



**Marist  
Poll**



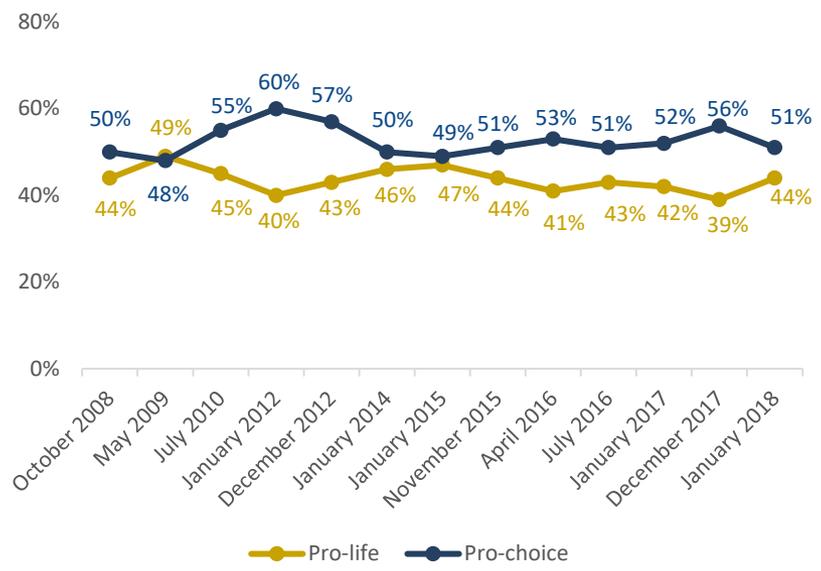
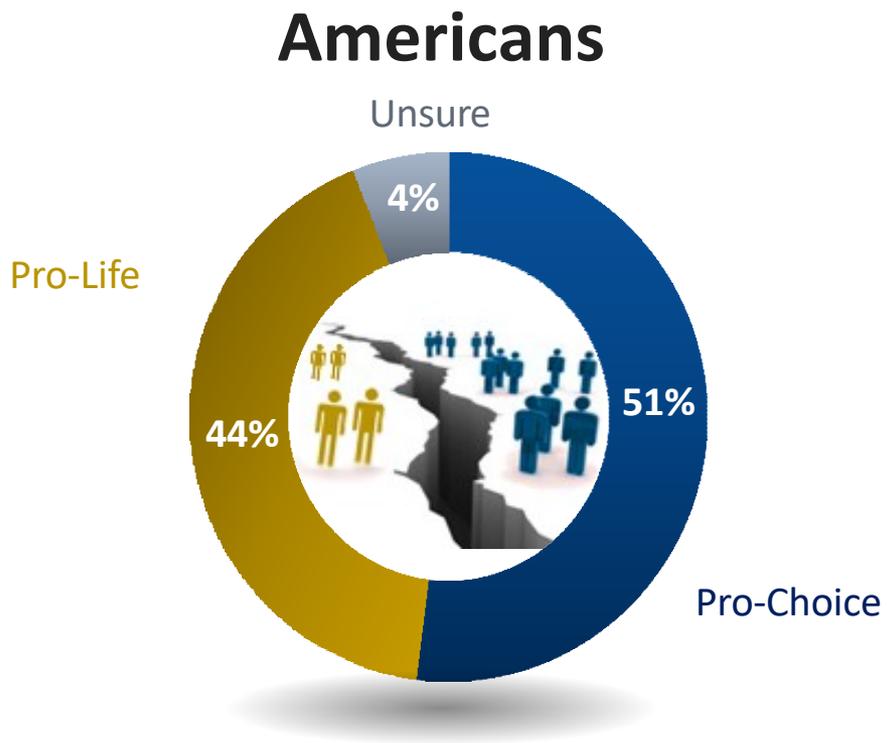
# Americans' Opinions on Abortion

January 2018

# When asked to align with one side of the abortion debate, a slim majority of Americans describe themselves as pro-choice.



On the issue of abortion, do you consider yourself pro-life or pro-choice?

