

Mixed ballot results on 'values' issues: November 2005 elections

by [Religion News Service staff](#) in the [November 29, 2005](#) issue

Religious conservatives lost electoral fights to pass an abortion law in California, overturn gay-rights legislation in Maine and defeat a bond issue in Ohio that critics said could fund embryonic stem cell research. However, the right claimed victory in Texas as voters overwhelmingly approved a measure November 8 bolstering the state's ban on same-sex marriage.

Elsewhere, voters in the Dover, Pennsylvania, school district ousted all eight Republican incumbents in favor of Democratic challengers who pledged to eliminate a policy requiring the teaching of intelligent design alongside evolution.

Among the results:

- A California measure that would have required doctors to notify the parents of teenage girls seeking abortions failed, with 53 percent voting against it. Catholic and many conservative Protestant churches spoke in favor. It was one of several ballot initiatives defeated despite backing from Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.
- Maine voters upheld a law that bans discrimination based on sexual orientation. In 1998 and 2000 Maine voters had rejected gay rights measures.
- Fifty-four percent of Ohio voters supported State Issue 1, a \$2 billion ballot measure for bridges, roads and infrastructure repairs that includes \$500 million for research and development. Antiabortion groups opposed the measure, saying they feared taxpayer money could be used to finance embryonic stem cell research.
- By a 3-to-1 margin, Texas became the 18th state to write a ban on same-sex marriage into its constitution. Many churches supported the amendment.
- The Dover school board incumbents were defeated in a small Pennsylvania town that is in the national spotlight over its teaching of intelligent design. The district's requirement that a statement on intelligent design be read to ninth-grade students at the start of a science unit on evolution sparked a lawsuit and then a six-week trial

in federal court that ended November 4. The judge's decision in the case is expected in January. -*Religion News Service*