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Support for Same-Sex Marriage Grows, Even Among Groups That Had Been Skeptical

For first time, as many Republicans favor as oppose gay marriage

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Support for Same-Sex Marriage Grows, Even Among Groups That Had Been Skeptical

For first time, as many Republicans favor as oppose gay marriage

Two years after the Supreme Court decision that required states to recognize same-sex marriages nationwide, support for allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally is at its highest point in over 20 years of Pew Research Center polling on the issue.

By a margin of nearly two-to-one (62% to 32%), more Americans now say they favor allowing gays and lesbians to marry than say they are opposed.

Views on same-sex marriage have shifted dramatically in recent years. As recently as 2010, more Americans opposed (48%) than favored (42%) allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally. In the past year alone, support has increased seven percentage points: In March 2016, 55% favored same-sex marriage, while 37% were opposed.

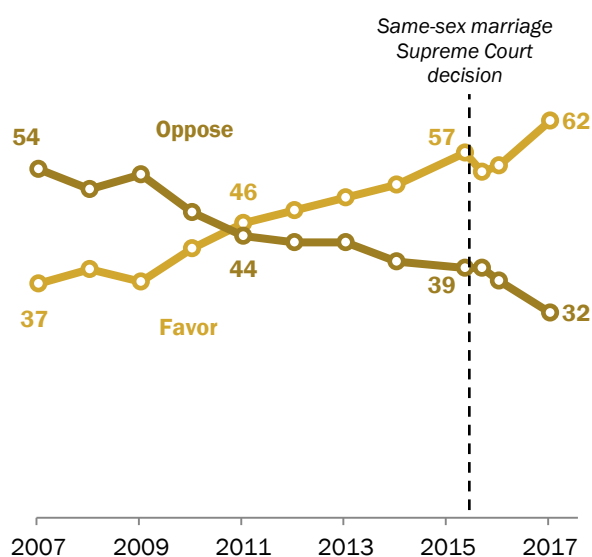
The latest national survey by Pew Research Center, conducted June 8-18 among 2,504 adults finds striking increases in support for same-sex marriage among some demographic and partisan groups that, until recently, had broadly opposed it, including:

Baby Boomers. For the first time, a majority of Baby Boomers favor allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally. Currently, 56% of Boomers favor same-sex marriage, while 39% are opposed. Last year, opinion among Boomers was divided (46% favored/48% opposed).

African Americans. Blacks have long been less supportive of same-sex marriage when compared with whites, but the share of African Americans who favor same-sex marriage has risen 12 percentage points since 2015, from 39% to 51%.

Public support for same-sex marriage reaches new milestone

% who ___ allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally



Notes: Data for 2007-2015 based on yearly averages.

Don't know responses not shown.

Source: Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017.

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Republicans. For the first time, a majority of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents *do not* oppose allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally. Today, 48% of Republicans and Republican leaners oppose same-sex marriage, while 47% favor this. As recently as 2013, Republicans opposed gay marriage by nearly two-to-one (61% to 33%).

Younger white evangelicals. Overall, white evangelical Protestants continue to stand out for their opposition to same-sex-marriage: 35% of white evangelical Protestants favor same-sex marriage, compared with a 59% majority who are opposed. But younger white evangelicals have grown more supportive: 47% of white evangelical Millennials and Gen Xers – age cohorts born after 1964 – favor same-sex marriage, up from 29% in March 2016. Views among older white evangelicals (Boomers and Silents) have shown virtually no change over the past year (26% now, 25% then).

For more on current views of same-sex marriage, see [detailed demographic tables](#).

Views of same-sex marriage by generation, race

Younger Americans continue to be more likely than older Americans to say they favor allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally: Fully 74% of Millennials (ages 18 to 36) say they favor same-sex marriage, while just 23% say they are opposed.

