

Results of SurveyUSA Election Poll #14613

Geography: California
Data Collected: 10/15/2008 - 10/16/2008
Release Date: 10/17/2008
Percentaaes

California Prop 8 Remains a Fierce Fight That Could Be Decided Either Way By Handful of Votes: In a vote today, 10/17/08, on California's Proposition 8 Ballot Initiative, which would change California's constitution to eliminate the right of same-sex couples to marry, approximately half the state supports the measure, half the state opposes the measure, according to this latest SurveyUSA poll conducted for KABC-TV Los Angeles, KPIX-TV San Francisco, KGTV-TV San Diego, and KFSN-TV Fresno. The exact findings are: 'Yes' (to change the law) 48%, 'No' (to leave the law alone) 45%. But: polling on ballot measures in general is an inexact science, and polling on homosexuality in general is a tricky business, so SurveyUSA urges all who examine these results to not put too fine a point on the 3 points that separate "Yes" and "No" today. In 3 SurveyUSA tracking polls over the past month, Proposition 8 has been fiercely fought, and effectively even, all 3 times. "No" nominally led by 5 points on 09/25/08. "Yes" nominally led by 5 points on 10/06/08. The movement from 10/06/08 to today is not necessarily statistically significant. What remains clear today: Those in the Inland Empire and the Central Valley continue to want the law changed. Those in the Bay Area continue to want the law left alone. Those in greater LA remain split. Men, seniors, gun owners, the less well educated and the more religious, support 8. Women, Democrats, liberals and Pro-Choice voters oppose. Young voters, upper-income voters, white voters, moderates and Independents split. There is no meaningful difference between how those who have already voted, and those who promise SurveyUSA they will, see the measure.

Filtering / Context / Caveats: SurveyUSA interviewed 800 California adults 10/15/08 and 10/16/08. Of the adults, 710 were registered to vote. Of the registered voters, 614 were determined by SurveyUSA to have already voted, or to be likely to vote on or before election day. There is a challenge in any ballot measure polling as to how much of the ballot language to read to respondents. What is read to respondents influences how they respond. Here is exactly what SurveyUSA read to respondents on this question: "Proposition 8 would eliminate the right of Same-Sex Couples to marry. It changes the California Constitution so that only marriage between a man and a woman is valid in California. On Proposition 8, are you ... Certain to vote yes? Certain to vote no? Or not certain?" Separately, there is a challenge to polling on topics that have an emotional "charge" to them, such as same-sex marriage. Respondents may tell pollsters one thing and do another. Third, there is a challenge on polling a ballot measure with a "double-negative." In the case of Proposition 8, a "Yes" vote says "No" to same-sex marriage and a "No" vote says "Yes" to same-sex marriage. SurveyUSA has tried to construct the poll question in such a way that respondent confusion over what a "Yes" vote does and what a "No" vote does is minimized, but conceptual confusion remains a possibility in such cases.

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Proposition 8 would eliminate the right of Same-Sex Couples to marry. It changes the California Constitution so that only marriage between a man and a woman is valid in California. On Proposition 8, are you ... Certain to vote yes?
Certain to vote no?
Or not certain?

615 Likely Voters	All	Gender		Age				<50 / 50+		Race				Party Affiliation			Ideology			Already Voted?		College Grad	Attend Religious Service			Abortion		Own a Gun?				
Credibility Interval: +/-4 pct points		Male	Female	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+	18-49	50+	White	Black	Hispani	Asian/O	Republi	Democr	Indepe	Conser	Modera	Liberal	Actual	Likely V	Yes	No	Regular	Occasi	Almost	Pro-life	Pro-cho	Yes	No		
Yes		48%	53%	42%	44%	47%	46%	57%	45%	51%	48%	58%	47%	42%	73%	33%	42%	79%	45%	21%	49%	47%	45%	51%	65%	48%	31%	80%	31%	56%	43%	
No		45%	41%	48%	46%	46%	50%	35%	46%	43%	47%	38%	41%	48%	23%	58%	52%	18%	47%	72%	46%	45%	49%	40%	31%	40%	61%	18%	59%	37%	50%	
Not Certain		7%	5%	9%	11%	7%	4%	8%	9%	6%	6%	4%	12%	10%	4%	10%	6%	3%	8%	7%	4%	8%	7%	9%	4%	12%	8%	2%	10%	8%	8%	
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Composition of Likely Voters		100%	48%	52%	24%	33%	24%	19%	57%	43%	59%	6%	23%	12%	33%	48%	18%	26%	42%	25%	19%	81%	54%	46%	35%	28%	37%	32%	65%	31%	65%	

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615 Likely Voters	All	Income		Region				
Credibility Interval: +/-4 pct points		< \$50K	> \$50K	Central	Greater	Inland	Bay Are	
Yes	48%	49%	47%	57%	48%	52%	37%	
No	45%	43%	46%	36%	44%	42%	55%	
Not Certain	7%	7%	8%	7%	9%	5%	8%	
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
Composition of Likely Voters	100%	32%	68%	19%	39%	18%	24%	

: KABC-TV Los Angeles, KFSN-TV Fresno, KGTV-TV San Diego, KPIX-TV San Francisco

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Statement of Methodology: About the Poll: This poll was conducted by telephone in the voice of a professional announcer. Respondent households were selected at random, using Random Digit Dialed (RDD) sample provided by Survey Sampling, of Fairfield CT. All respondents heard the questions asked identically. The pollster's report includes the geography that was surveyed; the date(s) interviews were conducted, the number of respondents who answered each question and the theoretical margin of sampling error for each question. Where necessary, respondents were weighted using the most recent US Census estimates for age, gender, ethnic origin and region, to align the sample to the population. In theory, one can say with 95% certainty that the results would not vary by more than the stated margin of sampling error, in one direction or the other, had the entire universe of respondents with home telephones been interviewed with complete accuracy. There are other possible sources of error in all surveys that may be more serious than sampling error. These include: the difficulty of interviewing respondents who do not have a home telephone; the refusal by some with home telephones to be interviewed; the order in which questions are asked; the wording of questions; the way and extent to which data are weighted; and the manner in which specialized populations, such as likely voters, are determined. It is difficult to quantify the errors that may result from these and other factors. Research methodology, questionnaire design and fieldwork for this survey were completed by SurveyUSA of Clifton, NJ. This statement conforms to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.