

October 17, 2013

**To: Bernard Cherkasov, CEO and Randy Hannig, Director of Public Policy  
 Equality Illinois**  
**From: Dave Fako, President and Jane Rayburn, Research Director  
 Fako & Associates, Inc.**  
**RE: Equality Illinois Statewide Assessment Summary Memo**

**Illinois' Voters Support Marriage Equality**

In a statewide survey of registered likely voters, the majority of the electorate says that they support legalization of marriage for gay and lesbian couples in the state of Illinois. Respondents were also given information about the Supreme Court's decision regarding the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), as well as balanced information both supporting and opposing marriage equality. In each case, support held steady, with the majority favoring legalization of same sex marriage. Demographic subgroups of interest voiced strong support in favor of a law that would permit gay and lesbian couples equal rights to marriage.

**Figure 1  
 Opinion of Legalizing Marriage for Gay & Lesbian Couples**

Q3. Now, would you **support or oppose [Rotate Choices]** a law that would legalize marriage for gay and lesbian couples in Illinois? **(WOULD THAT BE STRONGLY SUPPORT/OPOSE OR SOMEWHAT SUPPORT/OPOSE?)**

A majority (52%) of registered likely voters across Illinois say they would support a law legalizing marriage for gay and lesbian couples, while 40% say they would oppose it. Just 8% of voters are undecided. Of the slightly more than half in favor of the law, nearly four out of ten (37%) say they would strongly support it.

**Table 1  
 Opinion of Legalizing Marriage for Gay & Lesbian Couples  
 Among Demographic Subgroups of Interest**

Subgroups	Support	Strongly Support	Oppose	Undecided
Women	57	44	34	9
Independent Women	59	43	33	8
African Americans	55	39	36	9
Hispanics	63	51	29	9
Catholics	61	47	32	8

**Considering DOMA, Support of Gay & Lesbian Marriage Increases**

**Figure 2  
Opinion of Legalizing Marriage for Gay & Lesbian Couples  
With DOMA SCOTUS Decision Information**

Q4. As you may know, in June of this year, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a section of the Defense of Marriage Act was unconstitutional, which now allows married gay and lesbian couples and their families to gain access to federal benefits associated with marriage. There are over eleven hundred (1,100) federal laws and protections based on marital status, including the ability to file federal taxes jointly; spousal benefits for federal employees, veterans, and military personnel; and the ability to take unpaid time off work to care for a sick or dying spouse. Gay and lesbian couples in Illinois do not have access to any of these protections and responsibilities for their families because same-sex marriage is not legal in Illinois.

Knowing this information, would you **support or oppose [Rotate Choices]** a law that would legalize marriage for gay and lesbian couples in Illinois? **(WOULD THAT BE STRONGLY SUPPORT/OPOSE OR SOMEWHAT SUPPORT/OPOSE?)**

When given information about the Supreme Court ruling designating the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) unconstitutional, support increases to 54% (+2%) and opposition falls to 39% (-1%). Undecided voters make up 6% of the electorate in this scenario.

**Table 2  
Opinion of Legalizing Marriage for Gay & Lesbian Couples  
With DOMA SCOTUS Decision Information  
Among Demographic Subgroups of Interest**

<b>Subgroups</b>	<b>Support</b>	<b>Strongly Support</b>	<b>Oppose</b>	<b>Undecided</b>
Women	59	49	34	7
Independent Women	59	44	32	9
African Americans	61	49	33	6
Hispanics	70	59	25	5
Catholics	64	50	31	5

**Majority support of legalizing marriage for gay & lesbian couples is maintained after hearing balanced information is favor of and against legalization**

**Figure 3  
Informed Opinion of Legalizing Marriage for Gay & Lesbian Couples**

Q5. Now, I'd like to give you a little more information about the issue of legalizing marriage for gay and lesbian couples in Illinois from the perspective of supporters and opponents.

**Supporters**, including President Obama, Senator Dick Durbin, Senator Mark Kirk, labor, business and civil rights organizations, and many clergy say all loving, committed couples should have the security and protections of marriage. Supporters say that since the United States Supreme Court ruled the federal government must treat married same-sex couples fairly, it is important that Illinois' gay and lesbian couples be allowed to marry so they have access to critical federal protections – like family and medical leave and spousal benefits for veterans and military personnel – that strengthen families.

**Opponents**, including Chicago Archdiocese Cardinal George, Springfield Bishop Paprocki, many clergy, business leaders and non-profit organizations say that marriage should only be between one man and one woman, and legalization of same-sex marriage redefines marriage. Opponents say legalizing gay marriage denies children a traditional family with a father and mother, validates the homosexual lifestyle, and will force acceptance of gay marriage through the power of government by forcing businesses and non-profits to provide services for gay couples.

Now, knowing this information, would you **support or oppose [Rotate Choices]** a law that would legalize marriage for gay and lesbian couples in Illinois? **(WOULD THAT BE STRONGLY SUPPORT/OPOSE OR SOMEWHAT SUPPORT/OPOSE?)**

In the scenario where voters are given balanced information about both positions on gay and lesbian marriage, a majority (53%) still say they would support legalization, while 41% of the electorate says they're opposed to legalization. Just 5% of the electorate is undecided.

**Table 3  
Informed Opinion of Legalizing Marriage for Gay & Lesbian Couples  
Among Demographic Subgroups of Interest**

Subgroups	Support	Strongly Support	Oppose	Undecided
Women	59	49	35	5
Independent Women	61	45	29	9
African Americans	58	46	36	6
Hispanics	68	61	26	6
Catholics	63	49	31	6

Notably, Catholics remain supportive after hearing arguments against legalization, which specifically mentions their Church leadership's opposition.

**Methodology:** Equality Illinois commissioned the survey. Fako & Associates, Inc., of Lisle, Illinois conducted the survey by telephone on October 8 – 10, 2013 using professional interviewers. F&A interviewed a random sample of 600 likely voters in the November 2014 General Election within the State of Illinois. A strict screening process was used to ensure that only likely General Election voters participated in the survey. The interviews lasted an average of 6 minutes.

Scientific sampling techniques using a listing of registered voters were used to give all voters living in a telephone-equipped household, or with a listed cell phone number within Illinois, an equal chance of being interviewed. Cellular phones were included within the sample and accounted for 130 (22%) of completed weighted interviews. The interviews were conducted in proportion to gender and regional shares of the vote based on known election turnout data and demographics. Weighting was applied to age and gender to bring these groups into closer proportion to known demographics. The survey has a margin of error of +/- 3.94% at the 95% level of confidence. This means that if the survey were replicated the results would be consistent for 95 out of 100 cases. The margin of error is higher among the various sub-groups.