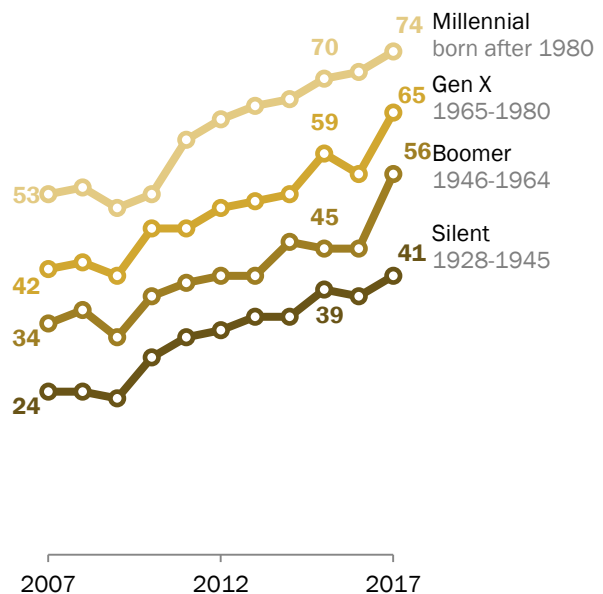
And by more than two-to-one, more Generation Xers (those ages 37 to 52) favor allowing gays and lesbians to marry than oppose same-sex marriage (65% vs. 29%).

Support for same-sex marriage among older adults also has increased over the past ten years. Today, a 56%-majority of Boomers (those ages 53 to 71) say they favor allowing legal same-sex marriage, while a smaller share (39%) say they are opposed.

Support among Boomers has increased since March 2016, when just less than half (46%) said they favored same-sex marriage. Among the Silent generation (those ages 72 to 89), 49% oppose allowing gays and lesbians to marry, while 41% favor this. However, support for same-sex marriage has nearly doubled among members of the Silent generation since 2007, when just 24% said they were in favor.

Majorities of Millennials, Gen X and Boomers now favor same-sex marriage

% who favor allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally



Note: Data for 2007-2015 based on yearly averages.
Source: Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017.

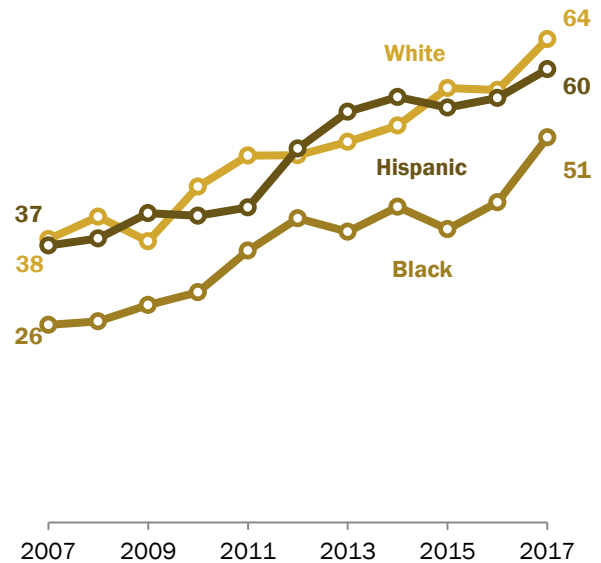
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Support for allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally also has steadily risen across racial and ethnic groups. Six-in-ten or more whites (64%) and Hispanics (60%) say they favor allowing same-sex couples to be married legally. In 2007, just 38% of whites and 37% of Hispanics supported same-sex marriage.

Although blacks remain less likely than whites and Hispanics to favor allowing gays and lesbians to marry, the share who favor gay marriage has also dramatically increased over the past decade: Today 51% of blacks support same-sex marriage; in 2007, just 26% did so.

Support for same-sex marriage has risen among whites, blacks and Hispanics

% who favor allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally



Notes: Data for 2007-2015 based on yearly averages. Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race. Source: Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017.

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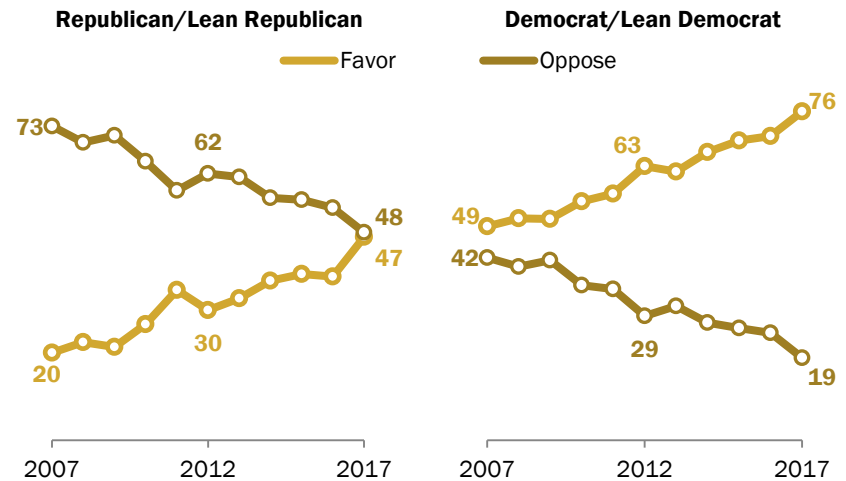
There continue to be wide partisan divides on the issue of same-sex marriage, but support has grown among both Republicans and Democrats over the past decade.