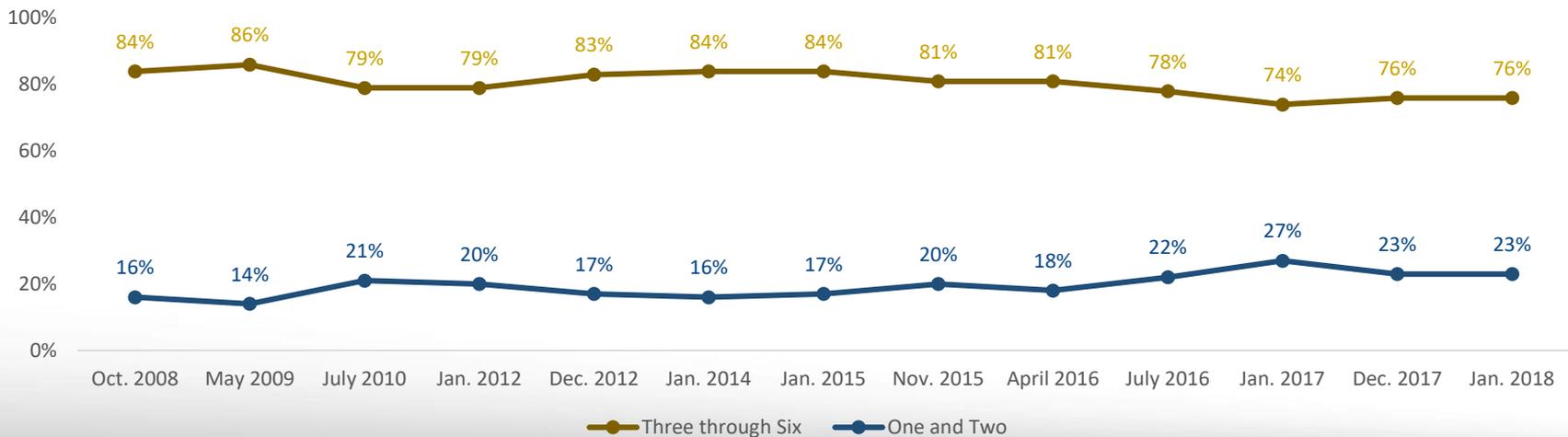


	Pro-Life	Pro-Choice	Unsure
Democrat	25%	72%	4%
Republican	76%	22%	2%
Independent	41%	55%	4%

# More than three in four Americans, including six in ten who identify as pro-choice, want significant restrictions on abortion.

Which comes closest to your opinion on abortion:

	Americans	Pro-Life	Pro-Choice
1 Available to a woman any time during her entire pregnancy	12%	2%	21%
2 Only during the first six months of a pregnancy	11%	3%	19%
3 Only during the first three months of a pregnancy	26%	8%	41%
4 Only in cases of rape, incest or to save the life of the mother	30%	46%	16%
5 Only to save the life of the mother	12%	23%	2%
6 Should never be permitted under any circumstance	8%	18%	1%



# More than six in ten Republicans, independents, and Democrats want significant restrictions on abortion.



Which comes closest to your opinion on abortion\*:

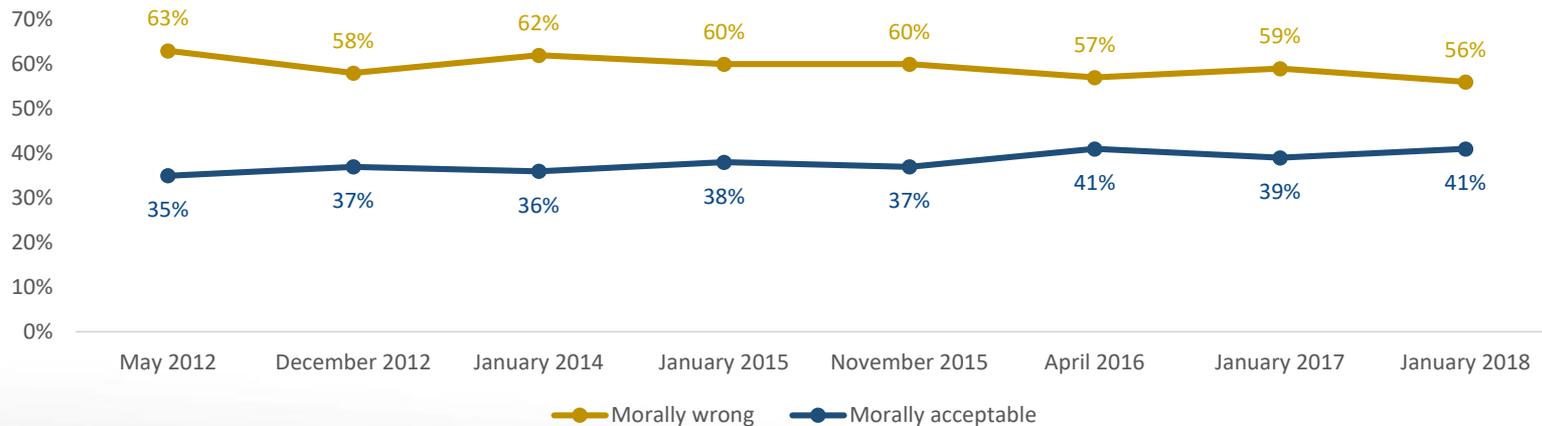
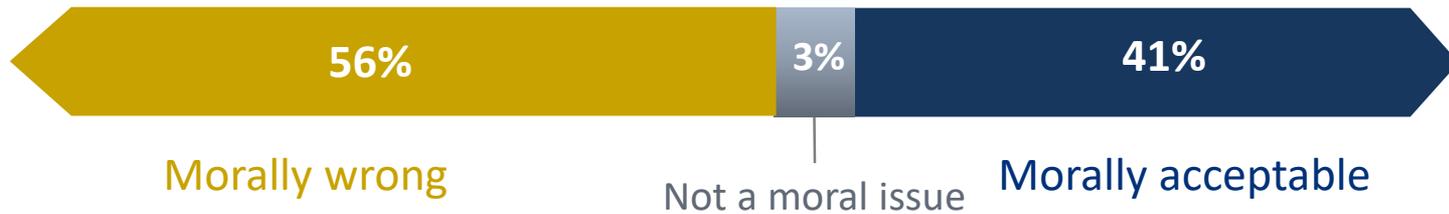
	Available to a woman any time during her entire pregnancy	Only during the first six months of a pregnancy	Want significant restrictions	Only during the first three months of a pregnancy	Only in cases of rape, incest or to save the life of the mother	Only to save the life of the mother	Should never be permitted under any circumstance
Democrat	21%	17%	61%	29%	19%	9%	4%
Republican	3%	5%	92%	15%	41%	19%	17%
Independent	13%	10%	78%	31%	30%	11%	6%

\*Which ONE of the following statements comes closest to your opinion on abortion: One, abortion should be available to a woman any time she wants one during her entire pregnancy, Two, abortion should be allowed only during the first six months of a pregnancy, Three, abortion should be allowed only during the first three months of a pregnancy, Four, abortion should be allowed only in cases of rape, incest or to save the life of the mother, Five, abortion should be allowed only to save the life of the mother, Six, abortion should never be permitted under any circumstance?

