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For Immediate Release

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ARIZONANS OPPOSE GAY MARRIAGE AMENDMENT; SUPPORT CIVIL UNIONS AND BENEFITS FOR SAME-SEX COUPLES

Despite their general opposition to gay marriage, a majority of Arizonans oppose amending the United States Constitution to outlaw it, according to findings from a recent *Grand Canyon State Poll*. An increasing majority of Arizonans also support allowing same-sex couples to form civil unions and to share health insurance and Social Security benefits, in the same way that married couples do.

The *Grand Canyon State Poll* was conducted by the Social Research Laboratory at Northern Arizona University. Calling took place between February 27 and March 3, 2004. Four hundred and ten randomly-selected Arizonans participated in the survey and results are accurate within a +/- 5 percent margin of error, at a 95 percent confidence level.

HANDS OFF THE CONSTITUTION

Opposition to gay marriage in Arizona seems to be increasing. Sixty percent of Arizonans oppose allowing same-sex couples to wed, up from 54 percent in October. And while in 2003, 52 percent thought that the state of Arizona should recognize legal gay marriages conducted in other states, only 44 percent now agree. Despite this opposition, 54 percent of Arizonans oppose amending the US Constitution to prohibit gay marriage, while 41 percent support such an amendment. A similar amendment to the Arizona state Constitution was opposed by 50 percent of Arizonans and supported by 45 percent. The strongest support for an

amendment to either the US or Arizona Constitution is among those who identify themselves as “very religious” (60% and 61%, respectively).

Arizonans’ views on this issue are tied to their gender, religiosity, and acquaintance with gay people. Women are more likely than men to support same-sex marriage (37% vs. 30%). People who consider themselves “not very religious” back same-sex marriage more than those who are “very religious” (62% vs. 19%). Thirty-six percent of those who personally know someone who is gay support gay marriage, as opposed to just 21% of those who do not.

INCREASING SUPPORT FOR CIVIL UNIONS, BENEFITS

While opposition to gay marriage on the rise, so is support for giving same-sex couples many of the same rights and benefits as married men and women. Fifty-seven percent of Arizonans favor allowing gay couples to enter into civil unions, up from 53 percent last year. Over three-quarters (80%) of those who self-identify as “not very religious” favor civil unions, while just 38 percent of those who consider themselves “very religious” support them. Sixty-three percent of Arizonans favor allowing same-sex couples to share health insurance coverage from one partner’s job, in the same way a married couple can, up from 59 percent in 2003. Fifty-five percent of Arizonans, up from 50 percent last year, would allow the surviving member of a same-sex couple to receive Social Security benefits when their partner dies, just as married individuals can.

“This issue is gaining attention across the nation,” says Kristi Hagen, Associate Director of the Social Research Laboratory. “As more cities move towards allowing same-sex marriages, this topic is becoming a bigger controversy in the upcoming presidential election as well as state and local politics.”



Social Research Laboratory, Northern Arizona University

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**GRAND CANYON STATE POLL
BACKGROUND MEMO**

Spring 2004

The *Grand Canyon State Poll* was conducted between February 27 and March 3, 2004. A random sample of 410 adult residents of Arizona was asked questions regarding gay marriage. Survey question results are subject to a sampling error of +/- 5 percent at a 95 percent confidence level. Sampling error is the probable difference in results between interviewing everyone in the population versus a scientific sample taken from the population. Sampling error does not take into account additional sources of error inherent in any study of public opinion. The data referred to in this release are presented below.

I am going to read you some proposals about the legal rights of gay and lesbian couples in Arizona. Please tell me whether you favor or oppose each proposal.

Do you favor or oppose allowing same-sex, that is gay and lesbian couples, to marry legally?

	2004			2003		
	Favor	Oppose	Count	Favor	Oppose	Count
Total	34%	60%	(400)	42%	54%	(594)
Female	37%	57%	(204)	48%	48%	(281)
Male	30%	63%	(196)	34%	61%	(285)
Knows someone gay	36%	59%	(319)	45%	50%	(455)
Does not know someone gay	21%	68%	(75)	30%	67%	(126)
Very religious	19%	81%	(130)	25%	70%	(163)
Somewhat religious	31%	59%	(168)	42%	55%	(270)
Not very religious	62%	32%	(82)	60%	34%	(117)

In a “civil union,” the state recognizes the relationship between two people, but doesn't consider them to be legally married. Do you favor or oppose allowing same-sex couples to form civil unions that would give them many of the same rights and benefits as a married man and woman?