Republicans and Republican leaners are divided on the question for the first time: 47% favor allowing gays and lesbians to marry, while a nearly identical share is opposed (48%). Fully three-quarters of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents (76%) say they favor allowing same-sex marriage, compared to just 19% who are opposed.

Among Republicans and Republican leaners, a majority of Millennials (60%) support same-sex marriage, while 38% are opposed. About half of Gen X Republicans (51%) favor allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally. Majorities of Republican Baby Boomers (53%) and Republican Silents (62%) continue to oppose same-sex marriage.

Support for gay marriage has increased in both parties since 2007, but wide gap remains

% who ___ allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally

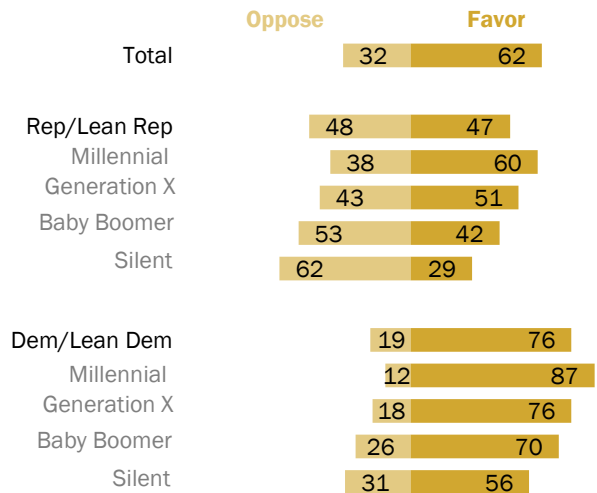


Notes: 2007-2015 based on yearly averages. Don't know responses not shown. Source: Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017.

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Older Republicans remain opposed to same-sex marriage

% who ___ allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally



Note: Don't know responses not shown. Source: Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017.

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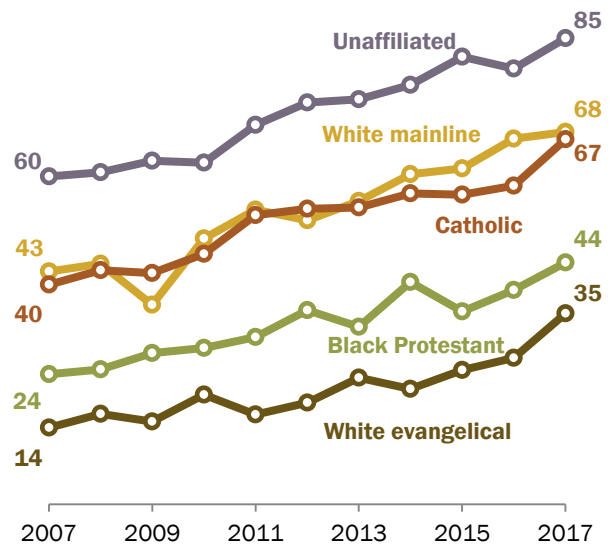
Among Democrats and Democratic leaners, majorities of all generational cohorts support allowing gays and lesbians to marry, though support is greater among younger generations: Nearly nine-in-ten Democratic Millennials (87%) support same-sex marriage, compared with 56% of Democrats in the Silent generation.

Views about same-sex marriage continue to differ across religious groups. Wide majorities of Catholics (67%), white mainline Protestants (68%), and – in particular – the religiously unaffiliated (85%) support legal marriage for same-sex couples. By comparison, a majority of white evangelical Protestants oppose same-sex marriage (59% oppose, 35% favor), while black Protestants are roughly divided in their views (44% favor, 50% oppose).

Support for same-sex marriage has risen across all religious groups in recent years, including among white evangelicals and black Protestants. Support for same sex-marriage among white Evangelicals has more than doubled compared with a decade ago (14% then, 35% now), while the share of black Protestants who favor same-sex marriage has increased from 24% in 2007 to 44% today.

