

**How Support for Legal Abortion in the United States Varies Based on Political Party
Affiliation, Race, and Religious Affiliation**

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Affiliation, Race, and Religious Affiliation

Abortion has always been a hot-button issue in America, but now more than ever, after the Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe vs. Wade, it's a pressing topic. In many states, the fight over abortion access is still taking place in courtrooms; most abortions are now forbidden in at least 13 states and abortion advocates have sued to block enforcement of abortion restriction laws (New York Times, 2022). Abortion is an issue that evokes strong emotions and during this contention surrounding the issue of abortion, the American public is intensely divided on this issue. Political party affiliation, race, and religious affiliation are three characteristics that can predict whether or not one supports the legality of abortion in the U.S. After all, some U.S. political parties, races, and religions are more likely to support legal abortion than others. Therefore, support for legal abortion in the United States varies based on political party affiliation, race, and religious affiliation.

In America, approval of legalized abortion depends on political party affiliation. According to the most recent Pew Research Center survey, there is deep disagreement between the U.S. political parties over abortion (Hartig, 2022). Democrats are overwhelmingly more likely to support legal abortion than Republicans (Hartig, 2022). This widening gap can be attributed to a "steady increase" in support for legal abortion among Democrats (Hartig, 2022). Upon the Supreme Court's decision to end the federal guarantee of a right to a legal abortion, Democrats have given increased attention and importance to the abortion issue during this past

fall's midterm election (Nadeem, 2022b). Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents are 42 percentage points more likely than Republicans and Republican-leaning independents to say abortion should be legal in all or most cases (Hartig, 2022). 90% of liberal Democrats and Democratic learners support legal abortion, as do 72% of conservative and moderate Democrats (*Public Opinion on Abortion*, 2022). In contrast, conservative Republicans and Republican leaners are much more likely to say abortion should be illegal in all or most cases (72%) than to say it should be legal (27%) (*Public Opinion on Abortion*, 2022). This can be attributed to the fact that the Republican Party platform states that “the unborn child has a fundamental right to life which cannot be infringed, while the Democratic Party platform is in favor of “safe and legal abortion” (Lipka, 2022). Therefore, those affiliated with Democratic Party support legal abortion while those affiliated with the Republican Party oppose legal abortion. And so, in that way, support for legal abortion in the United States varies based on political party affiliation.

Support for legal abortion in the United States also varies based on race. Across various racial and ethnic groups, majorities believe abortion should be legal in all or most cases (Hartig, 2022). However, support for legal abortion is more pronounced among Asian American and Black American adults, versus White and Hispanic American adults (Hartig, 2022). 68% of Black American adults and 72% of Asian American adults support legal abortion in all or most cases, compared to 59% of White American adults and 60% of Hispanic American adults (Hartig, 2022). Also, majorities among Asian American, Black American, Hispanic American, and White American adults disapprove of the Supreme Court's decision to overturn *Roe vs. Wade* (Nadeem, 2022a). However, opposition to the Supreme Court's decision is most prominent

among Asian American (72%) and Black American adults (67%) compared to White and Hispanic adults (Nadeem, 2022a). Therefore, those of Asian and Black race are the most likely to support legal abortion, while those of White and Hispanic race are somewhat less so. Hence, in such a manner, support for legal abortion in the United States varies based on race.

Additionally, assent for legal abortion in the United States depends on religious affiliation. White Evangelical Protestants and Mass-attending Catholics are the most fervent opponents of legal abortion, whereas those who are religiously unaffiliated are the most in favor of legal abortion. The most outspoken opponents of abortion are White Evangelical Protestants (Hartig, 2022). After all, about three-quarters of White Evangelical Protestants believe that abortion should be illegal in all or most cases (*Public Opinion on Abortion*, 2022). This may be due in part to the fact that one in five congregations in the Evangelical Protestant, historically Black Protestant, and Catholic faiths preach against abortion (Quinn, 2020). In addition, the Roman Catholic Church in the United States has also been considered one of the “foremost opponents” of legal abortion (Smith, 2022). Their teachings, after all, convey that human life is “sacred from conception to natural death” and that unborn children have a “right to life” (Smith, 2022). The Catholic church also teaches that every procured abortion is a “moral evil” (Fahmy, 2022). Furthermore, some Catholic clergy have argued that President Joe Biden should not be allowed to receive Holy Communion due to his support of legal abortion (Fahmy, 2022). Catholics who attend Mass on a regular basis are among the country’s strongest opponents of legal abortion, and they are also more likely than those who attend Mass less frequently to believe that life begins at conception and that a fetus has rights (Smith, 2022). In fact, Mass-attending Catholics are as

conservative as White Evangelical Protestants on the issue of abortion, and White Evangelical Protestants, again, stand out among U.S. religious groups for their strong opposition to abortion (Smith, 2022). However, U.S. Catholics who don't attend Mass weekly, in contrast, mostly support legal abortion in all or most cases (Smith, 2022). Those in the U.S. who are religiously unaffiliated, which the Pew Research Center refers to as religious "nones", overwhelming support a woman's right to a legal abortion (Hartig, 2022). 84% of religious "nones" believe that abortion should be legal in all or most cases, whereas only 15% believe it should be illegal (Hartig, 2022). Also, 66% of Black Protestants, 60% of White Protestants who are not evangelical, and 56% of Catholics support legal abortion (*Public Opinion on Abortion*, 2022). Therefore, those who are religiously unaffiliated are the most in favor of legal abortion, while White Evangelical Protestants and Mass-attending Catholics are the most opposed to legal abortion. So, in such wise, support for legal abortion in the U.S. varies based on religious affiliation.

Thus, support for legal abortion in the United States varies based on political party affiliation, race, and religious affiliation. The amount of support for legal abortion in the U.S. is significant because that is ultimately what will determine whether or not abortion will remain legal in the U.S. Without national access to legal abortion, issues such as back-alley abortions, poverty, and crime will become more pronounced in America, so it is critical to observe the trends regarding support and opposition to legal abortion. By becoming aware of how political party affiliation, race, and religious affiliation impact one's stance on legal abortion, we can better strategize how to preserve a woman's right to choose in America. Abortion is, after all, a

common experience for women in America. Nearly one out of four women will have an abortion by the age of 45 (*Abortion Is a Common Experience for U.S. Women, Despite Dramatic Declines in Rates*, 2022), so this issue affects a substantial amount of people in America. We must continue to fight to safeguard the reproductive rights we worked so hard to attain.

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