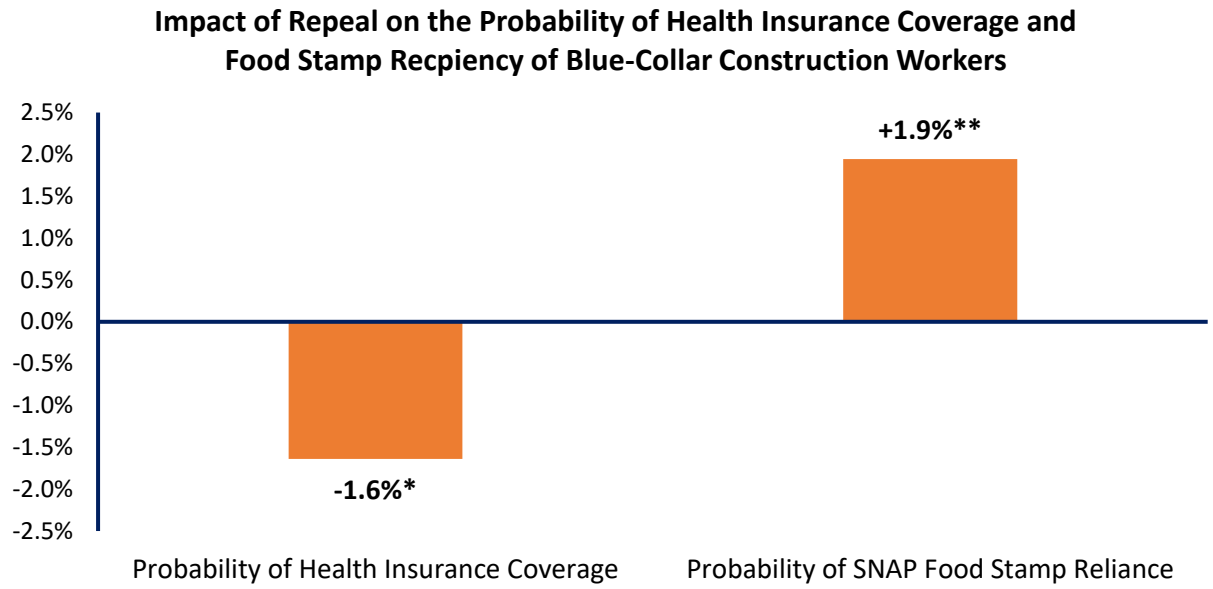
Source(s): Authors' analysis of the 2014 *American Community Survey* (1-Year Estimates) and the 2019 *American Community Survey* (1-Year Estimates) by the U.S. Census Bureau (Ruggles et al., 2021). *NOTE: The 6 Full Repeal States are Indiana, West Virginia, Kentucky, Arkansas, Wisconsin, and Michigan. Blue-collar construction workers are employed individuals in construction occupations excluding first-line supervisors (occupation codes 6210–6765). ***p≤|0.01|; **p≤|0.05|; *p≤|0.10|. For full regression results, see Table F in the Appendix.

Construction Worker Health Insurance and Government Assistance

"Probit" regressions, with average marginal effects, are used to determine the impact of prevailing wage law repeals on the probabilities of blue-collar construction workers having health insurance coverage and relying on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) food stamps in Figure 10. After accounting for other important factors, the likelihood of construction workers in these six states being covered by health insurance plans was 2 percent lower after the repeal of prevailing wage laws than it was prior to repeal, compared to states that kept their laws in place. Conversely, the relative chances of any given construction worker relying on SNAP food stamps increased by 2 percent due to the repeals of prevailing wage laws. Both effects are statistically significant with at least 90 percent confidence (Figure 10). The relative decrease in health insurance coverage is a contributor to the slower growth in fringe benefits paid to construction workers in states that repealed their laws, as illuminated by *Economic Census* data. Meanwhile, by reducing earnings, the repeals have resulted in construction workers likely contributing less towards the tax base but receiving more from social safety net programs like food stamps.

[8] Both regression outputs are converted to percent changes using correct adjustments to interpret natural logarithms (Kennedy, 1981; IDRE, 2021). The coefficients for the interaction term (*Repeal States x Construction Occupation x 2019*) for the average and median income regressions are, respectively, -0.0400 and -0.0514. The correct interpretations of these results are $e^{(coefficient)} - 1$ or $e^{-0.0400} - 1 = -3.9\%$ and $e^{-0.0514} - 1 = -5.0\%$. For full regression results, see Table F in the Appendix.

FIGURE 10: REGRESSION RESULTS – IMPACT OF REPEAL ON CONSTRUCTION WORKER SOCIAL OUTCOMES, 2014–2019



Source(s): Authors' analysis of the 2014 *American Community Survey* (1-Year Estimates) and the 2019 *American Community Survey* (1-Year Estimates) by the U.S. Census Bureau (Ruggles et al., 2021). *NOTE: The 6 Full Repeal States are Indiana, West Virginia, Kentucky, Arkansas, Wisconsin, and Michigan. Blue-collar construction workers are employed individuals in construction occupations excluding first-line supervisors (occupation codes 6210–6765). ***p≤|0.01|; **p≤|0.05|; *p≤|0.10|. For full regression results, see Table F in the Appendix.

Construction Workforce Diversity

Some opponents of state prevailing wage laws have made the suspect claim that the policies deter people of color from participating in the construction industry (Bernstein, 2018; Bott, 2017). Peer-reviewed studies have found no relationship between prevailing wage laws and the racial composition of the construction workforce (Duncan & Ormiston, 2018). After accounting for individual factors such as age, gender, residence in a metropolitan area, marital status, educational attainment, and union coverage, there is no evidence that prevailing wage laws have a racially discriminatory impact (Belman & Philips, 2005). Furthermore, there is no evidence that prevailing wage laws exclude people of color from training in registered apprenticeship programs (Bilginsoy, 2005; Bilginsoy, 2017). In fact, in the nine states that repealed prevailing wage laws from 1979 to 1988, people of color accounted for 19 percent of all registered apprentices pre-repeal but just 13 percent post-repeal, a 6 percent drop (Philips et al., 1995).

After accounting for other important factors, the repeals of state prevailing wage laws had no impact on the likelihood of any given worker being employed as a blue-collar construction worker—defined as an individual employed in any construction occupation *except for* first-line supervisors of construction occupations (Figure 11). The odds of working in construction did not change for White, non-Hispanic workers in the six repeal states following the change in policy. The probability of a Black or African American worker being employed in a construction occupation did not statistically increase in Indiana, West Virginia, Kentucky, Arkansas, Wisconsin, and Michigan after repeal of their prevailing wage laws. The repeal of prevailing wage laws also had no discernible effect on the chances that a Hispanic or Latinx worker would be employed in a construction occupation. Put simply, there is no evidence that the six

repeals of prevailing wage laws from 2015 through 2018 had any effect on the racial composition of the blue-collar construction workforce.[9]

FIGURE 11: REGRESSION RESULTS – IMPACT OF REPEAL ON WORKING IN A CONSTRUCTION JOB, BY RACE, 2014–2019

Impact of Repeal on the Probability of a Worker Being Employed in a Nonsupervisory Construction Occupation	Regression Effect
White, Non-Hispanic Workers	*No Effect*
Black or African American Workers	*No Effect*
Hispanic or Latinx Workers	*No Effect*

Source(s): Authors' analysis of the 2014 *American Community Survey* (1-Year Estimates) and the 2019 *American Community Survey* (1-Year Estimates) by the U.S. Census Bureau (Ruggles et al., 2021). *NOTE: The 6 Full Repeal States are Indiana, West Virginia, Kentucky, Arkansas, Wisconsin, and Michigan. Blue-collar construction workers are employed individuals in construction occupations excluding first-line supervisors (occupation codes 6210–6765). ***p≤|0.01|; **p≤|0.05|; *p≤|0.10|. For full regression results, see Table G in the Appendix.

Fatality Data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2014 and 2019

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) at the U.S. Department of Labor releases the *Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries* (CFOI) each year. The *Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries* is a count of all recorded and verified on-the-job fatalities occurring in the U.S. during each calendar year. In this report, total on-the-job fatalities in each state's private construction industry in 2014 and 2019 are respectively compared to the total construction industry employment in each state in June 2014 and June 2019 to produce a fatality rate per 100,000 construction workers. Construction industry employment data comes from the *Current Employment Statistics* (CES) by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS, 2021).

This section differs from the previous sections in two ways. First, it looks broadly at the overall construction industry instead of narrowly at blue-collar construction workers because employment counts at business establishments in the *Current Employment Statistics* are reported by industry. Second, it only examines repeal states and prevailing wage states for which there are data on fatal injuries and total employment in the construction industry in *both* 2014 and 2019. Due to reporting discrepancies, the section only contrasts five repeal states with full data—Indiana, West Virginia, Kentucky, Arkansas, and Michigan—to 20 states that maintained their prevailing wage laws and had complete information.[10]

According to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the on-the-job fatality rate for construction industry workers increased in states that repealed their prevailing wage laws (Figure 12).[11] In 2014, there were 16.9 fatalities per 100,000 construction industry workers in the repeal states. After repeal in 2019, the fatal injury rate was 17.5 deaths per 100,000 construction industry workers, an increase of 4 percent.

