

Recent State Polls on Same-Sex Marriage & Civil Unions

Last Updated: May 6, 2005

While Americans are still split on the issue of marriage equality for same-sex couples, an overwhelming majority does support equal access to the specific obligations, responsibilities and recognitions of marriage, all of which are threatened by the Federal Marriage Amendment and many similar bills pending before state legislatures. For example, most people feel that gay men and lesbians should be entitled to inheritance rights (73%) and Social Security survivor benefits (68%), benefits that Brazil offers to same-sex surviving partners but that the United States does not.¹

We are hopeful that, with time and public education, a majority of Americans will understand and support equal treatment of same-sex couple families. However, the rights of members of a stigmatized minority should never be determined by the prejudices of the majority. James Madison, a founding father and architect of the U.S Constitution, warned that majority rule, unchecked, could lapse into majority tyranny.² *Prejudice should never determine public policy.* Our system of representative government, an independent judiciary, checks and balances, and the Bill of Rights was designed to prevent majority tyranny over unpopular minority groups.³

Measures are too often decided, not according to the rules of justice and the rights of the minor party, but by the superior force of an interested and overbearing majority.

*James Madison
The Federalist No. 10*

Alabama: February 2005 – Auburn University Poll – 58% Support State Constitutional Amendment Against Same-Sex Marriage

A poll of 624 randomly selected Alabamans over the age of 19 found that 58% supported a state constitutional amendment against same-sex marriage, while only 28% opposed such an amendment and 11% expressed no opinion. Of those identifying themselves as Republicans, 69% expressed “strong support” for an amendment, compared to 38% among Democrats.⁴



¹ Kaiser Family Foundation (2001). Inside-OUT: A report on the experiences of lesbians, gays and bisexuals in America and the public's views on issues and policies related to sexual orientation. Cambridge: Author. Available at <http://www.kff.org/kaiserpolls/3193-index.cfm>; Rohter, L. (2000, June 10). Brazil grants some legal recognition to same-sex couples. New York Times.

² Madison, J., et al. (1987). Federalist 10. *The Federalist Papers*. New York: Penguin Classics.

³ Madison, J., et al. (1987). Federalist 51. *The Federalist Papers*. New York: Penguin Classics.

⁴ Rawls, P. (2005, February 8). Alabama poll says majority wants gay marriage ban. *Associated Press*. Margin of error is 4 percentage points.

Alabama: March 2004 – *Mobile Register*-University of South Alabama Poll – 80% Against Same-Sex Marriage

Nearly 80% of 421 Alabama residents polled said they disapprove or strongly disapprove of allowing gay and lesbian couples to marry. More than half of respondents also opposed civil unions. Forty-seven percent also believed that sexual relations between two people of the same sex should also be illegal. While a plurality of respondents preferred that decisions regarding the recognition of same-sex marriage be left up to the states, 65% favored a federal constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage.⁵

Arizona: March 2004 – Northern Arizona University Poll – 54% Oppose Federal Constitutional Amendment to Ban Same-Sex Marriage, 57% Support Civil Unions

A statewide poll conducted by Northern Arizona University found that 54% of Arizonans are opposed to a federal constitutional amendment to make gay marriage illegal, while 41% support such an amendment. When asked if they support state-recognized civil unions granting some of the same rights and benefits of marriage, 57% said, “yes,” and 39% said, “no.” Sixty percent, however, oppose allowing same-sex couples to marry, and 49% are opposed to the state recognizing a same-sex marriage that is performed in another state.⁶



Arizona: January 2004 – *Arizona Republic* Poll – 51% Oppose Federal Marriage Amendment

According to a poll conducted by The Arizona Republic, when asked, “Do you favor or oppose a constitutional ban to prohibit the marriage of gay and lesbian couples,” 51% of participants opposed such an amendment, 39% favored it, and 10% either did not respond or were not sure. The poll results did not significantly vary by age, gender, or income, though Democrats were more likely to oppose the amendment and Republicans were more likely to support it. The poll of 600 people with a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percentage points did not measure whether Arizonans favor or oppose same-sex marriage.⁷

Arizona: October 2003 – Northern Arizona University Poll – 53% Support Civil Unions

