Poll shows most in La. favor abortion in specific instances

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Several thousand anti-abortion demonstrators staged a march on the state Capitol last October, but they apparently represented a minority of the community, according to a survey conducted for the Morning Advocate and State-Times newspapers.

The 10-parish Baton Rouge metropolitan area, 72 percent of those questioned about their opinions on the issue said that women should be allowed abortions to some degree.

The majority of those Baton Rouge-area residents who responded to the newspaper’s annual year-end poll (53 percent) said they think abortions should be allowed only in certain cases, while 18 percent favored allowing abortions on request. Only 3 percent favored no abortion at all.

The Baton Rouge responses compared to 49 percent statewide who approved of abortion only in certain cases and 21 percent who favored the termination of a pregnancy on request.

“About 3 in 10 voters, or 26 percent, believe abortion should not be allowed at all,” said Roy Brady of Brady and Associates, the firm that conducted the statewide year-end poll Dec. 3-18.

The survey results show that a near majority of Louisiana voters feel that abortions are necessary in certain circumstances, while nearly a third who disapprove of abortion only in certain cases, while 18 percent of the respondents in each religious group said they favor it on request.

Among Catholics, 22 percent did say they would approve of abortion at all. Among Protestants, the percentage of those who disapprove of abortion was slightly lower — 25 percent.

Interestingly, non-whites and the very poor (those with incomes under $10,000) are more likely to oppose abortions than whites or those with moderate to high incomes, the survey showed.

“With respect to demographic groups, whites are more likely than non-whites to favor abortion on request,” Brady said.

The survey showed that 52 percent of the whites polled favored abortion on request, while only 18 percent of the non-whites did so.

By comparison, more non-whites — 46 percent — are likely to favor a ban on abortion in all cases than whites — 24 percent.

Most whites and non-whites, however, paralleled the view of the entire survey, favoring abortions in certain instances. Statistically, 56 percent of whites and 47 percent of non-whites opted for the middle ground.

(See ABORTION, 6A)

Abortion

Abortion (Continued from 1A)

road.

From an economic standpoint, 44 percent of those with incomes under $10,000 oppose abortions, while 50 percent of those with incomes over $10,000 favor abortions in certain cases.

The upper-income group is also more likely to favor allowing abortions on request — 26 percent — with the percentage of those taking the same position declining with average income.

Educational background also seemed to provide a demarcation line for those who are likely to oppose abortions and those who are likely to favor allowing abortions to some degree.

“Those with at least some college education are more likely those with no college education to favor abortion on request,” according to Brady.

Among those with some college, 33 percent said they believed abortion should be available on demand. In contrast, 18 percent of those with no college background gave the same opinion.

Using the same educational dividing line, the reverse was true for those who favor banning abortions — 38 percent without college backgrounds and 14 percent with at least some college said they disapproved of abortion.

For purposes of the poll, the state was broken into three geographic areas — north, south and southeast — with the southeastern area containing the metropolitan Baton Rouge and New Orleans areas.

Yet, the geographic origins of voters who responded to the poll seemed to make little difference in their opinions regarding abortion, except among those who favored allowing abortions on request.

In the southeast, 24 percent favored abortions on demand, while 18 percent held the same opinion in the southwest and north. Those who said that abortions should be allowed only in certain cases totaled 30 percent in the southeast and 49 percent in the north and southwest.

Respondents were asked whether their attitudes toward abortion were best described as allowing it on request, allowing it only in special cases or not allowing it at all.

Only 2 percent statewide said they had no opinion on the subject.