[9] Recent research has found that prevailing wage standards boost the homeownership rate of Black and African American construction workers by 8 percent, compared with a 3 percent increase for White construction workers (Manzo, Gigstad, & Bruno, 2020). As a result, repeal *may* have negatively impacted homeownership rates among construction workers—particularly for Black construction workers—but more research is needed.

[10] The Bureau of Labor Statistics did not report construction industry employment data for three jurisdictions with prevailing wage laws (Delaware, Hawaii, and the District of Columbia). Three states with prevailing wage laws (Maine, Oregon, and Vermont) and one state that repealed its prevailing wage law (Wisconsin) had fatality data in 2014 but not 2019. One state (Rhode Island) did not have fatality data in either 2014 or 2019.

[11] For full fatality rate data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics for every state included in this analysis, see Table H in the Appendix.

By contrast, in the states that maintained their laws, the construction industry fatality rate fell from 14.3 fatalities per 100,000 workers to 12.7 fatalities per 100,000 workers, a decrease of more than 10 percent. Accordingly, the on-the-job fatality rate was 14 percent higher for construction industry workers in the states that repealed their prevailing wage laws relative to their counterparts in states that maintained their laws (Figure 12). This finding substantiates a recent peer-reviewed academic study, which found that prevailing wage repeals led to an increase in construction injury rates of at least 11 percent (Li et al., 2019).

FIGURE 12: CHANGE IN CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY ON-THE-JOB FATALITY RATE BY REPEAL STATUS, 2014–2019

Construction Industry Metric, by State Prevailing Wage Status*	Fatalities Per 100,000 Workers in 2014	Fatalities Per 100,000 Workers in 2019	Fatality Rate Change	Repeal Difference
States with Prevailing Wage	14.3	12.7	-10.7%	--
5 Full Repeal States	16.9	17.5	+3.6%	**+14.3%**

Source(s): Authors' analysis of 2014 and 2019 information from the *Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries* and the *Current Employment Statistics* datasets by the Bureau of Labor Statistics at the U.S. Department of Labor (BLS, 2021). *NOTE: The analysis only includes states for which construction industry fatal injuries (not seasonally adjusted) and construction industry employment (not seasonally adjusted) are reported in *both* 2014 and 2019. For this reason, the 5 Full Repeal States do not include Wisconsin. The States with Prevailing Wage do not include Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Oregon, Vermont, or the District of Columbia. For full results, see Table H in the Appendix.

Research on Prevailing Wage Laws, Construction Costs, and Bid Competition

The economic consensus is that prevailing wage laws have no impact on total construction costs, despite their association with higher wages, benefits, and training contributions for construction workers (Duncan & Ormiston, 2018). Prevailing wage laws do not increase project costs for three main reasons. First, labor costs are a low share of total costs in the construction industry—approximately 23 percent both in the United States and in states with prevailing wage laws (Figure 13). Second, peer-reviewed research indicates that, when wages rise in construction, contractors respond by utilizing more capital equipment and by hiring skilled workers to replace their less-productive counterparts (Balistreri, McDaniel, & Wong, 2003; Blankenau & Cassou, 2011). Construction workers are more productive in states with prevailing wage laws (Philips, 2014). Third, contractors respond to higher wages by reducing expenditures on materials, fuels, and rental equipment and by accepting marginally lower profit margins (Duncan & Lantsberg, 2015). Since labor costs represent a small portion of overall costs, only minor changes are needed to offset any effect of paying prevailing wages.

FIGURE 13: LABOR COSTS AS A SHARE OF TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS BY STATE PREVAILING WAGE STATUS, 2017

	2017 *Economic Census* Construction Metrics, by State Prevailing Wage Status	Math	United States Totals	States with Prevailing Wage
A	Net Value of Construction Work*	--	$1,574,236,474,000	$1,023,597,882,000
B	Blue-Collar Construction Worker Wages	--	$276,213,296,000	$184,710,589,000
C	Wages for White-Collar Employees	--	$122,602,241,000	$81,743,101,000
D	Blue-Collar Worker Share of Wages	B÷(B+C)	69.3%	69.3%
E	Total Fringe Benefits	--	$115,233,915,000	$78,835,817,000
F	Blue-Collar Worker Fringe Benefits	E x D	$79,809,176,000	$54,650,435,000
G	**Labor Costs as Share of Total Costs**	**(B+F)÷A**	**22.6%**	**23.4%**

Source(s): Authors' analysis of the 2017 *Economic Census* by the U.S. Census Bureau (Census, 2022). *The "Net Value of Construction Work" is the total value of construction work less the cost of construction work subcontracted out to others.

There have been 20 studies on the impact of prevailing wage laws on the cost of school construction, highway construction, and municipal building projects that have been published in peer-reviewed academic journals since 2000 (Figure 14). Peer review is the process of establishing credibility by submitting research to a group of anonymous, independent experts who critically evaluate methodologies and conclusions before being accepted for publication. Cumulatively, these peer-reviewed studies have analyzed more than 24,000 traditional public works projects.

Of the 20 peer-reviewed studies on prevailing wage laws since 2000, 13 pertain to school construction costs, which is a key focus among economic researchers. Public school construction is more homogenous than other types of public works projects, which makes it easier to isolate the potential cost impact of prevailing wage laws. In addition to these 13 studies on school construction costs, four evaluate highway costs and two investigate public and municipal buildings. In total, 17 of these peer-reviewed studies (85 percent) find that prevailing wage laws have no effect on total construction costs, including 11 out of the 13 peer-reviewed studies (85 percent) focused on the impact of prevailing wage laws on school construction costs (Figure 14).

The earliest peer-reviewed studies used regression analyses to assess the effect of prevailing wage laws on school construction costs. Two studies examined more than 4,000 schools built across the United States and did not find any statistically significant cost difference between schools built in states with prevailing wage laws and those constructed in states without prevailing wage laws (Azari-Rad, Philips, & Prus 2002; Azari-Rad, Philips, & Prus, 2003). Five studies explored the introduction of a prevailing wage policy in British Columbia, Canada on school construction costs. After accounting for the business cycle, the number of bidders, the project type, and other factors, researchers found that overall school construction costs, the cost differential between public schools and private schools, square feet per project expenditure, and cost efficiency all were not statistically different after the policy was implemented (Bilginsoy & Philips, 2000; Duncan, Philips, & Prus, 2012; Duncan, Philips, & Prus, 2014; Duncan, Philips & Prus, 2006). Additionally, the policy, which implemented new apprenticeship training standards, increased the average project efficiency after 17 months—which is consistent with stable total costs (Duncan, Philips, & Prus 2009).

Two studies conducted in 2013 further tested the hypothesis that prevailing wages affect school construction costs by examining more than 8,000 bids on nearly 1,500 school projects in Ohio. The studies compared bids of construction companies that contractually pay prevailing wage to those submitted by contractors paying lower rates and found no statistically significant difference in average bid costs per square foot (Atalah, 2013a). The average bid cost per square foot was also not higher for 15 of the 18 trades (83 percent) that paid prevailing wage rates (Atalah, 2013b).

Two peer-reviewed studies released in 2020 echo the earlier economic research. One analyzed more than 100 school construction projects in Ohio and found that prevailing wage standards do not have a statistically significant effect on building costs (Onsarigo, Duncan & Atalah, 2020). A second analysis of about 80 school construction projects in the Las Vegas area found that Nevada's prevailing wage law had no statistically significant effect on school construction costs (Duncan & Waddoups, 2020).

In addition to these studies that school construction, five peer-reviewed studies have investigated the effect of prevailing wage laws on highway construction costs and two others have examined the impact on municipal and public buildings (Vitaliano, 2002; Duncan, 2015a; Duncan, 2015b; Manzo, 2022; Kim, Kuo-Liang, & Philips, 2012; Kaboub & Kelsay, 2014). Six of these seven studies (86 percent) conclude that