Fifty-four percent of those surveyed by Northern Arizona University’s Social Research Laboratory said they oppose same-sex marriage, while 42% support it. But 53% of Arizonans favor letting gay and lesbian couples form civil unions that would give them the same rights and benefits as married heterosexual couples at the level of state policy. Forty-three percent oppose the idea. The statewide poll of 610 people throughout Arizona was conducted between Oct. 2 and Oct. 20, 2003, and had a sampling error of plus or minus 4 percentage points.⁸

⁵ Curet, M. (2004, March 14). Poll: Big ‘no’ to gay marriage. *The Mobile Register*.

⁶ Fischer, H. (2004, March 19). Majority oppose gay-marriage amendment. *Arizona Daily Star*.

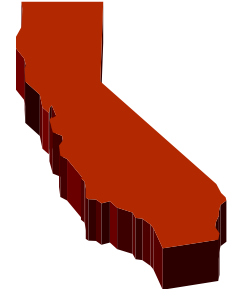
⁷ Kiefer, M. (2004, January 11). Gay-marriage ban opposed by Arizonans, poll suggests. *The Arizona Republic*.

⁸ Staff Writer. (2003, October 30). Majority of Arizonans oppose gay marriage. *Associated Press State & Local Wire*.

California: April 2004 – Los Angeles Times Poll – Majority Oppose Amending Constitution, Only 25% Oppose Both Marriage and Civil Unions

In a *Los Angeles Times* poll of 1571 California residents, a slim majority (51%) oppose an amendment to the U.S. Constitution banning same-sex marriage. 43% favor such an amendment. About 1/3 of those polled believe same-sex marriage should be legal, 40% oppose marriage but support civil unions, and 25% are against both marriage and civil unions. Half of those surveyed said that homosexual relationships are not a moral issue.

Whites were most likely to support same-sex marriage, African-Americans were most opposed to it, and Latinos were in between. Yet Latinos were more likely to support a constitutional amendment. Young people (age 18 to 29) are more likely than other age groups to support same-sex marriage – almost half believe same-sex couples should be allowed to marry. Among seniors, on the other hand, 20% support same-sex marriage, while 25% reject both civil unions and marriage for same-sex couples.⁹

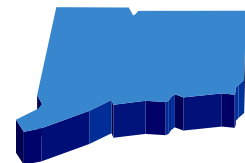


California: February 2004 – Field Poll – 54% Oppose a Constitutional Amendment Banning Same-Sex Marriage

According to a poll of California voters conducted by the Field Poll, 50% do not approve of same-sex marriage, while 44% support such marriages. Additionally, 54% oppose a constitutional amendment, while 41% support an amendment.¹⁰

Connecticut: April 2005 – Quinnipiac University Polling Institute – 56% Support Civil Unions

According to a poll of 1,541 registered voters by the Quinnipiac University Polling Institute, Connecticut voters support civil unions by a 56% to 37% margin but oppose same-sex marriage by 53% to 42%. Seventy-six percent of those 65 and over oppose same-sex marriage, while 19% support it. For the 18-to-29 age group, 79% support and 19% oppose same-sex marriage.¹¹



Florida: February 2005 – Strategic Vision Poll – 54% Favor State Ban on Same-Sex Marriage

A poll of 1,200 registered Florida voters found that 54% favor a ban on same-sex marriage, while 34% were opposed and 12% were undecided.¹²



⁹ Romney, L. (2004, April 26). The Times Poll: 1 of 3 in California favor gay marriage; the state is more open to the idea than the nation as a whole, less likely to see issue in moral terms. *Los Angeles Times*. Margin of error of 3 percentage points.

¹⁰ Ainsworth, B. (2004, February 26). Poll: Amendment to ban gay weddings is opposed. *San Diego Union-Tribune*.

¹¹ Dixon, K. (2005, April 8). Poll: 56% support civil union. *Connecticut Post*.

¹² March, W. (2005, February 24). Poll puts Crist, Castor on 2006 gubernatorial tickets. *Tampa Tribune*. Margin of error is 3 percentage points.

