



**THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER**  
**For The People & The Press**

***NEWS Release***

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
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## Independents Mostly Unmoved Half Say View of Obama Not Affected by Gay Marriage Decision

Roughly half of Americans (52%) say Barack Obama's expression of support for gay marriage did not affect their opinion of the president. A quarter (25%) say they feel less favorably toward Obama because of this while 19% feel more favorably.

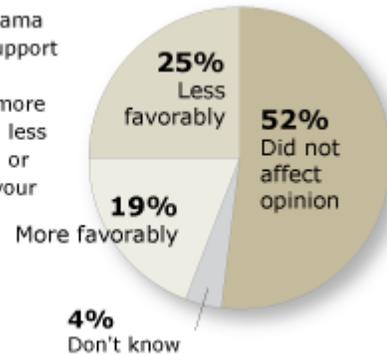
There are wide partisan and age differences in reactions to Obama's expression of support for gay marriage, according to the latest weekly survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, conducted May 10-13 among 1,003 adults.

About half of Republicans (53%) say they feel less favorably toward Obama because of his support for gay marriage. By contrast, 60% of independents and 52% of Democrats say their view of Obama has not changed. Among independents, as many say they feel less favorably as more favorably toward Obama as a result of his gay marriage decision (19% each). Far more Democrats say they feel more favorably than less favorably toward Obama (32% vs. 13%).

Among those 65 and older, 42% say they feel less favorably toward Obama, while just 15% feel more favorably; 38% say their opinion of Obama is unchanged as a result of his expression of support for gay marriage. Among younger age groups, half or more –

### Reactions to Obama's Support for Gay Marriage

Did President Obama expressing his support for gay marriage make you think more favorably of him, less favorably of him, or did it not affect your opinion?



PEW RESEARCH CENTER May 10-13, 2012. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

including 62% of those under 30 – say their opinion of Obama was unaffected by his gay marriage announcement.

The opinions of whites largely reflect the population as a whole: 49% say Obama’s expression of support for gay marriage did not alter their opinion of the president. Among those who say it did, somewhat more say it made their view of him less favorable than more (29% vs. 20%). Most African Americans, on the other hand, say the announcement did not alter their opinion of Obama. About two-thirds (68%) say this, while about as many say it made them view Obama more favorably (16%) as less favorably (13%).

Obama’s expression of support for gay marriage comes at a time when the public’s support for allowing gays and lesbians to marry is growing. According to a recent Pew Research survey, 47% now say they favor allowing gay marriage while 43% oppose this. In 2008, 51% opposed allowing gay marriage, while 39% favored it. (See: [“More Support for Gun Rights, Gay Marriage than in 2008 or 2004.”](#) April 25, 2012.)

### Republicans React Negatively; Independents Mostly Unmoved

	More favorably %	Less favorably %	Had no effect %	DK %	N
Total	19	25	52	4=100	1003
Republican	7	53	38	2=100	255
Democrat	32	13	52	3=100	309
Independent	19	19	60	2=100	329
18-29	22	13	62	3=100	157
30-49	22	19	56	4=100	212
50-64	18	31	50	1=100	284
65+	15	42	38	5=100	287
Men	17	24	55	4=100	455
Women	20	26	49	4=100	548
White	20	29	49	2=100	721
Black	16	13	68	3=100	97
College grad	30	25	43	1=100	329
Some college	17	25	56	3=100	307
HS or less	14	26	56	4=100	339

PEW RESEARCH CENTER May 10-13, 2012. Whites and blacks are non-Hispanic. Insufficient Hispanic respondents to report on reliably. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

## About the Survey

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted May 10-13, 2012, among a national sample of 1,003 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (603 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 400 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 195 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see: <http://people-press.org/methodology/>.

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and region to parameters from the March 2011 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status, based on extrapolations from the 2011 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size within the landline sample. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The following table shows the sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Plus or minus ...</b>
Total sample	1,003	3.6 percentage points
Men	455	5.4 percentage points
Women	548	4.9 percentage points
White	721	4.3 percentage points
Black	97	11.6 percentage points
18-29	157	9.1 percentage points
30-49	212	7.8 percentage points
50-64	284	6.8 percentage points
65+	287	6.7 percentage points
Republicans	255	7.2 percentage points
Democrats	309	6.5 percentage points
Independents	329	6.3 percentage points
College grad+	329	6.3 percentage points
Some college	307	6.5 percentage points
High school or less	339	6.2 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER  
MAY 10-13, 2012 OMNIBUS  
FINAL TOPLINE  
N=1,003**

**NO QUESTIONS PEW.1 OR PEW.4**

**PEW.2 AND PEW.3 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

**ASK ALL:**

PEW.5 Did President Obama expressing his support for gay marriage make you think [**RANDOMIZE:** more favorably of him / less favorably of him], or did it not affect your opinion of Barack Obama?

May 10-13

2012

19	More favorably
25	Less favorably
52	Did not affect opinion
4	Don't know/Refused ( <b>VOL.</b> )