

A majority would back an openly gay president, according to new poll

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The Zogby poll, conducted for the Gay & Lesbian Leadership Institute, shows that six out of ten American voters could support an openly gay candidate for president. 66% of the 1,089 respondents would back a gay vice presidential candidate, 69% a gay candidate for the Senate, and 70% would support an openly gay cabinet secretary.

"These results prove that most Americans want to be fair to gay people," said Chuck Wolfe, president and CEO of the Gay & Lesbian Leadership Institute. "Our aspiration is to always see each other as individuals first, and though we may not always succeed at that, our underlying fairness and decency means that one day soon we will. This marks tremendous progress for our community and for the voting public."

The first openly gay American elected to public office was former Massachusetts House Rep. Elaine Noble in 1974. The Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund counts over 415 openly LGBT elected officials serving in the United States, up from 49 when the *Victory Fund* was launched in May of 1991. While no openly LGBT candidate has been elected to the U.S. Senate, five have served in the U.S. House of Representatives, including Rep. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), the first openly gay non-incumbent to win a seat in Congress, and Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA). Openly gay Colorado Democrat Jared Polis is currently in the running to become the sixth; he would be the first openly gay man elected to Congress. No openly LGBT candidate has yet been elected to the Senate.

Close to 700 applicants are in the running to participate in GLLI's Presidential Appointments Project in conjunction with several LGBT advocacy organizations including Human Rights Campaign, National Stonewall Democrats, Log Cabin Republicans, **the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force**, the National Center for Transgender Equality, Federal GLOBE, Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, the National Black Justice Coalition, and Pride At Work. The project's objective is to identify and prepare openly LGBT candidates for positions as presidential appointees in the next administration.