

To: Interested Parties
Fr: Lake Research Partners & Planned Parenthood of Southern New England
Re: Poll Findings
Date: June 5, 2014

Recent survey findings¹ defy conventional wisdom and illustrate that Rhode Island voters strongly support women's access to comprehensive reproductive health services and agree that Rhode Islanders' rights to make private medical decisions should be protected.

Planned Parenthood is extremely well-liked in Rhode Island with a majority of voters having a favorable opinion of Planned Parenthood (71% favorable, 45% very favorable). Planned Parenthood is viewed net favorably across demographic subgroups and party.

Voters are divided about whether they think their state legislature is more supportive or opposed to a woman making her own decision about abortion, or are unsure where the legislature stands. When it comes to their own state legislative member, Rhode Islanders are even more uncertain where their member stands on the matter of abortion. Of those who have an opinion, voters are more likely to think their state legislator is supportive than opposed.

Half of voters favor the 1973 Supreme Court *Roe v. Wade* decision (52% Favor, 42% strongly). When given an explanation that *Roe v. Wade* established a woman's constitutional right to have an abortion and limited the circumstances under which the government could restrict this right, over half of voters say they would not want to overturn the decision (53%).

Voters overwhelmingly believe that it is important for women in Rhode Island to have access to all of the reproductive health care options available to them (93% important, 76% very important). This belief is a core value and is equally true among both men and women.

Even when asked how important it is for women in Rhode Island to have access to *all reproductive health care options including abortion*, an overwhelming majority says it is important (85% important, 68% very important). Again, both men and women say it is very important for women to have access, with intensity stronger among women (76% say very important) than men (59% say very important).

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¹ Lake Research Partners designed and administered this survey that was conducted by telephone using professional interviewers April 28 – May 4, 2014. The survey reached a total of 500 Rhode Island Likely 2014 Voters. The margin of error for the total sample is +/-4.4%.

A majority of Rhode Islanders think three key reproductive health services - testing for HIV and sexually transmitted diseases, prescription birth control, and pregnancy-related services – should be included as preventive health care services, which means health plans would be required to fully cover these services without any out of pocket fees for patients, like co-pays. Voters are most likely to say that pregnancy-related services should be included (77% say should definitely be included) followed by testing for HIV and STD’s (72%), and prescription birth control (61%).

Voters are very supportive of protecting the rights of Rhode Islanders when it comes to making medical decisions, with most voters agreeing that the state should pass a law that protects the right of residents to make private medical decisions, including the decision about an abortion, in the event that federal laws change (82% agree, 71% strongly agree).

This support is strong across demographic subgroups, including among Rhode Island Catholics (79% agree, 68% strongly agree), and across party lines with a solid majority of Democrats, Republicans, and Independents agreeing the right to make private medical decisions should be protected (94% of Democrats, 79% of Independents and 60% of Republicans agree).

Topline Data

- **Now I'd like to ask you about some organizations. For each, please tell me whether you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable impression of that organization. If you haven't heard of the organization {6}, or if you don't know enough about that organization to have an impression {5}, just say so and we will move on. Do you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable impression of Planned Parenthood?**

	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN	DEMOCRAT	INDEPENDENT	REPUBLICAN
Very Favorable	45	33	55	59	41	19
Somewhat Favorable	26	32	21	23	29	22
Somewhat Unfavorable	6	9	3	2	10	6
Very Unfavorable	8	10	7	3	4	32
No Opinion	14	14	13	12	14	19
Never Heard	1	2	1	1	1	1

	TOTAL	EAST BAY*	KENT	PROVIDENCE	WASHINGTON*
Very Favorable	45	40	43	45	52
Somewhat Favorable	26	36	22	26	22
Somewhat Unfavorable	6	7	6	5	10
Very Unfavorable	8	5	8	9	8
No Opinion	14	10	20	13	9
Never Heard	1	1	1	2	0

*Note small sample size

- **Thinking about your state legislature, do you think it is more supportive or opposed to a woman making her own decision on abortion?**

	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN	DEMOCRAT	INDEPENDENT	PROVIDENCE
Supportive	34	37	31	34	34	36
Opposed	32	30	33	35	27	34
Don't Know	34	33	35	31	39	30

*Note sample size is too small for analysis for Republicans, and residents of the East Bay, Kent, and Washington regions

- **Thinking about your own state legislative member, do you think he or she is more supportive or opposed to a woman making her own decision on abortion?**

	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN	DEMOCRAT	INDEPENDENT	PROVIDENCE
Supportive	36	36	35	37	34	39
Opposed	16	21	12	12	19	13
Don't Know	48	43	53	52	47	48

*Note sample size is too small for analysis for Republicans, and residents of the East Bay, Kent, and Washington regions

- From what you know, do you favor or oppose the *Roe versus Wade* decision, or are you not sure?

	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN	DEMOCRAT	INDEPENDENT	PROVIDENCE
Strongly Favor	42	38	46	56	45	42
Not So Strongly Favor	10	11	10	8	11	9
Not So Strongly Oppose	4	4	5	3	2	5
Strongly Oppose	10	9	11	4	8	8
Not Sure	34	38	29	30	34	37

*Note sample size is too small for analysis for Republicans, and residents of the East Bay, Kent, and Washington regions

- The Supreme Court's 1973 *Roe versus Wade* decision established a woman's constitutional right to have an abortion and limited the circumstances under which the government could restrict this right. Would you like to see the Supreme Court overturn or do away with the *Roe versus Wade* decision, or not really, or are you not sure?

	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN	DEMOCRAT	INDEPENDENT	PROVIDENCE
Strongly Yes	20	21	19	18	12	21
Not So Strongly Yes	9	11	7	5	11	6
Not So Strongly No	8	11	5	4	14	8
Strongly No	45	36	52	53	46	45
Not Sure	19	20	17	20	18	20

*Note sample size is too small for analysis for Republicans, and residents of the East Bay, Kent, and Washington regions

- **How important is it that women in Rhode Island have access to all of the reproductive health care options available, including abortion – very important, somewhat important, a little important or not important at all?**

	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN	DEMOCRAT	INDEPENDENT	PROVIDENCE
Very Important	68	59	76	80	65	64
Somewhat Important	17	23	12	14	18	17
A Little Important	8	8	8	5	6	12
Not Important At All	5	7	3	0	8	6
Don't Know	2	4	1	1	4	1

*Note sample size is too small for analysis for Republicans, and residents of the East Bay, Kent, and Washington regions

- **Do you agree or disagree that Rhode Island should pass a law that protects the right of residents to make private medical decisions, including the decision about an abortion, in the event that federal laws or policies change?**

	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN	DEMOCRAT	INDEPENDENT	PROVIDENCE
Strongly Agree	71	68	73	80	68	69
Not So Strongly Agree	11	12	11	13	11	12
Not So Strongly Disagree	3	5	1	1	4	3
Strongly Disagree	6	8	4	2	6	6
Don't Know	9	8	10	3	11	11

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