	2004			2003		
	Favor	Oppose	Count	Favor	Oppose	Count
Total	57%	39%	(404)	53%	43%	(596)
Female	60%	36%	(203)	57%	38%	(283)
Male	54%	43%	(199)	49%	48%	(285)
Knows someone gay	60%	37%	(324)	58%	36%	(456)
Does not know someone gay	44%	51%	(75)	37%	60%	(126)
Very religious	38%	58%	(128)	38%	57%	(163)
Somewhat religious	60%	37%	(173)	52%	45%	(271)
Not very religious	80%	18%	(83)	71%	24%	(117)

Do you favor or oppose allowing same-sex couples to share the health insurance coverage from one partner's job, in the same way that a married man and woman can?

	2004			2003		
	Favor	Oppose	Count	Favor	Oppose	Count
Total	63%	33%	(405)	59%	36%	(594)
Female	61%	35%	(200)	65%	31%	(286)
Male	65%	31%	(203)	53%	42%	(281)
Knows someone gay	66%	30%	(325)	64%	32%	(458)
Does not know someone gay	50%	45%	(74)	42%	52%	(123)
Very religious	41%	55%	(130)	42%	51%	(163)
Somewhat religious	68%	28%	(173)	59%	37%	(270)
Not very religious	83%	13%	(82)	80%	19%	(117)

Do you favor or oppose allowing same-sex couples to get social security benefits when one partner dies, in the same way that a married man and woman can?

	2004			2003		
	Favor	Oppose	Count	Favor	Oppose	Count
Total	55%	41%	(401)	50%	45%	(594)
Female	56%	40%	(200)	57%	38%	(284)
Male	54%	42%	(200)	42%	53%	(283)
Knows someone gay	57%	39%	(321)	55%	41%	(459)
Does not know someone gay	49%	47%	(74)	32%	62%	(122)
Very religious	35%	59%	(128)	34%	58%	(175)
Somewhat religious	56%	38%	(172)	49%	47%	(271)
Not very religious	78%	22%	(83)	72%	28%	(117)

If a homosexual couple is legally married in another state and later moves to Arizona, should that marriage be legally recognized here or not?

	2004			2003		
	Yes	No	Count	Yes	No	Count
Total	44%	49%	(401)	52%	44%	(593)
Female	48%	45%	(200)	58%	36%	(282)
Male	39%	55%	(200)	44%	53%	(284)
Knows someone gay	45%	48%	(321)	56%	40%	(457)
Does not know someone gay	37%	60%	(74)	37%	59%	(122)
Very religious	27%	69%	(127)	37%	58%	(163)
Somewhat religious	43%	49%	(172)	50%	47%	(271)
Not very religious	68%	24%	(82)	69%	27%	(118)

Do you support or oppose adding an amendment to the US constitution that would make marriage for gay or lesbian couples illegal?

	Support	Oppose	Count
Total	41%	54%	(400)
Female	38%	56%	(201)
Male	43%	53%	(197)
Knows someone gay	39%	56%	(318)
Does not know someone gay	51%	40%	(73)
Very religious	60%	36%	(126)
Somewhat religious	38%	55%	(170)
Not very religious	19%	78%	(83)

Do you support or oppose adding an amendment to the Arizona state constitution that would make marriage for gay or lesbian couples illegal in the state?

	Support	Oppose	Count
Total	45%	50%	(398)
Female	44%	52%	(202)
Male	46%	49%	(194)
Knows someone gay	44%	52%	(319)
Does not know someone gay	52%	38%	(71)
Very religious	61%	34%	(128)
Somewhat religious	45%	48%	(168)
Not very religious	18%	78%	(83)

Do you personally know someone who is gay or lesbian, or not?

	2004			2003		
	Yes	No	Count	Yes	No	Count
Total	80%	19%	(406)	77%	21%	(596)