FIGURE 14: PEER-REVIEWED RESEARCH ON THE IMPACT OF PREVAILING WAGE LAWS ON CONSTRUCTION COSTS SINCE 2000

Study	Authors	Year	Project Focus	Projects	Geography	Effect
1	Duncan, Gigstad, & Manzo	2022	Highways	2,155	Kentucky	*No Effect*
2	Manzo	2022	Highways	1,206	Iowa	*No Effect*
3	Onsarigo, Duncan, & Atalah	2020	School Construction	113	Ohio	*No Effect*
4	Duncan & Waddoups	2020	School Construction	77	Nevada	*No Effect*
5	Duncan	2015	Highways	132	Colorado	*No Effect*
6	Duncan	2015	Highways	91	Colorado	*No Effect*
7	Duncan, Philips, & Prus	2014	School Construction	498	British Columbia (Canada)	*No Effect*
8	Kaboub & Kelsay	2014	Public Buildings	3,120	12 Midwest States*	*No Effect*
9	Alan Atalah	2013	School Construction	1,496	Ohio	*No Effect*
10	Alan Atalah	2013	School Construction	1,496	Ohio	*No Effect*
11	Duncan, Philips, & Prus	2012	School Construction	723	British Columbia (Canada)	*No Effect*
12	Kim, Chang Kuo-Liang, & Philips	2012	Municipal Projects	141	California	*No Effect*
13	Vincent & Monkkonen	2010	School Construction	2,645	United States	+13%
14	Duncan, Philips, & Prus	2009	School Construction	438	British Columbia (Canada)	*No Effect*
15	Duncan, Philips, & Prus	2006	School Construction	528	British Columbia (Canada)	*No Effect*
16	Azari-Rad, Philips, & Prus	2003	School Construction	4,653	United States	*No Effect*
17	Azari-Rad, Philips, & Prus	2002	School Construction	4,974	United States	*No Effect*
18	Vitaliano	2002	Highways (Spending)	50**	United States	+8%
19	Keller & Hartman	2001	School Construction	25***	Pennsylvania	+2%
20	Bilginsoy & Philips	2000	School Construction	54	British Columbia (Canada)	*No Effect*

*Projects were analyzed from the following 12-state region: Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio.
**The 50 observations are DOT expenditures for all 50 states, and do not account for the amount of new highway construction ordered, which is an important determinant of project costs.
***The analysis did not analyze *actual* projects, but rather conducted hypothetical "wage differentials" for 25 arbitrary projects. Wage differential studies are flawed compared to regression analyses (Duncan & Ormiston, 2018).
****Three additional studies analyzing more than 1,000 affordable housing projects have estimated that prevailing wage standards are associated with a 5 to 16 percent increase in total costs (Littlehale, 2017; Palm & Niemeir, 2017; Dunn, Quigley, & Rosenthal, 2005), although recent non-peer-reviewed research finds no effect (Hinkel & Belman, 2019).

Source(s): Individual studies listed in table.

prevailing wage laws have no impact on total construction costs. The most recent study investigated more than 2,100 highway construction projects in Kentucky between 2014 and 2020 and found that the 2017 repeal of prevailing wages did not alter relative bid costs between state and federal highway pavement

projects (Duncan, Gigstad, & Manzo, 2022). Another recent analysis of found that federal projects that pay Davis-Bacon prevailing wages are no more costly than similar projects that do not include federal contracting standards, after accounting for project size and complexity, project type, location of the project, and other items (Manzo, 2022). The only study that found a cost effect was problematic because it did not analyze actual projects or account for important factors that may influence costs (Duncan & Ormiston, 2018).

Peer-reviewed economic research also sheds light on another reason why prevailing wage laws tend to have no impact on construction costs. There have been five peer-reviewed studies since 2000 that examine the effect of prevailing wage laws on overall bid competition—an important determinant of construction costs (Figure 15). All five studies conclude that prevailing wage laws do not reduce the number of bidders on public projects. An examination of nearly 600 bids on public works projects in five northern California cities found no evidence that prevailing wage policies affect the number of bidders (Kim, Kuo-Liang, & Philips, 2012). Another evaluation of about 500 bids on highway construction projects in Colorado found that the level of bid competition does not differ between federally-funded projects, which paid Davis-Bacon prevailing wages, and state-funded projects, which did not (Duncan, 2015a). A 2020 study of nearly 700 bids on school construction projects in Ohio found that projects built with prevailing wages had more bidders (8.1 bids) than those without (6.9 bids) and that "the cost-reducing effect of increased bid competition is stronger on projects covered by the prevailing wage policy" (Onsarigo, Duncan & Atalah, 2020). Similarly, an analysis of almost 300 bids on school construction projects in the Las Vegas area found that bid competition decreased by 25 percent after Nevada weakened its prevailing wage law, driven by union contractors exiting the market for other opportunities (Duncan & Waddoups, 2020). Finally, the investigation of state and federal highway projects in Kentucky included data on nearly 3,500 bids and found no statistically significant impact of the 2017 repeal of prevailing wage on bid competition. In fact, "the level of competition for the most common type of highway construction in Kentucky [was] very low relative to the same work in other states," and remained so even after repeal of prevailing wage (Duncan, Gigstad, & Manzo, 2022).

FIGURE 15: PEER-REVIEWED RESEARCH ON THE IMPACT OF PREVAILING WAGE LAWS ON BID COMPETITION SINCE 2000

Study	Authors	Year	Project Focus	Bids	Geography	Effect
1	Duncan, Gigstad, & Manzo	2022	Highways	3,480	Kentucky	*No Effect*
2	Waddoups & Duncan	2020	School Construction	291	Nevada	+25%
3	Onsarigo, Duncan, & Atalah	2020	School Construction	669	Ohio	*No Effect*
4	Duncan	2015	Highways	497	Colorado	*No Effect*
5	Kim, Kuo-Liang, & Philips	2012	Municipal	565	California	*No Effect*

Source(s): Individual studies listed in table.

Policy Reports and Statements After Prevailing Wage Law Repeals

There have been five reports released since 2016 on the effects of repealing prevailing wage laws (Figure 16). In Indiana, construction worker wages fell by 8 percent and an analysis of more than 300 school construction projects showed no change in the average cost to build public schools after repeal of the state's prevailing wage law (Manzo & Duncan, 2018b). After West Virginia's repeal in 2016, wages fell by between 1 percent and 8 percent for construction trades workers, the number of apprentices fell by 28 percent, and an analysis of over 100 winning prime contract bids found that repeal had no impact on inflation-adjusted school construction costs (Kelsay & Manzo, 2019). In Wisconsin, repeal decreased

construction worker earnings by 6 percent, increased the share of state highway construction projects being awarded to out-of-state contractors from 9 percent to 14 percent (driven by contractors from Iowa, Michigan, and Florida), and had no impact on the average cost per mile to resurface or maintain roads, based on about 70 highway preservation projects (Manzo et al., 2020). The 2017 repeal of prevailing wage in Kentucky had no statistical effect on bid costs and bid competition on state highway projects (Duncan, Gigstad, & Manzo, 2022). Finally, Kansas passed a state preemption law in 2013, prohibiting cities and counties from enacting local prevailing wage statutes and invalidating local ordinances. Following this state-mandated repeal of two prevailing wage ordinances in two Kansas counties, school construction projects became $67 more expensive per square foot, demonstrating that repeal did not result in any cost savings (Kelsay, 2016).

Elected officials in Indiana and West Virginia—the first two states to rescind their prevailing wage laws in the 2015 to 2018 repeals—have recently acknowledged that repeal failed to deliver as promised. In 2017, Indiana State Representative Ed Soliday commented that "we got rid of prevailing wage and, so far, it hasn't saved us a penny" while serving as the Assistant Republican Leader in the Indiana House of Representatives (Quinnell, 2017). Representative Soliday's observation was later confirmed in a June 2021 study by the Indiana Department of Labor, which found that "project costs for similar types of work have continued to increase since the repeal" and that "any effect the repeal may have had on the cost of projects was likely negligible," leading to the conclusion that repeal had "no significant impact" on project costs (IN DOL, 2021).[12] Furthermore, in 2021, West Virginia Governor Jim Justice, a Republican, stated that "we got rid of prevailing wage… and we've run to the windows—and they haven't come," referring to a lack of business, job, and population growth since repeal (McElhinny, 2021). West Virginia has recently experienced the largest decline in population in the United States and the share of construction work performed by in-state contractors has fallen by 8 percent since repeal (Raby, 2021).

FIGURE 16: STATE-SPECIFIC POLICY REPORTS ON THE IMPACT OF REPEAL OF PREVAILING WAGE LAWS SINCE 2016

Study	Authors	Year	Geography	Construction Worker Wages	Construction Costs	Project Focus
1	Duncan, Gigstad, Manzo	2022	Kentucky	--	*No Effect*	Highways
2	Manzo, Duncan, Gigstad, & Goodell	2020	Wisconsin	-6.4%	*No Effect*	Highways
3	Kelsay & Manzo	2019	West Virginia	-1.2% to -8.1%	*No Effect*	Schools
4	Manzo & Duncan	2018	Indiana	-8.5%	*No Effect*	Schools
5	Kelsay	2016	2 Kansas Counties*	--	*+$67.01 per square foot*	Schools
*A state preemption law repealed prevailing wage statutes in Sedgwick County, Kansas and Wyandotte County, Kansas.						

Source(s): Individual studies listed in table.

These outcomes could have been avoided by understanding the effects of earlier prevailing wage repeals between 1979 and 1988. In the nine states that repealed their laws during this period, repeal decreased skilled construction worker incomes by between 2 and 4 percent and reduced fringe benefits by between

[12] The Indiana Department of Labor report also said that repeal had no significant impact on wages paid and the employment of workers in Indiana's construction industry, but the Department's analysis suffered from methodological problems. Whereas other research, including this report, narrowly focuses on the wages and employment outcomes of blue-collar construction workers who are directly impacted by repeal of prevailing wage laws, the Department lumped both blue-collar and white-collar workers together and the Department did not compare Indiana's outcomes with neighboring states that maintained their prevailing wage laws (Manzo, 2021b).

