

Owner Control, Alabama Rules Real Estate Issues Polling Memo



DATE: Wednesday, October 14, 2026
TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Brent Buchanan, Founder & CEO
RE: Alabama Voters on Owner Control (Survey for Alabama Realtors)

Executive Summary

Alabama voters see no need for new rules on how owners sell property. They oppose restrictions on how owners market a home, like those other states have adopted, by 68% to 13%. 71% say the owner should have the final say over how a home is advertised, and 13% say homes should be required to be advertised publicly. Opposition leads in every party, racial, age, income, and housing situation group we tested.

Economic strain does not change this. 54% of voters say their household is falling behind, yet those voters still back owner final say 69% to 14%. Voters value agents and homebuilders. They want the choice to use them, and they want more accountability from the boards that license them.

Voters Value Property Rights Across the Board

92% of voters say it is important for Alabama to protect private property rights, including 54% who say extremely important. Republicans (96%), Independents (90%), and Democrats (85%) agree. 60% say property rights are not protected strongly enough, and 8% say they are protected too strongly.

Voters Worry About Government Involvement

72% are concerned about government becoming too involved in decisions about privately owned homes and land. 69% want Alabama policy based on conditions in Alabama, and 11% would adopt policies common in other states. 70% are concerned about out-of-state organizations writing Alabama's real estate rules. When an owner and the neighbors or government disagree, 62% say the owner has the final say, 7% say the neighbors, and 11% say the government.

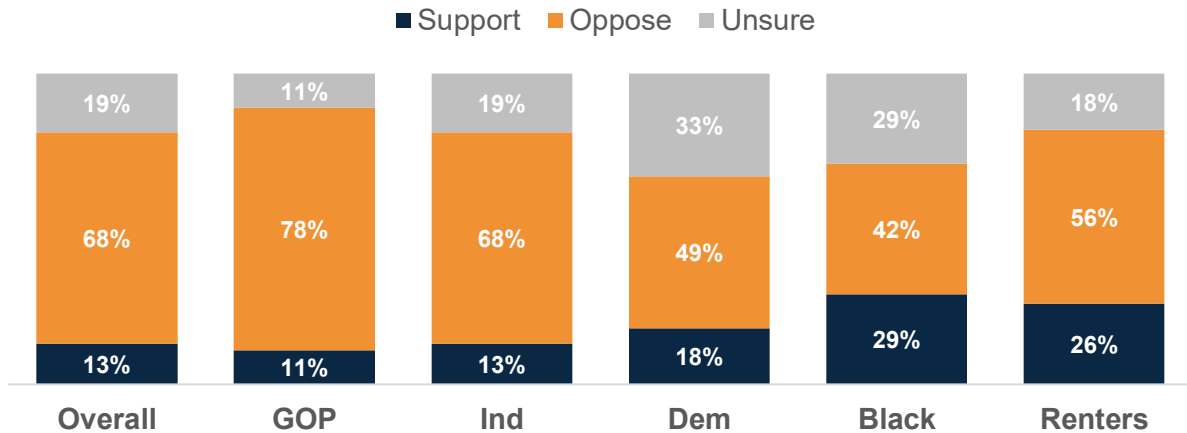
Voters Value Their Own Choice

Voters see value in agents and homebuilders, and they want the choice to use them. 71% say an agent makes buying easier, and 48% say an agent gets a higher sale price. Even so, 86% say the freedom to choose whether to use an agent is important, and 84% say the same about a homebuilder. 95% say an owner should have the right to sell without an agent.

Choice Extends to Marketing

85% say it is important that the owner, not someone else, decides how a home is advertised and marketed. 89% say owners should have as many options as possible, and 88% say an owner should have the right to decline advertising to the general public. The chart on the next page shows how voters split on marketing restrictions like those in other states.

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More Rules Push Voters Away from Agents

50% of voters say they would be less likely to use an agent if it meant more paperwork and rules than selling alone, and 11% would be more likely. The reaction is intense. 29% say *much* less likely, compared with 6% *much more* likely.

The friction voters already feel comes partly from rules. 30% name the amount of paperwork and forms as a frustration in working with an agent, and 29% name rules about how and where a property must be advertised. Voters value agents for making the process easier (71%), and new rules on agents cut directly against that value.

No Appetite for More Rules, Strong Appetite for Gov't Accountability

58% say working as a real estate agent for other people should require a license, and 54% say the same of home builders. Just 3% say selling your own home should require one, and 2% say the same of advertising it. By more than a 3:1 margin, voters believe state government is too large versus being too small. Voters want accountability from the bodies that already regulate: 63% support making licensing boards accountable to the Governor, including 75% of Republicans and a plurality (47%) of Democrats and 63% overall support the same Governor oversight for the Alabama Real Estate Commission.

The Result Holds in Both Parties

Republicans lead, but no party sides with new rules. Democrats back owner final say over advertising 54% to 25% and oppose marketing restrictions 49% to 18%.

	Overall	GOP	Indep	Dem
Property rights important	92%	96%	90%	85%
Concerned about government role	72%	78%	68%	64%
Want Alabama-based policy	69%	80%	64%	55%
Owner has final say on advertising	71%	84%	68%	54%
Oppose marketing restrictions	68%	78%	68%	49%
Less likely to use agent if more rules	50%	56%	47%	43%

Methodology: This probabilistic survey was conducted September 29 to October 1, 2026, with 600 likely midterm election voters. It has a margin of error of $\pm 4.0\%$. Likely voters were interviewed via text messages and online surveys. This survey was weighted to a likely general election voters audience.