

February 27, 2017

To: Interested Parties
From: Ben Tulchin and Corey O'Neil; Tulchin Research
Re: **LGBT Voters as Percentage of the California Statewide Electorate**

Tulchin Research recently conducted an online survey among 600 registered voters in California on behalf of Equality California. This survey included a basic demographic question asking respondents if they identify as being a member of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community. As there is limited existing data about sexual orientation and gender identity among the state's electorate, we feel our findings merit public release. **Our poll finds that 12 percent of California voters identify as being a member of the LGBT community**, while 88 percent do not. The table below reflects the exact question language employed and the results.

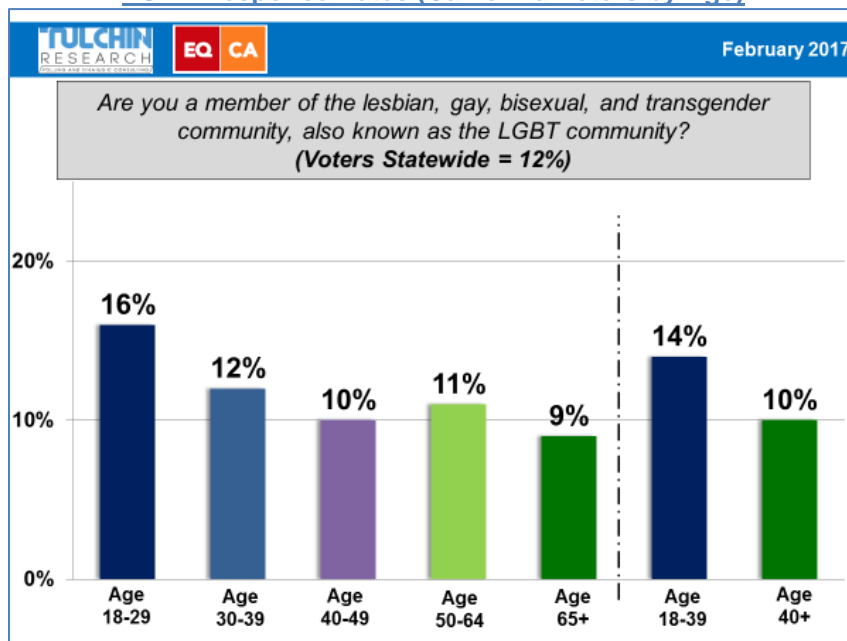
LGBT Response Rates (California Voters)

<i>Are you a member of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community, also known as the LGBT community?</i>	
Yes	12%
No	88%
Don't Know	1%*

*Results add up to greater than 100% due to rounding.

Our polling finds notable differences by age. Specifically, millennials (voters ages 18-29) are most likely to identify as part of the LGBT community (16%) and do so at a much higher rate than voters over age 40 (10%). Among voters age 30-39, one in eight (12%) identifies as part of the LGBT community. The chart below illustrates the correlation of LGBT identification by age.

LGBT Response Rates (California Voters by Age)



Additionally, these double-digit LGBT response rates carry across nearly every region in California including the San Francisco Bay Area (14%), LA County (11%), San Diego County (11%), Sacramento/Central Valley (11%), and the surrounding LA Area (10%). The table below lays out the full results among voters by region.

LGBT Response Rates (by Region)

<i>Are you a member of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community, also known as the LGBT community?</i>	
Region	% Yes
LA County	11%
LA Area	10%
San Francisco Bay Area	14%
San Diego County	11%
Sacramento/Central Valley	11%

We should note that our question wording derives from our extensive polling in San Francisco, which has a large LGBT community. We have found that this softer, more inclusive phrasing (“are you a member of...”) yields more direct responses and a lower “don’t know” and refusal rate than does explicitly asking one’s sexual orientation or gender identity. (e.g., “Are you gay or straight?” or “What is your sexual orientation?”)

We want to highlight the potential significance of our having conducted this survey online rather than by telephone. We believe that allowing respondents to reply to this question online rather than providing a verbal answer to a stranger on the telephone can result in a higher response rate and in more forthcoming responses. This is a key distinction we want to make when comparing this data to other publicly available data collected through traditional telephone surveys. Additionally, we note that our survey was conducted specifically among *registered voters*, who have historically reported LGBT identification at a higher rate than the adult population as a whole.

While it is very difficult to accurately ascertain the percent of the population that is gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender, we feel compelled to share our findings because of the evolving nature of survey research and the fact that an increasing amount of public opinion research is now done online. While there are methodological trade-offs to conducting online surveys like this one where participants are drawn from opt-in panels, there could also be significant benefits, such as the ability to collect more accurate data on sensitive topics such as sexual orientation and gender identity. This data stood out to us because it finds a somewhat larger LGBT population in the state than traditional telephone polling (a methodology that relies on verbally volunteering personal information to a stranger on the phone) has previously suggested.

Regardless of methodology, the results of this recent survey are compelling and we hope they will spark a conversation about the actual size of the LGBT community and the community’s future engagement in public policy matters.

STATEWIDE SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Tulchin Research designed and administered this online statewide survey, which was conducted by professional online data collectors and interviewed 600 registered voters throughout the state of California. The survey was conducted January 3-10, 2017, and interviews were conducted in English.

The survey utilized an online proportional quota sampling methodology. Respondents were chosen at random from a listed panel of online users who have opted in to participate in research. The respondent universe reflects the major characteristics of the statewide population by sampling a proportional number of voters from each key demographic group determined by statewide voter universe counts. The survey screened out individuals who were not registered voters and demographic quotas were applied to ensure respondents accurately reflected the demographics of the California electorate. The data were then weighted by gender, age, ethnicity, party, region and education to ensure an accurate reflection of the statewide voter population.

In interpreting survey results, all surveys are subject to potential sampling error. This means the results of this survey may differ from interviewing the entire universe of all California voters. The size of the potential sampling error depends upon the total number of respondents in the survey, the number of respondents to a particular question, and the percentage distribution of responses to a specific question, such as the LGBT question specifically in this particular survey memo. The survey's margin of error is plus or minus 4 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence level. This means that 95 times out of 100, if a response to a given question to which all respondents answered was 50%, we could be 95% confident that the true percentage would fall within +/-4% of this percentage - or between 46% and 54%. As 12% of respondents in this survey answered "yes" when asked if they were a member of the LGBT community, we can infer that the sampling error specific to that response is +/- 2.4% or between 9.6% and 14.4%.

The table below represents the estimated sampling error for different percentage distributions of responses.

Sampling Error by Percentage (at 95 in 100 confidence level)

PERCENTAGES NEAR

	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90
SAMPLE SIZE									
800	2.1	2.8	3.2	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.2	2.8	2.1
700	2.2	3.0	3.4	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.4	3.0	2.2
600	2.4	3.2	3.7	3.9	4.0	3.9	3.7	3.2	2.4
500	2.6	3.5	4.0	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.0	3.5	2.6
400	2.9	3.9	4.5	4.8	4.9	4.8	4.5	3.9	2.9
300	3.4	4.5	5.2	5.5	5.7	5.5	5.2	4.5	3.4
200	4.2	5.5	6.4	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.4	5.5	4.2
100	5.9	7.8	9.0	9.6	9.8	9.6	9.0	7.8	5.9