7 and 12 percent (Fenn et al., 2018). These states also experienced a 13 percent increase in construction injury rates and a 40 percent decrease in apprenticeship training (Li et al., 2019; Philips et al., 1995).

Conclusion

The repeals of state prevailing wage laws have had negative consequences for construction workers, contractors, and communities. Blue-collar construction worker wages and benefits have fallen behind, job growth and hours growth have slowed, and reliance on government assistance programs such as food stamps has increased relative to states that maintained their prevailing wage laws. Racial and ethnic diversity in construction occupations has also not improved. In-state contractors have experienced decreases in their market share. Meanwhile, productivity per construction worker hour has lagged and the on-the-job fatality rate in the construction industry has worsened in states that repealed their prevailing wage laws compared to states that maintained their prevailing wage laws. At the same time, there is no evidence that any of the six repeals of prevailing wage laws between 2015 and 2018 reduced public construction costs or saved taxpayers any money.

At a time when the United States is making historic investments in the nation's infrastructure, contractors—who are already reporting difficulty finding craft workers—need skilled construction workers who can complete jobs efficiently, safely, and within budget. The data are clear that prevailing wage laws attract qualified workers through family-supporting wages, develop skilled workers through contributions to apprenticeship programs that boost productivity, and retain experienced workers with strong health and retirement benefits that promote long-term economic security. Repeal has the opposite effect. Prevailing wage laws also level the playing field for local construction businesses to complete the road, bridge, public transit, rail, airport, water, power, and broadband infrastructure projects in their communities. Repeal has the opposite effect. To ensure that American infrastructure is built locally by skilled construction workers, state lawmakers should consider strengthening or expanding their prevailing wage laws, implementing new prevailing wage laws, and reversing recent repeals of prevailing wage laws.

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Appendix

TABLE A: TOTAL WAGES, TOTAL HOURS, AND AVERAGE WAGE PER HOUR FOR BLUE-COLLAR CONSTRUCTION WORKERS, 2012–2017

Economic Census: Construction Worker Wages Per Hour (Not Inflation-Adjusted)	Construction Worker Wages			Total Construction Hours			Average Wage Per Hour		
	2012	2017	Change	2012	2017	Change	2012	2017	Change
Three Full-Year Repeal States									
Indiana	$4,503,292,000	$5,502,538,000	+22.2%	171,134,000	222,362,000	+29.9%	$26.31	$24.75	-6.0%
Kentucky	$1,917,283,000	$2,692,850,000	+40.5%	89,288,000	118,301,000	+32.5%	$21.47	$22.76	+6.0%
West Virginia	$841,447,000	$953,921,000	+13.4%	42,903,000	44,299,000	+3.3%	$19.61	$21.53	+9.8%
Two Partial-Year Repeal States									
Arkansas	$1,197,738,000	$1,646,044,000	+37.4%	61,947,000	79,145,000	+27.8%	$19.33	$20.80	+7.6%
Wisconsin	$3,547,376,000	$5,833,209,000	+64.4%	142,594,000	198,513,000	+39.2%	$24.88	$29.38	+18.1%
States with Prevailing Wage Laws									
Alaska	$937,750,000	$949,394,000	+1.2%	28,307,000	31,744,000	+12.1%	$33.13	$29.91	-9.7%
California	$19,924,888,000	$34,093,739,000	+71.1%	820,319,000	1,267,687,000	+54.5%	$24.29	$26.89	+10.7%
Connecticut	$1,995,925,000	$2,717,721,000	+36.2%	112,572,000	99,443,000	-11.7%	$17.73	$27.33	+54.1%
Delaware	$567,135,000	$830,642,000	+46.5%	22,535,000	34,220,000	+51.9%	$25.17	$24.27	-3.5%
District of Columbia	$310,035,000	$467,898,000	+50.9%	12,429,000	16,753,000	+34.8%	$24.94	$27.93	+12.0%
Hawaii	$1,040,685,000	$1,543,618,000	+48.3%	34,700,000	54,526,000	+57.1%	$29.99	$28.31	-5.6%
Illinois	$7,810,404,000	$10,926,380,000	+39.9%	279,118,000	368,576,000	+32.1%	$27.98	$29.64	+5.9%
Maine	$715,753,000	$1,026,224,000	+43.4%	35,912,000	46,995,000	+30.9%	$19.93	$21.84	+9.6%
Maryland	$4,567,139,000	$6,347,647,000	+39.0%	274,056,000	252,157,000	-8.0%	$16.66	$25.17	+51.1%
Massachusetts	$4,454,945,000	$7,112,183,000	+59.6%	179,671,000	245,760,000	+36.8%	$24.80	$28.94	+16.7%
Michigan	$4,350,310,000	$6,780,903,000	+55.9%	207,925,000	262,420,000	+26.2%	$20.92	$25.84	+23.5%
Minnesota	$4,240,431,000	$6,204,759,000	+46.3%	164,386,000	221,683,000	+34.9%	$25.80	$27.99	+8.5%
Missouri	$3,584,891,000	$5,187,728,000	+44.7%	153,217,000	204,542,000	+33.5%	$23.40	$25.36	+8.4%
Montana	$738,146,000	$1,030,453,000	+39.6%	34,148,000	44,715,000	+30.9%	$21.62	$23.04	+6.6%
Nebraska	$1,183,670,000	$1,759,610,000	+48.7%	66,224,000	80,958,000	+22.2%	$17.87	$21.73	+21.6%
Nevada	$1,676,019,000	$3,025,022,000	+80.5%	69,785,000	127,028,000	+82.0%	$24.02	$23.81	-0.8%
New Jersey	$5,221,760,000	$7,698,098,000	+47.4%	185,484,000	268,904,000	+45.0%	$28.15	$28.63	+1.7%
New Mexico	$1,054,697,000	$1,375,152,000	+30.4%	52,612,000	66,059,000	+25.6%	$20.05	$20.82	+3.8%
New York	$11,975,166,000	$17,752,586,000	+48.2%	444,158,000	627,474,000	+41.3%	$26.96	$28.29	+4.9%
Ohio	$5,873,457,000	$8,443,134,000	+43.8%	253,133,000	326,936,000	+29.2%	$23.20	$25.83	+11.3%
Oregon	$2,315,531,000	$3,860,149,000	+66.7%	100,493,000	156,417,000	+55.6%	$23.04	$24.68	+7.1%
Pennsylvania	$8,036,404,000	$10,525,042,000	+31.0%	341,578,000	403,323,000	+18.1%	$23.53	$26.10	+10.9%
Rhode Island	$573,040,000	$842,016,000	+46.9%	23,496,000	33,850,000	+44.1%	$24.39	$24.87	+2.0%
Tennessee	$2,915,483,000	$4,106,451,000	+40.8%	157,369,000	181,605,000	+15.4%	$18.53	$22.61	+22.1%
Texas	$18,548,408,000	$30,031,296,000	+61.9%	846,221,000	1,202,302,000	+42.1%	$21.92	$24.98	+14.0%
Vermont	$468,636,000	$531,890,000	+13.5%	25,470,000	24,218,000	-4.9%	$18.40	$21.96	+19.4%
Washington	$4,873,220,000	$8,797,278,000	+80.5%	178,504,000	321,725,000	+80.2%	$27.30	$27.34	+0.2%
Wyoming	$773,219,000	$743,576,000	-3.8%	33,291,000	31,967,000	-4.0%	$23.23	$23.26	+0.1%
Aggregates by Prevailing Wage Status									
Prevailing Wages States	**$120,727,147,000**	**$184,710,589,000**	**+53.0%**	**5,137,113,000**	**7,003,987,000**	**+36.3%**	**$23.50**	**$26.37**	**+12.2%**
Three Full-Year Repeal States	**$7,262,022,000**	**$9,149,309,000**	**+26.0%**	**303,325,000**	**384,962,000**	**+26.9%**	**$23.94**	**$23.77**	**-0.7%**
Five Full- and Partial-Year Repeal States	**$12,007,136,000**	**$16,628,562,000**	**+38.5%**	**507,866,000**	**662,620,000**	**+30.5%**	**$23.64**	**$25.10**	**+6.1%**

Source(s): Authors' analysis of the 2012 *Economic Census* and the 2017 *Economic Census* by the U.S. Census Bureau (Census, 2022). Values may not sum perfectly due to rounding.