# A majority of Americans see abortion as morally wrong.

Whether Americans think access to abortion should be legal or not, more than half of Americans, 56%, believe abortion is morally wrong.

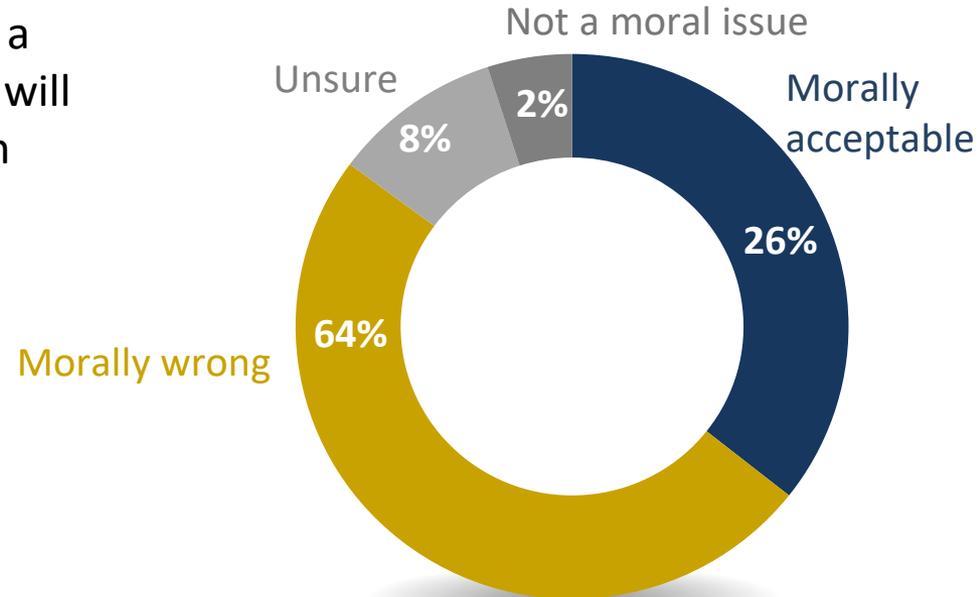
*Regardless of whether or not you think it should be legal, do you believe that, in general, abortion is morally acceptable or morally wrong?*



If it is likely a child will have a genetic disorder, more than six in ten Americans see having an abortion as morally wrong.

Nearly half of those who identify as pro-choice (49%), agree that it is morally wrong to abort a child based on the expectation that the baby will be born with a genetic disorder such as Down Syndrome.

## Americans



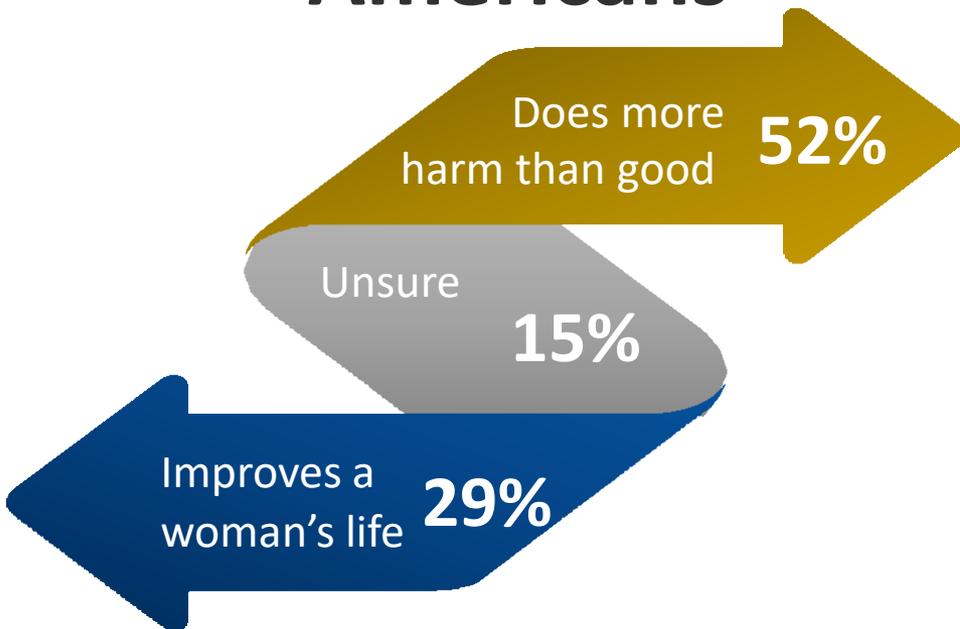
	Pro-life	Pro-choice
Morally acceptable	10%	39%
Morally wrong	84%	49%
Not a moral issue	1%	3%
Unsure	5%	9%

*Prenatal tests in many countries including the United States are able to determine how likely a child is to be born with a genetic disorder such as Down Syndrome. Regardless of whether or not you think it should be legal, do you believe it is morally acceptable or morally wrong to have an abortion because a child is likely to be born with Down Syndrome?*