Florida: July 2004 – Florida Times-Union and South Florida Sun-Sentinel Poll – Only 2% Name Same-Sex Marriage As Most Important Issue In Upcoming Presidential Election

In a survey conducted by The Florida Times-Union and the South Florida Sun-Sentinel, 600 likely Florida voters were asked to name the most important issue determining their vote for president. Only 2% named same-sex marriage as their biggest concern, while 26% said it was jobs and the economy, 16% said the situation in Iraq, and 15% said the war on terrorism.¹³

Florida: March 2004 – Miami Herald and St. Petersburg Times Poll – 65% Oppose Same-Sex Marriage, Majority Support Civil Unions

A poll conducted by *The Miami Herald* and *St. Petersburg Times* found that 65% of Floridians oppose same-sex marriage, while 27% are supportive and 8% are undecided. A majority, however, believe that same-sex couples should have equal rights as married heterosexual couples. Only 41% are supportive of President Bush's push for a constitutional ban on same-sex marriage.¹⁴

Georgia: March 2004 – Associated Press Exit Poll – Majority Oppose Any Recognition of Same-Sex Relationships

An exit poll conducted for the *Associated Press* on March 2, 2004 found that half of those who voted in Georgia's primary oppose any legal recognition of same-sex relationships. Only about 17% support same-sex marriage, and 25% said that same-sex couples should be allowed to form civil unions, but should not be allowed to marry. The poll did not ask about support for a state or federal constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage.¹⁵



Illinois: March 2004 – Copley News Service Poll – 60% Oppose Same-Sex Marriage, 53% Oppose Amending the U.S. Constitution, 50% Support Civil Unions

A poll conducted by Copley News Service found that 60% of Illinoisans oppose legalizing same-sex marriage, while 27% support it. However, 53% also are opposed to an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would ban gay marriage. Thirty-four percent favor such an amendment. Half of those polled support civil unions that would grant some legal rights to same-sex couples but not qualify as marriage. Thirty-three percent are opposed to civil unions and 17% are undecided.¹⁶



¹³ Ortega, F. (2004, July 26). Bush Anti-Gay Stand Not Resonating With Voters. *365Gay.com*. Retrieved July 28, 2004 from www.365gay.com/newscon04/07/072604kerryPoll.htm. See also Decamp, D. (2004, July 25). Florida tilting to Kerry, but race still a toss-up. *The Florida Times-Union*.

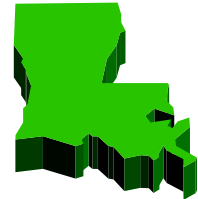
¹⁴ *United Press International*. (2004, March 8). Poll: Florida voters oppose gay marriage.

¹⁵ *The Associated Press*. (2004, March 3). Exit poll: Half oppose gay marriage. Author.

¹⁶ Schneider, D. (2004, March 15). Illinois in favor of civil unions. *Copley News Service*.

Louisiana: April 2004 – Southern Media and Opinion Research of Baton Rouge Poll – 62% Favor Amending the U.S. Constitution

A poll of 700 registered Louisiana voters showed that 62% favor an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would ban same-sex marriage, while 30% oppose such an amendment.¹⁷



Maine: February 2005 – Strategic Marketing Services Poll – 37.5% Support Same-Sex Marriage, 31% Support Civil Unions But Not Marriage, 27% Oppose Any Legal Recognition

A telephone poll of 400 random Maine adults found that 37.5% of respondents supported full marriage rights for same-sex couples, up from 30% in March 2004. Thirty-one percent backed civil unions but not marriage, down from 35.5% in the previous poll. Twenty-seven percent opposed any legal recognition of same-sex partnerships.¹⁸



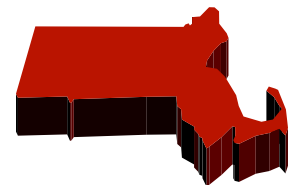
Maryland: January 2005 – Baltimore Sun Poll – 48% Oppose and 42% Support Civil Unions

A poll of 800 likely Maryland voters showed that 48% oppose and 42% support civil unions for gay and lesbian couples. Voters under 35 supported civil unions by 53% to 39%. Those over 65 strongly opposed them 57% to 33%. Some 66% of Republicans were opposed to civil unions, and 47% of Democrats supported the idea. Forty-two percent of white respondents supported civil unions, as opposed to only 28% of black respondents.¹⁹



