

## **Poll: Support for anti-gay marriage amendment widens**

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(San Francisco, California) A new poll, taken for a Catholic group opposed to same-sex marriage, shows that support is widening for a proposed amendment to ban gay unions in California.

The survey, conducted by Marist College Institute of Public Opinion, found the proposed amendment now has a 9 percentage point lead among likely voters — 52 percent to 43 percent.

The poll was taken between September 28 and October 5 for the Knights of Columbus, which has helped raise millions of dollars to promote the proposed amendment.

The sample included 1,008 likely voters in California, and has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.

The survey shows that support for the amendment, known as Proposition 8, leads in every region of California except the Bay Area, where 58% are opposed.

Statewide it has 53 percent support among men and 51 percent among women. Among whites, 51 percent said they supported the amendment while 57 percent of Latinos support it.

Among voters over the age of 45, Prop 8 has the support of 59 percent of those polled.

The highest level of opposition — 54 percent — came from people under the age of 45, and 54 percent of those who said they were unmarried.

A SurveyUSA poll taken earlier this month for four TV stations across the state found that 47 percent of likely voters would support the measure with 42 percent opposing it.

**Monday more than a dozen pastors who support same-sex marriage stood on the steps of San Francisco city hall to voice their opposition to the amendment.**

**They also announced that more than 2,200 faith leaders from across the country have signed an open letter to religious leaders calling for the recognition of same-sex marriage.**

LGBT groups have been struggling to match the millions of dollars raised by supporters of the amendment for television ads in the two weeks leading up to the election.

Talk show host Ellen DeGeneres has spent \$100,000 of her own money to buy television airtime to urge Californians to vote against the proposed amendment. DeGeneres married her long time partner, actress Portia de Rossi, in August.

In 2004 Newsom began allowing marriage licenses to be issued to same-sex couples in San Francisco. The state took the mayor to court, arguing he had overstepped his authority, and the California Supreme Court agreed. As a result, the more than 8,000 marriages that had been performed were declared void.

The ruling, however, did not directly address the issue of the constitutionality of the state ban on same-sex marriage, and LGBT civil rights activists began a separate court action challenging the prohibition.

In May the court ruled that denying same-sex couples the right to wed violated the California constitution.

Conservative groups began collecting enough signatures for the ballot measure. Recent polling suggests voters are closely divided over the amendment.