TABLE B: TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS, TOTAL HOURS, AND AVERAGE FRINGE BENEFITS PER HOUR FOR BLUE-COLLAR CONSTRUCTION WORKERS, 2012–2017

Economic Census: Construction Worker Benefits Per Hour (Not Inflation-Adjusted)	Construction Worker Fringe Benefits			Total Construction Hours			Average Fringe Benefits Per Hour		
	2012	2017	Change	2012	2017	Change	2012	2017	Change
Three Full-Year Repeal States									
Indiana	$1,339,493,000	$1,748,714,000	+30.6%	171,134,000	222,362,000	+29.9%	$7.83	$7.86	+0.5%
Kentucky	$476,131,000	$789,554,000	+65.8%	89,288,000	118,301,000	+32.5%	$5.33	$6.67	+25.2%
West Virginia	$240,776,000	$297,837,000	+23.7%	42,903,000	44,299,000	+3.3%	$5.61	$6.72	+19.8%
Two Partial-Year Repeal States									
Arkansas	$245,042,000	$443,194,000	+80.9%	61,947,000	79,145,000	+27.8%	$3.96	$5.60	+41.6%
Wisconsin	$1,128,368,000	$1,733,181,000	+53.6%	142,594,000	198,513,000	+39.2%	$7.91	$8.73	+10.3%
States with Prevailing Wage Laws									
Alaska	$257,372,000	$284,291,000	+10.5%	28,307,000	31,744,000	+12.1%	$9.09	$8.96	-1.5%
California	$5,537,533,000	$9,936,594,000	+79.4%	820,319,000	1,267,687,000	+54.5%	$6.75	$7.84	+16.1%
Connecticut	$560,224,000	$829,444,000	+48.1%	112,572,000	99,443,000	-11.7%	$4.98	$8.34	+67.6%
Delaware	$145,477,000	$234,265,000	+61.0%	22,535,000	34,220,000	+51.9%	$6.46	$6.85	+6.0%
District of Columbia	$71,838,000	$122,704,000	+70.8%	12,429,000	16,753,000	+34.8%	$5.78	$7.32	+26.7%
Hawaii	$342,696,000	$486,415,000	+41.9%	34,700,000	54,526,000	+57.1%	$9.88	$8.92	-9.7%
Illinois	$2,665,122,000	$3,599,054,000	+35.0%	279,118,000	368,576,000	+32.1%	$9.55	$9.76	+2.3%
Maine	$171,680,000	$279,640,000	+62.9%	35,912,000	46,995,000	+30.9%	$4.78	$5.95	+24.5%
Maryland	$1,146,837,000	$1,748,694,000	+52.5%	274,056,000	252,157,000	-8.0%	$4.18	$6.93	+65.7%
Massachusetts	$1,241,585,000	$2,123,916,000	+71.1%	179,671,000	245,760,000	+36.8%	$6.91	$8.64	+25.1%
Michigan	$1,319,496,000	$2,147,493,000	+62.8%	207,925,000	262,420,000	+26.2%	$6.35	$8.18	+29.0%
Minnesota	$1,395,158,000	$2,001,840,000	+43.5%	164,386,000	221,683,000	+34.9%	$8.49	$9.03	+6.4%
Missouri	$1,132,540,000	$1,616,727,000	+42.8%	153,217,000	204,542,000	+33.5%	$7.39	$7.90	+6.9%
Montana	$207,849,000	$315,376,000	+51.7%	34,148,000	44,715,000	+30.9%	$6.09	$7.05	+15.9%
Nebraska	$264,451,000	$484,311,000	+83.1%	66,224,000	80,958,000	+22.2%	$3.99	$5.98	+49.8%
Nevada	$439,025,000	$881,561,000	+100.8%	69,785,000	127,028,000	+82.0%	$6.29	$6.94	+10.3%
New Jersey	$1,541,005,000	$2,324,223,000	+50.8%	185,484,000	268,904,000	+45.0%	$8.31	$8.64	+4.0%
New Mexico	$228,865,000	$377,626,000	+65.0%	52,612,000	66,059,000	+25.6%	$4.35	$5.72	+31.4%
New York	$3,678,300,000	$5,411,089,000	+47.1%	444,158,000	627,474,000	+41.3%	$8.28	$8.62	+4.1%
Ohio	$1,787,109,000	$2,624,971,000	+46.9%	253,133,000	326,936,000	+29.2%	$7.06	$8.03	+13.7%
Oregon	$695,753,000	$1,152,119,000	+65.6%	100,493,000	156,417,000	+55.6%	$6.92	$7.37	+6.4%
Pennsylvania	$2,451,059,000	$3,273,972,000	+33.6%	341,578,000	403,323,000	+18.1%	$7.18	$8.12	+13.1%
Rhode Island	$171,312,000	$254,973,000	+48.8%	23,496,000	33,850,000	+44.1%	$7.29	$7.53	+3.3%
Tennessee	$674,459,000	$1,106,114,000	+64.0%	157,369,000	181,605,000	+15.4%	$4.29	$6.09	+42.1%
Texas	$3,884,385,000	$7,656,620,000	+97.1%	846,221,000	1,202,302,000	+42.1%	$4.59	$6.37	+38.7%
Vermont	$101,931,000	$144,132,000	+41.4%	25,470,000	24,218,000	-4.9%	$4.00	$5.95	+48.7%
Washington	$1,450,844,000	$2,999,298,000	+106.7%	178,504,000	321,725,000	+80.2%	$8.13	$9.32	+14.7%
Wyoming	$176,063,000	$208,513,000	+18.4%	33,291,000	31,967,000	-4.0%	$5.29	$6.52	+23.3%
Aggregates by Prevailing Wage Status									
Prevailing Wages States	**$33,739,968,000**	**$54,625,974,000**	**+61.9%**	**5,137,113,000**	**7,003,987,000**	**+36.3%**	**$6.57**	**$7.80**	**+18.7%**
Three Full-Year Repeal States	**$2,056,401,000**	**$2,836,105,000**	**+37.9%**	**303,325,000**	**384,962,000**	**+26.9%**	**$6.78**	**$7.37**	**+8.7%**
Five Full- and Partial-Year Repeal States	**$3,429,811,000**	**$5,012,480,000**	**+46.1%**	**507,866,000**	**662,620,000**	**+30.5%**	**$6.75**	**$7.56**	**+12.0%**

Source(s): Authors' analysis of the 2012 *Economic Census* and the 2017 *Economic Census* by the U.S. Census Bureau (Census, 2022). Values may not sum perfectly due to rounding.

TABLE C: TOTAL AVERAGE EMPLOYMENT LEVELS OF BLUE-COLLAR CONSTRUCTION WORKERS, 2012–2017

Economic Census: Construction Worker Average Annual Employment Levels	Average Construction Worker Employment (Jobs)		
	2012	2017	Change
Three Full-Year Repeal States			
Indiana	92,752	109,038	+17.6%
Kentucky	47,685	59,268	+24.3%
West Virginia	21,305	20,396	-4.3%
Two Partial-Year Repeal States			
Arkansas	32,573	38,288	+17.5%
Wisconsin	75,296	96,801	+28.6%
States with Prevailing Wage Laws			
Alaska	15,187	14,603	-3.8%
California	436,401	627,567	+43.8%
Connecticut	38,999	47,232	+21.1%
Delaware	12,333	16,991	+37.8%
District of Columbia	6,540	8,121	+24.2%
Hawaii	19,507	24,834	+27.3%
Illinois	146,750	176,539	+20.3%
Maine	19,151	23,241	+21.4%
Maryland	101,059	124,097	+22.8%
Massachusetts	84,460	115,546	+36.8%
Michigan	95,492	126,999	+33.0%
Minnesota	84,435	106,556	+26.2%
Missouri	81,710	102,387	+25.3%
Montana	18,692	22,557	+20.7%
Nebraska	30,926	39,012	+26.1%
Nevada	40,810	64,113	+57.1%
New Jersey	101,806	128,588	+26.3%
New Mexico	28,394	32,853	+15.7%
New York	238,278	304,281	+27.7%
Ohio	131,678	162,206	+23.2%
Oregon	51,545	77,167	+49.7%
Pennsylvania	173,713	195,968	+12.8%
Rhode Island	12,613	16,083	+27.5%
Tennessee	77,053	89,042	+15.6%
Texas	423,906	572,429	+35.0%
Vermont	12,219	11,935	-2.3%
Washington	101,877	155,675	+52.8%
Wyoming	17,619	15,518	-11.9%
Aggregates by Prevailing Wage Status			
Prevailing Wages States	**2,603,153**	**3,402,134**	**+30.7%**
Three Full-Year Repeal States	**161,742**	**188,701**	**+16.7%**
Five Full- and Partial-Year Repeal States	**107,869**	**135,089**	**+25.2%**

Source(s): Authors' analysis of the 2012 *Economic Census* and the 2017 *Economic Census* by the U.S. Census Bureau (Census, 2022). Values may not sum perfectly due to rounding.

