

PROPOSITION 8

# Americans Would Like Supreme Court to Uphold Proposition 8

*Most people want marriage to be defined federally as a union between a man and a woman, and not between two people regardless of gender.*

[SAN FRANCISCO – Jan. 28, 2010] – As a District Court in the United States reviews the validity of a ballot vote that restored the definition of marriage in California as a heterosexual union, most Americans predict that an eventual Supreme Court ruling on the matter will uphold this view, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

In November 2008, Californians voted in favor of Proposition 8, which overturned a California Supreme Court ruling stating that couples of the same sex have the right to marry. A U.S. District Court is currently studying the constitutional validity of Proposition 8, which effectively restored the definition of marriage in California. The case could eventually be reviewed by the U.S. Supreme Court.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 1,000 American adults, 52 per cent of respondents say that, if the Supreme Court reviews the Proposition 8 case, they expect the judges to rule that marriage is between a man and a woman. Only 28 per cent of Americans think the U.S. Supreme Court will define marriage federally as a union between two people, regardless of gender.

A majority of Americans (58%) would prefer Supreme Court judges to rule that marriage is heterosexual only, while 34 per cent would like a federal definition of marriage without gender limitations.

## KEY FINDINGS

- **52% of Americans expect the Supreme Court to rule that marriage is a union between a man and a woman**
- **58% would like the Supreme Court to rule that way**
- **34% would like the court to define marriage as a union between two people, regardless of gender**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

*From January 12 to January 13, 2010, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 1,000 American adults who are Springboard America panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 3.1%. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of the United States.*

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### **Views on Same-Sex Unions**

Americans remain divided on the issue of same-sex marriage. A third of respondents (34%) think couples of the same gender should be allowed to marry, while 26 per cent say they should only be allowed to form civil unions. Three-in-ten people (31%) believe that gay and lesbian couples should have no legal recognition. There has been little change in this question since an Angus Reid survey conducted in August 2009.

If a referendum on the matter took place in their own state, 58 per cent of respondents would vote in favor of defining marriage as a union between a man and a woman. Only a third (34%) would vote to define marriage as between two people, regardless of gender.

### **Breakdowns**

Women (37%) and respondents aged 18 to 34 (45%) are more likely to express support for the right of same-sex couples to marry than men (30%) and older respondents (27% to 30%).

Also, women (35%) are only slightly more prone than men (32%) to prefer an eventual Supreme Court ruling favoring marriages between two people regardless of gender. Americans aged 18 to 34 (41%) are also much more likely to want this than those aged 35-54 (32%) and those aged 55 and older (28%).

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Proposition 8						
Which of these statements comes closer to your own point of view on the legal recognition of same-sex couples in the United States?						
		Gender		Age		
	Total	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
Same-sex couples should be allowed to legally marry	34%	30%	37%	45%	30%	27%
Same-sex couples should be allowed to form civil unions, but not marry	26%	29%	24%	21%	27%	31%
Same-sex couples should not have any kind of legal recognition	31%	35%	27%	24%	34%	33%
Not sure	9%	6%	12%	9%	9%	9%

Proposition 8						
Several states have held referendums on the definition of marriage. If a referendum took place in your state tomorrow, and you only had these two choices in the ballot, how would you vote?						
		Gender		Age		
	Total	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
To define marriage as between a man and a woman	58%	62%	54%	46%	62%	64%
To define marriage as between two people	34%	30%	37%	42%	32%	29%
I would not vote	9%	8%	9%	13%	7%	7%

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### Proposition 8

As you may know, a U.S. District Court is reviewing the constitutional validity of California's Proposition 8, which restored the definition of marriage in California as being between a man and a woman. It is expected that the case will eventually reach the U.S. Supreme Court, which may end up ruling about the validity of same-sex marriage at the federal level. If this case reaches the U.S. Supreme Court, what do you expect the outcome to be? If this case reaches the U.S. Supreme Court, what do you expect the outcome to be?

	Total	Gender		Age		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
<b>A ruling that defines marriage federally as between a man and a woman</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>54%</b>
<b>A ruling that defines marriage federally as between two people</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>19%</b>

### Proposition 8

And, if this case reaches the U.S. Supreme Court, what would you prefer the outcome to be?

	Total	Gender		Age		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
<b>A ruling that defines marriage federally as between a man and a woman</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>65%</b>
<b>A ruling that defines marriage federally as between two people</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>8%</b>

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**Proposition 8**

Which of these statements comes closer to your own point of view on the legal recognition of same-sex couples in the United States? - *TREND*

	Jan. 2010	Aug. 2009
Same-sex couples should be allowed to legally marry	34%	33%
Same-sex couples should be allowed to form civil unions, but not marry	26%	25%
Same-sex couples should not have any kind of legal recognition	31%	36%
Not sure	9%	5%

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*Angus Reid Public Opinion is a practice of Vision Critical—a global research and technology company specializing in custom online panels, private communities, and innovative online methods. Vision Critical is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Strategies team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995*

*Vision Critical is now one of the largest market research enterprises in the world. In addition to its five offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, London, Paris and Sydney. Its team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research, and currently serves over 200 international clients.*

*Angus Reid Public Opinion polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum ([www.angusreidforum.com](http://www.angusreidforum.com)), Springboard America ([www.springboardamerica.com](http://www.springboardamerica.com)) and Springboard UK ([www.springboarduk.com](http://www.springboarduk.com)) online panels, which are carefully recruited to ensure representation across all demographic and psychographic segments of these populations. Panel members pass through rigorous screening and a double opt-in process ensuring highly motivated and responsive members. These premier online survey platforms present respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses. Each survey is actively sampled and weighted to model that characteristics of the universe required and employs the latest in quality control techniques to ensure data validity.*

*Angus Reid, the only public opinion firm to exclusively use online methods to follow the views of the electorate during the 2008 federal campaign, offered the most accurate prediction of the results of Canada's 40th election.*

<http://bit.ly/4zxf1S>

*Since 2006, Angus Reid has covered eight provincial elections in Canada—more than any other pollster in the country—and the results have accurately predicted the outcome of each of these democratic processes.*

*More information on the way Angus Reid conducts public opinion research can be found at <http://bit.ly/3z0u1l>*

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**For more information, please contact  
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

**Copies of this poll are available on our website:  
<http://www.visioncritical.com/category/global-opinions-and-trends>**

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