Growing support for same-sex marriage across religious groups

% who favor allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally



Notes: Data for 2007-2015 based on yearly averages. Don't know responses not shown. Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race. Source: Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017.

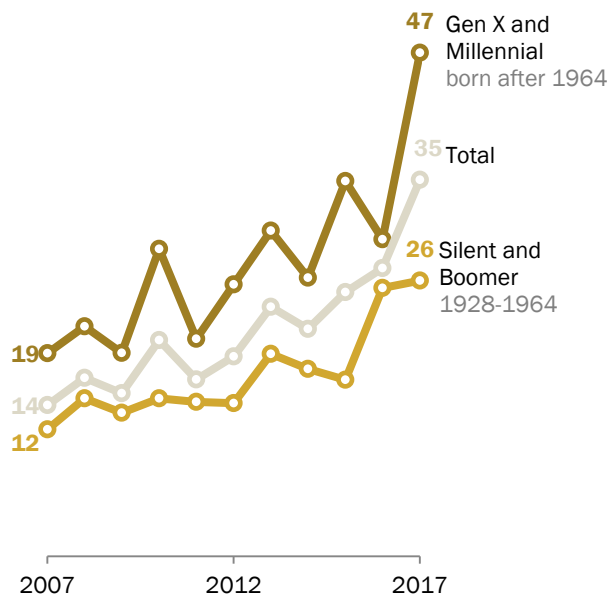
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As in the public as a whole, younger evangelicals have tended to be more supportive of same-sex marriage than their older counterparts. But the generational divide among white evangelicals is now wider than in past years: Today, nearly half of Millennial and Xer white evangelicals (those born after 1964; currently ages 18-52) favor allowing same-sex couples to marry legally, while only about a quarter (26%) of white evangelical Boomers and Silents (those born between 1928 and 1964; ages 52-89) hold this view.

Throughout most of the last decade, the generational gap within white evangelicals was more modest. In 2007, for instance, 12% of Boomer and Silent white evangelicals supported same-sex marriage, compared with 19% of Millennial and Gen Xer white evangelicals.

Widening generational divide over gay marriage among white evangelicals

% of white evangelical Protestants who favor allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally



Note: Data for 2007-2015 based on yearly averages.
Source: Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017.

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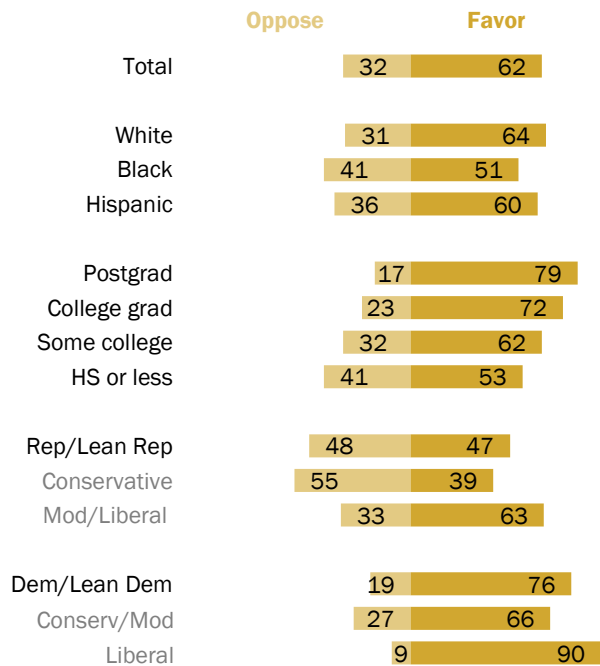
Current views of same-sex marriage

In the new survey, majorities across all educational groups now say they favor same-sex marriage, but levels of support are highest among those who have graduated from college: 79% among those with postgraduate degrees and 72% among those with bachelor's degrees. Smaller majorities of those with some college experience but no college degree (62%) or those with no more than a high school degree (53%) say they favor allowing gays and lesbians to marry.

While Republicans overall are divided in views of same-sex marriage, moderate and liberal Republicans are much more supportive than are conservative Republicans (63% vs. 39%). There also are wide ideological differences among Democrats, though majorities of conservative and moderate Democrats (66%) and liberal Democrats (90%) favor allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally.