# Does having an abortion improve a woman's life in the long run? A majority of Americans say no.

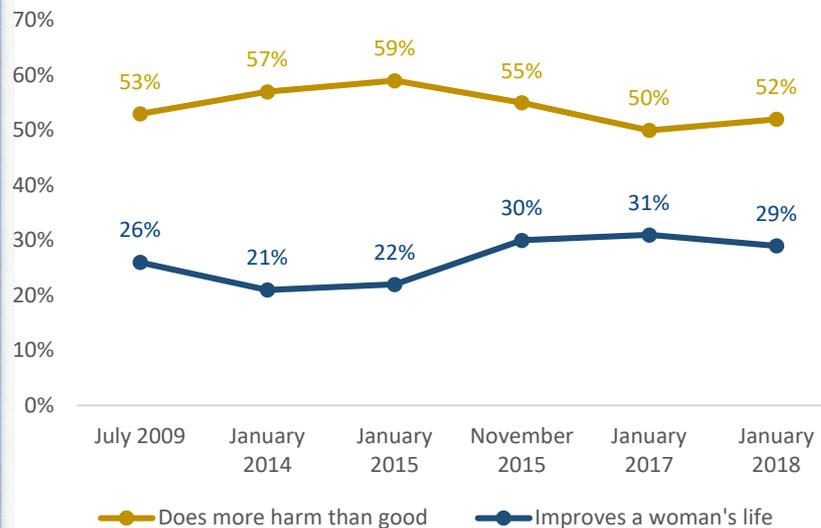
*In the long run, do you believe having an abortion improves a woman's life or in the long run do you believe abortion does more harm than good to a woman?*

## Americans



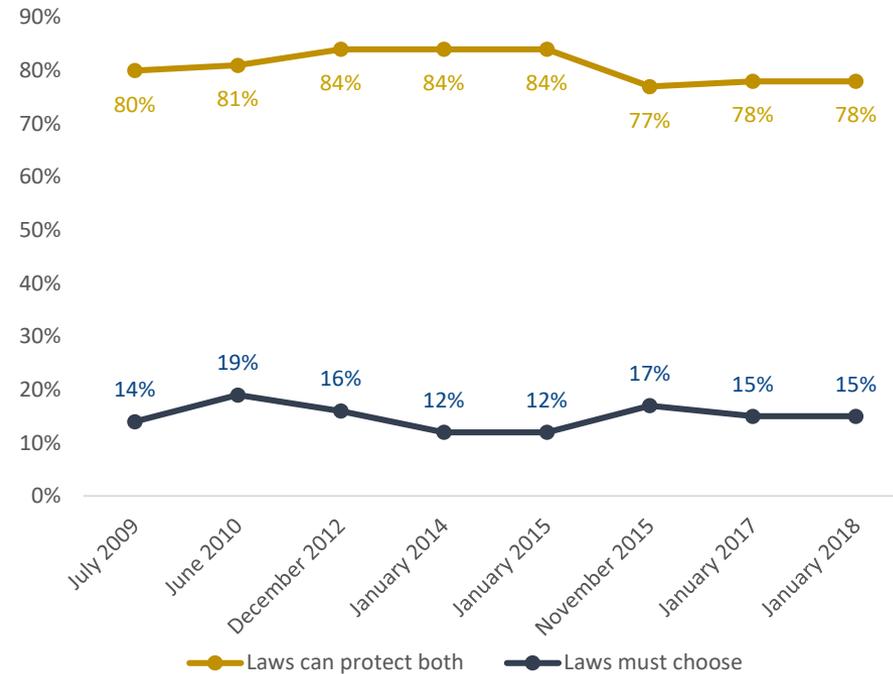
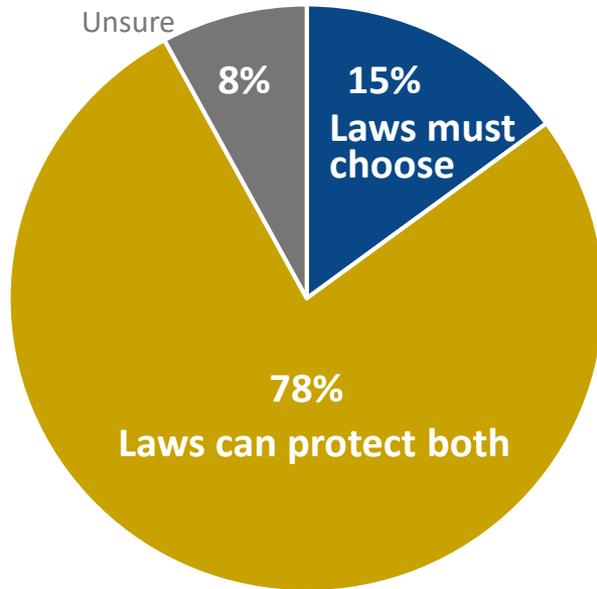
52% of residents say having an abortion is more likely to cause harm to a woman than it is to do her good. This includes one in four who consider themselves pro-choice.

	More harm than good	Improves a woman's life	Unsure
Pro-Life	85%	6%	7%
Pro-Choice	25%	50%	20%
Democrat	34%	44%	19%
Republican	73%	11%	12%
Independent	50%	30%	15%



# Laws can protect both a pregnant woman and the life of her unborn child according to nearly eight in ten Americans.

Which statement comes closer to your view: One, it is possible to have laws which protect both the health and well-being of a woman and the life of the unborn; or two, it is necessary for laws to choose to protect one and not the other?



