



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**AMERICAN PUBLIC OPPOSES BOTH SAME-SEX MARRIAGES
AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO PROHIBIT THEM,
NATIONAL ANNEBERG ELECTION SURVEY SHOWS**

The American public still opposes both same-sex marriages and a constitutional amendment that would prohibit states from legalizing them, the University of Pennsylvania's National Annenberg Election Survey shows.

In polling conducted after Wednesday's decision by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court telling the state's legislature it must legalize same-sex marriages and not try to compromise by allowing civil unions, 60 percent of the public nationally said they opposed any such law in their states, while 31 percent said they would favor one.

But the Feb. 5-8 polling of 814 adults also found that 49 percent of the public opposed a constitutional amendment saying no state could allow same-sex marriages, while 42 percent favored an amendment. That meant that about two fifths of those who opposed a same-sex marriage law in their state also opposed a constitutional amendment banning them. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus three percentage points.

Adam Clymer, political director of the survey, said "This subject is one where how the question is worded matters very much. For example, earlier this winter (Jan. 26-Feb.4) we tested another question which others have used: 'Would you favor or oppose an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would allow marriage ONLY between a man and a woman?' Using that wording, we found that 59 percent favored an amendment and 33 percent did not, even though the percentages opposing gay marriages were almost identical to those in our recent sample. Other polls have used various wordings and gotten different results."

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The Annenberg survey used this wording: “Would you favor or oppose an amendment to the U.S. Constitution saying that No state can allow two men to marry each other or two women to marry each other.”

Clymer said “We preferred this language because the amendment that is getting attention, offered by Representative Marilyn Musgrave of Colorado, is intended to prevent states from legalizing same sex marriage. Mrs. Musgrave’s amendment says: ‘Marriage in the United States shall consist only of the union of a man and a woman. Neither this Constitution or the constitution of any State, nor state or federal law, shall be construed to require that marital status or the legal incidents thereof be conferred upon unmarried couples or groups.’ ”

The Annenberg survey found that support for an amendment to the Constitution barring states from legalizing same sex marriages was highest in the South, where 50 percent were in favor and 42 percent opposed. It was lowest in the Midwest where 37 percent were in favor and 56 percent opposed.

More support than opposition for a constitutional amendment was also registered by Republicans (64 percent in favor to 32 percent opposed), people who attended church more than once a week (58 to 38 percent), conservatives (54 to 40 percent), and people 30 to 44 years old (48 to 42 percent).

The strongest opposition to an amendment came from liberals (65 opposed and 24 percent in favor), Democrats (62 to 28 percent), young people 18 to 29 years old (58 to 35), respondents with a college degree or more (58 to 36 percent), and those who attend church a few times a year or never (56 to 32 percent).

People who were married or living as married divided 45 percent in favor of an amendment and 47 percent opposed, a difference that was not statistically significant. Those who were widowed, divorced, separated or never married opposed an amendment by a 52 to 38 percent margin.

With no federal constitutional amendment in force states may now decide how to deal with same-sex marriages and on the underlying issue of whether people wanted their states to legalize same sex marriages, a majority in favor was found only among liberals, with 62 percent in favor and 30 percent opposed. Fifty percent of the 18-29 year-olds were in favor and 43 percent opposed.

Opposition was strongest among people who go to church more than once a week, with 84 percent opposed and only 11 percent in favor, conservatives (opposed, 78 to 15 percent) Republicans (opposed, 75 to 22 percent), those 65 and older (opposed, 75 to 12 percent), and Southerners (opposed, 68 to 26 percent).

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But on the issue of civil unions, nearly two-fifth of those who said they opposed same-sex marriages said they would favor “a law in you state allowing gay and lesbian couples to form civil union that are not marriages but would give gay couples rights such as inheritance, insurance and pension coverage.”

In all 54 percent of the public said they favored either same-sex marriages or civil unions. Previous Annenberg poll results from December found 50 percent taking a s similar view. In November it was 56%.

