

## New study challenges black support for Proposition 8

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A new study of voting patterns on Proposition 8, the November ballot measure that would outlaw same-sex marriage, concludes that African American support, reported by exit pollsters at 70 percent, was at least 10 percentage points lower.

The high reported support levels among black and Latino voters for the measure, which won voter approval but is now being challenged in court, led to post-election controversy and conclusions that non-white voters provided the margin of victory for Proposition 8.

The new study, commissioned by the San Francisco-based Evelyn and Walter Hass Jr. Fund and released by a consortium of gay rights groups, was conducted by two New York college researchers. It concludes that party affiliation, political ideology, frequency of attending church and age "were the driving forces behind the measure's passage" rather than ethnicity.

When voting results were adjusted for those factors, the researchers concluded, "support for Proposition 8 among African Americans and Latinos was not significantly different than other groups." They put overall black support for Proposition 8 at "no more than 59 percent" rather than the 70 percent found in exit polls of voters.

**"These figures point the way to winning marriage equality for same-sex couples sooner rather than later," said Jaime Grant, Ph.D., director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute. "Convincing the Republican Party that continued gay bashing will cripple its future is one; another is accelerating the already strong surge in support among young voters."**