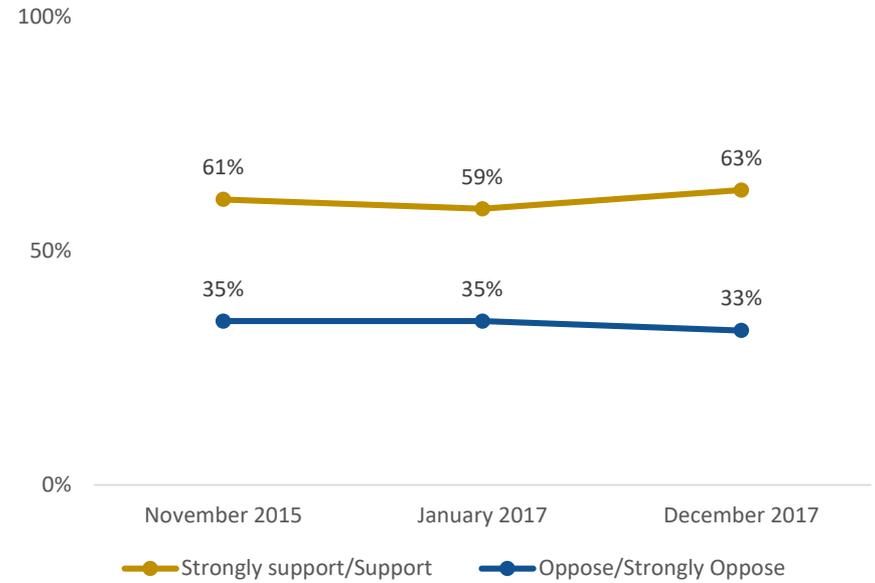
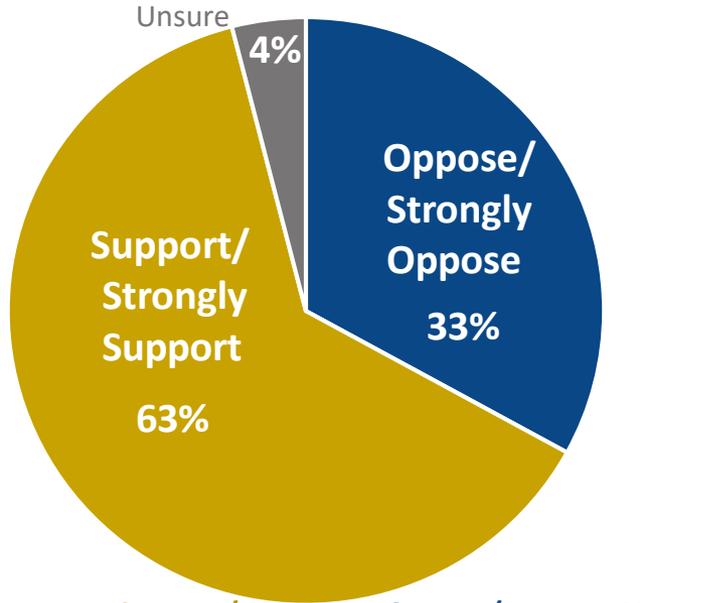
	Laws can protect both	Laws must choose	Unsure
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Pro-Life	84%	12%	5%
Pro-Choice	73%	18%	9%
Democrat	73%	18%	9%
Republican	83%	11%	5%
Independent	80%	12%	8%

Nearly three in four of those identifying as pro-choice (73%) and identifying as Democrats (73%) believe laws can protect both mother and her unborn child.

# More than six in ten Americans support a ban on abortion after 20 weeks of pregnancy.

*Please tell me if you strongly support, support, oppose, or strongly oppose banning abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy except to save the life of the mother.*



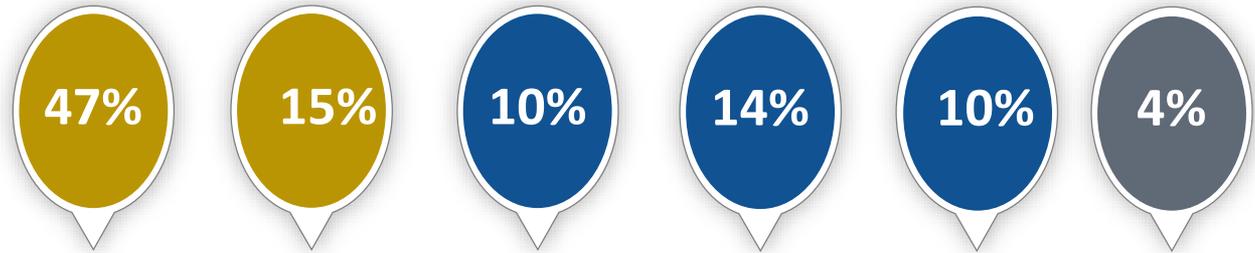
	Support/ Strongly Support	Oppose/ Strongly Oppose	Unsure
Pro-Life	74%	23%	3%
Pro-Choice	56%	40%	4%
Democrat	56%	40%	4%
Republican	73%	24%	3%
Independent	64%	32%	3%

The proportion of Americans who favor banning abortions after 20 weeks is up from 59% in January 2017. There has also been an increase in the number of Democrats (56%) that share this view compared to 49% a year ago.

# When Does Life Begin?

Regardless of party affiliation, more Americans believe life begins at conception than at any other point during a woman's pregnancy. More than six and ten Americans (62%) believe that life begins at least within the first three months of a woman's pregnancy.