TABLE D: TOTAL VALUE ADDED, TOTAL HOURS, AND AVERAGE VALUE ADDED PER HOUR FOR BLUE-COLLAR CONSTRUCTION WORKERS, 2012–2017

Economic Census: Construction Worker Value Added Per Hour (Not Inflation-Adjusted)	Total Value Added			Total Construction Hours			Value Added Per Hour		
	2012	2017	Change	2012	2017	Change	2012	2017	Change
Three Full-Year Repeal States									
Indiana	$12,994,175,000	$18,106,072,000	+39.3%	171,134,000	222,362,000	+29.9%	$7.83	$7.86	+7.2%
Kentucky	$6,191,106,000	$8,890,238,000	+43.6%	89,288,000	118,301,000	+32.5%	$5.33	$6.67	+8.4%
West Virginia	$2,686,075,000	$3,002,348,000	+11.8%	42,903,000	44,299,000	+3.3%	$5.61	$6.72	+8.3%
Two Partial-Year Repeal States									
Arkansas	$4,144,299,000	$5,618,833,000	+35.6%	61,947,000	79,145,000	+27.8%	$66.90	$70.99	+6.1%
Wisconsin	$11,208,513,000	$17,268,905,000	+54.1%	142,594,000	198,513,000	+39.2%	$78.60	$86.99	+10.7%
States with Prevailing Wage Laws									
Alaska	$3,256,977,000	$3,153,919,000	-3.2%	28,307,000	31,744,000	+12.1%	$115.06	$99.35	-13.6%
California	$69,182,898,000	$115,625,876,000	+67.1%	820,319,000	1,267,687,000	+54.5%	$84.34	$91.21	+8.2%
Connecticut	$7,535,643,000	$9,461,170,000	+25.6%	112,572,000	99,443,000	-11.7%	$66.94	$95.14	+42.1%
Delaware	$1,892,116,000	$2,907,288,000	+53.7%	22,535,000	34,220,000	+51.9%	$83.96	$84.96	+1.2%
District of Columbia	$967,859,000	$1,239,905,000	+28.1%	12,429,000	16,753,000	+34.8%	$77.87	$74.01	-5.0%
Hawaii	$3,764,147,000	$5,077,950,000	+34.9%	34,700,000	54,526,000	+57.1%	$108.48	$93.13	-14.1%
Illinois	$24,482,951,000	$35,136,483,000	+43.5%	279,118,000	368,576,000	+32.1%	$87.72	$95.33	+8.7%
Maine	$2,014,956,000	$2,979,548,000	+47.9%	35,912,000	46,995,000	+30.9%	$56.11	$63.40	+13.0%
Maryland	$16,226,260,000	$25,141,944,000	+54.9%	274,056,000	252,157,000	-8.0%	$59.21	$99.71	+68.4%
Massachusetts	$15,033,898,000	$22,659,566,000	+50.7%	179,671,000	245,760,000	+36.8%	$83.67	$92.20	+10.2%
Michigan	$14,805,770,000	$22,258,457,000	+50.3%	207,925,000	262,420,000	+26.2%	$71.21	$84.82	+19.1%
Minnesota	$14,157,261,000	$21,361,657,000	+50.9%	164,386,000	221,683,000	+34.9%	$86.12	$96.36	+11.9%
Missouri	$10,917,349,000	$16,964,700,000	+55.4%	153,217,000	204,542,000	+33.5%	$71.25	$82.94	+16.4%
Montana	$2,429,792,000	$3,337,558,000	+37.4%	34,148,000	44,715,000	+30.9%	$71.15	$74.64	+4.9%
Nebraska	$3,893,480,000	$5,675,474,000	+45.8%	66,224,000	80,958,000	+22.2%	$58.79	$70.10	+19.2%
Nevada	$6,083,761,000	$10,488,008,000	+72.4%	69,785,000	127,028,000	+82.0%	$87.18	$82.56	-5.3%
New Jersey	$19,807,037,000	$25,781,254,000	+30.2%	185,484,000	268,904,000	+45.0%	$106.79	$95.88	-10.2%
New Mexico	$3,135,939,000	$3,885,675,000	+23.9%	52,612,000	66,059,000	+25.6%	$59.61	$58.82	-1.3%
New York	$40,627,752,000	$57,913,627,000	+42.5%	444,158,000	627,474,000	+41.3%	$91.47	$92.30	+0.9%
Ohio	$19,165,624,000	$27,225,323,000	+42.1%	253,133,000	326,936,000	+29.2%	$75.71	$83.27	+10.0%
Oregon	$6,904,677,000	$11,694,405,000	+69.4%	100,493,000	156,417,000	+55.6%	$68.71	$74.76	+8.8%
Pennsylvania	$25,905,653,000	$33,896,934,000	+30.8%	341,578,000	403,323,000	+18.1%	$75.84	$84.04	+10.8%
Rhode Island	$2,279,002,000	$2,787,170,000	+22.3%	23,496,000	33,850,000	+44.1%	$97.00	$82.34	-15.1%
Tennessee	$9,850,653,000	$13,814,502,000	+40.2%	157,369,000	181,605,000	+15.4%	$62.60	$76.07	+21.5%
Texas	$66,948,317,000	$100,154,882,000	+49.6%	846,221,000	1,202,302,000	+42.1%	$79.11	$83.30	+5.3%
Vermont	$1,317,147,000	$1,528,958,000	+16.1%	25,470,000	24,218,000	-4.9%	$51.71	$63.13	+22.1%
Washington	$14,950,865,000	$26,546,595,000	+77.6%	178,504,000	321,725,000	+80.2%	$83.76	$82.51	-1.5%
Wyoming	$2,283,761,000	$2,218,124,000	-2.9%	33,291,000	31,967,000	-4.0%	$68.60	$69.39	+1.1%
Aggregates by Prevailing Wage Status									
Prevailing Wages States	**$409,821,545,000**	**$610,916,952,000**	**+49.1%**	**5,137,113,000**	**7,003,987,000**	**+36.3%**	**$79.78**	**$87.22**	**+9.3%**
Three Full-Year Repeal States	**$21,871,356,000**	**$29,998,658,000**	**+37.2%**	**303,325,000**	**384,962,000**	**+26.9%**	**$72.11**	**$77.93**	**+8.1%**
Five Full- and Partial-Year Repeal States	**$37,224,168,000**	**$52,886,396,000**	**+42.1%**	**507,866,000**	**662,620,000**	**+30.5%**	**$73.30**	**$79.81**	**+8.9%**

Source(s): Authors' analysis of the 2012 *Economic Census* and the 2017 *Economic Census* by the U.S. Census Bureau (Census, 2022). Values may not sum perfectly due to rounding.

TABLE E: TOTAL CONSTRUCTION VALUE COMPLETED, TOTAL VALUE COMPLETED BY IN-STATE CONTRACTORS, AND THE MARKET SHARE OF IN-STATE CONTRACTORS, 2012–2017

Economic Census: Construction Industry Market Share (Not Inflation-Adjusted)	Total Construction Value			Value Completed by In-State Contractors			Market Share of In-State Contractors		
	2012	2017	Change	2012	2017	Change	2012	2017	Change
Three Full-Year Repeal States									
Indiana	$27,022,902,000	$36,151,732,000	+33.8%	$24,149,179,000	$31,716,030,000	+29.9%	89.4%	87.7%	-1.6%
Kentucky	$13,241,536,000	$19,104,383,000	+44.3%	$11,412,437,000	$15,543,762,000	+32.5%	86.2%	81.4%	-4.8%
West Virginia	$4,871,594,000	$5,243,301,000	+7.6%	$4,461,844,000	$4,384,882,000	+3.3%	91.6%	83.6%	-8.0%
Two Partial-Year Repeal States									
Arkansas	$8,900,343,000	$11,003,707,000	+23.6%	$7,941,031,000	$9,859,402,000	+27.8%	89.2%	89.6%	+0.4%
Wisconsin	$25,148,760,000	$37,013,933,000	+47.2%	$22,826,538,000	$32,528,718,000	+39.2%	90.8%	87.9%	-2.9%
States with Prevailing Wage Laws									
Alaska	$6,385,918,000	$5,776,693,000	-9.5%	$6,385,918,000	$5,294,844,000	+12.1%	100.0%	91.7%	-8.3%
California	$146,865,780,000	$240,309,239,000	+63.6%	$144,050,890,000	$235,853,157,000	+54.5%	98.1%	98.1%	+0.1%
Connecticut	$15,149,227,000	$18,461,567,000	+21.9%	$13,999,952,000	$16,250,567,000	-11.7%	92.4%	88.0%	-4.4%
Delaware	$3,773,728,000	$5,632,207,000	+49.2%	$3,298,043,000	$4,865,988,000	+51.9%	87.4%	86.4%	-1.0%
District of Columbia	$2,638,916,000	$3,128,051,000	+18.5%	$2,073,307,000	$2,710,829,000	+34.8%	78.6%	86.7%	+8.1%
Hawaii	$7,871,733,000	$10,777,888,000	+36.9%	$7,871,733,000	$10,741,193,000	+57.1%	100.0%	99.7%	-0.3%
Illinois	$53,632,061,000	$73,709,165,000	+37.4%	$50,110,656,000	$66,269,466,000	+32.1%	93.4%	89.9%	-3.5%
Maine	$4,459,724,000	$6,116,058,000	+37.1%	$4,234,344,000	$5,396,797,000	+30.9%	94.9%	88.2%	-6.7%
Maryland	$37,114,022,000	$48,290,497,000	+30.1%	$27,841,911,000	$35,369,577,000	-8.0%	75.0%	73.2%	-1.8%
Massachusetts	$33,398,236,000	$50,848,984,000	+52.3%	$31,204,815,000	$46,147,183,000	+36.8%	93.4%	90.8%	-2.7%
Michigan	$32,208,855,000	$45,460,700,000	+41.1%	$30,673,245,000	$40,112,824,000	+26.2%	95.2%	88.2%	-7.0%
Minnesota	$32,482,160,000	$44,143,454,000	+35.9%	$28,543,859,000	$37,268,563,000	+34.9%	87.9%	84.4%	-3.4%
Missouri	$25,518,677,000	$37,570,272,000	+47.2%	$20,970,929,000	$28,070,509,000	+33.5%	82.2%	74.7%	-7.5%
Montana	$5,079,580,000	$6,961,346,000	+37.0%	$4,461,288,000	$6,195,972,000	+30.9%	87.8%	89.0%	+1.2%
Nebraska	$8,625,895,000	$12,354,541,000	+43.2%	$7,807,524,000	$10,363,975,000	+22.2%	90.5%	83.9%	-6.6%
Nevada	$12,209,043,000	$20,450,663,000	+67.5%	$11,260,164,000	$19,317,772,000	+82.0%	92.2%	94.5%	+2.2%
New Jersey	$39,551,802,000	$51,063,916,000	+29.1%	$34,253,442,000	$43,480,939,000	+45.0%	86.6%	85.2%	-1.5%
New Mexico	$6,888,631,000	$8,524,329,000	+23.7%	$6,527,853,000	$7,879,358,000	+25.6%	94.8%	92.4%	-2.3%
New York	$86,443,713,000	$123,614,345,000	+43.0%	$84,065,115,000	$118,859,505,000	+41.3%	97.2%	96.2%	-1.1%
Ohio	$42,400,586,000	$57,731,559,000	+36.2%	$38,516,548,000	$51,899,145,000	+29.2%	90.8%	89.9%	-0.9%
Oregon	$16,425,776,000	$25,923,095,000	+57.8%	$15,075,019,000	$22,891,707,000	+55.6%	91.8%	88.3%	-3.5%
Pennsylvania	$54,483,722,000	$69,491,442,000	+27.5%	$48,366,302,000	$59,034,177,000	+18.1%	88.8%	85.0%	-3.8%
Rhode Island	$4,737,370,000	$5,982,528,000	+26.3%	$3,816,596,000	$5,155,887,000	+44.1%	80.6%	86.2%	+5.6%
Tennessee	$22,646,357,000	$31,795,687,000	+40.4%	$19,513,521,000	$27,040,763,000	+15.4%	86.2%	85.0%	-1.1%
Texas	$144,580,057,000	$212,522,850,000	+47.0%	$134,351,620,000	$197,248,740,000	+42.1%	92.9%	92.8%	-0.1%
Vermont	$2,980,208,000	$3,124,066,000	+4.8%	$2,681,396,000	$2,783,825,000	-4.9%	90.0%	89.1%	-0.9%
Washington	$33,234,246,000	$59,754,859,000	+79.8%	$30,310,433,000	$53,850,503,000	+80.2%	91.2%	90.1%	-1.1%
Wyoming	$4,112,353,000	$4,028,122,000	-2.0%	$3,975,482,000	$3,776,709,000	-4.0%	96.7%	93.8%	-2.9%
Aggregates by Prevailing Wage Status									
Prevailing Wages States	**$885,898,376,000**	**$1,283,548,123,000**	**+44.9%**	**$816,241,905,000**	**$1,164,130,474,000**	**+36.3%**	**92.1%**	**90.7%**	**-1.4%**
Three Full-Year Repeal States	**$45,136,032,000**	**$60,499,416,000**	**+34.0%**	**$40,023,460,000**	**$51,644,674,000**	**+26.9%**	**88.7%**	**85.4%**	**-3.3%**
Five Full- and Partial-Year Repeal States	**$79,185,135,000**	**$108,517,056,000**	**+37.0%**	**$70,791,029,000**	**$94,032,794,000**	**+30.5%**	**89.4%**	**86.7%**	**-2.7%**

Source(s): Authors' analysis of the 2012 *Economic Census* and the 2017 *Economic Census* by the U.S. Census Bureau (Census, 2022). Values may not sum perfectly due to rounding.

TABLE F: THE IMPACT OF PREVAILING WAGE REPEAL ON CONSTRUCTION WORKER INCOMES, HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE, AND FOOD STAMP RELIANCE, 2014–2019

American Community Survey Regression Models of All Employed Individuals	Robust OLS Regression: ln(Real Income from Wages)		Quantile Median Regression: ln(Real Income from Wages)		Robust Probit Regression P(Any Health Insurance)		Robust Probit Regression: P(SNAP Food Stamps)	
Variable	Coefficient	(St. Err.)	Coefficient	(St. Err.)	AME (dy/dx)	(St. Err.)	AME (dy/dx)	(St. Err.)
Repeal States x Construction Occ. x 2019	**-0.0400****	**(0.020)**	**-0.0514*****	**(0.020)**	**-0.0164***	**(0.009)**	**+0.0195****	**(0.010)**
Repeal States x Construction Occupation	+0.0650***	(0.014)	+0.0637***	(0.014)	+0.0166**	(0.007)	-0.0205***	(0.006)
Repeal States x 2019	+0.0019	(0.004)	+0.0021	(0.004)	+0.0059**	(0.002)	-0.0194***	(0.002)
Construction Occupation x 2019	+0.0107	(0.008)	+0.0035	(0.008)	-0.0039	(0.003)	-0.0189***	(0.003)
Repeal States	-0.0984***	(0.003)	-0.0872***	(0.003)	-0.0046***	(0.002)	+0.0177***	(0.001)
Construction Occupation	+0.0063	(0.006)	+0.0255***	(0.007)	-0.0466***	(0.003)	+0.0257***	(0.003)
Year: 2019	+0.0791***	(0.002)	+0.0775***	(0.002)	+0.0263***	(0.001)	-0.0160***	(0.001)
Construction Industry	+0.1337***	(0.004)	+0.1302***	(0.004)	-0.0165***	(0.002)	-0.0178***	(0.002)
Usual Hours Worked Per Week	+0.0351***	(0.000)	+0.0358***	(0.000)	+0.0003***	(0.000)	-0.0012***	(0.000)
Weeks Worked Per Year: 14-26 Weeks	+0.8808***	(0.008)	+0.8921***	(0.010)	+0.0018	(0.003)	-0.0138***	(0.003)
Weeks Worked Per Year: 27-39 Weeks	+1.3180***	(0.008)	+1.3548***	(0.009)	-0.0145***	(0.003)	-0.0138***	(0.003)
Weeks Worked Per Year: 40-47 Weeks	+1.6229***	(0.008)	+1.6489***	(0.009)	-0.0023	(0.003)	-0.0138***	(0.003)
Weeks Worked Per Year: 48-49 Weeks	+1.7898***	(0.008)	+1.8069***	(0.010)	+0.0145***	(0.004)	-0.0287***	(0.003)
Weeks Worked Per Year: 50-52 Weeks	+1.9391***	(0.007)	+1.9593***	(0.008)	+0.0307***	(0.002)	-0.0384***	(0.002)
Age	+0.0646***	(0.000)	+0.0623***	(0.000)	-0.0111***	(0.000)	-0.0578***	(0.000)
Age^2	-0.0006***	(0.000)	-0.0006***	(0.000)	+0.0002***	(0.000)	0.0090***	(0.000)
White, Non-Hispanic	+0.0026	(0.003)	+0.0022***	(0.003)	-0.0092***	(0.001)	-0.0001***	(0.001)
Black or African American	-0.1228***	(0.004)	-0.1288***	(0.004)	-0.0339***	(0.002)	-0.0272***	(0.002)
Hispanic or Latinx	-0.0907***	(0.003)	-0.1141***	(0.003)	-0.0806***	(0.001)	+0.0533***	(0.001)
Female	-0.1824***	(0.002)	-0.1726***	(0.002)	+0.0164***	(0.001)	+0.0177***	(0.001)
Immigrant	-0.0712***	(0.002)	-0.0738***	(0.003)	-0.0716***	(0.001)	+0.0041***	(0.001)
Military Veteran	-0.0116***	(0.004)	-0.0050	(0.004)	+0.0485***	(0.002)	+0.0082***	(0.002)
Less than a High School Degree	-0.1771***	(0.003)	-0.1831***	(0.003)	-0.0351***	(0.001)	+0.0300***	(0.001)
Some College but No Degree	+0.1175***	(0.002)	+0.1179***	(0.002)	+0.0320***	(0.001)	-0.0289***	(0.001)
Associate Degree	+0.2208***	(0.003)	+0.2274***	(0.003)	+0.0569***	(0.001)	-0.0506***	(0.001)
Bachelor's Degree	+0.5383***	(0.002)	+0.5538***	(0.002)	+0.1013***	(0.001)	-0.1062***	(0.001)
Master's Degree	+0.7759***	(0.003)	+0.8136***	(0.003)	+0.1359***	(0.002)	-0.1322***	(0.002)
Professional or Doctorate Degree	+0.9932***	(0.006)	+1.0132***	(0.006)	+0.1463***	(0.004)	-0.1366***	(0.004)
Married	+0.1531***	(0.002)	+0.1487***	(0.002)	+0.0662***	(0.001)	-0.0432***	(0.001)
Lives in City Center	+0.0661***	(0.002)	+0.0608***	(0.002)	+0.0116***	(0.001)	+0.0146***	(0.001)
Lives in Suburb	+0.0586***	(0.002)	+0.0661***	(0.002)	+0.0331***	(0.001)	-0.0164***	(0.001)
Lives in Rural Area	-0.1138***	(0.003)	-0.1066***	(0.003)	-0.0135***	(0.001)	+0.0226***	(0.001)
Constant	5.5088***	(0.009)	5.5536***	(0.011)	0.8762***	(0.000)	0.0973***	(0.000)