The 60 percent who said they opposed a state law allowing same-sex marriages was statistically indistinguishable from the 59 percent opposed in November and December. Data on those polls is available on the survey’s website NAES04.org.

That National Annenberg Election Survey, the largest academic election poll, is a project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania (www.appcpenn.org). It has been tracking the presidential campaign since October 7, and interviewing will continue until after Election Day. Dr. Kathleen Hall Jamieson is the director of the survey. Ken Winneg is the managing director of the survey. Adam Clymer is the political director of the survey.

Another major election project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center is FactCheck.org.a project that tries to hold politicians accountable by exposing false or misleading campaign statements. It is available online at www.FactCheck.Org.

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Questions

A. Would you favor/oppose an amendment to the U.S. Constitution saying that NO state can allow two men to marry each other or two women to marry each other?

(%)	Favor	Oppose
Total	42%	49%
Men	42%	49%
Women	42%	48%
Northeast	39%	52%
Midwest	37%	56%
South	50%	42%
West	38%	49%
18-29 years old	35%	58%
30-44 years old	48%	42%
45-64 years old	44%	47%
65+ years old	38%	53%
Attend church more than once a week	58%	38%
Once a week	48%	42%
Once or twice a Month	42%	52%
A few times a year	34%	56%
Never	28%	57%
Republican	64%	32%
Democrat	28%	62%
Independent	41%	47%
Has gay friend, family, or colleague	37%	56%
No gay friend, family, colleague	53%	34%
Conservative	54%	40%
Moderate	38%	51%
Liberal	24%	65%
Married or living as married	45%	47%
Others	37%	52%
High school or less	42%	46%
Some college	47%	45%
College degree or more	36%	58%

B. Would you [favor/oppose] a law in your state that would allow gays and lesbians to marry a partner of the same sex?

(%)	Favor	Oppose
Total	31%	60%
Men	30%	62%
Women	32%	59%
Northeast	34%	53%
Midwest	29%	63%
South	26%	68%
West	39%	51%
18-29 years old	50%	43%
30-44 years old	34%	57%
45-64 years old	25%	67%
65+ years old	12%	75%
Attend church more than once a week	11%	84%
Once a week	21%	71%
Once or twice a Month	49%	47%
A few times a year	34%	52%
Never	43%	46%
Republican	22%	75%
Democrat	36%	53%
Independent	29%	59%
Has gay friend, family, or colleague	42%	51%
No gay friend, family, colleague	25%	64%
Conservative	15%	78%
Moderate	31%	59%
Liberal	62%	30%
Married or living as married	27%	65%
Others	38%	52%
High school or less	24%	65%
Some college	32%	61%
College degree or more	44%	50%

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Survey Methodology

The National Annenberg Election Survey (NAES) is a survey conducted each presidential election by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania.

The 2004 National Annenberg Election Survey is based on telephone interviews which began October 7, 2003 and will continue past Election Day. The sample of telephone exchanges called was randomly selected by a computer from a complete list of thousands of active residential exchanges across the country. Within each exchange, random digits were added to form a complete telephone number, thus permitting access to both listed and unlisted numbers. Within each household, one adult was designated by a random procedure to be the respondent for the survey. The interviewing is conducted by Schulman, Ronca, Bucuvalas, Inc.

The results have been weighted to take account of household size and number of telephone lines into the residence and to adjust for variation in the sample relating to geographic region, sex, race, age and education.

This report deals with interviewing conducted between February 5 and February 8, when 814 people were interviewed, and between January 26 and February 4, when 896 people were questioned about a constitutional amendment dealing with same-sex marriages. In theory, in 19 cases out of 20 the results for the each of these interviewing periods will differ by no more than three percentage points, up or down, from what would have been obtained by interviewing all American adults. For smaller subgroups, the margin of sampling error would be higher.

In addition to sampling error, the practical difficulties of conducting any survey of public opinion may introduce other sources of error into the poll. Variations in the wording and order of questions, for example, may lead to somewhat different results.

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