## Americans



Do you believe life begins\*:

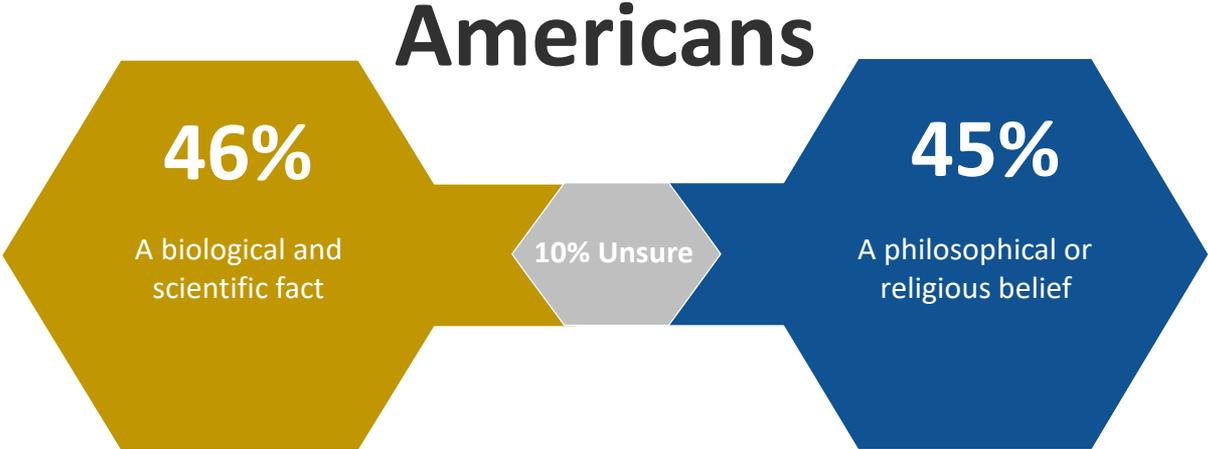
**At conception**   
 **First 3 months**   
 **3 - 6 months**   
**Viability outside the womb**   
**When a baby is born**   
**Unsure**

	At conception	First 3 months	3 - 6 months	Viability outside the womb	When a baby is born	Unsure
Democrat	32%	10%	14%	21%	17%	6%
Republican	72%	13%	3%	6%	4%	2%
Independent	44%	17%	8%	17%	10%	4%

\*Do you believe life begins: At conception, within the first three months, between three and six months, when a fetus is viable and can live outside the womb, or when a baby is born.

# Is the notion that human life begins at conception a religious belief or a scientific fact?

Is the statement "human life begins at conception":

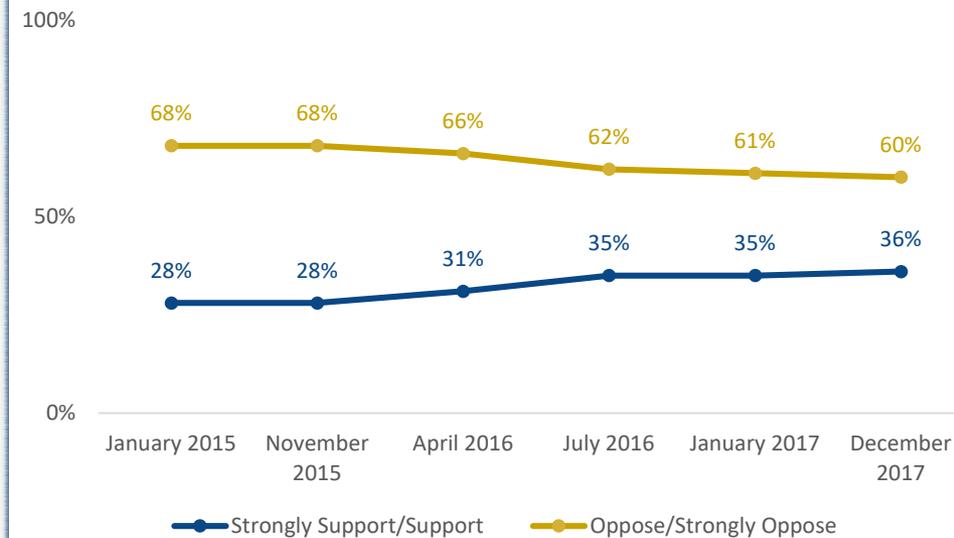
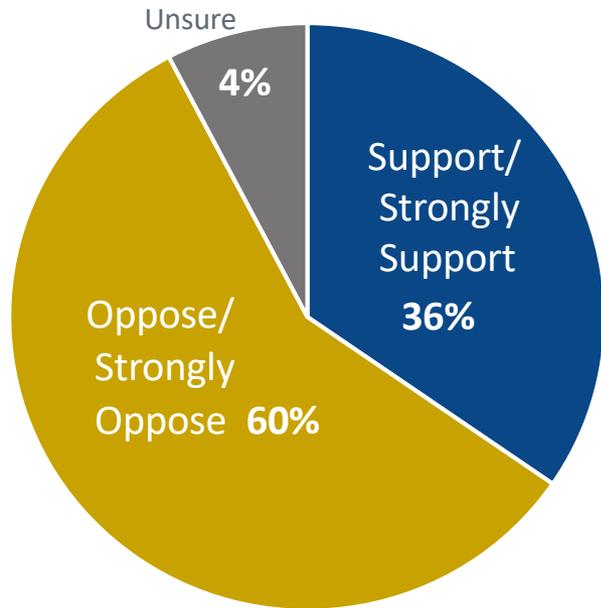


As many Americans (46%) believe the statement “ human life begins at conception” is a scientific fact, as those (45%) who consider it a philosophical or religious belief.