Massachusetts: May 2005 – MassEquality Education Fund/Decision Research Poll – 62% Support Same-Sex Marriage, 61% Approve of State Supreme Court Decision to Allow Same-Sex Marriage

A statewide poll by Decision Research of 600 registered Massachusetts voters found that support for same-sex marriage continues to grow and is now at a margin of 62% to 35%. The poll, commissioned by MassEquality Education Fund, found that 61% approve of the Supreme Judicial Court's decision to grant marriage protections to gay and lesbian couples. Fully 84% of voters believe marriage equality has either had a positive impact or no impact on the quality of life in Massachusetts. Some 82% of those surveyed said it has either had a positive impact or no impact at all on traditional marriages. Voters understand the difference between civil unions and marriages, and two-thirds believe that neither civil unions nor legal contracts is



¹⁷ Anderson, E. (2004, April 15). Poll finds La. favors gay marriage ban; Nearly 2 in 3 back constitutional change. *New Orleans Times-Picayune*. Margin of error of 3.8 percentage points.

¹⁸ Harkavy, J. (2005, February 3). Poll: Mainers opposed individual investments in Social Security. *Associated Press*. Margin of error is 5 percentage points.

¹⁹ D'Arcy, J. (2005, January 6). Lawmakers take up bills from both sides of issue. *The Baltimore Sun*.



any substitute for marriage. By 82% to 17%, voters believe the legislature should focus on more important issues than considering a proposal to take away equal marriage rights from gay and lesbian couples.²⁰

Massachusetts: April 2004 – *Boston Globe* Poll – 40% Support Same-Sex Marriage, Residents Split on Amendment That Would Ban Same-Sex Marriage And Create a Civil Union System

The Massachusetts Legislature has proposed a state constitutional amendment that would bar same-sex couples from marrying, but would create civil unions that confer the same benefits as marriage. In a poll of 463 residents, respondents were evenly split on the measure, with 47% favoring it and 47% opposing it. When asked about what institutions of commitment same-sex couples should be allowed to enter, 40% said same-sex couples should be allowed to marry, 28% said they should not be allowed to marry but should be able to form civil unions, and 17% opposed both same-sex marriage and civil unions. In comparison to earlier polls, we see that support for some type of institutional recognition of same-sex couples has increased to 68%, after a dip to 60% in February 2004.²¹ Support for the amendment has increased by 17 percentage points since February.

Massachusetts: February 2004 – *Boston Globe* Poll – 53% Oppose Same-Sex Marriage, 60% Support Civil Unions, Only 7% Believe that Same-Sex Marriage is the Most Important Issues Facing the State

A poll conducted for the *Boston Globe* by KRC Communication Research found that 53% of Massachusetts residents now oppose legalizing same-sex marriages. This represents a 10% increase in opposition since a similar poll was conducted in November 2003. The new poll also found 60% support for civil unions, down from 67% in the *Globe's* November 2003 poll. However, a state constitutional amendment that would define marriage as only a heterosexual institution but create a separate civil union system for same-sex couples is only supported by 30% of Massachusetts residents (55% were opposed to such an amendment). The poll also revealed that only 7% of Massachusetts resident believe that same-sex marriage and civil unions are the most important issue facing the state today; 18% chose the economy; 18%, health care and health insurance; 14%, unemployment; 11%, education; and 8%, taxes.²²

Massachusetts: November 2003 – *Boston Globe*/WBZ-TV Poll – 50% Agree with Decision to Legalize Same-Sex Marriage

A poll conducted by the Boston Globe and WBZ-TV found that 50% of the 400 people surveyed agree with the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruling legalizing same-sex marriage. Thirty-eight percent opposed the decision and 11% expressed no opinion. A majority also

²⁰ MassEquality. (2005, May 4). Statewide poll show support for marriage equality increasing. Boston: Author. Available at <http://www.massequality.org/PressRelease.pdf>. Margin of error of 4 percentage points.