Education, ideological differences in views of same-sex marriage

% who ___ allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally



Note: Don't know responses not shown. Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race.
Source: Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017.

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Acknowledgements

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Methodology

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted June 8-18, 2017 among a national sample of 2,504 adults, 18 years of age or older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia (628 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 1,876 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 1,109 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see <http://www.pewresearch.org/methodology/u-s-survey-research/>

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and nativity and region to parameters from the 2015 Census Bureau's American Community Survey and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status (landline only, cell phone only, or both landline and cell phone), based on extrapolations from the 2016 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size among respondents with a landline phone. The margins of error reported and statistical tests of significance are adjusted to account for the survey's design effect, a measure of how much efficiency is lost from the weighting procedures.

The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017

Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	2,504	2.3 percentage points
White	1,737	2.7 percentage points
Black	241	7.3 percentage points
Hispanic	297	6.5 percentage points
Republican/Lean Rep	1,050	3.5 percentage points
Democrat/Lean Dem	1,230	3.2 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

Pew Research Center undertakes all polling activity, including calls to mobile telephone numbers, in compliance with the Telephone Consumer Protection Act and other applicable laws.

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Appendix: Topline Questionnaire

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER
SUMMER 2017 POLITICAL LANDSCAPE SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
JUNE 8-18, 2017
N=2,504**

QUESTIONS 1, 15, 36-37, 126 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

NO QUESTIONS 2-11, 13, 16-24, 28-29, 31-35, 38-39, 41-49, 52-61, 63-76, 79-125

QUESTIONS 12, 14, 25-27, 30, 40, 50-51, 62, 77-78, 127 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK ALL:

Q.A128 Do you strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally?

	-----Favor-----			-----Oppose-----			(VOL.)
	<i>Strongly</i>			<i>Strongly</i>			
	<u>Total</u>	<u>favor</u>	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>oppose</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
Jun 8-18, 2017	62	31	32	32	14	18	6
Mar 17-26, 2016	55	26	30	37	15	22	7
Jul 14-20, 2015	54	28	26	39	18	20	7
May 12-18, 2015	57	28	28	39	21	18	5
Sep 2-9, 2014	49	24	25	41	20	22	10
Feb 12-26, 2014	54	24	30	39	19	20	7
May 1-5, 2013 ¹	51	21	30	42	19	22	8
Mar 13-17, 2013	49	22	27	44	22	21	8
Oct 24-28, 2012	49	22	27	40	19	21	11
Jun 28-Jul 9, 2012	48	23	25	44	24	20	8
Jun 7-17, 2012	48	23	25	44	23	21	9
Apr 4-15, 2012	47	22	25	43	22	21	11
Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011	46	--	--	44	--	--	9
Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011	45	20	25	46	25	21	9
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	43	16	27	47	26	22	10
Jul 21-Aug 5, 2010	41	17	24	48	24	24	10
Aug 11-17, 2009	39	14	25	53	31	22	8
Mid-April, 2009	35	14	21	54	31	23	11
August, 2008	39	13	26	52	30	22	9
June, 2008	40	15	25	52	31	21	8
Late May, 2008	38	15	23	49	29	20	13
November, 2007	36	12	24	54	29	25	10
August, 2007	36	13	23	55	31	24	9
Early January, 2007	37	13	24	55	33	22	8
Early November, 2006 (RVs)	30	10	20	57	31	26	13
July, 2006	35	12	23	56	31	25	9
June, 2006	33	13	20	55	32	23	12
March, 2006	39	10	29	51	28	23	10
July, 2005	36	13	23	53	31	22	11
December, 2004	32	14	18	61	38	23	7
August, 2004	29	8	21	60	35	25	11
July, 2004	32	10	22	56	33	23	12

¹ In May 1-5, 2013, Jun 28-Jul 9, 2012, Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011, July 21-Aug 5, 2010, Aug 11-17, 2009, August 2008, August 2007, Early January 2007, Early November 2006, March 2006, July 2005, December 2004, Early February 2004, November 2003, Mid-July 2003, March 2001 and June 1996 the question was asked as part of a list of items. In Jun 7-17, 2012, Apr 4-15, 2012, August 2009, April 2009, May 2008 and June 2008, the question read "allowing gay and lesbian couples;" all other instances read "allowing gays and lesbians."

Q.A128 CONTINUED...