Regression output continues on next page…

R^2	0.665	0.416	0.152	0.117
Observations	1,341,988	1,341,988	1,341,988	1,341,988
Weighted	Y	Y	Y	Y

Source(s): Authors' analysis of the 2014 *American Community Survey* (1-Year Estimates) and the 2019 *American Community Survey* (1-Year Estimates) by the U.S. Census Bureau (Ruggles et al., 2021).
*NOTE: The Repeal States are Indiana, West Virginia, Kentucky, Arkansas, Wisconsin, and Michigan. Construction workers are employed individuals in nonsupervisory construction occupations (occupation codes 6210–6765). The sample is all individuals employed in nonagricultural occupations in the private, for-profit sector of the economy. ***p≤|0.01|; **p≤|0.05|; *p≤|0.10|.

TABLE F: THE IMPACT OF PREVAILING WAGE REPEAL ON THE PROBABILITY OF A PRIVATE-SECTOR WORKER BEING EMPLOYED IN A CONSTRUCTION OCCUPATION BY RACE, 2014–2019

American Community Survey Regression Models of All Employed Individuals by Race	Robust Probit Regression P(Construction) | White=1		Robust Probit Regression P(Construction) | Black=1		Robust Probit Regression P(Construction) | Hispanic=1	
Variable	AME (dy/dx)	(St. Err.)	AME (dy/dx)	(St. Err.)	AME (dy/dx)	(St. Err.)
Repeal States x 2019	**+0.0015**	**(0.001)**	**+0.0011**	**(0.003)**	**-0.0007**	**(0.008)**
Repeal States	-0.0025***	(0.001)	-0.0043**	(0.002)	-0.0066***	(0.006)
Year: 2019	+0.0028***	(0.000)	+0.0000	(0.001)	+0.0173***	(0.001)
Age	+0.0031***	(0.000)	+0.0019***	(0.000)	+0.0065***	(0.000)
Age^2	-0.0000***	(0.000)	-0.0000***	(0.000)	-0.0001***	(0.000)
Female	-0.0958***	(0.001)	-0.0540***	(0.002)	-0.1923***	(0.003)
Immigrant	+0.0083***	(0.001)	+0.0016	(0.001)	+0.0427***	(0.001)
Military Veteran	-0.0046***	(0.001)	-0.0026	(0.002)	-0.0157***	(0.004)
Less than a High School Degree	+0.0042***	(0.001)	-0.0001	(0.002)	+0.0235***	(0.002)
Some College but No Degree	-0.0179***	(0.001)	-0.0076***	(0.001)	-0.0360***	(0.002)
Associate Degree	-0.0257***	(0.001)	-0.0087***	(0.002)	-0.0456***	(0.003)
Bachelor's Degree	-0.0666***	(0.001)	-0.0297***	(0.002)	-0.0944***	(0.003)
Master's Degree	-0.0901***	(0.002)	-0.0396***	(0.004)	-0.1496***	(0.008)
Professional or Doctorate Degree	-0.1099***	(0.003)	-0.0439***	(0.006)	-0.1542***	(0.011)
Married	-0.0011**	(0.000)	+0.0003	(0.001)	+0.0019**	(0.001)
Lives in City Center	-0.0046***	(0.001)	+0.0041***	(0.001)	-0.0056***	(0.002)
Lives in Suburb	+0.0027***	(0.000)	+0.0011	(0.001)	-0.0113***	(0.002)
Lives in Rural Area	+0.0036***	(0.001)	+0.0073**	(0.003)	-0.0245***	(0.004)
Constant	0.0390***	(0.000)	0.0210***	(0.000)	0.0854***	(0.001)
R^2	0.200		0.160		0.211	
Observations	1,446,364		144,015		304,821	
Weighted	Y		Y		Y	

Source(s): Authors' analysis of the 2014 *American Community Survey* (1-Year Estimates) and the 2019 *American Community Survey* (1-Year Estimates) by the U.S. Census Bureau (Ruggles et al., 2021).
*NOTE: The Repeal States are Indiana, West Virginia, Kentucky, Arkansas, Wisconsin, and Michigan. Construction workers are employed individuals in nonsupervisory construction occupations (occupation codes 6210–6765). The sample is all individuals employed in nonagricultural occupations in the private, for-profit sector of the economy. ***p≤|0.01|; **p≤|0.05|; *p≤|0.10|.

TABLE H: CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY FATAL INJURIES, CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT, AND THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY ON-THE-JOB FATALITY RATE, 2014–2019

Bureau of Labor Statistics: Construction Industry On-the-Job Fatal Injury Rate	2014 Fatalities	June 2014 Employment	2014 Fatalities Per 100,000 Workers	2019 Fatalities	June 2019 Employment	2019 Fatalities Per 100,000 Workers	Change Fatalities	Change Employment	Change in Fatalities Per 100,000 Workers
Full Repeal States									
Indiana	18	129,800	13.87	20	151,700	13.18	+11.1%	+16.9%	-4.9%
Kentucky	13	75,300	17.26	14	82,500	16.97	+7.7%	+9.6%	-1.7%
West Virginia	5	35,400	14.12	9	38,800	23.20	+80.0%	+9.6%	+64.2%
Arkansas	15	46,600	32.19	15	53,200	28.20	+0.0%	+14.2%	-12.4%
Michigan	23	151,500	15.18	31	182,900	16.95	+34.8%	+20.7%	+11.6%
States with Prevailing Wage Laws									
California	49	676,300	7.25	80	895,300	8.94	+63.3%	+32.4%	+23.3%
Connecticut	7	58,000	12.07	6	62,200	9.65	-14.3%	+7.2%	-20.1%
Illinois	28	212,400	13.18	30	241,100	12.44	+7.1%	+13.5%	-5.6%
Maryland	16	153,100	10.45	15	168,700	8.89	-6.3%	+10.2%	-14.9%
Massachusetts	10	135,100	7.40	22	169,700	12.96	+120.0%	+25.6%	+75.1%
Minnesota	7	119,300	5.87	11	140,500	7.83	+57.1%	+17.8%	+33.4%
Missouri	11	114,000	9.65	14	130,400	10.74	+27.3%	+14.4%	+11.3%
Montana	3	27,700	10.83	5	32,400	15.43	+66.7%	+17.0%	+42.5%
Nebraska	9	49,200	18.29	12	56,400	21.28	+33.3%	+14.6%	+16.3%
Nevada	6	63,400	9.46	7	96,900	7.22	+16.7%	+52.8%	-23.7%
New Jersey	23	145,300	15.83	18	164,100	10.97	-21.7%	+12.9%	-30.7%
New Mexico	9	42,800	21.03	10	50,500	19.80	+11.1%	+18.0%	-5.8%
New York	50	355,800	14.05	55	418,300	13.15	+10.0%	+17.6%	-6.4%
Ohio	38	207,300	18.33	29	238,100	12.18	-23.7%	+14.9%	-33.6%
Pennsylvania	40	240,500	16.63	26	271,600	9.57	-35.0%	+12.9%	-42.4%
Tennessee	21	107,300	19.57	28	132,700	21.10	+33.3%	+23.7%	+7.8%
Texas	107	654,100	16.36	123	778,300	15.80	+15.0%	+19.0%	-3.4%
Washington	17	160,000	10.63	17	224,100	7.59	+0.0%	+40.1%	-28.6%
Wyoming	6	26,100	22.99	3	23,900	12.55	-50.0%	-8.4%	-45.4%
Aggregates by Prevailing Wage Status									
Prevailing Wage States	**404**	**2,841,100**	**14.22**	**425**	**3,369,300**	**12.61**	**+5.2%**	**+18.6%**	**-11.3%**
Repeal States	**74**	**438,600**	**16.87**	**89**	**509,100**	**17.48**	**+20.3%**	**+16.1%**	**+3.6%**

Source(s): Authors' analysis of 2014 and 2019 information from the *Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries* and the *Current Employment Statistics* datasets by the Bureau of Labor Statistics at the U.S. Department of Labor (BLS, 2021). *NOTE: The analysis only includes states for which construction industry fatal injuries (not seasonally adjusted) and construction industry employment (not seasonally adjusted) are reported in *both* 2014 and 2019. For this reason, the 5 Full Repeal States do not include Wisconsin. The States with Prevailing Wage do not include Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Oregon, Vermont, or the District of Columbia.