	A biological and scientific fact	A philosophical or religious belief	Unsure
Pro-life supporters	59%	30%	11%
Pro-choice supporters	35%	58%	6%
Democrat	36%	55%	8%
Republican	52%	39%	10%
Independent	49%	41%	10%

# Six in ten Americans oppose using tax dollars to pay for a woman's abortion.

Please tell me if you strongly support, support, oppose, or strongly oppose using tax dollars to pay for a woman's abortion.



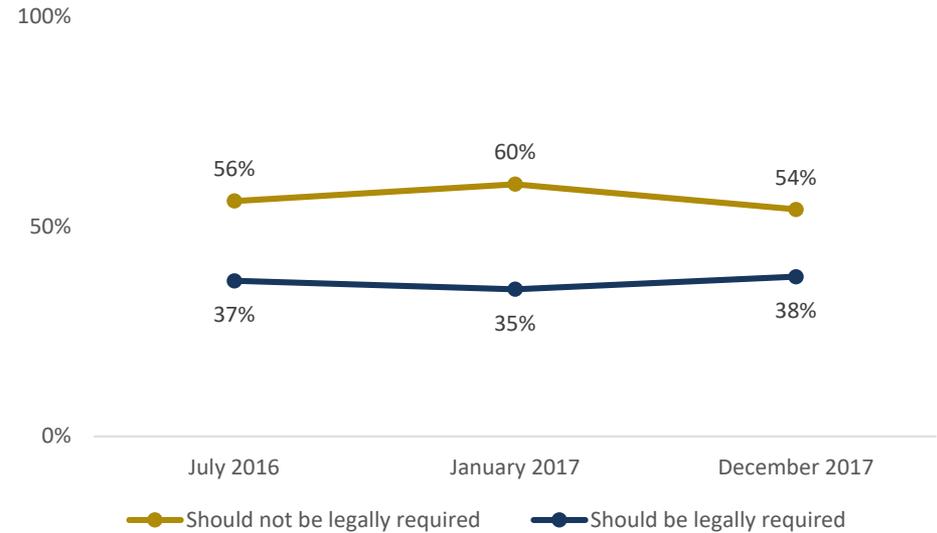
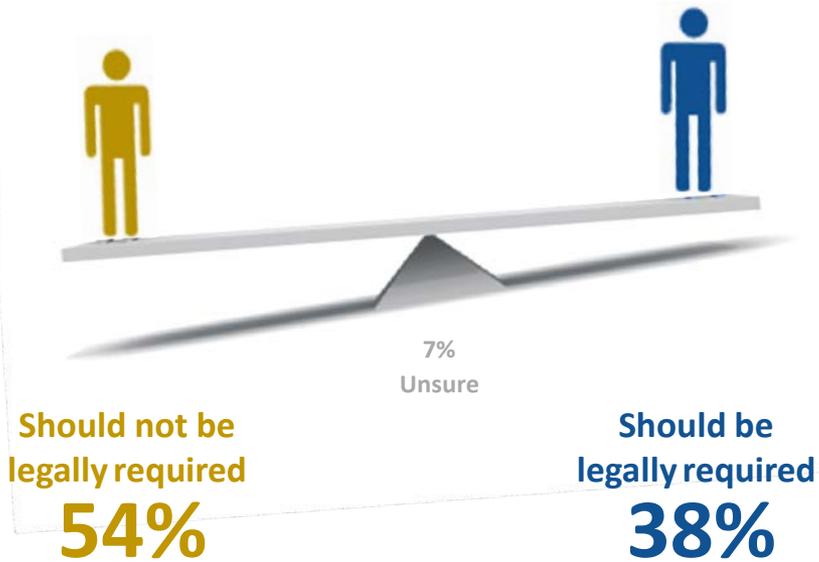
A majority of independents and a notable proportion of Democrats oppose tax payer funding of abortion.

	Strongly Support/Support	Oppose/Strongly Oppose	Unsure
Pro-Life	11%	87%	2%
Pro-Choice	54%	40%	5%
Democrat	51%	43%	5%
Republican	10%	89%	1%
Independent	39%	56%	5%

# A majority of Americans think those with moral objections should not be legally required to provide abortion services or insurance coverage.

*Do you think doctors, nurses, or organizations who have moral objections to abortion should or should not be legally required to perform or provide insurance coverage for abortions?*