	-----Favor-----			-----Oppose-----			(VOL.) DK/Ref
	Total	<i>Strongly</i> <i>favor</i>	<i>Favor</i>	Total	<i>Strongly</i> <i>oppose</i>	<i>Oppose</i>	
Mid-March, 2004	32	10	22	59	35	24	9
Early February, 2004	30	9	21	63	42	21	7
November, 2003	30	10	20	62	41	21	8
October, 2003	30	9	21	58	33	25	12
Mid-July, 2003	38	10	28	53	30	23	9
March, 2001	35	8	27	57	34	23	8
June, 1996	27	6	21	65	41	24	8

NO QUESTIONS 130-142, 144-167**QUESTIONS 129, 143 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****ASK ALL:**

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

ASK IF INDEP/NO PREF/OTHER/DK/REF (PARTY=3,4,5,9):

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

	Republican	Democrat	Independent	(VOL.)	(VOL.)	(VOL.)	Lean Rep	Lean Dem
				No preference	Other party	DK/Ref		
Jun 8-18, 2017	24	30	40	3	1	2	17	18
Apr 5-11, 2017	24	31	42	2	1	*	17	20
Feb 7-12, 2017	23	34	37	3	1	2	15	18
Jan 4-9, 2017	25	28	41	4	*	1	18	19
Nov 30-Dec 5, 2016	24	33	35	5	1	3	15	16
Oct 20-25, 2016	26	33	36	3	*	2	15	17
Aug 23-Sep 2, 2016	27	32	33	5	*	3	11	16
Aug 9-16, 2016	27	32	35	2	1	2	13	16
Jun 15-26, 2016	24	33	37	4	1	2	16	16
Yearly Totals								
2016	25.4	32.0	36.5	3.4	.5	2.2	14.6	17.0
2015	23.7	30.4	40.1	3.6	.4	1.8	16.4	17.3
2014	23.2	31.5	39.5	3.1	.7	2.0	16.2	16.5
2013	23.9	32.1	38.3	2.9	.5	2.2	16.0	16.0
2012	24.7	32.6	36.4	3.1	.5	2.7	14.4	16.1
2011	24.3	32.3	37.4	3.1	.4	2.5	15.7	15.6
2010	25.2	32.7	35.2	3.6	.4	2.8	14.5	14.1
2009	23.9	34.4	35.1	3.4	.4	2.8	13.1	15.7
2008	25.7	36.0	31.5	3.6	.3	3.0	10.6	15.2
2007	25.3	32.9	34.1	4.3	.4	2.9	10.9	17.0
2006	27.8	33.1	30.9	4.4	.3	3.4	10.5	15.1
2005	29.3	32.8	30.2	4.5	.3	2.8	10.3	14.9
2004	30.0	33.5	29.5	3.8	.4	3.0	11.7	13.4
2003	30.3	31.5	30.5	4.8	.5	2.5	12.0	12.6
2002	30.4	31.4	29.8	5.0	.7	2.7	12.4	11.6
2001	29.0	33.2	29.5	5.2	.6	2.6	11.9	11.6
2001 Post-Sept 11	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 Pre-Sept 11	27.3	34.4	30.9	5.1	.6	1.7	12.1	13.5
2000	28.0	33.4	29.1	5.5	.5	3.6	11.6	11.7
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9	13.0	14.5
1998	27.9	33.7	31.1	4.6	.4	2.3	11.6	13.1
1997	28.0	33.4	32.0	4.0	.4	2.3	12.2	14.1
1996	28.9	33.9	31.8	3.0	.4	2.0	12.1	14.9
1995	31.6	30.0	33.7	2.4	.6	1.3	15.1	13.5

PARTY/PARTYLN CONTINUED...

				(VOL.) No	(VOL.) Other	(VOL.) DK/Ref	Lean Rep	Lean Dem
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	<u>preference</u>	<u>party</u>			
1994	30.1	31.5	33.5	1.3	--	3.6	13.7	12.2
1993	27.4	33.6	34.2	4.4	1.5	2.9	11.5	14.9
1992	27.6	33.7	34.7	1.5	0	2.5	12.6	16.5
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	0	1.4	3.0	14.7	10.8
1990	30.9	33.2	29.3	1.2	1.9	3.4	12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34	--	--	--	--	--
1987	26	35	39	--	--	--	--	--

QUESTIONS 168-169 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE