

Coalition for Secular Government

MEDIA RELEASE

Nearly 40% of Colorado Voters Seek to Destroy Reproductive Rights Sedalia, Colorado / October 7, 2008

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A poll of likely voters shows strong support for Amendment 48, the ballot measure that would grant the full legal rights of persons to fertilized eggs. The survey, conducted on September 28th by Rasmussen Reports with 500 likely voters, shows that 39% plan to vote for the measure, 50% to vote against it, while 11% are unsure. (See <http://tinyurl.com/4huary>.)

Such strong support for Amendment 48 should surprise anyone familiar with the barrage of criticism published in Colorado media in recent weeks. Critics of the measure have warned voters of its destructive effects on Colorado’s laws if passed and enforced. They have shown that it would usher in a near-total ban on abortion, outlaw the birth control pill and in vitro fertilization, and subject pregnant women to police controls. Yet these latest poll results are basically unchanged from a June poll, also by Rasmussen. (See <http://tinyurl.com/4mm59r>.)

Diana Hsieh, founder of the Coalition for Secular Government and co-author of “Amendment 48 Is Anti-Life,” argues that the broad support for Amendment 48 is driven by a deeply-held faith pretending to be “pro-life.”

The most recent Rasmussen poll showed that 41% of Colorado voters believe that “life begins at conception.” That number explains the strong support for Amendment 48, despite the media barrage against it. “People who endorse that slogan regard a fertilized egg as a new, whole person with a right to life,” Hsieh said. “They regard the enormous sacrifices forced on real men and women by the measure as insignificant – or even ennobling. Their vote is based on faith, without regard to the real-world requirements of human life and happiness. It’s not ‘pro-life’ at all.”

“To effectively combat measures like Amendment 48, the whole ‘pro-life’ ideology must be challenged at its root,” Hsieh said. “A mushy slogan like ‘it simply goes too far’ is unconvincing, even misleading. It doesn’t speak to the fundamental dispute. Worse, it suggests that some compromise – like banning most abortions – would be acceptable.”

“Instead, reproductive rights must be defended on principle, based on the objective facts of human nature. With regard to abortion, the fact is that a fetus or embryo is only a potential person so long as encased within and dependent on the woman. Once born, the infant is a new individual person with the right to life. That view ought to be the basis for the laws of a free society. Any alternative – any attempt to grant rights to the embryo or fetus – would violate the rights of pregnant women.”

For a principled defense of reproductive rights, see the Coalition for Secular Government’s issue paper, “Amendment 48 Is Anti-Life: Why It Matters That a Fertilized Egg Is Not a Person,” available at <http://www.seculargovernment.us/docs/a48.pdf>, particularly the section “Personhood and the Right to Abortion,” pages 10-13.

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The Coalition for Secular Government advocates government solely based on secular principles of individual rights. The protection of a person’s basic rights to life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness – including freedom of religion and conscience – requires a strict separation of church and state.