

Obama's views on gays OK with most voters

by [David Gibson](#) in the [June 13, 2012](#) issue

President Obama's recent endorsement of same-sex marriage opened a torrent of speculation on what his newly enunciated position will mean politically, but the latest polls indicate that the public largely backs his views and that his stance may not hurt him at the ballot box.

A Gallup poll in early May showed that by a 54-42 percent margin, American adults consider gay and lesbian relations "morally acceptable." The level of approval has grown steadily since 2002, when it stood at 38 percent—so much so that Gallup considers the current situation "the new normal" in U.S. public opinion.

Another Gallup survey taken on May 10, a day after Obama announced his "evolution" in thinking on gay marriage, showed that 60 percent of Americans said it would make no difference in how they will vote in November, while 13 percent said it would make them more likely to vote for him and 26 percent said it would make them less likely to vote for him.

Twenty-three percent of independents said Obama's support for gay marriage would make them less likely to vote for him, a statistic that is already raising hopes among conservative activists.

"The six in ten Americans who say Obama's position on same-sex marriage will not affect their vote could be an underestimate because Republicans disproportionately make up the group who say they are less likely to vote for Obama, and Democrats disproportionately make up the group who say they are more likely to vote for him," wrote Gallup analyst Jeffrey M. Jones.

"It is probably safe to assume, given the strong relationship between party identification and vote choice, that most of those voters would have voted for or against Obama regardless of his views on gay marriage." Respondents were closely divided on whether they backed Obama's position, with 51 percent approving and 45 percent disapproving. —RNS