## Americans



### Should not be legally required

### Should be legally required

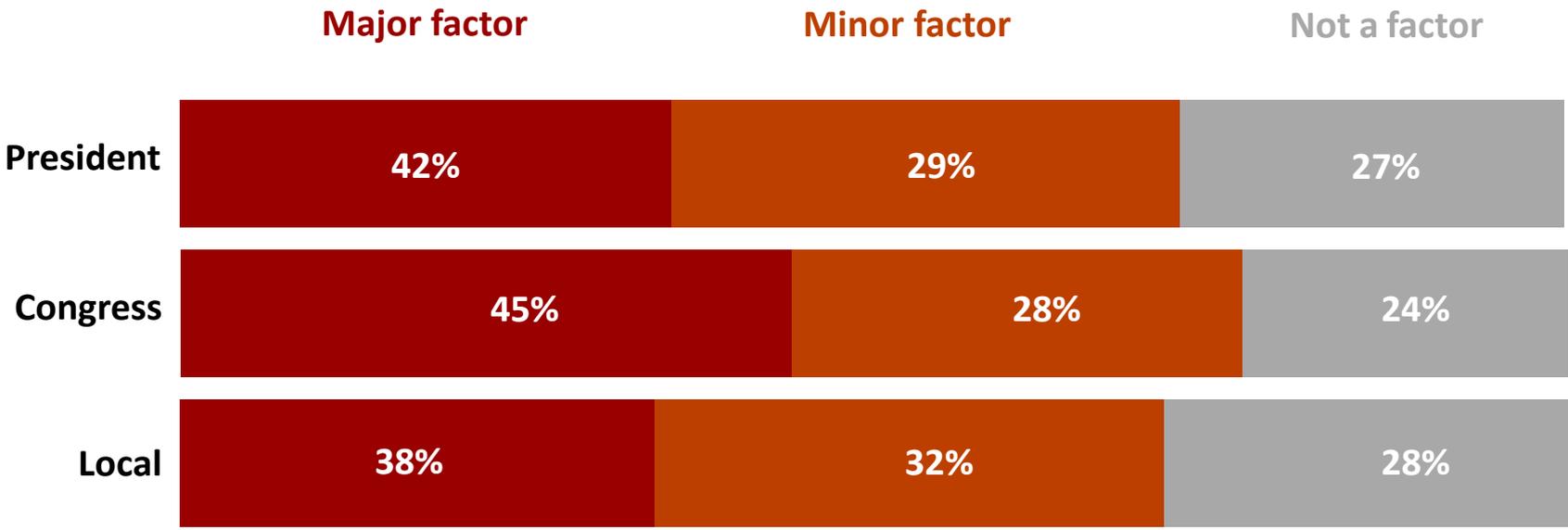
### Unsure

	Should not be legally required	Should be legally required	Unsure
Pro-Life	73%	21%	6%
Pro-Choice	42%	51%	7%
Democrat	40%	53%	7%
Republican	74%	20%	5%
Independent	56%	37%	7%

At least seven in ten Americans say a politician's stance on abortion is a factor in deciding their vote, including a plurality who say it is a major factor.

# Americans

*Is a politician's position on abortion a major factor, a minor factor, or not a factor in deciding your vote for:*



*Presents percentage reporting major/minor factor*

	President	Congress	Local
Democrat	73%	75%	76%
Republican	73%	76%	72%
Independent	70%	73%	68%

# How the Study was Conducted



- This study was undertaken by The Knights of Columbus and conducted by the Marist Institute for Public Opinion located at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York
- This report presents the findings from two random digit dial telephone surveys conducted in English of Americans, including both landline and cell phone sampling frames
- Data were collected in the first survey in December 2017 and in January 2018 for the second survey
- Analysis of sub-groups is included when noteworthy and/or statistically different
- Please note that some totals may not add to 100% due to rounding

# Methodology Statement

- The results from two surveys conducted by The Marist Poll sponsored and funded in partnership with The Knights of Columbus are presented in this report. Adults 18 years of age and older residing in the continental United States were interviewed in English by telephone using live interviewers.
- In December, 1,267 adults were interviewed from December 4<sup>th</sup> through the 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017. In January, 1,350 adults were interviewed from January 8<sup>th</sup> through the 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018.
- Mobile telephone numbers were randomly selected based upon a list of telephone exchanges from throughout the nation from Survey Sampling International. The exchanges were selected to ensure each region was represented in proportion to its population. Mobile phones are treated as individual devices. After validation of age, personal ownership, and non-business-use of the mobile phone, interviews are typically conducted with the person answering the phone. To increase coverage, respondents were also reached through random dialing of landline phone numbers from ASDE Survey Sampler, Inc. Within each landline household, a single respondent is selected through a random selection process to increase the representativeness of traditionally under-covered survey populations. Assistance was provided by Luce Research for data collection. The samples were then combined and balanced to reflect the 2013 American Community Survey 1-year estimates for age, gender, income, race, and region.
- The December and January results are statistically significant within  $\pm 2.8$  percentage points and  $\pm 2.7$  percentage points, respectively. The error margin was not adjusted for sample weights and increases for cross-tabulations.

# Contact Information



## Knights of Columbus Headquarters

Mr. Carl Anderson, Supreme Knight

Mr. Andrew Walther, Vice President,  
Communications and Strategic  
Planning

1 Columbus Plaza  
New Haven, CT 06510  
(203) 752-4253

The Knights of Columbus is one of the nation's premiere volunteer and charitable organizations. Last year, Knights worldwide donated more than 75 million hours, and more than \$177.5 million to charitable causes in communities throughout the Americas, as well in Europe and Asia. From helping children in need, to providing wheelchairs for the disabled, to helping stock food banks, to offering top-rated and affordable life insurance to its members, the Knights has been at the service of the community for more than 135 years, and is the world's largest Catholic service organization.



## Marist College Institute for Public Opinion

Lee M. Miringoff, PhD

Barbara L. Carvalho, PhD

Marist College  
3399 North Road  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601  
(845) 575-5050

Founded in 1978, The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion (MIPO) is a survey research center at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York. The Marist Poll has conducted independent research on public priorities, elections, and a wide variety of social issues. The Marist Poll regularly partners with NBC News and *The Wall Street Journal* to conduct scientific public opinion polls in key electoral battleground states. It joins with NPR and PBS NewsHour to take the pulse of the country.