

proposition 8

Poll: Voters reject same-sex marriage

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The Desert Sun

Neither the election nor legal challenges over Proposition 8 has changed the majority of Californians' minds about same-sex marriage, a poll released Wednesday shows.

Among likely voters, 45 percent favor same-sex marriage and 49 percent are opposed, according to a poll conducted by the Public Policy Institute of California.

In November, Proposition 8 stripped gays and lesbians of right to marry with 52 percent of the vote. In Riverside County, the measure passed by a greater margin — 64 percent.

In the Coachella Valley, 54.3 percent of the voters supported Proposition 8.

The divide on this issue is most
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sharp along party lines, with 60 percent of Democrats favoring same-sex marriage and 74 percent of Republicans opposed to gay marriage.

Republicans, churchgoers and those born before World War II drove the yes vote for the gay marriage ban, according to a January study by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

The Public Policy Institute has polled California sentiment on same-sex marriage since 2000 — when the majority of voters approved Proposition 22, a law to ban gay marriage — was placed on the ballot.

The California Supreme Court last year ruled the ban unconstitutional and about 18,000 same-sex couples married before voters approved a constitutional amendment defining marriage as between a man and woman.

The high court is weighing a legal challenge to Proposition 8 and should render a decision by early June.

Same-sex opponents were more likely than supporters to say the court's decision was very important to them.

Most Californians (56 percent) said the court ruling on Proposition 8 was very important to them with Republicans (64 percent) more likely than Democrats (58 percent) to agree, the poll found.

The Public Policy Institute's poll was based on a telephone survey conducted the week of March 10, 2009, California residents with a sampling error of plus or minus 2 percent.

Established in 1994, the Public Policy Institute of California is a private, nonprofit group that conducts research to improve California.

Marriage equality is an issue that resonates with many in the Palm Springs area, which has one of the largest gay populations per capita in the United States. About 1,200 same-sex couples married in the Coachella Valley in the four months gays and lesbians could legally marry last year.

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