



TO: Interested Parties  
RE: Freedom to Marry Research Update Memo  
DATE: March 7, 2013  
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- In May of 2011 we released a memorandum illustrating that growth in support for the freedom to marry had accelerated. The 2012 elections confirmed this trend.
  - While all prior attempts at the ballot box had failed, in 2012 all 4 states with ballot questions on the issue voted to support the freedom to marry.
- An analysis of the 2012 exit polls conducted on Election Day confirm another key insight: **Significant opposition to the freedom to marry is increasingly isolated within narrow demographic groups while a much broader and more diverse majority are ready to let same-sex couples marry.**
- The fact that a majority now support the freedom to marry, after significant and relatively rapid growth, has been well-documented.
  - Nearly all public data tracking these trends indicate that support outweighs opposition.
  - Publicly released polling since November 2012 shows that support for the freedom to marry now stands at roughly 53% of the voting public.
  - Moreover, polls show that opposition to DOMA is even higher: 59% oppose the federal government withholding equal benefits and protections from legally married same-sex couples. <sup>i</sup>

***A Broad And Diverse Majority Support The Freedom to Marry, While Opposition Is Increasingly Isolated***

- **Exit polls show that while voters age 65 or older (16% of the population) oppose letting same-sex couples marry by wide margins, support for the freedom to marry outweighs opposition among voters under 65 (84% of the population).** <sup>ii</sup>
  - Among voters over 65, opposition outweighs support by 21 points (37% support/58% oppose).
  - But a majority of voters under age 65 support the freedom to marry, by a margin of 8 points (52% support the freedom to marry while 44% oppose).
- Even more dramatically, exit polls show that **all voters besides white evangelical Christians support the freedom to marry (58% support, just 36% oppose).** By contrast, white evangelical Christians reject the freedom to marry by overwhelming margins (24% support/73% oppose).

- Indeed, **all major non-evangelical religious groups are ready to legalize marriage for same-sex couples:**
  - White non-evangelical Protestants: 54% support/43% oppose
  - White Catholics: 53% support/43% oppose
  - Hispanic Catholics: 54% support/35% oppose
  - African-American non-evangelical: 65% support/31% oppose
  - Jewish: 78% support/21% oppose
- **White non-college graduates represent another small pocket of opposition.** While they oppose the freedom to marry by a wide margin (40% support/56% oppose), **all other slices of the electorate support it:**
  - Non-white non-college graduates: 54% support/38% oppose
  - White college graduates: 56% support/41% oppose
  - Non-white college graduates: 58% support/35% oppose
- While exit polls proved that 2012 voters from the left and middle of the partisan spectrum support the freedom to marry by wide margins...
  - Democrats: 68% support/27% oppose
  - **Independents: 54% support/40% oppose**
- **...Opposition to allowing same-sex couples to marry is near universal among Tea Party supporters, but significant numbers of other Republicans support the freedom to marry.**
  - Republicans who oppose the Tea Party: 47% support/52% oppose
  - Republicans neutral to the Tea Party: 34% support/62% oppose
  - Republicans who support the Tea Party: 13% support/84% oppose
  - **Moreover, a majority of the next generation of Republicans supports the freedom to marry, even as the old guard of the party remains opposed.**
    - Among Republicans under age 30, 51% support the legalization of same-sex marriage in their state, while 46% oppose.
- **Among voters under 65, there is widespread consensus across racial groups in favor of the freedom to marry:**
  - Whites under 65: 50% support/46% oppose
  - African-Americans under 65: 51% support/40% oppose
  - Hispanics under 65: 60% support/31% oppose
- Finally, regardless of their own position on the issue, most voters believe that same-sex couples will win the freedom to marry nationally: 83% of voters say it will be legal nationally in the next 5-10 years.<sup>iii</sup>
- Given all the above data, and other data and trends we've seen, it is clear that **opponents of the freedom to marry are both on the wrong side of a majority of Americans and on the wrong side of history.**

i Goodwin-Simon Strategic Research, January 23-27, 2013, 802 registered voters nationwide (margin of error +/- 3.5%) [LINK](#)

ii All exit poll data comes from Edison Research's November 6, 2012 General Election Exit Polls (5322 Election Day voters; margin of error +/- 2.0%; "Should your state legally recognize same-sex marriage?")

iii Anzalone Liszt Grove Research, January 24-30, 2013 800 registered voters nationwide (margin of error +/-3.5%) [LINK](#)