²¹ Phillips, F. (2004, April 6). Poll finds split over marriage amendment. *The Boston Globe*. Margin or error of 5 percentage points.

²² Phillips, F. (2004, February 22). Majority in Mass. Poll oppose gay marriage: Survey also finds civil union support. *The Boston Globe*.

opposed efforts by the Legislature, Governor Mitt Romney, and Attorney General Thomas F. Reilly to prevent same-sex marriages and allow civil unions instead. Fifty-three percent also oppose a state constitutional amendment that would define marriage as an institution between a man and a woman, while 36% would support it.²³

Massachusetts: November 2003 – *Boston Herald* Poll – 49% Support -Sex Marriage

In a poll of 405 registered Massachusetts voters conducted by RKM Research and Communications, 76% supported extending full marriage rights to same-sex couple via civil unions, and 49% supported legalizing gay marriage. 54% of voters also opposed any state constitutional ban on gay marriage. This poll also assessed view and attitudes about the gay community in general: 63% of voters did not believe that gay marriage would diminish the sanctity of marriage; 62% agreed that gay couples should be allowed to adopt children; 62% did not believe that homosexuality was morally wrong; and 53% agreed that homosexuality was caused by genetics.²⁴

Massachusetts: April 2003 – *Boston Globe*/WBZ-TV Poll – 50% Support Same-Sex Marriage

An April 2003 Boston Globe/WBZ-TV poll found that 50% of Mass. voters support legalizing marriage for gays and lesbians, while only 44% oppose it.²⁵

Michigan: July 2004 – *Detroit Free Press*/EPIC-MRA Poll – 17% Support Same-Sex Marriage, Additional 43% Support Civil Unions; 61% Support Amending the Constitution to Ban Gay Marriage

A poll of 600 Michigan voters found that 61% support a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage, while 34% oppose it. Such an amendment to the Michigan state constitution will be on the ballot in November. When asked about what institutions of commitment same-sex couples should be allowed to enter, 17% said same-sex couples should be allowed to marry, 43% said they should not be allowed to marry but should be able to form civil unions, and 36% opposed both same-sex marriage and civil unions.²⁶



Minnesota: April 2004 – *Star Tribune Minnesota* Poll – 58% Would Vote for an Amendment Barring Same-Sex Marriage, 47% Support Civil Unions

²³ Phillips, F., & Klein, R. (2003, November 23). 50% in poll back SJC ruling on gay marriage. *The Boston Globe*. p. A1.

²⁴ Guarino, D.R. (2003, November 23). Poll finds Mass.-ive backing for gay unions; Narrow marriage support. *The Boston Herald*. p. 7.

²⁵ Phillips, F. (2003, April 8). Support for gay marriage. *The Boston Globe*.

²⁶ Associated Press. (2004, July 12). 61% of Michigan voters polled back ban on gay marriage. *Detroit Free Press*. Retrieved July 15, 2004, from www.freep.com/news/statewire/sw100847_20040712.htm. Margin of error of 4 percentage points.



In a Minnesota poll of 562 likely voters, 58% would vote for a state amendment defining marriage as a union between a man and a woman, while 35% would vote against it. Yet, encouragingly, 47% favor “allowing gay and lesbian couples to enter into a legal union that would give them many of the same rights as married couples”. 47% of respondents believe homosexuality is not a choice and cannot be changed, and 58% of those who say homosexuality cannot be changed would vote against an amendment. 57% have friends or family who are gay or lesbian, while 42% do not.²⁷



²⁷ Brunswick, M. (2004, April 6). Minnesota Poll; 58% say they’d ban gay marriage; Some not distinction between religious marriage and civil unions, however. *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. Margin of error of 4.1 percentage points.

