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OBAMA FACES SKEPTICAL PUBLIC ON IMMIGRATION ACTION – WSJ/NBC POLL

By Laura Meckler
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President Barack Obama faces headwinds as he sets out to sell his executive action on immigration to the public, a new Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll finds, even as public support for legalization of undocumented immigrants remains high.

The survey found 48% of Americans disapprove of him acting alone on immigration, vs. 38% who approve. Among Latinos, 43% say they would approve of him acting alone, vs. 37% who oppose.

The executive action, set to be announced later this week, is expected to offer a temporary legal status to several million people living in the U.S. illegally who have deep ties to the country, such parents of U.S. citizens. The question about executive action didn't offer these details.

At the same time, support for a pathway to citizenship for people staying in the U.S. illegally remained robust, with 57% favoring such a plan and 40% opposing. Support grew higher – to 74% – when people were given details of such a plan, including requirements that they pay a fine, any back taxes and pass a security background check.

Bill McInturff, a Republican pollster who co-directs the Journal poll, said public disapproval of Mr. Obama's is making people skeptical of executive action.

"The public wants this policy," said Fred Yang, a Democratic pollster who co-directs the poll. "That doesn't mean they'll be happy with how it might get done."

The WSJ/NBC poll of 1,000 adults was conducted from Nov. 14-17. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage point