

No public interest in paid cop details

By Boston Herald editorial staff

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Last week the Patrick administration said it is not quite ready to issue regulations on allowing civilian flaggers to direct traffic around road projects - that it must "coordinate with all of the interest groups" first. So it has taken longer than the allotted three months to come up with a plan.

Well, one "interest group" - the average citizen - has now made its opinion abundantly clear.

A poll conducted jointly by the Political Research Center and Beacon Hill Institute at Suffolk University found that 86 percent of registered voters in Massachusetts prefer the use of civilian flaggers at work sites on public roads over uniformed cops.

Eighty-six percent!

Another 3 percent of voters were undecided, while only 11 percent said they did not favor civilian flaggers.

(The poll didn't break it down but we're going to assume that 11 percent included cops, their family members and local officials who shudder at the thought of taking on the police unions.)

According to David Paleologos, director of the Political Research Center, this question in particular had the most lopsided response in the entire poll - yes, a poll taken in Massachusetts, that also surveyed voters about Barack Obama. Now that's saying something!

"Across age, gender, geography and political party affiliation, it was overwhelmingly supported," Paleologos said.

A working group has been meeting to iron out the regulations (which, thanks to legislative cowardice, can only apply to state projects). And the administration has promised that the regulations will be issued soon.

They should keep in mind the opinion of the one "interest group" that is paying the bills.