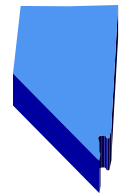
Missouri: July 2004 – Kansas City Star/KMBC-TV Poll – 62% Would Vote for State Constitutional Amendment Banning Same-Sex Marriage, 46% Oppose Any Legal Recognition for Same-Sex Couples

The Market Research Institute surveyed 600 Missouri residents about an amendment to the state constitution – on the ballot in August – that would ban gay marriage. If the election were held today, 62% of respondents said they would vote in favor of the amendment, 29% would vote against it, and 8% were undecided or would not vote on it. 14% said same-sex couples should be allowed to marry and 33% said they should be allowed to form civil unions but not marry, while 46% said there should be no legal recognition for such couples.²⁸



Nevada: March 2004 – Mason-Dixon Polling & Research Poll – 50% of Voters Oppose Amendment to the U.S. Constitution Banning Same-Sex Marriage

Despite two lopsided elections that resulted in a state constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage, a recent poll of voters in Nevada conducted by Mason-Dixon Polling & Research of Washington, D.C. found that 50% oppose a federal constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage, while 43% would favor such an amendment and 7% are undecided.²⁹



New Jersey: May 2005 – Garden State Equality/Zogby International Poll – 55% Support Same-Sex Marriage – 55% Support Same-Sex Marriage

A poll of 804 registered voters found that 55% of those surveyed favored allowing same-sex couples to marry, while 40% were opposed. Additionally, 61% said they disagreed with having a constitutional amendment blocking gays from marrying.³⁰



New Jersey: July 2003 – Zogby International Poll – 55% Support Same-Sex Marriage

A majority of New Jersey voters favor the legalization of same-sex marriage, according to an independent opinion poll commissioned by gay groups. The Zogby International poll of 803 likely voters in New Jersey was conducted July 15 to 19 and has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3.6 percentage points. The poll found that 55% of respondents favored gay marriage and 41% opposed it. Whites favor gay marriage by 56% to 40%, and Hispanics favor it 69% to 31%. But blacks oppose it 53% to 44%, as do Asian Americans, 55% to 45%.³¹

²⁸ Associated Press. (2004, July 23). Poll: 62 percent in Missouri favor ban on gay marriage. Margin of error of 4 percentage points.

²⁹ Neff, E. (2004, March 23). Nevadans say leave Constitution alone. Poll: Half oppose gay marriage amendment. *Las Vegas Review-Journal*.

³⁰ Linkous, Jeff (AP). (2005, May 4). Poll: New Jersey voters back allowing same-sex couples to marry. *Newsday*. Margin of error of 3.5 percentage points.

³¹ Peterson, I. (2003, July 29). Metro briefing New Jersey: Poll finds support for gay marriage. *New York Times*.

New Hampshire: February 2005 – Concord Monitor Poll – 51% Favor Federal Constitutional Amendment

A poll of 600 likely voters conducted by Research 2000 for the *Concord Monitor* found that 51% of likely voters favored a constitutional amendment outlawing same-sex marriage. The breakdown among men and women was fairly even, with the major split coming along party lines. Fifty-three percent of Republicans supported an amendment, compared with 31% of Democrats.³²



New Hampshire: February 2004 – University of New Hampshire Poll – 64% Oppose Federal Constitutional Amendment

A survey conducted by the University of New Hampshire Survey Center found that 55% of New Hampshire residents support same-sex marriage. Additionally, sixty-four percent oppose a federal constitutional amendment that would ban same-sex marriage.³³

New Hampshire: May 2003 – University of New Hampshire Poll – 54% Support Same-Sex Marriage

According to a University of New Hampshire Survey Center poll released in May 2003, 54% of New Hampshire residents favor a law that would allow the state to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples.³⁴

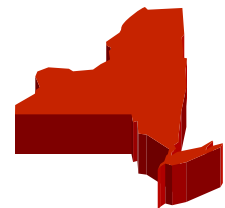
New Mexico: September 2004 – The Journal – 62% Oppose Legalization of Same-Sex Marriage

A poll of 402 registered voters conducted by Research & Polling Inc. found that 62% of those polled oppose the legalization of same-sex marriage while 28% support it and 10% are undecided. Additionally, 49% of those polled said they oppose same-sex civil unions, 44% support them, and 7% were undecided.³⁵



New York: March 2005 – Quinnipiac University Polling Institute – 51% of New York City Voters Favor Legalizing Same-Sex Marriage

A poll of 1,435 New York City registered voters conducted between February 22 and March 1, 2005 revealed that 51% of respondents favored legalizing same-sex marriage, while 40% were opposed. By 49% to 44%, voters also said they agreed with Mayor Michael Bloomberg's strategy of appealing a state



³² Poll: N.H. residents back Bush Iraq policy. (2005, February 12). *Associated Press*. Margin of error is 4 percentage points.

³³ UNH poll: Residents support gay marriage. (2004, February 26). *Associated Press*.

³⁴ Staff Writer. (2003, May 23). New Hampshire residents favoring law for same-sex marriages. *Associated Press*.

³⁵ Majority New Mexicans oppose gay marriage. (2004, September 10). *The Associated Press*. Margin of error is 5 percentage points.

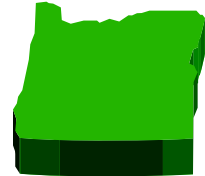
Supreme Court decision in February 2005 that the state’s refusal to grant marriage licenses to gays was unconstitutional.³⁶

New York: March 2004 – *Times Union*/News Channel 13 Poll – 54% Support Giving Same-Sex Couples Some Kind of Legal Union

A regional poll of 628 New York State Residents living in and around Albany found that 54% support giving same-sex couples some kind of legal union. Of those, 47% support same-sex marriage and 37% would rather see civil unions. Respondents also oppose a constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage by a two-to-one margin.³⁷

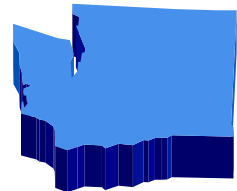
Oregon: March 2004 – *The Oregonian* Poll – 54% Oppose Same-Sex Marriage, Majority Support Civil Unions

A poll of 400 voters conducted by *The Oregonian* found that 54% are opposed to same-sex marriage, but a majority would support civil unions. As in national polls, voters are split primarily by age and political party affiliation, with 53% of voters age 35 and younger and 47% of Democrats supporting same-sex marriage. Only 25% of voters age 55 and older support same-sex marriage, and over 77% of Republicans are opposed to same-sex marriage.³⁸



Washington: March 2004 – *Seattle Times* Poll – 55% Oppose a Constitutional Amendment, 60% Say the Federal Government Has No Role in Promoting “Traditional Marriage”

In a poll of 500 Washington residents, 44% support same-sex marriage, while a little over half oppose it. The women polled were more likely than the men to support allowing same-sex couples to marry. Despite the split on support for marriage, a majority support rights for same-sex couples like civil unions and health and Social Security benefits. 55% oppose a federal Constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage, with only 38% supporting such an amendment. Almost 60% of those polled said that the federal government should not take a role in promoting “traditional marriage” and a plurality said that laws regarding marriage and civil unions should be decided at the state level. 54% say they have a close friend or relative who is gay.³⁹



³⁶ Poll shows NYC voters support gay marriage. (2005, March 5). *Associated Press*. Margin of error is 2.6 percentage points.

³⁷ Duggan, E. (2004, March 14). Opinion mixed on gay unions: In regional poll, 54 percent support some state recognition, but many express concerns about effect on society and on marriage. *Times Union*.

³⁸ Mapes, J. (2004, March 7). 54 percent in Oregon oppose same-sex marriage, poll says. *The Oregonian*.

³⁹ Gilmore, Susan. (2004, March 28). Legal benefits for gays backed, but state split over marriage. *The Seattle Times*. Margin of error is 4.5 percentage points.



Wisconsin: April 2004 – *Journal Sentinel* & *Capital Times*-University of Wisconsin Survey Center – 66% Favor Amendment if Civil Unions are Protected

In a statewide poll of 500 people conducted by the University of Wisconsin Survey Center in Madison and sponsored by the *Journal Sentinel* and the *Capital Times* of Madison, 53% of the respondents said they supported an amendment to clarify the definition of marriage and 38% opposed it. The poll also found that more people would favor the amendment if it did not include language that effectively bans civil unions, which offer protections and rights similar to those provided by marriage. Two-thirds said they would support a constitutional amendment if the language didn't bar gay couples from entering into civil unions. If the reference to civil unions was deleted, 66% favored an amendment and 28% disapproved.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Majority backs Wisconsin amendment to ban same-sex marriage. (2004, April 12). *The Associated Press*. Margin of error is 4 percentage points.