

# 6 in 10 Favor Lowering Voting Age for Local and State Elections

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PRINCETON, N. J., April 24 — Six in ten Americans favor lowering the voting age to 18 for local and state elections, with a majority in each of the four major regions of the nation expressing approval.

As might be expected, a high proportion (more than 8 in 10) of 18-to-20-year olds favor lowering the voting age to 18 for local and state elections.

However, considerable opposition to such a change is found among Republicans and older persons (50 and over), with approval outweighing disapproval by a relatively narrow margin.



## Tremendous Shift In Public Opinion

Only 17 per cent of all persons interviewed favored lowering the voting age to 18 when the Gallup Poll first sought the public's views on this subject, in 1959.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in December that the voting age be lowered to 18 for federal or national elections. However, since the ruling applies only to federal elections,

## Nixon's Popularity Shows Little Change

PRINCETON, N. J., April 24 — President Nixon's popularity shows little change since mid-March, with 49 per cent of all persons interviewed in an early April survey saying they approve of the way he is handling his job as President, 38 per cent expressing disapproval and 13 per cent with no opinion.

The President's mid-March rating was 50 per cent approval. Interviewing in the latest survey was completed prior to the President's recent televised speech on Vietnam.



## Details Of Survey

For the survey reported today, a total of 1,550 adults, 18 and older, were interviewed in person in more than 300 scientifically-selected localities across the nation. Interviewing was conducted April 3, 4 and 5. This question was asked:

*The Supreme Court has ruled that the voting age be lowered to 18 for federal or national elections. Do you favor or oppose lowering the voting age to 18 for local and state elections?*

Following are the national results, and those by region, party affiliation and age:

Local, State Races?	Lower Age For		No	
	Favor %	Oppose %	Favor %	Oppose %
NATIONAL	60	35	5	7
East	62	31	5	7
Midwest	54	41	5	5
South	65	31	4	4
Far West	57	38	5	5
Republicans	50	44	6	6
Democrats	63	32	5	5
Independents	64	32	4	4
18-20 years	84	14	2	2
21-29 years	73	21	6	6
30-49 years	57	38	5	5
50 & over	52	41	7	7

## "If Old Enough To Fight . . ."

Persons interviewed who favor lowering the voting age most frequently give these reasons: (1) If young peo-

ple are old enough to fight, they are old enough to vote; (2) people in the 18 to 20 age group are well informed, qualified to vote; and, (3) they should have a say in how the country is run.

Those who oppose lowering the voting age argue that young people are: (1) Not mature enough to cast a responsible vote; and, (2) are not well enough informed about the issues.

These two comments illustrate the debate over the issue: "We send our young men to fight," said a 40-year old Nebraska housewife, "let's give them a piece of the political action, too."

"Young people today aren't mature — they just don't know what the real world's all about," maintained a 40-year old engineer from Ohio. "The biggest problem 18-year olds face is splitting up with their girl friends."

## Rolling Hurts Republicans

As reported earlier, the U.S. Supreme Court ruling, which gives the vote to 11 million Americans in federal elections, could cause serious problems for the GOP. Recent surveys show the Democratic party holding marked advantages among this age group in terms of political party allegiance, attitudes toward the war and the Nixon administration, and support for Democrats in trial heats against President Nixon.

## Must Be Ratified By States

To go into effect, the proposed Constitutional amendment must be ratified by three-fourths of the states.

As of this writing, the measure has been approved by 20 states.

Should the states fail to ratify the federal amendment, individual states could still lower the voting age by referendum or legislative action.

a Constitutional amendment is now being presented to the 50 states which would extend the 18-year-old vote to local and state elections, as well.

One of the chief arguments for lowering the voting age in local and state elections is an economic one. If the 1970 law applied only to national elections, most states would have to maintain separate registration and voting procedures for the different types of elections, at an estimated cost of \$20-million.